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Warlock of the Magus World
Auðramazdā
1 - Reincarnation

‘My head really hurts….’

This was Fang Ming’s first thought upon waking up. It felt as if there was a cut on his head, hurting so badly that it seemed as if his skull was about to crack apart. As his consciousness cleared, he realised he was riding on what seemed like a horse carriage. His body bounced along to the rhythm of the moving carriage, sending shockwaves through the wound. The pain was so great that he had to suck in several sharp breaths.

Opening his eyes, he surveyed his surroundings. What filled his vision were walls formed from hollowed planks. Sharing this carriage with him were quite a few fair haired and blue eyed youths, their eyes closed in their reverie. Not one of them bothered to spare a glance in his direction. He seemed to be lying down on the floor of the carriage. Feeling the biting cold from the wood, Fang Ming realised that his body would not be able to bear lying down much longer. To avoid catching a cold, he struggled hard to get up in a hurry.

At that moment, he felt a sharp pain lancing through his head. The pain was sudden, and brought with it a flood of strange memories. Fang Ming’s eyes rolled back as he fainted.

“Leylin… Leylin! Wake up…” Fang Ming heard in his daze, and couldn’t help but open his eyes.

‘Is this… reincarnation?’ He still clearly remembered the dazzling
flames from the energy reactor’s explosion, one that was impossible to survive with his lack of protection. On top of that, this type of carriage made of wooden planks was considered an ancient antique in his old world, and would definitely not be used. After organising the new memories in his mind, Fang Ming gained some insight about his body and this world. This realm was in an era that was similar to the European Middle Ages. But there was something more to this world than that, the presence of a mysterious force. The presence… of magic. The original owner of his current body was called Leylin Farlier, and he was the son of a minor noble. He had been tested to be gifted with the talent to become a Magus and as such his father, Viscount John Farlier, had pulled strings to allow him to become a magician-in-training, an acolyte. The horse carriage he was currently on was travelling towards a magic academy. The one who had woken him up was a large, male youth. His large eyes were surrounded by his thick eyebrows which complemented his long, straight nose and sparkling gold hair. Although his face was somewhat tender, showing his youth, he had a sturdy, muscular body. He looked extremely manly. Seeing that Fang Ming had awoken, the boy laughed happily, “Haha… Leylin, you’re finally awake! If you had been even a few minutes late, you probably wouldn’t have made it to dinner. You don’t want to starve, do you?” Fang Ming lowered his eyes. After some thought, he figured out this person’s identity, “Thanks, George!” All the youths on this carriage had been tested to be gifted with magic. George was a Count’s legitimate son, and a favoured one at that. When his gift was revealed, the Count spent a lot of resources and pulled many strings in order to enter a magic academy. ‘A Count?’ Fang Ming inwardly thought. His memories returned to Leylin’s father, Viscount John Farlier. His
lands were about as large as a single city from Fang Ming’s previous life, and he had thousands of soldiers under his command.

In this world, noble rankings were inexorably tied to personal strength. George’s father being a count meant that his holdings were likely the size of at least several cities, and his annual income was a few thousand gold coins. And even with such finances and power at his disposal, it had taken a lot of effort for him to get George on this carriage. Fang Ming couldn’t help but wonder how Leylin’s father managed to do the same for him.

Even as he began to ponder the question, another sharp pain jolted through his head, and another scene appeared in his mind’s eye. He was in a dark room, with the musty old shelves lining the sides filled with a sense of antiquity. The surroundings were chock full of dust.

Under dim light, John Farlier solemnly passed him a ring, saying, “Leylin, my dear son, this is our Farlier Family’s heirloom, a promise from a Magus. Your grandfather had once helped an injured Magus out, and in return, he gifted him this ring.

“This ring is a promise. If any of your grandfather’s descendants had the gift of magic, they could use this ring to enter a magic academy for free! I give this to you, now, in hopes that you can be the pride of the Farlier Family and uphold our legacy…”

‘The ring!’ Fang Ming’s eyes narrowed, and his right hand subconsciously moved to his chest.

As his hand touched his clothing, he could feel a solid underneath, the metal ring was still there.

Heaving a sigh of relief in his heart, he thought to himself, ‘Phew! Either those guys didn’t recognise this as a treasure, or there’s a restriction of sorts. Either way, thank goodness this wasn’t snatched away.’

Fang Ming was a scientist in his former life, and the very mention
of such a mysterious force as magic filled him with a desire to conduct some research about it.
Furthermore, he didn’t want to be chased back home because he had lost such an important proof of entry.
Although he had taken over this body and even its memories, he was still very different from the original Leylin. His family members, who had spent years with him, would easily be able to tell the difference. If they mistook him as being possessed by a demon and perhaps begged one of those mysterious Magi to investigate, it was extremely likely that he would be found out.
‘However, if I can enter a magic academy, I probably won’t return for at least several years. By that time, any changes in behaviour will be written off as par for the course. Magi are known to be strange and eccentric. At that point, it would be strange if I hadn’t changed at all, not if I had!’
Just as he was in deep thought, a pair of strong large hands suddenly assisted him to his feet.
“What are you thinking about?” George asked.
“No– Nothing!” Fang Ming quickly shook his head, but then held onto it once more, still in pain.
He suddenly spun his head around and looked at George, causing the boy’s heart to stop in its tracks. He felt as if he was being stared at by a venomous snake.
Fang Ming rolled his eyes and asked, “Dearest George, why didn’t you wake me up earlier, instead letting me just lie on the floor like that for so long?”
“Heh heh! I saw you having such a nice sleep, and thought you liked lying down there!” George scratched his head abashedly. However, his eyes sparked with a cunning gleam.
Under Fang Ming’s murderous glare, he finally raised his hands in surrender, ‘Fine! Fine! Who asked you to offend my goddess. Offending her is still fine; as your bro, I am not such a petty
person. Alas, the entire carriage is now treating you like an enemy, and I don’t want to be isolated too!”

‘Offend? Goddess?’ Fang Ming scratched his head, but then he suddenly remembered why he was beaten up.

It was a girl named Bessita. Although she was only 15 years of age, her body was already well-developed and voluptuous. In addition to her big watery eyes, it was a huge draw to the lecherous Leylin. The original Leylin was no gentleman. He had lost his virginity at the age of twelve, and after that, he had either seduced or forced his way with many others, and had by now slept with more than a hundred women! He had been known as the scourge of his father’s holdings.

As Fang Ming finished exploring the memories, he rolled his eyes once again in disdain. No wonder this body was so weak and frail, it wasn’t just because of the injuries.

Thinking back, it was clear that Leylin had been too used to causing trouble in his own territory, and hadn’t been able to control himself when he saw Bessita.

The first few times it was still rather normal; flirting and making passes at her. Near the end, however, he had resorted to violent means. When Fang Ming saw these memories, he couldn’t help but label the original as an idiot.

That Bessita was the princess of a small country! And Leylin still wanted to rape her. Was there a brain in his skull or was it just dirt? Sheesh!

What happened after went without saying—Leylin was taught a savage lesson by a bunch of ‘Flower Guardians’, eventually succumbing to the injuries. This had eventually benefitted Fang Ming.

‘Heh, this Bessita isn’t as simple as she appears. Such a scheming mind!’ Fang Ming laughed coldly at this thought.

‘Fine. No matter what, I have taken over your body. If I get the
chance, I’ll avenge you. After all, I’m now Leylin Farlier!’ Fang Ming swore in his heart.
Leylin found no mention of anything resembling Asians in his memories, nor had he heard anything about China. In this new western world, using his own Chinese name would be too dangerous!
Leylin looked around to find that there was nobody else inside the spacious carriage. It was no wonder that George had come to call him over.
“No matter what, I still have to thank you! George, do you have any medicine?” Fang Ming stood up and stretched his body. Although it still hurt in a few places, it did not impede his movements, and the wound at the back of his head had already become a scab.
“Heh heh…I knew that you’d need this!” George laughed as he tossed a small bottle over, “This is my family’s secret product. I heard that it’s usually used during Knight training, and is extremely effective against any bodily injuries!”
As George spoke, he looked around furtively, “Alright! Dinner is about to start. I’m going to head there first, you should apply the medicine quickly and hurry over too. Remember, do not tell anyone else about our friendship!”
After he finished speaking, he had run off like a gust of wind!
Looking at George’s figure disappearing into the distance, Leylin couldn’t help but massage his forehead. It looked like this Leylin had truly stirred up a hornet’s nest. Was it such a big deal? His memories told him that the people of this world were rather open about sex…
At this point, he couldn’t do anything to remedy the situation. Swiftly taking off his clothes, Leylin quickly rubbed the medicine all over the injuries on his body.
“Hss… This damned George. Couldn’t he help me apply the
medicine before leaving?” Leylin drew several sharp cold breaths as he applied the medicine. The medicine was extremely effective. As soon as he applied it, there was a cooling sensation and the pain vanished. After he had dealt with the wounds on his body, Leylin put on his clothes and opened the carriage door. *Whoosh!* A gentle breeze blew over. The sun was setting on the horizon, painting everything a golden red. Leylin’s eyes moistened as he muttered, “No matter what, it feels good to be alive!” Looking at the surroundings, he noticed several large carriages forming a circle to make a crude temporary campsite. There was a large fire in the middle. There were many youths around the fire, sitting and resting on cloth mats laid on the ground. They were laughing and playing with each other while eating the bread in their hands. Leylin walked towards a table that had quite a few breads and juices placed on it. According to his memories, this was where food was distributed. When he approached the area, he saw that there were a few people queuing up. As they spotted Leylin, their gazes turned to ones of derision. Although Leylin thought of himself as thick-skinned, he still found it somewhat difficult to endure. Still, he did not leave. No matter what, he still had to eat. “Hurry up!” A hoarse voice rang out. “So… Sorry, Lady Angelia!” A freckled boy quickly apologised and took his share of the food before running away. [Beep! Danger Alert! Danger Alert! Host body is extremely close to a source of danger. It is recommended to move at least 1000 metres away!]
“T his?” Leylin’s eyes widened when he heard the mechanical voice in his mind.
‘Isn’t this the assistant A.I. Chip from my previous life? How did it reincarnate with me? This doesn’t make sense!’
He found it hard to believe. He thought to himself, ‘A.I. Chip, scan my mind and locate assistive systems.’
After a mere moment, the A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice replied,
[Beep! Scan complete! No foreign existences were found in host’s mind.]
“Hmm, scan my body, and display its stats.” This statement was met with another mechanical sound.
[Beep! Scan complete. Fang Ming (Leylin Farlier). Strength: 0.4, Agility: 0.5, Vitality: 0.4, Status: Blood haemorrhaging at the back of the head, many injuries to the soft tissues. No A.I. Chip present in host’s body!]
A 3D hologram appeared before Leylin’s eyes. It displayed Leylin’s own body and showed stats on the side. ‘No A.I. Chip? The A.I. Chip is equivalent to a material substance. How did it follow my soul through reincarnation?’ Leylin thought to himself, ‘It seems like some abnormality occurred during the explosion or my reincarnation, and the A.I. Chip’s functions have fused with my soul…
‘If I was still in my previous world, this would be a major discovery. It not only confirms the existence of the soul, but also
shows that physical matter and the soul can possibly transform each other! This is definitely something that group of old men in the National Academy of Sciences would go crazy over. It’s a pity that I’ll never see them again.’

This kind of A.I. Chip was essential to scientists in his previous world. Because of issues with human rights and the conscious thought, this technology didn’t have any intelligence of its own, instead serving two primary functions: data storage and analysis. It would analyse data on the command of its host, gathering data samples and running simulations to make deductions. Its storage ability was even simpler. It would store everything the host experienced through their five senses and recorded it down. Empirical data showed that it had enough wherewithal to store over 10,000 years’ worth of events.

“Why did the A.I. Chip and my soul fuse together… Bah, I’ll ponder this kind of question later when I have the ability and qualifications to do so. At least with this A.I. Chip, I have some resources in this world.’

The corners of Leylin’s mouth suddenly lifted to form a brilliant smile. He knew that in this medieval period, possessing the result of futuristic technology would definitely open up some extraordinary roads for the future.

“Still. This Leylin’s physique is really…” Leylin grew speechless after seeing the stats in front of him. This stats displayed were based on each aspect of an adult’s physiology as a standard. Theoretically, the average adult’s displayed stats would all be around 1. Although this Leylin was only 13-14 years old, his stats were still too low.

“Hm? That’s not right. It’s possible that the bodies of the people in this world are generally weaker! A.I. Chip, scan the bodies of the people around me and display their stats!”

[Beep! Task established, beginning collection of statistics.] In
almost an instant, 3D holograms of the surrounding people’s bodies appeared in front of Leylin, displaying their stats.
[Name: Unknown. Gender: Male. Strength: 0.9, Agility: 1.1, Vitality: 0.8] [Name: Unknown. Gender: Male. Strength: 1.2 Agility: 0.8, Vitality: 1.0] [Name: Unknown. Gender: Female. Strength: 0.8, Agility: 1.2, Vitality: 0.7]
‘Well then, it looks like the bodies of these people are stronger than those from my previous world. This Leylin is even inferior to a girl… I’m starting to feel embarrassed for him…’
Leylin scanned his surroundings. The people here were all youths around his age. There was a seemingly very delicate and frail girl whose stats were tons better than Leylin’s, causing him to feel utter despair.
“It looks like this Leylin is a useless leech, an excessively lecherous piece of trash with no control!”
[Name: Unknown, Gender: Male, Strength: 3.3, Agility: 2.5, Vitality: 3.2. Alert! Alert! This life form is excessively dangerous. Recommendation: Host should immediately move at least 1000 meters away.]
A red warning flashed thrice in succession. This caused Leylin to fall into a state of shock.
“Average stats of 3.0!” After Leylin scanned the information several times to double check that the A.I. Chip hadn’t made a mistake, he was left completely speechless.
‘Even the world champion didn’t have these kinds of stats. This person could easily make people think they were Superman in my previous world…’
As a scientist, Leylin understood well that a stat of 3.2 meant the person’s fighting capabilities, viral resistance, and body recovery speed were all three times greater than that of a normal person.
The various stats displayed being threefold greater than a typical person’s wasn’t as simple as just adding numbers together. What
kind of concept was this?
It meant that this person could defeat dozens of people empty-handed, and even get past a group attack by 100 people. In his previous world, he really could be considered a superhero!
‘I’m afraid that a person with these kinds of stats could only be created by genetically modifying their biochemistry in a lab. Moreover, only the minimum would be reached. This world is indeed not a simple one,’ Leylin thought to himself as he looked at the person possessing these terrifying stats once again.
It was a black-clothed person responsible for handing out food. He looked like he was middle-aged, and he had a scar on his face that stretched from his forehead to his lip. It pretty much split his entire face in half, and he looked extremely fierce for it.
The freckled boy from before was completely frightened by this person.
“This is the academy’s servant responsible for receiving us. It’s said that he’s not a Magus, yet he’s already so frightening. What would a real Magus be like then?”
Leylin suddenly discovered that a strong interest and curiosity about the profession of a Magus had arisen inside him. It was to the point where he was itching to go to the academy now and investigate everything.
The line was really short, and it was soon Leylin’s turn. After the black-clothed, scarred man gave Leylin a piece of white bread and some juice, he wordlessly waved Leylin away with an impatient expression on his face.
If it were the previous Leylin, even if he didn’t dare to drag this guy out and lash him a few times because it wasn’t his home, his expression still would’ve turned quite ugly, and he would probably have ranted at the man a bit.
But the current Leylin was naturally not that stupid. Following his memories, he formally bowed and said, “Thank you, Mister!”
The black-clothed man remained expressionless as he watched Leylin turn to leave.
“Ai! I didn’t think that Leylin would really seem like a noble after bowing!” The two youths behind Leylin couldn’t help but secretly whisper to each other.
“Hurry up and move forwards!” The scarred man shouted, his voice exploding into the eardrums of the two.
The great sound scared one of the youths so badly that he fell down onto the ground.
Leylin ignored the discussion behind him as he surveyed the area with a cold gaze. He then bitterly smiled, “Great! I’m really an unwelcome person!”
When he looked at George, George also hurriedly turned his head away. His hands made a secret gesture behind his back.
“Eh, fine. Since you gave me the medicine, I won’t expose you.” Leylin sighed, then found a relatively remote place. Without caring about whether or not the ground was carpeted, he sat down and began to eat heartily.
Leylin thought as he ate. ‘This plain white bread isn’t as good as that from the previous world! But according to Leylin’s memories, this is already considered a food that one can only get during celebrations.’
Based on Leylin’s memories, this world wasn’t very capable at food production. This white bread was an aristocrat’s food. Normally, only minor nobles could enjoy such a thing, and even then only during celebrations of major holidays.
To typical peasants, who only had hard, nutritionless black bread to eat, this was a supreme delicacy.
When he thought of the black bread as hard as rocks from his memories, Leylin sighed, “It’s a good thing that I’m quite fortunate; regardless of whether I’m a noble or a Magus, I’m still in the upper levels of this world, so I won’t need to suffer!”
He ravenously wolfed down the bread and downed the juice in one gulp as well. He then wiped his mouth in satisfaction and returned to the carriage.

Based on the experiences in his memory, the noble youths would set up tents in camp and rest for the entire night before moving again. However, it was clear that nobody would invite Leylin to join them. He didn’t have a tent himself, so he could only sleep on the cold and hard carriage.

‘When I looked just now, there seemed to be 50-some apprentices, 25 black robes, and three of the highest status white robes!’ When he thought of the scene just now when he had been noticed from a distance, the hairs on Leylin’s body rose.

Added on to that were the A.I. Chip’s warnings of [Discovered an unknown radiation source] and [Detected interference from unknown forcefield, scan impossible.]

This formed a shadow in Leylin’s heart.

“It looks like even with the A.I. Chip, I’m still extremely weak in this world. Very well then, if I’m weak I can just obtain the power of magic,” his eyes started to burn with resolve.

“It’s best if I sleep earlier. I still need to hurry on with the journey tomorrow!” Leylin took off his jacket and laid it on the ground to make his sleep more comfortable.

“It’s already been over 3 months since this journey started. We’ve passed through a few dozen kingdoms, yet we still haven’t reached our objective. These ancient transportation conditions are really…” He closed his eyes and fell into a daze.

After some time, the carriage door opened with a bang. Leylin suddenly sat up, his sense of smell being filled with the scent of a rose.

It was sweet and aromatic, extremely pleasing to the nose. It also made his body throb and invoked memories.

“Ley– Leylin… Are you well?” A pleasant, female voice said.
“Bessita? Please come in!” Leylin moved his body. The fragrant scent in the carriage suddenly grew more powerful as a beautiful young girl entered. She had fair skin and wore red, tight-fitting clothes that accentuated her voluptuous curves. What was even harder for Leylin to forget was this girl’s platinum hair and red eyes that were like crimson jewels. Combined with her beautiful face, she possessed an exotic charm.

This was the very girl because of whom the previous Leylin had been beaten up to the point of losing his life, Bessita.

“Is there anything you need of me?” Although this girl had developed quite well and seemed extremely enticing to the old Leylin, Fang Ming had come from a different world after all. He had experienced a plethora of beauties in his previous life, and this girl was only somewhat good-looking to him. His attitude was extremely cold and indifferent. It was clear that this manner somewhat shocked the young girl, as the words she was about to say didn’t leave her mouth.

After a long period of silence, she pulled out a small, glass bottle and placed it in Leylin’s hands, “This… this is a medicine for injuries. If you apply it to your body, it’ll help you. I… I’m sorry!” The girl bowed, revealing the ample, snow-white curves of her chest, causing Leylin’s heart to race.
After she made her apology, the girl ran off like a startled little fawn, leaving her wonderful scent behind.

Looking at the disappearing red figure in the distance, Leylin was rather puzzled. “It was clearly Leylin who had assaulted you, why did you come to apologise? Is there something wrong with your brain?”

He touched the bottle in his hand, thinking to himself: “Did I misjudge her earlier? Could this Bessita be a kind-hearted girl?”

Leylin studied the glass bottle in his hand curiously. “It seems like they already have the technology to produce glass. Although, judging by the workmanship, it still seems rather rough, it is quite decent already!”

As he opened the bottle cap, a medicinal fragrance wafted out.

Following the habits of his past life, Leylin immediately said: “A.I. Chip! Scan this medicine and analyse its components!”

[Beep! Task Established! Begin Scan!] [Discovered unknown components. Starting simulated experiments!] [Experiments complete! Unknown Medicine has effect of strong itching! Duration: 7 days!]

“Eh!” Looking at the results of the experiment, Leylin was struck speechless. “I retract my previous statement; that girl is rather blackhearted!”

However, he soon had the feeling of an adult being pranked by a naughty kid.
“She is still a child after all! She can’t use truly malicious tricks! Perhaps if it were a few years ahead, the bottle would be full of deadly poison instead!”

Looking at the bottle in hand, Leylin thought about it and decided to keep it. “I’ll just keep this for now, who knows when it might come into handy in the future!”

After Bessita left, no one else came to disturb him.

Leylin lay back down. Though it seemed as if he were sleeping, his mind was actually working in overdrive as he thought through things.

“It seems like there shouldn’t be any problems or risks of being found out by going to a Magus academy. Those white robed figures should be Magi, and I have walked by them a few times without drawing attention. It seems like they are also unable to detect anything strange about me. This means… entering a Magus academy should be relatively easy in that sense.”

“However, according to rumours, Magi are all secretive and cruel, at least according to what Viscount John heard. It also seems that in the academies, there is extremely fierce competition amongst the acolytes of the same level despite it being against the rules to kill one another. I need to at least have some form of self-protection.”

As he thought about that, he once again touched the ring hung around his neck, and held it in his hands.

The ring was jet black and nondescript. Within the inner ring, there was a small ‘Y’ inscribed, along with elaborate inscriptions around it.

“With the technological advancements of the Middle Ages, to be able to inscribe such a complicated pattern onto the inner ring is incomprehensible! However, regardless of the issue, as long as it has to do with the mysterious Magi, it shouldn’t be surprising at all!”

Leylin muttered to himself, and issued another command: “A.I.
“Chip! Scan the ring in my hands!”

[Beep! Task Established! Begin Scan!] [Discovered unknown metallic components. Comparing to Data Banks. Insufficient Data. Unable to analyse!]

“As I’d thought! With the A.I. Chip’s current level, it is still inadequate to analyse something that a Magus left behind!” Leylin sighed and stored the ring.

“How can I increase my power? This body of mine is truly too weak! It cannot even compare to those of the same age. That will not do.”

“If it were my past life, I could still undergo genetic modification. Alas, there is no such option here. Perhaps I should explore this Leylin’s memory once again, and see if there are any methods…”

Leylin thought to himself once again, then found a comfortable spot to lie down, thinking out aloud in his mind: “A.I. Chip! Scan the entirety of Leylin’s memory and arrange it!”

[Beep! Task Established! Starting arrangement!]

In Leylin’s former world, the world of science had always been of the opinion that the majority of the human brain’s power was not being harnessed. Amongst that power was the ability to access every memory since birth.

Some memories, even if the person in question could not recall them, were actually still stored somewhere in the brain!

Now, as Leylin gave the command, memories of Leylin’s entire life, from birth to his being chosen as a Magus acolyte and going on this journey, were all displayed in front of Leylin’s eyes with the A.I. Chip’s assistance.

Every single memory, down to what was eaten in every meal, as well as their tastes, were retained and displayed in his mind.

Such a large mass of memory was just too confusing, and was also full of useless information. In the past, Leylin had only taken what he had urgently needed, and ignored the rest.
At this point, with the help of the A.I. Chip, he was arranging and sorting everything out!

[Data sorting has been completed!] The A.I. Chip notification sounded out.

“Create a new file, named ‘Leylin Farlier’, and save it!” Leylin gave a new order.

[Beep! File created – Leylin Farlier!]

“New task, search the file for all possible methods for the host to improve strength quickly!”

[Beep! Task Established. Begin Search!]

In front of Leylin, innumerable amounts of data flashed past, seemingly forming a beautiful picture.

[Search Complete! Search Results – 453 methods!]

“So many?” Leylin paused a while as he thought. “Remove those with estimated success rate of 50% and below for the Host. Also, add another requirement: The Host must be able to carry out the strengthening method now. Begin filter!”

[Beep! Filter Complete. Remaining methods: 2!]

“Show them to me!”

[Method 1: Become a Magus.] [Method 2: Begin Knight training]

“Oh! Method 1 is not realistic at the moment; at least, not until I reach the Magus academy, Otherwise, how could I possibly learn how to become a Magus? As for the Knight training, I wonder what that is?”

As Leylin muttered to himself, he immediately assigned a new task.

“A.I. Chip, assemble all memory regarding Knight training. Once it has been arranged properly, send it into my memory!”

After the data was directly transmitted to his brain, Leylin began to understand what a so-called Knight was.

In this world, there were several mysterious forces. However, the ones commoners had the most experience with were Knights!

Knights were warriors who had gone through tough training and
had stimulated their inner life energy. Their physical attributes were way beyond that of a normal human.

To be a Magus, it required a specific kind of gift, and amongst tens of thousands of people, it was possible that there wasn’t even one such person. However, being a Knight was different; as long as they were willing to put in the effort, anyone could become a Knight!

For these Knights, not only were their physical attributes several times that of normal humans, they were also well versed in using various weaponry, as well as in the killing arts. Some Knights even had special secret skills that could unleash a sudden burst of power!

The kingdoms of the common world, along with the nobility, were generally made up of Knights.

The Farlier family which Leylin was part of was also a Knight family. The original founder of the family had fought in wars together with the king, and had accomplished much meritorious service. Thus, they had been awarded with the Viscount title, as well corresponding holdings.

After an overall sweep of the information, Leylin remembered a scene from the past.

It was a small jungle in the viscount holdings, and John Farlier was wearing a warrior’s outfit with a stern expression on his face. He was facing the infant Leylin as he said: “Today, I will teach you the secret skill that has been passed down in the Farlier family: the cross blade technique and the accompanying breathing techniques. You must remember that you can never teach this to anyone outside our family!” At that moment, Viscount John’s face held an unprecedented stern look!

Alas, Leylin was still an infant at that point, and obviously did not put much thought into the matter, thus eventually forgetting it. Viscount John tried to force him into training a few times, but
Leylin was so afraid of suffering and fatigue that after a while, even Viscount John had to give up.
“Sigh… an overly compassionate father leads to a failure of a son!”
Only now did Leylin realise how the previous body’s owner had become such a spoilt brat.
Although the young Leylin only knew how to act like a playboy and had totally forgotten everything about the Knight training for the family secret skill, Leylin managed to recover all of it with the help of the A.I. Chip.
Cross Blade Basic Sword Style: Horizontal Slash, Vertical Slash, Piercing Attack, Slanted Slash…
Footwork: Advance, Retreat, Dodge…
There was also the accompanying breathing technique. All of it appeared clearly in Leylin’s mind, along with the experience that Viscount John had imparted.
The memory finally ended with Viscount John emitting white mist from his mouth as he manipulated his cross blade, and splitting a rock as large as a millstone in two with a single cleave!
“Hm… a Knight is considered the lowest mysterious power, yet they are already so strong! What kind of existence are those Magi who are high above Knights?”
Leylin’s eyes burned with a fiery passion.
“Sigh! I have to take things step by step. I had better concentrate on this Knight’s breathing technique first! Anyways, the Knight training does not clash with Magus training. At least I’ll have some measure of self defense for now.”
After a detailed analysis, Leylin discovered that the so-called breathing technique of this world was very similar to the internal qigong of his previous world, but was a lot more crude. It was very dependant on external stimulations to activate the inner life energy.
“According to rumours, if a warrior goes through the Knight training and is still unable to activate their inner life energy, the
only option is to enter the battlefield and go through fierce and bloody battles. This is the only other way to trigger their inner life energy, and become a Knight!”
“A.I. Chip, transfer the knowledge of the cross blade technique to me!” Leylin issued his next order.
Soon after, a large amount of knowledge regarding the technique was transferred directly into his mind. It was etched deeply into his brain, as if he had been training in it since he was young.
“Isolate the cross blade technique and save it into a new file, with the filename of ‘cross blade technique basics’!”
[Saved New File: ‘cross blade technique basics’]
As the A.I. Chip notification sounded out in his mind, Leylin’s lips curved in a smile. With the help of the A.I. Chip, his learning speed was unbelievably quick – fast enough to make any so-called genius commit suicide from shame!
“Now that I have all the memories of it, it is just a matter of finding a cross blade, and going through some actual practice. If all goes well, I have confidence in mastering it within ten days, bringing myself to Viscount John’s level!”
All these sword techniques are merely killing arts. The most important thing for Knight training is the accompanying breathing technique!” Leylin muttered to himself.
“A.I. Chip! According to my statistics, simulate and create the best model for me to start training the breathing technique!”
[Beep! Task Established! Host human model established! Begin simulation…]
As the mechanical voice sounded out, a 3D model of a human figure appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes. It was transparent and shimmering in blue light, and appeared exactly the same as him – a 13 year old youth with Western features, brown hair, big eyes and bushy eyebrows.
The 3D figure repeatedly started training the breathing technique,
constantly adjusting the frequency, rate and magnitude. Slowly, a red line could be seen moving around in the 3D figure’s body. After a few minutes, the simulation ended, and the A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice sounded out once more.

[Simulation ended. Cross blade accompanying breathing technique – Time required for one revolution: 30 Minutes. 10 Revolutions will improve the Host’s body by 0.05 strength, 0.06 agility and 0.03 vitality. The improvements will gradually lessen as the stats improve! Warning: If the Host goes through long term training of this technique, it will result in residual damage caused to the Host body. Recommendation to think twice before starting.]

“Phew! This is indeed an impressive Knight training technique! As long as I persevere, I will quickly be able to improve my power! Alas, I wonder if there is any way to remove the effect of the residual damage?” Leylin said with a faint smile.

At this time, the A.I. Chip’s voice suddenly sounded out.

[Do you wish to optimise the breathing technique? Y/n/n] “The A.I. Chip actually has such abilities?” A joyful look rose on Leylin’s face.
never thought that this A.I. Chip’s analyzing abilities could also work on the Knight breathing technique in this world!”

Leylin exclaimed and said: “Optimise immediately!”

[Optimisation initiating, estimated time: 125 minutes.]

“Yep, 125 minutes, which is over 2 hours; I can afford to wait!”

Leylin felt at ease.

After waiting rather impatiently, the two hours finally passed. The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded out right on time.

[The optimisation for the breathing technique has been completed. Time taken for breathing technique, 5 minutes 23 seconds, and the effects have all risen by 5%! The side effects of the injuries have vanished!]

“Very good!” This result made Leylin very satisfied.

If the effect was a 5% increase each time, then dozens of times, and even hundreds of times, would result in huge differences.

“Rumor has it that the cross blade technique and the breathing technique were obtained by the founder after dozens of bloody battles, where he finally obtaining it from the corpse of a Knight. Amongst the many Knight families, it is considered to be the upper middle grade!”

“After the optimization of the breathing technique done by the A.I. Chip, I’m afraid it might even be comparable to the secret scroll techniques of those smaller kingdoms!”

Leylin quietly pondered, and immediately said in an impatient
manner: “A.I. Chip, transfer the optimized breathing technique to the memory zone!”
The A.I. Chip duly carried out its orders and brought large amounts of images depicting the breathing technique back to Leylin’s mind. After a few minutes of transfer, Leylin gently rubbed his head: “I feel a little giddy, but this is a normal occurrence!”
Right now his brain was filled with large amounts of memories about the breathing technique and the many matching sequences of practised experience. Compared to an average person, he did not have to go on the roundabout route.
“I did not feel it in my previous life, but in this world, the A.I. Chip really gives me a huge advantage compared to an average person!” Leylin mumbled on: “With this A.I. Chip’s ability to simulate and analyse, I am able to obtain the same result as a person who has to go through 10 years of hard work and experience, I only have to do exactly what the A.I. Chip has presented, and I will be able to do things in the most accurate manner!”
The breathing technique had many contradictions, and some of them required more than a verbal explanation to be understood. One had to go through the experience of training, and go along some complicated paths,
Only then would they be able to gain enlightenment. But these things could all be avoided with the A.I. Chip’s analysing abilities.
“I’ll give it a try!” Leylin thought, and his body laid on the floor in the shape of a cross.
According to the suggestions on the breathing technique which was presented by the A.I. Chip, there was no need to have any special actions to complement it, but just to find the most suitable and comfortable position.
“First, I must hold my breath for 65 seconds, then take three long
and one short breaths. The duration and frequency must be……”
Leylin followed the description of the breathing technique, and gradually entered a state of cultivation.
He looked unconscious; his face was bright red and his temples throbbed as if carrying out some kind of exercise.
As time passed, Leylin’s face grew redder, and eventually, he began to perspire out some faint black coloured fluid.
After he had maintained this process for over 20 minutes, Leylin opened both of his eyes and opened his mouth to exhale.
Phew! ! !
A black coloured breath was exhaled just like this.
Within his body, some cracking noises could be made out.
Leylin stood up and moved his four limbs. His whole body was warm as if he had just undergone a vigorous exercise.
“A.I. Chip, display my body’s statistics!” Leylin ordered.
[Leylin Farlier. Strength: 0.4 Agility: 0.5 Vitality: 0.4 State: Mild injury]
Leylin remained impassive: “Change the method of display and move the data back to 10 decimal points. Also, make comparisons with the data before the cultivation.”
With Leylin’s orders, the image flickered, and the body statistics had shown 10 more decimal points. The last three numbers had not stopped changing.
[Beep! After comparison, undergoing the Knight Training increases the Host’s strength by 0.005, Agility by 0.006, and vitality by 0.004]
The A.I. Chip faithfully relayed the message.
“Mn! Because this was the first practice, the figures are still climbing up!” Leylin analyzed and said.
“I’ve only cultivated for a bit over 20 minutes, but, the data’s increase is already rather considerable. With perseverance, it’s just a matter of time before I have the stats of a black-robed man!”
“Which is to say, those ten odd black robed men are all Knights!” Leylin thought indifferently, “What a pity. According to my memory and the A.I. Chip analysis, breathing techniques have cultivation limits. The Farlier family’s breathing technique can only be practiced once a day. Additional practice will not only have no additional benefits but will even cause harm to the body!”
“A.I. Chip, are there any methods to let me increase the number of times I can practice the breathing technique?” Leylin asked.
[Medicinal items are required as a supplement.] The A.I. Chip feedbacked.
“List all the necessary medicinal items!”
[Quinoline element, Marco 21, magnesium dioxide……] The A.I. Chip listed a whole bunch of medicinal items, which were all from Leylin’s previous life.
“Is it possible to substitute any of them with other medicinal items or herbs?” This seemed to be an obviously impossible task, but Leylin furrowed his brows and asked anyway.
[A sample is needed to analyse the medicinal properties. As of now, the data is insufficient!] The A.I. Chip chip prompted.
“As long as there is a way, then it’s alright!” Leylin heaved a sigh of relief.
He looked at his own body again. Because large amounts of sticky substance had been produced after the breathing technique training, his body felt very sticky, which was extremely uncomfortable to the touch.
Leylin frowned: “Looks like I’ll have to wash up first!”
He began to make his way out of the horse carriage. It was midnight by this hour, and the various young nobles were all sleeping soundly in the tent. Leylin quietly stepped out of the carriage and ran towards a small river that was nearby. [Warning! A human is approaching!] The A.I. Chip prompted.
Leylin pretended that he was oblivious, and continued his
advances.
“What are you trying to do?” A voice rang behind Leylin.
“So fast!” Leylin pupils shrank, “I had already been aware, but I was still unable to discover that he had arrived behind me. If he has any bad intentions, then I definitely won’t be able to resist in any way!”
On the surface, he still pretended to be scared out of his wits: “Ah……Who? Who?” Leylin turned around his body to look back, seeing the black-robed man who had been distributing the rations earlier in the day. Leylin remembered his name to be Angelo. “Hel…..Hello! Sir Angelo! I feel that I’m a little dirty, and wanted to wash myself!” Leylin face was pale, as if he was frightened, and did not even have the capabilities to speak properly. “Wash yourself?” The black robed man furrowed his brows and wrinkled his nose. He could indeed smell a stench coming from Leylin. “Alright! It is rather dangerous here at night, especially for young nobles like you bunch! Return quickly after washing!”
The black robed Angelo said. Not paying anymore mind to Leylin, he turned around and walked towards the heart of the horse carriage, where his tent was.
“Thank you for your reminders! Sir Angelo!” Leylin still said with a bow, no matter whether this man had heard him or not. Always being careful had been part of his principles in life. After seeing Angelo leave completely, Leylin then strode forward and headed towards the small river.
Angelo walked into his own tent and pulled down his mask, exposing his scarred face. “The substance expelled from the body after practicing Knight breathing technique? What a nostalgic feeling! Looking at these young people reminds me of my inexperienced self from the past!”
“What a pity, though, if I was also born of nobility, I wouldn’t need to practice the Knight breathing technique. I had even risked being
part of a Magus’s experiment and ended up in this state……”
Angelo muttered. His shadow and the tent’s overlapped into one
body, indistinguishable from each other.
Along the way, Leylin casually plucked the wild flowers and plants
and popped them into his mouth from time to time.
“I think that black robed Angelo must have realised something. But
it doesn’t matter, a nobility practising a passed down Knight
breathing technique is just a normal occurrence.” “Furthermore, he
already has the physical qualities of a Knight, so he definitely has
his own breathing technique, and won’t need to get mine. Besides,
even if he wanted it, it wouldn’t be a big deal. I can just write it
down and give him a copy…”
Since there was such a large difference in strength, Leylin did not
have any intention of protecting the secrets of the Farlier family.
However, it seemed that Angelo did not even fancy the Knight
breathing techniques from small noble families.
Chewing a grass stalk in his mouth, there was a bitter taste to it.
However, Leylin did not mind and even had some nostalgic
feelings of back when he was little.
[The analysis is completed, no beneficial properties towards the
Host’s body can be observed!] The A.I. Chip voice rang.
“Pui!” Leylin immediately spat out the grass stalk in his mouth and
replaced it with another plant.
“Take down the shape and qualities of the plant earlier and save it.
Now we will proceed with another round of analysis!” Leylin
commanded in his mind.
[The task is completed! Beginning to analyse the qualities! From
this experiment……] As the scene played out in his mind, Leylin
could see very clearly the procedures of the A.I. Chip. [Beep! The
experiment is completed. This unnamed plant has a mild paralysis
effect!]
“According to Leylin’s memories, this is called the TriNight Grass
huh, A.I. Chip! Rename to TriNight Grass, and save it inside the database!”
[Beep! Saving completed!]
“Mmn! This is ‘Red Fruit’, the taste is not bad!” Leylin plucked a bunch of fruits on a pile of shrubs.
These fruits were only the size of Leylin’s thumb, and they had ripened on the top of a barbed vine. Their appearances were quite beautiful.
Leylin carefully avoided the barbs and plucked one of the Red Fruits.
He placed it into his mouth and bit down with a crisp noise. A sweet juice was squeezed out from the fruit, filling his mouth.
“Mm! The taste is the same as an apple’s, just a tad sweeter.” Leylin evaluated.
“A.I. Chip! Analyse……”

……

Along the way, Leylin saved data about over 30 kinds of plants and herbs. Unfortunately, none of them were of any use to him.
He arrived at the small river. The earpiercing sounds of the trickling stream of water crashing against the rocks broke the silence of the night.
“A.I. Chip! Scan the surroundings!” Leylin commanded. Even if the black robed Angelo hadn’t warned him, he still had confidence in avoiding danger with the A.I. Chip.
[Beep! The surrounded area has been scanned! There are no dangers within a radius of 20 li!] The A.I. Chip faithfully reported the message.
“Well, it’s good that there is no danger. I don’t want to run back to the camp midway through my washing. That will definitely make me the biggest laughing stock……”
Leylin muttered and he took off his outer robes and underwear, entering the river naked. The icy cold river engulfed his body, refreshing him. “This water is really cold, I am beginning to miss the water heater from my past life!”
Two steel swords clashed, emitting a crisp sound.
“Leylin! You are still not my match, give it up!” George used both hands and grabbed the hilt, and laughingly said.
“We aren’t done yet!” Leylin shouted, and his legs moved in a strange footwork, and once again initiated an attack.
“Hah!” George swung the long sword in his hands, which brought a sinister rustling of the wind.
The cross blade in Leylin’s hand swept, and blocked George’s attack.
“Good! Your parry posture is not bad!” George praised loudly.
“Careful! My next attack will be on your left leg!”
“Bring it on!” Leylin made his preparations.
“Watch me!” George swung the two handed sword in his hands, and made a beautiful yet deadly arc towards him, sending it towards Leylin’s right leg.
Leylin retreated a step back, and blocked George’s two-handed sword in midair with his cross blade, “You definitely said the left leg, you didn’t keep your word!”
“Haha…..This is called tactics! It is to test your agility. My dad has always taught me, if one doesn’t know how to scheme, then one day he will surely be played to death by others! I only want to scheme, not to be the target of schemes!”
George laughed and said, and then pulled back his huge sword.
“No more! No more! You are getting better each and every time! I wouldn’t be able to beat you after a few more days!”
Scratching his puzzled head: “Leylin! My sword technique is passed down by a Grand Knight, I put in much effort, training with blood and sweat, so much so that my teacher said that my swordplay is better than the average Knight! Yet, you who can fight me to a standstill, how could you have been beaten by Ourin?”
“These sword techniques were taught to me by my father when I was younger, unfortunately I had forgotten it, and I’m currently trying to practice more in order to recall it!”
Leylin clenched his fists, and his face turned red.
“Once I have strength, I will definitely seek revenge viciously, and break Ourin’s legs!”
He looks like a hot blooded youngster who was filled with determination after a setback. “My dear Leylin, I believe in you. You will definitely fulfil your wish!” George patted Leylin’s shoulder.
And with another look of pity:” Currently, with your ability, it is already sufficient to seek your revenge!”
After sparring, George had a rough understanding of Leylin’s strength.
“Right now I can deal with one or two of them, but Ourin has five members!” Leylin was fretting over it.
Actually, he was already confident in dealing with Ourin and his gang, but without an excuse, how could he fool George into continuously practicing with him?
“Oh right, you mentioned Grand Knights earlier, what are they?” Leylin remembered
George’s complaint earlier, and casually asked.
“You are talking about the Grand Knights? They are one realm higher than Knights. No matter where they go, they are considered
a great existence! If one is lucky, a king might even be hospitable to them! And if one is willing to pledge loyalty, then they will definitely become a troop commander!”

“Their physical body has been pushed to the extremes, and rumours has it that apart from the long distance crossbow formation, even if a heavy cavalry troop were to charge at them, they won’t be able to stop them from advancing!”

“So powerful!” Leylin muttered.

A commander of a troop has the same status of an earl, and even Viscount John had to greet them if he saw one.

A heavy cavalry troop is the peak of a troop’s strength in this era of medieval weapons. Once they charged, even a smaller city’s walls might fall. For a Grand Knight to actually be able to use merely their physical body to fight with them, how strong would they have to be? Looking at Leylin who had a yearning expression on his face, George laughed out loud and consoled: “You don’t have to envy them, a magus has an even more mysterious and stronger power compared to that of a Knight. As long as you become a magus acolyte, your status is comparable to that of a Grand Knight. And if you become an actual Magus, then congratulations, killing a Grand Knight is easier than stepping on an ant. The various kings from kingdoms will all want to strive to be first and fear to be last in stuffing their beautiful daughters on your bed……”

“A magus is that powerful?” Leylin was skeptical ” Then why are the black robes so cold to us, who have the possibility of turning into a Magus? They are naught but Knights!” “Hmm about this? I am not too sure, but a Magus’s status is definitely very high. This was told to me by my father! I can swear it upon my Borunin family’s reputation.”

George touched his nose and replied rather awkwardly.

“Alright! Alright! It’s not like I don’t believe you!” Leylin felt a
little exasperated. Speaking within his heart “A.I. Chip! Scan the person in front of me!”

[Beep! Name: George Borunin Strength: 1.9, Agility: 1.8, Vitality: 1.9, Status: Healthy] George’s stats could not have been achieved just by standard training. According to him, he had trained with the Knights technique since he was young, and that was the reason he was able to achieve his current physique.

Warriors who had started cultivating the Knight breathing technique and thus improved their physique, but had not been able to ignite their internal life energy yet, were commonly known as preparatory Knights!

George’s physique could be considered at the peak standard even amongst these preparatory Knights!

This was also linked to his nobility status and being able to use large amounts of expensive medicine to assist in improving his body’s physique.

“Alright, we have sufficient rest now, let us head back! I do not want to return too late and find those black robes staring coldly at me!”

George looked at his surroundings, and the bright moonlight coated the surrounding with a layer of silver colour light, the tranquility of the night was occasionally interrupted by insect cries.

Leylin did not wish to attract attention during the day as they were travelling, so he sneaked out to practice with George at night.

Naturally, this did not escape the black robes, but after a few encounters, Leylin found their attitude to be extremely cold. As long as one did not wander too far away from the camp and cause trouble, they would not care about them.

“Just once more round, we’ll head back!” Leylin said. “After this round, I’ll return this cross blade to you!”

“En……Eh? George was a little absent minded, and then his eyes lit
up. ” Are you finally done using it? Gus had been bothering me for it!”

In order to train in sword techniques, the first requirement would be to have a cross blade! As nobility, there were many youngsters that wore warrior’s robes, with a sword attached to their waist. However, the previous Leylin did not do so, the reason being that it was too heavy, and it restricted his movements! Because he found it troublesome, the previous Leylin had travelled without even a dagger on him. This had caused Leylin now to be in the awkward situation where he was totally weaponless, without even a cross blade to practice with.

For the sake of practising, Leylin turned his attention to the first friend he saw when he woke up – George. Using threats of exposing their friendship, he had made George lend him a weapon and train with him!

Thinking back when George’s eyes had turned white and had an expression as though he has met with a bad friend, Leylin laughed uncontrollably.

“Your swordplay is improving at an extremely fast pace! But do you really not need the cross blade?” George asked.

“I am rather familiar with Gus anyways so even if I were to lend it to you for a little while longer, it’s not a big deal……”

“Thank you for your kind intentions! But I really do not need it!” Leylin smiled as he rejected his offer.

After this period of sparring, he had already seen through the secret technique of the Farlier’s family. Furthermore, due to the A.I. Chip, his swordplay would always remain at its peak state so his skills will not go rusty due to not practicing the cross blade for a long time.

“Good, then we will fight one more match with the same rules. I will only use the same amount of strength as you will!”

As George said that, he picked up his big two handed sword and
walked towards the centre of the patch of grass, his sword emitting a cold light as it reflected the moonlight. 

Leylin had also walked over, “Come on! This time, I won’t hold back!”

He had thought of an experiment and had sent out the invitation in order to carry it out. “A.I. Chip! Establish Task! Analyse the opponent’s strength and the surroundings to come up with the best plan to defeat him!” [Task Establishing. Beginning analysis.] [Simulation results – Host is unwounded, target loses his ability to fight. Please confirm on whether to turn on the vision aid?] “Turn it on!” Upon Leylin’s command, countless of blue lines appeared before his eyes that, as if turning the area into some sort of virtual world. [According to the target’s reactions, there is a 99.98% probability that the first attack will be the Host’s right arm! Most Effective method of combating this: Sidestep, Jump Slash!] Following the voice of the A.I. Chip, the blue rays of light in his retina had already formed an image of George, raising his sword and slashing towards Leylin’s right arm.

“Heh! Watch the sword!” George shouted, and as expected, he initiated the attack first, waving his two-handed sword. He charged over, the motion almost mirroring the projected image. Leylin’s lips curled, and dodged the attack, and he raised both his hands along with the cross blade. Leaping up high, he viciously swung it down. Jumping Slash!

“Damn! How did this happen?” George cried strangely and ducked the cross blade with a roll on the floor. Leylin’s cross blade struck onto the floor, which brought up some of the mud and small pieces of stones. George got up, a serious look on his face. He felt as if Leylin had
predicted his attack, almost as if he had read his motions and knew them like the back of his palm.
“If you are not attacking, then I am going to counterattack!” Leylin said smilingly.
“Bring it on!” George stared nervously at Leylin.
Leylin gripped his cross blade, took a step forward and pierced forward! Every action and movement had all been accurately performed as seen from a textbook.
George made a blocking motion, but his body moved to the side instead, and as he dodged the pierce, he countered Leylin’s attack with a slash of his own!
[The best way to react: Left turn 50 degrees, Horizontal Slash!]
Following the A.I. Chip instructions, Leylin dodged George’s large sword, and sent a horizontal slash, almost slicing George as he slashed.
The more they fought, the more perspiration formed on George’s face.
His every move and action had all been parried perfectly by Leylin and his evading range had gradually decreased.
“I can’t carry on like this any longer! I’ll stake it all on this!” George fiercely swung his large sword and sent it clashing with Leylin’s.
Bang! A piece of silver light flew out and directly pierced into the grass. It was the large sword in George’s hands! The blade had not stopped quivering as it let out a ‘weng weng’ sound.
In the sparring area, Leylin’s cross blade sword had touched horizontally at George’s waist. “You’ve lost!”
“Indeed! I lost!”
George muttered, and then immediately stared at Leylin :”How did you do that?”
“It is actually very simple, after training with you for a long time, I have already remembered the sequence of your movements!”
Leylin withdrew his sword and bowed smilingly.
“The……sequence of my movements?” George repeated.
“Yes, to put it in a simple way, everyone has a habit when they strike. As long as you can remember them, then it will be easy to arrange a trap according to the enemy’s habits. I have used the same trick on you!”
“Phew!” George exhaled out a long breath, “I understand now!”
And then looking at Leylin momentarily, as if he was looking at a monster:” Your gift in sword technique is absolutely the best that I have ever seen! If you are not chosen to be a Magus acolyte, I will definitely recommend you to go to a kingdom’s capital’s Imperial Knight Institute!”
Imperial Knight Institute huh?"

Leylin knew that the Imperial Knight Institute was the best Knight’s institute in the Sarad Kingdom where George had come from. Not only were they recruiting nobilities, the entry requirements were also extremely high. It was said that only geniuses would be accepted! “Sword techniques are only my hobby, but being a Magus is my lifelong dream!”

A Knight’s strength may be great, but it was still comprehensible by Leylin’s standards, not exceeding the boundaries. However, the Magi from rumours were able to manipulate the elements, including lightning and thunder. They also attained a great longevity!

A Magus’s greatness obviously exceeded the boundaries of a human, and Leylin could not even imagine it.

Furthermore, every Magus is a scholar filled with knowledge. Magi had strict attitudes towards experimenting with the secular world. They tried to study the laws of nature in order to achieve a massive amount of power to use for themselves! This lifestyle was more compatible with Leylin’s previous life as a scientist.

“Yes! Even if it is a Grand Knight, they can only be the servant of a Formal Magus. The strength a Magus holds is something that is impossible for us to imagine……”

George’s face turned serious and spoke the words in a sing-song tone.
“Why is it that no matter what words you say, I get the feeling that they were spoken by a bard……” Leylin rolled his eyes a little.
“Haha…… The reason I became like this is because my father sent me to court to undergo training for nobles!” George resumed his previous state.
Suddenly blinking his eyes, he said mischievously: “Leylin, you don’t have a fiancee right?
Why don’t I introduce my sister Molly to you! She is a beauty that is known far and wide……” “Scram!”
Under the moonlight, the two youths left the grasslands as they fooled around.
“Goodnight George!”
“Goodnight Leylin!”
After Leylin handed the cross blade to George and bid him farewell, he returned to the carriage.
The dimly lit carriage had only him inside. The interior of the carriage let off a very faint odour. The stench was a mixture of rot and sweat. Because of this, many noble youths refused to stay in the carriage any longer than necessary. Once they got to pit stops, they would escape to the grass fields outside like little wild horses coming out to play.
The concept of relationships in this world was very open-minded, all the more so for nobility. With the strong perception ability of the A.I. Chip, Leylin had discovered many affectionate couples around, which had led him to seek an even further location for him to train. Using his supervision eyesight to look at the wild battle scene, Leylin’s heart burned in rage as this had made him recall the former memories of the spoilt brat.
“Who would have thought! After changing into a youngster’s body, even my desires have increased……” Leylin smiled bitterly.
Calming his emotions, “A.I. Chip, show me my body’s statistics!”
[Leylin Farlier. Strength: 1.5, Agility: 1.6, Vitality: 1.4, Status:
Healthy

It had been over a month since he first began practising the Knight breathing technique.
Right now, Leylin’s body state had not only caught up to his peers of the same age but had also surpassed some. Against George, he had concealed his true strength, which had caused George to gauge his strength wrongly. “Not bad! I should proceed with today’s cultivation!”

Leylin settled into a good posture and entered the state of cultivation. This was his homework every day. According to the A.I. Chip’s instruction, after training at night, he should cultivate in the breathing technique again to have the best effects.

After 20 odd minutes had passed, Leylin was completely drenched in his perspiration, but the amount of black impurities that had flowed out were clearly less than before.

“Phew!” Leylin opened his eyes and looked at his body. He said in slight exasperation: “The breathing technique’s effect is reducing, which is logical. According to the A.I. Chip’s estimation, Farlier family’s breathing technique, even after optimising will completely lose effect by the times I’ve enhanced my body’s statistics to 2. This is the realm of Preparatory Knights. After this, I have I must use my own power, as well as the external stimulations from near death experiences, to attempt exciting the life energy. Only then will I be able to improve again……”

Thinking up to here, Leylin took out a yellow coloured fruit out from his pocket. There were some black spots on its surface, making it look quite horrifying.

Leylin directly placed it in his mouth, and then picked out a root of a herb, munching them together.

[Beep! The Host’s body is slowly recovering from fatigue. It is possible to carry on with another round of the Knight breathing technique!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice rang. 
“That’s great!” These herbal concoctions had been created by Leylin over the past month from countless experiments using the A.I. Chip. It could reduce his fatigue, and increase the number of times he could cultivate in the breathing technique daily. With the addition of a few more body-strengthening medicine, the quality of Leylin’s physical body had improved at an extremely fast pace. 
“Again!” Leylin once again entered the state for the breathing technique. 
During the past month, the travelling party had already passed several small kingdoms. Eventually, they had completely entered the wilderness. There were very few people in the wilderness. It was only a desolate stretch of sand, with fresh markings from vicious beasts and horse mounted bandits. 
Ever since the travelling party had first entered the area, they had already encountered danger several times. Although nobody had died, Leylin’s sense of crisis had slowly grown stronger. He could not wait to quench his thirst for power. 
When the rays of dawn shone brightly, the travelling party once again resumed its journey. Leylin sat alone in a corner with his arms crossed in front of his chest. The youths around him had all avoided him with disgust, allowing him to have quite a bit of space. “I don’t know what method Bessita used. The people in the carriage are still isolating me. If it were a regular youngster, this would’ve most likely driven them crazy ages ago! It’s just too bad that they met me instead!” 
Leylin contentedly stretched his back. He had trained late into the night yesterday, which had made him extremely exhausted. This empty space was sufficient for him to rest for a while. “However, this world sure is huge; the travelling party has been travelling for
half a year, but they still have not reached their destination yet. We haven’t seen the ocean yet either……”
As Leylin thought, he entered slumber with half closed eyes.
Ding ling ling!
At this time, the travelling party had already stopped. The black robed man shook the bell in his hands: “Ladies and gentlemen! It is time to get off the carriage to have lunch!” “It’s that time again?” Leylin opened his eyes. “This kind of lifestyle is really boring!”
After alighting the carriage and receiving his own portion of food, Leylin chewed on a piece of white bread as he walked towards the grassy area beside the camp site.
He had already used up the previously gathered substitute herbs, so he was preparing to restock.
As he walked, he casually observed the surrounding plants. “This is a Jade Root Fruit, there are already files of it in the database. It is useless to me!”
“Mn! Samun Grass, this is a kind of plant that can only be found in the wilderness. It can be harvested!” Leylin plucked a dirty, brown coloured stalk of grass. There were extremely sharp thorns on the grass’s sides. Leylin carefully broke the blade in half and used his fingers to dab at the jade coloured liquid that had been constantly flowing out from the grass. An expression of disappointment appeared on his face as he placed his fingers in his mouth. “I found it, Flowerless Snake Fruit!” Leylin threw the Samun Grass on the ground. As he casually walked over, he noticed, through the corner of his eye, the same yellow coloured fruit that he had eaten yesterday, growing on a shrubbery. His face expressed happiness.
“Hehe! What’s this I see? Leylin! Should I be saying ‘as expected from a minor noble of the village’? Are you actually eating wild fruits on the roadside? You have really tarnished the reputation of the nobilities……”
Just after Leylin had plucked the Flowerless Snake Fruit and placed
it into his pocket, an annoying voice was heard. “Is that Ourin?” Leylin raised his head and saw the murderer who had killed the previous host of this body. Ourin had fiery red coloured hair, and there were ripped muscles all over his body. His arms were as thick as Leylin’s thighs. He currently had his arms crossed in front of his chest as he smiled mockingly at Leylin. There were a few nobility youths at his side, which had all coordinated to jest at him. “A.I. Chip, scan their statistics!” [Scan Complete! Ourin., Strength: 1.7, Agility: 1.2, Vitality: 1.5, Status: Healthy] The A.I. Chip feedbacked. Looking at the data in front of his eyes, Ourin’s strength wasn’t bad. His strength was almost as strong as two adult men. It was no wonder that he had been able to fatally injure the previous Leylin. As a child of nobility, as long as they are able to endure sufferings and persevere in their training daily, coupled with the breathing technique, it is not strange to achieve such results. The nobles who were beside Ourin were not that strong; most of them were below 1. Leylin had even seen a pale-faced youth whose stats ranged about 0.5, giving a run for the money for the previous Leylin. Mentally calculating the stats, Ourin’s strength did not differ much from his. But his sword technique and moves definitely couldn’t rival Leylin’s, as he had the help of the A.I. Chip. As for the rest of the youths, they were only there to increase their numbers. The disparity between his stats and theirs was too huge. It would be extremely easy to deal with them, like an adult bullying a child. “Is there a problem?” Leylin asked his voice calm. “You……” Leylin’s reaction had obviously exceeded Ourin’s expectations. He actually had no fury or fear, and that made him speechless.
“If it was the previous matter regarding Bessita, haven’t I already apologised before? Bessita has also forgiven me……” Leylin added.

At the same time, his heart began to race; this could be a probe sent out by Bessita. After enduring for a whole month, had she finally been unable to endure any longer? “That’s right! It’s because of Bessita! She has forgiven you, but I haven’t!” Ourin spoke loudly, his hands tightly clenched into fists.

“Alright! Then what do you want?” Leylin spread out his hands, as if helpless. However, there was a glint of mockery deep in his eyes. Ourin hadn’t imagined that Leylin would be so submissive, and struggled for a long time before spluttering: “You have to make an oath to never bother Bessita again in the future!” “Alright!” Leylin agreed immediately, and even placed his right hand on the crest pinned to his chest. The crest had a cross blade and a picture of a skylark on it, which was the emblem of the Farlier family!

“With my honour as a member of the Farlier family, I swear that I will never bother Bessita ever again on my own accord!” Using a family’s reputation to make a vow was the most serious oath a noble could take.

Those who had gone back on their words would meet with the disdain of all nobles. “So! Mister Ourin! Can I leave now?” Leylin bowed slightly, with perfect noble’s etiquette.

“Hold on!” It had not occurred to Ourin that Leylin would show no resistance, and at this point, his eyes contained an avaricious glint: “According to the noble’s conduct, you still have to compensate. Hand over all the magic crystals that you have!” “Magic crystals!” The surrounding onlookers gasped in surprise.

“Magic crystals?” Leylin repeated. According to his memory, the magic crystals were a kind of currency between Magi. They were items of necessity for acolytes with no credentials to enter the academy.
Leylin did not know the exact amount required to enter an academy because he did not have even a single magic crystal on him. Viscount John had tried several methods to obtain magic crystals. However, he was unable to get even one. From this, one could see just how precious magic crystals were!
Leylin had been avoiding meaningless fights. In his opinion, the fun of winning against others couldn’t be compared to the fun of enhancing his strength through cultivation. Moreover, there’s no hatred between him and Ourin. He probably even needed to thank him for heavily injuring the original Leylin, which had given him a chance for rebirth. Leylin was a practical person. To him, face was never more important than reasoning. Even using the honor of his family to swear wasn’t the slightest loss for him. However, Ourin’s request after that had touched the bottom line. “You……you can’t do that! Those black robed lords won’t let you off!” Leylin tightly grabbed onto the sack on his hands with a frantic expression. “Haha……why would those black robes barge into our matters? Don’t forget, you were beaten half dead by me previously, and no one had paid it any mind.” Ourin clenched his fist, and clear cracking sounds could be heard from his bones, “If you don’t want me to break your bones one by one, obediently hand the magic crystals over!” As Ourin drew closer, his large frame engulfed Leylin within his shadow.
Leylin observed his surroundings; this location was already quite far from the camp. Around him were only some lackeys that had been brought by Ourin. They were all looking at them as if they were viewing a show.

“Don’t bother looking, no one will come to save you……”

Ourin grinned.

“Really? That’s best then!” Leylin suddenly laughed.

His silhouette flashed. When Leylin reappeared, he was already behind Ourin, “Perfect, I can take revenge for that day’s incident!”

A fierce kick was thrown out! Carrying intense wind, it kicked into Ourin’s waist area.

Ourin felt an intense force coming from Leylin’s leg, sending his body into the air!

Bang! Ourin fell to the ground, severe pain coming from his waist which made his eyes turn slightly red, “You dared! You dared! You actually dared to hurt me!”

“You’re dead! I will hang you!”

Ourin ferociously stood up, rays of blood-thirsty and savage light shooting out of his eyes.

“This is the advantage of having a good constitution?” Seeing that the kick that he used fifty percent of his strength for did nothing much to Ourin, Leylin’s pupils shrank.

“Ha!” Ourin waved his fist around like a violent black bear.

Leylin flashed sideways, dodging Ourin’s fist. When Ourin’s fist landed on the small tree behind, it actually left a deep dent. A strength of 1.7 is indeed not a trivial matter.

“Such a heavy punch. Even with my constitution, I can’t withstand more than a few punches……” Leylin swiftly thought.

“A.I Chip! Simulate the best method to defeat him!”

[Beep! Task established! Starting assist mode!] A voice came from the A.I Chip. Its powerful calculation ability instantly came up with the best solution.
[Duck! Task established! Initiating assist mode.] The A.I Chip prompted. Leylin immediately crouched down, dodging the roaring Ourin’s tackle.

[A flaw appeared in enemy’s defense! Most effective attacking location: Armpit!] The A.I Chip’s voice sounded.

Leylin’s figure continuously flashed, dodging Ourin’s attacks while also getting closer. “Do you know? Although your strength is powerful, you’re not agile enough. This is the disadvantage of your body shape……”

As Leylin could still speak when he’s attacking, it showed that he was still holding back.

“This……is this still the Leylin from before? He……why has he become so much more powerful?” The surrounding youths all opened their mouths in shock.

Under the everyone’s expressions of disbelief, Leylin threw out a punch! It hit Ourin’s armpit with his entire strength. Ourin, who had suffered the attack, fell onto the ground with a pained expression, and couldn’t get up for a long time.

Leylin’s full strength was at least 1.5 and wasn’t very different from Ourin’s. Furthermore, the place that he had hit was also the weak spot. Ourin fell onto the ground, his eyes bloodshot as he growled, “You’re dead for sure! My family will not let you off!”

“Oh! Really?” Leylin remained indifferent towards Ourin’s threat, and even gave Ourin a kick in his lower abdomen. Ourin curled himself up, like a cooked prawn.

Leylin squatted down, looked at Ourin with a face full of smiles, “Since you won’t let me off anyways, do you think that it would be better if I just made the first move and killed you?”

At that moment, Leylin’s smile at Ourin looked like the devil’s. “He’s not joking, he really dares to take action!” Ourin saw the killing intent in Leylin’s eyes. Suddenly, he felt as though he was being stared at by a tiger. The anger within his head completely
vanished and was replaced with fear.  
“Mister Leylin! Lord Leylin! You can’t do that! I……I have the Dorlan family behind me. If you kill me, you’ll get yourself in trouble!”

“Then do you admit your wrongs!” Leylin issued a ridiculing question.

“I admit my wrongs! I apologize…… sorry!” Under the threat of death, Ourin succumbed quickly.

“Very good, I accept your apology. In addition, according to the law of nobility, I have the rights to request for compensation!” Leylin said smilingly which gave Ourin a bad feeling.

“As compensation, hand all the magic crystals you have with you!” Leylin smilingly said those words of extortion.

“Oh! No! You can’t do this! Do you know how many people have been sacrificed for my family to obtain these magic crystals?” Ourin struggled to protest.

“Sometimes, it’s just a simple multiple choice question in the world. Now, it’s your turn. My dear Ourin, life or magic crystals, choose one!” Leylin didn’t seem to have any reaction to Ourin’s begging. Instead, he stepped on Ourin’s face, gradually increasing the amount of force he exerted.

The boots stepping on Ourin’s face sent his head further and further into the ground, giving a suffocating feeling.

After a few minutes, Leylin released some of the pressure, “So? Have you thought through it properly?”

“Puah!” Ourin inhaled the fresh air in big mouthfuls. His face was now covered with mud and footprints, making him look hilarious.

However, none of the surrounding youths dared to smile. One of the youths slowly began to retreat, wanting to leave this place.

Leylin picked up a pebble, [Wind estimation completed! Shooting
Whoosh! The pebble hit the escaping youth’s leg, sending him sprawling on the ground.

“Ourin, see that? Don’t bother waiting for reinforcements…… Furthermore, don’t try to challenge my patience!”

Leylin looked at the surrounding youths. Those who had Leylin’s gaze sweep past them all lowered their heads, their bodies trembling.

“Okay! I can give you the magic crystals! But I left them in the carriage! Follow me back to get them!” Ourin said in surrender.

“magic crystals are so important. You don’t bring them with you, but leave them at the carriage? Are you treating me like a fool?”

Such childish lies naturally couldn’t get pass Leylin.

“It seems like you haven’t had enough!” A ray of fierceness flashed across Leylin’s eyes. He grabbed onto Ourin’s arm and suddenly gave it a snap!

Crack!! Ear piercing sounds of fracture could be heard, followed by Ourin’s miserable scream.

“If you still refuse to speak the truth, I’ll break your other arm!”

“No! No! No! You can’t do this, the black-robed lord won’t let you off!” Ourin clutched onto his arm, rolling on the ground.

“Haha……why would those black robes barge into our matters? Did you forget that I was beaten half dead by you previously, and no one paid any mind to it?”

Leylin coldly smiled, sending Ourin’s words back to him.

“Seems like you’re really yearning for death!” Leylin was just about to go up and take action.

“Wait! Wait! Fine! I’ll give you the magic crystals, but you have to swear that you will not take revenge on me anymore!” Ourin shouted with a pale face as he saw Leylin approaching him.

“Okay! I swear with the honor of my Farlier family!” Leylin answered.
Ourin’s face turned green. Struggling to a half seated position on the ground, he took out a golden coloured pouch from his bosom and tossed it at Leylin, “All my magic crystals are here!”

Leylin took it and gave it a look. This was a palm-sized pouch made with gold and silver threads. In the center of it was a picture of an eagle and a shield, surrounded by many plants. It appeared to be a family symbol.

Leylin opened the pouch and saw over dozens of black coloured crystals quietly lying there.

[Beep! Discovered an unknown energy source!] The A.I Chip alerted.

“So? Can it be used?” Leylin had an excited expression on his face.

[Searching the database......information insufficient! The method of usage not found!”

[Alert! An energy source with unknown radiation. Recommendation: The Host’s body to strengthen defense!]

“So it’s like this?” Leylin inwardly thought, then turned to Ourin and asked, “Which academy are you going to?”

“Wet......Wetland Gardens!” Ourin had an ugly expression on his face.

“Wetland Gardens! I’ve heard before that the entry fee is ten magic crystals, right?”

“Correct! Where did you hear it from?” Ourin was a little surprised. Leylin faintly smiled, looking a little mysterious. He had never heard of any Wetland Gardens before and was only bluffing Ourin since most of the school fees were basically all in rounded figures. It wasn’t a big deal if he guessed it wrongly anyway.

“Okay! I’ll return it to you!” Leylin took out three magic crystals from the pouch and tossed the pouch with the magic crystals back at Ourin.

“These three magic crystals will be my compensation!” Although he could take all the magic crystal now, Leylin is still unsure of the
attitudes of the black and white robes on this matter. He also doesn’t want to use himself to test out their bottom lines. Thus, he left Ourin the sufficient amount of magic crystals for the entry fee. That way, even if they quibbled about it, Leylin had an excuse.

“Tha……thank you!” Ourin’s facial expression turned a lot better. If he were to lose all of these magic crystals and wasn’t unable to enter the academy, he really didn’t know how he’d face his family.

“Rest assured! I won’t take your magic crystals!” Leylin raised his head and looked at the surrounding nobles, who all had their hands tightly clenched into fists. Seeing this, Leylin couldn’t help shaking his head.

“Thank you, Lord Leylin!” Hearing Leylin’s assurance, the other youths all felt relieved and immediately bowed.

“But! I want to request other compensation!” Leylin looked at a youth, the one that tried to escape but had been knocked down.

“The Cross Blade at your waist looks pretty nice!” Leylin looked at the youth, who looked a little frightened. Leylin then pointed to the Cross Blade at the youth’s waist.

Having heard the hint, the youth hastily replied, “Lord, you can have it!”

“Haha! I won’t hold back then!” Leylin took the Cross Blade from the youth. After gauging its weight, he nodded his head in satisfaction.

As a noble’s sword, the quality of this crossed sword was excellent. The hilt of the sword was decorated with beautiful flower patterns to prevent it from slipping from the hand. The scabbard was made from the skin of sharks, giving it a luxurious feeling.
“So the method of distinguishing time is very similar to the past!
Leylin thought inwardly to himself as he messed around with the crystal pocket watch in his hand. The surface of the crystal pocket watch had fine workmanship, with twenty-four small frames inside. Each frame represented an hour. Not only did he extort a weapon from Ourin’s lackeys, but also spoils of war worth thousands of gold coin. This pocket watch was contributed by a small fatty. As for the revenge from their family, the Dorlan family that Ourin belonged to was from the Bourbon Kingdom, which was a few kingdoms away from Viscount John’s territory. Furthermore, the relationships between the two kingdoms were already in a state of hostility. Not to mention that time it took to become a Magus was at least a few years, and even sending letters back and forth would also take at least a few years. Leylin only gave it a little thought before throwing the matters between him and Ourin’s family to the back of his head. “This time, I’ve really made a profit! Furthermore, the magic crystals are the currency among Magi, so they are very useful for acolytes!” Leylin took out a magic crystal and flipped it around in his palm. It
emitted a steady, cold feeling. According to the calculation of the A.I Chip, although this magic crystal had some slight radiation, the effect it had towards the body seemed to be positive. It could enhance the body’s vitality.

“But! Ever since the news about me defeating Ourin spread, everyone’s attitude towards me has changed. Should I say that this is a world that respects the strong?”

It had already been two days since the previous incident, and the battle results with Ourin had spread among the nobility teenagers. Especially the scene of him breaking Ourin’s arm while smiling, it had become the nightmare of those teenagers present. When Ourin returned, he immediately hid in his carriage and tended to his injuries. As for those nobility teenagers, they trembled the moment they saw Leylin and quickly ran away.

“Hi! Leylin, do you want to play together?”

A nobility girl from the same carriage came over and asked. She wore nobility attire, wearing something similar to stockings in Leylin’s previous life on her long legs, giving off an alluring charm.

The custom of this world was to respect the strong. Now, Leylin felt that the atmosphere in the carriage was much better, and the others didn’t try to go against him either.

Moreover, several other nobility girls also extended invitations to him.

This girl was in the same carriage with him, her name is Lilith.

“Thanks! But, I have friends coming!” Leylin said apologetically.

“Ooh! I must have been interrupting! I’ll invite you, later on, Jasmine and a few others are also interested in you!”

The long-legged girl tenderly smiled, raised her skirt, and made a noble’s greeting, extending a tempting invitation.

“Girls nowadays are really maturing early!”

Leylin bitterly smiled in his heart.
“Haha……what did I just see? How many times has our young master Leylin been invited by girls?” An exaggerated voice came.
“How can I be compared to you? ‘Satin Gold Mane Lion’, your great name has spread among the female circles in the entire carriage!” Leylin rolled his eyes.
“Didn’t you want to avoid me so as to not be isolated from everyone, are you no longer afraid of that?” Leylin looked at George who was the approaching.
“You’re the hot topic in the camp now! Many girls have interest towards you. That Lilith earlier wasn’t bad either. I can guarantee you that if you just put your heart into it, you’ll be able to take her down in three days!”
George laughed, “Furthermore, I have to congratulate you on your successful revenge!” With a wave of his hand, a glass bottle drew an arc in the air and was caught by Leylin. Opening the oaken stopper, a fruity aroma mixed with a tinge of alcohol drifted out, causing Leylin to subconsciously take a deep breath.
“Apple wine! I haven’t drank much of this in these few months!”
“Correct! Furthermore, it’s a speciality from our federation. It wasn’t easy for me to have kept it hidden till now!” George opened the wine bottle in his hand.
“To our Leylin! Cheers!”
“Cheers!” Leylin smiled. Wine bottles knocked onto each other and emitted a clear sound.
“Also, thank you!” Leylin said sincerely.
George had the strength of a preparatory Knight, and with his leadership status amongst this bunch of nobility youths, if he had taken any slight action earlier on, he could have easily settled Ourin. However, he cared about Leylin’s emotions and only helped Leylin increase his strength secretly. Besides that, he had hidden their
relationship so that Ourin would provoke Leylin without any second thoughts. Finally, he helped Leylin complete his revenge. This protected his pride as a noble very well. From this, Leylin could see his meticulousness and his ability to take care of others’ feelings.

“This is no longer about winning the hearts of people, but about using sincerity to move them. I should say that it’s really worthy of Satin Gold Mane Lion’s family, leader of the Furze Alliance!” Leylin thought inwardly.

“No need for thanks! We’re all members of the Furze Alliance, how could I have turned a blind eye at you being bullied by those northerners!” George laughed, downing all of his apple wine in one gulp.

“Pity! Now that we’re deeper and deeper into the wilderness, we haven’t been passing by any large cities for a long time now. Even supplies are hard to find!” George seemed to have recalled the taste of the apple wine and had some regret.

“Right! We’re going to organize a barbeque banquet; it’ll be for our Furze Alliance. Do you want to join?” George extended an invitation.

“Of course! It’d be my pleasure!” Leylin smiled and responded. With his identity as a noble from the Furze Alliance, he could only join this circle. At times when one’s strength was still weak, joining circles was also a method to protect one’s safety.

It was deep in the night. The sky was filled with shining stars, pulling a silver veil over the ground. Inside the camp, groups of young men and girls all sat together, circling the campfire as they laughed and messed around. It was very lively.

After a few months of living together, they had gotten closer to one
Come, Leylin, I’ll introduce the both of you to each other. This is Yarfuan, Viscount Normier’s descendent!”

“Nice to meet you! I’ve heard lots about you trashing Ourin!” Yarfuan stretched his hand out as he smiled.

“Nice to meet you!” A genuine smile was drawn on Leylin’s face as he shakes Yarfuan’s hand.

“These are the sisters, Gwen, and Gwylith, they are your admirers!” George led Leylin in a circle around the campfire, introducing him.

“Nice to meet you! Mister Leylin!” The sisters looked exactly the same. They each had a pair of glittering aquamarine eyes, identical voices, and some red blush on their faces.

“Nice to meet you, beautiful ladies! It’s an honor to meet you!” Leylin placed his hand on his chest and did a noble’s greeting.

Seeing the two girls blushing as they ran, George looked like he was about to faint.

“Brat! You’re blessed! The two of them seem to be interested in you! They are twins! Twins!” George’s hands were dancing around as he said this, with some heartache.

“Okay! I believe that in a time when supplies are starting to decline, you should have another purpose to organizing this banquet, and not just simply to search for lovers!” Leylin said.

As for his personal needs, he was still able to restrain them. Although he didn’t mind letting them out, that also depended on the location.

“It’s good that you’re able to see this point!” George said. The smiling expression on his face disappeared and was replaced with a leader’s presence.

He strode to the center of the area and banged the silver spoon in his hand.

“Ladies and gentlemen! Sorry to bother you for awhile, but please
shift your gazes over here!”
George’s prestige was still rather high among this group of people. The surrounding crowd all stopped what they were doing and shifted their gazes to the center.
“Firstly! I would like to welcome a new comrade joining us! He’s Leylin!” George announced in a loud voice and clapped.
“Pa Pa Pa!” An intense, wave-like clapping sound could be heard from the surroundings.
Leylin got up and made a greeting towards the surroundings.
“Okay!” George waved his hand, stopping the clappings and continued, “I set up this small alliance to guarantee that every single acolyte from our Furze Alliance would safely reach the academy and become a well-respected Lord Magus. And now, fellow comrades, trouble has arisen and it is time for us to work together!”
George’s expression turned a little solemn, and even his tone was grave. Being infected by him, the surrounding atmosphere also became a little quiet. Only George’s voice still echoed in the air.
“We are nearly out of the wilderness and are about to enter the Great Plains of Death. This is the last stage of our journey, and also the most dangerous part!”
“Great Plains of Death?” Leylin was surprised, and immediately searched through his original memories.
According to the memories in the A.I Chip, the current continent that Leylin was in was very vast, filled with many kingdoms and without a united name.
Originally, the Furze Alliance that Leylin joined belonged to the southeast corner of the continent. They seemed to be one of the first batches of students. The travelling party had headed North, passing through many dukedoms and kingdoms, and now already reached the north side of the continent.
After passing through the wilderness, there was a long patch of narrow plains. Opposite the plains was rumored to be an ocean.
And this piece of plains was filled with all sorts of dangers, and had always been a restricted zone for humans! Rumor was that the plains were filled with all sorts of beasts; even the most ferocious bandits didn’t dare to enter the plains. Every part of the plains was filled with corpses of mercenaries, adventurers, and travelers!

Right now, the Magus acolyte-filled travelling party was about to pass through this Great Plains of Death, to the coastline.

“With the protection of the black robed and white-robed Lords, we’ll definitely be able to pass through it!” A fat boy said as the crowd went into an uproar.

“Correct! With the protection of the Lord Magi and Knights, our possibility of passing through here is rather high! But when those Lords are unable to manage, we will encounter death. It could be me, it could be you, do you want to experience such an outcome?” George asked.

“Definitely not!” The fat boy shouted as his face turned red and sat back down.

“Correct! Our motive is to reach the Magus Academy opposite the ocean and to become well respected Magi. But the cruel screening will begin now. According to the information that my father obtained, there will be large amounts of death in the Great Plains of Death in every single Magus travelling party!”

George went on, revealing a small part of cruelty.

“What……What should be done?” Lots of young men and women panicked, and they looked at George with ashen faces, hoping that he would have a plan.
9 - Entering the Plains

“Of course, the reason we formed this alliance was for that purpose!”
George stated loudly.
“We’ve already discussed this with the other traveling parties. We will swap positions with them so that our Furze Alliance can occupy a few carriages that are close to each other! We’ve also gotten the permission from the black robes!”
“Furthermore, us noble males will take turns being guards to protect the carriages! Of course, this is with the caveat that we are merely assisting the black robe Knights. As for the beautiful ladies, the logistics and cleaning duties will be up to you!”
“As for the weapons, you guys also do not have to worry. We’ve already made our preparations and even got hold of a crossbow!”
George called out his plans.
The youths of the alliance all began talking amongst themselves, and after some discussion, most were in favour of this plan.
“Okay, we agree!”
As for the position of the captain of the guards, it was inevitable that George would take that position. Striking while the iron was hot, George began to hand out some missions.
The feast continued afterward, but it was clear to see that most of the enthusiasm in the crowd had long since been lost.
“Originally I had planned on giving you a cross blade, but it seems there is no longer any need now!”
George held up his cup as he walked towards Leylin, pointing at the sword hilt fastened at his waist.
“Is it true that every single time a Magus troop enters the Great Plains, there are many deaths?” Leylin asked.
“Of course, the best case scenario is that only one or two will die, but there have been times where at least ten have perished!” George shrugged his shoulders. “Otherwise why else would I spend so much money and energy in order to establish an alliance that would be dissolved when we reach the coastline?”
“Wherever you plant a seed, there will be some form of profit to be had!” Leylin laughed.
No matter what, as long as everyone grouped together, then their odds of survival would increase. And any of the surviving acolytes would definitely hold some goodwill towards George and his family. As long as one of these acolytes were to become a Magus, then the returns would be great.
But even if there were no survivors, it wasn’t a big loss to him, either way, right?
“Aside from your swordsmanship, your intelligence has really impressed me!” George’s eyes sparkled. “The things I did were all things that my father told me to.”
“Well then, are you willing to help me?” George extended his hand.
“As you wish!” Leylin laughed, linking his hand to George’s.

……

Leylin’s reply to George’s request wasn’t an impulsive one. In fact, he had made this decision after careful deliberation. With regards to the hidden dangers in the plains, he wasn’t very knowledgeable about it. So joining hands by cooperating would be a decent proposal.
The cold wind descended upon the group and hit them in the face like knife blades. With each breath drawn, Leylin could smell the fragrant smell of grass.

“It’s already been 15 days since we’ve entered the Great Plains of Death!”

Looking back at the carriages, Leylin could see some traces of damage on it, causing him to feel quite gloomy.

The marks on the carriages were three different lines linked into one as if it was created by a single claw.

“The Great Plains of Death have dangers that even normal humans or even Preparatory Knights would have trouble with!”

After entering the plains, although the black and white robed lords had increased the number of patrols, and for the acolytes to band together, there had still been some casualties.

The marks on the carriages had been caused by a pack of plain direwolves. The very moment they had arrived, the carriages had suffered a siege.

Although there hadn’t been any deaths, the pack of plain direwolves had nearly pushed over the carriages and damaged it, giving Leylin a deep impression of them.

From that moment onwards, the students didn’t dare to camp outside and all tried to sleep in the carriages! But even with that, there had still been some casualties.

Leylin’s face grew dark.

Although the black-robed Knights were guarding them, some of the youngsters still needed to go out to take care of their bodily needs. Alas, within the danger-filled Great Plains of Death, that meant danger.

One youth had been bitten by a poisonous insect the very moment he stepped off the carriage and died.

“According to the calculations of the A.I Chip, the poison of the insect would corrode the brain within 13 seconds. There was not
enough time for medical help, and even the few white-robed Magus could only watch the youngster die…”
After that incident, the students would get off the carriage only when absolutely necessary. However, due to the small size of the carriage and the sheer number of people squeezed inside, the smell within was certainly unpleasant.
For the price of helping the black-robed Knights drive a carriage, Leylin was given the chance to get some fresh air.
Although being on the outside of the carriage seemed to be more dangerous, with the black robed Knight right next to him, it was actually much safer.
As for the carriage driving skill? Leylin only had to listen to the black robed Knight for a short amount of time while the A.I chip recorded everything.
“It’s getting dark! Everyone gather within the carriages to rest!”
A voice called out from the front, causing every single carriage to stop.
Not only was traveling at night dangerous, but it meant the horses did not have time to rest, which could lead to their deaths, and cause even more troubles.
“Young man, your carriage driving skills are quite good!” The black robed Knight looked at Leylin and spoke softly.
“Thank you for your praise!” Leylin nodded.
Returning to the inside of the carriage, a fierce smell hit his nose the moment he opened the door. Leylin’s eyebrows creased together, but seeing the stupefied looks on the students faces, he could only sigh to himself secretly.
Ever since the first casualty, none of the youths had a happy look, instead, there was a mournful atmosphere. This was another reason why Leylin did not like staying inside the carriage at all.
“Leylin, you’re back!” A small freckled youngster forced out a smile as he greeted him.
“Yeah!” Leylin sat down and looked around before taking a piece of flatbread to gnaw on. The dry piece of flatbread was chewed up inside his mouth, feeling as if he was chewing on sand. Despite its taste, Leylin managed to swallow the bread with great difficulty, but in doing so, he felt a sudden pain in his throat, prompting him to hurriedly take out his canteen and chug down a large amount of water. After he finally finished the entire piece of bread, he heaved a sigh of relief. After entering the Great Plains of Death, supplies were hard to come by. Even though the students had some gold coins, there were no merchants around. So in this situation, the gold coins were not much better than mere stones.

“Ley….Leylin, what’s the situation like? Just how many more days until we’re out of this damned plains?”

After Leylin had finished eating, the freckled youth asked him a question. His words were clearly what everyone wanted to know the answer, and drew everyone’s attention as they turned to look towards Leylin.

“While driving the carriage, I talked with the black robed Knight. We’ve already traveled half the distance, so if everything goes well from here, we’ll reach the coastlines in another half a month.”

“Eh! Good god, there’s still half a month more?! What terrible days these are, I can’t even stand another single day in this place!”

The freckled youth began to pull at his hair as he complained.

“Hey, cheer up, Kassa. As long as you can take these 15 days, then you’ll reach the coastlines. Delicious fruits, fluffy bread, not to mention a comfortable bed and a warm bathroom, all of it is waiting for you!”

Even as a youngster tried to cheer Kassa up, the words seemed to be trying to cheer himself up even more than Kassa.

Dong! Dong!
A rhythmic pattern could be heard as the doors to the carriage opened, revealing George. In his armor and carrying his long sword, George looked like a handsome Knight. “Hey, gentleman! Ladies! Break time is here! If you need to loosen up a bit, just come outside. If you don’t, then please stay inside, after all, the outside is quite dangerous…. The carriage grew restless before a few red-faced girls looked at each other in the eye and walked out of the carriage. Leylin shrugged his shoulders before grabbing his cross blade, “Let’s go!”

As a member of the guards, he needed to protect these ladies. Even though all he could do was to maintain his vigilance and call out for the black robed Knight to come help them if any trouble arose. “I…I won’t go down this time!” Kassa spoke out from the side as he shivered.

“Fine then!” Leylin gestured to the rest to follow him out the carriage. Landing softly on the grass, Leylin couldn’t help but to stretch comfortably outside. A beautiful scenery stretched far beyond what his eye could see. If it weren’t for the amount of danger in here, Leylin would have loved this sight.

“How beautiful!” George spoke out as he watched the setting sun. “How beautiful indeed, but also dangerous!” Leylin muttered. “There’s danger everywhere my friend! Sickness, famine, war, the world is filled with dangers like these. To us, this area is a threat to our lives, but to the white-robed Magus, this is nothing more than like the garden back home!” George clenched at his sword.

“Are you trying to say that as long as you have strength, then you can obtain both freedom and safety?” “Exactly! Take a look at Kassa, he has already lost his courage. On this road to power, he is lacking the spirit to face danger. Even if he were to safely arrive at the Magus academy, it is unlikely that he can
become a Magus. After all, studying magic is a treacherous path that is a hundred times more difficult than this plain!”

George threw a rock far into the plains, “It’s time to protect our beautiful treasures now!”

Seeing George walk away, Leylin had a smile on his face, “Courage? But for those chasing the truth, prudence is also a necessity!”

“A.I Chip! Initialize scanning!” Leylin thought.

Following the order, a three-dimensional scenery began to visualize within Leylin’s head, showing off the vicinity of the nearby area. Within the light blue geographical image, a cluster of white stars. These stars symbolized the students; not a single one of them seemed to be hurt.

As for the black robed Knight, he was a flashing red light. After the A.I Chip’s analysis, it had recognized him as an existence that could threaten his host.

The final few carriages had the white-robed Magus within. Leylin didn’t dare to try to use his A.I Chip to scan it in case its energy was detected and cause troubles for him.

Not too long after, every single nearby source of danger appeared within Leylin’s mind.

“Even if it’s a poisonous insect, they won’t be able to escape the A.I Chip’s scan! As of right now, this area is safe!”

This was a guarantee that Leylin could make.

Although he was a member of the guard, he would never do anything to put himself in harm’s way.

With the A.I Chip, he had a firm grasp of everything happening in a 20 li radius, and this would be the biggest guarantee to their safety.
“Perfect! I’ve used up all the Flowerless Snake Fruits again, and I can take this chance to gather some more. But I’m not sure if the plains even have this type of plant…”

Leylin thought to himself as he gradually walked further from the party.

“A.I. Chip! Check my body’s stats!”


A.I. Chip transmitted back the information.

“There isn’t much improvement, only around 0.1!” Leylin furrowed his brows, “Ever since everyone started resting in the carriage, I can no longer find a suitable place to cultivate the breathing techniques. Furthermore, the effects of the medicines are decreasing. According to the calculations, the optimized cross blade breathing technique should allow me to increase my basic physical stats to 1.9 before hitting the limit. After that, I can only improve after stimulating my inner life energy and becoming a Knight…”

Leylin kept watch on the girl from the Furze Alliance from afar, as he also kept an eye out for useful herbs and materials. After a long time, he finally looked up in disappointment.

“It is as I had feared! The conditions are too different, and the Flowerless Snake Fruits are not able to survive on these grassy plains. I can’t even find any suitable substitute herbs!”

10 - Direwolf Pack
“Hey! Leylin! It’s time to get on the carriage!” George’s loud shout came from the distance.
“Got it!” Wandering afar by himself was not only attention drawing but also very dangerous. As such, Leylin could only give up on his plan, and return to the horse carriage.

[Warning! Warning! Dangerous creatures are approaching!]
Just at that moment, the A.I Chip’s mechanical voice sounded out, and red warning words appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes, attracting his attention instantly.
“Quick! Show the map now!”
Leylin’s facial expression did not change, but he hastened his movement, reaching the limits of his body, and his right hand grasped his cross blade firmly.
On the virtual map that was projected in front of his eyes, there was a large group of red dots closing in on their group of carriages. The dots were slowly encircling and surrounding them.

[Beep! According to the databanks, these dangerous lifeforms have a 97.8% similarity to Direwolves!]
“Direwolves!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed as he recalled the data that had been collected earlier. “Direwolf: A kind of wolf inhabiting the Great Plains of Death. Savage and cruel, they mostly hunt in packs. Their strength is estimated to be around 2-3, agility around 3-4, and vitality around 3-4.”
“Such strength, they are definitely not creatures that I, a mere Knight-in-training, can handle!”

Leylin’s footsteps hastened once more, and he rushed towards George, saying in a low tone: “We have company. Trouble is afoot!”
George looked around at the surrounding crowd and saw that most of the students were still minding their own business. He quickly retrieved his water bottle in order to hide their actions: “What’s the situation?”
“A pack of direwolves! I noticed their tracks!” Leylin said quickly and urgently.
“I got it!” George drank a few gulps of water, then gave out a few simple hand signals.
The youths from their team who had been chosen as escorts were momentarily startled, but they still remembered their predesignated hand signals. Instantly, they all got moving, pushing the younger girls ahead, and whispering into their ears. The entire process was done swiftly and silently. Although some of the other Magus apprentices also noticed something was wrong and followed their retreat, most of them were still oblivious.
Sometimes, when danger arose, the only thing you needed to do was to ensure that you ran faster than your companions!
“Let’s go!” Seeing that most of the members of their alliance had successfully retreated, George and Leylin quickly followed suit.
“Leylin, you’re unexpectedly even good at scouting!” George said in a low voice to Leylin. After all, they had spent quite some time and were familiar with each other, and he knew that Leylin would not lie to him about something like that.
Although the members of the Furze Alliance were quiet and retreating in an orderly manner to refrain from alarming the rest, some of the other acolytes were very discerning, and they quickly joined in the retreat.
*Bang* *Bang*!
A loud piercing gong sounded out, “The Lord Magus has sensed danger! All acolytes are to retreat back to the horse carriages!”
One of the black robed men’s voice sounded out, thundering in all the acolytes’ ears.
The acolytes who were resting on the grass were all stunned into silence, before they all swarmed into motion, fleeing crazily for the horse carriages.
“No need for hiding anymore! Let’s run!” George shouted as he
drew his sword.
By now, all the members of the Furze Alliance had been alerted, and were already quite a distance, and the fastest amongst them had already reached the horse carriages.
“Aaawoooooo!”
At this moment, a long and drawn out howl sounded out, filled with ruthless bloodlust.
All around, the wolf howls sounded; since the prey had discovered their stealth attack, they would just charge forth!
Streak after streak of black shadowy wolves charged after the fleeing acolytes; they were about 2-3 metres long, and their speeds were such that a shimmering black afterimage followed them.
“A direwolf pack!” One of the acolytes at the back cried out in despair.
Just as he cried out, a black shadow pounced onto her, the large impact causing this young girl to fall to the ground. In the next instant, the merciless huge jaw filled with sharp teeth bit down viciously, tearing out her throat as she died with a despairing look on her face.
Some of the fleeing acolytes were attracted by the cries and turned their heads to look before they cried out in alarm as they witnessed the grisly sight and hastened their pace.
Another young girl whose face was full of tears was running and shouting: “Mummy! Mummy! I want my mummy…!”
“These pitiful youngsters, they are already beginning to lose it?” By now, Leylin had already reached the horse carriages, and could see the entire scene in front of him.
*Swoosh* *Swoosh*
Right at this point in time, seven dark shadows dashed out from the horse carriages, each wielding a huge sword the size of a man, which slashed through the air as they charged towards the direwolf pack.
“It’s the black-robed Knights! They’re attacking!” Leylin thought to himself.
These direwolves’ stats are about 3 each on average and are very similar to the Knights. However, humans have the ability to use weapons, along with their intelligence; furthermore, the Knights should have secret skills which can greatly raise their potential and allow them to burst forth with greater power when necessary! If it’s one versus one or even one versus three, these direwolves will definitely not be a match for the Knights. However, with the current numbers…”
Leylin had a worried look on his face as he looked at the several hundred red dots encircling them. “Previously, even with just nearly a hundred direwolves, they managed to get to the horse carriages, and even damage some of the carriages. With these several hundred direwolves… Perhaps today we will finally see those mysterious Magi show their abilities!”
*Psh* ! One of the black-robed Knights waved his immense blade, weaving a bright silver light in the air as he cleaved a direwolf right into two!
“Heh heh!” The Knight licked the blood from his lips, looking extremely ferocious: “Come on, my little precious!”
“Thank…Thank you, Sir!” The little girl who was saved kept thanking him repeatedly, the tears still on her cheeks. This was the girl who had been calling out for her mother earlier.
“Are you an idiot? Get back now!” The Knight’s head did not even turn as he charged forth towards the direwolves.
Only then did the little girl seem to reawaken to the reality of the situation, and ran back to the horse carriage.
“Hurry! Arrange the horse carriages in a circle to use as a defensive formation, the girls should stay behind while the boys, take up your swords and set up a defensive perimeter!”
The black robed Knight who remained at the campsite shouted out.
“Alright!” George was the first to shout out a reply, jumping up onto one of the carriages to direct the alliance members.

“It’s time to fight for our lives!” Leylin grasped the cross blade in his hands and muttered to himself.

Looking at the scene before him, he noticed that the members of the Furze Alliance had the least losses due to his timely warning; besides a few who had tripped while running and sustained minor injuries, there were no deaths or major injuries.

In contrast, many of the other acolytes had been killed or injured, for example, he had discovered that Ourin’s little party was now missing two youths, while the remaining few had all sustained some form of injuries. It seemed like they had been just lucky enough to escape with their lives.

“Alright! We’ve rescued all the ones who can be rescued!” Angelo’s body was covered with blood as he returned to the defensive formation, and he immediately saw Leylin, who was grasping a cross blade with both hands and was in a battle-ready stance.

“Aren’t you afraid?” the black robed Knight asked.

“At this time, being afraid won’t be of any help right?” Leylin replied. His hands tightened around his sword; after all, even in his past life, such a bloody scene was not common.

“Heh heh! These direwolves are cunning and intelligent, as long as we let them know that we’re not an easy target and that they will sustain many losses to kill us, they will definitely run away!” Angelo said passively.

Although he did not know if the Knight was just trying to comfort him, Leylin breathed an obvious sigh of relief.

“Aowuuu!” The few acolytes that had fallen earlier had perished by now, and with the scent of blood in the air, the direwolves went berserk and charged savagely towards the horse carriages.

“Here they come! Everyone be careful! We will try our best to
Angelo’s loud voice rang out, as he waved his huge sword, standing in the front lines together with the other Knights. “Kill!” The Knights shouted out loud, and Leylin could see a faint light shining around their large swords. As the huge blade cleaved down, the direwolf charging in front had a hole torn in its chest, causing it to roll back as blood sprayed into the air.

For a time, the dozen or so black figures stood like an immovable fortress, blocking the direwolves. “We should fight as well! We need to help the Knights and reduce their load!” George walked up to Leylin and said. “Yes, if this continues for long, the Knights will grow too exhausted to fight, and all of us will be in trouble!” Leylin nodded in agreement.

Under George’s leadership, all the men took up their swords and followed behind the Knights, attacking the ferocious direwolf pack from the side! “Aowuuu!” The direwolf howls were unceasing, and Leylin was currently facing a 2-metre long huge direwolf. As the direwolf continued snarling, Leylin could smell the stench from it.

“A.I Chip! Scan the battlefield and determine the most efficient method of killing!” [Task established. Begin simulation! Begin assist mode!] A light flashed in front of Leylin’s eyes, and a panoramic, 3D image appeared before him. The direwolf facing him finally launched an attack, and a gleaming claw specked with blood slashed towards Leylin, bringing along a hot wave of air. [Host is under attack! Most efficient method of dealing with it: use
the cross blade to block it with a 50-degree angle to the right, then pierce!

“Ha!” Leylin shouted out as he circulated the breathing technique, concentrating his strength in his arm muscles as he followed the instructions, sweeping his sword to the right and striking the claw away.

*BANG* Leylin felt a shock travel up his arm from the immense impact, making him feel as though he had struck a thick piece of metal.

“This direwolf’s strength is much higher than mine, if I keep doing that, I will be exhausted too quickly. I’ll need to finish this fight quickly!”
Leylin was shocked by its strength after using his sword to strike away the direwolf’s claw. The cross blade drew a brilliant arc. Immediately afterwards, following the path calculated by the A.I. Chip, he pierced out towards the direwolf opposing him. Piercing attack! The cross blade technique was a secret technique passed down through the Farlier family, and the key point was to use a powerful centrifugal force to strike at the enemy. At that moment, Leylin used his waist to exert power. The cross blade in his hands whistled as it pierced through the air and slammed towards the direwolf. Psh! Leylin felt the cross blade pierce through its flesh, and it seemed as though the cross blade in his hands was firmly stuck in the direwolf. The sheer impact of the blow caused him to tremble, and he tried to retract the cross blade. “He!” Leylin yanked his hands backwards. The cross blade was pulled out violently, causing fresh blood to gush out wildly! The direwolf opposing him screamed miserably. It turned out that Leylin’s sword attack earlier had just happened to pierce into the direwolf’s foreleg, its weakness. The direwolf hopped backwards in retreat, and one claw seemed to have already been rendered useless.
Seeing the direwolf escaping, Leylin’s eyes flashed once, but he didn’t pursue it.

“Most of the pressure has been taken on by the black-robed Knights. If I run out of the defensive perimeter to chase it, that would be tantamount to me committing suicide. Anyways, an injured direwolf will not be able to attack us again. It’ll probably die after a while, or… end up as its companion’s meal!”

“Well done!” George praised loudly from closeby. At this moment, George also had traces of blood on his body. His attack posture was confident and elegant, and it looked as if he was performing rather than killing. However, he still carried an unparalleled level of strength! He was actually going up against two direwolves and was still not at a disadvantage.

“The secret sword techniques passed down through noble families really aren’t ordinary!” Leylin thought casually before he once again directed his gaze towards the direwolf pack in front of him. The tragic fighting between man and direwolf continued on for half an hour. The sun slowly set, and darkness descended upon the grass plains.

At the moment, the eyes of the direwolves were giving off an aquamarine glow. The entire campground had an eerie feel as it seemed to be surrounded by a crowd of aquamarine eyes.

“Hah… hah” Leylin gasped for breath. He now looked as if he had been fished out of a pool of blood. His face was still covered with it, but he lacked the time to even wipe it off.

Even with the A.I. Chip allowing him to use the most efficient methods to kill or injure the direwolves, he still felt heavily drained from the effort.

“If even I’m like this, there’s no need to speak about the other acolytes. Only the black-robed Knights still have energy to spare, but even they will probably be unable to last much longer. In this situation, why haven’t the white robe Magi acted yet?”
Leylin glanced over and saw that there was an empty space amidst the female acolytes at the center of the campsite. Three white robed people were sitting there, giving off chilling auras. None of the surrounding acolytes dared to be within three metres of them. As for the direwolves surrounding the defensive ring, they had already lost one-third of their number. However, the number of defending acolytes at the front line had also greatly decreased; most had been injured and were under the care of the girls behind. “If I was the direwolf king, the current losses would be enough to make me give up! There should be one final wave of vicious attacks remaining!” Leylin’s sword flickered as it cut the leg of a direwolf. At the same time, he took the opportunity to pull out several berries. He tossed them into his mouth and chewed twice before swallowing. These were the useful plants he had collected along the journey. They could quickly replenish the body’s energy, but he was running out of them. “Aowuuuuuu!” Shrill wolf calls sounded, but this time, they carried a different meaning. The direwolf pack became more frenzied as it heard the wolf calls. It charged forward without any regard for their lives. “It’s here, the final wave!” Leylin’s eyes shifted. He brandished the cross blade in his hand as he advanced. Bang! Leylin felt a great force run through his hand, and the cross blade almost flew out of his hands. “The direwolves before us seem to be two times bigger than the others!” Leylin relaxed the muscles in his numbed arm, “A.I. Chip, scan the direwolves in front of me!”

[Direwolves. Strength: 2.3 Agility: 4.1 Vitality: 3.1. Description: In a direwolf pack, there will always be those whose bodies are significantly larger than those of the same race. These will be chosen to be the bodyguards for the head of the wolves. They...
usually have greater strength than the others of the same race, and at the same time, undying loyalty to the head of the wolves!]
This was a paragraph that the previous bratty Leylin had read from a random atlas at some point, and it was now retrieved by the A.I. Chip.
“How amazing, looks like the head of the direwolves is also making a big investment this time!” Leylin thought, before going forward to tussle with the huge direwolves again.
He had been a scientist in the previous world, and had thought that he was no longer hot-blooded. But now, being in this primitive society and killing the direwolf pack made Leylin feel as if something had aroused in his body, making his blood boil.
“This is unlike the peace in my previous world; these beast-like instincts are needed for a being’s survival!” Leylin realised.
“Haha! Come! Come!” Leylin had already trained the breathing technique passed down in his family to a very profound level. Now, he only needed the enlightenment gained from killing in order to stimulate his life force and become a true Knight!
“Kill!” Leylin’s eyes had a hint of red to them as he began to fight madly with the direwolf.
At this moment in time, he finally let go completely. In every sword stroke, he vented the dread of his death in the previous world and the unease of entering a foreign world.
“Hah!” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he fought the direwolf, seemingly having comprehended something.
The cross blade in his hands hacked downwards, bringing a silver light with it.
As it slashed towards the ground, Leylin’s body twisted, and strength was exerted from his powerful waist muscles. With the great centrifugal force of the cross blade, he made another horizontal slash!
The cross blade itself seemed to be releasing a dim light. The two
slashes seemed to fuse together, forming a radiant cross! Cross blade technique: secret killing move-Cross Slash! A Killing Move was something that had the essence of several killing techniques inside, using a profound skill level to raise one’s killing ability. Although it couldn’t compare to the Knight secret skills that increased all stats, preparatory Knights who possessed a killing move could still threaten a true Knight with life force! The cross blade viciously slashed the direwolf’s body and opened a large wound in the shape of a cross. The direwolf whined as fresh blood sprayed out continuously.

“Now!” Leylin’s eyes shone as he charged forward. Advance! Jump slash!
The cross blade swung past, and the direwolf’s huge head was sent flying!
The surrounding direwolves jumped in fright, and the attack slowed down. Even the surrounding black-robed Knights looked over in shock. Leylin felt a sense of contentment as he stepped on the giant direwolf’s head, and he couldn’t help but roar.

“Huuu…… I’ve already vented, so it’s time to retreat!” After roaring, Leylin didn’t choose to go forward to kill again but instead turned around to return to the defensive perimeter. This allowed a well-rested defender to take over his position.

“I’m not an idiot. The Killing Move just now was too exhausting, and I’ve already vented out all the negative emotions in my heart. I should save some strength for self-protection.” Leylin received a bottle from a girl with trembling hands and began to drink with big gulps.

By drinking water, he managed to conceal his eyes which were exuding intelligence. “I have killed the highest number of direwolves besides the black robes. With this, no one can force me
to enter the battlefield again. Next, I must maintain my strength, and witness the white robes’ actions at the same time!” Based on the collected figures, the A.I. Chip calculated that there was a 98% chance of a slip up by the black robes. The direwolf pack would thus break through the perimeter, and casualties would appear among the acolytes. At that point, no matter how much the white-robed Magi wanted to stay out of this, they would have to act.

“Aowuuuu!” With the non-stop howling from the head direwolf hidden amidst the direwolf pack, the direwolf pack’s charge became more aggressive. The ones that appeared now were the giant bodyguard direwolves. The throat of the frontmost acolyte was torn out, and he toppled over.

“We can’t wait any longer! Activate your secret skills!” The black robe Angelo shouted.

At that moment, the black robes released crackling sounds as their muscles continuously expanded. At first glance, their overgrown muscles made them look like small giants.

“It’s appeared! The secret skills of the Knights!” Leylin’s eyes didn’t blink. “A.I. Chip, collect data!”

[Beep! Task Established, Data Collection in progress!] [Knight secret skill (strength type?): After activation, vitality, strength and defense increase, agility decreases! In the middle of data collection for circulation path of life energy, 43% recorded. Remaining information insufficient, unable to analyse!]

Looking at the screen in front of his eyes, Leylin felt some regret, “I still can’t understand how the life force of Knights is activated! But if I have a Knight-level guinea pig to dissect, then I might just be able to understand…….”

As for the black-robed Knights who had activated their secret skills, not only did their muscle strengths increase, their defenses seemed to have increased as well. The giant bodyguard direwolves
still needed to be avoided, but the Knights used the giant sword to hack at the forehead of the normal direwolves despite being cut by their claws.
But with the increase in giant bodyguard direwolves, a direwolf had finally managed to slip through a gap and charge into the crowd of acolytes.
“Ah! Save me!” “Daddy! Mummy!” “I don’t want to die yet!”
The sound of various cries and screams resounded through the air and the campsite turned into utter chaos.
“In the end, they’re just a bunch of thirteen and fourteen-year-old kids!” Leylin sighed.
“Aowuuuu!” As if by chain reaction, another giant direwolf broke through their defenses, landing within the area occupied by the Furze Alliance.
“Leylin! Come and kill it with me!” George’s neck was wrapped up in gauze. It wasn’t known which noble family’s young lady wrapped it. Not only was it thickly wrapped up, it was even knotted in a bow, the sight making Leylin want to laugh out loud.
“No need! Give me the crossbow!”
“This?” George removed the crossbow from his back, and passed it to Leylin, “I’m afraid there’s no use! These mongrels have thick skin and flesh. If you can’t hit their weak points……..Oh! God! Dammit!”
Calculation of wind speed and temperature in progress! Calculation of trajectory complete!]
Following the A.I Chip’s calculated trajectory, Leylin pulled the trigger of the crossbow.
“Whoosh!” The powerful crossbow bolt flew out, and the strong recoil caused Leylin’s arm to feel slightly numb.
“Pu!” The crossbow arrow entered through the left eye of the direwolf and exited out of its right eye. The direwolf howled twice, crumpling to the floor.
“The advantage I have with the A.I Chip in this kind of high-accuracy work is really too great! A crossbow isn’t like a bow; all you have to do is aim and pull the trigger. It’s so convenient!”
Leylin compared the differences between him swinging around the Cross Blade before, and using the crossbow. “It looks like I’m more suited towards long distance attacks. This is also much safer. It’s just that I still have no idea how to activate the Life Force of Knights. Could it be that experiencing a really tough battle is required?”
Leylin hadn’t used a crossbow earlier. The first reason for this was to vent. The second was to make an attempt at activating the Life Force of Knights. Unfortunately, he possessed the A.I Chip as one of his cards and had never been forced into a desperate life or death situation. Naturally, he was unable to experience the feeling of the Life Force that was activated in a desperate situation.
“Leylin! Good job!” George only responded now, and he patted Leylin on the shoulder.
“From today onwards, this crossbow is yours!”
“Thanks then!” Leylin smiled. Even if George hadn’t said anything, he would still have tried to obtain the crossbow.
“Oh! Leylin! Leylin has killed direwolves, lord Leylin! Lord Leylin! Quickly save us!”
At this point, more direwolves charged into the campsite, and students cried out towards Leylin.
With the benefit of George’s prior preparations, the losses on their side had been the least. With George and Leylin, these two experts who were preparatory Knights, it was considered the safest place apart from the area around the white robes.
“Hu!” Ourin sucked in huge breaths as he used a sword to block a direwolf that was leaping forward. A huge force was transmitted over, causing the Cross Blade in his hands to fly away.
“I am the successor of my house! I still haven’t enjoyed a lot of things! How could I die here?”
Ourin roared. Of his surrounding comrades two had already died. Among the remaining people, if they weren’t dead, then they had already escaped.
At this moment, shouts of “Lord Leylin!” could be heard, causing his eyes to shine.
“That’s right! The Furze Alliance still has strength, and Leylin was so impressive just now. He can definitely save me!”
Ourin didn’t hesitate anymore and began to run in that direction.
“Leylin! Lord Leylin! Save me!”
“Well!” Leylin readied the crossbow, hearing the sound and taking a look, “It’s Ourin after all!”
The current Ourin looked embarrassing. Not only had the Cross Blade been dropped, his whole body carried wounds and he was being closely pursued by a direwolf.
“It’s a pity! You’ve looked for the wrong person! Did you really think I would be so magnanimous?” Leylin’s mouth formed a grin. “With the white-robed Magi here, I don’t dare to take my chances and secretly kill someone! But if it’s only not being able to save them in time, no one will have a reason to find trouble over that!” Leylin looked at Ourin, showing a brilliant smile. “He’ll save me! Definitely!” Ourin saw Leylin’s smile, and his heart relaxed. He continuously encouraged himself, increasing his running speed. “Ohhhh! Noooo!” At that moment, Ourin despairingly saw Leylin shoot the crossbow, dealing with a direwolf on another side. “How could you, how could you do this???” Ourin’s mind went blank for a moment and he tripped on a rock, falling onto the ground. The direwolf behind him shot forward. Its teeth bit down and blood began to flow non-stop……

“Thanks!” On the other side, the girl saved by Leylin ran to him to thank him, “Thank you!” “No need for thanks!” Leylin smiled. On the other side, Lilith looked at Leylin with her face red and lowered her head. There was a whistling sound, and George looked at Lilith, directing a ‘you understand’ gaze towards Leylin. “The situation is already like this, but your personality hasn’t changed, George!” “Even if I fall into the abyss of death, you can’t stop the yearning I have for beautiful romances!” George used the tone of a martyr, speaking as if he was unafraid of death. “You won’t die, the white robes are about to make their move!” Leylin rolled his eyes. Even though the field was in chaos, the giant direwolves seemed to have an amazing sixth sense. They had never bothered the three white-robed Magi, forming a strange circle.
And amidst the noise, Leylin could still use the five senses that were strengthened by the A.I Chip to catch the conversation between the white-robed Magi. Perhaps they themselves had not even concealed it.

“Crow! Are we still not making our move? The acolytes have too many casualties, and that will lower our rating!” A woman’s voice sounded.

“Relax! Relax! I’ve been counting. Up until now, ten have died so far. The limit hasn’t been passed yet!” A slightly cynical voice travelled over; it was a man’s voice.

“But it’s still reaching the limit, act quickly. I still need to determine the stability model for this technique! Dammit! The negative energy here is simply too high. It’s simply impossible to complete the construction of the ‘Tokerwuree!’”

“Then I’ll do it!” The white-robed man who hadn’t spoken before stood up.

“These mysterious Magi! The mysterious people rumored to be able to manipulate the forces of nature!” Leylin’s eyes stared at the white-robed man.

“All of you stupid and lowly beasts, you actually dare to bother the rest of the venerated lord Magi! Only death can be your eternal home!”

“Mazzerda Karachi!”

With the chanting sounds of the white-robed man, Leylin’s ears heard the A.I Chip madly sounding out. [ALERT! ALERT! Discovered radiation source! Discovered negative energy field! Suggestion for Host to immediately evacuate far away!]

The bright red words were so obvious, but Leylin wasn’t frightened into retreating at all. He only repeatedly recalled the chanting of the white robed man.

“This doesn’t seem to be the language used on the continent, but an ancient one instead. It seems like quite the tongue twister, do Magi
use this kind of language to chant?”
And as the white-robed man stood up, the surrounding direwolves retreated, as if they had met some kind of natural enemy.
“Secondary Energy Fireball!”
After the chant was completed, a floating fireball appeared in the man’s hand out of nowhere. According to the calculations of Leylin’s A.I Chip, this fireball was at least one thousand degrees and was actually causing the surrounding space to distort faintly. The fireball left a blazing trail and landed on the direwolf’s heart.
Boom!
“Not good! Quickly crouch down!” Leylin shouted loudly. Unfortunately, it was already too late. It didn’t matter whether it was the acolytes or the direwolves in the surroundings, everyone was sent toppling over. A loud explosion resounded, bringing with it a wave of heat.
“Puff! Pui Pui!” Leylin got up from the ground, hurriedly spitting out the soil and grass in his mouth.
At this moment, he was covered in dirt, and looked like a person who had just crawled out of a muddy pit.
“According to the A.I Chip’s calculations, that area should have been where the head of the direwolves was positioned, sssss…….”
Leylin climbed onto the horse carriage. He looked in the direction of the area attacked by the Magus just now and couldn’t help but suck in a sharp breath.
He could only see that where the fireball landed, there was now an additional pit of fire that was three metres in length and width, and two metres deep. As for the direwolves in that area, they had already become burnt charcoal.
The direwolves whimpered, before quickly escaping.
“He has the body of a human, and is able to attack to this extent! This, this is the strength of a Magus?” Leylin looked at the white-robed Magus, eyes burning with passion, “The strength of a Magus!
I must obtain it!"
“Quickly! Clean up the battlefield!” The white-robed man said, ignoring the fervent gazes of the surrounding acolytes. He returned to his original place, where the two other Magi were. When he passed by Ourin’s corpse, he stopped. He took a small golden pouch from Ourin’s bosom and placed it in his own bosom. “This…..seems to be the bag Ourin used to store magic crystals!” Leylin pupils shrank.
“Evaluation! Boundary! magic crystals!” Leylin’s mind raced. “It looks like these Magi received a task, which was why they helped escort us, acolytes. It seems there was a death count quota that would’ve lowered their evaluation and decreased their rewards if they had passed it!”
“And it seems that I had slightly underestimated the value of magic crystals before. These white robe Magi let the acolytes die, most likely because they had planned to take away the magic crystals of the dead acolytes!”
“Luckily, now that the dead acolytes have reached the danger limit already, we’ll be safer from here on!”
After thinking it through clearly, Leylin’s face turned ashen, “This is the world of Magi? Logical to the point of cold-bloodedness! Cold to the point of apathy!”
“Everyone, quickly pack up so we can continue our journey. The smell of blood here will attract other predators!”
The black robed Knight Angelo took off the outer clothes that had been torn due to the activation of the secret skill. The sweat on his face flowed nonstop, and he was gasping for air, looking slightly weakened.
Leylin’s eyes flashed with light, “It looks like a price needs to be paid to activate the secret skill for Knights…”
“Hey! Leylin, look!” Just as Leylin was about to enter the carriage, George snuck over and surreptitiously pointed to the side.
On another black-coloured horse carriage, Bessita was hugging her legs as she sat. Her shoulder had bloody marks on it, and she looked like she had just gone through a crying session.

“Ourin has always been Bessita’s number one ‘flower guardian’. Now that that group is almost completely dead, Bessita’s situation isn’t looking very good!”

George said next to Leylin’s ear, with an expression that implied that Leylin’s chance had come.

“I’ve already lost interest in her! Anyway, we’re in such danger, can’t you control your lower half a little?”

Leylin didn’t really know what to say. He pointed to George’s collar, and on those clothes were marks from a girl’s lipstick. He really didn’t know when this beast had been able to fool around.

“Hehe….my brother, it’s only in this kind of dangerous moment that we preparatory Knights can show our might! And girls will always show goodwill towards the man who saved them. This is the most basic of techniques!”

George took out something that was similar to a handkerchief from his bosom, smugly showing his harvest. “Can you see? Just today, I’ve already won the goodwill of three ladies…..”

“Yeah…..” Leylin had nothing to say.

When thinking of his playboy past, “It seems that the previous Leylin always used force when he met a girl he liked, seriously……”

“Alright, it’s time to set off!” Leylin saw the black-robed Knights gather the acolyte corpses together. They took out several magic crystals and passed them to the white-robed Magi, before hurriedly changing the topic.
“The Great Plains of Death is indeed a place no ordinary person can cross!”

Leylin sat in the carriage as his body constantly jolted up and down. The tiny window opened as a golden ray of sunshine peeked in, giving the interior of the carriage a trace of liveliness. It had already been over ten days since the attack of the plains direwolves pack. During these ten days, the travelling party encountered an increasing amount of danger as they ventured deeper into the plains. Only now did Leylin find out that the plains’ direwolves were merely at the bottom of the food chain. There were still many more cunning and vicious predators above them.

On the way, Leylin saw several animal colonies whose numbers were not inferior to that of the direwolf pack from before. Besides the plains’ direwolves, there were flocks of huge black birds that were several meters tall and even enormous monsters, dozens of meters long, which looked like sabre-tooth tigers, except their bodies were like tiny mountains. Just their aura alone caused Leylin to feel suffocated.

Fortunately, the deaths of the apprentices seemed to have reached the limit and the white-robed Magi had started to act. Not only did they set up magical defensive arrays on the carriages, they also directly stepped forward to disperse the animal groups that attacked. Through these measures, a large number of casualties was
The most dangerous time was when they confronted the monster that was dozens of meters long. Thankfully, that small mountain-like monster seemed to possess some intelligence and knew that the white robed Magi were not to be trifled with. It quickly left after a short confrontation and did not unleash any attacks, causing everyone in the travelling party to sigh in relief.

“It’s time!” Leylin took out his pocket watch and looked at the clock hand. It had already reached the 3 o’clock position. He stood up and opened the front door of the carriage. A moist breeze blew towards him, bringing a salty smell with it. It smelt very fresh and clean and Leylin could not help but deeply breath in a few times before seating himself besides Angelo.

“Good afternoon! Sir Angelo!”

“Good afternoon! Such a courteous noble gentleman!” Angelo did not turn as he directly handed over the horsewhip and reins to Leylin, “Good timing, I need to rest for a while!”

Leylin chuckled as he received the horsewhip and skilfully urged on the carriage.

Angelo leaned to one side as he unclasped a bottle at his waist. When he opened it, a strong alcohol smell floated out, and as he lowered his head to take a gulp, his eyes narrowed in joy.

“We are about to reach our destination. Based on the fact that you’ve helped me drive the carriage for a month, I can answer two of your questions!”

Leylin was just enjoying the view on both sides when he heard Angelo’s voice sound out.

“Alright!” Leylin lightly smiled. He had specially tried to get into Angelo’s good books and this was one of the reasons why he had done so.

“Then my first question is, what will there be at our destination?”
“Some temporary tents set up by the various Magus academies. Over there, all of you can freely choose an academy to join based on your interests and also undergo an even more accurate aptitude test!”

Angelo looked a little impatient as he answered, “These things will be explained by the great Magi when we arrive, don’t waste your opportunity!”

“An accurate aptitude test?” Leylin was stunned. Soon after, he recalled that they had only managed to identify his talent in magic initially before being sent onto the carriage by the viscount. As for how good his talent was in comparison to others, he did not have the slightest inkling.

“Temporary tents set up by the Magus academies? Looks like this is similar to the school recruitments of my previous world. I wonder what the requirements are.” Leylin silently thought to himself.

“Alright then! My second question! In your heart, what is a Magus!”

Leylin asked his second question.

“A Magus? They control enormous power and pursue the truth, with an equivalent exchange as their doctrine. Brat, don’t daydream of obtaining any free benefits from a Magus, or else the flames of desire will gush out from the abyss and punish your soul!”

Angelo’s face twitched as if he had thought of an unfortunate event, while his voice became extremely low.

“Pursuit of truth, equivalent exchange? I like it!” The corners of Leylin’s mouth formed a smile.

After answering, Angelo seemed to have lost all interest in talking. He ferociously chugged down two mouthfuls of the potent alcohol as he lowered his head and closed his eyes. Ten minutes later, the sounds of snoring could be heard.

Leylin dully gazed at the scenery to his front. Although the plains were very beautiful, after a whole month of looking at the same...
things, he now felt like throwing up at the sight of it.
“This is……”
As the carriage continued to advance, the green in the distance became less and less. In place of it was a vast blue, and wave after wave of strong winds.
“We’ve finally arrived, the Death Beach!”
The sleeping Angelo opened his eyes and looked at Leylin, “We’ve reached our destination!”
As they neared the sea, a small town-like place appeared at the end of his line of sight.
Numerous tents of various shapes and sizes stood together, and they formed a huge camp. Surrounding them were dozens of carriages similar to the one Leylin was driving.
And what numbered the most were acolytes of similar ages as them, around thirteen to fourteen years old, each and every one of them carrying looks of curiosity on their faces. Leylin did a rough estimate and counted that there were at least hundreds of them, filling up the entire camp. From time to time, some acolytes walked out from the tents, many different expressions adorning their faces.
“Alright! Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the intermediate stop of our travelling destination, the Death Beach! You will all decide on your future academy here, and then return back to your respective academies with your teachers to practice magic!”
The horse carriage halted, and three white robes came out and gathered the acolytes, then the leader Crow began speaking.
“Now, follow me into the campgrounds, and choose an academy. Remember, you may check on all the various academies, but once you have signed a contract to join one, you must not renege! Anyone who disobeys will be hung to death at the gate of the camp!”
Crow’s frosty words made the acolytes hearts turn cold.
“Haha! Crow! You guys are pretty late today!” A voice sounded,
and a fatty walked out from the camp grounds. He too was wearing a white robe, and he greeted: “Don’t scare these adorable newbies!” “There were some difficulties along the way!” Crow explained. “Alright! Newbies! Now follow me into the camp!” Fatty spoke with Crow and the others for a while more, then turned his head and shouted to Leylin and the rest. “You guys can call me Jevon, of the beautiful Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. Trust me, if you are to choose an academy, the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower is definitely your best choice!” Jevon said as he brought the acolytes into the camp. Once they entered, various sounds travelled into their ears, reminding Leylin of the marketplaces in his previous world. As for Crow and the other two white robes, they seemed to have something else to do, and they soon left the group. The surroundings were bustling with activity, mostly due to acolytes just like them. Some of them had gathered in a circle, while there were others who were entering or exiting the tents. Jevon brought Leylin and the rest, a total of 40 odd people, into the middle of the camp grounds. Here, was a large tent of pure white colour, and there were still strange flower patterns on the outside of it They seemed like both ornaments, and yet resembled writing as well. Leylin could not help but look at it closely, “A.I Chip! Begin Scan!” [Beep! Forming Image!] The A.I Chip sent the information, but in the constructed image, there was nothing on the white tent, as if the pattern had never existed before. “How could this be?” Leylin stared at the tent once again with disbelief. With every passing minute and second, the patterns on the tent seemed lifelike, constantly twisting itself. “Hehe!” “Haha!” “Ji Ji!” Various noises travelled to Leylin’s ears. The surrounding lights
seemed to distort itself, and Leylin looked at his own hands. At this point, his arm seemed to have been pulled into a long shape, which looked extremely slender.

“Leylin! Leylin! What’s wrong with you?” At this point, there was a pat on Leylin’s shoulder.

Leylin’s whole body suddenly quivered, and he came to his senses. Looking at the surroundings, the acolytes were still listening to Fatty Jevon’s speech, and everything seemed to revert back to its normal state.

“Could it be that it wasn’t an illusion earlier?” Leylin got scared, “A.I Chip, reproduce the situation I was in earlier!”

[Beep!] A pale blue light display appeared, and the series of images earlier appeared continuously in front of Leylin’s eyes, [An anomaly in the cerebral vessel, an immediate inspection is proposed!] [An anomaly is found in the Host’s condition! Staying away is advised!] [The Host body has returned to normal!]

Numerous lines of data kept emerging, which let Leylin know that it was not an illusion earlier.

“Phew……Magi, are they always this mysterious?” Leylin wiped his cold sweat off, still carrying a lingering fear of the events earlier.

“Leylin! Your complexion is really bad! Could it be that you have fallen ill?” George asked from the side.

“No matter who, their expressions won’t be any better if they had experienced that earlier!”

“No……Nothing……Where did Jevon stop at?” Leylin hurriedly digressed.

“Oh! We need to fill in a form, and take the aptitude test! And then it will be free time, and we can choose our academy autonomously!”

“Because you guys have come a day late, you only have a day’s worth of time left, and in this span of period, you must choose an
academy where you will practice magic in, if not you will have to wait until next year!” Jevon was still speaking loudly ahead of them.

Now, all of you line up and take the form from me one by one, and then enter for the test!”

Jevon sat behind a white table, and took out a stack of forms and placed them down.

The line moved forward quickly, and very soon it was Leylin’s turn.

“Fill in your particulars in this form, and then enter the tent and follow the instructions of the person inside!”

Leylin took the form and realised that it was made of sheepskin paper. The particulars required were minimal, only a name, age and location born, as well as a few others.

Picking up the goose feather pen on the table, Leylin filled in the form very quickly.

The faint, red coloured, inked flower patterns on the sheepskin seemed to be very beautiful.

“I never thought that this brat’s handwriting from the mainland is still pretty good!” After Leylin finished writing, he picked up the sheepskin paper and entered the white tent.

“Come over!” An ancient voice sounded.

It was very spacious inside the tent, and there was only a white-haired old lady sitting on a black chair and a crystal ball which rested on a table.

“Okay! Why would I suddenly think of those divination witches!”

“Hello!” Leylin greeted the witch.

“Bring the form here!” Clearly, this witch was not having any of it, and her voice was still frosty cold.

“Leylin huh? Place your hands on the crystal ball!”
Leylin followed the witch’s instructions and placed both of his hands on the crystal ball. Icy cold! Vibrations! A strange tactile feeling was transmitted from the tip of his fingers. Leylin’s head hurt as if there was a glass rod stirring inside. Along with the start of his headache, the crystal ball in front of Leylin also emitted a faint glow. “Very good! Don’t let go! The witch stared attentively at the crystal ball. As the pain increased, the crystal ball in Leylin’s hands also grew brighter, “No! No more!” Leylin clenched his teeth, and the pain that practically split his brain into two caused him to loosen his grip uncontrollably. “Okay! So you are at this level?” The witch nodded her head. She took out a goose feather pen and scribbled on Leylin’s form. “We have categorised the aptitude of the acolytes into five grades, with the first grade as the worst and the fifth grade as the best. You are in the third grade, a middle ranked grade!” The witch said as she turned a ring on her hand and made a strange mark on the sheepskin, which had been shining brightly with light. “My examination here is over, you go on behind me! Next!” Seeing a young girl with freckles entering the tent, Leylin took the sheepskin paper, stood up and gave his thanks, and then lifted the hanging curtain of the tent, heading to the next procedure in line.
The area was still as spacious as the one earlier, and in the middle, there was a white bearded old geezer. “From the layout of this tent, there should only be two tests. It is really simple!” Leylin thought, as he sat in front of the old geezer and handed the form over to him. “Third grade? Not too bad!” The white-bearded old geezer stroked his chin, “Alright! Now to test for elemental affinity!”

The old geezer knocked on the tabletop and it split open, and a black basin rose from the centre. This water basin was not smooth. It seemed to be made of stone, and there was a kind of liquid metal flowing inside that resembled mercury. “Carefully look into the water!” The old geezer’s voice sounded, seemingly carrying an authoritative tone.

Leylin could not help but to divert all his attention towards the centre of the water basin. With his constant focus, the mercury in the middle swirled continuously and turned into a whirlpool, as if a mouth had opened at the bottom.

“Now, tell me, what do you see?” Leylin’s eyes were a little glazed over, “Shadows, and a black coloured whirlpool! And there are red spots near the outer circumference!”

“Anything else?”

“There are also green specks of light in the surrounding area!”

“Is there a lot of green?”

“Not at all! Very little!”

“Okay!” The old geezer snapped his fingers, and Leylin suddenly came back to his senses, “What happened to me!”

“Your test is already over! In the aspect of elemental affinities, you have the highest affinity with the Dark and Shadow elements, after that is the Fire element, and you also have a smidgen of affinity with the Plant element!”
As the old geezer spoke, he rapidly filled in the form and added his handprint.

“Let me give you some advice! Magi are able to use every kind of energy! But only by following the path you have the highest affinity with, can you progress the furthest!”

The old geezer handed the form back to Leylin, “Alright! Your test is over. Walk out from the back entrance and start choosing your academy!”

Leylin bowed, and then left the tent.

As he lifted the canopy at the back, a ray of sunlight came shining down.

“A.I Chip, reproduce the state I was in earlier!”

[……An unknown interference has caused the host to enter a state of hypnosis!]

“As expected!” Leylin’s face darkened, and then he exhaled helplessly, “Thankfully, the other party does not have any bad intentions, if not……”

Deep in his heart, his thirst for power only grew more intense.

“Hey! Leylin!” George’s voice rang beside his ears, “You finished your aptitude test too?”

George’s voice travelled over.

“Yeah!” Leylin nodded his head and waved the sheepskin paper form in his hands.

“I have completed it too, hehe! I, this young master, am a genius with a fourth-grade aptitude!” George laughed loudly, wearing an excessively smug expression!

“I am not too familiar with the grading of acolytes, could you explain it in detail for me?” Leylin asked.

George’s family was much greater than Viscount Farlier’s family, and he was able to know more secrets regarding the Magi.

“Of course! This is all common knowledge. No matter which academy you enter, there will be people who will tell you.” George
The aptitudes of the acolytes are ranked according to the chance of being promoted to a proper Magus, and they are categorised into 5 grades! And the fifth grade is the highest, with a 90 percent chance of becoming a Magus!"

"The fourth grade is slightly inferior, but there is still a 50 percent chance! I, this young master, am a genius at this level! Haha…… My father will definitely be elated!" George digressed, he was clearly too excited.

"And the rest? Hurry and say it!" Leylin punched George’s shoulder and finally brought George back on track.

"Oh? Earlier I mentioned up to the fourth grade. What’s below it is the third grade, where there is a ten percent chance of becoming a Magus. As for the second grade, there is only a 2 to 3 percent chance, and the first grade is the worst, with only a 1 percent or even 0.1 percent chance."

"Anyway, there is only a chance for third grade and above. As for the first and second grade, basically, they can only be an acolyte their whole life!"

"So that is the case. It seems like my grade is middle ranked. There should be no academy that will reject me, nor would they regard me as important!" Leylin analysed his current situation.

"How about elemental affinity?" Leylin continued asking.

"Elemental affinity is the future path of a Magus, you know, some Magi can manipulate lightning, some Magi can manipulate fire, and some others can even manipulate frost! These are all paths of choice."

"Although a Magus is able to use any type of elemental spell, in theory, the ones with the highest affinity will not only let the casting speed be faster but also contain more power. If a Fire element Magus wanted to cast a water-based spell, not only would he consume more spiritual energy, but the might of the spell would
also weaken greatly. There could be a water-based pool summoning that ends up as only a water ball!"

“All in all, the elemental affinity will determine the path of a Magus, and the aptitude will determine how far a Magus can walk on that path!”

George concluded.

“The last sentence makes perfect sense, but it doesn’t seem to be yours!” Leylin repeated the words of the last sentence.

“He he! You found out. These are the words of a travelling Magus! I saw them in my father’s study room.” George said embarrassedly, as he scratched his head.

“Oh right! I finally managed to inquire as to why the black-robed Knights were so cold and distant!”

George seemed to have remembered something and was itching to share the news.

“The strength of a Magus, even if he is only an acolyte, is not something a Knight can withstand, so don’t you think that the black robes’ performance when we journeyed was a little strange?”

“There is indeed something strange about it!” Leylin nodded his head and asked with a conjecture, “Could it be that they have some background?”

“No! No! No!” George shook his head, “My dear brother, you are guessing in the completely wrong direction; these black robed Knights are actually one of the experiments of a Magus!”

“An experiment!” Leylin’s eyes widened. In his world, conducting a live experiment had always been a taboo for science, and even if there were any, they were done in secrecy. But here, they had actually done it so openly and aboveboard.

“In the process of the experiment, this batch of experiment samples had already sustained an overdose of radiation and would not live more than several years. That was why they were used as disposables, to escort acolytes like us!”
“This was the reason?” Leylin thought of Angelo’s pale face and silently nodded his head. Earlier, the A.I Chip had scanned and detected traces of radiation, but the radiation discovered on the white robe Magi were a hundred times more concentrated, so Leylin naturally thought that there was no effect.

“For us Magi, we will be acolytes at least; which Knight would not want to prostrate themselves and hope that we pick them to serve us in the future. The only ones who will not take us seriously are those who will not live for longer than a few days!”

George said with some regrets. His face was indignant, it seems like, as an heir to a large noble family, he was displeased with the rude manners of the black robes from before.

“I heard that for the guys from the west, not only had they been treated like young masters by the Knights along the journey, they had even slept with some of them!” George’s dissatisfaction only lasted a moment, before it turned into a vulgar expression.

“Slept with some of them?” Leylin was a little more awake, “There are also female Knights?”

“Of course, although female Knights are generally quite muscular, a few have practised some unique techniques so they still look pretty good!”

“Also, a female Knight’s stamina is rather good and can withstand all kinds of treatment. Especially during intercourse, her pair of toned thighs wrapping around you, that feeling is too wonderful for words!” George’s current character was that of a lecherous swine.

Leylin recalled his memories. The brat of the past was also a playboy, but obviously, he could not compete with George who was from such a large noble family, so he had indeed not touched a pretty female Knight before.

There were several female Knights under the Viscount, but they all
had bulging muscles, which made Leylin feel revolted. Shaking his head, he did not wish to discuss the contents of this matter with George.

“I understand now. Let’s go and choose our academy!”

“This! My father has already chosen for me, I’ll be attending the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. My family has a relationship with one of the senior Magi inside……Why don’t you come with me too!” George gave an invitation.

Leylin was a little tempted, but seeing the ring on his neck, he still hesitated,

“Earlier, that Magus never said which academy the ring could help me get into. What if it turns into a restriction instead?”

“No! I wish to walk and look around more!” Leylin declined politely.

“Alright then, I am going to carry out the procedures. You can come to the area for the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower to look for me!” George waved his hands and squeezed into the crowd.

“Where should I go? I don’t care anymore; let’s check out the academies first!”

Leylin strolled aimlessly around the camp and saw all sorts of interesting tents with strange shapes and sizes. Some were like a giant mushroom, where a small fan-shaped door opened in the middle, and some might very well have used some sort of strange horned devil skull, where the acolytes can walk into the tent through the devil’s ferocious mouth as though they were stepping into a haunted house.

And at the front of all these different buildings were marked with words.

“It is the language of the mainland, that’s still fine!” Leylin took a look, saw some of the academy names, and memorised them, “Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Mercifura Academy, Wetland Gardens……”
15 - Acolytes

Under the various academy names, there were details such as specialisation areas, and famous Magi, for the acolytes to consider.

“All these are for us to choose an academy according to our elemental affinities!”

Leylin nodded his head, “My elemental affinity with the Shadow and Dark elements is the highest, Fire is secondary, and lastly the Plant element is the most negligible unless I want to stay as an acolyte my whole life!”

“And……” Leylin took down the Magus ring that had been hanging around his neck.

“A.I Chip! Scan the patterns on the ring, and compare them with images of the academies I passed by before!”

[Beep! Mission initialising, beginning to scan. Scan complete, comparing with database……] [Comparison completed. Similarity level: Abyssal Bone Forest Academy 67.3%, Mercifura Academy 54.4%, Sage Gotham’s Hut 23.1% ……]

“So these three academies have the highest probabilities?”

Leylin stroked his chin, “From the various introductions of the academies, I remember that Mercifura Academy specialises in the Fire and Plant elements, as well as the creation of magic artifacts. Sage Gotham’s Hut is not known for famous Shadow and Dark element Magi either.”

“It seems like the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is the best choice?
They’re famous for their specialisation in the Dark element, and is also a pioneer in the research of souls.”
"But this Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Why does the name sound like a cult from the previous world?!”
“It seems like a Shadow and Dark element affinity user like me can never get close to the light!” After thinking for a while, Leylin still decided to take a look no matter what. At the very least, one cannot hinder their progress based on a name alone.
“I remember the recruiting area for the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes; it seems to be on the east side of the camp!”
Leylin walked for about 10 minutes and finally reached a tent that was constructed with numerous white bones. The words on top were arranged to form, “The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy welcomes you!” These big words were all written in red and dripping blood, which scared many of the surrounding acolytes away, and seeing this made Leylin rather speechless.
“Why would they construct such a scary looking scene? To frighten people? They could have at least done it after signing the contract; otherwise, all the acolytes will be scared away!”
Leylin shook his head and walked into the tent of white bones. As he entered, a cold aura that reeked of blood engulfed Leylin and made his hair stand on ends.
“He he he……After waiting for long, finally, one comes!”
“Where are you? Who is speaking?” Leylin received a shock.
“Excuse me! You are stepping on my hand!” The voice travelling from beneath Leylin’s feet, which made him jump in fright. Only then did he realise that his shoes were stepping on a withered palm. Leylin hurriedly jumped away, “Sorry, Sir!”
“No worries, but could you move your feet? They are stepping on my right leg now!”
Leylin then realised that the ground inside the tent was uneven and there were many dried bones littered about, and earlier he had
unsuspectingly stepped on some. As Leylin moved backwards, the few dried bones of hands and legs began to assemble into a skeletal figure. Taking a closer look, there was a faint layer of skin on top of this skeleton which had covered the bones and on the skull where the eyes were, two green light flickered faintly, which was extremely terrifying.

“I’m sorry! Sir!” Leylin gulped and hurriedly apologised. “No matter!” The white bony teeth clacked and produced a human voice: “Let me introduce myself, I am a professor of the Shadow and Dark elements. You can call me Dorotte!”

“My most respected Sir Dorotte, hello!” Leylin bowed once again. “You coming here, does that mean you wish to enter the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?” The bony white Dorotte conjured a black robe from nowhere and concealed its body within it, which soothed Leylin’s nerves a little.

“Before that, I wish to see the rules set by the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!”

“Alright!” Dorotte took out a dusty sheet of sheepskin paper from behind and handed it over to Leylin. According to the ancient agreement, after choosing our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you are receiving the right to partake in the basic lessons of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, a set of elementary meditation techniques, 5 years of residence, lodging, and food free of charge. We also allow you to use magic crystals as remuneration, to exchange for knowledge from the professors……” Dorotte spoke nonstop while Leylin read rapidly and compared with the information constantly presented by the A.I. Chip. He discovered that what Dorotte said was the exact same as the information on the sheepskin paper. In terms of basic hospitality, it was pretty similar amongst the various academies.
The feedback from the A.I. Chip also indicated that although it could not successfully scan the person in front of him, Dorotte had unintentionally released a fluctuating radiation which implied that Dorotte’s strength was above the 3 white robes of the travelling party and this startled Leylin.

“I have understood the basic terms now, may I know what kind of payment is needed to enter the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

“Thirteen magic crystals or an item identical in value!” Dorotte said.

“I will use this item to exchange!” Leylin made up his mind and withdrew the Magus ring hung around his neck.

“You seem to have an interesting toy!” The green flame in Dorotte’s eyes flashed.

The bony white hand took the ring and placed it in its palm, and then took out an item similar to a magnifying glass and inspected it.

“Mn…….It is indeed rather interesting, I haven’t seen these patterns in a long time!”

“A low-grade magic artifact! It looks like it was created in our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and there is a carved inscription of a hastening spell formation, but it is broken. It’s worth fifteen magic crystals!”

“Now! Newbie, are you willing to mortgage this ring for your school fees? Once you have decided, sign the ancient contract of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Dorotte said, with an accentuated tone.

“I accept!” Leylin’s resolute voice sounded.

“Good! I hereby declare that the contract is formed!” Dorotte said, “Hand over your form to me!”

After receiving Leylin’s form, Dorotte laughed, “Shadow and Dark element affinity, no wonder you chose our academy. In this Death Beach, we are the most outstanding!”

“Since you forked out a greater amount than the fees required, I
hereby announce that you have been accepted and won’t need an entry test! Take this card! Go back and rest. Tomorrow we will proceed with our journey back to the school!” Dorotte took out something that resembled a metal card. Leylin received it and saw that a number ‘9’ was written on it. “It is over just like this? Don’t we have to sign a contract or something?” Leylin asked casually. “Ha ha ha……Never once was there someone who dared to deceive a Magus!” Dorotte sniggered, and it gave Leylin the chills. “Then I will leave first, Sir!” Leylin bowed and walked out of the tent. He went to the area behind the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy tent. Behind the recruitment area of these academies, there were rows of wooden huts erected, and in the middle, youths of both genders were walking in and out of them. They seemed to be there as the temporary residence for acolytes. “Hey! Nice to meet you, are you new here?” Creak! The wooden door that was numbered ‘6’ opened and an acolyte with red hair and blue eyes walked out from it and greeted Leylin. “Hi! I am Leylin!” Leylin smiled. “Ha ha! I am Beirut. As for my family background, it isn’t very important since it cannot be used on another continent!” Beirut seemed to be very amiable. “Come! Let me introduce you!” Beirut headed towards the various fan-shaped huts, “Fellows! We have a new companion!” Several acolytes streamed out from the wooden doors and gathered together. Leylin counted a total of seven or eight people. “Good afternoon! I am Kaliweir of the Lance Empire, a fourth-grade acolyte!” A boy who seemed to have an air of leadership did a self-introduction. “You seem to be pretty late!” Kaliweir said.
“We met with some troubles along the way, in the Great Plains of Death!” Leylin said ambiguously, not wanting to say much.
“The Great Plains of Death? It is indeed very dangerous!” Kaliweir looked at the acolytes behind him, “Let me introduce them!”
“This is Beirut, whom you have met earlier!”
“This is Hancock, a third-grade acolyte!” A largely built Caucasian guy scratched his head in embarrassment, looking simple and honest.
“This is Raynor, a fourth-grade acolyte!” He was a small boy with a skinny build, but there was a tinge of pride in his eyes.
“This is Guricha, a second-grade acolyte! And over there are Nyssa and Dodoria, both first-grade acolytes!” Although Kaliweir had restrained himself, Leylin could still detect signs of disdain in his words.
First-grade acolyte, second-grade acolyte, they could basically only be an acolyte their whole lives so one couldn’t blame him for shunning them.
“How……How are you!” Guricha forced a smile and greeting. As for Nyssa and Dodolia, they were both little girls, and some baby fat were still on their cheeks. At this point, they glanced downwards.
“Who is that?” Leylin pursed his lips.
Beside their small circle was a boy dressed in black, his face pale. Standing at the side, he did not seem to fit in with the rest and looked rather arrogant.
“He! He is Jayden! Our genius of this semester, a fifth-grade acolyte! Becoming a Magus is only a matter of time! Kaliweir’s expression turned sour, and he seemed to have some bitterness in his words.
“Woah……a fifth-grade acolyte. He has a 90 percent chance of becoming a Magus! No wonder he is so arrogant!” Leylin thought, inhaling a breath of cold air, and couldn’t help but to give Jayden a
few more glances.
“Hmph!” As if noticing the crowd looking at him, Jayden silently harrumphed and entered his own wooden hut. This wooden hut obviously had a larger surface area, and the adornments were more exquisite.
“As a fifth-grade acolyte, his treatment will be the best Who knows, there might be some professors looking to take him under their wings early!”
Kaliweir face soured even more.
Leylin realised that this group of acolytes was split into a few cliques. The third-grade acolytes and fourth-grade acolytes were superior to the lower grade acolytes but rather inferior to Jayden, the fifth-grade acolyte.
As for the lowest grade acolytes like Guricha, they all stuck together pitifully and formed a clique. And then there was Jayden, who was segregated away from these two groups.
“Hello, everyone! I am Leylin, and my aptitude is……third grade!”
Leylin said.
“Welcome!” Kaliweir revealed a smile on his face, while Guricha and the two girls seemed to have their self-esteem lower as they greeted him and returned back into their huts.
“Don’t bother with them, their highest potential will only be that of a third-grade acolyte!” Raynor said with disdain.

“Yeah! That’s right, to acolytes, aptitudes are more important!” Leylin agreed.

Although this group of youths was pretty silent during the forming of their cliques, he naturally did the thing that would benefit him the most.

Amongst the acolytes, Jayden had the capability to be independent, but Leylin did not have such a good aptitude, so he could only join a group. Also, by comparing, naturally it was the group with Kaliweir’s as the head with a better future.

“Haha……Welcome! Welcome! With your participation, our group is now more robust, there will definitely be a day where I will make that person regret!” Kaliweir said while clenching his teeth. Afterwards, a few of them arranged to meet after dinner, and they went back to their respective huts.

“Beirut, what did you mean earlier when you said it was a different continent?” Leylin looked for the most amiable, Beirut, and asked him as he was concerned about what Beirut had said earlier.

“Oh…… This, you know! Actually, the continent we’re on is rather small. To the outside world, it is known as the Chernobyl Islands!” “Island?” Leylin gaped. According to his journey in the past half a
year, he could almost be certain that this continent was as huge as the Eurasian continent he was in from the previous world. But it was only an island here?

“Oh! Sorry! Geography is my weak subject, and it has often made my home tutor shudder in rage!” Leylin explained.

Truth be told, the Farlier family is only a noble family, and its heritage was pretty short. It couldn’t be compared to the nobles of those huge families, so not knowing was not a rare thing.

“Ha ha!” Hearing Leylin speak, Beirut laughed jovially, “Me too! I have made 5 etiquette tutors leave in rage! In the end, my father offered a monthly salary, but still no one wanted to teach me. This was something my father had specially told me right before I left!”

“Let us continue on the previous topic, we are in the Chernobyl Islands, and the outside world has coined another name for it: The Barren Islands!”

“Barren?” Leylin was a little skeptical, “There are still quite a few people here and plenty of kingdoms, could it be that it is referring to the lack of certain resources?”

“That’s right! In the Chernobyl Islands, due to the environment here, or some external factors, the land here is unable to produce any of the materials a Magus needs. Apart from the earnest acolytes and Magi in seclusion, there are absolutely no other traces of Magi here on this continent!”

“So that is the case!” Leylin nodded his head, and although there were myths of Magi back in his homeland, only the founder of the Farlier family has seen a Magus. From this, one can see the rarity of Magi.

“And so, we need to go to the other side of the seas before we can truly find a continent! I heard that not only are there various kinds of resources that Magi need, but there are countless traces of secrets and remnants of experimental labs. On the whole, the continent has various academies and organisations that trade and exchange the
information of magic!”
“On that continent, Magi are not a legend! Although they are still uncommon, even a regular human may be able to see one! Only there can we advance in the progress of our acolyte abilities!” Beirut’s eyes gave off obvious signs of yearning.
“So that is the case! What is the name of that continent then?” Leylin asked.
“I don’t know!” Beirut shook his head, “That continent is too huge! There was never a unified name for it. As for us, we’re going to the south of the continent, and it is known as the narrow coastal regions of the south! Just the south coastal regions alone is several times bigger than the Chernobyl Islands that we’re on!
“Siii!” Leylin sucked in a breath of cold air.
“So huge?”
“This world is indeed very vast. The higher one stands, the further one can see! This is a phrase from a bard that I like very much.” Beirut concluded.
“Thank you for your explanation! I think I need some time to digest the information!” Leylin bade his farewells and returned to his own hut.
There was a metal plaque on the yellow wooden door where a “9” was written, and it looked to be rather rusty.
Pushing the door open, an odour of rot and rust invaded his nose. Leylin uncontrollably sneezed twice.
“It looks like this is just a gathering point, so the accommodations are rather simple!” Besides a bed and chair in the wooden hut, there was practically nothing else.
Leylin found a cloth, wiped down the chair, and then sat on it.
* Creak Creak * The wooden chair creaked continuously, which made Leylin worry that it would be crushed into pieces in the next moment.
“Lucky it is just for a night! In this condition, it would be better to
Leylin patted the dust off his body and walked out of the wooden hut. He had made plans to meet with George and the others, and since he had already chosen his academy now, he should tell them so that they could properly write to each other in the future.

For the batch of acolytes that Leylin was in, they were considered one of the later groups to reach the camp. After Leylin’s batch had chosen their schools, the various tents of the academies seemed to have fewer people visiting them, and it looked to be much quieter.

“Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, it’s here!” Leylin walked to the back of the student quarters and blocked the path of a familiar girl from the same travelling party.

“Hi Lisa, do you know where George is?” Lisa was a red-haired girl who had matured early; one could already see the fine curves on her body.

“Ley…… Leylin!” Lisa blushed, as she had a good impression of Leylin, who had helped several acolytes along the journey a number of times.

“George is in room 13, I’ll call him for you!” Lisa picked up her skirt, and rapidly ran off.

Whiffing the perfume that was lingering in the air, Leylin’s heart trembled.

“Leylin!” This lecherous thought was very soon broken by a joyous voice.

George had obviously taken a bath and changed his clothes. He had also shaved his mustache and gave off a very refreshing look.

“Have you finished choosing your academy?” George said loudly, as he patted Leylin’s shoulder.

“Yes, I did, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Leylin replied.

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” George touched his chin, “I heard from my female seniors that it seems to be famous for its Shadow and Dark element magic! I hope you won’t piss in your
pants because of a skeleton during the night!"
“Female seniors?” Leylin shook his head and had even more admiration for George’s abilities for seducing women.
“Hehe……Those who are able to participate in the aptitude test are all of the nobility, and it just so happens that I met a distant cousin, an elder female cousin!” George laughed smugly as if having earned something.
“As for the skeletons and whatnot, I think we’ll see them not only at night but even in broad daylight!” Leylin laughed bitterly, as he had signed an acolyte contract with a skeleton not too long ago.
“No matter what, as long as you know the location it’s fine! Let’s keep in contact in the future!” George said seriously, a big change from his smug expression earlier.
“Let’s keep in contact!” Leylin nodded.
“Oh yeah! Do you know where Bessita went to?” George asked suddenly.
“Bessita?” Leylin shook his head.
After the previous attack of the wolves, the vibrant and beautiful girl had been much more silent, but at least she had endured and safely here arrived.
“Yeah! I heard from other companions that her aptitude wasn’t that great, only that of a second-grade acolyte, so she entered the Wetland Gardens Academy!
“I know now! Thanks!” Leylin was not too interested in the affairs of this girl.
Although she was the one the previous Leylin really admired, to him, a girl of thirteen or fourteen years of age was only a child! And the previous encounters were just a child’s mischief.
“How is it? Do you feel a little wasteful because you were unable to get her in your hands……?” George once again changed back to having a lewd expression.
“Scram……”
After another one to two hours, the sky had already darkened. Leylin was in the camp of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and enjoyed the dinner provided by the academy with the other acolytes.

This time, the dinner was extremely sumptuous, and because they were leaving tomorrow, they were generous with the portions. Various fruit juices and wine, fragrant barbecue chicken, fish sauce, truffles, fruits, and salads had all satisfied the belly of Leylin who had not eaten much ever since he appeared in the grasslands.

The acolytes were eating and drinking within several groups, and Leylin’s eyes looked towards the corner and found Professor Dorotte and Jayden standing at a corner. Jayden also spoke a few words to him occasionally.

“Having a fifth-grade acolyte in this semester, we are really lucky!” Beirut tore a huge strip of chicken thigh off the barbecue and gave it a huge bite.

“Ever since Jayden arrived, Professor Dorotte and him have spoken on a few occasions, I wonder what they are talking about?”

“For acolytes, the aptitude will greatly determine the progress of a Magus. What Professor Dorotte is doing is rather normal. Beirut, eat your barbecue chicken!”

Kaliweir’s voice turned cold, and only after seeing Beirut drink the fruit juice and lowering his head did he turn his gaze back on the barbecue.

“Although the aptitude is important for a Magus, it isn’t everything. Only the accumulation and comprehension of information is the true motivator and key to the rise of the Magi’s powers!”

A third-grade acolyte added.

Although it was the truth, the atmosphere in the group darkened as the saw Jayden and the professor chatting away. The group silently ate their delicacies, seemingly having lost their appetites.

“Ha ha…… Guricha, hurry, what happened, what happened next?”
On the other side, the lower aptitude acolytes sat in a circle with Guricha was in the middle, narrating a risky adventure. He had eloquence and was humorous in his speech. Nyssa and Dodoria held their tummies and laughed coquettishly as if they were two happy skylarks. Compared to them, this side was pretty silent. The group looked at each other and craned their necks, listening intently. However, only Kaliweir retained his prideful expression. Seeing that even the fourth-grade acolyte Raynor could not bear to go over and listen and seemed afraid of losing face, Leylin laughed silently. “After all, they are just a bunch of kids!”

After dinner time was over, the group bade their goodbyes and went back to their respective huts. After today’s simple cleaning, Leylin’s hut was barely accommodative. At least there was not as much dust as before. Leylin lay on his bed without removing his clothes, and he stared blankly at the ceiling as if he was lost in thought. “I finally entered an academy! It is also time for the cultivation of Magi to open its doors for me!”
An alarm sounded, produced by the ringing of a copper plate, waking Leylin up from his deep slumber. He opened his eyes. A hint of sunlight shone through the window, landing on Leylin’s shoes.

“It’s already morning?” Leylin got up, hastily washed up, and went outside.

“Good morning!”

“Good morning! Leylin!” Beirut had two dark circles around his eyes and kept yawning.

“The conditions here are the worst! There are actually fleas and fungi on my blanket, my god! I cannot remain here for a moment longer!” Voices of complaint sounded from time to time. These acolytes were all of the noble birth and their daily accommodations had not been lacking, so naturally they were suffering now.

Today, everyone was lacking sleep and had dark circles around their eyes.

Although Leylin could not sleep at the start, he had managed to fall asleep later in the night. Right now his vigor was greater than the others, and he still had an inclination to walk around. The whole campground seemed to be bustling with activity. There were many who were taking down the tents, and the floors were littered with rubbish.
As Leylin silently walked around, many thoughts crossed his mind. “Every year at this time, there will be batches of acolytes risking their lives to come here and walk on the path of a Magus. And right now, this is just my starting point!”

“Gather around! Gather around! Everyone gather according to your academy, and the respective professors will take charge! Do not wander off!” A white-bearded geezer shouted in the centre of the campgrounds.

His voice, however, was extremely piercing to the ears, as he used some kind of magic to make it resound throughout the camp.

“This has a much higher pitch than a trumpet from the previous world!” Leylin rubbed his ears, which felt like they had been trampled on, and hurriedly went towards the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy gathering area.

“Hey! Leylin, you’re back? Kaliweir was looking for you earlier.” Beirut greeted him.

During his short time here, Leylin had only managed to match the various faces with their names, but he had the best relationship with Beirut.

“My apologies! I strayed a little far and had forgotten to keep track of time! Did Kaliweir need something?” Leylin revealed an apologetic expression.

“It’s nothing! Dorotte asked him to make a head count, so you’ll just have to tell him later. Right now he is being smug about it!” Beirut shook his head.

“Alright! How are we going to leave, by ship?” Leylin looked over at the distant blue seas with boundless horizons, but there were no traces of any ships.

“Not only there are no ships, from a geographical point of view, we are not in a suitable location for a port.” Leylin was filled with suspicion.

“I guess so? However, it might take another half a year to get to
another continent!” Beirut scratched his head.

“Transportation in the ancient times is a little too behind in technology, needing around 1 year just to travel to school. Time cannot be wasted just like that; it needs to be used efficiently!” Leylin touched the 3 magic crystals that he had snatched from Ourin, which was in a leather pouch hung around his waist, seemingly deep in thoughts.

“Taking a boat? What naive thinking!” A frosty voice travelled over, bringing ridicule along with it.

“Jayden?” Leylin looked at the approaching black robed student.

“We are close to the Death Seas; any random fish in it is able to kill a Knight! Not to mention enormous beasts, and even ancient creatures, they all loathe the ships of humans and often bring storms and waves to them. So we would just be courting death if we were to take a ship!”

“A fish with the ability to kill a Knight?” Leylin widened his eyes. Right now he was still a preparatory Knight, and if what Jayden said was true, he would die if he were to fall into the sea?

Leylin delved into his subconsciousness and retrieved his body statistics.

[Leylin Farlier. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 1.9, Vitality: 1.9 Status: Healthy]

In the Great Plains of Death, Leylin had analysed the wolves’ flesh and had also belatedly discovered that their eyeballs contained a special component that complemented the Knights’ breathing techniques, so he had collected many of those eyeballs.

And with the contribution from these direwolves, Leylin had now reached the limits of a preparatory Knight.

According to the analysis of the A.I. Chip, when the stats have all reached 2, they have twice the strength of an average adult and is also at the bottleneck of a Preparatory Knight. Only by igniting their internal life energy can they get over this bottleneck.
Clenching his fist tightly, a strong force was controlled within his palms.

“Right now, if I were to hold a cross blade, I have the confidence to fend off against a squad of common soldiers! But even a Knight whose strength is above mine cannot defeat a mere fish in the Death Seas?”

Leylin was a little skeptical of it, “It could be that Jayden has exaggerated things, but the Death Seas containing dangers that even apply to Magi is a fact!”

“A.I. Chip! Is is possible to scan the seas nearby?”

[Beep! The radiation surrounding the host body is excessive! Unable to scan due to an interference of an unknown force field!]

The A.I. Chip replied.

“Radiation? Unknown force field?” Leylin looked at Dorotte, who wasn’t too far away, and had some understanding.

“In this continent, the Magi population is scarce and there isn’t much interference from radiation, so the A.I. Chip is able to scan up to a 20 li radius. But acolytes and Migi professors are present in this camp, which is why the interference is too strong, and hence, the A.I. Chip has limitations with its scanning abilities!”

“Right now, what is the furthest distance you can scan?” Leylin’s face darkened.

[Beep! Precise scanning range: Within 300 metres radius from the host’s body! Vague scanning range: Within 1000 metres!] The A.I. Chip intoned.

“Hu……” Leylin exhaled loudly, “Not too bad! This distance is enough to warn me of dangers! However, after reaching the other continent and the academy, this scanning range will most likely shorten once again!”

[To increase scanning range, please raise the level of the A.I. Chip!]

A message was sent from the A.I. Chip.

“I can still level up the A.I. Chip?” Leylin was ecstatic.
“Raise level!”

[Beep! The energy required is lacking, please replenish!] The robotic voice sounded, and brought Leylin down from Heaven into Hell.

“Damn!” The A.I. Chip has already disappeared from my original body so how can I retrieve it to replenish energy? Then again, even if I managed to, where am I going to find the energy?”

Leylin held his head and recovered after a while.

“Forget it, since its level is able to rise, I can just find a way in the future. As for now, its current functions are enough for me!”

“What did Jayden say to you guys earlier?” A voice sounded and brought the absent-minded Leylin back to reality.

When Leylin recovered, he discovered that Jayden had left without him knowing, and Kaliweir was now beside him.

“Him? He just spoke about setting off! I reckon he was bored, after all, not speaking to anyone all day is rather stifling!” Beirut surmised.

“Yeah, that’s true!” Kaliweir nodded his head and then looked at Leylin. “We’re about to set off, don’t go anywhere now. If you were to board the wrong ship, it would be rather troublesome!”

“Ship?” Leylin looked at the surface of the sea and still didn’t see any signs of a ship.

“Haha!” Kaliweir laughed loudly, “Who said it had to come from the water.”

“Look!”

Following the direction that Kaliweir pointed to, Leylin and Beirut raised their heads and gaped.

On the horizon, 3 massive white ships were slowly floating towards them.

As the ship approached, a massive shadow covered the whole camp, and it seemed as though darkness had descended upon the earth.
“Oh! Look!” “My god!” “How beautiful!”
The other people in the camp had also discovered the abnormalities, and many raised their heads, exclaiming in awe and shock.
“How is it? This is one of the Magus’ mode of transport, a dirigible! We will be riding these soon!” Kaliweir said rather smugly.

“All these were just told to him by Professor Dorotte, so what is there to be gloating about?” Jayden reappeared out of nowhere and said blandly.
“Dammit!” Kaliweir stamped his feet.
The 3 dirigibles constantly got closer and slowly lowered themselves onto the ground outside the camp, under the various cheers of the masses.
“En! They are rather similar to the blimps from my previous world, and each one has a very large aerostat gasbag on top of it, I wonder if they are filled with hydrogen gas?”
Leylin had some experience from his previous world, so he recovered from his astonishment faster than others, and pondered over the construction of the dirigibles.
The pure white dirigibles landed on the ground and let out thunderous growling noises.
The doors of the dirigibles then opened, and a few white-robed Magi walked out from them. There were also some movements within the camp, a few old geezers also walked out and exchanged words with them.
“Alright! Everyone bring all of your belongings and follow me. Don’t wander off on your own!”
Dorotte had a black cloak on, and the silhouette of his body was concealed within it. He began to gather the students.
The acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy all scrambled
and ran back to their little wooden huts to fetch their belongings. Leylin brought very few things with him. His belongings only consisted of a water sack, a leather bag, a cross blade hung from his waist, and a crossbow slung over his back.
The acolytes fervently left the campgrounds under the guidance of the professors of their respective academies, and they gathered into individual groups based on their academy.
“Alright! Listen to me! Pay attention to the names mentioned next! Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Wetland Gardens Academy…… All of you will board the dirigible on the right, numbered ‘332’. Don’t miss it! Professors, please take note of the number, and acolytes, follow your professors!”
“As for Mercifura Academy, Kerita Academy…… Your dirigible is in the center, numbered ‘955’.” The voice continued.
“…… Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Sage Gotham’s Hut…… Yours will be the one on the left, number ‘455’, don’t mix it up now!”
As Leylin finally heard Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he could not help but to glance at the dirigible on the left. As he approached it, he realised that the dirigible was simply too enormous. The aerostat gasbag at the top seemed like a gigantic rugby ball, casting its shadow on the ground.
“acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, follow me!” Green flames flickered in Dorotte’s eye sockets, and behind him were two figures, which seemed to be his servants or subordinates. Leylin walked in the centre of the group and glanced around. Under his keen observation, he noticed a few familiar faces from his travelling party. They also noticed him and smiled at him in response, also speaking to some fellows beside them. They all had excitement written across their faces. At the far right, George waved vigorously when it was his turn to board the dirigible, and entered the dirigible.
“From today onwards, the acolytes will all go their separate ways!”
A hint of sadness surfaced in Leylin’s heart, but it was suppressed very quickly.
Very soon it was Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s turn, and Dorotte led the way, stepping through the door first.

The acolytes hurriedly followed. When Leylin put more force in his legs, there was a sturdy reverberation coming from the floor beneath his shoes, as if he was stepping on a limestone floor.

“What a strange material! It looks like wood but it’s sturdier, is it some kind of alloy?”

Leylin looked at the greyish, patterned floor and couldn’t help but think about it.

“We’re here! This section of the corridor, from number ‘13’ to ‘32’, is the area designated for our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you all can allocate on the rooms on your own. Remember, my number is ‘14’. Look for me if you need something!”

After he finished talking, Dorotte turned, and his black cloak fluttered as he entered his room with the two servants.

“Alright! Now let me designate the rooms!” Kaliweir stood out and said.

“Hng!” Jayden harrumphed and casually picked a room, number ‘18’, and walked inside.

Kaliweir’s face turned red, and then white. He clenched his fist several times, only to put it down. “Good! Jayden chose room 18. Next, Beirut, you will be in room 15, Raynor you’re in room 16……”

Jayden left, and the remaining acolytes, Beirut, Raynor, and Leylin,
were in the same clique as Kaliweir. As for Guricha and his group, they did not dare to object at all. Leylin was allocated room 20. He didn’t say anything and hurried into his cabin. The room was rather small; it was just a partition. There was enough space for a bed, but hardly any room to stand at all. This reminded Leylin of the beds on the trains in his previous world, which were also as cramped, with barely enough room to stretch his limbs.

“Having a bed is considered good; I was just sleeping in my seat when travelling in the Great Plains of Death!” Leylin comforted himself.

“Ladies and Gentlemen! Welcome to the dirigible, I am your captain – Kirkwul Kroft Leebar, I wish you all a pleasant journey ahead!”

“There are a few announcements of note. Apart from the professors, the rest are not allowed to walk on the decks unless you wish to go flying down from the skies!……The cafeteria is in Hall 1, and Hall 2 is where the washrooms are. As for Hall 3, it’s a lounge; everyone is welcome to go there!”

A low pitched male voice rang throughout the room. Leylin looked around and noticed the sound was coming from a yellow bronze pipe, but did not know if it was an air duct or megaphone.

“We’re taking off!” Leylin felt weightless for a moment, and the ship swayed. He hurriedly scrambled towards a window. This window was only the size of a soccer ball and was very thick, so it was hard to see what was outside.

Following the dirigible’s ascent, the ground became smaller and smaller, and gradually, the camp in Leylin’s view turned into a black dot. Leylin placed his cross blade and crossbow aside and laid on the bed.
“I heard Professor Dorotte say that the journey will last for roughly a month, what a long period of time! Half a year has already passed since I left my family, but we still have not reached the academy yet!”
Absentmindedly, Leylin shut his eyes.
“Ding……Ding Dong……”
A melodious note rang, waking Leylin from his sleep. Leylin climbed out of bed and looked out the window, and was greeted by darkness.
“It is already evening!”
“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening!” Right now, the cafeteria is providing dinner. Today’s menu is foie gras with truffles roast chicken, white bread, squirrel meat……”
This time, the pleasant voice was that of a female’s.
Leylin rubbed his stomach and hurriedly stood up. He straightened his clothes and ran towards the cafeteria.
The corridor was rather dim and there was a small lamp every few steps, which produced a yellowish glow.
The surrounding wooden cabin doors opened, and acolytes came streaming out from them.
Right now, Hall 1 was already packed with acolytes but Leylin did not see any of the professors there. He wondered if there was a special room for them.
On the ceiling of the hall was a very large white coloured rock, which emanated a bright white light, just like a miniature sun.
The cafeteria was filled with long tables and white chairs, and it looked a little like a university canteen.
“Hey! Leylin, here!” In a corner, Beirut beckoned to him, sitting with a few other acolytes from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
“I’m here!” Leylin collected a silver coloured tray and cutlery, and after deliberating, he picked up a slice of white bread, a fried chicken drumstick, fruit salad, and a bottle of apple cider, and sat
beside Beirut.
“You guys sure are early!” Leylin greeted them.
“It’s you who’s late, could it be that you overslept?” Beirut said teasingly.
Leylin sat down, and gulped down half a bottle of apple cider, “Yeah, I did oversleep a little!”
Looking around the surroundings again, “Are we also travelling with these acolytes?”
At this moment, besides the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes, the hall was also filled with acolytes from other academies. These boys and girls sat together according to their respective academies and seemed distant towards one another.
“That’s right; we are on the same dirigible with Sage Gotham’s Hut, and a few other academies! As for Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, they are headed in a completely different direction from us, so we could only go our separate ways!” Raynor explained.
“So it’s like this!” Leylin said with a tinge of regret. “George and the others have all boarded the dirigible on the right, and it looks like the distance from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is rather far. I think there’ll be some problem with communication next time!”
After eating dinner, the masses returned to their own rooms to rest. Every day, apart from eating meals and sleeping, there did not seem to be anything else to do. This boredom lasted a whole fifteen days. One evening, the groups did not wish to go back into that tiny cabin room after eating dinner, so they sat around the table and started to chat.
“Beirut, what’s wrong with you?” Leylin looked at Beirut, who seemed to be in slight discomfort, and asked.
In these ten days, Beirut, who was the reincarnation of a chatterbox, had spoken of topics ranging from his family tree, to how a dish in the capital was created as if he was speaking fondly to a lover.
Leylin and the rest had already adapted, from being annoyed at his words to getting used to them, and now it was the only joy on this boring journey.
“Yeah! I still want to listen to your past relationships!” Raynor began to jeer.
“I have finished saying everything!” Beirut rolled his eyes, “I cannot think of what to talk about anymore!”
“I’m so bored!” Beirut lamented.
“Endure it; it’s only another half a month away! It was quite a distance from your home to the campground, so how did you spend your time all that while?” Leylin encouraged him, albeit a little curious.
“My house is located in the Porter Kingdom, which is on the edge of the Great Plains of Death. So we reached the campgrounds after walking for half a month!” Beirut said helplessly, as he rolled his eyes again.
“No wonder!” Leylin shook his head.
“Jayden, this is something that I saw first, what do you want?” A silver tray clattered on the floor, letting out a crisp noise.
Leylin turned around and saw Kaliweir growling, his hair slightly standing up like a furious lion.
On the other side, Jayden poked a golden barbequed chicken drumstick with his fork, “It belongs to whoever takes it first!”
Not only did the crowd not stop them, but they all appeared to be waiting to see a good show.
On this tiresome journey, Kaliweir and Jayden felt that the other party was unpleasant to their eyes, especially when Jayden tried to take in two henchmen.
They had restrained themselves in the earlier conflicts due to fear, as the Magi were around. However, things seemed to be out of control now.
Leylin furrowed his brows.
“It’s you who forced me to do this!” Kaliweir roared, and the muscles in his body tensed. It seemed like he had added a layer of muscle on his body.
As a noble, he had naturally trained with the techniques of a Knight. Also, he seemed to have already ignited his internal life energy, thus becoming a proper Knight.
[A.I Chip! Scan target!] [Beep! Kaliweir, Strength: 2.5, Agility: 2.7, Vitality: 3.0, Status: Currently using a secret technique] [Examination of the secret technique: After circulating, strength increases, Agility increases!]
“Today, I will let you know that you must lower your head in obedience before a prideful lion!” Kaliweir shouted, and moved his legs. An afterimage remained, as he dashed towards Jayden. [Alert! Alert! Radiation detected! Status: Recommend distancing from the source!] The A.I Chip’s voice sounded in Leylin’s ears.
“Radiation source? Could it be that a Magus has taken action?
“Haha! I will let you know today, who exactly is the number one amongst the freshmen!” Jayden laughed loudly and took out a green badge from within his chest pocket.
“Pilis-Duwasha! Creature of the green! Hear my calls of summoning, and come out to the mortal world!” Jayden chanted in a strange voice.
What he used was a very rare language, but surprisingly, Leylin had actually understood every word of it.
With the incantation, a layer of light emerged from the green badge and a few brownish vines appeared from the ground and elongated, like a confused snake that was dancing wildly.
* Chi Chi! *
The vines danced as they protected Jayden from the front, and as one vine was sent forward, it tripped Kaliweir down to the ground. The layers of vines continued to coil around him, and Kaliweir was soon wrapped in it completely, with only his face exposed.
“A magic artifact!” The surrounding acolytes cried in surprise. 
“To be able to use a magic artifact, one must at least be a level 1 acolyte! He……He has already been promoted to a level 1 acolyte?”
The crowd clamoured, and they looked at Jayden with gazes of respect. This only caused Kaliweir’s face to redden even further.
“How is this? As long as you swear to obey me, I will release you!”
Jayden walked to where Kaliweir was.
“Ne……Never! The pride of Golden Lion family will never be dishonoured by my hands!” Kaliweir veins popped as if they were going to bleed anytime.
“If it’s like this, then I have no choice!” Jayden shrugged his shoulders and the vines continued to tighten, and few cracking noises even came from within. It seemed like a few of Kaliweir’s bones had been broken.
The surrounding acolytes could not watch on any longer and were about to persuade Jayden.
Bang ! The dirigible swayed, and the light dimmed.
A few of the acolytes fell onto the floor, “What happened? Did we meet with some intense turbulence?” Leylin’s eyes flashed.
“Hu!” “Hu!”
The windows cracked open, and violent gusts of wind came rushing in.
Accompanied by the sound of the wind, there were also countless blue electric currents scattering in all directions.
Looking at these, Leylin pupils shrank to the size of a needle, “Thunderstorm? Where are the Magi on the dirigible?”
“You insignificant vermins, you actually dare to trespass the domain of the mighty Pendra!”
A voice reverberated, accompanied by a violent thunderstorm.
It’s a matured giant storm sprite!
“Damnit! How could we meet with this kind of things on this path, didn’t we clear it before?”
“Where are the Magi of the various academies? We need their help!”
A few flustered voices sounded.
“Let us first activate the large-scale defense spell formation. If not, those acolytes will surely die!”
After some incantations, all the walls on the dirigible were enveloped by a layer of milky white light. All cracks in the dirigible flashed with a green light as vines climbed up and firmly blocked any openings.
“Hu hu…… “Leylin’s face turned red as he panted heavily. When the giant storm sprite spoke earlier, the acolytes had all felt an ice-cold force pressing down on them. Immense, boundless, and raw malice! Leylin found it difficult to breathe.
Fortunately, after the defense spell formation was activated, Leylin felt much better as the pressure lifted. Otherwise, most of the acolytes in the hall might just die from suffocation moments later.
“Human beings, you must pay the price for your folly!” the giant storm sprite howled.
As the sound waves travelled through the defense spell formation,
the milky white light vibrated.
“Mighty being of nature! Please appease your fury! We have a letter here!” A familiar voice rang beside Leylin’s ears, it was the dirigible captain.
“This is the letter of agreement that we had with His Majesty, the storm king sprite, which grants us passage through this area!” Kirkwul said with a voice full of confidence.
“Letter of agreement?” The giant storm sprite’s voice contained suspicion, which he followed up with a furious roar, “Pendra is free! The agreement does not bind me to it!”
“Keep roaring! Rage on! Damikan Buthra!” With the incantation spoken, the thunderstorm outside became ten times more violent than before.
“Damn! It is actually a wanderer, I have hit the jackpot!” Kirkwul’s voice sounded once again, but it did not carry the usual confidence and was infused with exasperation instead.
“Everyone attack together!”
* Rumble! *
Many bright coloured lights flashed continuously outside the window, clashing with the lightning.
The dirigible gradually started to sway.
Leylin’s face turned slightly pale. He could only pray for the Magi to use their might and chase that darn giant storm sprite away, otherwise he would not even be able to escape since he was stuck high up in the sky.
“Bang!”
There was another rumble, and the dirigible recovered its stability.
“Has it left?”
“It is only a giant storm sprite that has just matured, it is only comparable to half of an elemental Magus at most. There are nine of us here, so it running away is natural!
The voices of the Magi discussions sounded from outside. It
obviously did not take a lot of effort for them, which eased the minds of the acolytes.
As expected, when the acolytes heard those words, they all shouted and cheered loudly.
“Woo! To our great Magi!”
“Damn it! I thought I would fall and be smashed into minced meat!”
“Haha! Look at that coward; he actually peed in his pants!” The acolytes all mocked an unlucky acolyte and vented the fear that they had held in their hearts.
Leylin’s eyes scanned the surroundings.
When the giant storm sprite spoke earlier, Jayden had already released the vines binding Kaliweir, and right now it seemed like Kaliweir had escaped. However, although Jayden’s face was rather pale, he stood his ground and maintained the pose of a victor.
“The A.I. Chip did not detect that Jayden was carrying a magic artifact earlier. It seems like it was only acquired recently, and the only means of that is through Dorotte!”
“It seems like after obtaining the magic artifact, Jayden has been leading Kaliweir into picking a fight with him impatiently. If not for this incident, it is very likely that he would have succeeded!” Leylin thought to himself.
Because of the interruption from the giant storm sprite, the fight between Jayden and Kaliweir remained unsettled as it drew its curtains.
From then on, Kaliweir tried his best to avoid appearing in the same place as Jayden. It seemed like he was afraid of his opponent’s magic artifact.
This fight had greatly influenced Leylin’s thoughts.
“Kaliweir has already ignited his internal life energy, and got through the bottleneck and became a full-fledged Knight. However, in front of an acolyte with a magic artifact, he is still as weak as a
lamb! It seems like the strength of Magi greatly surpass that of Knights!

“Originally, I thought I must ignite my internal life energy. But after this, if I haven’t ignited it before reaching the school, then I’ll give up on it! I definitely have to pour all my attention and energy into my studies to become a Magus!” Leylin made up his mind.

The time slowly passed, and the dirigible finally reached another continent.

In addition to the incident with the giant storm sprite, the dirigible had several encounters with other flying creatures. This led Leylin to realise that not only was the Death Seas difficult to navigate through, it was the same in the skies.

Fortunately, Kirkwul’s letter of agreement was still rather effective in front of the various large creatures and no conflicts were started. During this period, the dirigible alighted several times and sent several Professors and acolytes off. The dirigible slowly became more vacant.

Another dozen days passed unknowingly.

* Bang! * The dirigible landed and the whole interior shuddered.

“We have arrived at the Abyssal Bone Moor! Attention to all acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Please bring your belongings and leave the dirigible in an orderly fashion!” A voice rang through the cabins.

“We’ve finally arrived?” Leylin packed his belongings and quickly left the tiny space he had been holed up in during the past month.

“Jayden, Kaliweir, please take attendance!” Dorotte held a black staff, with a large green jewel embedded in its tip.

“Alright!” Jayden and Kaliweir nodded their heads and started accounting for the attendance.

Leylin glanced at Kaliweir. Ever since the incident in the dining hall, this youth had turned much quieter and often holed himself in his own room. Looking at his face now, he seemed to be gloomier
than before. On the contrary, Jayden was extremely lively, and according to some rumours, he had already been accepted by Dorotte as an apprentice.

Apprentices were different from other acolytes as their status were higher, and they could even freely obtain a lot of advanced knowledge from their professor.

A dozen or so people walked out of the dirigible.

“So this is our academy? It seems to be a little desolate!” Leylin looked at the surroundings, and it seemed rather desolate. There were a few small trails with obvious traces of others using it before.

There was a wooden sign in the middle of a crossroad, riddled with several holes. There were directions written in black, showing the various locations.

“The land of shadows and death – Bone Abyssal Moor!” The words twisted, and Leylin felt his scalp gone numb.

“Hehe…… Follow me!” Dorotte stretched his body leisurely, and his white bones creaked and crunched as if they were going to fall apart at any moment.

“Pay heed! Although our academy’s acolytes do a scheduled cleansing, there are still some living creatures, and polluted and evil beings roaming in this area. So if you were to stray off, I think we would be able to pay respects to your deceased body soon afterwards!” Dorotte snickered, and the acolytes’ faces all changed. They followed behind Dorotte closely, for fear of losing him.

The group gradually traversed across the Abyssal Bone Moor.

“What is that?” Leylin walked in the middle of the group, and suddenly something black flashed in front of him. It seemed to be a blue creature with a horn.
“A.I. Chip! Begin scan!”
“Task initialising, Begin Scan!” The A.I. Chip chip’s robotic voice sounded.
[An unknown creature of high energy! Estimated Strength: 3-4, Agility: 4-5, Vitality: About 5, Assessment: Extremely dangerous!]
“Ss! Whatever it is, it’s much stronger than the direwolves and may have some strange tricks up its sleeves. A Knight would only die if they encounter one!”
Leylin hurriedly squeezed forward. In this land where danger lurked, it seemed like the black-robed skeleton, Professor Dorotte, was his only insurance.
“It seems like our little acolytes have finally understood the dangers!”
The green flames in Dorotte’s sockets flickered as he said indifferently.
The group proceeded forward, and very soon the barren earth lessened and more forestry could be seen around them.
Very soon, Leylin entered a black coloured forest.
He did not know if it was an illusion, but Leylin felt as if the sun in the sky had dimmed after entering the forest, and there was a layer of white mist in the surroundings giving off a chilly feeling.
[Warning! Warning! A high energy being is approaching! Position: In the air!] The A.I. Chip’s warning sounded.
Leylin hurriedly looked down and crouched.
“Kak!” A piercing sound rang.
A black raven with red eyes swooped down and passed by Leylin’s position, its sharp claws headed towards the face of a female acolyte.
Boom!
A ball of greenish liquid struck at the raven directly, and the raven cawed as it fell onto the floor. A white smoke arose, giving off a corroding effect.
The female acolyte remained rooted to the ground and suddenly cried loudly. Only seconds later, the raven on the floor disappeared without a corpse and there was only a huge impression left in the corroded earth.

“It seems like these red-eyed ravens increased in numbers yet again. I think I will need to distribute more missions after we return, and let the acolytes cleanse this area!”

“What are you all looking at? Let’s go!” Dorotte’s voice sounded at the front and the crying female acolyte rubbed her eyes and gritted her teeth as she walked forward. Leylin was startled, and hurriedly followed.

After another hour of journeying, the group arrived in the centre of the Abyssal Bone Forest.

“This is……” Leylin saw a spacious area in front of him. And what was projected before their eyes was a large graveyard. In the hearths of the Abyssal Bone Forest, a large graveyard sat there unknowingly.

This graveyard was extremely huge and was marbled in black and white, seeming luxurious. Only, it seemed to have been forsaken for some time. Many of the graves had weeds growing on them, and some even had vines. Occasionally, the ravens caw on top of them, giving off a terrifying vibe.

“Welcome to your home of shadow and death – Abyssal Bone Forest!” Dorotte snickered, but no matter how Leylin saw it, Dorotte seemed to be taking joy in their unfortunate plight.
The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy has a satirical sense of humour, huh; they actually have their academy under a graveyard!

Leylin shook his head, but he felt rather comfortable, the pores on his body were all open and absorbed the air of the surroundings here.

“A.I. Chip! What is the situation now?”

[Beep! Task Establishing! Acquiring sample of the environment, analysis in progress!] [There is a significant increase in a type of energy particle here which faintly resonates with the Host’s consciousness. They are conjectured to be Shadow and Dark energy particles!] The A.I. Chip’s voice travelled over.

“No wonder! There is an increase in the energy particles here, which obviously benefits Shadow and Dark element Magi. It is like the novels from my previous world, where one must occupy an area that is filled with spirit energy when they practice the cultivation techniques of immortals!”

Leylin gained a slight understanding of the academy’s choices.

“Password!”

At this moment, Dorotte had already brought the group to the centermost area in the graveyard, where there was a huge grave. Black marble stones were piled up one by one, making it resemble a huge black castle.

Beside the marbled door, there were two stone statues.
On the left, there was a two-headed dog with spikes growing on its body. On the right, there was an earthworm with a pair of wings and razor sharp fangs protruding out, exuding a cruel aura. These two statues were lifelike. They had black jewels for eyes and looked as if they were alive. When Dorotte walked in front of the statues, the earthworm on the left side spoke in a parched voice. With each opening and closing of the mouth, dust from the stone continuously fell down onto the floor.

“Enough! Jumal, don’t you recognise me?” Dorotte had a look of annoyance on his face. Right after Dorotte spoke; the earthworm and huge dog both guffawed. Their voices brought about a huge wind, which flipped the robes of the acolytes behind.

“Dorotte! Although we are pretty familiar with each other, rules are rules!” Both of the statues seemed to have come alive. The huge dog licked its paws, and let out a female voice.

“Or, would you like to play with us?” The earthworm lifted its claw and made a human-like gesture, beckoning with the claw, “Then come! I feel itchy all over my body!” “Alright! Alright! Let me think!” Dorotte rolled his eyes.

“Oh! Damnit! I should really take the head of the pig who set up this defensive spell formation and shove it up their ass!” Dorotte suddenly bellowed.

“Hurry and say it! What is the password?” The huge dog roared and there were sparks coming out from its mouth.

“The secret password is – I hate smelly bones!” Dorotte spoke softly.

Leylin’s mouth twisted, and only by using a strong willpower did he manage to suppress his laughter. Although Dorotte wore a skull,
Leylin was extremely certain that he was currently sulking. “Haha! The password is correct!” The earthworm and huge dog laughed loudly and let them pass. “I bet the overseer keeping watch with the crystal ball is laughing to death right now!” The huge dog snickered, then returned to his original stone platform and changed into its former statue state. “Puchi!” An acolyte finally found it hard to bear and let out a noise. “Hng!” Green flames suddenly ignited within Dorotte’s sockets, “It seems like we must educate the new acolytes on how to respect their professors!” *Pa!* Dorotte snapped his fingers. “Ah! What is this, don’t come over here, don’t come over!” The acolyte who laughed out loud earlier retreated several steps and fell onto the floor, wailing loudly. “Rousey! What is it!” An acolyte beside him walked forward. “No……Don’t come over!” Rousey screamed, and his face gradually twisted. Seeing this scene, the nearby acolytes all felt a chill down their spines. “Magi are equal among themselves, so they can afford to play jokes on each other. However, acolytes must always maintain their humility!” Suddenly, Leylin understood the code of conduct in the Magi world. Only with equal strength, one will have the status to speak to another. Jayden and Kaliweir also seemed to be deep in thought. “Carry him up and let us go in!” Dorotte pointed at Rousey, who was still screaming. Both of his servants walked over and carried Rousey, one on each side. “Both of them are at least Grand Knights!” Seeing how the two servants subdued Rousey so easily, Leylin’s eyes flashed.
After opening to door to the grave, they all appeared in front of a stone staircase that spiralled downwards. The flight of stairs was spiralled and descended all the way into the depths of the darkness until they could not be seen anymore. Dorotte used his staff and knocked on the floor. *Dong Dong!* Blue flames started to light up one by one, illuminating the ground within.

“Apart from the colour, it’s similar to an ancient castle from the medieval times!” Leylin exclaimed, and tread down the stairs of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Leylin did not know how long exactly he walked for under the illumination of the blue flames, but it was definitely over 20 minutes.

“So huge! The area of this underground building is so much larger than the area of the graveyard on top, and it is not even by several times. It almost resembles an underground kingdom already.” Leylin calculated in silence.

“Our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was constructed in the Gregorian Year 324, and it has been almost one thousand years since then…… As for our academy founder, it is Merlin Falek Driwilc…….” Dorotte led at the forefront, and occasionally gave them a few sentences of explanation.

“The door which you all had entered from earlier is the main door! And besides that, there are still many exits inside the academy. As long as you have become a proper Magus, you can apply and chose an uninhabited, empty grave for your own personal passage!” Dorotte explained.

But Leylin’s lip never stopped twitching, “The purpose for us to advance as a Magus is so we can obtain a grave? How delightful!” However, ever since the unlucky guy was used as an example earlier, Leylin only dared to rant in his heart and didn’t say it aloud.
Our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is divided into several large areas: the dormitories, classrooms, laboratories, gardening areas, trading post, mission area and such. As for their exact locations, someone will bring you for an induction later. For now, all of you must follow me to register at the administration area, and then we’ll commence the selection of your professors!”

Dorotte came to the front of a slightly larger room, and pointed at the words on the steel door, “This is the administration area, however, I believe none of you will be willing to come here again in the future!”

Seeing the symbols on the door which seemed like both words and patterns at times, Leylin finally acknowledged that none of the characters were anything like what the brat1 had encountered in the past.

“Oh! I’ve forgotten that you guys don’t know the ancient Byron language!” Dorotte tapped his head, “No worries! This is one of the basics of incantation, you guys will learn it in the future!"

“Dorotte, huh? Enter!” An aged voice sounded from within, and the steel doors moved automatically. A steel hand opened the bolts on the door and even beckoned them in.

Leylin followed Dorotte inside and realised that this room was extremely large. An old man with white beard and red eyebrows was seated at the wide, black office desk. He was scribbling something with a feather pen, and beside him was a stack of parchment.

Behind him, there were countless bookshelves of over ten metres tall, and parchment and even crystal balls were disorderly arranged on them. It looked just like a library.

“You’re late!” The old man put down the quill pen in his hand, and his wrinkled face smiled gently.

“We met with some trouble along the way, a wandering giant storm...
sprite, so the dirigible was a little damaged, and hence the delay in time!” Dorotte explained. 
The old man said, “That’s really unfortunate!” 
And then he looked at the acolytes at the back and his bright eyes shone brilliantly. He scanned through the acolytes, before finally landing on Jayden. 
“It seems like you are well rewarded this trip!” “Of course!” Dorotte pointed, “Jayden, come over here!” 
Pulling Jayden to his side, “I have made a contract with him already! He is now my personal apprentice! Hurry! Settle the procedures for him!”
Dorotte took a stack of forms from a heavy black pouch and handed it over to the old man. 
“Mn! Fifth-grade acolyte, not too bad!” The old man took out an object resembling a pair of glasses with gold threads around its rim and hung it on his nose. 
“Definitely! Melda, that scum, he actually pushed such a troublesome thing to me, haha! Now I want to see him angry!” Dorotte gloated loudly.
“So then! Jayden! Are you willing to become the personal apprentice of Dorotte?” The old man asked. 
“I accept!” Jayden looked at Dorotte and agreed in a low voice. 
“Good!” The old man took a sheet of parchment and wrote something on it, then handed Jayden a black sack too, “This is yours, hold it well!” 
“Are the procedures done? I have taught him those meditation techniques, and right now I have to rush back to my experiments! It was difficult enough to find some inspiration along the way, but I did not have any ingredients on hand, do you know how much I was suffering?”
Dorotte let out a shrill voice and pulled Jayden along, leaving the room quickly.
“Alright! Mister Dorotte’s task is completed. What’s next are the things that you guys should be mindful of!” The old man knocked on the desk and drew the attention of the acolytes back to him, and then said in a satisfied manner.

“Since all of you have already handed in the fees and achieved the criteria for the contract, you are all acolytes of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy now. Right now, all of you will begin with the selection of your professors!”

“There are two methods to choose a professor. The first is to chose by placing your name inside the crystal ball and my treasure will pick a professor for you! This method is absolutely free of charge.”

“Excuse me? What is your treasure?” An acolyte asked cowardly.

“Oh?” The old man laughed, and suddenly a black python appeared on the table, “This is my magical pet! Spotty! It does not recognise any of you, so I think it’s the fairest for it to choose! Any other questions?”

“No……No more!” Seeing the large python, the acolyte quickly retreated backwards.

“There is also another method, which is for the acolytes to choose their own professors. Here with me is a list containing short introductions of various professors and their requirements, all for your choosing. Of course, if you choose this method, you will need a magic crystal as payment!”

“It doesn’t matter which method you chose, but once you have decided on your professor, you can never change again!”

The old man said, “Next up, I will call your names, and you will come forward and tell me your choice!”
After the old man finished speaking, the acolytes were a little flustered.
“What now? How should we choose?” Beirut asked worriedly.
“Paying is definitely better than not paying! This is common sense!”
“You should still have excess magic crystals, don’t you?” Leylin asked puzzledly.
“But…… I only have 1 magic crystal left; my family sacrificed one thousand troops to get merely 2 magic crystals!” Beirut was a little reluctant. Leylin was startled too, as he could not help but feel his pockets.
“The value of magic crystals is higher than I expected. When I extorted some from Ourin earlier, I really lucked out!”
“That’s not right, the Chernobyl Islands is also known to Magi as the Barren Islands. magic crystals are already scarce, so the value of magic crystals being much higher here may be due to that!”
“A matter like this can only be decided by yourself!” Leylin said to Beirut.
“Alright! First up, Raynor!” The old man said.
“Which are you choosing?”
“I……I don’t have any magic crystals left, can I first buy on credit? I am a fourth-grade acolyte!” Raynor blushed.
“Not a bad aptitude! A pity, however, rules are rules!” The old man
shook his head.
As he pointed at a crystal ball on the table, Raynor’s name appeared within, along with many other unfamiliar names, flickering as they appeared.
When the black python Spotty spat out a letter and dabbed on the crystal ball, the words finally stopped flickering, “Raynor! Your mentor is Gafrin!”
“Take this! A set of acolyte robes and an identity badge! A crystal ball which contains an elementary meditation technique! And your room number and keys are there too!”
The old man threw the black sack containing the items to Raynor and then snapped his fingers. *Bang!* A black ball suddenly appeared in the room and floated in midair.
“Follow this shadow slave, it will bring you to where your mentor is!”
The old man made a gesture to send him off, and Raynor helplessly followed the black ball out.
“Next! Rousey!”
The one, who laughed at Dorotte earlier, Rousey, was called. Although his complexion had recovered a little, there was still cold sweat on his face.
“Oh! What do I see? A nightmare hex! What a pitiful fellow! You’re going to suffer for the next month!”
“Could……Could you remove this hex?” Rousey’s voice quivered.
“Definitely! One hundred magic crystals! No credit allowed!” The old man agreed crisply!
Rousey shook his head and took a magic crystal from his robes, “I want to choose my own mentor!”
“En!” The old man accepted the magic crystal, and handed a compendium, which looked like a dictionary, to Rousey, “The mentors who are willing to accept apprentices are all there, take your time and pick!”
“Bang!” An hourglass appeared on the table, the sand falling slowly.
“I forgot to mention earlier, a magic crystal only allows for one turn of the hourglass. If you exceed it, you have to pay another magic crystal!” The old man grinned.
Rousey swallowed his saliva, and looking at the sand grains falling non-stop, he flipped through the pages in a hurry.
“This hourglass seems as though it lasts only 5 minutes worth of time! It is not even enough to skim through!” Leylin’s pupils shrank.
“Time’s up!” In accordance with the voice, the compendium closed automatically and made a loud snapping sound.
“How is it? Have you chosen? Or do you wish to have another look?” The old man asked.
“I have decided! I choose Mentor Vivian!” Rousey sucked in a deep breath.
“Take your belongings and follow the slave!” The old man threw a black sack, identical to the one from before, to Rousey and summoned another shadow slave.
Rousey bowed humbly and followed the floating slave out the large doors.
“Next up, Kaliweir!’
The old man continued calling, and Leylin scrutinised the acolytes who went up. Kaliweir seemed well off, as he paid 3 magic crystals and looked through the compendium before making a choice.
“As for Beirut, he did not pay the 1 magic crystal in the end. His mentor was chosen randomly, and he did not know if the results were good or bad.
“Next! Leylin!” The old man called Leylin’s name.
Leylin inhaled deeply and walked to the front.
“I’ll choose on my own!” Leylin handed a magic crystal to the old man.
“You know the rules!” The old man snapped, the hourglass flipped over, and time started elapsing. The compendium was rather heavy, and the material seemed to be of high quality. Leylin hurriedly flipped through the pages, and continuously skimmed through the information on the parchment. “It is the language of the Chernobyl Islands. It seems like it has been specially prepared for us acolytes of this area.” “A.I Chip! Record and extract the information!” “Mentor Lester, Department of Souls, specialises in transformation, neurology, and composition of radiation.” Able to provide information on 3 topics free of charge. Requirements: The acolyte must assist in an experiment every month, and cannot be declined for any reason!” “Mentor Dorotte, Department of Shadow, specialises in anatomy, conversion of energy, and necromancy.” Requirements: acolytes must pay 1 magic crystal per month, and at the same time, cooperate with experiments!” “Mentor Kroft, Department of Potioneering, specialises in medicine, herbalism, and neutralisation of energy.” Able to provide information on 1 topic free of charge. Requirements: acolytes must always help with the cleaning of the experimental lab, preparation and handling of various herbs, and at the same time, assist the Magus in carrying out herbal concoctions (on the basis that they cause no harm to the acolytes!)” “Mentor Estelle, Department of Curses, specialises in curses, dissecting of human anatomy, and soul studies.” Able to provide information on 5 topics free of charge. The category is chosen by the acolytes, and can guide acolytes in their studies at any given time! Requirements: Cooperate with one experiment! Only one!” The pages flipped, and let out a rustling noise. By the time the last
grain of sand fell, Leylin had managed to flip to the last page.
“Your memory isn’t bad, which is useful for your studies in the future! How is it? Who will you choose?” The old man smiled and asked.
Leylin closed his eyes, “A.I Chip! How is the collation of data?”
[Beep! Data is in order, information on 53 mentors collated. In process of discarding the enticing conditions!]
Leylin’s complexion turned bitter, “The information in the brackets for Mentor Kroft earlier made me rather mindful. It seems like the experiments of Magi are dangerous, and can actually jeopardise the safety of the acolytes!”
“Kroft is only doing experiments on herbal concoctions, but what of the others, like the shadow and necromancy experiments?”
“No wonder the requirements given are so easy to meet, not needing to give payment for information. It was, in fact, so they could lure students who would cooperate for experimental testing! Although they might not have any adverse effects, it’s all over once they do!”
“A.I Chip! Carry out the filtering process, with the conditions: To match with my current circumstances.”
[Beep!] The blue light flashed, and the light blue screen in front of Leylin flickered. More than half of the mentors’ information was omitted, leaving only a miserable few choices, including Dorotte’s.
“Mentor Dorotte, Department of Shadow, specialises in anatomy, conversion of energy, and necromancy.”
Requirements: acolytes must give one 1 magic crystal each month, and at the same time, cooperate with experiments!”
“Mentor Kroft, Department of Potioneering, specialises in medicine, herbalism, and neutralisation of energy.”
Able to provide information on 1 topic free of charge.
Requirements: acolytes must always help with the cleaning of the experimental lab, preparation and handling of various herbs, and at
the same time, assist the Magus in carrying out herbal concoctions (on the basis that they cause no harm to the acolytes!)”
“It seems like Dorotte’s temper isn’t too bad amongst the mentors. If not, he wouldn’t have gone to fetch the new batch of acolytes.”
Leylin thought inwardly, “A pity that my magic crystals are not enough, and he has Jayden already. I’m afraid there will not be much attention given to me!”
“Also the Shadow Department mentors all require acolytes to cooperate with their experiments and cannot ensure the safety of acolytes. This is such a fraud!”
Leylin helpless omitted the mentors of the Shadow Department.
“What’s left is only this Alchemy mentor! With the extreme and unique advantages that I have with my A.I Chip, I can definitely make use of alchemy to earn money and buy knowledge related to the Dark element!”
To others, Leylin had merely closed his eyes and made his choice right after opening them.
“I choose Mentor Kroft!”
“Alchemy?” The old man was a little surprised, “You wish to become an alchemist? The effort and resources invested are extremely horrifying! Do you want to change? I think Dorotte suits you well!”
“Thank you, sir!” Leylin earnestly bowed, “I have a hobby for alchemy, and have also acquired some knowledge in this field beforehand.”
“The mortal world’s perception of alchemy is totally different from that of the world of Magi!” The old man shook his head. Then, seeing Leylin’s resolute gaze, he couldn’t help but exclaim, “Since you have already decided, so be it!” After speaking, the old man took a quill pen and scribbled on the parchment paper.
“Here are your belongings, follow the shadow slave to where Kroft is!”
The old man handed a sack over to Leylin. Leylin bowed deeply and even nodded to the remaining acolytes, before leaving through the large door.

The black coloured ball floated in front and occasionally spun in a circle. Its speed was not too fast, and with Leylin’s body of a peak Preparatory Knight, he easily followed along.

From time to time, there were acolytes passing, but they did not look at Leylin in astonishment.

Leylin followed the shadow slave and passed through several corridors, two large halls, and a garden. It then stopped in front of an area designed for experiment labs.

The shadow slave turned translucent, and immediately passed through the door, leaving Leylin outside.

Leylin was speechless, yet he did not dare knock on the door. Therefore, he just waited outside patiently.

After a moment, there came a middle-aged man’s voice.

“Leylin, huh? Enter!”

“Yes!” Leylin pushed opened the doors of the experimental lab.

A sweet and spicy aroma filled the laboratory room, mingling with the odour of poisonous fumes and liquids, which made Leylin furrow his brows.

A huge table took up the space of almost half the lab, and placed on it were various test tubes, flasks and beakers, as well as some other apparatus that Leylin could not identify. This made Leylin recall his previous life.

In front of the laboratory table, there stood a white-haired, middle-aged man who wore white robes. His collar was embroidered with golden patterns, and his eyes emitted a golden light, like two golden gems.

“I’m Kroft, and I’ve heard the details from the shadow slave. So then, Leylin, are you willing to become my apprentice?” The middle-aged man put down the test tube in his hands and said
solemnly.
am willing!” Leylin hurriedly answered.

“That’s good! Since these are the arrangements made by the school, I’ll accept you as my disciple!” The middle-aged man stroked his beard.

“Although the environment here is quite ordinary, it’s enough to let you undergo the initiation!” Kroft swept his eyes over the examination room. “At least it’s very quiet here and we won’t be disturbed!”

“What initiation?” Leylin had some doubts.

“The initiation of a Magus!” Kroft replied.

“Now tell me, Leylin, what is a Magus to you?”

“A mysterious person with the ability to call forth thunder and storms, manipulate flames and other forces of nature!” Leylin said the definition he knew of in Chernobyl Islands.

“En! However, it’s a little off!” Kroft commented.

“A Magus is actually the title we give to people with power in ancient times. These Magi all learn the principles and how to control and manipulate the energy within. They are never ending in their pursuit of knowledge and truth!”

Kroft explained the definition of Magi to Leylin.

“So it is to say, the title of Magus is actually not limited to only humans!” Leylin had a better understanding now.

“Indeed! Other kinds of demi-humans, and even other intelligent beings have Magi existing among their kind, for example, a Magus
of the sea tribes, or even a Dragon Magus!”

Kroft said, “Alright! Now let us begin the rites! Don’t be afraid, it’s very simple!”

*Clap!* The floor around Kroft softened, and transformed into a spell formation of sorts, and a strange energy came spreading from within. The surroundings turned dark, with only the flame lit in the centre of the formation.

“Right now, give your hand to me!” Leylin stretched his hand out and a larger palm firmly clasped it.

“Abiding by the rites of ancient times, I will now guide you, Leylin Farlier, onto the path of a Magus!”

“Recite after me!”

“I swear! I will forever be in pursuit of the truth!” Kroft used an unfamiliar language, but Leylin understood it completely, and his mouth could not help but produce the same sounds.

“I swear! I will forever be in pursuit of the truth!” As it was a voice of a thirteen or fourteen-year-old youth, there was still a little immaturity in the voice.

“Without the permission of my mentor, I swear that I will not reveal any of the information my mentor passes on to me……”

Kroft continued to recite and Leylin followed suit, the two voices very soon eerily turned into one.

In the hearts of the formation, the flame suddenly grew brighter and blazed strongly….

“Congratulations on formally becoming an acolyte!”

After the rites, Kroft congratulated Leylin.

Leylin looked down at both of his hands. After the mysterious rites, it seemed like he saw the world in a different light, yet at the same time, he couldn’t pinpoint the difference.

[An anomaly has been discovered in the brainwaves of the Host!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.
“It seems like there is a change in spiritual force, but I don’t have any further information regarding this field, so I can only supplement it in the future!” Leylin said helplessly.
“The meditation technique in the crystal ball has already been given to you, right? Take a look at it when you go back, you can already absorb the information in it now!”
“Tomorrow, come here at six in the morning!”
“You can leave now, but remember! Don’t wander around!” Kroft warned.
“I’ll do as you bid! Mentor!” Leylin bowed, and then walked out of the experimental lab.
“Luckily I passed them earlier; otherwise, I wouldn’t even know where the dormitories are located!” When he was following the shadow slave earlier, Leylin had already let the A.I. Chip start mapping the area. Now, there was a small part that was completed, and he knew the places that he had walked past before.
The areas with Magi are rather dangerous, and Leylin did not wish to suffer from any collateral damage from them.
After reaching the dorms, Leylin took the key out from the sack issued by the old man.
It was a heavy, black copper key, and it was labelled ‘783’. Right now, it was rather cold and vacant in the dorms. Leylin walked through the empty corridors, and his hair stood on end as he listened to the echo of his footsteps.
Following the room numbers, he found his room, “It’s here!”
Leylin placed the key into the keyhole, and the heavy metal produced a click.
As the large door opened, the dark room automatically produced a flame, “They actually use the principles of Magi to invent a similar sound activation system?”
Leylin placed his belongings down and inspected the place in which he was going to live for some years.
The dormitory was a little small and was divided into three partitions, a bedroom, living room and washroom. They were actually self-contained living quarters, and there was even a new blanket placed on the bed, it looked prim and proper.

“The environment isn’t bad!” Leylin sat on the bed and took out the things that were given by the academy.

“A set of acolyte robes. The A.I. Chip has detected that there are several spells cast on it, and the defense is even comparable to some of the leather armour around great stuff!” Leylin efficiently changed into the robes and pinned the acolyte badge to his chest. This look was exactly the same as the grey-robed acolytes he had seen earlier today.

What Leylin did next was to pack his things, and do a cleaning of the room.

When he went out, the doors of the dorm beside him opened, and a brown haired acolyte walked out, “Hello! Are you a new acolyte? I am Bill!”

“Hello! I am Leylin, and I have just arrived today!” Leylin answered, and he just happened to have some questions, “Excuse me, how do I get to the dining hall?”

Hearing Leylin’s voice, Bill’s expression appeared as if he had expected it, “Right now it’s pretty late, and I’m about to go there too. Let’s go together?”

“I couldn’t ask for more!” Leylin smiled gently, and closed his door.

“The dining hall is on level 3, underground, and everything there is free. Of course, you can fork out money and let them make a dish that you want to eat!”

Bill led the way as he explained.

“I am from the Poolfield Kingdom, and you?”

“Chernobyl Islands!”

“Heavens! So far! You have definitely suffered along the way,
huh?” Bill was obviously a chatterbox, and Leylin managed to probe some information out from him.

Bill was the same as him, a new acolyte, and only arrived five days earlier than Leylin did. As for the whole of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the professors numbered close to a hundred, while the acolytes numbered over a thousand.

“Oh right! Who is your mentor?” Bill asked.

“Kroft, an alchemy professor!” Leylin replied.

“Alchemy? You’re good!” Bill was seemingly startled.

“Is it difficult to learn alchemy?” Leylin was a little worried now.

“Not only is it difficult, the study of alchemy requires a huge amount of resources and ingredients. People who don’t come from a good family background will rarely choose this! However, alchemists tend to make a lot of money after they have been certified!” Bill gave Leylin a regretful look.

“You must have been randomly assigned a mentor during the selection, and then duped by that python Spotty!”

“Oh really?” Leylin rubbed his nose.

“Alright! We’re here at the dining hall now, take whatever you want to eat!”

The dining hall was extremely extravagant, and the food was more delicious than what he had on the dirigible. Everyone who sat here was also an acolyte, and there were no signs of a Magus.

After dinner, Leylin bid farewell to Bill and then returned to his room. He sat on his bed, with the crystal ball clasped in his hands.

“I can finally start practising as a Magus!”

Leylin stroked the crystal ball, his eyes gradually turned hazy, and his nostrils flared.

[A data interface has been discovered, start transmitting or not?] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.

“Begin!” At Leylin’s command, an acute pain entered his brain, as if someone filled it with lead.
“This is…… “ Leylin grabbed his head, and discovered that many images and words appeared in his brain along with the pain, and the first line was: “Elementary Meditation Technique!” This information appeared out of nowhere and was firmly imprinted in Leylin’s mind. After some time, Leylin finally recovered from the pain, but he was still feeling groggy. “A.I. Chip, defragment the data for the elementary meditation technique!” [Beep! Task established, beginning defragmentation!] A blue interface started to flicker in front of Leylin’s eyes. [Beep! The data has been defragmented. 21.3% of miscellaneous information has been removed, begin to transmit?” “Transmit!” Leylin ordered. With the continuous transmission from the A.I. Chip, Leylin began to gain an understanding of the elementary meditation technique for acolytes. Elementary meditation techniques are, as their name implies, special meditation techniques given to acolytes, and are the most basic of techniques. After many years of modification, they have already reached a nearly perfect stage, and the content of the elementary meditation techniques from the various academies did not differ by much. To be specific, they are similar to the visualisation techniques from his previous world. An acolyte draws mind runes inside their mind to increase their spiritual force, and as they draw more mind runes, their spiritual force grows stronger. Every Magi liked to record all the precise details and processes down. In regards to acolytes, they have divided the practice into three levels: level 1 acolyte, level 2 acolyte, and level 3 acolyte. As for the division between levels, it is seen through the
progression of the elementary meditation technique. When one has the ability to meditate with 8 runes, they have passed the criteria for a level 1 acolyte. Being able to meditate with 24 runes is the sign of a level 2 acolyte. As for level 3 acolytes, there seemed to be other conditions needed. As for the meditation progress, it is closely related to a Magus’ aptitude.

“In regards to meditation practice, the superiority of a fifth-grade acolyte is extremely obvious; they can become a level 1 acolyte in only five to six days. No wonder Jayden, who was a regular human before boarding the dirigible, was able to use a magic artifact in just half a month’s time.”

As for a fourth-grade acolyte, the time needed to become a level 1 acolyte is approximately fifteen to twenty days. Third-grade acolytes will need a month’s time; second-grade acolytes will need half a year, and first-grade acolytes will need several years!”

“This difficulty in progressing will only increase when ascending to level 2 acolyte and level 3 acolyte, hence is it understandable for professors to favour acolytes with high aptitudes. After all, maybe one can receive the remuneration of a proper Magus in a dozen years, with just a little more effort put in now!”

[An independent file has been created for the meditation technique data, analyse or not?] The A.I. Chip prompted with a window.

“Begin analysing!”

[In the process of analysing! Progress: 0.11%] The A.I. Chip showed the current state.

“This crystal ball seems to input the information directly into the acolytes’ brains, but the method is a little too crude and it does not care if you remember it completely or not. But the A.I. Chip is able to defragment and store it directly in the memory bank, and is even able to aid by analysing the process!”

Leylin indifferently compared the differences between the two.
Tick Tock! Tick Tock!

The hands of the bronze clock in the room swivelled around once more, as another hour passed.

[The first mind rune has been analysed, start transmitting or not?] The A.I. Chip prompted.

“Has it finally been analysed? Begin transmission!”

In this period of time, Leylin had also been studying the blueprints of the meditation technique, but it was to no avail.

The mind rune appeared as a 3D image and the patterns inside were extremely complicated, with no room for errors.

To display this image in book form, not only would the author need to have outstanding training in the fine arts, but the reader’s comprehension skills would also be put to the test.

Leylin estimated that regular acolytes would need to spend a good number of days to even begin to understand a single mind rune, before starting to construct them in their brains. However, with the A.I. Chip, it was done in a matter of hours.

“This pace may very well be comparable to a fourth or fifth-grade acolyte!” Leylin estimated.

After the A.I. Chip’s transmission, Leylin had already completely comprehended the structure of the first mind rune. It was in the shape of an ‘A’, without the horizontal line in the middle, and was filled with patterns and helixes, making one dizzy the more they looked at it.
“To begin the meditation, I must first have peace of mind and imagine a serene lake……”
Leylin slowly closed his eyes.
In the dimly lit room, the youth sat cross-legged and closed his eyes, as if he was in a slumber.
After an unknown period of time, there were a few spots of lights flickering in the youth’s surroundings. They entered the body of the youth, and very soon they disappeared.
Leylin’s eyelids fluttered, and he opened his eyes.
“So tiring! It seems like the meditation technique and a Knight’s breathing technique is the same, there is a time limit! A.I. Chip! Check my body’s status!”

[Beep! Scanning the Host’s body!] [The Host’s brain cells have been stimulated, and all of the cells in the body have increased in activity as a whole!] [Beep! The Host’s vitality has increased by 0.05!] [Oh…… Meditation techniques, there’s no doubt that they are cultivation techniques for Magi. I can feel that the key purpose of this meditation technique is to increase the spiritual force, and the increase in vitality is only an added benefit.”
“The spiritual force affects my stats! After practicing the meditation technique, my vitality has actually started to exceed my previous limit!” Leylin’s expression was complex, and there was an indescribable joy in his heart.
“According to the introduction in the data, sleeping right after meditation will provide the most optimal effects!”
Leylin stripped his outer robes, laid on the bed, and then entered into a deep sleep.
[Beep Beep! The alarm is ringing!] The A.I. Chip’s voice rang and brought Leylin out from his sleep.
“It is already the time that I set my alarm for, time really passes quickly!” Leylin stretched lazily and saw that the clock showed the time as 5:30.
“I’d better hurry up and tidy up! I still need to see mentor Kroft!” Leylin washed up quickly, went to the dining hall and gobbled down a bread for his breakfast, and then rushed to the experiment lab from yesterday.
“Good morning Sir!” Leylin greeted.
He noticed a female acolyte beside the white haired Kroft. She had fine curves and looked beautiful, and seemed to be another apprentice of the professor.
“Hm? You attempted the meditation technique?” Kroft furrowed his brows, “How did it feel?”
“My head ached, and I felt a little dizzy!”
“This is a common aftereffect of the transmission from the memory crystal ball; you just need to get more rest during this period!” Kroft said.
“Come, let me introduce you! This is Bicky, my other apprentice. This is Leylin, the new acolyte from yesterday!”
“Hi!” Bicky bowed, giving a virtuous greeting.
“Hello!” Leylin placed his right arm on his chest and displayed the elegance of a noble.
“Bicky is your senior, besides her, you also have another senior called Merlin. His Potioneering skills are excellent!” Kroft said to Leylin.
“Merlin has been called a once-in-a-century genius of Potioneering, and is regarded as the most likely successor of our mentor!” Bicky added.
“Haha! Indeed! Merlin has shown outstanding talent in Potioneering! If there is anything you don’t understand, you may seek his help!” Once he mentioned Merlin, Kroft’s face revealed a smile, and he seemed extremely satisfied with that student of his.
“So Leylin, are you familiar with my rules?”
“I have seen them when going through the professor requirements during the selection of mentors!” Leylin nodded.
“Okay! From now on, you have to come here every day and help with the cleaning up, but you may go listen to the free lessons during breaks! As for the benefit of being under me, which is receiving information on a topic, you can choose and ask me after learning the basics!”
Kroft said.
“Thank you, Sir!” Leylin hurriedly bowed. Right now, he had no inkling whatsoever about the Magus world, so even if Kroft wanted him to choose, he would not know which was best. It was only right to choose at a later time when he could reap the most benefits.
“Right now, I will give both of you half a day’s break. Let Bicky accompany and show you around the academy. Bicky, tell him about the few restrictions!”
“Yes!” Leylin and Bicky nodded their heads and left the laboratory.
“This is the residence of the professors, acolytes usually aren’t allowed to enter……This is the trading post, where acolytes can make transactions with others. And here, we have the mission area. The different missions and levels will be written on this stone wall. Acolytes can complete these missions and obtain contribution points and magic crystals!”
Bicky’s voice was extremely pleasing to the ears, and she was beautiful too. Her personality was also lively. Leylin’s mood improved a lot by spending time with her.
The two of them strolled through the academy. It was mostly Bicky leading Leylin around, as she spoke of a few places and restrictions along the way.
Unknowingly, the two of them walked into a garden.
“Fayle, well done!” “Good, once more!”
The sound of voices caught Leylin’s attention. In the middle of the garden, a group of acolytes were standing around a large, sturdily-built youth and chatting continuously.
In the centre of the crowd was a youth with a bright silver hair,
with dark green eyes, and he seemed to have some sort of strange charisma.

“That is senior Fayle. He’s a genius; he became a level 2 acolyte just half a year after entering the academy!” Bicky’s eyes were widened, and her face shone radiantly as she muttered.

“This expression? It seems like Bicky has a good impression of this Fayle!” Leylin rubbed his nose.

“Bicky! Bicky!”

“Ah……What is it?” Only after Leylin called out to her several times did Bicky avert her gaze. At this moment, her face was a little flushed.

“Oh! I wanted to ask, why are there so many plants here underground!”

Leylin sniffed a red flower; the flower had a strong fragrance.

“There are huge patches of sunlight moss on the roof of the gardens, and these mosses can emit a light similar to sunrays, hence plants can also grow underground in here.”

Bicky explained.

“Oh!” Leylin nodded his head and wondered if he should come here more often in the future to bask in the sunlight since being exposed to more sunlight was not bad for a person after all.

Seeing Bicky’s reluctance to leave, Leylin purposely pretended to have a strong interest in the garden, until Fayle and the others left.

Only, Bicky would only glance at Fayle secretly, although she did not muster any courage to walk up to greet him even after such a long while. This made Leylin roll his eyes, as Bicky’s attitude towards romance can be considered rare in this academy.

“The academic area will often post the following day’s class schedule, and there are many free and public lessons to choose from. As a newbie, you cannot afford to miss these!”

After leaving the garden, Bicky brought Leylin to the academic area, and pointed to a large wooden board. In front of it were many
other acolytes who were taking down notes.
“Free public lessons? That means there are lessons which one must pay for?” Leylin asked.
“That’s right! There are lessons which have fees, and many advanced topics charge 1 magic crystal for 10 lessons. Although they are much better than public lessons, they are still somewhat inferior to the knowledge given by our own mentors!”
Bicky smiled a little bitterly, “I’m afraid the only advantage is them being less expensive!”
Leylin nodded. On one side, there was a professor teaching dozens of students, while the other was an individual lesson, the advantages between the two are definitely different.
However, he had the A.I. Chip, so his learning capability was outstanding. He was confident that he would do well even in a large class.
“With this method, I can definitely save some magic crystals!”
Leylin stroked his chin.
He only had two magic crystals left. Earlier, when he was in the mission area, he saw that the missions that awarded magic crystals generally had more troublesome tasks and required one to be a level 1 acolyte at least. Right now, Leylin did not meet the requirements.
“As for the cleaning tasks, they are all done by those spell slaves, and the rest are all snatched by others. There is simply no place for me!”
Leylin was a little frustrated. magic crystals were the currency among Magi and were also the most common way to obtain greater knowledge in the academy. Without magic crystals, his studies would be hindered.
“Hm…… I had better attend those public classes first and advance to a level 1 acolyte. After that, I’ll consider taking up missions to earn some magic crystals!”
Leylin sighed.
“A.I. Chip, how is the mapping of the academy?”
[Beep! 66.7% has been mapped]
The A.I. Chip replied. In front of Leylin was a blue image, each layer of the buildings was displayed and divided into multiple parts, and it looked like a beehive.
Some areas even had names attached, with Bicky’s explanation for them on the side.
The areas that could be entered freely were marked in green, while the dangerous areas were in yellow. As for the areas that even Bicky did not dare enter, the A.I. Chip indicated them in red, representing extreme danger.
For those red coloured danger zones, Leylin decided to walk around them. He even decided not to ask about them before becoming a level 3 acolyte.
“The mapping has been recorded!” Leylin nodded his head and said farewell to Bicky, “Bicky, thank you for accompanying me for a day, I remember most of the important areas of the academy now!”
“That’s great!” Bicky played with the little white flower in her hands, “If there are any things that you don’t understand, you can ask me!”
“Of course!” Leylin gave a small smile.
After bidding farewell to Bicky, Leylin ate his dinner and went back into his room. He began to practice the meditation technique.
A Magus’s meditation is a continuous journey, only with daily devotion and perseverance, can one achieve enough spiritual force to become a being that can control mysterious powers.
“The A.I. Chip is only useful for analysing the meditation technique. As for the creation of the mind runes, it was completely dependent on my own spiritual force, and it also relied a little on my comprehension and aptitude. In these areas, the A.I. Chip was
not much help!”
After meditating, Leylin felt his spiritual force increase by another tiny sliver, and then he entered into a deep slumber.
A level 1 acolyte is actually someone with a stronger spiritual force than an average person’s. At the same time, he is able to move energy particles and store them inside their body and is a newbie at conceptualising the creation of magic power. Only a level 2 acolyte will be able to access a magic spell’s formula and cast the spell in its complete form.

But once their body creates magic power, their stats can be strengthened through constant radiation as their body resists the poisoning from the external radiation.

Leylin made his judgment on the levels separating the acolytes based on the data on the meditation technique.

“A.I. Chip! Retrieve all the data I have gathered today, and begin analysing!”

This is what Leylin had been doing all this time. He would do his best to collect data from other people without drawing their attention, and store the data in folders.

He created a folder with the data regarding spiritual force and how to transform them, a lesson which Leylin learnt yesterday. The information required was too much, and the process may be measured in years.

[Beep! Analysis completed. Result: The entire surroundings of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is contaminated with traces of radiation. The biggest sources of contamination are Magi, and a
few experimental setups and materials. The Host is suggested to stay away from these sources, or to increase the resistance of the body!

“As I expected! There are no regular human beings in the whole of this academy because of the environmental effects that the Magi and acolytes bring about. As for these effects, only a Magus can resist against it. A regular human would most likely have a lifespan of a few years in this environment!”

Leylin’s face darkened, and conjured up the images of a few people, including Bicky and Kroft.

“According to the readings of the radiation emitted by them, a Magus is actually a moving source of radiation. Each one of them is like a minuscule nuclear reactor, or, could they have made use of the radiation to advance??”

Leylin furrowed his brows.

“No matter what, I must hurry up and become a level 1 acolyte. The longer I take, the greater the damage my body will receive. Leylin was resolved.

In the next two weeks, Leylin would report to where Kroft was every day, assist in the cleaning of the experiment lab, and sort out a few insignificant experiment resources.

In this period, he had seen Kroft’s genius apprentice Merlin, who was also his senior. Merlin was extremely tall and had a very taciturn personality. He constantly poured over his experiments. Besides Kroft, his interactions with Bicky and Leylin were minimal. This could be one factor attributing to his success in Potioneering.

In the remaining time, he spent them in the free public lessons. The free lessons in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were not many, and they only consisted of the history of Magi, the basics of the ancient Byron language, the principles of Magi spells, basic Potioneering, anatomy, and basic magic spell theory.

The professors of the public lessons always had dark expressions,
and they hurriedly left right after the period ended. Not only did they not answer the acolytes’ questions, it seemed like everyone owed them magic crystals.

“It was a public lesson, after all, being able to listen is already not too bad!” Leylin comforted himself. He had the A.I. Chip and could record the lessons completely. In the future, he could always take them out for reference when he revises. As for the other acolytes, they were in a worse state. If they did not understand, there was always a price to pay to obtain information from the professors or other acolytes. Leylin was even prepared to earn some magic crystals by giving away information from these public lessons.

“Today’s topic was really difficult! The image of that Barren Lizard’s anatomy was only shown for a few seconds. I did not even have time to look at it clearly!” Bill complained.

“There’s no choice! The study of anatomy is a very broad topic, and the images are aplenty, classes will not end if they’re not taught fast enough!” Leylin replied by his side. He was neighbours with Bill, and both of them were fresh acolytes, so they often attended classes together. Their friendship considered pretty well. As for Kaliweir and the others, because they were designated to various mentors and lived rather far away, they barely maintained their relationships.

“Professor Marlene’s anatomy classes are prerequisites for more advanced topics, so we have to learn it!” Bill was a little frustrated.

“Leylin, did you remember everything from earlier?”

“To memorise everything is impossible, but I have taken notes on most of the diagrams and the images depicting the vital body parts!” Leylin concealed his trump card.

“So awesome! Could you tutor me after classes? I will fork out one magic crystal!” Bill made up his mind,

“I want to major in Transfiguration, so I must excel in anatomy!”
“No problem!” Leylin smiled and nodded his head. The information of the few paid lessons in the academy was not allowed to be traded in private. But as for the public lessons, there were no such restrictions. Leylin had asked around, and it seemed that the higher level acolytes did not think much of these measly wages, while the lower level acolytes did not have much confidence to teach and failed to meet the requirements. Hence, this benefitted him greatly.

“However, you know that I have to undergo meditation at night, so let’s schedule the lessons right after dinner. 1-hour lessons for a week. How is it?” Leylin asked.

“No problem!” Bill answered. This amount of time was similar to that of the paid public lessons, but the tutoring was done one-on-one, so it was a fair price.

After dinner, Leylin went to Bill’s room and tutored him on the topic of anatomy. After an hour, he returned to his dorm. Playing with the magic crystal in his hand, Leylin nodded his head, “Bill knows how to conduct himself, and he has already paid the fees upfront!” Placing the black crystallised object onto the bed, Leylin took out the black sack hanging from his waist and poured the contents out on the bed. A total of four black magic crystals were dropped onto the bed, bouncing slightly. “I am a new acolyte and have only studied for half a month. Apart from Bill and some others, no one believes in my abilities. I have only earned 2 magic crystals so far!” “Ai! It’s hard to earn money through tutoring, and it takes up a lot of time. Senior Merlin can brew a random potion and earn ten times faster than me by selling it!” Potioneering Masters are rather rare amongst Magi, and a huge
investment is needed to become one. However, after succeeding, one can make money at a terrifying pace.

“Almost there! I have a feeling that I will become a level 1 acolyte tonight!” After reaching level 1 acolyte, I will be able to move the energy particles in the air. Not only will I be able to resist the radiation from the academy’s buildings, I will also be able to attempt to experiment with basic potion brewing!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed with excitement, but very soon he recovered the magic crystals on the bed properly, exercising restraint. He then sat cross-legged on the bed and began the meditation for the day. The air in the room quietened down, and only the faint sounds of Leylin’s breathing could be heard.

Leylin’s chest moved with an undulating pattern and his expression was serene, with only some restless movements beneath his eyelids. After about an hour, several black spots of light radiated from Leylin’s forehead, just like fireflies. These light spots hovered around Leylin and finally entered his orifices. It looked a little eerie.

“Hu……”

After the black coloured spots of light entered Leylin’s body, he felt his whole body shudder. The muscles on his face twitched, and large beads of sweat rolled down. Very soon, he returned back to having a peaceful state. After some time, Leylin opened his eyes.

“I have finally advanced to a level 1 acolyte! This speed of half a month is slightly inferior to a regular fourth-grade acolyte’s.”

“Originally, I could have advanced five days ago, but I stopped to stabilise my spiritual force. There were few difficulties in advancing this time, which may be attributed to that!”

The one reason for prolonging the date of advancement was to stable the spiritual force, and another was to keep a low profile. A regular third-grade acolyte must take around a month’s time to
turn into a level 1 acolyte after receiving the meditation technique. As for half a month’s time, that was the measure of a fourth-grade acolyte. Leylin did not want to undergo any tests caused by suspicions of him having the wrong aptitude. If the A.I. Chip was discovered in the end, not only would it be lost, his life might also be in danger!

After all, the A.I. Chip now has undergone changes after transcending dimensions. It has already fused together with his soul and cannot be separated at all.

“According to the estimations of the A.I. Chip, a level 1 acolyte’s spiritual force is roughly double that of an average adult. Moreover, spiritual force seems to have a life of its own, strongly attracting the energy particles in the air towards it!”

Leylin stretched his hands, and a layer of black coloured light wrapped around his arm, like a layer of cotton candy. It also felt a little cooling.

“I have the highest elemental affinity with the Dark element, and will choose to cultivate on the path of the Dark element. This was the plan that I set for myself since long ago. As for the energy particles of Fire and the other elements, I shall just keep a few of them to use it to my advantage in future!”

“Pa!!”

Leylin snapped his fingers several times, and a layer of faint blue light lit up on his body. What followed next was a layer of steam, which made Leylin’s clothes wet. “This is similar to taking a shower!” Leylin smiled, and then a layer of red light shone.

As Leylin’s body was enveloped by the red light, water vapour emitted from his body. Very soon the water was all evaporated, and the room seemed to be a little humid. “After becoming an acolyte, I am able to use these energy particles
for simple daily activities, this is really convenient!”
Leylin exclaimed again, and asked, “A.I. Chip, have you recorded
the processes earlier?”
[Beep! Recording done, please provide a name!]
“Simple usage of Water element and Fire elemental energy
particles!” [Beep! The renaming is done, storing in data bank]
With the help of the A.I. Chip, Leylin had one of the best
comprehension abilities for the usage of energy particles amongst
the level 1 acolyte.
Leylin smiled, but as he was about to stand, he suddenly felt giddy.
“I overspent my spiritual force earlier!” Leylin realised the reason
and smiled bitterly, “The spiritual force of a level 1 acolyte is still
too minuscule. To properly use the energy particles on a daily basis,
I must only do it when I am a level 3 acolyte at least.
Leylin rubbed his temples, “I already meditated earlier, so now I
can only sleep to replenish my spiritual force!’
He hurriedly straightened out the room and entered into a deep
sleep.
The next morning, Leylin was filled with vigour as he got off the
bed and headed to Mentor Kroft’s experiment lab.
“Oh? This energy movement?”
The white haired Kroft was startled, and immediately looked at
Leylin who had walked in, “Leylin, you have broken through!”
“Yes!” Leylin humbly lowered his head.
“It has only been twenty odd days since you started meditating, it
seems like your aptitude amongst the third-grade acolytes is
outstanding, and it almost reaches that of the fourth-grade
acolytes!”
Kroft smiled with gratification.
“Professor! I have already become a level 1 acolyte and have understood the basics from the public lessons……”

Leylin said softly.
“I know, you wish to choose the subject for the knowledge I am providing!” Kroft interrupted Leylin’s speech.
“I heard that you have already been teaching other acolytes information from the public lessons that you’ve attended to earn magic crystals. It seems like your learning and memorising abilities are rather outstanding. From what I see now, you have the capability to learn an information of a higher tier!”
“Thank you!” Leylin bowed deeply.
Leylin had some understanding towards the paid lessons in the academy. Although professors have information on a higher level, it was only their own findings. As for the other cutting-edge research, including the results of various personal experiments, information was only traded at the professors’ level. This information was deemed the best, and can even be transferred directly into an acolyte’s memory so they will never forget it. However, the fees were also the most expensive, each subject required at least ten magic crystals and Leylin simply could not afford it right now. The only thing he could hope for was the one free subject that
Kroft promised at the start. Kroft nodded his head and moved the apparatus on his table aside. He then retrieved some strange items from god-knows-where and placed them on the table. There was a huge book with a yellow cover, a crystal ball, and a test tube filled with yellowish liquid. “These three items represent my 3 areas of specialisation: The book on the left represents the Neutralisation of Energy, the crystal ball represents Herbalism, and the test tube represents Potioneering. Make your choice!” Kroft said. “I choose Potioneering!” The reason Leylin chose Kroft as his mentor was to advance in Potioneering and then rely on selling potions to earn money for his studies, so naturally he chose this. Elementary Potioneering is an advanced course stemming from the public Potioneering Basics course. In theory, it is possible to start brewing potions after fully understanding these two lessons. “I knew you would choose this!” The middle-aged Kroft revealed a smile. “The art of potion brewing is extremely complex and complicated, the slightest mistake will result in a failure. All of the Potion Masters have spent a vast amount of resources to accumulate their experience. Are you ready for this?” “Yes, Sir! I believe in this saying: You may not be rewarded for hard work, but without hard work, there will definitely be no reward!” “Indeed! A very good mindset. One needs to have this philosophy on the road to truth!” Kroft nodded and handed the yellow test tube to Leylin. “This is yours now!” “This? How do I use it?” Leylin looked at the test tube in his hands. “Just drink from it directly!” Leylin opened the wooden plug and poured the yellowish liquid
into his mouth.
An obnoxious sewer stench infiltrated his senses, and the smell lingered in his nose. Leylin’s face turned red, and tears even came out.
He barely managed to swallow it as he gasped for air.
“I swear, I have never drunk such a smelly thing before!!!”
Smelly!!! An unimaginable stench constantly shocked Leylin’s nerves, making him feel like fainting.
Under the stimulation of the extreme smell, the surroundings appeared blurry to Leylin, and the items in the vicinity all seemed to be distorted.
“You……It feels……Not so……”
Leylin looked at Kroft, and at this moment, the professor looked like a noodle, twisting and distorting. The professor’s lips opened and closed and he spoke sporadically, which brought about a lot of noise. It sounded like the friction produced between two metals, or some broken radio with poor signal.
Leylin raised his hand, his smooth palms seemed to be filled with folds, and even melted like a candle, falling down one drop at a time.
And finally, Leylin’s entire body turned into a puddle of liquid and disappeared completely into the darkness……
“How do you feel?”
Kroft’s voice rang, and Leylin was startled. He touched his head, the hard sensation bringing along warmth and a little moisture.
The surroundings turned back to normal, and Kroft stood there smiling.
“I don’t feel too good!” Large amounts of sweat trickled down from Leylin’s head.
“Was what I saw earlier an illusion? It felt too real!”
“That is a normal occurrence, the illusionary spells of Magi seem like reality to acolytes, and some acolytes have even experienced
their whole life inside the illusions and died of old age!”

Kroft’s voice sounded.

“The information has already been transferred into your brain, do some more meditation after you go back!”

At this moment, Leylin discovered a block of new information inside his brain. A phrase appeared on the right side of the text, saying: “Elementary Potioneering”

“Alright! Today your task is to sweep Area 3, and also freeze all the Fire Ant Grass……”

Kroft handed out the tasks.

Leylin nodded his head and picked up the tools lying in the corner of the lab, and then headed to Area 3.

“Congratulations, Leylin!” During Leylin’s break time, Bicky came before Leylin.

“I was just lucky!” Leylin smiled lightly.

Bicky had come here a year earlier than him and was also a level 1 acolyte.

“Once you are a level 2 acolyte, you will be able to use rank 0 spells! Also, the mind runes will only get increasingly difficult. I still have to persevere for at least another year of meditation before I have a chance at advancing.”

With the A.I. Chip, Leylin was fully aware of the situation he was in.

On the other side, Merlin, who was boring over his experiments, raised his head and forced a smile that was uglier than crying.

Leylin nodded his head in acknowledgement. He knew that this senior of his had burnt the muscles of his face in an experiment and was now unable to make any facial expressions.

“Magi experiments are really treacherous!” Leylin shook his head.

Leylin was rather efficient and normally finished the task Kroft gave him by noon. If there was spare time in the afternoon, he would go listen to the public lessons.
“Goodbye!” After saying goodbye to Bicky and Merlin, Leylin did not go to the academic area but instead went to the trading post. The trading post was huge and was located beside the Mission Area. However, it was rather chaotic; many grey-robed acolytes set up stalls, with an erect signboard stating the items and conditions that they wished to sell or trade. Once in awhile, a few acolytes would engage in haggling, it was extremely bustling. “It seems like only acolytes are around. As for the Magi, they should have another area to trade in!” Leylin looked on and only saw grey robes, not a single white or black robed Magus was present. Leylin browsed through the stalls. Some of them were set up on the floor, similar to the previous world’s street vendors, and looked to be a little dirty. The floor stalls’ items belonged to the miscellaneous category; most of them were bows, knives, darts and so on. There were also the fur, livers, and eyes of living organisms, and some still had traces of blood. The rest were some other items that Leylin could not identify. As for potions, every stall with ‘Potions’ on its signboard had acolytes clamouring over them. The stall owners all had calm expressions and radiated strong energy waves. According to the estimation of the A.I. Chip, most of these acolytes were level 3 acolytes! “As expected, the rarity of potions is above my imagination, not to mention magic artifacts, not a single one is on sale! Leylin thought of Jayden, who previously used the green coloured badge. That was a low-grade magic artifact, similar to the ring he had before. A level 1 acolyte could not use any spells, but Jayden had previously subdued Kaliweir through the green badge magic.
“Now it seems like the magic artifact was given to Jayden by Dorotte!”
Leylin could not help but be a little envious. He previously owned a magic artifact too, but unfortunately, it had been broken and was used in the transaction for applying to the academy. With these conditions now, it would be extremely difficult to obtain another one.
Leylin looked at the goods on display as he walked towards the centre of the trading post.
There were a few wooden huts here, and they seemed to have higher standards compared to the surroundings. The acolytes who occasionally walked in and out radiated strong energy waves.
Leylin casually walked into a shop selling potions.
“What do you need?” The shop owner was a fatty and wore a grey robe. He looked to be a little lazy. According to the readings of the A.I. Chip, he was also a level 3 acolyte and even carried a magic artifact.
“I need a set of equipment so that I can practice brewing potions!” Leylin said unhurriedly.
“Another one who is dreaming! And it’s actually a level 1 acolyte who wants to try brewing potions! You think you’re Merlin?” The fatty scolded him.
“Excuse me, Merlin is my senior and we have the same mentor!” Leylin replied.
“So it’s like this! It turns out you’re Kroft’s apprentice, so already brewing potions at this stage is understandable, it is understandable!” The fatty’s face seemed to be filled with spirit, “So you’re Merlin’s junior, hello, I am Woox!”
The fatty introduced himself, and there was a cunning expression on his face, “Rather than potion brewing, if you are able to get me some of Merlin’s potions, I will give a good price for them. Of
course, if they were made by Professor Kroft, it would be even better……”
“My apologies! Professor Kroft’s potions are impossible! As for Merlin’s, I’ll give it a try!” Leylin rolled his eyes, but he did not reject him outrightly.
“Now, can you give me an introduction of the apparatus?”
“Oh! Of course! Of course!” The fatty rubbed his hands and placed a few sets of glass apparatus on the wooden table.
“There is all of this! They are second hand, but they are still usable. I recommend this set; it’s from a level 3 acolyte that did not want it anymore!”
The fatty took out an apparatus set which included beakers, a glass rod, a petri dish, test tubes, and a set of pale yellow tools. It seemed rather complete.
Leylin examined the equipment with his hands.
According to the analysis of the A.I. Chip, the quality of this apparatus set was average, but it was enough for him to use.
“I’ll take this one then! How many magic crystals?” Leylin asked.
“Two pieces!” The fatty replied.
“Wrap it well for me!” Leylin handed the two magic crystals over to the fatty. Fatty received them and packaged the set before handing it over to Leylin.
“Do you have any elementary potion formulas?” Leylin placed the bundle on his back and asked again.
“Yes! I have formulas for strength potions, hemostatic Potions, and bug removal potions, which one do you want?”
“The strength potion!” These were all elementary potion formulas, so Leylin simply picked one.
“Give me a set of ingredients as well!”
The fatty Woox took out a black coloured box from a shelf behind him and placed it on the table. He also took out a sheet of parchment from under the sales counter. It seemed to be extremely old, with the ends a little torn.
“One copy of the strength potion formula, one magic crystal!”
“One set of ingredients, enough for ten tries, one magic crystal!”
Leylin opened the black coloured box. Inside were ten crimson-coloured fruits arranged neatly, which seemed to have traces of cracks on their surface, and beside them was a root of some green plant, and a bottle of black powder.
Putting the box away and picking up the faint yellowish parchment paper, he saw a formula written in black ink, which even included the areas to note. Although the handwriting was a little faded, it was still legible as a whole.
Leylin nodded his head and tucked the parchment paper into his robes. He took out the last 2 magic crystals he had in his waist pouch and handed it to Woox, then left the hut without turning back.
He only had 4 magic crystals and had spent them all on this small amount of ingredients. This terrifying expenditure for potion brewing was not something the average acolyte could bear.
What followed next was that Leylin’s daily routine had taken a similar route to how he had been in his previous world.
Every day, he was shuttling to and fro between five places: the
dorm, the dining hall, the Academic Area, the experiment lab and the library.
Another month passed unknowingly.
[The gathering of data has been completed!] The A.I. Chip’s notification sounded.
Sitting on one side of a long table in the library, Leylin closed the book he was holding in his hands.
Apart from attending classes and aiding his mentor with his experiments, the majority of his time was spent in the library. Almost every book that could be read for free was browsed through, and the A.I. Chip finished accumulating more data.
“Whew…… I have finally understood the formulation of potions!” Leylin exhaled loudly.
Although Kroft had provided some elementary information about Potioneering, there were many things that he still did not understand. He learnt things like the terminology and vocabulary by himself in the library. If he wanted a professor’s explanation he would have had to pay a fee. However, it was a pity that Leylin had turned into a peasant with 0 magic crystals.
Many acolytes who were embarrassingly short of magic crystals did the same thing, browsing through the variety of free information in the library. However, they did not have Leylin’s A.I. Chip, so they usually needed a dozen days to a month to find what they wanted in the library.
As for Leylin, he had now recorded all the information that was available to him in the library already. He even made a search function for it, so the information would be at his perusal if he met with any questions in the future.
However, even Elementary Potioneering was considered higher-tiered information. Even with the constant analyses from the A.I. Chip, Leylin only knew about one-third of it, but that was already extremely useful to him.
At least now, when he looked back at the basics of Potioneering, it was like looking down at the tiles from the roof of a tall building. As for the elementary potion brewing and the strength Potion formula, they had been fully analysed, so it was time to put them into practice. “My accumulation of knowledge is already enough, I’ll begin brewing the strength Potion today!” Leylin placed the books back on the shelves and left the library. A female acolyte with brunette hair raised her head and glanced at Leylin, before returning her attention to the black book in her hands. The library had many acolytes, and yet they were all well behaved and extremely quiet. It was very suitable for reading, and one of Leylin’s favourite hangouts. “Hey! Leylin!” When he walked out of the library, an acolyte greeted him. Leylin raised his head, “Ryan! Kaliweir!” Kaliweir wore the grey robes of an acolyte, and his original haughtiness had lessened, “Congratulations on becoming a level 1 acolyte!” “Thank you, congratulations to you too!” Leylin replied with a smile. He too had sensed that Kaliweir had turned into a level 1 acolyte. “The few of us in the clique have already turned into level 1 acolytes!” Kaliweir stressed the first few words and seemed to have automatically excluded Guricha and the others. “We have taken up a few missions recently, do you have any interest in joining us?” Kaliweir asked. Kaliweir seemed to be trying hard to maintain the previous group of friends. “Do a mission now?” Leylin’s brows furrowed, “From what I know, the area outside the academy has been getting dangerous
lately, especially for those level 1 acolytes who do not even know any spells……”
“There’s no choice, any high-tiered information here has to be bought, and magic crystals are the only form of currency! The magic crystals that we brought have already been spent!” Kaliweir smiled bitterly.
“If you want to be a Potions Master, the expenditure of resources will be extremely great……”
“About taking up missions, I’ll consider it again when I have become a level 2 acolyte! Take care of yourselves!” Leylin eventually declined. The rewards for completing missions were extremely alluring, but one needed to risk their life to claim them.
“Alright then! I heard that you are earning magic crystals by giving tuition to others. Could you also teach us, it can be in accordance with your rates!”
After hearing that Leylin was unwilling to go, Kaliweir felt a little dejected, but he continued to ask.
“Definitely, it’ll be my pleasure. I can even give you guys favourable rates!” Leylin smiled lightly, exchanging benefits was always the norm for Magi.
Both sides decided on the location and date, and then Kaliweir and his party left after that.
Seeing their departing figures, Leylin’s eyes flashed, “He is still roping people in? What a pity, Kaliweir has still not understood that in the world of Magi, one’s own strength holds the most importance!”
Shaking his head, he returned to his dorm.
Every acolyte in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had a dorm of their own, so secrecy and safety were not an issue.
Leylin locked the door and hung up a ‘Do Not Disturb’ sign, only then did he return to the room beside the bedroom.
A large black coloured table occupied the room, and Leylin’s
previously bought apparatus set had been placed on it. “After a few attempts at practicing, I am now a little more familiar with these apparatus, and I finished analysing the formula for the strength Potion today, so it’s about time to start!” Leylin muttered to himself and took out the black box containing the ingredients. He placed it on the table and opened it. The crimson fruit, green stem and bottle of black powder appeared before his eyes. Leylin’s fingers stroked the surfaces of these 3 items, “A.I. Chip! Measure the activity within and establish a model!” [Establishing scan, in the midst of gathering data, beginning construction!]

“Begin the simulation of the experiment!” Seeing the A.I. Chip complete its task, Leylin gave it another command. [Simulation of model in process...... strength Potion Formula...... Estimated time consumed: 2 hours 21 minutes!]

“As expected, it’s possible!” Leylin smiled jubilantly. Even for identical ingredients, the slightest deviation would result in different results when making the potion. As for qualified Potions Masters, they must make use of their experience and put the theory into practice, then make adjustments to obtain the desired properties of the potion. This field only relied on raw talent and the future accumulation of experience. As for the A.I. Chip, it was able to scan and produce simulations, resulting in a success rate that was much higher than for many other acolytes. Leylin patiently waited for some time, and then heard the A.I. Chip’s voice, [The simulation of the model is completed, success rate: 23.6%]

“A success rate close to one-quarter?” Leylin was in ecstasy. “A regular acolyte will always fail on their first attempt at brewing
potions. As for me, I’ll be able to have a one in four chance of success if I follow the A.I. Chip’s instructions?”

“Begin transmitting the process for the experiment!”

[Beginning the transmission of data!] A few images flashed by Leylin’s eyes as if he had already practiced making these potions countless of times. Various scenarios and their suitable responses, as well as the preparation of ingredients, were all presented in front of him.

“It’s time to start!”

Leylin’s expression turned solemn, and he picked up a crimson fruit, “This is a Blood vitality Fruit and it contains a huge amount of nourishment if it was prepared in an antidote……”

Leylin placed the Blood vitality Fruit into a white basin. He picked up a pounding tool and smashed the fruit into a pulp. The red juices flowed out, and an alcoholic scent was emitted from it.

After filtering out the mashed Blood vitality Fruit, Leylin poured the red juice into a beaker.

After the black candlestick had been lit, light blue flames continuously lapped at the bottom of the beaker. Within minutes, the red juice in the beaker started to boil, and a few flecks of black powder constantly jumped about in the bubbles.

Leylin picked up the glass rod beside him, and stirred the contents of the beaker.

“Marliwoosha!” Leylin chanted.

A thread of spiritual force travelled through the glass rod and entered the bubbling liquid, and a few wisps of black gas continued to be produced. It was the poison inside the Blood vitality Fruit. This was why only a level 1 acolyte and above could start to practice making potions, as a few steps required the usage of energy particles.

After all of the black gaseous substance were expelled, Leylin placed the liquid, which was even more crimson than before, into a
test tube.
“The first step is completed! The degree of purification isn’t bad!”
“The next part should be the stem of the Silk Fruit……”
What Leylin did next was to prepare the rest of the Blood vitality Fruit and Silk Fruit together. He failed somewhere in the middle for a few times and finally succeeded after making the 8th batch of the crimson liquid and the 7th batch of the frozen green substance.
“The next step should be the final blending process!”
Leylin placed the contents of the frozen green substance onto a petri dish, took out the black powder from the glass bottle, and sprinkled it on top.
The black powder caused a strong reaction after coming into contact with the frozen green substance. The frozen green substance continued to swell and let out a humming noise.
“Ice!” Leylin muttered an incantation in the Byrn language.
White mist suddenly appeared from the petri dish, condensing into a layer of ice and solidifying the frozen green substance yet again.
“It is time!” Leylin placed the frozen lump into a beaker, where a flame blazed continuously underneath the beaker.
“The final step!” Leylin’s eyes widened, and he poured the purified crimson liquid into the beaker.
A thread of his spiritual force also continuously extended into the beaker.
“Pa!” A sound suddenly came from the beaker, the frozen lump and the red liquid suddenly turned black, and a sickening stench emitted from it.
“Have I failed?” Leylin was indifferent.
“A.I. Chip, analyse the reason!”
[Beep! In the process of analysing......Conclusion: The Host’s spiritual force was unstable, and the temperature of the flames caused some distortion......]
The A.I. Chip replayed Leylin’s earlier actions and revealed the
reason for failure.
eylin dumped the failed experiment residue into the bin and inhaled deeply.
“Again!”
The same process was repeated, and finally, the purified crimson liquid from the Blood Vitality Fruit was poured into the beaker. This time, Leylin shifted all his concentration onto the beaker and continued to adjust the temperature of the flame below it. The red liquid and the frozen green substance continued to merge together, turning a faint yellowish colour.
“Green life, blood red vitality. Under the interference of the willpower from the depths of the abyss, you shall fuse! Furikesha Keleyahsan……”
Leylin chanted the final phase of the incantation. The various colours in the beaker continued to fuse together as he chanted. The substance finally turned into a faint blue colour liquid and emitted a fragrant and alluring scent.
“It’s completed! I successfully brewed the strength potion!”
Leylin smiled lightly and poured the light blue liquid into a tiny test tube.
“The liquid in this finger-length test tube can provide the nourishment that a person needs for 7 days, and also ensure that the person’s physical body and mental energy will be vigorous. It is a favourite for people who work on long experiments and adventurers! The normal price is 5 magic crystals!”
Leylin shook the test tube, and the potion inside glowed enchantingly under the light.
One night passed, Leylin looked at the three light blue test tubes that he held absentmindedly.
“With ten sets of ingredients, I succeeded three times and obtained three potions!
“This news definitely cannot be leaked out; otherwise, I will not be able to explain myself!” Leylin resolved, and destroyed the three test tubes containing the potions.
“What a pity!” Leylin was a little heartbroken.
“These 3 potions are worth 15 magic crystals, but the production cost is only 1 magic crystal. This potion industry has a crazy profit margin of over a dozen times its cost!!!”
“But I’m unable to sell them now! Aaarghhh!!” Leylin was rather exasperated.
“Not only can I not sell the potions, I still need to earn money to buy ingredients to continue my experiments and put on a façade of failure. I can only sell the most basic of potions after half a year!”
This estimate was based on Merlin’s success rate. He did not want to stand out and attract too much attention. Hence, he had to perform a little worse than Merlin. Merlin had a huge amount of ingredients and continuously practiced brewing back then. Only after a month did he manage to brew his first potion. Leylin did not have many magic crystals, so he could only show his talent in potion brewing after half a year.
He was, after all, an apprentice of the Potion’s Professor, and when he finally brewed his first potion successfully after half a year of failure, he would only be labelled as an ordinary talent as an apprentice of the Potion’s Professor, which was extremely logical.
“Potions absolutely cannot be sold in large quantities within the academy grounds, unless…… I am able to find a black market? But travelling outside the academy is too dangerous!”
Leylin shook his head, tidied up the experiment apparatus, and walked out of the room.
“This also proves that having such a high precision A.I. Chip gives me a huge edge over others in tasks with troublesome details! What’s next is to continue to focus and break through to a level 2 acolyte!”
“After I have the ability, I will abide by this cycle of selling potions, earning magic crystals, and gaining knowledge.”
Leylin still needed close to a year’s time to break through to a level 2 acolyte, according to the calculations from the A.I. Chip. After all, it would get increasingly harder to construct the 24 mind runes as the runes multiplied, and he also needed to accumulate more knowledge.
“In this period, I can constantly gather data and finish compiling the information on spiritual force. This will be very useful to me in the future!”
Unknowingly, another half a year passed just like that.
A brown-haired youth lowered his head as he walked on the black tiled pavement as if he was deep in thought.
This youth looked to be only thirteen or fourteen years of age and had brown hair. His face was unusually pale if it had not seen the sun for a long time.
This youth was naturally Leylin. At this moment, his right hand was hidden inside his sleeves, holding on to a test tube, and he appeared to be making some kind of choice.
“It has already been half a year since the first time I successfully brewed a potion!” Leylin looked at the acolytes walking past him and thought to himself.
In this half a year, many things had happened within the academy. For instance, Faye achieved some great accomplishments, and Merlin managed to brew a new potion. The fame of these geniuses only increased.
However, Leylin was more concerned with the fact that Jayden had already advanced to a level 2 acolyte. He recalled that when Kaliweir spoke of this news, he could not hide the fear and envy in his eyes despite trying his best to conceal it. The aptitude, as well as advancement, of a fifth-grade acolyte, was extremely startling.

As a fellow acolyte who came from the same area as him, Leylin did not have much thoughts towards it. He buried himself with the work he had to do, and to an outsider, he was just an ordinary level 1 acolyte. In this half year, Leylin had bought many of the strength potion ingredients and conducted many potion-brewing sessions. He also invested all of the profit he earned from giving tuition into this potion making. He also put up a front to conceal the A.I. Chip and tried to brew a potion without the A.I. Chip’s help most of the time, which had a success rate of zero. So far, he had spent a dozen odd magic crystals on this.

Of course, he also brought forward the problems he encountered to his mentor, Kroft, at times and asked other questions about the basics and brewing techniques. This was greatly beneficial for his Potioneering.

Secretly, Leylin could already affirm that with the help of the A.I. Chip, his Potioneering skills had already surpassed Merlin, only being a little inferior to his mentor, Kroft.

Today, it would be the day he ‘accidentally’ succeeded in brewing a potion and let his mentor evaluate it.

This time, the successful product was controlled by him through the A.I. Chip. He purposely made some minute errors, making it seem like an inferior product that was made by an acolyte, but it would still be considered decent for a new acolyte. Leylin’s palm, which was gripping the potion, uncontrollably
tightened.
“Only after today, can I start to sell a few potions in broad daylight and earn some magic crystals! Yesterday, I heard Raynor say that he already felt close to advancing. Therefore, my progress can’t lag behind too much!”

Leylin hurriedly walked into Kroft’s experiment lab.
“Leylin, do you have more problems with the brewing of the strength potion?” Kroft could clearly feel that his apprentice was different today.
“No, Sir!” Leylin inhaled deeply, “I have already succeeded once last night!”
“What?” The beaker in Kroft’s hands trembled, “Although your talent in Potioneering has exceeded my expectations, the brewing of a strength potion is not that easy!”

After half a year, Kroft was able to sense his apprentice’s frightening improvement after being questioned so much. However, he still felt that Leylin was still lacking in regards to brewing the strength potion successfully.

Hearing this, Merlin’s hand shook while he was concentrating on lowering a red crystal bead into a test tube. Black smoke emitted from the test tube and Merlin sighed, turning his attention over here.
As for Bicky, she just leaned over directly.
“Did you bring the completed potion?” Kroft asked.
“It’s in here!” Leylin took out a blue-coloured test tube and handed it to the professor.
Kroft unplugged the wooden stopper and took a sniff. His face revealed a startled expression.
He then poured a drop on his finger. A fine, milky-white light extended from between his brows and directly pierced the droplet, making it shake.
Kroft closed his eyes, his brows furrowed and soon relaxed.
“The purification of the Blood vitality Fruit was not bad, but too much was added at the end. There was also some problem with your usage of spiritual force, which damaged the chemical properties……All in all, there are quite a few problems, but you have succeeded as a whole! Congratulations!”
Kroft smiled jubilantly.
Hearing this, Leylin also smiled, and Bicky even cheered, giving Leylin a warm hug.
The fiery hot curves of this girl attached themselves onto Leylin’s chest, which gave rise to a peculiar feeling in his heart.
“Congratulations!” Merlin walked over too.
“Compared to Senior Merlin, I still have much to learn!” Leylin let go of Bicky and hurriedly said.
“You don’t have to be too humble, compared to Merlin, your resources are lacking. I guarantee that you would have been able to brew your first potion in 3 to 4 months otherwise. In Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, this talent can already be considered excellent!” Kroft exclaimed.
“Thinking back now, I am really lucky. First, I accepted Merlin, who has talent in Potioneering, as my apprentice. And now, I have you!” Kroft exclaimed.
“Sir, I will also work hard!” Bicky clenched her small fists and returned to her experiment table.
“Finish preparing the Monkey Headed Mushrooms in your hands first, before you say anything else!” Kroft’s face turned stiff.
After that, he returned the strength potion to Leylin, “This time, luck played an important factor in brewing the strength potion. What you have to do next is to remember how it felt when you first succeeded, and then practice more. This test tube can also be sold and exchanged for more resources!” Kroft seemed to be reminding him, “Leylin, you must remember. Different potions have different challenges for Potions masters.
Although you are able to brew this strength potion right now, you would most likely revert back to a newbie if you were to replace it with a hemostatic potion. Therefore, do not be arrogant. From now on, focus on practicing your potion brewing!”

“I will!” Leylin pocketed the strength potion well and promised solemnly.

After he finished his tasks in the experiment lab, Leylin left together with Bicky.

“Shall we go to the second level dining hall to feast, to commemorate your first success?” Bicky ran in front and twirled around a few times as if she was a lively butterfly.

“Of course! It is my honour to invite a beautiful lady to a meal!” Leylin bowed slightly, a gentleman’s propriety.

“Hehe!” Bicky covered her mouth and laughed adorably, and then her expression darkened, “If only……If only he was like you……”

“What’s wrong? Your Senior Fayle is ignoring you again?” Leylin knew a little about this matter. In this half year, Bicky gradually got closer to Fayle and finally became friends with him, but they were only normal friends.

As for Fayle, he was constantly studying and practicing, and taking risks outside the academy. He was always surrounded by beautiful girls, so he did not think much of Bicky and was a little standoffish.

“It’s not that! Fayle just has a very important experiment coming up and is in the midst of collecting resources, so he’s very busy……” Bicky lowered her head and kicked a pebble off the sidewalk.
"Something’s not right!" A thought suddenly occurred to Leylin.

"You…… Could you have given him your family’s resources? No wonder you are still a level 1 acolyte! Otherwise, with your aptitude, you should have advanced to the next level long ago!"

Bicky belonged to a small Magus family. Although small in size, they were still capable of obtaining the occasional resources and magic crystals. As for Bicky, the one whom the family placed all its hopes on, she was naturally given a fixed share each month. Her aptitude was not bad, and she had arrived earlier than Leylin by a year. By right, she should have been promoted to a level 2 acolyte long ago. However, she was still a level 1 acolyte, and even Leylin had nearly caught up to her.

"It’s……It’s not like that!" Bicky hurriedly shook her head.

Seeing Bicky’s expression, Leylin slowly shook his head. "Forget it! I can’t really do anything for you regarding this matter… However, you must remember to be more careful!"

Leylin hinted.

"Alright! Let’s go to the dining hall on the second floor!! I hear that the honey-flavoured cake there isn’t bad……" Bicky smiled, and it was obvious she did not want to talk about this topic anymore.

The second level dining hall was a special place. Contrary to the third level cafeteria where the food was served for free, the service
here had to be paid for in magic crystals.
It was the first time Leylin had come here. After ordering two
honey-flavoured cakes, a beef steak, two fruit juices, and the flesh
of a Uni-horned Lizard, the total came up to 1 magic crystal and
made Leylin feel a pang in his heart.
“I’ve heard that if the flesh of these lizards is specially prepared, it
is very beneficial for a Magus’s meditation, so I must try it today!”
Leylin used a knife to slice off a part of the lizard meat, picked the
meat up with a fork, and placed it into his mouth. He instantly felt
the fragrant flavour of the meat spread throughout his taste buds,
and Leylin’s eyes lit up in wonderment.
[Beep! An ingredient with a beneficial effect on the Host’s body has
been detected! Result: Mild increase in meditation. Hint: requires 10
continuous days of consumption for an obvious increase in effect!]
“I…… “ Leylin was speechless. “It’s such a splendid item, but how
could I have that many magic crystals? I can only eat it for its
flavour!”
On the other side, Bicky was very happily eating the honey-
flavoured cake.
After their meal, Leylin bade farewell to Bicky and went to the
Trading Post.
Leyin had very few magic crystals to begin with, but now he
planned to sell the strength potion. With Kroft’s approval, he could
earn magic crystals by brewing and selling more strength potions.
After walking past the chaotic stalls, Leylin arrived at Woox’s stall,
the stall he had bought potion ingredients from during his first visit
to this place.
“Leylin! It’s you again! You have spent dozens of magic crystals
this half year! Haven’t you given up yet?” Woox was still as fat as
ever.
“Potioneering is such an enchanting skill, I cannot bear to give it
up!” Leylin said, half-jokingly.
“However, today I am here not just to buy ingredients,” Leylin said as he handed the strength potion over to fatty Woox, “Look at this!” “This is……” Woox gaped, “You’ve succeeded?” “Of course!” Leylin smiled lightly.

What Woox did next was to make a thorough inspection, and after ensuring that it was indeed an authentic strength potion, his eyes almost seemed to glow.

“Over a hundred times! You have only attempted it around a hundred times and yet you’ve succeeded in brewing a strength potion! This talent……This talent is only slightly inferior to Merlin’s!”

Most of the ingredients were sold to Leylin by Woox, so he was able to deduce Leylin’s talent very quickly. “As if! This is due to Mentor Kroft’s guidance!” Leylin said bashfully.

“Oh! It’s Kroft again, he already has such a talented student like Merlin, why did they send yet another gifted student to him?” The fatty slapped his forehead and let out a shrill voice, “Why don’t you consider changing mentors? My mentor, Wranke, is also a professor who is adept in Potioneering……He will definitely like you!”

“My apologies! I have never considered changing at all!” Leylin hurriedly rejected the offer. Kroft treated him rather well, and he would surely incur the wrath of the Magus if he changed mentors on a whim. He simply did not want to take that risk.

“What a pity……” The fatty shook his head, he clearly knew that he had been grasping at straws.

“Alright! I will be able to give you 4 magic crystals for this strength potion, how about it?” The fatty asked.

Although the strength potion was priced at 5 magic crystals, 4 magic crystals was a reasonable price when considering the profit that was to be made by the stall.
“It’s a fair deal, exchange the magic crystals for more ingredients for the strength potion!”
“Alright! If you wish to sell any more strength potions in the future, I will buy them all at the price of 4 magic crystals per potion!” Woox’s eyes flashed.
An acolyte with a Potioneering talent that was slightly lower than Merlin’s was akin to a magic crystal mine that had yet to be excavated.
“Definitely! To a good partnership!”
Leylin and Woox shook hands, and after collecting four black boxes, he walked out from the hut.
“Look quickly! Fresh Mountain Cat eyeballs! This is an item that will greatly benefit your meditation!’
“Exquisite cross blades, as well as military crossbows. All imported from the Deep Blue Kingdom!”
“Feathers of a flamingo! A precious ingredient for experiments, only 5 magic crystals!’
Here and there, various acolytes were promoting their wares. Leylin saw a black-robed acolyte holding up a huge 5 coloured feather and advertising continuously, which obviously attracted a huge crowd.
“A.I. Chip! Scan the feather!”
[Beep! Comparing to databank! Similarity level: Mynah’s tail feathers 83%, homegrown peacock 64%, sharp-beaked crane 34%]
Leylin looked at the acolyte who was still advertising his goods and was speechless. Flamingo feathers are rare, but the 3 bird feathers that the A.I. Chip detected were so common that acolytes wouldn’t bother to pick them up if they fell to the ground. Obviously, it was a scam.
This situation was rather common in such stalls. Although goods are rather good, the counterfeit goods are also aplenty. Hence, Leylin always bought from the wooden huts in the centre area.
Moreover, acolytes are sharp, and the chances of finding a cheap yet good item in the stalls and striking big are the same as finding the remnants of dead Magi. Leylin shook his head and left the Trading Post. Three days later, Leylin was in his dorm, looking at sixteen test tube lined up properly on his table, deep in thought. Right now, his success rate for brewing a strength potion is almost at the same level at Kroft at 40%. However, he would be seeking trouble if he were to sell them all at once! “Right now I am only able to put on a front and earn just a little, so at most it will be 2 test tubes! As for the rest, I will have to stow them away. Leylin sighed and placed 2 test tube in the purse hanging around his waist, and then stowed the remaining 14 test tubes in the empty space under his bed. “I won’t be able to sell huge amounts within the academy, so I had better find some other way outside. The best scenario would be a black market; I hear prices there are higher too!” “The outside world is dangerous; I must become a level 2 acolyte before going out!” “What’s next, I can use the magic crystals I earned from selling potions to buy higher tiered knowledge from Kroft and expedite my break through to level 2 acolyte!” “After becoming a level 2 acolyte, I can attempt to practice magic spells, and take a mission outside to see if I can find ways to sell the potions……” Leylin pondered, and then asked, “A.I. Chip, bring forth my current stats!” [Beep! Leylin Farlier, level 1 acolyte. Strength: 2.1, Agility: 2.3, Vitality: 2.5, Status: Healthy] “After such a long period of meditation, my vitality has increased the most. As for strength and Agility, they have increased a little
too. As for my spiritual force?” Leylin looked at the data in front of him and his brows furrowed.
“A.I. Chip, are you able to convert my spiritual force into data and display it?”
[Data is insufficient. Information for spiritual force is being collated.] The A.I. Chip replied.
“When will it be ready?” Leylin asked.
[Estimated time: 155 Days 21 Hours]
“Half a year, huh? It is close to when I advance to level 2 acolyte.” Leylin nodded his head, “I’m not planning to leave in this next half a year, so it’s no big deal!”
What followed next was that Leylin entered into a state of painstaking training.
Apart from aiding Kroft in his daily experiments, he was brewing potions, exchanging them for magic crystals, and then purchasing more information.
Besides brewing strength potions, he also bought the formulas for the Hemostasis Potion and some low levelled antidotes and began to practice brewing them.
With the A.I. Chip, the success rate was not bad, but this fact was concealed by Leylin.
During this period, Leylin also heard some bad news – Kaliweir’s team had met with trouble on a mission. Not only had some been injured, others had also died. The acolyte who came with him in the same Dirigible, third-grade acolyte Hank, would forever be buried in the Abyssal Bone Marsh.
Leylin was expecting a similar result, as a level 1 acolyte only has a small resistance to magic. It would be abnormal if they risked their lives and was free of injuries or loss of lives.
After this incident, Kaliweir and his team seemed to face reality and started to be content with studying in the academy, not daring to take on any other missions.
In the blink of an eye, Leylin grew a little taller and his face acquired a tinge of maturity.
“I am finally 14 too!” Seeing that his palms had grown a little larger, he felt deeply moved.
The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy seemed to have a spell formation regulating the temperature. Leylin always wore the grey robe for acolytes, but he never felt any stifling heat or frigidity.
“Sir! I want to purchase the crystal ball with the magic spell formulas!”
Leylin stood in front of Kroft.
“Oh! You want to begin learning rank 0 spells?” Kroft cusped the porcelain cup that was emitting steam and heat in his hand, and sipped from it.
“I have nearly finished constructing my mind runes, and there’s only one more step needed before I advance to a level 2 acolyte. I wish to make some preparations for this beforehand!”
Leylin said warmly.
“Being able to progress in both Potioneering and also meditation, I am very gratified!” Kroft said as he stole a glance at Bicky who was nearby.
Bicky had only advanced into a level 2 acolyte two days ago, and never exhibited any extraordinary talents towards Potioneering. With her aptitude, this could be considered a slow pace.
“The academy price for the introduction to magic spell models is 30 magic crystals, I am able to give you a discount and reduce the price to 20 magic crystals!”
“Although I could also give you this information for free, I want you to know that you will only achieve results with effort!” Kroft smiled lightly. This was the authority of the professors. They could give students favourable prices, or even give the information free of charge. It all depended on the mood of the professor. From this, it was obvious that Kroft approved of Leylin.
“O"f course! I will always remember the teachings of my mentor!” Leylin hurriedly nodded his head and took out 20 magic crystals from the black pouch hung on his waist. 20 black magic crystals fell onto the table and let off a dark lustre. “Very well! This is a crystal ball with the introduction to magic spell models recorded on it. You can study it, but remember to practice it only after you have been promoted!” Kroft took a fist-sized crystal ball off the wooden shelf at the side and handed it to Leylin. Golden words seemed to ripple inside it. Leylin stooped over to take it and pocketed the crystal ball. These crystal balls were tools to record information in, and they could store more information than sheets of parchment. However, they could only be used once, and the information inside would fade away after someone viewed the contents, and hence, they were rather costly. Deep in the night, Leylin sat on the bed within his dorm and held the crystal ball in his hands. “Magi have named the spells that acolytes are able to cast rank 0 spells, to differentiate from the spells that Magi can cast. “No matter if they are a level 2 acolyte or level 3 acolyte, they are only able to use rank 0 spells! Furthermore, they need to be first class Magi to be able to cast them without injury, and this is often a sign of becoming an official Magus!”
“The principle of magic spells models is to construct a model in your mind with your spiritual force. After that, you use the nature of your spiritual force to attract the external energy particles and transform them intricately, turning them into a spell!”
“To put it simply, the spiritual force is the primer, and the spell model is the catalyst. The primer is always the same, but under the effect of different catalysts, different types of energy particles will be attracted to it to form a different spell!”
Leylin concluded and put the crystal ball away.
“Constructing a spell model is a complicated matter. In addition, your spiritual force will be impaired once you fail and will need at least half a month to recover. This is a bottleneck that even fifth-grade acolytes are unable to breakthrough with ease. However, I can minimise my failures with help from the A.I. Chip!”
“After advancing to a level 3 acolyte, I must construct a spell model and even buy the various spell models. This would be a big expense if not for my improvement in Potioneering; normal acolytes would have to risk their lives many times over before they earned enough magic crystals!”
From this, Leylin could discern the bloody price one must pay on the path of a Magus.
Compared to the magic crystals earned by risking his life as a level 1 acolyte, he would earn more by selling potions.
“Monopolising the market will yield the greatest profits!”
“All these are none of my concern, what I have to do now is to advance to a level 2 acolyte!”
A level 1 acolyte could only store a slight amount of energy particles in their body and have a basic magic resistance. However, their usage of energy particles is rather shallow, and hence, they are unable to cast magic.
As for a level 2 acolyte, the greatest difference is that they are able to cast rank 0 spells.
A rank 0 spell that is amplified by the spell’s model will have a greater destructive effect compared to the simple usage of energy particles.

“I have almost finished with the construction of my 24 mind runes. Tonight, I will advance to a level 2 acolyte!”

There was resolve on Leylin’s face.

One night passed.

In the dorm, Leylin opened his eyes.

“I have finally advanced to a level 2 acolyte! I can sense that the energy particles in my body have increased several times more than when compared to a level 1 acolyte!”

[Beep! spiritual force can now be represented in figures, proceed with the conversion?] At this moment, the voice of the A.I. Chip sounded.

“Hm? It seems to be two days faster than expected! What happened?”

[The spiritual force of the Host has increased and there is an unknown effect on the A.I. Chip. Processing speed has increased!]

A screen was projected by the A.I. Chip and it was littered with many curved lines and numbers. From this, one could see that the processing ability of the A.I. Chip had been raised last night.

“It seems like the A.I. Chip has indeed undergone some qualitative changes after transcending worlds. Now that it has fused with my soul, the increase in spiritual force when my soul became more powerful has indirectly affected the A.I. Chip!”

Leylin’s guessed that the subject of souls was the most unfathomable. Although Abyssal Bone Forest Academy claimed to be a pioneer in this area, they only managed to experience and grasp a few behaviours and patterns of the ectoplasmic beings. Moreover, only an official Magus was qualified to browse this information. For Leylin, it was still a long journey ahead.

“My A.I. Chip having the ability to represent my spiritual force in
numbers is also a good thing. Bring out my current stats!”


The A.I. Chip projected a 3D image in front of Leylin eyes and displayed his stats.

“The spiritual force can finally be shown in numbers. My spiritual force stat is almost equivalent to that of 4 people combined?”

Leylin looked at the image and asked, “A.I. Chip! Investigate the reason for the decreased growth after advancing to a level 2 acolyte!”

[Mission establishing, inspection in process!] [Reason discovered: The Host has more resistance!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.

“As expected! Using radiation to increase my stats has its limits! I wonder what methods those official Magi used to strengthen their bodies?”

Leylin touched his chin.

There was also a small district between the Academic Area and the Trading Post. It was where the academy sold higher-levelled goods. Although the items had set standards, they were more expensive. The service of the staff was also bad and they were extremely cold.

Leylin came to the front of a counter. Behind the glass casing was a grave-looking old lady who wore a deadpanned expression as if Leylin owed her a lot of magic crystals.

“Sorry to bother you!” Leylin bowed slightly. He could sense the energy waves of a level 3 acolyte radiating from this old lady.

“A.I. Chip! Inspect!”

“What do you want?” The old lady’s voice sounded. It contained a gloomy and chilly air, like a cold, glossy fish scale, and gave people goose bumps.

[Beep! Name: Unknown. Strength: 2.0, Agility: 2.1, Vitality: 3.5, Spiritual force: 7.6, Status: Healthy ]

With the A.I. Chip providing the information, he confirmed that
this old lady was indeed a level 3 acolyte, but her spiritual force was rather low as if she had been injured before. However, it was still a piece of cake for her to deal with Leylin.

“The A.I. Chip can already inspect the stats of the acolytes and other living organisms. It just cannot get past the defensive abilities of a Magus still!”

Leylin mustered the best smile he had, “Would you let me have a look at the basic spell models?”

“Take it!” The old lady flung a dusty large book over to him and did not seem even slightly bothered about whether he was going to buy it or not.

“I’m not angry! I’m not angry!” Leylin psyched himself and opened the book.

A spell model and the corresponding introduction appeared in his vision.

“Secondary Energy Fireball. Description: Summon a formidable fireball to attack your enemies. Prerequisite courses: Foundations of Negative Energy, Construction of Spell Models.”

“Shadow Sphere. Description: Use Shadow Energy to construct a fairly covert sphere. Prerequisite courses: Necromancy Studies, Transfiguration.”

“Acidic Aqua Shot. Description: Create an acidic ball with immense corrosive properties. Able to correct the trajectory slightly. Prerequisite courses: Foundations of Negative Energy, Psychology.”

“Umbra’s Hand. Description: Ability to use Negative Energy to form a concealed palm in the shadows for attacking. Extremely covert. Prerequisite courses: Shadow Studies, Basic Evocation.

“All of these are the most basic spells, are there any that could be advanced further?” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“None! We only provide the basic spell types here. As for the rest, get them from your mentor!”

“Give me the spell model for Acidic Aqua Shot and Umbra’s
Hand!” Leylin inhaled deeply.
“One will cost 10 magic crystals!” The old lady seemed to be annoyed.
After handing over 20 magic crystals to the lady, Leylin obtained two thick books made of parchment paper. ‘Umbra’s Hand’ was written on the cover of the top book, in the Byron language.
This counter was obviously constructed in a manner that let the sales staff always sit in a taller position than the customers. Leylin was a little pissed off at having to look up at the old lady.
He carried the two books and turned around, not wanting to stay for a moment longer.
“Leylin!” On the way back, a voice sounded and Leylin halted in his footsteps.
A male wearing leather armour ran over, “Earlier, I saw a silhouette of someone who looked like you, and it was indeed you. We haven’t met for a long time!”
Kaliweir greeted.
The leather armour he wore was rather damaged and looked rather pitiful as it was not repaired.
“You are…… Buying spell models? Have you advanced to a level 2 acolyte?” Kaliweir looked at Leylin who was holding the two spell books, seemingly startled.
“Yeah! I have just advanced! So I bought them to learn from!” Leylin answered.
“A.I. Chip, inspect Kaliweir!”
[Beep! Kaliweir. Strength: 2.6, Agility: 2.8, Vitality: 3.1, Spiritual force: 4.1, Assessment: level 2 acolyte]
“It seems like Kaliweir advanced not long before I did, this data shows the stats of an acolyte who had just advanced!” Leylin evaluated secretly.
Ever since the previous incident, our team has taken up very few missions. Raynor has also advanced to a level 2 acolyte recently
and wanted to try learning a spell model. It’s a pity that he has yet to pass a few basic theory lessons after failing them several times……”

Kaliweir placed his hands in his pocket, obviously wanting to look cooler.

After sizing up Leylin’s new grey robes, he said, “You are indeed worthy of being a Potioneering student, having so much money!”

Leylin smiled. Not only do the grey robes of the acolytes have spells which remove stains, the fabric was also good. The defensive capabilities could be comparable to leather armour so the price was rather hefty. Many acolytes did not have the capability to buy another after damaging their set of robes.

However, Leylin was different; he even had two more sets stored in his wardrobe.

Recently, my success rate has increased a little and I earned more magic crystals. However, after buying the spell models, I have spent them all again!” Leylin put on a helpless expression.

“Yeah! Each and every cost in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is too high!” Kaliweir’s expression was not too good. He came from a first-class noble family in the Chernobyl Islands, but he discovered he was actually extremely broke when he got here.

“Speaking of this, after we have all advanced to level 2 acolytes and mastered our spells, shall we all take up a mission?” Leylin asked.

“Really? That would be great!” Kaliweir was extremely gleeful. It seemed as though he had been considering it for a long time.
30 - Experimenting With Spells

Leylin and Kaliweir discussed the finer details and then bade farewell to each other. Leylin contemplated deeply before deciding to go on a mission with Kaliweir and his team. He still had a lot of potions which he did not dare to sell, so he could only seek for alternatives. Moreover, converting the knowledge gained from learning a spell into battle experience requires a continuous process of battling. Regarding battle experience, Kaliweir and his team’s average strength were similar to his and they also came from the same region. Everyone also knew each other beforehand which was naturally better than being with an unfamiliar group of people. Furthermore, Kaliweir has undergone a long period of arduous training and has learnt a lot. Since he could be considered to have an abundant of experience, Leylin was more at ease with his team. “When I master the spell model, my plan is to follow Kaliweir and his team on a mission and accumulate some experience. After that, I’ll leave the academy on my own and seek alternative ways……”

Returning back to his dorm, Leylin picked up the Umbra’s Hand spell book. The yellow cover of the spell book was extremely sturdy like leather, and there were some patterns on it which sent an icy cold feeling from Leylin’s fingertips into his body. The book was tightly bound by a metal chain and the ends were
clipped in the fashion of a belt.
“Learning the Umbra’s Hand requires research in Shadow energy
and Evocation. I’ve learned both long ago!” Via selling potions, Leylin continuously improved his knowledge
by acquiring advanced information on the Shadow element and
studying them.
“The incantation for opening it – Mansidala!” Leylin spoke in a low
voice. After hearing the incantation, the book suddenly trembled and,
amidst the trembling, the black chains automatically untied by
themselves and the pages started to flip through.
“A.I. Chip, begin recording the information!” Leylin continuously looked at the spell book containing the model
of Umbra’s Hand. Only after quickly flipping through it once and
hearing the notification from the A.I. Chip that it had fully recorded
the content, did he put the book down.
“The construction of a spell model is the foundation for a Magus to
cast spells. This process includes a series of complex variation as
well as the precise construction of the spell model itself. To learn a
spell, 3 months is needed at the very least!” As he learned of the difficulty for a Magus to cast spells, Leylin
sighed. Without the A.I. Chip, he could only learn to cast spells
after countless attempts and failures.
[The recording of data is finished, beginning analysis!] The A.I.
Chip’s voice sounded.
“How long will it take?”
[Estimated time taken: 106 Hours 32 Minutes!]
“106 Hours 32 Minutes! That is the equivalent of four to five days,
this speed is extremely fast!” Leylin nodded his head.
He stood up, patted his body, and placed the two spell books away
neatly.
He then walked to one side of his dorm. Originally, this section was
utilised for reception or other uses but Leylin changed it into a mini experiment lab for potion brewing. Although it was rather dangerous to experiment here, with the A.I. Chip he could guarantee that nothing would go wrong. “I’m going on a mission in a few months’ time! I better focus on brewing a few potions as preventive measures for sudden events!” Leylin lit a candle and begun his potion brewing.

The education system in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was rather loose. From what Leylin saw, it was most similar to the ancient times of one teacher to one student. The academy was only providing land and the most basic of services. As for everything else, like acquiring advanced information, one had to learn from a professor, the chances of which were very slim. Moreover, there weren’t any compulsory missions that one must take on. As long as a person could pay the school fees and did not meet a bad professor, one could normally stay here for 5 years! Of course, when there was no motivation, one’s power would lessen as they did not seek to improve. At least in Leylin’s case, he had not come across such a wonderful thing like receiving a few pieces of magic crystals each month for free.

To obtain magic crystals, one could only take up a mission and go outside of the academy using their life to fight for them! The world of Magus has always upheld the principles of fair trade. In the following dozen days or so, Leylin devoted his time to analysing the spell models and purchasing items like grains and nutrients for the mission he was going to take up. One afternoon, Leylin came to the spell experimenting area. “The spell experimenting area is a place that the academy has specially set up for acolytes and Magi to test the prowess of their spells. After all, various spells have immense might and there is also the problem of radiation. If the experiments are not managed
properly the academy will be blown to bits!”

The spell experimenting area was located on the left-most of the academy, a remote area.
The surrounding white marble rock walls were stacked neatly and seemed to be extremely sturdy.
Various runes were written on these walls, two of which Leylin recognised. One was for the isolation of radiation contamination, and the other was for reinforcing the walls.

“Are you going to test your spells?” Leylin walked to a counter where a big, bald guy smiled jovially at him asking.

“Yes, I would like to. Are there any places for me to do so?”

“We have two large areas designated for the acolytes and Magi. You are only allowed to enter the area for acolytes and, within that area, space is divided into shared and single rooms. Shared rooms mean experimenting with your spells alongside another person. There might be interruptions caused by this but, it is inexpensive. As for single rooms, the fees are much more costly!”

“What are the rates for a single room?” Leylin asked.

The baldy’s eyes shone since it was obvious that there was a promising client here, “Three hours for 1 magic crystal. Our single rooms even have specialised measuring devices which can calculate and report the might of your spells. Furthermore, we have…… It’s absolutely worth it!”

“Give me one!” Leylin handed over a magic crystal to the big guy.

“Alright! Please hold on!” The big guy registered him quickly and handed back a black crystal-like item.

“This is your room card! Number 32!”

Leylin nodded his head and entered the spell experimenting area.
On both sides, the runes on the white marbles glowed with a sparkling light. Some of the rooms obviously had occupants, but there were no sounds coming out from them and only the sound of Leylin’s footsteps could be heard the corridor.
“As expected! The noise isolation is really effective!”
Leylin nodded his head and, after locating his own room, swiped the black crystal on a black platform right outside the door! *Ka-cha!* The door opened and a mechanical female voice sounded, “Welcome! You have three hours; please notice the allocation……”
The interior of the room was huge! The area was similar in size to a basketball court from Leylin’s previous life. In the middle were a few human shaped targets wearing leather armour, metal armour and fur. To the far right, there was a screen on the wall and below it was the instructions on how to operate it.
– A Magus can attack a target with a spell, and the screen will automatically record the power of the spell. –
“The facilities here are very advanced and seem to have an intelligence of their own. However, it’s a pity that it is formed by magic, a different route from what my previous world took!” Leylin exclaimed silently.
“Let’s try with a physical attack first!”
Leylin’s muscles on his right arm bulged as he walked to the front of a white coloured target wearing leather armour.
* Bang!* Leylin moved and, with a low voice, he shouted and punched the middle of the leather armour, leaving a faint trace of an impression.
The screen on the right flickered, and a few words appeared.
“It seems like these targets aren’t made of common materials!” Leylin muttered to himself.
“Degree of power” is the official standard that Magi use to measure the extent of their might. A single unit, as a standard, is equivalent to the energy that can be completely released by 1 gram of magic
crystal.
“This method of measurement isn’t bad. A.I. Chip, in the future you can increase the content regarding this area!”

[Recording is done, defragmenting in process!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.
“Ha!” Leylin pulled out the cross blade hanging on his waist and brought about a strong gale as he viciously cut down.
* Qiang! * A gap split opened on the leather armour revealing the white coloured wound beneath.

Seeing the screen, Leylin nodded his head, “I used all my might to cut down with the cross blade earlier but it only gave this kind of damage to the target! It seems like I can put my mind at ease and learn magic!”

“A.I. Chip, transmit the 2 spell models over!” After this period of continuous research, the A.I. Chip had already analysed the 2 spells completely. The last step was to transmit the information into Leylin’s hippocampus1 which would then enable him to grasp these two rank 0 spells immediately.

[Beep! Transmitting in progress!] With the A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice replying, Leylin felt a lot of memories regarding the techniques and procedures of casting these 2 spells surfacing in his mind.
Every step felt extremely familiar. It was as if they were personally practiced by him countless of times.

“Bring out the data of these 2 rank 0 spells!”
“Acidic Aqua Shot: rank 0 spell. Casting time: 3 seconds. Effective distance: 7 Metres. Consumption: 2 spiritual force, 2 magic power”
“Umbra’s Hand: rank 0 spell. Casting time: 4 seconds. Effective distance: 10 Metres. Consumption: 2 spiritual force, 2 magic power”
power”
“magic power is the amount of energy particles that are stored within the body. It is limited by the upper limits of the spiritual force!”
To cast a spell, one does not only need to use their spiritual force as a primer but must also understand that the magic power within their body will be consumed as well.
Leylin suppressed his excited emotions, “A.I. Chip, Record in detail my spell casting process !”
“A.I. Chip, Record in detail my spell casting process !”
“Pandora – Graygonger!”
With the Byron language’s incantation sounding from Leylin, a ball of dark green liquid suddenly appeared at the upper area of his right hand. White bubbles continuously frothed outside of it.
“Let’s go!” Leylin flung the acidic ball in his hand and the green liquid streaked across in an arc, landing on a target wearing leather armour.
* Sssii! Sssii! *
The corrosion of the physical target sounded nonstop as it continuously dissolved while emitting a huge amount of white smoke. At the same time, an odour that pricks at the sense of smell wafted in all directions.
After a few seconds, the human target had been corroded, leaving only a pair of white legs behind.
“A.I. Chip, estimate the degree of power!”
[Beep! Degree of power: 5]
Leylin turned to look at the screen at the right. At this moment, the words on the screen changed and a new record was shown.
“Classification: Magical corrosive attack. Degree of power: 5. Damage to target: Severe.”
“En! It seems like the A.I. Chip and this screen have the same estimated values so I won’t need to come here in future. I should be able to estimate the degree of power in my spells with the A.I.
Chip.”
Leylin nodded his head and begin experimenting with another spell.
“Umbra’s Hand!”
Following Leylin’s incantation, a black coloured hand suddenly appeared under a target which wore steel armour. It grabbed the target’s throat forcefully and, with a crashing sound, the target’s head fell onto the ground.
31 - Patrolling Mission

Seeing the evaluation on the screen, Leylin began to compare the merits and drawbacks of the two spells.

“Although the might of Acidic Aqua Shot is greater, enemies can dodge it easily. It also requires constant fine-tuning with spiritual force. As for Umbra’s Hand, it is a little weaker, but it’s extremely covert and is best used for a sneak attack!”

“These two spells have been chosen by me with utmost care. Not only do they satisfy my Dark elemental affinity, materials are not needed to cast them either, which is extremely convenient!”

Leylin’s eyes suddenly flashed, “A.I. Chip, is it possible to optimise these two spells?”

[Beep! Affirmative! Consumption for optimisation: 19 spiritual force points, proceed or not?]

“Definitely not! I don’t want my spiritual force to be exhausted that quickly! Why does it require so much?” Leylin’s expression was a little unsightly.


“Alright, it seems like there is no hope for now!”

Leylin closed the screen, “Besides, a simple spell already requires 2 points of spiritual force. I can barely use it a few times at present!”
“A.I. Chip, bring out my current stats and show it in a concrete manner!”


At Leylin’s command, a 3D image of himself was projected, with various information appearing alongside him.

“It is much clearer this way! The two spells fully consumed my spiritual force and Magical Power earlier, no wonder I feel a little dizzy now!” Leylin rubbed his temples as they were hurting a little.

“With this constraint of spiritual force and Magical Power, learning more spells is not feasible. What’s left is for me to prepare a few more potions! If only I had a magic artifact, my strength would definitely have a significant increase…”

In the academy, the Mission Area.

There were all sorts of acolytes gathered here, and most of them had gloomy expressions. Their bodies also reeked of blood and held traces of injuries.

Occasionally, a few grey-robed acolytes who radiated strong magical energy would carry large monsters on their backs, garnering the envy and attention of others.

In the centre of the Mission Area was a black coloured rock wall, where various missions were arranged.

Green-coloured words glowed against the black wall, and it looked a little eerie.

Among the many missions, some were written in blood red and
gave off an ominous feeling. Most of the missions listed were
dangerous, but the rewards were also better.
In the corner of the square, a few people stood around patiently as
if they were waiting for someone.
“Leylin hasn’t arrived yet?”
Raynor crossed his arms in front of his chest, seemingly a little
bored.
“It isn’t the designated time yet, what are you in a hurry for? Since
he already agreed, he will definitely be here.” Kaliweir replied as he
polished a black cleaver, the smooth blade stained with traces of
blood.
“Leylin? Are you talking about that Potioneering acolyte, Leylin?”
A green-haired girl’s eyes shone.
“It is said that his Potioneering talent is only second to Merlin.
Furthermore, he has already begun to brew potions and earn a huge
amount of money, why would he still want to join our team?”
“He originally came from the same area as us, so it’s only natural to
join us for missions!” Raynor laughed.
“Then you guys must definitely introduce him to us later. If we are
able to approach an acolyte who knows Potioneering, we might not
need to risk our lives on missions in the future anymore!” A red-
haired girl laughed heartily. Her body was extremely volupptuous.
Raynor’s eyes unconsciously scanned over this girl’s perky chest,
and then he suddenly felt parched.
“My apologies! I’m late!”
Leylin wore leather armour with his robes on the outside, which
looked a little bulky. A Cross Blade hung down on his waist, and a
crossbow was slung on his back together with a large black sack.
“We have just arrived too!” Kaliweir sheathed his cleaver and
smiled.
“It’s just us five?” Leylin looked at the group. He recognised
Kaliweir and Raynor, but did not see Beirut and the rest.
“Beirut and the others are third-grade acolytes, but they have not advanced to level 2 acolyte yet. They only have a bit of resistance to magic spells, so the outside is too dangerous for them. This is also our first time going out after the previous failure and I don’t wish for any more casualties!”
Kaliweir explained.
Leylin suddenly understood. Although he was a third-grade acolyte, his talent was comparable to a fourth-grade acolyte with the A.I. Chip’s help, and he might even surpass them in learning spells.
Beirut and the others were only in the level 1 acolyte range. Bringing them out was no help at all, and they might even be a burden. Hence keeping them within the academy was also good for them. It was realistic, yet cruel.
“Come! Let me make the introductions!” Kaliweir smiled.
“The green haired girl is Lilisse, and the one beside is Neela. They are both apprentices under my mentor and advanced to level 2 acolytes two months ago…”
“Hello! Sir Leylin!” Neela’s eyes shone and she took the initiative to approach Leylin.
“It is really lucky to be able to go on a mission with you this time!” Neela stuck out her chest and spoke coquettishly in a very nasal pitch.
Seeing this scene, Raynor looked elsewhere, his expression a little gloomy.
“I only have a little talent in Potioneering and I must even thank Mentor Kroft, it was him who…” Leylin rubbed his nose. He knew that he only needed to reveal a bit of desire and this beautiful girl would pounce into his arms. However, he had been concentrating on cultivation lately and had very little wants in this aspect.
Furthermore, after so many of his wild trysts in his previous world, to him, Neela was only a girl who was good looking.
“Alright, what are the contents of our mission?” Leylin took the initiative and asked, interrupting what Neela was going to say next.
“As this is our first time going on a mission together, I am preparing to take on the simplest one: patrolling the academy’s perimeters and cleaning up a few Red-Eyed Ravens, what do you all think?”
In fact, the four of them had discussed this before so Kaliweir was really only asking Leylin.
“Alright! My rank 0 spells have not been fully grasped yet!” Leylin agreed.
This team of theirs was newly formed, so taking on a simple mission to improve their teamwork was within reason. From this, it could be seen that Kaliweir had matured a lot after Hank’s death and his way of doing things was now better thought out.
“A.I. Chip! Scan!” Leylin commanded silently.
“Ever since the processing capability of the A.I. Chip increased, its perceptive ability has also increased. Not including the Magi, all the acolytes in the academy right now are unable to escape the readings of the A.I. Chip.”
Leylin thought silently. These readings must naturally prioritise not alarming the other party. As official Magi have a layer of force field around them constantly, the A.I. Chip would definitely be discovered if it was to attempt to take readings of them. However, as long as regular acolytes are within Leylin’s scope, their every stat will be read by the A.I. Chip.
“From this data, everyone has indeed advanced into level 2 acolyte. However, I never thought that Neela was the strongest of them. It seems like this girl has also practiced the Knight’s breathing
technique. Her body and strength are not to be underestimated!” These few people had just advanced, and even if they had bought spell models before, they might not be able to comprehend it. Furthermore, the models have to be constructed in the mind, so they were definitely unfamiliar with it. After all, rank 0 spells are still very dangerous to a level 2 acolyte. Without complete control of them, there is a chance of failing and even causing a backlash!

Based on just their physical strengths, Neela could possibly defeat the three of them in one fell swoop if no one was to use any spells. This Neela, who seemed to be infatuated with and wanted to approach him, was actually the strongest out of the team of four. It was likely that even Kaliweir did not know of this. The corners of Leylin’s lips arched into a smile.

To be in full control of rank 0 spells, regular level 2 acolytes must practice for at least 3 months to half a year. However, for him, he will learn the spell in a flash once the A.I. Chip has completely analysed the spell model and transmitted it to his hippocampus.

As for the might of any of the rank 0 spells, they are not something the level of a Knight can resist. Perhaps Grand Knights have a slight chance at that.

Obviously, Neela’s data was only at the level of a Knight. Even if she had a secret technique, Leylin was not the slightest bit afraid. While Leylin had been taking the readings, Kaliweir had already run to the counter and accepted the patrolling mission.

After the discussion with everyone, they set off and left the academy.

Leylin’s eyes could not help but squint as the piercing sunlight shone down.

“Come to think of it, I have already stayed underground for over a year. Now that I have come out, it does seem a bit like a thousand-year-old corpse rising from the ground again.

Leylin used his hands to block the sunlight. His snow white hands
were a sickly pale colour, like an ill person who lost too much blood. It was due to him staying underground the whole time and spending very little time basking in the sunlight reflected from the mosses in the gardens. Of course, most acolytes from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy have this problem.

In any case, as long as their strength increased and they used their spiritual force, raising a point of two of their vitality was not a problem at all. Therefore, they did not need to go out everyday to bask in the sunlight.

“Let’s go!” Kaliweir took the lead.

Looking at the huge graveyard behind them and the two statues of the protectors, Leylin turned his head and followed the rest of the team.

“We are going to patrol the southwest area of the academy, where quite a few Red-Eyed Ravens have been showing up recently. We need to clean up their numbers, as well as a few other living organisms. Of course, all of the materials that we acquire will belong to us. Moreover, everyone receives a remuneration of 3 magic crystals.”

After the five of them walked out of the graveyard, Kaliweir picked a spot and took out a huge map and spoke as they crowded around. On the faint yellow parchment paper, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was located in the centre and occupied about ten percent of the total area.

There were a few simple routes around it, and there were descriptions of the places written in black colour. A few dangerous places were also marked in red with warning signs.
“Red-Eyed Ravens? We met with some when we first arrived at the academy but they were easily killed off by Professor Dorotte. He used a spell that seemed similar to Acidic Aqua Shot.” Leylin stroked his chin and recalled the scene of when he first entered the academy. “We had better hurry there and begin our patrolling. This mission requires us to bring back the right claws of 10 Red-Eyed Ravens as evidence of completing the mission……Do you guys have any other questions?” Kaliweir ended with a question, displaying the bearings of a leader. After he saw Leylin and the others shake their heads, he continued and said: “Since we are teammates, let us not hide anything from each other. Each of us should report our general strengths so the others can have a better understanding! I’ll go first!” “I’m Kaliweir, I have a Knight-level constitution and know a secret technique. I also know a rank 0 spell!” “Kaliweir, I never thought that you’d have learned a spell already! It seems like you’re ahead of me… I’m Neela, I have Knight-level physical qualities and a secret technique. I am still learning the rank 0 spell “Weary Hand” but I’m unable to use it yet!” While saying this, Neela looked at Kaliweir with a little surprise. “I’m Lilisse, I……I am still training to be a Knight, but my instructor says my dart-throwing isn’t bad. I don’t know any secret techniques as of yet!” Lilisse said shyly.
“Raynor, Preparatory Knight. I don’t know any spells but my archery skills aren’t bad!” He never thought that Kaliweir and Neela would have already begun to learn spells and was a little embarrassed. Patting the wooden bow on his back, he continued, “Don’t worry, I will not be a burden to all of you!”
“Leylin, Preparatory Knight. Right now I have learnt a spell!”
Leylin rubbed his own nose.
“Even you have learnt a spell……Oh! I’m sorry!” Raynor said a little disconcertingly. He originally came together with Leylin so he knew that Leylin’s aptitude was only a third-grade acolyte. Never did he think that Leylin’s accomplishments would already exceed his aptitude as a fourth-grade acolyte.
“No worries!” Leylin shook his head and indicated that he did not mind it.
In fact, Raynor’s meditation efficacy was much faster than Leylin’s. It was simply that he did not have enough magic crystals to exchange for information and other precious resources. Hence, he was gradually losing out to Leylin.
“You are indeed worthy of being called ‘Sir Leylin’! You know what outsiders are calling you now?” Neela said in admiration.
“Oh? I don’t mind hearing about how others are evaluating me!”
“A Potioneering genius who is seen once every fifty years! If you did not already have a mentor, the other Potioneering professors would have invited you to be their apprentice!” Neela’s pitch was very high and sparks almost seemed to jump out of her eyes.
Seeing Neela’s fiery gaze, as well as the expressions of Lilisse and the others, Leylin smiled bitterly.
To sell his potions faster, he could not help but take on the role of a Potioneering-genius acolyte. Fortunately, he had his senior Merlin to take the brunt of the attention off him. If not for this, the attention given to him would be much greater.
“Oh right! Leylin, you should have enough resources if you always
sell potions right? Why would you still need to come out?”
Raynor asked softly.
“About this? I felt bored being cooped up in the academy. Besides, I have just learnt a spell so I need to familiarise myself with it!”
Leylin’s main purpose was to gain more experience and make preparations for travelling out alone to look for a black market in the future. However, such a thing could not be mentioned.
“Alright! Let the gossip end here! Our destination is not far away but it will take some trouble to get there! If we don’t move out soon, the sky will turn dark!”
Kaliweir pat his hands, picked up his cleaver and led the party.
“Let’s go!” Leylin followed behind.
“I want to walk with you!” Neela walked by Leylin’s side, not masking her intentions in the slightest.
Lilisse followed next, with Raynor at the back.
“Be careful, the area near the school is vacant land, but now that we have entered the forest, there will be a lot more danger!” Kaliweir continued walking as he reminded the party.
Leylin did not bother with Neela who was beside him. Instead, he paid more attention to his surroundings while also maximising the A.I. Chip’s detection range.
This was his first time coming into contact with the dangerous world outside of the academy so he could not help but be more alert.
Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was built in the depths of a black forest and there was a forsaken graveyard on top of the school. There were only small shrubberies and short trees around the school so the danger was not that great. However, after entering the forest, the countless trees acted as natural camouflage. It had always been the hunting ground of many predators. Leylin could still recall that when they first arrived here, they met with a sneak attack.
Alert! Alert! An unknown creature is approaching. Threat to the Host’s body: Mild!

As the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, light blue lines formed an image in Leylin’s vision. From the projection, Leylin could very clearly see a red line snaking its way to them.

“Whoosh!”

A black shadow suddenly leapt out from the grass and viciously bit at Kaliweir’s neck.

Kaliweir’s expression did not change as the black cleaver in his hands swung down, knocking the black shadow away.

The black shadow fell on the ground and revealed its true appearance. It was a snake that was one metre in length, with faint traces of blood on its body and only one eye on its triangular head.

“This is an Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake, be careful of its poison!” Neela warned.

Right at this moment, Lilisse, who was behind them, suddenly struck and three throwing knives were launched towards the beast.

The Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake’s body coiled to avoid two of the blades but the last one slashed at it as it passed, leaving a gash.

“Heh!” Suddenly, Kaliweir ran forward and swung his black cleaver down on the snake’s head. With a cold flash, the head of the snake was cut off instantly!

The snake, which had lost its head, coiled in a circle, still bleeding profusely.

“Ah!” Lilisse was startled.

“It’s already dead. This is just a natural reaction for the body. Haven’t you learned about neurology?” Neela harrumphed.

“Only the poison sac and the skin of this Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake is useful. Whoever wants to collect the materials better hurry and do so now. The blood will attract many other living organisms here!” Kaliweir slowly spoke while putting away his cleaver.

“I will do it!” Raynor stepped forward and, after a short while, the
five of them continued on their journey.
“A.I. Chip! Was the information from earlier recorded?”
[Beep! The recording is done! Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake, Snake type. Strength: 1.1, Agility: 2.1, Vitality: 1.6. The blood sample has been collected and the composition of muscle has been recorded!]
The A.I. Chip’s feedback was timely. Leylin nodded his head and hastened his footsteps.
Ten-odd days later, inside the black forest.
A Red-Eyed Raven blinked its alert eyes and perched on a branch as it constantly ruffled its feathers.
*Whoosh!* Suddenly, a white arrow was shot.
“Caw!” the Raven flapped its wings to move away. While it was evading, there were another three flashes of white light, belonging to the throwing knives that were shooting towards it.
Dodging in an elegant arc, the Red-Eyed Raven avoided the knives and landed in an open space.
“Kill!” A shadow hopped out from some shrubbery, two hands grasping a cleaver, and hacked towards the Red-Eyed Raven. It seemed like the arrow and the throwing knives earlier had all been there to force the Red-Eyed Raven to the ground.
A black cleaver brought about a gale as it hacked at the Red-Eyed Raven.
“Caw Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven cawed loudly, letting off an unpleasant noise.
There was a flash of human-like resentment in the raven’s eyes and a pair of black claws met with the cleaver.
*Clang!*
Although the Red-Eyed Raven was a little larger than the average raven, it was only about the same size as a chicken. It had unexpectedly used its black claws to push back the Knight wielding the black cleaver.
“Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven cawed again, and a few black
feathers drifted down from its body. Taking advantage of the retreating Knight, the Red-Eyed Raven actually went forward and clawed at the Knight’s face with its sharp claws! “Pandora – Greygonger!” A hurried and quick incantation sounded and a ball of green liquid flew out suddenly, hitting the Red-Eyed Raven squarely on its body. *Psshhh!* White mist rose continuously, and the cries of a Red-Eyed Raven sounded. A few seconds later, the screams from the Raven completely vanished, and all that was left was a ditch. Lying inside were a few feathers which did not have enough time to corrode. “Are you alright, Kaliweir?! ” The shrubbery shook and a few figures made their way through it. Kaliweir shook his head, “No worries! Although the Red-Eyed Raven has the strength of a Knight and can even fly, it is still not an opponent for us humans who wield weapons!” Looking at the person in the middle, “Leylin! The timing of the Acidic Aqua Shot earlier was good!” “It was all due to everybody’s teamwork!” Leylin smiled. Kaliweir then walked to the large ditch, used a branch to brush away the feathers, and picked up 2 black claws from inside. The side of the black claws was extremely sharp. They released a chilling lustre as if reflecting the difficulty of dealing with its original owner. “Although the might of the Acidic Aqua Shot is great, it also corroded the Red-Eyed Raven greatly. Apart from its hard claws, there is nothing left…” Kaliweir said with a tinge of regret. “Hmph! If not for Leylin, you guys might have paid some kind of price to kill the Red-Eyed Raven!” Neela harrumphed at the side, seemingly displeased.
“That’s true!” Kaliweir sheathed his cleaver. Right now he had matured a lot and knew that Neela was rather spiteful, so he was not angry at all.

“With this Red-Eyed Raven, we have gathered enough materials. Should we head back to the school to complete the mission?”

Seeing that Raynor and the rest were looking tired, Kaliweir asked.

“Naturally, we have to go back! The forest is too dangerous. We couldn’t even have a good sleep during the night!” Neela said immediately.

Lilisse and Raynor hurriedly nodded their heads too.

As for Leylin, he also felt a little exhausted as the forest had been riddled with danger. Even though he had the A.I. Chip to warn him, he was still in a heightened state of anxiety for a prolonged period. His mind felt extremely weary as well, and right now he was beginning to miss the hot water and bed in the academy.

“Alright! Then let us go back first!”

Kaliweir was a little regretful as he carefully put away the claw of the Red-Eyed Raven, “What a pity! With our abilities, we could definitely kill more of the Red-Eyed Ravens. They are worth much more money than the Iron Thread One-Eyed Snake from before……”

“There is no end to earning magic crystals but right now, our team, as a whole, is completely exhausted and we have reached a dangerous state. If we do not hurry back to the academy, I’m afraid that we will make mistakes during our next hunt, which may even result in death!”

Leylin’s voice was cold and distinct. He was a person who kept his cool at all times, and he wouldn’t lose his bearings over a little profit dangling before him.

“Alright! Then let us go back!”

Kaliweir only hesitated a little and then nodded his head in agreement.
Hearing Kaliweir’s words, the expressions of the other four turned much better. Even Neela, who was feeling spiteful, also loosened up and smiled brightly.
The party packed up quickly and started on the trip home.
The chirping of insects could be heard in the quiet forest from time to time, and the lush branches and leaves of the trees covered the sun completely. Sunrays occasionally shone through the gaps like beams of light.

“Caw Caw!” Familiar sounding cries could be heard ahead. Kaliweir, who was leading at the forefront, furrowed his brows, “Why are there so many Red-Eyed Ravens!? These creatures are very aggressive towards humans! If we do not clean their numbers up in time, they will attract more of their kind which will be extremely troublesome!”

“What now? Should we take a detour?” Raynor asked.

“I’m afraid that might not work, they have already discovered us!” Leylin looked at the image in the A.I. Chip and said without looking back.

The sound of wings flapping gradually got closer. Kaliweir laughed, “Since they have voluntarily come to look for us, we shouldn’t hesitate to welcome them!”

The expressions of the others were at ease. After this period of polishing their teamwork, they all have a set of strategies that were customised to deal with the Red-Eyed Ravens.

“Not good! There are 2 of them!” Leylin looked at the screen and his expression changed suddenly.

Kaliweir was startled. As per Leylin’s warning, there was indeed another black shadow behind the first Red-Eyed Raven that flew...
over, and its size seemed to be bigger than others of its kind.
“We’re in trouble!” Kaliweir’s brows furrowed, “Leylin and Neela, you two deal with the one in front! As for the other one, leave it to us three!”
“Prepare well!” Leylin said to Neela behind him and drew the crossbow that was slung on his back.
“Measuring wind power and humidity! Adjusting trajectory…”
*Whoosh!* A black line streaked across the sky and pierced through the Red-Eyed Raven’s body, bringing along a few feathers with it.
“Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven at the front let out an angry cry and flew towards Leylin.
It actually seemed like it did not sustain any injuries.
“Let’s lure it away!” Leylin’s expression did not change, and he put down the crossbow that was in his hands.
Thanks to the A.I. Chip, he was very clear that the arrow earlier did hit the Red-Eyed Raven, but the vitality of these crows was rather high, being almost similar to a human Knight. Their feathers were extremely hard too; hence, it did not receive much damage.
The weapons of regular humans do not pose much threat to the creatures of the Magus World.
Seeing Leylin and Neela luring a Red-Eyed Raven away, Kaliweir made up his mind. He shouted loudly, “Raynor and Lilisse, stall the other Red-Eyed Raven that is behind and give me time to prepare my spell.”
Raynor and Lilisse looked at each other and then dashed towards the Red-Eyed Raven at the back.
As Raynor ran, he grabbed the bow on his back and shot towards the sky. A few throwing knives accompanied the arrow.
“Caw Caw!” The huge Red-Eyed Raven flapped its black wings and slapped the arrow and knives down.
“It actually used its bare wings to knocked the arrow away!”
Raynor’s face turned pale and his footsteps halted. However, the Red-Eyed Raven that was significantly larger than its counterpart had already swooped down and its huge claws cut into Raynor’s shoulders, leaving a gash. Raynor was pinned to the ground by the Red-Eyed Raven. “Save……Save me!” Raynor shouted and pleaded.

*Bang!!* Just as the Red-Eyed Raven was about to peck down, a bright light flashed. Lilisse raised a huge sword that was even larger than her and swatted the Red-Eyed Raven away. “Bam!” An iron wire that was made into a net was thrown in front of Raynor. “I’ll stall it, hurry and take the chance to throw the net!” Lilisse, who was usually quiet and a little shy, now seemed to be a completely different person. “Okay!” Raynor looked at Kaliweir, who was still preparing to cast his spell, and picked up the net. Lilisse had obviously trained with swordplay before, and the huge steel sword brandished in her hands turned into a silver flash as she knocked the Red-Eyed Raven away to the side. “Ha!” With a beautiful sweep, Lilisse knocked the Red-Eyed Raven down onto the floor, making mud and grit splatter everywhere. “A good chance!” Raynor’s eyes flashed, and the sharp pain transmitting through his shoulder made his eyes a little bloodshot as he spread the steel wire net and trapped the Red-Eyed Raven within it. “Caw Caw!” The Red-Eyed Raven continuously thrashed inside, and it seemed as though it would break free from the steel wire net at any moment. “Kaliweir, hurry!” The Red-Eyed Raven’s feathers are too thick, I can’t deal much damage to it!” Lilisse shouted anxiously. “Thank you for your efforts!” At this moment, Kaliweir finally
finished his spell, and a dark red coloured fireball was blazing in his hands.
“Hurry and move!” After Kaliweir shouted, Lilisse and Raynor hurriedly scattered.
“Let’s go! Negative Energy Fireball!” With a fling of Kaliweir’s hands, the dark red fireball streaked across with a booming sound until it landed perfectly on the Red-Eyed Raven’s body.
*Boom!* A huge sound reverberated continuously in all directions, along with a surging heat wave.
The intense wind from the explosion also burned a huge crater in the ground, and the surrounding plants and shrubbery did not escape from it either.
“Nice one!” Raynor had run a little too slowly and was swept onto the ground by the wind behind him. His clothes were stained with mud. However, when he looked at the Red-Eyed Raven, he was indescribably happy.
“Haah…” Kaliweir panted too, “This Negative Energy Fireball takes too long to cast and I need someone to help me stall the enemy. However, its might is extremely great!”
Lilisse straightened her fringe. As she looked towards the direction that Leylin and Neela had run in, there was an obvious tinge of worry in her eyes, “I wonder how they are doing now?”
“Don’t worry! Leylin and Neela are very strong, and we also managed to deal with the bigger one ourselves…” Kaliweir comforted her. This was the first mission that he had taken in a year, and he, too, wanted the perfect ending.
“We’re alright!” Just as Kaliweir was speaking, both Leylin and Neela walked out from a thicket of bushes.
A few black feathers clung to their bodies, but they did not seem to have sustained any injuries.
“Where is the other one?”
“Over here!” Leylin raised the black claws in his hands, and then
looked at the huge pit. “Wow, this fellow. I reckon that had at least 6 degrees of power, it seems like Kaliweir is pursuing lethal spells. “Since everyone is okay, let us hurry back, I have a bad feeling about this!” Kaliweir’s face darkened, “The monsters lurking around the school these days seem to be a little too much!”
“1 agree, were the academy missions before this dangerous?” Leylin asked.
“That’s not right! Even if we accepted a patrolling mission like this, we needed at least 1 month to find 10 Red-Eyed Ravens. However, we have exceeded that amount in just 10 days!” Neela explained beside him.
“After we return, let us report this situation, I feel there’s something amiss!” Lilisse said suddenly.
“If there are any problems it’ll be for the Magi to solve! We had better leave here as soon as possible, I don’t feel safe out here!” Raynor added.
“Nicely said! Let us hurry!” Kaliweir said as he threw the broken iron wire net aside and picked up a black claw.
As everyone did not have any objections, the team hurried back.
“Why would these 2 Red-Eyed Ravens obstruct us on our return trip back to the academy? Could it just be a coincidence?” Leylin suddenly felt uneasy and hastened his footsteps.
The rest of them seemed to have the same ominous feeling, and the team hurried along.
“Do you think those 2 Red-Eyed Ravens earlier were guarding some treasures? You know, ravens have a habit of collecting shiny items!”
Neela, who was at the back of the group, saw the gloomy expressions on everyone and said half-jokingly.
“Those are normal ravens. Although the Red-Eyed Ravens also have the word raven in their name, their bloodlines are closer to that of a Bramble Thorny Bird. Therefore, they don’t have the habit
of searching for treasures, but instead have an acute sense for a few special plants. In fact, Magi often raise Bramble Thorny Birds too, to use them to search for those special plants!” Leylin replied, not turning back.

“How do you know that?” Raynor was obviously not convinced.

“Bramble Thorny Bird’s origins and how to raise them. It’s on the level 3 bookshelf in the library, I read it recently.” Leylin replied blandly.

“Oh! Leylin! You’re so awesome!” Sparks could be seen in Neela’s eyes again.

Raynor turned away.

“Eh?” Leylin took a sniff and suddenly smelled a very fragrant scent.

“Stop! Did you guys smell anything?” Leylin hurriedly halted.

The group stopped. “Smell what?” Kaliweir’s expression tightened, and he gripped the cleaver in his hands.

“I seem to have smelled a very fragrant scent!” Leylin explained.

“Fragrance? There are only odours that make people want to vomit in this forest! And now it is getting more serious!” Raynor interrupted.

“I actually smelled a whiff of Jasmine Flowers mixed with Black-Oiled Roses!” Lilisse wrinkled her nose.

“Everyone be careful! There is the stench of a wild beast!”

*Shiiing!* Kaliweir unsheathed his cleaver. This situation was obviously strange. Leylin also placed his hands into his waist pouch.

*Hu!* A gust of wind blew over. It carried a fishy stench that stung the nose.

*Grooarrr!!!* The roar of a ruthless beast sounded.

The plants in the surrounding black forest also bent from the pressure caused by the beast’s roar.

Kaliweir’s face changed greatly, “Be careful, it’s a huge one!”
*Boom Boom!* The heavy steps rang. Leylin and the rest saw the appearance of the creature. It was a huge black bear and its skull was split open as if exposing its brain. There was also a ‘V’-shaped, white mark on its chest, like a lightning scar.

“Be careful! It’s the Violent Hilly Bear; each one is comparable to a level 3 acolyte! Last time, it was this fellow that we met!” Kaliweir’s pupils shrank to the size of a pin, “Be careful of its roaring attack. It was this attack that killed Hank previously!”

“Damn it! Let’s disperse and run!” Raynor’s face turned pale and he suddenly turned around and scooted off.

“This coward!” Neela fumed and her face turned red. The Violent Hilly Bear increased its speed because of Raynor’s sudden escape. “There is no choice left! This exceeds our capabilities, so let’s scatter and run. Let’s hope to meet each other back in the academy!”

Kaliweir smiled bitterly and made his decision.
After Kaliweir finished speaking, he took out a black powder-like substance from his robes and sprinkled it onto his legs. He suddenly appeared taller and upon closer inspection, it seemed that not only had his height increased, but there were also tufts of black fur growing out of the bottom of his shoes.

With this black fur, Kaliweir’s speed increased tremendously and he disappeared from the forest in the span of a few steps, with a speed faster than Raynor’s.

“The seed from a blade of Nimble Grass? It seems like Kaliweir used it to protect his life, but the aftereffects of this seed are not small!” Leylin muttered, looking towards the two girls at his side, “It is a little embarrassing to say this, but we had still better split up!

“Since we chose to come out here and take such risks, we should naturally be prepared to lose our lives! To be honest, the fact that you were able to stay behind those two guys has already shocked us !”

Neela said as she took out a green potion in a test tube and threw it on the floor. A green-coloured hurricane swept up and enshrouded Neela and Lilisse within its centre.

“See you at the academy!” Enveloped in a whirlwind of green, the two girls disappeared from Leylin’s vision.

“Everyone has a trump card, huh?” Leylin smiled, moving his feet
and disappearing from the forest.
In a flash, the party of five began to split up, with everyone using their own methods to escape from the scene.
Leylin’s footsteps never faltered, and the trees on either side of him disappeared into the distance as he sped ahead.
“The attack power of the Violent Hilly Bear is extremely high, while its speed is just average. In the party of five, Kaliweir used the Nimble Grass, while Neela and Lilisse used a speed-enhancing potion. As for me, I have the strength of a Knight, and therefore, my speed is pretty good. However, Raynor, the first to run, has the slowest speed amongst the five of us and is also in the greatest danger. If he did not prepare any trump cards, it is highly likely for him to die here.”
“I should be able to escape from this Violent Hilly Bear’s hunting grounds with Raynor as a decoy, so I had better not use this potion just yet!”
As a Potions Master, Leylin was still rather rich despite not being able to sell his goods in bulk. Naturally, he had prepared several trump cards that could protect his life, without which he would not have the confidence to come outside to train.
Every step he took was perfect, his every move and action seemed to blend in with the forest and he did not receive any obstructions from any branches or vines, his actions as smooth as flowing water. His speed was actually almost the same as Kaliweir who had used the Nimble Grass.
“Groarrr!” A vicious roar sounded.
Suddenly, a black figure appeared in front of Leylin, and with it came a huge bear paw.
“Impossible! How could it have made a detour to be in front of me? Was Raynor unable to draw it away?”
Greatly startled, Leylin’s body reacted, his conditioned reflexes causing him to take out his cross blade and begin slashing in front
of him.
*Clang!* Leylin hurriedly used the huge recoil travelling through the cross blade to turn his body around and escape the attack range of the bear’s paw. He did not have a good grip on the cross blade and as a result, it flew out of his hands.
*Bang!*
At this moment, Leylin did not hesitate to throw a fire red potion at the Violent Hilly Bear.
The moment the test tube exploded, a scorching red flame suddenly engulfed the Violent Hilly Bear.
Leylin did not stay to watch the scene. Instead, he immediately turned around and ran.
“The explosive potion’s might may be great, comparable to an average rank 0 spells, however, it still lacks the power to penetrate the Violent Hilly Bear’s thick hide.
“Groarrr!” The Violent Hilly Bear’s roar sounded from behind, and it seemed to be getting closer to Leylin.
Leylin turned around to look, and his eyes almost popped out,
“This is illogical!”
He saw that the Violent Hilly Bear’s head was a little charred, but the rest of the body remained undamaged. The explosive potion seemed to do nothing else apart from further enraging the Violent Hilly Bear.
The Violent Hilly Bear’s massively oversized body seemed to be as light as a feather and did not hinder its speed in the slightest, allowing it to tail behind Leylin.
“A.I. Chip! Take readings!”
Leylin gave a command, but the A.I. Chip did not reply even after half a day and only a faint static noise could be heard.
“A.I. Chip! A.I. Chip!” Leylin called out again, but it was to no avail.
“Damn it, just what exactly is happening?”
Leylin’s face distorted in frustration. The A.I. Chip was his greatest trump card in this world. Suddenly losing it had turned him a little crazy.

*Thwack!* The Violent Hilly Bear caught up to Leylin once again, and it swatted with his massive paws as if it was swatting at a mosquito.

“Umbra’s Hand!” Leylin hurriedly chanted and a black coloured hand rose from the Violent Hilly Bear’s shadow, firmly holding on to the bear’s paw.

The huge bear roared nonstop but was unable to escape from the Umbra’s Hand.

Seizing this opportunity, Leylin hurriedly ran off. “The Umbra’s Hand’s effect will only last for a few seconds! I must hurry!”

Leylin fled miserably.

“Damn it!” Leylin grumbled yet again, “What on earth is going on? This Violent Hilly Bear is stronger than my expectations, and it has such a swift speed too!”

In the black forest, the grass and shrubbery blew in the strong wind and the occasional insect cry could be heard from time to time.

“At last, I have finally escaped for now!” Leylin ran for a dozen-odd minutes before he dared to turn back and look. The dark forest resembled the mouth of a huge beast, seemingly wanting to swallow him whole.

“Caw! Caw!” Just when Leylin had finally caught his breath, the abominable sound of ravens could be heard in the sky.

Leylin raised his head and looked. There were ravens that were much larger than the Red-Eyed Ravens from earlier. Furthermore, there were three of them! Once they spotted Leylin, they immediately swooped down towards him.

“My cross blade has already been lost and my spiritual force and Magical Power are almost drained too. Am I going to die here today?”
An ominous premonition rose in Leylin’s heart. A black talon came slashing at him, and Leylin hurriedly attempted to dodge it. In spite of his attempts, the claw of the raven etched three gashes into his back. The immense pain clouded Leylin’s vision, “No! I don’t want to die! I have not qualified as a Magus yet! Or seen the rest of the world! How could I just die a silent death here!” As he tumbled to the ground, Leylin picked up a green rock from behind him. “Ha!” Jumping back up, he viciously smashed the rock down onto the Red-Eyed Raven’s head! *Bang!* This time, Leylin used all of his strength, and the Red-Eyed Raven swayed as it fell onto the floor. “Caw! Caw!” Angry cries were heard in the sky. Seeing that their comrade had died like that, the other two Red-Eyed Ravens immediately cried out and swooped down to avenge it. “Bring it on!” Leylin lowered himself slightly, coiling his body into position, like a leopard who was about to catch its prey. He felt every artery in his body expanding quickly, and the blood continuously surged, circulating huge amounts of energy into the various parts of his body. A warm current gradually rose in his lower abdomen, and the wound on his back no longer seemed as painful. “Die!” Leylin shouted, and flung the rock in his hands out ruthlessly. This time, he seemed to have used all his energy, and the warmth in his body constantly responded to him. The rock let out an ear piercing whistle and directly struck one of the Red-Eyed Ravens. “This is……Internal life energy!” Leylin was mildly shocked. He had attained the qualities of a Preparatory Knight long ago. Moreover, he meditated constantly, so he was almost comparable to that of an actual Knight. However, he had not been able to ignite
his internal life energy until now, and he never thought that he would be able to have a break through at this point.
Right at that moment, the warm current in his lower abdomen travelled to his two eyes, and a piercing pain in his eyes made them water.
When he opened his eyes, his vision was extremely blurry, as if he was shrouded in mist. However, the faint blue words of the A.I. Chip had finally reappeared.
[Beep! The host has suffered from an unknown effect…… Abnormality in the current state!] [Ho…… Host is hallucinating!]
The screen of the A.I. Chip displayed was intermittent as if it was suffering from a very strong interference.
“Hallucination!” Leylin was startled. However, at this moment, the other Red-Eyed Raven had already swooped down right in front of him. Behind him, there came a violent roar from the forest and a massive bear paw vehemently struck out at Leylin with a hooked claw.
Facing such a life-threatening attack, Leylin grit his teeth and actually closed both his eyes.
The sharp claws pierced his body and he felt an immense pain. However, it was not as painful as he thought, and Leylin’s body did not fall.
“It really is like this, huh?” Leylin’s lips curled upwards.
“A.I. Chip! Show me my current state!”
The A.I. Chip’s display merely appeared more distinct in the darkness.
The lines full of red-coloured warnings about the abnormal status was extremely striking, but Leylin had actually not realised it before.
[Beep! Detection over! The Host has breathed in very potent and delicate hallucinatory gas particles! The five senses were affected! To expel or not?]
“Begin expulsion immediately!” Leylin commanded.

[Beep! Reserve energy has been used, expulsion in progress!]

The A.I. Chip indicated that the expulsion was complete, and only then did Leylin open his eyes.

Right now, he was situated inside a shrubbery, and the Violent Hilly Bear and Red-Eyed Raven disappeared without a trace.

There were many cuts on his body from the barbs in the shrubbery, and blood was dripping from them. However, there were no gashes on his back.

“It seems like it really was an illusion. What I saw earlier was completely artificial!”

Leylin looked at his surroundings again. On the left, there was a tree that had fallen, and he saw traces of scorch marks in his surroundings.

“Although what I saw was fake, my reactions were all real. The explosive potion and Umbra’s Hand uprooted the tree, and it is very likely that I mistook the tree for the Violent Hilly Bear!”

Leylin felt a little regretful. The explosive potion had cost him plenty of magic crystals, and he had spent a whopping amount before buying the formula and ingredients from Woox. But now, he had actually used it against a tree.

“However, it’s not like I didn’t reap any benefits.” Leylin looked at the prompt shown by the A.I. Chip earlier.

[Secretion of adrenaline in the Host’s body has rapidly increased, blood flow has increased by 58%!] [The Host has ignited internal life energy and broke through the boundaries of a Knight!]

“It might have been an illusion all along, but the igniting my internal life energy and advancing to a Knight was real!”

“It is also thanks to my advancement into a Knight that led me to realise that something was amiss, if not, I would have died just like that!”

Leylin was a little afraid, “A.I. Chip! Record the status I was in
earlier when I broke through into a Knight!”

[Beep! Recording is done, name: State of advancing to a Knight]

“This state may be the key to igniting internal life energy! However why would it have some resemblance to the magic powers of my previous world? It seems extremely unconventional!”

Leylin harboured a few suspicions. This Knight’s advancement method was extremely perilous. Many of the situations required luck, otherwise, there might be an excessive secretion of adrenaline, opening up the possibility of being poisoned to death.
I wonder how Kaliweir and the others are doing now?” When Leylin feebly picked himself up, he felt like his whole body was going to fall apart.

“Even with the A.I. Chip, I have fallen into this state, let alone their situations. I had better find them quickly, it would be really terrible if they were to fall into a trap or encounter other wild beasts.

Leylin drew out a red-coloured potion from his waist pouch and opened the wooden plug. He poured the red liquid onto his wounds.

*Hiss!* White mist continuously rose up from the wound. Leylin gritted his teeth, his face a little twisted.

After the white mist dispersed, a red membrane was covering the wound, and the bleeding had already stopped. It had also closed the wound. Leylin waved his hands around and noticed that his movements were not restricted.

“This hemostatic potion is very good, but it’s so painful when it’s being used!”

Leylin grumbled, drew out another blue coloured potion, and gulped it down. The blue potion was sweet and carried the fragrance of white bread. Leylin felt his body getting much better and also recovered some strength. He walked out from the shrubbery and leaned against a big tree to rest.

“A.I. Chip! For that hallucinatory gas, are there any remedies against it?”
Since he knew that the only danger over there was the hallucinatory gas particles, Leylin did not mind rescuing his other party members.
If it really wasn’t possible, then Leylin would just turn his head and return to the academy to inform the professors while praying for them.
[Suggestion: Freshwater has good protective properties against the infiltration of the gas particles!]
The A.I. Chip replied.
“Freshwater, huh?” Leylin opened his water bottle and soaked a handkerchief, wrapping it over his nose and mouth before heading back to their previous location.
“I thought that I had run very far away, but I haven’t even gone a thousand metres!” Leylin retraced his footsteps. Moments later, when he returned back to where the party of five had split up, he was a little speechless.
“A.I. Chip! Scan the area in front and form a map!” Since he knew that the path in front was filled with hallucinatory gas particles, Leylin still felt very vulnerable despite his safeguard.
[Beep! Scan completed!]
An image appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes. Where the five of them were earlier, there was a depression with huge mushrooms growing out from it.
These mushrooms were extremely big and almost as tall as a human being. Each one was a mysterious purple colour, with many black spots faintly forming the image of a human in pain.
“What type of mushrooms are these?”
[Comparing to database! Similarity level: Spider-Faced Mushroom 98.7%, Spear-Lining Mushroom 74.5%, Purple Umbrella Flower 23.3%]
“Spider-Faced Mushroom?” Leylin thought back to an image he had seen in a picture book from the library.
“The Spider-Faced Mushroom is a very mysterious plant. It is able to emit extremely strong hallucinatory gas particles, and people with weak constitutions and other intelligent beings will not be able to resist them. They will often attract flying beasts and live together in harmony with them. It seems like the two Red-Eyed Ravens from earlier were attracted to them.”

Leylin noticed a few bones at the stem of the purple mushroom, some seemed to belong to humans, and some were from various creatures.

“However, these kinds of dangerous plants should have been cleaned up around our school area, unless they were moved here only recently!”

Leylin conjectured and suddenly felt chills over his body as if he had discovered a part of a conspiracy.

Shaking his head, “This is not something that I can attend to now. I had better hurry and look for Neela and the others and then leave immediately!”

With the help of the A.I. Chip, finding the others of his party members proved to be extremely easy.

Raynor was lying not far away, with one of his thighs impaled on a branch. It seemed like he had run into it himself.

Not long later, Kaliweir was found too. At this moment, he looked like a lunatic, cleaving at a huge black boulder. He could not even see Leylin walking over, and was knocked out by Leylin in the end.

As for Neela and Lilisse, they were the luckiest. Not long after they left, they had been entangled within some vines. When Leylin found them, they were still clad in the glow of the green hastening potion and were actually not injured at all.

Leylin brought the four of them far away from the Spider-Faced Mushroom. When he found a stream, he tossed all of them into the water.

This was the suggestion given by the A.I. Chip.
With the bone-chilling cold water from the stream invading the noses and throats of Kaliweir and the others, their bodies began to convulse violently.

“Cough Cough!” Kaliweir and the others started to cough violently. Leylin moved the few of them onto flat ground and laid them on their backs. He then picked up a weapon and got into a defensive stance.

“What happened?” Kaliweir rubbed his aching head and propped himself up.

“Do you still remember what happened earlier?” Leylin came in front of Kaliweir.

“Yes! I remember now, we met with the Violent Hilly Bear and even some Direwolves!” Kaliweir touched the gash on his face.

“Was it you who saved us?”

“Indeed! However, what we encountered were not ferocious beasts. I’ll explain it when the others have woken up!” Leylin pointed at the others, who seemed to be regaining consciousness slowly.

When the few of them left the domain of the Spider-Faced Mushrooms and gulped down huge amounts of fresh water, their minds started to clear again.

Leylin explained the matter of the Spider-Faced Mushrooms to them. As for himself, he said that he was lucky to avoid their situations because he had an item that could resist hallucinations.

After listening to Leylin, the expressions of Kaliweir and the others weren’t very good at all.

“Leylin! Thank you! I owe you my life!” Kaliweir said solemnly.

“Us too!” Neela and Lilisse spoke at the same time. As for Raynor, he opened his mouth but no words came out from it.

“I suggest that you all better tend to the injuries on your bodies first!” Leylin pointed to the puncture in Raynor’s thigh.

“Alright. I have some medicinal powder here. Do you need it, Raynor?”
Kaliweir felt for the item on his body, and then retrieved a bottle of medicinal powder from his waist pouch and gave it to Raynor. Leylin took a whiff and knew that it was medicine from the regular world. While it had certain effectiveness, it was still incomparable to a hemostasis potion.

The party slowly treated the wounds on their bodies. Raynor was the most injured, and his lips were as pale as snow. His legs were wrapped very thickly with gauze. Kaliweir managed to find a stick for him to use as a crutch, so he could at least manage to walk.

The physiques of Magi already begin to differ from those of regular humans. With the help of potions, wounds that are not too severe will usually finish healing in a few nights.

“What should we do next?” Kaliweir looked at Leylin. Although he was the party leader in name, Leylin’s performance made him bow his head.

“Can you still walk?” Leylin asked Raynor.

“I can definitely walk! Don’t… don’t leave me behind!” Raynor hurriedly propped himself up with the crutch.

“Then we had better hurry and set off!” Leylin thought of the Spider-Faced Mushrooms and of his own predictions. He had an ominous feeling about the recent events.

“That’s right!” Neela and Lilisse agreed in unison, it seemed like they were afraid of this place already.

“My Hastening Potion! That was something that I spent 5 magic crystals on!” Along the journey, Neela lamented.

“That is still okay, look at me!” Kaliweir adjusted his sack; the most important things were the 12 Red-Eyed Raven claws in it as they were the proof of completing the mission. He then pointed to his ankle.

On his legs, tufts of black fur already covered his calves and began spreading to his thigh area.

“Although a seed from the Nimble Grass can allow you to run
quickly, their reproductive abilities are too great. After using them, you will definitely be contaminated. If you don’t hurry back to the academy to take care of it, you might soon become a furry man!”

“Outer appearance is one thing. The most important thing is that if the Nimble Grass live on a human’s body for a long time, there will be poisonous properties! At that time, you can only amputate your leg!” Kaliweir said with a resolved expression, “Hurry!” Although he still wore a deadpanned expression, his footsteps had obviously quickened.

After suffering from the Spider-Faced Mushrooms’ attack, the five of them became easily frightened on the way home. Any rustling of leaves or blowing of the wind would make them feel nervous for a while.

When they finally saw the Abyssal Bone Forest Graveyard, Leylin swore that he had never found this graveyard so lovable before now.

“Password!” This time, the two-headed dog asked in a female voice.

“Abyssal Bone is paramount!” Kaliweir said slowly. The password changes whenever a certain period of time has passed. However, the password will naturally be told in advance to those who go out on a mission, like them.

“Correct!” The two-headed dog allowed them to pass and returned to being a statue on the platform.

Leylin finally heaved a sigh of relief when they entered the academy’s gates.

Although there were no deaths on this mission, they still met with several dangers along the way. If not for the A.I. Chip’s help, it was very likely that their party would have been wiped out completely.

“Let’s go! We’ll first hand in our mission!” Kaliweir’s expression loosened and he smiled. As for Lilisse and Neela, they both seemed relieved as well.
The five of them walked towards the Mission Area. Kaliweir queued in front of the counter while the other four waited to the side.

“Neela, did the missions cause so many injuries or deaths in the past?”

Leylin felt that the atmosphere was a little off. The number of casualties in the Mission Area had obviously increased, and there were curses and sobbing heard from time to time.

“We don’t usually have this many! I can guarantee that!” Neela looked at the many acolytes with darkened expressions on their faces. It seemed like not only did they fail their missions, but they had also paid a heavy price for them.

“Look! The missions have been refreshed!”

Leylin raised his head and saw a notice hanging in the upper corner of the black wall, with striking red words.

“Attention! There has been a significant increase in the dangerous creatures around the academy. We hope that the acolytes who go out in the future will be more cautious. If you aren’t a level 3 acolyte, we recommend that you stay inside.

These words were a size bigger than the others and were written in a striking red font.

Behind the warning, there was a new mission written in red.

“Mission: Find out the source of the abnormalities in the academy’s vicinity. Reward: 500 magic crystals, high-grade information on 3 topics at will, or an improved spell model. This mission is categorised as extremely dangerous, be prudent when accepting this mission!”

“500 magic crystals, high-grade information on 3 topics, or even an improved spell model!” Leylin exclaimed.

“If only I had that many magic crystals!” Lilisse was also intimidated by the generous reward.
“Didn’t you read the notice? If you aren’t a level 3 acolyte, then going out is practically throwing your life away!”

A voice sounded, and Kaliweir appeared behind Neela.

“You’re back?” Leylin asked.

“Yeah! Here is the reward for our mission. 15 magic crystals!” Kaliweir opened the pouch and there, sat 15 magic crystals.

“According to our prior agreement, each of us gets 3 magic crystals!” Kaliweir divided the magic crystals and then opened a large black sack. It was filled with many Red-Eyed Raven claws, as well as feathers, eyeballs and other miscellaneous materials.

“There is also this stuff! Only the Red-Eyed Ravens’ two claws have some worth. Each one can be sold for about 1 magic crystal. As for the other materials, they’re worth roughly 15 magic crystals in total! Do you guys have any questions? If not, we’ll be dividing them accordingly!”

The Red-Eyed Raven claws were only needed to prove that the mission had been completed. After it has been confirmed, the acolytes are allowed to keep them, and they can be considered additional income.

“I have no problem with that!” Leylin smiled. This time, he merely wanted to gain experience and was not too fussed about the number of magic crystals.

This time, earning 30 magic crystals at once could be considered a
lot. However, there were also the expenditures of this mission to factor in Neela and Lilisse used a hastening potion, and Kaliweir used the seed from the Nimble Grass. As for Leylin, he had used an explosive potion, hemostasis potion, and a strength potion. All these expenditures amounted to over 30 magic crystals.

If they were to calculate everything, the mission would be considered a flop and would not even compare to Leylin’s brewing of potions to earn money.

Seeing as Leylin had agreed, Neela, Lilisse, and Raynor could only nod their heads.

“In this mission, Leylin, you did the most. If not for you, we would have long been dead, so it’s alright if you take a little more!” Kaliweir was extremely sincere, and it seemed as though he had made up his mind about this long ago.

“I don’t need it!” Leylin smiled and picked out two of the Red-Eyed Raven claws, as well as some other materials, from the bag. After estimating that the things he had taken out were worth around 6 magic crystals, he stopped.

“These will be enough for me.”

“Alright, then we will redistribute the items again…” Kaliweir felt a little forced, but Lilisse and Raynor were obviously happy about it.

All of them, more or less, had wounds on their bodies. Something seemed to have happened recently to the academy, and accepting missions would no longer be a possibility if it turned out to be dangerous. The group quickly exchanged their contact information and left the mission area.

Kaliweir left the fastest. By now, the black fur had already grown to his thighs, making his legs look like those of a gorilla, and it seemed like he could not wait to seek help.

“Goodbye!” Lilisse and Raynor bade farewell too.

“Could you tell me your dorm number?” Neela stuck closely to Leylin’s side while whispering into his ear.
Warm air blew into his ear and he felt a little ticklish.
“I’m not in the mood for that! Maybe next time!” Leylin declined. Right now, his body still ached faintly, so how could he be in the mood to do it?
“Alright! I’ll be waiting!” Neela laughed coquettishly and gave him a light peck on the cheek, before running away quickly.
Leylin shook his head and turned around, returning to his dorm. As he opened his door, he saw that everything in the room had remained the same as before his departure and a feeling of security washed over him as he entered.
“The mission did not even last for a month, so why do I feel like a lot of time has passed?”
Leylin shut the door, placing the cross blade, sack, and other items aside before lying on his bed. He enjoyed the soothing comfort provided as he rested on the soft bed.
“A.I. Chip! Show me my current stats!”
There was an overall increase in the stats; his Strength, Agility and vitality had all increased by 0.3, while his spiritual force increased by 0.1.
“After advancing to a proper Knight, all my stats have risen. As for my spiritual force, this is the result after one month of continuous meditation!”
Leylin gazed at the 3D image of him, “A.I. Chip, calculate how much more the internal life energy in my body raises my stats.”
After a Knight ignites their internal life energy, there will still be a breakout period for their stats to increase. However, Leylin had already increased his stats plenty through meditation, so the effects may be diminished slightly.
If my stats were at 1.9 like the average person, this internal life energy would be able to raise all my stats by at least 1. However, now that my foundation is so high, raising it will be even more difficult!"

Leylin reasoned.

“The Farlier Family is only a newly established line of Knights. They have no training methods to pass on for after one turns into a Knight, so I have no inkling of how to advance to a Grand Knight.” Although there should be information regarding this aspect in the academy, the potential of Knights are much inferior to that of Magi, so I can forgo this goal for now!”

Ever since he entered the academy, Leylin had devoted all his time and effort to his Magus studies and delayed his training to become a Knight.

Even a Grand Knight will only end up as a follower or servant of an official Magus. Besides, a Knight’s journey will end after becoming a Grand Knight. As for Magi, they can continuously advance, so Leylin naturally chose the path with a better prospect.

“Besides advancing to a Knight, this map is the only benefit of my trip outside this time.

Leylin projected the image of a huge map.

Faint blue lines formed the general outline of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy as well as its surroundings. It was even more detailed than the one Kaliweir had.

On this map, the path that Leylin and his party had taken was the clearest. Furthermore, the vicinity of where the Spider Faced Mushrooms had been found was even marked as a dangerous zone. This map was formed through his own exploration, the scanning from the A.I. Chip, as well as the map that Kaliweir had.
It could not be said to be completely free of mistakes. But this was definitely the most detailed map amongst the acolytes. He would be able to fetch a price of at least 2 magic crystals if he were to sell it. In the centre of the map, green words highlighted the location of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“From this map, it can be seen that our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is only taking up an insubstantial area on the south coast. It could also be said to be in a rural area.

“Furthermore, with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in the centre, the Death Seas would be to the south. To the north, it would be the Mountain Plains of Despair; to the west, Sage Gotham’s Hut; and lastly, the Poolfield Kingdom to the east.

The north and south area are all forbidden regions, with countless dangerous creatures residing within them. Some with differing bloodlines, some of which have been contaminated. They are also haunted by evil spirits that are filled with grievances. Any acolyte stepping foot in those regions would die ten out of ten times.

“As for Sage Gotham’s Hut, it is another faction of the Magi. I have heard that there are some conflicts between Sage Gotham’s Hut and Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, so I can’t go there either.”

“The only one left for acolytes to explore would be the Poolfield Kingdom.”

Leylin thought indifferently. The factions in this world were similar to those of the Japanese during the world war, where various factions were divided in accordance to their territory and they controlled the various kingdoms from the dark.

In these kingdoms, the Magi bloodlines would be either royalty or nobility. As for the Knights, their bloodlines would commonly be those of wealthy families.

“In regards to their social hierarchies, the Magi would be like the feudal lords of the Warring States and the Knights would be the warriors and soldiers serving under them. Furthermore, they don’t
have a lone sovereign governing them as a whole; there are as many small kingdoms as there are stars in the sky, fighting solely for their own benefits in a chaotic era.

“There are a few Magi families supporting the Poolfield Kingdom behind the scenes. The kingdom has a total of 19 provinces. Each area is extremely vast, with many small Magi families, wandering Magi, and travellers living there. They would definitely not come to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy to make any trades, so there should be some kind of small markets over there. I’ll try concealing my identity and head there to sell my potions!”

Leylin’s Potioneering skills were only average, but with the help of the A.I. Chip, his succession rate for brewing had long surpassed his senior Merlin and could even be comparable to that of his mentor, Kroft. However, all of this had to be kept with the utmost secrecy. As such, Leylin did not dare sell too many of his potions inside the academy.

However, once he advanced to a level 3 acolyte, he would reach a bottleneck. Without a vast amount of resources to use, one could only slowly progress with time.

Even a fifth-grade acolyte, without resources, would require at least 3 years advancing to a level 3 acolyte!

Leylin was only an average, third-grade acolyte, and could only rely on this bit of income on the surface. To satisfy the requirements for advancement, who knows how long he would have to wait.

“A.I. Chip! Simulate the requirements that I need to advance into level 3 acolyte!”

[Prerequisites for level 3 acolyte: spiritual force: 7, mastery of at least 3 spell models, 500 grams of Reactive Elixirs required to aid with breakthrough.]

“Learning the 3 spell models is easy, but the Reactive Elixirs will be troublesome to obtain. I will need at least 500 magic crystals!”
Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn. As a Potioneering acolyte, he naturally knew what Reactive Elixirs were. These potions were not the same as elementary potions like the strength potions or hemostasis potions. However, they required someone to have reached the basic level of Potioneering. There are those which increase spiritual force, vitality, or even potions that can reinforce the mind runes at an alarming rate. The demand is always greater than the supply for them.

“500 magic crystals is a little too much. However, after I have finished mastering the elementary Potioneering techniques from Mentor Kroft, I can then start practicing with basic potions. I might only need to purchase 100 magic crystals worth of ingredients to make the potions myself.”

“It seems like the most important thing will be to get my spiritual force up to 7!” Leylin appeared to be deep in thought, “A.I. Chip! According to my current status, how long will it take to meet these prerequisites through meditation?”

[Using the Host’s spiritual force as a base, simulation in progress!]
[Beep! The simulation has been completed. Estimated time needed: 8 Years 6 Months and 15 Days!]

The A.I. Chip responded without any emotions.

“That long?” Leylin’s face turned pale, “What’s the problem? It only took me a little over a year to raise my spiritual force to 4.2 from the stats of an ordinary human…”

[The host has gained a resistance towards meditation, changing to a higher tiered meditation technique is recommended. Another option is to find ingredients that are compatible for raising the effects of meditation!] The A.I. Chip projected a screen, with the various data and results on it.
According to the A.I. Chip’s simulations and extrapolations, the elementary meditation technique is most useful when used to construct mind runes. However, after a level 2 acolyte has finished constructing their 24 mind runes, they can only progress slowly with time…” “No wonder even fifth-grade acolytes get stuck at the bottleneck to advance to a level 3 acolyte!” Leylin looked at the results of the mathematical formulas and entered into deep thought. “I have been in the academy for this long, but I haven’t heard of any acolytes who own an advanced meditation technique. Furthermore, the apprentices of the other professors all stop progressing for at least a few years after they have reached level 2 acolyte standards. It seems like even the professors can do nothing regarding this matter of meditation techniques, so I can give up on it first!” “As for the use of ingredients, there was some basic level potion formulas that could help in the raising of spiritual force. However, the price for them is rather high and the ingredients are also very costly. Even the results are rather appalling…” “However, my succession rate will definitely be higher than other Potioneering Masters because I have the A.I. Chip. Therefore, increasing my spiritual force with this method is highly feasible!” Leylin made up his mind. “What’s next is to collect formulas for
potions that can raise my spiritual force. In addition, I should sell my potions outside and obtain more potion ingredients!”

“However, it seems rather dangerous outside the academy right now, so how am I supposed to go find those black markets or small-scale trading groups?”

Leylin’s brows furrowed again. “With these problems, the professors inside the academy will definitely not sit around and do nothing. The problems will be resolved after a while; I had better get the potion formulas for increasing my spiritual force before anything else.”

If the problems outside could not be solved by even the Magi, then Leylin would definitely be at even more of a loss. Thinking this, he soon entered a dream state very quickly.

The next morning, Leylin sought out Professor Kroft.

“A potion formula that can raise spiritual force?” Kroft was a little surprised.

“The success rate of brewing these potions is too low and the resources required are extremely expensive. Many Potioneering Masters have lost their family fortunes over this, and only those with a strong family background are able to reap the benefits…”

Although Leylin’s Potioneering talent was highly outstanding, Kroft still felt that his apprentice had set his goals a little too high.

“Sir, you know it too. My aptitude is only third-grade acolyte. For a third-grade acolyte to progress to a Magus, there is an even greater bottleneck. Breaking through to a Magus is easiest when it’s done at a young age, so I want to give it a gamble.”

Leylin spoke softly.

“Oh… You!” Kroft sighed and sat down slowly, “I do have a few basic potion formulas for raising the spiritual force, but I signed a contract preventing me from reselling the formulas when I got them from other parties. As for my own formulas, you are definitely not able to afford them…”
“How many magic crystals are they worth?” Leylin’s heart sank, but he still asked.
“Haha! I knew you wouldn’t give up. 5000 magic crystals, and that’s only because you’re my apprentice!”
“Siii!” Leylin sucked in cold air, and then laughed bitterly, “It seems like I have no hope!”
“Developing a potion formula for raising spiritual force requires a Potioneering Master to spend a dozen, or even several dozens, of years on continuous experimentation, and the consumption for this is immense. Moreover, possessing an exclusive formula usually boosts a Potioneering Master’s family development. Hence, it is within reason for potion formulas to be this costly.”
Having a monopoly will yield the greatest profits. Leylin nodded his head slowly.
However, it also depends on who owns the formula. If it was an acolyte instead of a Magus, even Leylin would have harboured some bad notions. However, Kroft was an official Magus, and he had the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was behind him as his patron. Furthermore, his human relations were not bad; hence, he did not have many worries.
“However, if you really have this goal, you might not be completely without answers!”
Just as Leylin was prepared to take his leave disappointingly, Kroft spoke these words.
“It seems like I have a chance!” Leylin was secretly elated and hurriedly bowed.
“Although I am unable to give you my personally-developed formulas, I still have a few formulas from the Magi of old, and they were obtained when I went exploring several times before, so you can use them and give it a try!” Kroft said slowly.
“Formulas from the Magi of old?” Leylin felt a little uncertain.
“Indeed! Magi were the most prosperous back in the ancient times.
Not only did they construct the Byron empire which spanned over several continents, they had even set their sights on several other distant worlds, conquering different planes one at a time!” Kroft’s face was a little flushed. It seemed as though he held the utmost fascination towards the prowess of the ancient Magi.

“It’s a pity that the Byron Empire collapsed one night, due to some unknown reason, and the legacies of these ancient Magi were lost. We, as Magi in more recent times, have only risen to power through a few remnants of the research and documents left behind by the ancient Magi…”

Little by little, Kroft spoke of the story behind the scenes. This information was never mentioned in the historical books in the academy.

“I wonder how mighty these ancient Magi were?” Leylin put on a fascinated expression, and asked:

“Those formulas, are they all defective?”

“Indeed! You’re very smart! Although the effects of these formulas are good, many of the ingredients have already ceased to exist. At least, I have never come across them in the 200 years of my life…” Kroft said unhurriedly, “However, many Potioneering Masters still feel some affection for these ancient formulas because they all wish to find a substitute for them. Even if they have only a fraction of the original models, their effects are extremely useful!”

Leylin was elated. With the help of the A.I. Chip, he would definitely save a lot of time and effort when researching them.

On the surface, he still put on a frowning and worried expression,

“So… You want me to find substitute ingredients?”

“Indeed! Potioneering Masters often rely on flashes of inspiration for their successes. Many new types of potions are developed on this basis. If you really want to, you can try your luck! However, the success rate will be extremely low!”

Kroft’s face darkened. It seemed as if he was reminded of his past
failures.
“Sir! I still want to give it a try. Even if I won’t be able to develop a new formula, I can still improve my skills in brewing!” Leylin gritted his teeth.
“I can rest assured if this is your thinking!” Kroft nodded his head. After rummaging through the shelves behind him, he managed to find some dusty scrolls.
“The formulas of the ancient Magi are all here.”
When Leylin received the scrolls, his hands dipped. They seemed to be made of some unknown material with an extremely high density.
Casually flipping to a green coloured formula sheet, Leylin was intimidated by the numerous scribbles of the ingredients required.
“Ghost Spirit Flower, Seven Leaves Grass…… The poison sac of a Human-Faced Snake……The hair of a resentful ghost…”
Leylin had never even heard of over half of the ingredients listed there. As for the remaining one-third, they were precious treasures even to a Magus, and looking at them made Leylin’s eyelids flutter wildly.
“How is it? You’re shocked, right? I had the same expression as you when I first saw them too! However, if you were to brew a potion in accordance with the ingredients listed, I dare say that it would be useful even for an official Magus!” Kroft smiled a little.
Leylin flipped through several other formulas. He tried to find something that would suit the level of an acolyte and would have the easiest to obtain ingredients. A good half an hour later, he had barely managed to sift through and find two.
“I’ll just take these two, the Azure Potion and the Tears of Mary!” These two potions were better suited to Leylin’s current conditions.
“Alright! These two potion formulas suit you well!” Kroft nodded his head, “Each one is 150 magic crystals, so the total would be 300 magic crystals!”
Although this was a dozen times cheaper than a potion formula for raising the spiritual force, Leylin still felt a little heartache. He drew out all of the magic crystals in his pockets, and the magic crystals clattered and piled up into a small mound in front of Kroft. Within this mound, there were several pieces with greater energy undulations. These were mid-grade magic crystals, and the value of one was equal to ten regular magic crystals.

“There are 250 magic crystals here, and I’ll add this blade of Snake-Patterned Grass!” Leylin wore a look of reluctance as he drew out a small cloth pouch from his robes. After opening it, there lay a blade of silver-coloured grass. It even had the pattern of a snake’s scales on its surface. This was something that he commissioned Woox to obtain after a long period of time. However, having extracted a few of its properties, this blade of Snake-Patterned Grass was not very useful to him anymore.

“Oh! Snake-Patterned Grass. Although it is rather damaged, its properties are still intact. I estimate it to be worth about 50 magic crystals.” Kroft’s eyes shone as he inspected the blade of silver grass.

“The trade has been established! These two formulas are now yours!” Kroft smiled and nodded his head. Leylin then pocketed the formulas for the Azure Potion and Tears of Mary and bowed to Kroft, bidding farewell before leaving the room.

“300 magic crystals! That was all the income I’ve earned from selling potions this year! The ingredients needed for these two potions are also very precious. I can only hurry and head outside the academy to sell my accumulated potions before I can exchange them for experiment resources…” Leylin felt a little heartache. However, his success were way higher than what the others were estimated to have, and apart from selling
potions in the academy, he had still managed to amass many other potions. If he were to sell them outside the school, he would definitely earn a huge amount of magic crystals!

Ever since he obtained the two potion formulas, Leylin’s mind was filled with ideas on how to earn more magic crystals and brew potions.

“Leylin! Leylin!”

A girl’s voice rang and interrupted Leylin from his dazed state. “It’s you, Bicky! I’m sorry, I was thinking about some things!”

Leylin sized up the girl in front of him. After a year of growth, Bicky’s figure had even grown to be more provocative. Especially those two perky mounds on her chest, they had already begun to take shape.

“Hmph! Even you are like this! Fayle is the same too!” Bicky pouted.

“Haha!” Leylin glossed over it, “What’s the matter, is Fayle ignoring you again?”

“That’s not it! Fayle has been treating me well recently, and we even had dinner at the dining hall on the second floor yesterday!” Bicky said cheerfully, “Only, he seemed fixated on the academy’s recent mission, the one with blood-red writing, wholeheartedly wanting to claim the reward!”

“500 magic crystals, high-grade information, and even an improved spell model. If I wasn’t just a level 2 acolyte, I would most likely be tempted too!” Leylin joked.

“What were you thinking earlier?”

“Nothing much, only that selling potions within the academy are rather disadvantageous for me and I want to try selling them outside!” Leylin spoke with a half-truth.
Regarding the matter of wanting to sell his potions outside the academy, Leylin felt that there was nothing much to hide.

Other Potioneering acolytes were sure to have these thoughts too, but no one would expect Leylin to sell such a surprising amount. He must conceal his identity when selling the potions, but everything will be fine as long as he is not recognised.

“The acolytes in the academy are indeed clever, keeping the prices down!” Bicky nodded her head. “Why don’t you learn from our senior, Merlin. He signed a contract with a Magus family, where they provide potion ingredients to him for free and will buy all of the potions he makes!”

“I like my freedom!” Leylin shook his head. He knew a little about Merlin’s decision. Merlin had signed a contract with a Magus family. The family would provide huge amounts of ingredients for him to practice brewing and would also provide him with viable resources to aid him in breaking through to an official Magus. But after he becomes a level 3 acolyte, Merlin will have to provide a certain number of potions for the family every month. Furthermore, he would have to join the family after becoming an official Magus.

This was how Magus families roped in lowly acolytes. Without the A.I. Chip, Leylin might have embarked on a similar path. Or worse, having no family wanting to take him in because
his aptitude was too poor.
“Bicky, your family resides in the Poolfield Kingdom if I recall correctly, do you know if there are any markets or places for people to trade their goods?” Leylin asked.
“Of course! However, the situation there is extremely complicated. There are many wandering Magi and fugitives, so it is very chaotic and dangerous!”
“I know, but I don’t have to go there personally. For instance, I could always hire someone to do it for me.” Leylin began to spout nonsense.
“In the academy’s Mission Area, acolytes can also give out missions as long as they have enough magic crystals and are able to make a deposit.”
“That’s true! In that case, I will send a copy of the information to your room later!” Bicky nodded after giving it some thought.
“I will be really grateful for that! I’ll buy you a meal in the second level dining hall next time!” Leylin was elated.
“Alright!” Bicky smiled and her two eyes curved into a crescent moon shape.

……

As time passed, Leylin continued to analyse the two formulas with the A.I. Chip’s help. He also started to search for rank 0 spells that could conceal his aura or change his appearance.
Bicky had sent the information regarding the Magus bazaar long ago. However, Leylin did not dare go out until the strange happenings outside the academy were resolved.
In the third level cafeteria that handed out free food, Leylin was eating a meal with Bill. Today’s meal consisted of white bread with fish paste, as well as steak and fruit juice.
“What? Perry is dead? But he was a level 3 acolyte!” Leylin was a
little startled. Perry was a fifth-grade acolyte and also had a good mentor. Four years ago, he had risen to a level 3 acolyte and could be said to be an influential figure in the academy.

“That’s right! He accepted the mission to investigate the happenings around the academy and even formed a party for it. There was another level 3 acolyte in the party too!” Bill’s face darkened.”

“With a formation like this, only an official Magus could have killed Perry.” Leylin surmised. Perry was sure to be carrying a magic artifact, and he was one of the strongest among the level 3 acolytes, not to mention any powerful, life-saving items his mentor could have given him. And yet he still died, making Leylin even more fearful of the danger surrounding the academy.

“Not necessarily, they might have been overwhelmed by numbers! I heard that when Perry was found, his lower body was missing and his innards were all eaten. At a glance, it’s clear that these are the doings of the Beastmen!”

“Beastmen?” Leylin recalled the contents of a book he had read. According to the book, there were two explanations of their origins. One described them as the failed experiments of a Magus, and the other called them a type of human subspecies. However, a common point in both explanations was that these Beastmen were extremely savage and cunning.

“Weren’t they always in the Desolate Lands of Despair? Why would they be roaming here? They’re even attacking acolytes; don’t they know that this is simply provocation?” Leylin was a little puzzled.

“The brains of Beastmen were always poorly developed, who knows what they could be thinking. But they have never dared to provoke Magi, otherwise, they would have been long extinct.” Bill added.

Whenever the academy’s official Magi go outside, their paths are not blocked, nor do any strange happenings occur. It seems as if these Beastmen concealed themselves in advance.
However, they would attack with all their might whenever they met with an acolyte. It was a standard case of bullying the weak while fearing the strong.

“They won’t be this rampant for much longer! Perry is an apprentice of Professor Harosi. He’s known for worrying about losing face and shielding his shortcomings, so he’ll definitely take action!” Bill said confidently.

One reason why the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy did not take action against those Beastmen was because the Beastmen were too weak and posed no threat whatsoever to an official Magus. On the other hand, they give acolytes a chance to hone their battle skills and gain experience. However, the situation had changed now that an apprentice was dead.

However, Leylin still felt that it was absurd for these Beastmen to suddenly appear in the academy’s vicinity. As with the Spider-Faced Mushroom incident from before, he felt that it was all part of a larger conspiracy.

“However, I’m not the only smart one in this academy. If I can think of it, others are sure to as well. Why are there no rumours as of yet?”

Leylin thought deeply, “This situation is a little odd, I had better make some preparations in advance.”

“Leylin!” A voice called from behind him, and it seemed to be wavering a little. Leylin turned around and saw Guricha, one of the acolytes who had come to the academy with him and possessed the aptitude of a second-grade acolyte. The energy waves radiating from his body showed that he was still a level 1 acolyte.

“This is a friend of mine, I’ll take my leave first!” Leylin said to Bill.

“Go do your thing!” Bill smiled.

“Is there a problem?” Leylin walked over to Guricha and asked softly. Guricha was usually a rather reserved person and was
always being berated by Kaliweir and the rest, so he seldom hung out with them. There had to be a problem if he sought out Leylin this time.

“This… We do indeed have a problem! Could you come with me for a while?” Guricha asked.

“Alright!” Leylin agreed since he wasn’t doing anything.

“Let’s return to my dorm!” Guricha brought Leylin to his dorm.

Leylin looked at the room number, ‘1913’. It was quite a distance from his dorm, no wonder they did not see each other much.

“Let’s go in! Don’t be too shocked!” Guricha said preemptively.

Leylin inhaled deeply and placed his left hand into his waist pouch before pushing the door open and stepping inside.

Once he entered, a disgusting stench infiltrated his nose. It was rather similar to a mix of sewerage and the smell of a rotten corpse, and it almost made Leylin puke.

Enduring the sickening stench, Leylin examined Guricha’s room. Its layout was similar to his but there was a girl sitting on the bed now, and beside her was a figure wrapped in a black cloak. The stench was coming out from the cloaked figure’s body.

“Hello, Dodoria!” Leylin recognised her. She was also someone who came to the academy with him. Her aptitude was even worse than Guricha’s, only a first-grade acolyte, and barely qualified as a level 1 acolyte even now.

As for the black-robed figure, according to the A.I. Chip’s scan, their energy waves were a little strange. Sometimes the readings showed that they were not even a level 1 acolyte, at times it showed that they were at the peak of a level 1 acolyte and could almost advance to a level 2 acolyte. Furthermore, the radiation on their body was exceptionally strong.

“Hello, Leylin!” Dodoria forced a smile, but both her eyes were red and puffy as if she had just cried.

“What exactly is happening?” Leylin felt that the problem lay with
this black-robed figure.
As expected, Guricha checked that the door was closed and then, forcing out a smile, he said to Leylin, “You have said hello to Dodoria already, but there is one more person, Nyssa. Do you still remember her?”
“Nyssa?” Naturally, Leylin remembered the little girl who had the aptitude of a first-grade acolyte and got along with Dodoria rather well. She had also come from the same place he did.
“This…” The black-robed figure was huge and swollen, like an extremely fat person, and even gave off a disgusting odor. It was very difficult for Leylin to link this figure with the petite and pleasant little girl from the past.
“Nyssa, take off your cloak! Leylin is not an outsider! Besides, you still need his help!” Guricha said.
“That’s right!” Dodoria encouraged, sitting by her side.
After listening to the exchange, the black-robed Nyssa hesitated for a while and then slowly took off her cloak.
“Ugh!” Leylin covered his mouth, his eyes wide, looking extremely shocked.
Just how on earth was this a “Person”?
Scars littered her face, and there were even signs of stitches. She had the snout of a pig, her head was bald, she was missing an ear, and had coarsely spaced teeth. A thick, repulsive, yellow fluid continuously flowed out of her mouth. Her facial features looked like they had been messed up by someone and then put back together.
Looking at her appearance, two words surfaced in Leylin’s mind: “Suture Freak”. Right now, Nyssa’s appearance was like someone casually taking parts of a creature’s corpse and sewing them together.
With such a horrendous outer appearance, and compared to Leylin’s image of how girls normally look like, Leylin finally
understood why Nyssa chose to cloak herself in a black robe. “This……What is going on exactly?” Leylin’s face darkened. “Do you still remember the additional conditions that we there when we were choosing our mentors?” Guricha reminded. “You mean to say……Aiding in the experiments!” Leylin got a shock. He had originally thought that the conditions offered by the professor were too good, and now it turned out to be a trap! “That’s right! We didn’t have any magic crystals, so the choosing of our mentors was at random. Nyssa was allocated to a professor who specialises in Transfiguration!” “He treated Nyssa well, not only did he impart her with a lot of knowledge, he even promised her 1 magic crystal a month if she participated in his experiments!” Dodoria said, while wiping off the tears in her eyes with a handkerchief from time to time. “Three days ago, Nyssa was poisoned by the radiation of a spell, and she has been like this ever since then,” Guricha explained gloomily. “Human experiments?” Leylin’s heart sank. He knew that there were many Magi in the academy who did human body experiments in secret. However, they seldom operated on their acolytes directly. “Although there are many Knights and peasants he could have experimented on, acolytes are of good calibre because they have the highest resistance to spells!” Nyssa finally opened her mouth. Her voice was hoarse with old age and even carried a metallic ring to it. “That’s right!” Guricha continued, “Cough cough… I, too, have been aiding my professor in many of his experiments. Although there are no irreversible changes yet, a few residual effects are beginning to appear…”
A.

I. Chip, examine Guricha!"

Leylin ordered. Immediately, an image of Guricha was projected and Leylin noticed some pathological symptoms in some of his organs, the lungs in particular.

Acolytes are already capable of resisting spells, so how strong would the radiation have to be for an acolyte to be unable to withstand it?

Leylin’s face changed, “What did the academy say about this?”

“What could they say? Nyssa signed a pact with her mentor before the experiment and even declined any compensation!” Dodoria exclaimed as she sobbed.

Leylin was silent. Many low-grade acolytes, with no magic crystals, could only be assigned to different professors randomly. If their luck was good, they would meet professors like Kroft. If their luck was bad and they were to meet with professors who liked to experiment on humans, then they could only blame themselves for being unlucky.

Additionally, many of the acolytes could not resist the enticements from their mentors and would cooperate with them for experiments, so even outcomes like death were a possibility.

A few acolytes would die from experiments in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy each year. In comparison, Nyssa, who was able to keep her life, was much luckier than those who died.
“So why did you look for me? If it’s to help seek revenge or any other justice-related matters, then I’m afraid I won’t be of any help.”
Leylin did not allow any room for negotiation right at the start. To challenge a Magus with the powers of an acolyte, he would only do that if there was water seeping through his brains.
“We don’t have such intentions. We’re just here to let you take a look to determine if there is still hope for Nyssa to recover her original appearance.” Guricha hurriedly shook his hands.
Leylin nodded his head. After all, he had the Potioneering Master, Kroft, standing behind him. If he couldn’t think of anything either, Nyssa could only despair.
“Do you mind if I have a look?” Leylin asked Nyssa.
“I don’t” Nyssa’s voice was extremely soft, almost inaudible.
Leylin walked forward, and the disgusting stench only grew more revolting. Leylin forced himself to pick up Nyssa’s palm.
Every finger was thicker than a carrot, looked purple, and there were disgusting rings of folded skin.
What used to be the dainty white fingers of a lady had turned into this. Leylin believed that if he could not help Nyssa, then she ought to mentally prepare herself.
Leylin pressed the back of Nyssa’s hands “Do you feel anything?”
“No!”
“Her defense seems to be pretty good!” Leylin silently appraised, taking out a surgical knife from his waist pouch.
The tip of the gleaming knife was placed on the surface of her palm and pushed into the skin lightly, but it didn’t manage to cut through the skin!
Leylin’s brows furrowed and he applied more pressure on his hands, using all of his strength as a Knight to push down the tip of the blade. The surgical knife finally pierced Nyssa’s skin, and a drop of yellow pus flowed out.
Leylin hurriedly took out a test tube and stored that drop of pus. After dabbing some hemostasis potion on it, the wound on Nyssa’s hand rapidly healed. 10 seconds later, there wasn’t a single scar to be seen.

“What monstrous healing abilities!” Leylin gasped inwardly but didn’t dare say it aloud.

Seeing Dodoria and Guricha, who were staring at him without moving, Leylin laughed.

“Qiadarmo – Xurado” With the incantation, a gust of wind suddenly swept into the room and formed a small whirlwind. Black mist rose unceasingly as it consolidated into a vague, humanoid shadow in front of Leylin.

Guricha and Dodoria were startled, and even Nyssa retreated several steps back.

“I never thought that he would already be at this level after only 1 year or so. Could there really be no way to remedy the difference between aptitudes?” Guricha looked at Leylin, who was casting a spell, with a complex expression.

Leylin did not pay attention to Guricha in the slightest. Right now, his thoughts were all on the summon that was right in front of him.

“For you!” Leylin spoke in the Byron language and handed over the test tube containing the yellow fluid from Nyssa over to the shadow.

The shadow’s eyes glowed red. As it did not have any hands, it directly bit the test tube with its mouth. *Crunch!*

The test tube broke and the black shadow swallowed the yellow liquid into its stomach.

*Hah Hah!* When the yellow fluid entered its body, the black shadow seemed to destabilise. It roared loudly, and cold sweat formed on Leylin’s forehead.

“Krin – Sidamoersi!” As Leylin continued to chant, he took several dark-green rocks from his pouch and tossed them towards the
After about 3 to 4 minutes, the black shadow stopped rampaging
and spoke to Leylin in several obscure words.
Guricha and the others listened closely, but this language was very
unfamiliar to them. It was definitely not the Byron language.
Ever since the ancient times, many Magi organisations have
invented their own unique language for magic after many years, so
to learn them all is just a pipe-dream.
The black shadow continued to howl, and then disappeared after
one final roar.
Looking at the disappearing black shadow, Leylin could not help
but to heave a sigh of relief.
“How was it?” Nyssa asked. As it was her own problem, she was
the most concerned about it.
“It’s very difficult! Your constitution has already been completely
transformed, and there is a huge amount of polluted energy
circulating in your body. If not for the fact that you were an
acolyte, you would have died long ago!” Leylin shook his head.
After listening to Leylin’s assessment, Nyssa’s eyes dimmed and
she retreated back several steps.
“However, it’s not like there are no solutions at all!” Leylin
continued.
“What means are there? No matter what the conditions are, I will
definitely do my best for Nyssa!” Dodoria clenched her fist.
“Yes, we should think of a way together. Then we’ll be able to
solve it eventually!” Guricha cheered on, which made Leylin
somewhat speechless.
“The first method is for Nyssa to advance to an official Magus.
Magi are able to use the constant radiation to change the way they
look. As long as she spends the time, she will definitely be able to
change back into her original appearance!”
Leylin said slowly. This kind of remodelling of the physique
through radiation required fine tuning from oneself. There was no room for other Magi to help; there would be a huge backlash if they tried.

“An official Magus? I am only a level 1 acolyte right now!” Nyssa’s eyes flashed for a brief instant, but it dulled almost immediately.

“That is too difficult, however, it is also an option. What other methods are there?” Dodoria asked.

“There is only one more method I can think of, which is to use the Harmonious Aqua Regia Potion! It can cleanse Nyssa’s body of the pollutants, after which it would be much easier to remodel her appearance.” Leylin introduced the second method.

“Harmonious Aqua Regia Potion! Heavens! Isn’t that a potion used by Magi? One potion is worth at least 1000 magic crystals!” Guricha’s eyes almost popped out from his sockets.

“That’s right! The pollutant in Nyssa’s body is rather severe, only a Magus level potion that can remove radiation will be useful!” Leylin said definitively.

“These are the only two methods that I can think of, but I will also ask my mentor later!”

These two methods were the most optimal of the choices provided by the A.I. Chip, Leylin believed that even Mentor Kroft would not be able to come up with a better idea.

“An official Magus? 1000 magic crystals? I will achieve it!” Nyssa’s eyes filled with resolve as she clenched her fists.

“My sincere apologies for not being able to help. Please accept these potions, it will be able to reduce the pain that you feel during midnight!”

Leylin gave a small bow and took out a pink potion from his pouch. He could only do this much.

“How did you know about that?” Nyssa was clearly a little shocked.

“From the reactions given by your body, it seems like the energy particles react the most at midnight, which is also when you will
feel the most pain!” Leylin explained calmly.
“Nyssa! Why haven’t you told me this!” Dodoria’s eyes filled with anger once again.
“You have already done enough!” Nyssa replied.
“Take it!” Leylin handed the potion over to Guricha and turned around, walking out of the dorm.
The three people left in the room were as silent as the dead. “What now?” Guricha spoke first.
“An official Magus? This is simply out of reach for us because of our low aptitudes. The acquiring of magic crystals to buy a Harmonious Aqua Regia Potion is more realistic!” Dodoria said.
“If the three of us were to pool our resources together, after borrowing some more from others, we would have…… “ Dodoria did not even believe her own words. Acolytes would definitely spend any magic crystals they had on knowledge or items to increase their power. No one would simply throw them away.
“No! I wish to try breaking through to an official Magus!” Nyssa said slowly, her words filled with resolve.
“With the blessings of my mentor, this radioactive body’s defense is much higher than an average person’s. My spell resistance isn’t too bad either, I should accept more missions and earn the resources I need to advance! I cannot hold the two of you back any longer……” Nyssa forced a smile, but it looked uglier than crying.
“Why? Why did it turn out like this?” Dodoria cried.
Guricha hurriedly embraced her, it seemed like these two had been a couple since long ago.
“Following the plots of the novels from my previous world, shouldn’t I hurry and sell some potions to earn enough money to pay for Nyssa’s treatment? And at the same time, I ought to advance to a Magus and seek revenge for Nyssa and the like.” Leylin let his imagination run wild as he walked.
“A pity that this is the reality! Nyssa and I can’t even be considered
friends, only strangers who have seen each other a few times. Giving her the painkiller potion earlier was already the limit, and that was seeing how we came from the same place!”
“As for magic crystals, I don’t even have enough to use for myself, so how could I take them out? One must always pay the price for their own actions!”
Leylin’s gaze turned frosty as he left the dorm area. He would not do anything else for Nyssa, and she would only depend on herself.
After walking past the flower garden located beside the dorms, sniffing the aroma from the flowers, and basking in the sunlight radiating from the roof, Leylin’s mood became much better.
Walking to a long bench, Leylin sat down and looked at the acolytes walking past, his mind at peace.
“Coming out to bask in the sunlight occasionally is also a type of enjoyment, isn’t it?”
A voice travelled over and a grey robed youth sat beside Leylin.
“Jayden?” Leylin’s eyes opened wide.
[Beep! Jayden. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 2.7, Vitality: 3.1, Spiritual force: 5.0. Level 2 acolyte. Energy waves from a low-grade magic artifact have been detected from the Target’s body. Target is classified as dangerous!] The A.I. Chip’s scan of Jayden appeared in Leylin’s mind.
Jayden’s spiritual force was the highest among the acolytes, and even his vitality had increased after the constant radiation. Normally, Magus would intentionally increase their vitality to prepare for future transformations of the body.
Right now, Jayden’s spiritual force was higher than Leylin’s. He also carried a magic artifact, but no one knew of his battle experience.
“Calculate my chances of winning if I were to fight with Jayden!”
[Simulation beginning. Success rate: 57.82%!] The A.I. Chip
provided the data.
“Only a little over half, it seems like the might of a magic artifact is not little. Jayden is no pushover too.”
After the A.I. Chip’s scan, Leylin understood Jayden’s strength a little more.
Leylin was considered to have a considerable amount of battle experience amongst the level 2 acolytes. As long as his opponent did not have a magic artifact, he would have a very high chance of winning.
Jayden had a magic artifact but was still slightly inferior to him. This meant that his battle strength was lower than Leylin’s. Even though he had some battle experience, it was not much.
Of course, these were only rough estimations from the A.I. Chip. In reality, fighting has to be viewed from many aspects.
“Jayden, I haven’t seen you in such a long time!” Leylin greeted.
Jayden naturally did not know that his stats had been found out by Leylin in just a second. He adjusted his robes and sat by Leylin’s side.
He revealed his pale, white face as he raised his head to meet the sunlight.
“I haven’t basked in the sunlight for so long. Ever since I started following my mentor, my schedule has revolved around…… meditation, experiments and my studies!”
Jayden stretched his body, looking contented.
“I heard that you are doing pretty well under Kroft!” Jayden said suddenly.
“It’s alright; I’m basically just brewing potions and exchanging
them for resources!” Leylin was extremely modest.
“However, you recently went on a mission with Kaliweir, are you going to join that side?” Jayden suddenly smiled, but a cold glint seemed to flash in his eyes.
Leylin was a little speechless. He never thought that this conflict between groups that these kids had formed before was still ongoing. However, he had forgotten that he himself was only a boy of 14 years at this moment.
“We’re all acquaintances, we just did a mission together since we met by coincidence. That’s all!” Although Leylin was not afraid of Jayden, he still felt that it was better to avoid any trouble as much as possible.
Jayden looked at Leylin several times and the A.I. Chip even informed Leylin that his brain waves had been scanned several times. It seemed as though Jayden had actually used a spell to determine if he was speaking the truth.
After some time, Jayden gave a radiant smile.
“I think highly of you! Intelligent! Prudent! Being with Kaliweir and the others will only drag you down. Only by joining a higher circle of friends can you obtain more resources, glory, and even life!”
Jayden got up and continued in an indifferent tone, “Let me give you some advice, hurry up and leave the school!”
“What? Could you clarify that?” Leylin’s heart tightened as if had grasped something, and he hurriedly asked.
However, Jayden only smiled, walking away without taking a single glance behind him.
After Jayden’s figure had completely disappeared, Leylin sat back on the bench, a little lost for words.
“Pretending to be mysterious, as if he was a very powerful person, and even trying to convince me to join under his wing. Is that even fun? Does he really think of himself as the main character of a
“However! Jayden is a fifth-grade acolyte and is deemed highly likely to advance to a Magus. He would definitely be able to obtain news faster than me. I’m afraid that something has really happened!” Leylin’s face darkened.

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In a dark room, the fire was dimmed, and a promiscuous atmosphere permeated through the room. The moaning and shrill cries of a woman sounded, blending together with the constant low panting noises of a man. After climaxing, the girl lay in the arms of the man, as limp as a bag of soil.

“You’re awesome, just like a lion!” Neela’s expression was hard to make out. Leylin gently caressed Neela’s bare back and did not say a single word.

He had encountered many things today and urgently needed to take it out on someone, so naturally he looked for Neela. In this period of time, he had long since hooked up with Neela. In this world, everyone was extremely open-minded about the notion of sex. Many people lost their virginity by the age of 11 or 12. Leylin and Neela both had their sexual needs, so they had already done the deed after only a few days. In any case, Neela was no longer a virgin. As for Leylin, he himself was a no-good person in his previous life. Both of them desired love and sex, and it wasn’t bad to have a friend with benefits.

With the regulation of the A.I. Chip, he would definitely not leave his seed behind. Naturally, he could mess around to the fullest. Thinking of this, Leylin felt life stirring below his pants once again. “Ah!” Neela let off a cry, and Leylin stopped her as she was about
to climb on top of him. The corner of Leylin’s lips curved up wickedly, as he pressed Neela’s head downwards. Neela rolled her eyes at Leylin, but her lips smiled coquettishly as she dived under the blankets. Leylin let out a satisfied groan and leaned onto the wall slightly. Both of his hands grabbed hold of twin peaks, and he felt the sponge-like sensation transmitting to his hands. Sometime later, Neela got up and walked towards the washroom stark naked.

While he listened to the provocative beauty humming as she showered, Leylin began to ponder the day’s event. “I shouldn’t care about Nyssa’s affairs anymore. Although Jayden’s warning was extremely sudden, it has to be treated seriously. This might have something to do with the phenomenon outside the academy. What’s next is to investigate where the other fifth-grade acolytes went.”

In any case, the academy would definitely not forsake those acolytes who had the highest potential to succeed and advance to official Magi. If the academy was safe, they would definitely still be here. However, if they all left the academy for various reasons, it meant that the academy itself would be fraught with danger in the near future. “Harosi has been cleaning up the area outside the academy since Perry’s death. After he has finished cleaning, it will be the best opportunity!” Leylin’s eyes flashed. “My dearest, what are you thinking of?” Neela stuck herself onto Leylin, and two soft mounds pressed against Leylin’s right arm. “Just thinking about a few things!” Leylin smiled, “Recently Sir Harosi seems to be making a huge ruckus outside the academy!” “You heard about it too? About Perry?” Neela lay on top of Leylin’s chest and did not make any other movements.
“Yeah! Losing a fifth-grade acolyte genius and a potential Magus, anyone would turn crazy for a period of time!” Leylin said blandly, “You have your own cliques too, I need you to help me to find out a few things!”
“Neela’s smiled sweetly, “I’ll serve you, my lion king!”
“Don’t call me that! It feels extremely strange! It will make me think of some lion!” Leylin rolled his eyes.
“Alright! Let’s not talk about this, but about something more serious!” Leylin’s face was stern.
Seeing him act this way, Neela also stopped smiling.
Getting close to Leylin was so she could elevate her status and obtain more resources, and she clearly understood this.
“Help me check the results of Harosi’s battle. Also, find out if the academy’s surroundings are completely safe now. Lastly, I want to know where all the fifth-grade acolytes have gone recently!” Leylin whispered into Neela’s ears.
“I got it!” Neela grabbed Leylin’s head with both hands, “Could it be that something big is going to happen?”
“I hope that it is only my imagination!”

……

It was the morning of the second day after he had walked out from Neela’s room. Leylin felt extremely refreshed and full of vigour. It seemed like his venting had indeed helped in curbing his emotional distress suitably.
After thinking for a while, Leylin went for a shower and then headed towards Professor Kroft.
Kroft happened to be brewing a kind of potion. Red-coloured beetles were climbing around inside a test tube, occupying half of the space inside the test tube. It looked rather disgusting.
“You’re here! Is something the matter?”
Kroft watched the test tube closely, as he sprinkled some blue petals into it.
The red-coloured beetles hurriedly gorged on those petals, after which they dissolved and turned into a green-coloured liquid.
A dozen seconds later, the test tube half-filled with the red beetles turned into a green-coloured potion.
“Your skills are really amazing!” Leylin gasped.
“Haha! It’s just practicing!” Kroft shook his head, “You always look for me when you have a problem, so tell me what you want!”
“It’s like this. I, your apprentice, haven’t seen senior Merlin, for some time now. Can I know where he has been?” Leylin inhaled deeply.
“Merlin?” Kroft’s face had on a mysterious smile, “He has accepted a mission and left the academy already!”
“How long will it last?”
“About 1 to 1.5 years! It’s possible that it may take longer!” Kroft’s tone became sterner, but there was a hint of gratification in it.
“One last question, was the mission suggested by the family supporting senior Merlin?”
As a family that was able to rope in a genius Potioneering acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, their influence should be at the peak. After all, they had an intricate relationship with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, so their news network might even be more efficient than Kroft’s.
“Yes!” Kroft answered definitively. “You know, there are some things that were agreed on between the academy and me, so I cannot say it directly. But if you are to discover it on your own, then it would be none of my business!”
“However, you don’t need to be too worried. Your talent in Potioneering is only secondary to Merlin’s, and the academy needs a talent like you too!” Kroft comforted him.
“Yes!” Leylin smiled bitterly. It seemed like the academy still chose
to categorise by aptitude grades. Those talented individuals like Jayden and Merlin who were also fifth-grade acolytes had all been given ample time to retreat. But when it came to him, the treatment he received was much inferior. Up until now, he had only received a few obscure hints from his mentor.

As for those whose aptitudes were even worse, they probably wouldn’t know what happened even after they were dead. Although Leylin did not understand too well either, there was one thing that he was certain of! The academy was no longer a safe place to stay!

Once again, Leylin was determined to leave, “So, may I also take up a dispatch mission?”

“You may! Go to the counter of the Mission Area and clarify your intentions. They will be able to understand since your aptitude isn’t too bad and your talent in Potioneering is even more outstanding!” Kroft nodded his head.

“Thank you, Sir!” Leylin hurriedly bowed. Allowing acolytes to leave was an extremely good thing for them, after all, he did not want to stay in a potential battlefield.

Afterwards, Leylin assisted Kroft in a few more research experiments in Potioneering and also took the opportunity to seek answers for Nyssa’s problem. Unfortunately, Kroft did not have any good methods either.

After bidding farewell to his mentor, Leylin walked outside, “There is only a small family behind Bicky. As for Kaliweir and the others, they aren’t fifth-grade acolytes, so they will most likely not receive the news. I’m afraid I will have to drop a few hints for them. As to whether they will understand the message or not, it all depends on their luck!”

In the lavish second-level dining hall, the gorgeous crystal lights sparkled dazzlingly, as numerous musicians performed. Listening to music while tasting delicacies, it was indeed a very enjoyable thing
to do.
Furthermore, the food here was all prepared with the utmost care. Not only could they increase one’s stats, they could also speed up the meditation process. As such, they have always been welcomed by acolytes and Magi alike.
However, there were very few customers here today. Most of their faces were gloomy, and the sight was rather unappetising.
Leylin sat on a goose-feathered coach and pushed a steaming mug towards Neela, “This is hot cocoa, with some ground black pearls inside it as well. It has also a certain beneficial effect towards meditation, won’t you try it?”
Neela, who was sitting opposite him, smiled bitterly, “If it was before, I would still be extremely excited. But now…”
Leylin did not feel the slightest bit odd. Despite any pretenses, the atmosphere in the academy was very different with such a huge war imminent. Besides, a large number of talented Magus acolytes going missing would definitely rouse the attention of others as well. Moreover, the academy didn’t seem to want to hide this news. After all, they would still be relying on the official Magi for the upcoming battle, and these acolytes would not be of much help at all. Those that were left behind would definitely be those with the lowest aptitude and levels, only there to be used as cannon fodder. “Mentor Harosi has already cleared out the area around the school of Beastmen and any creatures who would pose a problem. They have been all reduced to skeletons by spells, especially the Beastmen, and their souls have been trapped in their bodies to suffer for eternity……” Leylin gave a slight nod of his head. It seems like the vicinity of the academy was safe for the moment. “How about the other Magus potentials?” “Very troublesome! According to the news that my other sisters have gathered, many of the acolytes with high aptitudes, including Chester and Sherpa, have all left the academy for various reasons. I’m afraid that it won’t be much longer before this news spreads……What did you find out?”
“My senior, Merlin, already left a few months ago! Furthermore, I, too, will take on a mission and leave soon!”

Leylin blandly spoke of the news he had gathered, and this made Neela’s face turn even paler.

“What about you? What are your plans?” Leylin still asked her at the end.

“I plan to return to my family. You know, although my Welter family is not very famous, we are still able to take care of ourselves. Do you want to come with me?” Neela clearly wanted to rope in a talent like Leylin for her family.

“No thanks! I have made plans for myself already!” Leylin smiled, turning her down. He would be subjected to various contracts and restrictions if he joined a family. However, he had too many secrets and was not suited to having an entourage.

The light in Neela’s eyes dimmed. Leylin also knew that their relationship had come to an end. After all, they had just been enjoying themselves, but going their separate ways now, in a time of crisis, was very normal.

“There is still something that I have to ask of you!” Leylin took out a black-coloured wooden box and placed it on the dining table.

“What is it?” Neela smiled, but it seemed rather forced.

He opened the black box. Many potions in test tubes were neatly arranged inside, and the sight dazzled Neela’s eyes.

“This is……” Neela’s mesmerising eyes let off an astonished look.

“These are the potions that I have accumulated until now. Help me sell them off!” Despite crossing his fingers, Leylin’s expression remained calm.

Of course, this was only a small portion of the potions that he had secretly brewed. Saying that it was his accumulation after a year was reasonable; their total value was several hundred magic crystals.

Letting Neela sell them for him was because Leylin didn’t want to
be conspicuous. On the other hand, it also provided her with a little compensation. After all, a trace of chauvinism still remained, deep in his heart. Breaking up would require him to give some form of compensation at least, and letting Neela be the middleman gave her a chance to earn some profits.

“No problem! Right now, the values of the various ingredients and spell models have fallen sharply, while potions and low-grade magic artifacts have drastically risen in price.” Neela’s eyes flashed. This was a normal occurrence. Spell models and other materials would definitely decrease in price whenever war was imminent, as they could not be used to improve one’s practical strength immediately. As for the other items that are able to raise one’s battle strength, they would be in high demand.

“After selling these potions, just give me 300 magic crystals for them!” Leylin sipped the hot cocoa which had been resting on the table.

Neela’s expression was a little complicated, “Of course it’s possible. In fact, my family could just buy them all! Do you have more? I can let my family know and give you a fair deal……”

“These are all the potions I have accumulated in the past year! You should know, I still need to rely on selling potions to obtain resources. If not for the market doing well right now, I wouldn’t let them all go in one breath like I am doing now!” Leylin’s expression seemed extremely earnest.

“Alright! I will do my best to help you!” Neela understood. In her eyes, Leylin brewing these potions nonstop and having such a collection was already the limit with his current ability. As the two of them had their own worries, the meal that followed was not very appetising for the both of them.

After the meal, Neela hurriedly bade farewell to Leylin. Leylin entrusted some people to bring a few messages to the people that
he mixed well with as well. He did not mention any details and only gave them subtle hints. Whether or not they could uncover the plot was all up to them.

Neela was extremely fast, and she handed Leylin a pouch of magic crystals the very next day.

After giving it some thought, Leylin decided it was better to spend his magic crystals while he was still at the academy. After all, he might not be able to find a trading depot outside, and even if he did, the resources there may not be as complete as what the school has.

This departure would most likely last an extended period of time. Leylin made preparations for his advancement outside. He prepared to buy ingredients to brew reactive elixirs and spell models available. As for any knowledge that a level 3 acolyte might require, it had been stored in the A.I. Chip since long ago.

However, the knowledge provided by the professors stopped there. As for the advancement to an official Magus and the basic information for a Level 1 Magus, the knowledge was heavily guarded by the academy. Only level 3 acolytes who have signed a contract with them would have the right to access them.

Leylin headed to the spell models’ shop first.

“What do you want?” The attitude of the old lady behind the counter was even more vehement now. However, Leylin’s good mood didn’t waver. He already knew that those level 3 acolytes had failed in advancing to an official Magus and they had signed a contract with the school, to stay behind and provide basic services. Due to the restrictions in the contract, they could not run even if they wanted to. With the impending battle and the collateral damage that would be inflicted upon them, it would be weird if they had a good attitude!

“Apart from Umbra’s Hand, I want all of the basic spell models for the Shadow and Dark elements!” Leylin put on a very
magnanimous air.
The old lady behind the counter looked at Leylin in surprise. After all, such a wealthy level 2 acolyte like him was rarely seen.
“There is a total of 13, for 130 magic crystals.”
“I also want the Basic Transfiguration spell model!”
“That’ll be 140 magic crystals then.” The voice of the old lady sounded from behind the counter.
Leylin nodded his head and poured a bag of magic crystals out onto the counter. The lady counted them and put them away, after which she carried 14 spell books over. Each of them was as heavy as a brick, and they stacked up to almost Leylin’s height.
“It seems like I should buy some horses as well!”
Leylin hired a few servants and got them to bring the spell model books back into his room, and then he returned to the trading area. At this moment, the trading area was one of the few places that were still bustling with people.
The number of acolytes who came here had also increased. Many premium goods had been put up for sale, attracting the attention of numerous acolytes.
“It seems like even the acolytes have noticed.” Leylin mulled.
It was similar to how, in the forest, a small number of animals would sense danger and take flight before a huge disaster befell them, but other animals would naturally follow when they saw the animals leaving, even if they did not sense any danger.
“However, there are still no magic artifacts here.” Leylin felt a little depressed. He had always wanted to own a magic artifact, but they were just too rare. Moreover, the prices were sky-high, and they would end up in the hands of a Magus every time they appeared. On the occasion that the Magi were dissatisfied with the magic artifact, the level 3 acolytes would all madly rush forward to grab it. Leylin simply didn’t stand a chance.
“magic artifact creation requires alchemy and enchanting, and it’s
such a profound subject. I don’t even have enough time to focus on my Potioneering studies now!”
Leylin laughed bitterly, even the A.I. Chip had a limit to its processing. According to Leylin’s previous experience, only when his soul continuously advanced, would the A.I. Chip’s level increase.
“When I become a level 3 acolyte, if I don’t have any other means, I will dabble in enchanting and see if I can create my own magic artifact!”
These stalls that had no magic artifacts did not attract Leylin in the slightest bit.
However, there were still some unusual happenings. For example, the stalls that were selling potions were filled with people and the sale of bows, arrows, and leather armour was also great. But as for the stalls that sold ingredients, they were rarely frequented.
He walked to Woox’s store, which he was familiar with.
Right now, it was crowded with acolytes and they bought any potions that they saw, in a very forthright manner.
Woox was so busy that he was sweating, and had even employed a few acolytes to help him. Such a scene was definitely not common in the past.
Leylin looked around. The potions on the shelves sold very quickly, many empty shelves were labelled as sold out.
Woox’s eyes shone when he saw Leylin. He called an acolyte to fill his position, and especially went to receive Leylin.
“Hey! My dear Leylin, I heard the cries of a skylark today, and I know you will definitely bring good news. So? How many potions? I can give you 10% more than usual!” Woox greeted Leylin cordially and looked at Leylin as if he was looking at a magic crystal.
“My apologies.” Leylin waved his hands, “I’ve been busy with missions, so I haven’t been brewing much recently!”
“This is indeed a tragic piece of news!” Woox sighed, “You don’t know how good the market is these days!”
“Alright! Alright! I came here to purchase ingredients.” Leylin said and handed a list of items over to Woox.
After Woox received the slip and looked at the scribbles and quantities required, his face changed and bean-sized sweat droplets begin dripping down.
“So many raw materials! Let me see, White Crystals, Purple Vine Radish Roots, claws of a Ghost Goblin, are you trying to brew a Reaction Elixir?” The fatty asked straightforwardly.
“Yes! Indeed! I want to make preparations for my advancement. If you have any completed reactive elixirs in stock right now I’ll buy them off you. You can set the price!”
Leylin spoke casually, the formulas for the reactive elixirs could be found in the library and many people have seen them before. The fatty being able to recognise the ingredients was nothing amazing.
Underneath the reactive elixir ingredients, Leylin had also added the many common ingredients needed for the Azure Potion and Tears of Mary. As for the few important ingredients, they have already been extinct in the Magus World for several hundreds of years, so Leylin did not even bother to write them down.
“The brewing of reactive elixirs is extremely complicated and the success rate is also very low. The demand for it is so high, and they immediately sell out once they appear. How could I still have stock left?” Woox shook his head.
“At least, you Potions masters are better off, you can brew whatever potions you need by yourself. I remember that when I was still a level 2 acolyte, I committed so many crimes just for a bottle of reactive elixir!”
Alright, let’s not talk about this anymore! These ingredients weren’t originally this cheap, but the prices of raw materials have fallen now, so I’ll sell them for 200 magic crystals.”

Woox set his price.

Leylin nodded and handed over 20 middle-grade magic crystals to Woox.

He then received a huge bundle from Woox, drawing the attention of many onlookers in the vicinity.

Leylin smiled bitterly, carried the bundle on his back, and begin casually chatting with Woox.

“So? Have you obtained any news of magic artifacts?” Leylin wouldn’t let any chances of rapidly increasing his strength pass him by.

“Of course not!” Woox shook his head quickly, “The prices of magic artifacts have recently been driven up wildly. After all, who wouldn’t want to keep their life-saving items and would go sell them?”

Woox suddenly lowered his voice, “Buying so many ingredients and asking about magic artifacts, you must have received that news too, right?”

Leylin nodded his head, “I am preparing to take on a long-term mission so I can go out and avoid all of this.”

Woox nodded his head, “Avoiding it will be good, I will also leave
in a few days’ time.”
“Even Woox, a level 3 acolyte with a magic artifact, has to flee!” The compelling feeling in Leylin’s heart only grew stronger, and after exchanging several more lines with Woox, he hurriedly bade farewell and left.
“The mission cannot be put off any longer, I have to leave immediately!”
Although it wasn’t necessary to register for a mission in order to leave, there was still the hurdle of the academy guardians. Leylin still wanted to return to obtain relevant information on Magi, so he would naturally follow these regulations.
In spite of his rather average aptitude, his Potioneering talent had been acknowledged by even Kroft, so the academy would not keep him here to die.
Because Harosi had already done a sweep of the school’s surroundings, the Mission Area managed to regain some of its former liveliness. However, Leylin realised that there were extremely few level 3 acolytes upon a closer inspection. Naturally, he knew what this was all about.
“They are all a pitiful bunch of people.” Seeing these low-leveled acolytes splitting mission rewards and working hard to earn money to exchange for information, a pitying look surfaced in Leylin’s eyes.
These were obviously the forsaken ones. Although a lone acolyte would be absolutely helpless against a Magus, they could still cause damage and even kill an official Magus if tens or hundreds of them banded together to execute a formation. That was their role here.
However, being in the vicinity of a Magus fight was extremely dangerous. It was already considered extremely lucky for them to have a 30% survival rate here.
Although Leylin felt pity for them, he still would not mention the news. He had already pushed the limits by hinting to his friends. If
he were to publicise the news, even Kroft would not be able to protect him.
Leylin had a look at the missions on the wall; most of them had short durations and were also located very close to the academy. It seemed as though the academy had hidden all the other missions.
When there were few people around, Leylin took the opportunity to quickly head up to the counter.
“What kind of mission did you want?” The reception was a very skinny old man and seemed extremely amiable.
“The missions on the wall don’t suit me at all, are there any special ones? My name is Leylin Farlier, apprentice of Professor Kroft.” Leylin said in a low voice, tossing a small pouch over.
The old fellow hurriedly caught the pouch. After opening it, he smiled. “Of course, there are!”
He took out a scroll from underneath the counter, “Look at this. The missions are all written there.”
The black-coloured scroll seemed to be extremely plain. Leylin opened the scroll and quickly skimmed through the missions written on it.
These missions all had a common characteristic. Their difficulties were not high, but their duration was extremely long. In short, the missions let those Magus potentials avoid the imminent calamity.
With the scan of the A.I. Chip, Leylin quickly decided on a mission.
“Investigate the wilting vegetation in Extreme Night Town. Mission duration: 3 Years.”
“I choose this one.” Leylin pointed to the investigation mission and relayed to the old man.
“Extreme Night Town is located in the Eastwood Province of Poolfield Kingdom. You will have to travel through almost half the kingdom before you reach it. Do you want to buy a map?” The old man smiled like a crafty merchant.
Give me a map!” Although Leylin had a map of his own, it was always good to have another for comparison. After spending two magic crystals, Leylin obtained a brand new map. Not only were the various provinces of the Poolfield Kingdom highlighted on it, there was even a red line to mark his journey.

“According to the map, Extreme Night Town is on the eastmost side of Poolfield Kingdom, where the boundary is, and is very far from the academy. But the good thing is that it was near one of the Magi assembly points mentioned in the information Bicky sent, which would make acquiring information and news convenient.”

This was also why Leylin chose this mission.

“This is your exit pass.” The old man handed a red metal card to him. “Don’t lose it, it’s irreplaceable.”

“It seems like the academy has been very strict in governing any entries and exits lately.”

Leylin thought this inwardly, but he did not say anything aloud as he took the metal card.

After walking out of the Mission Area, Leylin went to bid farewell to Kroft, Bicky, and his other friends.

After all, he did not know how long he would be out for. Some things still had to be settled first. Having received Leylin’s hint, Bicky was already preparing to return home. As for Kaliweir and the others, however, their complexions were rather bad. They had come from Chernobyl Islands and with no place to return to, Leylin could only pay them lip service and console them.

Pushing his room’s door open and seeing the familiar setup, Leylin suddenly felt a little regretful.

“I wonder when I’ll be able to return back here.”

The spell books and ingredients that he bought today were all lying neatly in a corner, filling up two big chests.

After brooding for a while, Leylin moved his bed away to reveal
some floorboards with very little dust on them.
“Farlier!” Leylin gently tapped a black dot on the floor.
*Ka-cha!* There was a mechanical noise, and the wooden
floorboards slowly moved apart to reveal many potions stored in
test tubes.
The amount here was at least 10 times more than what he gave to
Neela!
If Wook saw this, his eyes might even pop out. Leylin smiled.
This was his private potions collection. With the A.I Chip’s help,
his success rate has long surpassed what could be expected of
others. He had sold a small portion of them, but the bulk of them
remained here.
“Let me count! 200 strength potions, 150 antidotes, 180 hemostasis
potions, and an assortment of other potions, their total value would
be at least 3000 magic crystals!”
Leylin looked at these potions. They were his greatest asset and had
always been locked away beneath his bed. The spell used to secure
them was a little magic trick that all level 2 acolyte knew. Apart
from the owner using their spiritual force to open it, any means of
forcing it open would only cause the items locked inside to self-
destruct!
“Now, with the chests of spell books and the other ingredients
acting as the premise, I can move these potions out with very little
inconvenience. I will also have to draw some runes on the outside
for concealment.”
Leylin opened a small box that was covered in runes. Sponges, silk,
and other such materials were placed inside to prevent the potions
from rolling and being ruined.
After spending almost half the night, Leylin finally managed to
move all the potions into the box. He then covered the box with
some ingredients and placed spell books around it.
“It’s already past six!”
After hearing his alarm ring, Leylin switched off the clock in his room. He hurriedly washed up and brought the two big chests to the highest floor of the academy, where he bought 3 fine, sturdy black horses and a carriage. Leylin took a deep breath and rode the carriage to an elevator-looking mechanism.

“Take out your exit pass!” A man’s voice sounded. Leylin hurriedly took out the red metal card that he received yesterday.

*Bang!*
The elevator-like mechanism rose slowly and when it finally reached the top, the sound of gears could be heard. The two stone doors opened, and a beam of resplendent sunlight came shining in.

Leylin squinted his eyes, “The academy indeed has other exits. The original entry must be for people to use as a passage. However, the one here is for large items to go through.”

“Hyaa!” Cracking his whip, he urged the horse carriage forward. Only then did Leylin realise that his current position was at the back door, right behind the central graveyard that they had entered from the beginning.

Afraid of being inconvenienced, he had told Bicky and the others that he was preparing to leave in the next few days but did not specify an exact time. Hence, his departure was a quiet one.

Leylin gave the academy one last glance and then began his journey.

“Alright. Why does my luggage make it seem like I’m escaping from something, not the appearance of someone who is carrying out a mission?”

Leylin could not help but smile bitterly as he looked at the horse carriage he was driving and the heavy chests behind him.

“A.I. Chip! Bring out the map!”

At Leylin’s command, a map came into view. It was more detailed
than the one he had gotten from the old man yesterday and had a route carefully marked out.

“Based on the map that I obtained yesterday, compute the most optimal way to travel! Requirements: Convenient and safe! Also, it has to approach as many Magi assembly points as possible!”

Heeding Leylin’s voice, a red line showing the route surfaced on the map. It was a little different than the one he got from the old man. There were several more bends and they were all in the vicinity of Magi gathering places.

“Let’s go!” Leylin followed the route that was given to him by the A.I. Chip and drove the horse carriage forward.

“A.I. Chip! Increase the detection area to the fullest!” Because it was an individual trip, Leylin did not dare to lower his guard at the slightest.

[Mission establishing, beginning detection!]

The A.I. Chip loyally carried out its duties, and a 3D image of the vicinity was constantly projected in front of Leylin.

“The danger is the smallest when it is very close to the academy or very far away. The middle section is the most dangerous part of the journey!” Recently, the Magi protecting the academy had been cleaning up the area, but they were too lazy to pursue the enemies so it was likely that only the middle section would be littered with danger.

However, Leylin could only take a gamble. Harosi had also given them a lesson earlier, so he hoped that his journey would have more smooth sailing. After all, he might not be able to leave even if he wanted to, given enough time.

The horse carriage rapidly dashed on the road and the bird cries on either side of the road decreased from before.

As they got further from the academy, Leylin became more and tenser.

[Beep! Warning! Warning! A high-energy living organism has been
detected ahead!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, and a red object was projected onto the screen. There were huge branches constantly spread across the area, with many red spots of lights also floating above it.
“This image? It’s a tree?” Leylin placed his hand into his waist pouch and reduced the speed of the carriage.
With the horse carriage drawing nearer, the approaching scene entered Leylin’s sight. In the middle of the road, there stood a huge ancient tree. Its green branches seemed to extend endlessly in all directions, forming a very large canopy with numerous vines hanging down. On the enormous trunk, there were a pair of eyes and a mouth, and it looked like a human face. However, it had green eyes. Surrounding the tree were a few winged creatures that were continuously flying around. Their skin was green and they were shaped like a human. They were also stark naked.

“giant tree demon!” Leylin exclaimed. He laughed bitterly, “Didn’t the academy clean up the area around the school already? Why is there still such a big fellow here?”

“An acolyte of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?” The huge tree spoke, and the winged creatures growing on its back also turned their eyes to him.

“I am merely a lowly acolyte who is preparing to leave. May I ask if you might give way for passage? I can pay a price for it!” Leylin made a last attempt.

“Only death awaits any living organisms who try to make any futile attempts to leave!”

The giant tree let off a reverberating noise that even made Leylin’s ear hurt. At the same time, a green vine was slowly lowered, and
hanging from it was a human corpse. Its whole body was withered, and it was wearing the grey robes of an Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte.

“Big Brother! Stay behind and play with us!”

At this moment, a little sprite that had been flitting around the giant tree demon flew over. To Leylin, it sounded like the very pleasant voice of a girl’s, the sound of her voice intoxicating him. It was as if this voice belonged to his most important person in this world. Gradually, Leylin began to feel that staying here might not be such a bad idea.

[Warning! Warning! The Host is affected by a demonic charm!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice prompted him, bringing Leylin out of his hallucination.

“They actually charmed me!” Anger coloured Leylin’s face.

“A.I. Chip! What were the scan results?”

[Shuger giant tree demon. Strength: 5, Agility: 0.5, Vitality: 9.8, Spiritual force: 3.5. Skills: Leech, Vines] [Green tree sprite. Strength: 0.9, Agility: 2.5, Vitality: 1.5, Spiritual force: 3.1 Skills: Charming on living creatures] [Rumours have it that the green tree sprite and the giant tree demon have a mutual relationship. Normally, the green tree sprite will seduce the target into the attack area of the giant tree demon and then the giant tree demon will commence its hunt!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.

“The giant tree demon’s strength and vitality are too high, and its body is extremely huge too. There is simply no way to go around it!” Leylin’s face was calm, “It seems like I can only fight!”

“The first will be you! You actually dared to charm me!”

[Critical point confirmed! Calculating wind power, adjusting trajectory!]

Leylin suddenly raised his hands, and revealed the hidden crossbow as he pulled the trigger.
A black line streaked across the air and flew directly into the green tree sprite from earlier. The arrow pierced the right side of the green tree sprite’s chest, causing its eyes to tear. Green fluid, what appeared to be juice from the tree, was flowing out of its chest as it fell onto the ground.

“Dyrisse! That human actually killed Sister Dyrisse!” The enraged and shocked voices of the other green tree sprites came from the treetops.

“You actually dared to kill my daughter!” The giant tree demon let out a furious roar, its huge vines racing towards Leylin.

“Hyaa!” Leylin moved the horse carriage backward, avoiding the vines.

“According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the giant tree demon’s vine’s greatest attack range is only 20 metres! Its movements are also extremely slow, which is its greatest weakness!” Leylin drew his cross blade and steadied the carriage before getting off.

“I only asked to leave, but since you refuse to listen when talked to nicely, it seems like a fight is the only means of resolving this!” “You actually killed my lovely Dyrisse! I’m going to turn you into a shriveled corpse and hang you on my body for a hundred years!”

The giant tree demon’s roots emerged from the ground and stood up like a human before chasing Leylin.

“At this speed! Are you kidding?” Leylin laughed loudly and dodged as he clashed with the giant tree demon.

A dark green tree shadow whipped at Leylin, but he dodged by rolling away, easily evading the attack.

* Pa! * The green vine was like a whip, and it smashed a very huge hole into the ground.

Leylin slashed with the cross blade and chopped at the vines. The silvery white blade had made contact with the surface of the vine, but ended up leaving no more than a mark on it.
Leylin felt a huge force coming towards him, and a few black shadows appeared behind him. 
[An attack has appeared from behind. The most optimal way is to turn right for 50 degrees and jump right!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded. 
Leylin deflected a vine and turned to his right and jumped immediately, avoiding the sneak attack from the black shadow behind him.

“Great Father! We will help you!”
Roughly 7 to 8 green tree sprites swooped down, and they even carried small bows in their hands that looked like toys. However, when Leylin saw the dark green liquid on the arrow head, his expression changed.

“There’s poison!”
He withdrew a purple potion from his waist pouch and viciously flung it at the green tree sprites.
* Ping-Pong! * The test tube broke, and a gust of purple misty smoke rose, turning into the shape of a harpy. The harpy opened its mouth and let out an ear-piercing scream!

“The Howling Witch potion! I spent 20 magic crystals on it!” Leylin covered both of his ears. Although he had made preparations ahead of time, he still felt uneasy. As for the green tree sprites, they had all fallen to the ground long ago.
Using potions to mimic the effects of a magic spell was the normal fighting technique used by a Potions master. With Leylin’s current abilities, he could not brew the Howling Witch potion yet, so this potion had been bought from Kroft instead.
Not only were these potions extremely expensive, they only had a one-time use, which made Leylin’s heart ache.
Taking advantage of the fact that the giant tree demon and green tree sprites were still under the effects of the Howling Witch potion, Leylin hurriedly stepped forward and lunged at them with the cross
blade.
“A few green tree sprites were easily cut into two just like this.”
“The eardrums of these green tree sprites are extremely strange and they are more sensitive towards sound waves. However, the Howling Witch potion was obviously their bane!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he stomped on a few more of the green tree sprites who were lying on the ground until they were dead.
“Oh! No! Julie, Delia……”
The vitality of the giant tree demon was extremely high and it quickly recovered from the shock caused by the Howling Witch potion. Looking at Leylin torturing its daughters to death, it could not help but howl loudly. More of the vines came snaking over, and the remaining green tree sprites were carefully moved and kept amongst the crown of the tree.
“That human’s spells are extremely evil, don’t come out!” The huge tree’s voice buzzed.
“A good chance!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he hurriedly chanted an incantation.
“Acidic Aqua Shot!”
A green-coloured sphere appeared, and with Leylin’s control, it avoided the vines and hit the left eye of the giant tree demon perfectly.
* Sssii! * White mist rose continuously, and green thick fluid flowed out along with the cries of the giant tree demon accompanying it.
After the white mist dissipated, the giant tree demon’s left eye was completely gone, leaving only a charred hole.
“I will kill you! I will kill you! Hancus will kill you!”
The giant tree demon trembled and the vines around it continuously weaved around, forming a net.
“Who are you speaking to?” At this moment, Leylin had already arrived at the bottom of the tree. Its crown completely blocked the
sunlight, leaving only a huge black shadow.
While the giant tree demon was howling, Leylin had already reached the trunk of the tree.
“Go and die!”
The giant tree demon roared, and countless vines interweaved, forming a huge green palm, making a grab at Leylin.
“Goodbye!” Leylin laughed lightly and threw the remaining dozen or so potions at its trunk before taking flight.
* Bang! * A fiery flame rose up, engulfing the giant tree demon whole. What followed next was an even stronger explosion and black smoke.
“The effect is indeed excellent when using ten explosive potions together. Moreover, it is even more advantageous against a tree type Tree Demon like this!”
Although Leylin ran away quickly, he was still scorched by the flames from behind. Even the hair on his head was tinged and burnt.
“Ah!” The giant tree demon screamed and howled in agony, falling to the ground with a crash, its body still set ablaze.
As for the green tree sprites that were hiding in the treetop, they too were not spared and were all burnt to charcoal.
[Beep! The target has lost all signs of life!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.
Leylin nodded his head and returned to driving the horse carriage, going around the giant tree demon’s body.
Looking at the huge branches that were charred and the corpses of those green tree sprites, Leylin suddenly thought of something and went up to extract some of their cells and remnants.
“Only one battle and I have already used almost half of my stockpiled potions!” However, the giant tree demon and green tree sprites combo is a threat to even a level 3 acolyte. Having an outcome like this is already considered not bad!”
Afraid of the arrival of reinforcements, Leylin hurriedly drove the horse carriage away, until the three strong horses were frothing in the mouth. Travelling as fast as the wind, he disappeared from the horizon.

Half an hour later, a grey-coloured owl swooped down and landed on top of a branch.

“Hankus is dead!” The owl let out a human’s voice.

“I know, I know!” Suddenly a human face appeared beside the tree branch, “It’s a level 2 acolyte, should we chase after him?”

“The plan has already begun! This stupid tree demon totally deserves it for dying here!” The owl pecked the feathers on its body.

“I’ll be leaving first!” Saying which, the owl spread its wings and flew up into the sky.

The human’ face turned silent for a while and then revealed a human-like smile, “Although it’s just a slave, one must still pay the price for killing my subordinates!”

The branch extended to where the giant tree demon lay. At this moment, the fire had already been extinguished, only leaving behind some charred wood and green tree sprite corpses.

Suddenly, a corpse jerked. It was actually still alive.

This green tree sprite was already completely charred. Without any immediate treatment, it would definitely lose its life.

The tree branch brought the green tree sprite right in front of the human face, “Do you want to seek revenge?”

“Yes! For……Vengeance, Doris…….Is willing to pay any price, even if…….It means the soul!” The green tree sprite struggled to speak.

“Haha…….Very well!” The human face laughed loudly, “It just so happens that I have one potion from a previous experiment that ended up in failure. I’ll use it on you then!”

Suddenly an opening appeared on the black-coloured tree, and it
enveloped the entire green tree sprite…
Leylin was unaware that there were people planning to deal with him, so he carried on driving the horse carriage and travelling rapidly.

After the fifth day, when the surroundings started to show traces of human activity, he heaved a huge sigh of relief. Although Magi generally view acolytes in the same way that humans viewed ants, it couldn’t be denied that they originated from normal human beings. Even though human experimentation was continued despite repeated prohibition, especially at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, all the Magi still chose to avoid large human communities. This prevented human casualties from piling up and inciting the wrath of other Magi.

“Once I reach the city up ahead, I can take a breather!” After 5 days of continuous travel, Leylin and his horses were all extremely exhausted.

At this moment, he lowered the speed of the horse and had a look at his surroundings. There were now loosely spread fields on either side of him, and not far away was a giant windmill. A crystal clear stream flowed beside these fields, and there were even some unknown species of fishes swimming in it. Leylin suddenly felt relaxed as he viewed this scene.

“Serenity! The peaceful world of humans! I have not felt
tranquillity like this in a long time ……”
“According to the map, the nearest city should be Grey Stone City!” Leylin looked at the indicator on the map provided by the A.I. Chip in his mind.
“This place is still too close to the academy. There may be a gathering point for Magi nearby, but it still looks far too dangerous to sell potions or ask about the latest news here.”
“Moreover, I keep getting this ominous feeling!” Leylin’s brows furrowed as he looked behind him.
“Will the enemy let me go so easily after killing the giant tree demon?”
[Beep! Transfiguration Spell analysis complete!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded in his mind at that moment.
“That’s great!” There was an elated expression on Leylin’s face. He hurriedly read the introduction of the Transfiguration Spell.
[Transfiguration Spell: rank 0 spell. Effect: Ability to slightly reconstruct the muscles of the face for an extended period of time. Consumption: 1 spiritual force, 1 Magical Power a day]
This was a rank 0 spell that Leylin specifically chose for concealing his identity.
“Can it only change the outer appearance?” Leylin muttered to himself. “Many Magi can discern someone’s identity through the energy waves emitted by their spiritual force and some can even look right into their soul. Of course, these people are all official Magi at least. Right now, it’s most likely that I won’t meet with any of them.”
“A.I. Chip! Is it possible to optimise the effects of the Transfiguration and enhance the concealment of the energy waves from the spiritual force?” Leylin asked.
[Beep! Establishing spiritual force energy wave concealment optimisation task, beginning analysis……]
A dozen odd seconds later, the reply of the A.I. Chip sounded. [Able to optimise. Requires 7 spiritual force points. Time to completion: 14 days 5 hours. Supplemental data required: Spirit Research Studies, Obscure Runes.]

“7 spiritual force points? I can achieve that in a few years. However, the information on Spirit Research Studies and Obscure Runes will not be as easy to obtain!”

Research concerning the likes of spirits has always been the most mysterious aspect of the Magus World. Although Abyssal Bone Forest Academy has a reputation for being at the forefront of this field, the academy actually only had a few superficial theories. As for Leylin, he was just a level 2 acolyte so he did not have access to such information.

“The Transfiguration Spell should be enough for the time being.” Leylin gazed at his surroundings while driving the horse carriage hurriedly into the small forest nearby.

When Leylin reappeared a moment later, his appearance had changed completely. His original youthful appearance had now become rather mature. Coupled with thick eyebrows and big eyes, he possessed a very common looking face.

His clothes had also changed into weather-beaten leather armour. The cross blade hanging on his waist buckle also looked older. Leylin originally had a tall stature and looked well-fed. His body was already that of the typical adult before the change. Looking at him now, he seemed like a skinny yet experienced soldier.

Leylin walked to the side of the stream to get a glimpse of his reflection. “En! Not bad! Even my voice changed and I can modulate its pitch too.”

His voice gradually became coarser, a drastic change from the soft, immature and youthful one from before.

“I will temporarily enter the city in this disguise!” Leylin nodded
his head and took out a leather bag. In it was some white powder. “The Scent-Removing Powder of the Subterranean Blind Worm, just 1 gram can rid any living organism of their scent completely!” Leylin said softly.

“This should be the ultimate disguise method in the mortal world. My appearance and scent have already changed, so it won’t be easy to find me through regular means! But as for the spiritual force energy waves, I can’t do anything about them.”

Leylin looked through the horse carriage again. He then threw away any unnecessary items, only keeping the chest filled with potions and spell books. He also tied the chest filled with ingredients onto one of the two horses.

“Let’s go!” Approaching the last horse, which did not carry any burden, Leylin undid its reins and whipped it. “Woo!” The black horse whinnied then ran in a random direction. Subsequently, Leylin went back to the horse carriage and sprinkled a kind of red powder all over it. He followed that up by sprinkling the remaining Scent-Removing Powder over the two horses. He then mounted one of the horses and rode off.

Not long afterward, black smoke appeared in the forest, followed by a blazing flame.

As he continued along the main road, more and more signs of humans could be seen. After an hour, Leylin saw the silhouette of Grey Stone City. The walls of the city were short. Circular rooftops and sharp pointed grey buildings could be seen from the outside. Beside these walls were armed soldiers who were patrolling the area.

“State your purpose.” The patrol leader wearing leather half-armour stopped Leylin. “I’m a mercenary, and also a merchant!” Leylin smiled. He could see the greed in the patrol leader’s eyes.
Looking at the horse Leylin was riding and the chests behind him, the leader gulped down saliva. His eyes swept over the outfit Leylin wore. When he saw the cross blade hanging from Leylin’s waist, his expression changed to one of fear.

“The fee to entering is one bronze coin!”

“Here you go!” Leylin tossed over a brand new yellow bronze coin to the leader.

“You may enter! Remember not to wander around at night. If you are caught doing so, you will be imprisoned!” The leader revealed a very unsightly smile.

“Thank you!” Leylin brought his luggage through the city gates.

“Leader?” A soldier was obviously unresigned.

“Shut up!” Didn’t you see how he was dressed? Being able to travel solo while carrying goods and arriving in the city unscathed means he is no regular person. Who knows, he might even be a Knight!” The leader growled in a low voice, “Next time, don’t find any trouble with these sorts of people!”

“It seems like no matter where it is, strength can let me pass through easily.”

Leylin rode into the streets of the city. He saw commoners on either side of the streets avoiding him in fear. When they looked at Leylin, their gazes held both a huge amount of fear and envy as they nodded in approval.

“The development of this Grey Stone City does not seem to compare to even one of the small towns from my previous life!” Leylin estimated that, at most, there were only around 10,000 inhabitants in the whole of Grey Stone City.

As for its standards of living, they were even worse. The pavements were made of yellow mud and riddled with coarse sand. A slight gust of wind would cause yellow dust to swirl in the air.

Most of the people on the two sides of the road were malnourished
and only wore crude grey or black robes that even had a lot of jagged holes in them.
Along these streets were several fences enclosing cattle or sheep. Some small-sized livestock was even running around freely. Odour from the fresh layer of dung continually pervaded the atmosphere, with no sign of dissipating.
“Dirty, messy, lousy!” This was Leylin’s first impression of Grey Stone City.
“Let’s find a place to stay first!” The journey had made him somewhat weary.
Leylin did not manage to find any sort of inn even after searching for some time. In the end, he decided to spend some coppers in exchange for information regarding a place to stay from a local.
“Big Sword and Wine Cup. This is it.” Leylin looked at the words on the signboard and was a little speechless.
This family shop was situated somewhere to the west, where public order seemed to be more chaotic. Along the way, Leylin saw many drunkards and fights breaking out. A knife and dagger were even used in one instance. Despite this, there were no traces of security officers at all.
Pushing the door open, the smell of an inferior wine infiltrated Leylin’s nose.
“Come! Have another cup!” “Nice one, Jack!” A hubbub of noises constantly assaulted Leylin’s eardrums.
The interior was a pub of sorts. There were many drunkards guzzling drinks to their hearts content. Some were even half asleep and drunk, pawing the female hostesses and talking dirty.
“Sir! What would you like?” The bartender was a yellow-haired youth who looked like the soberest one in this pub.
“I heard that I could find a place to stay here?” Leylin sat on the stool beside the counter.
“Yes! We are the only establishment in the whole of Grey Stone
City that provides lodging services!” The bartender shrugged his shoulders, “However, it is nothing to be proud of. We do not have many visitors here all year round!”
“Give me a quiet room and take care of my two horses. How much is it?” Leylin looked at the big barrel behind the bartender.
“Give me your best beer here too!” Leylin tossed a silver coin over.
“Pleased to be at your service!” Very soon, the bartender brought a cup with a handle to the table, “Honey butter liquor! Our best liquor here!”
Leylin sipped the liquor while listening to the bartender’s introduction.
In reality, many Magi did not like liquor since it could dull the senses. They preferred drinks that could raise their vigour.
Leylin did not drink often either. However, his curiosity was piqued so he wanted a taste. This honey butter liquor was simply average, though. It even had a tart smell, which made Leylin feel cheated.
“Lodging here for a night would be 30 coppers and taking care of two horses, including their fodder, means an additional twenty coppers!”
Before leaving the academy, Leylin had already changed some pocket change to carry with him. So now, he very forthrightly tossed two silver coins over, “I’ll stay here for 4 nights first……”
“Look! Such fine horses! This fur colour! This build! They are definitely more valuable than the battle horses in the city lord’s manor!”
A very annoying voice was heard.
G
lancing outside, Leylin’s brows furrowed. His two horses seemed to have stirred up some trouble. His lips curled into a sneer as he turned around and quickly left the pub. Several local hoodlums were surrounding his black horses and sizing them up. Their gazes were marred with greed as they gazed at the spirited horses and the chests on them. One of them was actually in the act of impatiently untying the reins. “Are you trying to take my belongings?” Leylin strode over. He looked rather intimidating in his leather armour with his menacing cross blade hanging from his belt. But apparently it was still not enough. One of them, a cross-eyed hoodlum, shouted at him, “This is undoubtedly the horse that I lost! How come you have it? You stole it from my family, didn’t you! You damned thief!” This gang of crooks thought that even though Leylin was an armed soldier, he wouldn’t be able to take on their whole gang. “That’s right! Capture him and bring him to see public security!” The others raucously interjected. The surrounding inhabitants surreptitiously loathed what was happening. But nobody had the guts to step forward. “Let’s go! He’s alone!” Cross-Eyed drew a dagger from within his robes and led the attack. Leylin sneered, “Looks like I get to loosen these creaky joints.” He
dodged, avoiding Cross-Eyed’s piercing dagger attack. He immediately grabbed hold of Cross-Eyed’s right wrist and shook it slightly. Cross-Eyed screamed in agony as the dagger fell to the floor.

“Argh! That hurts! What are you doing? Let go of me! My brother-in-law is a public security officer. He won’t let you get away with this!” Cross-Eyed wailed in pain.

“Oh really? Public security officer? I’m so scared!” Leylin cried exaggeratedly, and then he twisted viciously.

* Crack! * The piercing sound of breaking bones was heard. Cross-Eyed fainted right away from the excruciating pain.

At this moment, Leylin’s physical power had already reached the Knight stage. Against these hoodlums, he naturally did not have to exert much effort.

“Boss! Boss!” The rest of the hoodlums shouted, but none of them dared approach.

Leylin smiled. He turned into a black shadow and dove right in their midst.

* Bang! Crack! Argh! *

The pitiful cries of the hoodlums and the gut wrenching sound of bones being crushed could be heard continuously. Leylin was like a black gust of wind. In a few moves, he knocked them all onto the ground, each one sporting a broken arm or a broken leg.

Leylin smiled amiably at them and walked towards the spot that Cross-Eyed had fainted at. He raised his foot and stomped viciously on the boss’s right leg.

“Argh!” Very soon, the pain jolted him awake. Both his eyes rolled around, and then he fainted once again.

“Take your boss away! You can call me anytime if you want revenge. But if you ever do, it won’t be as simple as getting a broken arm or a broken leg!”

Leylin said to the hoodlums. In their eyes, his smile was like that of
After seeing these hoodlums scampering away, Leylin returned to the bar.

“At the least, he has the physical power of a Preparatory Knight!”

The bartender groaned inwardly as he put on an even gentler and humbler expression.

“My most respected sir! Is there anything I can do for you?”

Seeing the deathly quiet that loomed over the pub, Leylin couldn’t help but inwardly smile with bitterness.

He did not want to be seen as a monster. However, he had brought many goods along with him, so what could he do if someone were to steal them when he was in the room? Although he left a Tracing Spell on his belongings, if the spell were to disappear, Leylin wouldn’t even have a place to cry.

However, after Leylin displayed the strength of a Preparatory Knight, many of those who had some malicious intent towards him quietly retreated.

“Help me bring these chests to my room, put my horses in the stable and give them the best fodder you have!” Leylin said as he tossed another silver coin at the bartender.

“That hoodlum from earlier, what kind of background does he have?”

The bartender lowered his head, “Sir, you completely don’t have to worry about it. He may have some shady dealings with a public security officer but nothing too serious, though.”

Having the strength of a Preparatory Knight means having access to a Knight’s training technique.

Such people are either nobility or have some huge power backing them. A small city’s public security officer will not dare to do anything at all.

“Take me to my room!” Leylin asked casually

The bartender intentionally took him to a room at the very back of
the building, furthest from the pub. He took out a key and opened
the room.
A ray of golden sunlight shone through the window into the room
The bed was in the middle of the room, and the bed sheets on it
seemed to be very clean. There was a blue vase on the bedside
table with some unknown wildflowers in them.
“It seems very clean. This place will be fine!” Leylin nodded.
“Here is your key, please keep it safe!” The bartender respectfully
handed over a brass key.
Leylin took the key and sent the bartender away to take care of his
horses. He unpacked the contents of the chests and ordered a steak
to be sent to his room. After he telling the bartender not to disturb
him, he closed the door.
As he closed the wooden door, he found the room’s noise
cancellation effects to be rather good. The noises from outside
were greatly reduced.
“My actions today were a little too eye-catching! I didn’t have a
choice, though. Grey Stone City is too small, the activities of any
stranger will definitely arouse unwanted attention. However, it is
still much safer to be behind city walls. People will, at least, think
twice before casting large area-of-effect spells!”
“Furthermore, there is a 50-50 chance of the faction which sent
people to block the path sending someone after me. It’ll be best if
they haven’t. If not, I must definitely kill the next wave of pursuers
so I can get away cleanly.”
Leylin was deep in thought, “The spiritual force energy waves and
the spirit sent to follow the trail look like the doings of an official
Magus. But this seems like a waste of resources. After all, who
would send an official Magus to track down and kill a level 2
acolyte?”
“The greatest possibility is a level 3 acolyte with a magic artifact or
some pet reared by a Magus!”
“I should recuperate and remain observant of any activities that are happening while preparing to get rid of the enemy! I also need to cast the transfiguration spell daily!”

Leylin thought as he brought a piece of the piping hot steak that he ordered to his mouth.

The steak’s flavour was not bad and Leylin, who was famished, ate it all up in the blink of an eye. When he was done, he asked the bartender to clean up the mess. After the bartender left, Leylin hung a wooden ‘Do Not Disturb’ sign outside his door and set up a layer of energy particles to act as an early warning alarm system before falling into a deep meditative state.

Meditation is something a Magus has to do regularly. Although the increase in spiritual force from this is rather small, Leylin still persevered each and every day.

After toiling for over an hour, Leylin’s head slumped and he entered into slumberland.

……

Outside Grey Stone City, in the air above the scorched woods.
* Pss Pss! * A green coloured winged creature suddenly swooped down.

“Doris has finally caught a whiff of the enemy’s scent!” The green tree sprite Doris retracted its wings and stepped onto the burnt wood with its bare skin with a puzzled expression.

“This is where the scent ends.” At this moment, the green tree sprite no longer had the same appearance as before. Previously, It had merely been the size of a human head. However, Doris was now as big as a 7 or 8-year-old child. Moreover, the originally pretty face now had layer upon layer of warts marring it. It looked extremely repulsive. Its mouth was filled with fangs, and its tongue constantly flickered
like a snake’s.
Its body now had many creases, as well as some strange looking scales.
Originally, green tree sprites were a kind of living creature that represented extreme beauty. Now, no one would link Doris with the green tree sprites.
Doris let out a yell filled with hatred, “Human, you won’t be able to escape!” Its tongue flickered. It suddenly spread its wings and flew towards the additional horse that Leylin had released.
In the next two days, Leylin stayed inside, finally recovering his strength and spiritual force back to its peak.
“It has been two days already, and they still have not caught up! It seems like it’s not an acolyte chasing me or they would have used magic to sniff me out by now! It’s probably some slave or creature reared by the Magus!”
Leylin surmised. His movements had been extremely quiet these two days. The only noteworthy event was when the public security officer brought gifts as he paid Leylin a visit. The officer said that he was there to plead for his wife’s younger brother. He then tried to ask about Leylin’s past, but Leylin only deceived him and did not reveal any information at all.
Later, Leylin changed into black robes and pulled up the hood to cover his face as he jumped out of the window.
In a gloomy and dark alley.
“Sir!” “Sir, you’re here!” A few hoodlums, upon seeing Leylin’s black robes, immediately came forward to receive him.
“How is it? Have there been any strange happenings around Grey Stone City these past few days?” said a hoarse voice from under the black robes.
“I’ll speak first, I’ll speak first! In the nearby village, Auntie Sofia’s cow gave birth to a two-headed calf. The others all said that it was cursed!”
This was what the hoodlum, who pushed the others away, hurriedly said.

[The target’s blood flow has increased by 12.4%. His brain waves appear to be stable. Judgement: It’s not a lie!] The A.I. Chip intoned inside his head.

Leylin nodded his head and tossed a silver coin to the hoodlum.

“It’s my turn now, Uncle Hugo and his son disappeared in the nearby woods while travelling! And traces of a wolf pack have been discovered at the scene!”

......

These were the hoodlums that Leylin had subdued over the past two days. They were extremely convenient for gathering news. At first, they tried to give false information to get the reward, but how could Leylin be fooled by an average human like them with the A.I. Chip to help him? He immediately broke the arms of the liar on the spot, shocking everyone present at the time.

Under the coercion of both money and the threat of violence, these hoodlums were very soon, faithfully reporting all the news happening in and around Grey Stone City.

“What did you say, human corpses were discovered? There were also traces of thick green fluids?” Leylin was obviously interested, “Speak clearly and this gold coin is yours!”

A skinny red-haired youth gulped down his saliva, “This is news I just heard. In the mill beside Messi Village, a few corpses were discovered. All the blood had been sucked dry. Everyone suspects this to be the work of a vampire. The city lord even sent several Knights to investigate!”

“En! Very good!” Leylin asked for the location again and realised that the area was very close to where he had last erased his tracks. He nodded his head and gave the gold coin to the youth. After
listening to the rest of the news, he left the alley.
Based on the latest news and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the creature sucking the blood of others might be after me!”

“Moreover, it’s tracking me down by smell! Their numbers are unknown, but they shouldn’t exceed two, or there might actually be just one!”

Previously, Leylin got rid of his scent using the scent-masking powder and changed his appearance before he entered the city. He wanted to use the mixed scents of people to conceal his. He would then gather sufficient information about the enemy before planning a counterattack.

Now, it seemed to have paid off pretty well.

“What a pity! My scent-masking powder is almost used up, if not, I would have been able to leave here long ago!” Leylin surmised regretfully.

The Subterranean Blind Worm was a rather rare ingredient used by the Magi, and its price was never cheap. Leylin had spent quite a lot to obtain a small packet of the ingredient before refining it into a scent-masking powder.

However, he had enough for only about 3 or 4 days. Within such a short period, he could not possibly run far. Once the enemy expands the range of detection, his traces would definitely be discovered.

“It’s better to settle this as soon as possible. If they chase me to my
destination, then that wouldn’t do me any good!”

Leylin’s face became solemn.

Even now, the effects of the powder were wearing off. He was relying more and more on the complicated mix of smells in the city to mask his scent. Alas, the unknown creatures were still able to trace him even after all he did.

After returning to his room, Leylin casually sat on the bed and mentally called up the A.I. Chip.

“A.I. Chip! In accordance with the news obtained during these past two days, simulate the enemy’s movement patterns, and design a plan for killing them!”

[Beep! Establishing mission parameters, beginning simulation……
Map imported……The Host’s battle strength imported, analysis in progress……”]

The A.I. Chip’s icy cold and unfeeling mechanical voice intoned within his mind.

The A.I. Chip was a tool specifically allocated to scientists in his previous world, so how could it have the intelligence or even emotions? Due to human rights concerns, they had forbidden A.I. Chips from manifesting intelligence and emotion as a core directive in its programming.

[Simulation complete. Host kills the target but will sustain light injuries. Success rate: 67.7%]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned while transmitting a large amount of information into Leylin’s mind.

“Sustain injuries?” Leylin stroked his chin, “Are there any possibilities of killing the target unscathed?”

[Insufficient Data! Requires more detailed information on the target!]

“So it’s like this,” Leylin shook his head. According to the news he got from the hoodlums, the creature outside the city was already in an enraged mood and had started attacking the locals. At this rate, it
would definitely charge into the city within 24 hours. Although there was a mutual accord among the Magi to not disrupt the lives of the regular humans, there were still some who were crazy enough to do so.

If massive casualties resulted, and his identity was discovered, Leylin had to take responsibility for the collateral damages, aside from taking into consideration the creatures and the Magi behind them. This was a problem that he clearly did not want.

“67.7%, this is enough for me to take my chances! I also have confidence in being able to retreat fully!” Vehemence marked Leylin’s countenance as he walked out.

The pub’s atmosphere remained as boisterous as ever. Upon seeing Leylin, the bartender went forward and bowed, “Sir, do you have any instructions?”

“Help me find a person……” Leylin spoke slowly and made his request.

“No problem! Although there aren’t any mercenaries of the sort in this city, there are bandits here. I can contact them on your behalf.” The bartender said, “By the way, Lord Roland, the city’s lord, sent men over. He wishes to meet you, sir!”

“The city’s lord?” Leylin nodded his head. No matter where a Preparatory Knight went, they would always be warmly greeted and received by lords. If Roland were to know of Leylin’s status as an acolyte, the treatment would be even grander.

“I have something on right now. How about we change to meeting time to the day after tomorrow?” Leylin enquired.

“Of course!”

“Also, the steak that you guys have here isn’t bad, send a serving of it to my room tonight.” Leylin instructed once again.

“As you wish!” The bartender smiled.

……
The second day, late in the night.
A grey robed figure appeared in the charred woodland nearby.
“Investigate? What is there to investigate here? There aren’t any treasures here. Most likely this was caused by some careless farmer, which resulted in this area going up in a blaze!”
The grey robed man was quite skinny. His movements, though, were rather swift as he continuously rummaged through the piles of charred wood.
“Something isn’t right! These scorch marks were not done by normal flames!” The man’s brows furrowed. His experience as a bandit made him realise something obviously wasn’t right just by looking at the scorch marks.
“This…… Seems to be the doings of mysterious entities.” The bandit’s hair stood on end. As a member of the underground activities, he had only heard of these entities in myths. These stories emphasised the most important things about them: their mysteriousness, their cold-heartedness, and that they were not to be made enemies of!
“I’d better hurry and leave! If I knew this mission was linked to these mysterious entities, I wouldn’t have accepted it even if the rewards were dozen-fold!”
The grey robed man trembled and wanted to leave.
“I found it. The smell of my enemy!” At this moment, a hoarse and repugnant voice sounded from behind.
The bandit’s body shivered. He saw an abomination, the size of a child, floating in midair.
Its body was strewn with scales in a disorderly fashion. Its face was full of warts. From time to time, its snake-like tongue hissed out.
“I’m afraid that even the devil wouldn’t be as ugly as this!” The bandit thought as he jumped back by 5 metres.
“I should have thought of this before! I have actually turned into
bait!” The bandit shouted.
“Don’t think about leaving!” Doris spat its tongue out and flew above the bandit, almost immediately with just a few flaps of its wings.
“We can talk about this! I have a lot of information on this mission’s principal!” The bandit yelled in despair.
“Die!”
Doris’s eyes were bloodshot. It did not care about the pleas and screams of the bandit. Immediately, it chewed on the right arm that was waving the dagger about and fed voraciously on the bandit’s blood.
A few minutes later, only the bandit’s shrivelled corpse remained.
“A scent lingers on his robes! That damned acolyte is definitely in the city!” Doris squinted at the silhouette of the city walls.
* Xiu! *
A black arrow zoomed past. A boom was heard as it went supersonic, directly piercing Doris’ chest.
“The last of the scent-masking powder was wasted here. I even sprinkled some paralysis powder on the bandit’s body. I don’t believe that this arrow won’t hit its target!”
From behind some tall shrubs, Leylin emerged wearing a leather armour and carrying the crossbow he had just used.
“Enemy!” Doris’ face twitched. Its originally repulsive face now even showed veins bulging from it. It was a sight that would definitely make children cry.
“Even I wouldn’t have guessed that the one chasing me was the Green Tree Sprite from before! This originally beautiful creature has now turned into something like this!” Leylin was a little shocked.
[Mutated Green Tree Sprite. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 4.3, Vitality: 3.5, Spiritual force: 5.5. Abilities unknown!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned the readings and situation over.
“Its attributes were actually raised by this much! What an astonishing spell. However, its body’s unstable condition can slowly be seen on its surface. It is unlikely to survive more than half a month.” Leylin eyes flashed coldly.

“The enemy who murdered my father and sisters! Even if Doris had to betray its soul, Doris will avenge them!”

Doris howled as it yanked the arrow out of its chest. A puddle of green liquid gushed out of the wound.

The green liquid quickly covered the whole chest. A plant root could be seen extending continuously and very soon the wound was suppressed.

“Go to hell!” Doris charged at Leylin in a green blur.

“It actually went through so much mutation that melee attacks are no longer effective?” Leylin nodded his head and snapped his fingers.

“Pa!”

Suddenly, a mud ball rose from the ground, blocking Doris’s path. Its contents were revealed to be crimson coloured potions.

* Bang! * A flame rose up. The accompanying heat wave even scorched the nearby vegetation.

The flames engulfed Doris and the crackling sound of something being barbequed was heard.

* Hu! * A green figure emerged from the sea of flames. Its body was scorched black. It even still had the fire burning on it as it charged towards Leylin.

[Target’s speed reduced by 67%!] Chimed the A.I. Chip.

“It was first affected by the paralysis powder, and then injured by the explosive potions. Even if it specialises in fire resistance, it will definitely still receive damage!”

Leylin’s face was calm. He threw away the crossbow and then drew his cross blade as he charged forward.

“Cross Slash!” The silver cross blade shone. This time, Leylin even
circulated his ignited internal Knight energy. The sharp blade reflected a glimmer of light.

When the cross figure directly struck the Green Tree Sprite, immediately a pool of green liquid appeared.

Doris toppled, and Leylin stopped advancing. He looked at the cross blade in his hands and his brows furrowed.

The silver blade was already filled with bumpy spots where the various liquid from Doris’s body splashed.

“Even its bodily fluid has a strong corrosive effect? This cross blade is ruined!” Leylin felt a little rueful. This cross blade had been taken from a noble youth while in the travelling party. It was extremely handy to use, but he never thought that it would be destroyed here.

He threw away the cross blade. As he looked at Doris who was still trying to charge over despite the cross slash on its chest, Leylin quickly chanted an incantation.

“Umbra’s Hand!”

A black-coloured palm rose from Doris’ shadow. It grabbed hold of its ankles and kept them firmly on the ground.

* Sssi Sssi! * A layer of white mist rose from the black-coloured palm.

“Although Umbra’s Hand has a corrosive effect, it seems like, against the mutated Green Tree Sprite, it is still somewhat lacking! Leylin’s mind quickly worked out the situation.

“I’ll use you as a guinea pig for my newly learnt spell!”

“The sound of the azure thunder! Listen to my command! Descend to the mortal realm and strike my foes down!” (Byron Language)

As Leylin voiced his incantation, silvery-blue lightning suddenly appeared in his hands.

“Go!” Leylin pointed his fingers and dazzling lightning flew towards Doris in an arc.

“Doris is not afraid of death!” At this moment, Doris stretched its
hands forward, and its palm split open. From it, a tree root-like object extended out.
* Xiu! * The tree roots entwined and assumed the shape of a bow. A brown coloured arrow was already loaded onto it.
“Not good!” Leylin hurriedly dodged.
Leylin tried to wrest his way out, but an excruciating pain radiated from his shoulders.

[Host has sustained injuries from an arrow! Warning! Warning! High bacteria concentration on the arrowhead, recommend immediate disinfection of the affected area!]

“Damn it!” Leylin hurriedly pulled out the arrow and took a silver dagger from his robes. Gritting his teeth, he gouged out the flesh surrounding the wound.

He hurriedly retrieved a green coloured potion from his waist pouch and poured half of it onto the wound. The other half he emptied into his mouth. Only after hearing the A.I. Chip’s voice, [Crisis under control], did he heave a sigh of relief.

When Leylin was struck by the arrow, Doris had also been struck by the lightning, and had fallen down, crashing onto the ground.

At this moment, Doris’s whole body was charred and its wings were more than half broken. One of her hands had vanished without any trace of it left behind, and her ankle was still grasped by the Umbra’s Hand spell. Her life force had dropped to a dangerous level. She could die at any moment.

“Revenge! My revenge!” Doris unconsciously kept muttering those words. Suddenly its eyes flashed coldly, and it bit off its own right leg.

* Pa! * The leg flew in the air. The Umbra’s Hand, which was holding onto the ankle, disappeared quickly as well.
“Let’s die together!”
Doris’s whole body inflated. Warts on its face vibrated. Her speed tripled as she charged directly at Leylin.
“Damn it!” Leylin pressed down on his shoulder wound and hastily retreated. At the same time, he threw out the last explosive potion.
* Bang! * An intense explosion reverberated.
Red flames and green liquid mixed together. It let off a dark green firelight.
Leylin rolled back several times before he could finally escape the blast radius.
At this moment, the surroundings were showered with a bunch of green-coloured bones and flesh. It was utterly repulsive.
“Eh?” Looking at the green-coloured remains on the ground, Leylin saw that a yellow fluid swiftly flowed out, continuously corroding the ground. His expression involuntarily changed, and he hurriedly inspected his body.
A few drops of thick fluid had unknowingly corroded his leather armour and opened several wounds on his body. Around each of these wounds was a patch of yellow that was beginning to numb that area.
[Host is suffering from an unknown secondary pathogenic infection. It has invaded the Host and is spreading at very rapidly. Recommend to take counter measures!]
“A.I. Chip! Scan the injury! Find a way to treat it!”
[Mission parameters established! Scanning…….] [Beep! Treatment requires 30 grams of Human Head Bird, 500 millilitres of pink ink oil, 50 grams of Green Coconut Rock…….]
The A.I. Chip continued to list down a huge number of items.
“When would I have the time to buy these? A.I. Chip, generate the method for immediate suppression!” Leylin’s face darkened.
[Cauterising the wound with a flame will be effective in reducing the rate of infection!] The A.I. Chip responded.
“A flame?” Leylin ripped his clothes and casually picked up a burning branch as he placed the glowing flame on his wound. * Sssii! * The sound of something being barbecue was heard accompanied by the smell of charring flesh. Leylin’s face contorted in pain.

Minutes later, the A.I. Chip pronounced the treatment effective. Leylin put away the fire and sat limply on the ground panting, cold sweat dripping all over his body.

“The enemy, this time, was extremely dangerous! Its resistance towards physical and flame attacks was extremely high. Its speed was also fast, and it had a poison attack. It seems to have been prepared specifically for me. If not for the A.I. Chip, I’m afraid……”

Doris’ body fluids, containing the secondary infection from the arrow’s poison, were something that the A.I. Chip had not factored in. This made Leylin, who expected only mild injuries from the encounter, suffer such a wretched victory.

“On top of that, the explosive potions that I had prepared have all been used! I have to prepare more ingredients again!” The past few battles, Leylin had highly relied on potions to defeat his enemies. However, the consumption was also huge, and he threw away close to a thousand magic crystals in value.

Fortunately, he knew how to brew explosive potions; if not, the cost would have skyrocketed even higher.

“Flame can only temporarily constrain the spreading of the pathogen. I have to buy the necessary ingredients to cure it completely!” Leylin looked at his charred wound, his brows furrowed as he gulped down another strength Potion before picking himself up and heading back to Grey Stone City.

This was a huge disturbance. It was very likely that the city’s guards already sensed that something was amiss and would very soon send someone over to inspect.
Leylin endured the intense pain and sneaked back inside Grey Stone City. He stealthily took out his chest, not bothering to even bring his two horses along with him. After stealing a light brown coloured horse outside the city walls, he escaped under the cover of night. He was headed towards the Magus market located on the map.

As for the summons of the city lord, it was only natural that he ignored it completely.

......

A dozen odd days later, on the way to Wulkan Province, a light brown coloured horse could be seen carrying two huge chests with a black robed figure astride its back. The horse was panting heavily as its four hoofs dashed across the ground.

“A.I. Chip! Show me my current status!” Leylin’s body which moved up and down with the horse’s movement, thought inwardly. [Beep! Leylin Farlier, level 2 acolyte, Knight. Strength: 1.3(2.5), Agility: 1.5(2.7), Vitality: 1.0(3.0), Spiritual force: 4.1(4.4), Magical Power: 4.0. Status: Host is in a weakened state due to infection from the pathogen]

“Although the pathogen was inhibited, it has been a dozen odd days since then. My body is still in a weak condition. Only my spiritual force has increased again- this must be due to the result of constant meditation!”

Leylin looked at his stats and smiled bitterly. Right now he had a completely new face. He had changed from an icy cold soldier into an extremely dashing golden-haired blue eyed westerner. His face, however, was devoid of colour.

“A.I. Chip! Project the mind map!” Leylin looked at the little information he had compiled superimposed onto an extremely detailed map.
“From Bicky’s intelligence gathering, there should be a gathering area for Magi nearby. There, I will be able to buy ingredients to treat this infection!”

Based on half a month of probing and simulation, Leylin surmised that the opponent had only dispatched Doris. Due to the official war with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, nobody could be bothered with a lowly level 2 acolyte like himself. This was a great piece of news.

“I can probably even make inquiries about the current situation in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Leylin made up his mind and left the main road. He quickly found a spot, took out his tent and tools, and went about setting up camp.

“This area seems a little desolate. However, it’s only normal. Magus activities always steer clear of human communities as much as possible. Moreover, the radiation from a Magus is not something that regular humans can withstand.”

Leylin sprinkled some white powder around the tent area to prevent bugs and beasts from approaching. He then picked up a metal pan, poured some stream water into it, and lit a bonfire. Just as the stream water began to boil, Leylin emerged from the trees and threw some mushrooms and other plants into it. A moment later, after adding some spices and a few strips of jerky, a fresh fragrance of food permeated the air.

Leylin scooped a bowl for himself. The soup base was white in colour. It felt extremely comforting to drink it while it was hot.

Leylin sighed in contentment, “As expected, food that’s hot is the best. I could almost puke from constantly eating biscuits and jerky.”

The surroundings were dotted with wildflowers, and there was also the sound made by an unknown bird; its cry was much similar to that of a skylark.

“If not for my injury, this would have been perfect!” Leylin
finished his meat broth and adjusted his robes. Under his clothes, a charred area of flesh had a layer of fine hair growing around it looking like hair on one’s head, which creeped people out.

“Over there, kill him!”

Signs of movement came from the trees nearby. Leylin’s brows furrowed. The shouting gradually became closer. He had a feeling that trouble had come knocking once more. The bushes nearby split apart as a large guy protecting a nobly dressed young lady rushed out. When the large guy saw Leylin, he was shocked. He never expected someone had set up camp here. He said with a bitter smile at Leylin, “I’m afraid you’ll also be implicated in this.”

“Over there, don’t let him escape!” A group of armed soldiers in leather armour rushed over. The leader wore an extremely beautiful chainmail.

“This outfit does not seem like something mercenaries or adventurers would wear. These people are most likely the personal retainers of some nobility which is even more troublesome!” Leylin’s brows furrowed. According to the A.I. Chip’s scan, this large guy was obviously injured but still had the strength of a Preparatory Knight. As for the pursuers, the leader was at Knight level, whereas the soldiers behind were just a little stronger than the average human.

“Who are you?” The leader looked at Leylin.

“I’m just an innocent bystander, please continue and don’t mind me. I haven’t seen anything today!” Leylin continued drinking his meat broth.

This casual vibe obviously made the private squad leader apprehensive since the large guy and young lady stood on the other side.

“Please save us! We are the descendants of Viscount Barrett. If you
were to lend us a helping hand, I will definitely remember your kindness, and you will forever have the friendship of the Barrett family!”
The young lady had a pair of mesmerising blue eyes. At this moment her face had a pleading expression that would most likely move the majority of noble male youths to impulsively swear to fight for her honour.
“Miss Lanning, the Viscount only asks for you to return. Please do not resist!” The leader told the young lady.
“That underhanded and despicable worm, he covets the possessions of my family and poisoned my father to his death. Even if I die I will not go back!”
The young lady poured all of her problems out in one go, sneaking a glance at Leylin from time to time. Although her movements were extremely well concealed, Leylin still saw through it.
“It seems like a struggle of inheritance by a descendant who has failed. By purposefully revealing this conflict, you want to drag me down into this huh?” Leylin shook his head.
“Viscount Sire has not done any of the things you claim. As for the inheritance, it is to be decided after the meeting with the nobles!” The leader exclaimed loudly.
“I have proof on my body!” The young lady snarled.
“Quick, bring Missy home!” The leader seemed prepared to not negotiate any further.
A few of the commoner troops brandishing their knives and swords charged forward. The large guy roared and shielded the noble young lady.
The large guy’s strength was obviously not bad. Even though he was injured, he still made 5 of these soldiers pay with their lives.
The commoner troops went forward to chop and retrieve the head of the large guy. They then tied the screaming noble young lady up and only then did the leader who had been wary of Leylin give him
a suspicious glance.
“It looks like we have been bothering you! Let’s go!”
The leader said as he turned around and prepared to leave.
Really? Then why are you still wielding your sword?” Leylin rose up slowly.

“The secrets of our Sire cannot be heard by anyone else!” The leader brandishes his sword slowly. “Moreover, the wounds on your body is the reason why you cannot lend a hand!”

“Cough cough……” Leylin coughed feebly, “Accurate discernment! Seems like you have resolved to kill me today? I swear never to reveal a word of today’s matter!”

“Only the dead will keep secrets!” The leader shouted as he slashed at Leylin, his sword reflecting a snow white glint.

Leylin dodged in a rather miserable manner.

The leader’s expression became elated, the muscles on his body bulged, but just as he was about to charge forward, his complexion suddenly changed and he retreated several steps. Behind him the soldiers and the young lady collapsed weakly onto the ground. Only their eyes could still move. “You actually poisoned us!” The leader snarled in shock.

“As expected of a Knight, you actually have the strength to withstand it!” Leylin nodded his head. Although with his strength now he could completely massacre this crowd, if there was a more convenient method available, why shouldn’t one use it instead?

The leader threw down his long blade and turned to flee. His speed was actually similar to that of a regular human.

“Under a poisoned state, and yet still having this speed. This is
rather remarkable.” Leylin assessed indifferently. He raised the crossbow, “A.I. Chip! Calculate wind speed and humidity! Adjust trajectory!”

* Xiu! * A black line pierced through the Knight’s chest. When he saw the arrow that entered from his back and exited his chest bringing blood along with it, fell down with a look of disbelief.

Leylin strode to where the young lady was and towered above her. He stared down then tossed the contents of a bag of powder into her mouth. A moment later, the young lady stood up and stretched her limbs.

“You are…… a Magus?” The young lady looked at Leylin as her eyes filled with curiosity.

“No! Just a Potions master. Shift them all over here and take care of them!” Leylin pointed at the fallen soldiers on the ground.

“Why don’t you do it?” The young lady pursed her lips, but she still shifted the paralysed soldiers over. She even moved the Knight leader and the large guy’s corpse over too.

Afterward, the young lady’s eyes flashed coldly. She took out a dagger from her robes and stabbed all of these paralysed soldiers to death.

Throughout the whole process, Leylin watched on frostily, as the young lady stabbed her pursuers to death.

“You are definitely a Magus!” The young lady said confidently.

“As long as you help me with my revenge, I will hand over all my prized possessions to you. This includes the inheritance of a Magus. And I also will belong to you!”

The girl said as she unfastened her robes.

“Are you sure that there is a Magus inheritance in your family?” Leylin was rather amused as he asked.

“I swear it upon the honour of my family!” The young lady’s expression was staunch.

[Scanning in the process! Target’s blood flow is rapidly increasing.
Unusual brainwave activity detected. Conclusion: Lie – 93.3%]
Looking at the conclusion of the A.I. Chip, Leylin shook his head.
“Why don’t you leave!”
“What?” The young lady was obviously shocked, “You don’t fancy me? I have a lot of prized possessions in my family, you can have anything you like……”
“Could it be that you have read too many tales about Knights in shining armour?” Leylin interrupted her speech.
“In a dense forest, an adventurer chanced upon a princess who was fleeing, and even helped her seek revenge. After overcoming a series of adversities. They triumphed over their enemies. The adventurer obtained the treasures, the love and the admiration of the princess. From then on, they lived happily ever after!”
Leylin recited it in a poetic, bard-like manner.
“It’s merely an empty illusory, full of false promise. At most, I’ll obtain your body and flesh then I have to help you seek revenge against a Viscount who has the backing of a huge faction. Do I look like an idiot to you?”
“But……” The young lady was obviously still struggling.
“Get lost!” Leylin bellowed.
The young lady got up helplessly. A malicious and poisonous gaze flashed in her eyes, as she prepared to leave.
“Wait!” After the young lady walked for several steps, Leylin’s voice travelled over.
The young lady, looking gleeful, turned around.
* Xiu! * An arrow bore through the beautiful face of the young lady and pinned her to the tree right behind her.
“Actually, I could have let you go, but I saw a malicious and raging intent in your eyes!” Leylin gradually sighed. “To a person who had always protected and followed you, you did not even bother to bury his corpse before leaving. From this, it can be seen that you are a brazen ingrate.”
“Moreover, to get your revenge, you contemplated some sort of reprisal against me. You will definitely announce this matter today to everyone. Although I am not afraid of trouble, I detest such inconveniences very much……”

“With these many reasons, why would I still let you go?”

Leylin pulled out the arrow and heaped the corpse of the young lady, who died with a grievance, together with the others. From his bag, he withdrew a yellow coloured potion and poured it on the wound of a corpse. * Sssii! * Soon, the corpse putrefied into a puddle of yellow viscous liquid.

Leylin did the same thing for the rest of the corpses, destroying them all completely. Moments later, the area surrounding the camp, had only a puddle of yellow water left. The large guy, the young lady, and the pursuing soldiers, all of them, had disappeared with nary a trace. These potions that could putrefy corpses, and the paralysis powder—all were Leylin’s inventions, done when he was bored. Although they do not have much effect against a Magus or even an acolyte, it was still extremely effective against normal humans.

“Right now, the most important thing still is to get enough ingredients to treat my wounds. Anything else would just be an inconvenience!”

Leylin sighed, “What a waste of a newly erected campground.”

Leylin packed his things once more, and erased any sign of his existence, before disappearing into the woods.

……

Nighttime, on the outskirts of a densely packed forest. A figure fully draped in black robes and even had on a conical bamboo hat to conceal its face, appeared.

“Lost Forest, it’s here!” Leylin took in his surroundings and
compared it again with his map. Without turning around, he entered the darkness.

His leather shoes stepped on the dried twigs, which let out a * Chi-Chi * sound. In the darkness, it sounded even eerier than normal.

“A.I. Chip, initiate area scan!”

[Beep! Slight illusionary field discovered! Field effect: Regular humans who enter will be baffled, walk around in circles, and eventually leave unknowingly.]

“Indeed, no wonder there are tales of ghosts and demons in here. There is often news about humans going missing.” Although they were under the illusion, if any Magus met an unsuspecting victim, they wouldn’t mind having another sampling for their experiments.

“Hello! acolyte! Welcome to the Magus Market!”

A black figure leapt down lightly from atop a tree and landed on a broken gravestone. Its eyes were gleaming with a dark green light. Leylin walked closer, and discovered it to be a black cat.

“A Magus’ companion? A modulated organism? Or the result of a spell?” Leylin thought inwardly. He then bowed slightly.

“I am a wandering acolyte who heard that the market here is open to any Magus, is that correct?”

“Indeed, this market is governed by the mighty Walker family. Moreover, it promises that every Magus who enters will be ensured safety and protection. Of course, that is only within the perimeters of the market!” The black cat licked its paws as it let off a human-like snigger.

“Then, I wish to enter!”

“All acolytes have to pay a fee of 1 magic crystal! It’s free for all Magi!”

“Here!” Leylin nodded his head and tossed over a low-grade magic crystal over.

The black cat caught it in its mouth, turned around and while leaping away from the gravestone, it made a beckoning gesture.
towards Leylin. Leylin shrugged and followed it. The further in they got, the denser the white mist became. However, there was a road under their feet that seemed to be specially constructed before. “We’re here!” Along with the black cat’s voice, the mist ahead dissipated and boisterous clamouring sounds could be heard. This made Leylin feel like he had returned to his academy’s trading area. The only difference was that the people here were all tightly wrapped in cloaks or grey robes, not revealing any piece of their skin at all. Occasionally, some did not bother about concealing their identity, which made Leylin broaden his horizons. In here were some marine species who had scales on them, and half-beastmen who had fur on their necks. They were different from beastmen, since they were rather a loving and affectionate of species. There Magi could be produced too, and Leylin even saw a Magus with the head of an owl. A large number of these people also exuded the energy waves of acolytes, but Leylin felt that their aura reeked of blood. “Although the acolytes in the outside world do not have a firm foundation compared to those in the academies, they are able to advance in an environment where resources are scarce. Their experiences must be bountiful, and they even may be more adept at fighting!” Leylin’s heart sank. The potions in his hands were almost consumed, and right now he was at the most a stronger acolyte amongst the level 2 acolytes, having barely enough strength for self-preservation. If he were to reveal the potions he was carrying, these acolytes would swarm around him like crocodiles and rip him to shreds. Lowering his head, he found that the black cat had vanished completely.
“Sir! Do you need a guide? I only ask for 1 magic crystal!” A rather skinny little boy ran over. He had the energy waves of a level 1 acolyte coming from his body. Even though his face was extremely thin, his eyes were very lively.
“Bring me around to have a look!”
“Alright!” The boy was in glee as he hurriedly ran in front of Leylin to lead the way.
“This market is under the protection of the Walker family, a well-received family by both wandering acolytes and Magi alike. Look over there, the wooden hut in the centre is a shop personally set up by the Walker family.
The small boy tried his best to fulfill his duties as a guide.
“So these are other people’s stalls?” Leylin pointed at the acolytes displaying their goods on the floor. Their goods were much better than those in the academy, and of course, more of them were counterfeits too.
“Yes, you only need to settle the procedures in the central hall, pay the fees, and then you’ll be able to obtain a place to set up your stall!” The little boy nodded, “Sir, is there anything that you’d wish to sell? The Walker family also provides consignment services.”
“I’m not in a hurry now. Bring me to the centremost area for a walk!” Leylin said.
In this Magus Market, he discovered several official Magi with activated defensive force fields surrounding them. These are existences he could not fight against right now, so he was more cautious than usual.
“This is the smithy! It specialises in selling weapons! Next to it, with the sign which has a test tube on it, is a Potioneering shop. On the far left is an auction house. From time to time, they have a few premium goods!” The little boy was extremely familiar with this place.
“An auction house? Then will they have the information about magic artifacts?” Leylin casually asked. He was a little more interested now.
The little boy shook his head, “That is a very precious item! Last year the auction only sold one low-grade magic artifact. There were even official Magi present who joined the bidding……”
“So it’s like this. Take me to the weapons shop!” Leylin followed the little boy to where the blacksmith’s smithy was. “Hey! Big-bearded old man, I brought you some business!” Once the little boy entered the forge he started shouting loudly. “I’ll be right there!” The shop owner did indeed have a thick and bushy beard. He was not tall, but the muscles on his arm were extremely hard and gave an impression of power. “Greetings esteemed guest! I am the owner of this smithy, please call me Black Hammer!” The shop owner introduced himself. “I need a cross blade!” Leylin spoke of his intentions. Previously, he had ruined his cross blade when fighting the mutated Green Tree Sprite. He now wanted a better quality one, something that wasn’t easy to obtain. “A cross blade huh, follow me.” Black Hammer undid the wine flagon hanging on his waist and took a sip. The scent of alcohol wafted out. “Oh! Haven’t I told you to tone down your drinking?” The little boy frowned as he pinched his nose. “Hiccup……Edgar, you are still a child and cannot appreciate the
absolute bliss of fine tasting wine!” Black Hammer shook his head and led Leylin to a wooden shelf.

“My shop’s finished cross blades are all here. Please take your pick. Of course, if it isn’t satisfactory, you can have one custom made, as for the price……”

When he spoke of the price, Black Hammer’s words were extremely clear. He did not seem even a little bit drunk.

Leylin casually scrutinized the cross blades on the wooden shelf. These blades obviously already went through the rigors of war. Their silver surface emanated a bloodthirsty aura.

Leylin casually picked one up. It had an intricate yet sturdy feel that tingled into his palms that felt rather heavy.

“A finely smithed steel blade. It even has a metallic star smelted onto it. The hilt is wrapped in black silk, to prevent it from slipping through one’s hands……” Black Hammer described the item.

Leylin nodded his head and placed the cross blade back on the yellow wooden shelf, then picked up another one. This cross blade’s exterior was a little darkened. It let out a solid reliable aura.

“A blade made of alloy. It has been modified before. Able to resist corrosion and flames!”

“Oh?” Leylin was a little moved, “Can it deflect a Magus’ spell?”

“Oh of course not!” Black Hammer shook his head immediately. “To resist a spell, there should be runes inscribed on the blade at the very least. Moreover, it has to be compounded using precious materials from an Alchemist. Such a blade would already be considered a magic artifact, and wouldn’t be displayed in the open like this for sale……”

“My apologies, I have been too greedy!” Leylin shook his head.
Picking up the black blade, “I want this, and prepare another 20 crossbow bolts for me……”

“Alright, the price is……” Black Hammer’s eyes shone. He did not
bother to drink his wine anymore. When Leylin and the little boy walked out of the weapons shop, Leylin hung the cross blade from his waist, at the same time he took a magic crystal and tossed it over to the small boy.

“This is your remuneration for today! I wish to walk alone now!”

“Alright! Have a good day!” The little boy was extremely delighted and put away the magic crystal before trotting off. Leylin stood rooted to the spot until the little boy could no longer be seen. Only then did he turn back to the stalls he had first went in, where the goods were lying on the ground. After browsing for a bit, Leylin visited every wooden shop found in the central area. Only then did Leylin walk into the shop with the test tube sign.

“Sir, how may I assist you?” spoke a young male staff who wore a fashionable western style suit. Leylin looked at the potions on the shelves. These sparkling potions radiated various colours. The transparent glass counter also displayed various precious ingredients.

“It seems like this shop’s goods are a little better than fatty Woox’s!” Leylin nodded his head in approval.

“I will need the feathers of a flamingo, eyeballs of multi-tailed owl, feather from a Human Head Bird, Pink Ink Oil, Green Coconut Rock……”

Leylin hurriedly listed his items. These were all ingredients needed to treat his injuries, to make explosive potions and formulate other basic potions.

The staff quietly listened until Leylin finished speaking before bowing and saying, “My apologies, but may I ask if you are a Potions master?”

“I have a little bit of knowledge in the field!” Leylin’s facial features were concealed by the hood of his the cloak. Thus, the staff was unable to discern his expressions.
“Our Walker family wholeheartedly invites you to join our family. The terms we offer are the absolute best amongst Magi families of equal ranking ……” The staff bowed even deeper. Leylin did expect this a little. Potions masters were a difficult breed to raise. Plus, Magi cannot do without potions so Magi families have always tried to recruit them by offering generous remuneration. He would definitely not be able to conceal his identity as a Potions master if he were to buy raw ingredients. However, as long as no one discovers his talent, he wasn’t afraid of letting them know. After all, as long as he was not found out, others would not know if the person standing before them was a Potions master or an acolyte.

“I will give this some consideration. Do you have the ingredients I listed earlier?” Leylin said with a raspy voice.

“We do have 2 flamingo feathers. As for eyeballs of the multi-tailed owl, we still have a pair left. However, it has been around for 3 years, so some of its medicinal properties have spoiled a little. As for the feathers from a Human Head Bird, Pink Ink Oil, Green Coconut Rock, we have them here, also……” The staff seemed to remember every item in the shop from memory and blurted them all out.

Leylin nodded his head. A Magus’ main cultivation is the spiritual force. After advancing, their brains will also develop. Hence, all Magi were intelligent people. As for Leylin’s conjecture, when Magi have advanced into a higher realm, their brains would even be comparable to the processing abilities of the A.I. Chip.

“I want all of them, name your price!” Leylin nodded his head.

“The total amounts to 157 magic crystals!” The staff smiled.

Leylin nodded his head and took out a small box, which he had prepared earlier, from his robes. After opening, one could see that it was densely packed with cyan-coloured potions.
“Look, these are all strength potions!” Leylin took out the strength potions and lay them in front of the front of the staff. Strength potions were one of the basic potions. In fact, most of the Potioneering acolytes chose to brew it first. After seeing this, the staff became evidently disappointed. But he quickly recovered his composure and began to inspect. “30 strength Potions, I can give you 130 magic crystals for them,” the staff said. Leylin approved silently. If he were to sell these at Woox’s, he would have gotten 120 magic crystals at most. Prices outside were indeed higher, but it was more dangerous too. “Okay!” Leylin counted another 27 magic crystals and handed them to the staff. “Bring me the materials I ordered!” “Okay, give me a moment!” The staff put away the potions and magic crystals before swiftly running to the back. Leylin waited for what seemed like another dozen minutes before the staff returned with a small wooden chest, which he placed in front of Leylin. “These are the goods you requested, please inspect them!” Leylin opened the small wooden chest. It was compartmentalised using wooden trays, where various ingredients were placed on them. There were colourful feathers, green-coloured rocks, and various coloured powders. Leylin fingers traced the various ingredients, “A.I. Chip! Inspect……” After the A.I. Chip indicated that all the ingredients were up to standard, only then did Leylin keep the wooden chest. He then rose to leave the Potion Shop. “What I’m selling is only the most basic of strength Potion, and to gather the ingredients is already this complicated. Even I cannot guess the uses of these ingredients completely. They will definitely
not be able to as well.”
Leylin hid the small wooden chest beneath his robes and circled around a few times before he slowly left the market.
“The most important thing is, my trades only cost around 100 magic crystals. If the Walker family was stirred because of this paltry amount, then their reputation would have long since gone bad!”
On the way, he increased the A.I. Chip’s detection area to the maximum. Only after confirming that no one was following him did Leylin leave the Lost Forest.
Ever since the earlier incident, Leylin moved camp. Right now he sheltered in a cave. As for its previous owner, a Black Bear, it had long since become Leylin’s dinner.
* Bang! *
Leylin stacked a few large boxes together to form a simple experiment table. Then, he placed his apparatus on it.
“I am finally going to be rid of this damned pathogen!” Leylin gritted his teeth, “Every day I have to cauterise this wound. With the limitations of my vitality and strength, I’ve had enough of it!”
Leylin picked up a green-coloured rock with the shape of a leaf on its surface.
This was a Green Coconut Rock, a rare half plant half mineral commodity.
Smashing the Green Coconut Rock apart, Leylin took the Pink Ink Oil and heated it. When it began to bubble, he added the grounded Green Coconut Rock powder.
* Sssii! * As the powdered Green Coconut Rock was poured onto the Pink Ink Oil, a hissing sound was let off.
The Pink Ink Oil turned green in a moment. It released a strangely fragrant odor.
[Potion successfully brewed!] Upon hearing the A.I. Chip’s confirmation, Leylin nodded his head slightly.
He stripped all his clothes off. All sorts of burns and scars could be seen littering his body. His shoulder and stomach each had an extremely horrifying scar with tufts of hair growing around them. “Qiesiter – Kesi!” Leylin murmured an incantation.
The green-coloured potion in the test tube immediately boiled, and continued to evaporate, making the smell in the air more concentrated.
* Sssii! * As if having been granted a life of its own, the hairs around Leylin’s wounds started climbing out and wiggled their way into the test tube.
“Wu!” Leylin gritted his teeth and let these hairs make their way out as they pleased.
A dozen minutes later, Leylin’s wound no longer had black hair around it. As for the test tube, it transformed into a ball of hair. Leylin’s expression remained apathetic as he wiped off his cold sweat. He lit a feather on fire and threw it on the ball of hair.
“Boohoo……”
Green flames rose and mimicked the crying sound of a female, which was rather similar to Doris’ voice.
Many strands of hair tried to escape, but they were trapped by Leylin within a ball of milky white substance. They had no option but burn into oblivion.
After the green flames died down, what was left behind was a pile of white dust. Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn as he lightly dabbed on the dust. * Hu! * The dust swirled in the air, transforming into a female’s face, “Enemy! Enemy!” “This pathogen contains the poison of an aggrieved soul, no wonder it is so strong!” Leylin shook his head, took out a green-coloured potion, and splashed it onto that female face. * Sssii! * The human face rapidly turned into white mist, vanishing completely into thin air.

“A.I. Chip, initiate scan!” Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Scan complete. Result: Pathogen in Host body has been completely eradicated!]

Hearing the A.I. Chip, Leylin’s face finally revealed his relief. He stretched lazily and touched the scars on his body, “It’s a little unsightly! If Neela were to see these, what would her expression be like?”

After rummaging through the big chest, he found a potion and downed it.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin’s superficial layer of skin quivered and forced out the layer of scars and dead skin replacing them with glossier skin.

“Once I got rid of the pathogen, healing the scars on my skin is just a matter of a few potions!”
Leylin touched the scars which were extremely faded now, “I estimate that after one more dose, these will be completely gone!” Leylin then took out the remainder of the unfortunate black bear’s paw and rewarded himself with a good meal. While eating and drinking until he was full, the sky outside had already dimmed. Leylin lit a small fire inside the cave and began to think of the journey ahead.

“Doris has finally been disposed of. There aren’t any pursuers remaining so I can rest easy while travelling!”

“The academy’s mission isn’t really important. After all, I have 3 years to complete it. I wonder how the academy is faring right now?” Although Leylin could enquire about news concerning Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in the market today, he did not dare to.

Who knows if there might be spies around. If he were to expose his identity, wouldn’t that be like walking right into a trap? He could only wait till he journeyed through half the kingdom before he could safely begin making inquiries.

Such a huge matter will definitely be a hot topic at Magi gathering points. He only has to be careful not to expose any information about himself.

“All of these could be dealt with later, what’s important is to hurry and change all the potions into magic crystals. It is simply too inconvenient to lug all these huge chests around!” Leylin patted the solid hard wooden chest. He thought of the miserable brown horse days ago that seemed like it would die anytime. He smiled bitterly.

“I can’t go to the Walker family’s market anymore. After all, I have just sold a number of potions there!” Leylin mentally called up the map and located his current position. “From the academy to Eastwoods Province, I have to travel through 5 other provinces. I can sell potions along the way. At best,
I can only sell potions until Jersha Province. On the map, the Jersha Province was midway to his destination. There were two more provinces separating Eastwoods Province from it. If he were to sell his potions all the way to Eastwoods Province, wouldn’t that mean giving away his itinerary and purpose? Leylin wouldn’t be so foolish as to do that. Although he sold his goods along the way, others may not be able to discover it. After all, the trades did every day were numerous. Leylin, however, would rather be a little more cautious in safeguarding his tracks. As for Jersha Province, it was in the central region of Poolfield Kingdom and was accessible from all sides. Other people would not be able to guess Leylin’s destination at all. “En!” Anyway, there is still time. If it’s necessary I can reroute to further locations. In any case, I must be careful never to reveal my identity!” Leylin looked the points marked as Magi gathering spots and entered into deep thought…… Two odd months passed. On a path to Jersha Province, a sturdily built black horse carrying a wooden chest and a black robed man could be seen cantering along. The black robed man had bright red hair and was extremely handsome. This was naturally Leylin in disguise. Ever since that time, as Leylin journeyed, he found some Magi gathering points or some small scale trading sites time to time, where he sold the potions he brewed. As he only sold a few each time, he did not attract the avarice of other experts. Occasionally, some foolish acolyte blinded by greed would waylay him, but they were completely not his match at all.
The most dangerous instance was when a level 3 acolyte brought a group of other acolytes to surround him. Still, Leylin managed to evade them with the help of the A.I. Chip’s detection capability. Through these trades, he acquired a few precious materials, and many books on specialised Magi knowledge, greatly enhancing the data bank of the A.I. Chip.

In these past two months, he finally recorded all the Shadow and Dark Element spell models he purchased previously. He then completely obliterated the contents of the book. This lightened his luggage tremendously.

After selling a huge portion of his potions and getting rid of those bulky spell books, Leylin could fit all of his belongings into one chest.

According to his projections, he could simply travel with a knapsack after selling the remaining potions.

“I have underestimated the popularity of potions. Right now, I have amassed over 2,000 magic crystals. If not for purchasing information and other miscellaneous items, I might have gotten over 2500 magic crystals!”

Leylin stretched his hands and felt around his robes. A sack of hard texture travelled to his hands. He could not help but smile.

“Fortunately, there are high-grade magic crystals in this Magus World. One piece can be exchanged for 100 ordinary magic crystals. Otherwise, I would have a problem carrying all those magic crystals……”

“A.I. Chip, stat update!” Leylin ordered.


“En! Strength and Agility increased. This is the result of continuous stimulation of my internal Knight energy. After it stabilises, I can begin to gradually take on the next phase of Knight’s training. This
should raise all my stats to at least 3! As for spiritual force, it only increased a little. This was the only return I got after a number of life and death situations. Magus training, as expected, is only going to get more and more difficult!”

Leylin sighed and mentally projected the map again.

On the huge map, Jersha Province was in the central region of Poolfield Kingdom. There were many small Magus families here. Although this was the capital of a regular human kingdom, it attracted all sorts of travellers, many wandering Magi, and even criminal Magi.

These Magi, because of their radical opinions, or some other matter, were exiled from their previous association, faced with persecution, or even put up on bounty lists. They turned into wandering Magi, often making them very dangerous people.

“In Jersha Province, it just so happens that there is a huge Magus market controlled by the Redbud family, one of the three big families supporting Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. I will definitely be able to obtain the latest news here!”

In these past two months, Leylin had secretly made inquiries about the various news related to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. However, the information he got were all rather vague. He only knew that it was at war with some factions to its west. As for its opponents, and how the academy was faring, everything was extremely hazy.

“We’re here, Ellinel Market. I’ll sell my remaining potions and ask about news of the academy before resuming my journey.”

Leylin decided.

……

In a tiny village’s ruined wharf.

“If not for the intelligence report, I would never have believed that
the first Magus market in the Poolfield Kingdom would actually be hidden underneath a regular human village”.
As Leylin scanned the village’s surroundings, a lifeless atmosphere greeted him.
“The Magus market should be below here since there are signs of occasional radiation emanating from it. The villagers above are also definitely sickly, where some might even die suddenly. How would they be able to flourish? I’m afraid after a dozen or so years, this village would become another ghost town!”

Leylin adjusted the grey robes on his body and covered his facial features, before coming to the entrance of a hut made of bricks. The corroded door let out a dull noise as Leylin knocked lightly.

* Creak! * The large door opened and revealed a black robed figure.

Leylin was shocked; he felt murderous intent oozing from the black robed figure. This may be a very obscure concept but if one killed too many of their kind, they will definitely be different from others. The feeling that this black robed figure gave Leylin was that many experts of the same level died in his hands.

“As expected of a large market, even the guard is so fierce!” The black robed figure emitted the energy waves of a level 3 acolyte. He even carried a one-time use magical item. It could not escape the A.I. Chip’s detection, though.

“No matter if it’s your first time or not, I will enumerate the rules. Any fights inside the market will be deemed as a provocation by the Redbud family.” The black robed figure said icily.

Only then did Leylin notice the Redbud insignia on his sleeves.

“I understand!” Leylin nodded his head.

“Alright, the fee would be 1 magic crystal!”
After Leylin paid the entry fee, the black robed figure tapped lightly on the fireplace, and steel machinery rumbled. The fireplace swung to the right revealing a flight of stairs going downwards.
“Even the style is reminiscent of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” Leylin shook his head.
After entering the tunnel, the fireplace swung shut, and the passage dimmed once more with only a few lamps dimly glowing in the depths.
Leylin descended the stairs. After he felt he had gone a dozen metres underground, a huge cavern emerged.
The market was extremely huge. It was the size of several football fields. The ceiling was studded with some kind of stalactite that made Leylin wonder if they were natural.
In the middle of the market, buildings built using grey rocks were lined up in a row. Surrounding them was a circle of wooden huts. As for the street stalls, they were actually rather sparse.
Magi and acolytes wore robes of various colours; white, black, and grey-robed people could be seen stepping in and out of the shops.
Leylin began to understand the rules of the Magus World a little better.
Normally, official Magi would either wear black or white, and acolytes would wear grey. White represented the factions that were more peace loving, for example, the healing arts and the like. As for the black robes, they leaned more towards combat, and their dispositions were rather strange too.
Of course, these are the conventionally attired ones. There were also some Magi who wore various odd looking costumes that were rather bizarre.
“Sir, do you need someone to show you around? I only charge 1 magic crystal!” Clamored the little boys and girls who crowded around Leylin.

“No need for that!” Leylin immediately refused. After visiting a lot of markets, he found out that these guides did not require that much payment. Some of the families controlling these markets even provide free guides to help patrons move around.

The first time he entered a market, he gave a little boy a magic crystal. This was a huge deficit for him.

As for ordinary markets, they were considerably smaller. Circling for a few times would be enough for anyone to become familiar with the place. There were even signs around. So under normal circumstances, patrons do not require guides at all.

Leylin casually strolled inside the market. Later, he walked towards the largest Potion’s Shop.

“Greetings Sir!” A white-bearded geezer smiled and bowed.

“I wish to sell a batch of potions. Their prices may be a little high!” Leylin was extremely direct.

“Please follow me!” The old geezer was startled. He immediately brought Leylin to a small booth at the back.

After closing the door, Leylin felt the energy waves generated by an isolation spell formation.

“Our shop extends confidentiality towards our guests. Moreover,
we also employ the best safety measures……” The white-bearded geezer smiled as he explained.
“Not bad!” Leylin nodded his head, being able to avoid the crowd was extremely beneficial to him.
There were two sofas within the booth, and between these was a small wooden table with two hot piping drinks on it.
“Please have a seat!” The geezer gestured.
Leylin sat down and reclined on the sofa. He lifted the cup and sniffed lightly, “Powder of Tillan Beans with black pearls added, very beneficial for an acolyte’s meditation!”
“Your achievements in Potioneering have left me speechless!” The old geezer’s eyes widened in shock.
“Thank you. I have been inside an experiment lab for a year until now working on something important. Please appraise these potions for me!”
Leylin handed over a sack to the old geezer.
The old geezer opened the sack, and immediately cried out, “Eh?!”
In the sack was the remainder of Leylin’s potions, each and every one of them glowed resplendently.
“Please wait a minute!” The old geezer took out a monocle and placed it over his eye.
After what seemed like half an hour, the old geezer looked a little exhausted and rubbed his temples after he put the monocle away.
“37 hemostasis potions, 45 antidotes, silence potions……These potions are all of the good quality and have been preserved well. I can give you 900 magic crystals for them!”
“Very fair!” Leylin gently nodded his head.
The old geezer then stored the potions for safekeeping and counted out 9 high-grade magic crystals which he handed over to Leylin.
“Sir, you must be a Potioneering Master? Please keep this; you will be able to enjoy a 10% discount on items and services in our shop. We can also offer a higher price for other potions you may
The old geezer said as he presented a purple card to Leylin with both hands. Leylin glanced at the card and then pocketed it swiftly, “I’ll keep that in mind!” The old geezer then sent Leylin off. As they bade farewell, Leylin casually asked, “As you know, I’ve just finished my experiments. Are there places where I may inquire about the latest news on the Poolfield Kingdom?”

The old geezer stared blankly for a while before answering, “If you wish to learn some secrets and the latest intelligence, Gandor’s Grocery Shop would be your best choice. Although his temper is a little wacky, but he’s the most informed……” According to the old geezer’s direction, Leylin came to Gandor’s Grocery Shop.

As he entered, the things inside the shop were very untidy, and various items were lying around. There were even many that the A.I. Chip could not identify. One thing stood out though, no counterfeit products were inside. This piqued Leylin’s interest.

“Who?” A voice sounded from behind the counter. Following which, a geezer, who appeared as if he was on the brink of death, popped out from behind it.

“The geezer from the Potion Shop recommended this place to me. I wish to gather the latest intelligence regarding the Poolfield Kingdom.

“Same old rules, only after buying an item in my shop will you will be able to obtain information from me.” The half-dead geezer lips did not move but a mysterious voice could be heard from him.

“Alright! I’ll simply pick anything I fancy!” Leylin wanted to pick an item at random.

“No can do, it is I who will choose for you!” The half-dead geezer
sniggered.
“No wonder business is so bad here!” Leylin rolled his eyes, “Go ahead then!”
The half-dead geezer rummaged through a shelf at the back of the shop. The wooden shelf made a creaking sound. It looked like it would collapse any moment. Leylin was even worried about him since the shelf looked like it could collapse at any moment.
“I found it!” The half-dead geezer took a black coloured scroll from the shelf.
On this scroll were characters that Leylin did not recognize at all. Its corners were extremely frayed and looked like mice had chewed on it.
“This is a fragment of The great Magus Serholm’s spell. I’ll sell it to you for only 1,000 magic crystals, an absolutely worthy deal, what do you think?” The half-dead geezer eyes glittered.
“This could even be the inheritance of The Great Magus Serholm! Perhaps, you could advance to high-level Magus after you buy it……”
Leylin was left speechless as he took it in his hands.
“A.I. Chip! Scan!”
[Beep! Confirmed: Carbon dating, document comparison analysis shows this page is composed of human skin! Belongs to: Lowian’s teachings: 89.5%, Blue Cobalt rare book: 56.5% and Serholm’s writing: 21.7%]
“There exists something like this? A.I. Chip, what is the strength of the geezer opposite me?”
[Estimated level 3 acolyte, based on energy wave emissions, Confirmed: he is in a process of reconstructing his physical body. Degree of similarity: Zombification: 86.6% and Aggrieved Soul Transformation: 45.6%]
Leylin pretended to scrutinize the page for some more time before looking up at the geezer, “This seems like a remnant of the
Lowian’s teachings. You actually lied to me?”
“How can this be?” The half-dead geezer hurriedly lamented. A flash of shock crossed his eyes, which immediately changed into a cajoling expression.
“Even if it is the Lowian’s teachings, this assuredly belongs to Sir Rookmanst, a rank 2 Magus, 2 years ago, this same fragment was sold for 700 magic crystals. So, how about I sell it to you for that price?”
Leylin shook his head, ” Lowian’s teachings were written in an advanced-coded language. Only an official Magus will be able to decipher the code. Ordinary acolytes will definitely not be able to.”
“Furthermore, although the contents were written in code, but their page numbers were written in the Angema language to make it more obscure!” Leylin pointed to the page number at the bottom.
“Look at this, it’s only page number 12! According to , the first 30 pages of Lowian’s teachings contained only records of his experiments, and insights penned when he was still an acolyte. Only when he turned into an official Magus, did he chance upon an inheritance and he began to display a terrifying talent! As for this overpriced page, the page number should at least be beyond 100 to be believable!”
“Transactions among Magi are based on the premise that the exchanged goods are equal in value. This derelict page of yours is not worth 700 magic crystals. According to my estimate, 70 is its highest asking price.” Leylin concluded.
“Yikes……Hahaha! Today’s weather isn’t bad!” The half-dead man tried putting up a front but finally gave in to Leylin’s unwavering gaze.
“Alright, I never expected to meet a very erudite scholar! Take your pick then!”
“No need, I came here to gather intelligence! I’ll just buy it at a fair price.” Leylin held onto the black coloured page and placed 7
middle-grade magic crystals on the table. Although the coding on this derelict page could only be deciphered by an official Magus, Leylin wished to give the A.I. Chip a shot at breaking the code. After all in terms of processing ability, Leylin was confident that the A.I. Chip’s ability was much better than even an official Magus’, despite this being his first attempt at such.

“Alright! Alright! What do you want to ask?” The half-dead geezer sprawled on the table and ate the magic crystals one by one. Leylin was rather shocked by this scene.

“I require a lot of energy. If you were to give me another 1,000 magic crystals I would’ve definitely completed my physical body’s restructuring……” The half-dead geezer’s expression was resentful.

Leylin shook his head, “Tell me news about Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!”

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! You are an acolyte there?”

“Only some interest in the happenings over there. Besides, I don’t want to suffer any collateral damage from the war!”

“Alright!” The half-dead geezer did not ask anymore. “I graduated from there too. Now Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s situation isn’t that great. I heard that Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle teamed up to go against Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in this war……”

The half-dead geezer spoke endlessly.

Half a day later, Leylin walked out from the grocery shop with an extremely miserable face. “I never thought that the situation would already be this bad. It seems like I need to stay out here longer than I expected.”

According to the half-dead geezer, the reason for the war had long since been forgotten. What mattered was that Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle were factions on the same level as Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Their alliance placed Abyssal Bone Forest
Academy in a disadvantageous position. Right now, the academy could only rely on its defence spell formation to resist.
“A.I. Chip, how long will it take to decode this page?”
Leylin felt the derelict page of the Lowian’s teachings. Although it was made from human skin, Leylin still wrapped it well and kept it within his robes.
[Beep! Analysis in progress! No comparable code found in the databank. Will require conjecture……Estimated time to completion: 93 days 13 hours!]
“3 odd months? I can do that!” Leylin stroked his chin as he casually strolled around the market.
What he had told the half-dead geezer earlier was the truth, but Leylin simply wanted to gamble upon the A.I. Chip’s abilities. Even if it did not work out, the information the half-dead geezer had provided was worth at least 20 to 30 magic crystals.
Although the page number of the Lowian’s teachings’ derelict journal page was pretty low and contained mostly information for acolytes, for a level 2 acolyte like Leylin, it still was pretty useful. There may even be some of Rookmanst’s meditation techniques, experiment records or even some discovery of resources. If he could discover them, Leylin would benefit immensely.
In any case, the processing capabilities of the A.I. Chip were very impressive. Leylin had not even used half of its capabilities, just letting it sit idle for most of the time. He might as well use this downtime for deciphering the code.
Leylin’s footsteps did not stop until he walked out of Ellinel Market.
The exit was at the side of the village and was actually beneath a stack of hay. It was also guarded by a black-robed man with the Redbud insignia.
“A.I. Chip! Initiate area scan!” After walking out of the village, Leylin ordered after walking out of the village.
A faint light blue screen was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes, clearly identifying a sneaky figure tailing him from behind. In the whole light blue projection, the red dot was extremely obvious.
[Target’s identified. strength estimated at level 2 acolyte. No magic artifact detected!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Only a level 2 acolyte huh? Seems like it’s not any huge faction, but only an avaricious dog after some wealth!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed coldly, “If I didn’t have other plans ……”
The level 2 acolyte tailing Leylin seemed to be extremely patient. Only after Leylin was a dozen miles away from the vicinity of the market did he make his sneak attack!
* Whoosh! * Suddenly two balls of mud rose beneath Leylin’s feet, turning into two yellow-brown coloured hands that tightly held down Leylin’s ankles.
A dagger suffused with purple light immediately stabbed towards Leylin’s back.
“Success!” yelled the sneak attacking acolyte whose face was
flushed with joy. He belatedly realised that Leylin had mysteriously dissolved, turning into a vine with thorns that coiled around his body.
The thorns mercilessly dug into flesh. The acolyte could even feel the vine come alive and was greedily feeding on his blood.
“Damn! It’s a golem! What is this spell! Shadow Embodiment? Leeching Vines?” As the acolyte lost huge amounts of blood, he increasingly became muddleheaded.
“Ah! You can’t do this! Please……Please spare me……”
The acolyte pleaded. Alas, the immediately the vines squirmed and sealed his mouth.
* Bang! * The spell’s effect disappeared, and on the ground was left the shrivelled corpse of the acolyte.
Against his enemies, Leylin was never merciful.

……

The second day, Leylin once again visited the market.
“Sir! Do you need a guide? I only require 1 magic crystal!” The noisy little kids were still clamouring at the entrance.
Today Leylin had changed his clothes. And to conceal himself even further, he changed his appearance too.
Although his previous face was a fake, there was no guaranteed special spell effect that could penetrate and see through the cloak.
As for energy waves and the sort, Leylin was not too worried about it. Yesterday he deliberately avoided official Magi, so his energy waves would never be recorded.
To capture the energy waves generated by the spiritual force, an official Magus has to make enough preparations beforehand. There wouldn’t be any Magi who had nothing better to do.
“You’ll do!” Leylin randomly picked a little girl.
“Thank you! Sir, I am extremely familiar with this place!” The little
girl was a little overjoyed. She wore a white coloured dress and looked to be somewhat thin. After tossing a magic crystal to the girl, Leylin said slowly, “I wish to enter a higher leveled area!” His voice was modified to sound different from the day before. “A higher leveled area? You mean……The second level?” The little girl asked a little hesitantly. “Of course!” This was the point to the experience Leylin patiently amassed after coming to the market many times. These markets weren’t very huge, and Leylin always felt that something was missing. Certain precious resources were absent in these markets too. These little children guides most likely stood here waiting for powerful customers to bring them to the more concealed areas. “Since you know about the second level, then you should also understand that if you don’t have an item worth over 1000 magic crystals or a guarantor, you will be denied entry.” “Naturally I do! Lead the way!” The little girl raised her head, yet she was unable to discern the expression behind Leylin’s cloak. She could only lower her head and lead the way. “Although there should be many official Magi on the second level, there is no choice. The two ancient formulas, Azure Potion, and Tears of Mary, plus many of their ingredients have not been collected yet. If I can’t even find it here, biggest Magus market, then there is completely no chance anymore. I can only look for substitute ingredients!”

Leylin’s expression was rather dark. As he journeyed, he sold potions along the way and did his utmost to collect all of the ingredients of the two ancient potions. However, he was met with little success so far. Ellinel Market was the second largest gathering of Magi after Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If he couldn’t find what he needed here, then Leylin was completely helpless. Leylin followed the little girl. They arrived at a rather deserted alley.
She used a stone found on a wall corner of the wall to knock. * Bang! * The alley’s walls shifted, revealing an underground passage.

“Here it is!” The little girl said softly, as if very afraid.

“Lead the way!” Leylin followed the little girl and they continued walking downwards. Several minutes later, they reached a door at the end of the passage.

Two level 3 acolytes wearing blood red robes were standing guard. According to the A.I. Chip’s scan, they carried magic artifacts on their bodies. This slightly startled Leylin. At the same time, he was filled with curiosity towards the market behind it.

The little girl went forward and exchanged a few words with the two acolytes before walking back to Leylin. She curtseyed, “Most respected Sir, I can only lead you this far!”

When she finished speaking, she hurriedly ran back up the flight of stairs disappearing into the darkness.

“It seems like there is something in this premium market that terrifies her!” Leylin thought indifferently as he walked towards the two acolytes.

“An item of proof, or an item worth at least 1000 magic crystals!” A red robed acolyte said icily. Standing before them, Leylin could somehow sense the wails of aggrieved souls hovering around them.

“What terrifying people!” Leylin thought inwardly. He tossed over a small sack containing 10 high-grade magic crystals.

The red robed acolyte opened and looked before tossing the sack back to Leylin. He then opened the door behind him.

Leylin walked in unhurriedly. Only after the large door closed behind him, was he inclined to observe the area in front of him.

This field was most likely beneath the market earlier. Its surface area was smaller, only having a street traversing it.

From time to time Magi walked past. Since it was not very crowded, the distance between passersby was rather far. There
were almost no level 1 acolytes here. Level 2 acolytes too were very few. Most of the people here were level 3 acolytes. Their bodies all radiated strong energy waves. Official Magi too were rather common.

……

Leylin inhaled deeply and walked down the street……
Half an hour later, Leylin walked out of a stone hut with a Potion sign, his face had obvious signs of joy.
They had the main ingredients Kroft mentioned, as well as the rest of the ingredients, “It is indeed the largest market!”
The main ingredients of the two ancient potions, Azure Potion, and Tears of Mary, were the most important. As for other ingredients, they were easier to acquire. Being able to buy them all at once exceeded Leylin’s expectations.
Leylin spent more than half of the 1000 magic crystals he prepared to purchase these ingredients. He was still satisfied, though, and felt that the expense was worth it.
Putting away the ingredients, he anticipated that he had to find a safe place and begin brewing the potions. His mood was rather good. He even felt inclined to stroll around a bit.
The goods here were obviously of a higher grade than the market above. Leylin even saw a low-grade magic artifact dagger for sale. However, the price was at least 400 magic crystals, which immediately made Leylin stop feeling lucky.
Suddenly, Leylin heard noisy clamouring voices travelled over leaving Leylin a little startled. He tracked these voices and made a new discovery.
“Slave market?”
What Leylin saw in front of him was a large fenced area. Many stark naked slaves were standing behind fences. Their faces
showed either numb indifference or extreme humiliation as they let the acolytes and Magi take their pick.

“Just right! I’ll need a few slaves myself!”

Leylin wanted to stay in Extreme Night Town for around 3 years. He could not manage many things by himself. Originally, he planned to recruit a few guards and servants when he got there, but a few high-grade slaves were now conveniently available. After all, they were all raised or controlled by Magi. This lent their owner better security and assured functionality.

“Sir! What do you think? Do you need a female slave for your bed?” Look, these are all good quality ones, some are even of the nobility.

A slave trader looked as Leylin walked forward. The slaver hurriedly patted the ample breasts of a group of female slaves behind him, which carried a rippling wave effect.

Behind him were a dozen utterly naked noblewomen. Their skin was extremely smooth, and their figures were quite vivacious. Even if they were slaves, their aura of nobility could not be stifled.

“How did they end up here? I mean, as nobles, wouldn’t it be troublesome?” Leylin was a little curious.

“Please don’t worry, these are all nobles who fought and lost in battles. Their fiefdoms have long since been usurped and their families destroyed. They are legally under the death sentence. There will absolutely be no trouble at all.

The trader smugly explained.

Leylin looked behind a noblewoman who was being dragged away. There was obviously a noble young lady standing there. He could not help but think of the young noble lady he met previously in the woods. If her revenge failed, who knows if she’ll be sold at this place too.

“How are they? Buy a couple, and it’s up to you how you play them! After you’re sick of them, you can use them for your
experiments. Even if they die, it’s not a problem!” The trader did his utmost to entice him.
Leylin shook his head, “I wish to purchase a few guards, preferably of a Knight’s level. Also, I will need a few assistants for my experiments!”
“If it’s like this!” The trader stroked his chin, “What you’re looking for are premium slaves, and their price will be extraordinary! Of course, those who are able to enter here are customers with strength. Please follow me!”
Leylin walked behind the trader and saw many slaves. Some of them were well-built youths while some were still children. They were all staring outside from behind the fence looking fearful. From time to time a few Magi pointed at them or even walked forward to inspect them.
Leylin even saw a group of Magi surrounding a few beastmen and marine species slaves, bidding over them.
The trader pulled Leylin to a large tent, and called a fatty over, “This is my friend, Dylan. Right, he has some premium goods.”
Leylin did not know what Dylan whispered to the trader, but after a while, the trader laughed heartily as he walked away. Only then Dylan smile towards Leylin and said, “Most respected guest, I have already understood your requirements! We just received a new batch of premium slaves, please follow me!”
53 - Subordinates

Leylin followed Dylan into a large white-coloured tent. A smell of incense inside permeated the air. It masked the musky unwashed odor of the slaves and various bodily excrement. Despite this, the atmosphere was much better than outside. The slaves in here wore some thin clothes that could somewhat cover their private areas.

Dylan brought Leylin to a few extremely muscled guys, “They were all raised and taught by a Knight! How do they look? I dare say these definitely meet your requirement!”

Leylin nodded his head and walked towards a large bald guy, “A.I. Chip! Stat Scan!”

[Beep! Target’s Strength: 3.1, Agility: 2.8, Vitality: 2.9, Spiritual force: 1.5. Status: Dowsed in neurotoxin!]

The other Knight level slaves’ stats were more or the less similar. Leylin observed that their pupils were widened and somewhat dispirited.

“The mind of these Knights seem to have been affected by something……”

Dylan hurriedly smiled apologetically, “Knights’ resistances are always higher than normal, to meet the various needs of our customers, we are unable to use standard marking to control their consciousness! They have all undergone constant brainwashing and corporeal subjugation. Furthermore, they were controlled by
drugs, turning them into high-level servants. Although they might not be as bright as regular Knights, they are still able to understand some simple commands. Branding of the consciousness was what official Magi used to control their servants. However, it was somewhat ineffective if acolytes were to use it.

Dylan obviously noticed Leylin’s strength before offering this batch of goods to him.

“It’s not bad, what’s the price?” Leylin asked.

“100 magic crystals each!” Dylan replied.

Leylin nodded his head and picked out two with the best stats. After paying the magic crystals, he received a scorpion-like organism from Dylan.

“The sting of this Desert Scorpion contains a unique poison. These poisonous secretions from this scorpion were used on your two slaves. If they do not take the antidote produced by the scorpion in 10 days time, they will die horribly! Of course, this is should be used as a last resort to control them. After all, during their training, they have already been brainwashed to obey their Master’s commands! Now, the lives of these two Knights are yours!”

Dylan respectfully handed the box containing the scorpion’s sting.

Leylin nodded his head and kept the box. “Also, I require a serving maid, one who can take on the role of assistant during experiments……”

As Leylin walked out of the market, two Knights wearing armour and a delicate yet pretty maid followed behind him.

The maid’s eyes were limpid and she wore a black cotton dress. According to Dylan, this maid received extensive training since she was young. She was more than capable to take on the role of an assistant for simple experiments. She met Leylin’s requirements rather well. Moreover, she had taken the Mandara Flower’s essence, which could counteract the radiation from a Magus. This
kept her looking youthful. The cost was her life span, which was shortened to only 30 years. “Ellinel Market did pretty well in designing this level. We can actually choose our exits freely. However, this is a service only premium customers may enjoy!” When Leylin and his servants appeared, they were no longer at the small village. They were at the outer walls of a city. This was a premium service provided by the Ellinel Market, but there was also a fee for it. If this helped him avoid more trouble, it was worth it for Leylin who was not very strong right now. “Master!” The Knights and the maid knelt and saluted him. “En!” Leylin nodded his head indifferently, “Do you have names?” The two Knights looked at each other, and their eyes dimmed eventually. “No, please grant us one, Master!” The maid too shook her head and indeed seemed rather pitiful. “You will be called Greem! He pointed to the larger Knight. “You will be called Fraser!” This was another Knight. “As for you!” Leylin looked at the beautiful maid, “Anna will do!” “Thank you for granting us names, Master. We will loyally engrave it in our hearts!” The three subordinates knelt on the ground and kissed Leylin’s shoe. “Alright.” Leylin waved his hands and got them to stand. He then looked at his surroundings. It seemed to be a small forest, and there was even the silhouette of a large city ahead. It was, at least, ten times bigger than the city he was in earlier. The entrance had carriages and carts going in and out. It seemed to be flourishing. “Greem! Go buy a horse carriage in the city, I’ll wait for you here!” Leylin tossed a black purse to the larger Knight. “Also, buy some goods for our journey, as well as some clothes!” Leylin instructed him.
Even since he destroyed his chest of spell books and sold all his potions, His remaining possessions amounted to over 3000 magic crystals all in all. His luggage too was reduced by more than half. He could fit all of them in a knapsack. As for the camping items he used previously, he already destroyed them before going to the market to save himself the trouble of going back.

“Yes, Sir!” Greem took the money purse and bowed slightly as he was about to leave.

“Also, don’t call me Sir from now on, Young Master will do!” Leylin touched his youthful face and was somewhat stumped.

“We obey!” The three of them knelt on the ground.

Seeing the figure of Greem leaving, Leylin suddenly turned and asked Fraser, “Do you have any inkling of the time before you became a slave?”

Fraser had brown hair and blue eyes, and his body was littered with scars. Moreover, his age could not be determined, but he seemed to have had an abundance of experiences and suffering.

“I can’t remember anymore! Every time I try, I feel a splitting pain in my head.” Fraser touched his forehead as if trying to recall something. His visage crumpled with pain.

“So it’s like this!” Leylin surmised that it could be the influence of some drug or spell that was only effective on normal humans. Right now he could probably break it if he spent some time on it, but he absolutely had no intention of doing so.

After all, his objective was to acquire subordinates, not to seek trouble. Those who were captured as slaves were the losers of battles and wars. If they were to recover their memories and seek Leylin’s help, what should he do then? Even if they don’t, who knows if they will continue remaining loyal to him.

“How about you?” Leylin looked at the shy Anna.

Anna’s skin was extremely white and gave off a milky glow. It made Leylin impulsively want to touch her. Her face too was
extremely exquisite like a doll’s. 
“Anna has been raised by a merchant since childhood, and was eventually sold to Sir Dylan……”
“For a maid like her, it was naturally more convenient to groom her at a very young age. Moreover, she had to learn various knowledge, and grooming of etiquette. Only then would she deserve the fondness of those higher ups. Of course, she had to take some lessons in pleasing men. Anna looked at Leylin who was still shrouded in the cloak, unable to discern his countenance. However, based on the voice alone, deduced that it should belong to a younger person. She could not help but blush.
What lessons have you taken before? How much do you know about the Magi?”
“I have learnt and , but……but only some preparations of simple ingredients. Anna is not an acolyte. For experiments that require the use of energy particles, I am powerless in that area……My apologies, Young Master!” Anna’s fingers clenched her dress and seemed discomfited.
“That’s not bad at all.” Leylin was actually satisfied. He had many secrets. Letting an outsider join his experiments was inappropriate. Helping him with basic preparations was already good enough.
If he wanted a Magus assistant, he or she must be at least acolyte level. This level of a slave is extremely expensive and was always riddled with problems too.
Although he did not see any in the slave market, Leylin knew that some other place in the market, there would be another slave market that specialised in selling acolytes as slaves.
After all, for many Dark Magi, it was only acolytes who could resist radiation, were to best subjects for their experiments.
As to sources of such acolyte slaves, they made use of war criminals or prisoners.
If Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was completely defeated, and the headquarters seized, then the fate of all the acolytes in the academy—apart from the ones backed by strong factions—will most likely end up as slaves.

As for people like Leylin who escaped earlier, he could only draw a clear line between himself and the academy in future. And take the four seas as his home, becoming a pitiable wanderer.

“Right now, I can only pray that the academy wins…… Even if they lose, I hope they don’t lose badly……” Leylin looked towards the west, his expression a little grim.

Seeing Young Master become pensive, Anna and Fraser bowed their heads too, not daring to utter a word.

With the noise of rolling wheels gradually getting closer, Leylin could see a Knight driving a horse carriage, the appearance seemed to be Greem.

The horse carriage was pitch black in colour and did not have much in the way of patterns on it. The merchants who sold the carriage did not know if Greem belonged to the nobility, so they did not dare inscribe on the carriage. However, it looked extremely sturdy. A couple of large black horses were pulling it, dashing rapidly towards Leylin.

“Young Master!” Greem got down the carriage, and handed the money purse back to Leylin with both hands, “The carriage cost……”

“No need for further discussion.” Leylin took it over, and then threw the money purse to Anna, “In the future you will deal with the finances, if there is not enough then ask me!”

“Yes, Young Master!’” Anna carefully kept the money purse.

In it were only a few gold coins used by normal humans. Leylin only required a little effort to get as much as he wanted. What he was concerned about were the magic crystals, the currency used in the Magus World.
It was a pity that even in the South Coastal Regions, magic crystals were in extremely high demand as currency. After visiting so many markets, Leylin could see shops exchange coins for magic crystals, but never the other way round.
These were his subordinates in the future. After thinking for a while, Leylin undid his hood. and revealed a dashing face. His appearance, however, was still in its slightly altered state.
“You will be my trusted aides in the future, so take a look at my true appearance!”
The reason why Leylin disguised himself was to buy and sell resources. Right now since all his potions were sold, he did not need a disguise. These people also had to meet Leylin daily, so they will definitely see his true appearance—so the sooner the better.
After Leylin removed the spell, the muscles of his face twitched, and returned back to his original youthful visage.
Seeing Anna and the rest nod their heads, Leylin commanded, “Let’s set off towards Eastwoods Province!”
On the wide road, a horse carriage rapidly sped by. In the driver’s seat sat two large guys wearing metallic armour and long swords. One look and people got the message that they were not to be messed with. Farmers in the vicinity scurried out of their way.

Inside the carriage, the smell of wood and lacquer mixed together and was somewhat unpleasant.

Leylin’s nose wrinkled as he caught a whiff of perfume. Seeing that Anna was blushing beside him, Leylin smiled and beckoned, “Come here!”

When she drew near, Leylin made her recline halfway, then lay his head on her chest.

His hands conveniently roved around Anna’s thighs. The thin cotton fabric could not hide her beauty. Leylin felt as if both his hands were touching a piece of warm and soft jade.

Savouring the softness he was leaning on, and hearing Anna’s panting, made Leylin feel extremely content. He sighed, closed both his eyes and stayed still.

He had had been feeling on edge lately, as he had to exercise prudence after every trade. This occupied a lot of Leylin’s thoughts. Now that he did not have to do so anymore, Leylin could finally take a break, and obtain ample time to rest. He even had two Knights to take care of the trouble.

Naturally, the two Knights would be sleeping outside, leaving the
interior of the carriage to their master and the maid. Leylin was no gentleman. Moreover, Anna was also quite a beauty and excelled in that area. Idling away in the carriage, he naturally had already bedded her. There was even a faint trace of dark red blood on the cabin’s floor.

As a maid bought by Leylin, how could Anna resist her master? All along the journey, she served him wholeheartedly and tried various positions with him, which also satisfied a few of his fetishes.

“Thankfully I am a magician. I can use magical herbs and undergo meditation to continuously recover and increase my vitality. With the previous Leylin’s sad physique, I would most likely have aged prematurely……”

Leylin ordered mentally, “A.I. Chip, show me my stats!”


“Four to five months have passed, and I persisted in meditation everyday. To think that there was only an increase of 0.2……”

Leylin’s expression was a little unsightly, “I have to hurry to my destination and settle down to try brewing the ancient potions. Who knows when I will meet the requirements for advancing?”

All acolytes encounter a bottleneck when advancing to level 3. Even a fifth-grade acolyte like Jayden still requires years of training in order to breakthrough.

After analysing the conditions needed to advance, mastering the spells and brewing reactive elixirs became trivial. Only getting past the 7 spiritual force bottleneck remained baffling for countless genius acolytes. Even official Magi did not have good solutions to address this aspect of spiritual force cultivation. Only constant painstaking meditation had any effectiveness or maybe the use potions and the sort could be an alternative. The cost of these, unfortunately, could not be borne by the typical acolyte.

Right now Leylin too was stuck on the same spiritual force
bottleneck.
“A.I. Chip! How is the analysis of the two potions? And what is the progress in deciphering Lowian’s Teachings?”
[Beep! Azure Potion analysis progress: 100%, Tears of Mary analysis progress: 78%, Lowian’s Teachings analysis progress: 63.7%] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“The Azure Potion has been fully analysed long ago. Unfortunately, the main ingredients are now completely extinct. Finding substitutes requires countless experiments. As for the Tears of Mary, it has been at 78% for 3 months now with no signs of progress at all. Could some crucial procedures be missing?
Leylin’s brows furrowed; the A.I. Chip’s processing ability was extremely powerful. The progress in analysing the ancient potion Tears of Mary analysis stagnated at 78%, which made Leylin rather surprised.
“These formulas that Professor Kroft gave me should be correct. If the A.I. Chip could not analyse them after all this time, it might have met with some difficult question that was beyond the parameters of the databank……Tears of Mary! Tears!” Leylin guessed.
“Could it be……That this ancient potion formula has something to do with a soul?”
After all hearing the name of this potion, one will easily associate it with some ill-fated event.
As for Lowian’s Teachings, the progress was rather good. Although the creator used extremely complicated coding to ensure secrecy, the A.I. Chip was least daunted by the complicated computations.
Leylin roughly knew the general contents of this scroll through reading the previous portions that have been analysed.
“Unfortunately, though this item is not bad, I can only make use of it when I become a level 3 acolyte!”
Leylin shook his head and got rid of these distracting thoughts.
Suddenly, the horse carriage stopped.
Leylin’s brows furrowed as he asked, “Did something happen?”
“Young Master please be at ease, it is merely a group of bandits who have blocked the path!” Fraser has already gone over to take care of it!” Greem’s voice travelled through the wooden wall.
* Ping Pang! Bang! *

As expected, moments later it seemed that negotiations failed. The sound of various weapons clashing could be heard. After a few profanities and continuous wailing, Fraser’s voice was heard saying “It’s settled.” The horse carriage once again resumed the journey.

This kind of an outcome made Leylin feel very satisfied.

The reason why he bought two Knights and a maid was so that all the trifling matters would be handled by them, allowing him more time to focus on researching spells and doing more experiments.

These matters along the way were trivial. Leylin had the faint outline of a plan that would require the participation of many people to accomplish. And these 3 people were at the core of it.

“Young……Young Master!” Anna who was behind him, let off a low pant.

Only then did Leylin realise that his hand slipped. While he was deep in thought, his hand had unknowingly touched Anna’s private part.

Leylin smiled and withdrew his hand.

Seeing that Anna’s face was still flushed, he said, “Right now Young Master is occupied with something! I’ll have time tonight to play with you……”

These intimate words made Anna somewhat shy as she lowered her head.

Pretending not to see the temptation right in front of him, he said “A.I. Chip! Transmit the fully analysed Azure Potion formula!”

Leylin always drew a clear line between entertainment and research. At the most crucial moment, he would definitely not be
infatuated and lose the will to improve.

……

Seeing Leylin had already closed both his eyes, Anna’s eyes dulled. She then rearranged her clothes back to its former neatness and tried her best to adjust her body so that Leylin could rest more comfortably……”

Night fell after what felt like a moment. Leylin regained consciousness after meditation.

“Young Master! There is a city not far from here!” Greem’s voice travelled over.

“Where are we now?”

“According to the markings on the map, we should have already entered Eastwoods Province. This is Roran City, which is situated at the provincial borders!”

The crashing sounds of things being rummaged sounded, as Fraser spoke.

“Roran City huh?” Leylin muttered to himself and adjusted the map stored in the A.I. Chip.

On the faint blue map, a red coloured line was linked with many cities. Roran City was towards the west of Extreme Night City, only several days’ journey.

“After half a year of travelling, we are finally arriving huh?” Leylin felt a little rueful.

The reason why he chose this place earlier was its distance from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy- he wouldn’t be affected by the conflicts taking place over there. Another consideration was that only by being far away from the academy, would he be able to conduct a few prohibited experiments.

After all, he had the A.I. Chip in his body and also the process for many of the experiments were very unusual. If he had
experimented at the academy, using the remnants or rubbish, the possibility of being discovered was inevitable. However, Leylin felt less restrained ever since he had left—like a caged canary that was set free and soared into the sky. Leylin opened the carriage door, and a gust of cold wind blew in. “The feeling of freedom!” Leylin looked at the city, which seemed a little desolate, and the nearby farmers. He could not help but smile. “First, find us a place to lodge in. We’ll set off tomorrow morning!” Leylin gave the orders. In the wild, it was natural to either stay in the horse carriage or inside a tent. However, since they had reached human habitation, Leylin naturally did not want to deprive himself of this chance. The black-coloured horse carriage entered the city under the respectful gaze of the guard. To the people in Eastwoods Province, having a horse carriage, guards, and a maid, elevated Leylin to the level of idle nobility. In fact, Leylin was indeed a descendant of nobility. It was just that it was not this continent’s nobility. Leylin never considered using the dukedom title from Chernobyl Islands here. However, the status of a noble could indeed greatly reduce problems. After finding a place at a local inn for lodging, Leylin called an attendant over. “Do you know where I can hire people here?” Leylin played with a gold coin in his hands. Seeing Anna behind Leylin, and staring intently at the gold coin in Leylin’s hands, the attendant could not help but to gulp down a mouthful of saliva. “Most respected Sire! If you require attendants, the employment marketplace beside the city lord’s Manor would be your best choice. There, you can hire strong warriors, proficient housekeepers, and even various maids and stable hands….”
“Very good! Bring me there tomorrow and this gold coin will be yours!” Leylin smiled.
This time, he could stay in Extreme Night City for a long period. Leylin naturally wanted peace and quiet. He required people who could carry out his bidding. Since he did not want to be controlled by others, he would not be able to avoid wielding his own influence.
With Anna and the two Knights as his core retainers, and hiring a few more from Roran City, his retinue would be more or less complete.
Although he could hire more people in Extreme Night City, they will definitely be infiltrated. As for Roran City, although it could not be avoided, it was good to reduce the numbers and influences to a minimum.
Dinner was white bread with vegetable soup. Although the shop owner had already taken out the best items to serve Leylin, it was still somewhat lacking compared to the academy’s cafeteria.
As Leylin was eating, many customers in the shop hid in the corner. They wore grey or brown coarse robes. Their gazes carried respect and fear.
Looking at the empty space around him, Leylin smiled bitterly.
The next morning, Leylin was guided to the employment marketplace in Roran City by the attendant. The employment marketplace was beside the city lord’s castle, so the public security there was not bad. At the very least, Leylin did not see any brawls taking place. Along the way, there were many people who looked at Leylin and his group. They were especially interested in Anna, who was behind Leylin, as she was an exceptional beauty, and was even more so after some dressing up. Fortunately, they did not dare try anything funny for they were rather fearful of Greem who was covered in steel armour.

“Sir! This is the employment marketplace in Roran City. All the people you require can be found here, besides you can also issue any mission related hiring……” The attendant explained to Leylin’s group of three.

As for Fraser, Leylin made him stay at the inn to look after the horse carriage and luggage. Although the important possessions such as potion ingredients and magic crystals were on Leylin, if they were to lose a few items like gold coins and the sort, it would prove rather troublesome. Leylin surveyed the employment marketplace before him. In his view was a large field, with groups of stable hands, mercenaries and the sort squatting on the ground, waiting for some employer to hire them.
Leylin knew that there had to be a slave market too, however it could not be displayed blatantly out in the open. After all, even a Magus market had to organise one covertly. However this was well within Leylin’s plans, he only wanted an entourage to hire here, so his requirements were lower. “Young Sir, may I help you with anything?” As Leylin entered the marketplace, a group of traders and merchants swarmed around him. They were obviously dazzled by Leylin’s lavish attire and shouted themselves hoarse as they tried to promote their products. “I need a group of mercenaries to escort me to Extreme Night City, and also to guard my estate there. The contract duration would be at least two years!” Looking at the fervent traders, Leylin stated his requirements. After reaching this part of the continent, Leylin realised that the novels, in his previous world talking about mercenary groups and bandit gangs and the like, were all nonsense. Apart from a few large cities that Leylin was yet to visit, in Roran City and other smaller city marketplaces, there were no such groups to speak of. All such employment, assassinations or similar missions, were arranged at the local bars or trade offices, some locations were even extremely bizarre. “After all, the costs have to be factored in, and, if the remuneration does not even cover the cost of operations, there wouldn’t be any fool who would be willing to toss their gold coins into the water!” “Then could I inquire if you have any requirements regarding the number of escorts and their strength?” A skinny man with a shiny bald head squeezed through the traders and asked loudly. “Number of people huh? Around 10 to 15! Their strength only needs to be equivalent to the average guard’s standard. The only request I have is loyalty and honour! As the mission might extend over 2 years, I will have to issue a contract, and the salary is to be
given monthly!”
Leylin said blandly.
“In that case, I have a group of mercenaries here that fits your requirements!” The bald trader smiled.
“The Roran Hawks mercenary group has just finished their vacation. Moreover, they are citizens of Roran City, so their reputation can definitely be assured of!” The bald trader explained.
Leylin noticed that when the baldy mentioned the Roran Hawks mercenary group, the crowd all turned silent. There were even respected and envious looks. It seemed like the Roran Hawks had a large reputation around here.
“Alright then! Bring me to have a look at them, the commission will definitely be given to you later!” Leylin said.
“Please follow me!” The bald trader led the way, bringing Leylin out of the marketplace.
After the attendant in the inn received his gold coin, he bade his farewell. Anna and Greem followed closely behind Leylin; the current group of four walked on for about half an hour before reaching the southern part of the city.
Having reached here, the surrounding buildings were constructed differently. If the central part of the city was modelled after the city lord’s castle, with the buildings being extremely imposing and respectful, then the southern part of the buildings were multi-coloured with various styles. Very much like residential estates.
“This seems to be the area where the free citizens of the city gather!” Leylin muttered as he looked at the crushed rock laid into a pavement, and the small flower terrace and stone-made lamp.
“You have a good eyesight, Sir. Those who live here are predominantly the traders and free citizens of Roran City. The Roran Hawks mercenary group also reside here!”
“Are you not going to bring us to the training grounds of this mercenary group?” Green asked at the side.
“Respected Sir! Roran Hawks mercenary group is only a small unit, and their number does not exceed 30. Their reputation is only spread within Roran City. It is only a casual alliance formed by their leader. The cost of renting some space for them to train would have made their mission earnings obsolete. Thus, who would be willing to do that?” The baldy said with a wry smile.

“Normally, the members are each busy with their own matters. They gather only when they receive a mission!” Saying which, the baldy looked at Leylin, and smiled apologetically, “Although the Roran Hawks Mercenaries are few in number, most of them are retired veterans. Moreover, their leader was once a middle ranked troop leader in the army, and his strength is not bad……”

Obviously, the baldy was worried about Leylin being prejudiced against the mercenary group, but these matters could not be concealed either, so he could only say before they found out.

“A middle-ranked troop leader huh? I am looking forward to meeting him!” Leylin smiled, he actually did not really mind who he hired in Roran City, as their roles will primarily be to run errands for him in future.

“We’ve arrived!” The baldy brought Leylin and the rest in front of a two-storeyed villa. Within a circle surrounded by a rosewood fence, there was a small pond and garden. There was a type of small white flower, their petals being extremely small, but with a dense aroma, a middle-aged lady was currently watering the flowers.

“Hello! Madam Lariette! Is Fayern around? I have brought some business for him!” The baldy greeted the lady watering the plants.

“Of course, he’s around, my dear friend!” Before the lady got to respond, a bold and unrestrained voice sounded from within the house.

A large guy wearing a white-coloured shirt walked over and hugged the baldy.
“My dearest Fayern! Let me introduce to you- this is Sir Leylin who came from the central part of our city. He wishes to employ your Roran Hawks mercenary group to escort him to Extreme Night City!” The baldy explained to Fayern.

“Hello! Respected Sir, if you choose to go to Extreme Night City, then the Roran Hawks mercenary group would be your best bet. We have traversed the route over 100 times, and recognise every rock, nook, and cranny on the path.”

Fayern bowed slightly towards Leylin and laughed as he spoke loudly.

Leylin noticed that this group leader’s eyes had been sizing up the three of them. Especially lingering on Greem for a while, as if discovering something. However, he overlooked Leylin.

“A crude outer appearance but his inner qualities are astute! He is also a Preparatory Knight!” Leylin observed, and at this moment, the A.I. Chip scanned Fayern’s stats.


These stats amongst Preparatory Knights was only considered average, however from Fayern’s callus and multiple scars on both of his hands, it can be seen that he has bountiful experience as a mercenary.

“We can discuss this later, won’t you invite us in to take a seat?” Leylin smiled and gestured towards the villa.

“Oh, of course, I will! Please enter!” Fayern patted his head and moved his body while bowing. His right hand stretched, making an invitation for them to enter.

After exiting the garden, it was soon the living room of the villa. The floor was painted red, and on one the four surrounding walls there hung a rusty and stained cross blade. Beside it was a skull belonging to an elk, with bent antlers that were intertwined and had a jet-black lustre.
Fayern cordially invited Leylin and the group to have a rest on the sofa in the living room. He also asked Madam Lariette to give Leylin and the rest a beverage similar to black tea and then began to discuss the details.

“I heard from Nigel that this respected Young Master wants to go to Extreme Night City? If it is not inconvenient, could you tell me the reason why? Please forgive me, only after assessing the risk can the group make preparations for it……” Fayern’s tone was rather sincere.

Leylin sipped on this beverage similar to black tea— it was rather sweet and salty and thus he did not like its taste— before he placed the cup down.

“Regarding the mission, this time, I only wanted to start some business there and require manpower for security. Do not worry about any other trouble!” Leylin looked at Fayern, while the latter was rather embarrassed and looked down.

Obviously, Fayern assumed Leylin was the bastard son of a noble who had lost in a power struggle and was sent away.

“The reason why I hire you was because the people in Roran City will not be easily bought when compared to those in Extreme Night City. Moreover, I have received news that there were some interesting events recently happening within Extreme Night City……” Leylin smiled and said.

“Interesting events?” Group Leader Fayern guessed, “Is it about the incident where the vegetation near the surroundings of Extreme Night City suddenly withered? ”

“Correct! A forest, the size of a small village, suddenly withered. It really makes one worried. Because of this incident, I believe it is necessary to increase the strength of the guards.”

“Concerning the earnings, I can give each a monthly salary of one gold coin. However, each one must sign an employment contract for agreeing to follow my commands for at least 2 years or more.”
Leylin interlocked the 10 fingers of his hands, as he gave his opinion. Fayern’s face was indecisive, clearly he was making a choice. After being silent for some time, he struggled to say, “The other matters will be alright, what about the mission duration?”

“Although the period of two years is rather long, you don’t really have to always stay at Extreme Night City. I promise you during any idle period, I will grant them leave to visit their loved ones. Also, if they want to bring their wife and family over to Extreme Night City, I can also arrange an appropriate position for them……” Leylin’s voice reverberated in the living room.

“Sir, I have seen your sincerity. I would like to talk it over with a few of my brothers; after all, I do not run the mercenary group alone. I can give you an answer tomorrow, so please be rest assured, Sir!”, said Fayern as he stood up and bowed slightly.

“Good! We will wait for good news from you!” While Fayern saluted, Leylin calmly got up and together with his servants and the bald trader, left the villa.
A golden object arced, flashing in the light, and landed in the arms of the bald trader.

“Take this; it’s the commission that you deserve,” Leylin said.

“Many thanks for your conferment, most respected Young Master!” The baldy hurriedly bowed.

“Next, I need a housekeeper and two people who can keep accounts well! If you’re able to find them for me, this gold coin is yours!” Leylin flicked a gold coin on his hand.

“Let me think! Let me think!” Seeing that it was another gold coin waving its hand at him, the baldy suddenly became lively. He began muttering incoherently while grabbing his bald head and racking his brains. “That’s right! Old Welker! Old Welker was a housekeeper for a Baron before. Recently, He has been saying that he wants to come out again to make a living!”

The bald trader said.

“Very good! Bring me to him!” Leylin nodded his head approvingly.

Two days later, in the morning. While the mist still had not completely dissipated, there was still some frostiness lingering in the cold morning air.

* Creak! * Roran City gates opened slowly, and a horse carriage emerged from between them.

A dozen odd mercenaries, wearing broken armour and carrying
metal spears and bows, escorted a large horse carriage as it slowly left the city.
In front of the horse carriage, Fayern was leading a brown colored handsome steed. Behind him was a 20-year-old mercenary carrying a red-coloured flag. On it was embroidered the image of a hawk; the insignia of the Roran Hawks mercenary group.
Greem rode close to the horse carriage having given up the driver seat. The person who sat there instead was a white-haired geezer. Although he faced the wind and his hair was blown about wildly, his clothes were impeccable and without any creases.
He was the housekeeper that Leylin got—Old Welker. Earlier, the Baron he served had gone bankrupt, hence, he became jobless. He was in the same boat as the bald trader who visited him and joined Leylin’s party.
Going from Roran City to Extreme Night City only required 7 days. Roran Hawks mercenary group was worthy of Fayern’s praise. They were extremely familiar with the route and could even find lodging along the way, saving them from the hassle of setting up camp.
7 days later, the group safely arrived at Extreme Night City.
Leylin lifted open the hanging screen on the horse carriage and saw that the clouds ahead were rather dark. The layers of cloud were crowded together, completely blocking any sunrays. It seemed that it would rain soon.
There was also a shadow cast on the surrounding bushes and grasses, which made it look very gloomy.
“Fayern!” Leylin walked out of the horse carriage’s door, “Didn’t you say that Extreme Night City has a large area of vegetation that withered? Which area was that?”
“Young Master!” Fayern grasped the reins firmly and reduced the pace of the horses to match the pace of the horse carriage.
“Extreme Night City is enormous. These mysterious happenings
only belong to a small portion in the eastern part. Normally, we try our best to detour around that area. After all, humans have also done their best to avoid danger……”

“Where is that forest?” Leylin leaned against the side of the door as if he was enjoying the scenery.

“The eastern part of Dark Night Woods is closer to the core of the city!” Fayern looked at Leylin and he lowered his voice and said, “Dark Night Woods had an abundance of certain herbs. Ever since the withering event, however, the supply of herbs in Extreme Night City has decreased by 30%!”

“Is that so?” Leylin smiled. Extreme Night City was considered a large city in Eastwoods Province and one of the pillars of its economy was the herb industry. Now, it seemed that most likely the City’s Lord and his officers were worried about the situation.

“Dark Night Woods? I’ll remember it!” Although the woods in the kingdom were rather dangerous, this was only true for normal humans. Leylin even traversed his academy’s Abyssal Bone Forest, so naturally he was not worried about the present dangers.

“Did any of the herb gatherers disappear in the withering zone?” Leylin asked suddenly.

“Herb gatherers? You mean various hired hands, bandits, and adventurers?” Fayern shrugged his shoulders, “The woods are full of dangers, and a few people dying is very normal, so who knows?”

As the two conversed, the horse carriage slowly approached Extreme Night City.

The city walls were not very high, yet they were extremely thick. It seemed to be made by piling granite rocks, and was extremely sturdy.

The guard at the city gates recognised Fayern and allowed the horse carriage to enter after payment of the toll fee.

“Let’s find lodging first!” Leylin ordered briefly.
Night approached, and Leylin sent Anna, who was serving him, away and stayed alone in the inn’s room.
Opening the window, a cold gust of air blew in. The outside was extremely dark, and there were few lighted lamps.
Leylin closed the door and took out a blue coloured crystal ball from the sack he carried at all times. 
This crystal ball was extremely small and let off a strange glow. In the centre of the glass were many golden specks of light that continuously rove about like little fireflies. 
“Activate!” Leylin muttered an incantation. 
The specks in the crystal ball started to shift about until finally forming a strange symbol.
This symbol was rather curvy and swirled continuously. It finally looked like an eye that was bloodshot.
Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn. First, he turned the symbol towards his face allowing his somewhat skinny face to be reflected onto the crystal ball.
“Shadow Calendar, Year 1032, Month of the severe cold, Day of the ravens weeping.” Leylin enunciated slowly in an extremely distinct voice. 
“Today, I have arrived at Extreme Night City and am currently residing at Hoof’s Inn.” Leylin turned the crystal ball so the surroundings were reflected into the symbol inside. He then walked over to the windowsill and soaked up the imagery outside.
“Currently, news has it that the withering area belongs to the east area, Dark Night Woods. As of this recording, there have been no reports of any member’s death. Tomorrow I will prepare to set off and enquire, maybe gather new information.”
“The above-mentioned records are by level 2 acolyte, Leylin
Farlier!"
After he finished speaking, Leylin wiped the crystal ball with his pale white fingers. *Hehe! Hehe!* From within the crystal ball came a strange sound, like a kid’s laughter. Following which, the eye symbol flickered and disappeared, turning back into countless golden specks of light.
The crystal ball was given by the academy to Leylin to be used as proof of having undertaken the mission. The crystal ball was able to record a few scenes and voices. All that Leylin had to do was to record every important event during the mission. He could then hand it over as proof upon returning to the academy.
Of course, the crystal ball’s controlling right was with Leylin. As long as he did not want to activate it, the crystal ball would not be able to record anything without his magical support.
This was why Abyssal Bone Forest Academy dared to allow their acolytes to go out on long-term missions without fear of being duped.
“From Fayern’s description, the withering danger zone is not that huge. I’m afraid that it could either be some tree demons or organisms that feed on humans. A level 2 acolyte would be more than enough to deal with them!”
Leylin weighed things carefully, “I don’t have to be that frantic, I still have over two years! I should first send some mercenaries over to have a look……”
“The most important thing at hand now is to settle down here. Moreover, I have to visit a ‘friend’……. Leylin’s lips curved into a mysterious smile.
Although the location of Extreme Night City was rather remote, it was close to a few Magi resource points. There was even a magic crystal mine nearby that was being excavated. Of course, the resources were already exhausted, but they still attracted a good
number of wandering Magi and small families. It even gave rise to a small scale Magus market and was indicated on the map Bicky gave. Moreover, within the short span of time, while they were entering the city, the A.I. Chip had already picked out several energy waves emitted by other acolytes. It seems that there were quite a few acolytes living in this city. This was extremely normal, as wandering magicians or those who were reclusive preferred remote towns to settle in, and to better conceal their identities. Of course, due to having longer lifespans, appearance and radiation emissions, they cannot stay in the same area for long, often changing locations after a few years. While Leylin was thinking thus, he yelled, “Anna!” “Young Master, what are your instructions!” Not long after, Anna entered wearing a beautiful red dress. As she curtseyed, her snow white calves were revealed. “Prepare a gift; I want to pay someone a visit tomorrow!” “As to the specifics, Welker will tell you!” Leylin yawned and stated blandly. After dismissing the somewhat disappointed Anna, Leylin casually set up an energy particle array as an early warning device before he blew out the candles and entered dreamland. The next morning, Leylin left with Anna who brought along a beautiful hat. “Is this the gift that Old Welker picked?” Leylin took the cap and gave it a once-over, realising that it was made of beast hide. It was very smooth to the touch, and there was also a feather stuck on it. “Housekeeper Welker said that in Extreme Night City, Sticking the Night Hawk’s feather on a leather cap represents peaceful intent and friendliness. It is the gift of choice when paying a visit for the first time!” Anna put on a rather frightened expression.
“Young……Young Master! Are you going to visit another ‘Sire’?”
Anna’s voice became somewhat shak y.
“Yes! He is also an acolyte!” Leylin lowered his voice so that it was only audible to Anna and himself.
After he spoke, he saw the young girl’s shoulder trembled. Leylin smiled, Anna was sold to a Magus before she was resold as a slave. It seemed to have been a traumatic experience for her.
“If you’re afraid, you can always go back first!” Leylin moved forward and embraced Anna’s slender waist.
“No! Anna wants to go together with Young Master!” Anna forced herself to smile.
Leylin shook his head, “Follow me if you want to!”
Extreme Night City’s construction was somewhat gothic with sharp spikes on the roof tops. The pavements were also layered with smooth rocks giving the impression that Extreme Night City was one of the wealthier cities around.
As Leylin and Anna neared the eastern side of the city, the people’s outfits here became much more urbane than that of other places and the decorations on the buildings became more gorgeous too.
“It seems like the east of Extreme Night City is where the nobles and scholars congregate.”
Leylin looked at the clusters of flowers on both sides of the road. There was even an outdoor fountain. He could not help but smile as he said to Anna.
Afterward, the two of them came to a white-coloured two storey villa. On the door plate was hung, “Cecelia Main Street, 59”.
Leylin rang the doorbell that hung on the door. A crisp ring of a bell could be heard, followed by the noise of scurrying footsteps.

“Hello! May I ask who you are? Do you have an appointment?” A meticulous looking butler appeared in front of Leylin.

“Leylin Farlier, I am here to visit the owner of this villa!” Leylin smiled.

The butler obviously looked distressed as he said, “Sir, as you know, my master, Murphy, is a renowned scholar. His schedule every day is extremely packed, perhaps……”

At this moment, a girl, who seemed like the maid, hurriedly ran over and whispered into the butler’s ears.

The butler’s complexion immediately changed as he bowed deeply, “Master invites you into the living room!”

Leylin smiled as he retrieved the energy waves he radiated.

Upon entering inside the villa, there was a corridor littered with various art pieces like paintings and exhibited on the faint yellow colored walls were all kinds of oil paintings, and other specimens of art, which were rather pleasing to the eyes.

As the living room came into view, it became quite obvious that it was a spacious house.

The decor in the room was extremely aesthetic. Although there were no dazzling golden or silver items or gems, these pieces had an aura of history and gave off a feeling of understated elegance.
Beside the fireplace in the living room, an old scholar with white brows and beard lounged on a dark red recliner. The old man’s eyes seemed muddy with only occasional traces of intelligence within. The old man’s originally squinted eyes opened upon seeing Leylin. He stood up and spread his arms in an embracing gesture, “Welcome, my young friend!”
Leylin went forward to hug the old man, “It is an honour to be able to meet you! I hope you like this present I brought for you!”
Anna stepped forward and handed over to the butler an extremely exquisite cap. “I like the tail feathers of the night hawk. They represent peace!” The old man waved his hands, “Lille, you may take your leave, I want to have a good chat with this friend of mine!”
“Take your leave too!” Leylin told Anna who was beside him. After extending their salutations, the few maids, and the butler left, closing the door behind them. Very soon, there was only Leylin and the old man left in the living room.
“Alright, let’s reintroduce ourselves! Murphy, level 3 acolyte! I have been a resident of Extreme Night City for 3 years now……” The old man’s eyes showed signs of his reminiscing past events.
“So then, guest from afar, how about you?” “Leylin Farlier, level 2 acolyte and wandering Magus. I have recently come to Extreme Night City and wish to reside here for several years.” Leylin smiled and executed the bow between Magi. “I detect signs of youth in your body. Being able to advance into level 2 acolyte at this age, you have a rather great aptitude!” Murphy sighed in admiration.
“I was just lucky……” Leylin demurred. Although the old man’s body had degenerated, the energy waves of a level 3 acolyte told anyone that it was not good to provoke him.
“A.I. Chip, initiate scan!”
The A.I. Chip faithfully relayed the figures onto Leylin’s field of vision.
Being a wandering level 3 acolyte, Murphy’s array of magic spells definitely surpassed Leylin’s. Moreover, he would have some extremely-difficult-to-deal-with trump cards hidden to protect his life.
However, Leylin came with good intentions. From the A.I. Chip’s area scan, the number of acolytes residing in Extreme Night City was not high. As for this Murphy, he radiated one of the strongest energy waves.
After exchanging several polite greetings, Leylin delved immediately into the main purpose of his visit.
“So it’s like this! I wish to reside permanently in Extreme Night City, and even open an ingredients shop. You know, the procedures are extremely tedious, and I also need a resident to act as my guarantor……”
“So you came here to look for me?” Murphy smiled and drank the cup of red tea that was on the table.
“To be honest, as an ambitious and truth seeking Magus, gold coins and the like should no longer sway us. Although I don’t know why you arrived at this conclusion, on a whim perhaps? Or for some other reason? To me, this indeed is a small matter!”
“Coincidentally, I have some friendly relations with the Lord of Extreme Night City. One of his sons is also under my tutelage. Moreover, any city lord will not refuse the request of a Mysterious Entity…… The residential procedures here in Extreme Night City, as well as the shop permit, can all be settled very easily.” Murphy guaranteed.
“Then I must really thank you!” Leylin nodded his head, “If there
are any areas I could help you with, do not hesitate to ask!”
Although this was said to satisfy the requirements of etiquette, both Leylin and the old man knew that it was mentioned as a mere courtesy.
The handling of residential procedures may be difficult to regular humans. However, for a famous scholar like Murphy, it was only a matter of a few words. Even if Leylin wanted to handle these procedures by himself, he would have to spend more time than the old man.
For both Murphy and Leylin, this matter was simply a means to establish a basic friendship of convenience between them.
“Extreme Night City is a peaceful and quiet place. If you wish to have peaceful days then this place will definitely meet your needs. Later on, I will also introduce you to a few friends of mine. However, there are some set conventional customs that have to be complied with……Don’t worry, they are all customary practices, for example, one should not massacre the residents or something like that!”
“I definitely agree!” Leylin’s coming to Extreme Night City was to avoid the chaos of war and intrigue. Naturally he would not do anything that would draw attention to himself.
Leylin and Murphy then talked about many Magi related questions, from how to stabilise a spell model for advanced levels to some of Murphy’s personal adventures.
Although Murphy was only a level 3 acolyte, his experience was abundant due to having remained at this level for a long time already. This made Leylin feel that the trip was not in vain.
On the other hand, Leylin’s vast knowledge and eidetic memory shocked Murphy.
Both of them regretted not having met earlier. They even had their lunch together all the way until dusk before Murphy let Leylin leave. When they bade farewell, they even arranged for their next
meeting.
“According to what Murphy said, the magicians in Extreme Night City are all of the acolyte level. As for the few nearby cities, official Magi were also extremely rare making this place very suitable for an acolyte to live in!”
The inquiries he made today caused Leylin to feel at ease, letting him walk at a slower and a more relaxed pace.
“Only regarding this case where plants and wood withered is Murphy completely ignorant. After all, he is already quite old and does not wish to take risks……”
The two street lamps were lit with a dim yellow flame, allowing Leylin to see the road ahead.
Anna followed quietly behind Leylin. Being an outstanding maid, she obviously knew what she had to do, which was not to interrupt Leylin while he was deep in thought.
After Leylin ran through a simulation of his plans one more time, they had both arrived at the inn.
“Young Master!” “Sir!”
Old Welker, Greem, and Fraser came forward to receive them.
Leylin nodded his head, “After dinner all of you come to my room. There are many things I want to inform all of you regarding my future plans!”
Dinner was vegetable salad and mutton soup, followed by huge pieces of dried cookies. After Leylin finished and allowed Anna to clean up, the core people among his subordinates went to Leylin’s room.
Leylin sat on a chair wrapped in beast hide and quietly listened to their reports.
“Welker, how was the search for a residence?”
“Young Master, Old Welker has already contacted a Knight who is preparing to move to Sage Province. He is willing to sell a small manor in Extreme Night City to you.” Old Welker reported. Despite
being an old man, he was brimming with energy after finding them a new home.

“Very good, what is the area like? Is the place enough to house all of us? How much is it?” Leylin asked.

“Please be at ease Young Master. Old Welker, I have gone to the manor and taken a look today. The area was very big and has no problem accommodating a hundred people. Moreover, there is even an oil palm forest, a fish pond, and a mill. Knight Victor originally built it according to a baron’s standards. He never thought that it would change ownership this quickly. As for the price, Knight Victor has set it at 5000 gold coins!”

“It’s not that expensive, gold coins aren’t an issue!” Leylin twined his fingers. To a Magus, such earthly items as gold coins are insignificant. What they were concerned with were only magic crystals, high-grade ingredients, and the acquisition of remnant ancient knowledge.

Leylin had high-grade magic crystals of his own. Any one piece would be able to fetch a price far surpassing this amount of gold coins. However, Leylin was not prepared to do that. After all, magic crystals were rarer. If he really could not get the gold coins, then he would go borrow some from Murphy in exchange for a few potions—which was not a bad idea at all.

“Very well!” Let’s take a look tomorrow. If the price and the area are both suitable, we can sign the contract immediately.” Leylin nodded his head, saying, “Also, go walk the streets and scout something for me. Recently, the herbs available in Extreme Night City have decreased. There will definitely be many small-sized shops that can no longer manage and are about to close down. Go and look into them first!”

“Forgive me for asking, but Young Master, are you thinking of opening a herb shop? The permit for doing such business has rather strict requirements……” Fayern said.
“Regarding that, none of you have to worry. I have already made arrangements. The permit will be here in a few days.”
Hearing this, Fayern and Old Welker were dazed. To be able to guarantee such a thing quite easily, Leylin’s identity as a noble had already been confirmed.
“In Poolfield Kingdom, the nobility represents progress and hope!”
With this in mind, their gazes towards Leylin became more fervent. Fayern silently clenched his fists. Being one of the few who could look ahead, he naturally knew that he could not work as a mercenary for much longer. Most of the mercenaries carried a lot of injuries and scars with to their graves knowing little enjoyment in their typically short lives. However, getting hired by this Sir Leylin as his private army could be the fastest way out of the trade.
The brilliant rays of the sun lit up the path with a golden light. Walking on it was like walking on a golden, paved road.

Today Leylin had especially changed into formal ceremonial attire. He had Greem personally drive the horse carriage to Murphy’s villa.

Similarly, Murphy also wore formal attire and carried a black cane as he waited. After seeing Leylin, his wrinkled face revealed a joyous expression, “Welcome, my friend!”

“My apologies for being a little late!” Leylin opened the window and said.

“The agreed time isn’t up yet, I just deliberately got out earlier!” Murphy got into the horse carriage with the help of his servant. With the crack of the whip, Greem drove the horse carriage towards the centre of the city.

“City lord’s banquet is to be held today. He invited you too. After all, as the owner, he has developed a curiosity for any guest with strength…” Murphy left his sentence hanging.

“That’s understandable!” Leylin answered. As someone who has control over a city, seeking Leylin out only after so many days since he had entered the city was somewhat surprising.

“Are you somewhat bored?” Murphy noticed Leylin’s indifference. “To be honest, I am not adept at these kinds of social interaction. Given a choice, I’d rather stay inside my experiment lab…” Leylin
smiled wryly.
“Haha…” Murphy let off a benign laugh, “I felt exactly the same way when I was younger! However, you must learn to enjoy life, young man! Compared to tasteless experiments, delicacies and fervent, unrestrained women can sometimes lead you towards excitement!”
Leylin nodded his head. This was actually the difference between retired magicians and newly advanced ones.
Murphy has no way of advancing in the path of a Magus anymore, so he could only divert his enthusiasm towards other areas. As for Leylin, he still had a lot of options, so he naturally would make use of the time to cultivate—not waste it on such mundane matters.
“Brighten up kid!” There are several comrades I will introduce you to….” Murphy smiled lightly.
“Could they be…?” Leylin’s eyes flashed.
“Indeed! They are acolytes like us, and they are all younger than me. You would have some common interests to talk about.”
“I’m starting to look forward to this banquet now!” Leylin’s lips curled up and smiled.
The city lord’s castle was in the heart of Extreme Night City. Standing guard around it were two rows of fully equipped black-armoured arms men.
“Those are the Black Iron Guards of Extreme Night City’s Lord, Viscount Jackson. They once defeated a 500-man army troop with roughly hundred men.
After alighting the horse carriage, Murphy introduced Leylin.
Leylin looked around. There were several other horse carriages in the vicinity. From time to time, gentlemen in lavish attire and ladies in low-cut ball gowns got down.
Murphy appeared to have quite a reputation amongst this circle of nobles based on the exuberant greetings Murphy happily responded to. They even chatted for a while before moving on.
Upon seeing Murphy, the guard at the door ran in immediately. Not long after, an extremely loud voice boomed from within. “Murphy, my friend! You have finally arrived!” Accompanying the voice, a burly middle-aged man walked out of the castle. The nobles and troops around respectfully greeted him. This apparently was Viscount Jackson of Extreme Night City.

Leylin’s height in the South Coast area was considered average, but this Viscount Jackson was actually taller than him by two heads. He had the classic western features and an extremely wide forehead. He even had extremely long sideburns.

Jackson gave Murphy a firm hug, “Little Jackson has always been asking about you!”

“I too miss that cute fellow. He is one of the smartest amongst all my students!” Murphy said.

“This is a good friend of mine from far away, Sire Leylin Farlier!” Murphy introduced Leylin to Viscount Jackson.

“Extreme Night City welcomes you!” Jackson sized up Leylin, and opened his broad shoulders, giving Leylin a hug.

Leylin’s smile was somewhat stiff, which he quickly concealed. Right at that moment, he was completely distracted by the stats shown by the A.I. Chip.

[Jackson. Strength: 7.9, Agility: 4.5, Vitality: 6.3, Spiritual force: 3.5. State: Healthy. This human is deemed as dangerous, it is strongly suggested that the Host maintain a distance of 50 metres from this person.]

“These stats can only belong to a Grand Knight!” Leylin’s pupils shrank.

“The vitality of Grand Knights is extremely high. And, after constant activation and stimulation of their internal life energy, they have surpassed the bottleneck that held back most humans. Moreover, they have also developed a slight resistance to rank 0 spells.” Leylin recalled a description he had read before.
“Very well! You should be a Knight too, right?” Lord Jackson was slightly astonished by Leylin’s strength, and he looked upon Leylin now in a friendlier light.
“I only recently advanced, and am nowhere close to you!”
Leylin said humbly and ordered the A.I. Chip, “A.I. Chip! Show me a simulation if I were to fight against this city lord Jackson.”
[Beep! Establishing parameters, inputting data, simulating battle scenario, predicting outcome....]
A large light screen flashed continuously, and the results: [Battle simulation complete. 50 metres and beyond, Host win rate is 89.8%. Between 20 to 50 metres, Host win rate is 58.7%. Below 20 metres, Host win rate is 33.9%!]
“As expected, the physical power of Grand Knights is extremely astounding. They are capable of closing the distance before a magician can cast a spell. If magicians do not try to stay out of range, they would be on the short end of the stick!”
Leylin’s expression did not change as he walked together with Murphy into the castle’s hall.
It was obvious that the large hall had been decorated for the occasion. The marbled floor was so smooth that it reflected the figures of people walking around on it.
A huge golden chandelier hung from the centre of the large hall. It was densely packed with lighted candles that shone through the surrounding coloured crystals letting out a colourful light.
At the side of this huge hall, was an orchestra of musicians wearing swallowtail coats and performing a slow enjoyable tune.
The area filled with long tables covered in white cloth. On these tables were gold and silver platters with various fruits and barbecued meat. On the side, there were even flasks and silver flagons, which emitted the strong aroma of wine.
Right in the centre was a huge open space where many of the nobility were waltzing to the music.
“It seems like a ball with a buffet on the side!” Leylin nodded his head.
“Go enjoy yourself! I’ll have to say hello to a few old friends!” Murphy said to Leylin.
“Please do!” Leylin gestured with his head in assent. He then picked up a cup of grape wine and sat on a nearby sofa.
Not long after, he spotted Murphy together with a number of coquettish women in revealing outfits. They even entered a small side room, which made him rather speechless.
“He’s so old and he still wants to pretend to be rather strong, can he even make it?”
“Do you mind if I sit beside you?” Just as Leylin was thinking such indecent thoughts, an elegant voice sounded beside him.
Leylin raised his head and saw a young lady wearing a purple gown. She a head of golden hair that fell to her shoulders like a waterfall; even her skin was a milky white.
Looking around, Leylin discovered that there was no one else near him. Leylin was quite good looking and kept himself well groomed, which naturally attracted a few young ladies.
“Of course, I don’t mind!” Leylin smiled lightly and chatted happily with the young lady.
To him, the combination of his memories from a previous life and the memories of this body’s previous owner made making a little girl happy an easy task.
Not long after, the young lady was completely enraptured by Leylin’s made-up stories.
“Haha…Haha, running naked on the street? He actually did that?” The young lady completely lost her earlier elegance; she laughed almost uproariously without much of her former delicate demeanor. This drew a lot of curious stares from the people close by.
“Sorry to interrupt you Leylin! However, our friends are here!”
Murphy followed closely by several noble women with whom he had just tangled violently, walked over. Surprisingly, his attire was still extremely neat and tidy, which left Leylin rather shocked.

“Alright, I have to go!” Leylin made a helpless gesture and rose from the sofa.

“This…Sir! After talking for so long, I haven’t asked for your name yet?” The young lady slapped her forehead.

“Leylin Farlier, just call me Leylin!”

“I…I’m Alicia, my house is located at Cecelia Main Street, 34. You’re welcomed to come over to play anytime!”

“Haha, I never thought that you might be so sought after by ladies huh!” After the both of them left, Murphy made fun of Leylin.

“It’s only a young lady who likes to listen to stories. Have they arrived?” Leylin asked.

“They’re all here, followed me!” Murphy said, and brought Leylin to a small room beside the dance hall.

There were several acolytes already waiting in the room. Leylin could sense that their energy waves made them either level 1 or level 2 acolytes.

Murphy obviously had the highest standing in this circle. When he entered, the acolytes all stood up to receive him.

“Alright!” Murphy swept his gaze around, “Let me introduce all of you to a new comrade! Leylin, he came from the west….”

After Leylin’s self-introduction was over, he could not help but ask Murphy, “Would a gathering like this cause an issue?”

“No worries, Jackson has reared some Beastmen and their noses are more sensitive than a dog’s. He already knew of our identities long ago. It’s just that all of us do not mention it explicitly!”

An acolyte with acne spoke, picking up a silver flagon and drinking from it from time to time.

“Oh! Mayflower, my Mayflower!” At this moment, a guy’s heavy
panting sounded.
“Oh! Baby! So hot, so good!” A woman’s murmuring groans followed soon after.
It seems like there was a couple in ardent passion in the room next door.
Black lines formed on Murphy’s face. He promptly swung his hand and a faint energy membrane enveloped the room isolating the noise of the outside world. “This is an accident, an accident!” His old face actually reflected his embarrassment.
Leylin wanted to faint, and there was a voice that repeatedly echoed in his mind. “Alright! I really shouldn’t harbour any hope toward this group of acolytes. They are all just a bunch of trash that has completely lost their motivation and prudence!”
Of course, on the surface, Leylin continued to pretend that he was naive as he began to converse in a friendly and amicable manner with this group of acolytes.

After the ball ended, the various horse carriages from different families set off. In a secret chamber within the city lord’s castle, the Viscount Jackson that Leylin saw today was talking to his subordinate.

“Is it confirmed?”

“I have detected the smell of a Mysterious Entity on his body. It has also been confirmed that he is extremely young!” The person who replied was draped in black robes; tufts of yellow fur could be glimpsed growing on his face.

“He is different from those befuddled acolytes. I do not think he will be retiring at such a young age. No matter if he is hiding from enemies or is concealing some other motive, his appearance is not good news for us!” A worried expression flickered through Jackson’s steely face.

“Please pardon my forthrightness! Although we are able to deal with a Mysterious Entity right now, if we draw the ire of the rest of them, then whatever gains we achieve would not make up for the losses we may incur!”

The Half-Beast Man said slowly.

“Indeed!” Jackson became quiet for some time before giving out an order, “Do not incur the wrath of the other party, but never let him
out of your sight!”
“I understand!” The Half-Beast Man disappeared into the darkness.…
Ever since the ball, Leylin’s agenda progressed extremely quickly. First, he borrowed 4500 gold coins from Murphy to buy the villa. Afterward, through the search done by Old Welker, Leylin chose a medicine shop that was about to close down but had a good geographic position. He took over it and obtained the shop permit. With the unexpected enthusiastic help from the city lord’s castle, many procedures were actually settled in a matter of days.
Of course, Leylin discovered a few spies loitering around the medicine shop and the villa. However, these secretive parties exercised restraint against Leylin, and only made basic surveillance measures, not insinuating their influence onto Leylin’s people. So, Leylin was not too bothered by their presence either.
Through Murphy, he hired a few pharmacists. Once the minimum standards for managing the medicine shop were met, he then completely handed over the reins to his core personnel and buried himself in his magic experiments.
After some renovation, the Knight’s villa looked even newer than when it was brand new.
Previously, the Knight stayed in a three storey high, white-brick loft. Now, Leylin chose the few really big rooms for his private use. The largest of these was used as his bedroom while the rooms on both sides served as a study room and an experiment lab. After putting in place a few detection spells he had learned at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy as an early warning grid, he passed down strict orders to his subordinates that without his order, no one was access to these rooms.
As for Greem and Fraser, they were posted near the master bedroom, as guards.
Fayern and other mercenaries were all given guard duty that rotated
between the villa and the medicine shop. Leylin also gave out notices that serious and hardworking people may purchase small tracts of land on his property in 3 years later, permanent residence being a possibility for qualified persons or families. This was a very strong motivation for normal mercenaries and farmers. Occasionally, Leylin looked through the windows and saw the serious hardworking serious mercenaries and farmers at work. Because he always stayed at the villa, apart from the occasional visit to Murphy’s place, he rarely even went to the medicine shop. The rumors that were slowly spreading outside gained Leylin the reputation of a benevolent yet lazy villa owner.

“Young Master! The people from the medicine shop are here!” Anna’s voice travelled through the door.

“Let them drop off the items in the living room and get Greem to move them to the experiment lab!” Leylin used his fingers to tap on the window pane, letting off a dull thudding noise.

“Your wish is my command!” The voice very soon was replaced with noises of things being moved about.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin came to the experiment lab. Right now, the originally spacious experiment was littered with crates and a few wooden long tables. There were no windows in the room, and only a chandelier hung from the ceiling emitting a dim glow.

“Young Master! According to your orders, the medicine shop has acquired for you every type of herb that can be found in the market.”

Anna lifted her dress and curtseyed. She turned around and opened a red wooden crate revealing stacks of tied roots and stems, as well as many other herbs of indeterminate quantity and type. On the side of each stack or bundle was stuck a yellow paper note indicating the names of these herbs.

“Also, these are all the formulas that normal pharmacists own.
They are only to normal humans.
Anna handed over yet another stack of dark yellow parchment notes.
Leylin’s eyes skimmed over these and placed the list on one of the long tables.
“All of you may leave! Anna, stay behind!” Leylin waved towards Greem and his assistants.
Greem bowed and strode through the large heavy door, closing it behind him.
With a huge clang, the experiment lab’s lighting turned even dimmer.
Leylin’s brows furrowed. He took out a white coloured rock from his sack.
He then pressed his fingers lightly on the rock and a layer of bright white light radiated from it.
This was a Sunlight Rock. It is an item that magicians normally use during their travels. Slight radiation energy is contained in it that can let out a bright light for a prolonged period of time.
However, this radiation was extremely small and could only be used for illumination.
“This is much brighter than before!” Leylin was very satisfied as he looked at his well-lit surroundings. He then said to Anna, “Store the herbs well, and arrange them in an orderly fashion on the experiment table!”
“Yes.” Anna hurried with her task.
Leylin casually picked up a purple coloured fruit. This fruit was the size of a thumb. It had lost all the water contained on its surface, thus its wrinkly exterior. Its weight was extremely light too.
“According to the medicine books delivered yesterday, this is the Warter Fruit, a type of fruit that grows in swamps.”
Leylin placed a finger on the surface of the fruit, “A.I. Chip! Extract data and save it in your databanks!”
Right now he no longer had to ingest the herbs. He could determine their medicinal properties with a mere touch.

In Leylin’s field of vision, the A.I. Chip overlaid a light blue screen, with many numbers and figures that changed constantly.

[Name: Warter Fruit. The area produced: Swamps. Uses: Mild poisonous properties with a numbing effect. Data stored!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned before a second had gone by.

“Very good. Again!” Leylin picked up another dried stem.

This was one of the reasons why Leylin had opened a medicine shop. Through his years of being an apprentice under Kroft, he recorded almost all the herbs used by Potioneering Masters, storing it into the A.I. Chip’s data banks.

However, those were special ingredients used by the Magi. As for herbs used by normal people, the A.I. Chip had no record of them. He now had to fill these missing bits of information.

Moreover, Leylin obtained two ancient potion formulas from his mentor and wanted to find substitutes for them. This could only be accomplished through innumerable experimentation and the consumption of huge amounts of precious and rare herbs. Even if Leylin had the A.I. Chip, he could not get around this step in the process.

With such a vast undertaking, Leylin could see no end to the task at hand even if he expended all his magic crystals.

However, if some ingredients could be substituted with herbs used by normal humans, he could economise by a huge margin.

“Although this might just be a daydream, the advantage was the potential savings a successful substitution promised. No matter how many experiments, it would still be considered a favorable exchange. Thus, by utilising the terrifying processing capabilities of the A.I. Chip, there is a glimmer of hope.

Leylin’s gaze was resolute, “Anyway, no matter how many
ingredients I consume, they are just ingredients used by normal humans. I only need to spend some gold coins to be able to buy them again. This is much better than spending magic crystals!” As for the investigation he commissioned, it had long since been tossed to the back of Leylin’s mind. After all, there were still two odd years of time and as long as he fully carried it out within these two years his mission would be counted as accomplished. Even if the mission were to fail, because Kroft was his teacher, the worst punishment would be a fine a few magic crystals. Hence, Leylin was not the least bit worried. Time slowly passed, and the experiment lab became quiet. There were only the occasional scraping noises Anna made when placing herbs on the table. Two days later, only Leylin remained in the lab. His face had a happy glow to it. [3217 types of herbs successfully stored in the databank. Would you like to create a separate folder?] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. “No! Combine them with the earlier record we made of some normal ingredients, establish a folder using the name “Compendium of ordinary ingredients”! Leylin ordered. [Folder created…transferring relevant simulation models into the databank] “Alright, next will be an analysis of the various combinations of medicinal properties. This is a huge project, even with the simulation I must still carry out experiments to verify the actual data and increase the probability of getting the results I desire.” Leylin thought. “Young Master, it’s time for dinner.” Anna’s muted voice sounded through the door. “Okay, I’m coming out.” When it was time to work, he worked;
and when it was time to rest, he rested. This was his principle for living. He would seldom do things like neglect food and rest to conduct more experiments, unlike other magicians.

To him, along the path of pursuing truth, appropriate rest was allowed.

Leylin smiled and tidied up the experiment table before leaving the lab.

“When I am conducting important experiments, I will hang a sign on the door. At that time, do not interrupt me no matter how many days I stay inside. Do you understand?” Leylin told Anna who was serving him.

“I’ll do as you bid, Young Master.”

“And what’s for dinner?” Leylin walked towards one side of the room. Although many masters practiced eating some meals together with their subordinates, this did not fit the customs of the Magi. So Leylin ate alone most of the time.

Several plates of food covered with hemispherical cloche tableware were arranged on a serving platter and placed on a small, round and white-colored table.

“It’s veal with purple vegetable soup and apple strawberry pie!” Anna said lightly, lifted the cover. A strong appetising aroma permeated the air.

“Not bad!” Leylin nodded his head as he let Anna place a napkin around his neck. He picked up the knife and dinner fork and began to eat.

“Also, remember to remind me tomorrow to set aside an hour of my time every day for Knight training!”

Leylin said to Anna, having suddenly recalled something. He had already ignited his internal life energy. As a Knight, he only needed to train some more to get his various stats above 3. Although Leylin planned to walk the path of a Magus, he had nothing to lose by increasing his stats.
The cold winter breeze was blowing and a bone-piercing chill permeated the air.

On a small field, Leylin was practicing his cross-blade techniques while half-naked. The muscles on his chest had become more defined. Although not very prominent, they were very robust, exuding a sense of vitality. Forward! Uppercut! Pierce! Every move was a flawless, textbook-perfect execution.

After Leylin finished his training, Anna—who was observing from the side—hurriedly ran forward and handed him a white towel. Leylin dried his sweat and called his stats onto his visual field.


“A.I. Chip, what is the progress from today’s training?”

[Assessment in progress! Host’s internal life energy has been raised to the maximum, further increase is not possible at the moment!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“This day has finally arrived!” Leylin exclaimed, “Being able to maximize these stats was already good enough. Even if I were to spend more time, I will not necessarily gain anything more. From now on his Knight training could be put on hold. After all, I just need to practice my blade skills in the future, so they don’t get rusty. With the A.I. Chip, this is no challenge at all.”
After the early morning Knight training ended, Leylin took a brief respite and waited until he was fully recovered before burying his head in more experiments.
Within the lab, Leylin placed a violet leaf into a beaker and added to it one spatula of a green-black, ink-like solution. He then lit a flame underneath the beaker.
The bright yellow fire continuously licked the bottom of the beaker, and purple bubbles began to froth.
“A.I. Chip! Record this down. Test 145, items of substitution: Hove Violet Leaves, Ninuo Root.”
[Record complete.] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned as it recorded in detail the various medicinal properties and reactions obtained through the experiment.
In this span of time, Leylin had already conducted more than a hundred experiments and made use of the A.I. Chip’s simulation feature over tens of thousands of times.
“This is the moment! I have a very strong premonition that it’ll be successful this time.”
As he murmured to himself, Leylin glanced at the volatile, green-and purple-coloured mixture.
Using normal human herbs as ingredients to synthesize the medicinal properties of magic herbs just seemed to be a fantasy, besides there were countless hurdles to overcome.
Although these experiments required ingredients that could be bought with gold coins, some magic ingredients were still needed to catalyse certain aspects of the experiment.
These were all magic ingredients that Leylin had acquired from the Magus Market. He had now almost used up all of them all.
Without the A.I. Chip simulating a large proportion of his experiments, Leylin’s rate of consumption would far outstrip his current rate.
Synthesizing a few important ingredients could already dry up
Leylin’s resources.
* Crash! *
The violet leaf in the beaker completely dissolved and the green coloured liquid became more translucent.
“This is it!” Leylin eyes widened. He picked up a glass rod and stirred in a counterclockwise direction at the same time extending a thread of spiritual force carefully into the contents of the beaker through the glass rod.
As the seconds became minutes, Leylin’s face grew more and more solemn. A few beads of sweat even began to form on his forehead.
* Ding Ling Ling! * A crisp ringing sounded from the beaker. At the heart of the faint green liquid, many black wormlike dots appeared and began continuously extending themselves in all directions.
Leylin’s expression did not change and his hands were as quick as a phantom, as he took a red-coloured pearl– lying on a petri dish nearby– and added it to the ongoing reaction.
* Pi Pa! * As the pearl was tossed inside, the black dots in the beaker quickly retreated and the faint green liquid became fainter and fainter, completely turning transparent.
[Beep! Azure Potion main ingredient substitution succeeded! Assessed as capable of standing in for 45.8% of the main ingredient’s medicinal properties.]
This prompt was extremely pleasing to Leylin’s ears.
“After combining several conjectures into tens of thousands of the A.I. Chip’s simulations, I have finally succeeded!” A corner of Leylin’s lips quirked up into a smile and he clenched his fist tightly.
At the same time, Leylin deeply lamented about the fact even though he was a Potioneering Master, it was difficult to modify formulas.
He had the original formula, and the A.I. Chip to run simulations for him. This saved a lot of time and ingredients. Even so, he took
this long to successfully modify the formula. Instead, if it was his Senior Merlin, he might not even be able to afford the cost of the ingredients, and that also true for the powerful family that supported him behind the scenes. Squandering precious ingredients for a gamble with a chance of less than one in ten thousand was simply illogical to the typical Magus. Moreover, during the process of experimentation, each failure would be an agonizing psychological burn that would singe the psyche of a Potioneering Master, day and night. If one could actually change the formula, then that would be out of pure luck, even for Potioneering Grandmasters who had abundant experiences and skill. However, once the formula was changed, it would lead to huge profits, especially for a potion that could raise spiritual force. “A.I. Chip! If I were to substitute the original ingredients, how much will the retained effect be?” [Comparison in progress. Databank information is insufficient. Establishing conjecture. Simulating... Beep! The new formula will retain roughly 35.4% of the original’s effectiveness.] “This is on the low side, but I have no choice. The substituted ingredients are mainly normal ones even commoners can obtain. Quantity can compensate whatever is lacking in quality.” Leylin analysed the pros and cons of the new Azure Potion, “Based on this, the price could be in excess of 100,000 magic crystals. A pity, this formula was achieved with my current stats. For other people, the effect would be extremely hard to predict. Moreover, the procedures are extremely complicated and some steps are impossible to do without the A.I. Chip. Other Potioneering Masters, will definitely fail many times when brewing this potion.” In fact, it was clear to Leylin that even if he became an official Magus, once others became aware of this formula, he would not be
able to hold onto it. After all, the ingredients for this new spiritual force formula could be bought in mass amounts. It would be game-changing for the lower levels of the various academies and factions. None of them would willingly let go of such an opportunity.

After making up his mind, he burned the formula completely into his memory. The potions he would brew would only be for personal consumption. Leylin then tidied up all traces of his experiments, before stepping through the door of the experiment lab.

“Young Master.” Anna, who was dozing on a chair nearby, got up in a hurry.

“Housekeeper Welker has been looking for you for two hours. There appears to be some crisis at the medicine shop!”

“Oh? Let him come to my study after dinner!” Leylin took off the soiled, sterile robe designed especially for his experiments and changed into more casual soft clothing.

“Apart from Welker, are there any other recent incidents?”

Leylin lounged on a nearby sofa. On the table beside it were purple grape-like fruits and some red berries, which Leylin usually liked to eat.

“Knight Fraser came over earlier and said that the reward mission you commissioned has some developments!”

Although Leylin did not give a high priority to the academy’s mission, some superficial work still had to be done. He, thus, issued a mission notice to the mercenaries and adventurers of Extreme Night City to scout the situation within the depths of the Dark Night Woods, the reward being 1000 gold pieces. It seems that the mission notice was beginning to bear fruit.

After dinner, Leylin received Old Welker and Fraser in his study. Fraser wore leather armour and was as robust as ever. As for Old Welker, he looked careworn and his body had hunched over.
Old Welker bowed towards Leylin, “Respected Young Master, our earnings from the medicine shop this month is….”
“No need for that!” Leylin leaned against the study table behind him and waved his hands interrupting Old Welker’s speech, “Pass down instructions to buy all Hove Violet Leaves, Ninuo Roots, and Three Flowered Snake Fruits….”
“Then Young Master, how many of them are we buying?”
“All!”
“All?” Old Welker raised his head and looked at Leylin in astonishment.
“That’s right. The three ingredients that I’ve stated, you must buy all of them in the market, and store them at the villa.” Leylin remained indifferent as he said this.
“But…may I remind the Young Master, the medicine shop business is not doing well, together with the herbs that Young Master purchased from time to time, our balance books right now are already in a precarious state….” If not for the villa forking out gold coins all the time, the shop would have been bankrupt by now—this was something, though, that Old Welker did not dare to voice out so he kept it to himself.
“I know that, but you must remember this. If the gold coins are not sufficient, you may take more from Anna. These purchases must not be discontinued. These are my standing orders.” Leylin steepled his fingers. Although he was approximately 15 years old, he could apparently impose his will.
“Al….Alright! I got it.” A layer of cold sweat beaded Old Welker’s forehead. He immediately bowed then left.
He was not the same as Anna and the three men who were aware of Leylin’s identity. It was only natural that he was a little apprehensive about the way Leylin handled financial matters.
However, for Leylin, the only reason he set up a household was to serve his own purposes and to help him with miscellaneous tasks
such as the collection of ingredients. So the loss of some gold coins was no big deal. Anything and everything was to pave the way for his progress to become a Magus. Everything else was a nuisance. “Although I have walked the path of a Magus, it is just to obtain freedom and a worry-free life. It is a pity, though, that my current strength is far from enough.” Leylin sighed deeply. He appeared to have become a person of consequence within Extreme Night City, largely owing to his having a villa and servants. However, for Magi, such things were illusory soap bubbles that could completely vanish with a gentle tap. The collateral damage of a battle between any two official Magi would definitely be a deadly situation for the current Leylin. What was the point of fleeting comfort when life or death was not entirely guaranteed? “More importantly, if the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was totally defeated, then Sage Gotham’s Hut would perhaps classify all of the faculty and students of the academy as fugitives. I would have to abandon everything and flee.” “In this chaotic era, only one’s own strength can ensure freedom.”
After Old Welker left, only Leylin and Fraser remained in the room.

The Knight knew of Leylin’s status as a magician, so Leylin’s attitude was a little more lax too. Half lying on the recliner, Leylin’s eyes squinted, “What is the update on the withering woods?”

Fraser lowered his head to signify his respect, as he said, “Respected Young Master, according to your orders, I sent many scouts out to reconnoiter the withering woods. At the price of 1 dead and 2 seriously injured, I finally uncovered some clues.”

Recent events at the withering woods had led to a direct decrease in herb harvesting. As of this moment, several huge factions had also sent scouts with the same intent. But even after having sent many scouts, they were all ambushed.

According to a few eyewitnesses, they had suffered from some ridiculous attacks from a black entity within the woods. So far, it was only known that that entity was an extremely swift monster. Apart from that description, nothing else was known.

“Go on.” Leylin’s voice was extremely calm.

“One bandit was finally able to see clearly what that monster looked like, during one of its ambushes. This is the sketch he drew.”

The Knight handed over a sketch to Leylin. Leylin took a look. On the sketch paper was a kind of four-legged,
snake-like creature. Its body was littered with scales, it had a forked tongue, and on its crown was a small horn. “What else did the bandit say?” Leylin asked. “He said that this creature was about two metres in length. Its whole body was a yellowish-brown and it was extremely fast.” Fraser added. “It had such an appearance?” Leylin said as hurriedly recalled an illustrated handbook of unusual creatures he had seen back at the academy, “It’s rather similar to the Blue Lizard, but the colour is not right. It also appears to be similar to a snake-type!” “However, the fact that a few scouts were able to escape shows that this creature is not very dangerous. A level 2 acolyte should be able to deal with it.” Leylin calmed down. At the moment, though, he still did not have any intention of settling this personally. Apart from the potion experiments entering a crucial stage, the withering woods event had not been investigated fully. Unless it was absolutely necessary, Leylin would not risk his life for unknown dangers. “Pass these orders down. No matter who, as long as they can capture or slay this creature, I will reward them with 2000 gold pieces! Also, any materials from the creature, be it scales, blood, skin or horn, I will give an additional 200 gold pieces for them.” Leylin said blandly. “Yes, Milord, allow me to issue these mission orders.” Fraser bowed. “Go.” Leylin waved his hands. Fraser bowed again before striding off.

……

Three days later, east of Extreme Night City, in a small canyon. Leylin wore black robes and walked on the mountainous path
along the canyon. Against a person like him with all of the stats above 3, these obstructions were not an issue at all. He trotted on as if taking a leisurely walk in his backyard. Behind him followed an armoured Greem, who also wore a mask with his helmet to conceal his appearance. “We’re here! Brey Canyon Market!” Leylin said softly as he felt the energy waves fluctuating in the vicinity. This market was on the map that Bicky had given to Leylin. It was situated close to Extreme Night City and served as a resource exchange point. Previously when Leylin chose the mission, part of his intent was to visit this market. “Halt!” A girl’s voice rang. Leylin turned towards the direction of the voice. He discovered a little girl, riding a mountain goat, moving towards them. The mountain goat’s four hooves skipped and hopped along the cliff. It actually moved very quickly, reaching Leylin’s side in a few moments. “You are a magician?” The little girl sized up Leylin and asked indifferently. “Yes, I am a wandering magician. I wish to enter the market. This is my servant!” Leylin pointed to Greem behind him. “This servant’s strength has already reached that of a Knight’s? You’re strong!” The little girl gave a thumbs up, “The fee is 1 magic crystal each for you and your servant. If you think that’s expensive then he can wait outside.” “No need for that!” Leylin took out 2 magic crystals and handed it over to the girl. “I wish to know where in this canyon I can obtain the latest information!” Leylin asked casually. “You’re new here, aren’t you? In here, I have the most updated news!” The little girl smugly tilted her head up and her face had an expression that said, “You may beg me for it.”
Leylin was rather speechless. From the A.I. Chip’s scan, this little girl was a level 3 acolyte. Her strength was actually higher than Murphy’s. She was definitely no longer a youth, appearances aside. It was hard to figure out why she maintained the countenance of a child.

“Could this respected guardian tell me what the price would be in order to obtain some news?” Leylin bowed slightly.

“You are rather pleasing to my eyes, so 1 news item in return for 1 magic crystal!” The little girl put on an expression that looked as if she thought highly of Leylin.

“Alright then!” Leylin smiled wryly and handed over a magic crystal.

“What is the progress of the war at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

“Recently, magicians who bought news from me have also enquired about this.” The little girl scratched her head, “According to the latest updates from yesterday, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy still persists due to their reliance on their magic spell formation. Acolyte fatalities have not been low, however.

Upon saying this, the little girl murmured, “Calm down! Calm down! The war’s conflagration will not extend to here. There aren’t even that many reliable resource points in this place, so how can it attract the attention of the academies. Only acolytes might come here occasionally.”

“I know that. Then do you know the reason for this war?” Leylin handed yet another magic crystal.

The little girl hurriedly took it, “Who knows? It seemed to be for a sceptre or some jewel….”

“So it’s like this!” Leylin nodded his head, indicating he had nothing more to ask.

“Young man, I hope you find what you need in this canyon, without any problems!” The little girl waved her hands and patted
the goat she rode. It resumed its hopping, and very soon they disappeared from his sight and into the canyon.
“Let us also go in!” Leylin said to Greem behind him.
Coming to the canyon this time, Leylin was on an extremely tight schedule. A number of his experiments have reached a crucial stage. The modified Azure Potion formula was also nearing completion.
It was a pity that some of the magic ingredients he stockpiled before had been depleted. He, thus, had no choice but to venture from his home.
“Soon! I only need to complete the supplementary ingredients, and then begin to try brewing the Azure Potion. By then my spiritual force, which has been slowly increasing, will receive a huge boost!” Leylin eyes seemed to glow with fire.
Following the narrow route along the precipice, Leylin carefully entered the depths of the ravine. In this resource exchange point, the stores were all set up within the holes that dotted the cliff, a little like the caves of primitive men.
Leylin walked into a potions shop called “Langford’s Potions”. The cave was extremely dark, only a few rocks radiating green light illuminated it.
These rocks seemingly made every item inside the cave emanate a green glow making the scene look extremely gloomy.
“Hehehe! What do you want?” A dark and sorrowful laughter could be heard.
From behind the counter, an old dwarf walked out. His face was full of wrinkles, was bald and most of his teeth had fallen off too.
“I require 20 standard servings each of Tendril Leaves, Water Crystal Fruits and Dragon-Eyed Grapeseed!”
Leylin enunciated slowly.
“Oh!” The old dwarf stood rooted to the floor not moving, “These are all potion ingredients and their prices will not be ordinary! Are
you a Potioneering Master?”
“That does not seem to concern you in any way.” Leylin’s brows furrowed, this old geezer’s attitude made him rather displeased.
“Young man! Could it be that no one taught you to respect the elderly?” The dwarf geezer smiled and the pupils of his eyes seemed to swirl continuously.
[Warning! Warning! The target’s body is radiating magical energy waves!] The A.I. Chip’s alert sounded.
Greem who was behind Leylin fell without making a sound.
“Damn it!” Leylin cursed. A few acolytes and even official Magi, because of getting injured while advancing or due to being contaminated by radiation from experimenting, caused them to become mentally unstable. They often exhibited craziness. Obviously, Leylin met one such today.
According to the A.I. Chip’s scan, the dwarf opposite him was a level 2 acolyte, but his spiritual force was much higher than Leylin’s.
The magical power in Leylin’s body circulated, allowing him to escape from the old geezer’s spell, “An Illusionary spell? Doesn’t seem like it! It should be some passive spell if it’s like this!”
Leylin’s robes shook, and a fire red potion was now in his hands. His whole body let off a very dangerous feeling.
“Hahaha…Just like this! Just like this! Death is beautiful, and is descending upon us soon!” The dwarf geezer laughed manically and danced in joy.
“This person has gone completely crazy!” Leylin got ready to throw the explosive potion in his hands, and to find an escape route.
He did not want to engage in a broil with a madman without cause nor reason. Besides, winning will not net him any gains.
“That’s enough, Langford!” Just when the dwarf geezer was preparing another spell, a voice travelled over. It was the guardian, the voice of the little girl who rode the mountain goat.
“Marissa! I’ve had enough of you!” The dwarf geezer howled loudly, and he made an incantation. Black coloured smoke congealed in his hands forming a massive black ball. The surrounding shelves that held various ingredients were on the verge of collapse under the energy waves emitted by the black ball. “Damn it! Langford’s time is here again. Which one of you can help me?” The little girl’s voice travelled over again, this time sounding rather exasperated. “Foos!” “Ocker!”

Two extremely short incantations travelled over and gave Leylin a shock, “They’re all level 3 acolytes! I heard that not only can the spiritual force of level 3 acolytes support a few rank 0 spells, they have also grasped the technique of phrase casting, which shortens incantations to a few syllables achieving near instantaneous casting.”

After the few syllables were cast, many green vines appeared within the cave. Some of the huge vines held Langford’s hands and feet together. Langford roared continuously. He prepared to toss the black-coloured smoke ball out.

At that moment, a red coloured arrow ripped through the air and flew directly at the heart of the ball. *Poof!* The surroundings let off a light ring as the black smoke and the red arrow continued to counteract each other before finally disappearing into nothingness.

“A positive energy arrow.” Leylin’s pupils contracted, “The level 3 acolyte who struck from the outside, no matter their battle ability or spell comprehension, they have far surpassed me!”
“What are you guys doing? Put me down quickly!”
At this moment, Langford, who was trapped, transformed rapidly. The maniacal look on his face vanished, and his eyes showed sanity. The originally bald head had grown a large amount of green hair that quickly extended to his ankles.
“Look his hair is already growing, it seems like he has regained his sanity!” The little girl’s voice rang out and the green vines were retracted.
“Langford! You actually did not master anticipating when your episodes of insanity would trigger. You even broke the rules of the canyon by startling our customer! You better obtain our guest’s forgiveness. Otherwise, you will be chased out of this place!”
Two voices gradually left, and Leylin did not see the other two level 3 acolytes, even after the battle had ended. Moreover, even the interior of the cave remained unharmed.
Upon noticing that something was amiss, the dwarf hurriedly bowed before Leylin, “My apologies, Sir! Due to some mental strain, there are times when I’m unable to control myself. I hope you will allow me to make amends for the inconvenience I caused.”
Langford was a little dispirited, “Earlier I really thought I had the timing down. Alas, I never anticipated that it would flare up more often than before, who knows if I really have to move out….”
Leylin too did not know how to react in this situation. He could only say, “Then please wake my servant up. Also, hurry and bring the ingredients I requested!”

“Of course!” The dwarf geezer dragged his long shaggy hair and stood in front of Greem. He lifted Greem’s eyelid to have a look, “Your servant has only fainted temporarily. He will recover after a short rest!”

He then took some brown coloured powder from his robes and made Greem swallow them. Not long after, the burly fellow woke up.

Langford then brought out a small box and handed it to Leylin, “To compensate for your trouble. Furthermore, I can give you a 50% discount!”

“…” Leylin was a little speechless, but he still handed the magic crystals to the geezer and gave the box to Greem for him to carry before he bade farewell.

As they said their goodbyes, Langford bowed deeply again, “If you still wish to trade with me, please remember, only when my hair has grown past my ankle, will I be in a period of sanity. The rest of the time, avoid me for the time being.

Leylin nodded his head and left the canyon with Greem.

Originally, he was in a mood to browse around. However, after this incident, he had completely lost interest. Who knew if there were other crazy people in this canyon.

The path of a Magus is treacherous, each failure in advancement—be it through an experiment or as a side effect of spell radiation—can cause irreversible damage to those involved, even costing them their lives sometimes.

Adding prolonged longevity and immense power, over time a Magus’ character would undergo some kind of change; some may even develop mental problems.

Leylin thought of Langford and the two level 3 acolytes who had
rendered their assistance. The feeling they gave Leylin was completely different from that of the acolytes of Extreme Night City.
To put things in perspective, it was like a pack of wolves against lambs.
“It seems like real magicians very seldom prefer to stay around humans, and they predominantly stay in rural areas.
Seeing the might of those two level 3 acolytes today made Leylin somewhat more zealous, “Once I have successfully brewed the Azure Potion, I too can quickly advance to that level!”

……

In the lab, under the brilliant light, Leylin took and stared at a test tube from the table. It continuously bubbled with blue froth.
With extremely firm hands, he shook it according to a mysterious rhythm.
The blue bubbles in the test tube continued to froth upwards then vanish as it reached the brim.
[The reaction in the potion has become extremely stable, and is estimated to exceed the threshold in 3 Minutes 24 Seconds!] The A.I. Chip’s observation alerted.
After reporting this condition, a timer at a bottom corner of Leylin’s visual field started the countdown.
When the countdown reached 0, Leylin immediately used the ancient Byron language and muttered an incantation, “This is the azure blue ocean, come! My little babies!”
His other hand immediately dropped some of the blue crystals he was holding, into the test tube.
* Weng Weng! * The test tube started to tremble.
A few streaks of a brilliant blue light flew out of its mouth and rotated around it turning into little blue coloured mermaids.
These little mermaids had a girl’s torso and were only the size of Leylin’s thumb. On their chests hung two shell pieces while the bottom half of their body was that of a fish’s tail. At this moment, they were holding hands together, circling the test tube, singing, and dancing.

Their sweet distinct elegant voices sang and it reverberated within the room strumming on Leylin’s heartstrings.

“The final step! Resist the alluring voices of the mermaids!” Leylin’s expression tightened.

Rumours had it that the singing voices of mermaids not only have terrifying bewitching energy, but these voices were also used to prey on sailors in the deep seas. Many suspected these mermaids as main culprits behind the creation of ghost ships!

Right now, Leylin felt a strong impulse to throw everything he owned to the side, and dive straight into the ocean.

“This is only an illusion. It only has the 10% of an actual mermaid’s might. If these were real or were cast by mermaid Magi, what would the effects be?” Leylin clenched his teeth and gave off a layer of grey-black light from his body deflecting these voices.

“Manse!” After waiting for roughly 30 seconds, Leylin suddenly blurted out a word.

* Chi Chi! * Black coloured needles appeared piercing through the chests of those little mermaids.

Agonised expressions could be seen on the pretty faces of the mermaids. Suddenly, they dissolved and turned into a few drops of blue liquid that returned into the test tube.

Huge amounts of bubbles, crystals and the drops of liquid rapidly merged and at that instant turned into a test tube half filled with a dark blue potion.

* Crash! Leylin shook the test tube lightly. From within the test tube came the crashing sound like that of great surging waves in an ocean.
The modified Azure Potion has been brewed successfully. A.I. Chip indicated.

“A.I. Chip, how potent is this potion compared to the original formulation?” Leylin asked.

[Beep! Collecting the vapours. Analysing and comparing data… Estimated to have 33% of the original potion’s effect.]

Although the previous estimate was 35.4%, there would be some minute differences during the actual brewing. Furthermore, it was the first time he did this experiment, so achieving this effect made Leylin very content.

“A pity that the consumptions of Hove Violet Leaves for this process is too high!” Leylin looked at the remnants of the Hove Violet Leaves lying on the side.

Only the essence from the middle of a whole piece of Hove Violet Leaf could be used for the potion. Apart from that, many complicated steps also had to be accomplished resulting in the high consumption rate.

He estimated that even after Welker bought all of the ingredients available, it would only allow Leylin to brew the potion another 30 to 40 times.

“Now, I wonder what the effects of this ancient potion are?” Leylin’s eyes flashed in anticipation. He directly walked to an empty space and sat cross-legged on the floor. He then poured the Azure Potion into his mouth.

“It’s a little bitter, and has a rather fish-like odour.” The muscles on Leylin’s face twitched, “The palate of these ancient Magi was just so-so….”

“According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the best complement to potions that increase spiritual force is meditation!”

Leylin thought of this before completely entering into a meditative mode.

This time, the meditations effect was very obviously different from
before. With a vague concept of time, Leylin felt like he was in the middle of an azure blue ocean and boundless blue sea water squeezed his middle almost suffocating him.

When seen from the outside, the muscles on Leylin’s handsome face twitched, and drops of sweat continuously dripped out. Almost two hours later, Leylin abruptly opened both of his eyes.

“Phew! The feeling from meditating like this is several times more uncomfortable than before!” Leylin shook his head.

The meditation of an acolyte, more often than not, led to exhaustion afterwards. However, right now Leylin felt his whole body aching, especially his brain, which felt like someone took a large metal hammer and kept smashing it. Even now he was somewhat dizzy.


Immediately, a blue screen appeared before Leylin and showed a stream of numbers.

[The Host’s spiritual force has been detected as undergoing a rapid rise!] [Host is under the influence of an unknown, spiritual force increasing by 0.01] [spiritual force increasing by 0.01] [The meditative state is deepening. Effect optimised. spiritual force increasing by 0.03] [spiritual force has reached the threshold, increasing by 0.05]

……

[Meditative state ended, Host’s stats undergoing change. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.2, Spiritual force: 4.9, Magic Power: 4.0. Status: Healthy]

Rows of data were displayed, and Leylin discovered at the end that his spiritual force had increased by 0.2.

“This figure!” Leylin’s eyes widened, “If the original ingredients were used, doesn’t that mean that I can increase the spiritual force
by about 0.7 at a time! It is indeed worthy to be called an ancient potion. Even for official Magi, this is a pretty good outcome!”
“A.I. Chip, assuming there are enough potions on hand, how much time will I need to reach 7 spiritual force points?” Leylin asked.
[Inputting effect of Azure Potion, establishing simulation, factoring tolerance principle, calculation in progress….]
The A.I. Chip began calculating, dozens of seconds later, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
[According to the Host’s resistance to medicinal properties, it is estimated that the Host will achieve 7 spiritual force points after two months!]
The necessary conditions to advance to level 3 acolyte was to have mastery over at least 2 spell models, a spiritual force of 7 and to use a reactive elixir.
Leylin had gotten the spell models and reactive elixirs long ago. What kept him back was this spiritual force bottleneck.
“A pity, though! The success rate for brewing the Azure Potion is extremely horrifying. Even if it’s me, I will at most succeed one out of ten times!”
“Hove Violet Leaves. I need huge amounts of Hove Violet Leaves. If it cannot be done, I must organise a trading party to acquire them from other cities.”
Leylin clenched his teeth. His eyes revealed obvious desire.
“Young Master!” As he walked out from the lab, Anna, who was waiting outside, greeted him immediately.
“Pass these orders down. From now on, our establishment will cease all operations and devote all resources towards purchasing Hove Violet Leaves. Moreover, Fraser is to make a trip to nearby cities to acquire them!” Leylin’s expression was extremely grim.
“Yes!” This was the first time Anna had seen this side of Leylin, so she hurriedly retreated.
The bitter cold of winter passed, and the weather began to get warmer.
Standing on the villa, Leylin could already see the minuscule green dots from afar. On nearby fields, there were even farmers laboriously working.
“A year has passed unknowingly; I am already 15 years old now!” Leylin’s hands pressed on the windowsill, and his eyes seemed to be disconcerted.
All of the Hove Violet Leaves available in Extreme Night City had been bought by him. With continuous brewing, he managed to get 5 Azure Potions, bringing his spiritual force to 5.8.
Unfortunately, any potion, when used excessively, would produce a resistance towards it, and the effects would be reduced over time. Originally, he had estimated that his spiritual force would reach a value of 5.9 with the resources available. However, in reality, it fell short by 0.1 without any apparent cause.
“Right now, I can only place my hopes on Fraser and the rest who have gone to neighbouring cities to purchase the ingredient.” Leylin rested by the windowsill. He stretched his hands and plucked a bunch of red berries from the table munching on them as snacks.
“Compared to other acolytes, however, my progress is akin to flying. After all, even the heir of a large family cannot use potions endlessly. What’s more, these are precious potions that could...
increase spiritual force.”
Within a month, Leylin already chased up to the fifth-grade acolytes who had pulled away from him over a year ago.
“It’s fortunate that I’m outside the academy. Only then am I able to pursue my experiments without fearing of the consequences, and use potions such as these!” Leylin was suddenly rejoicing over the benefits that the war brought him.
“However, even if the war ends now, I wouldn’t dare go back. I must, at least, wait until the 3 years mission duration is up. Only then will my excuse be plausible.
At that moment, Leylin estimated that he would already be a level 3 acolyte. Apart from the professors, he would be considered to have power, and would be regarded as a more important member. Moreover, with these years as cover, he would have enough time to think up a few explanations to cover his tracks.
“Master! An emissary from the city lord has arrived with an invitation.” Anna knocked on the door, entering only after getting Leylin’s permission.
Because of some Magus’ doings, her face looked as youthful as ever, never changing.
“An invitation?” Leylin was a little skeptical. He did not have many relations with Viscount Jackson all this while.
After looking the missive over, “A gathering? On the invitation, it was specifically stated that Murphy and his circle of people were invited, which are all acolytes!”
Leylin surmised, “Could it be? Some mysterious thing has happened that requires the help of magicians?”
“Anna, prepare a horse carriage and a set of formal clothes for me. I have to leave for a while.” Leylin said this without giving it another thought. Towards the Grand Knight, Viscount Jackson, who was also the Lord of Extreme Night City, it was difficult for an acolyte to interfere with
his might. Therefore, Leylin did not want to be on bad terms with him.
Moreover, due to the decreased supply of Hove Violet Leaves recently, Leylin did not have any other important things to do, so he could make time for this gathering.
“I’ll have a look, and I haven’t seen Murphy for some time now!”
In the heart of Extreme Night City, the castle-like building which was built using grey rocks was extremely magnificent. There were many soldiers patrolling the area, revealing its prestige.
* Ta-Ta! * A black horse carriage suddenly halted in front of the city lord’s castle. The carriage door opened, and a brown-haired noble youth stepped down from it. He looked rather thin, but his bright eyes were filled with vigour.
At that same instant, another horse carriage, made of reddish brown wood, halted alongside it too. From it stepped out a white bearded geezer who was carrying a book. He radiated a scholarly aura.
After seeing Leylin, every wrinkle on the old geezer’s face loosened as he smiled. He took the initiative and spread his arms out, “It’s been a long time, my friend!”
“I’m very pleased to meet you, Scholar Murphy!” Leylin smiled as he gently hugged the old man.
His relationship with Murphy was pretty good. Although this old geezer had a few demerits, but it was undeniable that some of his experiences were a source of great enlightenment for Leylin. When Leylin had first arrived in Extreme Night City, Murphy had also given much help to Leylin.
Both of them conversed casually. They flashed their invitation cards at the same time as they went past the guarded entrance.
A person, rather like a butler, led Leylin and Murphy through the garden and brought them to a small-sized living room.
Several acolyte residents were already there and Leylin went
forward to greet them.
There was a circular sofa in the middle of the living room, with a mahogany table at its centre. It seemed to suggest equality between status and levels.
“Welcome, my friends!”
The tough looking Viscount Jackson entered. He looked the same, to Leylin, as he looked a year ago. Time did not seem to have caused any changes in him, apart from a few more strands of hair white behind his ears that is.
“City lord!” The acolytes all nodded their heads.
“Come, no need for formalities! Sit!” Viscount Jackson casually sat on the sofa and serving maids that wore low cut blouses served some red tea as refreshments, with matching flavoured cake and biscuit snacks.
“Why does the atmosphere seem to be like a conference and afternoon tea?” Although he had his doubts, Leylin never revealed anything.
Viscount Jackson and the acolytes sat in a circle, and, from time to time, they discussed the latest news. On the whole, the atmosphere felt extremely amiable.
“A pity, Viscount Jackson is known to be a cold-blooded person. I heard that to suppress a riot, he immediately ordered the execution of a whole village, even hanging all its resident’s heads on wooden stakes….“
Leylin still put on a friendly mannerism, but deep down he exclaimed, “As expected, to interact harmoniously, one must first have the prerequisite of equal power!”
“Yes, speaking of Baron Fey, he has recently been distressed about the issues of the medicine shop!” Viscount Jackson inadvertently spoke of this while chatting idly.
“We have also heard of the withering woods of Dark Night Woods for some time now. Only that we have not arrived at any solution
yet!” An acolyte sitting at the side spoke, playing at being a character interested in delving deeper into this topic. Murphy’s brows furrowed, “I believe that my lord Viscount will definitely have a solution, right?”

However, Viscount Jackson smiled wryly, “My friends! I have already used ravens to inform the royal family, but up to now I have not received any reply….I am completely at a loss about what to do in this situation!”

“Royal family?” Leylin’s heart thumped, the royal family behind the Poolfield Kingdom was supported by Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. The relationship between the two parties was extremely intricate. This mission appearing in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was finally no longer strange anymore.

Speaking of which, he was even the representative sent by Abyssal Bone Forest Academy to remedy this problem, but he had been lackadaisical about it. He had finally forced Viscount Jackson to have no solution but to request help from this group of acolytes. Although deep within he smiled cynically, on the surface Leylin still put on the same front. He picked up the cup of hot tea and sipped, without any intention of owning up.

“Is it only a high levelled creature that had mutated? Could it be that Sire cannot even resolve this?” A red-haired, middle-aged man asked.

Leylin recognised this person; he had opened an apparel store in Extreme Night City and many clothes in his villa had been purchased from there. The city’s residents knew that the owner of this clothing store was a friendly, middle-aged man, who even has a beautiful daughter. But they never knew that he was a magician.

“Truth be told, I have already struck against it once before! I have even killed a lizard type creature, but it was of no help towards this withering woods case!”
Viscount Jackson flicked his hand.
“Right now, the withering woods area has expanded to a span of about two villages. If not resolved, sooner or later, it will encompass the whole of Dark Night Woods. When that happens, obtaining another herb from it would be only a dream!”
Viscount Jackson clenched his fists.
The herb industry was the pillar of Extreme Night City’s economy. Every year the city lord’s castle gained a lot from the high taxes it imposed on these trades. Right now its tax income had been drastically reduced. It was no wonder that Viscount Jackson was unable to sit still.
“Could you let us have a look at the composition of some of that lizard’s body parts?” Murphy asked.
“Yes!” Viscount Jackson clapped his hands, and a golden yellow-haired maid brought forward a silver tray. Displayed on it were some brown-yellow scales.
The surrounding acolytes all picked up a piece; Leylin too placed one in his hands.
“A.I. Chip! Scan!” The brown yellow scales were the size of a thumb, cold to the touch.
[Suspected to be the scale of a mutated creature, estimated to be a mutation of a lizard type in the Poolfield Kingdom! The surface emits mild radiation, the quality is a mess, extractable materials have been destroyed, useless as component material!]
The A.I. Chip relayed the information after the scanning.
“No wonder the magicians in the canyon did not react! There was simply no use of this creature’s body parts to magicians. It’s the whole body is not even worth a magic crystal. Who would do such a strenuous yet unrewarding task!”
Leylin was somewhat enlightened. To Magi, benefits were paramount. They will not do anything that reaped no benefits.
The withering woods case happened on the boundaries of Extreme
Night City. If there were any benefits or some magician who liked the creatures material, it would have long been resolved by the acolytes at the resource point in the ravine. Their letting this current state of affairs continues only meant one thing: there were no benefits at all from solving the withering woods debacle, only trouble. If there were any benefits, they were too small to cover the potential losses a venture would incur. This was why it had not been resolved after all this while.

“What a pity! It is not a high-level creature that magicians need, just a mutated organism, which has no use to them!” Murphy said after picking up a magnifying glass like object and scrutinising the scale for some time. He reached the same conclusion as Leylin.

“How is that? Any solutions?” Viscount Jackson put on a hopeful expression and looked at his guests.

“Most mutated organisms were caused by long-term exposure from its surroundings. Without further detail and research, I cannot make arrive at any conclusion from just this! Moreover, I don’t think that this creature is the main culprit for the withering woods.” Murphy shook his head.

“I am willing to give 30 magic crystals to every person, in addition to 5000 gold coins to ask you guys to scout the area. How about that? This is my request, on account of us being old friends!’”

Viscount Jackson looked the people in the circle and saw that the other acolytes too lacked interest. He could not help but clench his teeth as he stated this.

“Since it is troublesome for my lord Viscount, I definitely will not refuse!” Murphy said somewhat grudgingly.
pressed by Viscount Jackson’s aggressive request, very soon the other acolytes agreed too.
After all, they had been in his territory for so long, and he was also a Grand Knight, so it would be awkward if they were to decline.
However, there was an exception, the acolyte with acne, whom Leylin saw before, refused without hesitation.
Finally, the Viscount’s gaze focused on Leylin, “How about you, Mister Leylin?”
Viscount Jackson had some reservation towards Leylin. This was because the timing of Leylin’s arrival was a coincidence which made him guess that this acolyte was the emissary who had accepted the royal family’s mission.
It was a pity that ever since Leylin had arrived, he had spent most of his time in the manor, and rarely left the place. Neither were there any magicians who came forward seeking revenge on him, so it seemed like this acolyte was truly reclusive.
If it were not for the fact that Leylin gave orders so a mission to the withering woods would go forth, Viscount Jackson would have been utterly disappointed.
“After all, it has to be done, and going in as a party is better!”
Leylin thought deep down, yet on the surface he appeared extremely hesitant, “Recently I have been researching potions, and am extremely busy. Some of my experiments have reached a crucial
“Still, I beseech Mister Leylin to take time out for this!” Viscount Jackson said suddenly, “I know that you have been buying Hove Violet Leaves en masse recently. This ingredient is rather rare, and other cities as well do not have too much of this in their reserves. However, our castle has a storehouse. If Mister Leylin agrees to go on this scouting trip, I am willing to add those in our reserves as a reward!”

“Hove Violet Leaves?” Leylin eyes flashed; this was an unexpected surprise. He estimated this offer to be Viscount Jackson’s threshold. Leylin appeared to ‘struggle’ on the surface, before finally agreeing. Afterwards, the acolytes made plans for a concrete time to meet, before leaving hurriedly to make preparations.

For this bunch of acolytes, who wholeheartedly wanted to retire and live like princes, Leylin did not put much stock in their actual battle prowess.

“However, when all is said and done, they are still acolytes. Their basic spells, once cast, should still be something.” Leylin consoled himself.

At this moment, Murphy who just bade the others farewell walked beside Leylin with a frown on his expression, “Young man, when we reach the withering woods you have to protect me.”

“Sire! You are level 3! A level 3 acolyte! While I am but a level 2 acolyte!” Leylin eyes widened.

“Sigh…I’m already too old for this. I have forgotten much of my spell repertoire. You understand, forming the spell model is meticulous work, a small miss-step, and the explosion will not even leave behind corpse!” Murphy had a helpless expression.

“You, how long has it been since you last cast a spell?” Leylin suddenly had a bad premonition.

“It seems almost 30 to 40 years! As you know, I have always regarded myself as a scholar!” Murphy said very innocently.
“F*ck!” Leylin felt rather regretful suddenly.

Two days later. In the morning, Extreme Night City’s gates opened. Through those gates came a squadron of soldiers escorting a party in the middle. The group left the city’s perimeter at a rapid pace.

“I never thought that Viscount Jackson would also set off with us!” Murphy seemed to be very happy. Having a Grand Knight around, left him greatly assured.

Riding beside him, Viscount Jackson wore black-coloured, steel armour with a helmet that covered his entire face.

“How are your preparations?” Leylin found a suitable time and whispered into Murphy’s ears.

“I have concentrated these past 2 days, and can barely use two spell models,” Murphy replied softly.

“That’s good!” Their conversation before was of a joking nature. Leylin would never believe that this crafty old geezer did not have any life-preserving trump cards up his sleeves.

The Magus world is not a peaceful place. Without enough skills, Murphy would have long since died. So how could he have survived until now as a mere scholar?

“However, even the Black Iron Guards have been activated? There seem to be two small squadrons, about 20 men!”

“Of course, these are all elite troops of the city!” Murphy said. Actually, both he and Leylin knew that in the withering woods, those two squadrons served only one purpose. Cannon fodder!

Dark Night Woods wasn’t that far from the city. After travelling for about half an hour, the group managed to reach the wood’s outskirts.

“The danger level here is comparable to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, despite its smaller size. At least, if a normal human were to be more alert, they can enter and leave here as they please when gathering the herbs!”

Leylin was at the centre of the party. Seeing the two squadrons
paving the way at the front, his mind wandered. Along the way, Leylin felt the life force of the Dark Night Woods reducing. Although it was spring, the woods seemed to lack vitality. Moreover, everyone felt that their bodies were getting heavier and there was a shadow that veiled over their hearts. It felt extremely repressing.
Leylin looked around. The roots of the tree showed signs of withering. Some of the fresh sprouts have even turned pale yellow. “The withering area has not extended to this point, but this is just a hypothesis!” Leylin gasped.
“It is indeed different here now! My family used to be hunters. In past years, there used to be animals prancing about in this area. There were many wild vegetables and fresh herbs….” Leylin overheard the words a few soldiers whispered among themselves.
“A.I. Chip! Any change in the air around here?”
[Scanning. Comparing with the database! Conclusion: Oxygen density/levels decreased by 3.7%, Nitrogen density increased. An unknown noble gas has appeared. It currently accounts for 1.2% but its density continues to rise!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Could this inert noble gas be the perpetrator of this withering woods event?” Leylin stroked his chin, allowing the A.I. Chip to continue.
“Be careful! We have entered the withering domain!” Viscount Jackson roared at the forefront of the group.
Leylin patted his leather armour. Beneath it was the grey robes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acting as a second layer of defense. He had even purposely removed the academy’s insignia earlier.
What the accompanying acolytes lacked were the ephemeral defensive constructs that the Magi layered around themselves as they went into battle. Victory often revolved solely on whether the
spells cast managed to strike an opponent. “Instantaneous spell casting, Potioneering Spells, magic artifacts were all great enhancers of an acolyte’s battle strength!” Leylin reached into his robes and took out a potion from a leather bag tied around the waist. In Brey Canyon, he had replenished his ingredients and had made many explosive potions as his ammunition for this expedition. As the group advanced, the environment began to change. More and more dried withered plants and trees filled the woods. They let off an aura of death and decay. Leylin reached out and grabbed a twig in passing. His eyes flashed, “It has already lost all its water content, and even…. ” Exerting a little more force in his palm, the twig immediately turned into white dust, trickled through the gaps in his fingers and floated down towards the ground. “Even the internal structure has been completely destroyed!” Leylin’s heart felt rather heavy. A power like this already exceeded his expectations. “Where are we supposed to go?” Viscount Jackson asked Murphy who was beside him. “The heart of the woods! Only by reaching the center of this withering region, can my spell exert enough effect!” Murphy had an extremely solemn expression. He withdrew a spectacle-like item and hung it on his nose. A wide withered tree lay on the ground. It had an extremely spongy feel when stepped on. [Warning! Warning! Dangerous organism ahead!] The A.I. Chip’s alarm went off suddenly and Leylin tried to think of an excuse to use so he could warn the others. * Hu! * Suddenly brown-coloured branches and twigs flew up. A black figure came charging towards them. This figure was extremely quick. It opened its jaw littered with
snow white fangs. A red-coloured tongue flicked out. * Su Su! * The tongue coiled around one of the guards on duty at the front and retracted its tongue. * Pa! * The guard’s spear fell. “Be careful!” At this moment, Viscount Jackson gave a warning. “Argh!” The miserable cries sounded. The guard, trapped in the tongue’s coils had already disappeared into a black hole. He was snapped into two halves. Fresh red blood and guts spilled onto the ground. “Damn it!” Viscount Jackson shouted angrily and brandished the wide sword that hung from his waist. He immediately went and engaged the black figure. “Sluggish Spell!” The red-haired shop owner waved his hands. A yellow-green light was shot. It turned into a circular ring that closed on the black figure. The other acolytes began reacting and started their own incantations. * Sssii! * With the hissing of the creature, the black figure’s speed finally slowed down revealing its appearance to everyone. Its body was clay-yellow in colour. It had four legs, a tongue that was like a snake’s and a small horn on its forehead. “Wasn’t it reported that this creature died already? Why is there still one?” Leylin was suspicious, but he still activated the A.I. Chip. [Beep! Unknown organism. Strength: 5.5, Agility: 4 (6-7), Vitality: 5, Spiritual force: 3. Similarity to Blue Lizard 67.4% and to Mance Earth Snake 45.8%]
“It’s a rather strong creature. Apart from its low spiritual force, it doesn’t have any obvious flaws. Their numbers are also unknown; no wonder Jackson was not able to deal with them alone!” However, as the Sluggish Spell took effect, this strange lizard’s speed obviously took a hit. After a brief exchange of blows, the Viscount shouted, “Death Arc of Light!” From within his blade, a resplendent circle of light expanded into the shape of a blade. It streaked past the lizard’s neck.
“A Knight-class killing technique! It has the same properties as my Cross Slash. However, Jackson uses it with ease. He has not even used any Knight secret technique.”

* Bang! * The two passed each other. The huge lizard charged forward another few steps before suddenly crashing to the ground.

* Sssii! * Clay yellow scales landed on the floor one by one. Around the lizard’s neck area was a huge cut. Dark red blood spilled on the ground.

“All of you look!” An acolyte shouted suddenly.

With the death of the lizard, its body continued to cave inwards, with the scales continuously falling off and littering the ground. The blood quickly evaporated too. Within a few short minutes, there was only a white skeleton and some yellow scales left on the ground.
T here’s no need to look anymore. The same thing happened when I killed these creatures before.”

Viscount Jackson took out a white handkerchief and wiped his blade clean, before sheathing it into the scabbard.

“There’s actually a self-disintegration phenomenon when it dies!” Leylin was somewhat surprised. This did not correspond to the laws of nature. Looking at the skeleton that was still emitting white smoke, Leylin picked one of the bones up. The dried white bone was littered with cracks. It felt like any slight press would cause it to crumble. Leylin exerted a little more force, and with a hissing sound, the dried bone turned into fine powder.

“En, something’s off!” Leylin’s eyes flashed. He discovered some fine threads of veins within the white bone powder.

[Target still exuding vital energy. Identified to be a high-level pathogen. The host is recommended to keep a distance!] At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s scan appeared in Leylin’s vision. Leylin hurriedly flung off the powdery substance and began radiating internal energy particles from within his hands to cleanse them.

“What’s wrong?” Murphy too discovered that something was amiss.

“Be careful of those bones, there’s something inside it!” Leylin’s brows furrowed and he hurriedly distanced himself from it.
At that moment, more red blood veins appeared on the desiccated lizard’s skeleton. The bone began to exhibit innumerable puncture holes. It seemed like the veins resided within the bones previously.

Countless more blood red veins took shape, intertwining like the branches of a tree and started transforming into a small-sized creature.

It was rather similar to the creature before, but now its body was blood red. From time to time, red veins popped out. The creature did not have eyes or a mouth. Its four legs appeared extremely sturdy, however.

The creature’s attack was extremely fast. Before Viscount Jackson and the other acolytes could react, it left its original position. Only a red, blurry line could be seen.

“Give chase! This creature definitely has something to do with the withering woods!” A person covered fully in grey robes whispered something to Viscount Jackson, who immediately gave the order.

“That grey-robed person has always been following Viscount Jackson ever since we left Extreme Night City. He must be a trusted aide. He also has great detection abilities.”

Leylin eyes narrowed as he used the A.I. Chip to scan. “This appearance and figure, there is also the energy waves of a level 2 acolyte? Interesting!”

“Hurry! Keep up!”

Upon hearing Viscount Jackson’s orders, the Black Iron Guards immediately followed suit, overtaking Viscount Jackson and keeping him in their midst. The grey-robed person followed closely behind.

The remaining acolytes looked at each other. Murphy, a little helplessly, said, “Let’s follow them!”

Leylin purposely suppressed his speed and kept to Murphy’s speed, “That thing earlier, do you have any guesses as to what it was?”
“It seems to be some kind of parasite! According to its strength, the mother-parent has, at least, the strength of a level 3 acolyte….Or even that of an official Magus!” Murphy smiled bitterly.

Leylin and his small group were no threat to an official Magus. Any rank 1 spell could easily obliterate their entire party.

“That shouldn’t be!” Leylin shook his head. According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations, that parasite’s strength was not bad. The mother-parent’s body should at most have the strength of a level 3 acolyte, theoretically speaking. Otherwise, Leylin would have been the first to run away.

“It is only…..just an investigative mission, I even picked it myself. That it can actually involve an organism with the strength of a level 3 acolyte, how bad can my luck be….?” Leylin did not know what to think of himself anymore.

He was happy that he did not come here on his own before. Otherwise, unlike the main characters in the novels of his previous world, he was incapable of those fictional bursts of power in times of adversity. And the only outcome would be death.

“Be careful, we are venturing deeper. I can already feel the dense negative energy aura in the air!”

An acolyte howled.

Leylin had a higher perception towards negative energy. After all, his main affinities were Shadow and Dark Element particles. Just like Plant affinity and Light affinity emphasized on positive energy research, Leylin’s affinities made him spend more time exposed to negative energy compared to the others.

“It’s almost like the surroundings of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. No wonder I feel like a fish back in the water.”

Leylin pulled up his sleeves and covered the smile that pulled at the corners of his lips.

* Clang! * Sounded their armour as the group halted.

“It disappeared! I saw that red creature pausing at this spot for a
moment, then it suddenly disappeared!” Jackson brandished his long sword, “Be on guard!”
The Black Iron Guards immediately formed a circle protecting Jackson and the acolytes within to prevent any sneak attacks.
“This should be the heart of the withering woods!” Murphy rubbed his nose.
“The scouting method I have prepared can now be used!” Murphy took a black coloured potion from his robes and poured the contents on the ground after opening the plug.
* Plop plop! *
After the black coloured potion was poured on the forest floor, it actually turned into tiny ants scampering in all directions.
After the potion was used up, Leylin estimated that there were close to ten thousand ants that appeared.
“A scout like this can be considered to have omnidirectional coverage. It will be extremely difficult for that creature to escape!” Leylin thought.
As expected, after roughly a dozen minutes, a black coloured ant appeared at Murphy’s feet, crawled on his robes all the way to his ears, and appeared as if it whispered something.
“It’s been found! Follow me!” Murphy followed the ant and led the group to a withered oak tree.
“Move this oak tree away!” Murphy pointed at the large tree, “According to my probing, there seems to be a secret tunnel underneath it.”
“Squad 1! Go!” Jackson waved his hands.
Several Black Iron Guards went forward and stabbed their pikes at the oak tree.
The withered oak tree did not seem capable of withstanding the assault. After being pierced multiple times by the pikes, many pieces and chips of bark filled the air as if it were snowing. The ten guards hurriedly moved the completely withered oak tree away
revealing a dark sinister tunnel.
“Here it is!” Murphy’s eyes flashed, and he chanted an incantation. The widely spread black ants returned from all directions and entered the hole.
Suddenly, Murphy’s face turned pale, and his body fell backwards, almost fainting.
“What happened?” Leylin appeared behind Murphy and supported his waist.
“There seems to be an extremely dangerous creature inside. It destroyed all of my precious babies!” Murphy’s expression appeared very unsightly.
“What should we do?” An acolyte asked, apparently wanting to leave.
“Prepare a fire!” Jackson waves his hands, “We’ll have a look down there!”
“Yes!” The guards quickly carried out their lord’s orders. Leylin and the other acolytes looked at each other. Having no other choice, they could only follow.
The hole was rather small. A grown man needed to crouch before they could enter. However, the tunnel became more spacious the deeper it went, until a number of guards could walk abreast, even raising the fire torches high did not touch the cave’s ceiling.
“This is going to be troublesome! From the height of this cave, that ‘parent’s’ body will definitely not be small.” Leylin felt the leather sack hanging from his waist. If not for the multiple trump cards he prepared, he might have already sneaked away and left the group by now.
After all, his life was more precious than the wrath of a city’s lord.
“Lord Viscount! There’s a fork ahead!” A squad leader reported to Jackson.
“Let me have a look!” Jackson stepped forward.
Leylin followed behind. As expected, there seemed to be two
perfectly similar tunnels ahead. Looking at the darkness of their unfathomable depths, one could not see the tunnel’s end. It felt like walking into the huge mouth of a beast.

“The negative energy in here is becoming too dense. Some of our scouting methods cannot be used here!” The city lord’s aide, the grey-robed person spoke.

“Call two men to reconnoiter each path ahead!” Jackson’s brows furrowed as he gave the order.

“It would be better to let me do it!” Leylin walked forward suddenly.

Since he knew that the ‘parent’ was extremely powerful, he did not want his side to lose too much battle strength.

“Since Mister Leylin has decided to step forward, then it’s for the best!” Viscount Jackson smiled.

Leylin walked forward several steps and took out a transparent crystal from his robes.

“Gurisitong – Jiaonateyer!” Leylin chanted. A black vertical pupil suddenly appeared within the depths of the crystal.

The vertical pupil was the same size as a human’s, but it did not have the white of a human eye. Looking at this pure black pupil made one feel as if it could tear their souls from their bodies.

“This is… The Negative Energy Eye!”

“Only acolytes who specialise in negative energy are able to use it!” The acolytes behind began to whisper and their gazes contained more hostility and fear than before.

The rank 0 spells of magicians who specialises in negative energy are generally more destructive and their personalities were more bloodthirsty and savage than most other Magi. This normally meant being a Dark Magi.

The regular magicians’ hostile looks were understandable.

Leylin did not have any inclinations of explaining himself to the people behind him whatsoever. His fingers exerted force and
pinched the crystal to pieces. The black pupil split into two. One floated into each tunnel. Following the vertical pupils mentally, Leylin’s closed his eyes. Viscount Jackson became rather nervous as he stared at Leylin. The group grew quiet, only the constant soft snapping noise of torches burning could be heard.

A few minutes later, Leylin opened his eyes, “On the tunnel to the left are a few mutated lizards. At its end is a large granite rock.” “As for the one on the right, I only know that it leads unknown distance downwards. My spell got smashed after I tried probing further.” “Since it’s that way, let’s all go down together.” Jackson pointed to the tunnel on the right.

The right side of the cave got damper and more humid. Leylin touched the mud walls and found a few moss-like plants strewn all over it dripping wet, “It’s moist!” Leylin’s heart lurched, but his expression remained impassive. He took out a white handkerchief from his robes and wiped his hands clean. “I’m afraid we’re nearing the nest of those strange creatures.”
Light! There’s a light ahead!”
A guard walking in the vanguard shouted.
Leylin took a look. Indeed, the far end of the tunnel was radiating light.
“Enter!” Jackson gripped his large sword with both hands and was the first to rush in.
The rest followed suit.
Light! Eye-piercing light radiated downwards from above!
Leylin’s eyes were stinging, tears flowed down uncontrollably. He immediately used his hand to cover his eyes.
“Argh!” “Monster!” “Be careful!”
Various shouts resounded, and weapons were brandished.
On the screen, a talon the size of a palm was clawing towards Leylin.
Leylin hurriedly retreated a step and crouched to dodge the attack.
Amidst the wails all around, Jackson’s faint howling could be heard.
After the A.I. Chip’s scan, Leylin could see that many lizard-like creatures were making use of their familiarity with the geography to attempt a massacre of Jackson and the squad of guards around him.
The sneak attack was so quick that when Jackson and the rest
finally reacted, the whole squad already suffered heavy casualties. As Leylin swept his gaze across the scene before him and his eyes finally adjusted to the bright light. He realised that the floor was already littered with corpses. Many of them had traces of having been chewed on by these strange creatures. At that moment, only the 2 Knight level squad leaders and the grey robed figure, who always followed behind Jackson, were all that remained of the group with Jackson. As for the acolytes, one had fallen to the ground and another had a large wound on his abdomen that was oozing blood. At the apex of the cave, white-coloured jellyfish-like creatures were floating. The flash from earlier had radiated from their bodies. “The surge of light radiated from these jellyfish could actually increase instantaneously and produce an effect similar to a flashbang grenade. The coordination demonstrated by these strange creatures that caused several deaths and injuries definitely hinted at some intelligence controlling them from behind the scenes!” After light burst from the jellyfish, they seemed to have become a little dispirited as they floated around in the air. Although there was still some light emanating from their bodies, it was not piercing to the eyes. It seemed like the flash from earlier was a one time attack. “This is a Flash Jellyfish, a kind of subterranean creature. Their earlier attack can only be used once. They need a day of rest before emitting such an intense burst of light again!” Murphy appeared, clutching a book to his chest. “What we need to deal with are not these parasitic organisms, but that fellow in the middle!” Leylin pointed to the centre of the cave, and smiled bitterly. Leylin and the rest entered a large underground cave earlier, where the ceiling was littered with stalactites and Flash Jellyfish, which allowed them a panoramic view of the interior. At this moment, in the cave, there were many mutated, yet familiar
creatures. There were lizards, brown bears, and elks, all numbering over a dozen. At the centre most of them all, there was an enormous yellow snake that seemed to be the king, as it was guarded by the other creatures.

“It’s Mankestre – Great Withering Snake Mankestre!” Murphy’s book fell from his hands to the floor, letting off a bang.

“A.I. Chip, scan!” Leylin instructed.

[Great Withering Snake – Mankestre (Half-adult body) Strength: 11.9, Agility: 6.5, Vitality: 14, Spiritual force: 8] [Abilities: 1 – Parasitic. A Mankestre is able to develop an extremely strong parasite in its body, and spread it to other organisms, making them its underlings.] [2 – Wither. In any areas where a Mankestre has passed by, the plants will die, and become a type of nutrient for the Mankestre. An adult Mankestre possesses the strength of an official Magus, and can transform an entire forest into withering ashes.]

[Source of information: <Nigel’s Travels>]

The A.I. Chip delivered the information immediately in front of Leylin.

“Half-adult body? It doesn’t seem to be at its adult stage!” Leylin first heaved a breath of relief, before shouting out loud, “Murphy, don’t be fooled by its appearance. This is but a non-adult Mankestre. We still have a chance!”

“Indeed!” Murphy scrutinised the brown yellow colour of the huge snake and finally recovered from his fright, “An adult Mankestre is at least 100 metres long, and this snake is obviously not of that length yet. A number of parasites that it produces is also not right!”

“This huge snake is the cause of the withering woods?” Jackson asked at the side while staring at the huge snake as his Adam’s apple moved.

“That’s right! A Mankestre uses the juice of plants as their food. They are rather crafty and lazy, and also hate to move about. Basically, it uses the parasites to gather food for itself!”
Murphy, who had bountiful experience and wisdom, was extremely aware of the habits of the huge Mankestre Snake. “So then, if we kill it, the herb production in Dark Night Woods can recover again?” Jackson used his long sword and pointed at the huge yellow snake that was protected by its parasitic mutated creatures. “In theory, it should be the case as long as you kill it or drive it away. Although its death cannot revive the withering woods, it can still allow the prey and woods to slowly recover back to what it once was!” Murphy smiled wryly.

* Hiss! * The snake coiled in the centre of the cave hissed, and let off a low, snake-like speech. It was a kind of sound made by the friction of rubbing two pieces rotten leather together, which was extremely unpleasant to the ears. The creatures surrounding Leylin and the rest seemed to have received orders, and howled as they charged forward! Leylin casually took a look, “There are too many creatures, and the parent body is not yet dealt with, I must conserve my magic power!”

“A.I. Chip! Simulate the most optimal method of attack!” Leylin pulled out his cross blade.

[Beep! Inputting situation data, initiating build with Host’s stats!] [Calculating battle simulation for the most optimal method!] The A.I. Chip continuously displayed the attack style of creatures surrounding home.

Leylin’s feet moved as he dodged a brown bear’s attack. The cross blade in his right hand drew a strange trajectory, and deflected the paw of the bear, and directly pierced through its skull. * Bang! * The huge brown corpse of the bear fell to the ground, and even the Mankestre Snake had taken notice, looking at Leylin. Leylin’s scalp tingled, as he hurriedly kept his distance.
“Nicely done!” Jackson shouted in admiration. His body seemed to turn into a gust of wind, and continuously ravaged the mob of creatures, leaving a trail of blood behind him.

“It seems that Jackson has ignited the secret Knight technique! His technique should be enhancing his agility”

The few acolytes also casted their rank 0 spells that they had prepared and assisted in killing these creatures.

Leylin only took a look and did not bother about them anymore.

* Sssii! * The corpse of the brown bear that Leylin had killed rapidly decomposed. From the bones, many veins appeared, which turned into the creature that Leylin and the rest had been chasing earlier. The creature then climbed into the Mankestre’s mouth.

The Mankestre Snake opened its mouth and revealed rows of razor sharp teeth. Its tongue coiled, as it swallowed the strange red veined creature into its belly.

“Retrieving its parasite huh?” Leylin was rather shocked.

After swallowing the parasite, the Mankestre Snake finally uncoiled and looked at Leylin and the group, who were unrestrainedly slaughtering the creatures. Its crimson eyes showed signs of rage.

* Bang! * The huge body of the snake shot out, and the entire cave trembled violently.

The huge Mankestre Snake’s body moved at an alarming speed, charging towards Jackson.

“It’s too quick! With an agility of 6.5, I can only see its afterimage”

Leylin rapidly retreated, and at the same time, he used the cross blade to block his chest.

A surge of immense force came rushing over, and the cross blade that Leylin held onto flew in the air, completely broken.

“Such a strong force, and it’s only a casual swipe!” Leylin’s pupils constricted.

The Mankestre Snake opened its jaws wide, and its razor sharp teeth snapped at Jackson, bringing about a fish-like smell. If
Jackson were to be caught, he would definitely die without a corpse left.
“Sir!” The remaining two Knights and the grey robed person shouted.
“Hah! Good try!” At the brink of death, Jackson finally released all of his internal energy, and the sword pierced at the crown of the snake with a speed that was hard to track by eye.
The sword, however, only left a white spot on the scales of the snake. As for Jackson, he used the force to rebound, and twisted his waist, evading the snap of the snake’s jaw.
“Protect our Lord!” The two Knights rushed forward. The Mankestre Snake let out a ferocious roar, and directly gobbled the two Knights into its belly.
“Secondary Fireball!”
“Acidic Aqua Shot”
At this moment, the other acolytes also cast their spells, striking the body of the huge snake.
* Bang! * A black arrow with a yellow flame exploded from the body of the huge snake, revealing two scorched holes/wounds/gashes.
The huge snake let off a roar, which carried a tinge of agony. Its scales shook, and it sent its tail flying towards the few acolytes.
“The vitality of the snake is too high, any normal rank 0 spells would not be able to affect its movement at all!”
The huge snake swatted its tail, and a few acolytes who were unable to dodge in time were turned into meat pancakes, and blood oozed from beneath the snake’s body.
“No! Decker! Lancer!” Murphy cried hoarsely in anguish.
“There’s no choice, we have to retreat first!” The few remaining people huddled together, when the grey robed figure behind Jackson spoke in a deep growl.
“No! This damned worm dared to kill Decker and the rest! I will
definitely not let it go!” Murphy’s eyes were rather bloodshot. “I have a spell that can temporarily restrict its movements, the rest will be up to you guys.” Murphy stepped forward, placed the monocle that he always carried in his hand, and tossed it towards the huge snake. * Bang! * The glass shattered on the huge snake, and many dark red runes suddenly surfaced. The dark red runes multiplied, and turned into the shape of a long chain, binding the snake within it. “What a powerful restraining spell!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, “It will not be able to move for at least half a minute, so use whatever methods you guys have in that time.”
The fine rune shackles were the size of a strand of hair compared to the huge Mankestre snake. However, under the restraint of the shackles, the huge snake was helplessly locked to the ground, not even able to move.

“Hurry, charge!” Jackson howled, and the huge sword radiated light.

On the other side, the grey-robed person too lifted his cloak, and revealed a Half-Beast Man appearance as he hurriedly chanted an incantation.

* Roar! * The remaining creatures felt the danger that their parent was in, and rushed forward, with no thoughts for their own safety, towards Leylin and the rest.

“Go to hell!” Leylin pulled out a few fire red coloured explosive potions and decimated the remaining creatures into ashes.

“To the Mankestre snake, the eyes are their achilles heel, and is even more vulnerable than the heart.

Leylin howled, at the same time chanting.

Along with the chanting of the mysterious and ancient Byron language resounding in the cave, a hoard of congealed and thick black oily bodies appeared beside Leylin, completely surrounding him.

These black, oily figures circled around Leylin, giving off bubbles from time to time, and letting off a sound that was akin to decomposing material. While he continued to chant, the black oiled...
figures continuously changed shape, finally turning into a black lion head-like apparition.

“Go!” Leylin pointed.
The black lion head roared, and charged towards the crown of the huge snake which was being restrained.
* Pu! * The lion head immediately bit on both of the Mankestr snake’s eyes.
* Sssii! * The huge snake writhed continuously, letting off an agonised screech. The rune shackles on its body were also emitting off red smoke.

“How!” I cannot keep this up much longer!” Murphy completely diverged from his scholarly image and howled without a care.
The black lion head continuously chewed on the head of the huge snake, and finally dissolved, turning into a puddle of greasy black oil, that covering the head of the huge snake, and eventually covered both of its eyes.

“It is now!” Leylin eyes flashed and withdrew a test tube. The contents radiated a blood red light, which excreted feelings of danger.
This was an explosive potion, but was much larger in comparison had a larger blast radius was larger in circumference as in compared to the previous potions.
The muscles of Leylin’s right arm bulged as he tossed the potion directly into the black oil.
* Bang! * A tremendous flame rose, completely engulfing the huge Mankestr snake, and burning it savagely.
The huge snake continuously tossed its head, which looked like a huge burning torch from, side to side.
The rune shackles around it also let off creaking noises which meant that it could not endure for much longer.

“The decomposing oil water that comes from the subterranean area, together with the A.I. Chip’s modified explosive potion gives off a
combined attack of at least 9 degrees!”
Blue light in continuously flashed from within Leylin’s eyes, as he recorded the figures from the explosion.
“Pant! Pant! The earlier attack has already broken through most of the huge Mankestre snake’s defence! Now is the time to kill it!”
Leylin panted violently, and his face was extremely pale. It was like he had completely depleted his spiritual force and magic power, and he staggered several steps behind.
From an area of his sleeve which was concealed from others, another of the modified explosive potions, which was used earlier, appeared in his hands.
Leylin would never place his hopes completely on others, especially at crucial times like this.
At this moment, the Half-Beast Man had finished chanting his spell.
“The strength of my forebearer’s totem, transform now into frigid ice, and grant me the might to slay the Mankestre snake!”
The Half-Beast Man finished his spell, and touched lightly on Jackson’s sword.
* Sssii! *
On the blade of Jackson’s huge sword, a layer of frost began to envelop it, and the frost grew more and more, before finally enlarging the blade to double of its original size, and turning it into a frost greatsword!
What the Half-Beast Man had cast was actually a kind of rarely seen spell which could enhance weapons!
“According to the scan of the A.I. Chip, at this moment, the greatsword in Jackson’s hands already has the strength of a basic level magic artifact!”
Leylin eyes flashed, “It is a rather decent enchanting technique!”
Jackson had obviously teamed up with the Half-Beast Man many times before. Earlier, he had been conserving his energy, and once the greatsword had completed the layer of frost, Jackson howled
and raised it above him, charging and chopping towards the neck of the Mankestre snake.
The sword, which seemed like a giant crystallised ice sculpture, directly chopped at a blackened patch of the huge snake with Jackson’s strength of a Grand Knight.
* Pu-chi! *
Red hot blood flowed down continuously from a deep gash on the neck of the Mankestre snake, which seemed to be almost half a metre deep. One could even see the whites of the bones. The huge snake roared, and headbutted with all its strength.
* Bang! * Viscount Jackson was immediately knocked away, and even the breastplate he was wearing was dented inwards.
The frost greatsword landed upright by his side, burying itself halfway into the ground.
* Ping Ping Ping! * The layer of ice continuously cracked, and finally even the sword, which was made of steel, shattered into countless fragments that landed on the floor.
“It seems like this spell isn’t completely flawless either!” Leylin was still in the mood to observe leisurely.
However, at this moment, Murphy’s complexion turned red, “I can’t control it any longer!”
Under the continuous struggles of the Mankestre snake, the rune shackles around it finally collapsed with a rattling sound. As for the price of being able to free itself, the snake had already suffered a dozen wounds which penetrated through its scales.
As for the heavily injured Mankestre snake, its bloodshot eyes turned even more crimson. With lightning speed, it swiped and coiled its tail. Before Leylin could react, he realised that there was one less person beside him. The Half-Beast Man which originally stood there was now wrapped up in the snake’s tail.
“No! Save me!” The tail continuously constricted, and the huge snake’s figure almost covered the entirety of the Half-Beast Man.
At this moment, Jackson, who was not sure if he was still alive or dead, lay on the side, and could not answer his subordinate cries at all.

* Ga-cha! * With a creaking noise, the ear-piercing sounds of bones shattering resounded in the air. The Half-Beast Man’s distressed cries climbed higher in pitch, until finally, it turned into dead silence.

Leylin watched the huge, moribund snake attentively, as he drew a few potions of various colours.

* Bang! *

A huge black figure attacked, and hit a yellow test tube that had left Leylin’s hands. In the surrounding area, a layer of yellow light appeared, and engulfed Leylin’s entire body. The immense might crashed into Leylin and he was sent flying, crashing into a nearby granite rock. Mud flew above his head as he landed, and there was even a huge impression left on the rock behind his back.

At the same time as Leylin was sent back flying, a layer of intense red flames extended from the snake’s tail, and multiple colours of light also blossomed on the snake’s body, finally resulting in the cries of the Mankestre snake.

The yellow light shattered into many pieces, before finally dissipating into the air.

Leylin’s body was completely unscathed, and seeing the many spots of dazzling yellow light, he grimaced.

“The weakness of acolytes is that they always have no defensive measures!”

The defensive spell models for rank 0 spells were extremely uncommon, as they were not very practical. When an acolyte is being attacked, rarely would they have time to chant those spells.

As a result, in battles between acolytes, whoever was struck first by a spell would end up defeated or killed.
This scenario would last until one reached the stage of an official Magus. Apart from this, there was another method, which was to borrow strength from special items. For example, defensive or strange items which could instantly activate a defence spell. However, such high leveled defensive items were even difficult to obtain for official Magus, so they rarely appeared in the hands of an acolyte. Leylin and the other acolytes, together with the Half-Beast Man, all had no defensive items. At most, they only wore leather armour, which had absolutely no resistance against spells. Moreover, a simple roll of the Mankestre snake would have already been able to grind them into a meat paste.

“According to the records of the academy, there are still a number of acolytes who die at the hands of Knights and Grand Knights. However, there has never been any instance of an official Magus dying at the hands of ordinary humans!”

As for this yellow potion, it was Leylin’s latest experimental result – Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion! A potion like this has already separated itself from the category of elementary potions. It was a kind of beginner’s potion, and even amongst the beginner potion category it was extremely difficult to brew. As for the effect, it would produce a one-time defensive layer of light, which would defend against any spell or physical attack of ten degrees or less!

With Leylin’s amassed wealth from selling potions, together with the A.I. Chip continuous simulation, he had finally managed to make only two bottles of it. The amount he spent for these had already exceeded over 1000 magic crystals!

“These potions are not easily affordable by others, and all official
Magi attacks have an attack strength of over 10 degrees, so this Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion is best used only at the level of battles between acolytes. However, every bottle costs at least 500 magic crystals. Even direct heirs to large families would not be able to afford it!”

However, for Leylin who had the help from A.I. Chip, which could elevate his success rate, combined with his Potions Master identity, he could brew the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion, suppressing the cost to around 200 to 300 magic crystals. Although it still remained steep in price, as it was a trump card, it was acceptable.

“Leylin!” Murphy’s eyes widened, “You…Are you alright?”

“En! I’ve wasted an expensive defensive potion that I’ve acquired!”

Leylin’s face darkened, and seemed to be extremely saddened by the loss.

“This damned beast, I’m going to kill it!”

On the other side of the battlefield, the huge Mankestre snake lay half dead on the floor, seemingly spent, and having wounds strewn across its body.

First, it was hit with Leylin’s hybrid attack, before almost having its head chopped off by Grand Knight Jackson. Afterwards, it escaped from Murphy’s rune shackles through brute force, before it was finally struck again by Leylin’s potions.

The snake head, which was always held high with pride, now lay helpless on the floor. Its tongue hissed, and blood continuously flowed out from its neck area.

“After having suffered from such a devastating injury, no matter how tenacious the life force of snake type creatures are, they will absolutely still perish!”

Murphy gritted his teeth, and shot a green coloured pyramid shaft, which directly lodged itself into the eyes of the huge snake.

* Pu! * The snake’s eyes were finally pierced through, and a layer of creamy red and yellow liquid splashed out, which was sparkling
yet translucent.
“The eyes are where the life essence of the Mankestre snake is, and it looks like this huge snake is about to die!”

Murphy looked at the huge snake, which was in its last moments, and said rather bleakly.

“Be optimistic my old friend!” Towards Murphy’s bleakness, Leylin discovered that he actually could not utter any words of comfort. After all, the casualties, this time, were too much. From a group of roughly 30 people, the Black Iron Guards were completely wiped out, and Murphy was the only acolyte that survived. Moreover, the city lord and the Grand Knight, Viscount Jackson, was severely injured at this moment, and his life was in peril. And the source of them all was this huge Mankestre snake!

“City lord? Right, Leylin! Hurry and look at Jackson!” Murphy slapped his forehead.

“You only thought of him now?” Leylin was rather speechless, and walked around the huge snake corpse, coming to the other side. Viscount Jackson was lying on his back on the ground and his chest was sunken in a cavity. On the corners of his lips were traces of blood, and he was in an unconscious state. Leylin hurriedly took a look, “3 broken ribs and the arm and leg bones are all also broken. As for the rest they are fine. With the vitality of a Grand Knight, he should be conscious in a few hours. “That’s good! This is the only good news I’ve heard all day today!”
Murphy walked towards that huge, lifeless snake, and said, “This seems to be a Mankestre snake which has not yet grown to its adult stage. If it was an adult withering huge snake, it could be very likely that the water content in our bodies would have been sucked dry the very moment we entered the cave!”

The huge Mankestre snake’s head fell onto the floor, and a pair of eye-shaped pearls were pierced by the pyramid shaft, and dazzling fluid flowed out from within.

“Even so, the materials on this huge snake, would also be worth thousands of magic crystals!”

Murphy caressed the yellow-brown scales of the huge snake as he muttered to himself.

Suddenly, the other eye of the Mankestre snake opened! Its gaze, filled with hatred, immediately landed on Murphy. It opened its jaws, and the razor-sharp teeth was about to snap Murphy into two. This huge snake was not completely dead!

Earlier it had feigned its death, and right now, it finally revealed its razor-sharp teeth and was about to kill this repulsive human. Against such an attack, Murphy was completely not protected and he stood there stunned, not moving at all.

“Be careful!”

Right when the snow-white teeth was about to land on Murphy, a silver chain suddenly flew out and wrapped itself on Murphy’s waist, pulling him out of danger’s way.

A black arrow directly pierced the other eye of the snake, and the Mankestre snake continuously writhed and finally ceased moving.

* Huff! Huff! Huff! *

Murphy panted violently, “Ley… Leylin, thank you! I owe you my life!”

“No problem! You gave your support to me back then too, didn’t you?” Leylin smiled as his gaze fixed on the huge snake, up until when the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, [Target has completely lost all
Signs of life did he heave a sigh of relief. Under the detection of the A.I. Chip, although there were no more energy movements from the huge snake earlier, there was still a thermal response. Of course, many kinds of creatures must be dead for a while before all thermal signs completely vanish. However, because of that, Leylin was even more vigilant. Besides, intentionally or accidentally, he led Murphy forward and finally verified whether the large snake was truly dead.

“What a pity! If this Mankestre snake were to die before, its other eye would have absolutely been valued over 1000 magic crystals, but right now, the value of the whole corpse is greatly reduced.”

Leylin was somewhat helpless at he looked to Murphy, who was at his side.

“About the attack earlier- you actually did not dodge it, which makes me rather surprised!”

An unexpected flush reddened Murphy’s cheeks, “After using the rune shackles, my spiritual force and magic power are greatly weakened. In this period, I am just another old geezer on the street….”

With regards to Leylin, who saved him earlier, right now it could be said that Murphy trusted him greatly and actually even shared such a secret with him.

“Alright! Let’s hurry and harvest the materials of this Mankestre snake, and then return to Extreme Night City!”

Leylin sized up the chaotic scene. Leylin and the three of them had absolutely no way to move those corpses on the ground, so they could only return back to Extreme Night City and ask people to retrieve these corpses.

With the death of the huge Mankestre snake, this area should no longer pose a threat in future.

“Haha… This time Leylin, your contributions have been the most,
so you should be allowed to harvest the best material!” Murphy smiled.
Concerning this matter, Leylin did not have any notions of killing Murphy and claiming all the loot for himself.
Murphy did help him earlier, and on the other hand, right now Murphy and him were the only two acolytes left, so he would definitely monopolise a large portion of the resources, thus he did not have to take a risk and kill people.
From the whole Mankestre snake, the most valuable ingredient would be its eyes, after which the remaining materials would only add up to a total of 1000 to 2000 magic crystals, which was not enough to bewitch Leylin yet.
If right now there was some rare materials worth ten thousand magic crystals, who knew if Leylin would harbour some bad intentions.
“Decent scales, combined with the snake skin, should be able to produce many sets of soft armour.” Leylin went forward and unsheathed his cross blade, before dissecting the huge snake. Murphy too helped by his side.
After a moment of being busy, Leylin and Murphy had harvested some of the more valuable portions of the huge snake. As for the remaining items, they could only be transported with help from the city lord’s castle.

……

* Gu Lu Lu * The axles of the carriage resounded continuously, and Viscount Jackson opened his eyes.
“I am…still alive?” What entered his vision was a sky filled with resplendent starlight, and he felt his body rising and falling in accordance with the movements of the horse carriage.
Viscount Jackson discovered that his chest was already bandaged,
and a refreshing feeling dispersed the pain, which showed that the healing process was extremely professional.

“Who was it that saved me?” A doubt crossed Viscount Jackson’s mind, and he tried hard to untangle his thoughts.

“City lord! You are finally awake!” A face with a white beard and white eyebrows appeared in front of Viscount Jackson.

“How is it? Do you still retain your memories?” Murphy shook his finger in front of Viscount Jackson.

“Was it you who saved me? How are the others?” Viscount Jackson struggled to speak, and his voice sounded hoarse, like a ruined bellow.

“It wasn’t me, but Leylin who saved you!” Murphy pointed at Leylin who was driving, “We three are the only survivors of the whole group… After exiting the woods, it took me a while to obtain this spacious horse carriage….”

“They’re all dead?” Viscount Jackson flung his head to the side and an unexplainable sorrow welled from the bottom of his heart.

“Lord Viscount! It seems like you are alright now!” Leylin turned back, and tossed a green bottled potion, “This is a healing potion, I hope it will be of use to you!”

Murphy caught it, and fed it into the mouth of Viscount Jackson. After taking the potion, Viscount Jackson only felt a hot wave surging through his four limbs, and he finally regained some energy from it.

“Towards Leylin’s generosity and grace of saving my life, I will definitely repay you when we return!”

“If possible, please give me all of the Hove Violet Leaves in the castle. That would be the greatest recompense!” Leylin raised his request without a tinge of restraint.

“Of course!” Jackson was stunned, before immediately agreeing. With the advance of the horse carriage, the silhouette of Extreme Night City gradually appeared.
A few soldiers were still guarding the post, scrutinising the people that came and went.

......

Jackson looked at the distant scene, and his eyes quivered, and finally two streams of tears flowed....
The city lord’s castle’s reconnoiter group had perished completely. Even news of Viscount Jackson, as a Grand Knight, having been seriously injured had spread and immediately caused an uproar in Extreme Night City. Even after two days, the news did not die down. Instead, it even spread throughout the area,
As the city lord of Extreme Night City, Viscount Jackson always used his status as a Grand Knight to suppress many dark factions. However, when the news of him being injured spread, it caused several ripples and undercurrents inside the city.
At this moment, the strength of the city castle was waning, even the few acolytes who were friendly towards Viscount Jackson had died. Jackson who was nurturing his grief had to face with all these, and was rather overwhelmed by all these.
Leylin who stayed in the villa outside the city heard some of the news. However, since he had returned from the venture, he always holed himself in the experiment lab, and even refused many invitations from the city lord’s castle and other factions.
Under the bright light, Leylin stared; his eyes fixated on a petri-dish.
On the surface of the glass petri-dish, a small red lump of flesh continuously swelled, and from it grew many tentacles. Leylin picked up another pipette, and placed a drop of the yellow potion on the lump of meat.
* Sssii! * The meat dissolved, and turned into a puddle of crimson-red with yellowish blood fluid.
“I have finally managed to purify it, the primordial blood essence of the huge snake!” Leylin looked at the petri-dish, as if seeing the most precious treasure in this world.
“A.I. Chip! Scan composition!”
[Beep! Mission establishing, scanning in progress…] [The list of genes has been generated, comparing to database…]“99.8%……”
[Beep! Similarity of the blood essence with a normal huge python: 99.8%! Determined as the blood essence of original huge pythons! After remodelling in the later stage, there were new types of genes…]
The A.I. Chip continuously reported the conclusions, and even projected the list of genes in front of Leylin’s eyes.
From the multicoloured image, the blood essence of the huge Mankestre snake that Leylin saw earlier was actually the same with regular huge pythons.
“Indeed! This huge python is the result of an experiment by magicians!” Leylin nodded his head. He still remembered clearly that after the A.I. Chip had scanned the huge python, it had added the words half-adult to its name.
However, if not for the accuracy of the A.I. Chip down to the atomic level, Leylin would never unravel the secret behind it. Even other magicians would not be able to realise the difference.
“Two more days, and that area should be calm again!” Leylin informed his subordinates that he was going to undergo a very long duration of experimentation and that they are not to bother him with any matters and then he secretly left the villa.
he night was dark, and there was tranquility. Dried up old trees littered the surroundings, and on the branches, there were ravens ruffling their feathers.

* Bang! *

The grass patch below the tree tore open, revealing a dark passage beneath it.

Leylin was draped in black robes, and his face was veiled. One would not be able to see his face.

The nearby villa was still lit with lanterns, and the patrolling mercenaries did not know that their master had already left the villa.

In Leylin’s experiment lab, there was a direct passage which Leylin set up himself, with no one being the wiser.

“Since that huge Mankestre snake is an experimental body, there should be some experiment labs nearby from magicians! Moreover, that huge Mankestre snake had actually occupied Dark Night Woods for a few years, and not one magician had stepped forward to deal with it. There could only be one reason for that!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed, “That experiment lab is most likely abandoned! The magician in it, due to some circumstances, could no longer look after it, or is most likely dead! That is why the huge snake could escape from it!”

For magicians, seeking ancient vestiges had always been in their best interests.
The remnants left by ancient Magi, such as official Magi experiment labs, would often contain many valuable data and ingredients, high levelled research, spells and magic artifacts with immense might. These were all items that magicians always sought after. Rumour had it that more often than not, there were examples of acolytes who were lacking having stumbled upon ancient remnants, and beginning to wield tremendous power after that. Of course, there were failed ventures and explorations where they finally died under the ancient mechanisms or curses from the corpses. However, for magicians, searching for vestiges was still a very beneficial thing to do. From an experiment lab which could create a half-adult huge Mankestre snake, any one item in it could let Leylin immediately get rich quickly, and even obtain more precious ingredients and knowledge to pave the way for him to advance into an official Magus in future. “Since I have already found some traces, I will definitely have a look at the experiment lab!” Leylin’s gaze was determined. He was not afraid of risks, especially when the benefits strongly outweigh the risks. For this venture, he had specially prepared many items, which were enough measures to counter against any sudden developments. As for his subordinates? Not only were they easily susceptible to divulging news, but under the traps set up by official Magi, even Knights were only an existence slightly greater than ants. They were completely of no use, hence Leylin even kept his departure from them. Leylin journeyed for several nights in a row. Since there were no people around, he could use many of his methods. He splashed a green potion onto the ground, bringing about a ball of green coloured wind particles, which wrapped Leylin’s body
within them. His whole body seemed to turn into a breeze, and disappeared into the night.

What Leylin used was a hastening potion which he had formulated throughout the years.

As an outstanding Potions Master, no matter if it was using potions to journey or fight, he was entirely in his element.

In the original passage, where Leylin and the others had battled the huge Mankestre snake.

People had already been sent from the city lord’s castle to retrieve the mutilated corpses and largely dissected huge Mankestre snake. What remained were many impressions on the ground, as well as traces of flames and frost, which spoke of the intense fight that had occurred previously.

“The scenario from earlier has already been recorded down by the crystal ball given by the academy. To use that to signify the completion of mission is absolutely acceptable.”

From the battle previously, Leylin had used the crystal ball to record only most of the exploration mission, especially the corpse of the huge Mankestre snake at the end.

With some ingredients from the corpse, as well as the record from the crystal ball, it could be said that Leylin’s mission in Extreme Night City was finally completed.

However, he had no plans whatsoever to leave at all.

Not mentioning whether the mess of a war that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was entangled in at the moment already had a victor, Leylin did not want to go back during this period.

He had just managed to formulate a modified formula for the Azure Potion. Now would be the best time to break through into a level 3 acolyte, so why would he risk going back to the academy and expose himself in the process?

As for Extreme Night City, Leylin did not even see an official Magus, which put him at ease to carry out his experiments and
breakthrough. Leylin would wait for a buffer of three years after the dust settled for the war of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Although his advancement to a level 3 acolyte would still be fast that way, it would not be as eye catching! At that time, he could figure out an excuse, and cover his tracks easily. As for the corpses of the acolytes on the floor, naturally, they had already been inspected by Leylin. Back then, he had kept all the valuable items for himself before bringing the heavily injured Jackson and Murphy to leave the place. “However, that group of acolytes were all paupers, and not a single one of them had more than 10 magic crystals! Only on that Half-Beast Man acolyte, there was still a frost smelted gold rune which can be considered to be rather good!” Leylin grumbled in his mind, as he came to the centremost area of the cave. Under the light radiated by the Flash Jellyfish, the whole cave was extremely bright. Leylin could see that on the ground at the centre, traces of where the huge Mankestre snake was coiled were still apparent. “It actually managed to make such a deep impression, they are indeed of the same nature narrated by compendiums: an extremely lazy being. Leylin crouched and felt the earth that was sunken in. “A.I. Chip! Record composition!” [Recording completed, comparing to normal earth data in the databank. The target has 0.0005% of compound remnants, and is tentatively determined to contain Maike alloy!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Maike alloy was a type of artificial metal, made by spells of magicians, that was extensively used to construct incubation pools
in experiment labs.
“This is right!” Leylin eyes flashed with glee.
“A.I. Chip, is it possible to follow the tracks of the snake and find its original breeding area?
[Scanning in progress! The target’s data has been heavily covered by other creatures and is lacking in important information. Mission failed!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
Leylin scanned the surroundings. The ground was littered with claw marks from various creatures. Such was the devastation left by the parasitic abilities of the huge Mankestre snake.
“What a pity….” Leylin shook his head.
“However, according to the habits of the huge Mankestre snake and the clues left by the other traces, that experiment lab should not be far off from here!”
Leylin commanded the A.I. Chip, “A.I. Chip, scan every item in the surroundings!”
[Missions establishing, beginning imaging!]
Along with the A.I. Chip intonation, the image of a blue coloured map was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.
In the centre was a huge cave, with many small tunnels in the near vicinity. Leylin even found a few parasitic bodies that had survived through sheer luck. However, it was unknown how much longer they could live for when the parent was dead.
The map expanded until it finally reached the limit of its range.
Leylin’s brows furrowed, ” A.I. Chip, restart scan! Lower the precision to the lowest, and search in an extended perimeter! Begin running through a checklist of radioactive density!”
With the command, the map in Leylin’s eyes turned more out of focus. However, the perimeter extended, almost encompassing the nearby geography of the cave too.
“Maintain this area and precision!”
Leylin walked out of the cave and began running towards a
direction. Following his movement, the edge of the map also continuously expanded.…
A few hours later, Leylin walked towards a large black granite boulder.
“The surrounding areas have already been inspected. Although the radioactive densities are higher, this should be where the shedding of the huge Mankestre snake took place previously!”
“As for the only place with no radiation, but not within the scope of the A.I. Chip’s scanning perimeter, this is the only place!”
Leylin looked at the large black granite boulder in front of him. This boulder was of the height of several humans, almost the size of a small mountain.
In the map that the A.I. Chip scanned, this huge boulder had absolutely no traces of radiation. Even standing before it now, the A.I. Chip still did not detect anything.
“This kind of scenario has happened several times back at the academy. It is due to the spell formations set by official Magi, which are interfering with the detection of the A.I. Chip!”
Leylin stroked the surface of the large black granite boulder. It was ice cold, damp, and had algae growing on it.
“However….What I must do to enter?”
Leylin exerted strength in his right arm and grabbed some of the rock powder.
“A.I. Chip! Analyse composition!”
[Beep! Mission establishing, in the process of gathering data….] The A.I. Chip’s voice continuously intoned, and a screen appeared in front of Leylin that was densely packed with the various data of the granite rock.
“It seems like there are no differences between this and a normal granite rock!” Leylin drew the data of normal granite rock and made a comparison. However, he finally had to acknowledge that the magician defended his secrets very well. Leylin had absolutely
no way of finding the entrance to the experiment lab.
“However, since that huge Mankestre snake was able to come out, it
means that the defense in the spell formation has some sort of
problem. I just require more time to inspect.…”
Leylin stroked his chin and began setting up a tent beside the
granite rock.
He decided to stay here for a long time in order to continuously
detect any loopholes or weakness in the spell formation, hoping to
find a way to enter.
After all, there won’t be anyone coming to the vicinity of the
withering woods anymore, especially when the city lord’s castle has
sent people to retrieve the corpses of the acolytes, troops and the
huge snake.
After chewing on several biscuits that he brought along with him,
Leylin began to analyse the spell formation on the large black
granite boulder.
Of course, he only dared do this as he was sure that the owner of
the lab was already dead through his observations and conjectures.
Who knew if that unknown magician had long since died a natural
death.
“After having been here for so long, yet with no magicians coming
out, the accuracy of this conjecture has yet been raised by 30%.
Leylin stared at the large black granite boulder before him with a
zealous expression contained within.
“If I manage to dispel the spell formation, the items in there are all
mine!”
For Leylin, who was a level 2 acolyte, an experiment lab belonging
to an official Magus was a huge treasure trove!
“Only that… The traps set by official Magus are extremely
dangerous. I must absolutely not be blinded by greed and fall into a
trap!”
Time passed by. In the blink of an eye, Leylin had tarried beside the large black granite boulder for 5 days. In those five days, Leylin tried every method he knew on the large black granite boulder. He finally found a few loopholes he could exploit.

Leylin already confirmed that the granite boulder had a spell formation set up within. But it was in a damaged state. According to the wear and tear, this formation had already been in effect for over a hundred years.

The cause of this extensive damage might very well have had something to do with the huge Mankestre snake’s escape earlier.

“Some portion of the magic spell formation has already been damaged by that snake. That’s why there are detectable traces leaking out. Without those leaks, even with the A.I. Chip’s assistance, finding this place would not have been easy.”

Glee spread across Leylin’s face.

Due to his experiments these past few days, he managed to assemble a set of spells that gave him a 70-80% chance of opening the entrance to this experiment lab.

The cyclical timing inherent to this spell formation meant that the damaged parts only appeared at certain times. Leylin needed to wait for this window of opportunity.

The sun gradually set and the surrounding area became shrouded in darkness.
Owing to the death of the huge Mankestr snake, the withering woods would eventually recover its former vitality. Unfortunately, this would require at least a hundred years. Right now, there was only that deathly suffocating silence permeating the withering woods, which would insidiously choke anyone who dared enter. Leylin did not care a whit. Oblivious to the heavy atmosphere, he sought out a level rock and started brewing potions on it. Moonlight fell. Very soon the woods was enveloped in a layer of silver sheen. The full moon today was exceptionally bright. Curiously, there was a tinge of saffron tinting the moon. Leylin snapped open the pocket watch he brought with him, “It’s almost midnight!” He rose and sauntered to the side of the large black granite boulder. As moonlight from the full moon shone on the surface of the granite rock, its black stone skin suddenly came off and revealed a network of blood vessels coalescing into a silvery archway. They pulsed continuously as if absorbing the moonlight. “This is it!” Leylin’s eyes flashed. He quickly emptied the contents of the potions he just brewed onto the surface of the granite rock. * Sssii! * A large amount of white mist rose and corroded the surface of the rock, leaving the network of blood vessels in chaos. “Karamanda….” Leylin chanted the incantation softly. His voice sounded extremely depressed like the muttering of a jilted woman. In time with the chanting noises, the silvery network of veins settled and continued to combine, then finally turned into a circular passage. Seeing this, Leylin was elated. His chanting voice became more frenzied as he repeatedly tossed the few ingredients in his hands into the passageway. * Bang! * Along with Leylin’s final chant, the large black granite boulder completed its shape change. Close to Leylin, the silvery archway earlier disappeared. Instead, the entrance to a dark tunnel
materialized.
“A fake passageway actually got conjured!” Leylin shook his head and shrugged his shoulders.
At that instant, the eyes of the black raven perched on his shoulders, glinted with human intelligence.
“By harnessing some of this spell’s effect, I should be able to use this raven to break into the experiment lab in a short timeframe. Everything it sees would then be relayed into my right eye like a holographic projection!”
As Leylin shut his right eye, the raven cocked its head lightly before giving a cry. Then, it directly flew into the dark tunnel.
Many scenes flashed past Leylin’s closed right eye. He felt like he was flying. The scenery below him were all relayed into his mind’s eye.
The passage was extremely short. In moments, the raven reached the other end.
Green coloured vines crawled and filled the wall. On it were some sort of red-coloured flowers with what looked like bone petals.
“This is…..” Astonishment surfaced from the depths of the raven’s eyes, “Devil Vines? Bone Eating Flowers? I originally thought they were all extinct, but there are actually some in here!”
On the villa’s entrance was a jagged circular hole the size of Leylin’s palm. Leylin surmised that this could be the spot the Mankestre snake broke through during its escape—way back when it was but a youngling.
Near the hole, a white skeleton draped in black robes lay on a grey-coloured stone platform!
“According to the way the skeleton is positioned, it was obviously an acolyte like me who accidentally stumbled upon this place. He tried to break into the villa and perished in this sorry state!”
Leylin’s steeled his heart. He telepathically maneuvered the raven to alight beside the bones and let the bird pluck on it with its black claws.

A crash resounded, a heap of items fell from the robes. A book, several yellow parchment paper, a heap of bottles, and a yellow bronze ring tumbled onto the floor. A ‘K’ symbol was inscribed on it.

“Seems to be some kind of identity verification!” Leylin casually had the bird fiddle with the ring and peep at the book. After using the raven’s feathers to clear the dust, a row of esoteric patterns and cursive handwriting emerged.

“These characters…? They seemed to be in Ancient Terrestrial Elven language! I have seen these before in the library!” Leylin was stunned. He immediately began to decrypt the words, “Terrestrials… Terrestrial Elves! Alchemist of the Terrestrial Elves, Torozar!”

“It is actually information pertaining to alchemy!” Leylin was in ecstasy, “It was mentioned in the library’s records that the Ancient Terrestrial Elves were renowned for their exquisite alchemy, as well as their enchanting capabilities! If I were to obtain these information, I may begin attempting some of the things recorded in the Lowian Academy Teachings….”

With the A.I. Chip’s overpowered calculation abilities, the Lowian Academy Teachings, which Leylin bought earlier, was already completely decrypted. Part of data was about a method for synthesizing a magic artifact.

Of course, it was only a low-grade magic artifact. However, in Leylin’s current state, this was a rather huge temptation. He, alas, spent most of his time on Potioneering and Magic studies, so he had next to no inkling whatsoever concerning Alchemy and Enchantment. Moreover, such high level information was always kept under rigorous control. Regular acolytes did not have the
clearance to access them.
Even if Leylin had a way to synthesize a magic artifact, it would still be extremely difficult.
Luckily, with the Alchemy information material here and the simulation capability of his A.I. Chip, Leylin completely believed that he would be able to synthesize this magic artifact once he became a level 3 acolyte.
“Bring this book out!” Leylin was already thinking of retreating. To him, just knowing that within the granite walls was an abandoned experiment lab with degraded defenses made today’s probe an extremely fruitful one. Obtaining advanced information on Alchemy was an unexpected bonus.
The raven grabbed the book with its claws with much effort. As it turned around, it lightly brushed the parchment paper. With a hissing sound, the ancient piece of paper disintegrated
Leylin was stunned, “Has it already eroded to this state?”
* Hehe! Haha! *
Just as Leylin’s raven was about to fly off with the book, the surrounding area reverberated with a child’s ominous laughter.
“The defence formation activated! Damn it, I only have two more minutes!”
The black raven flapped its wings, preparing to rise and fly away.
* Ka-cha! * The grey coloured platform split open, revealing a huge jaw serrated with razor sharp white teeth.
In one ferocious snap, the raven was torn to pieces.
* Pu! * On the surface of the giant black stone, Leylin crouched down and grabbed at his right eye with his hands.
A wave of searing pain hit him. It felt like someone was digging out his eyeball directly from its socket.
* Huff Huff Huff * panting heavily, Leylin slowly recovered a good while later.
The muscles of his handsome face contorted and red veins could
be seen filling the white of his right eye. A blood vessel burst and drops of blood fell to the ground.

“Magic spell backlash!” Leylin sucked in a lungful of cold air and withdrew a red potion from his sack. He unplugged it and began drinking its contents.

Several moments later, Leylin stood up, feeling much better.

“Careless! I never thought that apart from the Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flower, there was even a Gnawing Slate.”

Leylin looked at the original position of the tunnel entrance. The surface of the huge black granite boulder remained smooth. The entrance seen earlier seemed to be merely an illusion.

“Devil Vines, Bone Eating Flower, Gnawing Slate, and other mechanisms. I cannot infiltrate in this place right now, what a pity….”

Leylin deduced this from the spells he had in his possession and the ingredients he owned.

“I’m afraid that only after I advance into level 3 acolyte, will I be able to enter this experiment lab!”

Leylin concluded, “Anyway, I now known the true location and its access protocols. Moreover, I have visually confirmed the presence of precious informative material regarding Alchemy inside. So this venture was not a complete waste of effort!”

Right now, the experiment lab was too dangerous for Leylin. He was not someone who got easily dazzled by greed. He decided to leave exploring this place to a later date and returned to the villa to cultivate.

Leylin calmed down as he focused on resting and recuperating from the damage done to him by the spell earlier.

He then went towards the tent area where stowed his things. He then erased all traces and tracks left by his recent activities.

“This defence spell formation has lasted over a hundred years. There were almost no loopholes a random passerby could exploit. I
only need to erase my tracks. Adding more defensive measures or illusory spells would be superfluous.”
Having finished arranging everything, Leylin took a last glance at the black rock. Then, without the slightest bit of hesitation, he left. “I have warned them before about the laboratory in the manor, so Anna and the others would not dare enter it. If I can return undetected to my laboratory, I can keep what happened here a secret.”
“Concerning Extreme Night City, Jackson only suffered some superficial injuries. He should be mostly have recovered by now after following my treatment. He is most likely pretending to be seriously injured to lure any turncoat and renegade from their snake holes!”
“Whatever the case may be, matters regarding the city lord’s castle are not my concern. I need not understand them. When I get the promised Hove Violet Leaves, I will immediately begin brewing the potions needed to breakthrough into level 3.”
To Leylin, increasing his own power was all-consuming. Otherworldly influences and the sort were considered a waste of energy. Since he did not care about such things, he was also disinclined to paying attention to these matters. But if anyone dared to entertain the idea of harming him, he would kill them!
As far as magicians were concerned, eradicating a few worldly powers or factions required almost no effort.
he heat wave caressed the earth. In the blink of an eye, a few months passed, and it was autumn.

In the small villa, Leylin swirled a tastefully refreshing iced grape juice in a wine glass.

He was attired in a leisurely frivolous apparel favoured by nobles and looked quite lackadaisical.

“A.I. Chip! Bring up my current stats!”

[Beep! Leylin Farlier, level 2 acolyte, Knight. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.2, Spiritual force: 7.1, Magic power: 7 – (magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force). Status: Healthy]

“I have finally reached the 7 spiritual force bottleneck!” Leylin sighed as he looked at the data.

After getting back from his solo exploration several months ago, Leylin got busy brewing potions to breakthrough the spiritual force bottleneck.

Viscount Jackson had expeditiously sent over a warehouse full of Hove Violet Leaves. At the same time, Fraser and the others continued to purchase ingredients found elsewhere as per Leylin’s standing orders.

Sadly, the modified Azure Potion’s brewing success rate was on the low side while consumption of Hove Violet Leaves was outrageously high. On top of that, Leylin could only take in the potion during the most optimal times recommended by the A.I. Chip for maximum medicinal effect. It was only now that he
reached a spiritual force of 7.
“Young Master! Fraser’s back!”
On the other side of the door Anna wore a black gauze ensemble that showed off her alluring curves beneath the fine muslin, especially her snow white thighs which was seductively enclosed in black fishnet stockings.
Right now she acted as Leylin’s chief aide, at the same time she had control over the finances, which could be considered as having high authority. However, in the presence of Leylin she was as gentle and as obedient as a little pussycat.
“Let’s go! I’ll go meet him!”
Leylin got up and left the room, his leather shoes gave off a thudding noise on the floorboard with each step.
“Young Master!’ Upon seeing Leylin’s arrival, two maids hurriedly curtsied.
“En?” Leylin suddenly walked in front of a maid. She had snow white thighs and perky breasts, but right now her head was lowered and she dared not move.
“You’re new here?” Leylin caressed her smooth chin. Her face still had some residual baby fat on it making her look extremely adorable.
“Yes… Yes, I am Trixy, the daughter of Luke who works in your farm ranch milord!” The maid replied softly did not dare reject Leylin’s teasing.
“Work hard!” Leylin waved his hands as he left.
“That maid earlier should now be very agitated huh?” Leylin slowly rubbed his fingers against each other as he revealed a mischievous smirk.
Ever since he had been transported to this world, because he occupied the body of a youth, he realised that his attitude was reverting more and more towards one befitting the host’s age. During emergencies or crises, it was not obvious. But now that he
was in safe haven, he could not help but have some notions of
tomfoolery.
He expunged the expression on his face as he strolled to the
warehouse. He was once again the great and stern magician lord.
“Young Master!” Fraser stated as he half knelt on the ground. “Your
subordinate, I have collected another 20 pounds of Hove Violet
Leaves from Austere Winter City. They have all been stored inside
the warehouse!”
“Very good!” Leylin walked to the warehouse, and took a look at
the amount and quality of the Hove Violet Leaves.
Amongst the whole pile, the only ones that could be used for
potion brewing were those whose central stems were thinner than
the stalk of an oat. The amount of spiritual force an Azure Potion
provided remained considerable enough to justify Leylin’s
continued use, despite the increasingly high resistance towards the
potion he was developing.
The bizarre purple leaves filled half of the warehouse. There was a
strange scent permeating the air, a rather stinging sulfuric
pungence.
Leylin casually picked up a purple leave, “A.I. Chip, detect
properties!”
[Beep! Gathering data!]
After a brief pause, the various properties of the Hove Violet
Leaves were projected onto Leylin’s visual field. The chemistry, the
medicinal properties- even the smidgen of various residue from
other items on the surface of the leaf- all projected by the A.I.
Chip.
“Based on this inspection, this batch of Hove Violet Leaves will still
do!” Leylin nodded his head.
“Young Master!” Fraser lips moved, yet he did not speak.
“Say what you want to say!” Leylin’s brows furrowed.
“All the Hove Violet Leaves in Extreme Night City have now been
purchased by us. What remains are those of poor quality. In fact, Greem and I have already seen a number of counterfeit batches from traders who wished to hoodwink us.

“Indeed, Hove Violet Leaves are a special product only found in Eastwood Province. They take at least a year to grow!”

Leylin stroked his chin, and estimated the amount of Hove Violet Leaves in the warehouse.

“Put our purchasing drive on hold until next year’s Hove Violet Leaves hit the markets. We can then resume buying them again!”

From this recent batch of Hove Violet Leaves, Leylin discovered that the quality was getting poorer and poorer. Some could not even be used for potion brewing.

Indeed, it seems like he purchased quite a huge chunk of the total Hove Violet Leaf production in this area. The ingredients in the warehouse should be enough to meet my requirements for manufacturing enough potions to get to level 3 acolyte. As for official Magus, it is not something that I can consider right now.

Leylin entered into deep thought. Right now his spiritual force has already reached 7. He has long since brewed the Reactive Elixirs. Advancing to level 3 acolyte no longer posed any problem for him at all.

However, Leylin still knew nothing about how to advance to official Magus from level 3 acolyte. Even though Leylin was authorized to access the academy’s library, he had not found any hint of the process.

It seemed like the academy had forbidden all information pertaining to this topic.

“Whether the academy or the market, I have always paid special attention to information related to official Magus. Until now, I could not even unearth a single clue.

This was also why Leylin was hesitant about leaving Abyssal Bone
Forest Academy.
The higher ups in the Magus World kept a tight lid on all information regarding how to advance to official Magus. More so for Leylin, who became an acolyte from afar. He had to fulfil certain requirements and run errands before he would be granted a peek at the advancement methods to study them.
“This is something out of my control. Maybe the Magus experiment lab has something that I can profit from?”
Leylin thought again of the Magus experiment lab concealed near the withering woods.
After his previous stint there, he could already confirm that the person who left the experiment lab was an official Magus. Moreover, it had been forsaken for a long time already. This was a piece of good news.
He only needed to be rid of all the spell formations laid on the experiment lab. Then, everything in it would be his, including the unlucky magician’s items lying just outside the door.
“level 3! I only need to advance to level 3 acolyte, and imbue another set of rank 0 spells so I can depart!”
Leylin made up his mind.

……

In a small secret lab with an extremely simple layout, there weren’t many household items, only a wooden bed in the middle. Leylin sat cross-legged atop the bed. Before his impassive face was a tangerine-yellow potion.
He was prepared and determined to breakthrough to level 3 acolyte. He did not breathe a word of this to anyone. Like before, he informed Anna that he was just going to carry out an experiment. No matter what happened, he didn’t want any interruptions. It was not that he couldn’t trust his subordinates but they had
neither the strength nor the ability to render aid if anything untoward happened. They wouldn’t be of much use so he might as well hide the fact that he was attempting to breakthrough. After all, he ‘disappeared’ from the villa from time to time. His manor staff had gotten inured to it by now. Once he had accomplished what he set out to do, when he next appeared before his people, everything would have been fait accompli. Although there might not be any prying eyes or ears, especially any spies sent by his adversaries, he was conscientious of the possibility.

“level 3 acolyte, the final step before official Magus. For first grade and second grade acolytes, level 3 has always been hailed the peak of cultivation. A level 1 acolyte could merely use energy particles, but could not cast any spells yet. Their fighting strength was roughly equivalent to a Knight’s. As for level 2 acolytes, they were able to cast some rank 0 spells. Though these were simple ones, it bolstered their battle abilities to such an extent that they surpassed the Knights. Level 3 acolytes, on the other hand, had exponentially greater spiritual force than regular humans. They had a more profound understanding of spell theory and its uses in combat. They were masters of techniques like instantaneous casting, which enabled extremely rapid casting of prepared spells. Even Grand Knights were not their opponents. Moreover, level 3 acolyte had always been considered the preparatory stage to becoming an official Magus. The faster one advances as a level 3 acolyte, the higher chances of eventually becoming an official Magus. Among Magus academies and factions, the number of official Magi was extremely small. Level 3 acolytes were universally considered the backbone of any academy’s or faction’s battle strength!
Any young level 3 acolyte was counted as a valuable asset of the academy. These institutions were inclined towards dedicating resources to nurture them, hoping that these seeds would advance beyond level 3 acolyte in the future.

“Breaking through level 3 acolyte requires mastery of two spell models, a spiritual force of 7, and the aid of Reactive Elixirs!”

Leylin picked up the tangerine-yellow potion before him.

“I have long since gotten both the elixir and the requisite spell mastery. Now, with the help of the Azure Potion, I have also met the spiritual force requirements, all within a few months. This speed has long since surpassed Jayden’s aptitude. A fifth grade acolyte!”

Even if they were genius acolytes of the fifth grade, before the huge gulf between level 2 acolyte and level 3 acolyte, 3 years would be the minimum they would spend getting there.

However, after obtaining the potion, Leylin’s speed had long since surpassed that of Jayden and the rest. In no time at all, he had reached the standard required to advance to be a level 3 acolyte.

“As long as my spiritual force gets enhanced, even if the breakthrough fails, I can always make another attempt. My body would suffer some major damage though, so being successful in one go is for the best!”

For the final time, Leylin mentally reviewed all information regarding advancement to a level 3 acolyte. After confirming that he had not left anything out, he popped the cork keeping the tangerine-yellow potion securely plugged.

“This Reactive Elixir is not meant to be drunk!”

Leylin undressed and smeared the Reactive Elixir over his face, limbs and chest.

The potion felt rather cool wherever he smeared it. However, after a few moments, a wave of heat gradually coursed through his skin. In an instant, his skin started to shudder and turn beet red.
[The Reactive Elixir is taking effect, medicinal properties under surveillance!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. As the potion continued to take effect, Leylin felt as if the potion coating his skin had come alive and was worming its way through his pores and into his body.
An itch!
An unbearable itch!
Leylin felt that his bones had split open and many ants came crawling out from within. An extremely itching sensation was coursing through his body at this moment.
“Damn it! And I actually have to enter a deep meditative state under this condition and remodel the mind runes.”
Leylin’s face turned red. He clenched his teeth and resisted the urge to scratch his body as he closed his eyes.
Due to the adverse yet intense effect on his body, Leylin spent several more times longer to enter a meditative state.
Inside the meditation, Leylin seemed to have come to a place.
The surroundings were a grayish blur. Up in the air, there were many lights which seemed like stars, illuminating this place.
Leylin lifted his head. In the air were 24 mysterious runes- glowing with a fluorescent light- which gathered to form a circle.
These were the mind runes that he had painstakingly constructed during the past few years.
Although these mind runes were all constructed through various special means, each and every one of the construction required a huge amount of effort and time. Previously, Leylin had spent more than a year before he could finally construct them in his mind.
“The mind runes of a level 2 acolyte cannot be considered to have fully consolidated. A level 3 acolyte has to integrate the mind runes
together based on the foundation set in level 2 acolyte. Moreover, there needs to be a reinforcement of the sea of consciousness!”

Leylin was extremely curious towards that state too. Right now, he was in a completely ‘conscious’ state. The sea of consciousness did not appear in any parts of his body. At least, the A.I. Chip had already used a microscopic scan at the atomic level on his body but yet could not find anything.

“The cultivation of Magi spiritual force, may very well have crossed over into the aspect of souls!”

Leylin let out a sigh from the bottom of his heart. And at this moment, the sea of consciousness had a phenomenon. A layer of tangerine-yellow light continuously permeated over the blurry, grayish mist. Not long after, the whole of the sea of consciousness turned into a bright tangerine-yellow.

“This is the effect of the Reactive Elixir! It was only with a potion that can be smeared on the body, and I also know of the ingredients it is made up of, but that it can actually affect my sea of consciousness, that is really mysterious….”

Before Leylin could gasp again, the tangerine-yellow light immediately rushed up into the sky, as if it wanted to dye the 24 mind runes into a tangerine-yellow colour too.

* Bang! *

The mind runes let off a glow and rejected the contamination of a foreign object, A huge force of impact travelled over. Leylin’s vision darkened, and he almost fainted.

“Suppress it!” Leylin hurriedly borrowed the strength of his spiritual force, to suppress the resistance of the mind runes.

* Pop! *

Towards the mind runes that he constructed, Leylin’s mastery over them was not little. A few seconds later, the 24 mind runes all stopped resisting, and they were dyed a tangerine-yellow.

Under the contamination of the light, the many mysterious patterns
appeared on the surface of the mind runes. These patterns continuously kept extending till they had completely covered the surface of all the mind runes.

* Bang! * The 24 mind runes finally stuck together, forming into an even greater rune.

In Leylin’s sea of consciousness, many patterns also appeared. And after the presence of these patterns, the sea of consciousness turned even more resplendent and transparent, as if it were being reinforced.

After the reinforcement, as if listening to some command, the tangerine-yellow light hurriedly retreated, immediately vanishing in the sea of consciousness.

The large mysterious rune let off a glow, and Leylin’s consciousness was pushed out from it.

“Where is this place?”

Leylin grew confused; suddenly releasing that he was in a mysterious place. The area was pitch-black, with no light whatsoever.

He wanted to reach out, but there was no concept of “hands” as if he never had any hands before.

In this manner, he floated in the air with no concept of time, yet he couldn’t move.

To Leylin, in this space, every minute was like a dozen years. This feeling could completely drive a sane person over the cliff.

Leylin was somewhat frustrated, “Haven’t I advanced into a level 3 acolyte yet? Why would I come to this space? How long has the time passed?”

Suddenly, Leylin’s heart jumped, “A.I. Chip!”

[Beep!] A bright blue screen was projected in front of Leylin and although it could not illuminate the darkness, still it made him feel much better.

[Scans have picked up that the Host’s spiritual force is in an
abnormal state. Under this circumstance, the Host will fail the breakthrough to a level 3 acolyte in 5 Minutes 23 Seconds! 13 Hours 45 Minutes later, due to the failure of all organs death will ensue! Whether to use magic power to get rid of the status? Yes/No?]
“Yes!” Right now Leylin completely did not feel any magic power left in his body, but the A.I. Chip could still circulate it, which made him elated.
[Obtained Host’s confirmation and now transferring magic power. In the process of getting rid of the abnormal status….] Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice intonation, there was suddenly a strange movement in the pitch-black space.

Leylin’s eyes flashed open. He realised that he was still in the secret lab and that not much time had passed since he began.
“During the advancing to a level 3 acolyte, there are actually such strange scenarios!”

Leylin’s expression was solemn. His degree of progress was too quick, most of his knowledge had been obtained from the library and also from the simulations and conjectures of the A.I. Chip.

He had no info about some scenarios of advancing into level 3 acolyte.

“Normally speaking, when many level 2 acolytes are in the midst of advancing, they all have their Professors to explain in detail to them… but I’m unfortunate! Even Professor Kroft wouldn’t have expected that I would face a breakthrough this quickly!”

Leylin held onto many secrets and would never tell the truth. In Kroft’s eyes, he was just a newly advanced level 2 acolyte, so why would he tell him about some notes to pay attention regarding the advancement to a level 3 acolyte?

Furthermore, the books in the library were available commonly. Many things in it had vague explanations. Even if Leylin had the A.I. Chip and was able to erase the false information, together with
his experiments, he wouldn’t be able to obtain the perfect results. This caused Leylin to encounter a phenomenon that occurred during his advancement and he was at a complete loss. “Luckily I had the A.I. Chip this time, if not I will be finished! The road to becoming a Magus is indeed very precarious!” There was some lingering fear in Leylin’s heart. But this, too, confirmed his deductions. The A.I. Chip had been with him when he was transported and for some unknown reason, it had merged into his soul. Hence, when his soul met with an abnormality and was isolated and without help, he could still activate the A.I. Chip to get rid of the inner influences from the outside. “So, advancing to a level 3 acolyte is not about the combination of the mind runes nor reinforcing the sea of consciousness, but about the space of darkness that comes after!” Leylin suddenly understood much more. All these were usually precious information secrets that were not announced by professors or the academy, many factionless acolytes usually died during this aspect. [Beep! The Host’s spiritual force has some change and is more lively. The Host has advanced into a level 3 acolyte! spiritual force increasing….] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Following which, Leylin felt dizzy, and his spiritual force increased at a rapid speed.

7.2
7.3
7.5

……

9.7
10.1
The spiritual force which seemed to ride on a rocket had continuously increased. When the final number jumped, it turned into 10.1, and finally stabilising itself.

“My head hurts!”

With the sudden increase of the spiritual force, right now Leylin’s body could still not adapt to the change. He had a runny nose and when he touched the area, he realised that he was bleeding from his nostrils!

“The increase in spiritual force is too fast, and the body could not take it!”

Leylin smiled wryly but very soon his expression changed and cracking noises came from within his body. At the same time, intense pain travelled from all parts of his body continuously. Leylin’s facial muscles contorted and he fell flat on the bed, like a shrivelled up shrimp.

“Damn it! Damn it! The Reactive Elixir’s effect is up and the backlash from the potion has started!”

Leylin howled, “A.I. Chip! Begin to coordinate with the magic power and get rid of the remnants from the elixir!”

A layer of a grayish-black halo of light appeared and floated on his body, enveloping his whole body. Along with the flickering of the halo, much of the yellowish-black pus was expunged from Leylin’s pores, releasing a very acute stench.

A dozen minutes later, Leylin struggled to get up. He took out a red-coloured potion from the bag lying beside him and drank it fully before his expression changed for the better.

At this moment his body was drenched in sweat and pus, bringing about an acidic stench, as if he had just been scooped out from the sewers.

Leylin tried to pick himself up. His face was pale stricken and he was weak in the knees. His eyes were sunk in as if having been bedridden with an illness for many months.
After pushing open the door of the secret lab, Leylin jingled the bell placed beside the door.

* Ding Ling Ling! *

A crisp yet penetrating sound rang, and it travelled far after a while.

“Young Master! You…” A few minutes later, Anna brought two maids as she rushed over. It seemed like Leylin’s lips were covered by his hands.

“It’s fine! Send me to the bathroom! I wish to take a shower!”

“Do you want me to call the herbalist or doctor over?”

“No need!”

……

Half an hour later, Leylin lay in a pool that was constructed from marble. The warm water flowed over his body, bringing away the dirt and grime from him.

Anna was buck-naked as she nestled up against Leylin. She used a white towel to scrub his body.

“Mi….Milord! Your deer blood soup and steak!”

On the other side, Trixy too was stark naked, and her delightful curves were all exposed in front of Leylin eyes. She blushed, as she carried a propped up tray over.

The ray was made of wood and floated on the pool. Leylin picked up his utensils and ate voraciously.

Some time later, Leylin wore a loose bathrobe and reclined on a nearby chair. His back leaned against Anna’s chest and enjoyed the sensational perky abundance.

And at his side, Trixy and another beautiful were giving a massage to Leylin.

They had only donned some clothes, which were smaller than a palm. The private areas weren’t covered, only faintly discernible at times. This made it even more embarrassing yet alluring.
Trixy and the other maid were only daughters of farmers and they had toiled in the farms since they were young. They had a layer of calluses on their hands even. However, they were extremely young and their slender figures were beautiful. Their bodies radiated the vibrancy of youthfulness. Compared to Anna, it was a kind of wild flavour.

However, right now Leylin completely did not have any interest to engage in an intense bout with them. Instead, he felt somewhat traumatic about the advancement today.
I. Chip! Bring forth my current stats!” Leylin commanded inwardly.

The A.I. Chip projected the data in front of Leylin’s eyes. Apart from him, nobody else could see it. Leylin closed his eyes, yet his mind was rapidly processing and thinking.

“En! My vitality has increased by 0.3, which should be related to the use of the Reactive Elixir. Also, not only did my spiritual force increase to 10.1, I can feel that my spiritual force is brimming with more energy as compared to before. My perception towards energy particles in the air has increased too, so casting rank 0 spells should now be easier!” “The realm of a level 3 acolyte is indeed not something a level 2 acolyte can compare to. However, the process of advancing is too perilous!” Leylin put on an expression of lingering fear. No matter if it was his consciousness being trapped in the black space, or the backlash from the Reactive Elixir, they were all developments which he had not expected.
To Leylin, all the data and information he had garnered was still too
little. Although the A.I. Chip’s calculation abilities were extremely
tremendous, if the basic information was not there, being able to
simulate the correct advancement technique was already considered
to be not bad.
As for the setback met during the advancement, due to the various
differences in vitality between people adding on to the shortage of
information, even the A.I. Chip was unable to predict them.
“After all, in the library that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy opened
for its students, much information had been restricted. Some high
levelled information was not even released to be read by the
acolytes!”
“Also, even if the A.I. Chip’s calculation abilities are comparable to
10 supercomputers, the Magus World has, at least, tens of
thousands of years of history. With all of the hundreds of
thousands of acolytes experiments, the results and models will
surpass the A.I. Chip’s calculation abilities!”
“The advancement, this time, was indeed rather lucky, and luck
played an important factor in it!”
Leylin’s face turn solemn, “I cannot go on like this next time! This
is only for advancing to a level 3 acolyte! In the future, when I
advance into an official Magus, I won’t be so lucky if something
like this happens again!”
The difficulty of the advancement from a level 3 acolyte to an
official Magus far exceeded that of advancing from a regular
human to a level 3 acolyte,
And if at that time there were some mistakes or oversights due to
negligence, even if Leylin had a few lives, it wouldn’t be enough to
save him.
“After returning, I must inquire greatly about all the details
pertaining to advancement into an official Magus, and not try to
break through blindly again!”
Leylin gave himself this mission for the future.
“What’s next is to wait until my body has adapted to the sudden increase in spiritual force, and muster the few rank 0 spells that only level 3 acolytes can learn, then go back to reexamine that lab!” Leylin opened his eyes and sent Anna and the other two maids away. After setting up a circle of warning with a spell formation, he dragged his weary body onto the bed on the other side and entered into slumber.

……

In the blink of an eye, half a month had passed like that. Night and the splendor of moonlight shone upon the ground. It was another full moon night. Nearby the withering woods, beside that same large black granite boulder, Leylin muttered an incantation and repeated the same procedure as before. Seeing the same dark hole of the cave, Leylin smiled and walked in. After the observation of his previous exploration, he had already roughly understood the rules that were governing the spell formation. Moreover, he recorded all the danger inside there and had a way to counter them. Furthermore, he had already advanced to a level 3 acolyte and had more confidence to break the defensive mechanisms laid by the unknown Magus. The black tunnel passage was very short, and the surface was extremely shiny, reflecting Leylin’s black robed figure. It was even projected at multiple angles on the wall behind Leylin. The villa that Leylin had seen previously was at the back of the tunnel. The Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flowers still littered the floor. There were even grey slates on the floor, and within it resided the Gnawing Slate.
On the door of the villa, there was a circular hole. At the side of it was a corpse and a black diary which brought lustre lay beside the corpse. Seeing this book that had records of Alchemy, Leylin’s heart began to palpitate faster.

In Leylin’s eyes, the exterior of the villa was set up with a dangerous halo of light coming from magic spells, and it was unknown how many traps were concealed under the brilliant light.

* Hehe! Haha! *

Just as Leylin’s right foot stepped on the stone slate, a childish laughter sounded. The slates on the floor twisted open and revealed a mouth filled with razor sharp teeth, snapping viciously at Leylin!

“The first defense! Gnawing Slate!” Leylin smiled and tossed a gob of black stuff into the huge mouth.

* Ka-Cha! * The huge mouth gobbled up the black mass.

* Pu! * The grey mouth chewed, and immediately spit the black residue out. A red tongue continuously flickered outwards, and spat a yellowish green spittle.

This scene looked very much like a regular human eating something disgusting and spitting it out.

“With Stinky Stench Flower, Faeces Carapace Mantis, and the Rotten Stemmed Grass as the components of this vomiting powder! It is indeed the bane of the Gnawing Slate!” Leylin looked at the grey slate vomiting again, which immediately grew two small legs as it ran away, and the sight made Leylin laugh.

“To the unknown Magus, this should be a temporary lab since the spell leaned towards concealment. As for its resistance, there should only be 3 layers! Moreover, using the Gnawing Slate, Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flowers combination, this is the trademark defensive measures of the Michael School of Thought!”

Leylin walked towards the front door, and immediately grabbed the black diary with his hands.

It was extremely heavy, and carrying it felt like carrying a brick. It
was probably made with special materials.

Leylin kept the diary in his robes and walked towards the large door.

A layer of blackish green vine immediately wrapped around the door, and on it, many red petals bloomed. The petals assembled, and actually formed the face of a female.

“Intruder! This is somewhere that you shouldn’t have come!” The petals formed the opening and closing of the lips as the female talked.

“The Magus in there is already dead, I will inherit his fortune! As for you, I will keep your existence alive, and give you all the nourishment you require for evolving, how is it?”

Leylin took a red coloured fruit from his sack, “To you, the whole experiment lab cannot even be compared with this ingredient in my hand!”

“With it, you may even leave in the future, and regain your freedom, returning back to the woods where you came from….”

Leylin spoke softly, with a tinge of beguilement.

“Freedom!” Hesitation and contemplations streaked across the woman’s face.

“I cannot betray the promise from before! Outsider, please leave!”

The woman struggled, but she still rejected Leylin’s proposition. A green vine continuously writhed, as if it would strike anytime.

“Sigh…. Leylin returned the fruit to his sack and sighed, “I thought that I wouldn’t have to strike!”

“Stubborn intruder, only death will be your ending!”

The Bone Eating Flower howled, this time changing into the face of a male, and many black vines immediately came lashing forward.

* Bang! * The black shadow charged forward, and Leylin ducked with his body. The thick vines slapped the floor, and the stone pieces flew in the air, revealing a huge pit.

“Don’t be so impulsive, what if you damage the experiment lab?”
A layer of green light flew into the vine in the air, turning into a ball of light, and enveloped the flower and vine completely. The vine’s attack speed decreased.
Leylin’s brows furrowed and he took out a black powder from his sack, before sprinkling it all over the ground.
Moreover, as he scattered the powder, Leylin hurriedly chanted an incantation.
“Intruder! Die!” The human face formed by flower petals roared, and continuously changed, sometimes it was the voice of a male, and sometimes it had the face of a female.
* Bang! Bang! Bang! *
The blackish green vines were continuously brandished and hit many holes in the surrounding walls of the cave.
Leylin relied on the stats of a Knight to dodge, and his incantation never stopped.
Finally, after Leylin ran around the villa, the surrounding was already scattered with the black powder.
At this moment, the chanting stopped. Leylin pointed a finger at the human face, “Go to hell! Cloud of Afterlife!”
* Boom! *
The black powder continuously dissolved, turning into a gaseous body, and formed into an ominous black cloud that engulfed the entirety of the villa.
* Sssii! * From within travelled noises, which made Leylin recall the decomposition process of a man eating plant.
The black clouds grew denser, finally shielding what was happening within.
However, there were the occasional sounds of the Bone Eating Flower which continuously waned and finally disappeared, only leaving behind decomposing sounds, which would make people cringe.
5 minutes later, the black smoke dissipated, revealing the villa from
before again.
By this moment, the surface of the villa had been severely corroded, and it looked as if it was going to collapse any moment. The Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flower had long since disappeared, leaving behind only a few remains.
“What a despotic spell! Cloud of Afterlife, a rank 0 spell which only level 3 acolyte can muster. Each use costs 5 spiritual force and 5 magic power, but it is worth it!”
Leylin nodded his head approvingly.
With one use of Cloud of Afterlife, not only did the Devil Vines and Bone Eating Flower disappear, the villa had suffered from extreme corrosion, leaving behind only part of the defense, which could be said to no longer pose a threat to Leylin.
Moreover, the Cloud of Afterlife was a Shadow, Dark Element spell which was the least destructive. It was something Leylin specially chosen in order to destroy the spell formation on the villa, at the same time leaving behind the construction of the villa.
“Only that…. The villa seems to have been corroded, and cannot stay erect for much longer!”
Leylin walked forward and knocked on the wooden door. * Crash! * The wooden door immediately crumbled into many pieces and fell to the ground.
“I must hurry!” Leylin strode into the villa.
“A.I. Chip! Scan the main structure of the villa!”
[Mission establishing, beginning scan….]
Previously, the A.I. Chip could not scan the blueprints of the villa due to the layer of spell formation and defensive measures on the surface of the villa. But, that was not the case now.
Very soon, a layer of light in the shape of a blue map appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes.
“En! There are two storeys in the villa. On the higher floor, it’s the bedroom and bathroom! The first floor would be the guestroom. As for the experiment lab, it is located underground! The entrance is built into the back of a wardrobe!”
Under the scan of the A.I. Chip, the interior of the villa was displayed in front of him fully.
“To the bedroom first!” Leylin rapidly ran up the second floor.
Gripping the yellow bronze handle, Leylin opened the large door to the bedroom. A layer of dust immediately infiltrated his nose. The surface of Leylin’s body automatically created a layer of black coloured light membrane, shielding him from the dust.
Leylin then scanned the area, “Everything is all neatly placed!”
The bedroom was very small, with only a bed, a table and a chair, and a closet.
Leylin opened the closet, “The clothes have all disappeared, it seems that the owner here has prepared to abandon this place!”
Although he had thought of this before, Leylin was still somewhat disappointed. He immediately rummaged through the bedroom but found nothing of value. Even the drawers of the table were empty, and there was only some blank parchment paper in the corners of the room. “These should be remnants of the diary or record book! A pity that there’s nothing written on them!” Leylin felt that it was somewhat a shame. His eyes suddenly flashed, “Diary! I got it!”

The yellow parchment paper was very old and seemed as if would break into many pieces. However, to Leylin, these few pieces of parchment paper were supreme treasures! “A.I. Chip! Scan the traces on the parchment paper!” Leylin ordered, and a layer of blue light was immediately projected in front of his eyes. As for the parchment paper, lines of red handwriting were intermittently surfacing. “This is something that the Magus wrote on a piece of parchment paper, but traces of his handwriting were left on these pieces of parchment!

Leylin was somewhat elated. Magi would only use spells to appraise items, but there were spells that defended against such attempts. However they had absolutely no defences against Leylin’s previous world’s graphology, and he eventually found some clues. The information on the parchment paper was extremely disorderly. Many characters were overlapping with one another, and even the A.I. Chip was unable to differentiate between them.

After putting together the scattered pieces, what little information Leylin gotten should have been this diary:

September 1st, clear. Extreme Night City is a very tranquil city, I hope I can carry out my experiments here peacefully….

December 5th, dark. Oh! Damn it! The experiment has failed yet again, as expected! The difficulty of synthesizing bloodlines has far
exceeded my expectations....
What remained was extremely vague, and even the dates could not be deciphered:
After reading Wayne’s letter, I conducted a few more experiments. I have to admit, he was right, I was heading in the wrong direction all along, this is indeed some sorrowful news....
The experimental body has failed completely. As for what’s left of the eggs, even if they could hatch, my plan has completely failed. Oh, my heavens....
There is nothing of value here anymore. Maybe I should go to the Dylan Gardens to have a look. Wayne said that his experiments have already achieved a few stages of success, this is a great piece of news for us....
The contents of the diary stopped here, it was a continuous record of a Magus’ failure and ended in the abandonment of the lab.
Besides a person called Wayne from the Dylan Gardens, Leylin gained nothing whatsoever.
However, there were too many Wayne’s, and as for Dylan Gardens, Leylin never heard of it before.
“Not right, wait a minute!”
Leylin’s eyes suddenly flashed, and in the corner of the parchment paper, he discovered a name.
The faint red writing was extremely vague, hence, Leylin almost missed it earlier.
“Nor... Norco Curadu Sfar!”
“Norco Curadu Sfar!” Leylin’s eyes widened, “Great Magus Serholm!”
“Could it be that the owner of this lab was the great Magus Serholm?”
Norco Curadu Sfar was a legend of the south coast! In the legends, not only was he an erudite scholar, he had obtained extremely outstanding results along the path of a Magus. He had even led the
whole of the south coast Magi to repel the countless advances of
the subterranean people and marine creatures.
This kind of great Magus was the role model for all Magi in the
south coast.
Earlier in the market, the dishonest merchant who tried to sell
Leylin the Lowian Academy Teachings had tried to pass off the
original decrepit page as the writings of the great Magus Serholm,
but it was seen through by Leylin.
“A respected figure like this, his legacy would definitely be of
value. A pity that the two storeys were left with nothing and there
definitely would not be any legacy or things of the sort!”
Regret streaked across Leylin’s face, but he still memorised the
contents on the parchment paper.
“I hope that there will be something to gain from the experiment
lab!”
Leylin gave the bedroom one last disappointed glance before he
puffed out a breath, and blew the parchment paper into bits.
Coming to the wardrobe on the first floor, originally, the in built
wardrobe should have been stuck on the wall. However, due to a
small crack, Leylin could now see the passage behind it.
This should be something that was done by the Mankestre Snake.
Leylin shifted away the emptied wardrobe, and the black passage
appeared before him.
* Pa! * Leylin snapped, and a layer of light illuminated the area,
dispelling the darkness and revealing a flight of steps that led
downwards.
Leylin’s eyes flashed fervently as he walked down.
* Clang! *
The leather shoes and ground made a dull noise from friction.
Compared to the villa above, the underground space was more
spacious, and was almost the size of 3 to 4 villas.
Criss-crossed walls littered the area, separating the underground lab
into a few large areas.
Leylin continued down the passage, and from time to time, he could see the labelling of the areas.
An ancient handwriting was used. However, it had some relevance to the Byron language. As Leylin walked, he looked.
Data area, garden area, incubator area, potioneering area, herbology area… Each and every special area appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes.
After seeing the incubator area, Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he walked in.
A ball of light always floated around him, illuminating the sight of the incubator area.
What initially entered Leylin’s sight were many circular glass domes, but the glasses had already cracked, revealing many rotten eggs of mysterious organisms.
Under the alert from the A.I. Chip that there were no signs of life around, Leylin put on a pair of gloves, and held a grey egg that resembled a granite stone in his hands.
[Scanning in progress, similarity level to the Mankestre Snake: 73.2%, Huge Wood Python: 34.5%, Huge Tree Lizard: 13.8%]
The A.I. Chip continuously projected the results of the scan.
“It seems like these are all the brothers and sisters of the half adult Mankestre Snake!” Leylin gasped as he saw the many dead eggs within the glass domes.
If they were all still alive, Leylin would most likely not be able to escape.
After some searching, Leylin discovered a strange incubating pool. On the surface of the glass ball, there was a circular hole that was cracked through, and the remnants of some egg shells.
“The Mankestre Snake from earlier should have been bred in this incubating pool….”
Leylin sized up the area and was unresigned as he continued
searching, finally obtaining nothing. He could only pick up a dead egg that looked like a stone and toss it.

Data area, garden area, potioneeering area, herbology area...

Leylin looked over everything once. The great Magus Serholm would have definitely spent a lot of time and effort on it. The setup in each area was extremely thorough.

However, when he left, he brought along everything with him. Leylin, who originally wished to get lucky, had now also completely tossed that notion away.

Apart from the few blank pieces of parchment paper in the bedroom, there was nothing that Leylin found.

“The final area! The dissecting room!”

Leylin wore a disappointed expression that he found difficult to mask, and walked into the room.

* Clang! *

The steel door boomed opened and a concentrated aura of dense negative energy permeated the air. Leylin could even hear the faint wails of countless souls.

“On the way of a Magus who seeks the truth, one can never avoid spilling blood!” Leylin muttered the maxim of the great Magus Serholm.

After sizing up the area, Leylin noticed that there were some traces of black blood on the white experiment table. He picked up some powder from it.

“A.I. Chip! Scan!”

[No surviving cells were detected! Due to various intense radiations, there are deficiencies and mutations in the fragments of the cells, unable to detect source!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“F*ck!” Leylin felt utter disappointment as he kicked the experiment table.

Towards Magi who loved explorations, nothing was more
disappointing than devoting countless effort and energy to enter the vestiges of ancient times and returning empty handed. Although the Alchemy diary could already be considered to be extremely beneficial to Leylin, compared to the great Magus Serholm, that kind of loot was somehow inadequate. This was the great Magus Serholm!!! An official Magus that was at least rank 4!!! But in his lab, Leylin gained nothing at all, which made him extremely vexed.

“Forget it! At least I still have the diary of that unlucky fellow. I did not suffer any loss. Moreover, this experiment could very well be a lab that the great Magus Serholm used when he was a rank 1 or 2 Magus. If not, I would have definitely not been able to enter….”

Suddenly, Leylin was rather glad. If he had trespassed into the lab of the great Magus Serholm when he was at his peak. and if there had been some curse laid out, Leylin certainly would have been unable to resist right now.

* Bang! *

As if kickstarting some kind of chain reaction by kicking the experiment table, a gust of wind blew past the ground, turned into a whirlwind, and coiled the dust up in the air. “Eh?” Leylin’s face tightened, and his right hand extended into his waist pouch.

The cyclone grew larger and larger, before finally forming into a translucent human figure. “How many years… How many years has it been already! I have finally caught a whiff of a living human!” The translucent figure seemed to gasp and revealed a vague elderly visage.
Leylin’s pupils contracted. The Magi were clueless as to the appearance of spirit bodies but most of them assumed that a spirit body was the external embodiment of a soul. Also, many Magi were in the dark with regards to the formation of a spirit body. It seemed that the creation of a spirit body required many coincidental encounters. Sometimes, even a regular human could turn into an evil spirit after death, yet even official Magi never had such things happen to them. Moreover, spirit bodies were extremely rare. With regards to their research, even if the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had a large number of observations, they only slightly understood the behavior of spirit bodies. As the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy only sought knowledge, Leylin managed to learn a little about spirit bodies through a few words mentioned by professors, so he wouldn’t be like others who might be frightened. “Who are you?” Leylin asked warily as he retreated back by several steps. “Name?” The translucent spirit body shook its head, “I’ve forgotten that long ago!” “Countless years have passed and I have been wandering here
always, up to this day! I felt that an interesting fellow had trespassed into my lab, so I came out to have a look at you!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, “So you are the owner of this lab! Accept my apologies, for interrupting you so presumptuously!” Saying so, he gave a polite bow used between Magi and his gesture had no flaws. The spirit body’s faint lips curled upwards, “I like little fellows with manners!” He reached out his translucent hand, and a layer of light appeared in his hands, “You can obtain a great present from this magnificent wizard!” “Really? Honestly, this is too good!” Leylin seemed to be ‘ecstatic’ as he stepped several steps forward. Suddenly, a gob of green ball appeared and was shot out from Leylin’s hands, which passed the spirit body, directly landing on the experiment table behind. * Sssii! * A large hole corroded through the experiment table. “A physical attack has no effect?” Leylin’s turned solemn. “Little fellow, what are you doing?” The spirit body smiled but it seemed to be more sinister from before. “This is the magnificent Magus Roman’s inheritance, which can allow you to successfully advance into an official Magus!” “Are you kidding me? You are just a spirit with a grievance that impersonated your owner!” Leylin retreated several more steps and a purple potion appeared in his hands. “I reckon that light in your hands is not anything good!” * Bang! * The potion flew from his hands and let off an intense combustion. The purple smoke rose continuously, and under the engulfment of the purple mist, the layer of light in the spirit body’s hands dispersed, revealing a sinister looking visage that howled with unwillingness. It looked rather similar to the spirit body.
“A malicious, vengeful spirit who loves to invade the physical bodies of living humans!”
Leylin thought of some distant narration and exclaimed, “Vengeful spirit! You are a vengeful spirit!”
“Who knows?” The spirit body had a bloodthirsty smirk.
“The thing that really lured you out should be this book right?”
Leylin waved an Alchemy diary book, which he retrieved from his robes.
“Indeed! This is something that belongs to me!” Seeing the black diary, the eyes of the spirit body seemed to be reminded of something.
“You are the corpse at the front door. During the exploration of this lab, you were killed by the Gnawing Slate. Your spirit was trapped by the spell formation, before finally turning into a vengeful spirit!”
Leylin summarized the series of events, as he already knew who the real owner of this lab was.
“An intelligent kid!” The spirit body toyed with its fingernails, “A pity that you will die here today!”
* Whoosh! *
Leylin only felt a light flashing by and tried to dodge, but he found several traces of blood on his chest.
“The smell of fresh blood!” Seeing the blood, the expression of the spirit body turned even more desirous and he placed his fingers in his mouth and licked them.
“What a quick movement! The naked eye cannot keep up with it!”
A blue light appeared from Leylin’s eyes, and the A.I. Chip calculated quickly.
“You won’t be able to escape! Surrender and become an offering of the magnificent Roman!” The vengeful spirit howled and charged forward again.
His fingernails sprung forward as if turning into a razor sharp
blade.
* Dang! * A layer of light membrane appeared from Leylin’s body, shielding him from the force of the frantic attack.
Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion!
“I’ve caught you!” Leylin sneered.
Leylin could not entirely keep up with a spirit body, which travelled as fast as the wind. Even if the A.I. Chip could calculate its trajectory and movements, with Leylin’s physical abilities, he could not follow it. Moreover, due to the illusory appearance of the spirit body, most physical attacks were of no use.
Thankfully, Leylin’s potion- the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion which he had concocted before- was the only defensive potion that acolytes had access to. There were even some suppression effects towards spirit bodies.
The hand, which was enveloped in light, directly grabbed hold of the right hand of the spirit body.
“Im…Impossible! How are you able to touch me?”
The spirit’s face contorted and it howled as it struggled.
“Spirit bodies may be very mysterious to the acolytes of other academies, but it’s a pity that you met me, who came from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Accept the fate of a failure!” Leylin’s face was serene and he took out a black coloured crystal ball.
This was something that he had managed to obtain in the academy- a Confining Spirit Sphere, which was specifically used to capture and store spirit bodies.
* Chi! * After the black coloured crystal ball came into contact with the spirit body, glowing light radiated and a suction force appeared on its surface, which sucked the continuously howling spirit body directly into it.
Minutes later, nothing stood in front of Leylin anymore. The inside the black crystal ball had an extra-translucent figure in it; thus, the
black crystal had a resemblance to amber.

Leylin heaved a sigh of relief. “Thankfully this old geezer is only a level 3 acolyte, and fortunately, I had the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion and Confining Spirit Sphere. If not, I would have been in trouble today....”

Concerning spirit bodies, the strength of their soul would determine their might.
As for the meditation of magicians, it is the cultivation of spiritual force, a type of method to strengthen their soul.
There was once an official Magus who, when he transformed into a spirit body, actually retained his spell casting abilities, finally turning into a spirit body Magus.
If today he met with a spirit body that was an official Magus, Leylin would have had no chance at all of escaping.
Once a physical body is occupied, the soul will forever be connected to it.
Looking at the black crystal ball in his hands, Leylin thought and then added several more seals on it, then placed it into a small black sack. He even tightened the mouth of the sack and hung it on his waist.
After doing so, Leylin searched the entirety of the villa. After confirming that there were no more oversights, he left the place with extreme regrets.
“What a pity!”
Leylin looked at the huge black granite boulder behind him, and without further hesitation, he rode a handsome blade steed and rapidly left the area,
* Boom! *
When he left, the huge black granite boulder exploded loudly, destroying the whole area and turning into ashes.
Half a month later, in the experiment lab, Leylin closed the black
diary after reading its last page. “I never thought that the synthesis of a magic artifact as depicted by Lowian Academy Teachings, or the ancient formula of the Tears of Mary, would include the aspect of souls….” Leylin had only heard of this information vaguely from Kroft back in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, but he had never researched it on his own. “I’m afraid that… I can only adopt the crudest method, which is to research and observe from various trial and error experiments. Also, I have to use the A.I. Chip to gather data…. In this aspect, perhaps Viscount Jackson, in his capacity as a city lord, could help me ….” Thinking of which, Leylin took out a black crystal ball from the corner of his lab. The crystal ball was originally placed on an altar with mysterious runes scribbled over it and there were 3 white, lit candles that surrounded it. Leylin knocked on the surface of the crystal ball. * Dong! * A wave suddenly erupted, and the mist in the crystal ball dispersed, revealing a vague fuzzy figure. This figure only had the upper half of its body, and its lower limbs were replaced by the continuously swirling white mist. As for its countenance, it was that of an old geezer. This old geezer’s expression was extremely rapt and fright permanently lingered on his face, as if it was a small worm that was solidified within amber. Looking at this vengeful spirit, Leylin suddenly laughed and chanted an incantation. “Where is this? Release me quickly….” Suddenly, the solidified contents in the crystal ball turned to life again. The old geezer howled. Although his face was still filled with vehemence and
craziness, it could not conceal his fear and helplessness!
“How is it, Mister Roman? How is the feeling of having your thoughts frozen?”
Leylin propped the ball in front of him.
“It’s you!” The vengeful spirit head-butted the surface of the crystal ball, but it was to no avail.
Seeing Roman, who was like a helpless mosquito, wildly charge against the interior walls of the crystal ball, Leylin chuckled and flicked his finger at the surface of the crystal ball.
* Bang! * Roman, who was inside, seemed to have been struck by a steel hammer and collapsed onto the ground, completely dispirited.
“How is it? Now, hurry up and tell me everything you know about the experiment and your life. I may consider letting you off after that!”
Leylin’s face was impassive.
“Dream on!” Roman put on a resolute expression.
“Then I have no choice!” Leylin shrugged his shoulders and placed a fiery red rock beside the crystal ball.
“Arghhh!” Flames immediately appeared on Roman’s body, as he wailed pitifully.
“In the aspect of adding suffering to a spirit body, I have some skills! Moreover, in this crystal ball, you cannot even commit suicide. This kind of torture will last for a very long time! A veerrrrrry loooooonggg tiiiiiime…..”
Leylin dragged his last words to the extreme, which would make someone who listened to it want to sleep.
“Be… A Bewitching Charm? Dream on!” Roman, who was squeezed into the crystal ball, gritted his teeth.
“That is some unexpected mental fortitude!”
Leylin’s brows furrowed, “It seems like I have to cast it once a day in the future, to make this vengeful spirit’s life force reduce
greatly….”
The life force was the foundation of vengeful spirits. When the life force of vengeful spirits is weakened, their intelligence will often lower, turning into a retard.
Under the current circumstances, adding on to the bewitching charm, there is a great chance of success.
Even if it did not drive Roman crazy, there shouldn’t be any issues at all. Leylin, as a Potions Master, had confidence in preserving Roman’s life force before it dissipated. By prolonging Roman’s life force, and repeatedly torturing him, with perseverance, Leylin would obtain the information he needed.
As for what Leylin had now, it was time. Time to toy with Roman slowly!
In the blink of an eye, it was already late autumn. The arable farms were all brimming with golden yellow ear wheat. The windmills in the distance were continuously whirling and the earth seemed to be joyous from the abundance.

*Dang Dang Dang!* Travelling on the road in the middle of the farms was a group of horse carriages and armoured Knights with the strength and robustness that far exceeded those of ordinary men. On the armour on their shoulder plates was an insignia of a crescent moon- this was the insignia belonging to the city lord of Extreme Night City, Viscount Jackson!

Upon seeing the horse carriages, the farmers hurriedly avoided the road, taking off their caps and bowing.

In the middle of the Knights and troops, were several horse carriages that were veiled with black cloth. As these carriages advanced, sounds of clanging metal chains were produced from it which gave off an ominous feeling.

“Look at this direction! It seems to be headed to the villa! This should be the third group in this month!” A farmer with a brown beard muttered to himself.

“Old Johan! What are you looking at?” A farmer at the other side called out.

“Those horse carriages! I keep having the feeling that something is amiss. Previously when the wind blew, I saw the figures inside the
horse carriage….” Old John’s brows furrowed. “So what? It might be that the lord of our manor has started to purchase female slaves on a whim! You know what, our kind-hearted yet lazy manor lord, is still in his teens!” The farmer beside Old John supported him and grumbled, “It’s better for us not to bother with the matters of these people. Let’s go! Rose Pub recently has new rum….” Both farmers’ silhouette disappeared gradually in the distance. As for the other side, the procession of horse carriages stopped outside of Leylin’s manor. Greem and Fraser have long since been waiting for them. “According to the city lord’s orders, the ‘goods’ have arrived!” The leader of the Knights peeled his cloak open, revealing a hideous face littered with scars. “Open the prisoners’ carriage!” With the leader’s command, the subordinates hurriedly opened the carriages carrying the prisoners, revealing the chained prisoners within. These prisoners only wore coarse armour and these had holes and were covered in grime. They were all of different stature. Short, tall, thin and fat. However, the common similarity is the killing aura masked in their expressionless eyes. Knights such as Greem and Fraser were extremely sensitive to killing intent. Only people who have truly committed homicide would have this aura. “There are 5 men. They are all heinous criminals. Every legal case regarding them is enough to execute the capital punishments a dozen times…. Of course, the city lord has long since approved of their death sentence. In the eyes of the law, they are already ‘dead’…. ” The Knight leader smirked, and his face which was littered with scars turned even more grotesque. “For whatever reason, even for the sake of those innocent victims, never let them go easily…. ”
“Their fate is all in the hands of Young Master!” After receiving the criminals, Greem said, “However, we can guarantee that not one of them will walk out of this manor…."
After getting a satisfactory response the Knight leader brought his troops and the empty prison carriages out of the villa.
As for Greem, he forcefully brought the 5 criminals under the basement of the manor.
The torch in the darkness, the tightly locked door, and the dry stifling underground passage gave all these criminals an eerie feeling. However, with the two Knights, Greem and Fraser, they had no chance to resist.
Greem led the way familiarly, bringing the 5 criminals each into different prison. Afterwards, he came to a newly tunneled experiment lab and waited by the side.
Although there were thick walls, and the surroundings had torches which were scorching bright, Greem still felt his hairs stand on end, and cold sweat trickled down his body.
As a slave Knight, he knew part of Leylin’s identity. He knew even more about the darkness and the terror behind those walls!
“That place is practically a hell!” The first time Greem was summoned inside by Leylin, he had blurted his thoughts. Afterwards, this fearless Knight had puked for an entire night.
Half an hour passed. For Greem, time seemed to have crawled like half a year long. Especially when the indistinct screams that occasionally seeped through the sturdy walls with the impression of piercing his ear drum!
May the heavens have pity! Although Greem was no good person, and his hands too were covered with blood, the moaning and wails behind the stone walls were something that a human was incapable of producing anymore.
* Creak! * The sturdy steel door swung open and Leylin strode out from it. On his body were traces of blood stains.
“A pity that the experimental body was not strong enough and was unable to endure the effects of the spell! I hope the next few experimental bodies will be more durable…."
To research on souls, Leylin did not have any readily available ingredients. So he could only adopt the crudest method which was to continuously gather data through experiments.
“Young Master!” Greem hurriedly bowed. “Today the city lord’s Castle has sent another 5 people over and they are all inside their cells….”
“Very well!” Leylin nodded his head.
Although he was a level 3 acolyte, before advancing into an official Magus, Leylin did not have enough assurance for challenging those self-proclaimed “Light” Magi, so some things still had to be concealed.
Only Greem and Fraser were handling the reception of goods. Apart from them, Anna, too, knew a little about it. Other than them, even Fayern and Old Welker, the housekeeper, knew nothing of Leylin’s deeds.
Although they had some faint surmises, but Leylin always disposed of those useless ‘ingredients’ by cremating them with medicinal powder. Under no evidence, even if anyone had suspicions, they could not do anything towards him.
“This is the limitation of strength! The official Magi in the academy can saunter through slave markets to purchase slaves as ingredients. They could even lure and cheat acolytes but nobody could punish them! However, I am just a lowly acolyte and all by myself. I still have to mind my reputation….”
Leylin stroked his chin.
“A.I. Chip, how is the gathering of data on experimental bodies today?”
Leylin asked inwardly.
[The spiritual force of the experimental subject has already been
discovered to have 23 abnormal cerebral fluctuations and within the cerebrum were 45 hidden locations.…]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Using the prisoners as living subjects and carrying out experiments to obtain research and data on the spirit body, seemed like it’s doable!”
Leylin nodded his head, “It’s just that the amount is still too little….”
Turning back, he looked at Greem who seemed to have been uneasy right from the start, “You did well, take your leave now!”
“As you wish, Master!” Greem bowed and heaved a secret sigh of relief as he hurriedly ran away.
As a regular human, naturally he was somewhat conflicted with these issues, not to mention the limitations set from the slave training. But Leylin’s strength had far surpassed Greem’s. Hence, he could only find it difficult to bear but did not dare to display any reluctance.
As his owner, Leylin naturally had seen through this point.
“After all, he is just a regular human and such occurrences are to be expected. As long as he is still obeying orders, the others I need not care about….” Leylin recalled Greem’s expression for a moment, before completely forgetting him. His black robes swirled about him as he disappeared into the underground lab.
“Leylin, my friend, we meet again!”
His green hair trailing the ground, Langford looked at Leylin and sincerity was shown on his face.
Ever since the previous incident between Leylin and Langford, they actually had traded a few more times. They had even established a friendship and became pretty good friends.
How things turned out like this was because Leylin discovered that when Langford was not crazy, his character was rather good. Moreover, his supplies of goods were constant and the prices in the
Brey Canyon were cheaper than other magicians’. Between magicians, benefits are the only constant. As for other things, most of them could be forsaken.
“Langford! This time, I require the goods urgently! Have a look!” Leylin nodded his head as he handed over a yellow parchment paper with scribbles on it.
“I seldom see this side of you! Let me take a look!” Langford took the parchment paper and immediately ground his teeth.
“The faeces of the Kosh Bird, Stellar Alloy…. These items are all connected to the aspect of souls and are not cheap items!”
* Dong! * A small sack was immediately slammed onto Langford’s table.
After loosening the ropes around it, glittering magic crystals were revealed within it.
“Do not worry about magic crystals, these are the deposit. I will make up for the difference later with potions!” Leylin spoke in a rich and overbearing manner.
“That’s right! With your ability, magic crystals are only a small issue!”
Langford eyes glowed, and immediately kept the magic crystal sack into his robes, “The Kosh Bird is on the verge of extinction. I heard that some people had chanced upon it before in the Black Death Mountain Plains. As for Stellar Alloy, I have a piece of it here….”
Langford immediately rummaged through the shelves behind him, after which he opened a small black box.
In the centre of the red satin interior was a silver-coloured rock with blue spots
“The ingredients that you need, Stellar Alloy, Flowerless Leaves… I have one of each here. As for the others, maybe you could look further within the canyon….”
Langford hurriedly piled the items together, and calculated the final value, “785 magic crystals!”
“Alright!” Leylin stroked his chin somewhat grudgingly, “I will go for a look at the market. Also, you have to keep a lookout for the items I requested and purchase them when you can!”

“Alright!” Once Langford agreed, his countenance changed and the green hair continuously shrank, very soon reaching the waist area from the legs.

“Lea... Leave now!” Langford’s face contorted, and one of his eyes was already bloodshot.

Leylin turned around, until he left the cave for a distance before a howling sound travelled to his ears.

“An intermittent illness like this is really scary....” Leylin’s footstep did not stop and directly headed towards the depths of the canyon.

“Hurry, look! Langford has acted up again....”

“Should we inform the protectors?”

“I’m afraid there won’t be of much use. Hehe, not long later, Langford will be chased out from this place.”

At the same moment, from both sides of the cave, many acolytes who wore pointed hats looked at the direction of the howling sound. Expressions of anxiety, indifference and schadenfreude were seen across various faces.

After being busy for some time, Leylin emerged from the Brey Canyon. On his back was an additional black backpack stuffed full of various ingredients.

Leylin turned around to look at the Brey Canyon, before riding his dark horse and left.
Inside a spacious and bright room was a full-length mirror. The mirror was taller than a person and was ornamented along its sides with black leaves which contrasted with the white birch wood. A large variety of different colored gems were also embedded along its edges, making it look extremely extravagant. At this moment, a youth wearing a swallow-tail coat was standing in front of this mirror. Behind him were a few maids, who were busy straightening out their master’s attire. After tidying up, the youth waved his hands, sending the maids away, leaving him alone in the room. This youth judged his reflected figure— a medium-height build with a slim stature. He was brown haired and somewhat pale-skinned. His countenance could be described as delicate, but the shining luster in both his eyes indicated he had a very active mind.

“Unknowingly, I have already turned 17!” Leylin looked at himself in the mirror and spoke with a hint of melancholy.

Time was the most incisive weapon. It turned babies into old people and created barren deserts by drying up seas. Even if a person was a Magus, they could only slightly prolong their lives. But even if they could live for several thousand years, they could still not evade the slow corrosion of time. Over a year had passed ever since Leylin returned from his previous exploration.
“No! I must fight the eternal curse of time and seek immortality. Only then would I be deserving of the fate of having being transported to this world!”
Leylin’s eyes turned a fiery black as if a deep magnificent flame was burning within them.
“Master! The city lord’s horse carriage is here!” Outside the door, Anna’s voice could be heard.
“Let him wait for a while, I’ll be coming over shortly.”
Leylin faced the mirror and finished sorting out his bearings, before picking up a short black cane and leaving the room.
* Deng Deng! *
The black horse carriage flew rapidly across the street and, after seeing the insignia of the city lord Castle; the citizens avoided it and made way. They all sent respectful and envious gazes to the horse carriage.
In the cabin, there was only Leylin. Currently, this youth was lying comfortably against a velvety goose feather cushion. His hand laid on its side, revealing a strange pendant on his palm.
The pendant was strikingly similar to the silver cross. On its surface were a few red and blue diamonds, which glittered in the light, giving off a faint glow.
As Leylin stared at this pendant, a satisfied expression crossed his face.
“According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations, with the Stellar Alloy as the centerpiece and the support of various precious alloys that I have obtained during my travels, this prototype of the magic artifact has already been perfectly synthesized.”
This pendant artifact was something that Leylin had synthesized according to the magic artifact section of the Lowian Academy Teachings.
3 years ago Leylin had managed to buy the decrepit page of the Lowian Academy Teachings, having the A.I. Chip slowly decipher
the contents within.
The earlier portions of the teachings were only suitable for acolytes, with many travels and adventures recorded down. If not, Leylin could never have purchased the page at an extremely low price.
Leylin’s luck was not bad. After the A.I. Chip finished deciphering, he obtained a method to synthesize a low-grade magic artifact.
Fallen Star Pendant. This was the name of the magic artifact recipe he had obtained. According to the Lowian Academy Teachings, this Fallen Star Pendant, while a low-grade magic artifact, was of the rare defensive nature. Compared to a few attack type magic artifacts, its value was naturally much higher. Even an official Magus might be interested in it.
After having to see the materials needed and the process, Leylin had immediately decided that he had to synthesize the Fallen Star Pendant.
Although the spells of acolytes are rather destructive, their low defense capabilities have always been an issue.
Only by turning into an official Magus, and being able to form an innate defensive spell, can there be a spell projecting a force field that constantly protected the body. Only then, could someone be considered to be an awe-inspiring Magus.
As for acolytes, they could lose their lives at any time from sneak attacks.
The few acolytes who had entered the withering woods with Leylin previously were the best examples of this case.
Although they were able to cast destructive spells, due to the Great Mankestre Snake, they had all perished due to the lack of defensive spells. Only Murphy was fortunate enough to stay alive, but that was due to Leylin saving him.
Once he had synthesized the Fallen Star Pendant, coupled with a couple of defensive potions, Leylin’s defence would be comparable
to a fraction of the defence that a Magus had. Furthermore, the Fallen Star Pendant’s defence force field would be activated immediately. For instance, as long as the opponent’s attack power does not exceed the threshold of the Fallen Star Pendant and before it’s energy was completely depleted, Leylin’s defence would be like that of a sturdy turtle shell. As long as the Fallen Star Pendant was active, nothing would happen to Leylin. “Fortunately, there was a magician market near Extreme Night City, if not I wouldn’t have been able to find so many precious ingredients so quickly!”

Leylin somehow felt glad for that. After smashing and grinding most of the magic crystals he had, as well as adding all of the ingredients from the Great Mankestre Snake, he managed to create this prototype of a pendant. “I have basically consumed all of my expendable resources. According to the Lowian Academy Teachings, this is only an incomplete product. The core of the Fallen Star Pendant has already been completed. What’s left is the final step....”

Glancing at the Fallen Star Pendant in his hands he saw that the silver cross glittered and glowed with a wide range of different hues. On its surface were inscribed mysterious patterns, and altogether it seemed like a mystical art piece.

“As for the final ingredient, I have it with me already. I need to only wait for the opportune moment before I can initiate the spirit awakening for the Fallen Star Pendant!”

Leylin gripped the Fallen Star Pendant tightly and kept it on his shirt. “As for the Tears of Mary, this ancient formula is really difficult to comprehend. Even after a lot of experiments and obtaining large amounts of data on spirit bodies, I still don’t understand anything from looking at this formula!”

Leylin appeared downcast, and his thoughts spun rapidly, “Could it
be that my conjecture is wrong? What if this formula has nothing to do with spirit bodies….”

“Halt!” The coachman’s voice travelled from the front. The horse carriage jerked, as it came to a stop.

“Sir Leylin! The city lord’s Castle is just ahead,” reported the coachmen, respectfully.

Leylin shook his head and organized his inner thoughts as he walked out of the carriage’s door.

The city lord’s Castle was still the same – just as imposing and dignified as before. Rows of guards on both sides of the entrance were standing facing each other, and their gaze never wavered, appearing formidable.

“Viscount Jackson is rather intelligent!” Ever since the withering woods incident, he had pretended to be heavily injured and allowed the news to travel out. After his enemies confirmed the news and began to gather in cahoots for an attack, he caught them all at once lightning quick. He cut off all of their heads and their blood overflowed into the moat. From then on, all of Extreme Night City has been extremely quiet….”

“Leylin! My brother!”

Viscount Jackson had long since waited at the main door. Upon seeing Leylin, he immediately went forward to receive him.

Viscount Jackson had witnessed Leylin’s strength first hand. Not to mention that Leylin was Viscount Jackson’s lifesaver. If not for Leylin, Viscount Jackson would have long since become prey for the Great Mankestre Snake.”

“City lord,” said Leylin, as he nodded his head.

Viscount Jackson grabbed Leylin’s hands in a cordial manner. After bringing Leylin for a stroll around his castle’s garden, he then brought Leylin to a private study room.

Within the privacy of the castle, Viscount Jackson finally revealed a worrisome expression.
“My brother Leylin! Last time you had requested for 50 men, but I am simply unable to provide you with that many…. I have already sent all the criminals from all of my jails to your place. Also, I have even sent you cheats and thieves whose crimes do not warrant a death sentence. However, it is still too far from the number you requested……”

“It was like this?” Leylin nodded his head, and sat on the sofa, entering into deep thought.

Extreme Night City could barely be considered as a medium-sized city. Their residents would not exceed 100,000 people. For Viscount Jackson, providing Leylin with a few prisoners meant for the death row was still within his means. However, as time passed, the number of death row criminals became less and less, yet Leylin’s request only kept increasing. So now, he could no longer fulfill the requests of Leylin.

“As you know,” continued Viscount Jackson while Leylin was in deep thought, “I am only a city lord. My noble status is only that of a Viscount. For individual death sentences, I may still be able to decide on them. However, once it exceeds a certain threshold, I have no choice in the matter. After all, there are still laws presiding over the dukedom……”

Viscount Jackson waved his hands, and his eyes flashed, “Unless there is a war happening at the moment, if 50 or 100 people disappeared at once, it would definitely incite the wrath of the masses!”

“War!!!”

Leylin was startled, but very soon his startled appearance turned into a frosty smirk. This was indeed a good chance to collect samples.

However, Viscount Jackson chose to mention it at this time, so it was very likely that he had already thought of a plan.

“Regarding this, I……” As Leylin wanted to speak further on the
matter, his chest pocket suddenly vibrated as a crow-like ‘caw’ sounded. Immediately Leylin’s expression changed.

“Is there something wrong?” Viscount Jackson asked with a ‘concerned’ look.

“It’s…. It’s nothing; I’ve received news from a friend!” Leylin reached his hands into his chest, and the cawing stopped immediately. His countenance also resumed its previous tranquility. However, Leylin lost interest in speaking any further. He hurriedly exchanged a few more words with Viscount Jackson before bidding farewell.

Although something was troubling Viscount Jackson, seeing Leylin, who became absent-minded towards the end, he still did not say what was on his mind.

After Leylin came out of the castle, he hopped onto the horse carriage and rushed back to the manor.

“I actually received news from the academy at a time like this …..” According to the news, the war of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had already reached the peak of its intensity, where the victor and loser could be determined at any given moment.

As Leylin was an acolyte who was sent out on a mission, the academy had given him items with which they could contact him. There were also various items for contact purposes, with a ‘single-use’ effect, sent with him. This way, they were able to get the most updated news of the school during critical times.

“Right now, the news given would most likely determine the winner and loser. The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s strength is limited, and there are two other factions of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s strength opposing it, so the chances of winning are slim,” mused Leylin, as he had a good grasp of the current predicament of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“Unless some external faction has stepped forward to mediate, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will definitely take a huge loss this
time, and may even result in being disbanded….”
Leylin carried a solemn expression as he stepped into his secret lab.
The shadow of a mahogany circular table could be seen under the dim glow of the lantern.

The four legs were elongated in the projection and when projected on the walls, it looked like a beast with four limbs, making it seem ominous.

Leylin stood in front of the table, and his shadow, too, was elongated.

A bunch of black scrolls were placed on the mahogany wood table. On the surface of each of the scrolls was a picture of a crow. At this moment, the crow seemed to have come alive and cawed continuously, giving off a noise that would terrify people.

“No matter what, I have to look at the contents within!”

Leylin made up his mind, “Even if it was a trap, which contains some sort of tracing spell inside, I still have enough time to escape!”

Even if that was the case, Leylin still gripped the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion – that he had just brewed – tightly in his hands.

After which, with a solemn voice, Leylin spoke in the Byron language, “Open in the name of Leylin Farlier!”

* Caw Caw Caw! * The black crow cried, and its figure twisted. Many black lines converged, forming the image of a black skull.

Leylin picked a red crystal from his robes and tossed it into the skull’s mouth.
* Crunch! Crunch! * The black skull immediately flew out from the paper and devoured the red crystal.
* Puff! * After finishing its meal, the black skull exploded, and the scroll shuddered violently. It started to burn at the bottom, where a green-coloured flame was seen.
The greenish flame then formed many characters in mid-air.
Leylin’s eyes shifted. These green characters were a kind of secret code, which outsiders would not understand. But he has learnt its corresponding encryption and decryption back at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
Under the green-coloured characters was a bright red stamp, with a distinguished name written below it in the Byron language. There even was an image of a black snake which crawled out from a skull.
“Even the chairman’s seal has appeared, it seems like this news is not a fake!”
Leylin’s expression became volatile upon seeing the fluctuating characters.
Some time later, after the flame finished burning, the green characters disappeared into the air, leaving behind a pile of grey ashes.
Leylin sighed and furrowed his brows.
“They actually sent the highest order asking all acolytes, who are working on missions outside, to rush back to the academy immediately!”
“Furthermore, they have also set severe punishments. Those who do not make it back to the academy within 3 months, will immediately be labelled as a traitor, and be subjected to the academy’s disciplinary team’s execution!”
“I’m afraid that I have to go back this time!” Leylin muttered.
As to whether it was a trap set by an enemy, Leylin was not at all worried.
First of all, Leylin was only a lowly acolyte. The enemy would not go through such painstaking means for him. Also, the chairman of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was a legendary figure. He was, at the least, a rank 2 Magus. Even if Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was defeated, his personal seal would never land in the hands of the enemy.

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy ….” Leylin sighed and thought of Kroft, Bicky, Nyssa and the rest, wondering how they have been. Previously when Leylin made a hasty decision to leave, it was indeed rather selfish of him. However, his strength was not even likened to that of an ant in front of the two academies, so he could not think of a better way.

“I’d never imagined that after 3 years, I will finally be returning!” Leylin suddenly ordered, “A.I. Chip, bring forth my stats now!”


More than a year had passed, and the modified Azure Potion, even for a level 3 acolyte, had a very beneficial effect. It managed to bring Leylin’s spiritual force up by another 3 points. His body’s resistance towards the medicine, however, had now reached its limits. Drinking more of the Azure Potion would no longer have any effect. Raising his spiritual force for the next few years would be impossible for Leylin unless he were to concoct a new type of spiritual force medicine.

“After level 3 acolyte, it will be the realm of an official Magus!” Leylin muttered, “Advancing from level 3 acolyte to official Magus, there will be a huge bottleneck. The difficulty is much higher than that of advancing from a level 2 to level 3 acolyte.”

It seemed like all of the factions in the Magus World deliberately controlled the information regarding of official Magus. Even if
Leylin were to fork out huge amounts of magic crystals, he would not be able to retrieve much. The previous, harrowing incident of advancing to a level 3 acolyte suddenly surfaced on Leylin’s mind.

“The higher ups in the Magus World have strictly kept the information regarding Magus advancement highly confidential. No matter how genius a wandering magician may be, as long as they don’t join a faction, they will never be able to obtain knowledge of advancing. This is to keep the lowest tier from resisting and creating a rebellion and to maintain the ruling.

Leylin, too, had experienced the evil consequences of advancing without prior knowledge. If not for the A.I. Chip, he would have died without even leaving behind a corpse.

“Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! I have to return once and obtain knowledge of advancing into an official Magus. This was the only place where Leylin knew he could obtain information more easily. As for markets and whatnot, they were completely not worth considering.

The path of a Magus would be covered with thorns. One misstep would result in an irreversible consequence.

Last time, Leylin took a risk and advanced to the level 3 acolyte, but because of the lack of guidance from the academy and his mentor, he could only rely on the A.I. Chip to simulate. In the end, he met with two unexpected situations. If not for the A.I. Chip’s immense capabilities, coupled with a little luck, Leylin would never have been able to advance that easily, and that too without any side effects.

“Only that…I have to reconsider the arrangements for my subordinates!”

Leylin stroked his chin, “Maybe, arranging for a backup plan here won’t be a bad idea after all ….”

“Give out the orders, I wish to join the subordinates for tonight’s
dinner!"
After exiting the secret lab, Leylin instructed Anna.
“Yes, Young Master!” Leylin was on the solitary side, and he usually left the daily chores and trifle things to Anna, Greem and the others, while he holed himself up in the experiment lab all day. He also rarely left the manor, so giving out an order suddenly did startle Anna. However, she was a quick-witted woman, so she did not ask much. After curtseying, she retreated while displaying her beautiful curves in front of Leylin.
In the manor, naturally there were halls large enough which could accommodate the master to have a meal with his subordinates.
The hall was constructed with large red rocks, the windowsill was rather small, and the sunlight could only dimly light up the place. However, at the centre, a silver rack with hundreds of candles lit solved that problem completely.
In the centre of the large hall, a long red table was placed. The attendants and kitchen staff were shifting the huge chairs with backrest, which caused squeaky noises. They also laid a thick, white cloth on the table, and arranged silver forks and spoons, plates and other cutleries.
When it was time to eat, the table was already filled with many delicacies. At the centre was a barbecued mutton. Around the golden yellow barbecue meat, there were many purple and red fruits. It complemented the combination of dishes and was a tantalising display.
Leylin immediately sat at the most respected position and looked at the group in front of him.
Immediately, to the left and right sides of Leylin, were Fraser and Greem respectively. As Knights and subordinates who had followed Leylin from the earliest, their positions were naturally of the highest. After them were housekeeper Old Welker and Roran Hawks mercenary group’s leader, Fayern.
As for Anna, she awaited behind Leylin silently, like a dutiful serving maid. However, all the people present did not dare think that her status was just that of a maid. Everyone knew that Anna was exceptionally favoured by this Young Master. Not only could she see Leylin regularly, but she even held the key to the gold vault! It incited a few, feeble grumbles from Old Welker, but Leylin did not care.

After Leylin had purchased the land here, Fayern had moved his whole family over, and turned into a truthfully loyal subordinate of Leylin.

After which it was Roran Hawks mercenary group. The contract with them matured not long ago. Half of the mercenaries continued to stay on under the generous conditions that Leylin had provided. Many others sat on the long table, but Leylin was only familiar with these few. The others merely looked familiar to Leylin, but Leylin knew of their faces and names, which he could remember by relying on the A.I. Chip.

Leylin never bothered about the trifles of regular livelihood. The pathway to being a Magus already expended a huge amount of his concentration. He absolutely could not allocate any of his concentration on other matters.

Of course, Leylin’s outward mannerisms were similar to that of many magicians. It also fit with how regular humans expected from magicians.

In the hearts of all the people on the south coast, magicians were a group of people who wielded mysterious powers, but they were extremely solitary. They often resided in dark woods or concealed marshes. Only when they needed ingredients and other items, would they leave their dwelling.

“Young Master!”

The masses around the long table stood up and bowed.

* Ding! * Leylin used the silver spoon and tapped on the glass in
front of him, giving off a crisp noise.

“Everyone! By calling you all out here today, is because I have something to announce to everyone!” Leylin’s eyes swept the crowd. As of now, his spiritual force had already reached 13.1, and the mysterious gaze of his eyes was awe-inspiring; it was as if his eyes had been chiseled from the highest grade jewels. Anyone who was looked at by him would experience a sharp pain in their eyes, and tears would involuntarily leak out.

Even if it was Greem or Fraser, they could only bow their heads low at this moment.

“Please give your orders, Young Master!”

“I will leave for a period of time, and there will be no set date on returning. When I am not around, the medicinal shop and daily matters of the manor would all be decided by Anna, Greem and Fraser.”

Leylin looked at the masses below him and said slowly.

“What?” A bout of commotion sparked, and immediately the group whispered fervently to each other, as they used strange gazes to look at the trio of Anna, Greem and Fraser.

Greem and Fraser could tolerate being the focus of numerous eyes. However, as a woman, Anna was somewhat uneasy as she twisted and clutched at her dress.

“Silence!” Leylin knocked on the silver glass again, and the crowd turned silent.

“From today onwards, the words from those 3 would be the same as mine. Any decision of theirs must be completely obeyed and carried out by you.”

“We obey!” Although Leylin did not usually bother himself with many matters, the imposing aura coming from him was extremely immense. There were also rumours flying around that he was part of the Mysterious Entity, which made his subordinates’ reverence towards him even greater.
“Anna, Greem, Fraser, you three come to my study room together after dinner!”

Seeing that his subordinates did not have any objections, Leylin nodded his head and said, “For now, everyone please enjoy yourself!”

The group nodded their heads, returned to their positions, and sat down. The sound of clanging cutlery continuously rang.

Ever since Leylin had issued his orders, the hall was much more silent than before. Although the dinner was sumptuous, the masses seemed to have something weighing down on their hearts.

After dinner, Leylin received the trio which knew of his magician identity.

Greem and Fraser wore leather armour, which looked extremely imposing. Anna still wore a low cut blouse, and appeared even more seductive.

“You guys know that I am a magician. Right now, I am about to embark on a journey, and due to some reasons, I can only keep you guys here….”

Leylin sat behind the desk, speaking solemnly to the three of them.

“The orders outside earlier were only for the others to see. From now onwards, Greem and Fraser, you must treat Anna the same way you treat me, do you understand?

“We understand!” Greem and Fraser nodded their heads. Compared to the rest, they knew how terrifying this master of theirs was and
had no objections towards Leylin’s orders. After sending Greem and Fraser away, the room was only left with Anna and Leylin. “Young…Young Master!” Tears welled up in Anna’s eyes. “The Mandara Flower’s essence on your body, I have already created an antidote for it. Also, take these!” Towards his own women, Leylin was much gentler. Saying so, Leylin handed over some potions and a parchment paper over to Anna. “This is….” Anna opened the parchment paper to have a look, and she became startled. “These are letters of authority. You will be managing all of my establishments in Extreme Night City. Furthermore, if I don’t return within ten years, all of these will be transferred over to your name!” Leylin crossed his fingers, “Furthermore, Murphy and Viscount Jackson are witnesses to these procedures! If you meet with any trouble in the future, you can seek their aid!” These worldly possessions, Leylin could have as many as he wanted. Naturally he would not mind giving them to Anna as a backup plan for himself. Moreover, even if he played this chess piece wrongly, there wasn’t much to be regretful about. After all, right now, Leylin was only an acolyte in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. According to the academy’s rules, acolytes are not allowed to bring their followers or maids into the academy compounds. Since these are things which he had to eventually let go of, naturally, Leylin’s heart did not ache for them. “Also, this is the desert scorpion sting, which is a tool specially used to control Greem and Fraser. You must keep them well….” Leylin handed over a red box to Anna.
“No!” Anna bit her lips, before finally pouncing forward and hugging both of Leylin’s legs. “Young Master, don’t chase Anna away! Anna wants to be by Young Master’s side no matter what she has to do, alright?”

The young lady held onto Leylin’s legs and tears as bright as pearls slid off of her beautiful face.

Her warm and mildly shuddering body wrapped itself around Leylin’s legs. One could see that Anna had mustered extreme courage to speak these words.

Leylin looked at Anna with a touch of gentleness in his eyes. He reached his right hand out and stroked the young lady’s hair and back.

“I’m very sorry Anna. The place I have to go is extremely dangerous for you….”

“But….” Anna lifted her face filled with tears as if wanting to say something else.

“Don’t mess around, listen!” Suddenly, Leylin’s face hardened.

Seeing her master act this way, the deeply ingrained pain and suffering for disobeying a master’s orders surfaced in her mind. After all, Anna had undergone slave training. Although these were the methods of the slave traders, it was etched right into Anna’s soul itself.

“Yes, Young Master!” Anna stopped her crying and kept the scroll and box. She only looked at Leylin, the same way as a cat that had been abandoned by its owner.

Seeing the girl act like this, Leylin withdrew a few potions from his robes and handed it to her. After all, he was not a stone-hearted person.

“This is a recovery potion, which can quickly heal physical wounds. Keep this well!”

“Also, this purple potion is an attack type potion. If there comes a day when you encounter a danger that not even Greem nor Fraser
can handle, throw this out at it. Do you understand me?” Leylin pointed at the purple potion and instructed Anna. “Anna understands!” Her eyes turned red. She knew that she could not disobey her master’s orders, so she kept the potion well. “Sigh…” Looking at her leaving figure, Leylin sighed suddenly. Although he had made many preparations, he knew that after a dozen odd years, this faction that he had left would most lightly disappear into thin air. However, he had no regrets. These were all regular humans without any aptitude for becoming a magician. They would be of limited use to him in the future. Most likely, the only use of this small faction to him would be to act as a cover for him to hide from people, and even then, it wasn’t very secure at all. In the end, entrusting everything to Anna was not a bad choice. Apart from the Mandara Flower’s essence on Anna’s body, all other restrictions on Anna’s body had already been removed by Leylin. From now onward, Anna would be a free human. “I hope that after having these things, you will be able to live a happier life!” Leylin’s eyes were unreadable. If Anna was to land in the hands of another magician, she would at most be a tool for them to vent their pent up energy. After their interest wanes, she may very well be used in an experiment. Now that Anna had followed Leylin, not only was she free from her status as a slave, Leylin had even saved her from the poison of Mandara Flower’s essence. He had even given her the manor and medicinal shop, so no matter what happens next, he would be free from all guilt!” “The troublesome matters have all been resolved. What’s left is to finally dispose of the experiment lab and underground cells
thoroughly!”
Leylin thought and got up to go to the underground. This was the forbidden area that he had demarcated. Anna and the two Knights would not dare come down here so easily. Under the dim light from the torch, Leylin withdrew a crystal ball. An old person’s figure could be seen within it. His expression was crazed, and even had terror in it. “We meet again, Mister Roman!” Leylin smiled and gave his salutations. However, in Roman’s eyes, this smile was more harrowing than the devil’s. “Don’t… Don’t come over!” Roman’s expression twisted, and he fearfully backed up to the walls of the crystal ball behind him. However, Leylin’s acute senses picked out the resolution behind the expression of the frightened vengeful spirit. “Let me tell you a piece of good news, and a piece of bad news!” Leylin proficiently placed many tools beside the crystal ball, and let the vengeful spirit let out ear piercing screams as he spoke. “The good news is that I am going to leave here for a while!” Before the vengeful spirit had any response, Leylin smiled and said, “And the bad news is that no matter where I go, you will be going along with me!” “Oh! No! No! I beg of you….” “Alright! So then, tell me everything you know!” At the beginning, Roman naturally would not speak of anything. However after over a year of torture, he had already begun to cough out some information. After the narration of the vengeful spirit, Leylin shook his head. “It seems like Mister Roman still harbours wishful thoughts, so let us continue….” Following Leylin’s statement, many hair-raising screams filled the lab, as if the howls of a person right before their death. Although this vengeful spirit had showed signs of a mental
breakdown half a month ago, it still managed to give misleading information to Leylin regarding the secrets he knew. This vengeful spirit gave much information at once, and it was extremely complicated. However, with the A.I. Chip, Leylin was able to record all of its narration quickly, and sort it systematically. The next few times, he discovered a problem. Towards things which are pertaining to more general and common knowledge, Roman always handed them over easily. However, towards the crucial points and secrets, Roman glossed over them and hid much of the important information. However, Leylin did not mind at all. It would give huge amounts of information each day. Along with the filtering and sorting of the A.I. Chip, he would still obtain plenty of information. Moreover, with the continuous and prolonged torture and interrogating, Leylin believed that one day, this vengeful spirit would tell him everything, and pray for a fast death. After the daily routine of ‘questioning’ was completed, Leylin went towards the other rooms underground. In here, various blood-stained torture instruments were hung along the walls. On the floor, there were even a few corpses with wounds littered across their bodies, causing them to be almost indiscernible as a human body. [Beep! The surrounding negative energy density is higher by 34.5%, which satisfies the most basic condition for a spirit body’s existence. The target’s physical body has undergone various suffering and tortures. Chance of spirit body appearing: 1.23%] The A.I. Chip scanned the few corpses and reported the figures. “Compared to the one-thousandth chance of a spirit body forming naturally, this proportion can be considered extremely high already!” Leylin stroked his chin, “If I were to be given more time, I would definitely be able to induce the formation of an artificial spirit body!”
The most efficient way to do research on souls was through the use of spirit bodies. This established theory was publicly accepted by all Dark Magi. What Leylin had to do now was to continuously simulate the conditions of the outside world, and induce the forming of an artificial spirit body!
If this piece of news were to leak out, Leylin’s reputation would be completely interlinked with savagery and ruthlessness, which would be bad for his future developments.
“Reputation is also a kind of benefit! Although I’m not afraid of how people view me, even Magi wish to have dealings with those who have good reputations, but not a fellow with a dredged reputation.
Leylin sucked in a lungful of air and sprinkled power on the corpses. With hissing sounds, the corpses turned into yellow pus after corroding, and very soon, they disappeared.
“Although I have finally stopped my experiments, which is a little bit of a pity, it’s not like I haven’t obtained any results!” Leylin comforted himself, “At least, regarding the Lowian Academy Teachings’ final step, the spirit awakening, I have already obtained sufficient data!”
As for the other ancient potion formula, Tears of Mary, Leylin still hadn’t found any clues regarding it.
Within Extreme Night City, there was recently a matter that was neither big nor small happening. This turned into an idle conversation topic discussed by commoners after lunch tea.

Mister Leylin, an heir of a noble who had stayed in the city for three years and Viscount Jackson and Scholar Murphy’s good friend, was temporarily leaving Extreme Night City. Before he left, he actually handed over the manor and medicinal shop to his serving attendant, a maid, to handle the running.

For nobles, although they did vent their pent up energy on their serving maids frequently, they would never have handed over important establishments and such over to them because of this act. After all, to them, maids were like toys, which could be changed or abandoned at any time. As for establishments and lands, they would often become the inheritance of an heir, and was the root for the growth of a family’s continual development.

By doing this, Leylin had turned into a joke in front of the rest of the nobility. Not only did his reputation contain a lazy and kind person, it also extended to a muddle-headed trademark.

However, to the surprise of many, the maid, with the help of two Knights, very soon made the remainder of Leylin’s faction submit to her. At the same time, Viscount Jackson city lord and Murphy stepped in personally to express their support for the maid, which allowed her to act on Leylin’s behalf with his establishments.
After taking over Leylin’s establishments, Anna dedicated herself to managing them and did it neatly and tidily. Not only did Leylin’s establishment in Extreme Night City not fail as predicted by the other nobles, it continually developed, which made many nobles fall from their chair. However, all of these things had nothing to do with Leylin. At this moment, he had long since left Extreme Night City.

* Pitter Patter! *

The sky turned dark, and bean sized drops of rain fell on the ground, initiating countless splashes.

* Thud Thud Thud! * A dark, handsome steed continually dashed along the road, and the scenery on both sides hurriedly retreated. Rainwater fell onto the body of a Knight, but was blocked by a raincoat.

By the time when it was midnight, the downpour stopped, and the Knight sought shelter in a cave.

A warm and bright flame illuminated the cave. A steel wok hung above the bonfire, and a white mushroom broth with a fragrant smell boiled. From time to time, a few pieces of meat jerky floated to the surface.

The Knight took off his coat, revealing a young face with brown hair and eyes that glittered like jewels.

This person was Leylin. At this moment, he drank the mushroom soup, while time bringing out a map from the A.I. Chip.

“After two months of continuous journeying, I am finally going to arrive at the academy!”

Leylin looked at the destination on the map. His expression was complicated. Previously, if not for him constantly changing his route and going to other markets to sell his potions, he wouldn’t have been in such a rush, and the journey would have been a breeze.

However, with such a hastened journey, he had suffered plenty.
After having lived like a king for the past 3 years, Leylin had gotten used to the extravagant life of a noble, and almost could not adapt to his current situation.

“However, I have finally arrived. According to the map, I will arrive at the academy after three more days!”

“I never thought that a third party would actually intervene, and make the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the other two factions come to a ceasefire agreement!”

Recalling the news that he heard from the markets in the past few days, Leylin was still somewhat in disbelief.

According to the news, with the pincer attack from the Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy should have been in a precarious situation. Even the academy headquarters’ defensive spell formation was damaged by half and was almost broken.

However, in the end, it was unknown what method the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy chairman used. He had actually managed to appeal for help from the Lighthouse of the Night.

The Lighthouse of the Night was one of the finest organisations in the south coast. Its leader was rumoured to have the strength of a rank 3 Magus.

Under the forceful mediation of the Lighthouse of the Night, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy finally managed to escape from its dangerous situation, eventually reaching a treaty between the two rivaling factions.

Leylin was not someone who would immediately respond when he was requested to return to the academy. Along the way, he always inquired for news. Only when he was indeed certain that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was freed from war, and that the recalling of the acolytes was not a trap, did he decide to return to the academy.

“With this distance, I can already initiate the communicative method that mentor showed me before! It’s best to first discern the
truth!”
Leylin’s face turned serious, and he withdrew a pink coloured potion from his robes.
After removing the plug, he used the pink coloured potion to draw a mysterious rune on the ground. It was cursive and winding, like a worm.
* Sssii! * Pink smoke rose into the air continuously, before finally turning into the shape of a large pink ear.
“Who is this? This energy wave?” Beside the ear, Kroft’s voice sounded, carrying many other static noises with it.
“It’s me! Professor!” Leylin spoke softly.
“This voice! These spiritual force waves! You are Leylin! You have actually become a level 3 acolyte!” Astonishment could be heard in Kroft’s voice.
For third grade acolytes, if they wanted to advance from a level 2 acolyte to a level 3 acolyte, it often required at least 5 years of constructing the mind runes and reinforcing of the sea of consciousness.
However, Leylin had spent only 3 years to advance to a level 3 acolyte, which shocked Kroft.
“You are only 17 this year, yet you have entered the realm of a level 3 acolyte!” Kroft’s voice, which was usually stable, carried a trace of excitement in it, “An acolyte who is level 3 before the age of 20 often has an extremely huge chance of advancing to an official Magus. However, the numbers of such acolytes are extremely rare. Even your senior, Merlin, only advanced to a level 3 acolyte when he was 21.
If Kroft knew that Leylin had advanced to a level 3 acolyte only 1 year after he had left the academy, he might immediately label him as a genius!
However, striking it rich silently was always Leylin’s norm of handling his affairs. Towards his mentor’s astonishment, Leylin
only bowed and said, “I was only lucky, and found a rare Void Flower ….”
A Void Flower was a type of mysterious plant. Its petals were purple, and if a magician were to raise it, it would be an extremely strong stimulant towards a magician’s spiritual force. The most crucial point was that the laws of reproduction for the Void Flower were strange. They could appear at any place on the continent. There were even cases where magicians found traces of these plants at the bottom of the sea or in a pit of a volcano. Moreover, the Void Flower had a special attribute. Once its petals were plucked, the whole stalk would immediately combust, leaving no traces behind.
Naturally, this was an excuse that Leylin thought of long ago. Through the A.I. Chip’s data gathering of various mysterious plants, he had already prepared this excuse as a reason for his advancement.
It was not like there weren’t any other level 2 acolytes who had used a Void Flower to advance to a level 3 acolyte before.
“Void Flower?” Kroft’s shock was relayed through the ear. “Such a precious magician resource could also be found by you… That is a top grade material of which one petal can cost several thousands of magic crystals…. It can even aid a magician in advancing….”
However, it was extremely difficult to predict luck in this world. After sticking to his statement that the Void Flower was indeed used up, Kroft had no other choice but to believe him.
What followed next was that the mentor and student spoke of Leylin’s recent journeying experiences. When Kroft learned that Leylin had successfully completed the mission from the academy, he expressed his congratulations.
Towards the end, Leylin asked in a solemn tone, “Professor, regarding the recalling of the acolytes to the academy…..”
Why he did not ask the academy directly was, naturally, because he
was afraid that it would be a trap. It may have very well been that the chairman of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had some other plans, and might be prepared to sacrifice a bunch of acolytes.

“….” Kroft remained silent on the other side of the communication spell, before finally speaking again some time later.

“The recall of acolytes, this time, had indeed been approved by the chairman and board of directors. I can assure you that there is no lie in the recall, but….”

Leylin hesitated and held his breath, afraid to disturb his mentor.

“Originally, if you were still a level 2 acolyte, I would most likely have not approved of you returning to the academy. However, now that you are a level 3 acolyte, things are different. Let me ask you, do you wish to advance to an official Magus?” Kroft asked suddenly.

“A rank 1 Magus. It is often the starting point for a Magus who pursues the truth. I definitely want to advance!” Leylin’s voice was low.

“If that is the case, then come back! When you’re here, I’ll tell you everything! There isn’t much time now…..” The pink ear shuddered and exploded immediately, turning into a huge cloud of smoke as it dissipated into the air.

In the empty cave, Kroft’s voice finally resounded one last time, “Heed my words! This opportunity is extremely rare but is also accompanied by danger. If you wish to walk further down the path of a Magus, then hurry back!”

Leylin looked at the gradually disappearing smoke and muttered to himself.

Through the long distance communication with Kroft today, although time was short, Leylin was able to understand the circumstances within the academy.

From this, he knew that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had indeed extricated itself from danger but the war seemed to still be
ongoing. This was why the academy forcefully recalled its acolytes back.
Moreover, opportunities often came hand in hand with risks. Looking at Kroft’s opinion, it seemed that plenty of opportunities would await him if he returned. It even related to the advancement that Leylin would have to undergo in the future.
“An official Magus!”
Leylin walked towards the entrance of the cave, and looked at the downcast sky and pitter-patter sounds of the downpour, letting out a sigh.
These few days, apart from making haste, he did nothing else but to go to a few magician markets to have a look. However, no matter how many magic crystals he was willing to part with, the market never contained any information pertaining to the advancement of an official Magus. Moreover, no one even sold a method of obtaining such information.
Looking at it, it seemed as though a large, invisible hand had directly hauled all of the information regarding official Magi away, not letting anyone else know of it.
“To be able to monopolise the information to such an extent, it must be supported by, at least, a majority of magicians within the large organisations and factions in the south coast….”
Leylin’s gaze seemed distant as if sparks of wisdom radiated from it.

“For the Magi of the upper echelons, under the circumstances where they are unable to advance any further, their only concern is the protection and prosperity of their own family and factions!”

“For that, they monopolised the knowledge of advancing to a Magus, isolating wandering magicians and halting their advancement. Moreover, even the academy has strictly regulated the information given for an acolyte to advance into a level 3 acolyte. . .”

Leylin, who came from another world, naturally saw through these methods of sealing away information.

However, compared to those high and mighty Magi, Leylin was currently but an ant. Even if he saw through it, there was no way that he could resist it.

After all, Leylin was only a level 3 acolyte, and not even an official Magus!

“There is definitely information in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy regarding the experience of advancement to a rank 1 Magus, but I’m afraid it’s not something that I can obtain easily! It’s a pity, but this is already the most probable situation I can think of....”

Leylin looked at the distant raindrops, sinking into deep thoughts.
After the harrowing experience of advancing to a level 3 acolyte, Leylin was rather traumatic over the incident. Before making preparations fully and obtaining enough information, he would definitely not dare to breakthrough into an official Magus.

For magicians, the step to become an official Magus, from an acolyte, was the most crucial step, and no mistakes could be allowed.

Leylin was, however, unable to discover any information pertaining to this. Furthermore, to obtain this information, he could only plan to seize it from an official Magus.

However, the strength of official Magi far exceeded that of a level 3 acolyte. Not to mention that the defensive force field surrounding the official Magi which the A.I. Chip had detected. Leylin had no means, even now, to break through it. The difficulty of obtaining information on advancement from an official Magus had long surpassed Leylin’s limits. Only if Leylin was mad would he proceed with it.

As for what Leylin knew, obtaining information on the advancement was the most appropriate method.

“According to the news that Kroft had hinted at earlier, although it might be rather dangerous at this time, it is also the best chance to obtain these resources and information!”

Leylin looked at the raging thunderstorm outside and suddenly steeled his heart.

Although he was someone who treasured his life dearly, in this situation where his path seemed bleak, he could only muster up courage, and take a gamble!

Right now, he was at the optimal age to advance to an official Magus. Once he missed this chance, even if he could obtain resources and information in future, it would be unlikely that his aged body would support him through the breakthrough to a rank 1 Magus.
Moreover, it was not as though he did not have any confidence. At the very least, according to his own hypothesis and the A.I. Chip’s simulations, there was, at least, a 90% chance that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy required him to fulfill some sort of dangerous mission, and hence, would not sacrifice him! This was enough for him to take a gamble!

“I’ll take a gamble this once! If I am unable to scale the absolute peak and observe the radiance from the rays of dawn, then let me be sludge and sink thoroughly into the earth, and rot!”

His eyes sparkled as he gazed intensely at the thunderstorm raging in front of him.

……

Three days later, in the outer vicinity of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
More than half of the surrounding forests around the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had already been destroyed. The ground was filled with traces of holes and depressions. Not far away, a few patches of the ground were white in colour, and on top of it were some rubble and ashes. From these, one could surmise what kind of bitter battle the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had gone through!

“It was actually reduced to a state like this….” Leylin rode the large horse and dashed ahead, feeling absolutely gleeful that he had made an unwavering decision to leave the academy beforehand. It had been such a massive battle that it had actually even ruined half of the geography around the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If Leylin were to remain here, he did not have any confidence in protecting his life.
Following the path and traveling on for another dozen minutes, a huge graveyard appeared before Leylin’s eyes.
This was the underground entrance to the Abyssal Bone Forest
Academy, a large granite graveyard. However, right now, half of the tombstones were shattered, and many graves were also dug open, revealing the dark passages within. The surrounding stone walls and mud reflected signs having been abused by many spells. Before Leylin’s eyes, the alert of the A.I. Chip continuously sounded, revealing the extremely high radiation from some traces of these spells.

“Every little tombstone here was actually a personal passageway for each professor in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and all are now in such ruins....”

Although he long knew that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would definitely suffer a catastrophic loss, this miserable scene still caused Leylin to inhale a mouthful of cold air.

* Bang! *

Leylin casually kicked a stone on the floor, and walked towards the centremost area of the graveyard, where a huge tombstone that looked like a castle was erected.

This was the huge entrance to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and was the common path for all acolytes.

The surface of the castle was littered with cracks, and part of the topmost area was chipped off. What remained was tottering, and seemed to be on the verge of collapse. Seeing such a sight made Leylin somewhat worried; he felt that if he were to stick a finger out and poke it, this castle of a tombstone would crumble.

“Halt! Outsider! If you are unable to show any items of proof, I will make you pay the price of blood!”

The two stone statues by the large entrance were completely destroyed. The Winged Earthworm and Two-Headed Dog from before were now gone. Right when Leylin wanted to enter, a metallic voice sounded.

Accompanying that voice, a large shadow from the peak of the ashened castle climbed down at a rapid speed. This black figure
was taller by an average human by two heads, and its hands were extremely long, extending to the ground. Although the castle tombstone was filled with cracks, no matter how this black figure climbed, the castle did not waver an inch. Obviously, the construction of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was not as weak as it seemed on the surface.

* Bang! * The black figure leapt, and a huge shadow was projected on the ground, completely engulfing Leylin. * Thud! * The black figure pounded on the ground, bringing up a layer of dust.

Leylin squinted and finally saw the appearance of the black figure. This was a large ape-like creature. Its whole body was layered with granite, and both of its hands propped itself up on the ground.

[Beep! A creature with high levels of energy has been detected. Now comparing to database. Determined as Granite Ape!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Granite Ape was a creature in the Magus World with a battle strength comparable to an official Magus.

“I sense the energy waves emanating from the item of proof on your body, take it out!”

The Granite Ape looked at Leylin, and sniffed him with its large snout. As the ape approached, an extremely dense and putrid stench wafted over. Leylin had to muster up a lot of strength to endure the need to frown.

“Item of proof?”

Leylin thought for a while, before hurriedly withdrawing the red metal card from his sack that he obtained before when taking up the mission.

“So it was this!”

The Granite Ape took the metal card and swallowed it in one gulp, as if munching on some delicacy. It even closed its eyes to savour the taste of it.
“It’s an acolyte of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy who took on an outside mission previously!”
After a dozen seconds, the Granite Ape opened its large eyes and said to Leylin, “Brat, enter!”
“Please accept my offerings!” Leylin thought, and bowed before the Granite Ape, before taking a bunch of banana like fruits and placing it on the ground.
“Elephant Stout Bananas! Not bad, not bad!” The large ape nodded its head, and took one from the bunch and peeled it, before tossing it into its mouth, as if it could not wait.
“Can I ask what happened to the two guardians from before?” Leylin asked cautiously, after seeing the Granite Ape enjoying itself.
“They’re dead!” The large ape answered concisely, and Leylin gasped silently.
This was something that he had long guessed. The two statues were obviously the first line of defense for the academy. After being attacked, they would easily be the first to perish.
After another bow, Leylin entered through the entrance of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
The dimly lit flight of downward stairs was the same as from before, when Leylin had left the academy.
However, for some unknown reason – which may have been the fact that he was now a level 3 acolyte with a greater spiritual force – Leylin discovered that there were a few marks on the walls and stones, with some traces of blood. There were even some faint wails of spirits who had perished, which travelled to Leylin’s ears.
Leylin, who had conducted a massive amount of experiments on spirit bodies, would never mistake these noises for something else.
Along the way, he noticed that he had run into far fewer acolytes than he did normally. Leylin estimated that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy didn’t even have half of its original strength. Even the Trading Post and Mission Area hotspots seemed to be devoid of
At the mission desk counter, Leylin handed over the records in the crystal ball and a piece of the Great Snake Mankestre’s scales. “I’m here to complete a mission!”

“Alright, please hold on!” The staff at the counter had changed too. This was a freckled girl, who seemed to only be a level 2 acolyte. While he was waiting, Leylin was bored to death, and looked at his surroundings.

Although the number of people in the Mission Area had been greatly reduced, the number of missions did not reduce but increased instead. Moreover, many of them had increased rewards compared to before. According to Leylin’s guess, while the difficulty of these missions had remained the same, the rewards had increased to twice of what they were originally.

This was an abnormal scene, which made Leylin’s eyes flash.

“Ley…Leylin!” A muffled yet hoarse voice sounded behind Leylin. Leylin turned around and saw a swollen figure wrapped in a black veil. Moreover, the stench of pus drifted over.

“You are… Nyssa!” Leylin’s eyes widened.

Naturally he recalled this image clearly, but even if he didn’t, the A.I. Chip had recorded it.

“You actually still remember me!” Nyssa’s voice had a tinge of excitement. At the same time, an energy wave leaked from her body. According to the A.I. Chip, she was actually a level 2 acolyte.
Leylin’s expression softened; this was one of the rare occasions that this occurred. He still remembered this unfortunate girl and the grief and perseverance on this girl’s face before.
“It’s really great to see you again, how are Guricha and Dodoria?” Leylin smiled.
Hearing this, Nyssa who was wrapped in the black cloak shuddered, and her voice was gloomy as she said, “They’re all dead. Even Kaliweir, Beirut, the ones who came with us from the Chernobyl Islands, more than half of them perished….”
“My apologies….”
Leylin did not know what he ought to say. Although he did divulge a bit of information previously, it was extremely obscure. Whether or not Kaliweir and the rest could figure it out, and if they could view it solemnly were all matters of uncertainty.
Moreover, even if they discovered that something was amiss, they were only first or second grade acolytes without much aptitude. Whether or not they could obtain discriminating treatment from the academy and leave was also difficult to say.
As expected, Nyssa continued, “After getting news from you, we’d came together several times. However, there were no good measures. Not long later, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy announced a lockdown of the whole academy, otherwise, death would be granted… Afterwards, the war began….”
Official Magi were the core strength of the war between both sides. Kaliweir, together with the others who weren’t even level 3 acolytes were not fit to be cannon fodder, so heavy casualties were to be expected. Leylin could not think of any consoling words. Nyssa too did not continue, and silence ensued.

“Mission recorded and confirmed as completed! This is your reward, please check and accept!”

At this moment, the freckled girl from behind the counter had finally raised her head, and scribbled on a piece of parchment paper with a feather quill, finally handing over a small leather sack to Leylin. Leylin weighed the sack, and rubbing noises between magic crystals came travelling from the leather sack.

“I still have something on, so I’ll take my leave first!” Leylin said to Nyssa, leaving her with a complicated expression on her face.

“Mission is completed, time to meet with Mentor!” Leylin walked through the gardens and came to the experiment lab where Kroft was.

* Dong Dong Dong! *

Leylin knocked on the door, following which, the door creaked open, revealing a pretty girl. The girl was slightly shorter than Leylin by half a head and had beautiful, green hair. Her body contours were extremely seductive. Due to the proximity, Leylin could even catch a whiff of her perfume.

“Bicky! It’s been a long time!” Leylin spoke softly.

“You are… Leylin!” The green-haired girl sized up Leylin suspiciously with a glance, before cheering as she leapt into his arms. Feeling the soft perky abundance against his chest, and the
fragrance that wafted into his nose, Leylin could not help but exclaim at this little girl having matured.
“Alright! I am here to visit Kroft!”
Leylin waited for a good while, and seeing that the girl did not want to leave his embrace, he could only he cajole her while patting her on the shoulders.
“Mentor is just inside, together with Merlin!” Bicky rubbed her somewhat reddened eyes, and her delicate features revealed a smile, “You being alright is really a great thing…."
Leylin nodded his head and walked into the experiment lab.
“Leylin!” Merlin greeted him first. His features did not change much from the past 3 years, only that his temperament seemed more stable and mature. After seeing Leylin, he forced an extremely ugly smile.
“Senior Merlin!” Leylin bowed. His knew that a part of Merlin’s face had suffered from irreparable damage from before, so he did not mind that he was unable to portray common expressions.
After which, Leylin continued walking in.
There was only an experiment table in here. On the operating table, a white-haired, middle-aged man placed the test tube in his hands down, and his pair of golden eyes met Leylin’s eyes.
“I can smell the barely faint smell of the Void Flower in your body, it seems like you really got the petals of a Void Flower!”
Kroft stared at Leylin for some time, before smiling, “You’re really a lucky fellow!
“Haha…” Leylin scratched the back of his head, revealing an embarrassed expression, but deep down he was elated.
After deciding to use the Void Flower as an excuse, he had been concocting the substitute ingredients for the Void Flower.
99.98%
After huge amounts of experiments, he had obtained a type of potion which could emit the scent of the Void Flower with a
similarity of 99.98%, to use as his trump card to fool others. Of course, this potion only had a similar fragrance to the Void Flower, but it did not contain any effect of the original Void Flower at all.

Before coming to the academy, Leylin had especially sprayed some of it on his body, and now it seemed that even Kroft was fooled. After which, Leylin only had to insist that the effect of the Void Flower was fully consumed by him, then nobody would be able to discover any gaps in his speech.

“No matter what, achieving level 3 acolyte before you are 20, you can already be considered as one of the core acolytes in the academy. Only that you have to go to the Administrative Area to register, then your various welfares and statuses will increase….” Kroft told Leylin about some benefits and authority given to a level 3 acolyte, which would be awarded to Leylin.

Finally, Leylin could hardly wait any longer and blurted out, “Professor, this time, I’m here to ask about the matter of the official Magus that you spoke of previously…..”

“I knew it!” Kroft nodded, “Ever since I saw you after your first meditation, I knew that you are resolute on the path of a Magus…..”

The white-haired, middle-aged man pointed at the chairs in the lab, “Regarding this, it might take a while, so let us sit first.”

Saying which, Kroft walked towards a recliner and sat down, with Leylin following behind him.

The black chair was draped with the leather of some creature, and running your hands across it gave a comfortable feeling. Between the two chairs, there was a small round table.

Bicky served two hot, steaming cups of green refreshments—her actions was of the official standard as if she had practiced serving innumerable times— and hurriedly retreated.

“Green Root Fruit Juice! I never thought that Professor would still keep this habit!” Leylin sniffed the fragrance, and his eyes reflected
“Haha… I have always liked these kinds of drinks, even when I’m idle or when doing experiments, I will still take a sip or two. Moreover, for an official Magus, 3 years is only a short time in their life!”

Kroft made several sips of the drink and then asked, “Leylin, do you know how to advance to an official Magus?”

“Please show me the way, Mentor!” Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn.

“An official Magus has long since overcome the limitations of a human. They are able to harness the nature’s energy and obtain a longer lifespan. Even the worst official Magus is far beyond that of a level 3 acolyte! They are extraordinary!”

Kroft’s voice sounded mellow, almost as if he were singing.

“This is because of the energy and devastating strength that an official Magus controls. A long time—maybe a thousand odd years ago, on the Luxe Castle of the south coast, all magisterium in the south coast have come to a mutual agreement to control the information about official Magi, and have even endorsed it…”

Kroft spoke of the past history of the Magus World.

“No matter what it is similar to the non-proliferation treaty of nuclear weapons of my previous world!” thought Leylin.

“From then on, before a level 3 acolyte advanced to an official Magus, they will sign a contract with the person or organisation imparting the knowledge to them. To promise that there will be in no way the concrete steps of advancing into an official Magus will be divulged. Any violators will accept the judgment of the Trial’s Eye, and his soul to be scorched for a thousand years….”

Kroft looked at Leylin, “I too have signed the contract before, hence I was able to obtain the resources and information needed for advancement. Due to the restrictions of this contract, I am unable to share the information with you!”
“However, I can still tell you of some general knowledge around it!” Seeing the obviously disappointed face of Leylin, Kroft continued.

“To advance to an official Magus, the first requirement is for the acolyte to reach a certain standard in the spiritual force. From what I see, you are very close to this criteria already. Actually, for many level 3 acolyte, this is not a problem at all.

“As for the real crux, it is to have a defensive spell model of a rank 1 Spell. This model will become your innate defensive spell in the future. Also, you need a standard amount of Grine Water to complement with the breakthrough!”

Leylin listened attentively, and various emotions flashed across his eyes, “So then, the criteria to advance would be these three: A certain level of spiritual force, a defensive rank 1 spell and Grine Water! Right?”

“Indeed!” Kroft nodded his head, “rank 1 Magus spell models and Grine Water are controlled by the huge factions. Even on the counters of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you will not be able to find them!”

Leylin smiled bitterly. He had already scouted most of the markets in the Poolfield Kingdom. There was absolutely no one place which contained Grine Water or a defensive rank 1 Spell.

From level 1 acolyte to level 2 acolyte, all that Leylin had learnt were rank 0 spells. Obviously, the Magi had made clear divisions on the rankings of spells. Moreover, they coined the spells that acolytes learnt as rank 0 spells, to differentiate between those spells of official Magi.

As for Grine Water, Leylin seemed to have seen some information pertaining to it on a ruined draft regarding Potioneering. That was a type of potion that was rather difficult for Leylin with his current abilities to brew. Moreover, many main ingredients were monopolised by the huge factions, and there were no traces of the
formula.
“So then, Professor, you asked me to come back, which means that I am able to obtain the Grine Water and defensive rank 1 Spell?” Leylin suddenly asked.
“I can only say that it’s possible.”
Kroft took another sip of the green refreshment. “Advancing to a level 3 acolyte before you turn 20 is already considered to be a potential Magus. Therefore, you are qualified to sign a contract with the academy!”
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“Contract? What contract?”
Leylin asked.
“First, you cannot reveal any information regarding the advancement to an official Magus. Furthermore, after you become an official Magus, the contract that you signed when you entered the academy would not impose any restrictions on you anymore. Hence, you must swear upon your soul, under the witness of Trial’s Eye, you will be of service to the academy for 100 years!”
“After signing the contract, you will be able to obtain a defensive rank 1 Magus spell for free, and a standard amount of Grine Water! Leylin saw an introduction to Trial’s Eye before on an ancient manual. It seemed to be a massive organism with Rules from a different world. It did not have a consciousness of its own, and magicians preferred to use it as a witness when undertaking important contracts.
The effectiveness of its constraints was known to be amongst the strongest of all contracts. Moreover, there was no way to be rid of it.
Once an agreement was formed, within the span of a hundred years, even if the academy were to have Leylin sacrifice his life during a battle, he had no choice but to obey.
This agreement was similar to a slave contract, yet it had more constraints stipulated in it than in a regular slave contract.
Leylin rejected it immediately within his heart. He was a person for valued absolute freedom, so it was rather distasteful for him to be under such constraints.

Of course, on the surface, Leylin still pretended to be extremely moved, struggling for an answer.

Finally, Leylin asked, with his throat a little parched, “So, Mentor, did you sign such a contract too?”

“Indeed! And because of this, I’ve joined Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and became a member of the professors!” Kroft gave a definitive reply, “Actually, the treatment that the academy gives to Magus like us – who came from abroad – is not too bad. They wouldn’t let us take on extremely difficult tasks as well!”

“Professor, asking me to come back to the academy, I’m sure there is some other way?”

Leylin looked at Kroft in anticipation.

Signing a contract and obtaining resources was a very common practice, and had nothing to do with the current precarious situation the academy was in. Leylin naturally did not assume that Kroft asked him to come back for this.

After hearing Leylin’s words, Kroft seemed to be happy. “Indeed, you are still as intelligent as before. Your eyes are also filled with wisdom, if not for your average aptitude, your achievements in future would definitely surpass Merlin’s!”

The façade of inferiority towards Merlin was put on by Leylin. He smiled, not speaking, waiting to hear what Kroft had to say.

“Actually, the war of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is not over!”

This sentence of Kroft made Leylin’s hair stand straight.

“What?” Leylin was so flabbergasted that he stood up immediately, “Was the war not mediated after the Lighthouse of the Night stepped in to stop Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle?”

“This news is indeed accurate but is incomplete. The war between official Magi have ended, but for acolytes it is still far from
Kroft smiled wryly.

“Although Lighthouse of the Night is one of the strongest guilds around, they are not the only one. Behind Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle, there is also a powerful guild supporting them from behind.

“Hence, under the mediation of Lighthouse of the Night, although the war between both sides has ended, yet there was a special clause!”

“What is it?” Leylin could faintly discern that it had something to do with the acolytes, but he still asked.

“The opposing factions have requested us to recall all of our acolytes, and engage in a bloodbath with their acolytes in a secret plane!

“Secret plane!? Bloodbath?”

Towards Leylin who had abundant information and knowledge, only after searching in the A.I. Chip’s data bank, he found the information he needed regarding those two terms.

The secret plane was a dimension used by magicians to protect their own lab and store their resources. It is created by a spell and the dimension is got by connecting to a region from the outside world.

Because of the powerful spell effects outside of these secret planes, magicians of the acolyte level could not break into it. As for some higher levelled secret planes, even if official Magi were to enter, they would also perish.

With the passing of time, some magician guilds will join forces, using spells to form a temporary secret plane, and conduct some experiments or for war/battle.

As for bloodbath, it contained the meaning of madness and massacre.

In the Magus World, if two magicians have a huge conflict that
could not longer be mediated, only with death they would rest their case. Under these circumstances, they will undergo a bloodbath with a host as a witness!

Before the bloodbath, both parties would sign an agreement. After any one side dies, their families, professors and friends may not directly avenge them.

This was a kind of battle, but with the effects of spells, the contracts, too, were difficult to breach. Many magicians with dignity would engage in this life and death conflict, yet they did not wish for the collateral damage to spread. So a bloodbath was the best choice.

“So, the academy summoned us acolytes back….”

Leylin suddenly realised that his throat was extremely parched as if he were a person dying from thirst.

“During the signing of the contract, the other parties have summoned Trial’s Eye as a witness, so our academy could only go according to the stipulated agreement. If not, all of us professors—including the chairman—will have our souls resting in eternal peace….”

“This time, it’s not only you guys, even the other genius fifth-grade acolytes, including your senior Merlin, must participate in this bloodbath. Moreover, the acolytes from each of the 3 academies, will all be at the same place….”

“Wait, which is to say, the acolytes from the other two academies will join forces and attack our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

Leylin felt rather dizzy, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes have already suffered tremendous casualties from the war before. As for Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle, they were forces with a level similar to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If any of these two were to engage in a bloodbath battle with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes, it would be 50-50, not to mention there’s two of them now.
Moreover, at the moment, there were only 50-60% acolytes remaining behind in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“This is too crazy, why would the academy accept such conditions?”

“There’s no choice, who asked for our academy to be in such a state? Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle wants to wipe our acolytes out at one go, and let the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s legacy be broken!” Kroft smiled bitterly, “Furthermore, be it our acolytes or the enemies’, they are not allowed to bring in any battle items of official Magus strength. This is programmed into the defensive spell of the secret plane. Any tools which exceed the strength of an acolyte will immediately be rejected upon entering the secret plane….”

“Can I still leave now?” Leylin harboured his tiny glimmer of hope.

“What do you think?” Kroft looked at Leylin deeply in the eyes, and the meaning implicated made Leylin quiver.

“All right then!” Leylin resigned to his fate and sat down. “The bad news is over? You should tell me some good news now!”

“You little brat!” Kroft smiled and shook his head. “Before the bloodbath, the academy will conduct a competition, where the rewards are bountiful. Moreover, various remuneration have increased by twofold, and the spell models and potions on the sales counter are also at a large discount….”

“They want to raise the strength of their own acolytes before the bloodbath, huh?” Leylin thought silently. He was a very optimistic person and had already faintly thought of a scenario like this before, unlike the extremely shocked appearance he was putting on right now. Since there is no room for retreat, his brain immediately adapted to the situation.

“All these have nothing to do with the advancement of official Magus. Previous, Mentor has told me that there is a method to advance, could it be inside the bloodbath?”
“Indeed! The academy has issued a mission to all level 3 acolyte like you for a blood vengeance. You are to massacre as many acolytes as you can inside the bloodbath!”

A sign of madness appeared for the first time on Kroft’s bespectacled features.

“We have assigned points on the enemy acolytes, every level 1 acolyte is worth 1 contribution points, level 2 acolytes are worth 3 points, and level 3 acolyte as 10 points. Towards the more noteworthy acolytes, we have corresponding values assigned to them.

There was a huge temptation behind Kroft’s words, “This time the academy’s mission reward is extremely bountiful. If you were to obtain enough contribution points, no matter if it is a rank 1 Magus defensive spell model or Grine Water, they all can be exchanged for with contribution points!”

“This is the only method that does not require a contract, and still can advance with resources!”

“If it’s this way….” Leylin closed his eyes, and quietly pondered of his mentor’s speech.

On the surface, Leylin looked calm. In fact, his brain had already begun to ponder over various scenarios, with the A.I. Chip constantly bringing out different simulations, projecting them in front of Leylin.

Minutes later, Leylin stood up again and bowed to his Professor Kroft. “If there is nothing else, please allow me to take my leave!”

“Where are you going?” Kroft was rather stunned by his own apprentice’s actions.

“Of course to see the Trading Post and sales counter!”

Leylin bowed again, and after obtaining Kroft’s approval, he left immediately.

Walking on an empty school route, Leylin thought over many things. First of all, trying to escape under the noses of various
professors of the official Magus level and then being hunted was something impossible.
Leylin only thought briefly, before beginning to toss that notion away.
Previously, he was able to escape was because of Kroft’s pointer and his personal capabilities. The largest reason was still that the academy allowed him to leave. If not, regardless of then and now, Leylin would never be able to walk out of the academy’s doors.
“Compared to official Magus, it seems like there is more hope in the bloodbath between acolytes, although the situation is still as unfavourable as before!”
Leylin walked to the Trading Post. The acolytes here numbered slightly more than other places, but many acolytes still had glum expressions on their faces. It seems that they had already gotten news of the upcoming bloodbath.
First, Leylin went to Woorx’s store to have a look. A pity, however, the little wooden hut was already gone, and the fatty Woorx was not known to have escaped or died.
Leylin sighed in disappointment. At the Trading Post, he purchased some ingredients he needed, before walking to the spell models sales counter.
Is there anything I can help you with?”
The disgusting woman behind the counter previously had now disappeared, changing into a friendly looking old geezer.
“Where’s the woman from before?” Leylin asked.
“Give me the spell model catalogue!” Thinking of that fussy woman from before, Leylin felt extremely glad. Even the sinking feeling from the mandatory attendance of the bloodbath had slowly reduced.
“Here!” The old geezer handed over a booklet made from parchment paper over to Leylin.
Leylin opened to have a look. The first page was of Fire element rank 0 spells, on the page number it shone with red light, indicating the element of the spells listed.
Leylin continued flipping. Water element, Plant element, even Necromancy rank 0 spells had all shone in their respective colours.
As for Shadow, Dark Element rank 0 spells, Leylin had already collected almost all, so he did not look any further.
While browsing through the booklet, Leylin realised that the prices of these spell models had reduced by more than half, so they were already selling them at a loss.
It was a pity, however, that for regular acolytes, to master a rank 0
spell, they must take at least months. Towards this imminent bloodbath, it was futile to start mastering them now.

“This Secondary Energy Fireball of the Fire element, Dampened Earth of the Water element, and the manipulation of corpses from the Necromancy Element, and this, and this…. One of them each.”

Since the spell model prices have plunged down, and Leylin had magic crystals, he could naturally afford to splurge on them. To him, it was like a sweep of the warehouse sale.

After handing the old geezer a huge bag of magic crystals, and requested him to send people to carry the books over, Leylin then asked, “Are there any rank 1 spell models here?”

“My apologies, our counter here only sells rank 0 spells for the acolytes.” The old geezer shrugged his shoulders and put on a helpless appearance. It seems like Leylin wasn’t the first acolyte to ask him about this.

After obtaining an answer he expected, Leylin nodded his head and left.

His earlier question was just to try his luck, so he wasn’t very disappointed.

* Ka-cha! Creak! *

First, it was the sound of a bronze key entering the keyhole and the turning of the lock.

“We’re here, place the things down!”

Leylin opened his dorm’s door and said towards several servants carrying boxes behind him.

* Boom! * The few servants placed the spell models books onto the ground, letting off a loud noise.

After placing Leylin’s purchase, these servants bowed to Leylin and walked out of the room.

“There is actually no change here!”

Leylin sized up his room. There was still a bright light radiating from within. Apart from more dust being collected, the rest was
still the same as before.

“Amansi!”

Leylin snapped his fingers. Suddenly a green whirlwind appeared from within the room.

The spiralling of the whirlwind continued, bringing the bedsheets and tablecloths floating into the air. A few grey dust particles were sucked into that whirlwind.

Very soon the green whirlwind spun around the room once, and many dust particles were trapped in it, turning a murky green colour, finally it dropped into the bin.

“Now it seems much more comfortable and clean!”

Leylin looked at the dorm that was as good as new, and nodded his head in satisfaction, before placing the spell models and ingredients away nicely.

After all was done, Leylin first went to the dining hall to have a sumptuous dinner, before returning to the room and picking up a spell model book.

“Secondary Energy Fireball huh?” Leylin looked at the fire red book. “A.I. Chip! Record!”

[Beep! Scanning in progress!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Hours later, the A.I. Chip replied, [The spell model of Secondary Energy Fireball has been recorded, analysing in progress: 9.23%]

After his advancement into a level 3 Acolyte, the A.I. Chip which was part of his soul also obtained an increase in processing capabilities.

To Leylin, other acolytes need continuous memorisation and use of their spiritual force to construct the spell models in their mind. This would require a huge consumption of time, and once something goes awry, it would result in a waste of time.

However, for Leylin, he only needed the A.I. Chip to analyse the spell and send it over to his hippocampus, then he would remember this spell model forever. In future, he only needed to
activate his spiritual force, before completely mastering the spell model.
To put it simply, the A.I. Chip had substituted the process of memory and also created a framework for him in his mind. It was like digging a pool, the A.I. Chip would help Leylin in digging a pool, and Leylin only needed to put forth his spiritual force like water into the pool. This saved a huge amount of time, which made Leylin’s learning abilities on spell models much faster than regular acolytes.
“A.I. Chip! Establish mission! With all the rank 0 spells as the foundation, begin simulating the model for a rank 1 spell!”
From what Leylin could see, the might of a rank 1 spell was stronger than a rank 0 spell. Only with enough material, with the A.I. Chip’s calculation abilities, can he manage to simulate a certain rank 1 spell model. There could even be a new spell model that had never appeared before in the Magus World!
[Mission establishing! Information on rank 1 spells missing, beginning simulation….]
Rows of data were projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.
[Estimated might of a rank 1 spell: 20 degrees and above! Information sources: , , , Umbra’s Hand spell model, Secondary Energy Fireball spell model…. Simulation time: Unable to estimate!]
The A.I. Chip listed many sources of material and even replied with an answer that it was unable to estimate for the first time. However, Leylin smiled. “As expected, although the time is not confirmed, but the A.I. Chip can very well simulate a spell model of a rank 1 spell…”
“What’s next, once I have a standard amount of Grine Water, and reach the requirement of the spiritual force to advance, then I can give it a go….”
For Leylin, he would try simulating a rank 1 spell model with the
A.I. Chip. But for the Grine Water, as it was a type of intermediate potion, the formula had always been held by the various large magician guilds. There was no way of them being divulged to outsiders. Many of the ingredients to brew it were also monopolised by these guilds, so there was no way he could brew it on his own.

Hence, his main goal in the upcoming bloodbath, was, under the circumstances of self-preservation, that he would try his best to acquire as many contribution points as possible to exchange for the Grine Water!

If he even had to purchase a spell model with the contribution points, he had no confidence to retaliate under the two academies joining forces and obtaining enough contribution points. Moreover, even if he did, he would be marked down by the enemy Magi, which was not beneficial for his future growth.

But now he only needed to get one of the two, so the difficulty was reduced by half. The attention he would be getting would be reduced too.

“Also, I have to complete the Fallen Star Pendant for a chance to live on in the bloodbath!”

Leylin’s hand turned over, revealing that silver cross.

Under the bright light, the jewels on the cross glittered resplendently.

“Once I have this low-grade defensive magic artifact, my survival chances will definitely increase in the secret plane!”

Leylin muttered, and came to his experiment lab beside the room, withdrawing the Confining Spirit Sphere that held Roman captive.

The originally dimmed crystal ball gradually radiated with light after Leylin undid the seal. Light reflected from it like amber, with a translucent worm-sized like human figure in it.

“Roman! Actually, I wanted to spend more time on you to pry more information from your mouth. A pity, however, there isn’t much
Regret surfaced on Leylin’s face.
As for the vengeful spirit, Roman, who was inside the crystal ball, he shuddered. The crazed and bloodthirsty look disappeared from his face, replaced by a pair of eyes that radiated intelligence.
“A level 3 Acolyte’s soul which transformed into a vengeful spirit, can definitely accomplish the final step – Spirit awakening!”
Leylin placed the silver cross beside the Confining Spirit Sphere and began to draw various runes with a feather quill and other tools on the large experiment table.
The runes and characters continuously writhed and twisted, forming a strange magic rune.
Along with Leylin’s incantation and tossing of ingredients, the huge magic rune let off a dim grey glow.
As for Roman who was within the Confining Spirit Sphere, he seemed to have seen something extremely dangerous, and even his voice started to quiver, “No… You can’t do this….”
The final step of synthesizing the Fallen Star Pendant required a sealed spirit that was full of energy, which is the best catalyst for the activation process.
Roman, who had the strength of a level 3 Acolyte in his previous life, was the perfect ingredient for Leylin right now!
After a vengeful spirit is sealed within the Fallen Star Pendant, Roman’s soul will be forever trapped within that silver cross, and suffer from never-ending torment. He could only wait for the day when the silver cross shatters, before his soul will be dissipated.
“You, who is in such a state, have you got any other bargaining chip for me?”
After finishing drawing the spell formation, and sizing up the spirit which was repeatedly begging him from within the Confining Spirit Sphere, a curious smile spread across Leylin’s face.
“I… I am an outstanding alchemist and have mastered many secrets
and special skills in alchemy. If only you let me go, I will hand them all over to you.…”

Seeing the resolute expression on Leylin’s face, Roman started to reveal everything that he knew, for a sliver of a chance to stay alive.

“Not enough! Most of your things were already recorded inside that Alchemy book, and these benefits will not be able to compensate for the loss of my Fallen Star Pendant!” Leylin’s face turned icy cold.

“I… I also know of a secret about magicians who advance to an official Magus! If only you swear to let me go, I will tell you! That is something that all the higher ups in the magician guilds have done their best to conceal!”
“A secret concerning official Magi?”
Leylin smiled, “Don’t tell me you know the spell model of a rank 1 spell, or the location of some Grine Water and whatnot….”
“You actually know of these….” Roman put on a shocked expression, but very soon it turned into a smirk.
“Yes! Your professor must have definitely told you that to become a rank 1 Magus, you need a defensive spell model as well as Grine Water, right?”
“Could it be that there is something more to it?” Suddenly Leylin had an ominous feeling.
“Hahaha…” Roman started laughing maniacally, “You have been duped by your professor, or maybe, even your professor doesn’t know of it….”
“Do you know the rankings of official Magi?” After laughing hysterically, Roman suddenly became calm and asked Leylin.
“It seems a Magus is differentiated by 9 ranks. rank 1 as the lowest, and rank 9 as the highest. The indication is to release a spell of that rank without any backlash!”
This was some information that Leylin heard from a certain lecturer. However, he had treated it as only a myth. After all, in the whole of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, all the professors were only rank 1 Magus, save for the chairman who was in the realm of a rank 2 Magus.
As for rank 3 Magi, only the heads of powerful guilds such as Lighthouse of the Night had that cultivation. Leylin was simply unable to comprehend the extent of the power that a rank 9 Magus could wield.

“IT seems as if you have been trying your best to obtain information regarding official Magi….”

Seeing that he had successfully piqued Leylin’s interest, Roman rested lazily against the wall of the crystal ball, and said, “The strength of official Magus, rest on their ability to inscribe a rank 1 spell successfully in their sea of consciousness, thus turning into their own innate defensive spell! They will then obtain an instantaneous spell casting or the spell will be permanently in effect. Moreover, the consumption is extremely little….”

Leylin nodded his head, the innate spell of official Magi could always be maintained around the surface of their bodies, forming a barrier. This was why the A.I. Chip’s readings were always hindered by these barriers of Magi, thus, it was unable to obtain the data needed.

“After advancing to a rank 1 Magus, a Magus’ sea of consciousness will form an innate spell. If this Magus was to advance again, turning into a rank 2 Magus, he will have to construct a new innate spell. Furthermore, it has to be constructed on the foundation of the original innate spell. Which is to say, a rank 2 Magus has 2 innate spells, and a rank 3 Magus has 3 innate spells. If it was a rank 9 Magus of the legends, they would have 9 innate spells, and the final one is a rank 9 spell!”

For a chance to survive, Roman divulged a few details known to few.

“Which is to say, if it was a rank 9 Magus, they can instantaneously cast spells of rank 1 to 9!”

Leylin felt sluggish. He could not resist even a rank 1 spell, to say nothing of a rank 9 spell cast by a Grand Magus.
Once a Magus was able to cast high-level spells instantaneously, it would mean that their battle prowess would be capable of burning down mountains and evaporating the seas.

“And what is this scam that you’re speaking of?” Leylin asked suddenly.

“Hehe! An innate spell is the root of the Magus’ spiritual force. Once constructed, it will be irreversible for eternity. Moreover, the innate spells after the first and original one have to be modelled after it. What would happen if you were to choose your innate spell wrongly? Two innate spells conflicting with each other in the sea of consciousness will result in a deficient spell as the best case scenario. The most likely event is that your brain will explode like an alchemy bomb. Bang! And off your head goes!”

Roman made an explosive gesture and sniggered.

“This scenario is extremely plausible!” Leylin face darkened.

“So then, where is the crux of this scam?”

“They have concealed the existence of advanced meditation techniques!” Roman hugged his knees as he squatted.

“Advanced meditation techniques?” Leylin’s heart wavered. He had faintly come across information on this, but even if it was his mentor, Kroft, had never seen such advanced source/material like them.

“Yes, advanced meditation techniques completely suit a magician’s spiritual force meditation techniques! Not only is the rate faster than those regular meditation techniques in constructing mind runes, they will even naturally form an innate spell in the Magus sea of consciousness on every level!”

“Naturally forming innate spells? You mean….” Leylin’s voice grew weak.

“Indeed, if the advanced meditation techniques were to increase its level, they will directly raise the rank of a Magus. There wouldn’t be any need for Grine Water or spell model!”
Roman smirked. “Also, according to the innate spell formed by the meditation technique, they’d directly complement each other. Not only is there no conflict with the innate spells, the meditation technique will even enhance the effect of the innate spell!”

“Think about it! If you were to use Grine Water to breakthrough, you will realise that your future levels will be extremely difficult to breakthrough. Every time you advance, you would require something more potent and effective than the Grine Water to aid in the advancement. Not only that, you have to scour the lands for an innate spell which does not conflict with the one you already have. This is purely based on luck, and basically it cannot be done!”

“And tens of hundreds of years will pass. The Magi who had cultivated in advanced meditation techniques would have continuously risen in their levels, while you will be on the bottom rung of the hierarchy struggling to survive, finally dying in some corner where nobody cares about….”

More and more cold sweat began to gather on Leylin’s forehead. With his abundant experience, and the calculation done by the A.I. Chip, he knew that what Roman spoke of was 98% authentic.

“The Magus World is indeed ensnared with pitfalls, and not one step can be wrongly taken!”

“So then, you wish to use a part of an advanced meditation technique to exchange for your petty life?” Leylin deeply inhaled for a few breaths, before asking Roman.

“Indeed, once you swear before the witness of the Trial’s Eye, I will hand over the location of one of these advanced meditation techniques!”

Roman howled, “If you won’t let me go, then never think of getting that piece of advanced meditation technique!”

“Has that advanced meditation technique got to do with the great Magus Serholm?” Leylin fell silent for a while before he suddenly asked.
“You know about it? That’s right, you have been to that lab too, and it seems that you have discovered some information!” Roman was a little shocked, before putting on a nonchalant air. “But so what? A part of an advanced meditation technique is indeed enough to redeem my life!”
“Alright!” Leylin fell into silence for a while, before finally agreeing. Following which, he chanted a mysterious incantation. This incantation was an extreme tongue twister, and there were many pauses. It required a huge amount of magic power before the chant was finished. Leylin was only able to use this incantation after advancing to a level 3 acolyte. Following the enunciation of the final syllable, an energy wave came from the void, and the surrounding light dimmed. In the air above of that experiment table, a mysterious vertical eye appeared. This vertical eye’s iris was pitch black, with its pupils dyed a crimson-red. Under its gaze, Leylin’s body shuddered, as if not wearing any clothes. All of his secrets seemed to have been exposed to it.
“A.I. Chip! Scan!” Leylin ordered from the bottom of his heart, yet he did not receive any response. It seems like the current ability of the A.I. Chip was still unable to detect such a strange entity like the Trial’s Eye. Even if it was only a secondary body that did not even contain a billionth of the main body’s might.
“With the Trial’s Eye as a witness, I, Leylin Farlier, will immediately release Roman from the Confining Spirit Sphere once Roman tells me the information regarding the advanced meditation technique. Leylin spoke slowly using the Byron Language. The moment Leylin finished his oath; the Trial’s Eye turned into a
black light, and separately entered each of Leylin’s and Roman’s foreheads.

“Alright! I have done as you requested, hurry and tell me the location of the advanced meditation technique!”

Impatience surfaced on Leylin’s face.

“Alright! Regarding the advanced meditation technique, actually, I don’t know much of it. Only that every advanced meditation technique have different requirements for the cultivator’s affinity and soul aptitude.”

“As for me, I have read it from a piece of writing left by a Magus, the lead to the lab of the great Magus Serholm. I also know that he left the legacy of the advanced meditation technique in a certain lab!”

Under the constraints of the Trial’s Eye, Roman began to spill everything he knew.

“There is a requirement for the cultivators, how about the requirements for the meditation technique?” Leylin asked.

“I don’t know. With my ability as a level 3 acolyte, obtaining the location of a piece of meditation technique is already extremely lucky, so how can I have more extravagant demands? Eventually, I hastily went to explore the lab, only to end up dying within it!”

Roman smiled sardonically.

“So then, tell me the location of that meditation technique!”

Leylin’s face was impassive as he spoke in a low tone.

“On that piece of broken page, I obtained a few locations. The previous location is crossed out now, so that leaves only one. It is the Dylan Gardens which rests within the Zither Moon Mountain Plains!”

“Zither Moon Mountain Plains, Dylan Gardens?”

Leylin suddenly thought of this place that he had come across in his previous exploration. “So the Dylan Gardens was situated on the Zither Moon Mountain Plains, huh?”
“All I know are these, hurry and let me out!” Roman howled.  
“Alright! I will let you out now. Under the constraints of the Trial’s Eye, I will dare not offend!”

Leylin smiled and snapped his fingers.

*Boom!* 

The whole Confining Spirit Sphere shattered into pieces, revealing the translucent spirit body within.  
At the same time, two rays of light flew out from Leylin’s and Roman’s body. This proved that the agreement with the Trial’s Eye has already been fulfilled by Leylin.  

“Haha! I’m free! I’m free!”

Roman shouted.

“Yes! I have abided by my promise, and released you from the Confining Spirit Sphere! Now, we are even!”

Leylin suddenly waved his hands and activated the spell formation.

*Bang!* 

In an instant, the spell runes on the experiment table irradiated with light, engulfing Roman within.

“What happened? You! How can you escape from the binding agreement!”

Roman’s face was in utter shock.
“I have already abided by my agreement and released you from the Confining Spirit Sphere. What happens next is not a part of the contract!”

Leylin’s voice was extremely unconcerned. This was just simple wordplay. Magicians were all intelligent people, and could not be lied to easily.

However, Roman was different. He had already died a long time ago, and his spirit body had transformed into a vengeful spirit. Naturally, his intelligence could not even be comparable to that of an average human.

Moreover, after spending so much time inside the lab, Leylin had been diligently exercising various methods to reduce Roman’s intelligence, making him more muddled, in order to interrogate him.

As expected, even if Roman had unexpectedly regained his intelligence today under the brink of his death, he was still manipulated by Leylin and gave away the important information to the advanced meditation technique.

“Even for me, as of now, a level 3 acolyte spirit body is extremely hard to acquire, so how could I let you leave?”

Leylin did not bother paying attention to Roman’s curses, and placed the silver cross in the centre of the runes, as he began to complete the final step for the Fallen Star Pendant.

The Fallen Star Pendant came from a derelict page in the Lowian
Academy Teachings. After having been decrypted by the A.I. Chip, together with the Alchemy diary found on Roman’s corpse, Leylin was able to deduce the correct procedure for synthesizing it. After advancing to a level 3 acolyte, Leylin had dedicated most of his time and effort on synthesizing this low-grade magic artifact. After costing Leylin a large amount of magic crystals and ingredients, the Fallen Star Pendant was almost completed, where the final step remained – spirit awakening!”

According to Leylin’s deductions and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the final step, the spirit awakening, had already involved the aspect of spirit and was something that he could not resolve then. However, Leylin sought a huge number of living bodies from Viscount Jackson of Extreme Night City as a main material in observing the soul. After many years of research, Leylin could already confirm that within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he would be the foremost regarding the topic of soul research, and might even surpass many Magi.

After so many experiments, the spirit awakening step did not pose a problem for Leylin. However, he had no leads on the other ancient formula that he obtained from Kroft, Tears of Mary, up till now. Leylin’s guess was that this formula was meant for an official Magus, something which an acolyte could not get involved with yet.

“For the Spirit awakening, a stronger spirit body is not necessarily better. According to the A.I. Chip’s simulation and my own deductions, a level 3 acolyte would be the most suitable for it…. ”

Leylin looked at the vengeful spirit, Roman, who was writhing and cursing him on the light formation.

“For a long time, I have deliberately calibrated Roman’s spirit strength to be compatible with the final step. As long as I am able
to complete the spirit awakening, the magic artifact that I get will definitely be perfect!”
This was the trump card that Leylin had prepared for the upcoming bloodbath.
A low-grade magic artifact did not exceed the boundaries of an official Magus. However, for acolytes, it was almost impossible for them to destroy the defense on this magic artifact.
As long as Leylin had that pendant, his safety in the bloodbath would be greatly increased.
“Let me go! You promised me!”
Roman who was trapped within the spell formation continuously howled.
At the end, the vengeful spirit Roman cursed in a low tone, “Despicable miscreant, I curse you….”
“Enough of your nonsense!” Leylin’s brow furrowed and he poured a silver liquid directly onto the Fallen Star Pendant.
* Sssii! *
A cloud of white smoke rose from the silver necklace, and the white mist in the air transformed into a large jaw lined with razor sharp teeth, which bit at Roman directly.
* Ka-cha! *
Roman was immediately eaten by the large malevolent mouth, which it opened and closed as if enjoying the aftertaste.
Leylin stared at the large mouth, and after seeing that Roman was completely devoured, he began to chant an incantation.
The chanting voice reverberated around the area, and Leylin’s spell formation that he drew on the experiment lab began to shrink to the centre, and finally, it all transferred onto the Fallen Star Pendant.
With the convergence of the runes, the patterns on the silver cross seemed more detailed and glowed with mysterious colours of light.
“Seal!”
Leylin fixed his gaze on the cross. When the runes were all
accepted by the silver Fallen Star Pendant, he pointed at the huge mouth in midair.

* Pu! * A sound similar to a bubble popping sounded.
The white mouth was directly dispersed, and threads of white gaseous bodies were emitted. In the centre of them were many strands of black colour, which continuously fell onto the silver cross.

“With my name, Leylin Farlier, Fallen Star Pendant, shimmer!”

Leylin’s expression was solemn, and he bit his fingers, dripping a droplet of blood onto the Fallen Star Pendant. The red jewel in the silver cross sparkled and directly sucked Leylin’s blood into it.

* Bang! * A strong suction force appeared from the Fallen Star Pendant, circling around the surface of the silver cross and forming a whirlwind. It directly sucked in all of the black and white gaseous compounds.
The thick mist enveloped the silver cross within, and it floated in midair, becoming a luminescent ball of black and white.

“Very good! The awakening phase is activated, and everything has been going smoothly without a hitch so far!”

Leylin looked at the glowing ball in midair, his eyes holding a fervent gaze. “What’s next, is….”

On the second morning, Leylin stared at a silver cross held in his palm, his face revealing an elated expression.

At this moment, the Fallen Star Pendant was a silver grey colour, and the jewels also seemed dull and without lustre. Based on outer appearances alone, it could not even be compared to the previous half completed item. However the A.I. Chip’s indication made Leylin feel ecstatic.

[Beep! Low-grade magic artifact – Fallen Star Pendant has been successfully synthesized!] [Fallen Star Pendant – Low-grade magic artifact. Main components used for defence: Stellar Alloy, Manfayla
Rock, Mankestre Bone Marrow….] [Physical Defence: 13 degrees, Magical Defence: 15 degrees. Instant activation when Host is attacked!]
The various stats shown on the A.I. Chip made Leylin extremely ecstatic. A defence magic artifact could not even be bought in the market.
Normally speaking, the attack of a level 3 acolyte was around 10 degrees or so. Only official Magi and above would be able to cast a magic spell of over 20 degrees.
With the Fallen Star Pendant in hand, while it still had energy, Leylin could completely ignore the attacks of level 1 and level 2 acolytes. Together with the Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion, Leylin would be able to endure a barrage of attacks even if it came from a level 3 acolyte.
One could say that with the successful synthesis of the Fallen Star Pendant, Leylin’s survival was assured.
“This magic artifact is like a simplified version of an official Magus’ defensive force field!” Suddenly Leylin exclaimed.
Reverence and respect for magicians uncontrollably welled up in Leylin’s heart even more.
The continued tradition of the Magus World was only in recent times, for about 1000 years. Before this, there were even the glorified and magnificent ancient times of the past. Back in the ancient past, the primordial and immemorial past, there was a countless accumulation of time, yet how many from these periods were geniuses? How many had invented mysterious spells?
Only by standing on a giant’s shoulder, one could see the road ahead clearly, strive hard and advance!
Even with the A.I. Chip, Leylin only had a better foundation than other magicians. On the path of a Magus, he still required to rely on the experiences of his predecessors and improve both himself and his abilities.
After sighing, Leylin hung the silver grey cross on his neck. The ice cold pendant came into direct contact with the skin, and Leylin pulled up his collar. This way, no one could tell that Leylin was wearing a pendant just by looking at the surface.

“With the Fallen Star Pendant, my defense is guaranteed. What’s next is to make use of the A.I. Chip to come up with a combination of a few strong rank 0 spells to be used in the bloodbath. Although Leylin believed Roman’s words, with the current rewards, he wouldn’t let it go. His previous plan was to obtain the Grine Water through the bloodbath, and right now he did not plan to give up. After all, he still couldn’t defeat any rank 1 Magi. Under the compulsion of the academy and professors, he still needed to join the bloodbath in the secret plane.

*Dong Dong Dong!* Just when Leylin was deep in thought, a patterned knocking on the door sounded.

“Please enter!” Leylin hurriedly removed the traces of his work in the lab and arranged his clothes before he spoke.

* Creak! *

The wooden door was pushed open, and at that moment, when Bicky who wore a green dress, walked in, a scented fragrance wafted in and infiltrated Leylin’s nose.

“Leylin! Mentor has asked me to get you to register for the upcoming school competition....”

Bicky toyed with a white flower in her hands. Before the bloodbath, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had already spared no hesitation in nurturing its acolytes. The prices of various ingredients and spell models had plunged, and they had also hosted many competitions before the bloodbath. Only with participation, there would be generous rewards, such as magic crystals, spell models, ingredients and the like.
As for the top few ranks, they were even given scrolls of spells and attack type potions as rewards. However, Leylin did not lack magic crystals, and he could also brew attack type potions for himself. As for the reward for the champion, it was not a magic artifact, so he was not attracted in the slightest. However, he still had to, at least, show some superficial effort. Leylin nodded his head and walked out of the dorm with Bicky. After not seeing her for 3 years, the girl from before had turned into a beautiful young lady. Bicky was silent as she led the way. Leylin opened his mouth but did not know what to say. The two walked through the garden zone, and Bicky smiled and said, “Leylin! You know what? Fayle has already agreed to let me be his girlfriend!” Saying which, Leylin acutely discovered a peculiar expression from within Bicky’s eyes. “Oh really? Congratulations!” Leylin had known of Bicky crush on Fayle it since the very first day he entered. After seeing his good friend fulfilling what she wished for, he was somewhat happy for Bicky. At the same time, he was somewhat worried. He had some understanding towards Fayle’s character and knew that Fayle liked to be in the limelight. On top of that, Fayle was rather vain. However, after seeing Bicky’s smiling expression, Leylin still chose to maintain his silence.
The registration area is just ahead!”

After walking through the garden zone, Bicky took the initiative to familiarize Leylin with the registration area.

“The academy competitions are split into many categories. There are some potion brewing ones, some for harvesting plants, and other lesser known subjects. However, the liveliest event is still the fighting competition. Any acolyte is able to join, and the reward is the most generous!”

“Although the acolytes are able to participate in many events, Professor Kroft said that you had better join the potion brewing event!”

Bicky looked at Leylin, not masking her worried expression.

“Don’t worry; I am only prepared to join the potion brewing event!” Leylin smiled as he consoled Bicky.

Leylin did not want to compete head on with those genius fifth-grade acolytes. Behind them were the support of many professors, and they would definitely carry magic artifacts with them. Moreover, the battle prize was not attractive to him at all. This prize was obviously prepared as a final chance to give to those average acolytes.

Although Leylin came only as a mere formality, naturally he had to choose the simplest way to do it.

The front of the education area was lined with several black desks.
The banner behind them had words like Potioneering and Fighting. Many acolytes were crowding around the tables to register. Looking on, it seemed like they were acolytes who had recently rushed back to the academy. Leylin thought for a while before directly registering for the Potioneering battle.

“Hold on to this! Your assigned number is 32, and the competition will start tomorrow afternoon at 3 o’clock. Please be punctual and come to the large hall in experiment zone 13 in order to participate!”

The administrative staff wearing grey robes handed a parchment paper over to Leylin, and also routinely gave him a numbered card. “Next!”

With the impatient voice of the grey-robed person sounding, Leylin rubbed his nose, shook his head, and walked away.

“Let’s go to the restaurant to celebrate!” Leylin said to Bicky, who was beside him.

“It’s better if I pay for it, as a celebration for us meeting again after such a long time!” Bicky’s face revealed a joyous expression.

……

On the second day, Leylin arrived 5 minutes earlier at Hall 13. At this moment, many Potioneering acolytes were already waiting here. Some recognised Leylin and smiled as they greeted him while some faces were extremely unfamiliar. This was not strange, as most magicians holed themselves up, often staying in their experiment labs to conduct experiments, especially those who practiced Potioneering and Alchemy.

Merlin and Bicky also entered the crowd, smiling at Leylin.

* Ding Ling Ling! * With a crisp bell sound, a black-robed figure emerged from the crowd.
“Official Magus!” Leylin exclaimed silently. Although he was not the same as before, compared to an official Magus, he was still an ant. The A.I. Chip was also helpless, as it was blocked by the defensive force field surrounding the official Magus.

“All of you, enter the main hall and go to your respective allocated areas as is indicated by your card number. I will only wait for 5 minutes, and those who aren’t there by then will be immediately disqualified!”

The black robed figure’s voice was extremely hoarse and unpleasing to the ears. After finishing his speech, the black-robed Magus shook his robe, and his body split apart, turning into innumerable bats, which flew away.

The acolytes that were present looked each other in the eye. * Bang! * Not knowing who made the first move, the whole hall clamoured and squeezed through into the main hall.

Although Leylin was not in a hurry, his body was involuntarily pushed into the hall with the crowd. With a great effort, he managed to get to his experiment table. The number 32 was scribbled on the corner of a pure white table. There were also a few herbs, ingredients and a piece of parchment paper on the table. With just a whiff Leylin knew that these were the necessary ingredients for a healing potion.

“Five minutes are up, any acolyte who has not found their place is deemed disqualified!”

The black robed Magus’ voice sounded again. At the same time, there were cries from many acolytes. Leylin saw an unlucky fellow beside him, who was just one step away from his table, grabbed by a black bat and thrown outside of the hall.

“The topic, this time, is to brew a healing potion! The formula and
ingredients are on the experiment table, and you will have 3 hours....”
After dealing with the group of disqualified acolytes, the black robed Magus’ voice sounded yet again.
“Your every move is under my vigilance, so do not try to cheat your way through it. If not, I will educate you on a lesson of blood!”
“As expected!” Leylin picked up the parchment paper, and it was indeed the formula of a healing potion.
“Such an elementary potion like this, I have brewed it so many times that I could vomit !”
Leylin felt extremely frustrated, but he still skillfully picked up a beaker...
To an outsider, Leylin’s every movement now was textbook standard. His arms were strong, and they did not quiver. During the process of brewing, every action was filled with a unique aesthetic movement.
* Drip! *
A drop of green liquid was placed into a test tube, and the whole test tube momentarily turned red.
“It’s completed!” Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip’s recording time, “1 hour 20 minutes? It seems like I have become a little bit rusty!”
“En! Very good, it’s completed!”
A black bat immediately flew onto Leylin’s experiment table and scrutinised Leylin’s potion.
“Sir!” Leylin hurriedly bowed.
“I recognise you! Aren’t you Leylin? The apprentice of that old geezer Kroft! The heavens are really unfair; he already had such an outstanding apprentice, Merlin, yet now, it even sent you to him....”
The bat seemed to recognise Kroft, and muttered by the side. Leylin maintained his silence throughout.
Leylin had no thoughts of establishing a relationship with a Magus, and he did not have the ability to do so either.

“Alright! Let me sniff the potion!
It could be seen that after seeing Leylin keep his silence like a log, the bat cursed for a while before suddenly speaking.
Leylin opened the plug on the test tube and placed it below the bat’s head.
“En! Healing potion! The quality is excellent! Kiddo, you have passed!”
The bat somewhat regretfully flew away, and let off an unpleasant voice, “Leylin! Consider changing professors and joining me….”
Towards this, Leylin could only smile wryly.

……

The Potioneering competition carried on for two days and one night.
Fortunately, the acolytes could all manipulate the energy particles to strengthen their bodies, so they could endure throughout the entirety of the competition.
Leylin had also been brewing potions in these two days.
Along with the intensity of the competition, the topics given by the academy became more and more difficult. Bicky had already been eliminated in the third round. At the very end, they moved on to beginner potions.
Through these series of tests, Leylin distinguished himself above the rest, and stormed through the competition with his senior, Merlin.
As for the contents of the finals, it was to brew a Hofdor’s Water of Radiance. This was a kind of healing potion that was able to treat injuries caused by negative energy spells. Even amongst the beginner potions, it was known to be extremely difficult to brew.
Although Leylin had the confidence to brew it successfully with the A.I. Chip, for concealment reasons, he spontaneously pretended to make a mistake, and lost to Merlin, taking second place. Deep in the night, Leylin returned to his dorm, and tossed the second prize reward, a Fiery Combustion Potion, aside. This type of attack potion had a might of 8 to 9 degrees, which could be considered to be an extremely remarkable trump card for a level 3 acolyte. However, it was not worthy in Leylin’s eyes. Since a year ago, he could already brew a potion like this on his own.

“It’s finally over. What’s left is to wholeheartedly prepare for the secret plane bloodbath!” Concerning the bloodbath between the few academies, it couldn’t just be glossed over hastily like the academy competitions. Even during the intra-school fighting competition, there was only a loss of a few acolytes’ lives due to mishaps. However, during the bloodbath, it was two against one, and their enemy’s goal was to eradicate the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

* Dong Dong Dong! * While deep in thought, Leylin heard a knocking noise outside the door.

“Who is it? It’s so late already!” Leylin was rather unhappy as he opened the door.

“It’s me!” Outside the door, there was a girl wrapped in a cloak, and her voice sounded coquettish.

“You are… Bic…” Before Leylin could finish, his lips were already sealed. The door closed and the cloak slipped off, revealing an ample yet provocative and naked body.

“This is… What’s happening?” After Leylin recovered his senses, he was already lying on his own bed, with a girl continuously writhing on top of him. Feeling the pleasure underneath his body, Leylin resisted his urges
and temptation to touch Bicky’s waist, which made her stop in her
movements, “Why are you doing this?”
“Because… I can’t think of a better way to console you! Leylin!
Don’t be upset! The loss is only temporary…”
Bicky pouted lovably.
“I…”
Leylin was extremely at a loss for words. If he could look in the
mirror, he would definitely be putting on a wry smile.
He deliberately lost on purpose, yet he did not think that this silly
girl Bicky would actually be fooled by him. Thinking that he would
be devastated, she offered herself to ‘console’ him.
At the same time, Leylin lost all his hopes towards the wanton
practices in this world.
“Alright then! How about Fayle? Aren’t you his girlfriend?”
Leylin asked.
“He wouldn’t know. Besides, before marriage, I have my freedom!”
Bicky revealed a coquettish smile and gradually started to thrust her
waist again.
“So then, what happens after marriage?” Leylin was somewhat
unhappy and quickened his motions.
The delicate beauty panted for a while before speaking with great
effort, “Ma… After marriage, I have to guard my body for Fayle!”
Leylin then performed another deep penetrating thrust, which made
Bicky moan with a shrill voice. She then collapsed in Leylin’s
embrace, as if all the bones in her body were removed.
“You are really… Alright then! After I have borne a child for Fayle
and confirmed with a blood test, whenever you want it, you can
look for me…”
Bicky’s face blushed, and buried her head in Leylin’s arms.
“What is this? I let Fayle wear a green hat in advance?”
Leylin thought at the back of his mind, as his hands involuntarily
grabbed on Bicky’s peaks of abundance, and began to move wildly.
In the morning, Leylin stroked the bare body of the girl, and he did not know whether to laugh or cry, “I never thought that I would become a friend with benefits….”
Looking at Bicky lying in his arms, Leylin’s expression was complicated.
Regarding the fact that she threw herself at him the previous night, Leylin guessed that there were a few reasons behind it. First it was that Bicky had a favourable impression of him. As she did not have the heart to watch him be defeated, she came here to console him. The second was that this world’s practices were generally more open, and Bicky wasn’t a virgin before she did it with him – she had obviously had intercourse before. Finally, due to the bloodbath that was drawing closer, she was restless mentally, so her subconscious mind made the decision to do some stimulating activities and thus vent her frustration. However, no matter what the reasons were, Bicky was a beauty, and Leylin was not on the losing end.

“Ah?!?” Suddenly, the female body on Leylin shook, and sat upright.
“What time is it? It’s actually 7 o’clock. Not good, I have to go to Mentor’s experiment lab….”
Bicky hurriedly left the bed, and revealed that exquisite body once again to Leylin. She quickly did the buttons on her robes, before giving Leylin a light peck on his cheeks and then scurrying out of the room.

“Really….” Leylin looked at Bicky’s departing figure and smiled wryly.
Very soon, the romance of last night was thrown to the back of Leylin’s mind. The secret plane bloodbath drew closer – it was one which none of the acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy could avoid. Especially those fifth-grade acolytes with genius aptitude, they were the target of the opposing academies. On the contrary, Leylin only had some talent in Potioneering; furthermore he had his senior Merlin to garner all unwanted attention, so he would not be in the limelight. This was one of the reasons why Leylin never revealed his true abilities. What followed next was Leylin holing up in his experiment lab, familiarising himself with the Fallen Star Pendant, and using the A.I. Chip to analyse the spell models. Also, he simulated those rank 0 spells with high degrees of attack to be used in conjunction with his attack potions, in preparation for the secret plane bloodbath.

……

The clouds were a patch of grey, and from time to time it drizzled, which made people feel like shadow was looming over them on the horizon. Acolytes wearing grey robes were crammed into a field full of wild grasses. Each of them had a solemn expression, and their eyes brought possible vicious or vacant looks. A few black and white robed official Magi stood before them. Leylin stood somewhere at the corner of the acolytes and maintained a low profile, and now and then stole glances at the professors in front of him. At the forefront of the professors was a large bloke – wearing black robes – who stood still, and subconsciously, strands of energy waves radiated out from his body which made Leylin’s
spiritual force circulation feel rather sluggish.

“That person is definitely the chairman of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, a rank 2 Magus of the legends!”

Leylin bowed his head lower, not daring to raise his head again.

As for the desire to use the A.I. Chip to scan, Leylin buried it deep within his heart. The might of a rank 2 Magus was extremely mysterious, and Leylin had no confidence in concealing this A.I. Chip from him.

Moreover, right now the A.I. Chip could not even break past the barriers of a rank 1 Magus, so he needn’t embarrass himself further.

“But… are we activating the secret plane right here?”

Leylin looked at the surroundings. Under the dimly-lit sky, the field was dead silent, the rodents and lizards as if discovering a great battle was coming, had long since left the place.

Amongst the acolytes, Leylin even saw Bicky, Merlin, Nyssa, Jayden and the like.

Jayden stood at the forefront of the acolytes, and his face was extremely gloomy. There were thick, dark circles around his eyes, and it seemed that his condition was not too great.

Nyssa stood at the end of the crowd, and her whole figure was draped in grey robes, which was extremely low profile.

As for Bicky and Merlin, they were muttering to each other.

After seeing Leylin, Bicky even gave him a smile.

“But Bicky has a few attack potions that I gave her, and she isn’t an important target, so most likely she’ll be alright!”

Leylin comforted himself.

“They’re here! They’re here!”

Suddenly, a ruckus was caused amongst the acolytes, which broke Leylin’s train of thoughts.

Leylin inhaled a mouthful of air and raised his head to look at the distance.
On the far horizon, a black spot suddenly appeared. With the black spot gradually approaching, its size, too, grew larger and larger. When the black spot arrived in front of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s representatives, Leylin managed to see the full appearance of this creature.

It was a giant beetle, with eight long and sturdy legs. Each of them was over a dozen metres long. On top of the tiny head of the beetle, was a pair of compound eyes which was looking down on the masses of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

[The target has a layer of defensive barrier, and is primarily categorized as a rank 1 Magus. Host is recommended to stay far away from the target]

At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned, which made Leylin realise how formidable this beetle was.

“Sssii!”

From the giant beetle, a few drops of yellowish green saliva drooled from its mouth, which fell onto the ground corroding a large pit.

The surrounding acolytes backed away in unison. Their faces were pale, seemingly shocked by it.

“What are you afraid of? It’s just an Abyss Steeled-Back Beetle!”

“Silence!”

Under the restrictions set by the professors in front, the acolytes then gradually recovered from their fright.

“Siley, your acolytes were actually frightened by my baby. It seems like their predicament isn’t very good right now! Hahaha….”

A crisp male voice sounded, following which a white-robed, middle-aged Magus jumped off the back of the beetle. Although he had a middle-aged look, his brows were snow white.

“Hng!” Seemingly unhappy with the other party’s taunt, the bald chairman Siley coldly harrumphed.

However, from the A.I. Chip’s detection, Leylin saw that a formless
energy wave was radiated from Siley’s body towards the beetle. “Wu!” “Arghh!” A few frightened voices came from the back of the beetle, and it seemed to be made by youngsters. “Siley! You actually….” The white-browed Magus was in rage, and his brows suddenly turned red, as if blood was going to drip down from it. “How is it?” Chairman Siley stepped forward as if being overbearing. “That white-browed, middle-aged man should be the chairman of Sage Gotham’s Hut. Although he is also a rank 2 Magus, Chairman Siley is a Dark Magus, excelled in the art of combat, so his strength is definitely stronger than White Brows. . . ” Leylin’s eyes flashed. Just when the acolytes thought that these two Chairmen were about to battle, a whizzing sound travelled from the sky. An enormous horse carriage that stretched over a few dozen metres, with a pair of snow white wings on each side, gradually descended under the control of a few condors. * Bang! * The horse carriage landed steadily on the ground. The door opened, and a white-robed, golden-haired lady walked out from it. “Guru, stop! Don’t forget we have signed an agreement!” Listening to the golden-haired lady, Siley and Guru scoffed and returned back to their respective groups. Behind the golden-haired lady, a group of acolytes came out from the horse carriage. Their bodies evidently radiated strong energy waves. “Hehe! Siley, I hope your acolytes will be able to survive. Don’t let your academy turn into a real graveyard…” White-Brows Guru sneered. Behind him, the beetle gradually folded its legs, which formed a flight of steps, where many acolytes stepped down from it.
The acolytes from both academies looked at Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s camp menacingly, as if the acolytes here were all preys. “Most of them are level 3 acolyte, and there is a rare number of level 2 acolyte. As for level 1 acolyte, there isn’t any!”

Leylin’s heart tightened. Due to the weakening state of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the rules in the bloodbath were obviously not favourable to them. Not only were they two against one, but the other side could let their level 1 acolyte be excluded from the bloodbath. Unlike Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were all their acolytes had to enter. These level 1 acolyte could only play the role of cannon fodder when they entered, and were absolutely of no further use. “After this mandatory enlistment, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will definitely be worse off!”

Leylin looked at the acolytes in his academy that were of 11-12 years of age, and sighed within his heart. However, Leylin could not offer any assistance to them at all. At the very most, under the circumstances that his life wasn’t threatened, he would do his best to help them. Right now, he had something more important to tend to. “A.I. Chip, assist in the recording!”

Right now Leylin was a level 3 acolyte and the A.I. Chip’s ability increased too. Most of the level 3 acolyte could not escape the A.I. Chip’s detection now. Leylin picked out the acolytes who carried magic artifacts. No matter if it was his own side or the other, he recorded them down. These people were the ones that he had to be mindful of during the bloodbath.

Listening to the provocative tone of the other party, Chairman Siley’s face darkened. He waved his hands, “Enough of this nonsense, let us begin!”

“Since you have such sincerity, how could we bear to refuse your
request?”

White-Brows Guru and the golden-haired lady smirked and nodded their heads, “Let us begin!”

Listening to their chairmen, the official Magi from the respective academies stepped forward and begin to retrieve many strange things from their sacks, robes or even within their bodies. After which, they began to set up a formation.

When they were finished with it, a strange magic formation was arranged on the ground.

“They are runes that make the foundation sturdy, linking up of energy and creating flames. I recognise some of these!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and recorded down all of these formations with the A.I. Chip.

As for the three chairmen, after their staff had finished preparing the formation, they each stepped forward and withdrew 3 crimson coloured scrolls.

“With my name, Siley, I summon the Will of Battle which is roving around the wilderness, and activate the glorious and deathly flight of stairs….”

The 3 chairmen chanted and simultaneously tore the scrolls in their hands apart.

* Bang! * Crimson lightning continuously thundered down, on the area above where the 3 crimson scrolls were torn, a huge opening suddenly appeared from the void.

* Whoosh! * Countless thunder and lightning appeared from within, and noises of explosion and whistling came from the opening.

Dozens of seconds later, the void calmed down.

“This is a secret plane which is now an abandoned resources point. Any organisms and resources of value in it were scoured clean by us. Right now, it will become your battlefield….”
Chairman Siley turned around and said to Leylin and the group of acolytes, “You are all the most outstanding students of my Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, who have experienced deaths with blood and fire. You are not just a flower that is nurtured in a greenhouse, but ferocious young lions. I want you to seek your preys, stalk them, and ambush them. Finally, rip them to shreds!”

After finishing the last sentence, Chairman Siley’s eyes turned a crimson red, and a blood red light was radiated, making his face seemed somewhat contorted.

Leylin’s face was extremely solemn, and he did not know how to react to this anymore.

Following which, the chairman promised many different rewards. They were all involving precious resources and advanced information that would be given as a bounty whenever the opposing acolytes were slain. This made the acolytes face gleam with greed.

“As per rumours, our chairman is indeed an extremely aggressive person!” Leylin thought, “I wonder how long this group of people will last?”

On the other side, the chairman of Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle were also giving their speech. Although their acolytes were cheering loudly and nodding their heads vigorously, Leylin was in glee.
The academies in the south coast had been influenced by the styles of their respective headmasters. Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was advocating a more bloodthirsty and theory of the law of the jungle. Overall, it was leaning towards the side of Dark Magi.
As for the two opposing factions, they were obviously leaning more towards Light Magi types. Although many acolytes were already level 3 acolyte, Leylin did not see the astuteness and craftiness in their eyes. Many of them even seemed innocent, which was extremely similar to the acolytes that were in Extreme Night City.
“If it’s this way, there is still a chance!”
Leylin’s eyes gleamed. His target was only to gather enough contribution points in exchange for Grine Water, so he had no reason to create more trouble for himself.
As for the price of Grine Water, it was 50 contribution points. This is to say, Leylin had to kill 5 level 3 acolytes on the other side, or even more level 2 acolytes, before gathering enough points.
“The acolytes do not have the defensive force field that an official Magus has. If only I have time, I can analyse and choose my opponents, giving me enough contribution points!”
Leylin sized up the opposing acolytes and eyed some of the level 3 acolytes who obviously had low energy waves. They will be his prey!
“Alright! This secret plane will hold on for 3 days. In these 3 days, you will all be transported to different places in the secret plane. Protect your chest badges well. They are proof of your contributions and contains information on the return route!”
Siley waved his hands, and the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes formed a long line, entering the entrance of the secret plane in an orderly fashion.
Under the mediation of Lighthouse of the Night, it obtained a few benefits. For example, they could enter the secret plane first, giving
them a territorial advantage. However, Leylin understood that in front of his opponents’ immense force, this little benefit for Abyssal Bone Forest Academy is simply a joke!

The acolytes on both sides numbered almost the same, at 200 or so. However, the amount of level 3 acolyte on their side was at least 5 to 6 times more than what Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had. As for the acolytes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, not to mention that most of them perished in the war, many of them could not make it back in time. Some even betrayed the academy and were killed while escaping. Such a result made Abyssal Bone Forest Academy inferior to the enemy in terms of elite forces.

Under these circumstances, the chairman of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy still provoked the enemy in such a fashion. This made Leylin convinced of a rumour – The cause of this war was exactly the provocation by this Chairman Siley.

As Leylin pondered on, he followed the acolyte in front of him into the secret plane.

……

* Weng! *

After entering the plane, Leylin’s sight turned black. When he regained his senses, he was already standing on an unfamiliar plot of land. He felt dizzy, as if there were millions of bees flapping their wings. Leylin’s face contorted, almost puking.

[A negative effect is discovered on the Host. The symptoms are dizziness and vomiting. The primary diagnosis is that it is the aftereffect from travelling through spatial areas!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Leylin slapped his forehead, and opened his water bottle, splashing the cold water on his face, which
made him feel much better. Looking the surroundings, what entered his sight were some small trees and shrubberies. There were always a few unknown fruit trees grown. On them were a type of purple-red fruit, and was slightly hairy on the surface.

“A.I. Chip, scan the surroundings!” Leylin ordered. Immediately, a light blue 3D image was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“There doesn’t seem to be any danger!” Leylin nodded his head and chanted an incantation.

Along with the chanting noise, Leylin’s face took on a morphing process. His eyes became larger, his lips paler, his hair changed colour, as if a totally different person. Even his height was shorter by a few inches.

What was surprising was that after this rank 0 spell, the energy waves from Leylin’s body gradually weakened. It regressed from a level 3 acolyte to that of a level 1 acolyte slowly.

[Shapeshifting spell (Modified), able to the change the height and appearance of a person, even the energy waves radiation! Consumption: 3 magic power, 3 spiritual force!]

Shapeshifting spell was a spell that Leylin specially chose back when he was leaving the academy.

After he advanced into a level 3 acolyte, he managed to reach the requirements for the A.I. Chip to make modifications to it. Back in Extreme Night City, he had already completed the modification for this Shapeshifting spell.

Of course, no matter how much the A.I. Chip modified it, the Shapeshifting spell was after all a rank 0 spell. It could only conceal his energy from acolytes, but not the detection from official Magi. If not, Leylin could have used the spell to make himself be a level 2 acolyte when he returned.

Moreover, the Shapeshifting spell could only slightly lower the
energy waves, allowing him to pass off as a low-level acolyte. It could not be used to conceal as a regular human or official Magus. However, the bloodbath in the secret plane was only for acolytes. So the disguise would not be found out by other acolytes.

“It’s done!” Leylin looked at his reflection in a mirror.

A blonde male acolyte, with the energy wave of a level 1 acolyte. Under this state, even if it was Bicky or Merlin, they wouldn’t be able to recognise him.

“However, a person’s habit cannot be changed so easily. I had better avoid meeting any familiar people.” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he disappeared into the shrubbery.

……

As for other places in the secret plane, many acolytes had already begun to face off and there were several explosive yet short-lived battles.

Beside a small pool, a black haired acolyte with a black cloak used lightning to obliterate an Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte into ashes.

On the other side of the plane, Jayden’s expression darkened, and suddenly countless vines shot out from his body, wrapping around an opposing acolyte from Whitewoods Castle into a ball of vines. Along with the contraction of the vine, fresh blood seeped through from the gaps of the vine, falling drop by drop on the floor.

Battles like these happened constantly throughout the plane. On the whole, the level 3 acolytes from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy has an advantage in 1 versus 1 combat. As for other level 1 and 2 acolytes, if they meet with these level 3 acolytes they would be killed immediately.

A pockmarked brown haired acolyte wore the uniform of Sage Gotham’s Hut. His eyes were not big, but it was filled with anxiety
and wariness, as he continuously scanned the surroundings.

“Damn it! I was actually sent here. The distance from the gathering point with the academy is too far…”

The acolyte hurried his step as he berated incessantly.

* Peng! *

Suddenly, a few large holes appeared from the ground. Yellow brown mud spikes emerged from it. In that instant, it pierced through that acolyte’s grey robes and inner armour, rupturing a huge hole in the stomach area.

With a look of anguish and disbelief, the acolyte’s eyes were drained of life gradually with the blood and innards flowing out from his body.

A dozen minutes later, the grasses in the surrounding shook. Leylin took off his green costume and walked towards the corpse of the acolyte.

He crouched down and retrieved a red badge from the acolyte’s chest.

“It’s only a level 2 acolyte! Value is 3 contribution points!”

Leylin kept the red badge in his robes. The various academies had different badges. Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s was black throughout in colour, while the ones from Sage Gotham’s Hut were red. Naturally, the badge from Whitewoods Castle was white. Moreover, there were different shapes for the different levels of acolytes.

“A.I. Chip! Bring forth my stats!”


“A Shapeshifting spell and Ground Spear has already consumed 5 points of my magic power and spiritual force. I have to conserve my spiritual force and try to use potions to battle!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed. This bloodbath between academies was not a competition or anything of that sort. According to the latest information received earlier, Leylin could already confirm that the opposing academies had chosen a few gathering points. It was for their acolytes to hurry to the area and then launch a joint attack on Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

As for the acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, their strength was greatly diminished. They could not agree on gathering points, if not they might be eradicated in one fell swoop. They could only scatter and fight their enemies.

Leylin could already foresee that on the very first day, the level 3 acolyte in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would be able to kill just a few acolytes of the enemy, and obtain a clear advantage. Once the enemies have gathered together, however, they would begin to hunt the acolytes from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy similar to chasing after wild ducks.

Once he thought of the scenario where the magic spell formation set by the acolytes – when completed – could cover a large area and hone in on the acolytes, Leylin’s scalp tingled.

“I could only rely on now to obtain more contribution points! If not as the time passes the difficulty will increase!” Leylin’s expression turned gloomy.
The bloodbath situation was forced on Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, which meant that the acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were in a disadvantageous situation. And the acolytes belonging to the two enemy camps would certainly chase them as if they were hunting and killing their prey. “Anyway, even if it was an astute hunter, if he left behind a single prey, then it is possible for the situation to be reversed – where the hunter becomes the hunted!” Leylin licked his chapped lips, exposing a malevolent grin.

Now, the three academies’ acolytes were scattered within the secret plane and the two enemy groups’ acolytes had also not gathered. This was certainly a fortunate timing for Leylin to gather sufficient contribution points!

Once the enemy group gathered, then Leylin would not have any more chances.

“Let’s do this! Today, I must defeat and kill as many of the enemy’s acolytes as possible and scrape together enough of contribution points. After that, depending on AI Chip’s guidance, I will stand aside and avoid the majority of the enemy…” After deciding on his strategy, Leylin hurriedly looted the magic crystals and resources on the acolyte’s body, leaving the scene. Two hours later after Leylin left, another acolyte came to the scene. “It’s Greg!” After seeing the corpse on the floor, the acolyte’s pupils shrank.
He came from the same academy as Greg. Seeing his comrade lying on the ground, this acolyte’s expression turned pale white, as if wanting to puke.

He muttered, “Too dangerous! This mission is too dangerous. Greg and I are only level 2 acolytes, we have come to this secret plane purely to die! If I knew earlier, I wouldn’t have taken up this mission!”

Regrets filled the face of this acolyte.

“Looking at this wound, it should be a heavy physical attack with an Earth element spell. The caster should be a level 3 acolyte! To deal with a level 2 acolyte, he actually used such a despicable method. What a low-life….”

It was not scary if the enemy was strong, but what was scary is if the enemy was strong and shameless!

After understanding this reasoning the acolyte felt his scalp tingle. He felt as if a pair of bloodthirsty and greedy eyes was eyeing him from the shrubbery, locking down on its prey.

“No way, I have to leave now!”

He then bowed towards the corpse on the floor, “I’m sorry. Although we used to be good friends, I am unable to give you a proper burial…. Or it may be that the destiny of magicians was to die along the path to the pursuit of truth!”

The acolyte made a prayer for his friend and prepared to leave.

“Je je! What a cold-blooded person, not even caring about his comrade’s corpse!”

A female voice sounded from the air above.

“Who. . . who is that?” The acolyte jumped back several metres like a rabbit, and in his hands, there was a black scroll tightly gripped.

“Haha! Look at him, like a pathetic bunny that has nowhere to escape in front of a predator!”

The girl’s voice sounded again. The crown of a nearby treetop shuddered, and a grey robed girl appeared in front of the acolyte.
This female acolyte wore the uniform of Whitewoods Castle, and the acolyte who was prepared to fight for his life heaved a sigh of relief.

“Hng! Trash!”

Another male voice appeared from the surrounding, and a young man walked out from the shadows. He wore the insignia from Sage Gotham’s Hut, and his right hand was silver in colour throughout. It radiated a mellow yet suave colour and reflected the shadows of the nearby shrubbery.

“This appearance?”

The acolyte’s hand trembled, and the scroll dropped on the ground.

“Silver-Claw Saurun! You are Silver-Claw Saurun!”

Silver-Claw Saurun was considered one of the most vicious existence in the circle of Sage Gotham’s Hut’s acolytes. Rumours have it that for a piece of ingredient needed for an experiment, he had massacred a whole village of regular humans!

Although this was only a rumour, but this acolyte did witness the way Saurun treated his enemies – That was a devilish existence!

Although Sage Gotham’s Hut was a Light Magi faction, but there were bound to be some talented acolyte with outstanding abilities in battle. Evidently, this Saurun was one of them.

Saurun did not bother about his junior who was frightened off his wits, and immediately walked to the corpse to inspect it.

“A very shrewd and ruthless method! Looking at the distance, the enemy should have activated the spell 20 metres away. This distance is the limit of Ground Spear! The enemy possesses an extremely high talent in his ability to use and calculate his rank 0 spells from it.”

Saurun licked his silver right hand, giving off a sinister grin.

“He is mine! I will hunt and kill him personally, and let the world know the consequences of incurring the wrath of Sage Gotham’s Hut!”
“As for you!” Saurun looked at the trembling junior distastefully. “Scram!”
“Yes! Yes, sir!” The acolyte nodded his head and hurriedly scampered away like a frightened little deer. In the blink of an eye, he traversed over several hundred metres, and even used a hastening spell on his body.

Seeing the figure of the leaving acolyte, the girl smirked, “What a useless trash! If not for the agreement between our academies, I would have killed him long ago!”
“Compared to him, I have a high interest in this acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!”

Saurun licked his lips, and the crimson red tongue seemed to be like that of a snake’s, twisting and writhing. “I am already anxious to know how the fresh blood of that acolyte tastes like!”

……

“A.I. Chip! Maximise the detection area!”

Leylin gives his command as he followed and ran along a white cobblestone path.

In the secret plane, the A.I. Chip’s ability was also affected. Although the detection area has become smaller, it was still extremely handy for warning and scouting the way ahead.

A light blue 3D image appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes. In the map, the white cobblestone path seemed to be paved in the shape of a rune, winding its way through a circular garden in the middle of it.

Moreover, the A.I. Chip caught traces of mild radiation on the ground here. This means that the magicians who had used this place before had operated it well, and even the soil had gotten affected.

However, there was obviously nothing of value. It was evident that
before this secret plane was activated; all the resources had already been ferreted out.

“It seems like it is rather difficult to get lucky by stumbling over some magician’s inheritance!”
Leylin shrugged his shoulders and continued walking.

[Beep! Human creatures ahead, determined as acolytes. Numbers: 3!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he secretly tailed them.

This trio was formed by 2 male and 1 female acolyte. The male acolyte in the centre had obviously reached the cultivation of a level 3 acolyte.

At this moment, this small group was heading towards the garden.

“Do we really have to take such a risk?” The male acolyte who was behind began to grumble. “We had better still gather with the other acolytes! As long as we activate that spell formation, then there is nothing to be fearful of….”

“Shut up!” The male acolyte in the middle did not turn his head, “If you go together with the main body, how much contribution points can you get? I have made enquiries about this place before. This was a deserted secret plane of magicians before! Secret plane! If we are able to dig up any remnants, then our lives in future would be without a worry. Also, we might even be able to advance into official Magi!”

After saying the last line, the acolyte in the middle show signs of longing and jealousy.

“If you are unwilling to, then you can very well return! Look at Marie, she hasn’t said a word!”

“Alright! Alright!”
The acolyte behind stopped talking, seemingly agreeing with the logic of the acolyte in the middle.

Afterall, he and Marie were level 2 acolytes. Their standing was
below that of the level 3 acolyte in the middle.
“That’s right, we also need to….,” The acolyte in the middle
suddenly pointed ahead without finishing his sentence, “Look
quickly! What’s that?”
On a patch of empty ground in front of them, a grey robed Abyssal
Bone Forest Academy acolyte was looking back at them with
frightened eyes. In his eyes, there was even a purple flower with
spikes. From the centre of the flower, there were several strands of
feelers which extended to the ground.
Seeing the group of three come over, this Abyssal Bone Forest
Academy acolyte was obviously frightened as he ran away quickly.
“An Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte! A level 1 acolyte at
that! He’s carrying a… Wolf Whisker Flower?”
The acolyte’s mouth in the middle gaped open and it seemed like
several eggs could be stuffed in it.
“Kill it! The Wolf Whisker Flower’s is a valuable ingredient worth
close to 1000 magic crystals!”
The level 3 acolyte roared and gave chase directly.
* Xiu Xiu! * The level 2 acolyte behind him was even quicker. A
gust of green whirlwind appeared around his body, increasing his
speed by multiple folds as he rushed towards the direction of the
Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolyte.
“Argh! Damn it! Did I not say not to use it until the most critical
moment?”
The level 3 acolyte slapped his forehead, and then he hugged Marie
with an arm, “Hold tight, I’m increasing my speed!”
“Put down the Wolf Whisker Flower!” The level 2 acolyte spared
no effort in chasing and shouting until his throat turned hoarse
from the excitement.
“This is only a level 1 acolyte. I will definitely be able to kill him.
The Wolf Whisker Flower!”
At this moment, a seed of insatiable greed and longing sprouted in
the young acolyte’s heart.
“What do you want to do?”
Just when the young acolyte’s thoughts went astray, the leader brought Marie and caught up to him.
“No! Nothing!” Seeing the cold gaze in the leader’s eyes, the young acolyte seemed to have his face splashed by cold water. All the desires disappeared in a flash.
“Don’t let him hide inside the shrubberies!” The level 3 acolyte commanded.
“Alright!”
The young acolyte steadied his heart and chased the acolyte in front of them.
100 metres!
50 metres!
30 metres!
20 metres!
10 metres!
The distance between both parties got smaller, until the point where the young acolyte could see his enemy’s frightened face.
“Wolf Whisker Flower! The Wolf Whisker Flower is ours now! Even if we divide it by 3, there are at least several hundreds of magic crystals each!
The young acolyte held a fervent gaze, and looking at the escaping acolyte in front of him, in the same way as he would to innumerable magic crystals.
Just as the trio caught up with the escaping acolyte, an explosion occurred.
* Boom!!! *
violent explosion sounded, and the bright yellow tongue of the flames spread in all directions, burning the nearby ground to scorch dark.

At the middle of the explosion, at this moment, there was a pit which was 1 metre deep and several metres wide. Dust and mud flew up, and the surrounding earth had black smears of blood, broken limbs and internal organs were strewn across which had lost most of its original appearance. After costing Leylin some effort, he finally managed to rummage through them and picked up a few badges.

“A level 3 acolyte and two level 2 acolyte! A pretty good reward! Using an explosive potion as a triggering trap is indeed useful!”

Leylin was rather satisfied with his battle results. This was one of his few plans – using the Shapeshifting spell to pass off as a level 1 acolyte, baiting and luring enemy acolytes into a trap.

With the detection of the A.I. Chip, several times Leylin’s ‘hunt’ was flawless, and did not suffer from any interference.

“Almost there!” Leylin kept the badges well. He had to collect enough badges before the enemy united as a whole, and then hide until the battle was over.

For this goal, after Leylin used the Shapeshifting spell and Ground Spear once to kill an acolyte, he began to avoid using his own spiritual force and magic power. Instead, he relied on potions and scrolls to battle, preserving his condition to the fullest in times of
need.

After cleaning up the area slightly, Leylin hurriedly left the place. Not long later, a male and female acolyte appeared in the vicinity. Looking at the obvious traces of an explosion, and the bits and remains of the Whitewoods Castle uniform, this time, the female acolyte’s face darkened.

“I want to kill him! Then hang his head on my horse carriage for 100 days!”

The female acolyte clenched her teeth.

“You will have this chance very soon! We are getting closer and closer to this conniving acolyte…."

Silver-Clawed Saurun half knelt on the ground, and picked up a stalk of grass with sludge on it, before placing it into his mouth.

“However, I admire his courage. He actually dares to obstruct our acolytes!”

“Enough of the nonsense! Have you found him?”

The female acolyte asked.

“Over there!” Saurun chewed on the blade of grass and closed his eyes for a moment. He then pointed to a direction and the both of them immediately headed in that direction.

In a dense forest, on a withered tree with three branches sat a grey robed figure. His stature was rather short, as he looked up at the sky.

“Dusk is coming!” Leylin muttered.

In the secret plane, there was neither the sun nor the moon, and not even any stars. However, the peculiar thing was that the bright sky would be strewn with white rays of light. At night, these rays of light would disappear, which distinguished between morning and night.

It seems like there was a layer of a barrier which blocked the sun and moon at the same time.

“After a whole day, I have only received these much!”
Leylin counted the contribution points he had gotten. In his hands rested 6 badges. Amongst these, 5 of them were from level 2 acolytes, and 1 from a level 3 acolyte, which was the contribution of the trio’s leader from before. It was extremely easy to distinguish between a level 2 acolyte and level 3 acolyte due the shape. “According to the academy rules, an enemy level 2 acolyte is worth 3 contribution points while a level 3 acolyte is worth 10 contribution points. Those famous acolytes are separately categorised. Right now, I have at most 25 contribution points, just half of what I need to exchange for the Grine Water.” Leylin’s face was rather solemn. Although Leylin had gotten 25 contribution points in a day, it was because that the enemy acolytes were scattered across the secret plane and have not yet gathered. After a day and night, the acolytes in the other two factions would have definitely gathered. After forming a large army they would surround the acolytes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Under those circumstances, Leylin could barely protect his life, let alone obtain more badges from them. Under the ordeal from the war previously, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s casualty was extremely disastrous. They simply did not have time to nurture a new batch of elite forces to go against the opposing two factions. Moreover, if one walks the dark path often they will meet a ghost someday.1 Leylin did not believe that his simple trap could always work. “If it really isn’t plausible, I might have to give up!” Leylin’s expression was determined. He was not someone to throw away his life for a little benefit. Even if his will was to become the king in the Magus World, which was with the prerequisite of preserving his life. If not, even if he
had everything but lost his life, what was the purpose of it?
“A.I. Chip! Maintain detection area! Report immediately if there are any problems!”
After issuing the A.I. Chip the role of a sentry, he dug a hole in the ground behind the tree for disguise purposes, before sleeping inside the hollow of the tree.
The acolytes of the 3 academies had to stay inside the secret plane for 3 days and 2 nights. Although the physical weariness can be overcome by various potions and methods, the mental fortitude was not that simple to replenish.
Thankfully, Leylin had the A.I. Chip, and could let it act as a sentry. It would do a great job with its ability.
Darkness blanketed the trees, time to time there were the cries of little worms.
In the hollow of the tree, Leylin shut his eyes. First, he meditated, before falling into deep slumber.
This was not a silent night. In the secret plane, various battles unfolded. Many colourful and enrapturing rank 0 spells were cast by the acolytes. Ambushes, reverse traps, beauty traps and the shrewd plotting were endless. Many young acolytes left their lives in this secret plane.
Of course, all these had nothing to do with Leylin.
The second day, when the sky was filled with radiant light, the hollow of a tree shook, and a huge hole appeared. Within it, Leylin walked out.
The power of nature was immense. After a night, many traces of blood diminished, and the various plants and animal tracks covered a huge amount of the intense battle marks left on the ground.
Leylin casually stretched and looked at the hollow of the large tree. Leylin remembered clearly that he only made this opening last night. However, it was gradually mending back into whole. Leylin even discovered a few green coloured sprouts nearby the opening.
“It seems like the flora and fauna in this magical plane has vitality much higher than the physical world!” Leylin stroked his chin and stretched his hand to pick a budding sprout with morning dew on it. “A.I. Chip! Scan the composition and record!”

[Beep! Comparing to the plant database. An abnormality is found!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. In front of Leylin was a green and light blue image overlapping. Moreover, in the centre of the image, was a red area that seemed like an octopus which was spreading its tentacles.

“Record composition!” Leylin ordered.

“Who knows if there’ll be a use in future?” Leylin comforted himself, and then began to pick a few more plants and herbs for recording purposes.

[Warning! Warning! There is an extremely strong radiation coming from 523m in the Southeast. Primarily determined as acolytes using rank 0 spells!]

Just when Leylin was picking out a green leaf with red veins, the alert from the A.I. Chip sounded.

“A chance!” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle were allies. Their acolytes wouldn’t fight with the other, so if there was any battle, it definitely involved Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes!

“With the A.I. Chip detection, I’m not afraid of being cornered if I am more cautious!”

Leylin patted his chest. Under the grey robes inner layer, a solid pendant lay against his chest.

“Or maybe, it’s time to test the might of the Fallen Star Pendant!” Leylin whipped his grey robes up and concealed himself as he headed towards where the battle was.

* Boom! *

As he got closer, Leylin could feel the intensity of the radiation...
from the spells. This degree could only be produced by a level 3 acolyte. Moreover, it belonged to one of the stronger acolytes. Towards the enemy level 3 acolyte which had a chance of advancing into a Magus before 20, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy opened a sky-high reward for it. They bumped the value up from 20 to 100 contribution points. This is to say, if Leylin managed to pull this feat off, not only could he exchange it for Grine Water, he might even be able to exchange for a rank 1 defensive spell model. However, Leylin’s legs halted, having a strong desire suddenly to leave. To him, one Grine Water was enough for him to use in his experiments. The rest were just unnecessary, and it was not worth it to fight against these level 3 acolytes. Moreover, there was another concern on his mind. Although the bounties of those popular level 3 acolyte were high, there were always professors behind them. Moreover, their respective professors would have definitely spent countless efforts on them. Even if Leylin used his toe to think, he could definitely ascertain that the Magi have laid spells on their apprentices. The moment he kills one of them, his appearance and other information would be known by the Magus. In front of an official Magus, the Shapeshifting spell was obsolete! Even if Chairmen Siley protected Leylin after the bloodbath, he did not want to be drawing all the unwanted attentions to him and even be marked by an official Magus. All in all, the risk was too great, yet the benefit was too little. Leylin would rather look for some level 2 acolyte or weary level 3 acolyte to kill than to invoke the wrath of those geniuses. He did not hesitate to turn around. Suddenly, a male voice sounded, “Haha! Jayden! You have finally
landed in my hands!”
“Jayden?!” Leylin’s footsteps halted, and turned back. 
The location of the battle was in the middle of some trees. And the 
trees right now have already been destroyed, showing a large 
clearing.
Leylin stealthily hid to watch the battle. 
In the centre of the clearing, Jayden who wore a hunter’s attire was 
half kneeling on the ground. There were even vines coiling around 
him, acting as armour. 
In front of him, a black-robed, male figure let out a maniacal 
laughter.
The black-haired acolyte had a silver chain coiled around his waist, and from time to time there were blue lightning sparks igniting between his hands, making a crackling noise.

“Haha… Jayden, I mentioned it before. One day you will land in my hands!”

The black-haired acolyte laughed wildly. With the wave of his hand, a blue streak of lightning faster than supersonic directly landed on Jayden’s armour of vines.

*Sssii!*

Jayden was sent flying, as if a train had knocked into him, and crashed onto the ground forming a large hole.

“How is it? Where is the arrogance back then when you stole my piece of lightning core?”

The black-haired acolyte taunted, before casting another spell at Jayden. It opened a gap on Jayden’s body.

The green vines had a huge opening now, revealing Jayden’s skin. A large patch of his skin was charred, and Leylin could faintly catch a whiff of barbeque smell.

“Don’t think a broken magic artifact can save you!”

It seemed like the hatred the black-haired acolyte had for Jayden was not small, as his glee in seeking revenge was shown on his face.

“A.I. Chip! Inspect Jayden!”
Leylin did not dare to scan the black-haired acolyte and chose the severely injured Jayden as his target.


No matter how much the opponent taunted him, Jayden did not speak a single word. He only used an icy gaze to stare at his enemy. “Not good! Jayden is also a level 3 acolyte now with a magic artifact, but he actually could not beat the opponent!” Leylin’s thoughts quickly surmised.

Leylin was attracted by Jayden’s name to this place out of curiosity but did not intend to risk his life for him. To tell the truth, if Jayden’s enemy was not strong, Leylin would have struck as Jayden had disclosed information to him previously. But now the enemy’s strength seemed to be extremely strong, and Leylin was somewhat hesitant.

“A.I. Chip! Inspect the target’s data and calculate the winning rate in a battle!” Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Mission establishing, beginning fight simulation….]

The A.I. Chip calculated rapidly and came to a conclusion. [Host’s winning rate is 77%. Possible scenario: Death of the target, light damage to the host!]

“This probability is rather low!” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“Look! There are really people there!” Just was Leylin was hesitant, the voice of a female travelled over. It was extremely familiar, and Leylin even heard the alluring pants of its owner not too long ago.

On the other side of the battlefield, Bicky and another female acolyte came over.

“It’s Bicky! Why would she come here?” Leylin inhaled deeply. He suddenly felt that things were going to be extremely troublesome.
“There is someone fighting. Ah! Senior Jayden!”
The female acolyte with Bicky recognised Jayden, and she seemed
to have some affection for him. Once she saw him injured, she
hurried over.
“A girl? Your friend?”
The black-haired acolyte’s brows furrowed and suddenly clapped.
“You brought me shame by stealing my possession. Today I will
return it in multiple folds to you. For instance, claiming this woman
right before your eyes….”
The black-haired acolyte sniggered lecherously, and his hands
moved and fluttered like a butterfly.
* Sssii! *
The blue lightning of snake continuously formed on his hands and
transformed into a metal chain. It pierced the fireball casted
hurriedly by the female acolyte, and knocked her to the ground.
“Molly!” Bicky was frightened, and she hurried over too.
“This idiot!”
Leylin helplessly shook his hand as he got up.
He still harboured some feelings for Bicky, and would take a risk
for her under the circumstances that his life was not threatened.
Of course, his largest assurance was the winning rate that the A.I.
Chip provided him!
If the A.I. Chip’s calculation did not give him such a winning rate,
he might have chosen to leave. After advancing into a rank 1
Magus he would then return and seek revenge for Bicky.
Furthermore, Leylin was completely unwilling to help if he had to
pay the price of being critically injured or even death to win.
On the other hand, if it were only some mild injuries, Leylin felt
that Bicky deserved his help.
“Actually, deep down I am an extremely rational, not to mention
unfeeling and apathetic person!”
Leylin scoffed at himself and hurriedly moved, closing the distance
of a dozen metres and held onto Bicky.
“Don’t go over!”
“Who… Are you?” Bicky gave a puzzled stare to the guy in front of her.
Leylin’s Shapeshifting spell was still in effect and even his voice was altered through potions. Therefore, Bicky did not recognise Leylin at all.
“A person who has come to save you!” Leylin’s voice was hoarse, and directly locked gazes with the black-haired acolyte.
“An interesting insect. It was you who was hiding in the corner earlier, huh?”
The black-haired acolyte clenched his fist, as blue lightning coiled around it, emitting sparks every now and then.
A few bolts of electricity were shot into the ground, and each exploded, creating many small holes. The shattered stones and mud flew up beside Leylin, and were blocked by his acolyte’s robes and soon fell back to the ground.
“An electric element acolyte and it also seems like his affinity towards it is rather high!”
Leylin gradually withdrew the cross blade hung on his waist, “This will be a tough battle that I never had before!”
To prevent Bicky from recognising him, he could not use some common methods used by Potion Masters. He could only use those that he learnt when he left the academy.
“However, this is also the best chance to test my abilities! Back then in Extreme Night City, Murphy and the rest were all people who had retired, and their battle abilities were rubbish! As for the acolytes in the market, I could not strike, if not I would have become their sworn enemy!”
And this acolyte in front of his was obviously strong in his academy.
Leylin licked his lips and suddenly felt a strong battle desire
surging from his chest and spreading to his four limbs. He could even hear the blood which was rapidly coursing, and made his eyes a little bloodshot.
This was a man’s hot bloodedness and desire for battle!
“Haha… Look what I found? Merely a level 1 acolyte who dares to draw a sword against me?”
The black-haired acolyte sneered and his expression became colder and more resolute, “Kiddo! I will give you one last chance. Hurry and kneel to the revered Lord Torash and admit your wrongdoing, and beg for my magnanimity! On account of my good mood, I may even pardon your sins….”
* Shing! *
In an instant, a silver arc of light flashed. It crossed the distance of a dozen metres and struck at the black haired Torash. The silver arc of light materialised into a cross blade which brought on a heavy killing intent. The aura emitted from it even pressed down on the grasses.
The black-haired Torash had a startled expression. Suddenly, several green runes formed by lightning appeared underneath his leather shoes and crept to his thighs. As if under some stimulation, Torash jumped backed several metres and avoided the attack.
* Bang! * The cross blade landed and slashed a cross shape hole on the ground.
The grey shadow flashed, and Leylin appeared at the original position of the black-haired acolyte. He gripped the cross blade in his hands and put on a regretful expression. With some lingering fear, Torash touched his face and felt a gash, which was several centimetres deep, on it. Although Leylin’s attack earlier did not strike the opponent directly, the force it brought already caused a gash on his face.
“So fast! If not for the hastening lightning rune my professor gave
me, I might have been a corpse already!”
Very soon the fear subsided from Torash’s face and it turned into a contorted expression of rage.
“You… You actually dare to harm the mighty Lord Torash, I’m going to kill you!”
However, his rage did not muddle his mind. Although Torash’s expression showed that he couldn’t wait to kill Leylin, he retrieved a scroll from his waist sack.
“I admit that your speed is extremely fast. You should, at least, have the physical ability of a Knight, right? But so what? Although a Knight’s body is stronger than a regular human and is not afraid of steel swords and large axes, it is just meaningless under a magician’s spell!”
* Sssii! * Torash pulled the scroll open, and an icy cold spell was activated, covering the whole of the battlefield. Countless white mist condensed in the air, turning into ice and spread across the land.
The surrounding temperature decreased by dozens of degrees. Bicky pulled the friend on the ground to the back of Leylin. Her body shivered as she looked at Leylin’s back, obviously grateful and puzzled at the same time.
Although she had no memory of this person, Bicky had a strong feeling that she knew this strong person who had suddenly appeared in front of her.
“Who exactly, are you?” Bicky looked at Leylin’s figure, her expression complicated.
At this moment, Torash’s scroll had finished its activation. With him at the heart of it, the domain of several hundred metres was covered by frost. There were even a layer of snow and ice on the trees and plants as if it was the coldest period of winter.
[Beep! Host is affected by frost. Speed is estimated to decrease by 43%] The unfeeling A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“No matter how fast a Knight is, as long as his speed is rendered useless, then it would just be a sitting duck, waiting on a dining table to be feasted on!”
Looking at Leylin’s figure whose hair and brows have already been frozen in ice, Torash smirked. “I can slightly alter this spell. The frost on you is definitely more at a lower temperature than the two girls. How is it?”
“A pity!”
Leylin felt rather regretful in his heart. Looking at the spell formation of this acolyte’s shoes and the scroll, he knew that Torash had a high attainment in spell formation. If not, it would mean that his professor was an expert in this area, to be able to customise this spell for Torash.
Leylin really wanted to sit down and discuss alchemy and runes with him, but alas, he was just being delusional.
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Leylin clenched his fist tightly, the hand grasping the sword hilt was clearly somewhat stiff. His face appeared pale and petrified as if he had gotten frostbite. One must know that Leylin had a vitality of 3.7. If it was any regular human, they would have long since frozen to death! "I don’t have any intention to go against you. As long as you let go of those two girls, I will leave immediately!"

Leylin used the cross blade and pointed at Bicky’s direction, in return for her grateful gaze. "No! Get him to release senior Jayden, if not I’m not leaving!"

The girl beside Bicky, who was saved, still maintained her resolve. Leylin rolled his eyes, if not for Bicky; did she really think that he would appear in the name of justice? Moreover, looking at the situation again, Jayden had apparently deeply offended the other party previously, so why would he let go of Jayden so easily?

As expected, after listening to the female acolyte, Torash’s gaze turned frostier, and immediately he waved his hand. A thick and long lightning streaked across the sky, directly landing onto Jayden. *

Bang! * The vines on Jayden’s body fell and he fainted. Moreover, his whole body turned into a black colour, as if like a pile of scorched rubble. "My apologies, I don’t wish to let anyone present go today!"

Torash waved his hands.
According to the A.I. Chip’s detection, although Jayden’s outer appearance seemed to be terrifying, there was still a life force pulsating in him. Therefore, Leylin did not bother anymore about him. Instead, Leylin was more cautious about this acolyte in front of him.

“A Lightning element is indeed one of the stronger powers. Although Jayden’s magic artifact belongs to an attack type with minimal defense, he was still defeated so quickly! No, it could be that the other party had been toying with him the same way a cat would with a mouse!”

“Now, it is my turn!”
Torash, who was on the other side charged directly at him and brandished a short black staff in his hand.

“Hng! Trying to be mystifying!” Leylin snorted and used the cross blade to slash at him.

* Peng! * The two weapons clashed. Under the frost effect, Leylin speed unavoidably took a slower turn. The original mirage effect could now not be used by him, where Torash caught dozens of his sword slashes.

Leylin’s strength was obviously higher than his opponent, and his cross blade was of superior quality to his opponent’s short metal staff.

After the two weapons clanged, Leylin used the force in both his arms and pressed the sword down on his opponent.

“Hehe… Your strength isn’t too bad!”

Although the blade was just centimetres away from his face, there was no fear on Torash face. Looking at Leylin, his gaze held some ridicule and… the savage thrill of retaliation?

Leylin felt something was amiss, and hurriedly let go of the cross blade as he jumped away.

In that very moment when he released his hands, several bolts of lightning extended from Torash’s arms and shot at the cross blade,
even up to Leylin’s hands!
In the moment when the lightning current was about to hit him, Leylin forwent his sword and evaded the attack.
“Too late! Torash looked at Leylin’s figure and chanted an incantation.
The current from the staff directly bore through the mud and extended like the root of a tree. In the blink of an eye, it caught up to Leylin.
* Zzzii! “Once the black lightning landed on the ground, it reappeared from the ground right in front of Leylin.
As if a poisonous snake, the blue lightning charged at Leylin.
“Ah!” Bicky who was on the other side involuntarily screamed and she clasped her mouth.
* Ping! * Suddenly, a layer of silver membrane appeared on Leylin’s body.
This layer of membrane immediately draped over Leylin’s whole body covering every inch, even his orifices were not left out.
On the silvery membrane, there were several pale reflections of flickering red jewels, giving off a mystical lustre.
The blue lightning took on the shape of a python with a crazed leer and opened its jaws. Lightning-made razor-sharp teeth directly bit on the membrane.
* Sssii Sssii! *
A similar sound to metal smashing porcelain was heard, and the ear piercing noise travelled across the whole battlefield. Bicky involuntarily covered her ears, to let her nerves calm down.
The lightning on Leylin’s body exploded, and from time to time a few poisonous-snake-like lightning currents converged and let off an explosive noise.
Looking on, Leylin seemed to be a silver statue, who was receiving the blessings of lightning bolts.
The lightning attack lasted for close to thirty seconds before it
dissipated.
There was a shocked expression on Leylin’s face as he looked at
the indication given by the A.I. Chip.
[... Host is subjected to Lightning-based attacks. Degree of power:
9! Fallen Star Pendant has automatically activated, energy
consumed: 23.99%. Host has successfully blocked the attack and
sustains no injuries!]
“Too careless!” The opponent’s lightning could actually pass
through normal physical materials. Moreover, it could use the layer
of frost on the ground as a conductor to initiate the attacks!
Leylin looked at his hands. Knowing that his opponent excelled in
the Lightning element, Leylin had already put on leather gloves
before the battle.
However, the hands that gripped the cross blade earlier were still
rather numb.
There was also a precursive condition for the Fallen Star Pendant
to be activated. Leylin had customised it to activate only when his
life was in peril. Otherwise, any raindrop from the sky would
activate the Fallen Star Pendant and finish the consumption of
energy in the magic artifact.
Previously, because Leylin had let go of his sword early on, the
damage from the electric current to his body was extremely little. It
was not enough to achieve the criteria to activate the Fallen Star
Pendant.
Of course, due to the conductivity, the lightning was too fast, and
Leylin still received an attack from it in his hands.
At last, Leylin backed away and under his opponent’s chase, he
suffered a 9 degree lightning attack. If he did not defend further,
his life would be in peril. Hence, the criterion for the activation of
Fallen Star Pendant was achieved, where a layer of membrane
immediately appeared from his body.
The Fallen Star Pendant’s defense could negate attacks up to 15
degrees. This is to say, if Torash attack could not exceed this degree, Leylin’s body was like a turtle shell until the energy of the Fallen Star Pendant was depleted.

“How is this possible?” Gazing at Leylin who seemed injured, Torash’s mouth was opened widely, enough to fit several duck eggs in it.

“This is an attack my professor has personalised for me. It complements with my affinity and my degree of attack is at least 9! How could you be fine?”

“I understand now! You definitely must have a defensive magic artifact on your body!” Black-haired Torash pondered and quickly understood the truth.

“Although it is only a low-grade defence magic artifact, there will definitely be many official Magi who will be interested in it....”

Torash licked his lips and a fervent greed appeared on his face.

For this bloodbath, both sides signed an agreement not to use any strength that was above an acolyte!

Any person, scroll of magic artifact which exceeded this criterion would be teleported out in a flash and had no chance of getting in the secret plane.

Although Leylin’s magic artifact was precious, it still belonged to the low-grade series.

In Leylin’s eyes, these low-grade magic artifacts had might below that of official Magi.

Any rank 1 spell’s degree of attack was 20 and above. If Leylin used the Fallen Star Pendant to block against them, he would definitely be slain immediately, not leaving a trace behind.

However, amongst the acolytes, the Fallen Star Pendant was a divine item!

Furthermore, even an official Magus would not mind having an extra layer of defense, no matter how small it was. However, the defence from Fallen Star Pendant was activated from the pendant
and did not affect the owner in one bit.
The value of a low-grade defence magic artifact was at least 5 times that of Jayden’s attack type magic artifact!
Which is to say, right now, besides the A.I. Chip, the most valuable thing that Leylin had was this magic artifact!
“Kill him! Kill him! Then that magic artifact is mine!”
Torash’s eyes turned bloodshot, “Even if it is a magic artifact, there is a limitation. Once it’s depleted of energy, before the next recharge, it would be a piece of trash! However, could I last until that long?”
“Even if I’m unable to keep him here today, I can gather other students to chase after him… Wait a minute, maybe there is a better idea?”
After seeing the Fallen Star Pendant, Torash did not harbour any hopes of holding Leylin here today. However, the flames of desire slowly invaded his logic.
Suddenly, Torash saw Bicky who was behind Leylin and his eyes flashed as he made a proposition.
“You! You are very concerned with the green-haired girl behind right?” Torash questioned, “Don’t deny it; jumping out to save her is the best proof!”
“So what?” Leylin’s brows furrowed.
“Give me your magic artifact, and I’ll let her go. Not only that, even Jayden and the other girl, I’ll let them go too!” Torash licked his lips.
“Haha….!” After hearing that unexpected speech, Leylin shook his head.
“Yes! I can’t keep you here today as you have the magic artifact. However, I can definitely retain the green haired girl, and even kill her….”
Torash changed his words to a threat.
“Please do!” Leylin stretched his hands and gestured.
“You… Why would you….” This reply made Torash extremely shock.
“I only have some involvement with her, which is why I wanted to rescue her. If the loss is too great, however, then it wouldn’t be worth it! Furthermore, after I lose this defensive magic artifact, how can I still be able to haggle with you?”
Leylin looked at Torash with ridicule in his eyes. He deeply understood that towards people making threats, you must never show that you are extremely mindful of the thing in their hands. If not, you would be baited into more and more demands.
Even if Torash really killed Bicky today, Leylin would only seek revenge for her another day. Therefore, if he wanted to use Bicky to threaten Leylin, there were only two words for it: dream on!
“I don’t believe you. You must have said it on purpose, didn’t you?”
Torash’s pair of cunning eyes flitted to the back of Leylin.
“Did you see that, after listening to your words, your little girlfriend is extremely heartbroken!”
“How lame!” Leylin did not even turn back.
“However, it’s time to end this!” Leylin looked up the sky, and the light rays were even brighter than dawn.
Magicians were intelligent beings. By threatening Leylin, Torash only harboured a negligible hope. His main purpose was most likely to stall for time until other acolytes could support him.
The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes in the secret plane were at an extreme disadvantage. Now it was also the second day, and the enemy acolytes would have already gathered. Once Leylin was discovered, a scene of calling and shouting for him to be killed would happen.
At that time, the innumerable spells which could cover the sky and earth would rain upon him. Even if Leylin had the Fallen Star Pendant, its energy was limited.
“What end?”
A few ingredients appeared in Torash’s hands, as he stepped several steps backwards.
“Of course, it is to end this silly game!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed and chanted an incantation.
* Sssii! * A reddish-green gas spread across upon the icy ground. When the frost and a thin layer of mist came in contact with the red gas, the temperature of the battlefield rose immediately by a few degrees.
As for the green mist, it continued to spread across the field. The visibility lowered immediately, and one could not see beyond a 3 metres radius.
“This is a spell I specially prepared for you, Flaming Cloud of Afterlife!”
Leylin spoke softly. Earlier when he exchanged senseless sentences with the opponent, he was actually wildly using the A.I. Chip for calculations. Furthermore, he set up the field, planting various types of ingredients in it.
“Just a mere corroding gas!”
Torash disdained it. On his whole body, there raged a blue current. If one described the current on his body as just a thin layer before, now it could be said to have already expanded to be 1 centimetre thick.
“Go!” Torash pointed, and the blue current directly charged into the reddish-green mist.
* Sssii! *
Where the electricity went, the reddish green gas evaporated, revealing the area around it.
However, Torash’s smug face was not maintained for more than a moment before it changed.
“This energy wave! You! You are not some level 1 acolyte, but a level 3 acolyte!”
From the centre of the reddish-green gas, energy fluctuations could be blatantly felt. His own electric snake was immediately corroded by the green mist. Furthermore, a trace of green colour continuously extended along the trajectory of the lightning towards
“No!” Torash gave a profound look to Leylin who was in the midst of clouds and mist and then simply broke into a run.
Leylin swung his arms and a green magic ring entirely enveloped Torash and he slowed down as if he was bound by chains.
*Sssii!!* A red-green smoky cloud spread close to Torash and it wrapped itself around his body.
The smoke grew denser and soon, Leylin could not even see Torash.
* Crackle! * Under the Flaming Cloud of Afterlife came the sounded of lightning and thunder sounds, along with Torash’s cries of anguish.
Leylin smiled coldly. This Cloud of Afterlife had been modified by Leylin, and was specially inserted with the most conducive energy particles for the Lightning element. It could be said that it was the bane of all Lightning element acolytes!
After hearing the wails within the Cloud of Afterlife, and the noises of flesh corroding, a disturbed expression appear on Bicky’s face.
“Argh! I’m going to kill you!”
A dozen seconds later, Torash charged out of the Cloud of Afterlife at Leylin, bringing a ball of cloud that clung to his body.
“Ah!” After seeing Torash’s appearance, Bicky and the other acolyte let out a terrified scream.
At this moment, Torash was half-naked, with his clothing almost dissolved. On his body were many abscesses which were leaking with thick yellow pus.
One of his eyeballs had fallen out of its socket, held hanging there by a few bloody tissues still attached to it.
Along with a few missing pieces of flesh on his face, right now Torash looked like an imitation of Leylin’s corpse from the previous world.
“Although acolytes can use energy particles to strengthen their
vitality, such a strong life force is still extremely rare!”
Leylin stretched his hands, and a black wrist guard automatically extended its reach, finally turning into a black bow where a sharp arrow with a reverse spike was notched on it.
[Wind speed and humidity in calculation, adjusting trajectory!]
Under the aid of the A.I. Chip, right now Leylin’s archery skills were that of a bow master.
* Chi Xiu Xiu!* Four arrows were shot from the bow and like black rays of light, streaked across the sky, directly penetrated through Torash’s 4 limbs, nailing him to the ground.
“Urgh Urgh!” Torash struggled. The flesh on his body continuously fell to the ground, and it seemed that even his voice was now affected. Right now, he could not even voice a single word.
“We… Won?” Looking at this scene, Bicky’s eyes looked somewhat bewildered.
“En! It’s us who won, but there are still some things to do!” Leylin notched his bow again and pointed to the girl beside Bicky, “What’s your name?”
“Mo…Molly! Sir!” Witnessing Leylin using the Cloud of Afterlife to torture Torash in such an unthinkable manner, the female acolyte yielded very quickly.
“Very good! Molly! Go up there and take down the severed head of the enemy who tried to murder your friend!”
“No! You can’t do this! Molly is still a kid! I! I will be able to do it for her….”
Bicky stood up.
* Xiu! * At the same time, an arrow shot past the fine hair beside her ears, flying to a distance behind.
“Do not countermand my orders. If not, the next arrow will be through your brain!” Leylin’s eye flashed coldly, seemingly fiendish.
“I will go!” That female acolyte called Molly spoke up and Bicky
turned silent. “I like girls who are obedient!” Leylin nodded his head and used an arrow to point at Torash who was thrashing on the ground. “So then! Hurry and do it!” The female acolyte gritted her teeth. She took out a knife which was embedded in jewels from her robes and walked forward. Looking on at Torash who was pinned to the ground on his four limbs by four arrows, her expression was extremely complicated. It was this person, who was deemed as a potential Magus, a genius acolyte who possessed a magic artifact. However, right now his four limbs were pinned to the ground as if a dog that was waiting to be slaughtered. This feeling extended like vines, spreading its reach in her heart. “Is this the taste of power? How great!” Looking at the female acolyte raising her dagger, Leylin moved quickly and grabbed Bicky, retreating dozens of metres behind. “Let me go, you sick pervert!” Bicky continuously thrashed. From her aspect, this acolyte that Leylin shapeshifted into was a stranger to her. Yet he had an unthinkable power and he was extremely emotionless. Earlier he said that he was rescuing her, yet in the blink of an eye he pointed an arrow at her and even fired it! In Bicky’s heart, right now Leylin was now a somewhat powerful madman. Moreover, in the Magus World, due to problems occurring from experiment and meditations, it was likely possible that their mental state was affected. Leylin shrugged his shoulders. After maintaining a distance away, he let go of Bicky. At this moment, both their eyes were shining bright and staring at the female acolyte who was holding a dagger before Torash. “Too rash! Too rash! The winning rate that the A.I. Chip provided
earlier was not considered high. Moreover, it said that I could only kill this acolyte after paying the price of sustaining light injuries. However, right now he is just a piece of flesh on a chopping board! For me to butcher!”

“Unless… There are some unknown trump cards on his body!”

Leylin’s intelligent eyes gazed.

After holding the dagger, Molly looked in Leylin’s direction again. Right now the arrow notched in his bow was still aimed towards her. She could only despair as she closed her eyes and pierced the dagger downwards!

“What a pity!” At this moment, Torash suddenly opened his eyes, revealing death and unresolved regrets in his eyes.

“I never thought that I would really use this move one day, much less to deal with a mere level 2 acolyte!”

* Boom! *

In his voice, countless lightning appeared from Torash’s body. These lightning were extremely violent, and spread through Torash’s body in an instant, even converging inward. After the lightning had reached an extremely small dot, Torash’s body suddenly exploded, with the noise of the huge boom reverberating throughout the area.

The sound wave continuously swept past everything, uprooting plants and sending pebbles flying.

“Be careful!” In the moment when the explosion occurred, Leylin immediately pulled Bicky to his side and smashed a potion on the ground – Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion!

At the same time, the Fallen Star Pendant on his neck also emitted a dusky glow.

Under the protection of the potion and the layer of light, the ground under Leylin and Bicky was not touched the slightest. It was even taller than the surrounding area of a certain length.

[Estimated target’s degree of power: 16! spell type – Corpse
Looking at the data from the A.I. Chip, Leylin finally understood how did the A.I. Chip come up with the winning rate. Although he had the Fallen Star Pendant, it could only resist spells which were 15 degrees or lower. As for Torash’s final self-destruct explosion, it was obviously at 16 degrees, which could break the defence of the Fallen Star Pendant and cause harm to Leylin. However, the last hit was done by Molly, while Leylin distanced himself dozens of metres behind. Not only did he suffer little collateral damage from the explosion, there was even time to put up his defenses.

“However, a degree of 16 huh? It is already close to that of a Magus value, he is indeed a top acolyte from a large faction!”

Towards his dead enemies, Leylin never spared his praises for them.

“You murderer! Executioner! You knew long ago that the opponent would self-destruct, didn’t you?”

Bicky who was in Leylin’s embrace pushed him away, her pair of pretty eyes filled with tears.

The ground where Torash self-destructed turned into a large pit now; together with bits and pieces of clothing and charred flesh. In the explosion earlier, Torash and that female acolyte, Molly, naturally had died together. Even the remnants of their corpses were mixed together.
Hearing Bicky’s accusation, Leylin only rubbed his nose, without saying anything.
Meanwhile, he was rejoicing from the bottom of his heart. He was fortunate that he had altered his appearance beforehand, if not, it would have been hard to face Bicky. However, he could only do this much.
Leylin came and stood next to the large pit formed by the explosion, and a round badge fell near his foot. The originally bright and beautiful badge was now covered with dust and it also had some residual flesh upon it.
“Just from a look, it seems that this acolyte must be a genius in his academy! His badge, at the very least, would be worth 50 contribution points!”
Leylin was still contemplating the badge lying beside his feet, with some hesitation.
Now, this badge was under his foot; if he stooped down, he could then get it into his hand.
With it, Leylin’s contribution points would be enough to exchange for one portion of Grine Water when the bloodbath was over.
He heard about the information regarding advancement into an official Magus from the vengeful spirit Roman and was rather hesitant in using such a method to breakthrough. However, the Grine Water was extremely valuable, and even if he did not use it, obtaining it and using the A.I. Chip to research on its composition
was also a good idea. However, the badges of a few extraordinary acolytes from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the opposing academies have been specially marked. As long as Leylin handed over the badge, it would be equivalent to admitting that he was the murderer of Torash! Leylin would never forget that there is a professor standing behind Torash! “Maybe, giving this badge to Jayden or Merlin is a good idea!” Leylin stepped on the badge below his feet and smiled. He had had a quick look earlier; Jayden had been knocked out at the border of the battlefield. Although he seemed to be in a miserable state, he managed to preserve his life, and there did not seem to be any life-threatening injuries. “However, there are still two worms that I have to deal with!” Leylin looked at the shrubbery at the side and suddenly flung two fiery red explosive potions at it. * Boom!* The two test tubes collided in midair, creating a large flame which seemed to blanket over the shrubbery. * Xiu Xiu!* In the moment when the flame engulfed the shrubbery, two black figures flew out from it, landing on an empty patch of ground. Silver-Claw Saurun and another blonde acolyte looked at the pit where Torash self-destructed, their expressions grim. “Torash, that lightning wielder, actually died by this fellow’s hands. Oh god, this fellow is a monster!” Saurun looked at the expressionless Leylin, his heart roaring wildly. Lightning wielder Torash, that was a monster whose reputation was not beneath that of his silver claw! Yet today he actually died by Leylin’s hands, so what kind of strength did Leylin wield? “If I knew he was that powerful, I wouldn’t be this foolish to chase after him!”
At this moment, the feeling of regret slowly engulfed Saurun’s heart.
“What should be done?” The blonde female acolyte looked at Saurun and cursed him inwardly when she saw that he was already of a mind to retreat.
“What else? We have to see if the opponent will let us go!”
Saurun waved his hands and bowed slightly to Leylin. “Respected acolyte who hails from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, your strength has convinced me, and I, Saurun, will never hold any ill intents towards you in future….”
Towards Saurun’s gesture of succumbing, the female blond acolyte pursed her lips but never spoke a word.
After seeing Leylin’s might and brutality, even she was somewhat afraid!
As for the revenge of his fellow acolytes? Although the death rate of Whitewoods Castle and Sage Gotham’s Hut was not as high as Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, but there were a few unlucky ones dying each month.
If Saurun and the blonde acolyte were to avenge every dead fellow acolyte, then they would definitely have to first massacre the acolytes within their academy.
The reason for following Leylin before was because they thought of him as a prey, and was prepared to play a good game with him. But now, Leylin’s ability had far exceeded their expectations, and his actions were extremely meticulous, yet brutal, which made them rather fearful of him.
“Is that so?”
Leylin did not agree nor deny, and kept the black bow in his hands. He also picked up the cross blade which he had thrown on the ground earlier.
“A pity! You should not have followed me!”
Leylin growled softly, at the same time chanting an incantation, and
gave his cross blade a smear with his hand.
* Sssii! * The temperature suddenly dropped by a few degrees, and the frost continued to spread on the sword. In an instant, Leylin’s cross blade turned into a transparent icy greatsword.
He managed to obtain this set of frost alchemy runes from the corpse of the half beastman previously, who was the close associate of Extreme Night City Lord. After storing it into the A.I. Chip, he also did an analysis on it.
At this moment, under the effect of the frost alchemy runes, the effect of the icy greatsword did not pale in comparison to a low-grade magic artifact!
“Light of the fallen!” After brandishing his greatsword in satisfaction, Leylin activated another magic artifact on his body.
* Peng! * A streak of an illusory glow was emitted from the Fallen Star Pendant, which engulfed Leylin’s whole body. The silver-grey light slowly transformed into illusory armour, which protected Leylin.
At this moment, Leylin, in his silver armour of light, with a transparent greatsword, looked just like a Knight from the fables!
The A.I. Chip’s reminder continuously sounded in Leylin’s head, [Under the effect of the frost runes, estimated degree of attack with the cross blade is 3 to 5, also carrying the side effect of an ice attack! The entire defense in the Fallen Star Pendant is activated, energy consumed is depleting, estimated to be fully depleted in 15 minutes!]
“We have no choice but to fight!”
Saurun and the other female acolyte looked at each other in the eye and saw the viciousness reflected in their expressions.
From Leylin’s performance, it was clear that he was not inclined to let them go, so no matter how they pleaded it would be meaningless.
Moreover, they were also geniuses with their own pride. They may
not fare better in a 1-on-1 fight against Torash, but in a 2 against 1 situation, even Torash would have had a headache from fighting them.

“I’ll stall him first; you prepare your formidable spell!”

Saurun said to the female acolyte and immediately reached out with his right hand.

At this moment, the silver skin on his right hand shimmered and transformed into scales. His fingernails extended and curved downwards, the sharpness bringing a cold glint. His whole silvery human palm turned into silvery beast claw!

A bloodthirsty tint emerged in Saurun’s eyes as he stepped forward to shield the female blonde acolyte behind him.

As for the female blonde acolyte, she continuously drew out ingredients from her robes as she chanted, from time to time using a dagger to cut her skin, dripping her fresh blood on the magic ingredients.

A strong magical energy wave gradually formed around the female blonde acolyte.

“How interesting. A close combat with a far cast, this is indeed a good combination!”

Leylin laughed manically and charged forward.

* Bang! * With the effect of Leylin’s Knight qualities, Saurun only saw a grey blur and could only instinctively reach out with his razor claw.

* Peng! * The frost greatsword and the silver claw clashed. An icy, bone-chilling cold permeated to the silver claw, extending onto Saurun’s body.

“So fast!” Saurun retreated several steps and hid the silver claw behind his back.

Borrowing the concealment of his sleeves, there was a layer of frost which slowly climbed up his arm, until the point of his elbow.

“How interesting. A close combat with a far cast, this is indeed a good combination!”

Leylin laughed manically and charged forward.
Leylin roared wildly, once again brandishing the greatsword and charged forward. Sensing the faint aura about him, Saurun couldn’t help but close his eyes, with a notion of wanting to submit to Leylin.

“Cross Blade Slash!”

Leylin hollered, the frost greatsword drew a beautiful cross. What was different from the previous energy wave was that the Cross Blade Slash now had formed a layer of ice which was sent chopping towards Saurun.

“Argh!” Saurun’s eyes were bloodshot as he gritted his teeth and raised the silver claw before his body. The scales on the silvery claw quickly extended and took on the form of a small shield to block the attack.

* Chi! * The greatsword made a huge dent in Saurun’s silver defense. Not only were there white ice forming, the chilliness also permeated the area.

* Pu! * Saurun revoked his silver shield, but now, upon his silvery right hand, there were two deep wounds through which bones could be seen and a sheet of cold ice blocked this wound from bleeding.

An icy-cold sensation continuously spread within his body and Saurun was aghast upon having discovered that already his right hand was feeling numb as if it had lost all sensation and that his body movement had also become more and more restricted.

“Die!”

Leylin unhesitatingly brought the sword to Saurun’s neck in order to behead him.

“No!” bellowed Saurun, waving the stub of his left hand. His left hand had by now turned silver and the fingertips had a faint blackish tinge and he aimed a stab at Leylin’s abdomen.

Within the academy, all the apprentices knew that Saurun’s achievements in Transfiguration far exceeded that of other similar
disciples and that his right hand could transform and become a sharp, incomparable killing machine. However, all of the acolytes were deceived by Saurun. His left hand was the real trump card! Not only could he use beast transfiguration for his silver-claw attack, it even had a Shadow and Toxic element that Saurun had paid a high price for. As long as the poison were to be smeared onto the opponent’s skin, even an official Magus would be in trouble! On the brink of death, Saurun adopted a fighting method that would result in both parties being severely injured, for the sliver of a chance at survival!

* Peng! *

Leylin’s expression was grim as he allowed the razor sharp claw to scratch his body. At the same time, the frost greatsword swung down mercilessly as it severed Saurun’s head from his neck.
P

eng!

Saurun’s head, an unresigned expression upon the face, flew several metres far in the air, and finally fell to the ground. His both eyes were opened wide; he was no longer able to close them.

His headless corpse was still kneeling in front of Leylin and blood poured out from it continuously.

The corpse’s left hand was still extended, it was his misfortune that it was blocked by grey radiant armour, a few inches away from Leylin’s body.

“With the defense of the Fallen Star Pendant, I don’t have to fear most of the acolytes’ attacks. Along with the frost runes’ enhancement of a greatsword, combined with my Knight’s abilities, it is one of the top strengths amongst acolytes!”

Leylin was very satisfied with this battle’s outcome.

Saurun was only an acolyte who was slightly less inferior than Torash. When Leylin, however, used his techniques, he could not withstand even a few rounds before being completely defeated, even with his head being chopped off.

“It’s your turn now!” Leylin kicked Saurun’s corpse away and charged towards the female blond acolyte.

“It’s completed!”

At the same time, the female blond acolyte exhaled, as if shouldering a huge burden.
A bright red flower unfolded its petals and revealed a green rock the size of a fist. It had a dazzling gleam, with the female blond acolyte’s fresh blood that was sprayed on it. There was also a broken half of a dagger, which was thrown on the floor. These 3 items faintly resembled a triangular formation, with many greyish power runes surrounding them.

As Leylin’s charged forward fiercely, the female blond acolyte smirked and pointed at Leylin, “By the name of Memphis Rofar Maginent, of the Gigantic Binding Sprite from the abyss, the person that I point to will lose all ability of motion!”

* Weng Weng! *

Light began to shine from the triangular formation, and Leylin suddenly felt a huge binding strength engulfing him, which made him rooted to the spot.

“A spell like this? A human customised spell?” Leylin continuously writhed and the sounds of shackles sounded from the void.

“There is no cause for you to resist further. These are the chains of the Gigantic Binding Abyss Sprite. No matter how many of them you break, the remaining amount would not only regrow, but the binding power will also be doubled!”

As the female acolyte spoke, Leylin felt the chain getting tighter and tighter around his body.

* Chi! * The silver glow from the Fallen Star Pendant continuously clashed against strength from the void, time to time producing white mist.

“You despicable maggot, the shameless murderer, you dared to killed the acolytes from two of our great academies, so I will grant you death to redeem your sins!”

The thrill of revenge and smugness filled the face of the female acolyte. The muscles on her face contorted, turning the once-beautiful face into an extremely loathsome one.
“You dared to kill Saurun; I will make you pay the price of blood!”
The female acolyte pointed at Leylin, “Strength deprivation!”
As she spoke, Leylin felt the strength in his body dispersing. In an instant, it was as if he changed from a Knight into a regular human infant.
“This feeling, have I been cursed?”
Leylin continuously struggled, “Such a measly curse, how can it make me bow my head!”
“It all has ended!” The female acolyte chanted in an incantation, “Flames of the abyss, cremate this sinner into ashes!”
As soon as the Byron language incantation had been uttered, a black fire suddenly blazed from below Leylin’s body. The flame continuously spread, engulfing Leylin’s whole body in an instant.
* Peng! * The frost greatsword on Leylin’s hands fell onto the floor. The icy shards shattered and broke into many pieces. Finally, even the refined metal blade of the cross blade melted under the black red flames, turning into a puddle of liquid metal.
* Chi Chi! *
The grey armour on Leylin’s body started to give in, and the A.I. Chip wildly flashed its alert in front of Leylin’s eyes, [Warning! Warning! The energy from the Fallen Star Pendant is rapidly decreasing. Currently left with: 45%. Estimated to be fully depleted in 34 seconds!]
“Ignore it and release all the energy within the Fallen Star Pendant in one go!” Leylin ordered.
“Weng Weng!” In that moment, the silver-grey light increased its radiance by a dozen times. Behind his back, there was an indistinct huge cross phantom. On the upper area of the phantom cross, a few jewels continuously gave off multi-coloured light as a wave of energy extended to Leylin’s limbs.
“Break…for me!”
Leylin struggled with all his might, and suddenly, crackling and rattling sounds could be heard from his body, and the countless black-rune-inscribed chains became visible and broke from all the struggling done by Leylin. They then fell to the ground and vanished.

“It’s your turn now, you disgusting whore!”

Leylin’s figure flew like a gust of wind and appeared directly in front of the female acolyte.

“Im… Impossible, how did you manage to counter it?” shrieked the female blonde acolyte and she pointed her finger at Leylin. Then several basin-sized fireballs directly struck Leylin’s body.

* Boom! * The flames exploded, burning with the previous black fire, as it extinguished very soon.

Behind the silver grey transparent armour, Leylin was unscathed.

“No! No!” The female acolyte fell onto the ground and crawled backwards.

Leylin kicked the green rock and dagger on the ground, breaking the spell formation.

Two streams of red fluid trickled down from the female acolyte’s nose, even her tears were falling.

“No! Don’t kill me! My mentor is….”

The female acolyte snivelled continuously as she crawled and spoke.

“I don’t care who you are!” Leylin’s expression appeared indifferent as he embraced this blonde woman.

The Fallen Star Pendant kept defending his body from the abyss black fire that was still burning on his body, but this female acolyte obviously did not have a similar layer of defense. Upon being the barbecued by the flames, she gave an ear-piercing shriek.

* Sssii! * The flesh of the girl dropped, chunk by chunk, onto the floor, turning into a pile of charred mess.

Finally, the originally beautiful female acolyte turned into a blood
red skeleton. Moreover, the set of bones slowly melted, turning into a white liquid which dripped onto the floor.
Leylin grimaced and with his hand, he swept away the remainder of the white bone liquid that were on him.
After which, as if he were changing his clothes, he ‘took off’ the grey armour.
As for the black red abyss flame on the grey armour, it was also removed.
“In the legends and tales told by the bards, the abyss fire is something which can burn the void. An existence that all children of the earth cannot resist! This is most likely just a projection of the true abyss fire, it does not have even one zillionth of the original’s might. If not, I would have long turned into ashes!”
Leylin thought for a while, before returning to the original place.
He then recorded all of the ingredients and the spell formation that the female acolyte used before roaming the battlefield to collect his spoils of war.
* Peng! * The unconscious Jayden was tossed before Bicky.
Although the battle earlier was extremely intense, the time that had passed was extremely short, so much so that Bicky was still in shock.
“Hurry and leave this place. The energy waves from earlier would attract many acolytes over. If you don’t wish to die, hurry and leave now!”
Leylin cleared his throat and looked at Bicky who nodded her head before he left the place.
Looking at the back of Leylin, Bicky’s expression was extremely complicated.
This person was here to save her. Moreover, the strength that he possessed was far above that which Bicky could imagine.
Lightning Wielder, Silver Claw, they were all impressive and notable acolytes from the opposing academies. However in front of
that person earlier, they were as weak as a sponge when they pleaded and was slaughtered mercilessly.

“But. . . exactly who is he?”

Bicky blinked her eyes. Merlin, Leylin, Fayle and the others, all of the acolytes’ images flashed past from her memory, yet she felt helpless as there was no such person in all of the acolytes that she recalled that resembled her savior.

However, her instincts told her that she definitely knew this person and that they had an extremely intimate relationship!

“Magi are reputed for their rationality. Such a thing like instinct will lower our judgment. Everything has to be proved beyond refutation….”

The sayings of an elder surfaced in her mind.

Bicky’s expression was seemingly vacant as she gritted her teeth and poured a potion on Jayden’s face, before she, too, left that place.

Although Jayden was Molly’s idol, she was now dead. Naturally Bicky wouldn’t risk anymore for Jayden.

Minutes later, Jayden opened his eyes and got up.

“What happened to me? Where is Torash?”

Jayden was at a loss, before the colours on his face changed. Touching his chest, he felt for the magic artifact which was still resting in his arms. Moreover, when he ensured that his sack was present, only then did he heave a sigh of relief.

“This is the aftermath of an intense battle! Who is it that saved me?”

Jayden scratched his forehead, before thinking of a girl’s figure who had dashed towards him, “Was it Molly? Such a terrifying battle, I wonder how she is….”

“Here!” Footsteps sounds drew closer and very soon 2 acolytes appeared within Jayden’s vision.

“An acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Kill him!”
After seeing Jayden, the two acolytes let off an excited howl and began to prepare their rank 0 spells.
Jayden sighed, before bringing out his magic artifact once again…
Leylin was, by now, dozens of miles away from this battlefield. He was settled in a cave, checking his spoils.
Those 3 acolytes were well known for their strengths. Furthermore, the ingredients and magic crystals that they carried with them were plentiful. They gave Leylin a total of tens of thousands of magic crystals and other valuable resources.
Leylin felt the surface of a black red diary cover, and he exclaimed in glee, “This aura is rather similar to the female acolyte’s abyss fire!”
Leylin flipped open the diary and a mysterious rune appeared, “A.I. Chip, compare to database!”
[Beep! Mission establishing, comparison in progress! Similarity level to Abyss script: 98.7%, Purgatory script: 45.3%…]
“Abyss script?” Leylin had a headache. Characters and knowledge from these mysterious planes were top-secrets and the knowledge was not passed around. He only managed to understand a few runes from derelict pages of a book in the library and stored them into the A.I. Chip database.
“No matter what, it is a good spoil!”
Satisfied, Leylin kept the black red diary in his possession.
What followed next was the most valuable loot this time around.
Leylin looked at the pile of items in front of him and muttered irresolutely to himself.
There were a few broken items, a dagger which had been broken into half, the remnant of a silver palm, with an incomplete silver necklace, with lightning flashing time to time.
The 3 acolytes who died under Leylin’s hands were the potential Magi of the enemy academies, so how could they not have magic artifacts on them?
It was a pity, however, that the broken dagger from the female blonde acolyte was only used to summon the aura of the abyss, and Leylin was still unable to figure out how the other items were meant to be used.
As for Silver-Claw Saurun, he was totally a pervert, who actually infused the magic artifact into his own palm.
Leylin could only chop the whole palm down, to try to separate the various properties in the magic artifact.
As for Torash, the magic artifact on him had also destroyed itself, which was the reason why he could unleash an attack of 16 degrees at the end.
The probing of magic artifacts was an extremely dangerous task.
Before further information, Leylin did not dare to risk and use these items.
Moreover, who knows if there were some booby trap laid within the magic artifacts by the enemy, thus Leylin felt that he should be more cautious. If he discovered that they might cause trouble to him, no matter how much Leylin was reluctant to part with them he would still toss them away within this secret plane. After all, he did not wish for an official Magus to notice him. “Actually, there is still a magic artifact that can be easily obtained! That is the green vine badge on Jayden’s body!” Leylin saw Jayden use this magic artifact on the dirigible before, back when he used it to suppress Kaliweir, leaving a strong impression on Leylin’s memory. However, this badge was given to him by Professor Dorotte. As for Dorotte, he was an official Magus in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If Leylin snatched an enemy’s magic artifact and hid in the academy, he might be safe. However if he took Jayden’s, then Leylin wouldn’t be able to stay in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy anymore. During the academy’s critical moments, if the news that he was still causing harm to fellow acolytes got out, then Leylin’s name would be equivalent to the despised street rat, in the Magus World. He would not lose his rationality for just this little benefit. “There is this also!” Leylin flicked his hands, and two differently shaped badges appeared in his hands. This were the badges of Saurun and the female blonde acolyte. Although they were weaker than Torash by a little, but it was still worth at least 20 to 30 contribution points. “At first, I’ll just hold onto these. If I’m able to find other badges in future then I won’t exchange these!” These two badges were Leylin’s insurance. If he was able to collect other badges in the secret plane to accumulate 50 contribution
points, then he wouldn’t use these. However, if the contribution points were not enough, then Leylin had no choice, and could only hand over one of them or both. As for Torash, Leylin felt that his strength was of great importance to his academy and the person backing Torash would have spent enormous efforts in nurturing him and so it was better to not provoke him.

……

Two days passed. The wilderness found outside the secret plane was lit up with a bright yellow color. From time to time, there were gusts of wind blowing granules of sand, and the living organisms on the ground avoided this place at all cost, even the moles and ants were not an exception. The entrance to the secret plane was slowly shrinking as if it were a live animal.

Outside of the entrance, the 3 chairmen and all the professors looked at the entrance that was constantly glowing with varying colours and had different expressions on their faces. Siley looked at the silver hourglass floating in midair. On the upper half of the hourglass, beads of golden sand trickled downwards, finally leaving behind a thin layer.

* Di! * With the passing of time, the final golden bead of sand trickled downward.

“The time is up, let us receive our acolytes!” Siley opened his mouth and spoke in a low tone.

“Are you extremely anxious?” Guru who was at the side smirked, “Every minute more that passes, one acolyte in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will be slain. Their heads will become the glory of my Sage Gotham’s Hut, and hung on the large gates…”
“At this moment, the secret plane might no longer have anymore Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes. We all know that once the acolytes from the two academies have gathered, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes would be meat on a chopping board for us to slice, and is not even equivalent to a lamb. The other blonde women smiled but her smiled seemed somewhat malicious.

“Nicola, you still can’t let it go?” Finally, a trace of expression surfaced on Siley’s face, and it seemed to be – regret?

“I have long since forgotten the matters from the past!” The female blonde woman Nicola said with a frosty expression.

“You can seek revenge for the matters previously, but once you are bent on destroying this academy that I succeeded as a professor, then you will be my eternal nemesis!”

Siley’s face too gradually hardened.

“Haha…Haha… You are still as arrogant as before, thinking that you are the main character of some novel, which the earth would revolve around you indefinitely!”

“However such an expression makes me want to puke!” Said the blonde woman as her eyes appeared to emit flames.

“I want to destroy your life’s work, destroy the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, even if there is the Lighthouse of the Night mediating, this time, there is still the next time….”

“Enough!” Guru at the side interrupted Nicola.

“Earlier you stopped me and Siley from fighting, but why is it that you can’t endure it now?”

“My reason for stopping you was because I want to take action myself!” Nicola’s maniacal look grew even stronger.

“Enough!” A dense black colour descended, and covered the sky in an instant.

Amidst the darkness, there was a bright yellow light that came from within, revealing a figure that was wrapped in black robes.
“Sir!” The three chairmen bowed. They were only rank 2 Magus, yet this person in front of them was a true rank 3 Magus! Every level in the Magus World had an obvious difference like that between the sky and earth. Previously, it was this Sir that suppressed the 3 of them to mediate the war.

“Since my Lighthouse of the Night has already stepped in, any conflicts that arise after is deemed as a provocation to us, as the contract and date are still effective.”

The black-robed man had a pair of dark green eyes. No matter if it was Siley or the other 2 chairman, if these eyes landed on them, they would shudder as if being trapped by some magical beast. This feeling of imminent death finally brought Nicola out from her madness.

“From now, activate the spell formation, and receive the acolytes within the secret plane!”

“Yes, Sir!”

* Peng! *

A fiery explosion erupted, and set the acolytes behind Leylin on fire, turning them into ashes. Leylin’s footsteps did not stop as he continued to escape.

“It’s him who killed Seet, Kroc, and Old Eagle, don’t let him escape!”

Behind him, parties of Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle acolytes were formed, a standard party of seven, which continuously gave chase.

Leylin’s pursuers gradually drew closer.

* Peng! * Leylin flung another two explosive potions again, where flames continuously extended behind him. The acolytes yelled and Leylin drew a longer distance from them.

“Damn it!” Leylin’s face was downcast.

After killing the 3 acolytes previously, Leylin began his hunting
movement all alone again.
At first, it was rather smooth sailing, where he collected another level 3 acolyte’s badge. This time, he specifically chose those who were rather old or those with no powerful items on them. They were those who seemed not able to advance further and had no strong backing behind them.
During the later half of the second day, all of the enemy camp acolytes had already gathered and formed group spell formations! All of them were performed by level 2 or 3 acolyte groups. If their numbers were sufficient, even a rank 1 Magus had to seek retreat temporarily.
Leylin had no choice, so he could only conceal himself and stop his hunt.
With the detection of the A.I. Chip, he managed to successfully hide until this day.
Things went according to how he had predicted: after the acolytes had gathered, they formed smaller squadrons and made a thorough search of the secret plane. They maintained a wanting-to-kill-every-last-enemy posture.
Many Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes were immediately killed, and under the opponent’s immense pressure, they could not even resist.
Leylin even saw a level 3 acolyte who carried a magic artifact, but that acolyte could only survive for a few more minutes under the spell formation. Afterward, he was ripped to shreds by the countless rank 0 spells that befell on him. Even the magic artifact became the trophy prize for his opponents.
Leylin could only extend his sympathisation to this fellow acolyte, and covered his tracks even more covertly.
Fortunately, the methods of magicians were extremely strange, and the opponents were only two academies who could not completely be harmonious amongst themselves. This gave the acolytes of
Abyssal Bone Forest Academy a chance for survival!
After Leylin estimated that time was almost up, he immediately ambushed a small party, since he was one badge short of his goal. According to his estimation, once he kills the opponents, then the time would be up, where he would even be teleported out and not need to face the group’s counterattack.
“F*ck! This lack of punctuality will have people killed!”
Of course, Leylin wouldn’t expect that the time would be delayed due to the enmity of the chairmen, which resulted in an error to his calculations.
After killing one of the level 3 acolyte, he was immediately surrounded and attacked.
“The Fallen Star Pendant’s energy was fully consumed the last time and I have not recharged it. If not I could have escaped long ago!”
Leylin gritted his teeth and gave an order, “A.I. Chip! Detect the geographical area and calculation the best retreat route!”
[Beep! Mission establishing!]
Along with the A.I. Chip’s indication, Leylin began to make various unexpected ducking movements amidst the dense forest, slowly pulling the distance further away from the pursuing acolytes.
“I have finally escaped!”
After running for over a dozen miles and shaking off his pursuers, suddenly he felt dizzy, and the badge pinned to his chest glowed resplendently.
“F*ck, the teleportation is finally here!”
The badge on Leylin’s chest emitted a fluorescent light. Leylin’s entire body was then engulfed by a layer of this light and was lifted off the ground as he began to involuntarily rise into the sky.

Floating at a distance within the light bubble, Leylin saw other acolytes in distant regions also floating in the same manner; they looked like stars strewn across the sky.

“This is really a beautiful scene!” Leylin couldn’t help sighing in appreciation. His hand touched a badge and holding it he said, “There is no force felt from this badge, it seems that the pulling force of the badge only works on those acolytes who are still alive. If that’s the case!”

Leylin waved his hands, and 2 badges that belonged to two level 3 acolytes was tossed out of the light bubble.

These two badges had, at one time, belonged to Silver-Claw Saurun and the female blonde acolyte. Since Leylin had already collected sufficient badges, he would no longer keep these two with him.

“I also have this thing with me!” said Leylin, as he withdrew an iron chain that had an electrical current and also threw that away.

After a thorough examination by the A.I. Chip on this destroyed magic artifact, there was a hidden spiritual force within it which kept pulsating, it seemed that this force had a tracking ability. If Leylin were to bring this item with him, then the professors of the
enemy academy would know immediately that he was the one who had killed Torash.
As for the other items taken from the acolytes, the half dagger and the shattered palm, there were no problems if he brought them back with him. They were carefully placed within his rucksack.
“The final procedure!”
Leylin smiled heartily, and removed the Shapeshifting spell.
The muscles on his face contorted, as his height continuously grew. Very soon, Leylin resumed the state of his original appearance.
“I have been acting inside the secret plane with this disguise, where no one had seen my true appearance!”
“I’m afraid after I exit, the enemy academy would wildly search for an acolyte that doesn’t exist?” After thinking of the probable scene in the future, he could not help but smile.
“Right now, I am Leylin Farlier, an ordinary Potioneering acolyte!”

……

Looking at the dazzling rainbow coloured exit, Leylin’s smile widened yet even more….
With much effort, Leylin managed to suppress the dizziness that came abruptly and did not vomit.
“The feeling of crossing planes is not a great one!”
“Hurry up and move, don’t block the way!” A cold voice sounded right beside Leylin’s ear.
Leylin hurriedly bowed and left the place.
Only then, did he take a look at the surroundings.
Outside the exit of the secret plane, it looked the same as before.
The 3 academies were divided into a triangular formation where they faced each other. Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle members stood closer together, and faced the common enemy, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, in unison.
As for now, acolytes continuously swarmed out from the exit, returning back to their respective professor’s side.

“Who is that person?” Leylin saw a black robed man ahead of the 3 chairmen. He couldn’t help guessing the person’s identity.

*Shua!* But now, because the black-robed man felt Leylin’s unwavering sight upon him, he turned his head around and looked back.

He immediately glanced upon a pair of dark green eyes. The surrounding world was as if it had been suspended in time; everywhere one could see only green. The acolytes and professors around Leylin seemed to turned into jade statues where no signs of life could be observed. Leylin strove to open his mouth, but he found no words coming out of his mouth.

“Leylin! Leylin! Leylin!” The surrounding statues suddenly opened their mouths, chanting Leylin’s name.

“What is happening?” Leylin roared within his heart, but not a single word could be spoken.

* Peng! Peng * The dark green sculptures began to move and green dust constantly fell off of them. Their eyes had become red-colored, as if the sockets had been embedded with rubies.

……

Countless green statues swarmed around Leylin, drowning him…. “Argh!” Leylin suddenly regained consciousness and panted heavily.

“What happened earlier?” The surrounding acolytes now seemed to be doing fine, yet Leylin did not dare to look in the direction of those chairmen again.
“Relax, son!” A pair of hands with a medicinal scent covered Leylin’s head, emitting a white glowing light.

“Professor Kroft!” Leylin bowed deeply. Under the white light, he felt much better.

“Was it you who saved me?”

“I did not exactly ‘save’ you, only a small favour.” Professor Kroft smiled and led Leylin back towards their academy’s gathering area.

“Official Magi always have a defensive force field surrounding them. Moreover, most of it are instantly activated or have a permanent effect. As for higher ranking Magi, they have an even stronger force field encircling them at all times. An ordinary acolyte cannot even get close to them!” Kroft explained for Leylin.

“Just now, that Magus from the Lighthouse of the Night did not do it intentionally; he just looked over this side and immediately many apprentices got caught in a hallucination. If a professor wasn’t here, then I would have been. . .” Kroft’s expression slowly turned stern, “Leylin, before you turn into an official Magus, remember to steer clear of any high ranking Magus! If not, I would not even be able to imagine your end…."

“I’ll keep that in mind!” Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn as he nodded his head. Only a slight glance had almost cost Leylin his life, which left him a lingering fear. Moreover it had resolved his determination to climb up in the ranks of the food chain.

“I don’t wish for my soul to crumble immediately in the future just because a high ranking Magus crosses my path in the future. This would really be a grievance!” Although higher ranking Magus could exercise restraint on their forcefields, it would mean that they were showing their softer side. Leylin could not imagine anyone doing that for him.

“Alright now! Welcome back son!”
After healing Leylin, Kroft revealed a sincere smile. “Being able to see you again is really great!” Leylin also smiled as he hugged his professor.

At this moment, only then he had time to view the casualties in his own academy.

Due to the teaming up of the other two academies, a huge number of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes had perished previously in the war. Right now it seems that Abyssal Bone Forest Academy suffered an even more severe casualty count.

At this moment, behind the professors, there was only a few scattered acolytes standing behind him. Most of them carried injuries with a gloomy expression.

“Leylin!” A pleasantly surprised voiced sounded in his ear.

“Bicky!” Leylin smiled warmly and hugged the curvaceous and beautiful Bicky.

“Very good. I still believed in you….” Tears welled up in Bicky’s eyes.

It seemed like she was worried about Leylin but that she did not know he was the mysterious man who had saved her before.

Leylin took another look at Bicky and was rather surprised when she was actually not injured the slightest, only that her mental state did not seem to be in the best condition. He could not help but feel so as even if it was a level 3 acolyte from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, under the oppression in numbers from their enemy, they may not be able to protect their lives.

As if seeing Leylin’s bewilderment, Bicky spoke on her own accord, “I met Molly right after entering. Also, I met with an extremely powerful enemy acolyte, but a stranger saved me. After that, I met Fayle and it was him who kept me by his side, so I was able to live up till now.

Bicky pointed at an acolyte behind a professor.

Leylin looked over, and it was indeed Fayle who he saw before.
After a span of 3 years, he seemed to be even more mature and had more charisma. With a level 3 acolyte protecting her coupled with some luck, it was probable that she could survive. Leylin nodded his head and did not ask further.

After casually exchanging a few sentences with Bicky, Leylin looked at the secret plane’s exit. Most of them were enemy acolytes streaming out, where very few Abyssal Bone Forest Academy acolytes came out. Leylin sighed inwardly, “It seems that this time Abyssal Bone Forest Academy suffered a great loss. I’m afraid that there will be a scenario where Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would have more professors than acolytes period of time.

* Peng!* At this moment, another acolyte walked out from the exit. This acolyte wore the grey robes of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and had several holes in them. Injuries seemed to riddle his body and there was even traces of blood. Moreover, an arm was missing.

“It’s Jayden!” Leylin’s pupils contracted.

Towards magicians, missing a limb was no big issue. There were various and mysterious spells which could regrow their limbs. Jayden braced himself and walked several steps forward. After seeing his professor from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he smiled and fainted immediately.

* Shua!* A white figure immediately appeared in front of Jayden and caught him. After the white flash stopped, Leylin saw the appearance of the Magus within – It was a skeleton with an underworld flame in its eyes!

“Professor Dorotte!” Leylin called out the name of this set of bones. Previously, it was Dorotte who led Leylin into Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Moreover, he was Jayden’s mentor and even gave Jayden
a magic artifact. It seemed like he doted on Jayden rather much.
“Alright! After my detection, there are no more surviving acolytes inside the secret plane. Seal the exit!’
The black robed figure standing before the 3 chairmen spoke. Once he spoke, the 2 camps sank into deep silence, before the murmuring and sighing noises sounded incessantly.
“No! Where is my Torash? He is definitely still inside!”
“Silver-Claw Saurun? Hurry and come out! He is a genius acolyte, how could the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy manage to defeat him?”

......

“Morphis! Morphis, where are you?”
Constant cries were heard from the enemy camp. And the Abyssal bone Forest Academy’s party seemed to have already expected this. Although the numbers of dead acolytes were many, the reactions of all professors were much lower than what Leylin had expected. Even for the Potioneering talent Merlin, his responsible Professor (Kroft) only let out a soft dismal gasp upon receiving news of his death.
“Torash! Torash! I left spiritual force coordinates on his body; he should be present amongst us here!”
On the opposite side, a blue bearded old guy yelled madly, following which he chanted an incantation.
* Bang! *
A bright blue beam of light drifted floated above Jayden who had fainted. Within this light an indistinct badge of an acolyte could be seen.
“Argh! No! My Torash! I will kill you!”
The expression on the face of the blue bearded old guy contorted,
where a massive thunderstorm appeared midair above him.
“Torash’s power, when compared to this, is absolutely rubbish.” Leylin gulped, and suddenly felt extremely lucky.
Inside the secret plane, one must take responsibility for themselves in the bloodbath; do you wish to violate the agreement?”

Under the massive thunderstorm, Dorotte stood up with many faint silver beast claws on his back.

“Enough!”
The black-robed figure standing in front of the 3 chairmen spoke, and a gigantic dark green hand grabbed at the sky. * Weng Weng! * The massive lightning was immediately scattered by the giant hand.

“I have said before to abide by the agreement!” The black-robed figure growled.

At the same time, the blue-bearded geezer spat a huge mouthful of blood. Anger was quickly replaced with fear as he knelt down, “Sir, please forgive an old man, who has just lost his nephew, with your magnanimity!”

“Just this once! If not, I will extract your soul and roast it in the abyss for ten thousand years!”
The black-robed figure spoke again.

The blue-bearded geezer then went back to his academy’s camp, before giving Jayden a vicious look. This hatred and determination of killing Jayden gave Dorotte a headache. Crackling and rattling noises could be heard from the skeletal figure.

“Although this time nothing has happened, Jayden will definitely be
pursued by Blue-Beard unless he keeps hiding inside the academy!”
Leylin’s eyes turned cold.
Earlier, the A.I. Chip picked up several traces of energy waves from spells.
Obviously, it was the search for the enemy who had killed their genius acolyte! If Leylin were to still keep those items that carried their traces, his outcome would now be the same as Jayden.
Those professors who had had their personal apprentices or successors killed by the other party, who was also their sworn enemy, swore they would make the killer pay with their blood!
As for the casualties of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, they were not considered because the other two academies were facing many more losses.
Although they were bound by the agreement and vigilance of the Lighthouse of the Night, as far as Magi were concerned, if they were to pay the price, they could indirectly find a way to exact their revenge!
For example, not taking action themselves, but suggesting to Magi outside of the agreement to act on their behalf. The black market was also an option worth considering.

……

Late in the night, Leylin returned to his resting area and laid down on his bed. In his hands was a faint yellow test tube that he kept on toying with.
The test tube was made of faint yellow crystals, and its density was extremely high. Holding it in his hands, he sensed a rather heavy feeling.
These crystals were made from a precious ingredient – Nitrogen Crystals. Any spell that was 20 degrees or lesser would not be able
to damage it.
Using these Nitrogen Crystals to make a test tube, this was often used to store potions which were more valuable.
According to the olden texts, test tube made from Nitrogen Crystals were known to have preserved the contents even after a thousand years.
Within the faint yellow test tube, there was a ball of translucent liquid.
Leylin casually swirled the test tube. Under the refraction of the light, the liquid within gave off a rainbow-coloured glow, as it continuously whirled, seemingly beautiful.
“This is the Grine Water of the myths which could aid acolytes to breakthrough into an official Magus!” Leylin looked at the test tube and muttered.
Earlier, under the suppression of the Magus from Lighthouse of the Night, the chairmen of Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle had had no choice but to bow their heads, then leading their acolytes away.
Even Torash’s professor was not that stupid to offend the high ranking Magus for the second time.
As for Leylin and the rest, they were led back to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy by their professors.
Leylin intentionally glanced and saw that at this moment the acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy did not amount to over 50.
As for any regular academy, they would have thousands of acolytes!
One can say that Sage Gotham’s Hut and Whitewoods Castle had accomplished their mission by almost swallowing the entire batch of successors in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy; if it were not for the fact that a few of their genius acolytes had perished inside the secret plane!
Even so, they originally had 200 acolytes enter the secret plane. Yet in the end only about a hundred came out from it. Compared to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, this was considered a great victory.

“However… All these have nothing to do with me!” Leylin looked at the potion in his hands that seemed like an illusion.

“What matters is that I got the Grine Water! Moreover, the academy has an anonymous exchange policy, which is extremely thoughtful for its acolytes!”

On the way back to the academy, Leylin and the fortunate surviving acolytes were told about the contribution points they obtained and the details of it, where they can undergo the exchange privately. Furthermore, the person that was in charge of the exchange was an alchemy beast created by the chairman with no human feelings whatsoever, so it wouldn’t reveal the acolytes’ exchanges.

One can say that although Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was extremely bloodthirsty, where there was a strong culture of the strong eats the weak, towards the protection of acolytes with true strength and abilities, they still did a rather good job.

Leylin only barely managed to scrape 50 contribution points, exchanging for a standard amount of Grine Water.

As for the catalogue on the contribution points exchange list, there were various precious ingredients, rank 1 spell models, and even spiritual force Potions. Looking on, Leylin felt overwhelmed by it.

At that time, deep down Leylin had some regret over not taking the few genius acolytes’ badges along with him.

However, after seeing Jayden with a gloomy expression, Leylin very soon buried this tinge of regret deep inside his heart.

Although Torash’s badge was worth at least 50 contribution points, which could be exchanged with many resources, the look that other acolytes had when they saw Jayden was full of pity. Incurring the wrath of an official Magus for these resources, was it
really worth it?
Moreover, the other professors did not know of their apprentices’ scores, yet Dorotte knew Jayden’s amount of contribution points like the back of his hand. Before anything else, at the very least, half of Torash’s contribution points would be taken by Dorotte. After all, he defended an opposing rank 1 Magus for Jayden!
“Before becoming an official Magus, it is best to maintain a low profile. There won’t be anything wrong with that!” Seeing Jayden’s outcome, Leylin steeled his heart with this resolve.
His senior Merlin was a great example of this. Merlin’s achievements and talent in Potioneering could be said to be extraordinary. If not for Leylin cheating by using the A.I. Chip, he would definitely be left far behind in this aspect. But so what?
It was due to Merlin’s reputation that made his enemies concentrate their attacks on him, finally causing him to die during the secret plane’s bloodbath.
No matter how genius an acolyte was before they manage to grow strong, they weren’t even comparable to a pebble on the road. As for Leylin, he always created the false image of being inferior to Merlin, allowing Merlin to attract the attention off from him. He successfully managed to divert his enemy’s attention, so there were very few that bothered about him inside the secret plane.
“However, this trick will not work for the time being!” Leylin toyed with the Grine Water in his hands, his face gradually turning solemn.
The surviving acolytes after the bloodbath amounted to less than 50, which was even less than the number of professors. Moreover, all survivors will be deemed as elites!
Under these circumstances, greater attention will be paid to any acolytes!
Leylin did not have any confidence whatsoever to try anything
funny for the fear of being discovered.

“Perhaps, I should make a trip outside. Previously, Roman spoke of the high-grade meditation technique. If I found it, it would definitely be much better than the Grine Water…”

Previously, before the Fallen Star Pendant was completed, Leylin had managed to swindle much information from that vengeful spirit, Roman, regarding the information of high-grade meditation technique left behind by the Great Magus Serholm.

According to Roman, the inheritance of Great Magus Serholm was located inside the Dylan Gardens of the Zither Moon Mountain Plains.

Magi who used high-grade meditation techniques were definitely stronger than Magi who used the Grine Water to breakthrough! Moreover, more potential would be realised, revealing more possibilities for future development.

Leylin wanted to climb to the apex of the Magus World. If he wished to have the potential for future advancements, using the Grine Water to breakthrough would be his last resort.

Thinking of the Fallen Star Pendant, Leylin removed the silvery grey cross from his neck.

On the surface of the cross was embedded with various colours of gemstones, which looked to be an impeccable art piece.

However, right now the gemstones on the Fallen Star Pendant seemed to glow dimly, as it had undergone a huge consumption.

[Fallen Star Pendant: Low-grade magic artifact. Effect: Instantly cast a defence. Current condition: All energy consumed, 0%]

The A.I. Chip showed the stats of the Fallen Star Pendant to Leylin. Fallen Star Pendant, it was the item that attributed the most to Leylin’s survival and killing the geniuses of the enemy this time.

The instantaneous layer of defense that the silvery cross radiated, no matter if it was physical or magical resistance, had reached a very high degree. Few below the ranks of an official Magus could
penetrate its defenses. However, in any world, the law of conservation of energy must be fulfilled. Every time the Fallen Star Pendant was activated, it required a consumption of energy. Once the energy was fully consumed, it wouldn’t be anything more than a pretty necklace!

“The Fallen Star Pendant’s defence is rather good, only that the energy is not enough!”

Leylin felt somewhat regretful, “A.I. Chip! Establish mission. Apart from the calculation ability for the Host, use all remaining computation abilities to find out ways to conserve the energy of the Fallen Star Pendant!”

[Beep! Mission establishing! Beginning to use idle processes to calculate, time is unknown!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Leylin nodded his head and came to the experiment at the side. He placed the Fallen Star Pendant in the centre of a mysterious spell formation. Around it, were many blue glittering stones.

“Activating process of recharging!”

* Weng Weng! * With the command of Leylin, faint blue light beams shone from the formation. Starlight was extracted from these stones and placed into the Fallen Star Pendant.

[Fallen Star Pendant recharging in process, current state: 1%....] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

The recharge of the Fallen Star Pendant actually only required for starlight to be shone on it. As long as it was bathed in starlight when the energy was fully consumed, the Fallen Star Pendant would automatically complete the recharging process.

However, in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, wanting to bathe it in starlight was an impossible task. Thus, Leylin could only use other methods to conduct the recharging process.
Time passed by.
The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s professors and acolytes had gradually recovered from all these sad events and adapted themselves to the present situation. The current Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had almost become a tomb.
Within such a great academy, one would rarely see another soul. The classrooms were vacant, the Trading Area was left uninhabited and even the academy’s mission area, which has a large, wide wall, on which the missions were hung up only had a few acolytes accepting missions.
The entire Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had sunk into a stillness as silent and steady as a grave.
In these circumstances, if an ordinary person were to stay here, he would be frightened to death!
However; the great thing was that the acolytes who survived the bloodbath, as well as other professors, were extremely resolute; so they were able to maintain the operations of the academy, even under such circumstances.
However, these state of affairs would not last very long.
According to Leylin’s guess, the enrollment period for new acolytes joining the academies of the south coast was fast approaching.
This time, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would certainly lower their requirements. Then a large number of acolytes would be able
to join and thus reinstate the glory on the surface. But the nurturing of any talented acolyte will consume a vast amount of time and energy, and not to mention the aptitude of 5th-grade acolytes where and how would it be easy to find one with such a talent?
The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s heritage had declined drastically during Leylin’s generation. It was likely that at least 10 years would be required to regain their former level of glory. However, Leylin wasn’t greatly concerned about these issues. He once again returned to a thread-like monotonous life, he would cooperate with his professor in his experiments and thus learn from experience.
Meanwhile, he took advantage of the privileges granted to a level 3 acolyte, he purchased large amounts of magical resources and stored information on advanced subjects.
Leylin’s aptitude in the Magus World was considered average, neither high nor low, but it was rather decent.
Moreover, he had succeeded in advancing to a level 3 acolyte. In the future, there would be plenty of time for him to breakthrough into an official Magus!
Considering this point, regardless of a professor or an acolyte, all would regard him as a person of very great importance. Whenever Leylin encounters an official Magus, he would greet them. In return, they would nod their heads in recognition and approval. Also, when acolytes see Leylin from afar, they would immediately greet him.
As for Nyssa and the rest, they did not dare to appear in front of Leylin. Thinking of Nyssa, Leylin could not help but feel happy for her. In such a bloodbath, she was actually able to preserve her life and even obtain a few contribution points, which was an extremely difficult thing to do.
He overheard that Nyssa had been able to exchange her contribution points for a potion to increase spiritual force and was preparing to breakthrough to level 3 acolyte.
“I hope she succeeds! To heal her body, she needs to, at least, become a proper Magus!”
Leylin thought of Nyssa’s injuries and was somewhat dismayed. Right now, in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy; there was only himself, Nyssa, and Jayden who hailed from the Chernobyl Islands. These thoughts only passed through Leylin’s mind. Very soon, he concentrated on the book in front of him.
The book in his hands was extremely thick, the same thickness of two bricks together. However, the paper’s surface was extremely small. This was the style of ancient books.
“Mother Earth laid down on the ground and gave birth to 7 children. They are Anger, Sorrow, Greed, Sloth, Lust, Gluttony, and Fear. Each of her children inherited one of their mother’s power. Mountains will tear themselves apart in front of them, and the seas will part before them….”
The book in Leylin’s hands concerned myths.
“The ancient writing is extremely obscure, in it, many information about Magi is concealed….”
Leylin’s eyes flashed as he commanded, “A.I. Chip! Record!”
Ever since Leylin registered under the administrative area and became a potential Magus, he managed to obtain more access within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
One of this was to peruse the hidden library section!
Of course, within these books, many information regarding official Magus were erased. At the very most, they were briefly mentioned in passing, with cryptic writings. Normally, people would just gloss over this information.
Even so, Leylin with the A.I. Chip obtained much more information from this hidden library section.
First of all, the A.I. Chip had recorded almost all information that was beneath the topics of Magi. Right now, Leylin could vouch for himself that most professors in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy could not match his knowledge concerning acolytes. This was a great foundation buildup for Leylin in the acolyte level. At least now he was aware of the mistakes from breaking through to a level 3 acolyte and even tried to correct them. One should not look down on such information. If the mistakes are not corrected, even after Leylin becomes an official Magus, his spiritual force would stall for a long period of time, with no chance of ever breaking through.

Furthermore, Leylin found some content regarding advanced meditation techniques. According to these bits and pieces, together with Roman’s information, Leylin could confirm that the chairman of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and those leaders of major guilds and magisterium in the south coast used these advanced meditation techniques to break through. Hence, they were able to achieve their current levels. As for the majority of the Magi in the south coast, as well as many professors in the academies, they did not know of the existence of advanced meditation techniques. They used Grine Water to breakthrough, causing them to remain at the level of rank 1 Magus for their entire life!

After looking at all these, Leylin completely sealed the notion of using Grine Water to breakthrough. “It seems like heading towards the Zither Moon Mountain Plains and obtaining the advanced meditation technique that the great Magus Serholm left behind is necessary for future developments!”

Leylin closed the book slowly and left the library. Leylin had used the A.I. Chip to record most of the information in the hidden library section. In the future, no matter where he was,
he could always perform a search with the A.I. Chip. It was equivalent to carrying a large-scale, intelligent library with him at all times.

“Professor!”

Leylin went to Kroft’s lab and bowed to Kroft, who was carrying out an experiment.

Although Kroft was the same as before, Leylin found that his eyes were somewhat dimmed. It seems that Merlin’s death had slightly impacted this old man of more than 100 years of age.

“Leylin, my child!” After seeing Leylin, Kroft smiled and he looked to be more focused.

“Regarding my suggestion from before, have you decided on an answer?” Kroft asked.

“Yes, Professor!” Leylin bowed once more. “I appreciate that the Leslie family thinks highly of me, but I wish to try breaking through on my own!”

After hearing Leylin’s reply, Kroft’s expression darkened. However, Leylin’s talent in Potioneering was admirable, even to Kroft. After knowing that Merlin died, Leylin had become his best apprentice, so he could not help but advise again.

“The Leslie family is a great one, with Potioneering as their niche. In there, your talents will definitely be displayed to the fullest. Moreover, the Leslie family has sincerity, where the contract conditions are much better than the academy’s.”

Leylin displayed a very keen look, but deep down he had rejected Kroft’s proposition without the slightest hesitation.

After the bloodbath, Leylin’s position in Kroft’s heart was elevated. Previously, when they spoke, Kroft represented the Leslie family in supporting him and made an offer to Leylin.

Leslie family was one of the large-scale Magus family in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, with many Magi supporting it.

Kroft was one of its members.
Having a long standing tradition and history with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the Leslie family also possessed a copy of a rank 1 spell and Grine Water.
What Kroft suggested was the same contract signed with the academy. The Leslie family would also give a rank 1 spell model and a Grine Water in exchange.
Compared to a contract with the academy, a contract with a family would have fewer restraints. However, this was not in line with Leylin’s interests.
No matter how powerful the Leslie family was, would they be able to provide an advanced meditation technique?
Looking at Kroft, who did not have a single high-grade meditation technique, he already knew the answer.
Under the inheritance of great Magus Serholm, Leylin hoped that he would never have to join a Magi family and put restrictions on himself!
Moreover, Leylin was a person who valued freedom. Unless he was in a desperate situation, he would never consider selling himself to be contracted with a family.
“All these, I know, Professor! But…”
Leylin raised his head, his eyes showing an unshakeable resolve and determination.
“I still wish to try on my own! If I were to fail, I promise you, Professor, that I will definitely prioritise and consider the Leslie family!”
“You…”
Various expressions flashed across Kroft’s face. Looking at the most outstanding acolyte he had right now, he suddenly felt a little helpless. “Alright then! You are only 17 now! Youth is precious, it allows you to make mistakes!”
Kroft looked at Leylin and was reminded of his younger self. His eyes revealed that he was recalling a memory.
“Thank you, professor!” Even though Kroft was unreasonable, Leylin was somewhat moved. He never wanted harm to befall his apprentices. This trait was rather praiseworthy within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“In that case… How do you plan to overcome this obstacle to becoming an official Magus?” Kroft asked.

“This…” Leylin shook his head, as if in ‘embarrassment’, revealing an apologetic expression.

“I heard that Professor Dorotte had a piece of remnant information concerning official Magus…”

“Haha…” Kroft laughed, “So this was your plan!”

In the south coast, the information to become an official Magus was often controlled by large guilds, but there was always an exception!
After many discussions, the major Magisteriums in the south coast had all unanimously agreed to restrict the advancement to an official Magus. Under the purview of the contract, all guilds must abide by it solemnly, to control the acolyte’s advancement to an official Magus. Even if it was the academy or family absorbing newcomers, they must swear to a strict secrecy. There was an exception information found within historical items and places!

In the expanse of the south coast, there were many traces of the Magi remnants. All of them were located in extremely perilous locations. Even official Magi had to risk their lives to search for a piece of them. Moreover, even if they were remnants, one cannot be sure of their contents.

Take Leylin for example, previously he spent a countless amount of resources and effort, yet he obtained nothing in the end. It was an extremely common situation. However, once Magi discovered a trace of ancient remnants and obtain their inheritance or other precious resources, it would be the start of another legend!

Although searching for remnants had many unforeseeable dangers, it still drove many Magi to seek them. The restrictions on the knowledge to advance to an official Magus...
was signed by all Magisteriums and guilds of the south coast. Hence, any remnants that existed before the agreement were very likely to contain information regarding official Magus advancement!
This was the reason for the birth of a few guildless official Magi!
According to the information gathered from Leylin’s inquiries, Dorotte became an official Magus only after he discovered a piece of information related to advancement while adventuring. Although the amount of information missing was over 60% of the original and it was definitely not possible to become a Magus just by relying on it, it was still very precious!
Moreover, Leylin was only a level 3 acolyte. Before he became a Magus, he wasn’t sure of his importance to Dorotte and whether he could conduct such an important transaction with him.
To obtain this piece of information, it could only be carried out through Kroft.
“Alright then! However, you should know the rarity of information concerning the advancement to an official Magus. What are you planning to exchange for it?”
“Although the information is extremely valuable, this and other single-use records are vastly different. I believe that this will leave Professor Dorotte satisfied!”
Leylin said as he put a hefty bag in Kroft’s hands.
“Moreover, after obtaining this piece of information, Professor you can also have a copy of it!”
Towards Leylin’s suggestion, Kroft only raised his eyebrows, not saying anything. But when he opened the bag, he could not help but sigh. “That old bag of bones Dorotte, would most likely not be able to reject you!” Leylin smiled.
In the bag he handed to Kroft, not only was it filled with a large number of magic crystals and precious ingredients, there was also a
Flourishing Flower.
This ingredient was extremely difficult to obtain and had regenerative abilities for magicians with broken limbs.
As for the environment required for the Flourishing Flower to thrive, it must be in a place with a large number of vengeful spirits. Every day, it would be watered with the blood of dying people in order to grow.
These ingredients were not common even in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
After all, in the breeding of artificial spirits, the research done by Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were far less suitable compared to Leylin, who had the help from A.I. Chip.
If not for the news to recall Leylin, he would have already completed this nurturing experiment.
As for this Flourishing Flower, it was a by-product from the experiment lab.
Currently, Dorotte was looking all over for materials to regenerate Jayden’s arm, these materials were an enticement which Dorotte could not refuse!
Although he knew this, Leylin was still apprehensive about giving away such a precious material.
As he had produced a Void Flower in the past and now that he had produced another precious ingredient, the Flourishing Flower, it would be hard to prevent suspicion.
But if he wanted a favour from Dorotte, he could not avoid bringing out this Flourishing Flower.
And he was fortunate that this item was rare.
Within the Magus World, there were many examples of frustrated and destitute acolytes who had stumbled across ancient remnants of Magi and turned into an official Magus becoming an overlord of a region.
Compared to them, Leylin’s luck was only so-so.
Three days later, within the laboratory. Leylin’s wish had at last been fulfilled and now he held the information in his hands.

“Branded Swordsman? What’s that?” Leylin frowned, “Wasn’t this supposed to have something to help me become a Magus?”

“Haha… when I first received this, I was also rather doubtful. But Dorotte explained it to me,” said Kroft.

“Leylin! Magi are people who possess mysterious powers! In ancient times, those with great power were often labelled as magicians! As for Branded Swordsman, through the alchemical runes, a magic spell formation would be branded on their body, allowing them to gain power. It is a small division of the ancient Magi!”

Kroft began teaching Leylin, “I see that you are now a Knight. Therefore, as far as you are concerned, it is indeed appropriate for you to become a Branded Swordsman.”

“I understand!”

Leylin was peering through a scrap of information as he said, “Branded Swordsman seem to emphasize more of physical strength training. Through the regular practice and branding, nature’s strength would be stored inside their body. In crucial moments, the energy would erupt explosively….”

“Why does it seem to resemble… a Knight?” Leylin’s eyes flashed. “Correct! You interpreted it well! Part of the information regarding the inheritance of ancient Branded Swordsman was widely spread. After some modifications, it was suited more towards regular humans. This turned into the creation of Knights and Grand Knights!”

Kroft nodded.
“Which is to say, a Branded Swordsman is an advanced version of a Knight!” Leylin had now gained some understanding. “However, it’s a pity that more than 60% of the information is missing. Especially the part about branding and spell formation setting, it is almost all gone. Attempting to forcibly brand a spell formation on the body, will only cause the Magus’ magic power to be in a mess….”

A regretful look flashed across Kroft’s face. “In ancient times, the combination of Branded Swordsman and Magi were a nightmare to enemies of many other worlds….” “Although this is the case, I am still very grateful to Professor!” Leylin bowed once again.

After walking out from the experiment lab, Leylin placed the book, which recorded the details of the Branded Swordsman, in his arms. “Although it is quite dilapidated, I still have the A.I. Chip. Perhaps, I can use it to compute the remainder of the information…” Leylin consoled himself, feeling much better suddenly.

He always liked to prepare a few backup plans. The advanced meditation technique in Zither Moon Mountain Plains was only a myth. It was derived from a few broken pieces of information from Roman, which almost had zero credibility. If not for Leylin having seen similar content back in the experiment lab close to the Great Mankeste Snake’s lair, he would most likely not believe in it.

Moreover, even if the Dylan Gardens existed, would there even be a piece of the great Magus Serholm’s inheritance? Even if there was, Leylin did not know if the advanced meditation technique was suitable for him.

By setting off, Leylin would be able to pick up a high-grade meditation technique that was suited to him; Leylin did not dare bet on his luck. Hence, the preparation of a backup plan and now it became
necessary to carry it out.
He had a portion of the Grine Water, the A.I. Chip was also simulating the rank 1 defensive spell model. Now he managed to obtain advanced information concerning Branded Swordsman. All these would be simulated into a completed piece of information regarding advancement.
Leylin decided that if he failed to discover anything in the Zither Moon Mountain Plains, he would apply for graduation. He would then roam the south coast, searching for remnants and obtaining information on high-grade meditation techniques.
If he did not obtain a meditation technique suited for him by 50, he would forcefully use the information in his hands to advance into a Magus.
Although this might cause difficulties for future advancements, Leylin felt that if he did not see any hope of advancement by 15, it was better to raise his strength before seeking better alternatives.
On the route back to the dorm.
Recently, Bicky had paid very few visits to him. In the vast level of the dorm, Leylin was the only one who lived here.
Leylin looked at the two sides of the dull and lifeless hall and sighed. “Although the concealment is not too bad, with fewer people coming to bother you, living in such a place is really somewhat dreary….”
After entering his own room in the dorm with the bright lamp, Leylin felt much better.
Walking to the simple experiment lab, Leylin thought in his mind.
“A.I. Chip! How is the progress on the simulation of rank 1 spell defensive model? Also the simulation the Grine Water?”
[rank 1 defensive spell model simulation progress: 14.3%. Estimated completion: 765 days!]
Towards the simulation of a rank 1 spell model, the A.I. Chip gave an unexpectedly long duration. However, Leylin was extremely
pleased with this. Previously the A.I. Chip was not able to estimate the progress of a successful simulation. However, after recording the massive amount of information in the hidden library, the A.I. Chip finally allowed Leylin to see a glimmer of hope in a completed rank 1 spell model!

“As long as it can be completed! Two years, I can afford it!”

Two years later, Leylin would only be 19, still in the prime of level 3 acolyte. This was the benefit of youth, never fearing that time was not enough.

[Calculating Grine Water formula in progress: 5.32%. Estimated ingredients: Fruit of Thousand-Eyed Tree, fresh blood of a Giant Tidal Snake….] [Estimated effect: A huge consumption on acolyte’s life force, to stimulate breakthrough of spiritual force bottleneck!]

“So that’s the case!” Looking at the A.I. Chip’s analysis, Leylin finally knew why the academy viewed a level 3 acolyte below 20 years of age as potential Magus…. Grine Water’s effect was to consume a magician’s lifespan in exchange for a stimulated breakthrough. The younger the acolyte, the more life force there is for consumption. Hence the higher possibility of a breakthrough. Once an acolyte has an ageing body, they wouldn’t be able to breakthrough even with Grine Water. This was because their physical body no longer had any more life force to be consumed.

“It seems that the previous situation has to be altered!”

Leylin stroked his chin. “The matter of searching for high-grade meditation technique will have to be pushed forward. Moreover, I cannot wait till I’m fifty! Thirty years old! After I’m thirty, if I haven’t managed to find any high-grade meditation technique, I must try in breaking through!”

After firming his resolve, Leylin tidied up the experiment lab and
took out an ancient Potioneering scroll.
Ancient Medicine: Tears of Mary formula. Begin the 1,312,933rd drug simulation!”

Leylin had received 2 sheets of medicinal formulas from Professor Kroft. One of them was about the Azure Potion, for which he had found substitute ingredients that had helped him reach his current level.

The other one, Tears of Mary, involved the concepts from his soul research. This had left Leylin at a loss as to how he should proceed. Afterwards, with the observations from the bulk experiments at Extreme Night City, Leylin had gathered vast amounts of data regarding souls, and was thus pushing for the analysis of the formula of the ancient drug, Tears of Mary.

Finally, after having obtained the Grine Water, the A.I. Chip had performed reverse engineering to find out the refining process of the Grine Water, and had eventually overcome the last obstacle in concocting the Tears of Mary.

However, to Leylin’s dismay, he found that some of the steps in the formula for the Tears of Mary could only be completed by an official Magus!

Moreover, many of the processes required huge reserves of spiritual force that was at least at the level of an official Magus. This situation proved that Leylin’s prior guess was correct, the Tears of Mary was definitely the secret formula for the ancient Magi to increase their spiritual force!
Thus, Leylin’s eagerness to successfully configure the Tears of Mary was reinforced. His spiritual force had not increased over a long period of time. His body had developed a complete resistance to the modified Azure Potion, so even if he were to drink more of the potion, his spiritual force would not increase even a little bit. Also, after having increased his spiritual force using medicine, trying to increase it using his regular meditation technique was something he couldn’t endure because the rate of increase was similar to a tortoise’s pace. His current spiritual force was just not quite enough to be able to break through the boundary to become an official Magus. According to the A.I. Chip’s calculations and his own estimation, with his regular meditation, it would take him several years to become an official Magus! Leylin could not wait that long, hence he brewed a new type of potion. Apart from that, he had been collecting other formulas all the while. Other ancient potion formulas were mostly controlled by the official Magi. Leylin did not have many treasured ingredients with him that he could exchange for, and did not wish to draw too much attention to himself. Moreover, compared to simulating and brewing an entire new formula, more than half of the formula for the Tears of Mary was solved so it was the better choice. Leylin boldly replaced a few brewing processes that could only be executed by an official Magus into one that was suited for a level 3 acolyte to brew with. After tens of thousands of modifications, together with the A.I. Chip’s millions of simulations, Leylin’s experiment now was very close to succeeding.

“First of all, I need the basic material for the formula, a female
vengeful spirit!.”
From the corner of his experiment desk, Leylin picked up a brand new Confining Spirit Sphere. Within it was a woman wearing a red gown, and looking at Leylin with an expression of fright.
The energy waves emitted from this female vengeful spirit which was not even close to those of Roman, who was only a level 1 acolyte.
After most of the acolytes in the academy had perished, it was the golden age of self-development for the surviving acolytes.
Originally, the resources for the acolytes in the academy had been for a thousand acolytes, but now, they had all been released for these 50 remaining acolytes.
Furthermore, the prices of all ingredients and spell models had been marked down drastically compared to the time before the bloodbath.
For example, a vengeful spirit was originally a rare commodity in the market. Once they had been seen on the market, they would have been bought immediately by acolytes, and the prices could have been up to 500 magic crystals.
As for now, Leylin went to the counter to look at the price, and bought it immediately. His expenditure did not even amount to 100 magic crystals!
Of course, this was a disguised reward from the academy to the survivors!
This situation continued all the way until the next batch of recruits.
However, in this discounted sale, Leylin quickly threw away the notion of reselling at a high price outside. The academy had long since forbidden this. If they were caught, the circumstances would be severe.
Leylin made use of this opportunity, and spent half of his magic crystals savings, buying a large amount of resources and strange spell models.
The female vengeful spirit in the Confining Spirit Sphere had long, silver hair; dark blue eyes; and soft, moistened lips. She also had a slender waist and long legs. When she was alive, she would have definitely been an outstanding woman who drove men crazy!

“What a pity!”

Leylin sighed, yet his hand continued to move and dropped a silver liquid onto the Confining Spirit Sphere. This was the “Dissolving Spirit Potion”. Back when Leylin had specially prepared it for Roman, with only a few drops, Roman would have definitely been shrieking for half a day, and even sustain a severe injury.

As of now, the remainder was used by Leylin here.

“Ah… It hurts! Please… I beg you! No…!”

The vengeful spirit continued to wail from within the crystal ball. Towards such an extraordinary woman, any man would have at least hesitated deep down within their heart.

However, Leylin’s brows had not furrowed the slightest as he continued the movement with his hands.

As more of the Dissolving Spirit Potion was used, the pleading of the female vengeful spirit was becoming more and more muffled. Even her red robes were slowly dissolving, revealing an illusory, and yet alluring glowing skin.

“You want to entice me?” Looking at this scene, Leylin’s lips curled up in ridicule.

“Vengeful spirit! Reveal your original ugly form!” Leylin raised a finger with a large, black needle protruding from the nail.

* Sssii! *

The black long needle pierced through the crystal ball, and directly into the chest of the female vengeful spirit. “Argh!” The female vengeful spirit let off a hair-raising scream, and her body became blurry. Once she could be seen again, the vengeful spirit that was in front of Leylin’s eyes had taken on a
completely different form. The face was filled with scales and wrinkles, and the orifices seemed to be misaligned, as though someone had casually attached them to her face. There were a few strands of green hair on the sides of her bald head. The mouth opened and closed, and razor sharp teeth could be seen. From time to time, a disgusting, viscous liquid could be seen dripping from her scarlet tongue. “Ao!” The female vengeful spirit’s eyes contained a greed that could rip people apart. She stared intently at Leylin as if wanting to gobble him down immediately. “Your outer appearance and inner self are ugly throughout!”

……

Leylin mocked her and laughed, before drawing another mysterious magic rune… The experiment lasted for over a dozen hours and continued the way until the second day before the end was near. Inside the experiment lab. Inside a scarlet pentagonal formation, a naked body with bumps through could be seen. The beautiful face of the female vengeful spirit had been tied down by a metal chain, trapped within the spell formation. At this moment, although the female vengeful spirit looked to be phantom, as if disappearing in the next moment, her face no longer had the craze and hate from before. Instead, there was a shy expression on it. Combining with the binding of the metal chains, it even creates a sadomasochistic desire! Leylin looked at the naked woman in front of him, his face
revealing a satisfied expression. “After a long day, I have finally removed all of the grievances from it!”
“Thank you! Young man! However, could you release me and give me some clothes to wear?”
The woman spoke within the formation, her voice as delightful as a black-naped oriole bird.
“Are you joking? I spent so much effort to release you from your grievance, not for some gratification!”
After hearing Leylin’s words, the female vengeful spirit suddenly felt that a calamity was looming over her.
Disturbed, crazed and pondering expressions flashed through Leylin’s face. Finally, they all uniformed into only one expression, Apathy! Indifference towards everything!

……

A few hours passed.
At this moment, there was a chill permeating the experiment lab. One could almost hear the wails of vengeful spirits within these four walls.
As for the female vengeful spirit in front of Leylin, it had almost lost its human appearance.
“The last step!” Leylin picked up a silver fork and pierced the female vengeful spirit’s head through the eyes.
“Pu!”
As if made from some special materials, the silver fork directly pierced through the female vengeful spirit’s eyeball.
“Hehe!” The female vengeful spirit squirmed and screamed like a wild beast, as if without a tongue.
After the fork had pierced the eyeball, the face of the female vengeful spirit could barely be made out. Two trickles of blood tears flowed down.
“This is the ancient potion Tears of Mary?”
Leylin raised his hand, dripping a few drops of blood in his hands. An icy cold and viscous sensation was felt. “The spirit is an illusory thing. As for me, I could actually come in contact with a spirit’s tears, what a wonder….” Leylin muttered as he smeared the red potion on his eyes.
* Bang! *
An extremely spicy sensation travelled from Leylin’s eyes, causing immense pain.
Red! His vision could only see the colour red!”
There seemed to be a woman’s voice sounding inside his brain as if narrating something. The voice gradually grew louder and louder. Finally, Leylin could only grab his head and head-butt viciously against the wall, to ease this symptom.
The A.I. Chip’s indicator appeared in front of Leylin.
[Subject underwent an unknown effect. spiritual force increased. Currently, it is 14.3…..]
The data that represented Leylin’s spiritual force continuously increased.
14.8
15.3
15.8
16.1
The number which represented the spiritual force continuously rose, finally stopping at the number 16.1.
“Hu… It has finally passed!” Leylin rubbed his temples firmly, as he inhaled a lungful of cold air.
“Although it’s very painful, the side effects are not too much…” Before he could finish speaking, Leylin discovered that there was a thin layer of mist in the surroundings. A flash of red colour robes streaked past in the room.
Leylin wanted to move, yet the air seemed to be extremely muddy like starch paste. Any movement would be difficult to execute! Finally, the owner of the red robes appeared in front of Leylin, the vengeful spirit! At this moment, more than half of the vengeful spirit’s head had dissolved. “If it was another time! Such an attack!” Leylin was extremely unwilling, but he was still struck in the chest by that claw. An icy cold chill started to spread from his chest.
The vengeful spirit wearing red robes continuously attacked, clawing strips of flesh off of Leylin’s body. Leylin’s expression of anger turned into indifference. A few minutes later, he opened his mouth with difficulty, “Gurisasi ~ duoluxian!” A dark-green flame burned on Leylin’s body, setting everything in the experiment lab ablaze….

“Hu…” After the dark-green flame was extinguished, Leylin recovered his mobility. At this moment, he finally had enough strength to look around at his surroundings. The experiment lab was the same as before, all apparatus lying neatly in their original position. As for the pentagon formation, it had lost all of its light, and the vengeful spirit was nowhere to be found. On Leylin, there were no traces of injuries, yet his expression did not seem well. It was because different indicators flashed from the A.I. Chip:

[Host has suffered from an unknown forcefield attack, determined from the database to be caused by a vengeful spirit! vitality decreased by 0.1] [Host has suffered from an unknown forcefield attack, determined from the database to be caused by a vengeful spirit! vitality decreased by 0.1] [Host has suffered from an
unknown forcefield attack, determined from the database to be caused by a vengeful spirit! vitality decreased by 0.1]
After 3 indications, Leylin’s face looked even more awful, “A.I. Chip, show me my current status!”
After the upgrade from using Tears of Mary, Leylin’s Spiritual Force reached 16.1. However, his vitality decreased by 0.3. Clearly, this was caused by the attack of the vengeful spirit.
“As expected, an ancient potion’s formulary cannot be modified so easily!”
Leylin sighed. He acted on his own initiative, changing many processes of the formulary, thus causing such an outcome.
“However, this decrease in vitality, compared to the increase in Spiritual Force, shows the value of this potion!”
Leylin was certain of his modified formulary for the ancient potion, Tears of Mary.
“Ancient potion – Tears of Mary modification successful, Host to give a name!”
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Blood Vengeance Potion!” Leylin thought of the final, flash of red, blurting out the name.
Although this potion requires a vengeful spirit as an ingredient, which was somewhat cruel, it was a potion that was hard to come by!
A single use could raise Spiritual Force by 3 points! The only minor backlash was: it was on the same level as the Azure Potion that Leylin had modified before.
As for the formulation process of this potion, it was somewhat ruthless. However, Leylin did not bother about it.
For Leylin, carrying out ruthless actions and even killing people,
was well within reason when in the face of benefits! People who only kill for joy were mental and inhumane. In his previous world, the environment was peaceful, so naturally he had also advocated peace then. However, in the Magus World, war was everywhere. Deaths occurred daily. The plebeians who faced dawn did not know if they would be alive to see the sun set. The law of the jungle and survival of the fittest were proclaimed explicitly by various powerful guilds and organisations. After coming to this world, Leylin followed ‘when in Rome, do as the Romans do’ and this became a completely egotistical person. As long as this potion was beneficial and did not cause him much hassle, he would not hesitate to create more of it! “This is the feeling of achieving 16 Spiritual Force, huh? How amazing!” Leylin shut his eyes, feeling the difference this increase brought him. Under his control, the Spiritual Force seemed to be a silver thread as it swept past every item in the room. Moreover, each of the item’s physical shape was perceived within Leylin’s mind. For regular acolytes, this was an extremely fresh feeling. However, Leylin saw that after a certain standard was achieved in Spiritual Force, it had a scanning effect similar to that of the A.I. Chip! “This effect, if mastered properly, could discover a majority of ambushes, never having to fear for another sneak attack!” Leylin appreciated the wondrous use of the Spiritual Force. “It’s a pity, however. For me, this is not as useful as the A.I. Chip!” In his sea of consciousness, waves of Spiritual Force constantly surged at the borders, continuously expanding the area of the sea. “Only that this external change is too obvious!” Leylin picked up a bronze mirror. On the screen of the bronze mirror, a brown-haired youthful countenance was reflected.
However, a pair of gleaming eyes flashed like diamonds in the night.

Normally, the upper limits of Spiritual Force for level 3 acolytes were 15, yet Leylin far exceeded this figure.

Moreover, when level 3 acolytes were about to breakthrough into an official Magus, their eyes would often show unusual signs of attraction.

That was the result of the boundless expansion in their massive sea of consciousness.

However, for Leylin, this was not good news. To others, he was just a newly advanced level 3 acolyte, yet now he exceeded those limits, this would bring about curiosity and suspicion from others.

If it was some regular acolyte, Leylin wasn’t too afraid. But if an official Magus required him to cooperate for questioning, then Leylin would meet with some trouble.

After all, Leylin had no confidence against official Magus since the A.I. Chip could not detect them.

“I can only conceal this for the time being!”

Leylin chanted a short incantation.

Creaking and cracking noises resounded on his face and his eyes dimmed, no longer radiating light.

This was a simple use of the Shapeshifting spell, the ability to modify facial features.

Many female official Magus would obtain such a spell and cast it on their faces, achieving a beautification effect.

“I hope this can conceal my presence for the time being!” Leylin was not confident.

After several modifications of the Shapeshifting spell by the A.I. Chip, level 3 acolytes would not be able to discover this.

However, Leylin was completely unsure if he could face an official Magus.

If they just walked past him, they may not notice his concealment.
As long as they did not use any detection spells, he should be able to mask it.
Deep down in his heart, Leylin had already decided. After travelling around the Poolfield Kingdom and discovering the vestige traces, he would set off to Zither Moon Mountain Plains in search of the remnants of the great Magus Serholm.
In any case, Leylin had expressed his interest to Kroft for wanting to travel, so suggesting it did not seem too abrupt.
After making some arrangements, Leylin rubbed his rumbling stomach, giving a wry smile. His experiment had already extended over a day’s worth of time.
No matter how high his vitality was, he was still a mortal, unable to escape from the laws of nature. Hence, there were symptoms of hunger.
Although he could replenish his strength with potions, Leylin still felt nauseous. Moreover, if the circumstances allowed for a better option, he would not mistreat himself.
Since the academy had a restaurant, why waste a potion?
Leylin cleaned up and opened his dorm’s door.
* Pa! * A white letter fell onto the ground. It seemed like someone paid Leylin a visit earlier. However, after seeing him concentrate on his experiment, they did not dare intrude, hence leaving a simple note.
“Who would it be? Bicky? Nyssa? Or someone else…”
Leylin opened the letter in curiosity.
After seeing the signature, Leylin’s expression was shocked, “It’s actually Jayden!”
As a fifth-grade genius acolyte, Jayden was somewhat of a lone wolf, seldom interacting with other acolytes.
As for now, Jayden actually took the initiative to meet with Leylin, which shocked Leylin.
“However, since he’s visited me, then I’ll meet him!”
After thinking for a while, Leylin raised his somewhat pale finger, directing scribbling on the white note. Every time his finger drew across, red characters would be left on the note. There was a simple spell cast on this paper note by Jayden, which could transmit some simple information. Of course, it was only usable in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy area, widely loved by acolytes. The recipient’s reply was extremely quick. Very soon, Leylin met up with Jayden inside of a room in the restaurant. Jayden now seemed to be gloomier. Looking at the area of his severed limb, Leylin noticed that a slim tiny arm had regrown and could not help but laugh.

It seems that his Flourishing Flower had been given to Jayden by Dorotte. What he did not know was the promise Jayden had to make in exchange for the Flourishing Flower.

“I have not thanked you regarding the Flourishing Flower!” Jayden sat on the white chair, raising his cup to Leylin. This gesture was somewhat impolite. Leylin frowned internally, yet not did not outwardly speak much about it.

After looking for a chair to sit down, he ignored the delicacy and aroma displayed in front of him. Leylin smiled in sincerity, “Regarding the information of official Magus that Professor Dorotte had exchanged with me, I should be the one expressing my thanks!” Naturally, Leylin had no clue that Dorotte had this information of advancing into a Branded Swordsman. It was Jayden who had leaked the news to him. As for the reason why it was probably due to Leylin ‘accidentally’ letting Jayden know that he had the Flourishing Flower. For Leylin, he would reap the largest benefit from Jayden, who desperately needed the Flourishing Flower to regrow his limb.
Jayden’s expression turned softer, “No matter what, we are acolytes who came from the same area, so it’s well within reason to help each other….”

Leylin too gave him some superficial replies, before Jayden finally revealed his motive for seeking Leylin today.

“Leylin, Professor Dorotte had long since told me that the information he had given you, a major portion of it was missing. There is no way that it could be reliable for advancing into an official Magus. It is because you also want to look for other traces that you are eager to go exploring, isn’t it?”

“Of course, no matter if it’s the academy or the families, their conditions are too much!”

Leylin interlocked his fingers.

This notion was considered by many level 3 acolytes. Only when the adventure for the remnants was unfruitful and acknowledging that the golden period of advancement was almost over, would they then consider signing a spiritual contract with the academy or the families.
just happen to have a trace of remnants regarding official Magus….” Jayden added.

After listening to Leylin’s reply, Jayden’s smile grew even wider.

“Remnants? Clues? You actually dare to go out?”

Leylin was somewhat shocked. In the eyes of an outsider, Jayden was the murderer of Torash from the enemy academy. The hatred held by the enemy official Magus was already locked onto him, yet he still dared leave for an exploration?

After hearing Leylin’s words, Jayden’s face darkened.

“I will kill that old geezer sooner or later! I’ll turn his corpse into a specimen and keep it in my lab…”

After cursing, Jayden then explained to Leylin, “The power of the Lighthouse of the Night is still formidable. Under the mediation of that lord Magus, the Sage Gotham Hut and the Whitewoods Castle would not dare to exact revenge hastily; not unless they wish to be destroyed!”

“On the contrary, with the passing of time, the treaty was agreed at a span of 20 years. My situation consists of constant dangers. Hence, for this, I have to retaliate somehow, to ensure myself with the ability to protect my life!”

“Becoming an official Magus?” Leylin’s brows furrowed as he guessed Jayden’s intention.

“Indeed! To go against an official Magus, one would only have the
ability after becoming an official Magus!” A longing expression streaked across Jayden’s face, “Once I become an official Magus, why would I still be afraid of the enemy’s retaliation?” Leylin nodded his head, Jayden’s train of thought was correct. The protection of the academy and the professors were external factors, which could be removed at any given time. Only the strength that belongs to oneself is the most reliable factor! After understanding the situation briefly, Leylin began to relax, slowly reclining in his chair. “So then, I have two questions. Where are the remnants? Why me?” Jayden inhaled a lungful of air and knew that if he did not reveal any information, Leylin would naturally not take the bait. “I cannot reveal the location of the remnants. However, I can tell you the general location. It’s near Zither Moon Mountain Plains….” Upon speaking the four words, ‘Zither Moon Mountain Plains’, Leylin’s pupils contracted, yet very soon he recollected himself. This change, which happened which a fraction of a second, went completely unnoticed by Jayden. “As for why I sought you out?” Jayden smiled wryly, “Zither Moon Mountain Plains is littered with poisonous plants and miasma. A Potioneering acolyte needs to come along, to ensure our safety… Right now in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the person I am familiar with, who is also a level 3 acolyte, is only you….” Leylin stared blankly, only then did he recall that the acolytes in the academy barely amounted to 50. Back when Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had thousands of acolytes, there were plenty of Potioneering acolytes around. Hence, Jayden could take his time to choose. However, after the bloodbath, Jayden’s choice was extremely limited, so much so that the only option left was Leylin!
“Although I don’t know if the remnants that Jayden mentioned were left behind by the great Magus Serholm; since the vengeful spirit Roman had found clues to it, it’s well within reason that Jayden had discovered something too….”

Thoughts spun in Leylin’s head, yet on the surface, he looked hesitant.

“The war has just ended. Right now it’s too dangerous to leave the academy….”

“According to my sources, the remnants are of an official Magus. There could very well be information and resources on advancing into an official Magus. Isn’t that what you need right now? Moreover, as long as you agree to participate, the reward aspects…”

After looking at Leylin’s expression, Jayden felt hurried, hence, he continued to elaborate, even adding a few bargaining chips. Leylin put on a struggling expression, finally agreeing to give it some thought over these couple of days.

After seeing Leylin act like this, Jayden could only consent.

After all, apparently Leylin seemed to be somewhat moved towards the end.

As expected, on the second day, Leylin sought out Jayden, informing him of his decision to participate.

……

Early in the morning

Leylin and Jayden rode on two black horses each, leaving the compound of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy under the rays of the dawning sun.

Before leaving, Leylin looked at the distant graveyard of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy for one last time.

The grey granite construction seemed to be littered with cracks, as
before. However, it might just have been a misconception, but those cracks were seemingly smaller now. It was as if this massive graveyard was a living organism amidst the processes of recovery.

“The next time I return, there will surely be many changes!”

After that last glance at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Leylin disappeared into the dark forest.

……

Five days later, within the Poolfield Kingdom, on the outskirts of a province in the west. On the road, 3 acolytes were waiting.

* Ta Ta Ta! * As the 3 people looked away into the distance, two figures on horseback appeared on the horizon. Those two riders stopped in front of the 3 people, revealing the countenance that belonged to Leylin and another unfamiliar acolyte.

“Leylin, let me introduce to you, this is Mister Bosain, from the Lilytell family…."

The stranger’s voice belonged to Jayden, as he introduced them to Leylin. To avoid trouble, Jayden had masked his appearance.

“Also, this is Shaya and Roth!”

Jayden introduced the group to Leylin. Bosain had golden bright hair and wore silver robes appearing dressed very grandly. If not for the acolyte mark, Leylin would even think that it was some professor who joined Jayden’s group.

However, Jayden specially emphasised on the Mister honorific and the explanation on the Lilytell family, giving Leylin a shock.

“Lilytell family? One of the big-three families in the academy, where every generation has produced at least one official Magus?”

“Indeed, in addition, the chairman of the Abyssal Bone Forest
Academy was elected by the big three families.”
Bosain added, pride evident on his face.
“Which is to say, he could have direct access to high-grade meditation techniques! Or, I can…” Leylin outwardly displayed a shocked expression with a tinge of envy, satisfying the ego of Bosain.
However deep down, he had some villainous thoughts.
As for Shaya, she was a fire-haired female acolyte, reminding Leylin of Neela. Ever since his return to the academy, he hasn’t seen Neela once.
She could be dead, or she did not receive the academy’s notice. There was also the possibility that she abandoned the academy and escaped.
Towards her, Leylin only sighed gently, before removing her from his thoughts.
As for the last member of the small party Roth, he was the archetype male of the West. His stature was tall and big, taller than Leylin by half a head, his face containing a simple and honest expression.
However, Leylin did not dare to be careless. acolytes who could survive in the bloodbath were not simple characters.
Moreover, these 3 people had the energy waves of level 3 acolytes. Bosain and Shaya even had the aura of magic artifacts on their body, as detected by the A.I. Chip.
“Hello! I’m Leylin, a Potioneering acolyte, I hope that…”
Leylin introduced himself to the rest.
“The Zither Moon Mountain Plains is perilous, however, I have heard of your reputation being only lower to the Potioneering genius Merlin! I believe that you would ensure our logistics and safety. . . ”
Bosain smiled amiably at Leylin, giving a feeling of warmth.
“I’ll try my best!” Leylin nodded his head.
“Alright! It’s getting late, let’s set off!”
Leylin nodded his head, and the five of them began their journey. However, deep down, Leylin was somewhat disgruntled towards Jayden’s action of adding more members without consulting him. He certainly did not approve of the current situation. Moreover, Bosain’s identity seemed to give him a troublesome feeling.
As if noticing something, Jayden engaged in a private conversation to explain to him.
“Bosain and the rest found out about my plans incidentally and insisted on joining. For this reason, he did not hesitate to keep the truth from his own family members and his professor, and sneaked out of the academy!” Jayden smiled wryly, “You know it as well, I am unable to refuse them!”
For the big families behind the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, it was the most dangerous period right now since the war ended. Bosain, as the successor of the family, has to always be inside the academy compounds.
However, now he did not even bring a bodyguard, which indicated that this was a covert exploration. Even his family did not know of his destination.
Concerning this, Leylin could only smile wryly and be more wary of his surroundings, with no better idea in mind.
The Zither Moon Mountain Plains was situated on the western borders of the Poolfield Kingdom. It was the boundary between the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the Sage Gotham Hut.
These two forces had just ended a huge war and Jayden even carried a blood debt since he killed the enemy’s genius. Once this party was discovered, they would definitely have problems.
No matter if it was Leylin or Jayden, or Bosain and the rest, they were all intelligent and conscientious people. Moreover at crucial moments, they had the courage to fight for their lives.
Along the way, the five of them changed their travelling outfits into those of young, noble masters and mistress, continuously travelling along the western borders. 
Without a doubt, it wouldn’t be inaccurate to say that knowledge and power were wielded in the hands of nobles. In the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, most acolytes were born of nobility and had no need to learn how to dress as one. 
This was why the five of them dressed as nobility. Their disposition was naturally formed, if they were to dress as someone else, they would definitely be noticed. 
Leylin too tried to get closer with the other 3 acolytes. Shaya and Roth were rather friendly. The most important factor was that Leylin was also a level 3 acolyte, moreover, he was acknowledged by them in having talent in Potioneering, so they were somewhat friendly. 
As for Bosain, he had the behaviour of being an elite amongst magicians. Refined and courteous, yet arrogant to the skies. He had the deceitful characteristics of the nobility, so he appeared somewhat indifferent towards Leylin and the other acolytes. 
Leylin felt that once he spoke of any information regarding the high-grade meditation technique, he would definitely gain the attention of Bosain. 
However, even if that was the case, after many days being together with them, Leylin had, more or less, determined their stats.
A part from Leylin, among this party of five, Bosain would be the strongest based on stats.

In the stats detected by the A.I. Chip, Bosain’s Spiritual Force had reached 15! It was already the requirement needed to advance to the level of an official Magus.

However, for some reason, it was concealed like Leylin’s. Bosain also used some secret method to conceal his Spiritual Force’s energy waves and also the aberration of his eyes, without letting anyone find out.

Moreover, as a level 3 acolyte from a large family, Bosain’s magic artifact emitted energy waves that were extremely strong, only second to the Fallen Star Pendant hung around Leylin’s neck.

In addition, the Lilytell family was one of the three big families of the academy. If Bosain, who was one of the younger generation that hailed from there, had no magic artifact on him, Leylin would be the first to not believe it.

As for Jayden, Shaya, and Roth they were level 3 acolytes who had just advanced. Jayden and Shaya carried magic artifacts with them and were stronger than Roth by a small margin. However, Roth was neither obsequious nor supercilious along the way, obviously he had his own hidden trump card.

“Without using any trump cards, between Bosain and I, we have a fifty-fifty chance of winning. As for Shaya and Jayden, they are below us by a little, whereas Roth is ranked the last. However, he
cannot be taken too lightly either!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed, rapidly calculating that if any conflicts were to occur within the party, what would be the result and the control that he had of such a situation.
However, be it in the novels of his previous world, or the adventure that he undertook today, various adventurers would have internal strife after obtaining the treasures. It was inevitable.
Leylin questioned himself if Jayden or the rest discovered that it was actually the inheritance of the great Magus Serholm they were after, they would definitely not be willing to share the loot obtained.
Who knew if he might be the first to revolt then?

……

The Zither Moon Town was a little town located at the foot of the Zither Moon Mountain Plains.
This day, on a road that was flying with dust, there were five travel-worn horse riders that appeared.
“Alright, we will enter the Zither Moon Mountain Plains from the Zither Moon Town. Before that, we can have a lodging at the inn in the town!”
Jayden reined in his horse. After getting down, he took out a badly damaged map to have a look.
At this moment, he had a completely different appearance. It was a rather secular face changing spell, which let Leylin somewhat surprised.
“This is the area of the borders. If there were any people from the Sage Gotham Hut academy it wouldn’t be odd at all, so we have to be more careful…”
“We know it already!” Bosain straightened his robes, showing impatience.
The five of them led their horses to an inn called “Ghosts With Grievances Don’t Weep”.
Opening the door, it was as though it was a whole new world. Shouting and clamouring noises, along with the stenches of sweat and the odor of alcohol, wafted over.
Jayden’s brow’s furrowed, but he still walked towards the counter, tossing out a golden coin.
“Give me 5 private rooms….”
“I’m sorry, we only have 3 rooms left!” Before Jayden finished speaking, a person, who seemed to be the shop owner and who also stank of rum, interrupted him.
“Alright then! Three rooms, we’ll have it all. Also, give us your best delicacies!”
Finding lodging at an inn in this small town is already considered fortunate, so Jayden did not pursue further.
But when he was paying the money, he complained, “Isn’t this damned place the one that doesn’t have even a few visitors each year? Now, why is is that there are only 3 rooms left?”
“Burp!” The shop owner hiccuped, “Who knows? The Zither Moon Mountain Plains is filled with the damned poisonous gas and miasma. Many of these lads don’t return after setting off. Usually, there are only people here to drink some rum, but regarding gold coins, I seemed to have met with two waves of important guests today!”
“Two waves?” Leylin stepped forward, “Which is to say, there was someone else before us who came here?”
“Indeed, and they even asked for a tour guide. Gold coin payment, bah! Who wants to die in the depths of Zither Moon Mountain Plains?”
After hearing this news, Leylin and the rest looked at each other, having a somewhat ominous premonition.
“Alright! I’ll let Pinky bring you to your rooms!” The shop owner
took down 3 keys that were extremely oily, as he shouted, “Pinky! Pinky! Don’t let me wait another second, if not I’ll scrape your skin off…."
* Bang! * Very soon, a dwarf which wore a grey pointed hat stood in front of the owner.
“Respected Sir, Pinky is here for your bidding…..”
This dwarf named Pinky was only half of Leylin’s height. He also wore a flowery green costume, looking somewhat comical.
“Bring our esteemed guests to the rooms upstairs to rest, you know which few!”
The owner casually smacked the dwarf, before handing over the keys.
“Dear guests! Please follow Pinky! Be careful of the steps!”
Pinky touched his hat and led the way at the front.
Leylin and the rest followed behind.
Shaya took off her cloak, revealing a beautiful face and alluring body, and this attracted the whistles from a few drunken blokes suddenly.
Towards this, Shaya was not irked at all, she even sent a few coquettish glances over, igniting some heat within those drunkards.
Looking at these group of animals that were lusting over her, Leylin snickered. This expression of Shaya’s showed that she was already angry to a certain extent.
If these drunkards acted recklessly and stepped forward to provoke, they would definitely suffer a fate worse than death!
“Leylin, you and Roth will be in this room, Bosain and me in the other. The last one would be for Shaya, any opinions?”
As the organiser for this adventure, Jayden quickly allocated the rooms to the members.
Seeing Jayden assign the difficult Bosain to himself, Leylin and Roth heaved a sigh of relief, naturally not raising any objections.
Shaya did not say anything either.
“Also, come to my room in a while’s time. Towards the previous batch of customers the shop owner mentioned, I am somewhat concerned!” Jayden’s brow’s furrowed.

“We are all staying at the same inn. I believe that we will definitely see the other party!” Leylin spoke blandly as if hinting at something.

According to that dwarf Pinky, the earlier batch of guests was currently not inside the inn. They seemed to have gone out to purchase some goods, even spending money to hire a tour guide.

Dinner was held at the large hall on the first level. The main dish was mud bean paste, with some wild herbs as seasoning. However, food like this was, in the eyes of Leylin and the rest, fit only for swines. The few of them had no appetite, yet they were curious about the previous batch of guests, so Leylin and the others chose to remain inside the large hall. They sipped on their drinks as they waited.

* Bang! *

Leylin was drinking his malt, and Shaya had reached her tolerance limits due to the provocation of a few drunkards beside her when the inn’s door opened at this moment.

* Hu Hu! * Large gale of cold wind blew into the inn, lowering the somewhat lively atmosphere. After seeing these few people who just entered, Leylin’s body tensed.

It was five cloaked figures. From the energy waves on their bodies, they were actually level 2 and 3 acolytes! When they entered, they too obviously noticed Leylin and the others.

The line of sight connected between the two parties, and sparks appeared. However, as if nothing had happened, the five cloaked figures did not stop and continued walking towards the second floor.
“How is it? Are they acolytes from the Sage Gotham Hut?” Shaya whispered, unable to conceal the worry on her face.
“I don’t know, but they are obviously not here on a holiday!” Jayden’s expression darkened.
“I say, if we did not choose this inn for lodging, would we have been able to avoid them?” Roth scratched his head.
“Avoidance?” Bosain smirked in contempt, “It is the thought of weak people. The Lilytell family would never ever have to avoid!” Being looked down upon by Bosain, Roth tensed. He was suffering from humiliation, yet he did not react.
“Moreover, the Zither Moon Town is so small, and there is only this one inn. When we entered the town, we were already exposed. Any sudden movements will only attract the vigilance of the other party!”
“The crucial thing is, what is their motive for coming here?” Leylin asked.
“Could it be that they also have found traces of the clues in here?” Jayden’s expression changed, “I purchased this lead for a heavy price, buying a book that was scribbled with ancient characters.
“Which is to say, the other party could have found something too. Who knows if they might even have a professor who tagged along…” Shaya’s face looked even more uneasy, “Should we abandon the operation this time?”
“No way!” Jayden was the first who refused. For this lead, he had paid too high a price, naturally he was unwilling for them to give up.
“I don’t think any of us here would be willing to let their professors claim half of the benefits that we obtained here after a dangerous exploration” Leylin added.
“However, before they notice us, the situation might change!”
“How about we get rid of them? I took a look, there are only three level 3 acolytes and two level 2 acolytes!” Jayden revealed a brutal
expression.
“We can try, but it has to be done within the Zither Moon Mountain
Plains. Moreover, we should eliminate all of the traces. I don’t wish
for the other side to find a reason to go to war with us!” Bosain
added.
“It could also be some wandering magicians, instead of the acolytes
from the Sage Gotham Hut…”
Roth said, his voice extremely soft.
A total of five acolytes, with three level 3 acolytes. This formation
required too much time and effort to nurture them, so wandering
magicians would never be able to do it.
Only academies and large scale magician guilds would be able to
send out these many acolytes at once.
“Alright then! No matter where they are from, even for the one
percent chance that they are here to seek out the remnants, once
they enter the Zither Moon Mountain Plains, they are our enemies!”
Jayden spoke in a murderous tone.
As acolytes, they did not wish to break the unwritten rules of the
Magus World by taking action within the small town where regular
humans lived. As for the other party, they could very well hold the
same thoughts.
In the depths of the night, due to Jayden’s suggestions, the five of them abandoned the idea of resting and all gathered inside one room, where they each took turns for the night watch. Also, the other team had the same idea.

“They have left!” warned Leylin, who was monitoring the other team’s acolytes with the help of A.I. Chip. Upon hearing his voice, the other 4 acolytes, who were all previously snoozing either on the sofa or on the table, suddenly opened their eyes.

“I heard the sound of their footsteps as they left and they were all heading in the direction of the Zither Moon Mountain Plains’ entrance,” continued Leylin.

“Choosing the night time to start a war, eh? Let’s catch up with them!” Jayden excitedly spoke.

As people who had survived the bloodbath, Jayden and others had all experienced the letting of the enemy’s blood. As far as this situation was concerned, not only did they all not have a common fear experienced by acolytes, instead, they all were looking forward to it for some unknown reason.

During this whole time, their knapsacks were unopened and left in the corner. Leylin and the rest hurriedly strapped them on and left the inn.

A total of 10 black shadows disappeared in the town, under the dim
glow of the starlight.
* Sou Sou Sou! *
A few black figures that were hard to track using the physical eyes rapidly left the town for the entrance of the Zither Moon Mountain Plains.
“The other party wouldn’t be so naive that they think they could outrun us. The only possibility is that they chose to fight!”
Leylin’s eyes gleamed, surmising the thoughts of the other party. However, he had faith in his party!
His side consisted of all level 3 acolytes and even had 4 magic artifacts. The A.I. Chip did not detect any energy waves from magic artifacts on the other party!
Moreover, in the other party, there were two level 2 acolytes. To Leylin, this was where the weak link and burden lies!
* Ka-Cha! * A branch that was in the way was broken as Leylin dashed through, his speed was not lowering the slightest.
Through meditation, acolytes can reflect their magic power on their own bodies, greatly enhancing the physical qualities. Concerning level 3 acolyte, the increase of spiritual force alone can already bring their vitality up to 2.5, equal to that of a Knight!
Moreover, level 3 acolyte could, through various self-experimentation, obtain stronger and larger physical prowess.
The pitch-black night, together with the jumbled branches and vines, could not hinder the speed of Leylin and his party.
“The other team has stopped!”
Leylin drew to a halt and scrutinized the whole surrounding.
Towering trees with their tops seemingly supporting the heavens, the dense foliage and undergrowth completely shielded them from the starlight, and only trickles of starlight were visible through the leaves.
But this was just enough for acolytes to see.
“This distance is already far from the town. Even if there are any
energy waves, no one would discover it at all!” Jayden placed a green badge on his chest.
“You actually took out your magic artifact now, just to deal with a few pieces of trash?” Bosain laughed and retracted his hand into the large sleeves.
Looking at the A.I. Chip’s scan result, Leylin was somewhat speechless.
Under the detection of the A.I. Chip, Bosain too held onto his own magic artifact. It was even one which could immediately be activated.
This behavior of Bosain, where he contradicted himself by speaking one thing but doing something else, was something Leylin and Jayden were used to.
On the other side, Shaya and Roth also made their individual preparations.
acolytes who survived the bloodbath were extremely clear on one point. Even a lion has to use its full force to catch a rabbit! No matter how weak the opponent seems, one must not slack off. If not, the loss of one’s own life might happen!
“Let’s go and get rid of them!” Jayden laughed sardonically and stepped out first.
“Hu…."
After going past a black leafy tree, Leylin saw a dark green marsh. The surface of the swamp had many dried branches and leaves, interspersed with the corpses of other animals.
On the other side of the swamp, the 5 acolytes that they saw previously were standing there quietly.
What was different about their outfits were that on the cloak and robes, they were already wearing the badge that represented the academy they were in.
“Sage Gotham Hut?” Jayden icily said.
“acolytes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” The leader of the
other party had some guesses to the identity of Leylin’s party. “It seems like another bunch of people will be dead again!” Leylin sighed in his heart. As these both parties, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and the Sage Gotham Hut, had just ended the war, their mutual hatred was as deep as the seas. Although the mediation by the Lighthouse of the Night had made them sign a peace treaty, that was at most a form of restraint for the official Magi. As for acolytes, if the two sides were to see each other, then it was certain that one side would perish. The two parties stood quietly and faced off the other. For a moment, even the air seemed to have congealed. “Actually… We don’t have to….” The other team’s leader remained silent for a while, then opened his mouth. * Chi Chi * The moment that leader opened his mouth, a murderous glint flashed in Jayden’s eyes and the badge on his chest radiated a ray of green light. Countless murky green vines with reversed barbs rose from the ground, encircling the five opponents! In terms of battle experience, Jayden obviously had more than the other party. Moreover, Jayden carried the blood debt of killing Torash. Amongst their party of five, he was the most unwilling to let the enemy go scot-free. If not, once other party disclosed the news, even if Jayden concealed himself, he would be in the pursuit of the official Magus from the other side! “Despicable!” “Escaaaaape!” “Aargh!” The five acolytes obviously did not think that Jayden would be this decisive and ruthless, not even mouthing a greeting before he took action. Within a fraction of a second, a green whirlwind swirled around
two acolytes, increasing their speed and bringing them off the attack area of the vines.
As for another acolyte, there was an orange-red flame that burned in his surroundings. It took on the form of a whip, continuously attacking the vines, which burned in retreat.
As for the last two level 2 acolytes, they seemed rather miserable. Countless vines wrapped them into a ball. Along with the tightening of the vines, fresh blood seeped through from within the ball.
“Kill them all!”
The moment Jayden struck, Bosain, Leylin, and the others rushed forward too.
“Right now, I can confirm that this bunch of acolytes is nurtured in the greenhouse, with no experience of seeing a war field that reeks of blood. They are as weak as sheep in the face of a strong adversary!”
Leylin looked at the few acolytes with a pitiable look.
He guessed that these few acolytes did not even participate in the previous bloodbath. Their mentality was the same as when they were inside their academy.
However, he loved opponents like this the most. Because one can reap the largest benefits without spending much effort.
As Leylin dashed forward, he chanted an incantation.
* Sssii! * A pitch-black hand rose from the shadows, grabbing onto the ankle of a level 3 acolyte.
* Umbra’s Hand!”
* Sssii! * The hand that was extremely corrosive dissolved part of the opponent’s leg and the flesh and blood continuously fell down.
“Aaargh… someone save me!”
The enemy acolyte fell onto the ground, his wails pierced past the quiet forest, directly to the heavens.
“Kiddo! Your mother will save you!” Shaya mocked him. She
waved her arm and a few silver light flew from her hand, directly piercing the head of the fallen acolyte.
* Bang! * The acolyte’s head sliced open like a watermelon as the brain and various juices sprayed on the floor.
3 people died directly from the first wave of attack from Leylin’s party.
“Damn it! Monty!” The two level 3 acolyte gritted their teeth and retreated. One of them withdrew a silver whistle from his robes and blew on it.
* Xiu Xiu Jiu Jiu! *
The piercing noise from the whistle sounded. From afar a growl from a beast was heard. It was oppressive, bloodthirsty and seemed to come from midair.
[Sound frequency recorded. Comparing to database, identified as a Moonlight Mayfly!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Moonlight Mayfly?” Leylin was surprised, “No wonder the other party chose this marsh as the battlefield!” He immediately shouted, “Be careful! They have a contracted beast. It’s the Moonlight Mayfly, hurry and leave the marsh!”
* Groar! *
The growl sounded and a massive black figure pressed down from the top of the trees, hovering in the midair above the marsh.
It was a giant creature with purple and black light emitting from the body. Also, it was the size of a horse, and two wings like that of a bat’s grew from its sides. At the end of the wings, there were barbed talons. The mouth was extremely pointed and was filled with razor-sharp, white teeth. A pair of bright, yellow eyes seemed to burn like flames in the middle of the night.
“A.I. Chip, scan the creature!” Leylin ordered silently.
large wings can allow them to maintain flight for a medium short distance. 2. Fury of the Marsh. As the pet of the marshes, the Moonlight Mayfly can call upon the fury of the marsh. Uses the marsh attack on enemies. Might: 7 to 9 degrees!]
* Shiikkk! * As Leylin warned them, an unpleasant roar came from the Moonlight Mayfly floating in midair.
With the roar, the surface of the marsh which was originally serene suddenly surged with ripples.
The ripples grew larger, finally turning into a 12-metre tall wave, directing falling right upon Leylin and the rest.
Many impurities were contained within the murky waters, and it brought along branches and corpses of wild beasts. The wave actually took over a form that seemed to cover the skies.
“Well done, my precious!”
The acolyte, who blew loudly on the whistle, shouted, “Kill them for me!”
“Damn it! Even a little worm wants to kill us!”
Leylin and the others rushed out of the marsh area. As the might of the Fury of the Marsh could only be displayed inside the marsh, the attack stopped pursuing. However, Bosain remained behind.
At this moment, facing this huge wave, his expression was as if he just suffered a humiliation.
* Bang! * A large wave surged and attacked Bosain. However, on the surface of his body, a large silver metal shield automatically appeared in front of him.
The shield was a dozen centimetres thick. On the surface of the shield, there were mysterious and complicated runes and it looked to be extremely sturdy.
The Fury of the Marsh attack crashed on the shield, creating a loud bang.
Bang!
Under the crashing of the wave, the silver shield seemed to be a reef in the middle of the ocean, not moving the slightest.
After the Fury of the Marsh was over, Bosain was still unscathed behind the shield.
Seeing this, Leylin’s pupil shrank.
“A defense type magic artifact!”
As the younger generation hailing from one of the big three families in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Bosain actually had a defense type magic artifact.
Leylin clearly understood the difficulty of dealing with it, as he too had a defense type magic artifact, the Fallen Star Pendant. Once the Fallen Star Pendant was activated, Leylin was invincible amongst acolytes.
As for the two opposing level 3 acolytes, they were obviously scared stiff by Bosain’s actions. There was actually a moment when they stood still.
Especially the acolyte who signed a contract with the Moonlight Mayfly, he gripped the whistle tightly, disbelief written all over his pallid face.
After the Fury of the Marsh attack, the giant Moonlight Mayfly seemed to have been spent. It continued to hover in midair, yet did not attack again.
[The Moonlight Mayfly’s attack can only be used once per day. Following which it has a cooldown period of 20 hours. Also, during this period, it would be in a weakened state!]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“A good chance!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and two potions, red and purple coloured, flew from his hands.

* Bang! * A red flame with purple smoke exploded on the body of the Moonlight Mayfly.

The huge explosion engulfed the Moonlight Mayfly. From the purple-red halo of the spell, the shrieks of the Moonlight Mayfly could be heard.

After the potion’s effect had worn off, the Moonlight Mayfly in midair was in a miserable state. Both its claws were broken, with many holes on its wings. It seemed not to be able to float in the air any longer, covering the distance between itself and the ground rapidly, as if wanting to rest.

“You damned bastard! You actually dare….”

Looking at the Moonlight Mayfly approaching the ground, Bosain roared. The silver shield in front of him then emitted a white light. The thick shield melted in the light, and silver liquid swirled around Bosain’s hands, turning into a silver greatsword.

“Hah!”

Bosain raised the greatsword with both hands and jumped up before slashing down!

* Sou! *

A silver flash of light chopped at the neck of the Moonlight Mayfly who was struggling, and a stream of blood appeared in its place.

The head of the Moonlight Mayfly was chopped off, spraying a large amount of black and purple ichor.

One slash to sever the head! The massive Moonlight Mayfly was actually decapitated with just one slash of Bosain’s sword.

“There is even a secondary effect! What a powerful magic artifact!
Of course, Bosain’s strength is an important factor!”
Leylin gasped in amazement.
“Ah, no!” The moment the Moonlight Mayfly was decapitated, the acolyte let out a shrill cry.
Moreover, the moment the eyes of the severed Moonlight Mayfly’s head dimmed, the acolyte’s face turned white, and wrinkles started to appear all over his face.
“It seems like it was a life-bound contract he signed. No wonder, despite his average strength, he obtained the loyalty of the Moonlight Mayfly….”
Leylin sighed, “A pity that life-bound contracts are linked with the creature. Once the contracted creature dies, the host will not be able to escape the same fate!”
After the fire in the yellow eyes of the Moonlight Mayfly disappeared, the acolyte panted. At this moment, he was already a white-haired old man and then he fell to the ground, losing all signs of life.
“Ahhh!”
The final remaining acolyte shouted, immediately turned around and ran.
At the same time, a feather was thrown into the air by him. A black flash of light turned the feather into a nighthawk which flew in the air.
“A magic summon, hurry and stop it!” Jayden pointed and several vines immediately gave chase.
“Arrow spell!” Red-haired Shaya shouted, and from her hands, a few bright white-silver arrows shot towards the night hawk.
*Jiu, Jiu!* The night hawk whistled and flapped its wings, moving in a beautiful arc as it avoided the attack from the green vines.
After which, the nighthawk with its razor sharp wings smacked the few silver arrows away.
“It’s also a magic creature!”
Bosain’s voice weakened.
“We cannot let it relay the news, if not we’ll be in a dangerous situation!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed, his wrist guard changing shape, turning into a black longbow.
“A.I. Chip! Calculate wind speed, humidity, and trajectory….”
* Chi! * The black arrow flashed across the sky like a lightning bolt, directly piercing the right wing of the night hawk.
With a wail, the nighthawk fell down.
“Nice one!” Bosain shouted in glee. His speed increased greatly, brandishing the silver greatsword.
* Pu! * The silver greatsword produced a white silk net, capturing the night hawk within.
“Go to hell!” The white silk net continued to tighten, finally turning into a ball of blood and feathers.
“We have finally gotten rid of it!” Jayden and Shaya heaved a sigh of relief.
“There is also this one!”
* Chi La La! * The thicket parted and Roth’s figure appeared in front of the party. Only now his appearance had taken a drastic change.
His right arm was blasted off, revealing many white tentacles. Half of his face was also strewn with green scales.
As for the tentacles on his right arm, it was holding onto the head of the last acolyte who escaped. The head wore a frightened expression!
“A mutation experiment? And it is so thorough!”
Leylin and the other three were shocked.
Although level 3 acolytes can enhance their own body and transform it to a certain degree, an acolyte’s spiritual force was still far beneath that of an official Magus. Many high-grade ingredients and knowledge weren’t enough, so more often than not, forcefully
enhancing the body would result in an irreversible damage. However, Roth’s current state showed that he was extremely sane.
* Sou Sou! * White tentacles continuously retracted back into his body. Very soon, Roth took on a half-naked appearance, returning back to his regular form.
Roth swung his right arm, tossing the acolyte’s head onto the floor and smiled widely.
“Now, the inconveniences have all been disposed of!”
“Indeed!” Jayden looked at Roth, “We have already been friends for two years. Although I knew your mutation talent is rather high, I never expected that you have already contained the physical transformation aspect!”
Roth looked at the other four and shrugged his shoulders. “acolytes must also have their trump cards, shouldn’t they?”
“Alright! Even though we annihilated the opponents, to prevent any unforeseen circumstances, we had better hasten the exploration and leave this place…”
Bosain suggested as he placed the magic artifact back in his robes.
“Indeed! The other party could have revealed their location to someone else. We have to hurry and look for the remnants in the Zither Moon Mountain Plains!”
Leylin also agreed.
“Alright, let us set off immediately!”
Jayden nodded his head and was about to lead the party away.
“Wait a minute, I even found this on his body!” Roth smiled and handed over a pale yellow scroll over to Jayden.
“This is…” Jayden opened it and his expression looked extremely unpleasant as if it belonged on a corpse.
“A.I. Chip, record!” The moment Jayden opened the map, Leylin immediately ordered the A.I. Chip to record it.
From the geographical drawing, the map depicted the Zither Moon Mountain Plains. Moreover, among the signs of the dark forest,
there was a thin red line which extended from the Zither Moon Town entrance to the depths of the mountain. It stopped at another marking which showed a cliff. Moreover, at the bottom of the cliff, there was the name ‘Dylan Gardens’

“Did the purpose of the other party coincide with our exploration?” Leylin asked suddenly.

“Indeed!” Jayden nodded vigorously, suddenly turning impatient. “Damn it, I don’t know how many leads this remnant owner created. Let’s hurry, I don’t wish to see a remnant that has already been scoured clean!”

Leylin inwardly saw the light. What the great Magus Serholm left behind was an inheritance. He definitely wished for someone to discover and continue his legacy. Hence, he left behind many leads. At this moment, Leylin could already confirm that the clues Jayden had belonged to the inheritance of the great Magus Serholm!

As there was a possibility that someone else might be there before them, the five of them proceeded with their journey, their hearts heavy and their complexions reflected their uneasiness.

However, they moved quickly, and in a few hours’ time, they had already entered the depths of the Zither Moon Mountain Plains. At this moment, the mountain was extremely different from when they had first stepped into it.

The change in the vegetation here was to an extreme. If the Zither Moon Mountain Plains border had normal plants growing, right now, what they saw in front of them were some relatively bizarre species of plants.

The most common plants were a species of big shrubs that were white in colour and their leaves had a strange spiral form. Every time a gust of wind blew, the sea of shrubs would move with the wind, producing a sound similar to playing the piano keys.

* Ding Ding Dong Dong! * The piano-like sounds was extremely chaotic. Leylin became aroused, feeling a need to recklessly charge
forth!
“Careful! This is the Piano Key Bush. The noise it makes can attract regular humans. Even an acolyte would be somewhat affected!” Leylin warned, “Earlier, the missing people from the Zither Moon Town could very well have been attracted to these sounds, entering an illusion and dying in heat…."
After which, Leylin withdrew a few potions from his bag and distributed it to Jayden and the rest.
“This is a tranquilizing potion that I have brewed, it can resist such effects!”
Jayden, Roth, and Shaya looked at the test-tube in their hands and drank its contents after tasting a little of it.
As for Bosain, he shook his head to refuse, directly returning the potion to Leylin.
“I don’t need it!”
Leylin shrugged his shoulders and led the way at the front.
On the later parts of the exploration, there were traps with poisonous gases and ambushes. This was the reason a Potioneering acolyte was needed to counteract them.
This was also the reason why Jayden asked Leylin to come.
After which, Leylin and the rest met several waves of miasma and hordes of poisonous insects. Under the aid of the potions Leylin provided, the party got through these danger zones with ease. After Leylin displayed a few methods of using the potions to dispel the poisonous insects and miasma, Jayden and the rest were convinced of Leylin’s talent. Even Bosain from the Lilytell family would occasionally cast surprised glances at Leylin. Obviously, he had heard of Leylin’s talent in Potioneering before, but Leylin’s talent had exceeded his expectations. The party trekked over land and water, finally arriving at the overhanging cliff depicted on the map two days later.

“So beautiful!” Shaya gasped. Even Leylin and the others showed signs of indulgence. On the edge of the cliff, there were bright yellow flowers growing on the levelled ground. In the heart of the flower, it was bright red. When it bloomed it had the size of two regular humans’ fists put together. The whole mountaintop was filled with this strange flower, and a heavy aroma permeated the area. “Leylin, what is it?” Jayden asked. The Zither Moon Mountain Plains was riddled with dangers, and
various strange plants had appeared. More often than not, the more beautiful a plant was the more dangerous it was. Especially when it was close to their destination!
As the Potioneering acolyte, Leylin already dealt with 3 similar flowers traps.
“No problem!” Leylin picked up a stalk of the flower.
“A.I. Chip, compare to database!”
[Beep! Mission establishing, scanning outer appearance and scent. Comparison in progress…] [Result is found in the database. Determined as a Beta Daisy!] The A.I. Chip’s voice loyally intoned.
“Beta Daisy?” Leylin’s brow’s furrowed. “This is a common plant in the south coast. Normally they are grown on plains. It represents nostalgia and respect…”
“This flower does indeed seem like the Beta Daisy. There should be someone who planted this here on purpose!” Bosain also gave a definite reply.
“Is it the magician who left behind the inheritance?” Roth who stood behind spoke, his voice gruff.
“It’s possible, but I can’t confirm it!”
Jayden opened the damaged map, “From the map, the remnants should be located at the bottom of this cliff!”
Leylin nodded his head, back when he scanned the map, the name ‘Dylan Gardens’ appeared beneath the cliff. Moreover, there was mentioned a huge area of Beta Daisy located on the cliff above it, so there was an 80-90 percent chance that it was correct.
“What are we waiting for?” The excitement was seen on Shaya’s face.
To acolytes, if there were able to find remnants of an official Magus and obtain the inheritance, it was often the start of another legend.
The five of them began to pant raggedly, even Bosain was not excluded.
The cliff was extremely high, and there were granite rocks on the
razor sharp steep walls. For a regular human, climbing to the bottom was an impossible task. However, for these five level 3 acolytes, this itsy-bitsy challenge could not stop them at all. Roth immediately transformed into the tentacle handed creature and climbed. As for Leylin and the others, they added a Floating Feather spell. This spell allowed them to lighten their weight and they floated right to the bottom.

* Bang! *

The Floating Feather spell was removed and Leylin’s feet touched the ground.

“This is…” Leylin was rather taken aback as he sized up the surroundings. It was littered with stones in the form of double edged blades. The countless stone swords were placed together, covering at least half of the bottom area of the cliff.

On the sharp blades, there were countless corpses. Leylin even discovered some corpses which looked like humans.

“It seems that these were living creatures which fell from the cliff!” Leylin sighed and suddenly realised that something was amiss, “How could there be regular humans here. Could it be some acolytes who had obtained leads previously?”

“Be careful, the floor is littered with blades!” Upon seeing Jayden and the others landing, Leylin hurriedly warned.

“Damn it!” Jayden’s face darkened. His arm had grazed over one of the sharp blades when leading, revealing an abrasion that was at least 12cm long.

“These pointed edges have been made razor-sharp to last for eternity. In addition, there also some magic spells imbued in them! If this were not so, it would not have been possible to breakthrough my defense and cause a scratch on my skin!”

“Indeed!” Leylin touched the grey-white blade and felt the faint
energy waves pulsing from it.
“Only an official Magus could perform the spell on such a scale, adding the effect on all these rocks in this area!”
“So then, where is the remnant?”
* Sou Sou! * Countless grey-white tentacles extended to the bottom of the cliff, bringing Roth with it.
“I have used my spell to detect earlier, there are only rocks and mud below here, no traces of remnants whatsoever....” Bosain held onto a green eyeball and spoke rather dejectedly.
“Let us search the area and see if there are any clues. 6 hours later, we’ll gather at the top of the cliff again!” Impatience surfaced on Jayden’s face as he spoke.
This exploration was suggested by him, so the worst disappointment is ending with no results.
Moreover, with some clues but not being able to discover the entrance still, this impatience, together with the fear of being hunted down by an official Magus had tortured this little boy. From what Leylin saw, Jayden was on the verge of a mental breakdown.
“Freedom to seek?” After hearing Jayden’s suggestion, the other 4 quietened down and nodded their heads in agreement.
To them, after arriving at the destination, Jayden was of little use to them. Moreover, being able to find the remnant and obtain the loot before the other party members were definitely much better than discovering it together. More benefits could be obtained that way.
The five of them had confidence in their own methods. Hence, no one suggested forming a team of sorts.
The few of them chose to walk downwards and left the area where they landed on.
“A.I. Chip, scan the geographical outlay and project a map from it!” Leylin commanded the A.I. Chip after walking for a moment before stopping.
[Mission establishing, scanning the geography of the region...]
The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s orders. Very soon, a pale blue 3-D image was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes. On this map which could only be seen by him, it clearly depicted the terrain of the location nearby. It was so detailed that even a blade of grass was not left out. According to the A.I. Chip’s detection, under the cliff, there were layers of granite. Here were no signs of magician activities. Moreover, in the surroundings, there weren’t any situation of experiment labs that was detected. “There isn’t any?” Leylin’s brow’s furrowed. “Perhaps, the other party had laid out such a strong concealment that even the A.I. Chip was unable to detect!” Leylin pondered as he looked at the surroundings again with his physical eye. 6 hours later, the sky gradually turned dark. There were a few tents pitched on the top of the cliff. In front of the tent, there was a bonfire, where a wild vegetable soup aroma rose from the boiling pot. It was rather unfortunate, however, that the five surrounding the bonfire did not have any appetite. “Everyone has returned, speak of your findings!” Jayden looked at the circle and spoke first. “There isn’t any! Apart from those darned inverted rock blades, there isn’t anything else….” Roth then spoke, “I say, could it be that you are leading us on the wrong path?” “What did you say?” Jayden stood up abruptly, the badge pinned on his chest emitting a green glow. “Alright! Do we want to cause internal strife even before finding the treasure?” Bosain emitted a huge energy wave, directly between Jayden and Roth. “I believe Jayden, if not he could have come here on his own!” Leylin added.
Why he said that was because he also held a copy of the Sage Gotham Hut party’s map. He knew that Jayden had been leading them right to the destination.

After hearing Leylin and Bosain mediating, Jayden and Roth glared at each other and sat back down.

“I have even searched the bottom level and it was all solid ground. There isn’t any underground construction or anything of that sort!” Shaya smiled wryly.

“An official Magus’ remnant could not be found that easily in the first place. If not it would have long since been looted!” Leylin added and immediately asked Jayden, “Do you have any other clues?”

After hearing Leylin’s words, the other 3 diverted their glances at Jayden.

Jayden kept his silence for a while before speaking, “The clue that I obtained was the map to come here. On the map, there were several ancient verses, it seemed to be a poem of sorts…”

“Let me see it!” Leylin and Bosain spoke together in unison.

“I’ll show it to all of you then!” Jayden smiled and opened the map in his hands.

Leylin scrutinised the map on Jayden. There was no difference with the A.I. Chip’s copy at all, even the route was the same, leading to this cliff.

However, Jayden’s copy of the map was much older. On the upper right corner, there were several blurry characters. The words were writhing like a snake.

“This is Curagerian language, I have seen it before on a manual. It seemed to speak of ‘carry…and people with respect, will be able to…garden….” Bosain eyes flashed as he tried his best to translate it.

“Only those who carry courage and respect will be able to see the Dylan Gardens!” Leylin translated the Curagerian language
immediately, “There is only this one line on the map!”
Bosain was clearly startled, “Such an obscure knowledge…you actually…”
“It’s because I like to hang around in the library!” Leylin smiled.
“The remnant’s name seemed to be Dylan Gardens. However, for courage and respect, what does it mean?”
Shaya scratched her head in puzzlement.
“I always thought courage referred to the courage to trespass through the Zither Moon Mountain Plains. It doesn’t seem to be the case now!” Jayden smiled wryly.
“The Zither Moon Mountain Plains is somewhat dangerous to regular humans. However to a level 2 acolyte, it doesn’t pose much danger at all…” Bosain looked at Leylin impassively, before speaking.
The group discussed till late into the night, but no conclusions were arrived at. After which, they assigned the sentry for the night watch, and the individuals returned to the tent to rest and meditate. Leylin lay on a simple bed laid with the fur of a white wolf, anxiety stirring in his heart.

To him, this inheritance that no one knew about was now revealed to the rest. Furthermore, using the A.I. Chip’s scanning abilities did not yield him any results. This made him feel rather irritated. Even the meditation that he did daily had to be postponed.

“Maybe I should not put all my hopes in here. The south coast is extremely vast. Every dozens of years there would be an acolyte who stumbled upon an inheritance and obtain resources to advance into an official Magus. There are many chances…” Leylin comforted himself, and then laughed in spite of himself. Originally, he had considered the great Magus Serholm’s inheritance as his own belonging, which had led him to be obsessed with it. Even a magician’s most basic intellect was affected by it.

And Jayden and the others were also in the same situation.

“How irritable, I ignored the dangers!” Leylin’s expression suddenly turned tranquil.

“The acolytes of the Sage Gotham Hut have all been killed by us. This will surely cause the other side to keep an eye on us and cause
them to send some powerful acolytes or even official Magi to investigate…”
“Based on the location of the Sage Gotham Hut, I still have around 10 days’ time till the information reaches them…”
“8 days! If within 8 days I still haven’t discovered any clues here, I must leave.” Leylin’s eyes showed his resolve.
Compared with the great Magus Serholm’s inheritance, Leylin valued his own life even more.

……

After having decided thus, Leylin felt as if a load had been taken off of him, and even his spiritual force felt like it was cleansed and thus he entered into the state of mediation.
Early morning, a skylark’s sharp cry echoed above their camp.
Leylin greeted Shaya, “Morning!”
“Morning!” said Shaya, two dark circles around her eyes. It appeared as if she hadn’t slept a wink last night. A few blood vessels were distinctly visible within her eyes. The gaze that she returned Leylin was inconceivable.
“I wonder…how is it that you can be so…relaxed?” After enduring for some time, Shaya at last enquired.
“This is an official Magus’ inheritance that we are talking about, there is a chance to even get some information and resources which would help us advance…”
“But we still haven’t found it, isn’t that right?”
Leylin, facing the rising the sun, stretched his muscles satisfactorily.
“As long as something is not yours, you must not obsess over it too much. Otherwise, your heart will only suffer.”
“You are very odd indeed!” Shaya rubbed her hand across her forehead, as she continued, “However, Magi and acolytes are all queer people, so you can be considered as normal!”
“That may be so!” Leylin nodded, as he thought that if these people came to know that the remnants were left behind by the great Magus Serholm, then the situation could worsen. But, he certainly would not tell them about this bit of information. The 5 people walked away from the tents and gathered to eat their breakfast which was a roasted fowl. After that, they all gathered together to discuss on how to proceed.

“Alright! Today will again be another day of solo explorations! Try your best to find the remnants!” said Jayden. After seeing that the discussion went on for ages with no result, he had no other option but to say this. This was also the most appropriate action for the current situation. Although it is possible that any acolyte could find the entrance first, as long as it is opened, Jayden and the rest would also be able to find that open entrance from its energy waves. At the very most, they would just give the people who discovered the entrance a larger portion of the reward.

“What are you doing?”
After everyone had scattered in different directions, Jayden, upon seeing that Leylin still stood hesitating at the top of the cliff and was bowing to appreciate the Beta Daisy, he couldn’t help but ask.

“It is as you see. I am appreciating the flowers,” said Leylin, with a hint of a smile on his mouth.

“At such a moment?” Jayden’s eyes turned red; he made as if to go and reprimand Leylin.

“Be calm! You must not get irritated!” Leylin made a gesture to make him halt.

“Yesterday we all looked for clues at the cliff’s bottom, but we haven’t discovered this secret hidden among the ocean of flowers!”

“Secret? You mean, you found it?” Jayden appeared ecstatic.

“What? Leylin found it?” *Sou! Sou! Sou!* 3 shadows appeared directly next to Jayden and Leylin.
It was the other 3 acolytes who had not strayed too far.
“En!” In front of his party’s eyes, Leylin slowly nodded his head.
“One of you who can use any floating spell, fly up to midair and have a look!” Leylin spoke.
“I’ll do it!” Bosain immediately withdrew a silver metal ball. On the metal ball, there were the energy waves of a magic artifact. After that, Bosain twirled the metal ball, which then melted to become a liquid. This liquid stuck to his back and formed two huge, pretty and dazzling silver wings.
“It is a magic artifact that can change form as needed!” praised Leylin. This artifact probably could reach the standard of a medium-grade magic artifact, guessed Leylin. The synthesizer had lowered the might of it for an acolyte to wield its power. Only large-scale families with a long history would be able to enjoy such extravagant methods.
* Chi La! * A huge translucent silver wing flapped, bringing the dust off the ground. With this strength, Bosain immediately flew into midair.
“How is it? Do you see anything?” Jayden shouted below.
“Flowers…The arrangement of the Beta Daisy….”
A gust of wind flew past and Bosain flew down onto the ground, retracting his wings back in his body.
“This patch of Beta Daisy was planted on purpose. They have formed a character!”
Bosain explained to the rest.
“What character?” Shaya and Roth asked.
“It is a Curagerian letter, and the meaning means ‘jump’!” Leylin said.
“Jump? Could it be that we have to jump directly off the cliff?” Jayden guessed. acolytes were not silly people, their judgment was clouded by the benefits in front of them previously.
“Haven’t we already jumped once yesterday?” Roth scratched his head, “Nothing was discovered, only those damned rocks below the cliff!”
“No! You climbed down. As for us, we used the Floating Feather spell to get down!” Bosain interrupted.
“I understand now, the remnant is located in a secret plane. As for the way to enter, it is to jump directly down from the cliff without using any spells!”
“Jump down directly? Are you crazy?” Shaya twisted her beautiful red hair, “Such a tall cliff with so many rock blades at the bottom. If we don’t use any magic spells for defence, with our physical bodies, even Roth would fall to his death!”
“So, we need some experiment specimen!”
Jayden said, “Go find some animals, better yet some humans!”
“That’s possible! But don’t harbour too much hope!” Roth pulled out a bunch of tentacles from his bag and hurriedly left.
“We should also search in the surroundings, if we still can’t find any, then let’s return to the town!” Jayden revealed a smile for the first time…
“Ahhhhh….”
Frightened screams could be heard from the cliff. Moreover, due to the high pressure from the wind, the voices were altered.
* Bang! *
A black dot fell from the top of the cliff, growing larger, finally, a human figure appeared.
It was a person from the town who wore hunter gear. His face contorted and let out a hell-raising scream, free-falling from the top of the cliff.
* Sou! *
The hunter smashed directly onto a rock blade and the huge force of impact directly severed his body in two.
The corpse which was in two fell on the ground creating a huge pit.
The bones and flesh were mixed together, the original appearance could not be recognised at all.
Beside these two pits, there was a smaller pit.
It had the same gory scene, only that the skull belonged to an animal similar to a deer.
“How is it?”
At the bottom of the cliff, Roth crossed his arms and inspected. Shaya too stood beside him. Moreover, in front of him, there was a semicircle object which glowed in green. From that object, Jayden’s voice could be heard.
“Nothing new! It’s just more meat paste, the result is similar to the deer from before!” Roth sneered, “It seems that our plan has failed…”
On top of the cliff, Leylin and the other two crowded around. Upon listening to the voice from the other half of the green semicircle object, their faces disappointed.
“From the start, an animal, till the last, a human. It seems like there are some other conditions that need to be met!”
Leylin was the first to recover from his low spirits.
“Let us think carefully, we are running out of specimens to test!” Bosain revealed a sardonic smile, pointing at the empty ground nearby.
On the empty ground, there were a few Zither Moon Town civilians who looked aghast at Leylin and the others. If not for the fact that their mouths were stuffed, they would most likely be cursing or begging for mercy right now.
Ever since Jayden suggested finding substitutes, the five of them had immediately split up and done their job.
Bosain was the most ruthless, it seemed like he went back to the town to kidnap a few citizens back here.
For peak magician families from where he came from, the secular regular humans were like wild grass. No matter how many were cut
off, more would sprout in the future. Being able to die for his cause was their glory!
Although Leylin did not agree with this, but going against Bosain for a few mere strangers was not worth it.
Moreover, using human specimens had a smaller margin for error, much more than a deer. It was also in accordance with Leylin’s interests!
At the same time, he was extremely shocked at Bosain’s speed.
“Jumping down would represent courage! According to the map, there must also be ‘respect!’” Leylin spoke of his own conjecture.
“Then what is ‘respect’?” Bosain asked.
“In ancient times, when people visit their elders, they would bring a Beta Daisy to show their respect. This custom has lasted till today’s times, and many places in the south coast has retained such traditions!”
Leylin smiled and said.
“Indeed! The Poolfield Kingdom does have such traditions!” Bosain’s eyes glemmed.
“Let’s try again!”
He went to one of the captives directly. It was a blue-haired kid which had not matured yet. “Be honoured kiddo! Being able to make contributions in front of mighty magicians!” Bosain smirked, and immediately cut the ropes that were tying the boy.
“Put this on well, better yet put it at the place 30 centimetres below your collar!” Leylin immediately plucked a Beta Daisy flower and inserted it into the boy’s collars.
“All preparatory work is work! Roth and Shaya, be careful!” Jayden roared into the receiver.
“Three, two, and one! Release!”
Bosain grabbed onto the boy’s hair with an arm and walked towards the edge of the cliff. Looking at the boy who was flailing, he smirked and let go of his hand.
“Ahhhhhhhhhh!”
The little boy spit off the thing stuffed in his mouth and let off a horrified scream!
After which, both his hands waved wildly as if a drowned person trying to hold onto the last rice straw.
“I hope it’s a success this time!” On the cliff, Leylin muttered as he stood with the other two watched the screaming boy turn into a dot.
Suddenly, Leylin and the rest discovered an energy wave. “This feeling! It won’t be mistaken! It’s the energy waves formed when a secret plane opens, the same as the bloodbath from before!” Leylin’s lips curled up. “Sha Sha…” Noises came from the receiver. “He disappeared! I see the person who was falling in midair engulfed by a light, completely disappearing!” Shaya’s voice could be heard with a trace of excitement in it. “Let us go immediately!” Roth’s voice, too, sounded from the receiver. Moments later, the five gathered at the cliff as they gasped in amazement at the methods of ancient Magi. “Courage and respect! Who would have thought of that?” Shaya spoke in a wondrous tone, “With no defense spells and jumping off the cliff, where many rock blades have been imbued with eternal sharpness. Even an official Magus would not dare try it…” “Moreover, one has to carry a Beta Daisy. If not, the secret plane wouldn’t be opened…” Jayden smiled, “Leylin, nice one!” At this moment, even Bosain revealed an approving smile. Shaya even clapped for him at the side. “Oh! All of this is due to everyone’s efforts!” Leylin lowered his head slightly, revealing a humble yet proud smile. “The secret plane has already been discovered, what are we waiting for?” Roth immediately plucked a Beta Daisy and placed it on his body. “There are them too!” Bosain pointed at the frightened captives. “I’ll end it!” Jayden stretched both his hands and the vines continue to extend. “Wait!” Leylin spoke suddenly, restricting Jayden’s movement. “What is it, could it be that you want to beg for them?” Bosain
looked at Leylin in amusement.
“No! Only that, the secret plane might contain many other mechanisms like this, who knows if there are other uses for them!” Leylin gave a viable reason.
“Moreover!” Leylin reached for a captive, “Granite Bind!” Grey granite immediately rose from the ground, turning into fetters and handcuffs, typing the captives together once more.
“Regular humans will not be able to escape from a magic spell. This way, we wouldn’t be afraid of them running away!”
“Very well! If we use too much time inside the secret plane, they will die of starvation. Leylin, you are indeed a magician!” Bosain smiled and directly held a Beta Daisy in his hands, “Let’s go! Are we still going to wait?”
“Jump!” The five acolytes each carried a Beta Daisy and jumped from the cliff.
* Bang! *
During the high-speed drop, Leylin’s skin was almost sunken from the high pressure. His eyes slightly reddened, and he felt as if the blood in his whole body was about to shoot out.
“Is this the feeling of jumping off a building?” Leylin harboured some nonsensical thoughts.
When the five of them fell halfway, a circle of light shone on the precipice. The light turned into a circle and the air writhed, revealing the scene of another dimension.
“The entrance of the secret plane!” Bosain shouted. Following which, the eyes of the members gleamed, and a strong weightlessness feeling overcame them.
After the earth spinning feeling, Leylin and the rest came to a dark cave.
“Such a large place, it should be a subterranean area! Only that we
don’t know where it is, since the underground of the bottom of the cliff was already searched with spells many times. It’s impossible to be there!”
Leylin got up slowly.
“Where’s the boy?” Shaya tidied the hair that covered her forehead and suddenly cried, “The boy from earlier has disappeared!”
“It’s not that!” Roth lowered his head and pointed to the ground. There was a puddle a blood and the broken pieces of clothes of the boy.
“As expected, danger lurks in the secret plane along with the remnants!”
After seeing this scene, Leylin’s eyes flashed.
Earlier when he disclosed the information to enter, he could have kept it to himself and wait until the others have returned to the academy before returning on his own.
However, he still chose to tell the others.
This was definitely not because he had had a change of character. But fear! Fear of the danger inside the secret plane!
The great Magus Serholm was a legendary Magus and had at least rose to rank 4.
The inheritance that such a person would leave behind, Leylin felt that there would definitely be many mechanisms to test the aptitude of the seekers.
No matter what, Leylin was still only a level 3 acolyte, not even an official Magus! This place, for him, was too dangerous!
As for Bosain who was amongst Jayden’s party, he was an existence not weaker to Leylin. The other three too had their various ways of surviving.
Leylin was extremely clear on his strength. Just he alone would be unable to break through every mechanism in the secret plane to obtain the inheritance. As for deceiving Jayden and the rest and completely reform a team with only level 3 acolytes, that was an
impossible task to do. Furthermore, even if it was a team he organised, at the very end when they discovered the inheritance of the great Magus Serholm, Leylin was certain that an internal strife would occur! For acolytes, the great Magus Serholm was a myth amongst legends! His inheritance has a deadly allure to any acolyte! Anyway, falling out was inevitable, so it did not matter who he had to fall out with. Leylin asked himself if he were to compare the trump cards, he was the one with the most. The final one laughing would definitely be him!

“It seems like the boy had been attacked by some dangerous creature!”

Jayden took out his magic artifact, a green badge, and held in his hand. The surroundings were extremely dim and the visibility was poor. Leylin and the others could not see very far. The five of them huddled together to face any outside attack. “Look at this!” Roth squatted down and pointed at a semicircle track. Leylin looked at the direction he pointed at, and the semicircle track was extremely deep, extending to the depths far away. Moreover, these tracks appeared the most around the boy’s remains. “It’s a snake’s trail!” Leylin felt a scale the size of a palm from the tracks and blurted out. “A snake’s track? Which means, there is a dangerous snake creature concealed in the area!” Roth’s right-hand muscle bulged and his sleeves exploded. * Hua La La! * White tentacles continuously extended from it, creating a defense by shielding his surroundings. * Sssii! * * Sssii! *
The spitting of a snake’s tongue continuously sounded.
“It seems like the great Magus Serholm had an affection for snake type creatures!” Leylin thought of the Huge Mankestr Snake back in the previous remnant experiment lab and started to link the two sightings together.

“But, what could this all mean?”
Regarding the records of the great Magus Serholm, they only appeared in poems and travel notes. Leylin had not yet discovered any journals that covered the happenings of the great Magus Serholm in detail. According to his conjecture, this information should only be available at the official Magus level.

“It seems like it’s a large one!” Bosain licked his lips. The silver metal covered him fully, turning into a full body armour.

* Bang! *
A gigantic long black figure charged towards the acolytes under the concealment of the darkness.

“Chi Chi!” Countless tentacles reached out, wrapping on the figure of the black figure.

Roth guffawed, “I caught you!”

“Illuminate spell!” Shaya held a bright light ball in her hands and tossed it in the air.

The light ball exploded in midair, and shone down, illuminating the cave like a sun.

Leylin squinted his eyes and sized up the creature that Roth had bound.

A giant snake, more than a dozen metres long, and was black in colour all over. It was filled with the rhombus-shaped scales that Leylin had noticed earlier. On its back, there was a long red line, stretching from the head to its tail.

On the middle of the snake’s head, there was a small stubby horn, emitting immense energy waves from it.

Under the horn was a pair of triangular shaped pupils. Its bright
yellow eyes looked like amber, as it stared at Leylin and the rest. At this moment, the giant snake seemed to be held down by a ball of tentacles wrapped around it, rooted to the spot. Compared with the snake, Roth seemed like a midget. The scene was somewhat comical.
“A.I. Chip! Scan the creature!” Leylin ordered.

[Similarity to the Black Horrall Snake: 98.7%! Neborake Mamba: 75%! Mankestre Snake: 34.6%!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Black Horrall Snake? Bring out its data!” Leylin’s brow’s furrowed.
[Black Horrall Snake, an extremely dangerous being. It contains a trace of bloodline of the ancient creature Kemoyin Serpent, which is known to contain tremendous might and an astonishing life force!] [Source of information: Ancient Creatures Illustrated Handbook, Catalog of Dangerous Creatures.]
can the stats of the Black Horrall Snake in front of me!”

Leylin ordered once again.


Abilities – 1. Scales Defence: The Black Horrall Snake rhombus scales has a defensive force field encircling it at all times. Immune to physical and magical attacks under 5 degrees. Moreover, it has a huge negation towards attack of 5 degrees and more. 2. Shadow Stealth: Inheriting the Kemoyin Serpent’s shadow powers allows the Black Horrall Snake to enter into a stealth state anytime, withdrawing all signs of energy waves. 3. Lightning blaze: Emits a lightning flame from the horn. Estimated degree of attack: 12 to 15 degrees. Status: Extremely weak!]

“Stats like this…”

Leylin’s eyes widened, “It has long since surpassed the boundaries of a level 3 acolyte, and is most likely close to that of an official Magus?”

There were no records of the stats of official Magus in the A.I. Chip, so Leylin could only guess.

“Roth, careful! This is a Black Horrall Snake! Its might is extremely higher, much higher than your imagination!”

“Hisssssss!”

Before Leylin had finished warning him, the Black Horrall Snake
let out an ear-piercing hiss.
The massive body of the Black Horrall Snake began to writhe and the tail was sent flailing. The cave seemed to shake.
* Pa Pa! * The milky white tentacles broke constantly, and from its wounds, there was white dense pus.
The triangular pupils of the Black Horrall Snake seemed to reveal a glint of ridicule. Following which, it turned back into the eyes of a beast and bit on Roth who had fallen to the ground.
“Save him!”
Shaya and Jayden roared, and a few green vines and silver flying knives was sent flying towards the Black Horrall Snake’s body.
* Bang! * The flying knives and vines hit on the scales of the Black Horrall Snake, and sparks were created.
The Black Horrall Snake did not budge at all and opened its bloody mouth, directly chomping on Roth, swallowing him with a gulp.
“Oh, no!”
On the neck of the giant snake, there was a bulge as if someone was attacking within.
Very soon, the bulge entered the stomach of the snake and the struggle within grew smaller and smaller, finally turning still.
The whole process took only a few seconds, so fast that Leylin and the others did not have time to rescue him.
“Black Horrall Snake?”
Bosain who was on the side recovered from the shock, “Isn’t that an existence that, when matured, could deal with a rank 3 Magus? Why has it appeared here?”
“It could go against a rank 3 Magus?”
Jayden and the others jumped in shock! rank 3 Magus! That is the cultivation of the leader in the Lighthouse of the Night, a person who could suppress the 3 academies!
“If it’s a rank 3 Magus, we would have long been dead, not even a speck left. Could it be that this Black Horrall Snake has not
matured yet?” Leylin’s thoughts spun rapidly.
“No! It’s not correct! This is a matured Black Horrall Snake. However, due to the duration that it has been sealed for and not being able to eat, it has already regressed from a rank 3 Magus into an elementary rank 1 Magus! Furthermore, it was awakened by the human boy earlier…”

According to the indication from the A.I. Chip, Leylin guessed the truth.
This Black Horrall Snake could be the byproduct of the great Magus Serholm before, and was left here according to his wishes. There was most likely no food in this secret plane, hence, the Black Horrall Snake could only hibernate to reduce the consumption needed for its body.
However, hundreds and thousands of years have passed. Even if the Black Horrall Snake tried to conserve its strength, it could not have reversed the decomposition effect. From originally a creature which could go against a rank 3 Magus, it had now regressed to the standard of a rank 1 Magus.
After swallowing Roth, Black Horrall Snake’s pupils showed a hint of satisfaction, before sizing up Leylin and the others.
“It is still a young Black Horrall Snake, not even an official Magus. We still have a chance!”
Leylin was afraid that Jayden and the rest would have been dismayed and lost their fighting spirit after hearing declare it as a ‘rank 3 Magus’, hence, he quickly shouted to boost their confidence.
Leylin had the A.I. Chip and was able to tell the truth behind the regression of the snake. Such a thing had to be kept mum. In the short period of time Jayden and the rest wouldn’t be able to discover it, so Leylin just simply told a lie in its place.
“A fledgling?” Bosain’s eyes flashed. “Indeed! This Black Horrall Snake is too weak, even weaker than a rank 1 Magus. It is
definitely in its pre-adolescent phase!”
“This is a creature which could fight against rank 3 Magi in the future when it grows up! If I were to sign a contract with it…”
Bosain muttered and his armour immediately flashed. A metal liquid was held in his right hand, turning into a silver white sword.
“Come! The brutal Black Horrall Snake of the legends! Let me, Bosain, be your owner!”
Bosain eyes were frenzied and he directly charged forward.
* Bang! * The thin silver sword slashed at the Black Horrall Snake’s scales, creating a long gash. A few palm sized scales too dropped out.
“Indeed, if it were a matured Black Horrall Snake, I would have no chances at all to break its defensive forcefield!”
Bosain hollered, “This is mine! This Black Horrall Snake must definitely belong to me!”
“Hissssssssss!” The Black Horrall Snake hissed angrily and flung its tail.
* Bang! * As if it were a black lightning, the long tail viciously struck Bosain.
Bosain seemed to fly out like a cannonball, creating a large hole in the walls of the cave.
* Hua La La! * Mud and rocks fell down, revealing Bosain who was wearing his shining white armour.
“Leylin, Jayden, and Shaya, help me to restrain it. Not only can you get the friendship of the Lilytell family, I am also willing to give up all of the rewards obtained during this exploration!”
Bosain shook his head and finally recovered from the dizziness, seeking help from Leylin and the others.
“No matter what, let us restrain this Black Horrall Snake first. If not, we won’t have a chance to obtain anything!”
Jayden spoke as he channeled a large amount of spiritual force and magic power into the green badge.
Ripples of jade green colour continuously came from the badge. *Peng!* Countless jade green vines seemed to fill the cave as it tried to entangle the Black Horrall Snake.

“Cloud of Afterlife!”

Leylin too used his spell that he was proud of. A large murky green cloud immediately engulfed the Black Horrall Snake within, the corrosive sounds constantly emitting from within the mist.

“Comb of Vengeful Spirit!” Shaya too took out her prized magic artifact. It had the appearance of a rather old wooden comb. Shaya immediately used it to comb her fire red beautiful hair.

*Sssii!*! The fire red hair grew rapidly. In the blink of an eye, there was already a layer of hair on the ground. After which, the ground of the whole cave was dyed red.

“It is actually a type of binding type magic artifact. Combined with Jayden’s green badge, it may really even restrain this Black Horrall Snake!”

An expectant look flashed across Leylin’s eyes. After the dark green Cloud of Afterlife had dissipated, it revealed the massive Black Horrall Snake’s figure within. The scales were still gleaming, as usual, only that in that large gash that Bosain had left on its body, the surrounding flesh had been corroded to a purple black state.

The huge snake’s eyes seemed dispirited. Looking at it, it was evident that Leylin’s attack had some effect on it.

“All together!” Jayden nodded his head towards Shaya. Countless green vines from midair wrapped around the Black Horrall Snake, even around its head.

At the same time, the innumerable fire red hair on the ground was like steel net. Very soon it wrapped itself like a net, trapping the Black Horrall Snake within.

*Bang!*
The green vines and red hair continuously tightened, leaving circles after circles of red and green imprints on the Black Horrall Snake’s body. The huge snake lost its balance and fell to the ground, bringing up dust and rock shards. “Nice one!” Bosain praised them. His body in midair left several white afterimages. After a few jumps, he came to the top of the Black Horrall Snake’s head. “Little baby, you’re mine now!” A smug and zealous expression filled Bosain’s face. He immediately withdrew a scroll which emitted immense energy waves, directly at the Black Horrall Snake’s eyes. “This is… A sealing contract within a scroll!” From the A.I. Chip’s detection, it was a power magical object. On it, a contract formation was sealed within. It had to cost at least tens of thousands of magic crystals. Moreover, one may not be able to buy it even with money! This price has long since surpassed the price of many magical creatures for magicians. From this, one could see that only those large families which had been around for many years could possess many great items. Leylin looked at Bosain who was opening the scroll and his lips curled up. “A pity that it is such a powerful contract scroll. If it were used against a youngling of a powerful creature, there could still be a chance of success. However, this Black Horrall Snake’s spiritual force is not in such a lowered state….” Bosain who was without the A.I. Chip would naturally not think of this. At this moment, his face carried a fevered gaze. Coupled with his trembling hands, he chanted an incantation and ripped opened the
magical scroll.
*Bang!*
An extremely radiant white light rose in front of Bosain and the black snake.
The white continuously circulated, finally forming a strange magic formation. On it was laced with mysterious runes and magic characters.
“An advanced contract spell formation! A.I. Chip, record!” Leylin immediately gave the order to the A.I. Chip.
“Come! Become my contractual partner!”
Bosain muttered. From the formation a green light appeared, directly entering the forehead of Bosain.
As for the other flash of green light, it was sent towards the Black Horrall Snake, moreover directly imprinting itself on the large skull of the Black Horrall Snake.
As if knowing that once it was bound to the contract and lose its freedom forever, the black snake thrashed continuously, resisting the entry of the green light.
“Hurry! Faster!”
Cold sweat the size of beans trickled down Bosain’s face, staring intently at the skull of the Black Horrall Snake.
“My dream, my life, when I obtain this Black Horrall Snake…”
Just when the green light had completely entered the Black Horrall Snake’s head, a strange sight occurred!
The eyes of the Black Horrall Snake revealed a human-like mocking expression.

*Bang!*

A tremendous amount of spiritual force was released, rejecting the green light instantly. Not only that, the contract spell formation in midair exploded violently too. Bosain’s chest seemed to have been struck by a hammer and he was sent flying backwards. Large chunks of silver armour fell and crimson red blood was constantly spurted from Bosain’s mouth. “The backlash from the contract!” Leylin who was watching from afar blurted out.

If the contract failed on a powerful creature, magicians will often suffer backlash on their spiritual force. Moreover, apart from that spiritual force backlash, there was also the attack from the creature’s spiritual force. Looking on, it seemed that Bosain’s spiritual force had been severely damaged. Furthermore, due to the connection of the spiritual force with the magic artifact, the magic artifact had also been damaged.

*Hua La La!*

Just when Bosain was sent flying back, a white protection rune flew up from his body. A milky white light then engulfed Bosain
who was still vomiting out blood. This kind of milky white radiance was resplendent and filled with a sacred feeling. Under the radiance of the light, even the naked eye could see that Bosain was rapidly recovering.

“A single-use healing rune?” Leylin’s eyes squinted, recognising the origins of that white protection rune.

“There are indeed plenty of items on his body!” Although Bosain did not suffer a severe injury as was expected, Leylin was still somewhat satisfied with it. After all, it had forced him to use one of his trump cards.

The synthesizer of this protection rune had to use many precious resources. Moreover, it required a huge amount of magic power and spiritual force from an official Light Magus. Even if it was Bosain, he couldn’t be holding on to another of this protection rune.

“What happened?”

Jayden and Shaya who saw Bosain flying back revealed expressions of disbelief.

“The contract binding has failed. Hurry and kill this damned black snake!”

Leylin withdrew the cross blade on his waist. With an incantation, a layer of frost covered the cross blade.

Frost Alchemy Runes! It was a type of alchemy rune that was specially used on equipment, adding on might equivalent to a low-grade magic artifact temporarily. After using it the equipment would normally break.

Leylin’s cross blade had long since been damaged back in the bloodbath.

However, there were as many cross blades in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy as he needed for him to purchase. The frost greatsword was immediately wielded and raised in Leylin’s hands. From the blade, a terrible chillness was emitted, and
this attracted the gazes of Jayden and Shaya.
“I knew it!” Jayden’s roared internally, “Leylin being able to survive in the bloodbath, he definitely would have some tricks up his sleeve!”
“Bind him, I’m going up!”
Leylin looked at the black snake which was still bound by the green vines and red hair in the eye.
After releasing an explosive amount of spiritual force to inflict damage on Bosain, the Black Horrall Snake right now continuously writhed its massive body, the energy waves surging out rampantly.
*Zhi Ya!*
Countless vines and hair were broken; Jayden’s and Shaya’s faces, too, became more and more uneasy.
“Hurry! I can’t hold on much longer!” Shaya shouted from the side.
“Cross Blade Slash!”
Leylin’s muscles bulged, and his whole body seemed to increase by a size.
[The Host has entered the state of a Knight’s secret technique. strength and agility have been greatly boosted! vitality decreased!]
The A.I. Chip very soon reported the change in stats.
During the three years back in Extreme Night City, Leylin had picked up the secret technique for Knight’s to enter the explosive state from Viscount Jackson.
This was even better than a secret killing move. Furthermore, the technique came from a Grand Knight, which was much better than the secret technique inherited from Leylin’s Farlier family.
Under the impressive calculations done by the A.I. Chip, Leylin incorporated Viscount Jackson’s secret knight technique with his cross blade killing technique, achieving an exponential increase in the secret technique attack.
Right now, the secret technique that Leylin used had already
reached the standard of a Grand Knight. The side effects had reduced, and the might was stronger than before. Under the loud roar, Leylin jumped high in the air. Two arcs of slash were sent from the frost greatsword. The two slashes crossed one another, forming a large ‘X’ in the air. Frost continued to condense, creating a layer of ice on the large ‘X’ which was sent towards the Black Horrall Snake.

*Chi!* The icy ‘X’ directly chopped at the neck of the Black Horrall Snake. Scales continuously fell and there was a layer of ice on the area. There was a giant cross-shaped wound on the Black Horrall Snake now. The frost continued to spread and a lot of fresh blood with a trace of black coloured snake blood was forced out from the wound.

“Hisssss!” The black snake let off an enraged cry. It violently thrashed its body and broke many more vines and hair on its body. “Good! Maintain this might. As long as it’s done several more times, we can definitely decapitate this snake!” Glee appeared on Shaya’s face. “Hisssssssssssss!” After the madness, the Black Horrall Snake strangely calmed down. After halting its writhing, the scales on its body continuously flashed with a black light, emitting a layer of negative energy that Leylin was familiar with.

“This is the energy particles of the Shadow element! Be careful…” Through the indication given by the A.I. Chip, Leylin immediately warned the rest. Alas, they were a step too late! Without warning, half of the Black Horrall Snake’s body turned transparent. First, it was the scales, then the skin, the flesh and finally the bones… The transparency very soon covered the body of the whole snake.
The giant snake which had the length of a dozen metres disappeared in the next moment.
“What is this? A concealment spell? A pity that under the two restraints from our magic artifact, what use would that be?” Shaya spoke in bewilderment.
“It’s not a concealment spell, but one which can negate any attacks while it is in stealth mode!”
*Hua La La!* The countless green vines and red hair on the Black Horrall Snake seemed to lose its target in an instant. It seemed to be binding only thin air now and fell on the floor.
“A spell with an effect like this?” Jayden’s pupil shrank. “This is no longer a rank 0 spell, but the effect from an official Magus. Why did it not use it earlier?”
“Because the consumption was too great and it cannot withstand it for a second time!”
Leylin guessed. This Shadow Stealth was comprehended by the Black Horrall Snake as an innate skill after maturing. Moreover during its regression, it had fortunately retained this skill.
The spell achieved the effect of a rank 1 spell. Leylin absolutely could not imagine the might of this spell when the Black Horrall Snake was in its mature state.
“I’m afraid that even official Magi would not be able to discover it, only be swallowed as food while in fear!”
“Hurry! The triangular defensive formation!” Leylin roared.
*Sou Sou!* Jayden and Shaya who knew that it was not the time to be slow rushed towards Leylin’s side. Even Bosain joined them with a gloomy expression.
The four of them formed a mysterious defense formation. They stood at the three corners of it as a layer of vine and hair continued to wrap around the area, protecting the four within.
This was one of the combinations that they had agreed on previously.
An invisible enemy was the most dangerous! Leylin, highly tensed, looked at the surroundings, not knowing at all when the Black Horrall Snake would strike. Under the illuminating spell, the whole cave was brightly lit. There was only dried mud on the floor. Apart from scales and a few puddles of blood, there were completely no traces of the snake’s tracks whatsoever. It was as if such a massive snake had just vanished.

“Be careful, this is very similar to a rank 1 Shadow Element spell Shadow Stealth. I have seen it once performed by an elder in my family. They are completely invisible on the physical plane as long as the time limit was not up, or when an enemy attacks it…” Bosain spoke hurriedly, with a hint of anxiety and gloom in his tone.

Leylin understood the feelings behind it. No matter who it was after losing a scroll worth tens of thousands of magic crystals and a rune which could protect the life they would not feel good about it. “What should we do? Continue to wait for it to appear?” Jayden was extremely unresigned as he controlled the vines to lash at the surrounding granite walls. A pity, however, the dust created did not help pinpoint the location of the snake.

“Snake type creatures have a strong intent for vengeance. It would definitely not leave like this. Maybe it is just around us, waiting for an opportunity…” Leylin’s voice was faintly discernible. It made Shaya who was beside him tense and kept a tight grip on that magic artifact comb in her hands.

“A.I. Chip! Can you detect where the Black Horrall Snake is?” Leylin asked inwardly.

[No results from scanning! No reaction from thermal detection! No energy waves from a large creature in the surroundings!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned and made Leylin’s expression darken.
Regarding the spells of an official Magus, the A.I. Chip now was still somewhat helpless against them.

*Hu!* Suddenly, a dozen metres in front of Jayden, many translucent scales appeared in midair and yet vanished again quickly.

“There!” Jayden’s eyes flashed. Dozens of vines crisscrossed, forming a large net and was sent over.

After which, Shaya shot out a green fireball, following right behind the net.

*Bang!* The green net vines caught nothing but air, falling to the ground.

The fireball too caused a huge pit on the ground with an explosion, yet no traces of the snake was discovered.

“En?”

Leylin suddenly tensed up. His scalp was tingling as if being stared on by some dangerous creature.

This feeling came purely from his instincts. The A.I. Chip and the detection spells had no effects at all.

However, he completely believed in his intuition. Leylin immediately made a decisive action and rolled on the ground, away from his original position.

“Hisssss!”

Behind the place where Leylin was originally standing, there was a flickering in the air and the massive body of the Black Horrall Snake materialised.

From the huge head of the snake, a vicious ray of light flashed. The snake opened its jaws and clamped on Shaya who was standing close to Leylin’s original position. Half of her body enter the snake’s jaws as it chewed.

*Boom!*

An intense explosion sounded within the snake’s mouth and a layer of purple flame escaped from the jaws.
A huge energy wave was detected which led the A.I. Chip to flash indicators wildly.
“It’s Shaya! She self-destructed the magic artifact right before she died!”
Jayden spoke hoarsely.
Bosain roared and the silver armour on his body formed again. He also produced a silver longsword, which caused a few ripples in the void around it.

“All out!” Jayden’s eyes reddened. He chanted a few ancient incantation and even bit on his finger, letting the blood drip on the green badge.

*Bang!*

Countless vines broke out from the ground. Only that the vines now were all red and the reverse thorns were even denser. On them, there were even a tinge of green and an extremely dangerous aura came permeating from it.

“Since it’s become like this!” Leylin waved an arm, and a dozen fire red potion left his hands.

Several more bright flames were exploded on the Black Horrall Snake’s body.

Furthermore, there was a flash on Leylin’s hands, and the black longbow once again appeared in his palm.

“Frost Runes!”

Leylin chanted an incantation and a layer of frost covered the original black longbow, turning the arrows into icy shards!

“Kill!!!”

The 3 different voices sounded at the same time.

The red vines had a faster speed than before, even bringing a gale.
of wind. In an instant, it had already bound the Black Horrall Snake which was rolling on the floor.

At the same moment, an icy arrow shot past the void and pierced through the right eye of the black snake.

“Hissssssss!”

The Black Horrall Snake’s mouth was set on fire and one of its eyeballs had burst. From the socket, there was a huge amount of resplendent and translucent fluid that poured out. The snake was screeching in agony at this point in time.

“Meet your death!”

During the explosion, Bosain’s silver armour turned into a metal liquid, converging onto the longsword in his hands. After this scene, the silver longsword immediately became five metres long. On the blade, there were even some mystical runes.

“The strongest power! The strongest state! Go to hell!”

Bosain’s muscles bulged and there were plenty of flashes of light from the spell.

Leylin only glanced at it and discovered many rank 0 spells which could temporarily increase the physical attributes of strength and vitality.

Under the support of so many spells, right now Bosain’s stats had most likely exceeded that of a Grand Knight. It was close to the evolved form of Grand Knights in myths, the Branded Swordsman!

*Pu!*

The longsword easily pierced through the defense of the Black Horrall Snake right into the crucial point of the giant snake, the place where the heart was.

Innumerable fresh blood laced with some blackish blood frothed out. The snake’s figure tried to raise itself, yet it was held tightly by the red vines. Also, the giant red vines climbed to where the wound was and, as if it had an intelligence of its own, it bore its way right into the wound.
“Hisssssssssss!”
The giant snake continuously bellowed and twisted as blood constantly splattered onto the muddy ground. After struggling for a dozen of minutes, the Black Horrall Snake’s left eye was completely devoid of lustre and it fell to the ground. “Is it dead?”
Jayden looked somewhat disbelieving as he asked. The red vines were still writhing on the body of the snake.

[Target is severely injured, its life force waves are continuously declining!] [Target’s life force has fallen to the lowest!] [Target’s life force waves has completely vanished. Dead!]
The indication from the A.I. Chip let Leylin know that the giant snake was indeed dead. However, he still said, “Let’s first perform some detection spells!”
Leylin was able to vividly recall the fact that the A.I. Chip could not detect the Black Horrall Snake when it was invisible. Who knew if this black snake had some secret method which allowed it to hide its life force waves and escape the detection of the A.I. Chip?

After which, the 3 acolytes began casting many spells. Finally, they could confirm that this Black Horrall Snake which killed two of their party members was really dead.
After hearing this conclusion, Jayden hurriedly retracted his red vines and collapsed onto the ground.
Leylin noted that there was not a single sign of redness on Jayden’s face. His pallid complexion made it extremely obvious that he had just lost a lot of blood.
As for Bosain on the other side, the greatsword had turned back into the liquid metal and was tucked back into his robes. Even the armour could not maintain its form. Looking at it, his magic artifact seemed to have consumed a lot of energy.
These little tidbits of information had been recorded into the database of the A.I. Chip. Moreover, it had wildly calculated the battle state of the two and came up with a battle success rate. Of course, in the eyes of those two, Leylin was simply an above average acolyte. Apart from his Potioneering skills, there was only his Frost Alchemy Rune which seemed decent. This was the false image that Leylin had painstakingly created.

“Also this! Hurry and harvest them!”

Leylin looked at the black snake which was devoid of life. The wounds on its body continuously had blood flowing out from it. A spell wave with low energy waves was formed on Leylin’s hands.

“What are you doing?” Bosain and Jayden immediately pulled their distance away from Leylin, looking at him warily. Once the threat was gone, under the enticement of benefits, seeds of distrust was unknowingly planted and had already begun to sow between the party members.

“Just collecting the materials!” Leylin’s spell never stopped.

“Blood!” After a few chants, Leylin opened his mouth and spat out a Byron language word.

*Hu Hu!* The blood puddle on the floor seemed to have a direction as they flowed towards Leylin’s palms on a few blood traces. Countless blood few in midair, continuously converging like a bloody ball of light.

*Hua La La!* The void seemed to have an invisible strength that was continuously compressing the blood as it congealed, finally turning into a small rock with the colour of blood.

*Di Di!* The invisible energy was directly applied on the wound of the Black Horrall Snake, and the blood within its body was continuously pulled out.

Minutes later, the Black Horrall Snake seemed to have gotten
somewhat smaller, its scales turning pale.
As for Leylin, his hand now held a dozen fist-sized blood-coloured rocks.
All the blood essence of the dozen metres long Black Horrall Snake congealed only to the size of a dozen rocks.
This was one of the rank 0 spell that Leylin had learned, used specifically to harvest the blood from large creatures.
After seeing the spell effect that Leylin cast, Bosain and Jayden then relaxed their guard. However, Leylin could still detect a trace of wariness deep within their eyes.
“The Black Horrall Snake’s blood is an ingredient for many potions. I wish to have all of it. As for the other materials on the black snake, I can let go of a portion of them to match the value of the blood!”
Leylin smiled and explained.
The contents of the broken diary that Leylin saw back then in the experiment lab near Extreme Night City surfaced on his mind then. Towards several words such as ‘modulate’, ‘bloodline’ and the likes caused him have an unknown instinct to collect the blood, even at the cost of offending these two.
“Blood?” Bosain cocked his head and suddenly laughed.
“Indeed! For many Potion Masters, the blood from powerful creatures was often a necessary ingredient for their potions.”
The concept of bloodlines and such did not enter Bosain’s train of thoughts at all.
After all, many ancient creatures had been extinct for thousands and thousands of years. In many creatures within the Magus World, only traces of the ancient creatures’ reflection could be seen.
As for how to extract the ancient bloodlines, this subject had been extensively researched by many magicians, yet there were no breakthroughs.
To obtain a fragment of gene from the blood and then reforming it
into an essence, was well outside the capabilities of magicians. Only a rank 4 Magus of the legends or above would that have a chance of being possible. However, a rank 4 Magus on the south coast was just a myth. “This Black Horrall Snake’s ingredients are at least worth 100,000 magic crystals!” Jayden’s eyes gleamed and his face revealed an intoxicated expression. Towards magical snake creatures like these, the part that was the most valuable were their scales, innards, brains and the likes. These were often the good ingredients to synthesize magic artifacts. As for blood and other stuff, apart from Potion Masters and Alchemists who needed them occasionally, there were not many uses for them elsewhere. After the circumstance where Leylin acted first, the three acolytes discussed briefly. Jayden and Bosain would then gather the most valuable few parts of the snake, then cast a preserving rank 0 spell before leaving the place. To them, right now the loot from the snake was just the reward from the outer area of the remnant, who knows how many more good stuff there were inside there. “This remnant site seems to be of an extremely high grade!” Jayden sized up the cave to try to search for more clues, “It actually planted a sentinel mechanism right at the very start, even leaving such a dangerous creature… A pity for Roth and Shaya…” Towards the deaths of these two party members, Leylin and the other two only put on a superficial downcasted expression before recovering very soon. To be honest, these two acolytes had only been in contact with Leylin for several days, so he did not feel much for them. Magicians were often apathetic creatures. Very soon, the three diverted their attention back towards the remnant. “Using powerful creatures to guard the remnants seems to be the
style of the Kukeral period!”
Bosain seemed to recall something, “The Kukeral period’s constructions were simple and boorish. Even those warning mechanisms were extremely simple, it would not go past two stages!”
“Which is to say, once we get through another mechanism, we should be able to near the heart of the remnant!”
Jayden’s eyes gleamed, “Then what are we still waiting for?”
To him, finding information to advance into an official Magus was the most important task. Although collecting advanced ingredients was not bad, it did not have the allure of the inheritance of an official Magus,
The three acolytes used various rank 0 spell to probe the interior of the cave, finally finding a hole in the corner.
The pitch black hole even grew a layer of green rust. It seems to be made of some metal.
*Sssii!*
A green eyeball immediately flew from the hole.
“Pa!” Jayden reached out to grab it and inserted it back into his socket.
“Not many dangers ahead. However, five thousand metres further, my spell seemed to be blocked, as if there has to be a verification of some sorts before going through.”
On the other side, Leylin and Bosain too used their own methods to inspect the cave before giving the same results.
that being so, why don’t we all enter together?!” Bosain looked at the other two. “Certainly!” Resolve surfaced on Jayden’s face. For him, the exploration, this time, was only considered successful if he found a Magus inheritance! “I have no objections!” Leylin looked calm on the surface, yet it was contrary to what he felt. He was aware of the person who left behind this inheritance and what was buried here. “Rank 4 Magus, a virtuous person in legends, inheritance of the great Magus Serholm!” Leylin’s heart blazed in desire. The three had the same opinion and entered the rusty metal passage. The tunnel was broad, enough to fit 3 adults walking side by side. Since they were 3 youths, naturally they had more freedom for movement. Leylin touched the wall and grey dust fell down, revealing the silver metal wall behind it. At first, it felt was icy-cold, then again it felt warm. This metal gave a strange sensation when Leylin’s fingers touched upon it. [Discovery of an unknown metal, not registered within database!] After a scan, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. “This is the Crying Blood Alloy. It seems that during its casting, it requires the fresh blood of beasts or slaves. Reportedly, there is a
certain limit to its effect on the spirit bodies!”
Bosain whispered into Leylin’s ears.
If magicians were treated as commoners, then Bosain would belong to nobility within magicians. His knowledge still surpassed Leylin’s in certain areas.
Moreover, a few precious materials could only be obtained within such families, Leylin had no access to them at all.
“Blood Crying Alloy?!”
Leylin commanded silently, “A.I. Chip, record composition!”
[Beep! Target information collect, saving in database. Folder: Resource Information Blood Crying Alloy!]
The A.I. Chip’s indicator sounded in Leylin’s ears.
“The distance to the protective screen observed earlier is becoming shorter!”
Jayden walked on the right, suddenly speaking, “Since this is a passage constructed by this type of alloy, there may be something appearing ahead…”
“A spirit body!” Leylin and Bosain called in unison, their face looking awful.
For acolytes, they lack effective defensive measures. For spiritual body attacks, they had no good countermeasures for it.
If it were regular acolytes, they would have long since retreated.
However, Leylin and the others were different. Bosain and Jayden had magic artifacts on them, which could be temporarily used for defense. Although those were not defensive magic artifacts like the Fallen Star Pendant, could still protect their spirits from being attacked for the time being.
As for Leylin himself, he had researched on spirit bodies for over two years. Under the aid of the A.I. Chip, his knowledge on spirit bodies had exceeded even a few of his professors.
At this moment, Leylin quivered.
[The negative energy density in the air has increased by an
additional 3.14% than regular settings!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“This environment seemed to be recorded by the A.I. Chip before. It is one of the most suitable environments for spirit bodies to survive!”

A strong fearful instinct rose from Leylin’s body.

“It’s here!”

Leylin eyes squinted, there was a bright hole appearing in front of them.

After passing through the cave hole, Leylin, and the rest felt a radiant light whose glare bothered their eyes and they could not help but shut their eyes.

When they opened their eyes again, they had already entered a sea of flowers with varying colours.

Tulips, flaming poppies, red large winding chrysanthemum, green calla lily, various flowers that Leylin knew and don’t know were blooming in this flower garden.

The garden seemed to be under some spell. Different blooming seasons and different areas of flowers were blooming wildly in this garden.

The secular world flowers were only for decoration. After a quick whiff, Leylin discovered many useful herbs for magicians. Many were those that even Kroft could never find. Yet now, they were sitting here in this garden.

“Violet Leaves Flower, Nose Root Fruit, Walking Dragonfly, Inverted Sunflower and there is even the Void Flower!”

Jayden and Bosain, too, gasped in amazement.

Towards the end, there were many species of flowers that Leylin could not recognise, but seeing where they were planted, their value must be above that of the Void Flower.

Right now, Leylin finally knew why the Dylan Gardens were named.
This huge garden was at least a dozen square kilometres. How much valuable plants were here? How much worth of magic crystals?
Leylin only thought about it for a while and felt dazed.
“Haha… the Sun Golden Flame! It’s actually the Sun Golden Flame!”
Jayden looked at a flaming plant at the middle with a fervent gaze.
“The strength of the Sun Golden Flame can even be combined with Grine Water to help Fire element acolytes to breakthrough. The success rate is increased by 20%!”
Jayden muttered and his hand unknowingly went to reach for the fire red Sun Golden Flame.
“Don’t!” Leylin seemed to thought of something and spoke suddenly.
Alas, it was too late. Jayden completely ignored Leylin’s warning and reached for the flowerbed.
*Ding Ling!* *Ding Ling!* *Ding Ling!*
A sound similar to chimes sounded, and was extremely melodious to the ears.
The air stopped! The wind stopped!
Leylin and the other two felt nothing below their feet and was immediately shifted to another area.
It seemed to be the interior of a villa. The four walls were displayed with brand new furniture. On the pale yellow desk, there was a lamp which contained an orange-red flame.
“Where is this place?”
Jayden spoke, losing his voice.
“A type of defense mechanism. It seems like we have been transported to another area!” Leylin smiled wryly.
Bosain was looking at Jayden right now, and he no longer appeared friendly.
“However, there is also good news. According to the Kukeral
period’s traditions, if we solve this mechanism, most of the remnant’s defensive mechanism will immediately lose their effect.” Bosain’s face darkened, “Originally, we had many opportunities to explore, and this is all because of you!”
He pointed at Jayden. Leylin suspected that if not for the dangers lurking in the area Bosain would most likely attack him.
“Teehee! Who’s here to play with Alice?”
A mechanical girl’s voice sounded.
At the turn of a corridor, something appeared a Western Doll? Leylin noticed the giant mannequin that was in the shadows of the corridor’s corner.
This western doll seemed to have to size of a grown adult. The eyeballs were of blue gems sewn in. It wore a pink frock and had beautiful blonde hair. On the chest, there was a red bowknot.
“A vengeful spirit figurine!” Bosain stuttered.
“Vengeful spirit figurine?” Leylin had not heard of this word before.
Obviously, this was a spirit body of some sort. Looking at the physical body of the vengeful spirit figurine, Leylin realised that his research and probes on the spirit aspect had just been on a superficial level.
At the very least, he was completely clueless about these types of vengeful spirits that seemed to border between illusion and reality.
“Hehe! You come play with Alice!”
The blonde girl pointed a finger at Leylin. Her arms were made of fabric and had no palm. Only a naked arm which was a glossy hemisphere.
*Bang!*
A translucent forcefield immediately exploded behind Leylin. He flew up in the air and could not stop himself as he flew towards the cloth doll.
“Come here! My little baby! Let Alice give you a hug!”
The cloth doll spread her arms as if wanting to hug Leylin. Jayden and Bosain looked at each other and immediately left the cloth doll and retreated. They actually abandoned Leylin and left. “F*ck!” Leylin tossed two balls of flames on the cloth doll and set it ablaze.

However, the fire was quickly extinguished, and not even a trace of the damage was found on the cloth doll.

*Ding!* Many baby sized arms appeared faintly from the void and seemed to pull on Leylin. A pair of girl’s arms was even touching Leylin’s waist now.

A numb feeling was immediately spreading from his waist. Leylin’s eyes flashed in viciousness and immediately threw a yellow potion on the ground.

A yellow protection screen immediately appeared around Leylin’s body, separating the countless baby sized arms.

Trevor’s Revolving Shield Potion!
The only defense potion that Leylin had access to was now duly exhibiting its effects.

“Argh! You have hurt Alice!” The cloth doll’s face split opened, revealing razor sharp teeth, “I’m going to eat you!”

A pair of half transparent beast mouth immediately appeared before Leylin and nipped down.

*Ka-Cha!* Ripples seemed to have formed on the yellow defensive light shield, letting off noises that could no longer endure the attack.

“This attack is quickly exceeding the capabilities of the potion!” Leylin felt for the item on his neck, “Now is not the right moment to use my trump card!”

After which, a red flaming potion was tossed out by Leylin.

“Intense Blazing Potion! Also this!” Leylin felt for several pink coloured pearls in his sack and threw it into the flames.
During his stay at Extreme Night City, he had some results from researching spirit bodies. Apart from researching the laws of the spirit bodies, he also obtained some information on what those spirit bodies hated the most and what could hurt them. This pink coloured pearls contained one of the best effects.

*Pu!* The pink pearls very soon exploded in the flames, revealing pink powder. After this addition, the flame turned pink too. It continued to spread until it filled the jaws of the beast. The huge jaws of the beast let off a terrifying roar and was very soon burnt to ashes by the flame.

At the same time, the flame seemed to have gone through the void, extending to the face of the cloth doll. The cloth doll covered its face as it let out a loud and indignant howl.

After the final wisp of flame had disappeared, the radiant screen on Leylin’s body had completely vanished.

Leylin landed on the floor. On his waist were the scars caused by two tiny hands. His brows furrowed. The clothes on his back had already been corroded, leaving behind two small black imprints on the skin.

“The injury caused by a spirit body must be removed immediately, if not it will continue to spread!”

Leylin hurriedly withdrew several white leaves and applied on the wound. Suddenly a refreshing feeling could be felt from the injury.

*Pa! Pa!*

The windows on the side were broken, and two figures immediately charged in.

Bosain looked at Jayden, the surroundings and then looked at Leylin on the ground. He smiled wryly, “It seems like no matter where we go, we will always return here!”
It seems like we have to get rid of her first!”

Leylin’s face was expressionless as he pointed to the cloth doll which was still clutching its face.

Regarding the matter of the other two abandoning him earlier, it seemed like the trio were suffering from selective amnesia.

Leylin understood that if he were to fall out with these two now, it would be a devastating loss.

Concerning this vengeful spirit figurine, they could only work together to even have a chance at defeating or even killing it.

As for that incident earlier, there would be plenty of opportunities later to get back at them!

“Fire! Alice hates fire the most!”

At this moment, the pink flame had already been extinguished on the pink doll’s face.

The originally beautiful face of the cloth doll was now charred black. Even an eyeball was now missing.

However the doll still laughed and said, “The three of you, let’s play together!”

With a wave of its hand, the tables and chairs began to jump around. Even the lamps and closet seemed to grow a pair of small legs as they danced and sang nursery rhymes, gradually surrounding Leylin and the other two.

“Umbra’s Hand!”

“Corrosive Blaze!”
“Acidic Aqua Shot!”

……

The trio constantly cast their spells on the tables and other furniture surrounding them. However, these creatures were too many, even if they killed a couple there was of not much use. Moreover, even if they used their magic artifacts to attack the doll, it would at most leave behind some scars and was mostly ineffective.

In the end, the 3 acolytes were back to back, already confined by the figurine in an extremely small area.

“There is no other choice!”

Bosain looked at Jayden and Leylin who had pale expressions on their faces, and a hint of viciousness flashed across his own.

“I have a formidable spell which requires time for preparation. Stall this freak for me!”

Saying which, Bosain withdrew a grey scroll that was drawn with various mystical patterns, immediately sitting cross-legged on the floor and chanted an incantation.

Hope glowed on the faces of Leylin and Jayden. They cast their spells with great difficulty, blocking the advance of the monsters.

“He’s finally forced to use it, huh!” Leylin thought.

Jayden’s frail state was real. However, Leylin was just feigning his frailty. However, the situation earlier was extremely dire. Just a little more and Leylin would have had to use the Fallen Star Pendant for defense.

However, from Bosain’s point of view, Leylin and Jayden were newly advanced level 3 acolyte. Their spiritual force and magic power had long since been depleted.

Even Jayden had used his magic artifact several times.

As for Leylin, a Potioneering acolyte, being able to last till here had
somewhat exceeded Bosain’s expectations. Of course, he did not know that although Leylin had advanced not too long ago, under the aid of potions, Leylin’s spiritual force now was even stronger than his own which he had accumulated over some time and formed a sturdy foundation for an official Magus advancement. Furthermore, Leylin had even concealed his defense type magic artifact.

“A healing rune which was used earlier, an attack scroll, a contract scroll and a magic artifact which can take on the form of anything to attack and defense!” Leylin flung his potions and chanted an incantation, constantly panting.

“Although Bosain belongs to a large family, he is after all only an acolyte. With these items, he is already unfathomable!” Under the concealment of the intense energy waves from spells, Leylin secretly calculated the remaining energy of Bosain. Dozens of seconds later, Bosain had finally completed his activation of the magic scroll. The grey scroll was now floating in midair, emitting a fire red light.

“This energy wave! It’s a rank 1 spell! No wonder it needs such a long activation time!” Leylin’s pupils shrank. Immense energy waves came from the scroll, not only did it send the creatures surrounding them in retreat, it faintly caused Leylin and Jayden to be unable to breathe. Bosain’s family had actually provided him with a rank 1 Magus spell stored in a scroll, as his greatest trump card!

“He is indeed from one of the three big families, who are rich and overbearing!” This scroll contained a seal rank 1 spell. Not only was the ingredients for it exorbitant, it required the official Magus to cast this spell over a dozen times to imbue it. Moreover, there needs to
be a Grand Alchemist who is skilled in imbuing spell formations. Every one of these scrolls was extravagant. Each scroll was at least 100,000 magic crystals and above! It had a sky-high cost and also there was the difficulty of imbuing. Apart from acolytes, official Magus would not have much use for it. Various reasons had caused scrolls like this to be rare in their numbers. Only large families like the Lilytell family would be able to have 1 or 2 of it. After forking out such a price, the scroll’s might was extremely deafening!

Fire red energy waves continuously radiated, and the scroll automatically burned within the light. The flame, under the bright yellow light, revealed a giant Three-Legged Golden Crow. The Three-Legged Golden Crow used its beak to ruffle its feathers, continuously issuing crystal clear cawing. As if like a real bird. Moreover, from the black pupils, signs of intelligence were observed, it seemed to have wisdom.

“Go!” Bosain’s face now was extremely pale as he punctured his lips with his teeth. On the side of the eyes, there was sweat rolling off, yet he let off an extremely zealous expression as he pointed at the cloth doll. It seems like the spell he cast earlier allowed him to have a huge sense of satisfaction.

“No! Don’t come over! Alice is scared!” The cloth doll opposite retreated 3 steps. On that figurine’s face, there was an expression of fear, as if a little girl had encountered a bad guy. However, Leylin and the others were not moved by this scene. Along with Bosain’s orders, the Three-Legged Golden Crow flapped its wings and the bright yellow wings burned with flames as it flew around Bosain and the other two in a circle.
Several bean-sized flame dropped onto the furniture which had been given life.
*Bang!* Balls of yellow flames were set ablaze, and the various chairs and tables were each reduced to a pile of grey ashes.
“Jiu Jiu!”
The Three-Legged Golden Crow let out an elegant cry and flew across in the air, directly landing in front of the cloth doll. The bright, red, conical beak took aim and gave the cloth doll a light peck!
“Arghh!” The cloth doll Alice let out a frightened whimper and its body was immediately set on fire with the bright yellow flame.
“Save Alice, Alice is actually very obedient…”
The figurine collapsed on the ground, reaching out a hand towards Leylin and the others, its voice carrying a hint of pleading.
Leylin and Jayden turned around and saw a crazed expression in Bosain’s eyes as he continued to ignite the flame. The bright yellow flame burned continuously, finally turning the cloth doll in ashes.
“Alright!” Bosain turned over and faced Leylin and Jayden, revealing a smiling face with his intentions unknown. Leylin’s heart skipped a beat and his hand already reached towards his neck.
“Jiu Jiu!”
At this moment, the Three-Legged Golden Crow cawed and turned into the grey scroll earlier as it fell to the ground.
“Pa!”
The grey scroll disintegrated into ashes into the surroundings. After seeing the energy of the scroll fully utilised, Bosain’s face looked terribly unsightly, but he still forced a smile on his face.
“Alright, the creature is dealt with. Let us find the way out…”
Just when Leylin was about to say something, another loud crash sounded. Behind the cloth doll, the walls shook and revealed a
crack, showing a straight tunnel. On the wooden boards of the wall, there was a line of characters written in the ancient Byron language. Seekers who are able to come here will have a chance to obtain my inheritance. Norco Curadu Sfar.

“Norco Curadu Sfar is the Magus who left behind this inheritance?” Jayden revealed a longing and curious expression. As for Bosain on his side, he muttered the name, Norco Curadu Sfar, repeatedly. An ecstatic expression gleamed in his eyes but was quickly restrained. However, this had been seen by Leylin who had been observing him furtively. He knew that Bosain had definitely thought what the name had represented.

“I seemed to have heard of this name, but it’s very vague now!” At this moment, Leylin also scratched his head, revealing a ‘dazed’ expression.

“No matter who, it’s definitely an official Magus! And his inheritance will definitely let me advance!” Jayden was extremely zealous and immediately rushed into the tunnel.

“Follow him!” Bosain and Leylin followed closely behind Jayden. After walking through the tunnel, Leylin and the others came to a study-room-like place. The four walls were filled with bookshelves, yet not a single book was to be seen, which made Leylin blurt out that it was a pity. As for the large table in the centre, there was a black box placed neatly on it. Behind the study desk, there was a chair and a strange oil painting. The oil painting showed a mysterious emblem, countless mystical runes formed a snake. The snake traced its own tail, forming the picture of a circle!

“I seem to have seen this emblem somewhere before!” Leylin was somewhat confused but he threw that thought away.
“It seems like this place was set up by the great Magus Serholm for his inheritance. This Great Magus is still somewhat benevolent. The mechanisms were all below the strength of an official Magus. If not, with just a little increase in difficulty, we would all have perished in here!”

Leylin was somewhat happy to let Jayden and the others come here with him. If not, just with his strength alone he would not have been able to reach this place.

“Wasn’t there a magician called ‘Norco’? Where are his remnants?” Leylin wished to ask this question, but it was very soon flung to the back of his head.

Because the scene right now took on a massive change!

After seeing the black box on the study desk, Bosain’s and Jayden’s panting started to become heavier.

*Bang!*

A silver white longsword suddenly appeared in Bosain’s hands and was sent slashing towards Jayden.

The vine armour on Jayden’s body flashed, but a cut still appeared; his arm bleeding profusely.

*Sou Sou Sou!*

The three of them immediately kept a distance from one another.

“As expected, in the end, we are going to fall out huh?” Jayden clutched his arm, letting off a bitter smile.

Looking at Jayden in this state, Leylin suddenly recalled that when they set off together, Jayden did not request for them to sign any contract. It seems like he had long since anticipated an outcome like this.
Indeed! The inheritance of an official Magus is a sufficient reason for this fellowship to be broken!” Jayden spoke slowly.

“Not only that!” Now, the metal liquid covered Bosain’s body and turned into a silver white armour.

“If it was just a spell model, Grine Water or something of that sort, I wouldn’t mind at all. But this is Norco Curadu Sfar’s legacy!” Bosain’s face became flushed.

“We are talking about the great Magus Serholm! The inheritance of a rank 4 Morning Star Magus!”

“The great Magus Serholm?!?” Clarity appeared on Jayden’s face. Of course, he had heard of the legend of this great Magus.

However, in the legends, the great Magus Serholm used an alternative title. Apart from Leylin who had an overpowered way to store data and Bosain who had a solid family foundation, there were many who weren’t aware of this fact.

“Since you know the reason, you can die in peace!” Bosain did not conceal the killing intent on his face as he viciously slashed the silver white sword down upon Jayden.

*Hua!* The longsword split into countless small silver needles that were sent flying towards Jayden.

“Form a shield!” Jayden shouted. More vines appeared from the badge and took the form of a large shield, in front of Jayden.

*Ding Ding Dang Dang!* Countless needles fell like rain onto his
shield, creating many small holes. The huge impact sent Jayden staggering backwards. His face became filled with despair. “Jayden! I know all of your tricks. Apart from your magic artifact what other trump cards do you have?” Bosain spoke these words to try and shatter Jayden’s confidence. Jayden retreated until his back hit a wall, then he turned his head and shouted to Leylin. “Leylin! Let’s act together! If not we will both die!” “Leylin! Don’t believe him! If you can stay neutral and be on the sidelines, or even help me, I swear that you will obtain the friendship of the Lilytell family!” After listening to the persuasion of both sides, Leylin appeared panic-stricken; he staggered back two steps and spoke in a quivering voice. “No! I don’t want any inheritance anymore, just let me go….” After hearing those words, Jayden’s face looked even more aghast and anxious. Even his vine shield had become smaller in size. Bosain, on the other hand, laughed loudly. “Haha… My Lilytell family will definitely welcome a Potions Master like Leylin…” “As for you Jayden! You’re finished!” The longsword in Bosain’s hands split again and each droplet of liquid metal floated in the air, turning into dart-like objects. “With my blood….” After seeing the opponent’s attack, hopelessness surfaced on Jayden’s face. He used the same method as before and smeared his blood on the green badge. In an instant, the green vine shield turned into a red giant one. “The energy in your badge should deplete soon huh? Even if you use your blood as a substitute how long can you last?!” Bosain shouted and sent countless needles flying towards Jayden. *Bang!*
The red shield exploded and the innumerable needles pierced Jayden’s body. With countless holes present all over his body, Jayden was immediately dyed red. Regret and disbelief filled his face as he fell slowly to the ground. “Hu hu…” Bosain was panting somewhat loudly at this moment. He turned around and faced Leylin. “Well done! You did not attack me with him earlier!” With a sinister smile, Bosain pointed at Jayden who laid within a pool of blood. “I, the heir to the Lilytell family, the pride of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the silver white swordsman Bosain will grant you your preferred choice of death!” As he spoke, a commiserating yet toying expression appeared on his face; he was like a lion or tiger who was playing with a rabbit. “Choice… Way to die….” Leylin squeezed out a smile, “Mister Bosain, I don’t quite understand you!” “My meaning is extremely clear, you can only die here!” Bosain’s expression was cold, “The inheritance of the great Magus Serholm is too important. I cannot allow the possibility of you leaking any information!” “Originally, as a genius in Potioneering, you had a bright future. What a pity…” Bosain looked at Leylin regretfully, as if feeling sorry for his plight. “Perhaps, you would like to end your own life … It might reduce some of the pain…” Bosain edged closer and closer to Leylin, his voice gentle yet enticing. There seemed to be a magical force in his voice, luring Leylin to do things the way he said. Leylin’s eyes went blank, his lips unconsciously formed the following, “I want to…” “It’s going to be a success!” exclaimed Bosain, gleefully.
At that moment, Leylin raised his head and grinned, revealing a pair of bright and shiny teeth, he said, “I want you dead!”

*Bang!*
A silver streak flew from Leylin’s hand onto Bosain’s face. Shock filled Bosain’s face, but a layer of liquid metal automatically formed a mask, protecting his face.

*Ka-Cha!* The silver light skid against the mask, emitting sparks. “A pity that it’s a magic artifact with instantaneous defensive capabilities!”

Leylin looked at Bosain who was retreating, his face showed a hint of regret and disappointment.

“You… You were pretending earlier!” Bosain touched his face which had already swollen, and his expression began to contort. “Such a boring illusory spell! I was not afraid of it when I was a level 2 acolyte!”

Leylin smiled brightly, “This look suits you very well! Like a pig head!”

“You’re seeking death!”
Bosain’s face was flushed from anger; the liquid metal crept and covered his whole body, forming a silver armour. His eyes were a little bloodshot as he brandished his longsword and charged towards Leylin. “I want to pluck each and every tendon from your body, you useless trash who only knows Potioneering!”

“Oh really?”
Leylin frowned. A black longbow appeared in his hands and a frost arrow was shot.

*Sssii!* Bosain did not dodge nor hide, letting the arrow land on his body. The frost arrow was blocked by the silver armour and turned into a white mist that covered the surface of Bosain’s armour. Suffering from its effect, Bosain’s speed had lowered somewhat.
“I have been watching you all along, all the potions in your bag should have been fully used up, am I right?” Bosain smiled maliciously, directly rushing at Leylin.

“An accurate guess!”

Leylin’s smile did not waver, which suddenly made Bosain feel a bad premonition.

“It is unfortunate, but my trump card is not related to potions!”

“Fallen Star Pendant! Activate!”

Along with Leylin’s command, a layer of silver-grey light radiated from his body. This layer seemed like starlight, dim but sturdy and unwavering. It covered Leylin’s body forming a silver-grey armour all over him. On the surface of this armour, a few gems were flickering.

*Bang!*

Bosain struck with his longsword, but he was blocked directly and grabbed by Leylin’s right hand, which was covered by the armour. Following which, Leylin viciously punched Bosain’s face!

*Ka-Cha!*

The mask on Bosain’s face dented inwards and he immediately spat out several teeth as he flew backwards with a look of disbelief on his face.

“As expected using fists to hit someone feels the best!”

Leylin narrows his eyes and spoke with some satisfaction.

*Hua La La!* Bosain crashed into a few empty bookshelves and they toppled over him. Numerous decomposing wooden boards buried Bosain within the rubble.

*Bang!*

The wooden boards were blasted away. Once again Bosain stood before Leylin with his bright silver armour.

“I have underestimated you! A defensive type magic artifact! You are actually the one amongst us with the most secrets!”

Bosain’s face now was extremely solemn. However, with two swollen lumps on both sides of his face, Leylin felt like laughing
when he saw him.
“Too much nonsensical stuff has been said!”
Leylin’s muscles bulged and he clashed with Bosain.
*Bang!* *Bang!* *Bang!*
Booming noises sounded from the study room, sending dust flying everywhere. Through the barely visible dust screen, two humanoid creatures wearing armour could be seen charging at each other. These two creatures seemed not to be afraid of injuries. They only used the most brutal and barbaric fighting style, completely forsaking their defence, each one simply attacked his opponent. Bookshelves collapsed continuously and chaos ensued.
If not for the two creatures deliberately avoiding the middle study-table containing the remnants, it, too, would have shared the fate of those bookshelves.
With the seconds turning into minutes, it could be seen that the human figure, the one with the bright silver armour, seemed to be at a disadvantage. The white light on it, too, had somewhat dimmed.
Finally, with a punch from the person armoured a silver-grey, the bright silver armour broke, turning back into its liquid metal form, and then it was restored to its original ball-shaped form.
Leylin once again stomped on Bosain who was on the floor.
*Crack!*, the sound of breaking bones could be heard from Bosain’s chest.
After which, a shoe coated in silver-grey light nonchalantly stepped on his chest.
One corner of Bosain’s lips was overflowing with blood, “I regret this! If only my scroll was still here, if only I didn’t use ‘silver light’ so many times earlier!”
*Ka-Cha!*
Leylin’s eyes were devoid of emotion. He showed no quarter towards Bosain and withdrew a dagger from his robes and severed
all 4 of Bosain’s limbs.
“Arghh….”
Bosain’s facial muscles contorted, and cries of anguish reverberated in the whole study room.
Leylin kicked the severed limbs away and took out a hemostasis potion, after which he took out a hemostasis potion and poured it on Bosain’s wound, he wasn’t going to let Bosain bleed to death.
“You…Just kill me!” Bosain’s face was extremely pale as he forced the words out from his mouth.
“How could I have the audacity to kill a member of the mighty Lilytell family?”
Leylin smiled slightly, yet to Bosain, it seemed to be a very sinister and sadistic smile.
“As the heir of a Magus family, you would definitely have some tracking spell cast on you by an official Magus. It is very likely that once I killed you, that official Magus would be able to sense it!”
Leylin spoke slowly. At the same time, Bosain’s expression turned completely ashen.
Upon seeing the sight of Bosain collapsed on the ground, Leylin did not feel any pleasure.

“You were a worthy opponent, your strength, your equipment, and even your cunning are highly admirable and hard to overcome! Concealing my strength, draining the energy of your magic artifact and making you use all of your trump cards, if I had not done all these, today’s victor could certainly have been reversed…”

These were sincere words from Leylin. If he hadn’t disguised himself as a pig but one that could eat a tiger and saw that Bosain had drained the energy of his magic artifact “Silver Light” and also the opportunities that made Bosain reveal his trump cards, the outcome of the battle between Leylin and Bosain would have been rewritten. But ultimately, Bosain was killed at the hands of Leylin. Even his death could not be decided by himself. This time’s affair caused Leylin to understand this fact.

In the Magus World, there were innumerable geniuses and even more trump cards. In the future, unless necessary, it was better if he kept a low profile.

Moreover, every one more trump card one has is equivalent to a little more odds of survival.

“You will certainly be found by my father; you will die an unbearable and miserable death…” As Bosain was speaking, his
eyes suddenly bulged. *Pu!* A bright silvery flash occurred as Leylin’s arms moved, and Bosain’s tongue was cut off!

“As far as acolytes are concerned, so long as they can chant incantations, they are dangerous…”

Leylin, unenthusiastically looking at Bosain who was on the verge of fainting, said, “As I was saying, even though your spiritual force and magic power has all been consumed, I must not let down my guard!”

“Bind!”

Leylin chanted an incantation and immediately summoned a shadow chain and bound Bosain who had lost his four limbs.

Bosain looked at Leylin who could still cast spells, and his eyes dimmed.

The fact that Leylin could still cast spells meant that his spiritual force and magic power was above that of Bosain, yet Bosain already had the spiritual force criteria to advance into an official Magus!

“Just one safety lock isn’t enough!”

Leylin frowned and placed the tip of his long, pure white finger on Bosain’s forehead and pressed.

*Weng!* A mysterious writhing rune was formed at Leylin’s fingertip. It coursed through Bosain’s body and entered the forehead area.

Bosain’s eyes flashed white and his body spasmed, before fainting.

“Alright now!”

Leylin stood up and patted his hands, his eyes showing an unspeakable amount of desire.

“Right now, there only thing left is the inheritance of the great Magus Serholm!”

The light from the Fallen Star Pendant had always covered Leylin’s body. With a face full of wariness, he crossed over many fallen
shelves and came to the centre where the study desk was. On the study desk, there was a black box. On it was a few thin patterns, as if formed by little snakes. “Adjust the Fallen Star Pendant’s form and change focus area: right hand!” Along with Leylin’s command, the grey light on his body flickered and the other areas apart from the right hand dimmed. It all gathered on the right hand, forming a thick armour. Leylin gritted his teeth and reached out his right hand to open the black box. *Pa!* The lid of the black box was opened. However it exceeded Leylin’s expectations and nothing happened. In the box was a thick, black book. As for the other empty areas in the box, it was filled with a type of red silk, looking extravagant. Leylin picked up the book. *Ka-Cha!* A mechanical sound reverberated throughout the room. “Damn it!” Leylin looked at the bottom of the interior of the box after taking the book and was somewhat stupefied. At the bottom, where after the black book was removed, a Byron language sentence was written in cursive font. “Inheritor! When you take away this ‘Book of Giant Serpent’, the whole secret plane will self-destruct within 3 hourglasses worth of time.” This row of words was written in blood and seemed extremely striking. “What exactly was this great Magus Serholm trying to do?” Leylin’s thoughts rapidly spun. The 3 hourglasses worth of time was enough for him to find an exit and even farm some of the flowers in the garden before leaving. “No! Not right. Too easy! There’s something wrong!” Leylin hurriedly flipped open the Book of Giant Serpent. “A.I. Chip! Record information!”
The whole book was extremely thick and was written in tiny characters. It was even written in code. If it was any other person, he would most likely not be able to even finish reading the preface of the book before the time of 3 hourglasses was up. However, Leylin was different. He flipped through the Book of Giant Serpent in a frenzy. In his eyes a blue light surfaced, and the A.I. Chip continuously recorded the information. In less than the time of half an hourglass, Leylin already flipped through the Book of Giant Serpent once.

“A.I. Chip! How is it going?”
[Information sort is in progress…. Deleting useless information obtained the real content from the Book of Giant Serpent!] [667 pages of travel notes, 78 experiment notes, 12 rank 1 spell models, 3 rank 2 spell models!]
The A.I. Chip quickly sent the information to Leylin’s brain.
“IT isn’t there! There is no information about a high-grade meditation technique!” Leylin realised this crucial point.
“According to the vengeful spirit, Roman, the great Magus Serholm had indeed left a copy of high-grade meditation technique! This reward is considered extremely bountiful to normal acolytes and even rank 1 Magi. However without the high-grade meditation technique, it’s a failure!”
[Alert! Alert! The host is in a place with unstable energy and it is estimated to collapse in 15 minutes 45 seconds, counting down…] The A.I. Chip showed a string of warnings, constantly flashing in front of Leylin.
“A.I. Chip, scan the study room!”
A resolve expression appeared on Leylin’s face, as he began to use various detection techniques to search for concealed compartments in the room.
After 5 minutes, Leylin’s face turned even more unsightly.
“I estimate that I need 5 minutes to leave this place. Which is to say,
the time left for me to search is only 6 more minutes! I have to leave before that!”
Although Leylin wanted the high-grade meditation technique badly, he valued his life more than the technique.
“The study desk is okay! No problem with the chair! Oil painting, oil painting!”
Leylin stared fixedly at a most suspicious-looking oil painting. Apart from an emblem with the similar sign of the Ouroboros, there was nothing else on that canvas.
“Eh?!”
At this moment, Leylin discovered a tiny object within his robes, radiating heat.
He reached in and withdrew a cheap yellow bronze ring. This ring seemed to be extremely average, there was even some scratches and rust on it. Inscribed on the surface of the ring was the letter ‘K’, which seemed to represent the emblem of some organisation.
“This is… the ring that was obtained from Roman’s remains!”
Leylin thought about the origins of this ring. Back when he was in Extreme Night City, after searching the lab of the great Magus Serholm, he found the corpse of the vengeful spirit, Roman. This ring was found on his corpse. It seems that the vengeful spirit Roman did not just obtain this information. Moreover, he somehow managed to hide some information from Leylin.
Leylin stroked the yellow bronze ring on his finger. The closer he walked to the oil painting, the more heat the ring emitted. Moreover, there was even light emitting from the letter ‘K’.
*Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!*
On the bottom area of the oil painting, part of it fell, revealing an empty hole which had the ‘K’ symbol, the same as the ring. Leylin fitted the ring in the gap! *Bang!* Both sides seamed tightly,
and a strange energy wave radiated from it.
*Sssii!*!
The black snake in runes on the oil painting seemed to come alive and a scarlet gleam was there its eyes. It continuously chased after its tail, spinning within the painting.
The spinning speed of the black snake kept increasing, finally turning into a black hole.
In the hole, there was the space of a small cabinet. In it was a cage that was made of crimson lightning.
Leylin gritted his teeth and looked at the decreasing amount of time, immediately reaching his hands to it.
*Bang!*
An ancient voice suddenly sounded in Leylin’s brain.
“The test has begun. Begin to portray this spell formation within 30 seconds!” A yellow, illusory figure, formed by the spell, appeared in front of Leylin.
“There is even a spell?!” Leylin was now convinced that this great Magus Serholm was a sadist.
Under the circumstances of the secret plane collapsing, he even intended for the inheritor to complete a test!
Moreover, even if it was a basic spell model, it would at least require several hours of time. 30 seconds? He’s plainly toying with others!
“A.I. Chip! Immediately decrypt with full operational capabilities!” With Leylin’s order, a bright blue light flashed in his eyes. This was the greatest calculation abilities that the A.I. Chip projected.
[Mission establishing, beginning analysis…] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out its duty, very soon projecting the completed spell formation in Leylin’s brain.
“Construction completed; next test. Within 30 seconds construct this spell formation!” This time, it was a blue formation.
Leylin rolled his eyes and continued to use the A.I. Chip to analyse.
Afterwards, it was the third spell formation, black coloured. This time, the required analysis surpassed Leylin’s expectations. Right before the 30 seconds timer was up he then managed to complete the formation.
“Will it end now?”
Leylin thought after finishing the third formation.
However, at this moment, the yellow, blue and black formation in his brain began to converge suddenly.
*Ka-Cha!* After the 3 spell formations instantly merged, it turned into a scarlet coloured spell formation. On the surface, it was filled with many mysterious runes.
*Sssii!* The scarlet lightning behind the oil painting seemed to have been attracted to him and entered Leylin’s body immediately.
“My inheritor! You must have the courage and wise, be astute and filled with knowledge. Only then, can you break through the shackles of Bloodline…”
That ancient voice sounded once again in Leylin’s mind.
At this moment, the A.I. Chip indicated, [A spiritual force data has been received, to accept or deny transmission?]
“Accept!”
Following which, Leylin felt that his brain was stuffed with a load full of information, similar to when he received his meditation technique when he first entered the academy.
A massive stream of information continuously entered his brain and was sorted by the A.I. Chip.
he book is a copy of high-grade meditation technique. It is only for warlocks who carries the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent…”

The beginning of the information already sent Leylin in ecstasy. “The high-grade meditation technique that I have always dreamt of is finally in my hands now!”

Leylin only felt a surge of blood rush to his brain and almost could not resist screaming in excitement.

[Warning! Warning! Time left for the place to collapsing: 5 Minutes 01 Seconds! It has already reached the limit that the Host has set!]


When he started to run out of the study, he glanced quickly at the collapsed corpse of Bosain. “To have you buried inside the secret plane is the best method to conceal the murderer. And, since I did not directly kill him, the probability of any Detection Magic is very less”.

After walking away from the study room, he found himself inside the Dylan Gardens where there was every kind of flower blooming. Leylin did not think any further and reached out to grab the few most precious flowers and placed it in his robes. He did not stop his footsteps and directly dashed out from the Dylan Gardens.

After running through the metal passage, Leylin once again returned to the cave where the corpse of the Black Horrall Snake
lay.
“Something’s not right, there is something missing!” Leylin ran to where the black snake was. His right hand glowed with the defense of the Fallen Star Pendant and as he traced the opening of the wound he ripped open the stomach and pulled out a scarlet heart out from it.
As the handling of such ingredients was troublesome, Bosain and the rest had decided to retrieve it only when they were prepared to leave.
“There is no more time!” Leylin looked at the timer which was counting down to zero soon and immediately chanted an ancient incantation.
“Starier Guderian!”
“This was the password recorded in the Book of Giant Serpent for leaving the secret plane. A pity that with the destruction of the secret plane, this time, there was no other chances to use it in the future.
After the chant, Leylin was enshrouded in a red lightning and immediately disappeared from the cave.
On the top of a cliff.
A few red flashes of lightning formed, taking the form of a spell formation.
A brown haired acolyte’s illusory image slowly turned into real substance among the lightning and landed on the cliff.
“I am finally out!”
Leylin looked at the void which was constantly emitting energy waves, his expression complicated.
This was the influence of a secret plane self-destructing in the main world. It was extremely weak and extremely difficult to discover.
However, Leylin was clear that the Dylan Gardens, and everything inside it was now wiped off from the face of this world.
“A pity! So many resources and precious herbs…. …”
Leylin looked down at the energy wave of the void which was slowly vanishing, and he felt a great pity about it. After all, that was the secret plane of a rank 4 Magus! Just the various flowers and herbs in the Dylan Gardens could fetch the price of several millions of magic crystals. Moreover, there had been copious quantities of herbs in there. With it, Leylin would not have to worry about his finances after turning into an official Magus.

“Fortunately, it’s not like I don’t have any gains!” Leylin looked at the few stalks of herbs tightly gripped in his hands, his expression relaxing a little. On his hands, there were several rare herbs, only that their appearance was not very beautiful at this moment. As Leylin prioritised in escaping earlier, he merely grabbed a fistful of the most precious plants, so naturally there was some damage done to those herbs.

“There is one more, Book of Giant Serpent!” Leylin touched the sturdy black book in front of him. Although it was just something the great Magus Serholm placed outside to conceal the high-grade meditation technique inside the oil painting, its price was still extremely precious.

On the Book of Giant Serpent, there were the travel notes of the great Magus Serholm with the drawings of a few precious items, which could enhance Leylin’s knowledge. Moreover, many experiments were also explicitly stated in detail, which allowed Leylin to benefit from it.

However, the most precious in the Book of Giant Serpent was the 12 rank 1 spell models and 3 rank 2 spell models! All these were items that the various guilds and magisterium in the south coast tried to get their hands on. They were something that magic crystals could not buy.

Finally, the motive of Leylin’s expedition, this time, the high-grade
meditation technique, was finally obtained. This meant that Leylin’s path in the future might not be smoothly paved, but at least he had a direction to work towards to. He had more chances than other acolytes!

Any one item on this book, once leaked, will only result in one outcome for Leylin. That is to be listed as wanted by all the organisations in the south coast! All official Magi, various academy chairmen, even the strongest Magus that Leylin had seen, the head of the Lighthouse of the Night, will do their utmost to catch him who was a mere acolyte. Just thinking of that outcome, Leylin already felt a headache. At the same time, he resolved to conceal everything he had gotten in this expedition.

“Since I have already decided!” Leylin’s eyes flashed viciously and looked at the few struggling prisoners behind him. They were captured by Bosain, used as guinea pigs to test the mechanisms of the secret plane. Furthermore, Leylin even bound all of them later.

He did not know how long he stayed inside the secret plane. Only that from what Leylin saw, these few people were already on the verge of death. If he were to come out a little longer, it would just be a few more corpses that he would see.

“I originally wanted to use them to kill Bosain after defeating him, but from what I see now, the self-destruction of the secret plane is a better way to kill him!”

acolytes who hailed from great families or were geniuses of an academy often had various detection spells placed on them. Once they were to die, the spells would be activated and imbued itself on the closest intelligent creature beside them and turned into a tracking spell. Hence, Leylin seldom attacked other acolytes. If there was a choice, he preferred to use scapegoats to finish his job.

Leylin muttered and walked towards the few prisoners.
Very soon, his face hardened, and he immediately grabbed a few prisoners and tossed them over the cliff.
*Pa Pa!* 
Not long after, there was the slight yet heavy noise which travelled to Leylin’s ears. 
“Not only that, the stone blades at the bottom must be destroyed, the corpses must also be gotten rid of with some bone dissolving powder.”
Leylin muttered and applied the floating spell on himself, floating down from the cliff like a feather.
When the moon was high in the sky, the blue constellations shone brightly. Only then did Leylin returned to the cliff, his robes filled with traces of grey powder.
The starlight which shone down was constantly absorbed by the Fallen Star Pendant on Leylin’s chest, forming a small ball of light in front of him.

[Fallen Star Pendant recharging. Estimated time: 5 hours 21 Minutes!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
Although the might of magic artifact were extremely strong and did not need any chanting to activate it, they required to be recharged. After the energy was fully consumed, the magic artifact was basically a useless item! 
Previously in the secret plane, Leylin concealed his Fallen Star Pendant and let Bosain use their magic artifact many times to drain the energy in his magic artifact. Finally after engaging in a battle with him, he drained all of Bosain’s magic artifact energy! 
Whenever he thought of the magic artifact on Bosain’s body which could take on the form of anything, the silvery and metallic “Silver Light” which could attack or defend, Leylin envied Bosain for it. However, he did not retrieve it from Bosain’s body. Instead, he let that magic artifact remain inside the secret plane.
Things that belonged to large families, if one were to say that there
weren’t additional protective measures on them, Leylin would be the first to doubt that statement!
Moreover, he had killed Bosain. This was the genius acolyte in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and one of the successors of the three big families, the Lilytell family.
Once this incident was discovered, he would naturally face the wrath and revenge of the Lilytell family.
However, Bosain, fortunately, was killed due to the secret plane’s self-destruction. The place where he died was also not in the main world but in a secret plane, which would mean many troubles for the Magi, who excelled in Divination or Prophecy.
“Only that it is still not enough! The methods of Divination Magi are not that simple!”
Leylin’s face was extremely solemn. He sat cross-legged on the cliff and picked up several water chestnut grass, forming the shape of a little human figure.
*Pu!* When the human figure made of grass was tanned, Leylin took out a dagger and cut his arm.
A huge amount of blood downed down, covering the grass doll in red.
Leylin used the dagger to dab on his blood, drawing a strange rune on his forehead.
Very soon, an ancient yet mysterious incantation was chanted by Leylin.
The chant was a tongue-twister and had a metallic ring to it. With the sudden rise and fall in his pitch, the surrounding atmosphere also changed mysteriously.
After the chant, many dense black gaseous bodies were emitted from Leylin.
The gases grew more and more, finally turning into a translucent black shadow, its face similar to Leylin’s countenance.
“Go!”
Leylin pointed at the grass doll and the black shadow immediately jumped into it. The black shadow shrunk a dozen times, entering the grass doll entirely. As for the grass doll, its face also changed, turning similar to what Leylin looked like. “Alright now!” Leylin exhaled loudly, before pursing his lips to whistle. “Gua Gua!” A black raven flew from the nearby forest, landing on Leylin’s shoulders. “Bring it away! The further the better!” Leylin placed the grass doll on the talons of the black raven, before feeding the raven a magic crystal. *Hu!* The body of the raven doubled in size, and the wings grew to the span of two to three times. As it flapped its wings it brought a tiny whirlwind with it. Seeing the raven flying further, Leylin heaved a sigh of relief. This was a little trick he saw from an incomplete diary in the library, it was said to have an effect to mislead those Divination Magi spells. Under the simulation of the A.I. Chip, he believed that there would be an effect to a certain extent. Naturally Leylin used it, hoping for it to stall a little more time for him. After killing Bosain, Leylin never hoped that he could cover it up completely. The methods of Magi were extremely strange. Also, as the Lilytell family was one of the three big families in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Leylin had no confidence of hiding from them at all. Even with the most foolish method of tracing leads in the world, they would definitely pinpoint all the clues to him.
However, for the inheritance of the great Magus Serholm, Leylin had no regrets whatsoever in killing Bosain. Even if it were to repeat the scene, Leylin would still choose to do it again. What he desired now, was only time!
The external conditions had already been met. To be able to retaliate the chase of the Lilytell family, he had to advance into an official Magus!
This was the purpose of Leylin trying to stall for time.
"However, there is also good news!"

When Leylin thought about his future developments, he slowly relaxed his muscles.

"Bosain and the other two joined in halfway while travelling. According to Jayden, Bosain even hid it from his family and the academy. Which is to say, the Lilytell family would only know that Bosain was dead, yet they did not have any idea where he had gone to or who were the people he had met. This is the best possible scenario!"

As for Jayden’s disappearance?
Leylin did not bother with it at all. First of all, Jayden was not killed by him. Even by using Lie Detecting spells and the sorts, he was not afraid at all. Secondly, Jayden only had a Professor Dorotte behind him. His background was much smaller than that of the three big families. Just based on Leylin’s mentor, Professor Kroft, he could handle this problem.
Leylin gave the cliff one final look, before walking away and never turning back.

At the same time, inside an ancient, stately and eerie fortress.
From one of the rooms, a large roar was heard, "Bosain is dead! The parasite larva on him was not activated too!"
Extreme wrath was detected in this voice, and waves of his voice reverberated throughout the ancient castle.
In the air, there were even many energy waves seen with the
physical eye. A rush of horrifying energy wave continuously radiated from the room. Many menservants and maids on the corridors immediately knelt on the ground, their bodies quivering in fear. “Call Kleiter here, if he is unable to find out the truth, I will punish and send him to confinement within the Blazing Mines for a hundred years!”

……

The atmosphere turned gloomy, and the cold wind howled. Not long later, fine raindrops splattered on the ground, giving a damp and icy feeling. However, Leylin was in a pretty good mood. At this moment, he was inside a cave feeding a bonfire for warmth. He closed his eyes and thought of the high-grade meditation technique contents. He viewed this high-grade meditation technique with utmost importance. His path in the future would be significantly determined here. Moreover, the high-grade meditation technique also had requirements for the acolytes. There must be a certain standard before they could cultivate in it. Leylin did not want to risk his life only to obtain something which he could not use. After hastily going through the contents, doubt filled his heart. “Warlock? It’s the same as Branded Swordsman, a branch of the ancient Magi huh?” Leylin leaned on the warm granite wall, his mind continuously sorting out the information he gotten from the high-grade meditation technique today. “Kemoyin’s Pupil.” This was the name of the high-grade meditation
technique that Leylin inherited from the great Magus Serholm. Before the information of the meditation technique, there were several other notes which introduced the existences of acolytes in the ancient past who had advanced to be Warlocks! These so-called Warlocks were a unique kind of Magi. Through devouring, copulation or some other methods, they would obtain the bloodline of powerful magic creatures or even the bloodline of creatures from another world. Moreover, they would continuously tap into the power within.

As with Branded Swordsmen, Warlocks were also a sub-type of ancient Magi. According to the introduction of the great Magus Serholm, he was originally a rank 4 Warlock! Moreover, he had unified the whole of the south coast, leaving behind many undying legends. Furthermore, according to the legends, Warlocks have a greater innate talent in spellcasting and they completely surpassed a regular Magus of the same rank.

However, if Warlocks were that strong, they would have long since controlled the south coast and not have that many magician guilds around.

First of all, Warlocks are on the path of bloodlines. Along with the passing of time and the reproduction of seeds, the descendants of these Warlocks will often see a thinning of bloodline, losing the replenishing effect from the bloodline origins. Just this point alone caused the Warlocks to become few in numbers.

Furthermore, a large number of Warlocks had an extremely troublesome malady emotions! The Magus World was represented by reasoning. However, due to the effects of the bloodline, Warlocks often suffer from extreme emotional states and was likely to go to the extremity of any emotion. Obviously, such a disposition was difficult for Warlocks to survive a long time in this Magus World with the law of the jungle.
However, the great Magus Serholm came up with a method to curb such an ailment Serenity Potion! When a Warlock takes the Serenity Potion, they would calm their inner nerves and retain the reasoning trait of a Magus. Furthermore, their strong willpower would also allow them to curb the emotional effects of the bloodline.

In the preface of the high-grade meditation technique, there were several types of methods to obtain bloodline, enough for Leylin to choose from. Seeing this, Leylin had already decided to choose the path of bloodlines and become a Warlock. Very soon, Leylin frowned again.

“3 levels! Why does the whole of the high-grade meditation technique only have three levels? There are obvious missing parts at the back!”

According to what Leylin gathered, high-grade meditation technique has the effect of raising the levels of Magi. Which is to say, once a Magus had completed the meditation technique of that rank, their level will rise automatically. There is no need of complementing with a large amount of resources to breakthrough, nor the use of constructing spell models. This was because high-grade meditation techniques would naturally form a compatible innate spell and inscribe them constantly with the meditation in the Magus sea of consciousness.

However, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent only had three levels. Which is to say, even if Leylin had finished the cultivation for it, he would advance to the maximum of a rank 3 Warlock, a little more powerful than a rank 3 Magus. It was pretty good as in the south coast, rank 3 Magus were extremely powerful existences, like the head of the Lighthouse of the Night who had that cultivation!

However, Leylin was somewhat displeased; he wished to cultivate
to the realm of a rank 9 Magus!
After which, Leylin somewhat scorned himself.
“Even the great Lord Magus Serholm was only a rank 4 Warlock. 
The distance to rank 9 is even further than here to the Milky Way! I 
should not ask for too much. After all, this can guarantee my path 
until a rank 3 Warlock. If it were left to me to break through on my 
own, I wouldn’t even have the confidence to become an official 
Magus….“
“Moreover, the great Magus Serholm was a rank 4 Warlock. Which 
is to say, the Kemoyin’s Pupil has a latter portion, only that it 
requires for me to search more about it…”
Leylin resumed his normal mentality and looked at the latter 
portion of the information. As expected, there were a few vague 
clues which pointed to the Central Continent.
Leylin had never even heard of the Central Continent before. 
However, in the Book of Giant Serpent, there were descriptions of 
it. It seemed to be a haven for official Magus. Not only was the area 
expansive, but there were also an abundant amount of resources.
Only that to enter the Central Continent from the south coast, it 
required a lot of trekking over dangerous domains. If one was not 
an official Magus, he would definitely die!
Leylin memorised the information and decided that he had to visit 
there in the future to search for leads on the Kemoyin’s Pupil in the 
future.
At the end of the meditation technique, there was a profound 
sentence:
“All those who walk on the path of bloodlines will eventually be 
shackled by the very bloodline itself…“
Somehow, not knowing why, Leylin felt that he heard a distant 
sigh, but it might have been a hallucination.
However, these words still cast an ominous cloud over his head.
Leylin remained silent, blue light flashing in his eyes, before
resuming his original state very soon.
“It seems that there is some flaw to becoming a Warlock! However, this is a problem I’d have to face after a rank 3 Warlock! I am just a lowly acolyte right now with not even much confidence to advance to an official Magus…”
“Even at the very end, if the path of a Warlock does not let me advance further, I can seek for other methods! At that time, I have at least the strength of an official Magus!”
“As for now, with the strength of an acolyte, there is no chance that I can obtain another piece of high-grade meditation technique…”
Various thoughts flashed in his brain and Leylin’s eyes gradually gleamed in resolve.
“To cultivate in the Kemoyin’s Pupil, one must first have the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent or a subspecies of it!” Leylin began to ponder over the problems of his path.
“Giant Kemoyin Serpent! It’s a type of ancient creature. There are records of it in the A.I. Chip. As for its subspecies, I have seen two of it before, The Huge Mankestre Snake and the Black Horrall Snake!”
From the Kemoyin’s Pupil that the great Magus Serholm had cultivated in, it seemed that he was a Warlock who had the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent!
As he nurtured various snake species, he preferred to use defense or ambush mechanisms with snakes, so it was completely understandable.
Leylin pondered and withdrew many times from his sack.
A dozen blood coloured rocks and a frozen heart!
These blood rocks were the essence of all the blood from the Black Horrall Snake collected by Leylin. As for its heart, when Leylin was escaping from the Dylan Gardens, he had already harvested the precious ingredient from the corpse of the Black Horrall Snake.
“According to the records of the high-grade meditation technique, I
can use this essence and obtain the Black Horrall Snake’s bloodline…”

An adult Black Horrall Snake was a creature that could rival the existence of a rank 3 Magus, so it fulfilled Leylin’s needs completely.

Perhaps, the great Magus Serholm kept the Black Horrall Snake in the cave to allow his inheritor to use its bloodline.

However, naturally Leylin’s ambition was not only there.

“Although the Black Horrall Snake is not bad, it only has a trace of the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Perhaps, I can purify the Black Horrall Snake bloodline and obtain the true ancient bloodline!”

Leylin’s eyes spewed fire from it.

Since Warlocks had to tap constantly into the power of the bloodlines, then it was better to transplant a stronger bloodline right from the start.

Leylin only gave it a slight thought, and his inner desires began to boil.

“A.I. Chip! Establish mission, calculate the chance of obtaining an ancient bloodline from the Black Horrall Snake’s bloodline!”

[Beep! Mission establishing, beginning analysis.]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned, loyally carrying out its duties.

[Scanning blood essence obtained! Composition – Pure Essence: 78.8%, Nutrients: 11.3%, Highly active bacteria: 2.14%, useless impurities…]

A stream of information of the blood essence turned into a chart and appeared in front of Leylin.

Leylin who had the A.I. Chip had the natural advantage in this field!
The auxiliary A.I. Chip from his past life had immense memory space and calculating abilities. Furthermore, for it to better aid the researchers, there was even a microscope that could see accurately up to the atomic level. During his transmigration, it even connected with Leylin’s soul, increasing many unfathomable changes. Now it seems that in the aspect of purifying blood, Leylin had an enormous advantage with it. After all, the purification of the bloodline was an extremely precise yet tedious process, and this method was the kind that posed the least problem to the A.I. Chip. “No wonder the great Magus Serholm had laid the test of horrifying calculation and analysis ability as his final test to obtain the high-grade meditation technique. To Warlocks with a strong ability for calculations, they can research on the bloodlines and unearth the power within!” Leylin was somewhat enlightened and thought of the few breeding labs that the great Magus Serholm had had. “No matter if it was the lab in Extreme Night City or Dylan Gardens, the great Magus Serholm had always carried out experiments on blending and modulation. Only that it’s unclear if he succeeded in the end…”
A few days later, under the ominous dark clouds looming over the sky, Leylin once again returned to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

“Really… “Leylin looked at the graveyard and academy constructions that were almost repaired fully as he smiled wryly. Bosain, whom he had killed, was a member of the Lilytell family, thus boasting a strong influence within the academy. Although right now it was almost impossible for them to know that it was Leylin who killed Bosain, there was a certain chance of risk. If possible, Leylin would never want to return to the academy. However, he grasped time to come back was because he had important things to do.

“There is no choice, who asked the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy to have the best resources and experiment labs. I have to hurry and purify the ancient bloodline and gather the ingredients for the Serenity Potion, so I have to come back this time…” Leylin was confident of his deception. Adding on to the fact that Bosain died inside the secret plane, due to the separation effect caused by the spell formation, concrete information on his death would have been very difficult for the people in the main world to receipt. Using the most boorish method of tracing in the physical world required a lot of time.

Also, Bosain and the others sneaked out, so even their families did not know where they were headed to. Moreover, Leylin had been rushing back along the way. It was to gather all his resources, complete the experiment and leave before the Lilytell family could react.

“Although there are some risks, according to my calculations and the simulation from the A.I. Chip, I can escape before the Lilytell family reacts!”
After inspecting Leylin’s pass at the entrance, the Granite Ape that Leylin saw before very soon allowed him to enter the academy that was underground.
After which, Leylin did not even return to his dorm and immediately went to the counter at the resource point, exchanging a large number of his magic crystals for resources.
To brew the Serenity Potion and complete the experiment on bloodlines, the items required were a monstrous amount.
Furthermore, many ingredients and items were extremely precious, so Abyssal Bone Forest Academy only would have them.
What made Leylin’s heartbeat quicken was that under the current policies of the academy, he could purchase resources that were many times cheaper than the market price.
He had already offended a large Magus family and had no place to hide. He could only continuously raise his strength to solve this problem.
“According to the A.I. Chip, the requirement for a level 3 acolyte to advance and become a rank 1 Magus, is 15 spiritual force!”
Leylin thought as he commanded, “Inspect my current status!”
[Mission establishing! Host data gathering in progress!] The A.I. Chip’s loyal voice intoned.
Ever since Leylin had used the Blood Vengeance Potion to raise his spiritual force to the limits, no matter how much he meditated, he could not increase it one bit.
It seems like the elementary meditation technique that he received from the academy back then was now obsolete.
In fact, many Magus were in such a situation. Without the high-grade meditation technique, every improvement or advancement required a huge amount of precious resources. Moreover due to the
tolerance of the physical body, the demand on its strength was even higher the next time round. Hence, this formed a vicious cycle. Adding on to the fact that they did not choose their innate spell model correctly, and the spell model needed for the next advancement was also difficult to find, it was such a huge factor that it halted the footsteps of many official Magi. Hence, in the whole south coast, newly advanced rank 1 Magus were the most common. As for rank 2 Magus like Siley, they were of the upper hierarchy, as with other chairmen of large organisations and academies. As for a rank 3 Magus, they stood at the peak like a fearsome existence! However, after obtaining the high-grade meditation technique, Leylin could absolutely catch up to them!

“My spiritual force has already met the required value. What’s next is to change the meditation technique and purify the ancient bloodline and try to advance into a rank 1 Warlock!”

A fiery passion blazed in Leylin’s eyes as he hurried his pace. After the settlement of the resources, Leylin did not visit Kroft, but only left a message to say that he would enter a very important experiment and required to be in seclusion for cultivation. After which, he poured all his heart into the experiment lab in the academy.

“This set of apparatus was made with vulcanised glass and is the firmest!”

Leylin looked inside a large experiment lab, his hands touching a set of sulphur-coloured glass apparatus. “There is also this! A machine that can generate negative energy 300 times faster!” Leylin turned around and looked at two large black coloured instruments on the table. Beside the black instruments, there was an item that resembled a microscope. However, the multiplier effect could not match up to Leylin’s A.I. Chip.
Leylin had specifically rented this experiment lab. Normally it was only available for official Magi, but he was a potential Magus in the academy, so he had gained the privilege to rent the experiment lab for set period.

The experiment labs that Magi used were naturally better than acolytes’; there were, even more, guarantees in the safeguarding of privacy. After all, the official Magi were professors that formed the foundation of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Even if it was Chairman Siley, he could not intrude on the privacy of these professors. Those who were able to become a Magus often had their secrets and trump card. Any form of detection or prying into them was considered as an outright provocation. Even Chairman Siley could not resist against the power of all the professors if they were to unite forces!

Of course, under the consideration of being cautious, Leylin let the A.I. Chip scan this area several times. He also used many detection spells, and even some that fended against the outside world.

“Let us begin!”

Leylin nodded his head and took out a small box from his robes. After opening it, a dozen blood red rocks lay there, emitting a mystical energy wave constantly. These waves were then absorbed by the dispel formation that Leylin set up, not leaking one bit of it at all.

“I haven’t conducted such an intricate experiment for a long time, I hope my skills aren’t rusty!”

Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn as he picked up a purple potion…

Afterwards, Leylin spent his day inside the lab. Even the daily nourishment needs intake was relied on potions.

Under the stupendous microscopic ability of the A.I. Chip and consultation from the Book of Giant Serpent and Kemoyin’s pupil,
the progress of bloodline purification was rather smooth. However, one day Leylin was compelled to leave the lab. “What? Bicky has been held captive by her own family?” Dark circles appeared on Leylin’s eyes, and there was a stubble under his lips. It seemed to be somewhat decadent. However, a pair of eyes gleamed brightly, looking at the girl in front of him. The girl had a head of blonde hair, her body contours delicate. Her lips were thin and had a layer of luscious red lipstick applied, adding a more matured look to her appearance. Leylin recognised this girl. She was called Hong, a simple one-syllabled name. It seemed to be the style of the hometown where she came from. Moreover, she was Bicky’s good friend and had seen Leylin during several encounters. “Why?” Leylin very soon retracted his expression and a calm expression was formed. However, under the mask of this serenity, it made Hong shudder slightly. “It’s said that Leylin is not only a genius in Potioneering, but even your cultivation in magic also has a high talent. You have advanced to a level 3 acolyte before twenty, obtaining many favourable impressions from professors…” Hong bit her lips, as envy and jealousy unconsciously filled her insides as she thought of the news she heard of Leylin. However, this feeling was suppressed very quickly. Hong combed her loose hair and smiled wryly, “Because she stole a precious Rainbow Potion from her family…” “Rainbow Potion?! That was a rare potion that had vanished. It is known to greatly enhance the effects of Grine Water. The Rainbow Potion which could complement the advancement of an acolyte to an official Magus?”
Leylin tapped his fingers on the circle desk in rhythm, the scented tea in the cup showing ripples. He had heard of Bicky’s family before. They had a rather long standing history, their ancestors also had a period of glory, but they seemed to fall after that. It was different with the Lilytell family and other large families, Bicky’s family was only a small one. As for now, the elders were only of level 3 acolytes, upholding the magic artifact and treasures from their ancestors which could temporarily have the might of an official Magus as self-defense. It can be seen that such a family did indeed have a hope in raising another official Magus, to continue the glory of their family. As for Bicky, as one of the heirs that had been fully nurtured by the family, not only had she betrayed her family, but she had also stolen the family’s treasure. Even if she was killed on the spot, it was not a strange thing. “Bicky is only a level 2 acolyte, did she steal it for Fayle then?” Leylin thought of the crux of the matter and questioned immediately. As expected, anger filled Hong’s face. “It is for Fayle! Originally, Bicky planned to elope with him after the theft, but Fayle had been misleading her all along!” Hong was fuming, apparently feeling unjust for her friend. “After obtaining the Rainbow Potion, Fayle immediately left her behind and joined the Redbud Flower family!”
The Redbud Flower family was one of the three big families behind Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the same as the Lilytell family.

This was a family that had official Magi among every generation and could activate the battle prowess of those Magi in times of war. It was completely on a different level than Bicky’s falling family.

With the protection of the Redbud Flower family, Bicky’s family could only grit their teeth in defeat as they would never be able to recover the Rainbow Potion.

“As for Bicky, she was captured by the experts in her family. It’s said that she would very soon be put on trial and charged guilty for betraying the family.

Hong’s eyes turned red, her tears almost falling.

“Hu!” Leylin exhaled a long breath.

Bicky had a crush on Fayle, he knew it since the first day in the academy. Moreover, he also knew that Fayle did not have much moral values.

When Bicky told Leylin that Fayle had already accepted her to be his girlfriend, Leylin felt that there was a conspiracy behind it, yet he had no way of reminding her.

Fayle, who had gathered enough contribution points in the secret plane, had exchanged it for the Grine Water. Adding on to the Rainbow Potion, his chances of advancement to a rank 1 Magus were extremely high!
As for Bicky’s family, it was akin to losing one official Magus. Moreover, they had to suffer even the loss of Bicky, who was an acolyte.
“A rather good scheme. A pity that his character had somewhat fallen to the lowest. If I see him next time, I’ll just kill him!” Leylin thought indifferently.
Bicky was his good friend. Moreover they had a one night stand, so he had to try to rescue her. Moreover, as long as it was within his capabilities, he would help her seek revenge.
However in Leylin’s heart, there wasn’t any feeling of humiliation or disgrace that Bicky had given him.
Looking at it in detail, Bicky was Fayle’s girlfriend both in name and in reality. In fact, it was Leylin who did the dishonorable thing and let Fayle wear a green hat, so naturally he did not have to feel humiliated or anything of the sorts. However, the crucial point now was to save Bicky.
Professor Kroft was an excellent candidate to save her, but Leylin very soon dismissed that thought.
The relationship between the professors and acolytes in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was only based on mutual benefits. The acolytes would fork out magic crystals and services. In return, the professors would give them knowledge.
If it were Jayden and Torash, highly talented individuals who had gained their mentor’s nurture, it was still alright. However, Bicky who had a rather average aptitude only had a simple relationship with her mentor.
It was as if after she had graduated, the relationship between her and her mentor would wane unless she advanced into an official Magus.
Moreover, Kroft was the professor of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. When entering the academy, he had already signed a contract not to interfere with the internal matters of other families.
As for Bicky’s family, it was one of the many families under the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s banner. Hence, Kroft could not take action as he would dishonor the agreement.

After drinking the somewhat cooled down tea on the circular desk, he slowly spoke under the anticipatory gaze of Hong.

“Due to an important experiment I am unable to leave, but I will write a letter. Please revert it to the elder behind Bicky’s family.” The experiment of purifying the bloodline had just entered its most important juncture.

If not for Hong telling him the news of Bicky, Leylin might not even have taken the time away from it. However, he could not leave the lab for too long either. Compared to Bicky, Leylin’s impending doom was even greater. He had to advance into a rank 1 Warlock in the shortest possible amount of time, to better deal with the threat from the Lilytell family.

Furthermore, the Lilytell family could trace it back to him any moment. Along with the passing of time, this possibility can only grow bigger. He had to purify the blood before the Lilytell family discovered anything, and find a safe place outside the academy to complete his most important advancement!

This matter concerned his life and death! Comparing the weight of this matter, Bicky’s issue could be put aside first.

Leylin reasoned that he was a genius acolyte in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy that had a huge chance of advancing into an official Magus.

As for Bicky’s family head, he was only a level 3 acolyte. In the Magus World, the prerequisite of association was to have similar levels of strength! Hence, towards Leylin’s words, the other party would definitely give it some consideration.

After hearing Leylin’s words, Hong’s eyes dimmed. She
straightened her body and almost left the seat immediately. It seems that she thought that Leylin only wanted to gloss over this matter on a superficial level. As a matter of fact, that was the most common practice of acolytes. Hong was already mentally prepared, but she still felt a little frustrated.

“On the letter, I will earnestly request for the head not to proceed with the trial and also to leave Bicky’s source of spiritual force intact, not causing harm to it. The source of spiritual force was the most basic foundation of magicians which was the sea of consciousness and the spiritual force. Once this source was to be wasted, the magician would be crippled. This was often the methods of families executed on those members who had betrayed them.

“And in return! I promise to compensate for the missing Rainbow Potion!” Leylin’s final words made Hong’s eyes gleamed immediately.

“Thank you! I am really so thankful…” Hong was too excited that her speech turned incoherent.

If it was just a simple request, the other party might not give Leylin any face at all, as they were both level 3 acolyte and the head were borne from a Magus family. However, with the promise of compensation, it was a different case. After all, even if they killed Bicky now, there were no benefits to the family at all. If they were only to keep her in captive, there was even the chance of receiving compensation for it! All logical magicians would definitely know what to choose between the two.

“Bicky and I have the same mentor, so it’s something I should do!” Leylin smiled and got up.
After his experiment, he would immediately try to advance. Once he succeeds and becomes an official Magus, his authority would immediately change. At that time, if he tries to rescue Bicky, it would be less troublesome.

To tell the truth, the price of a Rainbow Potion could be easily compensated with what Leylin had now. Not to mention the peddling of potions, just based on the few precious herbs he grabbed in Dylan Gardens, each and every one of time had a price that was several times of the Rainbow Potion. However if he were to just take the money and redeem her, he would easily be labelled as an idiot who had more money than sense. Leylin decided that there was no purpose in him being talked of as a fool.

Under the combination of logic and benefit, he chose the way that would be least consuming for him.

“I have sought out many a person, but only you, Leylin, helped me. Bicky would definitely be happy to have a friend like you!”

Looking on, Hong’s relationship with Bicky seemed rather good.

“If there are no other matters, then pardon me for taking my leave first!”

Leylin smiled like a gentleman, leaving his seat elegantly.

Bicky’s matter was only a small surprise to Leylin. After leaving the lab to settle this issue, Leylin once again buried his head in the experiments.

Three days later, Leylin looked at a vulcanised crystal test-tube with an engrossed expression.

Inside the test-tube, a layer of purple, red fluid had already occupied more than half the space within. Moreover, there was effervescence in it, continuously emitting tiny bubbles, as if having its life.

“This is from all the essence from the Black Horrall Snake, adding
on to the special blood purification apparatus using the heart as a primer. After the microscopic abilities of the A.I. Chip coupled with magic spells to continuously purify it, I have finally obtained half a test-tube of this ancient bloodline!”

A dreamy expression could be seen on Leylin’s eyes as he muttered.

Just by holding onto the test-tube, Leylin felt a tremendous force continuously emitting from the test-tube, radiating out to its surroundings.

“It is indeed the bloodline of the ancient creature-Giant Kemoyin Serpent!”

Leylin asked the A.I. Chip, “How is the sorting of information concerning the Giant Kemoyin Serpent?”

These formidable creatures of ancient times would only be briefly mentioned in very few documents and tales of bards. There were many misconceptions about them, so what Leylin had the A.I. Chip do was to sort out the real content of the data on the Giant Kemoyin Serpent.

After all, this was his only choice!

As for other bloodlines of other snake species, how could it be gotten that easily? Any creature with a trace of ancient bloodline could command a frightening price. Moreover, Leylin was not an official Magus yet, so many channels could not be used.

[Beep! After 3465 comparisons, omitting 139 false information, 45 repeated information, the main content has been sorted.] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

[Giant Kemoyin Serpent: Ancient creature, reaching the length of 5000 metres in an adult phase. It is known to have a powerful body and mysterious spellcasting abilities. In the adult phase it can go against rank 4 Magus and is the destroyer of many cities in legends. Main elemental properties: Darkness, with secondary element of Fire! In the legends, the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes had failed
to gain control of the Shadow World, hence bringing her children to the Purgatory World. From then on, her descendants all has the element of Fire.] [Sources of origin: Ancient Creatures Illustration Handbook, The Travels of Grey, Diary of the great Magus Serholm, The Book of Giant Serpent….]

“Darkness Element and Fire Element?” Ecstasy filled Leylin’s face. Although after transplanting the bloodline, the Warlocks would naturally add on the elements of the ancient creature, it was definitely the best to have their innate affinity to be compatible with the ancient creature.

Even after changing bloodlines, the original qualities of the magician’s body was extremely important. It was decided from the start of birth and was extremely difficult to change in the future.

“A.I. Chip, bring out my elemental affinity chart!”

In front of Leylin, a projected image appeared. The longest bar was dark coloured, representing the main elemental affinity that Leylin had: Darkness.

Afterwards, it was followed by a fiery red bar half the size of the Darkness Element. This was Leylin’s secondary elemental affinity, Fire.

At the back, there was a green bar and few other colours, representing the affinity of other elements. However, these bars were much shorter than Fire by a dozen times. If Leylin chose to cultivate mainly with those elemental energy particles, then he might not even be a level 2 acolyte by now.

Which is to say, Leylin’s affinity in the Darkness Element was highest followed by the Fire Element. The others could be treated as negligible.

“The properties of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent is actually compatible with my affinity. According to the introduction of the Kemoyin’s Pupil, under these circumstances, it can have a multiplier effect on the magician’s affinity, which is also the best
choice!"
Leylin could not mask the overjoyed expression he had on his face.
leylin immediately left the academy on the second day. He had managed to purify the ancient bloodline after using the facilities in the academy. Even the ingredients for the Serenity Potion were mostly gathered, so Leylin could not think of any other reason for him to stay. Moreover, with the passing of time, the probability of the Lilytell family uncovering the truth would only grow bigger. Leylin had no means at all to resist them within the academy. He also had another level of consideration. What he was about to advance to was a subtype of the ancient Magi-Bloodline Warlock! This was definitely differently from other official Magi. During the advancement, it was possible to have unique energy waves that were radiated. If chairman Siley or a magician at that level were to find out, his ending would not be any good. For safety reasons, it was better to advance outside. Before leaving, Leylin carefully cleansed all traces of his experiments inside the experiment lab. No matter how hard others might try to inspect, they would not be able to know what he had been doing inside the lab. After giving one last look at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Leylin left. He had a premonition that after leaving this time, it might take a very long time before he returned here again. After thinking of the future happenings in the school, it would
definitely be very intriguing! Leylin grinned as he urged his handsome steed to leave the Abyssal Forest.

Grey Stone City was a city that was relatively close to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and there weren’t many inhabitants there. Moreover, there weren’t any magicians staying here.

Ever since Leylin had left Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he had been pressing on continuously until he got here, even buying a two-storeyed flat in the heart of the city.

Around the apartment, there was a circle of greenery. Even though it was the heart of the city, there was a feeling of serenity.

On the side of the greenery were a row of small shops. Occasionally, there were mercenaries with steel blades walking together with women who wore extremely revealing clothes.

Leylin looked on for a while, before closing the windows.

This villa was the location that he had chosen to advance to a rank 1 Warlock. It was also protected with a defense spell formation, so the average person would definitely not be able to enter.

Furthermore, there were a huge number of regular humans residing within the surroundings of the villa. As long as they did not meet any insane Dark Magi, their safety in the area was considered rather well.

Leylin did not unreasonably hope that by taking all these people around him as hostages, the other party would let him go. However, as long as they were somewhat apprehensive to cast a large area of effect spell, it would be an extremely great thing for him.

*Sua!* Leylin shut the windowsill.

The thick sackcloth blocked the sunlight from entering the room, and there was a faint layer of scarlet light appearing in the middle of the room.

The entire second storey of the villa was already under Leylin’s control by this point. Moreover, there was a layer of a mysterious
spell formation inscribed on the floor. These runes were writhing as if they were made of little snakes, as they continuously headed towards the scarlet red light. The light crisscrossed, forming a spell formation. As for the centre of the formation, there was a pure black stone platform. Many scratches were cut into it with a small knife, taking the appearance of a very strange picture.

“The bloodline transfer formation is finally complete!” Leylin massaged his temples, and a blue glow could be seen in his eyes. “A.I. Chip! Scan my stats! Bring out my current condition!” [Beep! Gathering Host data!]

Very soon, the A.I. Chip brought out Leylin’s stats. [Beep! Leylin Farlier. Level 3 acolyte, Knight. Strength: 3.1, Agility: 3.3, Vitality: 3.4, Spiritual force: 15.5, Magic power: 15 (magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force). Status: In the middle of cultivating in Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique, spiritual force in purification!]

Back at the academy, after using the A.I. Chip to analyse the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique completely, Leylin had begun to adjust his own meditation technique and practice the high-grade meditation technique. The Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique that he had obtained had a total of three levels. With each increase in level, the technique would automatically advance the Warlock’s rank. Previously, Leylin did not have any sort of snake type bloodline, so he could not even cultivate fully in the first level. However, the high-grade meditation technique was indeed something good that had been previously concealed by the various organisations. After cultivating a good part of the first level and converting it into a meditation technique, Leylin realised that his spiritual force had undergone a purification process. Many impurities within his spiritual force, which had been boosted
in the past by potions, were now expelled during the process of meditation.
Leylin looked at his spiritual force stats. Due to removing the previous impurities, his spiritual force had decreased by 0.6, but it was all worth it.
As an acolyte, it was the foundation on the path towards being a Magus. The more solid one’s foundation was, the further one could walk down the path of a Magus in future.
Leylin had previously sought a rapid way and consumed potions in vast quantities. This had left many of the residues of those potions accumulated in his body. Even his spiritual force was affected, becoming somewhat heterogeneous.
If such a situation were to occur constantly, one day, his path in advancing would become completely blocked.
As for now, under the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique’s influence, his spiritual force was continuously being purified, heading towards a better development.
However, no matter how hard he tried, without the ancient bloodline, he would never be able to cultivate fully in the first level and advance to a rank 1 Warlock!
“The requirement for an acolyte to be able to advance is a spiritual force of 15. The requirements for Warlocks and official Magi are almost the same, with only the additional requirement of a bloodline!
Leylin inspected the spell formation again.
“A.I. Chip! Scan and inspect the bloodline transfer spell formation again!”
Following his command, a strong glow of blue light appeared in Leylin’s eyes as it scanned the formation.
This concerned Leylin’s future, so he had to be particularly cautious.
Leylin had confirmed that everything was in order and that he had
not missed anything, but did not, however, begin to rush through the bottleneck.  
First, he sealed off the entire second storey, walked towards a restaurant outside, and ordered a lavish meal filled with delicacies.  
Afterwards, Leylin wore commoners’ clothes, and walked several times around Grey Stone City, looking at the motions of the regular humans as they worked, rested, and played, feeling their joy and sorrows.  
Finally, Leylin returned to the villa and sat cross-legged on the bed, yet did not begin to meditate.  
He recalled his memories about his previous life, the experience of transmigrating to the Magus World, the life he had in the carriage party, entering the academy, and his various expeditions.  
The appearances of George, Kaliweir, Merlin, Kroft, and Bicky all surfaced in Leylin’s mind.  
Several hours later, Leylin’s recollections of his memories scattered. What took its place was only calmness and indifference.  
With the serenity of his heart, for the first time, Leylin did not meditate, but immediately fell asleep.  
Only when the sun rose on the second day did Leylin get up, feeling refreshed, as if every cell in his body was filled with energy.  
After activating all of the defense mechanisms, Leylin wore a loose white robe and went towards the second storey.  
After giving the formation and potions one final check, a resolved expression appeared within Leylin’s eyes.  
“Let us begin!”  
*Pa!* The buttons on the white robes came undone as it slid to the floor.  
Leylin was stark naked as he walked towards the centre of the scarlet formation, sitting down on the black stone platform.  
The black stone platform was made of bright black stones. A feeling of chilliness emanated through Leylin’s skin, giving him
goosebumps.
Leylin picked up a black dagger, the tip of the blade giving off a sharp coldness to it.
Leylin’s expression turned vicious as he cut himself on his body.
*Pu!* Blood gushed out.
His expression was unchanging, and the hand that held the dagger did not quiver. In a mysterious sequence, the black dagger began to cut all over his body.
Every time the black dagger drew across Leylin’s body, it would leave a bloody wound from where blood continuously dripped.
At the very end, from his stomach to his forehead, there was a mystical triangular shaped rune on Leylin’s body.
The blood that poured forth continuously from his skin looked extremely eerie and mysterious.
*Di Da!* *Di Da!*
The blood that flowed down from his body was collected by the grooves on the black stone platform, beginning to converge while following the grooves, and flowed towards the formation below the platform.
*Bang!*
Under the influence of the blood, the scarlet spell formation radiated a dozen times brighter.
The powerful flash of light brought forth a strong energy wave, which continuously radiated to the four walls of the villa.
At this moment, on the four walls of the villa, magical blue runes began to absorb the energy waves that leaked from the spell formation.
The scarlet coloured turned brighter and brighter, before finally engulfing the entire room.
In this blood red world, a layer of black smoke suddenly appeared, continuously changing shape in midair.
“Abiding by the ancient contract, my strength will now be that of
the bloodline!
After seeing the black shadow, Leylin moved his lips and chanted in the Byron language.
*Weng Weng!* 
After Leylin had chanted the incantation, the thick black smoke attached itself to Leylin’s body, and the triangular shaped wounds began to gleam in a grim black light.
Leylin shivered as an extremely strange iciness began to charge to his nerves.
After it had frozen to the extremes, a burning sensation seemed to set all of the cells on his body ablaze.
[Warning! Warning! Mysterious energy discovered infiltrating and beginning to consume copious amounts of the Host’s lifeforce. Use the Host’s own magic power to dispel?]
A row of words in red appeared.
“Deny!” Leylin gritted his teeth.
Along with the continuous burning of his body, he could distinctly feel that his spiritual force was increasing at a crazy rate.
It was constantly drawing nearer to the boundary of an official Magus.
However, if he were to use his lifeforce for that, it might have been very likely that before he reached the bottleneck of an official Magus, he would have first burned to a shrivelled corpse!
“It’s now!”
Leylin picked up the vulcanised crystal test tube containing the Kemoyin bloodline and poured the purple-red blood on his wounds.
*Hua La La!* 
The purple-red blood landed on Leylin’s body. It began to wiggle, as if having its own life, and turned into an innumerable amount of little snakes that drilled through Leylin’s wounds.
“Arghhh!” Leylin’s eyes were popping out as the muscles on his
face contorted. An extremely frightening agony constantly grated on his nerves, even turning his vision blurry. At that moment where he lost consciousness, Leylin only knew to follow the method of the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique, as he began to attempt to break through to a Warlock.
After Leylin had fainted, the red light in the second storey of the villa did not disappear, but gradually became more intense. Time passed, and very soon, it was the morning of the second day. The scarlet light grew stronger, and even the blue runes on the wall produced creaking noises as if they were unable to endure any longer.

*Ping Pang!* With sounds like the shattering of glass, the blue runes were finally dispersed and the red light shone through the walls and onto the villa beside it. “Look quickly! What’s that?” The unusual condition of the villa was finally found out by the passersby. A bald man who looked like a merchant began to point at Leylin’s villa as he shouted. Following the direction to where he pointed, one could see that the second storey of the villa was currently radiating scarlet rays of light.

The red light was so dazzling that even the sun could not hide its presence. With the continuous emission of rays of light, many regular humans around Leylin’s villa mysteriously fainted. *Peng!* The bald merchant who had pointed at Leylin’s villa now had a frightened expression on his face as if seeing some natural nemesis. Both of his hands gripped his chest where his heart was,
his eyes turning white as he fell onto the ground.
With the continuous expansion of the light rays, the number of passersby who fell to the ground increased, eventually extending to the whole street.
The citizens screamed and cried out in fright. A horde of them squeezed and jostled out of the city as if there was some scary demon behind them.

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Leylin had a very long dream.
In his dream, he was an incredibly tiny snake that constantly hid and snuck around, learning the methods of hunting prey.
The surroundings were up in flames. What surrounded him were simply lava and black boiling stones. The sight ahead was also a fiery-red.
As for him, he gradually grew up, going from sneaking around to avoid enemies, to being a natural predator at the top of the food chain.
No matter how many ferocious or horrifying creatures there were out there, they could only accept death in front of him while he swallowed them.
Leylin constantly changed his territory. One day, he arrived at another location.
That place was filled with the same species as him. Deep in his heart, there was a feeling of longing, which made him press on and climb deeper in.
As he went deeper in, Leylin could feel that the aura of the stronger members of his species increased. Just the aura radiating off of some of them was enough to leave Leylin with a feeling of suffocation.
Moreover, the surrounding flames and sulphur rapidly disappeared.
What took its place was pitch-black darkness. This darkness had countless shadows, yet it gave him a sense of security as if he was returning to his parent’s body. In the centre of the darkness, he could finally see. What he saw was a giant ball of snakes, which seemed to cover the sky’s horizon. It seemed to be a planet in the universe, eternal yet mighty. Every giant snake in the ball had strength surpassing his imagination. “Hissssss!”

Leylin flicked his tongue out, letting off a hiss that was only produced by snakes. The giant ball of snakes opened, revealing the figure of a black haired woman. This black haired woman had an exceptionally charming feature. Her eyes had vertical slits for pupils and looked as if they were made of a ceramic glaze that would let one see through to its bottom. She also had hair that writhed continuously, as if they were tiny snakes. The hair, which seemed to look like snakes, also gave her another layer of mysterious allure.

“You have come!” The woman opened her mouth, her voice ringing within Leylin’s heart. The language spoken was extremely strange and Leylin hadn’t heard of it before, yet he still understood it. Just as Leylin was about to speak out and ask a question, a flash of bright light appeared in his vision. He reached out to shield from the light and realised that his hand was that of a human’s. Only then, he realised that he had woken up from his slumber. “I recall it now; I’m Leylin, who was completing the ceremony of transferring a bloodline to break through a bottleneck. The life in his dream, which had seemed to be the reality, appeared
in Leylin’s mind. For a moment, it made him think that he wasn’t human. It seemed as if his reality had been obscured by a veil—nothing could be seen clearly. Slowly, large amounts of memories surfaced in his mind. “The villa has been destroyed?” Leylin looked at the construction which had collapsed, and the sunlight, which bore through the holes in the ceiling, finally noticing the difference. With Leylin at the centre, the surroundings were in a mess. Apart from him, there were no other living organisms. “It seems like the energy absorption spell has failed and copious amounts of radiation leaked out…” Leylin stroked his chin, suddenly thinking of something. “Warlock?! What happened to my advancement?” At this moment, he was stark naked, but Leylin could feel an intensifying strength under his skin. Moreover, his spiritual force had significantly increased from before. Leylin, somewhat unsettled, delved into the sea of his consciousness. At this moment, his sea of consciousness was filled with a scarlet light, turning the space into a patch of redness. At the centremost was a spell formation that had an octagonal crystal, floating quietly in the space. The power that he felt from inside to outside continuously emanated throughout his whole body. After he sensed the innate spell inside the crystal, Leylin grinned as he knew he had successfully advanced into an official Magus! “A.I. chip, bring out the previous monitor record!” [Detected traces of suitable composition for Host’s absorption! Determined to be the blood essence of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent! Beginning absorption] [Blood essence burning! Host spiritual force increases significantly!]
Successful completion of the first level of the Kemoyin’s Pupil! Host advances into a rank 1 Warlock! Various stats have been greatly boosted! [New scanning of Host’s data…] [Beep! Leylin Farlier. Rank 1 Warlock, Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Strength: 7.1, Agility: 6.7, Vitality: 8.5, Spiritual force: 27.9, Magic power: 27 (magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force). Status: Healthy]
The A.I. Chip duly reflected the data in front of Leylin.
“There is actually such a great increase, no wonder I feel different. Even my physical figure has been enhanced and my strength has increased!”
Leylin clenched his fist and punched, emitting a shrill air explosion in the air.
“Right now my body is not inferior to that of any powerful creatures!”
Leylin looked at his chest. The appearance did not change much, only that his skin looked even glossier. His abs were well defined, yet not too protruding, maintaining a fine balance.
“However, such a huge disturbance will definitely alert nearby magicians. It’s better to leave earlier!”
Leylin casually picked up a black robe in the mess and put it on. Seeing the mess, he smiled wryly.
About the advancement to an official Magus, the A.I. Chip had no better research materials. Although Leylin did his best to lay the energy absorption spell formation, it still shattered under the sheer amount of energy emitted.
As for official Magus, even if they restrained their radiation, regular humans would not be able to withstand it.
How would Leylin be able to restrain himself during the
advancement? Hence, it resulted in such a scene. After figuring out the details, Leylin shook his head and kept a few important items from the rubble before placing them all into a knapsack. *Bang!* Leylin exerted strength and made a deep impression on the ground. His body then turned into a dark flash and left the area with a speed several times faster than before. Some time later, a cawing of a bird was heard. A snow white giant bird landed, with two official Magi on its back. What they wore were the clothes from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. “We’re here, the place where we sensed the energy waves!” A female Magus touched the rubble on the floor and shut her eyes to sense for something. “I sense a tremendous spiritual force and also a blood-reeking aura. The feeling that it gives me slightly deviates from an official Magus…” “This is very normal!” A cloaked male came together with the female Magus. Under the cloak was the voice of a male. “Choosing to advance here would only mean that it’s a wandering magician! Furthermore, they have obtained the inheritance from a remnant!” The cloaked man grudgingly shrugged his shoulders. “There are many remnants in the south coast, who knows what period the inheritance that the magician obtained came from. He seemed to have inherited some sort of ancient cultivation path, so his aura having deviations from the norm is not out of the ordinary. However, the energy waves have obviously reached the might of a rank 1 Magus, so this matter should be treated seriously….” After hearing the words of her counterpart, the woman’s face
turned solemn.
In the south coast, various guilds and magisterium had mostly controlled the advancement of acolytes to protect their unique positions.
However, in such a vast domain, there were always many of these lucky wandering acolytes who had obtained the inheritance or remnants of others and advanced successfully.
Although it wasn’t very often, these sorts of things occurred once every couple of years.
The approach of the powerful organisations in the south coast was very clear. They would rope them in if possible, and if not, they had to coerce these lucky people into not spreading their knowledge about advancement!
As for the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, which was the closest to Grey Stone City, they were naturally the people in charge of enforcing this law to the wandering magicians in the Poolfield Kingdom.
Very soon, the cloaked male and female magicians began to investigate. However, all of the eyewitnesses had more or less died. As for those who were lucky enough to survive, they seemed to be in trauma. No matter what, they could not remember Leylin’s appearance. Even retrieving their memory was meaningless, so the two investigators could only leave.
At this moment, in the nearby dim forest close to Grey Stone City, Leylin stopped.
“After running for so long, I am actually not showing any signs of exhaustion. My vitality, which has reached 8.5, is indeed extraordinary!” Leylin could not mask the joy on his face.
The current Leylin was a complete beast in the form of a human. No matter how hard a greatsword would be sent chopping towards his body, his muscles would still most likely wedge it within, and hold it in place.
“According to the Book of Giant Serpent’s description, usually, acolytes who advance into an official Magus would only get a great increase in their spiritual force, which would also form their innate talent. Warlocks, however, are different. They would be able to unearth the power of the bloodline, and obtain the strengthening of both their spiritual force and their physical bodies. Leylin’s vitality right now had already surpassed many Grand Knights. Even if it were the Branded Swordsmen in the legends, they would most likely only be equal to him.
I am almost used to the familiarity of my physical body, but I wonder what kind of innate spell did I obtain?”

After a long run, Leylin casually did a few standard swordplay movements. After having some understanding of his reinforced body, he shifted his thoughts to other matters. According to the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique and the introduction of the Book of Giant Serpent, Leylin had more understanding about the innate spell of Magi. As far as regular Magi were concerned, most of them would choose a rank 1 defensive spell model and complement it with Grine Water to make a breakthrough. Magi, who advanced with this method, had the smallest potential. In future, if they were unable to obtain more precious resources and a rank 2 spell model that were suitable for them, they would have absolutely no hope of advancing. As for some large organisation heads or first-rate Magi Families’ core members, they could practise the high-level meditation techniques. Each level of the meditation technique could correspondingly promote the rank of a Magus. Moreover, the innate spell model found in each level is fixed. In other words, it would be easy to guess a Magus’ innate spell just by looking at a part of the high-grade meditation technique that the Magus practised.
However, Warlocks were different; they were literally “dependant on the heavens to have bountiful crops”\textsuperscript{1}.  
The formation of innate spells was heavily dependent on luck, purity and concentration of the blood essence of that bloodline.  
Leylin knew his luck was only so-so, but he had got the blood essence of an ancient being – the Kemoyin Serpent! Thus, it should be highly compatible with this high-level meditation technique, and would thus be good for him.  
After putting a thread of his spiritual force into the crystal, almost instinctively, Leylin knew the details of his own innate spell.  
Eye of Petrification… and… Scales of Kemoyin!  
Two innate spells! That’s right! There were two innate spells!  
“Haha…” Leylin did not contain his laughter and let out a hearty laugh.  
Concerning Warlocks, in the process of forming their innate spells, there was another scenario that could happen. That only occurs when the blood essence of the bloodline was extremely rich, almost the same as the origin of the bloodline. In such circumstances, there would be an additional innate spell.  
Of course, the two innate spells Leylin obtained were rank 1 spells, not that he immediately advanced into a rank 2 Magus.  
Inside a rank 2 Magus, they would have two innate spells too. However, one was a rank 1 spell while the other was a rank 2 spell!  
As for now, Leylin only had two spells that were of rank 1.  
Only after advancing to a rank 2 Warlock, the rank 2 innate spell would be formed!  
As for the might of the rank 2 spells, they would naturally overpower the rank 1 spells.  
Even so, having an additional spell will allow Leylin to be proud and unyielding amongst rank 1 Magi.  
This was equivalent to having an additional spell amongst the magicians of the same level, so naturally he had a great advantage.
Very soon, Leylin looked through the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique and the Book of Giant Serpent, obtaining more information on those two innate spells.

“Eye of Petrification: A petrifying gaze will be emitted from the eyes, equivalent to the might of a petrification spell. The target will immediately be petrified. For more powerful beings, they would become rigid temporarily! Consumption: spiritual force 1, magic power 1!”

“Scales of Kemoyin: A layer of scales will form instantly providing a layer of defense. Physical defense: 25 degrees! Magic defense: 27 degrees! Consumption: Every 5 hours spiritual force 1, magic power 1!”

The consumption was calculated by the A.I. Chip. Leylin looked at it blankly.

According to the estimations of the A.I. Chip, these two innate spells were rather outstanding even amongst all the rank 1 spells.

If it was formed through a spell model, each of the spells required consumption of at least 10 points of spiritual force and magic power.

As for now, the consumption was one-tenth of before. This was the advantage of innate spells!

Furthermore, Leylin also felt that he could only spend a consumption of 2 points in spiritual force and magic power to have the Scales of Kemoyin always in effect.

At this moment, he roughly knew what the defensive forcefield, which always hovered around Magi, was.

Those were the innate defensive spells that they had activated around them perpetually. Any attacks, as long as they do not break through their innate spell defense, will never be able to cause them any harm.

“These two innate spells, one is for offense, and the other is for defense. With them, my current abilities, even amongst official
Magus, can be considered excellent!”
Leylin estimated his might calmly.
As he chose the path of Warlocks which had good meditation technique and bloodline, the benefits he obtained right after an advancement greatly surpassed that from regular Magi.
As for those newly advanced Magi, they were not Leylin’s opponent at all. Only those who remained for some time inside the rank 1 domain, those with their spiritual force and magic power almost reaching the limits and having recorded a large number of rank 1 spells, would be a force to be reckoned with for Leylin.
As for rank 2 Magi? Right now Leylin was far from being their opponent. He did not even have much confidence in fleeing from them.
Every level between Magi had the difference like that between heaven and earth. It was not something that the bloodlines or better meditation technique could solve.
However, Leylin was extremely pleased with the present outcome. After all, he had just advanced, and his path in future was broad.
With a joyful heart, Leylin took off the black robes that he put on and changed into a new set of clothes as he began to rearrange the things that he had brought along with him.
After wearing black robes, Leylin immediately hung the Fallen Star Pendant on his neck again.
“The defense of this pendant is rather low now! Most of the rank 1 spells are above 20 degrees. Any attack from an official Magus will be able to break the defense of this Fallen Star Pendant!”
“A.I. Chip! Establish mission and calculate the probability of improving the Fallen Star Pendant!”
[Beep! Mission establishing, beginning analysis…] The A.I. Chip carried out its mission, and also gave a stream of information for Leylin to check on the progress.
After advancing into a rank 1 Warlock, the A.I. Chip that was
connected to Leylin’s soul also obtained large benefits. Its calculation abilities were evidently more powerful than before. After changing his robes, Leylin walked towards a small stream and looked at his reflection. In the clear waters, a handsome, black-haired youth looked back at him, his body emitting a strange charisma. “My hair, why has it turned black?” Leylin looked at his reflection, suddenly recalling the black haired snake woman inside his dream. “Could it be…That the dream was not just an illusion?” Leylin faintly guessed that it was the external changes caused by the changing of bloodlines. Moreover, Leylin realised that there were some slight changes to his face. Leylin had a rather average countenance at the start, at most having the looks of a youth. As of now, his eyes were brighter than before, his brows sleeker and the face turned more handsome than before. Combined with the dignity as a Warlock, there was a mysterious charisma to it. “In legends, not only did Warlocks have powerful spells and physical bodies, each and every one was a handsome man or a beauty. So, this was all influenced by the bloodline!” Leylin looked for a while more, before continuing with his preparations. He was a Warlock, not someone who relied on his face to live, so being handsome or ugly had no difference.

……

Sapphire Lake, situated at the eastern part of the Poolfield Kingdom, was an extremely beautiful lake. During winter, when the sun shines down from the sky, looking at it from a vantage point the azure lake seemed to be crystal clear like
sapphire. Not only that, there were even a special species of Blue Ice Fishes living in the Sapphire Lake. Its taste was extremely fresh and succulent. If acolytes were to include it in their diet often, it would have a slight boost in their meditation. Hence, this area was controlled by a Magus family. Tyler family was the Magus family which controlled the Sapphire Lake from nearby, to which Bicky belonged. On this afternoon, there was a visitor inside the Tyler family’s ancient castle.

“This is the ancient castle of the Tyler family?” Leylin looked up at the large stone castle.

The Tyler family’s castle was erected on a cliff close to Sapphire Lake. Around it there was even a layer of poisonous cloud hovering around it, so very few people were able to come here. Leylin sized up the giant castle. The large yellowish cliff had the depression and precipitation that withstood the test of time, silently standing here, bringing on a gloomy and declining feeling to it. At the front of the castle were two fire breathing statues.

“The Tyler family was known to have a period of golden age; one can tell just by looking at the outline of this ancient castle. A pity…” Leylin touched the two lifeless statues and sighed.

Magus families which were slightly more powerful can lay a defensive spell formation around their fort. At the very least, the door guards should at least be guarded by magical creatures. As for now, Leylin only saw two stone statues, and there was no aura of radiation coming from the ancient castle. With Leylin’s strength as a rank 1 spell right now, he could completely demolish this castle. It seemed like the news of the Tyler family of not having a rank 1 spell was true.
After lingering around the front of the castle for a while, the people inside it were shocked.

*Boom!* Huge stones axles revolving sounded, and the two sides of the door opened slowly.

“May I ask…Who are you looking for?”

A chirpy birdlike girl’s voice sounded. From behind the door, a green haired girl roughly 8 to 9 years old peeked out.

“I am Leylin, looking for your family’s head!”

Leylin caressed the little girl’s hair.

“My Lord! I’m sorry my Lord, this is my daughter, I did not pay attention to her for a while…”

At this moment, a middle-aged man with the energy waves of a level 2 acolyte finally appeared from the door, looking at Leylin in fright.

“Kushy! Hurry up and bow!” The middle-aged man hugged and placed the girl behind him, making her do a bow.

From the middle-aged man’s knowledge, although Leylin seemed rather young, he had the terrifying energy waves which had far surpassed himself.

“He’s at least a level 3 acolyte!”

He would never be comparable to a level 3 acolyte that this young man was.

Moreover, the Tyler family was in decline for a long time already, so they did not have much backing.
Hi! I’m Leylin, here to meet the head of the Tyler family!”

Leylin repeated his intent.

“Leylin? Leylin!” The middle-aged man repeated the name before his expression changed suddenly, before asking in a more respectful tone, “May I ask if you are the Leylin from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

“That’s right!” Leylin affirmed.

The smile on the middle-aged man’s face grew in splendor; it seemed more forced than good-natured as he said, “Welcome to the Tyler family! I will immediately announce your arrival…”

After learning of Leylin’s identity, this man’s manner changed. The man had heard Leylin’s distinguished name many times; not only was he Bicky’s junior, and Professor Kroft’s accomplished student, as well as a genius in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, rumor has it that he has astonishing talent in Potioneering and advanced to level 3 acolyte, with potential to become a Magus before turning 20 years old.

However, the most important thing in the letter was, Leylin had promised to compensate the damage caused by Bicky.

Thinking of this, although the man appeared deferential on the surface, there was a trace of greed within the nervousness he felt.

“I feel very upset regarding the matter of Miss Bicky…”

The man squeezed out some tears as he said, “Previously, Miss
Bicky was a very obedient child, but now…”
“I am well aware of all this, bring me to see your family’s head!”
Leylin’s gaze turned frosty, and the middle-aged felt a chill run down his spine. He felt as if he were being stalked by an extremely dangerous beast.
“I shall go at once! I shall go at once!”
Following which, he took hold of his daughter and immediately vanished behind the door.

More than ten minutes later, Leylin had already been received within the great hall of the castle and was in the presence of the Tyler family’s patriarch.

“Distinguished guest! I am Tyler family’s patriarch – Johnson Tyler! I welcome you to the Tyler Fort, and I hope that your stay here will be pleasant.”

The patriarch of Tyler family was known as Johnson Tyler. He was an old man wearing a formal black attire and had a head of lustrous, silver hair which had been carefully combed. But his eyes appeared a muddy white.

[Johnson Tyler. Level 3 acolyte. Strength: 1.9, Agility: 2.5, Strength: 2.0, Spiritual force: 13. magic artifact on target’s body can unleash attacks up to three times, each producing a force of more than 20 degrees. ]

A trace of blue light, invisible to others, flashed through Leylin’s optic nerve, as the A.I. chip scanned and recorded the information regarding the Tyler family’s patriarch.

Then, Leylin’s nose twitched; he had smelled a deteriorating and decaying odor emitted from that Patriarch’s body.

It was clear from the many wrinkles on this patriarch’s face that this man did not have many years of his lifespan left.

Too weak! This kind of strength, in front of Leylin, was the same as grinding an ant to dust.

Leylin swept a glance from top to toe of the patriarch and found
that the magic artifact he wore was somewhat decent. If a level 3 acolyte were allowed to pay an extremely high cost, they could attain a magic artifact suitable for a rank 1 Magus. It seemed that this was something that was passed down the family. However, from what Leylin saw, instead of one hit, he needed just two to take Johnson down. The disparity between their strengths was too high, and Leylin did not feel inclined to gossip with him.

“My purpose for coming here is: as stated in my letter from before, I will pay a sufficient cost to compensate for the Rainbow Potion, and you all must pardon Bicky of her crimes.”

Leylin ignored the angry look upon the patriarch’s face and found a seat to sit down on. Seeing that Leylin did not show any courtesy, a trace of fury flashed in the eyes of Johnson Tayler, but he quickly suppressed it. But within his mind, he felt aggrieved, as if a large stone had been placed in his heart. Since when could a level 3 acolyte act this brazenly inside the Tyler Fort? However, Johnson had, after all, had plenty of experiences during his span of life. Moreover, he could always detect a trace of danger from Leylin. The many years of training made Johnson put a smile on his face as if he was not even the teensiest bit angry due to Leylin’s actions.

“The Rainbow Potion is a precious ancient treasure, right now many of its ingredients are hard to find…”

“I will give the Grine Water in exchange for it!”

“Wh… What…” Johnson stammered immediately, and an unbelievable expression filled his face. “I said that I will give the Grine Water for it! That would be enough to exchange for the Rainbow Potion, would it not? After all, the Rainbow Potion’s effect is to complement the success rate with the Grine Water. When comparing the treasures, the Grine Water is
much rarer!”
Leylin interlaced his fingers as he smiled, immediately throwing out a temptation that Johnson could not refuse.
The composition and effect of the Grine Water had long since been analysed by the A.I. Chip during this period.
Only that the brewing process required a lot of ingredients to carry out. Leylin did not have that many ingredients on him, so he could only make do with the analysis.
According to the A.I. Chip’s calculation, the effect of the Grine Water was to burn the life force of the acolyte and breakthrough the spiritual force bottleneck.
This method had very evidently had a huge backlash and after effect.
As for Leylin, although he burnt a little of his life force during his advancement, it was very soon replenished by the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s blood essence.
Leylin guessed that it was the tremendous vitality found within the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s blood essence that substituted his own life force that was burnt during the advancement.
Hence, after advancement, right now Leylin had at least 500 to 600 years of lifespan according to the A.I. Chip.
As for normal rank 1 Magus, even if they used many methods to prolong their life, they would at most live up to 200-300 years old.
Moreover, after Leylin advanced to a rank 1 Warlock, the Grine Water that had effect for acolytes was not of much use to him anymore.
Leylin had planned to exchange it for some resources, but now it seems that using it as compensation was not a bad idea too.
As expected, after hearing the words ‘Grine Water,’ this patriarch Johnson began to pant.
There hasn’t been the birth of an official Magus in the Tyler family for over 300 years!
Moreover due to the decline of the bloodline and lack of resources, the Tyler family members had very little chance of advancement. They did not even have a level 3 acolyte where the academy chairman could fawn upon to sign a contract. So naturally they had no way of obtaining the Grine Water.

As for other families, they were extremely pleased to watch the decline of the Tyler family before stepping in to swoop all of their resources. Thus, there weren’t any good-natured people to aid them.

Although the Rainbow Potion was good, it was not rarer than the Grine Water. After all, the Rainbow Potion’s effect that could raise the success rate was rather hard to determine. It would at most raise it by 20%. However, the Grine Water was different! With it and an outstanding acolyte, the Tyler family could definitely try to cultivate their own official Magus! They did not have to be restrained by other contracts!

However, although this wily fox Johnson was extremely willing, he still put on a difficult expression.

“When Bicky stole the Rainbow Potion, she even ruined some treasures…”

Leylin shook his head. He had already predicted such a scene before his advancement.

Even if he was willing to compensate, he would definitely be ripped off.

As he was merely a level 3 acolyte, yet the other party was from a Magus family. Even if it was a declining family, their power is still to be reckoned with for any regular acolytes.

If Johnson did not ruthlessly try to knock off a huge amount from Leylin, then he would have lived to this ripe old age in vain.

“Enough!” Leylin’s face darkened.

At the same time, a mighty spiritual force energy wave emanated
from his body.

*Hu Hu Hu!* As if a strong gale had swept past, the cloth on the tables and curtains on the windows let off a rattling sound. The mighty spiritual force of an official Magus mercilessly swept through the fort as frightened wails were heard. Many youths in the Tyler family fainted on the spot, without making a sound. They were all regular humans without any resistance to Magus’s methods.

As for those level 1 acolyte and level 2 acolyte, they were not any better off. Their faces were reddened as they tried their best to support themselves and not fall onto the ground.

“Of… Official Magus?!”

As if seeing a ghost, Johnson’s mouth gaped widely, large enough to stuff several duck eggs inside. After which, fright surfaced on his face as he immediately knelt onto the ground, “Most respected Lord Magus! Please be appeased and let my family members off!”

Seeing that Johnson, who had wanted to rip him off just a few moments before, was now kneeling on the floor like a frightened rabbit, Leylin harrumphed coldly. However, he still retrieved his spiritual force.

Leylin only did a slight test earlier with some restrain. If not, the regular humans in the fort would have all died from the radiation. Johnson shuddered as he knelt, his inner heart wildly howling, “This spiritual force definitely belongs to an official Magus! It can’t be wrong! He… He is only 18 at most!”

Once he thought of having offended such a genius official Magus, Johnson desired to cry yet there were no tears. He even had the notion of committing suicide.

“Bicky! Yes! His relationship with her is good!” Johnson’s eyes lit up as he suddenly thought of this point.
“Quick! Quick bring Bicky here! No… Maid! First, bring her for a bath…”
After seeking approval from Leylin, Johnson scampered off and ran into a large hall, screaming at an acolyte that was sprawled on the floor.
After which, Johnson put on a flattering smile as he bowed towards Leylin. “My Lord, do you have any other orders?”
Looking at his shameless behaviour, Leylin was somewhat speechless.
After all, this was Bicky’s family; he could not do things to the extremes.
After Johnson accompanied Leylin in trepidation for another dozen minutes or so, Leylin finally got to see Bicky.
Bicky had apparently gone for grooming; her hair even had water droplets which had not been dried properly. She wore a white gown, her expression, however, did not seem very well, having huge eye bags and dark circles around her eyes.
“You… You’re Leylin?!”
Bicky looked at Leylin who stood there unyieldingly and then at her family head who was smiling obsequiously, suddenly feeling dizzy as she tried to connect the dots…
Several minutes later, within the large hall. There was no one else apart from Leylin and Bicky. Leylin and Bicky sat facing each other, only separated by a small, white round-table. There were many appetizers and aperitifs arranged on this table.

Bicky was holding a piece of sponge cake within her hand, but it appeared she had no appetite.

“Is it true? How did you actually get promoted to a level 1 Magus this soon?”

Bicky, still appearing absent-minded, picked up a steaming drink and took a gulp.

“Congratulations, Leylin! Also, thank you for coming over to help me.”

“Don’t mention it. After all, you are my friend.” Leylin smiled as he said.

“That’s right! You are a good friend.” Bicky unconsciously repeated whatever Leylin said, still looking dazed.

“What do you plan to do from now on?” asked Leylin, anxiously, seeing Bicky acting in this manner.

“In the future?” Bicky bowed her head as in deep thought and said, “I do not intend to return to the academy. I shall go and travel and perhaps one day; I will return to my family…”

Saying this, she looked eagerly at Leylin, “Maybe I can become your follower?”
After becoming an official Magus, a person can usually accept a few followers and agree upon a soul contract where the followers would pledge their life and loyalty to their master. In return, based on their accomplishments, the masters would have to provide their followers with knowledge and resources to the best of their abilities.

And in the outside world, a follower can be the representative of their master to a certain extent.

“This will not do!” Leylin refused Bicky’s request after thinking for a while.

“I have a big problem on hand. Besides all that…” Even though Leylin did not speak it out, Bicky understood that followers must have certain strength, which could, later on, be of help to their masters.

Now, Leylin was already a Magus. With his talent, this was only the beginning of his journey.

And because of this, Leylin’s followers’ aptitudes should not be lousy. Otherwise, further cultivation would be useless.

Bicky’s spiritual aptitude was not very good—till now she was still only a level 2 acolyte. Leylin reckoned that, if she did not experience any strange events, the status of a level 3 acolyte would be the highest she could achieve in her lifetime, which would not be of much help to him.

“If it’s like this! I merely made a passing remark…” Bicky laughed forcefully.

Seeing the way Bicky behaved, Leylin suddenly felt he had a headache coming on. He said, “Regarding Fayle, have you decided what is to be done?”

“About him…” Bicky remained silent for a moment.

A good while later, she calmly spoke, “He entered the Purple-Gold Flower family and now has both Grine Water and the Rainbow Potion. I am afraid that he has already broken through and become
an official Magus. What can I do?”
“At an appropriate moment, I will make him pay the price.”
Leylin still wished to offer some hope and guarantee to Bicky. Certainly, when and how he will take revenge is up to him to decide. In any case, Leylin himself wasn’t prepared to be riddled with troubles to kill the guy who cheated Bicky. Even if Fayle had advanced, he was now only a newly-minted Magus—which was definitely not a match for Leylin. Moreover, there were many rank 1 spells contained within that Book of Serpent, some which can kill people without a trace of sound. Outsiders will definitely not be able to connect the death to Leylin.
Bicky’s eyes reddened as tears the size of beans rolled down her cheek.
“Thank you! Thank you! Leylin…”
She cried as she pounced into Leylin’s arms. Leylin’s expression was tender as he hugged her with his left arm, with the right hand patting her gently on the back. After which, Leylin made a strange gesture with his right arm where Bicky did not realise it. A greyish black gas was pulled out from Bicky’s body and held firmly in Leylin’s hands.
Several hours later, after refusing Johnson’s invite to stay, Leylin left the Tyler Fort on his own. Before leaving, he still went according to the contract and gave the Grine Water to the Tyler family as compensation. In exchange, Johnson pardoned Bicky’s crime in front of all the members, even with the intent of making her the successor immediately.
Leylin walked a good long distance before looking back at Tyler Fort. With his vision, he could see a smoky white figure standing alone in front of the Tyler Fort, maintaining the gesture of sending
Leylin off earlier.
“I hope the potions I gave her will be of some use!”
Before leaving, Leylin even gave Bicky some of his modified Azure Potion and told her clearly of its uses. And like before, Leylin told a lie, saying that he managed to chance across them and made a purchase.
Although he had the strength of a rank 1 Warlock now and could definitely protect a potion’s formula, he still wished to avoid trouble.
To him, Bicky and the other acolytes in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were only part of his journey to climb to the top. He would slightly halt in this part of the journey, but not forever. He still wished to climb further to greater heights, to see and accomplish more things.
Perhaps, after he had climbed to the highest point, he would then reminisce of his past and return to it.
But before that, he will never leave behind any regrets!
“The issues are almost settled. Maybe I should leave the Poolfield Kingdom and travel around the south coast?”
The Lilytell family was a large family with a strong backing. Leylin’s might could not even be compared to a fraction of it. Leylin did not assume that after advancing into a rank 1 Warlock, he would be able to eradicate this family.
Moreover, at the very end, the Chairman Siley of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy will definitely appear. This was a rank 2 Magus! An existence Leylin had no chance against right now!
As the representative of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Siley will definitely take action!
After thinking for some while, Leylin felt that deserting the school was his best choice.
As for whether his professors and friends would be implicated?
No matter if it was Kroft, or the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy
members, or even Nyssa and the other acolytes, they were all members of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.

As one of the three big families, the Lilytell family had to maintain its decorum of nobility and exercise the compliance of rules. Towards this, the noble family amongst regular humans which Leylin was born in were not much different.

Moreover, even if the Lilytell family did not want face at the end and used other people as hostage to capture him, so what? Would Leylin be this foolish to walk right into this trap?

Although Leylin would offer his help for Bicky and the rest of them, it always came with a prerequisite. That he had enough power to do it and it would not bring him much trouble. Once exceeding this threshold, Leylin would somewhat become cold-blooded.

To put it in another way: even if the Lilytell family went to the Chernobyl Islands and used the Farlier family as a hostage to threaten him, Leylin would not give two hoots about it.

At the very most, after his power had increased, he would return to exterminate the Lilytell family, thus avenging the Farlier family.

Leylin thought of his plans as he rode on a horse along the road.

*Thud Thud!*

With the fast trampling of the horse hoofs, they ran past a forest.

As for Leylin, he had been squinting his eyes. At this moment, they were suddenly opened, and a streak of toying expression appeared on his face.

*Pu!*

Just when the horse was about to leave the forest clearing, several arcs of light shot out from the trees.

*Ka-Cha!*

With a huge boom, the fine steed was severed into a few pieces, bleeding out a huge amount of blood and intestines.

At that moment when the light hit his horse, Leylin used his palm
to press on the horse, grabbed his knapsack and jumped away from it.
When both of his feet landed on the ground, he realised he had been surrounded by a group of black-robed figures. They all gave off the energy waves of level 3 acolytes. A few of them also had the aura of magic artifacts radiating from their bodies. As for the one in the centre, his strength had already reached the standard of an official Magus!
The clothes on these black robed figures had an image of several crows stitched on with a gold lining on it.
“Such a getup? The Academy’s Enforcement Squad?” Leylin already guessed who they were, and calmness showed on his face.
“Leylin! Someone has accused you of killing your fellow level 3 acolytes. Bosain, Jayden, Shaya and Roth. Come back with us for your trial!”
The scarred faced leader did not hide the killing intent in his eyes. Leylin understood that the Lilytell family had finally investigated the matter previously, and even push the blame of the other level 3 acolytes death onto his head.
“And if I say no?”
The people who surrounded Leylin were not only level 3 acolytes but also an official Magus. Before his advancement, he could not even escape such a formation. But now, Leylin had an impulse and was rather eager to battle.
“Defying the Enforcement Squad! Kill on the spot!”
The official Magus, Scarface, unleashed his killing intent and waved his hands.
Many incantations sounded, and various energy waves were emitted.
Dazzling fireballs! Jade green corrosive acid! Purple blades, as well as several other magic artifacts were used, appearing above Leylin’s
A huge pit appeared on where Leylin stood. On the sides there were still flames burning, the surroundings littered with broken bones and mutilated corpses.

“He’s already killed?” An acolyte behind Scarface spoke.

“Boom!”

Suddenly, the acolyte’s brains exploded with the white brain juices and blood splattering on the ground.

“Ted?!”

The group members behind him shouted with faces of disbelief.

*Suá! Suá! Suá!*

Arrows were immediately shot off, causing the level 3 acolytes behind the official Magus to have their heads explode.

“This is? Illusionary spell?” Scarface shouted and immediately chanted an incantation.

*Ssii!*!

Ear piercing wails continuously sounded, and the air in the surroundings seemed to undulate like waves in the water. The void seemed to be ripped open like the curtains from a theatre.

Scarface looked at the surroundings. The level 3 acolytes were all laying on the ground with their eyes shut tightly, not knowing if they were still alive or dead.

However, at this moment, the official Magus did not pay any more attention to them.

“You… Advanced?” Scarface had a shocked expression, “You actually… Advanced into an official Magus at 18 years old!”

“What a frightening talent. A pity you have offended the Lilytell family, so you’re destined to die here!”

Scarface licked his lips, revealing a bloodthirsty expression. “Let me introduce myself. Clayde is my name, Clayde Lilytell!”
The moment Clayde declared his name, Leylin gave out an order silently.

“A.I. Chip, Scan the target in front of me!”

[Beep! Mission establishing, scanning in progress… A defensive forcefield around the target detected, unable to collect data!]

As expected, the A.I. Chip still gave the same answer.

“Which is to say, if I broke through the layer of forcefield, I’ll be able to scan it?”

Leylin used an immense force on his legs and charged towards Clayde like a bullet.

*Bang!*

Leylin’s right hand bulged, and the strength of his fist reached 7.1 degrees, smashing onto Clayde’s chest. The sound like a hammer striking at leather sounded. With a huge spark, Clayde was sent flying backwards. Leylin stood at where Clayde stood originally as he looked at his arm.

Black scales appeared above the skin. On the scales, there were tiny traces of flames continuously flickering.

[Data of target’s defensive forcefield obtained, comparing to database!] [Determined target’s innate spell as high-temperature forcefield, creating a flame of 24 degrees to burn objects within its vicinity!] [Target’s forcefield damaged: 4.6%. 20 more strikes are estimated to break the defensive forcefield!]

127 - Defeat
The A.I. Chip reported to data to Leylin.
“Cough cough…”
At this moment, Clayde who was lying on the ground got up. There was soot on his somewhat dirtied face.
“What tremendous speed and strength! A pity that you only advanced not too long ago, so how many rank 1 spell could you have learnt? Two? One? Or do you only have your innate forcefield?”
Clayde patted his chest and yelled.
Often Magi, who just advanced were in their weakest stages, not to mention memorising a few rank 1 spells. More often than not, they could not afford a single use scroll or magic artifact either.
After Clayde had finished yelling, he chanted an incantation immediately.
The energy particles in the air changed visibly, shining a dazzling yellow light.
“This might, at least 20 degrees…”
Leylin’s expression turned solemn. Right now his Kemoyin’s Scales resistance was only at 27 degrees. It was considered pretty good amongst newly advanced Magi, but it could not fend off all of the rank 1 spells.
Only by continuously tapping into the strength of the bloodline, the Kemoyin’s Scales would become stronger.
As for now, once the opponent’s attack exceeded 27 degrees, it would immediately break through his forcefield.
“I can’t let him cast any spells!” Leylin’s pupils contracted
*Crash!* The black light flickered, and finely articulated scales surfaced on his body, even his face was included.
In an instant, Leylin was covered by a layer of snake’s scales. He right now looked half snake and half human.
The blackness of the scales had an ancient aura and reflected a cold, glossy light which sent Clayde’s heart racing a little faster.
“Such a defensive forcefield? So strong!”
“Die!” Leylin shouted, and he moved quicker than before, charging towards Clayde. Clayde snorted, and a layer of green light appeared on his body which turned into thorns as they blocked Leylin.
*Bang!* *Bang!*
Leylin’s expression did not change as he swung his fists. After two punches, the thorns shattered. After covering himself with the Kemoyin’s Scales and coupling it with his strength, Leylin was now like an ancient creature, with an aura that was unstoppable. Clayde face turned rather unsightly after seeing Leylin breaking through the thorns like wild grass.
“You damned worm! What other methods you have, use them all now!”
Leylin howled and felt every drop of his blood being set ablaze. It made his appetite to battle even more intense than before.
“Damn it!” As Clayde chanted, he kept on changing positions. Moreover, he even activated several magic artifacts to block Leylin from advancing.
Although the might of these low-grade magic artifacts were not strong and mostly restraint type, breaking through them still required some effort. After Leylin broke through another layer of ice, Clayde finally finished his incantation of a rank 1 spell. An enormous blue fireball was sent flying towards Leylin.
*Boom!*
After the heat wave had dissipated, the mud around the area melted, creating a large pit.
“Haha… No one could survive after being hit by my corrosive fireball!”
Clayde laughed heartily. The joy of killing a genius early in
developing stages swelled in his chest. However, Clayde’s expression very soon changed and he hurriedly retreated several steps, as if he saw something unfathomable. “How… How’s this possible, he’s actually still alive?” In the sea of blue fire, a human figure parted the flames and walked out from it. At this moment, Leylin’s clothes were thoroughly razed to ashes, revealing his scaly body. The A.I. Chip’s warning continuously rang within his ear.

[Host has suffered an energy attack! Element: Fire, Acid. Estimated power: 20 degrees. Actual power: 26 degrees. Host’s innate spell, Kemoyin’s Scales, was activated! Energy consumed: 34%. No harm dealt directly to Host!]

“It’s actually an attack of 26 degrees. Just one more degree to breaking my defense!” Leylin had some lingering fear before it manifested into a stronger killing intent!

*Bang!* His figure flickered and appeared right in front of Clayde. The fist covered with scales punched Clayde’s chest with a tremendous might.

*Crash!* A bright red flame rose from Clayde’s chest, engulfing Leylin’s fist within.

*Bang!* Clayde’s face turned red as he was sent flying backwards. Leylin stepped forward, ignoring the flames on his body as he throttled Clayde.

“Run! Why don’t you run again?” Leylin’s expression turned malevolent, ramming fists after fists on Clayde’s body.

*Bang!* *Bang!* *Bang!* Massive explosions sounded continuously, and the earth quivered as if there was an earthquake.

Finally, after some time, Clayde cried out, and the flames on his
body disappeared.
[Target’s defensive forcefield broken, acquiring data…]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned, bringing Leylin, who was somewhat frenzied back to his senses.
“What happened? I was actually this impulsive and reckless?”
Thinking of how he did not dodge or block as he smashed his opponent’s defensive forcefield, cold sweat trickled down Leylin’s forehead.
Normally he would have never acted that way. Not to mention the final barrage of attack like a madman was not his way of handling things usually.
Clayde, who was lying on the ground, had his data extracted and sent to Leylin.
“Elemental Essence Conversion? No wonder his acidic fireball was so strong!” Realisation appeared on Leylin’s face.
After advancing into a rank 1 Magus, if one wanted to advance again, the basic conditions was to complete the Elemental Essence Conversion!
At this time, the importance of having an affinity for elements was finally shown. If one does not choose the highest affinity element to cultivate in, it’s impossible to have the Elemental Essence Conversion progress to get over 80%. Which is to say, they would never be able to advance into a rank 2 Magus!
Furthermore, with the increase in Elemental Essence Conversion, it would improve the might of spells of that particular element.
Originally Clayde’s acidic fireball only had a power degree of 20. However, after the 30% Elemental Essence Conversion it reached 26 degrees, almost breaking Leylin’s defenses.
Moreover, the multiplier effect could only be applied on one’s chosen element affinity. For instance, Clayde’s fiery spell could
have a 30% multiplier, but the spells of other elements would remain the same. In cases such as Water or Ice Elements, the power might even be reduced.

However, why would Magi gifted with the affinity of Fire element even use Water and Ice spells?

Blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes continuously. This was the first report of data he obtained from a rank 1 Magus. It could aid his understanding towards himself, complete the database and even compare the stats to a Warlock’s.

“You… Kill me now! The Lilytell family will never let you off!”

When the innate defensive forcefield of Magi was broken, they would also suffer damage on their sea of consciousness. At this moment, Clayde was already near his last breath.

“Why do I suddenly feel like the villain?”

Seeing Clayde, who put on a ‘loyal and unyielding’ expression, Leylin wanted to laugh.

“You wish for death? It’s too early for that!”

Leylin forcefully chugged a potion down Clayde’s throat. Clayde’s eyes turned white immediately, and he fainted. There were even some forbidden runes appearing on his body which isolated the branding of spell formation on his body.

After hastily cleaning up the area and packing his spoils, Leylin picked Clayde up and left the area.

With the vitality of 8.5, even if Leylin were to run for a day he would not be exhausted. The reason why he chose to ride a horse previously was just for convenience.

After running wildly for several li, Leylin then had the notion of checking his body status.

It worried him that he lost his control in the battle earlier.

“A.I. Chip! Bring out the data monitored earlier and investigate the cause of losing control!” Leylin managed to simmer down only after sitting in a refreshing stream and cooling off.
[Beep! Mission establishing! Bringing out monitored data!] The A.I. Chip intoned icily, not bringing any trace of emotion. [14 Hours 23 Minutes, abnormal activities observed within Host. Blood flow increased by almost 45%, activity of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent blood essence significantly increased!]
The A.I. Chip reported the series of data to Leylin. Through a comparison, there was a strange stimulant released by the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline during the battle earlier. It was similar to doping, and the stimulation caused Leylin to lose his rationality. “This is the origin of the Warlocks’ emotional aftereffects?” Leylin muttered, immediately asking, “A.I. Chip, bring out the best solutions to solve this!”
[Beep! Method 1: Forsake the Giant Kemoyin Serpent! Method 2: Use the Serenity Potion! Method 3: …]
Very soon, the A.I. Chip presented the possible solutions to Leylin.
The ingredients needed for Method 3 and above are too precious. I can’t even get them now!”
“Right now the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline is already fused with my body and even the soul. Forcefully removing it would mean that I will demote from a rank 1 Warlock. I might even lose my life, so this is impossible!”
“It seems like I can only hurry and brew the Serenity Potion!”
Leylin’s face was solemn.
He long since gotten the formula and even gathered the ingredients in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Brewing the completed potion was only a matter of time.
He thought he could rely on his willpower to overcome adversities. However, the emotional fluctuations had perplexed Warlocks for hundreds of thousands of years. It was something that could not be easily overcome with mere willpower.
Leylin was always proud of being a rational person. A circumstance where he could not control things was tormenting for him.
After which, Leylin looked at a nearby cave and gave a cold smile. After stripping Clayde of his belongings, he trapped Clayde, who was unconscious, in a cave.
Leylin was somewhat anticipatory on the information about the Lilytell family.
Even though he suspected that Clayde has some sort of tracing spell on him, Leylin still decided to grill him.
As long as he acts fast enough, Leylin predicts that he can leave before Clayde regains full consciousness. Moreover, the enemy merely assumed Leylin to be a level 3 acolyte; they would never anticipate that Clayde would fail. However, Clayde will never have the chance to be assigned to such an easy task in the future.

……

After a few hours, Leylin retrieved what he wanted and left the area. Nothing was left of Clayde’s presence in the area except for a pool of yellow pus. “I never thought that Bosain’s backing would be this powerful. He was the only grandson to an elder who had reached the requirements of advancement by having an Elemental Essence Conversion of 80% and above…” Leylin pondered on the latest developments as he hurried along his way.

Potion Masters crafted different types of potions. Leylin accumulated an assorted bunch of torture methods from the experiments in Extreme Night City. Leylin tested these torture methods on Clayde. Very quickly, the official Magus was driven to near insanity, letting the cat out of the bag in the process as he begged for a quick death.

According to Clayde, Bosain’s grandfather was a powerful elder of the Lilytell family and also a magus that Clayde was serving. This was the reason why he was able to command the rank 1 Magus. After eliminating the linchpin of the enemy and Clayde, Leylin knew that the powerful elder’s hate for him grew by the day. However, there was still good news at the end.
Because of selecting the head inside the Lilytell family, the internal conflict in the Lilytell family had reached a critical point. The various elders were not affiliated with each other; thus, Leylin only needed to worry about escaping from Bosain’s’ grandfather. However, the audacity of Leylin to kill the enemies’ linchpin magus has angered all of the clans in the family and they will certainly not mind dispatching of Leylin if it was convenient. Alone, Leylin stood no chance against the powerful clans Leylin took little time to realise that his best option was to escape The Poolfield Kingdom was Abyssal Bone Forest Academy territory, which was sort of Lilytell family’s gathering grounds. The more to the east, the more obvious it gets. The region to the north was filled with unspeakable dangers. Leylin decided that West was the way to go. He ploughed through the Zither Moon Mountain Plains and entered the vicinity of the Sage Gotham Hut The two forces just had a war, where they were irreconcilable like fire and water. In the vicinity of the Sage Gotham Hut, the influence of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was definitely the weakest. However, Leylin was not planning to stay for long in the vicinity of Sage Gotham Hut. Although they would definitely be willing to rope in an official Magus and even put the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy at a disadvantage, Leylin had never planned to be a pawn for them. The whole south coast was still big! Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and Sage Gotham Hut only belonged to the remote area on the eastern side of the south coast, like the rural area. After passing through the Inlan Dukedom controlled by the Sage Gotham Hut and passing through the Great Canyon Margaret and traversing through a dozen more kingdoms, he reached the central area of the south coast.
It was said that the Light Magi in this area held the highest power and could live in harmony with regular humans. Massacres and battles seldom occurred here. Leylin’s plan was to continue his progress in this area. Although he only needed to meditate the high-grade meditation technique to advance, it did not mean that he had no need for resources. Rather, it was just the contrary, no matter if it was for Elemental Essence Conversion or the decreased time between meditations, Leylin required resources, lots of magical resources! At the same time, he required huge quantities of potions and to obtain enough gold for it. All these required a distribution centre to collect the ingredients. The largest markets in the south coast were in the central region, which was overseen by the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower and other large magisterium. As he thought of Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Leylin recalled George. It was a youth who set off at the same time as him, finally entering the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower for his studies. In a flash, five to six years had passed. George had a fourth-grade aptitude, so it was very likely he had already advanced into a level 3 acolyte. “I wonder how they are now.” Leylin muttered as he sped up his pace towards the Zither Moon Mountain Plains. *Bang!* A huge cave immediately crumbled into a landslide, showing the apparent rage of the person who struck it. Under the rubble, the figure of an old man in silver white armour could be seen. There were some strange metal ornaments on this old man’s face, his eyes showing his wrath. “Clayde… Clayde was actually killed too!”
“I will definitely not let you go!” The old man gritted his teeth, the veins on his forehead bulging.

……

Fayle’s frame of mind was somewhat good the past few days. Especially when his servants and acolytes called him; Lord Magus Fayle’, he would often have some smugness from it. Fayle did have the ability to be arrogant. Before the age of 30, he already advanced into an official Magus! This degree of progress even shocked his mentor. Fayle enjoyed giving this astonishment to others. Moreover, with his title as a genius, the Purple-Gold Flower family took its initiative to rope him in, offering him an attractive contract. The restraints from the spirit contract were much looser than those given by the Academy. Although he lost some freedom, it was insignificant compared to the knowledge of advancement and a rank 1 defensive spell model. Without these two items, he would never be able to advance into a rank 1 Magus; maybe to add one more item—Rainbow Potion! Fayle immediately thought of Bicky after recalling the Rainbow Potion. “I guess that fool has already been killed off by her family?” He smirked in disdain. Previously, if not for Bicky always sending him magic crystals and other resources, he would have already kicked her away already. Moreover, Bicky unknowingly revealed that her family had a Rainbow Potion in their possession, so Fayle could not hold back from wanting it. First, he put on an act to save her in the bloodbath to deepen their relationship. Afterwards, he told her of his concerns in advancement, and requested her to steal her family’s treasure!
“Hng! I, Fayle, will be a monarch unifying the south coast in future. Why would I even have my eyes on such trash?” Furthermore, according to some inside information, the Purple-Gold Flower family wanted to betroth a young girl to him. This was normally the methods used by Magi families to rope in genius Magi. Not only could they bind him on their bandwagon, but they could also inject new heirs with superior bloodlines.

“Men…Mentor, it’s time to have lunch!” A shy voice sounded. It was a blonde female acolyte wearing grey robes. She was only about 11 or 12, where there was some baby fat on her cheeks.

“En!” Fayle acknowledged and caressed the girl’s cheek. The girl’s face reddened yet she did not dare to move, letting Fayle touch her. Finally, she left with an embarrassed expression. An insatiable lust could not be concealed in Fayle’s eyes as he watched the girl’s leaving figure.

Fayle knew that he had some fetish towards this aspect. For example… He did not like mature women but only young girls! This little girl was an acolyte he had taken in after becoming an official Magus. As for why he took her under his wing, it was the Purple-Gold Flower family’s request. On the other hand, it was also after seeing how she was this pure and lovable. He always felt it was disdainful to hide his desires. Moreover, to outsiders, there was nothing wrong with that. Official Magi always have special rights. Furthermore, if it was only this much the Purple-Gold Flower family had to invest in to get the teachings of an official Magus, the little girl was definitely benefitting from it.

Fayle, whose robes was neat and tidy, sat on a long table. Beside him was the little girl from before. Around them, there was a dozen of maids and menservants quietly
attending to their needs.
In reality, there were the servants assigned by the Purple-Gold Flower family, so he did not have to waste a single coin.
Moreover, even this tower that he lived in was constructed by the Purple-Gold Flower family and sent to him by the initiative.
Every time something like that happened, Fayle would be put in a good mood.
“What’s today’s lunch menu?”
“Fresh tenderloin beef, My Lord!” An old housekeeper bowed and replied.
A pretty maid went open and opened the golden lid. An aroma of hot food wafted in the air. In the middle was a well-done beef tenderloin steak, coupled with soup and juice.
Fayle expertly cut with the knife and used the silver fork to poke the meat.
“This meat… Seemed to be redder than regular beef…”
Fayle spoke indifferently and placed the meat piece into his mouth…
After eating, Fayle used a white napkin to wipe his lips.
“Today’s beef flavour was pretty good, where did the beef come from?”
“My Lord! It was a meat vendor who approached our front door and pitched a sale. I saw that the steak quality was not bad, so I bought a few…” The housekeeper reported.
“Isn’t this the outer vicinity of the Purple-Gold Flower family? There are actually meat vendors coming up to sell their goods?” Fayle suddenly felt that it was absurd.
“Y es, I remember it clearly. That meat vendor wore a black hood, his dishevelled hair covering half his face. There was a metal hook on his left hand…”

The housekeeper vividly recalled the memory of the meat vendor.
“This is really strange!” Fayle shook his head and looked at the little girl beside him.
“How is the construction of your mind runes coming on?”
“I have already constructed three but I can’t seem to construct the fourth! Also, inside the <All Living Things> biology…” The little girl reported back meekly.
“So it’s like this?” Fayle interlaced his fingers.
“Your progress is too slow. Tonight you must come to my room, I’ll be personally ‘coaching’ you!”
“Yes, Mentor!” The little girl replied softly.
*Dang Dang Dang!*
The copper grandfather clock in the hall gave a resounding boom and the clock struck 12 times. The sky outside had already darkened and one could slightly see some visible blue stars.
“It’s already so late, why isn’t Nida here yet!”
Fayle slammed opened the door with a loud bang, annoyance evidently seen on his face.
“Nida! Nida!” Fayle began to shout.
His voice echoed throughout the silent hallway, reverberating for a long distance.
The surroundings were in dead silence. Fayle could even hear his own breathing and the flow of his blood.

“Housekeeper! Housekeeper! Maids! Where are they?!” Impatience began to show on his face, as he hurriedly put on his outer garments and stepped outside of the door.

*Dong Dong Dong!* The sound of leather boots striking the floor was heard.

A black figure walked slowly towards Fayle.

“Who? Who’s there?” Fayle called out warily, a silver short sword appearing in his hands.

No matter how Fayle shouted, the footsteps maintained a constant pace that was neither too fast nor slow and walked towards him.

When the black figure drew closer, Fayle could almost see the full appearance of the figure.

It was a middle-aged man who wore black robes. On his chest hung the trademark apron that butchers wore. On his head was a black hood, his dishevelled hair covering most of his face. What was especially attracting was his empty left sleeves. Instead, only a rusty metal hook was seen at the end of the sleeve.

This description perfectly fit the one that the housekeeper mentioned earlier.

*Weng!* The silver short sword glinted and flew directly to the man with a whistling sound.

*Pu!* As if piercing through an illusion, ripples appeared on the meat vendor’s body and the silver short sword went through it.

“Illusory spell?!?” Fayle’s lips started to move as he chanted a high pitched incantation.

*Xiu Xiu!* A mixture of the sound of a quick panting on a metallic flute and like the sound of a rusty knife scraping against a metal continuously sounded, causing ripples in the air.
After the whistling sound ended, it was still absolute silence in the tall tower, as if the world only had Fayle and the meat vendor in it. The black robed man immediately raised his left hook and swung it at Fayle.

*Bubble!* From Fayle’s body, a layer of fluid formed transparent water shield, blocking the metal hook’s assault. This was Fayle’s innate spell which was finally activated in crucial moments!

Seizing this opportunity, Fayle hurriedly chanted and multiple frost spikes were shot towards the man.

*Pu!* *Pu!*

The frost spikes entered the body and countless blood was spurted out. However, the man in the robes seemed not to be conscious about it, even his expression did not change, like that of a zombie who did not know pain. He continuously brandished his metal hook, causing ripples after ripples on the water shield.

“F*ck, what is this damned thing?”

Fayle struck at the man in the robes for several more times before his mental fortitude seemed to be on the verge of collapse. No matter if it was physical or magical attacks, it all amounted to nothing when they landed on this man’s body. Instead, every strike from this metal hook continuously consumed the energy needed to maintain the innate spell. Fayle could clearly feel that if the opponent were to attack several more times, his innate spell would completely shatter.

“Run!”

Under the life or death crisis, Fayle felt as though he returned back to his acolyte days where he had to greet every Magus respectfully, before turning around and running away.

*Dong Dong Dong Dong!*

Hearing the approaching footsteps of the man wearing the black robes resounding in his ears, it made Fayle run even faster.
20 metres!
10 metres!
5 metres!
1 metres!
Fayle grabbed hold of the large main doors of the tall tower and dashed outside.
*Peng!* The door behind was closed shut. To Fayle’s utter dismay, he actually appeared inside his bedroom once again. Also, there was only a 3 metres distance between him and the man now!
“Damn it! Damn it! Damn it! What’s happening?”
Fayle gritted his teeth and continued to run, yet returning to his room every time.
Finally, tears and mucus ran down Fayle’s face as he returned yet again to his room and closing the door shut tightly.
*Dong! Dong!* The knocking sounds that were the footsteps of the death god. Fayle felt that every step was stepping directly on his heart.
“Mentor! Papa! Mama! Save me!”
Fayle crouched behind the door, crying like a little child.
As if hearing his pants, the booming footsteps halted. Finally, when it was just one step away from the door, it disappeared….
Fayle was pale stricken as he waited for a good half hour before his trembling hands opened the door, only to see no one there.
“Hu….”
Fayle exhaled a large breath and collapsed to the ground as if all the bones had been removed from his body.
“It’s finally gone! I must write a letter to Mentor tomorrow and let him check what had transpired…”
Fayle closed the door.
Suddenly, just when he had turned around, a dishevelled face appeared right before him.
What came closely following it was a black metal hook!
*Pu!* This time, the black metal hook directly broke through Fayle’s defensive forcefield and gouged his right eyeball out. The moment his eye was hooked out, black and red viscous liquid mixture flowed out. The man seemed to be unsatisfied as his sent his hook at Fayle’s head again! *Bang!* Fayle’s body was sent to the ground from the force. The metal hook bore through his brains deeply. Fayle was still unconsciously writhing before he lost all signs of life. *Brush!* Following wipe, the man in black robes immediately withdrew a greasy bone saw and began to expertly dissect Fayle’s corpse. After the dissection, Fayle’s muscles had been completely stripped clean. The colour of it too turned even redder, revealing the veins of blood, similar to that found in the beef tenderloin! Winding the time back to yesterday morning. The black robed man knocked on the kitchen’s door of the tall tower, revealing a hideous smile. “Do you want to buy meat? I have good tenderloin steak for sale…”

……

Several li away from Fayle’s tall tower, Leylin looked at a spell formation with a solemn expression. In the centre of the formation, a black flame was flickering, in the heart of it was the scene of Fayle’s ending. With the images continuously flashing by, Leylin stared at the image without blinking, mysteriously chanting at the same time. Finally, after the black robed man killed Fayle and scoured his flesh clean, Leylin’s expression loosened. *Pa!* The black coloured spell formation collapsed. The surroundings immediately quietened down and a dead silence
followed after.

*Dong Dong!* The black robed man inside the image earlier appeared in front of Leylin. “You’re here now?” Leylin seemed to have expected it, with no shocked expression on his face. “Shihiohj” The black robed man let off several indiscernible words and charged towards Leylin. *Bang!* The black metal hook was grabbed by a scaly palm. Leylin faced the black robed man and could even see the crude construction of his facial features. “Look into my eyes!” Leylin spoke gently with a hissing voice like that of a snake’s. The black robed man unconsciously looked into Leylin’s eyes. At this moment, there were some phenomenal changes in Leylin’s eyes, both his eyes turned into vertical pupils, letting off the crystal glow like amber! Innate spell Eye of Petrification! *Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!* A grey-white colour extended from the man’s face to his whole body. Several seconds later, the black-robed man completely turned into a grey-white statue. “Seize the chance!” Leylin picked up the grey statue and tossed it into the heart of the black formation! *Crash!* The stone statue shattered in pieces, from it grayish-white gases appeared as if wanting to form into a human figure. “Dust to dust, earth to earth, return to where you came from!” Leylin chanted in the ancient Byron language. A black circular whirlpool suddenly appeared in the middle of the formation. With a huge suction force, it sucked in the grey-white gas in. After the whirlpool disappeared, Leylin then heaved a sigh of relief
and collapsed to the ground.
“Such a curse cannot be easily activated by anyone!” Leylin smiled wryly.
After destroying all traces of Clayde, Leylin hurried along the way as he brewed the Serenity Potion, finally suppressing the emotional fluctuations that Warlocks had.
However after some thought, he wanted to see things come to an end. So he decided to kill Fayle before escaping the area.
The Lilytell family would definitely have a wanted list on him through the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, so what if he were to add another pursuer, the Purple-Gold Flower family to it? Anyway, it was the wanted list put up by Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, so having one or two families chasing after him had no difference.
Furthermore, Leylin saw a rank 1 curse spell inside the Book of Giant Serpent. It could completely kill Fayle with no one the wiser, and no trouble would come after him.
However, Leylin did not think that this curse was this malicious, it would even reverse the sorcery on the spell caster!
This left him with some lingering fear, especially after seeing the monstrous way Fayle was killed.
These rank 1 spell requirements were extremely harsh.
First of all, he had to cast a Darkness body and use the opponent’s trace of scent, if not it could not be casted.
Afterwards, it required one to know the basics of spirit bodies. Fortunately, Leylin had amassed some experience in Extreme Night City, so he picked it up rather quickly.
Finally, this curse had a limitation which was the distance. Moreover, it could only attack a target that had lower stats than the spell caster.
The Book of Giant Serpent mentioned that the curse had had to have stats lower than the spell caster. If any one stat of the target is higher, the might of this curse would be reduced by more than half.

Leylin found out that once the curse has ended, the caster still had to face the wrath of a vengeful spirit which was summoned in the process.

It was absolutely ridiculous!

With so many prerequisites, and being only able to deal with targets with lower stats, finally having to suffer the backlash from a vengeful spirit!

In Leylin’s opinion, this kind of curse wasn’t very useful.

However, Fayle met this requirement just right.

He had just advanced and embarked on the simplest path. The various stats were lower than Leylin. Moreover, he had already collected his scent when he was with Bicky previously.

Adding on to the various reasons, Fayle had become Leylin’s first sacrifice to practice the curse on.

“I always feel that there’s something wrong with this curse, it’s better to use it lesser in future!”

Leylin patted off the dust on his body.

“However, with the disappearance of the great Magus Serholm, the people on south coast who can recognise this curse are barely alive, no to mention finding out who the caster was. No matter how the
Purple-Gold Flower family investigates, they couldn’t trace it back to me…”
If Leylin could avoid such troubles and remove all traces of himself, he would do so, never leaving behind any leads.
After the task was completed, Leylin left the Poolfield Kingdom.

……

In the Inlan Dukedom, on a broad road, a black horse carriage continuously sped on it.
The wooden wheels which were galvanised by iron let off creaking sounds.
As there were no shock absorbing functions, the rise and fall of the carriage was extremely great, so the passenger inside the horse carriage did not have a good ride.
It seems that this rented horse carriage had all sorts of passengers on it. There was a white-bearded old man with his granddaughter, wanton women, and even those merchants wearing caps hugging onto their belongings tightly.
In their midst, there was a black cloaked youth.
The youth had pure black hair with some lustre on it. His handsome face had a radiant smile, which made him have a strange yet strong charisma!
This person naturally was Leylin.
After using the curse to kill Fayle, he no longer had any concerns, so he left the Poolfield Kingdom immediately.
Although the Zither Moon Mountain Plains was rather dangerous for acolytes, Leylin who was a Warlock that surpassed regular rank 1 Magi treated it as a walk in his back garden. It was a place where he could roam around freely.
After arriving at the Inlan Dukedom, Leylin finally relaxed!
Ever since the armistice, there has been peace between the Abyssal
Bone Forest Academy and the Sage Gotham Hut. However, with the increasing degree of hostility, even the powers of the secular realm were affected. There was news of this two great kingdoms going to war once again.

No mercy would be given to the two kingdoms’ official Magi. Once spotted in enemy’s territory, they would be viciously hunted down. With much of the troubles passed, Leylin began to feel more relaxed. He abandoned the notion of ploughing through his travels as a lone wolf and instead made use of secular methods to conduct his travels.

Since he did not opt to join the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy after his promotion, Leylin was not affected or restricted by the armistice. However, he was still in a precarious position.

As a betrayer of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and with no intention to join Sage Gotham Hut, he had to be careful while in their territory.

Blending amongst the regular humans seemed like a good way to travel.

The downside was that the traffic conditions while travelling with the plebeians were pretty bad.

A scowl crossed Leylin’s’ face as he experienced the chaotic congestions and rancid odour emitted from the carriage.

If there was an alternative way to travel, he would have long ago alighted from this carriage.

Amidst the foul experience on board the carriage, Leylin noticed a child dressed pink seated opposite him and let out a brief smile.

The adolescent female child had a pair of sapphire-like eyes and milky white skin. She spotted Leylin smiling at her and smiled back friendly at Leylin.

The little girl’s grandfather seated next to her spotted the interaction and immediately pulled her close to his side. He whispered words into the child’s ear which caused her to hurriedly avoid Leylin’s
attention. Although hard to hear, it was most likely a warning against the dangers lurking outside.
Following which, the white-bearded grandfather stared menacingly into Leylin’s eyes as a sign of warning.
Unaffected by the grandfather’s hostility, Leylin let out a chuckle.
Leylin felt an aura of familiarity from the little girl. Although just 12 or 13 years of age, she was already exuding an odd amount of charm, causing passengers of the carriage to constantly steal glances at her.
Even Leylin was fascinated by the little girl.
After observing her for a little while more, Leylin came to the conclusion that she had a Warlock’s bloodline!
The strength of Warlocks came from the bloodlines. Their descendants would also carry traces of their bloodline. However, it was extremely difficult to unearth that strength again.
For instance, this little girl’s bloodline was already extremely thin. Moreover, there were no energy waves coming from her. She was the most regular of humans, not even an acolyte.
Also, the further away from the first generation Warlock, the bloodline would slowly thin out over the generations, finally turning into regular humans again.
However, in the second and third generations, there were still plenty of decent quality bloodline inherited.
Hence, Warlocks tend to reproduce often to establish their own family.
Leylin, for example, was a first generation bloodline. If he had any descendants, his children and grandchildren’s bloodline would also have the strength of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent!
This scenario was somewhat similar to the Magi families, yet different.
The main thing that Magi wanted to pass on was their soul aptitude, every generation may be regular humans with no aptitude.
Furthermore, although both the Warlocks and Magi held bloodlines in esteem, the Magi would not mind accepting fresh blood to raise the genes passed down in the family, which might sometimes exceed that of the ancestors!

However, Warlocks were different. They revered the purity of bloodlines, so they would protect the purity of the bloodlines and soul through the marriage of relatives. To them, if an outsider joins their family, not only would it not increase the density of the bloodline, it would even contaminate their bloodline.

Moreover, the descendants inheriting the bloodline of Warlocks found it extremely difficult to advance into an official Magus. Unless they found a high-grade meditation technique that was suitable for their bloodline. Under normal circumstances, these things were usually passed down from the first generation.

However, once the density of the bloodline thins out, or if the inheritance of the high-grade meditation technique stopped, it was often the start of a Warlock family’s decline.

When a Magus family declines, there was the possible chance of their descendants bringing it back to glory. However, it was extremely difficult for Warlock families to do the same.

Unless the descendant found the original source of bloodline, or through some other methods to replenish the strength of bloodlines!

In the Central Continent, there were 3 schools of thoughts. Families consisted of either those who revered high-grade meditation techniques, those with bloodlines or some other assortment of the magisterium. This were the 3 main representatives in the continent.

This information and news naturally came from the Book of Giant Serpent written by the great Magus Serholm.

From some information that the great Magus Serholm had revealed, he was most likely in the central continent, yet for some unknown reason, he went to the south coast.
As Leylin was a rank 1 Warlock, he was extremely sensitive to his kind.
On that old geezer’s body, Leylin could not detect a single trace of the bloodline.
It was very evident that he was not the biological grandparent of that little girl.
However, this old geezer was not any regular human. Leylin detected a trace of acolyte’s energy waves from him. Looking at the might, it belonged to a level 2 acolyte.
“Interesting! A housekeeper? Or adoption?” Leylin smiled ‘apologetically’ and continued with his pondering.
What was undeniable was that Leylin had an extreme interest in his same kind.
Although it was most likely that no high-grade meditation techniques could appear on her. Even if there was Leylin would not use it, unless she was had the bloodline of snake types.
However, as the descendant of another Warlock, Leylin had a very good comparison sample on how to unearth his own strength from the bloodline.
Moreover, he wished to try and see if he could extract the blood essence from this girl and purify the bloodline. So that he could obtain another ancient creature’s bloodline.
The other party’s destination was also the Great Canyon Margaret, which coincided with Leylin’s plans, so he naturally dispelled the thought of travelling alone.
As for the white bearded old geezer beside the little girl, he often saw Leylin sneaking glances at his granddaughter, even having a smile that seemed to harbour malicious intentions. So naturally his expression was not too pleasant.
However, he did not discover Leylin’s identity, only treating him as a mere human.
After the advancement previously, Leylin spent much time and
effort to have the A.I. Chip optimise his shapeshifting ability again. The effect was greater than before, although he did not have the information from an official Magus, Leylin knew that this old geezer could not discern of his shapeshifting ability after activating it.

Right now, he had not yet completely know how to make use of this little girl. Should he abduct her directly and obtain the blood? Or conduct some experiments while observing her at the side? After all, he did not know if the backing of this little girl was a Warlock family or not. Although this possibility wasn’t great, Leylin still did not wish to take the risk. However, it seemed like he could unravel the mysteries very soon! The corner of Leylin’s lips curled up. After so many days of observation, he realised that the old geezer was mostly frowning as if he was riddled with a great load on his mind. Moreover, with the passing of each day, he was evidently becoming more impatient, as he hurriedly requested for the horse carriage to move faster. After being rejected, he even had the plan to leave the party. However, it seemed that he recalled of something, so he could only put up with it and continue on the horse carriage. “It seems like this journey would not be too boring!”

Leylin was only an acolyte previously, so naturally he did not wish for trouble. If he had not yet advanced into a Warlock, he would definitely be the first to leave the horse carriage if he met this acolyte who seemed to be running away from something. However, everything was different now. In the south coast, rank 1 Magi were great powers, much less to mention himself who was a little stronger than newly advanced Magi.
Previously, Leylin held himself back from taking action, not because he was afraid of doing something, but because he didn’t want to be inconvenienced. However, this girl in front of him had something that interested him. Furthermore, once his research was a success, he would greatly benefit from it. It was only natural, that he now intended to take action. However, for prudence’s sake, he still chose to lay low on the sidelines and observe the strength of his enemies first. If their might was average, he would definitely not be modest. He would immediately abduct or coerce the girl to follow him and not be afraid of the pursuers. If they were too strong, he could only give up. In any case, the world was so big, and she was not the only one with a Warlock’s bloodline. There might be very few of them on the south coast, but there were definitely many in the Central Continent. Several days later, the horse carriage entered the district of York City. This was already along the borders of the Inlan Dukedom. As for the old man, his anxiety had already intensified to the maximum. Most of the time he would stay on the horse carriage, seldom leaving it. He even closely guarded the little girl by his side, as if being afraid of something. The hazy night had dyed the sky an overcast grey. Only somewhere
far away in the horizon was there a little light.
The horse carriage stopped by the roadside, and the weary passengers began to alight, and then sat in a circle around a bonfire for refreshments and rest.
After so many days of travel, the people in the horse carriage also got close with each other. Especially that little merchant, who took out a flute and played an upbeat tune and the beautiful woman beside him followed suit by performing a gorgeous dance.
There were several middle-aged men who took out wine flasks from their sacks and walked forward to the beautiful woman to ingratiate themselves. As for that woman, she chuckled, seemingly not rejecting these suitors.
After the atmosphere reached a climax, the people began to sing and dance. Even the horse keeper gulped down several mouthfuls of strong wine and had a tinge of red at the end of his nose.
Leylin reclined against the trunk of a tree, his hand holding a wine flask from which he drank occasionally. He shot a glance inside the horse carriage and grinned.
Although the sky had already dimmed tonight, the old geezer still urged the carriage driver to move on.
However, travelling in the middle of the night was extremely dangerous. Hence, this suggestion was rejected by carriage driver and all of the passengers.
That old geezer’s expression then was really a sight to be seen.
Furthermore, tonight the old geezer had decided to stay within the horse carriage, not even letting his granddaughter leave half a step away from the horse carriage. Ugly rumours had already begun to have gossiped amongst the travellers.
However, Leylin knew that this pair who pretended to be a grandfather with his granddaughter was afraid of pursuers, that’s why they hid in the horse carriage. Looking on at the situation, the pursuers were almost arriving too.
No, they were already here. Leylin turned his head, and with the A.I. Chip, he saw several acolytes, who did not hold back their energy waves radiation, hiding in a dark corner. Looking at the strength of the energy waves, there were all level 3 acolytes.

*Bang!*

A red arrow was released and it directly shot through the brains of a muscled, half-naked man who was dancing by the fire.

“Ahhh!” The blood splattered onto a woman nearby. Her expression turned sluggish, only letting off an ear piercing scream several seconds later.

“Bandits!” “Help!” Various cries sounded in the camp.

As for the carriage driver, he very quickly donned a leather armour and crouched, hugging his head and not moving at all.

The horse carriage providers had a promise with the nearby bandits, that they would only rob the passengers. As for the drivers, the bandits would often let them go scot-free, after all, they would not have much money on them.

However, tonight the carriage driver’s plans were in vain.

*Xiu!* Another red arrow was shot, directly piercing through the driver’s neck! He clutched his neck with both hands, his eyes popping out and frothing blood at the corner of his lips. His mouth gaped open and close for air as if wanting to enjoy the freshness of the air one last time before he died.

“A sharpening spell added on the arrow? Interesting!”

Beside the chaotic campsite, Leylin was still reclining against the tree. He gulped down another mouthful of wine, his expression appearing indifferent.

At this moment, his lax behaviour was vastly different from the current situation, yet nobody was paying him any attention.

The second arrow obviously caused greater chaos within the camp. Be they man or woman, young or old, they were all wildly running
away.
Several minutes later, the campsite that had once had a lively and jovial atmosphere, now only had a crackling bonfire and several wine flasks which had been forsaken.
*Crash!* 3 figures wearing black robes appeared from within the forest.
Leylin’s outstanding vision allowed him to see clearly the appearance of this trio.
There were two men and a woman, all of them were of middling years. The woman had applied a very thick layer lipstick, which seemed like she had just drank a mouthful of blood.
These 3 were obviously not students of an academy. Their attire were rather casual, however, there was an image of a dodo-bird stitched on their robes, seemingly a family emblem.
These were the acolytes nurtured by a family.
Some of them from Magi families, who had poor aptitudes, could not be accepted into academies, so they could only be nurtured by their families themselves.
Most of them could not even advance to a level 3 acolyte, so the majority of them remained as a level 1 acolyte or level 2 acolyte.
These 3 who were able to advance to level 3 acolytes, either had good aptitudes or were expelled from an academy or had graduated.
“Miles, come out! We know you’re inside the horse carriage!”
The three of them took on a triangular formation to surround the horse carriage, and a silver-haired man laughed smugly.
*Boom!*
What replied him was a burning red fireball.
*Pa!* As the middle-aged man dodged the fireball, the horse carriage suddenly shattered and a black figure with a smaller figure wrapped on his lower body rapidly sneaked past the gap that the middle-aged man exposed.
“Thinking of escaping?” The woman smirked and hurriedly chanted an incantation, casting a speed reducing spell. A layer of murky green shone on the black figure and his speed dropped drastically.

“Xiu!” The eyes of the third person who held a bow flashed, and immediately he fired another red arrow. *Pu!* The arrow bore into the left chest of the black figure, drawing fresh blood from it. The black figure groaned and fell to the ground, revealing the face of the white-bearded geezer.

“Run! Why don’t you keep running?” The man, who had been the target of that fireball shot previously, was in a miserable state. Seeing the old geezer on the ground, his expression turned malevolent and he drew out a curved blade, hacking at the old geezer Mile’s left leg. *Ka-Cha!* The old geezer’s left leg was immediately chopped off.

“Ahhh!” The little girl fainted immediately after having blood spurting on her.

“Such a beautiful little girl, killing her outright is such a pity!” The man who held the bow licked his lips, revealing a lusty grin. “Why don’t you let me have some fun first?” “It’s your call, we still have plenty of time!”

It was very obvious that these three acolytes did not have any regard for the old geezer, Miles, at all. They were extremely relaxed and had their guard down. In fact, this was the reality. Miles was only a level 3 acolyte and the little girl was not even an acolyte. Such a line-up can be easily destroyed by just sending one level 3 acolyte. It was only for added assurance that 3 such acolytes had been sent.

When the bowman grinned lewdly, a lazy voice sounded. “I say, you guys seem to have forgotten about me!” Leylin flung the flask away and announced himself in a crisp voice. “You… You actually didn’t run away?” The other male acolyte was
somewhat shocked. Normally, wasn’t the reaction of people, after seeing someone get killed, to run away? Much less to mention encountering magicians of the sorts.

“Just right, I wish to loosen my muscles after pursuing this old geezer. Leave him to me!”

The only female acolyte among them looked at the handsome Leylin and her eyes flashed. Her mouth gaped open and close with the heavy lipstick as if wanting to swallow Leylin immediately. Right now, Leylin’s charm factor had increased significantly after advancing to a Warlock. Along the way, he met many girls who cast flirtatious glances at him. However, meeting this kind of elderly woman, he felt rather disgusted.

“My apologies, but I don’t have any interest towards aunties!”

Leylin spoke very ‘sincerely’, turning the face of this female acolyte red.

“Brat! I will let you feel the most unbearable pain on earth. An hour later, if you don’t prostrate yourself like a dog in front of me, you will have my admiration!”

The female acolyte looked at Leylin as if she wanted to bite a piece of meat off him that very instant.

“No need for that, if you don’t prostrate yourself like a dog right now in front of me, you will have my admiration!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed icily as he dispelled the concealment spell. An immense force field immediately surrounded the area of the horse carriage.

“Of… Official Magus!” The eyes of the male leader of the trio popped out as he collapsed feebly onto the ground.

“Lo… Lord! Please pardon our accidental intrusion!”

The bowman acolyte, too, no longer had any interest in defiling the little girl. He immediately knelt in front of Leylin, cursing the damned bitch thousands and tens of thousands of times.

“How is it?”
Leylin looked at that female acolyte with a toying expression. “Lo… Lo… Lo…” The female acolyte also fell to the ground, her jaws trembling, not being able to speak a single word. “Lord, we are from the Yale family… Our family head is also an official Magus!” The leader noticed that Leylin’s gaze was hostile, immediately bringing up the backing of his group. “Yale family?” Leylin shook his head, indicating that he did not recognise this name. Leylin had already scrutinised the large families around the Poolfield Kingdom before and did not recall any Yale family of the sorts. “A.I. Chip, scan database!” [Beep! Yale family: Situated in the Denisque Province of the Inlan Dukedom. The family head’s name is Sam Yale. Originally an acolyte from the Sage Gotham Hut, he advanced to an official Magus at thirty years of age. Information source: History of Magi families, page 1928!] An extremely simple introduction. From the information recorded on the A.I. Chip, it seemed like a newly founded Magus family which was completely reliant on a Magus who had shockingly advanced as an acolyte. It was far from being comparable with the Lilytell family and only slightly stronger than Bicky’s family. There was not much backing and easily classified by the Magus World as the nouveau rich. “Wait! Wait! I have the secret imprint of our family’s head!” Seeing that Leylin was about to take action, the leader immediately shouted and ripped his clothes apart.
The secret imprint?”
Leylin nodded his head and stopped in his motions.
This so-called technique for the secret imprint was a tool that official Magi use for communication.
Every newly advanced official Magus would be able to design a special sign to represent themselves. In future, they could leave their secret imprint behind for communication.
As for some Magi, they would even brand it on their family members or slaves to represent the authority given.
Leylin had crafted an imprint for himself. It was an inverted triangle enclosed in a circle. On the triangle was a black serpent that snaked to the top
As for the leader’s chest, an image of blue dodo bird’s head was flashing with light.
It seemed that initiating the communication to the head required a tremendous amount of spiritual force and magic power. Just a few minutes later, the leader’s face at once became deathly pale.
Fortunately, right before the leader was unable to endure any longer, the blue light shone brightly and a blue dodo bird flew out from his chest, and perched on his shoulder.
“Sulley, is there something you want to see me about?”
The dodo bird seemed not to have noticed Leylin and immediately questioned the leader.
“He… Head, it’s like this…” That leader hurriedly whispered to the
The dodo bird and briefly updated him on the happenings.
The secret imprint had its limitations and could only project the voices without images. Moreover, without the aid of the communications tower, once the distance was too great, even the voices could not be sent across.

“Hello, young expert!” The dodo bird greeted Leylin.
“It’s an honour to meet the head of the Yale family, Sam Yale!” Leylin opened his mouth, his voice gruff and hoarse. It was obviously altered with the help of the A.I. Chip.

“According to those family members that were dumb enough to offend you, I apologise on their behalf…” The blue dodo bird already flew back into the leader’s chest, turning into a tattoo that seemed to be alive.

“They actually dared to offend me, an official Magus. Hence, they must pay the price!” Murderous intent was contained in Leylin’s voice.

“They?” The dodo bird paused, before speaking again, “I can act on their behalf and compensate you…”

“Compensation? Leylin hooted with laughter. “Are you mocking me?”

“Not good, run!” The leader did not think that Leylin did not give the head any face in the slightest, as he hurriedly retreated.

“After offending me you still want to leave?” Leylin’s eyes turned bloodshot and several red fireballs were cast, turning the three who could not dodge in time into a pile of ashes.

The might of acolytes, in front of official Magi, were as brittle as paper.

As for the secret imprint which was a communication device, naturally it was unable to transmit any attacks.

By abusing the limitations of the secret imprint, Leylin chose to kill them.

Anyway, his voice was concealed by the alteration of the A.I. Chip,
so Sam would never be able to find him. Keeping these acolytes alive, instead, would easily bring him trouble. Moreover, he did not wish to remain in the Inlan Dukedom. Once he leaves the place, the other party would not be able to do anything about it either. Walking towards the grandparent and grandchild pair, the little girl was still unconscious, having several tears on her face. “Lord…Lord Magus!” A shocked expression filled the old geezer’s face. Obviously, he never thought that this person who rode the same horse carriage was actually an official Magus. Leylin squatted down and examined the old geezer’s wounds. The injury was serious. A commoner would definitely die from this wound. Even if this old geezer was a level 2 acolyte, he could survive for an additional 10 hours maximum. Of course, Leylin could cure the old geezer but he would lose some of his precious herbs and medicines in the process. Moreover, the old geezer didn’t have a Warlock’s bloodline so Leylin was very hesitant to treat him. However, what has to be done has to be done. “Drink this! It will make you feel better!” Leylin handed a vial of vitality potion to the old geezer. After which, he headed over to wake the little girl up. “Grandpa Miles!” As soon as she woke up, the little girl shouted, and threw herself at Miles and began to weep in sorrow. After drinking the potion, the old geezer’s face revealed a flash of life. Momentarily, his spirits were up as well. This potion was merely a stimulant. It was much cheaper than the actual cure, so Leylin was willing to expend such a cheap potion. “Good child!” Mile stretched out his wrinkled and quivering hands to gently
stroke the child’s head.
“This… This Lord Magus, could you send her to the Great Canyon
Margaret, to where Marian is….”
The old geezer begged Leylin earnestly.
“I can!” Leylin pondered in silence for a moment before nodding
his head to agree.
“Many thanks! You will forever be the friend of the Langster
family!”
The old geezer grabbed the little girl’s hands and instructed, “From
today onwards, listen to this Lord Leylin. Remember, you must
obey every word, do you understand?”
As if expending all of his energy remaining, blackish red blood
flowed from the old man’s lips the moment he finished talking.
“I…I understand…” The little girl sobbed silently.
The old geezer smiled, gratified at seeing the girl agree, before
closing his eyes for eternity.
“Grandpa Miles! Grandpa Miles!”
The little girl cried in sorrow.
Leylin stood by a side and waited for a dozen minutes. When the
girl stopped sobbing, he then asked, “We had better bury your
Grandpa Miles! Also, what is your name?”
“Ivy! Sir!” The little girl’s voice was hoarse, yet it brimmed with
respect.
Although Ivy was not an acolyte, but she, who grew up in a Magus
family from childhood, naturally knew what being a Magus
entailed.
An hour later, Leylin brought the little girl Ivy and looked at a
newly constructed gravestone, making their final tribute in silence.
After the old geezer’s disclosure and the little girl’s own narration,
Leylin finally understood the Langster family’s backing.
This Langster family was very small. Rumours have it that they
held the inheritance to an incomplete meditation technique.
However, the thinning of the Warlock bloodline and the lack of an official Magus has made the family a lowly rated one in the Magus World.

Two hundred years ago, the incomplete meditation technique was lost in an unfortunate accident.

The limitations of Warlocks were in their bloodline, as they could only cultivate in meditation techniques suitable for themselves. Normal mind runes constructions of acolytes had no use for them. Therefore, it was unavoidable that this family, which had produced no Magus, had deteriorated over the years.

If not for the few generations of heads standing their ground and accepting a few orphans to undergo acolyte training, it was very likely that they did not even have an acolyte in the family now.

As for Miles, he was one of these orphan acolytes, tasked as a housekeeper of the Langster family.

Just a month ago, the Yale family who was coveting the Langster family, declared war on it.

Apart from Ivy, all of the family members were killed in that war. As for Miles, he fought his way out to bring Ivy away, preparing to seek asylum with a friend of Ivy’s parents in the Great Canyon Margaret.

Hence, Ivy who was in Leylin’s hands was the final bloodline of the Langster family.

Of course, after knowing this news, there was an indescribable feeling stemming within Leylin’s heart.

However, after seeing the Langster family who had Warlock origins deteriorate into such a state, he felt like a fox grieving when the rabbit dies (It means to have sympathy with a like-minded person in distress).

Of course, he would not let these emotions fuel his desire for revenge to the Langster family. However, if the despicable leader of the Yale family happened to be in his way, that would be a different
“Let’s go!” Leylin grabbed Ivy’s little hand and set out towards his new destination. He prepared to bring the little girl to the Great Canyon Margaret. It wasn’t that he suddenly had a change of heart, but he was planning something else. First of all, some experiments required Ivy to coordinate with him of her own accord in order to achieve the best results. After that, the Great Canyon Margaret was one of the areas that Leylin had to go, so it was not troublesome. Furthermore, if Leylin discovered that Ivy had some other uses along the way, he would not hand Ivy over to Marian, for sure. Leylin did not eliminate any possibilities of doing good within his means to increase his reputation. However, it had to be under the conditions that it would not come across his personal benefits in any way. Even if someone were to beat him to death, Leylin would not commit such a foolish thing like altruism. However, if he could accomplish some things effortlessly and obtain a positive reputation, he would be very willing to do it. From Leylin’s perspective, reputation was also a form of resource, a type of benefit. However, in the hearts of different people, the gravity that people had towards fame versus their personal benefits were different. And in their eyes, the importance of fame was ranked low on their list. “One more point, I have some interest in your family’s bloodline. I require you to coordinate with me on some experiments, do you understand?” As the sky turned darker, an emerald green field of view appeared in Leylin’s eyes. It allowed him to see even better than daytime. When he spoke, Leylin felt Ivy’s hands quiver noticeably,
“As you wish! Lord!”
Ivy replied a good while later with a shaky voice.
“I adore intelligent and obedient children!” Ivy’s obedience and maturity left Leylin pleasantly surprised as he originally thought he had to spend some effort to handle her.
He gently stroked Ivy on the head and carried her in his arms.
“Mas… Master…” Ivy gently called out in a voice as small as the buzz of a mosquito.
“If you cannot see the road clearly in this dark night, I can help!”
Feeling the trembling of the little body in his bosom, Leylin smiled and patted Ivy on the back. With an increase in his pace, the pair quickly disappeared into the darkness.
“This kind of vision… is it that of a serpent?”
Leylin’s vision was affected by an emerald green tint.
Even though it was dark at night, Leylin could see everything.
Somewhere tens of meters away, there was a dog-like creature with red heat emitting from its body.
It somewhat resembled heat imaging.
“Turns out that the so-called path of Warlocks is to continuously tap into the origin of the bloodline and the process of remodeling of one’s body…”
Leylin was somewhat enlightened “Looks like I have to spend more time on my transfiguration…”
133 - Elemental Essence Conversion

In a somewhat dilapidated campsite. Erected in the middle of the campsite was a tent made from cowhide, and it had a sturdy look to it. Beside the tent was a small fire, where bright yellow flames continuously lapped against a metal pot hanging above it. A broth that contained some pieces of mushroom and beef-jerky was boiling in this metal pot. Around the fire, there were many pieces of forked branches, which was used to grill several small fishes. There was also some barbecued meat, which frothed with tiny bubbles as the golden-yellow grease continuously dripped down, while the aroma of sizzling meat permeated the air. The little blonde girl sat by the side, looking at the piping hot food, involuntarily gulping down her saliva. Thereafter, she turned her head to look to the side. There, on a patch of grass, a handsome, black-haired man sat cross-legged on a white sackcloth as he practiced meditation. This person was, naturally, Leylin. After bringing Ivy along for quite some distance, he initiated a break to rest awhile. Although Leylin, with his current vitality, would not be tired even after journeying for 7 days and nights, the little girl would definitely not be able to keep up. Moreover, he had to take out some time every day to cultivate with
his high-grade meditation technique.
The meditation technique that he had gotten was the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique that was compatible with his bloodline. Adding on to the A.I. Chip’s purification of the blood essence, his progress in meditation was extremely fast.
“Eyes are the windows of the soul, by concentrating your sight with the Kemoyin’s Pupil, you will rediscover yourself – Norco Curadu Sfar!”
This was what Leylin saw repeatedly at the start of the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique.
And now, Leylin shut both his eyes and felt that he was staring right into a pair of vertical pupils that were amber-like.
Darkness with burning flames seemed to engulf his body.
As for Ivy who had been watching Leylin, she realised that a black and red mist emerged from Leylin’s body. This mist revolved around Leylin, not dissipating.
The strands of mist began to converge, forming the shape of a small snake, coiling around Leylin, at the same time spitting out its scarlet tongue.
The small snake continuously roved around Leylin, finally coiling on Leylin’s face, turning into a strange mask. A wave of darkness energy particles was continuously absorbed by the mask.
A dozen minutes later, the mask shattered, turning into black gases and threaded into Leylin through the seven orifices.
“A.I. Chip! Scan my current data!” Leylin opened his eyes wide and commanded in silence.
“Every time I meditate there will be a definite increase in the spiritual force, it’s not bad already!”

Leylin nodded his head in satisfaction.

Increasing the spiritual force of magicians would only get more difficult in the long run. Especially for official magi, the meditation techniques they used as acolytes were completely irrelevant now. If they did not have high-grade meditation techniques, they could only rely on external resources to increase their spiritual force. Resources which were able to create an effect on official magi were extremely rare even on the south coast. Hence, after advancing into a rank 1 magus, many of the magi found it extremely difficult to advance again.

Only those who had cultivated with the high-grade meditation techniques would be able to maintain their progress.

However, every level of high-grade meditation techniques was extremely challenging. The first level was still alright. However, after that, every level required tens of hundreds of years.

As for the special characteristics of high-grade meditation technique, they would only get more difficult the further one is. According to Leylin’s guess, after the third level, a magus required thousands of years to advance to the next level!

Hence, many magi could not advance in time before their lifespan was up, and died from old age just like that.

“A.I. Chip, calculate how long more I need to reach the criteria to advance and become a rank 2 warlock, given my current progress!”

[Beep! Mission establishing, gather Host’s data, simulating conjecture…] [With the Host’s current stats, estimated to reach the requirements of advancement into a rank 2 warlock in 14 years and 7 months!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“That’s quite long! However, compared to those regular magi who cannot advance in tens of hundreds of years, it seems like my
current situation is pretty good!” Leylin’s brows furrowed but quickly relaxed.
From the graphical analysis made by the A.I. Chip, the increase in spiritual force that the high-grade meditation technique gives will also begin to slow down after reaching a certain extent. Moreover, the elemental essence conversion progress will only get slower as he progresses. This was the reason stopping Leylin from advancing quickly.
According to the A.I. Chip’s estimates and the Book of Giant Serpent implicit divulging, rank 2 Magus advancement criteria was to have a spiritual force of at least 80, and the elemental essence conversion to be over 80%.
These two conditions alone have stumped many genius acolytes before.
The spiritual force requirement was still alright. Whether it was about cultivating in high-grade meditation techniques or finding large amounts of resources which could stimulate the spiritual force, it could still be solved over time.
However, elemental essence conversion was a different story altogether. First of all, if the Magus chose the wrong energy particles, then he would find it extremely difficult to exceed an elemental essence conversion of 50%. To be specific, one has to first choose the energy particle with the highest elemental affinity to get the elemental essence conversion to over 80%.
Moreover, this was only the most basic criteria. To some heirs of large families and true geniuses, they would waste their potential if they advanced with an 80% elemental essence conversion. Only by getting a 90% elemental essence conversion and above, would they face fewer bottlenecks while advancing to become a rank 2 Magus.
These were all mentioned in the Kemoyin’s Pupil.
In addition, some regular Magi had to solve the problem of obtaining a rank 2 spell model. If they were unable to find one
which complements their rank 1 innate spell, mishaps will occur during the inscribing of their rank 2 spell model, such as having their brains exploding.
Hence, those magicians who used Grine Water with spell models to advance, their path in future would become extremely narrow. Although his progress was extremely fast already, Leylin still felt somewhat pressured deep down. He had utterly offended the Lilytell family. This was a large-scale family with the family head existence that could rival the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s chairman.
That was a rank 2 Magus or an expert close to that level! As for Leylin right now, once he was to meet someone like that, his only outcome would be death!
Advancing into a rank 1 Warlock only let him have the simplest form of self-preservation. To be able to live free in the future in broad daylight, he had to at least be a rank 2 Warlock to be able to handle the pursuers from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
After having access to the high-grade meditation technique, Leylin realised that magicians who cultivated with the high-grade meditation techniques also required some resources. This was because some precious resources could increase the progress of meditation.
There were several ingredients that could complement his meditation, that was mentioned in the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique.
Hence, he was somewhat impatient to hurry and reach the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, situated within the domain of Light Magi. It had the largest, free trade market and collection centre. Leylin could definitely rely on it to get his resources and improve his progress quickly.
“Lo… Lord… The broth is ready…”
Seeing that Leylin had finished with his meditation today, Ivy
hurriedly scooped a bowl of broth and brought it to Leylin. 
“You have worked hard!”
Leylin smiled at Ivy and took the bowl.
Ivy looked at Leylin’s unfathomable eyes that had endless depths and stared at them blankly, her eyes lifeless.
“This is…” Leylin had a slight shock and immediately reached out a hand glowing in white light as he tapped Ivy’s forehead.
“Lord! Just now…” Very soon Ivy recovering, yet she did not dare to look into Leylin’s eyes again.
“This is a circumstance of mine which I did not restrain properly earlier. In the future do not be this careless again…” Leylin understood what had just transpired.
It was the result that the A.I. Chip indicated earlier, elemental essence conversion progress: 1%.
When Magi continued to improve their progress of elemental essence conversion, the spiritual force radiated will bring about a strong power which was attributed to the elements.
Ivy losing her bearings earlier was considered as a mild effect.
If Leylin had had an elemental essence conversion of 50% and above, and by not restraining himself, in that situation Ivy would most likely have been attacked by the Darkness energy particles and thus would have become a shrivelled corpse.
As for different elemental energy particles, the final elemental conversion would also be reflected differently.
For example: if a Magus chose the Ice energy particles as the attribute to cultivate with, he would be able to freeze the spiritual force of anyone who stares into the said Magus’s eyes.
As for those who cultivated in Fire energy particles, enemies who probed their spiritual force would be burnt, even suffering from a backlash.
Leylin cultivated in the Darkness energy particles, which was emphasized more towards the aspect of a person’s spiritual force
and soul. In later stages, if regular humans were to come into contact with his high-density elemental essence conversion, their soul would immediately perish, their physical bodies decomposing into a shrivelled corpse.

“Sorr…sorry!” Ivy lifted her skirt and bowed, hurriedly moving out of the way.

Seeing that the girl was unharmed, Leylin nodded his head and poured the meat broth into his mouth.

The warm savoury meat broth laced with bites of fresh mushroom excited Leylin’s palette.

“This tastes pretty good! I guess you have not eaten yet too?” Leylin looked at Ivy, now with his eyes back to normal there was no chance of causing unintended harm anymore.

“Yes!” Ivy softly replied. She helped herself to some dry rations and a bowl of broth. Together with Leylin, they feasted.

Leylin looked at Ivy and let out the slightest sigh of relief.

If this was the past, Ivy would surely be treated like a princess by her own family.

However, this present way of living by roughing it out in the open would surely help her to mature quickly.

“After you are done eating, come find me in my tent. I need a sample of your blood!” Leylin gobbled his food quickly and said to Ivy.

The underlying reason he saved Ivy was not due to kindness but to use her Warlock’s bloodline for his research.
Out in the wilderness, the night was freezing cold. Even the blazing bonfire was unable to dispel the chill in the air. Inside the tent, however, it was much warmer, enough to make one feel slumberous.

Leylin waited for a few minutes and saw Ivy’s silhouette shivering as she slowly got into the tent.

You could tell she was very nervous, her hands clutched tightly to her skirt hems, exposing her pale white ankles. Fear was inscribed on a pair of beautiful eyes.

But it was as if her body was controlled by someone, as she advanced towards Leylin, step by step.

“Don’t worry! It’s very simple to take a sample, and it will not cause you any harm!” Leylin said, to try and pacify her.

“Please pull up your sleeve!”

Upon hearing Leylin’s words, Ivy hesitated for a moment. She then pulled up her sleeve, revealing a length of her jade-white arms.

“It’s going to hurt a little, but don’t be afraid!”

Leylin took out a huge needle-like item from behind him and spoke gently to comfort the little girl.

Unfortunately, the little girl started to tremble even more severely. With the girl’s arm in one hand, Leylin stuck the needle into the exposed vein on her arm.

Ivy’s face winced when the needle entered her vein as if she was about to cry but still forced herself to stay strong.
After drawing enough blood from Ivy, Leylin sent chased the little girl back to her own tent.

“Why does it feel like I was bullying a little girl?”

Leylin rubbed his chin as he looked at the needle in his hand. No matter what, it was unsettling being on the receiving end of a “You bullied me” look given by a little girl.

“A.I. Chip, begin the experiment, and prepare the microscope…”

After being in a daze for several seconds, Leylin came to his senses and his expression turned solemn. His slender hands began to move expertly like butterflies treading and dancing through flowers.

Next morning, Leylin saw a pink liquid within the vulcanised tube and his expression looked unclear.

“A.I Chip, scan!” A blue light glowed within Leylin’s eyes, falling onto the test-tube.

[Beep! Detected a trace of ancient creature’s bloodline in the drop of blood. Pala Night Hawk! Unable to purify further!]

The A.I. Chip ended its feedback, turning Leylin’s face darker.

Ivy did carry a trace of an ancient bloodline, a pity that the inheritance of the Pala Night Hawk bloodline ends with her. The traces had already thinned to the absolute minimum and only a bit of aura could be extracted from her blood but it did not have many uses.

“From this density, even if Ivy was completely exsanguinated, or made to bleed some blood from time to time, it wouldn’t be enough to even purify a single drop of the pure ancient bloodline.” However, Leylin did not feel particularly disappointed or anything similar to disappointment.

It wasn’t that he would be successful with every single experiment of his. However, if one doesn’t even try, there will be no chances of success.

He had learnt this lesson back in his previous life.
“Moreover, this bloodline that carries a trace of the ancient creature’s aura, adding on with some of the broken magic artifacts pieces I’ve gotten in the secret plane, they could aid in the modification of the Fallen Star Pendant…”

A notion rose in Leylin’s mind.
The Fallen Star Pendant was only a low-grade magic artifact which was useful back in his days as an acolyte. However, for Leylin now it was somewhat of little value.
The A.I. Chip had been given the task of researching the possibilities of upgrading the Fallen Star Pendant, and now it seemed to have borne some fruits.
However, Leylin was a Warlock now, if he was able to add some power of the bloodlines on top of the other ingredients needed for the upgrade, it would definitely achieve a better potential!
“A.I. Chip, establish this mission as a subtask: calculate the possibility of adding Ivy’s bloodline into the Fallen Star Pendant!”
[Beep! Mission established, classified in a subfolder under the mission of upgrading the Fallen Star Pendant!]
The A.I. Chip intoned promptly.
Although he was unable to purify the ancient bloodline, but he had obtained an ingredient that could complement the upgrade of the Fallen Star Pendant. So Leylin felt that he had reaped a huge benefit and hence his mood was uplifted, too.
The next morning, he even greeted Ivy during breakfast, which was something that he seldom did. This caused the little girl to be confused and out of sorts. Seeing this scene, Leylin laughed inwardly.
After eating breakfast, Leylin brought the little girl and carried on with the journey.
He even bought a horse carriage while making a stop at a town, putting out the misery of the little girl, who had had to walk all along.
The reason why he did this was not because of kindheartedness. It was because the little girl provided him with blood every day, and while Leylin brewed some potions to replenish the blood, her mental state did not seem very well as her face was as pale as dead people.
After purchasing the horse carriage, Leylin led his life even more leisurely. He would journey when the sun was up, and at night, he would continue to extract the essence from the Pala Night Hawk bloodline to upgrade the Fallen Star Pendant.
“Dawn’s Peak! According to our speed, we should be able to reach the Great Canyon Margaret tomorrow!”
Leylin pointed to a mountain which peak was amongst the clouds as he spoke to Ivy behind him.
“…” Ivy looked at the landmark in front of her and clutched her knees in silence.
His eyelids hung low, not knowing if it was because of the fears of what the future would bring, or because of bewilderment.
“The ingredients gathered are now sufficient. I will upgrade the Fallen Star Pendant tonight!” thought Leylin.
Naturally, he controlled the pace of the journey, so he was able to obtain enough blood right before reaching the Great Canyon Margaret tomorrow.
In the middle of the night.
The surroundings were dark and serene, and from time to time the sounds of insects and howls of wolves could be heard.
Ivy was in a deep sleep within the tent beside the horse carriage.
As for her who was in deep slumber, her eyelids twitched continuously, as if dreaming of a nightmare.
Seeing her in this manner, Leylin heaved a sigh of relief and returned to the horse carriage.
“A.I. Chip, simulate the start of the experiment!”
Leylin set up an illuminating spell and lit the interiors of the horse
carriage.
In the middle, several wood boxes were set up in a flat platform with some apparatus displayed on it.
In the middle of all was a silver grey cross, with several fragments of jewels on it.
This was the original shape of the Fallen Star Pendant. Ever since he had advanced into a rank 1 Warlock, he had rarely used it.
The Fallen Star Pendant’s physical and magic defense were both valid for at most 20 degrees. As for any rank 1 spell cast by an official Magus, it would exceed these limits.
Hence, Leylin would think of methods to raise the capabilities of the Fallen Star Pendant, hoping for it to be of use again.
[Simulation for experiment over, success rate to be 87.9%.] After a flash of blue light, the A.I. Chip reported a string of data back to Leylin.
Right now, the A.I. Chip could simulate most parts of the experiment and produce the success rate. This meant that as long as Leylin followed the steps given by the A.I. Chip, he could attain the same success rate that was indicated.
As for those magicians who painstakingly gathered ingredients yet not knowing their success rate, the A.I. Chip’s capabilities showed that it could save Leylin a huge amount of resources.
So much so that this capability could even be employed during an advancement.
If the A.I. Chip’s success rate was too low, Leylin could give up on the advancement and amass more resources before trying to breakthrough. This was much better after comparing this with other magicians who try to breakthrough in the dark and even suffer from a backlash.
“First of all, it’s to separate the ingredients for the magic artifact!” Leylin looked at the other items placed on the platform.
There was half a dagger and a broken arm. These spoils of war
were obtained by Leylin during the bloodbath in the secret plane. Although some time had passed, the arm still shone with a silver light, completely concealing the fact that it was a human arm made of flesh.

“Silver-Claw Saurun actually imbued his magic artifact into his own arm, what a crazy fellow!”

Leylin picked up the silver arm and placed it within a golden funnel, setting it alight at the bottom. A golden yellow flame continued to swirl in the funnel, turning the funnel red. The blazing temperature continued to radiate from the hand. Once Leylin noticed the change, he began to drip some blue fluid, drop by drop, onto the arm. The blue liquid fell onto the arm, turning into red immediately, extending it towards the whole arm. The temperature increased yet again. Leylin was ecstatic as he placed a transparent beaker below the funnel. *Pitter-patter**Pitter-patter* Droplets of silver liquid continued to drip down. Very soon, this liquid filled up half of the beaker. Leylin’s right hand rapidly gathered some powder and jewels and tossed it into the beaker, while his left hand reached for a metal wire and stirred the beaker. The powder and jewels melted immediately upon entering the beaker, and the silver liquid began to turn muddy. A dozen minutes later, there were two obvious layers in the beaker. On top was a liquid the colour of flesh, and at the bottom, it was a layer that was pure silver in colour.

……
After being busy for a while, Leylin looked at the several ingredients laid in front of him with a gleeful expression. The formerly mentioned dagger and silver arm had not turned into two blocks of black and grey metal as they shone with lustre. As for the Fallen Star Pendant, it was now submerged within a beaker. The beaker was half filled with pink blood with the scent of orchids “Keliesiding Guraweier Alongsu….”
Leylin chanted an incantation as he made a cut on his finger, dropping a dark red drop of blood into the beaker. *Bang!*
Once the dark red blood entered the beaker, it immediately had a chemical reaction. The pink coloured gases continued to rise and the blood began bubbling. Threads of red liquid continuously climbed onto the Fallen Star Pendant, turning the original silver-grey colour into a dark red colour.
After the blood in the beaker completely evaporated, the Fallen Star Pendant turned into a dark red cross. “What’s next is to modify the runes inscription!” Leylin’s expression turned extremely solemn. This was the most crucial step to upgrade the Fallen Star Pendant!
Modifying the Fallen Star Pendant’s runes inscription, increasing illusory runes to make Host compatible with its control.

A.I. Chip sounded at this very moment.
Blue light flashed across Leylin’s eyes, and many transparent patterns began appearing on the surface of the Fallen Star Pendant. Next, all he needed to do was to proceed with the modifications according to the transparent patterns on the Fallen Star Pendant.
And the A.I. Chip could assist Leylin during his inscription process, so there would not be any mistakes.
Using a pair of tweezers to fish the Fallen Star Pendant onto a white cloth, Leylin took out a solid inscription pen and started to finely carve on the surface of the cross.
At this point, his hand was like a steel sculpture, it was as steady as possible, without even a single tremor.
This required an enormous amount of attentiveness and endurance and consumed a lot of time and energy.
As time passed, beads of sweat started to drip from Leylin’s forehead.
[Fallen Star Pendant’s runes modification is a success! It has newly added reinforced runes, energy dissipation runes, extension runes…]
As he listened to A.I. Chip’s reminders, Leylin revealed a smile.
Immediately, he picked up another inscription pen from beside
him. It had grooves on its body and was just as solid.
“Next, I shall fill in these carvings!”
Leylin lit two beakers and proceeded to melt the raw materials he had separated earlier from the magic artifacts. Those beakers now contained only liquids.
Subsequently, Leylin followed a fixed proportion and mixed the two liquids together.
Leylin played with the grooves on the pen and it split open, revealing a hole to pour water into.
Immediately, he poured the concentrated silvery black liquid into the body of the pen.
Fine runes started to twinkle and flicker around the inscription pen, producing an enchanting radiance.
With a face of satisfaction, Leylin pushed the pen nib against the tracks of the inscriptions carved earlier on, repeating the process again.
But this time, the pen left silvery black liquid in its trail, filling every notch of the inscription.
After finishing the last stroke, Leylin sized up the completely reformed cross and nodded his head with satisfaction.
“Activate!”
Leylin used the ancient Byron language and read out two words.
*Pong* A cylindrical beam of gray light began to emit from the cross. Threads of silver light were moving along the rune inscriptions that Leylin had carved earlier.
As the silvery gray rays kept blending, they got brighter and eventually engulfed the Fallen Star Pendant in it.
When the rays completely vanished, the Fallen Star Pendant had changed in appearance entirely.
It only retained the shape of the cross but was bulkier than before.
Also, it had changed from a silvery black colour to a shade of dark red.
On the surface there were numerous fine and detailed rune inscriptions, causing the original fragments of gems to be concealed beneath it.

Leylin then took the dark red Fallen Star Pendant, noting its weight was heftier than before.

[Beep! Fallen Star Pendant’s upgrade is now successful with those middle-grade magic artifacts! Current Physical Defence: 24, Magic Defence: 25!] A.I. Chip sounded again, bringing Leylin the good news.

“Physical defence rose from 13 to 24, and magic defence rose from 15 to 25! Not bad, really not bad!”

This range almost surpassed the Scales of Kemoyin’s defense. It was almost equivalent to gaining another innate defensive spell. Leylin was naturally very pleased.

But there were a lot of other magic artifacts that have better innate spells. The would have another increase in power and defense in the future.

As for the Fallen Star Pendant, unless he finds even more precious materials to upgrade, it would be difficult to increase its defensive characteristics as per Leylin’s requirements.

Hence, in the long run, concentrating on his own innate spells was more dependable.

“In the south coast, acolyte ranks use beginner grade magic artifacts. Level 1 Magi use middle-grade magic artifacts and the occasional beginner grade magic artifacts. Only the extremely powerful level 2 Magi have the capability to get hold of high-grade magic artifacts!”

Leylin thought of the information he saw from the Book of Giant Serpent.

Although the era of the great Magus Serholm was somewhat distant, the general distribution of power and culture throughout the south coast could be seen.
Now that the Fallen Star Pendant had been promoted to a middle-grade magic artifact, it’s effective for Leylin as a level 1 Warlock. This, of course, put him in a good mood.

……

The Great Canyon Margaret spanned across the Inlan Dukedom and several nearby kingdoms. It was also a place that was necessary to travel through to enter the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, controlled by the Light Magi.

Of course, this was only with regards to Magi. Ordinary citizens of this dukedom seldom step out of the kingdom, from their birth until their death. Even their mercenaries only received missions within the kingdom.

Mercenaries and wandering bards who had travelled the vicinity could use the experience they gained to flaunt or gain respect.

“Great Canyon Margaret is filled with danger. Even a hastened journey takes several months…”

Leylin slightly frowned as he thought over the information about the Great Canyon.

Transportation in the Magus World was inconvenient, causing a great deal of inconvenience for magicians who travel far and wide. Of course, he had another choice, he could ride in an airship.

But unfortunately, not only was this mode of transportation costly, there was only a fixed number of dates per year for its departure. Furthermore, there were stringent requirements for passengers. They needed a local family or an organisation to be their guarantor.

Leylin was already on the wanted list of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. So naturally, he wouldn’t wait for the airship and had to rush by foot.

“Your parent’s good friend, that Aunt Marian, where does she live?”
Leylin asked Ivy, who was behind him. “Angler Town beside the Great Canyon!” Ivy said in a low voice. Leylin nodded. This girl’s blood had greatly helped him. Besides, there was no clash in the itinerary. Under such circumstances, he didn’t mind lending a helping hand. “Well then! I will first send you to Angler Town to find your Aunt Marian!” Leylin told Ivy. “L…Lord! Is it okay if I followed you around?” After what Leylin said, Ivy stayed silent for a moment before asking this question. “Oh? But why? I did not treat you very well!” Leylin was surprised. When he crossed over, he was from nobility, a respected Magus acolyte. He’d never taken care of anyone before. Ivy even suffered a small illness on this journey. Things would have taken a bad turn if Leylin wasn’t a Potions master. Moreover, every now and then, Leylin had to take from Ivy a big tube of blood. He simply could not comprehend why this girl would still want to continue following him. Maybe, I was too charming? Or was she so oppressed that twisted feelings began emerging? Leylin let his imagination run as he rubbed his chin. “Is this for revenge?” But, he soon figured out what the girl had in mind. Ivy lowered her head, obviously tacitly agreeing. “Ivy you should be aware that due to the genetic constitution of your family, before you can find the lost meditation technique, you’ll never be able to be an apprentice. Even I can’t do anything about it!” Only because Ivy and Leylin were inheritors of the same ancient bloodline, he felt that he should clarify it with her. “I know! But I request from you to get me vengeance! For this
reason, I’m willing to suffer any consequence!”
The little girl made her last effort.
“My apologies. Magus advocate fair transactions. And regardless of
your wealth, health or spirit, it is not enough for me to deal with
another official Magus!”
Leylin did not hesitate to reject the girl’s plea.
Upon hearing Leylin’s ruthless yet very real words, Ivy’s shoulders
trembled, hugged her knees as she sat in the carriage and fell silent.
Soon, the carriage entered Angler Town.
This was obviously a Magus gathering area. There were little,
almost none, ordinary people, and the architecture of the buildings
around portrayed a gloomy style that appeared cold and weird.
Even the atmosphere was filled with a moist putrefying stench.
“This kind of place doesn’t seem very good!”
Leylin frowned. According to his experience, these kinds of
dangerous district beside the major transportation road, dwells
those who harbors bad thoughts, Magus who have nowhere to turn to. Simply put, wanted criminals!
Leylin felt bad for Ivy. They followed the street and eventually got
to the number plate Ivy had reported before.
Appearing in front of Leylin was a dilapidated two-story loft. Black
wooden planks on the verge of collapsing revealed a decadent
atmosphere.
The first floor had been converted to look like a grocery store. But
it didn’t seem to be doing very well, and the people who entered were but a few.
Parking the carriage at a side, Leylin pulled Ivy’s hand as they entered the grocery store.
“Marian! Is Marian here?” Leylin yelled out. He did not attempt to conceal the energy fluctuations in his body as the road to Angler Town was unimpeded.
“Respected Magus Lord, how may I serve you?”
Before Leylin could finish his words, an obese middle-aged lady with a greasy grey apron and thick makeup made her way out, expressing humility and flattery. If it wasn’t for the level 3 acolyte’s aura she had on her body, with this kind of image, she looked exactly like an unkind housewife. “Is this Marian?” Leylin asked Ivy who was standing at a corner. “Yes… Yes!” Ivy nodded her head. Leylin finally understood why Ivy was so unwilling. By the looks of it, Ivy’s parents probably did not have anyone else to turn to back then. Hence, they allowed their housekeeper to send Ivy to Marian. “This is Ivy! Any impression?” Leylin pulled Ivy in front of him. “John’s daughter?!” Marian’s face changed slightly. “About the Langster family matter, I feel sad…” Marian said as she squeezed out a few drops of tears. “…Back then, I just happened to pass by and the housekeeper begged me to bring her here…” Leylin briefly spoke about the cause and effects. Upon hearing that she has to offer shelter for Ivy again, Marian’s face completely turned embarrassed, as if things were already difficult for her. Leylin reckoned, if he wasn’t around, Ivy would have already been chased away. “Since it is what the Lord wants, then alright!” She replied with an ugly smile after struggling for a long time.
Leylin rushed the carriage forward, wandering aimlessly around the streets.

He thought about Ivy and how she looked like a little puppy that was being abandoned. Even now, the sight felt a little bit laughable. Magi always advocated voluntary transactions.

The way Leylin saw it was that while Ivy provided him with blood, he brought Ivy on the journey to this place. He even demonstrated his might to find her a place to sleep for the near future. This should have been enough to pay her back for her contribution.

In regards to bringing her along on the journey, Leylin felt that he didn’t have the spare time to take care of such a cumbersome being.

Not to mention, if there was no suitable Warlock meditation method for her, Ivy would never be able to become a level 1 acolyte.

Warlock meditation methods were straining on blood vessels. Just like Leylin’s Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique, it was limited to only Warlocks who came from the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent or its subspecies.

Other Warlocks and Magi would not be able to practice this technique even if they had the Kemoyin’s Pupil technique. It could only serve as a reference for them.

While thinking, Leylin rushed the carriage and arrived at the heart
of the town.
As he went deeper into town, Leylin saw that the average strength of passersby were greater. At the heart of the town, he saw a few level 2 acolytes and even a few other official Magi.
All of the official Magi here wore cloaks and mantles, and their faces were covered by a face flannel almost as if they did not want anyone to recognise them.
In general, Magi who’d risk passing through the Grand Canyon Margaret rather than riding the airship were usually individuals who had been classified as criminal scum who were on the run. Some of them had offended local forces and had been forced to flee. Others simply had to flee to save their lives because someone hankered after something they possessed.
As a result, abruptly using detection spells here was often the cause of a huge battle.
Leylin looked at the crystal watch that he was wearing, whose hands were showing five past noon.
The sky slowly darkened, and the pedestrians present on the road lessened.
Approaching the centremost pub, Leylin knocked on the somewhat rotten door.
*Dong Dong!* A dull noise reverberated throughout the somewhat empty street, even drawing the caws from a couple ravens.
“Who are you?” The wooden door quickly opened, and a long-haired man with sparse wispy hair appeared, sizing Leylin up.
“I wish to pass through the Great Canyon Margaret and I hear that I will be able to find a means of transportation nearby…”
Leylin used a shroud to cover his face. The voice that emanated from within sounded somewhat gruff.
“Great Canyon Margaret? Are you a Magus Lord?”
The old geezer patted his head, and immediately opened the wooden door, “Greetings, Sir! What you say is correct; the Broken
Axe Pub is the only place where you can find the Seated Lupin Wolf…
This old man was just an acolyte, but it was obvious that he had seen the world, and that he knew both how to read a situation and how to protect himself.
Leylin nodded his head and walked into the Broken Axe Pub.
He had already enquired before coming; the Great Canyon Margaret was always surrounded with terrifying sandstorms and it required several months to traverse it.
Also, there were a lot of hidden dangers in areas of the canyon. Being filled with dangerous swamps full of poisonous insects and the like, even horses could not be used in there. Even Magi had lost their lives in some of the most dangerous spots!
Hence, forming a group and riding the Seated Lupin Wolf was the only way to get across the Great Canyon Margaret.
This particular pub was extremely quiet, up to the point of it being somewhat eerie.
Under the dim lighting, long chairs were placed along some partitioned rooms and sofas in the surroundings.
The little cubicle had three walls. Only the side facing the bar was wide open, as if the cubicle was a recess into the wall.
In the hall, several magicians sat in groups, drinking different coloured alcoholic drinks from time to time.
Leylin sniffed the aroma, and made out that the alcoholic content was extremely low, only meant to taste good, and not to induce drunkenness.
The magicians in the lobby were mostly level 3 acolytes. There were also several official Magi.
Leylin came in front of a horseshoe-shaped counter, sat down, and watched a bartender in a black western-looking suit.
“Sir! Do you want an ‘Ice Mountain Beauty’? Many magicians love this drink!” The bartender smiled and asked.
“I’ll have a cup! How much is it?” Under the dim lighting, Leylin’s tone sounded lazy.
“3 magic crystals!”
It was a very steep price that normal acolytes would definitely not be able to afford. Moreover, only the currency of magicians was accepted.
Leylin nodded his head nonchalantly, tossing a middle grade magic crystal to the bartender. “I’ll just have one cup! Furthermore, I wish to employ a Seated Lupin Wolf. Give me the information I require, and the remainder will be yours!”
Without a word, the bartender accepted the magic crystal. His hands moved swiftly, shaking the silver mixer on his hand, and drawing a few shiny arcs in the air.
“Sir, are you preparing to travel across the Great Canyon Margaret? Although the sandstorms have stopped, there have been rumours of a pack of Kary Vultures having seized the route leading towards the single necessary replenishing point. How about forming a group before setting off?”
The bartender shook the mixer in his hands as he explained to Leylin.
“Kary Vultures?”
Leylin’s brows furrowed. This was one of the mystical creatures in the Magus World. In its mature stages, a Kary Vulture was comparable to a level 3 acolyte. As for the King Kary Vulture, it had an existence equivalent to a rank 1 Magus.
If there really was such a group of Kary Vultures occupying the single route towards the canyon leading to the supply point, a traveller’s plan to cross the canyon would be compromised.
“All of these things that you have said were told to you by someone else, no?”
Leylin did not answer and stared at the bartender, before suddenly speaking up.
“Yes! Several official Magi have already formed small groups, and they’re lacking a few members. Hence, they had to stay in this area, and entrusted me to find a suitable member for them…”

The bartender smiled as he placed a drink with large amounts of ice on top and alcohol below to Leylin. It looked like a mountain of ice.

“Your ‘Ice Mountain Beauty’, Sir!”

Leylin raised the glass. There was a layer of thin frost around it, and even the alcohol inside had somewhat frozen over. The refreshing cocktail entered his mouth, and the chill even spread from his throat to his four limbs. The ice cold feeling subsided, and a fiery sensation followed. At first, it was extremely faint, but the heat grew stronger and stronger, even overcoming the previous iciness. This feeling of freezing and burning was extremely strange, indeed worthy of its price of 3 magic crystals.

“Good wine! It has been a while since I’ve had such good liquor!”

Leylin slightly closed his eyes for a moment, exhaled a breath of contentedness, and said to the bartender.

“It is an honour to have satisfied my customer!” The bartender bowed slightly.

“Very well!” Leylin gulped down another mouthful of the ‘Ice Mountain Beauty’ before saying, “I wish to meet with the group before considering joining them or not!”

“Of course. In fact, the group was formed by solo travellers, so they have been staying here…”

The bartender smiled and nodded his head…

Half a month later, many acolytes respectfully and sincerely sent off six figures riding big black wolves out of Angler Town. The Seated Lupin Wolves were matte black in colour, with a patch of red fur on the crowns of their heads. There were also two golden yellow rings on their forelimbs, which were securely linked
to their necks.
Each wolf was over 5 metres tall and 2 metres wide. Their appearances looked extremely vicious, and every step they took spanned the distance of several metres, so their movements were extremely quick.
Moreover, the Seated Lupin Wolf’s back had two hump-like bulges, which were suitable for travellers to rest.
These Seated Lupin Wolves were provided by the Broken Axe Pub at the rate of five hundred magic crystals per wolf. After reaching the destination, the travellers would release them, and they would run back to where they came from.
At this moment, Leylin was seated comfortably on the back of a wolf. He rose and fell on the strong and healthy back with his eyes half closed, seizing the opportunity to rest.
Even though he was travelling on the Seated Lupin Wolf, traversing the Grand Canyon Margaret would require at least two months. The route also had a lot of dangers, so it was necessary that he conserve his energy and physical strength.
With the introduction of the bartender, he had several meetings with the small group before deciding to join them.
It would be very difficult for a lone magician to face the vile environment of the Great Canyon Margaret, and even break the watch of those Kary Vultures.
Moreover, Leylin confirmed that the other party members were in the same situation as him, forming a party at the very last minute, so he was not afraid of them colluding against him.
Even with Leylin’s entry, the group members felt that their safety was not guaranteed.
After having waited for an additional half a month, it was only the previous day that another official Magus had joined them, and the group had decided to set off.
During that half a month, Leylin had been dwelling within the pub
while keeping a low profile. It could have been that the Yale family and the Lilytell family had ran out of leads, so they had not decided to search here, enabling Leylin to avoid a huge battle. Thinking about this, Leylin took a look at the members of his group.
Due to fact that the group was only a temporary one, in addition to the wariness of the magicians, more than half of the group members’ faces had been concealed. Only an old, white-haired geezer and a voluptuous female magician did not conceal their countenances. Other magicians were the same as Leylin, with half of their faces wrapped, and appearing cold and detached. All of these magicians emitted the energy waves of a rank 1 Magus. The Great Canyon Margaret was too dangerous for any acolytes, so apart from any special circumstances, acolytes seldom chose this route.
The roasting sun shone with a comfortable warmth onto his body, causing Leylin to crave a good sleep. As the surroundings turned dark green, the short shrubs bowed down to the Seated Lupin Wolf as they passed. This caused Leylin to think that he had arrived at the grasslands of Chernobyl Islands. The Great Canyon Margaret was extremely vast, spanning across several kingdoms.
Moreover, rumours had it that originally, there was no great canyon and that in fact, it had been formed by two unknown, high ranked Magi fighting. Looking down from the sky, the Great Canyon Margaret seemed like a wound created on the body of the south coast. However, Leylin still expressed his skepticism towards such a myth. Breaking apart half a continent should have required at least a rank 7 or 8 Magus. In the recorded history of the south coast, there had been no mentions of Magi of such ranking having ever
appeared. Even if they had come from another continent, why would they have specifically chosen this place for their battle?
No matter what the legend said, due to the double influences of topography and magic radiation, the Grand Canyon Margaret suffered from strange geographical conditions and an ever-changing natural climate.

In the Great Canyon Margaret, various terrains such as grasslands, mountains, forests, marshes, and deserts could be seen. Moreover, one moment, there might be rain, and in the next moment, a terrifying thunderstorm. As for the enormous intermittent sandstorms, they were a calamity that even official Magi had to escape from. Fortunately, the large scale sandstorms had their specific timings, so this passage was not completely out of the question.

Advancing through such an environment was a severe test for a Magus’ physical body and spiritual force. As for the Seated Lupin Wolf, it was a unique species that grew up within the Grand Canyon Margaret.

As if undergoing evolution and modification through radiation, the original species of mountain wolves, in the span of a long time, had evolved into an organism that was completely capable of adapting to the terrain and climate of the Great Canyon Margaret.

As for the magicians on both sides of the Great Canyon Margaret, they captured, tamed, and transformed these wolves into a necessary tool for traveling through the Great Canyon Margaret.

According to Leylin’s guesses, behind the Broken Axe Pub, there
were definitely one or more large Magus families that had joined hands. If not, they wouldn’t be able to reap in such sizable benefits from this huge territory.

*Pu*
The sturdily built Seated Lupin Wolves continuously dashed across the grassland, bounding forward from time to time to avoid the obstacles ahead.

Their sharp canine teeth and claws were enough to deal with most of the wild creatures, saving the magicians from having to cast spells, and letting them rest.

*Rumble*
In a split second, the initially bright sky was covered by clouds, and snake-like lightning rolled across the sky, sounding out rumbling thunder.

The most mysterious thing was that on Leylin’s side, the weather was still fine. One side of the sky was clear, while the other was ominous, filling it with a type of indescribable aesthetic beauty.

“It’s a thunderstorm! Pay attention and avoid getting wet!”
The leader, an old geezer, spoke from the forefront.

A vote had passed in the party, finally choosing the two who would show their faces as the temporary leaders.

“Damn!” Leylin’s ears twitched as he heard a female traveller from the front complain.

However he did not bother with her, only drawing out a large tarpaulin from the sack on the Seated Lupin Wolf and draping it over his body.

*Hu Hu Hu*
The speed of the wolves was extremely quick, so after a dozen minutes, they entered the region of thunderstorms.

The cold wind was whizzing, mimicking knives slashing against everyone’s faces.

*Pitter-patter* Not long later, bean-sized raindrops fell, rapidly...
turning into a heavy downpour.  
Under the rain, the grassland had now turned into a marsh.  
The muddy ground hindered the footsteps of the wolves. As for those blind spots, they were littered with the traps of quicksand. Once someone was to step into one, they would very soon be swallowed whole.  
*Pu*  
The wolf Leylin was riding on sounded a long hiss, and immediately, its four wolf paws gave out white light.  
Streaks of light began to form within the white dizzying glow. When the rays of light began to disperse, a thick coat of wolf fur could be seen above their paws.  
When the fur was spread out, it resembled a hoof.  
*Ta* *Ta* The wolf proceeded on water as if it was flat ground. The speed of the entire team got faster. “A creature formed from a combination of nature and magic, truly magical!” Leylin sighed in admiration as he gently caressed the wolf’s hump in front of him,  
At this instant, the wolf hair on the hump gathered and became similar to a layer of skin, sticking onto the surface of the wolf. It had a layer of oil, causing it to resemble a raincoat. Rain continued to roll off the body of the wolf, and not a drop remained on the wolf. “This is only an ordinary mount. Hearsay indicates that within the Light Magus region, endless other magical mounts exist. Some were natural, and were captured from the wild, and others were manmade, causing them to be bizarre and exotic.” Leylin’s eyes began to display an expression of yearning.  
With the speed of the wolf, they were able to make it before dark. Leylin and his party finally managed to rush out of the torrential rain zone and entered a stone forest.
“Tonight, we shall rest here. Pitch your tents and leave the wolves around the perimeter. Don’t forget to feed them!” The female magician yelled.

Upon hearing that, the magicians restrained and fed their mounts. They also began to pitch their tents in the stone forest.

Very soon, a circle of black tents was seen assembled closely together. The Seated Lupin Wolves were circling around the tents, laying low, as if keeping vigil.

In a special tent, Leylin finished his meditation and looked at his status.


The progress for a magician was always a gradual one. After so many days of meditation, Leylin’s spiritual force had only increased by 0.1. However, compared to the Magi who do not use high-grade resources to simulate their spiritual force growth, Leylin only had to persevere in meditation every day in order for his spiritual force to grow. This pace was considered overpowered!

As for the elemental essence conversion, not only it was one of the requirements to advance to a rank 2 Magus, it was another crucial method to increase the might of rank 1 spells, so it could not be neglected either.

Leylin had already somewhat discovered the Warlock’s flaws. As a small branch of the ancient magicians, not only did Warlocks have to unearth the power of their bloodline, they also could not neglect on their cultivation as a magician.

This meant that the advancement requirements for Warlocks were the same as those for Magi. Moreover, they had the limitations of their bloodline.
Even when a rank 1 Warlock would have reached the advancement criteria, if the concentration of his bloodline was not high enough, then the advancement would most likely fail, or not have an innate spell after their advancement. According to the A.I. Chip’s simulation, this was very possible!

This was indeed the case if given more thought. If the path of Warlocks was that superior, the whole Magus World would have been predominantly Warlocks and not the currently observed situation.

However, with such severe conditions for advancement, once a Warlock managed to break through, their might would often surpass that of a Magus of the same rank!

For Leylin, his personal advantage made it more suitable for him to walk the path of a Warlock.

After he finished meditating, Leylin got up and left the tent.

“Wu wu!” A Seated Lupin Wolf, which was laying beside Leylin’s tent, whimpered, slightly lifting its tall stature.

“Eat this!” Leylin took a large blue cod from his sack and fed the wolf.

The Seated Lupin Wolf growled with excitement and raised its giant red tongue that had white moss to gnaw on the fish.

As the tongue swept past Leylin’s right hand, he could feel a warm, moist sensation.

Although the wolf could hunt for its own food, only specific kinds of foods could keep up with their daily intake as a beast of burden.

“Hello, Lancey!”

The tent beside Leylin’s opened and a provocative and revealing figure walked out. Leylin rubbed his nose as he made his greeting.

During the allocation, he was assigned to be a pair with this woman.

“You’re here to feed the wolves too?” Lancey nodded her head, as she took out some cod to feed the wolf beside her.
Each and every move of this woman had a sense of loneliness behind it. Leylin felt that this was a woman with a story to tell. Of course, every magician who wanted to travel through the Great Canyon Margaret had a story behind them. Although Leylin did not know why this female Magus wanted to escape to the Light Magi domain, he was sensible enough to not ask.

“Listen! I hear the slight hymn of the wind! Look! The white clouds which are freely floating in the skies~”

At this moment, a rock beside the two of them trembled. A sprite, which was fully brown in colour and was wearing a Scottish costume, suddenly emerged and played its harp while singing. Looking at the rock sized sprite, Lancey covered her mouth as she gasped.

“It’s the Brownstone Singer! I heard that they were extinct! I never thought that I’d see one here…”

Before Leylin could speak, the old geezer leader came out from the tent, while exclaiming in admiration when he saw the sprite strumming on top of a rock.

“Brownstone Singer?” Leylin recalled the data regarding these creatures. “It seems to be one of the rumoured creatures that possess mysterious abilities, but don’t have much attack strength!”

“What adorable creatures!” Stars seem to shine in Lancey’s eyes, and she could not resist the temptation to try and touch them.

“The energy waves that they emit are so weak I wonder how they survived till now?”

“Let me capture them and slowly conduct my research!” A large bloke who heard the banter walked out with a disdainful expression.

*Hu* Following his demand, a layer of stone skin appeared on his hands as he tried to grab the sprite.

“You, stop!” Lancey frowned, but his words obviously did not
carry much effect.
The large bloke did not even stop and immediately grabbed the Brownstone Singer. The sprite stared blankly, before crying out and turning into mud yellow light dots, which disappeared in the hands of the large bloke.
“This… what just happened?”
“The Brownstone Singer is a creature that is naturally formed from nature. They are able to harmonise with the earth energy particles within the air. Magi who do not have an elemental essence conversion of 80% or above would not even be able to touch them!”
The old geezer leader said.
“Moreover, they are really timid! After getting scared off by you, they might never come back!” Leylin added on.
Upon hearing what Leylin said, the old man was astounded as he looked at Leylin. “I cannot believe that you actually know such information, which has been neglected by many!”
“I just happened to come across it while reading an ancient compendium…” Leylin replied modestly.
At this moment, the discussion had aroused the curiosity of the others Magi from the camp and brought them here.
“There’s still a little bit more!” Leylin looked at the huge bloke with a pitiful gaze.
“Legends have it that those who have been touched by a Brownstone Singer, regardless of their gender, would get pregnant!”
“Are you kidding… Argh…”
The huge bloke had a sinister smile, but soon after he gave a miserable shriek.
The surrounding Magi also cried out in surprise, as if they’d seen something unbelievable.
Right in front of them, the huge bloke’s belly began to slowly swell, taking the shape of a bulge.
Thinking back to what Leylin said earlier, Lancey was fearful yet relieved that she did not touch the Brownstone Singer like she wanted to.
Looking at the big bloke freaking out and hurrying back into his tent, drinking and consuming all sorts of items with medicinal properties, smiles were seen hanging on the faces of all the people at the site…
After appreciating the spectacle, they rested for the night and carried on their journey the next day.
The huge bloke had also recovered, but his complexion did not look very good.
Where magicians were concerned, to induce an abortion or to do a caesarean section, it was a small and simple operation that even one man could handle.
The effects of the Brownstone Singer might be frightening to a normal person. But for magicians, it was more of a practical joke than something to be feared.
“Due to the Grand Canyon Margaret’s topography, it became a paradise for many exotic creatures. Legends have it that you can still find trails of those that were said to be endangered or extinct here....”

Leylin secretly thought, as he saddled the Seated Lupin Wolf, and watched the surroundings slowly changed into an ash-gray rocky forest.

If it wasn’t because of Grand Canyon Margaret’s complex and ever-changing topography, and the huge sandstorm encircling it for a good part of the year, this canyon would have long became a natural resource mine for the magicians.

As time slowly passed by, the ash-gray rocky forest around Leylin and the others became shorter and shorter. Eventually, their surrounding only had fragmented small stones, resembling a barren land.

“Limestone Wasteland. We’ve already merged into the standard route. In the next ten days or so, we’ll be more at ease. But following this will be the frightful Golden Desert, where the Kary Vultures gather. Everyone should maintain their energy, and prepare for the upcoming battle....”

The lead, an old geezer, yelled uninterrupted, as he rode a Seated Lupin Wolf that had a few strands of white beard on its face.

“Limestone Wasteland? A.I. Chip, bring out the map!” Leylin slightly lowered his head as a projection that only he could see was emitted.

On a simple map, there were general markings of the danger zones within the Grand Canyon Margaret. In the center, there was a twisted green route, that was linked from one side of the map to the other.

‘Kary Vultures Gathering Place’ was marked with an eye-catching red font, that was in the center of the green line which they have to pass through.
On the other two sides of the route, there were other extremely dangerous zones marked scarlet, which indicated that they cannot be traversed. This only meant that making a detour was impossible. If Leylin and the rest want to safely get across the Grand Canyon Margaret, the only way was to banish the Kary Vultures obstructing the route.

“Limestone Wasteland!” Leylin found the range of the Limestone Wasteland on the blue map. It was a big ash-gray region. Small words were written beside the region: “Limestone Wasteland! Verified as having an extremely low level of risk, and no high-energy life form was ever seen…” Obviously, the Grand Canyon Margaret was explored by countless magicians on both sides and this was the best route to take to get across the canyon as it held the least risk.

As expected, once they entered the Limestone Wasteland, Leylin felt the Seated Lupin Wolf’s muscles and fur slightly loosen up, as if entering a relatively relaxed state. “The concentration of energy in the air here is very less as if the air has some kind of leakage and causes the energy within it to be vaporised.” Leylin snapped his fingers and a small ball of flame appeared on his palm. It trembled in the breeze as if it could be extinguished at any time.

If it were outside of this area, this small flaming wisp would be burning brightly, several folds brightly than now and its power would have been 1 degree or more.

“AI Chip, calculate this flame’s power.”
[Beep! Mission objective noted. Analysing the target. . . . completed! Flame’s power is 0.4238 degrees.] The AI Chip outputted the required data very quickly.
“As expected. The energy concentration in the air has been reduced. To cast spells here with complete power will cost even more strength than if cast outside of this place…”
Magicians and magical beasts all use the energy particles within the air to perform all sorts of unimaginable and marvellous magic. If the energy concentration in the air was less, the power of the spell cast will also be reduced.
Moreover, if a living being stayed in this place for a long time, it might undergo mutation.
As for those beings who knew magic, they would abhor these kinds of regions.
“This type of area, the Limestone Desert, looks like it was caused by a war between two highly-ranked Magi, as stated in the Book of Giant Serpent!”
Leylin now begins to believe the legend; the Grand Canyon Margaret was created by two great Magi during their battle.
But the Limestone Wasteland’s desert-like appearance was a good thing for travellers like them.
At least, there was no need to worry about random, exotic species ambushing them along the way. They could rest and conserve energy.
This tranquil life lasted fifteen days.
Along the way, there experienced some bad weather and other situations. But it was not an issue for Leylin, who was a well-prepared magician.
The night before they were to walk out of this Limestone Wasteland, the old geezer, who was leading them all, and Lancey, gathered the six Magi.
“Starting tomorrow, we will be out of the Limestone Desert, and entering the Golden Desert!”
Under the illuminating flame, the old geezer’s wrinkled face showed uncertainty as his pair of pupils shone.
“At the heart of the Golden Desert, the third supply spot that we will pass by has been occupied by the abominable Kary Vultures. The reason why we formed small teams, was mostly for this! Now, it’s time to make the final decision!”
The old and tiny geezer looked around: “Will we kill the Vulture King as mentioned before, or merely expel them?”
“What else? Of course, we kill it!” The huge bloke who was teased by the Brownstone Singer took the lead and voiced out first.
“Materials made from the Vulture King can be sold for sell tens of thousands of magic crystals, and bar owners from both ends of the canyon will give extra rewards. Is there anything better than this?” This was mentioned by the bartender from the Broken Axe Pub, who gave this small team an impromptu mission. Kill the Kary Vulture King, do not let it leave alive!
Once this is done, not only will the materials obtained from the Vulture King belong entirely to the group, the pubs on both sides will also give a generous amount of magic crystals as a reward. Because of the existence of the Kary Vultures, it had caused issues for cargos that were transported back and forth the canyon. It seems that the people involved can no longer tolerate it. And the Kary Vultures were very vengeful creatures. If the Vulture King wasn’t killed, it would gather more of its kind and hunt down any visible Magi.
The impromptu team Leylin was with, had a short discussion at the bar and agreed to the bartender’s proposal. After all, official Magi all lacked resources. They couldn’t afford to miss any opportunity to accumulate more resources. What the old geezer had put forward, was only to make a final confirmation.
“Of course!” “Well, did we not agree on this before?” The huge bloke’s words caused a resonance, and Leylin gently agreed. As long as it was appropriate, he did not mind giving his
vote and gain some magic crystals.
“Great!” The old geezer smiled till the wrinkles on his face gathered together, resembling a chrysanthemum.
Seeing him like this, Leylin reckoned the Vulture King had an important material that the old geezer needed. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have been so into this.
“Good! Then I’ll delegate tasks to everyone accordingly. The Kary Vultures are very cunning, their ability to fly makes battling them extremely troublesome. Those of you who know rank 1 flying magic ……”
The leader old geezer started to deploy everyone. Contrastingly Leylin remained uncommunicative; he did not voice out his expertise. He ended up with the role of assisting the attacker.
The old geezer’s arrangement was quite fair. In accordance with the principles of “work more, get more”, every magician was assigned a job within their capabilities and developed a detailed plan. However, during the planning, the flying magicians who were tasked as attackers and responsible for intercepting had the privilege of selecting the spoils of war. And the old geezer just had a showcase of his strange flying magic. Flying was still a relatively rare ability amongst the rank 1 Magi. Not only is the specialised rank 1 flying magic rarely seen, it is also not practical. Not unless they managed to obtain a few magic artifacts that could aid flying, like Bosain. But, as far as rank 1 Magi were concerned, only middle-grade magic artifacts would be deemed useful. For example, that item in Bosain’s hand, the liquefying metallic ball, called ‘Bright Silver’. Although it was very useful for one at the acolyte level, for an official Magus it would have very low power and be considered to be very weak. The most important factor, speed, of that artifact had
not reached a suitable standard and to use it to assist with flying
would only be seen as a joke!
It was still rare to be able to master the rank 1 flying magic like that
old geezer leader.
A pair of pale green wings grew on the back of the old geezer.
When he soared into the sky, Leylin keenly felt the currents and
particles in the wind fluctuate. Evidently, the old geezer was a
Magus who specialized in Wind element energy particles.
[According to the quantity of energy particles dispelled from the
target’s, determined to be of Wind element. Essence element
conversion is 15-20%!]
A fine beam of blue flashed across Leylin’s eyes.
The A.I. Chip could now judge other magicians during sudden
bursts of energy, to determine the general stats of the opposite
party.
But to get the most accurate data, it would still have to break
through the protective force field of the target.
Unless he met a tenacious enemy, Leylin would never do something
like that.
Before a rank 1 Magi’s force field can be broken, the moment
Leylin uses A.I. Chip to break through into the opponent’s
protective force field, it’s as if Leylin had used his hands to peel off
the other party’s clothes. It would definitely lead to some extreme
hatred from the other party. Leylin did not wish to make more
enemies.
Or maybe he could wait for the A.I. Chip to upgrade again, and
then he could break through into the other magician’s force field
without him noticing.
Leylin kept calculating in his heart, as he looked forward to such an
ability.
The rain drizzled continuously, as if like a thread of yarn. It pelted onto the tarpaulin Leylin had draped over his shoulders; it gave a cooling sensation.

Riding on the Seated Lupin Wolf that had a night’s rest, Leylin appeared tranquil as he peered through the ashy haze, trying to look at the scenery ahead.

*Whoosh*

It was as if the curtains were pulled apart. Leylin felt like he had rushed out of a dense fog as extremely dazzling sunlight directly shined on them.

*Rustling*

Wolf claws slowly sunk into the countless grains of sand they were stepping on.

The rain-filled, dark clouds had gradually dispersed, and now the fiery sun had taken over the sky. It brought with it burning hot rays of brilliance, which constantly spread across the wide desert. From what they could see, there was a field of gold as well as modulating levels of sand dunes.

“Golden Desert, we’ve arrived!” Leylin felt the surrounding temperature increasing constantly. It must have gone up by at least twenty degrees since the rain earlier.

The sweltering humidity continuously flooded into the tarpaulin, and even with Leylin’s constitution, he felt a little uncomfortable.

*Crash* He hastily removed the tarpaulin and stripped off some
clothes, and even then he only felt a little better. This sudden change in temperature within the Grand Canyon Margaret was not unusual. If ordinary people came here, it would have been a torment for them. However for Leylin and his group, it was only a wee bit troublesome.

“Awooooooo!”
The leading Seated Lupin Wolf howled, and the rest of the wolves that were being ridden by the others also howled. It wasn’t clear if these howls were due to excitement or was meant as a warning. With the howling of the wolves, Leylin noted that the body hairs on the Seated Lupin Wolf began to change.
The Seated Lupin Wolves had black fur, and only the head had a touch of bright red fur. But now in the hot sunlight, the wolf’s hair color gradually faded. Finally, it completely transformed into a pale white color, then a streak of light blue lighted up from the wolf’s body. The whole piece fur turned ice blue.
An icy breath emitted from the back of the wolf. The icy-cool feeling was very comfortable, especially in this desert.
“It actually even knows of the uses and the difference between thermal absorption properties of light and dark colors!”
Leylin could not help but to gasp in amazement of the adaptability of the Seated Lupin Wolf. Under the scorching rays of the sun, the ice blue fur was not affected by the heat as much as the dark fur. As for the fact that the Seated Lupin Wolf knew of these, it made Leylin feel somewhat shocked.
Moreover, they even applied the slight use of Ice element energy particles.
The Seated Lupin Wolf was undoubtedly the best creature to traverse the terrains of the Great Canyon Margaret!
The six huge wolves with icy blue fur gave off a chilly sensation. They very soon proceeded on their journey along with the Magi riding on them, and stepped into the Golden Desert which was 10
times more dangerous than the Limestone Wasteland. Under the scorching rays, Leylin gulped down some more water. With his vision and the A.I. Chip’s detection, he had already discovered many dangerous creatures in the nearby desert. To put it bluntly, the level of danger in the Limestone Wasteland was the lowest in all of the terrains within the Great Canyon Margaret.

A dozen days before, the journey for Leylin and the others were extremely relaxed. There was no difference from an excursion, and the dangerous creatures they met were rare. However, things were obviously different in here. With the slightest observation, Leylin already discovered many dangerous lifeforms concealed within the sand dunes. Six-Eyed Poison Snake, Golden Scorpion, Toxic Compound Eye Lizard were a few creatures that Leylin saw before in illustrations as they continued to appear before his eyes. There were even some grotesquely shaped creatures.

“The energy density in the air here has even been replicated. It’s even higher than in the outside world, no wonder there are so many troublesome things!”

Feeling the energy particles that filled the air, Leylin gasped slightly. “Everyone, keep your spirits raised. The dangers in the Golden Desert cannot be compared with the Limestone Wasteland!” The female Magus, called Lancey, shouted. Even without her reminder, the other Magi present had already recollected their absent-minded pace from before. One can loosen their guard occasionally in the Limestone Wasteland, but if they chose to do the same in the Golden Desert, they were foolish and seeking for death! Those magicians who were able to advance into a rank 1 Magus were seldom such people. “Awoooooo!”
Just then, Lancey’s steed let off a howl. Its huge claws were raised and its sharp claws at tip slashed down with a cold glint of light! *Pat*

Suddenly, a black scorpion with the image of an eye appeared in front of where the wolf was. It was patted down by the sharp claws of wolf as it continuously writhed its body and hissed.

*Ka-Cha* The Seated Lupin Wolf dropped its jaws and opened its gory mouth as it placed the scorpion into its jaws. The razor sharp mandible continued to chew, bringing along the snapping sounds of the scorpion’s bones being crunched.

“Such a life form can be settled by the Seated Lupin Wolf. However, dangerous creatures such as the Kary Vultures must be dealt by us personally!”

Lancey slighted nudged her steed forward and said to the Magi behind her.

“This is…”

Where the Seated Lupin Wolf had attacked earlier, it sent a huge amount of sand flying in the air and Leylin spotted several grains of gold within it.

He reached his hand forward and grasp a handful of gold sand in his hands.

In the middle of the normal grains of sand, several golden grains were mixed in with it. Its weight was also heavier than the others by a large margin.

“Golden sand?”

Leylin looked at the gold which seemed to be alluring and was somewhat speechless.

“Golden Desert, this here is the real Golden Desert!”

“If it was the secular world, it will definitely cause chaos. A pity, however…”

With a look of contempt, Leylin flung the gold sand back onto the ground.
To magicians, only the magic crystals, the ingredients which could stimulate the spiritual force and the various advanced information was considered to be the real currency!
As for the gold belonging the secular world, apart from its uses as an ingredient, it was no different from regular metals.
Moreover, the Golden Desert was situated inside the Great Canyon Margaret, an area forbidden to regular humans. To traverse it also required the employment of the highly expensive Seated Lupin Wolves.
Thinking of the cost of excavation would already frighten the kings in many dukedoms!
Leylin only felt some pity regarding the golden sand, but he very soon regained his composure.
The A.I. Chip’s detection had been activated by him all along as his eyes surveyed the surroundings. In the Golden Desert, one must always be on alert.
The six giant, icy-blue wolves seemed to be six small boats in the Golden Desert as they continuously plodded on.
After the sky gradually darkened, the temperature in the desert also dropped.
At this moment, the Seated Lupin Wolf gave off warmth; their furs also turned back to black, as if storing the heat from day time.
“Today, I shall stand guard during the night!”
After Leylin had built his tent, an official Magus present among them all, said so.
There was a total of 6 in the group. Leylin, Lancey, the old leader, and the huge bloke and two others who remained silent most of the time. The one who spoke was one of these two.
These two Magi had grey robes on at all times, and seldom spoke. Their personality was also extremely antisocial. Up till now, Leylin managed to exchange two sentences with only one of the two.
“We will count on you!” Lancey did not look too good, her face
appeared tired as she went into her tent. During the day, she had used her spiritual force to scan the surroundings for any activity going on. Now, she urgently needed to rest and meditate to recover her spiritual force. As Leylin had the A.I. Chip to help with his tasks, his mental state was still doing fine. Yet he still put on a false impression of being weary.

“Are you not going to rest awhile?” Leylin appeared in front of one of those official Magi and casually spoke to him.

“I need not rest. I have these. Come out, my little babies!”

The Magus on night duty gave a deep laughter as his pair of arms performed a strange gesture.

*Bang* *Bang* *Bang* A layer of Earth element particles continued to emanate from his body. The surrounding sand rose up by a layer. After which, it was quickly broken, revealing a dozen yellow slates. These muddy yellow slates each had a human face on it. Some were young, some were old. They even a pair of slim arms and legs. Just like a gingerbread man.

“Father! We await your commands!” A dozen stone slate people knelt on one knee in front of the Magus on night duty.

“Very well, you all shall guard the night for me. You are in charge of…” The night guard Magus nodded his head and unrestrainedly began giving out orders.

“Sentinel Slates?” Leylin was bewildered. These creatures were very similar to the Sentinel Slates in the database of the A.I. Chip, yet it seemed like a creature of a higher level.

“It’s a rank 1 Sentinel Slate but they have undergone modifications from me!” The night duty Magus declared proudly. After becoming an official Magus, magicians will often attempt to modify and improve some rank 1 spells and even the rank 0 spells
of acolytes. Once they were successful, it could absolutely turn into a unique trump card. Or it could be sold in exchange for a large amount of resources.

A pity that these things and finding replacement potions were the same. Unless one was extremely lucky to chance across it, or only after undergoing a vast amount of experiments, would it be possible to see results.

“It’s really quite a remarkable spell!” Several traces of admiration, which was just right, appeared on Leylin’s face, turning the gaze of the spell caster gentler towards him.

“Let’s go! The Sentinel Slates originally have to use of acting as a warning. After my modification, their detection abilities can span a dozen miles…” The Magus on night duty said.

Leylin looked at the Sentinel Slates, which, having received orders, hurriedly ran to the outer area of the camp encirclement, using the sand to conceal their own bodies.

Along with the sand that continuously trickled down, the energy waves of the slate got smaller, finally turning into an untraceable spell. Leylin could not help but approve in silence.

Any Magus would have their own trump card. Once they were disregarded, it would definitely be a painful experience.

Deep in the night, Leylin who was in a light sleep heard an ear-piercing scream.

“Hurry, get up. We have trouble!”

The earlier Magus, who was on guard duty, went into the individual tents and his face showing utter exasperation.

“What happened?” Lancey’s expression was the worst. There were several spots on her body where the robes were not yet arranged, as it revealed her alluring flesh. A pity nobody at the scene bothered to have another look.
Golden Giant is in the process of moving towards us!” The Magus on night duty exclaimed hurriedly. “The Sentinel Slate used to alert the others have been completely eaten by it, too!”

“F*ck!”

After hearing these words ’Golden Giant’, Leylin quickly heard the startled oaths of nearby Magi. The Golden Giant was a type of elemental species. Its power was close to that of a fully converted elemental Magus. On top of that, it has its own unique racial talents. Only a rank 2 Magus had the capabilities to thoroughly kill or banish it.

“Wasn’t it said that the Golden Giants from the Golden Desert are extinct? Furthermore, it appeared conveniently in our way. ”

The old leader clenched his jaws in a state of madness. His eyes emitted a green radiance.

“Can we avoid it for the time being?” Lancey suggested. “The Golden Desert is so huge, he might not be able to find us!”

“I am afraid not!” Leylin was the first to interject. “The Golden Giants have a natural instinct to chase species with high energy levels. The energy propagating from our bodies acts like a lamp in the darkness for the giant’s eyes. The more we move, the more likely the Golden Giant will assault us!”

“If that is the case what should we do?” A look of despair appeared
on Lancey’s face. “Unless we have a rank 2 Magus within our party, we will all fail to escape the assault of the Golden Giant….”

There is a large gulf of difference in power level between the official Magi of different rankings.

Leylin and his party of six were only slightly stronger than a rank 1 Magus. They would even have difficulties going head on with a semi converted elemental Magus. They had no chance of surviving an encounter with a fully converted elemental Golden Giant.

Semi elemental conversions refer to Magi whose elemental essence conversion has reached a level of 50% and above. At this stage, their increase in magical power due to the elemental essence conversion starts to become very obvious. When faced with budding Warlocks, they held a great advantage.

While Leylin was still an acolyte, he had an encounter with a semi converted storm elemental sprite while on the dirigible. If not for the fact that there was a large gathering of Magi from the different academies, the only outcome would have been death.

In the current predicament, Leylin had to face something far more powerful and dangerous than the semi converted storm elemental sprite.

“Perhaps, we should scatter and escape in different directions…”

The large bloke hesitated for a while before suggesting.

Upon hearing the suggestion, the Magi present entered a state of silence and eyes started flickering nonstop.

“Are you people mad?”

The old geezer interrupted the large bloke in a fit of anger. “If we fled in different directions, can you guarantee that you individuals are lucky enough to escape the assault of the Golden Giant? Furthermore, what will you do after you reach the Kary Vultures’ territory?”

The two sharp questions abruptly brought about a deeper silence.

After fleeing in different directions, they could once again head
towards the intended destination. If they were lucky, there was even a chance of heading back to Broken Axe Pub. However, this was only the last resort. The Magi will not accept their foul fate just like that.

“Quick! Another three of my babies are dead!” The night shift Magus said with a heavier breath than before.

“Maybe we could use the Sentinel Slate along with a rune which dissipates energy continuously to distract the Golden Giant. While it is distracted, we could do our best to restrain the energy emitted from our bodies and sneak away... If it fails, we could do as mentioned earlier and scatter in different directions...”

In the midst of silence, Leylin suddenly spoke up.

“Although this plan is unreliable, we obviously have no better options...”

The old geezer let out a sign of deep resignation and pointed at Leylin. “We will do as he says! I happen to have the material for a few Sentinel Slates...”

Following which, he handed out vials filled with grey powders to the night shift Magus.

Having looked at the materials handed out by the old geezer, the night shift Magus displayed a look of unwillingness. However, he still received the materials from the old geezer. “Alright, let’s try it! But I cannot guarantee that it will work!”

Soon after the chants from the nightshift Magus, a few pieces of Sentinel Slates that resembled the destroyed one rose up from the sands.

At this moment, the people in the camp could clearly see a golden glow appearing in the eastern direction. This glow was like the sun dissipating the darkness and brought about a glimmer of warmth.

In front of the solar disk was the colossal shadow of a giant. The giant’s body radiated a golden light. It was armoured very
simply. A leather armour on this upper body with an iron hoop in the middle that joined the two shoulder pads. On the shoulders rested the head of the giant with rigid face lines that looked like it was caused by the scrapes and slashes of weapons. The tangerine hair on top of its head looked like it was burning mightily.

[Beep! High energy species life form spotted, determined to be a Golden Giant, recommended to leave immediately!]

At the same instant, the A.I. chip displayed out of a red warning screen.

“Quick! Quick!” The old geezer’s voice was filled with urgency. “I know a few energy concentration runes, hopefully, it is of use!” The other usually quiet Magus stood up and said. Following which he applied what looked like a mixture of circular and triangular runes on the Sentinel Slate.

After the rune was inscribed, it radiated brightly and suddenly a power energy surged out from the Sentinel Slate. This enormous energy fluctuated chaotically causing the Golden Giant to let out a roar and accelerate towards it.

“Nice! It grabbed the Golden Giant’s attention!” Lancey exclaimed happily.

“Let’s add this on top!” Leylin uncorked a red test tube and poured its content on the inscribed Sentinel Slate.

After the liquid from the red test tube assimilated fully into the Sentinel Slate, the Sentinels let out angry snarls and transformed to be bigger and with stronger limbs.

“Hopefully, this will help them hold out longer!” Leylin tossed away the empty test tube. The energy propagating out of his body was reduced from that of an official Magus to a normal person.

This was done using the Transfiguration Spell. It diluted the level of energy propagating from his body.
After which, he went over to his Seated Lupin Wolf, placed a cover over the wolf’s mouth and gave it a pat on its head. The Seated Lupin Wolf seemed to be aware of the presence of the incoming Golden Giant. It got low to the floor with limbs trembling and waited for Leylin’s command. The other Magus followed Leylin’s action. They also used the protection of the environment to conceal their whole body. Finally, the Golden Giant was nearer to the camp. It was less than only 500 metres away! At this sort of distance, Leylin was able to see clearly every single hair on the giant. “It’s up to you now, babies, attack!” “Attack! For our father!” The burly and buffed up Sentinel Slates roared. Some of them rushed head on towards the Golden Giant while the others split up and ran in different directions. Whether it was the brave Sentinels Slates who charged heads on towards the Golden Giant or the others who ran in different directions, their bodies carried a large source of energy which pulsated out of them. The energy was almost like that of a rank 1 Magus. “kjfl” The Golden Giant let out an unknown type of shout as if swearing. It stretched out its large palms in a posture like it was hiding the sky and covering the earth. It pushed against the ground and dredged up the earth. A few of the Sentinels were picked up by the Golden Giant “For glory! For protection!” The Sentinel Slates roared as their little fists rained down upon the giant’s large arm. “Creak Crunch!” The large Golden Giant placed the captured
Sentinels directly into the mouth. It sounded as if he was chewing through biscuits.

After ingesting the Sentinel Slates, the Golden Giant let out a loud roar and chased after the fleeing Sentinel Slates with large strides.

“Now!”

The old geezer’s voice was soft. The six men covertly pulled the Seated Lupin Wolf and left the camp area.

Everyone was doing their utmost to contain the energy pulsating from their bodies. There was even a cover on the Seated Lupin Wolf’s body. Like moles, they stealthily left the area.

The Golden Giant shouted at the fleeing Sentinel Slates and chased after them. It never gave the camp a second look.

“Run!”

Someone exclaimed softly after the golden glow disappeared. Without hesitation, everyone ran at the speed of light.

……

*Crash!*

The wolf pack ran past, kicking up a dust of sand and stones. The dust glittered a faint glow of gold.

Leylin and the party had been on the run without a break ever since he was disturbed from his rest state at the camp. This, coupled with the Golden Giant incident had caused Leylin to have an unhealthy complexion.

From the pitch black darkness of the night to a fully risen sun, almost half a day had passed while on the run.

However, the thought of the Golden Giant spurred the party on and nobody grumbled about the lack of rest.

“We were lucky the Golden Giant does not seem to have high intelligence! It only knows how to mindlessly chase after high energy life forms. If not, the stealth attempt yesterday would have
failed. It was a really suspenseful situation…”
Leylin felt a lingering fear in his heart.
Although he has advanced his magical powers and is considered to
be someone of considerable power in the world of Magus, the
Golden Giant was something that was entirely out of his league.
“However, the Golden Giant is an elemental species. It does not
have a bloodline. If not, I would rather like to have a few drops of
the Golden Giant’s blood for my experiments…”
Leylin’s eyes betrayed a glimpse of regret.
There were countless types of mythical species in the Magus world.
The Golden Giant belonged to the elemental species. Its whole
body is made up of various type of elements and minerals. There is
not even a drip of blood in it, naturally there will be no blood line.
In ancient times, the paths to becoming a Magus were many. The
Warlocks chose the path of the bloodline.
And obviously, the Golden Giant chose a different path.
There are different paths to reach the pinnacle. Leylin’s plan was to
follow the path of the Warlock.
“Shall we rest? If we do not meditate and recuperate our spiritual
force…” Lancey’s voice was heard from the front of the party. She
travelled together with the old geezer on the Seated Lupin Wolf.
All Magi make use of the both their spiritual force and magic
power to perform miraculous magic. Due to the Golden Giant
incident yesterday and the constant travelling, the six Magi were
unable to mediate to recuperate their spiritual energy. Looks of
exhaustion were spread across their faces.
“No need for that, we are yet to be out of the danger zone, the
Golden Giant might catch up to us anytime soon…”
The wind carried the old geezers reply though the party.
After hearing the old geezers reply, the party sank into a solemn
silence and carried on with their hasty escape.
The Magi feared the Golden Giant more than any other dangers in
the Golden Desert.
Whoosh Whoosh!

A gale carried up the sand, bringing about a glittering gold color.

On the endless Golden Desert filled with death and danger, a pack of six large wolves padded across the soft sands at a relentless speed.

Upon the backs of the wolves, there sat a couple human silhouettes.

“We are here! Before us is the Golden Oasis!” The old geezer studied the map and exclaimed brightly.

“Are we here at last?” the rider of a Seated Lupin Wolf raised his head slightly and said. With his astonishingly powerful eyesight, he looked into the distance and saw a blanket of green.

Ever since their encounter with the Golden Giant, Leylin, and his party had been on edge, and had been easily startled by the slightest of things. They had only just started to relax after having been on the run for more than ten days. As a result, they also reached their destination at a faster time than they had originally planned.

This was the Golden Oasis, the only large water source in the Golden Desert.

Also, it was the only traversable path through the Grand Canyon Margaret. The other paths were wrought with dangers that far surpassed the capabilities of a rank 1 Magus.

Leylin spotted a few large bird-like creatures in the far distance that were taking off and landing at the oasis.
They were the Kary Vultures, the main culprits that occupied the land.
The six Magi stopped and stationed their Seated Lupin Wolves at a sand dune not far from the Golden Oasis.
The Seated Lupin Wolves were great against some of the lower level life forms in the Golden Oasis. However, against the adult Kary Vultures, which were comparable to a rank 3 Acolyte, they had no chance of surviving once trapped in their kill zone.
The Seated Lupin Wolves were still needed for the journey ahead. Furthermore, the wolves were borrowed. If the Wolves perished, a huge sum of magic crystals would be needed to compensate the handlers who were supposed to take back the wolves on the other side of the Grand Canyon.
“We can’t press on anymore! The Kary Vultures are capable of flight. We will surely be spotted by them from the air!”
The old geezer surveyed the surroundings, “We need to conceal the position at which the Seated Lupin Wolves are situated as well!”
“I might be able to help in this aspect!” Leylin let out a faint smile and waved his two hands at the shadow of the sand dune.
Under Leylin’s hand, the black shadow warped and swiveled. As if a giant behemoth hiding in the shadows, it opened its maw and swallowed the entire sand dune.
“Darkness is the natural friend of concealment.” In the shadow of the darkness, the large wolves vanished.
“Good job!” Lancey praised Leylin.
In her eyes, although Leylin was still just a budding Magus, she admired his nimble mind and weak, but practical spells.
However, this was just a false front by Leylin. Upon hearing Lancey’s compliment, the big bloke incessantly let out a cold snort, “If it were up to me to do it....”
“Ok, ok! We are a party after all, why the need for that?”
The old geezer interrupted the big bloke, “Our enemies at the
moment are the Kary Vulture flock and their King!”
“Lancey, you shall explain the situation to the party!”
Lancey stepped to the middle of the party and produced a blue gem from a small crevice in her chest region.
“This magic artifact is modelled to act as a spying eye, and can examine images within a ten kilometre radius!”
Lancey finished her explanation and placed the gem in her hands. She dripped a few drops of water from her water pouch onto it and chanted a few incantations.
A beam of light blue light was emitted from the gem. The light warped and stretched until it looked like a mirror’s surface.
On the mirror like surface, a beautiful lake could be seen. Green shrubbery and coconut trees grew around it. Occasionally, large red birds could be seen ascending and descending from the forest.
The vision on the mirror surface continued to pan in. Leylin could see the true appearance of the Kary Vultures.
The Kary Vulture’s wingspan spanned 5 metres and was covered in scarlet feathers. Its talons looked cold and sharp. The pink bald patches on its head were a disgusting sight. A tumor-like muscle bulged on its curved and completely bald head.
There were more than a hundred of these Kary Vultures in the oasis. If they were all fully grown and under the leadership of an official Magus-like Kary Vulture King, the band of Magi stood no chance.
“More than a hundred? This amount is too much! Can we see the Kary Vulture King?”
The old geezer hastily questioned.
“I will try my best!” Lancey was uncertain but continued to pan the mirror in the direction of the flock of Kary Vultures.
Over yonder, there stood a gigantic tree with a peculiar hollow that looked like a den. Hidden in it was an incomparably massive Kary Vulture.
While Lancey was trying to zoom in the mirror to get a closer look, the massive Kary Vulture seemed to notice her presence and let out an angry screech.
“Ga Ga!”
It sounded like a crow, but somehow unexplainably different. Suddenly, the surrounding Kary Vultures in the flock were agitated and stirred up.
Following the angry cry, a terrifying sonic wave swept towards all four directions.
“No way! It discovered my presence!” Lancey’s complexion changed for the worse.
*Pa!* The mirror shattered into pieces like a broken crystal. It turned into a blue glow and dropped onto the floor.
“Ga Ga!” The Kary Vulture King’s screech echoed from the distance. The Kary Vultures shook their large red wings, and like trained soldiers split up into sections. They spread out like carpet that covered the sky and searched the surroundings, not missing a single area.
“Sorry!” Lancey apologised with a look of embarrassment on her face.
“No problem! At least we saw the situation clearly, didn’t we?” The night shift Magus replied quickly.
“That’s right! That’s right!? The old geezer replied with a brief flash of shame across his face. It was him that allowed Lancey to search for the Kary Vulture King.
“Ga Ga!” The large Kary Vultures patrolled the sky for a long period of time, but it was to no avail. At last, they violently attacked some of the land creatures in the area. The Kary Vultures swooped up what looked appeared to be large lizards, and flew back into the oasis.
For Leylin and the official Magi, it was an easy task to hide from the pursuit of the Kary Vultures.
“Ok! Let’s discuss how we should deal with that goddamn flock of bastard birds.
Below the ground, in a temporary hut crafted using magic, the six Magi regrouped.
“A hundred Kary Vultures with power levels similar to level 2 or level 3 acolytes, plus a Vulture King whose power is far beyond what we expected!”
The old geezer looked at the other Magi.
“What else is there to do? Let’s follow the earlier plan and observe their hunting paths and patterns. We will then kill off the small hunting packs before mounting an assault into the oasis!” The big bloke was the not even the least bit concerned as he waved them off with his hands.
This was the plan that was discussed earlier, simple and practical. However, after the incident with the Golden Giant, the people in the party started to have a pressing sense of urgency and were unwilling to waste time on such plans.
Furthermore, the Golden Desert was the Golden Giant’s habitat, and they did not wish to bump into it again.
“Alright! However, we have to increase the frequency of our attacks, and get through here quickly!”
Having observed Leylin and the rest of the party approving this plan, the old geezer grudgingly agreed to it…
A black scorpion-like creature guided by the darkness stealthily crawled along the desert floor. Its hooked tail swung from side to side as it moved along. There was an unusual bright red colouring on it, which was obviously an indication of it being poisonous.
*Shuck!*
All of a sudden, a muddy yellow tongue lashed across at speed unseen by the naked eye and pulled the scorpion into a sand dune.
*Boom!* The sand dune split open, revealing a muddy yellow lizard. The lizard was covered by bits and pieces of fish scales and
had a large beautiful comb growing on its head.
*Zi Zi!* The lizard opened his mouth, and with one gulp and a movement of its neck muscles, the scorpion was eaten. After ingesting its food, the lizard swayed its stocky body and used its front limbs to rapidly dig into the sand and bury itself in it. “Ga Ga!”

Almost immediately after the lizard buried itself, an unpleasant vulture screeching echoed in the night sky. *Whoosh!* Following the vulture’s cry, a violent gust of wind swept by. The large Kary Vulture swooped from midair, and using its black talons, it knocked the sand dune apart and clenched its claws. *Kacha!* The sharp black talons directly hooked into the flesh of the lizard, and the lizard let out a howl of pain violently flipping its stocky body. “GaGa!” The Kary Vulture let out a screech of delight and pecked at the lizard with its hooked beak. *Pu!* The mud yellow lizard’s skull had been split. Its brain matter and blood left a mess on the sands. The Kary Vulture grabbed onto its prey tightly and began to fly back to its den.

Although normal vultures liked rotting meat, the Kary Vultures obviously preferred to ingest fresh and living mammals. The mud yellow lizard was two metres long, but in comparison to the Kary Vulture’s stature, the bird looked like it was grabbing a small fish. “Latent Fireball!” Somewhere from within the darkness, several black colored fireballs suddenly appeared and struck the Kary Vulture that was carrying its prey. In a flash, the black fireballs were all over the Kary Vultures body. *Bang!* Without a sound, the Kary Vulture, along with its dead
prey, were reduced to ashes. The following fireballs did not decrease in intensity. They shot right up into the sky and killed the remaining Kary Vultures. Following his attack, the ground vibrated and the sand parted, revealing Leylin’s face.

“A.I. Chip! Present the degree of attack!”

For these few days, he had been on watch in the area to hunt down those Kary Vultures that had swooped down looking for food. Just now, Leylin had been experimenting with the rank one spell that the A.I. Chip came up with.

Long before, when he was a rank 3 acolyte, Leylin had tasked the A.I. Chip with simulating a rank 1 defensive spell model. However, after receiving the teachings of the great Magus Serholm and advancing to a Warlock, this task had been delayed. Entering the Golden Desert left him feeling that his attack techniques were lacking. As someone who lacked a conventional attack technique, Leylin decided to place the task back on the agenda.
What Leylin had wanted to simulate earlier was a defensive spell. However, it was meant to be used by magicians who wanted to have a breakthrough with the Grine Water, so naturally, Leylin, having turned into a Warlock, did not need it anymore. As if struck by inspiration, Leylin added in a few rank 1 spell models from the Book of Giant Serpent and let the A.I. Chip make its modifications and optimizations, devising a rank 1 spell that was suitable for his elemental affinity. After advancing into a Warlock, Leylin’s spiritual force had significantly increased. Even the A.I. Chip, which was bound to his soul, seemed to have obtained many benefits. Just two days ago, it was finally able to simulate a rank 1 spell model.

[Beep! Data collected, scanning in progress…]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

[Latent Fireball! Classification: Rank 1 spell: Darkness and Fire. Degree of attack: 30.3. Added elemental bonus: 0.3 degrees]

Right now, Leylin’s elemental essence conversion was 1%. Hence, he obtained a 1% increase in the might of his darkness element spell. Although it seemed like the increase was insignificant, once the elemental essence conversion reached 50% and above, every Darkness element spell would be stronger than regular Magi by more than half!
“Not bad! This might is enough to deal with most Magi’s innate defensive force fields!”

Leylin continued to analyse the data, his face revealing a satisfied expression.

It wasn’t that the strength of Magi’s defensive force fields were always the same. However, normally, Magi who had just advanced only had a defensive force field with the capability of 20 degrees. However, with the progress of their spiritual force, coupled with them seeking for some precious resources to increase the might of their magic spells, their defensive force fields would often become strengthened.

The range varied for each individual, which was truer for magicians who cultivated in high-grade meditation techniques.

As for Leylin, who was a Warlock, as well as having unearthed his bloodline, the defense might of the Scales of Kemoyin would also continue to become stronger.

A magic spell of 30 over degrees was enough to break most regular rank 1 Magi’s defensive force fields.

That was to say, apart from his own trump card of his defensive force field, Leylin had another powerful method to deal with other Magi in the future.

However, it could only be that way.

If possible, Leylin would, of course, want the A.I. Chip to custom make a mighty rank 1 spell that could cover speed, strength, defense, detection, and all other various aspects.

However, it was a pity, as the A.I. Chip was only able to simulate the Latent Fireball spell due to Leylin having amassed large amounts of information. Also, it was due to the contributions of Darkness and Fire spells from the Book of Giant Serpent that made Leylin able to create the Latent Fireball after a long period time.

The few rank 1 spells in the Book of Giant Serpent were from the great Magus Serholm, who was also a Warlock with the Kemoyin
bloodline. His elemental affinity was naturally towards the Darkness and Fire aspect, so the spells he collected were of these two elements, which allowed Leylin to benefit greatly from it. As for these kinds of conditions, they would never be met again in the near future.

Hence, in this span of time, unless Leylin discovered a new type of Darkness and Fire element spell model, the A.I. Chip would not be able to simulate any new spells.

As he thought about the Book of Giant Serpent, Leylin involuntarily touched his chest, where the corner of a hardened black notebook was exposed. This was the Book of Giant Serpent, which had been obtained from the Dylan Gardens, and kept securely by Leylin at all times. It was made of a special kind of material where the pages of the book carried a strange sensation to the touch. As if made of some creature’s hide, every page could store large amounts of information.

Inside the book, not only were there a dozen rank 1 spell models, there were also three rank 2 spell models, together with the great Magus Serholm’s travelling experiences and lab experiments. The information inside was aplenty, and it was Leylin’s most valuable item that he’d gotten apart from the high-grade meditation technique.

*Weng Weng!* At this moment, a pocket-sized diary that was hanging like a keychain trembled. Leylin opened the diary and flipped to the page that was shaking. This pocket-sized diary was only the size of a child’s palm. On the faint yellow page, a secret imprint that had the shape of 3 rocks stacked together was letting off a slight glow and trembling. Leylin reached out his finger and lightly dabbed on the secret imprint.
“Haha! Leylin, you have killed a lot of them haven’t you? The Vulture King where I am at has already dispatched all of the Kary Vultures, so be careful when you conceal yourself!”
The voice of the huge bloke sounded from the secret imprint. This pocket-sized diary was what official Magi used to collect the secret imprints of their friends, professors, colleagues and other people that they wanted to keep in contact with. Some Magi, however, preferred to have the secret imprints inscribed on their bodies. One example was the huge bloke. Leylin saw that one of the huge bloke’s arms was fully covered with the secret imprints. Those densely packed imprints left Leylin feeling rather dizzy. Although it was rather troublesome, he preferred to use the diary to collect the secret imprints.
“Alright, I got it!” Leylin said to the secret imprint. Afterwards, he closed the diary and hurriedly left the area. Very soon, Leylin saw the dark figures on the far horizon. They were the shadows of the Vulture King, which, having been enraged, brought the entire flock with it. However, compared to a few days ago, when they could cover the sky, the flock was now rather thinly spread out. Their numbers had dwindled from over a hundred to less than half, at around forty or fifty. This was the fruit of Leylin and the others’ labours from over the last few days. Even from this distance, Leylin could sense the violent energy waves radiating from this furious Vulture King. “Ga Ga!” With the Vulture King in the centre, the tremendous energy waves continued to radiate into the surroundings. This kingly figure was venting its frustration and rage at the continuous loss of its subordinates!
[From the energy waves radiated, target’s Vitality is over 20,
Strength estimated to be 17-19. Concrete data is unknown!

Creatures like this, who had reached the stage of an official Magus, often had a layer of defensive force field around them. Leylin’s A.I. Chip still could not penetrate through and obtain any concrete stats. It could only analyse the strength that the target displayed, and give a rough estimate.

However, these stats alone made Leylin’s face change. Creatures like these often possessed immense strength and vitality and even had innate spells which were terribly difficult to deal with.

Looking at the Vulture King snarling above a few piles of ashes, the other Kary Vultures in the surroundings also cawed in anguish. Leylin stared intently at the Vulture King before leaving the area.

Deep in the night, in an underground room that was temporarily carved.

“Today we have killed another 9 Kary Vultures, well done!” The old geezer smiled.

“Right now, those damned trashy birds only have a strength of 50 odd!” The huge bloke was also excited.

The materials from a Vulture King, which rivalled the existence of a rank 1 Magus, were extremely precious. Moreover, they could also reap the rewards from both sides that governed the Great Canyon Margaret.

“However, the Kary Vultures that are still alive now very seldom hunt for their prey in the areas that we have set up. There are also signs of them relocating soon…”

“We have to hurry and find a way. If not, we could lose this bonus bounty reward…”

Lancey, who was standing on the side, poured cold water on their conversation.

The families governing both sides of the Great Canyon Margaret did mention that they could pass through the Golden Oasis when
the vulture flock had relocated. However, against this Vulture King that had its forces greatly reduced, and a bountiful reward assigned to it, Lancey and the others naturally did not want to let the Vulture King go.

“Perhaps we could…”

After some silence, the old geezer suggested an idea.

A fireball-like sun was hanging up high in the sky, and heat waves rising from the desert distorted the view.

Inside a stone forest that was temporarily created by spells, Leylin and the other five were huddled up.

“How is it? Can that old geezer do it?” The huge bloke spoke offhandedly as usual.

“You have to believe that old man. He is an official Magus, after all!” Lancey’s brows furrowed, “Has the ambush been set up?”

With a flash of a yellow light, Leylin came out from a side of the stone forest with the yellow light still glittering around him, “The side that I am managing has been completed!”

“It’s all set up now!” From the other side, the night shift Magus and the other quiet one spoke.

“Great! As long as that old geezer is able to lure the Vulture King here, I will rip that damned bird apart!” The huge bloke clenched his fist, his knuckles crackling.

Looking on, he was a magician that specialised in physical training and the reinforcement of his body, possessing strong muscles and strength.

“For the materials of the Vulture King, even the old geezer is spending a lot of effort!”

Leylin figured that if not for some precious ingredient the Vulture King had, the old geezer would not be this zealous and even offer to be a bait to lure it over.

“They’re coming!”

The A.I. Chip’s detection allowed Leylin to discover the other party
first. Very soon, on the horizon, a thinly spread layer of black figures appeared. There was also a human figure, with a green hurricane engulfing his body as he wildly rushed over. “Everyone, return to your individual posts, and pay heed to the orders! Quick!” Lancey shouted nervously. In a flash, the Magi who were present disappeared. Closer, even closer! The old geezer dashed extremely fast. From his concealed area, Leylin could even distinctly see that on the sides of his wrinkled face, blood continuously flowed out from both of his ears. *Whoosh!* The old geezer rapidly entered the stone forest, at the same time transmitting his voice. “Be careful of the Vulture King’s sarcoma. It is able to emit a sound attack. I took a hit from it earlier!” After seeing the stone forest, the Vulture King hesitated. However, thinking about the prey it was chasing, whose energy waves were not much different from its own, and the fact that it had even killed its children… “Ga Ga!” The Vulture King’s eyes turned bloodshot as it led the flock into the territory of the stone forest.
The target has reached the kill zone. Begin!”
The hasty transmission passed through the secret imprint and simultaneously sounded out in five different locations.
Upon hearing the transmission, Leylin’s hand radiated a scarlet red glow, and he proceeded to press his hands against the obelisk in front of him.
*Bang!*
A circular wave of tremendous magical power erupted violently. The colorful spell glowed, and trapped the Kary Vultures within it like a cage.
“Ga Ga!” The Kary Vultures screeched furiously while the tumour-like muscles on their bald heads grew in size and glowed a bright red, finally culminating in a violent explosion.
*Ting!*
The resulting ear-piercing sound wave continued to reverberate within the cage. The remaining Kary Vultures continued to vibrate their tumour like muscles, amplifying the sound wave in the process.
“This kind of attack…”Leylin widened his eyes, the sound waves pounded on his skull like a hammer. He started to fall into a state of dizziness.
Under the agitation of the sound waves, the ring of light on top of the cage started to flicker and fade.
“The attack coming from such a lowly beast is stronger than expected. Furthermore, it can be amplified by the rest of the flock. If the Kary Vultures from before were still present, they would have surely broken free from the cage!”
“Plan A is not working, time for plan B!”
Lancey’s exasperated voice emitted from the secret imprint.
“Copy!”
Leylin whispered to the secret imprint and transfigured a magic spell.

[Estimated countdown to entrapment detonation: 10 seconds!] The A.I. Chip stated.

“Let’s go!” Leylin took a last look at the Kary Vultures that were still struggling in the cage and fled the scene.

*Bang!*  
10 seconds later, at the stone forest, a violent explosion occurred. The sound of the explosion filled the area, and black smoke shot up into the horizon. In the blaze, colorful and fine potion powders occasionally dispersed. To increase the power of the spell, Leylin had added a ton of explosive and conflagratory potions.

“Haha! Beasts are still just beasts!”
Looking at the Kary Vultures that struggled in the fiery blaze, the big bloke, who was also present, laughed out loud, condescendingly. Two streams of blood flowed down from the big bloke’s ears. Evidently, the Kary Vultures’ attack had done considerable damage to him.

“This Kary Vulture King has realized its racial talents. The tumour like muscle on its head can be used to emit sound wave attacks, and it can be amplified by the flock. The level of danger will have been increased by at least two levels. When I get back, I must
demand more money from those despicable merchants.”
The old geezer cursed.
“Talks about the price increase can be discussed later. Where is the big fellow?” Leylin pointed at the heart of the explosion.
Slowly, the blaze started to die down. From the original stone, forest emerged a large, soot covered, bird-like figure.
Half of the scarlet feathers on this Kary Vulture were burned off as a result of the explosion, and the other half of them were covered in black soot. There was also a large blood stain on its bald head. It was a funny sight, but Leylin and the rest of the party did not dare to let their guard down.
“The explosion just now had an estimated power of 30 degrees or higher. How unexpected…” Lancey hung her jaw open in shock.
“After all, it is not a weak bodied Magus but a high-level species with a powerful body!” Leylin said quickly, “Go forward and surround it! It is about to escape!”
“Damn it!” The old geezer reluctantly looked at the Kary Vulture King, which was already in flight, and cursed. He rapidly chanted an incantation.
Following his chant, a faint azure breeze converged, and formed two large azure wings on his back.
“I executed both the baiting and the intercepting, so I must get a larger share of the loot!”
The old geezer blustered. He vibrated the wings on his back and floated into the air.
*Whoosh!* The old geezer traveled at a very quick pace. He was as nimble in the air as he was on the ground. From the looks of it, he had much practice in air combat.
“Ga Ga!” The Kary Vulture King angrily cried out. Sadly, a large portion of its wings were damaged by the explosion, and it was no match for the old geezer in the air.
After hovering and swooping for a while, the old geezer grabbed
an opportunity. With a green ray, he pierced one of the Kary Vulture King’s wings.

*Peng!*  
With one wing pierced, the Kary Vulture King lost its balance and crashed down into the ground. A large cloud of sand floated around the downed Vulture.  
“Advance!”  
Leylin and the rest of the party immediately rushed up and surrounded the Kary Vulture King.  
Blood flowed out from the multiple wounds on the Kary Vulture King. Looking at the Magi who surrounded it and the human figure floating in the sky above him, its eyes betrayed a sign of hopelessness.  
“Haha! Goddamn beast, I shall tear you apart!”  
The big bloke laughed out coldly. A green-greyish stone skin appeared on his body as he leapt at the injured Kary Vulture King.  
“Ga Ga!”  
The Kary Vulture King sounded an abnormally high-pitched shriek and shook its wings.  
What remained of its unharmed wing slashed across like a knife, with feathers erect like steel blades. The wing clashed with the big bloke’s fist.  
*Bang!* A dull explosion sounded out in midair and shook the ground below.  
The big bloke quickly retreated, his greyish stone skin letting out a crackling sound like the popping noises of popcorn.  
The Kary Vulture King let out another screech, and its body turned red. It looked like the Kary Vulture King was pumping all of its blood into its head. The originally shattered tumour on its head begun to rise and swell again.  
“Careful, he is about to let loose a sound wave attack!” Leylin rapidly shouted out. He grabbed the tumour with his palms.
”Restrict!”
*Sssii!*
The countless black tentacle-like objects reached out from the Kary Vulture King’s shadow and bound it tightly. Extra effort was placed in tying up the Kary Vulture King’s skull region.
“All together!”
Leylin yelled wildly. Together with the other two silent Magi, he attacked the Kary Vulture King.
Various intensely fluctuating magical spells landed on the Kary Vulture King’s body.
The spells tore apart the Kary Vulture King’s chest, causing large amounts of blood to spurt out of it.
*Kacha!*
The old geezer, who had been floating in midair, let out an emerald air-blade attack, which chopped off the bound tumour.
The Kary Vulture King screeched a couple of times as the light in its eyes started to extinguish, and it thudded onto the floor.
*Pa!* The old geezer landed on the ground, and his magical green wings disappeared.
The six Magi surrounded the Kary Vulture King’s corpse. They all had complex looks on their faces.
“What a chore this has been! If not for the additional remuneration from the pub, this would have been a complete loss!”
The lack of serious injuries on the party was a poor reflection of the difficulty level of killing off the Kary Vulture King. They had to spend a lot of time to prepare the traps and come up with the various materials needed for the potions. On top of that, the fact that they needed 6 Magi to complete the task proved how big of a challenge it was.
The materials that were scavenged from the Kary Vulture King’s corpse were barely enough to cover the expenses of the effort taken by the party.
If anyone was dead or seriously injured from the incident, this would have been counted as a big loss. Magi were a rational bunch. They could calmly perform cost-benefit analysis under different circumstances. If the cost was greater than the benefits, they would avoid doing the job. This time, if not for the fact that the Kary Vulture King was obstructing the way towards their destination, the party would have left such a high-level creature alone.

“No matter what, the fact that our party has sustained no serious injuries is good news!”

The old geezer smiled widely and said, ”Now let’s discuss how to distribute the plunder from our efforts…”

Afterwards, true to Leylin’s expectations, the old geezer claimed the majority of the feathers and the pair of large wings with the argument that he had put in the most work. From the looks of his happy face, he must have needed it urgently for an experiment or for crafting.

The rest of the party followed suit and claimed what they felt was fair for the amount of work they had done.

Leylin took only a bit of the blood and flesh from the tumour and nothing else.

As a Warlock, he was extremely interested in the bloodline of high-level creatures. Although the benefits of the Kary Vultures’ bloodline were not documented, Leylin wanted to experiment to see if he could extract anything from it.

At night, in the Golden Oasis, the 6 Magi cleaned up the remains of the Kary Vulture King and refilled up their water supplies in the nearby water source. The Seated Lupin Wolves, which had been hidden for a long time, happily cleaned themselves in the lake.

In a glowing tent nearby, Leylin looked at the surface of the tumour, which he had retrieved with a glint of excitement in his eyes.
“A.I. Chip, record data, assist in the experiment!”
Leylin silently chanted a sentence, and immediately pulled on a pair of white rubber gloves. He held out his thumb and pressed on the tumour.
The blood on the tumour flesh has dried completely by now. There were bloodstains on it and it was shriveled.
“It is very light, there seem to be meridians and air sacs…”
Leylin’s eyes glowed blue. Using his other hand, he used a scalpel to break the surface of the tumour.
Inside the flesh, there was an oddly small amount of muscle and blood vessels, and it was comprised mainly of small air sacs.
Many of the air sacs were layered over each other, forming what looked like a lattice shape that resembled a beehive.
“This kind of composition…”
Leylin muttered to himself, “A.I. Chip, record the image!”

……

After the experiment was finished, Leylin cleaned up his makeshift laboratory, picked up a goose feather quill, and wrote in his goatskin notebook: Sound vessel composition and sound wave attack…
The path after the Golden Oasis was much less dangerous. They did not have any further encounters with powerful, high-level life forms such as the Golden Giant.

……

Andre Town was a small town located on the other side of the Grand Canyon Magret. The Kary Vultures had caused the town to become empty and desolate. However, upon exiting the Grand Canyon, they saw a few
people.
“May I know if you people are master Lancey and company?”
There was already someone standing by the roadside. He was clad
in the pub’s working attire. Upon sighting Leylin and his party, he
bowed respectfully. "The incident with the Kary Vultures was
already relayed to us by a secret imprint. Please follow me back to
the pub to collect your rewards…”
“Ok!” Lancey and the old geezer stepped out among the group and
gave their agreement.
After reaching the pub the attendants unhitched their luggage, and
with a whistle, the Seated Lupin Wolves hurried into their feeding
area at the rear of the pub.
“It’s only renting for a few months, but it costs five hundred magic crystals. Your boss sure knows how to make money!”

The big bloke complained.

“In fact, we generally charge one thousand magic crystals per rental of the Seated Lupin Wolf. We only charged the minimal maintenance costs this time, as you Sirs took on the task…”

The smiling waiter explained.

As the old geezer arrived, he immediately threw the Vulture King’s skull onto the counter.

“Mission accomplished! Have a look!”

From behind the counter, a white-bearded, bespectacled old man in a bartender’s uniform came out. However, from the energy waves exuding from him, he also seemed to be an official Magus.

The white-bearded old man carefully examined the Vulture King’s skull for a long while, only then did he put it away.

“It is indeed the Vulture King’s head. According to the agreement, each one of you will be able to get….”

Mr. White Beard was nimble. He immediately took out bags filled with magic crystals and magic materials and gave it to everyone. It seemed like he had prepared this beforehand.

“In actuality, I belong to the great Dorian family…”

After completing the delivery, the old geezer put on a kind smile and extended an olive branch to Leylin and the rest.
These kinds of big families would recruit foreign magicians from time to time to further strengthen their family. Moreover, Leylin and the rest had decent strength, and since they had come from the eastern part of the Grand Canyon, they were not likely to be spies sent by their enemies. As long as they didn’t have a massive headache that they brought with them, it was likely that the local large magisteriums would be most willing to offer shelter for such talents. Leylin noticed that the big bloke’s face obviously displayed his intention to agree. The two magicians who were together, however, seemed indecisive. As for Lancey and the old geezer, they did not hesitate to reject the offer. Leylin himself did not consider this option. When magicians joined other big families, it was because they wanted to obtain higher level meditation techniques, magic resources and the like. Leylin already had meditation techniques, and as for magic resources, he could just use medicine to trade for them. Besides, compared to such closed families, Leylin was more willing to join an educational institute or an organisation. Hence, the olive branch the families threw to them, had a lesser appeal to Leylin.

“Come! In any case, we’ve operated as comrades! How about we go and have a drink?”

The leader old geezer suggested.

“Maybe not. I still have other matters to attend to, let’s keep in touch…”

Lancey left in a hurry, seeming like she had an urgent matter.

“I’ll pass as well. It has been a tiring journey. I just want to find a place to have a good sleep!” Leylin rejected him with a smile.

He had only become temporary comrades with these people to hurry along with the journey, so there was not much friendship between him and them. Besides, the crime he had committed was
not light, so it would be better if he rushed to the domain of the light Magi as quickly as possible.
After Leylin, the big bloke, and the other two magicians also rejected the old geezer’s suggestion.
The old geezer shrugged helplessly and looked at Leylin as he left the bar.
Outside the pub were a couple of narrow streets that were pawed with flagstones. It was dark all around, and only the lanterns outside the pub still gave off a couple soft rays of light.
“It’s already dark!!” Leylin checked out his surroundings “It’s probably wise to first find a place to rest…”
[Warning! Warning! High energy force field convergence detected ahead, determined to be a rank 1 offensive spell!]
The moment he stepped out of the bar. Leylin felt his scalp go numb, the blood vessels deep inside his body also started to surge and boil, emitting a sense of foreboding.
At the same time, A.I. Chip also started to project a large amount of red letter of warning.
“This attack is aimed at me!”
Leylin’s mind was working on overdrive. His body turned into a blur as he dodged to the side.
*Boom!*
Suddenly, powerful energy waves exploded in front of Leylin.
Dozens of weapons made of a silvery metal formed a metallic storm, which raged at the area where Leylin had previously stood.
The bar was directly cut in half, and the ceiling was shattered, exposing countless stupefied magicians and the painful groans of those who had hurt by the aftermath.
“Kid, I have found you!”
As the debris settled, upon the ruins stood a midget, who was staring at Leylin’s face with a pair of eyes that were like daggers.
“You are… part of the Lilytell family?!”
Leylin patted the dust off his body, and calmly squared off against the midget. Among the people and powers that he had offended, only that elder of the Lilytell family could have this kind of enmity and capability. In addition, the spell was similar to what Bosain had used. “You are courting death!” Leylin’s actions had clearly enraged his opponent. The midget waved his hand as countless metallic fluids floated up in midair to form weapons such as long spears and giant swords. On the surface, it even radiated the acute radiation of energy forcefield. “Go!” With a point of his finger, the metallic weapons once again chopped down at Leylin. “Latent Fireball!” Leylin chanted his spell at lightning speed. From the shadows a dozen black fireballs emerged and collided against the metallic weapons, causing violent magical explosions. 
[Target’s magic determined as Metallic. Degree of attack: 32 degrees!] The A.I. Chip probed this information, which let Leylin release a breath of relief. “You do have some skills, no wonder you could kill my subordinates and my grandson!” The midget said. “So you are the elder of the Lilytell family and the grandfather of Bosain? Quite without scruples!” Leylin retorted. “This… gentleman, this bar is under the protection of the Dorian family, within this…” From the ruins, the old geezer with the white beard and glasses that was tending the bar finally stepped forward. “I know!” the midget tossed over a piece of metal. “I have met your family’s Buffett a couple of times, this is his keepsake! And there is even a message on it!” “So, it is Master Lilytell, who is here to apprehend a criminal!”
The old geezer threw Leylin a gaze of pity, then hurriedly bowed to the midget. “Since that’s the case, the Dorian family will maintain a neutral stand on this!”

“Huh, kiddo, you’re able to escape well! Did you think the rules here could save you?”

The midget looked at Leylin with an unspeakable expression filled with schadenfreude, as if he wanted to see Leylin’s expression of despair. “The strong dictate the rules, and the weak can only obey. This is the norm of the world”.

The midget spread his hands. “The ignorant fools that dare to provoke my Lilytell family must pay the price in blood!”

Rays after rays of white metallic light appeared from the body of the midget. In just a moment, a silvery metal armor formed on his body.

The metal energy particles in the air kept revolving around the midget, emitting bright and dazzling lights.

“This… this kind of strength! It’s a semi-converted elemental Magus!!”

The large bloke and the leading old geezer who had arrived with Leylin hadn’t left, and they were now looking with shocked gazes at Leylin and the midget as they stood in the middle of the battlefield.

“No wonder he was in such a hurry to leave, he had actually gotten himself in such big trouble, tsk tsk! A semi-converted elemental Magus…”

A hint of schadenfreude flashed by the leading geezer’s eyes. According to him, since the opponent was a semi-converted elemental Magus and Leylin had been caught up to, it spelled certain death for Leylin!

In the Magus world, a semi-converted elemental Magus was a Magus with an elemental essence conversion that was higher than 50%!
This kind of strength was pretty good in the entirety of the south coast. If no chairman of some major academies or the like stepped in, you could basically walk around the south coast uncontested. One could say that even if all the Magi in the whole bar came together, they still wouldn’t be able to stop this one lone midget. What about Leylin? He was only a fledgling Magus, and might not even know what elemental essence conversion was. The leading geezer didn’t even think Leylin would survive this. “Right! There are also these people!” After recklessly leaking some of his power, the midget turned around to look at the geezer and the big bloke. He then said, “Is he one of your acquaintances?” “My Lord! My Lord!” The geezer was now bowing, his head almost touching the ground. “I did not know this person’s past, and I also did not know that he was someone that was wanted by the great Lilytell family! Otherwise, I would have....” *Pa! Pa!* By the time that the geezer had said half of his plead for mercy, Leylin and the midget had charged towards each other in the shadows. The ruins were unceasingly shaking. “He only used you to disrupt Leylin’s attention…” The big bloke, standing at one side, said with a laugh. “What do you know?” the leader old geezer said, as he awkwardly got up. At this moment, Leylin’s body was covered in fine black scales. It gave off a brilliant shine, and his body muscles began to bulge. He kept colliding into the silver-armored silhouette. The surrounding buildings could collapse immediately at the slightest brush. The two men seemed to have morphed into ancient beasts, recklessly displaying the violent strength of their bodies. *Bang!*
The silver-armored silhouette waved his fist, and a mass of liquid metal automatically adhered to it, turning the normal fist into a barbed fist cover. Leylin’s expression didn’t change. His hand emitted a dark red glow, as he fiercely rammed it against the barbed fist. *Boom!!!* The atmosphere continuously exploded, resulting in plumes of dust particles. From the inside of the dust, two figures could be seen flying upside down. *Bang Bang!* Several houses at both sides were knocked over, but the ones who lived there were mostly acolytes. Upon seeing official Magi fight, everyone distanced themselves from the fight, and no one stepped out to discuss the fight. “Sure enough, at an official Magi battle, the key is to be able to use formidable magic in the blink of an eye. The enemy will not give you much time to prepare any magic!” Leylin waved his right hand, which was turning numb. *Crash!* After turning numerous somersaults in the air, out emerged the silver-armoured midget, “I’ve underestimated you, kid!” The midget revealed a sinister smile. “However, no matter what, you’ll have to die here today!” “Oh really?” Leylin showed a smile on the corner of his mouth, “But I think I can still live for a long time!” “Unfortunately, this is just a body!” The midget suddenly said a strange verse and his body started to make rattling and crackling sounds. *Hong hong hong!!!* The midget’s face became twisted, and his body muscles began to swell. In the blink of an eye, he turned into a three-metre tall giant! *Kacha!* *Kacha!*
The giant’s clothes split open, and on the left side of his chest, there was an old man’s face, with silver coloured hair, and metallic ornaments on his face.

“Today, you’re doomed to die here. Your spirit will burn forever!” The old geezer stared at Leylin as he opened his mouth to chant an incantation.
his looks like it was caused by some sort of body possession spell!”

The knowledgeable Leylin was quick in assessing the situation.

“Old geezer, you only have the strength of a semi-converted elemental Magus, and you want to take me down?” Although Leylin looked like he could not have cared less, his right hand had already reached into his belt pouch.

*Boom!*

With a flip of his hands, a couple of potions exploded on the giant’s body. Following the explosion, a cloud of purple flame engulfed the giant’s body and continued to erode it.

“Negative energy flames? Child’s play!” The giant shook his head and widened his mouth to let out what seemed like a vacuum force, sucking all of the flames into his abdomen.

“Now, it’s my turn!” The giant let out a satisfying belch and grinned at Leylin.

In an instant, the giant turned into a silver flash and appeared right in front of Leylin.

The giant’s huge body structure and protruding muscles were faintly oppressing Leylin.

*Whoosh!* The giant’s skin was suffused with a metallic silver tone. It swung its mace-like arms towards Leylin, and Leylin could only raise both his arms up to protect his chest.
*Peng!*  
Like an artillery shell, Leylin’s body was rammed viciously into a wall, causing a large building to collapse in half.  
*Bang!* The rubble rolled apart and revealed Leylin’s figure.  
[Host’s ribs fractured, multiple muscle injuries, immediate medical attention recommended!] The A.I. Chip alerted.  
“Such great strength, it must be at least 15 or greater! On top of the amplification caused by its metallic element”  
Leylin’s eyes flashed blue, “A.I. Chip, input the site information, activate the prediction system!”  
[Site data transmitted, simulating opponent’s information!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Moreover it projected a 3D image for Leylin to look at.  
[According to the opponent’s movement, the next attack will appear at an angle of 38 degrees on the right side. Probability: 98.7%!]  
*Shua!* Just then, the giant charged over again.  
[Most optimal action: Duck to the left at 63 degrees, jump backwards!]  
Leylin’s body twisted and barely avoided the attack of the giant, before hurriedly jumping back.  
*Pu*  
At this moment, many half-metre-long metal spikes were piercing the ground where Leylin had stood before. If Leylin were still standing there, he would have died.  
To outsiders, Leylin was extremely nimble, making inconceivable dodging movements and evasions as he avoided a barrage of attacks.  
“He could actually stall a Magus who has converted half of his elemental essence and also has a reinforced body!”  
The old geezer was drenched in cold sweat. “I still thought…”  
“You thought that he was just a budding Magus that can be bullied
“easily, right?” The huge bloke said. “Count yourself lucky, old man! Managing to survive to this point hasn’t been an easy task!”

On the other side of the battlefield, the giant was visibly agitated because of Leylin’s successful evasive maneuvers. The human face on top of the left side of its chest blustered, ”Damnit! Goddamn pest!”

After which, the giant executed a maneuver.

Using its large hands, it broke apart its own stomach and pulled out what looked like a golden hoop.

“Hoop of Imprisonment!”

A bright white light emitted from within the golden hoop and immediately struck Leylin.

As the white luminescence fell upon him, Leylin was shocked to realize that his body had been weighted down by what seemed like an entire mountain. He could not move a single inch.

“Although this type of magical artifact is only of middle grade, It has been said that even a semi-converted elemental Magus would be shackled for at least a minute by its imprisonment powers!”

Blood continued to flow from the silver giant’s abdomen, and its guts were visibly hanging out. Unperturbed, the giant advanced towards Leylin and started choking his neck. Its eyes danced with gleeful ridicule, “Now, run for me, little thing!”

“It’s over!”

The crowd in the vicinity sighed.

“Being in a deadlock with a semi-converted elemental Magus for such a long time did not change the fact that he is just a budding Magus. On top of that, the opponent had a middle-grade magical artifact!”

The bespectacled, white-bearded, old geezer from the pub lost his earlier look of pity, and with a tinge of regret, he said, “What a shame! He was a gifted Magus”

“Young man, say your last words!”
A cold smile spread across the silver giant’s face.
“The person who should be saying his last words is you!” A wide smile spread across Leylin’s face.
“Fallen Star Pendant, activate!”
A dark red ray projected from Leylin’s chest and spread to his four limbs at a rapid rate. Immediately, Leylin held down the giant’s two hands. His pupils became vertical slits and carried an amber luster as they radiated a mysterious light.
Innate Spell Eyes of Petrification!
*Kacha! Kacha!*
The silver giant’s expression became blank, after which an ash-grey color started to grow from the giant’s eyes. The ash-grey color covered the giant’s face in no time and spread quickly towards its chest and limbs.
“Petrifying magic? Goddamn!” The old geezer’s head on the giant’s chest cried out in an alarmed tone.
Following which, the old geezer ground his teeth, and spat a mouthful of blood on the giant’s body. With a metallic flash, the rate at which the petrifying spell was spreading on the giant’s body slowed down.
“To hell with you!”
Leylin reached out his right hand, and the glow from the Fallen Star Pendant turned into what looked like a long sword, which was then swung down.
*Pu!* On the first swing, the giant’s skull flew up.
On the second swing, Leylin directly dug out the old midget’s visage from the giant’s chest.
*Pa!* The face fell onto the ground. “I will not forgive you!” it shouted.
“It is I who will not forgive you!” With a cold look, Leylin stepped onto the human face.
“Ah…” A depressed voice sounded out, and a puddle of green
blood slowly formed under Leylin’s foot.

……

*Huu Huu*…

A light breeze passed. There was a deathly stillness in the crowd.
“He… he actually managed to slay a semi-converted elemental Magus!”

The old geezer with his hanging mouth opened constantly surveyed the surroundings as if he was looking for something.

Immediately, upon seeing Leylin’s gaze turn towards his direction, the old geezer put on a smile and flattered him by saying, “Master Leylin! Please forgive me for offending you, it was a misunderstanding…”

Looking at the old geezer who had changed his facial complexion, Leylin shook his head and was not prepared to deal with him.

There will be no benefit even if I were to murder him. Leylin concluded that he himself was no homicidal maniac.

He picked up his bundle and the loot from his victory, and hastily left the scene. The surrounding crowd naturally opened up a path for him to exit. Magus or acolyte, nobody dared to make eye contact with Leylin.

“I must leave this place quickly!”

Leylin looked at the rapidly shrinking Andre Town in the distance and muttered to himself.

The midget from earlier was obviously just one of the many clones of the opponent.

This aligned with Leylin’s earlier reports. According to the report, the Lilyltell family’s elders’ powers should have reached an elemental essence conversion rate of 80% or more, which was the minimum requirement for initiating one’s advancement to a level 2 Magus.
Based on an estimation, the midget earlier had, at most, a 50% elemental essence conversion rate. It was not very stable, and the difference between his and an elder’s true strength was too huge. Leylin had been introduced to this type of Magus before. It was not easy for them to create a clone, as a copious amount of time and precious materials were needed. Furthermore, if their clone were destroyed, the Magus would be heavily affected as well. So far, only the clone had chased him up till this point. Leylin guessed that either the opponent was not able to be here physically, or the clone was intentionally placed on the other side of the Grand Canyon to facilitate communication and to do his bidding. Regardless, the next wave of attacks from the Lylttell family would arrive soon. “Speaking of territory, I am still within the boundaries of the dark Magi. Once I reach the domain of the light Magi, even the Lylttell family will not dare to trespass…”

……

Leylin turned his head to take one last look and vanished into the darkness. Months flew by unconsciously. In the span of these months, Leylin hurried along his journey with little rest. He traversed large kingdoms, and finally entered the boundary of the light Magi’s domain. In the south coast, there were two types of Magi. One type of Magus advocated violence, believed in natural selection, and looked up to the enduring dark Magi, while the other type was fond of peace, and revered the scientific research of the light Magi. Within these two factions, there lay many different groups and academies. While there was a lack of cohesion and an abundance
of friction between these groups and academies, they would always stand together as one whenever it was against an enemy.
The extent of the rule of the light Magi lay in the heart of the south coast, while the dark Magi occupied the more desolate outlying areas.
From Leylin’s observations, this sort of distribution of territory looked like a couple of concentric circles. The light Magi occupied the most fertile land in the middle, while the dark Magi occupied everything else around it.
After a prolonged period of travel, Leylin found it hard not to admit that the light Magi territory was generally more prosperous than that of the dark Magi. The commoners in the light Magi territory also enjoyed more peace and stability.
In regards to government administration, the light Magi had to do much more than the dark Magi in order to keep a firm hold on the vast and rich territory
According to the map on the A.I. Chip, Leylin would reach the market place of the light Magi domain, Teljose City, by today.
Leylin had few opportunities to change out of his black robe. He changed out into a clean set of leather armour. The exquisite armour comfortably fit Leylin’s well-proportioned body, and brought about an air of heroic spirit, making him look more masculine.
The light Magi instinctively viewed the dark Magi as their adversaries, so Leylin did not wish to incur any trouble by doing something rash.
Although it might only be a trade centre, there would surely be people, like the dark Magi, who were there to sell their contraband items. Leylin took extra caution and kept a low profile.
Following the horses, Leylin forged on ahead. He observed that the pathways became wider and wider, and the people used a larger variety of transportation devices to aid in their travels.
Upon further observation, he came across a variety of new and odd things.
For example, he observed a female Magus on a winged steed, and an old geezer on a hot air balloon. Hanging from the hot air balloon, there was a banner, which read, “Welcome to Hookety’s miscellaneous goods shop, we have a supply of…”
Furthermore, Leylin even saw a few machines that resembled the components of futuristic vehicles. The machines, which carried a bunch of dwarfs, roared and rumbled loudly as it sped along the road.
amongst those who were travelling on the same route as Leylin, there were not only magicians, but also many regular people. Most of the regular people rode on horse carriages, and they stored large amounts of vegetables and fruits at the back. Even though they might treat magicians with much respect, it was obvious that they held no fear when facing them. It seemed that in the light Magi domain, magicians were often revered, yet were on close terms with the civilians. This situation somewhat puzzled Leylin. In a kingdom where the dark Magi ruled, the mere mention of Magi would give rise to thoughts of terror and bloodshed. Even an acolyte would be enough to scare away a whole town of people.

“By the looks of it, the fact that light Magi and regular humans are able to coexist harmoniously is true!” Leylin glanced at a farmer who had taken off his hat to greet him, and nodded in acknowledgement.

“And…” His blue eyes shone, “There is no trace of radiation in his body. Does this have to do with the purification tower?”

In the area under the light Magi’s rule, white lofty towers were erected a distance away from each other. The towers were able to neutralise the radiation from magicians, which was vital in allowing magicians and regular humans to mingle within this area. As for the area ruled by dark Magi, Leylin had once seen inside the
library at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the designs for the Purification tower. But, it was apparent that the dark Magi were disinclined to build such a thing in their own territories. Besides the problem of the costs of constructing such a tower, Leylin guessed that the dark Magi liked to rule the commoners with a bloody and terrible regime.

As the mount was continuously flying, Leylin felt that his horizons was continuously expanding.

Green waves, almost like the waves of an ocean, was rippling in the breeze, giving off a thick atmosphere.

Here was the Teljose Great Plains which covered an area of several thousands of square kilometers and had several cities with population larger than 100,000. And the Teljose City was located in the middle of this huge plains, and was the central zone of this huge region.

“The vegetation is lush and abundant here!”

Leylin heaved a heartfelt sigh. The closer he got to the Teljose City, the more lushly the crops were growing, as if they were fond of people. There were even wheat plants which were as tall as a man, seeing which Leylin felt moved.

“Isn’t this very amazing? Are you a Magus from outside this region?”

A red pony suddenly drew to a halt besides Leylin’s own saddled mount, and the female Magus sitting atop this red pony, spoke to Leylin.

This female Magus wore a white, Chinese-styled gown, and wore a necklace strung with pearls and precious stones around her neck. Her appearance was quite ordinary, but on her face, she wore a gentle smiling expression.

Leylin had experienced this feeling of tranquility a few times. Although this female Magus radiated the energy waves of a rank 1 Magus, she had very little actual combat experience. There was
only one layer of innate defense spell upon her body, which appeared to suffice for her.

“That’s right, Miss, I come from afar and am a wandering Magus! You can call me Leylin!”

Leylin put on a harmless smile as he introduced himself.

“My name is Jenna, I’m a local Magus of Teljose. You are surprised upon seeing these many crops, aren’t you?”

The female Magus smiled and struck a conversation with Leylin.

“Indeed, you seldom see wheat grow this tall and let’s not forget the quantity… “Leylin’s face suffused with a puzzled expression.

“This is a Magus’ blessing! In a while you can experience it by yourself!”

The female Magus wore an expression of mystery but also expectation.

“I’m looking forward to it!” Leylin smiled briefly.

He could judge with just a look that this woman is like an innocent sheep, lacking the experience of meeting Magi of her peers and extremely curious about everything.

Just like a young lady from a large family, that has wandered off.

Afterwards Leylin stopped observing these matters, as the City of Teljose was appearing in front of Leylin’s eyes.

In Leylin’s line of sight, there first appeared a black dot.

Afterwards, that black dot increased in size as if it turned into a dark cloud, enveloping the whole sky.

Leylin’s jaw dropped, he saw a tall and erect mountain, reaching through the clouds and standing quietly on the plains.

Leylin had seen a lot of large mountains in his past life, but he was sure that he’d never seen a mountain so large that it could cover the skies.

In addition, on that large mountain there were numerous tightly packed buildings and black dots moving around on the many layers on that mountain.
At the foot of the mountain, a large tall city wall was erected in a circular fashion. A visual estimate gave its height at a couple of dozen meters and that it was entirely made out of grey granite. It looked extremely impressive.

At the giant peak of the mountain, there were layers of luxuriant snow. Smoke was continuously emitted from the peak, as if it was going to erupt at any given moment.

“An active volcano! Teljose City is erected on an active volcano!” Leylin gasped.

“Correct! Keep on looking around!”

The Magus Jenna pointed towards the opening of the volcano with a laugh.

Boom!

Countless black smokes were rising, the whole volcano was coming to life. Just like a mythical giant laughing sadistically at the sky.

A giant pillar of smoke rushed into the sky, coloring part of the sky black.

“Strange, why were there no tremors?”

Leylin came to sudden realization, “this must be the work of the Magi of Teljose City?”

“Correct, continue to look!” Jenna pointed towards the black clouds, “Magus’ blessing will soon descend!”

Rumble!

A soft rain was arising, tiny droplets of black rain were falling through the breeze.

Back rain fell on the ground, turning the whole ground ashen grey.

Soon a couple of farmers ran out from the fields, kneeled in front of Leylin, Jenna and other Magi and kowtowed respectfully as they said, “We thank our lords, the Magi, for our harvest!”

“This is volcanic ash?!”

Leylin’s body started to emit grey light, it enveloped the giant steed
and kept the black rain on the outside. He extended his right hand to collect a drop of grey rain drop and started to examine it.
“Looks like some artificial things have been added to it, it resembles nitrogen-based fertilizer!”
Volcanic ash was naturally nutrient-rich, which was conducive for plant growth. Coupled with some other things the magicians had added, it was no wonder crops here had an astonishing form and output.
“That’s right, the Magi control the Teljose Volcano’s eruption. They transport and evenly distribute the volcanic ash across the plains and fertilize the land. As for resources such as geothermal energy, the Magi will collect them and convert them into a source of power for Teljose City. Hence, the alternate name for Teljose City that I love even more, Nightless City!”
Jenna explained
“….. This technology is simply amazing!” Leylin murmured.
Teljose Volcano, as compared to the biggest volcano Leylin saw before his reincarnation, was much broader. To control such a big live volcano, they needed constant maintenance and magic spell formations, which exceeded what Leylin could have thought of.
Furthermore, to directly control a volcano as a power source and a place to live… This kind of design and boldness left Leylin feeling admiration towards these Magi.
“But, please forgive my bluntness, I’ve once travelled to the eastern region. The magicians there don’t seem to spare a thought for the normal people…”
Leylin properly expressed his curiosity.
“Yes, magicians are a group of intellectual people. They did this because it was for their benefit.” Jenna nodded her head. “The way we see it, the normal people that are alive are also a type of resource. Besides, as long as there is sufficient people, they can serve us at all times, procuring resources, and in addition, sow our
seeds and producing acolytes of excellent quality, increasing new bloods…”
“Hence, in the middle of our light Magi region, not only were there Magi who specialised in solidification innate spells to be used for helping to prevent all kinds of natural disasters, there’s even a full-time Magus in charge of farming land and increasing harvest yield…”
“This… this really is…”
Leylin wore a shocked expression while secretly releasing a breath of relief.
Although Jenna seemed pure and straightforward, she still considered herself superior to regular humans, similar to how the dark Magi thought.
The one difference they had was in their system.
Akin to the herding of sheep, dark Magi tended to operate in a more boorish manner and would reap the harvest at irregular intervals. In comparison, light Magi adopted a micro-management style, taking special care of each and every sheep.
But they both had the same purpose, to obtain the needed materials from regular humans.
Just based on this process, Leylin felt that the regular humans in the light Magi region had a more comfortable life, compared to those living in Poolfield Kingdom.
However, although Leylin could lament over the hardships faced by the regular humans, it did not mean that he thought of reducing the power and authority that the Magi held; it was foolish to advocate an ideal of achieving equality between all humans.
Not mentioning the mysteries and strength of the Magus world, even Leylin himself only believed in one truth, that one’s status would determine one’s course of action.
Leylin himself was a Magus and fully supported the privileges and political power that all Magi had. As for those who had delusions
of overthrowing the Magi in power, they would be killed immediately.
As part of a higher tier in the social pyramid, it was only natural to consciously defend the rights and privileges of that social class. Naturally, there were also the strange ones who chose to betray their peer’s interests, and would eventually be abandoned by their own peers.
Leylin concluded that: unless there were any signs of the Magi falling out of power, he would definitely not betray his peers.
“Very surprising, isn’t it?”
Jenna laughed, “Seems like you’ve always been travelling around the dark Magi region. But once you’ve arrived at the Nightless City, you’ll need to learn to acclimatize, and adapt to the new rules…”
Jenna’s words implied that she had discovered Leylin’s true identity.
But Leylin only picked up his eyebrow and didn’t seem to care in the slightest.
Teljose City, or reputed for being a Nightless City, on one hand was the accumulation of the light Magi’s hard work, and on the other hand was supported by the dark Magi. If the dark Magi was totally removed, then Nightless City’s total trades would immediately fall by more than half! No trade center would reject a dark Magi member from joining them.
From what Leylin gathered, dark Magi from all over the continent disguised themselves in order to enter Nightless City each day. Their aim was to trade items, amongst other activities.
The guards of the city turned a blind eye to their actions.
It could be said that Nightless City’s prosperity was largely dependent on the dark Magi.
Within the city, as long as dark Magi did not intentionally reveal their identity, light Magi would not bother about them.
Hence, Leylin simply smiled and told Jenna, “I came to the Teljose Plains to seek a peaceful way of life. I’m willing to abide by the rules here.”
“Nightless City is a fertile and beautiful city. I’m sure you’ll like it here!” Jenna laughed and said.
Leylin made small talk with Jenna and managed to gather quite a lot of exclusive information about the city.
Leylin had seen a glimpse of Volcano City in the afternoon, but it was only after the sky dimmed that he reached the gate.
At the moment, there were rows of people queueing up in front of the gates of the city.
The numerous heads seemed like ants as they were separated into different groups and entered various entrances.
Leylin noticed that beside the many small doors, there were also
several huge passages. The gates to the city itself were over ten metres high, and the passageways were closed. “These doors are for giants and large creatures, so they aren’t usually open!” Jenna explained at the side. “As for us, we are official Magi, so we are able to enter by the prestigious pass!” Jenna explained as she led Leylin to a smaller door which was quieter. As for the doors on both sides, there were even a dozen guards with the strength of level 3 acolytes, their bodies radiating the energy waves of their magic artifacts. “Respected Lords, may I ask if it is a temporary or permanent lodging…” After seeing Leylin and Jenna, these dozen acolytes immediately bowed and greeted them. Leylin noticed that they held a circular item that was emitting the glow of a magic spell, in their hands. Looking at the runes on the surface, it should be the runes formation to detect energy waves. Jenna immediately raised her right hand and revealed a white ring on her finger. The ancient ring had a silver body with detailed inscriptions on the surface, constantly emitting bits and pieces of light. “So it’s a Lord who has a permanent residence. Please enter!” The acolytes respectfully made way. “It’s my first time here. Are there any procedures I need to follow?” Leylin asked the acolyte from before. “Yes. For magicians who enter for the first time, we have a simple procedure. You can pay 200 magic crystals and obtain permanent residence, or spend 10 magic crystals and stay in Nightless City for a month!” “Handle a permanent residence for me!” Leylin immediately tossed out two high-grade magic crystals.
“Of course. Please wait a moment…” The acolyte quickly produced a piece of parchment and scribbled something on it. “May I have your name?”
“Leylin Farlier!” This was the light Magi’s territory and the Lilytell Family’s influence did not extend to this area. Leylin decided to use his real name.
“Here is your token. Please keep it well!”
The whole process was surprisingly straightforward. The acolyte merely asked for Leylin’s name, noted it down, and then passed him a silver ring.
“This is a token you will need to enter the city. Please keep it safe! Also, please do not linger on the streets after 12am. If not, the law enforcement group will apprehend you!”
The acolyte reminded him as he bowed.
Leylin nodded in understanding before leaving with Jenna, who had been waiting at the side.
“Jenna, I’ve been waiting for you!” Leylin went through a passage that was around five or six metres deep, and before he even had the chance to look around the city, he heard a hoarse voice. A burly blonde man who had been standing at the door for some time immediately rushed forward with a worried expression.
“Uncle Manla!” Jenna put on a coquettish expression and immediately embraced the large man. “Jenna missed you!”
“Haha…Me too!” The burly man smiled and looked at Leylin beside her.
“This fellow reeks of blood, it seems like he’s from the eastern marshes!”
The murderous aura and strong scent of blood from Leylin’s body immediately caused the man to raise his guard against Leylin. He positioned himself between Leylin and Jenna.
“This is…” The burly man’s glared at him, as if ready to make a move the moment he misspoke.
“This is Leylin, someone I met along the way!” Jenna hung on to Manla’s arm.  
“He’s a wandering Magus who is planning to stay in Nightless City!”
“Really? This is a city that advocates peace and harmony, so I hope you’ll enjoy your stay here. Here is a complete map of the city!”
The burly man showed him a kind smile and passed the map to Leylin. It was very obvious that he did not want Leylin to travel together with Jenna.
“Many thanks!” Leylin grinned brightly.
He could understand where the man was coming from. If he were a parent who saw his child mixing with a suspicious person, he would have the same reaction.
“It was great fun travelling with you! I’ll see you again, milady!” Leylin turned to Jenna with a smile and gave a gentleman’s bow, and Jenna answered with a bashful expression.
Having received the map, Leylin took a quick look at it and entered the trade centre of the south coast, also known as the Teljose Volcano City, where the night was as bright as day.
The burly man waited till Leylin was completely gone before turning to the female Magus, a stern expression on his face.
“Jenna, from what I know, you don’t usually get this close with strangers?”
The large man put on a puzzled expression.
“I don’t know why, but I have some premonition that makes me want to get closer to him…” Jenna’s eyes seemed to cloud over.
“Or perhaps, this is what fate decreed!”
“That seems plausible!” The man scratched his head. “The high-grade meditation technique that you’re cultivating in may not be very powerful, but at times, it is able to accurately pinpoint a trace of the future. Since that Magus gives you such a peculiar feeling, do you need me to send someone to check out…”
“Leave it! I have a feeling that if we do that, it’ll definitely incur his displeasure.”
Jenna’s eyes suddenly turned completely white, with no hints of any other colour.
“Twice! You actually made two prophecies about him!”
The burly man looked shocked. “That Magus’ fate is sure to be intertwined with yours!”
“Not me, but the whole of the south coast!”
The female Magus’ eyes regained their colour, cold sweat pouring down her face. She looked as if all of her energy had been wrenched from her.
“Quick, send me back to grandmother’s place!”
Jenna spat out and immediately fainted.
“Jenna! Jenna!” The expression on the burly man’s face was grim as he held her in his arms and quickly left the area…
Leylin, however, was completely oblivious to the situation. He was currently strolling through the streets of the Nightless City.
The moment he entered, Leylin’s first impression was People! A sea of people! Numerous heads were gathered close to each other, forming a sea of blackness. There were also various stores, as well as stands that were messily displayed. The constant haggling and bawling noises attacked the ears.
Many Magi and acolytes who were dressed in different coloured clothing were arguing aggressively with the vendors.
This almost reminded Leylin of the markets in his previous world. However, the different races that he saw within the masses brought him back to the present.
There was the scaly marine race, the sub-humans with fur and marks all over their bodies, the smaller version of giants who were over five meters tall, as well as the little green people who had pairs of transparent wings on their backs, dancing gracefully in the air.
Many lifeforms from the Magus world were communicating with each other, their speech slipping back to parts of their own languages.

Among the humans, Leylin even saw several regular humans who had absolutely no energy waves radiating from them, and yet they were still confidently trading items on the street out in the open.

“My Lord, is it your first time in Nightless City?”

Leylin’s intrigued expression naturally attracted the attention of many people. A man who was so skinny that he was like a stick approached Leylin as he bowed, wearing a flattering expression on his face.

“Do you need a tour guide? My fee is definitely the lowest. Moreover, my home is within Nightless City, so I am familiar with every nook and cranny in this place!”

“Are you the ‘ears’ of this city?”

Leylin inquired to clarify.

“Of course. If there is anything that you want to know, I could also make some inquiries…”

“What is your name?” Leylin asked.

“Sean! My Lord, you can call me Sean.” The thin man was delighted as this situation meant it was possible to seal the deal.

“Good. I wish to stay here for an extended period of time. Take me to a place where I can rent some lodgings. It must have all the facilities!”

“If you wish to stay here for long, renting an apartment which is in the heart of Nightless City would be the most worthwhile!” Sean said quickly without needing to think.

As if fearing that Leylin did not understand, Sean quickly went on, “The heart of the city is controlled by several large factions that back Nightless City. There are different types of apartments for sale, and they are generally quite safe and convenient…”

“Very well, let’s go there!”
Leylin nodded his head, and Sean hurriedly led the way with a gleeful expression. After going through the throng of people and walking for about half an hour, Sean brought Leylin to a small door. “Nightless City has five zones, and the outermost zone is meant for regular people and acolytes to live in. Its organisation is the most chaotic, and as long as one is in possession of a token, he or she can enter and leave the city at will.” “The second zone is reserved for those who have done the paperwork to stay here permanently. Of course, Official Magi are allowed to stay here too!” Sean brought Leylin to the queue in front of the door and explained further. “As for the third and fourth zone, they are the residences of the official Magi. There is also a trade area specifically catered to the official Magi erected within the zone.” “Lastly, we have the fifth zone, where various powers have established their branches there. Usually, they are not open to the public and if you are not a member, you are not allowed to enter!” Sean gave Leylin a clear explanation.
The queue progressed quickly, and within a few minutes, it was Leylin’s turn.
Leylin produced the ring he had recently acquired, and showed it to the guard, who respectfully stepped aside to allow him to pass.
The second zone was a lot bigger than the first, and the shops were arranged in an organised manner, unlike the situation in the first zone.
*Thud Thud *
His leather shoes thudded as they descended upon the marble floor. With Sean’s guidance, Leylin arrived at the centre of the second zone.
What was known as the communal centre was situated at the middle of the second zone. It was a humongous building that, based on its outward appearance, looked like a person’s inverted palm pressed to the ground.
Each of those fingers was a wide entrance.
Magicians formed long lines, looking like ants as they constantly went through the entrances.
“This is where the Nightless City’s internal affairs are conducted. These includes the renting of lodgings, the applications for store licenses, the issuing of missions, and so on.”
Sean brought Leylin into the passageway on the forefinger.
“This is the second passage that is specially catered for the Magi
who wish to rent lodgings. Of course, we also provide property agents, though the price will be higher and the rentals may not be of the best quality…”
“Sir, would you like to rent a lodging? Come to Old Hork’s place! Our facilities are complete, and there are even snake and fox girls who will serve you!”
“No! Come to our side. Our prices are the most reasonable here, and we’re even willing to gift you ten regular human servants.”
The moment Leylin entered, he attracted the attentions of multiple agents, who all looked ready to gobble him down.
“He’s my customer! Get out of the way! Move!”
Sean guided Leylin to a passageway nearby, pushing away the overzealous hands reaching for him.
Within the passage was a spiral staircase. When they got to the second level, Leylin suddenly realised how quiet his surroundings were.
As they passed through a door frame that read “Hall No. 762,” Leylin saw a large domed hall.
On the ceiling, there was a huge crystal chandelier from which multicoloured rays of light bounced off, casting a phantom image on the ground.
To the side of the domed hall, there were many counters, and a few seats meant for people to wait in. A few magicians were already seated, their eyes glazed over as if they were about to fall asleep.
On the right wall, there was also a black screen. There were words in red on it which were constantly being refreshed.
“Apartment #332, West Hall Street West, small sized, costs 6700 magic crystals!”
“Apartment #893, Flamingo Street, of medium size, costs 85000 magic crystals!”
“These lodgings are all second-hand. The prices here are considerably cheaper, and many people wait here, hoping they
might be lucky enough to get a good price…” Seeing the look of interest on Leylin’s face, he launched into an explanation. Leylin was speechless, the thought of a real estate agency from his past life suddenly came to his mind.

“If you wish to rent an apartment, you can proceed to counters 1 to 15. Would you like me to queue on your behalf?”

“Fine,” Leylin nodded.

Even though he had quite a sum at hand, he was unwilling to splurge on an apartment so quickly, when he had not yet made sense of the situation in Nightless City.

Seeing all of these ridiculously high prices made Leylin think of the acolytes back in the academy who were so desperate for magic crystals that they wished a magic crystal was worth twice its actual value. The image made him want to cry and laugh at the same time.

There were many counters in the hall. After Sean left to join a queue, Leylin found himself a seat and began to flip through one of the magazines left on a table.

“Rose Sanctuary and Fresh Blood White Bones are currently in a conflict. They are currently gathered in Margaret City, and the number of casualties is unknown…”

“It has been reported that magicians have found the culprit that caused the tsunami in the Eastern Sea- an Ancient Whale. Currently, Ennea Ivory Ring Tower is holding an emergency meeting to discuss countermeasures…”

“Looking to purchase large quantities of purified gems. Name your price.”

There was plenty of news in the magazine, though they seemed outdated. Furthermore, the majority of the content was on advertisements, sponsorships and the like.

“Sir, it’s your turn now!”

Sean’s voice travelled over. Leylin put down the magazine, heading to the 13th counter where Sean was standing.
“Welcome! How may I help you?”
Behind the counter was an adorable girl with a professional smile on her face, who was wearing something that was similar to lace. She seemed quite young, and Leylin guessed that she was, at most, eighteen or nineteen years old.
Leylin’s gaze shifted to the back of the counter, where he caught a glimpse of the white ball behind the maiden’s shapely backside.
“Of all the half beasts, someone who’s half-rabbit?” Leylin chuckled inwardly, not expecting the centre to actually hire a rabbit maiden.
“I wish to rent a house. The facilities must be complete, and it is best if it includes a laboratory, and the defensive spell formation has to be of at least this standard…”
Leylin stated his requirements.
“Please wait for a moment…” The rabbit maiden quickly flipped through the stack of parchments in front of her, closing her eyes from time to time while caressing a crystal ball with a metal base, as if she was communicating with someone.
“We have many houses that fit your requirements, but in order to rent a lodging in Nightless City, we require you to show evidence of… Ah! My lord! My sincerest apologies!”
Upon seeing the silver ring that Leylin revealed, the rabbit maiden’s previously absent-minded expression completely changed. She stood and bowed, showing her charming body and sturdy thighs, and the rabbit’s tail behind her backside occasionally appearing. It gave one the urge to reach forward and grab hold of it. “So it was an official Magi! Please excuse Bayjess’ rude behaviour!”
“It’s fine. Tell me about the houses!”
Leylin withdrew his right hand.
“For an official Magus of such high esteem, we strongly recommend apartments that are in the third zone or above. There is
a total of thirteen empty houses that meet your requirements…”
As she spoke, she continued to rub the surface of the blue crystal ball.
Rainbow coloured lights converged in front of Leylin and the multicoloured streaks formed many three-dimensional figures.
From the looks of it, it was a map of Nightless City, on which there were thirteen bright spots.
“All information about the apartments are on it, and there are also figures that allow you to view the structures of the lodgings.”
Leylin took a quick look. All of the apartments were in the second zone or above, and the total area of the land was rather large. They were at least medium sized villas that included gardens and other entertainment facilities.
Nightless City was built on a mountain, and the higher up one went, the more valuable every inch became. In a place like this, the privileges and extravagant lifestyle that magicians were entitled to were especially evident from the area of land they had access to.
Leylin raised his hand and pressed on the villa that he was interested in.
*Ding!*
With a flash of white light, the model was magnified, and a three-dimensional figure was displayed in front of him.
“Medium-sized villa’s location: Nightless City Zone 3, Large Whale Street #56. It includes a laboratory, a defensive spell formation, a negative energy reaction pool…”
Beside the 3D figure, there was also a white frame that displayed more information about the villa.
“While this technology is based on magic, it’s just too similar to how it was in my past life…”
Leylin suddenly sighed.
While the foundations of the two worlds were extremely different, one being science, and the other being magic, it somehow made
Leylin feel a little nostalgic.
“I’ll take this one. How much is the rent?”
Leylin pointed to one of the models and asked the rabbit maiden.
“Sir, the rent for this villa is a thousand magic crystals per month…” She peeked at Leylin, looking as if she wanted to say something, and eventually made her mind. “If you join any one of the powers backing Nightless City, you’ll be gifted a villa, and…”
“Alright. Which family do you come from?
Leylin was very much aware that these employees were part of the powers behind Nightless City, and it was naturally their job to attract talents. They were sure to receive attractive rewards for their work if they were successful.
“The Mordeken family! I come from the Mordeken Family!” The rabbit maiden lowered her collar and revealed a brand in the shape of a palm under her shoulder.
The shape of the palm was a little strange. Instead of having five fingers, as was the norm, there were actually six.
The sides of the brand were a little charred and twisted. From the looks of it, a branding iron had been used directly on her skin in the past. The contrast between that and the rabbit maiden’s delicate skin gave rise to an abnormal sense of beauty.
“I understand! If there’s anything I need in the future, I’ll consider the Mordeken family first!”
Leylin’s expression remained the same, seemingly unmoved by her attempts. Sean, on the other hand, was salivating at the offer.
“Here are the magic crystals. I’ll be renting it for a year.” Leylin threw a small bag of magic crystals towards the back of the counter.
After being rejected, the rabbit maiden’s expression slightly darkened, but she immediately forced a smile.
Even though she wasn’t able to convince an official Magus to join the family, she would still receive some rewards from this
The rabbit maiden asked for the ring on Leylin’s finger, and placed it in a device behind her, within which an exotic symbol was inscribed. She then respectfully returned it to Leylin. “The pattern of the villa’s defensive spell formation has already been marked onto your ring. You may enter the villa using the ring, and also make changes to the spell formation…” Following which, the rabbit maiden passed Leylin a bunch of keys and a document. “Here are the keys to the rooms in the villa, as well as some important information. I hope you have a pleasant stay there!” Leylin retrieved the items and walked out of the hall with Sean. “He actually spent over ten thousand magic crystals in one go…” Sean still had a look of disbelief on his face. Although he had heard of how certain magicians were able to spend unimaginable amounts of wealth, being in actual contact with someone who had the means to do so was still an entirely different feeling. “Having met such a magnanimous customer, my rewards will definitely not be meagre. I might even be able to get a generous tip as well…” Sean began to let his imagination run wild. “Bring me to the villa and these will be yours!” Leylin smiled, tossing a few magic crystals that were glistening temptingly. “Of course! Your wish is my command!” Sean’s eyes brightened, and he quickly ran to the front. “Please follow me! There’s not one place in Nightless City that I, Sean, am not aware of!”
149 - Trifling Issues

Rumble!

Crystal clear spring water continuously flowed from a white canteen. Under the white canteen was a half-nude marble statue. The statue was depicting a poised, long-haired maiden. In her eyes, there was an expression of indolence and perplexity. One hand was tugging on the skirt on her lower body, and the other hand was holding a white canteen upside down.

The spring water gathered below, forming a small pond. Different colored pebbles and fishes in the pool were reflecting the light.

Next to the pond were a small garden. Inside the garden were different coloured flowers of unknown names. Different fragrances were mixed together, but it didn’t feel jumbled; instead it provided a unique scent that made one feel refreshed.

Leylin leisurely walked around the garden before returning to the villa.

This was the new villa that he had recently rented for a year. The address was: Nightless City Zone 3, Large Whale Street #56.

There were very strict regulations for each of the three zones. The zones above the third one were only for official Magi and trade, with the exception of some specialised servants that were permitted to pass through.

This villa had a huge area, and its magic defenses against spells were also strong. According to Leylin, a level 3 acolyte, or even an
official Magus, would have no chances of entering. If they wanted to destroy this place, it would require a huge amount of effort from them.

However, Leylin still wanted to add some modifications and more defensive spell formations to this place. Regarding the spell formations that the Nightless City had, Leylin didn’t trust them enough.

In the area around Leylin’s villa, there was another Magi. Previously, there was even a red haired old man who waved to Leylin. He seemed quite friendly.

*Click!* They sound of a copper key entering the lock could be heard, followed by the sound of a door opening with a squeak. With his hands clasped behind his back, Leylin leisurely strolled around his villa. This villa had 3 floors, two of them being above ground, and also a basement.

The apparatuses in the lab were very complete, and the furniture and other things were up to date, making Leylin feel that he had truly received his money’s worth.

The bedroom was on the second floor and even had an open balcony. Leylin stood on the balcony and observed the distant scenery. The sun was setting; the dark curtain of night gradually enveloping the surroundings.

*Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!* By the side of the road, one lantern after another was being lit, extending far into the distance. The little spots of light had an effect as they lit together, finally forming a huge body of light. A bright, but not blinding, light flooded the entirety of the Nightless City.
“No wonder that Teljose City was referred to as the Nightless City!” Leylin exclaimed.
While he was used to this kind of setting in his previous life, the Magus world was different. A huge amount of energy was needed to be able to support this many lights, and perhaps only the volcano’s never-ending geothermal energy could barely support the city’s needs.

*Ding!*
Something like an incandescent light bulb lit up inside Leylin’s room.

“All of this energy, this overbearing splendor, is provided by the communal centre free of charge!” Leylin shook his head and commanded, “A.I. Chip scan the whole villa, and in addition, try to modify the defensive spell formations!”
Following Leylin’s command, a spot of glittering and sparkling blue light flashed in his eyes.

[Beep! The overall layout of the villa has been recorded, no tracking spells have been detected!]
The response from the A.I. Chip came after a very short amount of time.

[According to the Host’s request, modifying the spell formation of the entire villa allows an optimization of 13%…]
Afterwards, the A.I. Chip projected the places where the spell formation needed to be altered in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“Spell formations requires extreme fine-tuning, and once they are altered, even the places where they were previously concealed will be exposed…”
With a confident smile, Leylin brought out some materials from his bag in order to alter the villa’s spell formations.
By the time that Leylin had hurriedly finished his work, it was already midnight.
Leylin then placed a warning spell outside his bedroom, before
reclining on his soft bed.
The effort of constantly running while covering his back to prevent assassination attempts from the Lilytell Family had caused Leylin to be mentally exhausted.
Now that he had finally reached his destination, even the Lilytell family couldn’t do anything inside the Nightless City. Leylin felt like a huge mountain had been lifted from his shoulders, allowing him to relax completely.
“Speaking of which, I only have these things left ever since I left the academy…”
Leylin opened the package and emptied its contents onto the bed. A silver colored metallic hoop, a couple of separately packaged flowers and such, and an assortment of different materials and magic crystals appeared in front of Leylin.
First, Leylin brought out the metallic hoop. This was the spoil of his fight against the clone. It was a counterfeit Hoop of Imprisonment recovered from the body of the Lilytell elder’s clone. Even if it was a counterfeit, this magic artifact was still a middle-grade artifact. At that time, if it wasn’t for the fact that Leylin had activated his Fallen Star Pendant, he might not have been able to escape the confinement of this magic artifact.
According to the A.I. Chip, there were no hidden traps, so Leylin took it for his own use. He was planning to later alter it, or just simply sell it.
Ever since Leylin’s advancement, the A.I. Chip also received a huge upgrade.
A lot of things that he couldn’t discern back when he was an acolyte were now laid bare before him.
That Lilytell elder was simply at the level of a rank 1 Magus, and couldn’t hide anything from Leylin.
“Also, these ingredients need to be used soon. I’ve kept them for too long, and their medicinal properties are decreasing…”
Leylin looked at the several remaining stalks of plants and flowers which were under some preservation spells. This was his loot from the Dylan Gardens. Previously, he had harvested them in a hurry, so their current appearance was not too pretty. Afterwards, he had been on the run, so he could not find much time to add more layers of preservation and maintenance spells. Hence, they currently were in a rather withered and dried up state.

A black diary lay quietly at the side. It was the Book of Giant Serpent, and even now Leylin had to flip through it every once in a while. Although he had recorded everything with the A.I. Chip, Leylin still felt that the methods of the great Magus Serholm did not just end with the writings. Moreover, the materials used to make the Book of Giant Serpent were extremely strange. The amount of information it could store was alarming, which gave Leylin the urge to conduct more research on it.

What was left was the Fallen Star Pendant hanging on Leylin’s neck, as well as some magic crystals and some other miscellaneous items. Everything that was present, if added together, was all of what Leylin had.

“A rank 1 Warlock wishing to advance must never lack in the meditation and bloodlines. If not, just based on hard work, it is simply too difficult. One requires the aid of resources!” High-grade meditation technique required precious resources as a complement and they were extremely precious. Some even existed only back in ancient times, and they have been extinct by now.

Leylin summed up his wealth and realised that he would at most lead a comfortable life in Nightless City. If he thought of relying on what he currently had to obtain enough resources to advance into a
rank 2 Warlock, it was no difference from a pipe dream. Subconsciously, he looked at his current stats.


Every day, Leylin did not neglect his cultivation in a high-grade meditation technique. The Kemoyin’s Pupil was indeed a well-suited meditation technique for his bloodline. Leylin could feel that his spiritual force was growing at a steady pace daily.

As for the progress of the elemental essence conversion, it was not that satisfying.

“As according to the records of the meditation technique, the conversion progress is more difficult the higher it is. The stages of a semi-converted elemental Magus of 50% and a Magus with an elemental essence conversion of 80% especially are two bottlenecks. I wonder how many Magi had been obstructed from advancement because of this!”

Leylin’s face was somewhat solemn, “Right now my spiritual force could be increased with a high-grade meditation technique, and my bloodline is extremely pure. These two aspects do not require further planning for now. The only thing holding me back right now is the progress of the elemental essence conversion!”

The breakthrough of a high-grade meditation technique will often lead a Magus to breakthrough automatically. Right now Leylin had 3 levels of the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique, so his spiritual force progress would just be a breeze.

As for the aspect of bloodlines, he had obtained the purified blood of an ancient creature, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. This creature, in its mature stages, could reach the level of a rank 4 Magus, a Morning Star Magus.
Right now Leylin was just a rank 1 Warlock, and with respect to the concentration of his bloodline, it could most likely surpass a pre-pubescent Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Every day, he could feel the strength of the bloodline affecting his body. According to Leylin’s estimations, his second transition stage ever since obtaining the bloodline was soon approaching. These two aspects left Leylin extremely satisfied. The one thing slowing down his progress was the elemental essence conversion. The elemental essence conversion progress seemed to have something to do with the aptitude of a Magus’ soul. As for Leylin, he only had a third-grade aptitude, which was a common, middle tiered aptitude.  The higher the aptitude of a soul, the faster the conversion would naturally become. People like Leylin could only slowly improve through the passing of time.  Leylin was, however, on the wanted list of a Magus family, so naturally, he did not want such a slow progress. Apart from relying on time to progress, some precious ingredients could also hasten the progress of the elemental essence conversion. However, Leylin looked at the ingredients on his bed. “The Book of Giant Serpent must never be sold! The Fallen Star Pendant and Hoop of Imprisonment are rather handy for me at this stage, and are also magic artifacts which I’m lacking, so I cannot sell them too.” “The only choice left are these plants and the amassed magic crystals from before!” Leylin was somewhat frustrated. These items would at the most exchange for only a few of the resources he needed. His current situation was akin to pouring a cup of water on a burning cart of firewood. Right now, he was reminiscing about the Dylan Gardens. That was a secret plane left behind by a rank 4 Warlock. Just the
harvest each year was worth a million magic crystals! With it, Leylin would not have to worry about the resources needed to advance to a rank 2 Warlock.

It was a pity, however, that the Dylan Gardens was destroyed by a self-destruct formation left by the great Magus Serholm. “Perhaps, he did not wish for his inheritor to obtain too many items, for fear of losing the will for improvement!” Leylin surmised.
After hastily keeping the items on his bed, Leylin performed his routine meditation, then fell into a slumber. It was a very deep sleep. When he finally woke up, it was already midday of the next day.

Leylin thought for a while, dressed up in a comfortable gown, and headed into the wilderness.

Along the path between the villas, Leylin followed the map he had obtained the day before, and walked towards the fourth level of the Nightless City.

“Good day sir!”

The red-headed old geezer, whom he met yesterday, was pruning his lawn. Upon seeing Leylin approach, he smiled and greeted Leylin.

“Hello!” Leylin felt a strong spiritual force propagating from within the old red-headed geezer’s body. It did not feel like that of a budding Magus but that of someone who had halted in rank for a long time, and had accumulated a lot of essence.

Furthermore, looking at the traces of energy particles hovering around the old geezer, the A.I. Chip had estimated that he was at least a semi-converted elemental Magus.

The old geezer’s power level was similar to that of the clone from the Lilytell family that had been hunting Leylin.

“I wonder, what is his true battle prowess?”

The light Magi were better in the matters of theory and research.

150 - Crystals
Leylin did not get the slightest feeling of similarity of a dark Magus from the old geezer. Obviously, he was a light Magus. Being in a higher state does not necessarily mean that the fighting capabilities are high too. This was proved by the fact that despite having an elemental conversion of only 1%, Leylin managed to barely defeat a semi converted elemental Magus.

“My name is Crew. It has been a long time since any new neighbours have moved in!”

The old geezer smiled and placed his shears on the ground. From the looks of it, he was very excited to see Leylin.

“I am Leylin, and I have just arrived at Nightless City. It is a tranquil city and I love it here!”

Leylin bowed slightly as a sign of respect.

From the old geezer’s body, Leylin felt a sense of peace. The old geezer also had a heavy scent of books and scrolls, and had the temperament of a scholar.

In the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, all of the instructors brought about an air of intractable chill. The acolytes were afraid of them.

“Haha…you made a good choice!”

Upon hearing Leylin’s words, the old geezer’s wrinkly face creased with laughter.

“Where are you headed?” The old geezer sat down on a stool in the gardens. “Would you like to drink some red tea with an old geezer?”

“No thanks, I would like to have a stroll in the city and take a look at the trading district!”

Leylin rejected the old geezer’s suggestion with a smile on his face and left the area.

“This is really a peaceful city, maybe I should stay here for awhile!”

Leylin wandered around the streets.

The third zone of the Nightless City was very different from the first two zones, especially the Magi’s quarters. All of the villas were
widely spaced, and they were adorned with eye-catching symbols. Besides, the third zone’s city walls were constructed using meteorites. The meteorites were not only visually attractive, but were also capable of absorbing loose energy and radiation. According to estimations from the A.I. Chip, the city walls exceeded an amount of two million magic crystals to construct. It left Leylin speechless.

There were significantly less people in the third zone. Occasionally, official Magi and their attendants could be spotted. Leylin even spotted a few bodies that were intertwined with the energy of vengeful spirits and fresh blood. Obviously, Leylin was spotted by the others as well. It was easy for those of the same kind to spot each other.

However, due to the rules of the Nightless City, and perhaps for other reasons as well, Leylin and the other dark Magi only exchanged looks from the distance, and left their positions in haste.

Leylin reached the fourth zone of the city after passing through a heavily guarded gate.

Many different types of stores dotted the vicinity. Occasionally, Magi could be spotted entering and exiting the stores. The Magi that passed through the area had energy levels of official Magi and above. Not a single acolyte was seen.

“From the looks of it, this is the trading district set up for official Magi!”

Leylin was very pleased. The light Magi region was the trade center of the south coast, and Nightless City was one of the biggest cities within it. Congregated in here was some of the best the south coast had to offer. With an endless amount of resources available, it would definitely satisfy his needs.

Leylin looked around at the various store signs as he walked along the path towards the center.
Leylin was bewildered by the large variety of shops available. However, he followed the information obtained yesterday, and made a beeline straight towards the fourth zone’s central plaza. Smack dab in the middle of the district packed full of stores was a large open plaza. Eighteen pillars that were as thick as the human skull were erected around it. Occasionally, there were Magi on the plaza using their hands to feel the pillars with their eyes shut. It was as if they were interacting with something. Some of the Magi that looked directionless and lost gained a sense of purpose in their movements after interacting with the pillars. They hurried along their way out of the market or towards a certain shop.

“We have reached the trade plaza!” Leylin let out a gasp, and a flash of expectation came over him. Following which, he queued behind a red-robed, middle-aged man. There were only a scant few Magi on the plaza, so Leylin’s turn came quickly. Leylin took in a deep breath, and stood in front of the pillar, his palms pressing upon it.

*Buzz Buzz!*

The moment his palms felt the rough stones on the pillar, Leylin experienced an extremely ice-cold spiritual force creep from the pillar and bore into his forehead. Leylin’s skin slightly stretched, and a few streaks of dark rays passed by. He felt as if he had been suppressed while the spiritual force bore into him.

“Data transmission interface detected, awaiting permission to enter” “Allow it!” Leylin commanded.
Following which, a large amount of scripts and diagrams were circulated into Leylin’s mind like a message. The information converged into what seemed like a hefty book. Leylin’s spiritual force gingerly touched the book and flipped to the first page.

“Material types” “Finished goods types” “Knowledge types” “Potion types”…

What entered his vision first was a densely packed index catalogue. Leylin hesitated for a while, before opening the “Knowledge types” segment.

*Bang!*

A silver light flashed. Following which, a lot of sub-clauses appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

“High level dwarf enchanting studies”
“Comprehensive details for flame runes”
“Introduction to crafting of medicines”
“Soul research date”

……

Many different branches of high-level academic knowledge appeared before Leylin. There were many branches of discipline which Leylin himself had never heard of before. The names appeared to be very strange to him.

“However, there was no data on high level meditation. There was also no information in regards to the advancement of a Magus. It looked like it was intentionally hidden…”

With a slight flash in his eyes, Leylin turned to the “Material types” section.

Blue-gold stone, bayern flower, essense of wilted tree, black rose, heart of light blue lizard. There were many materials, some of
which he had never heard of before, and some of which even had
depictions that were very realistic looking.
“Search crystallised Darkness energy particles!”
Following which, the majority of the data disappeared, and only a
few lines of information from the hefty book remained.
“Looking to buy egg of a Fire Ingesting Bird at a favourable price,
can choose from the following for trade: I have wood spirit 200
grams, crystallised Darkness energy particles 100 grams, Firestone
800 grams, Rotten Cloud medicine, and various types of liquids…”
“Store sells the following: crystallised Darkness energy particles,
dragon grass, ghastly sunflower…”
On the hefty book, only these two statements appeared. It looked
pathetic.
“There is only such a minute amount, and one of them only accepts
the egg of a Fire Ingesting Bird for trade!”
Leylin frowned.
In order to increase the elemental conversion rate, other than
relying on hard work, the A.I. Chip suggested that he could also
ingest crystallised energy particles that suited his elemental affinity.
This sort of high energy concentration crystals were only formed in
nature under very strict elemental conversion criteria.
Once a Magus ingested the crystals, he would be able to increase
the rate of his elemental conversion.
Through this method, Leylin would be able to rapidly increase his
elemental conversion rate, and fix his shortcomings.
However, these type of crystals were very valuable. Furthermore,
the Darkness elemental ones were very rare, causing the whole
database to only contain two lines of information in response to his
query.
“Whatever. This is better than having to go search for the
information myself.”
While Leylin was using his spiritual force to reply to the message
selling the crystals, a small messaged appeared: Elm Street #231! This was the address of the shop from earlier. Leylin threw a high-grade magic crystal into the stone pillar’s interface. A considerable fee was needed when information was obtained from the trading plaza. Leylin rolled his eyes at the fact that the profitable areas were dominated by the powers behind the Nightless City. Upon analyzing the situation, Leylin found that he was not willing to part with another high grade magic crystal to obtain the contact information of the trader requesting the egg of fire ingesting bird. After leaving the trade plaza, Leylin found the small shop written on the message in no time. The tiny shop was rather inconveniently located in a small alley. If not for the definite address, Leylin would not have found it. The shop was dimly lit and its floor was dusty. The racks in the store were filled with transparent glass jars. Different types of organs and tissues were submerged in a faint yellow liquid within these glass jars. Leylin even saw a few that resembled a human embryo.

“What do you want?” From the sales counter, a female witch wearing a tall pointed hat walked out. Her face was filled with fine wrinkles and her nose was hooked like an eagle’s talons. “I was looking at the trading board. Are you selling crystallized Darkness particles?” Leylin asked with anticipation. “Whoa! Look what I found, a Magus that majors in the cultivation of Darkness energy particles…” The old female Magus laughed out as fire green light appeared in her eyes.
“You reek of blood, young man.”
The old witch cried out in exaggeration.
“You are a dark Magus, am I right?”
“Is there anything wrong? I don’t know of any rule in Nightless City that states that you can’t sell to dark Magi.” Leylin’s brows furrowed.
“Hehehe… Don’t worry, I’m a dark Magus too, though that’s a matter from over 200 years ago. Ah, just remembering those times makes me feel nostalgic…”
The old witch chuckled, which sounded like an owl hooting.
“For you young people who want to take shortcuts, the price of crystallised Darkness energy particles is not something a newly advanced Magus can afford. I doubt you have that many magic crystals, so as a favour as your senior, I’d like to offer you another option…”
Leylin furrowed his eyebrows even more. “What option?”
“A trade! You should be aware that once we get to this level, all ordinary resources mean nothing to us. Only fellow Magi on the same level as us have the supplies we require…”
“What do you need?” Leylin didn’t have a good feeling about this.
“One thousand! I need a thousand spirits brimming with energy! If you provide me with them, all of these Darkness crystals will belong to you.”
The old witch’s eyes shone with excitement.
“Are you out of your mind? If you want me to collect a thousand spirits within the light Magi domain, you might as well be telling me to commit suicide!”
Leylin replied indignantly.
Extracting spirits was a meticulous task, and in order to obtain the amount that the old witch desired, at least ten thousand people’s lives would be consumed.
If Leylin were to harvest such a gargantuan amount, he would definitely be on the death list of white Magi!
“I’m not asking you to harvest spirits here. You can do it in the dark Magi’s domain!” The old witch’s face was nonchalant.
“That’s much too far, and will consume too much time. Furthermore, I do not wish to incur the wrath of more dark Magi forces!”
Leylin immediately shook his head and rejected the old witch’s request. “Since you posted a notice at the trade centre, I imagine you still require some magic crystals. It’s not as if there aren’t any spirits sold in the Nightless City. At most, you’d have to spend more time to amass them…”
“Alright then. However, young man, I have to remind you that the price of the Darkness crystals is not to be underestimated!”
The old witch had an internal struggle for a while, before realising that her requirements were a little too much, while walking back behind the counter.
*Ping Ping Pang Pang!*
After rummaging through the drawers for quite a while, the old witch finally placed a conical glass bottle on the counter.
At the bottom of the glass bottle was a layer of semi-solid crystals. It let off a mysterious lustre as if wanting to suck in the souls of those peering at it.
“300 grams of crystallised Darkness energy particles. Every gram will cost 100 magic crystals!”
“Kiddo, I’ll still reiterate my earlier suggestion. As long as you bring me 1,000 spirits, these will all be yours!”
The old witch tried her best to tempt Leylin.
“No need for that!” Leylin shook his head. However, the given price did surpass what he could pay.
Most of his magic crystals were earned from selling potions that he had brewed. After the bloodbath in the academy, he also managed to earn a huge amount, obtaining many magic crystals and precious ingredients.
However, to offset the amount he spent yesterday, those resources were mostly diminished.
Leylin did not plan to be so foolhardy as to harvest 1,000 spirits just for the sake of this small amount.
Even amongst the dark Magi, if one were to massacre large amounts of humans and harvest their spirits, he or she would be seen as the evilest of existences.
Leylin did not wish to live the life of a street rat in the south coast, receiving animosity from everyone.
“Can I use other ingredients to compensate for the remaining amount?” Leylin asked.
“Yes!” The old witch nodded. “However, I only accept ingredients pertaining to spirits. As for those kinds of items, I will only offer a 90% rate for them!”
“ Spirits?”
Leylin suddenly understood that this old witch was a Magus who was most likely specialised in spirits. Right now, her experiments had reached a critical point, and she required large amounts of materials for her conjectures and theories.
Leylin did have plenty of precious ingredients on him, but many were still useful to him, and he did not plan on letting go of them anytime soon. Upon the realisation that this old witch was also researching spirits, Leylin’s eyes flashed as he came up with an
idea. “How about… Advanced information regarding spirits? Will you accept that?” Leylin asked. “Advanced information? Let me have a look first!” The old witch’s expression brightened. Leylin chuckled, withdrew a pearl the size of a thumb, and handed it over. This pearl was a special tool used to store memories. While conducting his research as an acolyte, Leylin had recorded some information regarding spirits and stored it within the pearl. Although Leylin was only an acolyte at that time, with the help of the A.I. Chip, his research on spirits was extremely profound. It could even surpass the knowledge of his academy’s professors. Moreover, Leylin only intended to reveal some of the information that he had discovered in his earlier stages. As for the experiments such as optimising the Blood Vengeance Potion and the bit of information that he had obtained from the Book of Giant Serpent, he was prepared to keep it for himself. The old witch gave it a once over, “It seems to be research materials at an acolyte level. I won’t reject…” However, with the passing of time, her expression turned solemn, and she even seemed to be entranced. “Such exquisite experimentations! Also, the unique perspective! How about the rest of the information! Hurry up and show them to me!” The old witch snarled, looking slightly deranged. However, upon seeing this scene, Leylin smiled confidently. “So then, we should be able to discuss and work out the price of this information…” A dozen minutes later, Leylin left the old witch’s shop smiling. The glass bottle containing the Darkness crystals was nested safely within his robes.
He had somewhat underestimated the zealotry that the old witch had for spirit research. The information earlier had been sold for a price of 20000 magic crystals almost immediately.

After Leylin withdrew another 100 high-grade magic crystals, the Darkness crystals were immediately sold to Leylin. Moreover, after looking through Leylin’s experiment research, the old witch seemed to have a complete change in attitude. She became extremely affectionate towards Leylin and even invited him to collaborate in an experiment. This was quite a sensitive matter, and Leylin eventually rejected after giving it some thought. However, he did leave his secret imprint with her. Although her craziness made Leylin rather reluctant to befriend her, it was undeniable that she had quite a few useful items. Moreover, Leylin had a plan that required a partner like her to carry out.

……

“Magus Leylin, it’s you again. How was your afternoon?”
Under the flickering lamps of the street, Leylin returned to his villa. Along the way, he coincidentally met that red haired geezer, Crew. This old geezer was resting on his couch with a contented look on his face. Beside him were several maids with voluptuous clothing, who fed him delicacies time to time.
“Does this old geezer have a fetish for being the target of voyeurism?” Leylin was somewhat speechless regarding Crew’s nonchalance about seeking pleasure out in the open. However, he still smiled on the surface. Resting against the fence, Leylin said, “It went okay. I managed to purchase some of the items that I yearned for…”
“Haha… After staying here for a long time, you will realise that
Nightless City has everything you need!”
The old geezer chugged down the grape wine in his glass, before grabbing a maidservant beside him and smooching her out in the open.
As for the other maidservants, they chuckled, as if it was a common sight.
Although Leylin knew that after advancement, some Magi would give up on further improvement and turn lewd, engaging in wanton ways, it was still a first for Leylin to see such a sight. It had somehow widened his perspective. After exchanging several more sentences with Crew, Leylin returned to his villa.
Leylin laid on his bed upon returning to his bedroom, recollecting the day’s events.
After obtaining the old witch’s crystallines, Leylin saw that there was still some time to kill. At the same time, he contacted the Magus that wanted to trade the Darkness crystals for the egg of the Fire Ingesting Bird with wishful thoughts, wanting to purchase it off of him through other methods.
However, Leylin did not succeed, as the other party only wanted the egg of the Fire Ingesting Bird. Even though Leylin offered a 50% increase from the market price, it still did not move the seller.
Finally, Leylin could only reluctantly spend several hundred more magic crystals, and put out a notice at the trade centre saying that he wanted to purchase Darkness crystals, before returning to the villa.
“A.I. Chip! Show me my stats and simulate the best way to absorb the Darkness crystals!”
Leylin thought inwardly.
[Mission establishing, gathering Host’s data, beginning model simulation!]
After receiving the command of its host, the A.I. Chip began to rapidly calculate, and rows of data began to flash past Leylin’s eyes.
The next day, Leylin relaxed while strolling throughout the city,
finding a restaurant to have a sumptuous feast before returning to his villa.
The basement of the villa had been remodeled, and a large spell formation had been carved into the surface of the floor. Leylin placed the Darkness crystals that he had recently acquired at the centre of the formation. “Based on the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the crystals’ absorption rate will achieve an efficiency of 94.7% when placed within this formation.” Leylin murmured to himself, as he came to the centre of the formation. “Activate!” He said the opening command in the ancient Byron language. * Buzz buzz! * The entire spell formation vibrated, emitting a bright light. In the heart of the formation, the Darkness crystals began to melt. First, they shifted from a half-solid state to a liquid state and filled in a bizarre rune. Immediately after, a bright red light flashed, and the liquid within the rune vaporised into black smoke, which circled within the basement. The black smoke converged, and seven indistinct snakes with red eyes emerged, twisting around Leylin’s body. Ice cold and slimy, the little snakes formed from the smoke resembled a real snake in every way, giving Leylin a bizarre sensation. Leylin breathed in deeply. *Sssii!* Two tiny snakes were immediately sucked into his nose. Leylin felt as if his body had expanded, and he felt tipsy as if he was drunk.
The five remaining tiny snakes issued cries of terror while struggling to escape Leylin’s reach. Suddenly, Leylin opened his mouth and inhaled sharply. All five tiny snakes were all swallowed inside his stomach. Meanwhile, the spell formations on the ground emitted black lights, engulfing the entire basement. Wrapped in darkness, Leylin had a feeling like he returned to his mother’s womb serene and comfortable. Only the constant notifications from the A.I Chip could be heard. [A large amount of essential substances are entering the Host’s body, confirmed to be Dark energy particles, absorption in progress…] [Host absorption rate greatly enhanced under the effect of the Darkness rites, crystal utilisation increased!] [Absorption complete! Host’s elemental essence conversion greatly increased, currently 35%.]

*Di!* A crisp tone sounded in the centre of the formation. Following which, the black light converged into the shadow of a figure at the centre. “Huff…” Leylin gradually opened his eyes, and a flash of black light streaked past his eyes. “This feeling…” Having the elemental essence conversion increase to 35% so
quickly was a strange sensation. Leylin could clearly feel that in the surrounding void, tiny black particles of the Darkness element were hovering around like fireflies. Although Leylin had a Darkness elemental aptitude, being able to sense the energy particles in the air this easily was still a first for him. It was a feeling of novelty. Moreover, Leylin could sense that it required less spiritual force than before to control the energy particles.

“Latent Fireball!”

Leylin quickly chanted the spell, and from the darkness of the basement, countless black fireballs flew out. Flames gathered in Leylin’s hands and became five times larger in an instant. Corrosive flames continuously formed and raised, and even the roof of the basement gradually turned red, seeming to be on the verge of melting.

“A.I. Chip. Calculate the current stats!”

Leylin muttered inwardly.

[Rank 1 Magic: Latent Fireball. Degree of attack: 40.5. Additional damage from elemental essence conversion: 10.5!]

“As expected! The might of the latent fireball has risen sharply compared to before, and the amount of spiritual energy and magic power needed has been decreased.”

Leylin’s lips quirked in a slight smile.

His elemental essence conversion had already reached 35%, which allowed him to have an increase in prowess when he cast Darkness spells. Moreover, as it was energy particles that were from his elemental affinity, the consumption of spiritual force and magic power was lowered too.

“If my elemental essence conversion reaches 100%, I wonder what kind of extent will it reach…”

There was an outward expression on Leylin’s eyes.
Right now, his elemental essence conversion was only at 35% and it had brought him this many benefits. If he was a fully converted elemental Magus, then he could rival the existences of those ancient elemental beasts!

Of course, Leylin was clear deep down that humans were, after all, not elemental creatures, so the possibility of 100% elemental essence conversion was minimal at best.

To some Magi, as long as they reached 80% elemental essence conversion, they could attempt to advance to a rank 2 Magus. As for those with 90% elemental essence conversion and above, they were the geniuses that were groomed by powerful guilds.

“100% is an unreasonable goal. However, with so many good conditions that I possess, I must have at least a 90% elemental essence conversion before I advance to rank 2!”

The studier the foundations were built, the more benefits one could reap after advancement in the future. This logic had been long since comprehended by Leylin back when he was an acolyte.

“Crystallised energy particles! I need large amounts of crystallised Darkness energy particles!”

His eyes were blazing with a fiery passion.

After waiting for a few minutes, Leylin went to the spiral staircase in the basement.

“A.I. Chip! Check my current stats, and see if there are any residual effects or injuries on my body. Calculate the amount of time needed before I can use the energy particles again!”

A flash of blue light appeared in front of Leylin.


Based on the stats that A.I. Chip had calculated, after using the crystals, not only had Leylin’s elemental essence conversion rapidly
increased to 35%, his spiritual force had also risen.

[Residual substances have appeared in Host’s body, determined to be elemental impurities! Currently in the process of expelling impurities from the body. Estimated time needed: 4 Months, 21 Days!]

The results that the A.I. Chip gave left Leylin somewhat shocked. Magi who used external resources to advance would often cause themselves some problems. He had known this since long ago. However, he didn’t think that the damages would have been this much lesser than expected.

“This can’t be correct! According to the meditation technique and the Book of Giant Serpent, after using the crystals, the backlash will only be the invasion of negative energy and a temporary loss in ability to sense the energy particles in the surroundings?”

Leylin was somewhat puzzled. If using such crystals had such a good outcome, then the price should have been several times higher.

The reason for the circumstances that happened to him most likely stemmed from his own body.

“A.I. Chip, find out the reason why!”

Leylin could tell that this probably had to do with his Warlock bloodline. Ever since his body had taken in the ancient blood of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, his body had been continuously merging with the blood, also transforming his physique.

The change in his body when he advanced into a Rank 1 Warlock had been minimal. There was also still a large amount of blood that was constantly merging with his body, which unknowingly gave him many benefits.

[Mission establishing, obtaining authorisation! Beginning microscopic analysis. Scanning in progress!]

The A.I. Chip quickly cast a light blue diagram in front of Leylin. It was a diagram of a human’s DNA helix structure.
The difference between him and regular humans was that on Leylin’s diagram, there were many barbs on his helixes. These barbs vaguely formed the shape of a mysterious rune. This rune was somewhat similar to the rune that Leylin saw while transplanting the bloodline. Furthermore, it seemed to expand continuously, as if wanted to cover the entire model of Leylin’s DNA.

[Abnormality in genetic information found in Host’s body. Endocrine secretion is different from normal humans. Cell activity increased, increasing effect of expelling poison!]

At the bottom of the diagram, the A.I. Chip came up with a conclusion. From the A.I. Chip’s conclusion, it could be seen that upon receiving the bloodline, Leylin’s body was constantly getting stronger. His body’s ability to expel poison had also exceeded most rank 1 Magi, to the point that it was able to dispel the residual impurities caused by the usage of the crystals.

[Beep! Based on analysis of the Host’s DNA, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline is getting stronger, and will soon undergo a transition. Estimated time: 1 Year, 09 Months.] The A.I. Chip prompted Leylin with another frame. “Bloodline transition?” Leylin suddenly thought back to the records in the Book of Giant Serpent. If a Warlock’s bloodline was extremely concentrated, and if the level of the bloodline exceeded that of the Warlock by a large margin, the power of the bloodline would remain stagnant within the Warlock’s body, and accumulate until it underwent a transition! For every transition in the bloodline, the Warlock’s body would undergo a drastic change! What Leylin had transplanted was the purified bloodline of the ancient creature, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. If one were to
quantify its level, it would be at least a rank 4 Morning Star Magus. As for Leylin, he was only a rank 1 Magus as of now! The concentration of the bloodline was too high, so it could only be dormant within his body. After Leylin’s elemental essence conversion and spiritual force had reached a certain threshold, it would then enhance him with a deeper harmonization.

“It seems that the ancient creatures’ bloodlines are mysterious yet powerful, which far exceeds my expectations!” Leylin who was walking up suddenly halted.

“There’s still 1 year and 9 months huh?” The second transition would bring immense benefits to Leylin. The most obvious change would be the leap in power! “If that is the case, a lot of my plans from before should now be modified!”

Leylin’s eyes flashed, “A.I. Chip, are there any methods to hasten the arrival of the second transition?”

[Mission established! Searching within the database!]

The A.I. Chip quickly began to compute. [Lacking in data, unable to proceed! Beginning simulation!] [Possible methods 1: Using Bloodline Crystals. 2: Obtaining a spell formation that can strengthen the bloodline…]

That was also one of the benefits of the A.I. Chip being upgraded. When important data was missing, it could establish conjectures, and provide a case scenario with the highest rate of success to the Host.

“Weren’t these two items already extinct within the south coast years ago?” Leylin was somewhat speechless, “Is my only option to wait this out?”

After walking to the top of the spiral staircase, Leylin opened a wooden door that had a metal hoop and came to the study room of the villa.
“It seems that I have to look for some servants and the like!”
Leylin sized up the empty villa.
There were multiple rooms here, as well as a professional kitchen and stable. By the looks of it, these had been prepared for a Magus’ servants.
After most Magi advanced, they would usually find themselves a few servants or followers, and some might even accept apprentices to service them.
It was a very rare situation for Magi who had advanced to still live alone, as Leylin did.
“I guess I should make changes to the original plan!”
Leylin looked around the villa. “It’s a good opportunity to stay here for a while and take care of matters such as getting servants.”
Originally, Leylin had been planning to undergo a series of expeditions to acquire resources for his advancement after settling down in the Nightless City.
However, from the looks of it, since he already knew that his strength would be greatly boosted in 2 years’ time, he could afford to give it some time and wait it out.
For Magi, two years were not a very long period of time. As for Leylin, who had the bloodline of an ancient creature, his lifespan was higher than most Magi.
“Since I have decided to stay in Nightless City for a while, I should not be idling around. I have to create potions for sale and join other guilds to obtain protection and high-grade information. These can all be carried out at the same time!”
Thoughts ran through Leylin’s mind as he suddenly remembered his neighbour, the red-haired geezer.
This neighbour of his would definitely be helpful in this area.
Come on! I specially got someone to bring this black tea all the way from the eastern islands!”

The simplistically carved wooden teacup was giving off steam, which vaporised into the air, bringing about the fragrance of brewed tea.
With a hospitable smile on his face, the red-haired Crew brought a cup of black tea to Leylin.
Sometime after Leylin finished consuming the crystals and made the decision to be a resident of the Nightless City, he bought a gift and paid the Magus Crew a visit.
“Come, this is a honey cake made from the honey of Pomelo Bees! The taste is delicious!”

After seeing Leylin drink the red tea, old Crew directed one of his maidservants to serve a plate of extremely sweet mini cake. The maidservants wore extremely exposing uniforms, only covering the few crucial areas. Most of her glossy skin was out in the open, which looked extremely alluring.
“If you like them, I can gift you a few!” Crew laughed absent-mindedly.
“Please don’t tease me!” Leylin shook his head as he forced a smile. “Haven’t I already told you the purpose of this visit?”
At the mention of getting down to business, Crew’s expression became stern.
He waved his hands, and the maidservants in the surroundings
bowed deeply, before quickly taking their leave. They were obviously trained and did not make any sound as they retreated.

“Do you wish to join an organisation in Nightless City?”

Crew’s expression was solemn.

“Yes, for the sake of high-grade information and some precious ingredients needed in experiments…”

What Leylin said was the truth. Obviously, he could brew his own potions and earn magic crystals, leading a very comfortable life in the Nightless City.

However, even if Nightless City was known as a trade centre, some precious items were still under strict regulations.

For example, only a few official Magi were able to access high-grade information, as well as some information that was related to breaking through bottlenecks.

These materials were heavily regulated, whether it was by magisteriums and guilds operating behind the scenes of the Nightless City, or through strict control and distribution on a periodical basis. As for wandering Magi like Leylin, there were no chances of obtaining them on the streets.

Perhaps a couple things could be found in black markets, but the amount would definitely be extremely little, and the prices extremely farfetched.

If that was the case, it was better to join a guild, even obtaining privileges at times.

“Well… the magisteriums in Nightless City are quite regulated, and…”

Crew may have omitted some information, but Leylin was well aware of what he was implying.

While Magi organisations and families may have had the tradition of recruiting wandering Magi or those who were on the run, there was a crucial requirement said Magi must not have created trouble that might bring harm to the organisation backing them.
For a Magus like Leylin, whose history was unknown, Magi organisations would do a complete investigation into his background, and then judge whether or not he was permitted to join their group.

“My full name is Leylin Farlier. I don’t have anything to hide, as you’ll find if you look into my history.”

Leylin didn’t have any plans on hiding anything about his background.

He was from the Chernobyl Islands, and was a noble’s son. All of his experiences from when he was a child up till now had been recorded, and he was definitely not afraid of being investigated.

Furthermore, the only enemy that he had was the powerful Lilytell family. Unfortunately, the Lilytell family was a typical dark Magi family.

They were the arch enemy of the light Magi, who were in control of Nightless City. Countless dark Magi had lost their lives within the light Magi’s domain.

Leylin had always been sticking to his role as an acolyte. There was no evidence that indicated he was insane or sick in the mind, such as having massacred regular humans at will.

As a result, his identity would not affect his entry into an organisation in Nightless City.

“There were some disputes over interests before. Due to some personal conflicts and interests, I killed the heir of a family, and am now on their wanted list…”

Leylin briefly explained his past.

After hearing Leylin’s recount, Crew’s face turned even gentler.

“Be at ease. I personally do not have any animosity towards dark Magi. Moreover, you have already abandoned their camp, have you not?”

As if afraid that Leylin was worried, Crew even explained himself.

“We of Nightless City will still welcome Magi like you, so be at
Crew sipped the black tea from the appealing wooden cup, before he slowly said, “So then, there are many guilds in the Nightless City; which one are you planning to join?”
“It’s precisely because I don’t know much that I’m here to seek your guidance!”
An embarrassed expression surfaced upon Leylin’s face.
“En! Let me think, where should I begin?”
Crew racked his brains, and after thinking for a while, he said, “There are many guilds in the Nightless City. Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Mercifura Academy, Four Seasons Garden, Hand of Femke, Human Faced Lion’s Eye…”
“These are all guilds that are more powerful, monopolising the trade behind the Nightless City. On the surface, there are a few other small organisations. Those ones aren’t that strong, some even having only a semi-converted elemental Magus as their backer. If at any time they were to die, the organisation would naturally be dismissed…”
“They are only guilds in name, and their shares of resources are extremely few, to the point of almost being negligible. Some are even just based on friendships and the collaboration of experiments. After some time, groups like that will naturally be formed. These types of groups have no backing at all, so don’t even think of joining them!”
Crew advised Leylin with a good heart.
“As for the application, you only have to go to the communal centre, and request an application. Once you pass the test, you will be granted entry!”
“Of course, the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower might have some special welfare and restrictions…”
Leylin did not pay Crew a visit just to find out superficial information such as this. He also wanted to understand more about
the inner workings of the large guilds in Nightless City. This information could only be known by older Magi who had been a resident of Nightless City for a long time.

Of course, Crew knew of this, so he leaked some important information further on in their discussion, allowing Leylin to grasp a better understanding of the various guilds.

Several hours later, Leylin bade Crew farewell with a huge grin on his face, and he returned to the villa.

In the study room, a white ball formed from magic was floating in mid-air, giving off vivid rays of light that were not too harsh on the eyes, and brightening up the entire study as if it were day. Leylin sat on an armchair, holding a stiff goose feather quill pen, and seemingly deep in thought.

On the surface of the piece of parchment spread out over the table, there were several handwritten lines written in black ink.

At the very top of the list was Ennea Ivory Ring Tower and Mercifura Academy, followed by Four Seasons Garden, and the tier below was the Hand of Femke, Human Faced Lion’s Eye, Aide Society, and the like.

These were obviously the names of the true powers behind Nightless City.

“Ennea Ivory Ring Tower and Mercifura Academy are both schools and have the harshest requirements for Magi who wish to enter. They even demand that Magi hand over a part of their spirit, and make an unbreakable vow! Even though their treatment is the best, I won’t go there.”

From the very start, Leylin crossed off Ennea Ivory Ring Tower and Mercifura Academy from the piece of parchment.

“As for the Hand of Femke and the Human Faced Lion’s Eye, they are both organisations formed by and for half-humans. The ratio of pure humans to half-humans is quite low, and there are rumours that they are discriminated against, so I’m not going there either!”
Once again, Leylin struck off two organisations from the list with a wave off his black goose feather quill pen.  
“As for Aide Society, they are more partial towards using positive energy magic. It’s an organisation made up of light Magi who are known for their healing abilities, which is definitely not my cup of tea…”

Leylin struck off the characters that represented Aide Society.  
There was just one lonely option left on the parchment.  
“Four Seasons Garden. I guess this is my only choice…”

Leylin had a bitter smile on his face. From the information that he had received from Crew, Leylin had a certain level of understanding regarding the organisations backing Nightless City. However, many of them did not meet his requirements. He was thinking of entering an organisation as an external lecturer or a visitor, but most organisations required their recruits to pledge their absolute loyalty to them. There were some with more lax prerequisites, but unfortunately, their specialisation did not coincide with Leylin’s interests, so he could not learn much from them.

No matter how he saw it, Four Seasons Garden was his only option.

Four Seasons Garden was a large scale Magi organisation. There were rumours that it was founded by a formidable Potioneering organization, and even now, Four Seasons Garden was still well known for its cultivation of vegetation, as well as Potioneering. This coincided with what Leylin was studying.

The requirements to enter this organisation were also laxer, and those who had talent in Potioneering received excellent treatment. Leylin had already achieved a certain level of attainment in Potioneering, and with the help of the A.I. Chip, he was almost as good as his mentor, Kroft. If he revealed just a small portion of his talent, it would definitely be enough to gain the respect of the Magi
at Four Seasons Garden. Since Four Seasons Garden was a Magi organisation renowned for Potioneering, it was sure to have many formulas, even including those ancient Potioneering formulas. In addition, the large quantities of documents and books that they possessed would definitely be extremely helpful for the A.I. Chip’s database.

As Leylin pondered, a trace of anticipation flashed within his eyes. The next day, Leylin donned leather armour, with a cross blade in a silver scabbard, and went to the second level of the communal centre in the Nightless City. The level of activity in the construction resembling a gargantuan palm was very high; every now and then, magicians walked in and out like scurrying ants.

This time, Leylin entered through the passage that resembled the thumb. Most of the Magi here were rank 1, with cold auras that deterred others from getting into close proximity with them.

“These are most likely wandering Magi coming here to seek an opportunity!”

Leylin inadvertently scanned his surroundings and saw several strangely dressed Magi. Just based on the energy waves radiating from them, Leylin felt a sense of danger. With just one look at them, one could tell that they were no pushovers.

There was a large hall at the end of the passage, and straight ahead of it, there were several counters that were separated by glass windows. Within those counters, several magicians seemed to be scribbling on their papers.
As there were only a few official Magi, empty counters were readily available.

There were a few magicians sitting on the big benches around the hall as if waiting for something or someone.

Leylin looked around and arrived in the front of an empty counter. “Hello!” The young maiden behind the counter seemed to emit the energy waves of a level 3 acolyte. Upon seeing Leylin, she greeted him cheerfully, as her face brightened up with a smile.

“I wish to join Four Seasons Garden, hence I’m here to apply!” Leylin directly told her his purpose for arriving.

“Nightless City welcomes you as our newest member!” After listening to Leylin’s request, the young maiden’s smiling expression was more pronounced. “Please show me your ring!” Leylin removed the silver ring from his finger and handed it over to her.

The young maiden reached out for the ring, placed it onto an instrument from behind the counter, and then respectfully handed the ring back to Leylin.

“Please fill out this form, and we will send a reply to you as soon as possible!” Subsequently, the young maiden handed a sheepskin parchment form to Leylin.

Leylin glanced at the form.

The questions on the form were simple. They asked for a name, aptitude, elemental affinity, address, and so on. On the back of the
form was a note, allowing magicians to fill in other information they deemed as important.

Leylin quickly filled out the form and handed it back to the maiden. The maiden accepted the form from Leylin and pressed on the crystal ball in front of her as if consulting something. Soon after, her face reflected her joy.

“Lord Leylin! A few examiners from Four Seasons Garden will be here this afternoon to conduct a test. You’ll only have to wait for a bit…”

“Oh? It seems like lady luck is shining on me!”

Leylin smiled as he nodded his head; he had finally found out what those magicians in the hall were waiting for.

According to Crew, after wandering magicians handed over their application forms, they would have to wait for the examiners of the various guilds, who would classify their abilities through an assessment.

The timing was not fixed. It could be as short as a few days, or as long as a few months.

This time, however, Leylin had managed to catch the right timing.

“Thank you!”

Leylin thanked the girl behind the glass window, and proceeded to a corner of the hall devoid of others, and closed his eyes as he waited.

“Hello Mister, would you like some lunch?”

A somewhat timid female voice sounded near Leylin.

Leylin opened his eyes and realised that a maid pushing a white dining cart had come up to him.

On the dining cart, there were a few silver plates on which a temperature-maintaining spell had been cast. Even though they were covered, the food’s aroma still drifted over to Leylin’s nose.

“What kinds of dishes are there? Do they require magic crystals for payment?” Leylin asked with curiosity.
It was evident that it was the first time the maid had seen an easygoing magician like Leylin; her reaction was sluggish. “There is roasted lamb thigh, calf loin… As for dessert, there’s an assorted fruit salad! All of these are complimentary…” Leylin nodded his head. It seemed that official Magi were treated pretty well in the Nightless City. This was common sense. It didn’t matter where it was; a person who had mastered a certain degree of power or ability would always be valued.

“Give me one portion of the roasted lamb thigh, as well as a portion of the fruit salad!”

The lobby was very large, and there were even customised compartment rooms that one could choose so stay in. Other than meals, it seemed that there were other special offers. Leylin personally witnessed a huge magician pulling a maid into one of the compartment rooms. Following which, sounds of repressed moans could be heard.

“L… Lord, if you want…” The maid servicing Leylin was also quite a beauty and combined with her slightly shy demeanour, caused one to feel lusty, and desire to ravage her.

“There is no need. I’ll just eat outside!”

Leylin shook his head. Inside the hall were some round tables and long benches, similar to the layout of a coffee place from his past life, where one could stay to dine.

Leylin considered whether he had his sperms acting as a brain. With the assessment commencing this afternoon, how could that magician still think of something like this? Wasn’t he afraid that his current actions would adversely affect his state of mind and ability to produce results during the assessment?

Upon hearing Leylin’s response, the maid released a sigh of relief. Soon afterwards, whether it was because she felt like she had been relieved of a huge burden, or she just felt empty, Leylin had made
his way into her heart. While the maid looked at Leylin, who exuded elegance and charisma, she momentarily felt an indescribable feeling. Leylin, on the other hand, did not notice the maid’s feelings. He was currently skilfully controlling the knife and fork in his hands, sending the lamb thigh meat into his mouth. Every move he made had an indescribable feeling of elegance and grace to it. In his previous life, Leylin was someone who paid extra attention to etiquette, and as the heir to an aristocrat, the previous Leylin had also undergone etiquette lessons over a long period of time. As a result, the original Leylin was very noble-like, and when coupled with the charisma he had gained from the Kemoyin bloodline, plenty of young female magicians favoured him. Just by walking along the streets of Nightless City, the present Leylin would spot several young ladies stealing glances at him. There were even a few voluptuous female magicians that directly requested a date with Leylin, causing him to be dumbfounded. After having a pretty tasty lunch, Leylin waited for a while before entering the hall, in which a large commotion was occurring amongst the magicians. “Are they here?” Leylin watched attentively as two Magi, who wore white robes imprinted with four unknown flower designs, walked to the center of the hall. Next to them were two other Magi wrapped in white cloaks, revealing nothing but two pairs of green eyes. “Today is the day of assessment for Four Seasons Garden and Hand of Femke. Those who have submitted their application form and would like to join Hand of Femke, please come with me!” One of the Magi with green eyes spoke first in a hoarse voice as if his vocal cords had been damaged. At the moment that he began to speak, the surrounding air started
to faintly vibrate. Circles of aquamarine light started to loom around his body.

“This is …… a semi-converted elemental Magus?!?” Leylin blinked. This type of energy wave was similar to the one that he had seen from the clone of the elder of the Lilytell Family.

After the cloaked figure revealed his strength as a semi-converted elemental Magus, the whole hall turned silent. Magi only respected and answered to power and strength, and this was even truer among wandering magicians and dark Magi. Furthermore, under normal circumstances, wandering magicians and wanted Magi had no fixed ways of breaking through their bottlenecks due to the lack of means to obtain advanced academic knowledge, potions, and the like. As a result, wandering magicians were generally of lower levels. Even amongst the wandering official Magi, it was extremely rare to find a semi-converted elemental Magus.

While the large Magi organizations of Nightless City could easily dispatch two semi-converted elemental Magi as examiners, this kind of power was something that smaller organizations could only hope to achieve.

After the cloaked figured finished his speech, he left without delay, and headed to a nearby side tunnel, while his companion followed behind without a word. Upon hearing the words of the green eyed magician, many magicians in the hall stood up and followed closely behind him. Leylin could sense a mixture of energies emanating from these magicians. Some even had fur on their faces, which was an obvious trait of being half beast.

“It’s a pity, They’re just a tribe of sub-human Magi and not Warlocks!”

Leylin now anxiously wished to be able to find another Warlock organisation.
He simply had too many unanswered questions regarding this ancient branch of Magi, the Warlock. With just the Book of Giant Serpents, he wouldn’t be able to go far upon the path of his bloodline.

However, unfortunately, warlocks seemed to be extinct within the South Coast. Leylin had travelled this far and had only been able to find a little girl in the Inlan Dukedom, who had a very slight connection with warlocks.

“Hello, everyone! I am Wade, a Magus from the Four Seasons Garden! This person next to me is Tyne!”

In comparison to the lack of politeness received from the men from Hand of Femke, the two main examiners from Four Seasons Garden were friendlier.

Wade, the middle-aged magician with golden hair, had taken the initiative and introduced himself. Tyne, who was next to him, was silent and taciturn, and sometimes even absent-minded.

However, from their bodies, one could feel that they possessed the strong energy waves of a semi-converted elemental Magus, discouraging wandering Magi from causing trouble.

“Now! Those who want to be assessed for Four Seasons Garden, please come with me!”

The golden-haired Wade turned towards the side road in the opposite direction that the Magi from the Hand of Femke had taken. Tyde followed closely behind.

Leylin and the rest of the five or six magicians exchanged glances and started taking strides to catch up.

The side road was long, and the path was made of an unusual and bizarre material. The floor had no traces of cracks, and it was smooth and glossy. Leylin could even see his own reflection on the ground.

After walking for about ten minutes, Leylin and the rest arrived at a hall that was slightly smaller than the one from before.
In the middle of the hall, there were several experiment tables and equipment for Potioneering. Upon seeing this, Leylin instantly knew what the Four Seasons Garden was going to evaluate them on.

“As we all know, our Four Seasons Garden is famous for our specialisation in Potioneering. Therefore, we have some requirements in the area of Potioneering for new members. The test is very simple. Within the established time, successfully brew a bottle of Jeffrey’s Purifying Potion!”

Wade spoke softly, but it seemed like some sort of magic technique was being used, and his voice was clearly heard by every magician’s ears.

“Raw materials are arranged on the experiment tables; we have prepared three portions of raw materials for each of you. In other words, you’ll only have two chances to fail!”

“This kind of request….”

Leylin squinted for a bit. Jeffrey’s Purifying Potion was a type of middle-grade medicine, which, even amongst potions of a similar tier, was famous for being extremely difficult to brew. Brewing this potion with only three portions of ingredients and within a specified time limit was something only those who were at a level comparable to Potion masters such as Kroft would be able to pass.

“Tsk….”

Sure enough, after the listing the requirements, Leylin heard distinct hisses from the magicians around him.

“In recent years, the larger powers within Nightless City have made their recruitment criteria increasingly stringent…”

At this time, a sound of complaint travelled to Leylin’s ears.
Seeing the chaotic scene, Tyne, who had stayed quiet all this while, suddenly spoke.

In a split second, tremendous spiritual power swept through the hall like a storm.

“This is the assessment to enter my Four Seasons Garden. If you have no wish to participate, the door’s right there. Please feel free to leave.”

Tyne pointed to the small door at the side.

It instantly became unnaturally quiet.

“Good! Are there none who want to withdraw? In that case, let the examinations begin!” Wade glanced at the Magi under him, nodded, and a golden hourglass appeared in the middle of the room. Grain by grain, the sand started to fall.

Seeing that it was time to begin, the magicians quickly ran to their workbenches and started to handle the materials they had.

Leylin found himself a space in the corner, and since there were many workbenches within the hall, nobody was going to fight him for this place. At the moment, he was still relaxed enough to be judging the performance of the acolytes.

Since these Magi had all chosen Four Seasons Garden, it was natural that they had achieved a certain level of attainment in Potioneering. All of the magicians began to operate the equipment on the workbench in a skilled manner, motions quick and
methodological.
“From the looks of it, I’ll have to reveal a bit of my skills…”
Leylin grinned and got to work…
“Hmm?”
Tyne, who had been sweeping his gaze over the applicants, suddenly made a sound of surprise.
“What happened?” Wade asked his friend in a hushed tone.
“That Magus! His brewing methods are extremely… perfect!” Tyne came up with the word after a long pause.
“Look! Even though the other magicians are skilled, they tend to make mistakes. However, there isn’t the slightest bit of a lapse in his hands or in his movements. Everything is so stable as if it’s a textbook example but in real life.”
“ Hmm… You’re right! If you hadn’t brought it up, I would have missed it!”
Wade watched the young man in the corner who was engrossed in handling a green plant.
The young man was currently using his right hand to heat up the beaker, the fingers on his left hand constantly emitting yellow flames. When combined together, the colour became a striking red.
“This is the Flame Combining Method unique to the dark Magi domain, and is a high level technique used in Potioneering. To think that he’s so proficient in this method…”
Wade wore an expression of admiration on his face. “It looks like we’ve found ourselves a promising seedling. Let me see what his name is…”
Wade immediately went through the stack of application forms and quickly found the young man’s name on the last piece of parchment.
“So he’s called Leylin? He comes from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in the Poolfield Kingdom, and has offended the local Lilytell family!”
“If that’s all there is, it seems like we’re going to be welcoming another comrade soon!”
Tyne’s usually emotionless face twisted in a smile.
For the magicians in the light Magi domain, they were uncaring of the fact that Leylin had offended those in the dark Magi region. After all, these two areas were at odds with each other in the first place.
What they were most afraid of was if Leylin had offended any of the local large-scale Magi organisations. That was the most troublesome.
At times, in order to maintain the guise of unity and solidarity, they had no choice but to reject talented Magi who were on the light Magi organisations’ wanted lists.
The magicians were focusing on completing their own potions, and seemed not to have heard the two Magi, who were engrossed in conversation.
All of a sudden, a Magus dressed in a black cloak made a sound. His hand trembled, and the chemical within the test tube that was already transparent instantly became cloudy.
“Bastard! You’re looking to die!”
The black-cloaked Magus roared, countless black rays gathering in his hands as he dashed towards a blonde female Magus at another side.
“Stop right there!” Wade bellowed, his body shimmering with light. A rune nearby the experiment tables shone, trapping the Magus within the area.
“My lord, she…” he protested.
“I didn’t see her doing anything, I only saw you trying to attack a fellow Magus participating in the assessment!” Wade snorted.
“If this happens again, you’ll lose the right to participate.”
The black-robed Magus seemed extremely dissatisfied as he clenched his fist. After tarrying for several minutes, he then
dispelled the radiation of energy waves in anger.
“I am going to kill you!”
He glared viciously at the blonde Magus. Afterwards, he picked up another set of ingredients and began his brewing again.
“This is… An attack on the sly?”
Leylin’s hands did not stop moving yet his emotions began to surge.
Just then, the A.I. Chip’s scan detected a tiny trace of an extremely covert spiritual force from the female blonde Magus that had attacked the black robed Magus.
Potioneering was a highly delicate process, and any tiny slip up could cause the whole brewing process to fail.
The black robed Magus had been interrupted at a crucial moment, and the potion he was brewing was naturally destroyed in an instant.
Although a spiritual attack was slight, a semi-converted elemental Magus would definitely be able to sense it.
However, these two examiners prevented the black-robed Magus from seeking revenge.
“Could it be that the test allows one to strike covertly, but it cannot cross a certain margin nor be too obvious?”
Leylin surmised.
With this said, the difficulty of the test had increased again. Leylin was stunned by the harshness and reality of this test from the Four Seasons Garden.
“However, on the other hand, the stricter the test is, the greater the benefits obtained later on!”
Right now, he was fuelled by a fervent desire.
*Bang!* *Bang!*
The commotion from just now seemed to have caused some sort of chain reaction, and in a short moment, another two Magi slipped up.
There was a cold glint in Leylin’s eyes. Using the A.I. Chip, he could distinctly feel that there were two minute waves of spiritual force aimed towards him. Their target was the Potion in his hand that was close to completion!

“A two pronged attack?”

Leylin laughed. To talk about the minute control of the spiritual force, Leylin who had the A.I. Chip to help him would not be afraid of anyone!

“A.I. Chip, begin secondary task and destroy the spiritual forces together with me!”

Leylin commanded inwardly. Very soon, a layer of spiritual force that had a trace of Darkness aura met the two similar spiritual force head on.

*Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!*

At the point of contact between the spiritual forces, Leylin’s spiritual force had rapidly overlapped, turning into the form of a small snake. Its tiny strength continued to stack, and after several rounds, its might momentarily multiplied by several times!

*Boom!*

The two opposing spiritual forces were destroyed the moment they came in contact with Leylin’s spiritual force.

Not only that, Leylin’s spiritual force still followed the pathway of the two spiritual forces and began a fierce counterattack.

“Urgh!”

“Argh!”

Two sudden cries were sounded in the hall suddenly.

The potions of the black robed Magus and female blonde Magus immediately turned to ashes. Furthermore, two streams of blood flowed down from their noses.

“Interesting! Earlier, I felt that the acting of the black robed Magus was somewhat poor, but now, have they been colluding?”
Leylin smirked. His elemental essence conversion had been significantly boosted. Also, with the help of the A.I. Chip, these two were unaware, and had actually taken a small hit from him. They most likely had to recuperate for a period of time before fully recovering from the spiritual force attack from earlier.

“My Lord! I forfeit!” The black-cloaked man glanced at Leylin in fright, and promptly lowered his head, afraid to look him in the eye any longer.

“Me too!” The blonde Magus yelled.

“Permitted!” Tyne answered.

The two Magi quickly gave Tyne a bow, and darted out of the hall. Unexpectedly, neither of them had any complaints or glared at anyone.

“At least these two know their place!” Leylin thought nothing of their behaviour.

Magicians respected power. In the earlier exchange, he could tell that the two Magi’s elemental essence conversions were not higher than 10%, so they most likely had only just advanced. They posed no threat to the current Leylin.

It seemed they were well aware of this fact, and quickly withdrew from the assessment, even being afraid that Leylin would pursue the matter.

“Did you see that? What an interesting performance!” Wade grinned as he spoke to Tyne.

“Yes, his elemental essence conversion is of a rather high level. His ability to manipulate spiritual force is also amazing!” Tyne nodded, his expression stern.

“And I was still worried that he was a spy from some organisation! I’m afraid nobody would be willing to use someone like him as a spy!”

“So this is your conclusion?” Wade blinked. This was the first time Tyne had such a good impression of somebody.
“No! This is just my hypothesis!” Tyne’s usually expressionless face suddenly had a mischievous smile.
“You!”
As Tyne’s colleague, Wade naturally knew that his counterpart’s frosty indifference was just an act. In fact, Tyne had a mischievous mindset.
As for Wade, who looked more normal between the two, he often had to take the blame for Tyne’s behaviour.
“The Jeffrey’s Purifying Potion! I’ve completed it!”
At this moment, Leylin indicated his completion by waving his hands.
This voice was extremely abrupt in the originally silent hall. In a moment, many gazes from magicians glanced at Leylin.
Firmly held in Leylin’s hand was a test-tube with a milky white substance.
Wade came in front of Leylin, and carefully took the potion from him. He then began to scribble on a form.
“Very well! You can leave now. Ten days later, come to the recruitment area at the communal centre, and await for your results!”
Wade gave Leylin an extremely warm smile.
“Many thanks!”
Leylin smiled and bowed before leaving from a side door.
He understood that the test had been successfully passed. As long as there were no problems when they reexamined his current status, the Four Seasons Garden would never deny his entry.
Outside of the communal area were the wide streets of Zone 2 in Nightless City. The bustling activity on the streets continued, as people continued to pass by.
Anyone who had registered and provided their paperwork were allowed to stay in Zone 2, so Leylin was even able to see some regular humans here.
Regular humans who lived in the domain of light Magi had better lives than those in the dark Magi domain. Furthermore, the revered magicians even allowed them to obtain resident rights in Zone 2 as long as they continuously worked hard for it. However, from what Leylin saw, it was only a different form of management. Regular humans were treated at the same level as wild grasses in the dark Magi domain, and they did not receive management very often. The only thing was that they would be harvested in times of need. As for the light Magi, they treated these humans as pieces of property; hence, they could afford to invest huge amounts of time and effort to manage them in order to reap greater benefits. Even in the most open minded domain of the light Magi, magicians always had a position far above regular humans. Furthermore, this gap in status surpassed the gap between regular humans and nobles. Leylin saw many situations in which regular humans, even those that seemed to be nobility, respectfully moved aside and gave a deep bow when they saw an acolyte. Leylin paid no mind to these situations, however. The test today was rather taxing, and he was prepared to enjoy a hearty feast, then proceed to Crew’s house to inquire about some matters.
The old geezer was very talkative, and Leylin wasn’t planning on asking him anything confidential, so he was naturally willing to entertain Leylin.

* Crash! *

“Ah!”

Suddenly, a little girl in a white dress, who was chasing something like a rubber ball, bumped into Leylin’s leg.

Rather than Leylin, who stayed in the same spot, the little girl fell backwards onto the ground.

She opened her eyes wide, and when she saw Leylin in his leather armour, she promptly began to cry in fear.

The congested street instantly became quiet, and regular people quickly backed away. Even a few acolytes yelped, “official Magus,” and phrases along those lines, and bowed while drawing back.

“My lord! Please forgive my daughter for unwittingly offending you!”

At the moment, a slightly plump noble prostrated himself in front of Leylin. He had cold sweat dripping down his quivering body.

In the Nightless City, the authority of the official Magi were extremely high. Even if they were to casually kill several humans, they would, at most, only be fined a set amount of magic crystals.

If Leylin’s mood wasn’t good, he could just kill these two people here, and they wouldn’t be able to do anything but accept their fate.

The plump noble kowtowed as he pulled the little girl to kneel as well. “Quickly, seek forgiveness from the Lord!”

This atmosphere that seemed like a befalling calamity had also influenced the little girl. She held back her sobs and blankly stared on.

“It’s alright!”

Leylin picked up the rubber ball on the roadside and handed it to the little girl. He even ruffled her hair with his right hand.

“It’s no big deal! No need to worry!”
“Thank you, Lord!” “Thank you, Lord!”
With a feeling of a renewed life, the fatty’s words were choked back. Even the little girl that he had brought along seemed to heave a sigh of relief.
“Do not be this impudent in the future anymore!”
Leylin nonchalantly lectured the fatty before leaving the scene in large strides, as the revered gazes of the passerby stared on.
“Do not be this disobedient in future anymore. Fortunately, this time, it was a kind magician. If it wasn’t…”
The fatty wiped off the sweat on his forehead as he scolded the girl.
As for the white-robed girl, she looked at the direction Leylin headed towards with admiration.

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Nine days later, in a spacious room.
An old Magus with a head of white hair and gilded spectacles was looking at the pieces of information he was holding in his hand.
Within a transparent crystal ball, lines of text appeared.
“Leylin Farlier! From the Chernobyl Islands. Entered Abyssal Bone Forest Academy in the year 20987 of the Saint Yuan Calendar!”
Next to these words, there was also a picture of a boy who was around thirteen or fourteen years old, and very similar in appearance to the current Leylin.
On another crystal ball nearby, there was a detailed record of Leylin’s experiences in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. As long as the information was made available to the public, it was all written there. There was even an article regarding the matter of how he had offended the Lilytell family.
“Hm! For the sake of a couple remnants? Seems reasonable!”
The old Magus nodded.
“Look, should we ask him to hand over the research materials he obtained from the ruins?” A Magus with a third eye on his forehead said.

“No, all official Magi have their own secrets. We need to learn to be lenient and tolerant, or else all of the magicians in the organisation would end up only acting for their personal benefits, leading to the segregation of groups!

There were several Magi who had journeyed throughout the south coast and managed to break through. If Four Seasons Garden demanded Leylin hand over his research, it would definitely draw the ire of other Magi, which would definitely provide no benefits for them.

“However, based on Wade’s information, that Magus called Leylin had a slightly different aura than regular Magi. He might have broken through with some ancient methods…”

The Three-Eyed Magus was somewhat unresigned.

“Those alternative paths that a Magus might take may not have the advantages that you think they might…”

The old Magus looked at Three-Eyes beside him, and could not help but remind him.

“Time is the best judge. In the long history of competition, several tens of thousands of years have already passed. Branded Swordsmen, Elemental Bards, and Divine Warriors have all become extinct with the passage of time. Only we, who are the most traditional of magicians, have been preserved. Does this not explain everything?”

The old Magus’ eyes shone with wisdom.

“For some subclasses, although they might have favorable conditions when they advance, most of their routes on the path of advancement become blocked. It’s not even close to us, who can see continuous progress with constant cultivation in meditation techniques.
“Moreover, one must believe in time and the power of influencing through good will! Learn to embrace them!”
The old Magus smiled with confidence.
“We should not treat him as an enemy, but as a friend. After some time, he will naturally sense our good will. Moreover, the bountiful reserves of our Four Seasons Garden will definitely contain something that he needs!”
The old Magus merely adopted a soft approach instead of a hard one. Even with such an approach, it did not mean that he had given up on obtaining the information.
“Other than the Lilytell Family, is the Magus called Leylin really not a criminal wanted by anyone else?”
The old Magus asked again.
“I’ve checked multiple times, Mentor!” Wade bowed, “After Leylin went to the south coast, he usually stayed within the compounds of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy to study. He had little contact with other powers, and nine days ago, he…”
Next, Wade gave a brief summary of how Leylin let go of the father and daughter a few days ago.
“Look, he’s still on the side of the light!”
The old Magus smiled as he spoke to the three-eyed Magus.
“Hmph! It’s just for show!” The three-eyed Magus made a sound of contempt.
“We always look at their actions, and not their heart!” the old Magus said a proverb.
“Even if it’s a show, it also shows his willingness to enter a white Magus’ faction! That’s a lot better than those unrepentant dark Magi!”
“In that case, do you mean…?”
Three-Eyes bowed slightly.
“Tell the Potioneering team that we have found them someone with potential…”
Naturally, Leylin would not know of such events. However, he more or less grasped the general situation. With the strength of the Four Seasons Garden, it was very likely that all of his experiments from a young age until now would be displayed in front of a table that would be vetting him! Furthermore, they would most likely infer that he had killed Bosain for the inheritance and was now on the run. However, he was not worried at all. The great Magus Serholm had utterly destroyed the Dylan Gardens. Since the dead party could not verify anything, they would at most reckon that he had obtained some subclass Magus information, and could have only advanced to an official Magus with some luck, so his future progress would be extremely limited. Moreover, he was now an official Magus. Other guilds would definitely have official Magi who advanced under similar circumstances, and if they were to try to get to the truth, they would not be able to gain the trust of these Magi who had advanced in special scenarios. At the very end, they were still forces of the light Magi, so no matter how they thought inwardly, they had to show a good reputation on the outside. As long as Leylin was able to hide the meditation technique of the great Magus Serholm and the A.I. Chip’s purification of bloodlines, he was not afraid of letting them find out about other things. Just as he expected, the moment he reached the reception area, he could see that Wade, who he had previously met, was already there waiting for him. “Nice to meet you, Magus Leylin!” Wade smiled as he bowed towards Leylin. “Congratulations on passing the test. From here on, you are a
member of the Four Seasons Garden!” Wade gave a passionate smile.
“I am also honoured to enter such a great organisation as the Four Seasons Garden!”
Leylin had a look of excitement on his face.
“There are still a few contracts and procedures we need to go through regarding your entry. Please follow me!”
Wade walked in front and led the way, bring Leylin out of Nightless City.
Seeing the look of doubt on Leylin’s face, Wade explained, “Even though Four Seasons Garden has a few laboratories and a reception area in Zone 5, our headquarters is in the outskirts of Nightless City.”
“I see!” Leylin nodded, following Wade to a region near the gates to the city.
In front of Leylin was a large square, and in the middle, there were several wooden crosses, to which creatures of all shapes and sizes were tied.
“This is one of the Four Seasons Garden’s contacts, from which you can choose a specialized mount!”
Wade pointed at a giant magical creature that had just landed from the air.
“Although you can rent them, I suggest that you buy one for your personal use as transportation!”
Wade walked to a small wooden hut beside the plaza and greeted the person inside through the window.
“Madre, give me two Dragon Crown Nighthawks, as I wish to go to the headquarters!”
“I got it, I got it. You told me already!” The man behind the window impatiently answered, and tossed out two green metal sheets.
“Let’s go!” Wade called towards the distracted Leylin.
“What, do you like these guys?”
Wade pointed at a creature in front of Leylin that looked like an elephant, but had a layer of white feathers on its body that appealed to Leylin.
“I’m very interested in these kinds of strange creatures!”
Leylin gave a slight smile while he made a decision. He would come here often and look around, and if he was lucky enough, there might even be a few creatures with ancient bloodlines!
“Come on!”
Wade brought Leylin to where two gigantic Dragon Crown Nighthawks were.
These huge birds that resembled eagles had steely black feathers covering their bodies and their necks were dyed red. On their head, there was a beautiful protruding bone in the shape of a crown.
Wade unlocked the bronze collar on the Dragon Crown Nighthawks’ necks and tossed one of the green metal sheets Leylin.
“This is the key to controlling them. Come, let us leave!”
Leylin climbed on one of the Nighthawks’ backs in curiosity. On its back was the leather saddle of a mount. It seemed to be manufactured for the comfort of the riders.
Leylin sat on the saddle and willed a trace of his spiritual force to enter the green metal sheet.
The moment his spiritual energy touched the metal sheet, Leylin
could feel his mind instantly connecting with the Nighthawk. The Nighthawk’s mind was very simple, and it was only able to receive commands such as fly, drop, increase speed, turn, and so on. Its intelligence was similar to that of a child of around seven or eight years of age.

[Dragon Crown Nighthawk. Strength: 5.2, Agility: 7.6, Vitality: 4.9, Special abilities: None.]
The stats given by the A.I. Chip were simple. From the looks of it, this type of Dragon Crown Nighthawk was only suitable as a means of transportation.

“Let’s go!”
The large Nighthawk spread its wings, and in doing so, swept up a dust tornado.

Following two cries of the Nighthawks, Leylin and Wade made themselves comfortable on their backs as they flew into the sky.

*Whoosh*
The strong air pressure made Leylin feel as if he were in the middle of a hurricane.

“Hehe! Leylin, how does it feel?”

Wade, who was on the Nighthawk beside Leylin, spoke up.

Leylin’s eyes closed in a contented manner as he enjoyed the scenery zooming past him on both sides, as well as the blue sky and white clouds that seemed to be in close proximity.

For official Magi, whose bodies were much more resilient than the regular human beings, this sort of pressure was akin to a slight breeze.

“It’s not bad!”

“Haha… Back then, I had regretted that I had not memorised a flying type spell. However, ever since I got my precious, I did not have those thoughts anymore. Perhaps one day, you can have a look at it! I swear that you will be enchanted by it…”

Leylin chatted with Wade along the way as he observed the flying
path of the Dragon Crown Nighthawk. Ever since he had left the Nightless City, the Dragon Crown Nighthawk had been flying eastward. With the passing of time, the air in the atmosphere turned chillier. Finally, a snow covered mountain range appeared in front of Leylin. The Dragon Crown Nighthawk let out an excited growl, and began to soar upwards. On a patch of ground covered with white snow, the Dragon Crown Nighthawks that carried Wade and Leylin landed. “Welcome to the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters!” Wade led Leylin into a tall passageway. Two acolytes that seemed to have been waiting for them began to receive the Dragon Crown Nighthawk, and brought them to their stables, before beginning to scrub and feed them. The passageway was extremely winding, and the walls were covered with pure white snow. On the inside, however, a warm wind was circulating. From the various forks on the passageway, Leylin could see several Magi with acolytes walking past them. They carried notebooks and seemed to be in a hurry. After half an hour and several checkpoints, they finally reached their destination. “We’re here, this is my mentor’s room, Lord Reynold’s office!” Wade pushed open a big black metal door while explaining to Leylin. It was extremely spacious behind the door, and there were many green vines creeping in the surroundings. The ancient tree vines were twisted and intertwined, taking the shape of the table and chairs. Also, where some knots were, several beautiful white flowers were blooming, emitting a sweet fragrance. Behind the desk made of black vines, an old, white-haired Magus wearing gilded spectacles smiled at Leylin.
“Welcome!”
“An honour to meet you, my Lord!” The energy waves radiating off the old man’s body completed surpassed that of a Rank 1 Magus. Leylin had only come across this sort of undulation from the chairman and a couple of other Magi at the bloodbath in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
It was obvious that this old man was at least a rank 2 Magus.
“Don’t hold back. The Four Seasons Garden was created by the great Potions Master, Amesandenisa, for the sake of exchanging research and potion formulas. Our objective is to create equality and freedom!”
The white-haired man laughed with a kind demeanor.
“Being able to enter the Four Seasons Garden is an honour, my lord!”
Leylin bowed once more.
“Now then, are you prepared to sign the contract?” Reynold asked.
“I hope you don’t mind, but could I see the contents of the contract?” Leylin asked.
“Right! Don’t mind me, I’ve already gotten so old that I have forgotten these things…” The old man chuckled and pointed at a piece of parchment on the table.
Leylin picked it up and looked through the conditions.
Just as he had expected, the specifications were quite lax.
It was stated that Leylin had to swear not to harm the Four Season Garden’s interests and that he had to complete a specific number of missions per year. In exchange, the Four Seasons Garden would provide him with information and resources. In all other areas, the conditions were lax and did not restrain him in any way. There wasn’t even any mention of what would happen to Magi who left the organisation.
“It is just as Crew mentioned. Due to some history, the Four Seasons Garden’s pact is quite loose!”
Of course, Leylin was aware that this was just for him to gain access to some of the Four Season Garden’s resources. He was unable to gain further access to the more important items. That was only possible from the start if the contract was much more strict, to the point that he had to leave a part of his spirit here. However, Leylin wanted to enter a large organisation by taking on the role of a guest professor or special guest. It was for his convenience to obtain high-grade information and resources in the future. He had planned to travel across the world in the future and search for various Magi remnants and did not want to just be tied down in one place.

Leylin took extra care to examine the margins of the parchment paper, which was extremely clean, with no additional conditions or runes inscribed onto them. Some ancient characters were extremely difficult to notice and even similar to runes. Leylin had heard that many magicians loved to use such devious traps in order to trick others. Although the Four Seasons Garden might not stoop down to such a level, Leylin still felt that he had to be more careful for his own sake.

“A.I. Chip! Scan! Check if there are any pitfalls or unknown constraints in the contract!”

Leylin commanded silently.

[Mission establishing, beginning detailed scan!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Currently, after several upgrades, the A.I. Chip was still able to hide all traces of its existence before a rank 2 Magus.

[Beep! Scan complete! No strange or concealed restraints on the contract!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

“These conditions are very good, I have no reasons to refuse them!”

The A.I. Chip’s indication could only be heard by Leylin. From
Wade’s point of view, Leylin had only given it a cursory glance, before readily agreeing.
“Very well!” Reynold chanted an incantation.
*Buzz buzz!* There was an undulation in the air, and immediately, a mysterious eye appeared in mid-air.
This eye was completely black, save for the scarlet light within the pupil.
“Trial’s Eye!” Leylin said inwardly.
This eye was extremely similar to the clone he had summoned, but it was at least ten times bigger than what he had seen before!
It was obvious that when summoned by a rank 2 Magus, the Trial’s Eye’s might would be multiplied.
If it was said that the Trial’s Eye that Leylin had summoned when he was an acolyte had less than a billionth of the strength of its true body, this vertical eye that Reynold had summoned would most likely have the strength of a millionth of the Trial’s Eye’s real body.
The Trial’s Eye floated in mid-air quietly, and Leylin seemed to even see a trace of intelligence within its pupils.
“This is different from a phantom that has no consciousness when summoned by an acolyte. The might of the Trial’s Eye, when summoned by an official Magus, is even stronger. Moreover, it is intelligent and can think on its own, so it is able to judge the contract fairly between both parties!
Reynold explained to Leylin.
That was to say, if this Trial’s Eye had appeared in the past, Leylin’s past ploy in deceiving the vengeful spirit Roman with a word game would have been exposed, and he would have suffered the punishment of the Trial’s Eye.
“I declare that the ceremony starts now!”
Reynold announced in a low voice, and the moment he spoke, the Trial’s Eye trembled. Leylin could tell that the atmosphere in the air...
had changed and became denser.
“Witnessed by the mighty and impartial Trial’s Eye! Leylin, do you agree to sign this agreement?” Reynold asked, his voice clear and powerful in the ancient Byron language.
“I agree!” Leylin answered his speech also in the ancient Byron language.
The moment the words left his mouth, he could feel his spirit tremble, seeming to repeat the words that he had just said.
The phantom of the Trial’s Eye shook, seeming to be the witness to this contract.
“So then, I, Reynold, hereby declare the contract as established!” Reynold called out.
*Boom!*
The contract on the parchment paper in Reynold’s hands suddenly combusted, turning into ashes as they entered the phantom.
*Xiu Xiu!*
The Trial’s Eye exploded and turned into two black rays, entering Leylin and Reynold’s bodies at a speed that the naked eye could not follow.
“Congratulations. From today onwards, you are now an extrinsic Magus! Not only can you obtain a portion of precious resources every month, you are also allowed access to most of our labs and the library!” Reynold said to Leylin.
Good, now let’s speak about your allocations…” Reynold told Leylin.

“According to Wade, you have an amazing talent and ability in Potioneering. We cannot allow such a talent to be neglected. After some consideration, we are prepared to arrange you into the Potioneering team. Do you have any objections?”

“I couldn’t wish for anything better!” Leylin smiled. Since there were Potioneering teams, there should be other alchemy teams, battle teams and more. Leylin only wanted to enter the organisation to get a salary and gather some resources. He definitely would not be willing to endanger his life fighting battles for them. As for being able to join the Potioneering team, the requirements should be related to Potioneering, which was something he specialised in.

It seemed that intentionally having exposed his innate skill and strength from before had helped him in his promotion. “Alright! Wade, bring Leylin to the Decarte of the Potioneering team, and then come back. In regards to the Moonflower Flame incident, I think there are better ways to deal with it……”

“Yes, teacher!” Wade gave a bow, and took Leylin away with him. “What do you think? My tutor is a good person, right?” Wade asked Leylin with a sense of pride and boasting. Being in front of Leylin, who was now a fellow comrade, he was visibly much more relaxed.
“He is a wise and amiable senior!” This time, Leylin naturally would not sing a different tune.

“Ha ha…… everyone says that. Come, let me bring you to the Potioneering team. Decarte, over there, is overly conservative, but he still attentively cultivates truly talented young magicians……”

Wade divulged a quite a bit of information without much thought. At the end of the turn, a magician in black robes emerged. This magician exuded a twisted and chilling murderous aura with faint howls from vengeful spirits, causing Leylin to feel sensitive. The most eye-catching thing about this magician was his vertical third eye in the middle of his forehead.

The vertical eye was always open, and its pupil was pitch-black. It seemed to lack feeling or sensation, causing one to not help but shiver.

“Wade, this new Magus doesn’t seem to be very polite……”

The three-eyed Magus said coldly. An icy spiritual force immediately pounced onto Leylin.

“Hmmm?!”

Leylin was caught by surprise, and immediately gathered his spiritual force to defend.

*Pop!* Fine bubbles of air in the atmosphere began to pop. The moment their spiritual forces met, Leylin could feel that his opponent’s spiritual force contained a strong aura of fresh blood. This kind of odor was so dense that Leylin nearly suffocated as he could not dispel it.

And besides, his opponent’s level of elemental essence conversion far surpassed that of semi-converted elemental Magi. Leylin’s spiritual force collapsed under his opponent’s attack. As if a sledgehammer had smashed into Leylin’s chest, he stumbled two steps back, and his face turned white.

The three-eyed magician looked bewilderedly at Leylin, “Your spiritual force is not bad, but it’s a pity that it was still
insufficient…”
Subsequently, he did not take another look at Leylin, and proceeded past them.
It seemed that the Magus was trying to show off and demonstrate his prowess.
“Are you okay?” Wade looked a little worried for Leylin.
“No problem, my spiritual force is just a little shaken up. A few days of rest is all I need to get better!” Leylin looked in the direction of three-eyed Magus as he left, “Who is he?”
“He is Lord Caesar, a Magus personally nurtured by the Four Seasons Garden, and with valiant fighting strength. He is in charge of the hunting team, and is the role as our deputy commander!”
Wade looked at Leylin with a bitter smile on his lips.
“Lord Caesar believes that foreign magicians will only damage the Four Seasons Garden’s unity, and believes that recruiting new magicians should be banned…”
As if afraid that Leylin would worry, he added on, “Of course, my teacher, Lord Reynold, does not agree with his point of view. Furthermore, my teacher was one of the pioneers of this organisation. At the present, the Four Seasons Garden’s higher authorities are still in favour of recruiting new magicians…”
“Head of the hunting team……”
Leylin glared in the direction of Lord Caesar, and a ray of light flashed from his eyes.
“A.I. Chip, estimate the opponent’s strength!”
[Based on the spiritual force emitted by the opponent, target’s strength estimated: Rank 1 Magus with peak strength, elemental essence conversion above 80%…]
“With this kind of strength, it bears a resemblance to the elder from the Lilytell Family. By the looks of it, if I was paired to battle against him, I’d have little chance of winning…”
Tons of complicated ideas were swirling around in Leylin’s mind.
“Okay, let me bring you to the Potioneering team…” Wade quickly changed the topic, and Leylin followed behind Wade without comment.
Along the way, Wade tried his best to speak about other topics, hoping Leylin would forget about the unhappiness from earlier on. Even though they both knew it was impossible, Leylin still acted as if he was listening attentively.
“After becoming a part of our team, you can live here permanently in a house for free. However, life here is very monotonous; we just conduct experiments after experiments. Hence, many magicians like to own housing in the Nightless City, so that they can have a vacation over there from time to time…” Wade responsibly told Leylin what to expect. After crossing several forks in the road, they came to a stone bridge that spanned mid-air across an overhanging cliff, which led to a botanic garden.
The floor here was made of metal, and the surroundings were a tidy and clean shade of white, causing the misconception of returning to his laboratory from his past life.
On both sides of the road, there was also transparent glass. Behind the glass were petri dishes, in which various sorts of exotic plants had been planted.
Walking Earth Grass, Giant Food Flowers, Face Vines… With just a casual sweep of his eyes, Leylin found countless precious plants. Some were even important ingredients for cultivating spiritual force, but of course, they were only effective for acolytes. Any newly recruited rank 1 Magus would be astonished at all these things, but Leylin had seen the great Magus Serholm’s Dylan Gardens that he had personally cultivated, and all these plants were nothing compared to what he had seen before.
However, a shocked expression still flashed across his face. “We’ve arrived. This is the Potioneering headquarters!” Wade brought Leylin through the garden, and arrived in front of
two huge stone statues that resembled monsters.
“Password!” The statue started to speak.
“Tell Decarte that I’ve brought someone here for him! And also, don’t make jokes to amuse yourself! If it happens again, I’ll tell the teachers to change all guarding systems in this facility! You should know that I have that power!”
Wade bellowed at the statue.
As if he knew that Wade wasn’t joking, the enormous stone statue monster chuckled before getting out of the way.
“These two statues seem to have been manufactured defectively. The creator mistakenly stuffed a couple of mischievous spirits into the statues. Just ignore them!”
Wade brought Leylin through, then told Leylin.
“Mischievous spirits?” Leylin stared blankly, while immediately recalling a written account from an illustrated handbook.
“Those that resemble goblins, and tease people for their own pleasure… Those spirits? This is really… it deserves our sympathy!”
“To be honest, I also have some sympathy for myself!”
While Leylin was speaking, a tunnel behind the stone statue was opened, revealing what seemed like a structure of a ginormous auditorium.
There was a huge gold chandelier suspended from the ceiling of the auditorium. There were plenty of giant candles on it, illuminating the auditorium.
In the auditorium, there were numerous unusually long white birch tables with all sorts of delicacies spread on top. There were only a few magicians, and they were sitting far away from each other. Only a few of them who seemed to have a better relationship huddled together to chat.
The voice from earlier on belonged to a middle-aged magician on the platform.
“Here, let me introduce to you, this is Lord Decarte, the head of the Potioneering team. He is a Magus at the peak of Rank 1, and on the verge of breaking through to Rank 2!”
Wade smiled as he saluted Decarte, then said to Leylin.
“Lord Decarte!”
Leylin quickly bowed.
“Hehe, I know you! I’ve seen the clip of you brewing the medicine; your technique was really admirable! From now on, we’ll be colleagues! Everyone, please give a toast to our newest comrade!”
Decarte snapped his fingers, and two cups filled with mead flew in front of him and Leylin.
“Cheers!” All of the magicians present raised their cups.
“Thanks!” Leylin took the cup. The mead’s alcohol content was not high, and it tasted like sweet liquor. Its taste was pleasant.
“Well, since I’ve sent Leylin here, I will be taking my leave!”
Wade drank his wine in one shot, “My dear teacher is still waiting!”
“Since you still have something to attend to, I shall not delay you any further. Leylin, come! Sit here!”
While Decarte was speaking, the acolytes beside him immediately arranged a new long table. Countless kinds of delicacies and fruits were continuously brought to the table, quickly piling up onto the table.
Leylin slightly bowed and arrived at his own seat.
Only at this time did he have the chance to size up Decarte, the formidable Potioneering team leader.
Decarte wore white robes, onto which green plant designs had been embroidered.
His face’s shape was common, and on his forehead was a dark green headband, making him look extremely indolent.
Around Leylin, there were also a couple of servants, who were dressed glamorous. From the aura they gave off, they were level 3 acolytes from noble families.
He took a look around. Solely in this auditorium, there were at least thirty official Magi, and countless acolytes. This was only a Potioneering team. In terms of overall strength, it had already surpassed the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. The banquet carried on for about an hour and a half. After the majority of the magicians had finished eating, the acolytes brought beverages of different colours. The atmosphere in the auditorium slowly cozied up, resembling the tea parties Leylin had attended in his past life.

“Alright. This meal and welcoming ceremony are over. Let us discuss the allocation of work now…” Decarte spoke on the platform, his voice resonating to the ears of every magician present. Upon hearing this, the magicians put down their cups.

“Elmo! How’s the progress of the Giant Dragon Strength Potion?” A voluptuous female magician stood up, “I am about 70% done with deducing the formula, and am currently stuck at some crucial points. I am applying for the third centrifuge and supplies from the fifth garden…”

“Good. After the banquet ends, submit an application form!” Decarte nodded in agreement.
How about you, Martin? How is the brewing of the monthly 300 doses of Frost Potions?”

Martin was a short old man, and when his name was called, he seemed uneasy as he stood up.

“Sir, you know it. I am having a shortage of manpower… Also, recently, the apparatuses have…”

“I don’t care what your reasons are, Martin. Isn’t this the third time already?” Decarte’s face darkened.

“Please… Please forgive me, Sir!” Martin’s face reddened.

“It’s timely that you’re lacking in manpower. Leylin will first be assigned to your team, and I will provide you with another 3 synthesizing machines. If you are still unable to complete your task by next month, your allowance for this year will be greatly reduced!”

“Yes, Sir!” Martin could not help but to wipe the sweat off of his face.

Leylin, who heard his name being called, got up.

Next, Decarte called on several other magicians, inquired about their progress, and made the necessary arrangements.

After the banquet, Leylin took the initiative to slow his footsteps and walk alongside Martin.

“Having you come to my team… I’m sorry…” Martin apologised.

“It’s not a problem!”

In any team, all newbies had to suffer at the beginning, and Leylin
was well aware of this fact.
“Alright, let’s move on. I’ll bring you to the lab and your room. There’s also some stuff that you’ll need to know.”
Even though Martin looked quite inept, he was enthusiastically guiding Leylin through the registration processes.
“Take it. They’re the keys to your room, as well as your identity token!”
The old geezer Martin brought Leylin to a house that was constructed of black stones. Also, he handed over an old bronze key and an identity token to Leylin.
The ancient key was modelled in an old fashioned way. There were even some characters inscribed on it.
As for the identity token, it was made of a translucent metal, with Leylin’s name and other information carved onto it.
“Just with this token, you are able to go to the organisation’s resource point and obtain a portion of precious ingredients, as well as some advanced information.”
Martin explained to Leylin with patience.
“This token is extremely important, and if you lose, it there will be quite a hassle. You must definitely protect it well…”
Seeing that Leylin nodded his head to express his understanding, Martin brought Leylin to view the experiment labs and rooms.
“The experiment lab is a common shared area, and its number is dkh-328! The apparatus in it is rather decent, and enough for an official Magus. Furthermore, if you have any other special requests, you can apply for it through the organisation. As long as you have enough contribution points, the organisation will do their best to fulfill your requests....”
Leylin had heard Martin mention contribution points before. They were a method that the Four Seasons Garden used to gauge the merits of individual Magi. After finishing the appointed amount of work required, an official Magus could obtain contribution points.
These points could not only raise the status of the team but could also be used to exchange for essential resources and knowledge. From what Leylin could tell, this was a form of currency in the Four Seasons Garden.

“Speaking of contribution points, since you have only just entered, I’m sure you don’t have enough. How about it? Do you want to accept one or two acolytes? These kinds of assignments give the most contribution points.”

Martin suggested helpfully.

“Actually, I don’t have any plans on teaching anyone anytime soon!”

Leylin smiled and refused Martin’s request.

“However, how does the academy function to protect a member’s family?”

Leylin briefly stated the issue of him offending the Lilytell Family to Martin.

Under the insurance of safety and personal benefits, Leylin would not mind leaving a lifeline for the previous Leylin’s Farlier family. After all, he was still the eldest son and heir to this family in name. Also, if the opportunity presented itself, Leylin wished to make up for the fact that he had borrowed the body of this family’s child.

“Oh, don’t worry about it!”

Martin listened to what he said and shook his head.

“Our Four Seasons Garden is a lot more powerful than the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. As long as we get in contact with them, the Farlier family in the Chernobyl Islands will definitely be taken good care of! Furthermore, based on the contract that you’ve signed with us, before it’s certain that you’re dead, the Lilytell family will definitely not be able to hurt your family of regular humans.”

“There’s such a rule?”

Leylin was a little curious. No matter that world he was in, it was
acknowledged that harming one’s family was a very good way causing one to seek revenge, much less in the Magus world, where the regard of law was lacking.

“Is this… the fear of revenge?” Leylin guessed.

“Exactly. You’re fast!”

Martin looked pleased with Leylin. “An official Magus that has nothing to tie him down is the scariest. Especially the fact that the Lilytell Family’s members are not all magicians. There are definitely acolytes and normal human beings amongst them…”

Leylin understood that this was a mutual fear of each other. Before his death was confirmed, as long as the Lilytell Family dared to strike at the Farlier Family, it would definitely incur the wrath and revenge of Leylin. Also, with the strength of an official Magus, slaughtering those humans and acolytes would be as easy as eating rice and drinking water.

Even if the Lilytell Family was rather established, they would definitely not be able to handle such a loss. Hence, the Farlier Family would completely be safe.

“What’s more, you’ve joined us!” Martin’s expression was one of pride, and perhaps conceit.

“The Four Seasons Garden’s might is not something that the likes of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy can even begin to compare to. After hearing that you joined our side, they might have even thought of withdrawing their order for your capture!”

“I don’t really care about that!”

Leylin thought about Bosain, who he had killed. This acolyte of nobility seemed to be the sole grandson of the elder of the Lilytell Family. In addition, they had also dispatched a rank 1 Magus to kill him, who had ended up dying by Leylin’s hand. This enmity could not be so easily resolved.
“I’ve heard that the competition to be the next head of the Lilytell Family has reached the most crucial point. That elder is also known for being headstrong, and will not tolerate my existence. Otherwise, his image and reputation will be ruined…”

On the contrary, as Leylin thought of this, a look of anticipation appeared in his eyes.
Right now his strength was rapidly increasing. Moreover, once he underwent his second transition of his bloodline, his strength would definitely be boosted by a significant amount. At that time, it would not be a matter of whether the enemy would let Leylin leave, but whether Leylin would let them go.

……

Four months later.
Leylin wore a loose white robe, with patterns of green plants embroidered on the sleeves and collar.
This was the uniform that official Magi in the Four Seasons Garden wore.
He was presently passing through the side roads in the mountain of the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters.
After walking through a tunnel full of little plant people, he arrived at an ancient square.
The square seemed to be constructed in the heart of the mountain and was very large. The ceiling was made of solid rock, and an innumerable amount of everlasting light spells had been added to the wall, brightening up the entire room.
This was the place in the Four Seasons Garden where he could exchange contribution points for resources.
Here, whether it was an acolyte or Magus, one could use contribution points and gain the materials and information that they wanted.
In addition, as an official Magi, Leylin was able to gain his monthly allocation for finishing his monthly tasks. Many magicians who wished to join the Four Seasons Garden were attracted by this temptation, which was second only to having a large backer supporting them.

Leylin specifically walked towards the counter that handled the redemption of contribution points for official Magi. The staff member here was actually an official Magus as well. This official Magus was a female, with ocean blue hair that softly rested on her shoulders. On the sides of her lips, there were traces of gills.

“Hello, may I ask what you require?” The female Magus asked using the common language of the south coast, her voice extremely gentle and pleasing to the ears.

“This feeling…” Leylin was instead alarmed, “It’s extremely similar to the time when I was brewing the Azure Potion, where the voices of mermaids singing were heard…”

“It seems that this woman has a trace of the mermaids’ bloodline…”

Leylin’s expression on the surface was indifferent, as he looked at the woman and handed over his token. “I am here to retrieve some ingredients; is there a catalogue for them?”

“This is the catalogue of the items that you are currently able to exchange for!” The female Magus swept her eyes over Leylin’s token and seemed surprised as she looked at Leylin. After that, she pretended that it was not a big deal, and handed over a catalogue to him.

Leylin looked at the list of items on the catalogue in detail. This list was extremely long. Not only were there many resources that were precious even in the Nightless City, there were also many pieces high-grade information, and the latest results of experiments. Furthermore, Leylin even saw some spiritual force potions that
were meant for an official Magus’ consumption. However, the contribution points required were so high that Leylin could only long for them.

“Sky Flower Welk Fruit, Dwarf Frost Runes, Elemental Crystals!” Leylin’s fingers stopped when they traced the words of ‘elemental crystals’ on the catalogue. His previous backlash from consuming them had now disappeared, so he could once again obtain more crystallised Darkness energy particles to raise his elemental essence conversion.

Leylin fervently looked through the entry of the elemental crystals, and finally, at the end of the list of the names of energy particles, he found the name that he was searching for.

“Crystallised Darkness energy particles: able to effectively raise the elemental essence conversion of a Magus. Also has major residual effects. Use at your own risk! Available: 5850g. 1g = 1 contribution point. Limit: Regular team members can only buy a maximum of 50g per month!”

“This price?” Leylin frowned.

Based on this method of calculation, he could purchase 50g of elemental crystals at the most, which would deplete his contribution points by about half.

He had used up 300 grams of crystals, which raised his elemental essence conversion to 35%. With another 50g, at the very most, he would be able to raise it to 40%, which just wouldn’t be enough!
W
hy is the price of these crystals so expensive?”
Leylin could not help but blurt out, “Also, there’s
a limit to the quantity that I can purchase?”
From the looks of it, with such a method for calculating the price,
elemental crystals were one of the most expensive items in the
catalogue. Their prices were only second to that of a spiritual force
potion.
Leylin had stayed in the Four Seasons Garden for four months and
had been allocated 10 contribution points per month. This meant
that even if Leylin stayed idle, he would be able to get ten
contribution points per month from the Four Seasons Garden.
Furthermore, he had joined Martin’s squad, and every time he
completed a mission, he would receive a fixed amount of
contribution points.
However, even after adding all of these up, it was actually still not
enough to buy many items.
“Although the backlash of the elemental crystals is great, it is
undeniable that it can boost the strength of a Magus. Naturally, it is
an item that is highly sought after.”
The female Magus seemed to have heard these questions countless
of times, so she did not hesitate with her reply.
“Give me 50 grams of elemental crystals, and on top of that, add
these two pieces of high-grade information!”
Leylin paused and thought, before pointing to the catalogue and
saying to the female Magus. 
He knew that he had made a mistake; the Four Seasons Garden’s monthly allocation of resources could not be stacked up, but was instead fixed for every month. 
That was to say, Leylin could obtain up to 50 grams of elemental crystals per month, but he was not able to wait and receive several months’ worth of allocations at the same time. 
Moreover, even if he knew beforehand that the monthly allocations could not be accumulated, he, who had just joined, did not have that many contribution points allocated to him in the first place. 
“A total of 80 contribution points!”
The female Magus took Leylin’s badge and waved it above a black machine. Bright red lights flashed. 
Following that, she then retrieved the items that Leylin had requested from behind the counter. 
“Thank you!”
Leylin stuff the items in his robes and left the plaza with a heavy heart. 
“Leylin! Leylin!”
A short magus, with a height of merely one meter and a skull like a gnome, hurriedly ran to Leylin. 
“You’re just in time. Follow me, Martin was just looking for you!”
From what Leylin knew about this short Magus, he had also been temporarily assigned to Martin’s group. The two of them had accomplished a significant amount of missions together and had a decent relationship with each other. 
“Is anything wrong?”
Leylin was a little curious. 
As the leader, Martin would usually lead and plan the task. In other areas, however, Martin had little presence. 
“It seems like this is related to this month’s task!” Leylin said. The short Magus revealed a delightful smile.
“Ever since Leylin joined Team 3, our rate of success has been steadily increasing, allowing Martin to gain favour with Lord Decarte! In addition, since our group has been performing exceedingly well, Decarte has started assigning us other more challenging tasks with higher quality rewards.”

“This time, it probably has to do with this matter……”

“Other tasks?” Leylin was a little curious. Ever since he had joined Team 3 under Martin, the tasks that had been assigned to him had always been the brewing of frost potions and the like.

In this complicated and taxing task, the presence of the A.I. Chip had begun to show its advantages. Leylin’s completion rate was exceptionally stunning. Thus, although Leylin consciously hid some of his progress, deliberately committing mistakes, his contribution to the small team was remarkable, gaining him the respect of many of the members.

Leylin followed behind the short Magus, passing through a couple of long and narrow forks, and eventually arriving at Team 3’s meeting point.

*Pong!* The iron door opened up at once.

“Leylin!”

Martin was slumped over at a long table and using a red pen to write, but after noticing Leylin, he briefly put his existing work on hold, his face revealing a pleasant smile.

To him, Leylin was basically his savior. With Leylin’s entry into the team, he had been able to complete his own task, assuredly securing his own resources this year, and also helping his team accomplish some marvelous tasks.

It was only now that he believed that Leylin was his lucky star. There were other members of Team 3 in the spacious room. Upon seeing Leylin, their faces displayed amicable smiles.

“Great! Now that everyone is present, I shall talk about this
month’s task!”
Martin happily took out a scroll wrapped with a golden ribbon out from his robe, steadily opening it in front of Leylin and the others.
“Our task this month is to maintain a specific area within the secret plane. Reward: 50 contribution points each!”
*Clamour*
Even though they were aware that the task this time around would be very good, the Magi situated below were in chaos.
“It’s actually to enter the secret plane! This is really…” The short Magus had a very excited look on his face.
At the corner, Leylin revealed his surprise too. “Such a huge reward, and also, a secret plane?”
A secret plane was a domain that ancient Magi had constructed in order to house resources or conduct experiments. It was isolated by spells, and by the looks of it, the Four Seasons Garden possessed such a place as well.
“I almost forgot, Leylin, you have just joined not long ago, and probably are still unaware of the secret plane!”
Martin closed and rebound the scroll, smiling as he walked towards Leylin.
“Leylin, from what you know, what is the one thing that a Magus values the most?”
“Talent and resources!” Leylin answered without hesitation. This was the common consensus from all Magi in the south coast.
“Not bad. A Magus’s aptitude is set from birth, and is impossible to change, and the only way to make up for it thereafter is in the resources aspect!”
“With sufficient resources, even a Magus with an average aptitude can possibly reach the footsteps of a gifted Magus… …”
Martin showed a face of awe.
“Thus, once ancient Magi advanced, they would search for an area that had a high concentration of elemental energy particles, and
construct a secret plane to nurture and grow resources… For this reason, it is the root of many ancient Magi remnants that you see now!”

“As for the current generation of Magi, they are far from the overpowering might of ancient Magi, who could cast isolation spells on their own, and set up spells that could stretch and compress space… some needed resources like space rocks for the construction, which cannot be found by the current age Magi!”

“Thus, at the current south coast, the inner circles of magisteriums have joined forces to open up and cultivate a part of a secret plane as a mainstream activity…”

“Perhaps, there are a few lucky ones. Those who are so lucky that they can cause jealousy, obtaining ancient remnants and inheritances and controlling a secret plane. That is really a story of instant success…”

Martin’s face was tinged with envy.
Of course, Leylin knew what a secret plane represented, as the knowledge that he had previously gathered at the Dylan Gardens had been deeply etched into his memory.
Simply owning a part of a secret plane would mean the provision of limitless resources!
For a Magi who especially required resources, this was an irresistible offer.
However, the capability of a Magus was limited, and one unable to build a new secret plane on his or her own. Only when working together could Magi build a secret plane.
Leylin had predicted the existence of similar places in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, but because his level had been lower back then, and he had advanced into a Magus after leaving the Academy, he was unable to prove this point.
“Leylin, you have only been here for a few months, and yet, you are entering into the secret plane. The upper management seem to
have a lot of confidence in you, huh!”

Martin patted Leylin on his back in a friendly manner.

“Not at all! Not at all!” Leylin gave a modest expression, appearing rather shy.

“Ha Ha… …Let’s go!”

Martin laughed and took the lead, and Leylin himself followed closely behind him.

The entrance to the Four Seasons Garden’s secret plane was near the headquarters so that it would be easy to deploy forces to guard the entrance.

Leylin and the rest followed behind Martin, and after following five to six roads, they reached the entrance to the secret plane.

On the way there, Leylin used the A.I. Chip, and felt the five or six energy waves scanning over his group.

Furthermore, the Magi guiding the entrance were of semi-converted elemental strength and beyond.

These types of stringent and vigilant checks caught Leylin by surprise.

Standing in front of them, the stern looking Magi examined the scroll that Martin was holding once more. After which, Martin turned back and shouted to Leylin and the rest, “Get ready, the entrance is about to open!”

The entrance to the secret plane was a door made out of a big slab of stone, and the borders of the big door were embossed with differing intricate designs.

On a platform beside the entrance, there was a Magus sitting cross-legged, whose countenance was concealed. Extremely mysterious and strong energy waves radiated from his body.

“This is the guardian of the academy! Hurry up and greet him!”

Martin led the group of magicians and bowed first.

“This is… At least a rank 2 Magus’ energy waves. It seems like the importance of this secret plane has far surpassed my guesses!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed as he bowed like the others. “Since the inspection is now over, let us enter!” The guardian waved his arm and chanted an incantation. *Weng Weng!* The stone door moved, and a white light radiated from behind the door, giving off a feeling of energy waves emanating from the void.

Having had previous experience in exploring secret planes, Leylin was familiar with the undulations that indicated the opening of the plane.

At the same time, a bright light was produced from the scroll in Martin’s hands, and enveloped the entire group. When the white lights met and fused, it produced a blinding glare. As the glare eventually vanished, Martin, as well as the other magicians, were revealed to have disappeared.

“Ugh!” Leylin rubbed his eyes, which were stinging in pain. “This is really uncomfortable!” He found himself standing on top of another platform, on which many acolytes were walking around.

Unlike the previous scenery, the surroundings were a sea of green. The sky was a pure blue, and the surrounding air was extremely fresh.

“Are we within the secret plane? It seems quite large!” Leylin stroked his chin. “A.I. Chip, analyse the surroundings!”

[Beep! Scanning in process! Compared to the air in the outer world, the density of energy particles within the secret plane is higher by 34.7%!]

The A.I. Chip displayed a chart in front of Leylin, quickly giving him the data that he required.
“This is shocking, isn’t it?”

Martin joyfully said as he walked closer. “This is the Four Seasons Garden’s four seasons secret plane, which has an overall land area of more than one hundred thousand mu, and is abundant with various types of resources…”

“One hundred thousand mu?” Leylin was extremely surprised; this was the land area of a couple countries from before he was reincarnated added up together.

“Yeah, there are not only valuable objects and magical living creatures, but normal humans are in here too…”

Martin pointed towards the distance at what looked like an area of small towns and villages. “We employ normal humans to help us with farming and even working at some plantations for the Magi. This proves that being well organised, well planned with training, and more highly invested human resources, we can produce even more resources…”

“The entire Four Season’s secret plane is the foundation of our Four Season’s Garden, and is an unending stream of treasure!”

“Building the secret plane, cultivating resources, and harvesting; these are the main resources used to furnish the white Magi’s power!” An intoxicating look flashed through Martin’s eyes.

“These one hundred thousand mu of land have such a high energy concentration, and adding the special care and maintenance…” Leylin sighed, as he thought to himself in his heart.
Leylin also felt that the old him was always living in the shadows of the Magus world, whereas right now, he could finally see the differing ideologies of the dark Magi.
The light Magi cultivated the various plantations and animals within the secret plane, thus reaping great resources.
On the other hand, the dark Magi seemed to prefer using violence to obtain these resources.
“Leylin, do you know why the previous check that we went through was so stringent?”
Martin asked unexpectedly.
“Why? Could it be because of the fear of the dark Magi?” Leylin shared his speculations.
“Yes, it’s those wretched beings!” Martin was fuming with rage when he spoke of the dark Magi.
“Those bloodthirsty dark Magi always seek to profit using other people’s toils, and cannot be bothered to run their own secret plane. Instead, from time to time, they plot against our light Magi’s secret plane.
The short magician who was at the side revealed the reason.
“Every year, there would be a successful occasion of dark Magi raiding our secret plane! Although they took only the presently available resources, and the secret plane was able to resume production, it was still a tremendous loss…
On the contrary, Leylin was surprisingly knowledgeable about the reasoning behind it.
Although the dark Magi grew up in a bloody and vicious environment, it was undeniable that having grown up in such conditions, these dark Magi were more powerful than the average light Magus.
In the eyes of the dark Magi, whose methods involved preying on the weak, the resources of the white Magi were a veritable gold mine.
Moreover, these kinds of smaller scale battles could even be used as a way for the dark Magi to train their forces. If the white Magi had not been well organised and united, and the black Magi themselves also had flaws and trust issues, perhaps the balance of power of Magi in the entire south coast may have been altered.

“Alright, I will allocate the next task!”

Martin stood at the corner again and waited for all the Magi to make their way over, before giving his speech.

“Our task is to clean up an area in the north division, getting rid of the insect pests and diseases within. We also have to pay attention to the disease that is affecting the grassland in the east division. Black spots have appeared on the surface of Horse Milk Grass, and we need to use the First Jacklin Potion to take care of it.”

“Fire Eyes and Hakob, go to the first east division! Oak and Leylin, you two go to the second east division.”

Next, Martin started to announce people’s duties.

“Let’s go!” The midget Magus named Oak told Leylin.

After everyone’s duties had been distributed, the Magi in the third team left the platform in groups of twos and threes.

“There is still a very large distance that we need to traverse to reach the north division, but we have already arranged for a mount, and will be able to reach our destination quickly… …”

It was obvious that Oak had been here a few times in the past. He brought Leylin to the edge of a building. Facing the window, he asked for 2 of the green metal plates.

“The controlling device for the Dragon Crown Nighthawks?”

By now, Leylin understood that the Four Seasons Garden totally controlled the secret plane.

With the two piercing cries of the Nighthawks, the two Dragon Crown Nighthawks flapped their wings and flew towards the east. After flying for a distance, if one were to look at the riders from
they had set off, one would only be able to see some tiny black specks.
The whistling of the wind continued to sound in Leylin’s ears.
Leylin sat on the wide back of the Nighthawk, sweeping his eyes over the land under him.
In the secret plane, where the amount of energy particles was much denser, all types of vegetation grew very well.
For as far as the eye could see, there were lush green fields, within which there were several organised patches of blue flowers that gave off a sweet scent.
This was the Honey Milk Flower. Not only was it often used by acolytes as an ingredient used in Potioneering, the nectar within the flower was also a food that all beings in the Magus world enjoyed.
With the use of the A.I. Chip, Leylin could see that within the sea of blue, there were several people looking like ants as they worked diligently.
Beside the sea of flowers, there were several obviously man-made constructions, which seemed to have the sole purpose of watching over the flowers.
“Regular humans are in charge of plants that acolytes use as ingredients. As for ingredients that the official Magi usually use, which are more precious, they are more heavily defended, and are bred in special environments that simulate the environment of the outside world.”
After flying for nearly half an hour, they descended into the outskirts of a small town.
“Greetings, my Lords!”
At this moment, a bunch of housewives and children came out from the town, and led by a town mayor and an acolyte, they respectfully greeted Leylin and Oak.
“We have definitely told you everything regarding the general events that have been taking place! This is my identity token! Bring
me to the surveillance tower!”
Oak handed over a badge to the acolyte.
The acolyte seemed to be very old, and there were streaks of white
hair behind his ears. He took the badge and traced over the surface
of it with his thumb while chanting an incantation.
With the incantation, a layer of white light emerged from the badge
and formed an image in midair. The screen listed Leylin’s and
Oak’s profiles.
“Lord Leylin! Lord Oak! Please follow me!”
After seeing the image and information, this acolyte seemed to
heave a sigh of relief, as he led Leylin and Oak to a tall stone tower
within the small town.
“This is the organisation’s surveillance tower. I have been taking on
the role as a guard and have been maintaining the tower. Right now
it is operating perfectly fine.” The acolyte opened the doors of the
surveillance tower as he made his report.
The surveillance tower was extremely simple, and the walls were
the colour of ashen grey rocks.
The first floor made up the living quarters of the acolyte, and
goods such as the stones and crystals used in the maintenance of
the tower were haphazardly stocked on the second floor.
After going up the long flight of spiral steps, Leylin reached the
highest floor of the surveillance tower.
Outside the door of the highest floor, there was actually a living
magic creature. It was a painting of a lizard mounted on the wall.
“Give me the password!”
“The great mother earth has bestowed upon us her powers!” The
acolyte recited in a singsong voice.
“Password confirmed!” Following the reply of the lizard, the door
opened with a creak.
“Even though he is only a level 3 acolyte, he’s not bad!”
Leylin looked at the lizard within the painting that was still crawling
and commented, before entering the room. The room at the highest level was very small. There were windows installed on the four walls, and through them, one could observe the scenery surrounding the town. “This is an apparatus that monitors the weather, and these spell formations complement the fine tuning of humidity and temperature. The controls are extremely simple, but since this is still your first time, Leylin, you can watch me first…” Oak walked towards a black apparatus. “Our initial purpose for coming here is to treat the disease that is affecting the Horse Milk Grass…” Oak pressed on the apparatus, and immediately put on a red plastic mask on his face. *Ka-Cha!* A depression appeared in the apparatus. It was the size of a thumb, which could fit a test-tube in. “First Jacklin Potion!” Oak placed several test tubes in the depression. Immediately, the green liquids water level slowly fell. “Rain!” Oak spat out the word in the ancient Byron language. At the same time, water element particles were constantly converging in his palm. The energy particles were magnified through the apparatus and were eventually expelled out of the tower. “To have used the magic of magicians to replace science and create man-made rain, this is incredible!” An intoxicated expression appeared on Leylin’s face as he thought. Any and all paths of progression would eventually converge at the same final destination. The magicians who harnessed the mysterious powers of magic in this world had nearly achieved the same feats attained in Leylin’s previous world. *Ka-Cha!*
Above the small town, patches of ominous clouds gathered and seemingly grew denser by the second.

*Pitter Patter!*  
Droplets of green rain fell from the sky.  
Dark clouds amassed, and the rain descended upon the grassy plains.  
With the onset of rain, the black spots on the surface of the Horse Milk Grass became noticeably lighter. It seemed that with the treatment contained within the rainfall, the grass could have a complete recovery.

“The management of the secret plane is also a skill! The method of creating rain is the simplest of all of the techniques that we use. We also need to be aware of the compatibility of the flora and the fauna. For instance, if Night Lotus Flowers and Midnight Bees are put together, not only can this raise the efficiency of the production of the Midnight Lotus Flowers, it can also increase the vitality of the Midnight Bees, and increase the chance of there being a Bee King. Furthermore, the honey made from the pollen of the Midnight Lotus Flower is also a cosmetic item highly sought after by female Magi.”

Oak gave Leylin a brief introduction.  
Leylin’s experience in managing a secret plane was completely non-existent.  
Hence, he attentively recorded Oak’s words in his memory and asked questions from time to time in order to lessen his doubts.  

“However, it’s a pity! If I am able to let the A.I. Chip manage the activities within the secret plane using science and technology, I am confident that I can increase the productivity of the secret plane by at least 20%!”

After understanding the general situation within the secret plane, Leylin felt that this was a pity.
No matter how great the Four Seasons Garden’s secret plane was, it did not belong to him. Therefore, Leylin did not want to reveal his trump cards for the sake of it. Also, as a newly advanced Magus, it was just a pipe dream for him to own a secret plane all to himself. Apart from these couple stray thoughts, Leylin did not have any better methods that he wanted to employ.

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Seven days later, the crisp caw of a Nighthawk sounded. Leylin sat on the back of a Dragon Crown Nighthawk while flying back to the Nightless City. The missions to maintain the secret plane were indeed some of the most popular missions. Leylin and Oak only spent seven days to cleanse the eastern part of the secret plane. Not only was the disease cured, they managed to drive away droves of ferocious beasts. After which, Leylin and the others who, had nothing else left to do, were sent out of the secret plane. On each of their tokens, there was a huge number of contribution points added. “I can try my earlier plan now. Also, I need to find several more servants. If I were to do everything myself, it would be a waste of my time…” Leylin thought.
After a span of four months, the backlash from consuming the Darkness crystals disappeared. However, the Four Seasons Garden’s supply was far from enough, so Leylin could only shift his attention to that old witch in the Nightless City. He remembered that the old witch’s shop had a number of good items.

The sea of people in the Nightless City was the same as before. Leylin flew directly to the passage that hosted the revered magicians and showed his ring to the guards, before entering the city under the respectful bows of the guards.

Suddenly, Leylin’s robes shook. A green light forcefully radiated through his robes.

“En?”

Leylin furrowed his brow, and withdrew a pocket sized diary. A green secret imprint flashed with light, and from it, the voice of an old lady sounded. “Hey Leylin, are you here yet?”

From the tone of the voice, Leylin could detect a sense of urgency. Ever since he had handed over a copy of his research on spirits from when he was an acolyte to the old witch, she had proved to have an extreme interest in it. Furthermore, she even given her secret imprint to Leylin.

During these past few months, she seemed to have gotten some progress in her experiment, but she was caught in a bottleneck. Hence, she had been continuously sending messages to Leylin.

It was a pity, however, that Leylin had been inside the Four Seasons Garden brewing potions to exchange for contribution points, so he hadn’t paid her any heed.

However, this old witch was extremely patient, and had been sending Leylin a message every few days. “What is it? Didn’t I say that I would try my best to come over as quickly as possible?” Leylin said to the secret imprint.
At the same time, his footsteps halted, and changed directions towards a deserted alley. He also applied a layer of isolation magic on his body.

“This time, I have amassed many items. Do you remember the crystallised Darkness energy particles? I have a total of 500 grams here, and I swear that you won’t regret it…”

Knowing Leylin’s temperament, the old witch hurriedly tossed out her bargaining chip.

“500 grams?” Leylin’s brows relaxed, and the original feeling of tension disappeared.

With that many Darkness crystals, combined with the ones he had been saving, it would definitely bring his elemental essence conversion up by another notch.

However, the Darkness crystals were not almighty. According to Leylin’s estimation and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, if these crystals were to bring his elemental essence conversion up to 70%, then it would already be a godsend.

What’s more, the backlash would be extremely terrifying. If his vitality was not superior to other normal magicians, he wouldn’t dare to be this crazy.

“Yeah, this time I spared no expense, and even owe some old freaks a couple of favours now… Do you remember our previous transaction? Give me the latter half of the information, and all of these crystals will be yours. Also, there is some prospect of the things that you mentioned to me before happening. As for the details, wait until you come to my shop…”

The old witch’s voice gradually faded, but Leylin could tell that she had a certain amount of confidence.

“Okay, wait for me. I’ll be right there!” Leylin closed the diary, and hastened his footsteps.

Within Nightless City, Elm Street #231!

“Hehehe… You actually got here so quickly. It seems like you’re
also anxious to get the items I have!”

Seeing Leylin entering the shop, the witch immediately closed the main doors. It seemed that she was prepared to stop operating her business for the rest of the day.

“You and I are both Magi, but if not for the fact that we both had something the other party wanted, we would not be gathered like this. Don’t bother trying to play these mind games!”

Leylin carefully scrutinised the old witch’s appearance. She looked more aged as compared to before. Furthermore, her hair was shrinking and falling out. It seemed like she had gotten older by thirty to forty years.

“What has happened to you?”

Leylin casually asked.

“It’s nothing much, just a backlash from an experiment!” The old witch obviously did not intend to elaborate.

“All 500 grams of Darkness crystals are here!” The old witch shook her head and placed a black bottle on the counter. Her body was extremely thin, as if she could collapse and die any given moment.

Inside the bottle, there was a layer of half solid and half liquid translucent crystals, the same as what Leylin had seen before.

“Before this, how about the thing I had entrusted you to look for previously? Are there really any prospects now?”

He had made a request to the old witch before, and that matter was no ordinary task.

“Of course, people who are similar are the most sensitive to one another. From your aura, I completely believe in your identity as a dark Magus. Furthermore, the guild behind me is very willing to have you join us…”

The old witch panted and sat on a chair made of vines while talking.

What Leylin had asked of the old witch from before was naturally to seek out an organisation operated by dark Magi.
Even within the Nightless City, which was controlled by the light Magi, there would definitely still be the existence of shadows. These were the grounds where the dark Magi would operate! After all, Leylin was still a dark Magus through and through. To him, slowly gathering resources like other Magi, and spending time and effort to seek a chance to break through, was far too inefficient for him!

Furthermore, Leylin did not own a secret plane, and with his current wealth, he would definitely not be able to establish one. As a result, he could only work for an organisation in exchange for resources. Such a cumbersome process was unbearable to him. As for the crudest way of obtaining resources, it was always done through bloodthirsty means. How could a slow and steady accumulation beat the instant gaining of resources through plundering? Although this method had a certain degree of risk, after doing some calculations, Leylin felt that it was within his risk threshold.

In fact, this was the most common thought of the dark Magi. One could nurture a secret plane on any given day, but once there was an immediate increased need for resources, looting or plundering would have to be done.

As for the previous encounter, Leylin realised that this old witch was not just a dark Magus. Her shop was most likely a contact point for the disposal of stolen goods, and a meeting place for the dark Magi. Hence, he had a notion about what was to come. After all, with his current capabilities, he would not be able to plunder a secret plane, so he would need the help of other magicians.

“En! When will you bring me to see your head?” Leylin asked.
“What about my reward?” The old witch refused.
“First, look at this!” Leylin tossed a scroll to her after thinking.
The old witch caught the scroll, and her eyes squinted. “En! It seems to be an introduction to a type of spiritual force potion. The ingredients required are really rare; you actually need a spirit…” “Guk Kuk…” Suddenly, as if something got stuck in the old witch’s throat, she let off a gag, her face filled with disbelief. “This is… A spiritual force formula of the ancient Magi! The primary steps have actually been filled in…” She looked at Leylin in alarm. “Give me the rest of this information, and the deal will be sealed! I can even give you other types of compensation, and my treasures will be for your taking!” Towards the old witch’s suggestion, Leylin scoffed. “Are you kidding? A copy of a spiritual force potion of the ancient Magi is only worth this much?” “Then what do you want?” The old witch’s face darkened, and a dark spiritual force energy wave emanated from her body. *Whoosh!* As if a strong wind had passed through, the items in the shop began to shake. “You wish to attack? Don’t forget that we’re in the Nightless City right now!” Leylin reminded her as he smiled gently. After which, his eyes flashed, and an immense wave of spiritual force with an inconceivable darkness enveloped the shop. *Bang!* The two forces clashed, and several explosions occurred in the air. The glass bottles in the surroundings cracked open, and several organs and fresh blood seeped from them. “You actually have such a huge improvement in your spiritual force?” The old witch staggered back two steps, apparently shocked. “Not only that, look at this too!” Leylin withdrew the identification badge of the Four Seasons Garden, and flashed it at the witch.
“The identity token of the Four Seasons Garden! To think that you had already joined them!”
The old witch was evidently more afraid now.
“Hey hey! Is this Elm Street #231, Marie’s Emporium? I detected strong spiritual force energy waves from your shop earlier; do you need any assistance?”
A milky white light from a secret imprint floated on the old witch’s counter.
“No… It’s nothing. Just a leakage of a failed experiment from earlier…” The old witch looked Leylin in the eye, and said to the secret imprint.
The other party was silent for a moment. “Then I will make this record. Moreover, you have flouted clause 762 of the Nightless City’s security law; please come to the communal centre to pay your fines before the 13th…”
Evidently, the other party had his suspicions, but as the perpetrator of this event, the old witch did not voice any problems, so the other party did not bother to pursue the matter any further.
“I know!” The old witch answered the other party in a superficial manner, before shutting off the secret imprint.
In the Magus world, strength alone was not everything. One needed to have some kind of backing as well.
Not only did Leylin display his immense might in front of the old witch, he even revealed that he had the backing of the Four Seasons Garden. Hence, the old witch now had no choice but to take him seriously.
As for the possibility of the other party catching hold of Leylin’s weak point?
Right now Leylin had not joined any dark Magi organisations, so why would he be afraid of that?
Also, after successfully joining the organisation that the old witch was in, everyone would be in the same boat. Leylin also had other plans, and would never allow this old witch to reveal them to others.
*Crash!*
A heap of high-grade magic crystals that radiated huge energy waves was emptied on the table, along with a dozen black magic crystal cards.
These magic crystal cards were made of the essence of 1000 magic crystals, which was the origin for many formations source of energy. Hence, they were extremely sought after.
“All of my magic crystals are here. Every item in this shop, as long as you want them, can be yours. If only you could give me that potion’s formula.”
An earnest and pleading expression appeared on the old witch’s face. It seemed that she needed this potion’s formula very badly.
This turn of events left Leylin somewhat shocked. From what he thought, this old witch would definitely be enthralled by it, but not to such a crazy degree. However, this situation was naturally more favourable towards him now.

Leylin appeared indifferent as he swept up the magic crystal cards and crystallised Darkness energy particles and stored them in his robes.

“How precious is the formula of a potion that can increase the spiritual force of even official Magi? It isn’t even easy for me to get this kind of item!” Leylin said nonchalantly, and despair was drawn on the old witch’s face.

“Although the formula cannot be given, we can still cooperate!” Right when the old witch was about to burst in rage, Leylin gently spoke again, causing the old witch relax the energy particles that she had gathered.

“Cooperate? How are we going to do that?” “You’re an expert in the field of spirits, and the raw ingredients for this spiritual potion are all spirits! You’ll provide the ingredients and do all of the other preparatory work, and I’ll be in charge of brewing the potion. As for the potions that are successful, I’ll get 60% of them, and you’ll get the remaining 40%!” Leylin suggested.

It was obvious that this proposal seemed to hit the old witch’s soft spot. In terms of potential, she couldn’t take down the present Leylin, and the power backing Leylin was also one that caused her some amount of fear. In addition, this potion was extremely important to her.

“The ratio is too little. I’ll be obtaining the spirits and doing all the prep work, which is much more dangerous. If I ever get caught by
the light Magi, I’ll definitely be chased to the ends of the world!”
The old witch emphasised the fact that she’d be in the most danger.  
“That’s the best you’ll get! It won’t get any higher than this!” Leylin wore a deadpan expression. “After all, the formula is in my hands.  
As long as you agree, we can immediately sign a contract and summon the Trial’s Eye to bear witness to it!”
“…Very well!” The old witch was silent for a long while, before forcing the words out of her mouth.
After picking another time to meet, Leylin left the area with a smile about his lips.
He had been planning on collaborating with her since after their first meeting.
The spiritual force potion that he had shown earlier was naturally the ancient potion formula for the Tears of Mary.
Back when he was an acolyte, he had already completed a simplified version of it, the Blood Vengeance Potion.
After he had advanced into a Rank 1 Warlock and upgraded the A.I. Chip, Leylin finally possessed the capabilities to restore the original incomplete formula of the potion.
This potion was indeed befitting of use by the ancient Magi. According to the A.I. Chip’s simple calculation, the Tears of Mary currently proved to be extremely beneficial for Leylin to speedily increase his spiritual force.
A large amount of spirits that had to be harvested, combined with the early stages of preparatory work, was extremely complicated and savage. The brutality contained was leagues above that of brewing the Blood Vengeance Potion! If the light Magi were to find out, Leylin’s only outcome would be a chase to the death, and even interrogation regarding the formula.
Leylin did not have the time and effort to take on such a risk.
Moreover, due to the potion formula’s special nature, the magicians who could handle the preparatory work had to have to strength of
an official Magus and a deep understanding regarding the aspect of spirits.
Right now, the old witch was the only one that fulfilled this criterion.
Within the Four Seasons Garden, there were sure to be Magi who were able to fulfill these requirements, but Leylin wouldn’t even consider it.
This spiritual potion, which was suitable for official Magi, was much more costly than those suitable for acolytes. Furthermore, it was an ancient potion! Leylin wasn’t so stupid as to think that he could keep possession of this formula. It would definitely be seized in the name of the organisation.
Even though the organisation was sure to give him some benefits, would it outweigh the advantages of having sole possession of the formula?
A potion that could raise one’s spiritual power was a temptation that no official Magus would be able to resist.
As a result, with Leylin’s persuasion, the old witch quickly agreed.
In addition, the two of them made an unbreakable vow, to which the Trial’s Eye bore witness.
The old witch was even forced to swear not to leak any information about Leylin or the potion formula.
This was, of course, at Leylin’s request. This way, even if someone found out the old witch’s secret, they would not be able to trace it back to Leylin.
In fact, Leylin pushed all the risk of material gathering onto the old witch!
Hence, he did not hesitate to give her 40% of the potions that would be brewed!
As for the formula of the potion, Leylin had given the old witch most of the contents of the first half. As for the few most crucial steps, it was solely controlled by him.
As long as he held on to those key steps, Leylin didn’t need to worry about the old witch possibly rebelling against him. These last few procedures were not only extremely tedious but also required the help of the A.I. Chip to achieve true success. Even if others had gotten the complete formula, they might not be able to brew the potion successfully. As for the witch who needed the potion, she had no choice but to toil for Leylin, taking on the extreme risk of harvesting souls, and also completing the bloody preparation of the early stages of the brewing process. After signing the contract, Leylin and the old witch were, to some extent, in the same boat, so the matter of being referred to a dark guild would naturally be followed up. “But that old witch’s reaction was a little strange. She agreed so easily in order to obtain the potion. I was prepared to give her more materials, but she actually agreed to my conditions so quickly, almost as if the potion wasn’t for herself, but for someone else…” The wheels in Leylin’s head were constantly turning as he ambled along. “No, this is better for me. If I have misgivings about this arrangement, then I will have something that I can use as blackmail material…” Under the setting sun’s light, Leylin’s shadow was drawn out onto the streets, looking somewhat malevolent, as if it were a devil… In the shop from before. The old witch stood there silently until she confirmed Leylin’s departure. After that, she walked to the counter and pressed on a hidden area. *Boom!* A mechanical sound was heard, and the wall at the back of the shop was pushed backwards, revealing a flight of steps that headed downwards.
The old witch held onto her cloak as she slowly walked down. The staircase was extremely short, ending after just a couple of steps. This was a basement, and it was positioned right below the old witch’s shop. Moreover, there were many runes inscribed onto the walls of the basement room. There were a few human bones scattered in the corners of the room as well. There were many traces of scars on these bones, which could only let one imagine the torture and suffering that the owners went through while they were alive. A frosty aura continuously encircled the room. If Leylin was here, he would definitely recognise this familiar feeling. It was similar to the lab back in the Extreme Night City, where he was trying to create vengeful spirits. *Sssii!* The old witch lit a candle in the centre of the room. This candle was a transparent white, yet the flame was a dark green. The old witch’s horrendous countenance looked even more malicious under the flame. “Mother…” Whoosh! A black tornado swept across the basement, and after a flash of black gas, there was suddenly a translucent figure in the basement. This figure belonged to a young girl wearing a simple dress. Her shadow was extremely faint as if she was on the verge of dissipating. “My daughter!” A kindly, yet heartbroken expression appeared on the old witch’s face. “What happened just now? Why did I feel a strong and vicious energy burst out upstairs?” The girl’s expression was one of suspicion. “No! It’s nothing, just a slight dispute while I was doing
business…”
The old witch looked tense. “Did it hurt you?”
“I’m alright, it’s only that…” The girl crouched on the floor and hugged her knees. “Don’t bother with me anymore; it has already costed you large amounts of resources to protect my existence. If not for me, wouldn’t you have long since advanced?”
“My dear daughter!” The old witch’s eyes reddened, and she wanted to hug her daughter, yet her two hands could only weave through the girl’s ghostly figure.
Following which, the girl’s arms turned even more illusory, as if they were going to scatter any moment.
“Oh! No! Why is this even faster than before?”
Fright appeared on the old witch’s face, and she frantically withdrew various items from her robes and placed them on the floor, forming a tiny spell formation.
In the center of the formation, there was a spirit trapped within a crystal ball.
“Almighty Defiling Mother, I hereby sacrifice the fear of this spirit in return for your blessings…”
The old witch continued to chant in an extremely awkward sounding incantation, all while pointing at the spirit.
“Ah…” The sound of anguish and terror travelled outwards from within the crystal ball, threads of silvery-white gas constantly being drawn out from the spirit’s body.
The silvery-white gas quickly supplemented the girl’s body, and her almost dissipated body gradually became more stable.
“It’s starting again! I don’t want to do this… It’s too… too cruel…”
The girl quietly sobbed.
“I found a potion today, and the formula is said to have been used by ancient Magi to raise their spiritual power. It’ll definitely be effective for you! Stay strong! Stay strong for a little while longer, and mother will definitely help you regain your physical body.”
The old witch continuously consoled her.
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Eylin did not know of the incident that happened after he left the small shop. After coming to an agreement with the old witch, he first went to the most famous and lavish restaurant in the Nightless City for a sumptuous meal. Following that, he brought gifts to Crew’s villa to thank him for divulging some information beforehand. As for Crew, after he saw Leylin who had successfully become a member of the Four Seasons Garden, his shocked expression almost caused Leylin to laugh. Although the Four Seasons Garden was rated as first class with complete experimentation facilities, it was undeniable that in terms of enjoyment it was still lacking to what the Nightless City had to offer. Leylin finally understood why many members who had a dormitory in the headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden still visit the Nightless City during their vacation period. For Magi, their long lifespan and inhuman strength allowed them to easily obtain much influence and status. And apart from research and analysis, these mortal pleasures became one of their ways of entertainment. Upon seeing no hope of advancing further, many elderly Magi would retire from their organisations and into Nightless City, enjoying their life to the fullest. Leylin’s neighbour, Crew, was a good representation of those kinds
of people. However, for the time being, this matter was too far in the future for Leylin to even be thinking about, since he was still young and had a lot of potential to rise in power. It was far too early to get discouraged. Whiling the time away was just a method for him to vent and relax during his free time.

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Time passed quickly, and three days later, Leylin abided by the promise and met with the old witch once again. “Follow me! I’ll bring you to a meeting with the organisation that’s backing me!” She brought Leylin out of Nightless City. In a rather isolated forest, the old witch took out a ghost mask and put it on. “The dark Magi organisations and light Magi ones are different. Any divulgence of information will lead us into trouble. Hence, many members conceal their identity. You had better cover your face and think of a nickname!” It seemed that before obtaining the complete formula of the Tears of Mary, the old witch had already treated Leylin to be in an alliance with her. After all, compared to promises and pledges, the constraints bound by benefits were more everlasting. “My nickname is ‘Old Devil’. Don’t call me by the wrong name!” The old witch reminded him, apparently worried. “Concealing identities? I like this idea!” Leylin nodded, and his facial muscles twisted. The colour of his hair also changed from jet-black to silver white. At the same time, he fitted a mask onto his face. “When we reach there, call me ‘Blood Rogue’!”
The dark Magi’s system was much more appropriate for Leylin’s tastes.
In addition, hiding his identity would also be useful for his work within the Four Seasons Garden.
The meeting was conducted at the bottom of a swamp.
Even though this place could be likened to hell for regular humans, for Leylin and official Magi, this was just a matter of walking a few steps further.
After passing through the swamp, which was emitting a putrid smell, Leylin found himself in a space under the ground, which had been set up at that instant.
“You’re late! Old Devil! And you seem to have brought in fresh blood?”
A black mouse, the size of a burly adult, stood on its hind legs, as it stared fiercely at Leylin, its small eyes full of distrust.
“Yes, he is the one I’ve spoken about before. His name is ‘Blood Rogue’!”
“Although the blood reeking aura on him tells me that he is a dark Magus, but those turncoat trashs who had gone to the light Magi’s side are too many. We need a deeper level of confirmation…”
Besides the black mouse was a bald Magus whose facial features seemed to have melted. There was also a large black boa coiled around its body.
“He has frightened my baby!”
The boa, upon seeing Leylin immediately retreated with fear, as if seeing its natural enemy. Afterwards, it then respectfully laid down on the floor showing its allegiance to Leylin. This turned the bald Magus’ expression extremely unsightly.
Leylin understood then that the fact the boa bowed in front of him was due to his Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline.
This was an ancient creature’s bloodline, which had a natural disposition and control over its own species.
“Damn it!” The bald Magus attacked. Something that looked like bestial claws appeared in the air and pounced at Leylin, the attack accompanied by the howls of wild creatures. “You’re looking to die!” Leylin roared, and a scarlet light bursting out of his body as he scratched at the air with his right hand! Innumerable black shadows emerged from the darkness and twined around those bestial claws. *Sssii!* White vapour emerged unceasingly, and the beast claws engulfed within the black shadows began to dissolve, turning into drops of black liquid that dripped onto the floor. “Ugh!” Meanwhile, the bald Magus turned pale and he retreated a few steps, seeming to have taken a little damage. “Hahahaha... What did I just see? Venom Snake, you actually cannot even control a newbie!”
A female Magus wearing a white mask mocked him. “Hmph, you just wait!” The bald Venom Snake stared coldly at Leylin but did not attack him a second time. Before arriving here, the old witch had already given Leylin a brief introduction. This small organisation was formed by a few dark Magi after several trades, so there weren’t any strict rules, so much so that all the members had their identities concealed. However, after some time, the organisation expanded in power, and could already rival the existence of medium tiered guilds. As the members were all dark Magi, the entry requirements were extremely lax. Many members had enmity between them, but against the immense pressure from the light Magi, they still chose to ally themselves with this organisation. As for the previous few Magi who tried to make things difficult for Leylin, it was a mere formality.
Right now, Leylin had displayed his prowess, so naturally, no one else dared to provoke him.
“Alright now! Blood Rogue is referred by me. Furthermore, I can vouch for him!” The old witch said.
“Since Old Devil’s already said this, and all who join us need to make a soul pledge, it’s definitely not a problem!” A Magus, with the head of a tiger, spoke.
From what Leylin had heard from the old witch, she had entered this organisation a long time ago and could be considered an elder. From the looks of it, this seemed to be true.
“Alright! The reason why we’re gathered here today isn’t to welcome the new guy… How is the plan from the previous time we met going on?” Another Magus, who had enveloped himself in a green fog, inquired.
“Since we’re all here, then it must mean that we’re all into this. Also, we can give our newbie a test!” The baldy Venom Snake stared at Leylin.
“Attacking a secret plane huh? Count me in, but also give me an equal portion of the resources obtained!” Leylin said blandly.
This was something that the old witch told him earlier. Such a large group of dark Magi gathering was not just to exchange resources.
To them, self-production was too slow. The best way was still to plunder resources from the light Magi!
Also, it was not that the dark Magi did not produce their own resources. However, during the time of managing their own secret planes, they also plundered to increase their harvest.
Leylin only understood all these recently. But the reason why he had joined a dark Magi’s organisation was precisely for this reason, so he was naturally supportive of their
plan.
“Good! Since everyone’s in agreement, I’ll go through the entire plan.”
“The secret plane I’ve discovered this time is located in a small-scaled secret storage plane used by the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. There’s an enforcement group comprised of official Magi keeping an eye on it, and the strongest Magus among them has an elemental essence conversion of above 80%. I’ll lead him away, so I want 40% of our profit!”
The Magus within the green fog spoke.
“I agree!”
“I agree!”
… This had obviously been agreed upon previously, and the surrounding Magi looked at each other and quickly voiced their agreement as they nodded.
“To be so certain that he can guide that Magus away must mean that that Magus within the green fog is very strong! He must be on the verge of advancing to the 2nd rank!”
Leylin shivered inwardly. He was very clear about the strength he held, and his position in the group.
Just based on the advantage of Warlocks in the innate spells and vitality, adding on to his current elemental essence conversion, right now he could defeat a semi-converted elemental Magus head on. However, towards those Magi with over 80% elemental essence conversion, he still did not stand a chance.
As for the members in this dark Magi organisation, they were mostly semi-converted elemental Magus, who would be considered as elites within the south coast.
As for small scaled secret planes, they were different from the Four Seasons Garden that Leylin saw previously which spanned over 1 million mu.
The small scaled secret planes were set up by Magi who wished to
store resources and other precious resources. Just like the Dylan Gardens, the area might not be extremely vast, but the items within were extremely valuable.

As for Four Seasons Garden’s secret plane, it was a large scaled resource production point. As the area was vast, the construction cost was extravagant. Hence they had a rank 2 Magus guarding over it.

It was evident that if this organisation that Leylin was in attempted to rob the Four Seasons Garden’s secret plane, the number of members who went would spell the number of deaths. However, to deal with a small scaled secret plane which only had a rank 1 Magus as the guardian, as long as the plan was executed perfectly, it was very likely to be a success.

“Alright! Since there are no other questions, then let us set off now!”

The Magus in the green fog withdraw a watch and looked at it. “Let’s go! My precious is already longing for fresh blood!” The baldy Venom Snake smiled in a savage and malevolent manner…

……

In a place not too far from Nightless City. There were several man-made buildings, from which Magi in disguise frequently entered and exited.

“This is the branch of Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. The secret plane that I inquired about is within this place…”

The voice of the Magus within the green fog travelled over, faintly discernible, “I’ll lead the guardian away. You have to plunder the secret plane before the guards of Nightless City arrive. Act based on the plan and remember, your time limit is 5 minutes!!!”

“Don’t worry, it’s not like this is our first time working together!”

The Old Devil, which the old witch was playing the role of,
laughed coldly.
“Go!”

With the command, the Magus enshrouded in green mist acted first. After an incantation, he floated in the air, green mist continuously emanating from his body.

*Whoosh!* All of the dark green fog turned into a hurricane and struck at a part of the division in Leylin’s field of vision.

*Sssii!* This green fog seemed to have extremely acidic properties. Several acolytes wailed as they turned into white bones after the fog engulfed them. Even the surrounding ground turned even softer and muddier, turning into a marsh.

Even the light from part of the defensive spell formation trembled under the corrosive power of the green fog, as if it was going to shatter at any moment.

“Who is it? You actually dare to attack a division of the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower?”

An enraged voice sounded out. Following which, a figure wearing black armour flew up into the air.

“Kill!” The black clothed figure coldly shouted, and smoke billowed from the ground, turning into a skull as it struck the green fog.

“Hehehe…” The Magus in the green fog cackled. Under his command, the green fog took on the form of a scorpion as it clashed with the skull.
*Boom!*
*Bang!*
The surroundings seemed to have been struck by 10 different hurricane force winds, which then dissipated in all directions. The mighty destructive power immediately caused the division’s building to be shaven off by a layer.
“Is this the might of a Magus who has fulfilled the requirements for breaking through to the next rank?” Leylin watched the actions of the Magus in mid-air closely, a strange light in his eyes. With the Magus in the green mist taking control, the battle in the air became increasingly one-sided.
“It’s our turn now!” Rodent, who was half the size of a regular man, licked his lips.
“Newbie! Don’t get intimidated! If you hinder this operation, I’ll be the first to claim your life!” Venom Snake threatened him.
“If you obstruct me, you’ll definitely be the one dead!”
Leylin, who was going by the name of Blood Rogue, made a sound as he snickered. A potion exploded and formed a red membrane on his body.
“Giant’s green fog is an extremely powerful type of area of effect spell. It can deal devastating damage to all targets within the area of effect!”
The old witch who was wearing the mask explained to Leylin.
“Be careful; although Giant has lured the strongest enemy away, the remaining enforcers won’t be easy to deal with either…”
“Hehe… Those light Magi are like little rabbits. I’ve long since wanted to rip open their chests and savour the taste of their innards…”
A zombie-like dark Magus licked his lips as he turned into a gust of black wind, charging into the division’s building, whose defensive spell formation had broken down.
As if his action signalled the start, dozens of strange colours with powerful energy waves radiating from them charged towards the division.

“Crap! It’s a trap, inform the team leader quickly!”

The light Magi who were by the entrance watched the dozens of dark Magi dashing towards them, and their expressions immediately changed. Even their voices cracked.

“Haha… Boss Giant may have some difficulty killing your leader, but it’s not a problem for him to stall for time! Even if your leader finds something wrong, it’ll be too late for him to save you…”

The old witch laughed loudly as she tossed two silver coloured metal balls towards the building.

The silver metal balls both exploded like grenades. After the shock waves had dissipated, a spell continuously encircled the area and the air was contorted, even to the point that the energy particles in the air were unstable.

The sound of electromagnetic interference boomed throughout the area.

“Not good! It’s an Elemental Fluctuation Bomb! They actually have something like that!”

The light Magi’s faces were ashen as they quickly retreated.

“Alright! None of the communication spells work, and space magic is now impossible to use. Comrades enjoy this blood fest! You only have a limit of 5 minutes…”

The old witch waved her hand.

“A translucent spirit suddenly appeared in the surroundings of the light Magi and exploded.

Against the energy waves that targeted the spirit, one light Magus retreated several steps. Blood began to flow from his seven facial
orifices.
However, in the instant that he retreated, a translucent worm appeared from the contortions in the air, directly charging towards the light Magus.
*Ka-Cha!* A defensive lightning shield appeared around the light Magus’ body, protecting him within.
*Pu!* The lightning shield crumpled like paper in the face of the worm, shattering from just the first touch. The crystal like worm drove its way right into the Magus’ mouth.
“Ugh…” The light Magus’ face turned purple, looking like an eggplant as he clutched at his throat and collapsed.
“Hehe, I don’t usually have the luxury of using magic as I please and collecting souls! Same rules, all spirits collected in battles must be handed over to me. I guarantee a good price!”
Silver light permeated the old witch’s hands as she retrieved a crystal ball from her robes and approached the light Magus, who had lost all signs of resistance. Her lips moved non-stop as she chanted something.
Following her incantation, the light Magus’ eyes became blurry, and an indistinct human figure was pulled out from that Magus’ body.
“This old witch is really a lunatic! She’s actually collecting spirits directly from the battlefield!”
Leylin watched her work, unperturbed by her surroundings, and suddenly began to regret his initial decision.
However, it was just for a moment that he shot a glance in the direction of the old witch. Immediately after, he spilled some red powder onto his two hands.
“Crimson Palm!”
As he chanted, a layer of crimson coloured light suffused both of Leylin’s arms. His palms turned extremely slender, and his fingernails turned razor sharp and also slightly transparent.
This was a rank 1 spell from the Book of Giant Serpent that Leylin
had long since recorded into his memory through the A.I. Chip. Although his rank 1 spell’s might was a little lower, with only a degree of 20 or so, with the addition of his elemental essence conversion, it was enough to deal with a normal rank 1 Magus.

Right now, Leylin was hiding his identity, so innate gifts and spells that were eye catching could not be used. However, he had already prepared another set of spells to cast in times like this.

[Host’s palms have had a slight adjustment in strength. Strength in arms are now stronger, with an added effect of poison!] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Looking at the surroundings, where every Magus had found his or her own opponent, Leylin smiled as he casually picked on a light Magus who came charging at him.

*Crash!*

The slender, yet extremely menacing fingers clawed through the void, and large energy waves surged through the air as if the surface of a lake had been ripped through.

Leylin’s body flashed as his red shadow rapidly moved around on the battlefield, leaving behind only a series of mirages.

“Who exactly are you guys? Which organisation are you from?” The opponent that Leylin chose was a middle-aged man wearing loose white robes, yet an extremely aged voice came from his larynx.

Leylin only clawed viciously as a reply.

*Thump!*

Leylin struck with his right hand, directly slashing a few marks onto the opposing Magus’ body.

In front of Leylin’s Crimson Palm, the official Magus’ standard white robes were like paper, getting slashed into pieces, and leaving behind a large hole.

“Elemental Shield!” The middle-aged Magus roared.
Brown energy particles gathered unceasingly and solidified to form a thin, yellow, full-body armour, protecting his entire body. Even his head was shielded with a helmet, leaving just a pair of sparkling eyes.

“I will ask again, who is behind this attack, dark Magus!” The middle aged man continuously staggered backwards, his hands stealthily reaching into his robes.

“You talk too much!” Leylin struck again, his crimson claws leaving a scratch on the yellow armour.

“It’s useless!” The middle aged Magus howled. Traces of brown energy particles were continuously being absorbed into the dents of the armour, quickly restoring most traces of damage.

[Target’s innate spell has been scanned and recorded. Beginning simulation and parameter testing to find out the weakest point!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. It also projected the 3D image of a human figure wearing the yellow armour. Several points on the armour were marked red, representing the weak points.

While Leylin attacked, the middle-aged Magus withdrew a scroll from his robes, from which tremendous energy waves emanated.

“A formidable spell in a scroll? I can’t let him activate it!” Leylin’s pupils contracted as he let loose an extremely high-pitched shriek.

“Hisssss…” This was the voice of an extremely venomous snake, and was so unpleasant to the ears that it could draw goosebumps from others.

When the sound waves reached the middle-aged Magus, a blank look appeared on his face, and the speed at which he was opening the scroll slowed.

“Right here!” Leylin’s footsteps moved in a bizarre manner as he rapidly increased his speed and covered a distance of over ten meters. In the blink of an eye, he arrived in front of the middle-aged Magus.
The bright red light of the Crimson Palm on his right hand shone even more vividly as he clawed at the area 3 inches above the Magus’ abdomen, which was protected by his armour. The first claw! A depression the size of a fist appeared in the brown armour, and a large part of the armour fell. The second claw! The middle-aged Magus’ innate defensive spell was destroyed by Leylin. “No! Please forgive me, the value of a Magus kept in captive is high!” It was obvious that this light Magus was used to living a privileged lifestyle, and lacked the will to even fight for his own life, sinking to his knees in front of Leylin. However, Leylin’s face was ice cold, like a thousand year old frost. His right hand struck again, crushing the middle-aged Magus’ head like a watermelon. *Crunch!* White brain matter and scarlet blood stained Leylin’s hands. His hands seemed even more demonic and alluring. “There’s an unexpected reward!” Leylin picked up the Magus’ scroll, his face filled with glee. “A pretty good scroll; the energy waves are extremely strong. It seems like it should be able to hold its own even amongst rank 1 spells! It should be worth quite a bit of magic crystals…” Right at this moment, a wretched scream caught Leylin’s attention.
Leylin turned around and saw the baldy’s snake shoot an ice bullet, which shattered the innate defense spell of his opponent.

At the same time, the precious boa of his charged, revealing razor sharp fangs and sinking them into the light Magus’ neck.

Baldy’s opponent was a rather young looking Magus with blonde hair and blue eyes. He had an extremely cheery disposition.

It was a pity, however, that right now, this light Magus had death written all over his face. With the continuous constriction of the boa, his life was drained away.

After killing the light Magus, the baldy’s Venom Snake threw Leylin a provocative look.

However, Leylin acted as if he saw nothing, and dashed right into the division of the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower.

“Right now, he wants to be petty about such things and not steal treasures? This Magus is definitely somewhat mental!” Leylin hurriedly ran past the doors and arrived at a place that seemed to be a library.

“These are all information meant for acolytes, so I’ll forgo them. A.I. Chip, scan!” Leylin’s eyes hurriedly swept the area. This library consisted of two floors, and the total area was rather huge.

However, Leylin had read most of the books found here before, so they were not of much value to him.

[Beep! Mission establishing, beginning scan…]
After which, a light blue image was formed and appeared in Leylin’s vision. Through this image, Leylin could easily discover that between the two floors, there was an extremely tiny passage. Right now, there was no one in the library, and books and chairs were strewn across the floor. It seemed that the people who were here had escaped quickly. Leylin strode past the lobby and came to the hidden spot. “It’s in here huh?” Leylin looked at the wall before his hands punched into it without hesitation! *Boom!* Dust flew around in the room, and an extremely narrow passage was revealed at the collapsed portion of the wall. “Hmm?” The passage was extremely short, and at the back, there was a small room. There were several shelves upon which some memory crystal balls sat on. Moreover, in the room sat three quivering acolytes. “Ennea Ivory Ring Tower huh? George isn’t here!” Leylin gave a quick scan and slightly waved his Crimson Palm. A blurry red light filled the small room. The three acolyte’s eyes turned red, and they immediately lost consciousness, their bodies still trembling as signs of life became less obvious. From the looks of it, they wouldn’t live past today. In front of an official Magus like Leylin, these regular acolytes’ lives were like those of ants. With just a slight misstep, he might accidentally kill a few of them. Leylin paid no mind as he stepped across the acolytes’ bodies, which were still involuntarily trembling, and came to the front of one of the wooden shelves. “Elementary Meditation Techniques” “Potioneering Foundations…” “Rune Theories” “Study of Particles”
The crystal balls on the wooden shelves were more valuable items, which could immediately transmit information into a magician’s mind without them forgetting anything. Leylin’s eyes swept past the crystal balls and noticed that they contained information meant for acolytes, which was not of much use to him. However, there was a clutter of black crystal balls in the middle of all of them, with various tags showing the high-grade information stored within. This caused Leylin to grin… A dozen seconds later, Leylin walked out from the library, which combusted in flames just seconds later.

At this moment, the whole division was in chaos, with magic spells being continuously fired across the battlefield. After killing most of the official Magus enforcers, most of the division’s defenses fell apart. Some were even acolytes who couldn’t resist the attacks of a group of dark Magi! The dark Magi wilfully plundered resources as they deemed fit, destroying everything they could see before them, and letting loose their inner cravings for darkness.

Leylin watched the scene with a blank expression, using the A.I. Chip to scan the entire branch. He didn’t have much time, and there was at most a few minutes before Nightless City’s allied forces arrived. No matter how insane Leylin was, he wouldn’t dare to contend with a large number of light Magi.

“From the structure, this isn’t a division of the academy. Rather, this is more similar to a research organisation, with a lot fewer people here…” Leylin traversed an area with disorganised architecture and idly looked around. “I found it!” An excited voice rang out. “Guys, come here! I’ve found the
entrance to the secret plane!”
“Hm?”
“That’s great!”
Multiple equally eager voices came for all around the region, and the dark Magi from before all gathered in a small garden.
Here, the large Rodent Magus was constantly rubbing his black claws, his beard sticking up, and his tiny eyes greedily fixated upon an oval object in the sky.
That object seemed to be a mirror with silver rays of light surrounding it. In the centre was a deep and dark spiral.
“I’m sorry, my magic can only show you the entrance to the secret plane. It will take some time to forcefully gain entry!”
The large Rodent immediately asked, “Which of you captured any opposing Magi? Interrogate them and get the password and method to enter!”
“Look for Old Devil, she’s an expert in this field!”
The zombie-like Magus was carrying the naked corpse of a female acolyte, gnawing her flesh from time to time as if savouring a delicacy.
“Hehe… That Magus’ spirit was extracted smoothly by me earlier; it seems like this will be a great harvest!”
The old witch cackled and walked towards the silver circular hole, while chanting an extremely awkward sounding incantation.
*Weng Weng!*
The void emitted energy waves as the circular entrance became enlarged, revealing the dark space of what seemed to be a storage.
“Haha… We have struck the jackpot…” The giant mouse rushed in like a whirlwind, with the following dark Magi following behind.
“I’ll stay behind to keep watch!” The old witch tossed several powder-like substances on the ground. “Anyway, we have to divide them in the end…”
Leylin exchanged a meaningful look with the old witch as he went
into the secret plane.
This secret plane was extremely small, about the size of a large warehouse. There was only one passage for people to walk about. On both sides of the warehouse, there were many labeled items and ingredients.
“Hurry! Pick the most valuable items and go, and burn the rest that we don’t need!”
Zombie tossed the female corpse aside and looked at the door of the warehouse, before stepping in with a snort.
Leylin looked at the dark Magi who were happily shoving items into their pockets, and could not help but shake his head.
In the Magus world, those magic artifacts which had spatial capabilities were extremely precious. At most, Leylin had only heard of them in legends and folklore. Until now, he had never seen any Magus owning an item like that.
Hence, most Magi could only carry the most valuable items with them. Every time they went on a mission, they would be carrying many sacks, with some even having horse carriages that were filled with empty chests.
As for right now, there were too many items in this warehouse. Leylin and the others could only choose the most valuable ones, and as for other large items, these dark Magi, who were already consumed by greed, could only choose to destroy them.
“If I had a spatial ring or something like that in future, then it would be much more convenient!”
Leylin rushed into a section where the shelves were filled with various ingredients, as well as heaps of magic crystals that had been tossed in a corner like trash.
Leylin quickly stuffed the precious materials into his own pockets. He immediately ignored the low-grade magic crystals, and only the high-grade magic crystals and magic crystal cards caught his eye. At this moment, he was still indulging in his fantasies.
“Of course, rather than getting any spatial ring, the best thing to do would be to occupy this territory. That would be real profit without any investment!”
Leylin was a little regretful about this, but he could only bury his delusions into the bottom of his heart.

[Beep! 4 Minute 37 Seconds have passed in the countdown, reaching close to the value set by the Host!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“There’s no more time! Retreat!” Leylin’s eyes reflected his resolution, and he speedily left the warehouse.
“Nightless City’s forces are arriving. Run!”
After Leylin left the secret plane, he heard Rodent’s flustered voice.
“Go!”
Leylin and the old witch nodded, and transformed into two streaks of shadows, which disappeared into the air.

After the retreat of all the dark Magi, Leylin turned back to observe the sight of black flames emitting from Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. Some of the Magi from the Nightless City who were using rank 1 flying magic descended from the sky.

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A giant beast dashed past the land.
Looking on, this beast was over 50 metres tall and 200 metres long. Its appearance closely resembled a large hippopotamus, and its jaws occupied almost half of its body size.
With every step that this gargantuan beast took, deep imprints would be made on the ground. Also, there were also tremors, as if mini earthquakes were occurring.
The surrounding animals would scatter and flee after seeing this beast, not daring to stay a moment longer.
Within this beast, the group of dark Magi from earlier were
gathered inside of a large hall. The Magus wrapped in green fog, who went by the name of “Giant,” stood unscathed in the middle, and his aura had not even decreased by much. It was evident that he had disposed of his opponent with much ease.

“Alright! Since all of us here have made our vows and have undergone the judgment of the Trial’s Eye, take out 50% worth of the items that you have plundered!”

Giant spoke in a cold voice. Despite the chaos of the Magi below, under the constraints of the power of the higher ups, as well as their oaths, they hastily piled some magic crystals and materials in the centre of the hall. Soon enough, the materials and magic crystals formed a small mountain.

“This all amounts to at least ten million magic crystals!” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he mentally calculated.

“Moreover, this is only 50%. Which is to say, the division of the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower has lost close to twenty million magic crystals, along with the destruction of other items… The Ennea Ivory Ring Tower is going to go nuts this time…”

After giving it some thought, he was a little curious and asked the old witch beside him in a low voice.

“Do we really have to give up 50% of our profits? Isn’t that too much?”
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“Y
ou thought… the magic crystals are all for Giant?”

The old witch snuck a glance at Giant, who was saying something, and answered Leylin under her breath.

“Am I wrong?” Leylin was a little astonished.

“Of course not. Even though Giant is pretty impressive, he’s no rank 2 Magus. Out of this pile, he’ll get at most 40% of it!” She pointed to the little mountain in the middle of the room.

“As for the rest, they’ll all go to ‘Boss’!” The old witch was vague.

“Boss?!” Hearing this phrase started Leylin’s imagination. Magi only respected power. For even the old witch to call someone ‘Boss’, this must mean that this person, Boss, was at least a rank 2 Magus, right?

“Who else? Who do you think is the one warding off the light Magi’s divination magic?” She retorted with a manic laugh.

“According to what I know, there are at least two to three dark Magi organisations like us. As for their backers, there will also be various people controlling from behind the scenes…”

As they were in a mutual alliance through the previous agreement with the potions, the old witch was evidently placing more trust in Leylin, hence she just told him some information that had been withheld from him.

“Marauding the light Magi’s secret plane is definitely not carried out
on a whim by the dark Magi. On the contrary, these operations are systematic and are all premeditated!”
A notion quickly flew through Leylin’s mind and occupied his thoughts.
“Who knows, there might be several powerhouses behind the dark Magi domain that also have a hand in this!” Leylin grinned.
“This seems to be getting more and more interesting…”
However, this had nothing to do with Leylin. His current goal was to join in the dark Magi organisation’s looting operations and obtain large amounts of resources.
Just the efforts from tonight had brought in a revenue of five to six hundred thousand magic crystals! This was obviously more convenient and faster than doing missions for the Four Seasons Garden.
Of course, the risk was no small matter and if he were to be found out, he’d be chased to the ends of the world and be killed.
This was also why every member who joined concealed their identity, and even the few leaders of the organisation had no idea of the real identities of their members.
“Alright! Collect your own share! Remember not to squander them quickly. It’s better to spend them only after some time!”
“Also, after this mission, those mad dogs from the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower will definitely go around biting people blindly in a rouse to find our locations. So remember to stay low…”
Giant who was wrapped in green fog continued to explain of some matters as he waved his hands, “It’s alright now, you guys can leave. Our exchange meetings must also be halted for a while, as for the concrete details it will be made known again…”

……

Baldy Venom Snake had had half of his face melted and the other
side filled with many bumps. He was continuously combing through the black forest.
And, with a big black boa lay coiled on his body, he presented a rather horrifying appearance.
*Bang!*
Suddenly, Baldy’s face changed as he rolled to the side.
At the same time, an explosion caved in the ground on which he had previously stood. A purple flame blazed in the surroundings, creating a hundred square meter radius of charred zone.
“Blood Rogue! It must be you! Get your ass out here!” Baldy Venom Snake snarled.
A layer of stiff hair grew on his body, altering his appearance to that of a gorilla.
What he received in answer were multiple fireballs that appeared from within the shadows.
*Boom!*
The speed of the black fireballs was incredibly quick. Before he even had the chance to react, they had reached his body and exploded in front of him.
The bald Venom Snake’s chest was charred. Black hair kept falling off, and the pit of his stomach was hollowed in. There was even the piercing sound of bones breaking, and his body flew out as if he had been hit by the head of a train.
The boa that had been hung around his shoulders was immediately burnt by the flames, turning into white ashes, scattering onto the floor bit by bit.
“Such a mighty spell?” The bald Venom Snake did not even have time to lament for his precious pet. He was frightened silly by Leylin’s Latent Fireball.
“This spell has to be a model that is modified by various large Magi organisation or had its might amplified. Who exactly are you?” Venom Snake looked at Leylin who slowly walked out from the
darkness, suspicions streaked across his face.

“Who I am is not important. What’s important is that you will definitely die here today!” Leylin had even used his Latent Fireball, so naturally he revealed the determination to kill this baldy.

“Aren’t you afraid of the organisation tracing it to you?” Venom Snake lay on the floor as if he had lost his mobility and was not able to get up.

“I have only signed a contract not to divulge the organisation’s secrets, but not one that doesn’t allow me to pursue a personal vendetta against my enemies!”

Leylin waved his hands forward and countless phantom hands appeared from the void, grabbing a small tree behind the baldy and crushing it to pieces. A yellow bug was retrieved from within the tree.

*Pu!* The yellow bug was smashed into bits in Leylin’s hands.

“Don’t do such useless things anymore!” Leylin stepped in closer.

“You’re leaving me with no choice! Second transfiguration!” The baldy bellowed.

*Crash!* In the blink of an eye, the muscles on his body grew and dense black hair grew out once again. Behind his back, two strips of flesh constantly raised, bursting out of his clothes. They turned into two furry claws.

His teeth became sharp, eyeballs completely red.

From the looks of it, he had turned into a mutated gorilla with four arms.

With the transformation of the bald Venom Snake, a strong energy wave was constantly emitted from his body.

“Activate!” Against this creature which was brandishing its fangs and claws, Leylin only smiled and chanted an incantation.

“Ding!” A crisp noise sounded and several green vines and muddy shafts emerged from the ground, turning into a prison like shape, suppressing the beast within.
“I gave you time not to let you prepare a spell, but for me to lay a trap!"
Leylin spoke leisurely, “You must have had the limbs of a powerful creature transplanted into your body to achieve such a transfiguration, huh? Moreover, it seems to be compatible with your innate defense spell…”
“A pity however that you only transplanted the forelimbs of the Vajra Gorilla. As for creatures like these, they are suppressed by the energy particles of the Earth and Plant elements…”
All this were naturally the simulations done throughout the battle by the A.I. Chip.
After adopting the A.I. Chip’s suggestion Leylin completely controlled the pace of the battle. He had to admit that it all felt pretty good.
“Urghhh…” The gorilla creature in the cage continued to beat on its chest, showing the rage it was in.
Following which, many small plants and rock spears appeared from the ground within the cage, piercing through the creature’s body.
“Aooo…” The gorilla continued to roar in anguish, as his entire fur coat was dyed a crimson red.
*Bang!* A large explosion sounded.
Only two furry arms remained where the black gorilla had been, and the bald Venom Snake had disappeared without a trace.
Looking at this scene, Leylin was not surprised but smiled in a satisfied manner.
“He had even used the substitution spell that can only be used once a day?”
Following which, the sound of a spirit explosion was heard. The trees parted and the old witch carried Venom Snake who had fainted in her hands.
“How is it? Is it still going smoothly?” Leylin inquired.
“Not bad. There was still an amulet on his body limited to a one-time usage that caught me by surprise!” The old witch’s green eyes shone.

“This is a good opportunity since an official Magus’ spirit is extremely difficult to obtain!”

“Also, you’ll get half of the items here and I’ll take the other half!” Leylin had already gone through the bald Venom Snake’s belongings from his crippled body. In addition, he gave half of Venom Snake’s sack of loot to the old witch. He was still prepared to maintain the trust between the two of them since they were going to be collaborating for a long time.

The old witch’s gaze revealed some fear while she looked at Leylin. Even though she was confident she could defeat the bald Venom Snake, she wouldn’t be able to do it so easily, and definitely not in this place. Such precise pre-calculations were beyond her. Leylin was even able to predict the opponent’s escape route, and that was what shocked her the most.

“But by killing Venom Snake, aren’t you afraid the organisation will…” The old witch reminded him.

“Stop trying to scare me!” Leylin laughed, not at all bothered.

“Dark Magi are just a group of indifferent, self-serving people. Why would they seek trouble with me for a dead person? Furthermore, the grudge I had with Venom Snake was apparent to the others, so who could say anything about it?”

“It seems like you have already planned everything!” The old witch looked at Leylin, her expression complicated. Leylin smiled without a reply.

It was indeed true that he had planned to kill Venom Snake a long time ago. There were two motives behind it. First was to establish his might! He was a newbie who had just joined the organisation, so he would definitely undergo some suppression by others. In many
organisations, the bullying newbies was a form of tradition. Through such means, Leylin could quickly show his prowess as a deterrence and to protect himself. Of course, he only dared to do such a thing within dark Magi organisations. If it were inside a light Magi organisation, no matter how powerful he was he would be beaten heavily. Who knows if he might even take the rap and be labelled as someone who had tried to sow discord amongst the unity of the light Magi? As a result, while he was in Four Seasons Garden, Leylin had always kept a low profile and did his work without any complaints. Until now, his leader and teammates still viewed him in a positive light. As for the second motive, which was Leylin’s main objective, it was only for the benefits! From today’s operation of plundering the secret plane, Leylin managed to obtain five to six hundred thousand magic crystals. On top of that, he had also gotten Venom Snake’s portion, and the total value came up to around a million, thus doubling his loot. Wasn’t Leylin’s reason for joining a dark Magi organisation to obtain enough resources? Since that was his reason, why wouldn’t he attack others?
Of course, even within dark Magi organisations, there were rules and regulations. If Leylin kept doing this, it would result in others ganging up on him and eliminating him under the pretext of self-defense. That was why Leylin needed to first cause some conflict, and then be able to act with a good reason to do so.

Honestly speaking, even if Venom Snake had not challenged him, he was also planning on instigating some of the weaker Magi and then blow the whole thing out of proportion. Afterwards, he would use revenge as an excuse to righteously kill and then seize their treasures!

But that was it.

Leylin assessed that after this affair, other dark Magi would be slightly dissatisfied with his actions, so he couldn’t let this get too far.

“You’re really…” The old witch was suddenly regretful, “I haven’t seen a youngster that’s as cool headed but also crazy in a very long time…”

“Nope! I’m just someone with the will to live!” Leylin said with a brilliant smile.

“What about you? When will you get your goods?”

The moment this was brought up, the old witch’s face stiffened. This was the only reason why she was working with Leylin and had been dragged along in the end.
“Today’s harvest was pretty good, especially since we got two souls from official Magi. It shouldn’t take long before we can finalize the product!”
“Notify me once it’s finished, I’ll be at Nightless City these few days!” Leylin nodded.
Following which, he approached the bald Venom Snake and undid the concealment spell, revealing the face of a middle aged man that had a venerable countenance.
“It’s him!” The old witch cried out in alarm from behind him.
“You know him?” This aroused Leylin’s interest.
“No, I’ve only seen him a couple of times!” The old witch appeared rather rueful.
“He’s the head of a small light Magi faction, and he’s got a good reputation! Apparently, he’s quite skilled in transformation spells. I didn’t know he was actually a dark Magus!”
“This is quite normal! Dark Magi like to assume a righteous personality, just like you and me!”
Leylin’s silhouette melted into the darkness…
In the following days. Leylin lived a very pleasant life in Nightless City.
It couldn’t be denied that Nightless City was an unusually large Magi City, in which Leylin was able to enjoy all kinds of services tailored for a Magus’ pleasure.
Splash! Boiling tea water flowed out of an exquisite silver teapot into a tea cup engraved with purple flowery designs. A rich fragrance of black tea permeated the air of the whole lounge as it wafted back and forth.
Leylin sat in an armchair to the side with a serene expression. Behind him and under each of his legs were beautiful maids in revealing clothing who were extending their lily white and seemingly boneless small hands to massage him all over his body.
“How is it? The skills of maids are quite good, right? Want me to
A red-haired old Magus, who was standing to one side, was saying as he directed another maid to feed him grapes. Around him were a number of maids who waited upon him like he was a god.

“Don’t blame me for saying this Leylin, but your villa is much too simple. It doesn’t even have a guard dog! You’ll be the laughing stock for other Magi if you don’t do anything about this…”

Crew was squinting his eyes. His face revealed an expression of rapture.

“Stop trying to sell me your maids!” Leylin revealed a bitter laugh, “But you must know a lot of merchants in this field, right? You should introduce them to me someday!”

Leylin admitted that it was strange for there not to be a single person in the whole villa. Besides, he felt that he did need some people to help around while he lived in Nightless City, such as servants and the like.

“No problem! I’ll take you to Nightless City’s slave market tomorrow. Once you’re there, all your needs will be satisfied. Besides, there are even slaves from other races!”

Crew revealed an expression that said ‘I’m glad you came to your senses’. When he mentioned different races, a lewd smile was revealed on his old face.

Seeing the expression of this old pervert, Leylin was speechless. He conveniently grabbed something that looked like a newspaper from the table and was immediately attracted by the eye-catching title.

“Ennea Ivory Ring Tower’s division under attack! Severe losses!”

“Tragedy! Dark Magi attack the Tallinn Highlands. All Magi present have perished!”

“It’s a declaration of war! The dark Magi have initiated the third great Magi war. What are you going to do? Please listen in detail to the analysis by our special guest, Nicholas Kajitel…”
Scenes of the havoc that Leylin and the others had wreaked were splashed all over the headlines. In addition, all of the reports came had very eye-catching headings, and some even exaggerated to say that this was provocation from the dark Magi and a forewarning that there were plans to begin the third Magi war.

“Look at this! All they’ve been reporting these days is about that incident. The Ennea Ivory Ring Tower really suffered a massive loss, this time, worth at least a hundred million magic crystals…” Crew looked to be rejoicing at their misfortune, and Leylin briefly wondered if there was some history between Crew and the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower.

“Tsk! A hundred million crystals! What wouldn’t I do to get those many crystals?” Leylin, too, had an expression of obsessive desire on his face, “But these dark Magi are really quite daring to even provoke the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower!”

Leylin’s facial expressions and movements were flawless as if he really had no knowledge of the incident.

“Sigh… This has happened multiple times in the past, just that nobody can tell whether it’s the Night Crows or the Zombies,” Crew continued.

The Night Crows and Zombies were dark Magi organisations that operated in the shadows of Nightless City. Before Leylin’s arrival, both groups were infamous for having committed several huge crimes with ruthless methods.

The dark Magi organisation that Leylin was a part of was not either of these groups but another, it was called the Thousand Meddling Leaves, though they were just as notorious.

“With Ennea Ivory Ring Tower’s Magi enforcers and help from Nightless City, it should be possible to capture those bold dark Magi, right?”
“I’m afraid that’s not possible!”
Crew shook his head immediately. “The powers backing the dark Magi aren’t to be trifled with. Magi specializing in divination have had their spells achieve no effect, and we suspect that there’s at least a rank 2 Magus backing and giving them orders. We believe there might be even more than one of them…”
“I see.”
Leylin nodded, his expression turning to one of longing.
“A rank 2 Magus! I wonder if I’ll ever reach that level in this lifetime.”
His look made Crew’s expression darken slightly.
Leylin was young and still had hope to achieve that. But he was different. After consuming a large part of his lifespan, his body’s vitality could no longer withstand the strain from another advancement. Furthermore, he had chosen the simplest route and broken through with the Grime Water, increasing the difficulty of breaking through to the next rank.
“Oh! My apologies!”
Upon noticing Crew’s expression, Leylin gave a bow in apology.
“Don’t worry about it. I just got nostalgic about some events in the past.” The desolate look in his eyes faded away. “Thinking back to my decision then, I’ve missed too many opportunities. If given the chance to relive my life, I think I’d still choose to sign that contract, though.”
Leylin understood his train of thought.
For many acolytes, even if they were aware of the existence of high-grade meditation techniques, they had no choice but to break through with the Grime Water. After all, only strictly-managed Magi organisations and large Families held possession of high-grade meditation techniques. Typically, level 3 acolytes had no social connections nor any strong background, and it was basically impossible for them to obtain
those techniques. Hence, they would rather use the Grime Water and break through, and hope that after they advanced to an official Magus, they could find a way to make up for the disadvantages of this method. However, even if there was such a method, it was not something any ordinary Magus could come into contact with. It might not even exist in the entire South Coast, and was more likely to be found only in the central continent. As a result, most Magi could only service their organisation for their entire life, and then retire, living aimlessly the way Crew was now doing.

“Alright! Enough about this mood-dampening topic. I’ll bring you to the slave market tomorrow to see a friend of mine. She has quite a few quality goods, like the snake girl from the previous time that remains fresh in my memories. You definitely can’t miss this chance!”

At this point, Crew’s mood seemed to have brightened. Leylin kept Crew company and they chatted for a while, and he had an exceedingly alluring time and sumptuous dinner before leaving Crew’s villa.

*Sssii!* At this moment, the pocket-sized diary trembled, letting off a slight glow.

“Leylin! I’ve already prepared what you wanted. When can you come over?” The old witch’s voice traveled to his ears from a green secret imprint.

“Give me a moment, I’m on my way!” Leylin was delighted at the message, as the old witch’s efficiency was better than he had anticipated.

Elm Street #231. It wasn’t Leylin’s first time here. The shop was located in a very remote area, and most Magi would not be able to find their way here.
After Leylin entered, the old witch closed the door and hung a sign that read “Closed”.

Leylin, unconvinced by this level of security, set up a sound-proofing spell around them.

“Rumours have been flying recently. How is it on your end? Have you been discovered at all?” Leylin asked, somewhat worried.

“Don’t worry. I’ve lived in Nightless City for over a century, and I do have some contacts…” She seemed rather pleased with herself.

“Also, these are the materials that were mentioned in the contract. I processed them using the method in the information you gave me! I did everything perfectly!”

The old witch positioned a dozen crystal soul spheres in the size of a thumb in a row, and placed it on the counter.

Within the soul, sphere were tens of expressionless spirits that seemed on the verge of dissipating. At the moment, many of them had lost their human form, which must have happened after brutal, inhuman torture.

“Has it really all been dealt with? The spirits need to have been immersed and soaked in immense suffering and hopelessness in order to achieve the best effect!”

“Hehe… I even captured a few spirits and experimented on them beforehand. On top of the basic pain that I can inflict, I also tortured their very souls. The effects are marvellous!” The old witch laughed excitedly, though it was a sound that caused others goosebumps.
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“Hum! The result appears to be not too bad! You can try increasing the quantity the next time round!”

A ball of milky white light emitted from Leylin’s hand, as it scanned across the many confining spirit spheres on the table, before Leylin gave a smile of satisfaction.

“Alright! I will bring these with me then. I will bring your medicine back at the earliest period of 10 days to latest 15 days!” Leyin made his promise.

“I would naturally believe you, after all we are under the constraints of the Trial’s Eye and signed an unbreakable pledge…”

Though the old witch looked as though she trusted Leylin, Leylin still felt the mistrust in her heart.

However, this was not an unusual situation.

After this deal was successful, her amount of distrust will drop tremendously and the connection with benefits between both parties would also be closer.

After leaving the old witch’s small inn, Leylin hurriedly headed back to his villa.

It had been a while since his spiritual force had a great increase, so now he couldn’t wait to attempt and brew the Tears of Mary, once again enjoying that delight of experiencing a huge boost in the spiritual force.

After activating the entire defense formation, Leylin went to the room at the ground floor of the villa by himself.
This place had undergone remodelling and things were now in order. At the lowest level was an area for experimenting with spells, which had absorption runes for reinforcement at the four corners.

As for the secret room situated at a corner, it had already undergone a special reformation to become a Potioneering lab, and contained all of the various high grade apparatus.

Clearly, for these things to be obtainable, Leylin had used his relationship with the old witch, with the resources he had seized to purchase and exchange for them.

Otherwise, with his current financial resources, even if he were to brew potions every day, it would take him more than 2 years to purchase all of the apparatuses.

After all, he could not possibly use all his magic crystals for building his laboratory as he would need some for his daily expenses and other necessities.

And from the previous time, with the haul from the plunder, the laboratory was built from scratch.

“A.I. Chip!” Leylin made a command in his heart.

[Beginning brewing of the Tears of Mary! Obtaining administrative rights from the Host to monitor the whole process and make informed reminders. Beginning to coordinate with Host’s spiritual force energy waves…]

The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

……

“Let’s begin!” Leylin took a deep breath and picked up a confining spirit sphere which had a spirit sealed within in.

In the blink of an eye, it was the dawn of the second day.

Leylin gasped for air and sweat dripped down his face continuously. However, his vigour was brimming with energy as he
smiled and fixed his eyes on the transparent liquid he held in his hand. The test-tube was made from nitrogen crystal glass and was extremely strong. It even had the effect of extending the expiry of the medicinal properties. Hence they were always stored by Magi and only used for important potions. Looking at the crystal clear and transparent potion, a look of dejection appeared on Leylin’s face. Thinking back, it had been 3 to 4 years since he took the potion formula from his mentor, Kroft. He managed to brew a dose for the Azure Potion soon after it was given to him, yet there was no progress in brewing the Tears of Mary. He only managed to simplify some of the processes and brew the Blood Vengeance Potion. However, it was only useful for acolytes. Right now, he held this potion which was a final product completely based on the ancient formula! It had a tremendous effect even in breaking through the spiritual force bottlenecks of ancient Magi. “Besides, the success rate is not too bad!” Leylin looked at the 3 broken confining spirit sphere on the floor, and his face revealed a pleased look. In the final stage of the brewing process, he specially added a few steps which required the use of the A.I. Chip. It was not only successful in the restoration of the formula, but also increased the rate of success in brewing. Surprisingly, the success rate hit an astonishing 30 to 40%! In other words, the 16 confining spirit spheres he received from the old witch could be used to configure 5-6 portions of this finished product. This discovery made Leylin feel extremely happy. After all, the origin of the ingredients of these potion were
extremely savage, and it was not easy to obtain. Hence, he wanted to increase the success rate. Due to the restraints from the Trial’s Eye, he had to abide by the agreement and give forty percent of it to the old witch. Although this percentage was rather high, Leylin considered them to be worth it. The old witch was also under the restraints of the Trial’s Eye. Once she was caught, she could not reveal any news of Leylin at all, hence he would be absolved from all risks.

“A.I. Chip, what is the result of the analysis of the medicinal properties of this potion?” Leylin looked at the test-tube in his hands and suddenly asked.

[Beep! It has been completed, the medicinal properties has been recorded and stored in the data bank.] [Ancient potion Tears of Mary. Original ingredients: Powerful spirits filled with grievances and despair. Effect: Great increase for an official Magus’s spiritual force, and a chance to helping a Magus breaking through a bottleneck.]

The A.I. Chip’s analysis was extremely concrete. And the last few words it uttered, led Leylin into deep thoughts. In the Magus World, potions which could directly increase the spiritual force was extremely exorbitant. Just like the exchange point in the Four Seasons Garden, the prices of several potions which could increase the spiritual force was even above that for the crystallised elemental energy particles. Compared the spiritual force potions, potions which could aid a Magus in breaking through the bottleneck was even a tier higher. Even though the chance of Tears of Mary which could aid the breakthrough was extremely little, it would cause Magi to go crazy after it.

“It seems like this effect has to be concealed. Since I already have a contract with Old Devil, she would not be able to reveal any news
of the potions to outsiders, so I can rest my worry for the time being…”
Leylin withdrew a golden watch that was decorated with diamonds. “It’s still early now, and I have an appointment for lunch with Crew only in the afternoon. I can even try the effect of the potion now!”
Leylin took the transparent dose of potion and went into the spell testing area below the experiment lab and sat in a cross-legged position.
“Activate!”
Leylin chanted an incantation. Soon after, the nitrogen glass test-tube seem to open like a flower engraving, revealing the potion liquid within.
A rather bland and sweet smell which seemed to be able to induce sleep and hypnosis began to envelop the room.

……

Under the effect of this fragrance, Leylin entered the meditative state in an instant…
While doing his meditation, Leylin felt as if his spirit had calmed down and floated on the clouds, enveloping the sun. This extremely harmonious and serene feeling flowed through his thoughts.
“What a pleasant experience!” Leylin opened his eyes after an unknown period of time.
Meditation was a physically taxing activity for Magi, and many would often choose to enter a deep sleep right after. This was to make up for the consumption of vitality during the process. This effect would be even more apparent when a meditation technique was of a higher grade.
Compared to before, even if Leylin’s vitality was 8.5, after the meditation of the Kemoyin’s Pupil every day, he would feel
extremely exhausted and could not wait to fall asleep immediately. As for today, after a round of meditation technique, he felt extremely comfortable in every part of his body. His spiritual force was extremely robust, and his condition in a state that was difficult to enter again.

This was an indescribable feeling, as if ripping off a layer of the nature, everything to his senses was extremely distinct. It also felt like someone who always had been in darkness suddenly seeing the light.

“This feeling is just awesome!”
Leylin grinned.
At this moment, he realised two warm streaks of moisture flowed down his face.
“These are… tears!”

“With the current control of my physical body and the help of the A.I. Chip, I actually teared unknowingly…” A look of admiration appeared on Leylin’s face, “The effects of these ancient potions has far surpassed my expectations!”

Only at this moment did he consider to check his stats. During the meditation, the A.I. Chip showed a stream of data, but Leylin was able to look at this data only now.

[Ancient potion Tears of Mary assimilation in progress!] [Due to the effects of the potion, quality of meditation increases, spiritual force increased by 0.5] [Due to the effects of the potion, quality of meditation increases, spiritual force increased by 1.0] [Ancient potion Tears of Mary reaching threshold, Host’s spiritual force greatly increasing…] [Kemoyin’s Pupil’s meditation technique completed, huge boost in Host’s spiritual force, recalculating data…]

After which, the A.I. Chip reloaded Leylin’s statistics.
36.8, Magic Power: 36 (Magic Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force). Elemental essence conversion: 35%. Status: Healthy]

“7 points! One portion of Tears of Mary actually directly increased my spiritual force by 7 points!”

Leylin could not conceal the excitement on his face.

“That means that even if my body develops a resistance to the potion in the future, I can still quickly increase my spiritual force so that it meets the requirements to break through to a rank 2 Magus?”

“Also, I can use the crystallised Darkness energy particles that I’ve been collecting again!”

The stats of a Magus were all intercorrelated.

Previously, Leylin’s spiritual force and concentration of bloodline was enough, yet the elemental essence conversion was lacking. Hence he could use the Darkness crystals to fill in the gap and achieve a 35% elemental essence conversion. However, after that time, Leylin’s elemental essence conversion was enough, but his spiritual force was lacking instead. Hence, according to the A.I. Chip’s estimations, before his spiritual force reaches certain value, using the crystallised Darkness energy particles would render no effect.

Hence, the 500g of crystallised Darkness energy particles he took from the old witch previously, with the amount he exchanged at the Four Seasons Garden had been kept aside by him.
noon came shortly after, and Leylin took a shower with a happy mood. He donned a set of comfortable white robes and went to Crew’s villa.

“Welcome, Leylin! My dearest friend!”

Crew gave Leylin a hug, looking somewhat bewildered.

“Your aura seemed to have increased again, it really makes people envious!”

Previously, he had already been astonished by Leylin’s age and potential. Towards a Magus who had such unlimited potential, establishing connections beforehand would often reap unexpected benefits.

However, Leylin’s rate of improvement far exceeded his expectations.

“This is just the result of a successful experiment!” Leylin gave a modest laugh.

In truth, this was the result after Leylin had used concealment spell to hide most of his spiritual force. If not, with Crew’s intelligence, he would definitely be able to guess at something.

Crew did not buy Leylin’s humble words, but the aspect of spiritual force was always among the most guarded secrets of Magi, so any prying would result in hostility.

Hence, Crew could only amicably smile and hold Leylin’s hand.

“Let’s not talk about this anymore. Come, let us go to the slave market!”
The slave market was in Zone 4 of the Nightless City and took up a very large area. Moreover, it was overt, even having a signboard. “Lord! Come to us, we have various types of slaves. There are even two snake girls from eastern mountain deserts, and their skills are top notch, you know!”

“Lord! Look over here, beautiful rabbit girls, fiery fox tribes. There are also beauties from the cannes tribe, with incredible strength comparable to Grand Knights. They are extremely good looking and long lasting. Moreover, they only cost 800 magic crystals each…”

“Look here quickly, this is the princess of the Dirk Dukedom! Her bloodline is extremely royal. The Dirk Dukedom is a dukedom comparable to kingdoms.

There were many shops in this slave market, hence, to attract people over to their stores, these shops had all kinds of gimmicks.

Leylin walked alongside Crew as he listened to the various calls of the shop owners. The provocative rabbit girls and fox girls revealed a large amount of skin, only having on a few pieces of clothing the size of a palm to cover their private parts. Their fluffy white rabbit tails and fiery red fox tails were bunched together. It was an extremely sharp contrast to the shy expressions of those rabbit and fox girls.

“How is it, sir? Do you want to take a look at this princess’ figure?”

Crew was obviously interested in the slave that was referred to as a princess. He made a stop in front of that shop.

Leylin was judging the girl behind the shop owner. She was tall, her pupils were golden, and she emanated an extremely noble aura. This was something that definitely could not be imitated, and had to have been developed from a young age.
This beautiful young lady was wearing a gown that one would usually see at a palace banquet, and she was even wearing a diamond-encrusted tiara, as if she was a princess who had ran out to play, if you didn’t consider the blank and resigned expression on her face.

“She’s quite a beauty!” A look of desire appeared on Crew’s face. “Now that I think about it, even though I’ve played with tons of women, I don’t think I’ve ever trained a princess before!”

“This is definitely a genuine princess. Her father was the former Duke!”

The shop owner was extremely eager to market his goods. “Moreover, this woman has not suffered any violations of the body, and is a complete virgin…”

“Dirk Dukedom, I seem to have heard of its past. A coup d’état occurred, right?” Crew stroked his chin and pondered. “It better not have any leftover troubles!”

“No way, no way! The previous duke wanted to control his own forces, and broke all ties with magicians. He had already been forsaken by the Magus family backing him, and in reality, this coup d’état was orchestrated by that Magus family…”

The shop owner explained to Crew in detail.

Leylin noticed that after that princess heard of the events, her head was bowed. Fear and hatred began to show on her face. Although this expression lasted for but a moment and was concealed well by her, how could it have been missed by the magicians present?

“Not bad! Does she have a fierce personality? Challenging… I like her.” Crew was immediately aroused by her, and asked, “Tell me directly! How much?”

“Two thousand magic crystals! That’s the lowest price I can give you!” The shop owner answered confidently.

“Two thousand magic crystals!!!” Crew’s eyes bulged. “Just for a
regular human who isn’t even a knight? Do you think I was kicked in the head by a donkey as a child?”
“This is a unique situation! I only managed to get this princess at a great cost, and you can only find her in this shop in the Nightless City! Other princesses all have Magus families backing them, and goods like this are only available now. Whether you’ll be able to get your hands on someone like her in the future will depend on your luck…”
The shop owner expended a huge effort on convincing him.
“Two thousand magic crystals is much too expensive! It’s enough to fund a few of my large-scale experiments!” Crew helplessly shook his head.
He turned to Leylin. “Sorry for the wait. Let’s go!”
Leylin shrugged and ignored that princess of a ruined dukedom, walking out of the shop alongside Crew.
“I was sure that you would insist on buying her, but now…” Leylin was somewhat shocked. He had seen firsthand Crew’s pervertedness and fetishes, so he could not believe that Crew would give up this easily.
“You don’t know…” Crew blinked, his face revealing a smirk and a clever look.
“This slave’s price tag is too expensive. As long as they’re not magicians who are desperately in need, she will never be considered by anyone.” The old geezer explained to Leylin.
Official Magi always required resources. Unlike Crew, who had no more hope of advancing anymore, was extremely lecherous, and only wanted to live in retirement, they would never have any interest in such kinds of slaves.
“I have several ties with the magicians in this kind of circle. As long as I notify them, nobody would snatch her from me!”
“Hehe… By then, this shop owner will only be able to hold this stock in his hands. Later, when I look for him again, I will be the
only one to whom he can sell the slave. I am confident that I can haggle the price down to a thousand magic crystals or below…”

“Then what reason have you prepared to convince your friends?” Leylin asked in curiosity.

“Hehe… Of course, such a collaboration to push down prices would be done in turns!” The old geezer did not hesitate to reply. “If you have any interest in her, then after I’m done with her, I can lend her to you to toy around with for a few days!” The old geezer seemed extremely generous at this moment.

“No one can surpass your skills in such an area…” Leylin felt as if he was utterly defeated, and no longer knew what to say.

After which, Leylin, who had been following Crew, finally approached a shop that seemed slightly strange. This shop was obviously a lot larger than the surrounding shops, and there were also two green, magically summoned creatures standing guard. Just by the presence and the construction costs of this shop, the value of the other shops were immediately lessened.

In addition, there was a thick curtain draped in front of the door, and one could not see anything inside unless they lifted the fabric. This heightened the curiosity of the Magi.

“We’re here! This is the slave market that my friend opened!” Crew gave a series of passwords in a practised manner, and received permission to pass from the two magically summoned creatures. “This is only open to members, and members can only bring one regular customer. The requirements are stringent, but it’s only at this sort of place that you’ll be able to get lots of great goods!”

Crew obviously had a mountain of experience, and he brought Leylin into an office.

“Lucia, my friend! I have brought you business!” What exceeded Leylin’s expectations was that this slave trader Lucia was, in fact, a female magician. She wore robes with a high collar, yet a small heart shape was cut
out at her bosom area, revealing deep cleavage.
“Crew! Have you grown sick of the snake girl from before?”
Lucia bowed at her slender waist and greeted Crew, quickly retreating back.
Looking at Crew, who wanted to take some liberties with Lucia, but was also embarrassed, Leylin rubbed his nose in shame. He had a feeling that he could have been ripped off by this lecherous old geezer.
“Is this the customer that you have brought?”
Lucia gave a slow smile as she advanced, and Leylin’s nose was filled with a very concentrated smell of perfume. While strong, it did not repulse him, but was rather like a strong drink that made men brim with the desire to explore further.
“What a handsome fellow!”
Lucia chuckled and gave Leylin a tight hug, her two large, satiny lumps of softness pressing directly against Leylin’s chest, and giving rise to a passion within.
“Young Magus, what kind of slave are you looking for? Fox girls, rabbit girls, or snake girls? Sister has everything here, and can even give you a discount!”
The beautiful slave owner with a provocative figure blew against Leylin’s ear as she whispered in a low voice.
“This… I apologise!”
Leylin gently pushed Lucia away, causing Crew to roll his eyes at him and Lucia to coquettishly laugh. “Oh my! Looks like our customer got embarrassed!”
“It is really your hospitality that makes it hard to breathe!” Leylin bowed and kissed Lucia on the back of her slender and pale palm, before receiving a jealous look from Crew.
It was not that he could not contain his urges, but that this beautiful slave trader was also a rank 1 Magus! Moreover, according the A.I. Chip’s detection, her elemental essence conversion was at least
Although Leylin was rather aroused, he did not want to have a knife stabbed in his back while bedding this woman. Moreover, how could a female slave trader be a simple character?

“Actually, my reason for coming here is to purchase a few special slaves!” Leylin made his request. Once the official matter was raised, Lucia put on a serious face.
No problem, we have the largest warehouse. As long as you make a request, we’ll immediately find a compatible slave for you!”

Lucia stated with confidence.
“Also, even if we don’t have it here, as long as you pay enough deposit, we can even organise a team to catch slaves and train them and teach them, customising them to your needs…”

Such a business model and industrialised chain of processes, also the special service provided for esteemed guests led Leylin to recall the VIP statuses back in his previous world.
“No need for that, my requirements are extremely simple!”

Leylin smiled, “First of all, it’s 5 slaves with the strength of Grand Knights. The race is to be humans, gender is unimportant. I need those with intact intelligence with no obvious flaw or damage on their bodies…”

He did lack a few workers in his villa to do odd jobs and maintain his image.
Furthermore, it was impossible for Leylin to take care of all miscellaneous tasks by himself.
Deep inside Leylin’s heart, he also had another plan. He had received one portion of resources for the Branded Swordsman from his trade with Dorotte. Even though it was incomplete and virtually impossible to break through with those materials, with the A.I. Chip’s deduction and Leylin’s own experiments, he had also
garnered some results. At the moment, he was thinking of trying out the fruits of his labour on a Grand Knight. These Grand Knight slaves would definitely have spirit seeds planted or some form of branding that would ensure they were 100% loyal. Their bodies were extremely strong as well and were the best people to experiment on to become Branded Swordsmen. “We have five Grand Knights here, you may pick them later. Each one will cost 700 magic crystals. Moreover, your big sister I will give you a discount. Amongst the 5 Grand Knights, there would be two beauties!” Lucia smiled. “I believe that apart from their duty as guards, they will definitely fulfill the other ‘duties’ as well!” For Magi whose vitality surpasses that of normal humans, normal girls would not be able to satisfy their needs. Hence, cultivating some Knights and Grand Knights as maidservants was a common practice. Hence Lucia did not lack any goods in this aspect. Towards such a benefit, Leylin only nodded his head, not feeling anything special. The Grand Knights were only a small matter. Leylin immediately stated his true purpose of coming here. “And then, I require an acolyte grade slave, it’s best if the strength is of a level 3 acolyte! Also, they have to know simple Potioneering and alchemy!” At this point, Lucia no longer had a relaxed expression. Even Crew looked at Leylin in surprise. In the Magus World, there were many tiers for slaves. Maidservants who have been nurtured, princesses or female nobles whose countries have been destroyed only belonged to the lowest tier of entertainment and consumption. Apart from the special cases of princesses and the likes, their prices were all extremely low. Further up, it would be the level of Knights and Grand Knights
who could be of use to their owners. The increase in expenditure was not small. If they also wanted slaves from different races of a beautiful slave, the prices would often be taken up another notch. However, none of them could be considered high-grade slaves.

In the south coast, there was only one type of slave that was considered to be high-grade. They were the magician slaves!

Whether regular humans or knights or Grand Knights, their bodies were unable to resist the energy pollution that Magi unwittingly emitted. In addition, they did not have any spiritual force to defend their Magus masters, nor help out with spell formations and the like.

Hence, upon advancing to an official Magus, many would usually recruit a few acolytes to assist them in their own experiments. However, on the south coast, some things still had to be adhered to. Even if one was in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the mentors could not use the acolytes as their guinea pigs and experiment on them as they wished, and had to tempt them with magic crystals or swindle them into a contract.

Rather than using the pampered acolytes, using slaves could solve this problem entirely.

Due to the existence of a spirit brand, slaves were typically loyal to a fault. In addition, the moment that a master buys them, their lives would immediately belong to their master’s. No matter how the Magi experimented on the slaves, they would not cause any trouble!

“Handsome fellow, you’re quite gutsy!” Lucia seemed quite bewildered as she looked at Leylin. “Level 3 acolytes aren’t that cheap!”

“Does that mean you have them?” Leylin picked at his eyebrow.

The origin of magicians slaves was quite simple. They were either wanted criminals or captives after a war.
In addition, their existence was not the most welcome, and even in Poolfield Kingdom’s Ellinel Market, Leylin did not see any shop that dared to publicly sell acolyte slaves. Leylin had only asked without expecting for there to be any results and had met with an unexpected surprise. Nightless City was the entire South Coast’s main trading centre! To think that it was possible to find high-grade slaves in a random slave shop!
“Don’t worry. As long as you can find someone, the price isn’t an issue!”
Leylin threw a black pouch to Lucia.
“I didn’t think a little guy like you has magic crystals!” Lucia checked the contents of the pouch and nodded, immediately ringing a red hand-bell on the table.
*Ding-ling-ling!*
With the ring of the bell, a maidservant pushed open the door, “My Lady! Do you have any orders?”
“Go bring Damien here!” In front of her servants, Lucia put on a frosty expression with no traces of smiles. Her every movement was filled with a domineering aura.
As for this maidservant, she did not even dare raise her head in front of Lucia’s orders and hurriedly led the room.
“Come! First, have a taste of this ‘chugu’! This is a special product from the Sicily Islands!”
After the door was shut, Lucia resumed her enchanting demeanour and brought out a fiery red flask, pouring a drink that seemed to be a mix between coffee and chocolate, for Leylin and Crew. Leylin took a sip and the mellow yet invigorating taste swirled in his throat.
“The taste is excellent! It’s rather similar to the Coco Fruit. Moreover, it had the effect of increasing vigour. If it can be popularised, it will definitely gain the attention of Magi!”
Leylin said indifferently.
"Lucia! You’re too much, how could you not give me several flasks of such great stuff!" Crew began to raise his loud.
"Young brother you have the foresight. I am preparing to open a new shop and promote this drink item as my brand item…” Lucia looked at Leylin in surprise, before smiling in an enchanting manner. “How about this, do you want to invest in this as well?”
“My apologies, I don’t have enough magic crystals. Especially after this round of purchasing slaves, I’m afraid I’d have to amass another fortune before considering such an investment…” Leylin naturally refused such a suggestion.
As for Lucia, there was no disappointment on her face; it only seemed that she had asked on the spur of the moment.
“Lucia, why don’t you consider me?” Crew put on an eager expression.
“You?” Lucia looked at Crew with disdain, “A fellow who only knows how to throw magic crystals on women, I have no faith in you at all. 27 years ago, it was you who took my investment and…” After Lucia talked about past events, Crew’s face reddened, and he kept his head down like a small boy who had done something wrong.
As for Leylin, he only cared about sipping his drink, pretending not to see or hear anything.
“My Lady! May I come in?”
This atmosphere was quickly broken by a request to enter the room.
“Is it Damien? Come in!” Lucia smoothed her hair and sat behind her desk once more.
*Creak!* The door to the office opened, and a silver-haired level 3 acolyte entered.
This acolyte was not young, and his face was wrinkled like the skin of a tangerine. In contrast, his clothes were neat and tidy, and not a
single hair was out of place. He seemed to be in good spirits, looking nothing like a slave.
“Damien! This is Magus Leylin, and he has expressed his desire to buy you. Now, he’ll ask you some questions.” Lucia pointed to Leylin, who was seated on a sofa at the side, and introduced Damien to him.
“It is my honour to meet you, my lord! I hope I am able to service you in the future!” Damien bowed respectfully.
“You don’t have to be so polite! I hope you’ll meet my requirements too!” Leylin looked undisturbed.
“In that case, if you blend the liquefied form of a Sun Flower and the stem of a Three Night Flower, what will happen?” Leylin asked a question related to Potioneering without any second thoughts.
“There will be a substitution reflect, and it will produce…” From the looks of it, this old geezer called Damien did have some attainments in Potioneering. He only needed to think for a short while, before fluently answering.
Next, Leylin asked a series of other questions.
At the beginning, Damien’s expression was relaxed, but as they got further along, cold sweat started to form on his back.
A little over ten minutes later, Leylin stood up, feeling satisfied, and told Lucia, “I want him. How many magic crystals?”
Through the little test that he had just conducted, Leylin concluded that Damien’s attainments in Potioneering and alchemy were definitely considered pretty good amongst acolytes who were in the same tier as him. It would definitely be worth it to buy him.
“16500 magic crystals!” Lucia smiled, “Adding on to those 5 Grand Knights, it amounts perfectly to 20000 magic crystals!”
“No way, this is too expensive! His age is already so high. Normally, acolytes only have a maximum lifespan of 150 years…” As for Damien, he stood there quietly by the side, as if the person they were haggling over was not him.
After Leylin left Lucia’s store with Crew, 6 more figures followed behind them. There was Damien, and the other 5 Grand Knights. Amongst the Grand Knights, there were two good looking girls with sexy figures, who also didn’t have any bulging muscles that destroyed their aesthetic beauty.
After fiercely negotiating the price, Leylin finally cut the price down to eighteen thousand magic crystals and bought the slaves. Furthermore, right in front of Lucia within the shop, Leylin used his own spirit brand and branded the six slaves’ minds. That meant from thereon, the fates of these slaves were all grasped within Leylin’s palm. Also, the nature of the soul brand was such that they had to be completely obedient to Leylin. Even if they were asked to kill themselves, they had to do so without a moment’s thought! One could go so far as to say that if Leylin felt a sudden urge, these slaves’ brains could simply explode like a watermelon. “Haha… I’ll stop bothering you and be on my way then!” Once they were on the street of their villas, Crew silently judged the two gorgeous female Knights behind Leylin with a mischievous twinkling in his eyes as they returned to their respective homes. “That old geezer!” Leylin was speechless as he shook his head, before bringing the six slaves into his villa. “This is my villa. You’ll be staying here from hereon, and you can choose your rooms in the back. Nobody is allowed into my bedroom and the basement! Understood?” Leylin turned and swept his eyes over his six newly-bought slaves as he ordered. “Understood, master!” The six of them split up and left.
“Damien, you stay behind!” Leylin stopped the level 3 acolyte. “Master, do you have any more orders for me?” Damien questioned respectfully.

“From today onwards, you are the butler of this villa and will be in charge of managing this place when I’m not around. Also, regarding the villa’s defense spell formation, I’ll give you the authority to modify it. Your task is to tidy up the entire villa, and stock up on items needed for everyday use…”

Leylin began to give a series of instructions. In a trading centre such as Nightless City where the Magi were in charge, there were many things that only a Magi could do. A typical Knight or Grand Knight didn’t have a sea of consciousness, so how could they even control their spiritual force, chant incantations and the like?

In order to maintain the operation of his villa even after Leylin left, an acolyte-level butler was indispensable.

“Also, tell me how you became a slave.” Leylin was slightly curious.

At the mention of this, Damien’s expression darkened and he trembled, a look of suffering appearing on his face. It was clear that his past was an extremely painful experience for him.

However, due to the control of the soul brand, he still had to adhere to Leylin’s command. “I was from the Steel Fort and was born in a regular little town. I was fortunate enough to be tested to have an affinity for magic and was accepted by my mentor into the Moonlight Shadow. Master may not have heard of it, as it is but a small Magi organisation. Even though I had to allow my mentor to experiment on my body, I was still lucky enough to survive and even became a level three acolyte…”

Until this point, Damien’s expression was still normal, but a traumatised look emerged on his face.
“Right after that was… the war! That darned war! As the powers lording over our district, the Wetland Gardens Academy began to support the expansion of other small organisations just because our leader was against them. Moonlight Shadow was conveniently used in the war, and my mentor, as well as many other seniors, died in battle. I was held captive and eventually became a slave…”

Leylin nodded in agreement. In the unwritten rules of the Magus World, Magi were typically not allowed to hold acolytes captive and use them as slaves, or else there would be no order in society. But there was one situation where the Magi was evidently not protected by any laws or agreements, it was when they were the prisoners of war! The prisoners of war and sub-human acolytes from established academies were the chief sources of magician slaves!

Leylin watched Damien, who was somewhat indignant and sorrowful, and suddenly felt a surge of fear.

At the beginning, if not for Abyssal Bone Forest Academy warding off the attack from the enemies, he wouldn’t be able to escape at all and his fate might have been to be killed by an official Magus or captured as a prisoner, and later be sold off as a slave.

“That’s why I’m so desperate for power! Only by possessing strength can I take control of my future!”

Leylin waved Damien away with a gesture of his hand.

“Familiarise yourself with the surroundings first. I want to go out and will only be back in the evening.”

……

The villa that Leylin was renting was extremely spacious, and there were rooms specifically meant for the servants to live in. Having six slaves moving in wasn’t crowded at all, and on the contrary, added a bit of life into the villa.
Damien revealed his abilities as an exceptional butler and kept Leylin’s villa neat and tidy. This allowed Leylin to relax and discard thoughts about odd jobs that needed to be done around the villa, and focus on brewing the ancient potion, Tears of Mary, in the basement.

Countless days later, Leylin went to the old witch’s shop alone and passed on to her the two portions of Tears of Mary that she was entitled to, based on their contract. They also set a timing for their next transaction.

After obtaining the ancient potions, no matter how hard the old witch tried to conceal her excitement, Leylin was still able to see her become feverish with elation.

She also stated that she was more than capable of handling even more spirits and that Leylin should prepare himself for that. From the looks of it, in order to obtain more of these precious potions, she was willing to gather and prepare the ingredients at all costs.

Leylin was quite pleased with this temporary ally of his. Though he didn’t know the reason why she needed the potions so urgently, this was a situation that benefited him too.

After the two of them came to a consensus, Leylin returned to the villa and took care of all the matters in the villa. He then proceeded to the outside of the city and returned to Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters on a Dragon Crown Nighthawk.

After joining Four Seasons Garden, besides the allocated amount that all Magi were entitled to, the great amount of resources in the library was something he something he coveted.

However, as a member of the organisation, he obviously was unable to stay in Nightless City all day long unless he was retired.

The missions this month were simple and could be completed in a few days, which gave him a lot of free time that he decided to spend in Nightless City.
At the moment, he had to return to Four Seasons Garden and take on the monthly tasks. Unless he wanted to renounce the portions he was allocated and the little power he had, he had to follow this sort of lifestyle.

If he were a typical Magus and were to use this way of life to slowly amass enough knowledge and resources for him to break through, it would take more than a hundred years!

But Leylin was different. Not only did he possess a high-grade meditation method, he was also extremely knowledgeable about the path one would need to take to become a rank 3 Magus. In addition, he had also stocked up and done preparations to ensure he had the best materials and ingredients!

In order to gain power and wealth, one needed to come up with alternative methods that might be frowned upon by others. He had never been a principled person.

Leylin had two main sources providing him with materials. One of them was the Four Seasons Garden, and even though the portion allocated by them was meagre, it still was a constant flow and the items were gained based on merit.

The other source was the dark Magi organisation he had recently joined. While it was slightly dangerous, the profits were plentiful.

With these two sources, one from an honest organisation and the other from an unscrupulous group, the rate at which he gathered his resources and increased his strength was far from what anyone could predict.

“Next, I’ll have to lay low, gather all my resources, and wait for the second transition of my bloodline.”

Leylin had planned everything for the next few years well ahead. The current him was just like the Dragon Crown Nighthawk he was sitting on before it flew, it would silently save its energy, anticipating a time in the future when it could soar through the skies!
Time flew by quickly, and in the blink of an eye, one year had passed. The mountain that was the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters was still standing strong and proud as always. Magi travelled through the passages within the mountain, looking like ants as they travelled around.

“Leylin! The theory of the ecology that you tested in the secret plane aroused my interest. How about it? Shall we have a discussion about it?”

At the moment, in a room for rest and relaxation, a male Magus with fire-red hair was speaking with Leylin. “Of course! I also hold an interest in the experiences and thoughts Magus Truman had while taking care of the Lava Goldfish.”

Leylin looked about the same as he did a year before, the main difference being the blackness in his eyes that seemed to have another layer of depth to them. “I was planning to take a trip to the library anyway. We can talk there!” Leylin invited Magus Truman. “But of course! I’m very familiar with your reputation as the child of the library,” Truman teased.

In answer, Leylin merely gave a light chuckle and did not take his comment to heart. In the span of this one year, he had been lying low most of the time, completing his missions without complaints and receiving his allocated resources every month, mostly living in seclusion. The place where he spent the most time in was the Four Seasons Garden’s giant library. The Four Seasons Garden was on a much larger scale than Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and the records and resources in the library
were abundant. In addition, with Leylin’s status as an official Magus, he had access to much more materials than what acolytes could get their hands on. Though some high-grade knowledge and potion formulas needed to be exchanged for using the specified amount of contribution points, the resources that the Four Seasons Garden provided free of charge was extremely helpful for Leylin. He spent about half a year gathering the information he had access to and saving them into the A.I. Chip, thereby largely enriching its database.

In order to prevent others from noticing the strangeness in his actions, Leylin would sometimes spend time in the library despite having saved all the information that was in there. For this pretense, he had rejected the invitations of countless beautiful female Magi. That had gained him several nicknames that were along the lines of ‘the insensitive wooden block’ and ‘the child of the library’ which quickly spread.

The Four Seasons Garden’s library was constructed within a huge hill, and acolytes could often be seen entering it. As official Magi, Leylin and Truman naturally received special treatment and received an isolated room in order to facilitate their discussion. There was also a soft sofa and multi-coloured snacks within the room.
he theory of ecosystems has long since existed. For example, many Magi find that growing wild grasses alongside Tortoise-Backed Mountain Grass will increase the yields of both by 30%!”

Leylin sat on the sofa and began to articulate upon his theories. “All I did was expand on this ring of connection. Adding multiple factors, it would proliferate to tens or even hundreds of species, forming a large ecosystem and increasing the outputs of various resources inside the secret plane…”

Truman’s eyes seemed to be giving off light. “What a novel theory! Being able to choose the most compatible ecosystem for the millions of resources in the natural world, I admire your knowledge and background in this area!”

Leylin just gave a faint smile. He was obviously unable to analyse that much data on his own, so the A.I. Chip did most of the work. The research that he had made public was only on a superficial level.

He was prepared to employ the many key experiments and procedures in his very own secret plane in the future and was unwilling to help Four Seasons Garden increase their output for free. After all, he was no do-gooder.

“However, I am also curious about the Lava Goldfish that you’re rearing, Truman.” Leylin remarked with an anticipatory look in his eyes.
Lava Goldfishes were a unique species in the Magus World. Usually, they thrived in lava, which made them extremely difficult to breed. As for their fish scales, they were necessary ingredients for many alchemy procedures. The blubber and flesh were a kind of nourishment which could recover a Magus’ energy and enable them to be revitalised after a weary meditation session. Hence, it was highly sought after with an extremely high price.

“Actually, it’s no big deal. These Lava Goldfishes’ habits are very predictable. Once you understand them, then you can make a relevant section inside the secret plane…”

Of course, Truman only briefly stated the methods.

“I hope to use this information of breeding the Lava Goldfishes to exchange for your theory of ecosystem. Moreover, as the value of your information is above mine, I am willing to top up 5000 more magic crystals!”

Truman made a sincere request.

“It’s no problem at all!” Leylin nodded and smiled. The purpose of releasing this information was to exchange it for resources and knowledge with other magicians. After a year of hard work, he had finally managed to grasp the general methods in operating a secret plane. Apart from that, he also learned about some of the habitats that the most expensive plants needed to thrive in. If he was given a secret plane to govern now, it would definitely not be in deficit, and actually, make profits. Although Leylin was a dark Magus and participated in plundering operations that the organisation he was in arranged, he never excluded the possibilities of extracting more magic crystals using a light Magus’ methods.

“Speaking of which, Leylin, you’re done with your missions for the month. Do you have any plans? I have a good friend whose experiment requires a high levelled Potions Master, so if you were
to go…” Truman sent Leylin an invitation. Apart from their duties inside Four Seasons Garden, many magicians often had a part time job through their connections in the organisation, earning additional magic crystals and resources. Of course, some did it purely as their interest or hobby, or merely just to help a friend out. “My apologies! The mission for this month was extremely taxing. I wish to take this well-deserved break to recuperate in Nightless City!” Leylin rejected Truman’s invitation tactfully. Right now, he no longer prioritised these tiny organization’s resources or connections. Moreover, he was in the crucial period of boosting his prowess, so he did not have that much time to bother about other trivial matters. “That’s really regretful…” Truman’s face reflected the disappointment that he felt. Only after exchanging several more words with Leylin and their specialised information did they separate. “Lord Leylin!” After parting with Truman, Leylin went to the landing pad of the Four Seasons Garden. The acolytes here all recognised Leylin and they bowed to greet him. “How is Hawke’s current condition?” Leylin walked to a cage with a giant creature within it. A pair of large red eyes stared back at him. The beast opened its jaws and revealed rows of razor sharp fangs that resembled swords, with a crimson tongue that had reverse scales. “Lord, your mount’s appetite is great. Yesterday, it had even eaten a whole red bread pig. Its temper was rather nasty, though this could be due to it being caged for a long period of time…” The acolyte who was in charge of these mounts was obviously
skilled in his work. He was also extremely diligent as he replied Leylin.
*Creak!*
A scarlet rune appeared on Leylin’s finger, forming the shape of a key and entering the keyhole of the metal cage.
“Roar!”
With an impressive roar, a green wyvern charged out of the cage. This creature had sharp talons and claws, and its whole body was covered in murky green scales. On its back was also a pair of large green wings. The membrane of the wings shone with a green lustre under the light.


The Venom Wyvern’s stats were displayed by Leylin’s A.I. Chip.
“Rawrrr!”
The gigantic Venom Wyvern continued to roar. At the same time, there was a fawning look in its eyes that was incredibly humane as it lowered its head and rubbed gently against Leylin’s body.
“Alright! Alright! I will give you an upsize for your meals when I get back!”
Leylin could not help but laugh as he rubbed this Venom Wyvern which had the mentality of a puppy missing its owner.
“Hawke, bring me to Nightless City now!”
Leylin got onto the back of the Venom Wyvern in one leap.
“Rawrr!” The Venom Wyvern snarled and the wings on its back jolted, unfolding segment by segment until they were fully extended, and were at least three times larger than its body.
With a fierce hurricane, the Venom Wyvern spread its wings and
swooped into the air.
“Hah… They’re finally gone. Just having that Venom Wyvern standing here is enough to make me feel uncomfortable,” a female acolyte who was feeding a Dragon Crown Nighthawk, gave a long sigh of relief.
“With that guy around, all these Nighthawks lost their appetites!” The female acolyte patted the Nighthawk in front of her that was eating cheerfully, seemingly just as relieved as her.
“That Venom Wyvern’s power is probably close to that of an official Magus. How strong must Magus Leylin be to be able to tame it?”
The male acolyte following behind Leylin had a very contrasting opinion from the female acolyte and his eyes reflected his envy and admiration for Leylin.
The Venom Wyvern’s flying speed was twice as fast as the Dragon Crown Nighthawk had been. It was thus much more convenient for Leylin to travel between Nightless City and the Four Seasons Garden.
Upon reaching the Nightless City’s landing pad, Leylin issued some orders for the acolytes to take care of his Venom Wyvern and gave Hawke another red bread pig before returning to his villa.
“Master!” Damien and a few Grand Knights bowed respectfully.
Leylin looked around, finding that the villa was still in the same state as it was before he had left. The human slaves that he had bought later on were carefully cleaning the staircase railing and all the pieces of artwork.
Damien was wearing a butler’s uniform, looking impeccable as he stood behind Leylin.
“Master! After you left, your neighbour, Magus Crew came over once. Also, I’ve already paid the continuity fees to the communal centre. Here is the inventory.”
After which, Damien gave a report of what he had done in this
period of time.
“Okay.” Leylin paid no mind to his words and nodded along. This Damien seemed to have undergone specialised training while he was a slave and was very proficient in these matters. Leylin had branded him and there was no way that he could revolt, so Leylin could place his trust in him.
“That’s enough for now. Make me some dinner and milk tea!” Leylin ordered indifferently.
“Hawke can be used for transportation and can sweep away most acolytes, but he won’t be useful in battles with official Magi.”
After a moment, Leylin, who was lying comfortably on a couch with pretty maids servicing him with their soft little hands, reflected with a hint of regret.
In the south coast, some Magi had top grade magic creatures as pets. These pets matured quickly, to the point that after their master advanced, it was possible for their own strength to reach the level of an official Magus.
In battle, how much help would an assistant with the same rank render?
Unfortunately, no matter how much Leylin searched and gathered them, he couldn’t find these high-quality pets, and could only purchase a Venom Wyvern to use as a mount.
Magi and their pets had to agree upon a strict spirit contract, and there were some that even required them to share their life force!
Leylin was obviously not going to waste his chance on this Venom Wyvern and used the simplest and cruelest spirit brand to forcibly control it. It was going to be a temporary mount, and he was planning to substitute it with a better option at the next best opportunity.
“But it’s a shame!”
Leylin turned his hand and a crystal that was like an amber revealed itself in his palm. In the middle of the crystal was a drop of green
liquid that had a unique aura emanating from it constantly.
“The Venom Wyvern’s blood essence has a trace of the bloodline of the ancient creature, the Thousand Venom Dragon!” The A.I. Chip prompted.
That was why he had purchased the Venom Wyvern.
While he was in Nightless City, Leylin had constantly been collecting creatures that might have ancient bloodlines in them and tried to purify their blood with the A.I. Chip.
However, a majority of his experiments were a failure, and the blood essence in his palm was the best result he had.
“A.I. Chip, have you found out the reason?”
In order to obtain the bloodlines of more ancient creatures, Leylin had conducted numerous experiments. However, none of them were successful.
The best result was what was in his hand, the quintessence of some ancient creature.
To most Magi, this was probably a precious treasure, but for Leylin, this was far from enough.
[Beep! After 124 practical experiments and a comparison with 9718 simulated experiments, the conjecture is that the Host’s concentration of bloodline essence is not enough. Unable to unearth deeper purification. Recommended to look for the blood essence of creatures with the power of rank 3 Magus and above as stimulus to purify bloodline.]
The A.I. Chip gave a prompt answer.
“As expected…” Leylin had already surmised this conjecture, and now it seemed to tally with the A.I. Chip’s calculations.
After a long period of time, the ancient bloodline in the mystical creatures in the south coast had been thinned out so much that if not for the amazing ability of the A.I. Chip, Leylin would not even be able to refine this blood that was full of impurities.
To obtain a pure ancient bloodline, it was necessary to gain blood samples from even stronger monsters.
The A.I. Chip had gathered that at the bare minimum, blood samples from a rank 3 creature had to be obtained.
That meant that as long as Leylin was able to obtain the blood of a monster that was rank 3 or higher, the A.I. Chip would be able to purify and extract a perfect sample of the ancient bloodline.

“But… A creature that is rank 3 or above?” Leylin smiled wryly at his thoughts, “I’d probably die just from a snort from them! I’d obtained the blood from the Black Horrall Snake that originally had the strength of a rank 3 Magus. Thankfully, its might had weakened to the equivalent of an acolyte, and that alone was a giant stroke of luck. It’s as if a tasty meat pie had fallen from the heavens!”

The Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline that Leylin was in possession of was purified from the Black Horrall Snake previously found in the Dylan Gardens.

That Black Horrall Snake was a powerful creature that rivalled the strength of a rank 3 Magus at its adult stage!

The Black Horrall Snake back then had definitely matured into an adult. However, due to the limiters inside the secret plane, coupled with prolonged hunger and perhaps also with the other methods from the great Magus Serholm, it caused the Black Horrall Snake’s state to deteriorate in its slumber, eventually turning pitiful enough to be attacked by a group of level 3 acolytes.

This was obviously a present that the great Magus Serholm left for his inheritor. It was an intentional setup and not a coincidence.

The great Magus Serholm was a rank 4 Warlock, and as compared to Leylin who was a rank 1 Warlock, he was the sun while Leylin was but a firefly.

“These things are dependent on luck. At most, I’ll take more notice in the future. It’s not the time to think about this now!”

Leylin pulled up his stats.

Healthy
In this year, he had been continuing his trade with the old witch. Using the processed spirits she had gathered, he had obtained a large quantity of the ancient potion- Tears of Mary! With the help of the ancient potion, Leylin’s spiritual force shot up rapidly.
Leylin had spent quite some time in the Four Seasons Garden and through the exchange of contribution points, he had gathered the formulas of potions that could increase an official Magus’ spiritual force.
However, he found that those potions’ effects were nothing compared to the ancient potion.
With its help, Leylin increased his spiritual force at a shocking rate, as if he had no limits.
Presently, he had no choice but to use concealment methods to hide his tremendous spiritual force. He stayed indoors whenever possible, avoiding areas where rank 2 Magi might appear. He didn’t want there to be any chances of others finding out.
Unfortunately, even with the A.I. Chip constantly upgrading the concealment method, it was not possible to hide his spiritual force entirely.
The moment he had a break, Leylin would rush back to Nightless City to hide and avoided all social interaction.
After reaching a certain level in terms of his spiritual force, Leylin had once again used the crystallised Darkness energy particles to push his elemental essence conversion to 70%!
However, after his elemental essence conversion reached 70%, Leylin received a notification from the A.I. Chip that his body and spirit had developed a resistance towards such crystals. Unless he found more precious resources to raise his elemental essence conversion in the future, he could only rely on meditation and time and progress at a slower rate.
“Potions made by ancient Magi are really different!”
A look of satisfaction crossed Leylin’s face. “The agreement with the old witch cannot be broken. Moreover, finding new ways to conceal my spiritual force is becoming a matter of urgency.”
In all honesty, he should be collecting the spirits himself. Directly branding the spirits of slaves who helped out would ensure that this matter was kept secret.
However, the preparatory stages for the brewing of the Tears of Mary required someone with the might of a rank 1 Magus. Moreover, it had to be a Magus who was specialised in spirits.
As for Leylin, his current attainment in the knowledge of spiritual force and spirits only allowed him to brand level 3 acolytes. It was basically impossible to brand an official Magus.
Anyway, the old witch had made her vow in front of the Trial’s Eye, so she could be trusted for the time being.
“However, the amount of spirits provided by the old witch seems to have decreased. In the past few trades, she also seemed distant and unfocused and didn’t even participate in the activities organised by the dark Magi organisation. It seems there’s something of extreme importance going on. I’d better check on her tomorrow and hope that there won’t be any trouble…”
This ally of his was recently acting strangely, inciting worry in Leylin’s heart.
“Master! Your dinner’s ready!”
Damien’s voice sounded while he was deep in thought, enjoying the service from his maids.
“Alright! I’ll be right there!”
Leylin opened his eyes, the blackness in his pupils gaining another depth in them…
After a day of entertainment and rest, Leylin was feeling refreshed. Wrapped in a black cloak, Leylin covered even his face and paid a visit to the old witch’s shop.
“What happened to you?”
The moment Leylin saw the state the old witch was in, he wrinkled his eyebrows.
The first time he’d seen her, the old witch looked like a dead person. The scent of death and decay was even more apparent now, and she looked like she was a corpse which had just crawled out of an old tomb. The undulations from her spiritual force were also extremely feeble.
This condition immediately alarmed Leylin.
For Magi, injuries on one’s physical body were insignificant, but if one’s spiritual force showed signs of weakening, that immediately meant that one’s might was decreasing.
The old witch was still Leylin’s ally, and he didn’t want his supplier to suddenly disappear.
“Nothing much! Just a recent experiment that’s approaching its crucial stage!” Her body was already as weak as it could get, and just speaking resulted in her panting. However, the light in her eyes was even more radiant, as if on the verge of burning up.
Leylin had seen such a fervent heat in a person’s gaze before— in his previous life, in the eyes of lunatics and crazy people.
“You’d better not keep anything from me. Remember, we’re allies. Haven’t we been working well together in this past year?” Leylin obviously didn’t believe her vague explanation.
“When it’s time, I’ll definitely tell you everything.”
The old witch gave a mysterious grin. “Also, I’ve found the spiritual force concealment method that you requested the previous time.”
“What? What?!” This was so unexpected that a smile surfaced on Leylin’s face.
He had always been searching for this content on the sly and attended a few of the dark Magi’s bazaars and meets to exchange resources, but to no avail.
He wasn’t expecting much when he employed her help, and it was a pleasant surprise that she had actually gotten what he wanted. “This is information regarding the compression of spiritual force. Take a look!” She passed a green leaf to him. Leylin reached out and took it, and then placed it on his forehead. A cool feeling was emitted from the leaf and permeated Leylin’s skull, going straight into the depths of his brain. [Spiritual force data interface has been detected. To accept the connection or not?] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. “Accept!” With Leylin’s command, a massive stream of information entered Leylin’s sea of consciousness. It was constantly broken down, recorded and analysed by the A.I. Chip. “Overall, the compression of spiritual force is to stack the spiritual force together continuously, arising in a different frequency of energy waves. From there, one can achieve the purpose of concealing their spiritual force…” After browsing through for a while, Leylin smiled in satisfaction. “This piece of information is very useful to me, but it seems to be incomplete. Where is the rest of it? Take it out! What do you want? Magic crystals? Potions? Resources? Just give the word!” Leylin appeared to be extremely rich and overbearing. “Hehehe… Just with the first half of this information, your spiritual force will be untraceable to all rank 1 Magi. Once you have the second half, even a rank 2 Magus won’t be able to discover your spiritual force energy waves. Although you can definitely afford it, I wish to make a trade with you using another method…” The old witch said with a cryptic laugh and hooted. “What method?” Leylin’s brows furrowed, guessing that it was going to be extremely troublesome. “I will give you the first half of the information now as a gift of thanks for being my ally!” The old witch appeared to be extremely generous, “As for the second half, I need you to do something for
me!

It was obvious that the old witch was using the second half of the information as bait to have Leylin help her with a certain matter. “I need to know the specifics.”

Leylin did not refuse, but he did not agree either.

“Hehe… Don’t worry, I won’t ask you to hold back a rank 2 Magus or anything like that. I just want you to accompany me to explore some ruins.”

The old witch revealed her true motive.


“The remnants of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect!”
“The Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect?!”
Leylin’s looked lost for a second, and immediately made a sound of astonishment. “Do you mean that sect that’s full of lunatics who think that spirits are the ultimate resting state of all living beings and like to massacre and sacrifice human flesh from time to time? Do you mean that wicked Magi sect?”
“Exactly! The Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect was just a small sect in the south coast during ancient times. I didn’t expect you to know of them!”
The old witch gasped at Leylin.
“The ruins of this kind of crazy sect is definitely going to be annoying. There might be some troublesome curses or mechanisms in there…”
Leylin was very clear about his abilities.
A year ago, he could barely win over a Magus with 50% elemental essence conversion and was considered an elite within the tier of rank 1 Magi.
After a year of constantly increasing his spiritual force and elemental essence conversion, the current him was at the top, second only to those who were on the verge of breaking through and already met the requirements in terms of their spiritual force and elemental essence conversion.
This might was considered quite good in the entire south coast and
he could be ranked highly here, but, if he had the misfortune of bumping into a rank 2 Magus, all that awaited him was death. At the most, he had a little hope of escaping with all his might, but what were his chances of survival? The A.I. Chip chip calculated that it was less than 10%!

In ancient times, elite Magi organisations were sure to have rank 4 Magi taking charge, and it was obvious that there were multiple rank 2 and 3 Magi.

The mechanisms left behind by Magi with such levels of strength were definitely not something Leylin could ward off, even though thousands of years had passed.

“Don’t worry, we’re just seeing a small part of it! I’ve also invited a few other friends. I just need one item from there, and all other gains will be left for you to divide amongst yourselves!”

The old witch gave her word.

“It looks like this item must be of massive importance to her. If that’s the case, it might be possible for me to…”

After hearing her words, Leylin’s eyes darted around as he considered.

“I need to think this over.”

Out of cautiousness, Leylin decided to obtain more information first before answering her.

“Alright, but make it quick. I plan to leave in five days, so contact me using the secret imprint before then!” The old witch gave a quick nod and passed a dozen spirit spheres to Leylin.

“This is the latest batch of spirits! However, I need 20% more of your potions this time. I’ll exchange some items to make up for this! How about two hundred thousand magic crystals and a Wolf Spirit Flower?”

Leylin glanced at the old witch, whose spiritual force undulations were waning.

If she was the one using all those spiritual force potions, she
definitely would not be in this state. From the looks of it, all the potions she had obtained had been given to someone else.
“Sure!” After giving it a thought, Leylin agreed.
In order to increase the efficiency of the Tears of Mary and break through the nature of spiritual force, which always hit a bottleneck, he would always meditate for a period of time first. When the increase in his spiritual force slowed, he would then use the potion. Based on the A.I. Chip’s calculations, this combination was the best method to consume the potion.
Hence, he still had some Tears of Mary in his possession.

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Five days later, on a flat ground in the eastern part of the Nightless City.
A shining bright moon hung in the sky, reflecting a silvery lustre on the earth.
The silhouettes of the trees dancing in the wind continuously projected malevolent shadows on the ground, just like monsters of various shapes and sizes.
*Whoosh!*
Countless black figures converged, forming the shadows of 3 figures on the ground.
Two of the three people had worn a thick layer of black robes and used a veil to cover their faces. It seemed to give off the vibe of something eerie and crafty.
“Old Devil! When is Blood Rogue coming?” A cloaked figure spoke to the person that did not put on a veil but had a small demon mask on instead.
“Soon!” The voice of an old woman sounded from under the mask.
“By the way, I don’t have a problem with you getting Blood Rogue
to come since he’s from our organisation and he’s quite strong. Who’s this person though?”
The cloaked person projected to the old witch, evidently dissatisfied.
“Don’t worry, she’s a good friend of mine. She’s definitely trustworthy!” The old witch guaranteed.
“She’d better be. If not, no matter how tempting your rewards are, I’ll take my leave!”
“Don’t worry, she’s…” She projected to him once more.
“I see!” She told the cloaked person some information, and it immediately became silent.
Minutes later, a blood-red flame soared at the site and a silhouette covered in a crimson cloak directly appeared on the ground.
“My apologies, I’m a little late!” Leylin spoke and glanced through the people around.
He was obviously familiar with the old witch, and he had also seen the cloaked man in the dark Magi organisation before. He went by the nickname Brass Ring. As for the other, Leylin had no idea who it was.
“Blood Rogue, you’re here! Let me introduce you, you already know Brass Ring, and this here is Jaye, a good friend of mine!” The old witch first gave a brief introduction.
At this moment, Leylin, who had gone back to his experiment lab and tested the spiritual force concealment spell that he had gotten from the old witch, coveted the latter half of the spell even more.
Moreover, regarding the ruins of an ancient organisation such as the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect, Leylin was also somewhat interested in them. Hence, after a period of consideration, he finally agreed to the old witch’s invitation.
However, as she had invited others, Leylin naturally made a deal with the old witch and came here with his identity as Blood Rogue in the dark Magi organisation.
Since he was using that identity, he naturally couldn’t ride his Venom Wyvern.
The present Leylin’s face was all red, and he had the appearance of a malevolent demon. There were even horns on his demon mask.
“Blood Rogue! Long time no see!” Brass Ring acknowledged his comrade.
Leylin’s had gained a reputation from his identity as Blood Rogue from the few operations within the organisation. It could also be said that he was infamous, and coupled with the way the bald Venom Snake had suddenly vanished with no warning, Brass Ring was slightly fearful of this Blood Rogue.
Dark Magi respected power, and Brass Ring naturally would not underestimate Leylin.
“Brass Ring! And Jaye, hello!” Leylin greeted and smiled.
“Alright, since we’re all here, let us set off!”
The old witch nodded her head and her figure disappeared in the darkness. Following which, after various flashes of light, there was no one left on this patch of ground, and darkness once again enveloped the area…
The old witch led Leylin and the others on a hastened journey. As they were all official Magus, their travelling speed was extremely quick, far surpassing the speed of horses. In the span of two days, they had already traversed across the entire Teljose plains.
Following which, Leylin and the others walked towards an extremely ordinary looking town.
This western styled town was no different from others, and the total headcount would not exceed ten thousand people.
As for the professions in this town, lumberers and farmers comprised the bulk of it. On the paths, there were even rubbish and dung strewn.
“It smells quite bad here!”
Brass Ring grumbled.
From the strange attire of the four of them, it was obvious that they could not enter the small town in broad daylight. The old witch first let them hide outside while she went in by herself. After that, they strutted in without fear to the sight of numerous people who were in a deep sleep along the roads.

“This…” Leylin breathed in with his nose, “The pollen of the Sea Anemone Flower, and the liquid secretion from the Pungent Rat’s joints! This dosage is enough for them to stay asleep for at least three days and three nights!”

“Hehe… And even if someone were to chop off one of their legs or kill them, they wouldn’t even wake up. That’s enough for us to conduct our exploration…”

“Is three days enough? Isn’t it more convenient to just kill all of them? We can even take this opportunity to obtain a few bloodthirsty spirits and the like.” Brass Ring casually brought up. This was the way a typical dark Magus thought. They revelled in bloodshed and violence and preferred to slaughter in order to solve most of their problems.

“After the exploration, I’ll let you do anything you want with them, but now, you have to listen to me!” The old witch stared at Brass Ring, a strange undulation emitting from her body.

*Teng Teng!* Brass Ring had to retreat a few steps. “Are you mad? You want to use this in this situation? Are you looking to die?” “Don’t provoke me, or you’ll absolutely regret it!” Her voice was hoarse.

At this moment, Brass Ring suddenly came to the realisation that the old witch in front of him was one of the elders in the organisation. She had connections and her powers were unknown, and if not for an incident many years ago, her power would be much stronger now!

At this moment, the other Magus called Jaye stood behind the old witch and expressed her support for her.
“Alright, alright! Let’s make a compromise and not act this way!” Leylin began to resolve the dispute, “Among the light Magi’s standard operating procedures during times of calamity, a town whose civilians had all fainted or were all massacred are two different matters altogether. The first scenario would only have acolytes dispatched to investigate, as for the second scenario, there will be official Magi dispatched!”
“For the sake of our safety, Brass Ring, it’s better for you to hold it in!” Following which, Leylin turned around and asked the old witch, “Time is indeed a concern. Old Devil, I’m sure you can tell us some things by now, can’t you?”
The old witch looked at Leylin deep in the eyes before reluctantly agreeing. “Alright then!”
“… This is a small scale secret plane that I stumbled on during my travels. It should be an experiment lab of sorts. The area will not exceed 100 mu, so we can definitely finish exploring it within 3 days!”
“Small scale secret plane?” A flash of disappointment was shown on Leylin’s face.
In the south coast, the secret planes were also categorised.
In the south coast, the storage type secret plane Leylin had previously raided and the laboratory type secret plane that the old witch found were all classified as small scale secret planes. The area of these kind of secret planes usually didn’t exceed a 100 mu and were only used to perform experiments and to store supplies. If one does not take into account of the items stored inside and only look at the area of the secret plane, its worth would be at the bottom.

Above that were the resource type secret planes, the area of that type of secret planes is usually larger than 100,000 mu. The area is large and the topology is varied and suitable to grow resources necessary to Magi. The highest rank of secret planes are those that have spells that can adjust the living environments of both plants and animals, and can be controlled by a single Magus!

These are only under normal circumstances, there are also places like Dylan Gardens which Leylin previously found. Even though the area was small but it was personally arranged by the fourth level warlock great Magus Serholm, thus its value couldn’t be compared to the normal planes of its kind.

“It’s a shame! If it was a resource type of secret plane, we could occupy it in secret then alter it, hehe… then we would be filthy rich!”

Brass Ring was stroking his chin as if he was caught in some
fantasy.
“Keep dreaming!” The old witch sneered icily, interrupting Brass Ring’s fancy dreams.
“The bigger the area of the secret plane, the higher the cost of construction. As for the resource type secret planes which was larger than 100k mu, even for some ancient Magi organisations, there weren’t many that could afford to construct it…”
“All the present resource type secret planes that belongs to the large organisations are all remnants from the ancient Magi which have been altered slightly, that’s all! If there really was a resource type secret plane being discovered here, the likes of us wouldn’t be able to stomach it. Even if we added our whole organisation plus the Boss that is backing it, it still wouldn’t be enough!”
“Let’s go! Even if it’s just a laboratory type of secret plane, there must still be a lot of valuable stuff inside. We’re also handing over a lot contributions to the higher ups. It’s enough for you to trade for a lot of resources!” Leylin said.
For these kind of small scale secret planes, every large Magi organisation has set up missions.
No matter if it’s Four Seasons Garden or the dark Magi organisation which the old witch belonged to, they all have the power to take it over. After which there naturally will be a lot of rewards for the finders.
If this was a resource type of secret plane then Leylin would put in some thought in order to pocket it himself.
Since it’s only a laboratory type of secret plane, he didn’t put much thought into pocketing it. After all even if he was to occupy it because it’s so small he couldn’t actually alter it that much. At most he would only have a small scale secret base to hide.
“The entrance to the secret plane is on the west side of this town, inside a two story wooden building!”
The old witch seemed quite familiar with the surroundings as she
brought the three of them to a two-storey building made out of wood.
Compare to the small town, this place was even more remote. Weed were growing all around the villa and there were even two mole like animals quickly scurrying by.
“Originally this place was a lively street, but since 13 years ago the residents in this place kept dying one by one. Sometimes the town residents could hear sound of a woman wailing outside their homes, that’s why the rumors spread about it being a cursed or a haunted house. The surroundings ended up being overgrown!”
The old witch opened up the rusted gates while feeling rather satisfied with herself.
“I found this place during one of my explorations, after a couple of months of investigation, I’m sure that the unusual situations around here is cause by the deterioration of the defensive spells around the entrance to the secret plane, unwillingly leaking radiation …”
“According to calculations, after 13 years the defensive spells should have totally deteriorated. Leaving the entrance to the secret plane exposed…”
“Thusly I pretend to be an ordinary person and bought this building, plus I added a facade on the outside so other Magi couldn’t discover this place.”
Leylin was listening to the old witch while he was exploring the inside of this building.
The bottom floor wasn’t that big, it only contained 2 to 3 buildings. The hall was filled with a thick layer of dust and broken furniture. In the corner was a spiral staircase filled with holes. It was the only thing connecting these two floors.
Beneath this obvious state of decline, Leylin could feel a strong aura of negative energy.
This aura was extremely malevolent, and it carried with it a smell that Leylin was familiar with.
“Spirits! And they’re spirits that have been driven crazy from being vengeful!” The corner of Leylin’s mouth curved, “This old witch really found a nice place!”

“Follow me! Be careful not to touch the black mold on the walls, those are trigger points!”

The old witch was in front leading the while, bringing the three behind as they climbed the squeaky stairs to the second floor. She seemed extremely familiar with this place.

The area on the second floor was smaller than the large hall on the first, where the corridors only allowed 2 people to walk side by side.

By chance Leylin was walking beside Jaye, because the other person was entirely wrapped in a cloak and didn’t speak much. Leylin couldn’t even distinguish the other person’s gender.

“This oil painting is the entrance to the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane!”

By the end of the corridor, the old witch was pointing towards an oil painting that was hanging on the wall as she turned around and spoke to Leylin and the rest.

Leylin’s focus involuntarily shifted to the oil painting.

This oil painting depicted a richly dressed noble woman, using a delicate fan to cover half her face.

Due to time and age, there were a lot of dust on the walls. Even around the oil painting were a ring of thick dust.

The whole oil painting used green as a base color, and it didn’t seem to fit the picture.

Besides, maybe it’s because of the angle and line, but if he stared at it long enough, Leylin felt that the fan the noble woman was holding in the oil painting moved slightly.

Suddenly, the young woman inside the oil painting blinked her eyes!

“Is this oil painting alive?”
Leylin cried out involuntarily.
“You’re finally awake?” The old witch advanced as she cackled.
“Foreign intruders, speak the password!” The woman inside the oil painting blinked again as information directly entered each Magus that was present.
“Password? Your masters have all perished, and right now we’ve come to take everything inside the secret plane!”
The old witch was staring at the woman in the oil painting, “If you choose to comply, there might be a place for you inside my storage room!”
“Password incorrect!” The woman inside the painting said. Leylin was keenly aware of that the fan which the noble woman held inside her hand closed slightly.
“It’s only a being conjured by spells, yet it dares to disobey me!”
The old witch’s eyes emitted green lights, and a ring of green fireballs emerged flying directly toward the oil painting.
*Bam!*
As the green fireballs burned the oil paint, the noble woman’s fan closed entirely exposing the face behind it.
Leylin didn’t expect that under the beautiful half of the noble woman’s face was a nose and mouth composed entirely out of bones.
This appearance was as if the flesh and blood below the noble woman’s eyes had instantly disappeared.
A feeling of discrepancy and wrongness suddenly assaulted Leylin’s thoracic cavity.
*Scree!*
Following that, the shrill sound of a woman flooded the whole corridor.
The green fireballs started to crumble, turning into small spark of green fire. Following which it directly extinguished in the fluctuation of the air.
Beep! Host is being attacked by sound waves. Resemblance to banshee wail 67%. Abnormality in muscle coordination, spiritual force circulation rate lowered by 89%…

The A.I. Chip projected the status with red color in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“Banshee wail? Could it be that there is a genuine banshee trapped inside that oil painting?” Leylin was startled, immediately a layer of crimson membrane appeared outside his body and isolated the sound.

Even though his ears still hurt, but his body has regained his mobility.

At the same time, a couple of blood red tentacles like intestines protruded from the oil painting and they headed for Brass Ring.

“Damnable thing!” Brass Ring cursed as his body protruded countless bone spikes. The red intestines was directly pierced and was severed.

“Bone Spike Arts?!” Leylin was startled, “He actually solidified this kind of innate spells onto himself, is he a masochist?”

Bone Spike Arts was a rank 1 spell, and was quite formidable. But its activation process was quite a hassle. It needed to be grown from a Magus’ own skeleton then pierce the Magus’ own muscle before attacking his opponent.

This kind of spell was literally hurting oneself before hurting your opponent, only maniacs and masochist would pick this.

“I’ll tear you damnable thing to pieces!”. One could see that Brass Ring was quite enraged since he was forced to use his innate spell.

Presently, his whole body was covered with bone spikes. It gave one the impression that he was like a white sea urchin.

At the same time, a green light spread from below his neck to his whole body, initiating blood staunching and similar effects.

“Stop!” The old witch’s body started to emit countless translucent spirit bodies, and every one of them circulated around Brass Ring’s
body, making his speed drop.
“There is a spell effect on this oil painting, if you tear it apart the whole entrance to the secret plan will also collapse!”
The old witch’s expression turned serious, “Let me do it!”
When the previous Banshee wail had struck, the bodies of both the old witch and Jaye emitted a black colored membrane. It seemed like neither of them suffered any injuries.
“Your Banshee wail was pretty good, it is a shame that the matching spell formation has been half collapsed due to the passage of time. What’s left isn’t something than can affect us official Magi…”
The old witch looked upon the Banshee within the oil painting with pity, as she stroked the surface of the painting with her hand.
Following which tiny dark purple dots originated from the old witch’s palm and spread continuously. Like someone was adding a coat of paint.
“Come forth! My baby!”
The old witch said softly, her voice sounding tender and flirtatious. As soon as these words were uttered, the Banshee within the painting turned fearful, as if she had encountered her natural enemy.
After the black purple colour extended throughout the entire oil painting, the banshee disappeared without a trace.

“That’s a pretty good entrapment method! Did you buy this just for this purpose?”

Leylin approached the old witch, “I’m rather interested in this banshee. Can you sell it to me later? I’ll buy it at twice the market price!”

“Once we’re done exploring the secret plane and we find what I want, I can just give it to you!”

The old witch flashed Leylin a glance.

At the present, in the middle of the oil painting a small dot of silver light suddenly appeared.

The silvery light grew bigger and bigger and the surrounding void started to ripple. Finally, it settled into a corridor filled with a silvery sheen.

Resentment, wailing! A strong aura of dark spiritual power poured out constantly from within the corridor.

A faint mist started to rise around the whole wooden building and the sound of people of all ages started to sound all around.

This kind of scenery, if the old witch didn’t previously put everyone in the town into slumber, would most likely have caused quite a commotion in the town.

“Even though there is no chance of encountering any ancient Magi
inside the secret plane, but there are still some lingering curses and traps that are still working. We better be careful… considering that the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect was a Magi organization famous for researching spirits, one must prepare accordingly.”
The old witch warned specifically.
“By now you should reveal to us what you’re really looking for right?” Leylin locked the old witch with his gaze.
“Heuheuheu… relax, you’ll all know when that time comes!” The old witch just cackled manically as usual.
“Speak the truth. Old Devil if you still won’t we all will feel insecure…” This time, Brass Ring sided with Leylin, “If you don’t tell me now, I won’t be able to keep my former promises…”
“You guys…” The old witch was quite anxious but suddenly broke into a coughing fit. Her originally crooked body seemed to bend even more as if her waist was about to break.
“Sigh… Alright then!”

After a long while the old witch recovered her breath but her complexion was turning paler.
“It’s an altar-like thing. There is only one of it in the whole laboratory. You won’t be able to miss it!”
The old witch spoke with an impatience.
“Then what? Only this much information?” Brass Ring immediately asked.
“What else do you think there is?” The old witch’s eyes emitted green light as her gaze bore into the body of Brass Ring, “I only found some clues from some ancient information that this altar might be inside this secret plane, how could I know any more specific facts?”
As if he was afraid that the old witch would again lash out at him, Brass Ring chose wisely not to ask any further questions.
“Then what’s the altar’s function?” After Brass Ring went silent, Leylin asked instead. “Don’t tell me that you don’t even know how
to use the altar and still went to look for it.”
“Of course not!” The old witch tried to calm her expression but still chose to speak at last, “That altar is a product made by the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect during their later periods, and is called the Spirit Altar. It has great benefits towards alleviating my current conditions. There is even a chance that it might directly cure it…”
“If you all help me get to it, then Blood Rogue’s materials, Brass Ring’s thunder fire stone, Jaye’s gasping lakewater will all be given, not one gram less!”
The old witch guaranteed once more.
Leylin didn’t completely believe it, it was apparent that the old witch had some other tricks up her sleeve.
“You and I are old friends, if I won’t help you then who will?” Among the rest of the three Jaye was the first to speak. The voice was neither masculine nor feminine and carried a weird pitch.
“Alright! I was just asking!” Brass Ring also started to concede.
“What about you Blood Rogue?” The old witch looked over Leylin. “If you are not planning to exploit us and make us risk our lives for your cause, I don’t have any other objections!” Leylin sneered.
“That’s good!”
The old witch looked at the corridor which emitted silvery light and said, “Alright, the corridor should be completely stabilised by now, let’s us proceed!”
Following which the old witch’s eyes radiated a fervent hunger as she stepped into the corridor.
Leylin and the rest looked at each other and followed. The dazzling silvery light suddenly expanded and swallowed the four people completely.
“Buzz buzz!”
Leylin scanned his surroundings. What he saw was a black corridor which seemed to be constructed by some unknown metal. The wall could strangely enough reflect
their shadows. But the shadows appeared twisted and seemed to emit a bone-chilling laughter.

“Illusion materialization technique?” Leylin smiled coldly. Black light flashed in his eyes and he was able to break out of the illusion immediately.

Following which he heard some buzzing sounds. Following the sound a large grey cloud appeared. Once it got closer, Leylin discovered that this dark cloud consisted of densely packed, moth-like organisms.

Fur grew on these organisms, and the image of a huge eye was depicted on each of their huge wings. It seemed quite eerie.

“Careful! Those are the Spirit Devouring Moths!” The old witch raised the alarm.

“Don’t touch the dust that they carry, otherwise your spirit and mentality will be continuously corroded!”

At the same time the old witch opened her mouth and emitted a shrill scream. Sound waves could be seen exploding forth like an artillery shell.

*Boom!*

Half of the grey clouds disappeared, and at the same time, a huge amount of dust billowed down like it was snowing.

*Whoosh!* As he heard the old witch mention the name of Spirit Devouring Moths, Leylin was already on alert. Now a scarlet red membrane of light enveloped his body and kept the dust at bay.

[Host’s body is being attacked by an unknown powder. The powder has a sticky quality!] [Activating the defense potion smeared on Host’s body. Adjusting frequency, emitting shockwaves… Adhesive powder substance’s effect removed!] A prompt from the A.I. Chip emerged in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“Such a bother!”

Leylin had read about this adhesive quality in the Four Seasons
Garden’s library before. This type of attack would stick onto the opponent’s body, and if the layer of light was removed before the powder was completely gotten rid of, the powder’s magic would be activated and begin the second attack.

“Crimson Palm!”

Leylin’s hands suddenly turned red as he struck an offensive pose. Both his hands clawed in front of him.

*Bang!*

Two crimson talons’ image flashed through the void. It surrounded the Spirit Devouring Moths from both left and right and pressed towards the center.

Countless moths were directly torn into tatters by the blood talons, torn wings and grey dust like kept fluttering.

[Host’s Crimson Palm’s theoretical power: 20 degrees. Real power: 34 degrees, Crimson Palm reached boundary of limits, adding additional power!]

Along with the sound from the A.I. Chip’s prompt, the phantom crimson claws in the air suddenly trembled, and blood-red flames burst out from his two hands, burning up all the falling bodies. Without even emitting any smoke, the Spirit Devouring Moths were directly burnt to ashes in the crimson flames.

“Is this the signature move of the Blood Rogue, the Crimson Palm? Why is it so powerful?”

Brass Ring looked at Leylin with shock.

Within the dark Magi organisation, Leylin was a newcomer who went by the name Blood Rogue, and the spells that he often used were quickly revealed.

Brass Ring was aware that Leylin had such a technique, but he never knew that it had such a mighty offensive power!

“You have made great progress recently!”

The old witch secretly transmitted to Leylin.

From what Brass Ring had seen from the battle between the old
witch and the Spirit Devouring Moths, he reckoned that these creatures were crafty and difficult to handle. Leylin, however, had used just one spell and completely demolished the opponent, which shocked the old witch.

It seemed that from the very beginning, this ally of hers had been developing at a frightening speed!

“This might… Is your elemental essence conversion more than 50%?” The old witch transmitted her voice to Leylin.

“What do you think?” Leylin answered indifferently.

“Hehe… the stronger you are the more it will benefit me. After all, compared to Brass Ring, I would rather trust you who signed a contract with me!”

The old witch made another promise while she spouted words she herself didn’t believe, “As long as you help me, not only will I give you information about concealing your spiritual force, I’ll also give you another million magic crystals. Hell, I’ll even give up my position as an elder in the organisation to you!”

“A position like that is transferrable?” Leylin was a little shocked. The group that he was in, the Thousand Meddling Leaves, didn’t have any real leader. The rank 2 dark Magus backing them was only in contact with a few of the elders. The organisation had gatherings and trade fairs every once in awhile, letting the members have chances to find good opportunities.

The moment an elder felt that the lead a member had found was worth acting on, he or she would gather the members and launch a looting operation. The elder and members who had first found out about this chance would be able to get a bonus after the plundering. It was obvious that once one became an elder, he or she would have a place as a leader in the dark Magi organisation. His or her status would be different.

“This situation would be impossible in a typical organisation, but
what can I do when I have a dark Magi organisation backing me?”

The transmitted voice of the old witch sounded bitter.

“Actually, besides me, the other elders have been changed quite a few times already. My condition hasn’t been the best lately, and the number of people waiting to trample on me have increased…”

Her explanation made a lot of sense, but Leylin didn’t really believe it.

“Alright! Since I’ve received your deposit, I’ll do my best in the coming expedition!” Leylin agreed.

This entire exchange was very quick, and as they both came to an agreement, the blood-red flames that had just been ignited in mid-air, had been extinguished.

The old witch took on her role as the leader and guided them in.

Minutes later, the four of them came to a fork in the path.
In front of Leylin and the rest of the exploration team. A passage made of jet-black metal had opened up to three pathways, each leading to a different direction. At each of the entrances, there were no obvious signs at all, causing a wave of foreboding to go through the four of them. “Since it’s a laboratory, how can there not be a sign for it?” Brass Ring took the initiative and asked. “There might have been one that had been destroyed by someone, or the Magi here had another method of communication that we’re unaware of!” The old witch shot a glance at Brass Ring. “What’s wrong? We’ve come all the way here, are you thinking of backing out of our deal?” “Of course not!” Brass Ring shook his head like it was the most obvious thing to do. Not only were the rewards that the old witch offered extremely generous, there was a large possibility of there being large amounts of profit from within the secret plane. Neither of these were things that Brass Ring was willing to give up on. “In that case, should we split up into teams and search, or do it by ourselves?” Leylin asked a very practical question. “Of course, we’re going to go in as a group! This is the ruins left behind by ancient Magi! Traps and other defense mechanisms are not easy for us to dismantle even as a group! It’s much too
dangerous for us to act alone!”
As the initiator of this operation, the old witch was resolute and made the decision for them.
“We’ve set up everything in the town already, and in the next ten days, there will certainly not be any people compelled to enter. This is enough time for us to clear up everything in the laboratory!”
After hearing her words, Jaye quickly agreed. Leylin thought it through for a while and also nodded.
“Alright then!”
Hearing Leylin’s agreement, Brass Ring had no choice but to curl his lip and approve of this suggestion.
The four of them chose the path that was on the far right and entered.
*Step step!*  
Black leather shoes and the metal flooring met, the friction causing a very piercing sound.
“Be careful. The methods of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect are much more difficult to deal with than Spirit Devouring Moths…”
Leylin reminded as he glanced at the surrounding walls.
A bright sound was constantly travelling through the passage, and there were also some echoes.
Leylin suddenly paused.
Only his figure was left in the entire passage. The old witch, Brass Ring, and Jaye had all disappeared!
“What happened?” Leylin fixed his attention on the red reflection on the metal wall.
“Did I unconsciously activate some trap? Even the A.I. Chip didn’t detect it!”
A hint of a smile appeared on his lips. “Looks like this expedition isn’t going to be so simple…”
*Ding!*  
Leylin’s sudden stop seemed to have triggered some sort of
mechanism, and behind him, the metallic walls seemed to have lives of their own as they converged, thus blocking his retreat.
“Crimson Palm!”
Both of Leylin’s palms turn blood red once again, crimson flames burning from the claws as he pressed them directly on the converging walls.
*Sssii!*
As if cold ice had been directly thrown onto a blazing inferno, a sizzling sound of evaporating water was heard.
Under Leylin’s hands, the unknown black metal turned completely red and constantly melted, forming puddles of liquid metal that stained the floor.
Over ten seconds later, the metallic walls that had suddenly emerged had a hole that was about one metre deep, and yet there was no sign of the end.
It seemed that in that moment, Leylin’s path of retreat had been completely blocked by the black metallic wall.
[Based on the data taken so far, estimated thickness of metal wall: 45-47 metres. There is also a huge amount of the Manker Alloy found in the middle. Estimated time required for Host to entirely break through: 30 Minutes 56 Seconds!]
The A.I. Chip projected blue lines of data in front of Leylin.
“Half an hour. That’s much too long!”
Leylin wasn’t so naive to think that the Magus who had designed the trap would be so kind as to give him time to escape.
Sure enough, the longer amount of time Leylin stayed in there, the black metal in front of him also started to distort and gather in the centre as if it had a life of its own.
The passage became increasingly narrow, to the point that only one person would be able to pass through.
“I can’t let this go on any longer. Otherwise, I’ll be stuck in the middle of a huge metal sphere. It’ll take too much magic power and
spirtual force to get out!”
Leylin glanced at the wall that had a large hole in it and rushed forward.
*Zoom!*
With the help of his burly physique and his magic, Leylin’s speed was already past the limits of a regular human. All that was left of him were a few long after images.
The passage ahead seemed to sense Leylin’s approach and converged at an even quicker rate!
“Hah!” Leylin breathed in deeply and quickly spat out a few punctuated syllables!
In a split second, the blood-red layer on his body expanded, the flames’ range achieving half a metre, emitting a fervent heat.
Leylin seemed to have been possessed by some ancient flaming creature, and with his body cloaked in crimson flames, he darted quickly towards the small crack left between the black metal!
*Bang!*
The entire passageway jolted slightly, and the sound of corrosion sounded.
Right as the metallic walls were about to converge, Leylin had forced his way out, leaving behind a human-shaped gap. Droplets of liquidised black metal were still dripping incessantly.
Leylin’s charge had lasted for almost an entire minute, and he only stopped the flames when his field of view opened up.
“What a troublesome passage!”
Leylin looked at the black passage behind him that had completely closed up. This sort of passageway might not be able to kill a Magus, but it was able to make the opponent waste large amounts of spiritual and magic force, and just the slightest bit of hesitance would entrap the Magus within it. It would consume a lot of magic power to fire a spell, and by the time the Magus’ spiritual force and magic power had been mostly used, coupled with the curses and
traps, it was enough to inflict serious damage, or even kill the intruder!
“This trap should have several parts to it, which implies that this is the area where the next part will be activated!”
Leylin surveyed his surroundings.
This used to be a garden or a place where plants were cultivated. It had a large area, and streams of man-made sunlight shone upon the land. Those were the Sunbeam Moss, which were tenaciously exhibiting their usefulness. There was also evidence of plants wilting.
“Though this is just a small-scaled garden, it seems to have been well taken care of. It’s such a waste that it was abandoned…”
Leylin constantly swept his eyes over the garden.
His time at the Four Seasons Garden’s secret plane had allowed him to identify a few plants from their remnants.
“The Three Horned Flower, Spirit Breaking Grass, as well as the Half Bodied Bat, Upside Down Lizard– These four are the main cultivators of this garden!
“The Three Horned Flower pollinates with the help of Half Bodied Bat, and the excretion from the Inverted Lizard is the best fertilizer for the Spirit Breaking Grass! In the middle of the region where the Three Horned Flower and Spirit Breaking Grass are located, there also seems to be a Star Fruit. This is what the Half Bodied Bat and Inverted Lizard feed on!
“This method of growing them…” A light flashed in Leylin’s blue eyes.
“This can increase the output of the Half Bodied Bat by 50%, the Inverted Lizard by 40% and the Three Horned Flower and Spirit Breaking Grass by 10%…”
Constructing a garden outside a laboratory must have been to make it convenient to make potions and other items that would be useful in experiments.
The reason why Leylin was calculating the output of the plants and animals so carefully was because he wanted to probe and find signs of experimentation. Just based on these clues, brilliant Magi could deduce the scope of experimentation and the laboratory’s uses in ancient times. With the knowledge that the A.I. Chip had gathered from the Four Seasons Garden’s library, Leylin’s knowledge was very profound. With the added aid from the A.I. Chip’s calculations, he would also be able to make a fairly accurate guess. “A.I. Chip! Search for similar ancient potion formulas that primarily require these four ingredients!” Though the number of formulas that Leylin had received were few, the ingredients required to make ancient potions were made public. Only the steps to brew the potion had been written in code on the formula, and as a result, the A.I. Chip had gathered quite a lot of information. [Beep! Entering simulated data! Searching database for compatible potions!] The A.I. Chip loyally intoned. Rows of data flowed, finally stopping on a few columns. [Spirit Fusion Potion. Similarity: 79% Effect: Able to boost fusion between different spirits by a large margin, producing a new consciousness from a fused body.] [Rejecting Spirits Removal Potion. Similarity: 56%. Effect: Able to eliminate confusion between spirits while fusing and stabilise the new spirit body.] [Wolfiporia Potion. Similarity: 34%. Effect: Able to boost the power of the spirit by a large margin! Side effects: Spirit’s consciousness will be expelled to a certain extent.] Leylin examined the information pertaining to these potions, and the look on his face became more serious. A period of time later, he sighed slowly. “These potions all complement each other. From the looks of it, I seem to have
discovered something amazing!"
“Oooh…”
Just when Leylin was thinking of exploring further, a low and hoarse voice sounded, and an enormous and warped figure appeared in the line of Leylin’s sight.
It was a huge monster that was about 10 metres tall.
There were numerous frightful wounds that were sewn together, and it looked to be the result of putting different body parts together.
This stitched up monster’s right hand was twisted in a weird shape and had eight fingers. In the palm of its left hand was a large axe that was dotted with rust.
Other than the two large arms, there were many slim arms grown on its upper body and back which were continuously trembling.
“This is a type of vengeful spirit… the Loathsome Evil!”
Leylin sucked in a cold breath. “Such a huge physique! How much blood and flesh had to be sacrificed for its body to still be so solid?”
[Alert! Alert! High levelled creature approaching with a strong contamination of spirits! According to the Host’s level, the threat is at a Grade 5!]
The A.I. Chip frantically warned.
The Loathsome Evil was a creature that Leylin had seen in ancient books. It was a type of life form that had been created by Magi. Its exact origin was unknown, but Leylin could very clearly remember that in ancient books, the Loathsome Evil had been described as a fiend. This type of lifeform had an exceedingly powerful body and vitality. What was even more frightening was the spirit pollution constantly emanating from its body. Ordinary people were simply unable to withstand the pollution caused to their spirits and usually died en masse. As a result, the appearance of a Loathsome Evil generally marked the destruction of cities and the loss of countless lives. The most frightening record had been when an entire army of over a hundred Loathsome Evils appeared! This terrifying army had destroyed two ancient Magi’s headquarters and caused the deaths of approximately twenty percent or more of the population of the south coast. Ultimately, only with the aid from an unknown ancient Morning Star Magus was that terrible army completely destroyed. “I didn’t expect the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect to have created this Loathsome Evil! Then again, the timing is just right!” Within Leylin’s eyes, there appeared a flash of understanding. Based on the annals of the Magus world’s history, after the disaster
caused by the Loathsome Evils, the Spirit Slaying Sect sank into a weird state of affairs. First, they proclaimed their conviction that a supreme Magus had descended, and then they ruled this world. Soon after, they carried a very large scale blood and flesh sacrifice and thereby disappeared from this Magus world. Now, it was clear to him that the thriving Spirit Slaying Sect had offended the Magi of the south coast, so the Magi had all joined hands to destroy this sect. At this moment, the Loathsome Evil that had been wandering around noticed Leylin. Through its eyes, one of which was big and the other small, its thirst for blood was self-evident. Even its huge, bloated body was trembling in excitement. A light green haze permeated the entire garden. “Spirit Pollution!” Leylin’s expression became grim, as he recognised the most dreadful attack from this Loathsome Evil. “Kemoyin’s Scales!” With a single thought, a fine layer of scales covered his body. The scales were jet-black and densely packed as they crept up Leylin’s arms and even his face. Under the protection of the scales, Leylin’s current appearance was vastly different. There was even a hint of amber light in his eyes. These scales did not give him a fiendish image, but rather, with the influence and charm that a Warlock’s bloodline gave him, there was a sense elegance to his appearance. Even a regular human would think there was a wild aesthetic to Leylin. If Leylin was a sub-human and part of the Snake family, he’d even be treated as a precious tribute to the queen snakes of various families, though Leylin would definitely be unwilling to go through with it. After activating his innate defense spell, Leylin was still unsatisfied
and used his palm to stroke his neck. A dark red light exploded from his neck, and like the scales, descended until it covered his entire body, forming something that seemed like armour. Leylin was especially cautious when dealing with this fearsome Spirit Pollution. Not only had he activated his innate defense spell, he’d even used his trump card, the Fallen Star Pendant. Not only did the might of an ancient Loathsome Evil surpass that of a rank 1 Magus, Leylin was unsure of what the Spirit Slaying Sect’s Magi had done to increase its strength, making it even more troublesome. Leylin wasn’t willing to risk anything, harm done to one’s spirit was much more difficult to treat than flesh wounds! At that moment, other than the red membrane layer, Leylin had also had activated his two main items for defence, Kemoyin’s Scales and the Fallen Star Pendant. Just as Leylin had finished his preparations, the light green haze had reached his location. *Bzzt!* The moment the haze enveloped him, Leylin suddenly felt faint. Immediately after, the red light in his sea of consciousness rippled, and the crystal in the centre sent out a wave of spiritual force, dispersing his giddiness. *Chik Chik!* The moment Leylin’s outermost crimson layer of protection came into contact with the haze, the sound of an object being corroded could be heard. Within a few seconds, it was completely broken through. Next, the phantom armour from Fallen Star Pendant started producing unbearable sounds, the energy from its reserves constantly being consumed. “It hasn’t gone through my defences, but to think that this was the
effect of the spirit pollution!”
Leylin trained his eye on the Loathsome Evil that was gradually approaching, the fear in his expression becoming increasingly apparent.
“Roarr!”
Two thick arms suddenly grew from its back and touched the ground, supporting the Loathsome Evil.
With a burst of power, the Loathsome Evil’s speed rapidly increased, and it dashed towards Leylin, slashing at his waist with the axe in his left hand!
Before that massive power reached him, the air in the atmosphere seemed to be compressed into crystals that hurtled towards Leylin!
With a gleam in his blue eyes, Leylin ducked through the crack in the axe by twisting his body at an unbelievable angle.
“Latent Fireball!”
After dodging this attack, Leylin looked around and saw that the garden had been almost completely engulfed by the green haze.
Unless he killed this Loathsome Evil, it would have been impossible to pass through.
In any case, Leylin didn’t believe that the ancient Magi would let him leave so easily.
Hence, Leylin struck back fiercely, using the spell that had the most might!
*Boom!*
Along with the syllables that flew out of Leylin’s mouth, a large number of black fireballs suddenly appeared around the Loathsome Evil’s figure.
These fireballs quickly merged into a single mass, its volume expanding to ten times the usual size, and exploded in front of the Loathsome Evil.
Black flames engulfed the Loathsome Evil, and many of its slim arms were broken off from the explosion.
Just from a single little black spark landing on the ground, a hole was melted that was so deep, one could not see how far down it went.

[Attacking target in the centre! Power of Latent Fireball: 51. Added bonus from elemental essence conversion: 21. Target’s defense in its front has been destroyed! Received data readings!”]

A prompt from the A.I. Chip sounded out.

Out of all the spells Leylin possessed, the Latent Fireball was a magic that was second only to the Eyes of Petrification. Currently, with the added bonus from his elemental essence conversion, its degree of power was a terrifying total of 51!

Even an ancient monster like the Loathsome Evil could only tremble under the might of these flames!

[Beep! Loathsome Evil. Strength: 34. Agility: 19. Vitality: 40. Spiritual force: 25. Special Abilities: 1. Spirit Pollution. The Loathsome Evil will always be surrounded by Spirit Pollution similar to that emitted by ancient Magi. Once a spirit is infected, the creature will be cursed for eternity, and eventually wither away! 2. Devour: Loathsome Evil can heal injuries by consuming large amounts of flesh. At the same time, devouring large numbers of spirits will help the Loathsome Evil to evolve into stronger creatures!]

Seeing the data that the A.I. Chip had analysed, Leylin looked at the monster howling in pain within the dark flames with a sense of admiration.

“This power is comparable to that of a Magus with a 50% elemental essence conversion. If an army of Loathsome Evils is formed with an even more powerful leader taking charge, it’ll definitely be difficult for Magus organisations to handle it. They would need to escape…”

Leylin was admiring the Loathsome Evil, but this was still a battle, and Leylin instantly cast another Latent Fireball.
Countless black fireballs emerged from the shadows and rushed towards the large mass of flames, causing it to burn even more vigorously.

Although Leylin possessed an interest in this Loathsome Evil, he would only extract some tissues and fluids from it after its death. He was definitely not planning on catching it live.

Hence, after seeing that the Latent Fireball was effective, Leylin immediately produced large numbers of the black fireballs, determined to kill off the Loathsome Evil in one go!

“Grah!”

The Loathsome Evil within the flames roared terrifyingly as it trembled on the floor, the many slim arms on its body melting and falling off.

*Boom!!!*

The black flames burnt through the Loathsome Evil’s belly, and instantly, innumerable spirits escaped out of its stomach.

These spirits’ faces were those of females and males of all ages, and most of these spirits were weirdly shaped. If they didn’t have an extra hand on their faces, there would be an extra three legs on their bodies. Some even had various organs and structures stuck on their bodies and looked extremely similar to the Loathsome Evil.

The similarities between all of these spirits was a lifeless look in their eyes as if they had lost all intelligence.

“Don’t tell me… This is a base where the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect creates Loathsome Evils?” Seeing this scene, Leylin compared his current conjectures with his previous guesses and came up with a conclusion.

These spirits mindlessly dithered around the Loathsome Evil and seemed to hardly be afraid of the black flames. They passed through without any trouble, and Leylin’s expression darkened.

“This! Could it be that…” Leylin suddenly had an idea.

He immediately threw out several potions, and even mixed in pink
pearls that were sure to cause damage to spirits! However, it was too late. With a high pitched cry from the Loathsome Evil, the surrounding spirits promptly blew up! *Boo*!
The old witch’s method used to explode spirits seemed to have appeared once again!
However, this explosion included potentially hundreds of spirits exploding at the same time. Its power far outstripped what the old witch had shown the previous time!
The black flames on the Loathsome Evil’s body were extinguished in the explosion. The waves from the frightening explosion hit Leylin. *Poof!* The defensive layer from the Fallen Star Pendant suddenly flashed and fell apart like a soap bubble.
Leylin was sent flying, as if he had collided with the head of a train, and destroyed countless buildings as he fell back. There was a long line on the ground, tracing the path that he had been pushed back.
“Why didn’t I detect such a frightening skill?” Leylin was startled and even a little angry.
[Detecting a force field that has been partitioned in a second defensive layer within the target’s belly!]
A prompt from the A.I. Chip emerged once again.
Although the A.I. Chip’s ability had been upgraded and strengthened by many-fold, but within this strange Magus world, it was still not as good as he desired. Due to the earlier mistake, Leylin was not in the mood to go and investigate. And by now, the Loathsome Evil had already approached him to attack! On the present vengeful spirit Loathsome Evil’s body, the majority of its hands had been cut off and it still had many burnt black patches and within its belly, a large hole had been cut open. This exposed its intestines and other unknown organs. But these did not affect the vengeful spirit Loathsome Evil’s mobility. On the contrary, to one’s eyes, the Loathsome Evil appeared to emit a scarlet radiance. Compared to before, it seemed to have become more fiendish. The veins on its body seemed to be intertwined and protruding out, and they were like cyan snakes that were twisted about each other as this Loathsome Evil came at Leylin. Many of its body flesh and fat had become abnormal because it had been burnt, but its speed was faster than before. ‘F*ck!’ The scales on Leylin’s body trembled a bit and the dust and pebbles sticking to it fell to the ground.
Although the recent spirit explosion was violent, but after it passed through the defense of the Fallen Star Pendant, its damage power was reduced and then it was entirely resisted by the Kemoyin Scales on his body.
For the present, although Leylin’s body received a tremendous jolt, he almost had no other injury.
At this moment, the giant Loathsome Evil attacked with a flying speed, while it unceasingly spread out waves of the spirit plague.
“Shadow Concealment!”
When Leylin saw this scene, his mouth continuously chanted the spell. At the same time, the scales on his body emitted a dark lustre. As this dark light passed through him, his body became rather transparent.
Soon, the giant Loathsome Evil collided with the shadow of Leylin and went past and shattered a rotten flower pot that was behind Leylin, which burst into pieces.
During this time period of more than a year, Leylin, using the accumulated contribution points, exchanged them for many spell models. So here, Leylin utilised the Shadow Concealment spell of which he had a profound impression.
Before, within the Dylan Gardens, the Black Horrall Snake’s attacks made it an unforgettable event for Leylin.
If it hadn’t been for his natural cautiousness and also the fact that the additional firepower from his comrades, the outcome of the battle with the Black Horrall Snake would have turned out different.
After that time, he began to be interested in the Darkness element stealth spells. Eventually, when he was exchanging his contribution points within the Four Seasons Garden, he happened to discover these spell models.
[Darkness element’s Shadow Concealment. Rank 1 spell. Its effects are: After the Magus cast this spell, he could hide within the crack
of the shadow world and he would be immune to the attacks that happen in the real world. Time of concealment: 20s Elemental essence conversion bonus: 14s. It consumes a spiritual force of 10 and magic power of 10.]
This spell was entirely complementing his elemental affinity. Besides, the Kemoyin’s Scales on Leylin’s body also seemed to have magnified the effect of this spell. Therefore, Leylin had expended a great deal of effort into learning this spell. And after this spell, he had no longer any weak points with regards to his agility and concealment. Leylin thoroughly took in the sensation of being in concealment. This was a very strange feeling, time flowed as if it had been slowed by a tenfold. The surrounding atmosphere also felt very constricting. Each of Leylin’s movement needed to consume even more strength than when he was in normal environments. Leylin glanced at the Loathsome Evil. It was now giving vent to its fury on the land surrounding it, as it had lost its original target. The Loathsome Evil, by chopping with its huge hatchet, carved out many ditches in the surroundings, causing them to be in a complete mess. Leylin noticed that the body of Loathsome Evil had a strange green tint to it, no that’s not it all, even the surrounding scenery, land and atmosphere was being polluted by a shining green mist. This green mist was very dense, it even made Leylin feel dizzy and he felt the sensation of wanting to throw-up. Leylin’s body felt as if it was hovering in mid-air; it slowly floated towards the Loathsome Evil. The Loathsome Evil seemed to sense something and brandished the enormous hatchet in its left hand; as it did so, the enormous orange yellow hatchet swung at Leylin’s waist.
If Leylin was currently in his physical form, he would already have been chopped into two halves. But the current him was just a shadow in reality. When the enormous hammer swung past, his body just wavered. The giant Loathsome Evil frantically brandished its hatchet. It often struck at Leylin’s body, but not even a single piece of the clothing Leylin wore was torn. It came closer… and closer! Leylin kept himself in the sliding position and hovered above the Loathsome Evil’s. When he looked down, he could see the constantly secreted yellow pus of the Loathsome Evil and the disordered teeth in its large mouth. *Swish!* With a flash of a black shadow, Leylin directly appeared in front of the Loathsome Evil. Currently, Leylin’s pupils had already changed to an amber colour, seemingly giving a peculiar gaze. “Look into my eyes!” Leylin spoke with a strange tone as it brought a hissing sound with it. It was as though a snake was speaking. Innate spell the Eye of Petrification!!! That voice seemed to carry a weird power. The Loathsome Evil couldn’t help but look into Leylin’s eyes with a bizarre expression. *Creak! Creak!* A greyish white halo started to shoot out from the Loathsome Evil’s eyes and its face seemed to be constantly expanding. “Roar!” When the petrification effect had affected the entire head of the Loathsome Evil, it suddenly raised its head and roared. Following the roar, the Loathsome Evil’s flesh bulged. There was also two enormous solid flesh that suddenly appeared on its shoulder. It looked like it had grown two arms. While its flesh was transforming, the greyish skin on the
Loathsome Evil face’s shedded. It was like a snake shedding its skin.
[The target’s physique is too large. It is starting to develop immunity to the petrification! Based on current situation, remaining time it will stay rigid: 3 seconds!]
The A.I. Chip gave out a notification.
As expected, the movement of the Loathsome Evil slowed down. It opened its mouth and maintained an eccentric smiling expression. It was like a machine that had not yet been wound up, making it stop in a peculiar condition.
“This is a great opportunity!”
Leylin’s eyes lit up. Numerous black fireballs entered the Loathsome Evil’s mouth, causing continuous explosions within its body.
“Falling Star Pendant! Activate the remaining power!”
Leylin shouted and a faint red light ray appeared beneath his neck. When the light ray consolidated in Leylin’s hand, it formed a long blade.
Leylin stared at the Loathsome Evil and with a roar, the muscles on its arm bulged, expanding a few folds. It instantly made changed from a lean youth to a muscular man.
Leylin’s body was filled with an explosive power at this moment. He raised the blade with both his hand and leaped highly and performed a jump slash against the neck of the Loathsome Evil that was still burning with black flames!
*Gurgle! Splat*
The yellowish green pus splattered everywhere. Simultaneously, the enormous head of the Loathsome Evil directly rolled onto the ground.
After losing its head, the Loathsome Evil’s four limbs were still moving. It was as though it was trying to flee.
Leyin’s eyes was serene as he constantly tossed out streaks of
purple medicine that landed on the enormous body and head of the Loathsome Evil.

*Boom!*

A purplish red flame started to violently ignite. The flame enveloped the Loathsome Evil’s body and head. Crack! The head of the Loathsome Evil split apart and a group of grotesque-looking spirits appeared.

However, Leylin was already prepared for that as he tossed a pink gemstone into the flames, while constantly chanting. The unconscious spirits were attracted to the pink crystal. They forgot to self destruct and just surrounded in front of the pink gemstone with their faces expressing reminiscing expression.

“Success! With the previous calculations by the A.I. Chip, the Derkoff Spirit Enticing Spell has been upgraded!”

Excitement flashed past Leylin’s face. He then rapidly carved runes and incantations on the ground around the flames, and constantly tossed various materials into the flame.

Finally, the purplish red flame already changed completely into a pure purple colour. The group of spirits were constantly dissolving, they were melting like heated wax.

At this moment, a lot of the spirits wanted to self-destruct!

“Activate!” Looking at the densely-packed spirits, Leylin’s lips curled up into a smile as he chanted the incantation.

Boom! A red halo lit up from the array, restraining all of the spiritual energy within the flame. That light ray seemed to restrict the spirits from self-destructing. The spirits within expressed frantic expressions despite them being emotionless existences, and not a single one of them could self-destruct as they did before.

Mournful and piercing screams constantly rang in his ears. Leylin could even feel the most painful wail from the Loathsome Evil.
While the purple flames were constantly burning, a strange smell constantly spread. The Loathsome Evil’s corpse that was at the center of the flame had already stopped moving. Moreover, under the effect of flames, from its fat body, a fatty, oily and viscous liquid began to flow down and around the surface of its body. This fluid was extremely viscous and its colour was an odd black. As that black, oily liquid constantly flowed, the corpse of the Loathsome Evil gradually became smaller, as though it was shrinking. The ten-meter-long, enormous body started to shrink to the height of an ordinary person and finally became a monkey-like form with wrinkled body. “This……” Leylin looked transfixed at the constantly shrinking head of the Loathsome Evil. When the head was completely dehydrated, an ordinary head appeared before Leylin’s eyes. Even though the skin was filled with creases, Leylin was able to recognise that this was a head of a western, middle-aged man, aged roughly 30 years or near about. “It looks like the main ingredient in making this Loathsome Evil’s body is a human body. Moreover, the manufacturing of its huge body is by inserting an enormous amount of crazed spirits into the human body and making them fuse together…..” This method made Leylin feel as though the human body was a womb and was nurturing something. “The fusion rate with the human body was extremely high as those Loathsome Evils were originally human spirits. It’s unknown how the Spirit Slaying Sect was able to solve the problem in fusing the spirits into the body. It’s the key skill!” Leylin’s thoughts constantly revolved.
He had a feeling that this wasn’t the final stage in the experiment on this Loathsome Evil. The frantic spirits would finally breakout from the body after undergoing constant fusion with the body of the Loathsome Evil. They would get much stronger as they grow, creating a more sinister being in existence!
eylin was watching the process of the Loathsome Evil coming together. The spirit within the array was finally incinerated as the purple flame gradually extinguished. Swish! The entire light ray from the spell formation completely shattered. Leylin walked into the formation. The smell of something burning wafted in the air, along with a repulsive stench that could make one feel nauseous. “This odour is just like when something from the sewers is burnt!” Leylin frowned and walked to the center. The human corpses had long since been burnt to ashes. On the ground, in the middle of the charred and indented formation, a glistening object caught Leylin’s eye. Lying in the pit were fragments of green crystals, sparkling and splendid like little diamonds. Leylin covered his hand with a layer of scales and grabbed ahold of the little diamonds. “Quite light, but very solid!” Leylin kept applying pressure using his palm to the point that his joints popped, but even with his strength of 7.1, he was still unable to do anything to the little diamonds. “… All of a sudden, a low chant of salutations entered Leylin’s ear, seeming to have been produced from within the green
diamonds.
Filled with curiosity, Leylin brought the diamonds closer to his ear.
“Thank you, young man!”
In an instant, a dazzling white light seemed to fill the entire flower garden. In the white light, Leylin looked at tens of thousands of phantom human figures.
The countenances of these phantoms seemed familiar; they were the spirit bodies of earlier, but they had assumed their original form of a human.
The phantoms were both male and female. Some of them were dressed like Magi and acolytes. However, at this moment, they expressed gentle smiles as they slowly faded in the white light.
“En!” Leylin looked at the surroundings. As if it was due to the death of the Loathsome Evil, the green coloured plague quickly retreated, once again revealing the flower garden.
As for the spirit bodies from earlier, they had all disappeared without a trace, as if he were just dreaming.
However, Leylin knew that he wasn’t hallucinating.
At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s voice rang out.
[Scan complete! Item identified as spirit crystals! This is the essence remaining after the ignition of a huge amount of spirits!] In ancient compendiums, these were one of the many favourite currencies that many experts in different planes liked to use.
“Spirit crystals!” Leylin understood.
He had heard about this item before, but only high-level Magi could effectively use them.
It was impossible for a mere rank 1 Magus to break the surface of a spirit crystal to extract a spirit’s power from within.
“No matter what, it will definitely be useful in the future!” Leylin picked up the green coloured spirit crystals littered on the floor, carefully placing them inside a small pouch. He even used a gold thread to seal the pouch, before placing it back in his robes.
The green spirit plague had completely vanished. Many fine cracks that looked like lizards littered the black rock walls at the edge of the garden.
Leylin walked in front of the cracks, and gently knocked on the fractured wall!
*Crash!*
Numerous stones fell, and large clouds of lime were thrown into the air. There was a deep hole in the wall, which was flickering with pitch black light rays.
A black glint of light flashed through his eyes.
He quickly plucked off a strand of his hair, and his mouth began to move as he chanted mysterious incantations.
The long black hair fell to the ground and constantly expanded, eventually turning into something that resembled a black snake.
This small snake had densely packed scales and a pair of red little eyes that looked like jewels. It was pocket sized, and did not look malevolent; on the contrary, it was rather adorable.
The little snake first coiled around Leylin, hissing its tongue. It licked Leylin’s shoes and then slithered into the pitch black crevice.
Leylin shut both his eyes, maintaining a connection with the little snake through a thread of spiritual force. Images and sounds were projected before Leylin’s eyes.
The lighting in the surroundings was very dim, but it wasn’t a problem for the little black snake.
Through the eyes of the black snake, Leylin could see that the interior of the crevice looked like an ore mine with huge amounts of roots creeping in the surroundings.
The roots intertwined across the walls as if they were covering the surroundings of the cave like a fishnet.
The little snake continued to traverse into the cave. After slithering for about a kilometer, the little snake reached a yellow tree root that was like a wall that blocked its path.
“This is… a Misleading Mist Tree Root, an ancient defensive system to deter intruders!”
Leylin’s heart was filled with glee. With the appearance of such a mechanism, it showed that he was nearing the experiment lab.
“Intruder! Answer one question of mine, or else you’ll be ripped into pieces!” from the large trunk of the tree, the face of an old man emerged. The old man stared into the little snake’s eyes as if it could see Leylin, who was controlling it.
“Ask!” Leylin gave off a wave of spiritual force through the little black snake. “Please state your question!” Leylin gave off his spiritual energy force directly through the black little snake.
“What has the face of a diamond, eyes like pearls, and in the winter, the maker of this object gives it a chance to reincarnate?”
“Hmm…” Leylin lowered his head, looking to be deep in thought. Though, in actuality, he was commanding, “A.I. Chip! Search database!”
[Beep! According to the clues provided to the Host, items that fit the description are: 1. Gemstone Starfish. Similarity: 97%. 2. Ocean Bed Sunflower: 78%. 3…]
The A.I. chip instantly gave the result.
“It’s the Gemstone Starfish!” The snake said in front of the Misleading Mist Tree Root.
“Correct!” The Misleading Mist Tree Root let out an ear piercing holler. Like pulling out a radish from the ground, the tree’s roots were uplifted, revealing the pathway behind it.
“As a reward, you now have the authority to go through!” The countenance of the old man on the Misleading Mist Tree Root revealed a smile.
“A reward, huh? I don’t think so!” The small snake shook its head and climbed through the passage.
*Pa!* In an instant, a giant tree root, like a huge palm, blocked the small snake’s path ahead.
“I have permitted the Magus behind you to go, but not a magical creature like you!” Anger welled up on the old face of the root. “Young Magus, are you belittling me?” “It is a part of me, so I believe it has the right to enter!” The little snake raised its head, making eye contact with the giant face. “No! You must personally come over!” The Misleading Mist Tree Root was stubborn in this aspect. “If that’s the case…” The little black snake lowered its head as if pondering over something. Suddenly, the little snake coiled up and immediately darted through the passage. *Pfft!* Suddenly, there were numerous bolts of black lightning that flashed into the originally peaceful pathway. Those flashes looked alive as they struck towards the little snake. In the sea of sparks, the little snake was burnt to a crisp. “It’s a trap indeed! Grade 51 and higher Black Prison Thunder, and there’s so much of it. The tree root really invested a lot in this attack…” Outside the entrance to the garden, Leylin looked towards the mud tunnel and smiled mockingly. This Misleading Mist Tree Root was just a trap in the first place! Even if an intruder got the answer correct, he or she would still be lured into a trap. It was a pity that after so many years, there was something wrong with the Misleading Mist Tree Root’s intelligence. Leylin felt that something was wrong because it seemed to be much too anxious. No matter how good a trap was, once it was found out, it was just another joke. At this moment, a strong tremor came from the tunnel that Leylin stood in front of. There was even an ancient voice, “I’ll kill you! I’m going to kill you, intruder!”
The walls of the ore mine seemed to be propped up by the roots of the tree. As they struggled to come out, it caused a huge chain reaction.

“This creature’s vitality and strength are most likely above that of the Loathsome Evil. Moreover, as it is a plant, its life force is extremely tenacious, and it has resistances against spiritual force attacks. It’ll be much more difficult to deal with than the Loathsome Evil, so if I was to fight it on its own territory inside the ore mine, as long as it would be willing, it could bury me alive at any time!”

Leylin pondered before raising his head, grinning mischievously.

“It’s a pity, however, that such a plant organism like that has a strong weakness to something I have recently developed in the lab! I’ll use it now!”

Leylin took out a nitrogen crystallised test-tube from the sack that he carried. There were no potions inside the test-tube. There was only a black organism on the bottom with a pair or translucent wings as if it was an insect.

After looking at this item, Leylin’s expression became serious.

“I don’t know if letting this thing out will be good or bad, but I have to give it a try….”

Leylin muttered to himself.

This was an item that he had unintentionally created. Inside the test-tube was a type of termite found only in the Magus World. Leylin had discovered it while getting rid of the pests inside the Four Seasons Garden.

As the sequence of genes was different from other termites, they were extremely strong, and hence, were taken back by Leylin, who had later discovered a secret.

These termites had an extremely strange gene that will exponentially increase their life force and reproductive capabilities. That speed was already beyond what was natural. Judging from
Leylin’s knowledge, this should have been made up of poisons and cells from another world. After many instances of failing, Leylin could only increase the abilities of these termites with the help of the microscopic capabilities of the A.I. Chip, turning them into a weapon to deal with plant organisms! It seemed like now was the right time to use it.

“Come! Let me see what happens when the strange items of the Magus world are coupled with modern scientific skills!”

[Host is about to release Living Organism No. 1! According to the settings, please input the parameters for self-destruction!]

At this time, the A.I. chip replied again.

“5 minutes!”

Leylin put a thread of his spiritual force into the test-tube, after which, he put several drops of another red potion into it as if making his final preparations. After that, he looked at the shaking tunnel. The Misleading Mist Tree Root was still writhing around, trying to reach him.

“Enjoy your death now!”

Leylin sneered, opened the test tube, and directed the termite into the hole.
I. Chip! Record the data, and create a folder on the experiment’s results!”

While Leylin released the termite, he pressed on his temple with one of his hands, making a bright blue light shoot out from his eyes, and shine directly into the hole. Under Leylin’s observation, the termite directly climbed on top of a tree root after being freed.

The termite was like a speck of dust compared to the enormous Misleading Mist Tree Root, so it didn’t arouse the attention of the massive tree.

[Living Organism No. 1 showing violent growth, and starting to propagate!]

In the graphic shown by the A.I. Chip, the termite, which was represented by a red dot, stayed on the yellow brown roots for a while, before its life force begin to increase tremendously, turning into a bright crimson red dot. Furthermore, many small dots began to appear in the graphic, scattering throughout the roots.

It seemed to have a domino effect. When the red light intensified, it grew from covering a root to instantly covering the entire wall, and drew close to the Misleading Mist Tree Root.

“What is this…Argh…”

Following which, the Misleading Mist Tree Root’s screams could be heard throughout the garden. Leylin could still hear the dense, hair raising, terrifying screams
while he was at the entrance of the hole.
As for the termites, they had now filled the entire body of the Misleading Mist Tree Root.
What seemed like billions of termites began to open their incisors, and mercilessly chomped down on the roots. Within only a couple of minutes, the Misleading Mist Tree Root was riddled with holes. The Misleading Mist Tree Root’s screams became weaker, until it finally came to a stop.

……

*Buzz Buzz…*
The sound of flapping wings could be heard. A large cloud of termites was seen flying out from the hole. They were like locusts, devouring the remaining plants in the garden. After devouring all of the plants, the flying termites began to buzz in fury.
[Alert! Alert! Intense energy waves emitting from the organisms’ spiritual force. Previously inputted spiritual force has failed, termites entering a frenzied state!]
As the A.I. Chip called out, all of the flying termites began to mysteriously stop as they turned to Leylin, looking at him with bloodshot eyes.
“As expected, impromptu experiments are always filled with surprises. However, it’s a pity that time is up!” Leylin was smiling. When the A.I. Chip’s countdown timer of 5 minutes reached 0, all of the termites, which were still flaunting their might, fell to the ground, losing all signs of life.
In the blink of an eye, there was a thick layer of termite corpses on the ground.
This was the security system that Leylin had inputted. It seemed to have an excellent effect.
“These things are filled with unknown characteristics! It seems that I’ll still need a lot of experiments on it before I can use it practically…..”

After which, Leylin picked up several of the termites’ corpses to keep as specimens, before walking into the mud tunnel, which had mostly collapsed.

Very soon, he came to where the Misleading Mist Tree Root originally stood. It was a pity, however, that it was now only filled with mud and the remnants of a husk. All traces of the huge tree root’s countenance had also disappeared.

“A lot of effort must have been put into this trap!”

Leylin looked at the black tunnel that the Misleading Mist Tree Root had used as bait. The inside of the tunnel was littered with many charred termite corpses.

From the looks of it, they didn’t die from the self-destruction coded into their genes, but from the trap laid inside the tunnel.

As for where the Misleading Mist Tree Root once stood, there was another bronze coloured path.

The pathway seemed to be formed using ceramic. It looked extremely crude, but had a unique, good feeling about it.

As for the path, there was even a line of ancient Byron characters, “Tunnel to Experiment Lab #1! Top secret! Only authorized personnel allowed!”

The blood red words made Leylin shudder.

“This material……”

Leylin touched the bronze coloured ceramic wall. He felt that the material used to make this wall was extremely sturdy. Also, it gave him a similar feeling to the Blood Sobbing Alloy inside the Dylan Gardens. They were both used to isolate spiritual force energy waves.

“If this is really what I think it is, the item that is locked in here must be remarkable!”
The insecurities in Leylin’s heart reached the max. He cocked his head and pondered, not daring to enter recklessly. Instead, he found an empty space, and took out various items from his robes, creating a strange formation. The appearance of this formation was extremely strange, looking like an inverted “J.” Afterwards, Leylin also carved a similar rune on his robes. “It seems that I’m really fearful of death!” Leylin’s insecurities lessened after arranging the formation. He mocked himself as he entered the tunnel.

The bronze coloured pathway wasn’t long, and Leylin quickly reached its depths.

There was a small hall and in front of it, there was a black metal door, which was extremely tall, and over 4 meters wide. On the metal door frame, there were various magic runes with the words ‘Experiment Lab #1. Supervisor: Edward’ written on it. The words on the metal door were obviously very old, as there was some dust on it, and it looked slightly beaten.

When Leylin was in front of the doors, two figures entered his field of view.

After seeing them, Leylin took the initiative to go forth. “Old Devil and Jaye, where’s Brass Ring?”

The old witch and Jaye were the ones that had appeared in front of Experiment Lab #1, while Brass Ring’s location was unknown. “We stepped into a trap set up by the ancient Magi that caused us to become lost! In the trap, every time when we thought our partners were beside us, we had actually been separated and had gone further apart…”

The old witch replied, “When the trap activated, and the four of us entered the different pathways, I was met with a sound illusion that was arranged by the ancient Magi….After an intense battle, I found this place, and met up with Jaye. Her experiences were similar to mine…..”
Leylin nodded his head, after which he briefly stated his encounters. As for his abilities and spells, he had naturally glossed over the narration of that area.

He then said, “In this case, we should just wait for Brass Ring…” “We don’t have to anymore! I can sense that Brass Ring is already dead!” Jaye spoke abruptly, causing Leylin to feel somewhat shocked.

This fellow, who seemed like a female, had seldom spoken ever since the group was formed. She also seemed to be rather close to the old witch, yet her energy waves were not very strong, just at the level of an average rank 1 Magus.

But now…

Leylin could not help but to look at Jaye. Even though Jaye was still wearing a black cloak, her cloak was tattered. It seemed to bear traces of her battle.

Apart from that, the energy waves from Jaye’s body were fluctuating at an unsteady rate. Sometimes, they had the strength of a peak rank 1 Magus, while at other times, it felt like a fledgling rank 1 Magus who had just advanced. At other times, it would intensify greatly, keeping Leylin guessing.

“Jaye had learned and remembered an extremely special rank 1 spell. We were able to estimate the timing of the death of the magus, so we decided to wait for you here!”

Jaye seemed rather antisocial, and she would not speak unless it was of the utmost importance. Everything else was explained by the old witch.

“Is that right?” Leylin was a little doubtful, as the rank 1 magic of the Magus World was extremely peculiar. There was an unknown amount of Magi that built on spells that their ancestors had created or modified in order to create many different unique spells to be passed down, so Leylin wasn’t able to make a decision regarding what the Old Witch had said.
“Since you’re here, let’s take a short break before attempting to enter this Experiment Lab #1!”
The old witch seemed rather zealous. “I have a feeling that the altar I need is right inside!”
Leylin was somewhat speechless. This old witch appeared too impatient.
However, he still walked forward, and touched the black metal door.
Upon contact, an icy cold feeling could be felt as first, before a hotter temperature was felt. As for the sturdy metal door, it gave off a feeling of being indestructible.
From the runes and incantation on the door, Leylin could feel that this room was not used for experiments, but as a prison of some sort.
There was a brass keyhole at the center of the black door. The ethereal keyhole made Leylin’s hair stand on end, and he felt a bone freezing chilliness.
“I can’t fully understand the runes on this door, but I’m still able to make out the general meaning of some of the high levelled runes. There is a high levelled solidifying rune, and a metal memory rune. To break open this door, we will have to spend a lot of energy. Perhaps, we should try to find the key!”
Leylin suggested.
“There’s no need for that! It’s here with me!” The old witch cackled, withdrawing an extremely thick yellow bronze key from her robes.
This key was rather curvy, as if it was a ladle, but it was a perfect fit for the keyhole on the door.
The old witch took the bronze key, and inserted it into the door.
“Wait a minute!” At this moment, a figure appeared in front of her.
“Blood Rogue, what are you doing?” The old witch looked at Leylin, who was blocking her, rage evident on her face.
Jaye immediately stood behind the old witch at this moment. The magic rays emitted from her body caused Leylin’s eyelid to twitch. “It’s nothing much, I just feel that the danger within has somewhat exceeded my expectations. I wish to withdraw!” Leylin was extremely calm. “According to the information I’ve seen, this Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect has been the advocate behind the scenes of many ancient calamities. Moreover, it had been undergoing extremely dangerous spirit research…”

Leylin’s expression was extremely sincere as he continued to talk. “Therefore, I suggest that we temporarily stop this exploration, and attempt to explore again after gaining much greater powers….”
When the old witch heard Leylin’s words, she started at the black haired handsome youth before saying with a dry and hoarse voice.
“I’ve known you for almost two years and didn’t know that you were such a cowardly Magus.”
Leylin had given her the impression that he was extremely crazy and daring. He would do anything to reach his goals and did everything without restraints.
“A Magus’s life is extremely long so two years isn’t a long time. Moreover, to give up after knowing it’s dangerous isn’t a cowardly action…..”
Leylin smiled.
“That is to say that you are unwilling to continue on no matter what?” The old witch asked.
“…..” Silence was his response.
*Pang!* The old witch didn’t say anything, but Jaye, who was behind her immediately made her move.
A green-coloured hurricane instantly swept past the area Leylin was.
*Pa!* Constant clear sounds were heard.
Following that, a black flame exited the hurricane, which burned half of the small hall and was heading towards Jaye.
“Hmph!” Jaye coldly snorted. Her cloak fluttered without any wind as black energy particles were raised.
When the flame and the energy particles collided against each other in the air, an intense explosion occurred. Jaye’s body shook and was forced three steps back. The aura from her body became unstable.

“Enough!” The old witch shielded Jaye, with green light rays being emitted from her eyes.

With Leylin’s high leveled observation skills, he knew that she was frantically warning him. He currently didn’t want to go against this old witch so Leylin smiled before moving to the side and eradicated the energy waves that was being emitted from his body.

“Jaye, you too. I’m great friends with Blood Rogue. You don’t have to be so wary of him.” When the old witch saw that Leylin moved to the side, the green rays from her eyes also dimmed before she said that to Jaye who was behind her.

“I understand!” Jaye answered softly.

“Blood Rogue, even though we haven’t been together for long, we should know each other’s personality. State whatever terms you have!”

The progress of the situation was slightly beyond what Leylin had expected.

He originally thought that with the powers that he had displayed and unintentional fight against the old witch, she should reasonably make him leave or explore other places.

Leylin was a reasonable person. He knew that the experiment lab was dangerous and there wasn’t anything worth his attention so he naturally didn’t want to risk it.

However, currently, the Experiment Lab 1 obviously needed his help in opening or to get there so the old witch had to lower her temper.

“To prove your sincerity, you’ve to firstly give me the second half content on the data regarding the compressing spiritual powers!” Leylin straightforwardly stated a condition.
“No problem!” The old witch tossed a green leaf towards Leylin without a single thought.
When Leylin caught it, the A.I. Chip pointed out that it had received a lot of information and images.
From the A.I. Chip’s judgment, this data should be the remaining portion of the data she had given from before.
“I shall also include this! How is that? Will that suffice you to risk yourself?”
When the old witch saw that Leylin had caught up in muttering to himself irresolutely, she tossed a black bag at him.
“These items can also tempt some of the peak rank 1 Magus and has high success rates. What do you say?”
Leylin opened the bag and looked slightly moved.
Following that, he looked at the old witch. “I’ll accompany you and risk my life with you on behalf of these two years of relationship. However, if I find that something is wrong, we’ll retreat straight away and I won’t continue to participate in this in the future…..”
“That’s naturally the case!” The old witch agreed.
After that, she walked past Leylin to insert the bronze key into the lock.
*Clang! Dong!*  
*Clang! Dong!*
The sound of gears turning could be heard as the old witch turned the key.
The sound was weak at the start, but it got stronger after that. Finally, the entire hall was filled with sounds of gears coming into contact with each other.
*Creak!*
Streaks of cracks appeared on the black metal door. After a few cracks appeared, it rapidly segregated into countless little black metal pieces. The black metals flew to the sides, revealing the scene of the Experiment Lab #1.
Corpses! What Leylin could only see was countless white human bone remains. The densely packed bones were layered, forming a small mountain of white bones. After that, a rotting odour that had been there for many years, accompanied by the scent of death, rotten flesh and negative energy particles that were so dense and couldn’t be separated, turned into a black wave rising forth towards the three of them. This was the Experiment Lab #1 inside the secret plane of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect. It actually formed a scene of the massacre of numerous people. A black light flashed from Leylin’s body to confront the huge, energy-filled wave, making him happily gulp in a few mouthfuls of air. This was the best environment for someone like a dark Magus that specialised in the cultivation of Darkness energy particles! Not only would the consumption of his spiritual force and magic power were lower when casting his spells in this environment, but the degree of power his spells could produce would be slightly stronger. “As expected….It’s the same as the records!” The old witch and Jaye were already prepared as they opened a scroll, where a fiery red shield enveloped them. The ash-colored negative energy particles constantly surged against the exterior of the shield, but they were burned out by the fire energy particles. Once the wave had receded, the old witch seemed to not have sustain any injuries. She currently was just staring fixatedly at the mountain of white bones with excitement shown in her eyes. “According to the information recorded, the altar I need is at the summit of this mountain of white bones.” The old witch climbed up, using the white bones as her path.
The white bones that had existed for an unknown period of time crumbled into powder under her steps, forming an extremely thick layer.

Leylin and Jaye followed slowly behind her.

While Leylin walked, he fiddled with the bones on the ground. Even though many bones had utterly rotted, there were still some complete bones.

Currently, Leylin was detailedly observing a white bone that was slightly thicker than the ones in the surroundings.

“From the shape of this bone, it should be human’s right thigh!” Leylin gauged the weight of the bone in his hand.

“It’s very heavy and this bone clearly had transformed as this isn’t something an ordinary person will have!”

“A.I. Chip! Investigate its content!”

A faint blue light was emitted from Leylin’s eyes.

“Beep! Beginning sample data collection and comparing the carbon elements within the bone!”

The A.I. Chip gave its answer, “This right thigh bone is from a person of the Knight rank. Its age is about 5341 years……”

“The Knight rank?”

Leylin surveyed his surroundings.

At the bottom of this mountain of white bones, its perimeter was the largest and had the most number of bones, but the majority of them were ordinary human bones. There were very few Knight ranked bones.

Following the climb up, there appeared to be Knight ranked bones everywhere. Leylin even found a Grand Knight’s bone.

When they were halfway up the mountain, it was completely filled with Knight and Grand Knight’s bones. There were even some acolytes’ bones.

A Magus’s body had a certain concentration of radiation. It was
easy to see that even from the bones. The old witch and Jaye were indefinitely bewildered from the start and took in a cold breath after seeing these bones. “From the form, there must be at least 20,000 or more acolytes’ bones buried here and an unknown number of bones belonging to official Magi…” Leylin released the breath he was holding. “It’s really something on a large scale that can be collected only in ancient times!” Similarly, he also knew why the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect was annihilated. No matter what was the reason, killing these many Magi would definitely attract the crowd’s rage. This was different from massacring ordinary people, which resulted in them being severely punished! The three Magi couldn’t help, but to slow their steps after realising this. As expected, while they neared the summit, they found numerous official Magi’s corpses! At the summit, there were often partially rotten corpses and the robe on them could be seen distinctly. Some weren’t rotten as much so they looked as though they were just sleeping. Moreover, from the radiation emitted from the remnants of the ancient magicians, it was way beyond that of the acolytes. Some of the remaining aura even made Leylin fearful of them. “There unexpectedly are some bones that hadn’t entirely rotted……” The old witch exclaimed. “The environment was extremely sealed and they seemed to have had anti-rotting measures. Moreover, these Magi aren’t ordinary people so from the circumstances……” Leylin calmly replied. He was currently stepping on a female Magus’s charming face. That Magus’ face had extremely perfected structure with fine eyelashes.
Her beautiful eyes could be seen clearly. It was imaginable that this Magus was a rare beauty in the ancient time, but Leylin stepped on her face without any hesitation. It looked just as if he was stepping on stones.

At the current position, the mountain of white bones had become a mountain of corpses and if Leylin and the rest wanted to continue, there had to constantly step on the corpses of the ancient Magi.

“This is blasphemy! Bare naked profaneness! These crazy fellows of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect, they disrespect the honor of the Magi!”

It was beyond Leylin’s expectation that Jaye, who was the most antisocial in the group, was the first to condemn their crimes.

“That’s right! However, in ancient times, power decides everything! These Magi were caught by the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect so they had to bear with the outcome……”

Leylin said.

As a Magus, it was natural to feel a tinge of regret for his fallen fellow Magi. However, in the current Magus World, was this not commonplace?

“Stop bickering. We’re here!”

The old witch that was heading forth in a daze suddenly stopped. Her voice was rueful, but it contained more ferventness and longing!
Upon hearing her words, Leylin looked up in surprise. Unconsciously, they had already reached the peak of the mountain of white bones.

Here, it was completely deserted except for the white altar at the peak of the mountain.

If one looked closely, it could be seen that the altar was made entirely out of human bones. These bones emitted energy fluctuations that far exceeded that of a rank 1 Magus and below, and just the aura made the air stifling, even for Leylin.

On some bones that were wider, there were strange runes handwritten in blood.

These runes were extremely complicated. Some were similar to 3D images, and Leylin had never seen any of them before.

What struck him the most was how, even though the runes had existed for over five thousand years, the blood was bright red and still looked fresh, as if ready to drip to the ground.

They were arranged in a strange manner and seemed to form a map.

Leylin took a closer look and realised that he recognised several of the areas in the secret plane. Filled with ecstasy, he immediately got the A.I. Chip to record everything down.

At the very centre of the altar, there was an odd skull used as a sacrifice.

The skull was similar to that of a human’s skull, but on the
cranium, there were two black, bent horns like that of a goat. Also, in the middle of the two horns, there was a small round hole that seemed to serve no purpose.

“Is this the spirit altar you were looking for?”

Leylin glanced at the old witch, but her eyes were already fixed on the altar. She was murmuring words in a language that he did not know, and seemed to have forgotten about the existence of the others with her.

What made Leylin more surprised was Jaye, who was beside him. Even with the cover of the huge black cloak, Leylin could tell she was shivering badly.

This discovery worried Leylin, and at the same time, a sense of unease in his heart was intensified.

“It’s here. Right here… My darling, I can now help you…”

While mumbling incessantly, the old witch produced a fragment of a piece of parchment and threw it towards the altar. At the same time, Jaye, who had been shaking all this while, suddenly made her move!

Streams of translucent, faintly green rays of light descended from the heavens and formed a large net, aiming for Leylin. The surrounding air produced a hissing sound, and there seemed to be some undulations in the scenery around them.

“What are you doing?”

Leylin bellowed, though his expression did not undergo much changes. It was apparent that he had been expecting something like this, and had thus made some preparations.

*Boom!*

On Leylin’s head, countless black strands of hair seemed to have lives of their own as they wriggled to counter the approaching green net.

*Pu Pu!*
The instant the half transparent green net and the black strands of hair met, large amounts of white gas emerged, and the sound of corrosion constantly erupted in the air.

With a wave of his hair, Leylin’s figure flickered and he shifted over ten metres away from his original spot.

“Madori Defensive Spell Formation!” Jaye, who was in the black cloak, was well aware that Leylin’s power surpassed hers. She had acted first in order to gain the upperhand.

While Leylin was dealing with that large net, Jaye had already fixed up a defensive formation around the spirit altar!

“Activate!” Along with Jaye’s words, translucent black rays rose around the spirit altar, keeping the altar, Jaye and the old witch protected inside.

“Latent Fireball!” With a flash of Leylin’s eyes, countless black fireballs emerged from the shadows, rushing towards the black dome!

*Bang!*

The numerous black fireballs converged and its volume expanded by more than ten times. With the added bonus of Leylin’s elemental essence conversion of 70%, its might had become exceedingly horrifying.

Under this level of attack, an ordinary Magus’ innate defensive spell would be completely destroyed within seconds!

The black flames spread, and even with Jaye within the dome trying her very best to maintain it, it was still vibrating vigorously, as if on the verge of breaking.

However, Jaye was unperturbed and chanted a few incantations.

*Buzz buzz!* From the bottom of the altar, a circle of black light emerged, merging with the defensive spell formation.

*Peng!*

With the addition of this circle of light, the entire defensive spell formation immediately became more radiant. Its colour was black
to the extreme, and it was almost impossible to see the figures behind the formation.
Flames from the Latent Fireball burnt at the surface of the dome for over ten seconds.
But when facing the reinforced defensive spell formation, they could do little but succumb and disperse.
“This…”
Seeing how Jaye seemed to be able to take advantage of the powers of the laboratory, Leylin hastily moved a few steps backwards.
The old witch was sure to have hidden a lot of information from him. Thinking back to the spirit explosion that she had previously used and what had happened with the Loathsome Evil, Leylin was certain that the old witch had found out about these ruins much earlier, contrasting with what she had said. She must have already reaped a bountiful harvest from within the ruins before this expedition.
“Give up! This is the core of the secret plane. After borrowing a portion of its strength, it’s impossible to break through this defensive formation unless your power has reached such heights that you’re able to destroy this entire secret plane!”
From within the black dome, Jaye’s faint voice was transmitted over. However, there was no hint of joy in her gaze and her eyes were not on Leylin but rather on the witch. There were dozens of complicated emotions on her face- anticipation, joy, and also… fear!
Upon coming into contact with the altar, the yellowed fragmented piece of parchment burst into flames.
These flames were a light yellow and extremely pure. They started off as small as a bean and gradually crept to engulf the entire parchment, the flames turning light blue.
At the same time, the altar seemed to come to life and began to tremble.
From the gaps between the bones of the altar, fresh red blood trickled down. Dark rays were emitted from the eye sockets of many skulls.

“Old witch! You’d better calm down. It’s obvious that there’s an extremely strong and evil being trapped within the altar. I don’t care if you made a pact or some contract with it, but the strong won’t bother making transactions with the weak.”

Outside the spell formation, Leylin recalled what he had seen and hastily spoke.

“Of course, I know what’s in there! I knew about it 157 years ago! If not for it being in hibernation, and the conditions to awaken it being too harsh, I would have summoned it a long time ago… As long as I summon it, I can…”

The old witch’s facial muscles twisted, her expression crazed as she gestured wildly. This exposed her knowledge about the ruins.

“You need to think this through. This is an evolved being that escaped out of the Loathsome Evil’s body and is much more sinister and vicious. It’s something the likes of you definitely can’t control.”

As Leylin persuaded her, he’d already left his original position and backed away to where they had climbed up, a ring of Darkness energy particles around his two legs.

“I know better than you how vicious it can get! Even though I can’t control it, I know how it was assembled and basically everything there is to know about it. As long as we give enough offerings, with the power of this spirit altar, I can definitely…”

Her eyes were crazed as she spread out her arms and yelled, “Come out! The collective body of vengeance, the manipulator of spirits and bodies! The supreme king, Gargamel!”

“Gargamel?!” Leylin’s heart lurched.

Before he had come here, he had seen plenty of records regarding
the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect and naturally knew about this Gargamel. It was a being that the sect had worshipped. They believed that a spirit was the last resting place for all beings, and the Gargamel was the one in charge of all these spirits!

It was apparent that this was a Gargamel that had already taken shape after the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s immense efforts in cultivating it! However, for some reason, this Gargamel had been sealed here by the Magi of the sect.

The old witch had obviously received the inheritance from the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect and obtained many benefits. She had also been working hard to unseal the Gargamel.

Leylin believed he had a rough understanding of this whole situation.

The black ring of light around his legs flashed and, wrapped in energy particles, his body’s speed reached its limits and he instantly disappeared away from the mountain.

Even though he had no idea why the old witch had swindled him and Brass Ring into coming here, it definitely wasn’t anything good!

Leylin felt it was better if he retreated as soon as possible.

As long as he was out of this secret plane, even if the old witch and Jaye attacked together, Leylin was certain he could take care of them.

“A smart move, but it’s a pity that it’s too late…” Jaye, who was nearby, gave a low sigh.

At this very moment, the piece of parchment on the altar had already been burnt to ashes and, with a cry from the old witch, streams of black gases streamed out of the gaps within the bones of the altar.

*Weng Weng!*

An ancient devil was awake once more.

An aura that caused one’s heart to palpitate in fear arrived on top of
the mountain of white bones. 
Ice-cold! Evil!
Leylin felt as if he had returned to his childhood, powerless while surrounded by a group of direwolves.
He hated being made aware of how fragile his life was.
Just with the leakage of this aura, the secret plane vibrated slightly.
A vast amount of black gas converged and gradually solidified, forming a gigantic translucent figure.
The figure brought the skull on top of the altar to its face, treating it as a mask. Its two completely red eyes seemed to be looking down on every one of the Magi present as if they were mere ants.
Leylin’s heart plummeted, and he could not gather any strength.
“Jiik!” The black figure bellowed towards the heavens.
With the tremendous sound waves, the black defensive spell formation that had caused Leylin much trouble instantaneously gave way, and the old witch and Jaye were forced aside from the pressure.
*Pu!*
As the old witch flew backwards, mouthfuls of blood spurted out like water gurgling in a spring.
“Respected Lord Gargamel… Cough cough… please accept our offerings”

Jaye, who was at the side, suffered quite a deal from the energy waves. However, she was still better off than the old witch and was somewhat able to stand. Observing these circumstances, she was partly kneeling in a bizarre position, while tossing a severed Magus’ head in front of the black shadow.

“Brass Ring!”

Leylin’s pupils contracted as he recognized whose head it was. It seemed that Brass Ring didn’t die because of the secret plane’s mechanisms after all, but was instead ambushed by the old witch and Jaye.

Right now, Leylin stood to the side with cold sweat forming on his body, not daring to move an inch. Although the black shadow atop the altar didn’t look his way, he could clearly feel an extremely vicious and unyielding spiritual force completely locking him down.

Leylin had a premonition that if he took a single step forward, he would be struck by the full power of the Gargamel!

*Crunch! Crunch!*

Immediately after receiving the head of Brass Ring, whose expression still held traces of disbelief, the black shadow put it into its mouth and started to chew.
An absolutely horrifying grinding noise could be heard reverberating from the top of the skeleton mound.

“Ji Ji!” After the black shadow swallowed the head whole, it gave off a sound of satisfaction. Moreover, a scarlet tongue licked its lips, apparently with a desire for more.

“Ah, a spirit that fulfills the conditions! State your wishes!”

An ancient and cryptic voice sounded directly into Leylin and the others’ consciousness, spoken in a language Leylin had never heard before. Strangely, Leylin could understand the meaning of each word that was being spoken.

“I want…” Jaye slowly opened her mouth.

“Let my daughter Jaye come back to life! Give her a new body filled with life!” The old witch, who had fallen to the side, suddenly grew frantic. As she threw herself in front of the Gargamel’s shadow, “If you can fulfill my desire, I will pay any price necessary!”

It could be a misperception, but after the old witch spoke of those words, Leylin seemed to notice a hint of… ridicule in the Gargamel’s gigantic eyes

“I need… I need more offerings…”

The giant shadow licked its lips, “According to the principles of spirit transformation, a male magus cultivating in the Darkness element is a necessary offering!”

“I got it!” Old witch retrieved a couple of crystal balls filled with spiritual powers, and in addition, pointed towards Leylin.

“As for the offering, it’s that Magus!”

As the black shadow stated its conditions. Leylin felt his heart sink as he furiously activated his hastening spells.

His silhouette looked like it was cloaked inside a black tornado as it charged down the hill.

However, the speed of the black shadow Gargamel was far beyond Leylin’s expectations.
Facing Leylin’s escape, the black shadow simply extended a translucent palm and grabbed!
*Screech!* *Whoosh!*
The black tornado was torn apart, revealing Leylin’s body. Leylin felt like the air was instantly solidifying, and that it was constantly pressing in from all four sides. In an instant, a band of silver light descended from the sky and coiled around Leylin’s waist. From this band of light emerged an enormous amount of tyrannical spiritual force. The quality of this spiritual force was higher than anything that Leylin had ever encountered before. Just a tiny bit was enough to completely shatter his elemental essence converted spiritual force.
The spiritual force was a fundamental part of a Magus and was also the primer for casting spells. With spiritual force having been shattered, Leylin naturally could not cast a single spell. The silver band of light retracted, and Leylin was forced to follow its movements to ultimately arrive in front of the altar.
Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!
Four black shackle-like tentacles emerged from the altar and bound Leylin’s limbs tightly together. The present Leylin’s body was spread eagle as he was presented to the black shadow Gargamel.
“Spiritual force materialisation! This evil spirit Gargamel must be at least at the level of a rank 2 Magus!” Leylin’s face was deadly pale as his mind raced, trying to gauge the strength of the black shadow. At the same time, the A.I. Chip was operating at full speed in order to calculate the energy that the Gargamel was emitting, and from there, predict its stats and weaknesses.
Spiritual force materialisation was an advanced technique that only
rank 2 Magi were qualified to practice!
Spiritual force lacked shape or substance, and the various colorful spells that Leylin had seen were actually just the appearance of elemental particles that were in the air. As for the spiritual force, it acted as a catalyst and initiated the process of casting spells. However, all of these things could not be observed with the naked eye.
After a Magus reached rank 2, he could directly draw his spiritual force from his sea of consciousness out into the real world, and materialise it into the most basic energy particle. This was something that could be seen by even the most ordinary person!
When dealing with Magi below rank 2, who were unable to materialise their spiritual force, that ability made it basically impossible to lose!
After all, for Magi who could materialise their spiritual force, their condensation of spiritual force far surpassed that of a rank 1 Magus. With the weak spiritual force of a rank 1 Magus, it was impossible to hold out against attacks produced by the spiritual force of a rank 2 Magus, which resulted in the situation where a rank 1 Magus’ power was nothing compared to that of a rank 2 Magus.
The silver band of light that the shadowy Gargamel used was a materialisation of spiritual force that could be seen in the real world!
“A rank 2 Magus? To think that the contingency plans that I had the A.I. Chip prepare in case of an emergency would have to be used now…” Leylin’s thoughts whirled about as he turned to watch the witch carefully.
“Can you tell me the truth now?” Leylin’s voice was muffled as if he had lost all hope. “After all, we’re still allies!”
“Other than the agreement on the making of the potion and how we were to divide them, there wasn’t any condition that said we
couldn’t injure one another!”

The old witch was still trembling incessantly as if she was about to topple to the ground and die any second. At the same time, however, she was extremely zealous, and her cheeks were flushed. “I’m willing to do anything for Jaye, much less sacrifice an ally like you that has wicked intentions!”

“Jaye! She’s your daughter?” Leylin stared blankly. Immediately he turned his head towards Jaye, the black-cloaked person.

Jaye nodded her head and removed the black gown she wore. A translucent image of a girl appeared in front of Leylin. The image had the appearance of a very young and pretty woman, and on her pretty face, one could still see some traces of how the old witch looked when she was in her youth.

“Spirit bodies?” Leylin was stunned once more. He thought back to how Jaye had been silent the entire time, and how she even wore a thick pair of gloves. Of course, there should also have been other secret methods that were used, or else Leylin and Brass Ring, who had spent some time with her, would have discovered the abnormalities of Jaye’s body long before.

“My poor daughter permanently lost her physical body after an accident during an experiment. All that I can do is to constantly transfuse spiritual force into her and prolong the amount of time that she can stay in this world…”

The old witch’s eyes were glazed over as if she was reminiscing the past.

“Even though Jaye is already dead, I have never given up on my wish to bring her back to life! By a stroke of fate, I remembered some materials about the ancient Spirit Slaying Sect that I had obtained when I was young. Their spirit transferring technique is definitely able to resurrect my daughter and help her regain a physical body!”

“So you’ve been collecting spirits and continuously trying to unseal
“this Gargamel?”
Leylin coldly inquired.
“That’s right!” The old witch frankly admitted to it. “It is also thanks to your potions. Without them, Jaye’s spirit would not have been strengthened enough to allow her to withstand the transfer…” It seemed that all of the Tears of Mary potions that the old witch had received from Leylin had gone to Jaye.
As a result, Jaye’s spirit was able to increase from that of an ordinary person to the level of an official Magus.
“Also, in order to summon the Gargamel and resurrect Jaye, a few conditions need to be met!” Having planned this for decades and on the verge of seeing it succeed, the old witch was obviously in the mood to say everything that was on her mind.
For some reason, the shadowy Gargamel did not make a move, and just waited as she spoke.
“I need to initiate the process of summoning the Gargamel through the use of an official Magus who meets several stringent requirements, such as those in terms of aptitude and physique. In order to resurrect Jaye, these are the offerings required. Do you know how long it took me to look for you two offerings? Do you have any idea how long I waited for this moment?”
The old witch’s expression became crazed. Without even waiting for Leylin to speak, she thundered, “53 years! To fulfil these conditions, I waited 53 whole years!”
“In these 53 years, my darling Jaye suffered a lot…sob…sob…”
At the climax of her narration, the old witch’s tears flowed down her face, while Jaye stood silently to one side.
“All of my efforts have been rewarded. Now, my beloved daughter, Jaye, will be resurrected!!”
Leylin silently listened on. Now, all was clear to him.
Leylin was not angry about the fact that he and Brass Ring would be offerings.
He’d never thought himself to be treasured by the heavens, where he would somehow be able to profit from unfortunate situations or turn misfortunes into blessings. Since he could scheme against others, others could obviously do the same. All he could do was to consider all of his options in advance and make sure that every step went as perfectly as was possible. This was so he would not be schemed against or made use of.

“Honourable Gargamel, based on the rules for replacement, I present to you this Magus as an offering. In return, I want you to help my daughter regain a physical body.”

The old witch was gasping for breath as she placed several bizarre items on the altar while she made her request. “This replacement is allowed!”

From under the skull mask that the shadow was wearing, it seemed to be looking at Leylin and the others with a faint trace of mockery in its expression. The old witch who was kneeling on the ground, as well as Jaye, who seemed confused, did not notice this.

“As much as I want to stay behind and watch the show, I’m sorry!” Leylin grinned as the large arm of the Gargamel approached him.
I. Chip, activate the suction spell formation with maximum force!”
Leylin violently roared inwardly.
Meanwhile, his muscles swelled and a fine layer of black scales appeared on his body.
His eyes changed to an amber colour and appeared to have a beast-like vertical pupil in them.
Scales of Kemoyin and the Eye of Petrification!
During this life-or-death situation, the current Leylin used both of his innate spells!
Leylin’s vertical pupils focused on the chains and shackles that were binding him instead of the Gargamel.
This Gargamel, at the very least, had the power of a rank 2 Magus and its spiritual force exceeded Leylin’s by several times. Using the Eye of Petrification on it would not be enough to close this difference in strength.
And even if Leylin got closer and used the Eye of Petrification on him, it would still only cause him an unfortunate consequence; the Gargamel would devour his spirit!
*Pa! Pa! Pa!*
The chains and shackles that bound him turned gray under the gaze of the Eye of Petrification.
They disintegrated all over the ground as Leylin flexed his arms.
At the same time, a reverse symbol ‘j’ became bright and visible on
his clothes.
A strong attraction force acted on Leylin’s body and pulled him away so hard that he was almost flying as he moved backwards.
The speed of this ‘flight’ was 4-5 times more than when he had used a spell to flee.
The old witch and Jaye only saw a black flash; Leylin had already vanished without a trace in front of their eyes.
“No…” The old witch issued a hissing roar.
Jaye wore a complicated expression on her face, as if she had lost all hope, and heaved a despairing sigh.
“The materials for the replacement has disappeared. But the ceremony has already started and must not be interrupted. Start using other materials instead…”
The Gargamel only watched from a distance the spot from where Leylin had vanished but did not chase after him. Instead, he said a few words that caused the expressions on the old witch and Jaye’s face to drastically change.
“No…”
Together with the unceasing spell which was being dispelled, a shriek filled with hopelessness and despair rang out, piercing through the entire mountain of white bones.

......

*Bang!*
A huge explosion erupted and the spell formation laid on top of the white ground in the garden shattered.
Meanwhile, a black human shadow was drawn to this place and created a deep indent as it smashed into the ground due to the huge gravitational force.
“Cough Cough…”
At the bottom of a huge pit, Leylin fiercely spat out a mouthful of
sand and pebbles. Upon seeing the strange angle his right arm was in, he smiled wryly.

“The A.I. Chip recovered only a portion of the ancient suction spell formation, and using it so rashly obviously resulted in this situation. If not for my innate spell, I’m likely to have suffered far more than just a broken arm.”

Despite the grimace on his face, he jumped out of this large pit quickly and observed his surroundings. This was the place where he had fought with the vengeful spirit, the Loathsome Evil, and also where he had arranged his spell model.

“This suction spell formation was truly set up perfectly!”

Leylin sighed regretfully, and immediately commanded, “A.I. Chip, analyse the map and find the most optimal route to exit the secret plane!”

Previously, upon the spirit altar, Leylin had seen something similar to a map of the secret plane.

Due to his cautiousness, he had immediately asked the A.I. Chip to make a record of the map and compare it with the map made from routes he had travelled. As expected, the result was that he obtained a complete map, the entire map of the secret plane!

The suction spell formation here was an ancient spell that he had upgraded himself.

He had only seen the original model of this spell in the ancient books at the Four Seasons Garden, and many parts of it were already badly damaged.

Even with the A.I. Chip’s help he only had one complete portion, which only held 30 to 40% of the original power of the spell formation.

But this 30 to 40% power was enough to cause Leylin much happiness and was one of his hidden trump cards.

This suction spell formation model was able to create a powerful gravitational force, which would forcibly pull magic artifacts or
lifeforms that had previously been engraved onto a place where the suction spell formation had been set up. 
Due to its utilisation of many ancient techniques the force of attraction was very powerful, and its speed was extremely high! 
Even a rank 2 Magus would be helpless against it. 
If previously Leylin had the assurance of 10% success in fleeing from a rank 2 Magus, then after he had properly set up the gravitational spell, this probability of success could increase to 40% or even more!

[Map imported and the optimal route has been found!]
The A.I. Chip computed quickly and the map of the secret plane was projected clearly in Leylin’s field of view. In it, a red line marked the route from Leylin’s current position to the oil painting, which was the entrance to the plane. 

*Jiji!* Just then, from the Gargamel’s location, a loud, weird noise could be heard. Then a black shadow became larger and larger and finally unfurled itself within the sky. 

*Crash!* It was as if the entire sky in the secret plane had been ripped apart, exposing a pitch-black hole, and many blood red lightning bolts and thunder hacked at this black shadow. 
The shadow wore a strange skull mask and struck out at the constantly roaring lightning and thunder. 
The repercussions of this fight, caused everything to be turned to dust wherever it landed. And the battlefield slowly expanded, reaching to the location where Leylin was. “Run!”

Seeing this apocalypse-like scene, Leylin did not think for long, and immediately broke into a run.

On the way, the ground began to split open, and many trestles and stone sculptures fell to the ground. This scene was as if the world was ending. 
Leylin ran with lightning-fast speed and his body was constantly
covered with the Scales of Kemoyin. At high speed, all that could be seen was a long, black afterimage.

*Swish!*

Leylin quickly passed through a metal tunnel, and ahead of him was a dead-end. A thick layer of metal had completely sealed this passage.

But Leylin’s expression did not vary in the least; flickering constantly, he rapped at a few points at the wall.

*Rumble rumble!* Along with a loud noise of a machine, The metal in front of Leylin split open with a deafening mechanical noise, exposing a silver passage.

Written in the ancient Byron language was a sign on one side of the tunnel that read: “Tunnel made for emergency exit, specifically for lab employees!”

Leylin’s blue eyes flashed and, without hesitation, he rushed through this passage.

The silver passage quickly flashed past Leylin.

Immediately, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned, causing Leylin’s footsteps to halt.

[Discovered hidden compartment. It wasn’t recorded in the map previously. Do you want to continue through that way or not?]

“Hidden compartment? And the map on the spirit altar did not have a record of it? The level of secrecy of this compartment must be very high.”

Leylin glanced at the passage behind him with concern, sprinted forth, and a small door suddenly appeared on the silver wall.

The room behind the door was very narrow. It was a compartment of a few square meters in area and at its center was a very simple and mysterious ancient spell formation.

This spell model was built entirely using a black stone and on its surface were all kinds of symbols which Leylin could not understand. All around this spell model were tall obelisks.
Leaning on one of the obelisks was a corpse. This corpse was wearing a black gown that was lushly and delicately embroidered. More importantly was that even after such a long time had passed the clothes still had a bright and beautiful luster.

“This definitely was a very important person!” Seeing this corpse, Leylin inwardly exclaimed.

“A.I. Chip, record the patterns on the spell model” Leylin issued an order then he crouched down next to the corpse, and began fumbling about its clothes.

Some miscellaneous items and a torn diary made of parchment paper fell into Leylin’s hands.

[The spell model’s formation and the runes have already been recorded.]

After hearing the A.I. Chip’s intonation, Leylin immediately left the secret compartment. All of these took place in less than 15 seconds of time.

Leylin tapped on another wall of the secret compartment, then he quickly ran away.

And behind him, with a rumbling noise, the secret compartment door closed and a white light was emitted throughout the entire passage. Nobody could tell he had been in there.

……

Rays of bright sunlight shone down.

It was already daytime in the small town, but, because of the old witch’s potion, the populace was in a state of deep sleep. This situation had already been discovered by the surrounding villagers and the rumors spread about very fast.

Of course, due to the fact that there were limitations in communication and reasons of time, the extent to which these
rumors were spread was very small and did not attract the interest of even an acolyte. Now, the small town gained the reputation of being a ghost town. At the end of the passage, the oil painting emitted a silvery light. Then this light turned brighter and brighter, and finally revealed the entrance of a passageway.

*Whoosh!* From this entrance emerged a black shadow in very sorry shape. Leylin used his left hand to wipe his cold sweat and turned around to see the passage to the secret plane. “That was way too dangerous! If not for the defense mechanism that the Magi of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect set up for in case the Gargamel lost control, I wouldn’t have been able to get away…”

To say that the Gargamel was very powerful was not a lie; the current Leylin was definitely not its match. The being formed from the gathering of evil souls were simply insane. They were known for their temperamental nature, and Leylin wanted nothing to do with such terrifying and dangerous entities. “Latent Fireball!”

After looking at the entrance to the secret plane, a flash of determination passed through his eyes and he threw black fireballs at the entrance, thoroughly destroying it. Although there were many good things inside this secret plane, but when compared to his own insignificant life, Leylin certainly knew which he would prefer. And compared with the fact that the Gargamel could come out at any time to finish him off, the other items inside the secret plane at once became dispensable. Leylin looked at the surroundings and after removing all traces of his having been here, he departed from this place without looking
back. And if the entrance was not destroyed, then the Gargamel could come out from within the secret plane. Leylin estimated that, with the strange and savage power of the Gargamel, it could immediately find the weak point of the secret plane and tear it apart and escape! But by that time, Leylin would be a long distance away. What did this have to do with him? Furthermore, in the entire Magus world of the south coast, Leylin was not the only Magus around. For instance, the head of the Night Lighthouse that he had met earlier was more than capable of suppressing this Gargamel!
The speed at which Leylin escaped was extremely quick, and after just half a day, the tall, thick walls of the Nightless City were within sight.

At this point, his right hand had already completely healed. The frightening vitality of a Warlock was proving its worth. Only after entering the Nightless City did Leylin breathe a huge sigh of relief.

The Gargamel was the result of the concentration of evil intentions by the Ancient Spirit Slayer Sect. Although it was unknown why that Gargamel had been sealed there by the Magi of the sect, based on the calculations from the battle with it, Leylin could say that this monster’s strength was equivalent to that of a rank 2 Magus!

Although Leylin couldn’t hold his own against it, there were a couple rank 2 Magi in the south coast that could. At the very least, the leaders of large scale Magus organisations and powers definitely had at least this level of power.

At that moment, within the Nightless City, the trading centre of the south coast, there were quite a few Magi with this kind of strength. Leylin was sure that if the Gargamel were to chase after him, the Nightless City was sure to have the means to stop it!

However, he had another plan in mind.

The old witch was trapped in the secret plane together with that terrifying culmination of evil. From the looks of it, her chances of survival were meagre.
However, it was a fact that she held the position of elder in the dark Magus organisation that Leylin was affiliated with, Thousand Meddling Hands. Her status was obviously higher than that of an average member, and she was also able to contact the hidden rank 2 Magus heading the group!

With her death, there would be loose ends that needed to be tied up.

If possible, Leylin would obviously want to take possession of everything the old witch owned.

In a light Magus organisation, this would naturally be impossible. However, in the case of Thousand Meddling Leaves, as long as he revealed a bit of his might, it would be enough to subdue the ambitious Magi who wished to take over this position.

“Hello? Is this Leylin?”

At this moment, a secret imprint that resembled a four-coloured ring emerged from Leylin’s waist. A man’s voice was transmitted from it.

“Hello, Lord Decarte!”

Leylin could make out the owner of this imprint. It was the head of the Potiveering team, Decarte! His tone naturally became respectful.

Previously, all of the missions that Decarte needed Leylin to complete had been issued to him by Leylin’s current leader, Martin.

“Ugh, the secret imprint seemed to have had some sort of interference, and I couldn’t contact you at all. Did you go somewhere far away?”

Decarte’s questions were transmitted to him from the secret imprint.

“Yes. I’d accepted a friend’s invitation to explore a small ruin…”

Leylin’s answer was half true.

“No wonder! Many of these ruins left behind by Magi will automatically block out all forms of communication. In there, a
secret imprint is merely a useless decoration…” No matter if Decarte actually believed him or not, the voice from the secret imprint sounded convinced.

“My apologies for making my lord worry about me. Might I ask what you require of me?” Leylin was puzzled as he spoke to the imprint.

“Yes, there’s something that I need. A few elders and the head have issued orders that Four Seasons Garden has entered the highest state of alert. All Magi will have their vacations cancelled! Upon receiving this message, you must report to the headquarters within 24 hours! All who do not do so will be viewed as traitors, and will be punished by the law enforcers!”

Decarte broke out the earth-shattering news.

“What?”

Leylin was in shock, causing him to take a few steps back. The Four Seasons Garden wasn’t stupid, and issuing such an order could only imply one thing. Something was going to happen to the entire south coast.

“I’ll be there in time! Can you tell me what has happened?”

Leylin sucked in a few breaths of air and calmed himself down before inquiring.

“The whole situation is a little complicated. You can ask Martin about it when you’re back. There’s only one thing I can tell you, war! A war is approaching…”

“I don’t have any more time left. Just remember to come here as quickly as possible! In war, the weak ones who don’t have organisations to rely on are usually the first to die!”

*Pop!* With his last word, the secret imprint dispersed into countless bright sparks, drifting through the air around Leylin.

Decarte’s sounded serious, which caused Leylin’s heart to sink. When compared to these strong organisations, the conflict at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was but a small matter.
To have caused the Four Seasons Garden’s Potioneering team head to be so flustered, there was only one possibility, that an incoming war was going to rock the Magus World!

Leylin suddenly remembered some information about Magus’ history.

After the ancient times had passed, it was the current period. During this current period, two huge wars had occurred. These two events had affected the Magi, and basically all species in the entire south coast. The Magi suffered massive casualties, and the humans were obviously more affected, with numerous empires annihilated. These two wars were named the First and Second Great Magus Wars!

Now, it seemed the Third Great Magus War was about to begin!

Leylin’s scrunched up his brows and wrinkled his forehead. For him, it was entirely possible to accumulate information and resources, and with the A.I. Chip, he would be able to constantly break through his bottlenecks and improve further.

As a result, Leylin had hoped to be able to develop in a more peaceful and stable environment until he would reach a bottleneck. In the previous great wars, acolytes were cannon fodder. Even official Magi fell and died in swarms, resulting in the alternate name of the wars: the Magus World’s Death Grinder.

Leylin wasn’t sure that he would be lucky enough to escape unscathed!

Wars of this scale affected the entire south coast, and nobody had been able to escape. As long as one was a Magus, he or she would be involved in it.

Unless… If he left the south coast and passed through several extremely dangerous regions, and set off for a new place, he would be safe.

“I shouldn’t scare myself. It might just be a conflict between the Four Seasons Garden and another Magus organisation!”
Leylin, who had been standing by the city gates, suddenly smiled gently and walked right inside. He’d thought it through. No matter what happened, it had absolutely nothing to do with him. After all, he was a member of Four Seasons Garden’s Potioneering team! Unless Caesar’s entire hunting team was annihilated, research personnel like him wouldn’t need to be on the battlefield. If this was a war with other Magus organisations, with the Four Seasons Garden’s background, it would be impossible to be thoroughly annihilated. If he were to defect now, it would be an extremely foolish decision that would offend the Four Seasons Garden for no reason. If the Third Great Magus War was to happen, the entire south coast would become a battlefield, and no area would be safe. Decarte’s words were a reminder as well as a warning. Great wars never began with both sides going all out. It would start with them using small groups and neutral parties to eliminate all other elements, and then they would be able to fight freely, without fear of others taking advantage of the situation. Wandering Magi and indecisive small organisations were definitely the first to be used! Leylin didn’t want to lose his backing and live a life where a crisis was always imminent. As a result, it was necessary for him to return to the Four Seasons Garden. Leylin was confident that he had hidden his skills well. In the eyes of the Magi in the Four Seasons Garden, Leylin was merely a newly advanced Magus who was talented in Potioneering and training! If the leaders of Four Seasons Garden were stupid enough to get Leylin to be cannon fodder, then at the most, he would just leave and cut all connections between them. Leylin was confident he would be able to leave the Four Seasons
Garden’s headquarters without alerting the rank 2 Magi there. After thinking this entire matter through, Leylin achieved a calm state of mind. Only then did he have the mood to survey his surroundings.

At this moment, Leylin discovered a difference in the Nightless City!

The Nightless City’s large gates had all been opened wide. Giants, which were usually rarely seen, could be seen wearing animal hides that did not fit them, and holding huge wooden stakes. They were entering the city in twos and threes. With every step they took, the ground slightly shook.

The number of people in the Nightless City had increased by around 50%, causing a few passages to become congested. However, whether they were regular humans, acolytes, or even some official Magi, their expressions were dark. In particular, there were a few official Magi who had a deep sense of distrust in their eyes when they saw unfamiliar Magi.

In the first zone of the Nightless City, shops that used to be bustling despite their unorganized placement saw a sharp decrease in price of raw materials. Defensive items, potions, and the like, on the other hand, were experiencing an increase in price. Many shops had already put up signs saying they were sold out. Though Leylin had expected this, seeing this scene in person definitely had an effect on his mood.

All this was evidence of the scale of the impending war that would affect the entire Magus World. Leylin would definitely not be able to escape this!

Leylin’s footsteps seemed to become a bit heavier as he passed through several gates and entered the third zone of the Nightless City.

In the region where the villas were located, the originally lively place was somewhat deserted. There were no signs of the cheerful
Magi who used to hang around the various gardens. Several flowers that used to be tended to in the flower terrace were listlessly lowering their heads, with some even showing signs of wilting, which gave off a bleak atmosphere.

“Master!”

Once he returned to his own villa, Damien, the level 3 acolyte who worked as his butler, welcomed him.

“I’m fine! Did anything strange happen in the Nightless City recently? Tell me everything you know!” Leylin immediately asked while he threw his cloak to Damien.

“Yes! Damien was just about to do so!”

There was a worried expression on his face.

“A day before, rumours about the start of a third Magus war started spreading around the Nightless City. At the beginning, nobody took it to heart, but as time passed, the fact that no organisation stood up to refute this claim has Nightless City in a frenzy…”
Damien expressed a slightly apprehensive expression.

“Many Magi simply left. Huge numbers of people are in the streets buying items to increase their powers. It’s as though they are trying to use up all of the magic crystals at their disposal…”

“That strange phenomenon only gradually abated after the public center dispatched people to patrol the streets…..”

“Moreover, your good friend Magus Crew also moved out this afternoon. Before he left, he left a message for you!”

“What message?”

“The night is approaching. Be careful in everything you do!” Damien said something that sounded like a proverb.

“What does that mean?” Leylin frowned. “When did that Crew start to like being a prophetic Magus? The things he says are never clear!”

Leylin pondered for a moment, and finally told Damien, “From the information I’ve gathered, there will probably be a relatively large war that is imminent……”

Even though he already had some guesses, when Damien heard this information, his body trembled uncontrollably. He was originally caught and became a slave because of a war. Even though he was under a spirit branding, that bitter experience was just like a brand that was deeply engraved in his memories, making it impossible for him to forget.
“That’s right, call Number 1 to 5 over here!”
Leylin casually instructed Damien, who rapidly suppressed his shaking body, and withdrew at an extremely fast pace.
After a few minutes, five armoured Grand Knights with greatswords appeared before Leylin and knelt to perform a perfect Knight’s greeting!
“Master!”
The extremely thick armour didn’t affect their movements in the slightest way, and every movement of those five people carried a killing intent. It could be seen at a glance that they were strong veteran Grand Knights that had experienced countless battles.
“You may rise!” Leylin commented softly as he looked at those five people.
They were naturally the five Grand Knight slaves that he had purchased at the slave market in addition to Damien.  
With the spirit branding, Leylin could order these five Grand Knights to die and they would obey without any hesitation.
They originally had names, but for convenience’s sake, Leylin gave all of them new names with numbers, starting from 1 to 5.
Leylin had put in considerable amounts of effort on the five Grand Knights. He constantly fixed their conditions during the past year. He didn’t even mind spending a lot of his resources to brew precious potions for them to consume.
Currently, the five experimental bodies’ were unconsciously giving off energy waves filled with life force. They were already beyond the Grand Knight’s rank and were beginning to advance to a higher realm.
“What are the results of the secret techniques that I taught you previously?”
Leylin asked.
“Master! After using the secret techniques along with the potions from before, Number 2, 3 and I felt life force start to flow through
us, which was something that had not happened for a long time. Our vitality also became increasingly stronger.”

The big man on the far left stepped out of the line and said, “But when Number 4 and 5 used the secret techniques, the brand on their bodies shook and gave off scorching hot energies that interrupted their training………”

This Grand Knight slave, known as Number 1, gave an extremely detailed report.

In the past year, Leylin had been constantly modifying the brands of the five through the modifications made by the A.I. Chip. This had allowed him to gain a lot of fruitful experiment results.

The ’secret techniques’ that were previously taught to those five Grand Knights were just improvised data from the information about Branded Swordsman.

“Is that so?” Leylin’s gaze became stern. “Remove your clothes!”

The five slaves removed their body armour without any thoughts after hearing their master’s order.

*Crash!* Metal armour made a racket as they hit the ground. The Grand Knights had removed the heavy armour in just a couple of seconds, revealing completely unclothed bodies.

Moreover, Number 4 and 5 were female Grand Knights, but they weren’t at all embarrassed as they stood before Leylin with their well-developed bodies and private parts completely exposed.

Those five had the strength of Grand Knights. Their bodyline was supple, but was well developed. Every inch of their flesh hid an astonishing explosive power.

Their bodies were akin to perfectly sculpted statues.

However, there were elements that offset their aesthetic appearance from being perfect.

Leylin didn’t cared about the two Grand Knight beauties; his gaze was completely focused on the interweaving brand on their body. Leylin scrutinised their bodies.
He noticed that the bodies of his Grand Knight subordinates were covered with deep, black brands. Near these brands were some twisting scars. It seemed as if a branding iron was the source of the brands and scars.

With close observation, the brands looked like a centipede climbing. While their chest and lower abdomen regions formed an extremely peculiar rune. Some of the brands seemed to be broken and were unable to link together.

“‘A.I. Chip! Scan those brands and compare the current conditions of these Grand Knights to the previous observations in a new file!’” Leylin thought.

As he said this, a blue light shone in his eyes and swept horizontally across those slaves.

[Beep! Mission established! Commencing the scanning!] The A.I. Chip followed the tasks that Leylin ordered.

Rows of numbers and three 3-D images appeared before Leylin and were constantly being updated.

“En! It seemed that the training method that I created isn’t bad. These Knights’ physical qualities have had drastic improvements and are also able to train their life force. Their previous stagnant powers are starting to rapidly improve!” Leylin was extremely satisfied after looking at the results of the three male Grand Knights.

“The training method of the Branded Swordsman conflicts with the brands on their bodies?” Leylin carefully looked through the A.I. Chip’s results while constantly walking around the slaves in order to attentively observe the position of the brands.

“Where is the source of the previous problem? Is it here?” Leylin placed his hands below the lower abdomen of Number 4 without ascribing and thoughts to what he was doing. After having
placed his hand there, he felt a warm sensation and could feel that underneath the smooth and supple skin, there were muscles that were slightly twitching now.

“Yes... Yes, that’s the place, Master!” said Number 4 with a slightly shaky voice. This female Grand Knight had a good appearance and an exceptionally curved, bountiful body.

“If that’s the case!” Leylin caressed his lower jaw.

“A.I. Chip! Amend the parameters for the two female knights to the p-grade content and change the index to the third grade before testing again!”

This kind of calculation was an easy task for the A.I. Chip. After a short moment, the A.I. Chip had already concluded its calculation and reported it to Leylin.

[Beep! According to the calculation, the brandings of the swordsman are different for males and females. The markings must follow a carved inscription!]

After looking at the A.I. Chip’s conclusion, Leylin’s expression did not change since he had expected such a result.

“So it really was the case! Kroft had gotten hold of a part of the Branded Swordsman information, but there is an extreme lack of information concerning the brandings. The runes inscribed on males had been deduced by the A.I. Chip. Moreover, those marks aren’t suitable for females, which resulted in the two female Knights being unable to train!”

“It seems that I must purchase a large quantity of male Grand Knight slaves to try to create a Branded Swordsman!”

Leylin planned to himself.

To him, using males or females didn’t have any differences. He just needed to head to different sections of the slave Market for them. However, regarding the most crucial rune inscriptions for the Branded Swordsman, he could only amend the model to suit males. While it was not impossible to create something out of nothing for
a female version of the model, it would take a lot of time. Leylin didn’t want to spend the A.I. Chip’s precious calculation skills on this matter.

“Since this is the case, there’s only one troublesome problem in manufacturing Branded Swordsman, which is the problem in combining the markings’ powers.”

Leylin rubbed his lower jaw with flames burning in his eyes. The ancient Branded Swordsman were similar to the bloodline Warlocks and elemental bards, which were among the stronger professions of the sub branch of the magi. Their specialties were their physical defence and offensive powers, which were regarded as their enemies’ nightmares.

Moreover, the combination of the Branded Swordsman and magicians was an eternal nightmare for many worlds. If the Branded Swordsman could perform crowd control, then the Magi behind them would have the time to prepare the formidable power of magic in order to change a given situation.

Moreover, the power of an official Branded Swordsman was equivalent to that of at least a rank 1 Magus!

Leylin just needed to form an army with Branded Swordsmen. The quantity didn’t need to be large; 20 of them would be sufficient. With such forces, Leylin would no longer have an opponent at the rank 1 Magus level and he was also confident enough to be able to fight against a rank 2 Magus!

“However, regarding the problem of the powers, the runes of the Branded Swordsman is the pivotal point. Even if it was the A.I. Chip, it could not guarantee perfection without countless experiments and accumulation of data. Moreover, there’s also a problem in controlling the Branded Swordsmen after they evolve to a higher realm…”

Leylin lowered his head as he muttered to himself irresolutely. He was only a rank 1 Magus now, so he could at most control level
3 acolytes and Grand Knights. However, in a similar fashion as the Magi and Warlocks, the ancient Branded Swordsmen could break through the ordinary realm to reach an extraordinary one.
This power wasn’t something that Leylin could currently control by using the spirit brand. Thus, a safer and more effective controlling method had to be researched and implemented on those Branded Swordsmen! Only with this method could the loyalty of his soldiers be guaranteed!
n the dimly lit basement.
A faint red ball of light floated in midair, constantly emitting blood red rays of light, which caused the lighting of the basement to be slightly gloomy, and gave off a horrifying atmosphere.
The previous Grand Knight, Number 1, was lying flat on the enormous white metal experimental table.
His eyes were tightly closed, and his eyelids were constantly moving, as though he was being tortured in his dreams.
Moreover, the black brands on his body seemed to be alive, constantly lengthening and shortening as it wiggled. Moreover, it slowly protruded from his skin, giving off dark red rays of light as he breathed.
“The ancient Branded Swordsman used the magic runes and arrays crafted onto their bodies to enable them to store the world’s natural energy particles into their body. Those particles could also be completely released during critical moments, turning into a terrifying spell! Moreover, the Branded Swordsman’s physical abilities were far beyond the limits of ordinary people, reaching an unfathomable stage because a large amount of energy particles constantly reformed their bodies!”
Currently, it could be said that Leylin was the top person in the south coast regarding the knowledge of the Branded Swordsman.
With a white scalpel and tweezers in his hands, Leylin finally
looked at Number 1, who was still unconscious.
“Even though I’m slightly eager to gain instant benefits, I can’t consider it any further!”
Leylin sighed as he said that. He still needed to get numerous results from the experiments conducted on the five Grand Knights using the A.I. Chip in order to gain accurate parameters before he could inscribe the final energy pathways.
However, time was pressing.
The news concerning the war’s imminence had arrived so suddenly that it messed up most of Leylin’s original plans.
Initially, Leylin was certain that he would make the second transition in his bloodline by the time the Branded Swordsman’s experiment succeeded. At that moment, with his increase in power, it wouldn’t be impossible for him to battle against a rank 2 Magus.
A rank 2 Magus was at the level of the principal of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, who possessed great magical powers.
If he could calmly wait and silently accumulate power, Leylin could quickly reach the peak domain that the majority of rank 1 Magi couldn’t reach in their entire lifetime.
However, everything was in ruins due to the dreadful news of the war.
At this moment, all Leylin could do was quicken his research in hopes that by the time the war came, he could produce Branded Swordsmen. He didn’t expect them to have the full might of the ancient Branded Swordsman but possess at least 50-60% of their original power, which would be sufficient to ensure his life during the chaos of the war.
Leylin took a deep breath after he sorted through his thoughts.
At that instant, he completely calmed down, dispelling all distracting thoughts from his mind.
An indifferent light flashed past his eyes as Leylin carved at Number 1’s chest with the assistance of the A.I. chip.
“Roar!” An enormous Venom Wyvern, accompanied by a distinct loud cry, dove down from the sky. It abruptly spread its wings when it was a couple of meters above the ground.

*Whoosh!* Enormous green wings covered the sky, casting a large shadow on the ground.

After spreading its wings, the enormous Venom Wyvern’s speed of descent drastically decreased, entering a gliding state. After gliding for a couple of meters in the air, it steadily landed on the Four Seasons Garden’s general headquarters’ landing pad.

*Bang!* The enormous beastial claws collided with the platform. When those sharp claws contacted the floor with such a large amount of momentum, it left several meter-deep markings.

Swish! A Magus who was wearing a white robe embroidered with plants directly jumped off the back of the Venom Wyvern.

“Lord Leylin!”

The surrounding Four Season Garden acolytes hastily went forth to bow to him.

There were two other armoured men that also jumped off from the Venom Wyvern’s back after Leylin disembarked. There were enormous greatswords the size of a door attached on their backs.

“These two are my followers. According to the school’s rules, I’ve the rights to bring two servants to live with me! Register them for me!”

Leylin told one of the acolytes, “You also to feed Hawke, and increase the amount of red bread pigs by two heads. It recently entered a state of binge eating prior to maturity, so it requires a lot of food……”

“Our wish is our command, lord!” That acolyte deeply bowed as he commanded the rest of the subordinates behind him to start
washing and cleaning the Venom Wyvern
The acolyte seemed to have rapidly recorded something down. After a short while, he passed two metal tablets to Number 2 and 3, who were behind Leylin. The two tablets were completely black, and on the surface, there was a scarlet rune marking. The marking consisted of an inverted triangle within a circle, with a coiled black snake in the centre. This was Leylin’s secret imprint.
“This will be your access pass. Take good care of it, as the replacement procedure is extremely troublesome! Moreover, there are some restricted areas that you’re forbidden from entering, as we are currently in a state of emergency. If you do, you’ll be caught by the guards as a spy!” That acolyte’s expression was very stern, which made Leylin apprehensive.
“That’s acceptable!” Leylin nodded before leaving this place along with Number 2 and Number 3.
“Is the situation already that severe?” Seeing the Magi rushing around on the way, combined with the warning from that acolyte, Leylin’s heart was slightly heavy. Leylin, who had gotten a lot of information from the previous experiment, rushed to reach the general headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden the next day. After all, he didn’t want to get into a conflict with the Four Seasons Garden. While he was still conducting experiments regarding the Branded Swordsman, he had brought Number 2 and Number 3 with him to make some adjustments to them using the result from experiments conducted on Number 1. Currently, Leylin had a higher understanding in his research on the Branded Swordsman!
Under the calculations from the A.I Chip, Number 2 and Number 3 would definitely become good assistants for Leylin after they
became Branded Swordsmen.
Leylin had made great progress regarding the problem in controlling them.
He used the white termite as the main ingredient to make modifications to the two Grand Knights and used potions to increase the degree to which the brand was carved into their spirits. He should be able to control their consciousness to make them completely enslaved, under those two control measures.
As for the Grand Knights Number 4 and Number 5, they were completely crippled, as the branded runes on their bodies were not compatible with them. The branding of runes wasn’t like drawing, where you could just erase your mistakes. Runes would be forever carved onto the body, and would also reside deep inside the spirit, forming a connection. This was the only way that the Branded Swordsmen could activate the natural energy particles!
Since it was Leylin’s first time operating, and he was lacking in experience and information, he had already carved the wrong runes onto the previous two female Grand Knights.
Currently, there wasn’t a way for Leylin to erase those runes, so they would forever lose their chances in improving and, would stay at the rank of Grand Knight for the rest of their lives.
Leylin would naturally not bring those two burdens with him. He had instructed Damien and the two female Grand Knights to defend his villa in the Nightless City as a future supply base.
Truthfully, Leylin was still in the darkness regarding the information of the war.
He knew that war was imminent, but didn’t know why it was occurring. Who were the opposing forces? Everything was shrouded from him.
However seeing how the Four Season Garden was acting as though it was going to meet a formidable enemy in combat, he could guess that the enemy, this time, wasn’t a simple one.
Information gathering was one of the reasons why Leylin decided to come to the general headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden. After arranging for the two Grand Knights to stay at the residential area of the Four Seasons Garden, Leylin briskly walked to the main lounge of the Potioneering team. It was rare for the two mischievous stone statues to not be creating trouble, so Leylin passed through them quickly. *Creak!*

When the door opened, the lounge was still as flourishing and vast as before. A long, white birch table and chairs were orderly arranged. There was a white tablecloth on the table, on the side of which delicate flowers had been stitched. Different teams in the Potioneering team sat at their respective positions, and constantly chattered among themselves. The only difference, this time, was that the table wasn’t filled with food, but was instead occupied by various documents and crystal balls that were being perused for information. The master’s position in the lounge wasn’t filled. It seemed that Decarte must have been busy, and couldn’t come here for the time being.

Leylin surveyed the area, and found the where Martin’s team was. When he met Martin for the first time, that old fellow was positioned extremely far from the host’s position. However, now that Leylin had joined and completed some missions, that old man’s position had moved quite a bit forward. This was something that Martin had constantly bragged about to everyone. However, even though he was sitting here, the excitement of being in this seat couldn’t cover the worry expressed on Martin’s face. After seeing Leylin, Martin’s wrinkle covered face displayed a smile. “Leylin! Over here!” He pointed to the seat beside him.

Leylin smiled, and after greeting the few Magi that he knew, he
walked over to sit beside Martin.
“I’m really glad that you could make it! You should know that due to this dreadful war, our tasks have become much more arduous…….”
Since they were extremely close to each other, Martin started to express his complaints to Leylin.
“Sorry! I’ll definitely work hard in the Potioneering aspect, so can you tell me the details regarding the war? I was previously exploring before I received the Lord leader’s secret imprint, so I’m currently still at a loss as to what is happening!”
Leylin’s face showed a textbook example of confusion.
“Oh! Look at my manners!” Martin patted his large forehead.
“Which part shall I start talking from?”
Martin stroked his beard and expressed a pondering expression.
“To be honest, the source of this battle is related to the previous two Magus wars…..”
Martin commented slowly, his expression becoming serious.
Leylin, did you know how the two Great Magus Wars began?”

Martin suddenly asked.

“It seemed to be because of the differences in values between light and dark Magi, as well as some anticipated benefits.” Leylin combined the factors he had read about in books and added his personal take on it.

“Benefits! Everything was for the sake of benefits!”

Martin waved his hand, his expression increasingly agitated.

“Saying that there was a difference in opinion is just a superficial reason, but when it comes down to it, it was all for benefits! When I find out who said this, I’ll copy it down and engrave it in my room!”

Martin quickly proceeded, “In reality, no matter if they were light or dark Magi, they were on the path of pursuing the truth! As long as they were not obstructed, no matter which areas the light Magi occupied, or what massacres the dark Magi were responsible for, the Magi couldn’t care less.”

“The real reason for the two Great Magus Wars was to obtain resources! The meagre resources in the south coast were not enough for the many of the Magi here…”

Leylin listened quietly as Martin explained the truth behind the Great Magus Wars.

At this moment, a cold smile emerged on his face.
“The so-called Great Magus Wars were actually just for the sake of obtaining more materials, which were not even abundant in the first place. It was a battle started by the highest tier of Magi on both the light and dark Magi’s ends, and was a way to ‘clean up’ the Magus World. After the war, there were massive casualties on both the light and dark Magi’s sides, and the remaining resources were enough for the Magi who had survived to advance. This is how the generations of families came to be on the south coast.”

As Martin was narrating, Leylin saw a rare look of heartache on his face.

From the looks of it, Martin did not approve of these methods and reasoning, and it was highly likely that he was somehow directly affected by the wars.

Leylin immediately thought back to his previous world.

In his previous life, the fall of any empire was said to be caused by corruption and an incompetent monarch, amongst many other things.

The way Leylin saw it, the real reason for their fall was due to benefits and resources!

In ancient times, the land was the base of life. As time passed, the population rapidly grew, and since there wasn’t family planning, people kept on having babies and used them for manual labour. That was the norm!

With an increase in population, but with the same amount of land available, not everyone was able to own land to support themselves. For this reason, the entire empire naturally declined.

Of course, during this process, high officials and landowners had their lands taken over, which hastened this decline.

……

After that, the confusion and deaths caused by the war caused the
population to be diminished by about 60 to 70%, and the land and territory were left open for the remaining survivors to use. With this foundation, a new leader could govern well for a century or two and then decline. The cycle would continue…

Leylin believed that the south coast’s Magus World was in such a situation.

Even with various measures, the number of Magi was still on the rise, and the south coast’s rate of production of materials was hardly enough to support the rate at which Magi advanced in strength.

Many had to see their dreams crushed due to the lack of resources available.

This bitterness and hatred were passed down from generation to generation, resulting in a state where the ruling Magi began to feel afraid!

Hence, a few of the top guilds in the south coast were unafraid of the losses that might be incurred, and initiated wars, disposing of less powerful Magi organisations.

In those wars, winning was useless! Surviving was the best form of victory!

Once he thought that through, Leylin sucked in a breath of cold air.

Compared to the huge empires in his previous life that could not forge ahead any longer, the south coast Leylin was in was just a small part of the Magus World. It could almost be said to be a rural country area.

Even so, those wielding power in the south coast would rather constantly exhaust their own power by raiding to reduce the risks and resentment of their people, than expand their territory. There was only one reason for this!

Just as how it had happened with the Great Magus Wars, the desire to expand would often result in the opposite reaction, where gains did not make up for the losses. No leader was willing to lose their
Magus underlings.
“What sort of dangers lie beyond the south coast?”
Leylin sighed inwardly. He had intentions on travelling all around the Magus World and climbing up to bigger heights. However, from this situation, it seemed rather impossible to even leave the south coast.
“However, this does explain why the south coast has always been so sealed off. Rarely are there Magi that stop over, with the only exception being the great Magus Serholm!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed as he seemed to come to a realisation.
“So does that mean that this impending war is also meant to lessen the population of official Magi?”
At this point, Martin and Leylin had both lowered their voices and transmitted their thoughts. Leylin had also taken the liberty of setting up a few spell formations that would isolate sound waves.
“That’s not it!” Martin slapped his head.
“I just had a lot of feelings regarding the previous Great Magus Wars!”
Old Martin behaved as though he was an old man, and Leylin had the urge to bash him up.
“Hahaha…” Seeing Leylin’s reaction, he laughed in a carefree manner.
“I apologise. I have this problem where in critical moments, I usually like to make jokes to ease my nerves.” Martin gave a tiny grin as an apology, but all Leylin saw was a despicable old man.
“Alright, let’s get back to the topic. The reason for this war is a dispute over benefits!”
Old Martin’s expression became milder, but Leylin still listened intently.
“About two days ago, a group of Magi who were out exploring in the Eternal River Plains found a Magus’ secret plane!”
Martin told Leylin some information.
This group had been searching for some ruins and had accidentally activated the secret plane, resulting in the leakage of this news, which could set off wars. This wasn’t anything new on the south coast.

However, to be able to elicit such a huge response from Old Martin, even making him think that the Third Magus War was arriving, this secret plane must be very unique.

“A secret plane? Is it a resource type plane? How big is it?” Leylin got right to the key points.

“I don’t know! From the information provided by Magi who had gone in, it’s about ten million mu! The density of elemental particles in there is of the highest quality, A!”

Listening to Martin’s statement, Leylin could not help but gasp in admiration.

Even a large-scale light Magi organisation like the Four Seasons Garden only had a secret plane the size of a little more than a million mu. Just from the site of exploration, the secret plane was already much bigger than what the Four Seasons Garden possessed.

Such a huge benefit was enough for the peace-loving light Magi, who were usually buried in research, to covet and be willing to kill to obtain the secret plane.

“Worst of all, such a huge secret plane has a large number of entrances. It seems that after the exploration group activated one of them, the other entrances were also automatically opened. Based on the news I’ve gathered, there are at least 7 other entrances.”

Old Martin was acting mysteriously about this.

Leylin just gave a huge sigh. “The Eternal River Plains are just at the border between the dark and light Magi’s territories. The undulations from the entrances to such a large scale secret plane will definitely be detected by official Magi, even if it were a thousand li away.”
He finally knew the reason for the wars. Even though it wasn’t the worst situation, it wasn’t all that good either.

“Exactly! Some dark and light Magus organisations got there first, and upon seeing the secret plane, started killing each other from their desire to gain possession of it. In the end, nobody received any benefits, and they later passed on the information they had learned to the organisations behind them! This information spreading from layer to layer resulted in a civil war between the various Magi.”

“In the end, the dark Magi managed to take control of three entrances, while the light Magi took control of the other four. In the huge secret plane, a bloodthirsty battle to steal away various precious resources and territories ensued. The war this time will be inside the plane, and Magi from all over will fight within. Of course, the most important part will be to gain possession of the territory within…”

Leylin heaved a sigh of relief.

Compared to the two other wars that affected the entire south coast, this was going to affect the Magus World the least. The number of dead humans would be minimal, and for Magi like him, as long as he did not choose to enter the secret plane, he would naturally be safe.

At most, there would be an increase in tasks related to Potioneering.

Of course, nearing the end of the war, there was sure to be a large number of casualties within the organisations, and Leylin might even have to be sent to the frontlines.

However, if that truly were to happen, Leylin would immediately choose to escape, and obviously wouldn’t be forced into the fight.

*Ding* Just as Leylin was about to enquire more from Martin, a clear sound resounded within the hall.

Despite there being no wind, the multi-coloured fabrics in the hall
rustled, and rays of rainbow coloured lights shone within the room. A distinct sound resonated across the hall. “The team leader is here! Get up and greet him!” Martin pulled Leylin along. Leylin rolled his eyes and stood unwillingly.

As the team leader of Four Seasons Garden’s Potioneering team, Decarte’s power was unquestionable. He was already at the peak of rank 1, and was ready to break through to rank 2 at any moment. He also had many achievements in Potioneering and was said to be a great master in the subject. However, not only was this man old fashioned, he was also crazy for anything lavish that could show off his status. As a result, this person who liked to have dinner with his underlings, have conversations and issue missions in the stately, formal hall, could not tolerate the slightest bit of rudeness towards him. A number of Magi had been punished for this reason.
Below the stage, numerous Magi bowed.
On the podium, red flames blazed.
A Magus in white robes and a green headband leaped up from the flames energetically, looking like a flame sprite.
“My lord!” Leylin and the other Magi bowed together.
“Hmph!” Decarte nodded in an aloof manner and swept his long cloak before taking a seat at his assigned place.
“Everyone!” Decarte’s voice was very gentle, though he had a weird accent. Having stored a large amount of data, Leylin knew that this was an accent that Magi nobility used in the ancient times. Other than showing off one’s status, there was nothing special about it. Only the most traditional families practised this way of speech now.
“I believe those in charge of you have already spoken to you. If not, you can ask them about it. I have only one thing to say here!”
“Four Seasons Garden will take over one of the entrances to the Eternal River secret plane on behalf of the light Magi. The battle and hunting teams have already been brought into the plane in batches to vie over the resources within against the dark Magi. Our Potioneering team may not be directly involved in killing the dark Magi, but we have the role of brewing potions and definitely can’t hinder the other teams!”
At this point, Decarte’s eyes shone as he scanned the area.
All Magi present trembled with fear.
“Is this the power of a Magus at the peak of rank 1?”
Though Leylin could withstand such might, he knew he definitely wasn’t Decarte’s match yet.
He looked at his stats.
As a Magus on the verge of breaking through to rank 2, Decarte’s spiritual force had definitely gone past 70 and might even be near 80. His elemental essence conversion was sure to have reached a high percentage and was much more than 80%, which was the requirement to break through.
Leylin suspected that Lord Decarte could have advanced a long time ago but had held himself back in order to increase his elemental essence conversion as much as possible before trying to break through!
Leylin knew that he had a large number of tricks up his sleeves, but the most he could do was catch Decarte unprepared. It was certain that the experienced Decarte could beat him up thoroughly.
“Alright, now I’ll issue the missions. Callum, your research on the Tree Secretion Potion is temporarily on hold. From hereon, spend all your time on brewing the Rotting Bee Swarm potion!”
Decarte began to issue the missions.
A Magus with a gold helmet that covered his face stood and greeted him.
Leylin knew of Callum. He was said to be the number one in the Potioneering team, and the team he led was very capable. They had managed to complete a series of difficult missions, and his own Potioneering abilities were awe-inspiring. Based on Leylin’s calculations, without the use of his trump card, the A.I. Chip, he
might not even match up to Callum. Leylin had heard a bit about the Tree Secretion Potion that Callum’s team was in charge of. The formula had already been mostly figured out, and there was one more step till the potion could show its real effects. However, because of the war, this experiment had to be postponed. “Good. I’ll compensate your losses a while later!” Seeing Callum so cooperative, Decarte’s expression brightened.

“Next up is…” Decarte changed all of the teams’ existing missions. Their previous missions had to do with research and fortification, but these were all abandoned in favour of refining potions that had immense killing power. Martin’s team, which Leylin was in, received a mission to brew the Heart of Lava. This Heart of Lava Potion was a type of offensive potion that had a large area of effect. Though its might was a little weak at around 20 degrees, it had a wide range and was a necessary item in large-scale wars. Besides Martin’s team, other Potioneering groups also received this mission. This potion was not easy to brew, but Decarte cared little for the grimaces on his subordinates’ faces and allocated a fixed number for each team to make. He also mentioned that if the monthly quota was not met, not only would their benefits and allocations be decreased, they might also be deprived of some of their current authority. Martin’s expression was bitter, and Leylin’s heart lurched when Martin looked at him with hope. Decarte’s attitude seemed to imply that Four Seasons Garden did not have the upper hand in the fight for territories within Eternal River secret plane. Hence, they needed a large number of these
offensive potions. If that was the case, it was a definite possibility that people who were usually working at the back, like alchemists and potion masters, would be sent to the frontlines to increase Four Seasons Garden’s strength.

With such high odds of this happening, Leylin needed to make some preparations for himself. After all, he wasn’t so stupid as to give his life for Four Seasons Garden.

“Leylin, we’re counting on you!”

Martin had a look of fervent hope as he patted Leylin on the back. His teammates had the same expression.

“Alright! However, this mission is extremely important and I can’t guarantee anything…”

Leylin forced a smile. Time passed quickly, especially while one was busy brewing potions. Usually, Leylin obviously would not reveal his true abilities in making potions. While brewing them, he purposely failed a few times in order to hide his ridiculously high rate of success.

However, there was an upside to this whole situation. As Potioneering was a job that demanded one to be meticulous, the environments Potion Masters were in had to be suitable. Hence, they often worked alone. Leylin also had a private laboratory of his own, and while he was brewing potions, even his own team members did not dare interrupt him. This gave him the opportunity to do as he pleased.

Firstly, Leylin used a frighteningly short amount of time to brew enough potions to fill the quota. The rest of the time was used on researching the Branded Swordsman, the information he had
obtained from the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane, and other subjects of interest.
Within Leylin’s private laboratory.
Burettes, beakers, and other laboratory containers holding colourful liquids were scattered atop the pure white experimenting table. Some of these liquids were solvents that effervesced.
Beside the table, Leylin had his eyes tightly closed, his facial muscles twitching.
At the same time, rings of energy and spiritual force rippled and were constantly being compressed. The atmosphere began to undulate with the tiniest ripples as if it were also being compressed. The large spiritual force that Leylin possessed was constantly lowering along with the fluctuations, and there even came a point where his spiritual force was undetectable.
A good while later, Leylin opened his eyes. Currently, his eyes were clear and pure. The layer of darkness from before was nowhere to be seen.
The energy waves he usually gave off had vanished and he seemed to be a regular human. The only identifiable aspect was the deep and immeasurable dark shadow that flashed in his eyes occasionally.
“The spiritual force compression method I obtained from the old witch is surprisingly effective!”
Leylin used the A.I. Chip to scan himself, but even the A.I. Chip could only give a few vague numbers and was unable to effectively analyse the state of Leylin’s body.
Leylin prevented the A.I. Chip from using all its efforts on calculating data, and he had not authorized the usage of an atomic microscope either. However, just this kind of result was enough to make him happy.
From the A.I. Chip’s calculations, this spiritual force compression method matched up the spiritual force energy waves from his body
and then compressed them. This would then adjust the spiritual force energy waves and hide his true strength.
Just the first half of the information that the old witch had provided was enough to conceal his strength from other rank 1 Magi.
With the second half he obtained from the old witch during his time in the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane, this effect was multiplied.
The current Leylin was certain that even rank 2 Magi would be unable to detect the concealment of his strength.
Having this ability right before the impending war made it even more precious!
“This method can be used as one of my hiding skills. When coupled with Shadow Stealth, the effects seem to be even better…”
The A.I. Chip began to calculate fervently while Leylin was deep in thought.
After about half an hour, Leylin got up and rang the golden handbell on the experimentation table.
*Ding-a-ling! Ding-a-ling!*
The crisp sound of a bell resounded.
*Creak!*
Moments later, a secret door opened, and two Grand Knights dressed in armour walked in.
“Number 2! Number 3! How are you feeling now?”
Leylin surveyed the two who had grown taller and had a change in their physique. Anticipation flashed in his eyes.
“There’s some pain from swelling as if something is inside drilling holes in my body…”
“Master! I feel the same as Number 2. Also, my body alternates between being cold and warm, and there are sudden surges in strength. I would break whatever I was holding unintentionally when that happened…” Number 3 knelt on one leg as he reported.
“Is that so? Lie on the experimentation table and let me see!”
Leylin commanded.
Number 3 took off all his armour and quickly laid on the ice-cold table.
At the moment, the brand on his body was becoming increasingly clear. What was most obvious was the few strange looking brands that were broken, which had been kept in place with red devices “I’m unable to replicate the methods of recreating the Ancient Branded Swordsman now, so I can only settle for second best. As long as I forcibly link the brand and let Grand Knights temporarily use this power, it still works!”
Leylin thought to himself.
To fully replicate the methods in creating the powerful Branded Swordsman, a large amount of time was needed.
The current Leylin had to make do and substitute it with other means.
In this pre-war period, the entire Magus World on the south coast was in a chaotic situation.
Though Leylin had always stayed within the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters, he had not completely broken off all contact with the outside world.
Every day, he could obtain information about the south coast from his butler Damien, who was still in Nightless City, as well as from other channels.
The appearance of the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane had galvanized the south coast!
All Magi, whether it be the organisations, wandering Magi, or even fugitives, were all rushing towards the Eternal River Plains.
The Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was said to be the largest plane found on the south coast to date.
It had an area of as much as ten million mu and even exceeded the total area of all resource-based secret planes that had previously been found.
Many Magi wanted to reap some benefits from this magnificent discovery.
For this kind of secret plane, just a small part of it was enough to cover several decades of expenses for the average Magus! Magi organisations that could set up such a plane were sure to be outstanding, even in ancient times.
Magi who could obtain an inheritance of this level could definitely
break through their bottleneck and allow them to have a chance at advancing to rank 3 or become a rank 4 Morning Star Magus! Such a huge temptation not only made the idle Magi crazy with desire, even older Magi who had retired a long time ago had decided to act and were rushing towards the Eternal River Plains. Due to their great numbers, the Magi rushing for the secret plane eventually had conflicts with the large Magi organisations guarding the entrances.
Dramatic scenes, chaos, murders, alliances, and betrayals were incessantly acted out on the stage that was the Eternal River Plains. Many small Magi organisations and individual Magi even made an alliance to contend against the large dark and light Magi groups. In such a disorderly situation, Leylin needed to raise his strength to protect himself as quickly as possible.
Although the Branded Swordsman created in such a short amount of time were only usable once and might be of inferior strength, that was enough for Leylin. During critical moments he could only rely on himself. As for the other organisations and powers... hehe.
The current situation in Four Seasons Garden wasn’t very good. The huge influx of Magi into the Eternal River Plains had resulted in a weakening of the security in the area. Four Seasons Garden not only had to deal with attacks from within the secret plane but also had to send out some Magi to maintain order at the entrance. Their numbers were simply not enough.
A prominent example was the obvious decrease of Magi in Four Seasons Garden. The rank 2 Magi leaders could rarely be seen. It was clear that Four Seasons Garden’s defense abilities were gradually becoming weaker.
Leylin even had the thought of giving this information to Thousand Meddling Hands and gain some benefits from their weakness. However, this plan was quickly rejected by Leyin.
Other than the restrictions he had from the previous contract witnessed by the Trial’s Eye, the rank 2 Magus guarding the secret plane was still around. Taking over this type of secret plane required at least the rank 2 dark Magus that was controlling Thousand Meddling Hands to act.
Leylin was merely a normal member who had, at most, gained some notoriety. He was not yet qualified to be in direct contact with such a strong being.
Though the old witch had promised Leylin her position as an elder, she was trapped within the secret plane. This promise thus became invalid.
Though Leylin found it a pity, he wasn’t particularly regretful. In that situation, it was already a miracle that he could escape. Considering the circumstances, it was not practical to think about anything else.
Leylin was still curious. How were the old witch and her daughter in spirit form, Jaye, doing in the secret plane?
And that Gargamel! As an evolution of the Loathsome Evil, this terrifying creature not only had the frightful strength of a rank 2 Magus, it also had many unpredictable techniques. The destruction of the entrance to the secret plane would not obstruct it for too long.
If it were to be let out, the situation on the south coast would be much the same as it was now, or perhaps even more chaotic!
If that Gargamel found traces of Leylin, it definitely would not let him off. After all, he had basically made a fool of it.
Hence, Leylin had an increasingly intense desire for power.
“The Branded Swordsman! As long as I complete this experiment, I would instantly gain two underlings with the power of official Magi. They would be unafraid of death, and there can be an unending stream of them to serve me!”
Leylin’s blue eyes flashed in excitement.
“A.I. Chip! Scan the data!”
[Beep! Mission established, beginning to collect data required. Microscopic scan ensuing!] The A.I. Chip loyally executed Leylin’s commands.
[Beep! Target’s Data. Strength: 29, Agility: 24, Vitality: 35, Spiritual Force: 19. Has been branded with runes: Flame Extension (for Male use) Effects: Able to store large amounts of flame elemental particles on the surface of the body and use it in battle. Each attack will have an additional damage from flames. All elemental particles can be set off at one go, and the effect is similar to a rank 1 Magus’ Lava Fireball. Estimated power: 30 degrees!] [The brand’s power is operating normally. Parts of it have mild defects, and is estimated to be completely damaged in 1540 hours.]
With the A.I. Chip’s microscope that could analyse on an atomic level, all information about Number 3’s brand was presented in front of Leylin.
“This means that instantly formed Branded Swordsman only have a lifespan of two or so months?” Leylin stroked his chin. “There are also some flaws in terms of agility and spiritual force too…”
“However, as cannon fodder that can only be used once, this is enough!” Leylin thought to himself.
After which, he made plans to exchange all the contribution points he had gained from his work at Four Seasons Garden for grown male Grand Knight slaves.
On the bodies of these two instantly formed Branded Swordsman, Leylin had also made some preparations beforehand to ensure they were completely under his control.
However, due to limitations in terms of his spiritual force and other areas, the A.I. Chip had calculated that he was only capable of controlling five Branded Swordsman at a time!
Only if a few out of the five Branded Swordsman died, leaving a
vacant spot, could Leylin put his abilities to use and fill the spot with other Branded Swordsman. This was not the optimal situation, but for Leylin now, this was the best he could do. As a rank 1 Magus, Leylin was able to control five considerably powerful Branded Swordman. If rumours of this got out, it would definitely shock the entire south coast!

“Compress!”

After gathering data and finishing his experiments, Leylin pressed a strange looking rune onto Number 3’s back. Instantly, a large amount of fire elemental particles lingering around Number 3’s body dulled, and the energy waves from his body began to weaken until he was at the level of a Grand Knight. This was the technique he had made sense of using the information about spiritual force compression method the old witch had given him.

By using external forces to control the energy waves in the target’s body, others’ senses would be confused. The Branded Swordsman was Leylin’s secret trump card and he naturally didn’t want to be discovered so quickly. Hence, putting on an act and concealing his strength was necessary. Next, Leylin repeated what he had done to Number 3 on Number 2’s body.

After ordering these two Grand Knights to stay in the laboratory, Leylin left for the Four Seasons Garden’s library. Usually, there would be a few official Magi or acolytes reading up or conversing. Though there were a lot of people, it was orderly and surprisingly quiet. The library was now extremely quiet, but it just seemed desolate. Desks and chairs that would always be filled were unoccupied, and there were the occasional leaves and petals from the garden landing on the seats. It was deathly still and lonely.
“My Lord!” An old manager was still at his post in the library. Upon seeing Leylin, even the decorative items on his body seemed to brighten up, and he bowed in greeting.
“No need for that! There seems to very few people now.” Leylin leaned against the counter and spoke casually.
“All acolytes have left after receiving missions. I’ve never seen so few people in Four Seasons Garden before!” The old manager gave a bitter smile.
“Missions? Now? Could it be to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane?” Leylin found that inconceivable.
In the battle between Magi, acolytes were naught but cannon fodder. Other than large-scale spell formations which might be somewhat effective, the acolytes were normally just easy kills for Magi.
This maneuver by Four Seasons Garden was just irrational.
“Of course, they aren’t going to go that deeply into the secret plane!” The old manager quickly explained to Leylin.
“Though many of those heading to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane are official Magi, there are also numerous wandering acolyte who have no fear of death. They had thoughts of going in to try their luck! The great Magi naturally did not bother with them, and now it’s our turn to be sent out…”
“After all, the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane is humongous. With a bit of luck, level 3 acolytes might not meet with opposing official Magi and make off with plenty of resources safely. Hence, there are some fearless level 3 acolytes who accepted the missions our Four Seasons Garden issued to explore the secret plane.”
It could be seen that the old manager was well informed, as Leylin himself was unaware about some of what he had said.
“Thank you!” Leylin continued, “Set up an entrance card for me. I want to go to the library’s secret room!”
Leylin then placed his identity token on the counter.
The old geezer processed everything quickly, and not long after, he returned the token and gave a translucent crystal card to Leylin. “The price to read in the secret room is 10 contribution points per hour. Please take note of the time and leave before all your contribution points are used up.” The old geezer explained some important matters to Leylin.
Similar to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, there were restricted areas in the Four Seasons Garden’s library. The place Leylin wanted to go to was the Four Seasons Garden’s secret storage room. In this private room, large amounts of knowledge regarding various subjects were open to official Magi. The fees were extremely expensive, and even the current Leylin was in pain over the costly price. Although he could copy the information with the A.I. Chip, that still took time. Leylin had calculated that even if he used up all his contribution points, it would barely give him enough time to record half of the information available in the room. He had originally planned to amass enough contribution points first and then record all the information at one go. But now…
Leylin went straight to the second floor of the library and waved his transparent crystal card at an old bookshelf. *Kreeeen!* The bookshelf moved backwards, revealing a small passage. Behind the passage was a small library with strangely shaped books placed on the rows of black wooden bookshelves within. Some of the books even had pairs of arms and legs, and if not for the iron chains restraining them, they might just stealthily escape.
As he had a goal in mind, Leylin ignored them.
To find the content he needed from within this extremely extensive library, a lot of time would be wasted. Luckily for him, Leylin had the A.I. Chip, and within a few minutes, he found the information he wanted.
“I see…”
Following the A.I. Chip’s instructions, Leylin came to a corner and flipped through a very old book.
It was extremely thick and heavy, and the cover was an ashen grey. The A.I. Chip judged that this book was made of a very special ancient stone material.
This method of bookmaking belonged to an interesting group of tiny sub-humans, the Stone Men!
This was a race that had an appearance extremely similar to that of humans, but the main difference was the thick layer of calcite on their skin, which looked very much like someone casting a stone-skin spell.
Leylin read through this large book made of stone. On one of the pages, a strange spell formation had been carefully recorded.
“It’s this one! It’s more than 90% similar to the spell formation in the secret plane of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect!” Leylin’s expression brightened up.
Right before his eyes, the A.I. Chip brought up a picture of the ancient spell formation that he had obtained from the secret plane. He then compared it to the spell formation that was recorded down, and came to a conclusion that the two had a similarity of over 90%!
“That’s astonishing!”
Leylin continued analysing it, looking increasingly cautious. Only now did he realise the true purpose of that spell formation, teleportation!
In the secret room that Leylin had found a corpse in while escaping, there still existed an ancient teleportation formation! This type of teleportation formation could instantaneously teleport a few Magi to a distance further than several times the length of the south coast. However, due to the geologic faults and the extinction of crucial ingredients, the current south coast no longer had traces of these formations. The Stone Men then were the best slaves that the ancient Magi used to construct the teleportation formations. It was because of this reason that there were records of this race.

“So in the space between levels in the emergency passage, there’s actually an ancient teleportation formation?” Just the thought of it made Leylin breathe more quickly. The south coast was surrounded by regions filled with varying levels of danger. In some places, rank 2 or 3 Magi would only be sending themselves to their death if they went there! It was because of the existence of such dangers that the Magi in the south coast would rather have an internal strife every once in a while to reduce the number of Magi than venture outwards. They were unwilling to expand the territory and gain more resources. Even if Leylin wanted to leave the south coast and look for traces of the central mainland, he had no way to leave! However, with the appearance of the ancient teleportation spell formation, Leylin saw a glimmer of hope! If he had tremendous luck and found a new land, how much profit would Leylin receive as the controller of the transportation pathway to there?

“No, I can’t do this! Calm down! Calm down! Whether this ancient teleportation formation can still be used or not, and where it leads to are all unknown. To make effective use of it, I have to answer all of these questions!” Leylin stroked his chin and calmed his emotions.
He then produced a tattered diary from within his robes. “I might be able to find an answer with information from this diary.”
In the secret compartment within the emergency passage, not only did Leylin find the ancient teleportation formation, but he also found what seemed to be the remains of a high-ranking Magus of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect. In addition, he also found some miscellaneous items and this diary on the deceased Magus’ body.
The first thing Leylin did upon returning was to order the A.I. Chip to record all of the information in this tattered diary.
Unfortunately, the language used in the diary was not one that the A.I. Chip was able to interpret. This made it difficult for Leylin to decipher the information within!
“Those strange people in black gowns who like to enslave spirits preferred to use an odd language and characters to issue commands. As long as we didn’t understand, we would be punished cruelly, which forced us to learn the name of that damned Turin Language!”
In the Stone Men’s books, Leylin found this written account.
“No wonder the A.I. Chip couldn’t interpret the contents of the diary. So it was the Turin Language!” Leylin suddenly understood.
The Turin Language was an exclusive language used in ancient times, which used special sound waves and light rays to transmit information. Even its characters contrasted hugely compared to other existing languages.
There were no records of this Turin Language in the A.I. Chip’s database.
“Turin Language?”
Leylin went around the bookshelf, and in a corner, he finally found a few books that seemed to be written in the Turin Language. There was even a book that gave a concise introduction to interpreting this language.
“A.I. Chip, scan it!”
In his excitement, Leylin hurriedly opened one of the books and ordered the A.I. Chip to record it down…
“My Lord, it’s already time for dinner. Are you planning to enjoy a dinner party here? Your contribution points are almost completely used up at this point…”
Leylin was immersed in the sea of knowledge and was using the A.I. Chip to translate and restore the information in the diary. In summary, there was a crazy Magus who kept using spirits to create the Gargamel. In the end, the experiment backfired on him. This was truly a tragic story.
What made Leylin most gleeful were the few images similar to the ancient teleportation formation that he found at the back of the diary. Based on the images, as well as some speculations on the A.I. Chip’s part, Leylin would be able to test whether the formation was still workable.
Now in a marvellous mood, Leylin didn’t bother with the old manager and glanced at his crystal card. “I got it. I’ll be right out!” Disregarding the old man, who was bowing so deeply his head touched the floor, Leylin jogged out of the library.
“A.I. Chip! Based on the information from just now, how complete was the previously recorded ancient teleportation formation?” Leylin asked a little nervously.
[Beep! Mission established, sorting through information regarding teleportation, and comparing…]
The A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice sounded.
On the virtual screen in front of Leylin, large numbers of words and images flashed past, with the formation that had been previously recorded placed in the very centre. [Beep! Comparison results: Completion of teleportation formation: 98.8%. Situation on other end of formation unknown, unable to calculate!]
The A.I. Chip’s answer made Leylin grin even more brightly. Though there was still a troublesome Gargamel in the secret plane, Leylin felt that it would be in a hurry to escape. The secret compartment was hidden well, and there was a high chance that it was still well preserved. The most important thing was the source of energy! “Even ancient teleportation formations needed a source of power! A.I. Chip, what does this formation need to be usable?” Leylin asked.

[Magic crystal essence, or some object that contains a dense amount of energy particles!] The A.I. Chip intoned. “Magic crystal essence huh? The magic crystal cards aren’t enough?” Leylin asked.

[Beep! The energy contained within is not enough, will require a purifying process to condense the energy. Projected ingredients: 10,000 magic crystal cards or more!] The A.I. Chip’s reply made Leylin’s legs wobble. “Ten thousand magic crystal cards? A single card has a value of over a thousand magic crystals! Ten thousand magic crystal cards would mean that I will need over ten million magic crystals?!” After a year of amassing resources from the light and dark Magi, the magic crystals and materials he had amassed only amounted to a value of less than five million! And this A.I. Chip said that it needed twice that amount!

In addition, the A.I. Chip only needed magic crystal cards. Leylin needed to exchange large amounts of resources, magic items, knowledge, potions, and the like for magic crystals. This exchange would result in him racking up huge losses due to his pressing need for them. “So many magic crystals… I’m afraid there will only be that amount stored in a few large scale Magus organisations’ resource-based secret planes.”
Leylin then shook his head. “This isn’t the time to think about that. There isn’t anything that requires me to risk my life, and even if it’s the Third Great Magus War, it is still limited to within the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, and won’t have much of an impact on the outside world!”

Currently, in the Third Great Magus War, the main reason for the fighting was a dispute over the rights to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, so the various disputes and conflicts had been taking place within it.

According to Leylin’s guess, this slice of the cake was way too big, and no single organisation would be capable of devouring it whole. It would definitely be shared with the various large magisteriums and guilds.

As for what Four Seasons Garden and the other guilds had to do, it was to do their best to fight for a larger share!
While freely strolling through the streets, Leylin heard an odd sound travel into his ears. “We’re in such a dangerous situation, and yet you’re still so relaxed… It looks like I need to make a suggestion to Decarte for him to give you a more challenging job.” The tone of this voice was icy, giving Leylin the impression he had attracted the attention of a ravenous wolf. Leylin gave a helpless laugh and scratched his nose, after which he turned back and gave a bow. “Lord Caesar!” In front of him was a Magus clothed in a black robe. There were several blood-red threads that decorated the robe, and bloodlust constantly emanated from him. What was most unforgettable was the eye on his forehead! This three-eyed Magus was naturally Caesar of the hunting team. He was an elitist, and firmly believed in one’s origin, so after Leylin entered Four Seasons Garden, he just didn’t like Leylin and constantly caused him trouble. “Wasn’t his entire hunting team deployed into the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane? Did something happen that required him to rush back and report?” While Leylin made his conjectures, he explained himself to Caesar. “I, your subordinate, have completed all missions required for me to receive my monthly allocations, and have decided to take a walk to settle my mind.”
“I see! Hehe, you’re very capable. There might be a position that
suits you better…”
Unexpectedly, Caesar did not inconvenience him, and only said
something profound before leaving.
Leylin was left standing on the road, deep in thought.
“What did he mean by that?”
Soon enough, Leylin found out the meaning to Caesar’s words.
During dinner, a banquet was held in the hall. Members of the
Potioneering team gathered in the hall and enjoyed a sumptuous
meal.
Hazelnut chicken, roasted suckling pig, honey wine, and other
delicious commonplace dishes were everywhere, arranged like
trash on every corner.
At the centre of the table, there were also various delicacies that
were only available in the Magus World.
Bubble fish! Dolosen Snake! Butter Yak! In addition, a lot of
treasured ingredients that Leylin didn’t even know the names of
were arranged neatly there.
The alluring smell of fine wine spread in the air, tempting
everyone’s palate.
“There must have been much blood shed by the acolytes in
preparing these dishes.”
Leylin picked up a piece of baked bubble fish, and while his taste
buds enjoyed the new experience, he heaved an inward sigh of
content.
This bubble fish was a high energy creature in the Magus World
with a strength of a level 2 or 3 acolyte.
The Four Seasons Garden’s magic kitchen specifically issued
requests for acolytes to gather the fish.
Behind this feast, there were the blood, sweat, and tears of
countless acolytes who had gone on dangerous expeditions. The
results of their efforts, which had garnered them some insignificant
returns, eventually turned into gourmet food on the official Magi’s tables!
“It’s for this reason that I hope to become the person who will deprive others, and not get deprived myself!”
Leylin had a resolute look in his eyes while still maintaining a kind smile about his lips. He took another roasted pig trotter and put it on his plate.
With the nearing of his bloodline’s second transition, Leylin could feel abnormalities in his usual condition.
The most obvious one was a heightened appetite, particularly for the flesh of considerably strong, high-energy creatures.
After the sumptuous dinner, Decarte knocked on a golden cup on the table.
*Ding-ling!*
The entire room instantly turned silent. Leylin and the other Magi stood, waiting for the Potioneering team’s leader to issue missions and inform them of any arrangements.
“Everyone! Before we get into the important matters, let me announce something!”
Decarte looked at the Magi present and cleared his throat.
“Today, the hunting team’s Caesar looked for me, hoping to have a few Potion Masters join him! You must know that in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, there are frequent battles, resulting in a lack of healers. Many Potion Masters can use potions to achieve the same effect as healers.”
Hearing Decarte’s words, Leylin’s heart suddenly lurched.
“Now, I’ll announce the list of people to be sent there. They are Wilkenson, Saladin… and lastly, Leylin!”
As expected, Decarte increased his volume and read out Leylin’s name last.
In that instant, Leylin felt countless pairs of eyes staring at him.
Within these gazes were thoughts of curiosity, worry, and most
prominently, schadenfreude.
His ostensible team leader was sighing heavily by the side. After
Leylin left, with Martin’s abilities, it would be impossible to tackle
the heavy workload that resulted from the war. However, Martin
did not have the courage to dispute it, since this was the decision of
the Potioneering team’s leader.
“Oh, my heavens! Leylin! What do we do?”
His partner, Oak, seemed to be completely stunned and gaped at
Leylin.
“Don’t worry! Even if I am sent to the battlefield, I’ll most likely be
working at the back, and won’t be in any real danger!” Seeing that
there was someone who genuinely worried for him, a smile
appeared on Leylin’s face.
In reality, was there any place on a battlefield that was absolutely
safe, especially when he was directly under that three-eyed Magus,
Caesar?
The moment he heard Decarte announce his name, Leylin
immediately thought about Caesar’s cryptic smile.
“The aforementioned Magi have five days to prepare, after which
they will be required to go to Four Seasons Garden’s branch at the
Eternal River Plains’ secret plane and report. Otherwise, you will be
seen as a traitor!”
Decarte seemed to be warning them at the end.
After offending the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the Lilytell
family, which were both large dark Magi powers, Leylin had no
wish to become enemies with an even stronger white Magi
organisation.
If it came to that, he would no longer have a place on the south
coast.

……
A day later, Leylin hastily organised everything and brought his two Great Knight servants along. They set off for the Eternal River Plains.
The sun shone mercilessly in the sky.
Smoke and dust flew above the ground, and not far away, the air seemed to be distorted.
This torrid heat meant there were almost no people walking on the main street.
*Thud Thud Thud!* At this moment, three quick horses hurtled past destroying the calmness and quiet atmosphere on this road.
“Master! There’s some shade in front. Shall we take a break there?” Number 2 reined in his horse and asked Leylin, who was riding behind him.
“Let us take a rest. Although we can still manage, the poor horses can’t anymore!” Leylin pointed to the horses, which were on the verge of frothing at the mouth.
Behind him, there were a few idle horses, on top of which were boxes and the other luggage they needed had been tied down. They looked listless, with their ears pressed to their heads, and the light in their eyes dim.
If Leylin was travelling alone, he naturally could travel on the Venom Wyvern.
However, he had to bring his two Grand Knight subordinates and even had to haul around a large amount of luggage. With this large amount of things, it naturally exceeded the burden that the Venom Wyvern could carry.
The Nightless City didn’t have any airships that could directly transport people to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, so Leylin could only rely on the most primitive method, which was traveling on horseback.
As for the Venom Wyvern, Leylin commanded it to scout the area
in the sky and accompany them on their journey.
“Master! Here’s some water!”
Leylin found a clean rock for himself to sit on. Number 3, who was behind him, passed him a large leather pouch.
“En!” Leylin drank from it.
Although the temperature did not impact his vitality very much, the ice cold water washing down his throat gave him a very refreshing sensation.
“Hmm?”
Suddenly, a gray fog covered the area surrounding the shade of the trees they were under.
Under the dim light, the various branches of the trees looked like the hands of monsters, as if wanting to grab hold of Leylin and the group.
At the same time, a drowsy feeling began to enshroud the three of them.
“Who is it?” Number 2 and Number 3 expanded their muscles and were ready to emit energy waves.
Leylin’s icy glare stopped them, and they stiffly collapsed onto the floor.
“Hei Hei… Blood Rogue, these two Grand Knights of yours have been modified well! They can actually defend against my hypnosis!” The voice of a little boy travelled over.
Leylin’s brows furrowed as he heard the name ‘Blood Rogue’.
He was still dressed as a normal Magus, yet this dark Magus from the Thousand Meddling Hands had actually seen through his disguise. From the looks of it, despite his efforts to conceal his identity, part of what he had done had been too high profile, resulting in the discovery of his identity.
It was very likely that even the Four Seasons Garden had similar suspicions about him!
It was because of this that Decarte was glad to see Caesar deploy
Leylin elsewhere, and even chairman Reynold did not have any objections.
“Boy! What’s the matter?”
Since he had been found out, Leylin asked bluntly.
“Hehe… This is about Old Devil. She is an elder of the organisation after all, and it’s not known whether she is currently alive or dead. ‘Boss’ had instructed us to investigate thoroughly. According to what I know, her final appearance was to invite you and Brass Ring to participate in an expedition…”
“You’re correct! However, Brass Ring had perished inside! As for Old Devil, she is currently not able to leave! As for the secret plane’s location, I have no comments about that!”
Leylin did not believe that they would be this concerned about her whereabouts. It was more likely that they were coveting Old Devil’s position as an elder!
As expected, after hearing Leylin’s answer, the boy snickered.
“You’re the Blood Rogue, after all! The way you work is straightforward and clear-cut! Let’s stop talking about Old Devil and move on. I currently bring you a mission from Boss!”
With the mention of this boss, the boy sounded more serious.
“What’s the meaning of this? Since when does the Thousand Meddling Hands force missions on their members?” Leylin wrinkled his brows. From the looks of it, the all-powerful dark Magus behind the Thousand Meddling Hands had finally been lured to the surface.
“Of course, there wasn’t anything like this before! However, it’s all different now! I believe that you will definitely do something for the organisation in order to protect your identity. Am I right, Leylin or shall I say, Blood Rogue!”
The boy began to threaten him, a hint of arrogance apparent in his tone.
“What mission?” Leylin asked expressionlessly. However, if there were people around him who knew him well, they would be able to tell how annoyed he was.

“The main purpose of you going to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane is to pass on information from the internal unit of Four Seasons Garden. At crucial moments, you are to coordinate with us and destroy the defense formations within!”

The boy sounded incredibly arrogant, making Leylin more annoyed.

“That means I’d be an undercover, right? How about that agreement I signed? If I betray Four Seasons Garden I’ll definitely be punished by the Trial’s Eye, no?”

“That… The boss will take care of it for you!” The boy was obviously insincere.

“In other words, you’re not giving me any benefits and want me to give up my life for you! Do you guys think I’m so easy to bully?”

Leylin suddenly laughed sarcastically, a red colour flashing in his eyes.

*Rumble!*

Immediately after he spoke, Leylin brazenly attacked!

Countless fireballs the size of human heads hurtled towards the boy’s direction.

The intense flames swept everywhere, and the mist was quickly
evaporated, revealing the figure of a little boy in a darkened corner. “Are you crazy?” The boy roared, outraged. “You’re the crazy ones! How dare you threaten me!”

Leylin coldly replied, his two hands becoming completely red as they clawed forward mercilessly.

Crimson Palm! Blood Rogue’s famous move! Huge blood-red claws swept across the air, grand flames burning atop the phantom claws.

With the added bonus from Leylin’s elemental essence conversion, this spell had already reached a strength of almost 34 degrees!

“F*ck!”

The little boy was in bad shape after the bout of fireballs being thrown at him despite rolling and trying to dodge the attack. He was dusty all over and looked like a clown.

After seeing Leylin using Blood Rogue’s move, his entire face changed.

Who knew Leylin would be so crazy and so powerful? His might far surpassed that of a semi-converted Magus.

The little boy had thought that he had blackmail material on his hands. He knew of Leylin’s identity and the moment he told Leylin he expected that Leylin would obediently do as the boy ordered, just like a loyal dog, which would allow the boy to gain some additional benefits.

But he never imagined that Leylin would not hesitate and attack with no qualms!

Upon seeing those claws, the boy made a strange sound and quickly tugged at a strange pendant from his chest and threw it on the ground.

*Chi Chi*

Numerous ice crystals emerged, forming a sparkling and translucent ice mirror in front of the little boy.

*Bang!*
The huge, sharp phantom claws had traces of crimson flames and crashed against the mirror, producing an immense sound.

*Weng Weng*

Flames and ice crystals flew everywhere. Each time an ice crystal fell, a thick layer of ice would form on the ground. Anything that came into contact with the crimson flames corroded, whether they be trees, moles or even rocks. Everything turned into a pile of grey powder!

“You thought a high-grade scroll could save you? How naive!” Leylin strode forward, chasing after the boy.

“This is a magic scroll with instantaneous casting that I spent 250 thousand magic crystals on!” An expression of regret and rage formed on his face, and his muscles were twitching.

“You dare to… You actually dare to… You will pay!” As he yelled, he produced a magic item that was emitting strong energy waves, ready to attack!

“Imprison!”

At the same time, Leylin made a low howl, and on his right arm, a metal hoop that seemed to be a decoration suddenly gave off light and shone on his body.

The boy who had been targeted by the Hoop of Imprisonment was like an insect stuck in amber, completely immobile and unable to use the magic item in his hands.

“You dare to threaten me?” Leylin advanced, kicking the magic item out of the boy’s hands and lifted him with one arm.

“You… There are still many others behind me that know your identity. The moment I die here, you’ll… Argh!” The little boy forced out words from the gap between his teeth, but all that answered him was a vicious slap to the face.

*Pa Pa* *Pa Pa!*

Leylin’s strength was 7.1, and this merciless slaps to the boy’s face
made both his cheeks swell up instantly. Some of his teeth fell and
his mouth was full of blood, rendering him unable to pronounce
properly.
After slapping the boy, Leylin grabbed him by the neck and raised
him to eye level.
“Don’t even think about blackmailing me, or you’ll die a terrible
death!”
“You think I’m afraid of having my identity exposed? Hehe… At
most, we’ll part ways and I’ll wander around. Before that,
however, I will kill you, no matter who is backing you!”
A dark, menacing look arose in Leylin’s eyes, shaking the boy to
the core.
Too scary! This boy was thoroughly terrified!
He was now extremely regretful. This Leylin was basically a lunatic
and dreaded nothing. He had a premonition that if he continued
with this unyielding attitude, Leylin would definitely kill him!
At this moment, it was as if he had been drenched from head to toe
by a bucket of cold water, his head cleared up immediately.
“Uh… Lo-Lord Leylin! I apologise. Please forgive me for my
offense!”
As his mouth was very swollen, his words weren’t clear but the
meaning was understandable.
“What did you say? Louder!” Leylin mocked with a sneer,
tightening the strength in his hand.
Hearing a strange sound emitted from his neck, the boy, who even
had his innate spells suppressed completely, gave up.
He trembled violently, tears and snot dripping down his face. “Lord
Leylin! Lord Leylin, I was wrong! Please forgive me!”
Leylin peered at him curiously, making him feel as if he was facing
an imminent catastrophe.
Suddenly, Leylin released his hand and the boy fell to the floor.
He breathed in fresh air in huge gulps, an unexpected sense of
blessed relief in his heart.
Of course, his head was still lowered lifelessly and he did not dare meet Leylin’s gaze.
“People only reveal their true self when in the face of death…” Leylin looked at the pitiful state the boy was in and sighed to himself.
“Get lost! Have the person backing you to speak to me!” At the same time, Leylin bent and picked up the magic item the boy had dropped.
It was something like a dagger. Based on the A.I. Chip’s probe, the level of energy within had reached that of a middle-grade magic artifact.
“Also, this magic artifact will now belong to me as the price of offending me!”
If not for the fact that a rank 2 Magus was behind this boy and also wanting to avoid having a falling out with Thousand Meddling Hands, Leylin would have killed him long ago.
However, he had released the boy, but Leylin definitely wanted him to pay the price in pain. If not, this sort of person would keep appearing in front of him.
Seeing the boy who was escaping, scared witless, Leylin contemplated.
This resource-based secret plane’s size was unprecedented in history and was an enormous chunk of fleshy meat. Even a rank 2 Magus operating the Thousand Meddling Hands from the shadows had been lured out.
And behind the rank 2 Magus, there were definitely other large organisations from the dark Magi region.
After all, with just a Thousand Meddling Hands, all they could do was reap the convenient benefits. How else would they have the chance to participate in such a large-scale battle?
“This is like a game of chess. How annoying!”
Leylin had a feeling that if he went to the secret plane, he would definitely be embroiled in a troublesome spiral of events. Unfortunately, the pressure given by the dark and light Magi gave him no choice but to move like a chess piece, based on a pre-decided route.

“You want to make use of me? I wonder if you’re ready yet.”

Looking at the sky in the distance, Leylin smirked. The Thousand Meddling Hands’ reaction was extremely quick. That night, Leylin saw the person backing the boy. The orange rays of light of the setting sun constantly became duller, until the black curtain of night shrouded the area.

Just as Number 2 and Number 3 were preparing to set up tents, Leylin shot a glance at a white owl on a large tree nearby.

“I’m going to take a walk alone. You don’t have to come with me!”

“Yes, master!” Number 2 and Number 3 answered in unison.

Following the white owl, Leylin came to the side of a curved river. On a white and large rock, a figure could be seen standing erect. Around him was a thick green fog emanating throughout, blocking his face entirely.

“Giant?” Leylin asked, surprised.

For his first mission, Leylin had worked with Giant, whose prowess indicated the peak of a rank 1 Magus. He had never thought that this would be the one supporting the little boy!

“He’s already told me everything that happened just now. He was a little too much, so I hope to apologise on his behalf! You may take the bloody dagger, a magic artifact, as compensation!”

Giant’s voice was low and soothing and did not speak up for the little boy which made Leylin so shocked.

“I know a bit about you. The organisation definitely will treat those who contribute to us well! As long as you do this job well, I’m telling you that you can get about 50% profit! We can even mediate between you and the Lilytell family, so that you can return to
Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Of course, you can choose other dark Magi organisations. Our door is always open to you…”

The Giant’s offer exceeded Leylin’s expectations. To allow him to suppress the situation with Lilytell family and return to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, this Thousand Meddling Hands’ power was probably far from what he could imagine. “What about the contract with the Trial’s Eye?” Leylin asked for information about what he was most concerned about.
signed the contract under the witness of the Trial’s Eye, promising not to do anything that would harm Four Seasons Garden’s interests! If I go back on that agreement, I would undergo judgment…”

This was Leylin’s largest concern.

If he had the choice, he didn’t want to harm Four Seasons Garden since they had treated him quite well from the beginning.

“That’s easily solved! Here is a solution of Filthy Birds’ wings. As long as you have it, you can nullify your contract with the Four Seasons Garden!”

Giant threw a bottle of grey solution towards Leylin.

“You even have items that are already extinct!” Leylin caught the bottle and let the A.I. Chip test the authenticity of the item. The results made him gasp.

With such a degree of preparation, it wouldn’t be a stretch to say that this had been premeditated long ago.

“Hehe… This isn’t mine but belongs to the ‘Boss’ behind me. He especially left this for you from his own collection!”

Giant did not claim the credit for himself and used a straightforward tone, which made Leylin slightly fearful.

“So, what’s your answer?”

“Acknowledging the strength of others is the instinct of all dark Magi. I first need to verify your strength!” Leylin pondered for a moment and then spoke.
“You will see…” Giant’s voice began to be less discernible. Large amounts of green mist shrouded the surrounding area, enveloping Leylin within. Some time later, the mist dispersed and Leylin left, his expression serious. He seemed to be worrying about many things. “I never thought it’d be him…” Following which, Leylin calmed himself and returned to his accommodations, as if nothing had happened. After a night passed, Leylin continued on his journey. The Eternal River Plains were situated at the border between the light and dark Magi’s territories. Security there was the most chaotic. Here, even within the city, armed confrontations, robbery, murder, and other crimes happened daily. At times, there would even be the occasional battle between Magi! In this situation, the guards of the city were more like professional corpse carriers and were in charge of clearing the roads everyday. After Eternal River Plains’ secret plane had been discovered, a large number of Magi flowed in, causing even more chaos in this place. On the way, just the number of people who were looking to seek revenge was above 15. This meant that every once in awhile, there would be someone with such a motivation. If not for Leylin and his group wearing clothing that gave them an air of mystery, even Magi like them might meet with some trouble. After walking out of a city of regular humans, Leylin suddenly started, seeming to have seen some familiar figures. “Master, what’s wrong? Is there something wrong with those acolytes?” Number 2 and 3 approached him and enquired. “It’s nothing!” Leylin answered casually. Even if it was them, they were from two different worlds. Leylin wasn’t planning on maintaining any contact with them, and passing them by. This
might be the best for them. Sometimes, however, fate was such a strange thing that could not be hindered. Just as Leylin was hastening his travelling and leaving the gates, he bumped into those acolytes from earlier. “Leylin! Hi! Leylin! Is that you?” Within the group of acolytes, a tall young man standing in the front was yelling excitedly. They had been quite a distance away previously, but now that they met, the acolyte opposite to Leylin had instantly recognised him. “Long time no see!” Leylin watched the acolytes, who were moving forward attentively, and couldn’t help but give a gentle smile in greeting. After strengthening his body, Leylin’s physique and sight had vastly improved. He could easily see that out of all the acolytes, the one who had shouted was very tall and had a head of long golden hair, thick eyebrows, large eyes, and a high nose bridge. There was also a female acolyte with an exquisitely curvy body, silver hair and eyes like rubies. She constantly emanated an exotic charm. Leylin immediately recognised these two acolytes. They were the people he hadn’t seen in ages, George and Bessita! “But isn’t George an acolyte at the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower? Why is he together with Bessita, who’s from Wetland Gardens Academy?” This thought went through his mind for a split second before he was interrupted, as George had brought Bessita and the others to approach him. “Leylin, it’s really you! I thought I’d gotten the wrong person!” George was a good friend that he’d made on that first journey in the beginning, and just like before, he affectionately gave Leylin a bear hug. Bessita, on the other hand, was twiddling her fingers at the side,
seemingly embarrassed. At the beginning, she had caused much trouble for Leylin. Of course, after Leylin had viciously beat up her ‘flower guardian’ as a threat to her, this woman had become very silent. However, she was still able to pass the magician aptitude test and enter the Wetland Gardens Academy.

“Hi, Leylin.” Bessita looked to be rather indifferent. “Come here! Leylin, let me introduce you. This is Alexander!” George pointed at a youth with reddish-brown hair. “This here is Lana! And the beauty in pink clothing is our long distance attacker Shiera!”

After that, George introduced the two female acolytes beside him. Lana was alright, but Sheira aggressively pinched the flesh on George’s waist. He immediately let out exaggerated sounds of pain; it looked as if these two had a less innocent relationship. Leylin couldn’t help but glance at Sheila more closely. She wore pink hunter gear that exposed a pair of milky white thighs. She was tall and carried a green wooden bow, looking to be a good match with George.

Even Leylin had to admit that George had pretty good taste. “Leylin, why aren’t you introducing your two friends here to us?” After saying that, George mock punched Leylin’s chest, which stunned him a little.

He looked at his own attire and then responded. For the sake of convenience while travelling, Leylin and his two Grand Knights had on civilian clothing. After obtaining the old witch’s spirit force compression method, he would also habitually conceal his energy waves, which indicated that he was an official Magus.

His two spiritually bound slaves were treated the same way. Hence, George and the others, who were still acolytes, obviously were unable to discover Leylin’s concealment and treated him as a
regular acolyte.
“These are my two friends. We met on the way and appeared to be going to the same place. They aren’t very talkative and are a little antisocial!”
Leylin threw a sculpture of a wyvern into Number 2 and Number 3’s hands. “Take this and leave first. We’ll meet at our destination!”
Upon receiving their master’s secret instructions, Number 2 and Number 3 nodded and left on horseback.
“Leylin, it’s best if you’re warier when interacting with them. I always feel uncomfortable around them…”
George looked at the figures of Number 2 and Number 3 as they left, and he whispered to Leylin.
“Don’t worry, I know my limits!”
Leylin nodded.
“Haha… Let’s not talk about this anymore. Leylin, we haven’t met in six or seven years, huh? This time, we have to drink to our heart’s content!”
George naturally put an arm around Leylin’s shoulder, and one could hear his excessive and proud laughter from miles away.
“Guess what? Two years ago, I advanced and became a level 3 acolyte! Even my mentor complimented me for this! But it’s not much; it can’t be helped that I only have a fourth-grade aptitude.”
Due to this chance meeting, Leylin and George dispelled all thoughts of leaving the city and returned inside. They found a small bar and prepared to reminisce.
After two beers, Leylin had gleaned everything he wanted to know from George.
George was obviously still a student of Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, and so was his girlfriend, Sheira.
Bessita, Lana, and that guy called Alexander were all acolytes from the Wetland Gardens Academy.
The reason for their trip here was to complete missions issued by
their respective academies. George and Bessita knew each other well, so the two little teams naturally travelled together.

“We’re in deep trouble. We were actually allocated a defence mission in which we must enter, as well as establish a presence in the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane!” George had a look of prolonged suffering on his face, and when they got to this topic, even Sheira and Bessita looked gloomy.

The secret plane was under the control of official Magi, and a few acolytes like them wouldn’t be able to create a tiny disarray within. They were but cannon fodder, and could die at any time.

Leylin glanced at these people. In this group of five that had temporarily been banded together, George and Bessita were level 3 acolytes, and the other three had reached level 2. In general, their total power was similar to the group of five acolytes that he had destroyed outside the Zither Moon Town.

“Oh, right! How about you, Leylin? Your aura seems pretty strong. You must be a level 3 acolyte, right?”

George seemed to be asking without any intent. Bessita, who was using a straw to drink her beverage, visibly strained to hear his answer.

“I was lucky enough to advance to a level 3 acolyte a few months ago!” Leylin chuckled.

“It’s not easy to advance to a level 3 acolyte! Come! Let us drink to our future as Magi!”

George hid none of his thoughts and yelled, attracting the attention of the surrounding people.

“Cheers!” Six glasses of beer clinked together.

After a bout of drinking, George asked, “Leylin, where are you now? In the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy? Only after entering my academy did I find out that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was a dark Magus academy that was at odds with us. It’s even forbidden for us to communicate with them.”
“What? Abyssal Bone Forest?! That Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”
The moment the words came out of George’s mouth, Lana and Alexander were like kittens who had had their tails stepped on, and jumped in shock.
Sheira didn’t say anything, but the gaze in her eyes was more guarded when looking at Leylin.
“Alright! Alright! Don’t be this tense! Leylin and I are good friends; he is different from other dark Magi…”
Only then did George realise the slip of his tongue, as he stood and awkwardly gave a closure on the topic.
 Leylin rubbed his nose upon seeing the cautious expressions of the few people around him.

In the Magus world, dark Magi and light Magi were archenemies. And in the Eternal River Plains, which was surrounded by the opposing forces on each side, not attacking after finding out Leylin was a dark Magus showed the immense trust they had in George.

“I left the domain of the dark Magi a few years ago and now live in Nightless City.”

Leylin thought and spoke a half-truth, “I’m currently studying at Four Seasons Garden.”

“See? I knew it! Leylin, you’re brave and honest. How could someone like you be a cruel dark Magus?”

George laughed out gleefully.

Shiera and the others appeared very embarrassed.

The number of Magi that had been killed by Leylin was not public knowledge, but those Magi would have been furious after hearing George’s words.

“Oh, by the way, Leylin, are you going to the secret plane?”

The Eternal River’s secret plane was a major event that triggered an earth-shaking response among the Magi of the south coast. The information regarding the secret plane had spread very quickly, and George and the others were not entirely clueless about it.

Leylin saw George’s anxious look and the other acolytes’ trading
gazes, and he immediately understood.
It seemed that George thought Leylin to be one of the acolytes, who were naive and wanted to try their luck within the secret plane.
Of course, this wasn’t surprising since after news about the secret plane spread, acolytes and Magi alike from all over started to convene at this location.
The whole journey was laced with danger. Some died en route, and others would struggle at the entrance and be unable to enter, while others were lured or coerced by the larger powers and became cannon fodder.
There was an extremely small minority of acolytes who would be successful in acquiring some resources from the secret plane and return to Nightless City and other Magi cities. This resulted in a reaction from the magicians in the cities, which in turn incited more acolytes to adventure into the plane.
It was clear that George and the others also considered Leylin to be just like these acolytes.
“Leylin…” George turned silent, seeming to be carefully considering his next words. “The danger inside the secret plane is not something that we acolytes can handle. Only the official Magi, who are the main forces inside the plane, can stay within for long durations of time.”
“Many of my friends suffered inside. You’re still young and need not…”
“Just let him go!” Bessita suddenly spoke up.
“If he’s lucky, he can get some resources and even advance!”
George furrowed his brows. How could one count on such a thing as luck? Bessita was speaking of it too lightly.
“Actually, I was issued a mission by the academy. I have no choice but to go inside the secret plane.” Leylin sardonically stated.
“I see… No wonder then. I warned you only because it doesn’t seem to be in your nature to undertake such a dangerous task.”
George patted his close friend’s shoulder in empathy and forced a smile.
“In this situation, we are probably all in the same boat and might even be assigned to the same location. After all, within the secret plane, the light Magi have gathered and created an alliance.”
After hearing that Leylin had been forced to come to the secret plane just like them, Shiera, Alexander, and the others revealed expressions of sympathy. Leylin’s situation was one they could empathise with.
These kinds of missions were usually suicidal by nature. Only those who had no backing or acolytes who had offended important people would be dispatched by their academies to complete these missions.
When he turned, he saw a hint of an expression on Bessita’s face. Something that seemed like… delight?
“This girl still brooding over what happened last time?”
Leylin inwardly grinned and actually found this a novelty.
At his current level, he had already left Bessita far in the dust.
Many Magi had died at Leylin’s hands; what trouble could a lowly acolyte cause?
No matter how she bared her fangs and made threatening gestures at Leylin, she was akin to a small kitten playing with him.
“Since we’re all going the same way, how about you join us too, Leylin?”
At this moment, George put forth a proposal.
“Sure!” Leylin gauged that he still had quite a bit of time and, considering the speed at which George and his friends were travelling, he could reach the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane well before the deadline. Thus, he agreed.
His relationship with George was quite good, so he could help out if the need arose.
Besides, there were still some matters that needed to be resolved
between him and Bessita.
“Very good. Since Leylin’s a level 3 acolyte as well, our combined battle strength has increased by a lot. Even if we meet a bandit, there’s no need to be afraid.” George seemed very excited. The other acolytes did not refute him.
“Bandit? You’re actually afraid of bandits?” Leylin asked, rather stunned. In his mind, the so-called bandits were just peasant farmers with grass pitchforks and fishing spears.
“Oh, you don’t know about this?” George seemed to be even more amazed than Leylin. “I can’t believe you came this far when you’re so overwhelming ignorant about the whole situation!”
Immediately, George carefully explained to Leylin, “If it was a bandit group composed of only ordinary humans, then there’s no need for us to worry. Shiera can single-handedly kill all those who come. However, the situation at the Eternal River Plains is different. Due to the number of acolytes travelling there alone, bandit groups that specifically target magicians have appeared. There are even rumours that official Magi are behind these bandit groups.”
Due to large increase in the number of magicians travelling to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, the public security in that area was extremely chaotic. Some scattered dark magicians naturally had the idea to fight for the resources.
However, as these dark magicians were mostly acolytes, their strength was inadequate when compared to Leylin.
If they were official Magi, the greedy dark magicians would be unwilling to attack, but if they were mere acolytes, then the they would not be as hesitant. Compared to the light Magi, who had grown in a protected environment like flowers in a greenhouse, acolytes on the dark side who had matured under the law of the jungle were obviously more powerful in battle. With their superior fighting instincts and their manipulation of timing when attacking, they were far more capable than their light acolyte peers.
Most of the acolytes in the area, especially those who were leaving, might be carrying some precious resources from the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. If bandits ran into any of these acolytes, it would be enough for them to make a fortune!

There were several dark magician acolytes that had these thoughts. Hence, the way to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was full of danger.

Many acolytes who were dreaming of panning for gold usually died before reaching the secret plane. Leylin thought back to how he had not run into any big bandit groups during his journey. Occasionally, he had encountered a few inexperienced local thieves that had been dealt with by Number 2 and Number 3. These two men had already advanced after receiving the incomplete runes of Branded Swordsmen and all ordinary men or acolytes were easily dealt with with a few sword attacks.

“So that’s what’s happening. It seems that I’ve been rather lucky.” Leylin massaged his temples and laughed.

“I can’t help saying this, but man, your luck is too good! However, this has just been the outlying areas. As we continue to travel further into the Eternal River Plains, there will be more of these kinds of bandits. As the light Magi will focus all their energy on the secret plane, some entrances might have a generous amount of warnings placed, but other regions will just be disregarded…”

George had a good grasp of Leylin’s character and knew that this friend of his was not what he seemed to be on the surface. He was sure to have some trump cards.

He wasn’t wrong either, since Leylin knew how to adapt to circumstances and act accordingly.

The stronger Leylin was, the more secure his band of comrades would be. If he continued asking further, it would only result in Leylin being pressured to leave, which did not work well for their
situati.  
It was but a mere assumption, but since Leylin could advance to a level 3 acolyte so quickly and receive solo missions, that meant he definitely had a great trump card. Poor George didn’t even consider the possibility that Leylin had already advanced to an official Magus.  
After all, there was a wide chasm between a level 3 acolyte and the realm of official Magi.  
Even if it was the most amazing genius, promoting to the Magus realm before 30 years of age was in itself a most outstanding speed of advancement.  
George, who knew that Leylin only had a third-grade aptitude, did not bother considering that all.  
“Good! Now that you’re a member of our group, let’s enjoy a toast.” George, as always, was very welcoming and put an arm around Leylin’s shoulder, patting Leylin’s chest with his other arm.  
“At least we’re not lacking good wine nor beautiful women. Do you see that red-clothed beauty beside the bar counter? She’s making bedroom eyes at you. If you just go up and speak to her, I bet she’ll she’ll be yours tonight! And then… heh!”  
George hadn’t said much and had already reverted to his lecherous nature. Beside him, Shiera’s face changed and the next moment, George let out a sharp scream and begged for forgiveness.  
“Haha…”  
Seeing this, the acolytes from the Wetland Gardens Academy and Leylin were unable to keep a straight face.  
Leylin obviously did not hit on anyone in the end, since George had been joking around to liven up the atmosphere.  
The result of this drinking session was surprisingly good. At least, after seeing Leylin produce the insignia of Four Seasons Garden, the relations between Leylin, Alexander and the rest of the acolytes all turned for the better.
Bessita appeared to be very happy to welcome Leylin as their new comrade.
The group rested in the small town for a while, before setting off early in the morning and resuming their journey.
The missions assigned by Ennea Ivory Ring Tower and Wetland Gardens Academy all had time limits. George and the others had to report to a designated area within a stipulated time. If not, they would be labeled as criminals and be on their school’s wanted list. They were mere acolytes! If something like this were to happen, they would be finished for the rest of their lives!
Hence, after receiving the mission, they could only obey the arrangements of the organisation no matter how unwilling they were. There was little choice but to enter the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane and accept the unknown fate their future held.
he azure blue sky was covered with white clouds, and there seemed to be no end to this wonderful sight.

Beside a ramrod straight street, a winding, clear stream flowed. On the bed of the creek white pebbles and green fish could clearly be seen.

“As long as we go through this Pome Alley, we’ll reach our destination. It’s an entrance to Eternal River Plain’s secret plane located in Marat Canyon. It only takes a day for us to get there, so we can afford to stroll there! Should we find a place and take a rest?”

George looked at the yellow map drawn on parchment paper and produced a compass. He checked his bearings and spoke to Leylin and the others as he looked back.

“Stop? If it’s that near, then wouldn’t it be better if we went and rested there?”

Sheira glared at George.

This situation had already occurred multiple times within this small group. Every time George had a suggestion, Sheira would vehemently shoot him down, and George would usually automatically give up.

It was such a regular occurrence that even Leylin had become used to it.

Perhaps only this kind of woman would be able to control a playboy like George. Leylin noted that George seemed to be
enjoying this situation. Bessita, on the other hand, had been silent the whole time. She did not give her opinion on anything, and were it not for her being the only level 3 acolyte from Wetland Gardens Academy, she might have been forgotten.

“Alright, alright! Let’s be on our way!” Just as expected, upon hearing Sheira’s voice, George quickly raised both his arms and surrendered. Leylin rolled his eyes at him.

Leylin was a little surprised as he looked at the other route in front of them. With Leylin’s current spiritual force, he could clearly tell that not far away, there was a team of acolytes. They were rushing in their direction and seemed to be heading for Marat Canyon as well. Based on their speed, it seemed that they were going to encounter Leylin’s group soon. Their might was obviously greater than George’s group by one or two levels. Leylin could also feel the undulations created by magical artifacts on the leader’s body. Although it was just a low-grade magic artifact, that alone was already very valuable.

Only truly talented acolytes and the successors of large families were in possession of magic artifacts. The battle might of these acolytes was definitely at the peak of level 3, and besides official Magi, they feared no one!

About three minutes later, Sheira’s face changed.

“Be careful! Bourbon discovered that there are acolytes nearing us!”

As the one in charge of long-range attacks, Sheira was naturally also the sentinel. Bourbon was an unusual owl that she was raising that could share its field of vision with her within a specific range.

“Acolytes?”

George’s expression darkened and he cursed. “F*ck! I hope our
luck isn’t that bad. Alert!”
Meeting foreign acolytes in the open wasn’t something that could be ignored. There was a possibility that conflict between them could occur, and in such a scenario, the weaker party would usually be the victim.
George issued an order; Bessita and the others quickly understood that they were in danger.
They gathered together and a few of them set up a simple defensive spell formation. The entire process was executed smoothly, indicating that they must have prepared and practiced beforehand.
While the acolytes were waiting nervously, a cloud of dust was nearing them.
*Tak! Tak!*
Along with the sound of footsteps from several horses, a team of five people appeared in Leylin’s line of sight.
The leader was dressed in a white robe and had a broadsword on his back. Leylin found that the undulations emitted from a magic artifact originated from that large sword.
“It’s such a large magic artifact. Interesting!” Leylin stroked his chin.
Usually, magic artifacts were much smaller due to the precious resources they had to be constructed from. Though this huge magic artifact was only of a low grade, this was Leylin’s first time seeing one that was so large.
After recognizing such an eye-catching signature item, Bessita, and the two other acolytes from Wetland Gardens Academy first had an expression of disbelief, and then shouted, “It’s Jamu! It’s Senior Jamu!”
“Oh! Are you acolytes from Wetland Gardens Academy?” Leylin glanced at the three acolytes who left the defensive spell formation and went to receive the newcomers.
A hint of a smile appeared on Bessita’s face.
With the added bonus of her natural beauty, her smile caused the acolytes behind Jamu to be stunned for a moment.  
*Clop! Clop!*  
The group pulled on their reins, and with a wave from their leader Jamu, the five dismounted; their actions were precise as if they were from the military.  
“Are you acolytes from the academy?”  
Jamu, the leader, was a tall man with fair skin. He was a head taller than George and had blue hair. There was a red mole between his brows.  
“Yes! Senior Jamu, we even met once at Professor Clarentino’s cocktail party…”  
Upon seeing such a famous character, Alexander and Lana were rendered speechless and could do naught but hide behind Bessita.  
Bessita, on the other hand, was very enthusiastic and chatted with Jamu, occasionally pointing towards Leylin and George.  
Ten or so minutes later, Jamu approached George and Leylin.  
“George! And this is Sheira…?”  
Jamu raised his chin, arrogance evident in his eyes, “I’ve heard about you from Bessita. As thanks for helping them, I permit you to follow behind us to Marat Canyon.”  
Jamu looked at them condescendingly, as if pitying them.  
“Senior Jamu is one of the ten strongest in the academy in terms of battle power! With him around, we don’t have to worry about our safety!”  
Bessita was boasting about his strength at the side, her entire body almost pressed against Jamu’s.  
“You…” George still had his own pride after all and immediately wanted to say something, but Sheira stopped him.  
“He’s right! Pome Alley has always been an area where bandits are frequently seen. Without Bessita and the others, I doubt we’ll be able to get through safely.” Sheira murmured into George’s ear.
After hearing his love’s words George became gloomy, and he eventually forced a smile, “In that case, thank you Senior Jamu!”
“Hmph!” Jamu nodded reservedly and looked at Leylin.
“As for you, the dark Magus from before! During these sensitive times, our group does not welcome you!”
“You can’t do this! Leylin is an acolyte from Four Seasons Garden, and has long since broken all ties with Abyssal Bone Forest Academy!” George hurriedly brought up.
“What credit do magicians who grew up in that sort of environment have to speak of? Who knows, perhaps his status as an acolyte of Four Seasons Garden was gained with unethical methods!” Jamu laughed icily.
“I do think there’s a large chance of him being a spy deployed by dark Magi, and we need to check his belongings!” Behind Jamu, a freckled acolyte yelled.
“Bessita! What do you think?”
Leylin watched her with a hint of interest.
“I’m sorry Leylin! Though we once walked the same path, the safety of our companions is the priority now.” Bessita seemed to be in a tough spot struggling with this decision.
“Do you have anything else to say?” Jamu crossed his arms. While Alexander and Lana didn’t think Leylin was an enemy, but in front of Jamu, they didn’t dare say anything.
As for George, Shiera had pulled him back.
“For some useless revenge?” Leylin stared at Bessita. “How stupid!”
“But it seems like I don’t have to take care of you myself!”
“What do you mean?” Jamu was confused by Leylin’s words and Leylin’s attitude irked him. A bright radiance caused by magic appeared instantly from Jamu’s body, which made the atmosphere become serious.
*Whoosh!*
An acidic flying dart shot out, striking the arrogant freckled acolyte. *Sssii!* Along with the terrifying sound of corrosion, the acolyte melted into a pile of flesh, and red and green liquid under the gaze of the surrounding acolytes. In the middle of the pile of flesh, several broken pieces of bones stayed upright. “An enemy attack!” Bessita’s flustered voice sounded, and because it was so piercing, she sounded a little hoarse. *Swish! Swish! Swish!* In no time, Jamu, Leylin and everyone else were surrounded by around twenty bandits. “Akai!” “You hateful brute!” “I’ll kill you!” The three acolytes behind Jamu were outraged at seeing their companion die in such a tragic manner. Several waves of magic rushed towards the robed bandits. “Hmph!” The leader of the bandits stepped forward, a ring of black light dispersing from around his body. *Pak! Pak!* The acolytes used their spells against that black light, but like soap bubbles colliding against each other and bursting, their spells were all deflected. “A magic artifact! A defensive magic artifact!” Jamu narrowed his eyes at the realisation and stood in front of the three acolytes, protecting them. “They’re not people you can deal with. Retreat first!” “I am Jamu! What is your name?” *Clang!* Metal scraped against metal as Jamu unbuckled the broadsword from his back. He held it with one arm and faced the robed bandit leader and asked for the enemy’s name. “Hehe…”
Amidst strange giggles, the leader made his move. 
*Boom!* A layer of the ground separated; soil and rocks were suspended in the air, converging into the shape of a beast. Its jaws were wide open as it snapped at Jamu. 
“Hah!”
A silver-white light flashed in the air as Jamu waved his hand. 
A single line sliced towards the beast! 
The surrounding greenery was destroyed in an instant; a gap separated the trees into two groups.
Weng!
The silver white light was extremely thin, and as it sliced at the beast formed from rock, not a single undulation was produced.

*Bang!*  
The stone beast suddenly halted in mid-air, and with a gentle booming sound, the beast cracked, and was reduced to fragments of rock that rained down.

“The Wetland Gardens Academy’s ‘Broadsword Jamu’ is indeed formidable!”

The leader chuckled, seeming to be very familiar with Jamu.

“When in the world are you?” Jamu frowned. Not only did these bandits have acolytes in the group, the bandits’ leader even had a magic artifact and knew so much about him. No matter how he thought about it, this leader wasn’t just any random bandit looking for a target!

He could smell something fishy and quite possibly dangerous going on here.

“Do you really think I’d tell you?” The bandit leader answered nonchalantly. “There should at least be a transmitting spell formation on you. The moment I expose anything about myself, the Wetland Gardens Academy will automatically have a record of it. Am I wrong?”

While he spoke, rays of black light emerged in the area.
surrounding him.
The black lights converged, forming warriors in armour. Their skulls were jet black.
“These are my darkness fighting troop that I especially prepared for you! Each dark warrior’s might is at least 15 degrees! How about it? Enjoy the experience!”
Amidst the manic laughter, the black armoured warriors roared and rushed forward, trapping Jamu between them.
Seeing the more than ten dark warriors, Jamu’s face fell.
Although this large magic artifact of his was very powerful, its energy consumption rate was equally enormous. It was obvious that this bandit was intending to use cannon fodder and force him to use up his magic and spiritual force.
No matter how amazing an acolyte was, once his or her magic and spiritual force were depleted, he or she would only be trampled on.
“Kill off the other acolytes. All items will belong to you!”
The black robed bandit leader hid behind the rows of dark warriors to stay protected and pointed towards Leylin and the other acolytes.
“Kill!” His underlings, the dark Magus acolytes, roared and rushed towards Leylin.
“Damn it! Try to prolong the fight. Once Senior Jamu takes care of the opposing leader, we’ll be safe!”
Bessita clenched her teeth and spoke to the acolytes behind her.
At the same time, she glanced towards Leylin’s direction.
“Let’s form an alliance! Otherwise, none of us will be able to survive!”
“Hmph!” George knew her suggestion was reasonable, but couldn’t help but snort in reply.
He wasn’t stupid and naturally knew what had just happened. He really didn’t want to form an alliance with such a woman. However, his rational side told him that this was the best way to get out of this difficult situation.
“George!” Sheira cast a worried glance at George. She had already readied her bow, which had been on her shoulder, and positioned it at her front. “Leylin! Let’s do it!” George saw that the bandits were quickly closing in and unwillingly bellowed. The muscles on his body bulged bit by bit, and in an instant, he turned into a giant that was more than three metres tall. At the same time, his skin had turned green, matching with the veins on his muscles that looked like connected earthworms. Leylin suddenly thought of the Incredible Hulk, a figure he was familiar with in his previous life. “Roar!” After transforming into the green giant, George pounded on his naked chest and bellowed out a thundering roar. He stomped on the ground, and with huge momentum, shot towards the incoming bandits like a lead bullet which had left a gun barrel. *Pa!* With a wave of George’s giant palm, a bandit was sent flying. Blood splattered all over, and the sound of bones breaking could be heard. Even the piercing screeches of horror were overshadowed by this grisly sight and sound. “What amazing power! Besides some flaws in speed and rationality, every other aspect is perfect!” Leylin watched George, who was freely utilizing his might, from a corner, his blue eyes flashing. He never expected George to have majored in transfiguration! However, this decision was easy to relate to, as Magi usually held high positions, and prioritised lengthening their lifespan. For the average magician, advancing to the level of a Magus to gain a longer lifespan was much too difficult. Hence, by transplanting the organs of various powerful creatures and modifying one’s body, one would be able to strengthen and increase his or her vitality. This had gradually become the norm amongst magicians.
The study of transmutation had thus become very popular amongst many.
Strictly speaking, the changes that a Warlock would undergo could actually be considered an extension of transmutation as well. At the very least, they were rather similar at the beginning stages.
Hence, when Leylin was at the Four Seasons Garden, he had concentrated on collecting all knowledge related to transmutation. With the aid of the A.I. Chip, his knowledge in transmutation was at a level close to official Magi who had spent most of their life researching on this subject.
With just a look, Leylin could identify the creature George had used.
“Out of all the plants that can be transfigured, a Green Metal Tree? This is a popular choice amongst acolytes since it’s easy to work with and augments offensive prowess. Its defensive properties are not bad, and there are many ways in which one can advance. There aren’t too many restrictions!”
At this moment, the green giant that George had transformed into was in the center of the battlefield, grabbing an unlucky individual’s thigh. The poor man was used as a huge club and was swung around by George at any bandits who neared him.
This “human weapon” brushed against the ground from time to time, producing traces of bright red bloodstains. From the looks of it, the acolyte that George had caught was in a rather terrible situation.
*Chi! Chi!* Meanwhile, there were several green arrows being shot by Sheira’s bow from behind George. She covered for George and helped him fend off attackers.
“Hm. They have good rapport!” Leylin nodded, looking incredibly relaxed.
Around him, there was a layer of invisible waves that could
manipulate one’s mind. All acolytes who entered the domain he had set up would unconsciously choose to ignore him, and would instead fight amongst themselves. Such a strange situation had obviously attracted the attentions of many. “Look at him! The enemies aren’t going after him at all. He has got to be a spy!”
The three acolytes behind Jamu saw this odd situation, and immediately yelled. “Uhh…” Leylin touched his nose. His laid back appearance was rather eye catching in this desperate battle.
Before George and the others could react, the winner on the side of the battlefield where Jamu was had been decided. “You’re forcing me to do this! Burst form! Activate!”
After waving his sword in quick succession, he scattered the bunch of dark acolytes that approached and steeled his mind while looking at the numerous dark warriors around him.
He pressed a few points on his body, as if stimulating some special state.
In a split second, his blue hair exploded strand by strand, and immense energy undulations were emitted from his body.
*Weng Weng!*
The white broadsword in Jamu’s hand also produced a rumble. “Whirlwind, Second form!” Jamu shouted. From within the sword, a violent, green hurricane emerged! The tremendous hurricane shrouded Jamu’s body, and he rapidly spun along with it.
The green hurricane was like a spinning top, with the surface being the edge of the broadsword. Like the wind, it swept through the battlefield, along with the hordes of dark warriors.
*Peng!* *Peng!* *Peng!* *Peng!*
The dark warriors that had been swept up in the green hurricane looked like they were caught by a large, shapeless hand and forced into a vortex. They scattered into countless black pieces that flew about in the air.
The violent hurricane instantly destroyed the dark warriors’ layers of defense and quickly approached the bandit leader.

“Night Devil!”
The bandit leader produced a black ring and yelled, the gaze in his eyes frantic for the very first time.

*Peng!*
Numerous black rays emanated from the ring and formed a large black shield in front of him. There were fine black barbed tips on the surface, with the sheen of a metallic luster.
When the attacks from the hurricane struck against the black shield, a gigantic energy shock wave engulfed the area.

*Boom!*
Along with the loud noise, the explosion left a deep crater on the surface of the ground. An entire layer of the ground had been turned up, exposing plant roots and countless stones.
Even the side of the battlefield that Leylin was on was affected!
Whether it was the bandits or the acolytes near Leylin, everyone was in a pitiful state.

After the blast wave had died down, dust flew all over like a curtain and covered the battlefield.
The two opposing forces stopped all actions, and focused their gazes on the centre of the area.
After a moment, the dust dispersed and revealed the area.
In the middle of the crater, innumerable crevices had split open like cobwebs under the two combatants’ feet. Jamu’s two hands were fixed firmly on his silver white broadsword, pressed against the surface of the black shield.

“Hah! Hah!”
Jamu was panting roughly, beads of sweat rolling down his forehead. It was obvious that the violent explosion had taken a toll on his physical strength. “Hehe… I acknowledge your strength, but so what? You’ve probably used up all your spiritual force at this point, no? I wonder how much energy is still left in the reserves of that large sword of yours.” The bandit leader snickered. With the sounds of his laughter, the black light from the shield began to suppress the sword. The strain could be seen on Jamu’s expression as the broadsword was gradually forced backwards by the shield. “Jamu, Senior Jamu!” The acolytes who had come with Jamu murmured worriedly, their voices breaking. “Jamu won’t actually lose right? He’s the number 1 genius acolyte of the academy…” Bessita’s little face had turned pale as she scanned the surroundings. “Hehe… I’ll bring your head back, hang it in my bedroom, and treat it as my most treasured collection item!” The bandit leader snickered complacently. “Unfortunately, you’re the one who’s going to lose! Furthermore, I’ll be the one stepping over your body as if I’m stepping over stones!”
Jamu’s face turned red and he suddenly shouted, “Third Form!”
An instant later, blood oozed from his skin.
The great amount of blood soaked into his clothes, staining it red.
His whole body currently looked as if he had just been fished out of an ocean of blood.
With his blood bubbling up, a shocking amount of terrifying spiritual force was also sent out from Jamu’s body suddenly.
The large sword in Jamu’s hand immediately turned a bright red color, and its radiance momentarily grew by several metres.
*Peng!*
The bandit leader’s black metal shield was broken into pieces by the blood-red sword.
Following which, Jamu swung the sword in his hands and aimed a fierce chop at the black-garbed bandit leader.
*Sssii!*
The black-garbed bandit leader was sent flying by the attack, and the black ring-shaped magic artifact on his body shattered into pieces in mid-air. It then turned into fine dust, which drifted off with the wind.
“Good work, Jamu!”
“You truly are worthy of being called Senior Jamu!”
Witnessing this scene, all the other people from the Wetland Gardens Academy immediately began to cheer.
Jamu, on the other hand, immediately turned around with his sword aimed at the remaining bandits. Apparently, he had planned to dispose of all these enemies in one breath; after all, the third form also placed a heavy burden on him and had other troublesome after effects.

“Jamu is the best…” Bessita said, seeing Jamu’s unusual power. She blushed, stars flashing in her eyes. “Pieces of trash! You have forced my hand!”

Suddenly, a strange hoarse voice could be heard. After hearing this voice, the bandits, who had been arrogant up until a moment ago, knelt down as if they had seen God, their bodies slightly trembling.

Following this voice, a huge black palm appeared in midair and slammed at Jamu, just like someone swatting a housefly.

*Thump!*

The black palm merely swatted, yet the blood-red sword in Jamu’s hand was sent flying. Soon after, a fist struck out. Jamu’s chest caved in, and he spat out a large amount of blood as he was thrown back.

“An offi…official Magus?”

Lying on the ground, Jamu’s expression was one of incredulity, and then he lost consciousness.

“Official Magus?” Bessita’s expression paled, and she felt limp and collapsed as if the bones in her body had been removed. “We are finished!”

Although they had heard that there was a dark official Magus hiding in one of the many bandit groups, they had not anticipated that they would encounter this particular one. This was a high and mighty Magus! Would he even put their small group of acolytes in his eyes?

Unfortunately, the reality was cruel, and what one least expected would always happen.
The dark Magus was clothed in a black robe with golden accents, and with a black fog obscured his appearance, he instantly appeared in front of them.

*Awooooo!* George issued a loud howl and faced the dark Magus head-on.

Though powerful, George’s gigantic green form caused side effects such as losing rationality for an indeterminate period randomly. This effect was more obvious when the body was transformed. He instinctively rushed towards the middle of the battlefield, heading for the dark Magus who was immensely pressuring him.

“George! Don’t!” shouted Shiera, with a look of despair on her face.

“A lowly acolyte dares to attack this mighty Lord Magus?”

The dark Magus sneered. A dangerous green phosphorescent claw from an unknown beast latched onto George.

*Puchi!*

Suddenly, raging black fireballs struck this strange claw. The raging black fireballs seemed to fill the sky and dyed it a dark black.

This was merely a green claw, and though it tried to persist within the black flame, it was burned to ashes within a few seconds.

“Who was that?” The dark-gowned Magus asked in rage.

“Ai…” was the reply he heard, a soft and gentle sigh.

Immediately, Leylin’s body flashed past in a dark ray of light, appearing in front of George, who had transformed into the green giant.

At this moment, however, there was some drool flowing from one side of George’s mouth, he had completely lost his rationality. Seeing Leylin, he attempted to grab him.

The green giant’s arms had flexible and sturdy muscles, causing violent gales when they moved.

While facing this attack, Leylin calmly extended his right hand.
*Bang!*
The huge fist was directly blocked by the pale, slender palm of Leylin.
At this moment, Leylin’s body was like an infant’s when compared to that of the green giant, but even so, Leylin still resisted the green giant’s full strength attack.
This scene appeared to be all too hilarious, but not a single person present was laughing.
“An official Magus?”
Alexander’s jaws snapped wide open, thus resembling a toad, and he said, “Leylin is an official Magus! My heavens…”
“How foolish were we?” Lana and the other acolytes also were gaping foolishly.
As for Bessita, this woman had basically become paralyzed on the ground, in short she was unable to say anything!
The only one who looked happy at all was Shiera.
Currently, George was on the ground, bound by many black chains which sprouted from the ground underneath Leylin.
Following which, the transformation of George’s body seemed to be undergoing a change; it began shrinking while emitting steam. He gradually shrunk, and later regained the build of an ordinary man.
“George!” Shiera hurriedly approached and helped remove the black chains from George’s body.
George was in a coma, and his body was involuntarily twitching. He looked terrible; his face still had large patches of green, and his lips had lost their colour.
“Ley….My Lord, I request that you save him.” Shiera clasped George’s face, a harried look on her own face.
“No need to worry!”
“This is only a biological rejection from the cells of a Green Metal Tree. It is very easy to solve.”
A milky-white beam emitted from Leylin’s palm, which was then irradiated onto George’s face. When the milky white beam turned into thin white rays that bored through George’s nose and ears, the green patches on his face vanished at a very quick speed. A few seconds later, George assumed a serene expression, like an ordinary sleeping person. After handling George, Leylin slowly stood up and saw the Magus in the black fog waiting at the side.

“I truly didn’t expect that I would run into an official Magus here.” The voice of the dark Magus, whose face was wrapped in fog, sounded out. This voice belonged to neither a male nor a female; it was clearly a fake voice. “I, too, didn’t expect that I would meet a dark Magus while taking a stroll after concealing my identity,” Leylin stated flatly.

Even though he had participated in a lot of raids and other such missions with the Thousands Meddling Hands, that was only for dealing with goals that had a degree of difficulty similar to raiding the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower. As an official Magus, resorting to being a bandit and robbing acolytes was something he couldn’t do.

It seemed that the dark Magus who was facing Leylin was poverty-stricken. His strength, spiritual force, and the energy waves fluctuating from his body seemed comparatively weak. He must have recently broken through. His spiritual force and elemental essence conversion were also very low.

“In that case, I will give you some face and let them all off!” The dark Magus quickly spoke up. Due to the lack of benefits, no Magus in their right mind would battle an enemy at the same level as themselves. “Thanks!” Leylin replied in a faint voice. While he was considering that the enemy might go on ahead, the
other dark Magus said, “Additionally, I have some exclusive information regarding the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. Do you want to hear it?”

“News about the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane?” Doubtful, Leylin glanced at this dark Magus, sizing him up. Based on the enemy’s strength, it would not be possible for him to have gathered any information. When he came across such lucky opportunities, Leylin generally maintained extreme caution.

“Not bad!”

However, Leylin still agreed, wanting to see what this dark Magus was trying to pull.

“You should leave first!”

The Magus in a black robe spoke to the horde of bandits, who were lucky to have survived.

“Yes, my lord!”

All of the bandits present immediately moved around wildly in their fright, and before one could blink, they had already disappeared.

Heavens! They had believed they would be raiding only a group of acolytes, and they did not think that they would unexpectedly find an official Magus within this group.

Moreover, seeing the attitude of their true leader, the other party’s strength must have truly been very terrifying.

If a person like Leylin were to be in a bad mood, killing the bandits would be as difficult as dealing with an ant.

Thus, these bandits helped the fallen acolytes get up, and disappeared like the wind, leaving a mess behind.

“You all wait here for me!”

Leylin saw that after he had spoken, all the acolytes in his group bowed their bodies, including Bessita.

These acolytes had picked up this habit within their academies. Towards a Magus, they were required to show extreme respect and
caution. Otherwise, they would be severely punished. Seeing this scene, Leylin inwardly smiled and immediately left with the black-fog-masked dark Magus.
“Can we speak here?” After the dark Magus had reached a faraway place, Leylin shouted, making the dark Magus halt.
“Finally, what is the news that you have? If what you say is really valuable, then no matter how many magic crystals or whatever else you want in exchange, I will not be stingy with it…”
“It is not very secure here. I need to bring you to a place where no one will be able to eavesdrop.” The dark Magus began explaining.
“What’s wrong? Do you not believe me?” The Magus surrounded by black fog questioned.

The Magus, whose face was concealed by dark fog, and could not have his or her gender identified, went straight for the middle of the pile of stones. Leylin, on the other hand, hesitated and stopped in his tracks.

“What’s wrong? Do you not believe me?”

The Magus surrounded by black fog questioned.
In the south coast, the storage type secret plane Leylin had previously raided and the laboratory type secret plane that the old witch found were all classified as small scale secret planes. The area of these kind of secret planes usually didn’t exceed a 100 mu and were only used to perform experiments and to store supplies. If one does not take into account of the items stored inside and only look at the area of the secret plane, its worth would be at the bottom.

Above that were the resource type secret planes, the area of that type of secret planes is usually larger than 100,000 mu. The area is large and the topology is varied and suitable to grow resources necessary to Magi.

The highest rank of secret planes are those that have spells that can adjust the living environments of both plants and animals, and can be controlled by a single Magus!

These are only under normal circumstances, there are also places like Dylan Gardens which Leylin previously found. Even though the area was small but it was personally arranged by the fourth level warlock great Magus Serholm, thus its value couldn’t be compared to the normal planes of its kind.

“It’s a shame! If it was a resource type of secret plane, we could occupy it in secret then alter it, hehe… then we would be filthy rich!”

Brass Ring was stroking his chin as if he was caught in some
fantasy. “Keep dreaming!” The old witch sneered icily, interrupting Brass Ring’s fancy dreams. “The bigger the area of the secret plane, the higher the cost of construction. As for the resource type secret planes which was larger than 100k mu, even for some ancient Magi organisations, there weren’t many that could afford to construct it…” “All the present resource type secret planes that belongs to the large organisations are all remnants from the ancient Magi which have been altered slightly, that’s all! If there really was a resource type secret plane being discovered here, the likes of us wouldn’t be able to stomach it. Even if we added our whole organisation plus the Boss that is backing it, it still wouldn’t be enough!” “Let’s go! Even if it’s just a laboratory type of secret plane, there must still be a lot of valuable stuff inside. We’re also handing over a lot contributions to the higher ups. It’s enough for you to trade for a lot of resources!” Leylin said. For these kind of small scale secret planes, every large Magi organisation has set up missions. No matter if it’s Four Seasons Garden or the dark Magi organisation which the old witch belonged to, they all have the power to take it over. After which there naturally will be a lot of rewards for the finders. If this was a resource type of secret plane then Leylin would put in some thought in order to pocket it himself. Since it’s only a laboratory type of secret plane, he didn’t put much thought into pocketing it. After all even if he was to occupy it because it’s so small he couldn’t actually alter it that much. At most he would only have a small scale secret base to hide. “The entrance to the secret plane is on the west side of this town, inside a two story wooden building!” The old witch seemed quite familiar with the surroundings as she
brought the three of them to a two-storey building made out of wood.
Compare to the small town, this place was even more remote. Weed were growing all around the villa and there were even two mole like animals quickly scurrying by.
“Originally this place was a lively street, but since 13 years ago the residents in this place kept dying one by one. Sometimes the town residents could hear sound of a woman wailing outside their homes, that’s why the rumors spread about it being a cursed or a haunted house. The surroundings ended up being overgrown!”
The old witch opened up the rusted gates while feeling rather satisfied with herself.
“I found this place during one of my explorations, after a couple of months of investigation, I’m sure that the unusual situations around here is cause by the deterioration of the defensive spells around the entrance to the secret plane, unwillingly leaking radiation …”
“According to calculations, after 13 years the defensive spells should have totally deteriorated. Leaving the entrance to the secret plane exposed…”
“Thusly I pretend to be an ordinary person and bought this building, plus I added a facade on the outside so other Magi couldn’t discover this place.”
Leylin was listening to the old witch while he was exploring the inside of this building.
The bottom floor wasn’t that big, it only contained 2 to 3 buildings. The hall was filled with a thick layer of dust and broken furniture. In the corner was a spiral staircase filled with holes. It was the only thing connecting these two floors.
Beneath this obvious state of decline, Leylin could feel a strong aura of negative energy.
This aura was extremely malevolent, and it carried with it a smell that Leylin was familiar with.
“Spirits! And they’re spirits that have been driven crazy from being vengeful!” The corner of Leylin’s mouth curved, “This old witch really found a nice place!”
“Follow me! Be careful not to touch the black mold on the walls, those are trigger points!”
The old witch was in front leading the while, bringing the three behind as they climbed the squeaky stairs to the second floor. She seemed extremely familiar with this place.
The area on the second floor was smaller than the large hall on the first, where the corridors only allowed 2 people to walk side by side.
By chance Leylin was walking beside Jaye, because the other person was entirely wrapped in a cloak and didn’t speak much. Leylin couldn’t even distinguish the other person’s gender.
“This oil painting is the entrance to the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane!”
By the end of the corridor, the old witch was pointing towards an oil painting that was hanging on the wall as she turned around and spoke to Leylin and the rest.
Leylin’s focus involuntarily shifted to the oil painting.
This oil painting depicted a richly dressed noble woman, using a delicate fan to cover half her face.
Due to time and age, there were a lot of dust on the walls. Even around the oil painting were a ring of thick dust.
The whole oil painting used green as a base color, and it didn’t seem to fit the picture.
Besides, maybe it’s because of the angle and line, but if he stared at it long enough, Leylin felt that the fan the noble woman was holding in the oil painting moved slightly.
Suddenly, the young woman inside the oil painting blinked her eyes!
“Is this oil painting alive?”
Leylin cried out involuntarily.
“You’re finally awake?” The old witch advanced as she cackled.
“Foreign intruders, speak the password!” The woman inside the oil painting blinked again as information directly entered each Magus that was present.
“Password? Your masters have all perished, and right now we’ve come to take everything inside the secret plane!”
The old witch was staring at the woman in the oil painting, “If you choose to comply, there might be a place for you inside my storage room!”
“Password incorrect!” The woman inside the painting said. Leylin was keenly aware of that the fan which the noble woman held inside her hand closed slightly.
“It’s only a being conjured by spells, yet it dares to disobey me!”
The old witch’s eyes emitted green lights, and a ring of green fireballs emerged flying directly toward the oil painting.
*Bam!*
As the green fireballs burned the oil paint, the noble woman’s fan closed entirely exposing the face behind it.
Leylin didn’t expect that under the beautiful half of the noble woman’s face was a nose and mouth composed entirely out of bones.
This appearance was as if the flesh and blood below the noble woman’s eyes had instantly disappeared.
A feeling of discrepancy and wrongness suddenly assaulted Leylin’s thoracic cavity.
*Scree!*
Following that, the shrill sound of a woman flooded the whole corridor.
The green fireballs started to crumble, turning into small spark of green fire. Following which it directly extinguished in the fluctuation of the air.
“Banshee wail? Could it be that there is a genuine banshee trapped inside that oil painting?” Leylin was startled, immediately a layer of crimson membrane appeared outside his body and isolated the sound.

Even though his ears still hurt, but his body has regained his mobility.

At the same time, a couple of blood red tentacles like intestines protruded from the oil painting and they headed for Brass Ring.

“Damnable thing!” Brass Ring cursed as his body protruded countless bone spikes. The red intestines was directly pierced and was severed.

“Bone Spike Arts?!?” Leylin was startled, “He actually solidified this kind of innate spells onto himself, is he a masochist?”

Bone Spike Arts was a rank 1 spell, and was quite formidable. But its activation process was quite a hassle. It needed to be grown from a Magus’ own skeleton then pierce the Magus’ own muscle before attacking his opponent.

This kind of spell was literally hurting oneself before hurting your opponent, only maniacs and masochist would pick this.

“I’ll tear you damnable thing to pieces!” One could see that Brass Ring was quite enraged since he was forced to use his innate spell. Presently, his whole body was covered with bone spikes. It gave one the impression that he was like a white sea urchin.

At the same time, a green light spread from below his neck to his whole body, initiating blood staunching and similar effects.

“Stop!” The old witch’s body started to emit countless translucent spirit bodies, and every one of them circulated around Brass Ring’s
body, making his speed drop.
“There is a spell effect on this oil painting, if you tear it apart the whole entrance to the secret plan will also collapse!”
The old witch’s expression turned serious, “Let me do it!”
When the previous Banshee wail had struck, the bodies of both the old witch and Jaye emitted a black colored membrane. It seemed like neither of them suffered any injuries.
“Your Banshee wail was pretty good, it is a shame that the matching spell formation has been half collapsed due to the passage of time. What’s left isn’t something than can affect us official Magi…”
The old witch looked upon the Banshee within the oil painting with pity, as she stroked the surface of the painting with her hand.
Following which tiny dark purple dots originated from the old witch’s palm and spread continuously. Like someone was adding a coat of paint.
“Come forth! My baby!”
The old witch said softly, her voice sounding tender and flirtatious.
As soon as these words were uttered, the Banshee within the painting turned fearful, as if she had encountered her natural enemy.
Jenna, who had collapsed at the side, was holding on to half her face. Seeing Leylin escape, she shouted in disbelief.

“How did you get out? In the future I saw, there wasn’t anything like this!”

Jenna yelled, her facial muscles twitching slightly.

“I know. It has to be! You must be the traitor going against fate!”

Jenna’s register suddenly became extremely high.

“Who I am is not important! The important thing is that you will have to die horribly today!”

The killing intent on Leylin grew stronger. Ever since he stepped on the path of a Magus, this was the first time he suffered such a big defeat!

The injuries he sustained on his body and his left arm, which was on the verge of breaking, were not easy to treat. His upcoming mission in the secret plane had now become more precarious.

At the thought, the fury in Leylin’s heart became more vigorous.

“Bitch! I want you to know the price of offending me!”

Leylin roared, and used his right arm, the only one that was still in good condition, to viciously claw at Jenna!

Streams of rope-like black smoke emerged from the ground, followed the ground, and climbed towards Jenna.

“Guard!” Jenny grasped the large, thick necklace around her neck.
A red gem brightened and a huge lava fireball generated in front of Jenna, rushing towards the black smoke.

*Boom!*

A huge energy wave was emitted, the scalding molten lava scattering in all directions, creating large black holes in the ground.

“Even if you have all the spells prepared in that necklace today, it won’t be able to save you!”

Leylin’s eyes glinted coldly.

Several black fireballs were shot out instantaneously, and merged into the air as one collective fireball! The immense energy waves momentarily exploded with might which reached 51 degrees that immediately burnt a huge pit in the ground.

“Latent Fireball!”

Leylin pointed at Jenna.

The giant fireball seemed to set like the sun, projecting over Jenna’s position.

Before the black flames descended, more sweat trickled on Jenna’s face, which was ever paler than before.

“Frost!” Jenna gritted her teeth, spitting out a character of the Byron language from her mouth.

At that moment, the necklace around her neck continuously emanated ice magic energy waves as it produced a series of white rays while the pearls emitted light one after the other.

The white rays formed a dozen huge ice shields in front of Jenna. The large, translucent white shields could clearly reflect the surroundings. The black fireballs from before flew down from the air, and in a flash, struck these ice shields.

Water vapour was being emitted.

A distance away from the fireballs, the water vapour quickly condensed into water droplets and ice chunks that fell to the ground.

After everything had settled down, the frost shields that were in
front of Jenna and the Latent Fireball had already disappeared without a trace.
In the mist, a black figure appeared within.
Leylin, whose body was lined with the fine Scales of Kemoyin, immediately charged to where Jenna was.
*Sssii!*
The layer of icy defense coming from Jenna’s necklace was immediately crushed by Leylin’s right hand. At the same time, he knocked Jenna away with his body.
*Pa!* Leylin’s shoulders crashed with a huge impact on Jenna.
*Chi Chi!* A layer of milky white light appeared on Jenna’s robes, enveloping her whole body.
This was Jenna’s innate defense spell. It had finally erupted at the most crucial moment.
*Pa Pa!*
Jenna flew backwards like the head of a train that had left its tracks, bashing into many trees along the way.
“This woman…”
Leylin focused his attention on Jenna. After that exchange, he could tell that she was merely a newly advanced Magus. In terms of elemental essence conversion, she was far from his match. If not for having a powerful magic artifact in possession, as well as that incredible gift for divination, she would long since have died at Leylin’s hands.
As long as she was given time to set up formations, she could quickly come up with methods that were specifically catered to her enemy’s weakness, like that incredible white pillared cage that had trapped him. Even a rank 1 Magus at his peak would be in trouble!
“Enemies with prophesying spells are the most troublesome. I was fortunate enough that her prophecy did not go as planned, but it’s unlikely that I’ll get so lucky again!”
Leylin’s eyes turned cold as ice.
The thought that there was an opponent that was operating behind the scenes with prophesying skills left a bad taste in his mouth. Having this happen once was one time too many. Never had his killing intent reached such an urgent degree.

“Shadow Stealth!”

Leylin tenaciously glared at Jenna, who had crawled up. The scales on his body flickered and gradually became translucent, and he vanished into the air.

He had decided to go all out when dealing with Jenna, and he made it his mission to ensure that this damned woman remained here forever.

Seeing Leylin disappear into the air, Jenna’s expression became even more serious. She currently felt Leylin’s determination to kill her. She was born intelligent, and with her high-grade meditation technique and her strengthened sixth sense, her instincts told her that if she made the slightest mistake then she would be the one that died today!

For the first time, such a terrifying experience had taken control of Jenna’s spirit. Deep down in her heart, her willpower, which could not be shaken, had slowly given in.

For the first time, Jenna felt that it was a very bad decision to come out here alone to assassinate Leylin!

This fear and regret were like a poisonous snake which was continuously gnawing at her already weak mental fortitude.

At this moment, a pink heart shape gem exploded inside Jenna’s necklace.

Jenna seemed perplexed at first, but very soon her will was strengthened.

“It’s a hallucinatory spell, with some psychological coercion!” Jenna’s face turned red. “Despicable!”

*Boom!*

A black figure appeared in front of Jenna.
With his right hand clenched into a fist, Leylin struck the defensive membrane from Jenna’s innate spell.
*Pa!*
This innate spell was not in its best condition from its previous consumption, and with Leylin’s iron fist, it was shattered into countless white spots, dissipating into the air.
Leylin’s right hand was able to grab Jenna’s right arm without any obstructions.
*Ka-Cha!* A bone crunching sound was made, and Jenna’s right arm had been torn off by Leylin.
“Arghh!” The muscles on Jenna’s face contorted in pain. She clenched her teeth and the silk on her robes seemed to writhe with life, bandaging her wound quickly.
At the same time, a large pushing force was emitted from her body, as if wanting to leave Leylin’s attack area.
“Thinking of running?”
Leylin’s pupils focused on Jenna. “Eyes of Petrification!”
Instantly, a mysterious light emitted from Leylin’s amber eyes as he targeted Jenna.
“Petrification magic?”
Jenna made a sound of bewilderment. Petrification magic was something that had long since been extinct in the Magus world.
Now, this was a spell that only creatures with ancient bloodlines had as an ability!
Next, creaking sounds emitted from Jenna’s body, as if her muscles had become stiff.
A layer of stone began to spread from Jenna’s face.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
In front of Leylin, Jenna turned into an ashen stone sculpture.
*Ding!*
When the grey-white colour had completely enveloped her, a light vibration came from the bulky necklace.
The whole necklace floated in the air, where the faint voice of an old person sounded, “Ultimate Guard of Life! Activate!”

Light! Dazzling light shone and enveloped the region in an instant. After Leylin opened his eyes, the stone statue in front of him had already crumbled. Jenna who was within had disappeared, leaving behind only a pile of petrified skin. After casting this final spell, that bulky necklace lost all of its powers.

*Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!*

A layer of petrified stone suddenly emerged on the surface of the necklace. The necklace had turned into stone, fallen to the ground, and shattered into pieces.

“This is a substitution spell!”

Leylin’s expression turned even more solemn. “This necklace contained so much power and even concealed a final body-substitution spell! An extremely large organisation must be behind Jenna!”

After realising this situation, the killing intent in Leylin’s heart grew even stronger.

“You won’t be able to run from me!”

Leylin inhaled deeply, where blue light appeared in his eyes immediately and scanned the surroundings.

“Several dozen seconds later, Leylin’s brows furrowed and hurried towards a certain direction.

“I… I have to hurry and leave!!”

Jenna grabbed at the stub of her torn arm and rapidly traversed through the woods.

“The family heirloom necklace was destroyed, yet I wasn’t able to get rid of him…”

Jenna was very dejected. The necklace from before was an heirloom, and for it to be destroyed while it was in her possession was a huge blow to her.
“Damned heretic! Traitor of fate! There will come a day that I will punish you!”
Jenna pledged inwardly.
“Found it!” Something that sounded like the devil’s voice rang in her ear, and a vicious hot air brushed against her.
Jenna quickly pounced to the side.
*Boom!*
A huge explosion sounded at the place she had been at, sections of the ground and plants flying everywhere.
Meanwhile, Jenna suddenly smelt something very sweet and immediately after, her entire body became numb and she collapsed to the ground, unable to move.
“This is the end!”
Leylin walked to Jenna, who had breathed in large amounts of chloroform, and raised his right arm expressionlessly.
“You- You can’t kill me! Do you know who I am?”
Jenna struggled, stuttering out her thoughts.
Without waiting for Leylin to ask, she quickly answered, “I am the successor of the Guardian family. I’m on good terms with the light Magi domain and various large organisations. The moment you kill me…”
“I don’t care who you are!”
With his right hand armed with black flames, he clawed downwards!
A green hurricane rapidly advanced towards Jenna and formed a green shield that protected her. Leylin’s flaming right hand collided with the shield, producing a tremendous noise.

“Uncle- Uncle Manla!” She produced a wide smile. Along with the loud noise of the wind, a burly, blonde man appeared in front of Leylin.

“Manla?” Leylin recognised this Magus, who had he had previously met once before.

“After receiving your transmission, I rushed over. Thank goodness I made it in time!” Manla stood in front of Jenna, glaring menacingly at Leylin.

“You actually dared to harm my niece to this extent! My family will definitely not…”

*Rumble!*

Before Manla could even finish his sentence, Leylin wasted no time and sent out numerous black fireballs towards him. From Leylin’s perspective, since they were already enemies, it was natural for him to eradicate them all. Who would bother with listening to what they had to say?

“Be careful, Uncle Manla! He’s very strong and his elemental essence conversion has surpassed 50%!”

While Jenna was yelling out warnings, Leylin was already
manipulating latent fireballs to attack Manla’s green hurricane. Under the attack of the fireballs, which had a might of 51 degrees, Manla was basically forced to retreat step by step. “So powerful!” An expression of shock appeared on Manla’s face. Shortly after, like a ghost, Leylin suddenly appeared in front of him, a clawed hand encased in crimson flames grabbing towards his face.

*Pop!* The sounds of bubbles being burst echoed and the defensive spell on the surface of Manla’s body was easily destroyed in the face of Leylin’s Crimson Palm. It was taken care of so easily, like paper being ripped apart. Leylin’s palm didn’t stop moving and grabbed ahold of the burly man’s chest.

*Slash!* A bloody piece of flesh was ripped out by the dragging of the claw, and the surrounding skin was left slightly charred. “This won’t do! The difference in power is too much. If we stay here, we’ll definitely die!” Manla immediately pulled Jenna up, turned, and ran!

Rationally speaking, Manla was a semi-converted Magus whose elemental essence conversion was at least 50%. In the Magus community on the south coast, he would be considered the cream of the crop. However, he had the misfortune of meeting an evildoer like Leylin, who was much too powerful even when his spiritual force and elemental essence conversion were being suppressed. In terms of hand to hand combat, Manla couldn’t win either. “Tiwoose Fererian!”

The moment they started to escape, Manla threw out a silver magic scroll. Nine green tornados formed, and like a wall, they hindered Leylin from giving chase. “You’re thinking of running?”
Darkness flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and after muttering a few incantations, he pointed forward with his right hand. Black fog immediately converged to become a black python, which headed for the two of them. This snake was like an illusion, passing through the green tornados. When it arrived in front of Manla, its crimson eyes were fixed on Jenna, and it bit towards her.

“What the hell is this?”

Manla produced another tornado.

*Hua la!* The black snake ducked and passed through without trouble, and then opened its mouth, viciously biting Jenna’s neck! Two black pinholes instantly emerged on Jena’s fair neck. They transformed to form a strange, twisted rune.

“Jenna?”

There was a white light surrounding Manla’s hand as he tried to brush the snake away.

However, with a swipe of the python’s tail, it shifted and bit Manla’s arm. The same rune was branded there as well.

After these two attacks, the snake hissed and turned back into the black fog, which entered Manla and Jenna’s bodies.

“This seems to be a curse! It’s going to be troublesome!”

Manla’s face fell. He couldn’t feel anything different from the formation of the curse, but instincts told him that it was going to be inconvenient.

“Jenna, hold on!” Manla yelled crazily, the green hurricanes still spreading. His entire body seemed to turn into a gale, and disappeared into the forest.

Seeing Manla escape in that direction, Leylin did not move. His body seemed to have shattered like porcelain, with large volumes of blood suddenly gushing out.

“It seems like I can’t endure it any longer, the injuries are too severe.” Leylin was half kneeling on the floor. He suddenly became
dizzy, and his vision began to blur. If possible, he obviously wanted to give chase and kill the two off. However, with his current physical condition, it was impossible for him to continue battling.

“However, the curse that I put up at the end… Hehe… cough, cough.”

Leylin laughed evilly but started to cough violently, spitting out large globs of black blood.

“Light elemental Magi will always be the archenemies of dark elemental Magi. Just a cage made of elemental particles was enough to reduce me to this state…”

Leylin laughed bitterly and his figure quickly turned into black smoke, disappearing into the forest.

Currently, he was in urgent need of a place to treat his injuries. Although he’d told George and the acolytes to wait for him, Leylin couldn’t even take care of himself, much less the others, so that matter was naturally thrown to the back of his mind.

……

After ten or so hours, in a temporarily set up tent.

In the twilight, an oil lamp illuminated the area a dull yellow. Hay was spread across the floor, and Leylin sat atop of it. In his right hand was a test tube with a potion within, which he was constantly tilting towards the injuries on his left hand.

This test tube was rather large, and in the translucent liquid, one could see something that looked like a baby’s face. It was encased in the liquid, and continuously let off little bubbles.

*Tssssss!*

After the potion was dripped into the wounds, large amounts of white gas were emitted, along with the sounds of corrosion.

“Ugh!” An intense pain struck Leylin’s nerves; he seemed to have
been struck by lightning, his muscles involuntarily twitching. Leylin bit down hard, and large droplets of cold sweat dripped from his forehead.
After that intense wave of pain, his wounds started to get numb. This numbing effect was very strong, feeling like tens of thousands of ants had crawled and gnawed on his bones. Leylin’s pale face reddened as he sucked in sharply.
At the same time, in the areas where Leylin’s left arm was injured, various veins and muscles squirmed and began to regenerate. First, the fractures in the bone were completely healed, and the flesh and veins followed soon after. After a few minutes, Leylin tested out his left arm.
At this point, the injuries on his left arm had been completely healed. Leylin’s arm was slender and fair, but under that beautiful appearance, there were muscles that held much explosive power. It was impossible to tell that this arm had been on the verge of breaking off just minutes prior.
Leylin tested out his left arm again with some actions and smiled in satisfaction.
“I’m lucky there was some liquid left over from the Flourishing Flower! If not, the injuries on this arm wouldn’t have been able to be taken care of so easily.”
The Flourishing Flower was an important ingredient used by Magi in operations to regenerate limbs. No matter what kind of injury it was, as long as there were enough Flourishing Flowers, it would be very likely that one could recover. The Flourishing Flower that Leylin was holding was something he had gained during his days as an acolyte. He had exchanged some of them in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy for incomplete information about the Branded Swordsman.
Excluding the injuries on his arm, Leylin had also used several potions to treat his wounds. He was now able to move freely and
fight in less vigorous battles.
“I’ve mostly recovered. I guess it’s time for me to go to the Marat Canyon!”
Leylin was a fairly cautious person. In the secret plane at the Eternal River Plains, it was dangerous beyond belief, to the point that even Magi were considered fodder! As a spy from the Thousand Meddling Hands, if he were ever to be discovered, he would be chased to the ends of the world!
In this situation, if he were to sustain any injuries, Leylin knew that there was little chance of him surviving, much less being lucky enough to reap benefits.
Leylin had already considered leaving and going somewhere else if his injuries couldn’t be treated.
After all, he still valued his own life over making profits.
However, the situation was not so dire. Though he had made enemies with a possibly high ranking Magus family with the abilities of divination, he didn’t think much of it.
“I believe they aren’t feeling very well right about now, yes? My curse won’t be taken apart very easily.”
Leylin smirked icily.
Though he had not been able to kill his opponents, he had successfully cursed Jenna and Manla with a spell that was unique to him.
The formation of this curse originated from a curse in the great Magus Serholm’s Book of Giant Serpent. Leylin had started the foundations of that curse and had made the appropriate changes to it.
After adding in every method he could think of, the curse was so different from the original that even the great Magus Serholm would be unable to undo it.
Like a password, it was complicated and difficult to make sense of. If one were not the original maker of the password, and instead
tried to use brute force to get through, the object protected by the password would be destroyed. Jenna and Manla seemed to have high standings within their family, and most likely wouldn’t be given up on so easily. Leylin’s next task was to use the power of the curse to find out who his enemies were. As he had been followed and almost killed on the basis of some useless prediction, Leylin was quite annoyed. However, there was still a family backing them, and he did not want to shed all sense of cordiality without making sense of the situation before him. This was why Leylin had chosen not to chase them and had instead placed a mark on both of them.
Marat Canyon was located at the end of Pome Alley. It was a barren canyon where the area and economy were both destitute. Apart from several wretched people who lived here in extreme poverty, no other humans would bother with a place like this. However, after the discovery that there was an entrance to a secret plane in this area, everything changed. Ever since one of the entrances to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was discovered here, Magi from every corner began to fight each other over the area. Eventually, the hunting and battle teams from Four Seasons Garden, with the aid of the white Magi domain, managed to repel the dark Magi forces and claim this land as theirs. Soon after this, unaffiliated Magi and acolytes set up a market for magic items in the surroundings. Four Seasons Garden’s higher-ups were well aware this place wasn’t well developed and dispatched people here. They treated this Magus Market as the center of their power and created a little town, welcoming all non-dark Magi. The first impression Leylin had when walking in this small town was that it had a lively atmosphere. “Looking for members! All of us are level 3 acolytes! We have a healer!” “The latest map of the secret plane for only 500 magic crystals!”
“Walking Dragon Flower! Walking Dragon Flower that’s freshly plucked from the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane for 6000 magic crystals! This is a discounted rate!”
“I am looking for a group to join! I’m a level 3 acolyte and have both offensive and defensive skills. I also know three healing rank 0 spells.”
From the entrance of the little town, various stall-keepers, adventurers and official Magi were crowded together, constantly arguing over prices till they were red in the face.
Everyone was at least an acolyte. There were no regular humans. The whole town was like a busy food market.
After much effort Lelin arrived at Four Seasons Garden’s administrative area, which was located in the middle of the town.
Compared to the chaos outside, it was much quieter inside the administrative area, which had the battle and hunting teams guarding the area.
Leylin couldn’t help but think about the two official Magi he had seen at the entrance to the administration area.
Getting two official Magi to stand guard obviously caused the Magi and acolytes who came here to feel immense pressure.
Numerous Magi were chattering amongst themselves quietly as they walked by Leylin. All of them looked to be in a hurry.
“Welcome! May I know if you’re here to do the entrance procedures? Please provide evidence that you aren’t a dark Magus, and then present 500 magic crystals. You will then have a one-time opportunity to enter!”
Leylin came to a counter, and as soon as the personnel saw him, he quickly spoke very formally, as if he were selling tickets.
In reality, Four Seasons Garden’s higher-ups had actually capitalized on the opportunity to enter the secret plane by selling entry permits.
“I’m not a Magus from anywhere else. I belong to Four Seasons
Garden’s Potioneering team and have been transferred here!” Leylin placed his token of identification on the counter.

“Ah… My apologies, Lord Leylin!” The personnel took a look at the symbol and name on the token and bowed.

“No worries!” Leylin looked at the several counters that had a long queue behind them and asked indifferently, “Have there been many magicians going in recently?”

“A large amount have come! Once we had allowed non-affiliated magicians to enter, the Magi and acolytes who came forth to register had filled up this area… We even had to request for several of the hunting team Magi to maintain order!” The staff smiled wryly.

Leylin was aware of this policy. Before he came here, he had taken a tour around the town and gathered information.

Though Four Seasons Garden had taken over this entrance, the amount of magicians who came here was no small number. If they kept hogging the entrance, it was sure to trigger someone’s dissatisfaction.

It wasn’t much if it was just acolytes, but when there were wandering official Magi involved, the situation wasn’t as easy to deal with.

If there were dark Magi purposely inciting conflict, then this cause a catastrophe!

Hence, the light Magi factions made a temporary agreement to become allies. They decided to open the entrance up to the public. All entrances that were controlled by light Magi had rules: other than dark Magi, as long as one paid up 500 magic crystals, one would have the right to enter the secret plane!

In addition to this, there was the condition that acolytes had to give up 50% of their earnings within the secret plane to the light Magi
powers guarding the entrance. Even official Magi would have a portion of their profits taken away! Even with these fees, magicians still flocked here. They unceasingly entered the secret plane and explored the areas without fear of death. There were some with good luck that managed to survive and leave the area with large amounts of resources. This attracted more acolytes to enter and risk their lives in the plane.

While these free labourers were dying by the dozen, Four Seasons Garden was hiding in the shadows and stealing portions of their profits. They were earning a fortune from this, and on top of that, through coercion and purchases, they now had a map of almost a million mu of the plane and received precious information firsthand.

To large light Magi organisations like the Four Seasons Garden, the resources that were currently inside the secret plane was just a small reward. What they really hankered after was the continuous production of resources that the secret plane could provide! Hence, with the resources as the bait, large organisations such as the Four Seasons Garden were able to attract many magicians with no affiliation to risk their lives and enter the secret plane for the resources. In exchange, they would be able to obtain more information regarding the topography and ecosystem within the secret plane.

As for the unaffiliated magicians, even if they were aware of the manipulations and hidden agendas behind the entrance fees, as long as they walked the path of a Magus they had no choice but to enter this profitable scheme that the white Magi had established. As the saying goes, as one is willing to be hit, one is willing to beat. Even Leylin had no choice but to approve the deviousness of this shrewd plan.

“I have 2 Grand Knights servants with me, they left for this place
before me. Have they arrived yet?”
Leylin asked.
“Please wait a minute, I’ll check for you!” The staff hurriedly
flipped through the thick book of records and accounting.
“I found it, it’s only yesterday that your two Grand Knights
servants brought your mount and luggage here. Also after showing
us your identification token, they were allocated to district D9 no.
23!”
The staff member bowed.
“I will report your arrival as soon I can. Regarding your task
allocation, someone else will contact and inform you in detail!”
“En! Great!” Leylin nodded his head. After leaving a secret imprint
with the staff as a proof of his arrival, he left the great hall through
the back door.
Behind the administration area was rows of orderly wooden
houses. These houses were modelled simply, and the edges were rather
rough. They looked as if their construction had been rushed.
Within these wooden houses, one could occasionally see a few
Magi and acolytes wearing Four Seasons Garden accessories.
In the middle of these buildings, a huge platinum gate that was tens
of metres tall was standing tall proudly like a mountain.
It stood tall there like an ancient existence. On the gate were
numerous runes connected together. They seemed to be alive and
kept wriggling on the gate frame.
Just the aura from the gate to the secret plane made it difficult for
Leylin to breathe.
“Is this the entrance to the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane?”
Leylin raised his head and surveyed this gate that seemed to be
rising into the heavens, eyes full of unspeakable awe.
The preciousness of a secret plane could be told from its entrance.
Enterances to secrets planes comparable to that of the Spirit Slaying
Sect’s plane could be easily destroyed by Leylin. The Gargamel that was as strong as a rank 2 Magus even had the terrifying power to break out of such planes!
However, if it were here, that Gargamel might not be able to even create a crack in the gate to the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane!
With an area of more than ten million mu, its internal structure and defences had to be unimaginably strong. Even if rank 2 or 3 Magi were to battle fiercely, the secret plane would be unaffected.
Leylin guessed that even a rank 4 Morning Star Magus would have a hard time trying to destroy this platinum gate.
Such a secret plane could be said to be a continental treasure! It was something that could help large organisations progress rapidly, or aid someone in taking over the world!
After actually seeing Eternal River Plain’s secret plane, Leylin finally understood how it could attract Magi from all over the south coast and even cause a Magus war.
“Unfortunately, no Magi organisation in the south coast is confident that it can take over the whole plane. As such, the plane has to be divided.”
Leylin sighed and turned his attention to the bottom of the large gate.
At the lower part of the large platinum gate, twenty or so Magi wearing Four Seasons Garden attire were patrolling the area like soldiers.
From these Magi, strong undulations from powerful elemental essence conversions of at least 50% were purposefully released!
Their bloodlust was also very obvious. It was apparent they weren’t idiots who were taking the resources based on luck but were actually seasoned Magi warriors!
Blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and the A.I. Chip immediately scanned the several spell formations that were laid around the entrance of the secret plane. There were some defensive
formations, while others were for detecting intruders. With such tight security, even if it was Leylin who were to try infiltrate inside, he would only end up dying. “What’s displayed might just be on the superficial level. There would at least be a rank 2 Magus holding fort around here!” Even outside Four Seasons Garden’s secret plane, there was a rank 2 Magus standing guard outside. Leylin did not think when it came to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, the Four Seasons Garden would be reluctant to send a rank 2 Magus as the guardian.
Leylin quickly looked at the faces of these Magi. He remembered each and every Magi that he’d seen at the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters before, but he did not recognize any of the people he saw here. There could only be one reason why these faces were unfamiliar! They must have been the hidden forces of the Four Seasons Garden, and usually did not show their faces. From the looks of it, the Four Seasons Garden had taken out all of their trump cards to keep control of the entrance to the secret plane. Caesar, the three-eyed Magus who was the leader of the hunting team, wasn’t here either. If he wasn’t hidden somewhere, he must have been on some special mission. Leylin felt his heart sink, as he was on an undercover mission as a spy for the Thousand Meddling Hands! It seemed that it was going to be difficult to complete his mission. Leylin recorded this scene with the A.I. Chip, and followed the signs along the road to find his accommodations. “Master!” Leylin approached the wooden house that was in district D9. As they could sense Leylin, the Grand Knights, Number 2 and Number 3, immediately rushed out of the house and knelt on one knee to greet him. Behind the wooden house, within a fence, the Venom Wyvern, Hawke, had drowsily lifted its head and made a noise of
excitement.
“Hm!” Leylin looked over his subordinates that he had remodelled and suddenly regretted having asked them to leave first. If he hadn’t, with the abilities of these two Branded Swordsmen, he wouldn’t have to be reduced to that miserable state and be so seriously injured.
“It’s important that I find an opportunity and test out the battle abilities and power of the Branded Swordsmen!” Leylin glanced at Number 2 and Number 3, who were kneeling respectfully, and rubbed his chin.

……

The Four Seasons Garden worked very quickly, and during the evening, a worker in something similar to a suit knocked on the door of Leylin’s house.
“Lord Leylin! In the name of the Four Seasons Garden, the elders request that you head for the secret plane tomorrow. You will be taking over zone 13.”
This person was also an official Magus. He spoke very slowly, with clear pronunciation. After reading, he passed a piece of parchment that had been stamped to Leylin.
Leylin raised his arms and took it.
The transfer order was on a stack of rather thick, dull yellow pieces of paper that gave a very firm feeling.
The contents of the order were just as the man had said, and on the bottom of the stack of parchments, there was a stamp that belonged to the Four Seasons Garden, along with a few signatures.
Leylin’s fingers brushed over the stamp.
*Sssii!* Four rays of light emerged from the stamp and danced atop the parchment, gradually forming a four-coloured ring that was unceasingly turning. After a few moments, the light died
This proved that the signatures and stamp were all real! Leylin became quiet. “Aren’t Potion Masters being called here to take over the roles of healers? Nobody told me I’d be on the frontlines.” Even if one didn’t have a brain, it would be obvious to them that this was Caesar’s work. Leylin still showed his annoyance and anger.

“I am a potion master, not a fighter! You can’t put me on the same level as those Magi with blood staining their hands. I protest!”

“I’m sorry, but this was a decision from the higher-ups in the Four Seasons Garden! If you have any problems, you can report to the elders within 24 hours. However, as long as the elders do not issue new orders to make your current orders void, you will still need to rush to zone 13 by tomorrow. If not, you will be labelled as a traitor and punished accordingly!”

This man said everything matter of factly, not caring in the least about Leylin’s opinions. He then gave an elegant bow. “If there’s nothing else, I shall take my leave now, Mister Leylin!”

*Pak!*

After the main door closed, the furious expression Leylin had on instantly disappeared. Instead, Leylin looked as if he was deep in thought.

Ever since he had arrived here, he had been prepared for people to make trouble for him and treat him badly. All of that talk was just a front.

The reason was that if a potion master were to be sent to the frontlines and took the news calmly, it would seem too suspicious. “But if time is so tight, I need to start with all my preparation now.” Leylin lowered his head in thought, his eyes sparkling with a faint darkness…

The huge platinum metal gate was, as always, standing tall. Only
until Leylin actually stood in front of it did he feel that all that he had seen in the past amounted to nothing in front of this majestic gate.

Now that he was so close to it, Leylin was in awe. From the gate to the secret plane, he could feel a trace of some ancient aura. What shocked him, even more, was that spiritual force was faintly emanating from the entire gate.

This spiritual force did not belong to any Magus but instead originated from the gate.

“It’s a living being and has its own spiritual waves. Perhaps, after a period of time, it can cultivate an intelligence of its own and become a genuine living creature!”

Leylin sighed in admiration and looked around the area. Though it was early in the morning, many Magi and acolytes were queuing in front of the gate with tickets in their hands. As there were tens of powerful Magi all around, it was rather orderly.

As an internal member of the Four Seasons Garden, he naturally didn’t need to queue up, and instead stood together with a few Magi at the optimal location right in front of the gate.

Number 2 and Number 3 were carrying large bags and quietly following behind Leylin.

“It’s 8 am! Open!”

Leylin looked at the hour hand of his pocket watch, which was now pointing to the number 8. The consumption of energy needed in opening the entrance to such a large scale secret plane was immense. Even the Four Seasons Garden would feel pain at this cost.

Hence, the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane’s entrance would only be opened once a day at this time.

With the loud order, a dozen Magi who had achieved 50% elemental essence conversion placed their palms against the frame
of the gate.

*Weng Weng!* 
A violent distortion of space rapidly formed in the middle of the gate and expanded.

*Creak!* 
The gate opened a little, and all of a sudden, light! Numerous rays of white light leaked out, swallowing all Magi and acolytes in front of it!

All Leylin could see was the blinding brightness in front of him, and his head spun from giddiness. After he regained his composure, he was already on top of a large white square in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane.

“Hah!”
Leylin breathed in deeply.

The first impression he had of the secret plane was that there was an extraordinarily dense amount of elemental particles in the air.

[Calculated density of energy in surroundings, found to be 371% of that in external world!]

The A.I. Chip projected its findings to Leylin.

“There is such a concentrated amount of energy, and on top of that, there’s so much land! For Magi, this is basically heaven!”

Leylin was astonished as he spoke.

“Listen up! I’ll only say this once!”

After the Magi and acolytes present familiarized themselves with their surroundings, a bald, brawny man who seemed to be in charge came onstage. He was donning the attire that the Four Seasons Garden’s Magi wore.

His voice was loud and resonant, echoing within the plaza.

“Attention to all Magi and acolytes who are not affiliated with the Four Seasons Garden! From now on, you are free to move about in the secret plane. As long as they have no markings of the light Magi alliance, all obtained items will belong to yourselves! Also, when
you wish to leave the plane, please return to this place. Remember, do not attempt to conceal your earnings! The moment you are found out to have been doing this, you will regret having been born!”

The brawny man was very direct, but the discontent of the masses quickly died down with the appearance of a row of official Magi behind him acting like guards. After the bald, brawny man announced that they were free to go, the Magi and acolytes cheered and rushed in all directions like wild horses let out of cages. In a few moments, they were gone.

“Alright! You are Magi from the Four Seasons Garden, yes? Come with me.”

The brawny man turned his attention to Leylin’s side, and his tone and facial expression became much friendlier. “My name is Dolorin, and I am the vice team leader of the Four Seasons Garden’s defense team! If you have any questions, feel free to approach me…”

It was evident that this man treated those in the same organisation as himself a lot better.

“I would like to know, is allowing these external magicians so much freedom actually a good thing? What I’m trying to say is, aren’t you afraid that they’ll stay longer in the secret plane or sneak out through other entrances?”

A petite female Magus enquired.

“Hehe! The Eternal River Plains’ secret plane is very large, and there is danger everywhere! No Magus can stay here alone for too long unless he or she wishes to die in strange and mysterious ways, or become the excrement of high-energy creatures!”

The brawny man obviously disapproved, a look of fear flashing across his face.

“As for your question about leaving, within one million mu, there is only one entrance, which belongs to us. If they wish to travel to
other entrances, they would need to go through exceedingly dangerous areas. Some of them are regions that basically require miracles for even official Magi to pass through due to the minuscule chance of survival!”
“Also, our light Magi alliance have all standardised the fees and set up stringent probing methods. This will not give them the chance to smuggle away their gains!”
“To go through such a difficult path and take such a big risk has no meaning basically unless they wish to defect to the dark Magii… However, I imagine the dark Magi are keener on robbing them of all their gains, and then flaying their skin and breaking their bones to use them as ingredients.”
Dolorin shrugged his shoulders a couple times, emphasizing his words with his facial expression.
“Zone 13? You’re really lucky!”

Leylin was brought to an office-like room in a castle. After Dolorin assigned locations to the few Magi who were queued up in front of Leylin, he opened Leylin’s transfer order.

Suddenly, Dolorin let off a surprised squeal. At the same time, he looked at Leylin as if he was cherishing a dear animal.

“Although you are a Potions Master, you were assigned to that place! Kiddo, did you offend someone?”

Leylin could only smile wryly in reply.

“Alright! Alright! As long as the order is correct, I won’t ask anymore. Take this, it’s a map!”

Dolorin slipped a piece of parchment paper to Leylin.

“Zone 13 is at the border between us and the dark Magi powers. Your mission is to protect the Black Mandara Flowers there, and if the dark Magi attack, you are to give a distress call through the signal tower. That’s all!”

Leylin was then sent out of Dolorin’s office like he was the plague. Leylin could do nothing but roll his eyes at this situation.

……

With Leylin’s speed, even taking into account the burdens that were Number 2 and Number 3, they hurried and reached zone 13 before
dusk. This area was a small highland and a fort that had been temporarily constructed using an earth elemental spell surrounded the Black Mandara Flowers. After Leylin provided proof of his identity, he met with the person who had previously been in charge of the area. It was a tall and slender male Magus!

“The signal tower is in the middle of the fort, and your room is beside it. I’m leaving all these items with you. Also, there were some acolytes who had been dispatched here recently; I’ll leave them in your care as well!”

The tall and skinny Magus hurriedly handed over the information, and after obtaining Leylin’s signature, he rapidly left the room as if he was escaping. This speed left Leylin rather agape.

“Alright, I seem to have gotten myself into some serious trouble now…” Leylin flipped open the map.

On the map that Dolorin handed him, the highlands of zone 13 that he had been assigned to were like an eyesore, smack dab in the middle of the dark Magi domain. Since he was surrounded on all sides by the dark Magi powers, there was a high chance of him perishing in that place. As for the forces that Leylin had, it was merely a few acolytes. Perhaps he would even have to include himself, an official Magus, as a fighting force!

In front of enemies, this trivial bit of power would only be able to warn and call for help.

“…No matter what, I still have to take a look at my subordinates!” Leylin came to the middle of the hall in the castle and gave a command for everyone to gather. “I am the new Magus guard! All acolytes who hear my voice are to assemble at the hall immediately!”
Leylin’s voice wasn’t loud, but it somehow travelled to every corner of the castle.
A moment later, hurried footsteps were heard and about ten acolytes jogged into the hall.
These acolytes’ attires were messy. Though they all donned the grey robes that signified that they were acolytes, the symbol of their academy and decorative motifs were all different, indicating they were the inferior acolytes that had been left behind by various academies.
The acolytes gave off energy waves that showed they were around level 2 or 3. Upon seeing Leylin, they all bowed in greeting, though they looked quite bewildered.
Leylin patted his head. That Magus from before had left too eagerly and hadn’t even bothered handing over his role to Leylin in front of everyone in the fort.
However, it was a fact that the slender Magus had transferred his symbol of authority to him.
Leylin withdrew a black scepter from his sleeves. Following which, various coloured defensive runes formed a spell formation within the large hall.
The scepter that he was holding on to was the device to control the defensive spell formations within the castle and was showed that he was the Magus leader.
After seeing the black scepter, the acolytes present understood the reason for his presence.
“We greet the Lord Magus Guard!”
“En! I’m Leylin. You! Tell me now, is everyone present?”
Leylin pointed at an old geezer acolyte.
“Rep… Reporting to my Lord! Apart for a few acolytes who have been delayed, the acolytes in this castle are all here…”
The old geezer cowered as he reported to Leylin.
Just at this moment, several acolytes appeared at the entrance of the
large hall with fear evident on their faces.
What followed was a rather youthful and apprehensive voice, “Lord, we are the new acolytes that were dispatched here! Our sincerest apologies that due to a previous patrolling mission, we had been delayed. May we seek your permission to enter?”
Even here, with Leylin’s position as a Magus, he had much power over these acolytes.
Not only could he issue missions as he pleased, he could even sentence these acolytes to death if he wanted to just by saying they had disobeyed orders!
After all, this was a time of war, and they were at the frontlines. Leylin had these acolytes’ lives in his hands, and this caused the few new acolytes to be extremely fearful.
After hearing this voice, Leylin’s face revealed an expression of astonishment.
“Come in!” He murmured lowly.
Immediately after, three male and two female acolytes entered the hall, still cowering in fear.
The acolyte standing at the front had a head of brilliant blonde hair, thick eyebrows, and big eyes, and behind him was a female acolyte with a large bow on her back. They looked to be a couple.
He trembled a little, but he clenched his jaw and knelt. “My lord! We had no intentions of being late, but they purposely gave us difficult missions to complete…”
“Utter rubbish!” At this moment, the old geezer, who seemed like a cat that had its tail stepped on, jumped forward. “The missions were all chosen by the Bottle of Famedor; how could there be a problem with it? It’s obviously you guys who do not respect our new Lord…”
Looking at this scene, Leylin immediately understood the issue.
It seemed that no matter where it was, it was a tradition for the older guys to bully the newcomers.
“That’s enough.” He spoke softly, with a gruff tone. The acolytes present all cowered in fear. The wrath of an official Magus was never a good thing to being about.

“This voice?”

While most of the acolytes were ducking their heads in fear, there were a few contrasting voices ringing out. They came from the acolytes who had just entered while keeping their heads bowed.

“Ley- Leylin!” George opened his eyes wide and looked at Leylin, who was up on the platform. He was gaping, his mouth opened so wide that he was like a huge toad. The others, who were making sounds of alarm, also included Sheira and Bessita.

Leylin scratched his nose. Though he knew that these three acolytes had been allocated to the secret plane to stand guard, he never expected that there would be such a coincidence that they would be under him.

“My apologies, my Lord! Although you told us to wait for you, after waiting for 2 days and 1 night, there were no signs of you, my Lord. Also, as the time limit for the mission was approaching, we had no choice but to leave…”

Sheira kowtowed, her forehead pressed against the icy cold floor as she did her best to explain. Leylin nodded his head, he remembered that he had mentioned it before. However, after the battle with Jenna, he had been severely injured and immediately needed a place to recuperate. Where could he have found the time to bother with them?

After that, he had already forgotten about George and his party.

“I don’t blame you for this! Previously I had an urgent matter to attend to, which took up much of my time…” Leylin explained.

*Peng!* *Peng!* *Peng!*

At this moment, the old geezer acolyte who had jumped forward
realised that George and his party were not nobodies who could be picked on. On the contrary, they were backed by an official Magus. He felt as if his soul was wrenched out of his body. Quickly kneeling on the floor, he kowtowed until fresh blood appeared on his forehead. “Lo… Lord! Please forgive me!” The old geezer felt exceptional fear. As an official Magus, Leylin had many methods to make him die a horrible death. Furthermore, conflicts such as these were like child’s play in front of an official Magus; he couldn’t hope to conceal this conflict. With Sheira’s constant tugging at him, George finally got himself together. As he looked up at his good friend, who seemed to be so far away from him, his expression was complicated. They were once good friends, but Leylin had surpassed George by such a huge margin that the old man, who was usually hard to deal with, was kowtowing and begging his pardon. This was a complex feeling that was difficult to make sense of in a short period of time. George’s head was spinning. Although Sheira had told him about Leylin after he woke up, seeing the truth of Leylin’s real identity for himself was much different from just hearing about it from others. However, George was well aware that he could not maintain the relationship he had with Leylin in the past. It would only be possible if he advanced and became an official Magus, and Leylin did not increase his power and stayed at his current position. But how was that possible? George looked at the dashing young man with jet-black hair. “Leylin is only twenty now, right? To actually advance successfully at this age indicates that he has a talent that I can never catch up to…” In comparison to George and Sheira, Bessita, who was at the side,
was stunned, and her expression was even more complicated. Emotions such as shock, regret, and fear, along with some other emotions she could not make sense of cycled through her face.

“That’s enough!”

Leylin waved his hand with an indifferent direction, motioning for the old geezer to stop his kowtowing.

“I don’t care for your matters. However, from today onwards, such petty conflicts must end. If anyone continues with it, causing our forces to dwindle and letting the enemy gain an advantage, I will draw the culprit’s spirit from his or her body, and torture it for a hundred years. Are we all clear on this?”

Leylin knew deep down that such bullying traditions could not be avoided. Under normal circumstances, if it was not for the fact that he knew George and his group, he would not have given a hoot about the issue.

However, with Leylin here now, not only would these acolytes stop bullying George and his party, they would even do their best to curry favour with them. As a result, he did not have much to say.
Alright, if there’s nothing else, you are dismissed!” Leylin looked at George, who appeared to have something to say but kept stopping himself, and then at Bessita and the others who kept silent. He could feel his enthusiasm waning.

Ever since he advanced to become an official Magus, he seemed to be in a different world compared to his original social circles. Even though his old acquaintances were right in front of him, they felt incredibly unfamiliar, as if hundreds of thousands of years had passed.

“Understood!” The acolytes under him bowed and quickly retreated. Even George and Bessita left the hall cautiously after bowing. Bessita, who was the last to leave, gave Leylin an incomprehensible look and quickly withdrew.

……

In the dark hours of the night, after completing one round of Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique, Leylin was lying in bed resting. Suddenly, he opened his eyes. Immediately after, a soft knocking came from outside. “Come in! The door’s not locked!” Leylin got up and spoke indifferently.
The door creaked open, and a human figure dressed in a grey cloak walked in.
“Bessita! What can I do for you?” Leylin glanced at this girl with silvery white hair, his eyes giving off a mischievous aura.
“Lord Leylin, please forgive Bessita for her previous offences!”
Bessita’s voice was mild and gentle as she spoke softly. Following which, she removed the cloak that she was wearing and revealed a stark naked body that was underneath it.
Bessita’s body had matured from the time he had last seen her. Her body was extremely voluptuous and with exquisite snow-white skin; it seemed as if water would gush forward when the skin was pinched.
Bessita looked at Leylin as she slowly knelt down. In her ruby red eyes, there seemed to be a fawning look earnestly seeking forgiveness.
One might wonder about the feeling of having a beautiful and stunning girl kneeling in front of you, stark naked, for your forgiveness, in the wee hours of the night.
Right now Leylin had experienced it for himself.
However, his expression was serene, as if Bessita’s seductive and delicate body was but a broken skeleton in his eyes.
Leylin looked over this intelligent, but also shrewd girl.
“You are smart, but at times, you’re too smart for your own good!”
He raised his right hand and caressed Bessita’s face, and then trailed it down to her breasts.
“You’re trying to seduce me? Just with these two lumps of flesh?”
Leylin’s right hand wantonly rubbed at Bessita’s soft breasts. The girl moaned, her expression filled with pain.
Bessita suddenly felt an immense sense of dread attack her. Her might as a level 3 acolyte was nothing to Leylin. What she did have confidence in, however, was her striking beauty.
However, looking at Leylin’s icy gaze, she suddenly felt that all she
had just done was shameless and laughable. Leylin’s cold eyes left her feeling suffocated. Her body continuously trembled as cold sweat dripped down. With the passing of time, Bessita’s body became flushed and her face pale. It was as if she could die from the lack of air at any given moment.

“However! Rejoice! To commemorate the previous ‘me’, I have decided to give you a chance!”

Just as when Bessita was about to faint, Leylin spoke softly. Only then did she recollect herself, and she panted heavily. Previously, it was as if a giant hand was choking her. The feeling of being suffocated disappeared when Leylin spoke.

Bessita took in the fresh air in large gulps with teardrops on the verge of flowing. There had never been a time where being able to breathe freely was something she considered a blessing.

“Come with me!”

Leylin shook his head and opened the door to a partitioned room. Bessita trembled and picked up her cloak, which was on the floor, and covered her delicate, naked body. She had been able to entice Leylin without feeling apprehensive, but now, all she felt was shame. Such a strange feeling made her turn beet red, wishing there was a hole that would swallow her up. After going through the door to another room, Bessita found that she had come to a secret room that was entirely sealed.

It was a small room, and one could see traces of the bricks on the walls.

In the middle of the secret room, there was a cumbersome metal desk that was similar to that of an experimentation table. Fixed on the four corners of the table were handcuffs and legcuffs. Looking at this metal desk, Bessita’s face turned pale. She wanted to retreat, yet she did not dare to. Then she realised that
oddities were hanging on chamber walls.
For example, there was a short cudgel that was littered with small beads on its surface. There was also a large syringe filled with various glass pearls within, with a suction pad and handle and other strange add-ons.
Bessita’s heart sank like a weighted rock.
Of course she was aware that many official Magi had strange fetishes.
She had even heard of a story where a professor in her academy ate a girl while she was still alive after having finished toying with her. “Don’t misunderstand, this isn’t mine, but a gift left behind by the previous Magus…”
Leylin fetched a unique binding instrumentation made with cotton and metal chains from the wall. “But I realised that his hobbies are quite similar to my own, in the past…”
Here, Leylin was naturally referring to that unfortunate idiot who had died and allowed Leylin to take over his body.
Leylin didn’t like Bessita since she had been taking advantage of him before. Hence, he was planning to teach her a lesson she wouldn’t forget.
The previous Leylin had suffered a great deal at the hands of others, and had eventually died.
Leylin believed that since he had taken over everything that belonged to the previous Leylin, it might be his duty to take revenge on his behalf. It wasn’t anything that difficult anyway.
“These items here have been modified and are exactly what ‘I’ liked.”
Leylin glanced at Bessita who was in front of him; a malicious smirk was on his face…
After Leylin willfully vented his feelings, he seemed to be completely fine the next morning and handled matters in the fort.
Bessita, however, struggled as she emerged from the secret room
the second night.
Her face was completely pale and her bones seemed to have no feeling in them. The scent of blood was strong on her, and Bessita stayed in bed for a whole week before she could force herself to walk.
If this had happened before, acolytes would have expressed their disapproval and complained.
But now, even if Bessita were to be absent for seven days, they could only tolerate her behaviour. After all, not every acolyte could have relations with an official Magus, right?
She suffered repercussions after that incident, and every time she looked at Leylin, both her legs would involuntarily shake as if she had seen a devil.
Of course, Leylin didn’t care about that.
Once he had used all the methods that he had gleaned from the previous Leylin’s memories on Bessita, he never approached her again.
The reason for what he did to her wasn’t because of some perverted desire or hobby. He simply wanted to punish her and take revenge for the original Leylin Farlier.
Hence, after heartily venting his anger, all matters regarding Bessita had been forgotten.
Leylin was currently patrolling the sea of Black Mandara Flowers.
These black flowers had petals that were the size of a palm. Atop were blue spots that were like stars, and in the night they would even give off milky white rays of light.
The Black Mandara Flower was a subdivision of the Mandara Flower. Their petals were an extremely precious resource for acolytes and even official Magi who specialized in negative energy.
In the external world, a Black Mandara Flower petal could sell for a staggering price of over 1,000 magic crystals!
And here, what Leylin had in front of him was a whole sea of these
flowers!
“The resources in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane are so bountiful that it makes one’s hair stand erect!” Leylin exclaimed even though it was not the first time he had seen them. A pity that above this sea of Black Mandara Flowers there was a surveillance spell. Before he decided to turn his back on the light Magi, he had to temporarily restrain any notions of seizing the flowers for himself.
In addition to the surveillance spell, there were intricate probing spell formations at every entrance to the secret plane. The question of how to secretly transport these resources out was a very troublesome problem.
Now he could understand why the Four Seasons Garden wanted to erect a fort in this area. Occupying a strategic location was just one aspect, but Four Seasons Garden could also not give up this huge sea of flowers. Although the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was extremely vast and had bountiful resources, this sea of Black Mandara Flowers was extremely valuable even amongst the other resources in here. If not for this terrible location, the Four Seasons Garden may have most likely sent a large army to defend this area.
“Lord! Our task every day is to try harvest as many of these Black Mandara Flowers and transport them away before the enemy arrives!”
Beside the sea of flowers, an acolyte trailed behind Leylin and explained the concrete details.
“Ennea Rings bless us! As those damned dark Magi discovered several large-scale resource areas, skirmishes arose as a result. We will most likely be facing a large amount of dark Magi forces… There are still some dark Magi and acolytes who try to break through the defenses every once in a while to steal the resources. Furthermore, we also have to guard against certain light Magi…”
This acolyte smiled wryly.
“I understand! Anyway, our mission is to harvest all these flowers as soon as we can and fend off wandering Magi and acolytes. If we are in a situation of distress, we have to send a signal. Is that right?”
Leylin asked indifferently.
“Yes, that’s about it!” The acolyte’s smile turned even more bitter. Such a tactic was plainly inviting Leylin and his party to dance at the edges of a sword and use their lives in exchange for resources. “I got it!” Leylin spoke solemnly after a moment of silence.
Leylin looked over the immeasurable number of black flowers in the distance as he calculated their progress. As long as all these Black Mandara Flowers were harvested, the headquarters wouldn’t have any reason to prevent him and the others from leaving. All the acolytes that Leylin had previously met were currently in the sea of flowers, carrying simple containers made from green vines. Their hands were covered with rings of dark energy particles as they plucked the Black Mandara Flowers with great care.

“This progress is too slow!”

With this kind of harvesting speed, Leylin estimated that it would take at least another month before this field of flowers would be completely harvested.

The opposing dark Magi would never give them so much time.

“I must find a way to speed up the process!”

Leylin squatted on the ground. With his hands covered by the dark light of a magic spell, he touched the petals of the Black Mandara Flowers, a light flashing in his blue eyes.

*Ding Ling Ling!*

Suddenly, a series of shrill sounds, like those of a small bell, rang.

*Buzz buzz!* A barrier of white light was emitted to tightly surround the field of Black Madara Flowers.

“The defensive spell formation has been activated! There’s an intruder!”
An acolyte started to yell, “Everyone, beware!”

*Whoosh!* Suddenly, a dark silhouette darted out from the high grass surrounding the field of flowers.

*Crack! Crack!* Two huge white skulls emerged from the hands of the black silhouette. The skulls didn’t have bodies attached to them, and floated in the air spookily. Inside each of the skulls’ eye sockets was a red ball of continuously burning flames. These huge skulls opened their jaws, revealing fine, sharp, white teeth as they bit into the white light barrier.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* The white light of the barrier was blinking constantly, as if it would break at any moment.

“Oh!” The black silhouette exclaimed in surprise, seemingly unsatisfied with his own performance. Following which, a black aura consisting of energy particles appeared around his body. Suddenly, the black energy aura emitted a serene light, which turned into two streaks of light as they hit the skulls.

*Crack! Crack! Crack!* The red fire within the skull’s eye sockets suddenly expanded, and the structure of the skulls expanded considerably. Cracks even appeared on the surface of the skull. It seemed that the energies inside were expanding too rapidly and the skulls were on the verge of bursting.

Following this transformation, the offensive power of these two skulls increased. The white light barrier kept shrinking, and in the end, it finally broke in front of the crestfallen acolytes.

“A semi-converted elemental Magus? We are finished!”

A more experienced acolyte collapsed to the ground with an expression filled with despair.

“Fear not! Lord Leylin is also an official Magus!” George held the
small hand of the trembling Shiera.
“What would you know!” The previous acolyte, who had collapsed to the ground, yelled in despair, “Our side only has this newly advanced and outcasted Magus! On the other hand, our opponent is a powerhouse who has been an official Magus for dozens of years. Being a semi-converted elemental magus, all his spells are stronger by at least half! At this stage, he is simply invincible as compared to those newly advanced Magi!”
Believing that his end was nearing, this acolyte didn’t care any more. He even started to be disrespectful towards Leylin.
“Hehe! A very interesting explanation, but quite accurate nonetheless!”
The black silhouette walked unhurriedly towards the flower field, and revealed himself to Leylin and the rest.
He was a young green-haired Magus. He was dressed in a strange black robe, which had a few green skulls and chains embroidered on it.
“He’s from Kurute Academy, which is known for its methods of torture and use of the spirits of the dead!” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he recognized this Magus in front of them.
This Kurute Academy was only a tiny faction within the dark Magi of the south coast.
They produced plenty of lunatics, and mentally unsound people. Even the other dark Magi could not stomach their actions, and hence, they only partook in sporadic missions and were often excluded from various operations.
The green haired Magus clasped his hands behind his back and greedily looked over the sea of Black Mandara Flowers.
“What an enchanting atmosphere… I can detect the taste of darkness…” The youth muttered.
Following which, he turned and stared at Leylin with his dark green eyes.
“Light Magi! Kneel before me, the great Lord Ciel, and offer to me your souls and devotion. Then I might consider letting you be my slaves…”

This Magus named Ciel had a rather proud demeanor, but Leylin could understand why. The age of a Magus couldn’t be determined just by looking at their physical appearance, but Leylin could estimate that this Ciel was around 50 years old based on the energy waves he was unknowingly releasing. His being able to become a semi-converted elemental magus at such a young age did indeed give him the rights to be proud, but he had met the wrong opponent.

Leylin smirked, but before he even had the chance to speak, the acolyte that sunk to the ground previously had already hastened towards Ciel, kneeling and kissing the ground before Ciel.

“Esteemed Lord Ciel! I am willing to serve you! I will become your most loyal slave!”

It was clear that the actions of this acolyte was a complete surprise to everyone.

Next to Leylin, plenty of acolytes carried expressions of scorn. They clearly didn’t know that this acolyte who normally carried himself rather decently would turn into this kind of person at a crucial moment.

The other acolytes were able to conceal the internal struggle within them such that it did not show on their faces.

“Very good! I’ll accept you as a servant!” Ciel revealed a strange smile on his face as he proceeded to extend his left hand and gently wiped the face of the acolyte.

“Ahhh!”

White smoke rose, accompanied by the pained scream of the acolyte.

Ciel’s left hand was like a red-hot iron plate as it left a large black
charred mark on the face of the acolyte.
While the acolyte was screaming, the Magus looked extremely excited as he slid his fingers over the acolyte’s face repeatedly. A little over ten seconds later, a complete rune mark was burned into the face of the acolyte.
The front of the mark resembled a skull, with a chain extending from within.
“Thank… Thank you my Lord for… this gift!”
The acolyte struggled to salute once more.
“Haha… After receiving my mark, you are now my slave forever!”
Ciel laughed, then looked over at Leylin.
“What is it? Light Magus, are you scared silly?”
“Not really!” Leylin shook his head.
“I just think he’s a bit pitiful, that’s all!” Leylin pointed towards the acolyte who had half his face ruined, his facial muscles still twitching.
“Why is that?” Ciel rubbed his fingers as slivers of white gas emerged from his fingers to form the shape of a skull.
The elemental particles surrounding his body was faintly discernable as his eyes emitted a dangerous light.
“Blurgh!” The acolytes behind Leylin all fell back, and some of them even doubled over and started to hurl.
The radiation from an official Magus, especially when voluntarily released from a powerful Magus with such a high degree of elemental conversion was something that acolytes found hard to deal with.
“He- will he be alright?”
George was supporting Shiera as he retreated quite a distance. He then glanced worriedly at Leylin, who had remained behind.
“Relax! Lord Leylin is very powerful!” As Shiera recovered, she also started to comfort her lover.
Even though she had previously seen Leylin in action, she couldn’t
quite understand how powerful he actually was. She only said those things to comfort George.
“It’s just that… Leylin is still newly advanced, I’m afraid that…” George held Shiera’s hand tightly.
Judging from how Ciel acted had before, one could tell he was probably crazy. If Leylin lost, then these acolytes would probably end up for the worse.
Shiera could only smile bitterly as she secretly prayed for Leylin.
“He’ll have to pay the price because he swore his loyalty to the wrong person!”
Leylin’s spoke indifferently as if he hadn’t even noticed Ciel’s previous magic display.
“What? You’re planning to…?” Ciel raised his eyebrows. He couldn’t understand. From the reports, it was said that this was a newly advanced Magus who was a meer potion master. How dare he ignore him?
Ciel pointed at Leylin!
It was as if the large skull had received a command and it charged towards Leylin, simultaneously spewing forth dark green flames!
*Bang!*
Leylin steeled himself for the attack with a nonchalant expression and charged forth.
“Is he crazy?” Before Ciel could finish his sentence, Leylin uttered a single syllabled word.
Immediately a dark red light erupted forth from within Leylin’s body.
The Falling Star Pendant’s defence activated immediately and formed a dark red barrier around Leylin. As the light condensed, it turned into something that resembled an illusionary armor.
*Boom!*
Dark green flames exploded on Leylin’s body, though no harm was caused.
Leylin advanced, bathed in fire like the incarnation of an ancient fiery war god. He swung his right fist viciously.
*Bam!*
The large skull was blown away, leaving a trace of fine bone dust as it spun through the air.
*Pow!*
After being sent upside down over a distance, the white skull finally broke apart.
“You…” Ciel was attempting to speak as he pointed towards Leylin. But it was too late now!
Leylin kept his face blank and charged in front of Ciel. He suddenly slashed with his hand, the red light around his hands extending and forming a crimson long sword.
*Slash!*
The long sword broke through the air and appeared in front of Ciel’s chest.
“Argh…” The muscles on Ciel’s face contorted, and just as the sword was about to pierce his body, numerous green chains emerged from within his body to form chainmail.
The red blade collided with the green chains, causing an intense wave of force.
*Crack! Crack!*
The long red blade shattered into pieces, and a part of the chain mail armour on Ciel’s chest broke off. Several green rings had been chopped in half and fallen to the ground.
“You… You’re not any normal Magus who has just advanced!” Ciel retreated, his expression showing his regret.
Leylin was indifferent as he charged at him.
“Wait… Wait a minute! We can discuss this! I still have many… Argh!”
Although Ciel wanted to say more, Leylin did not give him the chance to do so.
He pursued Ciel and struck again, black scales covering his clenched fist and emitting a glossy black lustre.
The first punch! Ciel’s chest was caved in, and countless green iron rings were shattered.
The second punch! Ciel’s innate defense spell was utterly destroyed. He retreated with his chest caved in and blood dripping from the corner of his lips.
“Do you have any last words?” Leylin expressionlessly approached him.
“My mentor will seek revenge for me!” Ciel incessantly said like a broken record.
“Boring!” Leylin prepared his third attack!
*Boom!* Ciel’s brain exploded like a watermelon, white and red liquids mixing together and spreading all over the ground.
The acolyte who had had his face branded was on the floor, staring blankly at the headless corpse that no longer had any life within it. He didn’t even have the presence of mind to wipe off the blood that had splashed on his face.
“I… I… I…”
George gaped and shook Shiera’s arm, “Was that person really a mighty semi-converted Magus? Are you sure he wasn’t an acolyte?”
“Definitely! Just a glare from him could kill us!” Shiera forced a laugh.
“Then… What kind of power must Lord Leylin have to have been able to defeat and even kill him?”
George watched Leylin, who was poking around Ciel’s corpse, with a complicated expression on his face.
“Lo… Lord…”
Only then, the acolyte standing at the side came to his senses. Just then, there was an arrogant semi converted Magus. How did he just die like that at Lord Leylin’s hands?
“Now, how do we handle the matter of Lyhart’s desertion?”
The deserter acolyte sat mindlessly on the floor like a fool as he unconsciously repeated nonsense. The secret imprint that Ciel had left on him was extremely eye catching.
“There should be an established punishment by the alliance to punish all deserters, right? Do you actually need me to teach you that?”
Leylin shot a glance at the acolyte.
Although it was just a glance, the acolyte immediately retreated several steps, and even his calves turned wobbly.
“N-No, my Lord!”
This newly-turned traitor was tied up by a few others and sent to the fort. The acolytes present all displayed terror and dread on their faces.

“Lyhart’s finished!” an acolyte murmured.

As per the rules and regulations set by the light Magi alliance, all acolytes and Magi who defected to the enemy’s side received the worst punishments.

Lyhart had betrayed them so blatantly in front of Leylin and the many acolytes, and he even had a secret imprint from the opposing Magus. This was irrefutable evidence.

In this situation, death was the easiest way out.

If he had the misfortune to meet a strict judge, at the very least, his spirit would be extracted and tortured for a hundred years. His family and mentor would also have to face some calamities.

“Why are you so distracted? Get to work! Do you want to stay here all day?”

Leylin looked over at the stunned acolytes and exclaimed icily.

“Ah, yes, my lord!”

Only then did the acolytes respond and continue with their harvesting. Not even George and Shiera were spared.

If they did not finish harvesting this patch of Black Mandara Flowers, they would not be allowed to return to the Magus base camp. No matter how powerful Leylin was, he would eventually be pressured by the dark Magus forces.

It might not even take that long. If the enemy was less stressed and decided to focus 0.1% or even 0.01% of their attention on this place, they would be doomed.

Hence, the acolytes worked diligently, hoping they would complete their mission today and leave this damned place.

“Restore!”

At the other end, Leylin was in the middle of the sea of flowers. He drew the black scepter, muttering a single word.
A ring of whiteness spread from the scepter, and like a thin thread, seeped into the ground.
At the same time, from the bottom of the flowers, the white spell formation appeared once again.
White threads that looked like spiderwebs surged, restoring the areas that had been destroyed by the dark magus.

[Jayle Defense formation Second form! Defense against physical attacks: 20 degrees. Resistance against magical attacks… Energy in store: 34.9%]

A screen appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes, presenting him with information about the spell formation.
With the help of the A.I. Chip, the restoration works were very successful. A few areas that had been damaged were perfectly repaired by the A.I. Chip simulating and Leylin physically fixing them.

“But the defensive capabilities of this formation are much too weak…”

Leylin stroked his chin, wondering if he should modify this spell formation to increase its defense.

As the Magus who stood guard here, Leylin was able to gain a portion of the Black Mandara Flowers, the ratio was so miserable that he cared little for it.

However, the rate at which the acolytes completed their task was directly related to how soon he would be able to leave. If there were attacks everyday, how would the acolytes harvest the petals?

Hence, Leylin’s first priority was to ensure the safety of the acolytes so they could finish the task as quick as possible.

“I should just wait until it’s late at night and finish it myself!”

Leylin looked at the acolytes who were bending their backs and working like farmers, a gloomy look in his eyes.

It wasn’t that he didn’t trust the acolytes, but he was used to having
some trump cards.
He could also come up with methods to increase the rate of harvesting. As long as he increased the rate at which the A.I. Chip operated, and prioritised this task, it would take but a few days. It was highly possible that by that time, the acolytes would be able to work quicker.

……

In the blink of an eye, about half a month had passed. In Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, the round disc in the sky began to descend, leaving a shadow on the ground. The Magi organisation that had constructed this secret plane had used some sort of spell and structured it so that there was a sun, moon, and different seasons. However, based on Leylin’s hypothesis and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, the sun and moon inside the plane had a hint of the energy of the original celestial bodies, which those ancient Magi were able to project into the secret plane using an unknown method. Leylin was in awe of the ancient Magi’s methods and boldness.

In Teljose City, the humans had made use of the volcano to allow increased production in its vicinity through the use of a spell, and just this had left Leylin agape. However, compared to the ancient Magi who could take the stars, embrace the moon, cause storms with one wave of their hands, and cast rain with another wave of their hands, Leylin had to bow down in inferiority.

“Not only is Lord Leylin a mighty Magus, he actually specialises in the study of plants!”

In the sea of flowers, two acolytes who were nearest to him were in conversation while their hands were busy.

“That’s a given; after all, he is an official Magus! It’s not something we acolytes can compare to.”
The male acolyte who had just spoken had short red hair. At this moment, there was a layer of blue light coating his hands. After rubbing his fingers, several strands of blue thread coiled itself around the Black Mandara Flowers.

*Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!*

The sound of a flower being cut was heard. Following which, the petals of that Black Mandara Flower floated down slowly from its stem and was kept safely by the acolyte, who placed it inside a bag. “Previously, every petal required a large consumption of magic power and spiritual force to acquire. Even Krall, who was the best amongst us, could only pluck 20 petal pieces in a day! However, ever since Lord Leylin imparted a new method to us, even I can harvest over 40 petals in a single day…”

The red haired acolyte had a look of admiration. “With this kind of speed, as long as we endure for a couple more days, we will be able to leave this damned place!”

The other acolyte who spoke revealed an obvious hint of longing. “I don’t wish to stay for another day in this place! With so many dark Magi and acolytes coming to attack us each day, we would have died over a hundred times if not for Lord Leylin here!”

*Boom!*

At this moment, the alert from the defense spell formation had sounded. However, these two acolytes seemed to have not heard it at all, as they continued to diligently harvest the petals.

“Say…Who do you think is the unfortunate one today?”

The red haired acolyte asked with some schadenfreude. “It should be another official Magus. Regular acolytes do not have such large energy wave fluctuations!” The other acolyte creased his brows before stooping down again to pluck more petals.

“Anyways, with Lord Leylin around, what’s there to fear?”

“You’re right!” The red haired acolyte nodded his head and began his day’s chores.
At this moment, within the castle’s walls.
In a gloomy, moist, and dark underground prison cell devoid of light, Leylin strode forward, carrying a black clothed figure on his arms.
*Crash!* The cell gate was opened, and Leylin tossed the person he carried into the cell without a care.
*Bang!* As flesh and the hard floor made contact, there was a loud thudding noise.
The person who was previously unconscious was now awake.
“Y
ou…you dare imprison me!? I swear on my name, Jocelyn Lena, that I definitely won’t let you off!”

This Magus, who was called Jocelyn Lena, donned a black robe. Her hair was curly, and her eyeliner make-up was extremely thick. Dark circles were prominent under her eyes, making it look as if she had not slept in days.

She had numerous bizarre silver piercings on her skin, and she also had a few earrings.

The general impression that she gave was that she was a non-mainstream teenage girl who had taken a wrong step in life.

“Jocelyn, yes?”

Leylin stood by the door, snapping his fingers.

Immediately after, the metal door seemed to have developed a life of its own and automatically closed. Meanwhile, metal chains climbed and locked the cage, and then branded the symbol of a black snake onto the entrance of it.

“I don’t care who you are. As you are a dark Magus attacking us to pilfer the Four Seasons Garden’s resources, I hereby arrest you on the account of attempted robbery. Someone will take you away soon. Once you are at the light Magi’s headquarters, I imagine you’ll have to start thinking of ways to escape your fate of being burned at the stake.”

Leylin said expressionlessly, and then commanded a nearby acolyte, “I’ve temporarily suppressed their abilities, so watch them well till
the defense squad takes over!”
“Yes, my lord!” The acolyte bowed deeply.
In these past few days, Leylin had given a little demonstration of his power, and that had been enough to instill fear into these acolytes.
All the dark Magi who had come to provoke them were easily taken care of by Leylin within a few rounds, whether they were acolytes or official Magi.
Just the number of Magi taken captive was enough to fill the fort’s jail to the seams. Leylin had no choice but to notify the defense squad. They worked out a schedule where they would take the prisoners away every few days.
“This power isn’t something that an ordinary Magus could even hope for! This Lord Leylin must be some amazing, important person!” the acolyte roared madly in his heart as he lowered his head.
Leylin cared little about this acolyte’s mental activities, and he cared even less about the female prisoner Magus, who was cursing hysterically. He shook his head and left the underground dungeon.
“Just wait! My uncle absolutely won’t let you off!”
From within the dungeon, Jocelyn was hatefully saying, “My uncle became a semi-converted Magus twenty years ago, and entered the secret plane with me. The moment he finds out what happened to me, he’ll definitely come save me! When that happens, I’ll…”
“That’s enough, Jocelyn! Can you be quiet?”
A helpless voice that held a hint of bitterness sounded from the opposite jail cell.
A curly haired middle-aged man appeared from the shadows and awkwardly greeted Jocelyn.
“Uncle-Uncle Luge, why are you here?”
Jocelyn covered her mouth, completely stunned.
“I was actually captured and brought here three days ago,” The
curly-haired man called Luge forced a smile. “The Magus guard in charge of this fortress, Leylin, seems to have reached the peak of a rank 1 Magus. I felt the terrifying undulations that could only belong to Magi who have reached the top.” Jocelyn was stunned. The sole person she was counting on had long since been captured, and thinking back to how she had been cursing incessantly, she had looked as foolish as a clown.

……

“These are the Black Mandara Flower’s petals that we gathered today. They have had spells cast on them to ensure their freshness for at least fifteen days.” Leylin pointed at a pile of materials that had been piled neatly to the side, and then at a few Magi who were in black robes and had their hands and legs cuffed, “These are the dark Magi caught recently. Take them away as well.”

“Yes, my lord!” The one taking the petals and Dark Magi for Leylin was also an official Magus who was followed by a few team members of the same rank. In front of Leylin, however, he could not help but lower his body and spoke with honorifics.

In the Magus World, whether one was a light or dark Magus, the basic principle was that power was everything. The team leader was only a semi-converted Magus, and Leylin had passed several dark Magi of that strength to him. In battle, taking an official Magus captive was obviously much more difficult than simply defeating or killing them. Hence, after being made aware of Leylin’s abilities, the team leader was unable to treat Leylin condescendingly and looked like he was meeting his boss every time he came.

“Hm! Three are official Magi, of which one is female, and thirteen
are acolytes…”
This female Magus was naturally Jocelyn, whose complexion was deadly pale as if she had been dealt a serious blow and did not dare to provoke Leylin. The team leader quickly recorded this information down and signed his name on a form. Afterwards, he couldn’t help but greeting him using Magus etiquette.
“Lord Leylin! Your accomplishments in the field have far surpassed mine. Once we return to the main headquarters, your rewards and contribution points will be given to you all at once!”
As it was basically a war in the secret plane, the prisoners that Leylin had taken captive could be turned into merit points. Not only could merit points be used to exchange for special items that could only be found within the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane from the large light Magi organisations, it could also be used to obtain unique items from other academies. This included advanced knowledge, improved spell formations, precious potions, and the like.
“Alright!” Leylin nodded. Based on his estimations, if the merit points he had gained could be converted into magic crystals, he would have least several million. This meant that soon, he could leave this place behind. As a better method for harvesting had been provided, about half of the Black Mandara Flowers had been picked, and only a relatively small amount was left. At the rate they were working at, the Black Mandara Flowers would be completely harvested in less than four days. And at that time, Leylin and the others would be able to leave this damned place. Every time he saw the defense squad coming in fully armed, Leylin was filled with annoyance!
As the goods that were to be transported were of extreme importance, the means of transportation provided to the transportation team was the Toucan.

This type of bird had a large body, and when matured, could grow up to ten metres tall.

Its beak drooped downwards, forming a large space that was basically a room that could store many items and even humans!

The team leader split up his team evenly and directed them into the beaks of three Toucans, leaving the best spot for himself. On top of the box full of Black Mandara Flower petals, he began to rest.

At the thought that he was sleeping on top of several million magic crystals, his heart began to burn involuntarily.

If not for the almost abnormal strictness that the light Magi alliance had at the entrance checks, and the fact that it was impossible to smuggle things out, even he might have harboured some terrible thoughts.

It was warm in the Toucan’s beak, and even when it was flying high in the sky, not a current of air came through. It was very comfortable, and as the team leader shut his eyes, he began to fall asleep.

*Crash!*

All of a sudden, the surroundings rocked and several boxes were overturned and fell to the ground.

“What’s happening?”

He exclaimed in shock.

Immediately after, a secret imprint by his ear brightened. “Leader, it’s an enemy attack! It’s the dark Magi!”

The voice of his subordinate travelled from the imprint, and he sounded fearful.

“Those wretched things!” He cursed, and shouted through his
secret imprint, “Prepare for landing; all members, get ready for war!”
*Boom!*
Before he had finished speaking, an intense explosion sounded, followed by squawks of pain from the Toucan he was riding in. Flames swept through in a horizontal line, burning through the Toucan’s tough beak and revealing the blue sky.
*Whooosh!*
Large amounts of cold wind flowed in, and the boxes filled with Black Mandara Flower petals were strewn across the floor. “Despicable! Land quickly!” The team leader hurriedly yelled. If he lost these resources, all the blame would be placed on him. How could he not be anxious? The Toucan was calling weakly. Finally, as if the flying Toucan could no longer take on any more attacks, its entire body lost balance and fell from the sky like a rock.
*Rumble!*
The Toucan’s huge body smashed into some shrubbery and left a deep indent on the ground. Various little animals revealed themselves and quickly escaped in the opposite direction. “Pah! Pui! Pui!”
Covered in dirt and grime, the team leader emerged from the Toucan’s beak and attempted to spit out the grass and leaves in his mouth. “I swear I will learn a flight spell when I go back this time!”
The leader vowed vehemently. It honestly felt terrible to be hurtled through the air. “Unfortunately, you won’t be getting the chance to do that!” An ominous voice sounded, and several people in dark Magus attire with green light shining in their eyes surrounded him. “Oh my! It seems I’m quite popular, eh?”
Looking at this scene, the team leader looked to be extremely dumbfounded, and just stared blankly at the opposing the dark Magi.

“Woofter magic arrows!”
A shrewd light flashed in the leader’s eyes, and his clothes exploded, countless fine needles flying towards the surrounding Magi.

“Go!”
He howled, and streams of lights and shadows flashed, rushing out in all directions to break out of the circle of people around him.

At this moment, he could clearly the state around him.

The Toucans, which served as a mode of transportation, had all been brought down, and were being surrounded by numerous dark Magi!
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In this situation, even though he was the leader of the defense squad, he had no other options but to flee.
*Woosh!*
A figure moved extremely quickly, with energy waves fluctuating about him.
The surrounding dark Magi had been stunned while he used a spell to launch himself away, and the leader took this opportunity to dash out of the circle, flickering every now and then.
At the very last second while he was attempting to escape, all he saw was his squad members being torn to pieces by colourful bursts of dark magic.
“Beta, Gogu… I’ll definitely avenge you!”
Gritting his teeth, a spell formation began to flicker, as if he was about to activate some spell.
*Peng!*
Suddenly, black hands extended from the shadows and grabbed his ankle!
“Thinking of running?”
A mass of green fog rapidly drew close, and he could vaguely see a huge figure.
The large figure raised his right arm, grabbing towards the team leader’s head!
“Damn it! I don’t care anymore!” The leader’s face turned red, and a necklace around his neck exploded, sending out immense magic
undulations that formed a Knight’s lance technique, which thrusted towards that huge figure!
*Tssss!* The dragon lance actually produced sound as it streaked across the sky, and even sparks were generated on it.
*Ka-cha!*
The dragon lance collided with the giant’s large hands. Under the disbelieving eyes of this team leader, the spell that he had spent a huge sum on to protect his life was slowly torn apart in the grip of those large hands.
The large hands didn’t stop moving, and they grabbed ahold of the leader’s head!
“Ah!” He screamed, a translucent crystal helm appearing on his head.
*Crack!*
The hands cracked the helm easily, and his skull was subsequently crushed, producing the ear-piercing sounds of breaking bones.
*Thud!* The now headless corpse fell to the ground, blood gushing out from its neck. Within ten seconds, the floor was dyed red.
“Have they been rescued?” The giant surrounded by fog asked.
“Reporting to my lord! They have all been rescued. Three official Magi, and thirteen acolytes! Not one more or less!” A dark Magus respectfully gave an account to the giant.
At the same time, beside the two other dead Toucan bodies, several Magi who had been captured by Leylin were rescued from their confinement.
“Listen up. I don’t care who you used to be, but based on the dark Magi’s rules and regulations, you are now our prisoners. Now, you have two options. One is to pay a ransom, and the other is to service us for thirty years for free! After thirty years, we will let you go…”
A dark Magus announced loudly in front of these prisoners.
Jocelyn and her uncle’s faces turned ashen. For dark Magi like them, rather than being saved by these people, it was much better to be sent to the light Magi!
After all, the light Magi were more trustworthy and easier to talk to. The moment they fell into the hands of other dark Magi organisations, it became impossible to tell what their fates were going to be.
However, their shackles had not been undone, and while they had their magic and spiritual force, they were unable to activate and use it. They were akin to regular people and were unable to resist.
In front of the giant surrounded by green fog, a faint black gas condensed, forming a cloaked black figure.
“How is it? The numbers are right! What about my rewards?”
“Don’t worry, we won’t count you out!” The giant tossed a black pouch to him.
The figure caught it and looked at it closely before keeping it, looking satisfied.
“But what’s the point of catching them, and then offering us this information for us to save them? What are your plans?”
The giant asked.
The cloaked person pulled off his cloak, revealing a crimson, masked face. This was naturally Blood Rogue, Leylin’s disguise.
The organisation before him was the Thousand Meddling Hands, the dark Magi organisation that Leylin had joined not too long ago.
“It’s obviously so I’ll get two portions of rewards! One from the light Magi, and another from you!”
“After all, at the light Magi’s end, after these prisoners are handed over, it matters little to me whether they live or die. If they dare to dock my merit points because of this, I’ll inform the elders!”
Leylin grinned, pointing at the prisoners who were unwillingly signing contracts.
“There’s something you get out of this as well, isn’t there? I doubt
you’ll let these Magi go so easily…”
“Haha…” The giant nodded in agreement, not looking the least bit sorry.
“Though we’re all dark Magi, they’re from small organisations or are wandering Magi. For us, they are unpredictable elements. No matter how many of them die, nobody really cares.”
“Also, I want 40% of the Black Mandala Flower petals from this batch! That is a part of the rules!” Leylin spoke up.
Capturing dark Magi and getting Giant to act the part of a good-hearted Samaritan and save them was just a part of the plan. Leylin’s main objective was still to gather resources!
After all, how could Leylin not be the least bit interested after seeing such a huge amount of resources slip by under his watch?
“Of course! These are the Thousand Meddling Hands’ rules! For those who provide information and news, they can obtain 40% of profit.”
Giant nodded, “Do you want the flowers or magic crystals?”
Without waiting for Leylin to state what he wanted, he continued, “If you want ingredients, you can just take two boxes of the Black Mandala Flower petals right now! If you want magic crystals, we’ll need to sell them first. I can’t guarantee the price, but it definitely won’t be lower than 80% of the market price. In addition, I’ll be taking 10% of your total profits!”
“Magic crystals! I’m in urgent need of magic crystals now, and I want payment in advance. If you can pay me right now, you can take 10%!”
Leylin thought about it for a while. Black Mandala Flowers were basically useless to him right now, and the spell marks on them were a little troublesome as well. The ancient teleportation spell formation that he had discovered previously required a large amount of magic crystal essence to activate.
Hence, he desperately needed magic crystals, and he needed a lot of
them to be of high quality!

“Oh?” Giant looked Leylin up and down, seeming to be surprised. “It looks like you’re pretty hard up now. Don’t worry, I’ll pay you in advance!”

All the resources were here and Giant wasn’t at a disadvantage, so he appeared to be very generous.

Giant passed a thick stack of magic crystal cards over to Leylin. “The amount is right!” Leylin counted and then told Giant. “I will be leaving this place in approximately four days, but there might be some resistance. Hence, I’ll need your help!”

“No problem!” Giant chuckled. “I’ll command the nearby Hell Cliff Army to look like they are going to attack. The people we have in the light Magi alliance will also help you.”

Leylin nodded slightly. Actually, right after finding out he had been assigned to an area that was thoroughly surrounded by dark Magi, Leylin had quickly contacted Giant. With the influence of his connections with Giant, the opposing dark Magi slowed their attacks.

Hence, those Leylin dealt with were mainly wandering dark Magi and acolytes. At most, there were some small organisations, but the real large powers did not appear at all.

After all, with Leylin guarding this area for over half a month and multiple dark Magi suddenly disappearing, would it not have attracted the attention of the larger Dark Magi organizations?

“Yeah! With the merit points you accumulated here, you’re sure to be promoted to a better and higher ranking position. At that time, don’t forget our agreement.”

Giant waved, and numerous dark Magi placed all the materials on a huge ground lizard and rapidly left the place.

At the same time, the green fog around Giant became increasingly
dense.
“I understand!” Leylin guaranteed.
Leylin was mentally prepared.
Since he had received benefits from the dark Magi, he naturally had to pay them back.
“You’ll always be a dark Magus! I hope you won’t forget that…” Giant’s voice became softer and softer, and the green fog dispersed, leaving behind Leylin, who was in deep thought.

……

“Magus Leylin, here is your order of transfer! Due to your exemplary performance in Zone 13, the alliance has given you a reward! You will be transferred to the alliance’s headquarters.” A Magus in black uniform respectfully spoke to Leylin. Though he was an official Magus, he did not dare put on airs. This was no joke! Leylin was someone who could easily take care of a semi-converted elemental Magus! Would he dare offend such a person while he was just a newly advanced Magus?
“Sure! Wait a bit; we’ll go after I pack up.” Leylin smiled gently.
“Take your time! I’m not in a hurry!” The Magus quickly waved his arms.
Leylin nodded and called for Number 2 and Number 3, who had always stayed indoors and seldom went out, and had been hiding their power. They were to pack up the bedroom and convene the acolytes in the fortress to complete the last ceremony.
“I’m leaving!”
Before he left, Leylin turned around and gazed at the fort. The surrounding Black Mandara Flowers had been completely harvested, leaving behind a bare field. This was an area that was surrounded by dark Magi on three sides. If anything happened, this was the first place to be attacked.
“Now, I can only hope that the scroll and potions I left behind for George will be able to save his life!”
If he wanted to transfer George and Sheila out of this place, he would need to work from headquarters.
Leylin already had made his plans. If it was not troublesome, he would help out, especially since they were good friends. If he could do anything to help, he would!
However, he now had to return to the headquarters before he could do anything of that nature.
s for that girl Bessita, Leylin had long since thrown her to the back of his mind. Although she had plotted against him before, she had already been punished for what she had done. Now that their debts had been settled, whether this girl would end up alive or dead would depend on her luck. What did that have to do with Leylin himself?

In the Four Seasons Garden’s entrance to the secret plane. Buildings were densely crowded around the large platinum door that had been erected at the entrance to the secret plane. There were two rows of Magi and acolytes queueing up near the entrance to the secret plane.

Before them was an exchange area set up for their merit points. The Four Seasons Garden would take a portion of their loot as a commission, leaving the rest for the magicians to keep. However, while that may have been the case, they still preferred to exchange their items into merit points for resources that better fit them, or even magic crystals for their convenience.

All of these things could be exchanged for here. Hence, Leylin estimated that excluding the loot that was secretly kept by the magicians, fifty to sixty percent of the resources from the secret plane were acquired by the Four Seasons Garden.

*Weng!* At this moment, a bright red light appeared in front of the platinum.
The beam of red light seemed to have an intelligence of its own, directly shining upon a Magus who seemed to be flustered. “Take him away!”

A Magus guard came forward and waved his arm. Two people wearing metal armour with runes embedded onto them held the poor fellow on both sides. “Ah! No!”

The Magus called out in despair. At this moment, two fireballs the size of fists had already been tossed at the two armoured men. *Boom!*

The flames swept the area, a heat wave continuously radiated outwards, causing the surroundings magicians to duck. After the flame dissipated, the two armoured figure were still standing there unscratched. Even the surfaces of their armour had no blemishes. “Attacking an enforcer, one more count to his crime! Take him away!”

The Magus guard’s expression was cold. With his command, the two armoured figures walked forward and suppressed the resisting Magus. “What a pity! That Magus definitely tried to smuggle something out and even thought of deceiving them…”

A Magus standing beside Leylin lamented. Leylin nodded his head. He knew that any resources from the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane would have a special aura which would disappear once it was brought to the outside word. Although that would not change any of the resources’ properties, the light Magi used it to make a sensory spell formation.

If any magicians were to smuggle resources out, this spell formation would immediately detect the aura of the magician. Hence, the Four Seasons Garden and other light Magi organisations
had devised a spell formation for that. Until now, not one had been able to successfully smuggle anything out.
Leylin knew of those spell formations, so in the previous operation, he did not wish to have the Black Mandara Flowers as his reward, but instead wanted magic crystals.
“Welcome! Welcome, Magus Leylin!”
Passing through various buildings, Leylin came to the zone where the enforcers worked.
This time, Dolorin personally welcomed him.
His attitude was very good this time, and it looked as there was a hint of apology in his tone as well.
The previous time Leylin had come, Dolorin had assumed that Leylin was just a Magus who was discriminated against. He had been assigned to a place like Zone 13 and it seemed unlikely that he would live past a few days, quickly becoming a corpse in the wilderness. Hence, his attitude had been fearful, and he had acted like he was chasing away a nuisance that would bring about the plague.
Now, with Leylin’s various achievements in battle, he could not hold himself back.
Goodness! Even he was just a little stronger than a semi-converted elemental Magus. Leylin, however, had defeated almost a dozen Magi of this strength in half a month.
Recently, Leylin had been transferred to the headquarters at the entrance. Based on the order, it seemed he was being put in an important position.
In the transfer of personnel, there were higher-ups in the Four Seasons Garden who spoke highly of him.
This meant that Leylin wasn’t alone and had a backing! A very powerful backing!
Dolorin was now very regretful of his actions in the past and decided to welcome Leylin personally, hoping to improve relations
with him.
“Vice team leader Dolorin! Long time no see!”
Leylin nodded slightly. He was already an adult and appear to be very enthusiastic, making Dolorin feel comfortable.
Though he was aware this was just an act, Dolorin was still surprised.
Magi were usually very antisocial people. In general, other than staying in laboratories to do research and occasionally teaching acolytes, they did not partake in activities to make connections.
Hence, Magi were very stiff in this sort of situation. Those like Leylin who were young, powerful, and socially competent were like a different species altogether!
Dolorin exclaimed that he was ‘abnormal’ in his heart, feeling it would be very difficult to deal with him.
To send Magi like him away, the price was something incomparable to regular Magi. He had been too harsh previously, and Dolorin was extremely unwilling to incur the wrath of a Magus who had a bright future ahead of himself.
These thoughts flashed in his head, but Dolorin’s face was unchanging, a smile stretching across his face.
“Magus Leylin! Your merit points, this time, are extremely high! I have brought it personally to you!” Dolorin handed over a medal-like item to him.
Leylin reached for it.
The medal felt rather heavy given its size, which meant that had been made of some kind of alloy with a high density. In addition, the medal was ice cold to the touch.
At the front side of the medal was the Four Seasons Garden’s insignia and at the back, it was a small screen.
On the screen, there was a record which read, “Leylin Farlier. Merit points: 563. Status: Locked!”
“This medal has recorded the aura of your spiritual force. Apart
from you, nobody else can use it. If you want to use the merit points, you have to unlock it first…”

Dolorin explained the workings of the medal.

“Oh?” Upon hearing that, Leylin inserted some spiritual force into the medal.

*Ka-chak!* At the same time, the sound of a lock opening was heard, and the entire medal began to ripple with light.

This light was a thin layer of dark green. Though it was bright, it was not piercingly so, and it engulfed the medal within.

A short moment later, after the light dispersed, the words on the screen on the medal changed.

The name and merit points were the same as before, but on the column in the back, a red “Locked” had turned into a green “Unlocked.”

“Huh, it’s really convenient!” Leylin was somewhat surprised. In the Magus world, everyone’s spiritual force was unique, and could be used as an individual’s password. Hence, such a locking mechanism was very advanced. It was not inferior to even the retina scanning of his previous world, but it was even more convenient.

“Haha… Leylin, you haven’t been to our exchange centre yet huh? The items available are plentiful! You, who has that many merit points, make me a little envious!”

Dolorin said.

“Really? Then I must really go and have a look!” Leylin smiled. Dolorin naturally did not say that on an impulse; it seemed that he was trying to make amends for his hostility before, and it seemed that he meant to do it through the exchange centre.

After all, he had been in the organisation for many years. He knew that even if it was exchanging for resources in times of war, there were still some good items that could not be exchanged for merit points. There were bound to be requirements of rank and identity.
Furthermore, there were different benefits offered based on who was redeeming the merit points. Obviously, this vice leader of the Magus guards had a rank much higher than Leylin’s.

“Haha, of course! We’ll go now!”

Dolorin put a huge smile on his face, though in actuality, his heart was throbbing in pain! Even he, with a somewhat decent rank, had a limit to how much of the monthly allocation he could use! Once that limit was passed, he had to pay the full price in merit points! Looking at Leylin’s attitude, it looked like today he would have to apologise through a large compensation in merit points!

Since the words were already out, Dolorin had little choice but to bring Leylin to Four Seasons Garden’s merit exchange centre.

The exchange centre was a huge white building, which had a roof that pointed up in a conical fashion. The curve was beautiful, and surrounding it, there was a divine light from the defensive spell formation around it, which caused people to stop in their tracks to admire it.

With Dolorin as a guide, Leylin successfully entered this place without any obstructions.

After passing through a pure white passage, Dolorin brought Leylin to a hall that was similar to the trading centre in the Four Seasons Garden.

“The exchange of merit points issued by the Four Seasons Garden is allowed in the entire light Magi alliance. Here, you can see precious resources that are not limited to only our academy, such as high-level knowledge and some exotic items.”

Dolorin continued on, but Leylin was already dazzled by the large screen that was basically a menu.

Compared to the exchange centre of the Four Seasons Garden, the amount and rarity of the resources were obviously of a higher level.
The crystallised elemental energy particles that could only be purchased in limited amounts in the Nightless City were sold in bulk here. One could buy as much as they wanted!

There were also various precious potions that were useful to Magi in breaking through the spiritual force bottleneck. They were in plain view, causing many Magi to halt their steps.

“Here, all internal members who are vice team leaders or have higher positions have a special privilege, and are able to exchanges for items with 10% off the price!”

Dolorin waved, seeming to be very generous.

He went forward to a counter and knocked on the glass window. “Put everything he wants on my account, under my quota. Do you understand?”

Leylin followed behind, “Then I’m not going to hold back!”
olorin had seen Leylin’s merit point card and knew that Leylin only had five or six hundred points there. Even if Leylin were to use them all up, it was still within his spending limit, which was why he was acting rich and very generous.

“I understand, my lord!”

All the personnel here seemed to know Dolorin. After receiving a blood-red crystal card from Dolorin, one of the employees smiled at Leylin, “My lord! As Lord Dolorin has used his authority, all items on the screen will be sold to you at a price of 10% off.”

“Good!”

Leylin nodded. “Give me three portions of Fantasy Flowers!”

This type of flower was an essential ingredient in brewing ancient potions. Leylin had thought they were extinct on the south coast, but to his surprise, he had actually found it here!

“Alright! Each is 50 merit points!”

The worker took Leylin’s card and swiped it on a card reader. *Beep!* A clear sound came from the medal.

Immediately after the number on the screen behind changed from 563 to 428.

After confirming that the transaction had gone through, he quickly passed three crystals the size of a fist to Leylin. Within the crystal, the phantom of a little white flower could clearly be seen.

This little flower was very pretty with its translucent petals and
roots. One could almost see the veins in the flower. At the bright yellow heart of the flower, several faint yellow stamens delicately revealed themselves. Sealed within the crystal, it appeared to be floating just like in a dream.

“A Fantasy Flower!”

As he took the three crystals, Leylin murmured under his breath.

“The moment precious plant ingredients like these are exposed to the air, they will quickly dissipate. Hence, crystallisation has been used to preserve them. The way to undo this magic is to…”

The worker quickly informed him of the important procedures. Leylin nodded and kept these words in mind. He carefully put the items away, pointed at a line of text on the screen, and said, “I’ve always admired Master Tywin’s potioneering diary. I want that.”

Dolorin’s gaze followed Leylin’s finger and fell upon the little words on the monitor. “Condition of Master Tywin’s potioneering diary: Half of it is lost. Fixed price of exchange: 100 Merit points.”

His face stiffened. From the looks of it, Leylin was going to use up all his merit points in one go. However, he had come here with the mentality of sacrificing his wealth to avoid a calamity. Since he hadn’t really used many of his quota this month, even if Leylin used up all of his own points, he would still be able to afford it. At the most, he would be hard pressed for merit points this month, so he did not oppose Leylin.

Another 90 merit points were spent, and a diary with a black cover, which was not in the best condition, was passed to Leylin. He could not contain the happiness brimming about his face.

“I also want that ancient potion formula, as well as…”

Leylin openly pointed out the precious resources and high-level knowledge he wanted. There were some items that he had searched high and low for to no avail, and there was information that only light Magi academies were privy to, and could not be bought easily.
Now, however, they had all appeared on the table of items he could exchange his merit points for.
Minutes later, the numbers on Leylin’s merit card had rapidly decreased until they had reached 0.
Even if they had been working there for a long time, it was rare for the people working here to see a customer spending so much in one go.
Dolorin could feel his heart aching. Leylin had pretty much used up his spending limit for that month, but at this point, he just gave a sigh of relief. “Haha… You’ve spent so much in one go. I’m afraid you might be breaking some sort of record here…”
At that instant, he was stunned.
All he saw was a bright smile on Leylin’s face as he produced an identification token, passing it to the person at the counter.
“Based on the rules I saw, if I don’t have any more merit points, I can use contribution points from the Four Seasons Garden to exchange for items at a ratio of 2:1, right?”
At that moment, Dolorin could feel that Leylin’s smile was akin to that of a devil’s smirk, and he felt that he had fallen into a bottomless abyss.
Moments later, Leylin emerged from the exchange centre with a look of satisfaction on his face. Dolorin, on the other hand, had an icy expression and bade farewell as quickly as possible.
The amount that Leylin had spent at the exchange centre had far surpassed his limit. He even had to pay a portion with his own money! It was no wonder that Dolorin did not look to be in a good mood.
However, he seemed to be considering something and hesitated to turn against Leylin.
“Yet another pitiful person constrained by rules and regulations!” Leylin glanced at the figure of Dolorin as he left.
The lifespans of official Magi were quite long. Hence, they were
quite tolerant of those at the same level of power as them, and could coexist harmoniously.
Dolorin and Leylin were in the same organisation, so it was inevitable that they would meet every day.
He had done Leylin wrong when he had first met him, so even though Leylin might have done a little too much, Dolorin still tolerated it.
However, in this situation, Dolorin had, from the victimiser, become the victim. If any conflicts happened with Leylin in the future, the public opinion would be biased against him.
If Leylin planned to continue in the light Magi camp, it would be unwise for him to abandon his reputation and lose his cool over such a small matter.
However, Leylin wasn’t just a light Magus! The covert mission he had been given by the Thousand Meddling Hands had placed Leylin on the opposite side of the entire light Magi faction.
What was worse was that Leylin was unable to decline the demands of the dark Magi organisation, in which there was actually a powerful rank 2 Magus! He was linked to the entire dark Magi faction in every way possible.
Hence, Leylin estimated that even if he were able to free himself from the mission, it would be impossible for him to stay in the Four Seasons Garden.
There was a large possibility that when he met with Dolorin in the future, they would be enemies. If Leylin didn’t take advantage of him now, he would just be an idiot.
As for Dolorin’s position as the vice team leader of the defense squad, Leylin lamented upon it for a while and then placed it at the back of his mind.
He went to the heavily-guarded centre structure built by the Four Seasons Garden in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. He waited to be granted entrance and receive a new mission.
In an office that had furniture shaped from plants, Leylin once again saw Reynold, the head of the Four Seasons Garden.

“Lord Reynold!” Leylin bowed, the spiritual force concealment method he had obtained from the old witch operating at full speed. Behind Reynold’s gold-rimmed glasses were a pair of pupils brimming with wisdom. They were fixated on Leylin, occasionally flashing with distrust.

“Magus Leylin! Your accomplishments at Zone 13 have been noted by us elders!”

After some time, Reynold did not notice anything suspicious from his observations, so he eventually began speaking in a light tone.

“We all agree that being a Magus guard is a total waste of your talent. You should be promoted to a more suitable role that can allow you to fully exhibit your abilities.”

Leylin looked respectful, but he was inwardly rolling his eyes. What ‘more suitable role’? Wasn’t it just a random decision made by the elders?

However, Leylin obviously did not dare voice his opinions or show his thoughts on his face.

In contrast, a faint blush appeared on his face as he slightly ducked his head, “I thank the elders for their trust in me. I’ll work hard at my new position.”

“Very good!” Reynold nodded, signing the document that appointed Leylin to his new role.

“Leylin Farlier! I hereby appoint you the vice team leader of the hunting team, and you will be the direct subordinate of Caesar. Retrieve your mission from him!”

“The hunting team! Caesar!”

Leylin immediately thought of the three-eyed Magus. It seemed that his ties with Magus Caesar were not easily cut off.

“What’s wrong? Do you have any objections?” Reynold stared at Leylin in interest as if trying to prod something out from his
expression. A faint undulation of spiritual force dithered about Leylin, trying to find out his true emotions. Unfortunately, with the scanning of the A.I. Chip, this trace of spiritual force was easily discovered. “It’s nothing! I’m just a little surprised. After all, I am a mere Potion Master and a Magus guard. I know next to nothing about the inner workings of the hunting team…” Leylin spoke indifferently, burying his feelings in the depths of his heart. “That’s not a problem. Caesar will train you well!” Reynold was full of smiles as if he was unaware of what had transpired between Caesar and Leylin. “Alright! I’ll consult Lord Caesar!” Leylin stayed silent for a while and then went forward to take his new document of appointment. After Leylin left, Reynold tapped his cane on the floor. *Thud! Thud!* The dull knocking sounds resounded about the office, and immediately, the bookcase at the side of the office split open. Countless vines spread out in two directions, revealing a pitch-black passageway. A Magus wearing a black robe adorned with blood-red flowers emerged from the passage. The most striking thing about this Magus was that he had three eyes! “Caesar, that little guy is going to be under you! Look after him!” Reynold told Caesar. “Naturally!” Caesar nodded, breaking out in a bloodthirsty smirk. “I am extremely interested in how he was able to increase his strength in such a short period of time!” Caesar’s expression became serious. “It seems that the inheritance
he obtained was anything but simple…”
Reynold shook his head.
“I examined him carefully just now. Leylin’s elemental essence conversion is at around 50%. Coupled with the record of him using his contribution points to exchange for crystallised elemental particles, I can only assume that he must have forcefully increased his strength. To be able to achieve such a battle record must mean that he obtained some powerful magic artifact or secret technique in the ruins…”
Even so, it must be some amazing item. How about it? Do you want me to get it from him?”

Caesar still hadn’t given up on his intentions. This time, however, Reynold was abnormally silent. Caesar obviously knew that the reason why they had not done anything to Leylin as of yet was because they believed whatever Leylin had gained in the ruins wasn’t anything precious. Hence, they could take their time, and did not have to do anything too unsightly. After all, they were light Magi! There had to be a certain level of trust between them and their peers!

Now, however, no matter how much Leylin tried to conceal his might, his battle achievements were a fact that could not be disregarded.

Also, the aura and energy waves that Leylin gave off was causing Reynold to become suspicious.

No matter what powerful magic artifact or technique Leylin may have obtained from the ruins, it could end up being an unpredictable factor that could change the tide of a battle. Hence, Reynold was a little interested.

There was nothing that couldn’t be done in this world. Not acting against Leylin previously was a matter of cost and benefit; it hadn’t been worth it to provoke Leylin.

But now, the situation was different.
“"You can give it a try, but don’t go too far!” Reynold held onto a
glazed porcelain cup, contentedly sipping a mouthful of a steaming hot liquid as he spoke.  
“I understand!”  
Caesar nodded, his figure disappearing into the darkness.

……

At another place, Leylin was following the signs on the road, and eventually came to the area where the hunting team worked.  
Once he arrived, he could see that there were very few acolytes and Magi. The stench of blood was thick in the air, causing everyone to feel pressure, as if there was a large rock pressed onto their hearts.  
“This has… quite an uncomfortable atmosphere!”  
Leylin looked up at the sky, which even seemed to be gloomy, and furrowed his brows.  
At this area, one could occasionally see members of the hunting team.  
These members all donned black Magus robes which were adorned with blood-red flowers. They intimidated everyone.  
Leylin could also smell the thick scent of blood, and even the smell of humans.  
It was evident that the dark Magi from before had been taken in by the hunting team.  
“However, this building is really quite large. The main thing is, how would I know where Caesar is?”  
Leylin held on to his document of appointment, and thought it over for a moment as he raised his eyebrows.  
He randomly picked a few Magi from the hunting team and blocked their path.  
“What do you want?” One of the Magi who he’d stopped was burly, and had a thick scar slashed across his forehead and middle of his face that made him look as if it had been split into half.
With such a terrible wound, his already fiendish face was made to look even more horrifying.

He was currently shooting out death glares at Leylin, elemental particle waves fluctuating around him.

"Very cautious of him! Also, he doesn’t seem to be holding back at all!" Leylin commented inwardly. Shortly after, he put on a bright, gentle smile. "I’m a Magus that is new to the hunting team. May I know where Caesar…"

"Whenever we have someone new, it’s customary for team leader Caesar to bring them in himself. You’re a spy!"

To Leylin’s shock, just a word from him had caused the Magus to shout.

Leylin was alarmed. Immediately after, the surrounding Magi of the hunting team halted, ready to watch a good show. He instantly understood the situation.

"Making things difficult for the new guy? What a repulsive practice!"

The scarred Magus roared, and immediately, two long metal blades appeared in his hands. Each blade was around 2 metres long, with the sheen enough to strike fear into the hearts of some.

"Storm!"

The Magus roared a syllable, and in a split second, the blade in his left hand began to emit a fierce, fiery red, while on the right blade, threads of white mist converged to form a blade of ice!

The scorching heat on the left and the icy coldness on the right mixed together, forming a red and blue metal tornado that swept towards Leylin.

[Metal Elemental Magic: A tornado formed from sharp blades, which has been upgraded by incorporating fire and ice elemental runes. With the bonus from his elemental essence conversion, the power of this attack is at least 35 degrees!]

A light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and he instantly estimated the
origin and power of this spell.
“The average newly-advanced Magus would be killed in seconds if
they were unfortunate enough to meet this sort of attack! This is
just crazy!”
Instantly after, Leylin smiled, as if he had gotten something he had
wanted. “Hehe… And here I was, afraid that I wouldn’t be able to
establish my superiority!”
Though it wasn’t good to attack the moment he came here, Leylin
wasn’t just any regular member, but the vice team leader of the
hunting team! Also, his opponent had been the one to initiate the
first move, so even if he were to complain to Reynold, Leylin was
not afraid.
To be honest, it would make him even happier if this incident
would cause him to lose his position.
All of these considerations flashed past in an instant, with only a
second passing in real time. In this amount of time, the metal
tornado attack of the scarred Magus was already in front of Leylin.
The violent wind pressure that accompanied the tornado turned
into wind blades that had a strength comparable to regular
weapons, instantly crumbling the walls on both sides of the
passage.
*Slash! Slash!*
The wind blades that seemed to have materialised out of nowhere
sliced against Leylin’s body, but they were repelled by a layer of
illusory, crimson armour.
“Not a bad attack, but unfortunately, you’re dealing with me!”
Leylin looked calm, enthusiastically evaluating his opponent’s
attack.
With a black flash of light, instead of retreating, Leylin advanced
and rushed forwards into metal tornado formed from flames and
ice.
“Is he a lunatic?” Not only the surrounding Magi, but also the
scarred Magus had this thought. What they saw next was the most unforgettable sight in their life!

*Bang! Bang! Bang!*

When the huge metal blades that had the added danger of the flames and ice struck Leylin’s body, immense noises resounded. Leylin looked indifferent, wandering around through the metal tornado as if he were strolling around his garden. The defense from the Fallen Star Pendant and Leylin’s own support spells rendered this level of attack useless. Leylin’s figure appeared as a black shadow as he entered the tornado, extending a pale, delicate finger and tapping gently!

*Poof!*

Like a balloon that had been punctured, the excessive might of the metal tornado broke down, and bits of blue ice and red embers flew all over the place, eventually disappearing in mid-air.

“This…” Scarface gaped, unable to utter a word.

This ice-fire metal tornado was his ultimate attack. With this one method, he had killed off countless official Magi, but now, this Magus had been able to move freely in the area of the metal tornado and even disable his most powerful attack with a gentle tap!

This had Scarface stunned, causing him to think that he was dreaming.

If Leylin had wanted to do everything himself, he would have used his powerful magic to go head on against that metal tornado. Although he would have been able to destroy the tornado in the end, the consumption would be immense, though the scene would be extravagant.

Hence, Leylin had chosen not to go through with that method, and instead, used the A.I. Chip to calculate the weak point of the spell. He then made use of his powerful defense and took care of the spell by heading into the area the spell affected.
This method was only viable when dealing with Magi weaker than Leylin. If the opponent’s spell was too powerful, Leylin wouldn’t want to risk entering the area of the magic like this. Now, having used this method, he found that it might have been a little too effective. Leylin looked at the dazed Magi and gave a gentle smile, his figure flashing as he came to the front of the scarred Magus. "You…"
Scarface raised his right hand, black fur extending from the palm of his hand and forming a red-eyed lion’s head. The lion head opened its mouth, preparing to shoot out some kind of energy attack. *Ka-cha!*
Leylin struck quickly, like lightning, and before Scarface could react, a large hand made from shadows grabbed through his innate defensive spell and touched his right hand. With the piercing sound of bones being crushed, the lion head on Scarface’s right hand crumbled. His right hand was also bent in an awkward angle by the black hand. The scarred Magus showed a hint of pain on his face, but that quickly changed to a fierce expression, as if he wanted to do everything he could to kill Leylin. Scarface’s remaining hand dipped into his bag and seemed to be touching some item. "Oh? You still want to resist?"
Leylin furrowed his brows, and in front of him, a black shadow blade emerged and slashed at the Magus’ left arm. *Thud!*
The black blade noiselessly streaked across, and the Magus’ left arm fell. Seconds later, fresh blood gushed out like a fountain. "Ah!" Scarface’s facial muscles contorted, making him look even
more sinister and terrifying.
In the eyes of Leylin, however, he just seemed like a clown!
Leylin grabbed forward, black threads at the tips of his five fingers. These threads seemed to have their own intelligence, latching onto Scarface and pushing him to the ground, and then entering his nostrils, ears, mouth and other facial orifices.
Like a duck that had been clutched by the neck, the Magus’ expression changed to that of resignation, and the violent undulations surrounding him immediately dissipated.
“You…”
Scarface seemed like he had something to say, but Leylin didn’t give him any chance to speak.
Unsympathetically, he raised his foot, clad with a leather boot, and stomped down on Scarface’s chest.
*Thud!*
Scarface’s chest sunk in, and his face turned deep red and then purple as he spat out a mouthful of blood.
Leylin stopped looking at him, and glanced at the surrounding Magi of the hunting team.
After defeating Scarface, the Magi from the hunting team that were present seemed to have achieved a mutual understanding, and encircled him.
“What’s this? Are you all going to attack me?”
Leylin, stepped on the motionless, scarred Magus with his right foot, and coldly glanced at the other Magi present in the surroundings.
An ice-cold killing intent suddenly descended upon this location, shrouding it entirely.
All of the present magicians all felt their backs turning cold, as if some ancient beast had turned its cold eyes to stare at them.
“I am the hunting team’s newly elected vice team leader Leylin Farlier! This chap disrespected me just moments before, so I punished him a bit. Does anyone have any objections?”
Leylin swept a glance over them all and coldly asked.
To strike at a Magus was within his authority, but if he set about to bully him some more, it would be considered excessive.
Moreover, there were at least a dozen Magi from the hunting team present here, and they were all seasoned warriors. If Leylin wanted to dispatch of all of them, it would be troublesome.
After hearing Leylin’s words, all the Magi there looked at each other in dismay. A Magus who seemed to have some status asked, “Since you are new here, would you be so kind as to release Wally?”
“No!” Leylin shook his head.
“This Magus dared to offend me, the vice team leader of the hunting team! Before he gets the punishment he deserves, I retain the authority to take handle this matter myself.”
“Apparently, he is still not planning on stopping.”
When all the present Magi heard Leylin’s statement, they all simultaneously felt a chill in their hearts.
This Magus Leylin was clearly a ruthless person!
They were all in a deadlock.
Fortunately, a voice was heard from afar minutes later, solving their dilemma.
“Magus Leylin! What do you think you’re doing?”
A crimson fog condensed and transformed into an illusory image.
“Team leader Caesar!” The rest of the Magi in the hunting team bowed respectfully.
“Hm!” Caesar casually nodded and then proceeded to focus his attention on Leylin.
“Leylin. What happened here? I want you to give me an explanation!”
“Can’t you tell, Lord Caesar?”
Leylin exerted some force with his right foot, and Scarface, who was under it, immediately lost consciousness.
“Not only did this Magus offend me, he actually did it in this area and used dangerous spells! I only utilized my authority as the vice team leader and stopped him!”
Leylin continued rather mockingly, “If you don’t believe me, we can go and take a look at the spell monitor…”
Leylin could have been wrong, but after hearing Leylin’s explanation, the fog which had congealed into a human figure seemed to ripple, as if it was so angered by him that it dissipated.
“Good! Very good!”
Caesar nodded condescendingly and looked towards the Magi present.
“Wally offended a Magus of higher power than him and attempted to use spells in a public area. I sentence him to imprisonment for three months within the dark tower. Also, I will rescind his share of
this year’s resources.”
“With this, are you satisfied, vice team leader Leylin?” Caesar asked, specifically stressing the last few words, and seeming to be implying something.
“But of course! I am very satisfied!”
Smiling, Leylin withdrew his right foot, and facing Caesar, he humbly saluted.
This outcome was already better than he expected, and he was aware that he should know when to stop and not go too far in this situation.
“By the way! You, come with me!” Caesar pointed at Leylin.
In front of the admiration and fearful gazes of the hunting team, Leylin shrugged his shoulders and slowly exited the field. Only the scarred Magus Wally was left lying on the ground.
“He… He’s actually this strong!”
After Leylin left the field, the remaining Magi made some noises of incredulity.
“Though he is strong, he dared to contradict our team leader. Hehe…” Another Magus grinned, revelling in Leylin’s apparent misfortune.
Their team leader, Caesar, was no good person. Not only was he the team leader of their hunting team, he also had, in his arsenal, many methods of torture that could cause any official Magus to have a nervous breakdown.
“Leylin? Leylin! I remember him, he is Zone 13’s Leylin!”
At that moment, one of the Magi finally realized Leylin’s identity.
“The person who killed 9 dark Magi and captured 8 more? Right, that person seemed to be called Leylin and was sent here by headquarters. It can’t be that much of a coincidence, can it?”
A Magus of the hunting team with exceptionally oily skin joined in the conversation, a wry smile on his face.
Having attacked and even captured many enemy Magi, some of
whom were semi converted Magi, Leylin had earned quite a reputation. It was only now that these Magi knew who they had provoked. “No wonder! If that was Leylin, he has the right to be so arrogant!” An older middle-aged man looked in the direction that Leylin had left, a complex expression on his face. They were just ordinary members of the hunting team, with their average strength being that of a semi converted elemental Magus, and multiple Magi who had this level of power had been killed by Leylin. The one thing they collectively agreed on was that power determined one’s status in the world. At the beginning, they had not known who Leylin was and thought Leylin had been provoking them. On hindsight, they decided this was the actions of an expert who knew what he was doing.

......

The Magi in the hunting team later saw Leylin once more at the banquet that was held the same evening. This time, no one dared to be so stupid as to go forward and pick a fight with him. Leylin sat on the right side of the long table, calmly sizing up all the Magi present at the banquet. The number of people in the Hunting Team was less than those in the Potioneering Team, but still, there were about 50 people here. Each of these Magi emitted powerful energy waves; almost all of the Magi here had reached the threshold of semi elemental conversion. They could be called the cream of the crop amongst official Magi. “Everybody!” At the head of the table, Caesar cleared his throat. Immediately, there was complete and utter silence, and all the Magi stood up in deference, waiting for Caesar’s command.
“Before we begin the feast, allow me to introduce to you to a new member!” Caesar’s face was brimming with a radiant smile. “This is Magus Leylin! He will join our hunting team and assume the post of vice team leader. Everyone, please welcome him!” In the wake of Caesar’s introduction, Leylin also got up and bowed multiple times to address everyone. “Vice team leader Leylin!” Those Magi who have seen Leylin display his might did not dare to do anything else other than bowing so low that they almost achieved a perfect 90 degree angle. “Hm! Very good!” Caesar observed this scene, and nodded in satisfaction. He then continued, “All of you have experienced Magus Leylin’s strength. Therefore, I declare that vice team leader Leylin will hold the position of commander of Hunting Zone 3.” “Wait a minute!” A voice sounded out, interrupting Caesar’s speech. Caesar frowned, but upon seeing the source of this voice, his expression eased up, “Vice team leader Leylin, do you have an objections?” “Of course I have one!” Leylin looked gloomy and seemed put out. “Hunting Zone 3? As per my knowledge, that seems to be under the Abyssal Bone Forest’s territory!” Within the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, apart from areas dominated by either light or dark Magi organizations, there were places that armies had taken over, as well as some unoccupied areas. These regions were located at the borders between the two factions of light and dark Magi. Some lay in desolate areas, while others were in accessible locations. Since both sides were still unprepared, engaging with their main forces was a waste of resources. Hence, there had been an
unspoken agreement that wandering Magi from either domain were allowed to battle there.
It didn’t matter what these places were previously named. These few areas, which were under the Four Season Garden’s control, all belonged to the Hunting team, and were further divided into different zones.
“Yes. The main enemy in Zone 3 is the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Do you have any problems with that?”
Suddenly, Caesar slapped his forehead and exclaimed, “Oh, I forgot! I read about your background Magus Leylin, you were once an acolyte under the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, right? Is there something you forgot to tell us?”
“Hmph!” When joining the Four Seasons Garden, Leylin had been very open with his background. Besides reaping some gains from Dylan Garden, there wasn’t anything interesting about his past. However, the feeling of having someone else having a hold on him caused him to be ill at ease.
“When I joined the Four Seasons Garden, I had clearly cut off my relationship with the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Does team leader still doubt my words?”
Leylin firmly replied.
“Very good!” Caesar clapped his hands smilingly.
“So, prove it to me! Bring me the head of a Magus from the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, and prove your loyalty to the Four Seasons Garden!”
“And if I say no?”
“In that case, pardon me, but I will arrest you on the grounds of going against orders!”
The smile on Caesar’s face turned cold, and his third eye on his forehead blinked open.
*Buzz*
A strong and bloodthirsty spiritual force that was like a fine
interwoven web covered the entire room in a split second. Leylin had a solemn expression as he used his right hand to lightly press on his temple. Spiritual force that was filled with an unfathomable depth and darkness descended upon the field as well.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

Instantly, the air seemed like it was being torn apart, and the sounds of shattering were emitted.

*Whoosh!* An intense storm broke out in the room, and it felt like a tornado with a magnitude of ten had appeared out of nowhere, scattering the food on the dining tables all over the place.

“It’s a spiritual force tornado! Fall back!” All the Magi present carried an expression of extreme terror as they retreated hastily.

“Your spiritual force has improved quite a bit, but it’s a shame that it still isn’t enough!” Opposite Leylin, Caesar’s voice drifted over, carrying a hint of surprise. Following which, it turned cold. “I’ll let you experience what a genuine peak rank 1 Magus is like! Spiritual Eye!”

After he spoke, a faint image of a giant vertical eye appeared instantly behind Caesar. The eye seemed demonic as the entire eye was completely black, and resembled the eye on Caesar’s forehead.

*Rumble!*

After the image of the vertical eye appeared, the might of the spiritual force tornado within the area amplified by a couple fold. It even resulted in minute black cracks in the void, where silvery light were being produced from there.

“Team leader Caesar’s prowess has reached the state where he can tear apart the void. If he progresses any further, he will reach the ability to materialise spiritual force, which is an ability that belongs to rank 2 Magi!”
Seeing that Caesar’s spiritual storm had almost torn space apart, the members of the hunting team that were present let out incredulous exclamations.

“I’ve long since heard about how 20 years ago Lord Caesar had reached the criteria to advance to rank 2. However, to pave the way and make his future advancement smoother, he chose to suppress his cultivation.”

A female Magus with gauze that veiled her face mumbled, her eyes revealing adoration for Caesar, “As I thought, our team leader really is the strongest!”

“As expected, he’s powerful!”

Leylin clenched his teeth and a large amount of spiritual force burst out from his sea of consciousness.

At the same time, a blue ray of light flashed in his eyes. “A.I. Chip, estimate the opponent’s power!”


Streams of data were rendered in front of Leylin’s eyes, eventually coming to a conclusion.


“This data means he’s way past the entry requirements to advance
The conditions for advancing from a rank 1 Magus to a rank 2 Magus were that one’s spiritual force must be at least 80 and that their elemental essence conversion must be at least 80%. However, many talented Magi did not want to advance right after meeting the bare minimum requirements. They wanted to be in the best condition when they advanced, which would pave the way for their future. Thus, they voluntarily suppressed their spiritual force, keeping it at the boundary while they increased their elemental essence conversion to at least 90%. Only then would they choose to advance. The type of Rank 2 Magi who chose to advance this way had a battle power that far exceeded that of their peers. All their future advancements would be easier as well. Caesar was a talented Magus with this train of thought! Based on strength alone, he was even above the leader of the Potioneering team, Decarte. However, this was quite normal. Decarte was the leader of the Potioneering team, and instead of battle power, he was more focused on being knowledgeable in Potioneering. Caesar, on the other hand, was in charge of the Four Seasons Garden’s hunting team, and was thus definitely much stronger than his peers. Leylin suddenly had a thought and immediately took a look at his stats.


“My spiritual force and elemental essence conversion are much too
weak compared to his, and he isn’t even using his full strength. If he did, my external spiritual force would have been destroyed long ago!”
Leylin gave a bitter laugh.
Of course, he hadn’t gone all out. His elemental essence conversion and spiritual force had been suppressed by the technique obtained from the old witch, which made it more obvious to the others that he was not a match for this person.
After Caesar had used the Spiritual Eye Technique, Leylin’s spiritual force gradually weakened, causing the attack to come dangerously close to his body.
“Puh!”
Leylin suddenly paled and staggered three steps backwards.
With every step, a deep footprint was seen. White gas seemed to rise around him.
A hint of red appeared in Leylin’s eyes, but it quickly dissipated. He rubbed the blood at the corner of his mouth, and looked at Caesar with an unwillingness to lose.
“Team leader is really amazing!”
In this situation, victory was very obvious. The female Magus from before cheered loudly.
“Shut it!” Caesar glared, and the female Magus kept quiet, feeling wronged.
*Pak pak!* Caesar clapped his hands expressionlessly.
After that, two rows of acolytes in formal attire came to the hall. Facing the mess in front of them, there was no sign of confusion or astonishment as they quickly restrained their emotions.
Multi-coloured rays from magic spells lit up the area, and the level 3 acolytes even used rank zero magic spells to speed up the rate of cleaning up.
Minutes later, the hall looked as good as new. Even the long table had been replaced, and all types of steaming and tempting
delicacies were once more displayed on the table. “So? What’s your answer, Magus Leylin?” Caesar watched Leylin, who looked gloomy. “Since that is what team leader wants, I have no choice but to obey!” Leylin answered unwillingly. “Very good!” Caesar nodded. “Well then, everyone! Let us raise our glasses to Leylin’s future contributions!” *Clink!* Numerous wine glasses touched together, producing bright, pleasant sounds.

……

“My lord! The area that we are in charge of, Hunting Zone 3, spans from the green highlands there to the region of dried up marshes. Here, the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane does not yield much, save for a type of Fantasy Spring Water, which is in high demand by Magi from both sides.” An old Magus from the hunting team with traces of white hair brought Leylin around, patrolling the area. The areas the hunting team were in charge of greatly differed from areas which had been officially conquered. They were at the border where many opposing powers were, and it was hardly strange to see enemy Magi around. Thus, these few hunting areas were those where the most fights occurred within the secret plane. Every day, there were many acolytes and even official Magi who died at the hands of the enemy, turning into mere merit points on the enemy’s part. “Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s acolytes? It’s really been a long time since I last saw them!” Leylin was on high ground as he mumbled, gazing into the
distance.
At that moment, his past life within Abyssal Bone Forest Academy along with each and every person there seemed to be fresh memories.
“Anyway, Professor Kroft is only a Potion Master, so it’s unlikely he will be sent to the battlefield. If he’s offended someone recently, that would be another story altogether.” Leylin thought for a while, the only people he would meet on the battlefield were the official Magi from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.
Out of the professors in the academy, he was only familiar with a few such as Dorotte and Kroft.
Even if he killed a few of the others, he wouldn’t have a guilty conscience since he didn’t know them anyway.
He even had hopes of running into some of the people from the Lilytell family! He clearly carried a grudge from being chased by them previously.
“Vice team leader! We have tarried here for more than 15 minutes! This is the boundary, and if we continue onwards, it’s possible that the enemy’s scouts will detect our energy waves and besiege us.”
The patrolling magician who was guiding Leylin bowed and reminded him.
In Hunting Zone 3, the vice leader Leylin was deserving of the title of being a local tyrant.
After all, he had sufficient strength, was the highest ranking person that was from Four Seasons Garden, and he was the boss of these hunting team members. This was very terrifying.
If Leylin found any Magus an eyesore, it was entirely within his right to send them to their deaths by commanding them to enter the enemy’s territory.
If they wanted to resist, Leylin could kill them on the basis of them defying orders.
Thus, now that their lives were in Leylin’s hands, things such as pride and honour would be long forgotten. Leylin, who had been sent here, subdued these few Magi with a few moves. “Got it, Old Man!” Leylin replied, indifferently.

Most of the members of the hunting team had nicknames, and this Magus who was next to Leylin went by the nickname of ‘Old Man’. “Since the Lilytell family lost the competition to be the dean of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, it implies that their strength definitely does not exceed that of a rank 2 Magus. Who knows, they might not even have a rank 2 Magus.”

Leylin quickly calculated the strength of the Lilytell Family. “The grandfather of Bosain, whom I killed back then, was a powerful elder in the Lilytell Family at the peak of rank 1. He was probably a little weaker than Caesar and had about the same level of strength as Decarte.”

Leylin’s blue eyes flashed as he silently commanded, “A.I. Chip! Using the data gathered previously about Caesar, set up a simulation model and calculate my chances of winning in a fight against Caesar…."

[Beep! Mission established. Beginning data transfer, simulating a human form!]

The A.I. Chip faithfully pinged. “Let’s go!” Leylin said to Old Man, who was standing at the side and heaved a sigh of relief as they quickly left the area. As he moved, streams of data flickered in front of Leylin rapidly. With Leylin’s mental power, it was very easy to multitask. Moments later, the A.I. Chip came up with the results.

[Battle results: Number 2 and 3 will detonate themselves and die. Host and Caesar will die together. Probability: 89.7%.] “What’s happening? Show me specific images!”

Leylin was shocked. The conditions that he set included what he
would do if he went all out, setting up traps and adding in surprise attacks from Number 2 and 3, who were Branded Swordsmen. Even with these conditions, the outcome was not in his favour, which was entirely beyond his expectations.

*Weng!*

A faint blue screen, similar to a three dimensional display, appeared before Leylin’s eyes and showed an image. In the scene, Leylin managed to launch a surprise attack when Caesar was distracted, dealing great damage to his opponent. Caesar then turned back in surprise and anger, and fought Leylin. Two figures flickered across the screen. What shocked Leylin was how strong Caesar’s body was.

As they fought desperately for a few minutes, Caesar used his secret technique once again and healed most of his injuries. At this moment, Leylin had also revealed his hidden cards: Number 2 and 3.

Number 2 and 3 roared and the brands on their bodies lit up, drowning Caesar in violent flames that shot out of their long swords. The third eye on Caesar’s forehead blinked open, exposing a black, defensive ray of light that completely suppressed the two Branded Swordsmen’s attack.

From that eye, there also seemed to be a white light that had high offensive power against one’s spirit. At the end, Leylin could was left with no choice but to order Number 2 and Number 3 to detonate themselves, thereby destroying Caesar’s third eye.

However, Caesar laughed crazily and split his body into two other figures. The three bodies stood at different areas, dragging Leylin with them as they exploded simultaneously.
Three spirits in one body! I never expected to see Magi still practicing this ancient technique, and actually succeed!”

Leylin’s expression showed his shock. However, from the simulation from the A.I. Chip, Leylin now had a better idea of the level of his strength. Currently, Leylin could be said to be at the peak of rank 1, where dealing with a semi-converted Magus was as easy as chopping vegetables. However, if he were to compare himself to genius Magi, such as Caesar, who had already met the requirements to advance, he was still weaker. Fortunately, Magi like Caesar weren’t common on the south coast. His mortal enemy, the elder of the Lilytell family, was a little weaker than Caesar. With Leylin’s current skills, if he were to fight him one on one without any tricks, he was not a match for Caesar. This was to be expected though, since it had not been too long since Leylin had become an official Magus. Most Magi would still be new and inexperienced. It was already an achievement for Leylin to possess this level of strength.

“As long as I endure for a while more and wait until my spiritual force and elemental essence conversion reach the ultimate degree
that can be achieved by a rank 1 Magus. Then, with the added bonus from my Warlock bloodline, I will definitely be able to defeat and maybe even kill him…”

Leylin calculated inwardly, his eyes flashing with dark light.
This sight caused the old geezer beside him to tremble in trepidation.

*Boom! Boom!*

A severe seismic wave came from the ground.
A crack appeared, and a gush of tempting, fragrant and milky white spring water burst out from the ground.
The mysterious aroma pervaded the air, and the plants in the area rapidly grew, seeming to have received some nourishment.

“Squeak squeak…” An earthen yellow mole scuttled from the grass and it opened its intelligent eyes wide, observing its surroundings.
It dashed to the side of the water, and began to drink in huge gulps.

*Boom! Boom!*

Heavy footsteps sounded and gradually increased in number, announcing a horde of animals.
There were regular animals such as wolves, cheetahs, and pythons, but they were nothing compared to the number of strange, bizarre-looking creatures that were there as well.
There were some whose upper half was human, while the other half consisted of the legs of a spider, and there were others that were as huge as mountains. More than all of these creatures, however, the thing that caused the most fear was the black smog at the heart of the wave.
This black smog spanned across a large area, and there were multiple tendrils of smoke at the edges that kept extending outwards like tentacles. Regardless of whether they were tigers, cheetahs, half-spiders, or double-headed snakes, all animals that got close would be silently consumed by the smog.
After it passed through, all that was left was a pile of white bones.
Even though there was a temptingly strong life force energy radiating from the milky white spring water, the animals all made the same decision to stay far away from the black smog. There was a deliberate amount of space left between the animals and the black smog. They came to the side of the spring and competed desperately to have the chance to drink the spring water. Just the black smog alone had taken up a lot of space. The sounds of furious roaring and the tearing apart of meat sounded out! A bloody battle for the chance to drink the water started at the mouth of the spring.

Of course, these bizarre animals headed in the opposite direction of the black smog, and the mole from earlier had long since disappeared. More than a few kilometers away, a group of Magi wearing the uniform of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy were advancing. In the middle was a Magus who had countless plants that seemed like tentacles hanging all over his body and embedded straight into the ground.

All of a sudden, a Magus halted his footsteps and began to grin. “What’s up, Blake? Did you discover anything?”

The leader of the team questioned the scouting Magus called Blake. “Yes! In that direction, about 7 kilometers away, I sensed dense life force energy waves, and I could feel the energy veins pulsing through the earth… It was at the mouth of a newly-formed fantasy spring. There are also multiple weak traces of life, which probably belong to the animals nearby that were attracted there.”

Blake spoke with conviction, pointing in the direction of the spring. “Good! Let’s get there, lest those darned bastards drink up the entire spring!”

The Magus leader was extremely pleased. Discovering the fantasy
spring was a substantial contribution!
“But…” Blake was obviously hesitant. “Within all those traces of life, there seems to be a large fellow…”
“Who cares? Do you mean it can resist with 5 official Magi joining hands to attack?” One of the members in the group immediately exclaimed, “Then what are we waiting for?”
The entire group immediately set off in the direction Blake had pointed out, and Blake could only smile wryly, knowing that nobody would listen to what he had to say. Also, just as his teammate had said, there was nothing that could stop them… Unless they met a Magus from the Four Seasons Garden!
Once the Magi group reached the mouth of the fantasy spring, they saw many animals scrambling for the spring water.
“No! How dare these lowly, wretched bastards drink my fantasy springwater!”
As he watched the water level drop, the leader was on the verge of going crazy. “This is a high-level lifeforce spring water that sells for over a hundred magic crystals per gallon! It’s also a necessary item when brewing potions. Quick! What are you still doing there? Kill all of these bastards!”
Two ice blades emitting coldness appeared in the Magi’s hands, his expression complicated as if he bore a grudge.
Though the spring would be saved like this, and would become a possession of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, only a small portion of contribution points would be given to him!
“Team leader, look at that!” Blake dragged the leader by his clothes, pointing at the black smog.
“The devilish black smog! Shit! It being so large must mean that it’s already an adult!” The leader could feel a headache coming on. The devilish black smog was a high energy being in the Magus world.
They were born without a form and were just made of black smog. They did not move quickly, but it was because of this that spells were less effective against them, and their defensive abilities were more impressive.

The most pressing issue was the fact that this devilish black smog had already matured.

It was a large possibility that a matured devilish black smog has awoken their ethereal skill. Even official Magi might have trouble killing or chasing it away.

“Whatever! The good thing is that this type of devilish black smog has high defense, but relatively weak attacks, so the only thing to be careful of is to not let its tentacles touch you!”

The leader pointed at two members. “You two will follow me and release long range spells, and hopefully draw the devilish black smog away. The others will chase away the animals because every second they are still here means we lose thousands of magic crystals.”

The Magus leader seemed to be respected in the group, and his arrangements did make sense. Soon after, the Magi split up.

“Drilling Frost!”
“Fireball!”
“Globule of Secondary Energy!”

Spells at the energy levels of an official Magi were let out by the three Magi. Ice bolts, fireballs and multi-coloured balls of energy flew out towards the devilish black smog beside the spring.

The spells distorted the air as they streaked across the sky, leaving behind traces of energy waves.

“Wa… wa…”

The devilish black smog made sounds like that of a child crying as the black smog on its body dispersed. It then became more transparent.

The ice bolts, fireballs, and globules of secondary energy went
through the black smog, but it did not cause any significant effect. The entire body of the black smog became a little more transparent, yet it drank from the spring in huge gulps, as if nothing had happened.

“Physical attacks don’t work, which means this devilish black smog definitely has awakened its ethereal ability! Use vaporisation or area of effect attacks that are made up of pure energy!”

The leader was a veteran, and immediately analyzed the current growth stage of the smog.

“Ice fog!”

He first produced a large amount of white fog, in which were ice shards and beads, which quickly moved in the direction of the devilish black smog.

“Support me!” The leader howled.

Immediately after, the two other group members got to work. One released a green hurricane that hastened the speed of the ice fog, while the other constantly set up defenses in front of the group. With the help of the green tornado, the icy fog moved extremely quickly and immediately reached and stopped at the devilish black smog.”

*Tss tss*

The sound of cold water freezing was heard as the ice fog collided with the black smog. The black smog all around the area started moving even slower.

“Whoa!” The roars of the devilish black smog continuously sounded, this time, filled with pain.

“Chi chi!” The black smog churned and revealed two huge yellow pupils, staring directly in the leader’s direction.

“I’ve already made it angry, so be careful!” Upon seeing the smog’s reaction, he began to yell.

*Chi chi!* With the strange sounds from the smog, two large portions of black smog were vomited out like a bomb, and rushed
towards the three Magi!
“Shield of Gaia!” The only member in charge of setting up defenses went forward, pressing his finger to the ground in front of her.
*Rumble*
A layer of large granite rock rose up from the ground, taking the shape of a shield and defending the Magi behind it.
The black smog bomb collided with the large granite shield, producing an explosive bang.
*Pa pa!*
The surroundings seemed to be a mess, rock and mud were splattered in all four directions, and a crater was also created at the epicenter of the collision.
The few Magi were hiding behind the Shield of Gaia. Together with their innate defense spell, they were safe even from the few stray fragments of rock that struck them.

“Ji Ji!” Seeing that its attack didn’t have any effect, the strangely-formed black smog finally shifted its attention away from the fantasy springwater. It extended numerous tendrils around the surroundings, which was slowly creeping towards the three Magi.

“Great! I’ll lure it away! All of you are to collect the fantasy springwater while it’s distracted!”

The team leader hollered.

After that, the three Magi constantly retreated while frequently casting spells, luring the strangely-formed black smog to gradually move away from its original spot.

The other two members of the team took the chance to quickly eradicate other life forms. When they reached the edge of the fantasy springwater, they were the only beings left.

Once Blake reached the mouth of the spring, he started to chant a mysterious incantation.

*Rumble!*

The milky white springwater started to bubble as he steadily chanted in front of the spring.

*Bang!* The large quantity of fantasy springwater was being absorbed in midair by Blake, just like a whale drinking water. As
the water was being absorbed, it concentrated into a milky white gemstone-like object, finally landing in Blake’s hands.

“Hurry up! I won’t be able to hold back the strange-formed black smog for much longer!”

When the leader saw that Blake and another member were collecting the springwater, he first let out a smile before turning to shock in the next instant.

After seeing that someone was collecting large amounts of the delicacy that it was going to consume, the black smog that was still pursuing the team leader let out a baby-like wail before turning back to charge towards the spring.

“Delay it to gain more time!” That team leader’s eyes were slightly red.

“Awoooo!”

A creature’s holler suddenly came from the sky while the few team members were occupied.

A chill arose in all of the Magi’s heart after hearing that sound. The strange-formed black smog also stopped its movement as it revealed its enormous yellow eyes, looking warily at the sky.

They saw an enormous Poison Wyvern. Its body was 30% larger than it should have been, with green scales covered it completely. The force behind every flap of its enormous wings was very powerful.

“This….This Poison Wyvern seems to be…..”

That team leader said in a daze.

“That’s right! That Poison Wyvern that is stronger than an official Magus is the symbol of that Magus! Leader, we’re really lucky this time!” A member of his group smiled wryly as he said that. A sliver of despair appeared on the team leader’s face.

“Hmm? A strangely-formed black smog? That’s right, I need its core…..”

An extremely youthful voice rang out from the Poison Wyvern’s
back, and following that statement, a strong magic undulation descended on the entire area. The Magi below instantly felt as though an enormous wave was crashing over them. That power was so powerful that they couldn’t resist.
The strange-formed black smog that was still dealing with three Magi immediately stopped resisting against them. The powerful aura of its body increased by half and its form shrunk. It looked more substantial and both of its yellow eyes were wide as it stared fixedly at its new opponent. Low snarls could be heard from it. Following that person’s voice, a black hand, which burned with violent black flames, struck from the back of the Poison Wyvern towards that strange-formed black smog.
The areas that the black hand passed through briefly fluctuated. The hand was not yet done, and the stones and grass were blown away roughly, revealing a barren land. The black smog lay right in the middle of this area. “Chi chi!” The smog faced the heavens and bellowed, constantly spewing out black bullets. These bombs that were formed from condensed black fog seemed to grow eyes and sailed through the air in a strange line, accurately intercepting the large hand that burned with black flames. *Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!* The black bullets exploded in front of the large hand, but it was clearly ineffective. They were burnt up by the flames, leaving not even a trace on the palm of the hand. *Whoosh!* The attack from the black smog was unable to slow down the fiery large hand. Under the astonished gazes of the surrounding members, the black flaming hand grabbed onto the body of the black smog. “Waah waah!”
The raging black flames covered the body of the black smog in an instant, the smog gradually becoming fainter under the flames. It eventually burnt into white steam and completely evaporated. The black smog’s figure became increasingly smaller, and within a few seconds, it was half its original size. It cried out painfully, its tentacles involuntarily twitching and even rolling on the ground, but this did nothing to deter the large hand. The flames persisted and continued to burn away the strange body of the black smog.

Another ten minutes passed, and the entire black smog was completely destroyed by the black flames, leaving behind something that looked like a black pearl. This black pearl was completely smooth, containing what seemed to be a miniature version of the black smog, constantly changing its shape.

*Thud! Thud!*

The Poison Wyvern in the air had also descended by then, a youthful male Magus jumping off its back. He approached the area where the flames had burnt, retrieving the black pearl. “A large Poison Wyvern and black flames! There is no mistake, he must be Four Seasons Garden’s ‘Blackfire’ Leylin!” This team leader smiled wryly. Earlier he had sensed an immense and terrifying spiritual force with a large amount dark elemental energy. It had reached the battlefield and had been observing their every move. Under the surveillance of this spiritual force, just moving required more energy than usual; it was naturally impossible to even think about escaping or fighting back.

“Blackfire Leylin? Isn’t that the one from our academy who…” A member nearby held his tongue, his expression revealing his shock.

As Magi of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, they definitely knew the
existence of a potioneering genius who had been involved in a conflict with the Lilytell family and had been subsequently expelled. Though it was said that he had already advanced to be an official Magus, hearing rumours and actually seeing it for themselves was a completely different experience. In addition, the strength that Leylin exhibited far exceeded the might that a newly-advanced Magus would normally have. Even old men like them could only sigh in longing at his power. “It’s such a large area, but we actually managed to bump into him. What luck we have…” This Magus team leader shook his hand and quickly stood in front of his teammates. “Go! I’ll stall for time!” “Leader!” “Team leader!” Several members of the team were reluctant to obey. Blake disregarded his words and went forward, standing shoulder-to-shoulder by the team leader. “If you’re going to stay behind, then I should be the one doing so. I’m the scout in this group, and it was my fault that we did not discover the enemy…” However, with Blake’s strength, discovering Leylin was basically impossible. Furthermore, Blake’s detection skills only applied to enemies on the ground. For those who were in the air, it was completely useless. “Leader!” The other members seemed to be on good terms with their team leader and hesitated, with another staying behind as well. The other two glanced at each other, erupting with wind elemental particles around them and moving over ten metres in the blink of an eye. They wildly charged forward, seemingly uncaring of their lives. “Why does it feel like I’m the huge villain here?” Opposite them, Leylin stroked his chin and had the sudden urge to laugh.
Academy could be so united in a life or death situation like this. However, even the dark Magi had a few friends they were willing to risk their lives for. Had the team members not trusted each other, then their small team would have perished on its first mission and would not have lasted till this point.

“Magi from Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”

Upon seeing their strangely familiar black robes, he turned somewhat emotional. Just a few years ago he had been a lowly acolyte who had to be extremely respectful the moment he saw robes that a Magus wore. But now, whether these official Magi lived or died was in Leylin’s hands. It felt quite strange to face the reversal like this.

“Do you want to stop resisting, or should I make my move?” Leylin asked indifferently.

The moment those words were uttered, the situation could no longer be changed.

“We’re going to go all out! Go!” The team leader showed his firm stance as he yelled.

*Ka-cha!* There were suddenly two more long ice blades in his hands mercilessly slashing towards Leylin!

Tentacles also formed under Blake’s feet, squirming and extending till they shaped into a large hammer.

The hammer was lifted high and ruthlessly slammed towards Leylin.

The last Magus used a few support spells on his comrades and set up a large rock shield in front of them.

“Quite a compatible combination! It’s a pity that it’s useless!” Leylin evaluated, seeming to be making no move. From his figure, innumerable shadow tentacles suddenly emerged. These shadow feelers seemed to be like plant roots, spreading all over in large quantities till they practically blotted the sky.
The world suddenly became dark and gloomy.
“Shadow Domain!”
Leylin whispered, and his body became a black figure, dissipating into the air.
*Boom! Boom!* 
The ice blades and huge hammer struck the floor, leaving behind two huge holes with traces of green smoke emitting around them. “Take care of our defense!” The team leader roared.
“It’s too late! Within the shadows, I am everywhere!”
Black light flashed, and Leylin’s figure appeared behind the rock shield.
As he watched the enemy Magus in charge of defense, Leylin raised his right hand and tapped.

*Weng!*

Countless black figures emerged from the shadows, overlapping with each other as they continuously multiplied. With the accumulation of the shadows, a small light appeared in front of his finger that formed a small-scale vortex that seemed to be able to suck one’s spirit in.

In front of Leylin, a layer of greenish-gray iron covering instantly appeared on that Magus’ skin.

This was ‘Iron Skin’, an innate earth element solidification spell that rank 1 Magi liked to use.

*Ripple!*

Leylin’s finger seemed to be moving extremely slowly, though in actuality it was approaching very quickly. As he tapped the Magus’ Iron Skin, the sound of rippling water could be heard.

In front of Leylin’s finger, the Magus’ Iron Skin peeled off bit by bit like snakeskin. A look of incredulity appeared on the Magus’ face, and after having been quickly tapped on the forehead by Leylin, his eyes rolled back and he fainted.

“Laura?!” The team leader was furious.

Shortly afterwards, a scroll appeared in his hands and Blake, who was to one side of the leader, produced a small shield the size of a palm.
Immense energy waves were emitted from these two items, indicating that they were ready to be activated at any moment.

“You two can attack me together!”

Facing this sight, Leylin simply smiled and clawed with both hands.

*Tssss!*

Black streams of air were emitted from his fingers, and each of the ten black streams was like little snakes as they surrounded these two Magi.

Where the two Magi had previously stood, two black cocoons could now be seen. From these cocoons, the occasional snake-like hisses could be heard.

Seconds later, the black mist dissipated, leaving behind two Magi that had fainted on the floor.

There was a layer of vague imprints that were like black snakes wandering back and forth across their faces.

*Pak!*

After taking care of these three Magi, Leylin willed the shadow vines obstructing the sky to withdraw back into his shadow.

“I feel it now! With the constant stimulation from my bloodline, my control over the darkness is becoming increasingly stronger!”

The darkness in Leylin’s pupils became deeper, and he appeared to be intoxicated while deep in thought as he mumbled to himself.

After handling these three Magi prisoners, Leylin waited another few minutes.

*Zoom!*

Two unidentifiable human figures were flying across the ground, dashing towards Leylin rapidly. Even Leylin was only able to see after-images.

*Thud!*

The two black figures were carrying something on their shoulders and came to Leylin, throwing the things on their backs onto the floor.
“Master!” Number 2 and Number 3 knelt on one leg, greeting him. “In accordance with your orders, we have caught all of them. None have escaped!”
The two Magi that had escaped just now were currently lying on the ground.
Several injuries that were so deep that bone could be seen on the bodies of the Magi. They were extremely pale, which was a result of extreme blood loss. It was not difficult to imagine that these wounds were the result of a fierce battle.
“Good! You did well!” Leylin expressed his approval towards his subordinates.
These two Magi were newly advanced, and thus the weakest amongst the Magi. Numbers 2 and 3 were able to defeat them because of the immense power of Branded Swordsmen, a subdivision of the ancient Magi.
Perhaps, this was the obvious result of the large consumption of potential and vitality from Number 2 and Number 3.
To obtain power, Leylin had no choice but to speed things up and carry out many taboo methods on their bodies. This allowed them to break through their limits and become Branded Swordsmen in a short period of time.
Because of this, their vitality was being consumed at a faster rate. Based on the A.I. Chip’s calculations, they only had two more months to live.
“Bring them along. Let’s go!” Leylin heaved a sigh of relief as he pointed at the five Abyssal Bone Forest Academy Magi lying on the ground.
He still had many questions that could only be answered by these people.
In addition, it was no simple task to obtain official Magi slaves and guinea pigs.
Leylin still had many ideas and conjectures regarding Branded
Swordsmen, and he needed to test it on these Magi. After all, in ancient times, Branded Swordsmen were a subdivision of the official Magi, not Knights! Hence, with Grand Knights as guinea pigs, Leylin still felt he was lacking something even with the help of the A.I. Chip. In the end, all he produced was Numbers 2 and 3, who were incomplete versions of the Branded Swordsman. This could be due to their lack of the tremendous spiritual force that Magi possessed, which resulted in Number 2 and 3’s difficulty in manipulating the elemental particles in the air. It was several times more difficult than predicted by the A.I. Chip. Leylin considered some scenarios and then brought the five Magi to a secure hidden area. After interrogating them, he immediately began to verify his doubts regarding Branded Swordsmen. Leylin only dared to be so unscrupulous because this was a time of war and he was doing this to those from the enemy camp. If not, using official Magi as guinea pigs would most certainly result in society’s displeasure, and he would receive negative repercussions.

……

On a high ground filled with white flowers. In the thick fog, a large castle that looked like an upside-down cone existed. This castle only had one point that was connected to the ground, and yet it was able to support the main body of the castle on top. Looking at it gave one the misconception that the world was upside down. It seemed like this castle was normally upright, but someone had turned it upside down. In the walkway paved with white marble, an old woman with a
head of silver hair was carrying an oil lamp, ambling slowly.  
*Ka-cha!* A metal door with blue electric currents sparking on the surface was pushed forward.  
*Tssss!* Large amounts of icy white gas began to condense as they came into contact with the outside. It filled the walkway behind her with a layer of white frost.  
The old lady walked in the house, which was practically a world of ice and snow. It was below 0 degrees, and if one were a regular human, it would be impossible for them to stay here for more than a few seconds.  
In the heart of the house, tendrils of white vapour constantly emanated from two ice coffins.  
Through the translucent coffins, one could see a burly man in one, and a girl lying quietly in the other.  
Both of them had their eyes tightly shut, a look of pain and signs of struggle flashing across their faces occasionally. Each had a rune with a snake wriggling about on their neck and right hand.  
“Sorry for the trouble, Doctor Hyder!”  
The old woman got out of the way, and a Magus with a head of silver hair came from behind her.  
This Magus looked to be very old, with wrinkle after wrinkle heaping on his face. However, his eyes were bright and he had a benevolent smile on his face.  
“Curses are a very troublesome part of spells. They involve many strange and cruel things and Magi in the south coast who know this type of magic are scarce. I can’t guarantee anything other than that I’ll try my best.”  
Hyder, a Magus specializing in healing, did not immediately approach the patients, but first spoke to the old woman.  
“You are an expert in this field. If you are unable to solve this problem, then I don’t even know who I should approach.”  
She gave a bitter laugh.
“Alright! I’ll give it my all!” Hyder nodded. Usually, he definitely would not take on such jobs. Not only were they dangerous, it was easy to offend the Magus who had produced the curse. However, he was on good terms with this family and owed them a few favours. Hence, he had no choice but to come. Hyder went forward and looked the ice coffins up and down, and then nodded.

“When unable to treat a condition, freezing the victim is a very good method!”

He shifted his focus past the layer of ice, and upon seeing the curse runes within, he gasped. Hyder’s expression immediately became serious, and a stifling atmosphere pervaded the air.

He produced several bizarre items from his clothes, which seemed to be useful in testing the nature and effects of the curse.

The old woman behind him stood behind him in bated breath, not daring to even speak a word.

A good while later, Hyder put down the stethoscope in his hands and rubbed off the cold sweat on his forehead.

“How is it?” She immediately inquired.

“It’s troublesome! No, it’s extremely troublesome!” Hyder looked abnormally solemn.

“From this rune I felt an ancient aura. It’s possible that this was a curse passed on from ancient times, and there are basically no other models of it to be found on the south coast. Furthermore, this technique is very complicated and without large amounts of experimentation, trying to treat it at this point will only result in the curse going berserk in the body. The end result is something none of us want to see…”

Now, after seeing how demanding and crafty this curse was, even Hyder regretted his decision. Was it worth it to repay a favour and, in turn, offend a terrifying dark Magus?
“An ancient curse… hss…” the old lady gasped. As a family with a long history, she naturally understood the difficulty in dealing with this curse. Forcefully breaking the curse would only result in death, unless the Magus who had set the curse decided to stop pursuing the matter. “Are there no other methods?” With a hopeful glint in her eyes, she stared at Hyder. “It would be best to make a trade with the Magus who set the curse. Other than that, I would need large amounts of guinea pigs and practical tests to find a way and break the curse.” Hyder slanted his head and thought for a moment, before speaking. “Also, there is a time limit for the curse. Based on my test, there is at most one more month before it will completely erupt!” Hyder dropped another bomb on her. Upon hearing this, the old lady trembled and then she breathed in deeply, a resolute look on her face. “It doesn’t matter what happens to Manla, but nothing can happen to Jenna! That is my final threshold!”
“Huh?” Hyder looked at the old woman, a little confused. “What I’m trying to say is… Rather than guinea pigs, the results would be better if you could do tests on a Magus who has also been cursed. Am I wrong?” The old woman looked cold and indifferent as if she was a block of ice. “Theoretically speaking, that’s true, and it would be even better if it’s an official Magus…” Hyder unconsciously muttered to himself, and suddenly came to a realisation. “You’re thinking of using Manla?”

Hyder could not hide his shock at her words. Though this lady’s family had a long history, official Magi were few and far between. There were not more than 5 of them; this act would sacrifice a fifth of their power! “If that’s what fate dictates, then so be it!” The old woman looked to be in a trance as she gazed at Jenna, who was in a deep sleep within the ice coffin. “She is the seer and nothing can be allowed to happen to her!”

“The seer? No wonder!” Hyder repeated after her. He had also heard about the family’s strange ability to foresee the future. “Kill him! The traitor that goes against fate!” At this moment, Jenna suddenly opened her eyes, revealing the whites of her eyes as she spoke expressionlessly. “Those who offend the seer will have their spirits cast into a
bottomless hellhole with black flames, and receive endless torture. Hehehe…” All of a sudden, Jenna’s expression changed, and she began to laugh crazily. Next, the whites of her eyes disappeared, and a look of suffering appeared. She looked to be on the verge of tearing as she stared in the direction of the old woman. “Grandmother…” This expression quickly dissipated, and the colour of her face changed. Several images appeared, forming different faces. “Hsss…” As if stimulated, the black snake runes on her pale neck began to extend. Lines of black veins instantly crawled all over Jenna’s face. “This is bad!” Hyder immediately went forward, pouring a bottle of blue liquid into her mouth. *Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* On the surface of Jenna’s body, countless shards of blue ice appeared, causing her body to freeze. “Sleep!” Hyder spoke slowly; the expression in his eyes was hard to make out and was somewhat intimidating. Blue threads from his fingers went deep into her body. After a long period of time, Jenna finally went back to sleep, and the snake curse returned to its original shape, though it looked a little bigger than before. “A fractured spirit! Or no, is this the fusion of spirits? How pitiful…” After all that work, Hyder began to look at Jenna with pity in his eyes. As a healing Magus who was friendly with this family, he knew about the divination ability they possessed. This strange ability came from an incomplete high-grade meditation technique. All who cultivated in this meditation technique would automatically gain the ability to receive premonitions of the future to some extent. As they progressed and cultivated further, they would even be able
to observe fragments of the future. Unfortunately, this incomplete high-grade meditation technique had stringent limitations, and only the female members of Jenna’s family were able to cultivate in it. In addition, within each generation, only one member would succeed in it and gain the power to predict the future. These people were called the ‘seers’!

If that was all, the situation would be manageable. However, with the passing down of this technique, a more scary phenomenon appeared. The spirits of the seer through the years were somehow preserved, and they would possess the body of the current seer. Hence, with the accumulation of more and more spirits, the seer’s mind would become mentally unstable, and she would become schizophrenic.

Hyder had previously accepted the task of producing potions that could stabilise the mental state or spirit of the seer. The current Jenna looked like a single person, but within her body resided the spirits of the past seer. With the increase of spirits within her body, Jenna’s mental health and rationality became frail, and there came a point where she did not even know what she was doing. The spirits of the seers from previous generations would even occasionally take over her body. As a result, she would do some strange things that were unthinkable to the regular person.

Hyder was very much aware that after gaining this ability, Jenna’s family had become a little neurotic. Not only did they say that pretty much everything they did was in the name of the protector, and were unwilling to accept any criticism, but they were also used to saying nonsense like “following what fate had in store for them.” As this continued to happen, several families that had previously
been on good terms with them distanced themselves. After all, Magi were a bunch of rational and free people. Nobody wanted to be with someone who would constantly criticise their actions.

What had once been a large clan inevitably fell. Just looking for some external help was difficult, and they could only find a sole healing Magus, Hyder.

“How is she?” The old woman inquired worriedly, though she pointedly ignored Manla at the side.

Hyder sighed, feeling pity for Manla.

“Though I was able to temporarily suppress the outbreak of the curse, Miss Jenna’s unstable mental condition means that the outbreak can recur at any time!”

Hyder gave the old woman a long, meaningful look. “Also, with that outbreak just now, the date which the curse on her body will completely erupt has been brought closer.”

……

Leylin knew nothing about what was happening. It was just the opposite. He was surprised that he hadn’t heard anything about Jenna’s family trying to find him through other organisations.

From the looks of it, Jenna’s speech about being on good terms with large white Magi organisations was just a ploy to scare him in a life or death situation.

Though Leylin had made some preparations, the feeling of having made preparations but there being no signs of attacks directed at him left him feeling a little dejected.

“But the time limit that I set is approaching! They will definitely look for me soon!”

The corners of Leylin’s mouth curved into a cold smile.
His curse came from the rank 4 Morning Star Magus, the great Magus Serholm. With the A.I. Chip’s simulation and encryption methods, it was basically impossible for anyone else in the entire south coast to undo it.
To save these two people, the family supporting Jenna would have to beg him for help!
Leylin was also quite interested in Jenna’s divination ability and desired to know more about it.

......

*Whoosh…*
The sounds of fierce wind whistled past Leylin’s ears.
*Awooooo!” The Venom Wyvern, Hawke, made sounds of excitement as it soared through the air.
The gale that met them ruffled Leylin’s clothes, producing the sounds of fabric flapping. Leylin closed his eyes in enjoyment, looking content.
“The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy and the Lilytell Family! It’s time to sever things off completely!”
Thinking back to the information he had gained from those few Magi, a merciless glint appeared in Leylin’s eyes.
He was quite knowledgeable in the field of spirits and had learned about methods in torturing spirits. Leylin even had the ability to use certain combinations of potions to search the souls of newly-advanced Magi.
Under the endless torture methods that Leylin had employed, the five Magi that Leylin had taken prisoner quickly relinquished all that they knew.
From their very lips, Leylin was able to obtain a very detailed distribution chart of the Abyssal Bone Forest’s forces in Hunting Zone 3.
What aroused Leylin’s interest was a stronghold that was headed by the Lilytell family! In the beginning, in order to obtain the Kemoyin’s Pupil technique, he had killed off Bosain. This had offended an elder of the Lilytell family, so Leylin had no choice but escape from the academy. Scenes of his past flashed by Leylin. This was a dispute that had come about in one’s pursuit of power. There was no right or wrong, but since he had garnered animosity from them, Leylin was prepared to eliminate this liability! Though Giant had promised to mediate, one could only trust himself! The best enemy was a dead one! That elder from the Lilytell family who specialized in metal had reached the apex of a rank 1 Magus. If Leylin were to make his move now, it would be a bit difficult. However, he would be able to cut off his opponent’s wings and weaken his family! It would be even better if that elder himself was around. Leylin was certain that he would be able to withdraw safely, and that he would be able to collect large amounts of data and command the A.I. Chip to simulate the best way to kill him! The Venom Wyvern soared through the air at a frightening speed, causing animals and acolytes alike to only see a black blur. “We’ve entered enemy territory. This is where most of the enemy Magus activity is.” Leylin suddenly having an idea. He produced large amounts of grey clouds from within his sleeves, concealing both him and the Venom Wyvern. With the spread of the grey clouds, the large figure of the Venom Wyvern actually become the same colour as the blue sky. Even the immense life and heat waves from it vanished.
On a valley floor, an obese-looking acolyte in grey robes was being chased by a group of wild wolves.  
“Faster! Just a little bit faster, and I’ll reach one of the strongholds of the academy!”  
The acolyte ran, cheering herself on while tightly grasping a unique red ore.
“Awoooo!” A wild wolf howled, surrounding itself with a ring of green particles. Its speed immediately increased fivefold, turning into a black line as it headed straight for the acolyte.
With green light shooting from its eyes, the wolf opened its mouth to reveal sharp teeth that reeked of blood, and snapped at the acolyte’s hand.
“Bite it!” This acolyte resolutely surrendered the left hand that the wolf was aiming for.
*Ka-cha!* The pathetic defense of the acolyte’s robes was pierced through.
Immediately after, the wolf fiercely bit onto the acolyte’s left arm, and a muffled sound similar to something biting on leather was heard.
“Hah!” The acolyte swung her left arm.
The wild wolf was swung away as she exerted her enormous strength.
At the next moment, however, multiple wild wolves caught up to her.
Seeing herself surrounded by wild wolves, the acolyte made a decision. She fiercely swung her right arm backwards. *Ka-cha!* Her palm split open, revealing multiple white teeth, and looked like another mouth. *Thump! Thump! Thump!* From the mouth on her right arm, several lumps of putrid green liquid shot out. “Awooooo…” The liquid balls hit the bodies of the wild wolves, producing large amounts of white smoke. They corroded at a very fast pace, revealing the striking red flesh and white bones of the wild wolves. The wolves’ attack became sluggish, and making use of this chance, the acolyte quickly recited a few incantations and added a spell that would increase her speed. Eventually, before the group of wolves caught up to her, this acolyte quickly burst into a layer of mist. After entering the mist, she heaved a huge sigh of relief. She looked around her. Around her were several official Magi and acolytes in the robes unique to Abyssal Bone Forest Academy moving about. “Stop there, acolyte! The password and your token!” Countless black owls surrounded the acolyte, creating a huge human figure that spoke.
“Supreme Abyssal Bones!” The acolyte muttered lowly, and then produced a black stamp, placing it before the giant.
“Correct!” The giant spoke, dispersing into many owls that flew away. This acolyte then took out a map and compared it with her surroundings.
“I never thought I would go so far inside. This is a danger zone marked with three bones. Without the strength of an official Magus, it’s best to leave as soon as possible.”
“Oh my! Such a disgusting smell! Let me guess who’s here.”
At this point, the acolyte was stopped by a few acolytes who were preparing to leave.
The acolyte in charge was wearing robes that indicated his status and made with exquisite materials. There was a silver necklace around his neck that gave off immense energy waves, which obviously made it a magic artifact.
“Is there even the need to guess? This smell is just as stinky as the sewers. Besides our swine Nyssa, who else could it be?”
The other acolytes immediately burst into laughter.
The acolyte who had spoken walked in front of her and lifted her hood.
Under the hood was an exceptionally ugly face.
The top of the head was bald, and between several of the teeth were gaps. There was also a snout, and a constant stink surrounded this person.
The acolyte who had entered the stronghold was actually from the same place as Leylin and she was his old classmate, Nyssa.
“Lord Lilytell!” Nyssa bowed respectfully, though her expression was stiff.
Due to her appearance, she had been discriminated against and bullied, but most of the acolytes did not think their actions were too excessive.
The acolyte obstructing her way was from the Lilytell family and
had a whole gang escorting him. He was exceedingly arrogant and often made fun of her appearance.

“Hn!” The acolyte nodded indifferently, looking aloof and proud. “Swine Nyssa, this is not a place you should be in. Don’t let your bad smell alarm the various Lord Magi here! They are our forefathers!”

The acolyte who had the word ‘Lilytell’ in his name covered his nostrils, looking at her in disdain.

“I… I’ll leave now…” Nyssa hastily retreated. However, as she was leaving, she accidentally tripped and revealed the red ore in her hand.

“Hm! Wait!” That acolyte immediately stopped her. “What’s that in your hand? What is it? Take it out!”

“No! No, it’s nothing!” Nyssa kept drawing back and tried her best to hide it, but the panic in her eyes could not be hidden so easily.

“Bitch!”

The acolyte cursed, and suddenly made his move. His entire right hand abruptly became bigger; the flesh bulged bit by bit, and the blue veins were prominent.

*Thud!* A punch landed on Nyssa’s face, and her entire body was sent flying.

While she was in midair, a red ore fell to the ground, whirling around like a spinning top.

“A Markov Crystal? And it’s actually red?” The acolyte of the Lilytell family stared hard at the red ore, joy and greed flashing in his expression.

“That’s mi- mine…” Seeing the greed in the acolyte’s face, Nyssa’s heart sank. However, this ore was extremely important to her since she would need it to advance, so she drummed up her courage and spoke up.

“Darned bitch! Even the skin on her face is so thick!”

The acolyte who had punched her swung his arm. “This crystal was
my gains from yesterday. You despicable thief, wretched thief; not only did you steal it, you even dared to claim that it’s yours!”
The acolyte waved his arm. “Go! Grab her and send her to the academy’s enforcement team to be punished!”
The few acolytes behind him encircled her, their intentions clear.
Nyssa kept stepping backwards, yellow pus flowing from her eyes.
A few acolyte bystanders remained unperturbed as they watched, and even some of the Magi looked on in the same fashion.
That acolyte was from the Lilytell family! They were one of the three big families in Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Many of the people in that family held important positions in the academy!
Offending them was akin to offending the school.
In addition, the Magi in charge of the stronghold were all people from the Lilytell family. Even if somebody else wanted to help her, there was nothing that could be done.
Besides, Magi were a bunch of practical beings, and this was even more so for dark Magi.
Why would they especially go against the Lilytell family for somebody like Nyssa, an ugly freak like her?
Hence, all they could do was to give a heavy sigh and continue with their work, as if they had seen nothing.
“Hehe! You’ve been an eyesore for far too long. Just seeing your back spoils my appetite!”
One of the acolytes around her snickered as he grabbed forward with his right hand! A black claw suddenly appeared, scratching towards Nyssa’s face.
“I want to smash this disgusting face to bits!”
The acolyte roared, as if at this very moment, a sense of righteousness had possessed him.
“No!” Nyssa blocked her face with her hands.
*Bang!* The black claw scratched at her arm, but only a layer of skin broke.
As the product of a failed experiment of an official Magus, Nyssa had gained a resistance to spells that ordinary acolytes did not have. Her strength had also increased, though she had no clue if this was good or bad.

“Damn it!”
The acolytes around her were fuming red as if they had been humiliated. They looked at each other and suddenly attacked as a group.

Fireballs! Ice bolts! Hurricanes! All of these were thrown towards her head.

“Don’t- Don’t force me!” Nyssa wailed as she ran from the onslaught of magic, hands hugging her head.

“Pu!” Thick green pus sprayed out of her mouth, right into the face of an acolyte opposite her.

“Ah!” The facial muscles of that acolyte fell bit by bit, and he could do little but hold on to his face and roll around on the floor in pain. At this moment, the spiritual waves belonging to a level 3 acolyte exploded forth from Nyssa.

“You’ve been hiding your strength, eh?” Seeing the state that his subordinate was in, the acolyte of the Lilytell family could take it no longer.

He walked a few steps forward, a teasing grin on his face. “Once more! Attack me!”

He arrogantly pointed at his face.

Nyssa stepped back in response to his provocation. She was not stupid. If she dared to attack someone of the Lilytell family here, the Magi here would definitely tear her apart.

“Haha… You don’t dare to? Then I’m going to make my move!”

The acolyte laughed maniacally as he pointed a finger at Nyssa.

“Bind!”

From the silver necklace around his neck, countless silver threads were produced. Layer by layer they extended like a spider web and
caught Nyssa inside.

*Shua Shua!*  
Silver threads inwardly gathered, binding her inside.

*Tsss!* Even with the modifications to Nyssa’s skin, yellow pus flowed under the tight binding of the silver threads. A look of pain appeared on her face.

“Let’s do this together! Kill that bitch!”

Feeling that his reputation had been sullied, this acolyte of the Lilytell family had begun to disregard the rules of the academy, wanting all schoolmates who were present to kill her!

After all, he was a part of the Lilytell family. Even if he did something wrong, the worst punishment he would get was confinement. His family members would definitely rescue him, so what was there to fear?

Seeing herself on the verge of being encircled once more by acolytes with the light from spells flashing in their hands, she could only hang her head sadly.

“Am I going to die here today? Though it’s a type of release, dying in such a manner really doesn’t sit well with me…” Nyssa thought to herself.

*Boom!*  
The sound of immense waves from magic resounded.

Nyssa squeezed her eyes shut, but feeling no pain in her head, she raised her head in astonishment.

Her jaw dropped in amazement.

She could see a huge Venom Wyvern hovering around in the sky, above the stronghold’s wards.

A black, flaming hand scooped downwards, fierce black flames immediately tearing apart a huge hole in the ward.

“Enemy attack!”

The owls from before appeared once more, turning into the shape of a giant.
“Shoo!”
A young man wearing black robes waved his arm disdainfully.
A huge black fireball fell like a comet.
*Boom!*
Innumerable feathers flew, and the giant made from the owls immediately dispersed after a brief contact with the flames. Owl after owl was burnt to ashes, falling from the sky.
“Rain of Fire!”
From atop the Venom Wyvern’s back Leylin’s gentle voice was heard.
Shortly after, yet another huge black fireball emerged out of nowhere on top of the stronghold, and boom! The fireball exploded, dispersing into black fire droplets that looked like rain, spreading across the entire area.
*Sssii!*
An acolyte who had been surrounding Nyssa had brief contact with a fire droplet that brushed by his shoulder, and before he could even make a sound, he had been reduced to a pile of white ash.
“Ru- Run!” The acolyte from the Lilytell family’s voice wavered, his fear apparent.
*Shua Shua Shua!* The acolytes that had been surrounding Nyssa looked as if they had seen a ghost, evading the fire droplets in the air, terrified.
*Tss tss!* A black spark fell on the silver threads that bound Nyssa. In that instant, this magic artifact was warped out of shape by the black flames and eventually melted into a silver white liquid that dripped to the ground.
Under the onslaught of black fire droplets, large numbers of acolytes were turned to ash without any chance to resist.
The surrounding buildings began to burn furiously, and under the attack of the Rain of Fire, everything instantly turned into a sea of
fire.
“It’s- It’s Leylin!”
Nyssa whispered, but at that moment, she saw a black fire droplet flying towards her.
“Hm?” Leylin looked around mid-air and suddenly noticed a very familiar figure from the corner of his eyes.
“It’s Nyssa!” Leylin exclaimed, and under his manipulation, the black fire droplet deviated, brushing past the edges of Nyssa’s hair.
“Who dares to attack the territory of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy?”
Several black human figures dashed out. One of them rapidly chanted a few incantations, and a dome emitting green rays appeared in the sky, blocking the attack of the black fire droplets.
*Drip! Drip! Drip!*
Countless black fire droplets splashed onto the dome and began to burn.
The Magus who cast the protection spell immediately cried out in alarm. “The might of this black fire is immense. My spiritual force is being rapidly consumed. Who will help me?”
“Me!” A Magus nearby immediately chanted a few words, and a layer of blue ice extended across the layer of protection.
Green, blue, and black rays of light mixed together soared into the sky and descended, forming a huge tornado.
After the tornado descended.
The two Magi looked pale, and it was evident that they had suffered massively.
However, at this point, nobody bothered with them.
“Black flames that are astoundingly strong! That Venom Wyvern as well! You must be ‘Blackfire’ Leylin!”
A Magus who seemed to be the leader recognised Leylin.
All of a sudden, clamours of disbelief broke out from the
survivors.
“You… must be Magi from the Lilytell family, right?” Leylin clasped his hands behind his back. “Don’t deny it! Even from this distance, I can smell that putrid stench of your bloodline on your bodies!”
“So what?” A silver-haired Magus stood. “You actually dared to kill the sole grandson of our elder. I’ve already sent him a signal, so just wait here and prepare to be punished!”
“You’ve told him? Good! That’s great!” Leylin’s reaction obviously surprised the silver-haired Magus.
Leylin continued, “Since you’ve already alerted him, there’s no point in keeping any of you alive.”
Hearing Leylin’s words, the Magi present felt a chill in their hearts, a sense of foreboding became apparent.
“Shadow Domain!” Countless tentacles extended from the shadow under Leylin’s feet, spreading across the horizon and completely blocking all the sunlight in the area.
“Be careful!” The Magus leader nearby could only screech, before a black light flashed and a crimson palm went through his chest, digging out a bright red heart that still pumped furiously.
Under the assault of the Crimson Palm, the innate defense spells of these Magi were torn apart like paper.
“He- He killed the leader!”
One of the Magi present looked at Leylin as if they were looking at the devil incarnate, and yelled in despair before running in the opposite direction.
“Lum, come back!” The surrounding Magi shouted, but it was too late.
Within the shadows, Leylin seemed to be a grain of dust that had fused with the gentle wind and floated to Lum’s back. A crimson palm went for his head.
*Rumble!*
A layer of crimson flames began to burn furiously on Lum, and turned the official Magus into ashes. Regular rank 1 Magi were as weak as children in front of Leylin. They were easily taken care of. *Zoom!* Leylin suddenly sensed something and gazed into the distance. From far away, a silver ray of light was like a sharp sword, heading here in a straight line. “The main character is here!” Leylin grinned, arms rising as he clenched his fists. The darkness that had engulfed the entire region was withdrawn into Leylin’s palm, turning into a sphere of darkness which hovered in the air. Strong energy waves swept the area, a violent storm surging and bringing up an entire layer of the ground. “Halt!” The silver-white ray shouted from afar. Unfortunately, Leylin did not care for the voice and flung out the sphere of darkness. The sphere of darkness that was full of destructive power approached the remaining Magi soundlessly. Under their terrified gazes, the black sphere advanced slowly and steadily, their spells and innate defensive spells devoured by the sphere. A few official Magi were run over by the sphere, leaving behind tracks on the ground. “I’ll kill you!” Along with the furious growl, the speed of the silver ray increased by a few times, and Leylin could almost see an old man with silver ornaments on his face. “Time to switch locations!” Leylin gave a light smile and patted Hawke’s head. “Awoo!” Hawke let out a roar that seemed to be a demonstration of its might,
and with a jolt of its wings, it quickly left the area.

*Chi!*

In a few seconds, the silver light from afar arrived, revealing the figure of an old man in silver white attire.
The old man gazed at the stronghold, which had been reduced to ruins. His clothes rustled despite the lack of wind, violent metal elemental particles hovered behind him.
“You can’t escape! Even if you were to escape to the ends of the earth, I will still find you and kill you!”
Metallic silver white rays flashed, and the old man was gone, leaving behind the echoes of his words.

……

Another ten or so minutes passed.

*Crash!* Within the ruins, there was an area with a mound. A bizarre creature that looked like it had been sewn together emerged.
“Was that Leylin just now? I can’t believe this! So he’s actually became such a powerful official Magus…”
Nyssa gazed in the direction Leylin had left, muttering to herself incessantly.
As Leylin had intentionally directed his attack away, as well as her somewhat strong resistance to magic, she had not gained any major injuries in this terrifying attack save for a few holes in her clothes.
“Official Magus…” An envious glint appeared in Nyssa’s eyes.
To be rid of the harm done to her body, she had to raise her strength to the level of an official Magus. Only then would she be able to alter her body and regain her original appearance.
“One day! I will reach that point one day!” Nyssa clenched her fists resolutely.

*Rustle!*
At this moment, a large sound was heard from a fallen wooden
building nearby. At the bottom of the building, an acolyte could be seen.

Nyssa walked over curiously but was met with the face of the acolyte that belonged to the Lilytell family. However, compared to Nyssa, this acolyte was very unlucky. Not only an arm and a leg was broken, there was a huge injury in his abdominal area. Even his intestines were spilling out, and all he could do was moan and groan in pain.

“You! Come here!” Upon seeing Nyssa, this acolyte brightened up. “What is it?” Nyssa gazed at him indifferently.

“A filthy, lowly acolyte like you… still, has a bit of use! Send- Send me to my family, and I’ll give you a few items that are barely passable as a reward…”

The acolyte stumbled over his words, looking at Nyssa with disdain, as if letting her touch him was a huge honour.

However, Nyssa was unmoved like a block of wood and stood there without moving.

“You…” The acolyte was flushed red with anger as he pointed at Nyssa, wanting to say something.

*Pak!*

With his movement, a red ore fell from his lap, spinning on the ground.

Upon seeing the ore, Nyssa’s eyes looked dangerous.

“You! What do you think you’re doing?”

The acolyte that had been arrogant beyond belief suddenly felt a hint of danger, a fearful expression flashed past before he tried to sit upright. “Are you trying to attack me? You have to think this…”

*Bang!*

Before the acolyte could finish his words, a green corrosive ball landed on his head, eating through most of his head in the next second.

Gazing upon his corpse, Nyssa went forward and retrieved that red
ore.
“I merely followed your earlier instructions and focused my attack on your face, young master Lilytell…”
Nyssa had a strange expression on her face. It seemed to be dread, but at the same time, she looked as if a weight had been lifted off her shoulders.

……

Leylin stood in the heart of a spacious land filled with broken stones while appearing to be waiting for someone. The Venom Wyvern Hawke was useless in this level of battle and had been ordered to return. All of a sudden, Leylin raised his head as if he had sensed something.
A ray of silver white light shot through the heavens like an arrow.

*Bang!*

The ray shot towards Leylin’s side, knocking aside countless stones.

After the light rays dissipated, an old man in silver white attire was revealed.

This old geezer had a nose that was bent the way an eagle’s beak was, and he had a few metallic ornaments dangling from his face. A pair of intelligent, tenacious eyes were fixed on Leylin.

“You’re not running anymore?”

The old man spread his right arm and a metallic sphere emerged on his palm as if it was a part of his body.

The silvery white metallic sphere circled the area, and the astoundment on the old man’s face was even more obvious. There was even a hint of confusion in his expression.

“No traps or ambushes either? Are you here to die?”

“No! I just want to settle a few things!” Leylin smiled indifferently.

His main goal this time around was to collect data, and hence, he had not thought to bring his trump cards, Number 2 and Number 3.

Though Leylin had never seen this old man before, he was able to recognise him at a single glance. This was the Lilytell’s family’s great elder, and the grandfather of the acolyte Bosain, who had died
Previously, at a small town by the Great Canyon Margaret, this old geezer had operated a clone and had it chase after him. In that battle, this man’s face had appeared on its chest.

“By the way, it’s already been so long, but I have yet to know your name…”

Leylin smiled gently.

The old geezer looked closely at Leylin. “With your power, you meet the qualifications to know my name. Marb Lilytell! Remember it well, because this is the name of the person who will send you to hell!”

After he spoke, a circle of silver white light was emitted from Marb’s body.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

Countless metal spikes emerged from the ground, constantly extending before converging in mid-air, and forming a cage that locked Leylin and Marb within.

“Metallic Battle Prison!” Marb quickly made a few hand signs.

After seeing a bit of Leylin’s strength, Marb had acknowledged Leylin as a proper opponent. His current move was to prevent Leylin from escaping.

*Ding!*

A halo of silvery white metallic elemental particles radiated from Marb’s body, evidently much denser than what could be produced by a semi-converted magus. It resembled closely to a sphere and covered Marb’s entire body.

His elemental essence conversion had reached at least 80%, and with spells such as this that increased his performance, his strength was effectively doubled!

*Xiu Xiu!*

From the surface of the metallic prison, bursts of light circulated, and little, white, barbed spikes suddenly emerged. The hooks on
the spikes glinted with a menacing light that caused one’s heart to palpitate and break out in cold sweat. The innumerable spokes were like sharp arrows, making loud whooshing sounds as they shot all around, blocking any routes that Leylin could take to dodge them. Light from magic could be seen on the surfaces of the spikes as well. This was obviously a support spell that had been added to keep the spokes sharp and strong. With this degree of attack, a regular newly-advanced Magus would be turned into a porcupine!

However, Leylin made no attempt to dodge.

*Rumble!*

From his body, a ring of black flames suddenly emerged. The flames were like a liquid, covering his entire body and giving him a layer of black armour. An immense wave of hot air spread through the prison, and even Marb, who was far away, could not help but furrow his brows.

*Pu pu!*

As the silver white spikes approached the flames, they flickered and appeared to be melting. By the time they actually met with Leylin’s latent flames, the silver white spikes made little sounds and were melted into small silvery-white metallic balls.

*Clatter!*

The sounds of pearls dropping were heard, and as these metallic balls struck the dark red protective layer behind the flames, they produced clear sounds and promptly lost all kinetic energy, before falling to the ground and rolling in all directions. At the sight of this, Marb’s expression became serious, and there was even a hint of vigilance on his face!

“Your rate of improvement far exceeded my expectations! I’m now slightly regretful. Back then, I should have dispatched a few more
clones and eliminated you.”

Leylin’s strength had been tested by Marb’s clone back then. Though he was quite strong, Leylin merely had the strength of a semi-converted Magus. If not for the fact that Marb had sent out merely a single clone, and Leylin’s spells had been too mysterious and astonishing, Marb believed that Leylin would not have been able to escape!

Now, however, the strength that his opponent now displayed was close to that of a peak rank 1 Magus!

What was more terrifying was that it had only been two to three years since he had last seen Leylin! A rank 1 Magus would typically still be considered newly-advanced at that point.

“He definitely should not be allowed to live any longer. If not, our Lilytell family will have ourselves a terrifyingly powerful enemy…”

Marb came up with this conclusion.

Having made this decision, his desire for Leylin’s blood became more intense, and his two eyes turned into a silvery white colour as if they were made of silver.

“Liquid Metal!” Marb muttered under his breath.

Immediately after, rows of complicated metal elemental runes lit up on several places on his body, and a ring of silver light was emitted from within his clothes.

A layer of silvery-white liquid metal suddenly oozed out of the pores of his body, quickly covering his skin and transforming him into solid, reflective, silvery-white, metallic human figure.

Liquid metal constantly collected in his right hand, first turning into a ball, and then constantly lengthening until it turned into a lance-like weapon.

“This sort of thing?” Leylin’s eyes flashed, suddenly thinking back to the mysterious magic artifact that emanated silvery light. That metallic ball that could change into different shapes had left a very
deep impression on him. Unfortunately, Leylin had left the artifact in the Dylan Gardens to avoid trouble. It had already been completely destroyed along with the secret plane. From the looks of it, that metallic ball was a magic artifact that Marb had invented.

“Kill!”

Marb turned into a silver hurricane, which headed straight for Leylin.

“Interesting! A Magus that specialises in close combat?” Leylin was extremely interested, and he quickly activated his innate defensive spell, Kemoyin’s Scales.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Black and silver figures rammed into each other, and the resulting shockwave caused a layer of the ground to lift. The surrounding animals, snakes, worms, mice, and ants, as well as other bizarre creatures seemed to sense an imminent catastrophe, and quickly escaped, hoping to be as far away as possible.

The crimson rays from Leylin’s Fallen Star Pendant turned into a crossblade to fend off Marb’s silver lance. Sparks emerged as they battled.

After a few rounds, Leylin’s expression became more serious. This Marb had obviously remodelled his own body. Whether it was his strength or speed, both were very strong. On top of that, he was skilled in methods to kill opponents, and coupled with his metallic elemental talent, he was practically a refined killing machine!

*Ding!* The crimson crossblade met with the lance once again, producing a crisp sound and constant strong gales. The greenery around them was continuously being blown about.

*Pu!*

At this moment, Marb suddenly had a look on his face that indicated he had succeeded in some kind of plot.
The sharp, pointed end of the silver-white lance instantly became flexible, and like a snake twisting its body, it bent and thrust, piercing towards Leylin’s body.
*Tss tss!* Leylin’s winced a little as several black scales chipped off.

“Battle Mode!” Seeing that his attack had been effective, Marb looked even more crazed as he yelled.

Next, dense needles emerged on his silvery white body, and his weapon also underwent some changes.

Broadsword! Crossblade! Battleaxe! Maul!

All kinds of weapons appeared in Marb’s hands. On the surface of the blades, there were also strong energy waves that indicated the use of magic. It was definitely enough to pierce through Leylin’s defense and cause tremendous damage.

“In terms of close combat, even with the aid of the A.I. Chip, I’m not at an advantage!” Leylin pondered.

*Xiu Xiu Xiu!*

Countless tendrils of shadow encircled Marb and tightened.

At the same time, Leylin hastily retreated and raised his arm, several black fireballs appearing above his palm.

“Latent fireball!”

The black fireballs fused and increased in size, and then flew towards Marb.

“How can this level of attack affect me? How naive!”

From within the constraints of the shadow tendrils, Marb’s disdainful tone could be heard.

*Tu! Tu! Tu!*

From the surface of Marb’s body, silver liquid metal kept oozing out and turning into countless sharp blades. Like gears, they revolved quickly and brought about a fierce, merciless wind.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

The black tendrils touched the revolving blades and emitted a few
sounds. They fell to the ground in several pieces, transforming into a gaseous state and dispersing.

“Hah!” The weapon in Marb’s hand turned into a giant silver sword.

With both hands on the handle, a ring of metallic elemental particles poured into the sword and gave it a sheen of light.

“Metallic Destruction!” Marb viciously swung forward!

*Ka-cha!* As the blade was brought down, the front half of the metallic sword suddenly detached and advanced towards the black fireball.

The silvery white tip of the blade kept changing forms in midair, before eventually transforming into a white lion head.

“Roar!”

The lion head opened its mouth wide and produced an earth-shattering howl as it faced the latent fireball.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

The surroundings around them seemed to be frozen in place, and even the air ceased to circulate.
Rumble!
The world seemed to stop at this second.
A few seconds later, the surroundings returned to normal.
The situation just now was as if a movie was being being screened, but had suddenly malfunctioned.
Next, a strong energy storm spread out in all directions.
In the centre of the energy storm, black flames and silvery white rays of light constantly battled, engulfing each other.
*Creak…*
At the boundaries of the battle, where Marb had set up the metallic prison, the cage constantly creaked in protest of their intense fight.
Minutes later, the frightening energy storm dissipated.
Marb did not have a single injury on him, and even his hair was untouched. He stared straight in Leylin’s direction, grabbing at him with a single hand, “Lad! Come here!”
Leylin’s body moved sluggishly, and this was enough time for several silver chains to lock him into place, and make his body involuntarily fly towards Marb.
“Die!”
Marb charged forward furiously, the spikes and blades attacking like the rain, with each spike and blade carrying a large amount of energy. Just being hit by one would cause a regular rank 1 Magus serious injuries.
“Fallen Star Pendant!”
Leylin bellowed, and the black scales and dark red light fused together, forming a ring of unusual light.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* His muscles swelled, and he broke the chains binding him using his brute strength.
*Ding ding! Ding ding!* Silver flying needles and blades fell upon this layer of light and were then repelled, producing sparks and crisp sounds.
“Is this all you have? You disappoint me!”
Leylin looked to be quite disappointed, and moments later, his eyes turned amber!
“If that’s the most you can do, then I give my apologies. You’re the one dying here today!”
In a flash, a strange light emitted from Leylin’s eyes and headed straight into Marb’s eyes.
The innate spell Eyes of Petrification!
Marb’s charging form suddenly became sluggish, and a layer of ashen stone skin spread, beginning from the corners of his eyes.
*Weng Weng!*
A burst of white light was produced by a talisman around Marb’s neck.
Under the milky white shine, the stone skin on his face came loose bit by bit.
“A talisman meant to counter against petrification? It’s quite effective. It must have been difficult to obtain!”
Leylin’s expression did not change as he came up to Marb in a few breaths.
The first time he had been chased after by Marb’s clone, Leylin had revealed his petrification abilities. That was how he had turned the tables on the clone, but in the process, he had also exposed his ability to petrify his opponents.
As his archenemy, how could Marb not make preparations against that?
However, even in ancient times, petrification was a lesser known spell. In the south coast, it was practically extinct. Talismans that could be used to negate it were scarce, and most could only be found in ancient ruins.

Leylin was a little surprised at Marb’s ability to find one so quickly. However, even if Marb had a talisman, how could it be that effective against the petrification methods of an ancient creature such as the Giant Serpent Kemoyin?

Though Marb had dispelled the petrification, he had still been slowed.

*Shua!* Black light flashed, and in that instant, Leylin was already in front of Marb, his amber eyes meeting Marb’s.

“Die!”

The crimson light produced by the Fallen Star Pendant solidified into a giant axe. However, Leylin did not seem to be satisfied and pointed at the weapon.

*Shik!*

Immense black flames engulfed the axe.

“Hah!” Leylin shouted, and large numbers of shadows emerged from behind him, and converged onto his body. From the shadows, Leylin’s tall figure suddenly shot up, and he transformed into a three metre tall giant with tanned skin.

“Aooooo!”

The giant roared, the muscles on his arm bulging, and showing the dark red, earthworm-like veins on his body. Like a deity from legends, the giant held the large axe and swung, aiming for Marb’s neck!

*Chi!* Before the hatchet connected, the unimaginable sharpness of the heat waves and gales produced from the swing had already destroyed the defensive layer of liquid metal on his neck.

*Ka-cha!*

The fiery, black axe cut through Marb’s neck, and it looked as if his
head was going to fall off. The black flames extended throughout his body in an instant. 
Marb’s expression was blank as he collapsed. 
“Hm?” Leylin was in a daze. This was much too easy, but even official Magi would not live if their heads were chopped off!
[Beep! Danger! Detecting target still giving out energy waves!] The A.I. Chip sounded at this moment.
Immediately after, a ray of snow white light appeared in front of Leylin.
“This is bad!” All Leylin could do was to try his best to dodge, and protect the most important parts of his body.
*Puchi!* A silvery white longsword that was giving off milky white light pierced into Leylin’s lower abdomen.
“Scram!”
Both of Leylin’s hands turned crimson, and blood coloured flames blazed as he clawed down!
“Crimson Palm!”
At the same time, he retreated without even glancing at Marb.
After he managed to create some distance between them, Leylin covered the injury on his abdomen while looking at Marb in shock. At this moment, Marb had turned into a white metallic humanoid. His head, which was tilted, was loosely connected to his neck by a tiny amount of skin. His body was still burning with black flames, yet it was as though he didn’t feel a thing as he quietly stood there. The sword that was held by Marb was also dripping with Leylin’s blood.
At the point of Marb’s neck where he had chopped, Leylin could see that the surface of the open wound was now all metallic, where there was no likeness to a human’s flesh and blood at all.
“To think that not only did he have his outer appearance protected by the liquid metal, even his internals had completed turned into metal…”
Leylin’s heart sank.
“Hahah…” Marb, whose head was dangling, laughed wildly. “Bet you’d never thought of this huh? Ninety-odd years ago, I had already completely fused my body with a metallic creature, so now, I don’t have a single weak point on my body. Injuries in places that would be fatal to other regular Magi are just scratches to me…”
“How pathetic!”
Leylin looked at the somewhat crazed Marb with a pitiful look on his face.
Although there were benefits to fusing with an elemental creature, by doing so, one would lose their sense of touch. When one’s flesh and skin turned into metal, he would not be able to enjoy the sense of touch anymore.
Wasn’t real reason for a Magus to pursue the truth and climb to the top, to control his fate and fulfill his desires, enjoying life to the fullest?
But now, for the sake of power, Marb had actually forsaken such a thing. So then, what more was the meaning of his pursuit?
“The pathetic one is you!”
Evidently, Leylin’s look of pity had deeply triggered Marb and his deranged expression grew even more intense.
Suddenly, a brownish yellow light flickered on Marb’s body. The silver liquid metal protruded outward, transforming into a tiny spell formation.
“Gravity spell formation!” After having been inflicted damage several times by Leylin, Marb finally revealed the trump card that he had been holding back!
*Weng!* In an instant, a huge amount of brownish yellow light began to emanate from him.
“This is… Gravity?!” Suddenly, Leylin felt his body turned heavy as if it was being crushed by a large mountain. As it happened,
Leylin recalled something. Around him, the gravitational force multiplied in an instant. Not only was movement difficult, Leylin’s face darkened due to the fact that even his internal organs had suffered from the gravitational pull to the point that pain had spread from his insides.

“Not good; although my defense on the outside is strong, it’s a completely different story for my insides! If this goes on and he activates a one hundred times multiplier, my body will most likely be obliterated…”

Leylin’s face was extremely unsightly at this point in time. Marb, who had a body made of metal, would not suffer any hindrances to his brain or organs.

“Hahaha… Once more! Times ten!”

Marb shouted, and the brownish yellow light flashed even brighter. Leylin’s feet sank, and the injury to his abdomen, which had undergone hemostasis, started to bleed profusely again due to the gravitational pull.

“Hahaha… Come on!”

Marb dashed right in front of Leylin and brandished his sword, yet Leylin could only feebly raise his right hand to deflect the blow.

*Bang!*

The scales on his arm were crushed and shattered, and Leylin was sent flying backwards like a cannonball.

“Not enough! Still not enough! Times twenty!” Marb pierced the ground with both of his hands.

In an instant, Leylin felt as if the gravitational force had increased once more. If he had felt the weight of a mountain crushing him before, now, it was the weight of three mountains!

*Boom!*

A huge crater was created on the ground the moment Leylin’s body landed.

“Go to hell!” Marb’s right hand turned into a giant silver hammer.
“Urgh! You actually restored the ancient gravity spell formation!” Leylin laid on his back as he smiled with a hint of admiration, “Not bad indeed!”
This expression gave Marb a sudden yet very uneasy premonition.
“You’re already going to die. What are you trying to act so tough for?” Marb hammered down viciously.
“Suction spell formation! Activate!”
Under the shadow of the large hammer, Leylin rapidly chanted a few syllables.
*Weng!*
A reversed ‘j’-shaped rune suddenly appeared on Leylin’s body.
In a flash, Leylin seemed to be pulled back by a huge force and flew away from under the giant hammer, and into a distant place.
“Trying to escape? Times thirty…”
 Watching Leylin’s retreating figure, the brownish yellow light on Marb’s body increased in brightness once more.
“Times thirty…”
Marb bellowed in frustration.
The brownish yellow spell formation flashed, and then exploded!
The layers of silver metal on his body fell to the ground, turning into round, silvery white pieces.
“Damn it… My body can’t take it anymore…”
Marb half knelt on the ground, a stubborn look on his face as he looked in the direction that Leylin had escaped.
The gravitational spell formation had taken a lot out of him. With his strength as a peak rank 1 Magus, he could increase the gravitational force up to 20 times the normal amount.

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A long distance away from the battlefield, inside a secret cave.
A spell formation emitting light constantly drew in and expelled air, as if trying to suck something in. On top of the spell formation, there was a constantly flashing reversed “L” shaped rune.
Beside the spell formation, two knights in black heavy armour nervously stood guard.
*Boom!*
The light from the suction spell formation suddenly became brighter.
In the blink of an eye, a black figure charged inside with a speed that one could not see with the naked eye, and smashed into the centre of the spell formation, producing a loud sound. Dust flew everywhere, and the spell formation was completely destroyed, leaving a large pit on the ground.

“Pu!”

Leylin mustered up strength and sat up, spitting out another mouthful of blood. At the same time, intense pain flared up from all parts of his body, as if he had been ripped apart. The strong suction power of this spell had allowed Leylin to escape, but it had also caused his injuries to worsen.

“It’s still not possible for me to battle with a peak rank 1 Magus. Everyone has their own trump cards…” Leylin smiled wryly.

“Master!” Number 2 and 3 immediately knelt and greeted him. “Hn! We need to leave here as soon as possible!” Leylin looked left and right before commanding his subordinates. He was currently seriously injured, and had no battle power to speak of whatsoever. No matter if he met enemies or people from his faction, it would still be very dangerous.

The good thing was that in this period of time, he had already set up a few hideouts in the region that were only known to his two spirit bound slaves. They were the safest places that he could be in. Leylin wasn’t planning on appearing in front of anyone before recovering from his injuries.

With the support of Number 2 and Number 3, Leylin quickly left the area.

“Although I suffered massive injuries, I still garnered some profits! At the very least, Marb’s two trump cards, his metal body and gravitational spell, have been revealed to me.” This kind of knowledge regarding a peak rank 1 Magus was very difficult to obtain.
A.I. Chip! Have you recorded all the previous data?” Leylin asked.
[Marb’s general data has been recorded. Beginning generation of stats!] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice resounded in Leylin’s ear, and immediately after, a blue light flashed in front of him, producing a virtual screen.
[Special techniques: 1. Metallic Life: After fusing with a lifeform that is purely metallic, all fatal attacks are ineffective. Vitality increases, and damage increased when using metal magic. As a side effect, loss of sense of touch. 2. Gravitational Spell Formation: Discovered gravitational runes related to gravity spell formation. Estimated completion of spell: 56%. Information recorded! Able to achieve between 2 and 25 times normal gravity over an area of 100 metres when used as an attack. Estimated strongest might: 29 times normal gravity!]
After this battle, Marb’s basic stats had been calculated. This meant that the next time they fought, if Leylin took countermeasures towards his attacks, the chances of Marb dying by Leylin’s hand would be more than 50%.
This was an advantage based on the information the data had given him. Leylin’s eyes flashed. “A.I. Chip! Construct human model and simulate the best ways to kill him. Factor in Number 2 and Number 3 as well.”
In an instant, scenes of battles appeared in Leylin’s mind. About ten minutes later, the A.I. Chip’s reply sounded. [Based on the newest data recorded, result: Death of target! Death of Number 2, massive injuries inflicted on Number 3, host body with light injuries.] Seeing what the A.I. Chip had planned, a thin smile appeared on his face. “Marb! The next time we meet will be the day you die…”

……

Outside the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, inside the inverted castle. Within a room that was as cold as an ice storehouse, with several large chunks of ice strewn about. Hyder was wearing a pair of thick, heavy spectacles as he stared fixedly at a beaker with liquid boiling inside. “The hair of a female goblin, the toenail of a subterranean lizard, and also… the silk sac of a Dulok spider…” His incantation was unclear, yet both his hands were as precise as a machine as he continuously tossed the items into the beaker. “Woman of the Deep Red, grace us with your presence!” After the ingredients had completely fused within the beaker, Hyder raised up and opened his hands towards the sky, and chanted in a very bizarre incantation as if conducting a sacrificial rite.

……

*Weng…* The ground began to tremble, and the stench of blood began to permeate the tiny room. In an instant, Hyder seemed to have seen a deep, crimson sea surging towards him.
In an instant, the blood coloured sea converged into the figure of a gorgeous woman that strangely had no face. Her ethereal body floated ever so beautifully in midair. “….!” Hyder chanted the final stream of the incantation, which was extremely tongue twisting. The accent was extremely difficult to understand as well; it was filled with a primordial and barbaric aura.

“Chikchik…” After listening to Hyder, the woman finally spoke. Her voice sounded like the chirps of a little bird, yet, at the same time, it strangely sounded like the flapping of insect wings. “Hurry! Bring it forward!” Hyder said to the old lady behind him. The old lady clapped her hands, and two black robed servants entered with a dozen feeble, trembling humans who had their heads covered by a black sack.

“Chikchik!” The woman in midair chirped in excitement as she immediately began to stretch her body forward. *Pu!* *Pu!* *Pu!*

Countless large wounds split open on the bodies of these captives, from which blood gushed out like a fountain. As if seeing the plague, the two servants quickly retreated. *Gloook!*

The blood formed a tiny tendril of steam as it floated through the air towards the woman. A moment later, there were no longer any traces of blood on the ground. As for the woman, the colour red was even more vibrant on her body now. After accepting the sacrifices, the woman nodded her faceless head and transformed into the shape of a flask. *Drip-Drop!*

A tiny droplet of crimson liquid dripped from the flask directly into the beaker. *Ka-Cha!*
After the liquid entered the beaker, a flame emerged from within the beaker and engulfed it. As the flames blazed, the sound of wailing spirits occasionally sounded from within. As the flames continued to burn, the woman disappeared without a trace. Whether it was Hyder or the old lady, no one knew how she had left.

“How is it?” The old lady’s gaze was fixed on the flame, which was spreading, and she put on an expression that could make one feel anxious. Beneath the gleam of the flames, which reflected off of the old lady’s face, there was an intimidating look.

“This is the most feasible method that I could come up with after many experiments. Moreover through a sacrificial rite, I borrowed the power of a trace of blood from an evil spirit... Towards this curse, it should be the best remedy!” Hyder looked at the subsiding flames, and his expression was extremely calm, his eyes showing signs of wisdom.

“I hope that is so! Jenna’s curse is nearing complete activation, so time is pressing...” The old lady muttered. Hearing this, a peculiar expression could be seen in Hyder’s eyes. Although Jenna was the one who had inherited the innate talent of prophecy, Manla was also a relative of theirs. From the perspective of a light Magus, this was somewhat going overboard. However, Hyder concealed his opinion well, not letting the old lady discover it.

*Bang!*

Several minutes later, the red flames completely died out, revealing a strange, congealed item in the beaker. It was an amorphous item, like a large lump of jelly, and was even squirming.

“It’s a success!” A smile surfaced on Hyder’s face.
Following which, his expression turned solemn as he said the old lady, “Madame, although this method of removal has a very high success rate, the curse is an extremely troublesome thing. Some dark Magi also like to add various disgusting and poisonous elements inside, and if they are not treated properly, things could very well become disastrous. Hence, if… what I’m saying is that if there is a possibility, it would still be better to have a chat with the Magus who laid this curse…”
“No need for that! My family will never be threatened by someone else! Fate is watching over us!” The old lady vehemently rejected the notion, and Hyder could only smile wryly in return.
Due to the possibility of a chain reaction from the activation of the curse, during treatment, Jenna and Manla were held very far apart in their locations.
Hyder wore white robes with many runes occasionally blinking on it.
At this moment, he held onto a container with one hand, which contained the soft body within.
Hyder looked at Manla, who was lying unconscious on the experiment table, and finally gave one last glance at the old lady.
She nodded expressionlessly.
Seeing this, Hyder sighed on the inside, and his face turned serious, “Then, I will begin…”
Hyder looked at Manla as he prayed for him. He then picked up a gleaming silver scalpel and lightly cut the arm which had the curse.

“Sssii!”

The black curse runes came to life and continuously twisted, forming a tiny black snake that hissed with its forked tongue. Black gas immediately surrounded Manla’s body, which was covered in bulging veins.

The huge bloke broke out in cold sweat and gritted his teeth unconsciously, the agony on his face apparent.

“The first light in this world! Listen to my summons and lend me your strength to dispel this darkness…”

Hyder’s lips moved quickly as he rapidly chanted an incantation.

*Weng Weng!* In the surroundings of the operating table, countless rays of light suddenly appeared and flew above Manla as they converged into a rune. Unadulterated, without a trace of any impurities! It was as if the light that first set upon this world had appeared inside the rune. This milky white light shone on Manla’s body.

*Chi Chi!* Manla’s body suddenly arched as he clenched his fists. At the same time, a seemingly endless amount of black gas was emitted from the pores throughout his body.
All of this gas was very quickly purified by the light. Hyder looked at the black lines on Manla’s body as sweat rolled down the side of his cheek. His immense spiritual force had now turned into an extremely concentrated and tiny one which continuously scanned Manla’s body and took note of its current state. He also had to guide the light in the cleansing process. This was a task that required extreme precision. If he made a single mistake, the curse on Manla’s body would fully activate. It was very evident that this put a huge strain on Hyder. In only a dozen minutes, this old geezer began to pant heavily as his energy began to drop. However, it was at a time like this that the stability of Hyder’s hands was even more pronounced. Just like a robot, his movements were fluid and without the slightest mistake. Finally, under the pressing attack from the light rays, the cursed runes made of darkness were continuously pushed back until they retreated back into the original wound. The light rays formed a halo outside the wound and confined it to a small surface area on the flesh. “Hu…” Hyder exhaled deeply as he wiped the sweat off his forehead. “I have already confined the curse to one area. Right now, this extraction process is the most crucial…” Hyder held the container which contained the jelly-like body as if it was some sort of precious treasure. Following which, he placed the container close to where the wound on Manla’s arm was. “Come forth, my darling!” A strange expression now appeared on Manla’s face as he spoke in a tone that could induce dizziness. “Sssii…” The runes on Manla’s arm writhed and once again turned into the
shape of a tiny black snake. It spat its tongue and, as if it had discovered something, it turned and faced the jelly-like body. “Chi Chi…” After seeing the small snake, the jelly-like creature, which seemed to have no consciousness, began to shrink its body. However, this movement attracted the tiny snake and it slithered towards the jelly-like body. Seeing the small snake closing in, Hyder held on to his breath, as if afraid that his breathing would scare the snake away. The black snake hesitantly circled the area where the wound was in. It then turned around and slithered away without a second thought! Just when the old madame thought that it was a failure, the tiny black snake which had turned around coiled its body and darted right into the wound as fast as lightning, jumping on top of the jelly-like creature. It swallowed the jelly-like body down in a gulp and began to retreat rapidly. “You want to run?” Hyder had the last laugh as he grabbed a pair of tweezers with his right hand and reached forward. The tweezers travelled in a beautiful arc through the air and landed right in front of the tiny black snake and blocked it. Following which, the tweezers clamped together and held onto the middle of the snake’s body. “Hisssss….” The snake hissed as it writhed its body continuously. Hyder’s face was extremely solemn as he knew how much of a calamity would be created if the abomination in his hands were to escape. Bringing forward a vulcanised test-tube that was covered in runes with his left hand, he tossed the black snake within and plugged the hole.
The runes flashed and sealed the test-tube tightly. Only after looking at this scene did Hyder allow himself a sigh of relief. “Mister Hyder, is it a success?” The old lady stepped forward and was extremely excited as she saw that the cursed runes on Manla’s arm had completely vanished. “Of course! It is done, I have not disgraced my art!” Hyder smiled in an aloof manner. He had no confidence prior to his attempts to remove this curse. However, in the period of his experiments, this curse had allowed him to greatly improve his Potioneering and healing skills. “Great! As I was saying, how can we bow down to that dark Magus?” “Fate is forever on our side!” A light of reverence appeared on the old lady’s face, as if the sun had shone on her. Hyder, who could not withstand this light, closed his eyes and retreated a few steps. *Pa!* At this moment, a very crisp clap sounded from Manla’s body and a mysterious black gas once again appeared. “What is happening?” The old witch was now like a duck which had its neck grasped, her voice hoarse as she asked. “Damn it, a second curse! It’s actually a model composed of a combination of curses!!!” Regret and shame now flashed across Hyder’s face. At the same time, a huge amount of black gas formed into many tiny black snakes as the dense smog engulfed Manla within. *Chik Chik…* From within the black smog, a harrowing sound could be heard. Seconds later, the black smog dispersed and revealed a blackened skeleton which sat quietly before the experiment table. This turn of events was extremely quick and even Hyder had no time to react.
“Seriously…”
Hyder could only smile wryly and opened his mouth to say something.
*Crack!*
The sound of glass shattering could be heard. As if recalling something, Hyder hurriedly tossed the test-tube in his hands away. Alas, it was all too late!
A black mist that was crackling with lightning exploded on his hands.
A bright layer of light immediately appeared on Hyder’s robes that repelled the black mist.
After everything had calmed down, Hyder looked at his already blackened left hand and looked extremely resigned.

……

“Hmm?” Leylin, who was recuperating in a hidden location, suddenly opened his eyes, revealing a ponderous expression.
“These energy waves… It seems like one of my curses has already activated a reunison effect… Oh! It should be that bloke Manla who is now dead…”
“I’m quite curious about the effects of the hidden mechanism I placed on the curse.” Leylin grinned.
Not only did he place a complex curse on both of them, but he also left behind many concealed mechanisms. The poisonous elements and malice hidden within was enough to let the Magus who was healing them to suffer greatly. If the healer was not careful, he might even lose his life!
Leylin was confident that after witnessing the prowess of his curse, the family behind Jenna would have no choice but to bow their heads down to him.
Even if he was not certain of the unique meditation technique this
family possessed, one could easily tell that a Magus who was able to predict the future held an extremely high position!
As such, he had many things that he wanted from that family.
However, Leylin only toyed with the idea for a while before tossing it to the back of his mind. Right now, he was stark naked as he rested his chiselled body in a stone pool.
In the centre of the pool, there was a deep green fluid emitting the scent of plants and an enormous lifeforce which continuously healed Leylin’s injuries.
This was the healing solution that Leylin had brewed before. Not only were many healing potions combined in it, but the Fantasy Water that he procured before in this location was also one of the main ingredients.
Through the translucent liquid, one could see that Leylin’s abdominal injury had now fully recovered, only leaving behind a tiny pink scar which was rapidly fading away.
This speed had already somewhat exceeded Leylin’s expectations.
“No! This isn’t the effect of the healing solution, but the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent…” Light flashed past as Leylin shut both his eyes.
A massive amount of spiritual force turned into tiny threads that filled his body.
Through his observation with the spiritual force, he could distinctly feel that various areas on his body had begun to erupt with a mysterious energy which continued to replenish and heal his injuries.
These energies were dark red in colour with an ancient aura. With its help, Leylin’s body rapidly began to heal.
“Not only this!”
Leylin reached forward with his right hand and clenched his fist tightly.
*Ka-Cha!* A huge explosion sounded in the air, as if something
was ripped into shreds.
“I can feel that during my recuperation, the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent is slowly strengthening the properties of my body!”
The abyss seen in Leylin’s eyes became even darker.
“This… The second transition of the bloodline, it’s here!”
The severe injuries he sustained seemed to have hastened the progress of the second transition in his body. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in Leylin’s body continuously surged and many mysterious energies began to be released, fusing with Leylin on a more profound level.
[Detected that the Host’s properties are currently being strengthened! A transition in the Giant Kemoyin Serpent is ongoing! The second transition will commence in ten seconds!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
*Hisssss…*
A layer of fine black scales covered Leylin’s body in a flash. He had actually unknowingly activated his innate spell. Under the flicker of the black light, the scales were strengthened. Even Leylin’s eyes had become an amber colour with vertical pupils.
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“Number 2! Number 3!”
Leylin shouted.
“Master!” Two Branded Swordsmen wearing heavy armour immediately came and knelt down in front of Leylin. “I’m activating all concealment and defence spell formations. You are to stand guard outside and not let any living being come inside.”
Leylin instructed. The two spirit-branded slaves nodded, keeping a strict vigil outside.
These two Branded Swordsmen were controlled by Leylin through spirit branding. Even if asked to die, they would do so with no qualms and were the best people to guard Leylin.
[Counting down: 8, 7, 6…] The A.I. Chip’s voice became softer.
All that Leylin needed to do now was to snap his fingers, and a ring of a spell formation suddenly emerged from his surroundings, protecting the area.
After doing all this, Leylin closed his eyes and submerged himself in the green liquid.

……

Time flowed by.
Ten days later, in this little cave, in the middle of the spell formation, dense Dark elemental energy particles were mixed with
flaming-red Fire elemental energy particles and they filled the entire pool. These elemental energy particles were so dense that they were immediately apparent in the external world; different colours were visible on the rock wall around him due to the reflection of light on these elemental particles. At the heart of the elemental energy particles, black and red vapour converged, seemingly about to crystallize. In the pool, the original green liquid had completely disappeared, revealing a dried up bottom. A large black cocoon lay still at the centre of the bottom of the pool, constantly expanding and then shrinking back, just as if it was breathing. While the black cocoon was ‘breathing’, the Dark and Fire elemental energy particles were continuously being pulled inside it with each ‘inhalation’. The black light became increasingly thin, till at the end, the hint of a perfect human figure could be seen. “Tsss!” A long hissing sound was produced from within the cocoon. Shortly after, a huge gale engulfed the cave. The Dark and Fire elemental energy particles in the air seemed to have come across a black hole, and were dragged into the heart of the black cocoon. The black light around the cocoon became weaker, and then completely dissipated. “Hm?” Leylin blinked his eyes open. The moment he had completely awakened, he could feel as if there was a layer of something sticky on his body, and it was very uncomfortable. He lifted his right arm, and a layer of skin that was the colour of his skin peeled off like withered tree bark.
“What’s this? Is this like imitating the molting of the snake species?”
Leylin was a little speechless and quickly tore off the dead skin.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
He efficiently removed the layer of dead skin covering his body. On the layer of the dead skin, there were even scaly resemblances similar to that of a snake’s skin.
Leylin placed the skin aside and reassessed his body. Currently, there were no signs of injuries on his body. All his wounds had recovered, and his mental state was brimming with vitality. In general, his condition was great and better than before.
Leylin stared at his hands. His palms were now even whiter and exquisite, and the pores seemed to have disappeared, it was like the skin of a newborn baby!
However, Leylin could clearly sense that a hidden and monstrous power was flowing through his arms..
*Ba-dump! Ba-dump!*
His heart was pounding strongly, circulating blood and other nutritious substances all around his body. While his heart beat, Leylin could almost feel his body becoming stronger bit by bit. Though this was very slight, with the passing of time, the strength held in his body would be terrifying!
“My body’s vitality has already become so powerful, but what about my spiritual force?”
Leylin closed his eyes and began to feel the elemental energy particles in his sea of consciousness. In the sea of consciousness, the red rays were even more prominent, and the silvery-white threads of spiritual force were spiralling, seemingly very steady.
“The total amount of spiritual force actually increased so much?”
Leylin transferred a bit of the silver spiritual force to the external
world. While maneuvering the spiritual force, he could feel himself extremely comfortable with this process. His body had adapted to the rapid increase in his spiritual force, and Leylin also knew that after this miraculous transformation, his spiritual force was slightly able to solidify. Within rank 1 Magi, the quality of his spiritual force was definitely one of the best.

After he had made a thread of silver spiritual force probe out of his body, an astonishing scene appeared. Blackness! Numerous black lights appeared in the sky like fireflies, rushing towards Leylin’s spiritual force and clinging onto it. Leylin had never felt so comfortable in his life. Even without the use of the A.I. Chip, Leylin knew that the level of his elemental essence conversion had already reached a very high amount.

“I was wrong! I got it all wrong!”

Leylin was dazed for a second, and then laughed wryly. “The Giant Kemoyin Serpent was originally the child of the shadows, and the elemental essence conversion is just child’s play for it. Rather than exploring the strength of my bloodline, I persistently tried to use crystallised Dark elemental energy particles to break through the bottleneck. How stupid…”

Fortunately, it was not too late. Using crystallised elemental energy particles only delayed Leylin’s second bloodline transition. Once he got more familiar with his body, Leylin commanded silently, “A.I. Chip! List the recent changes in my condition!”

*Shua shua!* Rows of blue words emerged in front of Leylin.

[Beep! Detected rapid liveliness in Host’s bloodline, the Kyerlis coefficient is: 44 - 46 - 56 - 78 - 89 - 101! The liveliness has reached the threshold and the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline’s second transition begins!] [Beep! Host has gone into deep sleep. Commencement of reformation of Kemoyin’s Bloodline within
body.] [Detected unknown composition in Host’s body! Permission to dispel substances… Countdown: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1!] [Beep! No authorization from Host, unable to dispel! Entering observation mode! Recording data…] [Beginning of alteration of heart. Rate of completion: 1%, 2%, 15%, 30%, 51%…] [Strengthening of Host’s bloodline. Innate spell, Kemoyin’s Scales strengthened! [Kemoyin’s Scales: Forms a layer of defensive scales on host’s body, has an instant effect. Physical defense: 35 degrees. Resistance to magic: 40 degrees. Consumption: 1 spiritual force, 1 magic power every 6 hours.] [Measured large rise in Host’s stats in multiple areas. Collecting data…] [Beep! Collection of data completed, converting into numerical values…]

Leylin found his stats being refreshed.


The heart was an important organ that produced the blood of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Through the remodelling of the heart, ancient Warlocks obtained vitality and the ability to produce blood as powerful as that of the Kemoyin Serpent.

With the scanning of the A.I. Chip, Leylin could clearly see a purplish red colour constantly extending from his heart.

Wave after wave of power and blood was transported to all parts of his body.

Along with the throbbing of his heart, the last few digits of the numbers that represented his spiritual force, vitality, elemental essence conversion constantly increased.

“Even before my heart is completely remodelled, the rise in my stats is still increasing. How terrifying…” Leylin mumbled to himself.
His current stats were comparable to a peak rank 1 Magus, and in terms of vitality, he exceeded them by a fairly large amount. He could feel a strength that he had never experienced!
Pak! Leylin supported his weight with his hands, and a deep palm print was indented onto the rock at the bottom of the pool. His entire body bounced, and he jumped out of the pool.

*Peng peng!* Under his feet, fine cracks in the rock extended like spider webs. “After the increase in my vitality, the density of my body has also increased. I’ll need to train again so that I can control the strength I now possess.”

Seeing the damage he had unwittingly caused, he smiled wryly. He found a random piece of black clothing in his bag and wore it, and then snapped his fingers.

*Weng weng!* The defense spell formation around ceased operation and two black figures arrived like a hurricane. They knelt before Leylin and said, “Master!”

“In the time I’ve been asleep, has there been any strange happenings?” Leylin asked indifferently.

Number 2 and Number 3 shared a glance, and Number 2 took the initiative and held out a pendant that looked like a book. “In the time that Master has been asleep, everything has been quiet. The five specimens are still unconscious, though Master’s secret imprint has been flashing constantly. Without Master’s approval, we did not dare answer…”

“Oh?” Leylin took the pendant and flipped to a page with an imprint with a strange smile on it. Under the smiling face, there were rows of communication requests, but since Leylin had been in the process of transitioning his bloodline, he naturally did not bother answering them.
He tapped on the smiling face, and string of Dark elemental energy particles shimmered.
“Tsss…” Similar to the static in radios due to bad signals a noise sounded, and the voice of the old man in Leylin’s team could be heard.
“My lord, is that you? Please forgive me. Due to the issue of signals in the secret plane, I can only contact you through the headquarters’ signal tower.”
“Cut the nonsense. What do you need?” Leylin asked.
“My lord… In the time you have not been around, our Hunting Zone 3 was attacked by a peak rank 1 Magus by the name of Marb. He was like a mad dog, and as long as someone appeared in front of him, whether an acolyte or an official Magus, they would be killed. He even announced your name and said that if you did not appear, this situation would continue… Bat and Crow have already died in his hands…”
eylin could hear the hint of fear in the old man’s voice. Bat and Crow were both Leylin’s subordinates, and now that both had been killed, it would be hard to deliver this news to Four Seasons Garden.

“Lord Caesar has already spoken and given you a time limit of ten days. Within that time, you’ll have to solve this problem, or else…” “Or else?” Leylin sounded very calm. The old man, on the other hand, was so terrified that even his voice trembled. “He will seize you on the grounds that you neglected your duties!”

“Oh!” He expected anger from Leylin, but all he saw was Leylin nodding slightly, “Tell him I understand!”

Next, Leylin closed the imprint’s connection. “Marb, is it?” Behind his eyes, he seemed to see that crazy metallized old geezer again. That Marb must have received news about him being in charge of Hunting Zone 3 and had thus taken action.

Leylin flippantly made a decision. Though Thousand Meddling Hands, the organisation of which Giant was a member, wanted to solve the conflict between Leylin and the Lilytell family, he wanted none of that. From his perspective, since they had already become enemies, it was better to completely eliminate them. Besides, the current Marb thought nothing of Leylin.
If, before the second bloodline transition, Leylin only had a chance to kill his opponent with the help of Number 2 and Number 3, he was now confident that in a fight, he could definitely destroy his opponent! Marb wouldn’t even have the chance to escape.
“Let’s go!”
With a shake of his robes, he brought the two Branded Swordsmen out of the cave.
“Awoooo!” Soon after, the silhouette of a huge Venom Wyvern soared up high from the cave…

……

*Zoom!*
On the plains, two figures flickered with light as they travelled at speeds that exceeded what could be seen with the naked eye. One chased, while the other fled.
In front was a young woman wearing white robes, her hair slightly curled, and her chest was bursting out of her clothes.
As she moved, her plentiful bosom would constantly jiggle, and paired with this woman’s beautiful face, men had the urge to become lecherous wolves.
It was a pity that her striking beauty had no effect on the Magus behind her.
*Xiu xiu!* The sound of blades slashing could be heard, and the woman’s face changed, instantly grabbing a chain bracelet around her wrist and flung it behind.
*Weng weng!*
Luminous green light was emitted from the chain bracelet, and the light converged to form a large web which slammed into the two silver pikes.
*Rumble!*
Green and silver rays exploded, and the intense explosive airwaves
struck the woman’s back. *Rip!* Half her robe was torn up, revealing her bright, clean back and delicate skin.

“Stupid old man! I already told you I don’t know any ‘Leylin’. Why did you keep chasing after me…”

The woman seemed to care little about how she was exhibiting a lot of skin as she produced a scroll. *Chia!* A pair of translucent, small wings grew behind her. Each was quite small and formed a semi-heart. They were quite cute and seemed like a decorative item.

*Hu-la!* The wings shook, bringing with them waves of energy. However, this lady did not fly but floated gently, as if she had become more buoyant. With her wings flapping behind her, her speed increased, and only then did she have the time to turn back and scold,

“You’re the light Magus in this region, so you must be under Leylin’s protection! How can you not know of him?”

The one that was chasing behind her was a silver-haired old man with metallic ornaments dangling from his forehead to his face. After having seen the woman using the scroll, a ring of silvery, metallic rays was produced. *Hu hu!*

Metallic rays constantly sprayed backwards like two silver tassles that drifted behind him. *Crash!* His speed increased sharply and was even slightly faster than the woman’s, which caused the distance between them to decrease.

The woman even felt like crying at this point. “I’m just a wandering Magus! Though this is Four Seasons Garden’s territory, we’re still allowed to go in. You’ve really got the wrong person!”

Hearing her explanation, Marb face did not change and he extended his right arm, a silver white metallic bomb appearing in his hand.
His pupils had no life in them and he was unmoved, as if this scantily dressed woman was just a rotting corpse. With a wave of his hand, the metallic bomb travelled in a beautiful arc and landed in front of the woman’s path. *Boom!* The silver bomb blew up with a loud rumble, fire constantly spreading and metallic debris constantly flying everywhere. The look on this woman’s face was terrible. She was barely able to dodge the aftermath of the explosion. Most of her wings were blown away, and as a result, her speed immediately decreased. She could even feel a bloodthirsty gaze on her basically naked back, as if it was looking at prey. This gaze was different from the lustful looks from many male Magi: it was pure killing intent without the slightest bit of desire. Hence, she was very clear that the moment she was in his hands, all that awaited her was death. Her pretty face, which was something she had always been proud of, served no purpose in this situation. “Though you’re a wandering Magus, you must belong to some part of Four Seasons Garden. If you die here, it’ll be bad for him anyway.” Marb coldly stated. In order to force Leylin out, there was nothing he would not do. In a place where rank 2 Magi were in charge, with his strength as a peak rank 1 Magus, it was still possible to kill as he liked. “Damn it! How did I get so unlucky as to meet a lunatic like him!” The curly-haired woman cursed, desiring to cry as she quickly ran. “Escaping? Do you think you’ll actually succeed?” Marb, who was behind her, gathered a silver fluid in his hand again, turning it into a short rod. He held on to the silver, metallic rod, and pointed it at the woman was fleeing as fast as she could. *Zilala!* The front of the metallic short rod split open, and
countless little silver steel balls flew out.
*Peng peng!*
These steel balls fell like rain, dispersed in a circular shape, headed forward, and blocked all the possible routes that the woman could use to flee.
*Ding ding dang dang!*
The woman clenched her teeth and a pink defensive layer emerged from her body.
As the silver metallic steel balls struck the defense layer, a heavy thud could be heard.
“Transform!” At this moment Marb, who was behind, shouted coldly, his two hands clawing forward!
*Tsss!* The steel balls that were hitting the pink layer suddenly melted to form a silver liquid that covered the layer.
Along with Marb’s clawing motion, a formless column of air seemed to strike on the silver liquid, the large strength it had constantly pulled the woman backwards.
*Rumble!*
Marb clenched his right fist, silver fluid coated his hand, which caused it to become an eye-catching silver colour.
The silver, metallic fist mercilessly struck the pink layer.
The layer was immediately dented to a terrifying extent. As Marb increased the power of his attack, terrifying cracking sounds could be heard.
Finally, under the woman’s desperate gaze, the pink layer was completely shattered by the silver fist, turning into shards that gently fell like butterflies.
“Pu…” With her innate spell broken, the woman paled and as if she had been struck by a hammer and collapsed.
“Damn it! I’m going to stay right here! Just do whatever you want now!”
She watched Marb, and closed her eyes as if in resignation.
However, the moment she closed her eyes, her legs spread open and her robes ripped apart, revealing the underwear underneath. The black shadow in the middle was enough to cause anyone to go mad and have the desire to explore further.

“All these little actions at this time?” Marb snickered.

Most Magi liked to enjoy themselves after they advanced and were open about their acts in this area. This was the case for both male and female Magi. But Marb was different! He was already one with metal and had lost the ability to have children. This was why he valued Bosain, his only blood relative so much.

Shortly after, his right hand turned into a chopper!

“Rest in peace! Nobody will save you!”

After having heard Marb’s declaration, hopelessness welled up. She was merely a semi-converted Magus and was probably slightly competent when it came to fleeing. However, in front of Marb, she was like a frail child.

“Am I going to die here? Mentor, I’m sorry I couldn’t complete the task you entrusted to me!”

As the chopper struck down, the woman mumbled under her breath.

“Really?”

*Boom!*

The pain she anticipated did not arrive and instead, a third person’s voice rang out in the field.

The female Magus opened her eyes to the sight of a giant black serpent, scales flickering with black light as it broke the chopper with a single bite.

After breaking the chopper, the serpent turned into black smoke and floated to the back of a very handsome male Magus. It turned into a ring of black elemental particles and hovered over him like an aureole.

“What a familiar face! This seems to be the person in charge of
Hunting Zone 3… Leylin!”
The woman inwardly heaved a sigh of relief, though outwardly she appeared to be indifferent to the situation.
The female Magus then stood up as if nothing had happened and quickly rushed off, covering a large distance in a short period of time.
“By the way, do I know you?” Leylin rolled his eyes inwardly. This was an area he had jurisdiction over, and all Magi who were in the light faction or any wandering Magi were supposed to greet him. However, Leylin was always indoors and rarely showed himself, so it was natural he did not know this woman. However, if she were to die here, it would put a mark on his record, so he decided not to bicker with her about it. Leylin’s full concentration was now on Marb.
After seeing Leylin, Marb’s gaze, which was as sharp as knives, was fixed on Leylin.
“So… You’ve finally appeared, Leylin!”
Marb spoke softly, but the coldness and determination were apparent in his voice, causing the female Magus nearby to break out in cold sweat,
In their previous battle, Marb had witnessed Leylin’s power and the rate at which he grew stronger. Fear and regret crawled around and constantly gnawed at his insides like ants.
He regretted it! He regretted not deploying more manpower to the Great Canyon Margaret and thoroughly eliminating Leylin there!
Now, Leylin had already grown stronger and was quickly becoming the Lilytell Family’s worst nightmare.
In the beginning, he had only just advanced to a rank 1 Magus, but now, he was capable of fighting on equal grounds with Marb. In the entire Magus history of the south coast, this was a rate of improvement that only the cream of the crop had.
Presently, Marb could still suppress his opponent, but even he himself had no confidence in being able to do so in the future.
By that time, Leylin would definitely destroy the entire Lilytell Family!
Marb did not want to be one responsible for his family’s death. Hence, in this period of time, he was like a madman, looking for traces of Leylin.
He did not even hesitate to anger a rank 2 light Magus as he slaughtered a large number of Magi in the light Magi zone. Finally, he had forced Leylin to come out.

Marb stared straight at Leylin, as if afraid that at the slightest blink, Leylin would escape once again and disappear.

“It’s been a long time! I’ve been looking for you for a long time…” Marb mumbled under his breath.

“I’ve waited quite some time. This really has to end soon!” Leylin clasped his hands behind his back and spoke. This indifference obviously caused Marb to become suspicious. The current Leylin’s aura was even more difficult to make sense of, and even he was unable to accurately judge Leylin’s strength. However, in order to force Leylin to make an appearance, he had no other choice!

“Die!” Marb suddenly made his move as he roared.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

In an instant, he turned into pure metal, rays converging in front of his chest and spell formation that emitted brownish yellow light.

“Metal transformation! Gravity spell formation!” Fully aware that Leylin was no easy target, Marb used his trump card right away.

*Weng Weng!*

A ring of brownish yellow light extended across the entire area. Wave after wave of a tearing force from the core of the earth descended onto the area.

“Gravity times twenty!” Marb’s eyes turned a pure silver hue as he roared.

*Rumble!* The brownish yellow colour immediately spread, and a tearing force that was ten times stronger than before exploded from beneath the ground.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

The surface of the ground peeled off, and moles, ants, and other
tiny animals were immediately ripped apart and turned into blood mist!
“Lunatics! They’re all lunatics!”
That female Magus was right at the edge of the spell formation, and she instantly lay on the ground, her skin constantly breaking. Blood flowed copiously, and she was quickly dyed crimson.
“Are you kidding? How can I die from the aftershocks of a Magi battle?”
The female Magus gritted her teeth and broke a pendant around her neck.
This usually simple task was made much more difficult due to the times twenty gravitational force.
In reality, if not for her being an official Magus and having remodelled her body such that it became stronger, she would have been blown up into blood mist like those animals.
*Chi!*
After breaking the pendant, a green light engulfed the female Magus’ body.
All her wounds were instantly healed, and if not for the bloodstains that were left on her body and clothes, it would be impossible to tell that she had been injured.
The green light travelled across her body, and she could immediately feel the effects of the increased gravity lessening. She quickly used her four limbs and crawled out of the area that the brownish-yellow gravity spell formation affected.
*Bo!*
After leaving the spell formation and feeling the gravity return to normal, she heaved a hefty sigh of relief and stood up.
“That was much too terrifying! As expected, it’s impossible for us semi-converted Magi to interfere in battles between rank 1 Magi who are at the peak.”
*Boom! Boom! Boom!*
At this moment, the sound of metal clashing against metal produced ear-piercing sound waves.
As if bitten by a snake, the female Magus took seven steps back and glanced at the middle of the spell formation. At the center, there were two human figures that had slammed into each other. In their surroundings, whether they were large trees or rocks, all were reduced to powder once they were brushed past.
“This is too dangerous!”
The female Magus’ expression changed, and she immediately fled further until the two Magi were on the verge of disappearing from her line of sight. Only then did she halt her steps.
“It should be fine here… right?”
Though this was what she told herself, the Wind elemental energy particles around her feet did not dissipate as she made preparations to leave if she saw the need to.
*Bam!*
Covered in a layer of black scales, Leylin struck Marb’s curved, metallic knife.
Sparks flew, and the clash produced an ear-piercing sound, causing the area around them to quake. There were even some black cracks around them that slowly extended outwards.
*Ping pang!* At this moment, the sound of metal breaking sounded from the middle.
The two figures that had been fiercely fighting quickly retreated. Leylin swung his arms, and in his hand was the sharp tip of a blade! In the fight just now, Leylin had actually used brute force and broken one of Marb’s blades!
At this moment, the tip of the blade was still wriggling about and had transformed into multiple metallic teeth that were biting at Leylin’s palm.
*Ka-cha!*
The metallic teeth bit at the scales and produced crisp sounds, but
there was not a trace left on Leylin’s hand. When the bloodline transitioning had occurred, Leylin’s innate spell formation, Kemoyin’s scales, had also powered up. Its physical defense and resistance to magic had risen by more than 30 degrees. With the added power from Leylin’s magic, Marb’s metallic weapons were now unable to hurt Leylin.

“Hm? How dare you resist!” Leylin furrowed his brows, and immediately after, the muscles on his right arm bulged out. More than 20 degrees of strength were displayed!

*Weng!*

Clenching his fist, a miserable shriek of someone at death’s door could be heard from the space between Leylin’s fingers. Leylin then opened his right hand and threw a few bits of metal that had clearly become dented out of shape, and thus become useless, onto the floor.

As Leylin had crushed the metal, Marb had trembled slightly, as if he had been wounded. With a liquid metallic body, Marb’s spirit was spread out evenly throughout his body. The moment Leylin completely destroyed the liquid metal in his hands, a part of Marb’s spirit had died as well.

“You’re- You’re actually completely fine! This entire area actually has twenty times the usual gravity!” Seeing that Leylin was completely fine, Marb’s face was filled with disbelief.

Just ten or so days ago, he had used this spell and caused Leylin to have no choice but to flee. However, currently, Leylin was actually so nimble even with the effects of the gravity spell formation. This situation caused Marb, who had recently experienced the pain of losing part of his spirit, to become terrified.

Though he was aware of Leylin’s talent, Marb realised that the rate at which he improved was far above his expectations!
“Gravity?” Leylin looked at the brownish-yellow spell formation and smirked. Within his body, a transparent energy membrane emitted a faint purplish red colour, protecting the most vulnerable organs in his body. This was the defensive ability that the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline had brought to him. In addition, even if this membrane was not activated, just his vitality of 25.7 was enough to withstand this level of gravity. After all, the sturdiness of his body was working up to the same level of hardness as the body of the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent.

“Today will be your doomsday!” Marb was stern and resolute. “Twenty-nine times gravity!” He roared fiercely, and his body was engulfed by a layer of brownish-yellow ring of gravitational force.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

A gravitational force that was even more tremendous descended and even Leylin could feel the pressure and the increase in his weight. However, the one who got the worse end of the deal was Marb himself. Right after sending out the attack, the sound of porcelain breaking could be heard from his body. Like a spider web, numerous cracks emerged all over his body.

“Even if I am to bet on the Lilytell name and sacrifice my life, I must kill you here!” Marb looked slightly craze as he spoke. “A fight to the death?” Leylin’s expression became serious. Though he had already gone through the second bloodline transition and his strength had surpassed that of a rank 1 Magus, he was not yet a rank 2 Magus! Facing a Magus who was also at the peak, even he had to be extra careful.

*Crack! Crack!*
Chilling sounds were produced as Marb’s metallic body suddenly increased in size, his muscles bulging as his body expanded. In the blink of an eye, Marb transformed from a regular old man to a metallic, burly man who was over five meters tall. On the surface of his body was a luster that was unique to metal. The cracks were even more massive, and it looked as if his new form might collapse at any moment. Leylin’s eyes flashed as he felt the immense, unstable energy waves of elemental particles from Marb’s transformed body. “You want to take me down even if it means your own death? Dream on!” Leylin quickly retreated, and at the same time, he chanted a few syllables. *Rumble!* Countless black fireballs emerged from the shadows on the ground, hovering in the air. The latent fireball, which had already been overwhelmingly powerful, now had an even more terrifying might of 60 degrees with the added bonus from Leylin’s current elemental essence conversion! This was practically the limit of the power that a rank 1 Magus could possess. Under the might of the black fireball, the soil melted and turned into something akin to the crystalline particles of porcelain and glass.
Latent Fireball!

Leylin raised his right arm and hundreds of small black fireballs fused in front of him, till they were about the size of a human head. The black in the middle was even more intense, giving it a profound air as if it could suck in human spirits.

Under the intense flames that were of a high temperature, even the brownish-yellow gravitational rays began to show signs of instability, constantly retracting and extending.

Facing the giant in front of him, Leylin’s expression was cold. The latent fireball soared through the sky as if passing through space, and it appeared in front of the metallic giant in an instant.

The black fire’s high-temperature force field caused the metallic giant to sway slightly, liquid metal constantly melting and dripping onto the ground.

In the face of such a terrifying attack, Marb steeled himself and grabbed on to his right arm!

*Ka-cha!*

The ear-piercing sound of bones breaking sounded, and Marb himself actually tore off his own arm.

The half-complete metallic arm that he tossed away showed signs of melting into the air and then turned into an oval metal ball. It then collided with the black fireball!

*Rumble!*
Bright rays of light unceasingly spread out, and at the centre, there was a black and silver-white light that was constantly squirming... devouring...

Even though Marb had tried to increase the distance between them as best as he could, he was still affected by the energy waves. *Ka-cha!*
The gravity spell formation at his chest immediately cracked.

*Pak!*
The brownish-yellow gravity spell formation simply collapsed, and the gravity immediately went back to normal.

*Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!*

Explosions sounded one after another like beans exploding. Just ten seconds later, the entire ground had been levelled, and even a large portion of the earth had been blown off.

At the centre was a gigantic pit that was so deep that one could not see the bottom.

After the ash and dust had somewhat dispersed, Leylin came to the side of the pit. Seeing the black flames that were still burning, he asked aloud, “Dead yet?”

*Shua!*

A silver-white figure immediately cut through the curtain of ash and appeared before Leylin.

“Marb?!?” Producing an expression of pure shock, he quickly backed away!

“Ah! Ah! Ah!” Marb’s current condition was very pitiful. Not only had he lost his right arm, even his chest and thigh had injuries that were so deep one could see the bone.

This was especially so for the injury above his waist. It looked as if he was on the verge of being broken into two.

If this were an ordinary human or even an official Magus, they would find it difficult to survive, let alone go on the offense with such dangerous injuries.

But Marb was evidently different. Liquid metal unceasingly flowed
and covered several areas, forcefully patching up his body. Upon seeing Leylin, silver light that seemed to have turned solid shot out of his eyes.

*Bang!*

Two metal bombs behind his back exploded, the force instantly acting on his back. Using this method, he was able to catch up to Leylin.

“We shall perish together!” Marb pounced forward.

While in midair, his entire body dispersed and turned into a silver white curtain. The metallic curtain seemed to have a life of its own as it bundled Leylin within, leaving behind his head on the outside.

“Hm? An interesting attack! Is this your final attack?” Leylin watched the silver liquid metal wrapped around him like a cocoon, his expression cool and not the least bit flustered.

*Gulu! Gulu!*

A large amount of liquid metal gathered at Leylin’s shoulder, turning into the face of an old man.

“For the family! For Bosain! Metal will ultimately be destroyed…” The old man looked deranged and looked as if he was planning to die for a just cause.

“By the way… do you mean to die together with that puppet?” Just as Marb was about to self-destruct, a voice lazily resounded from the other end of the battlefield.

Marb turned around in disbelief, and immediately caught sight of another Leylin that had suddenly appeared. He looked to be mocking the old man as he sized him up.

“You must have forgotten, but I am a Magus specialising in Dark elemental energy particles. For us, making a shadow clone is a piece of cake.”

While Leylin spoke, the “Leylin” that Marb had bound, began to transform in a bizarre manner.
The entire body became black and turned into a bundle of black shadows. “No!” A pair of silver-white hands reached out from the curtain as Marb yelled, trying to get away from the clone. “It’s too late!” Leylin exclaimed indifferently, with even some pity in his voice. *Shua Shua Shua!* The large lump of shadows that had Marb surrounded suddenly produced countless black tendrils that engulfed Marb. Marb bellowed as large numbers of fine, rotating knives emerged from his body. *Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Sparks flew as the blades and tendrils made contact. However, this time, the durability of the shadow tendrils had increased in might by a large margin, and the silver-white blades eventually got stuck. Some even snapped. “Goodbye, Marb!” His expression was strange as he watched Marb, who was completely bound by the shadow tendrils. Next, he raised his arm, and then clenched his fist! *Boom!* ……

“Is it over?” The female Magus from before had escaped far, far away due to her fear of the aftershocks from the battle. Only after it ended did she dare to return while cowering. It was not that she did not want to escape, but if Marb was the one who won, it would be impossible for her to escape with her current speed. Hence, it would be better to take the chance and return. If Leylin and Marb were able to heavily injure each other, she could
render some assistance too! This would ultimately benefit her! “Or perhaps… the two of them perished together? If that’s the case, all their possessions will belong to me! Hahaha…” At the thought of picking up loot from two mighty people, the female Magus began to laugh aloud a little neurotically. “My apologies, but you’ll have to be disappointed!” Next, Leylin’s voice was heard and the female Magus’ maniacal laughter suddenly stopped like a duck who had its throat gripped. “It’s you! That Leylin who caused me to be chased after…” The female Magus commented lightly, but quickly changed her words, “Oh! No, I mean Magus Leylin!” As he watched this female Magus, who seemed to be much too comfortable in this situation, Leylin shook his head and had no intentions of chatting with her. “Hunting zones are still quite dangerous. If you want to gather resources, it’s better to head to the other zones.” Leylin turned and left after he spoke. “Hey! Wait! Where’s that Magus called Marb? Did you chase him away?” Only now did the female Magus react. With the fear from before still lingering in her heart, she looked around as if afraid that Marb would appear at any moment. “Marb? He’s right here!” Leylin waved, showing her the huge lump of metal in his hand. “Hm?” The female Magus gazed at the item in Leylin’s hand with astonishment. That was a large piece of silver, metallic ore. At the beginning, she had assumed Leylin had found some materials and ignored it. ……

However, upon closer inspection, there were a few strange depressions and protruding areas on the surface, like a… human
After comparing the eyes and nose, the female Magus fell back three steps, “It’s Marb! You killed him?”
Such an unusual reaction actually threw Leylin off.
“He’s a dark Magus. As a Magus from the hunting team, isn’t it normal to kill him?”
“Were…. were you dropped on the head as a child? I- no! What!”
Too confused, she began to stutter.
“That’s a peak rank 1 Magus! Peak! No matter where you go, someone with that level of strength is definitely of a high status and has an extraordinary battle power. It wouldn’t take more than one attack from him to kill off newly-advanced Magi! And you… you actually…”
She peeked at the piece of metal in Leylin’s hand in disbelief, fear apparent while she glanced at Leylin.
Leylin smiled nonchalantly.
In the south coast, rank 2 Magus usually did not make themselves known. Hence, peak rank 1 Magi were the strongest powers out there.
Now, a rank 1 Magus at his peak who was considered the strongest out there, had died by his hand! If news of this travelled out, it would definitely cause a huge stir.
If this was the Leylin from before, he might even try his utmost to conceal this matter.
However, after his second bloodline transition and the sharp increase in his power, things had changed!
This was an unrivalled confidence in himself! So what if news of his battle achievements was circulated? With his current strength, it was enough for him to take care of himself and cause anyone who had designs on him to suffer miserably!
“Awoooo!”
At this moment, a huge Venom Wyvern circled the area briefly and
then descended.
It roared loudly and then used its huge head and nuzzled Leylin, trying to get a good response from him.
“This is… is this that legendary Venom Wyvern? How valiant, I like it…”
Her eyes shone like stars, “Handsome! Can you give me a ride?”
Leylin shot her a glance.
To be honest, this female Magus did not look half bad, especially in terms of her figure. In addition, she had not mended her clothes that had been damaged while she was fleeing, thus revealing a whole lot of skin.
Ordinarily, and in a situation where he had time to spare, Leylin was not against playing around with her.
But this was the secret plane! He was still being pressured by both the dark and light Magi factions. It would be a wonder if he was in the mood for this sort of thing.
“Boring!”
Leylin indifferent uttered a word and then jumped onto the back of the Venom Wyvern.
“Awoo…” The Venom Wyvern bellowed at the female Magus as if trying to demonstrate its power and spread its wings, flying off.
“Tsk! Such a petty man! It’s not as if I’ll die without you around!”
Waiting till the Venom Wyvern’s figure complete disappeared into the horizon, she fiercely made a rude gesture in Leylin’s direction.
*Thump!* A huge Venom Wyvern descended from the sky and created two large depressions as its feet touched the ground.

A black shadow flickered, and a robed Magus jumped off the back of the Wyvern.

“My Lord! My Lord!” An old Magus saw the Venom Wyvern, his eyes brightening as he approached them.

“Old man! We’ll need to have some words about you escaping at the last minute!”

Leylin couldn’t be bothered to deal with him and entered the hall.

“Vice Team leader! Lord Caesar is looking for you!” Two hunting team Magi came before Leylin and bowed slightly, their manners impeccable.

Though Leylin had no real power in front of Caesar, ordinary members like them were small fry. Those who had offended him the other time were still in isolation! Hence, these members were extremely respectful to Leylin, or at least on the surface.

“Great timing, I was just about to look for him!”

Leylin nodded slightly.

*Ka-cha!* The door opened, revealing Caesar’s figure behind the office desk. The two Magi who had escorted him here quickly left.

“Magus Leylin! You’re just in time. Regarding the previous mission…” Before Caesar even spoke, a huge metallic piece was
firmly thrown onto the table.  
“It’s done!”
On this huge silver white metal, there were indents that formed an old, wrinkled face.
“Metallic lifeform?” Caesar was slightly suspicious, but at the thought of something, his eyes suddenly opened wide.
“I need to inspect this!”
After speaking, Caesar took the metallic sculpture and jogged out of the office, leaving Leylin alone inside.
Though Caesar had issued this mission before, not in his wildest dreams could he have expected Leylin to actually complete it. After all, Marb was a Magus on the same level as him!
However, Leylin had given him something that looked like Marb’s head. How could this not astonish him?
In that moment, Caesar even had the suspicion that Leylin had brought him a random head to escape punishment.
*Creak!* Ten minutes later, the door opened once more.
Caesar appeared in front of Leylin, but his expression was dark, with even hints of shock in his face.
“I didn’t think you would actually be able to do it…” Caesar could not conceal the shock and curiosity in his eyes.
“If it’s possible, could you share the process of your mission with me? You know, as the hunting team leader, it’s necessary that I know about the entire process and then give rewards accordingly.” Caesar spoke indifferently.
“It was very simple…” Leylin unfolded his arms. “After taking on the mission, I was going to look for you but coincidentally saw him heavily wounded, which is how I completed this assignment.”
“Magus Leylin…” Caesar’s face darkened further. “Please speak the truth!”
“That’s what happened! I even brought along a neutral wandering Magus. If there’s anything else you need, you can just ask her.”
Leylin was indifferent.
In reality, as long as one was not completely blind, anyone could see this was an excuse!
But so what? Marb was dead. If Leylin said he was heavily injured, that must be the truth!
As for that female Magus, she was just a semi-converted Magus. How could she tell the state of a peak rank 1 Magus’ injuries?
“You…” Caesar’s face began to flush.
In that instant, he suddenly seemed to have thought of something and his entire body relaxed.
“No matter what, Magus Leylin, you have disposed of a peak rank 1 Magus from the other faction, thus showing your loyalty to Four Seasons Garden. Your bravery will be known by all light Magi, and you might even be recorded down in history…”
Caesar congratulated him with a fake smile.
“Thank you for your compliment, but I want to know more about the substantial rewards I will be getting!” Leylin nodded nonchalantly and then spoke.
For him, having a reputation wasn’t all that important. With the prerequisite that the situation would not be unfavourable to him, he was, of course, willing to do some good deeds and obtain a good reputation. However, if there were no advantages and him needing to put in so much effort, making a name for himself in history was just something that only idiots would bother doing!
“Hah…”
Caesar breathed in deeply to calm the fire within his heart and said icily, “There will naturally be rewards. As for any promotions, that will have to wait. However, the contribution points have already been issued to you. 1500 points! Don’t worry, the organisation is very strict when it comes to things like this, so I don’t have the authority to dock points from you.”
Immediately after, Caesar produced a green crystal card from
within his robes and passed it to Leylin. An obscure look flashed past Leylin’s eyes as he held out his hand to take the card. *Ka-cha!* That instant he took the card, a slight explosion happened. Leylin and Caesar’s bodies shook for a second, and they immediately sprang apart. “What a terrifying rate of improvement! Magus Leylin!” His expression held a trace of fear as Caesar looked at Leylin. Before, he still had the confidence that he could suppress Leylin, but now, after the probing, he found that this Magus who he had looked upon with contempt had already caught up to him and become a mighty peak rank 1 Magus! He might even be stronger than him! Caesar could not be so casual with Leylin any longer. Leylin’s ranking in his heart had already risen to the same level of opponents who were of equal strength as him. Leylin only gave a slight smile in response to Caesar’s exclamation. He had even concealed a part of the strength of his Warlock blood. If not, Caesar might be completely stunned. He took his own contribution point card and swiped the green crystal card above it! *Beep!* A light flickered and the 0 on Leylin’s own card changed to 1500. “Alright! Magus Leylin, you may return and take a rest while waiting for news from the Elders.” Caesar spoke slowly. Leylin’s transformation made him feel a little uncomfortable. He was currently in need of some time to come up with a counterplan. “Thank you!” Leylin stood up and took a small bow, each action revealing an unspeakable sort of elegance.
“Really? His strength exceeds yours?”
In a room made primarily out of plants, Reynold placed the white porcelain cup on the table, a hand supporting his forehead and a finger curling his hair. Another hand was unconsciously striking the table, producing the dull ‘thud’ sounds.
The current Reynold looked like an old man who was not in the best state of mind, but all those who were familiar with him could tell this was him pondering over something deeply.
Caesar stood aside, waiting for the final decision from this elder of the Four Seasons Garden.
“If that’s the case, we’ll give him the position of the head of patrolling at the headquarters!” Reynold thought over this for a long time till the steam from his porcelain cup had vanished, before speaking.
“Alright!” In response, Caesar merely nodded.
“Also, I found out that we might have paid too little attention to that guy… If there’s time, I think I want to meet him.”
Reynold stretched, looking pleased as he glanced at Caesar.
“Don’t you know how rude it is to bother an old man who was planning on taking an afternoon nap?”
“My apologies! I’ll take my leave now!”
Caesar quickly bowed and left, a mysterious grin about his lips.
“Leylin Farlier?”
Behind him, Reynold mouthed this name.
He had naturally taken Leylin’s talent into account. If he was truly sincere about joining Four Seasons Garden and that the value of the item he had gotten from the ruins was not too high, Reynold would not go so far as to do anything dirty and covet his inheritance.
However, from how Leylin had been able to improve his strength
so quickly, what he had obtained was definitely not as simple as he had thought it was. It was extremely beneficial to the user and was worth the risk for Reynold to take action. In addition, based on the information he had gathered, ever since Leylin entered Four Seasons Garden, he still had dealings with dark Magi. He was even involved in a few of the large incidents in Nightless City! This was just intolerable! Any organisation would not put up with the existence of disloyal members! Though this was just a hypothesis, this was enough reason for Reynold to make his move! He was an existence that had stepped into the level of rank 2 Magi! The difference between Magi from each rank was like heaven and earth. Even if Leylin received some amazing inheritance, as long as he had not promoted to a rank 2 Magus, he was powerless in front of a true rank 2 Magus. Just the fact that he could solidify his spiritual force was enough to suppress most rank 1 Magi!

……

At this point in time, Leylin was oblivious to all this. He was currently in a laboratory, holding a test tube that contained a grey liquid within. His blue eyes flashed as he constantly scanned the contents. “The solution that contains a Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers! Rumours have it that the ancient Nefarious Filthbird and Trial’s Eye were nemeses. Its feathers also carried with it the chaos its original body was known for. It is an item that swindlers love.” The conclusion that the A.I. Chip had was presented in front of Leylin’s eyes.
“Based on the information and simulations, this solution is able to take care of the oath I made with Four Seasons Garden. But what happens after? The problem I have isn’t just with the oath…” Leylin mumbled to himself, and looked at his stats once more.


“The heart is the location where the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s blood was produced. Through the alteration of the heart, ancient Warlocks obtained similar vitality and abilities to produce blood!”
very large increase!” Seeing that in his refreshed data, the progress of his strength and spirit and his elemental essence conversion all had a huge change, Leylin wore a pleased expression on his face. For an official Magus, making any progress was exceedingly difficult; even for a Magus like Leylin who had a high-level meditation technique, they would need to accumulate a lot of time. But now, after the second transition of his bloodline, his average data had risen to that of a peak rank 1 Magus’. And after his heart had been remodelled, it was incessantly stimulating the potential of his body towards a higher evolution. Only in these past few days, his reformation rate had increased by 8% and this had brought about an amplification in his other data, this was absolutely terrifying!
“If it is like this, then maybe I can…” Leylin quickly calculated in his mind and after which, his eyes emitted a dangerous beam of light. This beam was very pure and immeasurable; Leylin’s eyes, which were brimming with this beam, felt as if it could even absorb a person’s soul. But, a split second later, Leylin had already hidden this beam deep inside.
“The solvent of the Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers?!” Leylin once again focused his attention on the gray solution and a
blue ray of light from the A.I. Chip flashed occasionally as he scanned the test tube, and a large amount of data was being projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“The Void Hallucination Flowers!” exclaimed Leylin, as he saw the three crystals on the experiment table.

Deeply entrenched within these tiny crystals were white flowers that were so transparent they were almost illusory.

This flower was the principal ingredient in many ancient potions. These had previously been extinct on the south coast. It was unknown from which secret plane did Four Seasons Garden discover this flower. Its value was 50 contribution points.

“Crystal seal, undo!” As he reeled off several complicated words, Leylin pointed his right forefinger at a crystal.

*Glug!*

A noise like the ripples on a pond could be heard from the surface of those crystals. The ripple continuously distorted as it extended to the interior of the crystal... when with a *Clink! Fizz!* noises like waves rolling and volatile steam evaporating, the solid crystal continuously vaporized into the air. Finally, what was left behind was a delicate, small, white flower that slowly fell onto the surface of the experiment desk.

This exclusive seal removal technique was something that Leylin had obtained from the contribution hall. If he used other magic spells to forcefully remove the seal, though he would be able to effectively remove the seal, the aftermath would be that the material sealed within the crystal would also have perished.

Leylin scrutinised this ancient and precious ingredient. The Void Hallucination Flower was a very delicate existence; it was the size of a quail egg. Moreover, some veins, like those on a leaf, appeared on the translucent surface of the flower.

This Void Hallucination Flower, the moment it was exposed to the
air, it fell down and started to melt. “This is truly a fragile thing. No wonder that it is now extinct on the entire south coast…” Leylin muttered this as he used a pair of white tweezers, which he had prepared for such a situation, and quickly put the flowers inside a blue borneol beaker. “The properties of the Void Hallucination Flower are very surreptitious. By blending it, one can form 43 different kinds of ingredients. Thus, it was a popular major ingredient of many of the ancient potions…” Leylin mumbled, and seeing the continuously dissolving white flower inside the beaker, the corners of his mouth curved into a smile. “Patrolling troops at the Headquarters? What is the position?” Leylin gaped in amazement at Caesar. After a busy evening within the lab, He had just come out for a well-deserved rest, when he saw the Magus Caesar. Caesar’s face was all smiles. The vertical third eye in between his brows, which emitted a furtive radiance now appeared to be gentle. “This was a position personally drafted for you by Chairman Reynold!” Caesar laughed and gave an explanation. “You know, during wartime, Four Seasons Garden’s rule is that the elders have the authority to set up new posts and this Head of the Patrol of the Headquarters is one which Lord Reynold has specially endorsed for you, Leylin. In theory, in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, regardless of the headquarters, every branch and hunting zone’s magicians all will be under your supervision…” “Is that so?” asked Leylin, expressing his skepticism. This was clearly a troublesome task, it had no clear-cut authority, and only had supervisory power. It seems that in this post, he could manage everything, yet do nothing at the same time and also would be able to offend more people.
After all, all the leading Magi of every branch and every hunting zone were each powerhouses in their own right, how would they listen to orders given by a central supervisor? It was obvious that this Reynold had thrown an annoying task towards him!

“Also…. before I came, Lord Reynold also made a private request!” After handing over the appointment letter to Leylin, Caesar brought up yet another matter.

“A private request? What is it about?” Leylin looked alert; a rank 2 Magus was not someone his current self could contend against.

However, the current him, even if he is unable to defeat his opponent, he still had his means of escape and therefore, he was not particularly afraid.

“Lord Reynold is trying to find some time to talk to you. Of course, this will be private, and is not an order!”

Seeing that although Leylin was beginning to get nervous but still managed to appear calm, a flash of amazement appeared in Caesar’s eyes which he quickly suppressed. He meant to convey this to Lord Reynold.

“A lengthy conversation?” Leylin’s heart throbbed. It seemed that his recent chain of high-profile actions finally came to the attention of this rank 2 Magus.

However, this was also a part of his plan; thus Leylin nodded and said, “Certainly! I can meet with Lord Reynold. It is my honor to do so…”

“That is good! I shall immediately go and make some arrangements!” Lord Reynold was the overall commander for Four Seasons garden within the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. He handled numerous matters every day and if it were not for Leylin having performed such a meritorious deed, he would not have had the opportunity to see him.
And this time, the meeting was of a private nature, there were many protocols for this. But Leylin need not pay attention to all this; Caesar could arrange for the time and when Caesar calls him, he could go to meet Lord Reynold.

“Thank you very much!” Leylin gave a nod of thanks.

“Don’t mention it! It is nothing!” With his face full of smiles, Caesar, very quickly, left.

Seeing Caesar disappear into the horizon and finally vanish from his sight, Leylin appeared more and more solemn.

Finally, his expression turned as dark as ominous clouds.

This Reynold, a rank 2 Magus, now seemed to him like a mountain, extending as far as he could see.

“Everything will soon begin!” Leylin whispered…

Inside the merit points exchange centre.

“Hallo, Sir! May I ask if you need to do any transaction?”

Behind a transparent glass window, an employee asked Leylin.

Through the glass, Leylin could see shelves all over, covered with all kinds of precious objects and high-grade information. There were even many magic artifacts and single-use-only scrolls, and also some secret techniques used by Magi.

These secret techniques were the skills and application of spellcasting.

These techniques could, often, only be learned by official Magi. After having successfully learned them, they could be used to temporarily increase the magic power, or increase the might of a magic spell to the maximum and the sort.

Leylin had viewed them as the next best thing after high-level meditation techniques.

Even if a Magus’s degree of elemental essence conversion was sluggish, he could use these secret techniques and increase his magic power. This was no different to increasing the elemental essence conversion.
“Unfortunately, this was only an exterior item. The body’s own strength is the most important!”
But even if the elemental essence conversion and secret techniques can amplify the magic power, this also depended on the original might of the magic spell.
The foundation was sturdy and the growth rate was high; it was the most useful for a peak rank 1 Magus!
If the foundation was not good enough, no matter how high the growth rate was, they would not be able to beat another Magus with a low elemental essence conversion but solid foundation.
All in all, among the spells that increase amplification, the most specialized magic spells can only amplify the basic power by 40%.
And the most amplified power of elemental essence conversion was not greater than approximately 90%.
Be it whatever type of amplification spells, up till now, Leylin hadn’t seen any which was capable of providing a 100% or more of power. It was as if there was an invisible wall blocking the steps of the majority of the Magi.
“I am the new Patrolling Inspector from the Headquarters! I believe there is a problem here with the transactions.”
Leylin took out the recently received appointment letter and flashed it at the employee. The magical radiance on the letter was a characteristic of a rank 2 Magus and caused a blinding pain to the employee.
“My Lord….”
The employee was dumbfounded; after all this position was really bizarre. It could inspect any activities but in reality, the authority to actually execute anything was not that powerful.
While stalling Leylin, the employee pushed a red button located under the desk.
Leylin noticed this small act, but he smiled and did not do anything about it.
“My Lord! Our transactions here are completely equitable and in keeping with the laws, and it is definitely not ….”
While the employee was still explaining to Leylin, a translucent shadow took form in front of Leylin.
“I am Pierre! I am in charge of the transaction of merit points. Do you have any problem, the new patrolling inspector, Lord Leylin?”
The shadow’s face, on the exterior, looked to be about 50-60 years old, a male. He wore an eyepiece on one eye, and his hair was combed carefully and well-groomed and he wore a dark red colored formal robe, which did not have even a minute crease upon it.
This image caused Leylin to recall the land surveyors and gem appraisers of his previous world.
And, the fact that he knew Leylin’s identity so fast show this in-charge Pierre’s capabilities of gathering intelligence and his wide network.
“I have my doubts that the exchanges here and the permissions. I need to examine …” Leylin stated this matter-of-factly.
He deeply understood this authority he owned had an expiry date tagged to it.
It was all the more so, especially when it was a predestined rebellion.
From this inessential role that Reynold had assigned him as the Headquarters’ Patrolling Inspector, Leylin could tell that Reynold had designs on him.
Even if it had nothing to do with the suspicion of him being a dark Magi, the fact that he increased his strength so quickly had caused Reynold to be wary of him.
In this situation, no matter how hard he tried to keep himself low-key, it was useless.
Since it was like this, why should he not use that bit of power he possessed and gain some benefits?
After all, before Reynold officially stripped him of his role, his cover as the Patrolling Inspector at the headquarters was still able to intimidate a great number of people. For instance, like this man in front of him, at the merit points exchange centre!
“Are you trying to tarnish my reputation?”
Upon hearing this, the face of the apparition called Pierre darkened, eyes seemingly producing crimson rays.
“No… Not tarnishing it. This is just the usual procedural checks!” Leylin smiled gently.
The instant the words left his mouth, a ring of energy particles exploded between him and Pierre.
*Rumble!*
Though the two of them had tried their best to suppress the excess waves of energy from their battle, they still attracted the attention of...
several Magi bystanders.
Pierre took several steps back before re-balancing himself, revealing a shocked expression on his face, “A peak rank 1 Magus! Seems like “Metal Lunatic” Marb really did die by your hands!”
This information had been proved right before him, and he could do little but be in shock.
Just from that short fight, Leylin had revealed a strength that could rival a peak rank 1 Magus!
Based on the information he had gathered, Pierre was almost sure that the Metal Lunatic Marb of the Lilytell family had most certainly died at Leylin’s hands.
Goodness! Even Pierre himself was but a peak rank 1 Magus.
A peak rank 1 Magus, Marb, had died at the hands of Leylin. In a situation where a rank 2 Magus did not make his move, a peak rank 1 Magus was already the strongest in the south coast. It was rare that they were taken down. Furthermore, it was only because it had been only a short time since Marb had died so the news did not travel far yet. Otherwise, this would cause a huge commotion in the south coast.
Pierre, who was aware of this news, was even more fearful of Leylin.
“What do you want?” Pierre did not look good.
“Nothing much. I’m just thinking…” Leylin’s voice went so soft to the point that he simply closed his mouth and transmitted a message.
Upon hearing his transmission, Pierre’s face changed, first flushing as if he had been humiliated to the extreme, and then turning into a look of pondering.
Moments later, Pierre raised his head and glanced at the Magi nearby.
Due to the strange actions by Leylin and him, they had attracted the attention of many surrounding Magi and acolytes. This caused him
to come to his final decision.

“This isn’t entirely impossible. Come with me!”

The apparition called Pierre disappeared, leaving behind red energy particles turning into various signs that showed him the way. Upon seeing this, Leylin grinned. He was aware that even amongst the light Magi, there weren’t that many people who were incorruptible.

At the merit points exchange centre, it was a trading place where one could obtain the most profits. It was definitely not a place free of bribery, but if Leylin really wanted something from this place, it would be his last day with his current role as Patrolling Inspector. However, he had not forced the other party to do anything. He had merely pointed out a few of his requirements and resulted in the other person making a concession.

Uncaring of the strange looks from the Four Seasons Garden Magi, Leylin followed the signs came to a house behind the exchange centre.

In front of the door, a Magus who looked just like the apparition was already in wait. The one who appeared, this time, was a real body, rather than an apparition.

“You’re here!” Pierre’s face was dark.

Of course, regardless of who it was, nobody would be in a good mood if someone came up and tried to take advantage of them.

“Hn!” Leylin briefly nodded his head and did not speak further.

Pierre gave Leylin a meaningful look as if trying to inscribe his appearance to memory, “Come with me!”

Next, without waiting for Leylin, he simply stalked off. Leylin rubbed his nose, and with a smile he followed.

On the way, various seals and defensive layers were seen everywhere, but with Pierre, who was familiar with this area, it was obviously a smooth sailing.

*Ka-cha!*
Pierre produced a black copper key and opened a large door, which was full of runes on the surface.

*Rumble!* In an instant, the sparkles of various treasures and crystal balls, as well as the smells of many precious ingredients filled Leylin’s eyes.

In front of him was an impressive, huge storage warehouse. Various precious resources were placed in front of him, so much so that it seemed they were endless.

“With my authority, I can only open this secondary warehouse to you. Also, I can give you a 40% discount. That is the bottom line!” Pierre was resolute. From his wounded expression, it was obvious that these were his limits. Hence, Leylin did not press on.

“Alright, alright! I won’t be too difficult to you.” Leylin spoke without sincerity and walked into the warehouse. The way Leylin treated this place like it was his own home had Pierre grinding his teeth in annoyance, but he did not dare say anything else.

To be honest, there was something here that would result in him being apprehended if it was ever found out. He would be stripped of his position and would even face punishment. Compared to this, letting Leylin taking advantage of the situation wasn’t much.

Leylin walked past piles of potions and ingredients that were worth thousands of merit points, looking rather calm. For him, there were very few items that he coveted. In addition, what he was in urgent need of were methods to increase his battle power. Hence, a few offensive techniques were of more value to him.

Leylin’s footsteps did not stop until he came to the side of a wooden frame with an intellectual crystal ball on it.

“Research” “Experiments” “Secret techniques”

At the side of the frame, there were all sorts of detailed inscriptions
that recorded all sort of intellectual-type information and what they included, making it easier for Leylin to search through. He came in front of the column that had secret techniques. “High energy Eagle Eye!” “Dog nose transformation!” “Liver transplantation!” “Fire elemental negative energy layering spell!” All sorts of secret techniques, with some that even Leylin had not heard of, were displayed before him. He was almost getting dizzy with the sheer amount there was.

“Excuse me! Can you deactivate the defense formation? I want to take a look at the content!” Though Leylin sounded apologetic, his actions were nothing but that.

“You…” Pierre was speechless but still headed over, fished out a token from his robes and flashed it at the frame. *Weng!*

A milky-white magical light was emitted from the token, and soon after, the spell defense formation around the frame deactivated.

“With my authority, you’ll at most be able to see the first one-third of the contents. Any more than that and the spell formation will start working again, and I have no way to do anything about that…” Pierre spread his hands while he explained.

“That’s enough!” Leylin nodded, taking the information that recorded the way to have eagle’s eyes and sped through it. On the surface, he was skimming over the crystal ball and trying to find the information he wanted, but in actuality, the A.I. Chip was hard at work in his brain, recording down all the information he read through.

There he only had access to a third of the information, this was already enough for the A.I. Chip. Based on that, it could deduce the rest of the information. It was just a matter of time.

Half an hour later, Leylin had already looked through all the information in the intellectual crystal ball. The A.I. Chip had
benefited greatly as well, having recorded down a lot of precious information.

“Give me this projective technique, Dire bear transmutation and bloodline modulation theory!”

Of course, the A.I. Chip was not able to infer all information in its entirety. Behind the clauses that the A.I. Chip came up with, there was a list of ingredients that could not be deduced.

Leylin looked around and, based on his needs, asked for a few more items.

“Not counting the miscellaneous items, the total comes to a thousand merit points! With the discount, it is 600 merit points!”

With this, he was able to save 400 merit points. Even if the team leader Caesar were to come, Leylin estimated that he would at most get a discount of 20%.

However, he had been able to get a 40% discount on any of the items in this treasure house!

“And this, this… that… give me one of all that!”

Leylin very quickly spent the 1500 merit points he had just obtained.

Hours later, Leylin left the area under Pierre’s gaze as if he had met a calamity.

“What a great harvest!” Leylin rubbed his sack that was full to the brim and sighed in contentment.

“If only I could come here once a day!”

Leylin was aware that this was just delusional thought. If he did this once more, it would backfire on him and result in a huge counter attack from those who had a vested interest in the items. He was so arrogant, and that was only because he had no intentions of sticking around in Four Seasons Garden.

If not, in a light Magi organisation, this would cause public anger. There were plenty of ways to kill him!

“After fishing up all the benefits from the merit points exchange
centre, there’s still somewhere else…”
Looking at the vast Eternal River Plains’ secret plane and the steady stream of Magi constantly entering, his lips twitched and he began to give a bright smile.
Days later, tales of Leylin were spread throughout.
“Metal Terminator!” “Greedy Dragon!” These were his newest nicknames.
Metal Terminator referred to his battle achievement of killing off the Metal Lunatic, Marb! It was in this battle that Leylin had openly killed a peak rank 1 Magus, thus setting the foundation for his reputation as a powerhouse.
As for ‘Greedy Dragon’, this referred to the series of ‘robbing’ activities he had done without restraint.
Whether it was at the merit points exchange centre, the defense team, garrison, and even a few Magi divisions and zones, they had all been places he had pillaged and extorted from shamelessly!
To be honest, the greediness of Magi truly exceeded his expectations. In all the areas he had checked on, none were upstanding people.
No matter how well the accounts had been done, with the terrifying abilities of the A.I. Chip, nothing escaped his eye.
234 - Using the Solvent

Under the circumstances, each division could do little but pinch their noses in distaste while they did as Leylin wanted. However, his reputation had gone straight to the gutters and had gained him the reputation of ‘least welcomed’ at all divisions.

To be honest, when he had first received news of this, Leylin was a little surprised but found it very amusing.

In the Magus world, strength was to be respected. Reputation wasn’t entirely useless, but it only applied to those within the same ranks of strength.

As long as he continued to improve his strength, after he advanced to become a rank 2 Magus, these people would stick onto him like dogs, wagging their tails and lamenting that they had not let Leylin taking more advantage of them.

“Magus Leylin! Greedy Dragon! Lord Reynold would like to see you tomorrow at 7pm. Please be prepared.”

Caesar expressionlessly announced in front of Leylin and left.

“This is a little earlier than expected. Have I finally angered the heavens?” Leylin laughed without fear.

He did not take his position as the patrolling inspector seriously, and on top of that, he had been doing all sorts of things. It was no surprise that all of the Four Seasons Garden viewed him as an enemy and opposed him.

If he did not make any preparations, he was going to die!
This was definite. After all, Leylin himself was not completely innocent, and investigations would spell his downfall.
In addition, the inheritance from the Great Magus Serholm would definitely attract the attention of rank 2 Magi!
In the Magus World, there were all sorts of spells that could be used to detect lies and test one’s spirit.
The reason the Magi here did not use them was because they were light Magi and did everything in sequence. However, this was wartime! Everything was about power. Furthermore, there were also a lot of mysteries about Leylin.
Currently, if any of these spells were used against him, he wouldn’t even have the chance to explain himself!
Actually, Leylin had long since suspected that the Four Seasons Garden had discovered his activities with the dark Magi. Though he left no proper evidence, there might have still been some traces left behind.
If not, why would he, a high-level potion master who was young, talented, and sure to be held in high regard wherever he went, be assigned to this place to fight?
“But this is enough.”
Leylin’s lips quirked in a slight smile.
He had already been mentally prepared to be found out. After all, Magi had too many unknown methods, and he had no way to guard against everything.
Being able to have up to 2 years and allow his bloodline to transition, as well as being able to accumulate a large amount of resources and knowledge, had Leylin feeling quite satisfied.
“It looks like it’s time to fall out with them!”
Leylin looked apathetic. Theoretically speaking, he was the one who had betrayed the Four Seasons Garden, but this was for his own sake! For benefits! To chase his dreams! He was not going to turn back from this route.
“Alright! I’ll use this!” Leylin turned over to the palm of his hand, revealing a well-preserved test tube in his right palm. Within the test tube was a grey solvent. It was a type of grey that people would find disgusting, and just a glance at it would cause one to feel dizzy.

“The solvent of the Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers! Tests have been conducted on it. In order to break away from Four Seasons Garden and perhaps even become enemies, it’s necessary to dispel the constraints of the contract witnessed by the Trial’s Eye!” Leylin stared hard at the test tube in his hand, looking unusually excited.

He snapped his fingers, and in an instant, the room was shrouded in a layer of faint yellow light. Leylin then carefully removed the covering from the mouth of the test tube.

*Tsss!* A grey gas floated out of the test tube, and upon contact with the air, the solvent of the Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers produced innumerable tiny bubbles and began to evaporate violently.

“Ugh!” Leylin pinched his nose tightly. “What a terrifying stench!” He had taken in just a small breath, yet he was already on the verge of fainting from the smell. It was just too stinky! Even with his vitality of over 20, it was almost unbearable for him.

The Nefarious Filthbird was originally a congelation of all of the filthy things in the world, and its feathers held traces of its filthiness.

In actuality, the solvent made from the feathers did not get its power from the feathers themselves, but from the projection of the Nefarious Filthbird’s strength onto this part of its body!

The ancient Nefarious Filthbird was an existence that was the archenemy of the Trial’s Eye! Not only had their battles affected the Magus World, they also affected several other large-scale areas. There were traces of them present everywhere in legends and
myths.
“Filth! Chaos! How did these characteristics come about, and how did they work?”
A curiosity that could not be concealed appeared in Leylin’s eyes. Whether it was the chaotic characteristic of the Nefarious Filthbird or the fairness of the Trial’s Eye, they were very much different from the spells in the Magus World. They were more like a type of regulation, which gave Leylin the strongest urge to find out even more.
Magi usually liked to research about all types of strange phenomenon and strengths, as well as to try to find ways to make that power theirs.
In terms of trying to chase after the truth, Magi were similar to the researchers and scientists in Leylin’s previous world.
“It’s a pity that this sort of thing can only be approached by those who are at least Morning Star Magi!”
Whether it was the Trial’s Eye or the Filthy Bird, both could traverse through the entire world and weave through terrifying beings. Their existence surpassed that of normal beings, and they had entered a level that Leylin could not hope to even reach for, much less understand.
The current Leylin wasn’t even an ant to them; he was probably a little smaller than a speck of dust.
Even if he wanted to offer sacrifices and summon them, he would only see an apparition that lacked power. It wasn’t possible to explore and find out more about them.
Even though Leylin was a little disappointed, what he felt was, even more, fire and a stronger desire within.
“One day! One day, I’ll reach the peak of the Magus World and make people take note of the other great existences, and chase after the truth and eternity they hold…”
*Tsss!*
After the volatile grey solvent in the test tube finished its reaction, Leylin’s body was engulfed by grey mist. This mist was unbearably smelly, causing Leylin to feel suffocated. The grey mist seemed to have a life of its own as it climbed onto Leylin’s skin as if trying to find ways to enter his body.

*Rumble!*

Leylin suddenly felt faint, and his expression changed.

*Pak! Pak! Pak!* As if provoked, several apparitions of the Trial’s Eye appeared on his body. These apparitions were mostly only the size of his thumb, and the biggest was as big as his fist. There were a few mysterious threads connected to it that winded around Leylin.

“The power of regulation?” Leylin extended his right hand, trying to touch those threads. Unsurprisingly, his hands went straight through the threads as if they were thin air.

“These must be the threads from the contract and regulations! The small Trial’s Eye represents the agreement I had with the old witch, while the largest one is the contract I made that was witnessed by the rank 2 Magus, Reynold!”

The largest Trial’s Eye had the thickest threads and was inseparably close to Leylin’s body. Some part of him gave him the idea that if he went against the contract, these lines would break, and it would end in a result he did not want to even think about.

*Tssss tssss!*

After witnessing the apparitions of the Trial’s Eye, the fluctuations from the grey mist became more intense. Through an unknown channel, a mysterious piece of information was transmitted to Leylin.

“One feather solvent can only dissolve one contract?” Leylin nodded, and spoke in the ancient Byron language, “I choose this
one!” He pointed at the largest Trial’s Eye. Not only was the ancient Byron language the basis of spellcasting, it even held a mysterious power that allowed all beings with spirits to be able to understand its intended meaning from its words. Hence, it was a language used throughout the Magus world and in other places.

*Chi chi!* After receiving Leylin’s answer, the grey mist quickly became denser, and the chirps of a bird were sounded in the middle. The coarse chirps of this bird were was extremely unpleasant to hear, like the bawling of a woman. Along with the chirps, the grey mist spread out two wings and turned into a faint, large grey bird in the mist.

“Is this the actual body of the ancient Nefarious Filthbird?” Leylin carefully took down the Filthy Bird’s appearance. However, with the hindrance of the mist, besides the bird’s main appearance, nothing else could be clearly made out.

“Judgement!” “Judgement!” “Judgement!” “Judgement!” At this moment, as if provoked by the Nefarious Filthbird, the Trial’s Eye image on the surface of Leylin’s body began to vibrate. Small bolts of lightning were produced around the Trial’s Eye, the void crackling around them as sounds of sacrificial hymns sounded out. The Trial’s Eye in the middle immediately expanded several times, powerful undulations overflowing as it tried to break through the void to borrow a bit of power from its original body.

“Chii!” The giant bird in the grey mist extended its wings, where large amounts of grey-black mist emanated. Filth! Chaos!

Leylin felt dizzy again and was almost unable to tell where he was.

“Chi Chi!” The grey black mist and blue electric currents tried to
devour each other, and eventually perished together. However, it was obvious that there was much more mist than blue lightning, and in a few seconds, it was in an advantageous position. “Chi Chi!”

Under the shroud of mist, the Trial’s Eye shook wildly and even stopped all attempts at contacting its original body. At this moment, the large bird in the grey mist soared into the air, and like a predator hunting for food swooped down from midair!*Pop!* With a peck from its grey beak, the apparition of the largest Trial’s Eye was pecked out. *Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* The threads that connected Leylin and the Trial’s Eye were snapped in twain. As the threads snapped, Leylin felt his body slouch in relief, with even his spirit feeling a sense of freedom, as if a weight had been taken off of his mind.
These thin threads must represent my contract with the Four Seasons Garden! Now that they’re completely broken, it must mean that I’ve destroyed my contract with the Four Seasons Garden.”

A hint of glee appeared on Leylin’s face. Having destroyed his side of the contract, he could reap a lot of benefits! Leylin was now no longer under the constraints of the contract and was free to do anything that might harm the Four Seasons Garden, including brazenly killing their members.

As for Reynold, who represented the Four Seasons Garden, and was the one who Leylin had made a contract with, he had to abide by the regulations stated in the contract. Without evidence, he would not be able to do anything against Leylin!

Also, this method of destroying his end of the contract would not alert Reynold. This was one of the special chaotic characteristics of the Nefarious Filthbird.

*Rumble!*

The Nefarious Filthbird, which was hovering in mid-air, swallowed the Trial’s Eye down its beak! Leylin could even see a round protrusion at the Nefarious Filthbird’s neck, travelling down and into its abdominal area.

“Chi chi!” After swallowing a Trial’s Eye, the Nefarious Filthbird made joyful screeches and transmitted a message to Leylin.

“Trial’s Eye will eventually perish, and chaos will remain eternal!”
“More! More summons! I will wipe all traces of the Trial’s Eye from you!”
Little pieces of information were transmitted to Leylin and were transformed into a form that Leylin could understand.
“I will do so!” Leylin bowed deeply. Though he had no idea if the other party could really understand his actions, Leylin still had to remain polite on a superficial level.
The Nefarious Filthbird nodded in a very human way and produced a long, loud cry.
Amidst its terrifying, ear-piercing screeches, the Nefarious Filthbird’s body exploded into the grey mist.
The grey colour of the mist gradually faded into the air.
At the same time, Leylin could feel the chaotic attribute that had been surrounding him ever since he had opened the test tube, dissipating.
The Trial’s Eye was an existence on the same level as the Nefarious Filthbird! Without the chaotic power that the solution automatically let out, which isolated the area, the probing from the Trial’s Eye and the transmissions to Leylin would long since have attracted the Trial’s Eye here.
After the Nefarious Filthbird vanished, Leylin sensed some changes within his body.
His contract with Four Seasons Garden was now completely destroyed. Other contracts with the Trial’s Eye were still there, but they had no reaction, as though nothing had happened.
“The power of chaos is amazing! The ancient Nefarious Filthbird is truly the mortal enemy of the Trial’s Eye! I wonder how the dark Magus behind Giant managed to obtain this solution.”
Leylin murmured to himself.
In the south coast, contracts made with the Trial’s Eye were very common. They were very trustworthy, and there were almost no cases of them being tampered with.
Besides, the feathers of the ancient Nefarious Filthbird had become extinct over a thousand years ago. Hence, even Reynold would not imagine that Leylin would use this method to break away from the constraints of the contract.

“This power is truly terrifying!” Leylin could not help but raise the status of Thousand Meddling Hands in his heart, in awe of the ability of this dark Magus organisation to procure a solution that was already extinct.

“But even in the organisation, there shouldn’t be a lot of this solution…” Leylin was quite sure about this. If not, the Thousand Meddling Hands would have used it a long time ago and wreaked havoc upon the south coast.

Night descended. Though they were within the secret plane, the moonlight was still bright, making it no different from the external world.

At this moment, a black figure donning a cloak that covered his face sneakily crept into Four Seasons Garden’s camp and constantly moved towards the outer areas.

*Chila!*

At a place where there was a devilish tree that was somehow divided into three parts, the black figure stopped and lit his hand up with crimson flames.

“You’re finally here!”

The surface devilish tree twisted for a moment, and a man’s face appeared on the bark. It suddenly opened his mouth and spoke to the Magus, “Come down from here!”

*Tsssla!* As the wooden face spoke, a huge hole opened up at the roots of the devilish tree and revealed a pitch-black passageway. The Magus nodded and quickly walked down.

*Boom!* After his figure disappeared into the passageway, the entrance immediately closed and the human face vigilantly surveyed the area, before disappearing back into the tree trunk.
It became peaceful once more as if nothing had happened. The passageway was very long, and this Magus walked for about ten minutes before he reached the end. At the end was a huge basement, the surroundings of which flickered with yellow earth magic. It most likely had been made very recently. In the spacious basement, there was the vague form of a giant with great amounts of green fog floating around him. Upon seeing the Magus, he seemed to smile. “You’re here!” “Hn!” The Magus nodded and pushed back the hood to reveal a handsome young face. Black hair, elegant face, fair skin, and eyes that gave off a devilish glint. Just by standing there, he was able to give off a strange charm.

This person was, of course, Leylin. His eyebrows were currently furrowed because nothing good could be happening if Giant chose this moment to summon him here. At the same time, Leylin’s nostrils flared. “Did you receive a lot of guests just now? I seem to sense the aura of many familiar people…”

Giant looked at Leylin with some surprise. “Yes! They’re all our comrades from the Thousand Meddling Hands. I’d already wiped off all traces of them, but you were actually able to notice! Looks like the rumours out there aren’t wrong, and you’re already a peak rank 1 Magus!”

Giant glanced at Leylin with some apprehension in his eyes. “Looks like our leader’s initial choice to attract you into entering our organisation was a right one!”

Leylin only gave a mysterious smile in reply. After the second bloodline transition, he could feel that the quality of his body constantly increasing. Even a few of his organs seemed to have awoken from a deep sleep and obtained many miraculous
abilities.
Though these abilities were of no help to him in battle, they could usually exhibit surprising effects at unexpected moments.
“Looks like you’re planning something grand!” Leylin looked Giant straight in the eye.
From what he had sensed, Giant had actually called out all of the elites of the Thousand Meddling Hands.
Getting in contact with him was a huge risk, and he had even gotten Leylin to enter the inner circle of the Four Seasons Garden. It was easy to tell what Giant had planned to do.
“Hehe! That’s not my plan, but the idea from the Lord behind me!” Giant brought up the rank 2 dark Magus behind the Thousand Meddling Hands once again.
“So, the feathers of the Nefarious Filthbird are rather useful, yes?” Giant asked.
“I’ve used them!” Leylin lifted his brows. “If there’s anything you want to say, say it!”
“Alright! Our target, this time, is the resource warehouse in the Eternal Plains’ secret plane that the Four Seasons Garden is in charge of!” Giant told him their goal without beating around the bush.
“This time, not only will our members go all-out on this mission, even the Lord behind us will make his move at opportune times.” Leylin’s face twitched slightly at this news, but he accepted this peacefully.
In the Four Seasons Garden, there was Reynold, who was at least a rank 2 Magus, taking charge! If there wasn’t an opponent with a similar level of power to attract the brunt of the assault, the invading dark Magi would just be committing suicide no matter how many of them there were!
“Alright. What’s my mission?” Leylin inquired.
“Good!” Giant pointed his thumb upwards. “Your mission is
simple. The time we make our move is tomorrow night at 7. Reynold is planning on seeing you, right?”
Giant spoke matter-of-factly, but this made Leylin’s heart turn cold.
For him to know about even this, there must have been other spies from the Thousand Meddling Hands in the Four Seasons Garden!
But putting your hands on everything will only expose your own identity! Leylin smirked inside.
Giant had not noticed any abnormalities in Leylin and was still speaking, “At that time, we will lead Reynold away. Your mission is to pass through a spell formation inside his office and activate this spell design.”
As he spoke, he passed a fist-sized red crystal to Leylin.
*Pak!* Leylin firmly caught the red crystal.
“What is this spell design?” The interior of the red crystal was laden with tiny runes. When the runes connected together, they looked like a gold liquid constantly flowing inside the crystal.
Though the A.I. Chip had never recorded such runes before, Leylin was sure that this was a spell design specially catered to a specific spell formation or artifact.
After all, how could something Reynold had placed in his own office and was personally protecting, be anything simple?
“It’s just a regular spell design to lift a seal!” It was obvious that Giant did not want to explain any further.
Leylin stared at the Giant for a long, long time, and then spoke.
“You want me to do something in the area where the Four Seasons Garden has the tightest defense, which is a rank 2 Magus’ office. Are you trying to get me killed?”
As he spoke, Leylin’s eyes turned into an amber hue.
A powerful spiritual force with a depthless darkness quickly descended upon the area!
Bloodlust and terror! Spiritual force that carried dense elemental
particles with it formed a phantom of a black, giant serpent, which glided around Giant. Its eyes were fixated on Giant, as if it was looking for a place for it to sink its teeth into.

“Such an imposing aura and such bloodlust! How many people has he actually killed?”

Giant’s heart went cold. He himself wasn’t any good person and had taken the lives of countless people. However, compared to such a cold-blooded and strong bloodlust, he was still on a lower level than this person!

What made Giant even more shocked was that Leylin’s spiritual force had already reached an amount that only peak rank 1 Magi possessed. He might have even surpassed Giant himself!

“He actually dares to attack here!”

Gazing into Leylin’s ice-cold pupils, Giant’s heart suddenly chilled, feeling as if his opponent knew all of his secrets.
“Don’t worry, we won’t abandon you!”
Giant tossed a detailed map that had a route marked out in red to Leylin.
“After completing your mission, follow this route, and you’ll definitely be able to leave safely before any other Magi find out. The Lord behind us will divert Reynold’s attention, and we’ll provide support as well.”
Giant spoke calmly, even going out of his way to mention the rank 2 dark Magus supporting Thousand Meddling Hands. It was obvious that he was trying to threaten Leylin.
Leylin was silent for a while. “I will try…”
If it was much too dangerous, he wasn’t going to risk his life for this organisation!
“Alright! You’ll find that this is a very simple and effortless mission!” Giant smiled, “After finishing this, you can rejoin us as a dark Magi! How about it? Which academy or organisation do you want to join? Just tell me.”
Leylin shook his head. He had no such plans yet, and he still did not entirely trust Giant’s words.
If one was not shrewd when dealing with dark Magi, it was certain that they would be taken advantage of so thoroughly that every last bone of theirs will be gobbled!
“Alright! To ensure that things go well, you will need to sign this!” Giant threw a black scroll to Leylin.
“Hm?” Leylin looked through the contents of the scroll and was amazed. “A Trial’s Eye contract? After I have taken the solvent of the Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers, you still dare to use this?”

“This is a special contract that the Lord behind us specifically made for you!” Giant pointed out, emphasizing the last three words. “Also, that solution was the very last one in our organisation. If you can find another, we can only blame it on our bad luck.”

It looked like he was quite confident about this.

“Hehe… in that case, you’re the first person who dares to do something like this!” Leylin scrutinized Giant and smirked. At the same time, the phantom giant serpent suddenly opened its mouth wide and bit towards Giant!

*Rumble!*

As it neared Giant, the phantom giant serpent suddenly collapsed and turned into a mass of shadow, slamming against Giant’s green fog and producing the sound of waves crashing on the shore.

“Haha… I was just cracking a joke! I’m but a regular member in the Thousand Meddling Hands, so how would I dare to pit myself against elders like you?”

A bright, gentle smile suddenly appeared on Leylin’s expression!

“You’ll become an elder soon enough! After this operation, I can nominate you!” Giant spoke after a moment’s thought. “In that case, thank you!”

Leylin lightly tapped on the scroll, and the imprint of a black snake instantly appeared on it.

*Rumble!*

The apparition of the Trial’s Eye gave Leylin the feeling that this was even more powerful than the one that Reynold had summoned the previous time. Under its emotionless gaze, the scroll in Leylin’s hands began to spontaneously combust. Green flames enveloped the scroll.
The moment after the scroll completely burned up, a ray of light that represented the contract and its restrictions flew into Leylin’s mind. Afterwards, the apparition of the Trial’s Eye automatically dispersed into the air. He had skimmed through the contract. The only conditions were that he could not help the Four Seasons Garden; there weren’t any harsh conditions. After all, they still needed his help and could not go overboard.

“It didn’t detect traces of the acts of the Nefarious Filthbird?” Leylin wondered.

He then left the area without a word. Only Giant was left standing quietly in the basement as if he was waiting for something.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Minutes later, Giant’s body, which was covered in green fog, began to shudder violently, and the wall behind him suddenly exploded! After the dust settled, a large portion of Giant’s fog had dispersed, revealing a giant figure that was up to 2 metres tall.

“Crazy! That person’s a lunatic!” Giant murmured to himself and proceeded to laugh maniacally.

“Haha… Good! Interesting! Things are getting more interesting!” He then transformed into a green fog and drifted out of the area. Behind him, the basement gave way and dust filled the air…

The next day, Leylin punctually arrived at Reynold’s office at seven in the evening.

“Lord Reynold!” He knocked on the door gently.

“Come in!” From behind the door, Reynold’s gentle voice was heard. Leylin took in a deep breath and pushed the door open. Reynold was seated on a chair of vines, wearing a pair of spectacles as he drank a green beverage. Beside him was a little round table and a
“Leylin, you’re here! Take a seat!” Reynold pointed to the chair beside him.
“Many thanks!” Leylin bowed once more and sat near Reynold.
“Here! Try the juice of the Jaded Daro Flower! We’re just having a private conversation now, so don’t be too reserved!” Reynold seemed just like a hospitable old man.
As if a little embarrassed, Leylin gave a slight smile and drank from the cup on the table.
The refreshing scent of nature pervaded his taste buds and extended throughout his four limbs. Leylin felt as if warm water was rinsing his body and making him feel rejuvenated.
“How is it? It tastes pretty good, right?” Reynold asked with anticipation.
“The collections of an elder like yourself are pretty good!” Leylin praised sincerely.
“Haha…” Like a child who had received a compliment, Reynold laughed aloud brightly.
“Here, let us have a friendly chat. Leylin, you seem to be from the Chernobyl Islands right? I went there once when I was young. Resources are scarce in such a barren land, and it’s lacking in Magi…”
Reynold was a very entertaining speaker, and he began to chat with Leylin about his past experiences.
As they spoke leisurely, time flew by, and in the blink of an eye, an hour had passed.
All of a sudden, Leylin suddenly smelt something very sweet.
“What is this?”
“It’s a type of incense from the Wetland Gardens. It’s said to be useful in replenishing one’s spiritual force, and is a favourite of the Magi there.”
Reynold explained lightly, his voice seemingly less and less
discernible. A thread of silver spiritual force slowly extended. Leylin’s expression became slacker and he could feel his eyelids becoming heavier. He eventually fell asleep.

Seeing Leylin in a deep sleep, a smile appeared on Reynold’s face. He took off a ring on Leylin’s hand and inspected it closely.

“Ring of Sobriety? Looks like it has a few other effects that can defend against probings! There are seven different potions smeared on it as well. Looks like you’ve prepared well, but it’s a pity…” Reynold glanced at Leylin with a victorious smirk.

“The juice of the Jaded Daro Flower, as well as the pollen from the Intoxicated Dragon Petals, are something even a rank 2 Magus might not be able to withstand. What use is a mere ring and potion?”

These two items were a special combination that Reynold had picked out specifically for Leylin. Some of them even had to be transported from the secret plane, and he had used up a portion of his allowance as the chairman to obtain the items.

This had delayed his plans and allowed Leylin to have the chance to wreak havoc in the Four Seasons Garden. Of course, since he had paid such a huge price, the effects were superb.

A peak rank 1 Magus was an existence that even a rank 2 Magus like Reynold needed to be careful of! Also, these Magi also had special methods, and might have had a high resistance against hallucinations and enchantments. What was more troublesome was that Leylin was still a member of Four Seasons Garden, so without actual evidence, Reynold could not do anything that might have severe aftereffects.

As an experienced, veteran rank 2 Magus, this was not a problem for Reynold. Now, using a special concoction, he had made Leylin pass out.

In addition, these two ingredients were not harmful to the body,
and at most, they would cause Leylin to faint. His resistance to hallucinatory magic would be temporarily lowered, but after this, his body would ultimately benefit in the long run. Hence, Reynold was not going against the contract with the Trial’s Eye.

“Even so, the effects of this type of hallucinogen will not last for a long time. With his body, he’ll awaken in about half an hour, so I have to be quick.

The vined chair under Reynold began to move until Reynold was right in front of Leylin.

“Open your eyes and look at me!”

Reynold spoke lightly, his voice having a strange effect that made one feel dazed.

As he spoke, silvery white rays of light shot out of his eyes. This was the appearance of the solidification of his spiritual force!

Upon hearing Reynold’s words, Leylin’s eyelids flickered and then opened.

“Your name?”

Reynold asked, the silvery white rays so intense that they seemed to be on the verge of piercing through Leylin’s eyeballs.

“Leylin Farlier!”

“Where were you born? Do you have any relatives?”

……

The questions Reynold asked were quite simple at the beginning, and as time went on, he went deeper and increased the difficulty. Soon enough, after tens of questions, he got into the heart of the matter.

“Why were you wanted by the Lilytell family?”

Reynold asked gently, with some tremors in his voice.

“It is because in order to obtain an inheritance from a ruin, I killed Bosain Lilytell!” Leylin answered in a dazed manner, unable to
control the words that spilled out of his mouth.
“What inheritance?” The silver light in his eyes became more concentrated.
“An inheritance that contains incomplete information about the Branded Swordsmen! There’s also a high-grade magic artifact.” Leylin answered.
“Is that so?” Reynold shifted his glasses.
“Branded Swordsmen? A branch of the ancient Magi?” He sized up Leylin’s body.
“A tall and strong body with some brands on the surface. It seems quite similar to the legends…” As his vitality was amazingly high, the muscles on Leylin’s body were now very obvious, and he had a terrifying amount of strength within. If he tried to impersonate a Grand Knight, nobody would doubt him.
“In that case, what is your relationship with the Thousand Meddling Hands?” Reynold came to the key question.
Rumble!

Just as Reynold was using the illusionary spell to interrogate Leylin, a mighty energy wave fluctuation came from afar.
This fluctuation was so immense that even the buildings had mildly shook.
“What? A sneak attack?” Reynold stood up abruptly.
A layer of white light which seemed to be a communication device shone on his body in an instant.
“What’s happening?” Reynold asked indifferently.
“It’s the dark Magi! We suffered a sneak attack from the dark Magi! The first and second defense lines have already perished. We’re currently at the third line of defense!”
From the communication device, the image of a fair-skinned burly bloke who had donned a military uniform was projected.
This was the leader of the defense team who was specially assigned to defend all of Four Seasons Garden. The expression on his face was wrought with fright and worry. It seemed that the dark Magi had placed him under great pressure!
A simple and tiny issue.
“I will mobilise the fighting and hunting teams to your area as soon as possible, you…” Reynold replied to the communicative device.
Suddenly, his face darkened.
Through the projection of the communication device, he could see
a gigantic black hand land from the skies and mash the burly bloke between its fingers.  

“Ah…” The burly, fair-skinned bloke cried out miserably as he produced large amounts of milky white flames.  

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*  

A large number of miserable looking faces appeared on the gigantic black hand, their mouths opening wide as they swallowed the milky white flames.  

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*  

The bone-chilling sounds of gnawing sounds were heard. After swallowing the white flames, they actually began to gnaw at the burly, fair-skinned man’s body.  

“Jejeje…”  

In midair, solidified silver spiritual force appeared and formed a human face.  

“Reynold, my old friend! Why aren’t you coming to greet me?” The face sneered.  

Immediately after, the huge black hand swept the area and made a mess of the Four Seasons Garden’s defensive line. Under the tyrannical abuse of a rank 2 Magus, the ordinary rank 1 Magi were as insignificant as ants.  

*Pak!* The armrest of Reynold’s vined chair was kneaded until it broke.  

*Shua!* In a flash, he turned into a green figure and rushed out.  

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*  

After he left, his vined chair squirmed and constantly twisted, gradually turning into something that resembled a human. It stood by Leylin who was still unconscious as if keeping guard.  

*Boom!* *Boom!* *Boom!*  

Huge undulations from the magic that were even more immense than before travelled over. This was an intense fight between two rank 2 Magi.
As they fought, they moved further and further away as if deliberately trying to avoid this area.
In Reynold’s office.
All of a sudden, Leylin who had been unconscious, suddenly opened his eyes.
At that instant, his eyes turned amber.
Innate spell formation Eye of Petrification!
The vined human that had been keeping watch over him immediately turned into a grey stone statue.
After his second bloodline transition, this spell and Kemoyin’s Scales had evolved.
Leylin surveyed the area and stretched lazily, fixing the Ring of Sobriety that was on the round table back onto his finger.
“Though the process was a little unexpected, nothing bad happened.”
Leylin’s eyes were very clear. Where were the traces of him being caught in a hallucination?
Previously, Reynold had used a few ingredients and set up a trap, which had indeed cause him to fall into a hallucination.
But that was just for a moment. The power of the bloodline of the ancient being, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, was flowing in his veins and devouring all external substances!
His vitality of over 25 degrees had made it easier for him to quickly come back to his senses.
At that time, Leylin had beat Reynold at his own game and pretended he was still in a daze, thus lowering Reynold’s guard.
With the help of the A.I. Chip, his breathing, his body’s situation, and waves of his spiritual energy had been feigned spectacularly, which even deceived Reynold.
All that nonsense about the Branded Swordsmen was obviously just that, lies. With the adjustments made by the A.I. Chip, making up runes was a simple matter.
Only now did Leylin have the time to really look at the rank 2 Magus Reynold’s office. Based on his interests, the office was made of plants. The bookcase and window, as well as the tables, chairs, and even a few strange books were all made of plants. The entire setup was very clever and wasn’t very big, giving off a cozy and tiny feeling.

“Where is the place at which I need to place the spell design for it to activate?” Leylin mumbled to himself, producing a scarlet crystal from his pocket. The crystal now was emitting a bright red and was boiling hot.

“Is this... some sensing technique?” Leylin touched his chin, using the crystal to discern the direction in which he should be moving. He eventually found out that when he pointed the crystal at Reynold’s desk, it would emit the brightest light and be the hottest, to the point that he felt his hand was being burnt.

Following the crystal, he came before Reynold’s desk. This was a large green table with rings on it that indicated the age of a tree.

*Weng Weng!* At this moment, the crystal in Leylin’s hand exploded in a ring of light and mysteriously hovered in the air. “This is... a spell formation that is triggered automatically!” Leylin’s eyes widened, and he pointed his right hand at the crystal, causing tendrils of black gas to crawl onto it like snakes.

*Crash!* Under the shine of the scarlet crystal, the dark green desk suddenly shook, and most of the papers, quill, ink and various items on top of it rolled off of the surface. The surface kept squirming, and the various types of plants making up the table began to grow and extend.
*Pak!* The green desk was split into two, and under these two parts, numerous plants grew and acted like little feet which scurried away. In the place where the desk had been, there was now a huge pit. In the heart of the pit was a huge sealing spell formation that was shining with all sorts of runes that were floating around. On the surface of the spell formation, there were a few gaps. After making some comparisons, Leylin figured that the spot right at the middle could fit the red crystal. “Classified information like this actually got out, and there was even a spell design specially made for this…” Leylin mumbled to himself. All of a sudden, something strange happened! The scarlet crystal that had been hovering in midair suddenly burst out into blood red flames, zooming like a fire arrow towards the part of the formation that was caved in. In the crystal, there was a requirement that required it to make contact with the spell formation before it was activated. Combined with Giant’s obvious attempts at hiding the truth, Leylin could easily tell that it wouldn’t be good if the crystal activated. However, there was no sense of flustering on his expression. Rather, there was a profound look on his face. “I’ve been waiting for this!” He reached forward with his right hand! “Snake Binding!” The little black snakes that had been crawling on the crystal immediately began to squirm and turned into a huge snake ball, securing the red crystal within. Black gas pervaded the area, on the verge of concealing the red light the crystal was emitting. *Weng Weng!* The red crystal constantly expanded, and Leylin seemed to hear a
sound of unwillingness from within.
“As expected, there’s even a backup plan! It’s a pity…”
Leylin rapidly chanted incantations and sprinkled some light blue powder into the air.
“Freezing River!” As he finished the last syllable of the incantation, a light blue light surrounded the snake ball.
*Tssss!* White threads of mist were produced, and on the surface of the snake ball, the white mist condensed and turned into a layer of thin ice.
The amount of ice became greater and greater, until, at the end, a thick layer of ice had been formed around the snake ball. The entire snake ball seemed like it had turned into a huge ball of ice.
The red rays of light that the crystal had been producing was now completely contained within.
As if it had lost its detection abilities, the large spell formation in the pit ceased its rumbling, and all sorts of runes ceased to move on the surface of the formation.
*Shua! Shua! Shua!*
Three large ice pillars were like pylons, or perhaps chains, as they connected with the blue ball of ice.
“Hn! The power of this sealing spell formation is not half bad!” Leylin nodded in satisfaction.
This sealing spell formation was something he had gained from blackmailing Pierre at the Four Seasons Garden. It was definitely something worth being kept safely in the warehouse as it was quite effective. It looked like Pierre had not given him inferior items to go against him.
Leylin then shifted his attention to the spell formation that was caved in in the middle.
“A.I. Chip! Compare the runes on the spell design!” A blue ray of light brightened in his eyes and shone straight at the spell formation.
A huge amount of data flashed past Leylin’s eyes. Countless runes and designs were currently being compared. The red crystal from before was merely a key. The runes used on it were strange, and Leylin previously had no way to tell its function from the runes. But now, both the key and the keyhole were here. Hence, he was able to make comparisons between the runes on both ends and tell the rough functions of the spell formation and crystal. Seconds later, the A.I. Chip’s conclusion appeared before Leylin. “The part that’s caved in is a sealing formation, and the crystal’s function is to detonate?” A cold look emerged on his face as Leylin read through the first two lines. “Very good, Giant! Just you wait!” The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice continued to intone.
From the energy emitted by the spell formation, analysis shows that the probability of a body of consciousness residing in the spell formation is 78.9%.
The A.I. Chip’s conclusion was presented before Leylin.
“A body of consciousness?!” Leylin’s eyes sparkled.
“Can you compare it with the database and find out what sort of body of consciousness it is?”
[Searching… Beep! There is no such information in the database. Comparing with Host body’s existing memories…]
The A.I. Chip operated quickly.
Seconds later, a new conclusion was shown to Leylin: [The body of consciousness emits an aura that comes from the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. Determined to be a special being from the secret plane itself! Compatibility with large platinum gate of entrance to the secret plane: 67%.
“Platinum gate?” Leylin’s eyes widened, suddenly thinking back to the platinum gate that seemed like an ancient existence, right across from the headquarters. Incomplete spiritual force waves were emitted by the gate!
“From the looks of it, I’m afraid that the platinum door has already evolved to have its own intelligence. However, it was removed by Magi from Four Seasons Garden and sealed here. Hence, its spiritual force waves gave me such a strange feeling…”
Leylin slowly came up with the entire process that led to this result.
Though he had no idea why Four Seasons Garden sealed the consciousness of the entrance to the secret plane, there were only a few reasons that Leylin wasn’t going to bother wondering about. What he was more focused on was what would happen to the entrance to the secret plane if its consciousness was destroyed. After all, the red crystal that Giant gave him was no unsealing spell design! Instead, it would control the spell formation as well as the consciousness within, and destroy them together!

“A.I. Chip! Simulate the consequences of the destruction of the secret plane’s body of consciousness.”

Leylin spoke quietly, his expression dark and dreadful.

[Beep! Mission established, beginning to compare with high-level patterns. Importing data...] The A.I. Chip intoned loyally. After which, the result was placed before Leylin.

[Based on simulated experiments and remnants, if the body of consciousness is damaged, the possibility of the platinum gate being destroyed is 79.8%. Entrance will automatically close and be sealed shut. Another 15.2% chance of the opposite happening. The entrance will then become a public entrance and be open to any living beings... the last 5% possibility has unknown consequences!]

Leylin, who was silently reading the conclusion, suddenly understood everything. The most important part in the battle for the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was the acquisition of the entrance. Seven entrances had been discovered, with four being controlled by the light Magi. This control referred not only to the Magi army set up on the outer areas but also to a certain key that could control the opening and closing of the entrance!

From the looks of it, these keys referred to each gate’s core body of consciousness!

“If I detonate this area, there’s a large probability of Four Seasons
Garden’s entrance disappearing. The dark and light Magi will then hold the same number of entrances and there won’t be any disadvantages when trying to take over the secret plane.” Leylin could easily tell the intentions of the dark Magi. These Magi were planning to destroy the entrance here! Gaining control of the entrance meant obtaining a large amount of land, plentiful resources, as well as a huge number of troops. Most importantly, the speed at which spoils of war were transported would be increased! Light Magi currently held possession of four entrances. Whether in terms of the areas with radiation or potential battle power, they exceeded the dark Magi by a large margin. Hence, the dark Magi had to think of ways to make up for this handicap! Even if this place was not destroyed, it was still necessary to rob this place from the light Magi. They would rather have this place become a public domain than let it be controlled by the light Magi! “Shrewd! A very, very clever plan!” Leylin, who had made sense of this whole situation, couldn’t help but praise the person who had come up with this operation. However, as the very last chess piece in this game, he was in a very difficult position. If he destroyed the body of consciousness now, the gate to the secret plane would immediately be damaged and perhaps permanently lose its abilities. This may or may not be a good thing. Leylin, who had completed this task, would be held in high regard by the dark Magi, but the light Magi would definitely not let him off so easily. This was a decision that he needed to think through carefully. Just for that little bit of merit, was it actually worth it to offend the entire light Magi alliance? “Is there still… a need to consider any further?” Leylin’s eyes brightened.
“From this crystal and the extremely opportune timing, it looks like there’s someone in the shadows controlling everything. This person also has to have a high position in Four Seasons Garden, or else it’d be impossible for him to do this much… I’m almost sure of who it is! Once this operation is over, he’ll be the one reaping the most benefits. I might even be labelled as a traitor and be chased to death, while he will get the most merits for everything…. ”

Leylin’s lips quirked in a cold smile.

Since ancient times, a spy’s position was the most difficult. Even if they succeeded, if the person who instigated the operation was not willing to tie up loose ends, the spy would be the one who would stand to lose the most!

Besides, compared to a lowly spy like him, there was another spy with a higher position, had been in Four Seasons Garden longer, and was an even more loyal choice.

If there were conflicts of interest between them, who would Thousand Meddling Hands choose? This was a rhetorical question. Besides, the contract he had signed with Giant only specified that he could not help Four Seasons Garden, but the reason he was doing this was for his own benefit. With his own desire to get some benefits from Four Seasons Garden, it was evident that he would not suffer any backlash from going against the contract’s terms.

Afraid that Leylin would not agree, Giant did not dare to make the conditions too strict. If the conditions stated that he had to destroy specific things, then Leylin would definitely investigate further and could decide not to sign the contract at all.

“Shatter!”

Leylin clenched his fist while facing the blue ball of ice!

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!” Countless shards of ice fell from the ice ball, and immediately after, innumerable cracks appeared on the surface of the ice ball.

*Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack!"
Finally, the entire light blue ball of ice cracked and along with it, the red crystal dispersed into powder. This spell design that would cause the spell formation to implode was destroyed by Leylin, just like that!
Leylin had thought this through. It was alright to betray Four Seasons Garden. At most, he would have become the enemy to one more organisation, but destroying the gate of the secret plane would mean offending the entire light Magi alliance!
The current Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was a huge chunk of flesh that dark and light Magi alike were waiting for an opportunity to swallow into their stomachs! The gate to the secret plane did not belong to just Four Seasons Garden, but the entire light Magi alliance! Four Seasons Garden was but one of the characters who would look over the entrance. The moment Leylin destroyed the entrance, all light Magi forces would lose their advantage in this battle! Since ancient times, destroying a person’s livelihood was akin to murdering one’s own parents. For Magi, the secret plane was a huge gold mine where one could obtain a limitless amount of top grade materials! If he pitted himself against the light Magi like this, he would be chased to the ends of the earth and there would be no end to it!
On top of that, all of the light Magi powers would be working together to exterminate their enemy! The dangers of this operation were way above that of the times previously when he had gathered spirits and plundered brazenly!
In the south coast, light Magi were at the top. If the entire light Magi faction was against him, it was impossible for Leylin to stay alive. All he could do was find a deserted place and live a hermit’s life.
If he had connections in the dark Magi alliance things would still be
fine. This operation would be a huge gain on the dark Magi’s side, and based on his huge contribution, he would have a comfortable life with the dark Magi.
It was a pity that Leylin had entered Thousand Meddling Hands halfway through and was not as trustworthy. Otherwise, he would not have been deceived into doing this.
Besides that, he had no backing in the dark Magi alliance and rather, had some foes within!
After all, Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was a member of the dark Magi alliance. He had brazenly killed off the elder of the Lilytell family, Metallic Lunatic Marb, which resulted in a blood debt!
After considering the matter carefully, Leylin concluded that exploding the gate to the secret plane did not benefit him at all, and he would have actually become the scapegoat!
Leylin was definitely not going to do something that would harm his own interests.
Hence, with one last look at Reynold’s office, he ruthlessly left!

……

*Rumble!*
Within the headquarters of Four Seasons Garden at the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane, immense energy waves from spells exploding could be felt everywhere. Mixed within those sounds were miserable cries and maniacal laughter.
The dark Magi’s attack, this time, was very fierce and they had quickly made their way to the centre of the headquarters.
Hence, Leylin found very few official Magi along the way. Nobody bothered to interrogate him either, so his whole journey out was very smooth sailing.
Many Magi in black cloaks were freely venting their dark desires,
and some Magi could be seen bursting into flames. The violent flames engulfed the area and turned the prosperous and busy trading centre into a sea of fire. The official Magi of Four Seasons Garden were doing their utmost to hold back the dark Magi while awaiting support. The Magi who had chosen no sides were around mostly to look on without lifting a finger, while only a few who were on good terms with Four Seasons Garden chose to participate in the battle. Magi were a bunch of cold people, and seeing that the dark and light Magi were participating in a large-scale battle, most of the Magi present chose to look after their own hide and observe. This was obviously the case for acolytes. While official Magi were fighting, they did not even have the chance to intervene. Usually, just a stray wave of magic from an official Magus could cause a large number of deaths. “Things seem to be rather chaotic!” Leylin laughed without care. Though he was wearing the attire that belonged to Four Seasons Garden, the expression on his face was very composed and as cool as ice, as if everything happening here had nothing to do with him. “Magus Leylin, what are you doing?” At this moment, a figure rapidly appeared before Leylin. It was Dolorin. This vice team leader of the defense squad cut quite a sorry figure, his white robes torn into shreds.
239 - Blood Rogue’s Appearance

“Magus Leylin! In my authority as the vice team leader of the defense squad, you will temporarily be expropriated! Those darned dark Magi bastards are plundering our headquarters and killing our family and friends. I need you! Let us go and resist the enemy!”

Dolorin looked as if he was in a frenzy and was burning with rage. It looked like he was truly loyal to Four Seasons Garden.

As a large light Magi organisation, Four Seasons Garden had a very strong sense of unity.

Hence, even under such circumstances, many official Magi, and even acolytes, were willing to risk their lives and fight.

“My apologies, but I won’t do it!” Leylin unenthusiastically spoke.

“What did you say?” Dolorin became wide-eyed, unwilling to believe what he was hearing.

“I said I won’t! I am now the patrolling inspector at the headquarters! Just my position alone means that I have the same level of authority as that dead team leader of yours. Even he didn’t have the power to command me to do anything, much less you.”

Leylin squinted, causing Dolorin to seethe with rage.

“You… you dare…” Dolorin gestured at Leylin, his finger trembling.

Though his lips twitched, he did not say a word. Leylin’s reason could not be refuted, and with his current position, he did not have the authority to order Leylin, who held a higher position, to do
“Well then, Lord Leylin! Where are you going?” Dolorin suddenly asked with his fists tightly clenched and his eyes fixed on Leylin.

“Are you trying to mind my business?” Leylin’s spoke in a low register as he looked at this burly man.

“Of course not! It’s just that an envoy just came down from the headquarters and is standing guard at Experiment Zone 3. I think you might want to see him?” Dolorin lowered his head, though his words showed he had no intents of backing down.

“An envoy from the headquarters?” Leylin furrowed his brows. This was a key position and represented the will of the entire Four Seasons Garden. This person obviously had a position that was much higher than his temporary role as a patrolling inspector.

“Why wasn’t I informed of this? Who is it?” Leylin asked on.

“It’s Lord Reynold’s personal disciple, Lord Wade!” The name that came out of Dolorin’s mouth was unexpected, but at the same time logical.

“So it’s him! No wonder!” Leylin nodded.

Wade was a Magus who had been raised in Four Seasons Garden, from when he had been a regular human till he became an acolyte and then further became a Magus. His entire being had a close connection to Four Seasons Garden, and he was definitely loyal. On top of that, the person in charge here was Reynold, who was also his teacher. In terms of communication and connections, he had a natural advantage.

“It’s going to be troublesome to have an envoy come down at this time…” Leylin’s heart lurched.

Immediately after, Dolorin stared straight at Leylin. “My lord, think about it…”

“Since it’s an envoy from the headquarters and the situation is somewhat dire now, I’ll have to meet him!” Leylin said
indifferently.  
Surveying the area, he noted that the dark and light Magi were immersed in battle and nobody had the time to pay any attention to him.  
Also, they were in a corner and there was little chance of them being seen from afar.  
After having noted this situation, the expression on Leylin’s face became calmer as he tucked his hands into his sleeves.  
“That’s good… Ah…”  
What appeared on Dolorin’s face was glee, followed by a complicated glint in his eyes, as if some sort of evil plan was brewing in his mind. However, all of this was immediately destroyed by a pair of flaming, crimson palms.  
These crimson palms had blood red flames that went through Dolorin’s innate defense spell formation like paper and pierced right into his chest.  
A flash of disbelief passed Dolorin’s face before he turned into a pile of ashes under the blood-red flames.  
Leylin calmly retracted his hands. He was now the number one being who was second only to rank 2 Magi. Dolorin was a rank 1 Magus who was not even at the peak yet. Leylin had gone all out and mounted a sneak attack, and hence Dolorin had been killed in a single attack.  
From within the ashes, a hint of grey light rose and turned into a grey skull that pounced towards Leylin.  
“Oh! A secret imprint? I never expected Dolorin to have something like this!”  
Blood red glints flashed by his eyes and two crimson rays shot out of his pupils which landed on the imprint in a straight line.  
*Sssii!* Large amounts of white mist rose, and under the crimson rays, the skull imprint dispersed. It turned into little grey spots that disappeared into the air.
This was the same type of imprint that Bosain and Torash, who had both been killed by Leylin, possessed. This was an imprint that Magi used to mark those they wanted to take revenge on. When Leylin was still an acolyte, it was exceedingly difficult to remove this type of imprint the moment he made contact with it. It was also easy for Magi to track, which was why he had used the most direct and simplest way to kill those two acolytes. But this was now different! Leylin had advanced to a peak rank 1 Magus! The imprint of a regular Magus could easily be removed with a little spiritual force. He was only fearful of the secret imprint that rank 2 Magi personally set up. A rank 1 Magus imprints was not a worry to him. “Shadow Clone!” After doing all this, Leylin was still not content and pointed at the pile of bone and ashes. A black shadow clone crawled out from the shadows and entered the ashes. The shadow clone that was now mixed with the ashes extended, grew bigger, and became another man who was similar to Dolorin. Their faces and attire were practically the same, though the shadow clone’s skin was black. It was weird and rather terrifying. “Shapeshifting spell!” With a stretch of his hand, milky white light converged in his palm and shot to the clone’s body. Under the effects of the shapeshifting spell, the clone’s skin instantly turned fair, and even gave some colour to its face. It looked just like Dolorin. “Go! Show your face to the Magi in Four Seasons Garden, and then find an opportune time to die in battle!” Leylin instructed. The shadow clone which had turned into Dolorin bowed towards Leylin and dashed off quickly. “Trying to make me cannon fodder by getting me to see the leader at this time?” Leylin glanced at the ground, where Dolorin had once been, a
tranquil expression about his face. “Whether it’s killing dark or light Magi, none of this has any meaning. The real treasure is waiting for me! Time is running out and I don’t have time to play around with you.”

Leylin’s original intention was to take advantage of the chaos and seize some benefits, but Dolorin had schemed for Leylin to meet the envoy from the headquarters hence Leylin had no choice but oblige.

This was the complete opposite of Leylin’s intentions. Hence, Dolorin must die!

“It’s about time for Blood Rogue to appear!”

Leylin murmured to himself, rays of light appearing in his right arm and turning into a crimson mask. His robes also underwent some changes and turned into a shade of crimson, a stark contrast to the original white, and looked as if it had been stained by fresh blood. His aura also changed, reeking of bloodlust and evil. Just looking at him was enough to cause official Magi to break out in cold sweat.

Leylin’s other identity in Thousand Meddling Hands, Blood Rogue, now made its appearance!

After having transformed into Blood Rogue, Leylin identified a direction and rushed in the direction of the Merit Point Exchange Hall.

One would be an idiot not to seize benefits when possible!

The battle at the Merit Point Exchange Hall was also the most intense, with various spells and energies flying all over the place. Within the rubble, Magi of the defense squad in the white robes of Four Seasons Garden and Magi in the black robes of Thousand Meddling Hands were now tangled together.

All sorts of pieces and fragments of resources were strewn all over the ground. There was even an intellectual crystal ball that had been discarded in a corner within the rubble.
“Hm?”
From the corner of his eyes, Leylin discovered a few hidden black figures who emitted energy waves that belonged to acolytes! They must be incredibly reckless to even think of participating in a battle between Magi.
These figures lay in wait at the sidelines of the battle, their greedy little eyes fixated on the items strewn all over the ground. Even if they were to pay their life for this, there was no guarantee that they would be able to obtain these items in their lifetime. Taking advantage of the chaotic situation, a few of the more daring acolytes actually began to have designs on these items.
*Rumble!* An icy blue ray of light dispersed, and the remaining waves of energy hit one of the acolytes present.
This acolyte didn’t even have the chance to make a sound before he turned into an ice statue amidst the blue light.
Such a miserable scene scared away a large number of acolytes. There were, however, a few lucky acolytes who successfully left the battlefield after retrieving some resources and ingredients.
Though the official Magi present had discovered their presence, they couldn’t be bothered with these existences that were as unremarkable as ants.
Making use of the Magi’s reasoning, these acolytes betted their lives and struggled towards this hint of an opportunity! They did this despite knowing that if any official Magus found them an eyesore, they would immediately lose their lives!
Leylin suddenly reflected upon this and realised that a Magus’ path was full of blood and cruelty.
He strode forth at a measured pace and entered the heart of the battle.
Amidst them was a huge black rodent-like Magus who quickly got...
rid of its opponent and bowed before Leylin.
“It’s actually Lord Blood Rogue! It’s been a long time!”
The huge rodent now had green eyes that were the size of longan fruits and looked ready to bootlick any given moment.
Ever since Leylin had displayed his exceptional battle strength in previous fights, combined with Bald Venom’s disappearance without a trace, this large rodent had analysed the situation well and apologised to Leylin. It had also sent a large number of precious items.
From then on, it would eagerly approach Leylin and greet him, acting just like his servant.
When facing this large rodent-like dark Magus, Leylin only nodded slightly.

“You’re just in time. There are some areas that require your natural talent. Stay beside me!”

“Yes, my lord!” A glint of glee appeared in the large rodent’s eyes, and it quickly stood at a short distance behind Leylin.

It was very clear that in this large-scale war, even for official Magi, the probability of death was not low.

In order to protect itself, besides trying its hardest to raise its strength, the rodent Magus also had to have strong backers to protect itself. This was a method of survival!

“Who is that?”

The opposing Four Seasons Garden Magi asked in suspicion as they naturally could not recognise Leylin as he was right now.

“It’s Blood Rogue from Thousand Meddling Hands! It’s said that his crimes are insane, and in just the short span of a year, he’s already committed nine major crimes and has been labelled as a notorious criminal on the wanted list!”

Another old light Magi stared hard at Leylin, eyes revealing an unspeakable fear.

Leylin merely laughed gently and approached them, while the two dark Magi respectfully backed off.

“I’m only going to say this once! Move!” He spoke brazenly to the
light Magi.
“Are you crazy?”
Seeing Leylin actually dared to threaten a whole group of light Magi, even a few Magi from the Thousand Meddling Hands thought Leylin to be crazy.
However, the large rodent and the rest who knew Leylin better could feel their scalps numb as they retreated a few steps.
“Once Lord Reynold returns, the whole lot of you insane dark Magi will… ugh…”
A light Magus stood out and spoke righteously.
However shortly after, a translucent, black, giant serpent seemed to travel through space and appeared in front of him. Extending its mouth, which was full of sharp teeth, it bit down upon his neck.
*Ka-cha!* A piercing sound was produced, and this light Magus’ innate defence formation was destroyed to pieces in less than a second under the snake’s bite.
After that, the python directly bit the Magus’ unprotected nape! The spinal cord was ripped to shreds, and flesh and blood flew everywhere.
“Honestly… are all of you deaf?”
The light Magus’ corpse fell to the ground with a loud thud, and Leylin’s blood-red robes seemed to produce crimson rays of light. He faced the light Magi in front of him and spoke peacefully.
“Just- Just what level of… This power far exceeds that of the semi-converted Magus that he had been.”
Upon having seen Leylin kill an official Magus in one blow, the large black rodent behind him couldn’t help but be shocked. From what he knew, in Thousand Meddling Hands, there were only a few peak rank 1 Magi, such as Giant, who could do this. However, another person had joined their ranks, Blood Rogue!
It even went so far as to guess that Blood Rogue right now might have surpassed Giant and the other elders. At this thought, with a
gleeful, and an even more intense gaze that could be seen on its slender and hollowed face, it stared at Leylin’s figure. “Togo! He actually killed Togo!” A female Four Seasons Garden Magus looked at Togo’s corpse, evidently in disbelief, and went insane. “I’ll kill you!” With a crazed look upon her face, she was then wrapped up in a bundle of milky white light! *Ka-cha!* Under the shroud of light, her clothes split and revealed the curvy body of a young woman. At the same time, layers of clean white feathers sprouted out from her back, eventually forming a pair of large white wings. “The holy form! Looks like she’s going to go all out!” The surrounding Magi were surprised, and all of them had varying reactions. Some chose to retreat, others rushed in from the sidelines, and even more light Magi came in and surrounded Leylin. “Holy Judgement!” As if an angel had descended upon the earth, the female Magus’ face shone with a holy light. Her eyes turned pure gold as she pointed straight at Leylin. Light! Pure, clear holy light formed a knight’s lance, accompanied by a holy chorus in the background. Along with a huge spurt of energy, it charged towards Leylin! “Kill him! Let’s kill him!” Immediately after, the surrounding light Magi produced their best spells, and colourful magic rays rushed towards Leylin like a wave. In the face of such an attack, the black rodent immediately retreated, while other dark Magi had long since hidden themselves away. Leylin wasn’t their superior and lacked the authority to command
them.
In addition, as a dark Magi who had committed crime after crime, even if there was a leader who ordered them to go forth, they would disobey.
“At critical times, they’re a bunch of unreliable fellows! It’s good that I wasn’t counting on any assistance from them.”
Leylin raised both arms and loudly chanted a few syllables.
*Hualala!* A bright crimson colour stained his hands; the red was so concentrated that it looked like fresh blood on the verge of dripping down.
“It’s appeared! The magic that gave Blood Rogue his name Crimson Palm!”
A few dark Magi who were concealed a distance away yelled in awe.
“Die!” With a cold glint in his eyes, his two hands mercilessly scratched forward!
*Boom!*
Two blood-red phantom claws emerged and charged towards the holy lance and the wave of magic.
*Rumble!* On the surface of the crimson claws, large amounts of blood-red flames rose to the skies, virtually turning the sky crimson.
*Rumble!*
The flaming, sharp phantom claws slammed into the lance as well as the onslaught of spells, which produced a huge sound.
Black mushroom clouds formed and rose above the explosion; the aftershocks constantly spreading and shaving off a few layers of earth.
*Weng Weng!*
Countless amounts of black smoke and ash flew about, fully blocking the scene within the explosion.
*Ku! Ku!*
All of a sudden, two phantom claws that seemed slightly damaged charged through the layer of smoke and out of the explosion area. Huge crimson claws grabbed at the angel in the sky! Light! Large amounts of clean holy light transformed into crystal-like armour, automatically equipping itself to the female Magus. She now had on crystal armour and a pair of large white wings, looking as if an ancient goddess of war had descended upon the earth.

In contrast, the large crimson claws seemed like the hands of a demonic god from the depths of hell, mercilessly grabbing towards the war goddess!

*Ka-cha!*
Large crimson claws crashed into the armour, emitting the sounds of something cracking.

Under the disbelieving gazes of the many Magi present, the solid crystal armour that seemed to be a product from the heavens was torn into shreds by the crimson claws. They fluttered like butterflies before they turned into little spots of light that disappeared into the air.

After which, the crimson claws ruthlessly caught hold of the female Magus. The wings behind her back were forcefully ripped off, where pieces of pure white feathers drifted to the ground as if it was snowing.

The huge crimson claws immediately gripped her fiercely.

*Pa!* Like a watermelon that had been gripped so tightly that it exploded, the female Magus burst into pieces, blood flowing unceasingly. The liquid was absorbed by the huge claws, which caused its appearance to become more terrifying and evil.

[Beep! Power of Crimson Palm has reached the limits a second time. Layering effect achieved. 1. Crimson Flames: the crimson flames from Crimson Palm can be used as an area of effect attack.
2. Bloodleech: Every time Crimson Palm is used to kill an opponent, the power that is consumed will automatically be replenished after absorbing the opponent’s blood.

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded in Leylin’s ear. “Oh! Does that mean that every time I kill someone, Crimson Palm has the ability to automatically replenish its power and that the Magus doesn’t have to do it himself?”

Leylin was astonished. This spell was something he had obtained from the great Magus Serholm’s Book of Giant Serpent. It looked like the great Magus Serholm truly was deserving of his rank as a Morning Star Magus. Just a random rank 1 spell had such frightening effects.

After having absorbed the female Magus’ blood, the phantom crimson claws that had begun to turn dull and start to dissipate seemed to have received some powerful nourishment, and suddenly burst with crimson light!

The flames that had already died down began to burn furiously upon the claws.

*Boom!*

The crimson claw pressed down!

A huge palm imprint appeared on the ground, with flames burning around it.

The giant claw slapped a few Magi from Four Seasons Garden, and due to the crimson flames, they turned to ashes.

One strike! With just one strike, Leylin had killed countless official Magi!

If such battle achievements were to be spread, his name would be known throughout the south coast and even go down in history!

“Blood… Blood Rogue is actually so strong! Has he advanced to a rank 2 Magus already?!”

The dark Magi of Thousand Meddling Hands were startled by Leylin’s ferocious strike and were also stunned into silence for a
long while.
*Shua shua shua!*
Upon seeing Leylin’s attack, innumerable light Magi completely lost their confidence. Using various types of spells, they transformed into wind or giant birds, amongst other animals, and rapidly left the area.
Leylin merely stood where he was, not bothering to give chase. For him, killing light Magi was useless. What was more important was to steal resources!
*Boom!*
Yet another large claw was sent out and uncovered a passageway from the rubble.
Leylin went on a wild rampage, like the fiercest animal in ancient times, and based on the memory of the route that Pierre had taken, he destroyed all the traps and spell formations along the way.
In just a moment, he came before the huge resource warehouse from before.
Under his fierce flames, the huge metal door was melted into a liquid that flowed freely on the ground. With his hands clasped behind his back, he brazenly walked into the large resource warehouse.
“My Lord! After you!”
The dark Magi who had followed Leylin here did not dare to be indolent even in the face of such a huge room of treasure. Rather, they respectfully allowed him to have the first browse through these spoils of war.
Leylin unceremoniously began to search through the large resource warehouse as the smallest and most valuable items all disappearing into his robes.

The rodent who was following him took advantage of Leylin’s high position and managed to obtain quite a few valuable items. Once he was satisfied with his loot, Leylin returned to the doorway and spoke to the rest of the Magi who were anxiously waiting, “The rest is all yours.”

“Many thanks to Lord Blood Rogue!”

After the Magi present bowed to Leylin, they cheered as they impatiently dashed into the warehouse, plundering as they liked. “What a pity! If I had some magic artifact that could store items in another space dimension, you wouldn’t be getting anything from here.”

Watching the large storage warehouse get ravaged, a feeling of pity overcame him. Even if he couldn’t use these things, they could be exchanged for magic crystals and the like. However, time was short and he could not afford to keep many items on his body, so they were able to benefit from this.

“Rodent! Come here!” Leylin spoke indifferently.

“My Lord, what may I do for you?” Upon witnessing Leylin’s battle achievements, this Magus, Rodent, was already fully in awe of
Leylin and was even ready to sell its body to him.  
“You specialise in detection, right? I remember the last time while we were surveying the entrance to the secret plane, you were the first one to discover it.”
Leylin spoke matter-of-factly, but from the sharp glint in his eyes, it seemed as if he had already seen through Rodent’s entire being.  
“It’s just an effect from the shapeshifting spell…” Rodent’s heart chilled as it smiled dryly.
“Good! Find me the current location of this smell!”
Leylin raised his index finger, and tendrils of blackness were emitted and turned into thin little black pythons. They quickly appeared before Rodent and bit onto its nose.
“Ah…” Rodent gave a miserable cry, but the intense pain it had been expecting did not register. Instead, the smell of a Magus had travelled into his mind.
“It’s him! Bring me to him!” Leylin’s voice was very calm and it was impossible to tell if he was agitated or gleeful. However, this situation evidently unnerved Rodent further.
“Yes! Yes, my Lord, I’ll bring you there now!”
Rodent sprawled flat on the ground, nose right on the ground as he sniffed hard.
After a few minutes, he confirmed a direction, “It’s here. Please follow me, my Lord!”
Concealed under the crimson mask, Leylin lightly chuckled. What he had given Rodent was the scent of Pierre, who was in charge of the merit points exchange centre.
As the first Magus to be exploited by Leylin, his scent had been kept for future purposes.
But from what he had heard from Pierre, what he had plundered was not the main warehouse. The real one was something that even Pierre did not have the authority to bring others into.
This was an opportunity that was hard to come by!
Leylin gathered that the items in that main warehouse were definitely top-grade items or ingredients that Four Seasons Garden had found in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. If he managed to obtain all of that, it would likely be enough for him to advance to a rank 2 Magus and even above that. At this thought, his breathing began to silently roughen. The large rodent-like Magus had no real talent in terms of fighting skill, but it was his skill in detecting an opponent that Thousand Meddling Hands required his expertise for. Leylin followed this large rodent and bypassed several secret passageways. There were, of course, several alarms and magic traps, but they were all destroyed by Leylin. The main function of these traps was to alert the light Magi of intruders, and summon a large number of Magi from the Four Seasons Garden. As they went further in, even Reynold would be startled into action. With a rank 2 Magus like him around, things were as safe as it could be. But the situation now was different. Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters at the secret plane was now in a state of confusion and chaos. Reynold, the rank 2 Magus in charge, had now been lured away by a rank 2 Magus from Thousand Meddling Hands. In a situation where the main forces were gone, just a few dull traps and spells were just a joke to Leylin! “We’re here! My lord, if my senses don’t fail me, the owner of the scent is within this passageway.” After going through a maze filled with traps and crossroads, the large rodent pointed to a green passage at the opposite side and stated with confidence. This passageway looked extremely narrow, to the point that only one person could cross at a time. Within the passageway, there were innumerable vines that twined together to create a green wall, and
there were even powerful energy waves emitting from it. The aura it emitted was vaguely familiar and was something that Leylin had felt not too long ago, it belonged to Reynold, the rank 2 Magus!

“It can’t be wrong! This is the place!”

Leylin inspected the restriction spell formation put into place, his heartbeat quickening.

As the person in charge at the merit points exchange centre, Pierre would definitely return to the main warehouse and oversee it. As this place was kept in a secret location and had a large number of defensive spell formations, it was much safer as compared to the outside, where danger lurked in every corner. Hence, Leylin was eighty percent sure that he had chosen to hide out here.

Leylin had gotten Rodent to find his scent and was betting on this happening! Now, with the appearance of Reynold’s, a rank 2 Magus, defensive spell formations, it confirmed his conjecture. Even if it wasn’t the main warehouse, there were sure to be valuable things around if a rank 2 Magus had attempted to prevent others from going in there.

With a lengthy whistle, his hands turned red and he activated the full power of Crimson Palm. Huge blood-red claws carried crimson flames about it as they struck the wall of vines.

*Rumble!

Immense energy waves shot in all directions, and the passageway shook a little, rocks and dust falling from the ceiling.

After the dust cleared, the rodent-like Magus who was hiding behind Leylin saw a hole that was as large as a basketball above the entrance on the wall.

This hole was pitch-black inside, with traces of crimson flames burning and extending within.

*Crash!* Green light flashed and the entrance seemed to come to life, innumerable tendrils twisting together and filling in the hole. Rays of green light was emitted from the vines and they were
entangled together, green and right mixing together before they died down.
“The defense formation set up by a rank 2 Magus is indeed not simple!”
Leylin sighed in admiration, with no hint of disappointment in his eyes.
Crimson Palm was just one of the spells he used to conceal his identity. It was definitely not representative of what he was capable of!
The current him had already approached the realm of a rank 2 Magus. Even if he were to meet one, there was a high chance of him escaping. A formation set up by a mere rank 2 Magus was naturally not anything he worried about.
“A.I. Chip! Have they been recorded?”
Under the mask, a hint of blue flashed in his eyes as he enquired inwardly.
[Recorded 89% of the information regarding the spell formation. Currently simulating experiments and calculating its weak point.]
The A.I. Chip intoned loyally and then presented a few points where the amount of energy present was scarcer.
Usually, when a defense formation was not activated, it was difficult for the A.I. Chip to obtain such specific data. However, through Leylin’s attack using Crimson Palm, the formation began to operate and displayed all sorts of energy waves that the A.I. Chip scanned and gathered in detail. This was how it was able to see through it and ascertain its weak point!
“So that’s it!” Leylin peered closely at the diagram pointing out the places where energy signals were weaker, and the crimson rays were produced from his hands once again.
“Crimson Palm!” The giant blood-red claws struck again! Sharp, large flaming apparitions hit the entrance amidst the vines, 3cm below the centre of the door.
*Bang!* The entrance began to shake fiercely, and large numbers of vines devoted their energies to repairing the harm caused. “Hah!” Leylin’s arms did not stop moving as the crimson claws were used again, striking a few areas on the door. *Creak! Creak!* The door could not bear the abuse and even the veins began to slow in their movements. “Now!” Blood-red light flashed in his eyes. *Rumble!* The areas on the door that had been hit began to burn fiercely with crimson flames, forming straight lines and converging. *Weng Weng!* A huge crimson fireball appeared, and with a specific frequency, it bombarded the very middle of the vined entrance. *Tssssss!* As if someone had torn countless pieces of parchment, the green-vined entrance crumbled in pieces. The original healthy green turned into a wilted yellow as if its life force was drained as each piece fell to the ground. *Ka-cha!* The whole entrance was in shatters. Leylin’s footsteps did not stop and he immediately entered. Following behind him was the Rodent Magus who seemed to be struggling with its decision to follow. Its foot raised several times, but in the end, it took a huge breath and left this place. “You actually found this place?” After going through the passageway, Leylin came into a place that seemed like a small warehouse. The first thing he saw was someone dressed like an appraiser. He even had on gilded glasses and was standing there silently. At this moment, the expression on Pierre’s face was strange; he looked as if a weight had been lifted from his shoulders. He smiled, “I’ve been worrying about how to tell my superiors about you breaking into the exchange centre. I guess I don’t have to worry
about that anymore…”
He then gave Leylin a profound look. “You must be someone I know well, to be able to get here so quickly! Could you tell me your real identity?”

……

Leylin did not seem to have any intentions of letting Pierre die knowing his secrets. *Boom!* He fiercely took one step forward, and dark energy particles wrapped he and Pierre within like a fog…
*Sssii!* Thick fog spread, but there was not the slightest sound produced from the inside.
Minutes later, Leylin walked out calmly, and then entered the treasured warehouse that belonged to Four Seasons Garden.
242 - Leather Pouch

After Leylin left, the fog gradually dispersed, leaving behind a greyish-white statue of a Magus. This statue looked exactly the same as Pierre, with a look of astonishment on his face.

*Pak! Pak!*
Innumerable cracks began to extend across the statue like spider webs.

*Crack!* Immediately after, the stone sculpture broke into little pieces with a loud sound.

Leylin was now a peak rank 1 Magus. With the added bonus from his bloodline, even a regular peak rank 1 Magus was not a match for him when he went all out. However, he did not have any time to waste on thinking about this. His eyes were already attracted to the items before him.

This warehouse was incredibly small and was only a dozen or so square metres.

On a stone counter, only three items lay there. Though they looked to be unremarkable, they must be something of value for them to be placed here.

Leylin scrutinised the items on the counter.

On the left most was something that looked like a leather pouch. It was completely black and even had some detailed silver designs. Though it looked very ordinary, it seemed to have a slight wave
that was rather unique emitting from the pouch. Even the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline within him had a strange response to it. “From this feeling, it probably implies that this was made using the material from some kind of ancient creature.” Leylin rubbed his chin, the gears in his brain turning, “Something made by the hide of some ancient being. It doesn’t seem to be any offensive-type magic artifact either. Could it be…?”

In that moment, a slight possibility flashed past Leylin’s mind, causing his breathing to become a little rough.

“A.I. Chip! Scan the decorative designs on the pouch and compare it with pictures of ancient beings!”

[Bepp! Mission established, initiating scan…]

The A.I. Chip loyally intoned. Now, with a specific catalogue to refer to, the A.I. Chip immediately found an answer.

[Results of comparison: Ancient Creatures- Similarity to the skin of Void White-Eyed Snake: 92.6%. Tailless Ouroboros 46.9%. Void Raven: 12.3%]

“As I thought, it’s the Void White-Eyed Snake!” Glee emerged on Leylin’s face.

Even in ancient times, this sort of ancient being was extremely precious. This was due to the Void White-Eyed Snake’s innate ability that had to do with space! Hence, its skin was often used to manufacture all kinds of storage items.

“A.I. Chip! Look up all information there is regarding the Void White-Eyed Snake!” Leylin ordered.

[Void White-Eyed Snake! Ancient being, the darling of the void. After maturing, it can awaken its abilities that have to do with space, gaining a powerful innate skill similar to travelling through time! Its skin is often processed and made into storage items due to the void runes that naturally form on its body. Able to contain items that are a thousand, or even ten thousand times the size of its main body. However, due to excessive hunting by ancient Magi, it
became extinct in the middle of the Ancient Era. Source: The Illustrated Handbook of Ancient Beings, World Magus History, 37th revision.]

“As I thought, it’s the legendary space-type magic artifact!”
Leylin’s eyes were fixed on the black pouch with a fiery gaze.
For a large organisation like Four Seasons Garden, this item was not essential and only served to raise its value. However, for a Magus like him who was used to travelling alone, it was an indispensable item!
If he had had the pouch previously, he definitely would not have left anything behind for the other dark Magi and instead, chosen to take everything for himself.
Especially in his situation where he was planning to escape at any moment, his agility would increase by a large amount.
One could say that of all the items in this treasure trove, if he really needed to make a decision, Leylin would unhesitatingly choose this one!
However, Leylin could still contain his desires.
Suppressing the impulse of making his move immediately, he glanced at the two items beside the black pouch.
In the middle of the stone counter was a very thick, black volume that looked like a dictionary. At the side, one could see it was tattered.
“This must be the book that Four Seasons Garden obtained from the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane. As this was left behind by the Magus who constructed this secret plane, it must be even more valuable.”
These were items that only large-scale organisations had a use for.
If a Magus like him who worked alone set his hands on this, it would only backfire on him.
At the most right, beside the thick volume, there was a black honeycomb that looked somewhat like a charcoal briquette. On the
bumpy surface, there were beads of dark green pearls embedded in the holes. It looked rather bizarre.

“Though the volume is the most precious items out of these three, the pouch is still the highest priority to me!” Leylin solemnly approached the stone counter.

All items stored in a Magus’ warehouse were sure to be guarded by defense spell formations. Not only would they be set up around the item, the item itself would also have a spell formation on it. These spell formations usually had the ability to self-destruct, and the moment the method of approaching it was wrong, the item would be destroyed and cause the thieves to leave with empty hands.

However, dark Magi like Leylin were used to these situations and all had talent and skill in unsealing these spell formations. Leylin, who had been in the other warehouse, had used dark Magi’s unsealing techniques and successfully obtained a few treasured items.

However, the setup of this spell formation was evidently more complicated than that in the other warehouse. This was especially so for these three items, which definitely would have additional spell designs on it.

With runes that bound the items to the counter, even Leylin, who had help from the A.I. Chip could feel a headache coming on.

“It’s a pity! This is the main warehouse and even that dead man, Pierre’s token and his authority is useless here!” Leylin heaved a sigh and, from a small pouch, carefully poured the purple powder into his hands.

*Whoosh!*

Gusts of wind suddenly blew in the room, and little purple drafts were produced from Leylin’s hand, gathering at the surface of the stone counter.

This was an unsealing spell design he had obtained from Thousand
Meddling Hands, specially designed to deal with these sort of self-destructing seals. After modification from the A.I. Chip, its effectiveness had increased many times over! However, along with the A.I. Chip’s modifications, the difficulty in using this spell design had risen over ten times. One needed to be very precise and strict, and one could not be even a millisecond too late. In other words, it was a zero-error precision technique. Hence, on the south coast, perhaps only Leylin was able to use this unsealing method.

Purple gas flowed like water, coating the counter. The runes on the counter merely flickered a little and then died down, not detecting any abnormalities around. Waiting until the moment purple enshrouded the counter, Leylin’s eyes flashed resolutely.

“Now is the time! Magic transformation!” He fiercely chanted a few awkward-sounding syllables, and strange ripples suddenly began to flash upon the counter. *Weng Weng!* The purple streams of air solidified in a moment, turning into black, sticky liquid that surrounded the counter. Only at this moment did the runes on the counter react and it struck back with its more powerful and violent attack. A series of lights exploded, almost breaking through the thick black liquid that shrouded it.

“Cover!” Under Leylin’s instructions, the black liquid was like oil and completely covered the counter, rays of lights from various runes completely disappearing under it.

“Now!” Leylin produced thin blue threads from his right hand, which flew out like silk, and bound the black leather pouch. The thin blue threads seemed alive as they went towards the leather pouch, a series of slight popping sounds emitting as they moved.
Most of Leylin’s energy was spent on this unsealing spell design, to the point that his forehead was drenched with sweat. Finally, the silk-like threads bound the leather pouch tightly and looked like a blue cocoon. Leylin grabbed with his hands, and the blue cocoon automatically flew away from the counter and into his hands. “Alright! It’s a success!” Leylin exclaimed gleefully. Now, the black oil-like fluid seemed to be unable to cover the runes on the counter any longer, with hints of light passing through. “I’ll be quick about this. Once more!” Leylin pointed again, and thin blue threads headed for the honeycomb-like coal briquet. For Leylin, the book in the middle was likely the diary of the ancient Magus who created Eternal River Plain’s secret plain. If he obtained it, it would only cause him endless troubles. Rather than fighting for that, he should take a gamble on something else! The thin blue threads were soft and yet firm as they edged towards the honeycomb-like coal briquet. All of a sudden, the counter trembled, and much of the black liquid was flung off. A series of yellow rays from runes were revealed. *Weng Weng!* Yellow runes flew into the air, pouncing on the two remaining items on the counter. “Go!” Steeling his expression, the black oil that covered the counter began to boil, transforming into a small black shield, situated atop the coal briquet. *Ka-cha!* The yellow rune slammed into the little shield and, seemingly having gone against a firm hindrance, it bounced off. At the other side, the yellow rune flitted into the black volume due to the lack of obstruction. *Huala!*
The surface of the black book flashed and began to split bit by bit. Within a few seconds, the entire book automatically turned into flying ashes. 
*Pak!* 
At this moment, the blue threads finally bound the coal briquet and it flew into Leylin’s hands. 
*Rumble!* 
Immediately after, the entire counter crumbled before Leylin, turning into dust.
Looking at the self-destruction of the stone counter and the black volume, Leylin’s expression did not contain even a trace of pity.

As far as he was concerned, the biggest reward was already in his hands, so even if he was not able to get the other treasures, he felt no regret.

*Bang! bang!*

Two blue cocoons disintegrated right in front of Leylin’s eyes, exposing the two items that were within them.

Leylin calmly took them both.

The Void White-Eyed Snake’s snakeskin used to make the black leather pouch felt soft to the touch, and continuously spread a warm feeling to Leylin.

The silver designs upon it felt as if they were alive; they continuously moved about on the surface of the leather pouch, emitting a brilliant and dazzling radiance.

“It is worthy of being known as the Void White-Eyed Snake, or as the rumors call it, the darling of the void. A fully grown snake has its own space runes on its body…”

Leylin sighed in admiration, his fingers constantly caressing the surface of the leather pouch.

“What a pity that the Void White-Eyed Snake is not a creature with a bloodline. Otherwise, even though this leather had been solidified by the ancient Magi and lost all its vitality, I still could have
attempted to purify its bloodline…”

Leylin sighed regretfully, and then he looked at the thing that resembled a honeycomb-shaped coal briquet.

A dark green, pearl-like object was embedded in the surface of this honeycomb shaped briquet, something that strangely resembled an eye, and after looking at it, Leylin abruptly felt some dizziness.

“This thing is very strange! It seems that I must look for more data in the future so that I can analyse this thing’s components…”

Leylin vaguely thought as such. A thread of spiritual force crept out onto the surface of the leather pouch made from the Void White-Eyed Snake’s skin.

*Crash!*

The knot at the neck of the leather pouch broke open, exposing a really dark green hole. Leylin even momentarily felt as if his own spiritual force had locked onto some odd space.

The size of this space was not very large; it was only the size of two or three rooms. On all sides, there was a vast expanse of white lustre. Furthermore, the space runes that he had previously seen on the leather pouch were continuously roving about on the surface.

Through his spiritual force, Leylin felt that he could seemingly place any lifeless object in this space.

Following which, he immediately looked at the honeycomb briquet beside the pouch.

*Xiu!* The honeycomb briquet quickly faded from his palm and soon a hexagonal object with countless pearls on its surface hovered in the space that he had explored before.

“This is a curiously unusual feeling. Moreover, the weight of the leather pouch has also not increased…” Leylin weighed the pouch.

Just as he was about to close the leather pouch, a message was sent through a thread of spiritual force from deep inside the pouch.

“Successor! Congratulations on getting my final work of art, the Insatiable Bottomless Pouch! I originally created this item so that it
could become a magic equipment that would allow my name to be known through the ages! Unfortunately, it was stuck at the level of a high-grade magic artifact! I hope you will treat it properly and also help to upgrade it.....a namesake of myself, Meypes!”

“Meypes! I have not heard of such a name; he must have been a Potions Master from ancient times!”

Leylin also took the full measure of the first high-grade magic artifact that he had taken into his possession.

In the south coast, inferior grade magic artifacts were used by acolytes and mediocre rank 1 Magi. On the other hand, semi-converted elemental Magi and peak rank 1 Magi all used medium grade magic artifacts.

Only rank 2 Magi or those genuinely privileged might have a high grade magic artifact!

As for those magic equipment that were superior to magic artifacts, they were the highly kept secret treasures of every large powerful faction! Even Leylin hadn’t heard of any information pertaining to them.

And now, even Leylin had a high-grade magic artifact. Even though it was not of the offensive type, it provided him with assistance and was of much more worth than an offense-type magic artifact.

Leylin swept a glance over the other goods in the surroundings. Surrounding the black counter, there were several small wooden shelves. Although there were not many items on top of these shelves, and they weren’t comparable to those 3 items on the black counter, if they were to be placed outside, they would still be good things that would attract the attention of semi-converted elemental Magi or even peak rank 1 Magi!

“Since I am here, these all are mine.”

Leylin laughed, and a great amount of black fog turned into small snakes, which then pounced onto the shelves all around him....

A dozen or so minutes later, Leylin, with a smiling expression on
his face, walked out of this store. This time around, his harvest was plentiful. Even though some precious items were destroyed due to magic spells, what he had seized amounted to 80% of the hidden treasures! Those several precious materials inside caused a sparkle in Leylin’s eyes. There were even some materials that his currently updated database did not have any records of. Leylin made a concrete estimate that the value of those materials would amount to at least 10 million magic crystals. “These resources are more than enough to help me advance and become a rank 2 Magus, and will also be beneficial to me for a long time …” Leylin felt the black leather pouch that had been tucked away in his bosom, and the grin on his face only intensified. His biggest gain this time was this Insatiable Bottomless Pouch, a storage-type, high-grade magic artifact. As far as rank 2 Magi were concerned, they could only obtain such an item through good fortune; it could not be sought after! Currently, the leather pouch tucked in Leylin’s bosom had a dusty, weathered surface, making it look like an unremarkable item. The previously seen illusory silvery space runes were now completely concealed. After having received the message of the Potions Master from inside the pouch, Leylin could easily control the leather pouch and had modified its exterior form. Currently, when seen from the outside, this leather pouch just appeared as an ordinary leather waist pouch, with no energy waves. This ensured that people would not associate this pouch with a spatial artifact. Apart from that, this space had a size equivalent to 2 or 3 rooms. After Leylin had stored inside all the goods he had previously taken from that storehouse, and also added the stuff that he had on his
person, all of it only occupied one corner of the space. This leather pouch would be of enormous assistance to Leylin in future trips and adventures.

“Oh! Rodent! That is one clever chap….”

Leylin saw that Rodent had been missing for a long time and that the entire passage was deathly still; the floor of the passage was strewn with broken bricks and dust from the damaged wall.

At a far off region, minute tremors were felt from the bombardment of spells.

Of course, during this time, on the surface, the Thousand Meddling Hands’ dark Magi and the Four Seasons Garden’s light Magi were still fighting for their own goals.

“Not bad, it is time for the dark Magi to retreat!”

Leylin calmly felt for his golden pocket watch, saw the time, and sneered.

He, who had been long within the Thousand Meddling Hands, knew that although the dark Magi’s attacks were fierce at the start, so much so that even white Magi couldn’t resist, it was solely because they were covert and sudden attacks. After the passage of some time, the light Magi union would surely send some assistance. Additionally, the dark Magi were basically very selfish, and after having gotten what they came here for, they were hardly willing to do their utmost in the rest of this battle.

“Anyways, Giant and the ‘Boss’ behind him must be wondering why I haven’t yet destroyed the huge metal gate’s consciousness.”

The Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was a very stable land, especially around the two regions’ huge metal gates.

Leylin perceived that the runes on the metal gate alone were very problematic. Moreover, the huge metal gate had been made from some kind of recovery metal; it had the ability of automatic recovery. Unless that entire metal gate was destroyed in a split-second, or an attack that was an unusually high degree of power
was used to bombard the gate, it would automatically rebuild itself. According to A.I. Chip’s estimations, only rank 4 Morning Star Magi or Magi of higher levels could destroy the entrances to the secret plane. However, in the current south coast, it was unknown whether Magi of these ranks still existed or not! Leylin shook his head, and then chose a path, before vanishing into the darkness.

……

*Sssii!*
A whirlwind of green fog spiraled forth, tearing down on the building, and causing large noises as it eroded the building. There was an occasional magic radiance that flashed past, and all under the green fog was turned black until the building crumbled. Afterwards, the green fog turned into a green liquid. Within the centre of the green fog, Giant was crushing the heads of the Four Seasons Garden’s Magi with his palms.

“What is going on? Why hasn’t it detonated yet?” he looked in the direction of Reynold’s office, his look one of impatience.

If the core of the consciousness of the metal gate was destroyed, a psionic storm would occur, and the secret plane’s entrance would receive irreversible damage. But now?
Giant looked in the direction of the metal gate, where it was still standing majestically at the core of the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters. Even if random magic spells used by Magi during this battle had hit the gate, they only caused slight fluctuations; it was just like the oceans of ancient times, it concealed within it a ginormous power and existed calmly for countless years.

“It seems Leylin has faced some problems inside! But, I still have a
backup plan …”
A strange expression flickered upon Giant’s face.

……

Inside Reynold’s office.
At this moment, from the headquarters outside the plane, Wade hurried here, along with some magicians.
Seeing the intact seal, this golden-haired Magus couldn’t help but let loose a sigh of relief. “Mentor said that the seal is still intact and that there is no problem within the core consciousness….”
Immediately, he yelled at the magicians behind him, “Quickly, stand guard here. The danger level is 5A! This command is issued jointly by Mentor Reynold, and myself, the envoy of headquarters!”
“Agreed, my Lord!” All the magicians behind him bowed in acceptance, and they all scattered to protect the spell formation within the office.
These magicians all wore blood-red colored armour, which was inscribed with designs of thorny brambles. Their every move emitted a bloody aura, causing the other Magi’s hearts to palpitate.
This was Four Seasons Garden’s core power, the Four Seasons Corps! Every member of it was a powerful Magus with an elemental conversion of 60% or more, was proficient in many kinds of secret techniques that could increase their power to the equivalent of an elemental essence conversion of 70% or more, and could also use cooperative attacks.
This time, if it were not for Wade being made the envoy from the headquarters, they likely wouldn’t have even come.
“My Lord, should we also allocate some people to go to the merit points exchange center? According to information, previously, the S-rank criminal from the Thousand Meddling Hands, Blood Rogue, had made an appearance there….”
A spectacled female Magus, who seemed like a secretary, and was holding a thick notebook and quill pen, followed behind Wade.

Only at this point did she seem to remember something. This suggestion obviously gave Wade an idea. He glanced at the members of the team he had brought from the Four Seasons Garden, took a look at Reynold’s office, and eventually rejected the proposal, though he looked as if he was struggling with the idea.

“I can’t do that! The things here are more important! Even if it were Mentor Reynold, he would choose to defend this area as well!”

Wade gazed out of the window. Through the fixed spying channel, he could see that the Four Seasons Garden was already engulfed in a sea of fire, within which countless dark Magi in black robes were plundering as they liked.

“Damn it! The leader of the defense squad died in battle, vice team leader Dolorin is nowhere to be found, and the leaders of the hunting and battle teams are busy. If not, I would be able to assign a few of our Magi to give support there…”

“My lord, don’t worry. Lord Pierre, who’s in charge of the merit points exchange centre, is also a peak rank 1 Magus. Blood Rogue won’t be able to pass through so easily…”

Beside Wade, that secretary with an hourglass figure adjusted her glasses, trying to console him.
“It’s too late. Pierre has already died in battle! Our warehouse is going to fall into the hands of those wretched dark Magi!” Wade slammed his fist onto Reynold’s desk, leaving behind a deep imprint of a fist.

“Teacher! How great would it be if you were here…” All of a sudden, weak thoughts began appearing in Wade’s mind. Shortly after, he couldn’t help but laugh at his moment of weakness. However, his hands were still trembling within the sleeves of his robes. Due to their superior spiritual force and senses, compared to the regular man, Magi’s premonitions were quite accurate. Though they seldom appeared, it was a real possibility that such premonitions would actually come to pass.

“What? Pierre died in battle? How can that be? He’s a peak rank 1 Magus! Could it be that there’s another rank 2 dark Magus fighting here?”

The surrounding Magi became restless at the thought. Peak rank 1 Magi were, in normal circumstances, the most powerful beings in the south coast. In a situation where rank 2 Magus did not appear, they were the rulers, goals, and idols of most Magi. However, what they had thought to have been a sturdy mountain they could count on had collapsed, leaving the Magi present in shock.

“No! Calm down, everyone!” The moment the words left his mouth, Wade realised that he had misspoken, and quickly tried to steer the conversation away.

“Though the dark Magi have a very aggressive approach this time, thus leading to a huge loss in our members and resources, please believe in the Four Seasons Garden. Believe in the elders, and believe in my mentor, the rank 2 Magus, Lord Reynold.”

“Just hang on for fifteen more minutes! The Lightning Fury from the light Magi alliance will arrive, and once that happens, we’ll make the dark Magi who killed our friends and family pay the
Each word was dripping with blood, arousing feelings of hatred from the Magi present. Faced with a common enemy, the Magi calmed down.

Upon seeing that the situation had stabilised, Wade could only sigh. The light Magi of the Four Seasons Garden were similar to a few scientific researchers that Leylin had known. For them, their main work was to experiment, not to kill, and when they engaged with dark Magi, these official Magi performed very poorly.

Besides the few small teams that were in charge of battling and defending, most of the other light Magi who were in charge of exploring the secret plane and taking care of the plants had died.

At this thought, Wade glanced at the teams from the Four Seasons Garden who were clad in crimson armour. They looked extremely calm, not even revealing the slightest change in expression even after hearing the news of Pierre dying in battle, and of all of their resource warehouses being taken over by the enemy. They were still loyally going about their duties.

“Fortunately, the Four Seasons Garden still has a trump card! With the members of the Four Seasons Corps here, at the very least, the core of the gate to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane will be safe!”

Wade consoled himself.

As long as the core body of consciousness was in their hands, the light Magi of the Four Seasons Garden would still be in control of the gate to the secret plane. In that case, even if they suffered a devastating loss, all could eventually be regained.

It was with this in mind that after seeing the formidable attack by the dark Magi in Experiment Zone 3, Wade had chosen to pull back his forces and relocate all his men to this place. Everything was in preparation to defend the core body of consciousness to the death. This type of core body of consciousness could only exist within the
Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. It could not be too far away from the platinum gate, and it was for this reason that a few light Magi organisations were stationed nearby to protect it, rather than simply bringing it back to the headquarters for safekeeping.

*Ka-cha!*

*Ka-cha!*

All of a sudden, the crisp sound of bones breaking was heard twice.

Two Magi fell, shock still apparent on their faces, while they still had their eyes on the comrades that they had fought alongside.

“Matt, Ernie! What are you doing?”

The surrounding Magi quickly retreated, fearfully roaring at the two Magi whose hands were dripping with blood.

*Shua shua shua!* What was even faster was Four Season’s Corps, who were in the blood-red armour. They turned into a few red streaks and encircled these two Magi.

“Hehe! Every time I see you pitiful light Magi, I immediately connect you guys to meek little lambs crushed in a lion’s mouth.”

Amidst the sneers and taunting, the bodies of the two light Magi underwent a very bizarre change. Pieces of skin floated to the ground like leaves, revealing two foreign figures. One of them was bald, spare a few pitiful strands of hair at the top of his head, while the other was short and obese, with incisors that were unique to mice.

These two supposed light Magi were actually impersonators!

“It’s them! Thousand Faces and Shadow! They’re rank 5A fugitives, and are on the wanted list! Be extremely careful; it’s said that they are experts in shapeshifting, and can disguise themselves to resemble multiple different Magi within seconds, and without being caught.” Out of all the light Magi present, someone recognised the two dark Magi.

Of course, the real Matt and Ernie had long since been killed. As
for when this had happened, none of the light Magi had any clue at all.

“Hehe! The trump card of the Four Seasons Garden, the Four Seasons Corps? I’ve long since heard of this name!” Even while surrounded, the bald Thousand Faces did not seem nervous at all. His tiny eyes calmly scanned the area, and then snickered, “What a pity! I don’t seem to see anyone particularly exceptional within your group.”

In response to such taunts, the members of the Four Seasons Corps gave a single answer.

*Huala!*

The armour on their body vibrated, blood-red thorny runes seeming to come to life as they shot into the air, forming thistle-like apparitions.

The innumerable apparitions merged together and formed a dense cage, trapping Thousand Faces and Shadow within it.

“Haha… The only thing you have worth showing off is this thorny cage…”

Thousand Faces couldn’t stop laughing, but from the fine beads of sweat on his forehead, it was evident that he was not as relaxed as he tried to present himself.

“Shadow, are you done yet? The members of the Four Seasons Corps aren’t so easily fooled. With just a slight misstep, you might even die here.”

Thousand Faces silently transmitted a message to Shadow.

“Soon! I’m almost there. I need silence!” Shadow’s answer revealed that his throat was parched, and an obvious sense of urgency.

“Alright. If not for the generous rewards that the organisation is giving us, I wouldn’t do this sort of thing even if my life was threatened!” Shadow finally spoke.

*Boom!*
The huge, dull, red thorny cage kept compressing and shrinking the area within, and countless little thorns appeared, which, like bees, headed straight for the two dark Magi within.

*Bzz bzz! Tzz tzz!*

The tiny thistle thorns were like flying needles as they relentlessly pricked into the bodies of the two dark Magi, producing spots of fresh crimson blood. Strangely enough, their expressions were unchanged, as if their bodies were not their own.

“Be careful!” One of the members of the Four Seasons Corps warned, and the cage that was full of barbed thistles made contact with the two dark Magi within.

*Woo woo!*

At that instant, the surface of the two Magi’s bodies turned black, and a ring of fine red tassels exploded out of the duo’s bodies. “This…” Wade was slightly suspicious about this, and he seemed to remember something, quickly yelling, “Get out of the way!”

However, it was much too late. The two charred bodies smirked, extending their arms.

*Boom!*

The tremendous sound waves from the explosion engulfed the office and were followed by a huge amount of black smoke. In the ensuing waves from the explosion, all of Reynold’s furniture and documents turned into dust, and what had originally been his work desk was sliced in two, revealing the sealing spell formation underneath it.

“Clones and a high-energy bomb!”

Seeing the office that was in complete disarray, as well as the many Magi who had fallen, Wade grit his teeth.

“My Lord, are you alright?” The frightened female secretary Magus hastily ran over.

“Don’t worry, I’m fine…” Wade waved his hands.
After that, an odd expression appeared on his face, and his robes began to float. The plants that had originally been mere decorations seemed to come to life, turning into vines that grabbed hold of the female Magus in front of him.

“You… My Lord! What are you doing?”

The female secretary had been held in such a position that her legs were spread wide apart, presenting a humiliating pose in front of Wade. She still held traces of embarrassment and confusion in her eyes.

“Thousand Faces! Don’t try to swindle me! This female Magus was on my bed just last night; I’m a lot more knowledgeable about her body than you will ever be!” Wade retreated several steps, coldly viewing the female secretary Magus caught in the vine.

“Hehe! I guess I was found out…”

A maniacal smile appeared on the secretary’s face, followed by a fluctuation that revealed a bald head.

“It’s a pity that you forgot about me!”

The yellow floorboard under Wade’s feet suddenly flipped over, and a dagger that was flashing with silvery-white light stabbed towards his abdomen!
his silver dagger was obviously a magic artifact; it even had a menacing, silvery glint on its blade.
Wade’s innate defense spell immediately materialised into an armour of vines to protect him, but he was still pierced through by the silver white dagger.
As much as Wade was not resigned to his fate, he crashed to the ground, dyeing the area in a pool of red.
The brown yellow boards contorted, finally turning into the shape of a black figure.
“You guys had only noticed the changes that I, Thousand Faces, had made, but you forgot that the darkness can turn into a shadow and attach itself to any object…”
Wade was severely injured, and did not have much spiritual force or magic power left, so naturally, the vines that bound Thousand Faces had now slackened.
Thousand Faces massaged his wrist as he smirked.
*Ka-Cha!*
Suddenly, a flashing arc of red light pierced through his neck, causing blood to spurt out from his throat.
“It’s a pity that you have also underestimated us from the Four Seasons Garden!”
*Pu!* A member of the Four Seasons Corps, who seemed to be a team leader, retrieved his blood-red sword and pointed it at the location where the shadow was.
With another flash of red light, the thorny prison appeared once more, encircling Wade.
Not only could the prison of thorns be used to ensnare and kill enemies, it was also used as a form of a barrier for allies.
“Protect the Lord! Leave him to me!” This team leader exclaimed.
Shortly after, four long, blood-red shadows pierced the skies, appearing outside the prison of thorns.
“Thousand Faces died just like that!” Shadow looked around in disbelief.
In accordance with the current mess in the office, many Magi had lost their ability to move after that high-energy bomb. However, with the protection of their blood-red armour and innate spells, the members of the Four Seasons Corps did not receive serious injuries. They had already moved and completely blocked Shadow’s escape route.
“Damn it! Damn it! Damn it! Damn it!”
Shadow constantly surveyed his surroundings and roared with rage. “Despicable! I was deceived! What happened to the support that the organisation promised me? Where is it?”
Based on this situation, it seemed that Thousand Meddling Hands had issued them missions, but hidden a lot of important information. They had probably also promised some false rewards.
“Hmph! They are truly dark Magi! When it comes to this sort of situation, they’ll only care about themselves!”
The leader of the Four Seasons Corps snorted and then pointed at the place with the seal. “Team 2 is to guard that area. Do not let anyone get in there!”
A small group from the Four Seasons Corps immediately dashed to the seal spell formation, and a red circle of light brightened again.
The leader waved his blood-red longsword, aiming it at Shadow.
“You make me angry! In the fifty years that I’ve been carrying out missions, it’s the first time that my target has been hurt! Are you
“Are you ready to pay the price?”

Energy particles constantly shimmered around his body as a formidable spiritual force emitting from his body and engulfing Shadow.

His gaze was especially sharp as if he was staring at prey that he had settled on, which caused Shadow to shudder in fear.

“Wait, wait… We can discuss this. I know a lot of information about the Thousand Meddling Hands. We can work together…”

Shadow yelled out insincere words that attracted attention, a layer of magic that was so thin it was almost invisible flickering under his feet.

*Shua!*

His body transformed into a black streak, basically surpassing the limits of what the naked eye could see. In an instant, he charged out of the circle of the Four Seasons Corps Magi that had trapped him within.

Shadow flickered a few times and separated into a few similar-looking black shadows that dashed in various directions.

*Ka ka!*

In response to this, the team leader merely laughed condescendingly and fiercely stabbed his blood-red longsword into a wooden floorboard in front of him.

Ripples that were like ocean waves extended throughout the area. A brown “human figure” sprung out of the ripples.

*Rumble!* The leader quickly came before Shadow, his blood-red longsword slashing across and forming a bright arc.

*Ka-cha!* The transparent armour and pendant at Shadow’s chest shattered just like that. The longsword then ruthlessly sliced into his chest, spilling fresh blood everywhere.

*Pak!* Shadow fell heavily, and the leader of the Four Seasons Corps approached. With his right foot, which was clad in a metal shoe, he stepped on Shadow’s chest. “Run! Why are you running?”
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Tiny, and yet piercing, sounds of bones breaking was heard from Shadow’s chest.
Large amounts of foam and blood spilled out of the corner of Shadow’s mouth as if he wanted to say something.
That round of intense battle had happened so quickly. In almost ten or so seconds, all of this had happened, and the Magi who had fallen were unable to react at all.
At this point, the faint black mist had yet to completely disperse.
“Hm? Wait, no!” The leader who was stepping on the chest of Shadow suddenly turned, his expression changing to one of alarm and anger.
Then, he simply gave up on Shadow and rushed to the front of the seal spell formation.
“Blood Restraint!” The leader’s large hands grabbed forward into the air! Shortly after, a light green human figure was snatched out of thin air.
This figure was very slender and small. It was like a child, with green mist surrounding it.
“Hehe, what keen senses! It seems you’re just one step away from becoming a peak rank 1 Magus!”
The person shrouded in green praised with a little boy’s voice.
*Pak! Pak! Pak!*
A bunch of crystal balls that shimmered with light were thrown out.
*Crash! Crash! Crash!* Intense explosions sounded in front of the leader one after another, the immense shockwaves causing him to retreat.
Green mist gathered and turned into a sticky fluid, adhering to the leader’s body like superglue.
“Damn it, be careful! Their target has always been the sealing spell formation!” This leader had been caught by the sticky fluid and could only shout.
“Hehe, it’s too late!”
The little boy within the mist transformed into an apparition, which the red thorny spell formation had no effect on.
He dashed into the interior of the thorny spell formation, large amounts of green mist emitting from his body.
*Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! The four members of the Four Seasons Corps in charge of defense fell to the ground, green mushrooms and spots growing on their faces.
“What a bunch of idiots, this leaves me no choice but to take action myself!”
While speaking, his movements were quick, and he took out a red crystal that was the exact same as the one that Leylin had, pressing it down towards the heart of the spell formation!
This was a self-destructing spell design that completely matched with the spell formation. The moment it was activated, the whole spell formation would destroy itself, along with the body of consciousness that it was attached to.
The moment the core body of consciousness self-destructed, the platinum gate which was the entrance to the secret plane would collapse.
The situation had become extremely dire!
The boy’s eyes were glinting with excitement. He could already envision the destruction of the entrance to the secret plane, and the image of the light Magi’s flustered and exasperated expressions.
“Gotcha!”
At this moment, a hand that was like white jade emerged from the air and grabbed the little boy’s hand, black fog forming a python that crushed the red crystal into powder!
Leylin dispelled Shadow Stealth and quickly grabbed the boy. The moment his hand touched the little boy, Leylin’s palm burst out into crimson flames, burning the green fog till it disappeared, and revealing a Magus who looked like a young boy.
“You…” He pointed at Leylin, preparing to say something in his anger.
But why would Leylin give him the chance to do that? Several blood-red snakes quickly wriggled into the boy’s orifices, thus sealing his sea of consciousness and ability to move.
Leylin was still disguising himself as Blood Rogue. All that the other Magi saw was someone in a crimson robe, emitting an evil aura as he appeared out of nowhere and quickly took care of the boy.
After plundering the merit points exchange centre, Leylin had returned to the nearby Reynold’s office and, had been lying in wait there.
After waiting till Wade and the sneaky Thousand Faces came, Leylin had an idea and used Shadow Stealth. Like a python lying in wait for an ambush, he patiently waited for his prey to come knocking.
After seeing Thousand Faces killed, Shadow severely injured, and the Four Seasons Corps’ attention diverted away, the little boy could no longer wait, and took a chance and acted.
Leylin had made use of the ecstasy and astonishment that the boy had felt while he was on the verge of succeeding, and struck out.
This method of using opportunities in battle could be said to be classic. If not for the A.I. Chip’s help in simulations of the operation, Leylin would not have been able to take the boy down so easily.
“I didn’t expect you to be hidden this well!” Leylin held on to the back of the little boy’s collar, holding the frail and small body with his hand as if he were holding luggage.
As Leylin had sealed the little boy’s mouth, he was still unable to speak, and could only glare harshly at Leylin, as if he were wishing that he could hack him to pieces.
This boy was evidently the member of the Thousand Meddling
Hands that had threatened Leylin while he was on the way to the Four Seasons Garden.
At that time, he was not even a semi-converted Magus and had almost killed off Leylin, as well as causing him to lose a magic artifact.
But now… Leylin sized up the little boy. From the energy waves emitting from his body, in that short period of time, the boy had not only passed through the bottleneck of being a semi-converted Magus but had advanced until he was just one step away from becoming a peak rank 1 Magus!
This rate of improvement was something that made even Leylin, who had the help of the A.I. Chip, gasp in awe.
“Blood Rogue! It’s Thousand Meddling Hands’ Blood Rogue! Why did he stop his own comrade?”
The leader of Four Seasons Corps was rinsing himself with milky-white holy water, finally washing all the disgusting green fluid away.
With confusion in his eyes, he approached and resolutely stood before Leylin, thus blocking his way.
I’t’s Blood Rogue from the Thousand Meddling Hands! The S ranked fugitive from Nightless City! Though I have no clue why you’re helping us, I still want to thank you!”

The leader of the Four Seasons Corps bowed, and then slashed his crimson longsword at Leylin.

“I’ve thanked you as I should have. Now, leave the prisoners in your possession behind! In return, I will let you go…”

Seeing the leader acting this righteous, Leylin was slightly confused. “Are you stupid? Do you think I’m so easily bullied?”

He guessed that this leader was rather egoistic, though it might have had to do with Leylin concealing his strength. Most people only knew that Blood Rogue was a semi-converted Magus, and were still unaware that he had advanced to a peak rank 1 Magus.

At times like this, incorrect information could cost lives!

“Well then, I apologise!” The leader spoke unenthusiastically, a huge wave of apparitions of sharp swords appearing from the longsword. Like a waterfall, they charged towards Leylin.

“Move! 2nd spell formation!” The leader shouted as he attacked.

With his yell, the Magi of the Four Seasons Corps seemed to have received some order, and other than the four Magi protecting Wade, the other members rushed him.

*Tss tss!* Thorny plants constantly grew from their crimson armour.
The vines that appeared from the armour seemed to have self-awareness, grouping together, and forming a green giant that was about five metres tall.
This green giant formed from plants was full of thorns, and sinister black lines filled its body. At the area where its eyes were meant to be, there were two strange purple flowers.
“Awooooo!” The green giant snarled, opening its large hand and grabbing towards Leylin.
“Is their ignorance to the truth causing them to be so fearless?” Leylin glanced at the leader of the Four Seasons Corps with a pitying look. Next, a black ring emerged from under his feet, climbing up his robes and seemingly draping black armour on his body.
*Cling clang! Cling clang!*
Afterimages of red swords struck the black armour, sparks flying everywhere as they produced the immense sounds of a metal sword and armour crashing against each other.
The apparitions of the crimson sword kept falling apart, but the layer of black armour on Leylin’s body became increasingly thick, to the point that it began to produce multiple black tendrils.
“This is bad! That level of strength…” The leader’s eyes widened and he immediately thought to warn his subordinates, but it was much too late.
*Whoosh!* Before the green giant’s massive thorny palm had reached its destination, the surrounding air fluctuated and a powerful air stream was generated, blowing so hard that the furniture in the office was strewn apart.
“You don’t know when to stop!” While facing this green giant’s huge palm, Leylin raised his right hand clad in a black gauntlet, and gently gestured downwards.
From an outsider’s point of view, the situation right now was not the least bit balanced. Leylin was like a child in front of the giant,
and yet he had raised his slender arm to meet the giant’s palm. However, the green giant seemed to feel extremely threatened and kept roaring, the green rays of light in its hand constantly flickering as its speed increased by three times.

*Bang!*

Finally, Leylin’s little fist met with the giant’s fist that was the size of a water jar, a wave of immense vibrations spreading out in all directions. The surrounding air seemed to distort, and then all went back to normal.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

One after another, the thorns broke off of and fell from the large hand. This disintegration quickly reached the entire arm, and eventually the large body of the giant.

*Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!*

Thick plant roots and vines slid off the body of the giant, black cracks constantly extending until it was on the verge of tearing the body of the giant apart!

*Bang!* Finally, after a rumbling loud noise, the green giant’s body was broken down into tiny pieces that flew in all directions.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!*

The massive shockwave created extended miraculously to the bodies of the Four Seasons Corps’ members that were surrounding Leylin. The crimson armour on their bodies shook, and then broke apart. The Magi completely paled and retreated a few steps, some of them coughing up large amounts of blood.

“Peak rank 1 Magus! You’ve already reached the peak of rank 1!” The leader of the Four Seasons Corps stared fixedly at Leylin’s mask, as if trying to carve his appearance into his memory. In a situation where rank 2 Magi seldom appeared, peak rank 1 Magi were the most powerful beings in the south coast. The rise in
the power of Blood Rogue was much too fast and too astonishing; this leader definitely could not let his guard down. At this moment, fear was apparent in the leader’s gaze. “Sigh… Some things will be only resolved through violence!” Leylin still maintained his pose where he held the little boy, and his other hand formed a mysterious hand seal and tapped against the ground. “Shadow Domain!” A pitch-black shadow emerged from under his feet and quickly formed a dense, black sphere, crazily spreading to the surroundings.

……

In that instant, black shadows engulfed the Magi who were in the office…

*Shua shua!* Within the darkness, there seemed to be the sounds of someone moving quickly, and the low, miserable human moans that one would make before they died. Enshrouded by the shadows, where even light magic was useless, the Magi of the Four Seasons Corps were basically blind. Thankfully, this was only sustained for a short period of time. Several minutes later, the dense darkness dispersed from the office, revealing the figures of a few Magi. As for Leylin, who they had encircled previously, he was now nowhere to be found. “Leader! What should we do?” A Magus struggled to stand and came to the leader of Four Seasons Corps. However, he found a very strange expression on his leader’s face. There were hints of terror, as well as disbelief. “Leader! Leader! What’s with you?” This Magus suddenly began to feel slightly afraid, extending his right hand, and thinking of shaking his leader’s arm.
*Pak!* Just as this Magus’ hand touched his leader’s clothes, his body turned into black ashes like a bubble that had been popped, dispersing everywhere.

*Pak pak pak!* As if triggering some chain reaction, some of the Magi around him also exploded, leaving behind black mist. As the surviving Magi gazed at the mist, a suffocating sense of dread weighed down on their hearts.

……

*Shua!* While still holding the little boy, Leylin’s body transformed into a black hurricane that travelled around the headquarters, which had turned into a battlefield. As he was moving at a very high speed, the Magi of both domains could only see a flickering black figure, which then completely disappeared.

*Pak!*

Upon finding an empty area that was far from the battlefield, he threw the little boy to the ground.

“Blood Rogue, what are you doing?” The little boy rolled a few times, body covered in soil and mud. However, he seemed to have regained his ability to speak and spoke coldly the moment he stood up.

“Stop with your nonsense and get Giant to come here!” Leylin exclaimed.

“It’s a very crucial time now, and even I can’t contact him…” A strange expression appeared on his face as he explained.

Immediately after, however, he was kicked aside by Leylin. Though Leylin had allowed the little boy to regain his ability to speak, he had evidently not unsealed his sea of consciousness. The little boy’s frail body spun in mid-air several times, and then fell.

*Crack!* From the sounds of bones breaking produced from
within his body, it seemed as if a few ribs had been broken. Looking cool and collected, Leylin advanced, and like holding a duck, he grabbed the boy by the neck and lifted him up.

“I don’t have much patience, so it’s better if you don’t try to test my limits. Don’t think that I know nothing about the relationship between you and him!”

Though Leylin sounded calm, the boy who Leylin was glaring at felt empty inside. Under Leylin’s relentless gaze, he felt as if the other man could see through him and know all his secrets.

“No! How can that be…? I’ve always been very careful about it…”

A myriad of thoughts flashed past the little boy’s mind, and he eventually gave in.

“Be quick about it!” Leylin loosened his grip, and the boy immediately fell to the ground.

“Cough cough…” The boy sat on the ground, two hands cradling his neck, on which purple marks were already apparent. Without requesting Leylin to unseal his sea of consciousness, he quietly sat in a corner, as if in a daze.

Unexpectedly, Leylin actually waited for him. It did not take long, and a few minutes later, green mist permeated the air and filled the area.

“What do you need me for? Don’t you know that our plan has entered a state of emergency, Leylin?!”

Giant’s voice was as hoarse as before, but this time, Leylin was able to hear fury in his voice… along with worry?

“Kill him! Quick, kill him!”

At this moment, the little boy who had been staring blankly to the side suddenly burst into hysterics. Green mist had been protecting him, thus allowing him to regain his power.

“Our entire plan fell through because of him! Also, he actually dared to treat me in this way! I want him dead!”

The boy glared at Leylin, his eyes full of venomous anger.
“I know.” Giant briefly nodded, looking at Leylin. “What do you have to say for yourself about your slip ups in the past, as well as the thwarting of our plan this time?”
As Giant spoke, the mist in the surroundings became increasingly stronger, to the point that bushes and soil began to emit white smoke, and melted like ice.
“What I have to say?”
Leylin smirked, and then snapped his fingers.
*Pak!* The little boy’s expression suddenly froze, and his brain exploded open like a watermelon.
“If you want an explanation, does this work?”
Leylin grinned widely.
Faced with the little boy’s head exploding like a watermelon, the green mist distorted, revealing a heavily muscled figure that was more than 2 meters in height. For a moment, his head was visible, but he covered his head, his eyes bloodshot and glowing red.

“You actually…… You actually killed him……”

Giant roared, as if the little boy was very important to him. Seeing Leylin unceremoniously kill the little boy instead of letting him go, Giant was on the brink of going ballistic.

Tendrils of green mist rushed towards Leylin, looking like a swarm of moths and bees, and appeared to envelop Leylin like a huge cloud.

*Chi Chi!* Green meridians crawled over the muscles of Giant’s body like small snakes. Then his body grew instantly, increasing in height by more than three meters. The hairs on his head stood straight up, facing the sky like small thorns.

“Why are you in such a hurry? Are you afraid?”

Leylin sneered, and immediately, black smoke billowed from his body, rising and dispersing into the air.

A trace of the black gas condensed to form numerous black snakes. The bodies of those black snakes had fine black scales, and each had a pair of bean-sized eyes that exuded an unnatural, devilish red light. The snakes constantly hissed, and went to meet that green swarm of bees and moths.
*Peng!* For a moment, the two big groups, the wisp of green gas and the den of black snakes, immediately mingled, and there were all kinds of sounds of biting, hissing, and other sounds all constantly emanating from within the green mist.

“Ah! I will kill you, I swear! I shall break all the bones in your body; I will make you regret being born into this world!” Giant howled as he crouched and jumped.

*Boom!* A huge pit immediately appeared on the ground, soil and rocks flying outwards like bullets, and creating sparks in the air. With this momentum, Giant’s body was like a fiery arrow heading straight for Leylin.

“Kemoyin’s Scales!” A layer of fine black scales covered Leylin’s hands, from which spreaded rings of black light. The black colour from the scales turned even more vivid, and vaguely formed a design that was similar to a rune!

Following which, the muscles on Leylin’s arm bulged, and his strength of 20.1 was then displayed!

*Boom!* Green and black figures fiercely slammed into each other, explosions continuously sounding out. The two human figures flickered as they fought. Anything that the shockwaves from their battle brushed past, whether it was rocks or wood, would immediately explode into pieces.

*Bang!* Leylin’s left hand blocked Giant’s fist. As quick as lightning, his right hand turned into a claw, blood-red flames burning as it headed straight for Giant’s chest, where his heart was. Currently, Giant’s two hands were rendered immobile by Leylin, and it was basically impossible to evade an attack that was so close. Giant’s expression became resolute and he adjusted his position, avoiding that fatal claw at his chest! However, his right chest had been caught by Leylin’s Crimson Palm, and a huge chunk of flesh
and blood flew out.

“Bone Piercing Technique!” Giant yelled, and his arms spread wide. Not dodging nor avoiding any attacks, he charged straight for Leylin.

*Tss! Tss! Tss! Tss! Tss!*
White bone spikes rapidly pierced through Giant’s skin, growing out from inside his body.

*Ka-cha!* Leylin’s right hand was the first to be struck by the bone spike.

There were some spiral designs on the bone spikes that, upon contact, drilled into whatever it hit.
The revolving spikes first broke through the crimson flames, and then struck the surface of Leylin’s right arm, which was covered in Kemoyin’s Scales.
The extremely piercing sound of metal scraping against metal sounded; it could also be said to sound like a woman’s screams. Leylin’s brows furrowed, and he quickly moved back.

“Haha! If you’re only thinking of leaving now, it’s much too late!”
Giant laughed heartily, ignoring the blood that was gushing all over his body, and spread his arms. His posture was like someone giving a bear hug, he brought his arms together and was ready to prick Leylin till he became like a porcupine.

“This distance… Shadow Stealth!”
A large amount of light appeared on the surface of Leylin’s black, scaly armour. He then disappeared into thin air.

“You thought that I wouldn’t have prepared against this?”
After losing track of Leylin, Giant looked around and suddenly shouted, and then breathed in deeply.

Two streams of white gas that even the naked eye could see entered Giant’s nostrils like dragons, bulging his chest to a noticeable degree.

After this, Giant made a lengthy howl, “Awooool!”
The piercing sound travelled in all directions, and one could even see ripples in the air, with Giant at the epicentre. An entire layer of the ground was peeled off by the soundwaves, and the green fog of moth and bees in the air, as well as Leylin’s little black snakes, exploded from the soundwaves, turning into vapour. The fog was pushed further and further away by the soundwaves and eventually disappeared. As Giant’s voice increased to a higher pitch, the insects and moles in the area simply exploded in the air, forming a bloody mist.

*Weng!* With some undulations in the air and a flash of black light, Leylin’s body flickered from his camouflage. “I found you, you damned worm!” Giant snarled, the spikes on his body growing more densely and constantly rotating. He was like a human killing machine, charging ahead blindly and turning all the trees and rocks that obstructed him into powder. “Latent Fireball!” Leylin’s gestured, and countless black fireballs converged into a giant jet black, flaming fireball. With the added bonus from Leylin’s elemental essence conversion, the latent fireball currently had a power of 57 degrees. It could even be said to be the maximum amount of power that a rank 1 Magus could produce!

The moment the black fireball appeared, the temperature of the surroundings rose, and the earth began to melt, with some of it evaporating into black smoke. “Go!” Leylin pointed at Giant, and the black fireball kept stretching until it formed a python that blazed with black flames. The python’s eyes were brimming with intelligence as it nimbly floated around, sometimes spitting out flames and blocking Giant’s path.
Giant’s eyes were fixed on the flaming serpent, the fear in his expression more apparent. Being able to manipulate such a powerful spell that required immense precision showed Leylin’s immense talent in this area. His rate of improvement had far exceeded Giant’s expectations.

“Hisssss!”
The flaming black serpent hissed while coiling around Giant’s body.

*Ka-cha!* The black flames that brought blazing heat with them crashed into the white armour made of bone spikes!

*Rumble!* The raging flames constantly ascended, turning into a giant black inferno.

At the heart of the inferno, Giant’s figure that was filled with bone spikes stood silently within, looking quite pale.

The air constantly distorted, shrinking inwardly and seemingly turning into a black hole. It kept sucking in all matter around, getting smaller and smaller.

*Rumble!*

Then, a huge black mushroom cloud gradually rose from the ground.

Immense energy waves constantly dispersed in all directions, to the point that even Magi from both factions who were battling at the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters could feel this power, which could destroy the heavens and the earth!

“Has the two great rank 2 Magi’s fight brought them here?”

A young light Magus stopped what he was doing, “What do we do? Should we go take a look? Those are rank 2 Magi! I’ve never seen one fight before!”

*Pak!*

Immediately after, the back of his head was firmly struck. The youthful light Magus turned back and pitifully looked at a Magus with a white beard, “Teacher! Did I say anything wrong?”
The old light Magus’ face was full of wrinkles, but his eyes sparked with wisdom. He did not hesitate in the least and struck the young Magus’ head again.
“Why are you still in a daze? Get out of here! Just the aftershocks from the rank 2 Magi’s battle is enough to annihilate you without leaving a speck of dust behind!”
The old Magus was obviously very wise and had many life experiences. He knew that this high-level battle between Magi was a disaster for regular people and even low ranked Magi such as themselves!
“Hm? What?”
The young light Magus had yet to react.
“Look!” The old Magus yanked him by the hair and made him look in the direction of the battle.
At this moment, the young Magus suddenly discovered that the dark and light Magi who had been battling had all given up, as if they had reached a mutual understanding, and were moving in the opposite direction of the mushroom cloud.
“Do you see that now? Only a rookie like you would even think of watching a battle between rank 2 Magi.”
The old Magus pulled the young Magus along as he spoke, green hurricanes under his feet as he used invisible gusts to wind to send both of them far away.

……

In the middle of the black mushroom cloud.
The previous explosion had left a large crater that was more than ten metres wide. At the heart of the pit was a seemingly bottomless hole that was sending out black luster, as if it was a direct pathway to the core of the earth.
*Boom!*
A white human figure surrounded by green mist fell to the ground, along with shards of bone that had shattered.

*Pak!* Giant struck the ground, carving out long troughs as his body ploughed through the floor. He looked to be extremely pitiful, with more than half the bone spikes on his body gone and his right arm missing. There were serious injuries all over his body.

*Xiu!*

A black figure appeared in front of him, and what appeared next was a pair of phantom, blood-red flaming claws!

“Crimson Palm!” Leylin, on the other hand, was completely fine. He was also very satisfied with the strength of the latent fireball, which he had released with his full strength. There was no expression on his face as he calmly dealt out the final blow to Giant!

Giant struggled and crawled a little, but the phantom crimson claws mercilessly caught hold of his two legs.

*Ka-cha!*

Giant’s legs snapped, and there were even crimson flames climbing towards his body from the legs.
“Giant, when you first decided to exploit me to detonate the seal, did you ever imagine that things would turn out like this?”

Leylin slowly walked forward, a strange look in his eyes. He calmly raised his blood-red right hand, preparing to send out another magical attack!

*Xiu!* At this very moment, a figure separated from Giant’s body, the energy waves from its body indicating that it was also a peak rank 1 Magus! It pounced towards Leylin at a very high speed.

“Eye of Hallucination!” After this command, an apparition of a vertical eye appeared behind this figure.

The apparition let out dusky light with various colours flashing past. Anyone who even chanced a glance at it would be dazzled and feel dizzy.

Two black magic artifacts in the form of daggers appeared in the figure’s hands, moving like a viper as they struck towards Leylin’s vital areas.

This attack was very sudden, and the assailant was a peak rank 1 Magus who specialised in sneak attacks. Even if it was a Magus like Marb, he would suffer greatly!

Strangely enough, there were no signs of shock on Leylin’s face. Instead what appeared was a grin as if he had expected it.

“You’ve finally appeared?”

Next, a cross-shaped, dark red pendant over his neck produced
large amounts of dull red rays of light, and his body was covered with a layer of dense scales. Leylin’s eyes had also turned into amber vertical pupils. Two rays of petrifying light were shot out of his eyes, piercing into the apparition of the vertical eye. “Ahh!” Ashen gray rays of petrification ripped open the apparition, and a circle of petrification spread throughout the body of the black figure, causing him to yell miserably. “Crimson Palm!” Leylin’s hands were covered with three layers of protection. The innermost layer was black, the Kemoyin’s Scales. The middle one was a dull red, an apparition from the Falling Star Pendant, and the outermost one was the protection from Crimson Palm’s flames. The three layers produced different colours as they alternately sparkled on Leylin’s hands. Leylin welcomed the two black daggers that were headed for him. *Boom! Boom!* Though the black daggers emitted the energy waves of middle-grade magic artifacts, they bounced away from Leylin. Leylin’s Crimson Palm then unhesitatingly struck the chest of the black figure. *Rumble!* It was obvious that the black figure’s chest had caved in, and it was coupled with the ear-piercing sound of bones breaking. *Boom!* The figure was flung to the ground, revealing a Magus that Leylin was very familiar with. “Team leader Caesar, what are you doing here? And can you also explain why you chose to appear in such a strange way?” Leylin came before Caesar and enquired. From his tone, it was obvious that Leylin was not surprised at Caesar’s appearance here. “Cough cough…” The dark figure who had launched a sneak
attack was, as expected, Caesar. However, he looked to be in a bad state, constantly coughing out blood, and his face ashen. Around his third vertical eye on his forehead, there was a ring of gray stone. This was the effect of the Eye of Petrification, and it was still spreading.

“You…… When did you find out?” Caesar did not reply to Leylin’s question, and instead, countered with another question.

“From the very beginning! In all honesty, I really admire you for daring to train in “Three Spirits In A Body”, which is an extremely dangerous ancient secret technique. You actually succeeded and forcefully separated your spirit into three portions!”

Admiration was apparent in Leylin’s expression.

He had previously used the A.I. Chip to simulate Caesar’s trump card, and then heavily researched about ancient secret techniques like these.

Even in ancient times, these kinds of techniques were considered to be very dangerous. Only lunatics would choose to train in them, as they forcefully separated a Magus’ soul into three parts, each having their own will, and having the ability to be spread apart or merged together in crucial moments.

In other words, a person would be separated into three individuals. As long as a single body remained alive, the other 2 bodies could be resurrected given enough resources.

This was basically a secret technique that defied the heavens.

The situation was now very obvious.

Caesar, Giant, and the little boy were the different bodies of a single Magus who practised “Three Spirits In A Body,” and Caesar was a spy who was buried the deepest in Four Seasons Garden, and the instigator of this entire thing!

Leylin had found it strange that the Thousand Meddling Hands knew so much about the Four Seasons Garden, were able to come up with a spell design to destroy the seal linked to the core body of
consciousness, and possessed a map of the locations of the defense squads. From the looks of it, with Caesar, the leader of the hunting team, as a spy, everything made sense. Caesar forced a laugh, “It’s far from a success. Originally, if the boy had been able to become a peak rank 1 Magus as well, I would have been able to merge all three bodies and try to advance to become a rank 2 Magus! It’s a pity, though…” While speaking, a ring of stone-like skin had spread from the sides of Caesar’s third eye, almost reaching his nose.

“Why did you lure us here?”

Caesar asked while lying on the ground, without activating any defence formation. He was now aware that he would not be able to withstand even a blow from Leylin and was not going to humiliate himself by trying to protect himself.

“You’re smart! I want to make a trade with you. I hope that…”

“No! Don’t listen to him! Kill him! I want to kill him!” Giant, who was seriously injured, began to yell.

Leylin sighed as he held his head, “Looks like I have to take care of all the troublesome matters first!”

He could clearly tell that out of all the three bodies that Caesar had, only Caesar himself was relatively sane. Giant and the little boy obviously had a few screws loose, which might have been a side effect of the technique. The little boy’s craziness was possibly even a level above Giant. After his death, his maniacal tendencies were transferred to Giant. Out of everyone present, Caesar was probably the only one willing to listen to his proposition. Giant was just an obstruction!

At this thought, Leylin’s eyes were filled with a murderous aura; he was prepared to act right away! Even if Giant and the little boy died, Caesar would still be able to revive them given a lot of resources, and as long as he was still
around. It would just take a little more time. Caesar and Giant were currently heavily injured, and it was impossible for them to fight back.

“Young man, can you stop now?”

Just as Leylin was about to move forward and deal the final blow to Giant, an aged voice sounded by his ear. A silver ring of spiritual force descended upon the battlefield. This spiritual force was incredibly malicious and strong, to the point that the air was distorting. Silver spiritual force formed a large hand, which picked up Giant.

The silver hand formed out of spiritual force was extremely sturdy. The flames from Leylin’s Crimson Palm were still burning fiercely, but there seemed to be no effect on the hand. Grains of solidified spiritual force constantly fluttered around, slowly extinguishing the crimson flames on Giant’s legs.

“Spiritual force solidification!”

As he watched the silver, solidified spiritual force, Leylin suddenly thought back to the Gargamel that he had seen previously. That being formed out of evilness also had the strength of a rank 2 Magus, and at that point in time, Leylin was basically helpless against it.

“A rank 2 Magus from the Thousand Meddling Hands?”

Leylin halted his footsteps. The silver hand sent the heavily wounded Giant before a Magus donned in black robes.

This Magus was tall and slender but was surrounded by a terrifying spiritual force that even Leylin was fearful of. His eyes were a sparkling green, and anyone who saw him would feel immense fear from the evilness they gave off.

“Father! Father! After killing my ‘little boy’ spirit, he actually tried to kill me, the only member of your bloodline! He must pay the price in blood!”
Giant curled up beside the dark Magus, beginning to wail like a little child. Caesar, on the other side, called out ‘Father’, his face ashen. “So this dark Magus is actually Caesar’s father!” Leylin realised. However, something that the rank 2 dark Magus threw over made him feel anxious. It was the head of a Magus. Its skin was pale, and its face was full of wrinkles. Leylin was extremely familiar with this face, as he had actually seen it not long ago. “Reynold! You actually killed him!” Leylin’s eyes widened. This rank 2 Magus was even more powerful than Leylin had expected, to actually be able to behead Reynold, who was also a rank 2 Magus! *Pak!* at this moment, the petrification on Caesar’s face had extended to his neck, and his expression was still as if he had become a statue. *Rumble!* A streak of green flames began to burn, and the dark Magus traversed through space and arrived in front of Caesar. “Ancient Petrification Technique?” His voice was hoarse, like two metal pieces scraping against each other. “Don’t worry, my child!” The dark Magus extended a pair of thin arms, which had green spores on them, and caressed Caesar’s stone head. *Bzzz!* Milky white light descended onto Caesar’s head. Within the light, greyish white stone skin fell off bit by bit, revealing Caesar’s original skin tone. “Thank you, father! Also, he…” Caesar began to whisper in the dark Magus’ ear, and the Magus constantly nodded. Upon seeing this scene, Giant, who was not far away, glared furiously like a child who had his sweets stolen. There was even some jealousy as he stared hard at Caesar.
“Aren’t you all the same person? Are you jealous of yourself?” Leylin was speechless. At this point, Caesar was done speaking. The rank 2 Magus turned his gaze to Leylin. A powerful burst of spiritual force was fixed upon Leylin, to the point that he felt as if he was standing stark naked in a field of snow.
Your name is Leylin, and Blood Rogue is your alias, yes? Very good! You actually dared to thwart my plan!"

The dark Magus laughed coldly, and suddenly made his move! Silver solidified spiritual force controlled the energy particles in the air, turning into a large, colourful tide that was several times larger what Leylin was able to produce. It rushed towards Leylin like a tempest, covering the heavens and the earth.

“So strong! Whether it’s to catalyse or cast a spell using solidified spiritual force, the effects are far greater than that of us rank 1 Magi with our invisible spiritual force!”

Leylin’s expression was grim as his pupils turned amber. Behind him, large amounts of dark energy particles converged, turning into the terrifying form of a large, black python. The python was ten metres long, its eyes were the same amber colour as Leylin’s, and the scales on its body emitted rings of black rays while it kept hissing.

*Rumble!* The python slammed into the tide of elemental particles like a huge ocean wave crashing against a reef, producing a monstrous sound like that of said ocean waves.

In the midst of the colourful rays of light, the apparition of the black python and the elemental wave were extinguished. Immense pillars of wind rose towards the heavens and then rushed down low, before forming immense gales that swept across the
surrounding area.
Leylin quickly retreated four or five steps, his face pale, and two streams of blood dripping from his nostrils.
“Hoho, you’re not half bad! Out of all the rank 1 Magi that I’ve seen, you’re probably the strongest. You’re currently bordering a rank 2 Magus!”
The dark Magus was unmoving, the only sound being the wind rustling his clothes.
“But it’s a pity! A rank 1 Magus is still only rank 1, and there still remains a huge gap between us! The feeling of personally killing a genius is really making me feel intoxicated…”
The dark Magus mumbled to himself, the dark green light in his eyes suddenly intensifying to the point that it started to solidify into two beams of light.
“Anguished Howl of Cough cough…”
Just as the dark Magus was about to attack, the light from his body began to flicker, and he started to violently cough.
Rings of green light flashed as things that looked like plants began to emerge from his body. The green spores on his hands began to sprout, and green plant tendrils grew and spreaded across his body.
“So, killing a rank 2 Magus like Reynold was not without a price.”
While observing this scene, Leylin came to a conclusion. The dark Magus must have suffered some serious injuries in killing a rank 2 Magus like Reynold.
This was advantageous to him for the next part of his plan.
At this moment, the platinum gate to the secret plane suddenly rumbled. The energy waves produced were very distinct, to the point that Leylin could feel them from his current location.
Afterwards, an unknown existence that must have been at least a rank 2 Magus passed through the gate of the secret plane and
approached them.
“You darn dark bastards! Receive the judgement of lightning!”
This voice was full of anger, seemingly full of raging flames.
*Hualala!*
Countless blue bolts of lightning that were like crazed serpents scattered all over the sky and fell like raindrops.
*Ka-cha!* An electric current that was as wide as a bucket struck a dark Magus who did not have the opportunity to dodge.
This dark Magus immediately turned into ashes in the midst of the lightning, his body crumbling away.
*Boom! Boom! Boom!* The platinum entrance to the secret plane spat out light. Every time it flashed, groups of light Magi descended into the area.
These light Magi were dressed in uniform, and the metallic smell of blood was apparent on their bodies.
Compared to the dark Magi, who were already experts in battles, the division of work between the light Magi was even more efficient. The Magi who were specialised in battles were extremely experienced in bloody battles. Some even had a strength that rivalled the dark Magi!
With the help of these light Magi, the tide was turned. Rather than the Four Seasons Garden, the dark Magi of Thousand Meddling Hands lost their advantage.
“They’re here! The reinforcements from the light Magi Alliance!”
Leylin mumbled.
He quickly glanced at the dark Magi, who were being suppressed by the bolts of lightning.
“Look, my lord! The reinforcements of the light Magi have arrived. Are you still confident in destroying the gate to the secret plane?”
Leylin gave a slight smile as he asked.
“No, but I think this little bit of time I have left is enough for me to kill you before I retreat!” The dark Magus was silent for a moment,
and then sneered.
“Is that so?” The rune of the suction spell formation on Leylin’s back lit up, and a brownish-yellow spell formation emerged in front of his chest.
In that moment, a brownish-yellow light covered the earth, and the gravity around the area intensified by a factor of almost thirty.
“The ancient suction spell formation and the gravitational spell formation? You’re actually using both of them here?”
There was a subtle hint of fear in the dark Magus’ voice.
With the added bonus of these two spells, even if he were in his best condition, he did not have the confidence that he would be able to take down Leylin. Presently, his strength was depleted and his opponent would definitely be able to escape.
“I’m actually still on the dark Magi’s side. After all, a leopard can’t change its spots!”
Leylin spoke hurriedly and quickly, “Rather than completely destroying the gate to the secret plane, I believe that gaining possession of it will be of even more value.”
His voice had a bewitching quality to it.
“What does that mean?” The dark Magus asked coldly but stopped his attack.
“Currently, Reynold’s already dead, the team leaders of all the main divisions are dead, and Caesar and I may very well be the Magi with the most authority here! The reinforcements from the light Magi will have to leave eventually. Once that happens, and before a new member is assigned here from headquarters, we’ll be the people with the highest authority, and will consequently be in charge.”
Leylin was expressionless. “Once that happens, we’ll continue to cooperate with you in secret, and give you access to the spell formations and defence formations here. Wouldn’t that make everything easier?”
The dark Magus considered for a while, and then solemnly pondered over this question. It must be noted that this was a very attractive proposal, and was very much viable. After Leylin said this, he could even feel the dark Magus tremble a little.

“We can assassinate him or make him a scapegoat. Anyways, all we need is some time. By the time headquarters finds out what had happened, we’d be long gone…” Leylin answered swiftly.

“What do you think?”

The dark Magus glanced at Caesar, who was already standing. Caesar was silent. “I think it’s possible. Considering that our original plan has already failed, the situation can’t possibly get any worse than this!”

There was actually something else that both Leylin and the dark Magus had not pointed out. When that happened, even if the rank 2 dark Magus would be able to escape, his sons, Caesar and Giant, would definitely die here! Leylin was, of course, not so daring as to blackmail them so blatantly, but his hidden threat had been understood.

“I don’t trust you! Unless you let me give you a branding of your consciousness…” The dark Magus slowly spoke.

“Impossible!”

Leylin resolutely refused. Though receiving a branding of consciousness was slightly better than receiving a branding of the spirit, who knew what a rank 2 Magus could do? He didn’t want to be in a situation where he was unknowingly being controlled. Leylin had a rascally attitude.

In front of real power, only a person with a strength that others would be jealous of could have the guts to say this. Though Leylin was not yet on equal grounds with a rank 2 Magi, he was confident that he could survive and escape, resulting in his more brazen attitude.

“A contract with the Trial’s Eye. That’s the furthest I can go.”
The dark Magus pondered silently, and then responded in a low voice.
“...Fine!” Leylin hesitated for a moment and then agreed.
“As compensation for helping you, I’ll need a large amount of resources and magic crystals, as well as some high-grade knowledge. After this, you also have to guarantee that I’ll be able to enter Lighthouse of the Night. All of these things have to be written into the contract...”
The Magi acted quickly, and minutes later, the dark Magus left with Giant.
Leylin glanced at Caesar, who was standing strangely, with a smile appearing on his face, “Team Leader Caesar! Do you need me to help you back?”
After signing another agreement that could be said to be very harsh with the Trial’s Eye, Leylin and Caesar were now allies once more.
In the eyes of the light Magi, the sight of two Magi who were always at odds with each other suddenly becoming friendly was quite strange. However, for the dark Magi, this was just an everyday occurrence. In the dark Magi faction, all sorts of battles happened everyday. Betraying one’s alliance for the prospects of more benefits was very common.
“Then I’ll leave it to you!” Caesar glanced at Leylin and actually let him assist him back.
Doing something like exposing one’s vulnerabilities was unthinkable to the dark Magi, but Leylin could understand what he was thinking.
Previously, Leylin and the rank 2 Magus from the Thousand Meddling Hands had agreed and signed another contract.
Through the Caesar’s scrutiny of the contract, the conditions were very harsh. In order to prevent Leylin from making use of any loopholes, Caesar had practically gone through the contract word
by word.
He had basically made it impossible for Leylin to do whatever he
wanted, not even giving him the chance to go back on his words.
As he had to deal with a rank 2 Magus and the dark Magi alliance,
Leylin could only be placed at a slight disadvantage.
In other words, the moment Leylin expressed bad intentions
towards Caesar, the power of the contract would devour him
before he could even use his magic.
Hence, Caesar was quite trusting of Leylin now.
“We need to work quickly for our objectives regarding Wade!”
Caesar’s lips moved slightly, his low voice travelling into Leylin’s
ear.
As the one in charge of the hunting team, which actually had true
authority, Caesar had a very high position in the Four Seasons
Garden. He was second only to Reynold, and only a handful of
people could match his authority.
What was even more coincidental was that a few peak rank 1 Magi
had died on the battlefield for a variety of reasons. Some had even
been personally killed by Leylin!
As long as Wade was disposed of, Caesar would immediately be in
control of everything!
Leylin reflected briefly. Currently, in the entire Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, the Four Seasons Garden had received a fatal blow. Other than Reynold, a great elder, the combat and defense team leaders had all died in battle. The person in charge of the merit points exchange centre had been killed by Leylin, and it was unknown whether Wade, the envoy from the headquarters, was dead or alive.

Leylin was stunned at the discovery that in the headquarters of Four Seasons Garden in the secret plane, there might only be two peak rank 1 Magi here, Caesar and himself. Under these circumstances, it would be an easy task to exploit his authority in the headquarters. Though the headquarters in the external world was sure to react quickly, dispatching large numbers of Magi and even rank 2 Magi here to investigate, that would take time! Caesar and Leylin could use this time to further diminish the power of the Four Seasons Garden and create opportunities for the dark Magi. By the time the light Magi found out, the battle array of the defence would have been controlled thoroughly by dark Magi, and the situation would be set. Even if there were to be another large war, with the dark Magi in charge of four entrances and three under the light Magi’s control,
the dark Magi would have an advantage. Leylin had thrown out such tempting bait, which was how he had gotten the dark Magus to bite!

“IT’s Lord Caesar! And Patrolling Inspector Leylin!”

As they approached the headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden, the figures of Leylin and Caesar were quickly noticed by the large remaining numbers of the light Magi. The surviving members quickly came forward to greet them. Leylin ran his eyes over everyone. These Magi’s robes were in tatters, and there were traces of dust and blood on their faces. To all these Magi who had seen Caesar and Leylin, it was as if they had seen the pillars of their organisations.

“It seems like the loss of the higher levels in Four Seasons Garden is worse than I thought!”

Leylin admitted to himself that in the time he had been a patrolling inspector, he’d done nothing good, instead extorting much from every department. However, after these Magi saw Leylin, they gathered and greeted him, their enthusiasm surprising him to no end.

Unfortunately, there were no longer any peak rank 1 Magus in the Four Seasons Garden. That meant that Caesar and Leylin were the only two peak rank 1 Magi on the light Magi’s side, which was why they were welcomed with such enthusiasm and ardent hope.

“If they found out that Caesar and I were the instigators of this recent attack, who knows what expression they would be wearing…”

Leylin was slightly dumbfounded, but he still put on a solemn expression.

“May I know who currently has the highest authority in the Four Seasons Garden?”

At this moment, a Magus with lightning designs on his silver-white robes separated the Magi and approached them.
“I’m Caesar, the team leader of the hunting team. This person here is Magus Leylin, the newly appointed patrolling inspector.”
Caesar’s face was pale as he spoke.
“We are the Lightning Corps of the light Magi alliance. The leader of our corps would like to meet you.”
The Magus’ expression was blank, as if he was incapable of expressing emotion. Not caring about Caesar’s serious injuries, he forged ahead and led the way.
The surrounding Magi of the Four Seasons Garden cowered and did not dare to move forward.
Compared to something as large as the light Magi alliance, the Four Seasons Garden was just one of many allies. Also, every single member of the Lightning Corps was at least a semi-converted Magus, which would make them equivalent to the elites of the Four Seasons Corps. Their numbers were greater, and the leader was coincidentally a rank 2 Magus, which was something they could not contend against.
Leylin shrugged his shoulders, met Caesar’s gaze, and walked on.
They were naturally familiar with the headquarters here. After walking through an area with destroyed walls, Leylin and Caesar met the leader of the Lightning Corps in a temporary guest hall.
“Are you Caesar? 19 years ago, we met at Reynold’s wine reception!”
Unexpectedly, this Magus knew Caesar.
Caesar quickly bowed in greeting, “So it’s Lord Desmund!”
Leylin ducked his head and bowed slightly, chancing a glance at this rank 2 Magus.
Desmund had a blue robe draped over his sturdy body, which proudly displayed his chest and bulging muscles. Under his blonde fringe, there was a blue lightning mark on the forehead.
What garnered the majority of Leylin’s attention was Desmund’s eyes. Every time they blinked, slight electric currents flickered; it
was rather astonishing.
“Where did you go?” The rank 2 Magus asked right away.
“My lord! I was previously leading the hunting team in a battle with the dark Magi, which resulted in many casualties. In the end, even I sustained injuries, and it was thanks to Magus Leylin rushes over that I managed to survive…”
Caesar began to narrate a story that he had previously made up. The gist of it was that he had been defeated in battle, but had been saved by Leylin in the nick of time. This was a version that he had previously discussed with Leylin, and they had recorded all of the casualties as well. Of course, Caesar was the sole culprit for the annihilation of his own team members, and the two of them had also shifted a few dark Magus corpses from elsewhere to create the illusion of a battle.
With a rank 2 Magus helping to conceal this matter, it was a large possibility that they would not be found out. What made Leylin feel relieved the most was that Desmund merely had asked in passing; he nodded, and did not continue with more questions.
Though they were all part of the light Magi alliance, Desmund was an outsider, after all. These were things that required the Four Seasons Garden to dispatch their investigation team and investigate everything properly.
“Hm! You two peak rank 1 Magi, and also Wade, would be the Four Seasons Garden’s final force.”
Desmund looked solemn.
*Teng teng!*
Caesar fell back a few steps, his face full of disbelief, “The last force? Does that mean… Lord Reynold…”
Seeing Caesar’s Oscar-worthy acting skills, Leylin was speechless. Although Leylin had appeared to be shocked, his expression was
formed with the manipulation of his facial muscles by the A.I. Chip.
If not, with his current acting skills, he would have definitely been seen through by Desmund, a sly old fox. No matter how boorish he looked, he was still a rank 2 Magus, and he would not lose to anyone in terms of intelligence or observational skills. In comparison, Caesar’s performance was remarkable.
“No! I don’t believe it! Lord Reynold is a rank 2 Magus, and…” Caesar’s eyes glazed over as he kept muttering.
“Though I also find it hard to believe, this is the truth. Reynold has fallen… I felt the extinguishment of his life force. Unfortunately, I arrived too late, else I would have definitely been able to save him. I’m sorry…” Desmund touched his chest, his expression showing regret.
“As Reynold’s good friend, I will inherit his dying wish and carry out revenge on the dark Magi!” This corps leader guaranteed.
“Thank you, esteemed lord!” Caesar’s face showed his resolution.
“After I’m healed, I will immediately apply for missions to take revenge!”
“Hn!” Desmund nodded, and then clapped his hands.
*Rumble!* The floorboards at two ends of the temporary room split open, and a large, translucent, metallic pillar rose from the middle of the room.
The sounds of turning gears sounded from the heart of the pillar. Streams of glowing runes constantly travelled upwards, creating a magical sight.
“This is the core control of the Four Seasons Garden’s defensive formation! There had been a powerful interference, and the procedural spell design also had some issues. Don’t worry about that though, as I’ve already fixed it. Based on the rules stated in the alliance’s proposed laws, I now announce, in my capacity as the
leader of the Lightning Corps, the formation of the Four Seasons Garden’s Crisis Team, which will be in charge of the defensive and spell formations. The members will consist of Caesar, Leylin, and Wade. If you have differences in opinions, you should decide based on the majority’s decision.”

Desmund spoke as if he were reciting, and circles of light that represented a contract and celebration twinkled around the three of them.

“Now then, complete the ceremony for the formation genie to recognise its master!”

Desmund pointed at the metallic pillar in the center of the room. “Press your palm on it. The formation genie will automatically record the aura of your spirit and give you authority.”

Caesar nodded, and then placed his palm on the surface of the metal pillar, closing his eyes and seemingly communicating with a body of consciousness.

Moments later, while beaming with admiration, he withdrew his hand.

“Your turn!” Leylin nodded and also placed his hand on the pillar. The surface of the metallic pillar was very glossy, and there was a strange feeling when he touched it. It was very soft, as if it were not metal, but rather cotton.

It was also different from the iciness of metal. The surface of this pillar gave Leylin a rather warm feeling.

“Recording spiritual aura! Conferring an authority of seven stars!”

A robotic female voice sounded in Leylin’s mind. It was different from the A.I. Chip’s genderless voice, and was instead a crisp feminine voice.

“Is this a formation genie?”

Leylin was a little rueful. Whether science or magic, when it came down to it, there were basically different means to achieve the same end.
However, this formation genie obviously did not have any intelligence, and could only robotically answer Leylin’s queries. Communication with this conscious was quick, and in a quick ten seconds, Leylin was able to largely grasp what his authority extended to, and the function of the formation genie. This formation genie was the core of all the defensive spell formations that the Four Seasons Garden had set up. Through the formation genie, one could easily check any single region.

However, this spell formation had previously been heavily interfered with by the dark Magi, which resulted in the unexpectedness of the attack this time. As for the limits of his authority, this referred to how much manpower he could command. The chain of command consisted of a total of nine stars, with one having the least authority, and nine commanding the most. Leylin currently had a ranking of seven stars, and was therefore capable of dispatching most of the defensive forces in the Four Seasons Garden to besiege anybody, as well as having access to all available information, save a few top secret documents.

In the past, Reynold had had nine stars, and was capable of ordering the formation genie to self-destruct! Leylin, Wade and Caesar were merely granted seven stars temporarily to deal with this emergency.
“Where’s Wade? Why don’t I see him right now?” Caesar asked carelessly after Leylin had also completed the ceremony, and the metal pillar had automatically retracted into the ground.

“He sustained serious injuries and was also cursed by a very troublesome spell.”

Hearing this, Desmund’s expression darkened.

“It was caused by a dagger soaked in the poison of the Abyssal Spider. I’ve never seen such a cruel match-up… Though he’s already awoken, the poison and curse will eat his flesh and spirit, consuming all the nutrients in his body and turning him into a dried-up corpse.”

“In this situation, I suggest that he return to the Four Seasons Garden headquarters as soon as possible. The high-energy purification pool is there, and the elders may be able to find a solution, but unfortunately…”

Desmund spread his arms.

“After receiving news of his teacher’s death, Wade has been insisting that he stay behind and return only after the investigations end.”

This was troublesome.

It would be the best situation for them if Wade had died or returned to the academy after having sustained injuries. For them right now, what had been a two-man team had now been joined by another,
who would be an impediment to them.
“Find an opportunity and kill him!”
In Caesar’s eyes, Leylin could see a glint of vehemence.
After that, Desmund, Caesar, and Leylin chatted for a while about
the Lightning Corps being stationed here, and other matters
concerning living arrangements.
Leylin had never concerned himself with these matters before, so
he just shut his mouth and watched Caesar and Desmund speak.
After everything was over, Caesar gave the excuse of treating his
injuries and brought Leylin into his room.
*Pu!*
A curtain that seemed like a spider web rose in the room, the light
covering all blind spots.
“Alright! This is an early warning system that I designed myself.
With it around, I’ll be able to know even if a rank 2 Magus were to
eavesdrop on our conversation.” Caesar carelessly picked a chair
and sat down.
“Using the silk of the Eight-Clawed Spider, which is extremely
sensitive to spiritual force… What an interesting way of thinking.”
Leylin surveyed this curtain, eyes flashing with understanding as he
sat beside Caesar.
“You’re very learned! This type of material is very rare, and only a
few people in Nightless City’s scholarly institutions are able to
recognise this. You should be able to go and pass the exam to
become a professor there…”
Caesar sighed in admiration. It astounded him to no end that this
spell formation, which had been developed for him by his father,
had easily been recognised by Leylin.
“You don’t seem to be that worried about Desmund. He’s made his
stance clear that before the reinforcements and investigation team
from the Four Seasons Garden arrive, he will keep watch here.
Rank 2 Magi have a lot of tricks; aren’t you afraid that he’ll
discover something?”
Leylin showed no politeness as he asked this team leader, who had once been his superior.
His relationship with Caesar was quite unique. He could now tell that the person who let out the word of his identity within the Thousand Meddling Hands and transferred him here from Nightless City was definitely Caesar! His goal was probably to obtain another helper in the inner circle of the Four Seasons Garden, or perhaps just cannon fodder.
Hence, after seeing through this scheme, Leylin unhesitatingly chose to betray them and injured Caesar to the point that he was near death.
However, with the knowledge that he was backed by a rank 2 Magus, Leylin did not dare to go too far. After all, offending a rank 2 Magus was not a very sensible decision.
“Don’t worry about Desmund.”
Caesar waved his arms. “Rank 2 Magi all shoulder different responsibilities. When they oversee a place, they are usually unable to leave. I’m familiar with the place Desmund has been guarding; it’s the Lightning Region at entrance No. 2 to the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. As long as the dark Magi apply pressure to him from there, Desmund will eventually be transferred back there! After all, that was the region that his academy is in charge of. Let’s be real here, even if we fall to the enemy, their academy won’t really be affected at all, but if entrance No. 2 is taken over, their academy will receive a large blow…”
Caesar analysed it very logically, displaying his exceptional situational skills and ability to think of the big picture.
“In order to attack entrance No. 2 and put pressure on them, at the very least, a rank 2 dark Magus has to attack. If only we had someone backing us…” Leylin was speechless. Even he was able to come up with such a plan, but he lacked Caesar’s background and
backing, as to where dark Magi could be dispatched according to his orders.
“I’ll take care of everything regarding Desmund. Just focus on one person!”
Caesar turned to gaze at Leylin, his third vertical eye on his forehead blinking.
“Wade?” Leylin touched his chin.
Wade was the first Magus from the Four Seasons Garden that he had met. At the beginning, he had even passed the examination with his help.
“That’s right! Desmund is an outsider, after all, and there are many things that he can’t do. However, Wade is different. He’s an envoy from the headquarters, so he holds a lot of power, and he is also the student of Reynold. He can easily take over the connections and resources that Reynold had, and is a huge obstruction to our plan!”
Caesar’s tone was extremely serious and was practically one of fear.
“You don’t want this plan to ultimately fail either, do you? You’ve signed the agreement, and the moment things fail, your spirit will self-destruct and leave nothing behind.”
Caesar’s eyes seemed to give out dark rays that shot towards Leylin.
“Don’t worry! I’ll silence him!”
Leylin was silent for a while and then spoke.
“Alright! I’ve contacted the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters in the external world. The elders are in a frenzy, and the entirety of the Four Seasons Corps will be dispatched here, along with a rank 2 Magus!”
Caesar also gave more news, “Five days! We have, at most, five more days!”
What he and Leylin needed to do within this time period was to push out Desmund and Wade, and hand over the defensive spell
formation and core of the secret plane to the dark Magi. As long as all of that was done, all entrances to the secret plane would belong to the dark Magi.

“Five days is enough!” Leylin stood up and left. As he walked out the door, he turned back and smiled at Caesar. “Also, remember! I don’t like the look in that middle eye of yours. It’s disgusting!”

*Pak!* The door slammed shut, and the expression on Caesar’s face darkened.

“Despicable!” With a swipe of his arm, the cup, documents, and other items on the table fell to the ground, producing the crisp sound of objects colliding.

“If not for my “Three Spirits in a Body” still being incomplete, and me needing him to help me in my plan… I’ll kill him! I swear on it!”

Caesar’s facial muscles contorted. For him to be defeated by Leylin, who he had looked down upon in the past, was an absolute humiliation. Also, as he was not better than Leylin, and even had to concede in some matters; it was like reopening old wounds and exposing them to the scorching sun.

What made him more furious was that Leylin had actually killed the little boy, and had inflicted heavy injuries on Giant! These two Magi were the other spirits that were part of the trio from his body. Though they had different personalities, it could be said that out of the three people, including himself, one had been killed and the other two had been seriously injured! This hatred was definitely not something that a contract could restrict.

Caesar had concealed it well, but Leylin could see through it.

“It’s a pity… So what if he knows? I admit that you’re a genius and even the kind that’s one in a million! But so what? You’re now bound by the contract and don’t have much time to grow any further…Once the plan succeeds and you lose all your value, I’ll retrieve your spirit and torture you for two hundred years! I swear
Caesar lowered his head and began to laugh, like the murmurings of a patient who was nearing death. Caesar moved extremely quickly, and on just the next day, Leylin heard news of increased dark Magus activity at entrance No. 2 to the secret plane. For the sake of security, Desmund had led the Lightning Corps to guard the area again. Though there were many intelligent Magi who could tell this was a ploy to lure him away, Desmund still left. For Desmund’s and his superiors, if the Four Seasons Garden was able to eventually maintain the possession of their entrance, not only would the Four Seasons Garden benefit, and they themselves would be able to obtain ten to twenty percent of the resources. But entrance No. 2 was different! There were resources there that they were in charge of, and as long as they took care of the entrance, profits would come in like a wave! Hence, even if there was just a slight possibility, Desmund did not want to risk anything. As for his good friend, Reynold? Too bad! Magi were a bunch of practical people, and a dead friendship was a friendship no more. Without a similar strength and position, this friendship could not continue. After considering both sides of the situation, Desmund made the decision to return. After all, most Magi were selfish people! When it came to their own benefits, even rank 2 Magi could not resist temptation! “However, Desmund still had to put on a superficial front and pacify the Four Seasons Garden members.” Leylin strolled around, and the Magi who walked past respectfully bowed to him. Whether it was in terms of power or authority, Leylin was one of
the core existences in the headquarters within the secret plane. The rest of the Magi in Four Seasons Garden could only duck their heads.

What was more interesting was that most of the team leaders of those divisions that Leylin had extorted had died in battle. Furthermore, the remaining members of those teams bribed Leylin by sending over even more resources and ingredients as they wanted to shirk their responsibilities.

In the past, Leylin had needed to do the work himself, but now, bribes would appear on his doorstep on their own, and they were only afraid that he would not accept it. This treatment was vastly different from before.

In this situation, Leylin, of course, accepted all these and promised them blindly to everything they requested.

After all, the amount of time he would stay here could be counted in days. Once he was to leave, these Magi would only be left in shock.
hen the time comes, these Magi who bribed me before will, unfortunately, be apprehended and accused of helping the enemy... I wonder what expression will be on their faces when that happens?”
Leylin thought to himself as a sly grin appeared on his face. His feet did not stop moving until he came to a building that was still being rebuilt.
This had once been the merit points exchange centre, and after having experienced the attack from the dark Magi, which Leylin had been the leader of, it was now destroyed to a terrible extent. Most of the main structure had been destroyed and, what was even more serious, the huge loss of a few resource-based warehouses!
Besides the main warehouse, the greedy Magi also went after a few small-scale branch warehouses. There were some slightly valuable magic crystals, and if they had not already been stolen by the dark Magi, them they had self-destructed under the protection of their spell formations.
In the end, the dark Magi who had grown green with envy had even burnt up the whole area and torched everything!
On the bare surface of the stones in the surroundings, one could also see the burn marks here.
“Lord Leylin!” A light Magus who appeared to be the person in charge here quickly came over and greeted him.
“Hn!” Leylin nodded. He had never bothered remembering this
light Magus’ name, and could only vaguely remember that he was
the person in charge.
“How’s the progress of the rebuilding?” he asked.
Though it seemed as if Leylin had posed the question on a whim, sweat beaded on the forehead of the light Magus who was waiting by the side.
“Over 80% of our main infrastructure has been lost. This is not a large problem with earth elemental magic, but the key issue is that the spell formations have to be remade…”
This light Magus pulled out a white handkerchief from his robes and unceasingly wiped his shiny forehead.
“I’m not worried about that. When is the latest we can start working again?” Leylin stared hard at this Magus who was slightly plump.
“Three… No, two days! At the latest, we’ll be able to resume our work in two days.” The light Magus could feel himself tremble under Leylin’s gaze and quickly promised.
“Two days?” Leylin furrowed his brows and then shook his head.
“Far too long! I’ll give you two more Magi and twenty acolytes. The progress has to be 20% faster!”
“Yes, my lord!”
From the aura that Leylin was unwittingly giving off, the light Magus became even more afraid and the sweat on his forehead flowed quicker. He didn’t even have time to wipe it off with his white handkerchief as he agreed.
Leylin nodded, waved his hand, dismissed the person in charge, and began to stroll around the construction site.
Leylin had experiences from an alternate world and was naturally aware that the protection from the headquarters in the secret plane was as good as the rebuilding work after wars in his previous life.
There were two main points in this operation. One, regain the credibility of the administration, and two, guarantee the flow of
In terms of credibility, even though a rank 2 Magus from Four Seasons Garden had died, the main organisation in the external world was still significant enough that no Magus could look down upon them. There was no issue at all.

What was more urgent now was to make the merit points exchange centre operational!

From what Leylin knew, contribution points were the currency in this world. In order to make things work in this place via getting many light Magi to take on missions to help rebuild the area, what did they need?

Merit points! But merit points were a virtual currency that could not be used to trade for material resources directly, and were thus meaningless! With the merit points exchange centre, large amounts of merit points could be given out as the light Magi performed specific tasks, which could then be exchanged. This process would allow Four Seasons Garden to quickly regain their power.

For this reason, even under these conditions, Leylin and Caesar quickly transferred a batch of resources over so that the merit points exchange centre could resume operations.

Though he and Leylin were dark Magi spies, they were extremely cautious, and before they officially took action, they were as dutiful as any other Magus from Four Seasons Garden.

Hence, Leylin would come over occasionally and closely watch the progress of the reconstruction. Caesar was buried in a sea of documents and had to deal with a pile of urgent and frustrating work.

However, this was something he himself had instigated, and it could be said that he had caused himself trouble.

Leylin looked past the acolytes who were busily using earth elemental magic to create large numbers of stone pillars and bricks and approached a few people who were vigilantly surveying the
They were all wearing the uniform of Four Seasons Garden, which had lightning insignias on it. They were members of Desmund’s Lightning Corps. Though a rank 2 Magus had left, there was still a vice team leader and two large groups staying guard here! They were all official Magi who had experienced multiple battles and combined with the formation genie and defensive spell formation, even if a rank 2 Magus were to attack, Leylin and the others had the confidence that they could withstand the attack for a period of time until reinforcements from the nearby light Magi alliance arrived.

“The system of our defense has been re-built. It can’t be said to be watertight, but it’s no problem if we talk about maintaining our current situation. If not for me and Caesar being traitors…” Leylin felt some pity in his heart.

To be honest, Four Seasons Garden had not treated him very badly. If not for the fact that he had little choice, he did not want to betray them either.

Compared to the dark Magi who would often change their minds, he actually preferred having to deal with the light Magi, who kept their promises, even if this was only applicable to those on the same level of strength as them.

With Reynold and Caesar pushing him into a corner, Leylin had little choice.

Caesar had first let out news of his identity as Thousand Meddling Hands’ Blood Rogue, causing Reynold to become suspicious of him. Caesar had then assigned him to continuously participate in the battlefield, and wherever it was dangerous was everywhere Leylin would go. It was a pace where he could possibly work Leylin to death!

At the end, Reynold had even personally tried to identify Leylin’s
identity. This was a very dangerous sign, as this implied that the higher-ups in Four Seasons Garden were already beginning to lose trust in Leylin. Or perhaps, they had never trusted him at all. Hence, whatever Leylin had done till now to increase his strength was for the sake of survival!

Now, after his bloodline’s second transition and seeing first-hand the strength of a rank 2 Magus from Thousand Meddling Hands, he could now somewhat defend himself and escape. It was for this reason that he could temporarily leave this cycle and worry about Four Seasons Garden and others.

Leylin was not a heartless person. In a situation where his interests were not affected, he would definitely not mind helping friends and perhaps organisations.

“Under the name of changing the guards, George and the others have been transferred far behind the frontlines, so they should be fine. Dark Magi wouldn’t have any interests in a few pitifully poor acolytes…”

Leylin indifferently pondered.

He was pretty much in possession of a third of the power within Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters in the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane. This amount of power was simply astonishing.

But it was certain that he was going to betray them. In order not to implicate George and others, he could only work in a roundabout way.

“Are you ready?”

At this moment, Caesar appeared like a ghost behind Leylin and asked.

“All ready! We can start anytime!” Leylin nodded, “With us together, he definitely won’t be able to escape even with just what the formation genie grants us access to!”

He and Caesar’s conversations were transmitted using spiritual force, and nobody would find out.
Wade expressionlessly got up from a bed that had a strange smell to it. His face was stiff as he came before a large crystal mirror. Like a transparent crystal mirror, what was reflected was a person whose hair had withered, facial features sunken and two eyes caved in, much like the corpse of a mummy. The curse on the dagger that had been used in sneaking an attack on him had constantly been eating at his life, causing his external appearance to undergo changes. Wade could be considered a pretty boy in the past, but now, any Magus from Four Seasons Garden definitely wouldn’t be able to recognise him.

“Teacher…”

A low mumble emerged from Wade’s dry and cracked lips. For Wade, the first half of his life was the model of someone who was treasured by the heavens. Since he was young, he had been tested to have the first-rate talent in becoming a Magus, and successfully entered Four Seasons Garden without much trouble. He had even become the student of a powerful rank 2 Magus! He had then advanced to become an official Magus, and even the bottleneck that happened while he was a semi-converted Magus was easily overcome. However, everything had been destroyed the day before. In what seemed like the blink of an eye, his entire world had altered.

Four Seasons Garden’s entrance to the secret plane had been attacked, causing his teacher, Reynold, to die in battle. Even he himself had been struck with a curse that had maggots that burrowed into his flesh and bones, and could not be ridden of. This resulted in his current appearance, where he looked like an abomination.
“Teacher! I’ll definitely avenge you!”
The corpse-like Wade in front of the mirror let out a low howl and a resolute look appeared on his face. For official Magi like Wade, external appearances were of no concern. As long as he had time, he could slowly choose a look and make changes to achieve it. This curse was directed at his life force and even his spirit. The moment both were diminished, no healing techniques would be useful!
Originally, he could have chosen to return to the headquarters in the external world and be treated. With the methods of the Magi there, even if they were unable to heal him, it was a large possibility that they could slow the development of the curse and give him more time to come up with more ways to deal with it. However, for the sake of his teacher, Reynold, Wade firmly chose to stay behind.
He had too many questions regarding his teacher’s death. There were also a few suspicious points that he needed to make sense with the help of the investigation team from Four Seasons Garden before he would leave.
Hence, even if the conditions here were simply terrible and the curse was constantly eating at his body and turning him into a horrific state, he would still choose to stay behind.
“My lord! How do you feel today?”
A Magus wearing an armour of thorns entered.
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“Goro! It’s you!”
Wade glanced at one of the few surviving members of the Four Seasons Corps, his tone displaying his regret.
That day, he had sustained serious injuries, and practically all of the small team from the Four Seasons Corps had died. All that was left was Goro. As he had fainted because of the explosion, he had narrowly escaped death.
At the sight of Goro, Wade couldn’t help but think back to that scene.
Explosion! Figures! Green mist!
Everything had happened so suddenly that even his secretary who was also his girlfriend, had died in the attack.
“Now, even Goro is probably ridiculing me as well.”
Wade shook his head as he thought, and spoke in a hoarse voice.
“What’s the matter?”
“My lord, I’ve brought you your breakfast!”
Goro placed a silver tray on the table, on which were fruit salad, white bread, and steaming hot milk.
“Thank you!” Wade was silent for a while before he spoke.
“My lord, please be careful!” Goro bent his head slightly and quickly left.
Wade did not have much of an appetite, but for the sake of his teacher and as well as his own wellbeing, he still forced himself to
go to the dining table. 
He picked up a slice of white bread, preparing to slather some jam on it, but a slip of paper sandwiched in the loaf caught his attention. 
Wade retrieved the slip and spread it out. 
After being in contact with the warmth of Wade’s fingers, rows of little letters appeared on the originally white paper. 
“Danger! Dark Magi have infiltrated the headquarters and are planning to attack you. Leave immediately!” 
The words were very strikingly written in red. 
Wade stared hard and immediately got up to set up a few detection and isolation spells. 
Next, with some astonishment, he focused on the slip in his hands. 
“Like I thought, the dark Magi’s attack was way too ferocious, and they knew too much about our defense system. The formation genie was also interfered with, and could not be used at all. There has to be a spy!” 
Hatred appeared on his face, “If not for there being a spy, we definitely wouldn’t be in this position, and even… Teacher Reynold wouldn’t…” 
His fists were clenched tightly, to the point that a few drops of crimson blood flowed out through the bandages on his hands. 
“I’ll definitely find you and avenge my teacher. I swear on it!” 
A glint of resolution appeared in Wade’s eyes, and he then rubbed the slip of paper in his hands. 
“The paper used is the most ordinary parchment paper. The words were designed to show after coming into contact with my body temperature, so the sender has to be someone I’m familiar with. If he was able to warn me, that means that he’s very clear on whatever’s happened here, but… who could it be?” 
Face after face appeared in Wade’s mind, but he quickly pushed this thought down.
“It’s not the time to think about this. Danger? Does this mean someone is planning on attacking me? Within the headquarters?” Wade didn’t quite believe it.

*Pu! Pu! Pu!*

At this moment, explosions sounded in the air, and numerous black needles as fine as cow hair penetrated the air. They were sharp glints in the air, launching towards Wade like raindrops.

“Really?!”

A green shield of vines appeared, and the numerous thin needles struck the surface and produced sparks.

He then dropped to the ground and rolled!

*Boom!* A black dagger punctured the area that he had previously been, and the bench split apart like tofu. Even the air had been cut, producing two pure, white gusts of wind.

*Tss tss!* From the area where the chair had been sliced, the sound of an object corroding was heard, with much white smoke accompanying it. The bench that Wade had been sitting on was corroded in a few seconds, not even leaving behind any residue.

The person holding the dagger was a dwarf-like figure.

The dwarf was surrounded by a layer of black gauze, and his movements were extremely agile. After seeing Wade avoid the attack, he pounced towards him like the wind. The black dagger was like the tooth of a poisonous snake, searching for Wade’s weak points.

“Formation genie, activate the defense spell formation here, and inform the Lightning Corps!” Wade looked pitiful as he dodged a few attacks, and quickly swiped at a ring on his hand.

*Boom!* Green mist exploded at the scene, and with this chance, he began to yell.

“Order received! Activating defense at Zone B-7… Beep! Received a different command, cancelling out both. Your authority has temporarily been superseded!”
A robotic female voice sounded by Wade’s ear, causing his heart to sink. The formation genie had control over a large area, which practically included the entire headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden at the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. The moment he activated the power of the formation genie, he would definitely be able to break away from danger and arrest this killer. But now, the enemy was even able to control the formation genie! Didn’t this mean that the headquarters was now being controlled by the dark Magi?

A huge sense of fear suddenly made itself known. Despite the strong defense here, he could not feel any security and rather, felt like he was being caged in. At this moment, the green mist in the room dispersed, and the dwarf-like killer’s eyes had a cold glint within them. He seemed to transform into a black hurricane, which swept towards Wade.

*Teng! Teng! Teng!* Outside the room, footsteps kept sounding. The guard Magi who were outside had heard noises inside and quickly rushed here. The dwarf suddenly flung something, and the dagger in his hand turned into black lightning, streaking across the air and flying straight for Wade’s heart!

“If I weren’t seriously injured and cursed, this type of attack…” An unresigned expression appeared on Wade’s face, and he quickly tried to avoid the attack.

*Pu!* The black dagger stabbed his shoulder, leaving behind just the handle exposed. Large amounts of fresh blood spurted out, and Wade’s face paled as he collapsed. The dwarf quickly ran forward, preparing to deal the final blow!

“Protect the lord!” At this moment, the door to the room was forcibly kicked open and was turned into wood shavings. A few
Magi wearing uniforms with lightning designs on them broke in. Seeing Wade collapsed on the floor, they roared, and a few people produced blue and white electric currents. The bolt of electricity arced across the air and arrived in front of Wade.
*Pak! Pak!*
The blue and white electric arcs struck the dwarf, causing green smoke and the smell of charred flesh to spread throughout the room. The dwarf’s body trembled, before he glared hard at Wade as if staring at his prey, and suddenly threw two black balls to the ground!
*Poof!* A large amount of black gas billowed out and concealed the dwarf’s figure. After the gas had dissipated, the dwarf assassin had already disappeared.
“My lord, are you alright? Inform and warn Lord Caesar and Leylin about this!”
The Magi of the Lightning Corps supported Wade and then instructed. Half an hour later, Wade had already moved to another room, his injuries having been treated. However, while he glanced at his surroundings, terror was beginning to engulf him. The assassination attempt just now made him feel like something was wrong. Within the headquarters, an assassin had actually managed to enter without obstruction and suppressed the activation of the formation genie! What did this mean? “Who could be the thief who seized the authority to command the formation genie? Or is it Caesar? Leylin? Did they both join hands?” Wade was expressionless as the gears turned in his mind. “No! The headquarters are extremely dangerous, and there are too
many hidden enemies that I don’t know of. If things really are like the what slip of paper said, where the dark Magi have infiltrated here, I’m in even more danger…”
Wade glanced around his surroundings. A few Magi were patrolling the area, walking back and forth. After the attack, Caesar had brought over guards, but all he could feel were bad intentions in their gazes, causing him to sweat profusely.
“This isn’t going to work. I need to leave here as quickly as possible; it’ll be best to meet with the academy’s investigation team!”
Wade’s eyes showed his staunch resolve.
“What? Wade’s missing?” Leylin glanced at Caesar, shocked.
“How did this happen? You couldn’t even carry out such a simple task! He must be suspecting us now!” In front of Leylin was the three-eyed Magus, Caesar, who did not look to be in a good mood.
“Even if he’s an idiot, he’ll definitely know there’s something up with both of us after his authority in using the formation genie was suspended. If he were to report this to the investigation team…”
“That’s impossible!” Leylin shook his head.
“The entrance to the secret plane is in our hands. I’ve checked all the recent records of people entering and exiting; there are no problems. Communication between the secret plane and the external world is very unstable, and the few communication towers we have don’t work unless we use a spell formation exclusively for communication. Unfortunately, with our access to the formation genie, we can seal this entire area and turn him into a caged bird!”
“So the only thing he can do is to escape to other light Magi regions!” Caesar added.
“Exactly! A very daring decision!” Leylin nodded.
The area of the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane was enormous, and the distance between each entrance was vast. One even needed
to pass through a few extremely dangerous zones. The difficulty would be too much for Wade while he was in his best condition, much less while he was cursed.

“This is your problem. You solve it!” Caesar answered in annoyance.

“Alright! This situation is actually what we wanted, though, isn’t it?”

Leylin got up while he continued speaking. “Desmund has been transferred away, and nobody knows whether Wade is dead or alive… In these next few days, he won’t have the chance to communicate with any Magus from the external world. Hence, the entire headquarters of the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane now belongs to us…”
After having spoken, Leylin made a show of flinging his robes, with the intention to leave.
“What are you doing?”
“To take care of the mess that was left behind, and arrange for the dark Magi to receive access to the information about our defenses and resources…” Leylin’s figure eventually disappeared into the distance, leaving behind the echo of his voice.
Leylin went straight to his room, opened a secret door and revealed a basement.
“My Lord!” A dwarf in black clothing bowed towards Leylin.
“En!” Leylin nodded, and then pointed at the dwarf! A bright light was sent out from his fingertips and disappeared into the dwarf’s forehead.
The dwarf’s body swelled in an instant; green veins wriggling on his flesh like little snakes.
*Ka-cha!*
The dwarf’s body constantly expanded, and actually transformed from a little dwarf to an adult, burly male!
With the change in his body, his black clothes burst and revealed a manly and handsome figure. However, on what had once been a beautiful male body, all sorts of runic brands now covered it all over that formed a bizarre spell formation.
The man’s body which was laden with brands trembled involuntarily as bead-sized sweat constantly dripping. From the
looks of it, such a transformation was extremely uncomfortable, but the burly man gritted his teeth and did not make a sound. “You did well, Number 2!” Leylin glanced at the burly man and praised him. “It’s my honour to be able to serve Master!” This burly man was actually one of the Branded Swordsmen that served Leylin! With his strength as a Branded Swordsman, the only way for Number 2 to fail in killing Wade, who was already injured and weakened, was according to Leylin’s special instructions. Even the slip of paper that warned Wade was arranged by Leylin. “I’ve already helped you. Everything that happens next depends on your luck!” Leylin lightly sighed, his pupils seemed to penetrate the void and see Wade, who was already fleeing. He had gone out of the way to do all this. After all, he was on somewhat good terms with Wade and allowed him to enter Four Seasons Garden. He did somewhat owe Wade. Though Reynold had bad intentions towards Leylin, and Leylin had struck back mercilessly and indirectly caused Reynold’s death, this had nothing to do with Wade. Hence, Leylin did not mind letting him off when it was convenient. To take it further, Wade right now still had some talent in being a Magus and was not someone Leylin had in his sights. Even if Wade wanted to avenge his father or anything like that, he could just kill Wade. After this act, Leylin believed he had repaid the debt he owed Wade. If he stupidly decided to provoke Leylin, Wade would immediately be killed. There would be no hesitation. In Leylin’s mind, there was a very clear line. Wade was now a tiny bit helpful to Leylin, and they were on somewhat good terms, so he could let him off. If they were even closer, Leylin might even arrange for Number 2 and Number 3 to
escort him out, rather than letting him fend for himself. Of course, before all that, the prerequisite was that none of this would harm Leylin’s interests. If not, favours and things of that nature were not even worth considering.

“I won’t chase after him anymore, but to make sure everything goes well, Caesar will definitely mobilize dark Magi from Thousand Meddling Hands to kill him. Good luck to you!”

Leylin estimated that the chances of Wade’s survival in the external world were no more than 40%. This was in a situation where his own luck was factored in. However, this was much better than staying behind in the headquarters, where he was sure to die. Hence, Leylin sighed a little and quickly pushed this matter to the back of his mind, and ordered Number 2 and Number 3 to conceal themselves in order to be his trump cards. Without telling anyone, Leylin came to the region where the core of the formation genie was.

Whatever Caesar had ordered him to do, had naturally been disregarded. Did Caesar dare to fall out with him just over such a trivial matter?

The core of the formation genie was now situated at the heart of the headquarters of Four Seasons Gardens, not far from what had been Reynold’s office. Here, with every step he took, he could see many light Magi who appeared quite solemn as they went about their tasks. Amongst these Magi, not only were there Magi from Four Seasons Garden, there were also a few Magi from the Lightning Corps.

In Leylin’s eyes, the core of the formation genie was just like a generator room essential for the upkeep of the defense spell formation. The defense spell formation that guarded Four Seasons Garden was extremely important, and with the previous attack, the status and need for such defensive mechanisms was elevated by several times.
However, it was but a decoration in Leylin’s eyes. He was one of the two most important people in Four Seasons Garden now, and not only did these Magi not question his being here, but they bowed to him. After sending away the Magi outside, Leylin entered the room in which the spirit genie was located. This room was very empty, and wisps of cool air floated about, which caused the temperature to drop. In the centre of the room, the metal pillars within what was the main body of the formation genie that Leylin had seen the previous time were standing tall. Usually, this sort of formation genie was a being that had no consciousness and only carried out procedures. It could not compare to Leylin’s A.I. Chip, but to be able to construct this thing with magic was something that astounded Leylin to no end. This was the product formed by a rank 1 and rank 2 Magus. Did that mean that rank 3 or 4 Magi could use magic and produce artificial intelligence, and even generate life? There was a level of excitement in Leylin’s heart, as well as some vigilance. Though he had the A.I. Chip and had a much better start than the other Magi, the developed brains of highly ranked Magi were comparable to regular computers. His advantage was becoming less obvious, and would eventually be rendered obsolete. However, he was still very confident! Even if there was a day where the advantages the A.I. Chip granted him were evened out, or even surpassed by other Magi, he was confident he would accumulate enough power before that happened and would not fear any challenges! With a grin on his face, Leylin pressed the palm of his hand to the surface of the metal pillar. “Welcome, Magus Leylin Farlier, an authority of seven stars! Please choose the function you require!”
The formation genie’s voice sounded in Leylin’s mind, instantly separating a few fundamental modules, which included: the monitoring of the spell formation, checking information, alteration of basic runes and so on.

Leylin’s spiritual force touched the module that allowed him to check for information. Immediately afterwards, a large amount of information appeared in his mind.

This formation genie was, in actuality, a massive central computer, with large amounts of information about the Magi of Four Seasons Garden, recorded in its database.

What he had right now was access to everything except a few absolutely secret documents.

“Map to the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane! Distribution of resources! The best missions! Inventory of each warehouse! Backup of academic knowledge!”

A subdirectory dazzled Leylin as it streamed past his eyes. This was just a newly-formed formation genie, and if it were a high-level formation genie that had recorded over a thousand years of history in Four Seasons Garden, all the information within would cause Leylin’s brain to explode.

[A platform to control data entry has been discovered! Proceed with remote control?] At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded by Leylin’s ear.

“Yes!” Leylin nodded.

Next, a streak of spiritual force covered the metal pillar.

“A.I. Chip! Make a copy of the information stored in the formation genie, and establish a catalogue for browsing!] Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Mission established! Beginning copy of information! Progress: 1%…34%… 100%!]

The A.I. Chip’s efficiency was extremely shocking, and the amount it could store far exceeded Leylin’s expectations. All the information stored in the formation genie only required a few
seconds to be duplicated, and it had not taken up that much space either.

“It looks like after transmigrating, not only did the A.I. Chip fuse with my spirit, its storage space has also been increased. Even if I were to copy information from a high-level formation genie like the one in Four Seasons Garden that has over a thousand years’ worth of information stored within, there wouldn’t be any problems…”

Glee flashed by Leylin’s face, and he then commanded, “Search! Rare items column!”

Instantly after, a picture was sent to the A.I. Chip to be compared with. It was a bizarre honeycomb coal briquette, with many pearls that looked like eyeballs, was dazzling and demonic!

This was what Leylin had found after sweeping through the main warehouse of the headquarters of Four Seasons Garden. It was definitely a top-grade item found within the secret plane.

Though Leylin had no idea what it was, and there was no record of it in the A.I. Chip’s database, the rank 2 Magus Reynold was sure to recognise it. If not, he would not have treated it so preciously and protected it well.

With this image, there was sure to be a record of it in the formation genie.

As expected, after adding the database from the formation genie, the A.I. Chip quickly produced an answer.

[The fossil of the flesh from a Thousand Eyes Starfish! Degree of rarity: Level 5S. Place of discovery: Liema Channel in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. Note Taker: Reynold.]

“Thousand Eyes Starfish! It seems to be an ancient creature!”

Leylin rubbed his chin and looked through the introduction to its uses.

“The flesh of the Thousand Eyes Starfish contains extremely rich life energy, and can instantly regenerate a broken limb, and even
give Magi at the brink of death a chance to live. It is also very effective in the strengthening of organs. With just a gram of the flesh of the Thousand Eyes Starfish, it can increase the rate of the organ’s adaptability by two levels!” Leylin had a crazed look of excitement in his eyes as he read up to this point. “Adaptability of the organ? Doesn’t that mean it’s useful in the remodelling of my heart?” The progress of the remodelling of his heart had been stuck at 69%. After all, reforming the body was a very dangerous process, especially as Leylin intended to transform his heart such that it was similar to that of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent.
Even in Leylin’s previous life, during the process of transplanting organs, there would always be the possibility of the body rejecting the new organ. It was like this for transplanting between human bodies, and especially so for an exceptionally powerful organ such as the heart of an ancient being that was to be stuck into the body of an ordinary Magus.

Even with the help of magic, Leylin had to spend large amounts of time to increase the compatibility of his body and the heart. The progress of the remodelling of his heart had slowed considerably.

Now, however, the flesh of the Thousand Eyes Starfish was actually able to suppress the body’s antibodies and increase the rate at which organs adapted to the host body. How could this not get Leylin excited?

After knowing the uses of the flesh of the Thousand Eyes Starfish that he now possessed, Leylin left the room in a better mood. Soon after, a message came for him.

“What? Does someone want to see me? And is holding a rank 1 contribution token?” Leylin rubbed his chin and asked, “Who is it?”

The person who came forward to notify him was a young female Magus, who reverently gazed at Leylin. Well, after being transformed by his bloodline, his appearance would be lauded as
‘handsome’ no matter where he went. Also, for him to have reached the level of rank 1 Magus at such a young age showed that he was frighteningly strong! This caused a reasonably large commotion, which resulted in admiration and adoration from many female Magi.

“It’s an old, and very… haughty lady!”

The female Magus ducked her head and thought for a moment, and then chose these words.

“An old, haughty lady?” Leylin was stunned, and then a slight smile appeared on his lips. He had already guessed who it was, “Bring her to conference room 3. I’ll meet her there!”

The female Magus bowed and quickly retreated.

Leylin was left behind, looking as if he was deep in thought. From the curse he had planted on Manla and Jenna’s body, he could somewhat tell what was happening around them.

After seeing the curses on Manla’s body detonate, Leylin had a feeling that the family behind Jenna would try to compromise with him. From the looks of the current situation, this had come true. Come to think of it, the time for the curse to take full effect was nearing. They must have tried all the methods they had access to, and only after having no other way did they choose to compromise with him.

“What should I ask for this time?” Leylin scratched his chin. He did not have any good feelings towards this family that considered themselves above others and was preparing to make them pay a high price and watch them fall to rock bottom.

“However, to be so arrogant on my territory…” A cold glint flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

Three hours later, in conference room 3, the piercing screech of an old woman’s voice could be heard, “I don’t care what he’s doing, but I’ve already been waiting here for over three hours. No matter what you do, I want to see him now. Immediately! If not, I’ll use
my contribution token and fire you! I swear on it!”

*Crash!* Next, the sound of glass breaking could be heard.
The female Magus who had notified Leylin ran out, her expression unhappy, “That darned old lady. Is she commanding just because she has a contribution token? One day…”
The female Magus cursed under her breath. All of a sudden, a shadow loomed over her, revealing the figure of a Magus.
“Lord- Lord Leylin! There’s a guest who wants to see you!” She was shocked and immediately bowed, her cheeks rosy red.
“I understand!” Leylin restrained his laughter with great difficulty, and the female Magus walked into the room looking a little dazed.
He had purposefully taken a longer period of time to come over here so that she would calm her anger. However, for people like her, whose spirit had affected her neurotic characteristic, time was not going to change anything.
“Didn’t I say to call Leylin over…”
Conference room 3 was very large, with a few long leather sofas and a few tables in the middle. This was where guests could comfortably sit, have a drink and chat.
Now, however, one of the tables had been flipped over, and there were the shattered remains of a few cups and plates on the ground.
An old woman who had on the clothes of the upper class had her face covered with gauze. She wore black gloves and held onto a small bag, her temper foul.
Upon seeing Leylin, she was at first stunned, and then hatred shot out of her eyes.
The old woman’s chest constantly heaved up and down, as if trying to suppress the fury in her heart. Then, with a haughty accent, she spoke, “Leylin, is it? You actually dare to offend our noble Botelli family! This is an absolute sin! However, the mother of power and peace is benevolent and merciful. Now, confess to your wrongdoings and cure Jenna! I can even consider lightening your
While she spoke, she acted as if she was being noble to him by allowing him to repent, as if he had committed a huge sin that required her forgiveness.

“Hold on!” Such a pitying gaze made Leylin extremely annoyed, and he rudely interrupted her.

“What? Are you preparing to confess?” The old woman held her head high.

“No! I just wanted to ask you, are you crazy?” Leylin did not beat around the bush.

“What did you say?” The old woman’s expression showed her shock. She could not believe that someone dared to speak to her in such a manner.


“You- You actually dare…” The old woman pointed at Leylin, the joints in her fingers turning white and trembling in her anger.

“You actually dare to speak to me, the current wielder of power in the Botelli family, in such a manner! You even dare tarnish my family’s reputation! Hell forbid! I’d even been so kind as to hope that I could pardon you… Oh, powerful and merciful mother of peace, please forgive my stupidity…”

“Stop!” Leylin did not wish to listen to this any longer. He was now clear of the situation. Jenna’s family, which was the Botelli family, must have a family illness of craziness!

“I’m just going to say one thing. Only I am able to undo the curse on Jenna’s body, and she is very important to you. After trying all available methods, you had no choice but to come here and ask me for help. Since you’re here to ask for a favour, you must first have a good attitude!”

Leylin raised a finger. “If not, you can only watch as Jenna dies!”

Such an unrestrained way of speech seemed to pierce through the
old lady’s pretense of being honourable, the redness on her face quickly dying away, and leaving her looking pale. “I knew it! There’s no use in bargaining with sinners like you because you’ll just try to make use of us. The only thing awaiting you is eternal death…” The old woman incessantly muttered. “You…” The anger in his heart stirred. However, immediately after, his facial expression slightly changed and he calmed down. At this moment, the old lady took out a gold token that was the size of her palm, swaying it in front of Leylin and grinning proudly. “See this? This is a rank 1 contribution token my ancestors received from the Four Seasons Garden. It makes me a noble here, and if I choose to use it, the Four Seasons Garden has to fulfil one of my requests! I wonder if I want them to expel you, what would happen?” “So the reason why you were this unrestrained was because you have a token!” Leylin suddenly felt the urge to laugh. Not even counting the fact that he was planning to leave the Four Seasons Garden, he did not view them very highly in the first place. However, this old woman seemed to be banking her hopes on the Four Seasons Garden, and used it as a method to threaten him. “Whatever it is, you now have two choices. The first is to obediently admit to your wrongdoings and come back with me to cure Jenna. The second is to be banished from the Four Seasons Garden, and eventually, be chased down and killed!” A victorious smile emerged on her face. “…,” Leylin was speechless as he glanced at this old woman, suddenly finding her a little pitiful. The Four Seasons did have such a rule, and the rank 1 contribution token in her hands was also authentic. Unfortunately, she was a few
days late!
If she had arrived here a few days earlier, she might have been able to use the power of this token, and, with the Four Seasons Garden to suppress him.
But now? Leylin looked at the token in her hands.
“That’s right! She probably still doesn’t know about us being attacked, Reynold’s death, and me taking over…”
The attack had been classified as top secret, and the Four Seasons Garden entrance to the secret plane had even been sealed for a period of time. It was impossible for regular Magi to know about this.
As a result of a time difference and various other factors, this old woman was obviously still not aware that this branch of the Four Seasons Garden had already changed owners, what with her charging in so loudly and brazenly.
“What’s wrong? Can’t make a choice? Do you want me to help you?”
Leylin’s long silence gave her the impression that he was afraid. Hence, the expression on her face was more arrogant, and she loudly bellowed, “Guards! Guards!”
“What is the matter?”
Minutes later, a few Magi in white robes charged in.
“In the name of the Four Seasons Garden, I command you to arrest Leylin!” The old woman raised the gold token in her hands, which flashed and glinted to form a four-coloured ring. An energy wave with a very recognizable frequency was emitted.
“It’s a rank 1 contribution token! It can’t be fake!” The guard Magi glanced at it bowed to greet the old woman.
She nodded, still exuding arrogance.
“Capture him!” She pointed at Leylin.
“Him?” A few guard Magi looked at the old woman, then at Leylin, finding this situation difficult to handle.
“What’s wrong?” Her voice was piercing, to the point that one wanted to close their ears, “Do you wish to go against an age-old agreement?”
See this old lady acting like this, Leylin suddenly found her quite pitiful and lost the urge to play with her any further.

He waved at the few guards. “You may return first.”

“Yes, my lord!” The guards gave Leylin a deep bow, appearing as if a heavy weight had been lifted off their shoulders, and quickly dashed out of the room.

“Wait! What did they call you? My lord? Aren’t you just a regular Magus from the Potioneering Team? Aren’t you also ostracised?”

The old woman spoke agitatedly. She could feel that things were beyond her control as if a stone had lodged deep in her heart.

“It seems like you’ve investigated me quite thoroughly! Unfortunately, I’ve climbed up the ranks a little faster than that…”

Leylin spread his hands, a mischievous grin on his face.

Was he merely fast in climbing to this position? He had practically flown here! First, by killing large numbers of dark Magi, he had obtained the position of the vice team leader of the hunting team. With his battle achievement of killing Marb, he had been named the patrolling inspector of the headquarters. In theory, he was just as powerful as Caesar, the leader of the hunting team.

After the attack of the dark Magi and Reynold’s death, he had seized a third of the power within this branch of Four Seasons Garden. But wait, there’s more! After chasing Wade out, the
authority he possessed had increased to two-thirds! His position was infinitely nearing the chairman with this much power! This old woman only had a rank 1 contribution token, which was useless against a team leader, much less Leylin. Next, the smirk on his face vanished, and his expression turned solemn.

“Formation genie, record this down! This… Ahem! This person who holds the power in the Botelli family overstepped her authority and ordered for my arrest, with a rank 1 contribution token. I hereby announce that she be stripped of the authority and the contribution token in her hands!”

*Weng!* Magical light brightened in the middle of the room, and the walls were filled with a ring of wandering illuminated runes. “Recorded! Verifying! Verification complete. Removing authority from rank 1 contribution token!”

A robotic female voice was heard, and the rays of light from magic suddenly flashed outwards. The old lady seemed to be scared silly by such a strong energy wave. If all the spell formations around them exploded in one go, her body would simply vanish. The colourful magic rays did not attack her, but transformed into a hand the size of an adult, grabbing the rank 1 contribution token in her possession!

Then, the fingers exerted force!

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

The sound of an object breaking sounded. A web of cracks spread across the surface of the entire token, and under the hopeless gaze of the old woman, it turned into little bits of dust.

*Tss tss!* The magical light receded after destroying the token. Even the spell formation on the wall vanished. The old woman was now like a duck grasped at the neck, unable to utter a word.
She naturally knew the amount of authority needed to be able to order the formation genie to destroy a rank 1 contribution token! That was something only the chairman was able to do! Could it be that this young man had already advanced to become a rank 2 Magus, and had become the chairman of the Four Seasons Garden? This world was just too crazy. The old woman supported her head, feeling as if she was dreaming!

“How is it? Do you have any other trump cards? You can try using them!” Leylin crossed his arms, staring icily at this old woman. Her heart fell. Her family was now not in a very good position. This token, which was something their ancestors had left behind, was the last resort, but had been rendered useless without properly being made use of! She herself would even be in trouble upon returning!

“What do you want?”
Her voice was hoarse as if she had aged by ten years. She bent her back, and then released the pride from her tone, completely defeated.

“What do you want?” Leylin sounded innocent.

“You…” Leylin was exasperated but calmed his heart. There was no point in arguing over a trivial matter such as this.

Alright, now it’s time for me to name my conditions! My requirements are simple. I’m interested in that divination ability of Jenna’s. Impart me this technique, and I’ll release the curse on
her!"

“Oh, Mother of Peace! Not only does a sinner like you want to control us, you even dare to covet our family’s meditation technique!”

She clutched her chest as if she was on the verge of going crazy.

“Is it a meditation technique? Or even a high-grade meditation technique?” Leylin was suddenly very interested.

“Don’t even think about it, you monster! Devil! Don’t even think about trying to obtain our Botelli Family’s meditation technique!” The old woman resolutely rejected him, a cold glint that could not be concealed flashing past her eyes.

“Hehe… You may not know this, but the curse on Jenna’s body can only be released by me. Otherwise, you could try finding a Morning Star Magus, or else you’ll just be waiting for a dead body.”

“I’ll give you one day! Think it through!”

Leylin clapped his hands and two guards immediately entered.

“Send this lady away to get some rest. Do not be negligent!” Leylin’s tone was slightly different, and the two Magi who knew what he was implying quickly came before the old woman, ready to take care of her.

Leylin nodded and left.

Though the old woman had concealed it well, the coldness in her eyes was still apparent to Leylin. All that she was thinking had long since been discovered by Leylin.

“Trying to swindle me with a fake meditation technique? No! Magi are intelligent people! If you give me a fake one, I’ll definitely know. If I can’t tell, I can just find a few acolytes and perform tests on them… Unless… If she really gives me a high-grade meditation technique, but it has a very obvious flaw! Only with these conditions will Magi who lack high-grade meditation techniques be tempted to use it…’”
“What a pity!” Leylin cracked a smile.
If he was a Magus without a high-grade meditation technique, he would definitely be unable to resist the temptation, and would end up training in it. After all, it represented an increased chance of advancing, as well as insuring a better future.
Unfortunately, he already had a high-grade meditation technique of his own Kemoyin’s Pupil! No matter how amazing the Botelli family’s meditation technique was, he would only use it as a reference, and wouldn’t do something so stupid as to switch meditation techniques.
With a smile on his lips, Leylin went inside a secret room.
The four walls of this secret room were made of thick stone, with numerous runes that could isolate energy placed all over.
In the middle was a rather strangely shaped, little stone counter. Three pillars supported a triangular section, large amounts of green vines crawled along it.
“Formation genie, activate the communication spell formation!” Leylin spoke.
“Authority verified! Activating communication spell formation!” As the formation genie spoke, a dusky splendour shot out from the little stone counter, and all the runes in the room began to glimmer. Leylin nodded upon seeing this. Communication between the secret plane and the external world was all but impossible, and could only work through a particular communication spell formation.
This was a specially constructed communication spell formation that could penetrate the isolation effect of the secret plane and was considerably expensive. The Four Seasons Garden only had this one formation in the entire Eternal River Plains’ secret plane.
Before, Wade’s authority to communicate with the outside world was sealed through the combined efforts of Leylin and Caesar. Hence, in a situation where he could not contact anyone, Wade had no choice but to flee.
Leylin took out his own secret imprint book and flipped through to the most recent page. At the end was a blue imprint that looked like a beacon. Leylin lightly tapped it.

*Boom!* The blue beacon suddenly became bigger, and the runes in the room unceasingly lit up. A red line shot out of the stone counter, connecting to the surface of the blue beacon secret imprint.

“Is this Sir Hyder? How have you been feeling recently?” Leylin asked, full of smiles. “It’s… you! Quick! Give me the cure!”

From within the blue secret imprint, a haggard voice came on and off, as if the owner had been severely injured or was being tortured by some illness. The owner of this voice was Hyder, the Magus who was on good terms with the Botelli Family, who had been invited by the old woman to treat Jenna!

Previously, he had failed in his treatment methods. Not only had he been infected by a poison that Leylin had made himself, but the poison had also come with a communication imprint. Hence, Leylin was able to know a lot about the Botelli Family.

The grin on Leylin’s face widened. “Sir Hyder, I want to tell you something quite unfortunate! The wielder of power in the Botelli family has already approached me. She implored me to remove Jenna’s curse, but never said anything about you…”

Upon hearing his words, the imprint became quiet, and then came the sound of something breaking. “That whore, that lunatic! To think I worked so hard for her… Cough cough…”

After just two sentences, Hyder began to cough violently. Leylin’s smile was even brighter. “Sir Hyder! How’s the effect of my ‘Shadow Corrosion’? I spent a lot of effort on it! You’re also a very outstanding healing Magus. I would like to know your
evaluation of it!”
After a long time, Leylin once again heard Hyder’s voice from the secret imprint. “You’ve won. The composition of the poison is much too complicated, and they’re intricately linked together. I really have no way to remove it… Give me the cure, and not just medication to suppress it, and I’ll tell you everything I know!”
“Fine! I want to know everything, especially your knowledge regarding the contents of the meditation technique.”
A day later, Leylin met the old woman from the Botelli Family once more.
This time, however, she looked to be pale and in a bad state, as if she had not rested well.
At the sight of Leylin, her eyes seemed to come to life and she spoke in a low voice, “I can give you information regarding the secret high-grade meditation technique that belongs to our family. However, I want to make this clear first. This technique is incomplete, and there are stringent limits and restrictions applied to those who train in it. If you were to forcefully train in it, there are sure to be residual effects.”
“That’s my problem. Just give me the meditation technique, and I’ll give you the solution to releasing the curse. It’s as easy as that!”
Leaning against the comfy back of his reclining chair, Leylin’s fingers were crossed as he calmly spoke.
“Fine! But we will first need to make a contract with the presence of the Trial’s Eye!” The old woman straightened her back.
“Of course! I don’t trust you either.” Leylin nodded. “Let’s start…”
A moment later, the old woman took what she wanted and left. Leylin was left on his chair, fiddling with a light golden crystal ball, and looking to be deep in thought.
“What an interesting meditation technique!”
He had briefly looked through the contents of the meditation technique the old woman had given him. Due to the contract under
the watch of the Trial’s Eye, she did not dare cheat him, though Leylin had found out she had pulled a few tricks as well. For instance, she had either exaggerated or understated a few facts. Based on what Hyder had said, male Magi in the Botelli family who had forcefully trained in this high-grade meditation technique had all died after going mad. However, all that was written here was that there would be aftereffects that would affect one’s mind. The old woman had also exaggerated the effects of training in this meditation technique, distorting the fact that one could catch glimpses of some vague fragments of the future into one being able to see the future.

Upon seeing the frightening effects of a high-grade meditation technique that could aid one in seeing the future, most Magi would not hesitate to train in it. They would then fall into the old woman’s trap!

“How clever, but that’s it!” Leylin assessed as he played with the crystal ball that had information about the meditation technique recorded within it.

As the meditation technique the old woman had given him was real, it complied with the Trial’s Eye contract. There were only a couple of small changes that she made to the results and side effects, which would not cause the Trial’s Eye to retaliate against her.

However, in Leylin’s eyes, whatever she did was just a joke!

“However, the fact that there is an ability to predict the future is quite alarming. Through the spiritual force from the supernatural world, one can sense fragments of what’s to happen in the future…”

Leylin rubbed his chin. He had briefly looked through the technique, through which, with training, Magi could practice and form a unique type of spiritual force. With the extension of this spiritual force, one could then gain information and see images
relating to the future.
In general, the results were astounding, but unfortunately, the technique was incomplete.
“A.I. Chip, how’s the scanning and recording process going?” Leylin asked inwardly.
[Beep! Information on “Sacred Flame”, a high-grade meditation technique, has been recorded! Inputted into database, “Meditation techniques” …… Classified information as five stars]
The A.I. Chip intoned.
[After scanning through, the percentage of incompleteness of the meditation technique is at least 79.52%. If this technique is trained in, it will result in mental issues. Chances of developing bipolarism is at 98%!]
“98%!? Then there’s definitely going to be a problem!” Leylin sighed and then asked, “A.I. Chip, is it possible to complete this meditation technique?”
He suspected that the strict limitations of one’s body and bloodline, as well as the horrifying aftereffects, were all issues borne from the incomplete state of the technique. If the rest of it could be filled in, most of the problems would be solved.
[Beep! Due to a lack of information regarding high-grade meditation techniques, this technique cannot be completed.]
Unsurprisingly, this was the A.I. chip’s answer.
There was nothing he could do. High-grade meditation techniques were connected to the life or death of a Magi organisation or family. Even with his power now, he could only get ahold of two high-grade meditation techniques. One was his own Kemoyin’s Pupil, and the other was the incomplete Sacred Flame!
Based on his guess, the A.I. Chip would need a large number of samples to analyse and compare. Only after that would it be able to analyse and complete the Sacred Flame technique.
The samples required would be around ten high-grade meditation
techniques! They also would have to be completed. Ten high-grade meditation techniques? Leylin gave a long sigh. Even in the entire south coast, it was uncertain if there were that many high-grade meditation techniques. With his current power, it would be impossible for him to obtain them. “No matter what it is, this is still a high-grade meditation technique. It’s priceless!” Leylin caressed the golden crystal ball in his hands. All of a sudden, black mist appeared within his hands. *Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Cracks appeared on the surface of the crystal ball, and the ball turned into dust in front of Leylin’s eyes. All the information about Sacred Flame had already been recorded in the A.I. Chip’s database, and he would not be able to lose it. There was no point in keeping this crystal ball, and Leylin was naturally a little suspicious of anything the old woman left behind, and he found it best to destroy it.

……

Within Leylin’s room, in a laboratory. As one of the two current leaders of the Four Seasons Garden’s branch in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, arranging a better room and a laboratory for himself was nothing difficult. This laboratory had once been provided to Magi who were team leaders. The equipment here was the best and newest technology brought in from the external world; no laboratory that Leylin had worked in in his previous world could compare to this. Leylin was currently in front of a large, silver experiment table. On the surface of the metallic table, there was a black honeycomb-like coal briquette that silently lay there. There were many depressions on the surface of it, in the middles of which were dark green pearls that emitted dazzlingly bright lights.
This was one of the three most precious ingredients found in the main warehouse of Four Seasons Garden, the fossil of the Thousand Eyed Starfish!

After receiving the information regarding its name and uses from the formation genie, Leylin quickly found himself a laboratory, and prepared himself to make good use of it.

“The flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish has already turned into a fossil. It’s going to be troublesome to extract and use the useful portions of it; I’m going to need many potions to do that. Thankfully, I have this…”

Leylin laughed, retrieving a mysterious test tube from his pouch.

After obtaining the spatial high-grade magic artifact made from the skin of the Void White-eyed snake, Leylin had placed all his belongings into it. As all of his baggage was gone, Leylin now looked much slimmer.

The entire test tube was made from glass, and the liquid contained within had a very strange colour. The top half was an olive colour, while the bottom half was a greyish-black. There was a clear line of separation between these two.

“A high-grade Reactive Potion! Even in ancient times, this was one of the most precious potions used to awaken the life energy hidden deep within an item!”

The formula for making this ancient potion had been found within the database of the formation genie. As a few of the ingredients required to brew it had already gone extinct, this formula was not made confidential. For Reynold, this was probably something of little interest.

But Leylin was different! The resources he possessed through looting and extortion were plentiful, and he was easily able to gather the required ingredients.

As for the ingredients that were extinct? Fortunately, Leylin had them!
While he was still a level 3 acolyte exploring the Dylan Gardens, not only had he gained the high-grade meditation technique and the Book of Giant Serpents, he had even obtained a few extremely precious plants!

These ingredients were much too precious, so Leylin could not bear to use them. He kept all of them after going through some procedures to keep them fresh.

Now, however, after obtaining the formula to make the high-grade active potion, he suddenly came to the realisation that the few ingredients that were known to be extinct were, in fact, plants that he possessed!

This was simply too lucky for him! Now that he had gathered all the ingredients, coupled with the fact that Leylin himself was a highly-accomplished Potion Master, brewing the potion was a very simple task.

Along with Leylin’s chants, the test tube opened up like a flower, and a putrid stench spread around the room.

Drip by drip, Leylin carefully positioned each droplet onto the green pearls of the Thousand Eyed Starfish. Leylin’s movements were extremely careful, smearing the amount evenly on every pearl.

By the time the last of the olive-coloured potion was used up, the fossil suddenly began to squirm.

“Awaken!” His eyes flashing with excitement, Leylin’s lips moved as he softly murmured.

He had used the ancient Byron language, which seemed to draw power from the supernatural world.

*Weng weng!*

Invisible strength wrapped the Thousand Eyed Starfish within, and the potion evaporated and emitted black and white gases. The black and white gases merged in the air, forming the multiple black and white eyes.
*Whoosh…*
With what sounded like a big wave, the flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish constantly trembled, layers of rock falling off of it.
*Tss tss!*
Green eyes blinked open; those olive pearls in the depressions were actually the eyes of the Thousand Eyed Starfish!
“Begin deep heating! Preset temperature at 1548 degrees!”
Complying with Leylin’s voice, two large, mechanical arms suddenly rose from under the table. They were extremely shiny and seemed to be made of metal, but at the joints, there were traces of the slight movements that were reminiscent of real flesh.
The large arms scooped up the Thousand Eyed Starfish and placed it into what looked like a furnace.
Prepare the centrifuge! Beginning cooperation…”
Leylin shut his eyes, and black threads shot out from between his brows, connecting to the various apparatus in the laboratory.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
The light flickered, and the apparatus in the laboratory were activated. Any instrument that had a measuring function began to show numbers and pointers on gauges moved.
With the threads of spiritual force, Leylin worked on purifying his spiritual force and began the complicated separation process.
Two hours later, Leylin looked at the half-finished product on the table and nodded.
On the surface of the table was a piece of pink flesh. This had been the fossil of the Thousand Eyed Starfish. Leylin had fully expended the life force within it and had gotten rid of all the olive-coloured eyes.
There was a very troublesome poison held within the eyes of the Thousand Eyed Starfish, and as such, they needed to be removed.
The Thousand Eyed Starfish currently seemed to have returned to its original state, the tender flesh having a gleaming luster, as if it had only just been dug out, and was still covered in a layer of liquid.
“Yes! The separation operation was very successful! All that’s left is the last step.”
Leylin took out the grey-black, high-grade Reactive Potion, of which only half remained. He poured all of it onto the pink flesh.
*Tss tss!*
The moment the grey-black potion was poured onto the flesh, large amounts of steam were produced. Through it, one could see the pink flesh decreasing in size at a rate that could be seen with the human eye. The flesh seemed to shrivel up and turn black.
Leylin expressionlessly used up all the liquid, and then chanted some ancient incantations.
“Wu wu wu…” These incantations were ancient, with a very boundless aura. It sounded like countless conch shells being blown at the same time. Blue waves of energy were like sweeping tides, wrapping around the flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish…
After the blue light dissipated, all that was left was an object the size of a longan.
The object was grey in colour and even had lines that characterized muscle. It looked like salt-cured meat that had not been properly preserved.
The salty meat began to emit the smell of something burning.
*Rumble!*
Upon smelling this, Leylin actually couldn’t help but swallow his saliva, a distinct look of longing appearing from the depths of his heart.
“Eat it! Eat it!”
“Hungry! Hungry! Hungry!”
This thirst seemed to come from every cell in his body. It was extremely difficult to resist, and this feeling was the strongest at his chest, where his heart was.
Leylin could feel every blood vessel in his body pumping in excitement, urging him to swallow that piece of flesh on the table!
“Ah… haha… Primal desires? How can a mere thing like it control me?”
Leylin’s eyes turned a little red, and even his hands began to tremble. However, he did not choose to consume the flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish right away. He first used the A.I. Chip to analyse its composition and nature in detail. During this whole time, the meat in his hand was a huge temptation for him. However, even though every cell in his body shook with excitement, his expression stayed the same, as if he was unaffected, as cool and grim as a glacier that had existed for thousands of years.

In his previous life, he had already developed an extremely staunch willpower. No matter how fierce and deadly the temptation, he could still control and stabilise his inner desires.

[Recorded composition of this object! Saved in folder: Material type- Ancient Creature- Thousand Eyed Starfish!] The A.I. Chip replied.

Only after the stream of data finished working did Leylin gobble down longan sized meat.

*Boom!*

Like a bomb that had exploded, his entire body was paralysed by lightning, like a drunkard who had abstained for years and once more had fine liquor, or like a traveler who was on the verge of death from his thirst and had finally savoured the sweet taste of spring water!

Leylin felt as if his body was floating, lying on the peak of white clouds. There was joy coming from every cell in his body. An exceptionally sweet and refreshing feeling spread from his mouth and down his throat.

The flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish first went to his stomach. Gastric fluid rushed forward, and in just a few seconds, digested it completely.

Streams of water like from a hot spring spread throughout Leylin’s
body, and especially his heart was like a person dying of thirst, greedily absorbing this warm flow. Leylin closed his eyes. He felt as if he was naked, flowing along a warm and comfortable large river. A droplet of something moist suddenly rolled down his face. It was exceptionally sweet, exciting his taste buds to the extreme to the point that he unconsciously began to tear up. For him, who had a physique that far exceeded that of a regular person, it was basically impossible for him to react in such a way, but the flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish was able to do it! “I’m afraid such a taste might make one addicted!” Leylin exclaimed in satisfaction. The process of consuming the Thousand Eyed Starfish was just too comfortable and pleasurable. The stimulation of one’s body and mind was definitely enough to make any regular human addicted! However, Leylin was a Magus, and he was basically invulnerable in terms of his mind. His awareness of himself was as strong as steel, which was how he was able to keep ahold of himself and resist this temptation. At this moment, the robotic voice of the A.I. Chip was heard. [Beep! Detected that the essence from the flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish has entered Host’s body. Determined to be useful to Host body! Beginning absorption…] In that moment, Leylin retreated two steps. He could feel the rate at which he was absorbing the hot stream increase by another level. At the place where his heart was, it was practically a black hole which steadily absorbed the essence. [Beep! Host body has absorbed flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish. Rate of modification of host body’s heart has substantially increased.] The A.I. Chip began to work hard, the screen in front of him changing rapidly. Immediately after, Leylin could see in the column
that displayed his stats, the number that showed the progress of the modification of his heart flying up quickly.

[70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%!]
The number rose like a fiery arrow but faltered slightly at the 90% mark. What came next was an eruption of heat, and the progress broke through 90% to reach 91%, and continued to rise!

[97%! 98%! 99%! 100%!!!]
When the modification of his heart reached 100%, Leylin suddenly felt faint, as if he had been pounded on the head with a large metal hammer.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!*
His heart, surrounded by purple-red light, seemed to stop for a while.
Next, his heart began to once again pump with a huge amount of force!

*Bang! Bang! Bang!*
This force was extremely powerful, to the point that people would be able to hear his heart beating from outside Leylin’s body!
Blood that held hints of purplish red began to form at his heart. Through his arteries, they were transported all over his body.
The purplish-red blood, which had a slight chilling quality to it, formed a stark contrast with the heat from the flesh of the Thousand Eyed Starfish.
Leylin suddenly felt an overwhelming orgasmic feeling coursing through his body. Minutes later, the heat dissipated, and what replaced it was an extremely comfortable, refreshing feeling.

[Beep! Modification of Host body’s heart is complete. Detection of an increase in all body stats. Beginning recalculation of data!]
The sound of the A.I. Chip’s voice was heard, and Leylin found the column with his stats being refreshed again!

85.6, Magic Power: 85 (Magic Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force). Elemental essence conversion: 99%]
In a moment, a feeling of extreme power spread and seeped into his limbs and bones.
“After modifying my heart, it means that I have achieved a fusion of the deepest level with the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Now, it is replacing my blood! In the future, if I have children, they will automatically inherit this Warlock bloodline!” Leylin seemed to sigh, and looked at his stats once again.
“Although my strength and agility did not increase by much, my vitality had increased by a large amount, which makes sense! The physical body is a carrier for the mind and spirit. With a rise in spiritual force, it would naturally require an even more sturdy body to support it!”
From Leylin’s perspective, the body was like a glass, and the spiritual force was like the water in it. The bigger the glass was, the more water and thus, spiritual force it could contain. Conversely, no matter how much water there was, it would be useless if the glass was not large enough to hold it. It might even cause the glass to break.
Hence, many official Magi would think up ways to strengthen their body to adjust and balance their powerful spiritual force.
However, what shocked Leylin the most was the rise in his spiritual force and elemental essence conversion.
“Spiritual force actually went up to 85.6, and elemental essence conversion is even more terrifying. It actually rose to 99%! I think even ancient elemental beings would just be at this level… With these results, I can try my hand at advancing to become a rank 2 Warlock!”
Leylin sighed in contentment.
The requirements for a Warlock to advance was largely similar to a Magus, with the only difference being requirements in the
bloodline.
Leylin’s current bloodline was directly from the ancient creature, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, so there was definitely no problem at all. The conditions to advance to become a rank 2 Magus was for one’s spiritual force to reach 80, and one’s elemental essence conversion to be above 80%!
These were the basic requirements to be promoted to be a rank 2 Magus.
In terms of spiritual force, many Magi were able to reach it. However, they were often stuck in terms of their elemental essence conversion and were hence unable to proceed further.
There were also ambitious people like Caesar and Decarte who had reached the requirements to advance but had not done so. They wanted to push their elemental essence conversion to above 90% to build a stronger foundation and pave the way for their future!
Not only had Leylin currently exceeded the basic requirements in spiritual force, but his elemental essence conversion had even reached the shocking number of 99%!
Besides ancient elemental beings that were made of elemental particles, there was nothing that could have a higher percentage than this.
Leylin was a being made of flesh and blood, rather than elemental particles. To be able to reach 99% was basically reaching the extremes of his limits.
He was extremely clear about this and did not look to increase it any further.
“With the bonus from my bloodline, all of my body’s stats far exceed that of a regular Magus. Now, my elemental essence conversion has even reached 99%. Even in the entire south coast, I doubt that there’s a rank 1 Magus who’s stronger than me.”
Leylin was extremely clear of his ranking.
Compared to the regular Magi who did not have high-grade meditation techniques and were unsure of their futures, Leylin knew exactly what he was going to do. Over a long period of time, regular Magi would need to search for or create a rank 2 spell that was compatible with the spell model they had chosen when they had become a rank 1 Magus and then try to solidify their sea of consciousness within it. This would, of course, all be done after their spiritual force and elemental essence conversion had achieved a certain level. This was all a matter of luck. Even if one were able to succeed by chance, the two spell models could result in disharmony and wear and tear, having an adverse effect on the power of a rank 2 Magus. But Leylin was different. He had a high-grade meditation technique! Every time he advanced, he would generate an innate spell that completely suited his body! What he needed to do now was raise the level of his meditation technique, and train till Kemoyin’s Pupil went up to another level. Only then would he be able to be promoted to a rank 2 Warlock! For Magi who trained in high-grade meditation techniques, as long as they reached a certain level, the technique would automatically push and help a Magus to advance at a rate far faster than regular Magi. “I’ve already reached the basic requirements for Kemoyin’s Pupil to advance to the second level! Next, I’ll have to gather spiritual
force and produce immense energy to make a breakthrough in Kemoyin’s Pupil.”
Information regarding breaking through the second level of Kemoyin’s Pupil flashed by Leylin’s eyes.
“This is a process that requires constant accumulation! With my current condition, this would need around two or three years. However, with some special methods, such as burning up large amounts of spiritual force, for instance, the process can be quickened.”
Leylin serenely closed his eyes, seeming to emit dangerous rays of light…
Time passed slowly, and it was soon night.
The sky was filled with clouds blocking the moon and they had no intentions of moving. In the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, it was immersed in darkness.
Magical lights began to light up, connecting together like pearls as they brought light to the Four Seasons Garden headquarters.
However, even if they used large amounts of light magic, in a huge area like that the headquarters occupied, there would still be much darkness and many shadows.
Beside a flower terrace, dark figures emerged from the shadows, one after another.
All of these figures were wearing black robes with traces of blood on them. The smell of blood on their bodies was so strong that it did not seem like it could dissipate, and their eyes showed no sense of human emotion; all there was a pure desire to kill and vent!
“How is this? It’s the Magi Army from the dark Magi’s headquarters. They’re not that different from the light Magi, are they?”
Leylin and Caesar stood aside. This time, they had used their authority to transfer the patrolling Magi away, personally removed the defense mechanism here, and welcomed these people.
Caesar grinned at Leylin.
“They’re not bad, and are perhaps a lot stronger…” Leylin sucked in a huge breath.
Due to the harsh environments they lived in, they had to have great battling prowess. In general, being able to live until now was only possible with their own two hands.
The army trained by the light Magi had also gone through arduous and bloody battles, but the only way in which they surpassed the dark Magi army was in their cooperation. In terms of individual battle power, they could not compare.
“It’s been already two days since the previous attack. We only have three more days before the investigation team from headquarters arrive! It’ll be troublesome when that happens…”
Caesar’s expression revealed his discontent. “How about Wade? Haven’t you taken care of him yet?”
“He’s concealed himself quite well. The people I sent to search for him haven’t discovered anything yet!” Leylin waved his arms, looking helpless.
“He won’t be able to flee out of the secret plane anyway, so he won’t leak any information. Two days later, it won’t matter even if he meets up with the investigation team!”
“Let’s hope so!” Caesar stared coldly at Leylin for a long while and then forced the words out of his mouth.
He had guessed that Leylin was not doing this work himself and had intentionally let Wade off. However, as long as Wade was not able to spread any information, it would only be a small matter. In terms of general benefits, as long as there were limitations from the contract with Trial’s Eye, Caesar believed Leylin wouldn’t do anything that harmed their interests.
After all, if this operation failed, it was impossible for Leylin to return to Four Seasons Garden. Instead, he’d become a fugitive!
“Isn’t it too conspicuous to bring over all these people? What’s
going to happen if we get found out?”
Leylin looked at the line of dark Magi trailing behind Caesar and asked, a little worried.
The light Magi from headquarters were no fools. With the Lightning Corps around, every single action either he or Caesar took was susceptible to scrutiny, and if they were discovered to have dealings with dark Magi, they would immediately be stared closely at.
“There’s no other choice; we have no more time. In at most three days, or two days at best, we need to bring in enough people and transfer the authority to control the defense system to them!”
Caesar’s face was stern, “I can temporarily arrange for them to stay in a few abandoned laboratories and warehouses. They’re going to leave in a day or two anyway, so we don’t even need to prepare a lot of food or water…”
“Hide in the western warehouse! I’ve already minimized the patrolling officers and sentries there. Here’s the map of the changing of the guards and the warning systems.”
Caesar instructed the dark Magi behind him, and passed a piece of parchment paper to him.
The leader took it silently, and with a fling of his robes he turned into black smoke and left with the dark Magi behind him.
The entire process was extremely quiet, displaying the results of the dark Magi’s training.
Leylin was extremely aware that during the past few days, Caesar and himself had abused their own authority and brought several batches of dark Magi into the headquarters of Four Seasons Garden.
Due to the chaos after the attack, as well as he and Caesar helping to cover up this plan, not a single Magus had discovered that something was amiss.
By the time the authority to command the formation genie was
transferred, the dark Magi would cooperate with those in the external world. Even if all the official Magi within the secret plane now, as well as the two large groups from the Lightning Corps were gathered, they would still be powerless!

Leylin sighed deeply and closed his eyes. He could already imagine the confusion and puzzlement on these Magi as they died.

“Tomorrow, you’ll come with me to unseal the core body of consciousness of the secret plane! After the attack, Desmund added another seal and without enough authority, the formation genie will fight back!”

Caesar’s face was grim.

In the contest to seize the gate, what was most important was obtaining the core body of consciousness belonging to the gate into the secret plane. As long as this was in their possession, they could control the platinum gate outside and prevent light Magi from the external world from entering.

It could be said that the key to seizing control of the secret plane was the core body of consciousness.

After Desmund had reinforced the sealing spell formation, just Leylin’s or Caesar’s authority was not enough to undo the spell formation and retrieve the body of consciousness. Only if they worked together would they have enough power to do so.

This was why Caesar was so tolerant of Leylin.

“Don’t worry! This has already been stated clearly in the contract, so I can’t go back on my word.”

Leylin turned to look at Caesar.

“What’s more important is what I requested of you! How has the preparation for that been coming along?”

When he had made a contract with the rank 2 dark Magi that the Trial’s Eye had bore witness to, Leylin was also able to gain some benefits.

He had requested for a large amount of resources that were only
available to certain dark Magi regions, high-grade academic knowledge, research information and even a promise that allowed him to enter Lighthouse of the Night!

Lighthouse of the Night!
That was the holy land for dark Magi. It had a rank 3 dark Magus in charge, and its reputation was spread everywhere. The original leader had even used his own strength and defeated, with a single blow, the combined attack from the director of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Siley and a few other rank 2 Magi!

Leylin’s request was a little difficult for the rank 2 dark Magus to handle at first.

Though he was a delegate from the Dark Magi Alliance, recommending someone so that they could enter Lighthouse of the Night also required him using a lot of resources and favours.

As for materials, knowledge and the like, it was another huge issue. However, Leylin had absolutely insisted on this, and the dark Magus had no choice but to include this in the contract.

The moment he thought of this, Caesar’s expression became dark and his chest heaved up and down fiercely. Even his breathing had become harsh.

“Don’t worry! The Black Blood Ores, Bone Flowers and other resources have already been sent to your room. As for the promise for you to enter the Lighthouse of the Night, you’ll get it after we succeed here.”

“Very well!” Leylin nodded, and then disappeared into the darkness.

*Pak!* Behind him, there was the sound of something shattering.

……

Two days later, the day before the investigation team arrived.

It was noon, and the blazing heat shined hard upon the ground,
resulting in a heatwave.
Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters in the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane had already regained its vitality. Many light Magi were entering and leaving the Merit Exchange Centre as they completed all sorts of tasks.
The Magi from the outside with neutral stances went out to gather all sorts of resources within the secret plane before coming to the exchange point set up by the Four Seasons Garden and traded them for magic crystals to purchase useful potions and high-grade information.
Everything seemed to be in order.
With Caesar and Leylin heading this work, the headquarters had already returned to its previous prosperity and stability. Of course, this was just on the surface.
Within the shadows, at least fifty dark Magi had been smuggled in, and a few important places with defense spell formations were taken over by dark Magi.
The busy light Magi had absolutely no idea that the headquarters of the secret plane here had already changed ownership.
“How is it? How does it feel to see the headquarters that you built up yourself be destroyed by your own hand?”
A voice travelled from behind Leylin.
Leylin expressionlessly turned, and answered Caesar who approached, “I feel nothing!”
A
fter speaking, Leylin turned to gaze at the bustling market. Life and death happened all the time, much like the way flowers bloomed and withered away. Everything was being transformed in front of his eyes.

“Nothing in the world can escape the decay of time! This is why I’m so set on seeking eternity, which is something I live by!” Leylin sighed deeply in his heart.

The rebuilding of this market was not entirely without reason. At the very least, Leylin had gained quite a bit of experience from managing it. In the future, if he ever needed to take charge of an area where Magi gathered, he knew he could do it much better than before.

Seeing Leylin expression, Caesar snickered inside without showing anything on his face, “Then let us begin as quickly as possible! Someone will move the core body of consciousness today!”

“Alright! Are we finally going to make a move?”

Anticipation flashed in Leylin’s eyes, as they walked side by side as they left.

……

Caliste wore the robes unique to Magi from Four Seasons Garden, and ambled over to the region he was in charge of. Along the way, acolytes stood by the road and bowed to him. He
walked past them expressionlessly, and occasionally nodded aloofly.
“This is it! Respect! Reverence! This is what it feels like to be an official Magus…”
As someone who had just been promoted to be an official Magus, Caliste had yet to adjust to this situation. Such treatment that was reserved for those who were more powerful than the regular human had him feel a little intoxicated. However, all these thoughts vanished after seeing the large hole beside the fort.
At the outer layer of the headquarters of Four Seasons Garden, there was a huge hole. This was the masterpiece done by the dark Magi in their previous attack. Leylin and Caesar had ordered for people to mend this, but it had yet to return to its original state.
As he looked at the light Magi and acolytes who were carrying out construction work, Caliste felt as if all the wounds had been reopened as they sniggered at him.
This huge wound was a disgrace to all the Magi of Four Seasons Garden!
Those darned dark Magi! One day, I, Caliste, shall…” Caliste’s complaints and curses suddenly stopped as he recalled the insane power the dark Magi had displayed.
For a Magus like him who had grown up in a safe environment, every movement from the dark Magi, which were filled with bloodthirstiness and violence, made him feel a little stifled.
In this condition, even those who were of the same rank might lose quite badly.
“If they attack once again, will I be able to do anything?” Caliste was filled with self-doubt. After all, it was his luck that had allowed him to survive while other, more powerful, light Magi had died in battle!
“Hah… I don’t care anymore! There’s still the Lightning Corps, large-scale defense, and amplification spell formations here, as well Lord Caesar and Lord Leylin! With this level of power, there’s definitely no problem for us to hang on for one or two more days. Besides, the people from the headquarters are going to arrive tomorrow!”

Caliste exhaled slowly.

*Boom!*

At this moment, green flames suddenly streaked across the sky like a meteor, a tail of light following behind it.

*Xiu!* Accompanying the flames was the piercing sound of friction with the air.

*Pak!* Green flames rumbled as they exploded in the middle of the sky, forming the image of a green skull!

“This is… the symbol of the dark Magi…” Caliste’s voice became hoarse, his expression displaying his disbelief.

“Enemy attack!”

The patrolling Magi bellowed, and layers of black magical beasts charged forth like a tide.

“The biochemical army of the dark Magi! This is an army made out of cannon fodder, formed due to the radiation and poisoning of beasts in the secret plane! The real enemy is still behind. Activate the defense formation and notify the two Lords!”

Atop the watchtower, a Magus who seemed to be the leader of a team icily roared immediately.

“Activate the Heavenly Fire spell formation! Magi on the ground are to prepare wind spells and fire rain scrolls!”

This little leader was obviously the commander of a zone, and he immediately began to seek permission from the formation genie with his spiritual force.

“Formation genie! Activate the energy amplification spell formation again! The targets are all Magi of Four Seasons Garden!”
The energy amplification spell formation was a large-scale spell formation that would cover the entire area of the headquarters at the secret plane. It could cause Magi who were semi-converted and below to have their power to increase by 10%.

“Received request, verifying authority!”

He could hear the emotionless voice of the formation genie in his mind.

“Verification failed! Spell formation will not be activated!”

However, the formation genie’s next words seemed to throw him down into the abyss.

“What? It didn’t go through?”

The commander’s face changed and he fiercely smashed the stone railing beside him. *Pak!* A huge chunk of green stone fell.

“It happened again! There’s a traitor!”

He turned his head, glancing in the direction of Reynold’s office.

“Is it Caesar? Leylin? Or both of them?”

Magi were not fools in general. The failure to activate the formation genie could be said to be a fluke the previous time, but it had happened again. The scope of people he suspected had been made smaller, and no amount of concealing would work.

Caesar and Leylin did not bother doing that either, as they were already prepared to leave Four Seasons Garden.

“Leader, what do we do?” The female Magus behind him asked anxiously.

“Let’s go!” This Magus looked at the beast horde that was going to arrive soon, and then the platinum gate of the secret plane a distance away. He gritted his teeth and made his choice.

“The situation now is extremely dangerous, and there are also traitors here! The casualties here will definitely be more than the previous time. If you want to survive, leave with me! Immediately! Now!” The leader quickly explained.

He was deemed to be very trustworthy in this team, and a few
members chose to leave with him. The rest stayed behind. At this point, those who chose to stay behind were completely loyal to Four Seasons Garden.

The expression on this commander’s face changed, becoming icy as he led his team members and broke away from the beast wave. Before leaving, he turned back to look at Four Seasons Garden’s defensive line. Though the ranged spell formation of the formation genie could not be activated, there were still a lot of defense Magi who chose to stay behind. Hailstones, storms, flashes of lightning and thunder, and fire raining from the sky could be seen on the defensive line. “I’m sorry!” This leader apologised in his heart and immediately turned to leave.

Magi were a bunch of logical and practical people. The team leader was very clear that the enemies were very aggressive in their attacks, and they even had a highly-ranked spy to provide support. The Magi of Four Seasons Garden here would not end up well. As the defense Magi battled with the army of magical beasts, immense energy waves swept through Four Seasons Garden. In a second, Four Seasons Garden was in chaos once again. Wandering Magi with no affiliation thought back to the previous time this happened and quickly chose to leave. Acolytes were as powerless as ants in this situation, and they could only wail in hopelessness.

On top of that, a few Magi also took the opportunity to conduct some illegal activities, and in a short period of time, the sound from quarrels, wails, and on top of that, the roars from magical beasts coupled with the aura of magic traveled throughout the region. “How terrifying! Oh Four Seasons, did my nightmare reappear?” “Too terrifying! It’s too terrifying!” Caliste mumbled away. As a defense Magus of Four Seasons Garden, it was his duty to protect his homeland. However, his legs
were becoming jelly and started to shift backwards.
*Boom!* At this moment, half a body, from which the other half had been ripped off by a beast, fell from the sky. As the corpse dropped, it sprayed a rain of blood that covered his entire face.
“Ah…” Caliste’s facial muscles twitched, and he no longer hesitated to run in the opposite direction.
While running, his lips moved slightly and a ring of green energy particles appeared, causing his weight to decrease by half. A layer of dense earth armour also emerged on his body.
“I’m sorry…” While Caliste dashed off wildly, he apologised in his heart…
*Boom!*
Just when he passed by a building, the building suddenly began to shake violently, and then exploded in flames. The wave of flames and heat spread out in all four directions, with sparks and rocks flying everywhere. A few acolytes who were nearby turned into ashes instantly in this explosion.
*Bang! Bang! Bang!*
Caliste had his innate defensive spell formation, so he was physically alright. However, a few larger rocks had struck his chest, causing him to pale and fall backwards.
“What happened? How could the dark Magi enter so quickly?” Confusion was apparent on his face, which would be the last expression that he would ever make.
*Tss!* A large crimson sword that was still burning with yellow flames pierced through this Magus’ innate defensive spell formation, sticking into the area where his heart was.
“So there was one more official Magus here! I almost let him escape!”
Behind the cold voice, a Magus in black robes appeared before Caliste’s corpse and pulled out the crimson sword!
He gazed at the ruins around him, unexpectedly producing a crazed
look of enjoyment, “Kill! Cry! Only after feeling the deepest sense of hopelessness will my Weeping Skeleton Sword be able to exhibit its most formidable power!”
He glanced at the acolytes around him that were completely stunned, and the sword in his hand began to flame once more, charging into the crowd of Magi.
Corpses that piled as high as mountains, blood that flowed like the sea!
Caesar had brought in many elite dark Magi troops secretly using his authority, situating them at various core areas and had them unleash attacks together!
Immediately, Four Seasons Garden was turned into a sea of flames once more! Dozens of areas went up in green smoke. Dark Magi brazenly slashed and killed as they liked, venting their innermost desires…
In this situation where attacks were coming from both within and outside, Four Seasons Garden was definitely not going to last long.
"How is it? This is the masterpiece we created together!"

In what had originally been Reynold’s office, Caesar used the formation genie’s observation spell formation to survey the situation in the headquarters of Four Seasons Garden within the secret plane. The sea of blood and flames gave rise to a morbid look of pleasure on his face.

“I don’t feel much! Every living being is born, grows, and dies. Such is the law of nature.”

Leylin answered expressionlessly like a preacher.

The reason why he and Caesar were here was naturally to do something of utmost importance to move the secret plane’s gate’s core body of consciousness!

This process was extremely troublesome, and getting past the defense of the formation genie and sealing spell formation were trivial matters.

A consciousness core was a very delicate and fragile thing that could be obtained from a body. If there was the slightest attack from the external world, it would instantly die. Previously, Caesar had planned on destroying it and had not thought through the process but simply used the most violent methods.

However, it was different now. The person who would hand over the core body of consciousness to the dark Magi needed to ensure its safety. This was an extremely delicate job and there were
immense benefits to it. As long as they possessed the core body of consciousness, that meant that they could control the entrance of the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane!
Such a benefit would cause the light Magi association to lose their senses, much less the dark Magi!
“Who’s going to take over? Can you tell me now?”
Leylin stared hard at Caesar.
Within the office were a huge crowd of dark Magi.
The group of commanders in charge of the core in the secret plane had been completely infiltrated and taken over by dark Magi! This was simply hilarious.
However, no light Magus inside could laugh at the situation because they had all become corpses in the corridor outside.
The dark Magi gave off the feeling of people who had gone through specialised military training, they were swift and decisive in their actions. The smell of blood was so dense on their bodies that it could not dissipate.
These were the elites of the dark Magi! Their battle power was far from what an ordinary Magus could compare to. Even the troops from the Lightning Corps were a level lower than them!
Just standing there gave off a very intimidating pressure.
Compared to them, Leylin only had Number 2 and Number 3 beside him, looking rather pathetic in strength.
“You should be quite familiar with who it is…”
Caesar laughed, seeming to be rejoicing in Leylin’s misfortune.
“It’s me!” A hoarse voice sounded in the room.
Dark green flames spread in the air, eventually turning into a door.
A tall and slender Magus with green eyes in a black robe emerged from the door of flames.
Silver solidified spiritual force particles were hovering around his body. The waves from the spiritual force were like ocean waves spreading across the area.
“Lord Cabourn!” The surrounding Magi quickly bowed. This rank 2 dark Magus was the one that Leylin had seen previously. He was also the person that backed Thousand Meddling Hands; Caesar and Giant’s biological father!
“Keke! We meet again young man!”
The dark green flames in Cabourn’s eyes was extremely vigorous, and he was measuring Leylin up with what seemed to be bad intentions.
“So it’s Lord Cabourn!” Leylin’s expression did not change and he gave a small bow. Inside, however, he was beginning to get nervous, and worked even harder at using the spiritual force compression method from the old witch.
Fortunately, the rank 2 dark Magus fixed his attention on the core body of consciousness.
Cabourn approached the place where the seal had once been. The seal had already been mostly removed by Leylin and Caesar, and this rank 2 Magus would be able to easily dispel the rest.
Cabourn lightly tapped on the floorboard with his shoes. Two sides of the desk split open, revealing the sealing formation below.
At this point, the spell formation had mostly been destroyed and the runes of the spell were dim.
At the centre of the spell formation that had split open, a translucent depression emerged.
White gold flames the size of a pea were burning steadily.
“Is this the core body of consciousness of the platinum gate?” Though these white gold flames were tiny and looked ready to go out, Leylin was able to sense the immense energy and solidified spiritual force within.
This feeling was like lava that had yet to explode. It was like the sea during its tranquil stage, deep and enigmatic, enormous beyond belief!
“This is it! This is it!”
The rank 2 Magus, Cabourn, mumbled in a bewitched manner. Next, he turned to the Magi present. “What happens next is that I’ll take over here until our people completely occupy this place!”

The core body of consciousness of the gate of the secret plane was basically like a key to the gate. It was extremely important. In order to prevent any accidents or unexpected situations, the rank 2 dark Magus was going to take the core far away or destroy it right away.

“Black Blood Corps! You are to guard the corridor that leads to this area. Unless I order you to do otherwise, do not let anyone enter!”

Cabourn immediately began to arrange defensive duties. After giving the dark Magi in the room their orders, the rank 2 dark Magus switched his attention to Leylin, eyes unable to conceal his desire to toy around with him. It looked like he was eyeing a white mouse inside a laboratory.

“Magus Leylin! The Dark Magi Alliance has seen your efforts. I wonder if I can get you to do a little more?”

Caesar, who was standing behind Cabourn, began to snicker. From his point of view, Leylin now held no value, and anyone controlled by his father in this situation would not have a good ending.

“What is it?” Leylin’s face did not change.

“Please die!”

Cabourn grinned strangely, and suddenly made his move! Silver solidified spiritual force unhesitatingly swept through the office, books and bookshelves flying everywhere and turning into dust under the silver light.

The rank 2 Magus, Cabourn, was actually not at all afraid of the contract with the Trial’s Eye and had brazenly raised his hand against Leylin!

Silver solidified spiritual force transformed into strange, huge bony claws, and bright red blood seemed to drip from the joints!

“You dare threaten me! A rank 1 Magus like you actually dared to threaten me, Cabourn! You even treated Caesar that way! I want to
extract your spirit and roast it under White Bone flames for ten thousand years…”
Cabourn roared.
*Shua!*
Leylin’s expression was solemn as he faced a rank 2 Magus who was going all out against him and in peak condition.
A layer of dense black scales emerged on his body. At the same time, the defensive layer from the Fallen Star Pendant formed on his body, turning into a phantom set of armour. Leylin immediately entered his strongest defensive state.
*Weng!*
Brownish-yellow gravitational spell formation appeared in front of his chest, instantly covering an area of over a hundred meters.
A gravitational power of more than 40 times stronger than normal descended.
As if affected by gravity, the strange white bone claws sunk down a little, their speed also slowing.
“Latent Fireball!” Leylin rapidly chanted incantations, and a huge black fireball emerged, constantly expanding in midair. Two blood-red eyeballs were formed, as well as a blazing tongue that emerged from its mouth.
A huge serpent blazing with black flames hissed as it went forward, mercilessly colliding with the strange white claws.
*Rumble!*
An immense explosion swept through the office.
“You…” Cabourn was alarmed and immediately swung his arms. A black defensive layer immediately protected the area where the core body of consciousness was.
Next, black and silver-white energy began to extend and wreak havoc in the surroundings.
First the floorboards, then the window ledges, roof…
A giant black mushroom cloud ascended at the place where the two
spells had collided and constantly became larger, eventually turning
into a large round shape that devoured everything.
The tremendous explosion even caused the battle going on not far
away to be silenced. The dark Magi who were manipulating the
magical beasts and the light Magi who were defending to the death
had all halted, fearfully glancing at the scene at the centre of the
headquarters.
By the time everything quietened down, what had been Reynold’s
office had been levelled, and the buildings nearby had all
disappeared.
Even a few layers of the ground had been shaved off.
The dark Magi who Cabourn had sent to stand guard had all been
hit and they were lying around, fresh blood and broken limbs all
over the place. If not for their immense power and formidable
innate defensive spells, they would most likely be corpses instead
of being heavily injured!
Caesar, who was behind Cabourn, was in an even worse state. He
had been swept by the immense energy to over a hundred metres
away, buried in a pile of ruins. It was unknown whether he was
still alive or dead.
Leylin staggered backwards, paling.
Behind him, Number 2 and Number 3 had lost their robes,
revealing their firm muscles and the runes branded onto their
bodies.
“You…”
Cabourn raised a bony finger and pointed it at Leylin, his
expression full of disbelief.
Though he had split his attention to taking care of the core body of
consciousness, he had spent 70 – 80% of his power on the white
bony claws, and Leylin had actually been able to take it on!
Compared to a few days ago, he was now able to exhibit his full
strength! He had not held back at all!
To think that this level of attack had been taken on by Leylin. Had he reached the level of a rank 2 Magus?
Cabourn was speechless.
“Looks like my guess was right! You still have a way to evade the contract made with the Trial’s Eye!”
At one side, Leylin fell back and stared hard at Cabourn.
For him, there was only one Magus, Cabourn, who would be able to threaten him. Everyone else could be disregarded.
Though Leylin and Cabourn had signed the contract with the Trial’s Eye, how could he, who liked to engage in wordplay, actually believe in it?
It wasn’t as if there was no way to undo the contract with the Trial’s Eye. The last time, Thousand Meddling Hands had given Leylin the solution of the Nefarious Filthbird feathers which had destroyed one side of the contract. What made Leylin more uneasy was that this liquid had come from the hands of Cabourn, this rank 2 Magus! Though it was impossible to find another solution of the Nefarious Filthbird feathers, for Magi like them, they did have ways to achieve a similar effect. After all, the people behind Thousand Meddling Hands was the Dark Magi Alliance, which had at least a rank 3 dark Magus in charge!

If Leylin actually believed in that contract, then he must be a fool! Caesar in front of him was a very good example! He was a Magus of Four Seasons Garden that was highly regarded. The force of the contract on him must be even stricter, and yet he had been able to betray Four Seasons Garden without the slightest hesitation. He must have used some method to break away from the effect of the contract. Hence, though they had stated in the contract that they would not attack each other, Leylin did not take this to heart. Just as expected, the rank 2 Magus had outrageously attacked him after obtaining what he’d wanted, not caring about the effects of the contract. This meant that he had destroyed his side of the
contract. Fortunately, Leylin had been wary of this rank 2 Magus from the start and been able to improve his strength after modifying his heart. Only then was he able to take on the attack. “How… How were you able to retaliate? How are you able to break away from the influence of the contract?” Cabourn first disregarded his shock at Leylin’s strength, and first asked this question. The contract with the Trial’s Eye was not something to be made light of, otherwise it would not be used so extensively. Besides its mortal enemy the Nefarious Filthbird, there were few other ways to deal with this sort of contract. Even he himself needed guidance and help from the rank 3 Magus in charge of the Dark Magi Alliance and paid a large price to eliminate the limitations of the contract on his end. The meaning of ‘eliminating the limitations of the contract on his end’ was to remove the effect of the Trial’s Eye on him, while Leylin would still be bound by the contract. In other words, he could attack Leylin, but Leylin would not be able to strike back. The moment he did, the Trial’s Eye would punish him! It was because of this that he had been so fearless and brazen in wanting to eliminate this untrustworthy factor first! However, the powerful effects of Trial’s Eye did not work on Leylin. How could this not surprise him?

“Could it be that Leylin also trained in some magic that is similar to “Three Souls in a Body”? Cabourn was beginning to realise that he could not fathom this young Magus. His son, Caesar, had used the special effects of Three Souls in a Body that allowed Caesar to violate the contract with Four Seasons Garden. He had died once, and after the effects of Trial’s Eye had completely disappeared, he had come back to life and thus evaded
the power of the contract. Cabourn did not think Leylin had any rank 3 Magus aiding him, and the only other way for this situation to happen was that he trained in some ancient techniques! “Fools!” Cabourn glanced around coldly, and then coldly hummed. Due to the immense explosion, they had exposed themselves entirely to the light Magi. There were already a few wandering light Magi that wanted to investigate and find out what was happening. Their surroundings had turned into barren land, and only the place sealing the core body of consciousness had a layer of black energy guarding it.
A few Magi wearing the uniform of the Lightning Corps had quickly made their way here. The leader was someone Leylin was extremely familiar with. It was the vice-leader that Desmund had left behind, who was a formidable peak rank 1 Magus. “The Lightning Corps? What an eyesore!” Cabourn let out a roar as if he had some animosity towards them, and he moved his arms forward, “Withering Breath!” A ring of silver-gray stream was generated between his hands, and like a tornado violently revolved towards the Lightning Corps. This stream seemed to have an immense corrosive effect and produced long, deep tracks on the ground. In an instant, it arrived before these Magi.
*Tss tss!* The stream charged towards a Lightning Corps Magus. With a strange expression on his face, he suddenly began to wither. In the blink of an eye, this powerful Magus had turned into a dried up corpse and collapsed to the ground. “Keke!” Cabourn laughed in a way that sent shivers down one’s spine, and the silver-grey tornado killed the Magi one by one. It then pounced towards the face of the vice-leader, who was struck
with hopelessness.

“The rank 2 Magus, Deathbringer Cabourn! Lighting’s Fury!”
The vice-leader of the Lightning Corps obviously recognised Cabourn and roared, raised his metal arm and struck towards the tornado!
With his movement, two large balls of lightning appeared in front of his fists.
The huge lightning fists brought with it thunder, flames, and inexhaustible fury, and hissed as it pounced towards the silver-gray tornado in the air.
Unexpectedly, the two lightning fists charged into the tornado and somehow completely disappeared without even having produced a sound.
“Pu!” The vice-leader paled and coughed out black-red blood that emitted some grey gas.
“Keke! Ever since I suffered a loss the previous time, did you think I wouldn’t research your lightning magic?”
Cabourn could not stop with his strange laughter, and the huge tornado continued to howl as it sucked this man in.
*Woo woo…*
The tornado constantly revolved where it was, and in a few seconds, dissipated, revealing the scene within.
*Pak!* A spotlessly white skeleton fell the moment the tornado disappeared, which cracked in many places before turning into powder.
What had been the vice team-leader had had his flesh and blood stripped from him. Even the life force in his bones had not been let off.
Cabourn was able to take care of the Lightning Corps in a single blow. Such fearsome power intimidated the light Magi nearby, and the Magi of Four Seasons Garden unhesitatingly turned to leave quickly.
Though they were loyal to Four Seasons Garden, they were no fools! A person able to kill a peak rank 1 Magus had to have reached the level of a rank 2 Magus! If they went up against this sort of Magus, then they were simply committing suicide!

Cabourn nodded in satisfaction and turned to look at Leylin. “I’ve taken care of the hindrance. Now it’s time for us to start again…”

Leylin had been standing quietly while Cabourn had attacked and slaughtered the members of the Lightning Corps. Nobody had an idea of what he was thinking about.

“It’s time!” All of a sudden, Leylin exclaimed quietly. “What time is it?” Cabourn suddenly felt cold, having a bad premonition.

*Weng Weng…* The sound of something vibrating emerged, and the metal gate to the secret plane across the center of Four Seasons Garden began to buzz.

The Magi were no strangers to this situation. This had happened just once before, and this was when a rank 2 Magus had brought in a whole army of Magi through the gate of the secret plane!

*Tssss!* Blue electric currents swept along the metallic gate. What had been a cloudless blue sky suddenly dimmed, and dark clouds appeared. A pair of large hands formed out of lightning charged in through the gate and swept through the dark Magi around.

In an instant, the dark Magi who had been brazenly plundering and looting turned into ash with shock still apparent on their faces.

What followed the large hands was a blonde, burly man with a lightning symbol on his forehead that gave off eye-catching rays. “Desmund!” Cabourn gritted his teeth as he forced out this name.

Next, he gave Leylin a withering look, “Did you do this?”

Within the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, the only person who
was so clear about their plan and was able to communicate with the external world was Leylin! What Cabourn just could not understand was how this would benefit Leylin. What he had done was enough for the Light Magi Alliance to kill him hundreds of times. Even if he disclosed this information, he would still not be let off lightly. In addition, Leylin had offended both the dark and light Magi, so there was no way he would be in a good situation. However, Cabourn did not have any time to think about this. Desmund looked at the scene around them, shocked, and blue rays of light floated from the bodies of what had been the Lightning Corps, launching into the mark at Desmund’s forehead. This burly man was immediately overcome by fury. “Cabourn, you despicable maggot! A cowardly fool that only knows to run! I’ll definitely twist off your head and trample it for ten thousand years at my parliament hall!” Desmund roared and covered himself in blue lightning. *Ka-cha!* A tremendous lightning bolt split open the heavens and, in a straight line, landed on Desmund’s hand, turning it into a weapon that looked like a pike. *Xiu!* Desmund’s figure streaked across the sky and appeared before Cabourn. “Repulsive!” Cabourn’s eyelids blinked rapidly, and two lines of silver-gray tornados shot out from his hands. Large tornados thundered and combined into a larger tornado that wrapped him within. Like a lightning god, Desmund charged into the midst of the tornado, and one could vaguely see two figures wandering within. The violent tornado floundered around at will, and any Magus
which came into contact with it instantly turned into a withered corpse or was burnt to ashes by stray lightning bolts.

“They’re finally gone!”

Leylin glanced at the two rank 2 Magi that were fighting and revealed a smile of relief.

Though he had already modified his heart and was indefinitely closer to the world of a rank 2 Magus and could be said to be the strongest rank 1 Magus in history, he was still a rank 1 Magus! There was still a huge divide behind him and a rank 2 Magus.

Though he had been able to take on an attack from Cabourn, but if they were to continue battling, he was only confident in his abilities to escape.

This was something that was simply unacceptable!
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Though there were a few issues, everything is mostly going to plan!”
With a smile about his face, he walked towards the sealing spell formation that Cabourn was protecting.
“Leave this place!”
All of a sudden, a familiar voice travelled to his ears.
The instant he heard this voice, ten black figures appeared and surrounded Leylin.
Leylin was very familiar with the leader. It was Giant of the Thousand Meddling Hands! His legs had been regenerated, and the mist about him was denser than ever before.
Beside him, Caesar had been rescued and was full of dust. He looked to be in a sorry state, and stared hatefully at Leylin.
“Leylin, you dare betray us! You dare betray the honour of us dark Magi…”
“Stop!” Leylin was a little speechless as he interrupted Giant’s speech. “Aren’t dark Magi a group of creatures that only look up to benefits? Since when was there anything about honour?”
He glanced at Giant, who looked pale, “If you want to seek revenge, tell me! Don’t bother with the pretense!”
Giant paused, his face turning red.
“Yes, I want to seek revenge! What I have here are elite dark Magi whose elemental essence conversions are all over 70%! I admit that you’re strong, but as long as you’re not a rank 2 Magus, you
definitely won’t be able to survive the attack of so many of us Magi.”
Giant pointed at the dark Magi around him. “You actually dared to kill Little Boy and treat me this way!” His facial muscles began to twitch.
Being defeated so thoroughly by Leylin was the worst kind of humiliation for him.
“Ah… I want to kill you, peel off your skin, and make it my carpet!” Giant roared.
“Your threat is absolutely… Lacking in creativity…”
Leylin heaved a tiny sigh. Even though he was encircled by so many dark Magi, he still had the mood to scan his eyes over the situation in the Four Seasons Garden.
Even Number 2 and Number 3 behind him seemed to be influenced by him, and were not the slightest bit worried.
With the addition of the Lightning Corps, the complete defeat of Four Seasons Garden’s end seemed to less certain. The dark and light Magi had now broken into countless smaller groups and were battling.
In the heart of it all was the large tornado, within which Desmund and Cabourn were fighting.
The tyrannical tornado turned everything, whether it was Magi or buildings, into powder in an instant!
At the heart of the tornado, two figures could be seen rapidly exchanging blows.
Lightning currents were scattered everywhere, sometimes penetrating through the tornado and causing large numbers of casualties.
“It’s really chaotic…”
Leylin sighed, seeming to pity Caesar and Giant while he looked at them, “Leave immediately, and I might even let you off!”
“Are you trying to humiliate me?” Caesar and Giant spoke at the
same time. Though they had seen how formidable Leylin was, they did not think that Leylin would be able to survive the joint attack of so many Magi. Naturally, they thought of Leylin’s words as a bluff. Giant was even more angered, and he waved his arm. “Attack!” Immediately, all the dark Magi around him attacked. Corrosive curses, Exhausting Hand, Toxic Clouds, Acid Lightning, Ice Bolts, and all sorts of insidious spells turned into colourful rays of light that hurtled towards Leylin like a wave. Every single attack was had an offensive power of at least 45 degrees! This level of attack was something a peak rank 1 Magus would definitely be unable to handle. Without even being able to flee, they would be seriously injured and die under this joint attack. However, Leylin was different. After the successful modification of his heart and the mixing of his bloodline with the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, he was infinitely close to a rank 2 Magus, despite not yet reaching that point! It could be said that he was the strongest peak rank 1 Magus in history! “Shadow Domain!” In the face of such an attack, Leylin loudly chanted an incantation and made a weird sign with his hands, and then pressed them to the ground. *Weng!* A strange ring of black quickly extended everywhere with Leylin in the centre, instantly covering hundreds of meters. This was a domain-type attack which Leylin had come up with by studying shadows. Though the effect could not compare to true domain-specific magic, its power was still rather similar! In the Book of Giant Serpent, the great Magus Serholm had once mentioned that Magi of high ranking had a skill that could affect large areas. They were able to control a large territory and suppress
the innate skills of any Magus with a lower ability than them, causing the power of lower-leveled Magi within the area to become weakened.
If a Magus was of a high enough ranking, they could even come up with their own laws within the domain!
It could be said that in one’s own domain, a highly ranked Magus was basically a godly existence!
Leylin obviously had yet to reach that level. The “Shadow Domain” he had come up with was just an imitation that didn’t even have the effect of suppressing the abilities of Magi within. All it did was amplify his own attacks, but this also represented his ambition!
[Shadow Domain! Rank 1 Area attack effects: Instantly produce a shadow domain of 100m x 100m, within which the host body’s agility is increased by 30%, rate of recovery of spiritual force is increased by 10%, and resistance to elements is increased by 10%!
Duration: 5 minutes. Consumption: 15 Spiritual force and 15 Magical power!]
In the blink of an eye, darkness consumed the dark Magi beside Leylin.
All types of magical attacks soundlessly vanished after the appearance of the shadow. Not a single wave of energy was produced.
Immediately after, like a fish in water, Leylin seemed to become the devil king of the night. He began to harvest the lives of the Magi within the domain.
The low and horrifying shrieks of exclamation was heard in the darkness.
In just ten or so seconds, the shadows in this area pulled back and returned to Leylin’s feet.
The dark Magi who had surrounded him were in a state of shock, their emotions frozen on their faces.
*Pu!* A stream of air blew past, and a sound was heard.
A Magus in front of Leylin exploded into foam.
*Pu! Pu! Pu! Pu!*  
As if causing some chain reaction, the dark Magi exploded one by one, turning into pulps of human flesh.
Bright red blood mist pervaded this area.
Within the blood mist, there were still two figures that were not dead.
They were the Caesar and Giant, who were parts of a single spirit that had been split into different bodies. They were now full of wounds that looked like they had been caused by metal slicing against their flesh, blood dying their clothes as they collapsed into an unconscious heap.
Leylin was still not a rank 2 Magus after all, and did not want to attract Cabourn’s attention. If Cabourn ever decided on giving up on his current opponent, and decided to cause him trouble, it would be a huge headache for him. Hence, Leylin had chosen to leave them alive.
“Latent fireball!”
Seeing the dark Magi elites having been taken care of in an instant, whether it was the dark or light Magi, nobody dared to provoke Leylin, and they came to a tacit understanding, leaving the area right away. They left this place to Leylin.
Leylin came to the place where Cabourn had set up the black layer, and raised his hand, a black fireball the size of a fist appearing in his palm.
“Go!” Leylin made a tossing motion, and a black fireball streaked through the air, colliding against the layer and beginning to burn.
Drops of black liquid melted on the layer, and were quickly evaporated.
Leylin’s control over his spiritual force was now extremely refined. In his hands, the Latent Fireball was able to have an immense destructive force, and even attack while not making any sound and
limiting its power.

*Po!*
The black layer kept vibrating and was eventually unable to endure the attack, cracking into little pieces, and revealing the sealing spell formation within.

Due to the special attention Cabourn, a rank 2 dark Magus had put into protecting it, the area in which the sealing spell formation was perfectly fine despite Leylin’s previous attack.

One could even see a circular trace on the floor as the boundaries of the layer broke off.

“The core body of consciousness of the gate to the secret plane!” Leylin’s eyes saw nothing else. He concentrated on the white gold flames of the core within the sealing spell formation, eyes revealing his enchantment by it.

“Go according to the original plan!” He spoke to Number 2 and Number 3 behind him, and headed into the spell formation.

“Understood, Master!”

Number 2 and Number 3 glanced at each other. In their eyes, one could see a resolute expression and even preparation to die! As slaves bound spiritually to Leylin, even if Leylin wanted them to commit suicide, they would do so without any qualms.

Next, they each produced a crimson, diamond-shaped crystal.

“For the glory of Master!”

Number 2 and Number 3 roared, and shattered the crystals. A crimson screen emerged from the fragments of the crystal, and encased the area encompassed by the spell formation.

These two crimson crystals were actually single-use spell formations. Judging the defensive power of the crimson screen, it could be said that this was very valuable.

“Woo woo…”

Like the howls of a grieving spirit, or perhaps the laments of suffering, the wails of sorrow that came from the spirit sounded
throughout the headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden. Along with the sound, tiny black runes appeared on the buildings around them. These runes twisted here and there like little tadpoles or stretched out snakes, seeing to be very mysterious and strange. The runes assembled and eventually formed a large-scale spell formation. The spell formation had quite a wide range and included basically the entire headquarters. Whether it was the defensive area at the frontlines or the entrance to the secret plane at the back, they were all covered in these black runes. Streams of black light constantly combined, and due to the continuous battles, even a few layers of the earth were scraped off. However, these black streams arranged themselves and immediately filled in the craters! This massive spell formation had been immediately activated!
Along with the sound of wails, milky-white and dull red rays began to appear and shine all around the battlefield. These spots of light were very bright, with some of them even illuminating a vague human face. The Magi nearby kept crying out in alarm because what they saw within were the faces of their family and friends!

“Spirits! This is a spell formation that specifically targets the spirits of those who died in battle!”

A Magus not far away immediately yelled, “Where have I seen something that can cover such a large area and not destroy anything before…”

These white and red spots seemed to be attracted by an immense force and shot towards the surface of the crimson light screen at the centre of the spell formation.

*Tss tss!*

The spirits dissolved into the crimson screen the moment they touched it. The crimson screen did not refuse anything that approached it. Whether it was the spirit of an acolyte or a Magus, whether dark or light Magi, all of these spots of light which represented spirits were absorbed into it.

As the number of spirits that it absorbed increased, the reddish
layer became darker until, in the end, it became a dark red large-scale defensive spell formation.

“It targets just spirits! This is magic that the Light Magi Alliance ordered to be made a forbidden technique! It even dares to gather the spirits of Magi! This is simply blasphemous!”

The eyes of a Magus with a snowy-white beard turned red. Just now, he had personally witnessed his lover’s spirit being absorbed by that sinister screen. Even without using his brain, it was obvious that Leylin did not have any good intentions in gathering these spirits.

“Destroy it quickly!”

This sinister black spell formation immediately caused the magicians present much fear. Whether dark or light Magi, neither wanted their spirits to be extracted and used by anyone else. All sorts of magic such as frost arrows, fireballs, mysterious spirit spells and holy magic of the light element struck and exploded against the building that was filled with runes.

*Rumble!*

Under the joint attack of the Magi, the building was quickly reduced to ashes, but the black runes were like brands deeply etched into the air. Even the residual energy of the battle in the tornado between two rank 2 Magi was not enough to destroy these runes.

“I remember what this is! It’s the Large Formation of Ten Thousand Spirits: Hades’ Sacrificial Rites!” The Magus who had previously recognised the function of the spell formation yelled again.

“This is a forbidden technique that was considered taboo even in ancient times! It’s able to absorb all the spiritual energy from the spirits of the dead within its range. As it has a trace of protection from Hades, before the time limit is up, it will not disappear…”

“I’ve heard about this spell formation too! Hasn’t it been lost
though?”
The Magi stopped their attacks and turned their attention to the
dark red screen in the centre of Four Seasons Gardens, their eyes
displaying their fear.
The huge black spell formation constantly thundered as it absorbed
large numbers of spirits. Such a strange sight caused even the
magical beings outside to feel a sense of dread.
The battlefield was silent. Whether it was the dark or light Magi or
even the rank 2 Magi who were battling shifted their attention to
find out what was happening with the crimson screen.
Within the crimson screen.
Leylin gazed at the white-gold flame in his hand and grinned.
“Power!” He spoke.
He had not had any intentions of abiding by the rules of the
contract made with the Trial’s Eye. All that he did was for this thing
that was now in his hands!
All that talk about a recommendation to enter Lighthouse of the
Night was just a smokescreen. Compared to relying on another
organisation, how could it be any better than the thrill of freedom?
As for the contract with the Trial’s Eye? That was just a joke in
Leylin’s eyes!
Using the solution from the feathers of the nefarious filthy bird, he
was easily able to remove traces of the contract from his body.
Though there was only one portion of the solution, Leylin still
possessed many Void Hallucination Flowers!
This flower had a very unique property in that with some simple
methods it could imitate all sorts of complicated ingredients! It was
for this reason that the Void Hallucination Flower was an essential
ingredient in ancient potions!
Giant had delivered the solution of the feathers of the Nefarious
Filthbird into Leylin’s hands. Leylin had confirmed the authenticity
of the item and did not consume it straight away, but had instead
used the A.I. Chip to record the details concerning the composition of this solution!

Next, after many rounds of testing and a little help from the A.I. Chip at the atomic level, Leylin successfully made use of the Void Hallucination Flower and simulated the composition of the solution!

What happened next was obvious.

With his authority of seven stars for the formation genie, he had naturally secretly carved the runes for the Large Formation of Ten Thousand Spirits and prepared for today.

The runes and the setting up of the energy points was naturally information that he had gathered from the Book of Giant Serpent.

Based on records regarding Kemoyin’s Pupils, Leylin needed to burn up large amounts of spiritual force and stimulate his high-grade meditation technique in order to spur on his own advancement to becoming a rank 2 Warlock.

Rather than accumulating slowly, he could use large amounts of ownerless spiritual force to replace what he required with this method!

Spiritual force was as precious as one’s own blood. If one were to burn up large amounts of their own spiritual force, this would definitely result in very dire consequences. And even if one could advance, a long period of time would be needed to recover from the damage.

If he were to use spiritual force from the external world, this would not be a problem! If there was enough spiritual force and it was pure enough, it might even support the Magus and set up a strong foundation for them!

After being made aware of this fact, Leylin immediately fixed his attention on the core body of consciousness.

This core body of consciousness had formed after tens of thousands of years, and had a tremendous amount of spiritual
force. However, its intelligence was very weak and was not even comparable to a three-year-old. It was for this reason that it was so easily caught and sealed by Magi.

The spiritual force that would stimulate the meditation technique to power up would require refinement and purification of his own foundations.

Hence, Leylin chose to use the Large Formation of Ten Thousand Spirits in the Book of Giant Serpent, which was a formidable forbidden technique used specifically to accumulate spiritual power.

What this formation needed was a battlefield, and the deaths of many Magi who were extremely powerful in terms of their spiritual force. Leylin had therefore decided to activate it at this point of time.

In the external world, most of the light and dark Magi had already died. The spirits of these Magi and acolytes, and even magical beasts, had turned into fuel for Leylin’s advancement!

“Let’s not waste time. Let’s begin!”

With a thought from Leylin, milky-white and dark red spiritual spots were like moths flying into flames, pouncing towards the white-gold light in the palm of his hand.

At this moment, Leylin seemed to feel the howls of a confined consciousness at the heart of the white-gold flame.

The spiritual spots were numerous but were heterogeneous. The core body of consciousness had a boundless spiritual force, but had a very weak consciousness.

As these two collided it was like boiling oil meeting water, they created a violent reaction.

With the interference from the Large Formation of Ten Thousand Spirits: Hades’ Sacrificial Rites, the script that Leylin had prepared was beginning to put on a good show.

The flames, which had only been the size of a bean, suddenly
expanded and burned furiously. Just like that, the spirit spots were razed to ashes.

However, these spots seemed to be boundless. Even though the spots in front of them had been burnt to nothingness, they still did not hesitate to pounce towards the flames. This was especially so for the spiritual spots that belonged to official Magi. They could survive in the flame for a long time, almost extinguishing the white-gold flames.

Eventually, the consciousness of the white-gold flame became increasingly weak. All the impurities in the spiritual spots had disappeared, and the consciousness vanished, causing it to be extremely pure.

A clean, pure, ownerless spiritual force began to be produced from the heart of the flames.

……

Sometime later, Leylin focused on the silver flames in front of him, his eyes revealed his joy.
This was the crystallised spiritual force that he had refined. It combined the spiritual force that the platinum gate had gathered after many years, with the spiritual force essence from the Magi that had died in battle.

“The effects are even better than I expected! Total amount of spiritual force has increased by 22%.”

Leylin mumbled quietly, and then looked towards the silver flame. There, a white-gold ball of light like a ping pong ball hovered, emitting spiritual waves that Leylin almost did not notice.

However, the spiritual waves seemed to communicate with the silver flames, and there was even an urge to return to within the silver flames.

This was the consciousness that he had separated. After fights with
other spirits, it had become very weak and would probably be destroyed with just a blow from Leylin. However, as long as it was still not destroyed, the crystallised spiritual force flames in Leylin’s possession would never be able to be considered pure.

“My apologies!”

Leylin spoke to the ball of light, and then blew!

*Pu!* Like a bubble, it popped, and the ball completely broke open and it was on the verge of disappearing in the air.

With the destruction of the core body of consciousness, the crystallisation of the silver flames in Leylin’s hands were transparent, like a totem of flames created using crystal. It produced a very pure feeling.

This was its form after removing its pure consciousness.

[Large amounts of crystallisation of spiritual force. Purity: 100%]

The A.I. Chip came up with a conclusion.

“100%?” Leylin shook his head.

He was clear that at this point, he would not be able to identify the impurities in the spiritual force, and it could not be said to be perfect.

The spirit was a wondrous thing. Even the A.I. Chip right now was unable to examine it properly. Though it might not be able to detect a few ingredients, this did not mean that rank 4 or 5 great Magi would not be able to find out.

In the Book of Giant Serpents, there was a warning from the great Magus Serholm. This spiritual force seemed to be very pure, but in actuality, there were still a few spiritual marks left behind and could not be absorbed! Otherwise, the road ahead would be difficult, and might even cause residual effects.
“However I don’t want to absorb it, but to use it as a single-use stimulant to level up the meditation technique!”

Leylin chuckled and reached for the crystal in the heart of the flames.

*Weng!* *Weng!* *Weng!*

The spiritual force crystal glistened as it turned into a large silvery flame that engulfed Leylin within.

Where the crimson light screen formation was. The Magi outside would naturally not know what happened in here, but at this moment Leylin destroyed the secret plane’s core body of consciousness!

*Weng!* *Weng!* *Weng!*

The giant metal gate of the Four Seasons Garden headquarters creaked loudly as various runes on it dimmed! Right after, large cracks began to appear on the surface of the gate.

*Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!*

The noise produced from the giant metal gate was akin to that of ice cubes melting, as chunks of the gate began to melt like lava and rolled to the ground.

Under these circumstances, even the two rank 2 Magi inside the tornado stopped fighting and directed their gaze towards this scene. Finally, with the faces of the dark and light Magi showing their disbelief, the gate collapsed and produced a large amount of grime
and dust!

“The secret plane’s entrance has self-destructed! Damn it! That Leylin must have destroyed the core!”

Cabourn who was in the tornado charged at the crimson light screen formation.

As for Desmund, his eyes gleamed as he remained rooted to the spot, not planning to stop Cabourn.

At this moment, outside of the crimson light screen formation, Number 2 and Number 3 brandished their metal greatswords, which were even larger than they were. The brands on their body shone resplendently and surrounding them lay the bodies of countless magicians.

All these were magicians who had foolishly rushed forward earlier to stop Leylin from harvesting the spirits from both dark and light faction. However, under the two Branded Swordsmen’s teamwork, they were all slain here.

Branded Swordsmen had always been one of the stronger classes in ancient times. This could clearly be seen from the mighty battle prowess stemming from Number 2 and 3.

Regular semi-converted Magi were not their match at all. Even if those Magi were a tad stronger, under the combination of the instantaneous spell casting innate to their bodies and their battle techniques, the Magi were still easily disposed of.

Formidable physical qualities with an expert fighting technique, combined with instantaneous spell casting abilities have granted Number 2 and Number 3 the title of meat grinders on the battlefield. It required at least a peak rank 1 Magus to finish both of them.

However, how rare was a peak rank 1 Magus?

Previously, Leylin had already swept the battlefield clean of the peak rank 1 Magi. Not to mention those dark Magi spies who were now dead, and even Caesar and Giant were severely injured and
unconscious. At this moment, Number 2 and Number 3 were unstoppable!
However, no matter how powerful a Branded Swordsman was before they advanced, they weren’t a match for rank 2 Magi With the attack from Cabourn, Number 2 and Number 3 looked at each other with undying loyalty written over their faces. “For our Master!”
They grunted as the brand and runes on their bodies flashed ten times more powerful than before as they charged to receive Cabourn’s attack. “You’re overestimating your abilities!” Cabourn smirked and released two black tornados from his hands. *Sssii!* The tornados which contained a corrosive effect hit the Branded Swordsmen bodies, but it only left several white marks. Their skin was even intact. “En? What kind of modification is this?” This time, it was Cabourn who was astonished. However, he no longer had any time. At this moment, Number 2 and Number 3 bodies began to bloat, like two over-inflated balloons, as they came to Cabourn’s side. *Boom!* *Boom!* Two huge explosions sounded. As a Branded Swordsman, in front of an unbeatable foe, there was always a final move! This was to fully detonate all of the brands on their body to generate a powerful one-time attack! In theory, this attack was to use the life force of the Branded Swordsman, the energy particles attracted by the runes and even the spirit that would be detonated all at once! A rank 1 Branded Swordsman’s self-detonation, which could even be a threat to a rank 2 Magus! When Leylin made modifications to the Branded Swordsman, he
also increased the explosive effect of the detonation. 
As this information of the Branded Swordsman’s trump card was not known to many, even Cabourn as a rank 2 Magus had never heard of it before. Hence, he had received two such explosive attacks without any suspicions.
Two giant red mushroom clouds formed in the air, whistling through the skies as they engulfed Cabourn completely. These flaming mushroom clouds even had scarlet flames at their edges. Anything that the flames touched, be it Magi or concrete, would be instantly dissolved.
“What kind of spell is this? The might is infinitely nearing that of a rank 2 spell!”
The eyes of the surroundings Magi twitched as they scrambled away as if having seen a ghost.
*Rumble!* The splendour of the giant red mushroom cloud displayed its terrifying radiation and might. Several minutes later, the two clouds completely dissipated, revealing a black robed figure within.
“Cough Cough…” Cabourn’s appearance now was terribly miserable. His robes were all tattered and torn like a beggar’s. Especially noteworthy was his left hand which was in an unusual angle with evident traces of burns. It seemed like the effects of the self-detonation of Number 2 and Number 3 were substantial.
“Damn it!” Cabourn was now enraged. After advancing to a rank 2 Magus, when did he ever receive such a large loss like this? All the more so done by two unremarkable looking fellows, how could he be appeased?
Right now, Cabourn was in fits. If not for Number 2 and Number 3’s spirit being destroyed in that explosion, he would have definitely held their souls captive and let them feel the greatest pain and despair.
*Bang!* *Bang!* **Bang!*
At this moment there were some changes coming from the crimson light screen formation again. The formation continuously shrunk and expanded like that of a heart beating. On the surface of the light screen, the Hades’ Sacrificial Rites had black patterns inscribed on it, just like veins which bulged. With the continuous beating of this red heart, an energy so immense and overpowering which made Cabourn feel apprehensive began to form and grew increasingly bigger. This aura even caught the attention of Desmund who was merely spectating, as his expression turned solemn.

“A rank 2 aura… That Leylin is advancing into a rank 2 Magus!” Cabourn’s eyes opened wide, “How is this possible?” However, he was extremely clear that no matter how Leylin reached this stage with the advancement requirements, he could not let him advance, no matter what it took. Cabourn retrieved several items from his robes as he chanted an incantation.

Along with the incantation, layers after layers of energy waves emanated from Cabourn’s body. “It’s a rank 2 spell!” Several Magi who were looking on at a distance exclaimed in shock. At Cabourn’s level, casting rank 1 spells was almost instantaneous and required no chanting. However, once he was to use ingredients to aid him in spell casting, there was only one possibility! He was going to use a mighty rank 2 spell! In the south coast, a rank 1 spell model was extremely difficult to acquire. Regular level 3 acolytes had to at least amass contributions points for over 5 years before they could have enough to exchange for a spell model. If rank 1 spell models were this difficult to acquire, one can only imagine how much rarer a rank 2 spell model was.
Even most rank 2 Magus did not own many rank 2 spell models. Each and every one of the spells were enough to obliterate a small village.

As for now, Cabourn was casting a spell which contained such a might.

As Cabourn chanted, he continuously fused the magic items which he took out and eventually it held the form of a giant lance used by knights. The lance seemed to be metallic with a green sheen on it.

At the same time, malevolent skulls began to emerge from the void and attached themselves to the lance.

“Wailing Lance?” Cabourn even used this rank 2 spell! It seems like he’s really agitated now!”

Desmund who was watching from the sidelines sniggered. He dispersed the golden blue lightning ball on his hands, “It seems like I don’t need to strike anymore!”

Although Cabourn was his enemy, Leylin, who had destroyed the secret plane’s core, was not a good person either. Right now, Leylin was about to be killed by Cabourn, so naturally, Desmund would not stop this.

Furthermore, if Cabourn were to fail, Desmund could then strike after and kill Leylin!

The skulls on the giant green lance wailed loudly, emitting a loud whistling sound as they struck the crimson light screen formation.

*Sssii!*!

The crimson light screen shuddered as the red and green merged and spread through the skies. The air in the surroundings contorted wildly as energy waves were violently released.

*Rumble!*!

The green and red light began to shrink after stretching to their limits and a mighty explosion erupted as the flames lapped everything in the surroundings.

The surround buildings had previously gone through a large scaled
battle and were already damaged. This time, the explosion shattered them to pieces and turned them into a rubble. The rebuilding efforts that Leylin and Caesar had put in were now completely destroyed by this explosion.

*Pu!* *Pu!*

This Hades’ Sacrificial Rites that was harvesting spirits finally succumbed to the pressure and completely shattered. What was left now was Leylin’s final line of defense, the crimson light screen. The crimson light shuddered and then black cracks began to appear on the surface.

*Ka-Cha!* *Ka-Cha!*

The light screen shuddered and finally shattered!

The green lance that contained a monstrous might pierced the centre of the light formation.

Under the dazzling light, a barely visible human figure was seen. This figure was wrapped in a silvery flame which very soon was extinguished.

“Crimson Palm!”

The human figure in the centre spoke softly. Immediately, his hands turned into a fresh blood-red colour.

Two burning holographic claws appeared and grabbed the green lance, which created a whistling noise.

As the red flames touched the green light, the green light was extinguished.
Although Wailing Lance was a rank 2 spell, after going through Hades’ Sacrificial Rites and the crimson light screen defensive spell formation, it had been weakened, and eventually perished under Leylin’s Crimson Palm. The might of his Crimson Palm caused Cabourn, who was not far away, to turn pale and exclaim, “You’ve advanced to become a rank 2 Magus!” Only a rank 2 Magus would be able to withstand his magic so easily.

“Whew…”

Leylin heaved a huge sigh, feeling the transformation completing in his body. And could not help but mumble, “Such formidable strength really makes one feel intoxicated!”

The A.I. Chip had also shown a few notifications.

[Beep! Detected the burning of large amounts of ownerless spiritual force. Kemoyin’s Pupil in the process of advancing…] [Host body’s high-grade meditation technique, Kemoyin’s Pupil, has risen to the second level! Driving the advancement in Host’s rank! Host has advanced to become a rank 2 Warlock!] [Rank 2 innate spells have been generated! Modifying Host body’s sea of consciousness.] [Beep! Host has advanced to become a rank 2 Warlock! Stats have been substantially increased. Recalculating data…]

Next, the A.I. Chip refreshed and displayed his new stats.

[Beep! Leylin Farlier. Rank 2 Warlock, Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin

Leylin took note of the large changes within his sea of consciousness.

His red sea of consciousness had now expanded by a huge amount, but the core essence in the middle had experienced the most changes.

Originally, there had been a prismatic crimson crystallisation of his spiritual force. This was Leylin’s foundation as a warlock, and all sorts of complicated runes were carved onto it. These runes were like little black snakes seemed to be formed from nature, and made up his two rank 1 innate spells!

Currently, within the crystal, another smaller prism-shaped crystal had been produced. It looked exactly like the outer prism except for the size; it looked as if a tinier version of the original crystal had been placed inside of itself.

The only difference was that the runes on the surface of the inner crystal were different from the runes for Leylin’s innate spells on the outer crystal. These runes formed even more formidable innate spells.

If one peered at the two crystals from the outside, they would observe that the runes on the outer and inner layer were integrated to create an image of a crimson symbol-looking rune. This symbol was very mysterious, and seemed to contain some terrifying strength that could communicate with strange entities from the underworld. However, as it was not complete, it could not exhibit its strength.

This was the innate spell that completely suited Leylin, something that was only possible for those who had high-grade meditation techniques. As these spells perfectly complimented him, they would not have any negative effects.
If he were like a regular Magus, the runes and imprint would clash, and the two layers of the core essence would not be able to stabilise. Even if one found a rank 2 spell that suited them well, it would still have a high consumption rate, and they would not be able to fully exhibit the strength of a rank 2 Magus.

However, Leylin did not have to worry about this! Glancing at the rank 2 Magus, Cabourn, who was a distance away, Leylin sucked in a deep breath and looked at the rank 2 innate spell that Kemoyin’s Pupil had generated.

“Toxic Bile!”

This was the name of the rank 2 spell that Kemoyin’s Pupil had formed. After sensing the information emitted from the crystal in his sea of consciousness, Leylin was left a little speechless.

“Looks like it’s another ability from the modification of the body! This probably has to do with awakening the poisonous nature of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent.”

Every time a high-grade meditation technique advanced by another level, it would generate an innate spell for the Magus. However, the Magus would have no choice in this method, and likewise, Leylin had no choice but to accept it. However, the innate spells produced by these high-grade meditation techniques were extremely powerful and would not leave Leylin disappointed.

At this point, the A.I. Chip had finished organising all the information regarding Toxic Bile, and displayed it in numerical form.

[Toxic Bile, rank 2 spell. The ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent possessed terrifying toxic abilities, and its mature form could even corrode the void. Through modification of their bodies and bloodline, ancient Warlocks were able to transplant this ability into their own bodies. Prerequisites: Modification of heart to that of Giant Kemoyin Serpent to 100%. Effect: Through neurotoxins let
out of any part of the body, carry out an area of effect attack that attacks all living beings! Consumption: 10 spiritual force, 10 magic power.]

As a rank 2 Magus, the consumption of his spiritual force and magical power were simply both to a degree of 10. This was obviously because it was an innate spell. In addition, Leylin had needed to modify his heart, and had cultivated his body to be able to use this power, causing him to be even more expectant for the power of this rank 2 spell.

“I’ll use you as a guinea pig!”

Leylin glanced at Cabourn, who was not far away, and the spiritual force in his sea of consciousness rushed out, the twice-layered core essence flickering with dim light.

Leylin could feel from deep within that in his body, the purple-red blood of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent was congealing inside his gallbladder. Following the consumption of energy and spiritual force, a mysterious liquid was produced. This liquid could disseminate to all parts of Leylin’s body and be secreted from any pore on his skin.

With a single thought, the poison from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent spread through the air.

Mysteriously enough, when his rank 2 innate spell, Toxic Bile, was used, there was no energy fluctuation, nor was there any special scent or colour. It concealed itself very well.

From the time Leylin broke through to rank 2, to when he used Crimson Palm and let out Toxic Bile, only a few seconds had passed, and even the Magi outside had not been able to react.

Opposite to him, Cabourn looked at Leylin, who had just emerged, the expression on his face complicated. First was regret, then pity, and then fear and the will to kill him!

“Leylin Farlier! To be able to advance to rank 2 before reaching the age of 30 means that you’re a genius found only once every
thousand years in the south coast! But today, you destroyed the gate to the secret plane and have committed an unforgivable sin! We dark Magi shall judge and punish you!”

Cabourn spoke righteously, finding an excuse for him to kill Leylin.

The more potential Leylin had, the more danger he posed to Cabourn. Currently, Leylin had just advanced to rank 2, so other than his own innate skill, he would surely not have a rank 2 spell. This was the best opportunity to eliminate him!

Desmund, who had originally come to watch the show, now slowly walked behind Leylin upon finding out he had advanced to rank 2. Together with Cabourn, he surrounded Leylin.

After seeing the strange methods Leylin had used to advance, Desmund had become fearful of this newly advanced rank 2 Magus. He did not mind joining hands with Cabourn if it meant that he could take care of Leylin.

For a moment, the Magi of both factions were extremely coordinated. The two rank 2 Magi surrounded Leylin, while the other dark and light Magi encircled him as well.

“It seems like they aren’t afraid of death!”

Glancing at the official Magi who had encircled him, Leylin was expressionless, though he was sighing inside.

The degree of power of a rank 2 spell was at least 80! An attack of such a level was basically fatal to any rank 1 Magus!

The attack of Toxic Bile was invisible and did not differentiate between enemies and allies. The nearer people were to Leylin, the faster they would die.

*Thump!* The light Magus who was closest to him collapsed, a strange purplish-black colour appearing on his face.

*Thump!* *Thump!* Like a chain reaction, whether it was light or dark Magi, all who were around Leylin turned stiff, and collapsed to the ground.
“What’s happening?” “He…he’s poisoned! Be careful, it’s a toxic attack!” “Use a spell that stops you from breathing or a barrier!”
*Tss tss!* Large amounts of white gas emitted were emitted, and the bodies of the Magi who had collapsed began to corrode. One could even see the white bones within!
The white bones eventually darkened, and then melted into a black liquid.
The Magi who saw this scene instantly paled, shrieks and yells sounding everywhere.
“Ah…” Yet another miserable shout was heard. A Magus with a thick barrier fell to the ground, his body beginning to rot.
The official Magi near Leylin instantly collapsed and turned into black liquid. There was no time for anyone to rescue or move them!
Such a terrifying effect intimidated the two rank 2 Magi.
“Even a protective layer is useless!” Blinking rapidly, Cabourn and Desmund flew backwards. Desmund produced large amounts of lightning, cleansing his body over and over again, while Cabourn grew huge green warts that continuously absorbed something.
*Hu Hu!*
With the passing of time, the poisonous attack increased its range. It started where Leylin was, and then spread to the entirety of the Four Seasons Garden. In the end, even the magical beings in the external world began to collapse in large groups and turn into black liquid, the tart smell of decay spreading everywhere.
Besides the Magi who had quickly retreated from the very beginning, there were no living beings apart from Leylin and the two rank 2 Magi!
This situation surprised even Leylin, who had caused this.
“This… Is akin to the biochemical attacks in my previous world!” For there not to be a single living being within the area of his attack
shocked Leylin to no end. In addition, he knew the method through which his poison was spread. The toxin from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent could penetrate through any protective layer made from energy, and enter a Magus’ circulatory system through his skin. For spells that helped one hold their breath, that was even more useless. This sort of poison not only corroded one’s physical body but also did not let off one’s spirit!
The largest issue Leylin had with this was that the poison worked too quickly, and even he himself did not have any methods to save the poisoned ones.
The poison from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent was not simply a neurotoxin. Some ancient sinister thoughts and intentions had been mixed within, which made it difficult to dispel.
The reason that Leylin was not afraid was because after modifying his heart, he was now considered to be partially a Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Naturally, he would not be affected by his own poison, but it would be too difficult for him to save someone else.
Based on his estimations, even a rank 3 Magus would find it nearly impossible to deal with this poison. Perhaps only a rank 4 Morning Star Magus would have a solution to this.
“Looks like I can’t use this ability as I like! It can only act as a trump card.”
Leylin forced a smile.
The area of attack was much too vast, and it did not differentiate friend from foe. If he used this, it would definitely result in the loss of many innocent lives and give rise to public anger.
Though Leylin would not feel any guilt or shame, he did not want to become hated by many due to a simple accident.
For instance, after seeing all their subordinates dead, the two rank 2 Magi, Cabourn and Desmund, were on the verge of exploding with rage!
“You… You actually…”
Desmund howled, the lightning imprint on his forehead shining crazily, “You actually destroyed my Lightning Corps! I will kill you”
He had brought all the elites of his Lightning Corps here. On top of that, he had left two large armies here. In other words, Leylin’s Toxic Bile had utterly decimated his subordinates, which caused Desmund’s eyes to turn red. A violent aura undulated around his body.
Compared to Desmund, Cabourn was dealing with this situation much better. After all, he was a dark Magus, and was used to massacres. No matter how many of his underlings were killed, it wouldn’t affect him.
His mind was focused only on the strange spell that Leylin had displayed that intimidated him.
“What a terrifying ability! Is this his innate spell? A toxic area of effect attack that even a rank 1 Magi cannot withstand?”
As a veteran dark Magus, Cabourn immediately began to estimate Leylin’s battle power. He could envision how terrifying such an ability would be in a war!
This was a battle power that had a destructive power that could rival a natural disaster.
“Crap!” Cabourn and Desmund paled at the same time, and their bodies, which were in midair, began to tremble.
A purplish-black gas rose in front of their faces. This was the poison of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent! Even a rank 2 Magus could not completely dispel it!
“Seal of Ten Thousand Poisons!” The lumps on Cabourn’s shoulders exploded, and a red ring of flesh twisted into a circle rune, sealing the purplish-black gas within.
Only after the poison was sealed did he have the time to look at the state of his old rival.
Desmund was in worse shape than he was. Great amounts of lightning were in front of Desmund’s face, and the lightning rune between his brows was moving around, forcing the black poison to coalesce into his right arm. With a resolute look, his left arm struck down as quick as lightning, and he chopped off his entire right arm!

Though Magi could use all sorts of methods to regenerate their limbs, their battle power would be largely diminished if they had just lost an arm.

“Old fart, how are you?” Cabourn and Desmund were old rivals, and in front of Leylin, whose strength was scarily powerful, these two had joined hands to oppose this enemy.

“It’s…it’s nothing!” Desmund huffed. A ring of lightning flashed by his wounds and immediately stopped the bleeding. “It’s just that I can only use 70% of my peak strength. How about you?”

“A little better than that. I can exhibit 80% of my strength. Any more than that and my seal will lose effectiveness…” Cabourn forced a bitter smile, “Leylin actually dared to kill my kin! I will definitely kill him!”

Under Leylin’s all-encompassing toxic attack, Giant, and Caesar, peak rank 1 Magi who were seriously hurt and in a coma, were obviously not spared.

In addition, since the little boy who Leylin had previously killed did not come back to life. Caesar’s three spirits were all dead. In other words, he had really died!

Cabourn was Caesar’s father, and was not on good terms with Leylin. In this situation, he had another grudge, which was for the death of his son!

“It looks like we need to work together!” Desmund looked grim.

“En! I have no idea how that freak trains.” Cabourn and Desmund inched a little closer to each other.

“Sigh…”
Leylin sighed at this moment and approached Cabourn and Desmund. “Kill!” Leylin initiated the first attack, and huge black fireballs filled the sky like large stars. At this point, Leylin’s conflict with these two rank 2 Magi could no longer be resolved peacefully. This fight would only end when one side was completely eliminated. After being promoted to a rank 2 Magus, the might of the rank 1 spells that Leylin used had also obtained a huge boost. The Latent Fireball now held a power that was more than several levels stronger than when Leylin had used it while being a rank 1 warlock. Huge waves of black fire streaked through the sky, almost evaporating the molecules in the air into nothingness. “He’s only just advanced and has yet to record the spell model of his rank 2 spell. Beware of his poison innate spell!” Cabourn and Desmund exchanged glances. One person produced tremendous amounts of lightning, while the other sent out greyish-black tornados that charged towards Leylin. Lightning, tornados, and black flames mercilessly collided against each other. Silver spiritual power split the air, giving rise to a huge spiritual force maelstrom! Under the manipulation of solidified spiritual power, the rank 2 Magi exhibited magic that far exceeded the might of rank 1 Magi, reducing the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters into rubble. Three large silver hands that were over ten metres long wrestled like giants from ancient times. “Toxic Bile!” This fight continued for over ten turns, and with a glint in Leylin’s eye, a formless ripple of poison dashed towards the two opposite rank 2 Magi.
This time, even the air slightly rippled.
“Be careful of his poison attack!” Cabourn and Desmund retreated as if they had seen a poisonous snake.

*Weng Weng!* Formless ripples smashed into the two Magi’s innate defensive spell formations, producing sounds of corrosion.
A strange glint flashed through Leylin’s eyes, and the formless ripples turned into transparent hands that grasped towards Cabourn.

*Pak!* The innate defensive spell formation in front of Cabourn could not withstand the attack from this transparent hand, and a large hole was made.

“Ah! Omni-Decay!”

Cabourn looked torn as he yelled the incantation.
Black tornados whirled in all directions, looking like a blooming black flower bud.

*Rumble!* The large transparent hand and black flower collided. Both attacks dissipated, and the stray energy spread outwards.
A transparent tear in the sky exploded, and black spatial cracks formed.

Leylin and Cabourn attacked in two different directions.
At this moment, a sinister smile flashed in Leylin’s lips. With a wave of his hand, a large amount of red powder spread into the air like a cloud of fire, “Scorching Touch!”

Two lines of fiery energy shot out, and in an instant, they streaked through the air and appeared before Cabourn.
The energy fluctuations from the attack caused Cabourn’s face to change, “Rank 2 magic! How can this be? Hasn’t he only just advanced?”

*Pu!* *Pu!*
The two fiery streaks drilled through Cabourn’s lower abdomen and right shoulder, creating two large wounds that had been
The reason why Leylin had been in a tussle with these two rank 2 Magi was to stall for time, so that he could analyse the rank 2 spells in the Book of Giant Serpent!

After obtaining the Book of Giant Serpent, Leylin had received three rank 2 spell models. However, while he was still a rank 1 warlock, the A.I. Chip had been unable to make anything of them. Only now, after his advancement, could the A.I. Chip finally analyse these spell models.

Leylin chose a fire elemental offensive spell and ordered the A.I. Chip to analyse it. With the powerful calculative abilities of the A.I. Chip, the spell model was finally analyzed, and the information was sent to Leylin’s mind.

“Thunder Tempest!” Upon seeing his ally injured, Desmund immediately charged out to help.

A powerful storm of lightning surged up like a wave and swept towards Leylin.

“Kemoyin’s Scales!” Leylin steeled his expression, and fine black scales appeared all over his body.

After advancing to a rank 2 warlock, the scales on Leylin’s body emitted an even deeper black luster, and there were even incomplete patterns on the surface of the scales, which vaguely formed a dark elemental rune barrier.

The barrier instantly shaped into a huge, solid black runic shield that situated itself in front of the tempest.

Leylin did not care for Desmund’s attack from behind, and his eyes turned into amber vertical pupils that stared straight at Cabourn, who was quickly retreating while spitting out blood.

“Eyes of Petrification!” From Leylin’s amber vertical pupils, two lines of petrification rays caught up to Cabourn, who was in the middle of retreating.

“Ah…” Cabourn let out blood-curdling screams and covered his
eyes, from which a layer of ashen-white stone skin began to extend.
The power of a rank 2 warlock was even more powerful than a rank 1 Magus, and the two rank 1 innate spells Leylin originally had had received a huge boost. Even a rank 2 Magus was affected. Leylin’s speed increased rapidly, and in an instant, he caught up to Cabourn, who was still fleeing. There was no trace of emotion in his eyes. The fiery red Scorching Touch was casted again. Three fiery streaks combined and became as thick as a person’s arm, and penetrated through Cabourn’s brain. *Bang!* Cabourn’s head exploded open like a watermelon, and red and white cerebrospinal fluids and blood dripped all over the ground. *Boom!* The large black shield shattered, and lightning leaked through the cracks and headed towards Leylin. *Tss tss!* Blue lightning exploded behind Leylin, and he turned pale.
“Now, it’s your turn!”
Leylin turned back, coldly staring at Desmund.

……

Days later, shocking news spread throughout the south coast. The dark Magi had attacked the Four Seasons Garden’s headquarters once again, and all the Magi there had been completely wiped out. The entrance to the secret plane had been destroyed, and even the rank 2 Magus who had come to provide support had died in battle. What made this news even more shocking was that in this battle, even the dark Magi who had attacked had not garnered any benefits. Not only had the leader, Cabourn, died, even the elites of the dark Magi had been completely annihilated too. After the battle, Leylin’s name was spread far and wide. As someone who had killed off two rank 2 Magi and even destroying the entrance to the secret plane, Leylin was now on the wanted list of both the light and dark Magi. Any rank 2 Magi held immense power in the south coast, and were highly regarded. A rank 2 Magi going solo and not bound by any restriction, and who also possessed the terrifying ability to control a battle! Leylin’s existence was now one feared by many highly-ranked Magi!
His nickname as the “Demonic Poison King” began to spread. In a region called the Land of Eternal Light. A castle-like building that was upside-down was somehow standing upright. The defensive runes on the surface of the building constantly flickered. This was where the Botelli Family, who were rumoured to hold divination abilities, resided. Though their power had declined in the past few hundred years, they still retained some of the power from when they were at their peak. Beside the gate to the castle were two strange stone guards. In front of the gate were two statues with large swords plunged into the ground. These two statues were over ten metres tall and two to three metres wide. Whether it was their appearance or weapons, they gave off an intimidating aura. Within the castle, in a basement filled with white chilly air. It was filled with translucent blocks of ice. At the centre of the cold room was a transparent ice coffin. With a pair of hands placed on her lower abdomen, a girl of noble blood and an elegant temperament was quietly lying within. Though Jenna was still in a coma, the curse on her body was already beginning to spread. Black lumps of flesh and veins constantly spread. On Jenna’s face, black gas would not dissipate, and it looked something like little snakes constantly spiralling. With these snakes attached to her, Jenna’s eyelids kept moving and she looked to be in immense pain. It had been almost a month since Leylin had set up the curse, and it was already on the verge of completely exploding. Without a cure, Jenna would likely end up like Manla, who had turned into a set of dried up bones! *Boom!* The door to the ice room was pulled open, and the old woman who had met with Leylin walked in. “Jenna, the guide of our generation! Based on the will of the mighty Mother of Peace, you shall continue to exist in this world!”
The old woman mumbled, and then placed a blood-red key on the freezer.

*Weng weng!* Red rays were emitted from the key and began to seep into the ice coffin. The red light covered Jenna’s body in an instant.

Under the illumination of the red light, the black gas on Jenna’s face began to vanish. The terrifying might of the curse waned at a rate that could be seen by the naked eye.

“The talisman to undo the curse provided by Leylin is effective, as expected!” The old woman looked at the freezer that was emitting red light, and her expression brightened.

After having traded to Leylin the incomplete high-grade meditation technique that was inherited generation to generation in exchange for the talisman, she was able to rush back before the curse completely exploded!

“Leylin Farlier, you sinner! You shall be punished and judged by the Mother of Peace!” The old woman made a few hand signs and prayed in a low voice.

*Drip! Drip!*

Droplets of blood-red liquid formed from the key and penetrated through the layer of ice, and dripped onto Jenna’s pale, snow-white neck.

*Tss tss!* White gas rose from the area on Jenna’s neck that was covered by the blood-red liquid as it began to recover at a visible rate.

*Weng!*

Jenna, who had been unconscious all this time, suddenly opened her eyes!

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* The ice coffin shattered into pieces, and strange undulations traveled throughout the ice room.

The old woman was extremely familiar with this energy fluctuation. This was a phenomenon that happened when their guide was
making a prophecy!
“She’s going to start now?” A bewildered look appeared on her face.
“I see countless deaths! Demon king! A demon king with toxic abilities is approaching…”
Jenna’s eyes suddenly rolled back to show whiteness, and a low and gasping voice was heard.
“Toxic? Demon king? Could it be…” The old woman was startled and suddenly recalled the latest news.
*Weng Weng!*
The blood-red key from before suddenly hovered in the air, producing glaring rays of light.
“A tracking imprint? This is bad!” The old woman’s eyes widened!
At this moment, outside the upside-down castle, Leylin in black robes appeared.
“Is this the rumoured upside-down castle? It really is quite strange!”
Leylin lifted his hood and sized up the building in front of him, sighing in admiration.
After killing two rank 2 Magi, he knew that he would be chased by both light and dark Magi factions. Hence, he had changed his clothes and escaped out of the secret plane via another exit.
Though there were strict testing methods at each entrance, these were all tests that picked out the aura of precious materials gathered from the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, preventing them from being smuggled out.
With Leylin’s abilities as a rank 2 Warlock, it was naturally effortless for him to escape.
As for the sensing of any items, Leylin had placed them in the spatial leather pouch. With the isolation from spatial runes, even the most refined detection spell formations would not discover any traces.
Leylin raised his right hand, and on his wrist, a red key-shaped imprint was pulsating with light.

“It’s here!”

Leylin grinned as he looked at the tracking imprint. The place where Jenna’s family was located was hard to find. It could be said that even Hyder needed the old woman’s directions in order to enter. There was no real map.

In the trade with this old woman, Jenna’s family’s grandmother did not have good intentions and wanted Leylin to take this incomplete high-grade meditation technique and be taken over by it. Leylin, similarly, was not kind and added a tracking imprint into the talisman.

With the help of the imprint, he was finally able to locate the nest of Jenna’s family.

“Though the high-grade meditation technique, Sacred Flame, is incomplete, it is still unique! Its nature is extremely troublesome, and only one person in the world is able to train in it at a time.”

Leylin’s lips curved as bloodlust overcame in. He did not have a good impression of this egocentric family. Since he’d found where they were, it was natural that he would want to get things over and done with.

“Halt!” The two statue guards at the gate came to life and their muscles rippled as they yelled in a low tone.

“Two magical beings? Together, their power is almost equivalent to a rank 1 Magus!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, already pinpointing information about these guards.

“This level of defense for a Magus family is not half bad!”

Leylin waved his arm and two large black fireballs flew out, meeting the large statue guards that had whipped out their weapons.

*Bang! Boom!*

The fireballs smashed into the large stone swords, and like water
engulfed the bodies of the guards. The two guards immediately turned into two huge, black torches that burned furiously. Under the attack of Leylin’s Latent Fireball, the two statue guards that had been around for thousands of years instantly turned into a pile of black powder.

“Enemy attack!” “Who is it?”

Countless urgent voices sounded in the castle, and then the mournful, piercing sound of a copper bell. The runes on the surface of the castle began to move. For the defense of such an ancient family, even a peak rank 1 Magus would not be able to penetrate through if it was completely activated.

“Hah…”

Leylin let out a long sigh, and streaks of silver spiritual force extended from his body. His body then mysteriously hovered in mid-air, forming a huge silver face.

“Toxic Bile!”

From the lips of the large silver face, a cold incantation was exclaimed. The poison from the terrifying ancient creature, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, soundlessly penetrated throughout the insides of the castle!

The runes outside were entirely useless towards poison attacks. Every single person inside, whether it was an acolyte, servant or even official Magi collapsed to the ground, their bodies beginning to rot.

Not only the castle but in a range of half a km away, all the plants were beginning to dry up and rot.

Silence! The eerie silence of death! It shrouded the area, with the castle at the centre of it all.

In this large area, no being was lucky enough to survive and sunk into the eternity of death.
*Bang!* The old grey gate that was still full of patterns had an ancient aura that silently toppled. Under the corrosion of the poison, not only the defensive formation, but even the building itself was affected by the destructive force. In the granite that seemed to be extremely solid, there were hundreds of thousands of little holes that were the result of the corrosion. The entire building swayed and looked on the verge of falling. Leylin felt as if at a light push, the entire castle would fall with a huge rumble. In the corridor that was filled with a putrid smell, rotting corpses were everywhere. Leylin followed the tracking imprint and advanced further, finally reaching the ice room that was far into the castle. He entered the ice room filled with chilly white gas and saw the two corpses. The old woman had died extremely painfully, holding test tubes that held all types of antidotes. Of course, there did not seem to be any use in it and her flesh was still rotting. As an official Magus, her resistance was obviously more powerful than a regular person. Even when dead, her body was still more difficult to destroy.
On the icy counter in the middle, Jenna’s corpse lay silently. On her face, which had mostly been eaten into, all sorts of craziness could be seen, as if the expressions of different people had been mixed together. There was even a trace of relief in her smile, which made it even stranger.

The poison from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent had a vigorous corrosive effect, and the spirits of all the spirits residing in Jenna’s body were being eaten into by the terrifying toxins.

“How pitiful!” After obtaining the high-grade meditation technique, Sacred Flame, Leylin had used the A.I. Chip and simulated the characteristics of this meditation technique.

Gathering generations of ancestors and keeping it in the body of descendants, this high-grade meditation technique was something even dark Magi would find furtive and terrifying!

In addition, Jenna, who was the host body, would become schizophrenic and turn into a pitiful state.

To some extent, after training in Sacred Flame and inheriting the spirits of her ancestors, Jenna had already died.

“What a strange meditation technique, and a pitiful family!” Leylin touched his chin.

The properties of Sacred Flame caused him some hints of fear. Before he completely made sense of it and researched methods to evade these effects, he was not willing to go anywhere near it.

Half a day later, Leylin left the castle.
*Crash* After he left, little stones constantly slid off the castle, and huge cracks appeared on it.

*Rumble!*
The castle completely collapsed and turned into a pile of rubble. From hereon, the Botelli Family was no more…

Dense clouds covered the sky, thunder and lightning occasionally could be heard.

Moments later, black raindrops descended from the horizon.

At the Teljose volcano that was not far away, a great pillar of flames suddenly erupted towards the heavens. Large amounts of volcanic ash flew to the air, and along with some man-made structures, they turned into fertilizing raindrops and descended, which provided the Teljose Plains with great vitality!

The peasants who were farming quickly knelt by the roadside, singing praises to the Magi of Nightless City.

With the protection of the Magi they had plentiful harvests that were enough for them to live on without fear for lack of food or clothing, even after paying the large taxes and contributions to their lords.

A large black handsome horse streaked through the rain, and one could vaguely see the figure of a young man.

“Hawke… What a shame…”

While urging on his horse, he lamented inside.

In the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, the range of his Toxic Bile was too fast and powerful. Even Hawke, who had been kept at the edges of the headquarters, could not escape. In this attack that did not differentiate friend from foe, Leylin lost this very convenient mode of transportation.

Leylin had needed to deal with Caesar and set up the Ten Thousand Spirit spell formation. He even needed to secretly notify Desmund, and his mind had been whirling at high speeds. The Venom Wyvern Hawke was just a pet that was a means of transportation. Without
taking it into account, it had died together with the Magi on the outer layers under Leylin’s poisonous attack.

“However, due to the limitations of its kind, the Venom Wyvern can only become as strong as a rank 1 Magus! After I was promoted to a rank 2 Warlock, Hawke’s usefulness will only decrease bit by bit. I was going to find an opportunity to set it free, but…” Leylin sighed, taking a moment of silence for Hawke’s unfortunate passing.

He then tossed this thought to the back of his mind, focusing his attention on the large Nightless City that was towering in the rain, a cold smile about his face.

He turned the horse’s head, and it diverged from its original route and galloped towards a little town inhabited by regular humans. Due to its huge popularity, there were tens of large towns near Nightless City where regular humans lived. Like satellites, they surrounded Nightless City.

Everyday regular humans from all walks of life, people having the desire to become a Magus, fugitives, or even people who were only here because of their youth and adventurous nature discovered the brutality of reality. These humans were chased out of Nightless City and could only dither around in this sort of town.

Leylin came to a town called Clint, found a bar and entered, ordered mead, and drank it silently.

“Master!”

Ten or so minutes later, a few people dressed in black clothes with hoods arrived, and an old man who was the leader exclaimed.

“En! Come with me!”

Leylin tossed out a silver coin and brought this group of people away from the bar.

Next, the old man brought Leylin to a villa on the outskirts of the town.

“Master! After receiving your message, we immediately tidied up
the supplies and left Nightless City. We rented this house and have been awaiting your return!"
After entering the villa, the leader removed the hood and revealed a silver-haired old man.
This was Damien, the level 3 acolyte slave Leylin had bought, who was also his butler. He was in charge of Leylin’s property in Nightless City.
Number 4 and Number 5, the two female Grand Knights were also around. Like guards, they were vigilant by the door.
The first time he had met the boy and accepted Thousand Meddling Hand’s mission to be a spy, Leylin had had a bad feeling about the whole situation and passed down the order for Damien and the rest to leave Nightless City as soon as possible.
Upon hindsight, his initial decision was the correct one. If not, Damien and the rest would have long since been taken captive by the light Magi.
“Damien! Number 4! Number 5! Can I trust you?”
Leylin looked grim.
“Master! Your wish is our command!” Hearing Leylin ask this so seriously, Damien and Number 4 and Number 5 immediately knelt on one knee, chanting the reply.
They were slaves spiritually bonded to Leylin. Like Number 2 and Number 3, they could not disobey even if Leylin wanted them to kill themselves!
“Good! Now, I want you to cross the Death Channel and return to my hometown, the Chernobyl Islands and protect my family!”
“Understood!” Damien and the other two immediately agreed.
“I want you to leave inheritances on Chernobyl Islands, and make an oath that your students will continue this mission, till the end of the world…” Leylin’s voice became hoarse.
“Understood, master!” The three spiritually branded slaves trembled and bowed their heads lower.
“Good!” Leylin nodded. With a wave of his hand, three black streaks flew from his hand and entered the foreheads of the three people. 
*Tss Tss!* The spiritually branded slaves immediately grimaced, hands tightly grasping the ground. On their foreheads, Leylin’s own secret imprint emerged.
“This is my blessing! Within is a magic attack that is as powerful as an attack from me going all out! With some rituals, it can also be passed down…”
Leylin was now a rank 2 Warlock, and there were few who had this level of strength in the entire south coast! Just an attack would cause an official Magus to be seriously injured, or even die!
The secret imprint had even more uses. The south coast had a few Magi who were proficient in divination, such as by astrology and making prophecies. With this imprint, they would be mostly immune to these spells.
Just Leylin’s current might as a rank 2 Warlock meant that ordinary divination methods were useless against him.
Magi were a source of terrifying radiation and pollution, and this was even more potent for a rank 2 Magus. Leylin could feel that he was like a constant energy furnace, constantly emitting frightful energy undulations that even caused the air to distort.
At a certain level of strength, even the external world would be affected! If there was anyone who wanted to make a prophecy about Leylin right now, an ordinary rank 2 Magus was far from enough. At least a rank 3 Magus who was proficient in divination would be able to do so.
With the protection from the imprint, the three of them could find a place to find and take care of the Farlier family.
Leylin did not bank on them being able to withstand the attacks from dark and light Magi. All he wished for was for them to safeguard and defend the Farlier family from dangers in the
Based on standard practice in the Magus world, before confirming that Leylin was dead, any dark and light Magi would not dare strike against the Farlier family. If not, they would be met with the crazy retaliation from a Magus who had already reached rank 2 and had a terrifying destructive might!

This level of attack was something that not even the Lighthouse of the Night, which had a rank 3 Magus, would be willing to go up against!

Hence, with the protection from these spiritually bound slaves, the Farlier family that was on the Chernobyl Islands were completely safe, and would also receive a huge boost to develop further!

“These three people and their successors should be able to protect the Farlier family for at least five hundred years! In that case, I do not have to feel anymore guilt towards them…”

Leylin huffed out a sigh. His body belonged to the original Leylin Farlier. No matter what kind of person he had been, he was still apologetic for having possessed someone’s flesh and blood.

But if he had to return and acknowledge a bunch of strangers to be his relatives and even parents, then he was not going to do that.

In the end, not concerning himself with them was his best choice.

If that did not work, it was still possible for him to wait a few hundred years and wait till everyone Leylin knew died, and then give their family some advantages.

“And this!”

Leylin pondered for a moment, and then removed the dark red cross pendant from around his neck.

This was the middle-grade magic artifact he had carefully made, the Fallen Star Pendant!

After becoming a rank 2 Warlock, the help this magic artifact rendered him was insurmountable. Due to the limitations of the resources he had, it was difficult for the Fallen Star Pendant to be
powered up any further.
“Bring this back too! If a successor of the Farlier family with potential to become a Magus appears, give it to him!”
Leylin handed the Fallen Star Pendant over, and at the same time, he felt as if a weight had been lifted off his shoulders.
The cold breeze swept past, leaving behind pieces of dried leaves swirling in the air, which danced like butterflies. The crystal clear stream flowed silently, adding to the tranquility in this area.

A grey squirrel shook its fluffy tail and ascended the tree as fast as lightning, and rapidly gnawed on the acorn it held. From time to time, it would twist its little head to observe its surroundings.

*Ka-Cha!* A dried piece of wood was stepped on and broke. The squirrel was startled as it let go of the acorn it held and climbed even higher in the tree. It looked down in apprehension at the human figure who had broken the peace in the area.

“The last time I’ve been here was less than a year ago, wasn’t it? To think that it had actually changed this much…” Leylin exclaimed as he glanced at his surroundings.

He had returned back to the small town where the Old Devil had brought him on an expedition to the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect. Only this town had already been reduced to ruins.

A murky green vine crept around the town’s ruins, in which the occasional figures of animals could be seen flitting past. However, there were no signs of human traces at all.

From the many visible indications, the inhabitants of this town had voluntarily chosen to forsake their homes soon after Leylin’s expedition.

“This is the fear towards Magi!” Leylin shook his head and did not
feel the slightest shock regarding this turn of events. Although Leylin and the others came here covertly and did not slay any of the inhabitants, they still put the town’s people in a deep slumber for three days. However, the residents would only associate these eerie methods with Magi!

It was known that Magi of the light Magi domain would be more friendly to regular humans on the surface. However, who could have guaranteed that the residents would not see a dark Magus? Hence the flustered residents immediately chose to report it to the authorities.

However, during that time the Eternal Rivers secret plane had just been made public knowledge to all Magi. The strength of the light Magi had been concentrated there, so no one had the leisure to bother with a desolate little town who had suspected dark Magi activities. Furthermore, no deaths were reported! Hence, the light Magi alliance only sent out several level 3 acolyte to investigate the matter.

Naturally, these acolytes would not be able to see past the disguise set up by an official Magus. Hence, the entrance of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane was not discovered. After searching the area to no avail, the group of acolytes could only conclude and report that there were dark Magi who had long since left, apparently achieving their goals in the area.

This degree of danger would naturally not attract the attention of the light Magi alliance, and things had been dragged till this state. Even if the light Magi did not treat it with importance, how could the residents who had been living in the town their whole lives not mind?

After all, under the influence of the light Magi, they had often heard of dark Magi eradicating kingdoms throughout their childhood and as they aged into adults. Although the investigators had already concluded that the dark Magi left, there was always the ‘what ifs’.
Hence, without any further support, the residents chose to leave this town. Afterwards, several supernatural incidents in the area had caused the few elderly folks in the town, who had chosen to stay back, to disappear without a trace. These incidents had caused the town to be fully abandoned by all.

Leylin indifferently thought back to the news he had received of the town. After instructing Damien and the rest to defend his family, he had journeyed to this area and prepared to look at the ancient teleporting spell formation once again. For the sake of advancing into a rank 2 Warlock, he had destroyed one of the gates to the secret plane and even killed two rank 2 Magi! This animosity that was created was unusually huge! Although Leylin had confidence in his own strength, he still had to be wary of the fact that the light and dark Magi had their trumps cards: Magi who had reached rank 3!

Right now, Leylin was admittedly not a match for opponents of that level, hence he had decided not to tarry after choosing his escape route. The dark and white Magi had already infiltrated every corner of the south coast, hence it was not possible to hide here. Many terrifying and dangerous regions were also located on the south coast. Even for official Magi, going there would mean a 90 percent chance of death. If Leylin were to wander in those areas without any detailed information, then he would be a fool! Moreover, even if Leylin’s luck was good and he successfully managed to traverse past those domains, he might arrive in a barren wasteland like the Chernobyl Islands. Leylin still wished to walk further down the path of a Magus, hence he would not be willing to go to such an area.

However, the ancient teleporting spell formation was different! The
distance of the teleportation was vast; it would at least span a
distance several times that of the south coast. There was even a
possibility that it would lead to another world!
Around the Magus World, there were several mighty worlds and
planes. In ancient times, the ancient Magi conquered one world
after another, and analysed the unique laws in those worlds to
strengthen themselves!
This ancient teleporting spell formation was very likely linked to a
world or domain that the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect had once
dominated.
Moreover, the place that the teleportation would lead to was
definitely a place abundant with resources, at the very least on par
with the south coast. Otherwise, why would the ancient Magi have
the leisure to create this teleporting spell formation? The cost of
creating one was not a small figure, it was enough to cripple the
finances of a faction like the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect. Leylin
strongly believed that its creation was not merely for the sake of
having a means to escape.
“Speaking of which, I wonder how that Gargamel, Old Devil, and
Jaye are?”
Leylin stroked his chin.
Although he had already advanced into a rank 2 Warlock, he still
had fear towards the Gargamel which had been borne through the
fusion of countless vengeful spirits!
Afterall, it had been sealed for God knows how many years by the
sect, and actually had the strength of a rank 2 Magus immediately
upon its return!
One must know that the Black Horrall Snake back in the Dylan
Gardens had regressed from a rank 3 Magus into an acolyte’s level
after such a long sealing period!
According to Leylin’s estimation, the Gargamel inside the secret
plane had at least reached the strength of a rank 4 Magus before it
was sealed!
In ancient times, Magi of these levels had another term coined after them, Morning Star Magi!
According to the description of the Book of Giant Serpent by the Great Magus Serholm, after a Magus enters rank 3, their body will undergo a very long bottleneck period. For a rank 3 Magus to advance into a rank 4 Magus, the difficulty will surpass every prior advancement. It could even be likened to the fact that the difficulty of a regular human into a rank 3 Magus was far simpler than that of from a rank 3 Magus to a rank 4 Magus!
Even in ancient times, rank 4 Magi were rulers of their regions. As for their title, it was Morning Star!
What was a Morning Star? High above in the sky! Unparalleled! Eternal!
Magus who were able to advance in rank 4 were worthy of such a title! Moreover, their lifespan would be lengthened by a massive amount. Even living to a thousand years old was just child’s play! To regular humans or even lowly ranked Magi, this was already reaching the realm of being immortal!
At this level, Magi would really be able to control the devastating powers of flipping mountains and burning seas! It was ineffective to use a sea of people to fight against such power! Just one of them would rival the existence of an army of lower leveled Magi!
It was a totally different idea from the Lightning Corps. Magus armies back in ancient times had at least tens of thousands of official Magi, including several tens of rank 2 Magi! As for captains and vice captains, rank 3 Magi were definitely the ones who held these posts!
If the Lightning Corps was of a standard like this, Leylin would have long since been dead.
However, a Morning Star Magus could obliterate the forces of the ancient Magus army!
The Gargamel which Leylin had seen before had already undergone a long sealing period. However, upon its return, it had the strength of a rank 2 Magus! The strength it had before must have at least been that of a Morning Star Magus!
To put it bluntly, such an existence could kill Leylin with just a finger.
If not for several sources of information which had confirmed the departure of the Gargamel from this area, Leylin would have never dared step foot in here again.
In an area close to the Nightless City, Leylin had given several of his spiritually bonded slaves missions before infiltrating the city. With his methods now as a rank 2 Warlock, he could even avoid detection from a fellow rank 2 Magus, not to mention regular guards, by using the spiritual force compression technique. After spending some of his magic crystals, he then easily obtained the information he needed.
All of the attention in the south coast was still on the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. As for the latest and hottest news, it was the birth of a newly advanced rank 2 Magus, Leylin!
As someone who had destroyed a gate to the secret plane and killed two rank 2 Magus, Leylin had already been put in the crosshairs of the dark and light Magi alliances. Even the danger level attributed to him was of the highest level!
In the south coast, a rank 2 Magus was already a force to be reckoned with like Chairman Siley of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. If Leylin was still in the academy, he could even participate in the turmoil for the Chairman’s successor.
Although Leylin was listed as ‘wanted’ on the surface, many organisations had secretly offered him a position and even promised abundant benefits.
However, Leylin only chuckled at such ideas.
The resources he had pilfered were enough for him as a rank 2
Magus. Moreover, it was not easy to come out from this mess, he did not wish to be embroiled in such troublesome issues once again.
Apart from his information, the other news which had piqued his interest was the spirit plague in the western part of the south coast. In several regular human kingdoms, there had been a very odd disease spreading!
People who had caught this disease would not suffer from any illness. Only that several tiny black spots would appear on their face and waist areas, where they would slowly be thinned down. After seven days when the black spots became extremely huge, the diseased would then die without a sound.
After the light Magi’s investigation, the spirits of the afflicted had disappeared without a trace. As for such methods, they were very similar to the spirit plague released by the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect!
This disease had a high contamination rate, which had already amounted to a casualty number of over a hundred thousand regular humans.
Even the light Magi alliance, who had their sights set on the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, sent a rank 2 Magus as the investigation head for this matter.
The most useful piece of information they had acquired was that in areas where the contamination rate was the highest, they had discovered the traces of the devout from the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect. As for their leader, it was none other than the Gargamel!
“Heh! It’s harvesting spirits to recover its strength huh?”

Leylin figured out the purpose behind this Gargamel’s actions.
This Gargamel, which had apparently regressed from the Morning Star Magus rank, would most likely be harvesting a massive amount of human spirits in order to regain its former strength.
As a collective body that was fused from countless vengeful spirits, the Gargamel did not have to increase its spiritual force through meditation like other Magi. What it needed to do was to absorb vengeful spirits. The more afraid and in anguish they were, the faster it could recover its strength!
And after it had collected all the spirits it needed, the Gargamel would regain the power it had once wielded.
For the south coast, this was a calamity!
To regain back its strength, the Gargamel had to absorb the spirits of at least 30 million regular humans. This number was equivalent to one-third of the total population in the south coast; the dark and light Magi would definitely not agree to it.
Moreover, no one could say for sure what the Gargamel would do after regaining its strength!
Leylin sneered. “But what has all this got to do with me? I’ll leave this headache to the respective chairmen of the dark and light Magi alliance!”
He was no saint, nor was he like that bunch of lunatics from the Botelli Family, who had assumed the role of the protector of the world.

With his memory, Leylin was extremely familiar with the route to the small town. He walked towards what had once been the town’s centre, to where the two storey wooden house was.

This location itself was rather remote, and cobwebs and dust were strewn in the entrance. This appearance made it look extremely unstable, as if a gentle breeze would blow the house down.

However, Leylin was not fooled by such an appearance. He raised his finger, on which a white glow of light converged.

*Weng Weng!*

Leylin’s finger seemed to have caused some sort of resonance, and covert runes began to crawl like ants to where Leylin’s foot was.

“The barrier to hide this area is actually still present?”

Leylin was somewhat astonished. Soon afterwards, he walked to the second level, to where there was an oil painting of an upper-class lady. This was the entrance to the secret plane that had long since been destroyed by Leylin.

“This secret plane was only a small-scale one, and the barrier of the space and isolation were not so strong. If they had strength comparable to the ones in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, that Gargamel would most likely still be confined in here.”

Leylin reached out his right hand and touched the rough, black surface of the wall.

There was a thin layer of greyish black material, which had a granule-like feel to the touch.

Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn. On the wall, apart from him feeling that his fire energy particles were affected, there was an additional spiritual force!

This force was extremely subtle, and could not have been discovered if one was not being cautious enough. It gave Leylin a
vaguely familiar feeling.
“This spiritual force is filled with evil intent! There’s no doubt about it, it’s the spirit residue from that Gargamel! It had already escaped…”
Although he could surmise the escape of the Gargamel from the information that he had received, Leylin could only relax after confirming the evidence with his own eyes.
“However, it even laid an alert-type barrier, huh? It seems to have been set up for me…”
Leylin grinned. This Gargamel’s methods were extremely covert. However, it was only useful against regular Magi. The Leylin from before might already have noticed it using the A.I. Chip, not to mention now, when he had the strength of a rank 2 Warlock. This Gargamel’s tricks were ineffective against him.
Furthermore, Leylin’s strength had increased by leaps and bounds, and that Gargamel had only set this alert to match the strength it had witnessed when it had first seen Leylin. Hence, such a miscalculation could occur.
“A.I. Chip! Scan!” Leylin ordered.
Very soon, a layer of scanning ripple that only Leylin could see was on the field. After Leylin advanced into a rank 2 Magus, the A.I. Chip seemed to have received a very large improvement. The task of scanning was completed in an instant.
[A concealed type of spiritual force was discovered; determined to have been left behind by a rank 2 creature! The type is attributed to that of an ancient spirit’s barrier of the second form, analysing…”
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
In the database of the A.I. Chip, there was an immense collection of pictures and information. Furthermore, after Leylin had gained control of the headquarters of the Four Seasons Garden in the secret plane, he had obtained all of the data that were available to him, and had saved it inside the A.I. Chip’s database. Right now,
Leylin could be said to be a true scholar, an existence that was extremely rare on the south coast.
A silver thread of spiritual force released a unique glow that was filled with a strong yet mysterious quality. It stretched out from between Leylin’s brows and spiralled in midair, before writhing into the shape of a rune and imprinting itself onto the wall.
*Ka-Cha!* As if something had been shattered, the alert-type barrier that the Gargamel had left behind was completely destroyed. With Leylin’s current strength as a rank 2 Warlock, the act of breaking such a barrier was extremely easy, and would not raise the awareness of the other party.
“The might of the materialisation of spiritual force is definitely not ordinary!”
The corners of Leylin’s lips curled up as he felt the firmness and power of his own spiritual force.
A rank 2 Magus had definitely reached a higher realm than a rank 1 Magus. Between the levels, not only did they have superb control over the modification of their own body and obtain various types of power, but they could then choose from the various paths and specialisations and walk further down the path of their own specialisation.
However, there was one ability that all rank 2 Magus had to cultivate in. That was the materialisation of their spiritual force!
This process was to materialise a faintly discernable spiritual force from nothingness using energy particles.
This type of materialisation could only be performed after having their elemental essence conversion reach at least 80 percent. The materialisation of the spiritual force using energy particles far surpassed the might of regular spiritual force. It was also one of the criteria needed to advance into a rank 3 Magus!
Breaking through to a rank 3 Magus required a minimum amount of spiritual force, and also a certain threshold where a rank 2
Magus could materialise their spiritual force.
Right now, Leylin was only at the starting point for the materialisation of his spiritual force, but he had already discovered the benefits of using such materialised spiritual force.
Spiritual force was, in fact, a catalyst for spells. After increasing in power through the use of a spell model and conversion, it would draw from the energy particles in the surroundings?
Right now, the spiritual force, which was acting as the catalyst, had been strengthened. No matter which spell was cast, its might would be increased!
Hence, the power of a rank 1 spell from a rank 2 Magus would far surpass the one that a rank 1 Magus had cast.
“Fortunately I made preparations to overcome the isolation of the secret plane!”
After expelling the Gargamel’s spiritual force, Leylin looked at the already broken entrance, and sized up the surroundings, before withdrawing various items from his spatial pouch.
Through several past instances of extortion and plundering, Leylin had amassed a huge cache of resources that would even leave a rank 2 Magus gaping. The Insatiable Bottomless Pouch was almost filled with stocks of various ingredients. Hence, setting up a spell formation was not a problem.
Leylin’s movements were extremely quick as he withdrew many different coloured gems and other bizarre items from the pouch and placed them on the floor. He also used a silver powder to draw out a triangular magic symbol on the floor.
*Shua Shua Shua!*
Leylin’s right hand turned into claws. and several crucial spots in the spell formation were hollowed out to form the necessary shapes.
Soon after, he crushed the gems and energy jewels on the floor with his left hand!
Kacha!
Resplendent layers of light slowly spread out from the energy nodes of the gems, and like water, they slowly filled up the boundaries of the formation.
The spell formation seemed to have come alive, and it began to tremble, emitting beams of light.
Large amounts of visible distortion began to appear in midair above the spell formation.
Tiny specks of red light seemed like fireflies as they flickered within these distortions.
“What’s next is the localisation of the secret plane’s position!”
Leylin shut both his eyes and recalled the memory of when he was last in the secret plane of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect, searching for this familiar aura within the distortions in the air.
The various red specks of light, which were the weak spots of the void, flickered. If Leylin were to choose the wrong one, he would immediately be lost in the chaos of space and ripped into shreds by it!
At this moment, a darker coloured red glow appeared, and in it was an aura of spirits that Leylin was familiar with!
Leylin opened his eyes in solemnity, and a silver light flashed from his pupils!
“It’s in here!”
“Sword of Memphis!” Leylin raised his right hand and clenched his fist as he slashed downwards!
In the twinkling of the silver light, a transparent longsword appeared in his hands.
The slim blade accurately slashed at the darker red glow of light.
*Ka-Cha!* The slash was as fast as lightning, and very soon, the darker red glow exploded, turning into a pitch black tunnel.
Without the slightest hesitation, Leylin dashed into it.
Moments later, after travelling through the darkness, Leylin once again emerged in the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane. “Wu!” Leylin rubbed his forehead, “Opening the isolation tunnel of space is, indeed, very troublesome. It’s very difficult to pinpoint it through the chaos of space…”

Very soon, he sized up his surroundings.

It was not very far away from the entrance that he had entered before, and Leylin still had some recollections of this place. However, what was different from before was that the surroundings here seemed to have been abused by a hurricane that was over magnitude ten. The surroundings were in shambles.

“Gargamel definitely threw a tantrum in here! I hope the teleporting spell formation is still alright!”

Leylin thought, before sitting cross-legged on the floor.

“Hissss!” A huge black mist spread from behind his body, turning into many tiny black snakes with red eyes.

“Go forth!” Leylin whispered.

With his command, the countless tiny black snakes began to roam around in the surroundings. As for Leylin, he closed his eyes and used his spiritual force to sense everything inside the secret plane. As he had the map of the secret plane that he had previously recorded, the searching was much simpler this time around.
P

reviously, on the peak of the mountain of white bones where the Gargamel was sealed, Leylin had made a map. He later that found out that this was the main map of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect, and it was essential in his escape from there. What he now needed to do was to explore the area and make a comparison with the map that he possessed. Time passed slowly, and the state of the secret plane was presented in front of Leylin. The secret plane of the Spirit Slaying Sect was largely ruined. Not only had all sorts of mechanisms been completely destroyed, but Leylin could not even find a single complete building. It seemed that the Gargamel that had been sealed here must have been full of grievances. That huge mountain of white bones and all the materials in the laboratory were all gone. Even the cabinets full of information were all empty, and it was obvious that the Gargamel had ransacked the area. The little black snake that Leylin controlled with his mind approached a silver passageway meant to be used as an emergency exit. The metal was well preserved and seemed to emanate a strong power that could subdue spirits. However, there were a few large stones that had been thrown inside, which were now obstructing
The black snake easily slipped through the gaps in between the rocks and came to the place where Leylin had initially found the secret room.  
*Rumble!* After pressing the power switch, a side of the wall slowly opened to reveal a secret room.  
This room was extremely small, with a black spell formation in the centre that was surrounded by four stone pillars. Beside one of the pillars was the remains of a Magus.  
*Sssii!*

The little black snake circled the spell formation and suddenly began to hiss.  
Black flames began to burn from the surface of its scales.  
The flames became increasingly intense, gradually forming a doorway with abstruse spatial runes on its frame.  
“It’s here!”  
Leylin came out from the door of flames, and upon seeing that the spell formation had not been damaged, he looked satisfied.  
“A.I. Chip! Scan the teleportation spell formation!” Leylin pressed his temples, and a blue light that only he could see began to sweep the spell formation.  
[Beep! Scanning complete! Intactness of spell formation is 98.7%. Lack of energy present!]

The A.I. Chip quickly responded.  
“Compared to 98.8% from the previous time, it has slightly been worn down. Looks like the area of destruction by that Gargamel was quite substantial, for even this place to have been affected.”  
Leylin rubbed his chin and ordered, “Based on the information I received regarding teleportation, begin tests simulating the restoration of the formation.”  
In his previous exploration, Leylin had obtained a diary from the skeleton here, which included information regarding the
teleportation formation. With additional information that had he later gathered, he had learned the complete technique of the ancient teleportation spell formation; correcting this little imperfection would not be the least bit difficult. Based on the calculations of the A.I. Chip, the formation only needed to be 97% completed to work, but it was still possible for there to be problems! Leylin was not going to risk anything when it came to this long distance teleportation. Whether it was spatial distortions or the explosions of spatial elemental particles, anything could leave him dead without leaving any traces. He did not want to die in some stupid accident.

[Beep! Scanned incomplete portion, beginning simulation of restoration process…]

As the A.I. Chip sounded, Leylin felt as if he had arrived right at the spell formation. His fingers slid like the most precise surgical scalpel as he mended the teleportation spell formation. The runes carved onto the spell formation were extremely dense and complicated. They were more than ten times tinier than a strand of hair, and Leylin himself did not have the confidence that he could do this in one try and without errors. However, with the aid of the A.I. Chip, his every movement was filled with grace and fluidity. In less than an hour, he had already completed mending the few areas that were incomplete.

*Weng!* The blue light disappeared, and Leylin returned to normal. The feeling he had just experienced lingered in his mind. In front of him, the black teleportation spell formation still retained its original state without any signs of change.

“The A.I. Chip’s simulated experiments are becoming increasingly vivid!”

Leylin’s hands flashed as they moved, his fingers forming all sorts of symbols and hand gestures. These were techniques that he had
used while mending the spell formation. All sorts of complicated and profound signs were flawlessly made with his hands, as if they had been practised countless times, “Such a unique feeling had already been put to muscle memory…” Seeing the signs being made so fluently despite only being used once in the simulation, it looked as if Leylin had trained for a decade. A flash of awe appeared on his face. Leylin immediately thought of other areas in which this would be useful. For instance, learning rank 2 spells! Though he had used the A.I. Chip to aid him in using magic spells through the use of spell models, the movements were stiff and robotic, just like Magi who were training in something for the first time. But this situation was different. If he used the A.I. Chip’s simulation, his manipulation of his spells would reach a whole new level. Though this was just a short simulation, Leylin now had a rather in-depth knowledge regarding the teleportation spell formation. Though he might not be able to set it up, simple maintenance was not a problem. Leylin approached the side of the spell formation. “Thank you for your teleportation spell formation, Lord Magus!” He first went to the skeletal remains of the Magus and bowed towards it. A large black hand then descended, countless tendrils extending and propping up the skeleton. *Boom!* A huge pit was dug with the hand and the skeleton was placed within. Soil and stones fell, and this became a grave. “The area is ugly, so this is the only way to give you a proper burial.” Leylin sighed and then came to the front of the spell formation. “Naz’s Hand, third formation!” Leylin made a spell pattern, and from the tip of his fingers, silver threads were sent out and entwined themselves along the surface of the spell formation…
Two hours later, the teleportation spell formation was now completely restored to its original state, as if it were brand new. Not only were a few damaged portions mended, even some of the original runes were improved using the A.I. Chip. Leylin looked at the surface of this new spell formation, and his breathing became a little coarse. “Next is the most important step, which is to test whether this spell formation is functional…”

The leather pouch at his waist automatically opened, and a black crystal flew out and dropped into the energy groove in the teleportation spell formation. Within this crystal was a pure darkness, with even some transparent, distorted flames burning within. This was the essence of the magic crystals he had purified! The consumed had totalled over a thousand magic crystal cards, which meant a value of over a ten million magic crystals!

Although the ancient teleportation spell formation could send a Magus far away, the energy required to do was also monstrous. If not for Leylin’s recent successes in plundering, it would be difficult to gather this amount of magic crystals.

*Rumble!* After the essence of the magic crystal was deposited into the groove, the spell formation began to rumble. Mysterious magic runes began to light up, and bright rays lit up every corner of the spell formation

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha! Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

Threads of pure energy from the magic crystal was extracted from the spell formation and poured into the ancient spell formation. From the bottoms of the four stone pillars, rings of light emerged and spread to the tops of the pillars, until the top suddenly exploded to reveal a hole. Piercing light rushed out of the centre of the pillars and formed four differently coloured bundles of light, which hovered at the
tops of the pillars. Earthen brown, fiery red, heavenly green, and azure balls of light silently appeared in mid-air.

“Oh? This power!” Within these four balls of light, Leylin could feel the familiar air of energy particles.

“These are… Earth, fire, wind and water?” Leylin was dazed and immediately recognised the natures of these balls of light.

He touched his chin and pondered deeply. In a few ancient schools of thought, there had once been a concept that earth, fire, wind, and water formed the foundations of the world!

From the looks of it, the Spirit Slaying Sect also held such a thought.

“Activate!” Leylin exclaimed loudly, using a language that he had never utilised, which was full of a cryptic and ancient aura. This was the Turian language that the Spirit Slaying Sect used! After recording information regarding this with the A.I. Chip, Leylin had effortlessly learnt this language.

*Weng Weng!* Four energy balls constantly fluctuated, and different coloured rays extended from the balls, converging above the heart of the teleportation spell formation.

*Ka-cha!*

As if the fabric of space had been split in two, and as if lightning had descended, huge spatial distortions appeared in front of Leylin and became a depthless hole.

“Now the teleportation is working!” Leylin immediately came up with a backup plan. No matter whether or not he would need this teleportation spell formation, it would be an escape route if he ever required one.

“Should I go over?” A tempting thought appeared in his mind, but he mercilessly suppressed it.
Based on his conjectures and the A.I. Chip’s estimations regarding space, spell formations like these did not consume a lot energy from the magic crystals, but the moment a real and living subject went through, the required energy would be enough to extract and consume all the power in the essence of the magic crystals!

Leylin was still not clear about the situation at the other end of the teleportation formation, and naturally could not take such a risky chance. In addition, the magic crystal consumption from the trip was bound to break Leylin’s heart.

Without seeing the teleportation spell formation at the other end, Leylin was unable to tell if he could return safely. What if it is was a one-way trip?

“En! Spiritual force can’t penetrate through, and detection spells are useless. There has to be another way…”
After that, Leylin used a couple of different methods to try to investigate the situation at the other end of the tunnel, but none of them worked. His spiritual force still wasn’t able to see through space and every detection Magus’ spell was connected directly to spiritual forces so all of his plans didn’t work. After taking one last deep look at the tunnel, Leylin was extremely reluctant as he deactivated the Magus’ formation.

*Ka Cha!*

The magic stone crystal in the groove of the magic formation automatically flew to Leylin’s hand and the various light rays emitted from it became slightly dimmer. “Hmm? 10% of its power was consumed?” Leylin frowned a little when he felt the loss in power of the magic stone crystal. It was similar to using one million magic stones in the span of a short moment!

Moreover, Leylin didn’t send any living creature through it and just used his spiritual force to investigate it! Otherwise, the magic stone crystal would have been instantly depleted! “In this case, I must use something like a puppet or spirit slave that can automatically move by itself so that it can head in to check it out before being summoned back!” Leylin rubbed his lower jaw.

Following this thought, he did not hesitate any longer to leave the...
secret plane of the Spirit Slaying Sect. As he was leaving, he purposefully set a formation at the entrance to replicate the scene before he arrived as much as possible.
Even though he could observe from various signs that the Gargamel would not be able to break through to the interior emergency pathway, Leylin did not want to take the risk.
With the help of the A.I. Chip’s meticulous calculations, even if the Gargamel were to personally come here, it would not be able to discover anything. This meant that his personal safety had greatly increased.
After laying down the formation, Leylin left the place.
Brambles Iron Door, located in the western part of the south coast, was a large scaled Magus market.
The reason why this place had this name was due to an enormous iron door that was completely covered with thistles and thorns that was nearby. Behind it was a medium sized Magus’s secret plane!
In the south coast, the secret planes were mostly controlled by the various large Magi organizations, and this particular resource secret plane was being controlled by the wandering Magi alliance, Iron Crown.
Since the dark and light Magi had suppressed them both openly and secretly and, after having experienced countless suppressions, many wandering Magi who were sitting on the fence had finally chosen to rebel against the major alliances!
This Iron Crown was a power that had been formed from wandering Magi.
In this location, numerous wandering Magi grouped together, took charge of the nearby domains, and even controlled a middle-scaled secret plane!
Even though the middle-scaled secret plane could not be compared with the Four Seasons Garden’s large scaled secret plane, it was still extremely rare and precious!
The existence of the Iron Crown was like a torch in the dark; it attracted the various wandering Magi and acolytes from the various lands of the south coast and constantly expanded. However, it was to this point only. Since it was a Magi alliance and controlled the management and contract agreements, the Iron Crown had always been weaker than the powerful Magi alliances. When it dealt with the outside world, it always kept a neutral position. Moreover, it only recently had flourished to the point to being just slightly stronger than the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Furthermore, the dark Magi organisation Abyssal Bone Forest was only ranked as a mid-tier power! It was also unknown what the higher ups of the dark and light Magi organizations were thinking. Perhaps they couldn’t be bothered to make a plot to share that piece of land and just allowed the Iron Crown to continue existing. This place had also turned into an enormous bazaar for all Magi! Since the wandering Magi kept a neutral position, it had become the south coast’s irreplaceable free market. No matter if it was a dark Magus or a light Magus, non-affiliated Magus or one from an alliance, all Magi had free entry to this place. Since the Iron Crown watched over this area, the security could be said to be great as there were no terrible incidences that happened, which resulted the rapid creation of a good reputation. Leylin climbed to the summit of the mountain and looked with an elated gaze at the unfortified gathering city within the flat plain not far from his position. “Is that the Brambles Iron Door? Its scale is almost comparable to the Nightless City…” He took advantage of his high altitude and surveyed the area. He could see flat summits and large infrastructure gathered together. It seemed to be like a spider web that was expanding outwards from
Moreover, what made him feel amazed the most was that the gathering city unexpectedly did not have fortified walls or guards. Leylin could casually see various Magi moving about in various transportation devices as they moved in the gathering city in all directions.

Leylin had not felt this kind of atmosphere when he was in the Nightless City.

“When the Iron Crown was first founded, it was born from blood and flames. Initially, the thirteen wandering Magi had their hands covered with the blood of the dark and light Magi in order to run this place and to enable a place for the wandering Magi to live……”

Leylin sighed as he put on his hat before heading towards the Brambles Iron Door.

The specialty of the gathering city was that there were no obvious boundaries. After entering the perimeter of the Bramble Iron Door, Leylin saw various kinds and types of stalls on the road side. Those stalls were set up by the wandering Magi. Leylin could also see acolytes, Magi, and even humans that were mending the stalls.

“It seems that this place isn’t inferior to the Nightless City! I wonder if I’ll be able to obtain the materials that I need here…..”

Leylin thought to himself that his motives in coming here were to gather information, to replenish the ingredients he used most often, and to test his luck on whether he would be able to find any detection spell models. If it really was not possible to obtain them, then he would purchase a few puppets or spirit slaves to explore the plane.

“Hmm?”

Leylin walked without a destination in mind, but his gaze suddenly focused!

At the side of the main road, a group of Magi gathered and they
appeared to be looking at some form of public notice. Various images and words were shone onto an enormous black wall so that Magi from a few hundred meters away would still be able to see it. The words were blood red with the words ‘wanted list’ written in large. Below the words, pictured of the Magi, their danger levels, and bounty rewards were mentioned. Leylin had seen this before in Nightless City, but here, he was the top on the wanted list and was described to be incredibly dangerous! His valiant achievements in his life up until this point in time were recorded, including the fact that he killed two great rank 2 Magi. What made Leylin astonished was that currently on the wanted list his picture had shifted a position as he was replaced by an unfamiliar Magus. “It seems that during the period that I disappeared, the south coast has experienced some major events!” Leylin was a little curious, so he walked forward to see the words that were being shown. In the south coast, the majority of the wanted people were people that gathered souls, such as a black Magus that committed crimes including slaying cities and eliminating countries. Once a rank 2 Magus entered the board, it would definitely be enormous news. A rank 2 Magus would be counted as a big shot that oversaw an area on the south coast. There was not any news about such a person being wanted within the past few hundred years. The rank 2 Magi on the wanted list had always been those few and there wasn’t any news that they made a blunder and were caught. Moreover, in this few short months, there was unexpectedly two rank 2 Magi on the board, instantly attracting the gazes of numerous Magi. That was right! The person that was positioned in front of Leylin
was a rank 2 Magus!
Leylin squeezed to the front row to read up on that Magus.
“Alistair Faron, rank 2 Magus. Title: Solitary Wolf. Crimes: During an exploration, he had killed the tree protector Aleken from the same faction, resulting in three army squads of the Light Magi Alliance to be annihilated, and vast resources from the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane to be stolen! Risk level: Extremely high! If any Magus has any news regarding his locations and report it to a member of a nearby Light Magi Alliance, they will immediately be rewarded with a million magic stones as their reward! Killing the target will enable them to earn one billion magic stones or resources and rewards of equivalent value!”
In the image on the wall, Alistair had a mix of gold and white hair and was a youth which was smiling candidly. His eyes expressed the intelligence that he had accumulated from the passing of time. He had an extremely peculiar personal charm and a scholarly temperament.
After becoming an official Magus, Magi were able to undergo local surgery to change their appearance. Rank 2 Magi were able to undergo more extensive flesh and body alterations. Since Alistair could kill two Level 2 Magi, he definitely would be at least at the rank 2 Magi’s level. After all, he definitely would not be young since not everyone could be as perverted as Leylin, who could succeed in breaking through to being a rank 2 Magus level before he was forty.
As a matter of fact, when he broke through to the rank 2 Magus level, the entire Magi realm of the south had viewed him as an unprecedented genius.
According to what the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had said, they were extremely regretful of their initial actions.
“However, there were three Level 2 Magi. They seemed to be the guards of the Magi of the light Magi’s alliance at the Eternal River
Plains’ secret plane. It looks like something major has happened there again!”
Leylin rubbed his chin as he was extremely interested in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane.
It was vast and had everlasting resources. It wasn’t something that ordinary ancient Magi organisations could establish.
According to Leylin’s hypothesis, those who built it should be an alliance with a few Morning Star Magi.
Moreover, the secrets in the secret plane still had a lot of areas to be investigated.
It was to the point that it was unknown which Magi organisation had created this secret plane. Currently, the dark and light Magi were also unable to give an accurate answer.
“From the circumstances that made rank 2 Magi to fall out with one another and even kill each other, including the high rewards that were to be given out by the Light Magi Alliance, there should be a remarkable incident that happened in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane…”
Leylin lips curled up into an interest filled smile. He wore his cap as he reentered the crowd.
After a short moment and spending sufficient magic stones. Leylin received a report that he had wanted.
Leylin had now changed his appearance to that of a middle-aged man. As he stared hard at the human figure made entirely out of black fog, discontent appeared on his face.

“We don’t know either, but it’s definitely extremely valuable and has to be very tempting for rank 2 Magi. Upon seeing that treasure, Alistair betrayed the Light Magi Alliance without any qualms and plotted against Alex and Juna, and then snatched it away.”

The voice of the person in the black fog was very hoarse and its body seemed to be on the verge of disappearing at any moment.

“Alright. One last question, where is he now?” Leylin heaved a long sigh and asked.

“I’m not sure. Somebody seemed to have found traces of him in Nightless City. We made a conjecture of where he’s going, and he’s probably fleeing towards the Endless Ocean…”

Upon hearing this answer, Leylin shook his head.

The Endless Ocean was on the east side of Nightless City, and was in the complete opposite direction from the Brambles Iron Door. Even if he were to chase after him right now, he would not make it in time.

Also, to dispatch a large number of people for a piece of news that he was still unsure whether it was genuine was simply not worth it!

There were definitely a lot of Magi after Alistair. There were even
rumours of a rank 3 Magus around, and Leylin was not going to participate. He himself was a significant fugitive as well! “Do you have any more questions?” The figure in the fog asked. “No!” Leylin got up to leave this room. *Clang!* The large door rumbled as it closed shut, and the room sunk into darkness while the figure in the fog gradually dissipated. “Dear customer, you have asked a total of two 4 A level and 3 B level questions. The total cost comes to…” After Leylin walked out, a woman dressed in a revealing manner emerged, swinging her enchanting hips. She looked like the boss of a pub. A pair of ample breasts were almost pressed onto Leylin’s chest. “Alright, I understand!” Leylin seemed to be provoking her as he smiled, and a small black pouch with gold edges made a long arc in the air and accurately fell between the female boss’ ample breasts, causing her to pout playfully. After rejecting her intentions and attempts to make him stay, Leylin quickly left. *Hualala!* The bricks on both sides of the door shifted, revealing a secluded and dirty pathway. A distance away the sounds of Magi clamouring could be heard. Leylin turned back, only to find that the door had already vanished without a trace. There was only a regular wall there, and the place where he had first entered was completely different from where he was now. These Magi organisations that sold information as a living usually had a perfect mastery over methods in concealing themselves. Leylin could guarantee that their entrance at the Brambles Iron Door was definitely one of many others, and it was impossible to find out where their headquarters were from these entrances. Even this female boss was not easily dealt with! Leylin rubbed his
fingers and left with a smile about his face. After Leylin left, in the place where the trade had taken place, the female boss’ face changed and she collapsed onto a sofa, revealing her beautiful curves. At the same time, the immense spiritual force that did not lose out to a peak rank 1 Magus was gradually exhibited. This female boss was actually a peak rank 1 Magus! Even in the entire south coast, such strength could be enough to awe or intimidate anyone! Now, however, cold sweat rolled down her face. “How terrifying! This spiritual force…” The female boss patted her chest, fear still lingering in her heart, “He’s definitely a powerful rank 2 existence! Why is he here?” She could sense Leylin’s probing at the beginning, and in actuality if not for Leylin holding back at the end, she would definitely be in a worse state. The alluring female boss lay on her sofa for a while longer, thoughts rapidly running through her mind. All of a sudden, her expression changed. “Could it be that he’s here because he received that information as well?” Immediately, she paled and murmured in a low voice, “It’s getting harder and harder to do business here. This is not good! I need to leave as soon as possible! These kind of things happens every two or three days. I can’t take it any longer!”

……

Leylin, who was elsewhere, was also recalling the whole matter. Strictly speaking, this matter did have a connection to him. After he had destroyed one of the gates into the secret plane, some mechanism seemed to have been triggered and resulted in the
mysterious changes in the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane. A huge ruin had appeared at the heart of the secret plane. Overjoyed at the unexpected good fortune, the dark and light Magi broke out in battle and, after much difficulty, settled on an agreement and developed this place. The light and dark Magi had put in a lot of effort in their exploration! These were the remnants left behind by the Magus who had created the secret plane! If there was a possibility of gaining some inheritance, then who wouldn’t jump at the chance? The light and dark Magi immediately dispatched their elites and teams that were headed by at least rank 2 Magi entered and explored the ruins. In this exploration, Alistair, Alex and Juna’s three teams worked together and overcame a few difficulties. It seemed like they had obtained some incredible item. This treasure seemed to be an amazing item effective for rank 2 Magi. Alistair had chosen to betray his teammates for this item, and after dealing with Alex and Juna on the sly, he had swept up the treasure and fled! Upon receiving this news, dark Magi immediately attacked, and this had serious repercussions on the light Magi’s end. Not only had two rank 2 Magi died, even the corps that were guarding the area outside the ruins were attacked. At least three corps had been systematically annihilated. Ever since that matter, the dark and light Magi in the south coast were in a tense situation. Though the light Magi had had the upper hand previously, it was not as if the dark Magi were completely powerless. The difference in their might was not very big. Now, in the span of a few months, including Alistair, the Light Magi Alliance had lost a total of four rank 2 Magi!
This definitely had an effect on the ratio of the power between the two factions. Though there were no losses in terms of their rank 3 Magi, which were the strongest they had, the dark Magi were starting to become restless.

Of course, this had nothing to do with Leylin. He was mostly attracted by that mysterious treasure.

“What could it be that would cause a rank 2 Magus to betray his faction and even plot against his companions?”

Traces of red appeared in Leylin’s eyes, and there seemed to be a voice inside shouting, “Snatch! Snatch it! Snatch the treasure!”

A desire that he could feel deep inside his bones invaded Leylin’s senses.

“Hm? That’s weird! When did I become so irrational?” Leylin’s expression changed and he grimly looked at the crystal at his wrist. The crystal at his wrist was currently emitting a circle of red rays, looking about to drip fresh blood.

“The situation is getting worse!” An imposing look flashed by his eyes, and he opened a flask and drank from it.

*Gulp! Gulp!*

Large amounts of liquid that had a medicinal taste to it travelled down his throat, and Leylin’s expression seemed to calm down.

As time passed, the rays from the crystal dimmed, and it turned into a transparent, colourless crystal.

“It’s getting increasingly serious…”

Leylin kept the crystal and a solemn expression appeared on his face.

After drinking the potion he had brewed, Leylin could feel his spirit becoming tranquil, the impulse from before vanishing.

“The effects of being a warlock are really troublesome to deal with!”

Leylin furrowed his brows. After his heart had been modified such that he had completely fused with the bloodline of the Giant
Kemoyin Serpent, Leylin could feel that the intense emotions due to the bloodline, which he had suppressed with this potion of tranquility, were now beginning to stir restlessly. After advancing to become a rank 2 Warlock, this situation had become increasingly serious. Leylin now had no choice but to set up an early warning spell design on his wrist. This colourless crystal was a ward that Leylin had set up. The moment bloodline-induced emotions began to affect his rationality; the crystal would immediately emit blood-red rays. The graver this issue was, the more piercing the red rays on the surface of the crystal would be. Leylin now had no choice but to prepare potions of tranquility and keep it at hand, occasionally drinking some to prevent the emotions from affecting his mind. After all, for him to be able to come so far, the A.I. Chip was an important factor, the other being a clear mind. If he lost this factor, no matter how powerful he became, it would simply be a tragedy. “These emotional issues of warlocks were definitely complications in ancient times. Though the great Magus Serholm had come up with this potion of tranquility, it can only treat the symptoms but not the root cause. I need to find a way that can permanently deal with it.” Leylin looked grim. “As for that Alistair, it’s not my place to think about that. Also, he’s so much further away…” After regaining a clear mind, Leylin touched his chin. “Of course, If he’s so blind as to offend me, then that’s a different matter altogether.” After thinking this through, Leylin wore his hood once more and left this deserted alley.
A few hours later, Leylin emerged from a large building that had been built using gold and silver, a helpless look on his face. Behind him, a Magus that seemed to be the owner was watching him leave, an apologetic expression on his face. This was one of the top three commerce centres in the Brambles Iron Door, and Leylin had just purchased some items. It was a pity that besides replenishing a few frequently used materials, there was no mention of the long distance detection spell that Leylin had been hoping to obtain. As for a method to solve the warped emotions from his Warlock bloodline? Leylin didn’t even bother asking about it.
The inheritance of the Warlocks had been lost from the south coast for many years, so Leylin did not think that he would be so lucky as to be able to find a remedy so easily. In addition, he did not want to reveal his trump card!

“I’m afraid I’ll have no choice but to rely on the Great Magus Serholm!”

Leylin scratched his chin, walking as he pondered over this. As a rank 4 Warlock at the Morning Star level, the Great Magus Serholm must have had certain methods to withstand the emotional side effects that ailed them. The potion of tranquility from before was evidence of that! Leylin planned to find some vestiges or ruins that had been left behind by him, and hopefully discover something.

Leylin, who had already made up his mind, proceeded to the outer layer of the Brambles Iron Door. He urgently needed some information or news regarding the Great Magus Serholm. From this, he would be able to find some methods to relieve himself of the side effects of his bloodline.

“Is our guest here planning to leave already?”

Just as Leylin was planning on leaving the Brambles Iron Door, he was suddenly stopped by a strange person who was wearing a hood.

“Who are you? I don’t know you!” Leylin, whose appearance was now that of a middle-aged man with a dangerous aura emanating
from him.
The person he was facing could definitely sense this. He was
currently like prey that had been marked by an ancient creature,
and his two legs began to tremble involuntarily.
“Wait! Wait! My lord, I have no evil intentions!” The strange
person began to wave his arms. To prove his identity, he even
produced a metal disk and showed it to Leylin.
On the surface of the black disk, a symbol of the Iron Crown had
been deeply engraved. There was no ornamentation on it, and the
style in which it had been carved was with smooth, firm lines.
“Someone from the Iron Crown?” Leylin’s tone became less
aggressive, and his aura also calmed down. He sized up the strange
man, who was also an official Magus, “What do you want from
me?”
“My lord! We from Iron Crown are extremely respectful and
humble towards the many powerful lord Magi. To be honest, the
moment you entered the market, we had already noticed you…”
The strange person bowed towards Leylin, “Please come with me!”
Leylin scratched his chin and followed behind him. From this
person’s actions, Leylin could assume that the Iron Crown had
already discovered his true strength. Then again, as the ruler of this
area, a rank 2 Magus like him could easily disrupt everyday life
here if he was not monitored. Iron Crown must have developed
some sort of probing methods.
“How did you find me?”
Leylin, who was behind the strange person, couldn’t help but ask
this question.
After hearing this question, the hooded person in front proudly
patted the pouch on his waist. *Xiu!* A black shadow instantly
crawled up to his shoulder.
This was a high-energy being that was similar to a mole, with eyes
that brightly shone like shining sapphires. As it looked at Leylin’s
body, it couldn’t help but shiver, even wedging its tail in between its legs.

“Pardon me!” The hooded man patted the head of the mole-like being to comfort it. “This is my lifelong magical companion, a Krone Mouse. Krone Mice have a heightened awareness for powerful spirits. Hence, I was able to take charge and become the leader of the defence team of the Iron Crown.”

Leylin glanced at the mole on this leader’s shoulder, a look of understanding in his eyes, “To be able to make this creature that has already gone extinct your pet, it seems like you have pretty good luck!”

A Magus’ magical pet or companion wasn’t just some mount. They needed to sign a strict spirit contract, and could only have one magical pet or companion in his or her entire lifetime. Not only did many top grade magical pets have amazing battle power, they could also enhance a Magus’ magic or body. It was said that some legendary magical pets were able to help Magi break through bottlenecks.

Leylin had been looking for a magical pet that was completely compatible with him, but alas, such a thing was difficult to find. One could only depend on their luck, and as a result, Leylin still had yet to make a decision on his pet.

The Krone Mouse completely lacked the ability to fight, and did not have any special abilities that could increase the might of one’s magic or his resistance to spells. Its meagre ability to sense things was basically useless. This Magus had completely abandoned all these possibilities in favour of obtaining a powerful ability in detection, and it was hard to determine whether or not he had made the wrong choice.

Leylin followed the defense team leader into a private room that was opened up by other Magi.

It was extremely quiet, and there were even a few Magi. It seemed
that the entrance was tightly guarded, and was only open to members.

“Alright. Can you tell me why you brought me here now? I’ll give you five minutes!”

Leylin was becoming a little annoyed. The leader, who had realised this, quickly launched into the main topic.

“If I’m not wrong, you must already have stepped into the realm of rank 2, right?”

The team leader seemed to be probing as he asked. Upon seeing Leylin admitting to this by staying silent, he straightened even more in his excitement and bowed once again.

In the south coast, rank 2 Magi were the absolute highest level, and were the leaders of large-scaled academies or the wielders of power in families! No matter where they went, they would enjoy treatment that was reserved for honoured guests.

“Oh revered Lord rank 2 Magus! We of the Iron Crown have recently been holding a small trading gathering between highly ranked Magi. Seeing that you did not look very satisfied, I was hoping you would be able to obtain what you wanted there…”

The leader began to explain, and a look of understanding shone in Leylin’s eyes.

In general, though the resources on the south coast were quite plentiful, this was only so for acolytes and regular Magi. The moment one was promoted to become a peak rank 1 Magus or even a rank 2 Magus like Leylin had been, it would be difficult to find a market that could meet their needs.

Hence, trade meetings that were held by individuals, in which only Magi of a certain level were invited, became mainstream. Many Magi resumed their habits of using material items to make trades after being promoted to a higher ranking, exchanging items for what they needed with Magi at the same level of strength as themselves.
Before, Leylin lacked power, and was not qualified to participate. Now, however, he had been especially sought out and invited. “Is this a trading event organized by the Iron Crown? When is it? Where will it be?” Leylin questioned. He already had plans to take a look there. Meeting with other Magi at the same level of strength as him would be extremely helpful to him, and in this sort of setting, the appearance of amazing items was almost certain.

“We are extremely honoured to have you participate!” Seeing that Leylin had agreed, a hint of joy appeared on his face. With both hands, he then passed a black card to Leylin. “The trading event will be held three days later, and the address is on the card. When the time comes, you’ll just need to bring the card and reach the place on time. In addition, the sages of the Iron Crown would like to have a long talk with all who are at least rank 2 Magi before the trade meeting. You’ll definitely not be disappointed.”

This leader provided more news, which seemed to be the most important part of this invitation.

“A meeting with them?” Leylin was surprised. The sages of the Iron Crown were naturally not those who started the organisation, but they had the strength of at least peak rank 1 or even rank 2 Magi. Without this much strength, the Iron Crown would long since have been destroyed countless times over by Magi who harboured bad intentions towards them. “May I know what it is about?” Leylin fiddled with the black card in his hands. It was made out of some crystal and was cool to the touch. There were even rings engraved onto it that connected to form an intricate pattern that formed a large metal sword. “I can’t really reveal the details, but I can tell you that it has to do with the incident at the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane.”

The leader of the defense team smiled, but Leylin began to get
nervous. “The incident at the Eternal River Plain’s secret plane? Was my identity revealed?” Beneath his clothes, black scales protruded through Leylin’s skin. However, he quickly reacted, and asked without changing his expression, “Are you talking about Alistair?” “Yes! He’s the lord who betrayed the Light Magi Alliance!” At the mention of Alistair, this leader’s tone was still one of reverence towards a rank 2 Magus, causing Leylin to nod inwardly. Of course, this had to do with his neutral stance. If this leader was a light Magus, he would not call him a lord, or else he would be punished by the enforcement team! “Interesting! Very interesting!” After coming out of the private room, Leylin touched his chin, and a smile appeared on his lips. He quickly disappeared into the throngs of people. After finishing up this business, this defence leader politely encouraged Leylin to partake in the services provided here, which he did. It must be said that these places that were catered to service highly ranked Magi were truly different, whether it be in terms of food, liquor, women, or anything else. Whatever Leylin could think of, they could provide, and the quality was also first rate. For large organisations like this, any rank 2 Magus was worth roping in. In addition, Leylin was extremely unfamiliar to them, which had piqued their curiosity. The Iron Crown obviously did not dare look into his background, though some sorts of observations and investigations were definitely underway. However, Leylin paid this no mind. This middle-aged man that he currently looked like was completely different, and there was absolutely no information regarding him. By the time the Iron Crown might have found anything out or linked him to anything,
he would probably have been long gone.
“But Alistair?”
Leylin suddenly felt as if this was fate. He had already been prepared to let this man go, but somehow, he was nearby Leylin again.
“He’s thought to have fled towards the Endless Ocean, but in actuality, he escaped towards the west. He’s a little shrewd, but that’s it…”
The diversion made by a rank 2 Magus was not so easily seen through. From Leylin’s guesses, there was probably a rank 3 Magus involved!
AFTER having lived in the south coast for so many years, Leylin now had a basic knowledge of the situation there. Geographically speaking, though the south coast was said to be a coast, it was a huge continent that covered mountain ranges, marshes, plains, snowy areas, and all sorts of topography. There were even a few concealed, savage ruins that even official Magi did not dare explore. The largest population on this continent consisted of the native people. There were around 100 million of these regular human, and were divided into hundreds of dukedoms in various sizes. Behind these dukedoms were the dark and light Magi controlling them. The nobility and lords who were in power were basically the descendants of many official Magi! Every once in a while, large Magi organisations in the south coast would test the spirit and talent of these noble families and recruit them to become acolytes. They would provide them with knowledge for them to continue governing for generations. Though these academies would also bring in peasant acolytes, the percentage was very low. Only those of exceptional talent would be considered, and most of the times, their lives could not be guaranteed. Some light Magi academies would not even recruit peasant acolytes, only the dark Magi were willing to do so!
Even with such a large population, the number of peasants with spiritual talent was simply too small. Out of over ten thousand plebeians, only one would be lucky enough to be born with talent to become an acolyte and a Magus. Even amongst them, their talent was nothing exceptional. If one talked about third or fourth-grade aptitudes, one really needed quite some luck.

Hence, a lot of academies and schools disappeared not due to enemy invasions, but from not being able to find a successor. This resulted in the gradual diminution of their power and their eventual demise.

The dark and light Magi both divided their powers well and forbid the recruitment of acolytes at certain boundaries. Due to their conflicting ideas about management, the population that was under dark Magi jurisdiction and their prosperity could not compare to the light Magi.

Hence, the method of recruiting acolytes from outside their region became another way for dark Magi organisations to gain more acolytes.

In Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, this was also the case. They eliminated so many acolytes every year and were not able to steal people from the light Magi domain. This sometimes resulted in a lack of new students to recruit, and they had no choice but to try getting students from the Chernobyl Islands.

Though there were so many methods that could be employed, there were still few official Magi in the south coast.

In addition to this, the difficulty of the process of advancing to a new rank made this problem even worse. Those acolytes with grade one or two aptitude would basically be unable to advance. Their limit would be becoming a level 3 acolyte. Advancement to an official Magus was even more difficult, and the method to being promoted was controlled. Acolytes who were
peasants had not even heard of a high-level meditation technique, and even if they were lucky enough to advance, they would be mediocre at best.

Rank 2 Magi were even more rare. In the entire south coast, there were only less than a hundred!

For this reason, the Light Magi Alliance’s might was diminished after the loss of four rank 2 Magi, and caused the dark Magi to be stirred up.

If it was said that a rank 2 Magus was the highest level that could lord over rank 1, then rank 3 Magi were basically the real owners of the entire south coast!

Based on what Leylin knew, rank 4 Morning Star Magi had virtually vanished, and rank 3 Magi were truly the ones in control. This was so much so that of all the rank 3 Magi who had had notable achievements, there were less than ten, and every one of them were leaders at the level of Magi from the Lighthouse of the Night.

From Kemoyin’s Pupil and descriptions from the Book of Giant Serpent, after a Magus entered rank 3, one would awaken a lot of mysterious abilities. The difference between rank 3 and rank 2 was like that between heaven and earth.

If he was pursued by a rank 3 Magus, no matter what preparations Alistair had made, then all of them would come to naught.

“That Alistair is probably being pursued by a rank 3 Magus, and has been fleeing in this direction!”

Leylin felt like he had deduced the truth.

“That scamming inn actually dared to fool me with false news! If I ever see them again…”

When comparing the inn and Iron Crown, Leylin was naturally more inclined to believe that local tyrant.

In addition, he was quite interested in that exchange meeting.

“An exchange meeting held by the Iron Crown? I think I really
should go take a look.”
Leylin pondered, and turned in a corner.
Next, a silver-haired old man walked out, quickly vanishing into the market.

……

Three days later.
Not far away from the Brambles Iron Door., at an overhanging cliff.
The high black cliff seemed to cross the horizon. In the air, there was a little platform that was formed from a large protruding rock. On its surface was some soil, and weeds as well as vines and flowers that nobody knew the names of were growing.
*Whoo whoo!*
A black ray of light shot out from a distance away, arriving on the platform.
*Rumble!* A pit appeared in the soil, revealing a middle-aged, burly Magus.
“Based on the directions provided by the A.I. Chip, this should be the place!”
The burly man took out a black card and came beside the rock stratum. The simple methods used by regular Magi to conceal things were easily seen through, and the burly man laughed, sending out spiritual force waves towards a layer of rock wall.
*Bo! Bo!*
The rock walls were separated like waves, revealing two Magi in uniform, a metallic insignia on their chests.
At the sight of the man, they were extremely polite, “So it’s Lord Black Snake! We are the Black Iron Guards of the Iron Crown, and we’ve been here waiting for you!”
Upon seeing him tossing out a card, these two were even more
respectful as they bowed, “Please come with us!”
They then entered a hallucinatory spell formation, and the burly man expressionlessly followed them.
Within the spell formation was a flight of stairs, and after walking hundreds of metres, the Magi respectfully guided the burly man into a luxuriously decorated room.
After sending away the servants, the burly man surveyed the area. In front of him was a huge crystal glass, through which one could see a large dome of spectator’s seats and raised platforms.
There were a few Magi already seated, and the energy waves on their bodies were concealed well. However, under the eyes of this burly man, nothing could be hidden. This might was that of a peak rank 1 Magus, on the verge of breaking through!
Recalling the many passageways and large number of Magi, the burly man could not help but sigh, “Iron Crown has really worked hard to open up a passageway for us rank 2 Magi!”
This burly man was naturally Leylin’s disguise.
After receiving the invitation, Leylin lost his desire to look around Brambles Iron Door., and found a random cave. He spent the day training in his high-grade meditation technique, and quietly waited for the time of the exchange meeting to arrive.
For Magi, meditation was something that had to be done everyday, and this was even more so for Leylin.
Kemoyin’s Pupil was a meditation technique that was extremely compatible with him. Everytime he meditated, he could feel his power increasing bit by bit, and this speed was basically astonishing!
Based on his estimations, his current speed was several times faster than those rank 2 Magi that also had high-grade meditation techniques.
The reason had already been analysed by the A.I. Chip, and it had to do with his bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent!
After his heart had been remodelled, Leylin thoroughly fused with this bloodline. The mysterious strength held within was beginning to be activated by Kemoyin’s Pupil, thus increasing his strength. Each high-grade meditation technique had a different nature. As a Magus trained more, this could even increase a Magus in a certain area, raising one’s elemental resistance or even creating a mysterious ability!

In Leylin’s eyes, a high-grade meditation technique like Kemoyin’s Pupil allowed one to modify one’s body and strengthen it through training. A Magus’ body would draw closer to that of the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent.

As for that incomplete Sacred Flame, a Magus would train and produce a special spiritual force. It did not have any uses other than to extend into the extensive consciousness of the continent, and from the huge amount of historical information, pick out useful fragments and get some premonition.

However, this ability had a large amount of uncertainty, and were sometimes ineffective. The technique was also incomplete, which Leylin found to be a pity.

Behind the crystal glass covering, there was a comfortable white sofa, as well as a communication device that was covered in runes beside it.

Leylin sat without a word, dull silver spiritual force instantly connecting with the communication device, and instantly understanding the way to use it.

This was a communication device, which was also used to send the quoted price to Magi. Magi could manipulate their spiritual force to proceed with all sorts of exchanges, and avoid being recognised by people they knew.

The south coast was not that big, and there were plenty of rank 2 Magi who held resentment against each other. If they were to flare up and fight, then Iron Crown would definitely be in a difficult
Hence, they did not dare hold this exchange meeting at the headquarters, but rather set up this place.
For rank 2 Magi, Iron Crown was even more eager to please. On the little table beside the sofa, all sorts of snacks and fruits were placed. Some of them even had the ability to increase spiritual force and the effects of meditation, and their value was something that would even cause regular official Magi to become green with envy All these items were silently displayed here, letting Leylin pick as he pleased.
“Metal-Leafed Fruit!” Leylin easily picked out an apple that was emitting a metallic lustre, and bit into it.
The Metal-Leafed Fruit was truly the specialty from the secret plane that the Iron Crown controlled. It had the ability to condense spiritual power and increase the effects of meditation, and was highly sought by some official Magi. However, Leylin almost could not feel any effects.
After advancing to become a rank 2 Warlock, most of these resources that were useful to rank 1 Magi had lost their effectiveness. For items like this, the Iron Crown’s special product, it was only a means for him to quench his thirst.
Accompanied by ringing sounds, an old Magus suddenly appeared on the high platform. His golden attire looked extremely formal. Beside him were two female servants, who were more attractive than him, holding silver plates. They displayed something that looked like a root and showed it to the Magi below. Surrounding them were multiple projections of enlarged images.

“The Devil’s Antenna is an object retrieved from the body of a beast that had the strength of an official Magus. It has been well preserved within a liquid, and its worth is from two hundred to five hundred thousand magic crystals. It’s a pity that it’s of no use to me anymore…”

Leylin merely scanned the item that appeared on the platform, and immediately lost interest.

“Before the trade meeting begins, is there a need for this auction? How pointless…”

Though Leylin found it boring, the item on the platform seemed to be extremely attractive to the rank 1 Magi below. The shouts of people haggling could be heard, and the auction was extremely lively.

The items on auction by Iron Crown could be said to be of good quality and quite inexpensive, making them highly sought after by the rank 1 Magi.
Magic artifacts, high-level slaves, precious materials, knowledge, and even potions that could increase one’s spiritual force were displayed one after the next, allowing the Magi below to compete with them and choose. These were obviously not attractive to the rank 2 Magi. Neither Leylin nor the other rank 2 Magi in the VIP rooms shouted out a price. Leylin simply closed his eyes and rested, using the A.I. Chip to simulate the spell models of rank 2 spells. Though the spell models of the three rank 2 spells in the Book of Giant Serpents were already in his head, he had realised the other uses of the simulation methods of the A.I. Chip while mending the teleportation spell formation. Through the A.I. Chip’s simulations, he could actually accelerate his own understanding of the activation and firing of these spells, allowing the once robotic movements to be more agile. This was a function that the A.I. Chip did not have before and was something that had been created after his advancement. With this function, Leylin’s understanding and manipulation of rank 2 spells could almost surpass that of rank 2 Magi who had been accumulating knowledge over many years. “However, the number of rank 2 spell models that I have is just too small…” Leylin practised Scorching Touch once more and furrowed his eyebrows. A rank 2 Magus would usually be backed by a powerful organisation that would have no lack of spell models as they would have been accumulated over time. However, Leylin was different since he was now going solo. The difficulty of this path was exacerbated by the strict regulations for rank 1 Magi in the south coast which were even worse for rank 2 Magi.
Even when he was in Four Seasons Garden, Leylin didn’t even have the qualifications to come into contact with rank 2 spell models.

From killing Cabourn and Desmund, he had gained some experience and realisations regarding the use of rank 2 spells. However, what he lacked was the most important thing, spell models! Leylin only had these experiences as a reference.

“It’s not quite possible to buy this sort of thing using magic crystals. Perhaps if I lie low for a period of time, I can try to use other methods…”

As the auction went on, some items that could attract rank 2 Magi began to appear, and some prices were shouted from several VIP rooms.

At this moment, the announcer’s voice from below attracted Leylin’s attention, “Middle-grade magic artifact, Sabre of the Dawn! This is a sabre found in an ancient ruin, and it is said that its previous owner was a mighty Branded Swordsman. Starting price: five million crystals, or any precious materials of the same value!”

Leylin opened his eyes, and through the transparent glass screen, focused on the platform below.

At this moment, there was a dull-gold metal long sword put on display by the servants behind the announcer.

This long sword was around 1.5 m long and two fingers wide. For Branded Swordsmen, such as Number 2 and Number 3 who used swords that were the size of regular humans, this was merely pocket-sized.

However, a hint of glee appeared on Leylin’s face. On the surface of the long sword of the Rays of Dawn, there were some strange runes which were quite similar to the runes he had branded onto the bodies of Number 2 and Number 3.

“Looks like it’s the real deal!”

He nodded, and a slither of spiritual force quoted a price through
the communication device, “Five million magic crystals!”
A middle-grade magic artifact naturally was not so valuable, but this long sword was evidently worthy enough to do research on, which garnered the interest of the rank 2 Magi.
Quickly enough, a price was quoted from a VIP room not far from Leylin, “5.5 million!’
Leylin’s face darkened and he looked towards that VIP room. It was a pity that he could see naught but a blurry shadow.
The glass in the VIP rooms had naturally been processed. Guests could see outside through the glass, but people on the outside could not see anything inside the room.
“Six million!” Leylin immediately increased the price. Other than the magic crystals he possessed, he also had materials he had obtained from the secret plane and the wealth of two rank 2 Magi. This would obviously cause rank 2 Magi to be jealous, and it was natural that he could be so generous.
As if able to sense Leylin’s resolution and immense wealth, the rank 2 Magi nearby stopped raising the price and this long sword became Leylin’s.
“The guest at VIP room 7, please take note! Our staff is bringing your auction item to do the exchange. Please prepare magic crystals or items that are of similar value…”
News travelled through the communication device, and after just five minutes, an expressionless man brought the servant who had been holding the silver plate to Leylin’s room.
“May I know where this long sword was created?” After the delivery, Leylin’s eyes flashed as he questioned them.
“My apologies! This belongs to the client and it is our duty to keep this a secret for him!”
Though they were speaking to a rank 2 Magus, the staff still rejected Leylin’s demands. This exhibited their manners and professionalism.
“Very well!” Leylin nodded and waved for these two people to take their leave.
Next, he picked up the long sword on the table, and gold rays shined in Leylin’s hand.
A regular middle-grade magic artifact could no longer satisfy the needs of a rank 2 Magus. What was more useful was a high-grade magic artifact or even a magic device!
However, Leylin had no desire to use it. He was merely interested in the runes on this long sword.
“A.I. Chip! Scan and record the runes, and then compare it with the runes of the Branded Swordsmen!” Leylin thought in his mind.
[Beep! Recorded runes, now comparing with the runes of the Branded Swordsmen…]
The A.I. Chip loyally intoned. Right after, Leylin received the results, [Similarity to fire elemental Branded Swordsmen runes recorded by Host body is 67.1%. Similarity to foundation metallic runes: 34.2%. Similarity to basic sharpness: 13.9%. Estimated to be the runes of the weapons of the Branded Swordsmen! Estimated time required to perfect and alter: 294 hours!]
“Like I thought!”
Glee appeared on Leylin’s face. The information he had on the Branded Swordsmen was extremely limited. Even with the A.I. Chip perfecting and supplementing information, he was still only able to gain the fire elemental runic spell formation suitable for males.
As for the runes for other elements and the weapons suitable for Branded Swordsmen, he had no clue at all.
Now, with the appearance of this long sword of the Rays of Dawn, Leylin could finally see some hope.
He also had another thought. The Fallen Star Pendant, which was a magic artifact that had accompanied him all these years, was beginning to be unable to meet his needs. He had hence sent it back
to his family.
He now lacked an offensive-type magic artifact.
Perhaps, he could carve these branded runes on a magic artifact by imitating those on the long sword and create a weapon that was meant for him!
Leylin touched his chin and pondered over the feasibility of this plan.
While Leylin scanned and analysed the sword in his hands, a few Magi were quietly discussing in the VIP room that had been competing with him for this magic artifact.
“Torp, why aren’t you quoting another price? It’s just six million magic crystals. That’s nothing to you, right?”
A female in purple-gold Magus robes spoke to a red-bearded old man, a bewitching aura surrounding her.
“The magic crystals aren’t much, and I don’t actually want that magic artifact that much. I just want to analyse the runes on it, and I’m sure this kind of special magic artifact has very strict requirements for users. I’ve even come to suspect that those who aren’t Branded Swordsmen will be unable to use this long sword… The ancient Branded Swordsmen have already vanished from the south coast for thousands of years. It’s not worth it to spoil our plans for this item.”
The red-bearded Torp touched his beard.
“En! You are truly a Master Blacksmith! To be able to glean this much information from just a look…” The woman seemed to be in awe and then continued on worriedly, “I keep having this feeling that the plan is much too hurried. Will he really come…”
“Don’t worry! He’ll definitely be here!”
The red-bearded Torp spoke with conviction, “We’ve put out bait this time that is definitely irresistible to him. In order to use that item more effectively, he’ll definitely come!”
“That’s great!” The woman patted her chest, and then glanced at
Leylin’s room with some conjectures in mind.
“Say, do you think he’s inside? Should I sound him out?”
“Don’t do it!” Torp immediately stopped her. “Don’t act rashly. If it really is him, would he dare be so bold as to compete with us? Besides, offending an unfamiliar rank 2 Magus would probably be unfavourable to us…”
“Hehe, I’m just joking. You actually took it seriously…”
The woman giggled coquettishly, and her figure disappeared into the darkness, leaving behind the old man who looked to be in a difficult position.

On the platform, the last item on the public auction was sent out. The announcer went on, “The auction has ended, and we will now enter the segment of the exchange meeting. Those who wish to leave may exit through the passages at both sides.”
*Rumble!* Along with his words, the large doors at two ends of the hall opened loudly.
Many rank 1 Magi left the hall on the first floor through the two doors. Though they did not know much, from the serious atmosphere that emanated through the hall after the announcer’s words, they felt as if they were being pushed down by a mountain. *Hua la la!*
The masses dispersed quickly and in an instant, only a few rank 1 Magi were left in their original seats. On the second floor where the VIP rooms were, not one Magus left. *Boom!* The doors closed, and the solemn atmosphere shot up to the extreme! “Oh? Is it starting?”
With a smile about his lips, Leylin watched the centre and prepared for a good show. “Alright! Let’s start with me!”
From a VIP room on Leylin’s far right, there travelled a very robotic voice that was neither male nor female. It had obviously been heavily processed. “I have one portion of the potion Sea of the Ocean. I wish to exchange it for the hearts of three Fire Scorpions, or the core of a Lava Tyrant! Is anyone willing to make this trade?”
Along with the words, a projection of the potion was sent over, and could clearly be seen by everyone in the hall.
“I have two Fire Scorpion hearts, and wish to replace the rest with magic crystals. How does six million sound?”
A hoarse old voice sounded.
“No, I only need fire elemental materials! However, I can buy those two hearts from you for whatever price you name…” It was a pity that this offer was rejected by that Magus. Next, these two Magi spoke through the communication device, their conversation now a secret to the Magi outside.
The MC on the platform was already just standing aside, leaving the area for the rank 2 Magi to use.
Leylin waited silently and watched as all kinds of precious items were traded. His expression was calm, like that of a cheetah waiting for its prey to rise up to the bait.
After discussions with Iron Crown and Leylin’s own judgement, he could now confirm that this exchange meeting was a setting that Iron Crown or the light Magi faction were using to lure out Alistair. All that they were putting out were items that Alistair could not resist.
At this moment, an item that made Leylin’s eyes twinkle was exhibited in the hall.
“A high-levelled alchemy notebook, recording terrifying information from the abyss. Those who possess too little spiritual power will see illusions while flipping through it. The previous owner has already gone completely crazy and died, so the next buyer has to be careful.”
Along with this voice, a book that was black on the outside and had blood-red eyes projected in the middle of the notebook was displayed.
This notebook looked to be extremely torn, and even a few corners were damaged. However, the red eye in the middle was still extremely agile. Though it was just a projection, Leylin felt as if this eye was focusing its attention on himself, causing him to tremble
inside.
In addition, Leylin also noticed something interesting on the surface of this black notebook.
Beside the red eye, there were countless veins and black runes. These runes were all twisted together, and actually seemed to resemble little black snakes.
“This…” Silver light flashed at Leylin’s palm, and the Book of Giant Serpent that had been kept in his spatial pouch appeared in his hands.
The runes on the surface of the Book of Giant Serpent were extremely similar to that on the notebook.
“The Great Magus Serholm! This is likely to be the notebook left behind by him…” Leylin mumbled to himself, eyes shooting out crimson rays.
At the same time, blood-red rays furiously exploded forth from the crystal on Leylin’s wrist.
“89”
[Warning! Warning! Too much adrenaline is being secreted, and there is an 89% chance that this will stimulate the nerves indefinitely, and result in a detrimental effect on the mind!]
The A.I. Chip sent out blue words before Leylin.
“How… How… How troublesome!” Leylin roared lowly, and then loosened a black water flask from his waist and gulped deeply.
The water that had the potion of tranquility mixed inside calmed the impulse that had risen in Leylin.
At this moment, the sounds of people quoting prices out there could be heard again and again. It was evident that this notebook that recorded information about the abyss had garnered the interest of many rank 2 Magi.
After advancing to become a rank 2 Magus, a lot of Magi who did not possess high-grade meditation techniques had lost their direction. Hence, they were extremely enthusiastic about
researching information regarding the Ancient Era as well as other geographical locations, hoping to discover methods for them to advance.

The aura of the abyss on this notebook was extremely strong, to the point that Leylin’s face paled slightly.

For this reason, this alchemic notebook had received the attention of numerous rank 2 Magi.

“I really like this notebook. What do you want?”

Leylin contacted the Magus selling this notebook through the communication device, speaking in a low voice.

“What do you have for me?”

Evidently, this notebook was extremely popular and the seller was waiting for something good before he would sell it.

“Three standard portions of an ancient spiritual force potion that can be said to be useful in helping a Magus break through. I can even add in 500g of Filthy Magic Dust! Since you have this notebook, you must have done some research on items in the abyss. This Filthy Magic Dust is a precious ingredient that came directly from the abyss!”

Leylin thought for a moment and immediately showed his bottom line.

The Tears of Mary potion was now of little use to him. In addition, after advancing to rank 2, they were now nothing in his eyes.

Also, he was now disguised and this person would not be able to investigate his background. Even if that happened, would anyone dare make things difficult for a rank 2 Magus?

Leylin now had the power to take care of himself on the south coast, and was not afraid of any challenges!

“Hss… Ancient spiritual power potion that’s useful in breaking out of a bottleneck? And Filthy Magic Dust from the abyss?”

It was evident that after Leylin quoted this price, the Magus was shocked into silence for a long while.
After a few minutes, Leylin received his reply.
“Show me the potion!”
“Fine!” Leylin pondered for a moment and then produced a test tube filled with the Tears of Mary. Some silver light bundled up a bit of the potion and disappeared into that Magus’ room.
“It really is an ancient potion! Alright! Let’s proceed with the trade!”
Though the Magus tried his best to suppress it, Leylin could still hear the impatience in his voice.
“Alright! However, I’m not getting the better end of the deal here, so you need to tell me about the origins of this alchemy notebook!” Leylin, on the other hand, was extremely composed and hoped to gain more clues.
“… Alright, I’ll tell you everything I know…”
The voice was quiet for some time and then sent some information over to Leylin’s room.
Leylin carefully skimmed through the information and then nodded.

The trade between these two VIP rooms was extremely rapid. Outside were the spiritual forces of many rank 2 Magi, seemingly extremely curious about the trade between these two people. However, Leylin nor the Magus had any intentions to reveal anything.
A moment later, rank 2 Magi continued with the exchange and one after another, all sorts of precious and rare items were displayed.
“Next up is a treasure from the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane!”
A lazy voice sounded from the VIP room right smack in the middle.
In a split second, people seemed to even stop breathing, focusing on the VIP room from which this voice was produced.
The secret plane was now a hot topic and all the precious materials from there were sold at a very high price.
Upon hearing that the rank 2 Magus in the VIP room wanted to make a sale, even the few rank 1 Magi downstairs began to whisper amongst themselves after getting over the shock.

“Is it coming?” Kemoyin’s Scales surfaced on Leylin’s skin as he stared hard at the room.

From the information he had gathered, Leylin knew that the rank 2 Magus Alistair had only stolen a treasure from the ruins. What he did not know was that this treasure could display its might only when coupled with another item in the ruins. It could even help a rank 2 Magus to advance.

With his fervent desire to break through, Leylin could confirm that even if he knew this was a trap, there was a high chance that Alistair would still come charging in.

What appeared on the screen was a concentrated green liquid that formed a ball, floating in mid-air.

“This is the extract of a Wisdom Tree. Its purity is at 5, the highest level. The ancient Wisdom Trees have the intelligence of an enlightened Magus, and its extract has the effect of raising one’s spiritual force. When used with other treasures to break through, it is extremely effective!”

The hall broke out into a large commotion.

Even potions that could help acolytes or rank 1 Magi to increase their spiritual force would result in a mad scramble for them. A precious item like this that could help a rank 2 Magus break through to rank 3 was something that had not ever appeared in the entire south coast.

“Wisdom Tree?”

Understanding flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

“Indeed, only the crystallisation of ancient wisdom like that in the legends has enough spiritual force to help a rank 2 Magus break through.”

In myths and legends, the Wisdom Tree was a very amiable old
being, and many famed ancient Magi had received its teachings and enlightenment, and even its blessings and gifts, which helped them to accomplish much.
In the information in ancient texts, Leylin had seen how Magi had received gifts from the Wisdom Tree. After drinking the extract, the Magi were able to break through.
“For rank 2 Magi, just the effects of the extract are hardly enough. It needs to be stored for a period of time, and for this reason, the item in Alistair’s hands is necessary.”
Leylin quickly discovered the entire story. “We’ll just have to see if Alistair’s coming!”
Usually, the extract of the ancient Wisdom Tree would be stored securely in the light Magi headquarters, and there might even be a rank 3 Magus keeping watch over it. It would basically be impossible for Alistair to obtain it. To lure him out, they had brought the real essence of the ancient tree! That rank 3 Magus had also temporarily left his post. Magi were not idiots, and Allistair was no exception; before confirming that there was no rank 3 Magus around, he would definitely not appear.

“Alistair’s nickname is Lone Wolf. He’s definitely used to working alone, and has the strength to overpower groups of people. He must have a certain level of confidence and strength!”

To be able to heavily injure two rank 2 Magi in a single move, he himself must be rather difficult to deal with. Leylin was sure about this.

Even within rank 2 Magi, Alistar was definitely above the middle level and might even have reached the peak, and was just a step away from advancing to rank 3!

Once he verified there was no rank 3 Magus here, there was a large possibility that he would attack and attempt to rob this item!

“When that happens, it’s all up to us!”

Leylin surveyed the VIP rooms. How many of the ones inside were dark Magi, and how many were light Magi? How many were like him and harboured ulterior motives?
Evidently, the extract of the Wisdom Tree had attracted the attention of all the rank 2 Magi present. One after another, spiritual force from multiple Magi, each carrying a strong desire to complete the trade, rushed into the room that Magus was in. For regular Magi, rank 2 was usually the limit if they did not possess high-grade meditation techniques. When that happened, Magi’s innate spells would have already been finalized, and even if they were to switch to a high-grade meditation technique, it would be impossible to advance further. To forcefully alter a crystallised core consciousness that had already taken shape required a method that did not exist in the south coast. There were rumours that it could be found in another world or in the central continent, but this was not something that Magi in the south coast would ever have the chance to come into contact with. Hence, the essence of the Wisdom Tree that could provide enlightenment and help a rank 2 Magus raise their spiritual force was their only hope to being promoted to rank 3! They were willing to pay any price for this!

While rank 2 Magi in the VIP rooms were fiercely communicating by way of their spiritual force, a voice broke the silence. “100 million magic crystals, and fifty standard portions of the crystallisation of spirits!” This voice used no spiritual force and was instead shouted from one’s throat. The place where this voice originated made Leylin even more surprised, it was actually from a rank 1 Magus on the lower level. “Interesting! He’s just a rank 1 Magus, but he dares to stick his hand into this contest between rank 2 Magi!” Leylin sized up the Magi who was shouting with interest. There was a certain set of rules in private trade meetings like this. Rank 2 Magi formed their own circles, and it was impossible for
rank 1 Magi to participate.
This rank 1 Magus actually dared to speak so loudly. If he didn’t have outstanding might, then it meant there was a huge organisation backing him!
Or could it be… that their target had appeared?
Leylin focused his attention on this rank 1 Magus. He was of average build and donned a black robe. His face wasn’t able to be seen, but under the gazes of numerous rank 2 Magi, he was still able to maintain his composure, “This Lord Rank 2 Magus did not specify any materials, and only stated that the person who can give the most valuable materials will obtain it. I wonder, is what I’m offering of the highest value here?”
For lower ranked Magi, having the attention from rank 2 Magi was like being a weak, frail rabbit that had been dropped into a pride of lions. Most Magi would long since have been scared stupid, yet this rank 1 Magus was still very calm.
“How is it? Can you confirm that it’s Alistair?”
In the room of the Magus that Leylin had vied with for the Rays of Dawn, the lady asked the old man, Torp.
“I can’t tell for sure!” The old man, Torp, who had a red beard, stroked his chin. “His attire is extremely unfamiliar, and I don’t feel the aura of anyone I know. Out of all the people who were invited here, we have the least information about him!”
“That means there’s a high possibility that it’s him!”
The woman extended a forked tongue and licked her lips.
“It’s very possible. Prepare to attack!” Torp nodded, and concealed waves from a spirit imprint began to spread, “Target is suspected to have appeared. Prepare to attack!”
“Alright!” “Understood!” “Clear!”
Different voices sounded in the surrounding VIP rooms.
“Alright!” The place became silent, and the voice of the rank 2 Magus who was selling the extract of the Wisdom Tree was heard
from the VIP room.
As he spoke, golden yellow rays of light wrapped around the green extract that was filled with vitality, and it slowly floated out of the VIP room.
“Many thanks, my lord!” A glint of excitement appeared in the eyes of the rank 1 Magus who had bid, and he bowed slightly. A bunch of materials and crystals flew from his body.
The items that were to be traded met in mid-air.
*Bang!* All of a sudden, fierce red light shone from the green extract. The extremely dazzling red light looked intense, and was very similar to an alert signal!
“It’s him! It’s Alistair!” “Move!”
As if triggering some switch, the VIP rooms belonging to rank 2 Magi exploded. Each and every one of the Magi who had reached rank 2 brazenly showed off their strength, and immense energy waves were constantly produced, causing an earthquake in the surroundings.
“Binding of Azora!” A streak of golden white light fiercely attacked the area where the rank 1 Magus was.
“Awoo!” At this moment, the Magus that was suspected to be Alistair suddenly ripped off the clothes on his chest, revealing fangs and a black tattoo of a huge wolf still dripping blood.
With his roars, a large black wolf leaped out of the Magus’ chest, its large and sharp claws reaching forward!
*Bang!* Golden yellow binding lights were smashed by the giant claws and were rendered to bits of gold light that quickly dispersed.
“The totem of the giant wolf! It can’t be wrong, this is Alistair!”
More Magi charged out of the VIP rooms, streaking towards the rank 1 Magus like sharks that had found their prey.
An immense repressing force field suddenly appeared in the arena of the trade. The wandering rank 1 Magi that had been on the first level quickly retreated, looking pitiful as they left.
Some were even more unfortunate, the powerful spells of Rank 2 Magi having brushed passed them and causing serious injuries.
“Damn it! I shouldn’t have come here!”
A black figure had been caught by the intense red rays and could only dodge pitifully, their body charred over.
The figure’s hood was pushed back, revealing the face of the black figure. Surprisingly enough, it was the lady boss who Leylin had seen before, specializing in selling information.
“Damn it! Damn it! Are the leaders of the organisation stupid? Everyone here is a rank 2 Magus! They hid this information from the other Magi and wanted me, a puny rank 1 Magus to coordinate with their plans and go into the lion’s den? Did they want me dead?”
*Bang!* At this moment, the sparks from a huge green fireball brushed past and crashed into buildings behind her. There was even a corroded crater from the aftermath of the attack.
The female Magus was stunned for a second and then ran for the door without looking back. “Damn it, do whatever you want! I don’t care anymore!”
Compared to a rank 1 Magus, the spells of rank 2 Magi may not be as flashy, but the strength within were like mountains or seas. Just brushing against an object would cause it to turn to dust.
*Ka-cha!*
Numerous black figures that were like ancient savage beasts pounced out from the surroundings and sealed all the entrances from which Alistair could escape.
Amongst these Magi were white-haired elderly, grand and dignified ladies, as well haughty gentlemen in formal attire. The common trait between them was the symbol of the Light Magi Alliance on their chests.
“Alistair, you actually dare betray the glory that represents the light Magi! The Supreme Alliance will punish you!”
The red-bearded Torp yelled, and with a wave of his hand, immense flames and lava were produced from his hands, turning into a firey-red hammer.

“Lava Hammer!”

Lava kept boiling at the surface of the red hammer, emitting energy waves that belonged to rank 2 spells.

“Keke! I only temporarily entered the light Magi alliance. All that I have obtained are items I’ve gained through trade. How have I betrayed anyone?”

Alistair, who was in black robes, laughed in a strange manner that sounded like the howls of a wolf.

“This is definitely Alistair’s voice!”

“Go! What else is there to say to traitors who can’t even repent?”

The many rank 2 light Magi roared and colourful spells surrounded Alistair.

The black totem of a large wolf that Alistair had let out quickly turned to dust under the combined attacks of the rank 2 Magi.

Surprisingly, Alistair opened his arms and sneered at the rank 2 Magi that surrounded him.

“I have done no wrong! I need to advance to rank 3, and after that, darkness will eventually descend on this land!”

He chanted words that sounded like a prophecy, and his body began to crack under the continuous onslaught of spells.

*Pak!* *Pak!* Black fragments flew in all directions.

“This is... A dark Magus’ corporeal body puppet!”

Noticing that something was not right, Torp immediately yelled, “Beware! This is not Alistair’s real body, but a temporary flesh puppet!”

A ring of lava surrounded the puppet’s body.

*Pak pak!*

The black fragments from the flesh puppet melted into liquid in midair, forming large black nets that were similar to spiderwebs,
which covered all the nearby rank 2 Magi.

*Boom!*
The roof of the exchange hall shattered, and a Magus that looked exactly the same as the flesh puppet from before emerged from the rubble and dust; he howled at the Magus who was selling the extract of the Wisdom Tree.

“Awoo!”

Faced with the wolf howl, that Magus’ eyes seemed to glaze over, and he seemed to have been temporarily stupified.

“The Howl of the Lone Wolf!”

“Alistair’s unique mental attack!”

The rank 2 Magi who were trapped let out expressions of immense hatred.
However, it was too late.
With a sly grin on his face, Alistair suddenly transformed.
Muscles bulged, and thick, coarse fur that was characteristic of wolves covered his body. Fangs grew, and there was even fur on his face. Even his ears had turned into those of a wolf!
He threw himself forward, and in that moment, he turned into a werewolf!
*Pak!* Sharp wolf claws twisted in the air, and a rank 2 Magus’ head was smashed into pieces. Red and white brain juices spilled all over the ground.
The large werewolf did not stop and fished out a vial of green liquid from the corpse. His eyes revealed craziness along with his elation, and he was prepared to jump and leave the area.
“Alistair!”
At this moment, the announcer, who had retreated to the sidelines, suddenly stood forward.
Under white rays of light, the announcer’s body underwent a huge change.
His face became elongated, and a white beard dragged across the ground.
An overwhelming, tremendous, and unparalleled spiritual force descended onto the area.
“Giant Tree!” As the old man spoke, a huge plant suddenly grew
from the center of the platform. The thick vines on the tree constantly extended, even crushing firm rocks into powder. The huge tree blocked the entrance at the top, giving the werewolf no routes to escape.

“Awoo…” The werewolf that Alistair had transformed into howled at the old man.

“A rank 3 light Magus!” Leylin, who was in a VIP room, widened his eyes in surprise. This was the first time that he had seen someone at the most powerful rank amongst the light Magi!

A rank 3 Magus was the absolute peak in the south coast! They were indomitable powers that controlled both the dark and light Magi.
The moment this light Magus attacked, magnificent and splendid life spells ignited within the auction area. The wooden tables and chairs seemed to grow lives of their own, spores growing on their surfaces and turning into vines and plants. In that instant, the entire area turned into a green plant heaven, with the giant, ancient tree right in the centre. It reigned like an emperor, standing tall and unyielding.

“When plant-type spells reach this level, it’s already touching the surface of being a ‘domain’…” Leylin, who had the guidance of the Book of Giant Serpent, had foresight that far surpassed all the rank 2 Magi present. He was able to recognise how remarkable this rank 3 Magus was.

“But… plant-type? This somehow feels very familiar!” Dark energy particles exploded in Leylin’s hands, and the green plants in the VIP room instantly turned to dust.

This rank 3 spell immediately made him think of Reynold, the rank 2 Magus from Four Seasons Garden. Whether in terms of spells or aura, they were much too similar.

“Could it be that this rank 3 Magus is Reynold’s mentor or
relative?"
With this thought, all of Leylin’s plans to participate disappeared.
In the auction hall, there were very few Magi who had chosen to
just observe without lifting a finger.
There were two or three Magi in VIP rooms that still maintained
their silence, not planning to do anything.
Alistair had dared to utilise a flesh puppet to hinder the light Magi,
even risking his life to steal the essence from the Wisdom Tree.
Furthermore, he had almost succeeded.
Leylin could not help but be in awe at his decisiveness and
patience.
It was a pity that with the suppression by a rank 3 Magus, any plans
were all in vain.
No matter how well Alistair was able to deal with rank 2 Magi, he
was definitely not a match for a rank 3 Magus.

Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
Within the boundaries of the green plants, the large black nets of
mucus were quickly broken through by the many vines from all
sorts of plants. The rank 2 Magi that struggled free quickly
assembled behind the rank 3 Magus and secretly dispersed,
trapping Alistair, who had turned into a werewolf, in the middle.
The furry werewolf in the middle kept howling at the Magi, a
cunning look glinting in his eyes.
“Hm, something’s wrong!”
Leylin suddenly found an issue. Alistair, who was being
surrounded, was much too calm about his current situation.
“Grab him!” The rank 3 Magus whose beard reached the ground
seemed to have noticed something. His brows furrowed, and he
quickly commanded the Magi behind him.

*Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!*
Several streaks of translucent magic arrows cut through the skies
and produced whistling sounds, causing several Magi’s heads to
explode.
*Bang! Bang!* A few light Magi immediately collapsed.
“What’s going on?” The light Magi around quickly retreated, all sorts of innate defensive spells flashing and appearing on their bodies.
Unfortunately, this was all useless!
The translucent arrows seemed to possess some terrifying magical power, and even the defences that rank 2 Magi spent all their energy on could not withstand them at all.
“Greta Abyssal Arrow? Fedlan, it’s you!”
The rank 3 light Magus roared in surprise, and green rays of light were produced from the foliage. Under the green rays, the green vines turned into large hands that seemed to break through space and appear in front of the translucent arrows, cancelling each other out.
The light Magi that had survived stuck close to the rank 3 light Magus, surveying their surroundings fearfully.
“You dark Magi actually dare betray the contract with the alliance. Aren’t you afraid of punishment?”
The rank 3 old light Magus seemed to know his opponent’s identity and immediately exclaimed.
“Hehe! Light Magi, the contract with the alliance they’ve long since become things of the past! From hereon, darkness shall unify the continent!”
Along with the strange laughter, a dark green figure suddenly appeared within the auction hall.
After the figure appeared, green fluids and light rays began to take over half of the area, competing with the plant domain of the light Magi.
There were immense energy waves emitted from the body of the dark green figure that were on par with a rank 3 Magus.
“Hoduke, my old friend, isn’t it obvious? The continuous betrayal
and fall of rank 2 Magi implies that there’s a large issue with your light Magi’s values. Only dark Magi are qualified to rule the south coast!”

The dark green figure seemed to be narrating some sort of insignificant issue, but the faces of the light Magus who heard this immediately underwent a violent change!

With the huge temptation of the Eternal River Plains’ secret plane, as well as the continuous damage dealt to the light Magi alliance, the dark Magi finally decided to break this fragile balance and bring war to the rest of the south coast!

“Come out!”

*Shua shua!* As the dark Magus spoke, a few figures suddenly appeared in the middle of the hall. All these people had used black headcovers to cover their face, and there was an overpowering scent of blood on their bodies. On top of that, the energy waves they emitted were not lower than that of a rank 2 Magus!

Upon seeing this, the rank 3 light Magus’ expression worsened.

*Rumble!* Black mucus reached the heart of the giant tree, and covered by white gas, the tree shriveled up at a rate that could be seen by the naked eye. Eventually, it toppled and revealed a black rock with a hole in it.

“Let’s go! Don’t forget our agreement!” Fedlan spoke to Alistair, who was still in his werewolf form.

“Awoo!” The werewolf howled at Fedlan a few times as if in reply, jumped into the black hole that was a passageway and then vanished.

“The essence of the Wisdom Tree is extremely precious. They absolutely can’t gain possession of it!”

Hoduke, whose beard touched the ground, turned pale. Upon seeing that Alistair had fled, he quickly ordered the Magi behind him, “I’ll hold back the dark Magi. You need to get the essence
back!”
As a rank 3 Magus, Hoduke was well read and knew that the dark Magi were not very prepared. Whilst they were at a huge disadvantage, they couldn’t just let Alistair leave.
If not, it wasn’t going to be just the problem of losing a few rank 2 light Magi. This was a matter of imbalance of power between rank 3 Magi!
A portion of the extract of the Wisdom Tree might not be enough to help a rank 2 Magus break through, but with the treasure in Alistair’s hands, it was a real possibility.
Hoduke knew very well that the treasure in Alistair’s hands would create a heaven-defying effect when paired with the essence of the Wisdom Tree.
“My old friend, we haven’t exchanged blows in two hundred years. I wonder what kind of changes your Wailing Earth technique has undergone!”
Hoduke muttered, while the power from vegetation began to vibrate.
“Hehe! Twenty years ago, I finally succeeded in my experiments and refined three thousand pure blooded Quarks, and I blended their innate talents into Wailing Earth. I’m sure the result will not leave you disappointed.”
Fedlan laughed again. A huge phantom image filled with skulls and gravestones appeared, and it struck against the green mirage filled with plants.
“Is this the domain of rank 3 Magi?”
Leylin observed the two rank 3 Magi exchanging blows and commanded the A.I. Chip to record everything down carefully.
Battles between two rank 3 Magi were very rarely seen, so this was extremely precious information.
Leylin, who possessed Kemoyin’s Pupil, the Book of Giant Serpent, as well as much information from the Four Seasons
Garden, naturally knew that the power displayed by these two rank 3 Magi was still not a true “Domain”.
A real domain was a terrifying might that only rank 4 Morning Star Magi would be able to produce.
In a domain, all Magi who were weaker than rank 4 would have their abilities suppressed by a few levels, perhaps even to the point that they became like regular humans.
These two rank 3 Magi were only able to grasp a hint of this concept, and lacked the terrifying ability to suppress a Magus’ might!
However, now that he had been forced into these two rank 3 Magi’s “Domains,” Leylin couldn’t help but emit a few large darkness elemental runes, as if wanting to have a standoff with the domains.
“The domains of these two rank 3 Magi are already beginning to affect the Magi around them. Though the effect is very slight, it still isn’t weak enough to be ignored.”
Leylin gave the two figures, who were now hard to differentiate, a long look, and stood without any hesitation.
After standing up, Leylin used the spell that had the most outstanding concealing abilities out of all of the rank 1 dark elemental magic he knew. With the added bonus from his solidified spiritual force as a rank 2 Magus, Shadow Stealth was now terrifyingly formidable. Leylin’s figure disappeared from the VIP room in an instant, such that even the rank 2 Magi outside were not able to detect him.

“Alistair actually sided with the dark Magi. With him as the leading cause, this sets the background for the Third Magus War.” Leylin was unmoved by this, his body like a mirage as he hurried along.

“He’s not my business anyway. I just need to know if he has anything I need in his possession!”

The essence from the Wisdom Tree must have some extraordinary effects for ancient Magi to view it so highly. Though Leylin possessed a high-grade meditation technique, he wouldn’t mind some extra assurance for when he wanted to break through.

*Boom!*

Alistair leapt, his powerful hind legs leaving behind two deep pits in the ground.

With much momentum, he fiercely jumped out of the hole and began to run wildly on the field.
“He’s over there!”
Following closely behind him was that group of rank 2 Magi from the light Magi alliance. Upon seeing the situation, the leader immediately waved his sleeve!
*Weng weng!*
A concentrated volley of countless bugs was produced from his sleeves, and immediately after, a huge grey cloud floated out from the large sleeves of his robes.
Upon closer inspection, this ‘cloud’ was actually comprised of many densely packed bugs.
These bugs had two compound eyes, and their mandibles were fierce and sharp. A pair of translucent wings flapped at a high frequency, producing waves of an ear-piercing sound that would cause one to feel fidgety.
“Go!” This light Magus pointed at Alistair.
The bugs chirped in a way that shook the heavens, forming the image of a human face without eyes, and chased after Alistair, who was currently still in his werewolf form.
The huge human face streaked across the sky, looking like a black cloud of gas in the air. It quickly caught up to the werewolf who was fleeing, opened its mouth, and roared at him.
“Awooo!” The werewolf faced the heavens and howled, gathering two large masses of wind-elemental energy particles that turned into wind blades, one horizontal and the other vertical. It turned into a huge cross shape, and chopped towards the human face in the air.
The wind blade trembled slightly as it streaked past the face. In that moment, the bugs scattered and then regrouped, completely unharmed by the attack.
“Chi chi…” Along with the cries from the numerous bugs, a great grey ‘flood’ was spat out from the human face, which engulfed the werewolf within.
Upon closer inspection, within the ‘flood’ were several worms that were even tinier than most insects, their sharp mouths glinting with light.

*Chi chi!!!*
The grey worms wrapped around the werewolf in an instant, and the horrifying sounds of something being gnawed into were heard.

“Woo woo…” From within the grey worms, the werewolf’s pitiful howls could be heard.

“Alright! Now that he’s been caught by the Death Insects, he can’t run!”

The light Magus who manipulated the worms grinned, “Go, get him! Steal the treasure and essence of the Wisdom Tree!”

“As expected from the ‘Death Bug Manipulator’, Jajone!” The rank 2 Magi following him exclaimed in admiration and hastened towards their target.

At this moment, a beautiful melody from a recorder travelled from some distance away.

The formless sound waves swept through the area, and swarms of grey bugs fell one after another.

*Boom!* The surface of the earth cracked open, and two rank 2 Magi donning the robes of the dark Magi rushed out, accompanied by two huge white fireballs striking the human face in the air.

“Ah…” The human face emitted a sound similar to the shrieks of a female, and the face then began to distort.

In merely a couple of seconds, the face was shrouded with white flames, and large groups of Death Bugs dropped.

“It looks like you’ve long since sided with the dark Magi!”

The huge face formed out of bugs seemed to be connected to the spiritual force of the light Magus; after it had been burnt through, he visibly paled.

However, he cared not about his injuries, and instead focused his
attention on Alistair, who had escaped from the attack of the worms.
The werewolf was now in a pitiful state. More than half of the pretty fur on his body had disappeared, revealing patches of pink skin and flesh.
On his body were some very large wounds, revealing muscle tissue that had been severely damaged. One could even see bone.
*Chi chi!* The blood vessels and muscles visible on the wounds constantly wriggled, and layers of flesh covered the injury and stopped the flow of fresh blood. At areas which were barren of fur, a fine layer of fur began to grow.
The abnormal healing ability of werewolf exhibited its strength here.
“Let’s go!” With a wave from a rank 2 dark Magus, countless white ribs and bone spurs appeared in front of the light Magi, forming a large wall.
The wall seemed to have a life of its own, cunningly moving and trapping the light Magi within.
Then, with Alistair in tow, the two dark Magi left.
*Bang! Bang!* From within the white bone cage, the dull thuds of people ramming into the cage were heard. One after another, hemisphere-like shapes appeared all around the cage, and around these shapes were even some minute cracks.
These cracks increased in size, and eventually, the cage exploded open!
The white dust from the broken spurs dissipated, revealing the figures of a few light Magi.
“There are still rank 2 dark Magi reinforcements! The situation is getting more troublesome! Send out the signal!”
The Magus who was the leader of the light Magi roared.
A Magus nodded and swiped upwards, and a shooting star with
alternating red and green colours streaked through the sky.
*Xiu xiu xiu!*
Minutes later, thirteen Magi in black robes with iron crowns on their heads arrived at the scene.
“Alistair has already sided with the dark Magi. There’s now a rank 3 Magus holding Lord Hoduke back, and there are also two dark Magi who took Alistair away!”
The light Magus looked to be in a difficult position.
“It’s the same situation that we are in! Don’t worry though. We’ve sprinkled large amounts of the pollen of the Nine Threaded Flower at the auction area. As long as he was there, he’ll definitely be unable to escape the pursuit of the Patchy Bees.”
A Magus whose crown was a lot larger than everyone else answered.
“We are extremely confident in the setup of the Great Sage.” The leader of the light Magi bowed, displaying his respect towards the sage.
These thirteen Magi were actually sages of Iron Crown, and were absolute existences in terms of their might!
Their neutral stance also caused the light Magus leader to have to do away with his haughty attitude.
“Now that the dark Magi are also involved, we may not be able to provide you with more help. You know that the very reason why we have been able to maintain our reputations as towering existences is our neutral stance!”
The Great Sage continued.
“Great Sage…” The leader of the light Magi’s face fell, and turned icy. “We signed a contract stating that you would pursue Alistair. What do you mean by those words, Great Sage?”
“But… what about the dark Magi?” The Great Sage looked to be in a difficult position. Meanwhile, the leader of the light Magi had a vile look on his face.
“Just attack. We will take on the pressure from the dark Magi. The conditions in the contract we agreed on can be altered, and I can even concede on some matters…”
The leader was silent for a moment and then chose to make a compromise.
Besides, they did not have much time left.
After hearing this, the Great Sage of Iron Crown smiled, looking as if a weight had been lifted off his shoulders.
He produced a transparent glass bottle from within his robes, a creature with numerous compound eyes at the centre within the bottle. This creature looked like a bee with an image of a black eye on its yellow wings, and was quietly resting within the glass bottle. Traces of intelligence and quick-wittedness flashed through its eyes.
The Great Sage opened the neck of the bottle, and after flying in circles a few times, the little creature, the Patchy Bee, began to fly in a certain direction.
“It has found them!” the Great Sage exclaimed, dense metal plating appearing on his body and forming the armour that Knights usually wore into battle.
*Bang!*
The white skeleton of a large horse rose from the ground, green spiritual flames burning in its eye sockets and being snorted from its nostrils.
“My old buddy, I’ll have to use you again!” The sage in armour stroked an old and tattered pair of reins and sighed with regret.
He fiercely rode the skeletal horse, and roared from deep within his throat. “Iron Crown!”
“Glory for life! Advance for our responsibilities!” The sages present answered in a loud voice.
The skeletal warhorse neighed, and black liquid metal covered the entire body of the horse. In an instant, the skeletal warhorse turned
into a giant metallic beast with sharp barbs protruding from the surface of its body.

*Lu Lu!*

One after another, metallic warhorses struggled out of the ground and carried the other sages. Some of the sages wore dazzling magic robes, while others donned metallic armour. Powerful spells were sent out in a constant stream.

In an instant the thirteen sages with iron crowns turned into Steel Knights possessing immense power!

“Chase after them!”

Following the orders of the Great Sage, the thirteen warhorses charged forward, leaving behind traces of burning hoofprints.

“The inheritance from ancient Magi! This is definitely a branch of the ancient Magi!”

The light Magi’s eyelids twitched as they uttered these words in their hearts.

In the south coast, there was a rumour floating around about the Magi organisation with a neutral stance, Iron Crown. These thirteen sages of Iron Crown had received the power of the inheritance from some ancient ruins, and were henceforth able to set up and establish Iron Crown!
full body armour, and a spirit animal with formidable attack power as a mount!”

The light Magus mumbled to himself.

“This must be the inheritance from the ancient Steel Knights!”

Beside him, another light Magus sighed in admiration.

“In ancient times, Magi were able to obtain very abundant resources. Even high-grade meditation techniques weren’t anything special, and mere official Magi were able to obtain them as well! Many Magi discarded all prejudices they had towards factions and sects, learning and improving together. They even formed a huge alliance, conquering one world after another! That was the golden era of the Magi!”

He repeated, eyes burning with fervent passion.

“But for some reason, the ancient Magi received some huge blow, and historians made a conjecture that there was a world that was especially strong, and our Magus World’s attack on them was thwarted.”

“In order to prevent the war from spreading to our world, the ancient Magi made the painful decision to close the channel that connected them to this world, and sealed the other channels that were connected to other worlds. Even then, the ancient Magi who had suffered greatly lost their ability to pass on their abilities, and eventually declined.”

The leader of the light Magi sighed ruefully and then narrated this
history like it was some ancient poem. “Even if Magi were able to receive the inheritance from ancient Magi, they still lacked some of the required materials from other worlds, which made it impossible for them to progress!” “Hence, the Magi of today now use meditation techniques to progress, because this is the best route, and many could use the experiences of their seniors to advance. The ancient Magi who had acquired the inheritances were extremely pitiful. If they were lucky, they were able to find resources that were compatible with their bodies and improve, but most of them were stuck at rank 1 for their whole life.” The Leader said. “The ancient Steel Knights are said to be from a world close to us. It’s a specific profession unique to the Steel Lava world. After conquering that world, the ancient Magi altered our bodies with some methods, which resulted in the special state of evolution that the Steel Knights can achieve. Without an enormous amount of luck, their strength will stay at this point forever, so you don’t have to envy them.” “What should we do now? Should we proceed at a faster pace?” A Magus with an inverted crimson cross in his eyes asked. *Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!* While travelling, the rank 2 Magi used their minds to continue their conversation. With the help of their solidified spiritual force, their thoughts were processed at a rate many times faster than that of a rank 1 Magus. With just a wave of spiritual force, large amounts of images and words could be contained within. “No! We’re going to slow down!” With a cold glint in his eyes, the leader of the light Magi slowed. “Just let those Iron Crown Steel Knights charge at the frontlines!”
“A portion of the essence of the Wisdom Tree and that treasure should be enough to motivate them to go all out! We’ll follow behind them.”
The leader exclaimed coldly.
This was actually a ploy. The Steel Knights were well aware that the light Magi might take advantage of them by following them behind, but under the temptation of the treasures, they still chose to pursue their targets.
As for the contract with the light Magi? If they really managed to obtain treasure, the light Magi would pay a large amount for it anyway.
These Steel Knights were very confident in their abilities, they were sure that they would be able to end the battle before the light Magi arrived!
Alistair and the dark Magi who were fleeing at the front also stopped at this point.
In front of them, a figure suddenly appeared out of thin air and blocked their path.
This man looked to be extremely plain, and if he were ever to be in a crowd, he would be difficult to be picked out. However, he had the unique energy waves that belonged to rank 2 Magi, causing the three’s faces to change.
“Hand over the essence of the Wisdom Tree and the treasure you possess!”
The middle-aged man sounded extremely haughty, taking a large gulp from the flask at his side and looking unperturbed.
“You…” The two dark Magi behind Alistair became extremely annoyed. So what if this middle-aged man was a rank 2 Magus? They had three Magi who had reached rank 2!
“Awoo!” Alistair’s answer was extremely simple, howling at Leylin. His face, which had already turned into that of a half-wolf, produced an angry expression as he pounced towards Leylin.
*Pu pu!* While running, he opened his mouth and two balls of giant wind-elemental energy particles flew towards Leylin like explosives.
Meanwhile, the werewolf seemed to transform into wind and hid in the intense draft, approaching Leylin like a hurricane, his sharp claws filled with an iciness and bloodlust.
“The second stage of beast transformation!” Leylin focused on the werewolf who was nearing him, blue lights occasionally flashing in his eyes.
With a sweep of his right arm, red powder spread in the air.
“Scorching Touch!”
Two streaks that brought about intense heat penetrated the wind elemental energy balls and shot towards the werewolf!
“Awoo!” Alistair howled repeatedly, his body constantly changing directions.
However, the two lines of Scorching Touch seemed to have a navigation system and turned a circle in the air, blocking the werewolf’s path. Based on the drills from the simulations performed by the A.I. Chip, the way in which Leylin was using the Scorching Touch was similar in familiarity to one who had been analyzing it for decades. He had even researched and created a few tiny tricks that were uniquely his.
“Awoo!” The werewolf tried his best to dodge the attack on his chest, but instead, his right arm was directly struck by the red ray of light.
Alistair howled, a furry arm with a claw on it flying away.
“Bind!”
Leylin stretched his arms forward, and slight shadows formed two black figures that twined around Alistair, who had now lost an arm.
“Come help!”
*Bang!* Under the pester of the shadows, Alistair was forced to
undo his werewolf transformation and roared, producing the voice of a human.
The two dark Magi with him exchanged gazes, and suddenly made their move!
A bald Magus placed his hands on the ground, chanting a few mournful-sounding incantations that sounded like the howls of a spirit seeking vengeance.
*Chi chi!* A black thorny bone spur forest suddenly emerged from the surface of the ground.
Whether rocks or plants, they were all penetrated through by these black bone spurs.
The thorny bone spur forest increased in area, its blackness approaching Leylin.
*Bo! Bo!* The two black figures were pierced by the bone spurs, but it did not hurt even a hair on Alistair’s body.
“Hehe, Siley, you did well!”
Another dark Magus laughed, and the black rod in his arms extended.
“Spirits laying silent in the Weeping Abyss, come back to life,!”
A green fireball suddenly formed in front of the black rod and exploded, turning into starry specks that shot into the bone spur forest.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
The black bone spurs Siley had summoned forth levitated, forming thousands of large skeletal soldiers holding bone nail hammers and white giant hatchets, charging towards Leylin.
“A combination spell!”
Leylin cried out involuntarily. Within rank 2 spells, if the spells displayed by two Magi were similar in terms of their effects, there could be a combo effect if they utilized secret methods that allowed them to combine attacks. This type of magic would then be called a combination spell, and its power far exceeded that of regular rank 2
spells!
However, there were few rank 2 Magi whose body and spiritual force were at a similar level. The conditions for releasing this type of magic were very harsh, and there was only a small number of Magi who fit the requirements. Leylin never imagined that he would get to see this.

*Bang!*
The large white nail hammer slammed down, bringing with it the ear-piercing sounds of an explosion. The air nearby seemed to have its pressure sucked away by the strong wind, and Leylin momentarily felt suffocated.

[Estimated might of target’s purely physical attack: 90 degrees!]
The A.I. Chip provided in time.
Leylin dodged the hammer, and a red layer appeared on the surface of his body. “Purely physical attack? Does that mean there’s still a magical attack?”

“Ga ga!” At this moment, a large skeletal soldier that saw Leylin escaping opened its mouth.
Multiple white bone spurs flew powerfully like white raindrops, covering all the areas that Leylin was planning on retreating to.

*Rumble!* The white bone spurs slammed into the layer on Leylin’s body and then exploded.
The immense energy waves wreaked havoc on the red layer, and the rays flickered inconsistently, illustrating its difficulty in withstanding this attack.

“Ga ga!”
Behind that skeletal soldier, large groups of soldiers began to shoot out spurs as well.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
Under their attacks, the red protective layer on the surface of Leylin’s skin shattered loudly.

*Bang! Bang!*
Large amounts of black, densely-packed scales appeared as his body was thrown a long distance away by the undulations from the explosion. Yellow rays flashed as the shape-shifting effects were destroyed, revealing Leylin’s true appearance. “Latent Fireball!” “Scorching Touch!” Red and black flames extended, and the bone spurs that filled the skies were burnt to ashes. “Black flames? You- You’re Leylin!” The bald Magus who produced the black bone spurs couldn’t help but exclaim, stunned. “Long time no see, Director Siley!” Leylin grinned as he greeted Siley. “Siley! Is this the student that betrayed your academy? He’s actually advanced to rank 2!” The rank 2 Magus who cooperated with Siley gained interest as he looked Leylin up and down, “He’s quite talented!”
“Leylin, do you also wish to obtain the extract from the Wisdom Tree?”

Siley looked at what could be said to be the most outstanding student in the history of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, a complicated expression on his face.
On one hand, there was no need to prove Leylin’s talent as a Magus. To be able to advance to rank 2 at such an age and at such a speed was something rarely seen in recent years of Magus history.
Siley believed if Leylin could maintain this rate, it was definitely possible for him to became a rank 3 Magus before he turned a hundred, and advance to the most powerful ranking in the entire south coast! If he was still in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, the school would definitely be in its golden age.
On the other hand, Leylin had already betrayed the academy, and his fierce strike back had resulted in the death of Marb, the elder of the Lilytell family, one of the three large families in the academy. He had even killed off a large number of rank 1 Magi, causing the Lilytell family’s power to decline by a large amount and almost have their name removed from the Magus World!
Hence, Siley had many thoughts regarding Leylin’s appearance.
“Yes, director!”
Since his shapeshifting spell had already been removed, Leylin no longer had anything to hide.
“I hope you don’t interfere, as the essence of the Wisdom Tree and
the treasure Alistair obtained are items that I need!” Leylin bowed slightly.
Looking back on things, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had treated him quite well, not taking into account the actions of the Lilytell Family. They had abided by the basic principle of trading using equal values, allowing Leylin to be enlightened as a Magus and walk the path of the strong.
Hence, unless there were some special circumstances, he did not wish to exchange blows with Siley.
“How arrogant! You’re just a newly advanced rank 2 Magus, and yet, you actually dare…”
Before Siley had the chance to react, the dark Magus with him had already furiously lashed out.
In his eyes, no matter how much of a genius Leylin was, he had only just advanced. Though he had the terrifying battle achievement of killing two rank 2 Magi, who knew if he had taken advantage of the situation and killed them while they were seriously injured?
Hence, his attitude towards Leylin was a little too much.
“Young man, let a senior like me teach you how you should act in the circle of rank 2 Magi.”
Two masses of black rays were produced from this rank 2 Magus’ hands, forming a skull.
“What pointless preachings! How bothersome!”
Leylin muttered to himself, the red in his eyes becoming increasingly intense. On his wrist, the transparent crystal had begun to emit a dim red colour.
“What did you say?” The rank 2 Magi who was speaking was startled.
“I said you should do something about your habit of preaching. Otherwise, I don’t think you’ll live to see the sun tomorrow!”
Leylin suddenly raised his head, smiling brilliantly.
Tss tss!

Large amounts of white smoke poured out of the body of one of the large skeletal soldiers from before. Suddenly, the frame of the soldier scattered, turning into a pile of bones on the ground. The fragmented bones were corroded again, and ended up as a pile of black powder.

From a circle of charred earth, corrosion began to spread in all directions with Leylin at the centre of it all, the grass rotting in an instant and turning into something similar to mud.

Numerous bugs fell to the ground, and a mole flipped over, body stiff as it lay upside down, rotting.

As if the Grim Reaper had arrived, the entire region sank into deathly stillness.

*Slam! Thud!*

One after another, the large skeletal soldiers fell, their frames falling apart as they turned into powder.

“You used a poison attack that affects a large area!” Alistair was already injured from before, and under the powerful attack of Leylin’s Toxic Bile, his right arm began to fester.

Alistair looked miserable as he gritted his teeth, producing a test tube and pouring it on the wound on his right arm.

*Rumble!* A tongue of flames covered the area down from his right shoulder, and the smell of flesh burning was produced.

Alistair grimaced. After the flames disappeared, blood was no longer flowing freely from the wound on his shoulder, and the festering from before had disappeared.

“Go! I’ll stay behind and teach him a lesson!”

The dark Magus exclaimed coldly, with a hint of bloodlust.

“Alright! Be careful of the light Magi, I suspect that they have made some agreement with Iron Crown.”

Alistair quickly replied, moving to ride a magnificent flying carpet that appeared from his body.
All of a sudden, his eyes glazed over and he fainted!
*Bang!* Alistair’s body hit the ground; there were mysterious black patterns that looked like snakes slithering on his face.
Even the flame potion from earlier was unable to deal with the toxins!
“What ferocious neurotoxins! It can lie dormant before it completely flares up! This is bad!”
The expression of the dark Magus who found Leylin a nuisance changed vastly.
Immediately after, a pitch black gas surrounded his body.
The toxins of the terrifying ancient beast, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, began to corrode his body and spirit!
“I told you before. You can’t stop me!”
Like a Grim Reaper that had descended to Earth, the phantom image of a huge python appeared behind Leylin as he headed straight for Alistair, who was in a dead faint. After taking the essence of the Wisdom Tree from his lap, Leylin went through the pouch on Alistair’s waist, and dug out a crudely made wooden cup. The surface of this cup was an aged dark yellow, with the unique lines of the ancient tree. It also produced the slightly sweet smell of vegetation.
Though the appearance was nothing spectacular, Leylin could feel a very ancient and aged aura.
Even if it was an inanimate object, the cup still gave off a feeling of intelligence.
“This is… a wooden cup made from the bark of the Wisdom Tree!”
Leylin touched his chin. The reason why he was so sure was that besides the A.I. Chip’s tests and his own conjectures, the essence of the Wisdom Tree he now possessed was beginning to emit a slight green lustre, which was a huge indicator.
*Bo!*
Leylin relaxed his right hand, and the green bundle of light
disappeared into the wooden cup.
Like ice melting, the extract of the ancient tree and the wooden cup fused together. The cup was instantly covered by a layer of green light, and the inside of the cup was filled halfway with a transparent liquid. This liquid emanated an aura of vitality and intelligence.
Leylin sniffed the liquid for a moment and felt his mind clearing. The usual myriad of thoughts that went through his mind kept appearing, and the questions that he had been faced with while training began to be solved, causing him to feel more open-minded. “Is this enlightenment?”
Joy appeared on Leylin’s face, and a layer of light from his hands sealed the cup.
“The ancient Wisdom Tree! It truly is the crystallization of ancient intelligence! Just breathing in a little resulted in such a dramatic effect. What will happen if I use it all?”
A fiery look appeared on Leylin’s expression, and with a flash of silver light from his hands, the wooden cup and the essence within disappeared.
“Unexpectedly, the person who had been a student has already surpassed me!”
Siley was also surrounded by a layer of black gas. While glancing at Leylin, a bitter smile appeared.
With the corrosion from the toxins, neither he nor his partner was able to exhibit even 70% of their true strength. Even if they worked together, it would still be difficult to win against Leylin.
The dark Magus who did not like Leylin had long since fled, body flashing with the energy waves of spells used to dispel toxins. Unfortunately, the black poison became denser, and did not seem to be able to be removed.
At the thought of what he had said, this dark Magus’ face turned red. Thankfully, his face had been completely obscured by the
black gas, so nobody could see what sort of expression he had. Seeing Leylin holding the target of their mission, this dark Magus had all sorts of thoughts and his lips twitched, but in the end, he didn’t say anything.

Leylin’s might far exceeded his expectations. He was basically at the level of the elite within rank 2 Magi, and he or Siley were unable to handle him by themselves. Attempting to fight may incur the hatred of their opponent, as well as cause more unnecessary deaths.

Dark Magi were very shrewd people. Even if he was able to hold onto the essence of the Wisdom Tree, there was no way he would have the chance to use it for himself. Why would any dark Magus risk their lives for it then?

Leylin naturally did not know about the complex thoughts running through their minds. Based on experience, however, he was largely able to guess their train of thought.

Hence, after nodding briefly towards Siley, he turned to leave.

*Step! Step!* The sounds of the hoof steps of horses constantly sounded, and from the horizon a distance away, a team of Steel Knights appeared. Though there were just thirteen people there, the knights were like a flood of steel that was charging towards them.

“It’s the thirteen sages of Iron Crown, who form the Steel Knight Squad!”

Siley gulped, “Since when did they work together with light Magi? Or was this just a simple dispatchment?” At this point, he couldn’t help but chance a glance at Leylin. Their target could only be Leylin, who had stolen the essence.

*Lu lu!* Thirteen giant steel beasts that spewed out flames and had green light in their eyes stopped before the group. They fanned out and surrounded the Magi.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* The leader’s helmet automatically opened,
revealing the face of the Great Sage. “Who has the essence of the Wisdom Tree?”
He looked around with suspicion.
Their target, Alistair, was now collapsed on the floor, and nobody knew if he was alive or dead. There was a high possibility that the essence had been divided amongst the Magi here, or had been stolen. He naturally did not recognise Leylin, who had only just showed up.
What made him the most annoyed was that all of the Magi present were staring at him the way they would a dead man.
What’s going on?” The Great Sage was surprised, and all of a sudden, his body lost all its strength.

*Boom!* Multiple steel creatures fell to the ground; the spirit flames in their black eye sockets died out. In a few seconds, they turned into dried up bones once again.

“Old friend!” The Great Sage wailed sorrowfully. His connection with his steed had been completely severed. In other words, the spirit of his companion of many years had been destroyed and no longer existed in this world.

“Who is it?” His eyes turned red. That dark Magus and Siley turned in the same direction to look at Leylin, who had a helpless look on his face.

“It’s you!” The Great Sage’s face began to twitch. “You wretched trash! You dare…”

“How pointless!” Solidified blood-red rays shot out of Leylin’s eyes, and the red light on his wrist was now extremely intense, to the point that it hit its limit. *Bang!* The early alert warning system crystal exploded, turning into sparkling powder.

“Shadow Domain!”

“Toxic Bile!”

Total blackness filled the entire region, and behind Leylin, a large number of shadows that looked like snakes forming the terrifying features of a Devil King.
The large shadow was like a beast that swallowed everything as it spread, the terrifying sounds of corrosion and the low huffs of those meeting the face of death sounding at the centre.

*Bang!*

A moment later, the black shadow disappeared, leaving the thirteen sages with no light in their eyes as they collapsed. Even the spirits in their bodies had been eaten through by the poison.

“Demonic Poison King! It’s Demonic Poison King Leylin!”

In an area not too far away, the few light Magi who were planning to take advantage of the decision turned pale in fear at the rotted corpses under the black mist.

Though they had heard of Leylin’s nickname as the Demonic Poison King before, they had never understood how terrifying he could be.

“Ley-Leylin, you…”

Not just that dark Magus, even Siley was a little stunned as he looked at Leylin, whose eyes were still shooting out blood-red rays.

The thirteen sages of the Iron Crown were a firm force that had been safeguarding this region. Every one of them had the strength of a peak rank 1 Magus, and their leader, the Great Sage, was even at rank 2!

Siley knew that if he were to be trapped by this group, things would very very troublesome. Even fleeing would be an issue. The terrifying vitality of the spirit beasts was something that Magi who developed their strengths based on spells were unable to contend against.

Now, however, this little group of Steel Knights that had been around for hundreds of years had died, just like that? And their killer was a newly-advanced rank 2 Magus, Leylin? Siley scratched his bald head, wondering if he had been caught in some Rank 3 Magus’ illusion.
“Who else is there?”
Leylin’s expression was a little strange and he began to roar, the blood-red in his eyes more prominent as they swept in the direction where the light Magi were hidden.
“This is bad! He’s found us!”
The leader whispered softly, and the entire group rapidly withdrew a large distance. It couldn’t be helped! Leylin’s poisonous attack that could affect a large area had terrified them.
“Hah…”
Leylin’s current situation was not good. Not only were there a few small wounds left behind by the retaliation of the Steel Knights, his expression was also crazed. White streams of air exited from his orifices.
[Liveliness of blood cells in host’s body has exceeded threshold! Beginning procedure to forcefully control situation!]
All of a sudden, a flash of bright blue rays covered Leylin’s body, and his body temperature lowered. The white mist condensed into fragments of ice inside and scattered all over Leylin’s body.
“Damn it, I got emotional again!”
Under the control of the A.I. Chip and the stimulus from the biting cold, Leylin was finally able to regain his senses, eyes flashing with intelligence.
“I can’t fight anymore, or else I’ll descend into a crazed state and go on a killing rampage till I die…”
Leylin surveyed the area, keeping the sight of the battlefield in his mind.
Though walking the path of a warlock with a bloodline allowed him to possess an incredible might, to the point that he could use his innate talents from his bloodline to achieve victory against experienced rank 2 Magi or even kill them and gain a reputation for himself, this branch of ancient Magi, the Warlock, had quite a few flaws.
The issue of becoming overly emotional was one of the problems. Compared to the rational Magus, Warlocks were easily affected by the external world and were often extremely emotional. Slaughter and battles would easily result in fury for Warlocks, causing them to descend into a crazed state and lose part of their rationality. If he were to be surrounded by enemies, he would not be able to escape at all.

“My bloodline is much too pure. The moment it flares up, even the potion of tranquility will be rejected from my body.”

Leylin checked his stats.


“A.I. Chip, use Plan C!” Leylin could only laugh bitterly and give out the command.

[Received authorisation, beginning small operation on Host’s body.]

The A.I. Chip loyally answered. In that moment, Leylin’s pupils turned sky blue, and cold energy particles were produced from all over his body.

“He seems to have a problem! Go!!!”

The light Magi who had been pursuing them saw Leylin acting weirdly. Excited, the light Magus who was the leader waved his sleeves and countless flying bugs came together to form half a human face, flying towards Leylin.

“You just don’t know when to stop!”

A fire rose in Leylin’s heart, but with the force from the chilliness, it was quickly suppressed.
His right hand slashed downwards, and a formless, translucent ripple spread like a wave in the air.
The formless ripple immediately collided with the sea of bugs.  
*Bang!* The half-formed human face stopped moving for a moment, and large amounts of flying bugs fell to the ground, their compound eyes no longer moving. The bodies became stiff and began to rot.  
*Huahuahua!* Like rain, the bugs fell from the sky and formed grey droplets.  
The formless poison seemed to be able to go through the void and connect to the Magus’ spiritual force, corroding his actual body.  
The Magus who manipulated the flying bugs staggered back, black tendrils that looked like snakes spreading on his face.  
“Quick, protect me and help me leave!” At this moment, the leader of the group of light Magi finally regretted his greediness. Even when Leylin was in a strange state, he was not somebody he could handle.  
“You’re thinking of leaving?” Not far away, Leylin’s lips curved up in a sly smile, and the black defensive item on his hand exploded. Black rays were pulled into a shape, turning into a longbow.  
“Toxic Bile!” Leylin used his innate rank 2 spell once more, his left hand pulling the string and releasing an arrow in the direction of the fleeing light Magi.  
*Beng!*  
With vibration from the string, a formless toxic arrow streaked through the sky, distorting the air as it passed.  
On its way, the ground was charred black, plants died, creating a unique path that showed the arrow’s route.  
“No! You can’t kill me! My father is-” The light Magus who was in the middle of escaping was so terrified that it seemed as if his spirit had departed. Next, his body trembled and his expression
changed.
*Ka-cha!* The clothes on his back were ripped open, revealing a translucent palm.
This palm was the size of that of a regular human, and it grabbed towards the transparent toxic arrow.
*Beng!* A formless ripple spread, and the surrounding Magi quickly retreated, fearing the toxins.
“The protection from a rank 3 Magus?” Leylin watched on not far away, his desire to kill even stronger now, “Nobody can save you today!”
He pulled the string again. *Bzz!*
Along with the sounds of vibration, the toxic arrow that had been at a deadlock with the transparent palm exploded, forming countless tiny arrows that went flying in all directions.
*Tss tss!* The translucent palm exploded in such a manner that there were numerous holes in it, which caused it to break down.
From within, the roar of an old Magus could be heard.
With an expression full of disbelief, that light Magus stiffly collapsed.
On his back, a large wound from the explosion had been inflicted. His innate defensive spell that he had been so proud of had not been the slightest bit useful.
“You- you actually killed him! His father is a rank 3 Magus!” Siley’s voice trembled.
Leylin, who was still under the influence of the warlock bloodline effects, paid no heed to this. He turned, cold glaze piercing as he focused on Siley.
Siley quivered, suddenly remembering that his life was still in the hands of his opponent. He forced a smile, “Alright! I was just pointing it out. You can do whatever you want!”
Hesitation and struggle appeared in Leylin’s expression, and dense black gas wrapped his body.
Strong black gales blew madly towards the distance, and in a moment, disappeared into the horizon.

“That crazy guy is finally gone!” Siley and his partner glanced at each other, and then Alistair who was heavily injured and unable to get up, with bitter smiles.

“What should we do? Jajone’s dead! Lord Eric won’t let us off!” The other light Magi made sounds of indignation in unison.

“Kill those dark Magi and avenge Jajone!”

A light Magus stared hard at Siley and the rest with deep hatred.

Siley steeled his expression and stood with his partner, a ring of defensive energy particles appearing.

*Pu! Pu! Pu!*  
In that instant, the looks on the faces of the Magi present changed. The fierce toxins suddenly flared up.

In the havoc that Leylin had wreaked previously, the Magi present had somewhat been affected by the toxins of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, and this was difficult to remove.

The light Magi had been affected by the attack towards Jajone, and their injuries were even more serious.

The two groups of people exchanged gazes, and eventually decided on leaving in a huff, rather than clashing.
The reason for our existence is to seek truth! The path of a Magus is a continuous search for the truth, researching about phenomena and objects, and finding the rules in them and applying these concepts to ourselves. This is the source of motivation and strength for Magi!”

While walking, the old Magus taught the acolytes who were following behind him.

“I’ve already told you about the unique characteristics of the Bloody Grass. However, you’ve only seen pictures and samples. Now, I’ve brought you here, where it is naturally grown…”

“Arnold! Take a look at this. Is this Bloody Grass any different from the rest?”

The old Magus asked a male acolyte with freckles on his face.

“Yes! It’s thinner than others of its kind, and the veined pattern of blood on the surface isn’t very clear. It might have met with some natural predator, specifically… specifically…”

Arnold was still a large boy, with some hair growing above his lips. He walked ahead and extended his right hand towards the Bloody Grass, wanting to take a closer look.

*Xiu!*
In that instant, a red shadow shot out from the Bloody Grass, heading straight for Arnold’s face!
“Ah…” Arnold staggered and fell back, alarmed.
*Pak!* A black flash of light was shot out from the old Magus’ hands, striking the shadow down.
It was a red beetle-like organism with grey spots on its back. Its sharp mouth let out cold glints, its teeth that were half the size of its body still moving.
“This is the Sawtooth Beetle, the natural predator of the Bloody Grass! It loves to gnaw at the roots of the Bloody Grass. If it is cultivated by hand, one must patrol every day and eliminate this sort of insect!”
“Arnold! You didn’t even perform the most basic defence before observing the grass. This carelessness will cost you your life in the future!”
The old Magus shook his head and then headed off into the distance.
Arnold turned a little red as he rubbed his head, quickly stood up and caught up.
“Hey, big guy! You really are lucky! The spiral sawtooth attack of the Sawtooth Beetle is something even level 2 acolytes might not be able to take on! If not for mentor, you would now be a cold corpse…”
A female acolyte approached him, snorting in disdain.
“Hehe…” Arnold scratched his head, making him seem even more thickheaded.
“Let’s go! How could you even become an acolyte with that level of intelligence? It’s basically a disgrace to us and to our mentor!” A boy wearing fancy clothes and seemed to have received education on the etiquette of the nobility walked past, leaving Arnold far behind.
“Mentor! The Bloody Grass can strengthen one’s body to a certain
extent, and is a huge temptation to some high-energy beings. It is usually found in places where high-energy beings hunt, so should we be a little more careful?"
The acolyte of nobility ran in front of the old Magus.
“You’re on the right track, but I’ve already scouted the area. The only high-energy being here is just a Gale Shackled Weasel, which is about the limits of what you are able to handle with your abilities!”
The old Magus nodded, praising him.
“Though Bloody Grass can strengthen the body to a certain extent, its poison is too strong for us humans. It needs to be processed before it can be turned into a potion! Your mission now is to harvest enough Bloody Grass to brew a standard portion of body-strengthening potion, as well as remove the poison within!”
The old Magus began to issue the task.
“Understood, mentor!” A few acolytes immediately brought out their apparatus and separated, with the old Magus at the centre so that he was able to help every one of them in time.
“Good!” Seeing this, the old Magus nodded in satisfaction.
*Xiu!* A Sawtooth Beetle shot out of the Bloody Grass, brushed past Arnold’s face and scared him so much that he fell.
“Haha! Look at that idiot! Mentor had already demonstrated that there could be beetles hidden in the Bloody Grass that looked less healthy, and yet you still try to harvest it!”
The acolyte of nobility coincidentally walked past. He raised his hand and chanted a few syllables, and a corrosive ball shot out, putting an end to the beetle before mocking him relentlessly.
“Look! I’ve almost gathered the required amount of resources, and you haven’t even filled the bottom yet!”
The acolyte opened his bag and proudly showed it to Arnold.
“Don’t bother with him! Levi, come help me! The roots of this Bloody Grass are too hard!” The girl from before hummed in
dissatisfaction.
“Alright, alright, I’ll be right there!”
Levi quickly cast Arnold away, approaching the girl and being particularly attentive to her.
Though they were still children, the youngsters of the south coast usually matured early. There were already indications of this early on.
Upon seeing this, the old Magus reminisced, “This is youth…”
He mumbled to himself, producing a pipe with golden decorations on the surface and beginning to smoke. White circles of smoke were constantly puffed out and appeared in the air.
However, while he was recalling the past, a slight tremble of the ground began.
“Huh? This is?” The old Magus immediately put out his pipe, this peculiar situation immediately arousing his interest.
In the next few seconds, the tremors became more intense till the ground began to shake substantially.
From a distance away, a group of strange beings, such as two-headed wolves, four-legged mutated elks and all sorts of high-energy beings, normal beings, carnivorous and herbivorous animals banded together that formed a wave that was hard to avoid.
At the very front, the old Magus even found a few large terrifying beasts that gave him a sense of danger!
“Assemble! Assemble here!” The old Magus yelled, his voice a little hoarse from his nerves.
“What the hell is going on?”
The acolyte of nobility, Levi, raised his head and stared at the scene, stunned. All of a sudden, he was drowned by the large numbers of Sawtooth Beetles that flew out from the Bloody Grass. The girl with him could not escape the fate of death either, the
sound of flesh and blood being gnawed on constantly being produced. The group of beetles were like grey spots constantly rising from the Bloody Grass, forming a cloud that entered the wave. “What’s going on? Why are there animals fleeing from danger in this season? Is there some extremely dangerous being chasing after them?” The old Magus wondered to himself, not even sparing a glance at Arnold who had been running pitifully.

*Xiu xiu!* A human figure streaked through the sky at an incredibly fast rate, creating two air waves that had long ripples trailing behind. “You can’t escape!” A massive voice travelled from behind the figure. Following the sound, a large bundle of white light immediately appeared in front of the black figure, turning into a large shield. “Scorching Touch!” With a wave of his hand, two streaks of red rays shot out from the shadow and created two large holes in the shield. Under the constant shimmering of the white rays, the shield quickly returned to its prior state. Under the hindrance of the shield, the black figure stopped, revealing the appearance of a young Magus. He had black hair, his features handsome yet sinister. Behind him, a line of white light brought with it immense pressure as it burst towards him.

*Weng!* A formless energy boundary dissipated in all directions with the light at the centre. A fantastical land of light and beauty suddenly descended upon this region. “This is… the domain of a highly ranked Magus! It’s a rank 3 Magus!” The old Magus gaped, his eyes on the verge of popping out, “Who in the world is he chasing after? Is it also a rank 3 lord Magus?”
The rays dissipated, revealing the figure of a blonde Magus.

“Poison King Leylin! You dare kill my blood! Even though Jajone was just trash, our family name must not be tarnished!

Countless rays were emitted from his body, forming a huge pike made of countless other pikes.

“Heavenly Pike!” The large numbers of pikes shot towards Leylin like raindrops.

“Toxic Bile!” Leylin spread his arms and a wave of toxins rippled towards the pikes. *Tss tss!* A large amount of white gas sizzled out, and the sounds of corrosion was produced from the pike formed of heavenly rays. It quickly began to fill with holes.

However, though the pike’s power seemed to have been weakened, it still charged towards Leylin.

“Kemoyin’s Scales!” From the surface of Leylin’s skin, countless black scales with incomplete runes on it emerged. The black light exploded from the scales, forming a huge shield in front of him.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

The pike penetrated the shield with black runes, focusing on Leylin’s body and created a large number of sparks.

An unnatural flush appeared on Leylin’s face, and he retreated. While flying backwards, he waved fiercely.

“Latent Fireball!”

Large amounts of black flames wrapped the shield of light from before, combusting fiercely.

The shield of light had become slightly thinner after the attack of the Scorching Touch. Now, with the attack from the Latent Fireball, white rays constantly flickered and eventually exploded, turning into little milky-white lights that were burnt till nothing was left by the black flames.

“Light Domain!” The blonde rank 3 Magus suddenly spread his arms, looking ready to give a hug.

*Boom!* The boundaries of light shifted such that it increased in
area, including Leylin within.
A huge suction power exploded from the light Magus, and Leylin was involuntarily dragged closer to him.
“As expected of a rank 3 Magus! Though this light domain is but an imitation, it is still slightly able to suppress my strength!” Feeling the rapid increase of the number of light elemental particles in the air and the huge decrease in dark elemental particles, Leylin’s expression became grim.
“Die!”
A white bundle of light carrying with it a terrifying destructive power rose from the rank 3 light Magus’ hand, advancing towards Leylin.
“Activate gravitational spell formation at full power 100 times gravity!”
Leylin pressed his temples and ordered.

*Weng weng!*
A large, dark brown formation lit up and rose from the ground and tore apart the milky white domain.
The light Magus was stunned for a moment, the ball of energy in his hands changing its course and missing Leylin.
“An ancient spell formation? When did he set that up?”
The light Magus saw the terrifying formation that spanned for kilometres, shock apparent in his expression.
“I’ll take advantage of this! Suction spell formation!” An inverted “L” shaped rune brightened on Leylin’s body, and as if he was being sucked in by a black hole, he turned into a black streak and vanished.
“What an interesting little guy! It’s a pity that all your methods are useless against me!” The light Magus calmly looked in the direction in which Leylin had fled, and suddenly laughed, shooting a glance at the old Magus from the corner of his eye. He turned into a ray of light and quickly left the area.
“Poison? Then he should be the Demonic Poison King Leylin, whose name has been going around! I wonder which faction and organisation that rank 3 Magus is from…”
The old Magus mumbled to himself in a daze, not noticing the look.
of envy in Arnold’s eyes.

……

*Boom!* A black shadow slammed into the spell formation, the powerful suction spell formation smashed to pieces. Leylin let out a long sigh, “A rank 3 Magus is someone I can’t deal with yet…”

In the beginning, under the influence of his emotional state, Leylin had killed off Jojane, who had a powerful backing. Under his enraged state, he had not even taken the most basic protective measures.

When he had killed Jojane, the death mark from a rank 3 Magus was left on Leylin’s body. All Magi usually had this method. For Leylin, a mark from a rank 2 Magus basically had no effect on him. However, the mark from a rank 3 Magus was evidently not so easily dealt with.

Leylin forced a smile and took a look at his sea of consciousness.

Within the crimson sea was a little, maggot shaped, milky white ray of light. While Leylin was not paying attention to it, it would expand.

A large amount of time and spiritual force would be needed to wear down and expel this mark.

This was the best solution provided by the A.I. Chip, but Leylin would be found by his opponent every so often. There was not enough time to deal with this.

After a few battles, Leylin had a better understanding of his own strength.

In his current state, he was a terrifying existence to rank 2 Magi who were lucky enough to rank up.

With a high-grade meditation technique, as well as a powerful bloodline, Leylin’s advancements in rank as a warlock always brought immense benefits and increases in strength.
However, for similar rank 2 Magi who also possessed high-grade meditation techniques, the gap was not so obvious.

“In my current state, I am considered an elite amongst rank 2 Magi. However, in the face of any rank 3 Magi, I have no confidence at all. Even being able to escape would depend on my luck!”

Leylin shook his head and walked out.

In front of him was a small, desolate little town, with dust, rubbish and all sorts of vines growing on the ground.

“No! The mark on my body is constantly emitting waves to track my location. No matter where I am on the south coast, I’ll easily be found. I need to go to a place far, far away, to the point that the distance can interfere with the mark’s transmission of information!”

Leylin’s eyes showed his resolution. This was the desolate town where the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret plane had been!

“If this really doesn’t work out, I can just use the teleportation spell formation and leave this place! If I’m quick enough, he won’t be able to find out about this place, and I may still be able to return!”

If the Magus did not find out about this secret plane, Leylin could remove all traces of the mark, and then confidently strut back into the south coast.

The moment the entrance to the secret plane was found, no matter how much Leylin did not want to do so, he could only hold back the pain of having to abandon this place, destroy the teleportation spell formation there, and leave this place forever.

“I didn’t think I’d need to use my last resort so soon!”

Leylin laughed bitterly, and from a spell formation at the villa, entered the secret plane. While going through the spell formation that went through the void, Leylin moved his hand and a red ray disappeared into the wall.

“I haven’t been able to obtain probing spells or spiritually branded
slaves. If I’m going over, I’ll need to do it myself. Though I’ve already ascertained that the teleportation spell formation is alright after checking with the A.I. Chip, gambling like this really leaves a sour taste in my mouth…”

Leylin furrowed his brows and came to the secret room in the narrow pathway. Though he was sure that the teleportation spell formation was fine, the state of the surroundings around it might not be alright. What he could confirm, though, was that the other side of the spell was in a place that was very far away. As long as he escaped and broke the connection between the two spell formations, he would be able to break away from the chase of the rank 3 Magus!

“I’ll take a look over there, and if it really isn’t a good environment there, I can still come back!” Leylin consoled himself.

*Pu!* All of a sudden, a bright, milky-white beam shot out from Leylin’s body and up into the sky, heading upwards in a straight line as if penetrating the hindrances of the secret room. Leylin covered his head and staggered back. In his sea of consciousness, that milky-white light was spreading outwards, and no matter how Leylin used his spiritual force to obstruct it, it was of no use.

Leylin seemed to see a blonde rank 3 Magus rushing towards him.

“The time he takes to detect me has shortened. He’s found this place!” Leylin’s expression turned grim, “I’ll have to use my last resort and completely give up on this place!”

Not only that, even the teleportation spell formation had to be destroyed as well. If not, the Magus could give chase through the spell formation. With the mark, it was impossible for Leylin to hide.

*Tss tss!* Numerous black tendrils of smoke were emitted from
Leylin’s body. Meanwhile, in his sea of consciousness, a vast amount of red rays charged towards the milky-white spiritual force and encircled it, temporarily isolating it from external influences.

*Rumble!*
The secret plane began to shake as if there was a powerful existence attacking the area from outside.

“Alric is attacking the secret plane!” Leylin grit his teeth as the crimson ring on his finger exploded.

The alert spell formation that the Gargamel had set up on the wall had been damaged by Leylin in the past. However, the moment the red rays shone, it began to work once more, and a hidden spiritual force travelled through a special path.

*Hualala!*
In an area surrounding the little town, the grass and soil flipped over, and a strange ‘corpse’ crawled out!

This ‘corpse’ was shrivelled up and small, and resembled an old woman. Moreover, it had a couple of deformities. Not only were there two extra arms and legs, there was also a young face growing at the back of the head of the old lady.

It looked like a body that was shared by two people.

“The alert system set up by Master has been activated! The only person who can find this place has to be Leylin!” Wisps of green light shot out of the old woman’s eyes. “It has to be him!”

“Leylin? The offering that escaped?” The young woman’s face behind the old lady opened her eyes.

“Yes! If not for him, you would have gained a body of your own and not have ended up in this state.”

The old woman grit her teeth, a deep-rooted hatred apparent in her eyes.

She was Old Devil, the female Magus who had conducted secret
dealings with Leylin in Nightless City. She had tried to use him as an offering to the Gargamel in the secret plane, in order to allow her daughter, Jaye, to regain her physical body. Unfortunately, due to Leylin’s escape, her wish had been realised with a strange method. Somehow, the Gargamel had forcibly induced half a corporeal body onto the old woman’s body, and had placed Jaye’s spirit within. It could be said that Leylin had a played a very big part in causing the two of them to end up in this way.

“I want to kill him!”
Old Devil roared.

“Have you forgotten Master’s orders? He’s an offering for Master, so only Master is qualified to enjoy him!” Jaye’s eyes, behind Old Devil’s head, suddenly glazed over as she muttered.

“No! I wouldn’t dare offend Lord Gargamel!” The old witch quickly knelt down and begged for forgiveness.

“Then say your prayers, and report the happenings here to the great Lord Gargamel!”
Jaye closed her eyes after speaking, and the next time she opened them, she seemed to have turned into another person. “Mother! My illness seems to be getting worse…”

After implanting the spirit, the Gargamel had mixed in a few things into Jaye’s spirit, and had set up a core of consciousness that would oversee the old witch. Old Devil, whose daughter was being controlled, had no choice but to submit to the Gargamel.

“Oh, Great Gargamel, home of all spirits! You are the master of all, as well as the beginning and ending of all. Please listen to the prayers of your servant…”

The old witch took out something like a communication device and chanted a long verse of prayers from a scripture.
*Weng Weng!*

After Old Devil explained the current situation, the communication device began to vibrate.

“Yes, Lord Gargamel! It will possess me!”

The old witch was stricken with fear, but her body involuntarily knelt to the ground, after the modifications her body was now no longer her own.

A powerful spirit that was brimming with evil thoughts used a special method to rush out of the communication device and possessed the old witch’s body.

Old Devil’s body trembled violently, her eyes rolled back, and white foam frothed at her mouth.

Finally, her body was wrapped up in a black spiritual body and turned into a large, black, human figure.

On the figure’s face, there was a mask of a devil’s skull with a horn on it, which looked immensely strange.

*Chi chi!*

The Gargamel that had possessed Old Devil’s body made a sound and charged towards the secret plane.
“Oh? A unique, diseased spiritual force, and spiritual power full of hatred and resentment! You are a Gargamel, the main cause of the plague in the west!”

The rank 3 light Magus, Alric, immediately identified the Gargamel.

*Chi chi!* What came in response was a loud roar from the Gargamel.

The human figure with a bone mask waved his cape, and a great number of crazed and indistinct spirits pounced towards Alric, many of which began to self detonate in mid-air.

*Rumble!* The power of the explosion of spirits brought with it toxins of an ancient plague, causing Alric’s face to change as he staggered backwards.

“Light of Saint’s Glory!” He shouted, like a bishop not at all afraid of death, his face radiating with a dazzling light.

A large amount of milky-white, divine light was produced from Alric’s body, and the silhouette of a large building that commanded respect appeared behind him.

The moment these spirits met with the sacred light, black gases emerged from their bodies, and their crazed expressions became peaceful.

Afterwards, with their faces full of tranquility and smiles, they threw themselves towards the building behind Alric.
“It really is the Gargamel, with a body constructed of resentment!”
The light Magus roared, and like a madman, rammed into the huge figure.
The divine, milky white cleansing light and the black power of loathing offset each other.

……

At this moment, Leylin was currently placing a black, magic crystal into an energy slot.
*Rumble!* The teleportation spell formation came to life, rings of light brightening and four energy balls that represented Earth, Fire, Wind and Water hovering on top of the four stone pillars. The red, yellow, green, and blue lights came together, sparkling brilliantly all this while.
“I never expected the rank 3 Magus to come so quickly! Luckily, I made some preparations…”
Leylin looked at the spatial passage that was forming, and heaved a long sigh of relief.
He had anticipated that the rank 3 Magus would follow him. Afterall, every once in a while, the rank 3 Magus would use the mark to detect his position, not giving Leylin the slightest chance to rest or remove the mark.
To give himself more time, Leylin immediately thought of the Gargamel.
It had obviously remembered Leylin, and had determined that Leylin would definitely return to the secret plane. Hence, it had set up a secret alerting spell formation at the entrance.
However, with Leylin’s powers of detection, this was very obvious, and the spell formation had been temporarily damaged and sealed by him.
Leylin’s previous actions had completely activated the alerting spell
formation and had drawn the Gargamel here, which would give him more time. Since the rank 3 Magus was from the light Magi alliance, how could it just let the Gargamel, a body formed from resentment, go? In addition, the Gargamel was directly responsible for the recent huge plague in the west. From the looks of it, everything was going according to plan. A pitch black spatial passageway that emitted silver rays of light was constructed from nothingness on top of the spell formation.

“I need to leave this place, and I don’t know when I’ll be able to return!”

Leylin turned back to look at this region, suddenly feeling reluctant to leave. No matter what, this was the place that he had grown up in. The memories of this place had already been branded into his heart. If the other side was a place with terrible conditions, and if the rank 3 Magus was unable to find this place, Leylin might even make use of the teleportation spell formation on the other end and return. However, it was evident that this was no longer possible.

Leylin had no idea how long it would take for him to use his own strength to return instead of using the teleportation spell formation.

“Goodbye, south coast!” Leylin murmured.

*Rumble!*

Just as he put one foot into the teleportation passageway, a rumble sounded out, and everything around him began to shake, as if there was a magnitude 10 earthquake.

*Huala!*

The roof of the secret room was torn open, and boundless amounts of sacred light flooded in.

“Leylin! Don’t even think of running!” Alric roared, bearing terrifying injuries from spirits detonating themselves on his
The Gargamel was an ancient being after all, and its might even reached the thresholds of the level of a Morning Star Magus. Though its power had not fully recovered and it was merely using a borrowed body, it was still able to cause some trouble for Alric. “An ancient teleportation spell formation?”

Upon seeing the spell formation with its four, glimmering, coloured lights, he shouted. As a rank 3 Magus, he had lived a few centuries. How could he not know what an ancient teleportation spell formation represented? That signified another continent with endless resources and boundless benefits!

“Stay here!” Alric’s eyes turned red as he approached the ancient teleportation spell formation. He could give up on anything for access to this teleportation spell formation. He roared, two large arms made of sacred light grabbing towards Leylin. However, Leylin merely gazed at Alric coldly, and two words came out of his mouth. “Too late!”

*Rumble!*

A layer of Kemoyin’s Scales covered Leylin’s body, and with a huge leap, the silverish spatial passageway swallowed him.

*Tss tss!* After teleporting one person, all the energy of the spell formation was sucked dry, and the various rays of light dimmed. The passageway disappeared.

“No…” Seeing the spatial passageway, which was gradually closing like a beast’s mouth, Alric shouted.

*Whoosh!* He appeared in front of the teleportation spell formation, fishing out a high-grade energy crystal and throwing it into the energy slot. “Quickly! Activate!”

Though Alric did not know the Turin Language, he still had other methods. Under the solidified milky-white holy rays that wrapped
up the spell formation, the spell formation began to work. With large amounts of effort on Alric’s end, the spell formation worked at twice the speed that it had with Leylin. “Faster! Faster! Faster!” However, Alric was still not satisfied, and kept inserting his immense spiritual force into the spell formation. He knew very well that the moment Leylin reached his destination, he would immediately destroy the spell formation at the other side. When that happened, they would be on two different continents, and his revenge for his son, as well as the benefits from the teleportation spell formation, would come to naught. All he needed now was a little bit of time! With the urging of Alric, a rank 3 Magus, the spell formation worked quickly, and rings of energy constantly ascended. Once again, a pitch black passageway opened up! “Exactly! That’s how it should be!” Alric mumbled, eyes full of excitement as he watched the spatial passageway begin to open. *Weng!* *Bang!* However, just as it was about to completely open, the teleportation spell formation suddenly halted, the lights turning dim and the space cracking. The passageway then disappeared. This situation meant that Leylin had already destroyed the spell formation on the other end! “Damn it!” Alric roared, milky-white holy light that could be seen by the naked eye emitting from his body and destroying the items in the secret room around him. Next, a light beam struck the teleportation spell formation, turning it into a huge crater! Without the spell formation on the other side, this spell formation was merely a decoration. He obviously wouldn’t leave any chances for Leylin to make use of this spell formation again. “Despicable! Repulsive! Damn it!” Alric yelled, the pain of being
on the verge of gaining something only to lose it right after feeling like a poisonous snake devouring his soul.

*Chi chi!*

At this moment, with the wails of spirits that had departed unjustly, the secret plane of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect began to shake.

A pair of translucent, black arms broke through the hinderance of the secret plane, as if tearing through cloth, and charged towards the centre of the secret plane.

“The main body of the Gargamel has actually reached rank 3…”

Alric’s face turned grim. Without even having the opportunity to lament over letting Leylin go just like that, his clothes began to flutter despite there being no wind, and he flew in mid-air, confronting the Gargamel.

……

After Leylin entered the spatial passageway, regret was apparent in his expression.

The immense spatial power was like several hundred tons of seawater pressing against him from all directions and tearing his body apart.

Kemoyin’s Scales constantly produced crisp explosive sounds, as if about to crumble under this power.

If that happened, Leylin, who no longer had an innate defensive spell, would turn into minced meat in the flow of space.

“I miscalculated! I overestimated my own body’s capabilities and the defence of Kemoyin’s Scales!”

Leylin’s expression was serious, “This is a spatial passageway connecting two continents. The pressure within is something that not even rank 2 Magi are able to withstand. There must have been some method used in ancient times to avoid this, but I haven’t found it yet…”

“This can’t go on!” Leylin saw his Kemoyin’s Scales contracting, so
he produced a red test tube from his pouch and smashed it.
*Puff!* A defensive layer formed from the red potion appeared on
the surface of his body, and it began to vibrate for a while; after
only three seconds, it shattered.
“A middle-grade defensive potion can only withstand this for three
seconds?” Leylin was expressionless as he produced another
potion.
As a Potioneering Master, he had tens of different types of
defensive potions in his spatial pouch, which would be enough to
last him for a long time.
*Bang!* The layer formed by the potion cracked, and was then
quickly replaced by another layer of defence.
Leylin constantly went through his reserves to withstand this.
Finally, the potions were completely used up and a large pressure
was once again put on Kemoyin’s Scales.
“Ah…” Leylin shouted in a low voice, spiritual force and magic
constantly being consumed as incomplete black runes that formed a
full-body shield was produced from his scales.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
After being in a deadlock for a period of time, Leylin’s spiritual
force was exhausted and the defence of the Kemoyin’s Scales
shattered into pieces. A tremendous pressure began to tear Leylin’s
body apart.
Under the pressure of the space tearing, the sounds of bones cracking were constantly produced from Leylin’s body, and fresh blood spurted out like a stream.

[Alert! Alert! Host body is currently in critical condition! Estimated time until cells completely fall apart from the pull of space: 8 seconds!]

The A.I. Chip projected a paragraph of red words in front of Leylin’s eyes.

“This is happening even with the sturdiness of my body! What method did ancient Magi use to deal with the power of space?”

Leylin’s expression suddenly turned sinister, his veins all popping out and his eyes turning red.

Just as the A.I. Chip counted down to the last second, the silver rays of light dissipated to reveal a pitch-black cave.

Leylin’s mind jolted and he rushed towards the cave.

*Bo!* As if penetrating a shapeless water membrane, Leylin arrived in a physical world, and the immense pressure from space vanished.

“That was close!” It was all a blur in front of Leylin’s eyes. With all his strength, he drew a red line and destroyed the runel on the spell formation beneath his feet, and went into a dead faint.

*Drip! Drip!*

The stalactite above him in the cave constantly dripped light red droplets that fell on the ground, producing a rhythmic sound.
Leylin’s eyelids flickered and he opened his eyes.  
“Ugh!” He held onto his forehead, feeling the pain that was all over his body.  
“A.I. Chip! Check my current stats!”  
Leylin immediately spoke inside.  
[Leylin Farlier. Rank 2 Warlock, Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Strength: 15 (21.1), Agility: 4 (14.4), Vitality: 19 (27.9), Spiritual force: 0.01 (104.3), Magic power: 0 (104) (Magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force). Status: Serious injuries all over body, exhaustion of spiritual force!]

The A.I. Chip quickly intoned. At the sight of his condition, Leylin could only force a wry smile.  

As he had underestimated the dangers of spatial teleportation, he had not made enough preparations. This trip through the spatial passageway had almost cost him his life. Not only had his overall stats decreased, even his spiritual force had been nearly completely exhausted. This state would probably spell the end for regular Magi. However, Leylin had a shocking vitality, and was even able to maintain his consciousness.  
“I really got seriously hurt! Alric, I will return one day…”  

A cold glint appeared in Leylin’s eyes, and he shifted his gaze to his waist.  

Seeing that the black leather pouch was still there, a look of relief appeared on his face. This spatial leather pouch was a high-grade magic artifact. Though it did not have any offensive powers, its own defence was extremely startling, and with the spatial runes on the surface protecting it, it was not the least bit damaged. Thankfully, this was the case, if not all of Leylin’s assets would have vanished into thin air.  

“Any regular Magus lucky enough to survive my injuries would
also require a large amount of time to restore their strength. Their strength might even go down a rank from the injuries!

Leylin checked the state of his body. Though there were serious injuries all around, he could feel a cold stream of air full of life and vigour being sent out from his heart. With his blood being pumped to all parts of his body, the stream of air within began to help heal his injuries. Though this process was very slow, the good thing was that this was a continuous process.

“The regenerative abilities of a warlock’s bloodline are this powerful!” A hint of joy was seen in Leylin’s eyes, “With the potions that I currently possess, I can even further increase the speed of my healing…”

With this thought, he expended a great deal of effort to raise the only limb that he could move, his right arm, and took out a red healing potion from the pouch. He used his teeth to remove the cork and, began to drink in huge gulps.

*Rumble!* A pink layer of light encompassed Leylin. Due to the effects of the layer, the horrifying injuries on his body began to recover at a frightening speed.

*Ka-cha! Crack!* From Leylin’s body, the sounds of bones hitting each other could constantly be heard. The muscles on his face constantly twitched, and he huffed through his nose; even his breathing was becoming more serious.

After a few minutes of this, the pink layer on Leylin’s body dissipated. *Pak!* Leylin soared into the sky, and from his previous position of half-sitting on the spell formation, he was now standing upright.

“All of my external injuries have now been healed. Though the internal injuries are a lot more troublesome, they wont affect simple movements!”

Leylin exercised his four limbs, did a few motions that were standard in Knight drills, and furrowed his brows.
“No! With my body, I can only withstand the movements equivalent to that of a Preparatory Knight. If not, it would affect the recovery of my internal injuries…”
In other words, before his injuries were completely healed, Leylin could only use the strength and speed of a Preparatory Knight.
Leylin touched his skin, retrieving armour from his pouch and putting it on.
His Magus robes had been torn apart by the pressure of the space, and they had long since turned into what looked like a beggar’s rags, hanging from his body while being full of holes. Leylin simply tore his old clothes off.
After inspecting his body, Leylin focused his attention on the sea of consciousness within.
The state within was even worse. As a large amount of spiritual force had been used, his sea of consciousness even showed signs of drying up. The crimson colour had turned dimmer, and there wasn’t even a hint of silver spiritual force.
Leylin’s expression immediately turned grim, as even fine cracks had appeared on the walls of his sea of consciousness. If his sea of consciousness shattered, it wouldn’t be as simple as falling in rank. Upon seeing a little white ray still stuck in a corner in the sea of consciousness, Leylin’s face turned even darker.
This was the mark that Alric had left on Jajone’s body. After Leylin had killed Jajone, this mark had transferred itself to Leylin’s sea of consciousness, sticking like a piece of sticky candy. No matter what Leylin did, it just would not disappear.
The only way to deal with this sort of mark was to use large amounts of spiritual force and slowly wear it down. Though it was from a rank 3 Magus, they were currently a huge distance apart, and without boosts from the original Magus, the mark would not be able to persist under Leylin’s spiritual force. However, this required a lot of time, which Leylin did not have.
Now, however, it seemed like this was the time to deal with this thorn in his side!
Leylin sat down cross-legged, recalling the core information regarding the high grade meditation technique, Kemoyin’s Pupil. “Meditation in your spirit. With your eyes, make eye contact with the Giant Kemoyin Serpent and gain its strength!”
The daily training of meditation techniques was something every Magus had to do. Every time Leylin used Kemoyin’s Pupil, adjusting the frequency of his spiritual force until it was the most compatible with the operation of the meditation technique, he was able to penetrate through time and space and see the ancient, terrifying amber vertical pupils of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent!
This state was a phenomenon written about in the Book of Giant Serpent, which only occurred after one had studied it to a very profound level.
As Leylin meditated to a deeper level, the crimson rays in his sea of consciousness gradually grew stronger, and traces of silver spiritual force welled from the bottom from his sea of consciousness, refilling the dried up spring with new vitality.
In the dark cave, spots of dark red light fluttered in the air like fireflies, and entered Leylin’s body. This entire process was silent, but the terrifying apparition of a giant serpent appeared behind Leylin. The huge body kept rotating, becoming more and more substantial physically.
After one round of meditating, Leylin had regained half of his spiritual force, and a look of satisfaction appeared on his face.
“As expected of a high-grade meditation technique! Whether in terms of rate of improvement or recovery, it’s the best on the south coast! It’s a pity that there are only three levels…”
Worry appeared on Leylin’s face
Though Kemoyin’s Pupil was a high-grade meditation technique, of all the inheritance he had gained from the Great Magus Serholm,
there were only three levels of information. The level of a high-grade meditation technique and a Magus’ rank corresponded to one another. In other words, unless he could find the rest of the information regarding Kemoyin’s Pupil, his spiritual force would be at a standstill due to the lack of a meditation technique.

“Based on the information that the Great Magus Serholm provided, the second half of Kemoyin’s Pupil should be on the central continent. Where exactly am I right now?”

Leylin stood up, surveying his surroundings.

“I’ll go out and take a look! Hopefully, this is the central continent! Before anything else… A.I. Chip, are there any remedies for the damage to my sea of consciousness and the mark by the rank 3 Magus?”

Leylin enquired in his mind.

Large amounts of data, images and graphs flashed past, and the A.I. Chip worked at an extremely high speed, quickly giving an answer.

[Based on Host body’s requirements, as well as comprehensive calculations of current conditions, this is the best solution: solidify large amounts of spiritual force in Host body’s sea of consciousness, until all damage is healed and the mark completely disappears.

“Solidify large amounts of spiritual force?”

Leylin was surprised. This meant that before all his injuries were recovered, he would always need to solidify a portion of his spiritual force in his sea of consciousness, and would not be able to use that part at all.

In that case, his overall strength would largely diminish.

“How much do I need to solidify?” Leylin glanced at the cracks that were constantly expanding in his sea of consciousness, face falling while he asked cool-headedly.

[Requires 51.2% of Host’s spiritual force!] The A.I. Chip quickly
answered.
In other words, before completely taking care of all damages, I can only use the strength of a rank 1 Magus?”
Leylin stroked his chin.
To heal the damage done to my sea of consciousness, as well as dispel the mark from Alric, half of my spiritual force can’t be used during this period, right?” Leylin stroked his chin while contemplating.

A moment later, he decided. “Let’s start!”

*Weng Weng!*

The moment he gave the order, silver spiritual force in his sea of consciousness clung on to the nearest cracks at the edges, and then crystallised and solidified!

The silver crystals covered about half of the sea of consciousness, and within the crystal, the milky-white spot was frozen, like a little worm frozen in amber.

After solidifying about half of his spiritual force, Leylin realised that the fine cracks in his sea of consciousness had stopped expanding after having been reinforced by the solidified spiritual force. He heaved a huge sigh of relief.

This way, he had completely dealt with the troublesome parts of his body. The price he had to pay for this was that he could only use the strength of a rank 1 Magus.

After stabilising his injuries, Leylin was now in the mood to survey his surroundings.

It was rather dim, with some moss that gave off some faint light, which allowed him to see just a few metres away. Everything else was just pitch black.
“This must be somewhere within a cave! I wonder what direction leads to the outside…”
Leylin gave a long sigh and took another look at the teleportation spell formation.
The spell formation here was the same as that in the Ancient Spirit Slayer Sect’s secret plane. However, a rune at one of the corners had already been destroyed by Leylin.
Leylin believed that if he was the rank 3 Magus on the other end if he was not going to personally keep watch, he would destroy the spell formation at the other area. Hence, this teleportation spell formation would not be able to be used for a long period of time.
On one end, the set up by the Magi of the Spirit Slayer Sect was very simple. There was only the spell formation in the cave, and other than that, there was a very long and narrow passage that seemed to be carved out from the stone walls.
“Night Vision!”
Leylin used a support-type acolyte level spell on himself.
A black glint flashed in his eyes, and darkness no longer hindered his sight and he took his surroundings in.
“The dark elemental particles here are very dense. It seems to be more than in the south coast!” While using this spell Leylin could tell the large difference between the two continents.
If it was said that the concentration of dark elemental particles in the air in the south coast was 1, it would be at least 1.5 or even up to 2 here.
“A.I. Chip! Test the concentration of elemental particles in the air and make a comparison with that in the south coast!”
Quickly enough, the A.I. Chip transmitted two different pie charts to Leylin.
In the pie chart, the ratio of colours that represented different
elemental particles had various percentages. These were all presented in front of Leylin clearly.

“On the right is the average data found on the south coast, while the one on the left is the newest data!”

Leylin compared the differences between the two. The newest set of data revealed that the concentration of dark, shadow and death, as well as other negative energy particles, rose to about two times that of in the south coast. The positive energy particles such as that of light, plant and life were a little lower.

“Also, the concentration of earth elemental particles is quite high, while fire and water are quite meagre.”

Leylin touched his chin, looking thoughtful. “In other words, there is approximately the same concentration of elemental particles here as in the south coast, though the composition is a little different. The concentration of negative elemental particles is almost equal to that of a small scale secret plane, while the positive elemental particles are only like that of the Chernobyl Islands…”

Leylin made a few conjectures and took a few large steps forwards, entering the long and narrow stone passage. This passage was quite long, and only after ten or so minutes of strolling did he reach the end.

At the end of the passage was a large stone door. Calling it a door might even be a stretch. From what Leylin could tell, it was just a large rounded rock that was blocking the exit. Through the chinks in the rock, Leylin could hear the faint sounds of wind entering.

“It’s best to keep this stone door. When I need this teleportation spell formation in the future, I can still come back!”

With a thought, he used a rank 1 spell. “Shadow Stealth!” Black rays surrounded Leylin’s body, and within the rays, he started
to become transparent. The effect of Shadow Stealth was that the user would temporarily become hard to see, and would be able to hide within tiny shadows. He could pass through most physical objects, but in this mode, he would be unable to attack, else this stealth mode would disappear. Area of effect attacks using energy or sound waves were also the bane of this spell. Now, however, this was just meant to pass through a rock, so it was a simple task. The faint image that Leylin turned into easily passed through the shadows of the cracks on the rock and he reached the outside. “Hah! This is…” Leylin looked at the view outside, and was stunned for a few moments. He was standing on a little hill formed from large rocks, and surrounding him was a vast plain. There were also a large number of shrubs. A gloomy darkness encompassed the whole area, making it so that there was no light at all. The sky was dim and looked as if it would collapse at any moment. Vastness, gloominess, a deathly stillness! This was Leylin’s first impression about the place. With the help of his night vision, Leylin did not have any trouble looking at his surroundings. “This plant looks quite strange!” Leylin picked up a dried up twig on the ground. “It has no leaves and at most, just has some thorns. On top of that, it seems like all the plants I can see share this characteristic!” Leylin grabbed forward with his right hand, a little mole-like creature was captured from the ground. It constantly made ‘chik chik’ sounds. “Its eyes are small and don’t seem to serve much of a purpose. It
also looks like it has albinism! This is a mutation from not being able to get sunlight for a long period of time!”

*Leylin mumbled to himself, clearing up his doubts.

*Pak!* He tossed the mole aside and pushed himself into the sky using a dull, red light.

*Leylin kept ascending, and he could feel pressure on his head. Finally, after who knows how long, Leylin reached the end.

This was a large rock rampart. It had a metallic sheen to it, which made it look like the canopy of heaven.

“So the top of this place is the Earth’s crust!”

*Leylin descended slowly, his expression still revealing his shock, “This is a subterranean world!”

……

On a plain made entirely out of rocks and moss.

Two grey boar-like animals that were a lot smaller used their thick and coarse snouts to dig into the earth, searching for edible food.

*Xiu Xiu!* Two black arrows were suddenly released, and the sharp arrowheads penetrated the back of these two little beasts, pinning them to the ground.

“It’s not a bad harvest today. There are two grey boars! I can change the menu!”

On a hill, not far away, Leylin saw this scene, and joy was present in his smile.

Just ten or so minutes later, he used a wooden frame and made a fire. On top, the grey boars that had been skinned and washed were being roasted, a little grease rolling off the boiling hot skin. There was also an aroma that could make anyone drool mixed with the scent of pine wood, and Leylin’s forefinger couldn’t help but twitch.

“It’s been around a month since I exited from the large rock hill
where the teleportation spell formation is.”
After gnawing away at an entire grey boar, Leylin sighed contently and kept the other one for later.
After a month of wandering around, he now had an idea of how barren this subterranean world was.
Here, it was possible to not see any life despite walking for days, and only moss and bugs were tenaciously surviving.
The pig-like creature that Leylin named “grey boar” was the biggest animal he had seen thus far. It was also the tastiest.
At this thought, Leylin couldn’t help but feel a little regretful.
While the precious spatial leather pouch was extremely spacious, there was a limit to how much could be stored within. It was already full of precious items that Leylin had gained through various methods, the value of which was something even rank 3 Magus would be envious of.
Unfortunately, there was no good food or wine at all. Compared to precious materials, their value was much too low and it was not worth being stored within.
Hence, Leylin found himself living the life of a barbarian.
Water was not an issue. He was a Magus, and with a water elemental spell, he could easily produce large amounts of fresh water. If it was food, however, he had little in the way of options.
Because he was a rank 2 Warlock, it was fine if he didn’t eat for ten days or half a month, but if it was a full month, it wasn’t possible for him not to eat at all.
In addition, his living environment in his previous life, and even now, were all not unsatisfactory. He was used to having three meals a day, and even had some stringent requirements regarding the content of his meals.
Currently, after a long search, Leylin could somewhat find a few starchy plants and roots that he could consume. He might also be able to have some birds or berries.
Leylin was beginning to get tired of these meagre meals. This boar-like creature that he had named “grey boar” was, by far, the tastiest out of everything else that he had seen here up until now.

“Damn it! I hope this isn’t a completely barren land.”

After walking for a full month, besides this desert-area, Leylin had also seen some plains. Leylin began to have some suspicions, as even large animals were rarely seen. Honestly speaking, as he was accustomed to sunlight, Leylin had never realised how precious it was.
eylin had previously seen information regarding the resources of the subterranean world in an ancient book. Legend has it that the ancient Magus World was only a small part of the surface of the earth, and before the ancient Magi’s focus had switched to the other worlds, their goal had been the subterranean world!

The ancient Magi all wielded formidable power; even the sun and the moon would lose their splendor when put in front of these Magi. Many of the natives of the subterranean world had been subdued by them, and these Magi had then exploited layers and layers of the subterranean world to obtain endless wealth and resources.

It was recorded that the ancient Magi had exploited the 7 layers of the subterranean world!

It was said that the further down the layers one visited, the more powerful the ethnic race of that layer would be, and that at the core of the earth, there was an extremely terrifying female existence.

But these did not stop the ancient Magi from venturing further, and finally, the whole subterranean world had acknowledged them as their conqueror. This was all a part of the golden age of the ancient Magi.

Later, the still-dissatisfied Magi shifted their attention to different worlds, and conquered world after world until they ran into that extremely powerful world!
After what was known as the Final Confrontation, although that opposing world did not end up getting any benefits, neither did the Magus World, they deteriorated instead. Even the passage that led to the subterranean world had been destroyed by this war. Since then, the subterranean world had only appeared in legends.

At the least, within the entirety of the southern coast, Leylin had not seen any of the subterranean world’s life-forms, nor had he heard of any passages to the subterranean world.

“From the previously gathered information and the sights seen, this must be the subterranean world; I just don’t know which layer this is! However, based on the dangerous life-form that approached, it ought to be, at most, the third layer, else I would have ran into many dangerous, high-energy life-forms. Also, the probability of the life-forms I ran into being from the first or second layer is really large…”

Leylin kept on pondering this over.

Although he was uneasy that this place was a barren region, Leylin continued travelling. The recent appearance of the grey boar supplied him with huge confidence to proceed on his journey.

While walking the whole journey, Leylin also made a record of his surroundings.

At the location of the ancient magic spell, which Leylin had named “Giant Stone Hills,” the signs of life were so weak that, at most, one could see only moss and some insects, and nothing else.

As Leylin went about his journey, the signs of life gradually increased, and later, he saw something like bat-like birds.

He would occasionally see the grey boars and as he travelled further, the rate of encountering them grew higher.

Thus, Leylin was certain. He had already walked away from the life-restricting region and come to the outside world.

[Beep! Discovered energy waves! The estimate is that these waves are the aftermath of level zero magic. Direction: 15 degrees east, at
3,123 meters.]
Now, the A.I. Chip had issued a message.
“Huh?!” Leylin’s thoughts shook: “Finally, there are some traces of an organism with energy!”
He quickly packed up and soon went in the direction from which the energy waves were emitted.
There was still a grave injury upon his body, not to mention that due to his sea of consciousness solidifying large amounts of spiritual force, he could only display the approximate might of a level 1 Magus right now. However, he did not pay any attention to this trivial matter, and rushed to the scene of those energy waves.
What appeared in Leylin’s sight was the scene of three males and two females confronting a high-energy organism.
These five people seemed to be a standard small squadron. Two males dressed in leather, who were at the very front, served as human shields, constantly swinging their huge iron swords. They, at the very least, had the power of a Grand Knight.
The other three wore gray robes that looked like what the magician apprentices of the southern coast wore, but the style of these robes was very old-fashioned; they were simple and unadorned.
“There are humans here! And they are acolytes!” Leylin inwardly felt elated at this prospect.
What the five acolytes were confronting was an organism that was similar to the huge grey boar, but with a physique that was almost a dozen times bigger, and 3 pairs of huge, crescent-moon-shaped teeth beneath its snout. Hard fur grew all over its body, and it was entirely covered in pine resin, mud, and other forms of muck. It formed thick lumps that, like a battle tank that had donned armor on. The level 0 magic spell that had been previously used by those apprentices seemed to have only left burn marks in the region; it had been incapable of breaking through even the outermost defences.
“Hoo hoo…” Two puffs of white gas were emitted from the nose of this organism that looked like a suckling pig. After pawing the ground, it suddenly charged, and its whole body was like a derailed train as it ran towards those two Grand Knights.

“Ah!”

The floor shook, causing one of those Grand Knights to lose his footing. Soon after, he slipped and was sent flying by this huge boar-like beast. Upon having been gored upon his waist and back by the organism’s huge tusks, blood poured out from his wounds like spring water.

Seeing this scene, the other Grand Knight let out a loud shout and immediately retreated, thus exposing those three apprentices. With the Grand Knight no longer impeding it, the boar fiercely bared its teeth at those apprentices with a blood-thirsty glint in its eyes.

The two female apprentices were scared and kept retreating backwards. *Thud! Thud!* The two of them tripped on something and fell down, expressions of despair coloring their faces.

The remaining male apprentice displayed a gentlemanly bravery, quickly appearing in front of these women with an expression of firm resolve. Still shouting something, he lifted his hand, from which small fireballs were emitted and aimed at the middle of the nose of that big-headed boar.

*Pat! Pat* The big boar’s nose was blackened, but that did not slow down its assault speed by even a bit. On the contrary, the boar seemed to have been infuriated by that male apprentice, and its charging speed even seemed to have increased a little.

That male apprentice smiled helplessly, and then turned his head toward the two female disciples behind him and muttered something; his demeanor gave one the feeling that this youth was not afraid of dying.

*Hoo hoo!* The wild boar got closer and closer, and the three
apprentices could now see clearly the blood vessels in the big boar’s eyes and the thick pores below its fur. Of course, what they would find very hard to forget was the cold radiance of the three pairs of snow-white, fierce, crescent-moon-shaped teeth of the boar.

“Shadow Binding!”

At that moment, Leylin suddenly made his appearance, and several tentacles made of shadow extended outwards from below the belly of the wild boar, and transformed into several hands that firmly dragged the boar by its front hooves.

*Peng!* As if a magnitude 9 earthquake had suddenly occurred, that boar, which was charging at a high speed, suddenly fell down while making a huge noise; even the sounds of bones breaking could be heard from its body.

Soon after, the three apprentices saw a youth in leather armor walking out from behind the fallen boar.

Several black, shadowy ropes trussed up that fallen boar, not even leaving the smallest of weaknesses in the bindings.

“Are you alright?” asked Leylin, with a gentle smile on his face. Those three apprentices saw Leylin, their expressions those of shock, and they opened their mouths to say, “gnkmfsk……”

The smile on Leylin’s face drooped, and then he sighed. “This is really not the common language of the continent!”

What Leylin had just spoken in was the common language of the southern coast magicians, but what these 3 apprentices had spoken was not a language that Leylin recognised.

“This language’s endings sound a bit familiar to the Metiya language, but the syllables in between resemble the language of the highlands…”

Leylin did not feel surprised in the least about the differences in the language. After all, after the ancient era, the subterranean world had been isolated from the earth’s surface. It would be strange if
the language was still similar.

“Hello! I am a nomad. Can you tell me what is this place?”

Leylin immediately switched to another language, this time it was the ancient Byron language!

The ancient Byron language brought with a strange power; it held power over rules and regulations. It could draw upon the power of the energy particles within the atmosphere and was the foundation of all magic spells.

Thus, the ancient Byron language was also a language that all magicians were required to learn.

Whether it was the surface world or the subterranean world, the ancient Byron language was passed down from the ancient Magi, and there would not be even the tiniest bit of disparity in its usage. Sure enough, upon hearing Leylin asking in the ancient Byron language, those 3 apprentices immediately reacted, and finally, that male apprentice took the lead to reply, “Respected Sir! Hello! This here is the Woody Wastelands of the Eastern Twilight Zone.”

He gave a respectful salute. Although Leylin’s actions were suspicious and the language that he initially used to speak was very different from their own language, from the way Leylin had easily subdued this huge, 6-toothed boar that had almost caused a complete wipe for their team, it was obvious that the other party’s strength was superior to theirs.

This was the wilderness, where the strong preyed on the weak. If they got on bad terms with Leylin, then they would be killed, and no one would come to know of it. Thus, this male apprentice’s mannerisms were very deferential.

“Eastern Twilight Zone?” Leylin frowned, and the A.I. Chip quickly searched through the storage database but did not find any details related to this.

“You might need this!” Leylin pointed at the Grand Knight who had been sent flying, and threw a blood clotting medicine towards
“Thank you!” Those two fallen female apprentices also stood up, and one of them immediately clutched the medicine and smeared it on that Grand Knight’s injury. After hesitating for while, she bowed to Leylin.

*Hiss! Hiss!*

At that time, a snake formed entirely of black gas slithered forward and spat out an armoured Grand Knight who had lost consciousness from within its mouth.

“This one is also your partner, right? I had also conveniently picked him up.”

Leylin pointed at the Grand Knight who had just been spat out, and those three apprentices, who had been scared by the sudden appearance of that huge black snake, retreated many steps.

“This coward!” Leylin heard that female apprentice mutter, but he only smiled indifferently.

After that, he asked, “Oh, by the way, do you know which towns are close to here and where the Magi’s Bazaar is?”

These 3 apprentices looked each other in the eyes, and then that male apprentice, seeing Leylin’s agreeable demeanor and speech, gathered his courage and stepped forward as he said, “The closest town from here is Potter Town in the west, and its distance is one and a half days from here. About the Magi’s’ bazaar… the official Magi’s meeting point is located only in the capital city of the Twilight Zone….”
As if baffled by the kind smile on Leylin’s face, this acolyte mustered up his courage and asked, “My lord! Are you... perhaps, not from here? May this humble servant know what your name is? I... I am Aaron!”

“Me? I’m obviously not from around here!” Leylin laughed as he looked at these 3 acolytes.

“Though there are still a lot of things I’d like to ask you, I suddenly realised that it would be much faster if I were to see it for myself...”

Due to the look that Leylin was giving them, the 3 acolytes began to tremble, as if they were being stared at by some predator.

“Let’s go!” Aaron yelled, getting in front of the two female acolytes and chanting incantations.

“What a joke! You’re too slow!” Leylin shook his head, and three black streams of air shot out and entered the foreheads of the three acolytes.

They turned dizzy, and without being able to even make a sound, they fainted.

Leylin approached the male acolyte called Aaron, his right hand directly pressing on the top of his head. The acolyte’s eyes turned jet black, and even his pupils vanished.

Large amounts of images and voices were like a video, replaying in front of Leylin’s eyes. The A.I. Chip worked at full speed, gathering all the information it thought to be important and
organised them. This was a spell that was like searching through one’s spirit. It allowed Leylin to look through the memories of lower ranked Magi.

However, this spell was not actually all that useful. It was only effective against beings weaker than official Magi, and the targets couldn’t be resisting.

When Leylin had first seen this technique in the library at the Four Seasons Garden, he had merely gotten the A.I. Chip to record it in passing. Unexpectedly, he was able to find a use for it here.

Though it was a simple task for him to sneak into this little team and gain information with all the methods he had, Leylin couldn’t be bothered to do all that. He didn’t want to waste time either.

In addition, no matter how hard he tries to conceal it, there were many differences between magicians of the south coast and this subterranean world. This wasn’t something that could be easily covered up with acting. Rather than being considered suspicious when the time came, it would be better to do something about it right now.

[Gathering information regarding subterranean language, named the ‘Twilight Language’. Storing in database…] The A.I. Chip first collected information regarding the language. It would organise these data and transmit it to Leylin’s memories. After some practice, Leylin would be able to quickly grasp the language used in this world.

Next was information regarding the geography and factions here. Though Aaron was weak and had never left the Twilight Zone, his memories had been enough to allow Leylin to gain a better understanding of this subterranean world.

After he had gathered all of the valuable information, a cold glint flashed in Leylin’s eyes and he forcefully began to modify Aaron’s memories, removing all traces of his existence and the happenings
today. He left behind the false memories of a high-ranked Magus with unclear facial features that had suddenly appeared and had helped them subdue the Six-Toothed Giant Boar. These acolytes did not have anything Leylin found useful, and he did not want to kill anymore.

In a situation where he would not suffer any negative consequences, Leylin didn’t mind doing some good deeds. After all, he wasn’t some homicidal maniac who killed people for the fun of it.

However this method of altering memories carried a very high risk. Leylin paid no heed to Aaron’s original memories and forcefully did it. If there were no aftereffects, his luck must be unbelievably good.

Afterwards, Leylin repeated the process on the other four. Though the information he gained was about the same, it created a rather complete set of information.

“This Six-Toothed Giant Boar shall be your compensation!” Leylin looked at the acolytes who were unconscious on the ground and laughed. The black ropes that bound the boar suddenly tightened, and splat! Blood flew in all directions!

A long time after Leylin left, Aaron woke up while clutching his head, “Ugh… my head hurts… where am I?”

Next, fragmented memories entered his mind, scenes appearing in his eyes, “We met a Six-Toothed Giant Boar. That guy, Blake, actually ran away first! We were lucky that a lord who was passing by saved us.”

Aaron looked at the corpse of the huge Six-Toothed Giant Boar, he whooped with excitement, “How many magic crystals would such a large amount of raw material fetch? I’ve struck the jackpot!”

*Hah hah!*

Fine streams of air streaked past Leylin’s ears, as the scenery around him became long images, before further distorting and
forming into streaks of light.

Leylin hurried towards Potter Town, recalling the information he had gained from the five.

This was indeed the underworld, and was the first layer, which was the closest to the continent on the earth’s surface. It was a pity that this was but a small region that was disconnected from the rest of the underworld.

The Twilight Zone. This was the name of this region.

Around the Twilight Zone, if there weren’t gathering points for fearful, sinister beasts, there would be a wide expanse of a lava ocean. These dangerous regions isolated the Twilight Zone from the external world, and without the power of a Morning Star Magus, it was impossible to escape from the isolation caused by these regions.

The only pathway that connected it with the external world had long since been abandoned.

Legends had it that thousands of years ago, there were two Morning Star Magi who had engaged in a great battle near the channel. The resulting fluctuations resulted in the crust of the earth collapsing, and causing terrifyingly large rocks that were almost several hundred million tons to thoroughly seal the channel and stop all communications between Twilight Zone and the external world.

It was for this reason that the Twilight Zone instantly turned into an isolated island. Luckily, the Twilight Zone itself was rather large. Based on Leylin’s estimations, it was about half the size of the south coast. However, the population was only about forty to fifty million. So, the resources were self-sufficient and able to maintain the upkeep till now.

“Based on Aaron’s memories, this whole place is called the Twilight Zone, and it can be divided into the East, West, South, North and Central Regions, which makes up five in total. It is governed by
regions, and there is no such thing as a kingdom or realm.” From Leylin’s perspective, every city here could be said to be an independent power. As land was vast and there were few people, it was no surprise that organisations would flourish and decline quickly. Hence, it was rather chaotic.

Leylin was not interested in battles between mortals. What caught his attention was the information regarding the Magus World here. In the Twilight Zone, the Magus World here had preserved the traditions from the ancient era, still developing through taking in personal disciples and forming schools of thought.

As for academies or anything of the sort, there was no mention of that in Aaron’s memories.

Aaron and those two female acolytes were taught by a single mentor, and the Grand Knight was an assistant that they had employed while they went on this expedition.

However, what caused Leylin the most excitement was the information regarding high-grade meditation techniques in Aaron’s memories!

That’s right. In Aaron’s memories, there were mentions of great amounts of high-grade meditation techniques. His mentor had once even promised that if he proved to have enough potential, he could even apply to obtain the qualifications to get a high-grade meditation technique to train in!

Compared to the situation in the south coast, where large organisations were very strict regarding this matter, Twilight Zone was evidently much more relaxed regarding the restrictions against obtaining high-grade meditation techniques.

These Magi schools of thought set their foundations on different types of high-grade meditation techniques. Basically, all high-ranked Magi a given organisation would train in a single high-grade meditation technique. The earliest schools of thought were formed from a group of Magi who trained in high-grade meditation
techniques, and for the better exchange of ideas, had set up their own organisations.
“A high-grade meditation technique!” A flame began to burn in Leylin’s heart.
However, he quickly came back to himself. The underworld was the most similar to the ancient era and had received much inheritance from the ancient Magi. In addition, with the isolation of the Twilight Zone, the Magi environment here still retained the style of the ancient era. Hence, inheriting high-grade meditation techniques was not unusual.
“However, from the fact that a school headed by a rank 2 Magus can be considered a large school of thought, the high-grade meditation techniques must not be that effective. If it isn’t damaged, there might be specific ingredients that cannot be found here.”
In Aaron’s memories, the might of the Magi here in general was similar to that on the south coast. Official Magi were highly regarded and rarely seen. Rank 2 Magi were the big shots; perhaps a few cities in the five zones were under the control of rank 2 Magi.
“In general, the Magi here get to encounter even more high-grade meditation techniques. However, since these techniques are the core of every school of thought, besides a few specific people, Magi or acolytes will at most obtain a small part or a simplified version. This was the case for Aaron’s meditation technique.”
While searching his mind, some memories regarding meditation techniques were naturally recorded by the A.I. Chip.
Through comparisons, Leylin found that the meditation technique Aaron trained in was quite interesting. It had an ancient aura to it, similar to that of Kemoyin’s Pupil and Sacred Flame. However the requirements were all lower, and it did not have the ability to really increase any ability or affinity towards elements.
After a careful search through Aaron’s memories regarding the
meditation technique, Leylin found out that he was training in the high-grade meditation technique from his mentor’s school of thought, Aegalus. It was the simplified form of the Core’s Flame technique.

This simplified version was a lot more effective in raising spiritual force as compared to the willpower runic meditation techniques that acolytes in the south coast used. After reaching a bottleneck in spiritual force, there was a certain probability of passing through the limits to become an official Magus by using items to assist this process. This probability was a lot higher than those who used Grine Water.

In addition, as he trained in the simplified version of a high-grade meditation technique, there would be no problems if he were to obtain a genuine copy of the technique and train in it. Hence, these simplified high-grade meditation techniques were given out to screen acolytes who were suitable for training in it.

“A treasure trove! The Twilight Zone is a large treasure trove of high-grade meditation techniques!”

Leylin’s eyes were suddenly so bright that it was frightening.
The high-grade meditation technique Leylin trained in was what he had inherited from the Great Magus Serholm: Kemoyin’s Pupil. This high-grade meditation technique had very stringent requirements, as only warlocks with the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent could train in it. In addition, there were only three levels for now. Though the Great Magus Serholm had hinted that there was another part of the central continent, Leylin didn’t even know where this central continent was. He wasn’t going to have any high expectations.

To give himself a way out, Leylin set up a mission for the A.I. Chip a long time ago to simulate the second half of Kemoyin’s Pupil. It was a pity that he lacked a database of information regarding high-grade meditation techniques that he could refer to. The A.I. Chip’s research was going very slowly, almost akin to running on the spot.

Though Leylin had found the high-grade meditation technique Sacred Flame, which he was quite interested in, it was even more incomplete than the others he had. There was even a whole bunch of residual effects from practicing that technique that caused Leylin to shrink back.

Now, there seemed to be a possibility for him to completely restore these two meditation techniques.
“Based on Aaron’s memories, he knows about at least a dozen schools of thought. Even if the high-grade meditation techniques they have aren’t complete, based on my abilities, I will still be possible to plunder a few…” Leylin’s eyes shone.

The high-grade meditation techniques here were strictly restricted, so he most probably had to sign some contract in order to enter the school and become a core member in order to receive them. There might even be more strict requirements. However, Leylin was not planning on somehow sneaking in and secretly learning them. He was now a rank 2 warlock, and with the added bonus from his bloodline, his battle power far exceeded that of a regular rank 2 Magus, which was already rarely seen in Twilight Zone. If he used his brains and some methods, ordinary schools would be unable to obstruct him.

In addition, he was quite interested in some special information available here in the subterranean world.

Though the south coast, as well as the subterranean world, did research on the knowledge passed down through the inheritances of ancient Magi, the subterranean world had preserved more of the styles and academic knowledge from the ancient era. This was extremely tempting to Leylin.

He naturally did not think that anything from past times would be better than what was in the present. After all, after developing for so many years, the academic knowledge and foundations were more suitable for the current Magi’s progress and learning. However, this did not mean that knowledge from the ancient era was useless.

The might of the ancient Magi was deeply embedded in Leylin’s mind. He was desperate to find out the secret behind the ancient Magi’s power.

Based on Leylin’s speed, he naturally did not need to spend a day
and a half to get to Potter Town, as Aaron had said. With the use of a few spells that increased his speed, the town appeared in front of him after about half an hour.

Potter Town’s architecture was very different from what Leylin had seen on the south coast. It had an elegant yet formal style. Most of the buildings were rather tall, perhaps to properly utilise every single bit of land available.

At the heart of the little town was a tall minaret, which practically pierced into the skies. A bright little ball of light was at the peak, emitting light and warmth.

“So this is the most basic material that the people of the subterranean world rely on, sun stones! It really is similar to the sun!”

At this sight, Leylin suddenly felt a little moved. Though he specialised in dark elemental particles, he had been underground for such a long period, and suddenly seeing the bright sunlight got him quite excited.

Based on the memories he had gotten from Aaron, this light did not come from the shine of a real sun. It came from a high-energy mineral, the sun stone!

This mineral from the subterranean world was able to emit ultraviolet rays and warmth similar to that produced by the sun for a long period of time.

Every town here in the subterranean world had this type of lighthouse, which stored Sun Stones of different sizes. Every day, the people would depend on this method to have sunlight and provide energy to crops.

At the beginning, Leylin had already noticed that there were very little green plants growing here. This was because there was no sunlight, which meant that no photosynthesis could take place. Carbon dioxide and the like were absorbed by a grey moss, which could perform the conversion to oxygen.
Here, however, he finally saw a bit of green. At the side of Potter Town, there was a large area of densely packed farmland. As the range of the light produced by the minaret was limited, every bit of space was important. At the place closest to the town, a type of oat similar to that which grew on the south coast was grown here, though it did not seem to be growing that well. At the area where the sunlight was directly shining, a type of large mushroom was being cultivated. This mushroom was very large, even reaching Leylin’s calf. It was grey on the outside and looked extremely juicy. This mushroom made up around 80% of the crops being cultivated in the outer regions of the town. This was a terrifying ratio and meant that this mushroom was probably the staple food of the residents here. This was the truth. This type of mushroom was called the Grey Spotted Fungus, and it was a high yield fungus that did not require much sunlight. In Aaron’s memories, it had always been the staple food for people of the Twilight Zone. In the Twilight Zone, nobility and Magi enjoyed oats, meat, and other precious ingredients, while peasants could only live off of the Grey Spotted Fungus. Wherever there were people, there would be a certain hierarchy. In a Magus world where some people possessed extraordinary might, this was especially so, and Leylin had no desire to change anything. Walking along the road, Leylin saw a wooden fence that was like an enclosure. There were also two guards in tattered clothes, holding lances that were rusted all over. “Halt! What are you doing?” Upon noticing Leylin, the guards immediately gripped their lances, evidently on guard. Leylin’s leather armour made them feel a little wary. The guard who had spoken was speaking in the Twilight Language.
This language had already been sent to his memories by the A.I. Chip while he was on the way here, and after practising for one or two days, normal conversation was a simple task.

“I am a tired wanderer hoping to enter the town to get some rest and supplies! Don’t worry, I will abide by the rules of the town.” Leylin gave a slight smile, answering fluently in the Twilight Language.

Hearing Leylin’s words, the two guards dropped their wariness. This also had to do with Leylin’s harmless smile and handsome face, which easily gained him a favourable impression.

“Of course! If you show your identification documents to prove you aren’t any of the fugitives, it’s fine!”

The slightly shorter guard curled his lips.

“Of course, I know the procedure!” Leylin grinned, producing a piece of parchment and dangling it in front of the two guards. “Is this it?”

His voice immediately became faintly discernable, and it seemed as if some red rays flashed from his eyes.

“Of course! No problem!” The two guards momentarily felt a little dizzy but quickly regained their senses. “Welcome to Potter Town! The person in charge here is Baron Joseph. His emblem is a longsword and a giant eagle. I wish you a pleasant…”

“Good! One more question…”

Leylin obtained more information he wanted from the guards and bade them farewell with a gentle smile. He then entered the town.

Based on the directions from the guards, Leylin came to a small inn. After paying a few gold pieces, the lady boss, who was pleasantly surprised, led him to the best room of the inn.

The dinner was simple, with oats and salted meat, but this was enough to gather the attention of the children, who stood in a circle and watched him.

Oats that emitted the aroma of fresh milk, as well as meat, were a
luxury that only the upper class of the Twilight Zone could have. If there were fruits or vegetables, they were also something that was reserved for nobility and Magi. Though this inn had already brought out the best it had for Leylin, he still found it a little hard to stomach. After the meal, he gave the boss lady a bit of silver as a tip. He then instructed her not to let anyone disrupt him, and closed the door to his room. Though only a coarse sackcloth was spread on the bed, it was still much better than the hard rocks outside. Leylin half-lay on the soft bed hands behind his head and went into a daze. Next, he retrieved a green wooden goblet from his leather pouch. “The extract of the Wisdom Tree! It’s rumoured to provide enlightenment to Magi and increase spiritual force, as well as aiding in breaking through bottlenecks, which is something that goes against the heavens.” Rays of gentle, green light shone on Leylin, illuminating his bewitched expression. “A.I. Chip! How’s the analysis on this thing?” Leylin contemplated in his mind. [Pure extract from the Wisdom Tree, possessing a powerful life force. Can increase vitality, and help a rank 2 Magus break through to a certain extent. Nature: Unknown!]
The A.I. Chip sent out some information. “The essence from the Wisdom Tree, coupled with the goblet made from the body of the Wisdom Tree, definitely would not only have one effect when they’re combined together…” Leylin focused on the green wooden cup, eyes exhibiting regret. “It’s a pity that this sort of thing will be wasted if I use it now. It can only increase my spiritual force by a bit. At most, it can only let me reach the level of a peak rank 2 Magus. As for advancing through the bottleneck to rank 3…”
Leylin had only recently advanced to be a rank 2 Warlock. He was still a long distance from the peak. Hence, he gave a long sigh and kept these two items in his spatial leather pouch. *Dang dang!* A melodious chime resounded from the top of the minaret at the heart of the town. As if switching off a light, the sun stone stopped emitting light and the entire town sunk into a darkness like the external world. “It must be the night. The sun stone is now being changed to be maintained and protected!” Leylin was naturally aware of this.
The subterranean world was shrouded in darkness. The towns and cities here where there were sun stones were the areas in which human traffic was high. In the human cities of the Twilight Zone, the sun stone would be changed every 12 hours to be maintained, and kept the same light conditions as the surface of the earth. However, a small area like Potter Town wouldn’t have a high-grade sun stone. At most, it would be the size of an egg. Based on rumours, the larger a sun stone was, the higher its value and better its function was; it was said that at the capital of the five regions, there was a sun stone the size of a small mountain! The moment a sun stone was lost, the entire area would be engulfed in darkness and surrounded by countless dangers. Hence, at every area populated by humans, the sun stone was always placed in an area with the highest level of security. Seeing the darkness outside the window, Leylin heaved a gentle sigh and pulled the curtains shut. After setting up a defensive spell formation, Leylin sat up on the bed and began to meditate. Dark red specks of light were pulled out of the air one after another, and gathered at Leylin’s body. In his sea of consciousness, the silver-white crystals became even more solid, and the slight cracks at the sides seemed to be repairing themselves.
As for the mark, with the seal from Leylin’s solidified spiritual force, that milky-white light had become dimmer. He could tell that in the near future, the mark would be completely destroyed.

“It’s going well!” After seeing this, Leylin, who had been on edge this entire time, could finally relax.

Afterwards, he collapsed onto the bed and went into a deep sleep.

Morning! With the regular pattern from the alarm clock, a ray of light passed through the curtain and entered Leylin’s room.

“I finally got some rest!”

Leylin opened his eyes, feeling extremely comfortable. The tiredness accumulated from camping outside for a month dissipated with just a single day of rest.

This had to do with his frightening vitality. Even in his heavily injured state, all of his fatigue could be restored with a night’s rest.

“Good morning, Sir!”

In the dining area within the inn, the slightly plump boss lady brought oatmeal bread and milk for breakfast, a smile on her face.

A few children with sullen, yellow skin and some dust on their face were all gathered at a corner, staring hard at Leylin’s breakfast with desire apparent in their eyes.

However, they only dared look from afar, gulping down some saliva but not approaching him to beg for some food.

Whether it was Leylin’s elegance or his armour, all of it was something that regular people did not possess.

These people usually held a lot of power and a high position. They had once seen someone with a huge hammer use his black hand to crush a child’s head because he was annoyed by him!

After that incident, that murderer was merely imprisoned by the enforcement team for a few days and subsequently released after paying a fine.

Hence, these children had a clear understanding of the situation: never provoke anyone with weapons!
“Go away! Don’t bother this lord who wants to enjoy his meal!” Seeing these children harassing her important guest, this lady boss shouted. 

“It’s alright!” Leylin picked up a slice of oatmeal bread, “Let them have it!”

“Yes, of course! My lord has such a kind heart!” The plump boss lady’s expression revealed her thought that this was a waste. However, she still tore the bread into several pieces and gave them to the children, “You’re so lucky to have met such a kind-hearted lord! Eat and leave!”

The children quickly stuffed the oatmeal bread into their mouths, the aroma of food spreading inside their mouths. They cupped their hands over their mouths, on the verge of tears. The children had argued and even almost fought amongst themselves for just a bit of bread.

There was a boy who was a little older than the rest of the group who had kept the oatmeal bread he had received in his clothes, probably to bring it back for someone to eat.

Though Grey Spotted Mushrooms could fill one’s stomach, they tasted horrendous.

In addition, not everyone was able to even eat Grey Spotted Mushrooms. From the state of the children’s clothes, they must have come from poor families, and might not have even had decent meals.

Leylin merely glanced at them for a moment, and then shifted his focus away. He tossed out a piece of gold, which flew through the air and fell into the palm of the lady boss’ hand.

“I really like Potter Town and wish to settle down here. I also want to open a shop here. Do you know what procedures I have to go through?”

Until his injuries completely healed and he regained his strength as a
rank 2 Magus, Leylin decided to temporarily live in seclusion. He had a long life anyway and could afford to waste this bit of time. “You want to open a shop here?” The lady boss was shocked, “What kind of shop do you want to open?” “What do you think of a weapons shop?” Leylin spoke nonchalantly. The purpose of this was to have a cover while he analysed the long sword of the Rays of Dawn. Hence, he had chosen a weapons shop. He could clearly see that the Woody Wastelands was near Potter Town, and was an area where adventurers would go to. It wasn’t a bad idea to make and sell some weapons here, and it would definitely be profitable. “A weapons shop…” The boss lady hesitated, “My lord, you’ll need to go through the department of internal affairs and the guards. Also, weapons are restricted items, so you’ll need to get approval from the capital and Joseph…” “I see.” Leylin stroked his chin, and asked where the department of internal affairs, guard post and the baron’s residence were before leaving the inn. In just a few days, a weapons shop called “Blazing Hammers” covertly opened on the commerce street in Potter Town. For others, it might be a little troublesome to go through so many procedures, but Leylin was a Magus. With just some spells to confuse the target or alter memories, a lot of issues could be solved. Besides, he could afford to spend a lot of money, so the opening of the shop was obviously a smooth sailing process. The shop took up a large amount of space. At the front was the counter and shop, and behind was the storeroom and smelting room, as well as the rooms of Leylin and a few workers. The moment one entered, they would see sharp weapons displayed
on the wooden shelves lining two walls, glinting in the light. An icy feeling spread in the room.
“This is a first-rate steel weapon!”
A huge man who dressed like a mercenary entered immediately attracted to a large steel sword.
“This tempering technique is usually only found in a few large weapon shops!” The huge man caressed the sword, the silvery blue luster at the edges causing his eyes to be fixated on it.
The price marked on the shelf almost had him biting his tongue, “Fifty gold! This really is the price that would be found in the capital! But this is just a small town…”
The people in the Twilight Zone naturally had their own currency. The gold and silver used here were even more valuable than that of the south coast, and the currency was completely different.
In order to help mask his identity, the gold and silver pieces that Leylin used were actually the money he had gained from the south coast, the shapes of which he had forcefully changed to match the currency used here.
“What would you like?”
An intelligent-looking young man wearing the uniform of an attendant, who Leylin had hired, quickly asked with a smile.
“That sword is too expensive!”
The large man waved the sword around for a while, reluctant to part with it. “Can it be cheaper?”
“My apologies!” He had an apologetic smile on his face. “Our shop does not allow bargaining. This is a rule set by our boss!”
The large man’s face turned red, and he almost had the urge to cause a ruckus. However, he suppressed it.
Those who could make a living off of selling weapons usually had very powerful backgrounds; he wasn’t planning on dying just for this.
In addition, the shop owner wasn’t any regular person either. It was
said that he was an adventurer of noble blood who had retired. Not only had he taken care of the department of internal affairs and the guards with an insane speed, even the baron had treated him as an important guest.

What was even more shocking was that the shop owner had a terrifying might that far exceeded that of the average adventurer. This man had personally witnessed the young, black-haired shop owner take care of a few thugs, who wanted to extort protection fees, in a few seconds. They had subsequently been taken away by the guards, who had been informed and had arrived very quickly. It was said that their fate was to become a labourer until their deaths!

These methods had intimidated a lot of people; after caressing the sword for a long time, as if it were his wife, the large man eventually reluctantly left. Before leaving, he even had the young man reserve the sword, saying that he would return once he had enough money.

That night, after the last customer had left, the young man closed up and went to the room at the back.

*Knock knock!*

“Boss, can I come in?” The young man tried to make his voice sound calm.

Every time he saw his boss, he felt like he would suffocate. The imposing aura from his new boss was too intense; the young man swore that he had once seen a real count, but even he had lacked the elegance and dignified aura this man exuded.

“Perhaps my boss really is the successor of a very ancient noble family, and is merely experiencing the life here!” The young man thought in his heart, before thinking it funny. He was imagining the wildest of fantasies.

“Is it Baelin? Come in!” A very youthful voice sounded.

Baelin composed himself, opened the door and entered.
In the room, a handsome man in a loose robe was lying on a soft chair, occasionally drinking a beverage with peppermint mixed into it. He even had a huge black book in his hands. He was literate and had books! This was the biggest sign of nobility in the Twilight Zone!
Baelin! Is anything the matter?”
Leylin gazed at the servant the baron had introduced to him and smiled.
“No, I’d just like to report the situation in the shop to you!” Baelin tried his best to be less nervous.
“Though there are a lot of people who show interest in our shop, boss, your prices… they’re a little too high, so it’s not good for business. I even think our shop will make a loss this month…”
“Is that so! I understand. You can go back now!”
Leylin waved his hands, looking as if he hadn’t been paying attention.
“Alright, you’re the boss! You call the shots!” Upon seeing this, Baelin could confirm that this Lord Leylin was probably a successor from an ancient noble family who was out here to experience life. If not, he definitely wouldn’t be taking things so lightly.
After Baelin left, Leylin started reading the book in his hands again. On the yellowed parchment paper, red runes constantly moved like flames.
“To make a weapon from the Rays of Dawn is extremely difficult!” Leylin sighed.
The reason why he had opened this shop was to have his own smelting area while he recuperated. He could do some experimentation here.
As for those blades outside? They were only the products made on the side during experimentation.
Two years passed in a blur.
The residents of Potter Town were already used to this Master Leylin, the boss of the weapons shop.
Leylin rarely went outside, and barely took care of his weapons shop. Everything was left to Baelin, and he only would occasionally come over to supervise.
As he masked his identity well, nobody found out he was a Magus. At the most, they thought he was a young master from a noble family that was a wastrel.
In time, the words “Blazing Hammers” at the top of the shop were beginning to become mottled and show signs of decay.
The shop still had that lifeless aura to it. Though the weapons were known to be of superior quality, the prices were so expensive that people could only shrink back.
Leylin had no plans on relying on this shop to earn money. If the prices were too low, not only would business pick up, the other shops in the same industry would become jealous. Though he wasn’t afraid, Leylin didn’t want to stir up trouble over these small matters.
“Brother Baelin! I’m here again!”
Along with the voice, a boy with brown hair walked in through the entrance to the shop. He wore a linen short-sleeved shirt with some patches on it, and his eyes shone with intelligence.
“So it’s Longbottom!” Baelin had no choice but to greet him.
“Hehe, Brother Baelin, let me help you!” Longbottom snatched the cleaning rag from Baelin’s hands and began to wipe at the wooden shelves and cabinets.
His movements were practiced, and he was very familiar with the places that were often overlooked. Evidently, this was not the first time he was doing this.
After wiping the shelves and cabinets until they were sparkling clean, Longbottom expectantly looked at Baelin, waiting to be rewarded.
“Ugh, not again. Not again!” Baelin held his head, helpless.
“I told you! You’re only allowed to use it for five minutes, and you can’t tell anyone about this! You especially can’t let the boss find out!”
If not for this little kid’s beautiful sister, Baelin wouldn’t bother with him.
“I know, I know!”
Longbottom quickly nodded his head like a chick pecking at rice, and came before a shelf and took out a silver cross blade.
This cross blade was quite short, which was very fitting for Longbottom’s stature. It was about two fingers wide, and the hilt was made from pure silver. There was even a red diamond embedded within, making it seem very luxurious!
Evidently, with Longbottom’s financial background, he would definitely not be able to buy it no matter how much he saved up.
Longbottom held the cross blade carefully in his hands as if he were clasping some precious treasure.
“Hah!”
Longbottom slashed forward while holding the blade with both hands, making a crooked attack.
“Sigh… Little Longbottom, I’m not trying to be mean, but you’ll never be able to become a knight by learning with those normal soldiers!”
Baelin couldn’t help but shake his head. Potter Town was but a small one, and only the guards of the baron were knights. The rest were all made up of peasants, so what power could they have? This Longbottom had wanted to become a knight from a very young age! For this reason, he would secretly watch the soldiers’ training.
After discovering this place, he would come over to help free of charge, with the price of having Baelin lend him something in the shop for him to play with for a while. Out of everything in the shop, Longbottom’s favourite weapon was this cross blade.

“Brother Baelin, then who should I learn from?” Longbottom held the blade, his expression desolate, “I’m only the son of a regular hunter, and we can’t pay the expensive fees to go through training…”

Longbottom had someone in mind. Ever since he had found out that the boss of the shop, Master Leylin, was a powerful knight, he was even more diligent in coming over. He might even become like the main characters in stories about knights, having a great talent in this area and ending up with Leylin taking a fancy to him!

“Sigh…” Looking at this, Baelin could only sigh. In Twilight Zone, it was extremely difficult for a regular person to become outstanding.

“Little Longbottom, I think you should give up on this impossible dream, and come over here to learn how to read from me every day!”

Baelin proposed seriously, “Though I don’t know that many letters, it’s enough for you to be able to read the accounts. When the time comes, you’ll be able to find some kind of bookkeeping job.”

“Thank you, Brother Baelin!” Longbottom was extremely touched. Even if he wanted to study from someone, he would need to pay an exorbitant fee, yet Baelin was actually willing to teach him for free. This was something that he was very grateful for.

“It’s nothing, it’s nothing!” Baelin turned red, “It’s for my own sake too. If boss were to see this, I might not even be able to keep my job…”

“See what…”
Leylin’s voice sounded, and Baelin was stunned. Baelin stiffly turned back to the sight of Leylin, who had just entered.

“Bo- Boss! Why are you here now?” The smile on Baelin’s face was extremely stiff, and he was even stuttering while speaking. He had let others play with the products in the shop, and that was already a huge offense. Leylin could fire him just like this! However, the pay here was so high to the point that Baelin was not willing to give up this job!

Baelin inwardly grumbled. Leylin had always been reclusive, and often stayed in his room or the smelting room, not making himself known for days on end. How could he be so timely today and meet with this sight?”

*Thud!*

Longbottom’s hands trembled, and the cross blade fell, producing a low thud as it hit the floor.

“Mas-Master Leylin!” Longbottom called out while stuttering. For regular people like him, Leylin, the boss of a weapons shop, was an incredible person. Longbottom now felt like a thief who had been caught on the spot, and even his calves began to tremble.

“Oh?” Leylin shot a glance at the blade, and smiled at Baelin, “It looks like you’ve been having a lot of fun while I wasn’t around!”

“Boss! No, my lord! Please forgive me!” Baelin was so scared that he quickly knelt, while Longbottom’s body was already limp and he was unable to speak.

“I’ll settle this matter with you later!” Leylin glared at Baelin and spoke to Longbottom. “Kid, you have been touching the things in my shop as you pleased without gaining permission. How are you going to make it up to me?”

“My, my lord…” Longbottom’s teeth chattered and his voice sounded like he was crying. There were only regular people in his
family, and they were perhaps even of a lower status to others. What could he give to make it up to Leylin?

“Alright! From today onwards, you are to report here and do some odd jobs here for two hours every day as compensation!

Having teased him enough, Leylin touched his chin and made his decision.

Longbottom was stunned. What terrified him the most was that Leylin might have wanted him to pay money, and then get the guards to throw him in jail. Odd jobs? What kind of punishment was that?

“What are you in a daze like that for? Quick, thank my lord!” Baelin quickly reacted and pressed Longbottom’s head down.

“Thank you so much, my lord! Thank you so much!” Longbottom only now reacted, gratitude apparent on his face.

To have a good reason to touch the weapons in the shop was basically a dream for him. He was even able to make a connection to Leylin, a legendary, powerful Knight. It was something he never imagined would happen!

“Alright! Come and work here starting tomorrow afternoon!” Leylin nodded, turned, and went to the back of the shop.

Actually, Leylin had long since noticed Baelin and Longbottom’s actions, but he couldn’t be bothered with them. However, a few of his experiments were going quite well, and he was in a good mood.

After he entered his room, Leylin thought, “A.I. Chip! How’s the progress of the weapon blueprint simulation?”

[Beep! Weapon blueprint simulation: 100%. Completed setup of blueprint and runes!]

The A.I. Chip quickly intoned, and then sent an image of a weapon before Leylin’s eyes.

This was a black cross blade that looked to be very ordinary. It could be said to be ordinary to the extreme, but the cross section was filled with lines to loop energy, as well as runes.
[Design of exclusive weapon is complete, named “Meteor”] the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded.
In these two years, Leylin had finally completely analysed the middle-grade magical artifact that was the weapon for the Branded Swordsman, the Rays of Dawn. He had combined all his knowledge on smelting and spell formations, in order to create his own exclusive weapon!
Warlock class-specific weapon: Meteor Sword! Length: 1.67m. Width: 0.03m. Carved within are the following: High-grade energy converging runes, fire elemental brand runes, dark elemental amplification runes... Estimated grade of product: High-grade magic artifact!

The long sword the A.I. Chip projected in front of Leylin constantly rotated, and listed large quantities of data around it.

“The design is completed. All that’s left is to find the materials and actually make it.” Leylin was excited.

However, when he entered his sea of consciousness, this joy quickly dissipated.

After two years, the silver-white crystal in his sea of consciousness was still as resilient as ever, and had only shrunk a little in size. The spiritual force it produced allowed Leylin to increase his might from that of a regular rank 1 Magus, to the strength of a peak rank 1 Magus.

As for the cracks at the edges of his sea of consciousness, they had yet to be completely restored.

The mark left behind by the rank 3 Magus, Alric, on the other hand, had been completely expelled by Leylin.

However, the stubbornness of the mark of spiritual force left behind by the rank 3 Magus had exceeded Leylin’s expectations. He had estimated that it would take around two months to dispel, but in reality, it had taken an entire year before he was able to
completely remove the mark from his sea of consciousness.
“Perhaps I should find an opportunity to make contact with the
Magi of the subterranean world!”
Due to his serious injuries, Leylin could only display the strength of
a regular rank 1 Magus. Hence, he had chosen to lie low. However,
now that he had regained enough of his strength to reach the peak
of rank 1, he could be considered the best in the Twilight Zone, and
it was natural that he would want to explore.
In addition, the progress of the reparation of his sea of
consciousness was going very slowly, which made Leylin furrow
his brows.
He was prepared to find some methods out there to hasten this
process. If not, and he were to rely on just time, he had no idea
how long this would take.
At this thought, Leylin began to feel jittery.
His expression twitched, and he untied a black water flask and took
a drink. Leylin’s facial muscles then relaxed, and he forced a smile,
“Also, I have to find a way to control the overly emotional side
effects of being a Warlock!”
For Warlocks, the ancient bloodlines did give them formidable
power, but they also negatively impacted their emotions.
These emotions would lie dormant deep in one’s blood or even
one’s spirit, occasionally causing trouble and causing the Warlock
to sink into a state of extreme emotion.
For the Magus who sought truth and control, this was not tolerable.
Hence, Leylin had been searching for a method to solve this
problem.
“The inheritances found in the south coast are only useful up to a
certain point, and the items left behind from the ancient era are
very few. There is very little information regarding Warlocks, and
there doesn’t seem to be any sorts of methods there. But this place
is different!”
Leylin’s eyes shone with hope. “This is the Twilight Zone, a part of the subterranean world! Due to the lack of connection with the outside world, it has very little external influences, and preserves the inheritances from ancient times in their entirety. In other words, aside from the central continent, there are still places that might have research material regarding warlocks; this must be one of those areas!”

At this thought, Leylin touched his chin.
“Potter Town is in a very remote area, and the resources at the Woody Wastelands can, at most, attract only a few acolytes. I haven’t seen any Magi here. It looks like I have to go deeper into the Twilight Zone…”

Potter Town was only a small town in the vastness of the Twilight Zone, and while he had stayed here for over two years, Leylin had seen very few Magi.

Apart from this town, there was an even bigger city. If he advanced layer by layer, he would find the eastern capital!

Leylin was sure that there were many Magi in the city!

The rules in the subterranean world were different from the south coast. The existence of Magi were made public; they would not hide in some unknown location and isolate themselves from the world.

The Magi who wielded power were naturally of a high status. Even the nobility had to bow to them.

“Though the population of Twilight Zone is only half of the south coast, with the extensive spread of high-grade meditation techniques and their simplified versions, there are still many instances of Magi appearing. The hierarchy of Magi is similar to that on the south coast, though I don’t know how many rank 3 Magi there are, or if there are any Morning Star Magi here…”

Leylin propped up his chin using his hand, sinking into deep thought.
The candle on the table burned with dull yellow flames, reflecting Leylin’s long, flickering shadow onto the wall…

During the afternoon of the next day, little Longbottom punctually came to the shop.

“You are very punctual! I like kids who obey rules!” Leylin was bored to death, so he took over what had been Baelin’s position, and was yawning at the counter. He pointed towards the storeroom at the side. “Your task is to move those metals over there to the backyard!”

“Boss! Is this…” Baelin endured for a while, but could not take it any longer, and pointed to the storeroom as he spoke to Leylin.

“Every single one of those metals is even heavier than Longbottom’s own bodyweight…?”

Following his finger, one could see, through the half-open door to the storeroom, chunks of metal that were the size of a human head. This were the raw materials that Leylin used while smelting. They were very dense, and their weights were terrifying. When they had been transported here, Leylin had called for three strong men, and it had taken an entire afternoon for them to transport them. In Baelin’s eyes, Leylin was obviously making things difficult for the little kid by assigning him to such work.

“It’s his choice whether he wants to do it or not!” Leylin shrugged his shoulders, found a chair, and began to doze contentedly.

“Brother Baelin, I want to give it a try!” Seeing the mountain of metals, he gulped, but at the sight of Leylin beginning to nod off, he made his mind and began to work.

The metals were very heavy, and just lifting it a centimeter off the ground caused Longbottom’s arms to tremble.
*Thud!* Longbottom curved his back and slowly moved to the open space at the back, the metal sounding a low thud as it fell. “Hah…” Just moving one piece of metal was enough to cause Longbottom to pant, large drops of perspiration dripping from his face.

“Longbottom, you can’t continue, or else you’ll sustain long-term injuries…” Baelin naturally knew that the terrifying amount of work he had to do would permanently harm, or even disable, a growing child’s body!

Even if he wasn’t doing this for Longbottom’s pretty sister, Baelin felt that he could not let this youngster he got along with to continue like this.

“No!” Longbottom looked in the direction of Leylin, who had stalked off, with a resolute expression on his face.

In that whole afternoon, the residents of Potter Town could see a strange sight at Leylin’s weapon shop. A petite young boy was slowly working, moving pieces of black metal that were half his size.

That day, after completing two hours of work, Longbottom’s arms and legs constantly trembled, and he had no more strength to fiddle with any blades, dragging his fatigued body back home. This went on for ten days, and only then did Longbottom finish moving all the metals to the open space at the backyard.

“You really work very slowly!” Leylin judged, dissatisfied. “Next, I want you to move them back to the storeroom. Is that understood?”

“But Master Leylin…” Upon hearing this task, Longbottom’s body trembled. This physical labour had caused him a sore back, and it was so painful that he could not sleep at night. And now, he had to move them back? Longbottom felt like he would die from the fatigue!
He wasn’t just having fun here. He still needed to help his parents with work!
“Boss, you’re just toying with him!”
Baelin could not take this any longer, and jumped out while roaring at Leylin.
“Shut up.” Leylin spoke indifferently, but his glare caused Baelin to retreat while holding onto his chest and being unable to say a word.
“I’m the boss here, and what I say goes!” A teasing smirk was still about Leylin’s lips. “Youngster, you can leave right now, but if you do, you are to never return to my shop again!”
Longbottom was quiet, and then went to the metals without a word, and began to work.
“What an interesting fellow!”
Leylin poured himself a cup of peppermint beverage, leisurely watching Longbottom moving back and forth.
Leylin still needed to prepare for a period, and was quite rather bored. He only needed to pay brief attention to the calculations of the A.I. Chip, and could find time to toy with this youngster.
This labour was not something a child would be able to handle. In addition, it was easy to sustain injuries while working. Leylin had already discovered some bruises on Longbottom’s calves and arms.
“How long can he sustain this for? I look forward to it.”
Leylin touched his chin, a profound smile on his face.
For the next few days, Longbottom’s eyes were lifeless and he wobbled as he walked, causing people to be worried that this kid might just collapse and die.
An unexpected person also visited Leylin’s shop.
“Esteemed Master Leylin!” A beautiful young girl wearing a coarse sackcloth as a skirt curtsied towards Leylin.
“Could you please forgive my brother? Longbottom has been doing physical labour here for about fifteen days, and I’m afraid that he might not be able to hold on…”
This young maiden sobbed while she produced a white handkerchief. After opening it, Leylin found that there were some silver coins and copper, as well as a small broken piece of gold coin that was about a quarter of the original size.
“If it’s for what he has done wrong, I’m willing to compensate you here…”
Leylin glanced at this young maiden and shook his head.
I’ve mentioned it before. This is a mutual agreement. If your brother doesn’t want to do this, he’s free to leave at any time!”

Leylin spoke slowly.
“If you don’t believe me, you can ask him!” Leylin pointed at Longbottom, who was standing towards the side.
“Sister!” Longbottom ducked his head, a little afraid, but he sounded resolute, “It’s my own choice to work here at Master Leylin’s. It has nothing to do with him. Please don’t stop me.”
“You…” This young maiden was exasperated and pulled at Longbottom’s arm, revealing a large bruise, “Look at this. How are you still engrossed in these Knight fiction novels…”
“Cough cough!” Leylin suddenly coughed, interrupting her.
“This is my shop. If you wish to discipline your brother, please do it elsewhere and do not disrupt my business…”
Leylin said this boldly, though there were no customers in his shop right now.
“My- My apologies, my lord!” The young maiden covered her mouth, realising that her words just now were offensive to Leylin. She bowed, revealing her fair breasts and quickly left with Longbottom in tow. The sounds of them arguing could still be heard.
Baelin watched her back, looking enchanted.
“What a pure, kind-hearted lady! Don’t you agree?” Leylin looked
at Baelin, revealing a smile full of bad intentions.

“Of course! Miss Venus is a very diligent young lady, and works at three jobs outside in order to help with her family’s finances.”

Baelin subconsciously answered.

“Hm, I have no right to say anything about her kindness, but regarding her purity?” Leylin’s grin widened.

“Boss! You can scold me, but you can’t tarnish her reputation!”

Baelin clenched his fist, and even his face turned red.

“Oh, love. Love! How beautiful it is! How vibrant, for it to even attract a moth into the flames! To make cowardly little lambs turn into savage, mighty beings!”

Leylin chanted some proverbs, and without waiting for Baelin to ask, he continued, “While Miss Venus was wearing coarse clothing, although she had tried her best to hide it, there was still the smell of cheaply-priced perfume. It’s not from today, and there’s still some eyeshadow on her face. Her handkerchief is a good quality product from Old Walker’s shop; she seems to have too much money… In just that short contact with her, she seemed to have tried to entice me at least three times! This must be some occupational habit…”

With every sentence that came out from Leylin’s mouth, Baelin felt like a sledgehammer had struck his chest, and he fell back.

However, Leylin continued on with a fatal blow, “If I’m not wrong, you might find Miss Venus at midnight at the well-known Night Warbler alley…”

“No! What you said can’t be true!”

Baelin’s face distorted, but his pale expression evidently meant that he believed Leylin’s words. He was stunned and suddenly roared, dashing out of the door.

“Hehe… The senseless dreams of youths!” Leylin laughed, having a great time.

“It’s really quite fun to destroy fantasies and let youths find out about the cruelty of life as soon as possible!”
Longbottom quickly returned with two very red handprints on his face. He didn’t say anything to Leylin and began his daily work. As for Baelin, that poor fellow was said to have drank at a bar for an entire night. He only came to the shop the next day but was chased out by Leylin, who looked at him in disdain, wanting him to take care of the lingering smell of alcohol, lest he wouldn’t need to return.

*Boom!*

Seeing the last piece of metal moved to the storeroom, Longbottom, who was riddled with scars finally sighed with relief, glancing at Leylin with expectant eyes.

“Youngster, you’re smart and can persevere! From hereon, I declare that you are able to come to my shop for five minutes every day when nobody is around, and browse my products.”

Leylin tried his best to resist his laughter while announcing.

“Huh?” Longbottom raised his head, stunned.

“What’s wrong? Did you think I would take you in as my disciple and help you become a knight, and then you’d be a head above the rest, marry a princess, and live happily ever after?”

Leylin had on a teasing smile, “Kiddo, you’re still too immature.” Longbottom turned pale in embarrassment now that his plan had been seen through.

“You liar! You’re a liar!” He yelled, and quickly ran out.

*Pak!* As he had run too quickly, he had tripped by the road and fallen onto the ground, getting soil all over him.

“Haha!” “Haha…” “Come look! Isn’t that the fool from Blazing Hammers?”

The pitiful sight of Longbottom attracted the unfeeling attention of the passersby.

Under their ridicule, Longbottom yelled and frantically left as soon as he could.

Leylin supported his weight by the door, beaming as he watched.
“Boss, you’re so mean! No, you’re terrible!” Baelin stood behind Leylin with dark circles under his eyes. His face had become gaunt as he muttered at Leylin.

“Hehe… It’s not like this is the first day since you became acquainted with me!” Leylin shrugged and came to the backyard. He produced a black cross blade, the design of which was extremely similar to the Meteor long sword designed by the A.I. Chip. However, there were no energy waves emanating from this sword at all.

This was the imitation that Leylin had made using the design for the Meteor” sword. Only the outer appearance and weight were similar, and there were no energy runes or anything of the sort within.

“Hah!” Leylin lifted the blade and thrust forward, doing a move that looked like it came straight out of a textbook!

The sharp blade slashed out and cut the air, producing a piercing, explosive sound.

Though the Meteor long sword had yet to be made, Leylin had begun to make preparations beforehand so that he could get used to the weapon quicker.

Thrust! Slash! Strike!

Leylin suddenly turned into multiple figures on the ground, each of which held poses that were paused in mid-air.

At the end, Leylin leaped, “Cross Slash!”

A huge cross streaked across a huge rock in the area.

*Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!* Under Leylin’s Cross Slash, the rock turned into four large parts.

“This…” Baelin was dazed at Leylin’s terrifying might and gaped like a huge toad.

“I’ve seen the knights from the baron’s residence attack, but their offensive power isn’t to this extent. Could Master Leylin be a legendary Grand Knight?”

Baelin was so stunned that he could not even close his mouth.
“What? Do you want to learn?” Leylin picked up a white towel and wiped his hands. Seeing Baelin in this state, he smiled and asked. “Yes! …No, I… Don’t…” Baelin was confused, and his speech became incoherent. “So? Do you want to, or do you not want to?” Leylin grinned. Baelin only managed to react after a long while, still disbelieving that he would get such an opportunity. He was afraid of being cheated by Leylin. “Boss! Oh, no, master! I mean, I’m already 19 and I’m quite old. I’ve never had any official training and can only recognise a few words. Isn’t it best to start training to become a knight as soon as possible? If you want a disciple, I think Longbottom is even more suitable than I am…” Though he said this, Baelin’s breathing became rough in the face of such a huge temptation. “If you really want a reason, there’s only one.” Leylin spoke slowly, and Baelin’s ears couldn’t help but perk up. “Because I’m happy! Is this reason enough?” Leylin beamed. Warlocks were really quite impulsive beings. In addition, Leylin felt that it wasn’t good to keep suppressing the emotions of a warlock. He needed to find some way to vent, and since he found Baelin pleasing to the eye, he decided to do as he wished. “Alright! In the face of such a mighty reason, Baelin could only laugh helplessly. “If Longbottom found out that this was the reason, he’d definitely cry himself to death!” Baelin thought inwardly. “So? Do you want to learn?” “Of course! I do!” Baelin agreed right away. He would be an idiot if he were to reject at this point! *Pak!* A wooden sword was thrust, striking Baelin’s face. This poor guy collapsed, finding it difficult to climb back up. “Your footwork is too slow. You need to ensure your footsteps and
breath are in sync. Understood?”

Leylin was dressed in black as he stood in front of Baelin, “Get up!”

“Un-understood, my lord!” Baelin sucked in a cold breath and was somewhat able to get up. Leylin had been controlling his strength well; he had used just enough strength to cause Baelin pain, but not inflict internal injuries.

When Leylin had first agreed to train him, Baelin had planned to call Leylin ‘Mentor’, but Leylin naturally did not want a disciple, and had rejected his idea without a second thought.

After an hour of swordplay practice, they came to the breathing method.

“For knights, what they are training is their life energy, which is also known as their life essence!” Leylin instructed with zeal.

“About 5cm below the lower abdomen, in an inverted triangle area. This is where we think we can cultivate the spirit. Training to become a knight happens by manipulating the frequency of breathing, adjusting the secretions within the body, and hence producing more life essence.”

Leylin began to impart his knowledge regarding the cross blade breathing technique, which he had reorganised, to Baelin.

He was now extremely knowledgeable, and the information stored in his mind was plentiful. He also had experience from grooming his Branded Swordsmen. He had simply optimized his Farlier Family’s Cross Blade breathing technique and had upgraded it quite a bit.

Based on Leylin’s estimations, his version of the breathing technique could probably be considered the best, even amongst Grand Knights.
Breathing out! Breathe in! Focus! Pay attention to the frequency!

Baelin had taken off his shirt, revealing some muscle that he had gained after all these days of training. He sat cross-legged, closed his eyes, and inhaled deeply; the muscles on his body shook as he breathed.

“No, your abdominal muscles are moving incorrectly!” With a swing of his arms, a wooden sword mercilessly hacked at Baelin’s lower abdomen.

Baelin’s face twisted, and the muscles there withdrew. *Hah!* Two white streams of air exited from his nostrils.

“Remember it? This is the feeling!” Leylin patted using the wooden sword.

“Hah…” After training a complete round in the breathing method, Baelin expelled a long breath, some black impurities could be found in the white gas that he let out. He opened his eyes.

“Are you a pig? It took you ten days to understand the surface of this simple breathing technique!” Leylin scolded, and Baelin could only rub his head and laugh, continuously apologising.

After so many days of training, he could feel the sturdiness of his body increasing. With the help of the breathing technique, he could begin to feel some warmth flowing in his body.

The intoxicating feeling he gained from achieving power made
Baelin addicted to it. Even if Leylin wanted to kill him now, he wouldn’t leave no matter what.

“Go. A thousand times of the sword swings, and five thousand squats!” Leylin pointed, and Baelin immediately complied. 

“I didn’t think that this random fellow that I decided to teach would actually have some talent!”

The corner of Leylin’s lips curved up into a smile as he watched Baelin perspire in the small field.

Baelin was evidently suited to the path of the knight. If Leylin had not used the A.I. Chip, Baelin might not even be able to scratch the surface of the improved cross blade breathing technique in ten days and grasp life essence. However, he had done it!

“However, I’ve never really had the talent to become a knight. In comparison, this speed would probably mean Baelin is an unprecedented talent! I wonder how his spiritual aptitude is?”

The spiritual aptitude of regular people was not very obvious. Unless he had access to specific spells or supplementary tools, even Leylin could not tell the talent that one had for magic.

“It looks like I have to stay here for a period of time…”

Leylin’s expression darkened. Though he had planned on looking for other Magi, the sudden explosion of his emotions due to his Warlock blood had delayed his schedule.

Leylin could only use a few common methods to slowly let out the emotions in his heart. Also, he could only brew a few potions of a higher grade than the potion of tranquility to suppress his symptoms.

His plans after arriving in the Twilight Zone would be related to the obtaining of high-grade meditation techniques. He would not allow himself to wander around while he was still in this highly emotional state. If he did, there was an 80% chance that things would turn out like when he was robbing the essence of the Wisdom Tree and incited the anger of multiple people, who then
chased after him.
Unwittingly, six months passed.
Without knowing it, since the whole process was so smooth, Baelin activated the life energy in his body and became a real knight.
This miserable fellow saw that he was unable to withstand even one move from Leylin and thought that he was still a regular human. Therefore, he worked hard towards his goal of becoming a knight.
The one effect of his becoming a Knight was being able to withstand one strike from Leylin before collapsing.
As for Longbottom, Leylin did not see him anymore. It was said that that kid, who was unwilling to admit failure, had followed a bunch of traders going to trade at a city, and was hoping to get lucky.
It was a pity that Leylin had seen plenty of youngsters struggling outside with their dreams in mind. Out of a hundred, ninety would die without reason, and the majority of the remainder would become beggars, disabled, thieves, or criminals. Only one percent would be successful.
Leylin had listened to Baelin talk about this for a while and had thrown this matter to the back of his mind.
“Hah!”
Baelin brandished the large steel sword in his hand, the blade glinting with a cold, sharp light, roaring as he charged towards Leylin.
“Kill!” He struck with his large sword, which in its wake brought a fierce gale.
On the other hand, Leylin was holding a wooden sword and shook his head, “Too many excess movements!”
With just a gentle thrust forward, the wooden sword entered the metallic rays of light.
What seemed to be a gentle, slow attack from the wooden sword
pushed Baelin’s steel sword away, and the wooden sword pierced Baelin’s armpit!
“Ugh…” Baelin groaned and collapsed.
“Disappointing! Too disappointing!” Leylin bluntly struck him down.
During his free time after researching, he would tease this guy. It was one of the many pleasures he had in his spare time.
“My lord, can’t you let me win a little?”
Baelin huffed and puffed, complaining as he sat on the ground, “I’m always defeated in one blow! Gosh! I feel like I haven’t been improving at all…”
“Stop with the nonsense! Continue training. To punish you for being unable to withstand one move, you are to do a thousand more push-ups!”
Leylin tried his best not to laugh as he showed a poker face.
In fact, Baelin was improving extremely quickly. He was on the verge of advancing to become a Grand Knight. On one hand, this had to do with the effectiveness of the breathing method Leylin had provided. On the other, Baelin’s talent and diligence could not be disregarded.
Leylin reclined on a deck chair, watching Baelin sweating, but his thoughts were all on the A.I. Chip.
[Beep! Based on the real-time monitoring, host body’s secretion of adrenaline is at a low level, and mental status is becoming stable. Estimated to reach normal level in 341 hours!]
Through the diagrams and curve that the A.I. Chip analysed, Leylin was overjoyed to find that after all his efforts, his emotions were stabilising.
“Based on this pace, I’ll be able to completely suppress the explosion of my emotions in ten or so days…” Leylin grinned.
“Boss! Is the boss here?”
At this moment, a young man’s voice travelled over, “We want to
buy something. Is the boss of Blazing Hammers around?”
Upon hearing this voice, Baelin stopped his training. “Oh, my
heavens! There’s someone actually coming to boss’ shop? Has the
sun risen from the west?”
Due to Leylin’s unconventional pricing, only a few items were sold
every year despite the excellent quality of the weapons in the shop.
“What are you talking about! Go and entertain the customer!”
Leylin’s sword knocked on Baelin’s head.
At this moment, Baelin remembered that his real identity was a
worker employed to man the weapon shop. He immediately put on
a white shirt and jogged out to receive the customer.
Leylin was a little curious and followed him out.
“My lady, please come in!”
Baelin seemed to be fawning over a girl of noble blood, who was
wearing sophisticated clothing and had a ring with strange
inscriptions on it. He made eyes at Leylin, indicating they were
going to make a huge sale.
Behind this noble girl was an old man with silver hair that seemed
to be a butler. Behind this man were two young guards wearing
armour made of iron mail. The one who had shouted was evidently
one of the guards.
On the shoulder of the guard, there was a large crest with sun vines
adorning it. In the middle were a sword, shield, and a crown!
Leylin was learned in the area of the coat of arms, and naturally
knew that no matter which society they were in, only the first-rate
nobility were able to use a crown in their crest.
“Interesting! A daughter of a noble? She even has an acolyte and
two knights protecting her!”
Leylin gazed at this group of people with interest. The butler
behind the girl was obviously a level 3 acolyte, and he even had a
low-grade magic artifact, judging from the energy waves it gave
off.
The guards behind them were guards with the strength of knights. Even this girl herself also produced undulations from energy particles and had the power of a rank 1 acolyte. All sorts of amplification type rings were on her fingers. At this moment, the four guests were surprised at Baelin, who was treating them so politely, not every shop had a Knight that would service guests!

Baelin, who was still oblivious to everything, was politely introducing to the girl, “My lady, if you wish to go to the Woody Wasteland, I recommend this steel sword! Its workmanship is first rate, and there won’t be any nicks even after killing thousands. If you couple it with these arrowheads, it’s even more perfect…”

Baelin’s saliva flew everywhere as he opened another cabinet, revealing a bunch of arrowheads that looked completely new and was giving of a turquoise luster. This eagerly attentive display that might even be seen to be overly humble had Leylin laughing inside. The two soldiers behind the girl turned, a little embarrassed at seeing a knight just like them, who seemed to be tarnishing their reputation.

In fact, if not for their owner being right in front, they would long since have drawn their swords and taught this fellow who knew nothing about the dignity of knights a lesson.

“Look!” The noble girl spoke to the old butler behind her. The butler with the strength of a level 3 acolyte went forward, touching the steel sword with his wrinkly hands and then touching the arrowhead, shock apparent on his face, “The quality is not bad! It can even be compared with the works of the Great Master Yoda.”

“Oh?” The surprise was evident on this girl’s face. This was the first time she had seen her butler praise any item, and even more so comparing it to Great Master Yoda? That was a Master who had earned a reputation in the eastern capital from forging weapons, and was extremely popular with the public!
“Who forged the weapons here?” She asked, looking at Baelin. After all, his bulging muscles were very enchanting. Leylin, who concealed his power very well, was naturally ignored. “Oh, those!” Baelin was about to brag about his boss, but upon seeing Leylin’s warning look, he corrected himself, “That’s obviously a secret!”
“Is that so?” The girl lifted her brows, and even Baelin couldn’t bear to keep eye contact.

“Please pass on this message to that great master! I would like to meet him, and our Argus Family welcomes him to our door!” She spoke in an aloof manner.

The guard behind her immediately took out a sculpture that looked similar to the crest on his shoulder and passed it to Baelin.

“This! This! And those arrows. We want them all!”

The girl pointed at the display cabinet.

“Alright, alright!” Baelin was so excited that he was flushed red. He didn’t even have the time to analyse the crest in his hand, and immediately packed up the swords and other weapons, passing them to the guards behind her.

“The total is 1050 Gold! Thank you for your patronage!”

Baelin nodded at the girl, and the butler passed a small bag of gold coins and a purple-gold card to him. Baelin was on the verge of becoming stupid as his hand trembled while holding the bag.

The girl saw his movements and a glint of mischievousness appeared in the young noble’s eyes.

“I wish to go to the Woody Wastelands! Can you be my guide? I’ll pay 10 Gold per day.”

“Ten- Ten Gold?” Baelin’s breathing became rough.

While working in Leylin’s shop, the pay was 3 Gold per month; this was already a pay grade that made the residents of Potter Town
incomparably envious.
Ten Gold a day? This was something Baelin had never even dreamed of!
“But!” Baelin looked at Leylin and gritted his teeth as he rejected the suggestion. “My apologies, my lady! I must work here every day…”
Though Baelin wanted to make some quick money, he was still able to make a distinction between the present and the future.
Leylin was currently teaching him how to train to become a knight! This was only available in specific noble families of the Twilight Zone, and he would not have another chance to get it, even with over a thousand Gold!
If he gave this up just for a little Gold, that would mean giving up his future as a Knight; Baelin felt that he would completely regret that choice of action.
“Interesting, interesting! I never thought I’d discover such an intriguing shop on this trip!”
The girl laughed like a skylark.
“My name is Jenny, and I live in the largest inn in the town. If you change your mind, you can come look for me at any time.”
After the girl and her companions left, Baelin carefully placed the gold and purple-gold card on the table.
“The purple-gold card that is valued at a thousand Gold! It’s the first time I’ve ever seen this, and in addition, there are so many gold coins. My lord! We’ve struck it rich!” Baelin’s eyes were full of little stars.
“Yeah, yeah!” Leylin nodded, paying no mind as he kept the purple-gold card.
“The rest of the gold shall be yours as a commission!”
“Oh, boss, let me praise you! You’re really the master of fairness, the embodiment of compassion…” Baelin immediately began to cheer.
He tossed the crest up and down in his hand, puzzled. “This seems quite familiar! I recall hearing something about this Oscar Family from somewhere before…”

Suddenly, he shrieked, “Damn it! Sun Vine Argus! It’s the marquis family in the eastern capital! What did I just give up…”

However, although Baelin sighed, he did not pursue this matter any further.

After all, they weren’t going to take him in as a servant, but only as a guide. It would be a very stupid decision to reject Leylin’s teachings here.

The appearance of the Marquis’ daughter here obviously made her the topic of conversation in Potter Town. Leylin could hear the latest news about this group from Baelin.

“My Lord! My Lord! Apparently, Miss Jenny came to this place in order to prepare to obtain a very special birthday gift for her mother! She’s preparing to look for it in the wastelands. What a filial daughter she is!”

“Haha… I found out that Miss Jenny is looking for a special plant called the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud! It’s said to help women maintain their looks for ten years, and can even be sold off at an auction in the eastern capital for almost a hundred thousand Gold! After offering a reward for it, all the adventurers, mercenaries and even residents of the town have begun to pour into the Woody Wastelands to look for it, dreaming of getting rich quickly!”

“My Lord! I just saw Miss Jenny entering the Woody Wastelands while being guided by the baron’s knights…”

Baelin was as excited as a sparrow, chirping in front of Leylin; Leylin just rolled his eyes.

“Have you completed your homework for today?”

With that single sentence, Baelin completely quieted down and scratched his head.

“No, but I’ll be done soon!” Having said this, Baelin quickly rushed
to the training grounds and began to wave around a large sword that was about the height of a person.
“You still have the mind to think about running around outside of training. You seem to have a lot of excess energy!” Leylin grinned, “I’ll multiply the tasks you have to do for today.”
“Oh! No!” Hearing Baelin’s anguished wailing, Leylin felt his mood improve.
“Oh, Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud?” Leylin touched his chin and searched up some information recorded by the A.I. Chip from the ancient ruins.
He seemed to have seen records about this sort of precious plant in ancient books. It was said that it lived in a very harsh environment and needed to coexist with a high energy being, taking in the blood of this being every once in awhile, or else it would wilt.
“I remember that the high-energy being coexisting with the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud is called the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon. It’s said to be a mix between an ancient dragon and some demon, though I have no idea how true that information is…”
Leylin pondered deeply, “In addition, the beautification effect of the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud is just a side effect. The main use of the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud is to combat specific toxins…”
“Interesting. I was just searching for a good reason to enter the eastern capital!” Leylin glanced at Baelin who was still wailing but did not dare stop training, a fierce light glinting in his eyes.
Three days later, a small group laden with injuries returned to Potter Town, bringing back horrifying news.
The team with the Marquis’ daughter had met with unexpected danger while chasing after the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon and were stuck somewhere. Even the baron’s knight team captain had sacrificed himself.
This team had risked their lives to return and seek help.
The entire town sank into terror. The fury of a Marquis was
something Potter Town could not take on, and the person most afraid of the headstrong daughter were the owner of the area, Baron Joseph.

“My lord! My lord! I heard that…”

Baelin rushed into the yard like a gust of wind, to the sight of a plump man in luxurious clothes, constantly using a gold-coloured handkerchief to wipe the sweat on his face.

He was instantly like a duck held by the neck, his words stuck in his throat as he bowed, “Hello, Sir!”

This plump man was obviously Baron Joseph, the man in charge of Potter Town. Even Baelin’s current job had been introduced to him by this man. For Baelin, someone with land and an inheritance could be said to be an amazing person, and as a result, he was so shocked that he quickly greeted the baron, his head at his chest.

“So it’s Baelin! Do your job well!”

Baron Joseph did not seem to have any interest in conversing with him, and instead bowed towards Leylin with a smile, “Well then, I’ll leave it to you, Great Master Leylin!”

In order to settle down, Leylin had used mental spells as well as having left a very powerful image in Joseph’s mind.

Hence, now that he had met with trouble that he could do nothing about, Joseph quickly came to Leylin as soon as he could.

“My lord! What happened?”

Baelin waited until Joseph left before asking.

“What else could it be other than to save that willful girl?” Leylin spoke indifferently, picking out a shining set of armour from the storeroom.

“Oh, ooh! Oh! My lord, are you going to take action?”

As Leylin’s shop assistant and semi-disciple, Baelin was very curious about Leylin’s past and his power, extremely excited.

“Bring me, my lord! I’m sure you’ll lack a servant in the Woody Wastelands, right?”
“Bring me! You have to bring me!”
*Boom!* A large set of Knight’s armour was thrown at Baelin. “Try it on!”
“Oh! Alright!” Wearing armour was part of training to become a knight. Baelin had trained a lot, but it was his first time officially wearing armour. He was so excited that he was slightly flushed. This shiny armour unexpectedly fit him very well. There were even some patterns at the sides of the metal, and the leather plating underneath. Not only was it beautiful, it could also protect a few areas; Baelin loved it.

After training for such a long period of time, Baelin had also grown taller. He had beautiful muscles, and after wearing the armour, he looked extremely brave and courageous.

“How is it? I’m handsome, aren’t I?” Baelin patted his chest narcissistically, and two pieces of metal struck each other, producing a loud sound.

“Next!” Leylin tossed a steel sword to Baelin, and after he had worn and put everything into place, Leylin nodded in satisfaction. “I can relax now!”

“Of course! Huh? Relax? What about?” Baelin was bewildered. “Young man, the mission to save the princess will fall to you?” Leylin tried to hold back his laughter, patting Baelin’s shoulder while speaking in a heartfelt, meaningful manner. Baelin was stunned.

“Huh? Huh?! Me?! You want me to go to the Woody Wastelands alone?” Baelin finally reacted, pointing at his own nose. “My lord, I’m not even a knight! Are you trying to kill me?”

“It can’t be helped!” Leylin spread his hands, “Someone must stay behind to look after the shop! Youngsters like you need to be more energetic!”

“My lord, forgive me for my being so direct about this, but you sell but a few items per year. It doesn’t make a difference whether you
watch the shop or not. In addition, there’s a large difference between being energetic and sending myself to my death!”
“Don’t worry. You’re my employee after all; I won’t just send you to your death like that.”
Leylin waved his arms, saying things that were not helping Baelin calm down.
“I’ve already received more information. Jenny and the rest were trapped in a valley by Explosive Flaming Wolves, and temporarily will not meet with any danger…”
“I even prepared this for you!” Leylin passed a bag of medicinal powder to Baelin.
Baelin curiously sniffed at it, and then choked, sticking out his tongue, “What is this?”
“Stimulating medicinal powder! It can cover the smell of your live body scent and prevent the Explosive Flaming Wolves from finding you.”
Leylin gave a brief explanation, and that alone caused Baelin to light up, looking at the bag in his hands like it was filled with gold coins.
“Think about it. If you sprinkle the powder on yourself and walk into the valley, you’ll be able to rescue the princess easily. Reputation, power, money and even beautiful girls, they’ll all be yours…” Leylin’s voice was enticing.
“But…” Baelin struggled, but his tone was already not as resolute as before.
“No buts!” Leylin looked serious.
“This is an order. Baron Joseph has given me the rights to authorise this. To save Jenny, I can give out orders to any peasant of Potter Town!”

Leylin glanced at Baelin, obviously with bad intentions, “I remember that you’re a free resident of Potter Town, am I right? Do you want to go now, or do you want to be demoted to a slave and then go?”

In the face of Leylin’s methods using both the carrot and stick, Baelin could only raise his arms in protest, “All right, I’ll go!”

“That’s the way!” Leylin nodded in satisfaction.

That afternoon, Baelin had an expression like he was going to his death and, under the gazes of many residents of the town, he entered the Woody Wastelands.

Meanwhile, Leylin was lounging on a deck chair, his eyes closed as he took pleasure in the brightness given out from the sun stone. There was even a pot of hot tea and some snacks.

“A leisurely afternoon! I like this!”

Leylin contentedly poured himself a cup of black tea and blew away the rising steam.

“Shouldn’t the Explosive Flaming Wolves have long since migrated from the Woody Wastelands? And they bumped into them? This is getting increasingly interesting…”

He felt reassured sending Baelin. Not taking into consideration the fact that Baelin was just one step away from becoming a Grand Knight, just the powder Leylin had given him was enough for Baelin to return unscathed, as well as save Jenny and her companions.

“But this is just the start!”

Leylin had a feeling that the power struggle in the circle of aristocracy around Jenny had become very troublesome. It would involve everyone around her involuntarily.

However, this level of trouble was just like a few children playing
house. If not for him feeling quite bored, as well as needing a reason to enter the eastern capital, he wouldn’t even bother playing with them.

The situation was just as Leylin predicted.

Two days later, Baelin energetically burst in, excitement apparent on his face.

“My lord, my lord, I did it! I successfully rescued Ms. Jenny and her companions! Haha... I’m a hero!”

“If you failed even with the powder I gave you, you’d be an idiot!” Leylin rolled his eyes, and then glanced at the entrance, “Are there customers?”

Next, Jenny, her butler, and the others walked in in a pitiful state. There was only one guard left, and his right arm was in a sling.

He could tell that they were in a difficult situation in the Woody Wastelands. However, they had directly come here without finding a chance to clean themselves first.

Though there was still some dust on her, Jenny’s face was still quite clean as she curtsied towards Leylin, “I heard from Baelin that it was all thanks to Sir that he was able to save me. Jenny is here to express her thanks! Sir’s powder is extremely miraculous, and even James couldn’t tell what the components were.”

“It’s nothing much. It’s part of my collection while I was still an adventurer!” Leylin put up his arm, evading any further explanations.

He was clear of the intentions this noble girl had in coming here. One part of this was to thank him, but more importantly, she was here to invite him to obtain the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud.

At this thought, Leylin shot a glance at Baelin.

Under his gaze, the young fellow ducked his head, embarrassed.

This naive young man betrayed Leylin after being taken in by Jenny and the rest, leaking the information that Leylin used to be a powerful adventurer.
“Mister…” Jenny’s smile was forced as she ground her teeth, kneeling on the ground, “Sir! I’m here for the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud. It’s not for my mother, but for my father. He…” Then, there came the expected story of the power struggle between nobility.

The gist of it was that her two uncles coveted her father’s position as Marquis, and had used a strange toxin to harm him. In order to heal her father, this young girl had no choice but to bring her butler and guards to search for a cure.

“Mister Leylin, my father is a benevolent and wise leader! If the title of Marquis and its associated territories were to fall into the hands of one of my uncles, the people under him would definitely meet with a calamity. Please help them…” Jenny pleaded, giving a very thorough and brilliant act of a pure, kind-hearted innocent victim. Baelin had already clenched his fist, and Leylin kept shaking his head.

He naturally knew about the conflicts there were between the upper class. After growing up in that circle, even the most innocent child would be influenced. Besides, could there be an absolute right or wrong in these power struggles?

On the surface, however, Leylin had a righteous expression, “I admire the kind and fair old Master Marquis. I am duty bound to help. Baelin!”

“Huh? Yes!” Baelin suddenly felt like something bad was going to happen. This was an intuition he had developed after being cheated by Leylin on countless occasions.

As expected, Leylin ordered, “Go accompany Miss Jenny and enter the Woody Wastelands again until you obtain the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud!”

“I knew it! I knew this would happen!” Baelin roared in his heart, but upon seeing the grim look on
Leylin’s face and the pitiful young girl, he could not bring it upon himself to reject.
“Alright then…”
Letting Baelin help was evidently not on Jenny and the others’ agenda. However, after seeing Leylin’s courteous but obvious refusal, this bright young girl knew it was impossible to get Leylin himself to act. She could only retreat regretfully.
“Can you tell if he’s a Magus?”
On the way, and after ensuring that there were no passers-by around them, Jenny spat out coldly. Her voice was cold, and her expression haughty. Where was that frail and delicate young girl seen only a few minutes back?
“I’m not sure. I couldn’t tell! If an official lord Magus really wants to conceal himself in front of me, I definitely won’t be able to tell at all!”
The butler, James, who was a level 3 acolyte, forced a laugh.
“Not being able to tell would be the best clue! A retired, powerful adventurer who was able to teach Baelin to become a knight in a year, his strength must be far beyond our imaginations!”
Jenny was astute.
“Not bad! I probed into this matter, and that young lad, Baelin, is quite lucky. The breathing technique he’s training in is at least that used by Grand Knights.”
James sighed in admiration. Upon hearing this, the eyes of the guard behind Jenny darkened.
He had risked his life for the Argus Family for so many years and gone through many loyalty tests before he was conferred a Knight’s breathing technique. He was only lucky enough to advance after bloody battles, and listening to this story gave him the urge to kill Baelin.
However, he quickly buried this at the bottom of his heart, not daring to think about this further.
Supporting Baelin was a lord who seemed to be an official Magus! Even the Argus Family would not dare offend him. Though the Argus Family was a Marquis family with a high standing, this was only so by regular people’s standards. In the eyes of Magi, the well-known Sun Vine Family was just as significant as a speck of dust. Even in the entire Argus Family, there was only one rank 1 Magus whom they all respected. There was no need to choose who would be considered more important, an official Magus or a guard who was just a Knight!

“My Lord!”

After Jenny and her companions left, Baelin immediately gazed at Leylin with tears in his eyes, like a puppy that had been abandoned. “Give it to me!” He stretched his hands out.

“What?”

“That secret potion, which is a powerful treasure! Don’t you want me to obtain the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud?” Baelin thought it was only right that he received this.

*Bang!* He was struck heavily on the head by Leylin’s wooden sword, causing him to grimace from the pain.

“Baelin!” Leylin stood up, his tone sincere. “After this experience, you should know where your strength lies, right?”

“Of course! Thanks to the guidance from my lord, I am now a Knight!”

Now that they were talking about business, Baelin’s expression became solemn. Though he had gotten past the pack of Explosive Flaming Wolves with Leylin’s powder, the Woody Wastelands had more dangers than just the wolves! When he had split a large stork into two halves with a single strike, Baelin realised he had been played by Leylin. He had long since advanced to become a Knight!
In addition, through conversations with Jenny and the rest, he found out that Leylin had taught him very precious things! Hence, though Baelin appeared frivolous out of habit, he revered Leylin more and more.

“Being a Knight is just the start, and it’s not the end!”

Leylin put his hands behind his back, putting on the airs of a powerful person.
Your goal is to become a Grand Knight! The distant stars are your goal!”
Leylin’s voice was filled with emotion, causing Baelin’s blood to heat up.
“Though your Knight training method came from me and is said to be the best of the best even by the standards of Grand Knights, you lack something important that the strong possess!”
“The strong? Something important?” Confusion appeared on Baelin’s face.
“Exactly! That is real bloody battles and confidence. The Knights who lacked the training methods you have developed their unrivalled confidence through constant bloody battles, smoothly stimulating their life energy and becoming Knights! You lack this process…”
“Hence, you need to take on an even more difficult task to stimulate your potential!”
Leylin’s expression looked like he was trying to tell Baelin it was all for his own good. “How about it? Can you see what I’m doing for you?”
“Though I don’t understand, it seems cool!” Baelin clenched his fists, “I’ll work hard, my lord!”
Next, this little fool who had been duped by Leylin began to truly prepare to leave the following day.
Seeing him in a frenzy of preparation, Leylin shook his head as he
gave a gentle smile.
“Youths really forget things quickly. He was duped so easily…”
However, to make use of Jenny, this noblewoman, to enter the capital, Leylin didn’t mind helping them.
“Your sword…” Leylin took Baelin’s steel sword, which he had been holding. Having gone through numerous forging, it still held a cold glint, but a chip the size of an ant had appeared on the blade. This kind of nick could only be formed from countless strikes made by a Knight using his full power. It was evident that Baelin had met with more dangers in the Woody Wastelands than just those Explosive Flaming Wolves.
“What’s wrong, my lord?” Baelin’s expression displayed his puzzlement.
“This sword is too old and not suitable for your expedition. I’ll give you a new one!” The corner of his lips lifted in a smile.
“Thank you! Thank you so much, my lord!” Baelin was so excited that he was almost incoherent in his gratitude.
After this battle, he finally discovered how difficult it was to groom a knight. On one hand, there was the secrecy of the breathing techniques, and on the other hand, there were the immense expenses in training and obtaining equipment.
Equipment forged by experts had a value of over 100 Gold. However, after explosively using his life essence a few times, a chip had appeared.
Wouldn’t regular weapons have simply snapped?
Knights grew through battles, and he wondered how many of these weapons would have to be used for this growth.
Baelin had originally intended to repair this sword and continue to use it. After all, he was used to living in poverty and couldn’t bear to waste resources. However, Leylin had simply given him another one!
“Don’t worry, I’ll send the bill to Ms. Jenny.”
However, Leylin’s next words caused Baelin’s grateful heart to burst into smithereens, “She’s the daughter of the Marquis and probably has more gold than their family will ever need. It doesn’t matter if they pay a little, right?”

Leylin tossed a new sword to Baelin.

“Aw, my lord! Can’t you let me continue to feel touched by your actions for a while longer?”

Baelin lamented, though his hands were not the least bit dissatisfied as he caught the sword.

*Clang!* Baelin gently caressed the sword, the blue edge of the blade having detailed, complicated patterns, and a cold air was emitted from it.

Based on his intuition after working here for so many years, Baelin could tell this was absolutely one of the best steel swords in the shop.

What he didn’t notice was that before his lamenting, Leylin’s palm had stroked the blade of the sword and left behind a dull red imprint.

This imprint had been carved into the sword itself and disappeared, and Baelin had not noticed at all.

……

Jenny’s team had rested and reorganized themselves in Potter Town and set off.

Though most of the adventurers and mercenaries who had followed her the last time had died or been injured, there was no lack of people who were so poor that they wanted to take the risk and strike it rich.

Jenny had simply given out a large amount of gold and gathered enough people. Of course, their strength was nothing much.

She had little choice. In Twilight Zone, the Goat-Horned Earth
Dragon was a very rarely seen high-energy being. Only recently had people found traces of it in the Woody Wasteland. If she let this opportunity go, she had no idea when she would get another chance to come across it. Even if Jenny could wait, Marquis Argus, who was being tormented by poison, could not wait that long! “Baelin, we’re depending on you!” There was another person in the group, and it was Baelin in his new armour. He had repaired it through the night, and he was somewhat able to continue using it. On his back was the sword that Leylin had messed with, giving him a very brave and formidable aura, and even caused some girls in the town to throw him coquettish glances. Now, however, with just a word from Jenny, Baelin was elated. Feeling the reverence of the adventurers around him, as well as the ardent pleas from the noble girl, Baelin felt like he had downed several bottles of strong alcohol, and was beginning to feel giddy. “I never imagined I, Baelin, would have such an impressive moment!” Baelin nodded as he glanced at Jenny, admiration apparent in his gaze, “Don’t worry, I’ll definitely obtain the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud!” “Sigh, that pitiful fellow!” Seeing Baelin so crazy over his young miss, James, who was standing to one side, couldn’t help but sigh under his breath. So what if he was a Grand Knight? With the might of the Argus Family, they could easily summon a dozen of them! The person they really cared about was Sir Leylin, the person backing Baelin! In Twilight Zone, only the mysterious lord Magi were suitable for his young miss to bow her head to. “In addition, our young miss is an acolyte! Though her level is low, not just any regular person can do it.” James sighed even more deeply. The aptitude to become a Magus was a very mysterious thing.
However, after many years of research, Magi found that if one of the parents was a Magus, there was a high likelihood that their descendants would have an increased aptitude. If both were Magi, the chances of acolytes could even rise up to 33%!
In addition, within this group of acolytes, there was a higher chance of them having outstanding talent.
For this reason, unless there were exceptions, any females in noble families who had the aptitude to become a Magus were not allowed to marry outside of their family. Their only fate was to marry their close relatives and produce an heir who would have greater aptitude!
The Argus Family might be happy to have a female peasant with an aptitude to become a Magus marry into the family. However, they would absolutely not tolerate it if Magi in their family married outside, even if they were merely acolytes!
Of course, neither Baelin nor Jenny was thinking that far.
Even Baelin himself had automatically gotten serious after entering the Woody Wasteland, blindly hurrying in order to preserve energy. He had grown up in Potter Town and naturally knew of the terrors here. Many areas that seemed to be safe ground might take the lives of any adventurer at any time.
He was Baelin, someone about to become a Grand Knight! How could he die here?
“There’s something in front!”
All of a sudden, the team in front cheered, and Baelin immediately braced himself, approaching them.
“We discovered this! Come take a look!”
Jenny had changed into garments suitable for hunting and now looked more capable and experienced. She was now pointing at a large footprint on the ground as if she had seen some treasure.
Baelin crouched down. In front of him was a footprint almost a metre long.
The owner had left a very deep footprint, with four claw marks sunk deeply into the ground.
“There are five joints in the middle toe, and the smell is correct. This is it! This was left behind by a Goat-Horned Earth Dragon!”
James had also approached them. After using some strange item in his hands to probe it, he spoke to Jenny with conviction.
“What are we waiting for?”
She had a smile on her face. Though her target was right in front of her, she did not impatiently forge ahead.
“We’ll find a place to set up camp for today! All scouts are to move out and follow the footprint, and you must find the lair of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon!”
Jenny’s purpose in coming here was to obtain the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon. This special plant only coexisted with the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon, and it was hence necessary that they find its lair.
“I shall reward anyone who can find the lair of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon with a hundred gold coins!”
In order to find the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud as soon as possible, Jenny did not mind giving out large rewards, and it immediately resulted in loud roars.
Many adventurers who were originally not scouts left as well, wanting to try their luck. If they received this reward, and if combined with their own savings, they could practically retire already.
“They…” Baelin had a look on his face that showed he couldn’t bear to watch these adventurers leave.
He was not an idiot. In contrast, he was rather intelligent and knew Jenny’s intention in doing that.
These adventurers lacked strength or any special abilities. Their only function was to act as cannon fodder and bait!
Now that they had entered the territory within which the Goat-
Horned Earth Dragon was active, they would inevitably attract its action with all these adventurers running around. They would be able to find the dragon as long as they followed the blood-curdling screams or blood.

“It can’t be helped, Baelin!” Jenny laughed bitterly, “I’ll make it up to their families later…”

When the sun descended, three people did not return. Jenny was overjoyed as she chased in the direction that the three had moved in.

“Here!” Baelin picked up a rock on the floor, his expression complicated as he looked at the blood stains and some bits of cloth on that stone.
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Under the bright, flickering torchlight, there were traces of the chaos that had occurred, such as blood and remnant flesh.
It was obvious that before having its meal, the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon had toyed with its food.
At this sight, the faces of the adventurers around darkened.
Outside of this site, there was a long line of bloodstains, causing it to appear as a bloody trail.
“Follow it!”
With Jenny’s command, the group lifted their torches and did as asked.
Twilight Zone was underground and was shrouded in darkness all year around. However, the surviving humans had yet to evolve and have night vision, thus, torches were one of the essential items when exploring in the Twilight Zone.
“The footprints are more concentrated here!”
Baelin lifted his torch with one hand, the other tightly grasping the handle of his steel sword. His joints had turned a little white from using too much strength.
A piercing stench was beginning to pervade the air, to the point that Baelin associated it with the time he had worked at a horse stable when he was younger.
Next, with the illumination by everyone, a small hill made of black rocks appeared. At the foot of the hill was a large cave that
extended deeply into the side, hollowing it out.
“We can’t fight it in its lair. We need to lure it out!”
Jenny decided after looking.
With this dim lighting, it was bound to affect the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud if they were to fight in the small lair. If the bud was damaged, there would be no point even if Jenny and the rest killed the dragon.
“Don’t worry, the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon has very low intelligence and is very sensitive to the smell of blood. We can use that and set up a trap.”
James stood out at this moment and under his command, the adventurers set up a simple trap outside the cave.
As resources were limited and they couldn’t alert the Earth Dragon inside, James chose the simplest trap, poison!
A black being that looked like a goat was forced to drink an entire bottle of a red potion, and was laid across the cave. Its four legs were tied together, and its main artery was slashed open causing fresh blood to spurt out. A small puddle of blood was quickly formed on the ground.
The adventurers beside it had long since put out their torches and patiently waited aside, not even daring to breathe loudly at this point.
Baelin’s hands were on his sword, glancing at Jenny, who was extremely nervous, and James, who looked grim. He himself looked determined.
*Thud thud! Thud thud!*
Only ten or so minutes passed, but in the hearts of everyone present, it felt like centuries had passed. Finally, just when the adventurers were beginning to get impatient, dull footsteps and slight tremors of the ground could be felt.
“It’s here! Get ready!”
The adventurers who were lying in wait outside ducked their
heads, retrieving their weapons and bow and arrows, aiming them at the mouth of the cave.

“Hah…”

The sounds of heavy breathing resounded, followed by an increase of the concentration of the strange smell by more than ten times! The goat that was bait could only give a miserable shriek.

*Crunch! Crunch!*

Along with the sounds of chewing, the bleating of the goat stopped.

“Is this the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon?” As he was now a Knight, Baelin’s eyesight was very good. With just the faint light, he could somewhat see the figure of this monster.

This monster was about fifteen to sixteen metres long, and its four thick limbs supported its large body, its sharp claws scratching out a long straight line on the ground.

Above its yellow eyes, two curved black horns were grown, like the symbol of a demon.

With the opening and closing of its mouth, sharp teeth constantly meshed together and chewed the goat into bits, flesh and blood flying.

“On my command. Go!”

James swung his arm, and a rock the size of a fist was thrown to the side of the dragon.

*Rumble!*

Next, large amounts of light and warmth were produced from the stone, like a sun that had fallen to the earth.

Radiance dispelled the darkness and descended upon this piece of land.

“Roar… roar…”

Under the intense glare of the sunlight, the adventurers present closed their eyes, tears on the verge of falling.

The Goat-Horned Earth Dragon that was used to a life in darkness roared instantly became enraged.
“Quick! It has now been temporarily blinded. Move!”
Baelin was clear that when these beings used to the darkness suddenly came into contact with light, they would definitely be blinded for a period of time due to not being used to it, and this was the best time for them to make their move!
Besides, the function of the sun stone was to fill the area with light, which made it more helpful in allowing the group of them to exhibit their abilities!
“To create this chance, Potter Town gave out a year’s supply of sun stones. What a waste!”
There were definitely many adventurers who thought the same way as Baelin, but this thought passed through their minds for a brief moment. Then they roared, brandishing the weapons in their hands and charged towards the huge monster in the middle of the site.
Under the illumination of the light, even the brown scales and veins on the muscles on the back of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon could be seen very clearly.
*Xiu Xiu!*
The first to attack was a group of mercenaries with bows and arrows. They were obviously a team, wearing a set of uniform with ice-cold glints of their iron arrows being emitted.
The sharp arrowheads brought with them tremendous force as they pierced into the back of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon.
*Ka-cha!* The Earth Dragon constantly snarled, and most of the arrows were flung away. However, there were a few that obstinately stayed on its back.
“Kill!” By this point, the adventurers had also charged to the front.
“Roar, roar!” The dragon thundered, suddenly turning back and flicking its tail!
The tail was like a large mace sweeping across the area, and the mercenaries that charged up flew away. A few were struck by the tail, and their blood dyed the sky.
“What an astute sense of hearing and smell!” Baelin exclaimed in admiration. The eyes of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon were very small and had almost completely degenerated. With the sudden piercing bright light, it couldn’t see anything at all, but all beings that lived in the darkness naturally had their unique ways of distinguishing other objects.

Baelin stepped away, dodging the sweeping motion of the steel tail and raised his sword, a thin ring of light produced around him.

“Cross Blade!” In a moment, he used Leylin’s secret killing technique for cross blades.

The immense light formed a cross, slashing towards the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon that was still snarling.

The fierce, immense air pressure attracted the attention of the Earth Dragon and it lifted its right forelimb, mercilessly clawing in Baelin’s direction!

Large black claws clashed with the cross-shaped light, and the sound of glass shattering could be heard in the air.

“Roar…” The Earth Dragon kept snarling, its large black claws disintegrating the move and smacking towards Baelin.

“How powerful and quick!” Baelin exclaimed in admiration and used his sword as a shield in front of him.

*Dang!*

The large claw and steel sword clashed, producing a loud sound and shock wave. Baeflin felt an immense force transmitting from the sword and the sword was almost sent flying.

“Ah!” He gritted his teeth, holding onto the sword for dear life, using the force from the dragon to fall back.

*Roar!* The Earth Dragon was clearly enraged, once again brandishing its steel tail and chopping two mercenaries that had charged forward in two!

The two mercenaries howled, their halved bodies still squirming on the ground, intestines spilling out onto the ground. This gory scene
immediately intimidated the rest of the mercenaries and adventurers and they retreated, not daring to take a step forward.

“What should we do? James, that Goat Honed Earth Dragon is almost about to return to its cave. We need to think of a way!”

“Soon! Soon!” James now had his eyes fixed on the dragon, constantly chanting.

“Roar!”

At that moment, the body of the Earth Dragon that had almost halfway returned suddenly changed! Bubbles of pus began to swell and burst, revealing yellow pus.

“Woo woo…” The Earth Dragon’s voice became low and it began to wail in anguish.

“This is a high-energy bacteria solution especially brewed for the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon. It can lower the defence of its epidermis!”

James briefly explained to Jenny, quickly chanting some incantations.

A powerful undulation from energy particles was constantly produced from the old man, who had only seemed to be a butler.

“This is… a mysterious expert! So, Lord James is actually an esteemed Magus!” The adventurers around exclaimed.

In the subterranean world, Magi were widely known and worshipped.

“Mostar Corrosive Ball!” As the incantations ended, James waved his right arm.

A large blue ball arced in the sky, precisely landing on the back of the dragon.

The blue ball spread out, turning into large amounts of sky blue liquid that mixed with the yellow pus. Immediately, it produced a large amount of heat and began to corrode downwards.

“Roar!” The Earth Dragon’s pitiful shrieks increased in pitch, and large amounts of steamed flesh fell from its back.
“What are you waiting for? This is the moment where its defence is at its weakest!”
James placed his hands behind him, looking like an expert. The adventurers seemed to have just awoken from a dream and charged forward once again.
This time, with James’ work, the Earth Dragon’s speed dropped, and the skin and scaly defensive layer had mostly disappeared. The mercenaries could easily slash and create a gaping wound with their weapons.
In just a moment, the entire situation was reversed.
Wooh wooh…"
Under this attack, the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon kept howling and suddenly turned. Uncaring of the serious injuries it had sustained and the people who were pursuing and attacking it, it crawled back into the cave!
“This is bad! It wants to escape!”
Jenny cried out in alarm, and she immediately brought out the bow and arrows which seemed hand-made, that had been on her back. She took out a green arrow from her quiver, resting it on the bow.
*Weng! Weng! Weng!*
One after another, the various rings she had on her hand began to light up.
“Precise Aim!” “Keen Edge!” “Gale Technique!”
All sorts of buffs were applied to Jenny.
“Miss- Miss Jenny is also a Magus?!” Baelin, who was not far away, gaped, thinking he might be in a dream.
*Xiu!*
Jenny released the arrow in her hand, and a streak of green flew from the bow.
*Pu!* The green arrow of light struck an eye of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon, resulting in a large amount of red, greenish blood spurting out.
“Roar!!!” The Earth Dragon turned back sharply, charging in Jenny’s direction.
“Good! This is it!” Jenny’s expression revealed her excitement. “No, leave!” On the other hand, James at the side had paled. “Roar!” The Goat-Horned Earth Dragon thundered, spitting out a black ball of light. The large ball of light exploded mid-air, black droplets of flames sprinkling everywhere. “Ah!” “My eyes!”

The black droplets landed on the mercenaries’ bodies, instantly causing serious injuries. The many adventurers began to howl, and the circle which surrounded the dragon immediately had a hole. *Hah! Hah!* The Goat-Horned Earth Dragon stimulated its energy to every part of its body and it swelled, and its skin turned red. Its speed rapidly increased and it charged in front of Jenny. “Protect the miss!” The one surviving guard brandished his sword with his left arm and dashed forward. *Ka-cha!* The Earth Dragon opened its mouth full of sharp fangs and biting down, it had the knight in its mouth, constantly chewing. Blood and flesh fell from the gaps between its teeth. “Ah…” Jenny was so shocked that her legs buckled, and she fell to the ground.

She was but a level 1 acolyte. That attack with the bow was only effective with the bonus from all the rings she had. After that attack, the pitiful amount of spiritual force she had was almost exhausted, and it was not possible to pull off another attack. Jenny was now a fragile, helpless girl of the nobility as she was paralyzed on the ground, awaiting her unknown future. “Awoo!” The Goat-Horned Earth Dragon did not have any thoughts of taking pity on her, opening its mouth wide. With its sharp teeth filled with flesh and blood, it snapped its jaws and made to bite her. “Am I going to die? I’m sorry, Father…” Jenny’s mouth was half open, a teardrop rolling from her right eye. *Dang!*
The acute pain she had been expecting did not appear, and Jenny opened her eyes, stunned. All she saw was a strong figure in front of her.

“Hey! In Knight stories, there will always be a knight appearing whenever the princess is in trouble, right?”

Baelin laughed, ruthlessly chopping forward with the sword in his hands!

The large steel sword hacked at the surface of the dragon’s head, producing some sparks. Baelin bellowed, life essence bursting out. On the surface of the armour, there seemed to be a protective layer formed of light.

*Roar!*

The Earth Dragon retreated a few steps, snarling at Baelin.

“Oh my! This is the real life version of a brave knight fighting against the evil dragon!” Baelin shot a glance at Jenny behind him, and then took a look at how much life essence he had left, a helpless smile about his lips.

*Whoosh!*

A black figure constantly attacked the Earth Dragon, and everyone else could only see the dust flying at the centre of the site, as well as the constant howls from the dragon.

Under the immense pressure from the Earth Dragon, Baelin felt all that Lord Leylin had forced him to learn suddenly bursting out as he became more proficient at some techniques.

At this moment, he suddenly felt empty, as if he had lost all of the power he just had.

“The burst of power from the secret technique is used up, and my life essence has been exhausted!”

Baelin’s heart sank, and a black shadow like a steel mace pierced through the armour of light, mercilessly slamming on his chest.

*Ka-cha!* The steel armour caved in, and Baelin flew backwards, a large amount of blood spilling from the corner of his mouth.
“No!”
At the moment he was about to die, he seemed to see the gigantic shadow of the Earth Dragon, as well as heard a sorrowful wail. “What a short life! However, I have no more regrets!”
With a gentle smile, he froze into his image of Jenny crying hard while on the ground into his memory. “How can my student die in such a pointless way?”
Just as Baelin was about to fall unconscious, time seemed to stop, and his surroundings turned black and white. His body seemed to be stuck in mid-air. “It’s Lord Leylin’s voice! He’s finally acknowledged me as his student!” Baelin was overjoyed, his thoughts on this while he was on the verge of death.
Next, he felt the steel sword on his right hand constantly becoming warmer till it became burning hot as if he was holding a soldering iron. *Weng Weng!* The sword constantly shook, and a crimson rune appeared on its own accord on the blade. “Ahh!” Baelin felt a stream of heat being transmitted from the steel sword, rushing to his lower abdomen where his life essence was congregated. *Bang!* Like the sound of a bottle exploding, the bottleneck to becoming a Grand Knight, the issue which had been bothering Baelin for a long period of time was crossed! Life energy that was at least ten times more powerful than before congregated from the life essence at his lower abdomen, and flowed through Baelin’s limbs. “Shaaa!” Baelin held his sword and slashed forward. On the surface of the steel sword, red rays from the rune suddenly brightened, and the sheen from a sword streaked through the sky, appearing in front of
the Earth Dragon.
Under the black and white rays that had frozen time, the Earth Dragon was motionless, allowing Baelin to aim a slash at its neck.
*Whoosh!*
A cold wind blew, and the black and white faded, returning to the usual colourful world.
*Ka-cha!*
A fine red line appeared at the Earth Dragon’s neck.
This line began to spread till it covered the entire neck, and then reddish-green blood constantly flowed out, the gigantic head of the beast fell to the ground.
*Rumble!* After losing its head, the huge body of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon crashed to the ground, like a little earthquake, causing a large amount of dust to fly.
“What happened to him?” Jenny felt a little dizzy.
“He broke through! He broke through the bottleneck of a Grand Knight!” James mumbled to himself, and then helped Jenny up.
“Haha, I knew I was a genius! How could I just die like this!” Baelin, who had escaped death, patted his chest and began to laugh. Seeing him in this state, Jenny felt there was a fire in her chest, almost causing it to explode.
“You idiot!” Jenny threw a white handkerchief at Baelin’s face.
Leaving him alone, she entered the cave with James.
“Why is she being like this?” Baelin held the handkerchief in a daze, bewildered.
The surviving mercenaries and adventurers silently cleaned the area.
They had lost a lot of people, and many of them were their friends or even family!
It was very quiet on the battlefield, and not one animal came to disturb the silence.
The sun’s rays were extremely annoying for the beings that were
used to the darkness. Potter Town of Twilight Zone had made use of this aversion and used the sun stones to disperse the creatures of darkness, and could thus develop. James had considered this at the beginning when he threw out the sun stones.

Ten minutes later, Jenny and James came out with excitement.

“Is this the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud?”

Baelin noticed the plant that seemed like a flower in Jenny’s hands. This red flower was the size of a bowl, and there were webs that seemed like blood vessels and veins on the petals. It looked very bizarre.

Jenny carefully held the flower bud, as if she were holding some treasure that was as valuable as a city.

“Yes! With this, my father can be saved…” Jenny finally relaxed. Ever since her father had been poisoned, immense pressure had been put on the shoulders of this young girl. Now, she could finally heave a sigh of relief.

“Thank you!” Jenny was so emotional that she hugged Baelin, leaving him stunned at the spot.

“And all of you!” Jenny turned back to the adventurers and mercenaries, “Your loyalty and devotion to your role has earned you your rewards! I will give out twice the amount promised, and five times that for those who have died!”

“Thank you so much, my lady!” “A kind and generous person!” “May the lord of darkness protect you!”

As expected, Jenny’s declaration made everyone present cheer. They packed up and began their journey back.

On the way back, Baelin kept swinging the steel sword in his hand, wanting to find any strange marks on it. However, after that one burst, this sword had used up all its energy, and no matter how much Baelin prodded it, it did not exhibit any strange features.

“What a fool! However, only a person with a one-track mind like
him is suitable for my cross blade breathing technique!” Baelin’s actions were all seen by Leylin, who was in Potter Town, through a transparent crystal, and he shook his head. Beside him, a test tube full of reddish green liquid was thrown aside like rubbish. “There’s not even a sliver of a powerful bloodline in there! To think it even had the word “dragon” in its name!” Leylin sighed.
Not all myths and folklore were true.
On the contrary, many myths have been altered, some even to the extent of the subjective thoughts of the storyteller, hence they were unusually laid with errors.
Only Leylin’s A.I. Chip could analyse and sieve out the most accurate version of the myth from the myriad of mythological information available.
As for now, after the blood analysis of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon, Leylin discovered that there wasn’t a single trace of an ancient bloodline in it’s blood!
Evidently, the myth of the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon being borne from a giant dragon and another demonic creature was false!
However, Leylin did not harbour much hope from the start. Even if the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon were to contain traces of an ancient bloodline, this strength that did not even reach the stage of an official Magus did not fit his requirements at all.
Back in Nightless City, he was clear that even if he could obtain and purify the blood from creatures that contained an ancient bloodline, the creature had to be of a certain level to be of use.
As for this standard, after the analysis from the A.I. Chip, the conclusion was that these creatures needed to have the strength to at least rival a rank 3 Magus!
In other words, even if the Goat Horned Earth Dragon were to contain traces of an ancient bloodline, Leylin had to find one that
was the equivalent of a rank 3 Magus. Then, with the help of the A.I. Chip, the purification of the ancient bloodline would be achieved.

“Aaah, a rank 3 Magus!”
Leylin smiled wryly; he had only recently advanced to a rank 2 Magus and the spiritual force he received from his meditation technique were extremely little. Most of the increase in spiritual force came from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline.
Although there was nothing wrong with a Warlock relying on the strength of his bloodline, Leylin did not want his foundations to be unstable.
Furthermore, he had advanced to a rank 2 Magus by the age of 40. This speed was extremely astounding on the south coast. Even back in the ancient times, it was considered remarkable.
Hence, spending more time for a better foundation was something that he had to do.
As he was now, it was unlikely that he could win against a creature with strength equivalent to a rank 3 Magus, even with the help of his ancient bloodline. Those kinds of creatures were terrifying existences, to the point where most rank 3 Magi would not dare to face off against such creatures directly.
After a brief sigh, Leylin let go of the notion of collecting ancient bloodlines.
After all, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline was enough for him right now.
Moreover, even if he lucked upon another ancient creature’s bloodline, it would only be a very valuable research material for him. Once a Warlock has chosen an ancient bloodline, there isn’t any way to change it.
“However, things do not seem to stop here!”
Leylin, who was observing Jenny through the crystal ball, frowned as if discovering something.
Under the control of his spiritual force, the images in the crystal ball began to change from Jenny’s party to the top of a different hill.

At this moment, under the shroud of darkness, there were two black figures conversing on the hill.

“Can’t you do your job properly? You actually let them get the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud?”

The man who spoke had a gruffy voice and his silhouette was extremely fuzzy. He even wore a mask to hide his features.

However, Leylin’s gaze pierced through the darkness and the mask to see the countenance of the man.

The face belonged to a sinister-looking old geezer that had a black skull branded on his forehead. It seemed to have been branded using a hot piece of metal. There were also writhing burn marks that filled the surroundings of the skull.

Moreover, there was an energy wave that was not weaker than James. He was a level 3 acolyte and apart from having no magic artifact, his strength was not below that of James.

“I… I did not want that to happen to…” The youth beside him shuddered, and even he started to stutter.

“The earlier Explosive Flaming Wolves were already extremely risky, if we were to strike again, they would most likely discover us. Moreover, the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon was extremely difficult to lure… Your subordinate, I, thought that the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon alone would be enough to stop those people…”

“Although the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon was still in its adolescent stages, the might it had far exceeded that of a level 3 acolyte, only an official Magus would be able to take it down!”

The old geezer acknowledged the young man’s deduction.

“So then, how did they manage to kill the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon?” The youth was puzzled. “Even if a Knight manages to
breakthrough, he would at the very most be a Grand Knight, which wouldn’t be enough to change the outcome…”
“I can sense that the air was filled with extremely strong energy waves… It’s definitely a powerful existence aiding them secretly…”
The old geezer looked miserable. The strength revealed was only the corner of an iceberg, yet it could make his hairs stand on end. It felt as if as he had returned back to his life as a helpless child. He had this premonition that if this force wanted to kill him, it would not have any trouble at all. As for the ability to be able to do that, the person behind this force must have reached the might of a rank 1 Magus!
“What should we do? Should we continue?”
The frightened youth went into shock. He knew the identity of this old geezer, but this was an existence that could make even the old man tremble in fear. That existence ought to be an even more powerful magician.
Once he thought of this, cold sweat began to drip down his body. He had an urge to turn around and run, never to participate in such a mission again.
However, very soon he mocked himself for this thought. Being a covert member of this large organisation, how can one leave that easily? Just from the information he held at his fingertips, he was already familiar with the nature of the big boss. If one wants to run or retire, the only way to do it was to lie in a grave.
“No matter what, we cannot allow that girl to bring the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud back to the eastern region! This is the command of the big boss!” The old geezer was extremely stern.
“Let’s go…”
His cloak swiveled as he vanished into the darkness with the young man.
“Interesting! How very interesting!”
Leylin smiled wryly after seeing this scene. He had no interest in the petty struggles of these mortals but felt rather intrigued by the one pulling the strings from behind.
Power determines everything! In this subterranean world, for the Argus Family to be this powerful, there must definitely be an official Magus supporting it from behind the scenes!
Perhaps, this is an opportunity to interact with the Magi in the subterranean world!
Leylin rubbed his chin and entered into a deep thought.

……

“Teacher! Teacher! I have returned!” Baelin dashed in quickly into the little shop with forge and anvils, smiling triumphantly. “I have also advanced into a Grand Knight and plucked the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud for Jenny!”

As for Leylin, he sat at the counter concentrating on brewing his tea filled with yellow fellow petals and green buds, all this while not lifting his head.

“After cultivating in the breathing technique I’ve taught you, you managed to advance into a Grand Knight only now? What a big idiot you are! Also, when have I ever accepted you as my disciple?”

Baelin’s smile turned stiff.

“So… So when I slain that Goat-Horned Earth Dragon I heard your voice!”

The youth began to mutter to himself, “Back then you have admitted that I was your student, and even helped me to defeat… Argh!”

*Pak!* Leylin used a vine to lash at Baelin’s head.

“This is your imagination, kiddo! Want to be my student? Cultivate for another ten thousand years first!”
Under the relentless verbal abuse, Baelin’s head drooped. He was extremely embarrassed now and had the urge to find a hole and hide in it. After slaying the Goat-Horned Earth Dragon, he knew that he had hallucinated, but he still wished to make use of this opportunity to make Leylin his master. These were also incited by Jenny and James.
Evidently, this shameless plan of his failed! Leylin would never acknowledge him as his student, which left Baelin standing there, not knowing what to say.
“Haha… Mister Leylin is really a strict teacher!”
At this moment, Jenny walked in and reduced the awkwardness for Baelin.
“I am just educating this silly little chap!” Leylin smiled humbly.
As for Baelin, he heaved a sigh of relief and stood at the side.
“Actually… For Baelin to be able to advance to a Grand Knight at his age, he is considered to have a remarkable talent! Even in the aspects of the more mysterious arts, I believe he will have exceptionally great talent…” Jenny deliberated, “Mister, why don’t you give him a chance?”
Although Baelin did not quite understand what Jenny meant, he still looked gratefully at Jenny.
“I am rather strict when it comes to the selection of my students!” Leylin shook his head and expressed his rejection on the matter.
Hearing that, Baelin lowered his head again.
As for Jenny, she could only give a comforting gaze to him.
“Your purpose of coming here wouldn’t only be to speak about this, would it?” Leylin sipped on his tea, with no intention to brewing a cup for Jenny as he asked.
“Actually, picking the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud was only made possible with the help of Mister Leylin. Also, regarding the Explosive Flaming Wolves, I have come here to express my heartfelt appreciation!”
Jenny curtsied and smiled wryly, “With your capabilities, Mister, I don’t think I can offer you anything that you’ll need. However, in the future should you require the assistance of the Argus Family, please send along your requests! I, Jenny Argus, solemnly swear by the name of the Sun Vines, that I will not refuse your bidding!” Jenny’s face turned solemn as she made an oath.
“Also, I have come here to bid farewell to you, Mister!”
“Wait!” Before Leylin could speak, Baelin opened his mouth in shocked, “Jenny, you… you’re leaving?”
“Yes!” Jenny nodded.
“The Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud will perish soon, and my father will not be able to hold on much longer with his illness!”
“Alright then! I wish you a safe journey back to your home!” Baelin smiled with reluctance.
“Thank you!” Jenny did not speak further.
“Alright! The eastern capital is where the Argus Family is, I will pay a visit in the future!” Leylin sipped on his tea and stretched his right hand, gesturing as a gentleman.
“If Mister can come, then it would be the happiest thing that happened to Jenny!”
Jenny smiled, “How about returning home with me? My father would definitely be excited to be your acquaintance!” She looked at Baelin, “Of course, big brother Baelin, can come too!”
Hearing this, Baelin grew nervous as he looked eagerly at Leylin. “My apologies! I have no desires to travel right now!” Leylin declined without hesitation, once again making Baelin look down in dismay.
Hearing this, Jenny turned silent for a moment, before she curtsied and took her leave.
“What’s wrong? If you have nothing else to do then get to work!” Leylin roared at Baelin.
“Yes, Boss!” Baelin replied dispiritedly.
“Hehe… Youths!”
Leylin grinned silently.
This eastern region was one he would definitely pay a visit to. It was not only the centre of the mortals’ government, but it was also a gathering place for the Magi. It was rumoured to have large scale magic bazaars too.
However, going there of his own choice and being invited were two entirely different concepts.
With Leylin’s strength right now, he could do whatever he liked, but it would often attract some unwanted problems.
Furthermore, his injuries had not healed completely. Before finding enough methods to curb the emotional instabilities of Warlocks, he did not wish to have a high profile.
Hence, entering the area inhabited by Magi in the eastern region through the Argus family, was a wise choice.
Through the earlier spying done, Leylin had guessed that Jenny’s road back home would not be smooth sailing. Evidently, Jenny had the same feeling, hence she invited Leylin to travel back with her.
Leylin understood that the most precious things were often unobtainable. Hence he would let Jenny encounter setbacks and beg him before he would help her, creating a false impression in front of her.
Moreover, there was an even better reason now!
Leylin glanced at Baelin who was nurturing his sorrow at the side before his lips curled up at one corner of his mouth.
A Magus who was fed up with the dangerous Magus world and was starting to live in seclusion under his apprentice’s involvement with a girl, would once again enter the fray of the Magus world.
Yes, it seemed like a pretty good excuse to return!
As for the age? Magi never bothered with appearances nor age.
As for Leylin, he could also use his bloodline to change his aura, eyes, body shape and appearances in minute proportions, allowing
him to look much older than he was. This was enough to fool many Magi.

……

Jenny journeyed with haste. Once she left the town after bidding Leylin farewell, she continued her journey hurriedly.

“Why? You wish to go after her?” Looking at the horse carriage that was gradually turning smaller in the horizon, Baelin stood rooted to the spot. Leylin could not help himself but mock him.

Provoking this youth daily was part of Leylin’s amusement outside of his cultivation and research.

“I’ll definitely go to the eastern capital. Definitely, but not now!” A flame of hope seemed to start burning in Baelin’s eyes.

“Boss! No, my lord! Please train me more rigorously! I want to be a man whose name will shake the eastern region, and then look for Jenny there with these achievements.”

Baelin half-knelt on the ground, a great ambition, and thirst for power burning in his eyes!

“Haha, that’s good! I like that look in your eyes! Don’t worry, I’ll give you an even more ‘rigorous’ training… “ Leylin seemed to be harbouring some evil designs.

Originally, in such situations, perhaps a young man from a small town would train himself for many years and would then enter the eastern capital, and then take the Marquis’ daughter as his wife. It would be just another common occurrence.

But it was unfortunate or perhaps one could call it inspiring that, contrary to Baelin’s own expectations, he would soon be reunited with Jenny!

The night that Jenny left, Baelin, who had been tortured by Leylin for an entire day and was about to crawl into his pitiful bed and get
some sleep, was woken up by the sound of a fierce banging on the door.
“Baelin! Lord Leylin!” This was a woman’s voice, filled with fear, and it also belonged to the voice of someone Baelin would never forget.
“It’s Jenny!” He quickly got up at lightning speed and opened the entrance to the shop.
Jenny was standing covered in blood, with James lying on the ground. However, there was a large hole on this poor old man’s chest, with some arrows on his back. By the looks of it, he would not be able to live past tonight.
“Baelin, get Lord Leylin! Save…”
Upon seeing Baelin, Jenny relaxed and immediately collapsed in a dead faint.
“Hey! Who’s going to tell me what’s going on here?” Seeing the soft female body in his arms, Baelin looked ready to break down.
Wait! Wasn’t this how it usually went in tales involving Knights? Where was the counterattack? Where was the wait? Where was the whole thing about meeting in the capital?
Baelin hugged Jenny tightly, his mind unable to work.
However, at this point, a warm blood gushed out and spilled into Baelin’s hands, causing him to come back to himself.
“Lord Leylin, we have a problem!” The fearful, hoarse voice of the young man seemed to resound throughout Potter Town.
Blood and flames! The glinting from a knife, and then the dazzling rays from rank 0 spells!
This was the last thing James had seen.
Though he had long since known of the malicious ways of Jenny’s two uncles, he had never imagined that they would be so gutsy as to ambush them right in the open, that too on the main street!
Under the sudden attack, Jenny’s temporary guards could not even withstand a single blow.
If not for them relying on the Marquis’ magic artifact that the Madam had secretly left behind for their use before they left, he and Jenny would not even be able to flee!
After that, they returned to Potter Town, escaping and fighting back on the way.
James had simply fainted after telling Jenny to obtain Sir Leylin’s help.
“This is…”
James opened his eyes, bewildered as he stared at the yellow light and the ceiling that he did not recognise.
“Sir James, you’re awake!” Baelin, who was at the side, quickly came over and tipped a bowl of green liquid into his mouth.
“Ugh…” Within the green liquid, there were numerous roots and suspicious things that looked like bugs floating on top. It looked extremely disgusting and the smell that seemed to come from a sewer assaulted his nostrils, almost causing this old man to black out.
“What’s this?” After being forced to drink two large gulps, James finally got the chance to push away the large bowl in Baelin’s hands.
He swore that even if he were to die, he would not want to smell this thing again.
“It’s some herbal medicine that Lord Leylin instructed me to boil. It’s very helpful towards your injuries!” Baelin pushed the bowl towards him, looking helpful.
“No, thank you so much for your help! Does this mean that I’m in Mister Leylin’s shop? How is the young miss?”
James immediately asked.
“Don’t worry, Jenny is very safe!” Baelin was a little confused, “Do you think you could tell me what happened?”
He was extremely curious towards the events that had befallen on them, but he felt sorry if he were to call Jenny awake, which was
why he was still rather confused about the situation.
“What else could have happened?” James forced out a smile, and then gave a short summary of how Jenny’s two uncles had arranged an ambush.
“That’s vile!” Baelin felt aggrieved as he mumbled and then pounded on the table.
*Pak!* The sudden force that exploded caused the wooden table to be fall apart.
This loud sound also attracted the attention of another person.
“Sir Leylin, it’s all thanks to you this time!” After seeing Leylin enter, James struggled to get up and bowed.
James himself knew how severely injured he was. After all, it was caused by another level 3 acolyte.
However, being able to treat such injuries, Leylin’s identity had even become more mysterious.
“James, you are still sustaining injuries, so no need for such formalities!” Leylin smiled gently before tapping on Baelin’s head.
“Let us step out and let James have some more rest…”
“Oh! Okay!” Baelin who seemed to be dreaming got up and as he stepped through the door, he comforted James. “Sir James, you should recuperate here quietly, we’re safe here…”
“Of course! I have no doubts about that!” James replied. How can a place that had an official Magus not be safe? If so, are there any safer places out there?
Apart from that, if Leylin wished to help them, Jenny and those two uncles of hers caught in the internal strife were only as significant as specks of dust.
“But what should we do to get Mister Leylin to help us?” James pondered.
Through some discreet inquiries made during this period, he had a little more understanding of Leylin.
Amongst the people that James knew, this Lord Leylin was aloof,
proud and disliked troublesome matters, hence he seldom appeared in public places. The mortal items were just like floating clouds to him.
Apart from training Baelin each day, there was no other recreation that Leylin would partake in.
“Baelin! Right, Baelin!” James clapped his hands, an indescribable light in his eyes…

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“Speak! What’s the matter?”
Leylin looked at Baelin, who seemed to be struggling within during the journey to the training grounds, and smiled.
“My lord, I’d like to take your leave for a period of time and escort Miss Jenny to the eastern capital!”
The young man’s voice was resolute; his fists were clenched and his face flushed. Faint rays of light radiated from his body.

“So stubborn. Are you sure you won’t go back on your words? The moment you go to the eastern capital, I probably will no longer teach you!” Leylin had a toying expression on his face.

“A Grand Knight isn’t anything much. There are probably a whole dozen in Jenny’s family. Let’s not even talk about the dangers on the way that will probably cause you to lose your life. What are you planning to do after you send her back? Be a captain of some guards at the Argus Family? Or perhaps, even worse, become a mercenary?”

“Have you thought of all these?” Leylin asked.

Baelin had turned pale, but his voice was steady, “I know all that! But… but if I don’t send Jenny home safely, my heart will never be at ease. I know this for sure…”

“Fine! You can leave, but you are to never return.” Leylin looked at this toy of his that was full of righteousness and gave an ultimatum before returning to his room.

*Boom!*

The door slammed shut, leaving Baelin standing outside, silently.

“Thank you, Baelin!” At this moment, a small, cold hand covered
Baelin’s calloused palm.
“Jen...Jenny, you...” Baelin began to stutter as he spoke. A finger that was equally icy and was rather fragrant was placed upon Baelin’s lips. “You don’t need to say anything else!” Jenny mumbled, and then rested her head on Baelin’s shoulders. “When I was younger, what I liked the most was leaning against my Father’s body and resting my head on his chest. Now, can you lend me your shoulders to rest on for a while?” “Of course. It’ll be my pleasure to...” Baelin stood there in a daze, his nostrils breathing in the fragrance from Jenny’s hair. He did not dare move even a muscle.

......

A night passed and Baelin looked at his crush who had left his side, and also the trace of dampness on his shoulders, before smiling wryly. “Let us set off!”

On a mini horse-carriage carrying goods, Baelin wore rugged cloth and dressed as a horse keeper. As for Jenny and James, they were hiding inside a compartment of the horse carriage. On the four sides of the horse carriage, large torches were lit, dispelling the darkness in the surroundings.
“Don’t worry! They won’t be able to discover you!” Baelin tried his best to console them. As for Jenny and James, they could only look at each other and smile wryly. As the Lord Marquis’s condition was worsening, Jenny and James only had a short respite to nurture their wounds before continuing on the journey. Their employed adventurers and mercenaries were slain in the
earlier journey, which made it obvious to everyone that someone was obstructing Jenny and her party. There were no more fools stepping forward to be their valiant protectors. Furthermore, even the Baron who had lost a Knight and most of his elite troops felt a deep remorse. The way he looked at Jenny now was as if he was seeing the god of plague. To him, the sooner Jenny, who was like a magnet for bad fortune, left the better it was. In any case, it would be best that none of the incidents were to happen in the area he oversaw, so that he can be acquitted of the blame. This attitude was even more apparent after he received an anonymous letter from the eastern capital. It was to the extent of rejecting to grant Jenny an audience with him. In this feudalistic area, it was like many small kingdoms which were independent. After seeing the Baron act this way, all of the Potter Town’s citizens did not offer any help to Jenny thereafter. For this small horse carriage, Baelin had to fork out three times of the market price to purchase it. The seller even stressed that he would only sell to Baelin; he did not want to even have a buyer-seller relation with Jenny! They simply had no confidence that Baelin could complete this simple purchase! However, what else could they have done to ensure their safety? Looking at the shops selling torches and the weaponry shop which were closed, Jenny and James were in dismay. As for Baelin, he looked even sadder. However, he clenched his teeth and looked at Jenny sitting behind him, before cracking his whip. *Pa!* The horse carriage began to move, taking the three passengers out of this town. “Wait a minute, can I hitch a ride?”
Just when the town behind Baelin gradually grew smaller and when his indecisiveness was at its peak, he heard a voice that sounded heavenly to the ears.

“Bo…Boss!”

Baelin rubbed his eyes and looked at Leylin wearing black robes with a small knapsack. Immediately, his eyes were filled with guilt and excitement, relief and many other expressions.

“Lord Leylin! We’re extremely grateful for you coming with us!”

At this moment, Jenny and James popped out from the narrow compartment of the horse carriage and smiled, as if relieved of a heavy burden.

From the looks of it, if this mysterious Mister Leylin was to join them, what more did they need to worry about?

It was evident that Jenny and James had joy on their faces no matter how hard they tried to conceal it.

Through Baelin, they have successfully made Leylin, this mysterious person who was most likely a Magus, come with them. Even after returning to the eastern region, involving Leylin in their scheme was extremely beneficial!

As for these petty schemes, Leylin had not even needed to guess before he knew their train of thoughts. However, he did not express it explicitly and allowed Baelin to escort him up the carriage.

With this powerful expert Leylin holding the fort, the other three felt much better in an instant.

They threw away all that was used to conceal themselves, and also changed the interior of the horse carriage to make it seem like it was carrying passengers instead of goods. They no longer had to squeeze into that small space throughout the journey.

* Da Da Da!*

The wheels of the horse carriage spun as the two old horses galloped with all their might to travel forth.

“Master Leylin, why are you willing to give up on your shop and
come with me to the eastern capital?”
Baelin glanced at Leylin who was resting at a side, restraining himself as much as he could before he asked.
“Of course it’s for you, you fool! How can I be reassured if I let you go alone?”
Leylin opened his eyes and spoke indifferently.
“Bo-boss, I’m so touched…” Baelin choked with emotion, sparkling tears gathering in his eyes.
“If you thought I’d say something like that, you’re gravely mistaken!” Immediately after, Leylin’s next words caused Baelin to be stunned.
“Business at Blazing Hammers is not doing well. I’ve been wanting to go to the eastern capital and find a suitable place to do some business or open a branch. Since you’re going, I’ll go too since you’re already going there.”
“No, you must be lying to me! You must be here because you’re worried about me, right Boss?”
Baelin looked ready to breakdown, while Jenny and James looked like they wanted to laugh, but did not dare do so.
“Just think whatever you want to think.”
Leylin stared, speechless, at this fellow who was a bit too egotistical.
He spoke indifferently and snuggled into his clothes, seemingly entering a deep sleep.
However, in his heart, he thought, “A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!”
Over these two years, Leylin constantly used potions to heal his
injuries. At this point, the injuries on his body had mostly recovered.
However, healing the damage done to his sea of consciousness and his spiritual force was a very slow process, causing Leylin to start feeling impatient. 
Hence, after his emotions due to his Warlock bloodline had erupted, he had decided to go to the eastern capital and find a way to increase the rate of this process. 
After expelling the mark from the rank 3 Magus Alric, he could now release part of his spiritual force and return his strength to that of a peak rank 1 Magus.
Whether in the south coast or in Twilight Zone, Magi with this power could go on a rampage. As long as one did not meet with a Magus above rank 2, they were basically tyrants!
Though the Twilight Zone had a lot of high-grade meditation techniques, there were still some differences in the overall strength as compared to the south coast.
Leylin, who also trained in a high-grade meditation technique, was very clear about these differences.
The high-grade meditation techniques passed down from ancient Magi could help a Magus get stronger at every rank with all sorts of amazing powers along the way, but there were still a few obvious disadvantages!
After training up to a certain point, regular mortal resources were of no use to them, and only bizarre or even items from another world would be able to help one progress in one’s meditation technique. If not, one would get stuck at some point.
In ancient times, Magi took over world after world and amassed vast amounts of resources. Also, the connection between Twilight Zone and the external world still existed, so this wasn’t a problem. However, the troublesome matter was: Not only had Twilight Zone lost its supply of resources from other worlds, it had even lost
contact with the subterranean world itself!
Certain high-grade meditation techniques were extremely harsh when it came to the materials needed, and they also could not be substituted!
Hence, though the percentage of Magi here was a lot higher than in the south coast, there was probably the same number of rank 2 Magi on both sides.
As for rank 3 Magi, Leylin guessed they would be even lesser in number here than in the south coast!
After all, the higher the rank of a Magus, the rarer the materials they needed. This was even more so for Magi who used high-grade meditation techniques.
Without the help from these precious resources, Magi could only use time and make the occasional tiny amount of progress in these techniques. Such a speed would be enough to make a Magus have a nervous breakdown.
Most Magi used most of their lifetime and still could not break through the first level of their meditation technique, and were filled with unwillingness to accept their fate and were full of regrets at the time of their deaths!
But Leylin’s advanced meditation technique, Kemoyin’s Pupil, also required specific resources. If it wasn’t for the fact that he got his hands on the meat of the ancient Thousand Eyed Starfish by pure luck, then even Leylin had no clue how long it would have taken him to completely remodel his heart, and thereby become a rank 2 Magus.

Besides, compared to other advanced meditation techniques, the criteria for Warlocks were much harsher!

One mustn’t forget to train in Kemoyin’s Pupil, one must first possess the ancient bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent! Just this one prerequisite was enough to stump most acolytes!

Whether it was the south coast or Twilight Zone, there were very few beings with ancient bloodlines. They were practically extinct!

Any acolyte that wanted to obtain a bit of the essence from an ancient bloodline would find this task even more difficult than advancing to become an official Magus!

Take Kemoyin’s Pupil for example. If one does not try to obtain the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Snake or the Black Horrall Snake and instead settled for the next best thing, even getting blood from the matured Mankestre Snake, which had the strength of an official Magus, was an impossible task for level 3 acolytes!

High-grade meditation techniques had very harsh requirements, and they were not something that Magi from remote areas, such as the Twilight Zone, could fulfill.
Hence, though there were more ancient inheritances left behind here than in the south coast, the power on both sides was about the same, or perhaps the Twilight Zone’s power was inferior to the south coast’s.

“With the passage of time, everything is advancing!”

Having thought this through, Leylin couldn’t help but sigh. Though the south coast had not been able to gain the full inheritance, the Magi of the younger generations were just as talented and as good as the ancient Magi were at researching. In a situation where they lacked specific resources, they had independently come up with another way for Magi to advance: using Grime Water and breaking through by way of stimulation through a rank 1 spell model. Though this took a toll on a Magus’ life force and even hindered their future, the price to rise to rank 1 and 2 was still affordable. At least compared to high-grade meditation techniques which required precious materials, though there were many needs for resources using this simplified version, these could be satisfied using materials from the south coast itself. This had thus allowed for the prosperity of the south coast. The top-grade materials were all gathered and collectively provided to Magi with high-grade meditation techniques, guaranteeing that they could develop their top-notch battle power and maintain their governance.

“Things are improving over time! Though the choice of the Magi in the south coast in using the simplified version was not the best choice, it was likely the most suitable for the land of the south coast.”

Leylin sighed. Although the amount of ancient inheritances on the south coast were not incomparable with those in Twilight Zone, he had never seen so many Magi who were so fixated on the power of the
ancient Magi. They would kill each other in order to receive even a part of a broken inheritance.

“But the Magi of the Twilight Zone have a lot of Magi training in high-grade meditation techniques, which proves that there must be even more resources from ancient times here than in the south coast. This might be a chance for me!”

Leylin brightened up.

For him, gathering high-grade meditation techniques, filling up his database, completing Sacred Flame, and simulating the content of the fourth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil were some of his goals. His other purpose was to gain precious materials from the subterranean world, as well as items that might be helpful in progressing in high-grade meditation techniques.

“Be careful now, the hills which we were ambushed previously are ahead!”

At this moment, James spoke and broke the silence.

Baelin immediately gripped his longsword. As for Leylin, he did not even budge an inch.

To him, an ambush from a level 3 acolyte was just a joke!

The horse carriage continued forward, and very soon, hills surrounded them on both sides. The large trees which grew to the skies projected sinister-looking shadows on the ground, which was also the perfect place for an ambush.

On the ground, there were large amounts of footprints and traces of blood; even the surrounding rocks and trees were covered with numerous arrows and scars made from sword slashes.

Although the ambush happened some time ago, even with people covering up the tracks, it was not too difficult to imagine the gruesome scene that had happened.

Upon seeing all of this, Jenny’s body quivered and she immediately went back to the horse carriage.

As for James, he heaved a sigh, “Miss Jenny is but a fifteen-year-
old girl. All of this is too grim and too early for her…”
“Since she was born and raised in a noble family, she has enjoyed
the elegant lifestyle and glory of being a noble. However, she also
must undertake the responsibilities of one, regardless of her age or
gender. This is her calling…”
At this moment, Leylin who had been simulating the high-grade
meditation technique Sacred Flame spoke with wisdom.
“Lord Leylin’s words possess a philosophical element to them!”
James smiled and praised, but Leylin eyes lit up.
Just then, he had tried a different simulation of the Sacred Flame.
After hearing James speak, he replied with his own feelings.
However, when he did so, there was no doubt behind his words.
“Is this the power of Lady Fate? I seem to have glimpse part of her
silhouette
Leylin grinned.
He already had some understanding that Sacred Flame was linked
with the powers of destiny. The way to advance was also extremely
bizarre. One had to absorb a mysterious item at the peak of where
destinies clash before advancing.
As for fate, it revolved around the world.
It is no surprise then that in legends many heroes were always
supported by one or two Magi who could read prophecies. It was
all for mutual benefits.
Only by being with these ‘main characters’ who were destined for
great things would the powerful strength of destinies converge.
Every time they were to make a huge decision, it was when the
convergence of fate was at its peak. For Magi cultivating in this
high-grade meditation technique, they first had to appreciate this
great power and even be swept by it. To these ‘children of
destinies’, the Magi had to attempt and adapt to change the
outcome. During this progress, they often had to obtain mysterious,
yet specific, items in order to advance and level-up their meditation
technique.
“Fate and foretelling! What wondrous might!”
Leylin’s gaze swept past Baelin, Jenny, and James. It seemed like, amongst these three, there was someone who would be able to change the entire history of the Twilight Zone!
However, as Leylin had merely simulated Sacred Flame and did not actually train in this meditation technique, as well as it being incomplete, he could not tell who would be the person to change history.
Even so, Leylin knew for sure that the methods of the Botelli Family in using their ancestors’ spirits by force was a very malicious practice!
“Sacred Flame! What a wondrous meditation technique!” Leylin could tell that even in ancient times, high-grade meditation techniques that could foretell the future were very, very rare. However, he had no intentions of changing his meditation technique!
Not taking into consideration the incompleteness of the meditation technique itself, Jenna’s strange demise was still vivid in his mind. He did not want to become the next Jenna. Besides, he did not trust this ability that could tell the future. In Leylin’s eyes, the future constantly changed and could not be fathomed. Even if he could occasionally catch hold of a few scenes, it did not necessarily mean that he could control the future.
This was a difference in philosophy, and one where Magi had the most varied opinions!
For this reason, even if Leylin changed his meditation technique to train in Sacred Flame, he would definitely not be enlightened and might even cause significant damage to his sea of consciousness due to the technique itself.
However, Leylin was still drooling at the mouth within his heart about this ability.
Even though the prophecies might be false, under many circumstances they were important references and supplementary information sources.

“Perhaps after completing the Sacred Flame technique and propagating it, I can strip off some of the power from the people who have cultivated in it and create some some item with magical properties.”

Leylin suddenly came up with an idea, and the moment it was formed, it took root deep in his mind.

“Exactly! If I do this, while training, I can still see the situation and obtain information firsthand and constantly perfect the technique. Even if I fail, I’ll only lose some spiritual force and a bunch of resources, but I won’t suffer much damage. If I succeed, I’ll be the envy of even rank 3 Magi.”

The carriage passed a hill with no troubles and then came to a field. James and Baelin, who had been extremely nervous and on edge the entire time, heaved sighs of relief.

It was impossible for them to be ambushed on flat ground, which was why they could relax.

*Lu lu!*

Just as Leylin was pondering about his thoughts, the sounds of horses galloping from a far distance could be heard. A bright ray of light appeared on the horizon far away, and it quickly turned into a black cloud.

Many Knights wearing black leather armour on dark horses charged swiftly like a hurricane. They held onto the reins with their right hands and in their left hands they held onto blazing torches.

Very soon, many Knights surrounded the small horse carriage that Baelin’s party was in.

“Garrison troops from the Lilan castle? Madmen! Crazy! They actually deployed troops to surround us…”

There was incomparable fear on James’ face before it quickly
turned into despair.
Magi were extremely powerful and could regard regular humans as ants. However, this scenario of surrounding regular people using troops was different.
To high level Magi, no matter how many regular humans there were, it was but one more death word for them. Just the radiation emitted from Magi’s bodies would leave the regular humans to die in anguish.
However, James, who was an acolyte, did not have such terrifying strength.
He had once thought of a scenario: if he were faced with a hundred or less troops, he could deploy guerilla warfare and kill them all. However, if there were more, he would not be able to do that.
Magus’ spiritual force and magic power were not infinite. Even if they had extraordinary strength, they would still suffer from natural limitations. Even if James was a level 3 acolyte, when faced with a troop of a hundred elite soldiers, he could only retreat. The opponent’s side had too many people, and even if they lined up for him to kill them, his pitiful amount of spiritual force and magic power would not be sufficient to kill them all. And if these soldiers were all replaced with cavalrymen? Hopelessness had already started invading James’ heart. Being surrounded by that many cavalryman, the most he could do was to escape by himself with that magic artifact of his, leaving behind Jenny.

But, we have Lord Leylin with us now. There shouldn’t be any problem.

James glanced at Leylin and forced himself to calm down. A situation where a squadron composed of magicians and civilian troops fighting each other has never before occurred in the history of Twilight Zone. After all, no lord would stupidly provoke an official Magus. Moreover, as far as Magi were concerned, they could use stealth and cast spells and could easily end the life of the perpetrator, so why should he unnecessarily waste his time? If Lord Leylin really was an official Magus, then they need not be
worried about this danger. James inwardly comforted himself with these encouraging thoughts, and then he heard Baelin’s nervous, almost-filled-with-fear voice asking, “Who are you all?” Although he had advanced and become a Grand Knight, but it was evident that his attitude had not adjusted to this fact. After looking at the expressionless and dense army, the small city resident’s heart welled up with fear.

With the horses neighing in the background, a small path opened up among the ranks of the calvary. An old fellow wearing a black Chinese suit, and with the mark of a human skull on his forehead, walked out.

“Rhodes, it really is you! You went as far as to dare station some troops here, are you not worried about being punished?” The expression on James’ face was an odd mixture of fury and regret. “My beloved older brother, it is me!” Rhodes sneered. “Older brother?” The stunned Baelin had only now discovered that if that sinister mark branded on Rhodes’ face was removed, he would closely resemble James.

“We are all employed by the Argus Family. Thus, there is no need for the soldiers to face off against each other with swords.” James tried one last compromise.

“Brother James! It’s because I want to prove that I’m better than you! Even in the aspect of choosing my leader! It will definitely be the next head of the Argus Family!” Rhodes’ expression seemed to express a deep-rooted hatred.

“If it is about the matter that happened during our childhood years, I will apologize to you for that. I can even kneel before you. Nevertheless, Rhodes, one must not enter this vortex, as it can kill you…”

“Heehihihiihee… saying these things now, what’s the use?” Rhodes gave an eerie smile and came over.
“All of you... Annoying!” Leylin, who was in front of the carriage, frowned, expressing his dissatisfaction. Just as he had thought over and improved his plan, it was suddenly disrupted by this Rhodes and soon, an evil fire approached Rhodes.

“Is this Lord Leylin?” Rhodes gave a deep bow. In front of this person who had a high certainty of being an official Magus, he did not dare to be disrespectful.

“This is an internal affair of the Argus Family. Moreover, our family’s Lord Siegfried is also a respected Lord Magus. He also wishes he can meet you…”

“No! You lie! Grandpa Siegfried has been deceived by you.” Leylin still did not respond. Jenny jumped up, in a straight sudden manner like the tail of a kitten when it was frightened or angry.

“The official Magus of the Argus Family is known as Siegfried, eh? It seems he is the common ancestor for both these troops…” Leylin felt some pity for this Magus. His own descendants, for the sake of gaining power, were beating up each other. Maybe all of this gives him a headache. Or maybe he doesn’t care about such things. After all, a Magus’ lifespan was very long. By the time a few generations have passed by, whatever affection and such emotions that said Magus had towards his family would have become very diluted.

“I do not care who has Siegfried’s backing, but, I believe you are blocking my way. Now, step aside at once!” Leylin frankly chided him. The one Rhodes mentioned was just a level 1 Magus, who certainly couldn’t induce fear in him, but he was extremely disgusted with Rhodes’ attitude.

“Hic……” This kind of scolding, clearly made Rhodes feel deflated and he stood there looking foolishly around him. His face also
turned red. His every effort and achievements were like jokes in the eyes of his family. This is unfair! Again I hear such a tone. And again I am being subjected to such an expression. And in my childhood, my older brother was also the same. Why is he stronger than me in everything? Why do all the good things happen to him and not me? Rhodes’s eyes turned redder. Moreover, it isn’t clear whether that Leylin is an official Magus or not. There exists a probability that he is just someone that slut Jenny hired to scare me. Rhodes firmly waved his hand, “Charge!” The multitude soldiers received the order and immediately charged forth. Even if you are an official Magus, so what? Facing so many Knights, your spiritual force wouldn’t last long. After this mission is done with, if worst comes to worst, I will just hide myself within the Argus Family and live comfortably. Anyways, with me under Lord Siegfried’s protection, what can you do? Rhodes eyed Leylin resolutely, his face turning the shade of an abnormally faint red. “My lord! Jenny! You both please go ahead.” Baelin then pulled out his long sword and his whole body swelled up like a balloon. He resembled a small giant as he blocked the carriage from harm. After the enemy made their charge, he made his battle preparations and roused the secret Knight techniques that Leylin had instructed him in. Also, the reason behind Rhodes’s unusual facial change was immediately accurately revealed within Leylin’s eyes. “His pupils are unusually dilated. The blood flow in his brain has accelerated by 34%, a clear symptom of damage to his spirit.” Seeing the deranged-looking Rhodes, Leylin was somewhat clear
on why the opponent was acting so unbridled. The studies of Magi were extremely dangerous. Any forms of expression could very well sacrifice the Magus’ life into it. Furthermore, once there was a slight mistake in important matters that concerned the consciousness, meditation, and spiritual force, many detrimental outcomes could be created. This Rhodes, clearly received some harm to his sea of consciousness when he advanced to become a level 3 acolyte. He cannot completely control his spirit and his emotions, and so he appears rather nervous.

However, the reason why Rhodes went mad is only a small matter. Leylin only gave him a slight gaze before he focused his attention on the charging cavalry, his mouth displaying a slight sneer.

The charging troops had approximately 200 people. It seems as if the entirety of the Lilan Castle had come to battle. All of them had donned excellent quality armor and the pikes and huge battle axes they wielded carried a sharp, cold glint.

Two hundred mounts charged forth and the ground started to quake and under this mighty launch, Baelin only resembled a small, bemused ant.

This kind of battle formation would even cause a Magus to frown, but Leylin stood calmly as if nothing of importance was happening. “Why do you all always use a common man’s way of thinking against a Magus?” He lightly sighed and a faint khaki-colored light fell to the ground from his hands.

*Hissssss!* This light was as tiny as a firefly, and it looked as if a puff of breath blown on it would extinguish it.

After the khaki-colored light appeared on the ground, it promptly vanished from sight, as if it had fused into the soil and immediately ripples of tremors began to disperse out from the place where the light blended into the soil.
The tremors began to extend in all directions as if several dominoes had been struck down, and the tremors gained and dispersed more and more power. Finally, there even occurred an earthquake.

The ground began to split open. The huge shockwaves made the Knights feel as if they were caught in the crossfire of bullets. The surroundings quickly looked like as if there were waves from the sea surging forth causing continuous tremors.

“Argh!” “Earthquake!” “My horse” “Save me, my legs are broken!” The rifts began to open from the Knight at the forefront before they soon covered the ground of where the whole cavalry was. Along with the tremors, many horses stumbled and even threw their Knights atop them down.

The ear-splitting bone cracks, the neighing of the horses were all covered by the tremors that the earthquake caused. Only Baelin and James with a certain level of physical ability could barely make out the noise.

The shock wave swept away all the soldiers and still continued on further till they dissipated.

As for the consumption of this spell, it was barely five spiritual force points.

Magi wielded intelligence! Not brute strength! What Leylin did earlier was to calculate the conditions of the surroundings, before using very little force to cause a devastating earthquake using the butterfly effect.

Just one strike! A crushing defeat! More than two hundred cavalrymen were now dead. The wails of the injured and broken bits of limbs left Rhodes in utter shock.

“He…How can he be this powerful?” Rhodes roared within his heart before he frantically turned away to
escape.
“Baelin! Go capture him!” Leylin pointed at Rhodes. However, Baelin stood there stupefied, not moving an inch.
“ Aren’t you going?” Leylin flicked his finger, only to have a translucent palm slap the back of Baelin’s head.
“ Oh! Okay!” Only then did Baelin regain his senses, running towards the direction Rhodes had escaped in.

“Mister Leylin! No, Lord Leylin! Pardon my presumptuous question… But what is your rank as an official Magus?”
Just then, James paid his respects to Leylin using the most revered formality, with Jenny following suit behind.
“Me?” Leylin grinned, “I’m just a rank 1 Magus who is shuffling his feet in front of the door of truth…”
“So you are indeed an official Magus! Please pardon our disrespect to you earlier!”
After hearing the words from Leylin’s own mouth, Jenny and James sighed in relief. They once again bowed to Leylin before an uncontrollable glee filled their eyes.
“My Lord! I’ve captured that old man!”
Along with Baelin’s voice, there was a low thud as if someone was being tossed to the ground.
“Alright. Let’s go see your little brother!”
Leylin laughed and left first, with James and Jenny trailing behind him.
Outside the carriage, Baelin was holding a large steel sword, his clothes tattered, thus revealing his firm muscles, and his skin also seemed to be glistening. He was staring at the old man in black clothing.
The old man still had the brand of a black skull on his face. This was naturally Rhodes, who had just escaped.
If one talked about strength, this level 3 acolyte wouldn’t be so easily taken down by Baelin, a Grand Knight. However, Leylin had first done something to Rhodes’ body, and Rhodes himself had lost confidence after seeing how terrifying Leylin was. This was how he had been able to be captured by Baelin and brought here.
“My lord, how should we deal with him?”
Baelin swung his large sword at Rhodes, an evil grin on his face. However, knowing Baelin, he was simply intimidating Rhodes.
Seeing his brother who had chosen to embark on the wrong path, James’ expression was complicated, a few times he opened his mouth to say something but quickly shut up. After all, Leylin was the one in charge here. Besides, Rhodes had been caught by
Leylin’s disciple, so he did not have the authority to deal with his brother.

“You- You can’t kill me!” Rhodes gasped, body seemingly tied up by an invisible rope. Blood rushed up to his face, leaving him flushed.

“Oh? And why is that?” Leylin asked with a smile.

“I- I’m part of the Argus family! If you kill me, Master Siegfried won’t let you off,” Rhodes answered while struggling.

“Dream on!” Before he even finished speaking, he was interrupted by Jenny.

The young girl’s face was filled with contempt, “You’re just the conferred title of a subject in the family. Even if you’re a level 3 acolyte, who do you think Master Siegfried would choose to listen to, an official Magus or an acolyte?”

These words were like a sharp arrow, directly piercing into Rhodes’ heart and causing him to turn pale.

As long as these conferred subjects did not possess any land, to put things nicely, they could be said to be subjects of the family. In reality, they were high-grade servants of the Argus Family, and this was also Rhodes’ position.

In addition, even Siegfried would not offend a Magus of the same ranking over an acolyte.

“I’m afraid in Grandpa Siegfried’s heart even if my uncles or even father were to offend a lord Magus, he would send them over to the Magus as an apology!”

The girl looked at Rhodes who seemed to have lost his spine and had no intentions of taking revenge, and instead took pity on him.

Siegfried was a very distant relative of theirs. His family tree had probably branched away seven to eight generations ago.

Whether it was Jenny’s father, her uncles, or anybody in the family who would take control of the Argus Family, it didn’t matter who it was as long as they had the blood of the Argus Family!
Losing one of the families, who was a hindrance, would not really be a large issue for Siegfried.
“Only after gaining enough strength is it possible for Magi to make connections with each other!”
Jenny clenched her fists tightly, her desire for power intensifying.
“One day, I will advance to become an official Magus!”
In that moment, Baelin seemed to see boundless starlight shining from Jenny’s eyes.
“How about him? What should we do?” Baelin scratched his head.
Seeing James who seemed to want to say something, he was getting a headache.
“Let him go!” Leylin suddenly exclaimed.
“My lord!” James was evidently pleasantly surprised and half-knelt,
“I thank my lord for his benevolence on behalf of my useless brother!”
It was obvious that he still thought highly of his biological younger brother. However, the one calling the shots here was Leylin.
Without fully understanding Leylin’s intentions, he did not dare say a word for fear it would cause Miss Jenny trouble.
Now that Leylin was letting Rhodes go, gratefulness could be seen in his eyes.
“Since Lord Leylin has spoken, I have no objections,” Jenny spoke up, though James smiled wryly in his heart.
This tone meant she was furious with him. However, for his brother, he persevered.
*Xiu Xiu!*
An invisible rope was pulled on by Leylin, and Rhodes was made to stand up.
“Leave. Don’t let me see you again!”
Baelin pushed Rhodes and pretended to be threatening him by gesturing with his sword.
Rhodes totally ignored Baelin’s threats and glanced at his brother
James, a complication expression on his face, and quickly left. All this time, he did not dare to take a glance in Leylin’s direction. Leylin laughed. This was just a level 3 acolyte who was basically like an ant in his eyes. It didn’t matter to him whether Rhodes was killed or released. However, since this could earn him a good impression, why not? He believed that he needed to return to the side of people who abide the law and were kind. Even if he didn’t feel this way at all in his heart, it was necessary to display that image on the outside. When associating with a Magus who was a stranger to them, a good reputation would lower many people’s guards. For instance, right now, James and Jenny’s eyes no longer showed the prudence and cautiousness they originally had. Now, there was more admiration and respect towards him.

……

Rhodes was extremely intelligent. After knowing Leylin’s status as an official Magus, he wisely chose not to bother them with their journey any longer. Just like this, the undisturbed journey went past many towns, allowing Leylin and Baelin to learn more about this place. Twilight Zone was not a peaceful area, and places, where the sun stone and light were not able to reach, were filled with many darkness type creatures. Moreover, apart from humans, there were many other intelligent species which inhabited such areas. Along the way, Leylin met several handsome looking mice-men the size of human kids that rode large spiders as their steeds. They seemed to be a type of elf. According to Jenny, these were dark elves that even had a kingdom in the areas where light did not reach. The might of their species was about the same as humans. Of course, the creatures which were the greatest threat to Leylin
and their party were those lurking in the shadows. Without flames or the sun stone to dispel the darkness, these creatures would swarm forward like mosquitoes, devouring unaware travellers to bits. Hence, to travel in Twilight Zone, apart from having enough fire starter items or sunstones, power was a necessity. Otherwise, the only outcome was having regrets after becoming feces in the desolate field.

Of course, all of these proved no threat in front of Leylin, an official Magus. Even if it was a horde of the most brutal creatures, they were just cute little pets in front of him, which could be broken apart easily. Reverence filled Jenny and James’ eyes as they looked as Leylin, who had closed his eyes for meditation.

Leylin had lent a hand several times along the journey. But just this power was the corner of the iceberg that Leylin possessed, it was enough to leave Jenny and James in utter shock and reverence.

All those times when he struck had might exceed the guardian of the Argus Family, Siegfried!

However, just at this moment, the horse carriage which had been moving stopped.

“Lord Leylin! Jenny and Sir James! In front of us is the Weeping Ghost Grounds, should we make a detour?”

Baelin opened the door and in one of his hand, he held a broken piece of the map. On the map, the area that they were about to reach was the Weeping Ghost Grounds. It was circled in red, with several splatters of red ink that made it seem like spilled blood.

“We’re going to the eastern capital, and the fastest way is through the Weeping Ghost Grounds! This will save us a good half of the total time. If we’re making a detour, we must head north to the Geri Basin, and then through the Sicily Valley. This will cost us a lot of
James explained to Leylin.
“So then, what special dangers are there in the Weeping Ghost Grounds?” Leylin asked as his interest was piqued.
From James speech, it seemed like he had also approved of this route. Of course, all this was only possible if Leylin was with them.
“The Weeping Ghost Grounds is a very famous forbidden area in the whole of the Twilight Zone. It is said that two powerful Magi had a battle here, hence causing many mysterious types of phenomenon and power lurking within, which are still present up till now…”
James was extremely solemn. “History has it that the Weeping Ghost Grounds has gobbled up many adventurers who doubted the myth. Mercenaries, Knights, acolytes and once even an army of ten thousand!”
“According to myths, one official Magus had once managed to pass through the Weeping Ghost Grounds. According to his description, there seemed to be many spirit bodies within the area. These spirit bodies were filled with malicious intents. Once someone were to enter the area, they would be relentlessly chased after.
Spirit bodies huh? That really brings back memories!
Leylin grinned. He had dived deeper into his research of spirit bodies. There were not many Magi who were more competent than him in this field. It could be said that the least of his fears was a spirit body.
Furthermore, since a Magus had already successfully passed through this area, then it would most likely not be very dangerous.
“We’ll head through the Weeping Ghost Grounds then! I wish to see the traces of previous generation Magi!”
Leylin laughed as he spoke.
As for James and Jenny, glee was written all over their faces.
The Argus Family’s Marquis illness demanded immediate attention, and time was running short. If they were unable to send the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud back to the Marquis on time, he would very likely be poisoned to death. By then, Jenny’s two uncles would have most likely seized control of the internal powers within the Argus Family. This was a scene that Jenny was not willing to witness. However, to let her and James pass through the Weeping Ghost Grounds? That would only be courting death! Hence, after hearing that Leylin agreed to it, Jenny and James were exhilarated.

“Oh, I got this! So, we’ll pass through the Weeping Ghost Grounds, right? This name is really distasteful!” Baelin spoke casually and returned to the driver’s seat, before cracking his whip. As a local, the only knowledge he knew of his world was Potter Town and the nearby Woody Wastelands. Due to the limited traffic and deficiency of information that Potter Town received, he had no knowledge of other places. In fact, this was his first time travelling!

Along with the horse neighing and the creaking made from the spokes of the wheels of the horse carriage, they gradually entered the area of the Weeping Ghost Grounds. As the Weeping Ghost Grounds was labelled a forbidden area, very few travellers dared to tread through it. The roads had long since
been abandoned, with many weeds and shrubs growing on the sides. Baelin could barely recognise the tracks that were once used as they travelled on uneven ground.

As the horse carriage went deeper into the Weeping Ghost Grounds, a layer of thin mist veiled the area, slowly engulfing their surroundings.

At first the mist was rather mild, but as it got denser, their vision was reduced to only a distance of five metres from the horse carriage.

“Lor… Lord Leylin! The mist is too dense now…” Baelin slowed the pace of the horse carriage. To be going quickly under such poor conditions was simply seeking death.

“I got this!”

Leylin waved his right arm, and a thread of grey mist swirled in his palm. It was dispersed in one moment yet they converged immediately after.

“There’s a bit of chilliness in this aura. Also, it’s not purely made from water vapours…”

He then ordered, “A.I. Chip, analyse components!”

[Beep! Mission establishing, gathering source material, analysis beginning…] The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

Very soon, a composition image appeared in front of Leylin’s eyes.

[The main component of this mist is water at 98.2%. There are also mixed amounts of salt, protein and other digestive enzymes…] [Through comparison with the database, it is determined to be the tears of a human! Accuracy: 99.99%]

The A.I. Chip’s reply shocked Leylin a bit. After a moment had passed, the corners of his lips curled upwards.

“Using tears as mist? Interesting! I have even caught a whiff of some spirit bodies in this…”

“Lord Leylin, is there anything wrong?”

Jenny and James looked at Leylin, their eyes filled with worry.
During the A.I. Chip’s analysis, outsiders could only perceive Leylin staring blankly for a second before grinning to himself. Weeping Ghost Grounds was a forbidden area established atop countless skeletons. If not for this official Magus, Leylin, standing guard this time, Jenny and James would not have dared to approach this area. Furthermore, even with Leylin around, Jenny and James were still wary after entering the Weeping Ghost Grounds and did not let their guard down for a single moment.

“Lord Leylin! The mist is too much; I’ve lost my way…”

At this moment, Baelin stopped the horse carriage and turned back with an apologetic expression.

“This… How can this happen?” Jenny and James looked at each other before stepping out of the horse carriage. Very soon, they were stupefied by the amount of mist there was. In front of the horse carriage were three forked paths, they seemed to be like branches of an ancient tree, winding and crooked, heading towards different directions. There stood a badly damaged, rotten wooden signpost with countless vines creeping on it. On the sign, the black words which had almost faded away were the names of the different paths and even had arrowheads pointing to their locations.

“Hut of the Weeping Woman, Paradise of Wailing Creatures, Jones’ Pastry Shop…What strange names are these?” Jenny was bewildered. “I haven’t been here before, but according to the map there should only be one path, nothing like forked paths of any sort…”

“It seems like we’ve met with some trouble!” James sighed exasperatedly, but deep down he felt a little more relieved. Previously, he did not know what terrors were hidden inside the Weeping Ghost Grounds, which made him be on guard all the time.
However, now that trouble had presented itself, he felt a little better. At the very least, now that some troubles had appeared, their party had to solve them.

“Hng! Petty tricks!”

At this moment, Leylin walked out too. As he saw the sign, his expression showed distaste.

Very soon, a layer of red light flashed past Leylin’s pupils, and the surroundings underwent a tremendous change. The grey mist immediately thinned, revealing many bizarrely shaped trees. As for the signpost, many tiny three-headed snakes and toads now covered the words which were previously there.

“These are only the effects of poltergeists, affecting the mental soundness of regular humans and even acolytes. If it’s only up to this extent, it would be such a disappointment.”

“Now I will lead the way, and you will just follow my movements.” Leylin let Jenny and James sat in the horse carriage as he took up the role of assistant driver.

“Yes, my Lord!”

After Leylin sat beside him, Baelin inhaled a deep breath, feeling much more relieved than before, “Which way do we go?”

“None of those paths, head to the extreme right!”

Leylin sneered at the originally pitched forks. At this moment, in Leylin’s vision, the three paths had all disappeared, turning into three huge caves that were covered by trees. If the horse carriage entered those areas, they would definitely meet with a dead end. Once they had deviated from the main path, they would be trapped in there.

“But, those are granite rocks! How are we going to travel through that?” Baelin scratched his head.

The direction that Leylin had pointed in was where a large granite rock sturdily stood, with algae growing on it.

*Pak!* Before Baelin could finish talking, he was smacked on the
head by Leylin, “Just go where I tell you to, why do you have so much rubbish to say?”
Baelin wailed, but his experiences and training with Leylin allowed him to quickly follow the instructions given.
The horse carriage moved forward, charging towards the ten meter tall granite rock.
“Hey Hey! There’re only five more metres, should we stop now?” Baelin questioned Leylin as he rode forward. However, as no reply was given, he had no choice but to grit his teeth and urge the horses forward.
“Three metres! One metre now!” Baelin cried in alarm but at the very end he gave up and shut his eyes.
*Pop!* As the head of the horses crashed into the granite rock, the expected impact and cries did not happen. Baelin widened his eyes in shocked, and very soon a strange sight occurred!
The heads of the two horses had already extended into the huge granite rock. Looking at this scene, it seemed like the huge rock had swallowed them.
The huge rock continuously engulfed the horses from their head to their necks, to their back and tails, and finally towards Baelin.
“Yikes!” Baelin unconsciously extended his right hand to block the impact, but very soon a flash appeared in his vision.
*Pop!* A feeling like walking past a wall of water came onto him, as Baelin looked at the surroundings in awe.
After passing through the granite rock, the mist thinned by a considerable amount. With the torches carried by the horses and the frightening physical abilities as a Grand Knight, Baelin’s vision had already extended to over a dozen metres.
On both sides of the road were black birch trees, growing in an orderly fashion. In the middle was a small path, which was where
the horse carriage was travelling on. As for the original three forked pitches, they had completely vanished by now.

“Did we stumble upon some strange illusory spell earlier?” As a level 3 acolyte, James was the quickest to understand what had happened.

However, Leylin did not answer his question. On the contrary, he turned even more solemn, much more than when he looked at the pitched forks.

“The direction is wrong! This isn’t the scene that I saw earlier!”

In his earlier observation, the correct path that Leylin saw should have been a small road laid with brambles, but not such a neat and orderly looking road like this.

“Don’t tell me that I have also been influenced by the illusion earlier?” Leylin’s face turned dark.

However, the astonishment deep within his heart far surpassed what his face revealed. He was already a rank 2 Warlock! Although he was injured, a simple spirit body could no longer affect his senses.

“A.I. Chip! Scan the surroundings!”

Leylin rubbed his temples and ordered as a flash of blue light glowed in his eyes.

[Beep! Mission establishing, beginning scan!] [Alert! Alert! Due to unknown interference, the scan is unable to be accomplished. Will try again in 1 second…Bzzt..Bzzt…]

The A.I. Chip responded. However, very soon the feedback received was like a broken tape mixed with a radio with no signals, giving off a buzzy feedback noise.

This piercing noise grew louder and louder, finally turning into the ear-piercing wail of a woman.

“Wuu…Wuu…”

This noise filled Leylin’s head, making him dizzy.

“Have you guys heard anything? I think I hear a woman crying!”
In reality, Baelin muttered. He soon received the responses of Jenny and James, “Us too!”
“Over there!” James suddenly pointed.
Leylin also looked in the direction James had indicated, and under a rotten birch tree, a woman wearing a long black dress was crouching and weeping.
“This voice! This voice! It’s Marsha’s! I won’t ever forget it!”
An incredulous look was on James’ face. He quickly hopped off the horse carriage and rushed to the woman.
Marsha! My beloved Marsha, is that you?”
Agitation filled James’ voice as he skipped lightly towards the woman in the black dress, reaching out his hands to pull her shoulders back.
Leylin stood on the horse carriage while observing, yet he did not stop James.
The situation right now was extremely strange, and he needed a guinea pig to test the waters.
James used some force to turn the woman in black dress around.
Suddenly, all he saw was a face with no orifices, but only a black swirl on it.
*Xiu!* Horror filled James’ face as he seemed to be pulled into a long black string and was continuously swirled as he was absorbed into the woman’s face.
The whole process was extremely quick, ending just as Leylin was about to lend a hand. However, through a replay, he could clearly see how James was stretched and distorted bit by bit into more than a dozen metres and eventually absorbed into the woman’s swirling face.
This time disorder left Leylin feeling so disgusted that he wanted to puke.
At the same time, his heart sank.
“This is definitely not any sort of spirit body, but a more terrifying existence that I am still unable to comprehend…”
In an instant, Leylin recalled from the A.I. Chip’s database that back in ancient times, battles between two high ranking Magi would often devastate the earth and seas around them. At the same time, they could separate the dimensions of space and time, causing others to perceive things incorrectly. Especially in such places, there would often be strange beings with terrifying powers. Some of these existences were extremely weak, such that even a level 3 acolyte could easily eradicate them. However, some others were so terrifying that they could even surpass the powers of the Morning Star Magi, directly causing the stars in the sky to fall! “This black clothed woman is but an apparition. Once certain conditions are fulfilled, the swirl on her face activates, swallowing any objects that come close to it…” Leylin made his conclusion in an instant. “Right now, my power is still lacking. Against such an apparition, which obviously isn’t weak, choosing to engage without any further information is simply a foolish act. Run!” His body instantly turned into black mist and vanished into the thin air. With the flicker of black light, Leylin’s body appeared several hundred meters away with a black arc that followed behind. “Wuuuuu!” However, the ear-piercing screams still sounded in Leylin’s ears, the pitch of which was even higher than before. Leylin was stupefied as he found himself changing directions and flying towards the woman in the black dress. *Ka-cha!* The woman stood up and her skull split open into two halves. From that gaping hole, rows of razor sharp fangs were revealed, as though her face had turned into the jaws of a creature. *Bang!* The giant jaw snapped shut, and darkness enveloped
Leylin felt as if he had fallen from an extremely high place and hit the ground before his body shuddered as he regained consciousness.

“I seem to have been swallowed by that woman earlier!”

“Where is this?”

Leylin rubbed his head as he looked at his surroundings.

The room was dark and small, with many spiderwebs at the corners. There was not a single piece of furniture, nor even windows or a door.

It seemed to be a small, sealed basement of the sorts.

Besides Leylin, there also lay Baelin and Jenny. Their eyes were shut tight as they were unconscious. It seemed like they would need a long while before regaining consciousness.

“An even deeper illusion!” Leylin was extremely solemn.

“If the three pitched forks of the road were the superficial layer of this illusion, the women in the black dress was the second layer, and this, the third!”

An illusion! Also, Leylin did not have much interaction with the dreamland, but in ancient times, the Magi had once conquered another large world, in which the inhabitants had wielded dream and illusory powers. Through the powers of the dream realm, they could easily accomplish anything, and were even revered as gods by the ignorant inhabitants of the other planes and dimensions!

Also, through a short paragraph recorded in antique books, Leylin knew that the further one threaded into an illusion, the more difficult it was to escape.

“I’ve got to get out! The third level of an illusion is dangerous enough!”
Black flames ignited in Leylin’s palm, “Latent Fireball!”
The black fireball struck a corner of the basement, creating a deep hole.
“First I must understand the constructs of this illusion!” Leylin rubbed his chin. He had no better solution against such a power, so he could only test things out before searching for other methods.

……

Leylin jumped into the dark hole he created.
“It’s the 193rd time, yet I’m back at this place!” Leylin looked at Jenny and Baelin who were still unconscious, his expression looking extremely severe.
“Through my experiments, I have already understood the three-dimensional constructs in here. As expected, the deeper the level of illusion, the less sturdy the dimensions within are, which will finally turn into chaos…”
If the dimensions here were to collapse, there were only two possibilities. Either one would enter a deeper levelled illusion, or if their spirit was unable to bear the brunt of it, they would directly be swallowed by the caster of this illusion.
“I’ve tried all other places, so I am only left with this now!” Leylin kicked the unconscious bodies of Baelin and Jenny away, revealing the dusty grey floor beneath them.
With a fireball, the ground was shattered…
*Pop!* The floor of the basement cracked opened, and Leylin jumped into it.
“It’s still the same basement as before, but Jenny and Baelin have already disappeared. Good! Very good! There is finally some change…”
Leylin’s eyes swept over the surroundings. It was still the same cramped basement. However, what was different than before was
that Jenny and Baelin’s bodies were no longer here.
“Signs of repair that cannot keep up with the damage done huh? Next, I’ll have to…” As if plucking the strings of a zither, both of Leylin’s hands streaked across the void, creating circles of ripples. Under the movements of his fingers, the texture of the underground basement resembled water with light ripples. The greater the area the ripples covered, the more the void contorted, until finally, a pop sound was heard! The space of the underground basement shattered, and Leylin’s body dropped downwards once again.

……

Mirrors! Bright mirrors were everywhere, reflecting the appearance of a black haired, noble youth.
“This should be the interval between the two levels of the illusion!” Leylin touched the ice-cold mirror and made a deduction.
Right now, he had momentarily escaped from the illusion. This would definitely draw the attention of the caster. However, this was the effect he desired!
“Wuu..Wuu…!”
At this moment, the weeping voice of an adorable girl traveled over.
Leylin abruptly turned his head, and in one corner of a mirror, he saw a little purple haired girl wearing a red dress with white socks who was crying.
“Wuuuu… Alice has lost her little bear! Big Brother, can you accompany me to search for it?”
The little girl stopped her crying and looked at Leylin with imploring eyes.
“My apologies, but I cannot!” Leylin shook his head.
“But why?” The little girl was puzzled. “Alice is extremely
obedient! Don’t you like Alice?”
As she spoke, more mirror images appeared in the surroundings.
“I want to, but let us speak first!” Leylin tried his best to speak calmly.
He did not have much experience dealing with such strange entities.
Furthermore, the other party was a higher dimensional creature.
Their trains of thought and level of thinking would be different
than humans. Leylin himself did not know if he could convince it
to let him go.
“Won’t you accompany Alice to find her little bear?”
“No!” Leylin shook his head resolutely. It was rumoured in legends that similar things had happened before. Once one agreed to such a request, it would be treated as them having signed some sort of bizarre contract, and they would fall under the manipulation of others. Some were even indefinitely sucked into other dimensions.
Although there were a few lucky ones who had obtained mysterious strength through such encounters, Leylin was never one who relied on gambling, especially when his life would be at stake!
*Crash!*
Just as Leylin rejected her, countless beetles poured from the mirrors and engulfed him like a tide.
“I’ll still have to attack!” Leylin’s brows furrowed. He knew that he had to demonstrate his strength before the other party would acknowledge him.
“Latent Fireball! Eyes of Petrification!”
In an instant, his whole body was covered in scales, and black flames continuously billowed from his hands. Even his eyes had a mysterious light that shot outwards.
*Pak! Pak!*
Many of the black beetles were petrified as they fell to the ground, turning into a pile of dust. As for most of them, they were burnt
into nothingness by the black flames. However, the beetles still poured out continuously from the mirrors, and what Leylin had managed to get rid of was but one hair from nine oxen. “The strength of my opponent has far exceeded my imagination!” Leylin smiled wryly as he tossed a red powder out, “Scorching Touch!” Two scorching rays of light were released, clearing the path in two directions. However, Leylin’s face turned pale immediately, and his consciousness wavered. The crystallised spiritual force had even more cracks opened, almost shattered. Scorching Touch was a rank 2 spell, and right now Leylin only had a portion of his spiritual force solidified. With the strength of a rank 1 Magus, he would naturally receive backlash from recklessly using a rank 2 spell. This backlash was considered relatively light. If he were to use the innate talent of a rank 2 Magus, it was very likely that his sea of consciousness would undergo drastic changes. “Chi Chi!” The sea of beetles cried incessantly, once again pouring towards Leylin. Leylin, whose spiritual force was already depleted, could only watch as layer after layer of beetles engulfed his body.
The black beetles completely covered Leylin’s body; it was as if he was wearing a very thick, black coat.
Numerous beetles tried to gnaw on Leylin’s body; their teeth struck upon his black scales, resulting in crinkling noises. Leylin’s body emitted a black light and the layer of beetles trembled and fell off, but right after they just extended their exoskeletons and crawled back up.
These beetles eventually even advanced to the only exposed part of Leylin’s body: his eyes! They wanted to completely submerge him in the sea of their bodies!
“I underestimated them,” Leylin muttered. He had not expected that these black beetles would be so troublesome. There was not enough time for him to execute Toxic Bile!
“Ah! How can I die in this place?”
Leylin roared, and at this exact moment, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline within his body began to violently circulate. Soon, Leylin’s pupils became amber colored vertical slits, and while facing the sky, he let out a loud hiss!.
“Hissss!”
It sounded fierce, and appeared very sinister! A tremendous, devilish aura was cleanly emitted from Leylin’s body; it was as if a predator from ancient times had been resurrected.
Black energy spewed out of his body and congealed behind his back, taking the form of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, which hissed
into the sky.
*Rumble! rumble!*
Along with this huge shockwave, the beetles, which had forcefully crawled all over Leylin, turned to dust in midair, as if they had all been struck by bullets.
Leylin’s roars still echoed, and the power and emotions in his blood vessels recklessly surged.
*Ka cha! Snap!*
The surface of the surrounding mirrors covered with cracks and then exploded with a loud bang, exposing an opening of hollow space.
“Fu…Fu…”, Leylin stopped his roaring and started panting heavily. Just now, at the critical moment, the blood essence of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent within his body had exploded, which had also placed a very strong burden on his body.
Currently, Leylin was surrounded by pitch-black nothingness. Spread about on the ground were the butchered limbs of the black beetles.
*Hoo! Hoo!*
The mutilated corpses of the black beetles hovered in midair and formed the black face of a woman, which said, “A Warlock with the bloodline of the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent? I also get a whiff of the nauseous odor of spirits from your body.”
Her lips squirmed as she spoke in the ancient Byron language. It seems like it only likes the pure spirits of humans. As for the bodies of Warlocks, not only do they have a distinct bloodline, their spirits are different from normal spirits as well. Hence it doesn’t like this scent!
Although he put on a calm expression, Leylin was inwardly excited. Using the ancient Byron language, he said, “I accidentally intruded upon your territory. I request that you let me leave; I will also pay a ransom for it…”
This existence wasn’t human, so Leylin bluntly stated his conditions.
“Not bad! However, I do not like the spirit of a Warlock.” The huge human face responded, “As for the price for redeeming your spirit and those of the other two civilians, I ask that you give me those green spirit crystals in your pouch.”
“The green spirit crystals?” Leylin was startled. Immediately, upon his hand, were some beautiful crystals that emitted a green radiance and luster like that of a green diamond.
“Yes, precisely!” The huge human face spoke. Those are the ancient, pure spirit crystals that I got by killing the Loathsome Evil in the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect’s secret realm. There are rumors that these crystals are valued equally highly by all existences in the different worlds… A flash of understanding went through Leylin’s mind.
“So that will be the ransom for releasing me and the other two!” Leylin nodded, expressing his agreement. Then he asked, “What happened to that old man in the beginning?”
“He is deeply immersed in the illusion; he has already lost himself within my body….” The huge human face replied.
Leylin had already guessed that to be so. He sighed, “Send me out!”

Hu…”
Leylin opened his eyes and found himself lying on one side within the carriage. Baelin and Jenny were on the other side, and James’ body had silently vanished.
In the same way, the soul crystals also disappeared from Leylin’s hands.
“Here it is, the original location of the three-forked paths…”
By now, the grey mist had settled down for the most part. The three forked paths and the huge granite rock had all faded, and in their place was the original road. Leylin could clearly recognize the direction, and he quickly drove the horse carriage and left this place. “This time, it was really dangerous!” While Leylin kept driving, some traces of fear still lingered. If not for the enemy having disliked the idea of having her spirit contaminated by Leylin’s bloodline, or perhaps even having feared the power of Leylin’s bloodline, Leylin would have also ended up like James, being forever trapped in the body of that huge face made of beetles. The further he went, the more the mist began to clear up, until eventually, it completely vanished, exposing the view of overgrown fields on both sides of the road up ahead. “The Weeping Ghost Grounds are truly a dangerous place!” The traumatic experience that Leylin had just gone through caused him to keep turning around and check behind his back as he continued to drive, up until he completely lost sight of the Weeping Ghost Grounds. Behind him, the fading gray mist congealed again to form a wall that blocked his view. I also wonder about the two Magi who had once fought there, what rank were they, and what was the result of their battle? Leylin thought, and then he sighed. Just the aftermath of a fight had disturbed time and space and had created such a strange place. Leylin knew from this that these Magi’s powers exceeded his own imagination. They were probably existences that surpassed Morning Star Magi! “There will inevitably be a day when I, too, will reach such a level!” This time’s incidents only reinforced Leylin’s resolution to become
“Oh! Where am I?”
After leaving the Weeping Ghost Grounds, Baelin woke up, holding his head with his hands.
“How do you feel? Do you remember anything from before you lost consciousness?” Without turning around, Leylin asked while he brandished his horsewhip.
“My memories are not very clear. I think that we encountered a woman as we passed through the gray mist.” Baelin looked as perplexed as he sounded.
Very soon, the horses’ reins were placed in his hands.
“You woke up just in time! You can drive the carriage instead of me!”
Leylin pushed the whip into Baelin’s hands and sat back to enjoy this free manpower of his.
Baelin’s physique was that of a Grand Knight, and thus, he woke up before Jenny. However, Jenny was still a level 1 acolyte, so she woke up soon after Baelin.
“Very good reaction!”
Leylin looked at Jenny who was still pretending to be unconscious as he touched Jenny’s hand and complimented her indifferently.
“So it’s Mister Leylin!” Jenny shuddered and opened her eyes, “I thought it was the bad guys!”
Afterwards, she opened the carriage window and looked out of it to see that there was no grey mist.
“Have we already left the Weeping Ghost Grounds? Where is James?”
“Yes, we are now in Olive Fields. We will be seeing the capital city of the eastern region of the Twilight Zone in two days at most.”
Leylin slowly nodded, “As for James, you had best prepare yourself mentally…”
A short while later, Baelin, who was driving outside of the carriage,
heard Jenny cry out in alarm, “No, it can not be so. You are telling a lie!”
*Bang!* The carriage door opened, from which a tearful Jenny could be seen.
“Jenny, you…” Seeing Jenny look so broken-hearted, Baelin was bewildered.
*Sob! Sob!* Jenny threw herself into Baelin’s embrace and began to cry loudly.

……

The Twilight Zone was divided into 5 regions: the east, west, north, south, and central regions. The capital city of the eastern region was the most flourishing city in all the Twilight Zone and was also the center of politics and business.
Many aristocratic families had set up their headquarters here, forming the aristocrats’ alliance which held a major influence in the entire eastern region.
There were also many Magi conducting research and establishing academies in secret locations there, which caused this place to be a meeting point for magicians.
In the center of the city, there was a sun stone that was the size of a small mountain, which brought eternal light and heat to this entire region.
“The city’s walls are very tall!”
On this day, in the eastern region’s capital city, a country bumpkin could be seen gaping at this tall and sturdy castle wall.
“Enough!” Leylin used the sheath of his sword to hit Baelin on the head, stopping him from continuing to behave like this.
Although the eastern region’s capital city looked huge, as he looked around, it seemed to Leylin that it was the same as Nightless City. As a result, the way Baelin behaved made Leylin feel ashamed.
“You really are causing me to lose face,” he reprimanded Baelin. Hearing this, Baelin rubbed his head and looked at the surroundings, only pointing at the citizens from time to time. Only after a while did he smile in embarrassment as he said, “Lord! From the day I was born, I have never set eyes upon such tall city walls. I’m really sorry…” Leylin was rather speechless. If not for the number of people around, he may have even harboured thoughts of killing Baelin right there and then.

“Tee hee… Lord Leylin, Baelin has only seen Potter Town until now. This degree of astonishment is quite a reasonable reaction!” At this moment, Jenny, who was nursing her sorrow, was amused by Baelin’s behaviour. She sniggered as she helped Baelin out of his predicament.

However, after seeing Jenny answer for him, Baelin drooped his head in embarrassment, not doing any other potential things that could be unbearable to look at.

After all, in front of the girl he loved, Baelin still had to put up some poise.

“Alright! Since we have sent Miss Jenny back safely, we should bid our farewells now!” The atmosphere in the horse carriage turned silent, yet Leylin still smiled and faced Jenny.

“What?!” “What!?” Two shocked gasps were uttered by the two youths.

“Wh…Why? This is too sudden!” Baelin felt that something was amiss, yet he could not put his thoughts into words.

“Lord Leylin! I still request that you visit my Argus Family. My father will definitely wish to have your acquaintance, and Baelin’s as well!”

Jenny bit her lips.

“From the start, I mentioned that we were only travelling together
out of convenience!”
Leylin’s expression turned resolute. “As for you, Baelin, you can return with Jenny! Furthermore, there are already people coming to receive you, Jenny!” He smiled.
*Thud Thud*
Right after Leylin spoke, the continuous thuds of hooves of horses sounded out. The approaching party was a group of white Knights sitting upon handsome steeds. On the tops of their helmets was a white feathered ornament. Their armour had not even a single speck of dust, and even their horses were fully white in colour!
There was a shiny insignia on the flags held by this group of white Knights.

Lush sun vines formed the border of the insignia, and in the middle were a giant sword and shield. On the top lay a crown, which represented the profound origins and illustrious history of the household.

“It’s the Sun Vine Argus Family!”

“That well-known family where the Marquis is!”

“That is their ‘Silver-White Knight Squadron. Could it be that some important figure of the Argus Family is setting out on a journey?”

The citizens and passers-by fervently discussed amongst themselves, and Baelin put on an extremely complex expression.

“I’ll get going!” Jenny looked at Baelin and spoke.

“Oh? Eh! Alright!” Baelin replied sluggishly. Only now did he realise how great a distance he was from Jenny.

“Let’s us leave too, my lord!” Baelin sucked in a cold breath of air and spoke with resolve.

“We will remain in the city for a period. As for the location, I’m sure you don’t need to know. You’ll definitely be able to find us, won’t you?”

Leylin spoke to Jenny, before disappearing into the crowd along with Baelin.

As for Jenny, she inhaled deeply as she clutched onto the pouch that contained the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud.
“Miss! Our men have immediately reported your arrival upon receiving the news. We are here to escort you home!”
The leader of the Silver-White Knight squadron looked at Jenny as he took out a badge with a red jewel embedded in it.
“Alright! Let us quickly enter the city! This time, I have completed the mission of bringing back the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud for my father!”
Jenny muttered.

……

Very soon, she was escorted by the squadron leader to a lavish horse-drawn carriage. This young lady of nobility shed a tear, as she could no longer hold her emotions in…

Twilight Zone’s eastern capital was extremely large. The permanent residents amounted to over a hundred thousand people. Of course, most of them were just regular folks. Even so, it brought about an extremely wealthy economy in the area.

As they were in the subterranean world, the architecture of the buildings and the items sold here were different from those on the south coast. From Leylin’s observations, everything was engineered with defense in mind. The whole capital was like a massive fortress. Even the buildings themselves within were built with their defensive capabilities in mind.

“It seems like the environment for the humans in the subterranean world isn’t that great. It might even be inferior to that on the south coast…” Leylin pondered as he analysed his observations.

In the south coast, any danger would have long since been driven away or controlled by the Magi. Not one species would engage in a long battle with the humans, hence the living conditions were better there.

However, it was a different story here! Apart from humans, several
other intelligent beings resided in the Twilight Zone. Some of them even had their own kingdoms!
Hence, the horde of darkness beasts that forever lay in the shadows was the greatest nemesis for all intelligent beings.
Under such harsh conditions and the struggle for survival, the buildings and houses were not made to pursue aesthetic beauty, but rather, they were built with defense in mind, which was crucial for their survival.
“My lord! What are we going to do here?”
Baelin carried a knapsack and a greatsword. He gave off an extremely gallant disposition, yet he wore a vacant expression on his face.
Their reason for leaving Potter Town was to send Jenny back. However, now that she had safely returned, Baelin felt that part of his heart was vacant as if something of importance had gone missing.
“First of all, find some lodging, and then rent a building!”
Leylin looked at the bustling crowd and smiled. “After all, the inns in the capital aren’t cheap! If we want to stay for long, we’ll have to buy or rent a flat…”
“Settling down? We’re going to stay here instead of returning?”
Baelin could not express his current feelings. However, permanent residence? Thinking that he could be in the same city as Jenny, it immediately turned into a happy thought.
“En! Is there anything in Potter Town that is worth being nostalgic over?”
Leylin grinned at Baelin until the little chap bowed his head down in embarrassment.
This poor fellow thought that it was because of him that Leylin had decided to reside here permanently; he thought that it was so that his heart would be filled with gratitude towards Leylin.
Alas! On the contrary, this was based on Leylin’s own interests.
After recovering part of his strength, Leylin could wait no longer to get into contact with the Magi of the subterranean world. Although Leylin had exercised a mind searching technique on Aaron and the other acolytes, much of the information that he had gleaned was still incomplete. Due to their lack of status, no precious information could be obtained.

Furthermore, the circles of official Magi and regular acolytes were on two completely different levels. Leylin had no desire whatsoever to even take a look at the bazaar area that he got from Aaron’s memories.

As for the eastern capital, it definitely had many Magi and academies for Leylin to come into contact with. Even the Magus forefather of the Argus Family was an excellent choice!

Not long later, Leylin brought Baelin to the upper-class district on the northern side of the capital and rented a two-storey villa. The area of the villa was rather vast, and its walls were sturdy and tall. As for its windows, they were both tiny and few in number. Within the tall fences with coiled barbed wire laying on top of it, there was a tiny garden and a training ground.

A villa of this standard was considered way above average in the eastern city. Typical merchants and nobility would not even be able to afford it.

However, this was just peanuts to him. Even without considering the vast amounts of magic crystals that he carried, just the gold he had gotten from Jenny was enough for them to live extravagantly for a couple of years!

Back in Potter Town, Jenny had almost cleanly swept all of Leylin’s highly-priced equipment off the shelves for the use of her employed mercenaries and adventurers. Later on, to thank Leylin, who had lent her a hand together with Baelin, she sent even more gold and jewels to him.
To Magi, items such as currency were not essential items. Hence, Leylin was extremely generous with his purchases. Finding a villa and preparing the procedural documents was only hastened with the help of this worldly wealth.

“Ha! He!” A steady and loud shout sounded.

Leylin put down the coffee and newspaper he was carrying as he peered out of the window and towards the training ground. Baelin stood on the training ground as he practiced, his bare upper body revealing his chiseled muscles. After settling down, this fellow had turned even more diligent, training like a mad man each day. He even sought Leylin’s permission to join a mercenary group to hone his skills.

“Still harbouring the dreams of a knight being together with a princess? Interesting!” Leylin looked at the youth with interest, “If I had a word in things, and had helped him in reaching his goal, his dreams would most likely be fulfilled. But why would I? The glory of a story lies in the unknown!”

To him, Baelin was just a chap that he picked up on a whim to do odd jobs for him. Occasionally, he would guide him in some Knight training, but other than that, it was not worth it to spend any more effort on him.

On the contrary, as he was very curious about the developments of the story between Baelin and Jenny, Leylin had adopted the mindset of an audience member watching a show. Ever since he obtained the premonition through the Sacred Flame by chance, he knew that Baelin and Jenny were no regular folks. To be more precise, they were some of the main characters in the Twilight Zone.

Such a life would definitely be anything but ordinary!

Suddenly, Leylin smiled. “Finally here?”

Loud doorbells sounded from the front gate.
“Who is that?” Baelin took a white towel from a wooden rack beside him and wiped off his perspiration as he ran to open a small, partitioned box on the door. Just then, Baelin saw the girl of his dreams. “Jen… Jenny, why are you here?” Glee was written all over Baelin’s face. “Why? Am I not welcome?” Jenny smiled. “Welcome! Of course, you’re welcome here!” Baelin immediately opened the door. Jenny walked in wearing the outfit of a noble; her beauty and elegance left Baelin awestruck. It was obvious that Jenny did her makeup delicately. Not only was her attire vibrant with various ornaments, she even wore two giant ruby earrings and a sparkling diamond pendant. “What is it? Do you not recognise me anymore?” Jenny chuckled as she spun in a circle. “No! I mean… You’re too ravishing today!” Baelin’s face immediately turned as red as an apple. This helpless reaction left the maidservants behind Jenny snickering. In addition, it was only then that Baelin noticed the several Knights standing alongside the maidservants. This discovery left him feeling a little gloomy, but it was very soon concealed. “Jenny! Has your father’s illness gotten any better?” Baelin asked. “Yes, thank you! It’s much better now, but things are getting complicated! The purpose of my visit today was for this, and of course, also to see you!” Jenny swept her eyes at the vicinity. “Where is Mister Leylin? I wish to be granted an audience with him!” “The lord is in the house! I… I’ll report to him!” Baelin now had an urge to cry. “No need for that, I’ve heard it!” *Pa!* The windows were pulled open, revealing half of Leylin’s
figure. “Do enter, beautiful miss!”
Jenny did not dare tarry facing this official Magus, so she curtsied and entered after telling her subordinates to stay outside. In the guest chambers, Jenny sat opposite Leylin and between them were two coffees. As for Baelin, he stood behind Leylin. There were only these three people in the guest chamber. With a wave of Leylin’s hand, the room was covered by a layer of black energy particles.
The whole drawing room seemed to be covered by a black halo of light, and even the cracks on the window were also completely sealed off as if they had been covered with a layer of black cotton.

This kind of strange scene caused Baelin to be amazed. Feeling curious, he tried to touch the ‘black cotton.’ The light quickly refilled the path that his hand passed through.

Baelin enjoyed this very much, and when he looked at Leylin, his expression was much more respectful than in the past.

During this journey, Baelin had come to know of Leylin’s identity as an official Magus from Jenny and James.

For Baelin, who was from Potter Town, a Knight was already considered to be an awesome, lordly identity. However, a Magus? This was already something that was only heard of in legends.

In fact, Baelin had always fantasized about becoming a Magus and wielding the powers of lightning, fire, and ice.

This was also because if he could become a Magus, he would be able to marry Jenny.

But unfortunately, all his hopes were easily dashed by Leylin’s words “you don’t have any talent in this field”.

Leylin also noticed that Baelin’s aptitude was poor, at only around level 1, which was known as the least suitable aptitude for becoming a Magus; he could only remain as an acolyte during his entire lifetime.
However, even if he did not have a suitable aptitude, if he was diligently taught, he might possibly be able to become an acolyte! The identity of an acolyte was much better when compared to a Knight.

However, the problem was that training an acolyte required a lot more time and energy that training a Knight. Now that they were no longer at Potter Town, Leylin did not have any time for leisure, so why would he waste time on Baelin? Thus, Leylin had turned down Baelin’s request without the slightest hesitation.

Even so, Baelin was very interested in the mysterious power wielded by magicians.

“Okay, this place has been sealed by me. If you have something to say, say it. It will remain a secret between us.”

Leylin spoke out.

After hearing Leylin’s words, Jenny grimaced as she said, “As expected, nothing can be hidden from Lord Leylin.”

“Eh? Jenny, did you not come to visit us?” Now, Baelin finally reacted. He was about to make a fuss, but Leylin quelled him with a warning glance. Baelin quieted down and listened attentively to Jenny’s narration.

“After having received the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud, my father’s condition has greatly improved. He is now able to get up from bed and handle simple tasks, and his spirit has also improved a lot…”

Jenny looked slightly cheered up for a moment, but in the next, her expression darkened again.

“But good things don’t last long. Taking advantage of the fact that my father was recuperating, my two uncles once again convened a family meeting. They want to usurp my father’s title…”

“I came here today to seek help from you.”

Jenny stood up and performed an official curtsey to Leylin and said, “My lord, if only you can help my father get past this current
crisis, we will repay you with anything, including my own self.”
“Jenny! You!” Listening to this, Baelin became anxious, but he felt helpless, as he could not do anything to help her.
“Hehe….”

Hearing what Jenny said, Leylin remained composed and began to mutter to himself. When Jenny began to believe that Leylin had been possessed, he began to laugh out loud.
“I have no intentions of participating in the Argus Family’s matter. However, I will pay your family a visit in three days’ time…”

About a quarter of an hour later, Jenny left after having gotten what she wanted. Although Leylin hadn’t clearly stated which side he would support, a good relationship with an official Magus was something no family would dare to neglect.

But what Jenny did not notice was that after she left, Leylin’s lips curved up in a sneering smile.
“You hid so many things, yet you are still counting on me to come and help you. Do you people think I am an ignorant person with nothing better to do?”

The reason why Jenny’s uncles dared to openly go against her and be so brazen is likely because they have a powerful backer and a high certainty of succeeding, thus forcing the original successor to seek external help. With such a guarantee, Leylin was 70% sure that they had gotten approval from Siegfried!

In such a situation, Jenny and her dad placed all their hopes on Leylin, even sacrificing Jenny herself as the bait and the gift.
“Hehe… do you really believe that I would involve myself in your matters for the sake of Baelin’s happiness? Unfortunately, Baelin’s happiness, and even his life are only like toys to me…”

With a ruminating smile, Leylin glanced at the towering figure of Baelin standing near the gate.

……
Three days later, Leylin, dressed in the black ceremonial suit of the nobility, visited the Argus Family with Baelin in tow. “Lord Leylin, to be seeing you is an honor in itself.”

Having been informed by the servant, Jenny and her father, the Marquis Argus, came out and greeted Leylin. Leylin also sized up Marquis Argus while he acknowledged his greeting with a smile. This marquis had a full head of hair that was as bright as gold and shared many physical characteristics with Jenny. He currently wore a warm, cordial, and appropriate-to-this-occasion smile on his face.

Behind him, two servants bowed with bent waists, this was a most sincere and deferential invitation to come in.

“En!” Leylin indifferently grunted and nodded his head, and alongside Marquis Argus, he walked in. Afterwards, Leylin walked slightly ahead of the Marquis.

A Magus originally possessed a lot of stamina and authority. After seeing Leylin walk ahead of him, the Marquis’ smile only became more fervent, as if he did not care about these matters.

Behind the two were Baelin and Jenny. Baelin opened his mouth on several occasions, wanting to talk to Jenny, but after he saw the solemn Jenny, who was dressed up as if to attend a royal feast, he was unable to say anything, and just closed his mouth.

It went without saying that this serene, well-constructed mansion of a marquis, as well as the respectful and cautious servants that stood on both sides of him as he walked past, all frightened the wits out of this youngster.

After welcoming Leylin, the marquis thought to introduce Leylin to the other relatives but was interrupted by a sudden voice. “Ohoho! My dearest older brother, if you invited so many guests, why did you not invite us too?”

Upon hearing this voice, the marquis’s smile remained, but a trace
of wariness appeared in his eyes as he introduced the owner of the voice to Leylin.
“My lord, these are my two brothers, Lucas and Kermode.”
Then he turned to the two men who had entered the hall and said, “This is Lord Leylin, who met Jenny while she was on her journey.”
“These two must be the treacherous uncles that Jenny said are trying to usurp her father’s position.” With just a glance, Leylin had, with a lot of interest, sized up these two middle-aged lords.
Lucas, Kermode, and Marquis Argus all looked alike after all, they were brothers! However, Lucas’ eyes were purple and Kermode’s eyes emitted a silvery radiance. It was all very strange.
But what caused Leylin to feel startled was that these two uncles’ bodies emitted energy waves that were like those of magicians. These two were actually acolytes!
“We greet Lord Leylin!” At this moment, these two lords also respectfully bowed to Leylin. The Marquis found this behavior of theirs very hard-to-believe.
“Respected Lord Leylin, my ancestor Lord Siegfried cordially invites you to visit him and look around his laboratory. Also, he expresses his gratitude to you for having given a helping hand to the Argus Family.”
Lucas respectfully conveyed his ancestor’s words.
This invitation caused sunken expressions to appear on the Marquis’ and his daughter’s faces.
In this entire drama, only the foolish youth known as Baelin was unclear on what the significance of this invitation was!
The Magus Siegfried held a position of paramount importance within the Argus Family. Sending this invitation via Lucas and not via the marquis clearly indicated whom Siegfried was supporting.
“I am very honoured.” Leylin gave a slight nod and then immediately left the place, following Lucas, all the while not
glancing at the ashen-faced marquis and Jenny. In the secular world, Magi all had very headstrong personalities due to the power they all wielded. Before leaving, Lucas and Kermode looked at Marquis Argus in contempt, making the atmosphere awkward all around. “What is going on?” The rather stunned Baelin asked Jenny, having just come out of the daze caused by the recent happenings. Although Baelin’s intuition told him to follow behind Leylin, looking at Jenny caused him to involuntarily remain beside her. “It’s…it’s nothing… My family’s ancestor wants to meet Lord Leylin.” Jenny was barely able to smile.
*Ka-ching!* A sound of breaking glass was heard as the goblet in Marquis Argus’ hands shattered into pieces, crushed by him gripping it too tightly.

……

Leylin, following Lucas and Kermode, arrived at the back half the Argus Family’s mansion. The further he went in, the tighter the security was, but with these two people leading the way, Leylin traveled unhindered, and reached the middle of the rear courtyard. “Finally! Our ancestor, Lord Siegfried is in here. We ask for your forgiveness, as we are not allowed to accompany you in.” Lucas and Kermode brought Leylin in front of a huge conical tower, and then bowed and left. Each and every movement of them was executed perfectly, showing the flawless deportment of the nobility. Leylin failed to pay any attention to them, as he was distracted by
the white tower in front of him.
“Stability runes, restriction runes and runes which can transmute mud into stone! This is some very good construction. Moreover, I can sense the aura of energy particles in the air. It looks as if within this building, there is a source of at least two elements’ energy particles.”
Leylin gently stroked the surface of the white tower with admiration in his eyes and sighed.
This white tower, the curves of which were similar to those of a cow’s horn, was built by a Magus.
Just the expenses of the solidification runes and the cost of building the pond of energy particles left Leylin in astonishment.
It is a construction worthy of a Magus that has lived for several hundreds of years. If I wanted to set up a tower like this, I would need to spend at least half of the resources that are currently in my pouch…
While thinking this, Leylin sighed.
A specialized and private laboratory held many advantages. Not only was it magically concealed, one could carry out covert experiments within it.
However, since Leylin had no fixed residence, there was no way that he could construct such a tower for himself.
“Haha... an outdated work such as this can also get a sigh of admiration from Magus Leylin? It is indeed my honour!”

At that moment, the door at the base of the white tower opened, revealing a linen-clothed old guy, who grinned at Leylin. It was evident that he had overheard Leylin’s deliberate sigh.

“This humble self is Siegfried Argus! I greet Lord Leylin.”

This old guy’s expression was respectful, and he slightly bent his waist to bow, as was per the Magus’ etiquette.

This etiquette was passed down from ancient times, and was something Leylin had only seen in ancient books. He remained unfazed and repeated the same bow as he said, “I, Leylin, greet Lord Siegfried!”

After the perfunctory greetings were done with, Leylin was able to size up this Lord Siegfried.

Siegfried’s style of clothing was very casual, as if it could be torn apart with a single pull. It was more leisurely and comfortable compared to the splendid attire of the lords in the outer hall.

The current Siegfried was not someone that Leylin would associate as being the trump card of a great family. If it weren’t for his right-hand, Leylin would have assumed Lord Siegfried was just a peasant farmer.

That was right! His right-hand! This Siegfried’s right hand was a robotic limb that gave off an awesome, bright, metallic lustre; even
the gears and the welded portions were clearly visible.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*

Siegfried extended this right hand as he said, “I shall call you Leylin. I lost my right hand permanently while experimenting with a spell. I know that a flesh and muscle hand can be transplanted, but I find that a mechanical hand is much more useful.”

*Bang!* Then, his mechanical hand split open into finger-like parts, which were tools like tweezers, scissors, pliers, etc., and they were wildly swaying in mid air, looking like silver colored tassels.

“How is it? This ‘hand’ was created especially for me, using my specific measurements, by my old friend, an Earth Elf called Grandmaster Oak!”

“Very good.” Leylin nodded. This kind of a very precise machine limb is extremely rare even in the south coast and thus Leylin was also not stingy with his praises.

It was clear that this Siegfried was very happy with the admiration from a fellow Magus.

He then invited Leylin into his lab to look.

“Siegfried, did you build an energy particle pond in here?”

Due to Leylin’s graceful and cultured mannerisms, he soon became friends with Siegfried. They addressed each other directly by their first names.

This showed how well their relationship had progressed.

While Leylin casually walked around Siegfried’s lab, he came in front of what looked like a small pond and he asked this question.

This small pond was surrounded by stable, ferrous metals. On top of the pool was a strange and complex pattern and in the middle of the pool was a khaki-colored liquid.

A large number of energy waves could be felt fluctuating from the pool.

“Yes, I have built here an earth element energy particle pond. This task consumed all of the resources that I have accumulated for
nearly a hundred years!"
Siegfried’s face appeared to experience a muscle spasm, but the next moment, it was replaced with an expression of pride.
“After building this energy particle pond, the concentration of earth element particles in this place has increased to 55% and the results of my cultivation have been more remarkable when compared to using just meditation techniques.”
The element particle pond’s ability was not restricted to the one mentioned prior. Magi could use the energy within this pond to replenish themselves in a crucial moment, and the element particles within could be used to attack enemies.
Thus, a Magus having such a pond would be stronger within his own territory when compared with his peers.
With his strength as a semi-converted elemental Magus, within this white tower, Siegfried’s attack power would be roughly equal to that of a 70-80% converted elemental Magus.
“Oh, that’s right, I haven’t properly introduced myself. I am a reputed instructor at the Earth Fire Association, and I cultivated using their high level meditation technique, the Gaia’s Might! It is divided into three layers: earth, magma, and organisms. I am currently still in the stage of earth. A high level mediatation technique’s progress is too slow…”
Having said this, he looked at Leylin with curiosity, very much interested in the background of this Magus.
“It seems that sharing one’s experiences with a high-level meditation technique is a tradition amongst the Magi of the Twilight Zone…” As this information flashed through Leylin’s mind, he smiled very modestly, “I come from a very small institute known as Goodlaw! This institute specializes in researching in ancient reptilian creatures. It is very focused in that field. I cultivate with a damaged high level meditation technique called the Sacred Flame! Currently, I am stagnated in the first level of that meditation
After that, he explained, in simple terms, the first level of the Sacred Flame and its difficulties. As expected, he concealed that mystical ability to predict forthcoming events.

“Hu… Leylin! This meditation technique of yours is quite badly damaged.” Stroking his beard, Siegfried’s eyes shone as he looked at Leylin. “How about you join our Earth Fire Association? Our high-level meditation techniques are more whole as compared to your Sacred Flame, and moreover, we could continue to share our experiences…”

“No thank you!” Leylin shook his head, “Changing meditation techniques is too dangerous. I advanced to a level 1 Magus by depending on my Sacred Flame technique. I can’t get rid of the impact it has on my spiritual force in such a short time. Moreover, I also want to pass on my Goodlaw School’s inheritance, as it was my teacher’s dying wish that I do so.”

Leylin’s tone remained firm and unwavering; it spoke of his resolve.

He knew that this invitation of Siegfried’s was only small talk, and that it was not actually sincere. Moreover, in a situation where he did not know about the Fire Earth Association, he did not want to rashly become one of its members.

“En! That’s right, acolytes can switch meditation techniques, but for a level 1 Magus, after his sea of consciousness is stabilized, it would be extremely troublesome if he decided to switch out his meditation technique.”

Siegfried also solemnly agreed; it seemed that a while ago, he had spoken out without thinking.

As for Leylin’s background, he did not have a speck of doubt regarding that.

After a memory search on Aaron, and having spent two years in Potter Town, Leylin had already grasped the customs, traditions,
and manners of speech of humans of the underworld. He gave no
indications that he was not from their world.
In addition, there were countless acolytes in the subterranean
world, and schools that had only one or two Magi to pass on the
inheritance were similarly too many to count. And perhaps one day
when these Magi could not find the right apprentices to inherit
meditation techniques, that school would naturally cease existing.
As for other lucky magicians who had obtained high-level
meditation techniques, they would be considered the pillars of
support for passing down inheritances in their small academies.
Thus, even if he hadn’t heard of any Goodlaw, Siegfried believed
Leylin to be only a disciple of some small-scale academy, perhaps
even a bright shining disciple who was his school’s sole Magus.
Siegfried even felt some sympathy towards Leylin.
“Not only are high grade meditation techniques easy at first and
difficult later, the further one advances the more difficult it
becomes to keep advancing. For a Magus to train in them, they
must meet some very lofty requirements in regards to their
physique and spirit. It would be no easy task for an acolyte to find
a complete meditation technique that is suited to him.”
Leylin nodded in agreement with what Siegfried said.
With a high-grade meditation technique, a magician at the acolyte
or level 1 Magus stage could easily advance, but then onwards, it
would become harder. In addition, finding a complete meditation
technique that would suit one’s own physique depended upon
one’s character and luck.
Even Leylin was initially unsuitable to practise the Kemoyin’s Pupil
technique. Only after transplanting the bloodline did he have the
qualifications to study that high-level meditation technique.
No matter how difficult it was to advance using a high-level
meditation technique, Magi who used such techniques were much
better off when compared to those Magi of the south coast who
advanced by depending on resources.
Siegfried’s magician tower was divided into 5 floors. The lowest floor was where the refined metal puppets stood guard. On the second floor, there were rooms that stored treasures and junk.
The third floor consisted of a magician’s garden, a room for cultivation, and a room for training. The fourth floor had the lab and the elemental pool. The fifth and final floor contained his bedroom, a room where he received visitors, and other rooms for similar domestic purposes.
After Leylin had taken a look around the tower, he was invited by Siegfried to go to the fifth floor.
“Now, can you tell me the purpose of your visit, Leylin?”
The two of them had enjoyed their afternoon tea along with some light refreshments before they each took a seat on the sofa. The old man, with a wise expression in his eyes, laughed and then asked Leylin that question.
“Well, the fact is….” Leylin paid attention to how he phrased his next words.
“I have been wandering around in the Woody Wastelands, and do not understand much about the current situation of Magus powers in the capital. After hearing Jenny say that her family had an existence such as yourself, I decided to pay a visit!”
“Another reason is that she and her father had spent a lot of effort in inviting me over.”
“Hehe. You are very frank!” Siegfried wore a happy smile.
“Regarding these descendants of mine, I have no interest in their matters. In my opinion, they are all a pack of feral wolves, and only an alpha wolf chosen after a bitter competition will have the qualifications to lead the Argus Family.”
He let his descendants cruelly fight it out amongst themselves, and from amongst them, he would choose the one who was capable of wielding power within the family.
This kind of speech that was dripping with blood showed the cold and detached outlook of a Magus who had lived a long time. Leylin could also understand some of Siegfried’s thoughts. It seemed that he had already cut off any feelings he had for his close relatives; these blood-related descendants of his were no better than strangers to him. Because it was like this, Siegfried would be so cold and detached, and consider them as mere beasts or even commodities to be traded.

“Recently, Lucas had contributed an item that was of some use to me, and because of that, I have started favouring him.”

Siegfried indifferently talked about the internal disputes in his family, “Of course, if Leylin is taking Jenny’s side, then I shall immediately put an end to Lucas’ dreams.”

As far as Siegfried was concerned, Lucas was but one amongst the younger generation, while Leylin’s status was on the same level as his own. Thus, to strengthen their relationship, no hesitation was needed if sacrificing a small benefit of Lucas was needed.
"Oh! No no no! I think you’ve misunderstood me!"
Leylin hurriedly shook his head.
“While I am acquainted to Jenny, I also have no intentions whatsoever to partake in the Argus Family’s internal strife!”
Leylin made his stand.
With just one sentence, the calamity that was befalling Jenny and her father would be resolved. Even Lucas would not hold any objections anymore. However, what has all this got to do with Leylin?
Not only that, but after influencing Siegfried’s decision Leylin would owe him a favour! Favours are oftentimes the most difficult of things to repay!
Moreover, directly interfering with another Magus’ family matters could be seen as being disrespectful.
Whether or not Siegfried chose to mask his emotions, he would definitely be displeased about it.
Leylin did not concern himself with these issues. On one hand, Jenny’s father had some worldly factions supporting him while on the other hand, Lucas had the backing of Siegfried. There was simply no hesitation when weighing the benefits.
After all, with his years of experience, he was already used to making decisions by weighing benefits. This was also the principle that Magi practiced.
As expected, after hearing Leylin’s words, Siegfried smiled even more broadly. “Leylin, I think you are still unfamiliar with the Magi factions in the capital right? Don’t worry, you can pay me a visit to learn more about it whenever you like. I’ll also bring you to some Magi organisational places for networking and to make some new friends!”
“That’ll be fantastic!” After achieving the goal he came for, Leylin revealed his joy.
Leylin and Siegfried then exchanged some information that they knew about high-grade meditation techniques. Although Siegfried had amassed a bountiful amount of information for 250 years, he was still somewhat amazed by some of the theoretical practices simulated by the A.I. Chip. So much so that he almost wanted to immediately have them undergo practical tests. This was a form of acknowledgement of Leylin’s scholarly knowledge. As for Leylin, he respected the time that Siegfried had placed into his experiments.
After their sharing of information, both parties felt that the time spent was extremely short. Hence, only after setting a date for their next meeting did Siegfried reluctantly send Leylin off.

……

Now that Leylin had neglected to help Jenny’s father, the series of events that happened could only be expected.
During the Argus Family’s council, Lucas had amassed enough backing to take on the role of the next family head and to obtain the status of a Marquis!
During that very same night, the original Marquis died a painful death from a poison attack!
As for Jenny, she was accused of putting poison inside the Dragon-Blooded Flower Bud, thereby murdering her father.
Anyone with a discerning eye could tell that this was the lowest kind of set-up with a childish ploy. However, Lucas wanted to use this very method to know who stood on his side within the family and at the same time establish his dominance!
This deliberate misrepresentation of making a deer out to be a horse was done to punish Jenny, and to set an example for others. After using a few lightning quick moves to rid himself of the opposing factions within the family, Lucas had a firm grip on the powers within the Argus Family. The entire family implicitly allowed this to carry on, and even corroborated the story of Jenny poisoning her own father!

Power struggles were often this harsh. Win, and become king. Lose, and become a dog. This was but another example of the bloody battles in this dog eat dog world.

“Hu..Huu…”

Jenny dashed rapidly through a dark forest.

This girl of noble birth had now lost her elegant and haughty appearance. Her skirt had already been torn apart by the shrubberies. Blood streaked her face and she had an extremely miserable appearance; worse than a beggar’s.

“Dearest father!” Tears streaked down her face as she continued running.

The events had transpired so quickly that they left Jenny thinking that the whole thing was all but a dream.
Her backing, which was her very own father, had died just like that through a conspiracy. Worse yet, she was labelled as the murderer!
Dear heavens! Jenny did not know how perverted one had to be to brandish her as the murderer!

However, what followed next left her speechless. Under the immense political power, such absurdity was validated by the others, and even labelled her as a wanted criminal.
In fact, if not for the few loyal servants and kin who had tipped her
off and protected her along the way, she would definitely not be able to escape with just her strength as a level 1 acolyte. Of course, after helping her, those close ones encountered terrible fates.

*Plop!* Jenny stumbled on a tree root as she ran. Mud was splashed in the area as this young lady sobbed spasmodically as she knelt on the ground.

Even if she managed to escape this time, what good would there be ahead of her? Be it other nobles or even the common folk, she would be seen as a murderer. Her eventual outcome would either to be caught and be sentenced to execution, or to hide her name and honour in dirt, never revealing her identity. Just from thinking about this fact, Jenny adopted a bleak outlook for her future.

“Wuu…Why…Why did things turn out this way?” Jenny cried.

“Jejeje! Look at the pathetic state you’re in!”

At this moment, a familiar voice sounded behind her back, leaving shudders throughout her body.

She turned around and saw a tall Knight in armour, who had a malevolent scar across his face.

“This man had the terrifying strength of a Grand Knight, and was even one of her father’s own bodyguards, and as such commanded quite a lot of trust.

Todd only sniggered towards the lamentations of the young lady. However, his smile made his scarred face look even more horrifying.

“In fact, I’ve always been on Lucas’ side. So there is no betrayal per se!”

Jenny’s pupils dilated as she suddenly got a bad premonition.

“And as the reward of being an undercover operative, Lord Lucas has allowed me to seek pleasure with you before killing you!”
Todd licked his lips and revealed a wanton grin. “Five years! A full five years of listening to you call me Uncle Todd! In reality, during my duties I have thought frequently of possessing you, feasting on you, ripping you!” “You! You sick pervert!” After listening to the man admitting to the desires of wanting her even since she was a ten year old girl, Jenny’s hair stood on ends. “Yes! I’m a pervert, but what can you do about it? Missy of the Argus Family!” Todd advanced as he peeled off his gloves, “Relax, I will give you a great time…” Jenny scuttled backwards, as if Todd was some kind of terrifying beast. However, Todd was, in this moment, worse than a monster! “Save me! Help, someone please save me!” The girl wailed helplessly as tears streamed down her face. “Stop!” “At this moment, a extremely youthful voice sounded. What followed soon after was the wind caused from a blade being swung! “Eh?” Todd jumped back and looked at the lad who had emerged from nowhere. “Baelin!” Jenny snuggled into Baelin’s arms as she sobbed quietly. “You bastard, I’m going to kill you!” Baelin stared coldly at the large Knight in front of him. He seethed in fury, for had he arrived a moment later, something bad would have happened to Jenny. It was the first time in his life that Baelin wanted to kill someone so badly! “Kill me? Are you able to?” Todd unsheathed the sword hung at his waist. “You must be this missy’s lover! I’ve decided that I will first chop off your four limbs, then take her right in front of you! At the time, your expression will definitely be extremely fascinating to
watch. Perhaps, you can even join us…”
Todd licked his lips and smirked.
“Arghhhh….!” Baelin swung his cross blade that carried a flash of white light as he could not bear to listen for a moment longer.
“Grand Knight!” Todd turned solemn immediately.
His giant sword was swung forward as it clashed with the cross blade, emitting sparks.
*Clang Clang Clang!* Todd retreated several steps. “What power!”
The vibrations sent from Baelin’s swing left his hands somewhat numb.
“Kill him Baelin! Kill him!” Jenny wailed loudly behind Baelin.
Under the encouragement of his loved one, Baelin advanced and struck, sending Todd staggering backwards by several steps.
“Ping!” Just as the two weapons clashed, Todd suddenly released his giant sword and rushed to Baelin’s side like a sweeping wind.
*Ka-cha!* A black dagger suddenly appeared in his hand and pierced towards Baelin’s heart like a venomous snake!
Baelin struggled to move his body away, and a layer of spiritual life force appeared on his chest. *Pak!* As if thin leather, the dagger pierced through and left a deep gash on Baelin’s chest, allowing blood to flow profusely.
*Shing!* Todd suddenly appeared from a distance away as he licked the edge of his dagger.
“Now you’d know why they call me ‘Dagger’ huh? Because I like to cut the flesh of my prey with this dagger, and then watch them die of anguish!”
Todd’s face turned red and he spoke excitedly, “Your blood is the tastiest I’ve ever tried!”
“Secret Gale Technique!” Todd shouted and spiritual life force wrapped around his calves.
*Shik Shik!* He advanced again, this time even faster than before!
“Damn it! Secret technique, Cross Star!”
After suffering from several more wounds, Baelin could not bear it any longer and shouted. *Weng!* His body suddenly doubled in size as a layer of translucent armour protected him.
Todd’s black dagger slashed across the translucent armour, but it harmlessly bounced off.

“It’s a defensive secret technique!” Todd’s eyes gleamed. There were many secret techniques for Grand Knights, but many of them were just a large boost in a single attribute. For example, Todd’s secret technique focused on speed, raising it to twice his original speed!

From what he could see, Baelin had mustered a technique that boosted his defense.

“Dummy, once your technique wears off, you will still be slain by me!” A sinister smile appeared on Todd’s face. However, Baelin suddenly moved!

Speed! Baelin was extremely quick; as he moved, his translucent armour created a shrill noise from the wind passing through. Todd could only see the bare afterimages!

“It’s…actually the two attributes buff!” Todd cried out hoarsely, yet the greed in his eyes only grew more apparent.

Such a technique was of a considerably high grade that existed only in myths. Even the Argus Family had not seen anyone wielding such a technique for the longest of times.

However, Todd did not have much time to think. Baelin had already appeared in front of him as he raised his cross blade, furiously slashing down at Todd.
“Clang!” Todd jumped back and parried with the dagger in his hand.  
*Peng!” As the two weapons clashed, Todd’s dagger was sent flying out of his grip.  
“There is even a strength buff! Three attributes! A secret technique that buffs three areas!” Todd’s mind was blank at this moment. A two attributes buff was not unheard of, but this three attributes buff of a Grand Knight level was practically unheard of, even in legends! However, Baelin had no desire to explain things to him. He charged forward and swung his sword at Todd’s neck.  
*Pu!* The head that carried a scarred face was sent flying, as a blood fountain gushed to a metre’s height from the neck.  
“Jenny, are you alright?!” Baelin dispelled the translucent armour and rushed to Jenny’s side.  
“I… I’m alright!” Jenny replied involuntarily, before seeing Baelin collapse at her side.  
Although the Cross Star was a technique taught to him by Leylin, who was not a Grand Knight, the might of it exceeded that of other Grand Knight techniques, but still retained the same properties of a Grand Knight technique! As for Baelin, who had activated this technique, he entered a feeble state. Even raising an arm was too difficult for him; only his eyes and mouth could just barely move.  
“You… why are you this silly? This does not even concern you…” Jenny wept, and tears once again streamed down her face.  
“Keke…I’m fine!” Baelin tried his best to mask his current weakened state, but it was all done in vain.  
“I’ve thought about it, let’s seek asylum from Lord Leylin! He will definitely be able to protect you!” Baelin spoke what’s on his mind.  
“… We can’t do that!” Jenny wryly smiled and replied.  
“Baelin! Can’t you discern the truth from this misfortune? Lord
Leylin has already abandoned me!” Jenny smiled bitterly, “You had better return to Lord Leylin, where he can protect you! Lucas won’t be able to cause you any harm…”
“No!” Baelin’s face flushed red. “I won’t leave you even if I die!”
“Baelin!” Jenny crouched down as both of them engaged in a passionate kiss.
After the long and intense tongue fight, Baelin seemed to have changed immediately. “Let us go! To the middle region! To where the dark elves’ kingdoms are! To the area of darkness! Whatever it is, let us leave here to a place where no one can find us, and live happily ever after!”
“Alright!” Jenny resolutely replied.
The two exchange gazes and smiled brightly.
……

“Huh! It seems as though Baelin has decided to leave!” Leylin ruminated in amusement as he saw the extremely tidy and neat room, in which a letter lay on the table.
To him, Baelin was only a pet that he was raising while nursing his injury.
As for the current Leylin, he had already returned to the right path, and no longer had time to take care of Baelin. Perhaps it was the best choice to allow him to leave.
Furthermore, Leylin did not have much use for Baelin. Even if he was turned into a Branded Swordsman, the strength of a rank 1 Magus was not sufficient to aid Leylin.
“However, this is my first time having good intentions! I hope you can pass down my cross blade technique throughout the Twilight Zone and not ruin the name of my Farlier family…”
A profound light flashed in Leylin’s eyes.
Through the sense of the Sacred Flame he had, he already knew that Baelin and Jenny were not regular folks. What’s more, they would be taking the stage in Twilight Zone as the ‘main characters’! One would expect that in the near future, they would definitely not have any sort of peaceful lives, troubles would come searching for them one after another.

“But only then are things interesting! My setup can finally be put to good use!”

Leylin smiled gently, before putting this matter at the back of his head.

Today was the day that he had set with Siegfried to meet other official Magus. Leylin had been anticipating this day for quite a while.

“So it’s here?”

Leylin and Siegfried, dressed in common folk clothes, walked into an extremely lavish shop.

“Gersi’s Chamber of Commerce, the most outstanding conclave in the whole of the eastern Twilight Zone. Some of the nobility even know that there is a Magi organisation supporting this conclave from the shadows…”

Siegfried smiled as he explained this to Leylin.

Although they spoke as if no one was beside them, their voices did not travel far enough for the people in the surroundings to hear.

“As for us, the other Magi who are in small associations or are wandering around, we like to gather here for a couple of days and exchange some valuable insights gleaned from recent experiments or the experience gained from meditation techniques. Sometimes trades will be conducted too. Of course, all these are only restricted to the official Magus level.”

Siegfried wore a large black glove, hiding his metal prosthetic limb within it.

“Welcome! How may I help you?”
Two beautiful maidservants came over and asked after Siegfried stepped into Gersi’s Chamber of Commerce. “Take me to the VIP room!” Siegfried handed a gold card to the maidservant, whose eyes immediately started to shine. “My two Lords, please follow me!” She bowed deeply, showing off the curves of her chest. As she led the way, she exaggeratedly swayed her hips. “How is it? Do you want to play for a while?” Siegfried asked Leylin with a smile on his face. “I have no such urges now, so maybe after this!” Leylin smiled indifferently and replied. As the maidservant in front heard Leylin’s words, disappointment streaked across her face. Although she was somewhat disappointed, the maid still quickly brought them to an extremely lavishly decorated room. “My apologies! As my level is not high enough, our manager will take over and assist you from here!” The girl bowed again and took her leave. “Our Magus VIP cards are different from others, so the person who is serving us next will know our requirements and will bring us to the conclave!” Siegfried explained the process simply to Leylin. “The membership registration is extremely simple. You need to first reach the rank of an official Magus, and then have another Magus refer you. I’ll set a referral up for you later!” “I appreciate it!” Leylin smiled gently. *Boom!* At this moment, an oil painting in the VIP room swung open, revealing a flight of stairs. “Honoured guests, please follow me!” An upper-class woman with the spiritual force of a level 3 acolyte appeared in the tunnel. Her skin was flawless and white like porcelain, without any traces of pores.
“Alright!” Siegfried nodded his head and allowed the lady to lead the way.
However, he spoke to Leylin without the lady hearing. “She is an example of the high-grade goods that Gersi’s Chamber of Commerce is offering. If you’re interested, you can apply to purchase a few of them later. The chamber is rather generous to the newcomers’ needs…”
“A slave at the level of an acolyte?” Leylin was in shock. This level of a slave was much better than the ones appearing in the Nightless City on the south coast.
Back in Nightless City, Leylin, who was a rank 1 Magus, had only managed to purchase a level 3, old geezer acolyte who was nearing the end of his life.
Evidently, even though both of them were level 3 acolytes, a charming lady would definitely command a higher price than a dying old geezer.
The passage was rather short, and after a couple minutes, they soon reached the end.
After opening the door, Leylin was brought into a great hall. The light of multiple sun stones penetrated through the crystals in the four corners of the hall, illuminating every corner of the hall. At this moment, Magi were seated in different circles while chatting in soft voices.
Upon their tables were several green fruits and drinks. Apart from that, many delicacies that were unknown to Leylin were placed there for the Magi’s taking, yet very few bothered to taste them.
“Come! I’ll bring you to see some of my friends!”
After looking around, Siegfried eyes lit up after he noticed a group of red haired Magi sitting in one of the circles, and he promptly dragged Leylin over to them.
“Here! These are the Magi from the Earth Fire Association, and they are also my friends! As for him, this is Mister Leylin, a
wandering Magus who had recently come to our eastern capital…”
Siegfried made the introductions on both sides, and Leylin smiled and sent his greetings to the group of Magi.
Together with Leylin’s disposition as a noble and his increased charisma due to the fact that he was a Warlock, he very soon managed to break the ice and began to mingle with them.
leylin looked at the members of the Earth Fire Association. The Magi sitting here were rather few. Including Leylin and Siegfried, they only amounted to 5 people. No matter if it was the south coast or the Twilight Zone, it was not easy to advance to an official Magus. However, once someone advanced, their status and position would undergo massive changes.

“When I had recently studied Gaia’s Might, I felt that it was very difficult to attract the earth element energy particles. It was especially so on the topic of gathering Gaia’s aura…”

At this moment, one of the red-haired Magi impatiently began to talk.

“For that, I believe an energy particle pond will help you…”

Siegfried interrupted with his own opinion.

“That is not realistic! It consumes too many resources! I suggest using 3 kinds of meditation assisting runes, but then there is the problem of impurities in your spiritual force later on…”

Leylin found that these Magi of the Earth Fire Association discussed quite a bit about their experiences while training using their high-level meditation technique, Gaia’s Might. Some of the problems discussed had been researched very thoroughly, and it helped Leylin a little bit in his cultivation and perfection of his Sacred Flame and Kemoyin’s Pupil.

The common practice in the Twilight Zone was like this: people
would get together and discuss their experiences in meditation techniques, and thus hope to jointly advance. Of course, one was delusional if they thought that just relying on these casually discussed phrases would help in the completion of Gaia’s Might. Thus, these Magi were not worried that their cultivation secrets would be leaked. When it was Leylin’s turn to share his experience, he talked about his breakthrough through a small bottleneck, which led to some reminiscing among the other Magi. Although it had only taken him a short time to advance to a rank 2 Magus, his Kemoyin’s Pupil had also advanced to the second level, which was considered a high level. Moreover, after obtaining another high-level meditation technique called Sacred Flame, under the constantly inferred data by the A.I. Chip, Leylin’s understanding of meditation techniques had far surpassed the knowledge of these old geezers who had immersed themselves in meditation techniques for several hundreds of years!

“It seems that later on, one must not only bitterly cultivate by themselves but also often exchange experiences with their peers.” Just this one discussion had given Leylin new ideas for resolving the complexities and misunderstandings he had with his own meditation techniques. This was despite the fact that this discussion was only pertaining to the Gaia’s Might, which was not the meditation technique Leylin practised!
Furthermore, relying on the information collected by the A.I. Chip this time, Leylin could derive a deeper understanding of his two meditation techniques. This was only natural, as Magi followed the ancient principle of equal exchange among themselves. Leylin paid attention to the fact that these Magi only talked about general things and the mentioning of the various means of doing something.
The genuine, concrete details could only be mutually exchanged between two Magi in a way like a business transaction, and strict confidentiality was expected between these two parties that had made the transaction. Just now, Siegfried had sold some information related to the energy particle pond, and had got a huge remuneration. After the public information exchange session was over, the next session was the transactions between two people. If one was an official Magus, then they could set up a table with items to be sold and await customers. The atmosphere here was completely different from that of the open-air stalls and street vendors. Magi were not very eager to strike a deal, but rather, they loved to showcase and play with their precious resources. It was a common sight to see both buyer and seller chatting and smiling; some even had wine out to toast their successful trades. Unfortunately, although these underground resources were also very valuable, most of them held no interest for Leylin. With the A.I. Chip’s knowledge of some ancient information, he could easily identify the items on display and recognize their names and origins. It was a pity that while these resources were useful for a level 1 Magus, they were of no use to Leylin, who had already advanced to a level 2 Magus. However, after all was said and done, the underworld was not the same as the south coast. Leylin did not recognise some of the items on display, and as a result, his curiosity was piqued. “What is this?” Leylin walked up to a table just ahead and picked up an item that had been placed on a white tablecloth. It was a uniquely shaped bone flute, with one side having some irregular, round holes. “This is the Saxon bagpipes, which was inherited from the
McKinsey era’s Leighton archduchy. It is said the tune it produces is very beautiful, even surpassing the songs sung by mermaids. Thus, it can be used as bait to trap mermaids. Unfortunately, ever since the Leighton archduchy’s destruction, there hasn’t been anyone who knows how to play this instrument…”

The seller was a middle-aged fellow who was suitably attired for this occasion. In his hand was a long-stemmed wine glass full of a dark-red wine.

“I am very interested in these kinds of ancient musical instruments. I have currently already acquired 3912 varieties of musical instruments from different eras, and have housed them in my collection room. However, this item that I’m holding right now will not be able to shine on my hands, so I am in search of a more suitable owner”

The middle-aged gentleman’s face appeared regretful as if he was saying goodbye to his own lover

“If you can use this item to play the ancient Requiem, then it is all yours.” He raised his glass of wine to toast Leylin.

“Umm! I beg your pardon, but I have only a little understanding in playing a musical instrument…”

Leylin was somewhat silent, but this was also the norm for Magi. Due to their long lifespans, apart from always doing experiments and cultivating, Magi also took some time to have some extra fun. Preferring to hoard some special kind of collectibles was not a very common or safe hobby. Some dark Magi even experienced a big change in their temperaments, as they got addicted to collecting strange collectibles, some of which even reeked of blood, and finally caused harm to others and themselves.

“That is truly regrettable! However, one day, I will definitely be able to find its genuine owner.” This gentleman seemed to truly feel regret and sighed. “Come! Let us drink to the moment that my precious item will find its owner! Toast!”
“Cheers!” Leylin inwardly sneered, but still picked up a glass of orange juice. Then middle-aged gentleman touched his glass to Leylin’s, issuing a clear ‘ding’ sound. There were but a few in this trading session like this strange, gentlemanly Magus. Most of the Magi were doing their exchanges quietly. There were some who had clearly defined that their items could only be exchanged for items or resources, while the others also accepted magic crystals and completed their transactions. In the Twilight Zone, magic crystals were also a commonly used currency among Magi.

Leylin exploited those transactions that used magic crystals to buy several resources that could only be found in the Twilight Zone, intending to go back and look over each of them thoroughly. Because he was worried that both parties’ magic crystals might have subtle differences, Leylin had purified all the magic crystals he had brought from the south coast and had converted them into magic crystals with the purest essence he could produce.

Magic crystals with this kind of purity were just like that magic crystal used by Leylin when he had opened the ancient teleportation formation. This was because after undergoing the purification process many times, it was now impossible to find any characteristics of the south coast in Leylin’s magic crystals. It was just like that matter with the gold coins. The decorative design on the gold coins from the south coast was not too similar to those from Twilight Zone, but Leylin had melted down all his gold coins into a lump of gold so that no person would be able to tell that it was from the south coast.

“Ehhh??”

While Leylin was walking around, he was occasionally observing the other Magi bargaining, trading, and so on, silently watching and learning from them. At this time, however, something on a white table caught his attention.
“What is this?”
Leylin picked up an item that looked like a shard of ice from the white table, appearing to be interested in that item. This ice shard was preserved within a green jade box as if it was a very valuable treasure. However, this feature wasn’t why it had caught Leylin’s eye. While he was walking to this table, he had felt a movement in his blood essence, as if it were reacting to some item, and that item was this ice shard. At this moment, while Leylin was holding onto the ice shard with both his hands, the sensation he had felt before had now intensified.
*Zi! Zi!* A white mist appeared out from that ice shard and very quickly condensed into a layer of thick frost that froze Leylin’s fingers. This degree of white frost could not do any harm to Leylin, but he still was pleasantly surprised to find that when this cold air invaded him, there was an odd change that had occurred to the Kemoyin’s bloodline in his body. This feeling, it is as if a person who was burning with rage suddenly had ice-cold water poured on him. It really is very enjoyable!

Leylin heaved a mental sigh. A Warlock’s emotional instability was a bloodline illness, and it had already caused Leylin trouble for a long time. Although the A.I. Chip, in accordance with the research notes and the original prescription of the tranquility potion left behind by the Great Magus Serholm, had allocated more of the high-level tranquility potion, in the end, it could only suppress the illness, and could not completely cure it. Now, this ice shard-like item in his hand caused him to feel some hope!
“I feel that this item I am holding can suppress the negative effects on my emotions for at least a year! If I find more items like these, then perhaps the emotional instabilities can be completely cured.” A joyous sparkle appeared in Leylin’s eyes, but it was quickly concealed.

He did not want to expose any emotion before he got his hands on the name and origin of the ice-shard.

“This is the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath. Icy Jade Scorpions live deep within ice caves, and their saliva has the effect of boosting the advancement of plenty of ice element high-level meditation techniques. It is being sold for 500,000 magic crystals, or can be exchanged for an item of similar worth…”

In front of Leylin was an extremely beautiful female Magus. Her long purple robes could not hide the curves of the body. Instead, it was even more enchanting as the robes failed to conceal them. Her light purple hair was let down like a waterfall, and her exquisite face carried a smile.

This woman’s looks definitely ranked in the top ten of all females Leylin had ever seen, and in addition, she looked extremely intelligent and capable.

“I have an experiment which requires a large amount of this item; can you bring me to the ice cave? Or perhaps, I can purchase them in bulk”

From the smile of the woman, Leylin knew that she had seen through his urgent need for the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath, so he just calmly admitted it.
Meanwhile, a magic crystal was tossed onto the table. Leylin kept the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath in his palm with no intentions of returning it.

“Is it just an experiment?” The purple-haired Magus said with a grin. The magic crystal on the table flew into her hands, leaving behind a flickering black afterimage.

Leylin merely looked at her with a vacant stare, as if what he had said was the truth.

“Alright then!” The female Magus elegantly raised her finger, on which her fingernail had been painted with the red sap of a daffodil, and kept the magic crystal.

“I’m Celine! You can contact me in the future for more information regarding the Icy Jade Scorpion. This is my secret imprint!” She then passed her secret imprint, which looked like a purple daffodil, to Leylin.

Leylin nodded and left the area, and right after that, a plump Magus walked up to Celine and began to chat with her earnestly.

“Leylin, my friend! Where are you going?”

At this moment, Siegfried strolled up to where he was.

“You came at the right time. Do you know who that purple haired female Magus is?” Leylin pointed at the female Magus who occasionally covered her mouth and giggled while conversing animatedly with the plump Magus.
“Oh! That’s Celine, the inheritor of a small guild. Although the guild’s strength isn’t much, she is a famous beauty of the eastern capital! However, she’s extremely crafty, and many Magi who have harboured designs on her have suffered. She’s not someone you’d want to provoke…”

Siegfried looked at Leylin before grinning. “Why? Are you interested in her?”

“No! We just had some dealings previously.”

After listening to Siegfried’s explanation, he was even more sure that Celine was not a simple woman. The grip he had on the box unconsciously tightened.

However, the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath was paramount to his path as a Warlock, so he absolutely could not miss this chance.

“It seems like I’ll have to play with this vixen for a while!”

Leylin smiled as he glanced at Celine.

……

In the eastern capital, within the villa that Leylin bought.

After Baelin’s silent farewell, only Leylin was left as the sole occupant of the grand villa. As Leylin had not bought any slaves, it felt rather empty in here.

At this moment, Leylin had separately constructed a concealed tunnel in the underground cellar.

At the end of the tunnel was a spacious underground lab, at the centre of which was a silver metal experimental desk with test-tubes lying on top of it. All of these things were items that Leylin had brought along with him.

“What a strange item!”

At this moment, Leylin used silver tweezers and held the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath as blue light shined in his eyes.

With the aid of the microscopic analysing abilities of the A.I. Chip,
the surface on the icy shard continuously enlarged, finally revealing a strange rune with six sides.
Chilliness churned and emanated from this strange rune.
[Beep! The analysis of the components of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath is complete! Creating matrixes and images! Beginning simulation of the experiments on bloodline!]
Soon, the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
“Let’s begin!” Leylin inhaled deeply.
[Authorisation received. Beginning the simulation of experiment on bloodline!] The A.I. Chip worked on the data. Leylin’s eyes blurred as he seemed to enter a different dimension. He could vaguely make out a translucent human figure with purple blood running through their veins.
[Injecting the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath!] With the A.I. Chip’s voice, two thin metal needles pierced the humanoid figure at the shoulders, and images then showed a strange white liquid flowing into the body.
*Huala!* Once the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath had entered the body, it frothed as if hot oil had met with icy water, creating a very strong reaction.
The experimented-on body began to shake violently, and the numbers which represented the data of the figure changed wildly, almost turning into a blur.
[Blood flow and pressure are increased, and burden on the body is multiplied by five!]
From time to time, the A.I. Chip would update and interpret the new figures for Leylin.
“Begin the radiation of energy particles! Stabilise the vitality within!” Leylin ordered once again.
Soon, black Dark elemental energy particles began to emanate from the experimental body, and under such radiation, the body slowly began to stabilise.
Finally, the experimental body returned to its original state, and the purple blood in the body continued to flow, just like wine inside a glass.
The main difference was that the blood had dulled a little and become darker.
[Warlock’s bloodline emotional stability experiment was successful! Estimated time for suppressing the core emotional waves: 345 days, 13 hours.] The A.I Chip gave an accurate analysis of the experiment.
“If the dosage is increased, could it prevent any troubles in the future?” Leylin asked the A.I. Chip.
[Data is insufficient. Analysing the data’s probabilities…] The A.I. Chip once again went into a computing mode. Only after five hours had passed did the A.I. Chip come up with a reply. [Success rate is 67%. Requires more high-level Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath.]
“As expected! This kind of Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath can really cure problems with Warlocks’ emotions.” Leylin’s eyes shone brightly with happiness.
Although the ancient bloodline Warlocks had powerful physiques and magic capabilities, it was very difficult for them to advance.
However, this was not the main reason why the Warlock inheritance declined!
As a result of their access to powerful ancient bloodlines, a Warlock would also inherit the intact genes which were deeply imbued with tyrannical and terrifying emotions of ancient predators.
Because of this, a Warlock’s personality was often irascible, and they were quick-tempered, which was a fatal flaw in the Magus world.
No matter how powerful one was, what was the point in having such power if one could not control their own spirit?
Therefore, the calm and rational Magi could pass on their legacies. However, there were no traces of Warlocks on the south coast and Twilight Zone; perhaps only the central continent had some of the legacies left behind by Warlocks.

“Icy Jade Scorpion!”
Leylin quickly sorted out all the information he had related to this organism.

After being told the name of this crystal, Leylin began an intensive study on the characteristics, habitats, capabilities, etc. of this organism, and gathered all of the relevant data.

“Icy Jade Scorpion, a high energy organism that reaches the might of a rank 1 Magus in its adult stages. In search of fertile lands, they often reside in icy caves! Legend has it that they came from another world back in ancient times, and after entering the Twilight Zone, they underwent some evolutionary changes. Only the special radiation reflected from certain types of topaz are able to sustain their lives and reproduction capabilities. Their crystallised breath is known to have stimulating effects on certain high-grade meditation techniques.”

This was a brief summary of all the information Leylin had gathered.

The icy cave’s resources had already been monopolised by several guilds, and was in the process of being excavated. It would be extremely difficult for Leylin to enter on his own.

“No matter what, I have to obtain the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath!”

Flames of desire glinted in Leylin’s eyes, “Even if the heavens fall and the earth crumbles, I will not stop under any circumstances!”

Suppressing a bloodline Warlock’s emotional instability proved to be extremely difficult, as even though there were so many ancient Magi, they could only discover ways to suppress it. If not for Leylin having the A.I. Chip and bloodline acting as a reminder, he definitely would not have been able to discover the use of the Icy
Jade Scorpion’s Breath this easily.
Leylin did not feel that he would chance upon such a lucky encounter again!
“However, using the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath as a suppressant may not work for all Warlocks, and may not even work for others with the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline. However, the A.I. Chip managed to find a resource that is able to work specifically for me!”
Leylin’s face was extremely solemn.
There were no remedies to treat the emotional instability of Warlocks. Also, due to the difference in bloodlines, each Warlock had a unique bodily attribute. Hence, Leylin himself was not sure whether the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath would be effective.
It was very likely that the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath would aid Leylin, but not another Warlock with the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline.
In other words, the unique characteristics of this resource made it especially effective for Leylin!
Furthermore, the rise and fall of other Warlocks was of no concern to Leylin! He only cared that the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath was useful to him, and that he needed more of it. It would be best if he could find another Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath of higher quality.
“I’ll have to plan for this! I need a calm and collected mind!”
Leylin looked at the icy shard between the tweezers.
“Through the experimentation on the A.I. Chip, I now know that although the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath can suppress my mental fluctuations and allow me to be sane for close to a year, there will also be some side effects. I have to concoct some potions to get rid of these side effects!”
This would not stump Leylin at all. After residing in Four Seasons Garden for such a long time, Leylin was no longer a Potion Master who had just advanced.
The Four Seasons Garden was a large-scaled power that was formed of potion masters. They had various information on all sorts of potions, as well as ideas on concocting ancient potions, and these experiments were not too difficult. Naturally, Leylin had absorbed all of the information stored within the Four Seasons Garden like a sponge, all while practising his potioneering skills at the same time. Through various trades and experiments, Leylin estimated that his skills had far surpassed that of his mentor, Professor Kroft, after leaving the Four Seasons Garden, and had even reached the realm of a Potion Grandmaster!

A Potions Grandmaster! Their success rate for brewing high-grade potions was around 30%, and they could even research and try brewing new types of potions on their own!
Here were only a few Potion Masters in the entire south coast, and they were all pursued and worshipped by many major powers. Hence, Leylin did not dare to expose his attainment in potioneering. Advancing to rank 2 at his age was already heaven-defying, but if he revealed his skill in potioneering, he would be called not a normal genius, but a freak of nature!

A Potion Master’s progress was not dependent on his theory research, he had to do a great amount of practical work. Only after wasting lots of resources could he get plenty of experience and thus make progress. Even if Leylin was freakishly talented, he simply could not be promoted to a higher level in potioneering without doing anything.

If many Magi decided to investigate him, the existence of his A.I. Chip might even be exposed!

Because of this, Leylin had always concealed his genuine realm in Potions, choosing to stay silent regarding this.

The most important aspect of a Potions Master was innovation! By relying on their wealth of knowledge and experience, they could improvise formulas and still attain a very high success rate.

Thanks to Leylin’s current attainments in potioneering, he only had to think for a short while before being able to recall several formulas to be used together with Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath that would negate its side effects.
“En! In order to completely eliminate the side-effects of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath, I’ll need Arrow Frog Venom, Reddish Stony Feces, and the egg of the Black Mountain Goat, and then I’ll be able to start the neutralisation process…”

Leylin eventually selected a formula. “Coincidentally, I have one portion of all of these items!”

Soon after, he was deeply immersed in the brewing process. The usage of this Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath concerned the success or failure of eliminating the side effects from his bloodline, and thus, he had to be serious.

......

Two days passed before Leylin emerged from his laboratory. There were slight differences between his condition from 2 days ago and now. His personality had become colder, and he now gave off an unapproachable aura. His skin had turned softer, and it constantly emitted a jade-like luster.

A chilliness seemed to emit from his black hair, decreasing the surrounding temperature by a few degrees.

After having brewed the potion, Leylin was itching to make use of it and see if it would successfully suppress his bloodline.

The A.I. Chip had already given Leylin definite assurance that while the potion was in effect, even if Leylin was to take part in bloody battles every day, the effects of his bloodline wouldn’t corrupt his rational thinking.

Only now did Leylin have the confidence to research on the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath.

“Siegfried! Previously, I asked you to get some intelligence about Celine’s guild. Is there any news on that matter?”

“Celine! I now have some time, so tell me where it is! We can go there directly and talk in person about the matter concerning the Icy
Jade Scorpion!”
The first thing Leylin did was send out two short messages using secret imprints.
A few minutes later, he received an answer. A khaki coloured imprint of a mechanical arm shone upon the contact book.
“I had previously gathered some intelligence, and coupled with your generous reward, I have already gotten a better understanding of Nature’s Alliance. I’ll pass on the information to you later.”
Siegfried conveyed some good news to Leylin.
“Thank you! I will come and visit you later.” Leylin smiled.
Compared to Siegfried, Celine’s answer was much simpler. There was a time and a place, and everything else could only be discussed once they reached the place.
“What a shrewd woman!” Leylin evaluated. “I just hope you don’t go and get yourself ensnared too!”

……

“This is the place.” Leylin had arrived in front of an elegant office in the eastern capital.
This building was rather different from the usual structures of the subterranean world, which placed an emphasis on defence. Here, it was extremely majestic and sought to be elegant and pleasing to the eye, it was adorned with all sorts of flowers and plants, while its defence was unbelievably weak.
This contrasting style, along with the top-class luxurious items inside, had attracted the attention of several aristocrats, causing them to rush madly towards this place. However, it implemented a very strict system for its members, and only a limited number of customers were received. The supporter of this place was also extremely firm, and after rejecting the requests of a few aristocratic families, the demand sharply dropped.
Leylin entered this office and began to recall the information Siegfried had given him. Nature’s Alliance, this was the guild that Celine was in. It was said that this small sized guild had affinities with various plants from another world, and their greenhouse handling of plants and research of these plants were extremely unique and cutting edge. Furthermore, although the high-grade meditation technique of the Nature Alliance did not have strong fighting abilities, it was extremely useful in playing the role of support. Furthermore, the training in this technique allowed the practitioner to permanently change their appearance slightly, turning them into handsome men and pretty ladies that would be able to attract pursuit from the opposite sex. Lastly, the Magi that graduated from these guilds were completely different from traditional Magi with their stubbornness and unwillingness to communicate with others. Most of them were intelligent, capable, and extremely adept at socialising. They had quite a good reputation outside, and even had a good relationship with other small guilds. This was all the information Siegfried had gathered regarding the guild behind Celine.

Leylin had also found much valuable information from within. “Changing their appearance, being good at socialising, having a powerful backing... It looks like the high-grade meditation technique of Nature’s Alliance can’t directly increase one’s strength. It might increase one’s charisma or illusory abilities!” “In addition, they have a good relationship with most small guilds, and a few medium-sized guilds. This means that it’s almost impossible for there to be a rank 2 or higher Magus in charge, else it would have long since become a large-scale guild.” If Leylin was still a rank 2 Warlock, he would naturally force his way through. However, as he was still sustaining an injury and
could not yet use his full power, he had to remain low-key indefinitely and not attract unwarranted attention from Magi who were rank 2 and above. Hence, he had to be patient and enter the game that this wily vixen Celine was playing.

“Hello, Mister! Do you have an appointment?”

As Leylin stepped in, he was respectfully stopped by two maidservants. As they greeted him, Leylin caught a whiff of an extremely simple yet elegant perfume. The two maidservants were dressed extremely well, and they clearly had training in their poise, which could rival that of women in nobility. However, the few Knights that stood behind the maidservants were enough to cause people to dispel their stray thoughts.

“I have an appointment with Celine!” Leylin answered.

“Lord Leylin, please follow me!” After hearing Celine’s name, the two maidservants’ bodies shuddered slightly and they became more respectful to Leylin.

“Lord Celine is waiting for you in the Horizon Pavilion!”

“Horizon Pavilion? Isn’t that the guestroom that is reserved for people of the highest importance?” A passing noble youth squealed, attracting the attention of passers-by.

“I haven’t heard wrongly, it is the Horizon Pavilion!”

“Exactly what background does this young man have? I haven’t heard anything about a noble paying a visit…”

From a secret hall nearby, all sorts of mutters could be heard. Though their voices were extremely low and quiet, they were still able to travel into Leylin’s ear.

Leylin followed behind the maidservants. Under everyone’s astonished gazes, he headed towards the meeting point designated for the people of highest importance.

After walking through several corridors that were lined with flowers and plants, Leylin finally reached the Horizon Pavilion.

The two maidservants opened the door for Leylin before retreating.
Mist! A layer of thin white mist engulfed the entire room, and in certain corners of the room were the glittering of jewels, making the place more magnificent than before, its picturesque beauty like a place of fantasy.

“En? This mist seems to have a type of tranquil and relaxing effect, which is rather useful for even a regular human’s body!”

Leylin made his deduction after catching a single whiff of it. He even understood the formula to replicate the mist. “It’s a pity that it doesn’t have much of an effect on an official Magus.”

Leylin continued to observe the layout of the Horizon Pavilion. Green plants took up a huge portion of the room, but the layout was extremely neat and tidy, giving off a feeling of being one with nature.

In the Twilight Zone, green plants were extremely valuable resources, as the light from sun stones was used to grow various fungi and oats. As for vegetables and fruits, they were extremely rare items only for the nobility, much less plants that were only used for aesthetic viewing purposes.

Celine rested on a chair made of vines, seemingly unaware of Leylin’s arrival. Her long, slender legs were revealed, and with that beauty of hers that could cause wars between kingdoms, it was no small temptation, even for an official Magus.

“Ahem.” Leylin lightly coughed.

Following which, the woman lying down was roused in shock, and she proceeded to greet Leylin with a smile, “You’re here, Magus Leylin!”

Each and every movement of hers had elegance in it, and coupled with her voice that was as sweet as a skylark’s, it could leave one intoxicated.

“Hello, Magus Celine!” Leylin gave a perfunctory greeting, the expression on his face neither warm nor cold.

The spiritual force of an official Magus was enough to engulf the
space within the room, and when Leylin entered, he did not conceal the aura on his body. It would be strange if this woman did not realise his arrival at all!
However, even if it was done on purpose, Celine’s behaviour could not invoke any hatred. It was as if a little girl was playing a prank, which was not annoying.
However, after witnessing this scene, Leylin was even more sure of the meditation technique she cultivated in.
A superior illusory technique was not only cast on opponents, but also on the user. It would often leave opposing Magi finding it unbearable to inflict pain on them.
It was extremely obvious that Celine’s meditation technique had reached such a level.
“There is only one effect from such a meditation technique, and that is to increase affinity with others!”

“Natural affinity! Affinity to all things! At its peak, it will even affect intelligent creatures and their unconscious state of mind. Furthermore, it will also attract the illusion elemental energy particles…”

Leylin quickly deduced Celine’s meditation technique.

“Terrifying! At its later stages, this meditation technique will even affect official Magi, where the energy particles will enter the Magus’ body and influence their spirit’s natural inclinations…”

Of course, Celine’s attainment in this meditation technique had not reached such a level yet. Furthermore, Leylin had only conjectured the level higher than her current state, which may not even be true. Evidently, her lustrous appearance could still not enchant Leylin.

Hence, Leylin had not completely disregarded Celine’s beauty and found another chair made of vines, which was facing her, to sit on.

“I’m sure that Miss Celine is extremely clear about my intentions on being here…”

The attitude that Leylin showed caused Celine to furrow her brows. However, very soon she smiled meaningfully as she stood up and stretched her back.

“Since Mister Leylin had already mentioned it, then I won’t beat around the bush any longer!” Celine smiled wryly. “The icy cave is not controlled by my guild, Nature’s Alliance. As for the Icy Jade
Scorpion, it’s venom poses a problem even for Magi... Furthermore, the elite Icy Jade Scorpion has the might of a semi-converted elemental Magus. Legends have it that a peak rank 1 Magus could not even beat their king…”

“Under so many unfavourable circumstances, we have to pay a huge price for every Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath that we obtain. What’s more troublesome is that this species cannot be tamed, and they will attack any other living thing… To be frank, that material that I put for sale was the very last piece I owned…”

Celine continuously poured forth her grievances, seemingly pitiful like a weak and helpless damsel. One would often forget her identity as an official Magus.

However, Leylin would not fall into such a trap. Furthermore, even if she really had met with such troubles, Leylin had no intentions of helping her.

“My apologies but my reason for coming here this time is to amass large amounts of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath. Also, if you were to meet with difficulties, we could change our negotiations. Bring me the permit to enter the icy cave and a detailed map. In exchange, I’m willing to fork out large amounts of magic crystals, precious resources, and even top-grade research materials.

Leylin spoke in a rich and overbearing manner.

Of course, to enter the icy cave, he could deal with other organisations or simply choose to infiltrate his way in.

However, having an honest identity was always a good thing. Furthermore, Leylin had already inquired about the other factions who were safeguarding the icy cave. They were either a type of intelligent species or those extremely obstinate, conservative humans. As to whether Leylin could obtain anything from them, it remained a mystery.

No matter what, if Leylin did not want to cause a huge stir, the best way was to get in through Nature’s Alliance.
Of course, if he was left with no other choices, Leylin did not mind going into seclusion for a good while before he regained the might of a rank 2 Warlock and force his way in and even monopolise the area for himself.

“Entry permit? Even a map?” Celine bowed her head as she pondered, but she very soon declined, “My apologies! Mister Leylin, you aren’t from Nature’s Alliance, so if I were to let you in, the other factions would not be too pleased about it…”

“However, if you were a member of Nature’s Alliance, then there wouldn’t be any problems anymore!” Celine grinned.

Leylin laughed loudly, “Just for a mere entry permit and you want me to join as a member, aren’t you a little too naive?”

“It definitely will not stop at that level. If you, Mister Leylin, are willing to join, Celine is willing to give you the honorary title of a professor, with 500,000 magic crystals as a salary each year. Furthermore, the precious resources and experiment lab will be opened to you! Mister! Won’t you give Celine a hand?”

Celine sounded extremely sincere as she spoke in an endearing manner which could enchant people. Ripples seemed to emanate from her big, shiny eyes.

“En?” Leylin was shocked for a while before he smiled and met Celine’s eyes with his.

Under the detection of the A.I. Chip, an extremely indiscernible spiritual force was revealed to him. Moreover, the direction that it headed towards was Leylin’s brain and his sea of consciousness.

“She actually dared to cast an illusion on me?” Leylin did not know whether to laugh or cry. This woman was acting somewhat recklessly. Not to mention the automatic counterattack from his bloodline, as a rank 2 Warlock, his massive spiritual force was enough to cause Celine a backlash which could turn her into an idiot!

However, he still had uses for her, so naturally, he would not be
From Leylin’s eyes, a large crimson coloured light surged forward and crumbled the incoming spiritual force into pieces. After realising this had happened, Celine’s face turned pale. Leylin, who had adopted a low profile, had always been suppressing his spiritual force and energy waves that he radiated. On the surface, he was just another ordinary rank 1 Magus. For this very reason, Celine was willing to cast an illusion on him. However, from the looks of it, this Magus by the name of Leylin was concealing most of his strength, which had caused her to be on the losing end.

In many cases, magic could turn around and backfire on the person who had cast the spell and cause him or her damage. Celine struggled, wanting to shift her eyes away. However, her neck seemed to be stuck in a certain position, unable to move even an inch. Shocked, Celine could only gaze pitifully at Leylin, hoping to gain his understanding.

After playing around with her for a while, Leylin gave a faint smile and curbed the crimson rays coming from his eyes. Meanwhile, Celine trembled violently, two red lines flowed from her beautiful nose and created a flaw on her attractive face.

“A peak rank 1 Magus! You’re a peak rank 1 Magus!” Celine did not even bother sorting out her appearance and exclaimed.

Through this spiritual force encounter, Celine could tell that he had a spiritual force that was as deep and profound as an ocean. The icy and terrifying aura it had caused her much fear. She was extremely confident in her abilities in casting illusions. Based on records on meditation techniques, only someone who had the strength of at least a rank 1 peak Magus would be able to forcefully break her illusions.

At this point, Magi like them had basically completely converted
their elemental essence, and their whole body had undergone a slight change. Ordinary illusions were basically useless. And Leylin right here was a peak rank 1 Magus!

“My apologies! Celine did have the slightest clue that Mister Leylin had already been promoted to the peak of rank 1. Please forgive me for that sudden probing just now. Thank you so much for letting me off.”

Celine looked grim, got up, and bowed towards Leylin with an expression of reverence.

In this situation where guilds were usually managed by official Magi, a peak rank 1 Magus was enough to destroy several small guilds. Celine was extremely familiar with the destructive power of a peak rank 1 Magus.

Magi at this level were enough to be the trump cards of medium-scaled guilds. Why would they appear here?

While Celine was bowing, she secretly raised her head and took the measure of this young man who was preposterously good looking. All sorts of thoughts emerged in her mind.

“It’s nothing much! How is it going regarding the trade?” Leylin shook his head slightly.

Just showing a bit of strength was enough for this little vixen to see the disparity between them. When the difference in power was like that between heaven and earth, any scheming would be useless!

“The trade isn’t very urgent. Please wait for a while longer!”

Celine’s attitude had now undergone an 180-degree change. She bowed slightly, and then flitted away into the darkness like a butterfly.

She did not make him wait long, appearing in front of him again within a few minutes.

However, she now wore a purplish-gold gown and had dressed herself up, and did not look as pitiful as she had been. She was also holding onto a round disk.
“This is the collection at our office. There aren’t many produced every year, and we only use it to entertain important guests!”

Celine smiled daintily, placing the item on the round dish on the table.
It was a seed that was in the shape of an olive. There were also patterns that were similar to that on walnuts and was probably the seed of some plant.

Celine’s pale jade-like hands brushed at the seed!

*Weng!* Along with a circle of green rays, the entire seed began to tremble.

*Pak!* A white feeler burst out of the seed, extended itself, and then increased in number.

After the feelers were brown branches, followed by green leaves and pink flowers.

Under the green rays, this seed rapidly went through its entire brief life, and when all the flower petals fell away, a red fruit that was like an apple appeared on a branch.

“This is a special local product of ours, the Sicily Fruit! As it stays ripe for just a short period of time, it needs to be eaten right after being picked to be able to enjoy its pure, unadulterated taste.”

Celine explained to Leylin while giving a gentle smile.

“The miracles in life are truly splendid and numerous!” Leylin praised. Such a miracle was only possible by using magic.

He picked the fruit off the plant, and the plant, which had lost its fruit, quickly wilted, and in seconds, turned into a puddle of grey liquid.
Munch!
Leylin took a bite of the fruit that had been created by using magic to accelerate its growth.
As for any poisons, after having awakened the toxic innate talent of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, he was basically immune to most poisons in the world. Perhaps only the terrifying toxins that originated from ancient times might be able to affect him.
As the fruit entered his mouth, a fragrant and sweet juice flowed between his teeth.
“It tastes pretty good, and it also seems to be beneficial towards one’s spiritual force! It is still rather effective for official Magi who are gathering spiritual force.”
Leylin gave a slightly surprised glance towards Celine.
“The Sicily fruit is only effective for official Magi who are eating it for the first time. If a Magus’ rank is too high, or if it is eaten multiple times, it is probably only useful for satisfying one’s taste buds and stomach.” Celine could only force a wry smile, pointing out the flaws in the fruit.
“Even so, it is still remarkable!” Leylin shook his head. The effects of this fruit were akin to those of a potion for spiritual force. If this was on the south coast, countless official Magi would be looting this everywhere. Here, however, any small power was able to bring it out, and Leylin once again learned more about the abundance of resources in the subterranean world.
After displaying his strength, Leylin was extremely calm and composed, enjoying the top-grade delicacies, wine, and other great things that Celine brought out, while occasionally speaking to her. After that, Celine took the initiative and brought up the trade that Leylin had been talking about.

“Is my lord really not going to even consider Celine’s suggestion?” Celine stared at Leylin with puppy-dog eyes.

“I don’t have any plans to join any powers and be tied down.” Leylin rejected her straight out.

“Please don’t worry about that at all. Nature’s Alliance is very small and I, Celine, am the only official Magus. My lord, you wouldn’t have to do much!” Celine guaranteed.

“Also, the moment you enter, we will release to you all of Nature’s Alliance’s high-grade meditation techniques and information regarding the secret spells that have been passed down. After all, it was very rare for a peak rank 1 Magus to be seen traveling alone in the Twilight Zone. One could go so far as to say that they could be seen once in a hundred years. If one wanted to walk far on the path of Magi, it was essential that they possess large amounts of resources and knowledge, and these were things that only large powers possessed.

Hence, those wandering Magi were usually not that powerful. Anyone who was a semi-converted Magus was considered rather powerful, and as for being a peak rank 1 Magus, that was virtually impossible.

Even if there were one or two who were extremely lucky, they would immediately be roped in by large Magi organisations, and would definitely not continue to wander.

Now, however, Celine knew there was a tremendous opportunity in front of her!

The moment she recruited Leylin, Nature’s Alliance would automatically become a medium-ranked guild that would not lose
out to top powers!

Hence, whilst knowing that she did not have much hope in this endeavour, Celine still wanted to give it a try! Though she had previously used her own beauty to seduce a few Magi, most of them were nothing special, and all they wanted was to gain possession of her. It was extremely disgusting, but she had to endure the disgust that rose within her and continue to have dealings with them for her guild to continue to exist.

If her guild had a peak rank 1 Magus taking charge, things would definitely be different!

“My apologies but…” Leylin spoke, causing Celine’s expression to pale.

“But it’s not as if there isn’t a roundabout way of doing this.” However, Leylin’s next words caused Celine’s eyes to shine.

“I can go through the motions of entering the Nature’s Alliance guild to obtain the entry permit to enter the icy cave. Also, I want everything that you promised me, and in return, I can even personally help you to expand the guild to some extent! After this, you and your Nature’s Alliance are not allowed to reject any of my requests. Remember, I mean any at all!”

Leylin altered the conditions a little, leaving Celine to sink deeply into thought.

“Fine!” After muttering to herself for some time, this clever woman quickly nodded and accepted Leylin’s terms.

There were few chances to recruit a peak rank 1 Magus. In addition, though Leylin would only enter the guild in name, as long as she did her utmost if Nature’s Alliance were to get into trouble, wouldn’t he help out?”

“I can.. Even…” Celine raised her head and looked at Leylin’s handsome features, flushed red, and then ducked her head.

However, considering her experience, she knew to reign in her emotions.
“I’ll pass you the high-grade meditation techniques and information regarding spells as soon as possible. May I know when you are planning to enter the icy cave? I can arrange…”

Celine’s head automatically lowered. Such an attitude surprised Leylin. “Don’t I have to sign some contract? I recall that when most guilds recruit new blood, some even get them to leave behind a portion of their soul.”

“I trust Lord Leylin!” Celine resolutely stated, which left Leylin somewhat stupefied.

Of course, he would not leave any traces of his spirit to be bound by a contract. However, he was prepared to use the Trial’s Eye to reassure her. After all, he still had many items that could be used to concoct the solution of the Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers. However, it seemed like Celine was slyer than he thought, and was also willing to take risks!

Perhaps, in the future, Nature’s Alliance would be able to shine through her leadership and walk the path to glory!

Leylin looked at Celine, who seemed like a maidservant now, as he smiled in a toying manner…

……

A few days later, on a tall, fertile land, in front of a mighty construction.

Celine wore purple robes, seemingly with a bewitching intent. This caused the two acolytes behind her to gulp down their saliva. Between the two acolytes, one of them was female. She herself was intoxicated by Celine’s beauty, and her gaze held a trace of adoration.

“Lord Celine, are we really waiting for a peak rank 1 Magus here?”

As for the other male acolyte, he was somewhat in disbelief. It was a peak rank 1 Magus after all! Such strength was enough to be
granted the position of an elder in large guilds. Why would such a Magus lower his status and enter a small guild? Or perhaps, maybe it was for Lord Celine! The male acolyte racked his brains to derive a plausible explanation while tightly clenching his fist.

As for the female acolyte, she gritted her teeth. As for what she thought, that peak rank 1 Magus must have used some methods to cause Lord Celine to succumb to him, and intentionally joined the guild to use it to his advantage for a long time.

“Obo, Ilya, although this Lord Leylin has a relatively good-natured disposition, you cannot be disrespectful. You are the hope of my Nature’s Alliance. If you have the chance to be favoured by Lord Leylin and become his disciple, the chances of advancing to a rank 1 Magus in the future will be extremely high…”

As for Celine, she did not consider the complicated feelings of her acolytes and even tried to instruct them at this moment. The reason for her bringing the two acolytes who had the highest chances of advancing into an official Magus with her was twofold. First, she wanted everyone in the guild to know that she had recruited a peak rank 1 Magus, and on the other hand, she had hoped for Leylin to take them as his disciples, to further strengthen the ties they had.

“Jejeje! Isn’t that the guild leader of Nature’s Alliance? Who might be this important for the ravishing beauty Miss Celine to personally welcome him?”

At this moment, a group of Magi walked out as the large gates of the construction creaked open. The one walking at the forefront was middle-aged, with a half-naked torso and eight long legs that propped up his body. At his buttocks was a sack of silk. It seemed to be a half-man half-spider creature. Moreover, a genital
tube hung from his lower abdomen in the open. Looking at it, Obo felt it repulsive, and as for Ilya, she lowered her head. However, they could not express their disgust, as this creature had the might of a semi-converted rank 1 Magus, which made it stronger than Celine. Through the sensing of the spiritual force, they could see that the halo of energy particles surrounding the creature’s body was mightier than that of their guild leader. “It’s been a really long time, Magus Skrill!” Celine smiled jubilantly and went forward to greet the creature. The Magus Skrill looked at Obo and Ilya in disdain, before looking at Celine. “Miss Celine, why do you have to safeguard the Nature’s Alliance? There are so few acolytes, and much less potential. This will only end with you squandering your youth and your precious life span. Why don’t you join us at the Eight-Claw Spider Guild? I can give you a position which is just beneath mine…” Skrill licked his lips as he lustfully looked at Celine. “My apologies, Sir Skrill, I…” Celine smiled with some difficulty, and as Skrill edged closer, she caught of whiff of his repulsive odour, which left her rather pale. On the other side, Obo and Ilya’s eyes had already turned red; if not for Skrill being an official Magus with a might that surpassed Celine, they would have already dashed forward. Skrill was a leader of one of the small-scale guilds that had banded together with Nature’s Alliance to guard the icy cave. Very long ago, when Nature’s Alliance was at its peak, Skrill’s guild was still a pathetic, tail-wagging, pity-votes-garnering, tagalong of a guild. However, after Celine took over the leadership position, Nature’s Alliance’s power started to wane. Only then did Skrill begin to mercilessly reap the benefits that originally belonged to Nature’s Alliance, and even express his interests in Celine.
Celine herself had only just advanced to become an official Magus. Compared to Skrill, she was obviously lacking. In addition, all the Magi that were on good terms with Nature’s Alliance were not willing to offend a semi-converted Magus just for this small matter, as with their responsibilities in their respective guilds, they had to consider many more things than most other Magi.

Even if Celine were to win over a few Magi by using her body, those she could win over would at most be regular official Magi that would be much weaker than Skrill. This was what had allowed Skrill to be so unreserved with his actions.

The smile on Celine’s face gradually became more forced as Skrill made things more difficult for her along every step of the way. At the same time, she also sent warnings to Obo and Ilya, telling them not to do anything that might provoke Skrill.

Obo and Ilya felt as if their hearts had been slashed, as they were only able to clench their fists at this scene.

Celine continued, “The reason I’m here is to welcome a famed professor into my guild. He wishes to enter the icy caves.”

“Famed professor?” Skrill’s brows furrowed.

“Is it Wagrin or Noah? With just their measly amount of strength, they’ll just be a burden…”
Skrill sneered. “No! The professor we’ve invited is a travelling Magus from the eastern capital. In fact, I myself was rather surprised that he actually agreed to enter Nature’s Alliance.”

A grin surfaced on Celine’s face. “Anyways, he’s already here!” “Hehe… how powerful can a travelling Magus be? Celine, I hope you didn’t get cheated!” Skrill’s disdainful expression was still on his face. “Hm, he’s here? Where is he?” “Here!”

Leylin’s cold voice sounded from behind Skrill. Skrill’s body stiffened. How powerful was this official Magus to be able to escape his detection and sneak behind his back without any trouble?

If not for the greeting, it would have been an easy task for Leylin to kill him with just a spell.

He turned around rigidly to the sight of a young Magus in black standing behind him with a gentle smile on his lips. However, the aura he was giving off was terrifyingly strong! The moment he appeared, dense dark elemental particles permeated the area, repelling the elemental particles revolving around Skrill. “The aura of an elemental essence conversion… A p-peak rank 1 Magus!” Skrill had even begun to stutter.

Oh, great Gaia! A peak rank 1 Magus was basically a tyrant in the Twilight Zone. Why would one choose to enter a small guild such as Nature’s Alliance to be a professor?

Skrill could not make sense of this situation. “Looks like you aren’t very respectful to the guild master of our Nature’s Alliance, huh?” Leylin stared at this Magus with interest. “Surgical transplants? Or meditation techniques that can alter the body shape? I really want to explore further with that research…” Though his words were indirect, Leylin’s gaze was enough to cause Skrill to shiver in trepidation.
“My lord, you’re such a joker! We of the Eight-Claw Spider Guild and Nature’s Alliance have always been friendly with each other, so why would I be trying to make things difficult for guild master Celine? Haha… haha…”

Skrill bowed towards Leylin, lowering his head and smiling apologetically.

“Is that so?” Leylin shot Celine a glance.

“Yes, Lord Leylin!” Celine glared coldly at Skrill until an imploring look appeared in his eyes, and then spoke.

“In that case, go back first. I still have some matters that I wish to discuss with Celine!” Leylin instructed.

“Of course, of course. Many thanks, my lord!” Skrill immediately ran back to the fort as if he had been granted an official pardon, not daring to overstep his boundaries.

“Celine! It looks like your Nature’s Alliance isn’t doing that well.” Leylin looked at Celine, and then slightly eyed the two level 3 acolytes, both of whom were gradually flushing red.

“My apologies!” Celine gave a wry smile.

“Ever since my mentor passed away, we of Nature’s Alliance have not seen anyone advance to an official Magus in a long time. All that’s left is me working alone, which has caused our situation to go downhill. However, with my lord joining us, I’m sure the situation will improve.”

A peak rank 1 Magus was the trump card of middle-scaled guilds. With Leylin, Nature’s Alliance would obviously be able to develop more.

“Whatever. However, I hope you remember our arrangement. If not, I won’t actually help you if you cause some trouble that’s difficult to deal with.” Leylin reminded Celine. What he had agreed on was that in exchange for her high-grade meditation techniques, accumulation of information regarding Magi as well as easy access to the icy
cave, he would be a professor in name. In fact, Leylin would only be joining the Nature’s Alliance in name. Though he had other plans, he did not wish for Celine to use his name to create trouble outside. “Don’t worry!” Celine guaranteed. She was an intelligent woman and knew not to touch Leylin’s bottom line. “Obo and Ilya, quick, greet my lord!” She called out to the people behind her. Upon hearing her words, Obo and Ilya bowed, looking dazed. “We give our greetings to our lord!” Their heads were low, and they did not dare to look at Leylin. However, from their voices, their admiration was apparent. A peak rank 1 Magus! Obo and Ilya had never imagined that such a Magus would appear in Nature’s Alliance. Now, with a top-notch Magus like Leylin in charge, Nature’s Alliance seemed like it would once again emerge as a top power. Obo and Ilya were immeasurably emotional. Ever since they were young, they had been taken in by Nature’s Alliance and naturally had developed very deep feelings for the guild, hoping that it would become more powerful. Even their resentment from Celine almost being snatched away had lowered considerably. “Alright! Celine, where are the things I wanted?” Leylin gestured with his hands, getting the level 3 acolytes to leave, and then spoke to Celine. Seeing that Obo and Ilya were not enough to catch Leylin’s eye, Celine could only sigh in her heart. She then produced a light gold-coloured leaf and a sheet of dark yellow parchment paper. “This is a map! In the other hand, recorded on this gold leaf is the only high-grade meditation technique that we have: the original Crystal Mask. I hope you can take care of it!” Celine’s expression was very sincere
This attitude was rather surprising to Leylin. He immediately took the map and took a look. Within were numerous potholes and markings; it was obvious that Nature’s Alliance had been exploring the icy caves for a long time. Even so, they had not explored the deepest level of the cave, which went to show the immense size of the cave. This was the reason why Leylin had wanted the map. Otherwise, wouldn’t it mean that he would need to blindly explore the icy caves for months or even years before he could gather enough of the Icy Jade Scorpion Breath?

“Also, this Crystal Mask?”

Leylin naturally knew the significance of Celine passing down the original high-grade meditation technique to him. To some extent, this was a symbol of Nature’s Alliance. Celine’s actions were like she was handing over much of her authority to Leylin. In addition, handing out the original meditation technique allowed Leylin to see that she did not do anything suspicious to the technique.

……

Celine was unafraid as she met Leylin’s gaze, her eyes filled with a fervent hope and… pleading?

Leylin pursed his lips and extended his hand to take the gold leaf, and a trace of silver spiritual force entered it.

[Discovery of spiritual force, permission to allow transmission of information?] The A.I. Chip prompted.

“Permission granted!” Under Leylin’s orders, large amounts of data entered his brain, which also answered the question of why Celine had been so generous as to pass him the original.

“There are only two levels to the Crystal Mask?”

Leylin found it hard to believe as he looked at Celine. “Shouldn’t
all high-grade meditation techniques have at least four levels?”
In ancient times, high-grade meditation techniques were not just any simple techniques. They represented a route that could allow one to enter the ranks of the Morning Star Magi!
In other words, high-grade meditation techniques had at least four levels of information, allowing Magi to train until they became Morning Star Magi!
“The second half of the technique is lost, my lord!” Celine looked bitter.
“To be honest, most of the high-grade meditation techniques in the Twilight Zone are incomplete. There is no way to advance further.” After listening to Celine’s narration, Leylin suddenly thought of Siegfried’s meditation technique, Gaia’s Might.
The high-grade technique of the Earth Fire Association seemed to only have three levels, allowing Magi to train until rank 3. There was no another way for them to advance.
“Even in ancient times, high-grade meditation techniques were not staple goods, and there were a few wars in Twilight Zone. Though the inheritances were successfully passed down, we now lack a lot of the information regarding sub-topics and other information.” Celine explained to Leylin.
“In addition, even though we have two levels of the Crystal Mask, none of the Magi in Nature’s Alliance have successfully trained in both levels. The contents of the second level need to be supplemented with Mirage Crystals from the Fog World, but unfortunately, these materials have been gone from the Twilight Zone for over ten thousand years.”
Seemingly afraid that Leylin would think of this meditation technique as having little value, Celine quickly handed out something else.
“These are the spell models that Nature’s Alliance has been accumulating until now, within which are our research materials on
four rank 2 magic spells.”
She produced a crystal ball and passed it to Leylin. “In addition, we can increase our offerings to you to a million magic crystals per year!”
“Rank 2 spells?” Leylin was inwardly exhilarated, but his expression remained stolid. “Don’t worry. I’ve made my promise to you, and I definitely won’t go back on my words.”
As far as Leylin was concerned, he had collected high-level meditation techniques to supplement the A.I. Chip’s information bank and to further understand the contents of the Kemoyin’s Pupil and Sacred Flame. With the A.I. Chip’s formidable computation abilities, even if the data was somewhat incomplete, it did not matter. Difficulties regarding advancement were not the issue here, and in any case, Leylin himself would not be practicing all these techniques.

“Good! I am already aware of your sincerity!”

Under Celine’s somewhat stunned gaze, Leylin threw a light-gold leaf, the surface of which acted like a memory crystal, back to Celine and indifferently told her, “I now want to enter the icy cave by myself…”

“My lord! The icy cave’s terrain is complex, so even though you have a map, would you allow Obo or Ilya, or even Celine herself to guide you personally?”

Anxiety was present all over Celine’s face, as this was an opportunity for her relationship with Leylin to become better, and she did not want to miss it.

“No need for that!”

Leylin immediately rejected her suggestion. In addition to the fact that Leylin had many secrets that were inconvenient for him to reveal in front of others, bringing along people would bring no benefits. According to the A.I. Chip’s
analysis, the higher the rank of the Icy Jade Scorpion was, the better the quality of the Icy Jade Scorpion Breath would be, and therefore, Leylin desired to penetrate deep into the depths of the Icy Jade Scorpions’ lair in hopes of finding a higher ranked beast. For the commonly found, dangerous adult beasts, which were equal to an official Magus in terms of strength, two level 3 acolytes would simply be like food delivered on a platter. Even if Celine were to go, it would bring more demerits than benefits.

“In that case, I request that my lord informs me when he comes out. Celine has not brought my lord to have a look at the guild.” Celine bit her lip, and finally issued her invitation. “I will!” Seeing her wanting to speak more but hesitating, Leylin smiled inwardly, and immediately complied.

Then, following behind Celine, Leylin arrived at the entrance to the icy cave.

“Here the Nature’s Alliance, Eight Clawed Spiders, the Teal Vine, other guilds and factions guard this place together. They have jointly formed a council of Elders to oversee this place. In the past, our Nature’s Alliance naturally held a vast influence within this council of Elders, but it is very unfortunate that ever since my teacher passed away, Nature’s Alliance’s power has been reduced, and now, we have been pushed aside to the lowest authority.”

While Celine brought Leylin inside a huge building, she occasionally enlightened him as to the current situation of the Nature’s Alliance. Along the way, Leylin could often see many Magi and acolytes, all wearing different kinds of Chinese gowns with different symbols on them, pass by him on their way in and out.

“This place is known as the Ice Fortress. The 6 guilds jointly vested some funds and built the fortress, and the guilds’ members defend it. Also, many other guilds have set up their own special
laboratories here, and they analyze the various materials obtained from the icy caves…. Although our current authority is not much, escorting my lord inside is not a problem.”
Celine spoke as she led Leylin to the base of the fortress.
Within the man-made fortress, Leylin saw a huge white crevice. A cold wind blew out constantly from the crevice, causing the temperature inside the cavern to drop by several degrees, to the point that even the white wind was condensed into cold ice and white snow which formed a thick layer that covered the entire crevice.
“The icy cave is filled with this type of ice wind all year long. Incidentally, the cold air and sharp ice ridges inside the cave are thorny nuisances even for our official Magi. After many years of exploration, we discovered that this crevice here is the least harmful, and is a most suitable entrance. Other places are either a dead end or it requires a long period to withstand the chilling cold air. Even a rank 2 Magi cannot necessarily withstand it….”
“En!” Leylin nodded.
There were also other giant surface cracks outside the icy cave, but by seeing how all the magicians paid no attention to them, he knew that these entrances simply were deathtraps, and that here lay the safest path.
“Isn’t this Magus Celine? Do you want to enter the icy cave to explore?”
At this time, the Magus guarding the entrance greeted Celine with a smile, a warm expression in his eyes.
When Leylin saw that this Magus had a floor-length white beard, he somewhat speechlessly sneered inwardly.
“No! I am only escorting our guild’s honorary instructor to the entrance,” Celine replied with a smile.
“Honorary instructor? Him?!”
The old man was startled first, but then immediately began sizing
up Leylin, this newly arrived Magus. Although with Celine’s ability, she couldn’t attract an extremely formidable Magus, some comparatively shallow official Magi had willingly become members of Nature’s Alliance guild to get close to this beauty but were ultimately rejected by her. Based on the facts that she had revealed, Celine had tried to find at least a semi-converted elemental Magus to join the guild. It was obvious that among her admirers, only Skrill had met these requirements, but Celine would not agree to that.

“Hello, Young Magus! I am known as Old Madre!” The elderly Magus was carefully measuring Leylin up, but he nevertheless spoke very politely.

“I am called Leylin. Nice to meet you.” Leylin smiled but remained very reserved. Because of him frequently being in the habit of compressing his spiritual force, Leylin’s aura and fluctuation of energy waves were concealed, and thus, Old Madre was unable to discover Leylin’s true strength.

However, even this alone was enough to catch Old Madre’s attention and cause dread, as the unknown was often feared and considered dangerous by all, particularly the Magi.

“Since he is the honorary instructor of your guild, he can certainly go in!” After confirming Leylin’s capabilities, Old Madre reverted to his business-like appearance. Immediately, he pulled out something that looked like a metal ball, from within which a red light radiated, and submerged into the entrance.

*Po*! Within the void, there were faint trembles; these invisible distortions blasted out unceasingly, revealing a red coloured network of rays that covered the entire entrance. This network was clearly a previously-arranged defense mechanism, but it was
unknown how it concealed things so that there was not even a leak of any magic waves.

“Such an arrangement…” Leylin hesitated and inwardly muttered. “If I did not know what it was beforehand, perhaps my identity would have also been discovered by it!”

“It is dangerous within the icy caves. A cold wind that is comparable to a level zero magic attack blows everywhere, and there are also many high-energy organisms that gather in some places. Hence, I request that you please not go in too deep!”

Old Madre exhorted a couple of sentences, and then immediately gestured an invitation to Leylin.

“My lord! The cold air attack of Icy Jade Scorpion is of an extreme Yin nature! I am begging you to be careful!” This was the last sentence Celine said to Leylin.

This scene caused old Madre, who was standing to one side, to be somewhat envious, but he did not say anything.

But he was different compared to Skrill. Old Madre only had warm feelings of admiration for Celine; his attitude did not change to one of terrifying possessiveness.

Therefore, when saw that Celine’s intention was to cherish Leylin, he had only chosen to observe this scene.

“I will be careful!”

Leylin smiled in agreement, and after that, he signalled to Old Madre with a nod and then submerged himself within that cold wind and snow.

……

*Whooo! Whooo!* 
The cold wind howled in Leylin’s ears as it violently blew about while he hurriedly slid down. 
Finally, along with a light sound, Leylin steadily stood in a snowy
area.
“How is it so deep? Aren’t I already at least 3 kilometers underground?” Leylin surveyed his surroundings.
With the howling icy wind, there was much noise, like 10,000 musical instruments are being played at the same time.
The illumination contrasted greatly in here against the Fortress, as it was pitch black within the underground icy cave.
“Illuminate!” Leylin lifted his right hand, and a ball of light that was like a bright, incandescent light bulb calmly appeared on his palm.
“Let’s go!” As Leylin lightly shouted, the light ball rapidly rose in mid air and rotated.
The ball of light immediately illuminated this place.
Leylin took a quick look all around him. He was currently within a semicircular, underground icy cavern, the surroundings of which had countless densely packed holes in the walls. It was as if he was within an anthill.
All around on the walls was a thick, translucent layer of ice. The light from his illumination technique fell upon this ice layer and was immediately refracted into multi-colored light that made for a magnificent feast for the eyes!
*Flap*
Sounds of wings beating against the air resounded massively, as if tens of thousands of sparrows were trying to free themselves from a bag, waking Leylin who was standing awestruck while observing his surroundings.
Immediately, massive black dots welled up from within the underground cavern.
Upon taking a closer look, these black dots all had a pair of transparent, fleshy wings, forked tails that were similar to what swallows had, and tiny eyes and sharp ears that brought about an eerie feeling.
“Sun Chasing Bats! There are at least 10,000 of them!” Leylin quickly estimated the number of these bats.

“Chiiik…Chiik” The numerous bats cried out, and as if black clouds were blotting out the sun, they revolved around that light ball and projected a shadow upon the ground.

“Chiik!” After the colony of bats had surrounded the light ball, as if they had obtained a command they suddenly started to mindlessly attack that light ball. Their wings continuously smacked that ball of light, and like that, they wrapped up the entire light ball causing not even a sliver of light to be seen.

The entire cavern was once again plunged into darkness.

A moment later, the fluttering of wings once again echoed and the numerous Sun Chasing Bats scattered, but there were no traces of the light ball.

“Oh” Leylin sighed: “Igniting light in a region shrouded in darkness is clearly dangerous…”

In the subterranean world, the Twilight Zone’s human race made up only a small portion of the living organisms, and most darkness creatures had already been thoroughly exterminated, and because many of them were weak, they had no option but to hide upon seeing light.

However, in some desolate places outside of Twilight Zone, such light rays would instead stimulate the terrifying characteristics of these creatures of darkness leading to a relentless barrage of attacks!

The creatures of darkness outside of Twilight Zone and the ones that Leylin had just encountered were entirely different matters. The tide formed by the massive amounts of foreign creatures of darkness were also something that even official Magi generally avoided.
If the route that Leylin had taken had been filled with hordes of darkness creatures on the way to the eastern capital, the journey would not have been so quiet. Even if Leylin were to survive, Baelin, Jenny, and James definitely would have died in the mouths of these dark elemental beasts. It was obvious that within the icy caves, in the places that these beasts convened, they hated light; they would attack with all they had the moment that they detected any.

“Even I would need to spend a lot of time and magic to deal with all of those bats every day. It’s not worth it.” Leylin sighed.

While the groups of bats were running amok, he had used a concealment spell. Hence, he had naturally not been pursued or attacked by the bats.

After doing some experiments, Leylin made up his mind. “Night Vision!” He used this spell on himself. This was an essential spell for many Magi in the subterranean world. With this spell, they could see things in the dark as if it were day without giving off any light that would attract aggressive beasts.

“A.I. Chip, display the map in your records!” After he casted the spell, Leylin gave an order to the A.I. Chip. Immediately after, a 3D image appeared in front of his eyes. This was the simulated model the A.I. Chip had formed after
analysing the map Celine had given him. Nearby Leylin, there were red dots that constantly moved nearby Leylin, indicating the activity of high-energy beings. Compared to the previous inflexible map, this was even more detailed and reliable.

In a cave like this that was as complicated as a maze, Leylin had a definite advantage with his A.I. Chip. At the very least, with the A.I. Chip recording down everything, he would not get lost. The icy cave could easily cause people to get lost. Every year, there were acolytes or even Magi in the guild who got completely lost in the cave. According to other Magi, if they had been enticed to enter deeper areas, they would have likely died in the mouths of the dark elemental beasts.

“Show me the best route to where the Icy Jade Scorpions are the most active!” Leylin ordered once again.

Then, on the surface of the 3D map, a red line extended from the marker for Leylin’s current location. It led to the deeper levels of the icy cave, even marking a few important areas.

“Let’s go!” Leylin looked around him and then disappeared into the crevasse. Within the fort, in a concealed room.

Skrill saw the scene of Celine sending Leylin into the icy caves through a crystal ball, a grim expression on his face.

“Did that bitch Celine think that I wouldn’t dare do anything to her if she found a peak rank 1 Magus to depend on?” Skrill’s facial muscles began to contort as he stared at the shapely body in the image, his expression especially insatiable and passionate.

“You’re mine, and I will get you and make you my most beautiful treasure!”

Skrill moaned in an abnormal way.
“How is it? Have you made your decision?” Meanwhile, in a corner of the world, black mist rose and constantly changed shape, eventually turning into a human figure with vague features. “There’s a large issue with your plan. Celine has already recruited a peak rank 1 Magus into her Nature’s Alliance. Our original plan will not work.”

In front of others, Skrill concealed his previous expression and seemed cold.

“Peak rank 1?!” A startled gasp was heard from the mist. “Is your information accurate? Why would a peak rank 1 Magus be willing to join a small guild?”

“How would I know?” Skrill’s face darkened. Being scared away by Leylin like that was the ultimate humiliation for him.

“He could easily repel the elemental particles around me, and his elemental conversion was at a very high level. Even if he’s not a peak rank 1 Magus, he can’t be too far from that… I wonder if that whore, Celine, tempted him…”

At the mention of Celine, Skrill’s mood worsened again, leaving him feeling frustrated and unresigned, as if a delicacy meant for him had been robbed by someone else.

“Jeje, a peak rank 1 Magus is a little troublesome, but you should also believe in the guild backing us. A peak rank 1 Magus is definitely not enough to hinder our plan!”

The person shrouded in the mist was very confident.

“What do you plan to do? A peak rank 1 Magus isn’t so easily dealt with. Besides, two peak rank fighting would definitely lead to a huge commotion. Aren’t you afraid of being exposed?” A curious look appeared on Skrill’s face.

“Jeje! It’s not as if we don’t have a peak rank 1 Magus in our organisation. Did you forget about that good opportunity we have? He will definitely accept!”

“Do you mean…” Skrill’s eyes brightened.
“Hah…”
Leylin breathed out white mist.
The moment water vapour reached the outside air, it immediately condensed into tiny crystals that fell to the ground and produced slight sounds.
“A.I. Chip, what’s the current temperature?” Leylin casually asked.
[The temperature is now -75 degrees Celsius!” The A.I. Chip immediately answered.
This temperature was more than deadly for regular humans, but in Leylin’s eyes, this was a mere chill.
As he advanced deeper, he reached the very borders that Celine’s map had indicated.
It was at this place that he entered the territory where the Icy Jade Scorpions were active.
“The Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath!” Fire burned in Leylin’s eyes. This material was extremely effective in suppressing the issues he had from his bloodline, and so he definitely needed to get his hands on it!
As the overall data and gene composition was different between Magi, this was as good as hitting the jackpot for Leylin. If he missed this opportunity, he really had no clue where he would find this material again.
[Discovered being that matches Host’s description. Distance: 621 metres.] The A.I. Chip prompted, causing Leylin to perk up.
He followed in the direction the A.I. Chip indicated, and not long after, he saw the actual body of the being.
At the end of the tunnels of the icy caves, there was a huge cave, on the surface of which were mosses and little bushes, forming a rather infertile area where food was produced.
Here, two groups of beings were having an intense confrontation. On one end was a large, transparent, green scorpion that looked as if its entire body was made of green ice. The two large pincers in front constantly danced back and forth, and its venomous sting curved behind it, moving erratically and looking ready to strike. Blue, chilly air was produced occasionally, from the mouth of this Icy Jade Scorpion, and spat towards its opponent. With just a look, Leylin knew that this large Icy Jade Scorpion was what he was looking for.

Facing the Icy Jade Scorpion was a group of blue ants. These ants were the size of a mature adult’s finger. Their two large and sharp saw teeth kept opening and closing, producing terrifying, ear-piercing sounds. It was a pity that in the face of the hard shell of the Icy Jade Scorpion, their attacks were futile. Even if they crawled all over the body of the Icy Jade Scorpion, they could not affect its movements. On the contrary, every time the Icy Jade Scorpion raised its large pincers, numerous ants were sent flying. The chilly air puffed out by the Icy Jade Scorpion also froze many of the ants into little crystals, which it then swallowed. This was a battle where the Icy Jade Scorpion was foraging for food. It was the absolute winner here.

“A.I. Chip, scan the data of the Icy Jade Scorpion in front of me!” Leylin immediately ordered. After advancing to become a rank 2 Warlock, the A.I. Chip that was spiritually bonded to him had also gained many benefits. Besides a power up in its simulation abilities, beings like this that had force-field related innate skills could have their data taken down as long as they were below rank 2. Of course, for beings above rank 2, the A.I. Chip would be discovered and counterattack.
Icy Jade Scorpion’s Strength: 15.9, Agility: 10.3, Vitality: 25, Spiritual force: 45, Special attacks: 1. Icy Breath: An attack where the Icy Jade Scorpion spits out large amounts of extreme icy air. Power: 30-45 degrees. 2. Freeze: When heavily injured, the Icy Jade Scorpion can seal itself in ice and lower its bodily needs to the minimum level until its body completely heals. 3. Icy Armour: The icy layer on the surface of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s body can effectively defend against physical and magical attacks, and also has a slight rebound effect on light magic.

The A.I. Chip quickly sent out a row of data, and displayed a projection of that Icy Jade Scorpion in front of him.

“Even amongst rank 1 Magi, this is quite powerful!” Leylin judged.

A Magus’s strength could generally be decided based on their spiritual force. Acolytes were definitely below 20, while rank 1 Magi, which were otherwise known as official Magi, had a spiritual force between 20 and 80. As for rank 2 Magi, it was above 80. Based on Leylin’s conjectures and the simulations from the A.I. Chip, the spiritual force of peak rank 2 Magi could reach 200!

The strength of most rank 1 Magi’s spells was between 20 and 80 degrees.

Not only were its various stats extremely high, the strength of its breath could even reach past a degree of 30. With its innate defensive spell-like icy armour, even a regular rank 1 Magus was not its opponent.

“This strength is almost that of a semi-converted Magus. I wonder what the elites or even emperors of the Icy Jade Scorpions are like?”

At this point, the battle had also reached an end.
eye lin shifted his attention to the battlefield.
The Icy Jade Scorpion had now completely won, and after a single hiss, most of the blue ants fled in all directions. The Icy Jade Scorpion did not chase after the defeated army of ants. Instead, it crawled to the top of a mound and used its large pincers to dig at the mound, revealing a nest with numerous holes that made it look like a honeycomb. In it were large numbers of orderly lined up white eggs.
*Chi chi!* The Icy Jade Scorpion gave a cry of exultation and began to pig out.
“My apologies, but I’ll need to disturb you for a while!”
Its feeding time had been interrupted by another being. The tiny red eyes of the Icy Jade Scorpion fixed were fixed on the human figure in front of him, its two large pincers constantly flying in the air and its poisonous stinger flexing behind its back.
*Chi chi!* The Icy Jade Scorpion was instantly enraged by Leylin, who had disturbed its meal. Large amounts of icy mist was produced from its mouth and aimed at Leylin.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
The temperature in the cave lowered, as exposed rocks shattered into countless fragments wherever this icy mist passed by.
“Extreme cold! The unique breath of the Icy Jade Scorpion is said to possess an ability from the Icy World.”
Leylin muttered to himself while covered in the blue icy mist.
Immediately after, the large amounts of blue gas vied to enter through Leylin’s skin.

[Beep! Detected absorption of large amounts of icy energy. Extremely effective towards suppressing bloodline issue of emotional instability. Saved!]
The A.I. Chip intoned.
“It’s not enough! This level of iciness is not enough!”
Slightly disappointed, Leylin shook his head. He then extended his right arm, at which large amounts of icy mist converged, forming a small spiral in the air.
This sight caused the opposing Icy Jade Scorpion to pause its actions.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
The blue icy mist shrunk in Leylin’s hand, and its light blue lustre disappeared, revealing a pure hue.
Minutes later, the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath had completely disappeared from Leylin’s hand. Left over in his palm was a thin piece of ice that looked the same as what Celine had traded to him, though this shard was much smaller.
“The crystal shard of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath!” Leylin glanced at the white icy shard in his hand and suddenly sighed. A silver ray of light flashed, and the icy shard suddenly disappeared from Leylin’s hand.
“This Icy Jade Scorpion is still too weak, and its breath can only help in suppressing my emotions by a small amount. If I really want to cure myself, I’ll need to do tests on an even more powerful Icy Jade Scorpion.”
Leylin looked at the Icy Jade Scorpion in front of him. As it spat out large amounts of chilly air, the surface of this large scorpion looked transparent, and it was looking at Leylin from afar, seemingly about to escape.
“It still has a certain level of intelligence!” Seeing its behavior,
Leylin was even more interested.
“I need to obtain a complete experimental body, record its data, and gather some materials!”
Leylin looked at this large scorpion that looked to be formed entirely out of green ice and broke out into a smile…
Several hours later, in a large icy cave that had just been opened.
The entrance to the cave had been sealed by Leylin. He had also used some concealment methods to prevent ordinary beings from discovering this place.
On a large ice platform in the middle of the cave were tens of black iron pillars standing tall to form a cage. The Icy Jade Scorpion from before was kept inside, occasionally letting out low growls.
Leylin off to a side, holding a petri dish that held a green shell within. This shell was from the exoskeleton of the Icy Jade Scorpion.
*Drip drop!*
A droplet of red liquid was dripped onto the surface of the icy shell, causing the shard to begin to boil and produce large amounts of steam. The shell constantly melted until all that was left was a black fragment.
Leylin was delighted upon seeing this. A glimmer of excitement appeared in his eyes, and he used a pair of tweezers to transfer this fragment to a test tube.
“I’ve pretty much gathered all of the samples and data. All that’s left is to gather data on the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath.”
Leylin glanced at the Icy Jade Scorpion in the cage and suddenly clapped.
*Pak pak!* Large amounts of sparks flashed at the top of the black iron cage, and blue streaks of electricity whizzed on the pillars, reaching the body of the Icy Jade Scorpion.
*Chi chi!* Enraged, the Icy Jade Scorpion growled and spat out large amounts of chilly air.
This chilly air formed a thick layer of frost on the metal cage, but most of it automatically drifted to Leylin, forming another one of the white crystallised ice shards from before.

“Effects of electrostimulation: Excellent! Next is to try flames…”

Leylin snapped his fingers and black flames ascended, as vibrant red tongues of flames extended and engulfed the Icy Jade Scorpion…

After extensive experimentation, Leylin finally gathered the information he needed regarding the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath.

“Matured scorpions can spit out this extreme chilly air attack 5 or 6 times a day. Each time, the amount can form a shard that is a tenth of the size of what Celine gave me.”

Leylin glanced at the Icy Jade Scorpion in the cage. The scorpion currently had its pincers trailing on the ground, looking lifeless. The green on its body had almost disappeared, turning it into almost a translucent crystal scorpion.

Due to its characteristics, Leylin wondered once again if he should confine a few Icy Jade Scorpions, but quickly discarded the idea. Based on the information he had gathered from Celine and Siegfried; these Icy Jade Scorpions could only survive in the icy caves. The moment they left, they would immediately die. Should they survive, their later generations would slowly turn degenerate. The Icy Jade Scorpions could only maintain their unique properties while living in the icy caves.

In addition, though these beings had some intelligence, they were very obstinate, or rather, fascinating! This was because Leylin had found a control mechanism inside its sea of consciousness! Protect this place. Protect the queen! Such determination seemed to be passed down with its bloodline, constantly existing in its mind. If Leylin wished to expel this brand, he would need to destroy its sea of consciousness. However, the Icy Jade Scorpion have long since died, which would render this whole effort meaningless.
“They are so tightly bound as a group!” Such a strange control over them made it difficult for Leylin to understand. In wolf packs, there were instances of the alpha males being chased out after losing in a battle for power. However, the Icy Jade Scorpion made Leylin think more of queen bees or queen ants. Only in these sorts of simple organisms would there be a situation of ultimate power and control.

“It looks like there’s a need to go to the nest of the Icy Jade Scorpions!”

Leylin muttered to himself while looking at the Icy Jade Scorpion trapped in the cage. Though he could occasionally come over and gather the breath of the Icy Jade Scorpion to suppress the issue with his bloodline, he could not truly cure it. What he wished for was something that could completely eliminate all of the negative emotions from his body!

It wasn’t really a matter of convenience, but rather, it was the fact that it was a weak point that others could target at any time. Leylin wasn’t going to be so stupid as to let it be.

It was evident that just the Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath could not achieve this. Leylin could only place his attention on the elites that were a rank higher than this Icy Jade Scorpion, or even their emperor…

With this thought, Leylin immediately got to work. Using the information he had gathered from the body of the Icy Jade Scorpion, he produced a few materials from his spatial pouch and created some powder that was specifically useful against Icy Jade Scorpions.

This powder would produce a unique smell after being burnt, which was an indescribable temptation to Icy Jade Scorpions. With this powder, Leylin walked around the region where Icy Jade Scorpions were active and caught over ten regular Icy Jade
Scorpions, and even an elite as well. Elite Icy Jade Scorpions were bigger than the regular Icy Jade Scorpions by a factor of almost 1.5 times. Their jade-like bodies were also covered with mysterious patterns. These patterns covering the back of these elite Icy Jade Scorpions were curses, but they were incomplete, causing Leylin to be puzzled. All Leylin could do was get the A.I. Chip to record these images so that he could do research on them in the future. These elite Icy Jade Scorpions were almost as powerful as semi-converted Magi. With the added bonus of being in the icy caves, their strength was even further amplified. However, in front of Leylin, who had now regained enough of his power to be equivalent to a peak rank 1 Magus, it was like snow that had been exposed in front of the sun, allowing him to obtain many good research materials. The quality of the elite Icy Jade Scorpion’s Breath was far above that of regular ones. It was enough to suppress the negative emotions caused by his bloodline for ten years, which filled Leylin with more hope of being able to completely rid himself of it! Leylin was now hidden behind an icy plain, watching a group of Icy Jade Scorpions that were migrating. There were tens of Icy Jade Scorpions gathered here, and with Leylin’s interference, about half of them had left the area. Moreover, these were all matured bodies! The entire group went berserk for a period of time, but even after sweeping through the area, they still could not find any traces of Leylin. The Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor could not do anything but choose to migrate to another location. However, this was exactly what Leylin had planned on. Previously, the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor had hidden in a nest
that was heavily guarded by numerous elite Icy Jade Scorpion guards. The moment there was any situation, Leylin would immediately be met with the attacks from the entire family. The Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor was akin to the existence of a peak rank 1 Magus. Along with the tens of Icy Jade Scorpions, all of which had the strength of official Magi, peak rank 1 human Magi would almost certainly die. Even if it was Leylin, it would be difficult if he could not use his full power as a rank 2 Warlock. However, the situation had changed!
Due to Leylin’s use of guerilla tactics, the cyclone of Icy Jade Scorpions had lost many of its members. In addition to this, the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor had been separated from the safety of its den; it chose to make its move. This movement was the opportune moment for Leylin to act!

With just a thought, Leylin caused a fierce, black hurricane to suddenly appear to sweep across the icefield. As the violent black hurricane swept forth, the layer of ice that had remained frozen for ten million years immediately cracked open, and turned into white powder that scattered in the wind. The hurricane slightly took on the shape of a tornado, collided with the cyclone of Icy Jade Scorpions that were in the process of moving away.

“Jji! Jji!*

The cyclone of Icy Jade Scorpions suddenly emitted intense howls. As they made this noise, all the Icy Jade Scorpions immediately gathered together, puffs of frosty air came out from their mouths as they constructed a very thick layer of ice that formed a wall in front of them. As if unsatisfied with the firmness of the ice wall, these Icy Jade Scorpion did not stop exhaling; instead, they continued until the ice wall’s thickness had exceeded two meters before they gradually stopped.

*Ka-chak! Ka-chak!*
The black hurricane threw itself at the ice wall, and an ear-splitting noise similar to scraping one’s fingernails on glass echoed. Little flakes of ice were constantly being shaved off the wall. The Icy Jade Scorpions at the back immediately increased their rate of puffing to patch up the gaps in the wall caused by the hurricane. The remaining Icy Jade Scorpions united, and their combined power was equivalent to ten official Magi working together. Even a peak level 1 Magus would have to withdraw if facing an attack of this degree!

But Leylin was no ordinary peak rank 1 Magus! Although the total quantity of his current spiritual force was only that of a peak rank 1 Magus, but his spiritual force had already undergone the rank 2 Warlock advancement, and as such had the ability to solidify.

“Hmmph!”

At this moment, a cold snort was heard from within the black hurricane.

Immediately, a massive amount of silver spiritual force dispersed and covered the surface of the black hurricane. Silver cracks appeared on the hurricane’s surface.

From afar, there seemed to be a layer of silver on top of the black wind blades.

*Bang! Bang!*

Under the attack of the wind blades, the giant ice wall could no longer hold on, and deep fissures appeared in the wall. These fissures increased in size until the wall crumbled completely.

*Ka-cha!*

*Bang!* The giant ice wall fell to the ground with a loud noise, and the black hurricane then engulfed the entire cyclone of Icy Jade Scorpions.

*Ji! Ji!* Numerous Icy Jade Scorpions roared, the jade radiance on their bodies glimmered as they resisted the attacks of the wind blades.
Although the attacks of these wind blades were very strong, most of these Icy Jade Scorpions were fully-grown adults. With their icy armour and their defences from the chilly air about them, they remained in a deadlock for quite a while.

The black hurricane came quickly but disappeared just as fast. In several seconds, the hurricane had swept through the place where the cyclone of scorpions was and vanished into the horizons of the icefield, faintly emitting incisive sounds.

However, after hearing these sounds, all the Icy Jade Scorpions became frantic as if they had gone mad, and pursued the hurricane. It was a pity that speed was their weakness, and they could only look on helplessly as the hurricane swept further and further away, until it finally faded into the horizon.

Leylin urged the hurricane on, and the green shadow wrapped within sped forth until it was confirmed that the Icy Jade Scorpions could no longer overtake it. Only then did the hurricane disperse, revealing the identity of the green shadow.

After seeing the black hurricane dispersing, the figure of a green Icy Jade Scorpion was revealed. This Icy Jade Scorpion’s build was slender, and it appeared to be very gentle and exquisite. Compared to ordinary Icy Jade Scorpions, it was rather on the small side.

However, it was different from other Icy Jade Scorpion partially because of its imposing mannerisms. In addition to these, on the back of this Icy Jade Scorpion was a complete pattern, which had been seen earlier on the body of an elite Icy Jade Scorpion, though it had been incomplete. This pattern had the form of a distorted female’s face.

This Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor assumed an offensive stance and lifted both its arms, facing Leylin. “You do not need to struggle anymore. You should know of the disparity between our strengths!”
Silver spiritual force flashed in Leylin’s eyes while he grinned. Relying on his present strength, he would need to squander a large amount of spiritual force and magic power to face off against the cyclone of Icy Jade Scorpions that had already lost most of its soldiers. After all, the opposing party could be regarded as a group of Magi working together, with a peak rank 1 Magus commanding them! As he had yet to recover his strength as a rank 2 Magus, even Leylin felt dread.

But now, he only needed to take care of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor.

*Jji! Jji!* Reactions to Leylin’s words, the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor calmly issued a sound that increased by several pitches that made it even more piercing.

A big, green, misty brilliance was emitted from its shell, forming a thick ice armor that covered its body. After putting on this ice armor, the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor increased in size; it had gone far beyond that of an elite Icy Jade Scorpion and was almost the size of three ordinary Icy Jade Scorpions added together.

*Whoosh!* The Icy Jade Scorpion emperor simply left an afterimage where he had stood as he turned into a dark green ray that wanted to attack Leylin.

“Sigh. In the end, this problem can only be resolved with brute force!” Leylin quickly drew back, and the moment he retreated, the ground suddenly exploded, crushed stones flying everywhere to reveal a big hole.

*Pu!*

The Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor withdrew its pincers, and puffed out a big blob of blue icy breath without hesitation and aimed it at Leylin.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!*
The sounds of solidification constantly sounded, and there was even a transparent twisting seen in the air.
“Such chilliness! It even caused the air to freeze!”
Seeing such a powerful chilliness, Leylin could not help but be excited. Only this type of crystallised breath could completely eradicate the emotional instability that had resulted from his Warlock bloodline
“A.I. Chip! Scan the opponent’s data!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed blue.
[Beep! Task established, beginning scanning. Beep! Target is covered by an unknown force field, unable to be scanned.] The A.I. Chip quickly intoned.
“Oh!” Large amounts of black air were emitted from Leylin’s body, forming a shield adorned with various patterns. It smashed into the chilly air.
He could disregard the breaths of regular Icy Jade Scorpions, but the attack of this Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor was not something he could withstand with just his body. If he did that, he suspected that this fierce chilly air would freeze his body to death!
The shield formed of black air slammed into the blue icy mist, and darkness formed at the centre. It was like a black hole, swallowing the shield and chilly air and even the air itself.
“Unknown force field? Where is it?” Leylin asked. With the amplified power of the A.I. Chip, only rank 2 creatures could shield themselves from the scanning. This Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor was clearly at peak rank 1.
[At its back, where the distorted human face is.] The A.I. Chip responded quickly, and after hearing this expected answer, the gears in Leylin’s mind began to turn rapidly.
A few exceptionally formidable creatures from other worlds had almost godlike strength. They had formed unique runes of their
own that symbolised their path, achievements, strength and many other attributes.
This rune often had a mysterious strength that could be used as a link to them and could be passed on to descendants, and could even traverse dimensions.
This phenomenon was more distinct in bloodline creatures. Leylin even suspected that the perfect rune formed from his innate spells, as well as the rune of the human face on the back of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor could be classified as such.

*Ji ji!*

Seeing Leylin blocking its attack, a trace of human-like mockery appeared in the gaze of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor. It suddenly lifted its back.

*Weng Weng!*
The female face on its back seemed to come to life, rays of green light circulated and produced an ear-piercing wail.

*Ji ji!*
Invisible sound waves streaked past Leylin’s body, and he was in a slight daze.

*Xiu!*
The Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor immediately seized this rare opportunity and rushed to Leylin’s front as its large claw snipped at Leylin’s waist.
Meanwhile, Leylin looked absent-minded and was actually stuck in a daze, allowing the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor to attack as it liked.

*Ka-cha!*
Sharp giant claws immediately chopped Leylin’s body into two, and large amounts of blood, water, and internal organs gushed out. The Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s gaze exhibited its elation.

*Shua! Shua! Shua!*
However, this joy did not persist for a long time. The blood that flowed from Leylin’s body seemed to have a life of its own as it twisted, forming a crimson cage that closed in on the Icy Jade
Emperor.
Leylin, who was now in two halves on the ground, began to transform, finally revealing his true appearance. He was formed of countless shadows, and was actually an illusionary virtual body! There was a flash a distance away, and Leylin appeared.
He looked at the human face on the back of the Icy Jade Emperor, fear still lingering in his mind.
“What a terrifying illusory spell, to actually be able to affect me, even though my spiritual force is already solidified! If not for having met that banshee in the secret plane of the Spirit Slaying Sect and done research on the spiritual attacks like wails, it would have been dangerous!”
The attack of the human face on the back of the Icy Jade Emperor was even more powerful and strange than that of the banshee. Leylin had almost fallen into its trap.
*Jí! Jí!*
Countless blood tendrils climbed up the cage, engulfing the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor. It constantly howled and waved its large claws around, constantly puffing out.
“I need to finish this fast!” Leylin flung out numerous potion bottles.
These bottles exploded in the cage, forming an immense fiery mist that kept the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor inside.
This was what Leylin had brewed through numerous experiments, a potion that was especially made while taking into consideration the properties of the body of the Icy Jade Scorpion. Though he did not have a sample from the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, Leylin had increased the dosage. Based on the simulation experiments from the A.I. Chip, this potion was enough to affect a peak rank 1 Icy Jade Scorpion and cause it to become rigid.
As expected, as more mist entered the body of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, with crimson tentacles constantly twining
around it, its howls became weaker until they disappeared.
Within the icy caves, in a hidden room.
This was the temporary laboratory that Leylin had created in the basement. It was like a large-scale basement, with Icy Jade Scorpions trapped in various holes. However, they all looked lifeless, as if most of their energy had been sapped.
At the centre of the laboratory, Leylin was excitedly facing a small mountain of ice.
At the end of the war, the emperor of the Icy Jade Scorpions found that it was impossible for it to escape, and it could only resort to its ultimate innate skill, Freezing!
This was an ability unique to Icy Jade Scorpions, where a layer of solid ice was formed around the body until their injuries recovered. The fact that it had used this move showed it had no other alternative.
The block of ice in front of Leylin was huge and could be even said to be an ice mountain. Large amounts of mist emanated from the mountain, lowering the surrounding temperature.
The layer of ice was no ordinary one. Its hardness could even be compared to steel.
The Emperor Icy Jade Scorpion’s protective layer of ice was naturally even more terrifying than that of regular Icy Jade Scorpions. However, this was merely a small issue for Leylin.
Besides, though this move could protect the Emperor Icy Jade
Scorpion, it was also a prison! Hence, after completing his research, Leylin had used this layer of ice to imprison it. 

Leylin was now holding a thin, long needle, and jabbed it into the ice mountain!

This needle had been custom made. It was a shiny silver colour and almost a metre long. The moment it contacted the surface of the ice mountain, it produced a sound similar to that produced when molten iron meets water.

Next, a red dot appeared on the surface of the ice mountain. The silver needle had pierced through the layer like it was going through cotton, and directly reached the shell of the Emperor Icy Jade Scorpion.

It was currently like an insect frozen in amber, unable to move and even unable to blink.

*Zi!* The needle shook a little and then pierced into the body of the Emperor Icy Jade Scorpion, extracting some green blood.

After seeing this blood, Leylin’s expression showed his excitement.

……

Half a day later, Leylin stared at the green blood essence in the petri dish, looking hesitant.

The Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor was now similar to a peak rank 1 Magus in terms of its strength, and that obviously meant he could not refine the pure ancient bloodline from it.

Even so, Leylin had found a lot of information from its bloodline. Some ancient creatures could use a special method and transmit information and images to their descendants through their bloodline. This information was hidden deep within their genes, and only the creature itself could awaken it.

But Warlocks were different! Their research and understanding of bloodlines was enough to undo the complicated genetic lock and
allow this ancient information to see the light of day once more! 
Leylin had found some ancient information in the bloodline of the 
Icy Jade Scorpion. 
“Though I don’t know if it’s good or bad, I’ll just look at it!” 
Now, after seeing the blood essence of the Icy Jade Scorpion 
Emperor, even Leylin’s own Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline 
trembled, giving him some confidence. 
“Retrieving spirit memory!” 
A sliver of silver spiritual force extended from Leylin’s forehead, 
entering the bloodline of the Icy Jade Scorpion.

……

*Rumble!* 
It seemed like he had gone through a long period of darkness 
before he saw light again. 
Leylin woke up, but he now found himself immobile. However, his 
body kept crawling, as if he was an observer that was living in this 
body. He could observe, but had no control. 
Surrounding him was a world of white snow with a layer of ice on 
the ground. Leylin saw his reflection on the layer of ice on the 
ground. 
He had six jointed legs and a stinger, but his upper body was that of 
an adult male, though his two large hands had turned into pincers. 
“What kind of ancient creature is this?” Leylin was stupefied. 
There was little information passed down in the South Coast. There 
was no record of this being in the illustrated handbook of ancient 
creatures, and there were also many powerful creatures from other 
worlds that were not recorded. That was why Leylin did not know 
the true identity of this Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor ancestor. 
However, the vast, bubbling strength it had made it obvious to 
Leylin that this creature was far above him in terms of might. It had
even reached the level of a Morning Star Magus!

*Pak!*

An ice mountain that was thousands of metres tall broke into pieces in front of the Scorpion Man, and it brandished its large pincers as it advanced indifferently. Occasionally, it would battle with beings that were as powerful as it was, and the stray ripples would break off large fragments of ice.

Until one day!

*Ka-cha!* The Scorpion Man had just ripped up an ice dragon, and was gulping down its flesh and blood. As if sensing something, it raised its head and looked into the horizon.

*Rumble!*

The heavens split and the earth shattered. In the sky far away, it looked as if someone was tearing out a large hole. A horizontal crack that spanned a hundred thousand metres emerged in the sky.

Snakes! A giant black snake with silver armour! There was even the Giant Kemoyin Serpent that Leylin was especially familiar with rushing through the spatial crack, entering this icy world.

The appearance of these giant ancient serpents marked the start of a massacre.

The Scorpion Man howled. He could feel that just the stray ripples from the spatial crack was enough to heavily injure or kill him! Furthermore, every one of those snakes did not lose out to him in terms of strength. However, affected by his own bloodline and the surroundings, he couldn’t help but rush to the opening of the spatial crack.

Along with him were other beings of this word. Icy Dragons, Giant Chilly Eagles, Ice Spirits, and even some creatures that were natural enemies were somehow summoned, putting down their prejudices against each other and rushing to the battlefield.

The two forces slammed into each other, blood and flesh flying, the space contorting around them.
The Scorpion Man and a giant serpent battled. It was as if he had gone crazy, constantly attacking it. This all came from a premonition deep inside him. If these snakes were to continue existing here, this place would be damaged or even destroyed.

Kill! Kill! Kill! Life and death battles went on, and it was common for Morning Star Magi to fall. There were also corpses falling from the sky, their auras enough to make Scorpion Man tremble in fear.

“Hsss!” At this moment, a loud hissing from a snake caused the Scorpion Man to come back to himself.

All of the creatures on the battlefield looked at the spatial crack. A ferocious ancient aura leaked out through the crack, and all the snakes respectfully lowered their heads. The Scorpion Man was forced to lie on the ground from the pressure. The black crack suddenly extended, and a large ball of snakes that was the size of a planet seemed to want to pass through the crack and descend on this world.

The aura emitted from the snake ball made the Scorpion Man shudder from the very depths of his heart. The other creatures of the Icy World were just like him.

*Weng weng!* The entire Icy World trembled, layers of ice breaking to reveal a female giant who was several tens of thousands of metres tall.

This female giant had a very boorish face. She had copper armour, a pike and a green shield. The female giant first roared at the snake ball, but received no answer. The large snake ball constantly forged forward, widening the spatial crack at its seams.

Upon seeing this, the female giant raised the pike in her hands and pierced towards the snake ball. A devastative power appeared on the surface of the pike, red
lightning flowing around the body of the pike. It was as if the the gods had cast out a pike that could destroy worlds!

“Hsss!”

The pike arched through space, appearing in front of the snake ball.

The snakes that had entrenched themselves separated, revealing the body of a beauty in the middle of the snake ball. Every single strand of her hair was made of tiny snakes, yet she did not look strange, but was instead very charming!

The woman smiled sweetly, surpassing the limits of race with her enchanting features. All creatures, and even space and the world found her pleasing to the eye, not wanting to see her take on this pike.

A few creatures of the icy world even betrayed their faction and began aiming for the female giant. However, before they even came close, they were turned into powder by the lightning on the body of the female giant.

*Pak!*

Two large palms formed of countless groups of snakes extended from the snake ball, then grabbed hold of the pike and broke it!

The pike that seemed to hold the power to destroy the world was split into two halves by these large hands.

However, they were not yet satisfied, ruthlessly grabbing at the female giant!

A black blade came out of the spatial crack and instantly appeared in front of her.

*Bang!*

The female giant’s head and body separated, and large amounts of green blood spurted out.

A violent explosion resounded through the battlefield, and countless dangerous spatial cracks were created.

A droplet of green blood that was almost as large as a human head
fell on the back of the Scorpion Man. The intense pain and burn immediately caused him to let out a miserable cry. He was then swallowed by a large spatial crack. In the last moments which he was being swallowed, the last thing the Scorpion Man saw, was a gigantic Mountain Wyvern made entirely from an ice mountain which descended onto the battlefield, shattering the spatial crack. Within the snake ball, a woman’s sigh was heard… Darkness! A darkness that spread throughout the heavens and earth surged up and invaded Leylin’s body. “Hah!” Leylin gasped in large breaths, cold sweat rolling down his face. “That woman! The one inside the snake ball! I’ve seen her before!” Leylin immediately thought of the dreamlike trance he had been when he had advanced to be a rank 1 Warlock. The woman inside there looked to be the exactly the same person as who he had seen from the bloodline of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor! “Unless… That woman in the snake ball is the legendary Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes! And was the war that I just saw the battle where the ancient Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes invaded the Icy World…?”
Leylin felt that he had correctly deduced the gist of the story. In ancient times, after the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes had failed to take over the Shadow World, she brought her descendants with her and migrated to the Purgatory World. It was probably during this time that she had infiltrated the Icy World! However, the inhabitants of the Icy World’s naturally resisted this invasion.

According to Leylin, the Scorpion Man seemed to have received some powerful spiritual insight. Being able to interfere with the strength of a Morning Star creature through the spirit was either the work of the female giant, or the will of the world.!

The result was the death of the female giant, but with the great effort on the part of the Ice Mountain Wyvern, the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes’ plans to invade the area were thwarted.

In the great battle, the female giant had been killed, and a droplet of her blood had landed on the back of Scorpion Man, which had wounded him greatly. Unable to avoid the spatial crack, he was swept in.

In the end, Scorpion Man had travelled to the Twilight Zone through this spatial pathway and had then died from his injuries. Even so, he still had the strength of a Morning Star Magus, and the blood of the female giant, whose power was inconceivable. Hence, after his death, this entire region was affected by the radiation from
ice, forming a topography and climate similar to that in the Icy World!
The Icy Jade Scorpions evidently had some connection with the Scorpion Man, but this connection had degenerated. Its human upper torso had completely disappeared, and there were no other obviously similar characteristics.
“It’s because of this that Icy Jade Scorpions could survive! They were actually creatures from another world. They could only survive and reproduce because of the radiation of extreme cold here.”
Leylin sighed and thought about the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes.
He reckoned that the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes should have attacked the Icy World after migrating from the Purgatory World, due to the fact that this world must have been extremely important to her and her race.
After the setback when trying to seize the Shadow World, she had no choice but to withdraw and bring her race to Purgatory World. However, the fire attribute of the Purgatory World did not quite suit snakes, which were more compatible with the shadow element. After reproducing and beginning to adapt, their race even began to have some fire elemental attributes in their blood, but they were also mixed with the chaotic will of the Purgatory World in their bloodline.
This could be the origin of the emotional instability of warlocks with the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. After all, snakes were usually not so emotionally unstable as to lose control and rage.
Based on Leylin’s deductions, the issue with ancient Warlocks with snake bloodlines should have been an apathetic nature, and they might have even needed to hibernate. However, with the chaotic will added in from their time in the Purgatory World, their
emotions were also altered. The original characteristic of coldness had become a fiery temper! Hence, the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes had attacked the Icy World once more, probably hoping to use the chilliness there to treat the emotional instability issue with her bloodline! Of course, her plan failed in the end, but the Icy World had also paid a large price. For this reason, the Icy Jade Scorpion Breath from the Icy World was useful in treating the emotional instability that stemmed from Leylin’s bloodline.

“Sigh… what a complicated relationship!” Leylin held his forehead, which was starting to hurt from how hard he was thinking. “Though these are all but conjectures, my thoughts should be correct. It doesn’t matter even if I’m wrong, since the Mother of Ten Thousand Snakes, Ice Mountain Wyvern, and the Purgatory, Icy, and Shadow Worlds are too far away to even matter…” Leylin smiled wryly, “I just need to know one thing, which is how the breath of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor can heal my emotional instabilities. That will be enough!”

“A.I. Chip! Set up a plan to extract the Icy Jade Scorpion Breath and design my treatment process!” Leylin immediately ordered.
[Mission establishing, beginning analysis! Setting up data model!] After receiving the command, the A.I. Chip quickly began to operate.

Meanwhile, Leylin, deep in thought, stroked his chin. Honestly, after seeing that ancient war, it was impossible for him not to be stirred up. That droplet of blood that had dripped onto the back of Scorpion Man had stirred up Leylin’s interest as well as his desire to conduct research on it! That was a strength that far surpassed Morning Star Magi, it might even be equal to a great rank 5 Magus. It could even be from a
bloodline that was at rank 6 or 7, which even ancient Magi would have found difficult to attain!
If Leylin gained it, how much stronger could he become?
Though Warlocks could not change their bloodlines, doing research on the blood of these existences was sure to be unbelievably useful for his future.
In addition, the Scorpion Man had had the strength of a Morning Star Magus while he was alive. There was no need to refine his blood. It was the purest bloodline possible from an ancient creature.
Leylin’s breathing became rough just from wishing that he could enter deeper into the icy caves and look for the remains of the Scorpion Man.
However, he then smiled wryly.
Based on the remaining memories left in the bloodline of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor just now, Leylin knew that Nature’s Alliance and the other small guilds only controlled a tiny area of the icy caves.
Deeper underground, there lived all sorts of icy creatures that were ten or even hundreds of times stronger than the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, all of which formed their own small Icy World.
The remains of the Scorpion Man were probably at the deepest level of this Icy World!
There, rank 2 icy creatures would be running rampant. It wouldn’t even be surprising if rank 3 creatures emerged there.
Even if Leylin became a rank 3 Warlock, was not sure that he would be able to leave without a scratch. He would need to at least have the strength of a Morning Star Magus to completely break into this place to get the remains and bloodline.
“Strength! It all comes down to strength!” Leylin smiled wryly and gave up on any thoughts of exploring further in.
Though those were great items, Leylin was not going to risk his life
for them!
Leylin had always been very prudent. If he was less than 70% confident, or if his life would be in danger, he would definitely choose not to take this risk.
Besides, in a situation where the icy caves had existed for such a long time and yet nobody had realised their true origins. Leylin was not afraid that other Magi would come here. There were also the icy creatures down there, which were a great defensive line.
He had already figured things out. Once he had enough power, he would come back here and obtain the presents from Icy World.
“Things need to be done one at a time. First, I need to deal with the problem of my emotional instability!”
Leylin’s pupils returned to their calm state, his expression revealing his rationality.

……

Outside the icy caves in the Twilight Zone.
“Take note. The expedition into the icy caves is very dangerous this time. Though you are all the cream of the crop in our guild, as long as you haven’t become an official Magus, you have virtually no way to protect yourself in there. Take care not to leave the sight of the team leader, understand?”
A valiant looking middle-aged man dressed in armour was currently preaching to a group of acolytes.
“Hey, Mully! Are you bringing acolytes down there again?” Old Madre, who was guarding the area, greeted him with a smile.
“Yes! The joint conference is beginning soon. It’s best to raise the strength of these little monkeys under me. It can’t be helped even if it’s a little dangerous.”
“How is it? Have there been any icy explosions or migrations of dangerous creatures within the caves?”
“Currently, I haven’t received any reports that mention such a thing. Furthermore, there’s currently a famed professor from Nature’s Alliance in there. If there is a problem, you can ask him for help, especially since we’re all allies!”

Old Madre laughed and then mentioned Leylin.
“Professor Leylin who came from the eastern capital? I heard that he’s a master at the peak of rank 1!”

Though Mully said all this, he still looked unwilling to accept this. It looked like even if he really met Leylin, they wouldn’t be able to get along.

After all, it was shocking that a peak rank 1 Magus had entered a small guild such as Nature’s Alliance.

Like many other Magi, Mully thought that Celine was bragging.
“Celine really is quite pitiful. She’s been going around looking for help nonstop. Nature’s Alliance is in a very dangerous position.”

Old Madre sighed, but a glimmer of delight flashed in his heart.
Whether it was Leylin or Mully being on the losing end in there, it was still going to be a delight to see.

“Hmph! Whose fault is it that you two are always harbouring evil intentions towards my Celine?”

Madre thought in his heart while revealing an enthusiastic grin.
Compared to when Leylin had entered, he was much more passionate while explaining things of note to the acolytes.

From an outsider’s perspective, Old Madre was still a very respectable senior.

*Whoosh!*

At this moment, large amounts of chilly gusts of wind blew out from the crack in the ground, and the acolytes could not help but wrap themselves tightly in their clothes.

“This means someone is coming up… huh! They’re fine!”

Old Madre was bewildered.
“What’s going on?” Mully rushed over and asked.
“It’s Magus Leylin! He’s out! Magus Celine has already come here quite a few times to check if he’s out yet. I need to inform her!” Old Madre did not take him seriously, even complacently laughing after seeing Mully clenching his two fists.

*Bang!*

A figure with a large, icy mountain on his shoulder rushed out from the crack.

“Are you Leylin, the new, famed professor that joined Nature’s Alliance?” Mully sounded impolite.

“Yes! What’s the matter?” He was beaming widely.

This person was naturally Leylin. In this period of time, after constantly extracting the breath of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, he had already healed the emotional instability from his bloodline using the treatment designed by the A.I. Chip.

The extreme chill originating from Icy World, as well as support from the A.I. Chip had completely expelled the chaotic will in his bloodline that came from Purgatory World.

Though there might still be an issue deeper in his DNA, the A.I. Chip calculated that until he became a Morning Star Magus, the emotional instability of Warlocks would not be an issue. Leylin was therefore in a good mood.
Mully hesitated. Although he doubted the other party’s strength, Magi were a rational bunch. If it wasn’t for Celine, he would not even dare to provoke the other party.

Now, he was somewhat uncertain.

If Leylin really possessed such huge power and he decided to challenge him, wouldn’t he be courting death?

Immediately, Mully opened his mouth wide, “This… this is…”

In this moment, Leylin had already thrown the ice mountain on the floor, producing a loud sound.

Within the ice mountain stood a thin bodied Icy Jade Scorpion that was unmoving, as if it were a statue.

“Celine! Get some people here and move these items!” Leylin contacted Celine through the secret imprint, and from the other end came a surprised squeal.

“Oh? Previously, Magus Leylin went down with the purpose to do research on the Icy Jade Scorpion. It looks like his gains were pretty good! Unexpectedly, he even caught a smaller one. It seems like it’s a young one!”

Old Madre smiled and explained.

While in its frozen state, the Icy Jade Scorpion’s breath was suppressed to its lowest and Old Madre did not see it.

“No, damn it! This isn’t some young Icy Jade Scorpion! It’s the Icy
Jade Scorpion Emperor! A peak rank 1 Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor!” Mully retreated while stammering. “I have seen it before. This is absolutely the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor! Look at the terrifying markings on its back!” Mully retreated to the edge of the site, afraid that the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor would go wild at any time. “Raurghhh… Seriously!” Madre picked up what seemed like a pair of glasses and placed it on his nose, taking a good look at the Icy Jade Scorpion. This was then followed by a squeal as she took a few steps back. “Mag… Magus Leylin! Did you catch this?” Old Madre started to stammer as well. “Of course!” Leylin smiled and nodded. After having suppressed the emotional instability from his bloodline, Leylin massacred all of the regular Icy Jade Scorpions and collected their materials. As for the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, he could not bear to kill it. After all, its value while still alive was much greater than the value of the materials on its body. He still had many simulations that he needed to complete on the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, and Leylin was also extremely interested in the waning of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s life once it were to leave the radiation from the icy cave. Hence, he had to wrap the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor and bring it out. Leylin could only gather all the materials from the regular Icy Jade Scorpions inside the spatial pouch, and since it could not hold living beings, he had to carry an ice mountain all the way out. However, the look of disbelief on the faces of these two Magi that turned into one of respect was rather amusing to Leylin. He did not intentionally try to conceal his powers, but there was the underlying intent of showing his might.
After all, the might of a peak rank 1 Magus was not unfounded, and an Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor with a strength comparable to a peak rank 1 Magus was enough to intimidate everyone. Although Celine had been actively disseminating the information of her guild, she had not acquired the acknowledgment from the other guilds as Leylin had been keeping a low profile. Most Magi had even thought of this as an elaborate scam and were here merely to look for trouble. But now, these small guilds would think twice before coming forward.

Though he wasn’t afraid of trouble, he hated having to personally involve himself in these small matters. It wasn’t a bad idea to scare them away with this Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor. Even between peak rank 1 Magi, their battle abilities were varied. Since Leylin was able to catch a Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor that was similar to a peak rank 1 Magus, didn’t that mean that he was at the top of the peak rank 1 Magi?

Old Madre and Mully exchanged glances, and their gazes towards Leylin was filled with reverence.

“Lord Leylin, it’s great that you could come back safely!”

At this point, Celine was excited as she brought back the two acolytes from before. Leylin looked at them and nodded. It seemed like Celine had been waiting here with these two acolytes after he had left, which was rather considerate of her.

“An Icy Jade Scorpion is a creature with the might of an official Magus and they lived in clusters. Initially, I had my worries, but thankfully we were under the blessing of Gaia!”

Celine patted herself on her chest and was hesitant at the start, as she was worried for Leylin. Hearing that, Old Madre and Mully surreptitiously rolled their eyes. The one who should be worried should be the Icy Jade Scorpions.
This Lord had already captured the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor and the remaining Icy Jade Scorpions had either disbanded or sought refuge with the other cyclones.
At this moment, Celine found the ice mountain beside Leylin, “Do we need to move this?”
“En! Send two people to follow me to shift it to the Eastern capital before we look for a lab to analyse it further.” Leylin patted on the ice mountain behind him.
“ If you wish to find a lab, the headquarters of the Nature’s Alliance is just nearby for your Lordship’s usage.”
Celine’s eyes sparkled and suggested, “Furthermore, I would like to discuss in detail with your Lordship regarding the previous matter.”
“Your headquarters is nearby? Great, let’s go!” Leylin nodded in agreement. There wasn’t anything important in the basement he used in the eastern capital. All valuable equipment was carried on his person at all times.
As for the overall facilities, Nature’s Alliance’s lab was definitely better than his own established lab.
“Hop on and call another carriage to move this ice mountain back to the headquarters!”
Celine commanded. She went forward to take a good look at the Icy Jade Scorpion.
Through the translucent ice, a rune that closely resembled a face could be seen at the back of the Icy Jade Scorpion.
“This is… the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor!!” Celine covered her mouth with her eyes wide opened.

......

Whoosh!
A huge waterfall which seemed to fall from the sky like a white curtain, created huge splashes in the underground pond. A constant
rumbling sound of the water echoed in the surroundings. After passing the waterfall, there was a small canyon. Scattered around the canyon was a variety of plantations and some historical structures. The landmarks and road signs were covered in vines, with constant rays of light shining from above. This was where the Nature’s Alliance headquarters resided. Leylin looked around with curiosity at the whimsical constructions. Although these buildings appeared slightly run-down, there were slight glints of magical glows which indicated the existence of a powerful spell that had been cast on the wooden walls. Nature’s Alliance, albeit being a small guild, had accumulated their high-level meditation techniques over multiple generations in the past hundreds and thousands of years, proving their might. Periodically, a few Magi acolytes, dressed in grey gowns, would come out of the building to greet Celine. “Oh Celine, it has been so long since you last visited!” At the same time, a grey mole jumped out from a human-sized mushroom and lifted its claw, greeting Celine. The grey mole was the size of a boy and had sparkling bright eyes brimming with liveliness. It had a spotlessly white moustache that dropped down from the bottom of its mouth to the floor. “Nice to meet you, Grandpa Cedric!” Celine expressed with respect, “I brought your favourite berries!” Celine carefully placed the two strange fruits that looked like green dates on the ground. “En! Not bad! That’s my favourite!” The gigantic mole used its agile claws to pick up the fruits and threw them into its mouth, crunching noisily. “This is my newly recruited famous professor, Leylin Farlier! He will be having the same level of authority as me!” Celine introduced, after the mole finished eating.
“Leylin what?” The mole took a good look at Leylin with beaming eyes. “En! Deep and immeasurable power! Looks like you have pinned all your hopes on him…”

Leylin looked at the mole, “A guard animal? It has the strength of a rank 1 Magus. Not bad.”

At this time, Celine introduced to Leylin, “Grandpa Cedric was Nature’s Alliance’s guardian during my great great grandmother’s time. He is usually very gentle, just don’t disturb his sleep…”

After introducing the two to each other, Celine brought Leylin to a hall.

There were tens of acolytes waiting in there. Seated at the front were Obo and Ilya whom Leylin previously met.

“To think that a Magus guild will end up with only a rank 1 Magus, an animal as a gatekeeper and a few apprentices. What a failure!”

Leylin became speechless as he followed Celine in.

Celine went forward and introduced Leylin to the acolytes, “This is Professor Leylin whom I’ve invited over! From now, all of you need to respect him like how you respect me. No, you all should treat him with even more respect, do you all hear me?”

“Professor Leylin!” The acolyte greeted with their beaming eyes.

Leylin’s past achievements slowly spread around through Obo and Ilya. The apprentices felt extremely happy and elated knowing that they have a rank 1 Magus taking charge.

“Nice to meet all of you! A Magus is a follower of the truth. I hope to see all of you in the hall in the future!”

Leylin spoke a few words and indicated Celine to let the students leave.

All along, Leylin did not like such situations and furthermore, he was not interested in the group of acolytes.

The sole purpose of gathering the students was to introduce Leylin. The introduction ended within minutes, leaving Celine and Leylin in the hall after the students left.
“Can we talk now? Seems like something was wrong before I left the icy cave.”
Leylin took a glance at Celine as he asked with a smile.
“I can’t seem to hide anything from you!” Celine bit her lips and finally made up her mind.
“Do you know about the joint conference of the eastern guilds?”
Celine asked.

“Joint conference?” Leylin repeated. In the Twilight Zone, there was a parliamentary system, but it was simply a compromise between all the large and small organisations. One would be able to understand just by taking these words literally. Besides, Aaron had also information about this in his memories.

“My apologies! I’ve been wandering in the borders of the regions and I don’t know much about this. I’ve heard something, though. Isn’t it a conference where multiple guilds segregate their rankings and profits?”
Leylin answered.

“Exactly!” Celine’s wry smile became more prominent. “The joint alliance is a grand occasion for the Magi in the eastern capital. Every twenty years, all the guilds in the eastern capital will gather. Nine council members will, in their capacity as hosts, mediate all conflicts, conduct another election, and divide territories.”

“Even the rating of guilds will be decided during this joint conference! As long as they are not large-scale guilds, all can apply, and after some inspections, territories will be redistributed, with more benefits… The guilds that do not meet the requirements to hold their ratings will be demoted, and the territories they hold and
most of their rewards are transferred to other new guilds.”
“So, what you wanted to ask me concerns this rating!” Leylin pondered while looking at Celine.
“Yes, my lord!” Celine bit her lips.
“Because of my mentor, Nature’s Alliance’s rating during the previous joint conference was that of a small-scale guild. My strength is inferior to my mentor’s, so my ranking will cause us to fall till we aren’t even rated. In this case, most of our benefits have to be given away, and since we can’t enroll many acolytes, Nature’s Alliance will eventually die out.”
Through Celine’s explanation, Leylin had a better understanding of the rating system.
Generally, there were four rankings. They were the unranked, small-scale, middle-scale and large-scale guilds!
From Leylin’s perspective, as long as there was one official Magus in the guild, they would be unranked. Most guilds in Twilight Zone had this rating.
Above that was the small-scaled guilds like Nature’s Alliance. They possessed specific areas where they made profits, such as the icy caves, and there were usually a few official Magi or even semi-converted Magi taking charge.
There were then the middle-scale guilds. Not considering other details, at the bare minimum, they needed to have a peak rank 1 Magus.
In large-scale guilds, they were the elite guilds with rank 2 Magi in charge. Since the establishment of the joint conference, there were only a handful of instances where guilds were rated to be large-scale. Every time this happened, there would be a huge revolution involving the deaths of countless Magi.
The evaluation was not necessary to be in tandem with a Magi’s rank, as battle power differs even within a rank itself.
Hence, the ratings relied entirely on battle power! They would
usually exchange hands with others of the same rank, and the shedding of blood on the battlefield was not uncommon. Of course, there was another method. As long as one submitted research material that the nine council members approved of, one could also be rated according to the merits of the research. However, this was an extremely difficult process, and few had passed through the rating review using this method.

Celine’s mentor was said to be astonishingly powerful. Though he had yet to become a semi-converted Magus, he had somehow drawn a tie with a semi-converted Magus and had thus been thought to have an equivalent level of strength. Nature’s Alliance had thus been acknowledged to be a small-scale guild and received permits to estates and mines. If their rating went down this year, all of these would naturally be revoked, and without these resources, Celine alone would not be able to continue managing the Nature’s Alliance. Hence, she had no choice but to look for outside help.

However, a semi-converted Magus was already considered an elite within the ranks of rank 1 Magi. At most, they would have been groomed by other organisations. Though Celine had attracted the attention of a few official Magi, some of whom were inferior to her, with the allure of her body, what use was it? The rest were like Skrill who had some ulterior motives, and Celine didn’t dare to make use of them.

Leylin’s appearance gave Celine a sliver of hope. “As long as my lord agrees to lead us in the joint conference, everything in Nature’s Alliance will belong to you, including myself!” Celine slowly took off her coat, revealing her delicate body.

Under the translucent light that shone on her pale, exquisite skin, she was even more alluring. Along with that expression of one preparing to die for her cause, it made one have the desire to
ravage her.
“But why me? If these are the conditions, I believe there are many Magi, such as Skrill, who are willing.”
Leylin was expressionless. Women were merely for him to cope with stress. Sex was not anything special after he performed it one too many times.
“If I’m going to sell myself, I’m obviously going to sell it to someone more powerful. Skrill had been a candidate, but he was already responsible for another guild, and his appearance is a little too strange.”
Celine’s answer was direct and very practical.

*Pak! Pak! Pak!*
Leylin applauded. “Intelligent! Rational! Able to see the big picture! Fine. I’ll go to the joint conference with you!”
“In that case, I’m yours now, my lord!”
A blush appeared on Celine’s cheeks…

……

The next day, with Celine guiding, Leylin strolled around the headquarters of Nature’s Alliance. He then went straight to the library and did not emerge from it.
As for indulging in pleasures of the flesh? Leylin merely satisfied his needs every once in awhile. He could resist it during such crucial times.
Celine naturally understood this. After seeing Leylin in a hurry to pounce and start flipping through the books, she tactfully retreated. Leylin watched her back and nodded. He was quite satisfied with this woman, she was rational, smart, and rather pretty.
“A.I. Chip, record!” He ordered silently, his eyes flashing with blue light.
After all, Nature’s Alliance was a Magus guild. There were
thousands of books gathered in the library, including information about the culture, geography, and politics in the Twilight Zone, amongst other information. More importantly, there was an account of the Magus World. These were all things that Leylin now lacked. As such, he did not restrain himself at all and ordered the A.I. Chip to record everything.

As time passed, the database in Leylin’s A.I. Chip was enriched. He now had a very profound understanding of the Twilight Zone. Leylin proceeded further in, and even browsed in a few of the secret libraries within Nature’s Alliance. Some of these areas were forbidden territories and acolytes were not allowed to enter. However, he was now a famed professor in Nature’s Alliance. After agreeing to Celine’s request, he basically had control of this area, and there was no issue at all.

The items in the secret rooms obviously held more precious things than what was displayed in the public areas. Not only was there large amounts of research data, there was also information from Magi expeditions, regarding meditation techniques, reserves of high-grade content and even some conjectures by senior Magi. To be honest, at Leylin’s level, general research materials and information were not much to him. What he really cared about were the hypotheses and speculations of the senior Magi. Though a lot of them were proven wrong by the A.I. Chip’s calculations, they could still provide some new ways of thinking for Leylin.

In addition, there were differences between the studies in the subterranean world and in the south coast. The essence of these differences was worthy enough for Leylin to use as a reference. “Hm?”
At this moment, Leylin had unintentionally flipped to a page that held research material that he was interested in.
“The maintenance and mending of the sea of consciousness!”
This was a very old scroll. It was a volume formed of leaves strung together, with information recorded on it using images and words, and it had an aura of nature.
What was written down had left Leylin astonished.
His sea of consciousness had been injured while using the ancient teleportation spell formation, and even the edges had cracks.
The A.I. Chip could only give the suggestion of solidifying spiritual force and slowly mend it.
Hence, Leylin was now unable to use part of his spiritual force, and only had the strength of a peak rank 1 Magus.
Though this was effective, it was just too slow.
After two years of recuperation in the town, his injuries had recovered by just a small amount. Leylin was getting impatient and was seeking a way to accelerate this process.
“A.I. Chip, record this information and analyse the feasibility of this method for me.”
The sea of consciousness was linked to the roots of Magi and Warlocks. Leylin did not dare act without caution.
[Beep! Information has been recorded, setting up a simulation model.] [Beep! Effectiveness on Host body: 12.92%.] The A.I. Chip quickly arrived at a conclusion.
“So low?” Leylin was in disbelief, and could only force a laugh.
One’s sea of consciousness differed from person to person, and it was only natural that the mending method had such an effect.
“But it’s a good thing that it works. I’ll gather more information on this topic and let the A.I. Chip design a treatment plan based on the state of my body. The rate of success will then increase!”
Leylin comforted himself.
The books in the secret rooms did not have information on just this
topic.
A lot of the information here was useless or even harmful to acolytes but was extremely useful for Leylin. He had even found a notebook with reflections concerning the use of rank 2 spells. It seemed to have been written by a great Magus. Nature’s Alliance was merely a small guild, and there had never been a rank 2 Magus here. He wondered where they had obtained this from.
But Leylin accepted this with a smile. This notebook could supplement the rank 2 spell models that he had received from Celine.
331 - Remodeling By Freezing

In the Nature’s Alliance’s laboratory.

Leylin stared at the large ice mountain, his expression revealing his regret.

Around the ice mountain were numerous crystals that were emitting blue light that constantly swept across the ice mountain. They formed a spell formation, and the blue light.

[Failure of simulating icy radiation. Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s life force is gradually weakening.]

The A.I. Chip intoned with no emotion.

*Bang!* All of a sudden, the crystals emitting blue light exploded, and the rays from the spell formation dimmed.

“Is it still a failure?” Leylin sighed.

This was the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor that he had taken captive. Ever since he had brought it from the icy caves, it had been constantly weakening. This was even happening while it was in its frozen state, or else it would have long since died.

Leylin had no other ideas. After multiple failures while trying to simulate the special radiation from the icy world, he had already given up on this idea and was preparing to make use of this Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor as much as he could.

“It’s impossible to extract an ancient bloodline from it, and I’ve already recorded all the information I’ve obtained from its blood. So…”

Leylin shifted his gaze to the back of the Icy Jade Scorpion
Emperor. The rune of a distorted woman’s face seemed to be alive. Through the memories in its bloodline, Leylin knew that this type of Icy Jade Scorpion originated from the Scorpion Man that had the might of a Morning Star Magus. The moment Scorpion Man had been drawn into the spatial crack, a drop of the female giant’s blood landed on his back. From then on, the Scorpion Man’s bloodline was tainted by the blood of a higher ranking being. The descendants of the Scorpion Man all had this rune on their backs. Strictly speaking, the rune on the back of the Icy Jade Scorpion was just a projection of the power of the female giant’s bloodline. However, just a projection and the wail it let out was enough to almost catch Leylin in an illusion. In addition, the bloodlines of these higher ranked creatures all possessed incredible might even if there was just an aura of it left. “A.I. Chip, how’s the analysis on this fear-inducing rune?” Leylin asked.

[Analysis complete. Obtained freezing and healing runes that are incomplete at 45%. Able to make a cross reference with 31% of the information with the wailing banshee] The A.I. Chip intoned. “Huh?” Leylin was surprised. “Looks like the innate ability of the Icy Jade Scorpion to freeze and heal itself was affected by and formed from the blood of the female giant.” He suddenly had a thought that would exploit the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor to the fullest. “If I combine that information about the technique to mend my sea of consciousness with the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s innate skill, burning through its bloodline and stimulating the abilities of the runes on its back to form a bloodline imprint that can be used once…” Leylin’s eyes shone blue as he calculated, “In that case, I can also
use this freezing ability once, and its effects will even be amplified. The power of the bloodline inside would be enough to mend the damage to my sea of consciousness.”

Using solidified spiritual force could do this as well, but it took far too long. In addition to this, Leylin wanted to regain his strength as a rank 2 Warlock as soon as possible.

“Freezing” was a unique innate talent of the Icy Jade Scorpions. While heavily injured, they could protect themselves in a thick layer of ice. Not only was it an ultimate defence, it could also help heal injuries.

Now, Leylin wanted to use this ability on himself.

“A.I. Chip, what is the feasibility of this idea?” Leylin immediately asked in his mind.

Large amounts of information and graphics flashed, and the A.I. Chip gave an answer. [Feasibility is at 87%. Host body first needs to undergo changes in order to be able to tolerate icy radiation.]

“As expected, it’s possible!” Leylin’s eyes exhibited his joy.

The innate freezing ability of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, as well as the slight projection of the power from an ancient bloodline, was definitely able to repair the sea of consciousness of a rank 2 Warlock.

This was the optimal method to make use of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor.

After all, Leylin already had a lot of materials from the Icy Jade Scorpions. Besides, how could materials from another world be more important than his own strength?

“Oh! In that case, I should start making some preparations.”

Leylin glanced at the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor in the ice mountain. Covered in a block of ice, this Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor looked more fantastical, the green on its body looked almost alive.

Only the weakening of its life force and breath showed that it did
not have long to live.
“A.I. Chip, prepare the Bloodline Ignition Potion. It’s essential to make some preparations.”
Leylin’s eyes glinted coldly.
To completely make use of the freezing innate ability of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor, it was necessary to burn up all its blood completely and stimulate the fear-inducing rune on its back. Then, one needed to model it into a freezing bloodline rune, which involved a very complicated process.
However, all these preparations needed to start from somewhere. This was to ensure that this Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor could live through this, and secondly that Leylin himself could adapt to the harsh cold while in the frozen state.

……

Three days later, in the laboratory.
“Leylin, may I enter?” Celine’s voice could be heard from outside.
“I’ve already undone the alarm spell formation. Come in.” She promptly heard Leylin’s answer and did not hesitate as she pushed the door to enter.
“This…” The moment she entered, Celine instinctively wrapped her clothes tightly around her.
Within the laboratory, large amounts of mist was everywhere. There was even a thick layer of frost on the surrounding walls and some instruments.
Meanwhile, Leylin was naked in a giant glass tank. He was soaking in a blue icy liquid that seemed to be seeping into his body bit by bit, turning him a little blue.
“What are you doing?”
Celine had long since gotten used to Leylin’s naked body, and she naturally approached him without flushing red. She judged the
trough and was puzzled. She found this icy aura very familiar.
“Isn’t this the unique radiation of the icy caves?” All of a sudden, Celine thought of its origins.
“No, this is just an imitation. It isn’t even 50% of the original, and can’t keep an Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor alive.”
Leylin breathed in deeply, and the icy blue colour in the tank faded, turning from a dark blue to a lighter one, to the point that it was slightly translucent.
Over ten seconds passed, and the icy liquid in the trough had turned translucent.
Leylin stood up and walked out at this point. Celine had prepared a towel and began to dry the droplets of water on his body like a caring wife.
“What do you plan to do to the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor?” Celine enquired.
“We’re both going to go to the joint conference of the guilds in the east capital. When that happens, only Grandpa Cedric will be here, and it can’t deal with an Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor with the strength of a peak rank 1 Magus!”
“Don’t worry, I’ll take care of it by then.” Leylin was overjoyed.
Through the tempering of his body with the icy radiation over these few days, he had gradually gotten used to such a chilly temperature. With a few more remodelling attempts, he would be able to make use of the freezing innate ability of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor without any residual effects on himself to treat his injuries. Of course, he would not mention this to Celine. She was an intelligent woman who knew what could and couldn’t be asked.
“What do you plan to do to the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor?”
Leylin was overjoyed.
Through the tempering of his body with the icy radiation over these few days, he had gradually gotten used to such a chilly temperature. With a few more remodelling attempts, he would be able to make use of the freezing innate ability of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor without any residual effects on himself to treat his injuries. Of course, he would not mention this to Celine. She was an intelligent woman who knew what could and couldn’t be asked.
“Do you need clothes?”
After dressing Leylin, Celine rested her head on Leylin’s shoulder, her nimble little tongue licking at Leylin’s earlobes and silently
hinting at something.
“Of course not!”
Leylin laughed and pressed her down…

A warm breeze blew, causing one to have the urge to take a nap.

In the subterranean world, the humans of Twilight Zone could not
divide the year into four seasons. They had only two ways of
detecting the current season. One was based on the activity of the
planet’s crust, and dividing the year into the cold and warm season.
Another way was through specific crops, and dividing it into the
planting and harvesting seasons.

Such a warm breeze was the most obvious indication that it was the
warm season.

Leylin sat on the back of a horse carriage with Celine by his side.
An aromatic, crisp smell travelled over from Celine’s hair, causing
Leylin to feel slightly restless.

The people driving the carriage were the two level 3 acolytes, Obo
and Ilya.
Within all of Nature’s Alliance, these two were the ones who were
somewhat able to do this.

The animals used to pull the carriage were obviously not horses,
but an animal found underground, Wildebeests!
These animals were a lot larger than normal horses. They also had
bony armour, and what was most obvious was the single horn on
its head.

These animals were more patient than horses, they could also
withstand some amount of radiation, and were the first choice for
light Magi of the Twilight Zone when they went out on expeditions.
Of course, they was only useful for ordinary acolytes and Magi.

As for even more powerful Magi, they were naturally able to tame
even more ferocious, mystical creatures, or even top-grade pets
while they went on their journeys.

For a small guild like Nature’s Alliance, using a Wildebeests
showed how hard pressed they were. However, they had no choice. After Celine took over, Nature’s Alliance had not been in a good state and had been pressured in many areas. Based on the intel she received, there was a large possibility that the Nature’s Alliance would be demoted from its rating in the joint conference. In this situation, Celine had no choice but to look for external help. She could only turn to Leylin. Though Leylin had been said to be a famed professor in name only, Celine had been tactful and given most of the authority in Nature’s Alliance to him. Leylin wouldn’t turn down such a large gift as well. He also needed help from the other organisations for his upcoming plans. He had wanted to help Nature’s Alliance expand and assist them based on the agreement they had. However, it was also not a bad idea to take over this organisation. Leylin thought to himself as he eyed Celine, who looked calm.
Have you made inquiries about this already?” Leylin asked Celine, who was at the side.

“Based on intel from a few close friends, the person targeting us at this joint conference is Skrill of the Eight-Clawed Spiders!” Celine smoothed her hair out, revealing her pale neck. One could also see her well-developed chest.

“Skrill? That spider man?” Leylin turned a blind eye to Celine’s unintended seduction. The Crystal Mask that Celine trained in had a special effect, in which the Magus would unwittingly bewitch the people around them. This was not very effective on a semi-converted Magus, and even less so on Leylin.

“He’s merely a semi-converted Magus. With a few helpers, you’d be able to take care of him, right?” Leylin glanced at Celine.

“If it was only him, I could somewhat contend against by using some help my mentor left me, but…” Celine’s eyebrows showed her gloominess at this. “There seems to be another power supporting Skrill..”

“I see!” Leylin nodded.

“Of course, all I hope for is that my lord maintains the Nature’s Alliance’s current standing. Celine has no wish for anything more.” As if afraid Leylin would change his mind halfway through, she quickly spoke and clarified herself.
“Don’t worry. Since I’ve already agreed, you can trust me.”
Leylin didn’t pay any attention to whoever was working behind the scenes.
The bloodline imprint of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor was completed, and once his body could adapt to the icy radiation, he could regain his strength as a rank 2 Warlock!
A rank 2 Warlock, and especially one like Leylin with a powerful bloodline, had a strength that far exceeded that of a regular rank 2 Magus.
Whatever Nature’s Alliance had, it wasn’t enough for a rank 2 to covet it, was it?
“A.I. Chip! How much longer will it take until my body adapts to the icy radiation?”
Leylin closed his eyes and asked.
[Beep! Based on the current data on Host body, estimated time left: 56h 34min.]
The A.I. Chip quickly gave an answer.
“Two days later, which is after the joint conference ends?” Leylin muttered to himself and then checked his stats again.
After so many days of hard work and treatment using all sorts of potions, he could only draw out a small amount of his solidified spiritual force. This was not enough to break through the bottleneck of rank 1.
This strengthened Leylin’s resolve to use the freezing innate ability. If not, who knew how much longer it would take for him to regain his strength as a rank 2 Magus!
“After mending my sea of consciousness, my battle power will be even more powerful than it had been on the south coast since I’m
no longer affected by my emotional instability…” Leylin calculated in his mind.
“I look forward to it!”
In the icy caves, with the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s Breath, as well as its Icy Jade Scorpion’s bodies, he had thoroughly eliminated the issue of emotional instability.
However, this was not a complete elimination. Perhaps after he advanced to a higher rank, the chaos and tyranny in his bloodline and genes would explode forth once more.
However, with the detections by the A.I. Chip, Leylin was sure that while he was a rank 2 or even rank 3 Warlock, the emotional instability would not affect him.
Getting rid of this issue, he now possessed all the advantages of being a warlock with an ancient bloodline with no disadvantages at all. How much more power could he display?
When strength and intelligence were combined, there was nothing that could hinder a Warlock in a pursuit of the truth.
“My lord, what’s on your mind?”
Celine leaned over.
“Nothing much!” Leylin tugged her into his lap, a hand slipping down while following the curves of her waist.
“M-my lord, not here. Outside–there are people outside!”
Celine blushed, rejecting Leylin’s embrace.
Outside, Obo and Ilya outside ducked their heads in embarrassment. All the thoughts they had died down after seeing the strength that Leylin flaunted every once in a while.

……

Notta Highlands. The ground in this desolate area was filled with a white quartz gravel.
Usually, this place would be filled with creatures of the darkness,
but they had now left the area. At the heart of the Notta Highlands, a bright ball of light that spanned for around ten metres was hanging in mid-air like a little sun, emitting light and warmth. Under it gathered Magi of different tribes who looked different and wore clothes of various colours. Even if it was just passive radiation and energy fluctuations that were emitted, the gathering of so many Magi forced the creatures to avoid them. After all, this was still within the eastern capital of the Twilight Zone, and not a place for the creatures to flaunt their prowess. Any Magi that was stronger than them, could exterminate all the higher ranked darkness creatures. However, if this was outside the Twilight Zone, where human activity was low, the situation would be reversed. The creatures of the darkness had an absolute advantage based on their numbers. There would even appear formidable creatures that could rival a Magus, which would encircle and annihilate Magi. “Lu lu!” Meanwhile, another horse carriage bringing a few Magi passed through. The Horned Horse pulling the carriage seemed to sense the strength of the Magi, and neighed in worry. The Magi merely shot a glance at this area. Upon finding out that it was a small-scaled guild, they promptly lost interest and continued along their way. However, there were a few Magi that exchanging glances in secret, staring at the carriage without even blinking. *Rattle!* Obo and Ilya respectfully opened the door to the carriage, bowing as they welcomed the two professors inside. Celine alighted first, her face unusually flushed and clothes slightly untidy. However, she soon regained her calm.
“That’s quite a lot of Magi!” Leylin also descended from the carriage, scanning the area and commenting with a smile.

He had sensed the aura of large amounts of energy while on the carriage, and now, using his naked eyes, he knew that there were at least 400 official Magi gathered here. This was no small number, and these were merely the representatives from various large organisations. They still had much more guards than their headquarters. Only Celine, whose guild was about to fall apart, would come with the full power of her guild, leaving no one behind to protect the headquarters.

These 400 Magi seemed to intentionally cause pressure on the area, the radiation from their bodies slowly yet steadily emitting, and even causing the land here to have a different smell.

“Four hundred nuclear reactors piled together, exposing all their strength. If this happened in my previous world, it would be a huge issue!” Leylin’s lips curved up in a grin.

“But upon closer inspection, there are still some differences between Magi in the subterranean world and in the south coast.” Leylin observed and thought.

As there was less light, or perhaps because they had never been under the sun for a long period of time, the Magi in Twilight Zone were paler.

In terms of clothing style, there was a large variety. There were even some bizarre Magi who were completely naked and did not have any clothing on their skins.

Some nature-elemental Magi advocated being in harmony with nature and felt that clothes would interfere with this process. Hence, they had this strange behaviour. Though this was not acknowledged by many Magi, this was a matter of principle, and
for this reason, others could not oppose this logic. 
Leylin also found another point. These Magi did not have any 
distinctions such as light and dark Magi. 
Black and white robes were merely the formal attire of the Magi 
here. There was no special meaning. 
He saw many Magi donning black and white robes joking together, 
and it didn’t seem like they were going to attack each other. 
“Perhaps the distinction between light and dark Magi is a situation 
unique to the south coast!”
Upon seeing this scene, Leylin’s eyes flashed. 
“My beloved Celine, it’s been about a year since we had last met, 
yes?”
At this moment, an upper-class woman wearing clothing filled with 
gems and tassels, looking as if she were about to attend a ballroom 
dance party at a palace, approached them, greeting with a smile. 
“This is Mistress Sache of the Obsidian Throne guild. She’s a good 
friend, as well as an ally of our guild!” Celine explained in Leylin’s 
ear and then proceeded to press her cheek to Mistress Sache’s as a 
greeting.
“Hello, Mistress Sache! This is the famed professor of our guild, 
Mister Leylin!” Celine introduced him to Mistress Sache.”
“Hello!”
Mistress Sache looked Leylin up and down, her eyes glimmering 
with curiosity. 
“I remember that with the conditions of your Nature’s Alliance, as 
well as permission of the joint conference, you could only recruit 
one famed professor, right? It looks like Celine is betting 
everything on you!”
Leylin also observed this Mistress Sache. 
Along the journey the conference, Celine had given Leylin a simple 
introduction to this ally guild, the Obsidian Throne. 
Mistress Sache was very tall, and her nose was pointed. Paired with
her blue eyes, she gave off a unique feeling that was similar to the European style in Leylin’s previous world.
“I will do my best, Mistress Sache!”
Leylin was naturally aware that though there had been precedents of finding outside help for the joint conference, things still had to go according to the rules.
A small-scale guild like Nature’s Alliance could, at most, allow one person to vie for their ranking under the name of a famed professor.
How did one tell which guild they were from? This was actually very simple. Just by looking at the high-grade meditation technique the Magus cultivated in would make everything clear.
After advancing to become an official Magus, high-grade meditation techniques produced different effects that made them easy to distinguish between.
The only high-grade meditation technique in the Nature’s Alliance, the Crystal Mask, had been recorded by Leylin. It was a technique based on illusions that used energy from plants as supplements. There were merely two levels to it. As specific materials required to advance to the second level were only able to be acquired from another world, there had never been another rank 2 Magus in the entire history of Nature’s Alliance. Leylin possessed the Kemoyin’s Pupil, and had already confirmed his path as a Warlock. Naturally, he wouldn’t change his meditation technique. As a result, with one glance, outsiders would be able to tell that he was not a Magus trained by Nature’s Alliance. Based on the rules at the joint conference, Magi like himself were able to make an appearance, but small-scaled guilds could only choose one such Magus, and the chosen Magus could not be changed.

“Don’t worry, I have faith in Leylin!” Celine said confidently. Leylin appeared to be a peak rank 1 Magus. This kind of strength was a equivalent to a medium-scaled guild’s trump card. Naturally, Celine wasn’t very worried. “Is that so? That’s great!” Mistress Sache covered her lips with a black foldable fan, and smiled coquettishly. “What? Did you receive some information too?” Upon seeing her reaction, Celine immediately set up a soundproof barrier around
the three of them.

“Yes! I received intelligence from my boy toys. Skrill of the Eight-Clawed Spider Guild seems to harbour unkind intentions towards you. Moreover, he has the support of a medium-scaled guild called the Dense Fog Forest!”

After saying that, Mistress Sache looked at Leylin and said, “And they seem to have made preparations against you, an external support.”

“Medium-scaled guild! Dense Fog Forest!” Sure enough, Celine’s face registered a slight change.

These medium-scaled guilds possessed at least one peak rank 1 Magus as their trump card. The number of official Magi and their knowledge greatly surpassed that of Nature’s Alliance. How could this not worry Celine?

“Is there anything valuable enough inside Nature’s Alliance that the Dense Fog Forest guild is coveting?”

Leylin immediately wondered.

Being a medium-scaled guild, Dense Fog Forest guild possessed resources and minerals that Nature’s Alliance could not compare with. Furthermore, even if the Nature’s Alliance were to fall to an unrated guild, the Dense Fog Forest guild might not be the one that would gain control of their territory and resources.

“So the Dense Fog Forest has to be allies with the Eight-Clawed Spider. Once the Nature’s Alliance falls and loses its seat within the guild alliance, Eight-Clawed Spider would be able to take over its resources. With a little more edging from the Dense Fog Forest, the council of the alliance would not hesitate to hand the empty seat over to them.

“What resources do the Nature’s Alliance and Eight-Clawed Spider have in common? Only one! The icy cave!”

Leylin needed just a bit of time to understand the nature of this power struggle.
As long as one found out who the beneficiaries, or those indirectly gaining benefits were, the situation would then be made clear. After all, nobody would be willing to do thankless jobs. During this period of time, Leylin had somewhat gotten familiar with the resources Nature’s Alliance possessed. Honestly speaking, these resources weren’t valuable enough for Dense Fog Forest to be interested in. The only possibility for this was that the secrets within the depths of the icy cave had been exposed!

“In the past, the icy cave had only been an area rich in production of frozen materials, with the Icy Jade Scorpion as a specialty. It isn’t that valuable, which is why it was allocated to Nature’s Alliance. However, within the cave’s depths actually lies an icy world of a larger scale. The icy world even has the remains of a creature with the strength of a Morning Star Magus and a drop of blood from an even more powerful bloodline!”

After obtaining the information held within the Icy Jade Scorpion’s bloodline, nobody could be more knowledgeable about the icy cave than Leylin. Bluntly speaking, this was a big treasure trove, especially for a bloodline Warlock! Leylin’s eyes sparkled, with a tinge of chilliness within.

“Only benefits like this would be valuable enough for Dense Fog Forest to act secretly. Looking at the situation, information about these benefits has not been spread. If it was, the entire Twilight Zone would have been in an uproar, and numerous Magi would have formed groups to explore it.”

“Celine, Please ask around and find out how the Oaken Leaf Guild and Emerald Vine Guild been doing lately.”

Leylin ordered Celine suddenly.

“Yes, my lord!” Celine straightened her body and walked over to a corner. The runes from the secret imprint on her body continuously brightened. Thereafter, she returned, a worried expression on her
They have all received Skrill’s invitation. His influence is now similar to a spider web, extending to these two guilds…”
“Just as I thought…” Leylin sighed.
This was the final point of confirmation.
Right now, Leylin was certain that the Dense Fog Forest must have found out about the Icy Cave’s uncanniness, and decided to bribe the Eight-Clawed Spider to crowd out other guilds so that they could monopolise the entire icy cave!
“Find an opportunity to kill them!”
The flash in Leylin’s eyes caused Celine to be nervous, as if an ancient monster was seated beside her.
Currently, Leylin had impolitely claimed the entire icy world. Should the Dense Fog Forest dare tread on his property, he would not let them off easily.
“Actually, if we just want to resolve the crisis Nature’s Alliance is facing, there’s a better way, which is to reveal the secret of the Icy Cave! Even Dense Fog Forest cannot oppose the entire Twilight Zone. Under the pressure of the joint conference, the Dense Fog Forest would be akin to an ant that could easily be crushed. However, this would not be in my best interests!”
With Leylin’s strength, he could probably gain benefits merely by following the majority of the Magi, but there was just too much uncertainty.
Should those overpowered Rank 3 Magi be lured out, Leylin did not have confidence that he could snatch anything from them.
If that were the case, he would only get the leftovers, and that would truly be a pity.
Not to mention, should the Twilight Zone still have the presence of Morning Star Magi that could destroy the entire icy world, Leylin would definitely be reduced to tears.
As a result, for Leylin, it was best to let the secret of the Icy Cave
Guild stay a secret until he advanced to become a Morning Star Magus. He would later then return and reap all the benefits!

“But… If that’s the case! The Dense Fog Forest would have to be eliminated, and that needs to be done fast before their leader has the time to react!”

In his heart, Leylin had already meted the death penalty to Dense Fog Forest and Eight-Clawed Spider.

With just a few thoughts, Leylin had already roughly understood the gist of the problem.

To him, since this possibility was the greatest, he would rather kill the wrong person than to not let the matter go. Dense Fog Forest and Eight-Clawed spider needed to be eradicated, and he would even be able to conveniently seize their high-grade meditation techniques and collection.

What was more wonderful was that this could be done in the name of revenge for Nature’s Alliance, which would be killing two birds with one stone.

While pondering, Leylin emanated a massive spiritual force with traces of killing intent, which caused Celine to retreat. Even Mistress Sache gave an excuse and walked away.

“What happened?” Celine worriedly asked.

Naturally, she didn’t know that with merely a word or two, Leylin had managed to deduce the truth, which had helped him make the decision to kill.

“Nothing much!” Leylin smiled, hiding the truth from her.

For interests of such a huge scale, Leylin did not feel at ease revealing his plans to others, even to Celine, whom he had gone to bed with!

“I’m thinking about what Mistress Sache said about her boy toys. What did she mean?”

Leylin cleverly changed the topic.

“Boy… toys?” Celine’s face changed, and she replied: “You- you
know, some Magi may have strange interests and bizarre hobbies. Mistress Sache has sadistic tendencies and is also skilled in this area, so…”

“Oh! Sadism and masochism? I know!”

A look of understanding flashed in Leylin’s expression, but he then rolled his eyes. There really were all sorts of Magi.

“Leylin… Are you skilful in things like that?”

After some moments, Celine returned to Leylin’s side and asked shyly.

“Don’t worry!” Leylin replied matter-of-factly.

Since the culprit had been identified to be merely a medium-scaled guild, Leylin didn’t have anything to fear. What he was concerned with was how he had to proceed in order to prevent higher ranked Magi from interfering.

It was at this moment that a commotion arose among the Magi; they dispersed in two directions, revealing a line of people.

“The nine council members are here!”

Celine whispered to Leylin.

“Hm?” Leylin stared at the nine Magi walking over.

There were both male and female council members, but they were no longer young. Their hair was white, and many of them wore glasses. They held dictionary-like books and feather pens or scales, and their eyes glistened with wisdom, giving them a scholarly aura. However, their energy fluctuations left Leylin dumbfounded.

“Peak rank one! Peak rank one! Peak rank one! They are all peak rank one! How… weak.”

Leylin rolled his eyes. “The subterranean world only possesses this much strength?”

Honestly speaking, if these nine council members only had this much strength, using Toxic Bile before he had gotten injured would have resulted in the instant death of these nine council members. He would even have killed or injured the surrounding Magi as well.
“What is going on?”
Looking at the surrounding Magi paying their respects to the nine council members, Leylin pondered.
“Looking at the situation, either the subterranean Magi have flaws that make it hard for them to advance, or the higher rank Magi have a more intimate circle, and hence do not participate in the conferences of us rank one Magi…”
Leylin stroked his chin, “Whatever it is, I have to reevaluate the strength of Magi in Twilight Zone!”
Since everybody has gathered, then I can begin the announcement! Let the 325th Eastern Region Magi joint conference begin!”

After looking around, the council member in the middle immediately spoke.

Even though his voice was not loud, he could be heard by every Magus present.

Once he spoke, the books, calligraphy brushes, weighing scales, and the other items in the arms of the nine enforces immediately emitted faint rays of white light that floated in the air.

“I summon the Fallen City!!!”

Nine rays of light shot out from the books and other materials in a flash and converged into a big white sun.

*Boom!* *

The tall pagoda violently shook and a big crack from the abyss opened.

The Magi looked very calm during this kind of disastrous earthquake and only used their powers to protect themselves and their apprentices, as well as their luggage, horses, and so on.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* *

A few huge stone statues suddenly broke through the ground floor, emerging like tall mountains that cast large shadows on the surface.

“These are the Twilight Zone’s ancient Magi: Ignis, Nikolat, and Morfe.”
As this was happening, Celine casually introduced the Magi joint conference to Leylin. Since ancient times, the joint conference was not just organized by anybody but fixed in this location. In the legends, the Fallen City was an ancient city to consecrate the Ancient Magi. The nine huge stone statues in the middle were in fact the nine most famous Magi in the ancient times. As a matter of fact, the nine Magi of the joint conference were also emulating these few Magi.

*Crash!*

Big chunks of stone fell, like how bamboo shoots fall off in springtime when it rains
A piece of solid stone beneath Leylin lifted him up as it rose to the last position at the top.
Leylin looked around.
The Magi were now seated exactly in the center of the Fallen City. The entire building appeared similar to the ancient Colosseum of Rome, just like what the people of ancient Greece practiced. The circle of outdoor seats surrounded the middle area.
Outside the conference, twelve slim, spotless marble pillars glistened in the sunlight and appeared to support both heaven and earth.

“The joint conference controlled the way to summon the Fallen City. It’s a pity that we cannot find any materials related to the end of the war… or a single living creature. Otherwise, we can restore the glory of the ancient Magi….”

Celine, who was beside Leylin, gasped in admiration.
Many Magi went to their respective places and formed a circle, surrounding the altar in the middle.
Leylin looked, the ones in the front were the middle-level Guilds, followed behind them by the low-level guilds, like him and Celine,
that sat in the middle section closer to the back seats. As for the rest, the unranked guilds, they sat in the outermost section. Each seat took up a lot of space as a suitable distance was maintained between each one, which allowed the Magi to be able to see each other without feeling restricted. This site was enough to accommodate ten thousand people, but now there’s barely a few hundred Magi. Naturally, the there was ample space between each Magus.

“How were these nine council members selected?”

Leylin pulled Celine closer into his embrace, and whispered into her ear

“Each large-scaled guild would send a representative, before us Magi present voted for them!” Celine was slightly embarrassed, but she still explained it to Leylin.

“Oh! Basically, the Eastern Twilight Zone only has about nine high-leveled guilds?”

Leylin stroked his chin, this kind of strength was similar to the south coast. Only that he was unsure of the numbers of rank 3 Magi present.

But deep down he had some reservations. Although high-grade meditation techniques were widely taught and of a higher grade than in the south coast, most of them were incomplete, and needed a few special otherworldly materials for their practitioners to advance. This meant that there would be fewer higher rank magi in the Twilight Zone and they possibly would be weaker than their south coast counterparts due to the Twilight Zone being isolated from the external world.

“The first point of the conference’s agenda is to observe a minute of silence in tribute of our Magi ancestors! They were true pursuers of knowledge, the founders of the the Twilight Zone!”

The nine council members in the front immediately stood up, as they solemnly and respectfully bowed their heads.
And in their hands, a pure, white flower bud slowly bloomed. The petals of the flower bud looked like countless rays of light that created a dreamy illusion. Immediately after, the Magi disorderly stood up to observe the minute of silence, the rays of light in their hands transformed into the shape of the white flower bud. “This is the light daisy, a specialty of the Twilight Zone that is used to represent the recollection of the dead and our grief!” Leylin’s eye flashed and concentrated some of his spiritual force to observe Celine’s actions. The magic of transforming the flower was only a magic trick, one that even acolytes could easily learn. Celine’s abilities were immediately recorded by the A.I. Chip, which then provided the composition of the spell model and the spiritual force. *Zoom!* Leylin followed swiftly with a layer of white light twinkling in his hands. In a flash, numerous light daisies in the open space bloomed as formless ripples continuously circulated, and pure light rays of flower petals dispersed and spread to the sky. A rain of petals floated down, some of them dispersed atop the sculptures of the nine ancient Magi. “Hm?” It was at this moment that Leylin suddenly raised his head. To his eyes, numerous petals seemed to use some form of mechanism or magic, and the nine stone statues at the heart of the center were subtly trembling. A desolate, ancient aura filled with abundant energy surfaced in the center. And looking at the surrounding Magi who were calm earlier on and had seized the moment to close their eyes, Leylin realized that they were actually in concentration. Leylin also released his energy, letting his spirit and that aura connect.
*Boom!* Like the eruption of lava, like the coming of a tsunami wave, an intense vibration incessantly shook Leylin’s heart and at the same time, many confused thoughts crossed his mind.

“This is… a high-level meditation aura!”

Leylin gave Celine a somewhat intoxicated look, and immediately came to his senses.

“Regarding what these Twilight Zone Magi said, they’re lacking materials only obtainable from other worlds and their meditation techniques cannot be improved, and now this aura that comes from an ancient meditation technique is to guide them on which path to follow!”

Although this acted only as a guide, there were still many benefits for a rank 1 Magus. Moreover, who knows, there might be geniuses that could use this ancient aura and be able to make modifications on their meditation techniques and skip the steps of using rare and ancient resources.

“It’s a pity! In fact, there is no ancient technique that inspires me. Furthermore, rank two Magi have already decided their path and are continuously intensifying further. So those Magi who have been promoted to the second rank also don’t look up to these…”

After waiting for the rain of petals to pass, the nine huge stone sculptures regained their tranquility and many of the Magi were then obsessed with keeping their eyes closed.

“Alright! Now to the second point of the agenda, let’s come to an agreement!”

The Magus that stood in the middle and who held the weighing scale said softly, with his voice being channeled through an unknown device, was heard by every other Magus present.

Soon after, two Magi walked up to the front and debated loudly with him, and occasionally displayed the recordings of light. And the Magus holding the weighing scale would make his judgement after having listened to both parties.
Magi from both sides would generally accept the result, and occasionally those who did not would start to challenge each other at the center of the site.

“Can we believe this council member’s verdict?” Leylin asked Celine, who was beside him.

“Gandor the council member is a fair and wise senior, and we usually trust his judgements. Moreover, the golden weighing scale that he holds symbolizes fairness. His personal beliefs forbid from violating fairness and justice.

Celine explained softly to Leylin, “Do not ask such questions out loud, otherwise the other Magi will despise us!”

“Oh!” Leylin nodded his head indifferently.

However, he was somewhat bored looking at the issues that were discussed one by one here. Although there are contradictions in this joint conference, he understood clearly that it was for the protection of the entire strength of the Twilight Zone’s Magi and instead of internal conflicts, we should be focusing on foreign enemies.

Humans were not the only rulers in the Twilight Zone, there were also many darkness creatures out there, just like the neighbouring elven empire beside the humans that left many intelligent beings wary of them.

But Leylin was not convinced by this concept. To him, if the Dark Magi were to come in power, they would have already started a war and would be constantly fighting. And through such bloody wars, a selection of the acolytes would be conducted. They would start off from a low-intensity battle which would then gradually increase in difficulty. In this manner, an elite force of magicians could be created!

It was not worth having such an indecisive situation.

This situation was similar to current state between the light and dark Magi.
“Leylin! It is the guild evaluation right after, you need to be careful!” Celine cautiously reminded Leylin.  
“Dont worry!” Leylin replied calmly, and at this moment, two unfriendly gazes were laid on him. Leylin’s brows furrowed as he looked at the source of discontentment. 
At the seat of the Eight-clawed spider, Skrill lowered his head without delay, but his eyes had a sinister tint. 
“You will never survive today’s ordeal! From today onwards, Celine is mine!”
“What trump card do you have? Or is the Dense Fog Forest going to interfere?”
Leylin remained calm, knowing that Skrill had slipped away like a beaten-up dog at the sight of him. He strongly believed that Skrill had some sort of backup to rely on. But to Leylin, the strength of a middle-scaled guild was not enough to threaten him!
“Alright, continuing to the fifth agenda of the conference! The guilds’ evaluation” A council member declared.
In a split second, the Magi on site all looked on with eagerness and attention.
For these Magi, mediating the conflicting views from before was merely a small matter. However, the evaluation of guilds could directly affect their interests! Hence, the atmosphere turned solemn very quickly.*Cough cough!* The council member in the middle coughed lightly, and only after it quietened down did he begin to speak, “The evaluation process will go the same way as before. We will first announce the results before the evaluations are open to challenges. Each guild has, at most, three chances. Lower rated guilds can challenge higher rated guilds, but higher rated guilds are not to interfere with the lower rated guilds. Guilds of the same evaluation can challenge each other to settle any conflicts, and those who are defeated have to wait until the next time…” Leylin found Celine stiffen from worry after hearing the council member’s words. “Even if you don’t have enough strength, those resources are all given out to you by the joint conference. They’re not yours in the first place, so why are you so worried?” Leylin was a little speechless. From his perspective, one would be able to obtain territory that was proportional to one’s own strength. While Celine’s mentor had still been around, there had been nothing to fear, but once Celine took over Nature’s Alliance, she should have reduced the scale of the guild and given out the resources she had. That was the most
sensible course of action.
This time, if not for Leylin sticking his head into the matter, things would not end well for Celine.
Of course, the situation would be vastly different with Leylin around. Furthermore, the icy caves were something Leylin needed to have, by hook or by crook.
Next, after the declaration from the council members of the start of the event, the site began to get livelier.
Many Magi exchanged glances. Though they had many thoughts, none of them made their move right away, as if they were waiting for something.
After a long silence, a Magus in ashen robes stood out from a corner.
“"We from Gulde wishes to challenge the Seaflower Society!"”
“"En! Gulde is an unrated guild, while the Seaflower Society is a small-scale guild. The challenge is permitted; may the Magi of both guilds enter the stage!"”
A Magus wearing presbyopic glasses flipped through a thick book and nodded.
The Seaflower Society sent out an old geezer with blue hair and some strange runes on his face. His guild had been pointed out and challenged, so naturally, he was not in a good mood.
Didn’t this imply that their Seaflower Society had already fallen this low?
At this thought, killing intent flashed in his eyes as he made up his mind to make this an unforgettable lesson for his opponent.
Meanwhile, the Magus in ashen robes was stupefied.
Upon waiting for the confirmation from the council member once more, two fluctuations from spells exploded at the site.
At the same time, a light-yellow dome of energy shot out from all corners, protecting the audience and council members from any stray attacks from the battle.
Leylin watched on with interest. He wasn’t very clear about the strength of the official Magi in Twilight Zone, and this was a good opportunity for him to find out. Through the few mediations from before as well as what was currently happening, he was able to understand many things. As subterranean Magi were faced with powerful enemy forces, there were no scholars who solely focused on just research. These Magi were quite formidable, and they were fast in setting up their spell models. They had also grasped the technique of the instantaneous and silent release of spells, and on average, their battle power was one level higher than that of Magi from the south coast. In addition, most of them had grasped one or two spells with immense killing power, and they had no apprehensions about using them. This was another characteristic of theirs that allowed them to surpass the Magi of the south coast by a large margin.

*Bang!* All of a sudden, the scene of the battlefield changed. The ashen-robed Magus waved his arm, and two large black crosses appeared, which criss crossed and pierced towards the Magus from the Seaflower Society.

“The Cross of Anginus!” The Magus from the Seaflower Society yelled out the name of this spell in fear, continuously adding a few more protective layers in front of him and evaded at a flying speed.

“Serator! You can’t escape!” The ashen-robed Magus hissed for a long while, and his clothes split open at the back, revealing a pair of giant wings.

*Whoosh! Whoosh!* The black feathers on the wings were like steel, the tip revealing a luster seen on sharp objects. With the impetus from the wings, he soared into the sky.

Two grey crosses of light flew to his feet, forming something like
two sets of eagle claws.
*Sou! Sou! Sou!*
The grey figure constantly flashed, and after producing his wings, his speed increased until he almost became a shadow.
The grey figure constantly collided with the defensive layers.
*Ka-cha!*
The defensive layers of the Magus from the Seaflower Society seemed to produce a tearing sound before it was being completely ripped apart.
*Pu!* Large claws mercilessly tore at the chest of the Magus from the Seaflower Society, and the man let out a miserable cry.
Meanwhile, one could see with their naked eyes, the withering of flesh spanning out from the Magus of the Seaflower Society’s wounds.
“I admit defeat!”
Before the other claw reached his body, this Magus immediately yelled.
However, a cold glint appeared in the gaze of this ashen-robed Magus, and the grey claw increased its speed by thirty percent
“That’s enough!” A council member holding a scale shoutedcoldly, and the powerful spiritual force of a peak rank 1 Magus swept across. A brownish-yellow hand rose from the earth and protected the injured Magus from the Seaflower Society, protecting him from the attack of the ashen-robed Magus.
“My apologies, my lord! I was unable to hold back in time!”
The ashen-robed Magus descended onto the ground and removed the effects from his spells regaining his appearance as a regular human. He bowed, looking respectful.
“Hmph! Gulde’s challenge was successful, so it is now promoted to be a small-scaled guild. The Seaflower Society will now be demoted a ranking and is now in the unrated category. All the resources that have been allocated to the Seaflower Group guild by
the joint conference will be transferred over right away, and our council members will supervise this process.”
This council member furrowed his brow and snorted, but still announced loudly.
“Many thanks, my lord!” The ashen-robed Magus bowed once more.
Meanwhile, the Magus from the Seaflower Society became deathly pale and fainted.
Leylin, who watched on, was not too surprised. After all, since the ashen-robed Magus had taken the initiative to challenge the Seaflower Society, it was natural that he must have been confident.
After that, a few unrated guilds chose to challenge some other guilds.
Most of the challenged guilds were small-scale guilds that were declining, and almost all of the challenges were successful. Only one small-scale guild won, protecting what belonged to them.
This contest mostly happened between small-scale and unrated guilds. The medium-scale guilds rarely went onstage, and as for large-scale guilds, they were remote existences that only served as witnesses and judges.
“Dear council members, we of the Eight-Clawed Spider wish to challenge the Nature’s Alliance guild!”
Suddenly, Skrill’s voice sounded out.
“Hm?” The Magi present shifted their gazes towards him.
Usually, challenges between similarly ranked guilds rarely happened unless there was enmity between them.
As the Eight Clawed Spider Guild was already a small-scale guild, they would only cause Nature’s Alliance to lose their resources if they were victorious. What they would obtain would be meagre.
“Skrill! If you had any conflicts with Nature’s Alliance, why did you not mention it during the mediation period and instead wait until now?”
The council member holding the scale furrowed his brows. “My apologies, my lord! The animosity between us and Nature’s Alliance is not appropriate to be declared here, but please approve my request!” Skrill bowed, sounding resolute. The lines on the council member’s forehead became deeper. Honestly speaking, he did not want there to be internal friction between two small-scale guilds. However, Eight-Clawed Spider was not a medium-scale guild, and challenges between guilds of the same ranking were allowed. The moment Nature’s Alliance was defeated, not only would they lose their spot, but they would also have to hand over all their resources to be re-distributed by the joint conference. Skrill could only, at most, obtain a portion of these resources. As there were no benefits to it, few Magi chose to do this. However, Leylin knew that they would definitely choose to take the icy caves! Knowing the situation, the abyss in his pupils grew darker, and a sneer appeared on his lips. “Alright! Guild leader of Nature’s Alliance, Celine, who will you send onstage?” The council member looked towards Celine. “I invite our famed professor, Mister Leylin, to represent my Nature’s Alliance guild and battle!” Celine gave a slight bow. Leylin sighed and stood up. “I am also sending out our famed professor to represent we of the Eight-Clawed Spider onstage!” At the other side, Skrill immediately bowed and moved aside to reveal the figure behind him. It was a human figure completely wrapped in black mist. There were also numerous black tendrils fluctuating around it. “Hm? They both sent out famed professors!” The surrounding Magi broke out into a discussion. Though small-scaled guilds could invite famed professors to act as external support, only one professor was allowed to act. Since there
were very few Magi working alone, such situations rarely appeared. Now, with two suddenly appearing, it was no wonder that the Magi were surprised. There were a few Magi who could somewhat see through part of the strength of Leylin and the person wrapped in mist, and they shrunk back in fear, their eyes showing their terror. “En! You have both chosen famed professors to battle?”
The council member holding a thick book looked at Leylin, and some probing spells even flashed, before he flipped through his book. “Professor Leylin of Nature’s Alliance guild does not belong to any other guild, and can thus represent Nature’s Alliance!” “Magus Skrill, please get the Magus behind you to reveal his face for inspection!”
The council members spoke to Skrill. Seeing this, Skrill could only speak to the person wrapped in the mist in a low voice. The black mist then dissipated, revealing a face that was foreign to all the Magi here. “Xerxes greets all of you!”
What appeared in front of the audience was a very androgynous face. Even the voice was neither male nor female; one could not tell this person’s gender. The Magus called Xerxes seemed to want to provoke Leylin, shooting him a glance from the corner of his eyes. “En! The famed professor from the Eight-Clawed Spider meets the requirements as well. I hereby announce…”
just when the council member was about to announce the start of the fight, Leylin suddenly interrupted him.

“What? Do you want to admit your defeat right now, Celine?”

Of course, Skrill did not dare to be brazen with Leylin. In fact, regardless of whether it was Leylin or Xerxes, he could not afford to offend either of them. Hence, he could only taunt Celine.

“Rubbish!” Celine retorted angrily, worriedly looking at Leylin at the same time.

“Leylin… He… He wouldn’t just give up because of his inability to clearly see through Xerxes’s strength, would he?”

Celine clenched her fists, and even started breaking out in cold sweat.

Honestly, with her talents and meditation skills, Celine was very confident previously that she would be able to defeat all the Magi that had competed in the previous rounds.

However, upon seeing Leylin’s strength, her confidence had dissipated into thin air.

Right now, Celine realised that she did not understand Leylin a single bit.

“Magus Leylin! Do you have any problem?”

The council member holding the books asked.

“I recall that during the evaluation, other than these battling methods, aren’t there other ways as well?”

Leylin looked around the arena and took in Skrill’s taunting,
Celine’s anxiety, and Xerxes’s killing intent. He laughed abruptly and then questioned.

Once the word went out, all the Magi looked stunned.

“Yes, there is such a rule. You can even be exempted from fighting through your research contributions.” The council members quickly responded with little emotions.

“However, the results of your research have to be made public, and must be recognised by the council members. Furthermore, since Nature’s Alliance is a small-scale guild, the information you provide has to be at a rank of at least 5 stars”

Research with a rank of 5 stars was equivalent to research conducted by peak rank 1 Magi, and is obviously not easy to obtain.

Celine had the same idea previously, but unfortunately, the council members’ evaluation of research was extremely strict. Furthermore, the nine biggest large-scale guilds were already at the level where you could find the region’s finest research. Hence, very few things would interest them.

Moreover, a lot of time and effort was required to obtain research data of this level. The time invested in the research is no less than the time taken in inviting a semi converted elemental Magus. Hence, after conducting the research for a period of time, Celine gave up on that idea.

“Should you research data not be at the level of 5 stars, it would mean that you lose your independent research without garnering any gains. We hope you can think it over!”

“Please do not worry, I am very confident in my own research!”

Furthermore, Magi have always been virtuous people searching for the truth, so in this path of the search for knowledge, I do not mind sharing the results of my research with my fellow man”

Leylin’s words were immediately well received by the crowd of magi.
Many high-level magi that are on friendly terms would gather to exchange their own experiences so that they could improve together.

“We can see the glory of ancient times in your being!”
The nine council members nodded their heads, “Please present your information!”

“I object!” Skrill immediately shouted. He agitatedly pointed towards Leylin, his eight-clawed spider legs seemingly trembling.

“We were first in issuing our challenge. Even if the information were to be presented, it can only be done so after the challenge!”

“Objection overruled! Magus Leylin’s ways are in accordance with the ancient rules!”

A few council members immediately suppressed Skrill’s objection. Magus Xerxes, on the other hand just coldly started, his thoughts unable to be determined.

Looking at the scene before him, Leylin snickered to himself.

Under the witness of so many Magi, a battle to the death would be like a monkey show set up for an audience. Was that really in his best interests?

Even though many Magi would be willing to do so under the influence of the interests involved, Leylin was not one of them!

Furthermore, in front of the nine peak rank 1 Magi, along with the Magi troops, Leylin would not be able to kill. Otherwise, as Leylin’s injuries were not yet completely healed, he would not be able to defend against the joint attack of nine peak rank 1 Magi. He also did not want to offend the nine large-scale guilds that the nine peak rank 1 Magi belonged to.

After all, the large-scale guilds must have Magi of at least rank 2. Leylin did not want to find trouble at all.

Hence since he was not able to kill, there was no point in accepting the challenge and putting on a monkey show for others. Naturally, Leylin would choose the most effortless method.
He smiled, his every movement resembling how the ancient royalty were trained. He seemed calm, and together with the unique warlock’s charm that he had, this convinced many of the Magi. The eyes of Mistress Sache, whom Leylin had previously met, lit up like two balls of fire. Immediately, Leylin passed his already prepared research data to the council members. This was, in part, the flawed articles he had seen in the Nature’s Alliance. The research had already progressed to the final stages, but unfortunately, because of the lack of crucial steps, the articles were not able to be developed into a meditation. However, Leylin was different. He was a rank 2 Warlock, and had the support of the entire knowledge vault of the south coast. He could be said to have a bird’s eye view of the whole situation. Together with the incredible mathematical operations of the A.I. Chip, with a few tweaks here and there, Leylin would be able to produce research of a high calibre. Leylin was able to obtain the data without much trouble, and the information did not cost very much. However, when presented externally, these data were considered to have at least a rank of 5 stars, the equivalent importance of a peak rank 1 Magus. This was sufficient to allow the Magi present to vie for the information. Sure enough, upon receiving the crystal ball filled with research formulas and graphical information, the faces of the council members became more solemn. Their faces were serious while they perused the crystal ball in succession, and all the while, they were animatedly engaging in discussion. In the end, they even gathered in a circle, agitatedly discussing and letting out cries of argument from time to time. Meanwhile, Skrill’s heart grew heavier, while Celine’s face revealed a smile. The Magi outside were anticipating the results, eager to see
Leylin’s research data.
With regards to all the goings on, Leylin pretended not to notice and continued to calmly stand upright.
Just based on this cultivation of calmness during the chaos, Leylin received the admiration of the Magi here.
“Hu!”
Eventually, the council members returned to their seats. The council member sitting in the middle even removed his presbyopic glasses and rubbed the bridge of his nose.
*Bang!* He aggressively slammed his gavel downwards, which meant that the official evaluation of the research would begin.
“According to the council members’ unanimous decision, the information Magus Leylin has provided regarding the biological structure and bloodline of dark elves is to be classified as having a rank of 6 stars!”
*Hua!* The venue resonated with cries of wonder. The fact that Leylin’s provided information would be able to pass the test was within the expectations of many of the Magi. This was because Magi were not stupid; if they were to present any information, it must be because they were confident that it would suffice.
However, little did they expect that the information Leylin provided would actually have a rank of 6 stars!
Research of this nature must be close to the standards of a rank 2 Magus.
“These data will be recorded in the collective data vault. All Magi present will be able to use these contributions…”
After the council member had made the announcement, he immediately beamed. “Magus Leylin’s aspirations and intensive studying spirit has obtained my admiration. May I know whether there will be a chance in the future to invite Magus Leylin to my institute to undergo an interview?”
“It would be my honour!” Leylin bowed slightly.
Meanwhile, on the side, Celine seemed a bit dazzled. "Master! We have succeeded!" Only when the sound if Ilya cheering entered her ear did she return to her senses, her eyes watery with tears that were on the verge of falling. At this moment, all the difficulties they had experienced in the past, along with the ridicule they had to suffer, appeared in her mind. "Teacher, can you see this…"

"Hmph!"

Skrill’s face was extremely dark. He glared at Celine, "Consider yourselves lucky this time around. I hope that luck will always follow you!"

After which, without turning back once, he left the venue, with Xerxes unhurriedly following behind him. This time around, the plot of the Eight-Clawed Spider was fruitless, and with the possibility of inducing rage from the Dense Fog Forest, Skrill did not want to stay at the conference for a single minute longer.

"Leylin! Thank you!"

After Leylin returned to his seat, Celine held his hands, her face filled with a genuine smile. "It was nothing!” Leylin smiled. Actually, Leylin was very sure that this matter was far from over. After their open and aboveboard plans have failed, the opponent could only utilise underhanded means now. "Underhanded means? But those are my favourites!"

Leylin smiled coldly. Right now, during the joint conference, the only restrained party in this case wasn’t merely his opponent but himself as well. After all, he had started off as a legitimate dark Magus. Bloodshed and killing were very common to him. When that happened, it would be too late for the other party to have regrets. With regards to Leylin’s contributions, the Nature’s Alliance was
able to be exempted from the challenge this time around, and could be considered to have survived an ordeal.

After the evaluation, there was nothing much to see at the conference.

There were only a few guilds left to compete with one another. During the majority of the time, the apprentices would compete in a friendly context. This was also one of the reasons why Celine had brought Obo and Ilya to the conference.

Leylin had completed his task at hand, and so he sat with Celine, who was beaming, as they watched other Magi compete.

“Leylin! I can’t believe that I would see you here!”

At this moment, a Magus with a gold-plated, robotic right hand walked over, his face radiating with happiness.

“I can’t believe this, you actually joined the Nature’s Alliance without telling anyone!”

“Hello, Siegfried!”

Leylin greeted him. “There was no other choice since they had something very tempting to me in their hands! Moreover, I’m only a honorary professor, which means I can also guild.”

“Oh, I know!”

Siegfried’s face revealed a smile that all men would be able to understand. It was obvious that Leylin was bewitched by Celine, was it not?

“Come! Let me bring you to meet some of the high-ranking officers in the Earth Fire Association!”

Compared to his previous interactions with Leylin, Siegfried was now more cordial.

After all, Siegfried was currently not able to discern Leylin’s true abilities. However, based on the presentation of his high-end research standards and academic attainments, it was worth it to rope Leylin in.

In addition, a few high-level guilds council members had all
expressed their friendliness in succession, which made it even more plausible to try and rope Leylin in.
A carriage travelled across the dark plains unhurriedly. Two wildebeests pulled the carriage. Due to the unhurried nature of the journey, these two steeds snorted as they gnawed at the plants along the path from time to time. Around the carriage, a layer of light illuminated the surrounding land. This was due to a constant illumination magic being applied to the horse carriage.

“Leylin, you made Obo and Ilya lower the speed of the carriage, and you also had me prepare this. What is this all about?” Within the horse carriage, Celine asked Leylin as she suddenly raised her head and lifted a crystal ball that glowed with runes.

“It’s obviously to wait for somebody!” Leylin reclined on the cushioned seat as he squinted his eyes.

“Is it…Skrill from the Eight-Clawed Spider?” Celine was an intelligent woman, and her expression changed immediately.

“Not only that, but perhaps also Magi from the Dense Fog Forest. After all, I am here!” Leylin chuckled and suddenly walked out to the front of the carriage.

“Prof…Professor, look!” The horse carriage stopped, and Obo, who had been riding, stuttered. In front of him, a dense wall of fog formed and blocked...
the way. Although there were areas in the Twilight Zone with dense fog, such thick fog was abnormal. The power of the Magi who were mingled within the fog had given away their determination to massacre them tonight.

“A fog barrier! A specialised spell only known to Magi from the Dense Fog Forest. It really is them!”

Celine sighed from behind, “What should we do?”

After having experienced so many things, Leylin had already taken a leading role in Celine’s heart. Since this was the case, once she encountered a problem, she would seek out Leylin’s opinion first.

“As planned, all of you do not have to interfere with this, just keep yourselves safe!”

Leylin hopped down from the horse carriage and walked towards the wall of fog.

Under the illumination of the light, the grey fog seemed to congeal like a serum, with spiral waves occasionally forming.

“No matter how well-mannered, organised, or awe-inspiring they are, a Magus will always be a Magus! For the sake of benefits, taking a small risk like this is nothing!”

Leylin smirked.

Under such circumstances, if all of them were to perish here, Leylin would be able to take care of any repercussions later by tidying things up a little after having killed them.

As such he wasn’t surprised but was rather happy instead.

“It really saves me the time of gathering them all in one bunch like this!” Leylin immediately raised both his hands and pressed on the wall of fog.

*Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!*

With Leylin as the centre, a layer of frost began to spread and froze the wall of fog.

In a very short amount of time, the wall of fog had turned into
walls of ice that revealed inverted images of the objects in the surroundings.
This frost power came from the aftermath of the icy radiation he had received, which he had just released all at once.
“En! Not bad!” Leylin looked at both his hands.
His hands now were snow white, like jade, and even revealed a lustre deep inside them.
“With the adaptation to increased tolerance to the icy radiation completed, I can begin to freeze the imprints inside my bloodline!”
Leylin smiled and gently tapped on the icy wall.
*Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!*
Fine cracks appeared and spread rapidly from where his fingers had tapped.
Seconds later, the web of cracks covered the entirety of the ice walls, which subsequently shattered and turned into fine shards of ice that fluttered into the wind.
*Rumble!*
With a huge rumbling sound, the wall of fog crumbled like toy bricks breaking apart.
Several figures were soon revealed after the dispersion of the fog wall.
“As expected, it’s you Skrill! And also, Xerxes!”
Celine gritted her teeth.
The ones obstructing their way were Skrill, Xerxes, along with several old geezers. Their bodies radiated the might of semi-converted elemental Magi, with traces of grey fog that continuously swirled around their fingers.
Expressions of alarm could be seen on the faces of the geezers as they were rather frightened by Leylin’s apparent ease in his dispelling of the fog wall.
“You are indeed a peak rank 1 Magus, Mister!”
Amongst this group, the androgynous Xerxes, who was distinctly
the leader, said and bowed. “These are issues that we have with the Nature’s Alliance, would Mister Leylin please choose to back down for the moment? After this matter, no matter what conditions you have agreed on with them, we will multiply them manifold!”

As he finished speaking, it was like as if seal that had come undone as a violent power coursed through Xerxes’ body, which made Celine turn pale. As for Obo and Ilya, they had almost fainted.

“A peak rank 1 Magus! He is actually a peak rank 1 Magus!”

Celine clutched the hem of her robes tightly.

Under the presence of another Magus of equal standing, one might choose to compromise. However, Leylin shook his head and outright refused Xerxes’s suggestion. To him, anyone who coveted the icy cave could only be a certain type of person, a dead one!

“Pardon me for my impudence then!”

In the next moment, Xerxes, who still had a calm air, underwent a tremendous bodily change.

Similar to a fiery volcanic eruption, intense energy waves emanated from his body, and countless grey energy particles condensed and formed a tide of energy waves.

“Fog Giant!”

Along with Xerxes’ incantation, a giant elemental genie appeared. From waist down this genie was a mass swirling fog and its upper body had the shape of a man. It’s whole body was greyish white, and the muscles on both arms were extremely defined. Its ginormous stature was also extremely impressive.

“In my name, I order you to kill him!” Xerxes pointed at Leylin.

The Fog Giant roared, and two fists the size of hills smashed towards Leylin’s direction!

“Attacking with such power from the start? Are you planning to kill me?”

The slight smile about Leylin’s lips did not falter.
“Looks like he’s guessed that I know about the Icy Caves and thought I was a contender, so he’s planning to kill and silence me?”

In actuality, this opponent had guessed correctly, but what they did not know was that Leylin’s strength far surpassed them, and had the same intentions of killing them!

“Wind!”

As he faced the Fog Giant’s attack, Leylin merely recited a syllable.

*Weng!* A violent black tornado formed between him and the giant. The large number of wind blades pushed the giant’s fists back.

*Hsss!*

Following that, a spiritual force more powerful, more sinister than Xerxes’ descended upon the battlefield.

Black darkness elemental particles swept through like a tide, crushing the energy wave that Xerxes had formed into nothingness.

In the Twilight Zone, darkness elemental particles were very concentrated. On top of that, the solidification of Leylin’s spiritual force as a rank 2 Warlock could overpower his opponent.

Countless darkness elemental particles gathered around Leylin, to the point that they could be seen with the naked eye.

As a light wind lifted him into the air, the elemental particles fused with the tornado! Its volume had expanded immediately and it turned into an ancient creature with a ferocious, violent aura.

This was a tall and lanky giant beast that was around seven to eight hundred metres long. It had dense black scales on its body, and a pair of amber eyes that were as large as a water jar. It carried with it a malevolent, bloodthirsty aura!

Meanwhile, Leylin stood on this large black giant snake, appearing to be calm.

Just the confrontation between this giant snake and giant was enough for Skrill, Celine and the others to try their best to take shelter and quickly retreat to another area.
“This is a battle between peak rank 1 Magi! Just a single ripple of energy can easily destroy you. Be careful!”
While Celine retreated, she protected the two acolytes and warned them.
Meanwhile, Obo and Ilya were staring at the person on top of the large giant snake enviously, their expressions filled with yearning and hope.
Celine could only smile wryly at this scene.
How could one reach the peak of rank 1 so easily? These two acolytes were the core seeds of her guild. One would already thank the heavens if they could rise to become an official Magus in the future, but to reach Leylin’s level? Difficult!
“He… He’s actually this strong?”
On the other end, while Skrill knew Leylin was at the peak of rank 1, he had no idea how powerful Magi like Leylin could be, and he could only gape in response.
“How is Lord Xerxes?” Seeing the Fog Giant beaten down by the giant black snake, Skrill was extremely anxious.
“Don’t worry! Our guild leader is very strong, and he hasn’t even brought his trump card out yet!”
The other two semi-converted elders immediately comforted him. In their eyes however, there was very little confidence.
“Distinguished Leylin, you truly are an opponent worthy of respect!”
At this moment, Xerxes suddenly exclaimed, “This next attack will be my last. I hope you won’t disappoint me.”
“Mist Transformation!” Xerxes muttered in a low voice.
Large amounts of fog were sent out from his body, and it constantly gathered at the body of the Fog Giant. Meanwhile, Xerxes’ body shrunk until all was left was a pile of clothes.
Meanwhile, the Fog Giant rapidly increased in size until it was 50% larger than before, and fluctuations could be seen on its face. With
a grey flash of light, Xerxes’ face appeared there.
“I remember now! This is Mist Transformation, the strongest attack of the guild leader of the Dense Fog Forest! He once used this attack to kill a Magus who was similarly at the peak of rank 1! Be careful, Leylin! This Xerxes is the disguise of the guild leader of the Dense Fog Forest!”
Celine, who was standing not too far away suddenly seemed to remember something and reminded him loudly.
“I see!” Leylin nodded.
The effects of his opponent’s spell were not half-bad.
The original Fog Giant’s attack power was only around 60, but after Mist Transformation, the A.I. Chip warned Leylin that the number had increased to almost 79.
This was practically the limits of what a rank 1 Magus could do! It was no surprise that his opponent could kill Magi of similar rank with this attack.
Leylin glanced at the Fog Giant that was in front of him. After Xerxes fused with the Fog Giant, not only did its strength increase, but its movements also became more agile.

“Based on the principle of elemental essence conversion, can the physical body itself be converted into an element? An interesting train of thought!”

How knowledgeable was Leylin in this area? He had stored all the academic knowledge from the south coast in the A.I. Chip, and with a few glances, he could roughly deduce the theory and application behind this ultimate attack formed from fog.

“It’s a pity that a Magus’ body is the only place where spiritual force can be stored. The moment the physical body is converted, it will then lose the chance to go one step further!”

Leylin sighed, seemingly looking upon his opponent with pity. This attitude had obviously infuriated Xerxes, and with a roar, the Fog Giant charged over.

Leylin fearlessly manipulated the large giant serpent and had it coil around his opponent.

*Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!* 

The scale of the battle increased in size, and giant rocks the size of hills were smashed by the two of them, flying in all directions. There were even some sparks at the tail, creating a trailing flame.

“To this extent?!”
Not only Celine but also the other Magi were stunned. Meanwhile, while on the back of the giant snake, black light flashed in Leylin’s eyes. Numerous black fireballs flew out from the shadows. The fireballs converged and condensed, forming a small, blazing black sun that was even more sinister looking. Latent Fireball, the spell that Leylin had invented, had a reputation that could rock the south coast with the numerous Magi that had been killed by it, had finally revealed itself once again in Twilight Zone.

And the Magus he was facing was at the peak of rank 1! Xerxes’ expression became serious, evidently sensing the destructive power hidden within Latent Fireball. *Hah! Hah!* *Pant!* *Pant!*

Making the first move, Xerxes took in a deep breath, and two streams of white gas that could be seen with the naked eye rushed into his mouth. This stream was extremely powerful, to the point that even a tornado appeared in the air. Even bits of plants and little rocks began to float.

After taking in this large amount of air, the Fog Giant’s chest expanded at a speed that was visible to the naked eye. It was as if it was a giant frog. “Secondary Energy Air Cannon!” The giant opened its mouth, puffed out, and a light green compressed air bomb-like cannonball attacked Leylin. “Go!”

The air cannonball brought with it immense wind pressure, and Leylin’s clothes rustled loudly from the wind. Meanwhile, Leylin indifferently pointed at the Latent Fireball in the air. The black latent fireball immediately stretched out, formed a black
lance that caused distortion ripples in the air, and charged to the front of the air cannonball.  
*Pu!* Like a balloon that had been pierced, the black lance pierced through the air cannonball.  
Following this, the Secondary Energy Air Cannon exploded and deflated.  
The black lance’s power continuously extended as it ruthlessly used its momentum to plough into the chest of the Fog Giant.  
Black rays flashed and some flames blazed on the body of the giant, tenaciously extending till they covered half its chest.  
Xerxes, who had fused with the Fog Giant, winced, and had evidently felt pain.  
“Ah…” The Latent Fireball burnt not only the physical body, but also the formless spiritual force, and even the spirit! Xerxes began to scream pitifully.  
“Don’t think you can get away with this when you’ve gotten me in this state!” Xerxes’ looked resolute, bringing the Fog Giant in front of the black giant snake.  
“Self-detonate!”  
With this thought, the entire Fog Giant exploded.  
The black giant snake was drowned in fog and fire.  
*Rumble!*  
The ground constantly vibrated, as if a large earthquake had happened. Dust floated tens of metres high and blocked the whole scene from view.  
Moments later, a human figure was launched out from within the dust.  
“It’s the Guild Leader!” A few Magi from the Dense Fog Forest immediately went up to help.  
Xerxes did not look to be in a good state, with a large hole in his chest and numerous wounds all over.  
All of a sudden, rays of light fluctuated above his face, and his
original face disappeared, revealing that of a middle-aged man who looked to be a pacifist.
“It really is the guild leader of the Dense Fog Forest!” Celine muttered not far away, the crystal ball in her hands constantly flashing with light.
“Guild leader, are you alright?”
A few semi-converted Magi elders immediately asked concernedly, after catching hold of Xerxes.
“He’s also injured, but his injuries are slightly lighter than mine. He can still battle. Let’s leave quickly!”
Though Xerxes looked to be seriously hurt, his ability to think was not compromised.
“Understood!” The few Magi made to leave, with Skrill following closely behind.
“All of you can leave except for him!” Leylin’s voice sounded from within the cloud of dust.
Shortly afterwards, an icy blue ray of light shot out, striking Skrill who was trying to activate a scroll!
A blue layer of ice immediately formed around him, turning him into a blue, human-shaped ice sculpture.
The dust settled, revealing Leylin’s figure.
He was now extremely pale, with some blood at the corner of his lips. The fluctuations of his spiritual force were unstable, and he looked to be seriously injured.
“Since Lord Leylin has spoken, we’ll leave him behind!”
Xerxes struggled to answer, and upon hearing this, the semi-converted Magi supported Xerxes and retreated, not even sparing a second glance in his direction.
“Leylin!” Celine immediately rushed out, not hiding any of her worry.
“I’m fine!” Leylin waved his arms, “Have you recorded everything down?”
“Yes. I’ll send them to the council members of the joint conference and indict them!” Celine looked furious.
“No, not yet.” Leylin waved his arms.
“Also, bring Skrill along as well. He’s an important witness!”
“Yes!” Though Celine was still doubtful, she naturally did not dare ask more questions after having seen Leylin showing off his might. As she wanted to give Leylin space to recuperate, Celine went outside and squeezed in with Obo and Ilya.
In the carriage, there was only Leylin and the frozen Skrill.
A layer of black elemental particles instantly formed a divide that split the interior and exterior of the carriage into two completely different sections.
Leylin stretched and stood up.
It did not even look like he was injured at all.
“A surprise attack midway and having a witness is crucial enough to indict the other side for serious penalties. However, this will, at most, shake Dense Fog Forest’s position. It isn’t practical if we want to completely uproot them.”
Leylin understood this well.
In addition, since their opponents had tried to kill them, it was alright for Leylin to fight back and even kill one or two Magi from their side. However, if he did not let this matter rest and eradicated them completely, then that would be going against the laws of the subterranean world.
Magi grasped the bigger picture in the Twilight Zone and attempted to unify against the elven empire and darkness creatures. Hence having such internal conflicts were disapproved of within the committee.
Even a rank 2 Magus would find it difficult to deal with this situation, much less Leylin, who had yet to completely recover. Hence, he had to tempt his opponents to slip-up even more, and then respond while protected by a valid excuse.
“After seeing my strength, I’m sure they must be feeling uneasy!” Leylin grinned while stroking his chin.
“Besides, the seeds of enmity have been planted. Believing we’re almost equally powerful and considering my status as ‘heavily injured’, paired with the tremendous benefits from the Icy World, I believe they wouldn’t consider trying to settle this with us. Rather, they’ll try to eliminate me as soon as possible!”
Medium-scaled guilds had an ample number of hidden cards. Furthermore, besides the guild leader, they had many powerful Magi that, when they banded together, would cause a great deal of grief even to a peak rank 1 Magus.
Xerxes had not gone all out this time, naturally because he believed in his might.
The next time, he would come out at full strength!
However, this was what Leylin wanted. Their opponent was already at their doorstep, and wanted to eliminate the guild! Under this circumstances, it was reasonable for him to strike back brazenly and destroy the enemy, right?
Besides, the buffering time before this that had happened was enough for Leylin to use the freezing bloodline imprint to regain his full strength.
Once he regained his strength as a rank 2 Warlock, he would be free to wander freely. As long as he did not meet anyone like that old rank 3 freak previously, he would definitely be able to protect himself.
“Next up!” Leylin shifted his gaze to Skrill, who was in the block of ice.
The Spider Man’s eyes were unblinking, and he was only able to display a pleading expression.
Leylin smiled gently and advanced…
When the carriage reached a waterfall, Leylin descended from the carriage with a pale appearance.
Meanwhile, Skrill had already been retrieved from the ice and was now merely unconscious. Celine ordered for him to be imprisoned. This was obviously Leylin’s plan. Using a few methods, he found that Skrill did not, in fact, know much about the Icy World. All he knew was that the Dense Fog Forest was drooling over the icy caves, and Leylin’s killing intent died down. From his perspective, Skrill would make a pretty good subordinate. He was semi-converted, and that was enough to do many things in Twilight Zone. In addition, he was an able witness. Though Leylin did not believe in this method, this was enough to mitigate some potential troubles. Though he was unafraid of trouble, he did dislike it. It was not a bad idea to reduce it as much as possible. Lastly, Nature’s Alliance was much too weak. To complete his grand plan, he would need a few capable subordinates. Leylin could not really trust Celine. It wasn’t in fear of her betrayal. This woman was far too intelligent, and after gaining a large amount of power, she might prioritise her own benefits over Leylin’s words. She might not betray him, but there might be instances where she paid lip service to him, using her position and getting overconfident. Hence, it was necessary to pull in and control people who would definitely side with him. In Leylin’s eyes, Nature’s Alliance’s power would expand greatly, and would require his own staff. If not, it was easy to be hoodwinked. After seeing the demise of the Dense Fog Forest, he was sure that Skrill would make a sensible decision. After all, dark Magi were also very adept at controlling emotions!
A few days later, rumours had begun to spread around the Twilight Zone.
The rumours claimed that the guild leader of the Dense Fog Forest longed for the resources held by the Nature’s Alliance and the other small-scale guilds, and had been plotting to absorb them on the sly. There was even news that the Dense Fog Forest wanted to openly rob and murder the guild leader of the Nature’s Alliance!
Even though the assassination was not successful, there were rumours about both Celine and the Nature’s Alliance honorary professor, Leylin, being seriously injured.
These rumours first started spreading within a small circle of Magi, but very soon more people came to know about them. What was stranger about this situation was that the Dense Fog Forest had not sent anyone to refute the rumours, but had instead added fuel to the fire.
The largest propagator would reap the most benefits! Even though medium-scale guilds or even large-scale guilds had done the same, it was rare to see such unfiltered, unsightly tactics like those of the Dense Fog Forest.
Immediately all small-scale guilds of the Eastern Twilight Zone became cautious and distanced themselves from the Nature’s Alliance.
At the narrow valley behind a big waterfall, Nature’s Alliance’s
headquarters.
Celine looked inside the laboratory within a large icy mountain that was a short distance away and sighed. 
Upon returning to Nature’s Alliance’s, Leylin had practically stayed in the laboratory the entire time.
“I need time to heal! Remember, whatever the matter may be, don’t disturb me!”
That was Leylin’s words then, but the cold icy look within his eyes had caused Celine to be even more fearful. 
Obviously, Celine had instructed the release of the rumours within the Twilight Zone as to ensure that the Dense Fog Forest would have some reservations before making their next move. 
However, Dense Fog Forest’s silence was not expected, and this made Celine’s heart very heavy. 
In these kinds of situations, the natural thing to do would be to first flare up and then to maintain silence.
“I hope Leylin can recover soon!” 
Celine’s eyes revealed a sense of worry. 
At this point in time, Leylin was the only person she could depend on. 
At this moment, within the laboratory that had already transformed into an icy mountain, Leylin seemed to have been leisurely observing his palm. 
On his palm that was as white as jade there appeared to be a glowing white layer radiating from it. 
“Frost!” Leylin gently recited an ancient spell in the Byron language. 
*Whoosh!*
A cold wind whistled, and many snowflakes rotated on his palm and formed a small frost tornado. 
“I can’t believe that after the frost had taken effect, not only has my sea of consciousness fully healed, a power within in my body
regarding an ability related to frost energy has also been awakened!"
Leylin casually toyed with the mini frost tornado on his palm, his eyes revealed that he seemed to be distracted.
In his mind, his rejuvenated body had received a set of data from the A.I. Chip.

[Leylin Farlier. Rank 2 Warlock, Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Strength: 21.1, Agility: 14.4, Vitality: 27.9, Spiritual force: 104.3, Magic power: 104 (magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force)] [Beep! A new innate talent has been created within the Host’s body, transferring data]
The A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.

[Host’s innate spell: Increase in affinity and control of frost energy particles. Reduction by 40 degrees of frost related attacks! Ability to manipulate frost energy in a small area!]
This is similar to having a new innate spell, even though it is only rank 1.

“No! That’s not all!” Leylin immediately ordered the A.I Chip to show his graph on elemental capabilities.
In fact, everyone has an affinity with various element types, only that it is extremely small and almost negligible.
Talented acolytes had affinity with various element types far greater than that of the normal levels, at least 50 times and above, and that was also the Magi world’s official levels.
Originally, Leylin had the most affinity with the darkness element type followed by the fire type, and then the plant type which was such a small amount that it could be ignored. With regards to his affinity with the other elemental types, they were so minute that it could only be represented in decimal points.
As for now, the graph representing Leylin’s elemental affinities had experienced minor changes.
The darkness element type still had the longest bar, and even
exceeded that of previous levels. This strengthening of Leylin’s innate gift could be attributed to the numerous triggering of Leylin’s bloodline, and because he chose to cultivate in the darkness element. Thus, he obtained an increase in the element, which was a lot higher than that of other elements, even exceeding that of the total of the remaining elements.
The next highest ranked element Leylin had an affinity with is that of the red bar that represented the fire element, which had also experienced an increase, though of a smaller magnitude.
After the fire element, was that of the green bar representing the plant element type. It was extremely short, indicating that Leylin’s innate gift in this area was not as developed as the other elements.
After this, there was an additional bar.
It was a shade of pale blue, representing the element pertaining to freezing, frost, and ice.
Originally, the affinity levels were extremely low, to the point that the A.I. Chip did not represent it in the histogram. However, now the frost element type had obviously obtained a large-scale increase.
Under the detection of the A.I. Chip, Leylin now possessed an innate talent in the frost elemental affinity!
“So, this is the way to increase elemental affinity after birth…”
Leylin sighed deeply: “What a pity. This is not of any use to me anymore.”
The elemental affinity typically represented the path a Magi took.
When Leylin was still a rank 1 Magus, he had already chosen the darkness elemental particle type to develop in, even choosing to convert his elemental essence in it.
This was the most sensible decision because the darkness type had the highest elemental affinity, which meant that the results it could produce along this path would be the greatest!
Hence, he was currently not able to change his elemental type, nor
wished to change it. Furthermore, his innate ability with the frost elemental type was too low, and could not even measure up to that of the plant type! To have an insignificant increase of innate ability was of little value!

“However, this can be something worth thinking about!” Leylin stroked his chin, and appeared to be in deep in thought. Since the elemental affinity type could be changed and influenced by skills acquired after birth, what about that of the spiritual aptitude?

Honestly, compared to the newly increased frost elemental affinity, Leylin would much rather have hoped for an increase in spiritual aptitude. His spiritual aptitude had been examined when he first entered the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy; it was of the most common grade 3 aptitude. Amongst the many acolytes this is considered as a medium level!

After his bloodline as a Warlock had experienced numerous advancement, upon the A.I. Chip’s re-examination, his spiritual aptitude had now received a boost, and was now considered a good level within that of the other grade 3 aptitudes. However, it was still far from enough.

Compared to geniuses with grade 5 aptitudes, Leylin knew that he still had a long way to go. If not for the help of the A.I. Chip, the support of large doses of potions, and the good fortune of acquiring the bloodline Warlock heritage, he would not know where he would have been now.

As a result, he had been continuously searching for the easiest ways to alter his spiritual aptitude. However, these methods were rarely seen in the Magi world. There were probably ways to increase one’s elemental affinity, but with regards to spiritual aptitude. Its involvement with many other
aspects and its intangibility, made it difficult to conjecture. At most, only a handful of Magi who were skilled in high-grade meditation techniques could have, when promoted to a new level, forcefully increase their spiritual aptitudes by a small amount. At this moment, Leylin involuntarily laughed.

“Perhaps I was too greedy. The spiritual aptitude involves the spirit. I had not been as in-depth in my previous research, and am now lacking in skills as well. After I get promoted to a Warlock of a higher rank, and have commenced discussions with a few other higher ranked Magi, perhaps I would be able to find solutions to rectify problems of this nature!”
Leylin thought to himself.

“Regards this the frost innate spell…” He glanced at the pale blue bar chart again, “I can only put it aside for now!”
However, in his heart, he had already been making plans. For the innate ability he had in the frost element type, perhaps in the future this gift would be useful, in particular when he would decide to explore the Icy World or when side effects from the removal of his Warlock bloodline. These abnormal changes had been caused by the radiation from the Icy World and might not be that simple an affair after all.

“No matter what, being able to increase an area of ability, albeit not being able to raise it any further in the future is still pretty good!”
Leylin opened his eyes and his face revealed a smile.

“Furthermore, what’s most important is still this!”
Rays of silver spiritual forces radiated from Leylin’s eyes into the frost tornado within his hands.

*Whoosh*
Together with the rapid wind movements, the frost tornado’s physical form expanded multiple times, and the edges of the spiral formed sharp knife blades.
The surrounding areas were seemingly frozen as pressure radiated
“Finally, I’ve managed to recover all my abilities as a rank 2 Magus!”

Leylin’s smile became bigger. Having recovered his peak strength from when he was on the south coast, and having removed the emotional instability of his bloodline, the power he now possessed was greater than ever before.

In actual fact, on the night of his return to the Nature’s Alliance headquarters, Leylin had used the runes that the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor was carrying on its back and had made a mark of the frost bloodline!

Furthermore, Leylin had secretly left Nature’s Alliance headquarters and had chosen a safe place to practice the defrosting process.

With regards to his personal safety, Leylin had never liked or wished to depend on others. He had left for treatment, and had not allowed for anyone to discover him. During his defrosting period, he had created a protective ice layer around him, one that was harder than steel, and hence could have assured his own safety.

Furthermore, under Leylin’s deliberate control, the entire thawing process was extremely fast. It took just one night for him to have solved the problem.

Under Leylin’s meticulous calculations, it was no wonder that he had smoothly restored his original abilities without any big hiccups. The so-called ‘treatment’ here was merely a facade Leylin had let out to lure others into taking the bait.

“It’s about time, I have already ordered Celine to secretly release the news. Through the interrogation these few days, Skril has already given in, and will soon be sent to the committee members of the conference just like that of the crystal ball!”

Leylin’s eyes shined with a tint of deep thought. Imagery evidence could be falsified, but if a witness was present, the Dense Fog
Forest, who was a medium-scale guild, would definitely still be in trouble.
Continuing the trial of the joint conference, the Dense Fog Forest would most likely not be destroyed, but there would be bloodshed. In addition, a decrease in their evaluation was a possible punishment, which would be a big loss in benefits!

Needless to say, the “seriously injured” Leylin was here too!

Since there was so much hatred, the only way to end this would be through complete destruction, was something that the other party could not tolerate.

Thus, they would take advantage of Leylin being in the midst of recovery by gathering all their manpower, and destroy the Nature’s Alliance!

This was what Leylin also hoped for.

“I had specially given him a few days to rally his men. I hope he doesn’t let me down!” Leylin sneered.

Shortly after, he turned and looked towards the canyon’s exit.

“Coming!”

At this moment, Magi wearing black Chinese-styled gowns stood in a circle outside the Canyon, silently crowding around several figures in the middle.

The leader of the group, a middle-aged man with a face worthy of veneration, was the escaped guild leader of the Dense Fog Forest.

“Tsk Tsk! Gus, you really should be embarrassed, being reduced to this miserable state after getting injured from an honorary professor
in a small-scaled guild!”

So ‘Gus’ was his real name, and the previously used name, ‘Xerxes,’ was fake!

Another man who stood tall beside Gus, was an elderly man in his 50s or 60s. He had wrinkles all over his face. With his slanted nose, sharp, narrow pairs of eyes, it made him look even more sinister than Gus.

Even as he mocked Gus, no anger was seen in the eyes of the surrounding Magi from the Dense Fog Forest, as if they never heard what was said.

The reason for their change in attitude was that this old man was radiating huge waves of energy.

Among the emptiness in the middle of the circle formed by the old men, radiations of spiritual force could be observed. Impressively, it was the strength of a powerful peak rank one Magus!

“If you had been me, the result would not have been any better!”

Gus sighed in the face of mockery, but deep down, was still fearful of Leylin’s strength.

Having profound knowledge of Gus’ strength, the old man turned solemn too; “If Leylin has already recovered from his injuries, then I want twice the compensation!”

“If it’s doubled, let it be doubled!” Gus promised immediately with clenched teeth.

“I have actually used an ancient ‘light protector’ rune. That’s the reason why I could recover fast in such a short period of time. The other party could not possibly have such a thing…”

This was the confidence Gus had, as he hailed from a medium-scaled guild. To him, as a small-scaled guild, it was impossible for Nature’s Alliance to have such an asset.

“Je Je! You’re right. Besides, they are at most at the same level with you, how can they stop us two on their own?”

The old man chuckled.
“My Lord guild leader! The broken signal has been repaired!” At this moment, a semi-converted elemental Magus walks over and spoke to Gus.

“Great! Attack immediately! I want the Nature’s Alliance guild removed entirely from the Twilight Zone!”

A malevolent look swept across Gus’ face, and he suddenly raised his hand.

More than a dozen of different coloured bright lights fluttered out of the Canyon. Unexpectedly, each one was a rank one Magus!

As a medium-scaled guild, it was not a big problem if the Dense Fog Forest nurtured or recruited official Magi. Considering the long, accumulated history of the more than 30 Magi.

This time, Gus planned to use a large number forces from his guild.

*Bang!*

More than a dozen brilliant lights rushed to the entrance of the canyon, but were immediately stopped by a membrane formed from a defensive layer of light.

“It’s just defensive formation made by an insignificant small-scaled guild! Destroy it!”

From the layer of bright light, a screeching sound was heard and black light converged, forming the shape of a large axe. The head of the axe even had strong black iron chains coiled around it which were threads of bright, cold and threatening light.

*Ka Cha!*

The giant hatchet ruthlessly struck!

In the wake of the loud strike, the entire membrane of light fell apart, disintegrating and dispersing into small specks of light that gradually darkened.

“Enemy Attacking!”

As an official Magus, Celine was the first to react. Her face turned deathly pale and a gush of cold wind sent her to the entrance of the experiment lab within the icy mountain.
*Shaaa!* The black light flashed past, a mole no smaller than the size of a young boy crawled out, his two long, grizzly beards dragging across the floor.

“This Celine! Causing trouble this time! If I am still alive later, you’ll have to send me 10 times as many berries as before!”

The mole stroked his beard, with an unwilling look on his face.

“Damn it! If it wasn’t for the deal that I made with that stupid old man at that time, I wouldn’t have to be stuck here defending his place!”

“All of the acolytes, meet me here now!”

Celine did not even have the time to force a smile, let alone talk to the mole. She just communicated directly with the rest of the acolytes in the guild.

She was extremely sure that the attack this time around was from the Dense Fog Forest’s men!

In fact, during a war between the official Magi, acolytes were just cannon fodder! By sending them out was only a disgrace, and even causing needless casualties.

Currently, they had a slim chance of survival!

Celine’s eyes flashed with a tinge of hope, and started shouting towards the laboratory, “My Lord Leylin! It is the Magi of the Dense Fog Forest! They have violated the rules of the joint conference and launched an attack on our guild!”

But what took with Celine by surprise even more than the sudden attack was the fact that there was no reply from inside.

Celine repeated the message thrice, and it was only after she could not wait any longer and broke the layer of ice, that Leylin’s voice responded. ”I’m still in the midst of recovering! If this gets interrupted, I’m afraid that there will be immediate repercussions….”

“How much longer do you need?” Celine clasped onto her handkerchief tightly.
“Ten minutes!” After some silence, Leylin’s voice was heard again. “Alright! I will fight for you during this period of time!” Celine took a deep breath towards the acolyte that was previously there and cleared her throat. “As the guild leader, I command you to protect this place at all costs! It might be hard to you, but with the help of spell formations, I need you to persevere just for ten minutes! “Yes, my Lord! We will fight to the end!” After being distracted for a moment, the acolytes below started an uproar one after another, Obo and Ilya were among those acolytes. It was obvious and they clearly understood what the future had in store for them if their guild was defeated today. “That’s great! Let’s activate it! Grandpa Cedric!!” Celine took a deep breath. “Okay, alright! I can’t stand youngsters like you all!” the mole shook his head and suddenly plopped to the ground! In some instant, black rays of light spread out, forming a big spell formation runes on the ground. A barrier of light rose and combined with the original spell formation, engulfing Leylin and the experiment lab within. *Boom! Blast!* At this moment, a group of enemy Magi arrived at the scene, and the acolytes that were not able to get into the barrier in time were severely injured. A small boy was cut in half by a blade of light. His upper torso was still wailing as he tried to breathe. Another female acolyte, who was decimated into a pool of blood by a green sphere that fell from the sky, did not even had time make a sound. More and more acolytes were instantly buried to death, by huge broken structure of the building that was shattered by magic spells, also without being able to make any sound.
As Celine looked at the devastating scene in front of her, she was unable to control herself and broke down into tears. They were the future potential Magi of Nature’s Alliance, where her sweat and blood were poured in.

“I found it! It’s here!”

This new barrier of light, which was visibly thicker and stronger than the ones before, caught the attention of the enemy Magi quickly. Very soon, more than a dozen rays of light enveloped the entire place, creating faint shadows in the middle.

*Clang!* Celine threw a communication device on the ground.

“The signal is disrupted! Hold on!”

She placed her palm on the barrier, as a huge wave of spiritual force and magical power was poured forth and injected into the barrier.

The rest of the acolytes followed suit, though their spiritual powers were very weak. With a mere touch, most of the acolytes’ faces turned pale, as though they had been beaten up by a large hammer.

*Boom!*

Both sides did not exchange many words, and more than a dozen colourful energy beams bombarded the spell formation.

*Bang!* Numerous acolytes lay paralyzed on the floor, most of them having fainted. Celine could barely even stand up straight and was on the verge of collapsing.

Upon seeing two shadows behind the numerous Magi, Celine’s expression was filled with despair.

At this time, it has not even been half the time that Leylin had requested. Fighting against the two peak rank one Magi had made Celine lose all hope and strength to fight back.

In the laboratory behind Celine, Leylin quietly waited, a cold and detached expression on his face…

“It should be roughly about now, right?” He muttered.

In fact, Leylin could have fought back, but he had waited until the
Nature’s Alliance had racked up a disastrous amount of casualty… As for the dead acolytes, they did not have much importance to Leylin, and their deaths weighed lighter than specks of dust in his heart. As long as the opponent left irrefutable evidence of an attack, what were the deaths of a few acolytes? Also, these acolytes were under Celine’s guidance. If he really wanted to gain complete control of the Nature’s Alliance, more blood would have to be shed! Now, however, it was time. Gus and the rest of them had done so much damage to the Nature’s Alliance that even if Leylin were to kill them all, it could be reasoned as self-defense. This excuse may not be very good, but it was definitely better than having none! The acolytes that have died and the data that have been perished “Magus Gus! Why? Just why?” Celine retracted her hands and looked at the barrier which was damaged by the combined attacks of the enemy. The guardian animal too was severely injured as it spat out blood, smiling bitterly. “Benefits! Naturally, everything is for our own benefits!” Gus’ voice was ice cold, as if not having any of the emotions that a normal person would have. He had also turned a blind eye to Celine’s charms. “You hindered my path, and I just want to settle the dispute, that’s all!”
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“W hat gains are you referring to? I can give them up straight away!”
There was a glint in Celine’s eyes…
“This is your final chance! If this happened before the joint conference, I might have given it a thought, but now…”
Gus shook his head and said, “There is no further need for you to stall for time! There has been no Magus who has ever been able to survive after being hit by my Fog Giant’s self-detonation. Even if Leylin manages to survive the blow, he’s probably incapacitated unable to move a single muscle.”
Celine felt complete despair as her last hope was shattered.
“Get on with it!” She closed her eyes and exposed her pale neck.
“Where is Skrill?” Gus asked at the end while he formed a ball of distortion-filled with destructive energy.
“I have no idea. Leylin personally carried out the interrogation!”
“Then you are no longer of use!”
The indifferent Gus released the ball of distortion in his hands.
*Pu!* A layer of a black scaly shield appeared out of nowhere in front of Celine, and it managed to block the explosion from the attack.
After the smoke dissipated, a black-robed Magus had already appeared in front of Celine.
“Leylin!” Gus’ eyes widened in fear as he fearfully uttered the name.
“Tell me! How do you guys want to die?” The corners of Leylin’s lips curled into a vibrant smile.

“Do it!”

Gus’ face flushed red as he shouted.

“Double the amount! Bear in mind that it is double the amount!”

The old man with a hawk nose beside him released large amounts of elemental rings, forming a brass ring with mysterious runes on the surface.

While executing this attack, he did not forget to turn back and remind Gus about his remuneration.

Grey mist started to form immediately and the Fog Giant from their previous encounter appeared once again. Unlike the last time, rays of light which resembled starlight started to emerge from every Magus who was present and connected to the body of the giant, making the giant’s aura rise to a frightening level.

The brass ring was thrown around the waist of the giant and it strapped tightly around it in that instant.

“Roar!”

The giant let out a devastating roar. While its lower body was shrinking non-stop, the mist on its upper body started to aggregate once again, and formed a body of muscle with a toughness that was as strong as granite.

“A combination spell!”

Celine, who was behind Leylin, couldn’t help but to let out a sound at the sight. Even her breathing began to get rough.

“The opposing side has two peak rank 1 Magi, along with ten or so Magi elders. Meanwhile, Leylin…”

Celine had no time to process the thoughts in her head before her jaw dropped at the sight.

Silver!

A faint sliver of light started to appear on Leylin’s body.

At this moment, even the air seemed to be frozen. An oppressive
pressure could be felt descending onto the battlefield.

“Materialised spiritual force! A rank 2 Magus!”
The hawk-nosed old man made a strange sound. Despite bleeding profusely from his mouth and nose, the old man started to recall his spells, risking recoil in doing so while he retreated in haste.

It was a pity that this was all too late!
A pillar of silver light streaked across the sky and arrived at the top of the old man’s head.

“No!” The old man exclaimed in anger, and an incomplete protection ruin on his neck exploded, resulting in an inferno of crimson flames.

Following that, the old man stopped in his tracks for a moment and nearly fell to the ground.
He had obviously felt the peak elemental spiritual force residing in the flames being instantly destroyed by the silver materialised spiritual force when the two forces collided.

As the spiritual force being manipulated was dispelled, the inferno of crimson flames lost sight of its target and began spreading to the surroundings.
The silver spiritual force soon descended down on its target. It formed a silver cross-shaped sword after having elongated and pierced the old man in the chest.

*Drip! Drip!*
The old man was bleeding profusely and droplets of blood could be seen dripping onto the ground. He tried humming, but no energy particles were triggered.

The solidified spiritual force of a rank 2 Magus far surpassed the spiritual force of an converted Magus in terms of quality. The spiritual force residing inside the old man’s consciousness was no match for the silver spiritual force and was completely locked down with a single hit.

This rationale was very similar to what had happened to Leylin,
when he had been confined by the Gargamel on the mountain of white bones. After Leylin had completely recovered his rank 2 Magus power, even a peak rank 1 Magus was nothing more than a slightly stronger ant in Leylin’s eyes.

“He…! He…! He…!”

The sight had the Magi from the Dense Fog Forest at a loss. With just one single blow, the peak rank 1 Magus was on the verge of death! They had only heard of this kind of terrifying power in legends.

Gus’ face started to turn pale from despair before it finally became a grim.

“Roar!” Under his manipulation, the gigantic Fog Giant ferociously charged in Leylin’s direction.

Leylin started to slowly open an ancient scroll in his hands which was radiating with destructive energy that could be felt in the surroundings.

“Scorching Touch!” A bunch of red powder started to spill out, and two long and narrow energy beams which carried the destructive force of a rank 2 spell shot out from Leylin’s hands. The fog giant was immediately scorched and two large holes were created from the attack.

*Boom!* A large amount of the mist started to dissipate and all the Magi who were connected to the mist giant started to collapse to the ground.

In the blink of an eye, Leylin appeared in front of Gus.

*Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! Zoom!* While he was moving, several snow-white ice arrows were abruptly shot out.

*Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! Zoom!* Confronted with the might of the arrows, the innate defensive spell formations of rank 1 Magi were shredded easily like pieces of
paper. The heads of numerous Magi exploded, similar to watermelons exploding.
“You…”
At the sight of this unbearable scenario, even Gus, who was preparing a spell, could not help but feel anger and a sense of despair.
The number of rank 1 Magi that had died constituted almost half of the Dense Fog Forest’s forces. All his efforts to accumulate this power all these years had gone down the drain as he lost 70 to 80% of his forces.
But at this moment, Gus had no time to think about this as Leylin arrived in front of him.
“Protection of Andes!” Gus shouted loudly and a colony of black ants emerged from his face, clothes, shoes and all over his body and formed a peculiar-looking black shield.
“A futile effort!” Leylin looked indifferent and raised his right hand.
A layer of black rays started to gather around his palm and formed a bunch of black scales. “Kemoyin’s Scale! Partial Snake Transformation!”
*Po!*
Leylin’s palms were filled with an enormous amount of energy which penetrated the shield. The colony of ants on the shield let out a shrill sound as they tried to gnaw at the black scales, but it was to no avail.
“Your last resort is just a scroll engraved by a rank 2 Magus? How disappointing!”
The silver ray of light in Leylin’s eyes started to shine brightly, and with his right hand, he grabbed Gus’ wrist.
*Pak!* The scroll, which was already triggered halfway, suddenly lost all its luster and revealed its true appearance of what seemed to be a broken piece of goatskin paper as it fell to the ground.
“Do you have any last words?” Leylin asked Gus as he sealed his spiritual force. “You will be punished by the joint conference. I swear on that!” Gus’ eyes turned red. *Pak!* After which, his brain exploded, white brain juices, blood, and fluids spurting everywhere. “Just this? How pointless!” Leylin retracted his right hand. He appeared in front of the hawk-nosed old man and placed his hands on the head of an old man who was on the verge of death. “Do you choose death or subservience”? The old man who was bleeding profusely and nearing death struggled to open his mouth. “I… I’m willing to be subservient to you, my lord!” “Set a pact now and surrender a strand of your spirit source, or else you will end up like the others!” The tone of Leylin’s voice was very indifferent, and the pile of corpses surrounding him made the old man have no thoughts of defying the order. “I, Iren, am willing to serve under your command and become your most humble servant! Your future commands shall be my eternal mission!” Even with his eyes blurred with tears, the old man still struggled to speak. A fluctuating thread from the abyss was established between the two. “Very good!” Leylin recalled the silver spiritual force that was restricting the old man. “My lord!” Iren kneeled down to give his regards, the wounds on his body already beginning to heal on their own. He had been restricted by Leylin and lost his ability to recover. Once he was freed from the silver spiritual force that was
restricting him, there were far too many ways for Magi to heal themselves.

“Please accept your humble servant’s loyalty!” Although he had regained his freedom, the old man Iren had no desire to fight against Leylin as he had been deterred by Leylin’s actions.

With Iren’s words, a glowing spirit source floated out of his forehead and flew to Leylin’s hands.

After losing his spiritual source, Iren’s face turned pale and beads of sweat could be seen dripping down.

Leylin for his part kept the spirit source carefully.

A Magus’ spirit source was very important to them, and if Leylin were to destroy the source in his hands, the old man would suffer a severe blow and might even die straight away. The best-case scenario would be for him to have a mental breakdown.

It could be said that once Leylin had the spirit source, it was akin to him holding the old man’s fate in his hands.

“All good and done!” Leylin clapped his hands.

This kind of one-sided process and astonishing means from Leylin had made it difficult for Celine to process anything.

“My lord! You….” Celine had no idea of what to say.

“Have you … ascended to rank 2?” She said this carefully after deliberating over it for a while.

“Yes!” Leylin happily smiled “The injury I suffered has, instead, made me break through the restraints to my meditation technique and allowed me to rise to the realm of rank 2.”

Celine did not have the courage to continue probing despite knowing it was not the truth.

A rank 2 Magus! This was already a power that belonged to large-scale guilds! Facing this insurmountable gap in power, Celine could only accept whatever Leylin had to say.

“Wake those acolytes up and follow me!”

Leylin pointed to a few of the acolytes who were lying on the
ground that included Obo and Ilya.
“Hm? What for?” Celine’s face was filled with doubts.
“Naturally, it will be to retaliate!”
Leylin’s face broke into a cold smile, “Since the opposing party has been so eager to find us, how can we not repay what they have done?”
“But…. The joint conference….”
Celine had only spoken a few words, but she decided to swallow the rest. At this moment, she had no other choice.
My Lord! That’s the Dense Fog Forest’s headquarters!”

Old man Iren pointed to a fog-shrouded forest in the middle of the basin, with a look of respect on his face. Currently, Iren was completely submissive to Leylin and existed as his servant. Leylin walked behind him with conflicted feelings. Together with Obo, Ilya, and the other rank 3 acolytes, their faces were red with emotions.

Rank 2 Magus! Their famed professor was actually a rank 2 noble Magus who actually defeated a lot of enemies with just one blow! They were proud of this kind of glory.

“The Dense Fog Forest is still a medium-scale guild, with an extremely strong Magi formation barrier. With several protected and contracted beings as the first line of defense, does this not mean that we are…”

Iren had revealed all of Gus’ defensive lines backhandedly.

“We do not need anything! I alone am sufficient. All of you keep in mind, without my orders, no one is allowed to step into the basin!” Leylin’s face was stern. After which, he transformed into a gust of wind and disappeared in mid-air.

*Ssiii*

A sound could be heard as he travelled. Celine and the rest saw an illusory shadow of a snake appearing in mid-air. The huge snake
forcefully appeared and seemed to transform into the face of a terrifying devil. The shape of the devil’s face seemed to resemble Leylin. After half an hour passed they had obtained permission to enter the Dense Fog Forest, and they saw huge amounts of rotten corpses! A few huge high-energy beings whose size resembled small mountains could also be seen dead on the floor, their corpses, not yet fully decomposed, had emitted an unpleasant smell. “Your task is to completely search this area, and take away any resources that are of value!” Leylin slowly landed on the corpse of a huge beast. That scene had made many absolutely horrified. “Yes! Yes, My Lord!” Initially, Celine had doubts over why Leylin had wanted to bring a batch of acolytes over. However, now she fully understood his intentions.

……

After having searched the Dense Fog Forest, Leylin had arrived near the premises of the headquarters of the Eight-Clawed Spider guild. This time around, Skrill appeared beside him. If Leylin could subdue even Iren, naturally Skrill was not a big issue. “Go! Announce that the Eight-Clawed Spider will be disbanded! And that all the Magi shall join Nature’s Alliance!” Leylin ordered Skrill. “As you wish, my Lord!” Skrill bowed to Leylin, evidently afraid of him. His fear was to the extent that he was willing to accept such orders. With regards to the subsidiary guilds of the Dense Fog Forest,
Leylin did not intend to exterminate all of them fully. In any case, since they had no chance of knowing the Icy World’s secret, it would be for the best to subdue all of them to increase Nature’s Alliance’s strength. Furthermore, all of the Dense Fog Forest Magi had been exterminated without any exceptions under Leylin’s rank 2 Magi spell that covered a vast area. There was no longer any living beings within the entire basin. It could be said that the Dense Fog Forest guild had disappeared from the face of the earth. Looking at the uproar from the guild headquarters, together with Iren and the people that went forth to subdue them, Leylin smiled icily. “Next, perhaps it’s time for the rank 2 Magi?” How long had it been since such a large-scale attack, and such a vile way of exterminating an entire guild, had happened in the entire eastern Twilight Zone? No matter how dim-witted the large-scale guilds were, they would have to make a stand. Moreover, according to the latest news, the dark elven empire was starting to become restless, and it was also nearing the time when the darkness creature horde beyond the Twilight Zone was approaching. It was precisely during this period of time where Magi were supposed to collaborate that Nature’s Alliance’s move could be said to be going against the tide. “So what?” Leylin’s face revealed a smile that seemed to suggest that he did not care, “It is precisely because of this that I am making a move now!” “The combining of forces to deal with external forces not only restricts the Nature’s Alliance but all the other large-scale guilds as well!” “Would they be willing to, under these conditions, lose a rank 2
Magus? How can the strength associated with a medium-scale guild measure up to a newly promoted rank 2 Magus? Furthermore, we still possess sufficient evidence to prove that the Dense Fog Forest had started the fight first, and had even encroached into our headquarters and caused a large number of casualties…”

With strength and evidence, even large-scale guilds would not act recklessly.

With regards to this, Leylin understood the logic very clearly.

After 10 minutes or so, Skrill and Iren returned.

“My Lord! The Eight-Clawed Spider guild has officially disbanded. This is our high-grade meditation technique, Abyssal Breath!”

Skrill respectfully half-knelt and passed a black crystal wand to Leylin.

“Mm. Well done!” Leylin took the wand gently, with a thread of his silver spiritual force reaching into it.

Increasing the power of Nature’s Alliance was only part of the reason why Leylin had destroyed the guilds. The main objective behind his actions was actually to collect the high-grade meditation techniques!

As time passed, Leylin frowned, which caused Skrill to start trembling.

“Only rank 3?” Leylin sighed. The Eight-Clawed Spider guild’s meditation technique had the same flaws as Celine’s Crystal Mask. Not only was it hard to develop, it was only rank 3.

This implied that the Magi from the Eight-Clawed Spider guild could at most be promoted to rank 3, and not beyond.

“I, your subordinate, am ashamed! Our high-grade meditation technique does only have 3 levels! Personally, I have been stuck at rank 1, and can only use the irrigation of the abyss’ strength…”

Skrill lowered his head and quickly explained.

“Of course, I know!” Leylin knew that this Abyssal Breath mostly used the strength of the abyss to continuously change the body to
adjust to a physical state more fitting to the abyss. Skrill’s half-human half-spider appearance was the way it was due to the imitation of a special being from the abyss.
And this is merely rank 1 of the Abyssal Breath. According to the introduction of the meditation technique and the A.I. Chip’s deductions, if one were to promote the meditation technique to its highest level, one would be able to return to their original state and have the physical appearance of a normal person. Only then would the Magus, who had been entirely transformed by the abyss, be known as the spawn of the abyss!
But of course, these were only deductions made by the A.I Chip. According to Leylin’s estimations, to reach the state of the abyss’ spawn, one would have to develop the Abyssal Breath higher than rank 5.
Honestly, one could not be sure whether the high-grade meditation technique even had a rank 5.
“However, after all, this is a high-grade meditation technique and is a grade higher than the Crystal Mask. This can improve the A.I. Chip’s meditation techniques information database!”
Leylin kept the black crystal wand.
Because many ancient Magi were passionate about researching about all living beings in the world, they looked for patterns, obtained strength, and frequently interacted with beings of different realms. Hence, many ancient meditation techniques had a strong and strange aura.
With respect to the Abyssal Breath, Leylin estimated that it had a deep relationship with the abyssal world, and could even have been released by a strong and powerful being living within the abyss.
“Dense Fog Forest has other auxiliary guilds, namely 3 other small-scale guilds, and 15 unrated guilds. All of you shall break into 3 groups, Iren and Skrill will lead 2 groups to sweep the unrated guilds while I will be in charge of the small-scale guilds!”
Leylin immediately gave out his orders. “As you wish, My Lord!” the surrounding Magi all bowed with respect.
Leylin nodded. Iren was a peak rank one magus, and Skrill was a semi-converted elemental Magus. To put them in charge to deal with the unrated guilds was a terrifying force to be reckoned with. The unrated guilds did not stand a chance with the teams led by the two of them.
Furthermore, upon performing this deed, these newly subdued Magi would have no way out, and would only be able to come under Leylin’s wings.

……

Several days later, explosive news spread across the entire Eastern Twilight Zone that caused a sensation in the Magi world, and even continued to spread in the 4 other zones. After having existed for a few hundred thousand years, large amounts of contracted guardian beasts, countless official Magi, and even a peak rank 1 Magus that oversaw a medium-scale guild, the Dense Fog Forest, were entirely destroyed!
The one responsible for it was actually Nature’s Alliance! This news had revealed that the honorary professor of Nature’s Alliance had made a breakthrough to rank 2!
A peak rank 1 Magus was considered as a large power, while a rank 2 Magus was the goal of many official Magi, which were also known as the elites of the human forces!
Typically, a rank 2 Magi would only appear in large-scale guilds. The presence of the one or two old and experienced rank 2 Magi was that of the trump card of these guilds.
Nature’s Alliance, on the other hand, was only a small-scale guild! At this point in time, the entire eastern Twilight Zone was shocked.
Under Leylin’s control, the actions of Nature’s Alliance went extremely smoothly. Not only did Nature’s Alliance attack all of the Dense Fog Forest’s auxiliary guilds and wiped out all traces of its history, many Magi had joined Nature’s Alliance and enhanced its strength, such that it had been promoted to a medium-scale guild! These were all within Leylin’s expectations. Moreover, the taking over of the Dense Fog Forest’s resources was also proceeding smoothly. This, of course, was not in accordance with the rules set by the council members and had sparked their displeasure. However, under Leylin’s suppression, Nature’s Alliance continued doing whatever they wanted to without any hesitation. The guild sent out many troops and their strength increased day after day. With regards to small matters like the strength of the guild, Leylin could not be bothered to oversee them and would casually instruct his acolytes to handle them. The newly-joined Magi that were now part of Nature’s Alliance were all given roles as professors or guest professors, but in actual fact, they would only listen to Leylin’s bidding. Celine’s powers were suppressed to the maximum, but she could only force a smile, and could not complain much. Leylin had suddenly been promoted to a rank 2 Magi, and just his strength alone would make Celine’s previous plans prove futile. Furthermore, in terms of trickery, back in the southern coast the underhanded means that Leylin had employed did not pale in comparison to that Celine’s. Under these conditions, Celine could only give up. Due to her special status, other official Magi would still be slightly respectful towards her and would not reject her requests towards small matters. Furthermore, these Magi were still under Nature’s Alliance, even if
only in name, which gave Celine some comfort.
NATURE’S ALLIANCE HEADQUARTERS.

The headquarters had now undergone renovations. The reconstruction had started from the bottom, with magic spells fixed up and the acolytes who had died in battle buried. Powerful energy fluctuations were concealed within these few building structures. They were like multiple stars aiming to bring out the moon, crowding around a laboratory right in the centre. Whether it was the original acolytes of Nature’s Alliance or the newly-joined Magi, they would always unconsciously slow their footsteps when they passed by and exhibit their respect.

In the middle of the laboratory, Leylin stood by a table, deep in thought while gazing at the few items on the silver desk. These ten or so items were very simple. There were green leaves, red earrings, a short brown rod, and even the black crystals that Skrill had previously given him. The silver surface of the table was made using a special alloy. It was incomparably hard and had a high resistance against specific magic experiments. Hence, it was widely used in this area. Currently, the shining, sparkling metallic surface reflected Leylin’s troubled expression. These were naturally the numerous high-grade meditation techniques Leylin had forcefully obtained.

Though the Twilight Zone had obtained a larger number of
complete inheritances from the ancient Magi, high-grade meditation techniques weren’t anything common. Some unrated guilds only had the simplified versions that had been altered based on incomplete high-grade meditation techniques, which were completely useless to Leylin.

There were also a few guilds who had the same high-grade meditation technique as the Dense Fog Forest. However, they only had the first or second levels, and these were slightly modified. Leylin could immediately recognise this. These guilds must have been the Magi guilds that had split up from the original Dense Fog Forest.

This was not uncommon. It was not unusual for Magi in the Twilight Zone to split up based on differences in opinion while still having a good relation with the original guild. This was somewhat similar to a branch of the original guild. Hence, though Leylin had technically destroyed ten or so guilds, what Leylin actually gathered were only six high-grade meditation techniques.

Of course, the rate of advancing was much higher here than in the south coast, but Leylin was still in a bad mood. This was because out of the six high-grade meditation techniques, there were five that were incomplete! This was not something that could be explained just by the chaos of war. Only after checking some documents regarding this guild did Leylin gather a more reasonable explanation.

In ancient times, the inheritance of high-grade meditation techniques was not open to everyone in one go. Only one or two levels would be passed down at a time, and only after Magi succeeded would they gradually be passed down more. This was to ensure the secrecy of the high-grade inheritances. The other reason was to prevent Magi from seeking instant returns. However, after the fall of the ancient Magi in the final war, there
appeared a huge problem, a discontinuity in the passing down of meditation techniques! The higher-ranked Magi had fallen before they could pass down the other portions of their meditation techniques, which had resulted in the Magi of the Twilight Zone being unable to advance further.

The level of Morning Star Magus was the bare-minimum requirement to participate in the final war, and hence, the high-grade meditation techniques left in the Twilight Zone mostly had two or three levels, and there was a lack of information on the essential later portions.

In ancient times, rank 2 and rank 3 Magi were considered to have just finished their apprenticeships, and as such, they were naturally not required to enter the battle. They had survived and passed down their meditation techniques.

However, it wasn’t as if there were no surprises.

Leylin extended his hand and picked up something like a part of a white bone joint from the table.

Though it had an interesting appearance, this was actually a tool used for storing information. Leylin connected his spiritual force to it and information about a high-grade meditation technique appeared.

Ancient symbols appeared at the beginning of the meditation technique, emitting an ancient aura. There was even the sound of a dragon’s roar.

“Dragon King’s Mystic Might! High-grade meditation technique for Dragon Magi split into four levels: Infant Dragon, Young Dragon, Adult Dragon, Elder Dragon!” Leylin slowly read through the content regarding this high-grade meditation technique.

In ancient times, ‘Magus’ was a term that was inclusive of all powerful beings, whether they were of other races, humans, or even high-energy creatures. As long as they possessed intelligence had strength, and pursued the truth, they could all come under the
umbrella of being a Magus!
This Dragon King’s Mystic Might was obviously a high-grade meditation technique meant for the Dragon race to train in!
“Based on the A.I. Chip’s estimations, as well as a few illustrations from Dragon King’s Mystic Might, creatures of the dragon race, would accelerate their growth rate if they trained in this high-grade meditation technique. They would develop twice as fast as their peers, and would enter the sequence of being a mature dragon earlier…”
Leylin unhurriedly caressed this bone.
This Dragon King’s Mystic Might was what the Dense Fog Forest had in storage, but it was a pity that this was merely a decoration for Dense Fog Forest, as it was comprised of only humans. This was a high-grade meditation that was meant for another race and was unsuitable for the human body. Even Warlocks that had the bloodline of dragons could not do this!
However, after Leylin discovered this Dragon King’s Mystic Might, it was like he had gained a treasure. Though he could not train this technique either, he could see the traces of a new bloodline in this high-grade meditation technique. Similar to the Kemoyin’s Pupil, the Dragon King’s Mystic Might was a high-grade meditation technique that had very stringent requirements in terms of bloodline. It was probably even more strict than the Kemoyin’s Pupil. This would be of immense help to him in completing the next few parts of Kemoyin’s Pupil.
The Kemoyin’s Pupil that Leylin had acquired only had three levels and lacked the most important part, which was a description about the Morning Star Realm at the fourth rank. Dragon King’s Mystic Might could be used to make up for this.
In addition, the other high-grade meditation techniques had their unique features, which could be used to improve the A.I. Chip’s
No matter how different they were, they were high-grade meditation techniques and had to have some similarities. This was what Leylin was going to rely on to complete Kemoyin’s Pupil and Sacred Flame.

“Even so, the last few portions of the Dragon King’s Mystic Might are missing!”

Leylin felt a little regretful.

He still wanted to know what was after the fourth level of the Dragon King’s Mystic Might.

“In ancient tales, after the Elder Dragon were the Ancient Dragons, top creatures that could contend against great rank 5 Magi! And after that, there were the beings that only existed in legends, the Immemorial Dragons! However, the Dragon King’s Mystic Might lacks content after the fourth level.”

Leylin looked at the description of the fourth level of the Dragon King’s Mystic Might. “The Morning Star realm for humans is equivalent to the Elder Dragon in our Dragon race. At this position, the power of domain has penetrated into our bones, and our dragon might have also been developed to the limit. In addition, all our spiritual force, magic power, physical strength and even bloodline will, under influence of some rules, concentrate into ‘point mass’. This point mass is what humans call ‘Morning Star’, and what we call a ‘Dragon Crystal’.”

“So at the Morning Star realm, it is where Magi pathways will become condensed. All creatures of the Magus World at this realm are all the same. Point mass formed from hundreds and thousands of energy all can refine one’s strength. Hence, there is a difference like that between heaven and the earth between Morning Star and rank 3 Magi.”

Leylin gradually understood.

In his mind, the A.I. Chip constantly recorded information
regarding high-grade meditation techniques to fill its database. After goodness knows how long, a prompt from the A.I. Chip appeared in Leylin’s mind. [Beep! Recording of six high-grade meditation techniques complete. Dragon King’s Mystic Might, Abyssal Breath… Completeness of high-grade meditation techniques at 14.7%, beginning to infer actual level of the meditation technique…] Following this, the Magi strength chart in Leylin’s database experienced some changes. On top of the rank 1 and rank 2 Magi, information regarding rank 3 Magi constantly generated. This was the most accurate information the A.I. Chip had gathered after doing simulations with multiple high-grade meditation techniques. [Beep! Requirements to advance from a rank 2 Magus: Spiritual force reaches the boundary of 200, solidification 100%. Paired with the momentum from the essence of the Wisdom Tree, probability of advancing to rank 3: 46.9%.] “I’m a Warlock, so I have an added requirement from my blood. However, my bloodline directly came from a Giant Kemoyin Serpent at the Morning Star, rank 4 level and completely fits the requirements. It even aids me when my rank is too low!” “In addition, having almost a 50% chance is not a low percentage! It’s no wonder Alistair had made his move and did not hesitate to betray his faction!” Leylin touched his chin. The conditions that the A.I. Chip inferred were based on the most regular Magi that trained in high-grade meditation techniques. This meant he was not included in there. “A.I. Chip, if I use myself as a model, what are my chances of advancing to a rank 3 Warlock?” Leylin asked silently. Immediately after, a virtual 3D image that looked similar to Leylin was projected in front of him, and large amounts of information
streaked through.

[Chances of Host body advancing to rank 3 Warlock: 61.72%!]

This was with the added bonus from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Bloodline. It was a matured body that had reached the Morning Star Realm. To break through rank 2, it was still able to provide an impetus.

“Looks like breaking through is not an issue. The most important part is to accumulate more spiritual force!”

Leylin suddenly sighed, looking at his data.


The injury to his sea of consciousness had only recently healed, and during the time where he had solidified his spiritual force, rather than improving, it was already very fortunate that he was able to maintain his strength.

It was for this reason that the numbers for his spiritual force did not rise.

Now, with the repairs to his sea of consciousness completed, his spiritual force could increase once more.

Leylin couldn’t help but ask, “A.I. Chip, based on my current speed, how long will it take me to be able to meet the requirements to advance?”

A few minutes passed, and the A.I. Chip gave an answer. [Host body is estimated to reach the limit after 200 years, 12 days and 13 hours.]

“That long?” Leylin’s eyes widened.

He had increased his lifespan after advancing to become a bloodline Warlock, and after rank 2, he could live past 500 years, but 200 years! That was an extremely long period!
One property of high-grade meditation techniques was that they tended to get harder to cultivate towards higher cultivation levels. Typically, many Magi would not be able to wait for their meditation techniques to be promoted because they tended to die of old age before their meditation techniques could be cultivated to a higher level. This was why Magi were all passionate about collecting data since they wanted to increase the pace of the cultivation of their meditation techniques.

“Hu…” Leylin let out a long breath. “Looks like it is imperative that I use potions or other methods to hasten the pace of the increase in the level of my meditation cultivation. 200 years is way too long!”

There were many differences between the resources of the Twilight Zone and of the south coast; perhaps it would be possible to find spiritual force potions suitable for a rank 2 Warlock. Leylin remained confident in the resources that the Twilight Zone possessed.

[Beep! Rank 3 Magi simulation data has been completed. Completion level: 69.24%]

The A.I Chip intoned. Behind the data on rank 2 Magi, a new data was quickly generated.

[Rank 3 Magi, estimated spiritual force: between 200-400! There
are three stages in the spiritual force: vapour, liquid and crystal forms. The differences in strength between every rank is estimated to be between 3 to 5 times!
The A.I Chip projected a large paragraph of information before Leylin.
“Towards the end, the spiritual force span within one rank will be of a large amount and is terrifyingly difficult to achieve!” Leylin sighed.
An acolyte’s spiritual force was within 20 degrees, whereas that of a rank 1 Magus was between 20 and 80, that of a rank 2 Magus between 80 to 200, and upon reaching rank 3 the spiritual force was between 200 to 400.
The larger the spiritual force span, the more obvious the differences between the displayed strength.
As a result, newly promoted rank 3 Magi and rank 3 Magi with crystallised spiritual force would have an unimaginable difference in strength.
After understanding the strength of the rank 3 Magi, Leylin had recognised the formidability of a Morning Star Magi.
He had known vaguely that rank 3 Magi would enter a very long transmutation transformation period. Should the Magi be promoted successfully, they would have a rank equivalent to that of a Magus from ancient times!
“That makes sense! Even in ancient times, Morning Star Magi were the rulers of a region and hence could have had a role in the Final War. How can it be so easy to level up one’s rank?”
Leylin stroked his chin “Only through the continuous concentration of the spiritual force, can it crystallised and turn into point mass, before promoting to a Morning Star Magi!”
At this moment, the path that a Morning Star Magus took had appeared in its entirety within Leylin’s mind.
First, the elemental essence conversion. Only when the elemental
essence conversion had reached 80% were Magi qualified enough to transform their essence and be promoted to rank 2. Upon promotion to rank 2, all spiritual force would have to have a substance form, appearing as the smallest spiritual force particles!

These spiritual force particles, upon approaching rank 3 would gradually be condensed. Through the three stages of vapour, liquid, and crystal, they would condense further to form point mass! At this point in time, these Magi would have entered the Morning Star level!

“The path of a Magus is indeed getting tougher! Merely 80% of elemental essence conversion would easily kill many Magi. Needless to say, the barrier at the end would be an even more difficult task!”

Leylin exhaled deeply. “Thankfully my path ahead is clear, I only have to follow the path accordingly!”

“A.I Chip. Set up a long-term mission: Deduce what happened to Kemoyin’s Pupil and Sacred Flame!”

Leylin immediately ordered.

The A.I Chip automatically projected two progress charts that deduced the mission progress. The progress had not even reached that of 1% and had been increasing incredibly slowly, but at least Leylin could see hope.

Amongst these, Kemoyin’s Pupil was the main meditation technique that Leylin was cultivating and was the path that he had decided to take a long time ago, and as such, it could not be easily changed.

On the other hand, Leylin had gained interest in Sacred Flame, the meditation technique that had its roots from the prophetic Botelli family.

Even after having accumulated so many high-grade meditation techniques, from what Leylin could see, the value of Sacred Flame
was above that of the other meditation techniques, and could even be on par with that of the Dragon King Mystic Might due to its ability to predict the future. This ability was honestly a tad too terrifying. Even though there was the possibility of errors, Leylin still longed for it.

“Based on the A.I Chip’s deductions and information database on high-grade meditation techniques, one day it will be able to prophesize things. Of course, if I am able to continuously add in new high-grade meditation techniques, the process will be accelerated…”

Leylin was very clear on this line of reasoning.

*Boom*

Suddenly, a wave of invisible spiritual force passed through numerous barriers and exploded next to Leylin.

“Is it finally here?” Leylin’s eyes revealed a hint of a smile, and he immediately flicked his hand.

The numerous high-grade meditation techniques had disappeared after a silver flash, and Leylin turned into a phantom before arriving in front of Nature’s Alliance’s headquarters.

Following the directions of a thread of spiritual force, Leylin arrived at a location.

This area was originally a wasteland, but in the middle of it now lay a silver-white metallic building.

Leylin went up to the door and raised his hands with the intentions to knock.

*Ka-cha*

But before Leylin had transformed his thoughts into action, both steel doors, decorated with floral patterns, had opened automatically and revealed the interior of the building.

In the middle of the huge living room sat an old man on a steel chair who smiled gently at Leylin.

“Distinguished Leylin! You have indeed been promoted to a rank 2
Magus!” The old man stood up and smiled while having given up his seat.
This Magus wore burlap clothes and had an average appearance, like that of an ordinary old man, but Leylin had not dared be brazen in front of him.
“I’m lucky to have advanced a little further on the path in search of the truth!”
Leylin appeared extremely humble. From this old man, Leylin could feel that he had a deep solidified spiritual force that had surpassed his own accumulation.
Of course, having a high spiritual force was one thing, but having the actual strength was another. Leylin, had, in addition, the strength of his bloodline and a few other hidden trump cards, did not think he would be at a disadvantage, but felt no need to show his abilities.
“Hahaha… Please take a seat! You still don’t know my name, do you? I’m Logan, the Melhawk Guild’s leader!”
Logan beamed and introduced himself.
“Magus Logan, the protector of the Eastern Twilight Zone, I have long heard of your name!” Leylin smiled and replied, and at the same time sat down on a chair.
“Eh?” Though the chair’s exterior still had the glow of steel, it did not have the hardness of one and instead felt like a sofa that had caved into a certain arch. It comfortably supported Leylin’s body.
“How’s that? This is a steel lifeform I had specially acquired from the external zones!”
Logan revealed a smile as he observed Leylin’s expression.
“Not bad!” Leylin indifferently evaluated the chair. Though this steel lifeform could not compare to the organisms entirely constructed from the elements of the Steel World, this was already very hard to come by.
“If I’m not wrong this entire room is a huge steel lifeform, right?
And we are currently speaking to its body?”

“Haha! ‘Dark Steel’ has an innate gift in concealing its life aura. You are the first person to be able to guess this so quickly!” Logan chuckled, and hit the table top, “Dark Steel, come and say hello!”

*Ka Cha Ka Cha*

The steel flowed like liquid and formed a rough face on the table top. “Hello, Mister Leylin!”

At this point, because there was no need for Dark Steel to hide anymore, Leylin could clearly feel a wave of energy that was of a certain standard. Should it be a Magi, it would be of peak rank 1.

After conversing for some time, Logan entered the main topic.

“Magus Leylin, I think you should be clear about my intentions, no?” At this point in time, the old man’s face became more solemn.

“Of course!” Leylin nodded his head.

“In that case, with regards to the matter of Nature’s Alliance Guild violating the rules and exterminating the Dense Fog Forest Guild, and subduing all other subsidiary small-scale guilds, what is your explanation?”

Logan glared at Leylin as if he would make a move on Leylin should he say something not conforming to what Logan expected to hear.

“With regards to this?” Leylin smiled mildly and took a step back, his fingers crossed, and seemed to be very uneasy.

“The Dense Fog Forest first robbed and killed us, then barged into Nature’s Alliance’s headquarters and engaged in so much killing that they almost exterminated the Nature’s Alliance guild. As a result, out of self-defence, we naturally retaliated. If I remember correctly, shouldn’t this be in accordance with Eastern Twilight Zone’s laws for revenge?”

Leylin continued smiling and passed the crystal ball with Celine’s previous records to Logan. “Furthermore, we have eyewitnesses as well. If you would like to hear the words from one of them, you
can leave with me now to meet him…”
“But the dark elven empire is left running amok, and the tide of darkness creatures is approaching. Distinguished Leylin, aren’t you being too reckless? If you were to just showcase your abilities, Gus would probably surrender…”
Upon receiving the crystal ball, Logan did not immediately look into it, but the gloomy clouds on his face had dissipated to a large extent, though his brows were still furrowed.
“He offended me! The dignity of a rank 2 Magi!”
Leylin squinted his eyes, the atmosphere suddenly became tenser. “He almost interrupted my promotion. Only by offering all his blood, will it be enough to cleanse his sins!”
“Are these all the excuses that you have?” Logan looked right into Leylin’s eyes.
“These are all facts! Not excuses!” Leylin retorted without restraint. Two rays of silver glow seemingly collided in mid-air and produced a crisp sound.
“Haha….”
All of a sudden, Logan’s face revealed a smile, resolving the tension in the atmosphere.
“Since the opponent started it first, and offended you, then I would have nothing else to say…”
“Thank you for your understanding and support!”
Leylin smiled respectfully.
All of these were actually within his calculations. After all, Magi were all smart people, especially the more so the older one gets! A medium-scale guild or a rank 2 Magi, this decision did not need deliberation to choose between!
The Magus world was extremely pragmatic; no one would make life difficult for a rank 2 Magus just for a guild that was already exterminated.

Given that the demise of Nature’s Alliance would benefit quite a few other guilds, if Dense Fog Forest still had survivors who could repeatedly report them and collude with the authorities, there would have been a small bit of hope. However, Leylin had directly uprooted them. Under the massive Toxic Bile attack on their headquarters, not even a dog had survived. Thus, this matter had been met with little resistance.

This was another reason why Leylin had to exterminate the headquarters of Dense Fog Forest, not only to protect the secret of the Icy World.

Since the way forward had been decided, the other matters were much easier to take care of. Hence, Logan immediately remarked, “In that case, the joint conference will handle this situation appropriately. Dense Fog Forest’s remaining strength should also be handed over to another guild!”

“Don’t worry, I’ll get Nature’s Alliance on the path to becoming a medium-scale guild once I go back. However, will the council members cooperate?” Leylin asked. Eastern Twilight Zone’s joint conference was held once every 20 years, and the current one had just ended.

“That’s not a problem! The nine enforcers can make an exception
for you, but the matter would still have to be presented at the next joint conference for the sake of formality!” Logan waved his hand. “That’ll work!” Leylin immediately returned the favour saying, “For the upcoming wave of Dark Creatures as well as the looming threat of the Dark Elven Empire, I will help with the defence. After all, I’m a part of the human race as well!”

After being reassured by Leylin, Logan chuckled, the wrinkles on his face smoothing out.

“In that case, Leylin, since you’re a newly promoted rank 2 Magus, you must have many new perspectives and enlightenments. Now is a good time for us to discuss our viewpoints!”

Logan beamed, and with a flick of his hands, the steel table folded inwards, and two cups of steaming, warm, beverage floated up.

“I’m extremely honoured. I too have many questions pertaining to meditation techniques that I wish to consult Mister Logan on!” Leylin said, smiling and raising his cup.

A few hours later, Leylin left Logan’s estate. After he left, the exterior of the steel building immediately changed. The four thick legs on the steel building stretched out, and the building slowly moved away.

Meanwhile, at the side, Leylin’s mouth revealed a smile which showed his good mood.

This time around, not only did this move help prevent any future troubles, the experiences Magus Logan offered to him were all very useful. Because he had experienced a rapid advancement into a rank 2 Warlock, he had lacked some understanding in regards to rank 2, especially in regards to the path of pursuing the truth!

Even though these things did not look very important right now, they would definitely create a lot of inconvenience for him when he attempted to condense the point mass as a rank 3 Magus.

Now, there was a chance to remedy this.

Moreover, Leylin’s depth of knowledge, acquired from the
accumulation of information from a different part of the world, greatly surprised Logan. The insight he had gained from this exchange was no less than Leylin’s.

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Ever since Leylin had returned, Nature’s Alliance’s strength had reached a new peak. Rapidly, all the remaining factions within the Dense Fog Forest was absorbed, and the influence of Nature’s Alliance had even spread its net even wider. Regarding these actions, the joint conference enforcers turned a blind eye; they eventually even produced a formal letter that openly announced Nature’s Alliance’s promotion to a medium-scale guild, a move which left many Magi dumbfounded. Through the development during this period, Nature’s Alliance had broken through from a declining small-scale guild to a peak medium-scale guild! After all, with a rank 2 Magus like Leylin overseeing the guild, it could be considering as a trump card that could surpass most medium-scale guilds. However, Leylin obviously knew Logan’s bottom line. The nine existing large-scale guilds had already stretched the resources of eastern Twilight Zone to their limits; the remaining resources were insufficient to support the birth of yet another. Leylin had no intentions of vying to make Nature’s Alliance a large-scale guild, and hence Nature’s Alliance finally stopped growing and began to consolidate their strength, which left many Magi heaving a sigh of relief. Honestly, Nature’s Alliance’s expansion this time was way too aggressive and depended solely on Leylin’s powers. The guild’s foundations were very unstable. However, after passing this period, everything they took in would have been assimilated, and their abilities would naturally improve.
as a whole!
As the ceremonial guild leader, Celine had been so busy lately that no one knew of her whereabouts.
Leylin was far too busy to care about tangible powers. Hence, since Celine was the original guild leader and as someone who shared an intimate relationship with Leylin, she had obtained a great portion of this power.
At this point in time, Celine was full of gratitude for Leylin. Nature’s Alliance had once again achieved glory under Celine’s leadership, and the extent of its success exceeded that of the past. If her mentors knew about this, they would have been very pleased.
Leylin did not care about any of this. After the situation had more or less stabilised, he continued staying in the headquarters of Nature’s Alliance and sank into the deciphering of high-grade meditation techniques along with his own cultivation.
No matter what resources and materials he required, an instruction to his subordinates was all it took for them to be collected immediately and sent to him. Hence, Leylin became even more reclusive.
He could feel that he had improved at a pace that was way too fast, and hence, he needed to reinforce his foundations for a while. As a result, he chose to enter seclusion.
Time passed bit by bit without anyone noticing.

……

Three years later, the borders of eastern Twilight Zone.
At the outskirts of a small town stood a small wooden house. Some animal skins were hung on the walls of the house, which attracted many envious stares.
Many townspeople passing by would greet the female owner of the house through the walnut wood fence.
“Good morning, Madam Ginny!”
“Good morning Aunt Veeya!” Currently, Jenny had already grown to become a mature woman, her face revealing more of the charm of a young lady, while she smiled and conversed with the lady at her side.
After Aunt Veeya had left, Jenny looked at the burlap clothes she wore, and the basket of wheat bread in her hands; her face revealed that she was distracted.
“How time flies! Three years have passed just like that!” Jenny muttered to herself. It must have been 1 or 2 years since she had defected from her family, and it had been another year since she had escaped with Baelin to this place, and changed her name to Ginny.
Initially, when she had decided to elope with Baelin and was escaping the Argus Family’s assassination attempts, they had encountered numerous dangers during their journey. Thankfully, Baelin was already a Grand Knight, and hence they reached the peak of commoners’ lives. In addition, Jenny was an acolyte with the knowledge and experience of nobility. After escaping the incessant pursuit of soldiers and the many dangers nature had in store, Jenny finally crossed the border and arrived unharmed.
Although this small town was positioned at the border of the eastern Twilight Zone and was extremely remote, it was considered a safe location and no one had ever called on them.
“But…” Jenny gritted her teeth. Vengeance for her father! Her own hatred! Was she to just give up on them?
After several chaotic memories came to mind, Jenny unknowingly clenched her fists, until a voice roused her.
“I’m back! Do you want to see what I got?” Baelin, who was wearing a hunter’s outfit and carrying a bow and arrows, dramatically raised the pot in his hand.
“Yellow oil! This is high-grade yellow oil! I exchanged a grey-
toothed snake for it! If you spread it on bread, it’s something that even royalty might not be able to enjoy!”

“You!” Jenny rolled her eyes and led Baelin into the house. Though the house was not big, all necessities had been provided through Baelin’s capabilities. Even though they had to maintain a low profile, they were still living better than commoners. In regards to the lives they were leading now, Baelin was naturally very content, but Jenny seemed to have other ideas. After the door was closed shut, Jenny solemnly turned her head around.

“We need to leave!”

“Leave? Why? The environment here is so good!” Baelin was at a loss. Immediately after, his face tightened. “Could it be that the men from your family have tracked us down?”

“No! It’s war! The horde of darkness creatures is approaching soon, and the Dark Elven Empire might even commence their attack!”

Jenny smiled wryly. “You haven’t discovered anything after all the constant hunting you’ve been doing?”

“Now that you mention it, there does seem to be something like this!” Baelin rubbed his head. “Currently, the number of Dark Creatures has increased by a large amount. A few days ago I was chased by a giant wolf that was the size of a hill for almost an entire day!”

“Now you understand! With regards to the horde of darkness creatures, towns like ours are the least safe. Any small wave of attacks will be able to demolish the town. We have to move closer to the central region, or even the capital before we are safe from them!”

“But!” Baelin scratched his head, “I’m worried about our identities…”

“Although the Argus Family has very deep connections within the
eastern regions, we are in the northern region, where they have much less influence. Don’t worry, there won’t be any problems!” Jenny comforted him on the surface, yet she was not too confident on the inside. What she said only applied to regular humans; she had no confidence if the powers of Magi were involved. Even if that was the case, they still needed to move! Jenny was extremely aware of the looming threat of the horde of darkness creatures. Baelin was just a Grand Knight, even with her might as a level 2 acolyte, they would only be swept away by that force.

However, with her drive to survive and encouragement from her hatred, Jenny had advanced into a level 2 acolyte in these three years, and could now cast rank 0 spells with some effort. “Alright, I’ll leave it to you then!” Baelin smiled boorishly. “However, can’t we leave in two days? Uncle Veeya’s birthday is approaching, we have to at least congratulate him before setting off!”

Aunt and Uncle Veeya were a couple in the small town that had played a huge role in Baelin and Jenny’s settlement here. Hence, no matter what, Baelin had wished to leave the town after the birthday celebration. “Two days is doable!” Jenny bit her lips. Large-scale battles often took a long time to prepare, so two days was not a significant amount. However, it was regretful that, sometimes, the events in the world have anomalies. For those in northern Twilight Zone, the Wheel of Fate was beginning to slowly turn…
On a dark field, a group of cavalry chased after a lone figure.

The fleeing figure was a strange sight. He floated a few metres above the ground and had a pair of white translucent wings sprouting from his back. Each flap of these wings propelled him forward a great distance.

Behind the winged figure was a group of knights chasing after it! These knights rode on large spiders, each with eight brown, clawed legs. There were also icy blue stripes on them, and their eyes shone with bloodlust.

These were Underground Winter Spiders, the mounts of elite dark elves.

The knights riding on these spiders were not humans, but tall, slim creatures with exquisite skin; they had beautiful androgynous contours on their faces, with sharp ears and silver eyes that granted them vision in the dark.

*Bang!* The figure that was escaping in front suddenly turned his head, which revealed his handsome features and pointed ears, before he started chanting something undecipherable while swinging his arms backwards.

Five crimson red fireballs were fired out of his palm but were all dodged by the Underground Winter Spiders, exploding on the ground.

Surprisingly, the escaping figure was a dark elf as well!
“They really think highly of me huh, even sending the Underground Winter Spider knights after me!” The silhouette continued to escape but was unable to break away from the knights chasing after him. Not only could these Underground Winter Spiders move at an incredible speed, they could crawl over any terrain, regardless of whether it was in mountains, fields or even the misty canyons. Their advance could not be stopped. “Memphis! How dare you betray the glory of the Dark Lord? I will make you suffer, and offer your head as a sacrifice to the matriarch!”

The knight in charge wore a thin layer of leather armour. The Underground Winter Spider below him was a bit larger than the ones around it, and its upper body was covered with golden stripes. He inhaled deeply, and the Underground Winter Spider increased its speed. Immediately after, he aimed his bow and shot an arrow that flew elegantly, the arrowhead containing a secret, constantly-glowing rune. *Zoom!* A black ray of light emitted out of his hand, piercing through the sky and eventually landing on Memphis’ back! “Ahh!” A fiery red barrier of light appeared behind Memphis’ body, but when the arrow came into contact with the shield, the barrier could not even last a second and shattered instantly. The black arrow continued its flight, and with its unknown strength pierced Memphis from behind, protruding out of his chest. Memphis screamed, and the glowing arrow in his back disappeared. He collapsed to the ground, his flowing blood forming a pool of red streaked with silver. *Hiss Hiss!* The knights in the front surrounded him.
“Cut off his head!” The knight in charge heartlessly said and motioned to his men, resulting in two of his men walking up. At this moment, the expression on the knight’s face changed. “No! Fall back!” But it was too late.

*Bang!*

A strong wave of energy emanated from the body of Memphis, who was suddenly holding a scroll. Two huge balls of light were shot out, and the two approaching knights were burnt to ashes, creating a huge cloud of smoke and dust.

After waiting for the aftermath of the explosion to subside, the knight in charge stepped forward with an irritated look on his face, but by that moment Memphis had already disappeared from the ground.

“Find him for me!” His face contorted in anger. “He has been injured by my curse; he will not be able to travel far!”

……

Baelin aimed with his crossbow, and it cut through the air with a *swoosh,* hitting the wild boar in front of him. The wild boar squealed loudly, bleeding nonstop, but all Baelin did was to pull his crossbow bolt out.

“Haha! Uncle, Baelin’s present is here!”

After a fierce battle, Baelin smiled slightly while looking at the beast lying on the floor.

At this moment, a silhouette appeared from the other side of the battle field.

“Eh? Who is this?”

Baelin walked up, and the silhouette turned around, revealing a handsome white face…. 
Two hours later, Jenny was on her way home when she saw the dark elf that Baelin brought back. Putting her hand on her forehead, she groaned in despair and shouted, “You idiot! We’ve already offended the higher-ups and caused enough trouble…….”

Hearing Jenny’s complaints, Baelin innocently touched his head “I had no choice, seeing how pitiful he looks…….”

“Pitiful? Do you know what that is? It’s a dark elf! He is a purebred dark elf!”

Jenny’s face was flushed.

“This may be the border, but if you bring a dark elf, it could bring so much trouble to the town!”

In these recent three years, the Dark Elven Kingdom had frequently caused much insecurity and restlessness among the people!

Just with one look at the dark elf’s luxurious clothing, Jenny only had one thought, and that was whether or not the dark elf was like her, a member of nobility on the run because of a failed power struggle.

Thinking about this connection, Jenny started to break out into a cold sweat.

Regarding the cruellness of power struggles, she finally understood and knew that regardless of where this Elf hid, in the end, it would just be extending an endless cycle of fleeing and being hunted down. On top of this, her own people would suffer the consequences!

Thinking up to here, her eyes flashed with ferocity, but could only sigh when she saw the confused and helpless Baelin. Her tone also changed to one that was milder.

“Whatever happens, we must send him away quickly. I’m sure you don’t want to cause Aunt and Uncle Veeya any more trouble, right? Baelin scratched his head. “Oh, alright!”

……
At Baelin’s former hunting ground, a bunch of Underground Winter Spider knights surrounded a pit where Memphis the dark elf was concealed.  
A small Underground Winter Spider that was no bigger than a dog placed one foot into the cave, and then clicked at the knights.  
“He said that aside from Memphis’, a human’s scent was found”  
“Human?” the expression on the leader’s face sank, but then he suddenly started laughing maliciously. “No wonder Memphis is well known for peace! He has already been making connections with the humans”  
He gestured to his men, “Follow them. I don’t care who dares to protect him, I want to chop their heads off personally as sacrificial offerings!”  
“Yes my Lord!”  
The Underground Winter Spider knights responded in order. The relationship between the people of the Dark Elven Kingdom and Twilight Zone was not the best. Crossing the border by a little bit was not such a big issue, but currently, it looked as if a new war was about to break out. Even so, they could still kill a few more men, steal their food, and enslave their women!  
At this point in time, the eyes of many Underground Winter Spider knights flashed red.  
An hour later, a horse wagon pulled by an old, slow, horse.  
Baelin was guiding the horse, while Jenny was lying on a pile of straw with the dark elf that Baelin had previously saved.  
The elf’s clothes were cut open at the front, revealing a skinny body. His delicate chest was marred by an arrow wound bordered by a black aura, shaped like a spider and continually expanding.  
“How is he?” Baelin turned to ask.  
“The external injuries are almost healed, but a curse was cast on him, and I do not have any ideas or methods to cure it!” Jenny
raised her hands.

Although this injury was shocking, what surprised Jenny even more was the Elf’s vitality, which had allowed him to persevere and survive this long while suffering from the combination of such a serious injury and curse.

“The more that I think about it, the more I feel that this is not such a good idea. Judging from the curse, it is obvious that there is an official Magus after this fellow. If we do this, we will definitely infuriate his opponents!”

Jenny’s face turned gloomy.

Upon hearing that, Baelin could not help but tremble, this was an instinct that had been cultivated over many years. “Is an official Magus something like Lord Leylin?”

“Yes! Do you now understand how much trouble you have brought us?” Jenny gave Baelin an arrogant look.

“But haven’t we already saved him?” Baelin bitterly laughed. “What else can we do now then?”

All of a sudden, a burst of flames from afar roused Baelin from his thoughts.

In the dark, vast surroundings, this blaze was getting more and more obvious, almost dyeing the colour of the entire sky a fiery red.

“That is…. Our town!!” Baelin stopped the horse, a frightened look on his face, “What happened? Why would this big fire suddenly appear?”

Jenny had a bad premonition. At this time, Baelin turned the horse without hesitation and headed towards the direction of the fire.

“Are you crazy?” Jenny cried out loud.

“Uncle Veeya and the rest are still inside, I want to save them!”

“They can’t be saved; can you calm down a little?” Jenny said with an agitated tone.

“What? How can you be like that? Have you forgotten? Aunt Veeya
has treated you so well all this time!” Baelin said as he choked on a breath of air.
“This is not…”
“Sigh….”
While the two were arguing, the dark elf in the wagon suddenly coughed and woke up.
“A human!” He blurted out in the Twilight Zone’ Language.
Jenny’s heart went cold. The dark elves spoke a different language from humans, and this elf’s proficiency in their language was jarring.
In the subterranean world, knowledge was a trademark of nobility, and mastery of foreign languages was prominent amongst them. When she was young, Jenny had been taught the languages of dark elves, gnomes, and even grey dwarves by a private tutor. Learning them despite the physiological differences was simply a nightmare! And yet, this dark elf spoke so cleanly that it took Jenny by surprise.
“Where is this place?” the dark elf asked as he sat up and looked at the lost Baelin.
“This is the Twilight Zone. Who are you?”
“I’m Memphis, and I need to go now. I’ve given you enough trouble already; I’m really sorry!”
The dark elf named Memphis had an apologetic look on his face.
Memphis struggled and wanted to get up. But immediately, the spider made of dark aura on his chest let out a hiss. His face went pale, and he fell back down as large beads of sweat rolled down his face.

*Shuffling*

Baelin suddenly heard a mild, yet periodic rumble. “It’s coming from the town! Did someone survive?” Baelin beamed with delight.

In contrast, Memphis’ face suddenly changed. “It’s the footsteps of the Underground Winter Spiders! They have caught up with us!”

A short while later, the silhouettes of five Underground Winter Spider Knights appeared before Baelin’s eyes. “Memphis! You’re really here!”

“That’s great, we actually found you!”

“His head will definitely give us some merit!”

The knights started chuckling, talking in their language. Jenny only managed to understand a few terms, whereas Baelin had a blank face as he could not understand it at all.

Very quickly, the blank look on his face turned into one of horror. This was because the knights were sharing the backs of the Underground Winter Spiders with groups of severed human heads, which were still dripping with blood!

He could even see a few familiar faces amongst them. “Unc… UNCLE VEEYA! What did you do to them!” Baelin’s
veins popped out with anger, and he unsheathed the cross sword on his back.

“Haha…” Although the Underground Winter Spider Knights could not understand Baelin’s reproaching them, they could infer his fury from his body language. One of them used a spear to pick up a head and started taunting Baelin.

At the same time, another knight held a spear and rushed forward. “Aaaaah… I’m going to kill all of you!” Baelin’s eyes were bloodshot, and he too rushed forward.

“Secret technique! Cross Star!” Baelin’s life force abruptly exploded and formed an illusory armour around his body.

“Kill!”

Cross blade and spear collided, and Baelin and the Underground Winter Spider knight both retreated a few steps.

Underground Winter Spider knights were the pinnacle of an army whose regular soldiers each matched human Grand Knights. Combining their own ability with runes and their mounts, their strength vastly surpassed that of the average Grand Knight.

However, Baelin himself was no ordinary Grand Knight and could fight him evenly.

Unfortunately, Baelin had to fight not one opponent, but five! After seeing the life force explode out from Baelin’s body, a few knights looked at each other, shouted a few words Baelin could not understand and rushed forward.

*Pew*

A black ray shot through the sky and landed on the shoulders of an Underground Winter Spider Knight, piercing into the knight’s shoulder with some difficulty.

Jenny stood on the carriage, bow in hand. Her face was calm whilst she shot arrows non-stop.

Naturally, she could see the situation clearly. Under present circumstances, the only way to survive was eliminating this small
party.
The problem was that they were badly outnumbered, and each of their opponents was stronger than Grand Knights; exterminating them would not be easy. Jenny smiled bitterly in her heart.
As was to be expected, Baelin was slowly surrounded by the knights and seemed unable to endure any more attacks. The illusory armor around him began to appear as if it would explode any moment.
*Creak! Creak!*
One of the Spiders, under its rider’s commands, leaped past Baelin’s resistance and arrived before the carriage. The black spear pierced forth, and the resulting winds caused Jenny’s face to change.
“Ouch!” Nearby, Baelin let out a groan. His armor had disintegrated, and blood was gushing out from all of his wounds.
*Buzz! Buzz!*
Suddenly, Jenny felt a strong energy wave explode violently next to her. She turned her head and saw Memphis struggling to open a scroll in his hands.
A grey ripple swept out, the ring of light seeming to be a spirit avoiding both Jenny and Baelin as it reached the Underground Winter Spider Knights. It was like a halo that bound the knights and their mounts.
The knights that had been bound by the halo immediately felt the enormous power they were proud of dissipating. Even their mounts began trembling as if they could not stand under their own weight.
“A Weakening Imprint! Retreat!” A knight immediately shouted. But at this time, Baelin lost all self-restraint. “Die!”
“Cross Blade!” He violently used the last bit of his spiritual energy and executed the killing stance of the cross sword technique. A blade of light in the shape of a cross mercilessly slashed through the four surrounding knights.
Their faces became lifeless, and in a few moments, they disintegrated along with their mounts.
*Whoosh* Jenny seized this chance and used a single arrow to pierce through the neck of the last escaping knight. Memphis let out a smile, but abruptly spat out black blood, after which he fainted. Half a day later, on the carriage, Jenny looked at the defeated Baelin, and Memphis beside her, and was speechless.

“Why? Why must we kill? Why must there be war?” Baelin muttered under his breath, the world having lost all colour. “This is an answer that I’ve been looking for, but unfortunately I have not reached a conclusion!” Currently, Memphis was using the sap from a green plant to wrap the wounds on his chest. He laughed bitterly, “The two of you have saved me. I, Memphis, swear upon the honor of the dark royalty that I will repay the two of you!”

“Let’s not talk about that for now. The conflict you mentioned previously, is that real?” Jenny was obviously more concerned about this issue than other matters.

“It’s real! I have suffered from persecution and attempted assassination from others just because I advocated for peace!” Memphis’ eyes glowed, and his voice sank.

“What’s our plan now?” Jenny looked at Baelin.

“I have decided! I must do my best to prevent the war this time around. I don’t want to see more people shedding blood!” Baelin’s voice was coarse but held an unquestionable resolve.

“You’re crazy!” Jenny was trembling: “Based on your ability alone??”

“No! There’s still him!” Baelin pointed to Memphis. “I will escort him back to the Dark Elven Empire and try my best to stop the war!”
Having made that decision, Baelin suddenly felt like he was heating up. He ripped opened his clothes, revealing a gold coin that had a peculiar exterior. On one side of the coin was a skeleton, whereas on the other side was a lucky bird; the rim of the coin gave off a dim glow. Baelin had pierced through the gold coin, run a string through it, and hung it on his neck. Baelin caressed the gold coin, his eyes showing signs of even more determination, “Mister Leylin! Master! You support me as well, don’t you?”

……

Eastern Twilight Zone, Nature’s Alliance headquarters. Currently, Nature’s Alliance had stabilised its strength as a medium-scale guild and had countless hundreds of acolytes, far from what it was like in the past. Moreover, the increased presence of Magi strengthened their defenses greatly. They were now a few ranks higher than before. In the forbidden area in the middle of Nature’s Alliance, within a huge laboratory. Leylin blanked out and immediately looked towards the golden crystal in his hands. Currently, the crystal was emitting a faint heat, and the golden light generated from within enshrouded it. “A portion of the spiritual force has been received?” Leylin suddenly laughed. “It looks like Baelin has already started walking along with his destined spiritual path! The strength of fate will accumulate in his body!” Leylin glanced at the A.I. Chip’s progress with the recovery of the meditation techniques. Sacred Flame, the high-grade meditation technique that Leylin
longed for, the same one that could predict the future, had finally been fully recovered. There were even a few areas that were being constantly improved.

On the other hand, Kemoyin’s Pupil had not advanced at all in the past three years, remaining at halfway to completion. Leylin assumed that the lack of high-grade meditation techniques meant that advancing it to the fourth grade was exceedingly difficult.

After all, the only one rank four technique in his possession could only be cultivated by Dragons, while the others had no information that could assist in the progress of Kemoyin’s Pupil.

On the other hand, Sacred Flame had been recovered much earlier, and even went through a few modifications to remove the negative repercussions.

It was a pity that the A.I. Chip only managed to simulate it to the third rank. This meant the technique only went this far, and that left Leylin feeling slightly regretful

“Since the gears of fate have started to turn, then I can only continue to scatter more of these ‘seeds’ so as to anticipate a harvest in the future!” Leylin stroked his chin and looked towards the experiment table.

The silver-white table top had a few peculiar objects on it. Among these items were a black ring, a five-coloured pendant, and a tattered notebook.

“A.I. Chip! Begin!” Leylin’s eyes shot out a blue glow, and he picked the few objects up.

[Limited AI programming has been completed, inputting data!] The A.I Chip intoned.

After a few minutes, Leylin picked up the black ring. A ray of light shot out, and out came the figure of a scholarly looking Magus.

“I am the legendary Grand Magus Merlin, you lucky fellow! You will receive my advice and become the Twilight Zone’s strongest genius!”
Leylin’s mouth quivered. The Grand Magus figure seemed to have life, as it spoke with charm. These were the limited Artificial Intelligences that Leylin had been designing. He had the ability to control the programs remotely, which made them very useful. Having been pleased with himself after the adjustments, Leylin placed the few items into an empty bag and walked out of the laboratory. “My lord!” Along the way, no matter whether they were official Magi or acolytes, all of them lowered their heads in respect. Some acolytes would even bow from a distance, and quickly walk away. “I can’t believe that even I would receive such treatment!” Leylin abruptly laughed. If high-level Magi had not intentionally exercised restraint, the strong radiation that emitted from their bodies would be a type of contagion that could even be lethal to low-level acolytes. As a result, previously in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, there were many forbidden areas, which were actually the living areas and experimentation areas of high-level Magi. In the past, when Leylin had seen those Magi, he would also bow from a distance before quickly avoiding them. But now, it was time for others to do so instead.
In a short span of three years, Nature’s Alliance had cemented its status as a medium-scale guild. After absorbing Dense Fog Forest’s remains, it had even managed to become a peak medium-scale guild! All of these achievements had been largely attributed to Leylin’s contributions, a fact that went undisputed. Even if he did nothing personally, the mere presence of a rank 2 Magus would eliminate most of the Alliance’s troubles. Hence, the faith that he commanded from members of Nature’s Alliance had been increasing day by day up to a point of reverence, even deification. Additionally, a lot of Magi had joined during this period of large-scale recruitment. Although Celine’s strength as a rank 1 Magus afforded her some bit of status, there was no longer any influences that she could have. This meant that even if Leylin intended to take away her nominal position as the guild leader, he needed but to ask. Passing through layers of glowing spell formations, Leylin ended up at a purple villa. “My lord!” Celine and Iren respectfully bowed. “Mmm!” Leylin nodded, and directly asked, “Has anything happened recently?” “The guild’s development has been very smooth. Currently, our influence has expanded to the vicinity of the Ural mountain plains. Two local small-scale guilds have also expressed their desire to
subordinate themselves to us…” Iren took the lead and bowed while reporting to Leylin.

A peak rank 1 Magus, Leylin’s strongest military force, Iren ranked highly within Nature’s Alliance, where he specialised in the guild’s expansion.

“What about the approaching horde of darkness creatures and the Dark Elven Empire?” Leylin asked.

“Reports of abnormal activity of the darkness creatures are starting to come in. In addition, the warmongering faction in the Dark Elven Empire successfully staged a coup, eliminating all influence of the pro-peace faction. They’ve mobilised the entire army, and are ready to attack any day now.”

Wars were not uncommon in the subterranean world, but they rarely coincided with the attacks of the horde of darkness creatures. This was so rare, in fact, that even a peak rank 1 Magus like Iren had only encountered such a situation once in his lifetime.

That period had seen the loss of many Magi and numerous large-scale guilds. It had come to be known as the subterranean world’s Great Power Reshuffle.

An event that destabilised the world of Magi would obviously be a long period of suffering for the commoners.

“From the looks of it, a big war is inevitable!” Leylin sighed lightly.

A war between two intelligent species wouldn’t be quick to occur. It would be prefaced by a long period of strategy and preparation, with very little surprise attacks occurring. High ranking Magi had started keeping tabs on their opponents as early as three years ago, and their preparations had begun even further back.

However, precisely because of this long preparatory phase, any and all strategies tended to be useless; the war would devolve into a contest of information gathering and military might.

“Have we made any moves yet?” Leylin looked at Celine.

Recently, this woman had become much more beautiful. It was as if
the power she’d gained made her glow more than she already did. Power was an elixir to men. This was no less true for women as well. It was a pity that although these women were as beautiful as roses, every rose has its thorns. To conquer them was not a simple task.

Were he on Earth, Leylin would naturally not think like this. But the Magus world was different. Dominance, status, everything came from his own power, and he was not in the least bit concerned that Celine would one day surpass him.

“Forget the commoners’ war for now. The joint conference has commissioned a war council headed by the nine enforcers. It issued a formal request for your assistance!”

Celine arranged her hair. This revealed a translucent earring inlaid with a glowing red ruby.

The request was a result of Leylin’s agreement with Logan. In exchange for his participation in the war, Nature’s Alliance had been allowed to expand unchecked.

“Where have they stationed me?” Leylin asked with interest as he sat on a reclining chair. He raised up a crystal goblet, the fresh red wine within as thick as blood.”

“Dolon City! A large number of the Magi who responded to the call have gathered there! Of course, Duke Fendix and the royal military have been stationed there as well!”

“Dolon!” Leylin raised his glass, and a map of eastern Twilight Zone appeared within his mind.

“They’ve retreated too far! That’s basically giving up the borderlands!”

“Most of the commoners have already been evacuated!” Celine smiled wryly, “But for some areas, it’s beyond our control.”

As a Magus, Celine generally thought of problems purely based on how they affected her, but now that this matter concerned everyone, she exhibited the sympathetic nature of a woman.
Immediately, the sympathy turned into worry.
“The war council intends to use Dolon, Wakeshire, and Sadoor to form a tripartite defence that makes full use of our geographical advantages. When the war begins, my lord, you will have to face the military might of the Dark Elven Empire, including many of their matriarchs.”
The Dark Elven Empire was still a matriarchal society and was more a united kingdom made of numerous smaller clans than anything else.
The matriarchs of the smaller clans were at least as strong as official Magi. The ones Celine referred to were the matriarchs of the larger clans, existences that rivalled rank 2 Magi in might. Dark elves were naturally gifted with extraordinary strength, something which made the average elf much more powerful than the average human. Were it not for their low fertility, they would have conquered the Twilight Zone long ago.
Celine’s face was full of worry. After all, she was very clear that the powers she had came from Leylin. Should anything befall him, even if Nature’s Alliance didn’t crumble, it would fall dramatically in power.
“Don’t worry, I have confidence!” Leylin let out a smile. That he had decided to go forward meant he was amply prepared for anything that he might come across. At the very least, his personal safety wasn’t an issue. After all, even in a war as large in scale as this one, rank 2 Magi rarely fell.
Furthermore, he was not there to fight but to observe. The moment something was amiss, he would flee. Which Matriarch would dare sacrifice herself to prevent his escape?
Leylin had already recovered his strength as a rank 2 Warlock, even advancing in some areas. He was confident that, as long as he didn’t meet an old freak that rivalled rank 3 Magi, nothing could stop him.
However, thinking up to this point, Leylin felt a bit depressed. In a world of beings with extraordinary abilities, large-scale wars generally depended on the strength of the higher-ups. Wouldn’t the humans turtleing up mean that even his monstrous strength would not be able to turn the tide of this war?
Neither Celine nor Iren was qualified to know of this. Perhaps only rank 2 Magi would be able to see the situation more clearly.
“No matter what, I need to go and have a look. If I were to pass the completed techniques to the acolytes of Nature’s Alliance, it would arouse suspicion. Furthermore, the shifting landscape of war could hold good opportunities for me…” Leylin considered.
Upon seeing Leylin deep in thought, Iren immediately took his leave. Celine was a little disappointed and just curtsied.
Just as she turned to leave, Leylin grinned. “Celine, don’t go just yet…”
Having heard that, Celine’s face revealed a charming smile.
Dolon City was a military town along the Eastern Twilight Zone’s border. The town was built purely of black granite, which made it look like a huge fort from afar.
Currently, militia lined the entrance of the town, and soldiers and fleets of carriages crossed the gates occasionally.
Flags bearing the royal family’s crest were everywhere, and the silhouettes of knights leading small patrol teams were scattered around.
The entrance was guarded by official Magi in grey robes, and stringent checks were performed on everyone.
Dolon City originally supported 100,000 residents. Most of its current population, however, comprised of soldiers.
Now that the joint conference had commissioned a war council, the royals they backed could only execute their battle plans. All of Dolon City was preparing for war, and had begun wartime operations.
The center of the city was occupied by the grandest villa in town. However, this villa was not for royalty; it was meant, instead, for distinguished Magi. Numerous Magi, robed in all colours, could be seen on premises. They’d even set up a large spell formation for defence. Some of the Magi patrolling the city walls would occasionally cast spells on the wall to strengthen it.

“The atmosphere here is so stifling!” A rank 3 acolyte wearing a grey acolyte robe walked along a deserted road, and intermittently glanced at both sides of the street. Passing soldiers would bow to this mighty magician.

“With one foot already in the grave, how can I still be considered a magician?” Aaron smiled wryly. This acolyte was among the first group of people Leylin had met when he was transported here. Back then, Aaron was among the party of three acolytes and two grand Knights that Leylin had saved in the Woody Wastelands. As recompense, Leylin had scanned their souls, which resulted in them losing a lot of things.

Aaron sighed deeply. During his previous reckless foray into the Woody Wastelands, he had luckily obtained bio-materials worth a lot of magic crystals. Still, he felt like something was amiss, although he could not put a finger on it. What terrified him further was that, after his return, he found out that his aptitude had dropped a grade!

Aaron and the other acolytes had been lucky to survive Leylin’s reckless scanning of their soul. However, his random tampering of their memories had grave consequences. The development of magicians depended largely on their aptitude. Aaron’s original aptitude was not astounding, a mere grade 3. When it fell to grade 2, he felt as if the world began to crumble.
down on him.
He still remembered the regret and disappointment in his mentor’s eyes after the examination, as he said, “Perhaps an abnormal being attacked you leading to the demotion of your aptitude. It might never be reversed. Pity! What a pity!”
With the drop in his aptitude, he turned from an acolyte with a bit of hope into a good-for-nothing.

After seeing Aaron’s state, his mentor did not beat around the bush, telling him directly that he no longer had the qualifications to train in a high-grade meditation technique. Some high-grade meditation techniques had stringent requirements for those cultivating them, and currently, Aaron did not qualify to cultivate his.

“It’s much more difficult to advance to an official Magus using the simplified version of the high-grade meditation technique. Doesn’t this amount to completely giving up on me? And then there’s her…” Aaron lowered his head, fingernails digging into flesh. After finding out that his aptitude had lowered and that he could not train in the high-grade meditation technique anymore, his relatives and former friends had shunned him. Even his fiancee had abandoned him!

The memory of her firmly leaning into another’s embrace as she looked at Aaron in disdain left him feeling like his chest would burst into flames.

What infuriated him further, even driving him into the pits of despair, was that his enemies in the guild had taken the opportunity to beat him up. There were even traces of evidence showing that woman pulling strings in the background, for him to be dispatched to a place like this.
Dolon City was at the frontlines of the war. Official Magi might be able to retreat calmly if the city fell, but level 3 acolytes like him had no chance! In wartime, the army would be much more willing to give up on cannon fodder like him than on those of higher rank. Historically, an intense war like this would spell doom for over half the acolytes!

Aaron found himself feeling numb. He had to drag his body to the city gate. “Level 3 acolyte Aaron, reporting for duty!” he said, trying his best to look more alert.

“En!” The Magus at his post nodded, neither finding anything strange nor getting mad.
He’d seen numerous acolytes who were dumped here. With no backing, this fellow wouldn’t live past a month, so why would he grow angry at a walking corpse?

“Your mission is to maintain this detection spell formation. I’ve already adjusted it. White dots are regular people, while red dots are acolytes and knights. The purple dots are official Magi. Is that understood?”

“Yes!” Aaron nodded.

Suddenly, the spell formation rumbled and produced a loud bang, cracking apart at the edges. A black ray of light exploded forth.

“And what does black mean?” Aaron asked, dumbfounded.

“Rank 2! A powerful existence that is at rank 2 or above that!” The Magus answered in a daze, and then snapped out of it. “Quick! Sound the alarm!”

Not far away, a black dot expanded in the sky, gradually forming a human figure.

Watching the city gates where there was an uproar, Leylin shook his head slightly. “Looks like there’s been a misunderstanding!” He ceased advancing and silently waited.

Minutes later, two streaks of similarly powerful energy undulations
burst out from Dolon City, and two figures transformed into rays of light, darting in front of Leylin. These were two rank 2 Magi, one male, and one female. The man, in red robes with silver patterns embroidered on, laughed heartily as he greeted, “Sir Leylin! It’s great that you were able to get here in time!” The female Magus merely stood aside and smiled, seemingly leaving the situation to her counterpart. “It’s my honour to meet you, Sir Fendix!” Leylin bowed while smiling gently.

In these three years, it was not as if Leylin had done nothing. At least, he had gotten familiar with a few rank 2 Magi in the east. This rank 2 Magus was a leader of a large-scale guild. Duke Fendix was one of his descendants. “Come! If there’s anything else, let’s talk about it after we get back!” Fendix looked at the uproar around them and laughed towards Leylin, then slowly descended. Leylin and the female Magus followed behind him. “It’s a rank 2 lord! Quick, bow!” Leave alone ordinary soldiers, even high-ranking military officers and nobles knelt in front of him, while the official Magus from before respectfully bowed to his waist. Aaron quickly bowed as well, and then raised his head, confused. He secretly glanced at the young person in the middle, “I seem to have seen that lord before somewhere, but I don’t remember where…” Just as Aaron’s gaze swept over him, the Magus seemed to sense it and a pair of black pupils flitted over.

All of a sudden, a surge of darkness and shadows surrounded Aaron, causing him to retreat a few steps, feeling suffocated. Aaron was so afraid he broke out into a cold sweat and quickly lowered his head, not daring to raise it.
“It’s actually him! I didn’t expect us to meet here!” In contrast, a grin appeared on Leylin’s face. Strictly speaking, all that he knew about Twilight Zone had originated from this acolyte’s memories. To be able to meet again, he was considered quite lucky. “I’ll choose you first then!” The notion of a twisted delight seemed to rise in Leylin. This thought flashed past, but Leylin’s expression remained unchanged as he descended to the mansion at the centre with the other two rank 2 Magi. The interior decoration was not bad, and it looked to be the residence of some nobility or even mayor of the city. Of course, it had now been taken over. The three Magi entered the hall and took a seat, a few acolytes bringing drinks and some fruits, and then carefully making their way out. “The main forces of the dark elves have reached the border. They seem to be very determined this time and have even dispatched the matriarchs of several ancient families. Looks like we’ll be under immense pressure this time…” Fendix looked grim but smiled at Leylin, “Of course, with Sir Leylin here, we’ll have even more hope!” “As a human, I naturally can’t shirk my responsibilities!” While Leylin said this solemnly on the surface, he was meanwhile thinking about retreating the moment the situation wasn’t in his favour. Though he didn’t mind helping human beings occupy more land for the sake of survival, this was only if this would not harm his own interests. If not, there was nothing to consider. Of course, this was also how many other high ranked Magi thought. Even if the war council was aware of this fact, there was little they
could do. Meanwhile, Fendix was still speaking, “Battles between humans, as well as the regular dark elves and beast waves are usually handed to the duke to settle. Underground Winter Spider Knights and dark elf Magi, as well as powerful darkness creatures will require Magi to act, and there is but one reason for our existence, which is to prevent the matriarchs of the dark elves and the emperor of the darkness creatures from meddling!”

Leylin nodded. The powers of rank 2 Magi were good at suppression and deterrence. After all, if a rank 2 existence let go of all their inhibitions, even the Dark Elven Empire would not be unharmed.

“By the way, why is the Dark Elven Empire so confident this time?” Leylin’s eyes flashed and he asked.

Hearing this, Fendix and the female Magus exchanged glances and smiled wryly, “This is supposed to be top secret, but Leylin, you’re a rank 2 Magus as well. You’ve also joined up with us, so there’s nothing left to hesitate about.”

Fendix set up a sound-proof boundary, “The protector of the entirety of our Twilight Zone, the person who has become a rank 3 Magus, does not have much time left…

“The limit of the lifespan of a rank 3 Magus is a thousand years! Only Morning Star Magi can break through this limit. Ever since he started protecting this region, it has been over nine hundred years…”

Leylin went silent for a while. Then, he asked, “In other words, this war is but a probe?”

“The dark elves must have received some information from their end and started probing, but now…” Fendix forced a smile, “All I can say is that Twilight Zone is not allowed to fall back.”

Leylin’s heart fell. It looked like this rank 3 Magus was not in a good condition.
Under these circumstances, the dark elves’ probing would likely become an invasion on a large scale, perhaps even threatening the existence of humans!

Something flashed in his mind, and he suddenly thought of Baelin. “Chaos and suffering will give birth to the child of destiny. Looks like this is the overture to troubled times.”

With Leylin’s silence, the hall was filled with a tense atmosphere. “Alright, let’s not talk about these. Shall we prepare a grand welcoming banquet? We could use this opportunity and let those Magi meet you!” Seeing that the atmosphere seemed to have frozen, the rank 2 female Magus smiled slightly and suggested. “No, there’s no need! Let me rest for a while and then prepare a few rank 2 spells!”

Leylin did not have the slightest interest in these customs. “That’s fine!” Magi were generally antisocial, and this was even more so for higher ranked Magi. Fendix and the others did not take it to heart.

……

Central Twilight Zone!

This was the core of Twilight Zone, and where there was the largest population. Caravans passed by the routes frequently and were bustling with life.

In an unknown area deep in the earth’s crust, a green ray of light illuminated a room.

Bathed in the green light was a withered old man. His body was covered with wrinkles and his eyes had sunk so deep into his skull that he seemed like a dead man walking.

A large bizarre flower had tendrils wrapped around his back. Its densely packed sizeable leaves and branches were a dark green that made them seem fat and juicy, and many of its feelers hung low,
extending deep underground to an unknown destination. The stolon penetrated the man’s flesh as if taking root there, the man’s eyes shining as the roots swelled, channeling a great amount of plant matter into him. A black ray shot out from the back of the old man’s hand, projecting a totem in the form of a large spider. “My old friend, I can sense your feebleness. The aura of life is constantly waning from your body, and you can’t even reject my ‘Life Absorption’ much longer…” This was the voice of a young lady. It was pleasant to listen to, and even a little bewitching. “Anya! The ruler of the Dark Elven Empire, the most respected matriarch of the ancient clan!” The old man slowly called out this woman’s identity, and immediately after, an absolute formidable energy undulation exploded from behind the old man. “You can’t stop me…” The woman in the totem imprint sighed.
Snap!
Space seemed to freeze for a moment, but then it seemed like nothing had happened.
The black spider totems began to dissipate slowly, and Anya’s voice sounded out, “You’ve grown old already”
*Bang!* The black imprints dissolved into light. There were fewer stalks on his back now, and milky white sap flowed out of his injuries.
When the old man raised his head once again, he seemed older; patches of grey had begun to appear on his skin.
“Has this body’s vitality been taxed to its limit?” The old man looked at the spots on his body, and couldn’t help but laugh bitterly his eyes dull and lifeless.
“Time…” the old man said with a long sigh that instantly swept away the rays of light. The cave turned dark once more.

……

Aaron had returned to his room.
The last rays of twilight revealed a mix of rotting wooden boards and moldy corners. This stinky room was the ‘luxury’ he was awarded sole residence in. This dilapidated room showed how much he was valued.
Yet, at this time, he could not bring himself to care about it. His
mind was occupied with his earlier encounter. Patrol. Detection spell formation. The youth with black eyes… Memories flitted across his mind. ‘I’ve definitely seen him before! But why can’t I remember where?’ he was trying hard to recall. Suddenly, he covered his face and started screaming, veins popping out at his temples. The pain caused him to black out. His screams permeated the room until he returned to his senses a few moments later, finding himself on the ground. Hot sweat rolled down Aaron’s face as he gasped. “Again and again! This disease from my adventure in the wastelands is wasting away my spiritual force…” *Bang!* At that moment, as if unable to withstand his frustration, a piece of the floor rose up. A black gleam immediately caught Aaron’s attention. “What… is this?” Curiosity piqued, he dug out the black object and placed it on his palm. It was a ring with ancient writings on it, one whose surface was coated in black. Aaron’s heart skipped a beat. “A ring?” He twisted it around, “It’s still giving off faint energy waves, is it a magic artifact?” Magical artifacts, regardless of size and grade, will save your life on the battlefield. As his thoughts turned towards that direction, Aaron couldn’t help breathing heavily. All of a sudden, he felt a surging pain from his hand, a prick which caused him to shout and almost throw the ring to the ground. “What’s this?” Aaron looked at his forefinger, stunned, as blood dripped onto the ring from the punctured skin. A small thorn could be seen on the edge of the black ring, which was what had hurt him just now. *Xiu!* The blood drop was immediately absorbed like water on a sponge. The black ring flashed before turning grey. Simultaneously,
the energy waves it was previously giving off vanished and the ring seemed to lose all power, now just an ordinary object.

“This… is it the ‘Binding Ceremony?’ in myths” Aaron scratched his head with uncertainty. Although Aaron did not know much about magic artifacts, he was aware that some high-grade magic artifacts that were extremely rare required a ceremony to bind them to oneself. And the catalyst to begin these ceremonies… was blood!

“Hahaha! Kid, you’re right!” At this moment, a voice sounded in Aaron’s head.

“Who is it? Who’s there?” The sudden voice bewildered Aaron and he began to look around. He could see no one.

“I’m in the palm of your hand!” replied an aged voice.

“You are… the ring?” Aaron’s eyes suddenly widened.

“Mm! Kid, how about we make a deal?” the old man laughed heartily.

“No! I will not make any deals with you, nor will I sell my soul to you!” Aaron said firmly.

Magi were not reclusive people. Aaron had heard stories about ancient beings and exotic creatures that made deals with humans, toying with them and harvesting their spirits.

“Really? You don’t want to restore your aptitude anymore?” The old man’s laugh was sinister.

“Re… Restore my aptitude?” Aaron’s heartbeat quickened.

“I’ve grasped the mysteries of the soul. If your aptitude had been this low originally, it would have been difficult to increase it. But it’s still possible to reverse the effects of the damage to your soul…” the old man explained.

“Who are you exactly? Why would you help me?” Aaron asked, reignining his emotions in.

“I am the ancient legendary Magus, Merlin…… ‘s memory fragment!” the old man paused, causing Aaron to slip.
“Memory fragment?”
“Yes. My physical body has long since decayed, but this fragment has remained here, stuck in this ring…” The old man seemed to be reminiscing.
“As for why I’m helping you, I told you before. I want something in return!”
“What do you want?” Although Aaron was desperate for a cure to his problem, he was still alert and vigilant.
“Don’t worry, you’re someone destined for death. How much can I really ask of you? I’m not a devil that is here to collect your soul!” Merlin chuckled, “I need you to gather my remaining fragments! And in return, not only will I cure your disease, I’ll even pass on a complete high-grade meditation technique to you and help you advance to become an official Magus…”

......

“High-grade meditation technique, an official Magus!” Aaron was delighted, but this was immediately followed by piercing agony. Originally, he had hopes of achieving all these, but now….
“Your remaining fragments? What do you mean?”
“I’d originally made many magic equipments into which I’d placed fragments of my spirit. I’d been expecting big misfortune, and prepared them to tide it over. You need to help me find the remaining fragments of my spirit…”
“Every artifact you find will be of great help to us!” Merlin reassured Aaron upon noticing his hesitation. “Besides, the current you is too weak to help me, so I’ll also help you increase your strength as much as possible!”
“What are you trying to do? Do you intend to resurrect yourself?” Aaron guessed.
“Hehe… The rules of Death aren’t something a trifling Magus like
me can interfere with. I’m only a remnant filled with unfulfilled desires, and I’m unwilling to remain cooped up in a ring forever. I need your help to find my remaining fragments. Do this one thing for me, and we will be even. I swear on my own spirit!”

“You don’t need to swear, I will help you!” Aaron fiercely said.

“You’re right! What have you to gain from fooling a dead man like me? For that woman to abandon me for her own pleasure, I will not stand for it!” Aaron said with red eyes.

“Haha! Alright, even if I’m a mere fragment, I still possess a huge amount of knowledge. All you need is that to become Twilight Zone’s premier genius! Then, you can easily rise above the others once again!” Magus Merlin laughed heartily in Aaron’s head.

“Then, let’s summon the Trial’s Eye and sign a contract?” The fury on Aaron’s face disappeared, and he calmly stated this condition.

“Of course!” the old man said after a brief period of silence.

Aaron’s eyes flashed and he immediately summoned the Trial’s Eye hologram as a witness.

“Under the witness of the Trial’s Eye….”

In the room, the voices of two people swearing an oath could be heard.

……

“It’s done!”

On the other side, Leylin who was in the laboratory laughed, looked at his own body bound by Trial’s Eye and held a pitcher with the solution of a Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers. That thing was sent on purpose by the ring.

Merlin was just a limited AI, but it could fool the inexperienced Aaron. Furthermore, at critical moments, Leylin could control him from afar.

All in all, this was just a counterfeit of a certain ring and
grandfather. “With what I’ve given you, how will you affect the wind and waves of Twilight Zone? I’m looking forward to it!” Leylin chuckled, and an intense light flashed in his eyes.

……

As a nervous atmosphere permeated Dolon City, all the commoners were evacuated. Within days, many darkness creatures surrounded it, and among them could be seen the faint silhouettes of people.
“Sir Leylin! Sir Fendix has invited you to the City Wall!” A middle aged man wearing golden armor respectfully informed Leylin. This middle aged man was Duke Fendix, the commander of the army. The Fendix Family had consecrated numerous official Magi, many of whom were famous. Furthermore, this included two of Fendix’s own descendants.
But in front of Leylin, they were required to lower their heads like a commoner in the presence of a noble.
“Got it!” Leylin said as he slowly closed the big book in his hand and arrived at the City Wall.
Because this was the first attack, not only were there numerous soldiers and generals, but Magi were also present to watch.
“Sir Leylin!” Fendix greeted Leylin, floating in mid-air.
Leylin laughed as he flew up to join him. The two looked at a black line at the difference that was rushing at them like a tide.
“Magnificent, is it not?” The beginning stages of the war would be fought by cannon fodder. These creatures did not possess much strength, and Fendix’s expression did not even change.
“Magnificent indeed!” Leylin could not help but say lightly as he looked beyond the wall. There were hundreds of thousands of darkness creatures down below.
He had not expected so many darkness creatures to be here. And
this number was only that of those in the area. The total number of
darkness creatures in all the armies was definitely astronomical.
“Darkness creatures, human beings, and the other species; this land
cannot support all of us. Thus, every once in a while, all these races
go to war…..” a female rank 2 Magus said softly at the side.
“Among all the races, war and alliance both have occurred
countless times since long ago……”
“This war will have no winners and losers. Only after all groups
have used up nearly all their resources, supplies and soldiers, only
then, can the war end…..”
Upon hearing that, Leylin turned silent. History showed that, when both sides in a war had equal military strength at all levels, this was indeed the largest possibility. With the lifespan of the protector of Twilight Zone being at an end, they were actually at a disadvantage. Although the entire race wouldn’t be exterminated, the humans would lose large amounts of their territory.

“Our strategy this time is to rely on using the three cities to defend. Every city has three rank 2 Magi stationed there, as well as a large army. The protector of the east is on standby, ready to reinforce any of the cities as required!”

Leylin stroked his chin. “The bloodbath here will truly be terrifying….”

“Hoo.. Hoo….”

As if tired of waiting, many darkness creatures started an uproar as they charged towards the city’s walls.

Ten thousand horses charged on the field, causing the ground to tremble a little.

Fendix’s face remained unchanged and he used a secret imprint to pass a message. “Engage the first layer of defense!”

Instantly, many runes appeared on the massive city walls of Dolon, radiating light that shaped itself into a barrier.

*Boom!*
Flames! Tongues of flame shot out, swallowing the darkness creatures nearby. They gradually grew larger, slowly spreading out further.

“Isn’t it a little early to be using fire elemental formations?” Leylin cringed his brows.

“These darkness creatures may not be strong, but there are too many of them. We cannot let them exhaust our strength in numbers with just the first exchange. In addition, we need our troops to have high morale. We still have a lot of magic crystals in reserve and these outermost formations don’t consume as many. There’s no need to worry!” Fendix gazed at the battlefield and explained to Leylin casually.

Raging flames burned like a giant torch in the middle of the night, attracting innumerable Dark Moths to them.

Aaron stood at the top of the city, his face pale at the sight before him. The burning corpses had a pungent odour which sent shivers down his spine.

After waiting for the fire to burn out, the darkness creatures charged to the base of the walls and were about to enter battle with the city guard.

Out of the corner of his eye, Aaron noticed a ferocious beast with sharp claws and fierce, pearly white teeth drooling. Immediately, he looked at the grey ring on the forefinger of his right hand and shouted out within his mind: “Grandpa Merlin! If you don’t help me now, I’m definitely dead meat!”

“Fret not. With me here, nothing will happen to you!” Merlin’s voice sounded inside Aaron’s head. This was not Leylin talking to him, but the limited AI.

“Originally, you could simply have defected and run away, but it’s a pity that we are now in the middle of war! If you try to escape, all the magicians in Twilight Zone will be left with no choice but to immediately hunt you down!” Merlin seemed to sigh.
If this was during times of peace and Aaron had defected and escaped, naturally only the members of his own guild would be hunting him down. But all that changed during war, “Of course I know this!” Aaron panicked.

“Move three steps backwards! Use the Secondary Energy Fireball Technique! Aim 50 degrees to the right!” Merlin commanded with a cold and stern tone.

Aaron’s body could not help but obey the voice, and he moved three steps backwards, avoiding the claws of a beast.

“Quack! Quack!”
A huge black crow spiraled downwards and upon seeing Aaron’s escape, an almost human glint of regret flashed in its eyes.

“Dammit! I. Want. To. Kill. You!” Aaron said quickly as he paused at each syllable and swung his right hand at the bird.

A small fireball cut through the air and struck the crow.

*Boom!* A scarlet red flame burned the crow to cinders within moments. The creature did not even get to make a sound before it was burnt to a crisp.

“Just now, that was……” Aaron’s eyes lost focus.

He was certain that his fireball had been aimed nowhere close to the crow. Still, it seemed to have foolishly flown into its path.

“Foresight! This is something you must learn quickly if you don’t wish to die on the battlefield!” Merlin said from within the ring.

And Aaron looked at the admiration in the eyes of the acolytes surrounding him, and clenched his fist tightly in the dark: “I will….”

……

A few hours later, the sound of a desolate beast’s howl travelled from afar, and like the tide, all the darkness creatures retreated. Fendix nodded his head: “It seems like today was just a probe. Let
At this moment, several dark elf knights on their Underground Winter Spiders stood on the mud slope before the horde. Gazing at the scene, one of them nodded.

“The enemies’ three rank 2 matriarchs are gathered here; this is where the battle shall occur. Send the signal!”

One of the knights said a few words to a white carrier pigeon and released the bird immediately after.

The white carrier pigeon circled in the air and flew away into the horizon.

……

Night had fallen, and military curfew had made the entirety of Dolon quiet. Back in that small, moldy room, Merlin was talking to Aaron with assurance.

“You have already been sent here. No matter what reason you have, escaping your duties is a one-way street to death. There is only one thing you can do now, and that is serve! Accumulate a lot of contribution points, and use them to speed up your advance to a rank 1 Magus! Magi all have the power to make their own decisions, which will greatly increase your chances of survival……”

Although the entire battlefield was full of danger, there was still some hope.

At least for the magicians, the war council had set up a reward system. This allowed one to exchange contribution points for resources.

It is difficult for one to rise to power in periods of peace. War, however, produced countless heroes. It was a time when high risk met high reward.

“Of course, I know this!” Aaron thought deeply: “But my aptitude
and meditation technique....” He hesitated.
“I’m working to fix your aptitude. After yesterday’s minor operation, you felt it too, didn’t you?” Merlin chuckled. The only thing manipulating him now was Leylin, who was free at the moment.
It was Leylin himself who had harmed Aaron’s aptitude in the past. Now, with the A.I. Chip and the information he had obtained from his time in Nature’s Alliance, this sort of minor injury was easy to heal.
Hearing this, Aaron’s expression relaxed. Ever since Merlin had conducted an operation on him, the pain from his injuries had alleviated, and his aptitude had been restored.
“However, just this is not enough!” Merlin continued explaining, “Your aptitude is only in the third grade, and this is your limit. Magi who can increase your aptitude have long since gone extinct. Although with your current rank you can force yourself to practice your guild’s high-grade meditation technique, it doesn’t really suit you....”
Aaron’s face sank. The high-level meditation technique passed down in this Guild was Blazing Heart, and it didn’t have many requirements. As long as one had affinity for the fire element and possessed an aptitude that was at or above the third rank, they could practice it.
But there was a problem here. His primary affinity was not fire, but water. Fire was only a secondary affinity of his. Furthermore, for a magician to practice Blazing Heart, the higher the aptitude the better. His third rank aptitude just barely met the standards.
“Basically, you have no way of getting recognition and learning the high-level meditation technique from your guild!” Merlin concluded.
“Yeah! So what now?” Aaron’s eyes were tinted by dejection.
“Hahaha...” At this time, Merlin laughed out loud and said: “Have
you forgotten? I, Merlin, am a legendary Magus. How would I not have high-grade meditation techniques of my own?”

“I will bestow upon you a complete high-grade meditation technique. Furthermore, it has the frightening ability of allowing you to peer into the future! If you can predict the future, you can control everything!” Merlin’s voice was full of confidence.

“Foresee the future, control the future!” Aaron’s breathing grew heavier.

“That’s right! This meditation technique is called Sacred Flame!”

……

In Dolon City, Leylin’s bedroom was vastly different from Aaron’s. The gold-plated floor, the soft, silk brocade quilt, huge crystal chandeliers and gold and silver plates holding many fruits… comparing Aaron’s room to this place was like comparing a beggar’s shack to a grand palace.

“Few acolytes can resist the temptation of a high-grade meditation technique…” Leylin sighed. With his connection, he could tell that Aaron had begun using this new technique, and he let out a soft gasp.

Although the A.I. chip had repaired Sacred Flame and eliminated its side-effects, Leylin was still cautious of it. The soul was a huge mystery. While Leylin had previously assumed that his research into spirits was profound, after being at the mercy of a ghost, he had realized how ridiculous his thoughts were.

The amount of research he had done in the field of spirits was negligible. He had realized he was like a frog in a well, and completely abandoned any previous notions he had about the depth of his research.

Even more so, regarding the high-grade meditation technique Sacred Flame, he wished only to admire and respect it from afar.
Although he thirsted for the power of destiny, he did not want to devolve into a schizophrenic madman. Thus, it was necessary to collect data through live tests, which was what he had put into motion. Leylin had a blank expression on his face, full of indifference. His gaze pierced through a veil of light and stared into the future.

……

The next day, the darkness creatures besieged the city as usual with their cannon fodder. *Boom!* A fireball was shot and turned a huge black bear into a torch. Aaron calmly retracted his hand. Uncaring of the increasingly reverent looks of the acolytes around him, he walked to the side and began meditating to restore his spiritual force.

“How does the new meditation technique feel?” Merlin and Aaron were conversing inside his head. Aaron had previously only practiced in a simplified meditation technique. Even Leylin felt unfathomable that the transition was this smooth. And after practicing the Sacred Flame, Aaron’s aura had faintly changed.
I feel great! Be it restoring my spiritual force or during cultivation, high-grade meditation techniques are leagues beyond the simplified versions,” Aaron told Merlin as he stood up.

“But what about the aura that I’m giving off? If any of the guild members find me, I’ll definitely be caught and interrogated…”

“Haha… Don’t worry. This magic ring that I’ve smelted can conceal your aura and create artificial fluctuations in your spiritual force. With your current strength, even an official Magus won’t be able to discover you!” Merlin was very confident.

“Really?” Aaron’s eyes brightened.

“Of course, don’t you know who I am? Furthermore, this is a magical artifact! A magical artifact! Do you know what that means? You’re far too weak right now, or else you’d be able to display more of its power…”

“Not really, but I’ve heard about them before.”

Aaron scratched his head. “What do I do next?”

“Keep killing our enemies and accumulate merit points! I took a look at the reward list yesterday, and the potion there that can suppress your spiritual force will be of use. You absolutely must get that!”

“I understand!” Aaron clenched his fist tightly, eyes showing his resolution. “That lowly woman and the Broderick Family, I’ll be back!”
Two months passed by.
Outside the walls of Dolon, the war raged on. Numerous armies of dark elves had stationed themselves across from the city, their camps stretching out along tens of miles. Several golden tents stood at the center of their army camp, the aura within enough to cause even Leylin to furrow his brows.
Under organized command, the battle power of the darkness creatures and elves had risen by several levels. Dolon City was embroiled in intense battle, with the weakest rung suffering the most casualty.
However, there was a steady supply of cannon fodder from the eastern region which allowed them to hold on.
Under such high pressure, the atmosphere in Dolon City grew increasingly heavy. A sense of an impending crisis enveloped everyone’s hearts.
Aaron was now a little famous, the limelight finding him after he beat up a few acolytes who had been sent to make trouble for him.
Given that Magi valued strength more than anything else, his residence had now been shifted. This one was bright, clean, and much larger than before.
Aaron was currently sitting on a blue striped bedsheets with beads of sweat rolling down his face. Leylin, in the meantime, was monitoring his actions from within the black ring.
This was the first time he was using the unique spiritual force born from his new meditation technique, Sacred Flame, to explore the tides of destiny.
Leylin paid close attention to this and ordered the A.I. Chip to periodically collect data and accumulate information in his database.
The Sacred Flame Aaron trained in was obviously not the one which the A.I. Chip had perfected. This version had been modified by Leylin using the chip, and many manipulative portions had been added in.

“It’s here!” Leylin laughed, and black undulations filled his eyes. Immediately after, the visions were intercepted by the ring. Above the city, Aaron rose his arms and shot out a fireball, causing a huge wild boar to roll down, while a grin appeared on his face. But at this moment, an anomaly occurred. A large black monkey jumped out of the retreating horde. It had three eyes, and the centre one shot out a red beam. The monkey itself exploded forth with a power that equalled an official Magus! Without any time to dodge, Aaron was blasted into smithereens! Such scenes flashed across Leylin’s eyes but were rather blurry and unordered.

“So that’s how it is! At this rate, Aaron will die in the siege three days later?” Leylin touched his chin.

[Information from the meditation technique has been intercepted! Allow transmission?] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice intoned.

“Yes!” The moment Leylin spoke, Aaron’s body trembled on the bed, his two eyes losing focus and rolling back as if he had seen something terrifying.

Leylin’s had implemented backdoor changes to the Sacred Flame. By coupling these changes with the limited AI in the ring, any premonitions Aaron had would be intercepted and first seen by Leylin. Only with his approval would these scenes from the future enter Aaron’s mind. Besides interception, Leylin could modify these bits of vision at will. In other words, Aaron only saw what Leylin had wanted him to see.

After all, it was better to be cautious towards acolytes whose training in this allowed them to see the future. If not, what was he
to do if they got a hold of his plans through their prophecies?  
Of course, Aaron did not have a strong cultivation in this technique yet. He was only capable of prophesying events at the ability of a level 1 acolyte, which kept him from being able to sense anything about Leylin.
Even if he advanced to become an official Magus, with Leylin intercepting first, he would not sense anything. To become cognizant of the interception, he needed to, at the very least, equal Leylin in power. This meant he could not predict Leylin’s actions and prepare against them until he was promoted to a rank 2 Magus! Unfortunately, Leylin would not give him the opportunity to do so.
“Although the A.I. Chip could not upgrade Sacred Flame past rank 3, at least it’s no longer restricted to only females.” Leylin touched his chin.
“There aren’t enough guinea pigs yet!” He turned around and glanced at the colourful necklace and incomplete notebook on the table.
These were at most special magical objects. He only called them magic artifacts to fool acolytes like Aaron.
But it was enough.
“On the battlefield, one cannot control their own life nor death. If I put out this bait, they’ll have to bite no matter how suspicious they are.!” Leylin beamed confidently.
As for why he had not bought slaves or chosen people from Nature’s Alliance? It would be too obvious that he was the mastermind, which was not conducive to Leylin’s plans.
Meanwhile, Aaron was scared stupid by the prediction.
“Hah… I’ll die three days later, at the hands of a darkness creature with the strength of an official Magus,” he huffed roughly. He had visibly paled and was trembling in the aftermath of that premonition.
“What are you afraid of? This is just a possibility in the river of destiny. I’ve already predicted my death tens of times, but haven’t I gotten through alive and well?” Merlin appeared, looking disdainful.

“Yes, yes!” The light in Aaron’s eyes brightened. He now knew the many benefits of being able to make use of the power of destiny.

“What should we do now?” Aaron began to ponder enthusiastically.

“It’s simple! Just apply to leave this region or pretend you’re injured and hide for these few days!” Merlin seemed to be very experienced in this.

……

The dark elves’ offensive was not limited to just the eastern region of Twilight Zone.

The northern region had also suffered the charge of the dark elves. City after city fell until a few rank 2 Magi struck out, finally stabilising the situation. Still, they had been able to push the battlefront inwards by a few hundred meters. They had even dispatched elite Underground Winter Spider knights who seemed to be scouts sent for reconnaissance.

The eastern region was comparatively quiet. The tripartite defense of Dolon, Wakeshire, and Sadoor, with the continuous supply of troops, maintained an uneasy stalemate. Even so, capitalising on the endless darkness creatures as cannon fodder, the dark elves had caused many injuries to the Magi defending the posts.

It was a given that numerous acolytes would die, but even some official Magi had fallen. As for regular soldiers and knights? Too many of them were lost to even count.

In the blink of an eye, ten years passed. Leylin had been relieved a few times and periodically returned to Nature’s Alliance.

In this period of time, however, he kept a low profile and seldom
did anything flashy. Hence, he did not have a large reputation. Only he knew how much he had improved during this period of time.

“Leylin! I’ve received the heart of the Earthen Fiend. There are fifty here, and I’ve sent them to your lab!” A rune lit up and transmitted Fendix’s voice.

“Thanks a lot! I’ll get in touch with you later.” Leylin answered delightfully. “I’ve finally gotten it! Now all the requirements have been met!”

He hurried to the laboratory, where a Magus dressed in black robes was waiting for him. The man respectfully bowed his head, saying, “This is the heart of the Earthen Fiend that Lord Fendix wanted me to pass on to you. Please sign here to show that you received it.”

“En!” Leylin nodded and took the ingredients. After checking every single one, he nodded in satisfaction. He waved his arm over the piece of parchment the Magus in black robes proffered, and a black snake imprint formed immediately.

Seeing this, the Magus bowed and respectfully left.

Leylin entered his laboratory and activated spell formations for isolation and defense. A layer of various lit runes began to circulate outside.

“With all the ingredients here, I can finally attempt to brew potions!” Smiling, Leylin looked at his stats.


He had spent every day of the past ten years training in his high-grade meditation technique, slowly tempering his spiritual force. Over the course of his training of Kemoyin’s Pupil, he began to feel that the issue of irritability that was caused by his premature advancement was slowly corrected.
Given the quick pace of his advancement last time, an unstable foundation was only to be expected. However, all of that was made up for in the past ten years.
Ten years was a long time.
In this period, besides training in his meditation technique, Leylin constantly absorbed more information regarding Twilight Zone to supplement his A.I. Chip’s database. Given that he was already a rank 2 Magus, he was respected everywhere. To his benefit, most guilds simply gave up all the information they had to him.
In addition, he’d exchanged his contribution points for large amounts of the best research in Twilight Zone. This new research synergized perfectly with the data he had already stored from the south coast.
“A.I. Chip! Begin experimentation on brewing the “Giant Serpent’s Breath” Potion!” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he commanded. Immediately after, with a pat of his spatial pouch, all sorts of ingredients filled the table.
The Giant Serpent’s Breath Potion was an unexpected gain from the storage of a small-scale guild in Twilight Zone. It was originally an incomplete recipe for an ancient spiritual force potion. It was originally not named such, but Leylin and the A.I. Chip had modified to suit Warlocks in general, and his own Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in particular. Thus, it had been renamed after all the changes.
In other words, he had adjusted the foundations of the ancient formula to suit his individual needs.
After he’d advanced to become a rank 2 Warlock, all the previous ancient potions he had gathered, such as the Tears of Mary, were now useless to him.

On the other hand, this Giant Serpent’s Breath was the fruit of ten years of laborious research. It was a potion capable of increasing the spiritual force of Warlocks.

Pitifully, Leylin had been unable to find a substitute for the heart of the Earthen Fiend until now, and he was not able to proceed any further. Training in ancient high-grade meditation techniques was about relentless effort which would eventually pay off. Time was of the essence.

But at this point, the improvement in Leylin’s spiritual force had begun to slow down.

This was common when cultivating using high-grade meditation techniques. The farther one went, the more difficult it was to advance. Sadly, the increasing intensity of the war, as well as the deaths of several official Magi had left Leylin feeling a rising urgency.

The heart of the Earthen Fiend came at the right time!

After ten years of hard work, all the hidden damage to Leylin’s body had been healed. He could now continue to advance his strength using potions. This was obviously a good thing for him.

But that was not all. Leylin shut his eyes and took over Merlin’s role in Aaron’s ring.

Aaron was now ten years older, but due to the unique ability of Magi, he still looked rather young on the outside.

“Finally… I’m finally back!” Aaron stroked a roadsign, looking emotional.

This was where the headquarters of his guild was located. Seeing the unchanged architecture, Aaron felt like nothing had changed.

“Ha, Aaron? Are you not dead yet? Weren’t you at Dolon City? Why are you back? Did you desert your position?” a young
magician with an aquiline nose said with an incredulous look on his face.
Immediately, large numbers of acolytes came out of their rooms, following behind a young man, as if grouping around a revered leader. Behind him was a young woman who was glancing at Aaron with a complicated expression.
The magician at the center was dressed in luxurious robes. Although he only had the energy fluctuations of a level 3 acolyte, he wore quite a few magic artifacts.
“Aaron?” He furrowed his brows, and then looked at the woman behind him. “Is this that Aaron?”
“Yes!” The young woman nodded and grabbed the young man’s hand, “But I no longer have any relationship with him. I was the one to suggest that he go to Dolon. Did you forget that?”
“Ah, yes, that did happen!” The young noble patted his head. Aaron, who was watching this, looked increasingly gloomy.
“I don’t care how you came back. Just remember this, she’s mine. Behave, or else…”
The young man yawned, bored. Waving Aaron away just as one would a beggar, he prepared to leave. The surrounding acolytes all snickered, matching his actions.
“Hehe, what a great show!” Aaron suddenly lifted his head, and the spiritual force of an official Magus suddenly burst out of his body, sweeping across the area.
Many of the acolytes were paralyzed and fell to the ground, not even daring to move.
“Ah… An official Magus!” The young noble’s expression changed, while the facial muscles of the woman twitched.
She had never imagined that the trash she’d abandoned would one day come this far.
Her regret lasted only a moment before it morphed into fear and resentment.
'Destroy him! Destroy him!'  
She may feel betrayal and resentment now, but such was the truth. The young woman’s expression distorted further.  
‘Which Magus has arrived?’  
*Xiu!* A black figure flashed, and all of a sudden, a white-haired old man appeared.  
‘Mentor, I’m back!’ Aaron bowed towards this old man.  
‘Ah! You- You’re Aaron!’ The old man rubbed his eyes, thinking he had seen an illusion.  

……  

A few hours later, in the old man’s office.  
‘Haha, this is great! Not only have you regained your innate talent, you’ve also used the simplified version of Blazing Heart to advance into an official Magus, and even accumulated enough merits points to return…’  
The old man’s face was flushed red, and it was evident that he had communicated with the people at Dolon.  
While Aaron accompanied him in his laughter, he was sneering deep inside.  
Information about him was not a secret. If his mentor had been keeping tabs on him, then he would long since have found out. This display meant that this ‘mentor’ of his had assumed he would die at Dolon and had long since given up on him.  
However, he was an adult who had experienced a decade in the warzone. He had long since grown adept at hiding his inner emotions.  
‘Mentor, I would like to apply for access to train in Blazing Heart, as well as the treatment that official Magi in the guild have!’ Aaron spoke indifferently.  
‘Ah, that’s right! You should train in that since the simplified
version is useless after you become an official Magus!”

The old Magus nodded, “As long as you pass the test to confirm your meditation technique, everything you request will be granted!”

Aaron touched the black ring on his finger and laughed nonchalantly. Techniques to check for the aura of a meditation technique were invented by these guilds to screen traitors and spies. Deep down, he was communicating with Merlin, “Grandpa Merlin, why do we have to ask for Blazing Heart?”

Over the past ten years, as Merlin saved Aaron’s life multiple times and taught him a lot, the two had grown very close.

“Even if you train in Sacred Flame, you’ll still need to put up a front!”

Merlin appeared in Aaron’s mind in the form of an old wise man as he slowly explained the situation, “You were initially a worthless acolyte without a high-grade meditation technique. If you didn’t gain a guild’s high-grade meditation technique as a front, how else would you explain your advancement from now? Also, don’t forget the guild’s resources. I have a magic artifact’s blueprint for you. If you can craft it, it will definitely increase your strength by a huge margin!”

“What magic artifact?” Merlin’s words piqued Aaron’s curiosity.

“Meteor Sword, a high-grade magic artifact. Although I still have the designs of more powerful artifacts, they’re all too much for you right now…” Merlin said nonchalantly.

Aaron nodded. With his current strength as an official Magus, it was practically impossible for him to make magic artifacts. Only rank 2 Magi had the opportunity to have a high-grade magic artifact, and for him to get one this early was already very lucky.

“I have to help find Grandpa Merlin’s other fragments sooner.”

Aaron was currently feeling extremely proud of his achievements.

……
A few days later, the A.I. Chip prompted thus. Aaron had received the high-grade meditation technique, which meant that Leylin got it as well.

Although Leylin salivated over the power of destiny, the high-grade meditation techniques of other guilds still attracted him greatly. Other than to keep away unwanted suspicions, this was another reason he didn’t use his own acolytes for this experiment.

As a bonus, Leylin was now bringing into reality the sword he had designed.

Meteor Sword was a Warlock-exclusive weapon he had designed for himself. He had drawn inspiration for it from Rays of Dawn, the middle-grade magic artifact of the south coast. He had spent much time and effort on it, and it could be said that most of the time he had spent in Potter Town had been dedicated to this experiment.

However, the materials for this Warlock-exclusive weapon were far too hard to find. Even Leylin did not possess all of them.

Hence, he intentionally disseminated the blueprint parts to his ‘apprentices’ learning Sacred Flame, using them to gather the materials.

Their ability to see the future gave them a high success rate at this. “I also lack some raw materials for my potions. I can get them to look for those as well!” Leylin touched his chin and had an idea.

The seeds he had planted were now beginning to bear fruit. Through distributing numerous ‘grandpas,’ he had picked out a few talented acolytes and taught them the modified version of Sacred Flame. He was now gathering all the information from their foresight without being anywhere near them. After collating all the information, Leylin managed to roughly discern what the future
held. He had even seen himself in some of the acolytes’ predictions. Of course, these scenes were all intercepted, so the acolytes were unable to receive them. Suddenly, Leylin’s brows furrowed. He saw a scene in front of him. A blonde female acolyte’s eyes were rolling back, her body trembling uncontrollably. Scattered images were sent to Leylin.
In the many scattered images, there was also a figure that Leylin was extremely familiar with.
“Baelin?” A smile crept upon his lips.

……

“Are you sure it’s here?” Baelin asked, swallowing hard. The pitch-black hole in front of him seemed like the mouth of some weird creature. The aura on his body rose rapidly, nearly exceeding the limits of a regular human.
“We dark elves get all our Underground Winter Spiders from this hallowed place. It is where the Underground Winter Spider Emperor lives. Do you really think I’d risk my life to bring you here if I wasn’t sure?” Memphis rolled his eyes.
“As long as you can kill or dominate it, the Underground Winter Spider knights would immediately fall apart, and this war might just end,” he said with a sigh.
“How powerful is that Underground Winter Spider Emperor?” Baelin felt uncomfortable looking at the hole as if he had been laid bare before someone’s eyes.
“At least rank 2!” Memphis waved his arms, “But luckily, it’s deep in slumber right now, and won’t notice you.”
“I can’t help, though,” he added, “Any dark elves who’ve signed contracts with Underground Winter Spiders will wake it up as soon as they enter the vicinity!”
Not all ancient creatures were at the Morning Star realm. Morning
Star Magi were considered formidable even in ancient times, so how could such strong creatures be common? Baelin and Memphis had a very simple plan: they would either kill the Underground Winter Spider Emperor or force it to submit, a move so drastic which would cause enough damage to the dark elves’ military that they would be forced to withdraw,

“…Fine,” Baelin huffed. He turned and said, “I’m ready. Come!” In front of him was a bizarre lump of meatball that looked like a huge poached egg. What was even more terrifying was the presence of dozens of eyes on the thing, all open and staring at Baelin without blinking.

“How many times must I tell you? Even if you received my owner’s inheritance and advanced to become a rank 1 Magus, the current you are far from an opponent for rank 2 Magi. Leave alone you, even with me joining the fray, we won’t survive this encounter!” The lump said, blinking. It had the delicate voice of a child.

“That was an order!” Baelin’s expression darkened. “Alright, alright! Whatever! I finally find a new owner, and he turns out to be an idiot!” The egg-like creature shook its head.

With the order given, it shot over to Baelin’s body, extending countless meaty feelers that fused with him. Baelin grew much larger than before as the meat solidified and formed a dull red armour patterned with tens of eyes, something that made it seem very mysterious.

The moment the armour formed, Baelin’s aura broke through the limits of humans, stabilising at the strength of an official Magus.

“This map and amulet have been passed down from generation to generation. I wish you luck in this venture!” Memphis sincerely blessed him.

“Thank you!” Baelin answered, a pair of metallic large red wings spreading behind him before he charged into the hole.

The journey to escort Memphis back home had been arduous.
Baelin, Jenny, and the dark elf faced danger after danger, all while being hunted down by people from both sides. Fortunately, they had managed to survive the ordeal and infiltrate the Dark Elven Empire, getting him to a safe area. In addition, Baelin had acquired a unique inheritance which had led him along the path of a Bio Booster, a branch of ancient Magi. After gaining this inheritance, Baelin’s progress soared, until he became an official Magus. With the Bio Boosting armour that he had obtained and inherited as well, his strength was beyond that of a regular official Magus. The moment he jumped into the hole, he suddenly felt as if the coin he hung around his neck heated up…

In the laboratory. Leylin glanced at the golden crystal in his hands. Golden liquid now occupied more than half the volume within and appeared to be glittering splendidly. “As expected of the child of destiny. This rate of improvement is something even I might not be able to match!” Leylin sighed. Back then, he had tested Baelin for his aptitude, but it had appeared to be meagre. It was basically impossible for him to advance to be an official Magus. In addition, Leylin was only teaching him out of curiosity and playfulness, and would naturally not impart knowledge only Magi were privy to. Now though, destiny had played its hand. Baelin’s strength was growing boundlessly, to the point that he could now affect the results of the war.

In ancient times, the spread of ideas between different worlds, as well as the creativity and tolerance of ancient Magi, had led to the formation of many different branches. Some examples were Bloodline Warlocks, Elemental Bards, Branded Swordsmen, Steel Knights, and even the recently rediscovered Bio Boosters.
Leylin recalled the information he had recently found from an ancient volume about Bio Boosters. These ancient Magi were extremely strange and required their inheritors to have the aptitude to become both Knights and Magi. In addition, they had to have Bio Boosting armour! After obtaining the armour, a Bio Booster’s strength would rise sharply, and after fusing, the armor would automatically change the body of the host; this strengthened them continuously. In addition, this armour could be inherited. The moment a Bio Booster gained the armour left behind by a higher ranked Bio Booster, they would immediately gain more strength. In Leylin’s eyes, Baelin was quite suited to become a Bio Booster. “Destiny…” Leylin sniggered and left the laboratory.

……

“Fendix, thank you for the hearts of Earthen Fiends. I’ll make it up to you for whatever I haven’t paid you!” Holding a cup of coffee, Leylin chatted with Magus Fendix, who was in front of him. “These are all small matters. You don’t need to be so polite!” Fendix laughed but did not reject him. Magi were quite clear about this.
“I just came out from the laboratory. How is the situation with the war?” Leylin asked after some small talk.
“It’s still the same. The tripartite defense is barely holding off the matriarchs. All our manpower is being whittled away.” Fendix’s expression showed his excitement.
“Quite a few darkness creatures have been eliminated. The regions we’ve given up already are enough for them to proliferate, so they’ve begun to show signs of retreat. All sorts of voices are
already sounding among the inner circles of the dark elves. Although the matriarchs are currently suppressing them, they, too, have to worry about the repercussions of such an act…”

Leylin nodded. He knew that there were dissenting voices among the dark elves, and then there were Baelin’s actions as well.

“I reckon that if there aren’t any large changes, this war will end within five years!” Fendix seemed to heave a sigh of relief.

This conclusion was about the same as what Leylin had come up with, and he nodded as well.

*Bang!*

The door to the parlor was suddenly pushed open, and a female rank 2 Magus entered, looking grim.

“Something’s happened in the north!”

……

A while earlier…

Potti City was the center of the north’s defense. The human armies, backed by numerous Magi, confronted the coalition of darkness creatures and dark elves at that location.

A young Magus passed through a long paved pathway and arrived before a golden door.

“Magus Longbottom, is anything wrong?” the two Magi at the golden door asked.

“I have something pressing to report. Please let me see Lord Yade!” Longbottom looked to be in a hurry.

“Something pressing to report? Fine! We’ll pass on the message!” The two Magi exchanged a glance, and one of them immediately ran inside.

A moment later, the Magus returned and nodded, “Lord Yade is willing to see you!” Longbottom immediately entered through the door.
Behind the golden door was a large room, with a milky-white radiance around it. A Magus that looked very youthful wore a loose and comfortable robe and was sitting behind a large writing table. “Longbottom greets the great protector of the North!” Longbottom respectfully greeted while half-kneeling. “It’s little Longbottom! What’s wrong?” An aged voice was produced from the young man’s mouth. “I found a small group of dark elves while on patrol. I discovered this after the fight!” Longbottom respectfully held a black scroll above his head. A streak of blue light flashed, and it scanned the scroll up and down. “No abnormal energy reactions! Level of danger: 0!” A gentle female voice sounded, and Longbottom trembled. He knew this was the voice of a spirit genie. “Let me see!” With a wave of the young man’s arm, the scroll in Longbottom’s arms flew to the table and was unfurled. Something that looked like a map appeared in front of the young man’s eyes, with all sorts of red markings appearing all over it. “Oh? This is?” Magus Yade began to look grim, his body automatically leaning forward. Suddenly, the situation changed! A translucent black seed appeared from the map and turned into a ray of light, entering Yade’s forehead. “A parasitic seed! You-!” Yade was enraged. Right after that, large amounts of black tendrils and vines wrapped up his body, sealing him within. “Warning! Warning! Intruder!” The spirit genie’s voice became frigid. Powerful magical rays formed from a powerful spell illuminated
the room.
“I’ve been waiting for this!” A fiendish smile appeared on Longbottom’s face, and he waved.
A black ray travelled by Magus Yade and destroyed the oil painting behind him, revealing a complicated spell formation.
The core of the spirit genie!” Longbottom sighed slightly, unhesitatingly releasing a shockwave to destroy the spell formation.

*Tss tss…* Instantly, the spirit genie’s voice faded, and Potti City immediately grew chaotic.

*Rumble!* As if long since prepared, the opposing dark elves and beast wave unleashed their most ferocious barrage of attacks.

While the Magi were engrossed in battle, the defensive spell formation that had lost its spirit genie sputtered out.

“What are you doing?” Two Magi immediately rushed out.

“Life Absorption!” Longbottom’s expression remained unchanged as he waved his hands. A few green beams flashed on the two, and they began to age visibly. Their life force was rapidly depleting.

“Begin localization!” Longbottom took a glance at Yade, who was still sealed, and produced some materials and began setting something up.

*Rumble!* Minutes later, with the guidance of a spell formation that glowed purple, eight large spider legs pierced through, tearing the ceiling apart. On top of the giant spider that entered was a completely naked girl.

This girl had a slight smile on her face, her skin pale and ears pointy. She radiated a captivating charm.
“Greetings, matriarch!” Longbottom immediately bowed. “Well done, Longbottom!” The young girl giggled, causing Longbottom’s heart to leap. “Though you’ve wasted a portion of a precious Earthen Fetal Membrane, it’s still not a bad result to be able to deal with a clone of your opponent. After all, that person’s a peak rank 2 existence!” The young girl spoke slowly. Just her voice was enough for his heart to be inflamed with desire. Rank 2 Magi were powerhouses in their own right. If one was prepared, even the dark elves’ matriarchs would find them difficult to deal with. Additionally, there were bloodline detection spell formations scattered throughout Potti City. Any dark creature that entered would immediately be discovered. But Longbottom was different! He was a pure human, and what more a Magus. Though he was a wandering Magus, he had some achievements and was well received. Earthen Fetal Membrane was a top-class treasure of the Dark Elven Empire used to conceal one’s aura. Only when all sorts of conditions were favorable to him could he make use of the parasitic seed. This had made Longbottom very proud of himself, but her words had surprised him greatly. “Clone?” “Yes! Aren’t you going to come out?” The girl giggled while speaking at the air beside her. *Xiu Xiu!* Two pure white arrows of light shattered the tendrils, revealing a hazy human figure. This figure transformed into a long line and shot out, entering another figure that had just appeared. “This is the real body of Protector Yade!” Longbottom stared at the figure overhead that looked exactly the same as the one before, his fists tightly clenched.
“I didn’t expect Her Majesty, the Empress to come personally!”
Yade, who was floating in mid-air, paid no attention to Longbottom who was on the ground. His eyes were riveted on the young girl before him, gaze tinged with fear.
“Hehe… With your clone heavily injured, how much of your strength can you really use? 70%? Or 80%?”
The girl could not stop laughing, while her back tore open.

……

A monster that was a cross between a human and a spider appeared in the air, and a massive darkness drowned out Protector Yade…
Not far away in the horizon, Magi were stunned to find that, besides the dark elves and the horde of darkness creatures, dwarves and gnomes had joined the battle.
Half a day later, an earth-shattering piece of news spread throughout Twilight Zone.
Potti City had fallen! The Empress of the Dark Elven Empire had personally acted and killed Protector Yade of the northern region!
The dwarven tribes and gnome kingdom had also entered the battle, and the entire northern Twilight region fell into enemy hands, entering a reign of terror.
Still in Potti City.
The master of this region had changed. Squads of elite Underground Winter Spider knights patrolled the streets, and one could occasionally see dwarven warriors and gnome puppeteers passing through.
In the great palace hall at the heart of the city.
The Empress summoned Longbottom in.
“You did very well this time, Longbottom!” The girl spoke from the bottom of her heart. If not for him plotting against their opponent’s clone, she could not have killed him as easily.
“It is my honour to be able to serve the Empress.” Longbottom gazed at the girl’s absolutely beautiful face, seeming enchanted.

“Now, I need you to travel to the central region and drum up hate against Magi.” The girl did not seem disgusted by his gaze, instead of wriggling her body to expose more of her skin to the Magus before her.

“Hate against Magi?” Longbottom could not understand the reasoning behind this.

“Yes. Magi and the nobility all hold large amounts of knowledge and power in their grasp, restricting peasants and regular humans from obtaining them. Animosity, abhorrence, and anguish have been building up through the generations. What we need now is a tipping point, an opportunity for it all to explode into a huge uproar!”

The girl continued quietly, “I need you to go to the central region and cause unrest in the name of a revolution. When the time comes, you can even spread high-grade meditation techniques.”

“…Yes…” Longbottom answered after a pause. He would cause a rebellion at his enemy’s side, and then flank the enemy from both sides.

He knew that under the governance of Magi, commoners had been living miserably. The Magi and nobles enjoyed everything, while the rest had to suffer from day to night. Even then, they might not even get a good meal out of it. Crimes could be pinned on them for offending nobility, or in the worst case scenario, they would be killed without recourse!

It was difficult for commoners to be allowed to grow even if they had the aptitude

Even if they were lucky enough to enter a guild, they would still be discriminated against and even treated as guinea pigs or cannon fodder.

Of course, if one only had resentment and no strength, they would
only be mercilessly massacred by Magi. After all, power was still in the hands of Magi. But it was different now. Magi now were confronting a great enemy, and their mental and physical efforts were mostly spent. In addition, there were calls for a rebellion. Sometimes, resounding catchphrase and beautiful promises for the future could attract many hot-blooded teenagers to turn their heads. If they were given some power, it would be a disaster. When that happened, there might be internal strife amongst Magi. How many people would die? How much blood would be spilled? Longbottom knew this very well, but he had no thoughts of opposing this, nor any pity. All he had in him was the thrill of taking revenge.

“Leylin, I’ll make you suffer tens and hundreds of time for what you did to me. I promise!” Longbottom howled in his heart. If Leylin was here, he would find that this traitor called Longbottom was the little boy, Longbottom, he had played around with in Potter Town. “En! Very good. When you’re back, I’ll carry out the bloodline changing ceremony. From then on, you’ll be part of us dark elves, even in blood.” The girl nodded. “Many thanks, Empress!” Longbottom touched his head to the ground.

……

“Longbottom?” Hearing the rank 2 female Magus’ words, Leylin suddenly had the urge to cry and laugh as well. “Though the name might just be a coincidence, I have a feeling that this traitor to our race, Longbottom, is the same person as the one
in Potter Town!”
Leylin sighed ruefully. When he had found out that this boy had left to seek better opportunities, he had not taken it seriously. The chances of success were much too low. Unexpectedly, he had actually succeeded and even become a rank 1 Magus!
Without proper tools, Leylin could not tell a Magus’ aptitude. Hence, he did not know that Longbottom had the talent to become a Magus.
“But this is interesting. Looks like Potter Town is a place where Twilight Zone’s destiny converges.” Leylin touched his chin, deep in thought.
Potter Town had seemed like a regular little common town and had probably already fallen into enemy hands. However, it was surprising that it had given birth to both Baelin and Longbottom, the two darlings of destiny.
“Baelin and Longbottom are like the two sides of a coin. One day, they will meet again, and that day will be when Twilight Zone’s power of destiny is most concentrated!”
Leylin suddenly had a strange premonition.
“It’s quite interesting being able to shape history…” Strictly speaking, he had personally created this entire situation. It was in Potter Town where everything began. It made him feel like the destiny of Twilight Zone was in his hands. But this only left Leylin sneering.
“In that case, let me be the one to end this all!”
These thoughts merely flashed in his mind, while the other two rank 2 Magi’s expressions were filled with worry.
“Now that the entire northern region is gone, we have lost a fifth of our power.”
Fendix caressed a ring on his hand that had a ruby the size of a pebble, a dark cloud seemingly hanging over him.
“Not only that. Besides the dark elves and horde of darkness creatures, even the dwarves and gnomes have appeared!”
The female Magus smiled wryly.
Twilight Zone was a small area, and the subterranean world had all sorts of incredible races. The humans and dark elves were the two largest powers, but one could not underestimate the gnomes and dwarves either.
When they joined forces, the humans were definitely in a disadvantageous position.
“This war could result in genocide!” Fendix drew in a deep breath, “We need to get the war council and mobilise everything we have…”
“Before that, we need to first deal with the threats outside.”
A golden ring on Leylin’s finger lit up, and he immediately straightened his back, “The dark elves are on the offensive once again, and it can be confirmed that they have three regiments of elite Underground Winter Spider Knights, backed by three matriarchs.”
“Those wretched pointy-eared bastards…” Fendix got up, furious.
Emergency sirens were blaring throughout Dolon City. Leylin, Fendix, and the others floated across to the front of the city, watching the scene outside.

Ten years where life and resources were constantly lost had visibly reduced the numbers of the horde of darkness creatures. The newest reports suggested that the beast emperors had already made plans to withdraw their troops and end the war. If not for the fall of the north and interference of the dwarves and gnomes, the war was on track to end in a few years. The current situation was different, however. The humans of the subterranean world were now facing the possibility of extinction.

“Underground Winter Spider knights! And they’re elites!” Leylin looked up. Three regiments of Underground Winter Spider knights

Huge spider legs trod the ground silently, their dark elf riders wreathed in exquisite thin armor that looked ornamental. The surface of the armors was composed of intricate patterns. Matched with the handsome faces and lances, they seemed like a royal parade to Leylin.

Although these knights seemed extravagant and pretentious, the searing bloodlust they emanated was tangible. This was something only battle-hardened elites with fearless hearts could have.

“These are the dark elven royal family’s knights. I didn’t expect them to be sent out!” Fendix looked grim.
“Elite Underground Winter Spider knights are slightly more powerful than our Grand Knights. Those at the level of vice-captain and above are even as powerful as official Magi. Three formations of a thousand each, there are three thousand here!” The female Magus inhaled sharply.

“They’re planning to conquer Dolon City in one go!!” Leylin sighed lightly, “Do we need to act?”

“There’s no other way!” Fendix smiled wryly, “But their matriarchs are sure to obstruct as well, and we have no guarantee that we can win against them. I can already feel the power of the abyss emanating from their bodies…”

Cities were usually watched over by rank 2 Magi. The opposing camp had three matriarchs whose mission was to tie down the rank 2 Magi of the defending city. If they could not, the three rank 2 Magi would cooperate to cast a few large-scaled magic spells which would decimate these troops.

“There’s no choice. Let’s use ‘it’.” Leylin suddenly exclaimed.

“Hm?” Fendix chanced a glance at Leylin. “That’s our trump card that we’re planning to use in the final battle…”

“This is already the final battle!” the female rank 2 Magus interrupted before Leylin could answer, “I agree!”

“Alright, I’ll agree too!” Fendix glanced at the large dark elven army and laughed wryly, “This truly might be the final battle.”

With the three Magi cooperating, a unique order was sent down using secret imprints, and under the lead of the Magi, the troops on the ground shifted some special items onto the city walls. They were numerous giant casks. They were like the wooden barrels found in bars to store beer, with firm iron hoops on either side keeping them steady. There were also letters of the Twilight Zone written on them in blood red, indicating danger.

“Now, let us wait and see!”

The three Magi exchanged glances, and then fixed their attention on
the fighting.
“Attack!” With the signal from the dark elves at the other side, a large wave of darkness creatures charged towards them.
“Engage the third layer of defense!”
Fluorescent light exploded at the walls, revealing unending defensive runes. Large amounts of energy particles brought with them a terrifying destructive power, launching outwards. The darkness creatures charging over were injured by energy particles of multiple elements, covering their bodies with wounds. It resulted in a rain of flesh and blood.
A few of the more powerful ones dodged the attack. They climbed up on the carcasses of their comrades and clashed with the soldiers and Magi on the walls. In a moment, blood and fire exploded!
The Magi and knights on the walls bellowed, and all sorts of spells and energy fluctuations were released. Numerous darkness creatures fell from the walls.
This scene had repeated often in the past, and each time the dark elves would end up retreating, which ended the fight. Now, however, things seemed to have changed. The horde continued to charge with reddened eyes, unfearing of death.
*Tak tak tak!* Regular explosions sounded. The elite Underground Winter Spider knights seemed to have received an order, as they began to advance.
Although they were merely 3000 strong, they were like a surge of steel flooding over when they acted together.
“Go!” Underground Winter Spiders with barbs on their legs easily climbed up the city wall like monkeys.
For darkness creatures, the city wall was lofty and difficult to reach, but for these Underground Winter Spider Knights, they were like a level road.
“Attack!” One of them rushed towards the wall, brandishing the
black lance in his hand. Multiple snowy-white pointed javelins were sent thrusting like blooming flowers, and a few soldiers in leather armour collapsed, blood splattering everywhere. Amongst them, there was even a knight in heavy armour! In front of the elite Underground Winter Spider Knights, regular soldiers and knights could not take on even a single blow, and only Grand Knights had a chance to win.

“Secondary Energy Fireball!”
“Vine Winding!”
“Icy Pearl!” The magicians waiting on top of the city walls immediately acted, and the knights who had just rushed up the walls were drowned in the colourful rays of magic spells. Their powerful bodies and mounts that they had always been proud of were torn into pieces by various spells. However, the surviving Underground Winter Spider Knights still charged on fearlessly, and many captains and vice-captains launched forth with spells of their own, clashing with the Magi on the walls.

“Hands of Corrosion!” A knight in gleaming armour, riding a larger spider than its peers, called out loudly. Numerous black palms extended from the air and advanced towards the opposing Magi. “Ah!” A level 3 acolyte’s face was caught by one of the black hands and immediately wasted away, blood and flesh wearing away. “Be careful! He’s a vice-captain and has the strength of an official Magus!”

A middle-aged Magus with white air spoke in a low voice, his innate defensive spell formation flickering. “The situation doesn’t look good,” Leylin commented, watching the scene below. At this moment, the three Magi felt a few bursts of spiritual force aimed at them that equalled their own strengths being released from
the enemy camp. If they dared intervene, they would be faced with a terrifying attack by the matriarchs. In a situation where the higher-ranked forces were level, whoever first made the first move would be at a disadvantage. Thankfully, Leylin and the others were not planning on doing so. From the looks of it, though, only rank 2 Magi could change the outcome. “Let’s begin!” Leylin spoke lightly, the apathy in his eyes becoming more evident. “The command has been sent down. I only hope the matriarchs won’t go crazy and fight with us!” The ring on Fendix’s finger flashed red as he smiled wryly. At this moment, it looked like the official Magi on the city walls had received the command. “Begin! Activate!” They shouted, and all sorts of spells were aimed at the casks, causing them to explode into fragments. *Rumble!* The wooden boards exploded open, and the red liquid within spilled to the ground. This red liquid was very muddy and looked to be some red wine that had yet to settle. After reaching the ground, it became volatile and created a red mist. In that moment, the top of the city wall was wrapped in red mist. “Be careful of the toxic attack! Activate your defensive runes!” A dark elf in golden armour ordered. *Weng Weng!* In the twinkling of an eye, multi-coloured rays rose from the dark elven knights’ armours. After being wrapped within this layer of light, the knights charged towards their enemies once again, undaunted. They were very confident in the durability of their bodies, since they were members of a high-energy race. Dark elves might have lower reproductive abilities, but the durability of their bodies far
surpassed that of humans. This racial ability extended to the immunity to many toxins.
It wasn’t as if the humans hadn’t considered using poison, but most poisons that were deadly to humans only left dark elves feeling slightly giddy, or gave them a nosebleed.
Using poison would only hurt them more, and lead to more city guards dying. Thus, after a few attempts, the humans had given up on this method.
Now, however, the situation was slightly different.
“Hm?”
An Underground Winter Spider knight rushed up the city wall and sent a Grand Knight flying. Just as he was about to stab his lance into his opponent’s heart, he suddenly lost his grip, and the lance fell to the ground.
Recalling the short burst of weakness, the knight wondered, ‘What’s going on? How did these toxins paralyse me? Didn’t I already activate the runes that defend against this?’
The sudden realisation that the red mist had passed through the defensive layer without obstruction alarmed him. It was as if these runes were fake.
Large numbers of yellow pustules and blisters erupted all over his skin, bursting as quickly as they had formed. The knight screamed out, miserably.
“Attack!” A ray of light flashed, and the Grand Knight that had been sent flying grasped this opportunity and brandished the giant steel sword in his hands, slashing it at this dark elf’s neck.
A line appeared, which soon turned into a fountain of blood.
This dark elf’s delicate, pale neck was severed, its skull rolling on the ground.
Similar events occurred all along the city walls. Even the Underground Winter Spiders weren’t spared. Their eight legs crumbled down and their eyes dimmed, following which they were overrun by stampeding troops… This frightening effectiveness in battle managed to surprise even Fendix who was hovering in the air. “This toxin is truly very strong! If we manage to produce it in large quantities…” His eyes beamed with excitement.

“It isn’t as simple as you’d think!” Leylin smiled bitterly, “I specifically concocted this using plant concentrate based on the anatomy of dark elves. On its own, it isn’t a toxin, which is why it can pass through their defensive runes. Once it enters their bodies and begins circulation, it begins to react with their endocrine system. In a matter of moments, the benign gas transforms into neural poison.

“This is just a petty trick that makes use of a gap in their defenses. Once this battle ends, the dark elves will change their runes to protect against this method of attack, which will render it useless in the end!”

In fact, Leylin based this poison off his own rank 2 spell Toxic Bile. With the help of Nature’s Alliance’s research, he managed to get the approval of the joint conference, which only helped him improve upon it.

“Even so, Sir Leylin’s research on dark elves has far surpassed
“Ours.” The female Magus showed admiration at Leylin’s accomplishment despite him downplaying it. That alone showed the level of Leylin’s ability in alchemy and the depth of his research on dark elves.

“After this, I’m afraid that even I will have to pay a visit to the joint conference to learn from Sir Leylin’s works,” she said as she broke into a smile.

“I would gladly welcome any discussion with you, what’s more, any fresh thoughts you may have on the subject,” Leylin said humbly.

“This isn’t the right time to speak about this, the matriarchs are about to act!” She pointed at the dark elves’ camp across them where the spiritual force was climbing to its peak.

“They seem to have become anxious now, and might leap into action at any moment. We should prepare.” Fendi took out a short black gentleman’s cane. A sparkling diamond, as large as an egg, was embedded into the top.

Leylin smiled without saying a word.

Nearly three thousand of their elite Underground Winter Spider knights were fighting in this battle, half of their entire force. It was only to be expected that the turn of the situation had made them anxious.

At this moment, darkness energy particles gathered together, and a strong wave from a spell arose from the opposite side.

“Black Torrential Rain!!”

A sweet female voice was accompanied by a large amount of water vapour condensing above Dolon city. This was followed by a storm of endless black raindrops descending upon the city.

When the black raindrops and red mist came into contact, an explosion sounded out. They fused into a charred-black liquid that dropped to the floor, revealing the Underground Winter Spider knights who were lying on the ground, on the verge of death.
Leylin’s poison was only powerful against the elite Underground Winter Spider Knights. A rank 1 Magus could use the energy in their body to resist it. As for matriarchs who were rank 2 existences? It could not affect them in the slightest.

“Peng! Peng! Peng! Peng!” The ground cracked apart, and numerous strands of black hair emerged from the depths. These snake-like hairs wound around those knights who were still alive and pulled them back. In just a moment, the hairs had managed to pull back a dozen miles, bringing the knights to safety. Still, half of the Underground Winter Spider knights had already perished.

“You…!!” A few rage-filled voices emerged from the sky above the enemy camp. The black vapors dissipated, revealing the appearances of the three dark elf matriarchs. Leylin examined them. These matriarchs all possessed the ravishing beauty intrinsic to dark elves. The revealing clothing made of a leather-like material displayed their voluptuous bodies and their hands were adorned with thorn whips.

‘Yup! They definitely resemble the dominatrixes from my previous world!’ Leylin thought as he rolled his eyes. At this moment, the opposing three matriarchs were already on the verge of exploding into anger, powerful spells taking form in their hands.

“You guys dared to go against the agreement and take action!” Fendix touched the short cane which he was holding and remained stolic.

“Humans! How dare you use such despicable means to bring harm upon my brave soldiers, I will behead the lot of you and gift them to Her Majesty!” The matriarch at the center lashed out in the dark elven language, paying no heed to Fendix’s accusation. She wore
the most revealing outfit of the three, and the two golden rings at her bosom gave off a sensual vibe.

“Hehe! Since when did the dark elves that are renowned for being sinister and cunning start accusing others of using despicable means?” The female Magus said with a sneer before Leylin had a chance to speak.

“Speaking anymore is useless! Take action!!” Leylin exclaimed.

Large amounts of black mist appeared, forming a gigantic black snake whose back was filled with patterns. It sucked one of the matriarchs into it.

Leylin had grown bored of remaining in this place in spite of the minimal danger and occasional respites. He wanted to end this once and for all so he could head back and further his plans.

“Begin the counterattack!” Fendix sent out via secret imprint as he sneered.

“Retaliate! Retaliate! Retaliate!”

A sea of voices flooded out from within the city walls. The door which had been closed for a long time started to creak open. Numerous knights and magicians rushed out, heading for the dark elves’ camp.

After the previous battle and Leylin’s poison, the dark elves had suffered a devastating blow that had forced a retreat. It looked like the humans had taken hold of the advantage now.

Leylin did not pay much attention to the situation below. After some probing attacks, he had begun to lure one of the matriarchs to a suitable battlefield.

A dark elf matriarch had strength comparable to a rank 2 Magus, and Leylin could not afford to let his guard down against such a strong opponent. In addition, both the extent and range of destruction brought down by a rank 2 spell far surpassed that of one at rank 1. Thus, his opponent willingly followed him so that they could avoid unnecessary casualties.
After all, the two armies were in a melee, and any attack would definitely harm both parties. Considering their already low population, the loss would hurt the dark elves more than it hurt the humans.

In actual fact, looking at the two sides engaged in battle, the matriarch was pain-stricken by the loss.

Dark elves took 300 years just to reach adulthood. This made it much more difficult to recoup the loss of their soldiers, and every single member of their army was irreplaceable. On the other hand, humans with their high fertility and short life cycles had no such problems.

One-third of the elves on this battlefield belonged to this matriarch’s army, and among them were her own descendants.

“Here should be fine!”

Leylin brought the matriarch to a plain which was not far from Dolon City.

There were a few cities near this plane, but they had all been evacuated long ago. The roads leading to the plain were already covered with weeds, and unnecessary casualties were unlikely to occur here.

“I am known as Alicia, you are worthy of knowing my name!”

This matriarch had completely calmed down, as she had to face an existence whose power rivaled her own.

Looking at this elf who was dressed in revealing leather, Leyin flashed a smile. “I am Leylin!”

*Kacha!*

As he said that, he suddenly shot backwards, dodging a shadow spider.

This floating shadow spider had ominous green eyes, and the mouth which had just tried to bite Leylin was now producing a crunching noise.

“Do all you matriarchs act this shamelessly?” Leylin had been
stumped by her actions. “There is no use for face when up against someone of a different race! Surrender and defect to our side; I’ll gift you with my family’s bloodline and bestow unimaginable rewards upon you!” The matriarch licked her sexy lips and flaunted her voluptuous body, hinting at him subtly. “Hehe… this kind of seductive energy once again!” Leylin shook his head. A large amount of spiritual force chased the energy out. “Scorching Touch!” He scattered a red powder just as he was chanting the spell, and red rays started ripping across the sky and immediately appeared in front of Alicia. The might of the two forces from the ray made her pale. “Aldershkry!” Alicia started to chant and a white shield started to hover in front of her. On the surface of the shield was the image of a spider web and flowers. *Peng! Peng!* The scorching rays attacked the shield one by one, and screeching sounded out. Cracks started to emerge on the surface of the shield *Kacha!* Under Alicia’s stunned gaze, the white shield shattered to pieces and fragments flew in all directions. “This shield was smelted from the ore of the mine guarded by the Underground Winter Spider Emperor! You shattered it!” Alicia’s gaze at Leylin was now filled with dread. “Could you consider my proposal? You can have all the females in my clan, including me…” “Sorry! I can’t see any sincerity in your words!” Silver spiritual force continuously shot out with Leylin’s detached reply. He was not a lecher, and the price of betrayal was far too steep when compared to the profits he would obtain.
Anyone who betrayed their community for profit would immediately be labelled as unreliable. How, then, would they do well in the opposing camp? Furthermore, Leylin was confident in the humans’ ability to defend. Even if the protector of the eastern Twilight Zone were to perish, and the entirety of it fell into enemy hands, he still believed the humans in the subterranean world were not weak enough to go extinct. As a result, matriarch Alicia’s temptations did not affect Leylin in the slightest. On the contrary, Leylin was eager to fight this rank 2 matriarch. “Perfect. The template of a rank 2 Magus, as well as the rank 2 spell models the A.I. Chip deduced, can now be tested.” Leylin’s eyes flashed, which caused Alicia who was opposite him to feel cold within her heart. She had a bad premonition. But Leylin would not give the other party a chance, and he swiftly made the first move. ”Shadow Flames!” Dark red flames poured into the sky, forming a pillar of raging fire.

Shadow Flames: rank 2 spell. Elements: darkness, fire. Might: 120 degrees (Elemental essence conversion added)

These were the A.I. Chip’s stats on the spell which had been evolved from the Latent Fireball that he had previously made. Over the last ten years, Leylin had obtained the spell model of a powerful rank 2 spell from Nature’s Alliance. The guilds that they
had consumed had also net him quite a few such models as well. Of course the Alliance, as a medium-scale guild, had possessed the most outstanding model. Thereafter, during his stay in Dolon, he had exchanged for many more rank 2 models. By luck, he had even managed to collect two damaged rank 3 models, which he had treated like gems and diligently copied down. The A.I. Chip had been tasked with restoring these two models. The power of these dark red flames had clearly surpassed that of Scorching Touch from before. Matriarch Alicia had a solemn face. Suddenly, she took out her whip and cracked it in the air.
*Pa!* The cracking of the whip had compressed the air, producing a sonic boom. “Come out!” Complex black patterns emerged on Alicia’s face, covering the right side of it like a mask. “As you wish, My Lady!” Space seemingly split apart, and a cute spider as white as jade materialised out of thin air. The blood red lines across its carapace only served to make it look cuter. *Hiss* The matriarch let out a hiss, similar to the sound of a spider stridulating. That white jade spider immediately targeted Leylin, its back shooting out large amounts of thread that emitted cold air. The densely packed threads tangled together, forming a white cocoon that surrounded the elf and beast. The A.I chip made his vision flash blue, and the details of the white jade spider surfaced immediately. [Underground Frost Spider, a mutation of the Underground Winter Spider. Has an extremely strong ability to mutate! Strength: 35; Agility: 16; Vitality: 46.9; Spiritual force : 27; Special abilities: 1; Thread defense: the Underground Frost Spider’s threads have the ability of ice, and is the bane of many rank 2 fire-type
magi; Stealth: the Underground Frost Spider’s shell has abilities to reflect light, allowing it to be concealed with the surroundings.]

Leylin had never slacked off on feeding the A.I. Chip’s database with information after entering Twilight Zone. By now, a large portion of Twilight Zone’s special items were already recorded within it.

“A matriarch with an Underground Frost Spider as a familiar? One that can suppress fire elemental Magi?” Leylin’s smiled lightly. “What a pity, my Shadow Flames are mainly composed not of fire, but of darkness!”

Along with the change in Leylin’s intent, the dark red pillar of fire immediately transformed. The red glow at its center quickly faded, being replaced instead by a dark black which took over most of the space. In a moment, the shadow forces occupied most of the pillar. “Ingest!” Leylin grabbed at the air with both hands, and the large pillar swept Alicia’s giant white cocoon into itself. *Sssii!* Large amounts of white gases appeared on the surface of the white cocoon, moving about in the air. *Hiss* Leylin even heard the bloodcurdling sounds of the giant spider. *Boom!* The large white cocoon suddenly exploded, smashing into the reddish-black flames. From within the white fog, a silhouette surfaced. The matriarch had connected her body directly on top of the Underground Frost Spider, forming a monster that was half-human and half spider. It reminded him of his subordinate, Skrill. ‘This look is very compatible with Skrill!’ Leylin laughed mockingly, but he knew that these two parties were vastly different. Skrill had used his meditation technique to alter his physical appearance, but this matriarch had fused her body with that of her pet, maybe even her soul! Based on strength alone, Skrill could not compare to this elf who
was already rank 2 and possessed many techniques that he did not. “Disgusting, disgusting humans!” the elf that formed the upper half of this abomination hooted on the spider’s back.

*Ding! Ding!*
The elf held a spider leg that looked like white jade. The long spider leg instantly transformed into a white scimitar. Along the elegant curve of this scimitar were pretty patterns that glowed repeatedly. The blade emitted some white fog, which emanated cold rays.

“Kill!” The voice of the elf transformed into a wave of bright rays that enveloped her, which gradually disappeared into the air.

“Is she concealing herself now?” Leylin stroked his chin and smiled wryly.

Although dark elves were quite capable in open combat, they preferred more underhanded tactics. They would make use of their own bodies and beauty to tempt their opponents, or hide away in corners, to launch sneak attacks.

However, as a dark Magus, Leylin had come across many of these tactics, and employed them himself. He tilted his head and smiled, rooting himself to the spot and narrowing his eyes.

A few minutes later, a ray of cold white air quickly slashed across Leylin’s body, but was met with the exterior of his body rippling. The body had been a mere phantom.

“You’ve fallen into my trap!” Leylin materialised in a corner, his body ringed by defensive darkness elemental particles.

“You are the one who fell into a trap!” Alicia laughed softly, as another body shot out explosively from the side, targeting him with his own tactic.

*Boom!* A large white web filled with mucus flew out and trapped Leylin. White sap fell onto him, and the sounds of corrosion rang out as it continuously seeped into his body.

“So that previous attack was fake!”
Leylin smiled gently, but his expression did not show any dejection, as if the person trapped was not him.

With a flash of white light, Alicia appeared in front of Leylin. Currently, she looked apathetic. She held a white scimitar and was about to directly chop off Leylin’s head. However, Leylin’s demeanor made her feel uneasy.

*Boom!* As Leylin’s head flew upwards, a strange transformation occurred in mid-air.

The head dissipated into a large number of black shadows, condensing many darkness elemental particles to form a cage that bound the matriarch.

“Rank 2 spell, Illusory Body: Second Stage!”

The surrounding space flashed as Leylin removed the darkness elemental waves concealing his body, appearing in front of Alicia. Closer inspection revealed the sensuality of this matriarch’s body; the temptation it induced was shocking.

However, Leylin’s expression was as cold as ice. A black spear ringed with red flames instantly appeared in his hand.

“Rank 2 spell: Lance of corrosion!”

“Go die!” Leylin said beneath his breath, the black spear in his hand being launched forward.

The space warped where the spear passed, and a strong corrosive force continuously condensed onto its tip.

“Explode!!!” Upon seeing the terrible force the spear contained, as if able to destroy the very earth, Alicia’s face changed instantly. She resolutely chanted a few spells under her breath. Suddenly, the Underground Frost Spider screeched irritably, the blood lines on its body enlarging and dying almost its entire body red. Moreover, weirdly, its body swelled up.

A ray of white light swiftly separated Alicia and the white spider. *Boom!*

The spear exploded intensely at Alicia’s original location.
The black chains instantly exploded, which caused the exploded flesh and blood to strike the black spear.
Two large energy forces melded and grew denser, causing large distortions to the void.
*Bam! Bam! Bam!*
When the distortions had condensed to a point, it ended off with a violent explosion.
Even though the forces collided in mid-air, the remains of the energy waves they generated headed towards the ground, blasting off layers of stone and soil. The waves swept the area, causing large-scale destruction.
Alicia’s silhouette flew out of the explosion. However, things did not seem to look good for her, her lower body dripping with fresh blood. Being caught right in the middle of the explosion, she’d naturally received the brunt of the force it generated.
However, she currently did not have time to care about her injuries. Looking over herself restrainedly, she turned into a ray of blood that disappeared into the horizon.
Leylin stood where he was silently, and did not give chase.
To him, helping the humans retain their lands was just a passing favour. He did not want to kill a rank 2 existence of the opposing party, as he did not desire an animosity that could not be resolved.
Of course, some preparations had to be made to expedite the end of the war.
Leylin smiled wryly. Having roughly figured out his next course of action, he rushed towards the other two groups.
Fendix’s opponent was the matriarch who wore the two rings on her bosom. This opponent’s strength was tyrannical, and she had suppressed Fendix and limited his movements. Fendix ended up constantly on the defensive, which embittered him.
“Hm?” At this moment, Fendix and the dark elven matriarch looked toward the side.
“Fendix, I’m here to help!” Leylin closed in rapidly, his clothes rustling in the strong wind.
“Umbra’s Hand!”
Large numbers of shadows emerged from behind him, and transformed into what looked like a giant hand which obstructed the matriarch.
“What’s your situation? How much magic power do you have left?” Leylin glanced at Fendix, who was already slightly pale.
“Half, and I can release one more formidable spell. How about you?” Upon seeing Leylin’s arrival, Fendix heaved a huge sigh of relief.
“I’ve already sent that matriarch away. All that’s left is her,” Leylin pointed at the matriarch across them, “I remember you still have a powerful offensive spell, Violent Thunder Chains, right? I’ll keep her occupied. Quick, go and prepare it!”
“Alright!” Fendix gritted his teeth.
Though he had seen through Leylin’s intentions, this matriarch was his arch-enemy! In the past, Duke Fendix, the army’s commander and a member of his family, had been killed by this person’s army. He could not wait to end her!
Besides, they were at war. Killing a matriarch would reward him with an enormous number of merit points!
Leylin watched the matriarch, a slight smile creeping onto his face…
Minutes later, Fendix roared. A dazzling blue light filled the region, and snakes of electricity began dancing in the air, trapping the opponent within.
Innumerable streaks of lightning fell, and a few minutes later all that was left of the matriarch was ash and charcoal falling from the air.
“The dark elves are withdrawing!” Just as Leylin and Fendix had taken care of the situation here, the other rank 2 Magus hurried to them, “The matriarch who was fighting me seemed to have received some news, and suddenly escaped. I couldn’t catch up to her at all… Ah! You! You killed her…”
The female Magus clapped her hand on her mouth, unable to express her astonishment with words.

……

The dark elves that surrounded Dolon City retreated quickly. The three thousand Underground Winter Spider knights that had attacked were a very large power in the eastern region. Many of them had temporarily been transferred over from the other two armies.
Now, with Leylin’s poison facilitating a counterattack, a good number of them had been lost. The siege of Dolon had ended, and their victory even led to a chain effect.
What’s more, the death of a rank 2 matriarch had caused Dolon City to become the heart of the battle.
However, Fendix and Leylin did not choose to rest. Instead, riding on this momentum, they led troops in to save the other two large cities.
After their formidable forces had been weakened considerably, the
dark elves were pushed back step by step, and were finally chased out of the east. This gave the human race a ray of hope. As for the merit points from killing the matriarch? Since Leylin was intentionally keeping a low-profile, all of them ended up in Fendix’s hands. He cared little for reputation, and this seemed to be very important to Fendix, as if there was a grudge involved. Hence, he was happy to do him a favour. After all, Fendix had helped him quite a bit previously, and had also promised to make it up to him in the future.

……

“We won in the east? That’s great!” Aaron, who was currently in another city, heard the news. Shockingly, he was dressed in a gray, tattered cloak, and soot covered his entire face. The ring in his hand concealed his energy fluctuations. The whole city was now caught up in a wave of joy. Whether it was nobles, commoners or knights, they darted to the streets the moment they received the news, exhibiting their ecstasy with no inhibitions. The threat of the dark elves had loomed over this area for far too long. Hopes had plummeted further when the north was broken through, and the news of whole cities being slaughtered had terrified everyone. The people needed some good news to raise their spirits. The city master’s residence had been opened to the public, and he’d even ordered chefs to serve great amounts of oatmeal bread and fruit juice to the public. “This may be good news, but it’s much too distant from you right now.” A white ray of light shot out from the black ring, projecting
the image of a wise old man in Aaron’s mind. “Leave the moment you get it! The Mambo Family that governs this city is not something you can take on easily!” “I know!” Aaron nodded seriously, and disappeared into the crowd.

*Gu!* Minutes after he left, a small squadron surrounded the area, red flames burning. Among them was the figure of a woman in a pink gown.

“He was here not long ago. Seal the city! We can’t let him escape!” the woman exclaimed grimly, and the soldiers immediately dispersed. Soon, the shrill sound of bugles resounded throughout the city.

“You actually dared to steal my family’s most valuable treasure! You will pay for this in flesh and blood!!” The woman glanced at the area once again, and issued this frightful vow before travelling through the flames.

*Rumble!* A tongue of flame swept up to a height of five to six metres, and the figure of the woman completely vanished.

*Hah…*

After a few close shaves, Aaron stealthily left the city and reached a hideout he had previously prepared. This was an underground karst cave. After doing away with all traces of the entrance and activating a defensive spell formation, Aaron finally heaved a sigh of relief and sat on the ground.

“That was too dangerous! It was only one item, did they have to chase after me so fervently?” Aaron complained, and then glared at Merlin in his mind. “Let me make this clear. If it will still be this dangerous to gather materials for the Meteor Sword in the future, I might have to give up on it. The sword may be a precious high-grade artifact, but it isn’t as precious as my life.”

“Hehe, don’t worry. This Teardrop Gemstone was the most difficult material to obtain. As long as you have your predictions, the rest
are relatively easier to get our hands on.”
Immediately after, the old geezer looked stern. “The Teardrop Gemstone is a precious treasure of the Mambo Family, and it’s only natural that it was guarded so tightly. The weakening curses cast on your body are a pain, and I’ll need to spend some time analysing them. For these next two months, your strength will be restricted to that of an acolyte.”
“Sigh… But it can’t be helped!” Aaron sighed, and then thought back to the female Magus in the pink gown, his facial muscles twitching.
“I’m still far too weak. Grandpa Merlin, is there any method to advance in Sacred Flame quickly?”
“Of course!” Merlin stroked his white beard.
“Although most high-grade meditation techniques become harder to train in the further you train in them, and require many otherworldly materials to allow one to advance, my Sacred Flame is different!”
Merlin’s voice carried a hint of pride as he delved into his memories.
“Not only does my Sacred Flame give you the power to see the future, it can also allow you to advance quickly through the convergence of destiny’s powers. In theory, as long as you interfere with destiny as much as possible, you can advance at a terrifying rate!”
“Hss…” Aaron breathed in sharply, “So if I cause havoc in Twilight Zone, doesn’t that mean I can rush to becoming a Morning Star Magus?”
“Dream on!” Merlin was ruthless as he glanced at Aaron disdainfully. “How strong is the power of destiny? Just prodding the river of destiny could cause you to be ground into powder by the inertia of fate. I trained in Sacred Flame for hundreds of years and still only dared follow in Destiny’s footsteps, merely speeding
up the process.”
“No matter what it is, this can help me increase my strength! I’ll do it!” Aaron suddenly clenched his fist.
He had returned to his guild an official Magus. He had also made them pay, to a certain extent, but the result was far from what he had imagined.
That young noble who had stolen his fiancee still had a Magus family backing him, with an official Magus in charge. Aaron could do little more than accept his apology for stealing his bride.
After this experience, his thirst for power had become more intense. This was why he was in a hurry to wander around, as well as gather materials to forge the Meteor Sword.
“So where is the area where destiny converges?” Aaron looked at Grandpa Merlin, eyes full of hope.
“You’ll need to find out yourself!” Merlin seemed to be implying something.
“En! I have to use Sacred Flame!” Aaron’s eyes brightened.
“That’s right! You’ve been promoted to an official Magus, and can therefore take a peek at the real long river of destiny!” Merlin gave an amiable smile.
“I’ll take a look now!”
Aaron impatiently sat down and entered a meditative state.
A unique spiritual force emanated from his body, linking with passage of time in the underworld and the rivers of history.
“Hm?” Aaron suddenly moved, holding onto his head and crying out miserably.
Scattered images, containing the bloodlust and vengeance of spirits flooded his mind.
In the central region of Twilight Zone, a young Magus in black robes was currently speaking in a basement to an audience of malnourished and sickly teenagers. These teenagers, however, had extremely bright eyes that were almost blazing. Behind the Magus,
the twisted image of a spider seemed to appear.
The Dark Elven Empire! A teenager riding on a large Underground Winter Spider cheered excitedly, with a dark elf smiling wryly beside him.
These and a few other sporadic fragments appeared in Aaron’s mind, making him feel like a brick had been stuffed into it.
About half an hour later, Aaron reawakened, but he was breathing roughly.
“Those two people must be the ones around which the powers of destiny converge!” He sounded resolute.
“As long as I’m by their side and gain their trust, I can affect the children of destiny and accelerate the progress of Sacred Flame!
“When the time comes, you will all die! Haha…”
Aaron began to laugh madly, a faint trace of insanity in his expression.
The war had ended. Leylin, who had returned from the battlefield, was now leisurely drinking some coffee. With a thought, he accepted the scenes that the A.I. Chip transmitted to him.

“Baelin truly is Twilight Zone’s child of destiny, but Longbottom is really surprising me…” Leylin stroked his chin, watching Longbottom who was currently spouting resentment.

“Using a revolution to cobble together an army, gathering wandering Magi who are unsatisfied with the rule of the guilds, and passing high-grade meditation techniques to common acolytes? Ingenious!” Even he had to appreciate Longbottom’s methods.

The Magus World had never been a fair place, but the immense strength of Magi had meant that nobody could overthrow them. To cause trouble in the Magus World, it was necessary to incite disharmony within their ranks. It looked like Longbottom was doing well. He was even bringing about a revolution!

“Perhaps this happened in the south coast’s past as well, causing the power of guilds to wane and letting academies take their place…” Leylin made a sudden association.

However, the first of the revolutionaries would not be able to find peace, as the conservative factions would attack them, giving them a horrible death.

This was why Leylin had no intention of introducing the system of academies to Twilight Zone and had instead kept a low profile and...
assimilated into their culture.
“It looks like Baelin and Longbottom are like two sides of a coin. Both are the children of destiny for this era! However, one is a hero, while the other is a rebel.” Leylin picked up the cup of coffee on the table and took a sip.
Sometimes, rebels were merely heroes who failed in their conquests! If Longbottom’s revolutionary efforts succeeded, then he would be immortalised as a model in the Magus World, extensively praised and recorded down in Magus history.
If, instead, Longbottom was bested by Baelin, he would go down in the books as a rebel; a traitor who had betrayed mankind, forever shamed by history.
“The final decisive battle will definitely be between these two! Before that, the force of destiny will quickly increase their power, even if it might not be beneficial to them in the long run.”
Leylin was very clear about the path a child of destiny could take. While they were making their mark on the world, they could obtain an inheritance just by wandering around. By going into a random danger zone, there could be a grandpa giving out techniques, allowing them to advance quickly, and thereby causing many geniuses to be so ashamed of themselves that they committed suicide!
“Longbottom seems to have gained a bloodline, and Baelin is even better off. Not only has he even found the path to becoming a Bio Booster, which suits him best, he has even subdued the Underground Winter Spider Emperor, which is a creature with a might similar to a rank 2 Magus!”
Leylin, who had seen much in the world, could naturally judge their general strength through these scenes. The unexpected luck they had caused even Leylin to envy them.
At the same time, he had been frightened slightly. “If I had continued with him, wouldn’t I have been played by destiny and
become the grandpa handing out techniques?”
Leylin looked grim. Baelin had actually gotten some benefits from him. Although he had been affected by his emotional instability as a warlock, one could not deny the hand of destiny in this matter. After all, destiny was not created out of anywhere. It needed a form of catalyst, which would infinitely increase the probability of it appearing.
For instance, Leylin could have chosen to craft potions instead of taking in a disciple to while time away, but he had instead chosen to teach Baelin the ways of knights.
Out of everyone in Potter Town, he had settled on Baelin. How much probability and luck was involved?
“Since you want to play, let’s have a good time!” Leylin raised his cup and sent a challenge out to the skies.
[Beep! Based on scans by the limited AI, slight instability has been detected in target Aaron. The target seems to be in the early stages of mental breakdown. Immediate adoption of countermeasures suggested.]
At this moment, the A.I. Chip prompted, and an image of Aaron going crazy was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.
“Looks like things are getting quite troublesome! Although the effects when training as an acolyte were removed in this new version of Scarlet Flame, the effects don’t seem sustainable for those who advance to become Magi.”
Leylin’s expression darkened. This was why he had not trained in Sacred Flame. Not only did he already have Kemoyin’s Pupil, he feared the side-effects brought about by training in the technique.
The spirit had far too many secrets. Even with the unworldly calculative ability of the A.I. Chip, it was still not able to analyse the mysteries of the spirit.
“A.I. Chip! Gather stats from Aaron’s current condition, and modify Sacred Flame again. Also, check on the other guinea pigs!”
Leylin commanded. Immediately after, the images of two other people were projected before Leylin. He had not limited himself to forging the ring. His counterfeit grandpas had been passed on in secret during these past ten years, disguised by various methods as a ‘coincidence’ each time. The A.I. Chip’s scenes showed him a young female acolyte and a strong man who also trained in Sacred Flame, cold sweat rolling down their faces.

“The power of destiny!”

All of a sudden, the two of them opened their eyes and looked at the central region.

“Everything starts and end at the same place! There’s them as well…”

The two of them made the same prediction, fear flashing on their faces.

Through the interception of this information, Leylin naturally knew what they were afraid of.

“Hehe… have they sensed the others training in the technique? It seems Sacred Flame still can’t be practiced by more than one person.”

The high-grade meditation technique, Sacred Flame, had come from the Botelli Family. Traditionally, only one person in a generation could successfully train in this meditation technique, while the rest would suffer a mental breakdown and die. However, with modifications from the A.I. Chip, as well as Leylin’s lack of concern, this meditation technique had been passed down to many acolytes, and they had all risen to become official Magi through Sacred Flame!

[Due to the unusual nature of this meditation technique, they will need to kill each other to determine a victor. Only then will Sacred Flame be complete.]
Leylin smirked at the A.I. Chip’s newest conclusion. “This Sacred Flame really is a fraud!” His thoughts were now very clear. He would definitely not train in such a bizarre meditation technique. How to take advantage of their prophetic powers and set up the situation was worth looking into, as well as the question of who would win the fight. Leylin touched his chin, deep in thought.

……

Five days later, an unexpected guest paid a visit to Leylin’s villa. *Clang!* Four giant metallic legs charged straight through and finally stopped by Leylin’s garden, setting off a cloud of dust and creating a ruckus behind them. “My apologies, Magus Leylin! This large guy hasn’t been easy to control. It might be because it’s in its mating season…” Logan jumped off the back of his metallic lifeform, looking apologetic. “No worries Magus Logan,” Leylin smiled. Shaking his head to show he did not mind, he gestured to invite the Magus in, continuing, “Please come in. I’ve collected some items which may interest you.” A bit later, Celine who’d rushed over for some business saw the protector of the east, Logan, sitting on a chair and singing praises of the giant grilled fish on the long table. “What type of fish is this? I’ve never seen it before.” “It’s a hybrid of the Mamhar Fish and the Barracuda. I bred it myself!” Leylin laughed. This creature was an accidental product of a bloodline experiment. Unexpectedly, it had ended up tasting quite good, which prompted Leylin to serve it to guests. As the flesh of this fish was extremely delicious, and also had the
function of strengthening the body of a rank 2 Magus, it was very popular.
After finding this out, Leylin immediately ordered Celine to open up a massive aquafarm, preparing to breed this type of fish at a large scale. It would be another addition to his profits.
While learning under the light Magi of the south coast, Leylin had taken care of numerous secret planes and had learned that something like that had a lot of significance and value.
As a bonus. Celine had been extremely agreeable to him recently at night, her eyes so bright it seemed like she could blink out liquid.
Leylin’s conjecture was that she had thought he had been diligently managing the guild, which touched her.
Leylin had merely laughed off her misunderstanding, not bothering to explain and instead enjoying his luck with her.
After enjoying the fine liquor and good food together, Leylin finally cut to the chase. “I wonder what I can do for Protector Logan, that you’ve come all the way here?”
“I came here today because I have a presumptuous request of you.” Logan looked serious, and slightly embarrassed.
“What is it?” Leylin seemed calm, while Celine who was beside him grasped his fingers.
“On behalf of the central region’s guilds’ alliance, I invite Nature’s Alliance to move to the central region! We have prepared the resources afforded to a large-scale guild for you, and there is a seat for Nature’s Alliance waiting amongst our ranks. In other words, once you go there, Nature’s Alliance will become a large-scale guild!”
Logan went straight to the point, saying everything in one breath.
The moment the words left his mouth, Leylin could feel Celine’s breath becoming more hurried.
Large-scale guild! That was the ultimate dream of all guilds in Twilight Zone! As the heart of Twilight Zone, the central region
was also where the population was the densest, and represented the essence of the subterranean humans. Most guilds could only wish to expand there. Celine had always been striving for Nature’s Alliance to rise through the ranks, and she did not seem to find this situation to be strange as all. Meanwhile, Leylin was thinking of something else. “Has the situation in the central region become that bad?” He suddenly asked. “Hm?” Logan’s expression froze. Moments later, he laughed wryly.
really can’t hide anything from you!” Logan laughed bitterly. “As you know, the situation in the central region is not favourable. The dark elves are a part of it, but the Protector of Twilight Zone is the more pressing issue…”

Leylin roughly understood the situation. Powerful rank 2 Magi normally overtook the duties of protecting the north, south, east, and west of the Twilight Zone, but central Twilight Zone was different. That area housed the elite forces of Twilight zone, so the overseeing Magus was titled the “Guardian of the Realm”. The current generation’s Guardian possessed the strength of a rank 3 Magus.

But intelligence reports said that the lifespan of the Guardian was nearing its end; he hadn’t even appeared in public in the last few decades. His seclusion was so foreboding that it was probably the main reason for the dark elves, dwarfs and gnomes to gang up on them.

“You…” Celine clenched her fists tightly, her face turning red from anger, she had finally realized the meaning of the invitation. If it was during peacetime, and one was allowed to enter the central region and become a large-scale guild, that was a truly fortunate event. But now?

The dark elven army had just been routed in the east, giving them some room to breathe. On the other hand, with the fall of Potti
City, the center was facing a surge of dark elves and other enemies from the north. This meant the situation in the center was currently much worse than in the east.

At such a time, what sort of invitation was this? Wasn’t this just a request for troops and cannon fodder?

Celine almost cursed before she realised that the person sitting across her was the rank 2 Protector of the East. She suppressed her rage by force of will, leading to nothing but a smudge in her expression.

Leylin remained silent for a while. He finally let out a bitter smile.

“The central region was originally protected on all four sides. It was extremely stable and peaceful, and was the best choice for accommodation. But currently, it’s being eyed by our enemies. Logan, do you really want me to suffer?”

“I understand your problem! But…” Logan said hesitantly, “Firstly, I can tell you, this is an order of the Guardian of the Realm. We are to summon forth assistance from all four regions. Additionally, regardless of the other large-scale guilds’ intentions, I can guarantee that my own guild will step forward and enter the central region!”

Logan stood up and vowed solemnly to Leylin, even bending his head all the way to his knees.

“Sir Leylin! For Twilight Zone, and for the entire human race, I hope you can help us!”

In that moment, Leylin felt like Logan’s body was glowing. That expression greatly moved Celine who was at his side.

“Hu…” Leylin locked his brows, and seemed to be deep in thought. Logan and Celine, on the other hand, were afraid to even breathe too loudly for fear of interrupting Leylin’s ruminations.

“I’ll help you…”

After a few moments, Leylin produced an answer, bringing a sudden streak of joy across Logan’s face and causing Celine to worry. She wanted to speak out, but was abruptly thwarted by
Leylin continuing, “but I have a few conditions!”
“Speak!” Logan’s voice could not conceal his excitement.
Leylin raised his index finger. “Firstly, The resources and seat you promised previously must be handed over to us unconditionally!”
“Of course; you’re entitled to the resources and treatment given to a large-scale guild. If that bunch of brats dare to embezzle anything, I will kill them immediately!” Logan’s tone was merciless, but during war the protector did indeed have the authority to do such a thing.
“Great!” he raised another finger, “In addition, I need to keep my land and position in the east!”
“Want to leave an escape route? Sure! I can promise you that! Anything for mankind!” Logan considered the condition for only a few moments before he agreed in delight.
“Anything for mankind!” Leylin chuckled to himself. He had always known that the central region would be where everything would come to a head, and his plans also required that he go there. Hence, he had already considered going to the central region. Keeping a hold of their land here was obviously for him to retain the icy cave. There would have been no further negotiations if this point had been rejected. Leylin would rather secede from Twilight Zone than share the icy cave with anyone.
Now, he didn’t mind putting on a little show.
Logan was truly touched. Many large guilds that he had visited previously had refused to help. After all, Magi were all rational beings, and they too had to think of their subordinates. The central region was now full of danger; how then was it more alluring than the east?
“Ley… … Sir Leylin, Twilight Zone will forever remember your contribution!”
Logan appeared very reassured, as he entered his metallic lifeform and hurriedly left. It seemed like he still had many guilds to visit.
“Sir! Why did you…” Immediately after Logan left, Celine asked
with urgency.
“I have already decided. You can stay behind and guard this place if you wish. In any case, we will retain our land in the east. Going to the center is merely a gamble. It doesn’t matter if we fail, and if we do manage to succeed, Nature’s Alliance will become one of the central region’s large-scale guilds! Isn’t that what you’ve always been dreaming of?” Leylin smiled at Celine, placid.
“But… what about your safety?” Celine knew that the rise of Nature’s Alliance was founded completely on the formidable strength of the man before her. Were they to lose him, the consequences would be unimaginable.
“You do not need to worry about my safety, for I will not put myself in a deadly situation. Furthermore, do you not trust my abilities?” Leylin persuaded her calmly.
Celine nodded and her heart calmed. As the person who came into contact with Leylin the most and the one closest to him, she deeply believed in the man’s unfathomable abilities.
Sometimes, the display of just a fraction of his power could scare her breathless.
“Okay! Pass the orders. A new batch of Magi and acolytes are to be chosen, we set off in ten days!” Leylin commanded.
“Yes!” Celine saluted withdrew herself with a bow. Nature’s Alliance was currently under Leylin’s sole command, and nobody in the guild could disobey him. Although there were some small troubles initially, Leylin’s absolute authority ensured the orders for the mobilization of their forces were sent out methodically.
Although many acolytes feared the disorder in the central region, they also craved adventure. Despite the danger, there were also many magicians there who had gained rewards aplenty.
As for the higher ups? Their fates were in Leylin’s hand, so what choice would they have?
After ten days, an enormous squadron had been formed, and began
advancing towards the central region
Meanwhile, at the entrance of the canyon of Nature’s Alliance, Celine was clad in a purple gown. She observed the squadron proceed slowly until they disappeared along the horizon. Due to some considerations Leylin had, he wanted Celine to remain here.
“You must definitely return alive!” She prayed as she returned to Nature’s Alliance.
“Guild master!” Several official Magi and acolytes hastily greeted her. They knew of Leylin’s and Celine’s relationship, and the fact that both of them were the nominal masters of the guild, so they did not dare to be negligent.
Upon witnessing this scene, Celine felt some emptiness in her heart, but shortly after, another unfamiliar feeling arose.
“You may rise! The dark elves in the eastern region have already retreated, leaving behind many resources for us to conquer. This is our chance!” Celine’s voice was cold yet noble, and no one dared to look straight at her.
“Things will only be interesting when some leeway is given to these sorts of women”
Meanwhile, on a luxurious vehicle pulled by a giant salamander, Leylin stroked his chin and he broke into a demonic chuckle.
A woman like Celine could only bloom completely if authority was given to her. Hence, Leylin had intentionally given her position and power in the guild. He was sure that, in their next meeting, she would definitely not disappoint him.
Furthermore, his goals during this journey to the center were too large for Celine’s strength to be of assistance to him. He was also not in the mood to get intimate with her, so he had left her behind.
“The central region!” Leylin quietly went over the intelligence he had gathered regarding the central region.
It was the core of the entire Twilight Zone with a very high
population density. The strength of its large-scale guilds largely surpassed that of guilds in the other regions. Yet, this was not the most horrifying fact…

“The Guardian of the Realm… …” Leylin let out a sigh.

The position of the Guardian was normally given to the most powerful Magus in the entirety of Twilight Zone. But the Protector of the East, Logan, had met him several times and their abilities should be on par. Hence, the Guardian of the Realm should be a powerhouse even amongst rank 3 Magi. If not for his lifespan that was almost depleted, Leylin would not dare to play such tricks.

The squadron proceeded gradually, and the roaming darkness creatures and bandits on their path fled in all directions the moment they spotted them. They did not dare to obstruct Leylin’s party and offend them.

The bandits were observant and naturally realised that this squadron was composed of Magi. As for the darkness creatures, they could sense the strong aura travelling towards them and escaped for fear of death.

Thus, the journey was rather a peaceful one.

Along the way, Nature’s Alliance had amassed a following of several other medium-scale guilds as well as a few small-scale guilds. They, too, had heeded the call and wanted to go to the central region to keep watch.

Upon witnessing Nature Alliance’s standard, the guild masters of different guilds immediately came forth to visit him, and even let go of their pride to discuss the possibility of joining forces to advance.

After all, the fact that Leylin was a member of Nature’s Alliance was made known to many. That was a rank 2 Magus! With him there, the procession would definitely make it to the central region without any hiccups.
“Although there are a few idealists in there, most of them are those with great ambitions who are willing to take a gamble!”

After a look, Leylin evaluated these people indifferently. However, he still agreed to their requests. The horse carriages, which formed a large procession resembling a river, began to travel towards the central region.

As Magi could illuminate the path ahead with spells, there was no need for the carriages to carry torches.

The giant sunstone was placed on the top of a carriage, illuminating the surroundings and their path brightly.
Rumble!
Faint fluctuations travelled over, and for there to be so many undulations despite the long distance allowed the people in the carriage to ascertain their identities.
“They’re Magi, official Magi! It looks like they’re battling. Do we still proceed?” A peak rank 1 Magus guild master approached Leylin’s carriage and bowed, asking for further instructions.
“Of course!” Leylin spoke indifferently. With the power, they held when they banded together, they could easily go on a rampage in the eastern region. Thus, they were fearless.
The guild leader seemed to have the same thoughts and, after a moment of pause, they continued to advance.
The rest of the party noticed the energy fluctuations as they closed in. One of the two seemed to have reservations with approaching them, while the other hesitated for a moment before heading in their directions.
“Trying to use us to block the enemy?” The Magi in the group of carriages silently waited while smirking.
*Xiu!*
Seconds later, a red streak shot over from afar, and a young Magus appeared.
This Magus looked quite ordinary but for the black ring on his right index finger and his resolute eyes. After seeing so many official Magi, his eyes widened and he tried to take a long way
around them.
“You can’t escape! How dare you steal our family’s treasure!” a woman’s voice sounded out. The young man quivered, bit his lips, ground his teeth, and then dashed towards the group of carriages.
“Save me! I’m a wandering Magus, and for some reason, this mad woman is chasing me. She keeps slandering me and saying that I stole her treasure!”
This young Magus was naturally Aaron. After recuperating from his injuries, he had been unlucky enough to meet with the Magus from the Mambo Family, and had been chased all the way here.
As for blocking this group’s path, that was naturally Merlin’s idea.
“Will they save me? After all…” Aaron worriedly communicated with Merlin in his mind.
“Don’t worry! I’ve already completely concealed the aura of the Teardrop Gemstone. That crazy woman behind us won’t find anything!” Merlin promised confidently.
As for that confidence, it was definitely due to a certain someone within the carriages.
“Hehe… Young man, you’re pretty good to have actually helped me gather the Teardrop Gemstone. I didn’t even know the Mambo Family had this in their collection!” Leylin smiled lightly, a cold glint in his eyes.
*Xiu!* At this moment, a pink ray shot into this area, and the female Magus who had been chasing after Aaron appeared in their midst.
After seeing the group of carriages with so many Magi, she felt her chest tighten perceptibly.
“I am Ophelia of the Mambo Family! My apologies if I am offending you, but please do not stop me from pursuing this vile thief!”
The group was arranged haphazardly, with a few small scale guilds in front. Ophelia’s tone was therefore not that polite.
After all, the Mambo Family was quite famous in this region. 
“How dare you! Who do you think you are?”
“The Mambo Family? Never heard of it before.”
Although those in front were a just few small scale guilds, their higher-ups were watching on from the back, and even the legendary rank 2 Magus in charge of Nature’s Alliance was present. They were naturally unrestrained in their answers.
“You…” Ophelia’s voice lowered, and a faint aura of danger emanated from her body.
How many people in her family dared to speak to her like this?
At this point, however, more carriages had arrived, and the markings caused Ophelia to swallow the words she was planning to say, making her dumbstruck.
“The Lost Clock, Twisted Black Clouds, Infernal Blood, and… Nature’s Alliance!”
Ophelia’s eyes widened. These were all medium scale guilds, and each one of them was powerful enough to pressure the Mambo Family, especially Nature’s Alliance, which had a powerful rank 2 Magus in charge.
The moment they were provoked, they would squash her like one would an ant.
On the other end, Aaron gaped, stunned. “So many! So many Magi and acolytes! Are they migrating?”
“Ophelia had no intentions of offending anyone; please forgive me!” Cold sweat rushed down Ophelia’s spine, and she immediately dropped to the ground and bowed.
“Haven’t you dealt with this yet?” At this moment, Leylin opened the door and descended from the largest and most luxurious carriage in Nature’s Alliance’s group.
“Lord Leylin!” All the Magi there immediately bowed.
“Ley-Leylin! The legendary rank 2 Magus said to have heavily injured a dark elven Sovereign Mother! Why is my luck so bad?”
Ophelia was snarling on the inside, but she wouldn’t dare to even break into a cold sweat in this man’s presence.
“What’s going on?” Leylin furrowed his eyebrows, asking even though he knew the situation.
“My- My apologies, my lord!” A Magus from the Alliance was frightened so badly he couldn’t even speak clearly.
“What’s going on?” Leylin repeated once again, but the atmosphere had frozen. The entire group was quiet, and even some guild leaders of medium-scaled guilds, who were peak rank 1 Magi themselves, did not dare to make a sound.
“My lord, it’s like this....” Ophelia tried her best to make herself sound calm, narrating the whole story.
“Oh! Is that so?”
Leylin turned, and Aaron was pressed to the ground by an invisible force.
“I’ll give you one chance. You said you used your family’s secret method and found him. Do it again in front of us! If the Teardrop Gemstone is on him, then he shall be judged by us all. If not...”
Leylin’s dangerous gaze landed on Ophelia, causing her head to tingle.
“If it isn’t, then Ophelia is willing to accept punishment!” Ophelia grit her teeth and forced out an answer.
“Not only that, those of us here are responding to summons from the central region to engage in battle. If you are proven to be wrong, you shall be prosecuted by the war council for obstructing military affairs.”
Leylin smiled to make up for his harsh words. “Well then, begin!”
“What do I do? What do I do?” Aaron watched Ophelia who had already begun to use her family’s secret method and the official Magi who were preparing to watch a good show. He repeatedly asked Merlin in his mind, while not even daring to look at the legendary rank 2 Magus at all.
“Don’t worry. I’m the legendary great Magus Merlin. What is a little rank 2 Magus to me?” Merlin boasted shamelessly, “With my spirit force concealing it, this girl definitely won’t find anything!”
“Then why didn’t you use it previously?” Aaron felt like he had been conned.
“A lot of my spirit force has been used, and it hasn’t been replenished,” Merlin explained vaguely, causing Aaron to immediately begin reproaching himself. How could he not trust Grandpa Merlin, whom he had grown up with?
“You’re dead meat!” Ophelia snickered while lowering her head, pointing at Aaron with the ring.
“There is a tracking spell formation on the Teardrop Gemstone passed down by my ancestors. As long he has it on him, my ring will emit red rays of light. Look, my lords!”
Ophelia pointed the ring at Aaron, and shouted a word, “Mambo!”
Aaron’s heart was at his throat, and he almost closed his eyes to wait for the judgment of destiny.
“Eh?” “Oh!” “Ah?”
All sorts of sounds resounded by Aaron’s ears, but none of them were the accusations he had expected.
He secretly chanced a glance at Ophelia, who was now looking lost and dejected.
“How is this possible? How is this possible? It wasn’t like this the last few times!” She lifted the ring and scanned him a few more times.
The ring had no response, as if it were just an ordinary ring.
“Haha! How is it? Aren’t my concealing methods powerful?” Merlin chuckled heartily in Aaron’s mind.
In reality, all of this was Leylin’s work. If not for him being there, Aaron would definitely have been seen through.
“How?” Ophelia shrieked, unwilling to give up as she took off the ring and inspected the formations within.
Moments later, she yelled out, “It must be you! You must have hidden the Teardrop Gemstone somewhere along the way! “No! It must definitely be on your person. Hand it over!” Blazing pink flames appeared on her body.
“Enough! What a farce!” Leylin was still playing the role of a fair, altruistic judge.
“No! My lord, you need to believe me!” Ophelia’s voice cracked, sounding a little hoarse.
*Bang!*
A resplendent, silver light flashed, and the flames on her body were extinguished. She retreated a few steps and fell to the ground, her expression still full of stubbornness.
“Haha, that girl actually dares to resist. She’s in trouble!” Merlin rejoiced in Aaron’s mind.
“What’s happening?” Aaron immediately asked.
“That Lord Leylin is a rank 2 Magus! His solidified spiritual force is not something a little girl like her can withstand, but she actually dared do so. What should have been a light injury will now become more serious, and might even affect her sea of consciousness…”
“Ah? Then what’s going to happen to her?” Aaron began to blame himself.
“What else can happen to her? If a rank 2 Magus wants to discipline her, she’ll still need to endure it even if she’s not in the wrong. She can’t complain either,” Merlin continued taking joy in her pain, and took the opportunity to educate Aaron, “This is the law of the Magus World!”
“Leave this place and never appear in front of me again! It seems like you just made a mistake this time. I won’t report it to the war council!”
Leylin hummed lightly and returned to the carriage.
“Thank you for your mercy, my lord!” His actions elicited words of gratitude from the female Magus.
Ophelia left the area in a daze. Although she was in despair, were she to continue staying here, a few peak rank 1 Magi would make short work of her without Leylin even lifting a finger. “What are you looking at? We’re leaving!”

Soon enough, the carriages continued their journey.
aron stood in a spot alone, and no Magi bothered him. This was his second time experiencing a feeling of loss. The first time? Naturally, it was when his spiritual aptitude had deteriorated, and his engagement was broken off. Aaron held onto the black ring in his hands tightly. That was the gloomiest moment of his life, but thankfully he found this! “Grandpa Merlin? When do you reckon I will reach the level of Master Leylin?” Aaron silently asked in his heart.

It had never occurred to him to use his connections. In Dolon City, he was but a small acolyte, whereas Leylin was a powerful rank 2 Magus. The latter would surely not remember him! “Relax, isn’t it just rank 2?” Merlin had inherited Leylin’s twisted sense of humour. It whispered into Aaron’s mind: “As long as you can find the two children of destiny, and trigger the river of destiny, your cultivation in Sacred Flame will increase exponentially. Advancing to rank 2 or 3 will be a simple task!”

“In that case, I have to increase my speed!” Aaron clenched his fist and looked into the far distance; for an instant he was filled with hope.

To Leylin, what happened to Aaron was but a hiccup in his journey. Even though Aaron was a chess piece of his, he never requested Aaron to join him. After all, keeping Merlin at his side was enough. Moreover, he did not want to give Aaron or the others any clues, lest they discover his intentions.
Leylin lowered his head, concealing the bottomless glow in his eyes.

......

After advancing for half a month, the squadron had entered the central region. Their journey there had been very peaceful, with nothing happening. Their squadron was one that was composed of magicians. They had no lack of even peak rank 1 Magi, and Leylin, a rank 2 Magus was leading them. It was already considered pretty good that they had not looked for trouble with others, forget anyone daring to offend them.

With the aid of spells, they travelled rapidly, not being impeded even by rough terrain. Commoners would face difficulties when trying to trek through narrow valleys and scale steep cliffs. Magi just settled any problems with a few spells.

"Is this central Twilight Zone? The quality of life here far surpasses that of the east!"

Leylin had lowered his hood and looked around at the neatly built houses by the roadside. He nodded at the occasional farmer he saw. The center was the essence of Twilight Zone. Darkness creatures were a rare sight here, and the population density was very high. However, currently, Leylin could see squires dressed in leather armour running across the region. The farmers mostly looked worried; with north Twilight Zone having fallen, the big war was at their doorstep! The dark elven soldiers and dwarves, gnomes and even darkness creatures from outside the region could all directly arrive at the central region after bypassing the north, which could create a lot of trouble for them.

The central region lacked the strength to repel such raids, especially
in terms of magicians. They had no choice but to send out orders to all 4 zones and recruit more acolytes.

At this point in time, a Nature’s Alliance Magus came forth and reported to Leylin: “My lord! The leaders of a few medium-scale guilds have come forth to say their goodbyes; they are going to return to the zones they came from!”

“Let them go! They don’t have to specially report to me!” Leylin coldly ordered.

A large number of orders sounded in the distance. Some of the smaller troops, like the distributaries of a river, left Nature’s Alliance’s side.

“What a pity!” Leylin glanced at the small and medium-scale guilds that were leaving, and let out a sigh.

Even though the resources in the central region were good, they had to be exchanged for with one’s life!

If these guilds could survive the big war, they would naturally get land as their reward. However, if they risk suffering heavy losses, or even being completely wiped out, then leaving would be the best choice.

Though the central region was rich in resources, even it could not support all the guilds that came.

The war would choose the real winners who would end up with the last laugh! Still, many guilds swarmed to the central region. Even though they knew it was all a gamble, they did not hesitate for a moment to stake everything on this wager. They hoped to gain a lot from it.

“After the war, how many guilds would there be left?” Leylin sighed lightly and closed the windows.

“Send the orders down, we are to advance at full speed and rush to our territory as soon as we can!” On the surface, Leylin was still representing Nature’s Alliance’s interests, and hence he had ordered so casually.
“As you wish, my lord!”
The orders were quickly passed down through magic spells, and the sounds of the Earth Salamanders and Wildebeest came repeatedly as the entire squadron’s speed increased a level.

……

In yet another region, a few haggard travellers entered the boundaries of the central region.
“Is this the central region?” Baelin swept off the dust on his body and looked at the big city ahead.
He was dressed in oversized grey gunny robes, and a spider streaked in gold would pop out onto his shoulders from time to time.
“Yes! Advancing after Tran City should lead us to central Twilight Zone!” Memphis was next to Baelin. However, he had currently lost all resemblance to a dark elf, and only looked like a pale-skinned royal.
“Could you get your Underground Winter Spider Emperor to hide? It’s very easy to attract attention here!” He once again looked at the mischievous spider that climbed onto Baelin’s shoulder, and smiled wryly.
*Hiss* This golden spider seemed to be able to understand human languages, and upon hearing what Memphis said, it let out a threatening screech.
“Aru says that he has restrained his aura, and only rank 2 Magi can see through his transformation; so even if formal Magi were to see the Underground Winter Spider Emperor, they would only treat it as a mutated ordinary spider!” Baelin translated for Memphis, “Also, if you dare to suggest this ever again, he’ll eat you!”
“Alright!” Memphis was rendered speechless.
This Underground Winter Spider Emperor was Baelin’s reward
from their excursion into the Dark Elven Empire! Originally, they had planned to attack or subdue the Underground Winter Spider Emperor to halt the war.
However, the Underground Winter Spider Emperor had confoundingly decided to follow Baelin, becoming the Magus’ contracted familiar.
Memphis had not expected that, and after he found out that it could have been the workings of his ancestral amulet, he felt so cheated that he almost went and banged his head against a wall.
Although he knew that his ancestors were royals of a strong clan, he had not expected them to have left such a strong agreement that the owner of the amulet could actually control the Underground Winter Spider Emperor!
That was a being with the strength of a rank 2 Magus! Were he to have gained control of it, the Underground Winter Spider knights would have defected to his side, but now?
Memphis smiled wryly as he looked at Baelin who was standing at the side.
Even though they had the Underground Winter Spider knights, the proud dark elves simply would not admit that a member of another species could exercise control over their sacred objects. On the contrary, they had viewed this as a great humiliation, and had even launched into a relentless killing spree!
Memphis had seen the Dark Elven Empire’s plans fail. He learned through his connections that the dark elves were plotting yet another scheme in the central region, one that could potentially destroy the foundations of the human race!
Upon receiving the news, Baelin had become restless and filled with a strong sense of duty. After ensuring that Jenny settled down, he secretly entered the central region with Memphis.
“What happens to us after this? Do we tell the Magi what we found out?” Baelin suddenly realised that he had no idea about his next
course of action.

“Just based on our own merits?” Memphis pointed to himself and
smiled bitterly, then pointed to the Underground Winter Spider
Emperor on Baelin’s shoulders, “A dark elf and a suspicious man
with an Underground Winter Spider Emperor?”

“I’m afraid that, before we even utter a single word, the other side
will have started flinging spells at us. Needless to say, this
information would only be heeded if a rank 2 Magus passed it on,
and Aru’s stealth would not hold up against such an existence!

“Furthermore, upon seeing an Underground Winter Spider
Emperor, a rank 2 Magus would even kill us immediately! After all,
their bloodlines ensure that dark elves would instantly weaken the
moment an Underground Winter Spider Emperor dies. They would
even lose their endless supply of mounts! This would definitely be
a huge blow to the Dark Elven Empire! What do you think they
would choose to do?”

“Essentially, there’s still no way!” Baelin squatted down and felt
dejected.

“However, it is not entirely hopeless!” Memphis’ tone changed.

“There’s hope?” Baelin’s eyes lit up.

“Do you remember that I mentioned Magus Leylin earlier?”

“Master Leylin?” Baelin’s voice held a tinge of respect within it. He
saw Leylin as a teacher and was grateful and respectful to him.

“Yes! That Leylin! Did you know that he is actually the most recent
Magus to reach rank 2?” Memphis lowered his voice. Even though
Leylin was a member of another species, he still held a respect for
the strong.

“According to the news I received, not only did he help Fendix
attack and kill a rank 2 matriarch at Dolon, he had defeated another
matriarch before it! My clan’s intelligence has already marked him
as a threat with a danger level of 8!”

“Master! He is actually so… strong?” Baelin’s eyes widened. He had
personally witnessed the strength of a rank 2 matriarch. In the Dark Elven Empire, he and Memphis had been hunted down by a matriarch. If not for the protection of the Underground Winter Spider Emperor, they would definitely not have been able to escape. The matriarch’s unyielding strength had left a deep impression on the minds of the two. And now, he was being told that the Master Leylin who had taught him before was even stronger than a rank 2 matriarch? Baelin’s feelings at that moment were very complicated. There was pride, but there was also regret. “Yes!” Memphis nodded his head: “Though we’re not of the same kind, I admire him greatly as well! “This Master Leylin is definitely a heavy presence in the Magi world, and even has ties with you. You need only pass the intelligence to him…”
“H"m, that is indeed a good idea! But…” Baelin had nodded, but then felt a little guilty.
He had only left behind a letter when he took Jenny away, not even wishing the man goodbye. It was slightly irrational, and even ungrateful.
This had always been a thorn in his heart. However, he had been impulsive as a teenager, and his worry for Jenny’s safety had led him to go through with what he had done.
He had planned to wait until things got better and he managed to make something of himself. He would return as a successful man with a reputation. If he then begged for Leylin’s apology, he believed he would be forgiven.
“Lord Leylin might even make an exception and acknowledge me as his disciple!” Baelin occasionally dreamed of such.
However, the timing was still not right. He was a poor, penniless youngster who was even being chased by the dark elves. If he were to head over now, he would even need to rely on Leylin for help.
Blood rushed to Baelin’s head, and his cheeks flushed.
“What’s wrong?” Memphis asked.
“Oh, nothing, it’s nothing. You have a great idea. Let’s do it!”
“I don’t recommend you do that.” At this moment, a cold female voice sounded beside them.
“Who is it?” Baelin immediately jumped a distance away, his cloak fluttering open. His Bio Boosting Armour, comprising of countless
eyes, fused with his body and the Underground Winder Spider Emperor on his shoulder hopped off as it expanded from the size of a fist to that of a two-storeyed building. It turned towards the voice, a translucent liquid dripping from its white teeth.

On the other side, Memphis started to prepare his spells as well, his body glowing. The relentless pursuit they had escaped from until now had made them paranoid, and they were easily startled.

Red flashing lights revealed the source of the voice to be a female Magus.

This woman wore a large white robe; her charming eyebrows were long and narrow, and the lines on her face were soft and exquisite. She could be considered a rare beauty.

What made her stand out was the five-coloured gemstone bracelet on her pale neck. Energy fluctuations that did not lose out to that of an official Magus emanated from her body.

“Who are you?” Baelin asked guardedly.

This human Magus seemed to be proficient in stealth techniques. She had been able to come close without being noticed, closer than even the dark elven forces that had chased them could get!

“I have no bad intentions.” The female Magus smiled good-naturedly, and then spread her arms.

“My name is Vinas, and I’m a wandering Magus. I’m here to give you some advice” The female Magus’ voice was very calm, and there was a mysterious aura about her. It was an aura found only on the erudite and wise, like elders who had long since learned the ways of the world.

‘No, not erudite! She’s confident, as if the entire world is a toy in her hands!’ Memphis was secretly shocked. This confidence was seldom seen even among matriarchs. This conclusion drove him to further shock, and he went on high alert.

This sort of person was bound to have unfathomable strength or a special ability. It was best if he and Baelin did not do anything that
they were not sure would go well.

“Alright! Well then, Ms Vinas, what would you like to tell us?” Memphis had stealthily retreated a few steps, and was using his right sleeve to conceal his actions as he took hold of a simple magic scroll.

“You don’t have to be so wary. I’m a friend who is here to help you!”

Vinas smiled wryly, and without waiting for Memphis to enquire, she began to narrate, “There’s a traitor among the upper ranks of Twilight Zone’s Magi who has colluded with the dark elves. I don’t know this person’s identity yet, but I know he’s shrouded by the fog of destiny. However, he might have a guardian, be it the guild leader of a large-scale guild, or even the Magus Leylin you spoke of! If you enter their hands, the consequences will be dire.”

“There’s a traitor among the higher-ups of Magi?” Baelin cried out, “Where did you get that news?”

“The guidance of destiny lets me see this, just as it lets me see your futures.” A pious expression appeared on Vinas’ face as she walked forward, focusing on Baelin’s face.

“You will become a hero in the future, and I shall be your most loyal subordinate and assistant.” As she said this, she actually half-knelt and performed the rites to vow her loyalty and devotion to him.

“I- I’ll become a hero?” Baelin seemed to turn a little stupid, but Memphis had zoned in on the main points of her speech.

“A prophecy? Could you be the legendary witch of destiny, capable of peering into someone’s entire life?”

“Under the guidance of destiny, nothing can be hidden!” Vinas nodded and confirmed her identity.

“A female Magus that can predict the future! So cool!” Baelin cheered.

“History has given birth to many legendary figures like the Lion
King and John the Golden Knight. Each of them had a wise and powerful Magus aiding them, one with the power to see the future. Only with this aid did they become the masters of their generations!”
The stream of fortuitous meetings, as well as having the witch of destiny standing on his side made him feel slightly complacent. “Perhaps… I really am destined to be a hero!” These thoughts could not be contained as they took root in Baelin’s mind, a seed that kept growing.
“Baelin, wake up!” Memphis was a little speechless.
They hadn’t even ascertained whether this person was friend or foe, or whether her prophecy was real, yet he had already begun to daydream…?
“My Lady Magus, can you prophesize the conspiracy stirring amongst the dark elves?” Memphis asked what he was most concerned about.
“I’m afraid not! The current of destiny is far too powerful, and I can only see certain images, of specific times and places.” Vinas smoothed her long hair at the back, laughing wryly.
“Also, the dark elves seem to have a helper that is the same as me, able to predict the future.”
“What?” Baelin and Memphis involuntarily cried out at the same time.
Since when did terrifying Magi who could predict the future become so commonplace that they could be found everywhere?
“Alright! Looks like I wasn’t the only one. Well then, Vinas, are you willing to become our companion and adventure with us?” Baelin laughed, stretching his arm towards Vinas.
“It would be my honour!” Vinas’ voice revealed a tinge of emotion.
However, the moment their hands touched, her expression changed.
A white circle spread from the centers of her eyes, turning her
pupils pure white.
In her line of sight, a young Magus with a black ring was rapidly rushing in their direction. That person also looked in this direction; as if through the power of destiny; they had also noticed her existence.
“This is bad!” Red light flashed from her body, and she quickly turned to leave.
“Don’t even think of running!” On the other end, Aaron now knew the reason why he had been hurrying his journey and feeling so restless.
Another person training in Sacred Flame had already rushed ahead of him and arrived first.
*Boom! Boom!* Two rays streaked through the horizon, causing Baelin and Memphis to be unable to make heads or tails of the situation.
“Is she the other Magus?” Aaron’s expression was dark as he asked in his mind.
“Yes. I can feel the aura of another magic artifact I forged on her!” Merlin’s voice was low as he answered quickly.
*Rumble!*
The two rays clashed, and quickly separated. However, with that attack, Aaron and Vinas could now see each other clearly.
It was a beautiful female Magus, Aaron judged, but immediately after, a powerful desire exploded from the depths of his heart. This was a violent surge that could not be stopped.
‘Devour her! Devour her! Devour her!’
“What’s going on?” Aaron pressed his hand to his heart, looking ashen. He asked Merlin, “Why do I feel like I need to kill this woman to be whole?”
“Sigh…” Merlin huffed out a long breath, “It looks like the necklace contains a memory fragment of mine, and it has imparted
Sacred Flame to her as well!”

“Sacred Flame is an exclusive high-grade meditation technique. In other words, only one Magus in a generation can successfully train in it. The rest might not die, but they won’t be able to attain a higher level in their meditation technique. My apologies…”

“Don’t worry.” Aaron was now a lot more mature, “If not for Sacred Flame, I might have died countless times. Why would I care about that?”

“But does that mean I’m enemies with that female Magus?”

“Yes! Only one person will be able to have the last laugh between you two, and I hope that will be you,” Merlin’s voice travelled, “Don’t worry, I will do all I can to support you!”

……

“Everyone has gathered. The show is about to start!”

Leylin occupied the central tent in Nature’s Alliance’s temporary encampment, and it was the most luxurious. Through the A.I. Chip, he was now checking up on his guinea pigs and their progress in Sacred Flame.

By distributing the old grandpas and his modified technique, he obtained not only a lot of experimental data but also the high-grade meditation techniques that he’d had them steal. These high-grade meditation techniques were normally only passed on to guild members. However, with an unwitting spy amongst their ranks, obtaining them was very easy.

“Looks like I’ve managed to successfully modify prophecies!” Leylin scratched his chin.

That prediction of a traitor had been a cock and bull story he had conjured up, but it had successfully deceived Vinas. This allowed Leylin to be even more confident in his future plans.

“But that last guinea pig is really exceeding my expectations! He
actually chose to side with the dark elves. How daring!”
Leylin was actually full of praise for the last guinea pig. To be able to overcome the pressure to help their own race, and to disregard the norms and side with the enemy race, that required courage and decisiveness that not many possessed. “It’s a pity that since all the information you get is transparent to me, it’s useless no matter what you do.” Leylin sighed, eyes flashing with a dangerous light. “My lord!” At this moment, a Magus’ voice sounded outside. “Come in!” “Yes!” The fabric for the tent was pushed aside, and a kindly old geezer entered. This was Iren, the peak rank 1 Magus Leylin had forced into his service. He had many plans for the central region, and had naturally brought his strongest helpers to put them into practice. “The inconveniences around Ardent Gale Lake have been taken care of. We can move in at any time,” Iren respectfully lowered his head, reporting to Leylin. Though the central region had gone all out and agreed to give Nature’s Alliance resources that were usually reserved for large-scale guilds, there were still many problems which Nature’s Alliance needed to handle themselves. Magi could be controlled, but dangerous creatures would not obediently listen to the orders of the war council. “You did well!” Leylin nodded slightly.
Ardent Gale Lake was where they were going to be garrisoned. It would be Nature’s Alliance’s headquarters in the central region. Iren responded deferentially to Leylin’s indifferent commands, and withdrew quickly.

“Also!” Just as Iren was about to leave, he heard Leylin’s voice, “I want to go out for a bit, and I’m leaving you in charge. Be careful of the surrounding dangers.”

“Of course, my lord.” Iren bowed even lower.

“En!” Leylin nodded, waving his arms and letting Iren leave.

The next job was construction, something that was both troublesome and time-consuming. Leylin could not be bothered with helping, so he left everything to Iren.

If this was his previous world, this might result in him becoming a mere figurehead, but the Magus world was different.

His own strength rivalled or even surpassed that of the rest of Nature’s Alliance combined! Not to mention, he still had full control of Iren’s life. He still had the man’s spirit source!

Hence, Leylin did not worry one bit that Iren would betray him.

“It’s also time to see some old friends.” Leylin laughed slightly, and his body was suddenly engulfed in black mist.

*Pak!* With a light noise, the black mist suddenly exploded, and Leylin’s figure disappeared from the tent.

……

“Ernis, are you sure that he is vulnerable right now? This is a rank 2 Magus we’re talking about!”

Somewhere else underground, Longbottom wore his black robes with an image of a spider twisting on the back. Eight jet-black claws stretched towards the air, as if trying to draw in some mysterious energy.

“Of course, my lord!” The Magus named Ernis was a pale, sturdy
man. His features were clear and he wore exquisite handmade armour. The tattered notebook in his hand stood out, as if it didn’t belong there.
“The great Magus Rosby, the guild leader of Green Waters Garden, will be weakened by restrictions in his high-grade meditation technique, and his strength will fall from that of a rank 2 Magus. I’ve already foreseen the exact time, and even his hiding spot!” Ernis sounded very confident.
Ever since he’d begun practicing Sacred Flame, every prophecy he’d made had played out in real life. Naturally, he had grown to be sure of their accuracy.
“Good! This operation will be a big one!” Longbottom closed his eyes, as if he was communicating with the spider on his back. He then suddenly spoke, “The Magi that belong to guilds all own the most land and have the best resources, and restrict us from advancing. They monopolize high-grade meditation techniques and cruelly exploit we acolytes and Magi who have humble backgrounds. Can you tolerate that?” Longbottom’s body floated to the air, sound magic amplifying his voice tenfold such that it resounded in the underground cavity.
“No!” “No!” Within this cavity, there were a few acolytes and Magi besides Ernis. Though they looked to be down and out, their eyes seemed to be ablaze.
Few magicians were lucky enough to find inheritances on their own. If the rest were not nurtured by guilds, their futures would be bleak.
As a result of unfair treatment and having been pushed around for a long period of time, Longbottom had easily lit their hearts aflame. He had needed to spend little energy in gathering a large group of magicians to his side.
With the secret support of the dark elves, as well as Longbottom’s
generous distribution of high-grade meditation techniques, these magicians had increased their strength by a level or two. Magi who were able to survive in the cracks of society were all quite capable in their own right, and the amount of power they had been able to muster had left Longbottom tongue-tied. Now, by brainwashing them into desiring change by revolution, Longbottom had played these Magi into the palm of his hands. “What do we need?” Longbottom’s voice boomed. “Revolution!” “Revolution!” “Revolution!”

The sound waves almost launched Ernis off his feet. He stood aside, hearing the acolytes and even official Magi’s shouting themselves hoarse, and flushed red. He felt incomparably cold inside. At this moment, he felt a mysterious power shrouding them. It seemed as heavy as the mountains and seas, but it had no element to it. After training in Sacred Flame, Ernis was extremely clear of what this energy was. “The power of destiny, and so concentrated at that!” Ernis muttered. “We are now going to destroy a large-scaled guild and kill the rank 2 Magus, Rosby.” Longbottom ordered, full of spirit. Behind him, the spider totem’s eyes suddenly brightened.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Soft booms sounded from Longbottom’s body as elemental rings of light appeared around him. These were the symbol of a semi-converted Magus. Immediately, numerous energy rings appeared, creating brilliant lights and vibrant colours. Longbottom’s aura constantly strengthened, until it would not lose out to a peak rank 1 Magus. “‘Life Absorption,’ a high-grade meditation technique used by dark elven matriarchs. Through drawing on the life force of others, one can advance very quickly, but the aftereffects are severe. If they
cannot gather the requisite amount of life energy every day, then the Magus’ own life force will quickly wither, until the technique has drained them completely of their life.”

Ernis lowered his head, hiding the glint in his eyes. “Looks like Longbottom has been gaining a higher status at the dark elves’ end, and I have pretty much entered the dark elves’ camp and turned into a traitor.”

A sardonic smile appeared on his lips, “But so what if I betrayed them? Magi should only consider their own benefits. My counterparts are still contesting the other child of destiny, how would they have the advantage I gain by being alone? I will be the one with the last laugh!”

Ernis roared in his heart. He felt his own body twist, and the meditation technique that had been advancing at a snail’s pace began to progress at a rapid rate.

He suddenly raised his head and looked at Longbottom, who was ready and waiting.

In his vision, of the powers of destiny that had gathered on Longbottom’s self, a part had quickly turned towards him.

*Ka-cha!* As if he had broken through some bottleneck, tiny elemental rings appeared in his hands, along with a crisp sound emanating from his body.

From a normal Magus who had just advanced, he had become a semi-converted Magus.

“As expected. By changing the course of the river of destiny and taking in its power, Sacred Flame can improve at a rapid pace!” The burly man’s eyes were filled with a crazed excitement.

“How is it? I didn’t lie to you, did I?” A voice suddenly sounded from the tattered notebook.

“En! I was too careless previously. I apologise, dear Magus Merlin!”

The man did not hesitate to lower his head, since he would lose
nothing by apologizing.
“You really are quite gutsy to dare tamper with destiny on such a large scale. Longbottom could very well die there!” The old geezer Merlin touched his beard, “Even I have rarely done something this crazy in the 3200 years of my life!”
“Hehe. Longbottom is a child of destiny, he won’t die so easily. As for the other Magi? What do their lives have to do with me?” Ernis snickered, “Even if the child of destiny really were to die here, that will alter the course of the river of destiny as well. How much power could I get from that?”
“And after that, you will be devoured and killed.” Merlin refuted without hesitation.
“It’s all a gamble. I don’t care.” The burly man chuckled, radiating an aura of determination and madness. These two auras mixed together and formed something even more contradictory.
Merlin sighed, but did not speak further. Inside, however, it was sending the main A.I. Chip and Leylin some information. [Target has developed type 2 mental breakdown. Data has been recorded as such: …]
“Hm?”
Somewhere at a high altitude, Leylin halted his footsteps.
“Interesting! What an interesting plan!”
His lips quirked up in a smile.
“The central region is unstable right now, but it hasn’t been pushed past the tipping point yet. Let me be the one to do that.”
The field had been partitioned, with a large mill occupying the center. Not far away, there was a small farm and a stone castle. However, it was very small and lacked a moat. At a glance, it looked to be the territory of a small aristocratic family. In a shadow, Ernis had respectfully lowered his head and was reporting to Longbottom. “My lord, I can confirm that this is a secret stronghold of the Green Water Gardens guild. The Great Magus Rosby who is in his down period is hiding here.”

“En! This is their nest, and there should be many defensive spell formations. Since they’re a rank 2 Magus, even if they were weakened temporarily, they cannot be compared to an ordinary peak rank 1 Magus!” Longbottom muttered to himself, and then glanced at his subordinates. Those following him were all official Magi, but few were even semi-converted. He could unearth their potentials, but what he needed was time. He had brought them along now as a declaration of allegiance, to form an impassable divide between them and the ruling class. Longbottom glanced at the few figures dressed in black robes. These people had slim bodies and had concealed their features with large cloaks. The cloaks were so large, in fact, that one could not even tell the men from the women.
These were the backup he had been given by the dark elves. All of them were at the peak of rank 1.
As for the rank 2 matriarchs? Every single action of theirs was being monitored; it was impossible for one to sneak across the border to conduct an assassination.
In addition, even if they somehow got in, they would be surrounded and attacked by the Magi of Twilight Zone.
Dark elves could bear the deaths of rank 1 Magi, but rank 2 matriarchs were the backbones of their clans; their presence was a spiritual support to the clan members, boosting their morale. The death of a matriarch was a heavy loss for any clan.
It was for this reason that Fendix, who had killed a matriarch, had gained large rewards from Twilight Zone as well as a huge bounty from the Dark Elven Empire. Honestly speaking, the rewards that the crazed dark elves promised had even tempted Leylin.
Fendix himself was so frightened that he spent all his time at the headquarters of his guild, and had naturally not come to the aid of the central region.
“Go!” With Longbottom’s order, flames of death descended on this peaceful field.
*Rumble!* Fireballs rained down like meteors, sending sparks flying everywhere.
“What’s going on?” A knight dressed in the garb of nobility rushed out, shocked.
*Xiu!* After seeing the situation, he retreated without the slightest hesitation, leaving his territory, subjects and even family behind.
As a knight who had entered the battlefield before, he knew the terror that Magi brought with them. He knew that once they attacked, this place was doomed.
“Don’t let any of them go!”
Longbottom watched the knight who was darting away and pointed
at him like one would at an ant. A deathly light streaked across the sky and reached his back. Like cutting through cotton, it easily penetrated the knight’s defence and exploded on his back.
*Bang!* A hole that could fit a basketball was opened up, revealing white bones and black blood. The knight’s eyes were filled with fear, as well as shock. The powerful inertia allowed him to run a few more steps before he fell with a thud.
Under the constant onslaught of spells, the village turned into a sea of fire. None of the peasants lived, and it soon turned into a white land.
However, Longbottom was still not satisfied and ordered the Magi to quicken their actions.

Layers of soil were lifted, revealing a glossy rock wall, with runes on it concealing any energy fluctuations.
“Hehe, he’s actually like a groundhog hiding under the feet of regular humans, and has even carved energy runes to conceal his aura. This Magus Rosby really is rather timid…” Longbottom sneered, and pointed at the magic wall.
“Destroy it!”
*Rumble!* Numerous spells were interrupted by several rays of light before they could reach the rock wall.
*Rumble!* The rock separated, revealing a large door.
*Thud! Thud!* Accompanied by heavy footsteps, four large silver guards walked out.

These silver guards were all adorned in heavy armour, and their expressions were moulded to be blank. There was even some light flashing out of their eyes like a searchlight.
Ernis immediately stepped forward and spoke “Rosby is very careful and cautious. He hasn’t revealed this location to any other Magus, and even the guard has been set up by him alone, consisting only of Secret Silver Puppets. Hence, he’s the only one
in here. We need to prevent him from fleeing.” As for how he had found this out, it would stay a secret.

“When working together, these four Secret Silver Puppets are equivalent to two peak rank 1 Magi. The two of you, go up there and stop them. The revolutionary army will be around to keep them from fleeing.” Longbottom quickly sent down the command. The two black-robed people charged up without a word.

*Roar!* The Secret Silver Puppets yelled and brandished their large silver swords, battling the black-robed elves.

Immense energy fluctuations gave rise to a storm, sweeping through the region.

The revolutionary army Longbottom had brought with him dared only to watch on from a distance, occasionally supporting the two and pinning the guards down.

“Ernis and the rest, follow me.” Longbottom shook his robes, and the rest of the dark elves and Ernis followed him.

Only after they were far from everyone’s eyes did Longbottom speak to Ernis, “Quick! Find the escape routes Rosby could be using!”

“Come with me!” Moments later, Ernis led the way.

“Go!” Longbottom watched Ernis who was leading the way, eyes darting everywhere. Nobody could guess his thoughts.

In a little farm about five kilometers away…

*Pala!* The soil flipped over, revealing a dark pathway.

A grim middle-aged man in dark red Magus robes walked out. After glancing at his surroundings, he immediately unfurled a scroll. Green hurricanes blew forth, and a large pair of wings formed on his back.

“I can’t stay here any longer. How did this get out?”

This Magus was obviously Green Water Gardens’ rank 2 Magus, Rosby.

He was obviously in a stale mood. The location that only he knew
of had been leaked, and someone had even found him while he was weak. The whole situation reeked of a conspiracy. However, he had another question. “I didn’t tell anyone about this place. How did they find out?” However, he did not dare dwell on this for long, “This place is dangerous. I’ll think about it after I leave.” Just as Rosby was about to spread his wings, an extreme sense of danger came upon him. He immediately retreated, his figure turning into an afterimage. *Rumble!* A large explosion occurred right where he had been standing, and the energy particles that were dispelled caused massive damage to the ground. *Xiu! Xiu!* Two black streaks of light flew across the sky, forming a cross in mid-air. These arches accurately homed in on Rosby’s wings. “This trajectory? It’s the dark elves’ curved archery! You are dark elves!” The wings fell apart, and Rosby paled before crying out in alarm. *Shua!* Black light flashed, and a distortion appeared in the air, revealing a few figures. Longbottom took the lead, and the two robed people behind him also took off their clothes, revealing pale, handsome features and pointed ears. The twisted runes on their fantastic black bows were now flickering. “Humans and dark elves! Looks like you are the revolutionary army that has been causing such a ruckus. You are the leader, right? Longbottom?” Rosby calmed down. “Yes!” Longbottom bowed, “As a rank 2 Magus, you are my senior, but for our hopes and future, please die.” *Rumble!* Just as his words sounded, the dark elves suddenly attacked.
Black streams of air formed what looked like a spider web and fell from the skies. On Longbottom’s body, the phantom image of a large giant spider appeared and jumped onto the web, hissing loudly.

“Combination magic? Its power is almost as much as that of a rank 2 spell!” A strange smile appeared on his face, “But just that isn’t enough.”

*Rumble!* A torrential power exploded forth from Rosby’s body, as if a landslide or tsunami had come upon the area. Silver spiritual force slashed at the skies like a sharp sword, and quickly severed the web into two. The phantom image was also bisected, causing both Longbottom and the dark elves to pale.

“Rank 2 strength! You’re not weak anymore!” Longbottom had become deathly pale, his voice quivering.

“Impossible! Impossible!” Ernis could not believe it either.

“Recognise the reality of it! Your opponent is a rank 2 Magus. How could he not have a few trump cards? Even if his strength might have been lowered because he was in his down period, he can still suppress that for a while and reveal true rank 2 strength!” Merlin’s voice sounded in Ernis’ mind.

“How is this possible? I didn’t predict…” Ernis was flushing red, but suddenly became silent, like a duck that had been grasped at the neck.

“Do you understand now? You’re only a rank 1 Magus, and in ancient times you’d be considered as just having crossed the gates of becoming a Magus. With just this bit of strength, it’s impossible for you to completely predict the trump cards of a rank 2 Magus using Sacred Flame, even if he were weakened or heavily injured. The fog of destiny may shroud him, or even counterattack!”

Merlin’s voice was as cold as ice. “Now, do you know why I fell?”
Ernis looked defeated. “So I’m definitely going to die?”
Merlin sneered in his mind. “Not necessarily! Longbottom is a child of destiny, and is not one to fall so easily. Besides, do you think the matriarch backing him doesn’t have any contingency plans?”
“You dare offend me, a respected rank 2 Magus? You will pay for this humiliation in blood!” Rosby declared grimly, and a line of spiritual force converged that was tinged silver.
The rank 2 Magus had even been slightly frightened. If he hadn’t possessed a technique that could temporarily suppress his weakness, he could have died just then.
A rank 2 Magus dying at the hands of a group of rank 1 Magi would be the biggest joke in Twilight Zone’s history!
Rosby felt like a robust adult who had been bitten by an ant. The humiliation irked him to his soul.
This secret technique was not without cost. His period of vulnerability would be extended, and in the times of war, this could have had deadly consequences. Hence, he was now truly enraged.
“I shall turn you into maggots, making you rot and suffer underground for ten thousand years. I swear it!” Rosby’s eyes were completely red, and great amounts of solidified silver spiritual force swept through the area.
“Damn it. Use that!” Longbottom yelled.
The two dark elves behind him exchanged a glance and nodded,
silver rays shooting out of their eyes. In that moment, their expressions were that of those preparing for death. They then produced jewelled daggers with a strange curve, aimed them at their own hearts and jabbed in.

*Puk! Puk!* Two peak rank 1 elves collapsed, a bloody mist spreading from their chests.
The phantom image of the spider behind Longbottom had been seriously injured by spiritual force and was on the verge of disappearing. However, it suddenly twitched and absorbed the red blood-mist, quickly restoring itself. Its aura continually strengthened, until it was almost strong enough to rival the rank 2 Magus ahead of it.

“What- What’s going on?” Ernis was astonished.

“Hehe, nothing much. It’s just a sacrifice! The same old thing that the dark elves always use.” Merlin laughed sarcastically.

“Dark elven society is made up of clans. Every clan has its matriarch, and they all have immense control over their descendants. This control runs deep in the blood, and is very difficult to free oneself from. Even if it’s a peak rank 1 Magus, a mere spiritual suggestion would convince them to kill themselves without hesitation.”

“The meditation technique Longbottom is training in is one that absorbs life energy. After absorbing that of two peak rank 1 Magi, although he can’t defeat his opponent, he will most likely escape…”

“Hm? What about me?” Ernis was suddenly put in a difficult spot. Longbottom could leave, but he was just a semi-converted Magus. How was he to escape?

“This is the retaliation of destiny! Longbottom, being a child of destiny, can escape successfully. You’ll be left behind as an outlet for the rank 2 Magus to vent his anger upon!” Merlin’s voice was frigid, rendering Ernis silent.
His eyes turned white again as he tried to think up some countermeasures. He was trying to make a prediction, but he did not get anything.

“What should I do next?” Ernis’ voice was hoarse.

“Pray! At this point, you can do nothing but pray!” Merlin’s voice displayed his helplessness, “If I still had my body, killing him would be as easy as crushing an ant. But now? You can only hope he doesn’t prolong your life to torture you.”

“No! No! I still have hope!” Ernis stared hard at Longbottom, “As long as my lord is willing to save me, I can…”

Ernis’ words stuck in his throat. He watched as Longbottom, who was manipulating the phantom spider and battling with Rosby, quickly withdrew. Black gas flew everywhere and increased his speed. In a moment, he disappeared into the horizon.

“I… I…” Ernis’ eyes were filled with despair.

On the other end, Rosby who had lost Longbottom turned his attention to the semi-converted Magus. A giant silver claw flew forth, its strength not something that Ernis could resist, and grabbed him!

“Am I going to die? I can’t accept this!” Ernis closed his eyes. Powerful solidified spiritual force causing the magical power in his body to become sluggish in its movements. He could do nothing in the face of a rank 2 Magus’ wrath.

“Rosby!”

At this moment, a low voice sounded from the horizon a long distance away, carrying with it a berserk energy.

“Hm? An opportunity! A person seeking revenge against Rosby seems to have appeared. I’ll use my power to cover your presence. Quick, run!”

Merlin’s voice was hurried, and with a sudden feeling of coldness infiltrating his senses, Ernis found himself able to move once again.
He quickly escaped, dodging the attack of the giant claw. Without looking behind him, he quickly left.
Rosby did not pursue him, because a rank 2 spiritual force was now focused on him. He raised his head and saw a black figure rushing over from the horizon.
This figure’s face was shrouded by black mist, causing him to be unable to tell the real appearance of this person.
“Who are you? I don’t think we’ve met.” Rosby sounded out.
He was currently in a very dangerous situation, and his secret technique could lose its effect at any time, causing him to fall down to rank 1. That would be very dangerous.
“It doesn’t matter who I am, but this is a seed I planted. How could I let you harvest it?” The figure’s voice was robotic, obviously having been altered.
“Seed? Harvest? Are you…” Rosby’s stunned expression immediately warped into an immense fear.
Mist! Large amounts of black mist brought with it a silver luster, forming a large maze that trapped him within.
“He plans to limit my strength, and after my secret technique stops working, he’ll deal with me.” Rosby could tell his opponent’s intentions with a glance. He waved his arm, and numerous silver arrows flew into the mist.
*Pu pu! Pu pu! Pu pu!*
The arrows of light flew into the wall of mist and instantly disappeared, causing Rosby to pale.
“You don’t need to consider calling a friend or anything of the sort. This place has already been sealed by me, and no information can be transmitted out.”
The voice from before sounded in the black maze, but it did come from a single location.
His opponent was very cautious in dealing with a rank 2 Magus that had used a secret technique to somehow return to his regular
strength. He had not appeared, preventing him from using some powerful force that could destroy everything. A look of hopelessness appeared on Rosby’s face. Ten or so minutes passed, and Rosby bellowed, unresigned. The aura on his body quickly weakened, and lines of wrinkles appeared on his face. His appearance changed from that of a middle-aged man to that of an old man. This meant the secret technique was no longer in effect. He was once again weak, vulnerable. Seeing this, large amounts of mist pounced on him… *Pak!* The black maze dispersed, and a single black flame fell, burning Rosby’s corpse to ashes. Leylin weighed the green ring in his hand, a smile blossoming on his face. “As expected of the guild leader of a large-scaled guild. He’s accumulated plenty of things, and there’s even a spacial magic artifact!” He stared closely at the ring in his hand. It was extremely slender and looked like it was for a female to use. Its surface was decorated with flowers and vines, forming an exotic image. “There are many good items in this spatial ring, but the defensive layer on the surface is slightly troublesome. I’ll need to use the A.I. Chip and slowly analyse it.” Leylin scratched his chin and kept the green ring away. Rosby was a rank 2 Magus and had a spatial item. He would definitely have a lot of resources on his body, the total value of which could even exceed that of those stored in Green Water Gardens’ headquarters. Gaining this was akin to robbing a large-scaled guild, as well as all the property belonging to a rank 2 Magus. “The gains aren’t too bad this time. Also, hehe…” Leylin laughed coldly.
On the surface of the ring, he felt a tiny connection to a being a distance away. This meant that Rosby had yet to truly die. The connection was minute, and if not for Leylin already being a rank 2 Magus, as well as the A.I. Chip’s help in carefully scanning the ring a few times, he might not even have noticed this. If his opponent were to escape this time and find the ring on Leylin’s person, things would be bad. But now? Leylin glanced in the direction that Ernis had fled, a slight smile on his face. “It’s great that you could come back!” Longbottom glanced at Ernis, revealing a bright smile. “I was just lucky!” Ernis laughed wryly, though the seed of distrust had been planted within him. The two of them had already returned to the little manor. The four Secret Silver Puppets had been reduced to dust after being attacked by the two dark elves and many Magi. “Do you know who that Magus is?” Longbottom asked Ernis. “No, but he should be an enemy of Rosby’s. The strength of a rank 2 Magus is too far off, so I couldn’t gather any useful information.” Ernis seemed a little regretful. All of a sudden, he felt a prophecy entering his mind, and his eyes turned white. “Rosby is dead, but the seed of a clone is still within the headquarters of Green Water Gardens!” Ernis quickly passed on this information to Longbottom and asked, “What should we do?” “Is there a need to ask?” A sinister smile appeared on Longbottom’s face. “Summon our people. We shall go to their headquarters!”
There was still something else that Longbottom had not mentioned.

“Since the Magus that appeared seemed to have some squabble with Rosby, I’ll definitely get into the good books of that Magus if I kill Rosby completely in Green Water Gardens and destroy his guild. I can then try to rope them in…”

As a spy of the dark elves, Longbottom never forgot his own mission, create chaos and lower the might of Twilight Zone. If he could rope in a rank 2 Magus, that would be an immense merit!

At this thought, his heart began to blaze.

It had not been a mere day or two since the dark elves had infiltrated Twilight Zone. Longbottom immediately procured a map of Green Water Gardens.

In addition, Ernis had supported him with information about their defensive spell formations and weak points.

Green Radiance City was the central region headquarters of Green Water Gardens. Today, it had been met with a calamity.

Flames burned everywhere, painting the sky half red. The defensive spell formations had collapsed, and the Magi lying in wait outside all charged in.

“Kill!” Longbottom took the initiative, mysterious green light bursting from his hands.

The Magi who were obstructing him wilted, drying up into corpses on the road. Amongst them were Magi who, like him, were at the

368 - Intrinsic Quality
peak of rank 1!
Green Water Gardens was a large-scale guild, and there were quite a few peak rank 1 Magi and contracted creatures in charge of it. However, under the attacks of Longbottom’s revolutionary army and the dark elves, they were unable to endure for long.
“This way!” Ernis’ eyes turned white, and like someone familiar with the route, he brought Longbottom further in. Minutes later, they arrived beside a large ancient tree. *Crack!* The ancient tree was prised open violently, revealing a descending passageway.
Luminescent defensive spell formations appeared. Having been set up by a rank 2 Magus, they possessed immense magic power.
Longbottom sneered, “Looks like Rosby’s clone seed really is underneath!”
He did have a certain amount of knowledge about these clone seeds. Each seed could only live on and grow after the death of the original body.
In addition, he could not immediately regain his strength of rank 2. It would be miraculous even if he managed to keep the strength of a rank 1 Magus.
The value of a clone seed was that it was a second life. Even when one was training their way up again, there would be no bottlenecks impeding them from achieving their original rank.
The clone would originally be very weak, but as time passed, it would grow even more terrifying than the original. Hence, it was wise to exterminate it as soon as possible.
Ernis tested the formations with an instrument, and his expression warped instantly. “These defensive formations set up by a rank 2 Magus are quite strong. A peak rank 1 Magus will have to attack them for about half an hour to break them apart.”
“There’s no need for that!” Longbottom waved his hands, producing a black crystal.
“This is a gift from the matriarch. Sealed within is one of her full-powered attacks. It just so happens that this is a good place to use it!” Longbottom crushed the crystal in his hands.
*Chi chi!* The confused cries of numerous bugs echoed out.
A huge phantom spider appeared, this one purple. Its compound eyes shone with wisdom, even sentience, as it swept past Longbottom, Ernis, and the rest.
Ernis felt his heart go cold. When he was being stared at by this spider, it felt as if all his thoughts and secrets had been discovered by it.
*Pak!*
The purple phantom spider condensed into a ball of energy, striking the defensive radiance.
*Creak!* A large depression appeared on the defensive layer. All sorts of runes flashed, and there were also sounds of something breaking.
Upon seeing this, Longbottom’s eyes brightened and he shouted at Ernis. “Attack together!”
All sorts of spells and lights crashed onto the surface of the defensive spell formation.
Like the last straw that broke a camel’s back, the two’s spells reached the layer and caused the spell formation to tremble.
Petals of light with runes on them continuously withered and fell, turning into little bits of light that floated away like fireflies.
The defensive spell formation set up by a rank 2 Magus were broken through with their combined effort!
“I can feel his aura inside!” Longbottom’s eyes brightened, as if he had smelled something delicious. His eyes glowed green as he rushed in.
Ernis hesitated for a moment, and followed him inside.
“Haha…” After passing through a short passageway, Ernis heard Longbottom laughing maniacally.
He entered an underground laboratory to see Longbottom holding a little boy’s throat, laughing loudly.

“Great Magus Rosby, guild leader of Green Water Gardens, O powerful rank 2 Magus! Where is your power? Where is your might? Where is your grace? Where has it all gone to?” Longbottom chuckled brashly in front of the child.

Vile characters always sought revenge not past the night. He had just escaped from his opponent with difficulty, but he could now grasp his opponent by the neck, controlling his opponent’s life and death. Longbottom was left feeling drunk on this feeling.

He had even assumed Rosby to be another rank 2 Magus.

Ernis was shocked to find that this little boy’s face was similar to Rosby’s, who he had seen previously. His skin was slippery, with the placenta and mucus still attached to him. At this moment, he knew this person’s identity.

Although Rosby had successfully reincarnated using the seed he had prepared beforehand, his current body only held the power of an acolyte. In front of Longbottom, he was as weak as an ant.

“But you still have your uses!” The green in Longbottom’s eyes seemed to solidify.

“Though you are an acolyte, you are still a rank 2 Magus at your core! Absorbing you will further my insights into rank 2!” Longbottom smiled slightly, and lights flashed in his hands. Thin threads of red and green were drawn from the boy’s body, entering his palm.

The boy aged rapidly even as Longbottom seemed to be drunk with pleasure.

Moments later, face frozen in terror, Rosby collapsed to the ground. As if a mere dried husk, his body cracked apart on contact.

Longbottom’s face flushed red, as if it had received some great supplements.

“Quick! Move everything of value away before support arrives.
Destroy what we cannot take!” Longbottom’s aura had changed after absorbing the life force of a rank 2 Magus. Ernis deferentially lowered his head, not daring to meet his gaze.

……

At the same time, in the cover of shadows, Leylin’s figure somehow appeared above Green Radiance City.

*Pak!* With the complete death of Rosby, the green ring in his hands also produced a crisp sound. Scans by his spiritual force and the A.I. Chip revealed that all connection to the outside world had been broken completely. This meant that Rosby’s clone had been annihilated.

“Not bad!” A smile appeared on Leylin’s face. The prophecies from before were planted by Leylin, letting him eliminate Green Water Gardens and Rosby’s clone. Furthermore, with the most valuable items all in Rosby’s spatial ring, Leylin had no intentions of vying over anything with these paupers.

“Time to leave!” He looked up at the sky far away, and disappeared with a shake of his head.

Moments after Leylin left, the sounds of hurried huffs sounded from that very position. The Magi who had newly arrived looked very benevolent.

Green Radiance City was now in a state of chaos…

A few days later, a monumental piece of news was transmitted throughout central Twilight Zone. It spread to the other regions as well, and at an alarming rate. Green Water Gardens, the large-scale guild, had been destroyed by Longbottom’s revolutionary army! Even Lord Rosby, their guild leader who was rank 2, had fallen in this battle.
The fall of a rank 2 Magus caused a sensation. With the loss of Rosby, their official Magi, and their inheritances, Green Water Gardens would soon become an unrated guild even if there were a few acolytes lucky enough to survive. With this task, Longbottom’s name spread throughout Twilight Zone, and the war council put out an astronomical bounty on him; his danger had even been rated at seven stars!

……

Elsewhere, Leylin had also visited Logan, the Protector of the East. Logan was one to abide by his promises, and he’d brought his guild to the central region. He had even stationed himself near Nature’s Alliance and a few other guilds.

“We need to suppress them! I’ve already sent out the enforcers and soldiers to wipe out their strongholds.”

Logan huffed roughly, but Leylin maintained a thoughtful silence.

“These rogue Magi are really out of control. And then there’s Longbottom. We need to behead him and store his spirit in the council as a reminder to all Magi!” Logan heaved.

Leylin laughed in his mind. Logan was truly feeling anxious. Previously, rank 2 Magi could disregard Longbottom and his revolutionary army, but now that one of their own had fallen at his hands, they could ignore him no longer.

“In the middle of a great war, there are still so many lawless Magi who are causing trouble at home. We definitely can’t give way. We have to suppress them mercilessly!”

Logan declared his stance, “This is the unanimous decision of the war council. In addition, no matter which wandering Magus it is, as long as they dare have any opinions about having sympathy or support for the revolutionary army, they shall also be punished.”

Leylin nodded. Guilds still held immense influence, and were
entirely capable of ending these fads.
369 - A Competition For Geniuses

Leylin deliberated over his phrasing. “But to do that, you’ll have to deploy the higher-ups!”

If the guilds joined forces, they could naturally extinguish the scattered rebels, but part of their forces would be tied down. With the north down, and casualties stacking up at the center, the cost outweighed the benefits involved.

“Then what do you suggest?” Logan seemed to be able to tell the hidden meaning in Leylin’s words.

“The rebels led by Longbottom definitely need to be suppressed and exterminated, but I believe we can try to pacify the wandering Magi.”

Leylin stroked his chin.

“How? Twilight Zone has a limited amount of resources. Are you, Nature’s Alliance, going to pay out of your pocket?” Logan was slightly annoyed.

“No, of course not!” Leylin smiled while he shook his head, “What do you say we hold a competition for young Magi?”

“Competition?” Logan was baffled.

“Yes, a competition between geniuses! It will be targeted at young Magi, with generous rewards and the opportunity to join some guilds. If they obtain a certain ranking, they can even enter a guild of their choice!” Leylin declared his scheme.

“With this, not only can we unite more wandering Magi and express our goodwill to the organisations behind them, we can also shift...
their focus from the unfairness of guilds to the vying for a position, causing internal friction!”
“This… Let me think…” Logan scratched his beard. Leylin paid no attention to him and smiled, because he knew Logan was considering his suggestion.
As expected, minutes later, Logan roughly slapped the table, “It’s a good idea! Of course! Why didn’t I think of it?”
He stood up and quickly paced around the room. “No matter how much we try to tempt those old Magi, it’s all going to be in vain. They’ve already lost all chances of improving anyway, and won’t be able to cause many problems!
“On the other hand, the competition offers young Magi more than just glory. The generous rewards and the opportunity to join a guild will surely tempt them! We just need to hand some things out, and it will definitely change the dynamics of their army. We might even be able to pick up some good seedlings! Not bad… not bad at all!”
Logan kept nodding. He, too, knew that pressuring the lower strata was not a good idea, especially in times of war. Prying them apart would lead to a much better ending.
“I’ll go and report your suggestion to the council, they’ll definitely agree!” he did not even bother to hide his excitement, yelling out his agreement.
Meanwhile, Leylin revealed a profound smile. There was something else he had yet to say, but he was sure Logan understood it as well.
Setting up a competition to select Magi and taking them into guilds was also a type of revolution. This was a step in the direction of the setup of the academies on the south coast. This way, Longbottom’s righteous cause would be wounded in multiple ways. When that happened, it would be the best time to capture and kill him!
At the same time, the various Magi training in Sacred Flame all fell
into a stupor. They were all receiving a prophecy.
“Countless stars are congregating there. It is the location of both the beginning and the end of everything!”
Aaron’s eyes recovered from having been all-white, the fear still lingering in him as he patted his chest.
“I actually automatically made a prophecy! Looks like the force of destiny is unprecedentedly powerful.”
“Of course! A competition between genius Magi! Not only wandering Magi, but also geniuses of guilds can also enter. The judges will be the protectors of the four regions who are at least rank 2, and the legendary protector of all regions might even appear!”
In front of him, Vinas rolled her eyes and said sarcastically.
“You-” Aaron was so furious that he turned red, almost getting up.
“Alright, alright. Can you not quarrel!”
Baelin was now wearing his Bio Boosting Armour, his aura more vast and profound as a result of the power of destiny converging on his body. Though he couldn’t feel anything himself, for Aaron and Vinas who trained in Sacred Flame, the change was as obvious as the lighting of a torch in the darkness.
“What did you see?” Baelin asked curiously.
Under his supervision, these two prophetic Magi were currently at peace, having decided to first crush the dark elves’ conspiracy before battling it out among themselves. Sometimes, however, the two would be at odds, which would end up giving him a headache.
“Not too long later, central Twilight Zone will hold a competition for young genius Magi! The only restriction is that one must be younger than 50 to attend.”
“In addition, the champion of the competition will even be able to meet the great protector of all regions and be given access to profound Magi academic knowledge, as well as assistance to advance forcefully.”
Aaron couldn’t help but gulp. Even he was enticed by such temptations. The young female Magus called Vinas continued, “Most of Twilight Zone’s geniuses will attend, including Longbottom who’s sided with the dark elves. He’ll be waiting to cause trouble! “And because there’s another Magus like us helping him and covering him with a fog of destiny, I can’t tell for sure what their exact plan is and whether they’ll succeed.” “Longbottom…” Baelin muttered, his eyes dim. He knew that this kid that he had thought highly of had quickly become an official Magus and even sided with the dark elves. He’d probably played a big role in the fall of the north. “I remembered him being a very polite and enthusiastic boy… and his sister…” Baelin’s expression looked complicated. If Leylin had chosen to impart his knowledge to Longbottom, everything would have been different. Aaron noticed Baelin’s indecision. “Lord Baelin, Longbottom is now a traitor to humanity, a destructive person who is masterminding a rebellion. You need to draw the line, and capture him yourself!” he advised. “That’s right! I can tell that the large conspiracy in the central region involves many rank 2 Magi, and they will show their strength during the competition. You need to defeat Longbottom there and thwart their plans to save humanity!” Vinas sounded incomparably resolute. She believed she was now walking the path of ancient heroes and was working hard to protect the harmony and stability of the human race. There was an aura of piety about her. “I understand…” Baelin smiled wryly. Somewhere else, Longbottom had also obtained this information from Ernis. “A competition for young geniuses? A pageant for the Magus
world? Many rank 2 Magi and protectors will even appear there as judges?”
Upon hearing this, green light shone out of Longbottom’s eyes, “This truly is a great opportunity to finish everything in one fell swoop!”
Ernis was silent as he felt two powers other than his own in the river of destiny. They would surely meet at the competition.
“Is it finally here? The final victor shall be me! Only I will be able to train in Sacred Flame till the peak and become the ruler of Twilight Zone!”
Ernis roared in his heart, though he looked calm on the outside.
“Send down the orders. All sections are to halt all activities and enter stealth mode, preparing for the upcoming competition. Also, inform the matriarch that I need support. Powerful support!”
Ernis respectfully bowed his way out upon hearing Longbottom’s orders.
Longbottom’s aura had become an enigma. After absorbing the essence of a rank 2 Magus, his strength had soared so high that Ernis could not tell the limits of his strength.
“Leylin, Baelin! Everything shall be settled there!” Longbottom mumbled, and the large phantom spider figure became more solid, as if becoming real.

……

Time passed, and news of the central region holding a competition for young geniuses spread like a hurricane to all four corners.
There was only one requirement for entry; all participants needed to be below 50 years of age. The rewards were very generous; not only were there great amounts of precious resources and research to be won, the top thirty could freely enter a guild of their choice. The large-scaled guilds in the central region all provided a few
places, and there was even a small rumour going on that the Guardian of the Realm would meet the champion and take them on as their disciple!

All of Twilight Zone was elated. Many young wandering Magi, and even guild geniuses, all left their stations and headquarters to head to the central region. Many of them cared little for both the resources and the opportunity to join a guild, but apprenticeship to a rank 3 Magus was a temptation they could not resist.

Leylin expected this.

The plan was accepted as soon as Logan reported it. The Magi of the council were definitely smart enough to see the benefits of such an event. They even decided to make it a recurring thing, to ward off such troubles permanently.

However, even Leylin was initially surprised that the Guardian of the Realm would announce such a thing. It led him to make a few guesses.

“Looks like the Guardian of the Realm doesn’t have much time left. I just don’t know if the inheritance is meant to draw out the malefactors, or is sincere.” Leylin touched his chin.

However, he was very optimistic towards all this. With it, the competition would be even more popular, and work even better for his plans.

Those so-called ‘genius Magi’ probably brought with them forces of destiny. Though they could not be compared with Baelin and Longbottom, when they were all added together, the sum was not something that could be ignored.
The dark elves were rather quiet in this period of time. Although they had managed to take over the north, navigating through territorial disputes with the dwarves and gnomes consumed most of their energy. Hence, although central Twilight Zone was under immense pressure, the situation seeming dire, all they had to deal with till now were a few scouts and wandering riders. Balanced on this razor’s edge, the central region had still remained peaceful. The preparations for the competition even made it seem like it was flourishing. As more and more Magi rushed over, it had gained fresh blood and increased strength. After seeing this, Leylin suspected this was another intention of the war council. They wanted to attract more Magi over to increase their fighting strength.

......

In a shady swamp. A toxic purple fog permeated the place, the rotten sludge concealing the bones of various darkness beasts. Occasionally, a few three-eyed crows would caw as they flew past, which was jarring to the ears. In a dimly lit cave. The walls were lined with spells that made them impermeable to
the sludge and fog. 
A black-haired old man was running his hands through the hair of a young Magus, his touch containing affection. “My child! In the ten years you’ve been here, you’ve learned everything I have to offer. Now, you are free to explore…” 
“Gom has brought back some information. The holy land for us Magi, the central region, is holding a competition for young geniuses. Not only can the champion obtain great rewards, they can even meet with the Guardian of the Realm, a rank 3 existence. What’s more, they could even get the opportunity to become his inheritor…” 
“A rank 3 Magus?” The youth, who had until then not looked in the least bit serious, suddenly turned solemn. 
“Yes. You are the most formidable genius I’ve ever seen, and I believe there are few who can match you in the entirety of Twilight Zone. I believe the victor shall be you, though I’m afraid I won’t get the chance to see it…” 
The old man sounded slightly regretful, and his hands halted in mid-air. 
His originally smooth and tight skin began to age rapidly, layers of wrinkles forming as if an old branch that had lost all its moisture. His black hair gradually greyed out. 
His body withered at a rate that could be seen by the naked eye, ending up a dried corpse. 
“Master? MASTER!” The young Magus was dubious as he looked at the master who had always accompanied him. 
*Thud!* The old Magus turned into a withered, dried black corpse. 
*Poof!* The youth bumped into the Magus’ arm, and the corpse turned to dust in front of his eyes. Ashes spread out, leaving a complete set of Magus robes on the bed. 
The young Magus was dazed, and only recovered after a long while.
Even if Magi could manipulate the radiation of energy particles to obtain a longer lifespan than regular humans, there was still a limit. Even with dangerous modifications to the body, Morning Star Magi could only extend their lifespans by a few decades. It was difficult to succeed, and could cause Magi to end up with a strange, terrifying appearance. This old Magus’ life energy had been exhausted, and he had reached the end of his life. Regular rank 1 Magi, those that were not of ancient branches like Warlocks, had 200-year lifespans. This old Magus had lived for a very long time, and had not advanced in his meditation technique. His time was now up.

“Master!” The youth stood there silently, images of the times he spent with his master flashing across his mind. A long while later, he turned and left. *Rumble!* After he left, the earth caved in, forming a void that allowed the surrounding sludge to enter.

“Master, don’t worry! I will definitely be the glorious victor!” The youth swore to the heavens, and left without hesitation. As he left, a tear fell from the corner of his eye.

……

“The family’s honour is in your hands.”
In the southern region, in an ancient Magus’ castle. Dim rays of light fell on a long, rotten table. This black wooden table was about ten metres long, and extended from the head of the hall to the door. On the tablecloth, there was a silver lampstand and all sorts of fruits and delicacies. A few figures were seated sparsely around it. The old woman at the master’s seat, who wore a black high-hat and multiple red gems and emerald rings, was giving a young girl a
reminder.
She was silent for a while, and then spoke resolutely, “I understand, grandmother.”
Only she knew that, under the cover of luxury, this family was already waning.
The wooden table was already rotten, and the castle had not been repaired for decades. Even their defensive spell formations were deactivated due to a lack of magic crystals. Among the aristocratic Magi, they were basically a joke.
The silver lampstand and delicacies at this table, too, had been gathered with some difficulty. The ornaments on her grandmother’s fingers? Fake trinkets! The originals had long been pawned off.
The girl was silent, knowing that in order to raise a Magus like her, they had paid a large price.
“I’ll definitely become the victor of the young Magus competition and revive the family!” She vowed.
“Good! Let us drink to Lilina’s promise!” The old woman laughed and raised her cup.
“Cheers!” The rest of the relatives all cheered and finished all the alcoholic drinks in their hands. After, they pounced on the delicacies on the table.
Even though they were the descendants of a Magus family, fruits were not things they could have often!
Upon seeing this, the old lady had a bitter expression. This caused Lilina to be even more resolute in her convictions.

……

In the faraway northern region of Twilight Zone.
Groups of human slaves were tied up with thick ropes, and herded towards a city.
There were countless humans, and the one similarity between all of
them was the shared expression of despair and numbness. All of them were originally people of the northern region, but after it was attacked, they lacked the time and strength to move and all turned into slaves. They would be lucky to be enslaved. Most captives only had one choice, which was to become offerings to the various matriarchs!

At the highest point of a city built in corundum, an absolutely beautiful dark elf maiden was staring on coldly. “Human’s reproductive ability is too powerful. Their population is tens or even a hundred times ours! How should we rule them? The only way is to kill them until they are fewer than us or to the brink of extinction. Then we wouldn’t have to worry about any instability.”

A command that was cold, detached and inhuman was produced from her lips. Behind her, elite dark elven secret guards drew back respectfully and passed down the order, resulting in the formation of a red sea. What was more terrifying was that the corpses of these humans would be recycled to be used as army provisions for the gnomes, dwarves and even dark elves!

“How is it going with the Underground Winter Spider Emperor?” She asked indifferently.

“Through investigations, we can confirm that the mother body is not dead, and we’ve also appeased our elite knights. However, in the holy land, the disappearance of the mother body’s aura is still causing a disturbance amongst the Underground Winter Spiders.” Another matriarch with a gold crown on her head in black leather revealed a great amount of skin as she bowed and reported. “Trash!” A cold glint flashed in the maiden’s eyes, “Sacrifice the original head guard of the holy land!”

“Yes!” The icy intent behind those words caused the matriarch behind her to quiver.
“That mere human dares profane the holy land of us dark elves? We need to use his flesh and soul to scrub off this humiliation!” The maiden vowed.

“My lord, here is the newest intelligence from Longbottom!” At this moment, the door opened. A dark elf shrouded in translucent black muslin held a brass circular cylinder and knelt, offering it to the maiden with both hands.

The girl laughed slightly, and a slight wind blew the cylinder over to her hands.

After seeing the letter, she bit her lips, her reddened lip providing a stark contrast to her pale skin, causing the guards around her to gulp.

“A genius competition in the central region?” She muttered to herself again and then ordered, “Gather the matriarchs. I to convene a meeting of Dark Nobility!”

She felt that this was a turning point that could give her the chance to take care of the Magi in the central region in one go.

However, she had a sense of extreme danger from the will of the darkness.

After pondering over this for a long while, the maiden sighed and decided to put this question up for discussion.

……

After news of the genius competition spread, the entirety of Twilight Zone and even the surrounding dark elven, gnome and dwarven empires all responded to the news.

All sorts of Magi, regardless of race, hurried towards the central region.

In that moment, there really seemed to be a sense of instability.

Leylin, who was meanwhile waiting for the fish to bite, patiently waited for the competition to begin. As he had been the person to
suggest this and was plenty strong himself, he was able to get a position as a judge.
As for the people in Nature’s Alliance? All of them had been sent off on miscellaneous missions.
As Leylin’s number one subordinate, Iren was nowhere to be found every day, and nobody knew what Leylin had ordered him to do.
The competition was to be held on the Walker Plains in the central region.

This place was close to the central city, so a few large-scaled guilds had branches nearby that could send out resources and personnel if anything unexpected came up. The miraculous abilities of Magi ensured that it took but a few months to transform the heart of the Walker Plains into a vast field. Before the competition started, a few Magi had arrived earlier to settle down and do business. Thus, a few fairs had sprung up on the outskirts. Many fairs merged together, forming a rudimentary Magus city.

If this competition could be pulled off without a hitch, given the war council’s plan to make it a regular affair, the place could really become a new Magus city, even surpassing the cities of the other four regions.

......

Waves of Magi surged in from all over the place and filled the area. Seeing such a bustling scene, Baelin took a deep breath and pulled off his cloak, and then hastened as he rushed through a street. He walked quickly, and after seven or eight turns, he arrived in front of a residence and knocked.

*Ka-cha!* The door moved slightly to form a narrow slit, and a
A pair of guarded eyes appeared. After realising it was Baelin, the eyes disappeared into the darkness and then opened the door. Baelin turned sideways and squeezed in, not letting the door open fully.

It was a small room inside. The oil lamp produced a dim, flickering yellow light, while Aaron, Vinas and Memphis were all waiting quietly.

Memphis was in the worst state. Not only were there many black bandages around him such that he was similar to a mummy, his ears had even been pierced through with a large nail, revealing a large hole.

“Hey, when can I free myself from this weird appearance?” Memphis raised his hands with bandages wrapped around them, looking like a mummy as he protested.

As a former member of the nobility, he could not stand being low-profile.

Baelin furrowed his brows as he explained. “Wait a while longer. This place is being monitored using bloodline aura detection spell formations. Even if you’re siding with the humans currently, we can’t let the fact that you’re a dark elf be revealed!”

Vinas shot Memphis a glance, “Don’t bother with him! He’s just been restrained and wants to go out to breathe some fresh air. My lord, how’s the situation outside?”

Aaron gestured to show that he was listening.

“There are far too many Magi gathered here. I couldn’t find Longbottom and the others, so it’s very likely that he’s modified his appearance or is in hiding.”

Baelin smiled wryly, “Looks like we can only catch them during the competition!”

“Competition? Do you mean you’re planning to enter the genius Magi competition?” Aaron got the point quickly.

“Yes, that’s right. I’m only thirty years old, and Bio Boosters are
considered a branch of ancient Magi. In that case, I meet the qualifications to enter!” Baelin laughed.

“Only in the competition will I have the chance to meet Longbottom and persuade him to turn back!” Baelin mumbled.

Vinas and Aaron, who knew that this child of destiny’s shortcoming of idealism was making itself known again, could only sigh.

Honestly speaking, this child of destiny was basically perfect, but his flaw was in his kindness.

In Twilight Zone, kindness was the one thing that one could not have. Sooner or later, Baelin would pay the price for this.

Aaron and Vinas exchanged a glance, as if having made some decision.

Baelin was totally oblivious to this, still sighing for Longbottom.

In his memories, Longbottom had always been a good child. What had happened?

……

At the registration point, a deathly pale Magus in green robes walked out.

“Hehe, Leylin, Baelin, I’m here!”

Longbottom’s appearance had undergone a huge change. His spiritual force had been suppressed till it was that of a semi-converted Magus.

On the Walker Plains, this level of strength was considered mediocre at best and not eye-catching. It was unknown what methods he had used to get past the detection spells at the registration point.

The youth looked to the centre of the competition area. Hatred, elation, and an emotional struggle all flashed by his expression, before they disappeared.
He quickly took his coat and used his hood to conceal his face, disappearing into the crowd.
Leylin could somewhat sense the arrival of these people, but he could not be bothered with them currently. He was in his personal laboratory, an empty test tube beside him.
Threads of black liquid were still wriggling at the mouth of the tube, producing slight hissing sounds.
The Giant Serpent’s Breath potion. It was the fruit of his labour, formed from ten years of study, and with the help of Fendix’s hearts of Earthen Fiends, he was finally able to make it. Leylin turned green after he ingested it, his aura dark and unstable. This situation continued for an entire night before he recovered.
Leylin glanced at his condition.
“A standard Giant Serpent’s Breath potion can increase my spiritual force by ten points, and the other attributes also increase as well. Not bad! Based on this rate, after taking five standard Giant Serpent-Breath potions, I’ll meet the spiritual force requirements!”
Leylin looked at the numbers, his eyes sparkling.
Giant Serpent’s Breath potion was the culmination of his hard work in these ten years. With the ancient rank 2 Magi of Twilight Zone as the foundation, he was able to create a spiritual force potion suitable for Warlocks.
With the aid of this potion, he was confident that the estimated 200 years given by the A.I Chip could be shortened.
“The requirements to become a rank 3 Magus is to raise spiritual force till the 200 mark, and then completely solidify it!”
These were the two requirements for Magi to advance, and neither could be overlooked. Warlocks also had specific requirements
pertaining to their bloodline. Leylin laughed, raising his hand. A thread of bright silver spiritual force shot out from between his eyebrows. Like a mischievous little snake, it wriggled livelily between his fingers. Though it was only as fine as a strand of hair, this thread held within an immense energy. The solidified spiritual force of a rank 2 Magus was something lower ranked Magi were unable to comprehend. All spiritual forces that had not reached this level would be smashed through in a direct clash. Hence, rank 2 Magi were usually capable of crushing lower-ranked opponents. This was also one of the reasons why rank 2 Magi could lead.

“Amongst rank 2 Magi, to appraise the extent of solidification of spiritual force, one needs to look at how deep the silver colour is.” Leylin muttered. After gathering numerous high-grade meditation techniques and with the simulations by the A.I. Chip, he was extremely clear on what he was supposed to do to advance. “At the early stage of solidification, spiritual force is a light silver. At the middle stage, it will become more concentrated and become silvery-white! At the peak stage of the solidified spiritual force, it will be a bright silver!” After reference to countless other meditation techniques, Leylin had broadened his perspectives and progressed at a rapid pace in his own. He smiled lightly as he peered at the light silver spiritual force in his hands, and produced a thought. This bright silver spiritual force danced in the air, attracting energy particles of various elements and formed spell models of various shapes, and then disappeared back between Leylin’s brows “I’ve completed all my homework on the solidification of spiritual force, and my manipulation of it has reached the peak.”
Leylin evaluated his own strength. Through ten years of settling down and working towards rank 3, he had accumulated a lot. He had even touched the boundary of rank 3, and even Logan, the Protector of the East, was no longer in his sights.

“With my current strength, I’m probably the furthest ahead amongst rank 2 Magi. With the bonus from my bloodline, I’m basically matchless within rank 2!”

With the help of the A.I. Chip, Leylin was very confident in his strength.

“But there’s still ways to go before I can handle rank 3 Magi!”

At this point, the ones capable of causing Leylin fear were only Anya, the dark elven Empress, the Guardian of the Realm, and the remaining few rank 3 Magi.

“No matter what it is, this competition is tied to my own advancement, as well as my choices and conjectures about destiny. It must proceed smoothly, even if a rank 3 Magus were to attempt to stop it!”

Leylin made up his mind, eyes sparkling.

……

*Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!* Multi-coloured fireworks exploded into the air, various spell lights and tassels forming gorgeous images in the sky.

The genius Magi competition held in the central region had begun magnificently.

The competition area was similar to the ancient Roman colosseum. With support from magic, this construction was much larger than the ancient roman one. It was big enough to hold tens of thousands of Magi.

At the heart of the colosseum, tens of individual arenas had been created. The young Magi who were participating would first begin
with the elimination rounds.
“How boring.” Leylin and the eight other rank 2 Magi sat on the platform which had the best seats, doing their jobs as judges. Though Leylin was seated here, he had long since gotten annoyed by the host’s speech. The only reason why he was still sitting here was because he was forcing himself to do so. As for the other few rank 2 judges, they looked just as bored. The battles at the beginning were usually not very intense. The Magi were lowly-ranked, and most were level 3 acolytes. With a competition of this level, it was more than enough for peak rank 1 Magi to watch over them. Hence, Leylin and the others were bored to death.
luckily for Leylin and the other judges, they were rank 2 Magi and had a very high status. Even if they were discontent, the audience did not dare show this on their faces, and instead placed their attention on the competition going on. Leylin’s eyes brightened at this moment. Following his gaze, there appeared a person he was interested in on an elevated stage at the southeast corner. “Arena 34, the fifth round of the selection! Here are participant numbers 273 and 35!” The announcer was a peak rank 1 Magus dressed in formal Magus attire, his hair perfectly combed. Almost at the very moment his words ended, a line of fire flashed, and a beautiful woman with a great body arrived at the centre of the stage. This female Magus had voluptuous, sexy curves and had intentionally worn tight clothing, her chest bursting out of the seams of her clothes. However, she looked a little young, as if she had yet to be of age. This angelic appearance and devilish, arousing body immediately garnered the interest of the audience. “Oh, I remember now! She’s Fire Scorpion of the western region. She actually came here!” A Magus blurted out, and through many layers, the voice entered Leylin’s ears. “Fire Scorpion?” Leylin was slightly flabbergasted at this nickname.
“Haha, has Magus Leylin gone to the western region before?” Also on the platform, a rank 2 Magus laughed after hearing Leylin’s voice. He had a white cloth wrapped around his head and his pupils were blue. This was the typical style of the western region in Twilight Zone. This Magus was the leader of a large-scale guild in the western region. Though the central region was the main essence of Twilight Zone with many highly-ranked Magi, they could not take up all the spots for judging. It was necessary to hand out a part of the seats to Magi of the four other regions. “Fire Scorpion is rather famous at our side, and it’s said she’s rather ruthless. She even killed a few of her husbands, which earned her nickname as the Fire Scorpion!” Without waiting for Leylin’s answer, the rank 2 Magus continued, “Actually, if not for her specializing in fire magic, we would definitely call her the black widow!” “No, I just hear about her occasionally.” Leylin shook his head. What he was focusing on was not Fire Scorpion, but her opponent. With the impatient looks of the judges on the platform, the opponent who was late had opened up a route for himself and entered the arena. This was a youth in green Magus robes, a sinister look in his eyes. “Hmm, this youth?” Before Leylin could speak, the rank 2 Magus was already surprised. “What is it? Do you know him?” Leylin asked with a smile. “Yes! The Magus in green robes is another formidable character known in the western region, Green-robed Carl. How unexpected that they’re matched together in the first round!” The rank 2 Magus also from the western region sighed lightly, as if finding it a pity that these two geniuses were matched so early.
“Green-robed Carl?” Leylin was laughing inside. Rank 2 Magi were very sensitive to auras. Whoever they met with, if left with a deep impression or memorable aura, the next time they met, it would be difficult for the other parties to conceal themselves.

For this reason, the Magus was confident in his judgment. However, through his mole, Ernis, Leylin spied on his opponent. Yes. This Green-robed Carl was, in reality, Longbottom in disguise. Through the lingering spirit in the notebook in Ernis’ hands, Leylin had watched in high definition the real Green-robed Carl being killed by them. He watched as they then skinned the man and, using special musical means, used it to transform Longbottom’s appearance.

What was even more wonderful was that Ernis had no idea that he was unwittingly leaking information while he was hell-bent on working for the dark elves. Hence, for any spells that could sense and test one’s thoughts, there was no reaction at all, which allowed him to survive.

At this moment, the A.I. Chip sounded.

[Skin Covering spell model has been completely analysed. Inputting into rank 1 spell model database!]

This Skin Covering spell was what Longbottom used to deceive everyone. Though it was only at rank 1, mysteriously it was able to trick even rank 2 Magi.

In addition, this spell did not originate from Twilight Zone, but rather, from a hidden inheritance of the dark elves. No Magi would expect this.

It was a pity that Leylin knew this beforehand, which caused their hard work to be in vain.

Even this spell model had been intercepted and taken by Leylin in secret and, with the A.I. Chip, completed. If Longbottom knew this, he might really spew out blood.
Leylin had a sick interest in this but held it in. Sometimes, the fruits of victory would taste better when waited for. “Who do you think has the larger possibility of winning?” All these thoughts passed through Leylin’s mind, but he still continued the conversation with the rank 2 Magus.

“Hm…” The rank 2 Magus muttered to himself and decided, “Though Carl’s corrosive spells are renowned, and he possesses a middle-grade magic artifact, Fire Scorpion is a decade older and thus, has accumulated a decade more of experience. In addition, fire energy particles are capable of restraining corrosive-type energy particles, which is very remarkable.”

“I think differently. Perhaps that kid called Carl can really create miracles!” Leylin laughed lightly.

“Oh? Can you tell me the reason?” The old Magus looked interested.

“About that, please let me keep it a secret.” Leylin rejected with a slight smile.

“You…” The old Magus laughed as well, but gave more attention to arena 34.

Meanwhile, Longbottom who had transformed into Green-robed Carl, was feeling terrified. “Damn it, a rank 2 Magus’ gaze swept this location quite a few times. What is it that piqued their interest?”

He quickly considered, “I previously gained much information regarding Carl’s habits, and I’ve even secretly grasped his signature spells. The Skin Covering spell shouldn’t have an issue, so what went wrong?”

“No, it’s possible that there’s nothing wrong. It’s just that my battle with Fire Scorpion has attracted their attention! After all, this is still the start. It’s very rare that two official Magi get matched together at the start.”

Longbottom racked his brains, considering it from all angles. If Longbottom knew everything had happened only because of
Leylin’s sick sense of humour, he might really get so mad that he would collapse. This careless attitude of his had obviously enraged the opposing Fire Scorpion. “Carl, you dare underestimate me! I’ll make you pay the price!” Fire Scorpion was so furious that her face was flushed red, her chest quivering and shaking her breasts, which caused the surrounding Magi to hiss in excitement. “Fire Scorpion!” Fire Scorpion shouted under her breath, and quickly began to chant in broken sentences and syllables. Traces of bright red energy particles converged, forming large numbers of little scorpions crawling out from the ground and surrounding Longbottom. “Rain of Corrosion!” Longbottom chanted in a low voice. Droplets of green rain fell from mid-air, and every time the droplets made contact with the ground, a faint sizzling sound of corrosion could be heard even as white gases were being formed. After the white gas disappeared, a deep hole was seen on the ground. Those fire scorpions were even more pitiful. Clustered raindrops were inclined towards them, and in no time, they had all turned into a pool of pus-like liquid. “It’s appeared! Green-robed Carl’s Rain of Corrosion! It’s an omnidirectional attack with no dead angles, with an offensive power of up to 40 degrees!” A Magus of the western region who had his head wrapped shouted excitedly. Whether it was the corrosive raindrops or the fire red scorpions, the moment they reached the boundaries of the elevated stage, they would immediately fall apart due to the layer with translucent defensive ripples, turning into pure energy particles and being absorbed into the spell formation. This was a defensive and absorption spell formation that was set up
under every stage to limit the damage range to within the stage.
“Flames of Rebirth!” At this moment, Fire Scorpion’s expression showed her confidence in prevailing.
With her chants, a blue fireball suddenly appeared and exploded in front of her. The small blue flames dispersed like starlight and fell into the liquid on the ground.
*Rumble! Rumble! Rumble!* Like flower petals, blue flames blossomed on the ground, and fire scorpions crawled out once more, spitting threads of fire.
“Rain of corrosion!” Longbottom yelled once again, corrosive raindrops falling.
“It’s useless!” Fire Scorpion shot out a spark and revived the red scorpions that had fallen.
“I have more spiritual force than you, and the spell ‘Flames of Rebirth’ absorb 50% of the energy I’ve expended from using spells. With such a fierce consumption in our competition, you’re definitely not a match for me!”
Fire Scorpion attacked and did not forget to hurt her opponent’s morale with her words.
“Damn it!” With the increase in red scorpions, Longbottom’s activity scope had been reduced to a corner of the stage, and he looked about to fall off.
“If I didn’t have to worry about those rank 2 Magi, I would use my true strength! With just one hand, I can drain you till you become a dried-up corpse!”
Longbottom thought mercilessly. “I can only use that.”
He punched his hand deep into the ground, and traces of black liquid appeared from within his arm and entered the surface of the ground.
“Gushing Dark Springs!” A black corrosive fluid first appeared under Longbottom’s fist, spreading in all directions like a ripple. The red scorpions were drowned by the black fluid.
Though Fire Scorpion was expending all her effort on employing ‘rebirth of the flames’, the fire scorpions that were resurrected were still swallowed up by the black spring. After seeing this, Fire Scorpion turned deathly pale. Finally, the moment the black fluid was about to cover her body, she raised her right arm, “I admit defeat!”

“Hmph!” Seeing this, Longbottom had to give up all thoughts of pursuing the matter despite his unwillingness to do so.
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“H...” The old Magus beside Leylin was astonished as he touched his beard, “Looks like Carl has improved quite a bit! It’s a pity that with this method, too much spiritual force is consumed. He’s destined not to succeed in the next selection battle!”

“That might not be so,” Leylin laughed and pointed in a direction, “Look!”

“Oh?” This rank 2 Magus looked in that direction and laughed, “He actually used a precious spiritual force restoring potion? Such a thing could save his life at a crucial moment!”

In a corner, Longbottom’s hands trembled and he almost flung out his potion bottles.

“Again! Again!” His expression darkened.

Leylin snickered in his heart. His own gaze was now at a stage where Longbottom could not discover it, so he constantly directed the attention of the rank 2 Magi beside him to the fellow, causing him a lot of stress.

Having teased him enough, Leylin did not want to shoot himself in the foot and directed the attention of the rank 2 Magi away. “By the way, are you interested in visiting my laboratory after the competition ends? Nature’s Alliance’s special fish is somewhat effective for rank 2 Magi...”
At another end, Longbottom sighed, “Then again, Green-robed Carl’s original strength loses out to that of Fire Scorpion. Though I tried to conceal it, I still attracted attention. I’ll need to be more careful in the future…”

“My apologies, please let me pass!” At this moment, a Magus squeezed in, looking hurried.

“What are you doing?” Longbottom pushed the other person away. The two were suddenly caught in a daze.

Though they had disguised themselves, Longbottom was still able to recognise Baelin at first glance, while Baelin had also recognised his former buddy.

The two of them stared at each other, but because of some unspeakable reasons on both ends, they silently swallowed their words. They did not attempt to expose each other’s identities.

“Number 188! Number 188!” At another end of the stage, the judge was starting to get impatient.

Baelin’s body trembled and he hurried on. “I will stop you!” he said softly when passing Longbottom.

“I’ll wait and see!” was the immediate reply.

As match after match went on, a few geniuses made a name for themselves, resulting in the adulation of the audience. Leylin had also picked out a few people. “Lilina from the western region, Haylon of the voodoo marshes, and then Baelin as well as Longbottom and their friends and subordinates will take up the top few spots in this genius Magi competition.”

With his knowledge as a rank 2 Warlock, he easily found those so-called ‘geniuses’.

Usually, these geniuses would be considered the ‘main characters’ of the era and were important figures in history. However, such influence was nothing compared to Leylin!

“The champion should be either Baelin or Longbottom.” Leylin concluded.
“They really are the converging point of Twilight Zone’s forces of destiny. Their strength has risen by so much, and I believe these two have even touched the boundary of the rank 2 realm.”

Leylin sighed in awe. With this rate of improvement, even Aaron and the other ‘fake’ geniuses he had made with his grandpas, leave alone Lilina and Haylon, were left in the dust.

The preliminaries were very quick.

By nightfall, about half out of the numerous contestants who had signed up had been eliminated. Numerous Magi became familiar with some of the great battles here, and some were even turned into videos and supplied to large-scale guilds to pick from.

Baelin and Longbottom, as well as the other contestants that Leylin had thought highly of, had not failed their missions. They passed through the preliminaries, and even earned themselves a reputation. Amongst the Magi at the competition area, they had become somewhat famous.

“Haylon!” “Lilina!” Carl!” and the like finally reached the ears of rank 2 Magi.

......

“The forces of destiny have converged further!”

While resting that day, Leylin proceeded to a luxurious room that was especially prepared for him and looked out the window at the sky.

In this short period of rest, many events were unfolding.

In a contestant’s room, a few black-robed Magi were threatening Haylon from the voodoo marshes, “If you see our young master tomorrow, you must forfeit! If not…”

“Scram!” Haylon raised his eyebrows.

“What did you say?” The few Magi were instantly enraged.

“I told you to scram! Didn’t you hear clearly?” Haylon stood up,
his eyes now completely red.
Black and red rays of magic exploded from his body.
“There are Magi from large-scaled guilds monitoring this area. You dare-”
These Magi evidently did not expect him to be so stubborn and irritable. The moment there was a difference in opinion, he attacked without hesitation.
*Rumble!*
Several rays of magic burst in the rooms, the stray ripples surging and shaking the surrounding walls till they turned to powder.
“What’s going on?” A group of Magi wearing the patrolling uniform rushed over. They represented the dignity of the organisers and were backed by many rank 2 Magi. Since they had such powerful backers, they naturally confident.
The few black-robed Magi exchanged glances and everyone saw the helplessness in their eyes, “Please!”
Meanwhile, they had a deep hatred for this person who was ruining their plans and could not understand the situation.
The youth seemed to sense something and gazed into the distance, revealing for the first time a hint of grief within.
“Seizing the championship is Master’s dying wish. Anyone hindering me from achieving it will die!”

……

Under the dim yellow light, Lilina looked at a blue pearl in her hands, seeming undecided.
The light blue pearl was smooth, round and beautiful, with little flecks of gold that formed the image of a palm at the heart of the pearl.
This was the last treasure of her family. However, it also held within it horrific side effects, which was why Lilina was feeling
hesitant.
She then thought about the sacrifice of her family, and their current condition.
Though their family was a Magus family, resources were not so easily obtained in the Magus World. With all hopes of revival left to her, her shoulders were weighed down by far too much pressure.
“I must become the champion and lead my family on the road to revival!” Her expression turning resolute under the lights, she pressed the blue pearl to her forehead.
*Sssii!* The pearl merged into her forehead.
A smear of deep blue began to flicker on Lilina’s body.

……

“My lady!” Longbottom removed his disguise and gazed at the human figure within the black mist, kneeling deferentially.
“En! Little Longbottom, though you are beginning to carve your own route and have almost reached rank 2, the accumulation that happens with time cannot be overcome so easily.” A charming female voice sounded from within the black mist.
“I will now condense all the life force essence of my race onto you in order to help your Life Absorption meditation technique truly break through to the second level.”
“Many thanks, my lady!” Longbottom looked ecstatic.
In his mind, he instantly recalled the figure sitting on the platform.
“I’ve finally, finally caught up to you! I really want to see the expression you’ll have on your face… Leylin!”

……

“What are you thinking about?”
Aaron watched Baelin, who was standing aside.
“No… It’s nothing. I saw Longbottom, and he’s changed so much…” Baelin sighed, looking worried.
“Listen to me, Baelin! Longbottom has now completely sided with the dark elves and will cause bring chaos to the human race. Your mission is to stop him. You cannot forget this!” The expression on Aaron’s face became serious.
“Yes, I will stop him!” Baelin repeated, strengthening his tone of voice.
Days later.
With the Eternal Light spell as well as strength of the Sun Stones, the area was illuminated.
A Magus wearing the attire of a host first bowed towards the platform, and then announced the schedule for the competition.
“All of you are the best who have gone through round after round of selection! A victor will appear amongst you today, and the top thirty will have the opportunity to choose a guild to enter! This includes any large-scaled guilds…”
The moment these words left the host’s mouth, the area was filled with an uproar.
The hundred or so remaining contestants’ eyes revealed different emotions. There was passion, contemplation and excitement.
*Cough!* The host coughed lightly, and the area fell silent.
“The competition shall be held here!” He pointed at the stage right in the centre.
A giant spell formation had been set up atop the stage, while crimson runes were spread around. They emanated a strange light that caused one to shudder in fear.
“The finals of the competition will be held in a secret plane. You will be sent to a random location in the secret plane, and there is only one way to win. Defeat your opponents and obtain the points on their amulet!”
The host raised a milky-white amulet that was only the size of a
finger with a simple number written on it.
“In the secret plane, there are no rules. Besieges and usage of external items is allowed.”
“I would like to remind all of you that even though we will install a spell pattern that will teleport you out the moment you are at the brink of death, there are always accidents. Hence, there is the real possibility of death in the secret plane, and I want you to consider this carefully.”
The host spoke indifferently, and a bloody smell assaulted the nostrils. Baelin was surprised. With this lack of rules, it was easy to slip up. Even with the aid, it would be difficult to keep one’s life. After all, the mysteriousness of magic could not be surmised by the regular person. Perhaps there were methods that could forcefully break the life-saving methods the organisers had set up and cause a large number of deaths.
Although the host talked about potential dangers in the finals, nobody drew back. The world of magicians was no paradise. Those who managed to survive this rat race had seen blood time after time again, and were well prepared for such a situation. The generous rewards that the large-scale guilds offered and the chance to become the inheritor of a rank 2 Magus had convinced them to bet their lives on this competition.

“Good! Since nobody’s backing down, let the finals begin!” The host waved his hands.

*Peng! Peng! Peng!* Three giant fireworks flew across the sky like colorful comets, and the music reached fever-pitch.

*Buzz!* Purple energy condensed into the spell formation, constantly increasing its strength until a hole was ripped open in space.

The finalists stepped forward one after the other, receiving their amulets and spell formations before they disappeared with a flash of light.

After the last of them entered the secret plane, a giant curtain of light was formed around the competition area. Their figures blinked onto the curtain, each contestant occupying one of the dozens of square partitions.

They were monitoring every inch of the secret plane, which surprised many of the Magi present.
“Such a clever monitoring technique, and so expensive as well…” Leylin murmured to himself.
He, too, could develop a technique to monitor the whole plane, but it would cost too much.
Even with the leadership of the joint conference and the sponsorship of several large-scale guilds, they could only maintain this technique for a day or they would go bankrupt.
But the result of ignoring such costs and using this technique was rather good. Nearly every contestant could be seen on the screen.

……

“Something’s wrong!” Baelin said as he brandished his cross blade. A sword wave streaked across the air, chopping a giant leech into two. However, the two halves didn’t die instantly. Instead, it writhed in the mud and splashed water all over the place.
Being attacked by this leech the moment he was teleported into this marshland gave Baelin a bad omen.
“Be careful, master. I sensed a powerful monitoring ability here!” His armour split apart to reveal an eye. The Bio Boosting armour was communicating with him.
“It’s the Okell’s Great Observation Spell from the Plant affinity, which uses the roots and vines as transmission channels. If you want to act in secret, my lord, you must avoid any places that have plants in them” it said to him in his mind.
As a Bio Booster, Baelin’s gains from inheriting the Bio Boosting armour of an ancestor was not limited to a significant boost in strength. Having the armour with him was like carrying around an old grandpa who would help him with his knowledge and experience.
“No wonder I feel uncomfortable, we are being watched!” Baelin nodded, and left the marshland quickly.
Just when he reached the edge of the marshland, Baelin heard something and pointed his cross blade at the bushes nearby. “Who’s there? Get out!”
“Don’t! We mean you no harm!” Two Magi stepped out who were similar in appearance.
“Lord Baelin, we were just teleported here.” “We are only trying to help any Magi who have fallen into swamps!” “Also, Lord Baelin, we admire your strength from the bottom of our hearts. How could we dare to harm you?”
“Yes! Yes!” The twin Magi spoke one after the other without pause, leaving no chance for Baelin to say anything himself.
In fact, Baelin’s power with his cross blade and fleshy armour left deep impressions on the competing Magi. The respect of the very Magi he once feared left Baelin feeling quite smug.
“Lord Leylin should feel satisfied after watching this scene! In fact, Lord Leylin was on the judging platform all this while. Maybe I should find an opportunity to talk to him…”
Baelin venerated his Master from the depths of his heart. Not for a moment would he suspect Leylin of being the traitor among the upper circle of Magi. Had he not been stopped by Vinas, Aaron, and Memphis, he would have gone to Leylin’s mansion the moment he’d arrived.
“Haha…Haha…” Baelin stroked his head embarrassedly, a smirk on his face. Seeing this, the twin brothers glanced at each other, a strange look flashing past their eyes.
“Lord Baelin!” One of them said as he approached him, “Since this place is so dangerous, how about we stick together?”
*Pang!* Just as he finished his words, several green brambles stuck out of the earth, tying Baelin’s feet up.
“Now!” he shouted.
“Profound energy blast!” The younger brother standing behind him
crushed a crystal rune. Together with a chant, a powerful attack was launched.
A ball of purple liquid, filled with corrosive white bubbles, rushed directly towards Baelin’s head.
The twins had gathered intelligence about the awesome power of this armour, so they had aimed instead at Baelin’s unprotected head.
The twin brothers’ co-ordination was perfect, and their final strike reached an offensive power of around 60-70 degrees! Such an attack could even corrode mountains.
“Haha! Stupid! Even if you are more powerful than us, this is a competition! Why wouldn’t we take a gamble?” The elder brother laughed, looking at Baelin with a little excitement.
He was not pleased when Baelin stole the limelight, and this chance for vengeance made him happy.
“Master!” The second before the corrosive liquid ball arrived, eyes arose from every parts of Baelin’s armour.
These eyes were smaller, but they blinked with wisdom. Now, they were showing signs of rage.
*Pang!* A membrane of flesh formed like a helmet around Baelin’s head, protecting it.
As the profound power blast hit the membrane, Baelin’s body was launched backwards. But weirdly, not a drop of blood flew out.
While Baelin was still in the air, his armour changed significantly.
Flashy membranes hardened to form real armour, and the dozens of eyes merged into thirteen big ones that were scattered along it.
This terrifying appearance, was the most powerful form of the Bio Boosting armour.
*Bzzz!* The purple corrosive energy still attacked Baelin’s body, but it was nothing in front of his armour. There wasn’t even a tiny depression formed.
This fact stupefied the twin Magi. They looked at each other, and
immediately came to an accord. “Run!”
Magi who could defend against a joint attack of theirs were far more powerful than they could handle. They did not want to be thrown out this easily.
“You!” Baelin was about to blow his top, and jumped forward in a rage.
*Crack!* Pits were formed under Baelin’s feet as his jump landed him in front of the twins in an instant.
“Die!” Baelin raised his cross blade. Baelin’s strength was already at the peak of rank 1 Magi, approaching the boundary of rank 2. Once he made up his mind, it was easy to kill mere semi-converted Magi like them.
*Pup!* The cross blade ran through the neck of one Magus, then a light came out of his body.
His body was covered by a milky light column, and disappeared immediately.
“You go along with him!” Baelin took no pity on them this time, and shoved his cross blade into the other’s heart.
*Peng!* This one disappeared into the white lights as well.
After killing the twin brothers, Baelin took a milky amulet out of his pocket.
*Beep!* After a flash, the number in this amulet turned from 1 to 3. Baelin stared at this in a daze, a wry smile on his lips…
Outside the secret plane, in the middle of the arena.
A light column burst out, an indistinct figure inside it.
“Quick! Medicine!” The host ordered with experience.
Several Magi dressed in milky robes with the symbol of a snake and cross rushed around.
After the light dissipated, the Magus who was eliminated first showed up, his face pale and the wound on his neck bleeding.
“I will stop bleeding first, prepare the life spell!” The medical team consisted of healing Magi, several of whom emitted energy
fluctuations at the peak of rank 1.  
A milky light bathing him, the wounded Magus was cured and the wound on his neck disappeared.  
A second later, his younger brother was also sent out, and the medicine team took care of him as well.  
Up in the platform, what happened just now was seen by Leylin, but he had an impulse of cover his eyes.  
“Very adaptable, but still stupid! It seems that the years of exile and adventure taught him nothing. Fortunately, I didn’t tell anyone that I taught him! What an embarrassment…”  
“Look! Haylon and Carl ran into each other!”  
“The stars of the competition meet, this should be a good show!”  
Some Magi smiled gloatingly.
Leylin turned his attention to another screen. In the sky above a verdant forest, Longbottom, disguised as Green-robed Carl, had run into Haylon. These were two favoured dark horses had a large possibility of gaining victory. This immediately attracted attention. Many contestants had already been eliminated in a short period of time. With fewer participants remaining, the remaining screens had increased in size.

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Within the secret plane.
“Green-robed Carl?” Haylon glanced at the strange youngster in front of him.
“I’d originally wanted to skip the trouble of defeating you guys one by one, and had decided to wait to make a move and harvest a large number of points at once, but forget it. I’ll make an exception for you and take your point right away.”
Longbottom looked at Haylon in front of him, a sinister smile on his face. Now that he was getting closer to the goal, he did not have to disguise himself so carefully. His opponent’s identity as a genius made Longbottom, who had been born a commoner, feel a sense of disgust.
“You seem to hate me?” Haylon’s brows furrowed, “It’s alright,
anyone who obstructs my path shall die anyway!”
“Jeje, who do you think you are!” Longbottom laughed weirdly, and released part of the bindings on him.
Cold! Powerful!
A berserk wave of spiritual force swept across like a hurricane.
“Peak rank 1?” Haylon’s expression that had always been as cold as ice was immediately smashed through.
Longbottom’s ‘burst’ had also caused a frenzy outside the plane.
“Peak rank 1? I remember Green-robed Carl is only forty-five years old, right?” A judge wearing reading glasses asked a Magus behind him, “Fano, when did you reach the level you’re at?”
The Magus by the name of Fano was an old geezer with a white beard. He looked ashamed as he spoke, “Your subordinate is ashamed. After training hard on the Icy Throne for 70 years, I reached this realm at 115 years old.”
“If he studied on his own, this Carl really is a genius!” This judge raised his spectacles, “Run checks on him. If there’s nothing wrong, we can consider enticing him into entering our guild.”
Leylin, who was also on the judge panel, saw that many of the other judges had sent down the same order and couldn’t help but laugh inside.
If this was a few days ago, they might be able to find out about Longbottom, but now? By the time they had run their checks, Longbottom might already have achieved his goal. What use was it then if they found out?
“You’re already at the peak of rank 1!” Haylon blurted out, unable to maintain his indifference any longer.
“This is the expression! This is the expression!” Longbottom chuckled aloud, “I want those people who look down on me to realise how wrong they are!”
He laughed crazily, flushing red as if he were sick.
“You’re crazy!” Haylon’s voice became cold, and large numbers of
silver-white light blades appeared from his robes, swirling in formation.
“Go!” Haylon pointed at Longbottom, and the many light blades formed a dense mesh and tried to pull Longbottom in. Meanwhile, he turned into a black shadow and disappeared into the sky.
“You overestimate yourself!” Longbottom snorted coldly, a layer of green mist surging forth.
*Tss tss!* Great numbers of silver-white light blades entered the mist and immediately produced sounds of corrosion, dissipating one by one.
“Come here!” Longbottom’s right hand became a phantom image and reached deep into the air.
Next, a black shadow was pulled out from the surrounding space. Haylon’s expression was that of disbelief. “That’s impossible. This concealing technique is my master’s special technique! How could it…”
“That strong aura of life on you betrayed you!” Longbottom explained, his expression showing his disdain.
Meanwhile, Haylon went limp, as if this was a huge blow to him.
“Kid, you’re very luckily. If we’d met earlier, you’d long since have turned into a corpse, but now?” Longbottom halted his intentions of using Life Absorption and turning him into a dried-up corpse. This was still within the secret plane, and he was being monitored by the Magi outside.
If he hid his true strength, he could pass it off as being exceptionally talented or having gained some inheritance. Whatever it was, Twilight Zone was huge and it was no surprise to have some fortuitous encounters.
However, Life absorption was a dark-elven meditation technique. If it was exposed, the competition would be halted, and he would be faced with several rank 2 Magi who would combine their efforts to kill him.
“But I really don’t want to just let you off!” While lifting Haylon, a smile appeared about Longbottom’s lips. This smile was enough for Haylon’s hair to be raised, and he immediately thought of using the spell pattern for escape. However, it was too late!

A green light sword ripped through Haylon’s forehead, and with the corrosive force invading, he could only cry out miserably.

“Ah…” Amidst the painful screams, Haylon’s body was bound in light pillars and transported out.

Longbottom took out his own amulet and saw the number rapidly rise to thirty, and revealed a satisfied expression. After closing his eyes for a short while, he began to hurry towards another location.

*Thud!* Outside the secret plane, Haylon’s body fell to the ground, large amounts of black blood flowing out of his orifices.

“His mind has been damaged! Quick, get Master Dojek here!” The healing Magus who came over took a look and quickly shook his head.

A moment later, Dojek narrated something to Leylin and the other committee members at the judging area.

“His sea of consciousness has been destroyed? There’s no cure?”

“Yes, Haylon’s sea of consciousness has completely been destroyed by a corrosive spiritual force. There is no way to restore it. At most, I can only save his life. From hereon, he can only live on as a commoner…”

Dojek’s expression was dim. Haylon truly was a genius, but he had not realised that no matter how amazing the genius, they could fall before they truly matured.

However, his long life had allowed him to experience much, and with a sigh, he left.

Leylin and the committee members had a brief exchange regarding the issue, before they promptly tossed this matter to the back of their minds.
The final competition carried the risk of death! Just crippling a Magus wasn’t much. What they were more interested in were the methods Longbottom had used to heavily injure Haylon before he had been transported out.

“It seems to be a combination spell. By instantly transmitting large amounts of energy particles to destroy the composition of the sea of consciousness…”

There was a flash in Leylin’s eyes. He felt that after large numbers of geniuses had fallen in this competition, the force of destiny shrouding the area had become richer till the extreme. The surging river of destiny was like a giant gunpowder warehouse. With just a little spark, it would explode violently.

“I didn’t expect the three of them to meet. Time for a good show!”

Right after, Leylin realised something else and changed his focus to a screen at a corner.

“Based on the guide of destiny!”

Three voices sounded in unison, with both male and female voices. Aaron, Vinas, and Ernis who were all training in Sacred Flame, the geniuses Leylin had created himself, finally came together. If anyone had been focusing on these three Magi, they would realise that after entering the secret plane, they had not fought with any Magi and instead, had been hurrying forward. Just as they were about to encounter enemies, they could predict and evade them. Hence, the three somehow passed through half of the secret plane and met at a corner on the plains.

“It’s the first time we’re meeting in real life! I’ll introduce myself. My name is Ernis!” There was a smile on Ernis’ face. His gaze swept past Vinas and Aaron, and stayed on Aaron’s ring and Vinas’ multi-coloured necklace for a long while.
“Aaron!” “Vinas!”
“Are you going to repent for all you have done?” Aaron asked, standing with Vinas. Though they were competing against each other, he and Vinas were on the humans’ side, and had no good feelings towards Ernis of the dark elven camp.
“I’m just used to looking at issues from a different point of view!” Ernis laughed, obviously not wanting to say more.
After all, there was a large group of Magi watching. How could he expose himself?
“Then die!” Just a moment before, they had speaking nicely, and in the next, Aaron immediately became hostile and attacked.
A silver cross blade hilt appeared in his hands, and was only a third as long as a regular cross blade. It had lost its sword blade and point, but a sharp energy fluctuation burst out from it.
A ray of light streaked through the air, bringing about with it numerous ripples and aimed at Ernis. Ernis seemed to have predicted it and dodged, looking delighted at the sword hilt in Aaron’s hands.
“So you’ve forged it too! I won’t have to conceal anything anymore.”
A silver-white slender long sword tip appeared in front of Ernis. The sharpness it emanated was even above that of Aaron’s attack.
“Go!” Ernis pointed at Aaron, and great amounts of silver light shot out from the tip of the blade. Formless ripples collided with the silver light and quickly dispersed, as if nothing had happened.
However, the surrounding grass had become much shorter, cut through smoothly as if it had been sliced through in that instance by some light.
“This is it. All devious plots are useless to us. All we can depend
on is solely strength to fight it out!”
Ernis yelled, his sword tip flying into his hands and shooting out
great amounts of light.
Seeing this, Vinas sighed and retrieved a silver-white sword blade
from behind her back and besieged Ernis with Aaron.
“Hmm?”
The Magi outside suddenly made sounds of astonishment.
“These three middle-grade magic artifacts have reached the peak.
Also, why does it feel like the sword hilt, sword blade and sword
tip can be combined to create a magic artifact with more power?”
“These three are definitely high-level artifacts, to the extent that they can be combined to make a magical weapon!” The Rank 2 Magus sitting beside Leylin guessed.

“I think so too!” Leylin smiled and nodded, his gaze secretly heating up.

In the center of the secret territory, three silhouettes continuously collided fiercely, and the glowing radiance emitted by the magical artifacts in their hands destroyed the meadow around them until it was unrecognisable.

“Kill!”

Aaron and Vinas looked at each other and exerted their spiritual force to its extreme so that the silver sword flew towards Ernis.

“Battle Chain!” At that moment, a different expression flashed across Ernis’ face and a black chain covered in black runes flew out from his chest, covering Aaron and Vinas.

“You really thought I was so foolish, eh? One person against the two of you?”

Upon seeing the chain, Ernis finally had a smile on his face, indicating that he had achieved what he had wanted.

“This is the secret weapon of the Haylin Guild. It can bind two semi-elemental Magi for at least 10 seconds. I had never thought that this Magus would be in possession of it. The others will definitely lose!” Some of the Magi outside secret territory could...
recognize this evil object.
But soon after, they were struck agape.
They only saw Vinas smile indifferently. Another “Vinas” appeared from the center of her body, and the other Vinas, one with a stern and firm aura, charged towards Aaron.
Among the flickering light rays, Aaron, who was bound by iron chains before, was now floating in mid-air and the Vinas-doppelgänger replaced him.
“Quick! Now!” said the two Vinases. The constantly tightening iron chains made the defensive runes on Vinas’ body shatter one after another.
“Doppelgänger! Using a doppelgänger to be free from the binds of the chains? This is actually very worthy of study!” a Magus said while stroking his white beard.
Aaron, who saw Vinas vomiting blood, was somehow enraged and charged forth towards Ernis.
It was obvious that Ernis, who was trying to restrain the binds of the chains, had used up a huge amount of his spiritual force and magical power, and was thus unprepared to deal with Aaron’s sudden attack.
Aaron’s eyes turned red. Drawing the sharp end of his sword, he held the sword’s handle and pierced Ernis’ chest.
But Ernis did not summon any escaping spell and only had a weird expression on his face, as though he was crying and laughing at the same time.
“What happened? Is there something wrong with the spell? Extract him!” a Magus immediately commanded.
But the characteristic white light had not appeared yet.
“Sigh…” Ernis coughed out a huge amount of blood.
“You…You’ve won!” Ernis said as he struggled.
“What? Why aren’t you escaping?” Aaron asked. He found this all extremely hard to believe.
“Tsk tsk! Why do I have to escape?” Ernis’ facial expression changed, as though he had changed into a completely different person.
“Don’t… don’t kill me!” Soon after, a dreadful expression shadowed Ernis’ face.
But following the huge loss of blood, the expression gradually disappeared. And everything eventually returned to its original state.
“You need…. Need to be careful of the black hand behind. My brother, I saw…..”
Ernis shuddered and gave the long double-edged sword and calligraphy pen to Aaron. His eyes suddenly turned white and without finishing his last prophecy, he lost his life’s aura.
*Peng!* Ernis fell to the ground.
*Kacha!* Aaron felt a mysterious energy emerge from Ernis’ body and enter his own as Ernis died. The Sacred Flame rapidly swirled, as if it were absorbing something unknown from his body.
Soon after, he broke through the semi-converted elements and finally achieved the position of a peak rank 1 Magus. But he was not happy at all.
“Let’s go,” said Aaron, as he helped lift Vinas, who was seriously injured, and disappeared among the milky, white light beams.
The day’s events had been thoroughly confusing for him, so much so that he no longer held any interest in the final showdown between Baelin and Longbottom.
Outside the secret territory, Leylin touched his chin as he pondered deeply.
“Schizophrenic symptoms are getting more severe. Signs of benevolence, viciousness, weakness and other personalities along with intense suicidal tendencies are being exhibited! This experiment is a failure! Even if one is alive, it’s no use!”
He appeared regretful as such thoughts passed through his head.
Soon after, he then turned to the last screen and said, “Let the first fated confrontation start!”
In the center of the secret plane, a majority of the Magi had already been eliminated. The only two to survive were Baelin and Longbottom, who, combined, had more than forty wounds on their body.
Furthermore, these two people were gradually getting close to each other, on the verge of converging.  
“If no mishaps happen, the champion will arise from one of these two Magi. Let us wait and see!” The host excitedly declared as the screens on site constantly fused and finally, the two last huge screens were split respectively on Baelin and Longbottom’s side.
The two screens merged, as the two Magi walked closer towards each other. They were going to form a single large screen.
“We finally meet again!” The strong body armour on Baelin had 13 eyeballs with oddly-shaped cyclones on them, as though they were absorbing something from the surroundings.
“Can you stop me?” Longbottom, disguised as the green-robed Carl, sneered.
“Whatever happens, I must defeat you today!” Baelin firmly said with confidence as he pointed his crossbow towards Longbottom.
“Tsk tsk! You know what, Baelin? The more I see you, the more annoyed I get, ever since I saw you at Potter Town!”
At this time, Longbottom said to Baelin: “Why did Leylin choose you the previous time, and not me? What do you have that’s much better than me?”
“So you still do care about this!” Baelin’s expression darkened upon hearing all this.
The other Magi outside the screens looked doubtfully at the two Magi settle down without producing any energy waves.
“So these two Magi knew each other beforehand?” questioned some Magi as they exchanged doubtful looks.
And at this moment, the two Magi in the middle of the screen started moving.
Energy particles stormed forth from their bodies just like a gale, producing immense pressure and causing the airflow around them to reverse.
It was an uncommon sight to see two rank 1 Magi competing against each other in Twilight Zone.
Leylin, who understood and knew these two Magi, naturally knew that what they showed to the public now is far from their true powers.
*Bang! Bang!*
The green and red silhouette continued bumping against each other in mid-air so much that the air around them got compressed and exploded.
“I never thought that you can also enter the Rank 2 Realm!” Longbottom said to Baelin in the midst of the intense battle.
The Magi outside did not notice anything strange with Baelin and Longbottom’s first showdown between the screens. Although the energy waves were only at the peak of rank 1, only Baelin and Longbottom, who knew each other very well, could tell the terrifying capabilities of each other!
On top of that, they were able to control these abilities without the slightest spillover and maintained the facade of being rank 1. With this amount of strength, it would be a good showing even for a rank 2 Magus.
“Give it up now, Longbottom!” Baelin said as his willpower decreased a little.
Originally, Longbottom was not someone with such big aspirations and ideals. Furthermore, to even confront face to face with a friend he knew since young, he simply had no strength to do it.
“Give up? I’ll give up now!” With a fierce front, huge drops of
green corrosive liquid started forming at Longbottom’s lower body, forming a whirlpool.
“Whirlpool of Death!”
*Zila!* But this was just the beginning. Longbottom tore open a scroll upon seeing strong energy particles being emitted, provoking the whirlpool to increase in size. This sparked the radiation of a dangerous aura, causing some rank 2 Magi to frown and disperse from the sides of the whirlpool.
“It’s the scroll of a rank 2 spell!” cried out some of the Magi, standing outside the battlefield.
This sort of thing was so rare to see. Even if a rank 2 Magus were to create such things, a lot of time and effort is wasted and success is not even guaranteed. Thus, it is rarely seen in the marketplace. Who would’ve thought that such a precious thing will be in the hands of Carl?
Besides, was it even worth it to waste such a precious thing during this competition?
“To use a rank 2 Magus’ scroll for protection now, is it because he has to resort to using all of his strength in a split second?” Leylin said outside the battlefield as he chuckled lightly.
“If nothing untoward happens, the champion will obviously be our Carl from the Western Regions!” exclaimed the rank 2 Magus who had spoken to Leylin previously, as he stroked his beard with a hint of pride on his face.
“Not exactly!” Leylin shook his head. Baelin was a destined child, and he would not lose so easily.
“What now then? Do you want to bet with me?” the rank 2 Magus from the Western Regions immediately said. He was inwardly very worried as he remembered how he was previously defeated by the Fire Scorpion spell.
“No need! I do not have anything good to bet against you, Sir!” Leylin said as he forced a smile and shook his head.
“No worries, we won’t bet with money. Just a simple bet of the outcome!” said the Western Region’s rank 2 Magus.
Leylin nodded. He knew that these rank 2 Magi have already reached their limits of what they could achieve on the path to becoming a Magus. Thus, they focused all their energies on other areas such as upon younger talents.
This rank 2 Magus from the western region had previously won over him. If Leylin did not win this time, he was afraid of the discomfort that will remain in his heart for a few years.
The enormous and brutal whirlpool continued expanding, like how a monster widens its mouth, and immediately engulfed Baelin.
Upon seeing this scene, Longbottom smiled.
“Die!” Longbottom suddenly charged into the middle of the whirlpool and came out holding a green sword handle.
*Rumble!* The 13 eyes on Baelin’s armour started staring and in the middle of the pupil, numerous fine-textured runes shot out, spiralling around Baelin’s body and forming a strange pattern.
The runes on the armour started evolving and radiated dazzling rays of brilliance. The whirlpool of death emitted huge ripples of corrosion, striking the armour. Yet, it caused no damage
*Pa! Pa! Pa!*
Baelin roared and the entire whirlpool surprisingly broke apart. Longbottom was not prepared for the sword slash that was aimed at him.
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“Ripple of corrosion!”
A green circular ripple immediately appeared before Longbottom, and shook continuously, as if it was trying to push Baelin out. However, Baelin’s face remained composed, and from his blade large amounts of vertical eye phantoms appeared.
“Bio Boosting armour and sword!”
The sword with the vertical eye phantom gave off rays of flames, and evaporated all the green ripples. With indomitable strength, it directly targeted Longbottom’s right chest.
Blood flowed through the corner of Longbottom’s mouth, and a long wound opened up on his chest. He flew through the air, and landed on the ground, giving rise to a long trail of blood.
*Boom!* The many soil layers behind him had piled up into a small mountain, and had finally offset the inertia in Longbottom’s body, which had caused him to be unable to stop.
“You lost!” Baelin landed calmly in front of Longbottom, his emotions complex. There was no visible hint of joy or victory in his expression.
“I lost!” Immediately, Longbottom’s face registered his defeat.
*Cough!* He violently coughed out a mouthful of fresh blood: “Bro… Brother Baelin, I have some things regarding my sister that I wish to talk to you about!”
“What about your sister?” Having heard Longbottom’s familiar
address, Baelin’s heart softened. Moreover, Longbottom’s sister was his first love!
Baelin could not help but lower his body.
“My sister, she… she…” Longbottom’s voice gradually became softer, which caused Baelin to get closer to him.
“She wants you to die!” After seeing that situation, a hint of a maniacal smile flashed across Longbottom’s face, and a crystal in his hands was launched like a lightning bolt.
“Not good!”
Baelin’s eyes widened, and he unceasingly flew backwards, his Bio Boosting armour continuously adding layers of defense.
But it was too late. A grey ray of lightning detonated in front of Baelin’s chest, and smashed the milk-white talisman.
*Boom!* A pillar of light enveloped Baelin, and caused him to disappear from the secret plane in an instant.
*Crash! Bang!* Baelin’s figure appeared at the site of the competition, his face still registering shock and grief. He looked at the charred area above his chest and remained silent.
“Haha! Even though the tactics weren’t entirely legitimate, at least I won!” The Magus from the west, who had bet against Leylin, immediately laughed loudly.
“That’s right! You won!” Magi were not knights, and did not have to conform to a code of honour. Even though Longbottom’s tactics were overboard, and he used whatever he could to obtain success, he was undoubtedly the champion! Leylin naturally had to recognise this point.
What was more important was that there was nothing wagered on this. To concede defeat was nothing much.
Leylin’s attitude actually caused these Magi to feel embarrassed.
“Actually, the Magus that you thought highly of was strong too. Not only has he reached the level of a peak rank 1 Magus, he is walking
the ancient path of the Bio Booster. If I am right, his armour was inherited from at least an ancient rank 2 Bio Booster. If we were to compare their true strengths, he would still surpass Carl!”

“En!” Leylin nodded outwardly, but he did not agree with the claim.

Even though Baelin was strong, Longbottom was not a person to be provoked. A son of destiny just like Baelin, his most terrifying dark elven meditation technique and other secret cards had not been revealed.

Of course, both of them had suppressed themselves for the sake of the Magi who were watching, and Baelin himself had concealed his trump card, the Underground Winter Spider Emperor. Were the two to have battled without considering the consequences, both parties would have equal chances of winning.

By now, Longbottom had finished off the remaining few Magi in the secret plane, dominating his opponents, and the host announced loudly, ”The champion has already emerged. He is Green-robed Carl from the west! Let us cheer for him!”

“Carl!” “Carl!” “Carl!”

The Magi present instantly let out cheers of happiness, and welcomed Longbottom.

“What are we to do? Should we openly reveal his identity in public?” Aaron secretly communicated with Baelin.

“No! Not at all! He threatened me earlier on. Should we do so, he will immediately initiate his plot and bring huge amounts of casualties to the Magi present. Before we clearly understand what he’s planning, it would be best not to do so!”

Baelin hesitated, and was seemingly indecisive.

Regardless of how they were communicating secretly, the process of the competition had been advancing bit by bit.

“Now, may we invite our champion and the other 30 Magi on stage, for our 9 most distinguished and high-ranked judges to give out the
prizes…” Along with the host’s voice and cheers, a stage decorated with gold and silver, bedazzled with numerous rays started rising slowly from the middle of the site. Other than Baelin, Longbottom, and a few other Magi who held other intentions, the 30 Magi who had obtained a high enough score walked up to the stage emotionally. To them, this was the pathway to fame, the glorious road to success.

“Let’s go. They are actually having us present prizes to them! What a bother, couldn’t they just have passed down the prizes?” A rank 2 Magus from the west complained to Leylin. “This is actually the important stage where budding Magi obtain credit due to their ambitions. Even though it’s only a ceremony, it still has to be done!” Leylin smiled and got up, and went to the golden stage together with the other rank 2 Magi.

“I, Victory, rank 2 Magus and guild leader of Glorious Sword, solemnly announce that this Magus from the west is the champion of this season’s young genius talent competition!” The rank 2 Magus standing in the middle announced, at the same time placing on Longbottom a golden crown encrusted with gems. “Carl!” “Carl!” “Carl!” Many Magi were cheering, and bouts of cheers got overpowered by other bouts of cheers. “Other than obtaining the reward previously, Carl, you have the opportunity to choose a guild to enter! What is your choice?” Victory had high hopes for Carl, and hence in his voice held a tinge of excitement and pressure, as well as feelings of enticement. “My choice is obviously…” Longbottom deliberately hesitated a while and then said, “It’s obviously the Dark Elves, you idiots!”
“What?” The jaws of numerous Magi dropped open. They all thought they’d heard wrong.

“Not good, we have been cheated by him!” On the other side, Baelin’s face immediately changed, the armour on his body once again surfaced. He had wanted to rush over, but unfortunately, it was already too late.

“Mud membrane!”

A layer of clay-coloured invisible film surfaced from Longbottom’s body, with 9 rays of lights shooting out of his body, directly shooting at the 9 rank 2 Magi judges on the stage who had no time to dodge the attack.

*Kacha! Kacha!*

A deep blue ice layer immediately spread out on their body, and caused all 9 Magi to freeze into ice sculptures.

In the ice sculptures, the numerous rank 2 Magi had life-like expressions of anger or fear.

This sudden change had shocked all the Magi present at the site.

“Longbottom! What are you doing! Release Master Leylin now!”

Baelin suppressed the rage within, having seen the ice sculpture of the already frozen Leylin. He had originally wanted to undo his pretense here and give Master Leylin a big surprise!

Furthermore, from the bottom of Baelin’s heart, he respected Leylin and had treated him like a teacher. Having seen Longbottom’s actions, he instantly felt anger.

“Carl! What are you doing!” The face of the host on the stage instantly became more solemn, a ray of a peak rank 1 energy wave imploded from his body.

*Boom! Boom!*

2 rays of spells attacked the surface of an ice sculpture, yet it was entirely useless, and could not leave any traces on the crystal clear surface of the ice sculpture.

“There’s no use, the matriarchs of the dark elves used one thousand
years to extract this essence of the cold abyss. Even rank 2 Magi cannot be able to overcome it…” Longbottom’s voice was unhurried.

“As for Leylin? I’ve wanted to kill him for so long! And now, he is finally in my hands. Do you reckon I would easily let this opportunity go by? Haha…”

Presently, Longbottom had removed all restrictions, and laughed hysterically.

*Boom!* A light ray flashed across, Longbottom removed the skin alteration spell on his body, and recovered his original appearance. At the same time, a strong and enormous energy was released from his body like the surging waves of the ocean.

“And this noisy crow, I’ve borne with you long enough!” Longbottom lifted his hands and a dark silver spiritual strength exploded. The body of the host, not having time to react, exploded into a rain of flesh.

The Magi standing on the stage immediately retreated, with one of them shouting out, ”Solidified spiritual force! Rank 2 Magus!”

“This is the leader of the revolutionary army, Longbottom! I saw his face in a picture once!”

“It’s already too late. Attack!” Longbottom shouted.

*Swish! Swish!* Numerous shadows appeared all around the competition site, all tearing apart magic scrolls. Dark clouds instantly enshrouded the area, and large numbers of tiny spiders were shot out of the dark clouds. The spiders spat out threads continuously, binding up the entire area in a short duration. From a distance, the competition site that was enshrouded by a white silk wall looked like a giant cocoon.

Baelin’s face dimmed, and the aura on his body exploded forth. He treated Longbottom as a rival. “So your target was not only the 9 judges but also all the Magi in this competition site!”

He was secretly shocked. Around 20% of the elite Magi of Twilight
Zone were present at the scene, and if they were to all die here, it would be a terrifying blow to the humans.

“Kill!” At this point in time, the black-clothed men hiding amongst the crowd immediately took action, and many more spiders drilled their way through the cocoons, surrounding and attacking the human magicians. Large amounts of silk wove together into a formation, weakening the human Magi while channeling the strength to their opponents. Immediately, lights flashed and explosions occurred everywhere. The obstruction made it impossible for the human Magi to escape. Some Magi, eyes turned red, fired off spells in all directions, adding further to the chaos.
These aren’t just the people of the revolutionary army!” Baelin stared at the many black-robed Magi and his expression darkened.

“Haha… Of course!” At this moment, Longbottom had no more qualms. “The matriarchs of the dark elves have already infiltrated this area. Not long after, blood will flow, and the dark elves will rule the subterranean world!”

Longbottom’s face was slightly flushed.

“You lunatic!” Baelin roared, and charged at Longbottom.

“Life Absorption!”

Longbottom shouted, and a large phantom image of a spider appeared behind him.

Compared to the last few times, the image had become even larger and even held a terrifying aura. From the eyes of the spider, a very human light could be seen, as if it now held an intelligence of its own and had now become alive.

“Aru!” Baelin whistled for a while, and a gold phantom darted out from within a small crack amongst the spectators and dropped to the ground. Its figure suddenly increased in size, and in the blink of an eye, it was two stories tall.

This was a giant, golden Underground Winter Spider. The stripes on its body gave it a very elegant feeling, and the phantom image on Longbottom’s back kept snarling, as if its honour was being challenged.
“Underground Winter Spider Emperor! So you are really the sinner responsible for the theft of the sacred creature!”
The cold glint in Longbottom’s eyes expanded, and several greyish-green streams of air rose from his body.
“Ah!” “Ah!”
Two short yelps were heard.
These belonged to the two official Magi who were unfortunately struck by the stray streams of air. The moment they had contact with the greyish-green air, their bodies wilted and they turned into dried corpses that had died in an incomparably pitiful manner.
“You dare rob life force that does not belong to you. You’ll be devoured by it sooner or later!”
Baelin’s expression was dark as he rode the Underground Winter Spider Emperor, looking like a gallant knight.
“How would you understand how brilliant Life Absorption is?”
Longbottom merely gave a cold answer to Baelin. Meanwhile, the giant spider phantom image pounced forward, the strange streams of air like black holes that greedily sucked in the life force within Baelin.
Baelin’s expression became grim as he patted the Underground Winter Spider Emperor he was on and collided with Longbottom.
The energy particles formed from the clash between two rank 2 Magi created havoc as they sent a few people unlucky enough to be hit by stray particles flying. They were seriously injured.
Within the greyish-green vortex, a knight on a giant golden spider was emanating red light. He looked like an ancient dragon-slaying prince as he charged towards the heart of the vortex.
The battle kept changing location and caused a few stages to be completely destroyed.
At this moment, the nine judges were trapped. The rank 2 Magi were already the most powerful in this entire competition area.
The result of Baelin and Longbottom’s match could even decide the
life or death of all the Magi here!
Hence, even while battling with the revolution army and dark elves, many Magi tried to spare some energy and watch the battle.
What attracted their interest the most were the nine ice sculptures on the platform!
These Magi knew very well that a small part of their chances of survival depended on Baelin, while most of it depended on whether these rank 2 Magi could break out of their restrictions.
Even Longbottom would be reduced to dust under the combined attacks of nine rank 2 Magi.
“Cough! Wake up, my lords!”
At this moment, light flashed in a corner and a grey-haired Magus appeared.
He mumbled spell incantations, a huge blazing fireball striking the nine sculptures and turning the podium made of gold and silver into a sea of fire.
This Magus despaired as he saw the flames soon dying out under a layer of white frost. Dense icy mist lingered and froze the whole podium into ice and snow.
Meanwhile, not even a corner of the nine ice sculptures had melted.
“What a waste of energy. This is the icy air from the abyss and is a rank 2 spell which can be sustained for a long time.” Longbottom watched on and began to laugh coldly.
Without waiting for his orders, a few dark elf special guards in black-robes charged forward and began to battle with the Magus in grey robes. Not long after, a sharp dagger pierced into his chest.
After seeing this, the many Magi who had plans to rescue him all fell silent, putting away all thoughts of rescuing the judges.
Most of them wanted to break away from their opponents and successfully leave this place.
At this moment, the battles in the area became more brutal and intense.
Outside the competition area, everything had yet to die down.
*Teng! Teng! Teng! Teng!*  
At the horizon far away, a black line suddenly appeared. It gradually closed in and the two ends began to shrink, and it felt like the line would surround the whole competition area.  
When the black shadows came closer, it could be seen that they were actually the elite Underground Winter Spider knights. There were a great number of dark elven Magi, which included multiple matriarchs and even Anya.  
“Seal off that area and don’t let any human get away” Anya commanded, and then pointed at the cocoon in the middle, a gentle voice transmitted to every knight’s ears.  
“Fight for Her Majesty!” “Fight for Her Majesty!”  
The many dark elven Underground Winter Spider knights cheered and then began their attacks.  
“Prepare for Joint Earth Pitfalls Spell! Begin!”  
At this moment, brownish-yellow lights flashed and countless depressions appeared in front of the Underground Winter Spider knights. They were like long trenches, with earthen spikes piercing upwards and stopping the knights in their tracks.  
There were a few knights who had moved too quickly and fallen into the trench, their chests, arms, thighs, and even faces pierced through like skewered meat. Those who had yet to die kept howling in pain.  
Three figures appeared in mid-air, causing Anya to furrow her brow slightly.  
“The protectors of the east, west, and south have all arrived. What about that old Guardian of the Realm?”  
“I’m right here. I wouldn’t need you to worry about me!”  
Green light flashed, and the the old protector appeared before Anya. Though he seemed weak and did not have much of an aura, Anya looked as if a great enemy had appeared in front of her.
“I didn’t expect you, Anya, to use the dark elves’ crown as a means to enter Twilight Zone without letting even the dark elven knights know about it…” He smiled slightly while greeting her.

The crown of the dark elves was a sign of the authority of the Dark Elven Empire. It was also a very powerful magic artifact. It had a very simple function, which was to conceal the energy aura of a large group of people and their mounts. The key point was that it could turn around the battle. However, every time it’s used, it can only be used again after a fifty-year wait, which is why this inherited magic artifact of the magic elves could not be used flippantly.

Now, the dark elven crown could finally exhibit all its strength and shield numerous dark elven armies into the central region, almost wiping out all the Magi at the competition area.

“Except for the protector of the northern region who has died, all of the lord protectors are here. What’s this? Do you want to stop me?” A little green vortex appeared above Anya’s hands, glimmering with a mysterious light. It attracted the attention of everyone to look at the vortex, which had the intention of sucking human spirits in.

“Protecting Twilight Zone and the human race was our vow when we took on the role as protectors. This is an honour worthy of exchanging our lives for!”

The Guardian’s face was filled with layers of wrinkles and he looked about to die of old age. However, his eyes still shone with light.

Anya sensed that, although the life force of the Guardian was like a flame that was sputtering out, it still emanated light and warmth that even caused her to be worried.

The allied Magus army appeared behind these few protectors confronted the dark elves.

“The plan was actually leaked out. Who was it?”
Anya’s brows furrowed and then straightened out, “Whatever it is, we’ve finally restrained your nine rank 2 Magi. There are still many elite Magi and acolytes within the competition area. In other words, we have a sure victory in this war!”

“Attack!” Without waiting for the opposing Magi to finish their preparations, Anya immediately ordered for the dark elven matriarchs to attack.

With a flash of her body, she somehow disappeared from the air and, when she reappeared, she was in front of the Guardian of the Realm.

A fair palm brought with it a terrifying devouring strength and was pressed towards the old man’s chest.

“Floating Light!” The light in the old protector’s eyes became brighter and he exclaimed.

Numerous tiny rays of light surged out continuously and formed a protective shield in front of him.

The moment Anya’s hand made contact with the shield, a low sound was produced, and the ground suddenly trembled, the space even beginning to quiver.

“Old geezer, how much longer can your life force sustain you?”

Anya’s expression remained unchanging as she continued her attacks.

A tremendous vortex formed behind her, and any Magus that was sucked into it, turned into a dried corpse in an instant.

“Activating combination spell pattern!”

The expressions of the protectors of the other three regions changed greatly, and as if they had made up their minds. They headed into the skies, shooting out great amounts of green threads that connected with the Guardian of the Realm.

Tremendous rays from light force wrapped around him, and the next time he reemerged, he had already become a handsome and sunny middle-aged man.
If not for the familiar spiritual aura about him, nobody would recognise him.
As for the three other protectors, they began to age visibly.
“Good! Good! Good!”
Anyà bit her lips. She could naturally see that the three rank 2 Magi were entrusting their life force to the Guardian. However, this meant that, after today, the four of them would have all their life force consumed and lose their lives.
All obstructions are futile! The dark elves will rule over Twilight Zone from today!” Anya mumbled, and a dark grey shadow extended from her back over the area. Within the dark grey world, the plants and animals were drained of their lives, turning to ashes at a surprising pace. “Wilting Domain!” Anya shouted in a low voice, and within the domain, a circle of grey light exploded from the bodies of the Underground Winter Spider knights, allowing them to be even bolder and fiercer. As for the enemies that had been affected by the domain, they soon found their bodies aging and their life force disappearing. “A false domain! Anya, from beginning to end, you’ve always been ahead of me.” The protector who looked like a middle-aged man sighed, and then shot out large amounts of gold light that were like a giant sun. The two domains collided against each other, and the air seemed to shatter, causing tremendous spatial distortions and then exploding. On the ground, the Magi used the trenches as their first line of defence. However, the dark elves were still proceeding with their attacks. In that moment, the area was filled with the scenes of war. The Magi spent all their energy here, and did not have any to spare to break the giant cocoon and save the others.
The large white cocoon was standing proudly, and even if magic were to brush past it, it remained unharmed, displaying its immense defensive ability. Even if there were stray streaks from the battle between the rank 3 Magi causing it some harm, there would be multiple little spiders crawling up and spitting out threads to patch it up. Such a powerful regenerative ability caused the Magi within and outside the arena to feel despair.

“Haven’t you found it yet?” Vinas glanced at Aaron. They now had their backs against each other. Parts of the silver-white Meteor Sword floated, withstanding the attacks surrounding them from the Magi of the revolutionary army, dark elves as well as countless little spiders.

The situation on the battlefield was what Longbottom’s side intended it to be, and it was progressing in a way that benefited them.

Not only were the nine strongest rank 2 Magi restricted, many people from their own side had also snuck in. Under the unexpected attack that nobody could have responded to in time, many Magi died in their comrades’ arms. In addition, within the competition area, Longbottom had also arranged for something.

“Not yet!” Aaron smiled wryly, “Longbottom’s conspiracy is too complex. He actually used himself to draw our attention, and left the key to the battle on the battlefield itself.”

He brandished his sword hilt, and great amounts of sharp white lights severed the threads in the air.

“It’s very difficult to identify these threads, which are spread out all over the area. The moment they wind around the body, they will consume spiritual and magic force, which is used to complement the running of the spell formation! To break this spell formation, we need to find the very center of it!
“But I can’t see it in my predictions!” Aaron’s expression was incomparably dark. “Grandpa Merlin, what’s going on?” “Seems like an even more powerful Magus is using the power of destiny to conceal the important part. To be able to hide it from your prophecies, it must be a powerful person, at least at rank 2. I even suspect it could be a rank 3 dark elven matriarch personally doing this!”

Grandpa Merlin’s voice was serious. “Then we can only search one by one at the places where energy converges?” Aaron’s expression was serious. He suddenly raised his sword towards the right.

*Weng!* White light blades streaked through the sky, and a dark elf’s face showed his disbelief as he was slashed into two. The badly damaged corpse fell to the ground, large amounts of fresh blood and multi-coloured intestines flowing out. Chaos! Aaron thought that this was utter chaos!

Many Magi of the revolutionary army, dark elves, as well as summoned creatures all battled in the giant area, and there were even a few Magi secretly taking revenge on their rivals. These bloody battles caused the situation to become even more chaotic.

At the very centre, Baelin was riding the Underground Winter Spider Emperor, he and Longbottom in the middle of the final showdown.

The energy from the battle between the two rank 2 Magi overflowed everywhere, and the surrounding Magi automatically avoided them.

Not far from the battlefield, nine ice sculptures stood tall. Despite the stray waves from the battle between rank 2 Magi, none of them were in the least bit hurt, creating a stark contrast between them and the complete disorder in the surroundings. There was even a circle of dried corpses around them, and they were the Magi of
Twilight Zone who had wanted to secretly unseal the rank 2 lords. “Even with an ancient inheritance and an Underground Winter Spider Emperor with the strength of rank 2 as your magical pet, you still can’t win against me, because trash will always be trash!” At this moment, the rank 2 battle was nearing its end. Longbottom’s face was filled with black gas, and the phantom image of a spider behind him rushed into his body. “Ah!” His expression began to distort. “All living things disintegrate, and return to earth!” A great dark chilly aura shrouded the area and it became deathly quiet, as if they had entered apocalypse. Longbottom was suddenly like the grim reaper, dancing with precise steps as he strolled to Baelin’s front. “Seal!” With a palm strike, Baelin was sent flying while coughing blood, and he then stood atop the Underground Winter Spider Emperor’s head. *Chi chi…* The Underground Winter Spider Emperor Aru made sharp sounds that could be of fury, or terror. Immediately after, it saw Longbottom produce a black metal bottle with a thin mouth aimed at it. A feeling of an imminent catastrophe filled its heart in that instant. “How dare you fail to appreciate the matriarch’s kindness! The great Matriarch couldn’t be bothered to deal with you, which was why she got you to stay in the holy land and be a sacred creature. How dare you betray your own race!” Longbottom looked pleased at that moment, especially when he saw the urgent expression on Baelin’s face as he spat out a few more mouthfuls of blood. Feeling like he had wreaked vengeance on Baelin, he was especially thrilled. Threads of little runic chains extended from the mouth of the bottle and then covered the body of the Underground Winter Spider Emperor.
“Aru!” Baelin yelled hurriedly. Through the long time they had gone on adventures together, he had long since considered Aru a companion he could trust. Now that it was gradually being sealed, he was extremely anxious.

*Pu!*

In that moment, however, he suddenly collapsed and spat out a huge mouthful of greyish-green blood. Longbottom’s power full of perishing and withering had invaded his body, and was continuously devouring his life force. In this situation, even the Bio Boosting armour found this a thorny issue and without more time, it could not dispel it. Baelin could only watch as Alu’s body shrunk until it was sucked into the metal bottle.

“Did you see that? This is what happens to all that have helped you before, whether it’s Leylin or this Underground Winter Spider Emperor!”

Longbottom’s voice was clear and cold as he sealed the bottle and then kept it in his bosom. He unhurriedly walked to Baelin’s front, “How is it? Are you unable to move? My Death Decay isn’t so easy to withstand!”

*Boom!* He gave Baelin a flying kick, pushing him tens of metres away, his face dragging and forming a giant trench. Even with the protection of the armour, Baelin also flushed red and then paled, and what followed was the sound of bones breaking. The Bio Boosting armour also produced a groan, indicating it could not bear this.

“Wh-Why?”

Baelin looked at Longbottom, gritting out the words through his teeth.

“Why?” Longbottom went forward and stepped on Baelin’s face, pushing his head deep into the ground.

“You’re asking me why?” There was a sinister smile on
“Why were you the one chosen by the Baron? Why were you the one to work at Blazing Hammers? At the end, why were you the one chosen by Leylin?” Longbottom snarled.
“So- So you still minded all these…” Baelin coughed and was stepped on once again ruthlessly, taking a mouthful of soil.
“Exactly. I minded all this, but it doesn’t matter to me now!”
Longbottom began to laugh maniacally. “The Magus Leylin who looked down on me, and you, who has been snatching away my opportunities, are now lying like dead dogs in front of me! I once swore that I would make anyone who scorned and humiliated me pay the price, and now, both of you are left. Let me see, should I first take care of Leylin or you… Oh, right! I heard you have a wife, right? I heard it’s a missus born in nobility. Don’t worry, I’ll take care of her well.”
“You- You dare…”
Baelin was so furious, the veins on his face popped up, but he was then stamped on viciously……
“What do I do? The child of fate is now fated to lose!”
Aaron struck and fended off the attack of a dark elf, but there was also an injury from a corrosive spell. The corroded flesh was constantly expanding.
“In the prophecies, I do not see any hope of him turning the tides!”
“There’s definitely hope! It is every Magus’ power and duty of Twilight Zone to look to the light in the darkness. Humans of Twilight Zone will definitely survive, and the glory of Magi will remain eternal!”
Behind him, Vinas muttered, and a misty-eyed look appeared in her expression.
“What’s going on? Did you predict something?”
Aaron was startled, and he sensed the person beside him collapsing.
“What’s wrong?”
Aaron immediately turned back, and what he saw caused his eyes to widen.
Vinas lay down weakly, and there was a sword tip glimmering with silver light in front of her chest. It had already pierced into where her heart was.
“You…you… why? I’ll treat you right now!” Aaron felt two bouts of heat flowing below his eyes.
“No! Don’t!” Vinas extended her hands filled with blood and resolutely stopped Aaron.
“Only by my death and allowing Sacred Flame to unite, as well as gathering all the parts of Meteor Sword, can you put up a fight with Longbottom!”
“No, no, no! There must be a way! There must be another way!”
Aaron’s hand trembled, and he began to roar.
“Don’t be silly!” Vinas laughed weakly as she reached out and caressed Aaron’s face. “Sacrificing me, a single person, will allow you to save the entirety of Twilight Zone, what’s there to hesitate?” At the present moment, although her lips have gone pale and chapped from the loss of blood, her face remains full of radiance and it hurt Aaron to see her like this. “No! You’re doing this for me! You’re doing this for me!”

Advancing to the second rank did not ensure that he could match up to Longbottom, but it would at least greatly increase his chances of escape.

Aaron wept, tears flowing down his face uncontrollably.

Vinas laughed, her tone full of gratification “This impermanent fate! We were destined to be enemies, yet we fell in love… with each… other”

*Bang!* Vinas’ palm fell listlessly.

Shortly after, a strong current of concentration, along with a warm and gentle scent, was injected into Aaron’s consciousness. Sacred Flame started to revolve quickly, causing Aaron’s aura to rise sharply, and he broke through the bottleneck of a rank 2 Magus.

*Snap! Snap! Snap!* The three parts of Meteor Sword assembled together, emitting bright silver rays, and from the light, a tall and thin sword shaped
like a cross slowly appeared. The aura of a high-level magic artifact, also much closer to the level of becoming a magic weapon, spread out in a powerful manner.

“AAAAAAAAH!!!”

Aaron roared as he lifted the Meteor Sword and he transformed into a long arc as he charged into the midst of the battlefield. Any magi who obstructed the path, be they from the Twilight zone or from the Dark Elven Empire, all faded into the air under the power of the Meteor Sword.

“What’s the matter?”

In the middle of the battlefield, Longbottom stared at the huge incoming arc. With fierce eyes, he stopped toying with Baelin. A fireball aimed right at his head hit him.

*Pew!* The Meteor Sword released a ray of light, accurately targeted at the attack launched by Longbottom. A great and powerful wave of energy surged forth like raging waves.

Although at this moment Longbottom could still kill Baelin, he would definitely suffer huge amounts of damage.

“Rank 2?” Longbottom’s pupils froze. Energy at this level, in addition to a high-level magic artifact designed for offence, was a great threat to him.

As such, Longbottom made a choice. Without moving his body, his quickly moved backwards, layers of grey-green protective shields formed in front of his vision.

“As kill!” In the middle was Aaron’s silhouette. At this moment, as he charged forward with the mighty sword, silver threads of spiritual force continued to condense onto the arc, causing the sharpness of this high-level magic artifact to increase exponentially.

*Bang! Bang!* The protective shield set up by Longbottom was torn apart like crisp paper, and the blade of the sword even touched Longbottom’s eyes.
“Are you trying to kill me? With just you alone?” Longbottom had a sinister expression on his face, and the shadow of a spider appeared on his body, with its mouth wide open, clasping directly on the long sword.

Snap!

The sound of a slight explosion rang in the air, following which, the silhouette of two people flew away, retreating. Longbottom stroked his face, as below his left eye, a stream of blood flowed.

Whereas on the other end, Aaron’s arm produced a bone crunching noise as he quickly retreated to where Baelin was.

“You… are you alright?” Baelin finally expelled the Corrosive spell’s energy left by Longbottom within himself and he stood up. Although he did not witness the previous scene, he felt that the expression on his friend’s face was not right.

“Your strong armor has been damaged! Use this!” Aaron glanced at Baelin. He then passed the cross-shaped sword in his hand to Baelin. “The energy it can display in your hands will be much greater than what it displayed in mine”

Now was not the time for idle talk, Baelin immediately took over the Meteor Sword, but the deathly stillness in Aaron’s eyes still frightened him.

“This again! This again! Why is it that everytime I am about to succeed, there will always be more obstructions sprouting up?” On the other side, Longbottom observed this scene with a grim complexion.

“So what? Having one more rank 2 Magus does not change anything! You will all die here today!” Longbottom roared. The phantom spider on his back suddenly did something unpredictable. It ruthlessly widened its mouth and plunged its sharp incisors into Longbottom’s shoulders.
Strings of red which were visible to the naked eye was extracted from Longbottom’s body. And the spider image on his back grew redder and started to expand. Although Longbottom’s body continued to become thin and weak, leaving only skin and bones, which looked terrifying, the energy in his body was increasing exponentially, as though there was no limit.

“Dark Elven Ritual of Life! We cannot let him complete it or he will advance into the peak of rank 2, even though he will have to pay for it with his life…”

Aaron’s voice grew hoarse, but he immediately transformed into a silvery arc as he rushed at him.

“Old friend Aru! This time I will not hesitate and be benevolent. Just you wait, I will save you!”

Baelin gripped the Meteor Sword tightly. This melee weapon, when in the hands of a powerful warrior, also let out a deafening screech.

“Kill!” Baelin had a face of determination. The eye on his armor opened once again, and a huge restrictive aura suddenly arrived at the site, aimed at Longbottom who was in the center.

“Haha… Come! Come!”

Longbottom who had a stick-thin figure laughed wildly, and engaged Aaron and Baelin.

*Bang!* After the ritual of life, not only did his aura increase, it seemed to have experienced a transformation, allowing him to gain a huge boost.

He raised his bony right arm against the Meteor Sword in Baelin’s hands.

*Bang bang!* The two came into contact, letting out a horrifying sound of metal brushing against metal. The Meteor Sword in Baelin’s hand could only cut the skin on Longbottom’s hand, following which it was blocked by Longbottom’s arm which was stronger than steel.
“Huh!” Baelin face was full of shock, he chopped another time, but the long sword that pierced Longbottom’s face was stopped by his teeth clenching hard.

“Sacred Flame!”

Aaron pointed at Longbottom, a wave of pure white blaze laced with threads of silver fell, causing the area around Longbottom’s body to burn.

Longbottom’s Magus robe, rings and accessories were all melted in the blazing fire but his body remained intact, just like sturdy metal.

“What is happening?” Jumping on this chance, Baelin finally drew out the long sword, standing up with Aaron who had retreated to a corner.

“The Ritual of Life has begun, and at this point his life does not belong to him, it belongs to the noble Mother of the Abyss. Simply put, the source of his life has been transferred and his body is only a puppet now. Whatever harm we inflict upon his body won’t have any effect.”

Aaron’s face turned serious, with a hint of frantic “But his ritual of life has not been completed, so the core should still be in the process of transferring, later I will control and mark him, take care of the rest!”

“Got it!” Baelin nodded “How are you going to…” he could not finish talking before Aaron madly dashed in.

“Die!” Longbottom watched Aaron charge towards him, his eyes full of vengeance and violence.

He abruptly sent out a fist. The black fist collided with Aaron’s chest, letting out a crisp sound.

Snap! Longbottom’s face suddenly changed and he retracted his fist. On his knuckles, a bone had already been pierced through and strands of black solidified blood could be seen.

“How…What’s happening? How can an ordinary Bone Piercing Spell take down my defenses!” There was a huge change in
Longbottom’s expression, and he seemed to have thoughts of retreating.
*Bang! Bang! Bang!*
But it was too late, Many silver bone piercings started to come out from Aaron’s body, and his eyes turned white. Surprisingly, he was able to predict Longbottom’s retreat route. After dodging his long range attack, he clung onto Longbottom.
“Ah! Ah! Ah!”
Several bone piercings acted like a trap and pierced Longbottom all over, but Aaron grew even worse, blood spurting out of his body.
“Heh heh… This is my upgraded version of the Bone Piercing Spell, enjoy!”
Aaron’s face was a mixture of madness and relief as he yelled, “Vinas, I am coming!”
“You lunatic!” Longbottom roared. He pounded on Aaron’s back with his fists, and the great tremors even caused the ground to vibrate.
“Quick! Over there!” Aaron was bleeding from his nose and mouth, he used a sliver of spiritual force to mark out a position. That was on the flowery pattern on the abdomen area of the spider tattoo on Longbottom’s back. It was now shining with a silver light.
“Kill!”
Baelin’s expression was calm as a great silver aura was released, forming silver white flames.
Large amounts of flame gathered on the Meteor Sword, a terrifying energy wave spreading throughout the entire competition venue, causing the surrounding Magi to involuntarily stop what they were doing.
The huge wings behind Baelin rose, carrying him into the skies, causing him to look like a red meteor streaking through the skies.
“Die!” At this moment, Baelin no longer showed signs of hesitation and unwillingness. The long sword ruthlessly pierced through the
defense of the spider image, the blade directly cutting through the marked position.
The illusory spider screeched, and its eight legs started to tremble irregularly. Suddenly, it was sent tumbling down. It then turned into black smog and dispersed.
“Ugh …glug…..” Longbottom’s expression was very weird; he looked as though he wanted to say something but could not, all that could be heard was a constant gurgling noise made within his throat.
The light in his eyes dimmed until they were a dead black.
*Bang!* Longbottom’s corpse fell to the ground and sent a huge patch of dust flying.
“We… succeeded!”
Baelin mumbled to himself, feeling as though he lost a part of himself. He felt empty, as though he had lost something very important to him.
“Be careful, the darkness has not ended!” Both of Aaron’s eyes turned white and he fell to the ground, a pool of blood forming beneath his body.
“Darkness? What darkness? Hasn’t Longbottom’s scheme been thwarted?” Baelin was doubtful, but he no longer had the time to think. He scooped Aaron up in a hurry, preparing to treat him. Strands of green rays emerged from Baelin’s fingers, and merged with the horrifying wound on Aaron’s body, helping him stop the bleeding and mending his tissues. “Aaron, Aaron! Are you alright? Hang in there!” Baelin constantly cried out, large amounts of tears spilling from his eyes. “Longbottom! Lord Longbottom is dead!” At this time, in the middle of the competition venue, the revolutionary army and dark elves who had just lost their leader all fell into a state of chaos. *Cough Cough!* Aaron coughed violently and opened his eyes. “I… I’m still alive?” “Of course, you’re my prophet. How can you die without my permission?” Baelin covertly brushed away his tears and laughed. “Oh no!” Aaron suddenly started to struggle. “What’s happening?” Baelin hurriedly helped him stand up. “Danger is still near! In fact, it’s in our immediate vicinity!” Aaron’s face showed increasing terror, “He… He is…” *Bang! Bang! Bang!* A person wearing an exquisite black robe emerged amidst sudden applause. Every move of his held an inexplicable aura of authority and grace, and he slowly entered their field of vision.
“As expected of a Magus practicing Sacred Flame. Once you reach rank 2, even I cannot escape your prophecies!”

“Master Leylin! Weren’t you…” Baelin looked at Leylin. At first, he felt joy, but then he noticed the nine statues erected in the center. “A mere Ice Seal of Eternity, what can it do to me?” Leylin laughed casually, not revealing that he had known about Longbottom’s plan from Ernis. Even if he hadn’t known, though, his frightening power and affinity with frost would have let him escape quite easily.

*Bang!* As though to verify Leylin’s words, one of the nine ice sculptures suddenly exploded, revealing the silhouette of a puppet which quickly dissipated.

“What… What’s happening? Ah! Haha… Haha… I get it! Master Leylin, this is just a prank, isn’t it?” Baelin laughed forcefully, but the unease in his heart had reached its peak.

“Prank? Oh! Yes, I love cracking jokes with you, just not today. I was just excited by your performance and wanted to excuse myself!” Leylin snapped his finger.

*Swish! Swish! Swish! Swish!* Light flashed everywhere, and a large number of Nature’s Alliance Magi appeared. Some came out from beneath the stages, some from behind the seats, and some just materialised from the shadows.

These Magi all had their concentration and powers intact, and embarked on a ruthless massacre the moment they entered. The dark elves and Twilight Zone Magi all fell at their hands, and were swept in a matter of seconds.

“Second level seal enhancement begin!” The leader, Iren, immediately tossed out a scroll.

*Bzzzt Bzzzt!* A frightful wave of energy dispersed, and an even larger fleet of Magi appeared at the center of the competition venue, reinforcing the gigantic spider cocoon.

“Lord Leylin? Why?” Baelin kept retreating, looking as though he
was on the verge of breaking down.
“You are one of the higher-ups in Twilight Zone, and also someone I look up to. Why…”
“No particular reason, after directing a play for so long, it’s time I came to wrap things up!” The corners of Leylin’s mouth turned into a sinister smirk.
“Play? What kind of play?” Baelin did not dare to think further.
“A comedy about a silly hero, and a group of foolish Magi!” Leylin smiled subtly, and pointed at Baelin’s neck.
Boiling hot! Scalding hot! Baelin felt an unnerving heat exuding from his neck, penetrating through his armor, roasting his skin and muscles.
*Boom!* A streak of gold light emitted from his neck and returned to Leylin’s palms.
It was a peculiar gold coin, one face of which had a lucky bird and the other a skull. The sides of the coin also had elaborate patterns and prints on them.
“This was the gold coin you gave me, was it all planned from the very beginning?” Baelin laughed pathetically.
“No! I did not have such plans back in Potter Town, but on the way to the Eastern Capital, I found out that you were the Child of Destiny, so I decided to do this!” Leylin looked at the gold coin in his hand, excitement written on his face.
“Hehe….. You are all liars! Liars!” Baelin laughed hysterically. Rays of silver light burst forth from his body, and he charged forth, Meteor Sword in hand.
*Pow!* A fist of immense strength landed firmly on his cheek, causing the Meteor Sword to be swung out of his grasp even as he was sent flying.
Alas, the Bio Boosting armour on his body failed to hold any longer and disintegrated midair.
“Your destiny was to become the victor of this revolution in your
battle with Longbottom! And after Longbottom was taken care of, how do I put it... You are no longer of use to destiny. And without destiny on your side, you are but a dead dog to me...” Leylin ruthlessly attacked Baelin.

It was the truth. Before Baelin completed his mission, were Leylin to have made a move, he had a premonition that something would inexplicably block his path. But now? There was nothing that could stop him.

This was the very reason why many accomplished heroes never got another chance to take risks and could only choose to live in seclusion among the commoners..

“Coin of Destiny, step one accomplished!” Leylin turned around and looked over at where Aaron was.

*Pew!* At this moment, a stream of light also emitted from Aaron’s ring, and in front of him appeared the Great Magus Merlin.

“Little Aaron, what did you promise me then?”

“I promised that other than collecting your shards, I’ll have to help you complete another task!” Aaron’s expression was a mix of terror, alarm, and agony.

“Now, I request of you, to return to me the Sacred Flame!” Merlin’s voice was extremely calm, but Aaron couldn’t help but turn pale at his voice. “Grandpa Merlin, I’ve always been respectful to you as though you were my own grandfather...”

“But, the moment you advanced to the second rank, you realised it, no?” Merlin’s illusion transformed continuously before settling on the image of Leylin.

“So all of this; me gaining the inheritance, practicing Sacred Flame, meeting with Vinas; it was all your doing?”

Aaron turned around and looked at Leylin, his pupils pitch black.

“At first it was, but the melodrama at the end was something I couldn’t predict either. It looks like the stability issues with Sacred Flame still have to be solved!” Leylin’s voice was extremely cold,
“Now, hand it over!”

“AH!” As soon as Leylin voice sounded, Aaron felt as though his consciousness was split open by someone who wanted to extract something.
The extreme horrifying pain caused him to roll around, and his face contorted into demon-like expressions.
Shortly after, Aaron felt the spiritual force he had so painstakingly cultivated with the Sacred Flame was drawn out from him entirely.
Strands of silver spiritual force formed a vortex in midair, and Aaron who lost his meditation technique had his powers depleted progressively, from rank 2 to rank 1 before hitting rock bottom, an acolyte.
“The spiritual force of Sacred Flame!” Leylin’s smile broadened. He sang with excitement, “Along with the sacrifice of a Child of Destiny!”
With his deep voice sounding, the surface of the Coin of Destiny shone with a thin layer of light and was lifted into the air.
“With the magnanimous power of destiny, along with the foundation and spiritual force of the Sacred Flame that split apart and then merged together!”
Leylin pulled out a crystal already full of golden liquid, and threw it into the spiritual force vortex.
All of a sudden, a surge of silver white flames emerged from within.
“There are still three broken and unwilling souls!” Leylin’s smile became even wider, and two items flew out from Aaron’s body.
They were a worn-out notebook and a five-colored necklace. At this moment, an illusion flickered on each of the two items.
“Vinas! Vinas!” Aaron struggled as he saw the face of his lover on the five-colored necklace, however, Vinas’ expression was ever-changing, from tenderness, to detachment, to distraught…
“You can join too!” Leylin pointed at Aaron’s forehead and it
exploded like a watermelon. The black ring in his hand also flew into the air, joining into a triangular formation with the other two items.

“With great power from the fragmented souls as the main body, the Sacred Flame meditation technique as the core, and finally injecting a large amount of the power of destiny…”

Leylin’s voice grew in fervency.

Following the chanting, the triangular formation and meditative vortex grew closer, giving off small explosions.

“AHHHHHHH…” Baelin hissed violently and charged forth once again, but before he got close, he was already thrown out by the airwaves.

“Seal!” A complex and awkward-sounding ancient incantation finally fused into two short seals.

*Boom Boom!* A gigantic vortex formed, compressing the vortex and triangular formation into the Coin of Destiny like a funnel.

When everything ended, flashes of light appeared on the Coin of Destiny, yet it seemed as though nothing had changed.

“Beautiful, isn’t it?”

Leylin let the gold coin float in midair and with a wave of his arm, the Meteor Sword voluntarily flew into his hands.

“You did all this, just for those two items?”

Baelin was beyond miserable, his eyes with a tint alike to flames.
It was mainly to attain the power of destiny. The Meteor Sword was just something that came along with it. Besides, it’s not even complete!” Leylin was in a good mood as he explained the details to Baelin. Soon after, a great number of alchemy ingredients appeared before him. Brilliant rays of light started seeping into the sword and making it shine brighter.

“The truth is, the Meteor Sword was designed by and customised for me, and it is missing the most important step!” Leylin drew the sword and held it up, his eyes glistening with excitement.

“Toxic Bile!” The terrifying image of a devil king started to manifest behind him. But this time round, the Toxic Bile was concentrated on the Meteor Sword instead of a large-scale attack. Menacing, deathly strands of black crawled onto the sword and the once-bright silver glow started to dim before turning a glistening coal-black.

This was the original intention of Leylin to forge the weapon. The scope of the attack by the Toxic Bile was too large. Leylin thus confined its poison within the sword, preventing it from diffusing freely.

Henceforth, anyone who was injured by the sword would immediately be poisoned. In addition, Leylin could use his own innate spells to supplement its already-great power.
Leylin looked at the dark sword shining in his hands, unable to mask his happiness. From here on, the power of Toxic Bile would not be used recklessly. Rather, it would be his common means of attack, greatly increasing his strength and power.

“There is one last procedure!” Leylin glanced over at Baelin, with a sharp look in his eyes.

Baelin had understood how this was going to turn out. He looked at Leylin and told him fearlessly, “I believe in the fairness and righteousness of Twilight Zone. You’ll be punished for everything you’ve done!”

“Haha… Fairness and righteousness?”

Leylin shook his head and laughed, “The glory of my achievements will be recorded and sung by the people. As for the unglamorous stories behind the glory, who would pay any attention to them?”

A ray of black swooshed across. Baelin’s head was decapitated, and before it could land on the ground, both his head and body had started to decompose.

Blood splashed on the surface of the gold coin and the once brilliant shiny surface became dull. It seemed to faintly be emitting a hint of history.

“Lastly, with the sacrifice of the child of destiny! Unique magic item Coin of Destiny, complete!” Leylin finished his last incantation.

The gloomy yet glowing item lay ominously in his hand.

“Unique magic item Coin of Destiny! With the Sacred Flame at its core, and the blood sacrifice of the child of destiny, will bring forth a magic item that has an astonishing amount of power. The coin can guide us through the path of the future to a certain extent, and may produce uncertain results!”

The A.I. Chip tried to generate a description for the coin. However, it was very clear that even the A.I. Chip could not make an accurate judgement of its powers; after all, things such as fate and the power
of destiny could not be assessed by the current A.I. Chip or expressed by data.
The supposed unique magic item was hard to be categorised.
In the Magus world, there were always magical items that possessed a power which surpassed magic equipment. However, the physical quality itself might be weak, while some others contain bizarre capabilities. Hence, they were not categorised the same as magic artifacts and magic equipment but had a classification of their own.
Amongst the unique magic items, some possessed limited capabilities, while there were others that display a horrifying amount of power!
A ray of silver lit up and, in a flash, Coin of Destiny had vanished into the bag Leylin was carrying.
“Kill the dark elves and the revolutionary army! As for the Magi of Twilight Zone, kill them too if they don’t pledge allegiance to me!” Leylin looked around and inspected his surroundings.
The Magi of Twilight Zone may have had an advantage in numbers, but the lengthy battle had exhausted them of their stamina and magic power. They were no match for the fresh Magi of Nature’s Alliance.
Furthermore, the Alliance had the support of Leylin, a rank 2 Magus.
As time passed, the field got progressively quieter before settling for silence.
“Sire! What do I do with these captives?” Iren asked with a bow.
There were weak and dispirited Magi all around, many of them covered with wounds and blood from multiple injuries.
“They are to hand over their spirit sources to me, kill them if they refuse!” Leylin gave the order indifferently.
Soon after, Leylin moved towards the remaining eight Magi encased in the ice sculptures and pointed at them.
“I shall add another layer of seals on these eight Magi. They will be transported back to headquarters to be interrogated by me!”
The Magi from Nature’s Alliance were lying in ambush and the plan was carried out according to what he had planned. And sure enough, the results at the end were very favourable. The exhausted and injured Magi from both sides were eliminated at one stroke. In fact, Leylin was the one who notified the Guardian on the outside and asked for his assistance.
“The war outside should be ending about now?” Leylin smiled. He held up a special artifact and sent a communication signal through it.
“My Lord! Reporting on our status. The Magi on our side as well as the dark elves are severely injured. The dark elves have withdrawn their troops, but we cannot pursue due to similar losses on our end!” one of the Magi on the battlefield reported.
Any attempts at communication had been blocked long ago by Longbottom. With Leylin’s enhancement to the cocoon, only his own artifact could communicate with the outside.
“Very good! The current situation is the best of the three scenarios that I had anticipated!”
Leylin swept his eyes over the Magi from Nature’s Alliance and smiled, “As long as we follow and advance according to the plan, soon the entirety of Twilight Zone will be ours!”
Leylin had never led before, but he had experienced much in the Magus world. With his ability to influence their minds, Leylin’s words were bewitching and convincing.
Although there were some Magi among the crowd below that seemed to be somewhat hesitant, Leylin was pleased to see the obvious fiery ambition sparkling in their eyes, dispersing any sign of restlessness and confusion.
“As long as you are a living being with wisdom, it is difficult to remain unwavering in the face of temptation!“ Leylin rejoiced
covertly in his heart but also let out a sigh…
The news about the incident at the young genius competition spread like wildfire through the Twilight Zone.
The leader of the revolutionary army, Longbottom, had disguised himself and snuck into the competition as a contestant. Once he was crowned champion, he plotted against the judges. Thereafter, the dark elven forces, under the conceal of their crown, joined to complete the ambush. Even though their troops retreated in the end, a huge amount of damage was inflicted on the central region, causing numerous casualties.
The situation of the arena was worse. The losses there were tremendous, and only a few Magi had survived.
Leylin, most powerful of the survivors as a rank 2, issued complaints about the dark elves’ conduct, calling for action from the central region.
After his return to the base, Leylin immediately gathered all of his Magi. Seeking the assistance of the other Magi who favoured his cause and started organising an army.
The central region was currently in a state of tremendous chaos. A large number of high-level Magi had perished. The Guardian of the Realm, as well as the other Protectors, had all vanished without a trace as well. In the name of righteousness and for other reasons, the remaining Magi all united under Leylin’s banner.
Leylin, who was at the centre of attention, headed towards a different place on his own. This single empty space seemed to have emerged from the Earth’s crust, it was narrow and cramp, the continuously faint but hurried breathing could still be heard.
*Bang!* A massive explosion sounded and crushed rocks flew everywhere.
In the midst of the mayhem, Leylin smiled as he walked forward
with the Coin of Destiny in his hand, “Lord Guardian of the Realm, and Protector Logan, you both are truly very good at hiding. It took me awhile to find this place!”

Leylin took a quick glance around and realised that there were 2 dead bodies lying in this cave and on their corpses, some rank 2 energy was still present.

A half-naked old man, whose body was covered with incantations and coloured spots, leant against a rock trying to catch a breath. On the other side was a familiar face, Logan from the east. When he saw Leylin, he couldn’t believe his eyes.

It seemed as if after the battle with the dark elves and Anya, two of the Protectors had died. Logan and the Guardian of the Realm were still struggling with their breaths.

“Why…. Why is it you?” Logan asked with a pale face.

“Oh?” Leylin raised his eyebrow, ”Looks like there are many Magi out there who miss you! So much so that you do not even dare to go back to your old nest, preferring to hide outside…”

But he didn’t mind because, in the face of true power and capability, any crafty conspiracy would seem like a joke.

“How did you find us? Forget it, that is not important right now. I just want to know, young Magus, do you belong to us or the dark elves?” the Guardian by the wall struggled to ask.

“There’s no need to worry. The dark elves are not rich enough to bribe me! As for Twilight Zone’s Magi, they shall step on the path to glory under my leadership!”

“Well then! Go ahead!” the Guardian smiled, his eyes gleaming with wisdom.

“….” Leylin bowed slightly in respect to the Guardian who dedicated his whole life to serve the Twilight Zone. Soon after, a thick black darkness shrouded the entire area.

The border between the northern and central region of the Twilight Zone.
At this moment, in an open plain, two enormous armies were about to confront each other. On the north was the dark elven army, their skilled knights riding Underground Winter Spiders and emitting continuous energy waves from their bodies.
The human camp was more complicated. Many Magi, acolytes and even common soldiers had been gathered together like a mixed flock of birds. It had turned out this way due to the lack of core leadership. The deaths of the Guardian of the Realm and the Protectors had left them without a stable chain of command. Hence, many problems arose, not the least of which was disputes in command. Many ambitious parties were working from the shadows, plotting their own schemes.

“Oh? People are gossiping about me?” Back at his own camp, Leylin was updated with the latest report, and his face revealed a mysterious sinister smile.

“Don’t bother with them. These rumours will be deemed baseless soon enough!” Leylin waved his hand and flashed a faint smile. Suddenly his face changed as he looked towards the northern skies, “She’s here!”

A tiny black speck suddenly rose from the northern skies, bringing a huge and irresistible power to bear upon the two armies.

“Your Majesty.” Numerous elite Underground Winter Spider knights knelt down to salute with zeal in their eyes. Anya looked up to face the human army, her beautiful face and body exuding a mysterious charm.

“Where is your commander? I want to see him!” she spoke with a sweet yet icy tone to her voice, as alluring as a rose in a bloody
scene. It was tender and beautiful, yet dangerous and deadly. And so that voice with the strength of a Magus was heard even on the side of the humans.
Numerous ordinary troops started fainting and dying, many of them shedding patches of hair and bleeding furiously. This was the result of radiations emitted recklessly from a high ranking Magus’s spell, causing the destruction of the normal human’s body.
The acolytes too started to faint one after the other, until only official Magi could remain clear-headed, although even their fighting strength was heavily reduced.
Streams of green air could be seen, being drawn out from the human camp and transferred to Anya who was hovering in mid-air.
“A false domain! There were rumours that the dark elven empress had attained such a high level, the ability to suck life and power out of them is a formidable gift!”
Leylin’s expression showed signs of interest and he turned to look at the other high ranking Magi.
In the human camp, the rest of the high-ranking Magi were waiting in their tents in silence. Waves of spatial magic power permeated the air.
“The battle has yet to begun, and you’re already about to run away?” Leylin laughed uncontrollably, but then felt that it was only right. After all, these Magi had thought that the empress of the dark elves had been severely injured. If not, the Guardian of the Realm would have survived as well.
What now?
“At this moment, the Magi outside would mostly likely be vehemently cursing me, huh?” Leylin shook his head, as his body floated to mid-air.
*Roar!* A massive, ferocious aura that seemed to emanate from a predator of ancient times burst forth.
A wave of violent air rolled and surged through, causing huge chaos to the opposite camp. The other Magi noticed that this wave of energy was not inferior to that of the dark elven empress!

“Bloodline Skill Intimidating Gaze!”

*Snap!* Leylin’s life force rose ferociously, as if a chain or seal had been broken, and at that moment, he had crossed the category of a rank 2 Magus and entered a deep and unmeasurable realm. This kind of change upset Anya, “Rank 3! You have already advanced to rank 3!”

Yes! Before the murder of the Guardian of the Realm, Leylin had secretly arranged for his advancement to a rank 3 Magus. With the Giant Serpent’s Breath potion and the usage of a large amount of top-notch resources, Leylin’s spiritual force had turned bright silver long ago, and his power had been enhanced greatly. As for the next level in Kemoyin’s Pupil, Leylin already had it! In fact, with the A.I. chip’s enhancement, it had become even more all-encompassing. That in addition to the enlightenment from the Tree of Wisdom formed the perfect conditions to ensure success.

Leylin’s intention was to elevate his power to be on the same level as the best of Twilight Zone, so that he would have the confidence to carry out his plans.

The breakthrough had surprised Leylin. His materialised spiritual force had been refined continuously and, at the same time, the foundations of the spiritual force crystal had been constructed. The swiftness and ease of it had left Leylin with an unfathomable feeling.

It could be the result from the use of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s blood or from the accumulated knowledge from the A.I. Chip. It might be the great essence of wisdom found in the ancient tree that no one knew about. Or it could be the different factors all coming together that assisted Leylin in acquiring his current position. It had
surely surpassed his own expectations.
The enhanced A.I. Chip thus refreshed Leylin’s status.
[Leylin Farlier, Rank 3 Warlock. Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent, Power: 23.6, Agility: 20.1, Physique: 35.7, Vitality: 203.4, Magic Power: 203 (Magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force)] [Host has obtained an innate spell upon advancement, Intimidating Gaze!] [Intimidating Gaze: After numerous blood purification, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, as an elite ancient predator, has its might absorbed and assimilated into the bloodline Warlock. They who held the dignity of creatures from ancient times has a force field with an intimidating effect! Effect: any living being that is within the perimeter will have their powers suppressed. Those with weak willpower will enter a state of confusion. Rank 1 Magus will have their abilities weakened by 50%, rank 2 Magus weakened by 30% and Magi of the same rank will have their stats reduced by 10%!]
With such an ability to suppress the power of his enemies, Leylin seemed genuinely ready to dominate the field. In fact, he could be considered an ideal Magus to dominate everything!
Unlike the domain of a Morning Star Magus, which gave them complete control, Intimidating Gaze only applied certain effects to those caught within its area of effect.
With Leylin now using Intimidating Gaze, the Underground Winter Spider knights felt as if an eye from the depths of hell was gazing upon them, which caused them to collapse to the ground. As for the matriarchs, their faces turned ashen, warping with terror.
Leylin took a calculative look at the empress in front of him. Strictly speaking, this could be considered their first meeting.
His relentless gaze transcended the opposing party’s demonic charm, instead, he paid more attention to the decorative design on her body.
A moment late, Leylin sighed and responded faintly: “So… You
were already seriously injured!”
The suppression of injuries by the branding of runes on the body, as well as the familiar scent, reminded Leylin of the Guardian of the Realm who had perished. The vicious fight with him and the Protectors had obviously caused Anya to suffer serious injuries, leaving her with no choice but to retreat.
Anya looked at the youthful Leylin, showing a bitter smile.
“Do you know? Dark elves’ lives are filled with hardships. When I was young, every winter I would witness many dark elves firmly geared up with weaponry. My mother told me they were gearing up for war, and after the war, we would have enough food and provisions to survive…” Anya’s face was filled with loss, her voice angelic. The corners of her eyes sparkled.
“My mother told me that, far away on the southern side, there was a huge empire of the human race. It was continuously fighting with us for survival. Hence, every year we suffer huge losses and death. I’d decided then that I would lead an army of dark elves and break this cruel cycle…
“But now, unfortunately, I am unable to do so…”
Anya turned to look at the dark elven camp one more time, and at this moment, an enormous uproar occurred. Several rank 2 matriarchs disregarded the frightening energy wave and stormed straight forward.
“Can you promise me, that you will preserve the dark elven race?” Anya lowered her once arrogant head, pleading.
Looking at the intelligent and well-respected empress of the dark elves in front of him, Leylin nodded his head lightly, “I promise you that I will preserve the dark elves and see that they remain in Twilight Zone….”
“However, what the other Magi do afterwards will be out of my hands. Moreover, whether the dark elves are able to survive within the ecology laboratory is also another unpredictable matter…”
These words were left unsaid.
“Thank you so much!” Anya smiled, the crown on her head giving off a glaring ray of light.
The moment Leylin swung his hand, a huge golden Spider appeared and landed in the center of the field. It sat facing the Underground Winter Spiders across it and started hissing loudly.
The Underground Winter Spiders then became increasingly restless, and many of them started to show signs of instability. Some even turned against the dark elven knights riding them and started biting at them.
Aru, the Underground Winter Spider Emperor, had originally been sealed by Longbottom. Leylin had unsealed it after the events at the arena and subdued it for his own use.
To a certain extent, Aru might be the common ancestor of all Underground Winter Spiders, hence to have such unbelievable power for use by him, he was thrilled to possess this killer weapon.
“Here we go!”
Leylin exclaimed lightly, fine black scales appearing on his body and striking Anya’s at the same time…
Along with the loud hissing of both opposing spiders and the clash of the two Magi, the two opposing troops on the ground also started to assemble and started the attack in full force, the roar of their voices shaking the earth…
Twilight Zone, year 5782. Magus Leylin Farlier led the human army to crush the army of the dark elves along with their empress. Magus Anya, along with rank 1 and rank 2 matriarchs, were not spared. Together with the rest of the army, they collapsed at the scene and countless lives were lost.
After Leylin’s progression to rank 3 and the defeat of the dark elves, all the dissent and secret plots in the central region quieted down as if they had never existed. As a newly promoted rank 3 Magus full of vitality, one who wasn’t struggling to even protect the realm, Leylin could easily find the time to destroy those guilds that did not subject themselves to his rule. He was poised to control Twilight Zone for centuries to come. Faced with the pressure from such great power, no matter how unwilling the Magi in the central region were, they dared not offend him.

At this moment, the few survivors from other guilds appeared, diminishing all talk against Leylin. They were all elite Magi from different guilds, and a few rank 2 judges were also among them. They joined together to testify that what Leylin had said before was the truth, which waived all doubts immediately.

They were all Leylin’s captives at that time. Those rank 2 Magi had long since submitted to Leylin. They were not fools. Knowing Leylin’s power and their own waning influence, most of them recognised the truth.

Of course, there were some stubborn ones that all perished gloriously in the “war.”

Twilight Zone year 5783. Aided by his rank 3 power and the glory of defeating the dark elves, Leylin was pronounced the Guardian of the Realm.
the Realm under the witness of many Magi in the central region. From then, Leylin became the sole power controlling Twilight Zone’s Magi, and the sacrifices and darkness behind his radiant glory were often ignored by the masses. People would only end up remembering Leylin’s glorious achievement of defeating the dark elves. They composed folk songs and legends in his praise, leaving out the hard work of Baelin, Aaron, Vinas, and even the previous Guardian. Those names were buried beneath the documents and historical records concerning Leylin’s eternal brilliance, and his legend continued.

After succeeding the title of the Guardian of the Realm, the first order Leylin passed was aimed at making Nature’s Alliance the core strength of Twilight Zone. He gathered large masses of Magi to construct the Nature’s Alliance Academy at the heart of the central region.

Although Leylin had not planned to do so originally, the present him did have the strength to implement the academy system, reaping great rewards in the process.

After establishing the Nature’s Alliance Academy, a few large-scale guilds who had good relationships with the Alliance made a high-profile announcement. They would merge with Nature’s Alliance Academy to form a formidable guild. Of course, this was all due to Leylin’s control in the background.

Following that, Leylin no longer had to worry. The rapidly rising academy naturally edged out other nearby guilds, continually expanding its capability and area of influence.

It was clear to Leylin that the south coast’s model was more just and fair than the guild system followed by Twilight Zone. They had also relinquished the tradition of inheritance from master to disciple. Although there were still many mentors, very few of them continued treating their acolytes like slaves.

Furthermore, how many acolytes could a mentor take on? How
could they compare to the large-scale classrooms of an academy? Many large guilds started to relinquish their narrow-minded restriction of meditation techniques to combine forces, as it would definitely be much stronger than the strength of individual guilds. This was the success of the system! It was also the improvement of an era, once it became a trend, it could not be stopped!
The guilds that were left behind, in order to not be overshadowed by the academies, also had to establish institutes and enroll many acolytes to survive.
This allowed talented commoners to have a very good chance. Academies that were more free and open could also accept roaming Magi. Without the meditation technique restriction, it became much simpler for roaming Magi who wanted to join academies.
Leylin had noticed this long ago. Although guilds that practised the same kind of meditation technique were very united, they also became highly xenophobic. After joining a guild, if a Magi did not practice that guild’s meditation technique, they became targets for ostracization.
But academies did not face this problem. The flames of the revolution started by Longbottom were also snuffed out gradually by the institution of academies.
Leylin did not actually mind this. What he prioritised was still the meditation techniques of the guilds and their valued research.
Indeed! Under the advocation of fair, just, transparent and free communication by the academy’s rules, guilds that joined the academy had to contribute their unique meditation techniques and some precious research.
Under Leylin’s leadership, this large amount of precious information was stored in the academy’s library for all Magi to peruse, and this trend developed ardently.
It must be said that after relinquishing the narrow-minded notion of a guild, such open communication and probing indeed benefitted
the Magi a lot, causing the Magi of Twilight Zone to improve their abilities.
As for these meditation techniques and research, all of it was naturally kindly accepted by Leylin, greatly increasing the A.I chip’s database.
It can be said that at this point in time, a large portion of Twilight Zone’s meditation techniques and high-level research was pocketed by Leylin, including all precious resources.
Nature’s Alliance was now the most influential in the central region. No matter what Leylin desired, as long as it was within Twilight Zone, he needed but to ask. A large number of commoners, acolytes, rank 1 and even rank 2 Magi would unhesitatingly go get it for him no matter the cost.
This was the benefit of authority.
Time passed.
Twilight Zone, year 5785.
Sensing that every party had completed their preparations, Leylin, with his title of Guardian of the Realm, sent out an appeal ordering alliance forces from all regions to recapture the north!
Indeed! After murdering Anya, Leylin chose to retreat and did not directly attack the North region, but that place was now easily obtainable.
It was very clear to him that though he had exceptional abilities, he first had to sort out his own skills. Although impulsively sending troops to defeat the dark elves, recover their lost lands and gain reputation could work out, the real gains would definitely be reaped by others harbouring ambitious schemes.
In addition, at that point in time, he did not have the title of Guardian of the Realm! Leylin was not foolish enough to fight on the front lines and let the Magi at the back reap the fruit of his efforts.
Hence, he would rather watch on as the north’s remaining dark
elves waged war against the dwarves, gnomes, and even themselves, letting them wear themselves out before he would act. But now, the time was ripe.

Compared to the previous appeal, Leylin was now the Guardian of the Realm, the ruler of Twilight Zone. The orders of the greatest leader of the Magus world naturally carried more weight. Once the order was passed down, not only did all the guilds in the central region send out Magi and soldiers to form an alliance, even the east, south and west regions sent out large masses to help. Something worth mentioning was that Leylin only had true control over two regions, the center and the east. As for the west and south, their attitudes toward Leylin as the Guardian of the Realm were rather ambiguous. But Leylin did not care, after organising the center and east, relying on the strength of the academies in these two regions was enough to crush the other party.

He had abstained from doing so earlier because his time was occupied by internal restructuring. But now? The other regions had also sensed that conditions were not favourable for them, and they started to yield. After all, sending out armies in accordance to the appeal was an act of allegiance.

Leylin stroked his chin, the corners of his mouth curled up in amusement.

North Twilight Zone.

Throngs of troops lined up neatly and advanced forward constantly. Meanwhile at the back were large numbers of Magi riding peculiar transports. The troops were neat and orderly, and unified by the same order, compared to the previous army organised by Leylin, this one seemed much more powerful.
Due to the passing of the dark elven empress three years ago, most of the dark elves had already withdrawn from north Twilight Zone. Only some of the more stubborn members of their race were left struggling along with the dwarves and gnomes. And such strength, to a congregation of many Magi, especially the human troops led by Leylin, was as insignificant as dust. The troops had an irresistible force. They conquered expansive plots of land by barely expending any energy and even pushed through to Potti city.

At the entrance of the city, the flag of the dark elves could be seen flying high, amidst thick smog, giving off an ominous feel. “Potti City! The original line of defence of the north, and also the place where Protector Yade died!” Leylin looked at the few dark elves and sneered, “This is a strategic border town, could it be the dark elves are still dreaming of dividing the land with us?”

“Pass down the order, all troops are to pitch camp here, we will attack tomorrow!” Leylin casually passed the order to his left and right-hand men, and they passed down the message layer by layer. The entire troop stopped and found themselves suitable spaces to pitch camps. At the moment, the Magi and normal soldiers were busy, but they were not in disorder, displaying the good control Leylin had over his army.

In the center of the closely packed camps was a big gold tent, decorated with exquisite gemstones and incense. There were even teams of Magi patrolling outside of it. Although the Guardian of the Realm did not fancy all this, it was necessary etiquette.

“Hm?” Leylin who was meditating in the middle of the gold tent suddenly opened his eyes and his mouth turned into a smile. After a few minutes, a congratulatory voice could be heard “Master!”
“Enter!”
The front curtain was unveiled and a middle-aged man with white hair entered, his being radiated with the scary energy of a rank 2 Magi, but at this moment, he kneeled down on one knee as a form of respect to Leylin.
“Reporting to master! There is a rank 2 matriarch of the dark elves who claims to be an old friend and wants to see you!”
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The rank 2 Magus deferentially accepted the order and left, and minutes later, a rank 2 dark elven matriarch in skintight clothing walked in. Her face was extremely delicate, her skin pale and exquisite. She was evidently a beauty that was hard to come by, though her expression now held apprehension.

“Alicia! As expected, it’s you!” Leylin laughed. Out of all the dark elves, it was just this one matriarch that he had been standing against for ten or so years in Dolon City, and they could somewhat be considered acquaintances.

“Alicia greets the lord Guardian of the Realm!” The dark elven matriarch Alicia bit her lips, and then knelt and leaned down, respectfully touching her head to the cold ground. She was still slightly dazed. This young Magus that had contested with her for over ten years had long since reached the apex of the Magus World and had left her far behind. When she saw him, she even needed to kneel. She did not want to do this, yet could not express it on the outside.

From Leylin’s point of view, he took in everything, from the pretty and flirtatious matriarch’s exquisite jade-like back, rounded taut buttocks, to her slender, firm thighs. As if noticing Leylin’s gaze, a look of bashfulness appeared on Alicia’s face, but she secretly wriggled her body, revealing a silent charm.
In her heart, however, she felt an intense feeling of humiliation. Though dark elves were very open when it came to promiscuity to the point they could have boy toys of different races as well, it was always the dark elves dominating in the psychological aspect, with their mental belief in their stance as masters and owners who were untouchable.

But now? This experience of offering herself up as a gift and fearing the other party not accepting was difficult for Alicia, a matriarch of fewer than 200 years and a very mentally sensitive dark elf.

“So what is your intention in coming here?” Leylin withdrew his gaze. He had always been able to control himself when it mattered.

In addition, after advancing to be a rank 3 Warlock and taking over as the Guardian of the Realm, there were more than enough women wanting to climb into his bed. There had even been dark elves who had attempted this after the great defeat of the dark elves, there was a large dive in the prices of dark elven slaves in the slave market, and there were many dark elven nobles on sale! It had to be said that because of their great outer appearance and innate skill at magic, dark elves were truly the most suitable choice to be Magus slaves.

Even if Leylin did not express anything, there would be Magi racking their brains on how to please him and sending him captive dark elves for him to enjoy.

“I represent the dark elven race and am here to offer my allegiance to my lord! Please let my race go!” Alicia’s voice brought with it sorrow as she continued kneeling, passing over a fine crown and a black crystal.

“This is the symbol of our power, the dark elven crown, as well as the complete volume of the high-grade meditation technique, ‘Life Absorption.’ We dark elves are willing to completely withdraw from north Twilight Zone, even pulling back till the north of the
river. We will also supply top-grade exclusive slaves and many precious resources. Please let us off!” Alicia continued to beg while kowtowing.

“This…” Leylin pondered, fingers circling and rapping to create a regular rhythm.

Alicia’s breath almost stopped, awaiting the judgment of destiny in terror and anticipation.

“Fine.” Leylin nodded in agreement.

After the human race’s allied force recovered the northern region, it lacked the ability to advance and gain more.

In addition, Leylin still had other ideas.

An absolute power meant that once the human race completely extinguished the dark elves, gnomes, and dwarves with his help, they could very well decline quickly due to internal strife. This was not what Leylin wanted to see.

A constant, unyielding external pressure would evidently be able to serve the function of spurring on the humans.

“Many thanks, my lord!” Alicia was so elated she was on the verge of tears.

Though Leylin could immediately enjoy the enthusiastic desire of this matriarch to serve him, he still chased her out.

It was obvious that Alicia’s value could not compare to the dark elven crown and high-grade meditation technique.

“Magic equipment Dark Elven Crown!”

Leylin caressed the surface of this magic equipment. As it had been used recently in the war, the crown’s surface was dim, and it seemed unremarkable.

If not for knowing about it beforehand, Leylin might have been tricked by its outer appearance and missed this magic equipment.

In the world of the Magi, magic equipment ranked far above magic artifacts. They held a mysterious power within, and usually, only Magi at rank 3 and higher would have the opportunity to come into
[Discovered magic equipment, beginning scan!] [Beep! Scanning complete. 45.9% could not be analysed. Obtained high-grade concealing and icy runes, as well as traces of incomplete high-grade illusory spell formation runes…]

Many prompts from the A.I. Chip appeared.
“This is just the start. If I can completely analyse the inner workings of this magical device, I might even be able to forge my own…”

Leylin could tell that this was a great opportunity for him. He had been unable to improve his alchemy and high-grade enchantment skills in recent times.
“And this!” Leylin picked up that black crystal.
Large amounts of information streamed in front of Leylin’s eyes. They were written in the dark elven language, but this was nothing important. Earlier in the eastern region, Leylin had obtained much fundamental academic content through the library in Nature’s Alliance. Things like the dark elven language were nothing much.
“Life Absorption!” This was a high-grade meditation technique passed down by the dark elves. Only dark elves who were as powerful as matriarchs were qualified to train in it.
From this, it could be seen that Longbottom had really been doing well with the dark elves, and had gained their trust.
“This meditation technique…” Leylin touched his chin, recalling the information the A.I. Chip had just recorded.
Even though this bit of time was not enough for him to completely analyse the meditation technique, he largely knew its characteristics and uses.
Life Absorption was obviously rated as high-grade and was in the top class even in Twilight Zone. If not, dark elves themselves had many high-grade meditation techniques. Why would they make it a rule that it was a meditation technique to be passed down?
The characteristic of Life Absorption was that it could increase the spiritual force by robbing life force from other creatures, thus helping with breakthroughs. The higher the level, the easier it was to gain the life force of various creatures. At the end, it could even cause a deathly vortex that was similar to a calamity, and all creatures in range would be attacked regardless of what they were. However, this meditation technique did have its disadvantages. As it relied on robbing life force to improve, its foundations were not stable. There had not even been a single matriarch who could break through from the rank 3 level into the Morning Star realm. Besides, when one reached the more profound parts of the meditation technique, the Magus himself or herself would find their life force disappearing. This could not be compensated with any method other than the life force of other creatures. The moment the life energy gained was too immense, or if the Magus’ rank was too high, the Magi who trained in Life Absorption would lose their life force at a faster rate. This meant that every time Magi who trained in Life Absorption used it, it meant they were one step closer to the abyss of death. However, with the growth of strength and the later loss of life force, it was like a drug that influenced many Magi to use it and eventually destroy themselves. “To cultivate in this sort of meditation technique, it’s best to find an ancient creature with enough life force and drain all its life force, succeeding in training in this meditation technique all at one go.” Leylin’s plentiful experience allowed him to think of a few methods to solve this issue, but he then shook his head. “It’s not just the difficulty in advancing in meditation techniques. Ancient creatures that have great life force cannot be underestimated by even rank 3 Magi… Unless it was their remains…”
At this thought, Leylin naturally thought about the Icy Cave. If nothing unexpected happened, in the deeper parts of the Icy Cave, the Icy World held within the body of a creature with the strength of at least Morning Star strength, as well as the blood of an even more frightening existence.

“With my current strength, what will it be like if I go to the Icy World?”

Leylin was silent for a while, and a gold light suddenly flashed in his hands, a simple gold coin appeared in his palm.

*Bling!* Leylin flung the coin, and there was a sole golden arc in the air that then landed on the back of his hand.

Leylin lifted his palm and he saw the side with a skull engraved on it pointing up. Its eyes seemed to be ridiculing him with its smirk.

“It won’t end up well?” Leylin murmured, and gave up all thoughts of proceeding forth.

*Ka-cha!* Immediately after, a slight crack appeared on the surface of Coin of Destiny.

As the unique magic item, Leylin had created by exhausting his thoughts, Coin of Destiny had the terrifying ability to predict the future!

However, there was also a limit. Though Leylin had given it a sacrifice using the child of destiny, as well as added much spiritual force from Sacred Flame, he did not train in this meditation technique and thus, could not obtain images and specific information. He could only approximate the judgment through positive and negative predictions.

Besides, due to the constraints from Sacred Flame’s level and the ranking of the sacrifice, there was a limit to how many times Coin of Destiny could be used.

If he wanted predictions on rank 3 Magi and below, it could be used for a long time, but once it got up to the Morning Star realm, each usage would result in great damage to Coin of Destiny itself.
and then cause it to fall apart.
Leylin had asked for predictions on the situation if he headed to the icy caves. The skull head was up, implying that if Leylin really did that, it would not end up well for him.
“It’s still a no.” Leylin kept the Coin of Destiny, feeling slightly crestfallen.

The Coin of Destiny had been cast rather crudely. Due to the involvement of Morning Star Magi, it was already damaged, and if it got worse, Leylin truly had no idea where else he would find a child of destiny to offer as a sacrifice.

Though he could make prophecies the way he had used Aaron, they had no way to make predictions regarding higher-ranked existences, and the risks in that were too huge.

Humans were creatures full of possibilities. If the Magi that Leylin had chosen managed to advance till they were on the same level as Leylin and managed to prophesize his actions, there would be no way Leylin could benefit from it.

Leylin would rather use these dead creatures. Though they were troublesome, they were convenient and very safe! That was what he prioritised.

“Even I with my rank 3 strength will meet with dangers that cannot be measured in the Icy World. Looks like that’s still a place that I can’t peek into.” Leylin was clear on his situation. He now held most of Twilight Zone in the palm of his hand and had nothing to be anxious over.

The Icy Cave would always be present, so the things inside would be his sooner or later!

After the entire dark elven race surrendered, all that was left to take
care of in the northern region were the gnomes, dwarves and few remaining guilds there. Leylin could not be bothered with this and used his overbearing power to take care of it. A few days later, a shocking rumour spread. Lord Leylin, Guardian of the Realm in Twilight Zone, charged into the dwarves’ stronghold, the Taline Caves, alone. They said that the lord relied on his own power and barged in head on, and went all the way into the dwarves’ royal court. Berserk lightning and the terrifying aura of death constantly shrouded the area. The battle continued for numerous days before it stopped.

From then on, however, the royal dwarven court sent out an announcement, saying that their respected ruler, King Greybeard, and various other important ministers had died from illness. The young dwarven price inherited the throne and immediately withdrew his troops...

The same thing happened in the gnome kingdom. This time, the explosions could be seen with the naked eye. Their machinery was ruined, and the three godly weapons which represented the peak of their alchemic skills were turned into trash. Many of their outstanding artisans were also kidnapped, and thus they lost many essential resources and research material about advanced alchemy. From then on, Leylin’s fame spread throughout Twilight Zone. Besides humans, even when dark elves and gnomes mentioned him, they did not dare call him by his name. He had been titled the Radiant Guardian. His image had been recorded as a legend by other races, and news of his being an exceptionally terrifying existence was passed down. Of course, Leylin had not considered all these. He was now sitting on the most respected gold throne in Potti City and instructing Iren.
“Divide the resources in the newly-recovered northern region, and prioritise the guilds who’ve sided or displayed their goodwill towards us. As for the rest of the harvest, confiscate it all.”

Leylin’s intentions in attacking north Twilight Zone was not to be a good samaritan, but to get rich. Through many years of development, there were various abundant resources in the northern region. Most guilds had died out during the chaotic war, which gave him another excuse to take them over. As for those lucky enough to survive? Besides those who sided with Leylin’s side, whom he gave special treatment to, he was not planning to bother with the rest.

“Then… How about the Magi who’ve set up organisations there?”

Iren was slightly hesitant.

Due to the chaos, not just other races but also other guilds from Twilight Zone had dispatched people to the former north Twilight Zone. They attempted to seize some things and even occupied a small territory, having a long-term confrontation with dark elves and managed to survive with their tenacity. This was a result of Leylin killing the opposite party’s great matriarch in one blow. If not, no matter how gutsy they were, they would not dare even consider this area.

“Handle this in the same way. Also, for those stubborn guilds unwilling to submit to me, arrest them on the grounds of treason and colluding with the enemy. As for the evidence? Just look for Alicia. I’m sure she’ll be willing to supply it.” Leylin smirked.

This was basically an act to eliminate all outsiders, but Leylin’s crushing strength and his advantage of acting on an absolute righteous cause allowed everything to seem calm and organised. In reality, Leylin was building north Twilight Zone up as the headquarters of Nature’s Alliance. In the other regions, the strength of the Magi made everything tricky, and it was difficult to just insert an exceptionally large-scale
guild within. Nature’s Alliance Academy in the central and eastern region had expanded to its peak already. If this was in the past, Leylin could simply continue expanding outwards, but the situation was now different. Due to the war, the northern region was destroyed by the chaos and many guilds had died out. The nobility and other chains of command had almost completely been wiped out as well. Though this partly had to do with the cruelty of dark elves, most of it had to do with various organisations who were hidden deep within. Leylin had also played an important role there. After most of the original organisations in the northern region were purged, it was time for the strong to divide up the feast. Leylin, who held an absolute advantage and Nature’s Alliance Academy, gained the largest part of the benefits! A few months later, a large branch academy of Nature’s Alliance was established there. Besides being a branch in name, the facilities and allocation of staff were based on the highest standards and even bested the headquarters in the central region. With the completion of the branch academy, Leylin gained complete control of north Twilight Zone. For the two areas which were still hesitating, this was a huge shock. In the year 5786 of Twilight Zone, the western and southern regions that had only been pledging their allegiance on the surface could no longer hold on and announced their agreement to support Nature’s Alliance academy in the central region. They received guidance from the great Guardian of the Realm and built a joint academy. Twilight Zone was unified, and the prestige of the Guardian of the Realm, Leylin, was deep in the hearts of the masses. Human society also began to develop at a quick rate. It was a new page of history. The end of the former era, as well as the ascension of the new one, proceeded so quickly that many Magi
found it hard to react to.
North Twilight Zone, in Nature’s Alliance Academy.
“Crap, I’m going to be late!”
Will quickly got out of bed and hugged his thick notebook and textbook, a sandwich fresh out of the oven in his mouth as he dashed across the roads of the academy.
The academy was illuminated with large amounts of sun stones and eternal flames. There were even bonsai transplanted to the side of the roads for viewing pleasure. This would have been unthinkable in the past.
On the roads, there was the occasional sight of acolytes who were all darting towards their own classrooms.
“Mentor Jeline’s reaction field theory is so profound. I don’t understand at all…”
“The principle behind the construction of spell models is very important. It is the basis of all spell models that can be performed, and it needs to be solid. There cannot be any mistake!”
“It’s almost time for the academy competition. Rumours say that the victor can even get guidance from an official Magus!”
Many conversations flew into Will’s ear, and there were even many familiar voices. However, his feet did not stop moving as he ran at a flying speed.
As an acolyte chosen from among the commoners, he truly appreciated this hard-to-come-by opportunity.
It was because he had been up studying till late last night that he had overslept.
After passing by the teaching plaza, all acolytes would respectfully bow towards a statue in the middle.
The statue was carved out of black dazzling stone and formed the image of a handsome young man. His gaze was set far away, as if surveying the scene in the distance from his elevated position.
Under the statue, these words were carved in the language of
Twilight Zone.

‘Distinguished Guardian of the Realm, Leylin Farlier. Rank 3 Magus, the founder of Nature’s Alliance Academy, once gloriously killed the dark elven empress, dwarven king and gnome prophet in battle, saving all humankind. The patron saint of Twilight Zone, he also has other names, such as the Hand of Sacred Light, the Glorious Guardian and so on…’

“The lord Guardian of the Realm!”

Will bowed slightly towards the statue, admiration apparent in his expression, “If only I could become such a mighty Magus one day…”

Immediately after, however, he couldn’t help but laugh. He really was imagining the wildest things.

Some time after passing by the sculpture, Will couldn’t help but turn back and look, only to find a figure under the statue that had the exact same face as the sculpture.

“It’s- “ Will’s eyes widened, but when he looked once more, the figure had disappeared, as if all he had seen was merely an illusion.

*Shua!* Celine drew the curtains, and the giant French window revealed the current bustling, lively situation of Nature’s Alliance.

“How is it to see the splendour you created by your own hand?”

Celine laughed as she embraced Leylin’s waist from the back.

“Also, welcome back! You’ve stayed in the laboratory for about fifteen years, haven’t you?”

Celine gently placed her head on Leylin’s back.

She, who had tasted power, was now even more alluring than beautiful, as enchanting as a poppy.

However, Celine was very aware where her power and status had come from. This was especially so during the period of debauchery Leylin had engaged in when in the central region. She had, at that time, come to realise exactly how stable her position had been. She had even abandoned her work in the east and dashed to Leylin’s
side.
It was a pity that Leylin’s thoughts were all on gathering high-grade meditation techniques and all sorts of information, giving Celine the cold shoulder.
“I don’t really feel anything.” Leylin was quite indifferent to all this. The reason why he had established an academy was just so that it would be more convenient for him gather meditation techniques and precious resources.
Celine watched Leylin who was bathing in the light from the sun stones, seemingly intoxicated by the sight. Leylin still retained his handsome young appearance, as if the passing of time did not leave any traces on him. He, who was glimmering with golden rays, seemed to be a war god wrapped in golden robes. It was this young man who had already reached the apex in Twilight Zone, having seized immense authority that nobody could even imagine of possessing!

“How are the results of the experiment?” Celine asked. “Quite alright!” Though there was a smile on his face, it seemed slightly dark, and Celine tactfully did not ask further. Leylin’s hand groped around her body, but his thoughts were someplace else.

Through supplements from numerous high-grade meditation technique, the A.I. Chip’s meditation technique databank was becoming even more complete, and it had even simulated the fourth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil!

However, Leylin was still slightly worried. He planned on searching for the original Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique to compare as well as improve his own. It was always better to be more careful when it came to anything that had to do with the spirit.

If the situation with the meditation technique was a good thing, there was something else that made Leylin’s mood the worst it
could be. He looked at his stats.


“Fifteen years! It’s been fifteen whole years, and the improvement in my meditation technique has been slight. If not for the numbers given by the A.I. Chip, I would have suspected I had completely stopped improving.”

Leylin’s expression was dark. In these fifteen years, he had hovered around the level of a rank 3 Warlock that had just advanced. He had not even reached the Vapour Phase of his spiritual force. This speed was making him go crazy.

Though Leylin liked to enjoy himself, those were things he did while he was not increasing his strength. At his level, he might not have a rival in Twilight Zone and be the tyrant he was. However, how was this the life that he wanted?

Before obtaining the greatest strength at the apex, Leylin did not plan to slow his footsteps.

“The resources of Twilight Zone are plentiful for rank 1 and 2 Magi, but for rank 3, they’re insufficient. In addition, based on calculations by the A.I. Chip, to become a rank 3 Magus with gaseous spiritual force, I need to have a Vapour Phase spell formation, but it doesn’t exist in Twilight Zone!”

Leylin pondered, “In addition, there’s still the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique. Though the A.I. Chip has simulated a portion of it, it’s better to get the original and refer to it.”

“All these can’t be obtained in Twilight Zone!”

Leylin made his mind, while the beautiful woman beside him let out a frail gasp.

Leylin, who had come back to himself, realised that his hand seemed to have reached a very deep place that was causing Celine
to let out pants.
Without telling Celine his plans, Leylin embraced and ferociously rolled her onto the bed…

……

Even though he enjoyed this pleasure, Leylin did not lose himself to it. He rejected Celine’s suggestion of gathering the Magi of Nature’s Alliance Academy and instead left, keeping a low profile and travelling around Twilight Zone.
On one hand, Leylin was filled with curiosity about Twilight Zone. After all, he had never truly toured the area, and only gathered information through maps and the information in the A.I. Chip, which was only one aspect of it.
More importantly, Leylin wanted to try his luck. He might even be fortunate enough to discover the legacy of some ancient Magus!
Leylin rejected Celine’s requests to accompany him and went on the road since he was used to travelling alone.
He weaved through Twilight Zone. He went deep into the nests of darkness creatures, but also headed to the edge of the world, to see the Magma Sea that stretched as far as the eye could see.
While journeying, Leylin disguised himself as a common wandering Magus. With the A.I. Chip and directions from the coin of destiny, he found quite a few inheritances and the like.
It was a pity that these were all small harvests, and were dispensable to Leylin.
The more dangerous areas, such as Icy World and the Weeping Ghost Grounds that were extremely terrifying, would cause damage to the coin of destiny and were not places Leylin could go to as of yet.
Even so, with his own instincts and the slight directions of the coin, Leylin continued to wander.
A thick darkness constantly shrouded around the earth, and only the light on the carriage persisted, illuminating the surrounding area.

“Is that Grand Ivy Canyon is a ruin left behind by Morning Star Magi?”

On the carriage, Leylin was conversing with another wandering Magus. Leylin was now concealing his frightening rank 3 aura, and also made adjustments to his outer appearance. Nobody would be able to recognise him as the legendary Glorious Guardian. After all, he did not want to be surrounded and watched everywhere he went.

He was now having a delightful conversation with a wandering Magus he had just met.

“Yes! I once excavated the outer portions of a ruin and found part of a sculpture there… The surrounding aboriginal culture has also recorded this matter.” The slender blue-haired Magus with a goatee was speaking excitedly.

His name was Pharen. Though he was merely a rank 1 official Magus, he was unusually interested in travelling and adventures. He had once explored many famous ruins and had a great reputation amongst wandering Magi.

Leylin listened quietly while sitting beside him, occasionally asking a few questions and providing opinions, which caused Pharen’s eyes to sparkle.

With his current knowledge, there were few in Twilight Zone who could be compared with him. With just a few words, Pharen was full of praise for him.

Leylin chatted with him once in a while, forcing down the anxiety in his heart.

“I forcefully made a prophecy while disregarding the damage done to the Coin of Destiny. I finally found out that the way to improve
further is in the west, but now that I’m here and almost at the Magma Sea, why haven’t I discovered anything yet?” Leylin dug his hands into his bosom and caressed the surface of the coin of destiny.

On the simple gold coin, there were already two fine cracks, causing Leylin to feel pain in his heart.

“Oh! By the way, may I know what Sir Reynold’s intentions are in accompanying me deep inside here?” Pharen asked. This was a question that had been in his heart for a long time.

“This is the common territory of the dark elves and dwarves. Though us humans have now seized control, if they see us in the outskirts, we could easily be surrounded and attacked.”

“There are a few things I have to take care of. Besides, I want to see that magnificent scene you mentioned about the lava tides.” Leylin laughed slightly in answer.

Pharen’s eyes brightened, feeling like he had found someone who could understand himself.

“Not bad. Based on my guesses, the lava tides that are going to burst out will be the largest in a whole century! They might even surge to the surface!” Pharen’s face was flushed.

“That’s impossible. There are several hundred kilometres of earth crust until we reach the surface!” While Leylin said this, his heart suddenly lurched.

The surface? This was something worth considering. Perhaps the directions from the coin of destiny had to do with this.

Of course, Leylin was not going to start fantasising and think that he could use the magma and break through the crust. That was something even Morning Star Magi might not be able to do.

“But this is still possible in theory. As long as I find a suitable place and channel, such as a volcano…” Leylin touched his chin, thinking that he would need to inspect a few lava lakes that could link him to the surface.
While Leylin was deep in thought, a strange undulation caused him to awaken in surprise.
“This is…” Red rays flashed in his eyes, “A resonance with my bloodline… Who is it?”
He abruptly looked in a direction, stirred up and grim.
“What’s going on?” Pharen waved his hand curiously, and the carriage stopped.
Immediately after, he felt Magi’s energy fluctuations travelling from the direction Leylin was looking at.
“So it’s a battle between Magi! Sir Reynold’s acuity is truly admirable!” Pharen sighed in heartfelt awe.
Just this extraordinary sensory ability made it clear that this Magus called Reynold was ranked far above him.
An energy aura far away sensed something and began to head in this direction at a mad dash.
“Sir Reynold, it looks like they are going to use us as a shield!” Pharen sneered.
Such a scheme was as crude and laughable as a little tease in the eyes of Magi. However, seeing someone dared provoke himself, Pharen’s eyes flashed with an icy glint.
*Shoo!* A brownish-yellow ray launched over.
The response from his bloodline became more intense.
The yellow light stopped in front of the carriage, revealing a middle-aged Magus. His skin let off a bronze light, and there were numerous traces of burning on his skin. The lines on his face were resolute, and even while heavily injured, he still emanated the charm of a mature man. What was even more eye-catching were his eyes, which was a pair of amber pupils!
“A Warlock! He’s definitely a Warlock, and he has a deep relationship with my bloodline!”
Leylin’s eyes met with the other’s, and they immediately understood each other’s identities.
After seeing Leylin, the middle-aged Magus’ expression slackened and he produced something like an emblem to Leylin, “My lord, please save me!”

He used the Byron Language, which was a mandatory subject for all Magi. Leylin naturally understood.

*Thud!* As if he had relaxed too much, the middle-aged man could not hold on any longer and collapsed, fainting on the ground. *Pak!* The emblem accurately fell in the palm of Leylin’s hand.
The emblem was rather small, the back being a bronze base. After seeing the symbol on the front, Leylin’s pupils suddenly shrunk. It was a giant black serpent formed from numerous runes, holding its tail in its mouth and forming a strange circular imprint.

“That symbol! I’ve seen it before in the Dylan Gardens!” Leylin obviously would not have forgotten this. The memory was still fresh in his mind. When he was in the Dylan Gardens, there was a large oil painting of this black snake holding its tail in its mouth in Great Magus Serholm’s inheritance. Behind that oil painting had been where Leylin had obtained Kemoyin’s Pupil.

This symbol could be said to mark the beginning of Leylin’s path as a Warlock!

“Him being a Warlock, the resonance of our bloodlines, and the symbol!” Leylin weighed the emblem in his palm, “Looks like he was what the Coin of Destiny was leading me towards.”

“What? Reynold, you know him?” Old Pharen asked. “No, but I need to rescue him.” Leylin’s tone was light but held within an unquestionable resolve.

“My apologies, but if you insist, we can only part ways here. I don’t want to meet with any trouble.” As a Magus, Pharen instinctively declined. A rank 1 Magus like that usually represented some form of trouble,
and Pharen had no wish to provoke it. Besides, he and Leylin had merely met en route and just got along well. He wasn’t close enough to Leylin that he’d take risks for him. “Of course. You can leave first.” Leylin answered, not finding Pharen’s choice strange.

If Pharen was the type to ardently insist on staying with him, he wouldn’t have been able to live to this age. “I’m sorry!” With an apologetic look on his face, he made to get on the carriage and leave. “Stop right there!” At this moment, a sudden sound was heard, bringing with it a loud boom. Five or six streaks of glaring lights shone over from the skies, and by the time the shine dissipated, the figures of six different Magi had appeared. They were evidently a mix of races, and the presence of dark elves and dwarves surprised Leylin.

*Rumble!* Amidst the flying dust, a group of elite Underground Winter Spider knights and dwarven soldiers hurried over. “Human Magus?” The dwarf and dark elf in charge furrowed their brows after seeing Leylin and Pharen.

Twilight Zone was now a place where the human race had the highest status. Even in the outer regions, human Magi would be respected. Of course, if they were in the desolate outskirts, there would be situations where these races murdered humans and robbed them of their treasures. Although such acts occurred, there would be no traces left behind, lest the humans use it as a cause to invade. It was difficult to eliminate two Magi and prevent news from spreading. “This is a despicable thief that stole the sacred item that our two races are jointly protecting. Magi, please don’t misunderstand!” The
dark elven and dwarven Magi warned them. “Protecting a sacred item? What is it?” Leylin curiously scanned the unconscious middle-aged Warlock with his spiritual force and then found a green bundle of vines in his arms. A concentrated life force extended from within the vine ball. “So it’s this!” A look of understanding flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

This bundle of vines was actually called the Vitality Fruitvine, and it held within a large amount of life force essence. To those races that trained in meditation techniques like the dark elves’ Life Absorption, it was truly invaluable. It could replenish much life force and treat injuries or even save lives and was naturally thought of highly by soldiers and the artisan dwarves. That was why these two races were looking after it together.

The reason why Leylin was so knowledgeable on this was because this fruit had always been a major product in the dark elves’ and dwarves’ yearly offerings, and Leylin enjoyed a whole portion of them alone.

Because of him, there was a shortage of these Vitality Fruitvines. Even the theft of one fruit would result in one getting in much trouble and being hunted down.

“Though you are human Magi, these sacred items have to be offered up to the Guardian of the Realm, Lord Leylin!” Seeing Leylin still unmoved, a dark elf threatened.

“Magus Reynold, you’ve brought me trouble!” Pharen laughed bitterly.

Pharen naturally knew of the famous Guardian of the Realm. He was the ruler of the entirety of Twilight Zone!

Even he, a wandering Magus, had many mentors and acolytes to take care of. He could not truly break away from them.

At the mention of the legendary rank 3 Magus, Pharen seemed to have plans of casting away this troublesome matter. “Reynold,
“Pfft-!” Leylin could not hold it in and began to laugh.
The smile on his face became so big that he even bent down, holding his belly with both hands, unable to rein in his laughter.
“Human Magus, why are you laughing?” Their leaders exchanged a glance, having a bad feeling.
At this time, they took note of the handsome young man in front of them, his face seeming to be exceptionally familiar with them.
“It’s the first time someone’s used my own name to threaten me!”
After laughing, Leylin’s expression darkened.
At the same time, there was a strange change to his face, as if there was a spontaneous removal of some concealing method.
An aura similar to the awakening of an ancient wild beast began to emanate from his body.
*Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!* The eight legs of the Underground Winter Spiders began to tremble and they weakly fell to the ground.
The Underground Winter Spider knights and Dwarven soldiers all fell.
Leylin took a step forward, and space seemed to freeze.
The six Magi in mid-air were forced to the ground, expressions full of terror.
“You- You- You’re Leylin Farlier, the Guardian of Twilight Zone, the Great Emperor of the Night!”
Pharen’s mouth widened, his goatee sticking up. His fingers were trembling and he was so scared he was almost unable to speak.
Goodness! So the one who had been journeying with him was the lord Guardian whose name had spread far and wide? The one who was almost deified?
Pharen immediately searched through his memories until he found he had not said anything unpleasant about Nature’s Alliance or Leylin himself, and then heaved a sigh of relief.
After that, however, his heart got stuck in his throat once more.
Previously, he had been planning on leaving Leylin and that Magus to flee for his life. Would this behaviour gain the displeasure of the Radiant Guardian?
Compared to the inner conflicts Pharen had, the blow Leylin’s appearance had towards these other races was completely different. “Greetings to lord Guardian of the Realm!” The dark elven and dwarven Magi immediately bowed.
Even if he were a fake, the unique energy undulations from a rank 3 Magus could not be mistaken.
The Magi of both races had a very deep impression of Leylin’s expression, and even if they were turned to dust, they would not get it wrong.
After all, Leylin had destroyed the splendour their two races had possessed, and even killed their rulers brazenly!
Leylin was now like a devil king or monster to them.
“En! Tell the people behind you that I’m going to take this man. This Vitality Fruitvine will also be considered part of this year’s portion.” Leylin indifferently ordered.
He was not planning to use raw force because that would just be bullying them.
“Understood, my lord.” The dark elven and dwarven Magi heaved a long sigh, bowed, and then withdrew quickly as if there was a great monster chasing them.
The news of Leylin’s appearance here was much too mind-blowing, and they had to bring this news to their higher-ups immediately to be able to respond.

……

“Are you awake? If you are, come here!” The middle-aged Magus opened his eyes, Leylin’s voice sounding by his ear.
He immediately got up and saw Leylin standing aside, playing with
a test tube full of blood. Within that test tube were strands of earthen-yellow that had congealed, unable to scatter.

“Kubler greets my lord!” he immediately knelt respectfully, looking deferential and awed, as if a wolf that had seen its king.

Leylin had sensed this. He had the feeling that through his bloodline, he could influence this Magus.

This was a terrifying thing.


“Yes. Warlock of the Mankestre Bloodline, Kubler, greets my lord!” he bowed once more.

“No wonder…” Leylin shook his head.

He finally understood the strange feeling he got from this man.

The Wilted Huge Snake Mankestre was said to have a trace of the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Though it was thinned out, it was still a descendant of the Kemoyin Serpent.

In the face of a true Warlock of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, it was natural to be affected and suppressed by him.

When Leylin was still an acolyte, he had once seen a Huge Mankestre Snake. Though it was still young, it was enough to cause him a headache.

The matured body of this Huge Mankestre Snake was comparable to that of an official Magus. Though it was nothing in Leylin’s eyes now, that was a terrifying strength for acolytes.

“Well then, tell me your history and your reason in coming here.” Leylin spoke expressionlessly, though his eyes were enough for Kubler’s heart to turn cold.

Though he could not use spirit-searching spells on official Magi, it was very easy for Leylin, a Warlock who had already advanced to rank 3, to completely smash the spirit and extract spirit fragments from him.

Though he would not get a complete set of information if he did
that, and this Warlock would definitely die, it was very possible. Fortunately, Kubler was evidently a sharp-witted man and deathly afraid of Leylin. Soon enough, he systematically narrated his origins. After hearing a few words, Leylin’s expression became grim.
Kubler claimed to be a Magus from the central continent. The hometown of the great Magus Serholm, the core of the entire Magus world, The sacred land of Magi, the central continent!

As for why Kubler was at this place, Leylin could not care less. On the contrary, he was very interested in the route Kubler had taken to get here.

If they were to walk this path in the opposite direction, would they be able to successfully reach the central continent? Leylin spoke the question in his mind,

Kubler’s face showed a moment of hesitation before he respectfully divulged the truth, ”In actual fact, the surface right above this subterranean world is the central continent! I learnt of the exact spot where the lava erupts from a research manual passed down through my family. After calculating the weaker points in the lava, I followed the pathway to arrive at this place.

Having heard Kubler’s account, Leylin more or less understood the procedure of his entrance.

On the whole, this was like what he had previously envisaged, and would also explain why the other party’s body had horrifying burn wounds, no matter how precise his calculations of the lava’s weak points were, the flames and the high temperature were not something a rank 1 Magus could bear.

If he had not by chanced upon the Life Vined Fruit, he might have
already become a charred corpse!
“Mmm! I already settled the inconvenience with the dark elves and dwarves. You can have this as a reward for being open with your information!” Leylin waved his hands and threw the Life Vined Fruit into Kubler’s hands.
“Thank you, my Lord!” A tinge of gratitude appeared on Kubler’s face.
To him, managing to keep his life had already been a huge reward. As for the fruit that was full of vitality, it was a welcome surprise.
*Sizzle!* A few fine red blood vessels sprouted forth from his fingers, drilled into the insides of the fruit, and started to draw large amounts of life essence.
With a lively green radiance appearing on his body, his burn wounds recovered quickly. The scars gradually faded, eventually disappearing without a trace.
The scene reminded Leylin of the parasitic body of the Huge Mankestre Snake he had seen as an acolyte. The two seemed to have a certain level of similarity in their abilities.
Moreover, the method of directly drawing in vitality seemed to be inspired by the meditation techniques that could absorb others’ spiritual force.
Of course, those were all small matters.
Having seen Kubler’s state improving, Leylin then asked him about the Black Serpent emblem “Also, this symbol. What meaning does it actually have?”
“What? My lord actually doesn’t know?” His response further surprised Leylin, but Kubler calmed down a moment after his reaction. “It doesn’t matter, the bloodline cannot be faked.”
After seeing Leylin’s look of puzzlement, Kubler immediately explained to Leylin: “This is a symbol of our organisation, the Ouroboros Clan!”
“The Ouroboros Clan?” Leylin nodded, that name was indeed very
vivid: “Is that an organisation of Bloodline Warlocks?”
“Yes! Furthermore, within the Ouroboros Clan, we only accept Warlocks who hold the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent or its descendants!” Kubler answered very certainly.
“Additionally, a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock with great power, simply by joining the Ouroboros Clan, could instantly obtain a relatively high rank…” he added after shooting Leylin a glance.
“Since this is the case, then I have nothing much to hide!” Leylin laughed. “In actual fact, I too am a wandering Magus. I came to Twilight Zone by accident and chanced upon the inheritance of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent among historical remains! It was there that I first saw the symbol of the Ouroboros Clan!”
Leylin spoke honestly. Even though he spoke vaguely, and did not reveal any real details, Kubler was smart enough to not ask further. On the contrary, he fed large amounts of information regarding the central continent to Leylin.
From this information, and records that he had obtained from ancient books, Leylin finally pieced together an image of the Sacred land of the Magi.
The central continent was the core of the Magus World. It spanned across a huge area, and had an abundance of precious resources! There, official Magi were as common as the clouds, and rank 2 Magi were the elites! Rank 3 Magi were respected, although there were different ranks to them. Only Morning Star Magi truly held clout.
Organisations in the central continent needed a Morning Star Magus to oversee their development if they hoped to grow in power. Some small organisations were occasionally built by rank 2 or rank 3 Magi, but they were short-lived, typically being destroyed after a short period of time.
“You say we have Warlocks at the Morning Star realm overseeing the Ouroboros Clan?” Leylin was most interested in this.
After all, they were rank 4 Warlocks with the bloodline of Giant Kemoyin Serpents! This was clearly his path ahead!
“Yes!” Kubler was clearly very pleased with Leylin’s usage of “we,” with his tone and expressions being much intimate.
“Among the ranks of our Ouroboros Clan, the Grand Elder, Second Elder, and Third Elder have all reached rank 4. If they joined forces, they could even contend with a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus! As a result, our Ouroboros Clan could be said to have some fame in the central continent!” Having said this, Kubler clearly felt proud.
“Rank 5! Radiant Moon Magus?” A doubtful expression crossed Leylin’s face, and he asked Kubler to clarify the rankings of Magi after the Morning Star realm.
Official Magi had a total of 9 ranks, and they were respectively termed Magi from rank 1 to 9.
And for every 3 ranks, there would be an extremely large bottleneck.
From rank 1 Magi to rank 3 Magi, and from the rank 4 Magi to rank 6 Magi, and eventually rank 7 and above, the differences between them was extremely terrifying.
The central continent was slowly regaining the splendor of ancient times.
Not only were rank 4 Morning Star Magi becoming common, even rank 5 Radiant Moon Magi and rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magi would appear periodically.
Morning Star, Radiant Moon, and Breaking Dawn were the honorific titles of rank 4, 5 and 6 Magi respectively.
“Am I akin to a moon or sun?” Leylin laughed in his heart, “However, just a Morning Star Magus has a lifespan of more than a thousand years and possesses tremendous strength. The even greater glory and radiance rank 5 and 6 Grand Magi possess can be understood from just that…”
Kubler had not discovered Leylin’s thoughts and continued to narrate, “I don’t qualify to know about what comes after the Breaking Dawn realm. Moreover, the few Magi who are at rank 6 are all the most influential leaders of the central continent, and are titled our ‘Kings!’”

“King of Magi? This term has a lot of meaning to it!” Leylin nodded.

“There are three main powers in the central continent. The Warlocks tied together by bloodlines, the Magus organisations that hold a lot of high-grade meditation techniques, and the Academies where various powers mingle with each other! Together, these three sets control over 70 percent of the resources and land of the entire continent. The rest is occupied by an assortment of human Magi and other species…”

With Kubler’s description, a blueprint of the central continent gradually appeared in Leylin’s mind.

Strange species! Large amounts of resources! High-ranked Magi! And a larger stage and space for improvement!

A flame ignited within Leylin’s eyes, as well as an even stronger urge to immediately rush towards the central continent.

Immediately, he suppressed the desire and impulse.

“Alright! Now can you explain to me why you would risk your life to escape from the central continent?”

Leylin’s eyes that radiated coldness glanced into Kubler’s, which immediately made the latter feel a chill in his heart.

“Ac… Actually…” Kubler’s did not look good. After which he knelt down before Leylin, and placed his forehead tightly on the ground.

“Lord Leylin! Please accept me as one of your henchmen!”

“What do you mean? Please explain yourself clearly!” Leylin’s face remained unchanged. After which, he heard some untasteful stories from Kubler.
To put things simply, Kubler had offended someone in the Ouroboros Clan, which had left him with no choice but to leave. Now, he wished to obtain Leylin’s protection so as to once again return.

Honestly speaking, from the looks of the central continent Magi, the subterranean world and other areas were all desolate. If not for the fact that he was forced into such circumstances, why would he willingly leave his hometown?

“Why do you think I can protect you?” Leylin desired to know. Before asking clearly, he would not easily promise anything.

“Of course! My lord has already achieved rank 3, and is a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, with a bright future. How can people like us rival that?” Kubler said matter-of-factly, and had a faint tone of admiration and inferiority.

“This subordinate has offended a Black Horrall Snake Warlock, who has the potential to at most grow to rank 3. The high-ranked officers of the Ouroboros Clan would definitely not side with him…”

“Growth potential?” Leylin was alarmed and understood that he heard something extremely important.

“Does My lord not know yet?” Kubler, on the other hand, had already in favour of himself, changed his address of Leylin.

“The inheritance I obtained did not contain any object in this area, please detailedly explain!” Leylin’s face looked upset. His heart had a bad omen.

“Yes! Subordinate will not hide anything!” Kubler’s attitude was extremely upright, and he had started to follow the standards of vassals; Leylin could not be bothered to correct him.

As Kubler narrated, Leylin’s face got gloomier, and eventually was like that of the sky before an imminent storm.
Warlocks were a branch of ancient Magi, and possessed enormous strength as a result of their bloodlines.
Warlocks of a rank not only had all the abilities a regular Magus of that rank held, but also the amplification of their bloodline. Their powers greatly surpassed those of regular Magi. Why couldn’t such a powerful branch dominate the Magus World? Why, instead, did they lay low in the South Coast and Twilight Zone, with even the central continent only containing a small number of them?
All of this could be attributed to their main problem, the shackles of their bloodlines!
According to Kubler, unlike Magi who could continuously improve, the advancement of Warlocks was largely dependent on the bloodline they inherited.
That was to say that, for a Huge Mankestre Snake Warlock like Kubler, because of the bounds of his bloodline, he was destined to never advance further after being an official Magus! No amount of effort could promote him to rank 2! This, was the shackles of a bloodline!
Similarly, the peak of a Black Horrall Snake Warlock’s development was rank 3! Such a Warlock would never enter the Morning Star realm!
For a Kemoyin Giant Serpent Warlock like Leylin, even though his pure bloodline could support him in his advancement to rank 2 and
rank 3, it was of little effect against the obstacles to becoming a Morning Star Magus. Moreover, after advancing to a Morning Star, he too would lose his potential to advance. It was impossible for a Warlock to alter his own bloodline, and hence there were nearly no solutions to this problem!

In reality, Magi like Leylin could be considered to be quite fortunate. After all, Morning Star Magi still held some clout even in the central continent. The more miserable ones were Warlocks who could not even advance to become official Magi, due to the limits of their bloodlines! For instance, if Kubler had used a young Mankestre Snake instead of a matured one, then his entire life would be spent with him as an acolyte. No matter how great his talent was, it would be useless!

Having heard all this, even Leylin who had considerable knowledge broke out in a cold sweat. Initially, if he had coveted convenience and directly used the blood of the Black Horrall Snake to advance, he might have been restricted to being a rank 3 Magus, and lost any hope of progression!

And now? Although Kubler had said that the limits of his potential were that of a rank 4 Warlock, at least it was better than before. Moreover, even in ancient times, Morning Star Magi were prominent figures. With their strength, they were likely to have interacted with regions on a broader scale than a rank 3 Magus. As a result, there might already have been some solutions to this!

Lastly, there was still the rich resources of the Icy World and the legendary Snake Dowager, which presented a gleam of hope! Due to Leylin’s confidence in himself, he was only somewhat dispirited before he recovered.

He thought back to what had come up when he obtained the
Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique: “All those who walk on the path of bloodlines will eventually be shackled by the very bloodline itself…”
The line had baffled him then, and had left him with an ominous premonition. From the looks of it now, though, it was a reference to the shackles of a Warlock’s bloodline.
“At that time, Great Magus Serholm was cultivating the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline. He had conducted a lot of experiments on bloodlines, perhaps this was why…” Leylin thought of this again.
Very evidently, even in the Circle of Ouroboros, Warlocks of different bloodlines have different positions.
The Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks held the highest status, to the point that some pureblood Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks could merely rely on time to elapse and enter rank 3 automatically in a few hundred years. They even had the hopes of becoming Morning Star Magi.
As a result, pureblood Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks like these would be elite royalty in the Circle of Ouroboros. Viewed as future Morning Star seeds, they were protected and nurtured.
On the other hand, the Black Horrall Snake Warlocks had a bloodline limit of rank 3, and would forever not be able to improve. However, in any case, they relied on the strength of their bloodline and did not have any problems advancing to be rank 2 Magi. There was a possibility to become rank 3 as well, so they ranked just after Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks.
As for Huge Mankestre Snake Warlocks like Kubler? They were a bunch with the most miserable status, only slightly better than the acolyte Warlocks. Even rank 3 Warlocks with a slightly better bloodline would look down on them.
This wasn’t intentional. Just a result of differences in strength.
Hence, for higher status and better treatment, many lower ranked
Warlocks chose to go under the wings of Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, forming the relationship of a master and vassal. This was how Warlock clans came to be.
Kubler had detected the bloodline resonance of Leylin’s Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline, and immediately sold himself to Leylin in exchange for protection.
Upon hearing that, Leylin sighed internally. “Looks like no matter where you are, as long as any organisations exist, there will be a hierarchy of power and unfairness, exploitation and oppression!”
Having seen Kubler’s nervous and hopeful expression, he laughed weakly: “I, Leylin Farlier, accept you as my vassal! I hope you’ll be able to abide by the rules of our master-servant contract! The prestige and status of the family of Leylin Farlier…”
“As you wish, Master! From now on, your wish is my command, as witnessed by this drop of blood!”
Kubler’s face was solemn. He cut his hand, and smeared the bright red blood with a tinge of yellow on his forehead, kowtowing low.
*Bam!* After he paid his respects, Leylin instantly felt a contracted connection, the bloodline contract. To him, there were few restrictions, but the impact on Kubler was much greater.
Originally, Leylin could only hint at and impact Kubler to a small extent through his high-level bloodline. With the contract having taken effect, that influence was amplified. Even if Leylin were to order Kubler to die, Kubler would probably have to follow the orders!
“This control of a higher rank has over a lower rank is this strong?”
Having seen this point, Leylin did not experience any joy, but instead, fear had arisen in his heart.
Since the Giant Kemoyin Serpent was a species with a snake bloodline, should it meet a snake species of a higher rank, or even the Snake Dowager, the other party could easily butcher it!
“No! Absolutely not! My will is mine alone!” Leylin shouted
violently in his head, and even resolved himself secretly. Even though he had many considerations, from Kubler’s point of view, Leylin was merely mildly startled before accepting his oath. “Master, I arrived at this point from the spurting of the lava, this is the map and the site of the volcano!” After Kubler got up, he immediately passed on a map to Leylin with both hands. “Are you in a hurry?” Leylin looked at the map; at the top, there was labelled a curvy path. In the upper region were more detailed lava sites. The only drawback was that there were damages and stains in some areas, which could not be seen clearly. “Master, I made use of the dormancy of the volcano to get here. Large amounts of the lava had solidified into pathways to this place. If we are to get out, we must rush to do it before the volcano erupts. If not, large amounts of lava will block the pathways. This conditions will only last a few days. If we miss this opportunity, we will have to wait for at least a hundred years… Kubler’s thoughts naturally would not be able to keep Leylin in the dark, hence he just said it out directly. Even though he had just arrived here, he already disdained the nasty conditions of Twilight Zone. Not only was the energy particle concentration here much lower than that of the central continent, the resources were also much poorer. For instance, the Vitality Fruitvine might not have been common in the central continent, but rank 3 acolytes could get a hold of them. It wasn’t big enough for official Magi to fight each other over. Seeing his longing to return, Leylin’s anticipation towards the central continent immediately increased. The prosperity of the central continent seemed to have exceeded his expectations. The description even contained traces of the golden age of the ancient Magi. “This can come later. First, I’ll go check out where you came
from…” Leylin stroked his chin and kept the map. Even though he had decided to proceed towards the central continent, there were many things to settle in Twilight Zone as well. After all, in a guild as big as Nature’s Alliance, there were a lot of vested interests. Also, were Leylin to disappear, the human race would be thrown into chaos, and this might even extend to beings of other species.

*Bloop! Bloop!* This was a huge lava lake. Large amounts of fresh red lava continuously boiled to the top, radiating heat. The lava at the central had grown so hot it was golden-yellow, the glow of the ripples captivating even in its danger.

“This high temperature,” Leylin’s face slightly changed, “I’m afraid that even with my defense I could withstand it for ten hours at most!”

Above the lake was a giant hole. It was pitch black, with no exit in sight, but there were traces of wind howls transmitting out from it.

“Above us is the main entrance towards the giant volcanic mountain range. Normally, the lava level is so high that it covers the entrance. Only once in a hundred years, during the short dormancy, does it drop down low enough to travel through…” Kubler explained.

“I know!” Leylin’s body rose into mid-air, as he felt the edges of the cave. A strange feeling of a solid glow with a tinge of heat was transmitted over.

After being immersed in large amounts of lava, the surface of the rock was not composed as it was before. It had become an alloy of metal and crystal.

“We need to make the most of the time we have! If not, we won’t be able to make it back to the surface of the earth before the lava engulfs the area!” Kubler’s expression looked peculiar. Similarly, he had not thought that having just arrived at this place, he would have to journey back again.
“No, don’t worry! I have better plans!”

Leylin smiled faintly: “Furthermore, I still have some things to settle here….”

Kubler’s heart was too full of worry. He wondered whether his Lord was going to wait a hundred years for the next cycle. Mankestre Bloodline Warlocks like him did not have a long lifespan. He could, at most, last two or three hundred years. A hundred years was, to him, a significant portion of his lifespan!

But… Kubler looked at the man whom he now served. As a vassal, the Lord has the last say, so what more could he do than laugh bitterly?

“I’ll be heading out for a while. Stay here and monitor the lava flow data, and contact me periodically using our secret imprints. In the meanwhile, use the special rocks here to make one of these. All you have to do is follow this blueprint!”

A fluorescent blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes. It took him but a moment to form a design and imprint it into a crystal ball.

Kubler’s face changed slightly as he received it, and he respectfully lowered his head. “Yes, my Lord!”

“Alright!” Moments after the order was given, Leylin transformed into a dark silhouette and disappeared.

A black streak pierced through the sky, creating friction with the air and leaving behind an ear-piercing screech.

Even if he had time to prepare, it was running out, so it was
important to make the most of it!
Nature’s Alliance, North Twilight Zone.
Celine sat behind the huge and luxurious office table and stretched lazily, revealing her perfect curves.
Although doing irksome corrections and office affairs every day was very troublesome, she found the tiring job enjoyable. It made every cell in her body shiver with excitement and even made her slightly moist down below, every time she thought about how every word she put to paper, even every sentence she uttered, would make a big difference to the fates of numerous acolytes and even Magi.
“But it is a pity that my position here is not fully secured….” Celine glanced at her flat and smooth abdomen, a rather reluctant expression on her face.
“What’s wrong? Are you still grumbling that you’re not with child?”
The voice of a young man suddenly sounded from inside the office.
“Ra… Radiant Guardian!”
When the other female Magi and office administrators saw Leylin, they could not contain the excitement in their eyes. Files were overturned and cups of tea spilled as they rushed to bow.
“Mmm!” Leylin said as he nodded and waved. All the Magi except Celine left the office quickly, completely silent.
“Well!” Celine looked into Leylin’s eyes without fear.
Although the mental state of this impeccably handsome man was rather decent, his attire was somewhat dusty and messy.
‘Could this be the aftermath of rushing and being nervous?’ As a keen and observant woman, Celine immediately realized this…
“Leylin, you’re currently standing at the peak of Twilight Zone. One step and you can turn the entirety of it into a Magus kingdom, and pass it on through the generations!” Celine’s voice held a
mixture of excitement and confusion, “A child! All you need is a child! An inheritor to your power!”
Her eyes clouded up as she hugged Leylin.
If it was the past, Leylin definitely would not hesitate to argue with her over it. But now, Celine noticed the calm in Leylin’s eyes; calm like the still waters of an old well.
A realization hit Celine, making her immediately sink into immense fear. The day she loses Leylin’s affection would be the day she loses everything. This was also the reason why she strongly wished to bear Leylin’s child.
Even as she struggled to think of a method to show her affection, Leylin’s next words beat her down into the abyss.
“T’ll have to go!”
“You’re going?” Celine was feeling slightly giddy, “Where to?”
“I’m leaving this place! Leaving Twilight Zone!” Leylin paused at every word, making sure Celine heard everything clearly.
“Are you mad? Why do you want to leave this place? You’re the king here! You’re my sun and my star. You are my everything….”
What would happen once Leylin leaves? The mere thought of scenarios that might happen if he followed through with his words made Celine sink into extreme fear. She hugged Leylin tightly, tears flashing at the corners of her eyes.
And yet, Leylin cruelly pushed her away, his hand cold as steel.
Celine calmed down and gazed at the emotionless Leylin.
“As you know, I’m actually not even a Magus of Twilight Zone, it was all an accident!” Leylin slowly said.
Regarding his history, after going through so many interactions and investigations, this woman had probably speculated a lot already. Sure enough, Celine’s face remained unchanged and she evidently did not feel surprised.
“I seek the pinnacle of the Magus world. The scene of different worlds from the top will be the most beautiful view one could ever
hope for… So I cannot stop advancing. I must continue forward until I achieve my goal! I believe you too can understand this!”

Leylin looked into the depths of Celine’s eyes. At this moment, Celine had already completely calmed down. ‘Or rather, was it all just an act before?’ Leylin’s thoughts stopped here as he couldn’t help but secretly feel a little annoyed.

“I do! I’ve always known that when this place is can no longer fulfill your requirements any further, you would leave. I fully understand that, but I never thought that our separation would be this quick, or in this manner!”

Celine chuckled bitterly as she combed through her messy hair. “Fate is unpredictable!” Leylin tried to hide the news about the central continent. “Plus, I’ve also made appropriate arrangements!” “What arrangements? I can’t keep the other races and rank 2 Magi in check. Even I rose the ranks to the peak with your help, I’m only a rank 1 Magus, not someone they’ll listen to!” Celine was indeed very realistic and had already accepted the reality of Leylin leaving and was already planning her own future.

*Swish!* Leylin flicked his finger and a black ray of light penetrated the window, landing on the huge black stone sculpture in the plaza in front of the teaching block.

*Buzz!* The sculpture started trembling and a thin barrier of light flickered at the top.

“I left some of my aura on this sculpture. As long as my main body doesn’t die, this barrier of light will never dissipate… Believe in the deterrence of this rank 3 Magus and you’ll still be able to continue for a very long time!”

Other than being a clear indicator of whether he was dead or alive, there was absolutely nothing else that was useful about this aura. But as long as the Magi of Twilight Zone knew that Leylin was still alive somewhere, he would be a terrifying deterrence to them. And this was a way of assuring that the relations and power he left
behind still existed!
“Good! What else?” Celine’s voice finally contained some hope.
“These!” Leylin handed her a few fine, white crystal chips.
“These are some spirit sources that I control: Iren, Gogoer and a few Rank 2 Magi! As long as they’re in your hands, there will never come a day where they betray you!”
These Magi were the core strength of Nature’s Alliance. In fact, as long as Celine had them under her control, the entirety of Nature’s Alliance would be subject to her manipulation.
As long as there was no internal conflict, Nature’s Alliance was the most powerful in the entire Twilight Zone. Even if Leylin suddenly went missing and caused a stir, it would not affect Nature’s Alliance too much.
After all, this was still Leylin’s backup plan. He still had the treasures of the Icy World waiting to be excavated and he would not give up on them so easily. This was also the reason why Leylin specially rushed back to prepare. Celine herself wasn’t an important enough reason for him to return.
“Besides, when I disappear, you can simply claim that I’ve gone to a secret facility for research. Anyway, it’s common for high-rank Magi to spend a decade on research, no?”
“Alright, good bye!” Leylin finally said and left.
This was similar to how a person working at an office would act before leaving every morning. Leylin simply left after a few words, not at all like someone who was going to leave for someplace far away.
In any case, Leylin had already seen Celine for who she was: a woman whose heart will never truly be moved. She was just calculative and thirsty for power. Looking at her suppressed excitement as she held the spirit sources, she must have already been rejoicing on the inside.
“Hold on! This will not be the last time right? What I said before
was true, I will take care of your bloodlines, and turn them into the
Guardian of the next generation…” Celine bit her lower lip.
“I’m sorry. I don’t have much time!” Leylin’s figure transformed
into a black ray of light and he shot into mid-air, disappearing into
the horizon in a flash.
Leylin understood Celine’s plans very well. Bloodlines of high-leveled Magi were hard to come by. Furthermore, he progressed incredibly fast. Celine thought that his bloodline was from an ancient, fearful creature. Hence, she wanted him to leave some of his seeds behind.
In actual fact, Leylin was now a first generation Bloodline Warlock. The blood descendants he left behind would also have the Kemoyin’s Bloodline and would naturally be Warlocks! With a bit of nurturing, they would be unbelievably strong!
But why would Leylin do that? Even when he fooled around with numerous girls before, he had secretly controlled his secretion and made sure not to leave any descendants behind.
A clink sounded in Celine’s hands as Leylin walked away, leaving behind remnants of a delicate gold cup.
She always had great confidence in her charm and knowledge, but looking at the situation now, it seemed like Leylin did not have the slightest bit of concern towards her. This hurt her pride badly.
But a smile crept onto her face once again as she stared at the huge number of spirit sources in her palms.
Now that Leylin had left, the power of Nature’s Alliance truly lied in her hands! A wave of happiness drowned her heart as her face flushed.
Everything had happened just as how Leylin had predicted. Under Celine’s leadership, Nature’s Alliance naturally became stronger.
Though there was unrest in the Twilight Zone for the 10 years after Leylin’s absence, it would still be contained.
This, too, was related to Leylin’s prior subjugation of the power-
hungry Twilight Zone Magi and the major powers of other races. Gradually, the tales of Radiant Guardian Leylin turned into a legend. As for Leylin, a new journey was just beginning for him...
Magma roiled around like water in a rough sea, emitting heat waves that swept across, a hint of the incredible power beneath.

A sheet of golden liquid lay at its center, as if a lake within the lake. However, this magnificent sheet could stop Magi in their steps. Above the lava lay a giant passage, tiny voices sounding from it now and then. The rock around this passage was very hard, and no one knew where it led.

*Swish!* A silhouette appeared on the shores of the lake. The light dispersed to show a very young Magus, his long black hair tied up casually and his skin fine and smooth. His handsome face was filled with the dignity of a ruler.

This was naturally Leylin, but his robe was currently a little dusty. The hurried round trip had drained him.

“My Lord!” a middle-aged Magus with bronze skin saluted. “Are you finished?” Leylin asked casually.

“Yes! Please follow me!” Kubler led Leylin to a hole he’d dug near the lake.

A giant ball lay at the center. The dark ball seemed to made of stone, its surface was a glossy black. On a side of the ball was a door which revealed that it was hollow.

“According to your blueprint and orders, all parts were made from the hardest layer of this metamorphic rock to bear the high temperature of the central magma. The joints were even reinforced
by runes…” He reported at Leylin’s side like a loyal servant. He didn’t even mention the difficulty in collecting the rock and casting it into shape.

“Good job!” Leylin nodded, looking at the runes inside the ball with surprise. This Mankestre bloodline Warlock was much better than he’d expected at alchemy.

“No, it’s my pleasure to serve my lord, there is no trouble at all!” Kubler saluted humbly with his hands crossed before his chest. This sort of respect was expected in front of Magi with higher bloodlines. Kubler had grown used to it during his time in the Ouroboros Clan.

“The lava lake is becoming more active recently. I’m afraid this means that it’s about to erupt!” At that time, the place would be flooded with lava, blocking the entirety of the passage. Kubler had come down here when the volcano was dormant, and had still suffered horrific burns. This had left him in fear of the lava. Although he went with his lord’s plan, he was still worried. However, the servant had no right to make the final decision. He could only make suggestions and had to follow his master’s orders.

“I understand. The eruption will occur in an hour and 23 minutes. Prepare yourself!” With the A.I. Chip’s ability to observe and forecast the eruption, Leylin knew the timing much better than Kubler did. He had run this plan by his A.I. Chip’s calculations, and the success rate was over 90%. Why would he risk his life if not?

More than an hour later… A black ball was floating on the red lava as if it was in the water. Kubler sat inside with Leylin, face pale. Watching the lava outside through a magic screen, he stammered out, “My… my Lord, this plan is too dangerous!”
Once the ball was crushed, they would be devoured by endless lava! Even if he was a Magus, this kind of horrifying death made him shiver.  
“Calm down!” Leylin stared at lava outside calmly.  
*Blub! Blub!* The lava had reached its boiling point, and the whole cave began to tremble, dust falling off the walls.  
[Beep! Eruption will occur in 10, 9, 8…]  
The A.I. Chip had begun the final countdown.  
“Now!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and the terrifying strength of a rank 3 Magus burst forth.  
“Freeze!” With his hands as the centre, a layer of deep blue ice spread out along the walls. Cracking sounds rang out as this phenomenon soon extended to the outside, enveloping the ball in ice.  
This ice was so cold even the boiling lava could not melt it. White vapours arose as the two surfaces came into contact.  
“This can earn us some time!” Leylin said with a smile, and then looked at the screen of the A.I. Chip.  
[3! 2! 1! Critical limit reached!]  
*Boom!* With the prompt of the A.I. Chip, Leylin and Kubler felt tremors envelop the ball. It was like they had entered the body of a terrifying ancient monster, and that monster had woken up with a thundering roar!  
“AAAAAAAH!” Kubler screamed with fear, his hands waving around as he struggled to find something to hold on to.  
Then, he felt a force that could be from the explosion of the universe as a huge impulse hit the bottom of the rock ball. The lava rose into the sky like a dragon taking flight, except this dragon had a small rock ball on the front.  
Lava surrounded them and rushed into the passage. The ball shook continuously as it hit wall after wall, but what frightened Kubler to death was instead the high gravity!
As the ball had rushed up like a rocket, the two inside dealt with an equally large gravitational force. The intense force pulled at Kubler’s skin, making him feel like he was being bitten all over by ants. The pain made him lie on the ground like a frog, and he felt like if he wasn’t a Warlock with a strengthened body, he would have died long ago.

Booms sounded out and the trembling continued. The terrifying power of nature made Kubler feel like a tiny ant. All he could do now was pray; pray for an early release from this torment, pray that this rock ball would hold out.

Thumps and explosive noises continued to sound out. This was a giant volcanic range, and today its central volcano had accumulated enough pressure to erupt.

Masses of black smog were ejected into the sky, forming a sea of gray clouds that shrouded the nearby lands in darkness. Rivulets of lava flowed down the mountain slopes, looking like arteries on flesh.

*BOOM!* Finally, with a huge explosion that caused an earthquake, the volcano erupted. It was as if heaven and earth were torn asunder, and the world was ruined. Red lava, dotted with gold, burst into the sky transforming into countless fire dragons that flew in every direction. Fire raged, and explosions rang forth even as the earth quaked. It was like armageddon.

Amidst this terrifying lava were multiple rocks. Boulders that were as large as hills hit the ground with great force, cracking the earth underneath and ruining everything around them.

*Bang!* Among the countless boulders in the sky was one rock with a particularly regular shape. This rock ball streaked across the ground, leaving behind it a long track of burnt black. The surface of the ball was still a dull red, as if it was ready to melt any moment.
The ball soon began to crack apart, and a portion was thrown off with a bang, revealing a hollow interior.
“So this is the central continent?” Leylin came out of the ball, exhaling a breath that was as hot as fire itself.
The hellish scene nearby did not affect him. Instead, he was filled with delightful anticipation. “The central continent, here I come.” he murmured in his mind.
It took a while for Kubler to slowly crawl out of the ball, coughing. His body was in a mess, with some burn marks on it.
The layer of ice Leylin had made had been thawed within a few dozen seconds of the eruption. Afterwards, the rock ball had heated up to extremely high temperatures. They would have been roasted had they not been Magi.
“Exciting! This is so exciting!” After retching for a while, Kubler wiped his sweat off, fear in his eyes.
“Relax! We got out safely, didn’t we?” Leylin turned back and smiled. “It’s quite fair for us to pay a small price for concentrating a day’s journey into a few minutes!”
“Yes, my Lord!” Kubler could do nothing but smile.
“So is this the central continent?” Seeing Kubler collect himself, Leylin wanted to confirm it with him.
“Yes!” Kubler said even as his expression turned complicated, “This is the Mt. Asura of the central continent. The land that we are standing on now is undoubtedly of the central continent.”

……

Three days later, in a small town.
A giant gleaming revolving gate swung around as carriages and people wearing strange clothes passed by, some of them official Magi.
Leylin was sitting in a hotel room, the pudding and juice in front of
him all but untouched. He was staring outside with a dreamy gaze. At that time, the door was opened with a thump and Kubler stepped in.

“My Lord! I’ve bought tickets for an airship heading to the Black River Domain that leaves tomorrow morning! In at most four days, we will arrive at the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan!” His voice was tinted with excitement.
“Hmm!” Leylin nodded his head inattentively. “I see many Magi here!” He pointed to the outside.

A Magus who was dressed like a wandering poet was playing a pipe organ. A group of residents was watching and cheering him on.

“Yes! Over here, official Magi often mingle amongst the commoners and the residents know them very well too…” Kubler explained to Leylin. “In the central continent, the Magi and nobility communicate in the Byron language. Hence, my Lord, you do not need to worry about a language barrier. In fact, here are some materials about the central continent and a few variants of maps as well as information about communication.”

Kubler respectfully handed over a crystal ball filled with information to Leylin.

For a Magus to learn the Byron language was compulsory. Thus, Leylin and Kubler could communicate the moment they met. They could understand each other immediately.

Leylin helped himself to a scoop of dessert. A rich, fragrant, and sweet flavour excited his taste buds, “Nice delicate food, looks like the lifestyles of the commoners in the central continent are better than in Twilight Zone…..”

“Naturally. This is the central continent, the core of the Magus world!” Kubler exclaimed with a hint of pride. Leylin smiled and shook his head.
Even if the seven layers of the subterranean world did not agree with such a statement, during the ancient past of the central continent, there was at least a rank 7 Magus overseeing it. But now? Only a slight hint of their past glory had been restored. As for this problem, Leylin did not want to do anything about it. After all, the current situation in the central continent might suit him better.

After a night of good rest, Leylin and Kubler headed towards a location outside of the city. The busy road there was filled with horse carriages and other means of transportation. Loads of luggage and goods were being transported on them and the place looked prosperous. In addition, every passerby on the street had some level of energy undulations on them. There were very few commoners present. Leylin and Kubler crossed the wide and sturdy road and saw what looked like a futuristic airport. There were many white oval-shaped airships at the huge flat field, some taking off and others landing. A throng of people moved in and out of them like an army of ants. Some of the airships were towing truckloads of goods, with workers calling out to their partners to off-load the cargo and luggage. The scene was hot, busy, and messy.

The central continent was huge, its lands vast and boundless. Ground transport was not only slow, but it was also much more dangerous. Hence, airships had become their common mode of transportation. Even within the small section of a city, there was an airship docking point with a few Magi and acolytes on duty manning it. Their responsibilities included maintaining law and order in the city and the maintenance and repair of airships. On top of that, there was a pool of specially trained engineers for the job. With bodies as thin as a match, bulging eyes and balding heads, Leylin saw them working between the bases of the airships.
and the tunnels with spanners and other tools in their hands. Construction cost and maintenance fees for such airships were very high. Still, as long as the air route was secure, there were profits to be made. It was a case of large investments yielding great profits. And such investments could only be made by Magi who possessed great wealth.
The airships of the south coast were smaller than the ones here. Their air routes were limited and their flying times were regulated. They simply could not be compared to those from the central continent.
“Who is behind these various air routes?” Leylin asked Kubler in a soft tone.
A single airship ticket in an ordinary cabin cost one hundred magic crystals. For Leylin and Kubler, who naturally chose to travel in the superior cabin, their journey alone had cost them six hundred magic crystals.
Fortunately, Leylin was rich and imposing as he had control of an entire region’s resources. Money came easily at his beck and call. He had an abundance of magic crystals, so he would naturally not be a scrooge.
Even though Leylin had the great support of Twilight Zone’s resources, when he compared himself to the enormous airship business, he felt that he was still lacking.
“The central continent’s entire airship route is single-handedly managed by the Fallor Family, it is their private property!”
“Private property?” Leylin was shocked, and immediately asked, ” Who is the Magus on their side?”
Such enormous benefits that included crucial traffic involvements, if their background was not up to par, they wouldn’t have been able to manage such a thing.
And for the Fallor Family to dominate the entire continent until now, surely their support was a formidable one.
“The Fallor Family themselves have two Morning Star Magi. Of course, it doesn’t count for much. The crucial one who has their back is the Monarch of the Skies!”


With a Magus who stood at the pinnacle of the central continent devouring those deals, the Fallor Family were basically relegated to housekeepers. The actual one who had the control over the entire airship’s business was the Monarch of the Skies after all.

“Yes, under the rule of the prestigious and intimidating Monarch of the Skies, the safety of the airships is guaranteed,” Kubler remarked, a ray of yearning in his eyes.

Rank 6 Magus! This was the highest level in the central continent! Every single action of his would affect the lives of innumerable Magi underneath!……

……

*Woosh* With the whirring of the wind, the airship retracted its anchors, and it started to drifting upwards into the sky.

Leylin stood on the deck enjoying the wind, a pleased look in his eyes and a smile on his face.

With a mix of sunshine and the taste of fresh green grass, the cool wind blew and lingered around him.

“It’s been too long! Too long! I have not been under the sun for so long….”

Leylin looked at the blue and white sky and the golden rays of sunlight. Momentarily, he felt emotional.

Although there were sun stones and spells of everlasting light in Twilight Zone, they were artificial after all. They could never be compared to the the light and warmth the natural sun gave.

Those who lived in Twilight Zone for a long time constantly faced
a land and sky made of thick black rock. It left them depressed, and on occasion could lead to serious problems as well. Even though Leylin didn’t have such misfortune, he did not want to risk it anymore. He never wanted to leave the luxurious space and experience the radiance of the actual sun brought again. Those constantly under the sun would never understand the others who had been in the dark and who looked forward to its natural radiance!

As the airship picked up speed, the airflow on the deck increased tremendously, enough to blow away an adult. Of course, in such a situation, Leylin was unfazed and couldn’t hear the announcement made for everyone to retreat to their rooms. He allowed the strong winds to envelop him all around.

“Very beautiful, isn’t it?”
A sweet female voice was heard. Leylin turned to his right and saw a young lady holding tightly to the railing. She was tip-toeing and attempting to gaze at the scenery beneath. Beneath them, past the sea of clouds, patches of farmland and crops could be seen. The windmills appeared to be toy-sized and the outline of the city far away. Tiny dots of black were moving about on the roads.

“My name is Jessia, how about you?”
The young lady amplified her voice when Leylin failed to give her the attention she craved.

“Leylin!” He replied with no emotions. Leylin felt the energy rolling off the lady in waves, she was a rank 1. She could be considered a genius considering her rank 1 status at such a young age, but too bad, Leylin deemed her insignificant.

“So, Leylin where are you from?”
The young female Magus was not frustrated that Leylin ignored her, instead she started to ask more questions.

“What kind of power do you possess? Where do you intend to go?
Do you like the flower cape jasmine? I like staffs made of walnut, I believe they enhance my magic power, and they smell nice too…” She chirped on like a sparrow, asking a chain of questions. “You…” Leylin rolled his eyes and was about to speak up when another voice spoke from behind him. “Jessica, what are you doing?” Leylin turned around. A young Magus wearing a golden white robe with a red ruby emblem on it walked towards them, anger hidden in his eyes. “No… nothing… I am just out here looking around…” Jessica pulled back her head, looking pitiful. “Since you are done looking, head back in now! It is dangerous out here!” The youth repressed the smile on his face. “Sir Leylin, I’ll look for you next time!” Jessica waved while walking away, and the youth was clearly displeased. He looked at Leylin, his lip parted to speak, but did not do so. He shot a darting look filled with warning towards Leylin and turned to walk back into the cabin. “Ridiculous!” Leylin shook his head in disbelief. He knew the young female Magus had used him as a reason to dodge herself from the wrath of the young Magus and that made Leylin form negative impressions towards both of them. It was clearly evident that they had not discovered Leylin’s hidden undulating energy, hence one regarded him as a saviour, yet another unknowingly did not dare to challenge him. “Kubler, come here!” Leylin looked at secret imprint on his hand. “Master! What are your instructions?” Kubler got onto the deck swiftly and replied respectfully with a bow. “Do you know this symbol?” Leylin projected an image of the red ruby emblem that the young Magus was wearing. Judging from the proud persona of the young Magus wearing the ruby red emblem on his chest, Leylin suspected it could be the
symbol of a powerful Magus. Unfortunately, he had no idea at all and had to endure the critical look from him. Luckily, following Leylin along this journey was a Magus from the central continent, who was knowledgeable and was able to answer many of his questions.
"This is the crest of the Rolithe Family!" Kubler took a quick glance and concluded.
He knew that his master was not of the central continent and knew nothing about this matter. He went on to explain, "The Rolithe Family is a rather famous Magus Family in the Black River region. It's said that there's a rank 3 Magus in charge there!"
"A rank 3 Magus? What stage is he at?" Leylin asked on.
Rank 3 was a period where one prepared to become a rank 4 Morning Star Magus. It took a long time and was extremely difficult to cross. Within it, there were a few smaller stages, and each stage meant a large difference in strength for Magi.
For instance, a rank 3 Magus at the Vapour Phase was definitely capable of suppressing a few Magi who had yet to reach that stage.
"All information regarding the strongest Magi is confidential. We subordinates know very little about it…" A look of shame appeared on Kubler’s face.
"But that Magus Rolithe once won against a rank 3 Vapour Phase challenger, so his might cannot be underestimated."
"Is that so? I understand." Leylin seemed absent-minded. As long as his opponent was not at the Hydro Phase or above, he was confident in his abilities.
"It's all up to you now. I hope you won't continue to provoke me, or else…” Leylin lowered his head, a dark glint flashing in his eyes.
The first class cabin not only had individual rooms but also had the luxury of a dining hall with fine wine, all included in the ticket price. After all, given the value of magic crystals, normal food and drink were all very cheap. Only precious ingredients and high-energy beings could be used to make delicacies that were effective for Magi. That was why they were sold at such a high price.

“Sit, Kubler.” Leylin sat down at a round table with a white tablecloth spread over it without asking anyone and then called Kubler over. Kubler bowed respectfully, and seated himself at the edge of the seat, not daring to get comfortable. He was now a retainer of Leylin and was similar to a high-grade servant. It was natural that he acted respectfully, lest he be punished by his owner. Leylin noticed this and sighed inside. Kubler’s behaviour showed how rigid the hierarchal system in the Ouroboros Clan was.

Luckily, he was not only a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock with a pure bloodline but also a rank 3 Magus. The moment he went there, he would be considered one of the higher-ups and would not have to suffer.

“The fourth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil, as well as information regarding the shackles of bloodline! I have to obtain them from the Ouroboros Clan.” Leylin schemed. Though he had successfully simulated the level of Kemoyin’s Pupil through the A.I. Chip and information regarding multiple meditation techniques in Twilight Zone, he was not that confident. Hence, he still had an intense desire for the original. High-grade meditation techniques were usually not for training the body. They also related to a modification of the spirit, and this was
something the A.I. Chip would not be able to calculate. Just like Sacred Flame before, the A.I. Chip had made changes, but there were a few issues during the experimentation stage with the guinea pigs. Leylin did not want a repeat of this disaster, especially since this was not going to be on any guinea pig but himself!

“Mister, do you need anything?” At this moment, a waitress in black, low-cut maid attire with white socks arrived in front of Leylin’s table, asking respectfully.

Leylin opened the menu and took a look. There were all sorts of dishes, and they could be considered quite sumptuous. “Give me a calf steak and cider. As for Kubler, ask him yourself.”

The atmosphere in the dining hall was not half bad either, with warm light from a crystal lamp and a pleasing fragrance from the fresh flowers on the table.

At a corner of the dining hall, they had even placed a bard who was currently performing.

Even Leylin felt like he had made a good choice in spending those magic crystals!

“Mister Leylin!” After the fresh calf steak was brought out, Leylin arranged the napkin and, with a knife and fork in each hand, sliced up the steak that was emanating steam. The calf steak here was of a good quality, and the chef had also spent great effort on it. The moment the fork and knife made contact with the steak, boiling gravy gushed out.

Just as Leylin raised his wineglass and was about to enjoy himself, he heard a voice like that of a skylark. He looked aside and found Jessia, who had seen before, waving her arms with all her might, while that Rolithe’s face was as sour as a lemon.

“Oh!” Leylin greeted casually, and then turned his attention to his own food.

However, it was evident that the other party had no intentions of
letting him off. Lifting her skirt, Jessia ran over in little steps, sitting right beside Leylin.

“Mister Leylin, do you like cider? In the Jessia Family, there’s a bottle that’s not bad in our cellar…”

“Even if you’re looking for a shield, does it have to be me?” Leylin raised his head gloomily, taking a look around.

He then found out that he really was the only choice she had. After reaching the rank 1, Magi could use energy particle radiation and alter their appearances, retaining their young, bright looks.

There were very few geniuses who, like Leylin and Jessia, had become official Magi before the age of 20.

Many rose to rank 1 after fifty, and female Magi obviously wanted to retain their most youthful and beautiful looks. On the other hand, many male Magi chose to keep their image at the time they advanced.

Hence, in the Magus World, there were old and young male Magi, but most female Magi were around twenty to thirty years old in terms of their looks. There were few who presented themselves as old women.

In the dining hall Leylin was situated in, it was not that there were no official Magi, but most of them were middle-aged or elderly men. The few young acolytes and the like did not dare flirt with official Magi or rival anyone for the affection of the people around.

Thinking about it, it seemed like Jessia’s best choice was Leylin. Firstly, though she could not tell Leylin’s strength, he was definitely an official Magus. That was the most important thing! Next, Leylin was young and rather handsome, which was enough for other men to get mad at.

However, towards this unexpected luck with women and the calamity it could cause, Leylin rolled his eyes.

“Can I sit here?” At this moment, the young man whose expression was dark also arrived.
Leylin nodded and watched as he sat by Jessia’s side, much to her visible displeasure.
“Let me introduce myself. My name is Nolan, Nolan Rolithe! This is my fiancee, Miss Jessia!”
Nolan laughed slightly, putting emphasis on the words ‘Rolithe’ and ‘fiancee’.
“En! Honestly, this engaged couple is quite compatible! Both are just as young and full of talent!” Leylin nodded.
Through their conversation, the aura and waves that were unwittingly emitted, and even their eyes helped him deduce their general age.
Usually speaking, this would be a perfect pair, but it was a pity that the female did not seem satisfied with this wedding.
Though there were two extra members here to disrupt things, Leylin was able to enjoy his meal, completely ignoring Jessia who paid much attention to him, and Nolan who was about to explode.
Before leaving, the guy called Nolan secretly sent Leylin a transmission, “Get away from my fiancee, or else you’ll regret it!”
“Master?” Kubler looked at the expressionless Leylin and asked, sounding him out.
With Leylin’s command, he would immediately kill the moron Nolan who dared offend his master. Though they were all rank 1 Magi, these two were obviously rookies who had just advanced. It was impossible for them to survive under the hands of Kubler, a Warlock.
“There’s no hurry,” Leylin waved his hands, though he had some questions. Magi were rational people, and while Jessia’s actions would give rise to Nolan’s displeasure, he would definitely recall everything and not start a feud with another Magus over such trivial matters. Besides, Leylin and Jessia had only exchanged a few words.
In addition, Leylin would not kill the two of them over something
so insignificant. It was not beneficial to him.
“Looks like the female Magus called Jessia might continue with some tricks!” Leylin touched his chin, feeling like he was watching a show.
“Yes, master!” After hearing Leylin’s instructions, Kubler was unwilling but did not bring it up again.
Two days passed by quickly, the airship stopping outside a station at a middle-scaled city in Black River Region.
Leylin held a cane and put on a hat, wearing something like a suit. He seemed even more elegant than young masters of noble families, having the dignified aura only a ruler would have as he walked down the stairs.
Meanwhile, Kubler was like a loyal butler, following close behind and holding something in his hands.
“Mister Leylin!” Jessia’s voice sounded. This was also her stop.
Leylin laughed and approached her.
Nolan stood aside, though he was full of smiles as if he had understood something.
“Sire Leylin, my apologies for my behaviour!”
Nolan resumed his good behaviour, washing away the impatience and seeming poised.
He had realised his mistakes and was now coming forward to apologise.
“It’s fine! If I had such a pretty fiancee, I’d be overly suspicious of everyone else well!” Leylin teased.
Jessia rolled her eyes at Leylin and asked, “Mister Leylin, where are you going?”
It wasn’t the first time she was asking this, and Leylin had refused to answer.
“Me?” Leylin saw a hint of nervousness in Nolan’s eyes, and couldn’t help but shake his head and break into laughter.
No matter how poised and calm he looked, his eyes would give
him away in the end.
I would like to walk around for a while, you may leave here!”

Leylin saw a hint of disappointment in Jessia’s eyes after he told her that, and Nolan heaved a sigh of relief. He chuckled as he turned around and raised his hand and disappeared among the stream of people, with Kubler immediately following.

With his astonishing senses, Leylin faintly heard two people behind him arguing in constrained voices.

“This is really….” Leylin shook his head, “Instead of focusing your limited energy on pursuing the truth, you focus on such things…”

“But I suppose this is probably a commoner’s pleasure right!”

He nodded his head after shaking it, called out to Kubler and continued his journey.

“After entering the Black River Domain, the Ouroboros Clan Headquarters, Phosphorescence Swamp will be very near…”

Kubler was naturally very familiar with this place and had a tinge of both fear and longing.

After hiring a horse chariot, both he and Leylin enjoyed the scenery along the way.

If they had hastened on with their journey, they would not have been so slow in progress. However, Leylin was not in a hurry and had wanted to enjoy the sights and sounds of the central continent, hence he chose to travel by chariot.
As night fell, the two arrived at a small town. Accommodations at the inn were cramped, and the air was filled with the odour of alcohol, sweat, and manure. Leylin furrowed his brows at such conditions. Since this was the only inn in town, he still reluctantly accepted it as it was still better than spending the night in the open. After putting down their luggage, Leylin and Kubler headed to the main hall intending to have a meal. The menu for dinner was beef and potato stew with some fresh vegetables. That was all the town had to offer. Surprisingly it was deliciously prepared with an enticing scent to boost one’s appetite. “Huh?” At this moment, Kubler’s expression changed. A gush of profound ash-colored dust started stirring from the main door of the inn, spreading continuously and extending to the other parts of the inn enveloping other travellers and the owners themselves. *Crackle! Crackle!* The commoners, whose bodies were covered with the ash-colored dust all stood frozen, their bodies as stiff as a candle. “It’s a freezing spell! There is a Magus around and we are the target!” A shocked Kubler stood up and exclaimed with anger. Yellow energy emerged from his body and spread all around. A circular radiance surrounded their round table, protecting them against the fate of the other travellers. Leylin was totally unfazed by what was happening and was still enjoying the town-brewed wheat wine. *Bang!* The wooden main door burst open and 2 Magi wearing black robes entered the room. In front of their chest, Leylin saw the familiar red ruby emblem. “Nolan! We meet again!” Leylin raised his glass and greeted
casually. Indeed, Nolan was among the two entrants. He had a vexed expression and stood, glaring at Leylin. “Where is Jessia? Where? Hand her over!”
“Jessia? Isn’t she with you?” Leylin chuckled.
“She left! I thought she was abducted. Based on the location markings marked on her body, I am sure she is here!” Nolan’s eyes turned red.
“Location markings?” Leylin laughed in amusement, “How insecure are you? To put such a spell on your lover?”
“I do not care. Uncle! It is him! I am sure this is the Magus who took Jessia!” Nolan tugged at the sleeve of the Magus standing beside him and pointed at Leylin.
The accompanying Magus shifted his eyes and abruptly took a step up.
A ray of silver flashed by and the light barrier on Kubler’s body collapsed immediately.
“A rank 2 Magus!” Kubler mumbled under his breath.
Nolan looked on proudly upon hearing it while the other Magus had no expression on his face.
In his eyes, he did not regard Kubler who was a semi-converted Magus. However, he was distracted by the silent Leylin who sat quietly by the side.
“Sir, we the Rolithe Family have no intentions to use force. The fiancée of our successor has gone missing and it is a big matter. We need to inspect this place and we seek your cooperation…” Power was exhibited first, followed by etiquette. It was a remarkable way of handling the situation, much better than what Nolan did.
“Absolutely!” Kubler was surprised that Leylin agreed instantly.
“Many thanks!” Seeing how cooperative Leylin is, the two Magi
eased the tension on their faces and Nolan fell silent.  
“Over here!”  
Nolan looked into an odd mirror he was holding in his hand and rushed forward.  
“Let’s take a look!” After his satisfying meal, Leylin got up and together with Kubler, stepped forward as well. The two Magi followed closely as if they were afraid of Leylin’s escape.  
“Ah…. Jessia…… My Jessia……”  
Upon reaching the room where Leylin and Kubler’s luggage was, they heard Nolan’s cries.  
“Bad news!” Kubler rushed in and saw a white coloured woman’s dress on the bed, there was a big patch of blood stain on the stomach area and some portion had dried to a dark colour.  
“What happened?”  
“Jessia! Jessia! How dare you…..” Nolan’s face flushed a fiery red as he yelled and stormed forward.  
“This is trouble!” Kubler frowned, a layer of yellow scales appearing on him and his huge hand and suppressed Nolan who had lost his self-control onto the ground.  
“Warlock from the Ouroboros Clan?”  
The Rank 2 Magus expression immediately changed to become a vicious one as well.  
“Even if you belong to the Ouroboros Clan, abducting the fiancée of our Rolithe Family’s successor and treating him with such disrespect, you have to give me an explanation!”  
The rays of silver in his eyes amplified and streaks of silver whips appeared in his palm.  
“Wait!” Leylin smiled subtly, his hand on the shoulder of the Rank 2 Magus.  
“Huh? What is happening?” Although it is just a hand, but it felt like a mountain. In fact, the Rank 2 Magus felt his body stiffen and couldn’t even lift a finger.
“Innate spell Ring of fire resistance!” the Rank 2 Magus emitted a layer of flame from his body, forming rings of fire with it, with streaks of silver on the edges, blazing the surrounding atmosphere ferociously.

“Annihilation!” Soon after, he heard Leylin mouthing the word.

*Hiss Hiss!* The blazing flames were put out immediately, leaving no room for the smoke to reignite the fire.

An enormous and horrifying spiritual force assaulted the Rank 2 Magus, destroying his defences, took over his consciousness and confined his magic power.

“Ra… rank 3 Magus?” The Rank 2 Magus turned his head with difficulty, his throat dry and rough.

Leylin had been using his skills to suppress his spiritual force and energy undulations all this time. Now, he undid the suppression bit by bit, and a huge tide of energy was released causing the atmosphere to become heavy.

“So tell me, if I want Jessia, do I need to be sneaky about it?” Leylin shot them a look and asked sarcastically.

“Of… of course not! It is our mistake! We’re sorry!” the rank 2 Magus shook his head promptly.

In the central continent, the sighting of Magi might not be uncommon, but it was not easy to witness the presence of a rank 3 Magus. And among the large-scale powers, rank 3 Magi were high-ranked with stable power and authority. They did not need to resort to any unscrupulous methods when dealing with rank 2 Magi.

At this time, Nolan was speechless. Although Kubler had lifted the spell on him, he lay helplessly on the floor with cold sweat trickling endlessly.

The Magus with the highest power in the whole of the Rolithe Family was only at Rank 3. If Leylin was displeased and had them killed, the other Magi might not even have the ability to seek revenge.
Thoughts of killing them crossed Leylin’s mind, but he eventually let it slide.
To him, there were no benefits in killing either these 2 Magi or even Jessia. Additionally, he might provoke an enemy with rank 3 strength.
Even though he was not afraid of the opposite party, he did not want any trouble.
“Follow me!” As such, he looked nonchalantly at the rank 2 Magus and Nolan, who was still lying on the floor before heading out.
Kubler followed Leylin closely, with the rank 2 Magus and Nolan close behind. In the face of a Rank 3 Magus, they had no chance of trying any tricks, hence they could only follow Leylin’s orders.
Leylin walked on with a destination in mind and soon they left the town and reached a paulownia tree forest.
Nolan didn’t quite understand anything, he merely followed suit.
Leylin came upon what seemed like the biggest paulownia tree, and knocked gently on the trunk as if he were knocking on a door.
“Anyone there?”
*Dong Dong!* The tree trunk produced a dull sound, but there was no response and all was quiet.
“You are very clever! And attentive to your set-up. However, you are still not wise. After completing your work, you can’t help yourself but return to find out the reactions of others!”
“I have already noticed you, you should show yourself! Otherwise. ….” Leylin’s voice turned chilly.
“Humph! Alright, alright, here I am, what are you going to do about it?”
*Shhrrrk*, the surface of the tree trunk split open to reveal a round door. Jessia, whom they had first met on the airship, jumped out and grabbed Leylin by the arm.
“Brother Leylin! You are so awesome! How did you discover me?”
On the other side, both the rank 2 Magi and Nolan were speechless,
anger filling them to the brim.
“Jessia, What are you doing? Get back here now!”
Flames blazed in Nolan’s eyes when he saw Jessia holding on to Leylin’s arms shamelessly with her breast almost pushed towards him.
The rank 2 Magus on the other side immediately stepped up and delivered a hard slap to the back of Nolan’s head, causing him to bend forward.
Droplets of cold sweat were trickling down his forehead.
It was obvious that what had happened today was all a misunderstanding. The crucial point was, they were lacking in ability when compared to the opposing side
Moreover, any slight mishandling of the situation would enrage a rank 3 Magus, and on top of that worsen their relationship with the Ouroboros Clan. At this point, thoughts of death crossed his mind.
“Anyway, it is just a small misunderstanding! Forget it!” Leylin replied indifferently.
Before the rank 2 Magus could reply, Leylin’s ice cold voice was transmitted to him, “This is the price for offending me!”
*Bang! Bang! Bang!*  
The rank 2 Magus, Nolan and Jessia collapsed and were flung out, blood trickling down the sides of their mouths.
“Leave, all of you! I do not want to see you all ever again!”
“Thank you for sparing our lives, my Lord!” the Rank 2 Magus gave a respectful bow, and quickly pulled Nolan and an unwilling
Jessia away from the scene.
“I believe such troubles will continue to occur in the future....” The look in Nolan’s and Jessia’s eyes when they were leaving left Leylin with the feeling that this matter was not over yet.
The common hatred might have spurred them into an alliance in the future.
“What nonsense is this?” Leylin felt rather gloomy and thought he should not have gotten involved with matters between husband and wife.
“My Lord, should I...” Kubler spoke up with an ominous glint in his eyes
“No!” Leylin shook his head.
He fiddled with a dark and shiny gold coin in his hand, silent and in deep thought.

......

Phosphorescence Swamp.
This was the general headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan. Very few other Magi ventured out to this place.
The swamp was a sea of thick black wetlands and the air was a continuous mix of cold and chilly yet hot and blazing. Occasionally, flashes of green phosphorescence could be seen on it.
“The concentration of energy particles in the air is very high here! This location is a good find indeed!”
Leylin looked at the graphic data collected by his A.I. Chip, nodded his head and told Kubler who was standing behind him.
Although the average energy concentration in the central continent had far exceeded that of the south coast and twilight zone, the energy here was even more prominent.
Within Phosphorescence Swamp, the concentration of darkness elemental particles was the highest followed by that of fire. The
concentration of these two elements was ten times higher than the average of Twilight Zone.

“This is merely on the outside, if an element pool or secret plane was built, I believe the disparity would be more terrifying....” Leylin thought to himself.

“Yes, such a location with a combination of darkness and fire particles is rare. Historically, when we first occupied this place, there were 5 Morning Star Magi who combined their forces to destroy a few powerful enemies, and brought along a country of commoners....” Kubler was brimming with pride as he explained to Leylin.

“My Lord, due to my current identity, there might be some trouble here!” he added. He had been framed by others and was wanted by the Ouroboros Clan, hence before the accusations were lifted, he was afraid of being treated like a criminal.

“Not might, it’s already here!” Leylin pointed out. Soon a few profound dark shadows suddenly emerged from the nearby swamp.

*ROOAAAR!* Two high-energy serpent-shaped living creatures suddenly emerged, making a big splash. The silhouettes of two Magi could be seen on their heads.

“This is not even the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan, yet patrolling the perimeter are rank 2 high-energy living creatures and rank 2 Magi! Looks like they have a very strong base!” Leylin felt a resonance of bloodline from the serpent-shaped living creatures ridden by the Magi. In fact, they seemed to be blood descendants of the Kemoyin Serpent!

“Kubler! How dare you step foot in this place? Didn’t you leave?” From where the 2 Warlocks were standing, a surprised voice was transmitted out and it didn’t sound flustered.

Under these circumstances, Leylin discreetly nodded his head. It
would seem like Kubler was indeed innocent. The grassroots troops understood perfectly and even started to attack before they laid eyes on him.

“This is not my fault, I was framed by Johnny!” Kubler raised his voice, his face flushing red.

“We do not care about the details, just for the fact that you dare to step foot in Phosphorescence Swamp and brought an outsider!” Another Warlock immediately continued.

“I apologise! But I am not just any outsider!” Leylin smiled faintly, took a step forward and garnered the Kemoyin’s bloodline and the rank 3 spiritual force in his body, letting off a ferocious explosion. Just like a hurricane, the energy willfully and violently started to sweep everything away. The awe-inspiring kind of familiarity in power left the two lower rank living creatures cowering and bowing with respect.

“A noble rank 3 Bloodline Warlock? Who are you? It is an honour to meet you!” The other 2 bloodline warlocks who possessed lineage of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline immediately felt the suppression from Leylin. They knelt down to show their utmost respect.

“I am a wanderer from afar and unintentionally accepted a Warlock inheritance. I met Kubler along the way and wanted to take a look at the Ouroboros Clan. Why? Am I not welcome?” Leylin asked indifferently.

“Sure! Sure! It is an honour for us to receive you!” The bloodline resonance between two Warlocks could not be faked. Hence the two Warlocks were very sure Leylin was a warlock of a pure Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline! And this level was the highest in the entire Ouroboros Clan! Who would dare offend him?

“Very well! Show us the way!” Leylin nodded his head and gave the order.

“Yes! Yes! This way, please!“ The two Warlocks made eye contact
and immediately offered Leylin a position on the back of a huge snake. Kubler was offered one next, and he was secretly touched. One of the Warlocks could be seen secretly sending a message, probably with the intention of informing others, but Leylin did not bother to pay attention to it.

The Rank 2 serpent moved with great speed along the swamp, emitting an aura of terror that made all other animals stay clear of their path.

“What species of snake is this?” Leylin stroked the dark green scales beneath his feet.

“This creature is an improved version we created using a specialized combination of bloodlines. Their abilities are very suitable for those of the Ouroboros Clan…” A rank 2 Warlock immediately explained to a curious Leylin, hoping to pleased him.

“That explains why I have not seen such information before!” Leylin nodded his head, “What is your name?”

“Maron! My name is Maron, my Lord! “ The Warlock named Maron immediately replied with a look of glee in his eyes.

“Alright Maron!” Leylin nodded his head, knowing what to do to garner reverence.

The two giant serpents glided along with great speed. In about 10 minutes or so, Leylin reached the depth of the Ouroboros Clan. Here, a row of massive structures was combined together, forming a small scale Magus city, and at the front of the gate sat two enormous stone sculptures of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. With the delicate black scales coupled with the ferocious pupils, they looked like they could very well be alive.

At this moment, a small group of Warlocks was already waiting near the gate.

“Haha… Welcome home, my bloodline brothers!”

A young Warlock that looked like a goblin stood in front of the small group, his eyes that glowed with a purple radiance lighting up
upon seeing Leylin. He stepped forward, stretched out his arms and hugged him.

“Thank you!” Leylin returned the hug unnaturally and asked, ” May I know….”

“Oh! Haha! Look at me! I am so excited by your arrival that I have forgotten to introduce myself!” The fellow had very fair and exquisite skin that seemed to be emitting some kind of peculiar charm, a common trait among Warlocks.

“My name is Robin, you might not know this, but as long as a Warlock has the Kemoyin’s bloodline in him, he shall be considered to be a part of our family! My brother!”

Leylin could sense the aura from the opposite party and it was similar to his own Kemoyin’s bloodline. In fact, based on his spiritual force, Leylin was sure the young Warlock had not only long attained the status of a rank 3 Warlock, but also ascended further, with his strength and spiritual force at a high level.

“Oh, I see! My name is Leylin!”

“Yeah! Leylin right? Follow me! A Lord wants to meet you!” Robin held onto the arm of Leylin with an expression of excitement, totally ignoring Kubler who was behind him.

“Lord? Might it be…” Leylin’s pupils dilated.

“Haha! That’s right! My teacher, A Rank 4 Warlock! Morning Star Magus! Duke Gilbert has been waiting eagerly to meet our new blood!” Robin replied cheerfully.

Upon hearing the name, all the Warlocks bowed their heads in unison in a show of respect.

Rank 4 Warlock! Theoretically, this was the highest level for a Warlock of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline! In fact, it was also a truly high level for the whole of the central continent. Even within the Ouroboros Clan, there were no more than three Warlocks at such a level!

Leylin took a deep breath: “It is truly an honour!”
“Come! Follow me!”
Robin quickly led the way, with the rest of the Warlocks following respectfully behind. Leylin noticed how the Warlocks all showed their respect to Robin along the way. It seemed like Robin held not only a high rank in the clan, but also a great deal of authority…
Following Robin, he passed by various bizarre buildings with strange styles. There were all types out there, and before Leylin had the time to identify them, he was led by Robin into another building. After passing around a corner, there came across another Warlock in black gilded clothing. There were also rings of mysterious black patterns on his face. “Johnny!” Kubler, who had been following behind Leylin immediately clenched his fists, seemingly terrified as he hid in Leylin’s shadow. “Greetings to Marquis Robin!” Johnny came before Robin, and then greeted him using the etiquette of nobility. “It’s Count Johnny! Here, let me introduce to you Leylin here! He’s a rank 3 Warlock about to join our clan!” Robin smiled slightly. “So it’s Lord Leylin!” Johnny bowed, “Though it’s the first time we’re meeting, I have a request. I wonder if you could agree to it.” “If it’s about Kubler, I’m afraid I can’t agree.” Leylin immediately answered. “That’s a real shame,” Johnny answered indifferently, not looking the least bit exasperated, causing Leylin to shiver inwardly. “What if I say I’m the one asking?” At this moment, another voice interrupted. “Marquis Wood!” Besides Leylin and Robin, the other Warlocks immediately bowed.
Leylin glanced at him. It was a blonde middle-aged man, brightness and resolution in his expression that also held an imposing aura. There was also the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline on his body, and it even overshadowed Robin.

“Kubler is a criminal who stole a precious treasure from me. I hope you can hand him over to me.” Wood’s eyes were fixed on Leylin, a pressure being emanated from him.

Kubler was ashen, and after seeing Johnny’s look of satisfaction, he immediately understood that after seeing he had a new master, Johnny immediately asked someone else for help.

“So are you handing him over?” In that moment, numerous thoughts flitted through Leylin’s mind.

On the surface, Wood was truly a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, as compared to Johnny with Black Horall Snake bloodline, his bloodline was more noble. In addition, he had entered the rank 3, and from the perspective of one looking at merely profits, it was better to give Kubler up.

Exchanging a rank 1 Mankestre Warlock who had no hopes of advancing for a favourable impression from a rank 3 Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, there was little to consider in this trade. Johnny, who understood this, immediately looked smug, while Kubler looked defeated.

“My apologies, but no.” Leylin’s voice sounded, allowing Kubler to recover from his despair.

“Master!” Kubler let out a long breath, looking touched.

“Hm?” Wood’s gaze that was sharp like a sword pierced towards Leylin, “Have you thought this through clearly?”

“Of course! Very clearly!” Leylin did not hesitate and met his gaze. There was the talk of three ways of thought in his previous world, but Leylin’s principles had long since taken shape, and they were to prioritise benefits! The moment he had to make a choice, he would consider his own benefits and choose the best course of action.
Such a line of thought was not purely about tangible benefits; it also took into consideration reputation, familial and romantic love, and other such things. Of course, all this varied from person to person.
Some felt that love was priceless and decided to be biased towards it, while others believed it was worth 50,000 or 100,000 units. They would then make the corresponding choice.
For instance, if time was spent on working or going out with family, Leylin believed that working for one day amounted to 100 units, but with the family, he would lose 300 yet gain 600 from the happiness in his heart. The total profit would be 200. When comparing things, it was indeed better to go out with the family.
Using this logic, if his work earned him 1000 and the value of going out with his family were 300, it was an obvious decision to continue working.
Now, handing Kubler over might give Wood a good impression of him and provide a good foundation for this period of time. However, in the long run, the gains do not compensate for the losses.
‘Kubler followed me and brought me to the Ouroboros Clan. In exchange, I will ensure his safety. All this complies with the principle of an equal exchange. If I abandon him now, not only will my reputation be damaged, I will also have abandoned my own values.
“In addition, I’m definitely being watched over by many lords. If I appear to be too cold-blooded, they will definitely be disappointed. This will cause an eventual loss in the future, which is even worse than offending Wood.’
Though Magi were generally cold and rational, the leaders always had to advocate for hope, hot-bloodedness and sacrifice. If the lower ranks of the organisation did not strive to better themselves, and they weren’t hot-blooded enough to sacrifice themselves, what
benefits would they gain in the end?
The essence of any group was the unequal responsibilities of the higher and lower levels.
Honestly speaking, Wood was merely a rank 3 Warlock. The moment Leylin entered, he would have a similar status. At most, there would be a slight difference in their strength. Would Wood actually dare do anything?
If he withdrew right now, the onlookers would immediately be disappointed, and nobody would then rely on him.
After comparing these, Leylin finally made the choice that would benefit him the most.
“Good, very good! I hope you won’t regret this in the future!”
Two streams of white air were expunged from Wood’s nostrils as he glared at Leylin. With a fling of his robes, he exited from the side, with Johnny following closely behind.
“Don’t worry! The moment you enter our Ouroboros Clan, you’ll be given the position of a Marquis. Wood wouldn’t dare do anything to you out in the open.” Robin believed Leylin was worried about Wood taking revenge and immediately consoled him.
“So if I don’t join, does that mean he’ll take revenge very quickly?” Leylin rolled his eyes, but he could tell that he was being invited to their organisation. He immediately answered, “Of course! Where else can I go to if not to the Ouroboros Clan?”
“Haha…” Robin burst out in laughter and patted Leylin on the shoulder, “Exactly! In the entire central continent, the Ouroboros Clan is the best place for Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks to join. You made the right choice!”
“Alright, let’s not let the lord wait too long.” Leylin reminded him. If not for the fact that there were rank 4 Warlocks in Robin’s organisation, he would not have agreed so readily.
“Oh, right! Yes, come with me!” Remembering there was work at
hand, Robin immediately led the way. The two chatted as they walked, and after passing through a few obstructions, they finally arrived in front of a small villa. “My mentor, Gilbert, is a very amiable person. There isn’t any etiquette required, so just relax.” Robin smiled towards Leylin and then opened the door to the villa, bringing Leylin inside. The furniture on this level was all ordinary but placed very cleverly, giving a very warm atmosphere. Robin left the rest of the people outside and brought Leylin straight to a study room on the second level. “Mentor, I’ve brought Leylin here!” Robin spoke lightly to the wooden door, which then automatically opened with a creak. “Greetings to Duke Gilbert!” The moment Leylin went in, he did not first take in the surroundings or the appearance of Duke Gilbert. Instead, he saluted him. “Good child! Raise your head and let me look at you properly.” Upon hearing this, Leylin looked up, his eyes flitting across. This place was filled with bookshelves. The smell of black truffles emanated, and behind the red desk was a bald old man wearing a nightgown. He was clean-shaven, with layers of fine wrinkles on his body. “Is this the realm of a rank 4 Warlock, a Morning Star Magus?” Though Leylin’s senses were more powerful than the average rank 3 Warlock, he had not sensed this person in front of him. In his spiritual senses, there was nobody behind the desk, but what was in front of his eyes proved that he was truly there. The disparity of this left Leylin feeling giddy. A glint of wisdom flashed in Gilbert’s eyes. He scanned Leylin for an instant and then concluded, “You’re very young! You’re not even a hundred and have even advanced to be a rank 3 Warlock.
Though there was support from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline, your talent and efforts are commendable.”

“Hm… Are you willing to be my student?” Gilbert asked after staying silent for a moment.

“Of course. Greetings to Mentor!” Leylin immediately bowed.

Since he had already agreed to join their organisation, there was no disadvantage to having another person to rely on. In addition, this rank 4 Warlock was more than capable of guiding him.

“Haha… good! Very good! I was already planning to give up on disciples, but I’ve been sent a genius…” Gilbert chuckled, the wrinkles on his face unfolding.

“Congratulations Leylin! From hereon, you’re my junior!” Robin congratulated him.

“En! This is your senior, Robin. There are a few others who aren’t here. I’ll introduce you to them in the future.” Gilbert was evidently elated.

“Also, your title and territory will be given to you soon. Robin will bring you to take care of all these matters. You’re from another continent, yes? Robin! Bring him to my storeroom and show him Crystal 1 and let him have a better understanding of our Magi in the central continent.

Gilbert saw through a great many things with a single glance, not allowing Leylin to refute anything.

“Understood, mentor!” Robin and Leylin could only bow before leaving the room.

“That’s… it?” Leylin was still in disbelief. Wasn’t this too simple?

“To officially join us, there’s obviously more to do. However, since you’re mentor’s student, things will be different!” Robin said all this matter-of-factly.

“In addition, you still have to take care of a few miscellaneous issues. Mentor means for you to take care of everything before you see him again. He will then consider what knowledge to pass on to
you.”
By the way, what’s all that about title and territory?” Leylin asked hurriedly.

“Oh, that? All official Warlocks who join our Ouroboros Clan will obtain a title and a set territory.” Robin began to go into the details and explain it to Leylin, since they were now on the same side.

Through Robin, Leylin then found out that the hierarchy within the Ouroboros Clan was implemented similarly to that of the feudal nobility.

There were five rankings, from the highest to lowest, as a Duke, then a Marquis, Count, Viscount, and then Baron. Rank 1 Warlocks were Barons, rank 2 were Viscounts, rank 3 were Earls. Then came the surprise— if Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks reached rank 3, they would immediately gain the title of Marquis! This made Leylin aware that discrimination came everywhere. It was lucky he was in the privileged class, rather than the one discriminated against. Rank 4 Warlocks would then be Dukes.

The position and treatment he would get were correlated to the title. There a total of three Dukes in the Ouroboros Clan. They had formed an Elders Association, and were called the great elder, second and third elder, and they held the most authority in the Ouroboros Clan.

There were, even more, differences as well. If Warlocks who had Giant Kemoyin Serpent or Black Horrall Snake bloodlines would
have their title evaluation and territory given very quickly. However, if it was a bloodline like Mankestr, things would be slightly more difficult. Take Krubler, for instance. Though he could be given the title of a baron, but until now, all the processes had not gone through. Territories and the like? There was no word about it. But Leylin was different, for he was a pure Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline Warlock, as well as the student of the third elder, Duke Gilbert. He had a great background, and he was prioritised. Titles and territories would be presented to him quickly, and also be given the best treatment.

Robin did not bring Leylin out right away, but instead went towards the basement. This was as per Duke Gilbert’s instructions, where Robin brought Leylin to see something.

“Leylin, have you seen the spells of Morning Star Magi?”

While walking, Robin would occasionally speak to Leylin.

“The spells of Morning Star Magi? Of course not!” Leylin’s emotions skyrocketed, “You mean we’re going to see that?”

There were rumours that Morning Star Magi could shift mountains and fill seas with just a wave of their arms, displaying terrifying power able to destroy the heavens and wreck the earth. At this thought, Leylin’s heart began to burn.

“I thought so. Mentor Gilbert believed that only after seeing Morning Star Magi attack would you be able to understand your path better.” There was a hint of a smile on Robin’s face.

“I just hope it won’t scare you!”

“How’s that possible?” Leylin laughed involuntarily. If this was in the past, that might have happened, but he had gained part of the bloodline memories from the Morning Star Scorpion Man. He had even witnessed an ancient legendary war, so there was nothing that could scare him.

“Hopefully!” There was a slight smile on Robin’s lips. Like Leylin, he did not leave the villa and entered the underground area.
*Clang!* After opening a metal door, a large complicated maze appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

“This is the Disorientating Maze, a spell pattern that us central continent Magi prefer to use. It is primarily used as sentry and defensive force.”

Robin explained to Leylin, “As a student of our mentor, we have the power to enter the first and second level. As for the deeper levels, our mentor has yet to open it up to us.”

Immediately after, he stood in front of Leylin and smiled at the entrance to the maze, “Open!”

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* A layer of rock fell, and a single giant pupil appeared on the wall of the maze.

“Remember, this is another student of my mentor’s, Leylin. He will have the same authority as I do.”

“Master has already told me.”

A spiritual force imprint extended from the giant eye. Leylin could tell that it was the core of the maze, similar to the spirit genie. The giant eye stared straight at Leylin. In that moment, a slight force field covered Leylin, and he tensed.

Fortunately, this force field was not on the offensive and merely surrounded Leylin. After extracting part of his aura, he left.

*Crash!* The maze dissipated, revealing a pathway. There were different small doors at two sides, with markings on them.

“This is Mentor’s laboratory and storeroom. Everything in the villa is a guise. Follow me.” Robin headed into the path, while Leylin followed closely behind.

“Here!”

Robin guided Leylin for about five minutes, and then opened a door before entering.

The moment he entered, he saw an engraving on a door that said ‘Image Resource Room’.

In this storeroom, it was exceptionally dim. Crystals flickering with
different colours were giving out magnificent rays of their own. “Crystal Number 1! It’s this one!” Robin picked up a red crystal on a wooden shelf the size of a fist, and placed it on a pedestal with a depression on it, at the centre of the room. “This is a projection crystal. We use it to store important footage, such as some important experiments, or battles between high ranking power.”

*Buzz Buzz!* After the spell formation was activated, the light in the room dimmed, almost becoming pitch-black. The red crystal on the pedestal suddenly brightened. A dazzling light shone down!

Leylin found himself standing atop a little hill. Green plains extended as far as the eye could see. He grabbed at a black beetle that was flying past him, and it went through his palm, appearing on the other side.

“3D holograms? It’s very similar to the simulations of the A.I. Chip!” Leylin sighed in awe. At the peak of science and magic, there were definitely similarities between them after all.

“This is a classic battle that happened in the central continent’s history. This is the attacker.” Robin appeared beside Leylin, pointing to the east.

The scene was pulled closer, and a human city appeared. At the side, many corps were lined up, creating an imposing aura. What shocked Leylin the most were the members. All of them were official Magi! There was not one regular human or knight.

“This is an imitation of the ancient Magus corps, ‘Thorned Hammer’. The members were all official Magi, and the team leaders were rank 2 Magi. The captain and vice-captain were rank 3 Crystal Phase Magi, and the corps could even cooperate to display a large-scale fire elemental spell! The range was vast, and on average, its strength was above 470 degrees!”

Robin explained to Leylin.
Now, two Magi flew out from the Thorned Hammer corps. The auras on their bodies far exceeded those on Leylin and Robin. They were emanating the tremendous bloodthirst of veterans of war. This aura could even be seen on regular members of the corps. Lelin knew that this valour and confidence in victory was built upon multiple conquests. Every time this corps levelled an enemy nest, stepping on the bones of their enemies, they would gain more confidence, even taking in the resentment of the defeated and increasing the strength of their spells. This was the way of war of ancient corps.

The two Magi of the Thorned Hammer corps flew out and roared at the city, obviously to urge the city to surrender. Above the city wall, it was empty but for one lonely figure. “This is the other party in this battle Morning Star Magus, Flame Manipulator, Lord Kason!” There was a trace of reverence in Robin’s voice.

Leylin looked this Morning Star Magus over. The Magus called Kason looked like a middle-aged man, wearing luxurious gold robes with embedded with them metal at the sides. There was a fiery-red jade band on his forehead. Facing this entire corps of ancient Magi, there was no sign of fear in Kason’s expression. Instead, he began to berate his opponent, probably telling them to withdraw lest they suffer the consequences. After the negotiations fell through, the entire Thorned Hammer corps roared, powerful and complicated spell undulations connecting all of them and converging on the two rank 3 Crystal Phase Magi in mid-air. Even through the video, the frightening waves were enough for Leylin’s expression to change.

In the face of this ancient corps, all he could do was flee, and he might not even be able to escape successfully. At this moment, Flame Manipulator Kason finally moved. Rings of
spell rays brightened on his body.

……

First was a red spell, the energy undulations indicating rank 1. Following it was a rank 2 spell…
A total of four rings of light brightened on his body, and at the last spell, it emanated tremendous waves that even surpassed a rank 3 spell.
“A rank 4 spell?” Leylin glanced towards Robin, who was beside him.
“Wait a while more. The show’s about to start!” Robin gazed steadily at Kason, envy and anticipation evident on his expression.
“Foolish Magi, today, you shall know how the dignity of ancient Morning Star Magi was established!”
Kason warned with righteous words.
Immediately after, the small energy undulations amplified on his body and seemed to change, to the point that even the rank 3 Crystal Phase Magi grew extremely fearful.
“Rank 1 innate spell Burning Zone!” As soon as this spell was launched from Kason’s body, it covered the entire region.
“Rank 2 innate spell Blazing Attachment!” Little sparks were created in the skies.
“Rank 3 innate spell Lava Region!” Great amounts of flames scorched the surface of the ground, forming a lava-infused land.
“Rank 4 innate spell Meteor Descent!” With Kason’s yell, meteors appeared in the sky, one after the other.
“Complement: Ancient Morning Star Magus Final Technique Fire Rain Annihilation”
After the four innate spells were combined, the fusion generated a change that made Leylin’s blood run cold.
Rumble! Numerous meteors exploded in the horizon, forming a rain of fire. The strength of each wisp of fire dropping down exceeded a thousand degrees!

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* It was as if the world was being destroyed. The earth trembled and the skies wailed. Even the sky could not hold on, forming countless spatial cracks that were quickly destroyed as well. The previous two rank 3 Crystal Phase Magi were unable to finish a sentence before they were broken down into fragments by the flaming meteors. Following that, explosion after explosion wreaked havoc on the land.

The vast area, with the city at the heart of it, turned into a fiery hell. Many Thorned Hammer Magi could not resist at all under the onslaught of the fire rain. They could only watch on in despair as they were swallowed by the flames. As Blazing Rain Of Extinction covered too large an area, any methods of escape all turned into jokes.

After a wave of the flaming rain fell, the entire Thorned Hammer corps had been exterminated. Besides the city that Kason was in, which was unharmed, the entire area had turned into a living hell. The Earth’s crust had collapsed, lava boiling, and it was as if they had arrived at an ocean of lava.
*Pak!* The video cut off, and Leylin maintained his expression of shock, unable to come back to himself for a long while. “The area that Lord Kason cast a spell on later turned into a region of active volcanos. Every year, it will erupt a few times, and all living creatures living within a few hundred kilometers would perish as it turned into an area of death.” Robin was still explaining to Leylin. “When the power of magic is pushed to the extreme, will it create such a terrifying scene?” Leylin muttered to himself. “Ever since that incident, all Morning Star Magi in the central continent signed an agreement that unless there were special circumstances, they could not use final techniques in the central continent, nor destroy the environment at such a large scale.” Robin smiled wryly. The range of these Morning Star Final Techniques were too terrifying, and if not regulated, it was impossible to live on the central continent if there were more great battles. Sooner or later, they would be extinguished, similar to how the ancient era had died. “Phew…” Leylin sighed. The scene just now had truly astounded him. Though he had fragments of the Scorpion Man’s memories, there were differences between Morning Star creatures and Magi. What he could feel was the terrifyingly durable body of the creature. As for the battle at the end, it was much too profound for him to understand. Now, there was a Morning Star Magus that had proven to Leylin that once he advanced to the rank 4 realm, just simple spells could create a giant qualitative change. “How could the power of a rank 4 spell have such a frightening effect? Even if it’s a combination spell, it doesn’t make sense!” Leylin mumbled to himself. Robin shook his head, obviously thinking differently. “Haha, this is
the combination final technique of a Morning Star Magus. The taboo of ancient times! How can it be compared with little combination spells? Doubling the individual strength of the spells is the apex of a combination spell’s achievement! The amplification of the final technique of a Morning Star Magus is more than ten times that!"

“That’s impossible. Regular spells can’t support this consumption! Unless…” Leylin’s eyes brightened, as if he had thought of something.

“Exactly, you’ve already thought of it! That’s it! Only by combining innate spells that consume little energy but have great effects can the Morning Star final technique be formed. The ancient high-grade meditation techniques are the culmination of many experiments by ancient Magi, designing innate spells that are the most suitable for combination. It is also a process that can be solidified in the sea of consciousness!” Robin immediately narrated the details.

“There have to be four levels in a high-grade meditation technique. This is the reason! Only Magi who form their innate spells by following high-grade meditation techniques are able to combine them when they are at rank 4, forming the Morning Star final technique. That’s why the fourth level in any high-grade meditation technique is the most precious part!”

“Then how about Magi who use Grine Water to solidify their innate spell model?” Leylin suddenly asked, and then realised the stupidity of his question.

“Grine Water, combined with an innate spell model? Is that the method to advance in your hometown? We have something like that in the central continent… Thank goodness you did not choose that!”

Robin’s expression seemed to say ‘you’re very lucky’.

“The combination of a Morning Star final technique is the culmination of precious experience gained by generations of
experiments. The Magi who used random ways to solidify their innate spells would be extremely lucky if they were not consumed by it. To create a combination final technique? Dream on! I wouldn’t be surprised if they got themselves into an explosion!”

Leylin’s expression was grim. He naturally understood the difficulty in designing a final technique from scratch. Even he, with his A.I. Chip, did not have much confidence. Those Magi could only weep in despair.

At this point, a smile appeared on Robin’s lips, “Now that I think about it, there are a few Morning Star Magi like that in the central continent. As many innate spells have long since been solidified, there is little opportunity to alter them. Though there are those lucky enough to rise to the rank 4 realm, they wouldn’t have a Morning Star final technique. Due to the huge consumption of their innate spells, they could only be slightly stronger than rank 3 Magi, and are viewed as a disgrace to Morning Star Magi in the central continent.”

“So based on what senior mentioned, the final technique from high-grade meditation techniques are set by the technique?” Leylin suddenly had a question, “Then at the fourth level of our Kemoyin’s Pupil, what kind of final technique will there be?”

“Your conjecture is right! Each final technique from high-grade meditation techniques is fixed. Since innate spells are formed from high-grade meditation techniques, they cannot be changed. From the final technique, one can tell the high-grade meditation technique a Morning Star Magus trains in.” Robin nodded, “As for the Morning Star final technique of us Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, it is the Flawless Morphing Technique.”

“Flawless Morphing Technique?” Leylin was puzzled.

“En! Actually, almost all Warlocks develop Morning Star final techniques that are rather similar after reaching rank 4. It is similar to an flawless morphing effect.”
“Advancement for Warlocks comes from constantly purifying the bloodline and altering the body, drawing close to the source of the bloodline. That is why after reaching the rank 4 realm, we can even use the Morphing Technique and simulate the form of a real ancient creature, as well as display all its strength!”

Robin spoke emotionally.

“In other words, after reaching rank four, Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks can turn into an ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent at will?” Leylin recalled the terrifying durability and strength of the Scorpion Man who was at the Morning Star realm. If combined with the brain and spells of Warlocks…

“That truly is terrifying…”

Ancient bloodline creatures were originally very powerful, and even Morning Star Magi did not dare provoke Morning Star giant beasts. If combined with a Warlock’s strengths, how formidable could they become? Just the thought of it caused Leylin’s to be stirred up.

“I see. It’s no wonder that the solidified spells of high-grade meditation techniques cannot be modified. Each level is fixed, as this is the optimum combination created by ancient Magi. With no internal friction and with the force of point mass that Morning Star Magi have condensed to the utmost, this will create a terrifying qualitative result.” Leylin immediately recalled the crimson spiritual force core crystal in his sea of consciousness.

After reaching rank 3, the crystal had formed a complicated three-layered tessellated structure. The crystal of the third level had become even more intricate, the runes even more complicated and forming his innate spell Intimidating Gaze.

When the runes for Intimidating Gaze combined with the ones from before, the new rune had been a strange crimson. All that was lacking was something in the center, which could then help it fully display formidable strength.
“This is probably the prototype for my rank 4 Morning Star final technique!” Leylin sighed. All of a sudden, he was very glad that he had not used the fourth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil simulated with his A.I. Chip. Though, in principle, the A.I. Chip’s version was perfect, most of the high-grade meditation techniques in the subterranean world lacked a fourth level. The only one was Dragon King’s Mystic Might, which was specifically only able to be used by the dragon race, and had failed to mention all this information. Without this knowledge, there was a real possibility of Leylin suffering a loss. If this was the case, he would lose this precious opportunity and become like those poor Morning Star Magi who reached rank 4 but lacked a final technique. He too would be scorned by his peers. However, since he knew the principle behind this combination, through simulation with the A.I. Chip, he would be able to obtain information regarding the real fourth layer. At this thought, Leylin immediately commanded, “A.I. Chip, using my Warlock innate spell model as the foundation, simulate a rank 4 innate spell. Refer to the Flawless Morphing Technique as required.” [Mission established. Beginning simulation. Estimated completion time: 158 years, 9 months.] As per usual, the A.I. Chip gave him an astronomical figure. Leylin rolled his eyes. When calculating anything more powerful than him, the A.I. Chip always needed a lot of time. This also verified his previous notions. If he relied on himself and tried to create a reasonable final technique, it would be an impossible task. “In this case, unless they have plans of destroying the core of their spiritual force and take a gamble to retrain from scratch, all the Magi who use Grime Water are doomed to be cannon fodder.” Leylin suddenly sighed. The Magus World was filled with traps and
dangers.

“Alright, let’s go out! The introduction to Morning Star Magi shall end here.” Suddenly, Robin turned around for a moment. “Also, all this information may not be that confidential, but it’s only circulated amongst the higher-ups in a few organisations.”
“Don’t worry, I won’t spread this!” Leylin promised immediately, knowing what Robin meant.

“Good! Come, then. I’ll show you your manor and some important places like the trading hall! Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks are our most valuable members. You will enjoy the best we have to offer…”

The Ouroboros Clan held quite a bit of fame in the central continent. There was no doubt that they controlled a huge region teeming with mortals and acolytes. Parts of this land would often be granted to the higher-ups within the clan.

Some of the Warlocks in the clan built giant castles in their territory. They preferred to stay there, and seldom visited the headquarters. Slowly, they would expand their families.

On the other hand, most Warlocks who held a high hope for further advancement were the exact opposite, choosing to stay behind at the headquarters, leaving the territory to someone else to manage.

Given that Leylin was a Marquis, his territory would undoubtedly be quite large. The production of magic crystals as well as other resources from it would far exceed the poor south coast and Twilight Zone.

Additionally, he would be given an isolated manor in the headquarters as his personal residence.

The trading hall was like a stock exchange. A screen hung in the
air, displaying various fields of information as numbers blinked with different colours. Under the big screen were Warlocks of different ranks looking hurried as they whispered to the staff behind the counters.

Every organisation had a place like this. It was similar to a hall where missions were issued, and handled part of the exchange of goods. Leylin was very familiar with such places, but never before had he seen one this large. One message on the screen left Leylin embarrassed, “Rank 1 Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock with a decent bloodline. Selling the opportunity for a night’s irrigation of seeds. Price: 1000 contribution points. Additional requirement: The female’s appearance must be approved by me.”

“This…” Leylin didn’t know what to say.

“Haha!” Robin was not surprised at all.

“After the passing of generation after generation, most Warlock families will have their bloodlines thin out. Exceptions to this rule do exist, but are very rare. Even among Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, there are those whose bloodlines are weak enough to match Black Horrall Snake or even Huge Mankestre Snake Warlocks. Therefore, Warlock families generally search for those with pure bloodlines to improve their own fading ones. There are some weaker Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks who live on this income. Although it’s difficult for a Warlock to sire a child, it’ll happen eventually if they try often enough.”

“That I know!” Leylin said contemptuously. He was quite unhappy about this kind of work, where they were basically pimping themselves out.

“By the way, you do have a very pure bloodline, Leylin. You’re also quite strong yourself, so be careful. The female Warlocks will go crazy over you!” Robin said with a teasing smile.

“It doesn’t matter. I won’t do this no matter what!” Leylin said assuredly. This kind of act violated his bottom line, and he would
not do something that went against his basic principles. “Your wants have nothing to do with it. Some female Warlocks with high bloodline purity will capture ones like you and not let you go until they become pregnant. Given that the male suffers no substantial losses and revealing this would generally hurt their reputations, they choose to silently endure, thus making it hard for us to interfere…” Robin’s following words dumbfounded Leylin. Robin looked Leylin up and down, and nodded to him. “Don’t worry. Based on your current strength, there are few female Warlocks in the clan that can actually capture you.”

“Robin! What a coincidence!” Suddenly, a woman’s voice rose up behind them. Robin turned back and saw a female Warlock with long black hair creating a divide in the crowd as she approached them. While occasionally eyeing Leylin, there was an undisguised hint of excitement on her face which sent shivers down his spine.

“Who is this handsome fellow? We haven’t met before, have we?” The aura of this female Warlock was the same as Robin’s, their spiritual force have both reached the Hydro Phase. She was also a well-built beauty, with a charming appearance and fair skin.

“This is Marquis Leylin, a new member of the clan who is under Mentor Gilbert’s tutelage!” Robin said with a smile on his face but he felt uneasy.

He transmitted to Leylin, “Be careful! This is one of the female Warlocks I just told you about, Blood Serpent Miranda!”

“Hello, Marquis Miranda!” Leylin knew her status and gave her a salute.

“Marquis Leylin! So is this the first time you’ve come here? Why don’t you follow me? I can show you around, and we can even go to my manor later where I show you the enthusiasm of our female Warlocks!”

Miranda’s eyes shone with excitement as she surveyed Leylin and ran her tongue along her lips. This further increased her charm to
the point that few males could resist her.
“My apologies! I’d prefer to be lead by Robin!” Leylin denied. He liked beautiful girls, but it was only if he was the dominant one. It would feel too humiliating to be used like a tool for mating.
“Don’t refuse me so fast! Five thousand contribution points! Five thousand contribution points for one night! Deal?” Miranda offered a price without any hesitation, and the Warlocks around inhaled a deep breath. It seemed like five thousand contribution points was quite the number.
“That’s enough!” Leylin’s face turned solemn, his hand reaching for the hilt of his sword.
“So that’s how you want it. Then let me tame you in my own way!” Miranda felt no fear for Leylin, and instead a foxy expression appeared on her face. She’d seen through Leylin at first glance, and knew that he was a newly advanced rank 3 whose spiritual force had not reached the Vapour Phase. Meanwhile, hers was already in the Hydro Phase. Rank 3 Warlocks were divided into those with Vapour Phase, Hydro Phase, and Crystal Phase spiritual force. There was a huge gap in strength between each phase. With Leylin being two phases below her, she was not worried even if he had some secret weapons.
“Right here?” Miranda’s eyes narrowed into slits, a dangerous aura bursting forth. Dense scales appeared on her body in the shape of flowers which made her even more alluring.
“Miranda! Stop!” Another clear female voice arose, and a red snake flew over.
“You!” Miranda waved her hands. Countless black wisps appeared around her, bumping into the red snake. Robin ended up having to repress the following explosion, but even so many Warlocks were pushed down by the aftermath of the clash.
“Another one! Leylin, your luck today is just too poor!”
“Another one?” Leylin looked at the source of the sound. The one who attacked with the red snake just now was also a female Warlock, her long black hair cascading to her waist like a waterfall. She possessed a voluptuous body that was in stark contrast to her saintly face.

“This is Marquis Freya! I’ve never heard about rumors of her capturing male warlocks, but her family’s bloodline has been declining in recent years. They are looking for a suitable male to marry into their family, be careful!” Robin transmitted to Leylin who currently could only keep silent.

“Freya! If you want a man, there are plenty in my castle that I can gift you. This one is mine!” Apparently, Miranda had already considered Leylin her own prey.

“Miranda, you slut! I’m not here for romance. I’m here to ask him to join my family!” Freya retorted sharply.

“No way! I saw him first!”

“So what?” With the argument escalating, the danger around these two women grew and everyone around backed away. Leylin stood between them, feeling amused and annoyed. Rather than asking for his own opinion, these two were fighting over him like he was a victory item. “Listen here! Are you even going to bother about my opinion?”

“You?” Miranda smiled faintly, “Weaklings have no right to an opinion. Even your Mentor wouldn’t say anything about this. I have an elder backing me as well.”

On the other side, Freya expressed her silent agreement.

“Fine! I will let you know who is the weakling!” Leylin drew his sword from its sheath. The Meteor Sword was a high grade magic artifact; it began emitting a scary aura.

Streams of black light shot at the two women, containing within them the horrifying toxins of a Kemoyin Serpent. Meanwhile, Intimidating Gaze, his rank 3 bloodline spell, shot forth.
Although similar waves shot forth from the two women, they retreated the moment they came in contact with Leylin’s domain. “An Intimidating Gaze this powerful?” Robin looked at the weaker Warlocks who had fallen to the ground. “It seems like Leylin’s blood purity is much higher than I expected.”

With a flash of black light, two distinct sounds rung out. A red whip in Miranda’s hands cracked into two, and Freya retreated a few steps as a red ring in her hands was crushed into a powder.
“I will only choose someone I like! Do not provoke me, or else…” Leylin coldly replied, sword drawn, as he immediately pulled Robin away.

At the bottom of his heart, he was actually a little fearful of these two crazy women.

“Pure Giant Kemoyin Serpent poison! Such a powerful Intimidating Gaze! His bloodline is exactly what I need!” Freya muttered to herself and watching Leylin’s back with a steady glint of light in her eyes.

“Haha! What a personality! I like it!” Miranda was even more excited than Freya.

“Hey. Hey! You saw his ability. Although he isn’t as strong as either of us, he will definitely escape if we try to get him ourselves. I suggest we join hands to deal with him. What do you think?” Miranda moved close to Freya and bit her ears. ”When the time comes, I can let you be first! Of course, if you prefer a threesome, I have no objections…”

“Nonsense!” Freya rolled her eyes and walked straight out.

……

“Phew…..” Leylin let out a long sigh of relief after leaving the place.

“Haha! You will get used to such incidents! You are considered
lucky, joining only after you have attained the 3rd rank. These 2 lady Warlocks are the most powerful. If they can’t get a hold of you, the rest won’t have a chance!”

“Thinking back about my past... Sigh...” Robin sighed as if recalling some repressed memories.

Leylin maintained his silence, he was sensible enough not to provoke Robin at the moment.

“This is it, this manor belongs to you!”

After passing through a series of buildings, Robin led Leylin to the front of a big garden courtyard.

At the entrance sat two enormous ash-gray stone serpents. Faint energy undulations were emitting from them. They were evidently not just ornamental.

Kubler was standing at the front of the gate, dressed like a butler. Upon seeing Leylin, his eyes lit up and he immediately stepped up and bowed respectfully. “My Lord!”

Robin handed Leylin a pink crystal. “My men have sent the decoration details to Kubler. This is the master key and identification crystal!

“I assume you will have many matters to handle since you have just arrived. Just remember to be at the same meeting place tomorrow afternoon. Sir Gilbert will see you then...” He stepped out after giving his last instructions.

“Show me around the manor! Also, your matter is resolved now!”

Leylin was deeply moved as he looked around at the surrounding structures. He would be spending a long time here if nothing happens out of the blue.

“As you wish, my Lord!” Kubler thankfully replied. Although a simple matter like his could be resolved with a word from his Lord, it was indeed rare for the master to care so much about a servant.

Leylin was now not only a Marquis of the Ouroboros Clan, but also a student of Duke Gilbert. His future was truly bright and
Kubler was naturally filled with enthusiasm as he intended to be a good servant to Leylin. “In this manor, other than your personal master bedroom, there is also a study room, a laboratory and an arena for negative energy. There’s a bloodline purifying pool, a quiet field of sculptures… In addition, there are more than enough specially prepared facilities meant for use by Magi who are 3rd rank and below…..”

Kubler clearly had been briefed before. During the introduction, he spoke with much familiarity.

“A common facility for other Magi? Looks like it is an exclusive one for the vassals!” Leylin nodded his head, “Go ahead, pick a set for yourself!”

“Thank you, my Lord!” Kubler bow earnestly, his face filled with joy.

The perks that came with being the retainer of a marquis were definitely outstanding. In fact, they were better than what he would normally get if he’d become a Baron.

“This manor is too big, and it is a little quiet. Look into whether we should recruit some acolytes or perhaps buy a few slaves…..”

“Leylin casually gave the order and Kubler listened intently.

……

In the study room.
Gilbert unrolled the document in his hand and analysed it closely.

“Hmm, according to what Leylin has revealed, his bloodline is that of Norco Curadu Sfar!?”

“Yes, sir!” Robin replied respectfully.

“This Norco Curadu Sfar is registered in our records. It belonged to a marquis of the Kemoyin bloodline who went missing during an exploration. Looks like it had been disseminated to the south coast,
and he also left behind a descendant…”
“The south coast! I travelled there when I was younger, it was a barren place…” Gilbert sighed.
To a Magus of the central continent, the south coast and Twilight Zone were poor backwater regions. The energy in their atmosphere was extremely lacking and their resources were limited, which was the reason they’d left.
“As for the Norco Curadu Sfar Warlock, he is considered my senior! For Leylin to acquire such an inheritance, and the corresponding accuracy of events in the timeline, it is clear what will come next!”
“Yes, our men from the south coast have sent over some information!” Robin nodded his head.
“It is a pity that he only acquired part of the inheritance and didn’t lay his hands on the fourth grade of the Kemoyin’s pupil!” Gilbert sighed, knowing very well and viewing the status of Leylin from the cinema room
If he had the full inheritance of a Morning Star Magus, perhaps it might have triggered his interest. However Leylin had obviously inherited only the external portion, hence he lost all passion.
“I agree with you!” Robin echoed.
For Magi of the south coast and Twilight Zone, even if they were to rise in rank to a Morning Star Magus, they would still be lacking in comparison to their peers from the central continent.
There were many advanced and sophisticated experiments that could only be implemented on the central continent. Moreover, a single Magus’ lone research would never be on par with the accumulated research of a huge group.
“Since there are no problems, let’s admit him! The Clan has not had any new blood for a long time!” Gilbert let out another sigh.
Warlocks and Magi were created differently. Not only did they need innate skill with the soul, they needed to meet the required
concentration of bloodline. Warlock bloodlines tend to dilute over the generations, hence the first and second generation’s bloodline were the purest and they held the most accomplishments. Those who came after would find it difficult to surpass their success. Even if bloodline mutations occurred, such cases were rare and random. The probability of success was also pathetic. Many of the famous Warlock clans of the ancient period did not perish due to external enemies, but instead due to their own bloodlines gradually withering away until they faded from the world of Magi. This was a problem of the current Ouroboros Clan as well.

……

The next day, Leylin arrived at Duke Gilbert’s villa earlier than reporting time. The two lady Warlocks of yesterday were either stunned or had other plans in mind, as they did not approach Leylin which caused him to heave a sigh of relief.

‘Amongst animals, it’s very often the females that possess formidable physiques and great power! Serpents, too, are as such! This might have caused the Yin element to become stronger than the Yang element within the Clan. In fact, it might be the root cause for the female Warlocks’ bloodlines to be thicker than those of the males.’ Leylin walked on with a thought circulating non-stop in his mind.

According to what Robin had revealed yesterday, within the Ouroboros Clan, even if the ranks were the same, a female Warlock’s ability was distinctly higher than a male’s. This seemed to verify his conclusion.

In addition, even the legendary Snake Dowager was female!
Leylin shook his head, trying to get rid of such mixed thoughts as he approached the main gate of the villa.

“Mentor! This is Leylin” he spoke into a purple morning glory hanging by the door frame.

*Crack!* The door of the villa automatically opened once Leylin’s voice was heard. As he stepped in, he saw that the decorations were similar to the day before, resembling a commoner’s grand mansion.

The A.I. Chip made a quick scan and discovered nothing out of the ordinary.

However, the more normal it seemed, the more vigilant Leylin became. The decoration of a Rank 3 Warlock already made it beyond his ability to perceive energy.

If Gilbert were to launch a spell in such a seemingly safe place, how frightening would it be?

As Leylin stepped into the study room on the second floor, he once again came face to face with the bald glossy head of the Rank 4 Warlock, Gilbert.

“Mentor!” Leylin bowed immediately, showing great respect and etiquette.

“Mmm! Very good! Get up!” Gilbert was reading a book that was made of bone. From time to time, green sparks and howls erupted from its surface, but they very soon vanished into thin air before they could come into contact with Gilbert.

“You saw the images yesterday, how do you feel about it?” Gilbert closed the book and it made a crisp sound.

“Very strong! Very terrifying!” Leylin truthfully replied.

“That was a true rank 4 Morning Star Magus, one that qualifies to join the frightening final battle for power! He was also a true elite of the central continent!”

Gilbert sighed and continued, “In reality, to differentiate between the strong and the weak organisations, you just need to look at the
number of Morning Star Magi they possess! I have very high expectations from you…”
Gilbert then handed a crimson red crystal ball to Leylin, ”This the fourth grade of Kemoyin’s Pupil. Since you have already achieved rank 3 as a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, you are entitled to it. And since you are a student of mine, I can give it to you directly! As for the requirement of rank 3 Warlocks to attain Vapour Phase spiritual force and things as such, you will still need to make the necessary contributions.
After he received the crystal ball, the A.I. Chip immediately recorded the fourth grade of the Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique and started to deduce a comparison with the current version, optimizing many abilities.
“Thank you, Mentor! If I attain the status of a Morning Star Magus in the future, I will certainly protect the Clan!”
Being imparted the fourth level of Kemoyin’s pupil meant he had genuinely entered the core ranks of the circle. Although such meditation techniques needed a matching bloodline, and was useless to an outsider, it was still considered to be very high in value.

Seeing how he was admitted to the clan with sincerity, Leylin was rather shaken, and he too made an oath. With his current strength, any words that he spoke of would hold its own weight and have a tremendous effective.

Gilbert looked at Leylin deeply, ”Very well! I hope you will engrave in your memory the words you have spoken today!” “From herein, I shall strive to impart to you everything I know. As for how much you can learn, it will all depend on your diligence and luck…” he added.

“Thank you, Mentor!” Leylin gave a deep respectful bow. He knew that, as a Morning Star Magus and an elder of the clan, Duke Gilbert was very busy everyday. It was most definitely not easy to take time out every day to teach him.

This also meant that Gilbert was optimistic about Leylin’s future. Besides, regardless of the inconveniences, it was not going to be a long journey!

Because it was as such, this opportunity was even more precious!

Thereafter, Leylin would be at Gilbert’s manor, receiving his teachings on foundation subjects. Although Leylin had already...
learnt most of it, the content from the southern coast and Twilight Zone differed from that of the central continent and Gilbert aimed to acknowledge and reverse these discrepancies. Even though it was just basic foundational knowledge, with Gilbert’s way of narration Leylin gained even more insight from the content. In addition, Gilbert had placed his personal library in a separate concealed room, allowing Leylin to browse the books freely. Content that he needed to memorize were those relating to history and magic
“Introduction to dimension theory!”
“Space communication knowledge!”
“Research on the boundary of the stars!”
Leylin as usual, approached the concealed room and picked out three thick books that he had marked. After flipping to a specific page, he started to read. With the illumination of the unceasing flame in the concealed room, Leylin was focused and devout. These were qualities that all researchers should have.
After an hour had passed, Gilbert approached Leylin. He saw the contents of the book in his hand and was all smiles. “Well? I see you are interested in interdimensional travel?”
“Yes, Mentor!” Leylin nodded his head and admitted it. Magi from ancient times were formidable because they had plundered an enormous amount of the world’s accumulated knowledge and their consistent research to upgrade themselves. Leylin wanted to be like them.
“Interdimensional travel may be dangerous but it is also very enticing. Once you succeed, the benefits of the world will be solely reaped by you!”
Gilbert let out a sigh and pulled out a chair, ”Alright! Today I will tell you about the research the central continent has conducted on
interdimensional travel!”
‘The central continent has already begun research in this field?’ Leylin’s heart skipped a beat. He sat upright and was all ears.
Gilbert gave it some thought and decided on where to begin. “First of all, you need to understand the concept of worlds and dimensions!”
“The multiverse is wide and borderless. Even the ancient Magi at their peak they were unable to explore to the extreme ends of it. Surrounding the Magi were the existences of multiple other great worlds as well. And so, a plane is but a small tiny world. If the world of the Magi is the sun for instance, a plane is a small star! However, no matter how small the plane is, their surface area will still exceed what you have imagined it to be….”
“And among the different worlds and dimensions, all kinds of bizarre living beings exist within them. In fact, there are existences that surpass that of the Magi in history. Some were the ones who initiated the start of a brilliant civilization. While other were the amalgamation of consciousnesses and concepts. No living organisms exist there, only a terrifying mix of chaotic beings with consciousness….”
“The ancient Magi won by means of conquering these worlds and researching their powers. They robbed the necessary resources and created their own splendid civilization….”
“And so, the basis of interdimensional travel is a cosmic gate! One theory states that the cosmos is the highest state of the multiverse. It is also the core of all dimensions, time and space! Through the cosmos, the world of Magi could connect to any other world at will!”
“I see! So it simply means, that the so-called Star Realm is actually a central hub for various dimensions and the world! “ Leylin remarked after some thoughts.
“Yes, you can look at it that way! However the mystery of the Star
Realm can never be fully comprehended, so you need to show your utmost respect!” Gilbert smiled and gave Leylin a stern warning. “Yes! I understand now, Mentor” Leylin nodded his head in compliance. “By opening the cosmic gate, you will be exposed to countless dangers. There were Magi who stumbled into unknown worlds carelessly and died to attacks from various dangerous creatures. And others who went and came back to the Magus world with unusual and terrifying curses…” “Of course, on the whole, Magi dominated the various worlds, well, except for that world…..” “Are they the formidable enemy that we fought with, during the battle that ended our golden period?” Leylin vaguely remembered the details from the antique book he had read back in Twilight Zone. “Right!” Gilbert replied with a tone of seriousness. “Magi from the ancient past conquered one dimension after another, causing many living creatures to bow and surrender and to be used as slaves. However, the huge victories and glory soon clouded their egos, and they became greedy for more insane strategies of attacks, ignoring all signs of dangers, until they met that world…..” “What kind of world is that?” Leylin couldn’t help asking, knowing very well the formidable power it possessed yet not knowing the seldom-mentioned details. “It is a world that consists of multiple planes that can no longer evolve any further. Clusters of smaller dimensions are suspended at its edges. And surrounding the entire world is yet another strong layer of crystal walls!” As a rank 4 Magus of the central continent. Gilbert naturally knew the details of ancient secrets very well. “There are many strong Magi in that world, some at rank 7, rank
Of course, they are not called Magi there, instead they address themselves as Gods!”

“Gods?”

“Yes, and so that world is known as the ‘World of Gods’! Although the opposing side is extremely strong and powerful, the Magi at that time were also at the peak of their own prosperity. Resources in the World of Gods were plentiful and this made the ancient Magi jealous. They saw great value in the Gods’ lands and sought to attain them. Hence, those Rank 7 and Rank 8 Magi who wielded horrifying powers started a war with them…..”

“What happened next, you should know very well! “ Gilbert turned to look at Leylin.

“Yes, I do! Neither side won! Many of the ancient Magi died one after another to the point that it ended our golden period. The door to the cosmos, on the other hand, had no choice but to be sealed too. All this led the collapse of the Magus world! ”

“Mmm! The way I see it, our Magus world and the opposing World of Gods are each at one end of a funnel and the cosmos is the link between us. As for the planes and other worlds, they are sprinkled between us along the way!” Gilbert explained his personal opinion.

“As the strength of both sides were similar, the opposing Gods did not have an easy time. There were rumours that their most powerful, the ‘Supreme God,’ suffered an irreversible injury that caused him to sink into an eternal sleep. As for the other fallen Gods, the numbers were astounding, hence it was termed the ‘Sunset of the Gods’…’

“So….. after finding out about it, the new generations of Magi recently reopened cosmic gates and started conducting interdimensional travel!” Leylin guessed.

This explains why the central continent is much more prosperous than all the rest.

“In the beginning, it was the lone decision of a single Morning Star
Magus to do so, but when it was revealed that there were no signs of invasion from the World of Gods and no adverse consequences, the other Morning Star Magi followed suit…”

Gilbert smiled bitterly.

In the central continent, if you did not improve, the others would naturally improve and leave you in the dust. Since using cosmic gates would cause no harm and yet reap great rewards, then how could the rest of the Magi endure this temptation?

“After some cautious travel, we finally got word of the World of Gods. The external layer of their crystal wall system had been stabilized, reinforced and hardened, resisting all external intruders and it had already reached a new, stronger level of sealing…”

“Upon hearing this news, all the Magi in the central continent unanimously let out sighs of relief, and decided to carry out even more interdimensional travel, slowly regaining the glory of our ancient past, so much so that a few Rank 6 Magi, those we now call Kings, started to appear….” Gilbert said conclusively.

Leylin nodded his head. The current Leylin, with his newfound knowledge of the central continent and battle of the ancient past, finally understood the total picture. At the same time, he looked forward to experiencing interdimensional travel.

“The world where I used to live in, is it a part of the endless multiverse?”

At the bottom of his heart, Leylin was suddenly filled with indifferent expectations.

The current Leylin had already combined innate spells with science and technology, embarking on his own personal journey. Even if other Magi were to achieve the much needed accumulated knowledge of science and technologies, they might not be able to match up to his rate of advancement.

Moreover, the A.I. Chip had fused with his soul when he was shuttled through space and time. This was not something any
Magus could achieve, and the probability of success was simply too low. Even if other Magi were to try and attempt it, their soul would likely be destroyed at the end.
“But, as your Mentor, I would like to remind you this. You are too weak to conduct research on this currently!”
Gilbert pressed on the interdimensional travel research that Leylin held in his hand.
“Only when you have reached the status of a Morning Star Magus will you be able to venture out into the cosmos!”
Morning Star Magus?” Leylin looked doubtful as he glanced at his Mentor.

“Yes. Only the massive spiritual force of Morning Star Magi can withstand the consumption as you step over. In addition, many dangers in various worlds are unable to be dealt with by regular Magi. At the very least, you need to be at the Morning Star realm.” Gilbert looked stern.

“With your current spiritual force, with the help of the spell formations and the astral gate, you’ll at most be able to approach a few Magus Worlds and receive a few sections of incomplete information even if you drain all your spiritual force. You may not even be able to obtain all of the information.”

Gilbert shook his head.

“If you really must do this, you could aid me in my experiment regarding projection of coordinates.”

After that, through Gilbert’s explanations, Leylin found out some fundamental information on how to use the astral gate.

This experiment of crossing over to different worlds consumed a lot of energy, and there were rules when it came to transporting objects. In general, receiving information through spiritual force consumed the least energy, but the moment any substance was to be transported, the consumption would increase several times. If a Magus were to go over, the energy required was tremendous, to the point that it might even cause Morning Star Magi to exhaust
themselves!
In reality, in both ancient and recent times, there were so many Morning Star Magi who had consumed large amounts of resources and energy only to find a desolate world, ending up with nothing despite their efforts.
The astral gate had always been a place where fortune and danger coexisted.
The Magi in the central continent seldom travelled over. They preferred to send out a few spiritual force coordinates, as well as use things like teleportation spell formations.
This was similar to setting down fish bait, and then waiting for the other side to accept it.
Though the chances were so small that they were below one in ten thousand, there was a real possibility of intelligent beings receiving the spiritual force tokens that were floating in spatial cracks.
Next was to bewitch these beings and then gather information regarding these other planes and determine their coordinates. If this information was determined valuable enough, Morning Star Magi would then open the true astral gate and then travel there in great numbers, seizing control of the plane!
“Why does it sound like we’re doing the same thing as a cult, as if some satanic summoning ritual?” Leylin was bewildered.
“It is something like that! Those devils or whatever they are come from a different plane near us. They like to gather spirits through this method. If not for them concealing themselves so well, we would have long since used the coordinates and tried to kill them!” A killing intent rose in Gilbert’s eyes.
“Well then, Mentor. I would like to enter your experiment with the astral gate!” Leylin immediately requested.
“Alright. While I am experimenting, you can be my assistant, observing and studying by my side.” Gilbert watched Leylin’s resolute gaze and nodded.
After leaving Gilbert’s villa, Leylin was in a very good mood. Not only had he gathered many ancient secrets, he was now qualified to participate in the space experiments.

“In the future, I want to make my own astral gate!” Leylin decided. At the very least, he would need to go to that Purgatory World at least once. He would gain a solution for the shackles of his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline there.

Of course, this was the hope of the entire Ouroboros Clan. Leylin’s mentor, Gilbert, and the two other Morning Star Warlocks were crazily searching for the coordinates of the Purgatory World. It was a pity that the multiple worlds and coordinates were like the numerous stars in the sky. With their method of trial and error, it was impossible to know how long it would take from them to find Purgatory World.

However, Leylin had plans of his own. He would not mention them yet.

“Leylin!”

Around a corner, Leylin heard a voice and halted his footsteps, seeing a blonde middle-aged Magus walking over. However, there was no longer the calm and dignified look he had had. Instead, he was flustered, and even the energy fluctuations around him were unstable, as if he had gained injuries.

“What is it?” Leylin was in no mood for this sheltered Warlock who had once threatened him before, Woody.

“Don’t think you can do whatever you want just because you have someone backing you, you gigolo!” Woody’s expression was terrible, looking as if he wanted to gobble Leylin up.

“Gigolo?” Leylin’s heart jumped, and he had a bad feeling about this.
“Woody! Aren’t you starting yet?”
A female voice that made Leylin’s hair stand. He then saw that Warlock Freya from before, pulling at a pet that seemed to be a black sheepdog.
Upon closer inspection, Leylin realised there were complicated black patterns on its face, its eyes flashing with intelligence. However, all that was inside them was now despair, frenzy and an unspeakable dread.
“Morphing technique! This is Johnny!” Magi naturally did not recognise people by their appearances. The familiar spiritual waves immediately allowed Leylin to tell the true identity of this sheepdog.
“This is Crazy!” Seeing the dog leash around the sheepdog’s neck, Leylin could confirm Johnny even had thoughts of suicide.
“Wooo!” After seeing Woody, the sheepdog began to whimper even more, as if hoping its original owner would save it.
Woody paled in anger, but did not do much.
He then gritted his teeth, bowing slightly to Leylin, “Marquis Leylin, please forgive me for my previous offences. Please do whatever you please with Johnny.”
Having said this, Woody immediately turned to leave, disappearing after turning a corner.
“How is it? Do you like my gift? To change him into this form, it used up a precious morphing scroll I got from my Mentor!” Freya pulled the black sheepdog till it reached his side, anticipating his reaction.
“I…” Leylin could only force a smile.
He had heard from Robin that compared to the wanton Miranda, Freya kept her chastity and did not do anything to charm male Warlocks into becoming their toys. However, in order to improve the bloodline in her family, she would go around looking for suitable candidates.
At this moment, she seemed to have chosen him! The earnest look on her face seemed to be giving Leylin a headache. Though she was a student of the Second Elder and was thus doted on, for her to become hostile to another Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock and even punish members in the same circle as she was in, she would definitely be under immense pressure. Of course, as a Warlock, she had inherited emotional instability and perhaps would not think too much of her actions. Through the A.I. Chip, Leylin noticed the unstable aura on Freya’s body. It was apparent that pressuring Woody was not such a simple task, and both sides would suffer losses. The reason Woody had automatically conceded was because his bloodline instability was not flaring up. He knew how to weigh his benefits.

“I- Whatever! Do whatever you want with Johnny!”

Looking at the whimpering sheepdog on the ground, Leylin really sympathized with it.

“Also, here are two things for you!”

Leylin passed her a high-grade healing potion, as well as a high-grade potion of tranquility. He was not one to accept favours from others. A healing potion was a small matter, but what was more important was the high-grade potion of tranquility. This was the strengthened version of the potion of tranquility, and Leylin had even added parts of the Icy Jade Scorpion’s bloodline. Though the effects were reduced, it was still very effective for Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. He really hoped this potion could slightly inhibit her crazy tendencies and stop her from bothering him.

Watching Leylin seemingly fleeing and disappearing along the road, Freya caressed the two potions in her hands and smiled, “It’s great as long as you have a good impression of me! You’ll be mine.”

……
If Leylin knew what Freya was thinking, he would probably regret his actions. Now, however, he had found Robin.

“Hm? You want to take a look at your territory?” Robin looked at Leylin in front of him.

“Yes! Mentor Gilbert has finished his teachings, and all that’s left are preparations for the astral gate. There’s nothing left for me to do, so I want look at the territory.”

Leylin spoke. After his current trip, Gilbert was done with teaching him. He was a rank 4 Warlock and had numerous tasks to carry out. On top of that, he had to focus on his research and could not continue coaching Leylin.

Before conducting the astral gate experiments, a lot of time was needed to prepare the materials, adjust the frequencies and the like. Leylin wanted to make use of this time and first leave the headquarters. A part of it was because he wanted to see his territory, but another reason was because he was really a little scared and wanted to hide outside.

“Oh, it was Freya!”

Robin thought for a moment and suddenly began to laugh. He seemed to have some knowledge regarding what had just transpired.

“She’s actually not half bad! She hasn’t had a partner in the past, and her mentor is also a Morning Star Warlock. You should just marry her!” Robin even teased as he suggested.

“If I really want to marry someone, I can take her into consideration, but you know…”

Leylin’s lips quirked in a wry smile. Though Freya was doing all she could to get into his good books, her final goal was to make him a breeding machine. Even if they did become companions, she would want him to marry into her family. How could he stand this?

In the deepest part of his heart, Leylin believed himself to be a male
chauvinist, and he could not stand for this.

“That’s true. Besides, you’re still young!” Robin thought for a moment and then nodded, as if having expected this.

“Young? I’m almost a hundred!” Leylin was speechless.

“Haha, I’m almost five hundred, and I’ve had 24 wives! I’ve married into several families.” Robin’s expression showed his experience in this area.

“When you’re at my age, you’ll think little of this sort of thing.”
The wind blew, bringing about with it a refreshing feeling. Leylin rode on a horse, looking at the scenery on both sides. Great numbers of farms joined to form a large field which many farmers were working on.

At the two sides of the roads, purification towers could be seen everywhere. These were specifically to remove the unwittingly emanated radiation pollution from the bodies of Magi. This allowed regular humans ad Magi to exist in harmony.

Robin did accede to Leylin’s request in the end, even sending another Warlock to bring Leylin to his own territory. “Marquis Leylin, confirmation of your title as nobility and your proof for your territory has been handed down. From hereon, your title shall be recognised throughout the central continent. The plains to the east of the Black Lustre Mountains are all yours. All the regular people living here are automatically your subjects.” The white-haired rank 2 Warlock said.

“Give me the map.” Leylin got off the horse, and Kubler immediately unfolded a slightly yellowish rolled-up map. With the map, the outline of the territory was even clearer. Not only was the area large, including a few fertile fields, there was even a coastline and a few good ports.

A Marquis of the central continent naturally had more gold than one in the south coast. The range of his territory was even
comparable to a large kingdom of the south coast. Of course, for Leylin who had been the Guardian of Twilight Zone and ruler of fifty million people, he was not moved the slightest. Meanwhile, Kubler and the rank 2 Warlock’s expressions were full of envy.

If the produce from the vast area in this territory was turned into resources for Magi, it would be a huge source of revenue for regular rank 3 Warlocks.

“Kubler, look for a few skilled administrators and build a governing structure. Oh, and also, for my seal of nobility, design it like my secret imprint.” Leylin instructed casually. Kubler lowered his head respectfully, expressing his understanding. Seeing this, the white-haired Warlock glanced at Kubler with a hint of envy in his eyes.

From his perspective, Leylin was a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock and was the student of a Morning Star Magus. He had boundless potential, and Kubler was his first vassal and was trusted. It was natural that his status would rise as time passed. At Robin’s side, even if he tried to climb through the ranks for his whole life, he could only enter the elite circle.

With this comparison on both sides, he was even more envious and jealous.

“Master, as a Marquis, you will need a castle to be the core of your power,” Kubler warned timely.

“En! Buy a few slaves, and with food and money as their pay, recruit a few people to help with construction. It should be done here.” Leylin pointed at a place on the map.

This was a field close to the coastline, one that was within walking distance of a port.

“Understood, kind master!” Kubler praised.

In reality, after the Ouroboros Clan had conferred all this to Leylin, he had now gained authority over the life and death of all beings in
his land. He was even allowed to make his own army and kingdom. In the central continent, commoners could be forced to bring their own food when conscripted, being forced into labour. They themselves would have to take care of logistics after wars. Leave alone food, Leylin was even giving out a pay. This made him benevolent beyond compare.

“Name the castle ‘Onyx Castle.’ Gather a few scholars and architects. After the design is done, bring it to me.” Leylin was not in the least concerned about these small matters, giving Kubler free reign.

What he really paid attention to was at the bottom, “Beside Onyx Castle, I am planning to create a Magus Tower.”

“Magus Tower!” The two beside him immediately gasped. This would be insanely expensive.

“Yes, and it should be made with the highest of standards!” In Leylin’s eyes, Onyx Castle was a place where regular people would place their focus. This Magus Tower would be his true residence.

“Why not construct it at the headquarters? Not only will you be supported with resources, it can even help guard the clan,” Kubler proposed.

“No!” Leylin shook his head. Though constructing it at the headquarters would net him technological support as well as resources, he would have to incorporate it into the joint defense system. Leylin had far too many secrets. How could he stand to reveal them to anyone else?

In addition, a Magus Tower was a prerequisite to experiments on cosmic gates. Hence, Leylin made up his mind and decided to construct it alone in his territory.

“In that case, the blueprint and expenses…” Just the thought of it made Kubler feel faint.
“I’ll complete the design myself. As for the expenses, don’t worry about it.” Leylin smiled slightly. He had milked the entirety of Twilight Zone for all its worth. Though it was far from the wealth that the central continent had, when all of it was concentrated on one person, it was still rather terrifying. His magic crystals had filled an entire spatial ring, and he also had all types of precious materials. This was enough to cover the cost of constructing a Magus Tower, and this would be no ordinary tower, but one constructed based on the highest standards! How could a regular Magus Tower contain Leylin’s ambitions? In addition, high-grade Magus Towers would be able to boost a Magus’ own strength, and were a place where many experiments would be conducted. Hence, many high-ranked Magi would plan to make their own Magus Towers. However, there were few who could afford to make one themselves without feeling the burden it would put on them. Others would need to live and accumulate resources for hundreds of years before they could even dream of regular Magus Towers. As for top-grade towers? They could only dream about those. “I’ll need many male slaves and stonemasons for the construction of the castle and tower. Do you have any means of getting them?” Leylin glanced at the old Warlock. “Of course.” The old man bowed, “Actually, there are a few specific channels my master has access to. They provide half-beasts, gnomes, dwarves, and adult slaves.” “En! Then I’ll leave that to you. I’ll need at least ten thousand people. The method of payment shall be with magic crystals.” The moment Leylin’s words were heard, a hint of elation could be seen in the old Warlock’s eyes. The central continent used gold and silver as their currency. Magic crystals were higher-grade currency that would have a higher
exchange rate in the black market. By doing this, he would definitely be able to make some profit secretly.
Of course, Leylin no longer cared about such trivial profits. If this could motivate the old man into working even harder, then so be it.

……

No matter what they had once been called, Leylin had decided to rename these lands the Onyx Castle Plains. This land was now the heart of his developing territory.
Under observation by overseers touting whips and clubs, groups of adult slaves transported large pieces of granite across the lands.
The granite had been divided into equal sizes from a nearby stone quarry and was then transported here, being piled up to form a large castle.
Leylin’s Onyx Castle had two layers of city walls as defence. The outer layer was slightly lower than the inner wall, and there were many sentry towers, watchtowers and the like.
Outside the Onyx Castle, there was also a channel forming a very wide moat.
The building was mostly constructed by piling up granite. Near the end, he would invite Magi proficient at manipulating earth-elemental energy particles to reinforce the structure and fill the parts between the granite, forming a large body. After that, he would get a few renowned sculpting masters to do more work.
After the construction was done, it would definitely not lose out to the grandeur of common nobility.
To complete the Onyx Castle, many slaves and the people that Leylin had recruited would put all their effort into working day in and out.
The meals that Leylin provided were not bad, with black bread and fish soup. For slaves and poor peasants, all these were hard to
come by. Hence, they worked even harder.

“Master, ten thousand male slaves have been transported over. A part of them are at the stone quarry, while the rest are here.” Kubler followed behind Leylin, seeming like a very calculating housekeeper.

As Leylin was paying with magic crystals and could be said to be rich and overbearing, not caring about the source, he was the best client for slave traffickers. The old man from before had also worked doubly hard, and soon enough, ten thousand slaves were bought.

This was not a small number, and thus helped Leylin gain a deeper understanding of the power Robin had.

“We need to use these slaves efficiently. We need to divide them into classes. Those who are diligent and proactive can get a small piece of land after construction is completed. They can become my farmers or soldiers. As for the lazy ones and the rebels, they can be a slave till they die, or we can just kill them.”

Leylin spoke indifferently. He had gone through a lot and had much experience in administration. Everything he said had Kubler nodding along.

“Tell me the progress of the construction.”

“Master, with this rate, your castle can be completed in spring next year. The entire cost comes up to around 1.5 million gold coins.” Kubler lowered his head and gave it a thought, and then announced a number that could cause a few normal kings to faint.

“Alright, that’s not bad.” These were trivial matters. Leylin let it pass through his ears and did not think more into it. The construction of the Onyx Castle was not the most important thing. What was more terrifying was the blueprint in his hands.

Kubler was fearful and apprehensive as he looked at the blueprint in Leylin’s hands.

This was the structure of the Magus Tower that Leylin had designed
himself.
The entire Magus Tower would be constructed with blurite metal, which was a stable alloy created by Magi. There would be a total of three layers underground, with laboratories, summoning and binding rooms, and a huge negative energy reactive pool at the bottom-most layer.
On the ground, the first floor would be the living room. The second would be the master bedroom and library. The third would be the Magus garden and ecological laboratory. The fourth would be the storage room, and the highest would have a positive energy reactive pool that would be the counterpart to the underground negative energy reactive pool.
Almost all energy particles had positive and negative properties. This sort of energy pool would seize countless energy particles and be a costly structure that could gather energy.
In Twilight Zone, Siegfried had been extremely proud of just the earth-elemental energy particle pool that he had saved up for over hundreds of years. However, Leylin had basically constructed energy particle pools of various elements, and even made two pools for each element. This terrifying consumption was enough for Kubler to want to faint.

This was not all. Kubler knew what his master was planning. Not taking into consideration the tower itself and the spell formations for each level, it was the intellectual core that Leylin was planning to make, one using a Domore Crystal and a fourth-grade magic scroll that could give the crystal life.

A fourth-grade magic scroll was not something that could be bought with magic crystals. If not for Leylin’s status as Gilbert’s student, he might not have even found a way to obtain it.

With a tower genie, all the defences of the tower would coordinate with each other. This intellectual being that would only recognise one master would be a great helper for a Magus.

After all these resources and materials were brought out, Kubler believed that this Magus Tower would not be unpresentable even for a Morning Star Magus to live in.

Its defensive abilities would be able to hold on for a long time against the joint attacks of multiple rank 3 Magi.

“The construction of the Magus Tower is a large project. With the
people we have now, we can only make some preparations. After the Onyx Castle is completed next year, I shall live here and watch over the building of the Magus Tower.”

In Leylin’s plans, the Magus Tower was something long term that would take more than a decade to complete. The blood, sweat and resources put into it could not be calculated, but after all was said and done, he would have a solid foundation in the region. The amplifying effect that Magus Towers could provide for Magi was considerably frightful, especially for a high-grade building like this. Leylin reckoned that as long as he was at the Gaseous Spiritual Force stage and within the scope of the tower, he would not need to be afraid of any rank 3 Magus, even if they were at the Crystallised Spiritual Force stage. Of course, if the offender was a rank 4 Magus, even one of the disgraces that did not possess a final technique, they could destroy him. The terror of Morning Star Magi was something he had really understood through experience. If those true Morning Star Magi used a final technique, half of his territory would be wiped out, and his Magus Tower would be useless. Unfortunately, he would be done for immediately.

“Kubler, have you found the people I asked you to look for?” Leylin glanced towards Kubler. He had gotten Kubler to look for talents at administration. Also, he needed many more vassals that would help him build up his power. In addition, when construction of the Magus Tower began, he could let them come and take over, and thus save him some strength. As long as he personally took the last step of giving the tower genie life, he would be able to have complete control of the tower, and there would be no other issues.
“Master, my apologies.” Upon hearing Leylin’s words, Kubler’s heart sank and he quickly knelt.
“What’s wrong?”
“There are many talents, and even a few came in answer to the recruitment. I have taken them all in. As for vassals, all my friends have the Mankestre Snake bloodline and may not be able to meet your needs.”
Kubler looked ashamed.
His clan of friends were obviously of the same rank as him. If he were to bring them to Leylin, it was just seeking death. He would obviously not do so. Higher-ranked Warlocks would naturally want to serve Leylin, but he lacked the connections and could not get into contact with them.
“En! That’s true.” Leylin stroked his chin, having guessed the reason. He considered looking for Robin, where he would surely be able to recruit a few Warlocks.
He could not even consider Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. However, among the rank 2 and even rank 3 Warlocks, there were surely some who would think this was a dream come true, even going as far as hugging onto his leg, crying and yelling in hopes of getting the position.
“Let’s look at the talents you recruited who can take care of our internal affairs.”
“Understood, master.” Seeing that Leylin did not punish him, Kubler relaxed and brought Leylin to another makeshift camp.
Here, a few regular humans whose auras were so very weak, waited in trepidation to meet with Leylin.
Leylin even felt that if he did not intentionally moderate himself, just the radiation from his body would kill all these people, and it would not be a peaceful death.
Of course, out of all these regular humans, there were one or two acolytes. However, in Leylin’s eyes, they were just slightly-larger
“Greetings to the Marquis of Onyx Castle!” A few of them called, and then bowed respectfully to Leylin. He scanned them and realised most of them were elderly, with one of them being a resolute-looking middle-aged man. “Announce your name and capabilities.” Kubler saw Leylin’s expression and shouted.

“I am Saltcliffe, proficient in internal affairs.” This was an old man. “My name is Royce, and I’m adept at training troops. I was once the commander in a dukedom.” This was the middle-aged man. “My name is Alesandor, and I’m proficient at internal affairs and law.” This old man was brimming with the waves of an acolyte, and Leylin shot him a second glance. “Alesandor, have you taken the blue berry essence before?” Leylin’s nose wrinkled and he suddenly asked. This blue berry essence was a special secretion of plants, and had the effect of lengthening the lives of acolytes who were below official Magi. However, their strength would be fixed, and they would never be able to improve.

“Yes, my lord. I am now only a hundred and fifty, and I have a hundred or so more years to work under you.” Alesandor was truly a magician who knew the way they thought. What Leylin needed was long-term support. Regular old geezers would be so old they could not move in ten or so years. What use were they? “Very good. You and Royce, from just now have been recruited.” As for the old people who were experienced but on the verge of death, they could only take their leave regretfully. After they left, Royce and Alesandor bowed once more, “Master!” This was the etiquette used when vassals greeted their masters.
“From hereon, you are all my subordinates. Royce is in charge of security and the army, while Alesandor will take care of internal affairs. As long as you work hard, I will bestow upon you titles and your own land, and also take in your descendants to work for me.”
As nobility, Leylin naturally knew what they wanted, and want to use it to motivate them to work diligently.
As expected, after hearing his promise, Royce and Alesandor both knelt in gratitude, kissing the ground under Leylin’s feet. “I shall offer my loyalty and respect, even if the world were to end.”
“En! You can go. Kubler will give you more details.” Leylin waved his arms.
He was in no mood to deal with this, and could only pass on his authority to someone else to make decisions.
If this was in the middle ages in the previous world, doing something like this would mean certain death. He would be made a figurehead by his subordinates, or even killed, but it was different here.
Leylin himself held absolute power and did not have to worry about what his subordinates thought.
Under the deterrence of Magi, those two would not dare to have any strange thoughts or plans.
“It’s about time I return. Not only do I need to gain experience from Mentor Gilbert, it’s best to obtain a spell formation to vapourise my spiritual force.”
Leylin looked at his stats.
After entering rank 3, the effects of the Giant Serpent’s Breath Potion had weakened.
Though the environment in the central continent was much better than in Twilight Zone, after using such great amounts of resources, his spiritual force was now stuck, still around the level where he had just entered rank 3.

However, Leylin was confident because the clan was a group formed entirely out of Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. There were many formulas and products used to raise a Warlock’s spiritual force.

In addition, with Gilbert’s help, he would soon reach his current goal.

The Vapour Phase spell formation would thus become essential.

*Buzz Buzz!* Rays of light were emanated from the suspended imprint on Leylin’s body, forming a scarlet rune.

“Mentor Gilbert’s ready now? Alright, I’ll get back as soon as possible!” Leylin spoke to the secret imprint and then called Kubler over, telling him to oversee the project while he made his way back.

Phosphorescence Swamp.

The black swamp held within an aura of death, occasionally generating green flames.

Leylin walked atop the swamp, feeling his body jubilant and excited, and could not help but nod. “As expected of the final choice made by the clan amongst many others. This environment with the particles around is very suitable for the advancement of those with Kemoyin blood.”

The headquarters of the clan were similar to before. Many Warlocks resided, lived and researched in this small Magus city.

Leylin went straight to find Robin and found out that Miranda and Freya had received a mission recently and had left. Knowing they were no longer in headquarters, he could not help but sigh in relief. “Haha!” Seeing Leylin like this, Robin as a senior could not hold back his laughter.
After the teasing, the two dove into work.
“The astral gate experiment is very dangerous. The creatures from other planes could be terrifying existences with strength surpassing that of Morning Star Magi. In the White Terror incident 214 years ago, the great pioneer, Morning Star Magus Borrell, made contact with another world recklessly and met with a fearsome consciousness formed from terror. Not only did he fall, all his descendants died as well. Even if they were not on this continent, they met the same fate. I hope you can reconsider.”
Duke Gilbert has already told me in detail about the dangers related to the astral gate!” Leylin had a smile on his face, but his expression was as resolute as ever.

“But if we don’t communicate with other worlds and obtain their unique knowledge and resources, how can we improve? In the pursuit of knowledge, I’m willing to do anything!” Magi desired truth more than any other being did.

Having seen Leylin’s expressions, Robin let out a long sigh, “In that case, prepare the designated protective gear and memorise the escape spell…”

Gilbert’s basement laboratory, the core of the region.

Scribbles of detailed and complex runes and graphics dotted the four walls. Leylin need only slightly take a glance to discover that there were quite a few high-level runes he himself had yet to see.

“High-level air isolation rune! And this flawed rune pattern! It seems like I have seen this previously in the ancient records of Twilight Zone…” Leylin let out a gasp of surprise, and at the same time ordered the A.I. Chip to record all of the runes down.

At that point in time, a layer of black film appeared atop him. Like a protective suit, it enveloped his entire body, not leaving the smallest part uncovered.

Moreover, after having entered the area, he had experienced at least three
This biochemical clothing could effectively isolate any pollution that would be passed on from other worlds through the astral gate. Hence, it was an essential piece of equipment for experiments on it. “Just based on the meticulous preparation, one would be able to tell the complex and terrifying nature of astral gate experiments…” Leylin sighed once again. His eyes could not help but once again gaze at the center of the laboratory.

At the center, a large area of starlight was giving off bright rays. The interior seemed to contain something, but Leylin was unable to see clearly given his current eyesight.

“That is the physical state of a astral gate. Just opening one would exhaust my resources greatly, maybe even making me bankrupt…” Leylin silently contemplated in his heart. The energy consumption of a astral gate was just too terrifying. After giving it some thought, he realised that even he, with his vast funds, could not endure such a thing. It was no wonder that some Morning Star Magi would become bankrupt after studying astral gates.

“Quick! Prepare the experiment!”

Robin had a layer of protective film around his body as well, and was going about his preparations at a table in the corner.

In reality, they were still some distance away from the real gate to the Star Realm. Duke Gilbert was at the center of it all, where a circle of magic runes was radiating a golden glow.

The students, including an old man, whose spiritual force had reached the Crystal Phase, could only wait outside this circle, unable to advance further.

“The running time of a astral gate is very precious. Currently, it is at its lowest limit and can only allow the passage of spiritual force coordinate markers! All of you, come try one by one!” Duke Gilbert’s voice echoed.

“Leylin, it’s the first time you’re taking part in experiments like these! You can just observe what I do first!” Robin said from
beside him.
“Yes!” Leylin’s eyes radiated a sparkling blue glow, and he stared at Robin’s movements attentively.
Duke Gilbert took out a piece of golden crystal, and threw it towards the centremost blue flame.
*Boom!* The golden crystal collided with the blue flames, and instantly a violent reaction occurred. A large amount of golden light was radiated, which was immediately absorbed by the blue flames. Blue rays of energy extended towards the loops of the spells before finally arriving before the few rank 3 Warlocks and forming a mercuric mirror that caved in slightly, one that had at its center a black ripple.
“This feeling! It’s quite similar to that of the ancient teleportation spell formation, but it possesses a greater degree of disorder and violence…” Leylin compared the two in his mind.
A bright silver ray of spiritual force emerged from Robin’s head, and rapidly formed a flower bud in the air. Runes were formed on the surface which quickly went into the mirror.
“This spacetime positioning experiment is extremely simple. With the repeated casting of coordinates into astral gates, we might stumble upon a different world, or it might be picked up by an intelligent being. Generally speaking the probability is extremely low, and there may not even be a single case of success within ten thousand tries!”
“Then isn’t this just trying our luck?” Leylin rolled his eyes in his heart, and was somewhat speechless. However seeing Robin’s pale face, he knew that things were not as easy as what he had said.
“In the past, it was impossible for me to use my spiritual force to sense movements in the Twilight Zone through teleportation spell formations but now I have to use my spiritual force to explore the world! The difficulty level is incomparable! Even though I have already reached rank 3, and have the support and help of other
Magi, I’m afraid the difficulty levels have not decreased much…”

*Boom!* Suddenly, an explosion sounded from Robin and he immediately took a few steps back, face pale.

“We have failed! My spiritual force coordinate marker met with spatial dysfunction, and has been completely extinguished!”

What they were doing now was sending the coordinate marker made from spiritual force to the astral plane between the various worlds to float in between, and they could only hope for good luck for the spiritual force to land in another world.

But the gaps between the worlds were fraught with dangers. The most fundamental was that of spatial interference, and there could even be a few strange beings that specifically stay within this space, who would not only destroy the spiritual force markers but even follow the markers back upstream, retaliating by launching an attack on the Magi who had sent out the markers!

As a result, Duke Gilbert would have to be watching on the side. The destruction of the spiritual force marker was a common occurrence. Robin failed twice after, which caused his face to become as pale as a corpse.

‘With the amount of spiritual force that he exhausted in this experiment, Robin will have to rest up for a few days and spend time meditating to recover completely!’ Leylin thought to himself.

Like Robin, many other students in the laboratory had failed many times, and not one of them had successfully found an alternate world.

But there were still many differences between them. A female Warlock who possess a Vapour Phase spiritual force managed five attempts before she had to retreat to a corner to recover. Meanwhile, Robin was at his seventh attempt, while the white-haired old man, the strongest of the bunch, had made more than ten attempts.

“The disparity within rank 3 Warlocks is simply too huge!” Leylin
let out a sigh in his heart after having seen this scenario.
“Phew! I can’t do this anymore! It’s your turn!” After having failed once again, Robin’s face was so pale that the blood vessels below were visible. He immediately retreated, and Leylin took over his position.
“You must have understood what was happening from your observations before this, right? It’s very easy, just simple usage of your spiritual force!” Robin retreated to the side, and swallowed a purple capsule which made him look better instantly.
“Alright! Let me do it!” Leylin eagerly walked forward, and large amounts of bright silver spiritual force were condensed into silvery-white seed-shaped substance.
Constructing a coordinate marker from spiritual force only required a simple usage of spiritual force, and any ordinary rank 1 Magus could do this easily.
Under Leylin’s control, the silvery-white seed slowly floated beyond him, and touched the indentation in the mirror.
*Bloop!* As if falling through a layer of water, the silvery white seed instantly penetrated the mirror.
However, instantly, Leylin’s face registered a change. He immediately felt his connection to the marker weakening. It took a large amount of spiritual force to maintain the connection.
Rays of silvery-white spiritual force repeatedly disseminated from his sea of consciousness, and he managed to maintain a faint connection to the marker.
‘No wonder only those at rank 3 or above can participate in this experiment! Just one attempt could drain the life out of most rank 2 Magi!’ Leylin sighed in his mind. Suddenly, he could feel the spiritual force seed he’d scattered coming under the control of a frantic tsunami, only able to float and sink with the waves. He was unable to pick a path to advance.
‘If it’s like this, everything depends on luck!’ Leylin smiled grimly;
if he could not even control his spiritual force, of what use would anything be? The only option was to pray that he was lucky.

“Hmmm? Not good!” At this instant, two large air tides collided in the silver space, wedging his marker in between them. Leylin tried to move the marker away, but it was to no avail. He could only watch as the two air tides collided, giving rise to a huge storm and extinguishing his seed.

‘Does this mean that I can only condense these coordinate marking seeds and try my luck for three times at most in a single session?’ Leylin was rendered speechless. With the experiment being completely dependent on pure luck, and no way to increase the success rate, his seniors had a huge advantage when compared to him.

It was no wonder that Duke Gilbert had solicited the help of so many students. The greater the number of attempts made, the greater the hope to succeed. However, the chances were still low and completely dependent on luck.

Leylin subconsciously reached for his waist pouch, before quickly withdrawing his hands.

The Coin of Destiny could only make predictions about matters beneath the Morning Star realm. Once the matter involved the crossover of various worlds, no matter how slight the contact, the coin would be completely destroyed without being able to make a single prediction.

Leylin took a glance at Robin, and once again condensed a spiritual force marker, sending it through the lens.
‘Huh? Things are going much more smoothly this time!’ Leylin was amazed for a moment, and then fell back into silence.

In the middle of that thought, his spiritual force symbol had entered turbulent space again. An eastern wind soon picked it up, sending it forth into the distance.

What awaited it in the distance was a terrifying fire whose aura was slowly but surely increasing.

Through the response from the symbol, Leylin vaguely saw an incomparably enormous world. Surrounding this world was a membrane of sorts.

“Really? Is Lady Luck on my side?” Although Leylin had his doubts, he continued to dash forwards with his spiritual force.

“Who is it? This is the Blazing Flame King’s territory, get lost!” A loud rumble was heard, and Leylin felt a powerful aura that caused his symbol to crumble apart.

*Thump thump!* Leylin stumbled a few steps backwards, blood oozing out from both his nostrils.

“What happened?” Robin immediately stepped towards Leylin and supported him.

“I seem to have discovered a world, but was blocked at the edge and attacked by a self-proclaimed king!”

“Oh! That is the Fiery World! It is under the control and protection of the Monarch of Blazing Flames, Breaking Dawn Magus
Aragorn!” Robin’s expression showed both understanding and indignance.
“They were already under his subjugation! “ Leylin remarked with his eyes opened wide.
“Yes! A few of the famous Breaking Dawn Magi here have already attacked and conquered some worlds with horrifying accomplishments. We even suspect that it is the spoils of these wars that have allowed them to enter the Breaking Dawn realm…”
“Afterwards, the Breaking Dawn Magi and their subordinates will protect the conquered world, stopping us from spying on them. On top of that, the guardians and other Radiant Moon Magi use their spiritual force to invade unconquered ones, at the same time destroying our spiritual force symbols!” Robin’s smile was forced and bitter.
“Therefore, avoiding probes by those formidable powers and camouflaging our spiritual forces until the time is right are topics that are very valuable for research!”
“Ah! “ At this moment, the rank 3 old man looked as if he had provoked something, stumbled backwards and looking upwards, shouted :”Be careful, it is heading this way!”
*Ji Ji!* An unpleasant sound transmitted out from the mirror in front of him.
A huge tentacle stretched out from within the mirror. It appeared to be some species of octopus, but without suction pads on the pure black tentacles, it looked extremely illusionary.
“Intimidating Gaze! Toxic Bile!”
Despite facing possible death, the rank 3 Warlock showed no fear. He extended his domain and under his manipulation, Toxic Bile manifested itself and became a trident, piercing through half the body of the black octopus-like creature.
*Peng!* The mirror shattered into pieces as the octopus succeeded in squeezing its way through. It’s skin was filled with eyeballs all
over, making it a horrifying and gross sight.

*Phush phush!* The highly toxic black poison fork had pierced straight into the body of the octopus, yet no injuries were inflicted. “Innate skill of virtual transformation! This is most common attribute among the living creatures in space!”

Leylin momentarily remembered what he had recorded. Soon after, a huge ball of pitch-black smoke was puffed out from the mouth of the octopus and started to attack in the form of infrasonic waves. Leylin immediately retreated to a distance.

The old man yanked the crystal crucifix that he was wearing and held it up in front of himself.

*Thud!* Beneath the octopus’ black tentacles, the crystal crucifix proved to have no effects and it was penetrated through easily. The octopus came face to face with the old man and pounced on him. Countless big and ferocious teeth started appearing beneath. “A pretty good creature!” However, the octopus did not came into contact with the old man’s face. It was grabbed firmly by yet another palm.

*Snap! Snap!* Multiple sharp teeth were gnawing on the hand, producing a spine-tingling sound, yet there seemed to be no effect at all.

“A space creature! One that has not been seen before! This experiment is indeed valuable!”

Gilbert was full of smiles as he manipulated a layer of blue flame in his hand to cover the entire octopus. After the ignited flame shrunk considerably, what remained in Gilbert’s hand was a blue crystal ball with a black octopus swimming within it. It looked like a pocket-size ornament.

“And these too!” Gilbert took a deep breath. A huge hurricane was generated, and Gilbert sucked up the smoke that the octopus had puffed out into his stomach.

In a flash, the smoke that had caused them so much trouble
vanished into the thin air.
“Truly a Morning Star Magus!” Leylin exclaimed with a tense gaze.
“Great! It’s all thanks to Lucian for this successful experiment. I will remember your contributions. As for the rest of you, everyone will get ten thousand contribution points!”
Gilbert then declared the conclusion of the experiment. Looking at his expression, Leylin was sure Gilbert couldn’t wait to lay his hands on the newly captured strange creature for experiments.
“The astral plane might be dangerous, but the gains are rich too!”
Leylin felt gloomy from the bottom of his heart.
While walking out of the laboratory, Robin smiled and turned to Leylin to make introductions: “This is Lucian, and this is Kesha, they are both my fellow students!”
Lucian was in fact the old geezer who was in the Crystal Phase. As for Kesha, she too was a rank 3 and Leylin gave both of them a respectful greeting.
Lucian and Kesha extended a warm welcome to their new junior before leaving. Both of their spiritual forces had been exhausted considerably and they needed to rest and restore their strength. especially Lucian; he was almost seriously hurt in the process hence he was in a dull mood.
Leylin understood Lucian’s feelings, but he was left speechless after he had to adopt nine more purification processes after the appearance of the strange creature.
At the trading hall of the clan, bright twinkling lights were being emitted from the huge screen. Some fixed assignments and resource exchanges appeared on it from time to time.
Leylin intentionally looked for the poster selling the life seed. Little did he expect to see there were many messages left under it. That it was a popular item for sale left Leylin speechless.
He only looked at the messages for a short while before turning elsewhere.
After numerous promotions to a higher position, the processing capabilities of his brain had strengthened immensely. He was now comparable to a regular computer. With just a few glances, he could assimilate the information that he needed from the huge screen easily.

“Rank 3 Vapour Phase spell formation, a must-have item for supplementing the vitality and strength of a Rank 3 Magus. Sale price: One hundred thousand contribution points!”

This was exactly what Leylin needed now.

Cultivation of a Rank 3 Magi was to further compress and concentrate the already small spiritual force seed. Firstly, the bright silver spiritual force would be turned into vapour, after which it would enter the liquid phase and finally crystallisation.

At the final stage, all of the spiritual force would be condensed to a single point, the point mass. This was the raw material required for advancing to become a Morning Star Magus!

Leylin was currently stuck at the beginning stage of rank 3 and had not even entered Vapour Phase.

“With the help of this spell, together with medication and the right meditation techniques, it should only be a matter of time before I enter the Vapour Phase!” Leylin reckoned.

There was a door for every stage within the 3rd Rank. And once a Magus reached the Hydro Phase, they would be allowed to experience entry into the astral gate independently with the assistance of the Magi tower.

Of course this wasn’t a door built specially for the astral plane. It was built for eventual interplanar exploration in the future.

“Mentor Gilbert might be willing to trade the astral gate blueprint with me for a favourable price! However, it will be very difficult to acquire the astral stone…”

According to his Mentor, the so called astral stone was a necessary
material when building a astral gate. The origins of the astral stones were unknown, and the Morning Star Magi kept them within their own circle. Thus, it was seldom seen outside.

Experiments on interplanar travel depleted the energy within these astral stones, and they would then have to be replaced. Thus, Morning Star Magi didn’t have enough of them on hand for their own use, leave alone selling them outside.

Given their sky-high price, even if Gilbert were willing to sell some to him, Leylin wasn’t sure he had the financial capabilities to buy them.

Leylin skimmed over the screen at a lightning-quick pace, looking out for anything associated with experiments on the astral plane. Unfortunately, high-grade research like that would not normally be put on sale. Even the rare piece was immediately gobbled up for a very high price!

Leylin stroked his chin in contemplation. ‘Looking at the current circumstances, interplanar travel was a hot topic in the central continent. Although the weaker Magi did have some knowledge of it, most of it was still a big secret!

‘It isn’t realistic to expect to buy a astral stone, and the Vapour Phase spell formation is expensive as well. It’s a better idea to slowly accumulate contribution points as I grow my spiritual force!’

Leylin thought about the ten thousand contribution point reward that Gilbert had handed out today, and exclaimed that such extravagance was indeed worthy of a Morning Star Magus. A few more visits to his experiments and Leylin would be able to afford the Vapour Phase spell formation.

It was a pity that most Magi believed in the principle of equal exchange. Leylin’s income today was a payment for the help he rendered, and there was a bonus due to there being gains from this experiment. Gilbert was not one to just randomly reward his
students some points.
‘I need to accumulate contribution points, and get a hold of some spiritual force potions that work for rank 3 Warlocks!’ Leylin set these two short term goals.
“It would be the wisest, most compatible and safest way through potions!”
Leylin looked at the screen. There were many highly paid requests for Potion Masters to concoct various potions. There were also contracts available for long-term patronage.
Potions Grandmasters were rare in the south coast, and at that time, Leylin was only a rank 1 Magus. Thus, he needed to avoid doing things that would leak his secret and lead to trouble.

But the central continent posed no such problems. Even the Ouroboros Clan alone housed a few reputable Grandmasters, not to mention the entire continent.

Furthermore, Leylin had already become a rank 3 Warlock, and his strength now was leagues ahead of what it was before. With Gilbert as his back-up, he had no cause for fear. Thus, it wasn’t much of a problem to reveal a bit of his prowess in the field.

It was still important to keep it a secret on the whole. Leylin’s Potioneering ability was honed over many years by personal tests and A.I. Chip simulations. In addition to the Chip’s assistance during the act itself, he’d reached a level of skill that bordered that of the most respected Potions Grandmasters, a mysterious and unfathomable realm.

But it was unnecessary to show his complete prowess. On top of that, through Potioneering, he could get hold of a majority of the recipes from the central continent for free. Moreover, most were exclusive, and would contribute greatly to Leylin’s database.

Leylin hoped from the bottom of his heart that, after acquiring all the information the central continent had with regards to Potioneering, he would have a breakthrough in his skill!
3 years later.
Leylin was in his manor in the Ouroboros Clan headquarters. Because of the many people and slaves in the region, the manor was not as empty as it once was. Once it had started functioning properly, clean-cut slaves and coquettish maids were walking about everywhere.
There were even some acolytes mixed into this sea of people. Leylin had gathered all the gifted people in his territory and brought them here. He normally left his Warlock vassals to guide them, and only came out to teach himself when he was in a good mood.
This arrangement of Leylin wasn’t well received by the acolytes but they stayed on for the opportunity to work under him. Some of the acolytes and Magi even specially moved to his territory.
Inside the specialized living area, Leylin was conversing with Robin.
“Honestly speaking, Leylin, your Potioneering ability has greatly surprised me!” Robin was playing with the test tube in his hand. The purple liquid inside rippled and reflected a myriad of colours.
Leylin had granted himself both wealth and fame through the selling of potions and Potioneering for his clan members over the last three years. The number of high-ranking Magi and Magi of affiliated clans seeking for Leylin’s Potioneering had been on a steady increase.
And Leylin wouldn’t reject their offers most of the time, though his success rate was a little lower than the Potion Grandmasters of the Ouroboros Clan, Leylin’s fee was much lower when compared to theirs. Besides, many Potions Grandmasters had already filled their schedules with requests and were unable to take on any more requests.
Precisely because of this, Leylin was able to come across the recipes for a large number of rare potions, which added to his Chip’s database as well as his own skill.

“I just have a slight interest in Potioneering. After all, I started my time as a Magus by becoming a Potions Master’s acolyte!” Leylin laughed weakly, his eyes and expression tinged with nostalgia.

“That itself is extraordinary! And I have to mention that it’s more than impressive for you to keep up with your meditation technique while making vast improvements in your Potioneering skills!” Robin looked closely at Leylin, “Your spiritual force is almost ready to move on to the Vapour Phase, isn’t it?”

“Indeed! I’m about to buy a Vapour Phase spell formation and plan to try and break through soon!” Leylin nodded with confidence. He had nothing to hide.

He’d earned a lot of contribution points through Potioneering. With that and his own resources, Leylin had indiscriminately bought spiritual force potions for his own use from the Ouroboros Clan. With the fourth layer of Kemoyin’s pupil as a guide, Leylin’s path had been clear of any obstacles. With a distinct aim, his spiritual force had improved significantly in this period.

The resources of the central continent could not be compared to those of Twilight Zone and the south coast. In addition to the energy-rich environment, it was much easier for Magi to break through and better themselves here than elsewhere.

“Mm! A Vapour Phase spell formation costs roughly 100,000 contribution points. With the addition of the necessary materials for it, the total will come up to about 150,000! Do you have enough? If not, I can lend you some for now!” Robin said in goodwill.

“Thank you so much!” Leylin laughed.

Although Potioneering was a very profitable business, Leylin had only been in it for a very short time. He’d even spent a huge number of contribution points to purchase spiritual force potions.
Thus, he was not so well-off. The Ouroboros Clan allowed one to exchange magic crystals for contribution points, but there were some considerations that led to Leylin not considering that path. One of them was a fixed limit on the number of crystals a Magus could trade for.

“Oh and here is the information I plan to handover to the clan! Help me do an appraisal!” Leylin chuckled as he handed a folder to Robin.

After skimming through, Robin lifted his brows and looked back at Leylin, straightening his back in astonishment. “You… You actually want to bestow your high-grade potion of tranquility to the clan?” The high-grade potion of tranquility was an improved version of the one Leylin acquired from the great Magus Serholm, which helped to suppress the emotional instability of Warlocks. Of course, what he offered the guild was the rudimentary version that was not based primarily on the Icy Scorpion’s Breath. But it still proved relatively impressive in repressing the emotions of high-rank Warlocks.

The emotional instability of high-rank Warlocks was quite obvious. Although there were some methods and potions to control them circulated inside the Ouroboros Clan, the Magi could never have enough.

As long as the root of this problem was not dealt with, such medicine would always be in high demand. In the past three years, Leylin had refined and manufactured vast quantities of high-grade potions of tranquility, turning them into one of his biggest sources of income. That he was willing to sell the formula left Robin extremely surprised.

“Of course!” Leylin laughed as he shook his head. He did not have the time to concoct and sell potions of tranquility for money. Furthermore, this was an advanced potion! Normal Potions Masters would not be able to achieve a high success rate at concocting it. It
would still be easy for him to return to the business to earn contribution points if he wished.

“Just this alone is worth around 25,000 contribution points. Looking at you now, it doesn’t seem like you lack points!” Robin laughed bitterly.

“I wish! Honestly, I was thinking of borrowing some from you, senior! I still have a shortage of them!” Even as he said this, Leylin slyly lifted the corners of his mouth, making Robin feel a little closer to him.

At times, the bond between two people can be improved through the act of mutual support.

“Oh! You won’t be able to support your Magus Tower’s construction much longer, will you?” Robin’s expression changed into one of understanding, and Leylin just chuckled bitterly.

The construction of Leylin’s tower was more or less done over the part three years and now it was mostly down to the detailing and decoration of each floor.

And Leylin’s expectations were exceptionally high. The materials selected were practically the most premium ones and the resources exhausted were comparable to a chain of mountains.

To be honest, Leylin’s wealth was enough to sustain the following add-ons to his tower but he didn’t want to be completely transparent. So the facade of a poverty-stricken individual was absolutely necessary.

“Ah… Leylin, I told you so! Why did you not set your standards lower back then during the planning process, or build it here at the headquarters directly? It wouldn’t have resulted in this situation then!” Robin consoled.

“No!” Leylin shook his head with a resolute tone.

“The Magus Tower is a reflection of the rank of its Magus. When I build one, it must be the best of the best! Moreover, I have to think about the future. The Tower being in my territory will act as a
deterrent to the surrounding forces.”
“Makes sense. But it is still unwise to use up all your resources for it! I almost prostituted myself when I was building mine, even with my family and the clan’s resource….” Robin pummeled his chest, fear lingering in his voice.
Leylin could only roll his eyes at the near-promiscuous flashback as Robin moved on to the main concern, “Anyway, how much were you thinking of borrowing?”
“I’d like to ask, how much are you able to lend, senior?” Leylin asked as a smile tugged at the corners of his mouth…
In a short while, Leylin arrived at the trading hall of the Ouroboros Clan with a large number of contribution points in hand.
After spending the past 3 years here, Leylin was already familiar with the place and headed straight to his destination upon arrival.
‘A.I Chip, Report my current status!’ Leylin silently said in his head.

The A.I Chip faithfully processed and sent the information.
As a Magus, spiritual force and magic power were the most important numbers. Vitality was the foundation upon which spiritual force was built and sustained, and had to be strong enough; otherwise, the Magus’ body would collapse.
When his strength and agility reached their maximum, Leylin temporarily took his focus away from them and raided for potions and alchemist spell formation in the clan that can boost his Vitality resulting in his terrifying increase to nearly 40.
Looking at these numbers, Leylin felt that his own body terribly surpassed many high-energy beings. Not only was his rate of recovery alarmingly fast, he was able to take on any Magi below
rank 2 unarmed!
His bulky physique made cultivating his spiritual force a piece of cake, and he was already prepared to break through the bottleneck that was the Vapour Phase.
“A.I Chip! Simulate my current shape and compute the conditions needed for me to move on to the Vapour Phase!”
Leylin immediately commanded the A.I. Chip again. 

[Task established! Initiating simulation, preparing main stats...] The A.I. Chip rapidly operated, and projected a 3D hologram in front of Leylin, which faintly resembled himself. Apart from gathering and analysing large amounts of data, it could also run breakthrough simulations and obtain concrete probabilities and numbers. This was what made Leylin different from other Magi, who could only make deductions based on rough estimates of probabilities and slipshod experiments, or even through luck! And this was one of the reasons for Leylin’s successful breakthroughs every time.

[Beep! Simulation completed! Conditions for breakthrough: sufficient spiritual force, the bloodline essence of the Corrosive Lizard, three portions of Purple Leaf Snake scaled-fruit, and a complete Vapour Phase spell formation! Success rate: 86.9%!] The A.I. chip presented this to Leylin.

“A close to 90% chance of success is enough!” Leylin clenched his fist tightly.

As they did not have the precise calculations of the A.I. Chip, other Magi could only gather some materials that would help in the breakthrough. One would already thank the heavens if they had more than a 50% chance of success, let alone such an accurate forecast.

Leylin felt that after the A.I. Chip had fused with his soul, it had
improved with his own progress, and its strengths had been amplified largely. Its predictive ability now greatly surpassed even the best A.I. Chips of his previous world. In other words, his current A.I. Chip, even if placed in his previous world, would be too sophisticated to be copied.

“The Purple Leaf Snake Scaled-fruit and the bloodline essence of the Corrosive lizard are the most commonly used supplementary materials when Warlocks attempt to make their breakthroughs, and can be found in the trading hall. Even though they are pricy, I can still afford it!”

Having saved up money as a Potions Grandmaster for three years, and with the huge loan from Robin, Leylin could be said to have ample funds. ‘After this, I’ll have to return to my territory to make the breakthrough, as well as to take charge of the construction of the Magus Tower!’ Leylin thought to himself.

A Magus Tower was being constructed next to Onyx Castle. This tower could be said to be his actual foothold in the central continent, and even as he was Potioneering for the majority of the past three years, he had not once loosened his watch on the construction of the Magus Tower.

Furthermore, the basic structure was already complete. The remaining portions, such as the installation of the elemental pools, adjustment of the spell formations and the like would have to be done by himself. The other Warlocks could only assist, after all, Leylin would not give anyone access to the secrets of the core of his tower.

‘The ability of a rank 3 Vapour Phase allows the activation of rank 4 spell scrolls. Then, we can even purchase a Scroll of Life from Mentor, that can be used to construct the entire intellectual core of the Magus Tower. Hopefully Mentor’s price won’t be too hefty…” Leylin thought casually, while looking for the data from the screens
to carry out his transactions. Even though he seemed preoccupied, under the tremendous assistance of the A.I chip, all the resources chosen were top-notch, and even the Vapour Phase spell formation was successfully obtained.

However, during the transaction, he had also obtained some news that made him frown. “Miranda and Freya returned after completing their task? But they were seriously injured? Why is that so?” Leylin asked. These two were rank 3 Hydro Phase Warlocks. With the addition of their bloodline, their strengths were a few levels higher. That they would be seriously wounded had piqued his curiosity.

“Sorry! This is a secret! Even I am unable to get any news!” The peddler who had transacted with Leylin was a skinny Magus with a huge grin on his face. He did not dare offend Leylin; after all, Leylin was a big customer, and he had previously earned a huge sum from a previous transaction involving potions of tranquility.

The Magus came closer and lowered his voice, ”However, reports say that a mysterious person attacked them when they were exploring some ruins! This left the second elder furious, and he swore to find the culprit…”

“So it’s like that!” Leylin nodded, and quickly completed the transaction. He had to return to his territory as soon as possible to make the breakthrough. He’d merely asked out of curiosity; no matter how chaotic it was here, it would not affect him.

……

Onyx Castle.

Construction had been completed in the last three years. The entire structure was built out of sturdy granite, and was reinforced by
earth-elemental spells that closed up the gaps between the underlying rocks. From the outside, the entirety of Onyx Castle looked grand and expansive, exuding a feeling of deterrence. This was the core of Leylin’s territory.

With the amount of reinforcement it had gotten, Onyx Castle could last a few thousand years at the least. After seeing it, Alesandor remarked that he could hold the fort against fifty thousand elites with just a few thousand man, but of course this only applied to regular humans.

The castle was carpeted in cashmere. Silver cups and golden lampstands were everywhere. The place was filled with a flowing light, and its luxury was something few royal palaces could rival.

If a commoner were to use the castle, it might have stirred up criticism and attacks from other jealous leaders. But since the lord of the castle was a strong Magus, there would be no problem. The strength Leylin possessed was enough to let anyone with negative intentions despair. The people would only compliment the nobility of its lord, and not for a moment have any designs on it.

“Looks like Royce and Alesandor have taken care of this place fairly well!” Leylin slowly walked into the castle.

He looked at the castle’s surrounding farmland. A lot of it was already being cultivated, and large windmills were turning slowly as farmers cleared the earth of weeds.

These were slaves he had previously purchased, with a portion of them being leaders.

In the process of the construction of the castle, a portion of the outstanding slaves and citizens had received rewards in the form of land. Since then, they had settled down and built a relatively prosperous area.

Soldiers and tall knights patrolled the place from time to time.

Royce and Alesandor who were appointed and nominated to oversee politics and military matters respectively had exhausted
their time and effort into building a foundation over here due to the temptation of status and territory. At least in Leylin’s eyes, the Onyx Castle looked more or less like a Marquis’ palace.

“Welcome home, my Lord!” Once they neared the main gate, Kubler quickly hurried out. He was wearing a butler uniform and looked very energetic, with Royce and Alesandor following behind him.

“Mmm! Well done!” Leylin nodded his head slightly, and acknowledged Kubler’s work. He was not one to leave the power in the hands of only two people, and hence he’d left Kubler here as well.

Even though he could be sure that Royce and Alesandor would not dare to betray him, corruption was inevitable. However, with Kubler around, Royce and Alesandor would not dare to cross the line.

“Master! The latest survey has been completed. Within your territory, there are a total of 13,572 soldiers. The total population is. . . .”

Before Kubler could finish his sentence, Leylin waved his hand and interrupted him. ”Write a report about that stuff and hand it over to me later. For now, follow me. I want to look at the progress on the Magus Tower!”

Leylin had invested in the Magus Tower more than ten thousand times what he had invested into Onyx Castle! He would naturally devote minimal attention to it, instead electing to let the A.I. Chip scan progress reports every now and then.

“As you wish, Master!” Kubler followed Leylin in his rightful position. Meanwhile, Royce and Alesandor exchanged glances and could only smile grimly.

A small distance from Onyx Castle, atop a mountain, was a huge piece of construction land with various workers running about. Because they were building a Magus Tower, they could no longer
use ordinary human slaves. Ordinary humans were useless when it came to certain special construction materials, not to mention the possible contamination caused by long-term contact with such materials. Even with a purification tower, ordinary human slaves would perish within a short period of time!

“Hurry! Quicken your pace! Or else there won’t be any alloy rods for dinner tonight!” A youthful Warlock with an iron whip in his hands was shouting in a strange language.

Warlock acolytes, and even some formal Warlocks, were doubling up as foremen and architects in the construction site, rushing a few strange slaves to speed up their work.

These slaves were large in stature, with hard skin the colour of stone.

These slaves were from the Stone tribe. Leylin had previously deciphered a book written in the Turin language from the pocket dimension of the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect. In it there was content left behind by the craftsmen of the Stone tribe.

The Stone tribe was a type of human race. Because of their naturally large stature in addition to their stony exteriors that were as powerful as defensive spells, they could be said to have tough bodies. They were the species ancient Magi favoured to be construction slaves. Much of the construction in the Ancient Spirit Slaying Sect was done by them.

The members of the Stone tribe spoke in the Turin language, mentioned by the young Warlock, which was a difficult one to learn. Still, for Magi, it was no big deal.

The Stone tribe existed in Twilight Zone and the south coast, but Leylin had not expected them to be present here as well, let alone being sold as high-class slaves!

For the construction of the tower, Leylin could only grit his teeth and buy a large batch of these slaves. It cost him no small amount!

Leylin’s arrival naturally attracted the attention of some Magi. Not
long after, an extremely good-looking and youthful Magus came before Leylin and bowed respectfully, ”Master!”
What was shocking was that his voice sounded extremely aged, which was not consistent with his appearance.
“Rise, Parker! What’s the progress on the construction of the tower?”
410 - Attempt At Vaporisation

In his three years in the Ouroboros Clan, it was not as if Leylin had done nothing but brew potions. Through the support of Robin and a few other seniors, he’d gathered a few henchmen and organisations under him.

In the Ouroboros Clan, it was a fixed tradition for lower-ranked bloodline Warlocks to support higher-ranked bloodline experts. Leylin was a pure-blooded Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, and even had a Morning Star mentor. He could be said to have boundless potential, and it was obvious that some Warlocks would want to side with him.

Of course, as he was still not as strong yet and had not done anything to gain himself a reputation, no powerful people would side him. This Parker in front of him was Leylin’s biggest gain!

Parker had been introduced to him by Robin. He was a Black Horall Snake Warlock, and his limit was rank 3. Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks would obviously not become someone else’s subordinate and become a vassal.

Besides, Parker had only just entered rank 3 and had not even reached the Vapour Phase. Due to his age and the injuries and poison accumulated in his body due to his adventurous lifestyle, he had lost all hopes of advancing.

He had joined Leylin’s side to make preparations for his family. Despite all that, Parker was a rank 3 Warlock, and was Leylin’s strongest vassal. Thus, Leylin naturally treated him well, and even
took in his grandson as a disciple to strengthen their bond.
“The main structure of the Magus Tower has been completed. It’s exactly the same as is in your blueprint, but the energy circuit and spell formations need to be done by yourself, my Lord. I wouldn’t dare make that decision myself.”
Parker had experienced much in his life and knew what could be done, and what could not. Just these few sentences pleased Leylin a lot.

Leylin couldn’t help but turn towards the construction site. A tall black spire had already taken shape, possessing a vast power within, as if making its presence known to the whole world.
Parker continued with his report. “Also, we have already stocked up on many of the materials to create the elemental reactive pool and garden. There’s also something regarding the Faens Family…”

“The Faens Family?” Leylin’s brows furrowed. That was Freya’s family. It was said that there were signs of their bloodline declining, and it had been a long time since any descendant had awakened their Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline. For this reason, Freya was now going around looking for pure-blooded Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, and had thus considered Leylin.
“What do they want?” Leylin asked, suddenly alert. Of course, he was even stronger than before and was not afraid of her. However, this was still troublesome.

“The Faens Family sent people to contact us, hoping to sell a large amount of materials for the construction of the Magus Tower at a low price. I’ve seen them, and they are all top-grade materials and of great quality… They have even expressed their intentions in helping construct the tower, my Lord! In times of need, they also offered to send over manpower…”
Parker made sure to note Leylin’s reaction as he made the report. Rumours were already circulating about the previous incident, and he himself wondered whether his master had chosen her.
Leylin twitched upon hearing the news. He glared at Parker, which resulted in him lowering his head deferentially.
“We can purchase everything at full price, we don’t need their discount. As for any assistance they provide, reject it all,” Leylin commanded. Though he knew the other party was expressing goodwill, just thinking of their goal caused Leylin’s expression to warp. He had to resist rolling his eyes.
“Understood, master.” Parker acquiesced, though he felt a tinge of pity.
The Faens Family was prestigious amongst the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. They went back a thousand years, and had an unfathomable background. If he had their sponsorship, the construction of the Magus Tower would go much smoother. However, Leylin would definitely not agree to it. If not, the Faens Family would definitely throw out more bait and lure him into a trap.
Though he could be ruthless, taking all the bait but not caring about them, that would be too shameless of him. Leylin believed that unless he was in dire straits, he would not do such a thing. After all, all the resources he had plundered from Twilight Zone were more than enough for him to use for himself as well as to construct the Magus Tower. Since his needs were all taken care of, Leylin would not even consider this. It was much too shameless.
It was now night.
In the large Onyx Castle, candles and oil lamps were used everywhere to illuminate the area. There were even illumination spells such as Eternal Light in several areas, filling the interior of the castle with light. From afar, the castle was like a large, dazzling column of fire, overflowing with radiance and heat. All his subordinates and vassals were gathered in the ballroom. After enjoying a sumptuous meal together, Leylin returned to his bedroom alone.
This was the most secure area in Onyx Castle. Not only were there many regular elite human troops patrolling, if one went further in, some specific detection spell formations and guard Warlocks would appear. He closed his eyes inside his bedroom, and the general situation in the castle entered his vision. He could not help but nod. “Looks like Parker and the rest are doing quite well.”

The defence of Onyx Castle was not bad. Though it was far from perfect, it was impossible for rank 2 Magi to sneak in.

‘To truly make Onyx Castle a strategic stronghold against Magi, it might take over a hundred years to strengthen the defensive spell formations bit by bit. The radiation unwittingly given off by high-ranked Magi residing here has to affect the whole castle and strengthen it…’ Leylin rubbed his chin as he pondered.

The higher ranked a Magus was, the easier it was for them to affect their surroundings. Leylin believed that just by emitting the terrifying might of their bodies in the castle, Breaking Dawn Magi could affect the quality of the castle itself. The powerful members of the Magus World could even give the castle a life of its own, having it give birth to many strange creatures.

These were the best foundations in creating defensive spell formations. As long as one subdued the castle’s spirit and enslaved all the strange creatures, the defence of the castle would reach its peak.

With his own radiation, he could achieve a similar effect. However, the time taken would be more than a century.

If numerous Magi were to reside here, this time could be shortened. Hence, the older a Magus’ castle, the more profound the strength of the defence. There would also be many strange occurrences that even the Magus family occupying the castle would not be able to explain.

But now? There was still a long way to go on his own.
Leylin calmed his thoughts and conveniently pressed some button on his bed. With a mechanical sound, the large bed in front of him opened up and revealed a passageway that led downwards. Leylin walked in expressionlessly. After he entered, the machine closed itself and no trace of it could be seen from the outside. The path was long, and by the time Leylin had walked to the end, he had reached deep underground. It was at least several thousand meters below the surface.

At the end of this path, there was a standard underground laboratory. The surrounding stone walls were full of runes that prevented energy from dissipating and isolated all auras. “Though this is still very crude, it’s good enough.” Leylin waved his hand as he entered the laboratory, and a defensive screen of light closed off the pathway. This screen was still flickering with a glaring light, and it was obvious that it concealed an extremely powerful defensive spell formation.

This was a temporary laboratory Leylin had constructed. Before the Magus Tower was done, some secret experiments could be done here.

Leylin patted the spatial pouch on his waist, and silver rays lit up. Three items appeared on the ground. One was a giant green crystal that contained a spell formation. Within the transparent crystal were a few runes that were constantly shifting like a fog.

Another was an irregular black vessel in the shape of a shell. It held within it green blood that emitted a nauseating smell.

The last was a set three purple fruits that looked like apples, although they had a fine layer of snake-like scales on top.

“A vapourisation spell formation, blood essence of the Corrosive Lizard, and Purple Leaf Snake-scaled Fruit.” Leylin extended his slender fingers, looking through these items once more.

The A.I. Chip cooperated with a scan, and then relayed the news
that there was no mistake.
“Let’s begin!” Leylin muttered, sitting cross-legged at the heart of the vapourisation spell formation. With a flick of his hand, two pieces of pure magic crystal essence entered the groove in the spell formation.
The vapourisation spell formation trembled, and the runes within began to undulate violently.
[Host body beginning attempt to break through the bottleneck of the Vapour Phase. Beginning real time monitoring] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice followed soon after.
“Next is the blood of the Corrosive Lizard.” Two streaks of black shot out of Leylin’s eyes, disappearing into the black shell.
*Plop Plop!* The green blood began to bubble, mist rising and forming a large green lizard in the air. On its skin were numerous signs of corrosion, and its white bones and internal organs could somewhat be seen.
*Hiss hiss!* The green lizard’s front claw scratched at the earth, as if it was eager to give something a try.
As if provoked by the Corrosive Lizard, Leylin felt the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in his body begin to stir.
eylin’s pupils turned amber in an instant.

As if it had been provoked, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in his body operated frantically, emitting mysterious energy. This energy was nutritious to him, and thus his body immediately absorbed it.

Under the effect of these mysterious substances, Leylin’s spiritual force began to increase; slowly, but surely!

“This is the power of the Kemoyin bloodline! Warlocks definitely have a huge advantage in this regard!” he exclaimed.

The Giant Kemoyin Serpent was a terrifying ancient species, adults of which possessed Morning Star strength. In other words, until a Kemoyin bloodline Warlock attained rank 4, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in his body would release a large amount of power to help in his advancements.

All bloodline Warlocks would receive this aid, but not all bloodlines were created the same. For instance, a Black Horrall Snake bloodline would exhaust its aptitude when helping the Warlock rise to rank 3, and could not help with the advancement to the Vapour Phase or further breakthroughs. It would even become an obstacle to the Warlock’s progress.

“It is likely that the improvements of Warlocks, and my previous personal breakthroughs were largely attributed to this mysterious energy. Of course, the bloodline shackles thereafter is also largely due to this cause!” Leylin ordered the A.I Chip to record the nature
and content of this particular energy so as to allow for future study. At the same time, under the influence of the boiling Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline, a terrifying phantom in the shape of a black snake had appeared behind Leylin, exuding a powerful and cold majesty. Thankfully, Leylin had gone underground and even set up a spell formation specifically to isolate his aura. Otherwise, he would definitely have alarmed the nearby Magi and Warlocks.

*Hiss* The enormous lifelike Giant Kemoyin Serpent phantom flicked its tongue, and rushed towards the Corrosive Lizard. Compared to the enormous snake, the Corrosive Lizard was alike to a pitifully small rat. Even its roars had been suppressed into whimpers.

*Rumble!* The giant snake phantom opened its big mouth and swallowed the Corrosive Lizard whole.

“Hmmm?”

Just at the instant when the giant snake shadow had swallowed the Corrosive Lizard, Leylin felt the bloodline strength in his body surge, as if it had become more concentrated. A large amount of strength began overflowing from his body. The A.I. Chip showed that his spiritual force had begun to skyrocket.

255… 267… 289… It only stabilised at a value of 299. The abrupt surge of spiritual force caused Leylin’s vision to blur even as his brain ground to a momentary halt. “Compress!” A spell entered the Vapour Phase spell formation. Very soon, a resplendent glow erupted from the spell formation and enveloped his body. The originally violent bright silver spiritual force in his sea of consciousness shrunk under the pressure. The large amounts of spiritual force particles, under repeated compression, gave off a greater bright silver glow, and in the end
slowly gathered together to form… a fog! That was spiritual force in Vapour Phase, the result of a successful compression of his bright silver spiritual force! Leylin was overjoyed at the sight.

Originally, the bright silver spiritual force was only an indistinct glow. But now, it had become corporeal!

After the first trace of spiritual force had taken shape, the rest of the spiritual force followed suit, and the conversion became much easier.

Leylin shut both his eyes tightly. The energy around him shrunk, but it now held increased longevity and was more terrifying than before.

*Kacha! Kacha!* Light glowed from numerous cracks that appeared on the spell foundation surrounding him, until eventually it crumbled into dust.

It was at this instant that Leylin opened both his eyes. All the spiritual force in his sea of consciousness had been converted into a thick fog!

[Ding! Host has entered the Vapour Phase! Spiritual force has experienced changes, re-tabulating results!]

The A.I chip intoned, and not long after a set of data was projected before Leylin’s eyes.


Even though his spiritual force had reduced from before, it actually gave Leylin a sense of relief.

The surge previously was just a surface phenomenon. Not only was the additional strength hollow, it was not consolidated. The quality of that type of spiritual force was very low. If not for having been compressed into a vapour, it would have actually impeded further
progress.
And now, even though the total amount had decreased, the quality had increased quite a bit!
“Vapour Phase!” Leylin lightly waved his hand, and a foggy spiritual force immediately appeared at his fingers.
This was the first time that his spiritual force had taken a physical form. The bright silver previously was just an indistinct glow, but this haze now was tangible!
Just that alone showed how tremendous the changes to his spiritual force had been.
“This is but the beginning! Rank 3 Magi at the Crystal Phase can actually directly condense their spiritual force into crystals that would not dissipate easily. Even after long-term storage, these crystals could be used to replenish their spiritual force, or even sold to others…”
According to a few deductions of the A.I Chip and Leylin’s own conclusions, this was his future path.
[Warning! Warning! More than 12.6% of the Host’s cells are injured! Immediate treatment suggested!] The emotionless voice of the A.I. Chip sounded out and Leylin stumbled, almost falling to the ground.
“This must be the after-effects of the surge and sudden concentration of spiritual force. I’m afraid that, apart from my cells, even my sea of consciousness might have been affected slightly!” Leylin smiled wryly, and thereafter waved his hand once again.
The three sets of Purple Leaf Snake-scaled Fruit that he had bought appeared in his hands.
“Thankfully Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks have a lot of experience, they even knew of some suitable medicine. The A.I. Chip ran some simulations as well…” Leylin swiftly swallowed a fruit.
The exterior of the fruit had fine scales that felt like hard ice to his gums and teeth. When it entered the stomach, the icy sensation of the fruit immediately disappeared, instead being replaced by a flow of warm heat that swiftly spread throughout his body. Leylin’s cells were like humans that had almost died of thirst in a desert, rapaciously sucking up this warmth.

[The agent’s cells have absorbed an unknown strength, and are currently in recovery! Current damage: 9.6%]

The damage reported by the A.I Chip was decreasing, and eventually stopped at around 2%.

Minor damage to the body was the most cumbersome to heal. Even with the best medication, Leylin could only heal himself down to 2% damage, after which it wasn’t easy anymore. After breaking through, Vapour Phase Warlocks would have to treat the damage over a long period by using the radiation they emitted during constant practice.

Of course, that was a minor price to pay for the breakthrough.

……

The Onyx Castle was holding a banquet to celebrate Leylin’s breakthrough. It was, of course, a gathering of Warlocks. The only ones invited had been Robin, a few other seniors, and other members of the Ouroboros Clan that Leylin had connections with.

This was another tradition of the central continent. Leylin originally should have held the banquet upon the completion of Onyx Castle, but he had decided to delay until the Magus Tower had been built completely.

Now, however, Leylin’s breakthrough called for a celebration, so he decided that he might as well hold a banquet to take care of both
obligations.
In the wide hall, large chandeliers hung up high from the ceiling, radiating a bright glow that was a mixture of spells and man-made flames.
The numerous Warlocks were all gathered in a hall. Since Leylin’s status was not too low, there were many Warlocks who attended the event.
Furthermore, because of the added value of their bloodline, all the Warlocks had were good looking, and even the old men looked handsome.
Many female Warlocks wore gowns with plunging necklines, revealing their snow-white back and cleavage, whereas the male Warlocks wore black swallow-tailed coats. From time to time, they would talk over a drink or invite the females for a dance.
At the corner of the large hall, a band was performing with all their energy, and next in line were poets and dancers.
“Haha… Leylin, I knew you would succeed! Even though advancing to Vapour Phase is an obstacle for ordinary rank 3 Magi, Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks like us will never face such a problem!” Robin laughed dramatically.
Given how high this junior’s innate talent was, he was becoming increasingly important to the short Warlock.
Even at the banquet, the differences in ranks between the various Warlocks was very obvious. The few rank 3 Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock Marquises, including Leylin, had gathered in a circle and none of the other Warlocks would dare to interrupt them.
A few rank 1 or rank 2 Warlocks with pure bloodlines had the fortune to listen at the side, but even they had no right to speak.
With regards to the other circles, Leylin needed only to make a toast and say a few words, but the guests in this circle required his personal accompaniment.
Not only were there seniors like Robin, Lucian and Kesha around,
there were a few merchants whom they had good ties with along with their children. They were essentially his Mentor, Duke Gilbert’s, influence, and hence good connections would have to be made.
Speaking of which, Leylin was more familiar with them, and had held a few transactions with them, and even coordinated on some experiments.
“This is the younger generation of my family. Come and see Uncle Leylin!” Kesha called forth two of her nephews and nieces. Those two youths though looked a bit reserved and flushed, but still respectfully bowed and said, “Uncle Leylin!”
“Mmm! Hello, you two!” Leylin said, his face stiff. He was not even a hundred years old. These two Warlocks with pure bloodlines, who were their family’s hopes, were probably older than him!
“Senior Kesha’s 2 nephews and nieces have a very rich bloodline within them, looks like they have a bright future ahead of them!” Leylin complimented, which had caused Kesha to beam with delight.
Much to his chagrin, Leylin had discovered that even though the Ouroboros Clan had a long heritage and was a large, powerful organisation, there were many traditions and complex regulations that were very tedious. Especially in terms of hierarchy; nobody knew whether it was inherited from the Giant Kemoyin Serpents, but their hierarchy was very rigid.

Previously, even if they were all Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, Kesha who had reached the Vapour Phase would pay no attention to someone like Leylin. Yet, the moment he made the breakthrough himself, here she was, her attitude having flipped completely. This had dumbfounded Leylin.

Lucian was the same. He who was at the Crystal Phase was the strongest here, and sat quietly in a corner, drinking smugly. Unfortunately, everyone had already accepted such behaviour as a norm.

Even if he rolled his eyes internally, Leylin understood that he could only do things according to the rules.

“Senior Lucian has always been like this. He has suffered a lot previously, and just can’t bring himself out of it!” Robin transmitted after noticing Leylin’s gaze.

“Actually, he’s extremely delighted at your breakthrough. Normally, he wouldn’t even deign to take a glance at a banquet invitation!” Perhaps because he was Gilbert’s butler, Robin’s communication
and observation skills were outstanding. Just a glimpse at Leylin in his peripheral vision and he’d realised things, explaining Lucian’s attitude.

“Don’t worry, I understand!” Leylin smiled wryly. Even if Lucian decided not to show him respect, he could do nothing about it. Even with all his trump cards, Leylin could at most deal with a Hydro Phase rank 3 Magus. With that kind of difference in strength, it was useless to talk about it. Had Lucian not considered his Mentor Gilbert and the fact that it was Leylin’s first invitation, he might not even have come.

“Oh, right! Let me introduce you to my apprentice, Snoopy!” A reserved youth walked up at Leylin’s introduction, a dimpled smile on his pockmarked face.

“He… Hello distinguished masters!” Snoopy greeted all the Magi, stumbling on his words.

A few rank 3 Warlocks merely nodded aloofly and did not pay much attention, and even Kesha’s 2 younger generations looked down on him. They could see Snoopy’s Black Horrall Snake bloodline at one glance. Even though a rank 3 Warlock bloodline was considered a big deal even in the central continent, those with higher bloodlines thought nothing of it.

Immediately, they linked this sight to Leylin’s top subordinate, Parker and guessed the motives behind Leylin’s acceptance of this apprentice. They would naturally not pay any more attention, but on account of Leylin, they had nodded their heads in recognition.

Fortunately, Leylin had only brought Snoopy out for exposure, and quickly dismissed him after he had bowed to everyone.

Snoopy’s response was quick, and his withdrawal was even faster. With a tinge of embarrassment on his face, it appeared to Leylin as if he was fleeing.

“This is the hierarchy of Warlocks!”
Leylin sighed internally. In comparison, though Kesha’s 2 younger generations were slightly lower in strength, because their bloodline was distinguished and there was the possibility of making a breakthrough to rank 4, they would immediately receive more attention. Even the rank 3 Elders would consider this normal. For Warlocks, even though bloodline could not determine your lowest achievements, it could dictate your greatest. Take for example the two Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks Kesha had brought along. They needed only to put a bit more effort and spend more time, and it would be child’s play to reach the Vapour and even Hydro Phase. However, the advancement to the Crystal Phase depended on one’s innate talent. As for the breakthrough to the Morning Star realm, innate talent alone was not enough. There was a huge amount of luck to be factored into it! After all, they were not first generation Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. Their bloodline was not as pure, and could not allow for the adults to easily advance to rank 4. In actual fact, in the entire Ouroboros Clan, there were already no more absolutely pureblood Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. Their bloodlines had faded with the passage of time. For the three elders to break through to the Morning Star realm required not only a large amount of resources and effort, but also a stroke of luck. Leylin did not know how pure his bloodline was, but the A.I Chip and the recognition by the few seniors and Mentors seemed to suggest that it was not too bad. In fact, he had immense confidence in the bloodline purification skills of the A.I Chip. During the period of time he was in the Ouroboros Clan, he had discovered that even in the central continent, there were no microscopes here that could form images at the genetic and atomic levels. Their research at most halted at the cells. Their best microscopes
could at most see the structure of a cell.
Previously, the A.I Chip had directly extracted the part of the genes that belonged to the Giant Kemoyin Serpent from the bloodline essence of the Black Horrall Snake, and reconstructed them.
Leylin even suspected that the bloodline within his body could compare to that of a first generation Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock!
Mind you, that was a bloodline that allowed a Warlock to progress to the Morning Star realm automatically as he aged.
Leylin’s own improvement had been too rapid. He was only a hundred years old, an infant among Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks. Thus, he did not have a deep enough understanding of the frightening potential of his bloodline.
Still, it took way too long for Giant Kemoyin Serpents to mature. If he was to advance at the same rate as his bloodline would let him, he would only be a rank 1 Warlock as of now. With the passing of time, he would feel his spiritual force growing slightly even if he did nothing but sleep all day. After finishing semi-conversion and complete conversion, his strength would soar. At about 500 years of age, he would become a rank 3 Warlock. As for a Morning Star Warlock? That would take him until he was 900 if he only depended on his bloodline.
In other words, Leylin’s current improvement was rapid to the point that his bloodline could not keep up with him.
‘Even if I have almost 900 years of life according to the A.I. Chip, the risks with waiting that long are way too high!’ he thought as he stroked his chin. On top of that, Leylin can’t be sure that the purity of his bloodline was enough for a breakthrough to the Morning Star stage by the time he reaches 900.
As such, he would continue to work hard!
At the very least, his bloodline shackle would not retard his progress before he hit rank 4, and he would be able to advance to
that realm without any obstacles.
“Penny for your thoughts?” His introspection had obviously drawn
Robin’s attention.
“Oh… It’s…” Leylin summarised his ruminations on his bloodline
growth, obviously concealing his conjecture on its purity and
instead diverting the conversation to how he could develop his
bloodline.
“…So, you wish to find out whether there are any medicines or
materials the Ouroboros Clan uses to speed up bloodline growth?”
Robin looked at Leylin, and did not know whether to laugh or cry.
“Many Warlocks depend on the strength of their bloodlines when
using their meditation techniques to slowly improve in ranks. A
case like yours, where the host’s strength surpasses that of the
bloodline’s growth is extremely unlikely…”
“Unlikely, but not impossible!” Leylin was determined. The central
continent had many groundbreaking talents, and the Ouroboros
Clan was where Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks congregated.
There must be a way!
Still, any solutions that existed were sure to be extremely precious
and hidden. Leylin had never seen such a thing in the trading hall.
“Indeed. Like you, Leylin, our organisation has had a few Warlocks
in the past whose strengths far surpassed their age!”
Kesha interrupted, “And they used a top-notch precious material to
increase the growth of their bloodline to remarkable results!”
“What material?” Leylin’s eyes glowed.
“Lamia Hair!” Kesha did not intend to leave Leylin in suspense, and
gave him a specific term.
“A.I Chip!” Leylin recited internally: “Query the database for Lamia
Hair!”
Collecting data and books was habitual for him. Naturally, he
hadn’t slacked off on it in his time in the Ouroboros Clan.
The Ouroboros Clan was a major power of the central continent.
Its library had a rich collection of data, and since Leylin was a Marquis, he had little restriction on what he could read, and had thus expanded his database significantly. What was remaining was naturally not too big a problem. Although he could not claim that he knew everything about the central continent, the knowledge he had accumulated in this period would not lose out to that of a scholar who was a few hundred years old.

[Lamia Hair: It is an ancient precious material. Legend has it that a strand of hair from the ancient Lamia has an extremely horrifying ability. Rank: 3, Rarity: 4, Description: The Lamia was an extremely tyrannical being in ancient times. Other than strange spells, they were experts at controlling lower serpents to attack, and normally lorded over snakes! Legend has it that they were direct descendants of the Snake Dowager, and were comparable to Radiant Moon Magi in adulthood!]

Leylin saw the description given by the A.I. Chip and could not help but smile wryly. A description in terms of rank and rarity was standard on the central continent. Rank 3 indicated that the material was only effective for rank 3 Magi, while the rank 4 rarity meant only Morning Star Magi could get their hands on one. Needless to say, the assessment on how it could compare to a Radiant Moon Magus in adulthood shocked Leylin completely. A Radiant Moon Magus was at rank 5! They exceeded Morning Star Magi by one full rank, and there were few Magi on the central continent who possessed such strength. How would Leylin, who could not afford to offend even a single Morning Star Magus, dare to think of a plan involving Radiant Moon Magi?

Of course, the strength of the beings themselves was one matter, the resources were yet another.
“For senior Kesha to mention it, could it be that Mentor has strands of Lamia Hair?” Leylin’s eyes lit up. The ancient Lamia had been extinct for a long period of time. But some remains could have been discovered by Magi, and it would be extremely normal to obtain these resources as a result.
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“I”t looks like you’re extremely familiar with this material, Leylin. At the very least, you should’ve read up on something similar before!”

Kesha first nodded her head, before smiling wryly, “Lamia Hair can nourish the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline within our bodies. I won’t go into detail, but it’s useful enough to have others fight you for it. Nobody who has some will want to sell it! Moreover, it will be used up the moment someone discovers it. The reason I know of it is that Mentor Gilbert had obtained such a material when he was younger…”

This was an eye-opener for Leylin. Given how much the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline had deteriorated by now, the current generation’s bloodline could not be considered extremely pure. At the bottleneck before the Morning Star realm, the current bloodline in the Ouroboros Clan could only provide a tiny bit of help.

On the other hand, once nourished, this bloodline would have been strengthened greatly. Not only could it allow weaker Warlocks to advance rapidly in rank, it would lay a solid foundation for their future breakthroughs.

Perhaps this was the primary reason for Duke Gilbert’s successful advancement to the Morning Star realm.

Leylin could only sigh, helpless. This type of top-notch material was not easy to acquire, and one required both sufficient strength and fortune to get their hands on it.
At that very instant, Leylin noticed that Robin’s expression had warped. Leylin put it into memory before beaming and changing the topic.

Leylin’s study in Onyx Castle.
The banquet had already ended, and an attendant had currently led Robin here, opened the door and entered before retreating with a bow.
Leylin was sitting on a couch, the glass in his hands filled with dark red wine that was rippling under the light.
“The wine produced in this year is actually my personal collection! Does Senior Robin want a glass too?” Leylin swirled the wine in the glass.
“Of course!” Robin sat down on another couch and picked one up for himself.
After pouring a small amount, he swirled the wine as well, his face expressing his enjoyment. “Grape wine brewed during the harvest year! It’s a rare sight these days!”
“Parker and the rest sent it over to me. Apparently, it was a tribute from some royals in the vicinity!” Leylin laughed. He was not interested in anything that was purely for enjoyment, and moved on to the main topic after some pleasantries.
“When the matter of the Lamia Hair came up today, Senior, you seemed to have some thoughts about it?”
“Mmm!” Robin squinted his eyes and deeply inhaled in the fragrance of the red wine.
“Since senior was willing to come over, the information must be something that can be shared. Please state your conditions!”
“Good, that’s the Leylin I know!” Robin praised before taking a sip. He continued, “There is no price or the like, but I need you to keep what you hear today a secret. This information cannot be leaked!”
“No problem, I swear upon the honor of my royal bloodline!”
Leylin’s face was solemn as he made an oath. When two parties were at a certain level of strength, even casual agreements would be binding, let alone an oath like this. It made Robin smile.

“I do have some clues about the Lamia Hair!” Before Leylin could inquire further, he continued, “I received information that in the Eastern region of the Forgotten Land, a pocket dimension was found!”

“The Forgotten Land!” Leylin stroked his chin. The A.I Chip swiftly scoured the database for information related to the Forgotten Land.

The damage output of a Morning Star Magus was immense. Their final techniques held power akin to nuclear bombs, and had the ability to wipe out countries. Thus, the central continent had signed a peace agreement that forbid the wanton usage of final techniques, restricting Morning Star Magi from using their full strength.

Still, even with such a contract, some disputes escalated to the point that battle was inevitable. Clashes between Morning Star Magi still occurred, and devastated the land every single time.

In Twilight Zone, two Morning Star Magi had inadvertently destroyed the passages linking it to the rest of the Magus world, isolating the place for thousands of years.

Even in the much vaster central continent, with Morning Star, Radiant Moon and even Breaking Dawn Magi watching over, such battles would still cause a large amount of damage to the area.

Moreover, some regions would be damaged to the extent that there was no return. All sentient species would go extinct, and elemental particles would start leaking whenever someone visited the area, causing the strength of a visiting Magus to drop greatly.

Gradually, some of the affected areas became lands of death. Only strange species and convicts who could not mix with the rest would bear the hardships of the environment and settle down there.
The Forgotten Land was one such place. Legend has it that in such vile conditions all the beings would strive to promote their strength, and evolve in a horrifying direction. Over time, they would form an extremely strange race, and the place would be fraught with dangers.

“What pocket dimension?” Leylin asked, getting a bad premonition. Pocket dimensions were naturally not rare in the central continent, and the Ouroboros Clan itself had the powers to construct one themselves. Although the major powers of the central continent were focused on interdimensional travel, rank 2 and 3 Magi still built pocket dimensions.

But the resources in the Forgotten Land were extremely poor normally. That a pocket dimension, a type of region known for being rich in resources, had appeared there would lead to a lot of competition and bloodshed.

“The pocket dimension must have been damaged during the clash between Morning Star Magi. Due to its regenerative abilities, a small portion of it was preserved and was unearthed recently!”

Robin placed the wineglass down, his face solemn yet tinged with greed.

“Even though the subordinate who had discovered the mysterious region was under a very powerful curse, and died painfully immediately after handing me the intelligence, at least I obtained some information! If you would look at this!”

Robin took out a black leaf. Once it appeared, Leylin felt the bloodline within his body throbbing. He suppressed the peculiar reactions of his body and took it.

Even though it was an ordinary leaf with green veins, there was an aura lingering on its surface that caused his pupils to dilate. Even though the aura was very feeble, it could not in the very least conceal the strong essence behind it, and even caused Leylin to be fearful.
“The aura of the Lamia! Legend has it that the Lamia could control giant serpents through spells, no wonder I feel uneasy!” Leylin sighed a long breath of relief: “Did this leaf come from the pocket dimension?”
The ancient Lamia was a terrifying being at the Radiant Moon realm. Even though there were half-human half-snake species in the Magus world now, the ancient Lamia was an entirely different species!
And only the threatening aura of the Lamia could make Leylin feel terrified.
“Yes!” Robin nodded.
“According to my intelligence, there is a huge pocket dimension there filled with resources. It belonged to a Warlock organisation of ancient times. As you know, as long as it’s a Warlock organisation, due to the bloodline limitations of Warlocks, they are the most passionate about collecting bloodlines to mix and modulate in their experiments. As a result, you will be able to find many materials Warlocks urgently need!”
“I get it now. You wish to explore, but you don’t have sufficient manpower?” Leylin had understood Robin’s plans.
Even though there was a certain level of danger, he was still prepared to journey there. The temptation of the hair of the Lamia, alongside many other bloodline resources, was sufficient to have him brave the danger.
“Yes! Apart from you, I have also invited Kesha along!” Robin nodded his head.
Even though they were all rank 3 Warlocks, the Kemoyin bloodline and the Black Horrall Snake bloodline had a very big difference. Under him, there was a younger generation of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline who had just advanced to rank 3, and the rest of his subordinates could at most act as assistants, and were not very useful.
“Looks like there are more risks!” Leylin leaned back. As to why Robin did not invite Lucian who was at the Crystal Phase, or even directly reported it to Gilbert, Leylin did not need to think much to understand the reasons why. Robin himself was at the Hydro Phase, and with Kesha and Leylin at the Vapour Phase he could suppress them easily. If they were to call Lucian, how would they distribute the potential yield? And if he were to inform their Mentor, there might not be many resources left for him. Of course, Robin had made the decision after examining their strength. He had felt that if the three of them were to join forces, they would be able to obtain the resources in the mysterious region. Even if they were to meet obstacles they could not overcome or were not able to succeed eventually, there was still time to invite Lucian or Gilbert then.

“I have no questions! When do we set off?” Leylin asked.

“There’s no rush. I have to make preparations on my end as well. I need about 2 more months. After 3 months, let us gather at the headquarters and set off together!”

Robin said the specific timing, and at the same time placed a document on the table. “This is the intelligence regarding the Forgotten Land and the pocket dimension. You should have a look at it, and prepare yourself accordingly!”

“Got it! See you 3 months later at the headquarters!” Leylin nodded, and got up to send Robin out of the study room. After which, he sat down and did not utter a word.

The A.I Chip was swiftly scanning the documents Robin had left behind, and was carrying out comparisons and making deductions. “There are no problems with the data, looks like Robin is sincere!” Leylin stroked his chin. The data related to the Forbidden Land which Robin had provided was generally similar in content to the data the A.I Chip had collected, and was even more comprehensive.
and detailed.
“Quicksand! What a weird name for an organisation. Is that a Warlock organisation?”
Quicksand was the organisation that created the pocket dimension. Legend had is that it was a Warlock-based organisation, but it was unlike that of the Ouroboros Clan which only accepted Warlocks of the same bloodline. Instead, it was heterogeneous, and would accept Warlocks of any bloodline. As a result, the condition of the members was extremely complicated, and there were even some members with bloodlines that were only heard of in folklore!
And this pocket dimension seemed to have been constructed by the Quicksand Organisation, as a place meant for experimentation on the modulation and combination of bloodlines.
Of course, no matter how formidable Quicksand once was, it had disappeared in the ancient final war, and was now an abandoned mysterious region.
But Leylin delved deeper into his thoughts.
Perhaps the Lamia Hair within the pocket dimension was not obtained by capturing an ancient Lamia. There might have been someone who advanced their own Lamia bloodline to the extreme and has even gone through atavism, thus leaving this item behind.”

When a Warlock’s bloodline was concentrated to its limit, it would transform into its original form. Once this process was over, a Warlock would discard their original appearance as a human, and completely turn into a creature alike to his bloodline origin. By that time, the Warlock would no longer be human. Even those with the same bloodlines would not be able to tell that it was a Warlock who had gone through such a process.

In other words, if Leylin did so, he would truly turn into a Giant Kemoyin Serpent.

“Hm… Forget it.”

Leylin imagined himself as a giant serpent, only able to swallow raw food everyday and looking for female serpents whenever he had to sate his desires, and it made his whole body shiver.

‘The Morning Star morphing technique is enough. I have no desire to really become a giant serpent,’ he decided.

He pursued strength and dominance, as well as his own freedom. If the option was that he obtained unequalled strength and yet suffered for eternity, it was fine if he was not unrivalled.

In addition, the closer he was to the source of his bloodline, the
greater the suppression of his mind by higher members of his race. In the ancient war of the Icy World, the Snake Dowager was the only thought in mind. Many Giant Kemoyin Serpents who risked their lives and battled with beings from other worlds were more than aware of this. Leylin did not want to be controlled by someone after all his efforts and become cannon fodder.

Of course, all this was far into the future. Right now, all he was focused on was using the Lamia Hair to nourish his bloodline, allowing it to mature faster and bring him to the Morning Star realm.

In the central continent, rank 3 Warlocks were respected, but only Morning Star Magi held any actual clout. Only after reaching the Morning Star realm could he perform experiments on astral gates alone, attempting to travelling between various places and worlds. This was the only method for Leylin to solve the issue of his bloodline and could not be substituted. After thinking about it for a while, a silver light flashed in his hands, and a dull gold coin appeared.

‘If I go to the pocket dimension, will I be able to get all that I want and leave safe and sound?’ With this thought in mind, Leylin tossed the Coin of Destiny in his hand.

*Pak!*

The coin landed steadily on the back of his hand, revealing the image of a luckbird. At the same time, slight cracks appeared on it. Noticing this situation, Leylin kept the coin away, and a flash of excitement could be seen on his face before he turned serious.

‘It’ll work out, but the power of a Morning Star will hinder me?’ The Coin of Destiny was a unique magic item that Leylin had sacrificed blood and tears to make. It had the terrifying ability to predict the future, but could not be used when powers at the Morning Star realm and above.

Every time a prediction involved a being with Morning Star
strength, the coin would crack further and further until it would eventually be destroyed.
Leylin had a feeling that after losing this Coin of Destiny, he would not be able to create another for a long time.
‘What does this prophecy mean? Is there a Morning Star creature slumbering in the pocket dimension, or will there be Morning Star Magus outside who’ll interfere’ Leylin rubbed his eyebrows, the many possibilities flying through his mind and giving him a headache.
The Coin of Destiny was a non-living thing and its prophecies were vague enough to baffle him on occasion.
In addition, destiny could not be grasped so easily. Even the coin could make some wrong predictions, especially in a place like the central continent where almost every area was overseen by Morning Star Magi. They would affect destiny even more.
Morning Star strength was already able to slightly affect the force of the river of destiny.
The strong grasped their destiny. This was an eternal truth.
Hence, the prediction of this coin could only act as a reference and might not be accurate. Blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and all sorts of possibilities streaked through his mind…
About two months had passed in the blink of an eye.
Leylin was now in front of the black Magus Tower, with various runes and strange metal plates on the ground.
“Enchant!” Foggy spiritual force congealed to form a solid rune pen that carved out refined, complicated patterns on the metal plates. All the patterns combined to form a dazzling spell rune and imprint.
After the last stroke was completed, the many metal plates were shrouded with dim light.
“Your enchantment techniques have probably reached the level of a master and are not far from those of a grandmaster, my Lord. My
respects towards you!” Parker glanced at the enchanted metal plates, of which almost all had been done successfully, his expression revealing his admiration.
The young man in front of him had reached the Vapour Phase before he turned a hundred, leaving him biting the dust. His knowledge in potioneering had even reached the level of a grandmaster. It seemed like his enchantment knowledge was also not to be underestimated, at the level of a master!
‘Looks like my master’s future will be hard to predict!’ Parker suddenly had this thought. ‘This is good too. I’ve made the right choice!’
Leylin cared little for Parker’s thoughts. He glanced at the enchanted metal plates that he had worked on, looking satisfied.
In actuality, with the support from the A.I. Chip, what he was least afraid of was complicated things like this. His skills in enchantment and alchemy had long since reached the level of a grandmaster.
He had even intentionally failed a few so that he would not be seen as terrifying.
He would be considered a genius if he could be one or two steps ahead of everyone. However, being ten or more steps ahead would cause panic, and he would be seen as a freak. Leylin obviously did not want that to happen.
“Parker, spread these isolation plates within the positive and negative energy elemental pools based on the blueprint from before. Is that understood?”
Leylin took a white towel from a deferential Snoopy and wiped his hands as he spoke to Parker.
The Magus Tower was now completed with the efforts of the Stone Tribe men. The next order of business was to carve defensive runes and activate spell formations.
The Warlocks that sided with Leylin were like him, spending all their time adding these runes on all sorts of materials. After
inspection, they were stored until the building’s construction was completed.

“Understood, master.” Parker respectfully bowed 90 degrees, leaving Leylin flabbergasted. This new vassal of his seemed to be even more respectful than before. However, this was to be expected. The might of a leader was built from strength and obedience.

“Also, I’m planning to leave. When I’m not around, you’re in charge of everything regarding the construction of the Magus Tower. A few supportive facilities have been built. However, the activation of the spell formations will wait until I’m back, I’ll do that myself,” Leylin commanded.

These miscellaneous matters could be passed on. As long as he was the one checking everything and activating the spell formations, there was no problem.

The last step, which was to give life to the structure, was enough for Leylin to make the whole Magus Tower perfect and even have a spirit of its own. If there were any issues, all would be known to him.

“Understood. Master, are you going on a long journey?”

The Magus Tower was only half-done, and it was the lifeblood of a Magus. Usually, nothing could move them from the tower, which was why Leylin’s actions were very strange.

“Yes! I’m going to the headquarters, but it is not certain how long it will take.” Leylin glanced up the sky, into the distance.

He had a reason why he had to go there. The temptation of the Lamia Hair was too much for him. In addition, besides the last few steps, the construction of the Magus Tower now was all about the details. There was no need to stay here and supervise.

……
A few days later, outside Phosphorescence Swamp.

“Haha, Leylin, you’re finally here. We’ve been waiting for you!” Upon seeing Leylin’s figure, Robin immediately moved over and gave him an enthusiastic hug.

“My apologies. I had some work to do so I’m a little late.” Leylin had an apologetic look on his face as he greeted Kesha.

Besides Robin and Kesha, there were nine other Warlocks whose auras made it evident that they had reached rank 3. Leylin couldn’t help but sigh in admiration at these Warlock families who had accumulated their bloodline and strength for a long time. Just a casual request would call forth many powerful Warlocks.

“This is Noah. You’ve seen him at the banquet before.” Robin laughed as he pulled Leylin aside.

“Uncle Leylin!” This young man named Noah had wine-red eyes that were very memorable.

This young man was Robin’s nephew, and he had a very concentrated bloodline. He had already reached rank 3 and Robin thought highly of him. Leylin had also seen him once before at the banquet.

As for the rest of the rank 3 Warlocks, Robin merely skimmed over them.

Headed by Leylin and the other three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, the eight other Black Horrall Snake Warlocks were also at rank 3 but had a lower status.

Out of these eight rank 3 Warlocks, Robin had brought over five, and with his nephew added in he held the most authority in this small group. Kesha had brought three Black Horrall Snake Warlocks from her own family over. Those rank 1 descendants from before had not appeared at all, and it was probably because she knew this expedition would be dangerous, and it was pointless to bring them along.

Leylin was alone and looked quite pitiful.
Out of all his subordinates, only Parker was somewhat acceptable. However, he was useless in this expedition, and might even have hindered them. Leylin though it’d be better if he just stayed and looked after domestic affairs.

“Alright. Since everyone is here, let’s go! The Forgotten Zine is very far from here, and it will take a month by airship.” Robin waved his arm in high spirits.
415 - The Descendants’ Issue

Leylin and company’s departure did not rouse much commotion in the Ouroboros Clan.
Warlocks did not spend all their time on research. Adventuring and the exploration of pocket dimensions were also deemed normal for them. Due to their longevity, even were they to disappear for a few years, their absence would be inconspicuous.
The twelve rank 3 Warlocks moderated the horrifying radiation and energy undulations on their bodies and went under the guise of a regular troop of adventurers from the central continent. Discreetly, they all boarded an airship at a city not far from Phosphorescence Swamp.
Standing on board the deck, Leylin fell silent as he looked at the illustrious symbol of the Fallor Family splashed across the body of the airship,
“They are indeed the rulers of the skies. They single-handedly dominate and monopolize the entirety of aerial transport in the central continent!” From the bottom of his heart, Leylin sighed without any inhibitions.
“What are you looking at?”
A whiff of perfume and seconds later, Kesha walked over, half leaning on the railings and revealing her sensual beautiful body.
Due to the enhanced bloodline of Warlocks, her skin was more delicate and exquisite. Coupled with her slim, shaped eyes and slightly curled cherry lips, she eluded a kind of demonic charm that
caused some travellers to have rumblings in their throat and flames burning in their stomach.
Leylin’s eyes naturally swept across Kesha’s body unrestrainedly, paying particular attention to the vital parts.
“Hehe!” Kesha laughed tenderly and without a qualm arched her back and pushed her bosom forward, “The journey is getting rather boring, would you like to go back to my room for some fun?”
Leylin rolled his eyes, lust and illicit sexual relations among the nobles were common. It was even more normal for those who grasped great power and possessed a long life.
Of course, there were some exceptions among the Warlocks. To attain an even more outstanding and pure bloodline, female Warlocks would go all out and embrace craziness. In fact, they had the advantage for seduction.
Leylin smiled and replied, “Pardon me! Not today, you will be the first to know when I decide to sell my seed, though!”
“Alright then! Such a pity!” Kesha licked a finger, revealing no hint of her humiliation.
“But still! I really do like you, junior!” She placed her finger on Leylin’s chest and with a smile, twirled it in circles.
However, that was the furthest Kesha went and she attempted nothing else. In the end, she appropriately settled for casual conversation with Leylin.
“Do you know Freya and Miranda? Kesha asked out of the blue.
“We have met a few times!” Leylin replied with some uneasiness as he drew out the air from his breath. As far as those two nutjobs were concerned, especially the more powerful one out of the two, he really had a hard time dealing with them.
“Then are you aware?” Kesha smiled mysteriously, with an added crafty look of a little girl.
“They have been spreading the word that you belong to them and you are their prey. Any other female Warlocks who have any
intentions of looking your way, will have to go up against them!” “I…” Leylin rolled his eyes in anger, almost cursing in his rage. “These two maniacs!” he finally exclaimed with extreme resentment. “Actually, Why don’t you seriously consider it? Miranda has to-die-for skills and holds the title of the Succubus, as for Freya….” Kesha moved forward, almost leaning on Leylin and whispered into his ears: ”Freya has never been with a man, so she might be a virgin after all!” The scent from her hair was pleasantly sweet as it permeated the air. Coupled with Kesha’s words, Leylin was left with a dry mouth. “Why?” A victorious smile surfaced on Kesha’s face, ”What about now? Do you want me to cease your desire? My skills might be better than Miranda’s!” As she spoke, she stuck out her pink tongue and gently licked on Leylin’s earlobes. Suddenly, Kesha felt Leylin’s body turned cold, just like a block of ice. “So I see, you knew the both of them?” She lifted her head in astonishment and saw an emotionless Leylin standing there, both his eyes sparkling and clear, without a trace of sentiment. “Yes! I know them, and I am just relaying somewhat of a message for Freya, that’s all!” Seeing Leylin’s reaction, Kesha knowingly stepped back, not daring to tease him further. “Please tell them I will consider it carefully!” Leylin replied nonchalantly. “Got it! “ Kesha looked intently at Leylin: “Your current state! It’s as if you’re not influenced by the emotional and passionate moods that arise from your bloodline! I finally understand why Freya could not get her mind off you! Such an outstanding bloodline. It is what we Kemoyin Warlocks need….” Watching Kesha’s back as she was walking away, Leylin stroked his chin and a bitter smile curled the edges of his lips.
Even for Kemoyin Warlocks, deterioration of one’s bloodline cannot be avoided. Looking at the three Black Horrall Snake Warlocks from Kesha’s Clan, it was obvious their bloodline could not avoid the inevitable degeneration either. Thinking back on her recent temptation, at least half of it were real. If Leylin had agreed to Kesha’s seduction and had multiple sexual escapades with her, she might have even helped herself to obtain his bloodline. Even if it weren’t for the bloodline, according to the emotional state of minds of female Warlocks, as long as the mood and feel were right, they will go ahead and copulate with other Magi. In the Magus world, other than female Warlocks, the same applied to the female Magi. Those girls who were pure were a rare species. But Leylin really had no interest at all. He was in the middle of a risky journey and had no mood for it. Even if he needed the company of a lady, his choice would not be Kesha, Freya or Miranda. These ambitious female Warlocks would do anything for the continuation of their bloodlines. As female Warlocks, they must have done their research on the nourishing of the bloodline with some specializing in techniques and spells to do it. They were well aware of the ways to attain the seed of a male, something which did not surprise Leylin at all.

He was not completely confident in the A.I. Chip’s ability to calm him down, as well as his control over his own body against the methods they deployed to acquire his bloodline. If anything unthinkable were to happen, resulting in a pile of descendants that were raised and taught by other clans, it would be mind-boggling and Leylin dreaded the idea. Besides, there was another hesitation in his heart. His bloodline was purified by means of the A.I. Chip and the purity level was exceptionally high, almost equalling the original
bloodline. With his own ability and with the help of the A.I. Chip, he was able to conceal his true strength and capabilities from others, but a newborn baby could not. If his peculiar bloodline were to be discovered, given the greed of those Morning Star Magi, he might have been captured to become a reproductive machine for the next generation. God knows, they might even be able to extract and strip him of his bloodline! Therefore, until he was absolutely sure that it was safe, he would not allow the outflow of his bloodline, not to mention having descendants.

“But, nevertheless, if I am promoted to the rank of a Morning Star Magus and I want to start a clan of my own in the central continent, I am afraid those female Warlocks are my only choice!” Leylin stroked his chin. Being a pure Kemoyin bloodline Warlock, in order to have strong and powerful descendants in the future, it was naturally more suitable if he chose a female Kemoyin Warlock. As for female commoners and ordinary Warlocks, children he had with them would have their bloodline diluted to half of his, something which was unacceptable. The quality of a Warlock’s bloodline was known to be the best in the first generation. The more concentrated it was, the better they would be. These minute details flashed across his mind once before he tossed them aside.

“This is not the right time for me to think about such matters!” Leylin squinted his eyes, enjoying the natural and pure sunlight from the deck. A look of satisfaction gleamed in his eyes and his thoughts wandered to a faraway place.
As far as Warlocks were concerned, long and slow journeys were not torturous. At worst, they might have to stay in their room every day and meditate to pass time. And since the Fallor Family had provided such excellent services in the first class cabin, Leylin was satisfied, especially with the meals provided. Given how poor Twilight Zone’s environment was, the food and drink of the central continent were worlds apart. And no matter how long a journey was, it had to come to an end. The huge airship started descending, casting a huge circular shadow on the ground. The shadow kept spreading until at last, a loud thump was heard. “This is Sin City station. All passengers who are alighting, please maintain order!” After the airship had stabilized, a group of workers and slaves opened the warehouse latch and started unloading the goods. A few flights of stairs were unfolded and secured to the ground. The passengers who were going to alight got ready and started forming a queue. “We are finally here, the border of the Forgotten Land, Sin City! Even the name is unpretentious with no need to cover up!” After multiple flights on airships and a month of travel, Leylin had finally reached his destination as he mingled among the other tourists. He fixated his eyes on the orange sun in the distance, and the dilapidated grey and brown walls under it, as he sighed. The A.I. Chip issued a warning. [Beep! The energy particle concentration here is about 10-20% lower than the outside world. Please take note!] The spells of Warlocks and Magi were cast through their own energy which galvanised the surrounding energy particles. Low concentrations of the energy particles would cause a weakening of
their power, leading to greater consumption of their spiritual and magical energies. If they were to face such a situation all of a sudden, many Magi would probably be thrown into a flurry.

“The elemental leakage had affected even the Forgotten Land!” Leylin sighed, “The power of Morning Star Magi is too devastating!”

Although the energy particles concentration level was lower than that in the outside world by 20%, it posed no problem to Leylin. The concentration level of energy particles of his homeland, the south coast, and the Twilight Zone, were less than half of the central continent. Spellcasting with such low available energy was natural for him.
Leylin remembered the relevant information. Immediately, he looked at his surroundings. Sure enough, the tourists who had departed the car had solemn expressions, an aura on their bodies that clearly indicated that they were not to be messed with. Some of them had even covered up their faces. Those were the slaves and coolies who had been transporting objects underground. They would size up the batch of tourists from time to time, and their docile gazes concealed a malicious bloodthirst. It was as if they were waiting for the tourists to reveal a slight opening, for them to rip them apart and devour them like wolves.

‘A chaotic region where strength rules all! A place that reeks of sin! Nefas is the city of sins indeed.’ Leylin thought of the information mentioned by his A.I Chip previously, and along with Robin and the rest, subtly mixed in with the crowd.

Nefas City had no city guard to speak of, and there was obviously no entrance fee. As a result, there was a lot of human traffic, but none of it was particularly good. Of course, anyone who was forced to come here did not exactly have a stellar character.

“Rascal, what are you looking at?” An extremely muscular man who was close to two metres tall gazed at a youngster with an unfriendly expression.

“Oh! Sorry! Sorry!” The youngster had eyes that were triangular in
shape. His mouth opened and he started to smile apologetically, at the same time nodding his head and bowing. Just as he had bowed down in his apology, a cold glint emerged in the youngster’s eyes. He violently whipped out a black dagger and stabbed the strong man in the stomach.

“You!” The strong man’s face registered rage as he was caught off-guard. Still, a thin layer of defense formed on his body. That strong man was actually a Grand Knight that could incite life force! A defence made of life force was very useful at mitigating the damage from clubs and the like. Even for sharp blows, it greatly reduced the strength.

*Whoosh!* The strong man’s eyes shone ominously as he decided on how to torture the youngster to death. But instantly, the ominous glint in his eyes, disappeared, replaced instead by terror. The defense he was so proud of, a Grand Knight’s defense, was cut apart like paper by the black dagger.

The black dagger repeatedly, as if following a trajectory, stabbed the strong man’s stomach before violently pushing it in.

“You…” The strong man’s foamed at his mouth and he collapsed. He struggled in pain on the ground, and one could faintly see the ruptured organs and intestines through the wound.

With that type of injury, unless a Magus were to help, the man would completely not have a chance of survival.

The youngster kept his dagger, and swiftly squeezed out of the crowd before disappearing around a corner.

“What a pity. The strong man was at the very least a knight! If they were to fight properly, even 10 dwarves would not have been able to win against him!”

“What pity? That dwarf’s weapon was something that, at the very least, was leaked out of the Magus world. With something like that against him, even a Grand Knight would suffer if he was not careful!”
The pedestrians on both sides did not panic at all, and were instead rejoicing at the misfortune of the strong man who had collapsed in the middle. There were even a few people who exchanged glances before moving toward the direction in which the dwarf had escaped.

After a long time, a batch of patrolling soldiers arrived, serving well their roles as cleaners and corpse-collectors.

‘The object the dwarf was holding on to was a dagger with a weak spell attached to it. Even though it had not reached the rank of a low-ranked magic equipment, that alone is not too bad…’ Leylin saw the scene unfolding before him and shook his head internally. He had seen such a situation occur about four to five times ever since he entered Nefas City. There was simply nobody watching over this place.

The pathways of the city were paved with knife shavings and hammer splints. There were even bloodstains that could not be washed off, having long since turned a brownish-black.

In general, this was an extremely chaotic criminal town. Robbery, murder, rape and lewd behavior could be seen everywhere. Shady businesses were being conducted in the corners, and there was a faint aura being emitted that caused even Leylin to be uncomfortable.

Thankfully, Leylin and the rest were under disguise as mercenaries, and had a strong aura. They were also equipped with weapons, and looked like they were not to be trifled with, which had removed many inconveniences.

However, even so, there were still a few people who did not know better and lusted after the beauty of Kesha and a few other female Warlocks. They would often unscrupulously block the path ahead, and make certain requests of Leylin and the rest.

Of course, they had all become corpses, carrying their regrets to their deathbeds.
“Robin, the aura from the shadows is making me extremely uncomfortable.” Leylin leaned in to say as he sped up.
“Very keen perception!” Robin wore a black cloak that only revealed his eyes. ”That’s right, these depraved fellows are performing summoning rituals and offering sacrifices!”
“Huh?” Leylin’s pupils enlarged; he would not think of that answer in a million years.

Similar to their interdimensional exploration through the astral gate, powerful individuals would occasionally unload some of their keepsakes or spiritual force particles in the Nefas City through other planes from time to time. They would even tempt intellectual beings in order to obtain higher strength!

In summary, it was a constant cycle of travelling through respective passageways of designated places and the Nefas City while collecting depraved souls and stuff like that.

The most famous were the plane that held demons. Legend has it that there were many such locations, both on the south coast and in the central continent.

Robin smiled and began to explain, “You know, the more degenerate and sinful places are, the more attractive they are to demons. The sacrifice of spirit and flesh in these environments brings them, even more, delight, leading to their duplicates, or even original bodies, descending.

“Nefas City’s Governor is the mighty demon hunter. Lord Cyril, the Morning Star Magus!” Whenever a demon’s duplicate descends, he immediately captures it, and either conducts his own research on it or sells it. Apparently, they sell like hotcakes!”

Leylin was somewhat speechless after hearing all of that. Lord Cyril acted like the biggest bait of the entirety of Nefas City, and attracted many different demons to take the hook.

Whenever these demons were offered tributes, and sent duplicates or even descended themselves, Cyril would immediately seize
them. To think about it, these demons must have a lot of grievances.

“Well… Is this mighty hunter not afraid of the descent of demons of a higher power?” Leylin voiced out his worries. A city like that with demon worshippers in every corner was literally an active volcano! Was that Morning Star Magus not afraid that by using himself as a bait he would attract troubles?

“Don’t worry. This hunter has a very thorough knowledge of demons, and many formidable demons are not his adversaries! Moreover…”

Robin shot a glance at a corner not far away, “The plane of the demons is nothing! Plenty of Magi have been eyeing it. If not for the crafty behaviours of the demons, in that they would rather abandon their duplicates than to leave any tracks, we would have chased after them long ago, and completely taken over their plane!”

“Furthermore, they are struggling whilst at death’s door. According to our predictions, that hunter is the Magus closest to finding the plane of those demons! He might even have already found it!”

This rendered Leylin speechless. Robin demonstrated to him the confidence every Magus of the central continent had. That ambition and aspiration were cultivated after having overcome countless planes.

Such a state could only be seen in the ancient times, but the Big War had ended the golden period of ancient Magi. Now, with interdimensional travel being resumed, the central continent had recovered part of the glory of the ancients!

‘Perhaps, only this mental state that’s full of ambition and enterprise can push the Magus world to greater heights!’ Leylin sighed internally, and his spirit grew even more indomitable.

This was the best period! All the resources, knowledge, and meditation techniques were available to him, and there were numerous planes and strange realms outside that were waiting to be
explored and conquered!
‘I need to advance to the Morning Star realm quickly!’ In Leylin’s heart, the thirst was becoming stronger. He hoped to be able to leave a legacy, or even take the lead in the rejuvenation of the Magus world!
Even though he had done similar work in Twilight Zone, that was at a small scale. Where was the broad stage for the work to be done?
“The Forgotten Land is just after Nefas City! The elemental leakage effect is very intense there, and I’m afraid there’s only less than 1 percent of the elemental concentration of the central continent remaining. We can only depend on potions and the essence of magic crystals to replenish our spiritual force and power. Everyone, please take note. If you need to, please swiftly refill your spiritual force here…” Robin pointed out softly.
“Also, don’t go too far in Nefas City, and don’t deliberately cause trouble! After all, there’s still a Morning Star Magus here. This particular demon hunter is famous even amongst Morning Star Magi…”
Leylin, along with the other Warlocks, nodded in agreement.
The Ouroboros Clan was considered a large-scale force in the central continent, but did not dominate the entire continent. They did not rank all that highly, either.
Before they had set off, Robin had explained some taboos to Leylin.
First, the few rank 6 Emperors were a force not to be reckoned with, and for those at the Radiant Moon realm, they had to avoid getting into trouble with them as much as possible.
The remaining forces fundamentally were of the same rank as the Ouroboros Clan, and hence there was nothing to be afraid of. As long as their reasons were justified, they could take actions if they wished to! Warlocks surpassed Magi of the same rank.
Even though all the Warlocks had declared that their spiritual forces were plentiful and their magical powers were full, Robin still decided to reside in Nefas City for a night before entering the actual Forgotten Land. As a result, Leylin and the rest found a clean hotel to reside in after which the Warlocks either meditated, shopped or bought some necessities.
A boundless barren wasteland.
Gales howled, sending the dust hurtling through the air to cover the sky, forming a thick haze.
In this land, twelve Warlocks were hurrying along on a special giant lizard.
“This is the Forgotten Land after all. Look at how sparse the elemental particles are here!” Leylin glanced at the statistics that the A.I. Chip gave him and shook his head. Even compared to the south coast and Twilight Zone this place was too poor. Not only was the land barren, even the elemental particles were scarce. It was no wonder that Magi and other races only chose to live here if they’d run out of options.
Leylin believed that were it not for his ancestral map, even Kubler would have been forced to hang around this place.
“Regular fugitives can just flee to the Nefas, it is the city of sins after all. From the perspectives of other Magi in the central continent, going to Nefas City is akin to banishment. Only those that are truly evil who could no longer stay in their own cities and are being hunted down would choose to come here. We need to be careful.” This was not the first time Robin had warned them about this. It was evident how great the danger here was in his mind.
*Swish!* Two dense corrosive balls that were yellow in colour flew out and burst midair causing countless droplets to fall.
The moment these droplets made contact with the similarly yellow
sand, they began to emit smoke, forming a pit whose descent could be seen with the naked eye.

*Chi chi!* A few black figures in the sand shrieked, fleeing far away.

Leylin saw that although these creatures had a head and humanoid limbs, they were only as large as a seven or eight-year-old child. In addition, their heads were shaped like those of mice, with two giant white teeth jutting out that looked sharp. Their bodies were covered with fur, and they all had thin black tails behind them.

‘Mouse People! They’re a type of lycanthrope, the product of experiments left behind by ancient Magi!’ Leylin quickly recalled information about these Mouse People.

The ancient era was the most glorious period for the Magus World. Not only did the ancient Magi take over many different worlds and places, they even took away creatures from different worlds to be their slaves and even guinea pigs. This was why there were so many races in the Magus World.

“Noah, what are you doing?” Robin suddenly shouted at his nephew who had launched the attack.

“Uncle, I merely…” Noah lowered his head, ashamed.

“You can’t just attack anything as you please! You’re too weak, and you’re giving the opponents a chance to get you! The Mouse People are a very united race, and the blood from their injuries will attract even more of them. We need to leave this place as soon as possible!” Robin was infuriated, but after remembering that Noah had only just come out for some experience, he could not help but soften his words.

“I’m sorry!” Noah found it hard to speak. Though he was no longer young and had long since obtained the strength of a rank 3, he might not even be as experienced as rank 2 Magi when it came to confronting enemies.

Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks were precious resources in the
Ouroboros Clan. They were sheltered, which was why Noah had no real life experience even if he had theoretical knowledge. Under Robin’s command, the lizard under them increased its speed. However, it was too late. The situation proved that Robin was not wrong in his lecturing. In less than a day, they were surrounded by a large group of Mouse People.

“Damn it, why are there so many?” Noah’s face flushed as he glanced at the Mouse People who amounted to more than two thousand. They formed a huge wave and surrounded them, the stink so bad that he was on the verge of vomiting.

“Mouse People reproduce like rabbits, and they require very little in order to survive. Other races may find it difficult to survive in the Forgotten Land, but this is not an issue for them. They make use of the rotten plants and maggots underground to live, and if they are truly desperate, they can even gnaw at sand and rocks!” Leylin explained to Noah.

“Damn these inferior beings. If we were outside-!” Noah clenched his teeth. Though they had spiritual force potions for replenishment, they still needed to be frugal.

“It can’t be helped. Regular Mouse People are very resistant to radiation and can be compared to rank 3 acolytes. Elite adult Mouse People even have the strength of official Magi. The leader of this group here is very sly, and I suspect it isn’t even here!”

Robin closed his eyes, a white eyeball appearing on his forehead. It was evident he was using detection magic to search for the tracks of the leader of the Mouse People.

In this situation, in order to keep depletion at the lowest, the best idea was to kill the other party’s leader. However, the Mouse People seemed to be aware of this as well.

“Darl, you guys, prepare to attack!”

Robin opened his eyes and exclaimed to a few of the Warlocks behind him. The five Black Horrall Snake Warlocks went forward,
a great energy wave flickering from their bodies, causing an uproar amongst the group of mice people. Robin and the others were the main force and could not afford to waste energy here. They could only have their followers take care of it.

“Prepare to provide assistance!” Kesha instructed the three Warlocks from her family behind her.

Leylin took around. He was alone and did not have any servants.

“Never mind. Their spiritual force and magic power are also precious and can’t be wasted here. Let me do it.”

“Leylin, you-? … Alright. Only you are the most suitable in this situation.” Realising Leylin’s identity as a Potion Master, Robin nodded.

“Get away, or you’ll pay the price!”

Riding the lizard, Leylin went up front, the terrifying undulations of a Vapour Phase rank 3 Magus emanating from him.

The disturbance amongst the mice became even louder, but nobody left.

Leylin couldn’t help but admire them. The use of his aura to suppress them might be easy for creatures with lower intelligence, but the moment it was used on creatures with an intelligence similar to humans, it was useless. This was especially so, if they had a leader commanding them.

Of course, if Leylin used his rank 3 innate talent, Intimidating Gaze, there was no problem. After all, that was not just using his aura to suppress others, but a suppression that was similar to that of a domain.

However, Leylin thought it would be too extravagant to use a rank 3 innate spell against this group at the boundaries of the Forgotten Land.

As he watched the Mouse People pouncing at him, a silver light flashed in his hand as a few test tubes glimmering in multiple
colours appeared.
“Defiant Ring of Fire!” A fiery-red test tube was tossed out with a swish and exploded in the air to form a giant ring of fire encircling Leylin and the others.
“Wind Blast!” Immediately after, another two light green test tubes flew out, and great gales broke out, blowing the flames in all directions.
“And lastly, oil roasting potion!” With another toss, a purplish-black potion exploded in the air, and something like crude oil in gaseous form was dispersed.
*Rumble!* The fire from before made contact with this oil and grew even more powerful, tongues of flame sweeping in all directions.
“Rank 3 Potion-combination Spell Divine Prairie Flames!” Great flames rushed along the ground, and as if pushed by a powerful invisible force, began to surround the Mouse People. Many fire serpents engulfed the area and swallowed many of the Mouse People, the cracking sounds of meat being roasted filled the air.
*Chi chi!* *Chi chi!* They were burnt to ashes, and this horrifying scene motivated the Mouse People at the sides to flee. However, this was merely a small number.
At the end, many Mouse People were charred and became conjoined to the ground forming a single entity. A disgusting stink that was ten times worse than before was produced.
“He actually used a few rank 1 and 2 potions and simulated the effects of a rank 3 spell! He really is a Potions Grandmaster!” Robin praised from the bottom of his heart, “Also, this battle style does not consume spiritual force nor magic power. It is the most appropriate to use in the Forgotten Land!”
“It’s only the results of an ordinary experiment.” Leylin smiled very modestly.
In actuality, those were his true thoughts. The amplification of effect from such a combination only reached around 70%, and was far from what could be produced from the Morning Star final technique that used a few spells and produced an effect that had a huge change in quality.

However, Leylin had gained a very large interest in this method of combination and had been doing research on it. This Potion combination technique was a result of one of his successful experiments.

“Everything is great, but this is a little too disgusting!” Kesha used a gold-laced handkerchief and covered her nose, her expression revealing a look of revulsion.

The other rank 3 Warlocks were not in good shape either, especially Noah, who was deathly pale and seemed unable to hold back his urge to vomit.

After surveying this region, they realised that besides the earth under their feet, everything else had become charred. That unique stink of the Mouse People had become even denser after the burning.

“Alright. Get used to this kind of thing, because you’re going to be experiencing more of it in the future!” Robin patted Noah’s shoulders, gaze unable to conceal his admiration towards Leylin.

Over here, only he and Leylin could chat without a change of expression.

To take care of everyone, Robin quickly led and continued the journey.

With the previous experience, everyone was even more cautious this time. Even Noah exercised restraint and followed along at the back of the group, gathering experience.

After that, Leylin found that this Forgotten Land truly was a large dump. They met all sorts of strange creatures that were all the products of failed experiments who had escaped. Some of these
species were very rare in the central continent. No matter what they were, they all had a common point, they were either plagued with flaws, were corrosive, or had powerful poisons. There was one way to sum this up. They were hard to make use of and were of no value to Magi!
Maybe that was why the Forgotten Land was not overtaken by the Magi. Otherwise, the barriers between dimensions would not deter against the greed of Magi!
There were, of course, a handful of rare species who voluntarily entered the Forgotten Land to escape the grip of the Magi, however rare the cases might be.
The Magi here were so few in number that Leylin only caught a glimpse of one in all this time. And it wasn’t without the aid of his A.I. Chip that he could make out some of his features.
The said Magus was a mature male with peculiar scales embedded in his face, probably the result of a mutation.
With the unexpected negligence of Robin, however, he fled at the speed of light upon noticing Leylin’s group.
The concentration of energy particles continued to drop drastically as time passed and the group headed further into the Forgotten Land. Often, there was no soul in sight.
Those they did come across were mostly some rare species or exiled Magi who couldn’t survive in the central continent.
More often than not, these meetings ended up in a battle.
While they showed mercy to many creatures, keeping in mind to conserve their energy, some of these creatures actually initiated the attacks.
The most threatening one was a profuse chase by a rank 3 Cthulhu beast which bore the physique of a hill.
It took Kesha, Robin, Leylin, and the surrounding Warlocks before the Cthulhu was wholly taken down, and the death of it actually garnered them a heap of rare materials. But unfortunately, a Black Horrall Snake Warlock was sacrificed in this face-off, removing a member from Leylin’s group.

*Flap flap!* Kesha’s pet, a pristine white bird, flew to a stop on her shoulder. Leylin often wondered why Kesha chose to keep a creature that only possessed an investigative nature instead of fighting abilities as her contracted partner.

“Guys, a tribe of Kobolds lies ahead of us. It is a sizeable one with a manpower of more than a thousand, I’m afraid we’ll have to make a detour!” Kesha announced as she opened her eyes.

“Kobold?” Upon hearing that, Leylin did a thorough research on this species through the A.I. Chip.

[Kobold: Ovipara, said to be a subspecies of giant dragons. They will reach a height of 3 feet (around 1 metre) upon maturity and their outer appearance is characterised by a scaly skin which can range from a dark reddish-brown to a faded black. There are two taupe horns on the crowns of their heads and their fiery red eyes possess infrared vision. Furthermore, they can obtain spells through their bloodline and become an expert similar to that of a Bloodline Warlock!]

“Giant dragons?!” The frightful creature that was mentioned in his high-grade meditation technique Dragon King’s Mystic Might came to his mind in that instance. The image of the Kobold on his A.I. Chip was, however, not close to his imagination of the creature. Nonetheless, the giant dragons of the ancient era were famous because of the majority Ehya subspecies which was said to be able to mate with any species. Thus, these Kobolds were only to be expected.

But the thing that caught Leylin’s attention was actually their bloodline!
Rank 3 creatures still existed in small numbers on the central continent despite their rarity. Moreover, Leylin had already reached the status of a rank 3 Warlock, it was about time he explored things in that field.

Unlike Leylin, other Warlocks did not own an A.I. Chip, nor could they extract ancient bloodlines from the blood of rank 3 creatures. As long as there was an adequate source, Leylin could extract as much of the ancient bloodlines as he wished.

“The bloodline of ancient giant dragons?” Leylin touched his chin, uncertain. “We can’t be sure if there are any rank 3 Kobold Warlocks… but it’s definitely possible in a large tribe with a population of over a thousand.

Kesha spoke after that, “I’ve found several rank 2 Kobold Warlocks within them and there are no signs of division in the tribe as of now. They are definitely under the control of a stronger Warlock, there must be a rank 3 in there……”

“A rank 3 Kobold Warlock backed up by numerous Kobold warriors and low-grade bloodlines. That is enough of a threat to us, we have to take a detour!” Robin did not hesitate in his decision. It was an aftereffect of the death of his subordinate, the Black Horrall Snake Warlock, earlier. Afterall, he had spent a painstaking amount of time and effort in nurturing him.

Leylin was about to make a comment but said nothing upon seeing everyone’s approval towards Robin’s decision.

It was clearly impractical for Robin to go against a huge Kobold tribe. Besides, the Kobolds were known for having diluted bloodlines and were already very distantly related to giant dragons. So it was almost impossible to extract giant dragons’ bloodlines from them, even for Morning Star Magi. Wouldn’t Leylin be digging his own grave if he persisted in moving ahead?

To put things into perspective, Robin and the rest were all Bloodline Warlocks. They could start suspecting Leylin’s intentions
in collecting bloodlines.
‘Well, I guess we can only make a mark and return in the future!’ And Leylin stealthily marked out the place on the map of his A.I. Chip.

……

Leylin and his group made it to their destination in spite of the many mishaps on the way.
A saffron bonfire danced from below as an alluring aroma of roasted meat filled the air. The meat was dripping golden and glistening grease every now and then.
A small stretch of white tents encircled the bonfire.
“How are things going? Are the sentry and camouflaging spells up?” Kesha walked out of her tent, a cloud of steam still surrounded visibly. She had only clothed herself in a loose bathrobe and was still drying her hair.
She had obviously just come out of the bath. Nobody knew where she got the water for it, but it was a simple thing for a high-ranking Warlock like her, even if a waste of resources.
“It’s all done, we’re undetectable.” Robin furrowed his brows and replied, “And I remember reminding you not to use any spells here!”
“Don’t worry! The water was from my spatial item!” Kesha was noticeably annoyed and even threw a coquettish glance at Noah who turned beet red.
Robin pulled a long face at that, saying, “Kesha, you’re old enough to be Noah’s granny! On top of that, our families have numerous blood relations, he might as well call you Aunt!”
“Rest assured, I have no interest in kids! On the contrary, I actually prefer mature and charming male Warlocks. Am I right, Leylin?” She shot Leylin a look.
“I’m gonna go double-check!” Leylin quickly excused himself from the circle to check on the spell formations before he got involved in the irrelevant argument.
From his vantage point, he was able to see the white haze that engulfed the whole campsite, making the bonfire and tents only faintly discernible.

Leylin was aware that it would be beyond unlikely to notice any anomalies in the campsite if viewed from outside. The campsite would look like nothing more than barren land.
The whole camouflage was seamless under the setup of Robin’s and Kesha’s men, it would be challenging even for the A.I. Chip to locate areas that could be improved on.

Leylin strolled around aimlessly and shook his head at the indistinct quarrels.

Many families of Kemoyin Warlocks intermarried to preserve the purity of their lineage and for other benefits. Strictly speaking, every family in the Ouroboros Clan was related to every other, and they all could even be traced down to the same ancestors. Hence, it’d be a rotten mess if one were to try and piece the puzzle together.
Leylin was sick of hearing about the indecent acts of the aristocrats, and of the fact that they would always be superior regardless.
He figured that he might as well use this extra time to study the spell models and relevant information in his A.I. Chip.

Leylin’s eyes lost focus as he devoted the entirety of his attention to the A.I. Chip…

Robin and Kesha had made up by the time Leylin returned to the bonfire in the evening. They, too, knew it wasn’t a time to discuss such things.

Robin gathered all the warlocks next to the bonfire and spoke of the final safety precautions.

“This pocket dimension was discovered by a Barbarian Bear tribe
from the Forgotten Land and the information was proliferated in the Forgotten Land instead of being kept secret. Following that, 2 factions, that were led by human magician fugitives and the local barbarians respectively, also marked out this sacred place, opposing the Barbarian Bears.

“They are the three main factions that we’ll be facing this time. Aside from a trickle of other intellectual species, we can overlook the rest…” He explained in detail.

“The entrance to the pocket dimension is at the mid-section of an underground river, guarded by these forces! We must break in swiftly, then fight our way through using either a boundary-breaking spell or by force…”

A solemn look was painted across the faces of Leylin and the rest. Given the pitiful concentration of energy particles in the Forgotten Land, it would be hard to find useful resources. Thus, this secret place was of utmost importance to the Forgotten Land and its livelihood, especially towards those factions! These factions would not sit back if Leylin and the rest were to take advantage of this land!

Though the group was practically undeterred as they were backed by the Ouroboros Clan, it must also be understood that the Clan would not launch an attack just for them. It just wasn’t worth it!

To add on, there was no end to the amount of evil and wicked Magi and dangerous creatures in the Forgotten Land that couldn’t care less about it.

Leylin and the rest had to defend themselves throughout the duration of their escape from the Forgotten Land, or else it’d be a truly undignified sacrifice if they were to lose their lives.

The boundary-breaking spell was a type of escaping spell that was fast and convenient, customised for entering and exiting pocket dimensions. Though the result varied for different types of lands, and might have no effect on occasion, it was still a useful spell.
Though, if one was superior in ability he’d able to travel through the pocket dimension with ease. Obviously, this did not work with Leylin and company. Why else would they painstakingly plot all this?
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What happens after we enter the pocket dimension? Are we going to be working together or alone?” Leylin asked unhurriedly from the side, taking a bite of the roast meat.

Kesha was gazing at Robin attentively. The reason she was here was due to the temptation of the precious materials in the pocket dimension. It was natural not to choose to work together.

“You can do as you wish!” Robin answered without hesitation.

“I have a general topographic map here, but it lacks a lot of information. Take a look!” Robin had evidently made preparations earlier and produced two maps, giving one each to Kesha and Leylin.

“Of course, after we get everything, I hope we can discuss or perhaps exchange a few things. If anyone here plans to sell their precious materials, the other two shall have the preemptive right to purchase them!” Robin was very thoughtful, and since Kesha and Leylin had no issues with that, they both nodded.

……

A snaking river flowed out from underground, the sound of surging water echoing throughout the cavity in this underground world, making it feel even more oppressive.

In another area, not only were there powerful defensive spell
formation set-ups and runes that glimmered, there were even Magi and beings of other races patrolling the area. Though these people looked pitiful wearing clothes filled with creases and patches, their auras were very powerful and wild. Leylin and his group all entered Shadow Stealth state and snuck in. Not far away from them, black bear humanoids, upright creatures with animal skins around their waists as well as other accessories were standing guard.

“Barbarian Bears!” This was the first time Leylin had seen such a creature.

Unlike the half-beastmen who had escaped from the laboratories, Barbarian Bears were truly from another world. They were extremely intelligent, and their bodies were very resilient. An adult Barbarian Bears was comparable to a rank 1 Branded Swordsman or Bio Booster, as well as other sub-branches of ancient Magi. After awakening, the power of their totems, elder Barbarian Bears, and Barbarian Bear Shamans could gain the ability to obtain magic with offerings, and turn into frightening magicians. Just this tribe alone could take on the role as the kings in the Forgotten Land.

In front of Leylin, there were no less than a hundred elite Barbarian Bear warriors, as well as numerous elders and Barbarian Bear Shamans.

And their opponents were not limited to Barbarian Bears. A few short green creatures strolled past the Barbarian Bears patrol group, holding multi-colour staffs with different ores and gems embedded into them. These staffs emitted detection magic, which caused Leylin to back up. These green creatures were very similar to gnomes, though their larger heads were like watermelons, large and round. Their skin was a wretched green.

These were the Green-skinned barbarian Magi. Favouring the
ability to cast spells, they had abandoned the advantage of strength. Their spiritual force and magic power were terrifying. Every single one of them was akin to a human rank 2 Magus, and some even emanated the strength of rank 3.

“What do we do?” Kesha’s voice travelled into Leylin’s ear.

“Don’t act recklessly. Look!” Leylin pointed in another direction. At the side of the river, brown vines crawled all over a brown rock. It looked very normal, but this immediately attracted Robin and Kesha’s attention.

“It’s an alarm spell pattern that targets hidden fluctuations in the air. It’s concealed very well. If not for Leylin’s warning, we’d all have been deceived!”

Robin gritted his teeth, “Let’s withdraw first.”

They exchanged glances and left the underground, while the other Black Horrall Warlocks followed closely behind.

*Boom!* Once they got to another safe area, Robin’s expression darkened, and cracks appeared under his feet from his stomps.

“Those wretched traitors to humanity! They must have set up those alarm spell patterns. If not, it’d be impossible for the Barbarian Bears and Green-skinned Barbarians to come up with this technique even if they had ten thousand more years to do so!”

Robin walked in circles, evidently very annoyed. Within the Forgotten Land, besides the Barbarian Bears and Green-skinned Barbarians, there were organisations formed entirely out of fugitive human Magi. There had always been three main forces here. In order to protect this common asset of theirs that was the pocket dimension, they had obviously teamed up.

“Didn’t we discuss this matter some time ago? Though this is the worst situation, we have made the required preparations. Relax, your emotional state does not seem too good.”

Kesha watched Robin, whose eyes were turning red, and quickly warned, “Damn it. Leylin, Robin’s probably going to have another
episode!"
“Hm?” Upon hearing this, Leylin was stunned and turned to look at Robin’s bewitching handsome face. It was now distorted, and bloodlust was beginning to converge. This was obviously an effect of the emotional instability caused by his bloodline, resulting in Robin losing his senses.
“Wake up! Robin, you might need it!” A high-grade potion of tranquility appeared in Leylin’s hands as he stared at Robin. Besides Noah and Kesha, the few other Black Horrall Snake Warlocks had retreated a distance. It was not out of fear of being hurt by accident, but because of the bloodline, Robin’s outburst might even affect their own bloodline and cause them to descend into a state of confusion.
“No, I’ve had enough of that potion!” Robin’s eyes were gradually turning red, dense spiritual particles almost solidifying in front of him.
“Has your uncle been having these episodes lately?” Leylin asked Noah while watching Robin.
“No! It hasn’t been that long since the last episode. With the potion and suppression from the spell formations, it shouldn’t be happening again so soon…” Noah looked helpless.
“What should we do? If he really goes crazy, he’ll definitely kill us!” Kesha stood beside Leylin, now evidently on the same side.
“What else can be done? Hold him down and force him to calm down!”
Leylin’s eyes turned amber, and a pair of vertical pupils produced a terrifying chill. After a few advancements, Leylin’s bloodline was even more concentrated, and the aura of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent had also risen. This feeling was most evident to Robin. He took several steps back, his expression alternating between mania and rationality.
“Robin, we’re helping you!” At this moment, Kesha went forward, a powerful aura emanating from her body. The two of them worked together and evidently gave Robin a terrifying amount of pressure. At this moment, while he was breathing heavily, the rational expression stayed on his face longer. “You’re right.” Robin’s voice became coarse and thick, completely different from the gentility it held before. He produced a high-grade potion of tranquility from his spatial equipment and gulped it down. A bracelet formed using white crystals was glimmering with tiny white rays, producing a chill that spread in all directions. “Hah…” Robin let out a long breath, his expression becoming gentle. He took a look around, eyes clear and wise, “Many thanks, everyone. I’m better now!” “That’s great!” Noah cheered, while Kesha and Leylin looked like a weight had been lifted off their shoulders. If Robin really were to act up now, they would have to give up on the plan despite their unwillingness not to. “Robin, what’s going on? Why did it suddenly happen?” Kesha expressed her disapproval towards Robin. “My apologies! The outburst of emotion was too sudden, and I could not control it at all…” Robin laughed wryly. The defect of emotional instability caused by the bloodline had always been an issue for Warlocks. Even with all types of suppression potions and spell formations, they could only ease the issue, not cure it. This was why Leylin’s potions of tranquility were in such high demand. ‘With Robin’s strength and thoughts, he shouldn’t be stirred up so easily and invoke the emotions from his bloodline. Looks like
there’s something he must have from the pocket dimension, which caused him to be so irritated and be made susceptible to those emotions…’ Leylin rationalized. Compared to other high-ranked Warlocks, he had used the breath of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor to treat his bloodline in Twilight Zone. That was why he had experienced no episodes till now. Based on the A.I. Chip’s simulations and Leylin’s own calculations, he did not have to worry about this until he reached the Morning Star realm. Other Warlocks would not be so fortunate. Even a rank 3 Hydro Phase Warlock like Robin would often be affected by these emotions. As for Kesha? Leylin’s eyes swept past her, and he found at least three types of spell patterns that acted as alarms and bloodline-suppressors. “Alright, now we think about what happens at the end of the plan,” Leylin spoke, gathering Robin and Kesha’s attention. “Though we are now a distance away from the pocket dimension and have also especially set up a concealing spell formation, an outburst of aura like what just happened could be sensed by our opponents. “We need to decide on what to do as soon as possible.” Upon hearing this, Robin looked sorry and embarrassed. This whole situation was caused by him. Rank 3 Warlocks, merely by using their auras, could generate giant energy undulations, and it was unknown whether their setup was enough to conceal that. “It can’t be helped. We should enter stealthily, and if it doesn’t work, we barge in!” Robin gritted his head and made his choice. “Now that they might have discovered the undulations and are coming here, we should just head straight to the entrance of the pocket dimension. As I am the reason for the delay, I will place myself at the back of the group and enter after all of you have done
so.”
Robin bowed slightly.
At the rear, he would require much strength to face the crazed counter-attacks from other powers. Even Robin would find this difficult to bear, which made his sincerity clear.
Hence, Leylin and Kesha immediately agreed to Robin’s suggestion.
eylin and Kesha were both unemotional, knowing that it was not the time for any disputes. Their opportunity was fleeting, and could not be wasted.

Approximately ten seconds later, everyone entered Shadow Stealth and left.

A huge formidable energy undulation suddenly broke through the spell and created a violent explosion, just like a prominent bonfire in the darkness of the night.

Of course, this was intentionally set up by Leylin and company. And with the continuous transmission of the energy undulations, some brilliant rays shone in their direction…

“We’re here! This is the furthest we can go, any further and we might alert the alarms that were set up, even in Shadow Stealth. The spell has too many defects that can be probed.

Robin led everyone into a hiding spot and then stopped his steps. Leylin looked over and from where he stood, he was able to see to the bottom of the flowing river, In the middle of which was a huge whirlpool. The continuously whirling water sparkled on occasion, and some green Barbarian Bears and human Magi started to emerge from it.

“The entrance to this pocket dimension is unexpectedly just a whirlpool….” Leylin nodded his head. The undulations that were being emitted by the whirlpool did not seem to be fake.

He was deciding on a path of approach.
Leylin took a closer look at the surroundings of the whirlpool. The A.I. Chip was working at full power, forming a 3D map of the area in his mind. The enemy’s defense was naturally strong, with some large structures and a sentry system in place for defense. There were even some rank 3 Magi standing guard. 

Leylin shifted his line of sight to the center and shot a glance at a Barbarian Bear. It had a thick neck with a weird looking flag on its back. There was another big headed, very old looking Green-skinned Barbarian. Lastly, there was an unassuming human Mage robed in grey.

“These three…” Leylin’s pupils dilated, ”They’re at least at Hydro Phase. As for the Barbarian Bear, it might already be at the Crystal Phase!”

Leylin and company were nearly equal in power to these Magi, and only held a slight edge in power. Once the patrols were counted in, numbering ten times their own, it would be very difficult to defeat them.

“I will make use of the secret gem to cover up our tracks. Wait for my signal and move together. My men and I will take care of the back!” Robin took out a black ring and spoke in a heavy tone.

Leylin and Kesha both nodded their heads, and walked in a straight line towards the whirlpool in the dark river.

There were some scattered buildings around where they were that looked brand new. It also had a rugged feel to it, most likely made by the Barbarian Bears. Leylin and company were amongst the shadowy construction area and moved progressively towards the centre with the help of the shadows of some patrolmen.

“If they come ten metres closer to us, we will attack!” Robin’s voice sounded out, the tone oppressive.

Rank 3 Magi were very sharp and alert. As soon as they came close, the party would certainly be discovered.

In the midst of the crack in the shadows, the outside world seemed
like it was covered with a layer of fog, almost like a starch paste. It was very vague and fuzzy. However, Leylin could clearly sense them advancing. One metre… two metres… three metres… Another seven meters to go and Leylin and the rest of the Warlocks would have the confidence to breach their defence and wipe them out completely before heading for the pocket dimension. *Woo woo…* At this very moment, something unexpected suddenly happened. The decorative flag on the back of the Barbarian Bear started to flap and shudder. A strange skull symbol on the scarlet red patch of the flag started to open its mouth, revealing a mouthful of sharp teeth as it wailed loudly. “Intruder!” The Barbarian Bear stood up and hissed. The sound engulfing the entire area. “Damn, we’ve been exposed! Charge!” A singular ray of brilliance shone through the hollowness and Robin appeared to take the lead. “Innate poison!” Immediately, he opened up his poison domain. In a split second, an invisible and terrifying ripple originated from Robin and started to spread. The surrounding patrolmen immediately started to collapse one after the other, with some dying on the spot and their bodies decomposing thereafter. “Toxic Bile! You are a Warlock from the Ouroboros Clan!” The average-looking Magus wearing the grey robe clenched his teeth, as if he had some deep-seated hatred with the Ouroboros Clan. “Activate the rank 5 poison defense spell formation!” He ferociously raised his hands and clapped. A burst of intense brilliance erupted and a huge spell was cast, rays of green falling on every Magus present. Like a protective armor, the spread of the green rays enveloped the Magi. Although the armor was trembling continuously, it resisted the attack of the Toxic Bile. As for the rest of the Magi around
Robin, they were completely doomed for, even with the assistance of the spell formation.

“All of these sinners deserve death! Do not show mercy!” Kesha and Leylin entered the scene with her yell as she launched her own attack of poison. The rest of the Magi soon followed suit.

In the blink of an eye, the Kemoyin Serpent poison built up, repeatedly overlapping and growing. The formidable power increased to such an extent that even Leylin raised his eyebrows in awe.

*Zi Zi!* The green rays of brilliance were corroding the armor. The other Magi and tribes who were standing behind could not hide their stunned faces.

“Kill!” The huge Barbarian Bear said coldly after a loud roar. The muscles on its body bulged, and the velvet fur stood on end as its physique immediately widened.

As for the big-headed Green-skinned Barbarian, it quickly took out multiple bottles of different sizes, as if ready to cast spells.

“Leave him to me. You deal with the rest!” Robin looked over at the grey-robed Magus with fervour.

“I remember now, he is a Magus from Lone Zither, the sole survivor of the massacre.”

At the mention of this name, the grey robed Magus’ face turned blood red, “Today, I shall avenge the death of my teachers and classmates!”

*Vroom!* A ball of black flame ignited from his body just like a human shaped column and dashed towards Robin.

“Seeing how things have developed till now, I can only go all out!” Without any other choices, Leylin shrugged his shoulders and, with lightning speed, tossed out multiple test tubes and bottles containing potions.

“Potion combination spell Divine Prairie Flame!” A large number of fire snakes swirled and engulfed everyone who
was desperately trying to defend against the Kemoyin Poison. Huge billows of smoke rose in the air along with their pitiful cries as a violent and deafening explosion erupted from the blaze.

‘It costs ten times as much to cast a spell here as it does outside. We need to preserve some strength to defend ourselves in case enemy troops catch up with us, so…’ Leylin drew out the black Meteor Sword from his waist.

The grooves on its blade buzzed continuously, as if thirsting for blood.

“Cross Slash!” Leylin grasped his fallen sword and delivered a single forward hack!

A black cross-shaped ray from the edge of the blade streaked across and dismembered a majority of the Magi into pieces. The Kemoyin poison from the blade immediately caused their flesh to decompose.

“We are not here to kill people. We only have to get into the pocket dimension!”

Leylin looked at the surroundings and saw the human grey robed Magus blocked by Robin, while Kesha had picked to go up against the huge Barbarian Bear. He found it puzzling as to why she liked such big challenges.

Noah, on the other hand, led the Black Horrall Snake Magi and continued with the attack.

The entire field was a sea of confusion and chaos. An urgent bugle horn sounded and Leylin could feel the rays of light that chased them making their way back rapidly.

“Foreign human, do you also long for the Forgotten Land’s pocket dimension?”

With a brain that was twice the size of a regular human and a body covered with endless wrinkles, the Green-skinned Barbarian was done with its poison concoction and positioned itself in front of Leylin, revealing its few teeth that were stained yellow.
“I didn’t expect you to be a Potions Master as well!” Leylin looked intently at the grey coloured alms bowl the Green-skinned Barbarian was holding. In it was a bubbling dense green liquid.

“Get out of my way!” The fallen sword in Leylin’s hand created endless blade rays.

A huge ray of brilliance swiped across the ground and left a long deep gush.

“You shall make a fine addition to my, Modris’, collection!”

The Green-skinned Barbarian laughed. With it’s exceptionally nimble hands and the constant undulations on its body increasing steadily, it seemed as if it was more powerful than Leylin!

*Swish! Swish!* The clever Green-skinned Barbarian split his body into three parts, and in turn each part grew as a whole. It headed straight for Leylin at full speed.

“Just this?” Leylin smiled callously as swiped his sword repeatedly and pierced through two of the phantom images.

The Green-skinned Barbarian’s smile showed a confidence in victory as it swiftly started chanting.

Beside one of the phantom images, the greenish liquid in the grey alms bowl exploded and manifested itself into a gooey monstrous hand.

The innumerable suction pads on the hand started trembling, seeming like it was attached to a tremendously huge body that was attempting to break free from the alms bowl.

Green billows of fog filled the air as if a cage and attempted to trap Leylin within.

But suddenly, the Green-skinned Barbarian’s eyes shot open.

Leylin showed no signs of panic or fear amidst the fog, and on the contrary, took out a potion of his own from his belt. A layer of pink smoke slowly dispersed, enveloping the alms bowl. The pink smoke neutralized the green gas in moments, and soon droplets of liquid started to form that sprinkled onto the ground.
“How… How can it be…” The Green-skinned Barbarian’s jaw fell wide open.
“Are you surprised your summon mixture has zero effect? Do you think I can’t recognise it?” Leylin looked at the Green-skinned Barbarian, his smile showing his satisfaction.
“With just a potion of clean-jem neutralizing potion, the problem can be solved. You should be embarrassed to use such mediocre potions against me!”
Battles between Potions Masters depended most on their accumulated knowledge and recipes. For instance, had Leylin not recognised the type of potion that the Green-skinned Barbarian was using, it might have been a hindrance to him. The winner was determined by who managed to see through the other party’s setup. When it came to all this information, how could the Green-skinned Barbarian match up to Leylin, who possessed the A.I. Chip? “You-” The opposite Green-skinned Barbarian’s fingers began to shake, evidently in fear. “What? Are you planning to use the Star-traced amulet and activate the Icy Frost Potion above your waist, or are you going to use the Corrosive Poison Arrow Potion at your back?” Leylin measured up this Green-skinned Barbarian, obviously ridiculing it. “Oh! No, I think you’re doing this as a cover for you to activate your Wind Spirit’s Fury under your feet!” All sorts of expressions crossed the opposite Green-skinned Barbarian’s face, and it was truly difficult for it to have so many expressions and movements on his creased face. At the end, all this turned into terror. “Ah! You’re the devil! The devil!” The Green-skinned Potion Master yelled, and actually abandoned
his race and companions, fleeing from the battle area first. It evidently had a very high status here. After seeing it flee, the other Green-skinned Barbarians were startled, and with some of them shouting at the top of their voices, they rapidly left the area.

“Good job!” Robin, who was not far away, revealed a smile. He was the strongest of the three of them, and the opposite grey-robed Magus could only fend for himself.

Kesha, who was on the other side, was not so lucky. When she had chosen her opponent, she had had no A.I. Chip and depended on her judgment. She had actually chosen the Barbarian Bear Shaman, which was likely at the Crystal Phase. This Barbarian Bear Shaman not only had unimaginable strength but also a tough body. Even Kesha’s Eye of Petrification could only hold it for a second and had no other effect.

Rank 1 or two spells that struck it would char the fur, but there would be no substantial harm. As for rank 3 spells? Not only were such models difficult to get a hold of, to use them in the Forgotten Land required that one pay a huge price.

Not everyone was a Potions Grandmaster like Leylin, who could use potions to simulate the effects of a rank 3 spell.

*Wooh wooh!* At this moment, the skeleton flag on Barbarian Bear Shaman’s back suddenly exploded, sounding like a bugle horn.

“Awoo awoo!” The surrounding Barbarian Bears who heard these sounds immediately roared frantically, eyes turning blood-red and their offensive abilities increasing by a large amount. Noah and the other Warlocks were immediately at a disadvantage.

“They’re entering a frenzied state! Even regular Barbarian Bears are affected! How about that one?” Leylin immediately shifted his attention to the Barbarian Bear Shaman.

Along with the sounds of the horn, the Barbarian Bear abruptly
roared towards the skies, slapping its chest. Thick veins that were like old tree roots occupied its hands, chest, and back.  
*Ka-cha!* The skull of this Barbarian Bear cracked open, revealing a muscle similar to a brain that was beginning to glow with warmth.  
“Awoo!” Under its crazed roar, this Barbarian Bear Shaman’s body began to expand. Its body that was about two floors high became taller, turning into a gigantic humanoid bear-shaped monster. Energy undulations typically produced by Crystal Phase Magi burst out from the body of this giant Barbarian Bear.  
“Crystal… Crystal Phase!” Kesha looked pained. The Barbarian Bear monster obviously did not care about that. With its paw that could cover the heavens, it swiped at her! Under this terrifying might, the air seemed to solidify and began to attack Kesha. With a boom, Kesha’s figure was sent flying, slamming into numerous buildings.  
“Explosive Fireball!” Countless giant fireballs exploded on the Barbarian Bear’s head, but the groove with what seemed to be a brain was not the least bit damaged. All these attacks successfully incited the fury of the Barbarian Bear monster, and attracted its attention elsewhere.  
“Kesha, how is it? Are you dead yet?” “Who asks questions like that?” Bricks exploded, and Kesha’s figure appeared. However, she was not in a very good condition. Her clothes were tattered beyond repair, revealing dense snake scales. Kesha was now in her snake form, and not only did her Kemoyin’s Scales cover her entire body, even her pupils had elongated and turned vertical. Even with the most powerful defensive form of Giant Kemoyin
Serpent Warlocks, there was a huge wound on her arm and it was slightly twisted. Even her bones had issues.

“I used a diversion technique and shifted most of the attack to my left hand.” Kesha revealed her mangled left arm and smiled wryly as she explained, “I didn’t expect that Barbarian Bear to be so fierce! It’s very dangerous today!”

To be defeated by a creature that used brute force and its physique, it was a huge blow to her.

Leylin smiled wryly and quickly pulled Kesha aside, dodging a large black foot.

*Boom!* The building from before was smashed, leaving behind a gigantic footprint.

“What we need to consider right now is how to get away from them. Besides, the support troops and Magi who we attracted before are coming this way. The traps we set up can’t hold them for too long, so we need a plan!”

Leylin quickly told Kesha, his words reaching Robin who was a distance away.

“Awoo!”

At this moment, the giant Barbarian Bear monster was already destroying everything, whether it was its ally, the Green-skinned Barbarian, fallen Magi, Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan or even Barbarian Bear warriors, all were attacked without distinction.

“Ah!”

A Black Horrall Snake Warlock was grasped in the palm of the gigantic Barbarian Bear monster, and produced miserable shrieks of fear.

“You monster. Die!” His facial muscles twisted as he yelled, terrifying rays converging in his hands and turned into a large axe, striking down at it.

*Ka-cha!*

The axe, which had the terrifying might of a rank 3 spell made
contact with the monster’s chest, and actually produced sparks.
*Boom! Boom!* The Barbarian Bear monster took two steps back,
shook its head, and continued roaring.
With a swing of its arm, it threw the rank 3 Black Horrall Snake
Warlock into its mouth and began to chew.
*Gachi! Gachi!* 
Flesh, blood, organs and bones slid out from its mouth.
The might of those jaws, as well as its physique and sharp teeth
turned the Barbarian Bear monster’s mouth into a grinder, turning
the Warlock into minced meat.
“Oh no! Alfredo!”
Noah screamed. It looked like yet another Warlock from his family
had died, while Robin’s expression turned as gloomy as dark
waters. When he saw a few rays about to catch up to them, his eyes
revealed a steely determination.
“Quick, get into the pocket dimension. I’ll bring up the rear,” he
opened up his hand, “Illusory Terror!”
Formless thin lines like a large web trapped all the human grey-
robbed Magi within. There were even all sorts of strange laughter
being produced in the air.
After that, he stood in front of the giant Barbarian Bear monster
and helped Noah and the others stall for time.
“The seal spell formation is completed.” At this moment, a Warlock
who had been by the dark river called out.
A scarlet rune launched from his finger and entered the whirlpool
of the underground dark river.
*Pila!* A giant blue web immediately appeared on the surface of
the river.
“Open!” Leylin’s eyes flickered with blue rays, his Meteor Sword
streaking across with a strange arc and slashing at the web!
Black light flashed, and the blue web immediately broke apart,
revealing the black entrance to the pocket dimension in the
whirlpool behind it.
“Quick, quick, quick! Hurry up!” Many Warlocks immediately jumped into the whirlpool, and immediately disappeared with silver spatial rays.
“Senior Robin, let’s go!”
Leylin slashed at the area with the Meteor Sword and terrifying Kemoyin toxins appeared once more, before he unhesitatingly jumped into the whirlpool.
“Awoo!” The giant Barbarian Bear monster’s eyes glinted with intelligence, and it charged towards Robin in a frenzy.
“What a pity! This is something I only just got my hands on!”
Robin took a look at the monster and tossed a black ball at it.
*Pak!*
Countless vines appeared in mid-air, with green shoots and leaves that formed a large green web that trapped it within.
“Ball of Binding! This is a one-time use magic object passed down from ancient times. Even Crystal Phase Magi will be held back for at least a minute!” Robin sighed, and then jumped into the whirlpool.
Silver-white rays flashed, and he disappeared.
At this moment, a few splendid rays charged to the camp and the lights vanished, revealing the forms of a few people who looked terrible.
“Douglas, stop, you idiot!” A Barbarian Bear with golden fur immediately went forward and roared using a unique method.
This roaring was at a specific frequency that prevented the monster from moving.
“Looks like someone broke into the pocket dimension! I smell the disgusting scent of Warlock blood…”
The Green-skinned Barbarian leader’s nose twitched and he concluded confidently.
“The Ouroboros Clan? Even they have to abide by our rules in the
Forgotten Land!” Together with these two Magi was a human Magus with a strange brand on his face that seemed like some kind of symbol.
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“S

o what now? Do we continue our chase?”

Upon hearing the howl of the Barbarian Bear, the huge monster had already returned to its original state and was currently lying on the floor, depressed.

“Or we could simply destroy this entrance!” the golden-furred Barbarian Bear proposed.

“Are you mad? It would be a waste to destroy such a good pocket dimension. Nobody will agree to it!” The Green-skinned Barbarian shook his head and continued: “Besides, those Magi can completely escape from other small cracks. This is such a silly plan!”

The Barbarian Bear groaned coldly, revealing a big flag on his back.

“Alright! Alright, currently we are allies and we need to discuss as to how we will handle our enemies!” said the human Magus as he was stuck in between the Green-skinned Barbarian and the Barbarian Bear.

“What else can we do? If we have no intentions of letting our enemies mindlessly plunder from our pocket dimension, then we must send people in! But you’ve seen their strength, we’d be sending them to their deaths!” The Green-skinned Barbarian’s eyes flashed with a tinge of helplessness.

“Then we’ll have to deploy Hydro and Crystal Phase Magi! In the worst case scenario, we just abandon our bases. First, we must gather our men here!” the human chief replied.
“Since you said so…” The Green-skinned Barbarian and Barbarian Bear chiefs looked at each other. “Then it’s settled! We will immediately send out the signal!”

……

“Is this the pocket dimension that was established by Quicksand in ancient times?” Leylin said whilst standing on a huge plain that, every now and then, emitted wisps of fog. Leylin looked at the statistics gathered by the A.I Chip and nodded his head. “From this mapping of energy particles, the concentration here is almost the same as that of the outside world. There isn’t any impact to spells anymore!”

During the battle at the underground river, Leylin and the other Magi could not use their entire strength because of the lack of energy particles. But it was different here. Of course, there were always two sides to a coin. With this concentration, even the Crystal Phase Magi of the other side would have their strengths restored as well, and become free of restraints. Robin’s silhouette slowly emerged as silver rays of light flashed. He looked at his surroundings and his expression lit up, “Wonderful! These are the Purple Plains, which are not very far from the Magi buildings in the center!”

“Where do you intend to go? If we have different targets to plunder, we need to separate here!” He asked Leylin and Kesha for their opinions.

“Of course! I want to go to the core of the Magi buildings!” Leylin said with a know-it-all look on his face. The Lamia Hair was likely to be kept in the core of the pocket dimension, why would he go to other places?

“Me too!” Kesha followed. Each pocket dimension had its own set of rules, and the resources were most plentiful at its core.
Furthermore, the ruins of Magi are there, so there definitely would be storerooms and laboratories inside, making it the most sought after place.

“That’s good then! We shall go to the ruins of the central continent together, then split and start our mission when we arrive!” Robin nodded his head: “In any case, the ruins there are expansive and we can’t say for sure we won’t run into…”

There could still be remaining Magi and other creatures from the previous three forces that dwelled in the pocket dimension, and not to mention the possibility of armies chasing after them. They ought to move as a group to achieve better security to prevent any mishaps.

To make full use of time, Robin immediately announced the start of the mission.

Although they had lost two men in their lineup, the remaining ten shot out blazing rays of light from their pupils, which transformed into ten black streaks that pierced through the horizon.

*Bang!* A Green-skinned Barbarian Magus was thrown to the ground with no light in his eyes. His forehead had a massive and terrifying hole in it, and one could faintly see a portion of his brain. But it was already thoroughly destroyed and looked like a lump of starch paste.

This Green-skinned Barbarian Magus originally had rank 2 Strength. But because his brain was damaged and he did not deploy a clone seed beforehand, he was actually doomed to die.

As his body twitched, the flames of his life were slowly extinguished.

Kesha, who was beside him, took out a gold-trimmed handkerchief and cleaned her hands of the brain remnants.

“I’ve already extracted fragments of his memory. He is a sage of the Green-skinned Barbarians. This time, he came to gather potion materials and resources. According to his memory, we did not
deviate far from our original path and we are almost at the core of the pocket dimension, the Quicksand ruins!” she told a bunch of Magi near her. Their faces flashed with delight upon those words. They had taken about two days to get to their current location. All this time, they had not only encountered scattered members of the three forces, there were also Hydro Phase Magi on their tails with orders to kill. That troop, under the lead of a Crystal Phase Magus, had unhesitantly chased after their group. Luckily, being Warlocks whose strength exceeded their levels, Leylin’s group had been able to fight them and flee whenever they met, but this had still caused a deviation from their original plans. “Go there as quickly as possible, find what we need and immediately get out! Our traps will not be able to hold them off for long!” Robin’s expression sank. The small squads at the back could only grit their teeth and carry on with the mission with no time to rest, not to mention any time to find resources. Even if a trap was put in place again, with the add-on of Leylin’s spectacular skills, and the difficulty in successfully confining multiple Rank 3 Magi, the effects would not last very long. Even their whereabouts would be known to their enemies. After entering the pocket dimension, their ultimate goal was to reach the Quicksand ruins in the central continent. Leylin and company had never tried to conceal this fact or rather, they couldn’t. The fiery, blazing sun shone in the sky scorching everything. Although this was merely a projection of the sun of another realm, the terrible heatwaves were still rising constantly, clambering up the surrounding temperature. Leylin had draped himself with a white cloak and was standing in a
large desert. There was only yellow sand as far as the eye could see. Not even a cactus could be seen, not to mention other plants and animals. It was a scene of death.
“Although this is a desert, the atmosphere and environment here are out of the norm!”
Leylin grabbed a handful of sand and its boiling heat spread to the center of his palm, “This kind of temperature is easily beyond a 100 degrees. Leave alone animals or plants, even a group of acolytes or rank 1 Magi cannot stand this terrible place for too long…”
He opened his palm, letting the boiling sand slip through his fingers. “Furthermore, this terrain is giving off a peculiar vibe. It seems to be from an ancient life form!”
“Did you notice it too?” Robin walked up to Leylin as he asked.
“Mm! Apparently, there are traces of some kind of ancient life form that lived here once, and they have a characteristic of blazing heat.” He said with a firm nod of his head.
Large-scale environmental changes like these, made subconsciously by the ancient life forms, were scarily similar to those by Breaking Dawn Magi.
“I’ve heard a rumor. Among the ancient Quicksand Organization, there was once the son of a famous Bloodline Warlock who safely returned to his ancestors and really became the ancient Sun’s Child. Robin looked at the vast desert and could not bear to sigh with sorrow: “We can’t say for sure but if that Sun’s Child was here before and cast his power…”
“The Ancient Sun’s Child!” Leylin’s face changed slightly as he scanned through the database of the A.I Chip.
This was not just a simple bloodline creature. Its flames could burn in a vacuum, twisting the concepts of time. Even in some small worlds, the sun seen is not the actual fixed burning star, but in fact a grown Sun’s Child!
In the event of a Sun Child leaving the small world, it would bring
great disaster to that place.
“Relax, even if the Sun’s Child surpassed Breaking Dawn Magi and entered the unpredictable rank 7, he would have probably died long ago during the ancient war.”
Robin seemed to have confidence and Leylin nodded his head in agreement.
Although ancient Magi were incomparably strong, their enemies, too, knew the rules of survival. And could even wipe out certain Magi via these rules.
Once somebody falls during the war, there was no possibility for them to survive. Even if they cloned their bodies as a backup, it was no use because it would decay the second the main body dies.
Even if the Sun’s Child surpassed the strength of the Morning Star Magus, it would be dreadful if he was made to enlist and die during battle.
‘Everything takes its own course. Even one as strong as the sun cannot escape the fate of death!’ Leylin sighed.
‘So it is uncertain if rank 9 Magi will be able to reach immortality?’
This was his highest pursuit and his greatest ambition, a path to eternal life!
Even if he attained the position of a rank 9 Magus in the highest realm, if he realized that he was unable to be immortal, he would still carry on with his journey, without the slightest hesitation, looking for all hope and opportunities!
Leylin’s pupils burned with desire, but he quickly concealed it.
“We’ve arrived!” Shouted Robin who was at the front.
“Hm? Let’s take a look!” Robin and Leylin looked at each other and walked to the front.
After kicking a small sand dune over, they spotted a huge, black, ancient castle, peacefully standing on its own amidst the yellow desert. The rising heat waves caused the castle to look like an oasis, a scene from a dream. But they could only see a small portion of it,
and were able to roughly gauge the size of the ancient castle.
“We’re here! There are traces of Magi here, Quicksand Castle!”
Robin laughed out loud.
And surrounding the ancient castle, there were a few people working on temporary construction; a few Barbarian Bears, Green-skinned Barbarians and human Magi forming a harmonious group. At certain times, there were Magi setting off alone, changing into flowy rays of light and entering the ancient castle.
small white bird landed, and Kesha opened her shut eyes. “From the energy fluctuations at that end, they have, at most, a Hydro Phase Magus overseeing them. What do we do?”

“Even though they have received some information related to us, it isn’t too risky to just barge in. We still have to obtain some sort of guide or map of the area to explore it, though……”

Robin let out a deep sigh, “My subordinates only acquired a part of the information about the outermost region. They have no clue as to the internal structure of Quicksand Castle……”

“Even if it’s a trap, the opponent’s teams have been trapped in the sculptured spell formation. Even if there was a trap set up, they would not have much manpower!” Leylin stoked his chin as he stated this assumption.

“In that case, we have nothing to be afraid of!” Robin’s laughed sardonically.

Having been chased after by their opponents for such a long time, almost to the extent of being chased out of the pocket dimension, he held a lot of pent up anger, a sentiment more or less shared by every other Warlock present.

*Pu!* 

A scaly hand suddenly extended outwards from emptiness and grabbed the chest of a Barbarian Bear Warrior, gouging out a still-throbbing bright-red heart.
Drops of fresh blood that had yet to lose their warmth dripped down unceasingly, causing the surrounding Magi to be scared stiff. “Ah! A beautiful, short, death!” A Black Horrall Snake Warlock robed in black squeezed out of a crack in the shadows, his face revealing a mesmerised expression. Magi could, more or less, be considered mentally ill, and Warlocks were no exception. Previously, they had been restricted from acting by the royal bloodlines, but now there was no such thing. Once the orders for an attack were given, the alliance went into complete chaos as six Black Horrall Snake Warlocks, together with Noah, massacred every Magus in sight, regardless of rank. Even acolytes were not spared. That tragedy had caused some Magi to flee. *Boom!* The central building exploded. Three magi with gloomy expressions floated in mid-air, their bodies emanating the terrifying energy of Hydro Phase Magi. “Launch the spells!” the one at the center shouted. A ring of fluorescent light flickered and large runes formed a steel cage, firmly securing the entire campsite within. “I knew you had some tricks up your sleeves. But where are your Hydro Phase and Crystal Phase Magi? Have they all died?” Just when the three Hydro Phase Magi were about to go forth to stop them, a spark exploded out of the darkness. Robin, along with Leylin and Kesha, stepped out to block them with a sneer. There were no Morning Star Magi in the Forgotten Land. Even the major powers of the region like the Barbarian Bears had few Crystal Phase Magi. To deploy a small team to hunt after Leylin’s team was the most they could do without their tribe leaders. Even for that, they had to give up on many strategic locations. Were this team to be trapped, this alliance in the pocket dimension
would have their overall strength greatly reduced. After all, this group of Magi was only exploring the place. Nobody had expected them to invade.

“A mere one at the Hydro Phase and two at the Vapour Phase. I, Dominic, will ensure that none of you leave this place today!” The human Magus, who wore black robes with a cross-shaped floral pattern on his face, charged forward as Hydro Phase spiritual force surged forth like a tsunami.

“Oh really? But in the eyes of us royal Warlocks, you are like a lamb to be slaughtered!” Robin’s eyes showed a tinge of arrogance and a horrifyingly intimidating strength erupted fiercely from his body.

The same happened with Leylin and Kesha.

“Rank 3 innate spell Intimidating Gaze!”

This was the formidable spell that high-level rank 3 Warlocks could master. Moreover, even the strength of this spell in the hands of rank 3 Black Horrall Snake Warlocks could not compare to when Leylin and party used it, even if they had trained in the same spell. This deterrence strength was entirely attributed to the bloodline. The more concentrated the bloodline, the stronger its ancient roots, the more powerful the effect of intimidation would be.

“Rank 3 spell formation! The Domain of Unity!

The bodies of the three began to glow, the light merging to form a strange triangular diagram. Under the effects of the spell, the dreadful force fields the three of them emitted actually started to indistinctly complement each other and increase in intensity, forming a force similar to that of the domain of a true Morning Star Magus!

Waves of hissing howls arose, those of ancient predatory Giant Kemoyin Serpents. Space vibrated endlessly and a more than thousand metre tall phantom of a giant serpent appeared. The serpent opened its amber eyes and stared straight at the 3 Magi
ahead of it, making them break out in cold sweat.
‘A real domain should possess three basic attributes: weaken the enemy, strengthen the self, and bend fundamental laws!’ Leylin had a deep understanding regarding his own domain, all thanks to the large amounts of information hidden in the library of the Ouroboros Clan.
‘The terror of an individual Giant Kemoyin Serpent can at most weaken its enemies. When we cooperate, the terrifying force fields we generate complement and amplify each other!’”
In an instant, he saw the actions of the opposing Magi slow down. The acolytes fainted while rank 1 Magi could barely move. Rank 2 and 3 Magi could move and even cast spells, but their strength had been greatly reduced.
On the contrary, the Black Horrall Snake Warlocks had an abrupt increase in their aura, to the extent that they could compare to the Vapour Phase now. Under Noah’s lead, the low-ranked Magi unscrupulously massacred the camp.
‘After combination, our powers now both weaken the enemy and strengthen our allies. What a pity that we cannot bend laws, else it would have been a terrifying true domain!’ Leylin could feel the terrifying force field adding to his powers.
An indescribable aura entered his body, exciting his bloodline to a boil and pushing his power to that of the Hydro Phase.
Kesha’s situation was similar to his, but what shocked everyone the most was Robin’s transformation. As the core of this combination, he had received the greatest amplification of power. His aura increased nonstop and began to terrify even Leylin. Only Lucian had managed to inspire such emotion in him previously.
Supplemented by the innate gift of three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, Robin had already neared the threshold of the Crystal Phase. With the addition of his bloodline’s strength, he had completely stepped into the Crystal Phase in power!
“This terrifying force field! You are all Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks!” The human Magus, Dominic, squinted his eyes, his body trembling.
The reports had only mentioned that a group of rank 3 Warlocks had invaded the pocket dimension. Because Leylin and the other three had only used their innate poison spells when they entered and not this terrifying force field, the Magi had underestimated them.
Even if they were rank 3 Warlocks, the Black Horrall Snake bloodline and the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline were in completely different leagues. Their strengths were poles apart.
Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks were very rare, and typically never strayed out of the Ouroboros Clan headquarters where they were well-protected. The human Magus had not expected the presence of so many Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks in this infiltrating party.
He could feel a portion of the spiritual force in his sea of consciousness being locked. His inability to use it caused his expression to change to one of bitterness.
A little over ten minutes later, the massacre on the ground had come to an end. Limbs and flesh were strewn about everywhere. Noah and the nine remaining Black Horrall Snake Warlocks had not suffered any injuries, but their clothes had been dyed dark red.
The battle in the sky, too, had reached its climax.
“Ophidian Gnaw!”
Robin had grown even more terrifying, having activated his Kemoyin scales defence. The intricate black scales that covered him were smooth yet elegant, and there were even faint patterns on the surface, forming a complete rune the colour of blood.
He howled, and numerous streams of black air congealed into a large black phantom snake that swallowed a huge Barbarian Bear. A cringeworthy sound of gnawing was emitted. Several seconds
later, there was no longer a hint there of the existence of a Barbarian Bear Shaman.

“Shadow cage!” Leylin, Meteor Sword in hand, combed the area. From time to time, he would cast a few spells which caused the Green-skinned Barbarian Magus opposite him to retreat slowly.

*Boom!* At that time, a hidden trap burst out from behind the Green-skinned Barbarian Magus, morphing into a cage of shadows that trapped the Barbarian within.

“Die!” Leylin rushed forward, his quick steps containing the elegance of a dancer. His sword slashed across the neck of the Green-skinned Barbarian. Green blood spurted out as a head flew across the sky.

“AAAAH!” The human Magus let out a startling cry and distanced himself from Kesha, morphing into a ray of light that streaked into the distance.

The cage from before had immediately made an opening for him as he neared.

“You need my permission to leave!” Just as the Magus was going to rush out of the cage, a black palm blocked his path. Robin made his way there with a smile.

Leylin and Kesha tailed behind him and blocked his retreat. Upon seeing that scenario, the Magus smiled wryly and put up both his hands in an act of surrender.

“What now?” The surrendered Magus immediately fell to the ground and fainted. Robin looked anxiously at Kesha.

“Even though the opponent was very cooperative, but it is extremely troublesome to scour through a rank 3 Magus’ memories!” Kesha opened both her eyes, her face revealing an exhausted expression.
have already check the maps and the symbols thoroughly. The copies he gave were real. It is exactly the same as in his memory...."

“That’s good!” Leylin glanced at Dominic who was lying dead on the ground whose sea of consciousness was still sealed.

“What do we do with him?”

“Throw the body out. He only co-operated because of the promise to spare his life.” Robin spoke indifferently, as if talking about garbage.

Every word and action of a rank 3 Magus carried with it a terrifying energy. Hence, the pacts they made, even if mere verbal agreements, would be like binding.

Of course, to Robin and Leylin, Dominic was no threat, therefore whether he was killed or spared made little difference to the bigger picture.

“Alright then!” Kesha summoned a yellow sand puppet which lifted Dominic from the ground and ran off to a distance.

“Hmm! Now, let’s take a look at the arrangements in the Quicksand Castle!”

After occupying the original camp, Leylin and company chose one of the rooms and assembled together. They spread out a map on a big round table.

This was what the coward Dominic had handed over. It had been retrieved from memory and tested for authenticity, so it was
credible.
The structure of the huge castle was laid bare on this yellow parchment, surrounded by plain white barring a few outer areas that were marked with clearer symbols.
Amongst those were many areas marked as rank 3 danger zones.
This clearly showed that only rank 3 Magi with their capabilities could explore this place. Average rank 1 or rank 2 Magi would only be courting their own deaths if they attempted to advance there.
Leylin and the other Magi looked on with intense attention, memorising the map completely.
“Based on the accumulated information from ancient times, not only are there plenty of illusions and traps here, the routes and defenses constantly change with the passage of time, rendering any work of mapping the traps useless. Currently, there are three routes that are safe for travel!”
Robin pointed on the map and explained, ”They are the main door, the first window sill, and the rooftop which contained the flaw of the defensive spell formation, which one will you choose?”
After reaching this point, the team was basically going to split.
Leylin, just like the rest of them, had his own agenda in mind and hoped not to travel with the rest. This way, he would be able to protect his secrets.
“I intend to start from the rooftop which had the weakest entry point!” Kesha took the lead and decided,”The three Warlocks from my clan shall follow me!”
“I will take the main door then! Although the rooftop might contained good natural resources, the main door is much safer!” Robin chuckled.
Noah and the rest of the three Warlocks said nothing. It seemed like they followed Robin willingly.
“So I’ll…” Leylin parted his lips and was about to reply.
“Leylin, why don’t you join me?” Kesha invited, ”I know you are
looking for Lamia Hair. If we find it, you’ll get priority!”
Lamia Hair was very precious, so for Kesha to make such a comment showed the great extent of her goodwill for him.

“Join you?” Leylin lowered his head in thoughts. Of course there were benefits, especially in the face of enemy troops and when facing multiple traps. In turn, though, it would create many troubles for him.
He still had some strategies up his sleeves that he had not divulged as yet because the time was not right.

“Sorry,” He smiled apologetically

“It’s nothing,” Kesha smiled, as if she didn’t care too.

“Alright! Let’s move out after we have decided on our routes. I do not wish to be chased out again!” Robin exclaimed and immediately left the room with Noah and the other three.
In this excursion, both Leylin and Kesha had not suffered much loss. However, Robin had lost two of his rank 3 subordinates, something which left him in regret. He felt a sense of urgency to search for more resources to make up for his losses.

Kesha and Leylin nodded their heads in agreement and quickly left the place.
The entire camp was left in a deathly silence. Remaining behind was the blood that had seeped into the ground and the wreckage, remnants of the violence that had taken place.

*Shoo!*
A few hours after Leylin and company had entered the depths of the ancient castle, a few rays of dazzling brilliance shone over from the horizon.
They faded out to reveal the figures of the Magi of the various tribes. In the arms of one of the women was the unconscious Dominic.

“This whole camp is completely abandoned, Coulomb and Akamu are most likely dead…” Seeing the ruins on the camp, many of the
high ranking Magi had to constrain their rage.
“Coulomb is fine, he prepared a clone seed long ago. The regeneration itself will take place in our clan!” An old Green-skinned Barbarian announced, “If not for the fact that this cloning process causes huge exhaustion of his spiritual force, it would have been difficult to defeat him!”
“Not true!” Another Barbarian Bear Shaman who had a dull expression remarked.
Within this camp, out of the three Hydro Phase Magi, one was in a coma and the other still had a clone seed. Only the Hydro Phase Barbarian Bear Shaman was truly dead.
The Barbarian Bear clan specialised in physical strength. As for the spells and such, they drew support and strength from the totem, so naturally they did not have many methods of keeping their lives safe. They were also rather rigid in thoughts, unwilling to bend over and surrender like the humans.
“I can feel the power of the Crystal Phase. Based on Akamu’s ability, only with such strength could they have wiped them out in such short order!” The Barbarian Bear Shaman roared loudly.
“What do we do now?” The female Magus’ eyes met the Green-skinned Barbarian.
“Give chase! I can smell them, they have intentionally split up!” The Barbarian Bear Shaman’s eyes grew bloodshot, looking horrifying. ”Those who dare to murder those of my clan will pay dearly! I will act personally, and place their heads at our altar to suffer eternal damnation!”
It looked exceptionally furious indeed.
The female Magus shuddered in cold sweat. She had heard about such curses. It was said that the enemy’s head would be chopped off and placed on the altar and the power of the totem would inflict eternal torture.
Some rumours stated that the soul of the Magus would also be
imprisoned inside the skull to suffer the eternal cruelty!
This was the Barbarian Bears’ most wicked punishment, and it
looked like this time it was going to be put to use.
‘For these different tribes to survive in this Forgotten Land, they
have to stay united, hence their troop cohesisiveness is very high!’
The female Magus sighed. Comparatively, for the human alliance,
which was made up mainly by the disloyal and traitorous, their
alliance was very strong and solid but sadly there was no unity.
Thus, their combined strength was less than those of the Barbarian
Bears and Green-skinned Barbarians.
“Let’s split up three ways and move forward!” The Green-skinned
Barbarian nodded his head in agreement.
These three powerful individuals had met and formed an alliance
for the pocket dimension. Although there was some semblance of
unity amongst them, the bond was rather weak. Not too long ago,
even they had been at loggerheads for sole ownership of the plane.
Thus, to act independently was a wise choice.
“The Magus whose is pestered by the spirit of Akamu chose the
main door. I can feel it! I’m going after him.” The Barbarian Bear
Shaman hastened his steps and immediately moved forward.
“I will choose the rooftop!” The old Green-skinned Barbarian
added. With a hunched back that looked like it might break
anytime, he held out crutches made of solid gold and precious
gems and flew upwards.
“You…”
The female Magus shook her head. She stomped her feet and
headed towards the windowsill.
At this moment, Leylin was unaware that the enemy troops had
cought up with them and were just outside the vicinity. He was
looking around the room curiously.
It looked like a bedroom. The floor area was very small with only a
bed, a table, a chair and a bookshelf, with nothing else present. The
wooden planks inside the house had turned a brownish yellow. Cobwebs and piles of dust covered the corners. On the whole, it seemed like a regular abandoned bedroom. Leylin walked to the bookshelf and started reading the titles on the spines of the books.《57 Ways To Brew Apple Wine》，《Ways To Capture Molten Bugs》，《The World – A General Discussion》… There were many odd genres of books stacked neatly together, something that amazed Leylin. He held himself back and refused to touch any of them. Such ancient Magus castles had already absorbed unquantifiable radiation from the previous residents over the years. There might have been a terrifyingly powerful Magus as well, or the Sun’s Child. The castle had probably undergone terrifying changes. Leave alone the structure and essence, at this point it might even have manifested some bizarre phenomena. Some of those phenomena could not be explained even by the original owner, hence they could prove to be even more deadly. Ancient Magi had been known to make good use of these as defense networks and build a large numbers of traps. Exploring Magi had previously had touched these items in the house and were drawn into a deep mysterious space, completely lost to the world. Even well known Magi who had great status, too, met the same fate of death. Many Magi were fearful of the terrifying outcome, therefore they would not act blindly without thinking. “According to Dominic’s report, I have to wait for another three minutes before the door can be opened!” Leylin stood outside the bedroom door. His eyes stared coldly at the brass handle and his expressionless face looked serious. On the wall, a clock was slowing ticking away. *Tick..Tock…Tick…Tock!* The needles were moving very slowly. It seemed like the world had moved for five seconds and the clock
only one.
With so many odd and unexplainable environmental influences, many Magi made the mistake of telling the wrong time. If it weren’t for Leylin’s A.I. Chip, he might have fallen into the same trap.

“It is time!”

Leylin watched attentively at the A.I. Chip’s stopwatch. The moment the needle reached zero, he grabbed the handle immediately and opened the door.

*Boom!*

Distant echoes could be heard in the corridor. Leylin looked to the ground and saw that the bright red carpet lined on the floor was spotless without traces of dust. Beautiful chandeliers hung from the ceiling, emitting a yellow radiance.

Leylin turned his head around, the original room was nowhere to be seen, not even a single trace of it remaining. What was left was just a blank empty wall.

“This must be the illusionary corridor, and this also means that I have entered into the second level of the castle!”
Eylin looked into the information the A.I. Chip had previously recorded.
The three powers had been hanging around for a long time, and they had definitely obtained a few useful items. Based on Dominic’s information, Quicksand Castle was far larger than it looked on the outside. It was practically a gigantic maze. The numerous rooms outside were the first layer of defense. If they did not leave on time, they would travel through countless rooms and later be trapped inside till their death. The mark of the second layer would first be this illusory corridor. With the dim yellow lighting, Leylin looked through the decorations in the corridor. The two walls were mostly white, with some strange patterns of flowers and plants, but there were no portraits of humans. The red carpet on the ground extended until the end of the corridor, with not a speck of dust in sight. “This drawing technique?” Leylin touched his chin. “It has the style of the ancient era. Looks like it is one of Quicksand’s experimentation areas.”
The strength of the current Magi could not compare to that of ancient times. Leylin even suspected that Magi at the Morning Star Realm or higher had even participated in the construction of this place. As a mere rank 3 Warlock, a slight misstep could take away his
Leylin glanced at the oil paintings in the corridor vigilantly, he started advancing in a strange pace. The flower patterns on the two sides began to move in tune to his step. They began to grow, germinate, blossom and then wilt, creating a cycle.

“Rumours have it that the illusory corridor can only be entered with a unique walking frequency. It possesses a strange force that can send a person to any place he would like to go to.”

Leylin remembered this passage, as well as the account at the end, “If there are errors in one’s footwork, the illusory corridor will turn into a life-threatening trap, trapping both their body and soul.”

This specific footstep was discovered through the huge sacrifice from the Magi on the outside, which now made things convenient for Leylin’s group.

“What exactly do I want?”

Leylin strolled along the corridor and constantly asked himself. A unique feature of the corridor was that if one did not have a clear desire, there would be no end.

After a specific period of time, the same mechanism would activate.

“Immortality, strength and all that would be too vague and exceed the abilities of the illusory corridor. I can only mention a place it can communicate with.”

Leylin muttered to himself, “It’s not safe to directly say the location of the Lamia Hair. If such a material doesn’t exist, the illusory corridor will instantly regard me as an intruder!”

This was a test for all who entered. The true owner definitely knew what was at the end of the corridor.

The teleportation of the corridor would only work within the castle. The moment Leylin mentioned an area that did not match what was inside, not only would there be no teleportation, but defensive spell
formations would be activated instead. However, he was unwilling to give up on the Lamia Hair. ‘I would like… to go to a place that will help my bloodline mature!’ A moment later, Leylin made up his mind and constantly repeated this line in his thoughts.

In that instant, the corridor seemed to shrink and the flowery patterns on the walls sped up. In a few seconds, they completed a cycle of growth. A bit of light appeared at the end of the corridor, constantly expanding.

“Let’s go!” Leylin gritted his teeth and calmly headed ahead.

*Swoosh!* The feeling of weightlessness during the teleportation left him feeling dizzy.

Shaking his head vigorously, he took stock of his surroundings.

“Where is this…?”

He was in a large laboratory. He could see plants outside through the glass, as well as many glass vessels and experimental apparatus that were all neatly arranged inside.

“A lab, huh. My luck is pretty good. There’s definitely going to be something here to help mature my bloodline faster!”

Leylin let out a long breath, and immediately recalled the rumours regarding Quicksand. Given that their ranks consisted of Warlocks of various bloodlines, they had a vested interest in the field. It would not be difficult to find something that could help his bloodline mature.

Leylin arrived at a metal counter, and pulled out the first drawer. It was messy, mostly made of thick parchments recording data from experiments. It was all in the Byron language.

Leylin opened the other drawers, and the contents were about the same. There was mostly data from experiments, the counter practically filled by these documents.

“There is so much data, but it’s a pity there’s no information on the receptors and core data. There’s no way to tell the procedure of the
experiment at all…” Leylin found this regretful but quickly saved all the information to the database. Even if it was mostly unrelated data, it was still very valuable. Who knows, some of these parchments could even hold the data essential to repeating the experiment! In addition, with all its recent advances and improvement in its abilities, it took little time to record everything. Everything was organized neatly. It seemed like the Warlocks then had left in an orderly fashion, not leaving much behind. After recording the information, Leylin turned his attention to the ecological garden outside the giant glass wall. Large leaves that were like palm-leaf fans covered the sky. Barely any sunlight shone down on the thick roots of the plants. It looked like a primordial forest. However, Leylin who had experience from Twilight Zone immediately realised the difference in this sunlight. This was not sunlight from the natural world, but an artificial recreation of heat and light. Though there was a similar effect, it lacked the harmony of nature. “This place has probably been abandoned for thousands of years. To be able to let this ecological garden achieve a balance like this, it truly is a perfect system achieved with astonishing skill,” Leylin sighed and touched the glass. [Custom-made reinforced glass. Degree of hardness: 3!] The A.I. Chip concluded. A level 3 hardness meant that regular rank 3 Warlocks would be unable to break this glass. Leylin’s eyes brightened at this information. “Looks like this place was used to hold many powerful creatures.” A giant fireball appeared in Leylin’s hands, the terrifying heat burning even the air around it into nothingness and searing through
the void.
“Explosive Fireball!”
Enormous flames smashed against the glass wall, the dazzle of the heat and light incomparably piercing. Even Leylin himself had to close his eyes temporarily.
When he opened his eyes again, there was an indent in a part of the glass, but not much more. It still stood strong.
‘As expected of a material with a hardness of level 3!’ Leylin sighed, as he could immediately tell how much power this reinforced glass could withstand.
Based on the power of his attack, it needed to be used at least ten times before he could completely shatter this glass wall.
‘What for?’ he thought as he stroked his chin. While gathering information, he had also discovered an activating spell which should have been the key to entering the garden. The attack from before was purely to test how strong this laboratory was.
‘Looks like there were at most rank 3 creatures here, so it’s not too dangerous!’ Leylin was now assured. If not, the defence would not be so uncomplicated. Even if there were still spell formations that had yet to be activated, the creatures would still be around rank 3.
He quickly arrived at an instrument that was like a disk. After checking it briefly, he found a groove and placed crystallised magic crystals inside, replacing the previous powder.
After that, Leylin placed both hands atop the disk, rays travelling from his palms and connecting with the disk. “Activate!”
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* The entire glass wall began to shake, great amounts of dust and silt sliding off.
*Rumble!* As it had not been activated for a long time, the mechanism seemed to be aged and produced a loud sound as a glass door opened.
A crack appeared within the glass, expanding in two directions, bringing with it an unusually refreshing breeze.
In that instant, Leylin felt every cell in his body dancing in joy, and his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline beginning to stir. “I didn’t notice this before, but it seems like every plant in this ecological garden is an ancient species. Also, they’re quite a few times larger than the species we have now, containing traits of the ancient era…”

Leylin walked out of the laboratory and looked backwards. The laboratory from before was like a giant white egg, set atop a thick stone base. Everything around it looked like a primordial forest. ‘With such obvious traits of the ancient era, and given how lively my bloodline has become, this place is a perfect copy of that period,’ he determined.

Though such an environment may have been the norm at the time. This is very valuable information…” Leylin revealed an expression of excitement, and immediately commanded, ‘A.I. Chip, record the parameters of the environment!’

[Mission established, beginning scanning. Recording parameters of the atmosphere…]

The A.I. Chip loyally intoned, following through on Leylin’s command meticulously.

After giving the order, Leylin walked along a giant plant root, Meteor Sword in hand. At the end of the root was a berry vine, and atop a leaf the size of a millstone, he found bite marks.

‘An animal eating,’ Leylin looked at the mark on the leaf, ‘It should be omnivorous, these marks are of teeth used to tear flesh!’ The plan was repairing itself rapidly, erasing all traces of the bites.

‘They grow so quickly, which explains how this cycle was constructed here…’ Leylin touched his chin and came to the ground. At the root of the plant was a stinking thick, green goop.
Leylin guessed that this animal was the bottom of the ecosystem’s food chain. That was the only way for this cycle to have been sustained through the ages. After all, this was just an ecological garden, not a pocket dimension full of resources. As big as it was, it could not support the entire ecosystem on its own. The organisms here had apparently established their own ecosystem in the absence of the researchers.

*Groan!* A deep howl sounded out and Leylin instantly hid himself, watching the new creature draw near. This creature looked somewhat similar to the Snake-Necked Dragons, but what gave him the chills was its enormous black shell, barbed with spikes. It made the thing look indestructible. Its head stood out in a stark contrast; as opposed to its humongous body, it was tiny with two small bumps at the back of it. It also had a long nose which produce the howling previously. Booms rang out with every step, creating a weak resonant vibration with the ground. This massive creature had to weigh more than three tonnes.

It came to a stop in front of Leylin’s hiding spot, threatening yet tiny eyes scanning around as it stretched its neck every now and then to nibble on the leaves of the giant plant. Its bite marks were the same as on the leaves Leylin had seen previously.

‘A.I. Chip! Search the database for the image of this creature!’
Leylin ordered stealthily.
[Beep! Mission received, starting to scan image, checking database…]
Leylin’s order was carried out faithfully by the A.I. Chip and the answer seemed closer than ever.
[No matches found in database, starting search for similar creatures…] [After comparison to similar creatures in the database, this creature is suspected to be a Snake-Necked Turtle. The two are 87.9% similar!]
A detailed information on Snake-Necked Turtles was then provided by the A.I. Chip as a follow-up.
[Snake-Necked Turtle: Creature of the ancient era. Extinct as of the present. Omnivorous and even-tempered, its shell possesses an astonishing defensive ability making it the core ingredient of many defensive weapons. Can reach a strength similar to that of a rank 2 Magus upon maturation.]
Leylin studied the image an illustration in an antique book the A.I. Chip once recorded of the Snake-Necked Turtle in concentration
“Right! The only differences between them are the colour of their shells, the number of spikes on the shell, and their heads. It must be a mutation of some sort…”
Leylin couldn’t say he was surprised. An environment like this would be hard for ancient era creatures to survive in if they didn’t actively evolve. A little mutation was nothing. This may even have been instigated by members of Quicksand.
Either way, it’d be truly abnormal if these creatures were to retain all of their ancient characteristics.
“If that’s the case, Snake-Necked Turtle you shall be!” Leylin decided. It wasn’t like normal Snake-Necked Turtles were alive anymore to contest it.
Leylin still stayed, undetected by the Snake-Necked Turtle as it finished its meal and announced its departure with lengthy howls.
Failing to resist the temptation, Leylin tailed the Snake-Necked Turtle.
“Shadow Stealth!” Leylin’s manipulation rendered this spell, which was supposed to be rank 1, stronger than many rank 2 spells. This was especially true when used with Vapour Phase spiritual force. Leylin climbed onto the back of the Snake-Necked Turtle as he fell into the shadows.
The solid shell gave Leylin a sense of stability and security, and he observed his surroundings. The area was covered in a thick canopy and massive trees with hanging vines resembling the Chinese Fringetree. Droplets of water exuded an enchanting radiance as they rolled over the leaves and down the vines.
The atmosphere was further amplified by the blooming of bright-coloured flowers, larger than humans, and the fragrance they gave off. They were truly roses with thorns.
Leylin sniffed, “Hallucinogenic pollen, paired with this neuro-inducting energy. A level 3 acolyte, or even an official Magus would be tricked…”
To Leylin, this place felt like a virgin tropical rainforest from his previous life where different species prospered. It painted an ambience of primitivity.
Instead of spotting Leylin, the Snake-Necked Turtle became his form of transportation, advancing continuously. Its steady steps caused no discomfort to Leylin as he rested on its back. Approximately half an hour later, the Snake-Necked Turtle brought Leylin to a lake.
Beside the lake was a piece of vacant land. The water came from a river, white as jade, that filled the lake with fresh water bit by bit.
*Moou!* A crowd of Snake-Necked Turtles started gathering around. Many of them swam around without care in the lake, diving in every now and then before raising their heads above the water suddenly, resulting in huge splashes everywhere. Some also
shot columns of water from their nostrils that resembled fountains. The Snake-Necked Turtle that Leylin rode was similarly excited and went straight for the lake.

‘There should be about 75 of them here!’ Leylin’s eyes lit up. Snake-Necked Turtles weren’t well-known after the ancient era; not only were they lacking in strength, their bloodlines were weak too. They were of no use to Leylin. However, there was something that stood out about them: they bred like rabbits!

The breeding period of a regular Snake-Necked Turtle was very long. They laid almost a hundred eggs every other month, and the survival rate of their clutches were high as well. Barring predators, at least half the eggs would hatch successfully. As long as there was sufficient food, they would mature in the next few years and continue the cycle.

‘This is how nature balances itself. The strong cannot multiply as fast, and even when they do it’s hard to provide for them. On the other hand, the weak have an insane rate of reproduction and activity…’ Leylin remembered the mice of his previous life. There was only one word to describe their adaptability and rate of reproduction: perverse. They had a very high possibility of surviving even nuclear winter.

‘As for the mutated Snake-Necked Turtles here, their inner bodies seem to work even faster. It probably takes them under a year to mature from the ovum.’ Leylin touched his chin in thought. Evidently, the reproductive capabilities of these mutated Snake-Necked Turtles were intensified to prevent the extinction of their species. Of course, it came as an acquired evolution.

It can be seen, then, from these selective evolutions that the Snake-Necked Turtles definitely did not possess any form of superiority and were actually at the bottom of the food chain, waiting to be preyed on.
*Hoot!* Just as Leylin was preparing to bring back samples of Snake-Necked Turtle blood for further study, he heard a high-spirited, piercing screech.
It caused an uproar in the community of Snake-Necked Turtles and all of them starting speeding towards the lake. Those that were already in the lake dived deep in and never surfaced.
The screech got increasingly louder and Leylin could see a streak of crimson on the horizon due to the several-fold increased senses of his body.
The creature was a type of giant hawk-like being. Glossed with the colour of blood, its feathers were smooth yet solid, its head accessorised by stalks of golden feathers giving the illusion of a crown.
[Blood Vulture detected! Creature of the ancient era. They attack with sound waves and can manipulate the blood of their target. They possess a strong interest in bloodline-related treasures and are communal creatures. Evaluation: Extremely dangerous!]
The A.I. Chip pushed into his sight.
“Blood Vulture!?” Leylin’s expression quickly grew from shock to joy.
‘They have extraordinary sensory ability towards idiosyncratic bloodlines on top of their superb vision. A strand of hair on the ground could be detected easily even from an altitude of 10,000 feet. Mostly kept as pets by ancient warlocks to seek bloodline treasures!’
‘But…’ Leylin hesitated as he read the danger evaluation of it.
Just the strength of this particular Blood Vulture was enough to caution Leylin. It could equate to a human rank 3.
Moreover, the A.I. Chip stated that they were communal creatures, there were definitely more rank 3 members back in its nest or even a King Blood Vulture! The king would, no doubt, be a rank 3 Crystal Phase being, and may even have reached the Morning Star
realm!
*Hoot!* The Blood Vulture sounded out occasionally as it sailed in the air causing fear within the community of Snake-Necked Turtles, something which seemed to encourage the vulture even more.
*Bang!* A single Snake-Necked Turtle, with a wounded leg, stood out as it trailed behind the mass of them, and fell to the ground under the stampede.
Deciding that it was time to stop the fun, the Blood Vulture flapped its wings and plunged straight to the ground. The strong winds that followed its action already had Leylin stunned. The remarkable size of the vulture, much bigger than the Snake-Necked Turtle, slowly came into view as it drew closer to the ground. The contrast between their forms was not obvious when the Blood Vulture flew in the sky, but compared when closer by, the huge Snake-Necked Turtles were like mice to the Blood Vulture.
*Hoot!* The Blood Vulture stretched its huge claw and punched a hole in the head of the Snake-Necked Turtle. The thing fell, blood splattering everywhere…
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Shriek!

Upon seeing the blood fluids, the Blood Vulture’s eyes shot our rays of excitement as it started to shriek hysterically. A blood-coloured glow shone from his body. Concurrently, large amounts of fresh blood spewed out of the Snake-Necked Turtle’s neck like water from a fountain. It coagulated in mid-air and eventually formed lumps of blood clot which were swallowed by the Blood Vulture.

*Rip!*

Soon after, the Blood Vulture stretched out its long sharp black claws, and easily lifted the shell of the Snake-Necked Turtle. Using its claws, it separated the fresh flesh into segments of meat and started devouring the meat. His motions were smooth, as he nonchalantly ate a Snake-Necked Turtle in front of its counterparts. The majestic beast presented a perfect combination of grace and bloodshed.

“Moooooo…” As they watched their companion being brutally murdered, the rest of the Snake-Necked Turtles mourned but did not dare to take a step outside the lake.

Leylin quietly watched this scene and maintained a neutral expression.

That was but a common occurrence in the natural world. Before the advancement to a stage where one could survive purely based on the injection of energy, such predatory acts were not considered to
be good or bad. The survival instincts were merely the rules of life, meant to be followed and respected.

“Its ability to control bloodline!” On the contrary, Leylin was actually very interested in this specific ability of the Blood Vultures. Furthermore, differing from the Snake-Necked Turtle, a mature Blood Vulture was at least at the standard of a Rank 3, the minimum criteria to achieve the Pure Ancient Blood! Leylin was extremely interested in the origins of these bloodline creatures.

‘It’s just… Should I go?’ Leylin stroked his chin.

The King Blood Vulture could be of Morning Star rank, and under its detection, Leylin’s stealth spell would not be of any effect. However, should the King Blood Vulture still be of rank 3 status, even if it was at the apex of the Crystal Phase, Leylin would still be confident in his ability to conceal himself.

‘The number of choices we humans have is very troublesome!’ Leylin thought. He sighed feeling like he was at a crossroads in life, with a dense fog shrouding his destiny.

In fact, this was a choice people would have come across many times in life in which their final choices can result in different outcomes, both good and bad.

‘Do I go, or not?’ Leylin debated with himself.

*Trrrriiiing!* Leylin tossed a dull golden coin and it landed on the back of his hand with the Luckbird staring back at him. Even after a long while, the coin was not badly damaged, causing Leylin to heave a sigh of relief.

“Since the Coin of Destiny did not crack, this means that the Blood Vultures don’t have a rank 4 in their midst. I can take my chances!” Leylin’s eyes burned with passion.

The Coin of Destiny was Leylin’s biggest accomplishment in Twilight Zone. It would, however, bring about huge misfortunes if it were to be utilised to predict the abilities of Morning Star Magi. But despite this flaw, it still benefitted Leylin without a doubt.
Since not a single crack appeared on the coin when he made the prediction, this suggested that there were no Morning Star beings blocking his path. That was good enough for him. Even if he used everything he had, he could not bridge the gap between himself and a Morning Star power.

As long as the opponent was not at the Morning Star realm, Leylin was willing to take the risk.

*Choo!* At this point in time, the Blood Vulture on the ground had already finished its meal. Leylin was stunned, as he looked at the Blood Vulture fly into the sky with the remains of the Snake-Necked Turtle in its mouth as if it wanted to bring the remains back into its nest.

“This is my chance!” Leylin’s eyes flashed brightly, as he initiated his Shadow Stealth. He concealed his figure in the crevices and stealthily entered the carcass of the Snake-Necked Turtle.

The wind howled unceasingly. The Blood Vulture took off at a high velocity, the friction created by the turbulence had caused sparks to be created with the corpse of the Snake-Necked Turtle.

Fortunately, the collision of airflow ceased after it reached a certain height.

The Blood Vulture travelled at a high velocity, causing Leylin’s view of the landscape below to be that of a blur. About 10 minutes later, they arrived at their destination.

Leylin could barely hide the shocked expression on his face as he saw the huge shadows not far from him.

Ahead of him was a huge mountain, solitary and upright. There was not a hint of vegetation, instead, it gave off a dark glow that made it seem as if it was some kind of metal structure.

Scattered all around were huge caves, of which Blood Vultures could be seen squawking in.

They were synchronized in their cacophony. Not only were their penetrating screeches ten times as strong as those of the...
individuals, they caused Leylin’s Kemoyin bloodline to have a weird reaction, as if it was about to leave his body. Fortunately, this was just a momentary hallucination. Under the suppression of his Vapour Phase spiritual force, it disappeared without a trace.

“The Blood Vulture’s ability to control bloodlines is truly terrifying!” Leylin muttered.

“Furthermore, this Ecological Garden is far too vast and wide!” Leylin developed doubts towards his previous judgment. “Don’t tell me that this place is not simply an Ecological Garden or a Magus’ garden, but a pocket dimension… A pocket dimension within another!”

Rumour had it that, among the various pocket dimensions that the ancient Magi left behind as a legacy, some even contained additional pockets of their own.

This sort of layering was extremely difficult, as it was impossible to shift a dimension into another. Even though Leylin possessed quite a few spatial items, he was unable to place his storage ring into his storage pouch.

But it was very obvious that the ancient Magi had methods to successfully break through this restriction, thus building this pocket dimension within a pocket dimension!

This kind of pocket dimensions were known as cores. It required the huge affluence and power of the ancient Magi to be able to build such a core. And in this core were stored all kinds of resources, many of which would make Morning Star Magi turn green with envy.

“Since the Sun’s Child was within the Quicksand Organisation, then their powers would be considered top-notch even in the ancient times. Such organisations would hence possess the ability to construct these!”

Leylin guessed as such as he looked up at the entirety of Quicksand Castle, which was, in fact, an extraordinary pocket dimension!
*Choo!* At this moment, the Blood Vulture with Leylin let out a harmonious hoot and descended into one of the huge caves.

*Bam!* The carcass of the Snake-Necked Turtle was thrown to the ground, following which, the Blood Vulture started squawking. A few small pink Blood Vultures ran out from the cave, gnawing at the flesh.

It was obvious these small Blood Vultures were only children. Not only were their bodies shades of pink, they were completely bald, having yet to grow feathers. They were similar in strength to level 3 acolytes.

“After these Blood Vultures grow into adulthood, they are able to reach the level of a rank 3 Magus. Furthermore, they are able to control bloodlines. Since they were capable of flight too, their eggs, if sold, would definitely be able to obtain a high price!

Leylin looked at the baby Blood Vultures, which were as small as chicks, and thought that it was a pity.

Since they were born, these Blood Vultures would only succumb to the first creature they saw after they exited their shells, and could never be tamed by anyone else.

Taking advantage of the Blood Vultures eating the carcass, Leylin secretly exited the carcass of the Snake-Necked Turtle, and went to a corner of the cave.

“Shadow Technique!” Leylin used a complicated magic rune on himself. The darkness immediately shrouded him and Leylin vanished into the shadows.

The Blood Vultures were driving Leylin up the wall and at the same time, Leylin felt a terrifying life force fluctuating from the centremost cave.

That was definitely the King Blood Vulture, a peak rank 3 Crystal Phase creature!

Under the detection of so many high-ranked creatures, his Shadow Stealth could not hold out for long, hence Leylin had used yet
added another spell. The Shadow Technique was not exactly a spell but a special technique. When Leylin was in Twilight Zone, he had collected many rank 3 spell models. Even though the majority of them were flawed, there were still a few which were in good condition. So with these models as a starting point, he developed his own special technique that was compatible with Shadow Stealth! Amongst everything, many of the ancient records of the Dark Elves gave him a lot of insights in his development of the special technique.

[Shadow Technique: Can be used on its own to hide the user’s physical body, or can be used in combination with the rank 1 spell Shadow Stealth, increasing its strength, in which case the final strength will be similar to that of a rank 3 spell!]

It was very difficult to develop a rank 3 spell independently, but Leylin found Shadow Stealth an easy spell to cast. It was rare to come by such a combination of compatibility with both bloodline and aptitude. Hence, Leylin customized this Shadow Technique to amplify Shadow Stealth’s ability, elevating it to rank 3 status. The combination of the Shadow Stealth and Shadow Technique immediately produced a frightening end-result.

Leylin could clearly feel his own shadow being engulfed by a layer of dense darkness. He had been kept on edge before as he felt that he would be discovered anytime, but now, those feelings of trepidation had completely disappeared.

“So… Blood Vultures do like metallic surroundings. This is something the books never mentioned!”

Leylin ignored the exchange of the family of Blood Vultures, and without consent, looked around the nest of the Blood Vulture. The cave was huge and gloomy, dimly lit, and had the foul smell of a certain creature. Of course, this didn’t matter much to Leylin. Following the path to the bottom of the cave, Leylin saw a huge
bird’s nest made with chunks of gold. Beside it were multiple smaller nests weaved with other unknown golden stalks and roots, radiating a faint light.

“This is….” Leylin walked closer and immediately widened his eyes as he was attracted to the objects inside the golden nest.

“Bloodline Crystals, Dragonroot fruits, and dried up bones of bloodline creatures!”

He was immediately able to recognize a few items.
Leylin recognised a few items in the golden nest. First was a crimson gemstone. This was a bloodline crystal, a very precious material for Warlocks. It could even slightly increase the purity of a bloodline. Though this was practically useless for Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks like Leylin, whose bloodline had been purified to the limit, it was definitely something that could cause most other Warlocks to go all out. As long as news about bloodline crystals was spread, the two female Warlocks, Freya and Miranda, would definitely pounce over like lunatics, willing to pay any price in order to obtain it!

The Dragon Root Fruit was also a very special plant, with a very durable outer layer that even surpassed the strength of Magus alloys. It could be preserved for over a hundred years, and Magi that ate it could increase the durability of their bodies. Rumours had it that there was a chance of inheriting a trace of a bloodline from within the fruit. This would mean the beginning of a Warlock family!

Of course, for Leylin and all the others who already had a bloodline, they could no longer change it. However, if traded outside, it would go for a sky-high price. Such a resource could not be measured by price, and could be exchanged between Morning Star Magi.

The other few things included some skeletons that were each the
size of a human femur, and the remains of a powerful creature above rank 3. Even after so many years, there was no erosion, and he could still sense some remaining suppression from a bloodline. These remains were actually what were most useful to Leylin. The blood of most bloodline creatures came from the bones, and these specific remains came from powerful rank 3 creatures. With them on hand, he could refine an ancient bloodline out of it. Besides these few items, there were also other bloodline items within the little golden Blood Vulture nests. Even Leylin, who was very learned and had gathered a terrifying amount of knowledge, could not identify everything. There was no question that these were all bloodline items, and every single one was enough to make any Warlock go crazy! "I see…" Leylin glanced at the pile of bloodline items, a look of understanding flashing in his eyes. It was obvious that the growth of a Blood Vulture was inseparable from these items. Though they could be used directly, long-term contact with them increased its rate of maturation. It could also increase its strength and awaken its mysterious bloodline ability! This was also why the Blood Vulture was so enthusiastic about gathering bloodline items. Glancing at all these, Leylin had to expend a lot of effort to suppress the desire within his body. "Though these are good, they aren’t as important as the Lamia Hair. Also…" Leylin glanced towards the Blood Vulture outside the cave. He was currently in stealth, and with the added bonus from darkness techniques, he had not been discovered by the bird. Though Shadow Stealth was great, there was one flaw. If Leylin wanted to take these items away, he would need to dispel his Shadow Stealth. In that case, he would definitely be discovered the Blood Vulture,
and the whole group might be attracted here. On top of that, with a terrifying King Blood Vulture, Leylin would need more than nine lives to survive!
This would definitely raise the guard of many other Blood Vultures, which would not be beneficial to Leylin’s future plans.
‘A regular Blood Vulture nest has so many great items inside. Within the King Blood Vulture’s nest, there should be even better things!’ A fire began to blaze in Leylin’s eyes.
‘The place with the highest probability of having the Lamia Hair should be the King Blood Vulture’s nest!’ Leylin immediately recalled the giant cave he had merely shot a glance at earlier, with very profound, horrifying energy waves hidden within.
‘Looks like I’ll be stuck here for a period of time. I’ll have to find out the behavioural patterns of the Blood Vultures…’

……

“Uncle, are you sure this is the place?” Noah glanced at Robin who was beside him. They were now in front of a large door, intricate and complicated patterns on the frame.
The three remaining Black Horrall Snake Warlocks were like little followers as they gathered closely behind them.
“If we activate anything wrongly, we’ll lose our way even more thoroughly and be stuck here till we die!”
“Don’t worry. Based on the information I received, it can’t be wrong. Besides, that item is too important to us!” Robin looked grim, yet there was a fiery look in his eyes.
“I need some time to confirm this. Have all the issues at the back been taken care of?” Robin did not even turn back as he asked.
“I’ve already set up five spells of abduction, as well as created a body substitute!” A sinister expression appeared on Noah’s face.
“The moment they catch up to us, they will definitely be teleported
to various areas within the maze and then be trapped in the Boundless Room till death. Barbarian Bears are such stupid creatures.” He spoke confidently.

*Boom!* At this moment, a giant howl travelled from a short distance away, accompanied with the breaking of a spell formation and a roar, “Little worms, I’ve found you!”

*Ka-cha!* A pink crystal necklace was split open while Noah looked on in disbelief.

“Never underestimate your opponents!” Robin’s eyes were still fixed on the giant door, but his voice was transmitted over, “They’ve only broken through our first defensive spell formation. We still have some time.”

“Take care of the spell formations and try your best to buy me more time!” Robin commanded, and the other three Black Horrall Snake Warlocks bowed, before leaving immediately.

Rumbling sounds were heard constantly, and a large bear monster could vaguely be seen roaring in the spell formation, causing beads of cold sweat to roll down Noah’s face.

*Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* Crystals shattered one after another, every time being followed by the voices of the subordinates.

“Second defensive spell formation destroyed!”

“The main body of the defensive formation is damaged. We can hold for less than a minute, AAHHH” The short conversation ended, followed by the abrupt blood-curdling shrieks, signifying the end of these Warlocks.

Noah clenched his fists. All of them were from his family, but they had all fallen in this exploration.

Now, only he and his uncle were left.

“I’ll go and stall for more time.” Noah exclaimed.

“No need for that.” Robin interrupted his words and, raising his finger, tapped on the door a few times. Using some strange rule, he drew a circle.
A hum rang out as, in an instant, multiple water ripples appeared on the surface of the giant door. The tide surged, and then rushed into a brass keyhole. Like a castle of blocks collapsing, the door rapidly broke apart into countless fragments, the two sides springing open and revealing a mystical luster within.

“Wretched maggots, I’ll tear you apart!”

*Boom!* With a loud sound, the last spell formation hindering the Barbarian Bear Shaman shattered, revealing a giant Barbarian Bear with firm muscles all over. After seeing Robin, its eyes immediately turned red.

“Don’t mind it. Let’s enter.” Robin pulled Noah through the door.

“If you want revenge, then come in!” The sound of Robin’s taunts travelled over.

“Ahhh!”

Its eyes completely red, the Barbarian Bear Shaman chased them in. Magnificent rays flashed, and the scene suddenly changed.

By the time Noah came back to his senses, he was already sitting at a dining table. On the large white tablecloth was not even a speck of dust, while the silver lampstand had candles burning above it.

“Hm?” After which, Noah found that he was unable to get up. Even the spiritual force and magic power that he had been so proud of as a rank 3 Magus could not be used at all.

He looked towards his uncle, fear and terror apparent in his expression.

At the other end of the table, the Barbarian Bear Magus was sitting in a daze. Though the muscles that were bulging displayed the fury of its owner, it could not move an inch.

“This is ‘The Last Supper, which is the most impartial and bloody duel. Between us, only one side can live, while the loser shall lose everything and turn into the meal of the victor. In addition, the victor will even be awarded with the judge’s horn.”
Robin said matter-of-factly, seemingly very familiar with all that was happening.
The moment his words sounded, black figures suddenly appeared in seats that had initially been empty. There were no energy undulations from their bodies, their eyes completely red.
For some reason, the moment he saw them, Noah felt cold sweat running down his back.
He counted carefully. There were thirteen seats at this long table, but there was one empty.
“Now, for the first dish. The Bloody Mary Desert…”
An indescribable voice resounded in Noah’s mind, sending a shiver down his spine.

……

“What the hell is this!”
At another area in Quicksand Castle, Kesha was quickly fleeing along a corridor, a Green-skinned Barbarian with a strange appearance escaping shoulder to shoulder with her.
These two were originally hunter and the hunted, but for some reason, they had formed an alliance, and were both looking pale in panic.
“All offensive spells of the four great elements are useless against it. Try special attacks! I’ll cover you!” The Green-skinned Barbarian looked to be in pain as he flung a gemstone necklace behind him.
*Bang!* Terrifyingly chilly air exploded, covering the ground with a layer of frost as numerous runic chains appeared.
*Crack! Crack!!* What followed was the sound of ice shattering, and footsteps drawing closer.
A black figure materialised from the icy mist. It was a monster that looked like a middle-aged man wearing a trenchcoat. He donned a
hood, and it was hard to tell what he looked like. The fingers on his two palms had disappeared, and in place of them were many scissors that were glinting with light. The numerous runic chains did not stand a chance against the man’s scissors, and were easily snipped at and broken. “Eye of Petrification!” Many crimson runes appeared on Kesha’s body as she bit her finger and drew a strange rune on her forehead. Following that, her eyes turned into a pair of amber vertical pupils. With the amplification from the blood rune, her innate spell had reached a frightful degree of power. A circle of petrification began to spread with Kesha at its center.
In the face of the Eye of Petrification, the man in the trenchcoat suddenly froze and an ash grey coat of stone formed across the surface of his body.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* His entire being turned into a giant statue and particles of dust fell endlessly from him.
“Icy Blades!” Under the manipulation of the Green-skinned Barbarian, numerous blades formed a tornado, enclosing the statue within as eerie noises rang constantly.
Moments later, the blades dispersed and the statue that once stood there had vanished, leaving behind a bed of fragmented rocks.
“It’s finally over…” The Green-skinned Barbarian heaved a sigh of relief.
“No, not yet!” Kesha laughed bitterly instead.
Soon after, to his terror, the Green-skinned Barbarian saw the fragmented rocks explode, exposing pieces of flesh within.
Many of them grew tentacles and started amalgamating to reform the man in the black trenchcoat from before. Even a single tear could not be seen on his clothes.
“Goddammit!” The Green-skinned Barbarian cursed, “Where in the world did you infuriate this darned thing? Not only is it immune to spells, even physical attacks are useless!”
“I have no idea!” Kesha’s face spelled despair.
After entering Quicksand Castle, she had only charged through a few levels before the man in the black trenchcoat set his sights on
her. With her subordinates being lost one by one, the current situation seemed to bode ill. 
Under the immense threat of death, the last Green-skinned Barbarian in pursuit was compelled to join forces with Kesha to defeat this creature together. But by the looks of it, they were at their wits’ end.

……

*Chirp chirp!* A piercing sound sliced through the air. Violent whirls of wind were brought about as the earth was engulfed in darkness and shadows. 
With a wing-spread wide enough to envelop the land in darkness, a Blood Vulture descended in the heart of an enormous mountain range that bore the appearance of a honeycomb, landing in the highest and largest cave. 
Somewhere in the mountains, Leylin’s eyes sparkled with a blue glint. 
“Left at 4.47pm, and returned again after an interval of 23 minutes and 45 seconds!”
He was currently recording the King Blood Vulture’s travel statistics with great detail. Over the past few days of observation, he had managed to reap some returns. 
This King Blood Vulture had at least the strength of the Crystal Phase. The bulky physique of the creature and the terrifying spiritual force on it was sufficient to completely destroy Leylin’s plans of seizing anything. 
Besides, the King Blood Vulture had no need to leave its nest to hunt. It received sacrifices from the entire pack of Blood Vultures. Every day, numerous Blood Vultures would return with food and deliver them into the cave. 
Hence, it rarely left the cave throughout the day, unlike the average
Blood Vulture Leylin had seen earlier, which usually spent half its day flying around outside. However, every afternoon, at this particular time of the day, the King Blood Vulture would leave the cave for a period of time, likely to patrol its territory. This was the very chance that Leylin had been waiting for. “The Blood Vulture is indeed a creature from the ancient era gifted with the bizarre ability to sense any bloodline treasures....” Leylin exclaimed. Apart from the King Blood Vulture’s cave which he had not dared to pry into, he had explored the lairs of the other average Blood Vultures and discovered many bloodline treasures which would be useful to Warlocks. The accumulated value of these items were enough to make even Duke Gilbert lose his mind. “Everything will hinge on tomorrow!” Leylin watched the cave at the highest point with caution, and slipped into the darkness.

……

The next day, in the afternoon. Following a cry, the gigantic King Blood Vulture stepped out of its cave once again, casting a shadow upon the earth. Terrifying vibrations swept the area, intimidating the other formidable creatures that watched over the region. “The time is now!” Leylin’s glance froze. “Shadow Stealth!” “Darkness technique!” In a split second, his physical being vanished and was concealed within the shadows, surrounded by thick fog. With the help of the concealing effects of the spell, Leylin fumbled his way to the cave right into the central cave.
‘The King Blood Vulture’s lair is guarded by two Blood Vultures that are already at the Hydro Phase! Whenever the King Blood Vulture is out on patrol, they are responsible for guarding his lair’

Leylin crawled onto the protruding top of a black rock and watched the two huge blood-red silhouettes in the cave closely. He furrowed his brows.

“According to my current abilities, I might barely be able to handle a single Blood Vulture at the Hydro Phase, but it would definitely cause a ruckus! There’s a high possibility that the entire pack might surround and annihilate me, or that the King Blood Vulture might even return unexpectedly!”

Leylin took a glance at the silhouettes of the two guards, gritted his teeth, and passed through to the other side while hidden.

Two Blood Vultures at the Hydro Phase would be too much for him to handle with his current abilities, but the detection abilities of the powerful creatures might not be as acute as that of a human Magus. This was his chance.

Having already wasted too much time here, Leylin did not dare to continue waiting.

Even if it was risky, he wanted to give it a try!

In the shadows, everything outside was overcast. It was as if the world had been soaked in thick glue and every step he took, Leylin had to expend a great amount of energy and magic power, while at the same time taking note of how the two Blood Vulture guards reacted, making it a terribly tiring job for him.

Just when Leylin carefully arrived at the entrance, and was about to walk past one of the Blood Vulture guards…

“Chirp chirp!” The guard seemed to have discovered something and became alert, glancing around its surroundings with vigilance.

‘Even for a powerful creature, once it has passed rank 3, no matter how dumb it was originally, it would evolve to have the intelligence of a human!’ Leylin exclaimed.
He immediately commanded in his head: “A.I. chip! Begin the plan B!”


At the halfway mark of the mountain, a miniature model of a spell formation suddenly exploded, revealing a shadow servant within. The shadow servant zoomed into a cave that was guarded by an adolescent Blood Vulture and grabbed a few pieces of bloodline crystals before escaping swiftly.

“Chirp chirp!!” The Blood Vultures were left enraged, and numerous blood red figures flew out too, circling in the sky. Before the shadow servant could run out of the perimeter of the huge mountain, it was torn to pieces by the explosive might of the Blood Vultures.

Although the two Blood Vulture guards did not take action, their attention was obviously taken away by the scene there. Seizing the chance, Leylin immediately took out a black crown.

This crown was very small and exquisite, and the design was not too flamboyant, as though it was specially made for females.

“Dark Elven Crown!” This was Leylin’s war trophy. After completely defeating the dark elves, they who submitted to him offered the crown along with their powerful meditation techniques.

This crown was also the first magic equipment that Leylin had obtained, and was at a higher rank than his Meteor Sword. The Dark Elven Crown was a sacred legendary weapon, which possessed the strong ability to mask auras. The then-queen of the Dark Elves, Anya, used it to enter the core of central Twilight Zone in a single motion. If not for Leylin’s secret interference, she might have emerged victorious over the humans and unified the entirety of Twilight Zone.

As a piece of magic equipment, the Dark Elven Crown had no
doubt a hidden function, but as it had been used once recently, it took decades for it to be available for use again.
After getting hold of this magic equipment, Leylin had been constantly analyzing it using the A.I. chip, and had learnt many useful techniques and spells.
What made him especially interested was that the A.I. chip could forcefully stimulate a portion of the functions of the Dark Elven Crown when charged with a certain amount of magic crystals!
Although it only possessed a portion of its full powers, the Dark Elven Crown was still a piece of magic equipment! Its effect was limited only to Leylin himself. The scary thing was that it could even escape the perception of a Morning Star Magus.
This went without saying for the two Blood Vulture guards. With the shadow servant outside holding their attention, along with the protection of the Crown of the Dark Elves, Leylin successfully infiltrated the lair of the King Blood Vulture.
Although the lighting in the cave was poor, it did not pose a problem to Leylin. The floor was covered in dark red blood stains and the remains of other creatures which had varying degrees of decomposition; likely the food that the King Blood Vulture had consumed recently.
The entire cave felt eerie to Leylin, as though he was being watched closely by something.
Leylin reached out his hand and felt the wall which was black and studded with metal grains.
When his hand came into contact with the black wall, countless tentacles extended from above, but were quickly burnt by his black flames.
“By the looks of it, this pack of Blood Vultures has been living here for a long time; even the mountains have been affected by the radiation and have come to life!” Leylin exclaimed.
Such materials that had been given life were very precious. Not
only could they be added to self-defense spells, they could also confer the ability to heal oneself. Architecture that was built mainly with these materials usually could last for more than a thousand years without collapsing. If such materials could be added to Leylin’s Magus tower, its degree of stability would definitely go up a notch.

“What a pity that plans to exploit this area would certainly be too unrealistic!”

Leylin continued walking, deeper and deeper, until he reached the end of the cave, where lay a gigantic Blood Vulture nest. Gold animal fur and the metal itself were laid out to form a sturdy mat, upon which there was a depression from years of use. Yet, there wasn’t a single thing on the mat.

“Hmm?” Leylin was shocked, but followed with a bitter laugh.

“The bloodline items are only effective for the young of the Blood Vultures. It looks like the King Blood Vulture hasn’t laid any eggs, so naturally there would be no need to collect these items…”

‘I have to evacuate as soon as possible, and ransack all the other Blood Vulture lairs before that!’ Leylin was determined.

He made a prompt decision on the spot; if there weren’t any new discoveries, he would choose to leave immediately, and hardly did a sloppy job.

“Who would have thought that I would meet a comrade here!”

An exclamation sounded from a distance, causing Leylin to freeze in his steps. He turned and firmly stared at a corner.

There, an illusory figure slowly came into view.

“A soul?! No! An even more powerful being!”

Leylin watched the figure that had suddenly appeared, as though he was about to face an enemy.
The illusion that surfaced was that of an astonishingly beautiful young woman. Her hair was like a sea of emerald green with light curls, flying in the wind like it had a life of its own. She possessed a pair of mesmerising eyes, coupled with a delicate yet puzzling charm to her face. To Leylin’s surprise, she gave him a baffling sense of familiarity. Especially after the complete materialisation of the illusion, Leylin’s blood vessels generated a sense of fear, as if he had met a natural enemy. Yet, he felt an amiability within her that tempted him to throw himself into the arms of the woman regardless of everything. “Lamia?” There were agony and bitterness in Leylin’s tone. From how called out to him just now, he managed to guess some things. The similarity in temperament and looks between her and the Snake Dowager was especially striking. The Lamia shared the same bloodline as the Snake Dowager. In fact, it had an even more direct line of descent compared to the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Thus, on the whole, they could be considered siblings with blood relations. “My brother! Tell me, why are you here, what are you looking for?” The green haired Lamia asked, her voice strangely charming, compelling him to answer.

[Warning! Warning! Instability detected in host bloodline, possibility of an emotional outburst!] The A.I. Chip sounded the
reminder, snapping Leylin out from the confusion he was in. This made him unwilling to look at the opposity party, particularly at the Lamia’s eyes.
“Rumor has it that the ancient Lamia has the ability to manipulate any kind of snakes she desires. It seems like this is true indeed…” It was merely a remnant soul, yet it almost got to Leylin. If the Lamia were to be at the Morning Star Realm, Leylin was afraid he might have to bow down to her.
“Your bloodline, it seems to be extremely pure, and you have a special power enveloping your whole body….” The virtual image of the Lamia bit her finger.
“Who are you, really?” Leylin spoke in a deep tone.
“I was a human once, I had a few names, but I have forgotten them all…..” The virtual image smiled, as if she was narrating a story unrelated to her.
“Are you the soul of the ancient Lamia Warlock?” Leylin made a guess.
According to his intelligence, the ancient Quicksand Organisation once had a Lamia Warlock. And apparently, after her atavism, she became a true Lamia possessing terrifying power that even average Radiant Moon Magi could not match.
“No! She had perished completely. I am just a phantom image formed by the scattered fragments of memories that have evolved together after a very long period of time…” A sense of loneliness could be felt from the green haired woman’s face.
“Even so, for your soul to take such shape, I am sure there is a source of radiation nearby!” Leylin’s eyes lit up and he reached out and grabbed at the fur cushion.
Huge black claws appeared, splitting the fur and metal within and revealing what was underneath the surface.
It was a layer of white fur. Brush that aside and immediately a rich and heavy scent of undulating bloodline spreaded out.
“You can even resist the radiation undulation and the aura of the bloodline!” Leylin kept the white feathers in a flash and thereafter eyed the hollow area intensely. It was the broken section of a bone, it must have been a part of some bloodline creature. Although it might have been a long time ago, the horrifying threat and undulations emitting from the bone made Leylin have an impulse to kneel down. “You are truly the adult form of a rank 5 bloodline creature; even though it is a broken section of a bone, it could still radiate even after your death. Moreover you can induce such a thing!” Leylin looked at the green haired Lamia in amazement. For Blood Vultures, the remains of a rank 5 bloodline creature was a precious item to that was dearly cherished. No wonder the Blood Vulture had safeguarded it under so many layers, even going so far as to mask its energy with the feather. “What do you intend to do here, my brother?” she asked again. Leylin muttered under his breath and finally replied, ”I want to acquire something that will speed up the maturation of my bloodline, for instance Lamia Hair or some such thing.” “Compared to Lamia Hair, this can help you more!” The Snake Woman smiled and the broken bone was flung out and landed on Leylin’s hand. “You…. Why are you helping me?” Feeling the ecstatic joy boiling in his bloodline, Leylin knew the broken Lamia bone in his hands were the real deal. He could already feel the transcendence. However he did not immediately accept it and instead asked some questions. “I have been in existence for far too long…. It might be a few hundred years or even thousands. I can never leave the designated finger bone’s radiation area……”
The Lamia shot a glance at Leylin, “Do you know how it feels?” Leylin fell silent. Such pain, it did indeed have the ability to drive a Magus crazy to the verge of seeking death.

“If you take the finger bone, there will be a shortage of such a radiation environment and I will gradually fade away…..” The young woman’s silhouette became more and more illusionary with a smile of relief on her face.

“Wait. How can I resolve the shackles on the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock bloodline?

Watching the young woman’s illusionary image gradually fading out until the wall behind her could be seen, Leylin quickly blurted out the question.

“This problem, can only be solved by the Grand Matriarch…..” Accompanying the fading image, the Snake Woman’s grew softer and softer until she dissipated into thin air.

“Grand Matriarch? Snake Dowager?” Leylin stroked the finger bone he was holding in his hands, his face a sea of infinite obscurity.

“Regardless of that, I better make a move fast!”

With lightning speed, Leylin kept the finger bone well, swept his eyes over the surroundings and launched the Dark Elven Crown. Thick, black darkness enveloped Leylin completely, and coupled with his magic power he was able to pass through the gate which was guarded by the two Blood Vultures unharmed.

After he reached the foot of the mountain, Leylin looked back at the huge black form of the mountain and its innumerable caves. He looked hesitant.

This was practically a Warlock’s treasure trove, but without a strength at the Morning Star realm, there was no way the entirety of the Blood Vulture could be subdued.

“I have, at most, five more minutes before the King Blood Vulture is back from his patrol. When he realises that the finger bone is
gone, I am sure he will definitely launch an investigation into the matter…”
Leylin stroked his chin. He had been hiding up here for so long, the backup plans had to be more than these. But now, the biggest harvest was already in his hand. Whether to continue or not, he had not yet made up his mind.
Since ancient times, it was a common occurrence for an individual to place himself in danger for personal benefits. Leylin did not want to become one of them.
“Forget it! Let’s go!”
With some regret, Leylin turned his head and left the place.

……

“Huh?! You are finally out.”
Not too far away, a temporary underground cave opened up. A female Magus in pursuit ran in with a crystal ball in her hand. On the surface of the crystal ball, a blood-red layer appeared, getting brighter and brighter.
“If you had kept hiding in the nest of the Blood Vultures, I might not have been able to find you. But what about now?”
The female Magus flashed a smile.
She was in pursuit of Leylin all the way and had even used a spell to use a trace of Leylin’s energy to build a tracking item. But after reaching this place, she realised Leylin had hidden in the nest of the Blood Vultures!
The King Blood Vulture there was at the peak of the Crystal Phase! Other than that, there was a big group of rank 3 followers. If she chased in after Leylin and a commotion was created, it would definitely alert the many Blood Vultures to join in for the kill.
Therefore, this female Magus chose to hibernate and wait. To her, Leylin would come for collection of resources, it was just a matter
of time. As long as she waited with patience, regardless of success or failure, he would leave and an opportunity would present itself. “All thanks to you, I was able to discover this treasure place. In return, I shall grant you a quick death…” The female Magus shook her robes and immediately disappeared underground.

[Beep! Warning! Warning! High energy force field undulations detected. Distance 15 kilometers away. Approaching quickly!]
The A.I. Chip gave out this sudden warning, shocking Leylin. This was the advantage of having the A.I. Chip. Not only did Leylin possess the Magus’ special abilities of consciousness scanning, he also had the A.I. Chip for exploration, probing and throwing necessary warnings. Moreover, the range of probing by the A.I. Chip was much wider compared to Leylin’s own ability.

“Begin imaging!” Leylin gave the order immediately. Soon after, a red-hued motion picture was sent in front of him. It was an image of a living creature. There were only heat and radiation readings, without any signs of the gender, however the bright colours were a giveaway. It was a rank 3 Magus, one that had attained the Crystal Phase.

“Ah, the pursuers are finally here!” Leylin had expected this would happen.

*Hoot!* At this moment, from a distance, a high-pitched sound pierced forth, turning Leylin’s face pale white.

“The King Blood Vulture is back! If I turn back now, all that awaits me is death!” As it is, at this point in time, Leylin curled his lips into a smile and commanded his A.I. Chip, “A.I. Chip! Prepare to activate all programs!”

[Command received! Activated!] The A.I. Chip alerted without any emotion.

*Hoot!* Immediately after the King Blood Vulture had entered its cave in the mountain, a violent cry rang out.
Two Hydro Phase Blood Vultures were pinned to the ground by its claw. Feathers and blood were smeared all over the ground. The King Blood Vulture snarled, creating a whole world of uproar in the Blood Vultures’ mountain.

But that was not all.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Following Leylin’s order, in a secret corner of the Blood Vultures’ mountain, hidden spells were activated in series.

One after another, shadow servants manifested themselves at lightning speed, so much so that they appeared right next to the Blood Vultures’ nests. They grasped at many of the bloodline treasures, with some even clasping onto huge Blood Vulture eggs, fleeing the grounds.

Basically, except for the area around the King Blood Vulture’s cave, the rest of the mountain in its entirety was under attack. There were at least fifty such spells placed!

Corresponding with the loud snarl of the King Blood Vulture, multiple shadows of darkness bore through to the center of it all and immediately the whole of the Blood Vultures’ mountain became a huge field of upheaval.
The King Blood Vulture used its wings and fanned the two Blood Condors in its path away, flying into the sky. A crimson beam of light struck down, and a shadow servant who could not dodge in time was shattered, scattering multiple bloodline treasures everywhere. With the commanding high-pitched squawk, the flock of Blood Vultures now had a leader and their formation immediately changed. Many of them flew high into the sky and, like a web, began to circle the shadow servants, occasionally dropping down in attack. Though this method was effective at killing many shadow servants, the remaining servants’ movements in looting them were much too quick. After paying the price of a large number of casualties, a portion of them still broke out. *Chu!* The King Blood Vulture roared, bringing with it multiple Blood Vultures as it gave chase. “Found you!” Leylin met with the person who were chasing after him. It was a ginger female Magus. Her body was curvy, a golden headband rested on her forehead, and her pair of long and narrow eyes were fixed on Leylin. “My name is Leylin. May I know yours?” In the face of her gaze that was ready to shoot flames, Leylin smiled slightly and
performed a noble’s bow, his movements so precise there was nothing to criticise.

“Tanasha!” This female Magus had not expected Leylin to feel so relaxed. Though her chest was bouncing in her anger, she still had a lot of self-restraint as she announced her name.

“Are you prepared to admit to your sins?” Tanasha glanced at the handsome young man in front of her. Captives could be ransomed in the central continent. In addition, he had not caused too many casualties to her organisation, and was also a human backed by the Ouroboros Clan. Hence, it was not too surprising that he was still calm in this situation.

“Oh, no, you’ve misunderstood,” Leylin’s smile was dazzling, “I just want to ask you this. Do you… like Blood Vultures?”

“What do you mean?” Tanasha’s mind could not process this fast enough. But looking at the numerous crimson figures appearing on the horizon, she suddenly had a bad premonition.

Leylin acted before she could do anything, “Eye of Petrification!” His eyes turned amber and the pupils became vertical slits, shooting out mysterious, unmeasurable rays of petrification.

Though it was only a rank 1 innate spell, with the addition of his Vapour Phase spiritual force and the strength of his bloodline, its power could not be underestimated.

At the same time, Leylin quickly chanted some incantations, and numerous shadows emerged from all directions, forming a giant cage that trapped her inside temporarily.

Tanasha’s reaction was extremely quick. “Storm!” Almost at the same instant the rays of petrification appeared, her eyes turned silver-white, releasing dazzling light that blocked them.

Meanwhile, a giant storm appeared from behind her, forming a tremendous tornado that stirred up and created chaos in the interior of the cage.

However, Leylin’s sudden attack made her falter. “Lance of
Corrosion!”
A dark green lance, tip white, appeared in Leylin’s hand. It shot towards Tanasha, accompanied by a burst of air.
“How confident are you that a mere Vapour Phase Magus dares provoke a Crystal Phase Magus?” Tanasha was expressionless, but her fury was evident.
*Snap!* Tanasha extended her delicate, pale arms and a translucent layer appeared on top of her smooth skin.
Leylin had used all his might when he shot this Lance of Corrosion forth, and yet, she’d caught it just like that.
*Boom!* She viciously crushed the Lance into powder, while Leylin paled as he took several steps back.
However, his smile now was as if he had gotten away with something.
“Hm?” Tanasha’s brows furrowed. Only then did she notice that after the Lance of Corrosion had been destroyed, a white feather had appeared.
*Pu!* The white feather had exploded into powder and lightly stuck to Tanasha’s body.
“This aura? And with a powerful lock-on spell formation…” Tanasha’s brows furrowed and she immediately sneered, “I just need two minutes to-”
However, her expression completely changed.
Leylin, who was opposite her, waved his arms towards her and activated the Dark Elven Crown, and immediately turned invisible.
*Sou! Sou! Sou!*
Numerous black figures appeared. The shadow servants from before quickly pounced towards her, only to be killed by her while heading in her direction.
However, with this opportunity, they threw some bloodline crystals, bones and the like at her legs. There was an especially large egg that had been knocked so hard that it broke, revealing the egg yolk
and whites within.

*Chu chu!* Numerous Blood Condors hurried over under the lead of the king, and upon seeing Tanasha, their eyes instantly turned red.

This was especially so for the the King Blood Vulture. It smelt its feather on Tanasha’s body. It was a feather used specifically to protect the Lamia fingerbone and was extremely precious. The smell was extremely unique, and there was no way it could recognise it wrongly!

It now looked like the person who had infiltrated its mountain and looted the area as they wished, was also the thief who had stolen its treasure!

The King Blood Vulture was furious, crimson lightning materialising around it.

“I- I- I!” Tanasha was momentarily stunned. No matter how stupid she might be, she knew what Leylin had planned.

“Wait, O King!” Tanasha was now sending spiritual force waves to the mind of the King Blood Vulture, her final attempt at saving herself.

However, would the enraged King Blood Vulture listen to her explanations? Though it had the intelligence of an adult, it was now in an angered state. Usually, in its territory, it would have what it wanted. Why would it listen to the explanations of a human?

Numerous bolts of crimson lightning struck down, drowning her…

Meanwhile, Leylin had made use of the Dark Elven Crown, and was sneakingly heading back.

*Boom!* Soil upended at an area, revealing numerous bloodline items within. Red gems and white bones were scattered, giving off a dazzling luster.

“There’s even a Blood Vulture egg here! It looks like a pretty good harvest.”

Holding a giant egg in his hands, Leylin looked elated. This was a
few times larger than an ostrich egg, and it even had blood-red patterns on the surface, powerful life energy radiating from within. Leylin could even feel a throbbing from the shell. Blood Vulture chicks could not be tamed, but one still in its egg could. Not only did it have the ability to find bloodline treasures, it was also very popular for its ability to reach rank 3 after it had matured. Of course, Leylin had no plans of selling it off. Rather, he wanted to subdue it. The central continent was vast and boundless. There were many places that even Magi were yet to explore, and the Blood Vulture’s ability to fly was very useful in this area. In the future, he could gain a steady flow of bloodline treasures, which was the best advantage!

“The harvest is quite good!” Leylin quickly kept everything properly. He had long since ordered the shadow servants to place whatever they had stolen on the road here. Whatever had been flung at Tanasha’s feet was just a small portion. The real treasures had long since been moved away and were all with Leylin. After checking all his gains, Leylin looked back towards the Blood Vultures’ mountain, sinking into deep thought. ‘The King Blood Vulture has brought all its main forces to annihilate Tanasha. She is a Crystal Phase Magus after all, and it is possible for her to hold them off for some time. Should I go back and rummage through the Blood Vultures’ nests?’ Leylin immediately shook his head, throwing these enticing thoughts out of his mind. “Forget it. What I now have is more than enough. I shouldn’t take such a risk at the end like this.” “Besides, my real target is that rank 3 Crystal Phase Magus, not the rest of those bloodline treasures.”
Leylin’s eyes flashed ruthlessly…
“Damn it! Damn it! Damn it! I want to slaughter that wretched Magus and turn his flesh and blood into powder and feed it to a Carnivorous Flower!”
Tanasha was in a tropical rain forest, sprinting hard. However, she was evidently not in a very good condition. Not only were her clothes in tatters making her seem like a beggar, her entire right arm had disappeared. Her face was pale, with green veins visible on top.
This flock of Blood Vultures was truly relentless. In order to break away from them, Tanasha had to employ a few secret methods that would stimulate the potential in her body in succession. She had even discarded a clone that she had nurtured for a long period of time before she could successfully draw the King Blood Vulture away.
Tanasha was definitely fuming at the mouth, wishing she could eat Leylin alive.
“Tsk tsk, Ms Tanasha, you don’t seem to be in good health. Do you need treatment?” In the quiet rainforest, a voice suddenly sounded, causing Tanasha’s body to stiffen.
She then looked at the young man she would never be able to forget, blocking her path.
“How- how did you get here? I already destroyed all auras and smells that would identify me!” Tanasha gaped, disbelieving.
“You don’t need to know. Right now, you can only answer a question of mine.”
Leylin produced an ink-black cross blade and pointed it at her. “Submit to me, or die.”
He had naturally used the A.I. Chip to scan the surroundings and hunt her down. Though Tanasha had concealed her aura very well, and destroyed all the localizing marks that Leylin had shot out, nothing could be hidden in the face of the A.I. Chip.
Not considering anything else, just the signs of a human passing through on the road would not be able to escape the A.I. Chip’s nanoscopic scanning, no matter how hard Tanasha tried to cover her tracks. It was only after Leylin confirmed that she was heavily injured that he chased up to her. Tanasha was at the Crystal Phase, and was multiple levels higher than Leylin. In the past, it would have been a joke if a Vapour Phase Magus had announced his wish to kill a Crystal Phase Magus. However, a hint of fear had already appeared on Tanasha’s pale face. She had no choice but to admit that Leylin had the strength and ability to kill the current her.
Rank 3 Magi were categorised into several stages. Leylin, at the Vapour Phase, could compress his spiritual force into a physical, observable fog. On the other hand, Magi at the Crystal Phase could solidify their spiritual force, even preserving it to sell. Spiritual force at the Crystal Phase had an unimaginable advantage against Vapour Phase spiritual force. In other words, even if Leylin, Robin and Kesha had teamed up against Lucian, they wouldn’t be his match. However, Tanasha’s spiritual force was exhausted long ago, including her Crystal Phase spiritual force crystals. He wouldn’t be Leylin if he let such a good chance slip out of his hand. Not only were Crystal Phase Magi powerful, they were considered nobles in the central continent due to their status as the reserve forces of Morning Star Magi. Under usual circumstances, it was out of the question for Leylin to defeat Magi of this rank. Perhaps only Duke Gilbert, his mentor, would be able to. But with Tanasha as she was, it would be easy. “You…” Tanasha’s pale complexion flushed in anger, her fingers trembling, “How dare a lowly Vapour Phase Magus talk to me like that?” “Looks like I’ll have to help you snap back to reality!” Leylin
sighed in disappointment upon seeing her demeanour. His figure transformed into a ray of light and flashed in front of her. *Thump!* He planted a fist on Tanasha’s cheek. *Buzz!* A barrier of light was created around Tanasha as a brilliant ruby ring shone. It was, however, too feeble to deter Leylin as he easily broke through. In the blink of an eye, Tanasha was sent flying, a large red patch on her cheek. The Meteor Sword has already reached her neck before she could react. “Now choose... Surrender, or die!” There was a change in Leylin’s tone. Now he demanded with utter disdain, every word pricking with a bone-chilling vibe. He had decided to kill were she to choose it. He certainly did not wish to leave behind a Crystal Phase opponent. Tanasha wisely chose to be silent in front of the cold-hearted Leylin. This feeling of impending death was familiar to her. She felt as if she had returned to times of frailty and weakness, as old memories surfaced and she momentarily became distraught. “What is with this woman’s mental state?!” Leylin shook his head, Tanasha’s reaction was nothing out of the ordinary since he was aware of the common psychological instability of Magi. There was also her injuries to consider. Moreover, all who entered the Forgotten Land would certainly have a dark past of own. “I’m only giving you three minutes! Be quick!” Leylin tightened his grip on the sword and brought it closer to Tanasha’s neck. Other Crystal Phase Magi would probably have a sense of dignity and pride, but things were different in the Forgotten Land. Those human Magi who entered here were mostly those who had reached an impasse, willing to forgo everything for a means of sustenance. It was easy for the mto capitulate.
Leylin’s cold voice caught Tanasha’s attention. The angry flush on her face had already dissipated by then, leaving behind a canvas of ivory.
“I… surrender!” She replied so softly Leylin could barely hear a thing.
As if on cue, Tanasha fell limp to the ground, her backbone losing support the moment she agreed. Her tears were uncontrollable. The Meteor Sword remained on her neck in spite of everything.
“Make an oath! Also, relinquish your spirit source!” His voice was cold as ice.
“I… Tanasha…” Hesitance crossed Tanasha’s eyes as she fought an internal battle. However, she ended up choosing to surrender.
A sparkling strand of spirit source was released from her forehead and landed on Leylin’s palm.
That was a Magus’ lifeline. Were it not voluntary, it would be completely impossible to offer it to another person. Rules were even stricter in the central continent, to prevent the dominance of one over another. Of course, this didn’t stop people with influence and power from committing it but similarly, it had to be done in secret or they would be boycotted by all Magi.
This was no issue at all for Leylin since he didn’t plan for Tanasha to be seen by others.
“Master…” Tanasha called out in a deep voice and got up to her feet. She resembled a broken puppet, someone that had lost her soul.
“Being forced into the Forgotten Land, you must have your own dark past. But rest assured, I am not going to compel you to do things that are disgraceful to Magi. Instead, I can give you hope. A hope for revenge.”
There was a bewitching tone to Leylin’s offer and Tanasha’s eyes lit up a little as the word ‘revenge’ rang in her ears and a hint of anger rushed through her.
“That’s right! Revenge!” Leylin made eye contact with Tanasha and lowered his voice. “I promise, when I’m strong enough to take revenge for you and not worry about the possible repercussions and retaliation, I will aid you in accomplishing your dream. That is, if you work for me wholeheartedly till then.

“I’m not trying to patronise you. You see, I’ve reached the Vapour Phase at less than a hundred years of age. Moreover, there will be no problems with advancing to the Morning Star realm because of my Kemoyin bloodline!”

Deep down, Leylin was aware that with his method, Tanasha would only be willing to become a puppet to him. To milk her for everything she was worth, Leylin needed to ignite her battle spirit by fuelling her with hope. And instead of empty promises, he promoted his skills to Tanasha, proving his capability to help her in her revenge.

“One hundred years old! Vapour Phase!” Tanasha gazed at Leylin with a heightened intensity.

A hundred years of age was definitely old for humans. But for Magi, especially those who were at rank 3 and above, it wouldn’t even be considered as puberty.

For Leylin who have both the talent and bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, his status in the Ouroboros Clan could not be overlooked. All this pointed to one thing: There was a substantial chance for him to become a Morning Star Magus.

Even someone with the capability to escape a rank 3 Crystal Phase Magus would crumble like paper in the face of a rank 4 Morning Star Magus.

“I am at your beck and call, Master! I, Tanasha, will be your most loyal servant as long as my revenge is assured!” Tanasha knelt on a knee and gritted her teeth, a little more willing this time. Although it was a mere promise without a covenant, what more could a captive like her bargain for?
“Haha…” Leylin cackled.
The addition of Tanasha was definitely a reinforcement to Leylin, given her strength which was more than his.
Plus, she would be hidden from the public since this assistance would be carried out in secret.
That was Leylin’s plan all along, to gather as much of an underground force as he could in case anything unexpected occurred.
“Take these potions quickly and recover!” Leylin showed generosity to the newly-recruited Tanasha and presented her with three tubes of differing colours.
“High-grade healing potion! High-grade spiritual force recovery potion! Sacred regeneration potion!” Tanasha’s face was painted with surprise as she recognised these three potions. Apart from their heavenly price, these potions were heavily utilised by large-scale organisations as their war reserves and could not even be bought with money.
This was especially true for the sacred regeneration potion which could stimulate the regrowth of limbs that were as good as the original with absolutely no side-effects. It was unfamiliar, even to a rank 3 Magus like Tanasha.
“Thank you, Master!” Tanasha bowed and sighed in relief, “Don’t mention it, it’s just something I made!” Leylin added to his credibility.
Sure enough, Tanasha’s eyes widened at his sentence. She was beyond impressed, advancing to Vapour Phase before the age of a hundred was amazing enough, she did not at all expect that Leylin would be a Potions Grandmaster as well. This was genius at its best and would be considered rare even in the central continent. As long as there were no mishaps along the way, success was pretty much guaranteed.
Hints of hope filled Tanasha’s eyes as she watched Leylin…
Simultaneously, in a clandestine area, Noah was staring at his dish, face drained of colour.
There was an indistinct bloody liver-like substance lying on the white china, emitting a chalky fog.
“Eugh…” Noah slapped a palm over his mouth, resisting the urge to gag.
In his vision, the Barbarian Bear Shaman’s stomach was cut open, and a large amount of yellow grease flowed out from it. There were also visible traces of the skeleton inside.
“Uncle, I can’t do this any longer!” Noah cried through the spaces of his fingers.
Robin didn’t look good either, his body was missing huge chunks of flesh and he was covered in terrifying wounds.
“It was rumoured that this place is dominated by the sin of gluttony, we will be attacked if we stop partaking! We have to keep going, success will be ours if they fail first.”
Robin persisted to his best abilities whereas Noah’s hand trembled as he picked his cutlery. Ultimately, he put them down again. All the food here was created from the sin of gluttony and due to it, all spells would be rendered useless; only their own tenacity could help them withstand the ‘feast’. *Ring ring ring!* The melodious bell rang from afar, but to the trio it seemed like it came from the depths of hell…
Noah made several attempts to reach for the knife and fork but he gave up halfway, letting out an expression of intense suffering. He collapsed on the dining table with a bang, his teeth clenched tightly.

Similarly, Robin had a pained look on his face as he endured the nausea and swallowed a bloody piece of meat. Within 30 seconds, the ringing of the bells came to an end, lasting only for a short duration.

*Ka-cha!* Out of nowhere, it seemed as if a huge invisible mouth took a bite. At this moment, Noah let out a deep cry. A large portion of his flesh was missing on the right side of his head, his ear having completely disappeared. From the side, his ghastly white teeth could be seen. It was a horrifying sight.

Suddenly, a streak of light flashed across. A bloodied ear, still twitching unconsciously, appeared before a dark figure.

“Ew……”

After a few rounds, Robin and Noah had paled, now resembling corpses. However, the Barbarian Bear Shaman on the other end had finally reached its limit and collapsed onto the table.

*Buzz!* As if a signal was given, the Barbarian Bear Shaman was immediately moved to the 13th chair, which was unoccupied. When this was done, numerous dark figures pounced on it.

“Ah……” The Barbarian Bear Shaman shrieked continuously.
Soon after, fur and skin started disappearing piece by piece, followed by flesh, veins and even bones.

*Hoo…* The Crystal Phase Barbarian Bear Shaman no longer had any power to fight back and vanished within the dark figures. Even up till the very last moment of its life, the Barbarian Bear Shaman was still very much conscious, as could be seen from the expression in its eyes.

After they engulfed the Barbarian Bear Shaman, the many dark figures dispersed and vanished into thin air one after another. At the same time, Noah could feel the strong imprisonment fading.

“It’s finally over…” he sighed, plopping to the ground shortly after. He began to vomit, almost to the point of spewing out bile.

“I swear. I won’t be able to eat anything for at least three months…” Despite his bitter expression, Noah’s bodily wounds were in fact healing quickly.

However, Robin’s fervent eyes were fixed on a particular part of the void. From Noah’s perspective, a presence had already arrived somewhere.

“What reward do you wish for?” An inexplicable voice rang within the hearts of the two men.

“I want…” Robin answered. His voice was deep, but even more so, it carried his unrestrainable excitement……

At this point in time, Leylin walked out of the ecological garden with Tanasha and they returned to the illusory corridor.

“Master… According to our research, we will be able to get out after passing 3 more spatial points.” Tanasha’s condition seemed to have improved greatly, and even her missing arm was able to grow out again with the help of the potions.

“Yes,” Leylin nodded.

“After we get out, stay in the Forgotten Land for the time being. Wait for an opportunity to sneak out and join me! Do you have any restrictions in your organisation?”
“No! I am one of the leaders in the Alliance of the Exiled, I didn’t agree to any sort of soul-binding contract!” Tanasha responded quickly. It wasn’t surprising given her Crystal Phase strength.
“That’s good…” Leylin nodded. He was about to say something else but all of a sudden, his expression changed and he gave Tanasha a look.
Tanasha acknowledged with a nod before disappearing into a wave of water.
Based on the readings on the A.I. Chip, Magus energy waves were detected ahead. Since Tanasha was a backup plan arranged by Leylin, she could not show herself easily in front of outsiders.
Leylin smiled at Tanasha, who was now concealed behind the water, and walked past a corner.
Then, he saw a warlock dressed in a black robe, slumped on the ground. A puddle of black blood was growing beside him. Leylin knew this warlock well – he was one of Kesha’s men, named Arcus.
“Wake up, Arcus!” Leylin flipped Arcus over and immediately noticed the criss-crossed wounds on his chest as dark blood gushed out continuously.
“Curse power!” Leylin’s expression hardened as he felt an enormous power from the long, narrow cuts.
As a Magus, Leylin was knowledgeable in curses, especially those in the Book of Giant Serpent, left behind by Great Magus Serholm. They inspired him greatly and even led him to develop many new ones of his own. This knowledge helped him to a great extent when he was at the south coast.
However, the deeper his knowledge, the more he understood about the strangeness and difficulty in coping with such power.
In particular, the curses from ancient times were those that Leylin was unwilling to make contact with even now.
It seemed like Quicksand Castle also contained a terrifying curse
power, and this power had already found its way to Kesha and her group.

To the unconscious Arcus, whose face was faintly branded with a spell made of dark fumes, Leylin looked at him and said, “Today is your lucky day!” He then smiled and pulled out a tube filled with a green solution from his leather pouch.

Leylin applied the thick, green fluid onto Arcus’ wounds drop by drop.

*Sizzle!* The green fluid immediately went through a strange transformation as it condensed into many tiny green worms, which remained on Arcus’ skin. It was a rather disgusting sight.

After that, the numerous green worms aimed at the dark fumes and pounced on them. They engulfed the dark curse power as if they were having a meal.

As time went by, the dark fumes on Arcus’ face slowly faded away and he opened his eyes.

“M…Master Leylin! Thank you for saving me!” Arcus had realised the situation he was in. He struggled to bow but was stopped by Leylin.

“Did something happen to sister Kesha and the others?” Leylin’s voice was calm and full of wisdom.

“Yes, yes! After we entered Quicksand Castle, we were attacked!” Arcus answered with his pale, dry lips, sounding a little frightened.

“It’s a terrifying monster in human form! Not only are spells and physical attacks ineffective, the wounds inflicted by its scissors cannot heal! It also possesses a frightening ability to enter the void and heal itself!”

“Sir! Please save my master!” Arcus pleaded sincerely.

“Don’t worry! We are an organisation of bloodline brothers and Kesha is also my sister. I will not leave her in the lurch!”

“Rather than that, you……”

“I’m fine! I can leave by myself!” Arcus knew for sure that his
presence was a burden thus he made a sensible decision.

“Alright! We are already near the exit, all you have to do is avoid
the Magi outside, then leave this pocket dimension!”

Leylin nodded and watched Arcus as he limped out of the place.

“Master, are you going to save them?” A wave swept past the empty
space and Tanasha, who had been concealed all these time, appeared again.

“Yes!” Leylin nodded.

Kesha had been good to him and they were relatively close. He had
to save her.

Of course, more importantly, through his analysis of Arcus, Leylin
had already prepared himself for said curse. At the very least, he
could ensure his own safety.

If it was like that, there was no reason to refuse to rescue them
while he was here.

“You don’t have to involve yourself with this matter anymore, you
may leave first!” Leylin ordered Tanasha.

After that, he immediately handed a large black box to her.

“You have to guard the contents of this box carefully. Do not open
it, return it to me when we meet again later!”

“Yes, Master!” Tanasha bowed. After receiving the box from
Leylin, a bright light flashed and the item disappeared.

Although rare, spatial artifacts could be found even on the south
coast and Twilight Zone, leave alone the central continent.

Tanasha had long since entered the Crystal Phase. A storage artifact
was no big deal.

As he watched Tanasha’s silhouette moving away, Leylin turned in
the opposite direction and disappeared into the corridor.

……

“Huff……”
Kesha hid behind a large shelf, and her tall chest moved up and down unsteadily as she breathed. “How is it? Has the trap succeeded?” She asked a Green-skinned Barbarian beside her. Both Kesha and the Green-skinned Barbarian had long, narrow wounds on their bodies. A pool of dark gas circled above those wounds. These two Magi were almost entirely drained of their energies and they were at their worst condition. “The Fogbound Labyrinth can only trap it for 3 minutes!” The Green-skinned Barbarian said bitterly. “Damn it! That amount of time isn’t even enough for us to recover, not to mention getting past the illusory corridor!” Kesha looked despair. Being pursued by the man in black, especially after sustaining such injuries, the illusory corridor had refused to transport a cursed person like her several times. They were practically trapped in there while still alive. By now, both Magi were already at their limits. They had no more strength to fight back. “I’d never expected that I would die here, and with a green-skinned dwarf beside me!” Kesha let out a faint sigh. “What did you say, woman?” Angered after being called a dwarf, the Green-skinned Barbarian jumped up and pointed his staff at Kesha’s nose. “If you guys hadn’t intruded and killed many of our clan members, we wouldn’t have chased after you and we wouldn’t have run into that thing!” “You…” Kesha wanted to refute further but her expression suddenly changed. She and the Green-skinned Barbarian dodged in opposite directions. Ka-cha! A brilliant, silver-white light streaked across and the large shelf was split into two. It exposed the silhouette of a man in a black trenchcoat who held a pair of scissors emitting a sharp
“Oh no! It broke through earlier than expected!” The Green-skinned Barbarian turned pale, looking even greener than usual, and it began to shiver.

“Fuck! I knew it, you green-skinned dwarves can’t be trusted!” Out of her despair, Kesha burst out swearing.

The man in black made an ambiguous howl. The sounds of the scissors echoed as his footsteps slowly drew near.

With her sea of consciousness now dried up, a bitter smile emerged on Kesha’s face. However, the man in black was evidently not one to show mercy even towards a female as he raised his hand and pierced at Kesha’s eyes with the scissors.

“Explosive Fireball!” A massive explosion sounded. Numerous dark figures gathered to form a cage and bound the man in black.
Kesha felt giddy, her head was spinning, but she soon fell into a strong embrace. “Ley...Leylin!” She was taken aback and called out his name. “Sister, it looks like you’re in a difficult situation!” Leylin rubbed his nose and gently laid Kesha down. He then tossed a potion at her. “This is a purifying potion, it can eliminate the curse energy from your body! Use it as soon as possible!” “Thank you!” Kesha’s face glowed with a lovely smile. Having just escaped from death, she was especially touched. “Wait up! That... Can you also give me one...?” The huge Green-skinned Barbarian Magus rolled over like a ball, and he was eager to please. “Huh?” Leylin looked at Kesha. “Give it to him! After all, we fought alongside each other!” Kesha nodded her head.

At this moment, countless black shadows exploded forth with a bang. Trenchcoat stood in the center, completely unharmed. He made eye contact with Leylin and started roaring. “This kind of feeling, it isn’t a common hybrid curse. It’s a gene curse!” Leylin’s face grew absolutely serious.

The so-called gene curse was a high-grade curse. It had the ability to materialise itself which was extremely difficult to cure.
Leylin himself had mastered a few curses. However, even he was not too sure about these gene curses. “I’ll take care of him. You two, use the potions and leave as quickly as possible!” he said in a deep voice.

As with any curse, there were limitations on the scope of the effect. As for Trenchcoat’s gene curse, it most likely prevented him from leaving the confines of Quicksand Castle. In fact, he might not even make it through the illusory corridor in the outer layer.

Kesha and the Green-skinned Barbarian nodded their heads in agreement and opened the test tubes. “Right, for such a high-grade curse to make an appearance is fortunate. I have long wanted to study them!” Leylin’s eyes lit up like a spark of fire. He threw out a large number of potions.

*Boom* A flash of jade-green flames ignited and blazed fiercely. “dkjsklgmnsklm……”

Trenchcoat seemed to have some apprehensions with regards to these flames and muttered some senseless words. “A.I. Chip! “Leylin ordered, “Compare with every language in the database!” However, the A.I. Chip had not recorded Trenchcoat’s words and so was unable to find an answer.

“Let’s go!” Kesha and the Green-skinned Barbarian yelled. Both had the black cursed energies from their body expelled successfully by the purifying potions.

As he watched Leylin and his two companions leaving, Trenchcoat standing opposite bellowed loudly and charged at them. *Crackle!* A copious amount of jade green flames were blazing on his body ferociously. Big patches of black clothing were flaking off onto the ground, revealing the badly scarred skin beneath.

A long hideous wound extended all the way down from his right shoulder blade. It looked like a huge black centipede, a sinister and horrifying sight.

What made Leylin frown was the fact that the profound and brutal
power of the curse seemed more pronounced and vigorous on Trenchcoat’s body.
“Run, now!” Leylin waved the Meteor Sword in his hand, bringing forth horrifying poisons and the sharp radiant sword shadows, causing the surrounding structures to collapse one by one.
“Use this!” The Green-skinned Barbarian held out a glittering crystal ball that was radiating beautiful, brilliant rays.
“This is an escape crystal ball. It consists of at least 5 escape charms, enough to get us out of here!” The Green-skinned Barbarian Magus met Leylin’s eyes and explained it to him, seemingly trying to win his favour.
“Good job!” The blue light in his eyes sparkled and the A.I. Chip affirmed the authenticity of the crystal ball and its favourable functions.
He immediately stimulated the crystal ball and the three of them vanished in a blinding flash.
A black shadow whizzed past and Trenchcoat’s pair of scissors slashed across empty space as it produced senseless, incoherent roars.
Inside the illusory corridor, the surrounding walls were filled with images of many plants and flowers. Many of the plants were in a continuous loop of life from germination, to growth, then blossoming and finally withering.
*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Loud thuds of heavy objects falling were heard. Leylin and the rest were in the middle of the corridor.
“Alright! I can no longer feel the power of the curse at this location. You are all safe!” He shut his eyes and exclaimed.
Hearing his words, Kesha and the Green-skinned Barbarian broke into smiles of relief and joy.
“So, it is now time to discuss how we should ‘handle’ this!” Leylin pointed his finger at the Green-skinned Barbarian, revealing a sinister and calculative grin.
“Oh! No! You can’t do this to me. I saved your companion’s life! And we even fought alongside in battle!” The Green-skinned Barbarian raised both his arms, pleading innocently. It didn’t adopt any form of resistance as its spiritual force had been drained a few days ago when it was in pursuit. It even needed Leylin to stimulate the escape crystal ball as it wasn’t able to do it on its own.

“But the fact is, you came here to capture us, no?” Leylin saw through his clumsy trickery. Thus, he held up the cross blade and aimed for the Green-skinned Barbarian’s brains. “Seeing how things have turned out, you have paid the price accordingly. I will spare your life this time!” At that moment, Leylin revealed his true intentions. Having heard what he said, Kesha, who was initially displeased, suddenly snapped out of her emotional state.

“But…. I do not possess any other good stuff!” The Green-skinned Barbarian Magus pleaded pitifully, but secretly slipped an odd bracelet out of his right hand.

Leylin refused to believe that. Being a Crystal Phase Magus, how could it not have a few aces up its sleeve? Looking at the current situation, although both parties were seriously injured, they could have mustered up their remaining strength for another fight. Yet, Leylin only wanted compensation and did not want to test the opposite party’s threshold which would have inevitably caused them both to suffer.

“Hand over the compensation! Or do you want to start a fight here?” Leylin’s tone was harsh and intense.

“Sister Kesha! When the compensation is presented, I’ll share 50 percent with you!” Once these words were spoken, Kesha immediately inched closer to Leylin’s side, showing her support. For this exploration, Kesha had ended up losing her life savings and there was no way she could ever step foot into Quicksand
Castle again. She had also lost three capable assistants, who were all feared dead, so now she thirsted for compensation for her losses.

Seeing how Kesha reacted, the Green-skinned Barbarian let out a bitter smile, “All of you human Magi are shrewd and greedy, worse than the devil!”

It resigned itself to its fate, crouched down, and handed a black pouch to Leylin.

“Go ahead and take a look! My treasures are all in there!”

Leylin reached out to received the pouch that seemed to be made from animal fur. Upon further probing, many useful items of brilliant lights and vibrant colours could be seen.

Crystal Phase Magi in the Forgotten Land were not as wealthy as Crystal Phase Magi elsewhere, but it was enough to please the two Vapour Phase Magi.

There were so many precious materials inside that Kesha was dazzled by its extraordinary splendor as she let out a thrilling cry.

Leylin chose some of the most precious ones, including a few copies of notes and thereafter handed the pouch to Kesha.

Kesha showered her delicate charm on Leylin in appreciation, then started choosing gems from the pouch without restraint. When she finally passed the pouch to the Green-skinned Barbarian, it was obvious the pouch was shrivelled and light, with lots of missing items. The Green-skinned Barbarian was heartbroken.

“Alright! Since the ransom has been paid, we shall take our leave!” Leylin bowed slightly, his lips curled in a slight smile as he walked quickly along the corridor with Kesha. They disappeared at the end, leaving the Green-skinned Barbarian speechless and bitter.

A few days later, at the desert surrounding the Quicksand Castle, in a dim and gloomy underground area.

A wave of bright red brilliant rays flashed past, and the silhouettes of the uncle-nephew pair, Robin and Noah, appeared out of thin
“You are both finally here, Leylin and I have been waiting for a long time!”
Kesha stood up, a tone of dissatisfaction in her voice. Soon after, she gazed attentively at Robin: “You…… what happened?”
Using her aura detection abilities, it seemed that Robin had changed greatly, yet she couldn’t tell exactly what changed.
“Huh?” Leylin scrutinized Robin’s face intently.
There was no change in his outer appearance, with an unusually bewitching handsome outlook, but in the space between his eyebrows, there was an additional black symbol imprinted. Multiple blood vessel lookalikes covered his entire forehead.
What amazed Leylin more was that the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline on Robin’s body seemed to be strengthening continuously, with the tendency to purify gradually. If it weren’t for the extremely pure and concise bloodline in Leylin’s own body, together with the probing of the A.I. Chip, he wouldn’t have noticed such changes.
“It’s nothing. On the contrary, I have never felt better!“ Robin chuckled, rational as ever as he whipped out a huge foreleg and started gnawing on it.
There were scales covering the whole animal foreleg and purple-black blood was still dripping from the severed site. It was clearly a high-energy creature from the vicinity.
Robin wolfed down his food with gusto and finished it up with just a few mouthfuls, meat and bones. He felt like he could be wrong, but after eating the meat, Robin’s bloodline seemed to have strengthened slightly again.
“Eww…” Noah’s face turned ash-white after witnessing Robin feasting on his food. He turned away, not daring to take another look.
“And what happened to you?” Leylin had a premonition. He was
sure Robin had acquired some rare resources from Quicksand Castle.
Of course, he had his own fortuitous encounter and the benefits were not small. Luck wouldn’t shine on only one person, and Leylin understood this theory.
“No…Nothing, it was just a traumatic experience. I might fast for a period, I do not even want to see anybody eating anything….”
Noah waved his hand weakly. The horrible memories from the previous dinner left a deep horrifying impression on him.
“Noah has experienced too little, let him be! We need to leave the Quicksand pocket dimension immediately! Any objections?”
Robin was evidently clear-headed and wise, not mentioning anything about his experiences in the castle. Leylin and Kesha, as well, were too tactful to ask.
“N o matter the profits or losses, it is time to leave.” Leylin nodded, approving of Robin’s suggestion. He had gained quite a lot this time, and had long since had the inclination to leave. More importantly, his pursuer, Tanasha, had surrendered into his service. The Green-skinned Barbarian Magus was also heavily injured, and only after being extorted precious materials from was he released. As for the road that Robin had taken, it was evident that it had been disastrous. These were Crystal Phase Magi! The three powers outside would probably be stamping their feet in anxiety. By the time they reacted to the situation, Leylin and the others would probably be met with the joint attack from the three powers. On Leylin’s end, the Black Horrall Snake Warlocks that Robin and Roya had brought were all dead, and those following Kesha were probably in a similar situation. Arcus, who Leylin had rescued, had not met with them here. This would only have happened if he had other plans, or he had met with some unexpected situation, causing his strength to be greatly diminished. If they did not choose to escape now, were they going to wait to be killed? “Alright, I agree as well.” Kesha sounded helpless. Out of everyone here, she had gained the least, and it was not even enough to make up for the loss of the three Warlocks from her family. When she returned, this would be a huge blow to them.
Anxiety was apparent in Kesha’s eyes. “As for the way out, it’s definitely impossible to go through the entrance of the pocket dimension. We should use our original plan and look for the weaker areas of the pocket dimension, and use escape runes to tear through the space and exit!” Robin exclaimed. The entrance of the secret realm had probably been placed under heavy military guard long ago by the three organisations. Leylin and Kesha would not suggest leaving that way, and they all nodded in agreement.

……

Under the scorching rays of the sun, the moisture in the ground evaporated, cracks appearing within. Somewhere, many cracks converged and caused a terrifying explosion. A hole opened up in the void, and a few pitiful figures dashed out of a tunnel. “Based on these energy particles, it looks like we’ve successfully escaped and reached the Forgotten Land!” Leylin commented after sensing the energy particles that were so sparse that they could be overlooked around him as well as the desolate surroundings. “That’s right! This must be the Tuck Barren Lands close to the Forgotten Land, which is very close to the city of sins, Nefas!” Robin checked the surroundings, and he looked elated, “Leylin, I didn’t expect your abilities at calculating the areas where space is weak to be so impressive!” “Yes! Not only did you use the shortest time possible and find the place where space was weak, you also evaded space storms and chose a place that is closest to Nefas City!” It was no simple task to find the weakest spatial node in a pocket dimension. For Magi, this would require a very precise and meticulous probing ability, and the requirements when it came to
calculation were even more terrifying.
“Hehe… What are you saying, that’s only a coincidence!” Leylin rubbed his nose.
All these may seem difficult to a regular Magus, but for the A.I. Chip, it was just a walk in the park. He had even especially chosen a spatial node closest to Nefas City, all so he could leave that place as soon as possible.
He had reaped marvelous gains this time, and he had a bad feeling about this. It was this feeling that prompted him to leave without hesitation, even so going so far as to expose some of his abilities.
“It’s best that we leave as soon as possible. Something feels off.” Leylin furrowed his brows. The resources in the Quicksand pocket dimension were far too plentiful, and just the highly valued pocket dimension, Quicksand Castle, was enough to arouse the interest and greed of Morning Star Magi. A Morning Star Magus was not something any of them could handle.
“I have a bad feeling about this too.” Robin looked grim as he agreed as well.
Hearing this, Noah and Kesha could feel the seriousness of the situation. The premonitions or feelings that Magi had, especially that of high-ranked Magi like Leylin and Robin, were usually accurate. It did nothing to reassure them, causing them to tremble in fear.
“Have the organisations in the Forgotten Land contacted the external world? Or is there any supporter of theirs?” Leylin asked Robin as the group of Magi hurried along lightning-quick.
“Contact? They’re a bunch of vicious criminals, or those who can no longer stay in the central continent. How could there be any communication between them?” Robin scoffed at the idea.
“They can’t even leave the Forgotten Land, and can at most conceal their identities in Nefas City.”
At this point, his expression changed and he immediately halted his
footsteps. “You mean…”
Leylin’s expression was grim as he nodded.
“What’s going on?” Noah was baffled, while Kesha seemed to have some thoughts on this, “The organisations within the Forgotten Land and Nefas City have contact with each other? Or…”
She did not dare speak further, but the heavy atmosphere lingered in their hearts.
“But what can we do if we don’t go to Nefas City? The airship station there is the most convenient way to communicate with the external world.” Kesha bit her lips.
“Let’s take the long route.” Leylin let out a long breath.
“This will take more effort. I’ve seen the map, and we’ll pass through a few dangerous areas with rank 3 Magi. However, as long as we’re careful, there’s a large possibility of us passing through, though it might take a bit more time…”
Robin nodded, agreeing with Leylin. Though it was very troublesome to divert their route all based on a conjecture, Kesha and Noah exchanged a few glances and did not object.
The Magus World was filled with danger, and any carelessness could lead to the misfortune of death.
Those who could become high-ranked Magi were very confident in their premonitions, and would prefer to avoid any trouble even if it would cause them to expend more effort.
The moment this group was about to turn around, there was an unexpected situation.
*Ka-cha!* A huge hole opened up in the sky, and countless black streaks of lightning appeared with a thunderous sound..
An incredibly mighty pressure suddenly descended, causing Leylin and the others to stand in a daze.
Suddenly, Leylin felt this whole region being isolated from the surroundings, and the air suddenly becoming heavier, to the point that he could not even move a finger.
“This is… the domain of a Morning Star Magus! I’ve felt it before at my mentor’s. I can’t be wrong!”

Robin turned back, face so pale it was like a corpse’s.

“Found you!” A hoarse voice was transmitted from the black hole in the sky, cold, unfeeling and condescending. It was as if Leylin and his group were a bunch of insignificant little ants.

Numerous black streaks of lightning twined around each other to form a black, giant palm, grabbing at Leylin and the rest.

“Ah-!” Leylin wanted to retaliate, only to find that not only was it difficult to use the spiritual force in his body, even the sparse elemental particles in the external world had disappeared, as if they had become insulators of elemental particles.

[Host body affected by unknown force field. Spiritual force suppressed by 80%. Stats in all areas decreasing.]

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, being distorted as if it was being interfered with.

In terms of Leylin’s own stats, there was a large decrease in all of his abilities, and he had been suppressed to about as strong as a rank 1 Magus.

“The suppression from a Morning Star domain, and its influence, has turned us into elemental insulators!”

A wry smile appeared at the corner of Leylin’s lips, “The terror of Morning Star Magi is something I can only hope to achieve!”

Honestly speaking, he was still in a good condition. Kesha and Noah had already collapsed, leaving Robin and him somewhat able to stay standing. However, in front of the giant black-lightning palm, they were helpless.

“Hmph! Cyril, it’s not up to you to give my students a lesson!” Just as even Leylin gave up all hope, a voice suddenly rang from beside him, a familiar sound immediately perking him up.

“Mentor Gilbert!” Robin and Kesha exclaimed, delighted.

Following that, Gilbert appeared by Robin in loose white robes, his
two eyes turning into dangerous vertical pupils.  
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Ash gray stone skin extended on the black lightning hand, and it eventually collapsed in mid-air, turning into a pile of powder as it sprayed downwards.  
*Po!* Like a soap bubble that had been pierced through, Leylin felt his body become lighter, the region he was in returning to the world. That feeling of being shrouded in a tight membrane disappeared.  
The numbers on the A.I. Chip were returning to normal, as was his contact with the elemental particles.  
[Beep! Detected reactions from two unknown force fields, resulting in a neutralizing effect.]  
The A.I. Chip prompted, and a look of comprehension flashed in Leylin’s eyes. ‘This is mentor’s Morning Star domain, cancelling out the other party’s force field!’  
He had also gained a deeper understanding of how formidable Morning Star Magi were.  
Without reaching the Morning Star realm, just a Morning Star domain was a torture to many low-ranked Magi. In the face of Morning Star Magi, the concept of strength in numbers was just a joke.  
“Giant Serpent Duke Gilbert!” A figure appeared in the sky suddenly, and though he was just standing there, Leylin felt that he was like a high mountain.  
“Demon Hunter Cyril!”  
Leylin lowered his head, taking a few secret peeks at the sky.  
Cyril’s face was gaunt, and his lips were very thin. He had a pair of silver eyes that could inspire fear and the Magus robes he wore, with black threads that formed demonic images and the many chains, axes and torture instruments along with, made him look frightening.  
“Wait here. I’ll go have a good talk with him.” Gilbert placed his
arms at his back. Wrapped in dense crimson rays, he floated above and, with Cyril, transformed into two shooting stars that disappeared into the horizon.
“Hah…” Robin let out a long breath and dropped to the ground. He no longer cared about his image.
The situation just now could be said to be extremely dangerous. If Gilbert had not reached in time, they would probably be in a terrible state.
What exactly is going on?” Noah shook his head, still feeling slightly giddy. “Demon Hunter Cyril tried to hinder us, but Mentor showed up in time to save us, as simple as that!” Kesha laughed bitterly. The great name of Demon Hunter Cyril struck his ears like a peal of thunder. Rumour had it that this infamous, ferocious being would make even the most cunning devil burst out in tears, regretting that they were ever born into this world. Simply thinking about falling into the hands of such a person had her breaking out in cold sweat. “I should’ve thought of it earlier. Nefas, the city of sins, and the Forgotten Land are in close proximity and there are frequent interactions between their people. It is impossible that the forces in the Forgotten Land are not in contact with the Demon Hunter.” Robin’s face was full of remorse. In actual fact, what he meant was that those forces were the other party’s lackeys. When they saw that they could not handle their group, they immediately informed their master. However, there was no conclusive evidence. In addition to that, the Demon Hunter was also a Morning Star Magus, which was why Robin spoke obscurely. “If Mentor Gilbert hadn’t arrived in time, we would’ve been in grave danger. Oh yes, why did Mentor come here?” Robin asked
with a doubtful expression.
“It was me!” Leylin stood out and gave a bitter laugh.
“Before I left, I’d already had a bad premonition. Thus, I gave Parker a letter. If I failed to return within the time limit, he would hand it over to Lucian immediately, who would then pass it on to Mentor… Thank goodness! Brother Lucian is indeed trustworthy. Mentor also didn’t get caught up in a high-level experiment……”
His words were only partly true. As a matter of fact, it was the Coin of Destiny which allowed Leylin to predict the interference of a force at the Morning Star realm. However, he could not bear to give up on the Lamia Hair, hence he adopted such a compromising measure.
From the looks of it, it wasn’t a bad result.
“Sorry! I acted on my own!” Leylin admitted and apologised immediately.
“No! It’s nothing! We still have to thank you for your vigilance!” Robin waved.
“That’s right! Who would’ve known that the Demon Hunter was actually so treacherous? He even tried to snatch away small fries like us!” Kesha spoke with a face full of indignation.
“Silence!” Leylin and Robin shouted simultaneously to stop her.
“Towards Morning Star Magi, even if we are enemies, respect must be given no matter what! This is to respect the truth!” Kesha flushed red from embarrassment and lowered her head.
*Rumble!* At this time, a large wave was transmitted from afar. Leylin looked towards that direction in concern.
“No need to worry! The Demon Hunter may be famed for his strength, but you have to believe in our Mentor. He is also very powerful!” Robin noticed the worries on Leylin’s mind and gave him a comforting smile.
“Let’s hope things will be as such!” Leylin replied a little forcefully.
Getting Duke Gilbert out was already his last resort. Apart from this
mentor, he could no longer think of any other ways to make the Demon Hunter give up.

Should their mentor be defeated, the students themselves would not have a good ending as well.

“Strength! It still comes down to strength!” Leylin could not help but clench his fists together as his yearning for the Morning Star realm grew.

*Whoosh!* A scarlet ray of light streaked across the horizon and Gilbert’s silhouette emerged before Leylin and the others.

“Mentor!” Robin and Leylin rushed to bow.

“You rascals, look what trouble you’ve gotten yourselves into, you even provoked Cyril!” Gilbert swept his eyes over before a smile surfaced on his bald, bare face. It seems, that in the battle between him and the Demon Hunter, he was not on the losing end. After realising that, Leylin heaved a sigh of relief in his heart. At least the worst case scenario no longer had a chance of occurring.

“Alright! You must be exhausted after the expedition, just take a trip back on my airship!”

Smiling, Gilbert waved his hand and a small airship appeared on the spot.

Although it was smaller in size than the public airships, it was evidently more luxurious and ornate. The spell formations drafted on it were also more intricate and powerful.

“This is…” Leylin’s mouth opened wide.

Despite its small size, it was still a proper airship! With enough space to fit an airship of this size, surely Duke Gilbert’s space artifacts must have been at the level of magic equipment at least!

But Robin thought Leylin had lost his senses because of the airship. “This is the ‘Black Scale,’ Mentor’s ship. When he advanced to become a Morning Star Magus, the Fayle clan sent it as a gift. It can use any network of channels and will be treated as an honoured guest at maintenance and rest stops!” he explained with a smile.
“What a lavish clan!” Leylin gasped. The family which had control over the central continent’s airship channels, had a lot of inside information as expected. “Will they send a gift for every Morning Star Magus after they are promoted?” Leylin suddenly remembered and asked. “That’s right! Basically, after a Magus is promoted, the Fayle clan will definitely send a private airship as a gift!” Robin nodded. “What a great scale of spending!” Of course, Leylin knew very well that it was probably not the intention of the Fayles. Instead, the Monarch of the Skies was using the chance to get on the good sides of the Morning Star Magi. The Black Scale’s interior was very luxurious. Comprising a master room, guest room, kitchen, meditation room and a customized living room, the airship was big enough to accommodate dozens of people without seeming crowded. For a private airship, this was enough. Gilbert sat on a sofa in the middle of the living room while Leylin and the other 3 stood respectfully at one side. A few clear-winged elves carried the teapot and cups and swiftly poured a cup of red tea for everyone. “Sit!” Gilbert chuckled. “I am also rather interested in your experiences this time round!” Leylin’s heart stirred. He knew that whatever was to come could not be avoided, but he showed no dissatisfaction about it. By the sole fact that Gilbert saved him, it was only right to share a large portion of the reward. “Tiny energy waves are detected! Identified as Bloodline artifacts’ detection technology! Space artifacts are unable to cut them off!” By this time, the prompting sounds of the A.I. chip had reached Leylin’s mind. In his vision, he distinctly saw a scanning wave sweep past the 4 of them, not even sparing Noah. The wave was so obscure that even Robin could not feel it
scanning his body, it even went on to scan Leylin’s spatial pouch and ring. Despite that, Leylin’s face remained unchanged. The few people remained silent for a while before Robin took the lead and spoke up, “Mentor, It’s like this…” “…….” After listening to his narration, Gilbert looked at the imprint of the spell on Robin’s forehead and took a deep sigh, “I didn’t expect that you would ultimately choose this path!” “This is my choice!” Robin bowed and replied, “If not for this, I’m afraid I wouldn’t even get the chance to look at the realm of the Morning Star!” He spoke resolutely. “As your mentor, I can only guide and advise you in your pursuit of the truth and the power of the bloodline. As for your final choice, I will not interfere any further.” Gilbert shook his head and said, “Since you are insistent on doing this, then so be it!” “Mentor……” On the other side, Kesha was acting like a little girl, on the verge of crying. She spoke about her encounter extremely miserably. “Arcus and the other two are all dead…… That’s half the strength of my clan…… Mentor……” Towards the end, Kesha’s eyes flushed red and she started crying. Tears flowed out like a waterfall. She spoke nothing about her earnings from the extortion of the Green-skinned Barbarian, which was done in collaboration with Leylin. “Alright! Alright!” Gilbert said helplessly. “After this, I will give orders for your clan to be taken care of!” “Thank you Mentor!” Kesha’s face brightened up instantaneously, with such speed that it created a pang of admiration in Leylin. “Leylin, how about you?” Gilbert finally directed his attention to Leylin, with a slight smile of interest in his eyes. ‘What the hell. Amongst you, one is his former student, while the other is a woman. I, the newcomer, am at the greatest
disadvantage!’ In his mind, Leylin rolled his eyes but he kept a calm expression on his face. He patted the space pouch respectfully and a few items appeared on the desk.

“A bloodline crystal!” Kesha covered her mouth and let out a gasp as she saw the blood-red stone. However, Robin’s focus was on the long-root fruit and a few pieces of large, milky white bones.

As for Gilbert, he looked engrossingly at a large egg which sat in the middle of the desk. As he looked at the blood-red runes on it, he appeared to be deep in thought.

“Leylin, you’ve struck it big this time in the pocket dimensions!” Kesha leaned forward, almost squeezing her whole body into Leylin’s embrace. “This sister’s clan is already so pitiful, shouldn’t you help me out?”

“Haha…” Gilbert, however, made a carefree laugh.

“This is the egg of a Blood Vulture! Blood Vultures in the ancient times were originally well-known for searching for bloodline artifacts. Leylin, I suppose you got lucky and found a nest of Blood Vultures?”

“Yes!” Leylin scratched his head, looking a little embarrassed. “After I found the nest, I hid there for a few days before I finally seized the chance and snuck these things out……”

Upon hearing that, a hint of jealousy appeared on everyone’s face, even Robin’s. Why didn’t such good luck descend on him?

“These items, I’m willing to offer them all to Mentor!” What Leylin said thereafter turned Robin and Kesha’s minds blank. “It’s not even possible not to offer…” Leylin gave a sincere look, but he was utterly bitter inside.

After discovering that Leylin possessed these items and did not hand them over, Gilbert would not feel good about it. If that was the case, Leylin’s future life in the Ouroboros Clan would be difficult.
“Haha… Good!”
Gilbert laughed out loud…
Upon hearing Leylin’s words, Gilbert stared blankly at him for a while, and then started laughing heartily. “I will accept your gift then!”

“Thank you, mentor!” Gratitude was apparent on Leylin’s face as he bowed.

“Sure! Of course, I wouldn’t simply just want to have your things for no reason; after all, Blood Vulture eggs from the ancient times are still very precious!” Gilbert lowered his head in thought.

“How about this? Aren’t you currently accumulating contribution points to buy the scroll that can inject life into constructs? I’ll make an exchange with you directly then; a sealed fourth-grade magic scroll would be sufficient to make up for these items!”

Gilbert swept his hand across the table top. The numerous bloodline treasures vanished, and a grey scroll covered in simple floral designs appeared.

“Thank you, Mentor!” Leylin received the scroll and expressed his thanks again, this time with more sincerity.

“Besides…” Gilbert glanced at Leylin’s ring and smiled.

Leylin scratched his head and displayed his embarrassment, knowing that Gilbert had discovered the items he had hidden in his spatial ring.

……
After nightfall, Leylin lay on his bed and examined the scroll in his hands, satisfaction written on his face. “Exchanging those items for a fourth-grade scroll is indeed a fair trade, I didn’t suffer!” He then looked at the ring on his hand and collapsed onto the bed, looking as though he would fall into deep sleep soon enough.

But in actual fact, he was sneering secretly. What Gilbert had discovered was actually what Leylin purposely wanted him to. Inside the ring, there was only a single Bloodline crystal and a few remains from ancient times. Gilbert did not value them exactly because there were only a few items, thus he silently agreed to Leylin’s secret stash.

In actual fact, what Leylin had handed over today was not even ten percent of his real loot, much less the fingerbone left behind by the fifth-grade Lamia from ancient times. The temptation of such an item was too huge, and even Leylin was not willing to take it out. If not, it would be hard to pass Gilbert’s checkpoint.

No matter what happened then, it would not be a situation that he would want to see. After all, Gilbert was rather nice to him, and he didn’t want to fall out with his mentor and the Ouroboros Clan.

Benefits are the greatest reason why people are divided, and Leylin did not want to use the fingerbone to put the bond between master and disciple to the test. Might as well avoid it for the better good.

Yes, the real loot, including the Lamia’s fingerbone, were not on Leylin himself! Therefore, no matter how strict Gilbert was with his inspection, there was no use at all!

“However, although this journey was dangerous, I finally attained the items I wanted, and the other loot is not bad…” Leylin thought as he lay in bed, quickly falling into deep sleep for real.

The Black Scale travelled at high speeds. Initially, Leylin and company took more than a month to travel from the Ouroboros Clan to Nefas City, but the return journey only required about ten
days or so.
After returning to headquarters, Leylin, his mentor and a few seniors gathered together and returned to Onyx Castle to check on the Magus Tower in his territory.
“Welcome, Lord Leylin!” Parker stood in front of the black Magus Tower and saluted respectfully to Leylin. His voice still sounded old as usual, and was strangely mismatched with his youthful face.
“How is the construction of my Magus Tower going?” Leylin stepped forth and gently caressed the black tower, admiring the exquisite runes on it and the faint but powerful energy waves it emitted. A smile spread across his face.
“The entire structure of the Magus Tower has been completed, we’re just left with a few cores and most importantly, the activation of the spirit of the Tower! These are awaiting your completion, Master!”
Parker’s response made Leylin satisfactory. He was serious when working too; the previous task that Leylin had given him was performed well. He had successfully delivered a letter to Duke Gilbert and helped Leylin avert his misfortune.
“Excellent! Leylin nodded, “Bring Snoopy to my lab someday. I haven’t taught him anything new in a long while too!”
He, of course, knew that age was catching up to Parker and he had no ambition, so he placed all his hopes on his grandson Snoopy, whose importance surpassed any reward.
Of course, after hearing what Leylin said, Parker was slightly excited and his bow almost reached a right angle, “Thank you on his behalf, Master!”
“On my way back from this trip, I obtained the Scroll of Life. Under my orders, prepare to begin work. I would like my Magus Tower to be completed immediately!” Leylin gave his orders indifferently.
“Young wish will be executed!” Parker replied. All the preparations
for construction were already complete, and the other core materials had already been prepared too. All was left was to wait for Leylin to return and take the lead. Wandering in his own Magus Tower, Leylin examined every corner carefully. The interior of the Magus Tower was very spacious. Leylin created all of it according to the highest standards, with a complete set of facilities that looked refined and luxurious. Leylin looked at level after level, especially the positive and negative energy reactive pools, along with other places such as the laboratory, the binding room, and the ecological garden.

“A.I. Chip! What are the results of the scan?” While looking around his tower, Leylin did not forget to let the A.I. Chip fully scan and record the decorations and spell formations that he saw before conducting an inspection. The A.I. Chip sent feedback faithfully.

[8% of the main structure of the Magus Tower has been scanned. Defence spell formation operation intact, areas that can still be further optimized: 2!]

As the blueprint of the structure was originally done by Leylin himself, using the A.I. Chip’s perfect deductions, the decorations of the entire Magus Tower were perfect, almost to the point that no fault could be found. The remaining areas that could be further optimized were only small problems that resulted from improper construction and other reasons. No matter how perfect his plan was, as long as it was executed by humans, accidents were bound to happen. Leylin had long prepared for this. ‘The rest is alright, but the previous ecological garden can be altered a little by adding in the data I collected about the environment in the ancient times while at Quicksand Castle!’ Leylin stroked his chin.
Since the Magus Tower was yet to be completed, he could still take the chance to amend it now. If he waited until the defensive spell formations were activated, especially after the tower genie had been awakened, then he wouldn’t be able to amend anything even if he wanted to.

“A.I. Chip! Design an improved version of the blueprint according to what I said earlier!”

Leylin had always liked to put the A.I. Chip in charge of the nitty-gritty things, while he himself was responsible for directing the big picture.

[Task established, adjusting original blueprint! Adding in simulated environment parameters from ancient times, beginning formation of the blueprint…]

The A.I. Chip operated swiftly and projected a new blueprint in front of Leylin within a few minutes.

Leylin scanned the blueprint many times, satisfied with the blueprint made by the A.I. Chip. “Yes! To maximize the use of the original resources and set-up, I just have to add a few items and spell formations! This will do!”

He now had numerous subordinates and a huge number of Stone tribe slaves. Once he handed down the task of amending the place, it would only take a small number of people working in shifts day and night for ten days to complete it.

Leylin stood at the side of the negative energy reactive pool on the lowest level, and examined the complicated spell designs. At the radiance of the pure gold, silver and other precious materials, his face showed no signs of sadness or joy, maintaining tranquility.

[Simulation of the spell formations of the entire Magus Tower complete, 341 dummy runs, number of malfunctions: 0!]

The blue glow of the A.I. Chip flashed in the depths of Leylin’s eyes.

“Begin!” Leylin exhaled gently, and placed a piece of compressed
energy crystal that was emitting immense light rays and heat, much like a miniature sun, into a groove at the heart of the spell formation.
*Brr!* The entire spell formation started to shake, and ring after ring of runes appeared out of thin air. Traces of light circulated on the spell formation.
“Start!” Leylin’s spiritual force extended and connected with the spell formation.
In the instant when the spiritual force came into contact with the spell formation, Leylin felt as though he had opened a valve, causing a multitude of energy particles to be frantically absorbed by the spell formation, before passing through a complex conversion channel and flowing into the negative energy reactive pool.
Meanwhile, outside the Magus Tower, Parker, Kubler, Snoopy and Leylin’s other subordinates had all gathered to watch this scene, their eyes all brightly lit.
A huge elemental wave seemed to form a vortex that was absorbed by the black Magus Tower.
One by one, the magical runes on the body of the Tower lit up, bringing about frightening and yet stable waves, firmly connecting to one another.
Only Leylin was in the Magus Tower at that moment. He ran to the top of the Magus Tower at the speed of lightning and saw that the external appearance was almost the same, but the spell formation and storage pool gave off an entirely different vibe.
“Next, the positive energy reactive pool!” Leylin pushed the same high energy crystal into the groove, and the same activation spell appeared from Leylin’s hands, merging into the four walls.
*Boom!* At the top of the Magus Tower, a huge elemental wave practically condensed into a physical substance, energy particles of various colours emitting brilliant lights and vibrant colours. They quickly subsided into two rainbows, one bright and one dark.
Soon after, the bright rainbow was absorbed by the peak of the Tower, while the rainbow with a hint of gold submerged into the ground.
The positive energy reactive pool buzzed continuously, the elemental liquids within accumulating further and further until it finally reached the middle mark.
Two spheres of light that resembled stars emitted from the peak and underground of the Tower, spreading continually across the structure. Numerous runes lit up one by one, and finally converged at its centre.

[Magus Tower spell formation fully activated! Currently operating well!] the A.I. Chip pointed out.
At that point, Leylin was standing on the point of intersection of the positive and negative energy reactive pools. An unadorned scroll covered in bizarre floral designs appeared in his hands.

“Fourth-grade magic the Scroll of Life!”
“A.I. Chip, prepare to inject knowledge into the being!”
Leylin ripped open the grey scroll, and rays of light burst out. Suddenly, a terrifying attractive force was transmitted from the scroll. The Vapour Phase spiritual force of his consciousness was consumed in huge quantities, and the process only came to a gradual stop when it was close to being exhausted.
Of course, with how much of his wealth Leylin had expended on this, the power of the activation spell was not to be belittled.

A circle of sparkling starlight shrouded the tower. Numerous runes flickered in sync and breathed at the same rate, as if having lives of their own.

A faint blue figure began to form in front of Leylin. “Master, this tower genie is here to serve you!”

This tower genie had been branded by Leylin’s spiritual force upon its birth.

In addition, it was one with the Magus Tower, and could help Leylin take care of any minute details that might be difficult to find.

“Alright. Here’s my first mission. Accept this and fuse with it!” A blue seed shot out from between Leylin’s eyebrows and quickly entered the blue tower genie’s figure.

A multitude of data flowed across the tower genie’s eyes, and a tremendous amount of complicated information even caused the newly-formed tower genie’s figure to flicker, as it eventually turned into a ball of light.

By the time everything had stabilised, the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice was produced from within the blue ball of light, [Digitization complete. The A.I. Chip system is now serving you. Please choose the exterior appearance.]

“A tree elf!” Leylin had never had anything against humanoid
The blue ball of light shook, and eventually formed a blue elf the size of a human head, with a pair of wings formed of starlight.

“I’ll call you Number 1 in the future.” Leylin nodded, very satisfied with this intellectual body’s external appearance.

“Understood. Number 1 greets Master!” The blue elf bowed, though its facial expression looked mechanical.

[Beginning networking.] Such an expression actually pleased Leylin more. What he needed was an absolutely rational manager, and from the very beginning, he had not built in any emotional functions.

With this command, a data interface connected Leylin’s A.I. Chip with the elf using a stream of spiritual force.

[Beginning synchronizing of data. In the midst of tidying up] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.

[Discovery of inharmonious spiritual force waves at three areas. Beginning elimination.] [Fusion with tower genie completed. Activation of anti-probing spell formation at full force.]

One after another, these prompts popped up, and the smile at the corner of Leylin’s mouth grew wider.

Regular tower genies definitely lacked the terrifying calculation abilities of the A.I. Chip. The area that it could manage would only include the interior of the Magus Tower. However, with what he was doing, not only could he control the interior of the Magus Tower from a distance away, he could even completely eliminate any damages that would otherwise have been hidden.

After fusing with the program that the A.I. Chip had duplicated, the tower genie had now become more intelligent, able to autonomously search for holes and repair them, and even take care of a few flaws or defects that had originally been there.

It could be said that even if Grand Duke Gilbert had done anything
to the rank 4 scroll, it would have been pointless. This was because Leylin had already modified the tower genie’s structure with things of his own.

“Hah…” Leylin took in a long breath.

The construction of the Magus Tower, particularly the completion of the positive and negative energy reactive pools, now allowed the interior of the Magus Tower to have ten times the elemental particle concentration as outside.

The concentrated energy particles could even be seen with the naked eye, and for Magus eyes this was even more apparent. Leylin felt like he was surrounded by an elemental ocean.

The particle concentration in the central continent had already been very high, and that of this Magus Tower far surpassed that.

It could be said that in this environment, Leylin’s progress in his meditation technique would not be too slow even if he did not use any potions. What was more frightening was that even trashy acolytes with a level 1 or 2 aptitude could break through their own limits and become official Magi if they studied and meditated here!

After recognising this, Leylin immediately made a choice. Unless there was anything terribly important, he would stay and settle down in the Magus Tower.

Outside the tower.

Parker and the others could not feel all this as keenly as Leylin, but after there was a rumble from the entire Magus Tower and it started emanating faint light, everyone still began to cheer. Even Kubler had shining tears at the corner of his eye.

A Magus Tower was a representation of strength in the central continent.

With a Magus Tower, and a Magus like Leylin who was viewed highly, regular Magi with Crystal phase spiritual force would not dare trespass in this area. In addition, with the large-scaled monitoring abilities of the Magus Tower, the rate of crime would
definitely be lowered. This signified that Leylin’s power was secured, whether among mortals or Magi. As a result, all the vassals who depended on Leylin were extremely moved. *Boom!* At this moment, with the sound from a power switch, the entrance to the Magus Tower opened up, revealing Leylin’s figure. “It’s finally done. Come in and take a look!” “Many thanks, Master!” A few Warlocks immediately bowed. They had contributed to the construction of the Magus Tower, and naturally wished to take a look at it. “Ah! The concentration of the particles!” Upon entering through the entrance, they were immediately shocked by the terrifying concentration of particles in the Magus Tower. “As expected of the Magus Tower that my lord personally constructed. If I had studied in this place from my youth, I might have been able to break through to the Hydro Phase spiritual force stage by this time…” Parker caressed the cold and rigid walls, almost feeling like sobbing. “Based on your contributions, I will give you different amounts of authority within the Magus Tower, as well as assign you your own bedrooms, laboratory and the like.” Seeing all his subordinates, Leylin immediately made a promise to reward them. “Many thanks, Master!” Numerous Warlocks were immediately touched. They had never even dreamed of having a place in such a high-grade Magus Tower. This was especially so for Parker. Though he had little hope of advancing, all he wanted was to pave the way for Snoopy. He had never expected this treatment at any point in his life, and was immensely grateful. Leylin thought nothing of it. These Warlocks were all his subordinates, and ought to be given rewards. With the tower genie
supervising, they wouldn’t be able to do anything anyway.
He would only open up the guestrooms, living areas and a few
laboratories to them. The core areas, the positive and negative
energy reactive pool as well as control room were safely in his
control.
As it was very likely that they would live and perform research
here, Kubler and the others had a different reaction and emotion to
this.
Leylin brought them to look at the few levels in the middle, passing
by the living room, bedrooms, library, and all the way to the Magus
Garden.
Leylin had set up this Magus Garden like those of ancient times.
Though he had yet to transplant any plants here, some vegetation
and precious plants were already growing lushly.
A green light shone down. All this was the accumulated life energy
that had come from activating the Magus Tower, giving the
vegetation a huge boost in nutrition and vitality.
“With the positive energy pool, the entire Magus Tower’s water
circulation uses the purest water elemental particles and turns them
into water that is purified to the highest degree. The yield from this
Magus Garden would be enough to provide for thousands of
people if the incoming energy stays at its peak,” Leylin introduced,
sounding a little proud.
With the bonus from the Magus Tower, he could obtain a strength
comparable to a Magus with Crystal Phase spiritual force, and even
provide for over five thousand people in the tower!
With this ability and self-sufficiency, it would be considered an
extremely frightful large fort in times of war.
The Magus Tower was a terrifying war machine, and its amazing
strength was enough to obstruct any attempts at spying on them.
“This is my future base!” Leylin sighed in his heart, but a smile
then appeared on his face. “To celebrate the completion of the
Magus Tower, I will hold a feast in Onyx Castle tonight. Let us all revel!”
An intoxicating clamour spread throughout the room.

……

Night fell and Onyx Castle was filled with scenes of jubilation, with many female singers, dancers and entertainers presenting their art with all the energy they could muster. Waves of delicacies and fine liquor were constantly sent to the feast like running water.
As this was in the form of a family banquet, the rules were lax, and even regular nobles were invited.
Though the Warlocks had formed a circle of their own, they were not repelled by the clamour outside. All faces were brimming with smiles, full of hope for the future of their territory.
With Leylin’s status, nobody dared disturb him. He drank a few glasses and encouraged his subordinates with a few words, and then secretly left the castle.
The moon hung high in the sky, silver moonlight spilling down. The night air held a chill to it and was just right for those who had consumed alcohol.
Of course, with Leylin’s body, there were few wines that could get him drunk.
He came to the side of the Magus Tower. Here, due the superb detection abilities of the tower genie, the original guards had all been transferred out.
A ring-shaped rune suddenly brightened on Leylin’s hand. “I’m here. Come over!” Leylin said, his tone holding within a command that was difficult to ignore.
A black figure appeared from the air, and came to stand silently beside Leylin. “Come with me.”
The entrance to the Magus Tower opened up with a rumble,
welcoming its master.
They went all the way to the reception room, and only then did Leylin’s facial muscles relax as he took a seat on the sofa.
“Sit! You don’t need to conceal yourself anymore here. My Magus Tower has powerful detection spell formations. Even the spying of Morning Star Magi can be recognised!”
The person in black robes hesitated, and then threw back her hood, revealing a pretty female face with a golden headband on her forehead.
“Master!” She exclaimed in a low voice. This female Magus was the fugitive Magus leader that Leylin had subdued, Tanasha!
Watching Tanasha taking a seat, Leylin asked slowly, “I hope there weren’t any troubles on the way here.”
The Forgotten Land was very infertile and could be said to be a desert of the Magus world. Magi who travelled there were all fugitives who had been driven to desperation in the central continent.

Of course, Tanasha was no different. If her identity was exposed, it was not just her, but also Leylin who would be in deep trouble.

“No, I have been very careful so far. I didn’t leave behind any information about my appearance or scent, and I did not use an airship!” she stated.

“Very well!” Leylin nodded. “Where are my things?”

“Right here!” A large black box appeared on the table with a swish of her hand.

Seeing the seal still perfectly untouched, Leylin gave a look of satisfaction. He opened the box, in which was a thick layer of soft white fur.

This was the King Blood Vulture’s feathers. It contained the miraculous ability to conceal a bloodline’s aura, and it had even fooled Leylin previously.

After brushing these white feathers aside, the energy waves of many bloodline treasures radiated out, surprising Tanasha.

A mountain of bloodline crystals and many strange bones, as well as fruits, rhizomes and such containing the power of bloodlines, were piled up messily, as if they were not of any monetary worth.

However, deep inside, Tanasha knew that once these items were
revealed, it would greatly impact the Ouroboros Clan. Every single item in there could make a high-ranked Warlock go crazy! Although she brought them over as per Leylin’s orders, it was also by his order that she did not open the box. It was only then that she became aware of the contents of the box. This was obviously Leylin’s plan. When he acquired the loot in the pocket dimensions, he had already considered ways to get them past Gilbert. After all, as the person who had sent out the information, he had already known long ago about Gilbert’s arrival. How could he not have prepared for it? Morning Star Warlocks’ ability in detecting bloodline treasures was far exceeded Leylin’s expectations. He had no confidence in hiding them at all. Hence, Leylin chose not to bring them with him. Even if Gilbert monitored Leylin’s spatial pouch and ring, he could only find some of the things that Leylin left behind intentionally. The real loot was all moved away by Tanasha. With regards to this set up, it certainly was a decision that Leylin had made with determination. Firstly, Tanasha had not only sworn her loyalty to him, but also allowed a part of her spirit source to be held by Leylin. For a Magus, this kind of restriction was practically fatal. If Leylin destroyed that part of her spirit source, Tanasha would lose her mind even if she did not lose her life! On top of that, he deliberately won her over previously and agreed to take revenge for her. The assigned mission was just to transport an item. Leylin had some confidence in her. For safety’s sake, not only did he cast a sealing spell on the black box, but he also used the King Blood Vulture’s feathers as a cover in order to conceal the bloodline energy waves of the treasures. It seemed like the plan had succeeded. Leylin looked at the pile of bloodline treasures, nearly laughing.
Among the many bloodline energy waves, a fingerbone lay there quietly, yet majestically like a king. It made the other treasures seem less appealing.
Tanasha stared at the fingerbone as if she had seen her enemy, “What is this thing?”
Evidently, the aura of the fingerbone made her uncomfortable. This was unfathomable for a Crystal Phase Magus. Even though it was just the remains of a creature, it had the power to make her so uncomfortable. How powerful could the living creature have been?
Tanasha fixed her eyes on Leylin. Now, she began to find this young Magus increasingly unpredictable.
“The Lamia fingerbone!” Surprisingly, Leylin answered the question directly.
“Tower genie, keep these items safely!” Leylin picked up the fingerbone and ordered the small blue elf beside him.
“Yes, my master!” The small elf held its chest and bowed. After that, a mechanical puppet walked over and took the black box to be stored in the treasury.
“Tanasha, come with me. I might need you later on!” Leylin called out to Tanasha with a downcast face.
Subsequently, he brought Tanasha all the way down to the room binding room before he came to a stop.
Powerful binding runes, energy-isolating runes, the power of corrosion, the weeping of vengeful spirits, gravity runes…
Tanasha looked at the runes on the walls as her expression darkened. With so many binding spells, even Tanasha, a Crystal Phase Magus, would have difficulties struggling her way out. This led to an even deeper understanding of Leylin’s financial capabilities.
“You set up such strict bindings. Do you intend to summon the great devil?” Tanasha asked, with a slightly provocative tone.
“No! This is only set up in case of an emergency. You know it the astral plane is filled with all kinds of strange creatures. A little more preparation never hurts!”
Leylin’s face carried an odd smile, “But never did I expect that the first subject that it would be used on, would actually be this!”
As a light shone from his right hand, the Lamia fingerbone in Leylin’s hand immediately appeared at the center of the bindings. A strong sluice gate made of reinforced glass dropped and the many runes began to flicker.
The Lamia fingerbone lay there silently like a dead creature.
Tanasha held her breath. She knew that Leylin was probably going to show her something unusual.
“Tower genie, begin first-level operations of the bindings!”
Following Leylin’s orders, the circle of lights in the binding room lit up all at once. An invisible power lifted the Lamia fingerbone.
“Start purification!” As per the tower genie’s emotionless command, two small lightning clouds grew above the bone, streaks of lightning crackling as they burst towards it.
“I know you’re still there. There’s no need for the pretense! Come out!” Under the lightning, the white fingerbone appeared to be unaffected. However, Leylin had a straight face, with an expression as cold as ice.
After a few minutes, there was still no sign of any anomaly, causing Leylin to sigh deeply.
“Begin the next level of purification!”
“Authorisation verified! Inputting energy!” Upon hearing the tower genie’s voice, the original two clouds began to transform immediately.
Dark, black clouds suddenly soared above the area, and the lightning acquired a subtle red hue. Thick bolts swept across the bone mercilessly, causing narrow cracks to surface on it.
“If you continue doing that, you’ll destroy the fingerbone!”
Tanasha looked at Leylin, but his expression did not stop, indicating he had no intentions of stopping.
Under the lightning that had been strengthened tens of times, the bone began to vibrate, as if it was going to explode into dust anytime.
*Ring!* Just when Tanasha thought the fingerbone was about to explode, a strange scene suddenly appeared. A ring of green light burst out violently, with such a strong power radiating that it split the dark clouds apart in a second.
*Hiss!* A touch of green light emerged. It then transformed into a phantom of a young, green-haired woman, now lunging towards Leylin.
Compared to what Leylin had seen previously, the image of the young woman was not only more illusory, but her face had also become a lot more complex, with rhomboidal scales. Her eyes were a sea of green and her pupils had become vertical slits.
As the Lamia’s phantom swept her glance across with her pupils, Leylin’s entire body became a little sluggish.
“Begin binding!” This time, the tower genie responded swiftly and gave an order.
*Bang!* A loud sound echoed as the young woman’s phantom crashed into the clear reinforced glass, causing the runes to flash. Soon after, an enormous gravitational strength emerged and pinned the woman to the ground.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* A chain of runes appeared one after another, binding the green-haired Lamia’s phantom.
After coming back to his senses, Leylin, who had broken out in cold sweat, could not help but draw a deep breath. “That was really close!”
Although he tried his best to overestimate the opponent, the terrifying feeling of having his mind being snatched had given him a fright all of a sudden.
This was the definite control that a high-ranked bloodline had over a low-ranked one. In face of the great gap between the ranks, all efforts were to no avail. “You dare oppose me? The Grand Matriarch will not let you off, bloodline traitor!” The green tongue of the Lamia’s phantom forked as she spoke. “Sorry! I don’t have the habit of obeying orders that’ll cause me to lose my life!” Though Leylin apologised, he showed no sign of remorse on his face. “The Giant Kemoyin Serpent is a rank 4 creature. It needs to obey the Lamia’s bloodline, which is of a higher rank. This is branded deep into the inheritance of the bloodline and is not able to be changed!” The Lamia’s phantom glared at Leylin and asked, “How did you escape?” “How would I know?” Leylin swished his hands. In actual fact, he had guessed that it might have a connection with his bloodline. Not only was the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline in him extremely pure, there was a great possibility that through the A.I. chip’s purification, his bloodline differed from the original. “What is this?” Tanasha stared at the Lamia with a look of curiosity surfaced on her face. “The owner of the fingerbone. Just a projection of a destroyed, shattered and unwanted memory fragment!” Leylin spoke with disdain. “When did you find out?” After seeing Leylin like that, the Lamia calmed down. “I knew from the beginning!” Leylin said calmly. “I am not someone who would sit and wait for rewards. I only believe in achieving things through my own efforts. Seeing how you took the initiative to come to me, there’s no way I could let my guard down!” Frankly speaking, Leylin basically believed the part about the other
party being tired of staying in the King Blood Vulture’s nest, but he could not believe that it would be so boring and despair-inducing that one would seek death.
Ancient Magi had strong mental endurance, and on top of that, she was an extremely powerful Warlock. How could she possibly be cowed by a long period of solitude?
Perhaps her true intention was to get out, or to seize a corporeal body with the help of Leylin!
A Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock which is suppressed by the ancient Lamia, was definitely a first-rate target to seize of control!
The moment Leylin used the Lamia fingerbone and fused with it, her remaining memory fragments would also fuse into his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline, secretly lurking within. When the time was right, the Lamia’s sea of consciousness would burst forth. How could Leylin be a match for her? It was not just the large gap between them in terms of their knowledge and experience. The inborn control in terms of his bloodline, as well as issues of how she would try to gain dominance over him would definitely put Leylin at death’s door. Having thought this through, Leylin’s murderous intent towards the Lamia was at its boiling point.

However, he had not flared up but instead, pretended that he knew nothing. He waited till the Magus Tower was built, and once his most capable subordinate, Tanasha was at his side and increased his power to the maximum, he then lashed out on his home ground. It looked like it had been a good idea to be so meticulous. If not, his opponent could have easily taken care of him.

“Shall we make a trade?” The scales on the Lamia phantom’s face faded, returning her face to that of a young girl. Her delicate and pretty face even enchanted Tanasha, who was also female.

“What trade?” Leylin’s voice was low.

“Help me find a flesh body. Anything is fine as long as they have the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline, and it’s best if it’s a female
Warlock. In return, I can give you all my knowledge. Though you’ll only obtain a portion of the knowledge that my main body possesses, she is a rank 5 pure-blooded Warlock. Just a small bit of her memories is enough to make you strike gold…”
Calm words rang from the mouth of the phantom Lamia, causing Tanasha’s breath to become rough.
Inheritance from an ancient rank 5 Warlock? Perhaps even Morning Star Magi would go crazy in want over this.
The price he had to pay was a mere female Warlock, and with just a bit of effort, he could find them easily in the Ouroboros Clan.
*Clap! Clap! Clap!!* Leylin applauded, a slight smile on his face.
“Good suggestion! What a great suggestion! Even I am tempted.”
“Good! You can first…” The Lamia phantom’s words stopped halfway, and a look of fury suddenly appeared on her face. “You!”
Countless chains tightened, binding her to the spot.
“Tower genie, use all stored energy and prioritise the bindings. The aim is to exterminate this person!”
“Tanasha, help me!” Leylin’s face suddenly changed, and he made to deal the fatal blow.
Great amounts of thunder clouds were produced, lightning washing over the phantom time after time, causing her figure to become even more illusory.
Tanasha obeyed Leylin’s order subconsciously, and her Crystal Phase spiritual force emanated, reinforcing the runes of binding.
“Traitor! The Grand Matriarch will not let you off! Hiss…” The phantom image eventually turned into a half-human, half-snake and hissed, her expression incomparably fierce.
“Let’s talk about it when she finds me.” Leylin’s expression was resolute, constantly urging on the runes and spell formation of binding.
The inheritance from an ancient rank 5 Warlock was indeed very tempting, but Leylin had his own considerations.
The other party was merely a remnant spirit, and might even be the combination of a few memory fragments. How much could she remember? And just for this, he would bring her around and let her scheme against him? Though he was somewhat confident in his scheming abilities, Leylin was not certain that he could win over this ancient freak, especially when she could suppress his bloodline and was so enticing. The ancient Lamia had started out enticing various giant serpent species, and Leylin did not want to unknowingly let her suggestions affect his mind. For him, it was most practical to be able to take in harmless things. Everything else was an illusion!

“If you don’t die, I can never be at peace.” Leylin stared at the Lamia phantom behind the glass, a determined look in his eyes. “Maximise power!”

[Runes of binding operating at excess of 120% capacity. This is the most powerful attack.]
Along with the tower genie’s voice, a streak of thick red lightning struck the phantom.
*Rumble!* The Magus Tower began to tremble, and fine cracks began to appear in the binding area. The phantom image of the Lamia seemed to have given up all hope as she dissipated to nothingness under the red lightning.
*Pak!* A fingerbone with cracks all over its surface fell to the ground.
“It’s over.” Tanasha heaved a sigh of relief and glanced at Leylin as if she was looking at a freak, “That’s inheritance from an ancient rank 5 Warlock! You actually…”
“I was, of course, tempted!” Leylin shook his head, “But it wasn’t to the point that I would become muddle-headed in the face of it.
Ancient Magi have too many methods. I wouldn’t dare bring a disaster waiting to happen along with me at all times.”
As he spoke, the tower genie constantly scanned the fingerbone in the binding room, streams of electric light moving across its surface.

[Level 1 scanning complete. No remnant spiritual force found.]
[Level 2 scanning complete. No abnormal reactions found.]
[Level 3 scanning complete. Confirmed total extermination of remnant spirit of Lamia.]

Red, green and blue rays shot out and scanned the fingerbone to and fro, not missing any spots.

A streak of blue flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and he waited till the A.I. Chip gave the final confirmation before he issued the command, “Open up the protective layer!”

*Shoo!* The tempered glass split apart. Bathed in milky-white light, the slightly cracked fingerbone floated to Leylin’s hand.

Though it looked like a mere fragmented bone, the rejoicing of his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline told Leylin that the moment he digested this bone, his bloodline would become so pure it would be unimaginable, and might even be able to help him advance!

‘If Mentor Gilbert were to know about this, he would immediately fall out with me in order to obtain it. What ties we have as part of the same clan, our mentor-student relationship or ethics would mean nothing at all.’ Leylin sighed inside. If not for the isolation by his Magus Tower, he would not dare take it out now.

‘Though it’s best if I use it right now, it has too much research value! Besides…’ Leylin glanced at the data recorded by the A.I. Chip.

[Activity of Host Body’s bloodline increasing. Maturation period of bloodline estimated to be in 124 years, 4 months.]

Though it was just some physical contact with his skin and the waves and energy radiation from the fingerbone, it had the
legendary effect of Lamia Hair, allowing Leylin’s bloodline to mature by a large amount.

“Based on the situation, I don’t even need to absorb the bone. I can make use of the radiation to increase the rate of my bloodline’s maturation by nearly tenfold!’

‘Looks like I’ll need to stay in the Magus Tower as much as possible from now on…’ Leylin touched his chin and ordered the tower genie, “Keep the Lamia fingerbone well. Store it based on all procedures for special grade 1 materials.”

[Understood, master.]

The little elf quickly took the Lamia fingerbone and vanished. There was no other way around it. Bloodline Warlocks were extremely sensitive to this type of item. If Leylin brought it with him, not counting Lucian and the others, Gilbert would definitely sense it.

The only way was to make use of the powerful energy isolation abilities of the Magus Tower and conceal the undulations from its aura.

After taking care of all these matters, Leylin looked back and revealed a kind smile to Tanasha, “Alright. Tanasha, welcome!”

After going through such a secret matter together, he evidently had a better relationship with Tanasha.

Making use of this opportunity, Leylin invited Tanasha to have a look around his Magus Tower. Glancing at Tanasha, who was immersed while glancing at the Magus Tower constructed with top-grade materials, the corner of Leylin’s lips quirked up in a smile.

“Can I know more about your past?”

Leylin asked after the tour of the living room, where the tower genie had a few puppets deliver hot cocoa and desserts to them.

“Since I am now with Master, I have nothing to hide…” Tanasha held her mug with both hands and looked pained, as if immersed in some memory.
“I am of the Madie Lands, in the Dark Lunar Forest at the western region of the central continent.”

Leylin listened closely. It was just another story about profits, women and other things that gave rise to blood and hatred, which he was familiar with. He learned the name of Tanasha’s enemy.

“Some large family in the Crescent Moon Zither Alliance?”

“Yes! If Master could take revenge on my behalf and extinguish the Swaine family, my body, spirit and everything will belong to Master!” Tanasha promised, looking determined as she delivered her oath.

After hearing Tanasha’s story, Leylin did not agree immediately, but sank into deep thought.

Crescent Moon Zither Alliance was a small organisation in the central continent, but since he had heard of it before, there was definitely a Morning Star Magus in charge. However, that Magus was not of the Swaine family, so there was a way to interfere in this.

“I can agree to this, but it might be a long time till then. You need to be prepared.” Leylin watched Tanasha’s eyes attentively and spoke slowly.

Tanasha ran her fingers through her hair behind her ear, a wry smile about her lips, “I understand! I am already very happy that Master agreed.”

Leylin was surprised. It looked like this was her only wish.

“Alright! As for your identity, I have no way to solve that issue yet. I’m afraid you’ll need to stay out of sight or return to the Forgotten Land. Do you have any plans?” he asked.

She lowered her head and pondered over it, “I still have a few things to take care of in the Forgotten Land.”

“Alright.” Leylin nodded.

“One more thing. In the Forgotten Land, there is a Kobold tribe. I’ll need the blood essence from the stronger ones, meaning rank 3 or
above!” The Kobolds were rumoured to have the great giant dragon bloodline, and Leylin was very interested in this. “That’s not a problem. There are many powers with conflicts amongst each other within the Forgotten Land. Battles are common!” Tanasha nodded and agreed.
Leylin holed himself inside the Magus Tower after its completion. This was because the elemental particle concentration here far surpassed that of the outside, allowing his spiritual force to grow much. Furthermore, there were many high-level experiments that could only be done in the Magus Tower. Many of his previous theories could finally be put to the test. More importantly, the Magus Tower could block out the probing of high-ranked Magi, turning into an elusive location which could hide Leylin’s many secrets.

With those factors coming into play, it was natural that Leylin almost never left the tower, and had neglected both sleep and food to focus on his meditation practice and research. Many top-notch results had been actualised with the A.I Chip’s assistance, which had increased Leylin’s own knowledge reserves.

In the gigantic library, Snoopy was trying his best to chain up a hysterical, screaming copper-coloured book that had pages filled with fangs, and properly settled it on a bookshelf made of black pinewood.

The library of a Magus was naturally extremely enriching, and represented the accumulation of its owner’s knowledge. Even though Leylin had the A.I Chip, he had previously collected many books from the south coast and Twilight Zone; the books were so plentiful that all the space was practically filled up. Now,
they would have to tidy the books up and sort them out according to their different genres.

Other than that, the central continent was vast as well. Its accumulated knowledge was even more shocking. Leylin had always been actively purchasing books related to magic and a steady flow of such books were sent to the Magus Tower, which further enriched his collection.

His apprentice Snoopy was sent here to sort out and manage the conservation of the books. Even if it was tough, he cherished this opportunity. Not to mention the stiflingly high concentration of energy particles in the tower, the chance to read so many books freely made him so happy that he could die. Even if he had his head buried in books day in and day out, he would only have covered an insignificant portion of Leylin’s collection.

Only now did he realise the depth of his Mentor’s knowledge. Just the terrifying accumulation of information was enough for him to look up to Leylin.

At this time, in a room within the library, Leylin was sitting before a giant study desk, quill in hand, as he wrote with lightning speed. Every second, tens of characters were jotted down, one after the other. His astonishing speed as well as the coordination of spells allowed Leylin to perform a miracle unthinkable in his previous life. A blue light glowed in his eyes as rows of words appeared unceasingly. He was actually trying to replicate all the information the A.I. Chip had recorded.

“All done!” Leylin looked at the messy yet seemingly organised documents on his desk, and his face revealed a satisfied expression. “The entirety of the ecological garden’s experimental data has been replicated. As for these…” Within the Quicksand Castle, Leylin’s
biggest gains were what he’d appropriated from the Blood Vultures. However, he had also found large amounts of miscellaneous data in the laboratory.
Due to the lack of the core information and the receptor model, the data could not be replicated at all.
But the other gains thereafter had allowed Leylin to see a glimmer of hope. In the spatial pouch of the Green-skinned Barbarian Magus whom Leylin had saved from a curse, Leylin had found some flawed research data and notes. From the looks of it, the forces in the outer circle had also obtained some data from their explorations.
Even though the other party had not managed to analyse any information, Leylin’s deductive ability was very strong with the support of the A.I. Chip. He had instantly realised the connections between the data and the experimental information he had collected.
If he was not wrong, the torn and tattered journal he obtained from the Green-skinned Barbarian Magus was the core data that was missing in the laboratory!
Even though the Green-skinned Barbarian’s collections were not complete, as long as Leylin had some form of data, albeit flawed, he would be able to derive the other information through deductions and simulations. It was only a matter of time.
After interactions with Tanasha, he had further improved the core data.
With his research, he gradually deciphered the experiments that were conducted in the gigantic laboratory.
“Studies on transferring and combining bloodlines?” Leylin held out a part of the deciphered content and muttered to himself.
Quicksand was undoubtedly an alliance of various Warlock organisations, and their research on bloodlines had never ceased. Their experimental data was actually more in-depth and concrete
than the research of the Ouroboros Clan, which had allowed Leylin to reach a whole new level.

‘I have a premonition that if I finish analysing the experimental results and add them into my own A.I Chip’s system, my research in bloodlines would advance to an unimaginable stage, even to the extent that I can directly extract genes from rank 1 and 2 bloodline creatures and assemble them into an ancient bloodline!’ Excitement flashed across Leylin’s eyes.

Bloodline shackles were the greatest pains to a Warlock. Those that had advanced to the peak of what their bloodlines would allow and reached a dead-end would normally choose to turn their attention to research on bloodline modulation and combination.

That was also the main direction of the research of the Ouroboros Clan.

While the three elders were looking for the Purgatory World, they were also trying to manufacture an even stronger bloodline by building upon the foundations of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline, and from there onwards, break their own bloodline shackles.

Of course, until now, the experiments had made no progress to speak of, not to mention any hopes for success.

“From the looks of it, in this area, the ancient Warlocks have greatly surpassed us…” Leyin sighed as he held the data tighter in his hands.

If he did not experience a breakthrough after being promoted to a Morning Star Magus, or if his search for the Purgatory World were to fail, this would perhaps be his last hope.

“Tower genie! Store the bloodline research data well, at level 1 confidentiality!” Leylin issued the command.

Nowadays, he felt that it had been extremely worth it to construct the Magus Tower. If he didn’t have one, let alone experimentation and information storage, how would he hide such a valuable
Just after Leylin had consumed some food and was about to start research, the tower genie suddenly appeared before him.

“Master! A strong radiation has been sensed south-east of the Magus Tower, about 200 kilometres away. Estimated to be a Magus of rank 3 or above!”

In terms of range of detection, the Magus Tower far surpassed the A.I. Chip. That was also one of the reasons why many Magi liked to construct a Magus Tower in their territory. The feeling one got when in complete control of their territory and that nothing could escape their eyes was extremely desirable. More importantly, they were able to protect their own interests.

Of course, in terms of accuracy, the Magus Tower could not measure up to the A.I. Chip. Currently, it could only scan for energy spikes, and could not concretely tell him how many people there were or even their genders.

Leylin was not too worried about that. Even when compared to all other Morning Star Magi, his Magus Tower was one of the best in the entire central continent.

As the enemies inched closer, the accuracy of the Magus Tower’s scans would increase until it could project a proper image.

“It’s them! I’m afraid I’ll have to go out for a while.” Leylin looked at the two silhouettes in the image and stood up, feeling a headache coming on.

At the same time, Kesha had arrived at Onyx Castle with another female Warlock.

Kubler, who was in a butler uniform, lowered his head, “Distinguished Marquis Kesha, my Master is currently conducting experiments in the Magus Tower. If you could rest here for a while, I’ll inform him immediately!”

As a Mankestre Bloodline Warlock, his position in the Ouroboros Clan was very low, and he could only admire the highly-ranked
Magi like Kesha. If he wasn’t Leylin’s vassal, he would not even have a chance to speak to her.
“There’s no need for that. He’s already here!” Kesha waved her hands, and a shadow from afar waved back.
“Hehe… How did Senior find the time to visit me here?” Leylin landed on the floor, his robes flowing in the wind. He nodded to Kesha as a form of respect, and looked at the other female Warlock.
The Warlock had jet-black hair that gushed like a waterfall until her waist. This was an effect of the darkness elemental energy particles in the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline, but it matched Leylin’s standard of beauty very well.
Her fair skin, gentle facial features and voluptuous body were what made many men find her unforgettable, but what left a deep impression on Leylin was her wild and reckless personality.
“Welcome to my castle as well, Marquis Freya!” Leylin’s smile was a bit forced. Kesha, however, disregarded all societal expectations and came forward, giving Leylin a passionate hug.
“Leylin, I haven’t thanked you for saving my life the other time! Originally, I had wanted to subsidise the construction of your Magus Tower, but from the looks of it now, you are so much richer than I am…” she remotely sighed, and appeared to be jealous as she stared at the splendor of the Magus Tower not far away.
“Keke… That’s only some savings from a lifetime of risks!” Leylin touched his nose and said unabashedly.
“Alright. Freya and I came here today specifically to see you. Aren’t you going to show us around?” Kesha curled her mouth. In front of close friends, she behaved in a feminine manner, and was sometimes even childish.
“Of course, of course, it’ll be my pleasure. Please!” Leylin wryly stretched out his hands and locked arms with Kesha.
Inviting close Magi to take a look at one’s Magus Tower, or even to
reside and perform research there, was something many Magi used to strengthen their bonds with them. Leylin, of course, was not an exception. Thanks to the manipulation abilities of his tower genie, things that he did not want found would be hard to discover while inside the tower, even for Morning Star Magi. Hence, there was no need to fear his secrets being exposed.
Leylin led Kesha and Freya around his Magus Tower. Kesha oohed and aahed at everything, while Freya was much quieter, as though there was something on her mind. “Whew… Junior Leylin, I take back what I said earlier. You’re not only much richer than me, you’re a lot richer than even Senior Lucian!” Kesha said, pleased. She was half-lying on the sofa in the living room without the slightest care about her wardrobe malfunction. “In my opinion, even Lucian’s Magus Tower might not be as luxurious as yours, Leylin! I’m afraid that only a handful in the entire central continent would be as fancy!” “Senior! Don’t say such things!” Leylin laughed wryly as he raised his arms in defeat, “Why are you here today?” Seeing his mentor conversing with guests, Snoopy served refreshments and quickly retreated, behaving like a waiter that had been groomed with utmost care. “We are here to thank you, junior, for your care in the pocket dimension. We’d initially planned to compensate you with resources, but by the looks of it, you aren’t short on them, so we’ll have to make it up to you through other means…” Kesha licked her lips, “How about letting me keep you company for few nights? Any position works…” “Hmm! Let’s talk about this another time…” Leylin laughed and changed the topic.
“Hmph! You’re still as boring as ever!” Kesha shook her head regretfully, “On Freya’s end, she’s here to ask a favour of you, hoping to make a trade with you!”
“A trade?” Leylin had his doubts, and instantly recalled the previous incident at the trading hall.
“Not that kind of trade! Of course, if Lord Leylin is willing to sell his seed, I will offer a high price!” Freya giggled with her hand over her mouth.
“I don’t have any plans in this area just yet!” Leylin said with a straight face, realising that speaking to these women was indeed very tiring.
As though afraid to anger Leylin and cause the trade to fall through later, Freya was very obedient and didn’t dare tease him.
“Actually, I’m offering a high price for a certain material that you possess.”
“Which material?” Leylin put his guard up in a split second.
“Bloodline crystals!” Freya took a deep breath and looked at Leylin expectantly.
“Oh, that!” A look of understanding flashed in Leylin’s eyes. Bloodline crystals had the potential to strengthen bloodlines, and even had the powerful effect of purifying them. Although they did not have much effect on Leylin, a Warlock whose bloodline was already purified to its limit, it was a priceless treasure to Freya whose family’s bloodline was showing signs of degradation.
“But… how did you know about them?” Although the question was posed to Freya, Leylin’s eyes were fixated on Kesha. Under Leylin’s gaze, Kesha couldn’t help but feel uncomfortable, before sitting up and saying arrogantly, “That’s right! I told her. You still have leftover bloodline crystals from the time when you performed the exchange with Mentor, right? You don’t have any family, so you don’t need them urgently. On the other hand, Freya is a good friend of mine, and the price she’s willing to pay will
definitely satisfy you!”
Leylin stroked his chin. What he handed out on the Black Scale previously was only a portion of his possessions. He still had a secret stash of a few pieces in his spatial ring.
Of course, this was done on purpose for Gilbert to see. Otherwise, even a regular human would be suspicious of such a generous student.
There was no way sly old Duke Gilbert would believe him to be without a trace of selfishness, especially as a Magus.
Thankfully, everything went as Leylin had expected. Although Gilbert knew that Leylin had a stash in his spatial ring, he didn’t pursue the matter, and instead was more assured.
Leylin’s secret stash was not tempting enough for Gilbert.
From the looks of it, Gilbert didn’t care about it, but that didn’t mean that other high-rank Warlocks didn’t. He must have been spreading the news, or else Kesha would not have known either.
“Bloodline crystals… I still have one remaining piece, but you should be very clear of its value. How much can you pay for it?”
Leylin muttered, tapping his finger on the table rhythmically, as though struggling with the thought.
In actual fact, he had already decided to sell off all the materials he had shown, or else many people would have their eye on these items.
This time, it was Kesha and Freya, who were close to him. In the future, however, if crazier people like Miranda or Senior Lucian came over, what should he do?
Freya and Kesha exchanged looks of joy.
As long as they were willing to offer a price, everything would be settled. Their families had profound backgrounds and possessed much that was enticing to Leylin. Since Freya had made special preparations before coming, the items must be even more tempting.
“A set of the Hydro and Crystal Phase spell formations that have
been passed down the generations in our family. They can increase the success rate when compressing your spiritual force by 10%!” Freya’s first sentence made Leylin’s eyes light up.

The compression spell formations inherited by such high-ranked Warlocks could not be compared to the normal goods exchanged in the Trading Hall of the Ouroboros Clan. Furthermore, the other party was also a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, so the spell formations developed would be even more appropriate for bloodline Warlocks.

“That’s not enough!” Leylin kept a straight face.

“And this!” Freya pushed a red box before Leylin.

The box was small and had a grainy wooden texture, likely made from some bark. A loop of fiery red energy particles surfaced on the box, forming multiple seal patterns.

“What?!” Leylin furrowed his brows and blew lightly on the box.

*Whoosh!* Powerful yet fine black darkness elemental energy particles whizzed by, and the seal on the box started to disintegrate, tearing apart inch by inch.

“As strong as a Crystal Phase Magus!” Kesha gasped in awe, “The amplification from your Magus Tower is really terrifying!”

Freya was also shocked. She had purposely left the seal on the box as it was, with the intention of testing the waters, but it looked like Leylin’s abilities in his Magus Tower were far beyond her expectations.

As a matter of fact, within the amplification boundaries of the Magus Tower, Leylin could not only display strength comparable to a Crystal Phase Magus, but could even manipulate the energy particles in the positive and negative energy reactive pools to replenish what had been depleted. His magic power was endless. If any average Crystal Phase Magus were to enter, they would waste all their spiritual force against him.

It could be said that within the range of his own Magus Tower, the
only ones that struck fear in Leylin were Morning Star Magi.
In response to the exclamations made by the two women, Leylin’s expression did not change, as he opened the box.
At the bottom of the box was a thick layer of soft, pure white velvet.
And right in the centre of the velvet cloth was a red octagonal gemstone. A few intricate gold runes were swirling around in the jewel, much like tadpoles.
[Hall’s Jewel. Rarity: One of the three ancient wondrous items. Has the ability to greatly boost the compression of a bloodline Warlock’s spiritual force, and can increase the success rate of advancement to the Hydro Phase by 50%.

The A.I. Chip swiftly transmitted the corresponding information to Leylin’s brain.
‘It’s actually Hall’s Jewel!’ Leylin was unable to mask his excitement. ‘Haven’t these materials been lost since ancient times?’

With this gemstone, coupled with the Hydro Phase spell formation, his spiritual force would naturally enter the Hydro Phase without a bottleneck once he had sufficient spiritual force.

It was obvious how important this object would be to him.

Leylin took a glance at his condition that was presented in his consciousness.

‘The minimum spiritual force required to enter the Hydro Phase is estimated to be around 300!’ Leylin recalled the statistics he had obtained from many simulated experiments through the A.I. Chip.

‘And with the Lamia fingerbone, if I artificially strengthen my bloodline, the rate of increase of my spiritual force wouldn’t be too slow either, and I may attain it in a few decades!’
The two obstacles in a Magus’ progress would be accumulating spiritual force and breaking through the bottleneck. Now that the problem of a bottleneck had already been solved by Freya, what’s left was to slowly accumulate spiritual force. How could this not be a cause for joy?

Although Leylin tried to keep a straight face, Freya managed to catch a glimpse of happiness flicker across his face.

“It seems that Sir Leylin has taken a great liking to this item!” she smiled sweetly.

“Yes, the Hall’s Jewel is enough to make any Vapour Phase Magus go crazy!” Leylin nodded.

“If it’s appropriate to ask, may I know where you found it? The Hall’s Jewel should have been wiped out with the extinction of the Sea of Gemstones!” Leylin stated his doubts.

“The Sea of Gemstones did vanish a long time ago, but it still existed in ancient times!” Freya smiled in response, “As long as you find more ruins from ancient times, it is still possible to find these gemstones.”

‘So this was the aim of their previous expedition…’ Thinking about how they returned full of severe injuries previously, and how even the Second Elder was forced to take action, Leylin felt his scalp go numb, and the gemstone even heated up.

“I initially wanted to give it to you without any conditions, but…” Freya expressed her regret, but Leylin was secretly afraid. Thankfully, he owned something that she wanted, or else he would have a hard time deciding if he should accept the Hall’s Jewel should she have really sent it over as a present.

Once he took the bait, the other party would tempt him with more benefits in the future, landing him in a trap until he willingly married into her family.

Sadly, in the history of Magi, many with shockingly excellent inherent skills but yet without a background or much status were
enticed into marrying into other families in this manner.
Although both parties would be satisfied in the end, Leylin was
different from them.
Compared to those warlocks who were talented but had no background, Leylin was much more extravagant. With the A.I. Chip in his hands, his learning and operating abilities were far better than other common Magi. These in turn resulted in increased productivity, allowing him to earn sufficient resources for his practice and research. Hence, he did not need to look for support from a large clan like other Magi did in order to obtain the required supplies, academic knowledge and so on. However, due to the many secrets he had, he had no choice but to stay alone as much as possible and conceal his secrets in the darkness. As such, until now, he had never once thought of finding a partner. Those times when he slept with women were only to have fun, or to satiate his needs. If Freya used the Hall’s jewel to seduce him, that would be a headache for him. Luckily, he now had in his hands something that she needed urgently, and things would not get so complicated. Moreover, although the bloodline crystal could not eradicate the issue of the other clan’s bloodline weakening, there was still hope to delay it for a period of time. This would give Leylin some time. “How is it? Are you satisfied with the exchange?” Kesha curled her lips out of what seemed to be injustice and said, “If this is still not enough, then count the two of us in. In order to obtain the bloodline crystal, Freya is ready to put everything at stake.
anyway…….”
“That’s enough!” Leylin nodded, pretending that he had not heard the other part of Kesha’s words.
“The two of you, please wait a moment!” He rose and turned into another corridor.
After Leylin left, the two female Magi relaxed at once. They knew that the entire Magus Tower and especially the interior, was all under Leylin’s control. However, it felt different when he wasn’t around.
The two women even seemed to have a faint hope that their words would reach Leylin through the tower genie.
“How is it? Are you reassured now?” Kesha fell lazily onto the soft couch, the slit in the lower part of her gown vaguely exposing her snow-white thighs.
“Yes!” Freya heaved a sigh of relief, but it seemed as if she was disappointed.
“Actually, the bloodline crystal can only relieve the deterioration of the bloodline for at most a century. When the time comes, what is to happen is inevitable. Moreover, using the bloodline crystal repeatedly will cause its effects to weaken sharply, ultimately making it completely ineffective!”
It seemed as if Kesha was bewitching Freya, “Hence, the safest method is still to absorb fresh blood! With the degree of pureness of Leylin’s bloodline, your clan will not have to worry about this for the next few centuries!”
“Then why aren’t you doing that?” Freya blushed slightly as she threw a question back at Kesha without backing down.
“Of course I want to, but it’s not like you haven’t seen it. This method doesn’t work on him. What else can I do?” Kesha sighed, took a few steps forward and raised Freya’s chin with her finger, “Such a beautiful and pure female Magus, and that guy isn’t even tempted. Is he really made of stone?”
“Sister Kesha isn’t lacking either……” An indistinct smile flashed across Freya’s eyes as she clasped both hands around Kesha’s waist.
“It seems that I’ve got to teach you a lesson this time……” Kesha grinned and gave Freya a kiss on the lips.
“……”
Leylin, who saw the scene through the tower genie, could not help but be a little dumbstruck. These women were indeed wild and playful, and were even completely unscrupulous in trying to tempt him.
Unfortunately, Leylin could see but could not touch them. He had to control his bloodline, which made him feel slightly depressed.
“However……” Leylin smirked slyly.
Previously, he did not dare to sleep with women because he was afraid that they would use techniques and spells to steal his bloodline. However, ever since he’d obtained the research data regarding the composition of bloodlines from Quicksand Castle, his knowledge of bloodlines had deepened.
If he was given a little more time, he could definitely develop a technique that would not leak out his seed and keep the source of his bloodline. If it were to be combined with the A.I. Chip, even if those women coveted his bloodline, they would not have a chance of getting anything out of him.
When that time came, the expressions of those women who had suffered a loss in order to obtain the bloodline, would surely be very interesting.
As for now?
Watching the sexy scene on the screen made a faint anger rise in Leylin. It seemed that he would have to order Kubler to buy some beautiful female slaves to extinguish the fire within him.
Leylin was always unwilling to make things unfair for himself. Everything he had must be the best, regardless of the aspect.
After all, what’s the point in having eternal life if he could not enjoy the pleasures of the world? Although he wanted to join in, Leylin still waited in a gentlemanly manner for more than ten minutes before entering the living room. The living room had already been tidied and cleaned, and the clothes on the two women were extremely neat without a speck of dust. Their expressions were very calm, as if they had done nothing but wait for him during this entire time. Leylin smiled as his nose twitched slightly. He noticed a very special scent in the air, which carried a slight aroma and an even more unique flavour he was familiar with. While watching his movements, Kesha and Freya could not help but blush. It was only when Leylin saw Kesha almost jumping in anger that he laughed, putting an end to his silent provocation. He then placed a silver tray on the round table.

“This bloodline crystal is the last in my inventory. If I had a family, I would never have brought it out to exchange…” As he spoke, the two women’s gazes were attracted to the rich, scarlet radiance that was emitted from the bloodline crystal. “We are very grateful for your generosity! Hopefully, our friendship will be able to continue on forever!” When it came to business, Freya’s face no longer had the shyness from before. What replaced it was an extremely solemn expression. “Yes, yes!” Kesha nodded in agreement beside her, along with a hopeful gaze towards Leylin, “I heard from Mentor Gilbert that you were very dishonest that time and even hid some of the precious remains of ancient creatures. Come on, share them with us too…” As Leylin watched this senior of his whose eyes were almost sparkling with radiance, he could not help but shake his head and laugh wryly.
“Leylin, Mentor told me to inform you to be more cautious these days. If there’s nothing going on, do not exit the Ouroboros Clan’s boundaries.” At the time of parting, Kesha whispered into Leylin’s ear.
“What?!” Leylin was startled, but he swiftly gathered his thoughts and asked, “Is it because of Demon Hunter Cyril?”
“That’s right. He’s a Morning Star Magus after all, and just by revealing his intentions of attacking, many Magi wanting to get into his good books would do all the work on his behalf without him even lifting a finger. This is especially so for Magi of Nefas. They are rather insane…”
A wry smile emerged on the corner of Kesha’s lips, “It’s not just you. Robin and I were also given the same order by Mentor!”
After a long silence, Leylin nodded with a smile. “I understand. It just so happens that I’ve been wanting to take a break for a while now. The Magus Tower has also just been built, and I have yet to begin any experiments as of yet… For the next few decades, I can’t leave this place!”
“That’s good then!” What Kesha was most afraid of was that this junior of hers, with his youthful vigour, would get himself in trouble outside. However, it seemed like Leylin was acting very rationally. She could not help but feel gratified.
She hugged Leylin before leaving with Freya.
As he watched the silhouette of the two women disappear before his eyes, Leylin’s smile slowly faded into a dark, gloomy expression.
“Morning Star Magus, Cyril……” He was already an adult before he crossed over to his world, and his experiences were far richer than any other Magus. Naturally, he would not venture out and land himself in danger due to momentary rage. That was something only
a fool would do.  
When it was time to withdraw, Leylin did not mind hiding in a tortoise shell.  
As for his reputation, honour and such? With his life in jeopardy, none of those mattered.  
However, Leylin was still unhappy about the Morning Star Magus’ pettiness and grudge-holding attitude, especially when he recalled the time when the other party attacked without considering his reputation. If he had not prepared in advance and gotten Mentor Gilbert’s reinforcements, Leylin would have died there.  
“The Great Morning Star Magus is just like a star in the sky, bright and radiant, as if everlasting…” Leylin glance in the direction of Nefas as a sneer emerged on his face.  
“However, even if it is a star, it’s bound to be extinguished one day, what more Demon Hunter Cyril. I look forward to the moment you fall from the sky…” In his heart, Leylin had already decided that when his skills surpassed the other party, he would definitely fulfil Cyril’s destiny of death.

……

Of course, on the surface, Leylin had not exposed his intentions at all. After Kesha’s warning, Leylin had been keeping a low-profile and hid in his Magus Tower. He even avoided going to the headquarters as much as possible.  
On one hand, there were a lot of experiments and tasks to work on. But a larger reason was that he actually had problems with the materials.  
The Magi who coveted what he had numbered far more than just Freya.  
Fortunately, he was now a Vapour Phase Magus and was considered a high-level Magus in the organisation. Furthermore,
after building the Magus Tower, he was comparable to a Crystal Phase Magus in his territory and could not be trifled with.
In addition, many Magi would reconsider and wonder if it was worth it to offend a promising young man like him just for material items of lesser significance than Leylin’s potential.
As such, his days went by relatively peacefully.
Of course, this was all possible since the fact that he had secretly ordered Tanasha to carry the resources had not been divulged. If not, there was no need to think about the effects this would have on the Magi’s relationship would Leylin. Even Morning Star Magi would get involved!
He obviously hoped to sell those items as soon as possible to avoid others having their eye on them. After all, this bit of his harvest was only a drop in the ocean for him. However, if he sold them too easily, it would very likely attract suspicion. This was why the whole process had been delayed.
After a year of waiting, Leylin finally had the opportunity to sell off the rest of the remains of high-energy creatures in his possession at a high price, by commissioning the Ouroboros Clan to auction it. These items were ultimately bought by Lucian.
A fter settling the troublesome matters, Leylin’s life sank into complete serenity. Everyday, other than meditating at fixed times and using the Lamia fingerbone’s radiation to mature his own bloodline, he was cooped up in the laboratory. He had already completely recovered the information on bloodline combinations. Besides that, he would patrol his territory and mentor Snoopy on occasion. Such peaceful days were hard to come by. With the passage of time, his strength was slowly increasing, and was something worthy of rejoicing over.

Before anyone knew it, Leylin’s authority had been firmly set in place in his territory. The gigantic Onyx Castle towered on this piece of land, becoming the nucleus of power in this world. With the years rolling by, it left its mark on history. Apart from being indestructible, the castle now had some history to it, which was something only the castles of true nobility could accumulate.

The only constant was the huge Magus Tower nearby, its everlasting glow seemingly eternal. Inside the tower, Leylin lay on a huge experimental desk half-naked, his firm muscles visible. A few robotic arms were holding a translucent crystal ball above him, releasing blood-red rays that swept across his body. His eyes were closed, as if trying to sense something.
If one looked through the surface of the crystal ball, they could faintly see a milky-white fingerbone suspended at the center of the crystal ball, emanating a mysterious light.

The entire process lasted for a total of two hours before the robotic arms retreated back into their valves. Leylin then opened his eyes. However, his pupils had now turned amber, still containing an ominous glint.

The moment he opened his eyes, the tools in front of him all became ash-grey, turning into stone. The alarms from various apparatus began to ring unceasingly.

Leylin lowered his head, deep in thought, ‘The bloodline is too rich… that can be a problem as well.’

When he raised his head once more, the amber in his eyes had faded, instead replaced by a pair of bottomless black pupils. Yellow skin rustled as he tore a layer of his body and threw it aside. The skin still had fluids and traces left behind by the scales.

Leylin continued to tear off his dead skin, as though he was a molting like a snake.

“This is already the third time I’m undergoing molting!” Leylin looked at the molted skin as helplessness flashed across his face.

Warlocks’ advancement was done through meditation and transforming the body, progressing towards becoming ancient creatures.

It could be said that the higher-ranked the Warlock was, the less human they would be. The same held true for Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan.

Since Leylin’s bloodline was that of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent, he naturally would undergo molting periods in his growth. However, under the radiation of the Lamia fingerbone, the molting process had been greatly expedited.

“Tower genie, prepare warm water for my bath.” The tower genie acted quickly under Leylin’s order. Before he’d even reached the
designated bathroom, steaming hot water had been prepared. Water elemental particles had been condensed into a pure liquid, and had been made extremely suitable for the bodies and skin of Warlocks through specialised proportions.

Leylin lay contentedly in the bathing pool made of black marble. As he looked at his fair and smooth skin, his eyes faintly phased out.

Every single time he molted, his strength would see a rapid increase. The rate of his advancements recently had been truly terrifying.

Leylin looked at his palm. Who would have thought that these ordinary slender hands could hide such extraordinary power?

‘How time flies. This leisurely life of mine has gone on for a century now?’ Leylin sank into deep thought.

Indeed, nearly a hundred years had passed since his foray into the Forgotten Land.

Such a long period of time was enough for commoner families to have passed between four to five generations, yet all this did for Leylin was make him look more mature. Given his life expectancy as a high-ranked Warlock, he could be said to still be in his teens.

In this last century, Leylin had maintained a low-profile lifestyle, immersing himself in research and drawing links between his own knowledge base and that of the central continent. He had even reached the boundary in multiple areas.

The A.I. Chip’s data had also been updated several times.

[Leylin Farlier: Rank 3 (Hydro Phase) Warlock. Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent; Strength: 30, Agility: 30, Vitality: 45.5, Spiritual force: 315.6, Magic Power: 315 (Magic power in synchronization with spiritual force)]

Through the Lamia fingerbone’s maturation of his bloodline, even without the consumption of spiritual force potions, Leylin’s spiritual force increased day by day, up to the point where he
fulfilled the requirements to advance to the Hydro Phase. 20 years ago, Leylin had used the Hall’s Jewel and Hydro Phase spell formation to finally condense his spiritual force, breaking out of Hydro Phase. There were, even more, merits to the maturation of his bloodline. His strength and agility, which had stagnated for a long time, experienced an exponential growth, while his vitality steadily increased as well. Once both strength and agility reached 30, Leylin knew that even the Kemoyin Giant Serpent bloodline could not lead to an indefinite increase in these areas. This was probably his current limit. Similarly, the increase in vitality from every consecutive molting was diminishing. It seemed like it, too, would slow to a crawl. Leylin clenched his fists, feeling the surge of strength within. ‘Just the radiation from the Lamia fingerbone could bring about so many benefits,’ he muttered to himself as he felt the increase in power from the molting, his blood bursting with vitality. Outside the bathroom, two pleasant voices similar to that of an oriole sounded, “Master, it’s time for lunch!” Leylin smiled and exited the bathroom. Two teenage girls in maid costumes were kneeling on the two sides of the bathroom. They showed not a tinge of bashfulness when he walked out stark naked, using a large white towel to dry him and dressing him in a loose robe. It was clear that these two emitted energy waves unique to rank 1 Magi, and they possessed a special charm. They were actually Warlocks! Even though they were only rank 1 and did not have a pure bloodline, they were still hard to come by. They were Warlocks under Leylin’s guidance. The two were actually sisters who came from the same family tribe of Giant Mankestre Snake Warlocks. Due to the restrictions of their
bloodlines, their position in the Ouroboros Clan was very low. Once Leylin had released news that he was hiring, the family had immediately sent these two sisters to serve him in his tower.
The Magus Tower was extremely dangerous. Even its living quarters had large amounts of radiation, and commoners would not be able to live on the premises. Only Magi were suited to stay within.
Leylin’s Magus Tower was naturally only open to a few of his acolytes and subordinates. Even though they were only given access to the living areas and a few laboratories, it was more than enough for them to be moved to tears.
“Mentor!”
In the dining hall, Leylin saw Snoopy. That kid had already advanced to become a rank 2 Warlock. For his Black Horrall Snake bloodline and meager natural aptitude, it was considered a great feat.
“Mmm!” Leylin nodded his head lightly and sat at the head of the table. The two twin sisters immediately served delicious food.
“How’s the cleanup of the library going?” Leylin asked Snoopy while eating.
During the organisation and influx of books into the library, Leylin had noticed Snoopy’s passion for them and decided to just hand the entire place over for him to manage.
“It’s going well! Only area B-3 has experienced some mild oxidation, but I’ve already asked the tower genie to isolate the region and deal with it.” he humbly answered.
“Also, the captives locked up in the experimental areas have become more irritable, and the rate of energy consumption of the binding rooms has risen by 1.9%…” This next bit caught Leylin’s attention.
After lunch, he went to the basement of the Magus Tower.
*Boom! Pow!* The intermittent noises he heard after entering the
area caused him to frown. He came to the area outside the binding room. Through the reinforced glass, he could see a large red-eyed Kobold. Large amounts of drool were dripping from his mouth as he rammed his head into the walls repeatedly. Every time he did that, a thick blue electric current would shoot at the Kobold’s body, burning its reddish-beige scaly exterior to a charred black. Leylin frowned and ordered, “Retrieve its information!” The tower genie projected a screen in front of Leylin’s eyes. The densely-packed words and figures of the surgical journal and surveillance footage were laid out in front of him. ‘After the initial bloodline strengthening experiment, symptoms of hysteria appeared on the eighth day?’ Leylin stroked his chin. “This Kobold has no more observational value. Get rid of it and send its carcass to the dissection room!” “Authority verified! Getting rid of the Kobold!” The tower genie answered without emotion. After all, it had been programmed to put Leylin’s orders as the first priority. *Swish!* A black light streaked across the sky, and the hysterical Kobold that was confined immediately fell to the ground. In the blink of an eye, this terrifying Kobold, who had been so close to reaching rank 3, completely perished, without being able to put up a fight at all. The prison gates then opened, and a few adamantine puppets carried the lifeless Kobold carcass out on a stretcher.
After seeing what happened, the Kobolds bound in the center huddled up together, fearful of the demonic Leylin. Looking at the fear in their eyes, Leylin nodded his head, “The rest of the experiments look alright!” The fear represented sanity, which meant they were still worth keeping alive. These Kobolds being here was naturally Tanasha’s handiwork. After receiving Leylin’s order, not only had she collected a large amount of high-grade Kobold blood, she had even captured a group of captives and sent them to Leylin. In the midst of working on Quicksand’s bloodline experiments, Leylin gladly accepted these gifts with pleasure and used them in his research.

Right now, the results were rather positive. Leylin looked at the rest who were bound in the center. Their general was well-built at over two metres of solid muscle covered with a dense layer of scales. The horn on his head was also thick and bulky.

“I did not expect the rumors about the Kobolds possessing the giant dragon bloodline to be true after all…” Leylin took out a tube of golden blood from his pouch. The tube of blood carried a powerful aura. Even the cowering Kobolds who were covering their heads in the corner raised their head unanimously and looked at the tube in his hands, their eyes
filled with desire.
“The quintessential bloodline of the Ancient Red Dragon!” Leylin gasped. As long as he was willing to give up this ancient bloodline, with the high-grade meditation technique of Dragon King’s Mystic Might that he’d obtained in the subterranean world, he could have turned any of the Kobolds into a terrifying first generation Dragon bloodline Warlock in a flash.
But before he’d conducted more research on methods of restriction, such a thing would be equivalent to Leylin creating unnecessary trouble for himself, which he didn’t want.
Even though his bloodline was already finalized, the experiments of the ancient Quicksand Organisation did inspire him tremendously. For instance, one of the fields he was interested in was the ignition of another bloodline to strengthen himself. He had constantly paid attention to that area of research.
Upon confirming that all the hubbub was raised by that one crazed Kobold, Leylin soon left the place and reached the experimental area for spells.
After molting, he urgently needed to train his control of his powers. The Magus Tower’s spell experimental area was built with the strongest alloy, and had specialized registers and targets for testing. The strength and durability was high enough to withstand any spell at rank 3 or below.
“Beginning with rank 1 innate spell, Kemoyin’s Scales…” Leylin’s entire body was soon covered with exquisite black scales, this time slightly differing from before. Multiple decorative designs extended across them to form a symbol. The outer layer had another bright membrane on top, forming a second layer of defense.
This was the advantage of an innate spell. When a Magus attained enough power, their innate spell would improve with them and become stronger, displaying the power and effects of higher-grade spells.
The same went for the bloodline inherited spells of Warlocks. The stronger the bloodline, the greater the amplification of the innate spell’s power.

“Initiation of test!” The tower genie hovered next to Leylin. Ever since he had the tower genie, Leylin had allocated most of the A.I Chip’s tasks to the tower genie instead. The freed-up processing power of the A.I Chip were then accumulated and used by Leylin to be spent on deducing more important tasks.

The elemental rays dazzled. Numerous elemental particles appeared and coagulated, ready for attack.

It started with the commonly seen earth, fire, and water elemental attacks. After which, there were attacks by special light and darkness elemental particles, followed by various fused spells. Lightning, hail, blades of wind, and balls of fire all burst onto Leylin’s body, their power unceasingly rising.

*Buzz buzz!* A black radiance emitted from the Kemoyin scales and formed a layer of defence around Leylin’s body, which had repelled those frightening attacks.

The violent energy particles had a sustained attack of ten minutes or so. After which, the tower genie’s voice intonated once again, “Spell resistance test completed. Physical defense test initiated.” The moment the words were spoken, the attacking spells vanished and the ground crackled as it split apart to reveal an entry valve. Adamantine puppets appeared from within, wielding huge steel swords, hatchets, heavy hammers, and other large weapons. They started attacking Leylin.

For the next half hour, an unceasing rumbling could be heard. The tower genie flapped its invisible wings as it flew towards Leylin and reported, “Kemoyin’s Scales defense test completed!”

A numerical report was then clearly projected forth.

[Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock rank 1 innate spell Kemoyin’s Scales (Augmented: Rank 3) Spell Resistance: 160 degrees.]
“Physical Resistance: 175 degrees.”
“With this sort of resistance, I’m basically immune to the common rank 2 spells,” Leylin nodded with extreme pleasure.
Next was the testing for the Eye of Petrification and Toxic Bile. After comparison, the degree of power of the Eye of Petrification had reached the apex of rank 2, although there wasn’t any other strengthening of the foundation.
On the other hand, Toxic Bile’s terrifying poison attack had quietly crept past its boundary and reached the rank 3 realm.
“This bloodline strengthening has benefitted me so much!” Witnessing his own innate spells getting more powerful, Leylin couldn’t help but sigh in pleasure.
For an average Warlock, they depended on their own bloodline to spur on their advancements to the next level, whereas for him, he had advanced too soon in the past and his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline couldn’t keep pace with his strength. This had resulted in a lack of advancements in his rank 1 and 2 spells.
And now? He had finally caught up with the other Warlocks who had progressed over many years, enabling his innate spells to match, if not exceed, theirs!
After testing several of his own innate spells, Leylin asked in silence, “A.I. Chip, how did the simulation go?”
[Rank 3 spell derivation progress currently at 98.9%!]
The A.I. Chip’s response was swift and got Leylin smiling, “It’s almost done! At the current rate of progress, it’ll only take a short while to completely derive the spell!”
Although rank 3 spell models were very valuable, Leylin had gotten his hands on quite a few. As he recalled his previous battles, he realised the same problem recurring.
Although he had many tricks up his sleeve, the majority of his battles had him dependent on a combination of potions, spells and the Meteor Sword to successfully defeat his opponent.
It may have seemed straightforward, but in reality, if the other party had surpassed him in any one of those factors, he would’ve found it difficult to succeed. To put it simply, he lacked a sure-fire killing move. Such a strategy could arise from a huge demonic weapon, an earth-shatteringly powerful spell or a deadly potion. However, Leylin realised, he had no such thing on hand. Manufacturing a huge demonic weapon would be way too troublesome. The same went for a deadly potion. There were material costs and they had limitations to them. As such, after much deliberation, he decided to bring forward the A.I. Chip’s derivation of a powerful spell, which was tailored for him. In order to see this matter to completion, Leylin gave his full attention and had stopped himself from many other missions. He even had the tower genie share the burden of the A.I. Chip. He wanted to maximize the use of the A.I. Chip’s processing power. As such, everything had progressed smoothly.

“According to the latest estimates, this new spell will have at least 300 degrees of power. Common Crystal Phase Magi will not dare underestimate me, and it’ll be useful enough below the Morning Star realm…” At this juncture, the light faded from Leylin’s eyes and was replaced by a hint of gloom. In his previous expedition to the Forgotten Land, they had offended the Morning Star Magus, Demon Hunter Cyril. Although Cyril didn’t declare any intentions to seek revenge, there were many rank 3 Magi who wanted to get in his good books, and quite a few of them were at the Hydro and even Crystal Phases. Therefore, under such tremendous pressure, Leylin had withdrawn and holed himself in his territory for a long time, coming out only when necessary. Every once in while, there would be a few ignorant trespassers who
would gallantly cross the border. They were almost always discovered immediately and brought to Leylin. Under the amplification of his strength by the Magi Tower, Leylin had powers parallel to that of rank 3 Magi. As a result, he managed to defeat the few trespassing Magi easily, the deaths of those Magi affording him some bit of reputation.

Over time, fewer and fewer Magi tried to trespass.

Additionally, with the ability to deduce spells, Leylin’s confidence soared. Relying on those trump cards, he could fight on par with Crystal Phase Magi without relying on the tower. He felt that the time was right.

Truth be told, it was frustrating for Leylin to be cooped up for close to a hundred years in a single territory.

‘Before this, I’m afraid I would still have to make a trip to the Ouroboros Clan to see if there’s anything profitable for me. Phew, astral stone…’ Leylin plotted in his mind, and could not help but sigh again.

Normally, once one had their own Magus Tower and had been promoted to Hydro phase, they would have the ability to conduct early-stage experiments on the astral gates independently. Unfortunately, Leylin had not taken any actions for a long time to come. The only reason behind that was because he lacked the key ingredient, the astral stone.

It was the base material for the construction of an astral gate, and at the same time a core battling resource held by Morning Star Magi. They were rarely circulated in public, and required a trade with other rare or valuable items.

At the moment, Leylin did not have the connections to carry out such exchanges. In fact, Leylin could not even make up his mind even for the trading of mundane objects.

It was not due to the fact that he did not have enough enticing treasures to put forth, but that many of the objects he possessed
were better off not being exposed to others. For instance, the essence of the ancient red dragon bloodline and the yield from the Blood Vulture’s Nest. He could have easily exchanged any of these objects for astral stones. However, he could also have attracted unnecessary attention from other Morning Star Magi. Leylin had enough trouble from provoking the Demon Hunter, he certainly did not want any more eyes on him.

On the other hand, Kesha had secretly been in touch with Leylin and had informed him on an arrangement for astral stones. He looked forward to it eagerly.
“Sister Kesha, you’ve grown prettier again!”
Within Phosphorescence Swamp, the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan was bustling as usual, with many bloodline Warlocks shuttling to and fro.
Below the Giant Kemoyin Snake statue, Leylin had recognised Kesha instantly.
He walked up to her with a big smile and hugged her tightly as both his hands groped Kesha’s body impolitely.
“Alright! Alright! We’re still on the way, let’s talk when we get back!” Kesha’s breathing became heavy but she had a depressed look on her face.
“You got me there!”
“Haha……” Seeing the sister who made him concede defeat repeatedly become like that, Leylin could not help but laugh out loud. His face carried an unconcealable smugness.
After going through the restoration of Quicksand’s bloodline experiment, Leylin’s knowledge in this area had advanced greatly, reaching the peak of the central continent.
Under his control and with the help of the A.I. Chip, the spell to protect his own bloodline had already been developed a long time ago.
After numerous “real-life combat tests” with Kesha, this female Magus had no choice but to admit that even if the female Warlocks from the Ouroboros Clan were to come forth all at once, exposing
all of their secret techniques, they would not obtain Leylin’s seed. Leylin, who had now let go of this matter, enjoyed himself without any apprehension. However, Kesha and the others were growing a little intolerant of him.

……

The pink cotton quilt was covered in traces of their lovemaking, as a strong fragrance wrapped the entire room. Leylin flexed his upper body, exposing his firm but sleek muscles. He was half reclined on the couch, listening attentively to Kesha’s accounts. Kesha looked more miserable, with her body full of scars from the havoc, but she had a look of satisfaction. The cotton clothes could not conceal her delicate body at all, it even exposed more than what others could bargain for. Despite her miserable look, this was actually nothing but child’s play for female Magi. It could only be considered as a more intense game as they would be able to recover within minutes. For instance, the current Kesha’s breathing did not have the slightest heaviness from before; it even seemed calm.

“Leylin, the speed at which you’re improving, you’re one of the best talents in the Ouroboros Clan. Only Robin can surpass you!” With serious matters being brought up, Leylin no longer had the cavalier attitude from before and was now listening optimistically. “Brother Robin’s success is due to him being well prepared, how can I compare to him?” Opposed to Kesha’s flattery, Leylin shook his head with a faint smile instead. He had advanced to the Hydro Phase very quickly, and it was supposed to create a big fuss in the Ouroboros Clan. After all, only an extreme talent could perform so well. But Robin had stolen his thunder. Just around when Leylin had
advanced to the Hydro Phase, news had spread that Robin had actually become a Crystal Phase Magus. Hydro Phase Magi were not very rare in the central continent, but it was a different scenario with Crystal Phase Magi. Be it their individual strengths or the difficulty of the breakthrough, the two levels were not on the same platform. Naturally, Leylin’s limelight was stolen by Robin. Deep in his heart, Leylin was a little glad that Robin attracted a lot of attention to himself. He had always enjoyed reaping his rewards in the dark and did not want to show off like that. At the same time, he remembered the trace of the black mark on Robin’s forehead. It seems that the other party’s breakthrough was deeply connected to his encounter in the Quicksand pocket dimension. Duke Gilbert seemed to know some of this information but of course, he would not tell Leylin about it. Leylin could only guess. “Both of you are perverts!” Kesha’s expression was a little gloomy and she seemed to be full of indignance. Leylin and Robin had obviously benefitted a lot from the previous expedition, and only she ended up empty-handed. She even lost many of the powerful members of her clan. What was worse was that when they were hunted down as fugitives, the responsibility was on all three of them. Chivalrously, Leylin wrapped his arm around Kesha’s slim waist and began to comfort her in a soft voice, “Alright alright! It’s already been over a hundred years, those people must have already lost their patience…” After a while of tenderness, Leylin finally asked the question regarding his main purpose of this journey. “By the way, you’d mentioned an astral stone previously. What’s that about?” He had always drawn a clear line between work and pleasure. Of course, Kesha knew that her relationship with this talented
brother was just an insignificant link, and only the entanglement of benefits would allow her to bind him into her clan’s war chariot, making him at least a part of their camp. Hence she quickly gave an account of the whole story.

“Auction?” Leylin’s eyebrows knitted when he heard the news.

“Yes!” Kesha did not brush away Leylin’s unconsciously playful hands, she only glared. “An auction hosted by a Morning Star Magus in Azure Mountain City!” As if she knew that Leylin had not understood her, Kesha began explaining to Leylin again in detail.

It turned out that after Magi entered the Morning Star realm, ordinary materials and resources were already far from sufficient to satisfy them. What Morning Star Magi needed had always been items that were highly cherished in ancient times, and even those that had long since been lost. These treasures were evidently not purchasable by magic crystals. Thus, organising some exchanges in private and barter trade became mainstream.

The founder of Azure Mountain City, the Azure Mountain King, was a neutral Morning Star Magus. His clan controlled almost half of the auctions that took place in the region.

Every ten or so years, a grand auction would be held in the headquarters of Azure Mountain City. When that time came, many rare treasures would appear, attracting numerous Magi who intended to pursue them.

And behind the auction, the distinguished Azure Mountain King would also organise a small-scaled private exchange meeting.

This secret meeting had a very high bar for attendance. Ordinary rank 3 Magi could not enter, and even Morning Star Magi of all sides snuck in to see if they could get things they needed.

“The next Azure Mountain auction is commencing soon, I have received information that there is someone there who wishes to sell an astral stone the size of a fist…” Kesha explained the matter thoroughly.
“Also, Leylin, even if you come back from the auction empty-handed, you can still try your luck at the exchange meeting later on. With so many highly ranked Magi there, surely there will be those who have astral stones on hand. Of course, the prerequisite will be for you to have an item that is attractive enough for the other party……”
“What time does the exchange meeting start? How do I obtain the authority to enter? What restrictions are there?” Evidently, Leylin’s interest in the exchange meeting was piqued.
And he had indeed accumulated a large quantity of items, which he had intended to sell in exchange for magic crystals or other raw materials.
“The exchange meeting will commence after the auction ends. As long as you are located within the borders of Azure Mountain City, highly ranked Magi who have fulfilled the requirements will be invited. Besides, rest assured that the entire exchange meeting will be conducted in anonymity. The distinguished Azure Mountain King is willing to vouch that there will be no trouble in the future!”
A neutral Morning Star Magus’ word had a definite reputation in the entire central continent, putting Leylin at ease.
It seemed that the issue of materials that was perplexing him had a very high chance of being resolved in Azure Mountain City.
Moreover, after being low-profile and living in seclusion for such a long time, it was about time he went out to roam around.
Leylin, who was in high spirits, pulled Kesha into a new round of war once again.
“Marquis Leylin…”
“Good afternoon, Marquis Leylin!”
On the way to the headquarters, a smile hung on the corner of Leylin’s lips as he greeted the surrounding royal warlocks who passed by from time to time. Occasionally, he nodded in response, which got the low-ranked warlocks overwhelmed.
As of now, he was considered slightly famous in the Ouroboros Clan. On the contrary, being Gilbert’s disciple and having the talent to break through to becoming a Hydro Phase Magus was secondary. The primary reason he became famous was still the technique of protecting his seed.

Ever since the test with Kesha and warlock Miranda, the crazy women in the Ouroboros Clan rarely bothered Leylin anymore. If they solely wanted pleasure, there were many boy-toys in their clans. There were all sorts of males, rough ones, weak ones, and also uniquely delicate boys. They did not have to bother Leylin. Furthermore, there were also many male warlocks who came to Leylin with attractive conditions, in hope of acquiring the results of his research. Undoubtedly, these were all rejected by Leylin.

The mere consequence of offending the warlocks in the Ouroboros Clan made Leylin somewhat eager to avoid it, not to mention the possibility of his bloodline research results being spied on through those techniques. He could use it for himself but once he spread it, he would be provoking all the women in the Ouroboros Clan. Leylin was not such a fool.

From afar, Leylin spotted someone familiar and he immediately went up to greet her, “Good day, Miss Miranda!”

“It’s Sir Leylin! Haha… Today’s weather is great… Oh! I just remembered that I still have an experiment to conduct, please excuse me!”

Miranda laughed casually and left quickly with an excuse. Watching her enticing back, Leylin rubbed his fingers as if he remembered the alluring scent she had while in bed. He could not help but let out a smirk.

Previously, he had left her in an extremely miserable state. Now, it seems, Miranda had developed a slight fear of him.
Leylin came before Gilbert’s villa along his stroll. He was about to knock when the door suddenly swung open and a figure walked out of the villa, almost bumping into Leylin. “Brother Robin!”

Leylin scrutinized the current Robin carefully. The Crystal Phase energy waves on his body were very obvious. It seemed that he had completely stabilised at that level. In addition, the veins on Robin’s forehead seemed thicker and more distinct, and the black mark flashed with a strange luster.

“Leylin!” Robin smiled. His facial muscles seemed rather stiff, as if he had not smiled for a long time. “I still have some matters, I’ll be leaving first! Mentor is inside!”

Robin exchanged a few words with Leylin and left in a hurry. As he watched Robin leave, Leylin’s entered a moment of deep thought.
In the past Robin, being one of Gilbert’s students, was very popular. He was very patient, meticulous and was capable of making people feel comfortable with his presence alone. Hence, he was able to hold a high position, somewhat alike to a supervisor, in the clan.

He had changed ever since he entered the Crystal Phase, though. His temper went foul and he lost his position and did nothing but idle all day long. Upon recalling this matter, Leylin couldn’t help but feel saddened at the thought.

Leylin entered the villa, and met Duke Gilbert in the study. Gilbert’s face did not change at all, not a strange of facial hair nor visible pores which made him look as smart as ever. With all these combined with his shiny and smooth head, he did look a little sly and terrifying.

Yet to Leylin, Gilbert was a good mentor who strived his hardest to teach him. Hence, he bowed to the man respectfully and told him the reason for his arrival.

“It’ll be nice to take a trip outside!” Gilbert leaned against the couch, beverage in hand. Leylin could occasionally spot little mermaid-like creatures appearing in the drink.

“With the passing of a century, I’m sure Cyril has forgotten all about you. Even those fugitives aren’t that patient. You really ought to travel outside.”

“But…” Gilbert paused for a while.
“If mentor needs anything, feel free to ask!” Leylin felt excited as he knew that Gilbert might have some tasks for him to carry out.

“Since you’re leaving, why not just take up this task!” Gilbert flung out a scroll, “The Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan have to periodically finish tasks for the organisation as a form of contribution. Even though you are my disciple, you can’t keep idling around. While you’re traveling, you should just finish this task.”

“Yes, Mentor!” Leylin bowed as he obediently agreed and left. He unfurled the scroll in his hand after he walked out of the villa.

[Spiritual force data interface detected, accept?] A prompt immediately popped up from the A.I. Chip.

“Yes!” Following Leylin’s order, a string of messages immediately entered his brain, and were imprinted directly into his memory so that he wouldn’t forget them easily.

“This is actually an extermination task?” Phosphorescent green flames lit up in Leylin’s hand, burning the scroll to ashes. Yet, he was expressionless.

The task was actually very simple. He had to go and exterminate a base of people rebelling against the Ouroboros Clan.

Even though they reigned supreme in this area, they had eliminated many influential clans and even commoners when they first set foot here.

The surviving members of those clans held the desire to conquer. Additionally, as with all regimes, there were also clashes with the interests of the indigenous population, creating friction. All these led to the rise of opposition parties.

Even though such organisations were weak, having not a single Morning Star Magus, they often concealed themselves well and it was difficult to identify their locations.

Yet, once they were found, they couldn’t escape their destiny of extermination.
Gilbert’s task for Leylin was simply to eliminate the most recently found base.
‘This is basically a dirt job!’ Leylin sighed but he knew that this was inevitable. Having joined the Ouroboros Clan, he knew that it was necessary for him to do some of the things he did in order for him to gain trust from the organisation. Furthermore, through applying such pressure, they would be able to keep the new Warlocks involved in the war.
In reality, one of the advantages of being Gilbert’s student was that he was given such a simple task. Leylin was considered to have been given preferential treatment to have been assigned tasks of just moderate difficulty level.
‘The location of the mission is Doroy Forest, en route to Azure Mountain City. Just as well. I’ll take care of them en route, then head to the auction!’ Leylin decided.

……

There limestone pavement was dotted with litter, creating a messy and chaotic environment. From time to time, one would be able to see, on the streets, traces of the domesticated livestock such as cows and horses that had been moving about on the pavement. A strong odour emanated from the overflowing groundwater which had formed water puddles on the roads. This was a quite normal scene in a city of commoners.
The advancements of the Magus world did not spill over into the world of mortals. The only improvements on that front were that one could now earn enough food to feed their whole family.
Leylin was strolling along. As soon as he’d accepted the task, he left the general headquarters without hesitation and headed to his current location.
If the directions weren’t wrong, this was where the Ouroboros
Clan had set up a secret division, and also where their agent had found the rebels.

After using a Transfiguration Spell, Leylin’s aura was equivalent to that of a rank 1 or 2 Magus.

Despite Gilbert mentioning that Cyril would not care about him, Leylin still wanted to be as cautious as he could.

After all, Cyril’s subordinates were Crystal Phase Magi who may be keeping an eye on them. Leylin had to make some preparations to butter him up.

According to the house number, Leylin came to a house that looked like a normal bar and knocked on the door.

*Knock! Knock!*

After ten minutes or so, an impatient voice called out.

“Who is it? We don’t open in the day!”

“I’m looking for Tamansi.” Leylin’s voice was deep and low.

“You’re looking for our boss? What’s the matter?” A golden-haired brawny man opened the door as he stared at Leylin with caution.

Yet, Leylin could only feel a weak wave of energy going through the man, marking him an acolyte.

“Look at this!” Leylin let out a small smile as he took out a badge. The ancient symbol of a black serpent eating its own tail contrasted greatly with the golden background. To others, this symbol made of runes, might appear to form a mere odd circle at the base of the badge.

However, since this man was an acolyte of theirs, he would definitely recognise the symbol of the Ouroboros Clan.

As expected, the man’s eyes widened. He relaxed, lowering his precaution towards Leylin.

“I’ll go and ask…” This time, the man’s reaction became quicker and within a minute he brought out a light brown-haired man of a smaller build.

It was obvious to Leylin that this man was a mere Rank 2 Magus.
These were the lowest level of Warlocks found in the Ouroboros Clan. Due to the fact that their skills were low and their families were in decline, they could only do miscellaneous jobs and silently accumulate credit, hoping that one day a bloodline genius would be born into their family or even a chance for them return to the general headquarters.

“My Lord!” With just one look, Tamansi recognised Leylin. As far as Warlocks were concerned, the aura of bloodlines that couldn’t be faked. The intimate and dreadful feeling it exuded was etched deeply in Tamansi’s memory.

‘This concentration of the bloodline seems to be that of a particular bloodline regal…’ The dwarf thought as he respectfully bowed.

“My name is Tamansi, my Lord.”

“I see,” Leylin nodded as he made his way into the bar.

As he walked past the counter, he came to a room located underground that was even more concealed and complex.

“Tell me everything that you have found out, and don’t withhold any information from me…” Leylin took off his cloak, inadvertently emitting an imposing aura in his every move, which had caused Tamansi to regard him with more revere.

Upon seeing the documents that Leylin produced, Tamansi did not dare to hide the truth, and immediately reported to Leylin, “That was three days ago. At that time, I was here…”

Numerous days later in the gloomy dark forest.

The chirps of the cicada drowned out the hushed conversation between the two Magi.

That was Doroy Forest, a large prehistoric forest where Tamansi had found the enemy base.

“Are you sure it’s here?” Leylin wore a black Magus cloak with golden rims. Ironically, his appropriate dressing, together with his slender build, as well as his pure bloodline temperament, made it seem like he wasn’t here to kill but instead to travel.
“Yes, my Lord!” At this point, Tamansi felt nothing but respect for Leylin. As a royal Warlock of the organisation, Leylin held a high position and was in control of the life and death of the expatriates. “After a few months of investigation, we finally found out that the Arm of Vengeance has been hiding here!” “According to the traces nearby, there are indeed hidden spell formations set up around here as well as trails of Warlocks in this area.” Leylin nodded his head. “These rascals sure can hide! Rest assured My Lord, my subordinates have already rounded them up. Once My Lord gives his command, we will definitely be able to break through their spells, along with the men you brought along.” The dwarfish Magus slapped his chest and guaranteed. To Tamansi, it seemed that Leylin, who was dispatched by headquarters, only had the weak aura of a rank 1 or 2 Magus, and seemed especially amicable. Thus, he probably wasn’t particularly powerful. However, since he was already out on a mission, there would definitely be numerous people to make up for his evident weakness. For such royal bloodlines, wouldn’t his family have dispatched a huge number of people to protect him whenever he was out? “Whoever said that I brought manpower?” Leylin turned back to look at Tamansi. “No… No one?” Tamansi wanted to laugh, but he couldn’t, “My Lord, please don’t make such a joke. Inside this camp is Toram from the Arm of Vengeance. Apart from their leader, she is the strongest in their organisation, having reached the Hydro Phase two centuries ago…” “Oh! So Toram is the most capable member here? That’s a rather good chance!” Leylin clapped his hands as he looked through the prompts given by the A.I. Chip.
“Looks like I can test this spell on site,” Leylin muttered to himself. One of Leylin’s plan to create commonly used formidable rank 3 spells had came from heavy utilisation of the A.I. Chip’s operational capabilities. It had customised a rank 3 spell for Leylin, and had just finished its simulation. Moreover, this new enemy was perfect for Leylin to test his new spell.
“Master! You may have overestimated my ability. Even with all of my men added up, we wouldn’t be a match for Toram…” Tamansi forced a smile. He believed it necessary to clear things up with Leylin. Even if he was a royal and a special agent from the clan, he couldn’t just sacrifice himself for him.

“Your men?” Leylin was rendered speechless. With such weak Magi and acolytes, they wouldn’t even be able to break through the spell formation.

It was of no consequence, though. Tamansi was in charge of intelligence, he did not have high hopes regarding their fighting strength.

“Just look after your men, I’ll take care of the rest!” he replied coldly before floating up.

Suddenly, a powerful and chilling surge of mountainous energy filled the entire place.

“Th- Th- This!” Tamansi stared hard at Leylin, eyes bulging. The energy he’d felt from Leylin before was similar to his own, but he had suddenly burst forth like a ferocious creature.

The terrifying undulations of Leylin’s energy rose endlessly. In the blink of an eye, it broke through rank 3 and skyrocketed to an unpredictable level.

“My Lord, it seems like you’re not one of those royals who only fool around, but instead a person with influence.” Tamansi’s eyes
lit up. If he were to be affiliated to Leylin, he’d have an unimaginable future and could even fulfil his dream of revitalizing his family.

“Marquis! My Lord, you must be a Marquis that holds authority in the clan!” Tamansi balled up his fists, his face flushed.

The moment Leylin stopped repressing his aura, he’d actually felt a desire to kneel.

Tamansi had never felt such a sense of majesty from other Marquis similar to Leylin.

Leylin, on the other hand, did not care about how others felt about him.

Because he had given up suppressing his aura, he had been discovered by Tamansi. Presently, he was suddenly engulfed by a sudden fog that had appeared in the forest which evidently, was the work of Tamansi.

“Which Magus is out there? We are a secret guild that rejects all visitors and transactions!” A large quantity of light was emitted, forming a giant defence shield covered in flickering runes. By the looks of it, the Magus isn’t someone to be trifled with. Additionally, with the decisive tone of the Magus, most people would have backed off if they had stumbled upon this Magus by accident.

Still, Leylin was not like most people. Besides, his mission here was to exterminate them.

“Is it the Arm of Vengeance?” Leylin towered over the spell formation, his voice piercing through. He had wanted to make a final confirmation in order to prevent any unwanted mishaps.

“A Warlock from the Ouroboros Clan?!” A probing light shone down, and the tone turned menacing. The pure hatred dripping in that voice had even Leylin shuddering.

Nevertheless, it gave Leylin the confirmation he needed. Things would now be a lot easier.

Leylin’s pupils reflected his indifference. To him, the war for
resources and benefits was never a question of right or wrong. It was the mere determination of a winner and a loser. Meanwhile, at the top of a group of buildings inside the spell formation. The face of the female Magus who had spoken earlier was distorted as she stared at a crimson crystal in her hand. A female Magus who looked to be in her teens, cheeks still chubby, arrived at the side of her Mentor and asked, “Mentor, what’s wrong?”

“It’s the Ouroboros Clan. Those damned Warlocks have managed to track us here!” The woman appeared to be in her thirties, with a voluptuous body. She would be a stunning beauty were it not for the huge cross-shaped scar across her face. “Ouroboros Clan?” The youth inhaled sharply. That name brought about images of demons, of a monster dens and other terrifying creatures. To her, Warlocks from the Ouroboros Clan were menacing demons that could swallow someone whole in a matter of seconds.

“I’m afraid the situation is borderline threatening now that they’ve managed to track this place down. When the inevitable arrives, you have to run off while I try my best to delay their path,” the scar-faced Magus turned and ordered with a wistful expression. “You want me to run? What about Hulk and Fanny, what about the rest?” The teen Magus was startled upon hearing those words from her mentor. “This is a life or death situation, we can’t afford to care about them!” The scar-faced Magus smiled bitterly as she watched the chaotic situation of the crowd below.

“I can’t believe they’re here!” A white-headed elder male Magus exclaimed as he floated up along with a few other Magi. “We’ll go all out then! There’s nothing to be afraid of!” a muscular middle aged Magus said. He had an eye missing and his head was
adorned with a tiger skull.
*Boom!* The spell formation trembled and the defensive shield started vibrating vigorously.
It was a sight akin to that of the heaven and earth cracking apart. It swept across the small encampment almost immediately, causing the faces of many Magi to darken.

……

Outside the shield, Leylin was looking at the powerful defensive spell formation from a vantage point. ‘The spiritual force of a Magus could also represent the limitations of their abilities…’
With a spell formation like this, given his previous level of strength, he would’ve taken some time to completely demolish it.
‘If it’s less than 20 degrees it would be at an acolyte’s level. Rank 1 Magi if it’s between 20 to 80 degrees, rank 2 if it’s between 80 to 200 degrees and rank 3 if it’s more than 200…’
‘But once the spell surpasses 300 degrees, even Crystal Phase Magi will have to be careful.’
Leylin mumbled to himself and played around with the complicated spell model that was sent to his sea of consciousness by the A.I. Chip.
The many individual runes came together perfectly in this model and gave off an exquisite feel.
Leylin had practised the manipulation of this spell very well through his A.I. Chip previously. The way he was using it now was as if he’s tried it umpteen times, and it was beyond just proficient.
*Boom!* Numerous elemental tides were formed, and due to the impressive strength of this spell, the darkness and fire elemental particles of this region were instantaneously sucked away, as if encountering an elemental black hole.
The energy exhaustion of a rank 3 spell was, of course, not
something rank 1 or rank 2 spells could compared to. But the current situation was one that even Leylin felt uncomfortable in. The terrifying energy did not in the least dissipate but instead agglomerated in Leylin’s palm, forming black rays. The space caved in and was seemingly absorbed by the black rays. “Fatality’s Tip!” Leylin flicked his finger, and a black ray met the defensive spell formation with a loud bang.


Leylin had named this spell himself. By giving up on area of effect and condensing all of his power into one finger, it could grant death to any creature below the Morning Star realm, hence the name. Of course, there was a tinge of self-mockery at the fragility of his previous life.

*Pop!* Just like a soap bubble that was pricked, the powerful defence shield fell short in the face of the deadly attack, and lost all of its strength before instantly shattering apart. The fog faded, revealing the buildings behind and the Magi whose faces were drained of colour. “Toram?!” Leylin’s looked at his target. The scar on her face left an exceptional impression.

Her scar was left behind during the massacre, and as a woman she could obviously remove the scar for vanity’s sake. But for the memory of her hatred, she had kept it on her face as a reminder. More often than not, people like these were extremely heartless and were people whom Leylin had to pay more attention to. “Only one? A rank 3 Hydro Phase Kemoyn Warlock?” Seeing Leylin coming to them alone, Toram’s expression differed from those of her happy peers. She turned even more gloomy, and gave off a sense of hopelessness.
In the Magus world, someone who dared to move alone was a lot stronger than a collective. And if Leylin dared to arrive singlehandedly, he must have had the utmost confidence in killing them all right here. “This is life or death, we don’t have to hold back any longer. Ensuring the escape of our seeds is the highest priority!” Toram commanded. “Of course, I’ve been wanting to take the lives of Kemoyin Warlocks since long ago. I’ll skin him alive and use him as a carpet!” The tiger-skull Magus remarked with hate, shooting a dirty glance at Leylin. ‘Other than Toram who is a Hydro Phase, there are still two other rank 3 Magi?’ Leylin’s eyes glistened as the A.I. Chip began collecting the data on his enemies and predicting the possible outcomes. As for those acolytes? They were like specks of dust to him. “Since you’re a Kemoyin Warlock, if you lose your life here, I’m sure those higher-ups would mourn this loss!” Toram’s eyes turned bloodshot, and she covered herself in a liquid-like armour. “Similarly, after all of you perish, the Arm of Vengeance won’t be any trouble for a period of time!” Leylin retorted. “But before I finish you, I should do some clean-up!” “Clean-up? Oh no! He is planning to…” Toram’s expression fell instantly but it was too late. A horrifying projection of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent emerged behind Leylin, “Toxic Bile!” With the maturation of his bloodline, this innate spell of his had also grown exponentially, and it had even exceeded 200 degrees of power, reaching the strength of a rank 3 spell. Even with preventive measures, it would be difficult for the rank 1 and rank 2 Magi to survive it. On top of that, the effect of the spell would be even more amplified...
now that the defensive shield was down.
An incorporeal ‘death-god’ had solemnly descended on the rebel camp.
On the ground, innumerable rank 1 and 2 Magi started collapsing with their acolytes in tow, dying despite multiple layers of protection, potions, magic artifacts and other defenses.
Even the surrounding buildings were not spared. They creaked and swayed as they crumbled down like sand faced with water.
Formless toxic ripples took aim at the three rank 3 Magi in the air and started attacking them, leaving them helpless as they watched their apprentices and the other members of their organisations fall.
With a single attack, except for a handful of Magi who managed to escape using their secret treasures, the rest had been turned into corpses that decayed rapidly.
“YOU!” Toram roared as she rushed ahead.
The terrifying power of a Kemoyin Warlock’s toxic attacks was common knowledge. However, Leylin’s ability had reached a level that allowed him to exterminate nearly everything on the ground, which was abnormal.
This attack of his was sudden and unexpected, which resulted in huge losses. Witnessing the deaths of their own apprentices, friends, and even families at Leylin’s hands, the two other rank 3 Magi hardened their gazes and dashed forward with tearful eyes.
“Phantom Hologram!” Multiple phantoms of gigantic creatures started appearing from behind an old rank 3 Magus. They
surrounded Leylin and opened their huge, ferocious, and menacing mouths to trap him in their midst.

“Crimson Throne!” An illusory image of a bloody red throne appeared behind Toram, emanating a strong stench of blood. The throne was simple and unadorned dull gold with marks on it from various swords and hatchets. It seemed as if it had gone through a lot of trials and tribulations, giving it an almost lifelike appearance of cruelty.

Under the illusory throne, the three of them donned a red armour, their auras having been raised to a level.

“Hmm! Aura amplification and removal of suppression… so such spell models exist!” Leylin’s blue eyes sparkled with excitement. He diligently recorded the opposite party’s domain into the A.I. Chip, intending to research it further.

This was the characteristic of the incomplete domain of a rank 3 Magus. Once Toram completely comprehended the strength of this domain, she would step into the Morning Star realm.

Of course, the current Crimson Throne only provided a limited amplification to Toram and the rest. It could not compare to Leylin’s own Intimidating Gaze. However, under the brilliant glow of the throne, the eyes of the huge phantoms became bloodshot, and they dashed towards Leylin with full force, not an ounce of hesitation in them.

“Such a weak retaliation! Toram, I’ll be utterly disappointed if this is all you have…” Leylin sighed. The terrifying energy undulations from his body overflowed as the terrifying innate spell of a rank 3 Kemoyin Warlock, Intimidating Gaze, enveloped the region.

*Hiss Hiss!* It seemed as though an ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent had been reborn in all its savagery. A tyrannical surge of dark energy descended on the ground, bringing with it a rather unusual and wild aura.

The force field immediately took over the territory previously
under the Crimson Throne, almost instantly countering its effects. Even though Leylin had suppressed the energy on his body, his abilities had been exposed to the huge phantoms and they went absolutely crazy, as if they had seen something horrifyingly bizarre. They roared in confusion, brutally attacking one another and even sprinting towards their original owner.

“Oh! A nice chance to witness the effects of the confusion!” Watching the opposing Magi fumbling about, Leylin smiled indifferently.

His innate domain had been steadily strengthened by the Lamia fingerbone, something that extended to the regions of energy amplification and suppression. If not for the fact that he’d experienced the bending of rules by a true Morning Star Magus’ domain, he would’ve thought that his had already been formed. Still, even if it was a mere force field, its effects were already unimaginable.

The phantom image of the Crimson Throne started to retreat in defeat, as if stripped of its previous glory. And before the two other rank 3 Magi could retaliate, their force fields had been suppressed and defeated.

Toram was the only one who qualified to match Leylin in a collision of force fields. As for those lower-level force fields used by the others, they could certainly not match those of these Hydro Phase Magi. Due to the differing depth of understanding of a domain at different levels, there was a vast difference in their strengths. Thus, the force fields of Magi below the Hydro Phase were considered effectively useless.

The Magus with the tiger skull wore a look of defeat. He understood and admitted the huge disparity between Leylin and himself. Yet, he roared ferociously, the muscles in his body tensing and
swelling up as his gorgeous fur shone with a colourful radiance. The joints on his bones popped loudly and soon his body swelled and expanded from a normal figure to a hulking three meters. “You punk! I’m going to kill you! I will break your bones one by one, inch by inch without mercy!” He roared thunderously and delivered a high intensity punch, as strong gusts of wind hit him right in his face. The surrounding air seemed to have been so compressed by this punch that it became a substantial crystal body which surged towards Leylin like a projectile. “A human Magus with a reinforced body, what a rare sight!” Leylin became serious, growing cautious of the man. Magi with reinforced bodies were known to belong to the barbarian beast clan. As for other types of Magi, they would generally be glad to use spells for the destructions of enemies. As such, seeing how the tiger skull Magus transformed himself into such a powerful creature, he was sure there were some in the central continent that could do it, although it would be rare. Generally speaking, Magi did not place much emphasis on strength and agility. Instead valuing the quality of the physical form more, as the corporeal body was the part that bore the foundations of any magic power. Also, different Warlocks inherited different abilities from their elders, hence it highly depended on which area each ancestor placed their emphasis on. Leylin understood this and strived to polish all factors of strength and agility in himself to the maximum. “Heh!” In a rush of excitement, Leylin drew his Meteor Sword and skillfully exhibited his cross blade techniques. “Cross-blade Slash!” A big black cross shone and sliced through the sky, carrying with it terrifying Kemoyin toxins. The projectile shattered to tiny bits in the air, even as the aftermath traveled towards the enraged tiger skull Magus. “Awoooooo!” The tiger skull Magus covered his head with both
hands and dashed forward.

*Crackle!* The sound of breaking glass could be heard as the gorgeous colourful shine from the tiger skull Magus burst forth in a flash and collided head on with the black cruciform, smashing it into a million pieces.

*Zzzz!* A slight tear appeared on his arm, and from it one could hear faint sounds of something decaying as white smoke arose. Without hesitation, the tiger skull Magus dashed towards Leylin in a moment.

“Very high vitality indeed!” To be able to withstand the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s poison, other than possessing excellent spell resistance, one’s vitality needed to be at least a hundred points and above.

In addition, the opposite side’s strength and agility had exceeded his own value of 30 by leaps and bounds. Seeing how he was able to use simple techniques to deal deadly blows, Leylin’s eyes brightened.

“Die now!” The right arm of the tiger skull Magus had morphed into a huge tiger claw, striking down on Leylin. The huge tiger claw looked like a small millstone. The shiny sharp claw was glossy and menacing, with spell runes visible in the brilliant light it emitted.

*Bang!* The tiger claw was stopped abruptly mid-air by a palm. Although Leylin’s build was tall and lanky, when compared to the tiger-headed creature, he was rather petite and his palm was equivalent to that of a baby.

Yet, it was this insignificant palm which had managed to tame the sharp tiger claw, disabling his ability to advance forward.

“How can that be?” The old man yelped in surprise. He had just defeated his phantoms a distance away. He was absolutely certain of his friend’s strength. The tiger skull Magus had mercilessly killed a rank 3 creature in
this beastly state.
Even when he recalled it now, it had been shocking. Yet, a full attack from his friend had been blocked by a single palm, something that made no sense. What’s more, looking at the opposite party, it seemed to be effortless.
“Even for a Warlock, it is not possible to possess such terrifying power, unless you are also a Magus who practices body reinforcement techniques?” The old man scrutinized Leylin, trying to analyze but unable to read him.
“How… How is that possible?” Other than the shocked old man, the tiger skull Magus was speechless himself.
He had been extremely confident in his ability. Even in the face of several magic alloys put up by other Magi, he only needed to use his claw and they would have cracked and crumbled like soft sand. But now…
“There is nothing that is not possible!” Leylin tightened his grip, and cracking sounds rang out as the tiger skull Magus’ arm twisted abruptly into an odd, distorted curve.
“The difference between humans and animals lies in the usage of your strengths, be it for exploitation or as a tool. If you do not even know this, regardless of how strong you are, you are just a fool!” Leylin looked at the whimpering tiger skull Magus and he felt a tinge of pity.
Behind him, the black shadows of two arms appeared, attaching to his right hand and injecting a steady flow of energy into it. Although Leylin’s strength was only thirty degrees of power, he could use his spells to break through that limit and massively increase his strength for a short period of time. After all, his innate character was that of a Magus, not a competitive knight.
“Those who cannot keep up with the times, you will be abandoned like trash!” Leylin heaved a sigh, grabbed the tiger skull Magus’
arms, and raised him up.

“This is bad! We have to save Borgin!” The clash had happened too quickly. After all, both Leylin and the tiger skull Magus were agile, with at least 30 degrees of ability in that respect. From the initial assault, to Leylin drawing his sword, to the retaliation and counter-attack, everything had happened in a matter of seconds. Even Toram did not have the chance to react, nor would she have expected Leylin to so easily defeat a rank 3 Magus.

“Shadowflame Plague!” Leylin was not going to show any mercy. He was completely ready to take everyone out.

A scarlet-black wall of fire appeared and, in a flash, the two rank 3 Magi that had charged forward were drowned in its blaze.
he corrosive black flames were like a chasm which separated Toram from the rest.

As for the other rank 3 Magus? The flames had inflicted him with heavy injuries, and he had escaped to the side while letting out blood-curdling screams.

“What… What are you trying to do?” At that moment, the tiger skull Magus was truly terrified. He felt the increasingly horrifying strength emitting from both of Leylin’s hands, and the savage spiritual force which had sealed his sea of consciousness. For the first time, he felt terror from the bottom of his heart. He began to regret not escaping immediately upon Leylin’s arrival. Because of that, he had landed himself in his current circumstances.

“What I’m trying to do?” Leylin’s lips curled up. Shadow arms emerged from his back in rapid succession. Enormous muscles emerged indistinctively, and fused onto both of Leylin’s hands.

*Creak! Creak!* First, the skin ruptured, then the muscles, then the bones.

The tiger skull Magus had a twisted expression, and was in so much pain that he could not even make a sound. His entire being seemed to have been stretched apart by Leylin.

“Let him go! Wait! NOOOOO….” Amidst Toram’s blood-curdling screams, the tiger skull Magus was ripped into two. Large amounts of bloodshed could be seen everywhere.

“Don’t you think it’s too late to say these things only now?” Leylin
expertly avoided the blood, a skill he’d acquired from experience. His body had not even been tainted by a smidgen of it. As if tossing out the garbage, he threw away the two segments of the corpse before turning towards Toram, his face emotionless. “You should have come to your senses before you decided to rebel against the Ouroboros Clan!” “You’ll perish here today! This is my promise to Borgin!” Toram’s face instantly calmed down. Still, Leylin could very distinctively see the desire for vengeance in her eyes. This was not a hot-blooded vengeance that arose merely from this one incident. It was rather a collective response to the extended period during which they were hunted down like prey. Many of Toram’s friends and family presumably died amidst the massacres conducted by the Ouroboros Clan, and Leylin’s actions earlier had fully evoked her wrath. “Even now, you refuse to learn!” Leylin shook his head. “Currently, you don’t seem to be fit to be my opponent. Let me give you a hand!” Just as he finished these words, a Magus dressed in a black robe, who looked identical to Leylin, suddenly emerged before the rank 3 Magus who had been seriously injured by the Arm of Vengeance. A few multi-coloured potions were thrown out by “Leylin”, as he kept a straight face. They collided in mid-air and emitted terrifying energy ripples. “Rank 3 potion combination spell Divine Prairie Flames!” The endless flames instantly swallowed the rank 3 Magus, even spreading so far as to include the “Leylin” in the area of effect. “Leylin” who was surrounded by the many flames suddenly laughed hysterically, and morphed into many shadow chains that confined the rank 3 Magus in the flames. “Master Toram! Save me!” The rank 3 Magus’ face was full of dejection. He did all he could to seek help, and him looking to
Toram for help was his last hope. But Leylin had blocked Toram’s path, and mercilessly dashed that last hope.

“You must be the only high-ranked Magus left in the stronghold now?” Leylin looked to Toram after the rank 3 Magus’ life aura had completely dissipated in the sea of fire.

“If you don’t use your remaining time to make me happy during our battle, I’m afraid I’ll continue to hunt down and kill all the other Magi below!”

“That female Magus must be your apprentice? The two of you might even be related by blood. Don’t even think about lying to me. Both the bloodline ripples on your bodies and the spiritual force frequency have revealed your relationship…” Leylin shot a glance at one of the corpses lying around, and what he said caused Toram’s facial expression to change.

Just when Leylin’s gaze shot across the area, the female Magus with a childlike face who had been lying behind the remains felt as if she was stared at by a fierce ancient creature. Her limbs began to shake uncontrollably.

“It’s… It’s too terrifying!” Upon realising that she had been discovered, the female Magus tried to escape.

A light green wind dissipated from her body and carried her to the depths of Doray Forest.

“Other than Nina, even Master Borgin has….” As she started to sprint, tears streamed down her face.

At the instant when Leylin had released his deadly attack, the low-ranked Magi were all exterminated. Other than the three rank 3 Magi, almost everyone else had instantly perished.

No antidotes or defensive runes had any effect on the attack. Before the terrifying toxins of the Giant Kemoyn Serpent, everyone else was feeble and weak.

Toram’s innate defensive spells had not in the least bit affected
Leylin’s attack. If not for the protective charm she’d obtained from her mentor, she would have perished as well. The female Magus that was lucky enough to survive had hidden herself behind a wall, witnessing Leylin’s cruelty and terror. The two powerful rank 3 Magi had perished at his hands one by one, and from the looks of it, Leylin had not even unleashed his full power. Now, he was even using her life to threaten her mentor! After hearing her mentor’s hurried whisper, the female Magus could not take it anymore, and started sobbing out loud. Even so, the energy particles below her feet had not once stopped shining, as if escaping from that area was instinctive. In the depths of her subconscious, she did not want to return to face the horrifying monster anymore. “That’s not too bad of a suggestion! Looks like you care for her a lot!” Leylin watched as the rank 1 Magus escaped, with no intentions of giving chase. On the contrary, he turned to Toram who was ahead of him, and a taunting expression flashed across his face. “However, I’m afraid you’ll have to try to buy time. If not, she won’t be able to make much headway…” “Lunatic! Monster!” Toram cursed. A majority of Warlocks had anger management issues, something that was only exacerbated by battle. Compared to Magi, Warlocks preferred to ruin their opponents or even vent their desires upon them. Toram had previously witnessed similar scenarios. It was painful to see dead Magi, and many female Magi subjected to horrible violations. And now, she thought of Leylin in the same light as those crazy Warlocks. “Even if I have to put everything on the line, I will stop you at all costs!” Toram announced as she ripped the silver necklace off her
neck with eyes full of determination.
“Haha! Excellent! That’s the mindset!” At that instant, Leylin felt like the big villain from the movies of his previous life.
“Seal of Dark Corrosion! Release!” Toram performed some gestures and, in that instant, the silver necklace exploded.
In a flash, the energy waves on her body strengthened significantly. Drops of blood even started seeping out of her pores. The detailed black runes instantly crawled all over her body. Coupled with the scar on her face, she looked even more terrifying. Leylin could sense that she’d already reached the peak of the Hydro Phase. In fact, some of her spiritual force had already formed traces of crystals from repeated attempts at compression. Once completely solidified, Toram would reach the Crystal Phase. Of course, her rash actions put her in grave danger. However, right before her body completely fell apart, she’d stepped one foot into the Crystal Phase realm!
This was definitely her trump card, some sort of mysterious spell that would put everything at stake.
Strangely, Leylin did not try to stop Toram’s actions, instead allowing the aura on her body to rise slowly as he let out a hearty laugh, ”Haha… Good! Indeed, with this sort of mysterious spell, you won’t disappoint me!”
From the very beginning, the entire reason why Leylin had adopted such abusive methods was to force Toram to use a spell that would exhaust her vitality and allow her to temporarily increase her strength. Although he’d accepted it as a task from the organisation, he also intended to experiment with his newly developed rank 3 spell Fatality’s Tip. Even though its ability to break through the defensive spell formation spoke volumes of its formidability, he ultimately lacked the physical data to affirm its full capability. Especially with regards
to its ability to clash with Crystal Phase Magi, something that engendered his resentment.
He had discovered that with his strength, he was the best of the best among Hydro Phase Magi, and even a peak Hydro Phase Magus like Toram could do nothing to him. Only a Crystal Phase opponent would cause him trouble.
And the A.I. Chip lacked data specifically regarding Crystal Phase Magi. Given the fact that Leylin would have to deal with Magi of that rank, he desperately needed a standard to measure his own capabilities.
And now, Toram had become such a standard.
When he’d probed her during the previous battle, the A.I. Chip had detected that not only had her strength become feeble, she had even seemed to be injured, something that resulted in her not performing to her fullest potential.
And so Leylin took such drastic measures to compel his opponent, to incite her will to live on so as to battle him.
And from the looks of it, he’d achieved his goal.
Originally a peak Hydro Phase Magus, Toram indeed possessed the formidable ability to partially crystallise her spiritual force using this mysterious spell, even if she’d pay for it with her life.
It was rare to experience a fight against a Crystal Phase Magus. After all, the Crystal Phase Magi he’d previously come across were mostly his seniors, and he could not fight them.
Magi like Toram, who had a probability of losing control when they forcefully entered the Crystal Phase, were even more scarce.
Leylin immediately ordered: “A.I Chip, record this battle in detail!”
[Orders received! Scan scheduled!] The A.I Chip intoned.
A pale blue screen was projected ahead of Leylin’s eyes, and Toram who was in the screen was engulfed by strong radiation.
The mysteries of Crystal Phase spiritual force were also slowly being uncovered by the A.I. Chip and presented to Leylin.
“The madmen of the Ouroboros Clan should not even exist in this world!” Having advanced to the Crystal Phase, Toram’s strength now was a far cry from what it was before. Just the suppression of the aura in the atmosphere caused Leylin to feel discomfort.
Rumour has it that after a rank 3 Magus enters the Crystal Phase, they undergo a phenomenal change and experience an exponential increase in strength. From the looks of it, that might just be true!’ Leylin stared at the Crimson Throne behind Toram, a solemn expression on his face. Originally, his own force field had enveloped hers and suppressed it to the point of near destruction. Now, though, it had expanded greatly, especially the huge crimson throne. It seemed almost corporeal, and the power it was emitting had somewhat exceeded that of his terrifying force field.

“Haha, this is great. Just the kind of opponent I wanted!” This was the first time Leylin had felt pressure on the battlefield yet he was smiling, evidently pleased. The opponent he’d wanted to go up against was precisely Toram, who’d experienced a huge increase in her spiritual force and had broken through to the Crystal Phase.

“Alright! Let’s see the real strength of a Magus in the Crystal Phase!” Leylin felt feverish as a layer of fine black scales formed on his body. Multiple runes appeared on the surface that formed a black membrane, an additional layer of defense. In the face of a Crystal Phase Magus, he did not dare hold back any longer.

“If that’s what you wish!” Toram said. Two streaks of red liquid flowed down from the corners of her eyes, like tears of blood. It
gave her a sinister aura.  
*Swish!* The two human silhouettes morphed into black shadows that collided with each other. A loud ear-piercing boom was heard and a frightfully huge amount of energy rippled out in all directions.  
“Lord… Lord Leylin is actually this strong?” Tamansi saw the entire horrifying scenario play out from outside the camp and his jaw dropped.  
Toram was indeed the second strongest in the Arm of Vengeance, a rumoured peak Hydro Phase Magus!  
Not only had she been a strong opponent for years, there had even been rumours that this person who was wanted by the Ouroboros Clan had advanced to the Crystal Phase.  
What’s more surprising was that Leylin actually had the upper hand in this fight, and could fight her to a standstill! What kind of strength was that?  
Only one thought was left in Tamansi’s mind. He would grasp at Leylin’s coattails without hesitation.  
[Crystal Phase force field record completed! Beginning analysing opponent’s perimeter of attack!]  
At this juncture, Leylin who had been battling with Toram did not look like he had it easy.  
Although she’d used a secret technique to enter the Crystal Phase, Toram’s strength far surpassed Leylin’s expectations.  
Not only had she formed an armour of spiritual force, that had fully advanced to the Crystal Phase, on her body, the rest of her spells had been greatly amplified as well. From the looks of it, the rumours regarding the massive transformations after advancing the Crystal Phase were true.  
Besides, Toram had steeled her will and was fighting like a madman to end up in mutual destruction with Leylin. She cared not one whit about herself, which gave him a lot of trouble.
Whatever the case may be, there were still limits imposed on someone who entered the Crystal Phase using a secret technique. The blood dripping from Toram’s body dyed the ground a bright crimson.Nearly half the blood present in the human body had already flowed out, and a normal person would have already died from such a serious injury. Even if she were a Magus, she was not in a good state either. How could there be no price to pay when one forcibly compressed their spiritual force to enter the Crystal Phase, akin to cheating? Leylin would not be surprised even if she suddenly burst into pieces.

“Shadowflame Plague!” Dark red flames blazed and Leylin used the opportunity to get a headstart from her opponent. Leylin smiled as he scrutinized the data recorded by the A.I. Chip. He turned to look at Toram, whilst still dripping blood. His face pale, he muttered “You were a worthy opponent. It’s a pity…” Feeling Toram’s life force ebbing away and that she was about to drop down from the Crystal Phase, Leylin did not continue to hold back.

“Initiate the experiment and gather the data!” the A.I chip strictly carried out Leylin’s command. The horrifying spell that had breached the defensive spell formation, that the Arm of Vengeance had been unable to react to in time, had once again begun forming at Leylin’s hand. Horrifying amounts of energy particles condensed and formed a black spot that rested on Leylin’s fingertip. Leylin sighed gently, and pointed at Toram. ”Rank 3 spell Fatality’s Tip!”

“Secret technique Crystal Shield!” Even though Toram knew of Leylin’s plans, her survival instincts and hatred towards the Ouroboros Clan urged her to accept the battle. Many sparkling spiritual force shields appeared before her, glowing
with runes.

*Bang!* The black ray of death arrived before Toram in a near instant, and collided with the first Crystal Phase spiritual force shield.

*Crack!* A hole about the size of a finger immediately formed on the shield. Many cracks extended from the hole like a spider web. The shields rippled as they were torn apart by the ray of death, as if they were sheets of paper, on its way to Toram.

“Is this the taste of death?” A momentary distraction emerged in Toram’s eyes, but it was replaced almost instantly by the ever more terrifying flames of hatred.

“Even if I die, I will not die in such a humiliating way without even causing damage to my opponent!” She roared as blood-red flames started burning her body.

“Soul sacrifice! The flames of hatred have indeed clouded her judgement!” Leylin’s face sank. Magi knew that death was not an end. The souls of many departed high-ranking Magi would return to the astral plane, awaiting reincarnation.

A soul sacrifice was a secret technique that traded away their soul. To obtain temporary strength, the very soul was burnt away! What a great idea!

She had basically destroyed her last hope. From the looks of it, the Magus who was called Toram had an immense hatred towards the Ouroboros Clan.

A strange aura spread across the whole venue in the amount of time it took for the blood-red flames to combust.

A crimson gem appeared on Toram’s forehead and exploded, bringing with it a shower of blood. It was at this moment that Fatality’s Tip appeared in front of her.

The two collided.

Space suddenly shook, after which it seemed like nothing had happened.
Leylin was startled for a while before his face changed. He realised that things were not right and swiftly escaped. Like the sound of glass being smashed, in the area where the blood-red gem and Fatality’s Tip came into contact, a black hole had seemingly appeared, which had sucked in all of the objects in the area.

In an instant, even the air looked distorted. After a sudden contraction, a terrifying eruption occurred!

*Boom!* A large mushroom cloud rose to the sky with the point of impact as the core. Large waves swept across the floor and swept away everything.

Tamanssi who was watching outside was engulfed by the giant waves before he even had time to scream.

After the explosion, the sky itself started to crack apart. Anything that came into contact with these rifts suddenly disappeared from its original position.

At that moment, the sky was roaring, the ground trembling. It was only after 10 minutes or so that the remaining radiation from the explosion dissipated.

*Boom!* A light shone in the void as Leylin appeared again

Currently, Leylin did not look too good. Even he was affected by the aftermath of that terrifying collision, and the injuries he’d suffered were not mild.

As for his opponent Toram? Being in the middle of the eruption, she had been torn to pieces.

Let alone the soul sacrifice, just because of the secret technique Toram had used to step into the Crystal Phase, combined with the damage at the end, even if she hadn’t used a soul sacrifice she would not have much longer to live.

“What a pity…” Leylin sighed, but yet his face did not register depression. To him, he had already accomplished his objectives this time round. Even though the ending was a bit abrupt, everything
was still within his control.
He landed on the ground, his feet stepping on a rock that had been burnt black. "Tamansi, come out!"
"Master, do you have any commands?" The soil became looser and Tamansi crawled out from underground.
During the explosion, coupled with luck and his abilities as a Magus, he had managed to keep his life. However, he had still suffered severe injuries.
From Leylin’s point of view, Tamansi looked terrifying, with his clothes tattered and his skin scorched.
“For what happened this time round, write a report to be sent in! I still have other matters to attend to, so I won’t be returning to the headquarters for now,” he ordered.
Since they had accomplished the task, they would need another set of people to validate it.
“As you wish, Master!” Those were originally matters Tamansi had to do as an intelligence officer, and he swiftly replied.
“Also, for that female Magus, how should we handle her?”
“That small fry? Send out a warrant for her!” Leylin thought of Toram’s apprentice, and yet did not pay too much attention to it.
It would take 500 years for a mere low-ranked Magus like that to cause a threat to the current him! Needless to say, after that amount of time, Leylin would have advanced to a more powerful state. It would be hard to say whether the other party would even survive to that period.
“Alright then…”
Even though Tamansi wanted to seek refuge from Leylin, he actually started trembling when he came face to face with Leylin, and was unable to speak his mind.
Currently, Leylin’s aura was immensely strong after killing Toram, and even an ordinary rank 3 Magus would feel uncomfortable in his presence.
Moreover, even though his injuries weren’t serious, they were still a hassle, and had to be resolved as soon as possible.

“I’ll leave it to you to tie up the loose ends!”

Leylin faintly thought about it, before he disappeared into thin air, only leaving behind Tamansi who looked glum and regretful…
Azure Mountain City, situated beside the Andius mountains, was the ancestral territory of the Oakheart Clan. The Andius mountains were rich in natural minerals, something that made the alloy produced by Azure Mountain City, with its superior quality, one of the most desirable in the entire continent. In fact, Leylin had even visited this place himself once to source the materials for his own Magus Tower. With excellent smelting techniques coupled with rich and plentiful natural resources, the Oakheart Clan had superior control over auctions, accumulating an outrageous amount of wealth. The original name of the progenitor of the Oakheart Clan had long fallen out of the public mind, but his title still remained to this date. He was the powerful and brilliant Azure Mountain King! Indeed, the progenitor of the Oakheart Clan was the well-known Azure Mountain King, the famed and almighty Morning Star Magus. The intimidating nature of this Morning Star Magus served as a warning to other vicious and hateful Magi not to have any designs on the Oakheart Clan. Otherwise, it would have long been overtaken and ruled by those fugitive human magicians. And now, the time had come for the decennial large-scale auction. As the event venue of the auction was in Azure Mountain City, the entire place was filled to the brim with people. The prices of the
airship tickets heading there had also risen sharply due to this
event. However it was not a deterrent, as Magi from everywhere
continued to flow into the city. Some among them were powerful and well known. Others had
masked themselves, cherishing anonymity. Regardless of their varying powers, all the Magi present would
generally be disciplined enough to control and maintain themselves. After all, they would lose as well if the auction were to
not proceed smoothly. In fact, they would risk losing much needed materials to an arch-
enemy, as well as materials that were hard to obtain through normal
means. With the auction event approaching, the crime rates in the
neighbouring areas also increased substantially! Many fugitive Magi on the wanted list came forth to the event
sneakily and had daringly looted many people. But as long as they weren’t caught red-handed, the Oakheart Clan, the main organiser,
would not excessively pursue the matter. The otherwise orderly Azure Mountain City had suddenly turned
chaotic. A small group of Magi were pushing forward with their
own secretive agendas behind the scenes. As such, even under the watchful eyes of the Morning Star Magus, the Clan had to face a mounting number of incidents hindering their move forward. They were kept busy and anxious.
“Such a bustling scene!” Leylin was at a local inn along a stretch of shops, viewing the hurried crowd through a transparent glass
flooring. In front of him were served colourful glasses of juices, along with some freshly baked cookies and snacks.
He had been in Azure Mountain City for 3 days. The wounds from the clash with Toram had already mostly healed with his liberal use
As he had arrived early, Leylin was able to find lodging at an inn in the city, unlike the situation now where many Magi were struggling to find a room and had to search throughout the city and risk getting into conflicts with one another.

Leylin stroked his chin, looking at the busy street that was bustling with activity. Many of the commoners wore grey, black and white apparel. Among the crowd, there were many Magi and some other races discreetly mingling about.

In the central continent, humans were not the only race. Many different species of humans had mingled together producing offspring of mixed bloodlines. Leylin had personally met some of them on the streets and had witnessed their odd characteristics.

Walking among the pedestrians were patrol Knights from the host’s city. Many of these knights wore barbed armor. Under the guidance of senior Knights and acolytes, they regularly combed through every corner of the city.

Although their abilities were insignificant to Magi, the fact that their uniforms bore the emblem of the Oakheart Clan was enough to deter any impetuous Magi.

“IT’s him!” At this moment, cries from a skylark sounded near Leylin. It perched itself outside the inn. He found the tone of the cries familiar, and smiled and walked towards the entrance of the inn.

At this moment, a young couple stepped foot into the inn. The lady took one look at Leylin and was shocked.

“Oh! It’s been a long time, Nolan, Jessia.” Leylin noticed that Jessia wore the look of a young woman instead of a young girl and exclaimed, “Also, a blissful marriage to you!”

This couple from the Rolithe Family had left a deep impression on
Leylin, especially the defiant young girl.
“Ley… Sir Leylin!” Nolan whined bitterly in his heart. He had heard about the delicious treats being served here and hence brought his wife along. Little did he expect he would bump into Leylin.

Nolan’s knees grew weak thinking about how he was chided and taught a lesson mercilessly by this rank 3 Magus in the past.

As for Jessia, she looked as if she relied heavily on Nolan and had her arms around him. Leylin couldn’t help but sense the hatred and detestation deep in her eyes. It made him speechless.

‘Just because I had the ability to, but did not save you, you hate me so much?’ Leylin stroked his chin. Coincidences happened all the time in this world. Maybe a word, an action, or even an exchange of glances, it might all result in an inexplicable hatred against someone else. It was something unfathomable.

He had not expected such matters to happen to him.

“Both of you look happily married now, although it does gives me a troubled heart!” Leylin was rather amused and called out to them to take a seat,”Shall we sit together? The food here is decent, I found this place after a long search!”

“Oh! No need! We do not want to impose on you, Sir!” Nolan gave a bitter smile and bowed politely. He grabbed Jessia’s hand and left the place hastily.

Dining with Leylin? Nolan could feel immense pressure. In fact, the aura he felt this time was much more powerful than during their previous meeting. He certainly do not want to cross paths with Leylin again.

“What are you doing?” Jessia blurted out in anger after crossing a few streets with Nolan pulling her along.

“He is just a rank 3 Magus, what is the big deal? Your grandfather is also a famed Hydro Phase Magus… Furthermore, as long as we can gather sufficient materials this time, he can also attempt to enter the
Crystal Phase!” Jessia pouted her lips with displeasure, profound resentment in her eyes.
After the wedding, Nolan had been good to Jessia, and she too, had gradually accepted her fate. However, her hatred towards Leylin from their initial meeting had not ceased one bit.
She hated how Leylin had disrupted her plans and how he had treated her, even till the end. There was no hint of nobility and no demeanor of a gentleman at all!
“That was after all a rank 3 Lord. Even if he hasn’t reached the Vapour Phase, we cannot afford to offend him… Moreover, he had the support of the Ouroboros Clan…” Nolan smiled bitterly. Sadly, he was not up to date with the latest information. He was unaware of Leylin’s true position and abilities in the Ouroboros Clan. Plus, Leylin himself had been low-key all this while.
“I do not care, you have to take revenge on my behalf…” Jessia tugged at Nolan’s arm with a look of dissatisfaction.
“Alright alright alright!” Nolan tamed her with verbal promises. However, from the bottom of his heart, he had zero intentions of doing so.
Of course, he couldn’t speak his mind freely. Otherwise, knowing Jessia, she wouldn’t let him have her when the night fell, and he would certainly dread it.
“Hmph! Leylin, since you are here, you will definitely not miss the auction. We’ll see!” Her scheming plans were reflected in her eyes as they shined brightly.
Inside the inn, watching Nolan and Jessia leave, Leylin was deep in thought.
The hatred in the past was apparent and obvious to him. And up till now, she certainly had not given it up. The only difference was her attempt to conceal her feelings.
Leylin could have crushed such insignificant characters easily in the past. But he did not do so then. Other than his fear of offending
someone who had a strong family as support, there was another reason.
After the couple left the inn, Leylin went back to his seat and sat down. In his palm, a dull gold coin appeared and he toyed with it. “I can feel it, looks like they can present something valuable to me this time!” Leylin grinned as he slid the Coin of Destiny back into his pocket, his eyes twinkling a deep black.
The river of destiny could not be fathomed. It would constantly drift about without a permanent resting place. However, at some specific times and places, minute details of it would intersect, something that a few Magi could sense. It had happened to Leylin previously. He had, with the help of the Coin of Destiny, felt that there were some unresolved matters. In the near future, he knew he would cross paths with the couple again. And that time, they would voluntarily present him with an item of importance.
This current location seemed to be the confluence point where their destinies met.
“Boss, bill please!” Leylin smiled and stood up. The owner sprang up from behind the counter and stepped forward…
The Azure Mountain auction company was situated at the center of Azure Mountain City. Its land was extensive, surrounded by an encampment of the Oakheart Clan. Standing there, a simple and unadorned majestic Magus Tower could be seen radiating horrifying levels of energy. It seemed to have an unknown connection with the skies and the entire region.
This Magus Tower built by a Morning Star Magus was Leylin’s current destination, as well as something he looked up to. It was the symbol of the Oakheart Clan’s power, and a guarantee. Once he stepped foot into the auction hall, a female servant in uniforms stepped up swiftly and greeted him warmly, clearly well trained. “Welcome, how can I be of service to you?”
“I would like to sell some things in this auction!” The present Leylin was unrecognisable. He had altered his facial features and worn a hood over his head. He’d also added another outer layer of cotton shawl that draped down from the top, covering his face. Fortunately, at this point of time, there were countless Magi in Azure Mountain City dressed exactly like Leylin, hence the servant was not baffled at all.
A s long as it is verified by our appraiser, any items estimated to be worth over a hundred thousand magic crystals can be sold in the auction! May I ask if you need appraisal services?” The servant blurted out, almost as if by reflex. It was obvious that she’d said this multiple times before. It seemed like he was not the first person coming up to host something for auction.

“Bring me there!” Leylin answered concisely. Soon after, he followed the servant and came before a few customized cubicles. As he was passing through, he even sensed the spell formation that was buried under the ground as well as the concealed runes on the wall. The security in here was much tighter than the outside, with even a rank 3 Magus keeping watch.

They came up to a room that was a reception area, and the servant respectfully invited Leylin to take a seat. “Customer, please wait a moment, I will get the appraiser here immediately to serve you!”

“Alright!” Leylin nodded, his eyes following the young woman as she exited. After a short period of time, the door opened and an elderly man with a headful of silver hair and a face that had seen the vicissitudes of life entered.

“Honourable guest, I am a rank 2 appraiser, Norta!” the old man bowed.

“Hello!” Leylin smiled faintly in response. He pointed to the seat in
front of him and invited the appraiser to sit.
In the central continent, appraisers also had ranks. This rank 2 appraiser was already a rank 2 Magus as well, and still maintained such respectful conduct. This was considered rare.
Furthermore, his hands were covered with all sorts of scars, making him seem extremely experienced.
After Norta sat down, he looked at Leylin with a hint of amazement.
Now that Azure Mountain City’s auction was about to begin, it was not odd that various kinds of customers had shown up. However, just by the smell and appearance, he was able to judge that the Magus before him was very young. Yet, his body carried a dense fog that even he could not see through, which seldom occurred.
It was hard to say, maybe this customer had in his possession unique treasures that were hard to come by.
The appraiser stroked a ring on his hand as he was unable to repress the slight anticipation that flashed in his heart.
“I am a Potions Master. I’m thinking of selling some potions here!” Leylin spoke straightforwardly.
Of course, he had with him many more items that were more valuable than potions, but those were to be saved as exchange items for the barter later on. Only these potions that were made during his free time happened to be available to be offered for sale.
With his Potioneering talents, in the a span of 100 years, which was about half of Leylin’s age, Leylin had amassed a large number of completed potions as a Potions Grandmaster.
“How unexpected, for you to be a Potions Master as well!” Norta’s eyes sparkled. No matter where, proficient Potions Masters and alchemists always enjoyed preferential treatment.
After some thought, Norta still informed him beforehand about the matters that needed to be taken note of. “However, I would like to explain the rules of the auction to you first. In our auction, only
high-grade potions and above are sold, if it is a middle-grade potion that is not very valuable, it will have to meet a certain quantity…”
“Don’t worry, I know that!” Leylin smiled, reaching his hand out and sweeping it across the table.
A silver radiance shone. After spatial energy waves passed, the red table was filled with test tubes of all kinds of colour.
“So…… So many!”
Norta’s eyes widened instantly in surprise. He then lost that last bit of calmness in his expression of his after he recognised a few of the potions. “And they are all high-grade potions!”
“Hoho……” As he watched the old man lose his composure, Leylin smiled kindly. In fact, these were only a small portion of his achievements over the last few centuries, but it was enough to scare the other party.
“This is already all my gains over hundreds of years…” On the surface, Leylin laughed proudly but he still sighed.
“Sir you are actually a Potions Grandmaster!” This time, Norta’s voice contained a slight tremor.
Potions Grandmasters were always given special treatment even among strong organisations. The scarcity of such masters in the central continent was actually very scary. This was clearly evident from the sole fact that even in the Ouroboros Clan, which had 3 Morning Star Magi and was regarded as one of the top forces of the central continent, there were not more than five.
“This…These…” Drops of cold sweat slid down the appraiser’s forehead and even more so, he had an embarrassed look on his face.
“My apologies, honourable guest! This deal is beyond my abilities, please wait a moment……” Even if he was at the Azure Mountain auction house. An ordinary appraiser like him did not stand a chance to serve such a Potions Grandmaster.
“Then I hope you can hurry!” Leylin spoke indifferently with a straight face, concealing his discontentment.

“Yes sir!” Towards a Potions Grandmaster of unknown origins, this appraiser dared not be tardy and he immediately withdrew.

‘It seems that the identity of a Potions Grandmaster is pretty useful in the central continent!’ Leylin smiled while stroking his chin.

This time, the other party did not make him wait for long. Almost within a minute after the old man left, a polite knock sounded again, “Honourable guest, may I enter?”

“Please do!” Leylin smiled, and shortly after he saw the previous appraiser pulling open the door respectfully, inviting a middle-aged western lady in.

“Let me introduce myself. My name is Serene, Serene Oakheart! The administrative matters of the Azure Mountain auction house, as well as Mister’s business, will be fully handled by me!”

This beautiful lady named Serene was like a ripe peach, there was not a part of her body that did not emit an alluring scent. Furthermore, her surname made Leylin raise his eyebrow. Not only that, although she had used some sort of technique to cover up her aura, the A.I. Chip was still able to detect that she was actually a strong Magus who had attained rank 3 as well!

*Ka-cha!* Norta made a bow and exited the room respectfully. Before he left, he even shut the door, as if he was only a doorman.

“Sir, how may I address you?” Serene looked at Leylin whose face was covered, especially curious at the deeply concealed aura of the other party.

“Just ‘Blood Rogue’ will do!” Leylin immodestly used one of his old names.

“Hoho… Lord Blood Rogue, how are you planning to sell these potions!” Serene swayed her slender waist, waving her sleeves as she sat down in front of Leylin languidly. Every single movement of hers seemed to be of the highest quality, with a polite scent that
yet stirred up men’s burning desires even more. ‘This woman is a temptress, comparable to Celine from Twilight Zone!’ Leylin sighed in his heart but he spoke without a tremor, “Tell me about your plans!” Serene’s eyebrows furrowed, but they relaxed shortly after. “Since sir is interested, Serene will first explain the rules of our auction. For ordinary customers, we have two methods of auctioning!” “Firstly,” Serene stretched out a spotless jade-white finger, “These potions, can all be auctioned here. No matter what price they are dealt for, our Azure Mountain auction house will have to take out a part of it as a commission fee! Of course, if the auction fails, you will have to pay us a guarantee fee as well!” “Secondly, our auction house can purchase these potions from you directly. Price wise, it will be calculated according to the market price! What we do with them afterwards will not be of your concern anymore. If you need magic crystals urgently, you may opt for this method!” Leylin nodded, this second method was evidently prepared for those Magi who were planning to accumulate large funds to bid for certain items during the auction. The only thing was that the auction house would definitely buy items priced lower than market price. Unfortunately, the other party was willing to purchase at market prices, not only because these potions were rare, but even more so because of their interest in a Potions Grandmaster’s identity. “I certainly hope that I can get my hands off these items as soon as possible, so that I can obtain enough magic crystals to use during the auction! Since you are so sincere, of course I’ll go with the second method!” Leylin said. Although he might be able gain more by auctioning them, it was definite that he could only receive the payment after the auction. He did not want that. “That’s great! Purchasing so many high-grade potions is also very
helpful for my sales record, Thank you, Sir.” Serene chuckled, as if she could not see the many precious potions piled up in front of her.

“I estimate the total price of the potions to be around 98 million magic crystals! Sir, do you have any objections?” The words that Serene said after that slightly shocked Leylin.
However, his shock immediately relieved. He was in the other party’s territory and the potions had already been piled up on the table for a long time. Estimating their worth based on detecting techniques was not something hard.
No wonder she did not look much at the table after entering. This was why.
“A very reasonable price!” Leylin nodded. Of course, he already had an estimate of the value of his items. This price was obviously based on the current market rate, and might even have a little bit higher.
“Ordinary customers automatically become VIPs once their transactions involve a total of over 50 million magic crystals in our Azure Mountain auction house, making things much more convenient for them… But for someone to enter the VIP rank in the first transaction like you, Sir, is very rare!”
Serene smiled, her blue eyes gleamed with a charming radiance. It was as if she wanted to see through the veil and take a look at Leylin’s real face.
She clapped, and the door opened for a moment before a servant walked in, holding a tray.
On the red tray lay a purple-gold card as well as a black pouch.
“This is the payment and the VIP certificate! Please verify and accept this, customer!” When it came down to business, Serene regained her serious expression.
Without any trace of politeness, Leylin walked up to check on the items, especially the magic crystals. Using the A.I. Chip, he scanned
continuously to check for their purity and quantity, before giving a nod upon confirming that nothing was overlooked. When the transaction ended, Leylin did not leave immediately. Serene also accompanied him, beaming with a smile without a trace of annoyance. The two beat about the bush for a long time before Leylin spoke up. “Actually, I still have two more matters to ask for your help!”
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“What does Sir need?” Serene beamed while asking. A Potions Grandmaster was hard to come by, and even the Azure Mountain auction house would spare no effort to entice him. If the other party had any requests, that would be easy to handle! In the central continent, there were few things a Morning Star Magus could not do.

“The reason why I came to the Azure Mountain auction this time round was because I want to acquire a precious resource. My sources tell me that said resource is going to be sold here…” Leylin said without a hurry.

“Is Sir trying to ask about the details of the seller before completing the transactions?” Serene’s face revealed her dilemma, “What is it? If it’s about the few rare items, we, the Azure Mountain auction committee is unable to make any decisions!” Leylin laughed and whispered a few words into Serene’s ears.

“You actually want…” Serene’s pupils widened, before she instantly smiled wryly.

“Those things are too hard to come by. Even my grandfather would not sell it. I’ll not keep it from you. Previously, a few batches of people have came to me wanting to obtain some information, but we have not revealed any of the information because the high-ranked Masters have already noticed the auction pieces…”

“Ah, I see…” Leylin seemed slightly disappointed. From the looks
of it, the astral stone was indeed very precious. Just its appearance here had already aroused attention.
For Serene to call them Masters, they had to be Morning Star Magi; there was no other possibility.
At the same time, Serene also looked at Leylin with astonishment.
Astral gate research and experiments could only be conducted and hosted by Morning Star Magi. Even preliminary research had a high requirement, needing one to be a Hydro Phase Magus with a high-ranked Magus Tower.
This customer’s strengths seemed to be very robust.
“Let’s put this matter aside and talk about another matter, the private gathering after the auction. What are the prerequisites to entering the venue?” Leylin asked casually after quickly collecting his feelings when he was not able to obtain a reply from Serene.
‘This question!’ Serene lightly let out a sigh of relief.
This was within her purview. If it hadn’t been, she would have failed at satisfying either of her guest’s questions, which was equivalent to stepping on his feet.
“The private gathering will be held within 3 days of the closure of the auction. We will announce the actual venue later. With regards to entrance requirements, sir is already a VIP of the Azure Mountain auction, and hence you fully qualify for the private gathering. I’ll send someone to inform you closer to the event date…”
“Excellent!” Despite a few flirtatious invites from Serene urging him to stay, Leylin left behind a few methods of contact and got up to leave for the auction.
Even though she was rejected, Serene did not feel an ounce of anger. She smiled until Leylin had left before returning to the auction.
“How was it? Did you verify his identity?” In her office quarters, a golden-haired middle-aged man with a walking stick asked
casually, and seemed to be very aware of Leylin’s actions. “Nope. He was very cautious!” Serene smiled wryly.
“I looked through the details of all the Potions Grandmasters in the vicinity, and none of them match his personality. Is he from a different region?”
Even though the Azure Mountain’s auction had a great reputation, but they only attracted Magi below the Morning Star realm. Moreover, the list only contained Magi residing in this region.
“Perhaps he’s someone with a lot of experience, someone worth recruiting. After all, we can involve him in the matter that we are currently plotting, which would fit Grandfather’s requests…”
The middle-aged man’s tone was very neutral, but having heard his words, Serene’s eyes lit up, “Do you mean…”

……

With growing anticipation and the many conspiracies in the shadows, time ticked by, until it was finally the first day of the auction.
This was a festival for Azure Mountain City. Not only did the residents carry lit lanterns and played with fireworks, but the streets were also bustling with activities.
It wasn’t uncommon for Magi to make underground exchanges and interactions.
And the Oakheart Clan, as the regional power, had sent out many elite units to suppress the situation and maintain order.
‘Speaking of which, this is a festive event for many of us magi who are below the Morning Star rank!’ Leylin snuck into the crowd and walked along, occasionally glancing from side to side.
The A.I. Chip gave out warning after warning.
The crowd that Leylin was in mainly consisted of Magi. Ranks 1 and 2 were common, and even rank 3 Magi were not rare, with
some who were on par with Leylin himself. Those Magi were all like Leylin. They were in disguise, and had concealed themselves further with thick cloaks or veils, appearing to be very cautious.

‘Whether major powers or fugitives, no vengeance can be had here. This rule has been carried down from previous auctions, eh.’ Leylin smiled and pressed his cap down further, as his continued to inconspicuously scan through the dangerous people identified by the A.I Chip.

At that moment, the Azure Mountain auction’s gates were opened at the city center. Numerous hosts and Magi came forth, welcoming the incoming Magi in the most glamorous gowns. The normal entrance had already been filled to the brim with Magi, and the rest had no choice but to line up behind them. Why were they so obedient? The welcoming committee was the greatest deterrent.

They were elite Magi of the Oakheart Clan. Not only did many of them possess powerful spells, they even had some methods of combined attacks. Even Crystal Phase Magi would be hard-pressed to even flee were they to attack in large numbers.

The VIP entrance, on the other hand, was vastly different. Magi entered from time to time, and they would immediately be given looks of respect.

VIP membership in the Azure Mountain auction represented not only identity, but also status. To take out 50 million magic crystals for a business deal was not just a matter of being wealthy. This was the Magus world; were they to not have enough power to keep their wealth, all the riches in the world would not prevent their being robbed.

As a result, the status of a VIP represented a certain amount of power.

Of course, Leylin would not choose to queue with those low-
ranked Magi for a seat, and so he took a turn and walked towards the VIP entrance.

After Leylin left the crowd, he realised that a huge bunch of people had the same intentions as him, and he even knew them.

“I’m sorry, but according to our regulations, a VIP card can only allow for the entrance of two more Magi!” Serene bowed in apology, but the young married woman in front of her still refused to budge.

“Who do you think you are? We are the Rolithe Family…” Jessia became red in the face, but Nolan pulled her to the side, face plastered with a bitter smile.

The two bodyguards at the side had a solemn look on their faces, and did not seem to be intimidated by the reputation of the Rolithe Family.

The other party was a small clan without even a Morning Star Magus. If they were to give in to them, the Oakheart Clan would be treated as a joke!

Nolan obviously knew this point, and he muttered a few words to Jessia.

Beside them were two Magi, both at rank 3. One caught his eye

“That old man?”

Leylin looked at the Magus standing at the front. His face was sunken and he wore on his ear a red ruby pendant that seemed to have some symbolic meaning.

“He must be the clan leader of the Rolithe family, the one who is rumoured to have reached the peak of the Hydro Phase!” Leylin calmly walked over. He had managed to subdue Toram who used a secret technique to break through to the Crystal Phase. He naturally didn’t consider the old man a threat.

“Jessia, I thought you didn’t want to take part in auctions like these?” Nolan helplessly persuaded. This wife of his had originally said that she wanted to come here just for fun and would not
partake in the auction. However, something had come over her today and she had insisted on coming. However, their family still had an elder at rank 3 who’d come along this time as well, and hence the quota had already been filled. With their feeble strength as a small family clan, the Oakheart Clan would not make a special exception for them and allow them to exceed the quota for the VIP entrance.

Leylin could not help but notice that after marriage, Nolan had indeed matured a lot.

“I just want to go in to have a look. Grandpa Vance, can’t you just let me in?” Jessia tugged at the old Magus’ arms, and started to act coquettishly.

Vance, who was bothered to no end by her could only smile wryly as he glanced at Serene, “Look…”

“I’m extremely sorry, Mister Vance! Even though I’m an old friend of yours, rules are rules. If this lady would really like to enter, she can only enter through the normal passageway!” Serene had a professional smile on her face. Even though her tone sounded sincere, it seemed to have a tinge of hypocrisy within.

It’s only a small family clan and she need not put in so much effort.

“No! I refuse to walk through that passageway!” This turn of events had attracted the attention of many Magi. Jessia’s refusal to agree had caused them much embarrassment.

“Excuse me, please make way! There are other VIPs on the way!” At that time, Serene’s eyes lit up as she quickly walked to welcome the incoming VIP, “Lord Blood Rogue, it’s been a long time since we met!” As compared to the response before, Serene seemed much more enthusiastic.

Having seen such an attitude, Jessia and even Nolan looked dispirited.

“What’s the matter?” Leylin asked, even though he already knew the answer.
“Oh, there’s nothing much! The guest quota of this customer is already full, but this lady insists on entering!” Serene summarised the event.

“Put it on my quota, then! I’m not bringing anyone anyway!” Leylin shook his head.
“S”ince that is what Sir Blood Rogue wants, of course it’s possible!” This was a small matter, and the rules were flexible enough to accommodate it. Furthermore, Serene wanted to attempt roping in Leylin, so naturally she would give him due respect. In actual fact, even if Leylin’s quota was full but he still wanted to bring more people, Serene would agree to it. After all, in her eyes, a Potions Grandmaster was of a much higher status than the Rolithe Family, which only had a single Hydro Phase Magus. “Really? Thank you so much, Sir!” Nolan immediately expressed his delight. He, of course, did not recognise Leylin who had changed his disguise, and bowed with Jessia. “Many thanks…” Jessia was slightly reluctant, but she bowed anyway, still feeling wronged. “Alright!” Leylin nodded in a reserved manner, and was about to enter the auction venue. “Hold on! Dear friend, my name is Vance Rolithe! Thank you so much for this!” The old man by the name of Vance had been standing by the side, waiting for Leylin to start walking so that he could enter the auction venue with him side by side. The wine red carpet extended continuously under their feet. “Nothing much, just a bit of help while I’m here!” Leylin replied, but god knew what expression he had under his hood.
He reached out and stroked the round coin on his chest.
‘The reaction is getting stronger! Perhaps what I need is with the other party, hehe… Jessia, you’ve given me a large present!’
Leylin shot a glance at Jessia, who was walking with her head held low. This woman still seemed rather fiery.
The scene outside the auction venue had completely stripped her of her vanity, making her aware of how inferior and helpless she really was.
She did not show the slightest amount of gratitude to Leylin who had given her a hand earlier.
Of course, she didn’t recognise Leylin as well, and was instead cursing and grumbling inside, “Wretched Leylin! If not for you, I wouldn’t be here and suffer such humiliation… You’ll see. Don’t let me bump into you tonight, or else…”
A sinister look flashed across Jessia’s eyes, but was quickly masked. As her head was partially lowered, her expression was not discovered by anyone.
That’s right. The main reason for her being here was Leylin. Ever since she saw Leylin at Azure Mountain City, revenge was all that was on her mind.
Plus, according to the elder that had seen Leylin with them, he was only in the initial phase of a rank 3 back then and hadn’t even entered the Vapour Phase.
As long as they could find him, Grandfather whose strength had already reached the peak of the Hydro Phase would definitely be able to help them seek revenge!
But what disappointed Jessia was that no matter how hard she searched Azure Mountain City, even going so far as to stand guard at the pastry shop they had met in, he was nowhere to be found.
Leylin had long since changed his identity to Blood Rogue, and even if they were to meet face to face on the streets, Jessia would definitely be unable to recognise him.
After countless futile attempts, Jessia could only grudgingly give up further plans to continue the search. Instead, she turned to other ideas. She would strike at the auction! She was extremely certain that Leylin would appear here, attracted by the auction. Therefore, even if she hadn’t found him for the time being, she would find him at the venue! As such, her trip here was to relieve her of her troubles. It was why Jessia, who didn’t have even the slightest bit of interest in the auction, had pestered Nolan to bring her here. However, she seemed to have forgotten something. Not only would there be a huge number of Magi attending the auction, making it impossible to comb through everyone, there was also another problem that would be highly difficult to solve: as long as he was an official Magus, he would definitely have the ability to change his appearance! Once Leylin was in disguise, even if she wandered around the entire venue, it would be impossible to find him. Jessia might have thought about this were she not filled with rage and fuelled by hatred, making her lose her ability to think rationally.

At this moment, Leylin and Vance had reached a crossroad. “Haha, it has been a pleasant conversation with you, Blood Rogue. I shall head to my room. Maybe we can each leave our secret imprints behind, and meet again to chat another time…” Vance was deliberately trying to get close to Leylin; after all, he evidently was holding a high position at the Azure Mountain auction. The more people of high-standing that they knew, the more benefits their family stood to gain. “Sure!” From under the hood came a laugh that been altered by the A.I. Chip. At the same time, a secret imprint emerged. After saying their goodbyes, Leylin followed the maid to his room. The room was decorated very luxuriously, but it was rather small,
and could only accommodate a maximum of three chairs placed side by side without squeezing them close to each other.

‘No wonder they only allowed two other people to enter, I’m afraid that Jessia will have to stand at the side, oh no, maybe Nolan will stand at the side, while Jessia takes his seat…’ Leylin let his thoughts run wild.

At the same time, he was sizing up the whole cubicle. The most captivating part of the entire room was the huge screen in the centre, where numerous auction items would appear.

Leylin fiddled with the bidding machine and communication equipment for a while and quickly got the hang of it.

The quality of the sound-proofing between cubicles was excellent, and the entire booth immediately went quiet when the maid left.

“Something doesn’t feel right! A.I. Chip, scan!”

Leylin leaned against the top of the chair and stroked his chin, seemingly meditating out of boredom or deep in thought, but yet a faint blue glow flashed across under his eyes.

[Starting scan, no abnormalities!] A few moments later, the A.I. Chip’s conclusion alarmed Leylin.

“What?! That can’t be true, as an owner of the auction, how is it possible that a basic intelligence-gathering spell formation has not even been set up? Scan again, activate combined tri-unit operation, mobilize atomic microscope!” Leylin immediately realized the root of the problem.

How could such Magi be at ease at an auction? Even though on the surface they said it was for protection, the necessary surveillance was still required.

Perhaps some Morning Star Magi could avoid such treatment, but Leylin clearly did not qualify.

[Beep! Orders received! Mobilizing atomic microscope, starting in-depth scan!] The A.I. Chip immediately began operating again.

This time, a discovery was made within 3 seconds.
[Beep! Discovered traces of microscopic beings, no similar image found in database!]
The A.I. Chip sent the report loyally, and projected an image into Leylin’s brain. The image was clearly a magnified version of the image from the atomic microscope. In an environment made up of numerous cell-like objects, living creatures similar to ladybirds that were the size of fine particles were patrolling around the cracks. Together, they even formed a spell rune.

“This is…” Leylin’s pupils contracted, “Manlar’s Eavesdropping Rune! And what is this creature? It is actually so tiny that an atomic microscope is needed to examine it…”

A chill ran down his spine as he ordered the A.I. Chip to scan himself. After confirming that these ladybirds only stayed on the floor of the room and that there were none in contact with his body, he heaved a sigh of relief.

‘Although I don’t know what other purpose this creature serves, its mere ability to spy by forming runes is extremely hard to deal with and dreadful…’ Leylin’s heart was heavy, but he maintained a drowsy appearance, so no one thought that something was wrong.

‘Looks like the entire auction venue has been covered with these tiny bugs. Also, someone is using their characteristics to build a spell formation… Such a thing can only be done by the Azure Mountain King!’

Leylin was very certain. Although he was well-equipped with knowledge and experience, he had never heard about such a ladybird before, so it was likely to be a creature from a different world that had been captured and made use of by the Azure Mountain King to form a strange spell formation.

A spell formation deployed with utmost care by a Morning Star Magus would not be discovered even by a rank 3 Crystal Phase Magus.
Leylin even suspected that even other rank 4 Magi would not find out easily. This would also explain why this secret had never been revealed, and why the Azure Mountain auction had been having such good business void of any nasty incidents. Under the watch of the ladybirds, no matter what plans one had, they would be hard to implement. ‘He is indeed worthy of being a Morning Star Magus!’ Leylin gasped without saying anything else, acting as though he hadn’t discovered anything. However, this also explained why VIPs were given such tiny rooms. Judging by the strength of the Oakheart Clan, even if they built a spacious and luxurious cubicle for every single VIP, they wouldn’t face any financial pressure. The only possibility why they didn’t was because of such a spell formation. A surveillance spell formation that was able to cover the entire auction venue was incredibly expensive. After all, the entire venue accommodated a huge number of Magi! The current surface area that it occupied was the maximum, and could not be expanded further. As the boundaries of the spell formation ended there, if the compound was further expanded, there would be blind spots in the surveillance, which would obviously not be permitted by the Azure Mountain King. At this moment, a voice sounded, as though it came from right in front of Leylin. ‘Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Azure Mountain City. We thank you for being here at this distinguished event. I am honoured to be your humble host, Leo Oakheart…’ Soon after, many images appeared on three of the walls, revealing a humongous platform on which a gold-haired middle-aged nobleman wearing a swallow-tailed coat was making a speech. ‘A 3D hologram technique?!’ Leylin almost yelled, but immediately
came to his senses; it was only an effect achieved by spells. It seemed as though Leylin was sitting in the best spot, directly facing the host of the auction. Certainly, the Magi in the other cubicles felt the same. A row of words appeared on the screen in the centre of the room. “The first auction item will now be presented, a Fiery Gemstone…”
behind the introductions were several other rows, each describing the items following the first.

“…… Now, please allow me to present the first item of this year’s auction: a treasure produced from the Fiery World, the Fiery Gemstone!” The host announced loudly, lifting the gauze from the tray behind him at the same time.

*Boom!* In a flash, 3 pieces of translucent crystal emerged before Leylin’s eyes. An unceasing flame seemed to be burning in the cores of the crystals.

“Treasures from another plane!”

Numerous Magi gasped. In order to start off the auction successfully, the Azure Mountain auction house had indeed put in much effort. Evidently, the first auction item was unexpected for many of them.

“The Fiery Gemstone is rumoured to be a treasure of the central Blazing World. Containing heavily compressed fire elemental particles, it can help break through and upgrade a fire-attributed Magus’ spiritual endowments, and is even an essential item the advancements of many high-grade fire elemental meditation techniques…” the host continued.

However, very few spared the attention to listen to him anymore. They had all averted their rapacious gazes to the Fiery Gemstone on stage.

Even Leylin was slightly tempted by this item, leave alone the other
Magi.
Resources from other planes, could only be obtained by Morning Star Magi due to the requirement for an astral gate. For rank 2 and rank 3 Magi like them, they were an inaccessible existence.
It’s small-degree spiritual endowment enhancing effects especially drove many of them crazy.
“Alright. Now we will begin the auction for the compressed blazing gemstones, with the starting bid at 5 million magic crystals!” The host reported a figure, which was soon drowned amongst a cacophony of bids.
Huge figures appeared on the screen, which was refreshed again and again with the highest quoted price.
Leylin speechlessly watched the numbers spike on the corner of the screen, exceeding ten million in a flash and going all the way up to around 50 million before slowing down. He could not help but smile bitterly.
“I originally thought that the more than 90 million magic crystals from the Azure Mountain auction house was already a large fund. Now it seems it will be really difficult to win the bid for the astral stone…”
Leylin extinguished all thoughts of pressing the bid button.
Although he had many items that he could use as payment and winning the bid for the compressed blazing gemstone was not hard, it was too ostentatious. Furthermore, his funds were limited, they had to be saved for later and were not to be wasted on this.
Because he had already decided to give up, Leylin was able to relax and engrossedly watch the group of high-ranked Magi fight furiously over these treasures.
The value of otherworldly treasures still exceeded Leylin’s expectations. Not only were the VIPs in the VIP lounge going all out, even Magi seated at the regular auditorium began quoting prices to fight for the items as well.
“Possessing the financial ability to compete for the Fiery Gemstone yet withdrawn within the regular auditorium crammed with all those low-ranked Magi, he is also a rascal pretending to be weak!” Leylin looked at a red-haired youth and assessed monotonously.

“Bidding closed, the three people who quoted the highest price will obtain the rights of attribution to the Fiery Gemstone!” The host, who stood on the central elevated platform with a slightly flushed face, spoke with an obvious excitement.

Now, on the screen, the large figures stopped in a moment. The highest bid had reached a shocking 85 million magic crystals! The second and third highest bid merely differed from the first by not more than 1 million magic crystals.

“This is crazy!” Leylin shook his head.

Clearly, the quoted price this time had been overshot by a lot, even exceeding the original expectations of the auction house. The host calmed down and began introducing the next auction item, “Magic equipment – Aphopis’ Scepter! Starting bid: 38 million magic crystals or resources of equivalent worth…”

An entirely golden, magnificently crafted scepter instantly appeared within Leylin’s sight. At the head of the scepter, many gold tassels and decorations formed the shape of a sun’s corona, emitting light and heat continuously.

“40 million magic crystals!”

“50 million magic crystals, and 3 moonstones on top of that!”

Evidently, this piece of magic equipment was already renowned among this group of Magi. Even before the host finished speaking, the Magi below had already begun quoting prices.

Leylin rested his chin on his hands and as he watched, he suddenly felt that he was actually considered poor.

Compared to these central continent Magi who took possession of rich resources and had long-spanning inheritances, even if he plundered the entire Twilight Zone, he would still only be
considered slightly rich.
If not for those few incidents of huge profit, and if he was not a Potions Grandmaster, he definitely would not have dared to participate in the auction for the astral stone.
Shortly after, the piece of magic equipment, Aphopis’ scepter, was bought by a Magus in the VIP lounge at a high price of 90 million magic crystals. Many Magi could not help but take note of the VIP lounge number.
The Azure Mountain auction was no doubt the top power in this area. What followed next was a large quantity of rare Magus treasures, information on high-grade meditation techniques, and also a great amount of valuable resources appearing on the stage one after another, something which many Magi pursued.
The high-grade potions that Leylin initially sold were in there too. Although there were only a part of it, they were still sold at sky-high prices. The desires of Magi for high-grade potions could never be satisfied.
This made Leylin rather happy but at the same time, he secretly rolled his eyes.
He originally thought that the Azure Mountain auction house undertook a definite loss when they purchased his potions, but now it seems this transaction greatly profited the other party instead.
“Ladies and gentlemen, today’s auction is approaching an end, our Azure Mountain auction house has specially decided that the biggest treasures of this time’s auction will be up for auction at the last moment!” The host’s words piqued Leylin’s interest uncontrollably as he fixed his gleaming eyes on the stage.
“This time’s auction will continue on for 3 days, which means to say, there are 3 extremely valuable items to auction! There are few opportunities!” The host’s voice carried a hint of temptation.
“Next, please allow me to grandly introduce the first treasure: the
ancient advanced meditation technique Wing of the Sun!” Following his words, the curtains on both ends of the stage were drawn, exposing the precious object behind it. It looked no different from the common large swords. Its model was full of antiquity and the middle section of its blade had obvious cracks on it, with the tip of the sword missing. Even more so, what caused Leylin to slightly lose his spirit was the drop of golden blood on the blade of the broken sword, which looked as if it contained a life of its own. It took the form of a spiral and shone with radiance continuously.

“As you all know, once a Magus surpasses the Morning Star realm, reaching an even scarier and more unpredictable state, their lives will begin to sublime. Even the smallest cell of their blood will contain a deep secret about themselves, so much so that they may achieve blood reincarnation…”

The host’s voice carried a slight excitement, “And this broken sword, had once been in contact with a little bit of the blood of the ancient Sun’s child! Through our appraiser’s verification, although the blood on the broken sword has completely lost its life energy, this sole drop of blood holds the information about the meditation technique of the Sun’s child from that time!”

“Sun’s child!!!”

As soon as the host spoke, Leylin somewhat lost his cool. It wasn’t rare for the relic of such a powerful person from ancient times to contain some fragments of information. Even the Lamia fingerbone could forcibly catalyse the formation of a soul by the means of its own radiation. But to contain the complete information about the meditation technique was extremely rare. Based on Leylin’s conjecture, the Sun’s child must have had a premonition about his death when he was facing his enemy and thus deliberately left a legacy behind. Only, what amazed Leylin was that he had never expected to see a
relic of that Sun’s child, who was amongst the ranks of Quicksand, in this place.
Somewhere, he had a feeling that maybe, his fate with the ancient bloodline Warlocks, the Quicksand Organisation, was not so short-lived.
“We can guarantee that the meditation technique Wing of the Sun is absolutely complete! The ancient top meditation technique is still a great reference for us even if we are unable to practise it! Moreover, although the bloodline of the Sun’s child on the sword has completely lost its life energy, you never know, there may still be certain spells that can restore its vitality. If it’s like that, I’m afraid the Warlock structure of the entire central continent will be revised……”
The host was trying his best to delude them, “For this auction item, the starting bid 200 million magic crystals, or other equivalent resources!”
After the host finished his sentence, the scene became calm and actually fell into a short, temporary awkward silence.
The numerous Magi, all stared at the broken sword and its golden spiral which was on the elevated platform, with unknown thoughts.
“Huff…” Leylin gave a long sigh, “If Mentor Gilbert was here, he’d buy this at all costs…”
Of course, Leylin was sure of one thing, the auction would be conducted for three days and a valuable item would be revealed every day at the last moment; this advanced meditation technique was only the cheapest among the three precious treasures.
The advanced meditation technique, Wing of the Sun, was similar to Kemoyin’s pupil, a technique specially customised for individual Warlocks. The criteria to practise it was to possess the bloodline of the ancient Sun’s child. According to Leylin’s intelligence and knowledge, ever since the ancient Sun’s child of Quicksand died, there had not been any news of the birth of similar bloodlines in
the entire central continent. Hence, the Wing of the Sun meditation technique was at most useful for Magi as a reference, causing its worth to plummet. Also, the blood on the sword had lost its life energy and could not be used as a bloodline to be introduced into Magus bodies and passed down. Even though it looked very precious, its real worth was in fact not much. Of course, the relatively low worth of this item was only when compared to the other two treasures. To Leylin, the price of this treasure was still too high to afford.
What a pity…” Leylin sighed. If he was willing to use up all of his magic crystals, and sell a few more precious materials on top of that, he would stand a chance in bidding for the Wing of the Sun. Even though that was good, it did not quite fit his requirements as his main intentions were still to obtain the astral stone. However, if Duke Gilbert was here, he would be willing to offer a sky-high price for the Wing of the Sun, even if was only going to be useful for research!

A higher-ranked bloodline as well as a top-notch meditation technique! These were temptations that a Warlock would easily succumb to.

Upon getting hold of this precious object, they must have exhausted all possible methods until it was no longer possible to exploit the bloodline of the Sun’s Child, before reluctantly putting it up for auction. If not, they would never have minded transforming into a Warlock family. As far as Leylin was aware, there wasn’t a single Warlock Family on the central continent that could reach rank 6. In other words, if one was really able to combine the blood of the Sun’s Child together with the meditation technique, a Breaking Dawn bloodline Warlock would be able to gradually rise to power in the central continent!

“A loss in such a bloodline is totally impossible to recreate in the
present central continent!” Leylin remembered that he had received data on fusion and modification of bloodlines from Quicksand Castle.

“If I were to make use of the modification technique, together with the genetic reformation function of my A.I. Chip, there might just be a possibility of success….” However, even if it succeeded, this would only produce yet another ancient bloodline treasure for Leylin. He already had a pure ancient red dragon bloodline on hand. However, it was a pity that after a long period of research, he had realised that he was still unable to transform his own bloodline. All the research on synthesising and modifying bloodlines had gone down the drain.

A Warlock’s bloodline did not only exist within his body, it was also merged with his spirit. Even Leylin was at a loss for how to deal with this. Ultimately, it is only when one has advanced to the Morning Star realm, and when their spiritual force has undergone continuous advancements, then can they come into contact with the spirit itself. As a result, even if Leylin was able to restore the bloodline of the Sun’s Child, he would not have the desire to bid for this treasure. As a matter of fact, his interest in Wing of the Sun far exceeded his interest in the Sun’s Child bloodline.

“It’s an advanced ancient meditation technique!” It was indeed a higher level bloodline meditation technique as compared to Kemoyin’s Pupil. Even though they were both bloodline meditation techniques, the Wing of the Sun was evidently at a much higher level.

Kemoyin’s Pupil only had a total of four levels due to the origin of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Bloodline. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent was originally a rank 4 creature, limiting the progress of a Warlock who would partake in this technique. Since no Kemoyin Warlock
could cross rank 4, there was no method to attain a higher-ranked meditation technique.
On the other hand, the Sun’s Child was different. It was originally a Rank 6 creature, hence allowing a Warlock of its bloodline to reach rank 6 as well, thus engendering the highest level of meditation techniques.
Customarily, in the central continent, a meditation technique with four levels that could let its practitioner attain the Morning Star realm, to be called a high-grade meditation technique.
Furthermore, an advanced meditation technique of at least level 6 was needed for a Magus to peek at the path to the Breaking Dawn realm.
Naturally, Leylin would not be contented with just a mere rank 4 Kemoyin’s Pupil. His ultimate goal was to reach Breaking Dawn and higher levels to reach immortality! Hence, the Wing of the Sun was attractive. At least it could serve as a model upon which the Kemoyin’s Pupil could be improved on.
Yet… Would it really be worth it to pay such a high price for a meditation technique that would merely work as a reference?
Leylin shook his head, attempting to erase the thought from his mind.
‘Meditation techniques are not tangible, but only information made up of words and pictures. Since the Azure Mountain clan is certain that the meditation technique is complete, they’re bound to have a copy of the information as well as the bloodline of the Sun’s Child. Perhaps I can start working from that area...’
Leylin placed his hand on his chin as his thoughts wandered away.
After moments of silence, the Magi below finally responded.
“Two hundred and ten million magic crystals!” An aged voice called out from the VIP lounge.
As if it was a signal, the crowd immediately quoted their prices, practically flooding the screen.
This was after all an advanced meditation technique coupled with an ancient bloodline, thus it was priceless. Even though there was not much use for it, the value of this precious object for collection purposes had way exceeded its base price.

In addition, the vastness and mystery of spells were not something that current Magi could explore completely. Perhaps, in one of the hidden corners of the central continent, there lay a powerful technique that was capable of activating the Sun’s Child bloodline. If that was the case, by buying this precious object at a low price today, one could earn a fortune in the future!

This was clearly what the majority of the Magi here thought. This definitely included those Morning Star Magi who were rich and imposing, willing to buy this just for their own research.

Even though the Azure Mountain auction house was unlikely to attract Magi of such levels, there were bound to be some exceptions.

One such exception was within a VIP lounge that was distinctly larger than the room that Leylin was in. The Magus inside had an emaciated face and silver eyes. He was wearing the Devil’s Cry robe and smiled, “I didn’t expect to come across such a precious object!”

He didn’t use the device to quote his price and instead said softly, “One billion magic stones!”

Strangely, even though his voice was soft, his comment was heard by the Magi in the entire auction venue, leading to a halt in the quoting of prices.

Alas, one that could quote such a high price was obviously a Morning Star Magus. Who else would dare to compete with him?

On the other hand, when Leylin heard this voice, his entire body suddenly stiffened.

‘Demon Hunter Cyril!’ Even though the tone of the voice was different, Cyril had left a deep impression in Leylin’s mind. His
voice was recorded in his A.I. Chip and hence he recognised the other party immediately.

‘I can’t believe that even he is here.’ After calming himself, Leylin placed his hand on his chin and smiled bitterly, ‘In order to get such cheap auction prices, you can even scare the Magi in this venue. Demon Hunter Cyril, you are still as braven as before.’

Even so, he did not intend to stand out to make a complaint. Leylin understood that he should keep a low profile when he was at a disadvantage.

A Morning Star Magi was indeed a great deterrent. Once Cyril quoted his price, the entire auction house became silent.

“…. Okay! Since no one is increasing the price, I’ll announce that this top-notch meditation technique will belong to the Lord in the first VIP lounge!” The host laughed dryly, as he started to mediate the scene.

In reality, his heart ached. According to him, this precious object should not only be worth one billion magic crystals but instead, it should at least worth more than two billion magic crystals. It was definitely possible to sell it at such a high price judging from the attendance of high level Magi in this venue.

Now? Even the Oakheart Clan was willing to offer more than one billion magic crystals for this meditation technique. This was definitely a loss.

“My dear lord, your loot is here, please follow me to make the transaction. Also, the guardian of our clan would like to see you.”

At this moment, in the first lounge, Serene bowed respectfully and even her voice became a little shaky.

“Okay, I will go.” Cyril waved his hand.

Even a Morning Star Magi was required to follow the rules. His rash behaviour would only lead to the Morning Star Magi of the Oakheart Clan warning him.

In actual fact, he only had this one chance to do such a thing. If he
dared to do it again, the Azure Mountain King would definitely become hostile. But it was clear that deep in his heart he did not feel remorseful at all. What was reputation worth to him? Tangible benefits were the most important. Once he complied and guaranteed that he would not do such a thing again, he could easily obtain such top-notch meditation technique. So why not do it? Demon Hunter Cyril was originally more crafty and despicable than demons. This was also the exact reason why other Magi feared him. As a result of Cyril’s actions, the day’s auction ended on a bad note. Adding on that the attendance of Demon Hunter Cyril spread like wildfire, if the Azure Mountain auction house did not guarantee that such a thing would not happen again, they would even incur more losses. After all, who dared to compete with a Morning Star Magus? If such a thing happened in each auction then the Azure Mountain auction house should just sell the items off to them instead. As a result of the guarantee of the Azure Mountain Clan, the second day of auction went on as usual. Leylin, too, came to the venue and watched emotionlessly as each precious object was bought by others. The day before, Serene had hinted at the appearance of the astral stone. This was the exact reason why Leylin merely watched in silence throughout the entire auction. Towards the end of the auction, the host then announced, “This is today’s most precious item: astral stone!” Finally, Leylin was able to see his ultimate goal at this auction on stage, the astral stone. The existence of the astral stone was widely known in the Magus
World, but not many had laid eyes on it. A shiny black stone that resembled any other was brought on stage. Upon close inspection, the surface of the stone reflected soft rays of blue light, as if it was starlight.

“The astral stone is a necessity for interplanar experiments! This stone weighs 1582 grams and its density is very high. This is known to be the highest quality stone within this century. It has an abundance of energy and is definitely the best choice for astral gate experiments!” The host rambled on about the astral stone non-stop. While the astral stone was indeed worth less than the top-notch meditation technique from the day before, the application of this stone was widely known, hence the popular demand.
“This is an astral stone. The base price is set at 200 million magic crystals, and every increment set at a minimum of 1 million. You may use resources of equal value to make up any difference! Let the auction begin.”

The presenter waved his hand and the huge screen in front of Leylin lit up immediately in bright colors. Watching the numbers on the screen clambering up bit by bit, Leylin’s mouth curved into a bitter smile. His guess had come true; this astral stone was one of the three most valuable items up for auction. The price had soared to an outrageous amount.

It looked like he did not have enough magic crystals at the moment and would need to sell some of his resources. Leylin was glad that he had no lack of good materials on him. Were he to sell them all, he would still qualify to join the bid.

“1 billion magic crystals!” Leylin immediately yelled his bid with an announcement device in the hopes of scaring off the rest.

“1.1 billion magic crystals!” Another bid was heard immediately. It came from VIP lounge 1. Although no other announcements were made after the first, who didn’t know that the occupant of the VIP lounge was the Morning Star Magus Demon Hunter Cyril?

Leylin stroked his chin and his eyes gleamed with traces of caution. “Ha ha! Cyril, aren’t you embarrassed to bid so low?”

Another voice was heard from VIP lounge 2. Soon after, the screen
refreshed to reflect a new price, “2 billion magic crystals!”
“Huh? This conduct, another Morning Star Magus?”
Leylin’s mouth twitched in a bitter smile, ”Trouble is brewing…..”
Even though he was confident in his wealth, he was not egotistical
enough to compare himself to someone at the Morning Star realm.
Moreover, with these two Morning Star Magi nipping at each other,
wouldn’t he be courting death if he were to get involved any
further?
Yes, the astral stone was truly valuable and losing the opportunity
of acquiring it was extremely unfortunate, but compared to his own
mortal life, Leylin knew exactly which was more important. He
sensibly gave up on contending for it.
On the other hand, Leylin did not lose all hope. There was still the
anonymous barter that he was looking forward to after the auction
was completed.
In VIP lounge 1, Cyril’s face hardened the moment he head the
voice of the other party. “This voice… It must be Emma, that
bitch!”
He may have been swearing at her, but his face was actually filled
with endless fear.
Blood Duchess Emma, was well-known for her crazy and savage
ways. The other party was too a Morning Star Magus, how could
she not show him respect?
“3 billion magic crystals!” The astral stone was an important
element in the current stage of his astral gate experiments. In the
near future, there was a possibility that he could uncover the
coordinates of the devils, hence his dire need for it. He knew he
had to bid successfully for it, even if it meant paying a sky-high
price.
As such, Cyril yelled his bid reluctantly, as if his heart was
bleeding.
“Haha… Cyril, your pocket is as poor as your city of sins, I bid 4
billion!” Emma, who was seated at the opposite side, had clearly received some unknown information, hence she was determined to not give in.

The price for this astral stone clearly surpassed its actual value, which made him reluctant to bid. Yet, he was evidently embarrassed by Emma’s mockery a moment ago.

“4.5 billion magic crystals!” Cyril immediately shouted out. Deep in his heart, he made up his mind that if the opposite party dared to bid further, he would give up. He would let her pay the unnecessary magic crystals for it.

“Haha… Cyril, do you think I am going to bid further? Wrong, this astral stone is not such a special item after all. It is no big deal if I were to let go and let you have it.”

Unexpectedly, Emma withdrew and stopped bidding, causing him to feel a rush of anger.

“Honesty, to spend 4.5 billion magic crystals on an astral stone… Cyril, where has your astuteness gone?” she ridiculed sarcastically, adding salt into his wound.

“This bitch! One day… ONE day…” Cyril clenched his teeth in rage, wisps of blood clouding his silver pupils.

The horrifying ripples had caused the other guests in other VIP lounges to feel uneasy.

“Emma, just you wait and see…” after tossing these last words at her, Cyril stood up and left in a hurry, not wanting to linger for another second.

Leylin, on the other hand, upon hearing the name, was slightly taken aback. ‘Blood Duchess? Isn’t that Freya’s mentor?’

Blood Duchess Emma was a Morning Star Warlock, the second elder of the Ouroboros Clan.

‘If it’s her, it’s no wonder she couldn’t see eye to eye with Cyril…’ Leylin drew a deep breath. ‘I didn’t expect someone of such status to be present here. I am sure she has just arrived, otherwise, the
Sun’s child bloodline would not have been acquired by him…’
After the favourable harvest from the Quicksand pocket dimension some time back, Leylin and company had immediately relayed all specific details to Duke Gilbert.
Especially Leylin. With the presence of Cyril, they were sure they would never have the chance to step foot in the Forgotten Land again. Therefore, he laid out the route map clearly and specifically, paying special attention to the possibility that Quicksand Castle was the core of the pocket dimension.
His scheme was for the Ouroboros Clan to hanker after the Quicksand pocket dimension. In fact, if they were to successfully seize it from the hands of Cyril, Leylin would then have the opportunity to conduct deeper exploration.
One single pocket dimension would fail to stir the greed of the Ouroboros Clan. However, what if the location in question was an ancient pocket dimension with another pocket dimension in within?
Especially since this pocket dimension was built by Ancient Warlocks at a time where rare natural resources were scarce.
Other than the useful information, Leylin’s bloodline crystals and Blood Vulture egg, as well as Robin’s own harvest, had left Duke Gilbert delighted.
As such, upon his return, Gilbert immediately invited the other two elders in the hope of joining together to go up against Cyril.
According to rumors, after the showing of Ouroboros Clan’s power, not only had they shamed Cyril thoroughly, they also managed to be allocated a share of the pocket dimension, as well as priority purchasing power, amongst other benefits.
Hence, from here on, the relationship between Cyril and the three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks would naturally deteriorate.
In the past, when the 3 allied against Cyril, they had almost defeated him.
Due to this same reason, Cyril had never forgotten about Leylin or the other two Warlocks. In fact, he had even covertly issued warrants for their arrest. This was one reason why Leylin had holed up in his territory bitterly for almost a century. Learning of the positive outcome of the situation at the higher level, Leylin was truly relieved that he could attend the auction held the next day, plus the anonymous barter thereafter. Otherwise, he would have given up on the idea of attending the exchange.

The frightening probing abilities of a Morning Star Magus could not be underestimated. If Cyril had been present throughout, there was no way Leylin could stay anonymous for long. And once he was discovered by Cyril, he knew his life would be as insignificant as an ant, being crushed by with just a single finger. Now, armed with the knowledge that Emma was here, Leylin did not have the slightest amount of intentions of acknowledging her. If it were Duke Gilbert, he would have stepped up with warm greetings, in the hopes that he might, in a way or two, help Leylin to acquire some astral stones or such, but Emma? Forget it. She might have been an elder of the Ouroboros Clan, but they were from different factions, which might make the meeting awkward. His thoughts of Emma naturally led to those of Freya. This female Warlock was indeed lucky. After the positive transaction of bloodline crystals with Leylin, she had successfully managed to save her family. And thereafter, there were rumours of her research in seclusion. It was as if she was attempting to break through the bottleneck to advance.

It was known that, once a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock was promoted to the rank of the Morning Star realm, their bloodlines would be purified. This method was naturally preferred compared to that of obtaining it through the easier method of having a pure-
blooded Warlock join the family. What was worth mentioning was the fact that, among the female Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan, Freya was considered to be one with discipline and self-respect. The only negative characteristic was her eagerness to be first.  

Leylin stroked his jaw and pondered over the rumours about her decision enter seclusion. It was as if she was trying to stimulate and break through the Hydro Phase. Due to this reason, Leylin was even more adamant about not revealing himself to Emma. He dreaded thinking about the possibilities of her forcing him to become a part of the family for the purpose of her advancement. How awful would that be? 

On the other hand, if he had been discovered by Cyril first, by hook or by crook, he would definitely seek Emma out and ask for help. Any terms and conditions then would have been agreed upon, as it was all worth keeping his life. 

You could only have one life. Once that was lost, nothing else mattered. In such cases, Leylin’s integrity was relegated to the back seat. 

With such misgivings, Leylin went low-profile once again. He made sure his spiritual force compression technique and transfiguration spells were in full operation, and made sure his energies were not discovered by the other two Magi. 

Luckily, that fateful night, Leylin felt enormous energy undulations transmitted from far beyond Azure Mountain City. It was not only him, many Magi were distracted by it. Although they were very far away, the energy undulations were frightening and caused Leylin to feel somewhat suffocated. 

The lower ranked Magi felt nothing. Only those who were close to the Morning Star realm could notice and be mindful of that terror. Soon after, Leylin received news of Demon Hunter Cyril and Blood Duchess Emma’s departure from Azure Mountain City. He secretly
breathe a sigh of relief. With such volatile elements, the fewer there were in his life, the better. This was probably the similar mindset of the other Magi. Under such circumstances, in the presence of multiple Morning Star Magi, there was no way they could have acquired their desired treasures with their limited magic crystals. What were they to do if one of the two-eyed what they wanted? A stifled atmosphere had hung over the auction these past two days. The most dissatisfied of them all was the Oakheart Clan. With the intrusion of the law-breaking Cyril, their revenue had suffered a steep decline. The third day, the auction erupted in full force, as if finally free of suppression and mounting pressures. The degree of liveliness far exceeded Leylin’s expectations.
The third day of the auction commenced with much flair. The lower ranked Magi had been suppressing their enthusiasm and saving their magic crystals to the best extent of their abilities, hence once the pressure was diffused, they exploded into action. Every item was sold for a high price, so much so that Leylin was quite surprised by the number of wealthy Magi that emerged. Some were in the VIP lounges, but there were also others amongst the crowd. It seemed like although he was very rich, he did not belong to the group of the most wealthy.

Leylin witnessed one of the Magi in the crowd buy a treasure for more than 100 million magic crystals nonchalantly. The cause for this transaction was the ever-so-common jealousy of a love rival! When he began socialising with others, Leylin learnt that this young kid was the direct descendant of a Morning Star Magus who possessed a lot of resources and influence. It was natural for there to be a lot of magic crystals at his disposal. However, he hadn’t dared to be arrogant in the face of the two Morning Star Magi present, and had hence only revealed himself now.

Leylin also saw Vance, the patriarch of the Rolithe Family, successfully buy a spell formation that was optimized to increase the chances of advancing to the Crystal Phase by 20%. At the same time, he’d also bought a lot of other supplementary materials for
the process. It seemed like he’d reached the bottleneck and was ready to advance.
Leylin stole a glance at their party. According to the Coin of Destiny’s guidance, the item he needed to acquire now was probably in their possession.
The last great treasure up for auction was top-grade magic equipment, the Tri-Python Ring!
It was rumoured that the bodies and souls of three ancient cold pythons were extracted to cast this piece of magic equipment. Not only was its spatial storage boundless, it could even withstand three full attacks of a Morning Star Magus!
A full-power attack from an ancient Morning Star Magus was known to be able to kill anything under that level. Such spells had the ability to blot out all light; they could crush mountains and destroy rivers!
To possess the ability to withstand up to three such attacks, this Tri-Python Ring was undoubtedly the most precious treasure up for auction this time.
Even Morning Star Magi would be envious of its ability. This piece of top-grade magic equipment would be a great advantage in a battle between Magi of the same rank. It could flip the heavens and the earth for its user’s sake.
Its value climbed steadily up to the last bid of 8.6 billion by a Magus from a VIP lounge.
According to Leylin’s estimates, that party could be a Morning Star Magus. In fact, it might even turn out to be the Azure Mountain King.
In spite of the hiccups along the way, this Azure Mountain auction had concluded successfully. The emergence of the Tri-Python Ring had created strong waves that continuously spread even to the surrounding areas.
Some lower ranked Magi began to leave the city, heading back
home to continue with their own research or embarking on another journey. With the decreasing number of Magi, the city seemed to have regained some order. The original chaos had considerably eased up, and the situation became peaceful. Leylin and some other high ranked Magi, on the other hand, were waiting in silence. To them, this auction was similar to an appetizer. The actual main course was yet to be presented. On the surface, it looked like the Oakheart Clan had recalled their elite patrol. However, the actual fact was that the level of caution had increased threefold. It was only that the security concerns were now internal. Everything was set up for the anonymous barter. The anonymity of the event meant that many Magi were now disposing of stolen goods. Hence, there were going to be many precious high-quality treasures offered for an attractively low price. The Oakheart Clan would guarantee safety and confidentiality of both parties. On the other hand, they would not be held responsible for the consequences and disputes that would arise after a successful transaction. In a room in a small hotel, Leylin who was in the midst of meditation opened his eyes. A flower-shaped secret imprint emerged from his contact book, bringing with it the voice of Serene. “Sir Blood Rogue! The anonymous barter will take place tonight. As for the venue…” This woman had been attempting to rope Leylin into the Oakheart Clan, and had kept a close tab on his whereabouts. Still, Leylin would not let her have her way. Not only had his past been hidden flawlessly, his attitude towards her left him neither close nor distant, causing her great distress. Finally, he had even changed his accommodations. The only way to contact him now was via the secret imprint, which left her helpless.
When night fell, Leylin changed his outward appearance once again. Following the directions he was given, he arrived at a spot outside Azure Mountain City. Unexpected incidences were not rare at such private events. Even under the watchful eyes of the Azure Mountain King, the Oakheart Clan did not dare hold the event within the city, choosing an outside venue instead. As such, even if anything were to happen, the damages would be reduced to a minimum.

‘Huh? There are other Magi too?’ After his descent, Leylin noticed another Magus who had also just arrived a step ahead of him, walking towards an unremarkable cave.

“Welcome!” Two old men wearing the Oakheart Clan uniform emerged. Without any questions, they handed over a black mask. The Magus nodded his head without replying, accepted the mask, and headed in.

Without the need for a number, command, or even an invitation card, any Magus would be granted access as long as they knew of this entrance. In addition, they would be given items to help conceal their identities. It was this persistent and tight secrecy that allowed the anonymous barter to be successful for so long.

According to Serene, the entire location had been masked by a cover-up spell formation. With these matching face masks and their own identity concealment, even their genders were difficult to make out. Even Morning Star Magi could not see through these disguises.

Leylin’s mouth curved into a bitter smile.

“In reality…” He stopped mid-sentence, and stepped over to take the mask from the old man before proceeding to head inside. Both these old men were at the Crystal Phase, and yet were stationed to guard the entrance. The Oakheart Clan had indeed invested heavily into this event.
‘A.I. Chip! Mobilize the atomic microscope and begin scanning!’ Leylin commanded in silence.
[Beginning Scanning! Microscope engaged… *Beep!* Abnormality detected!]
The reply from the A.I. Chip was swift. Leylin noticed within his line of sight that on the black mask were innumerable ladybugs flooding the surface. These were the same creatures that he’d seen at the auction.
In fact, their numbers far exceeded what he had seen previously. They were even cautiously entering Leylin’s body.
‘Hehe… This is the true Oakheart Clan!’ Leylin shook his head.
The spell formation enveloping the entire barter was genuine. The concealment runes on the mask were also genuine. Otherwise, it wouldn’t have by-passed the inspection of the many Magi. However, the Oakheart Clan had secretly planted these ladybugs all over the event area, including on all the masks.
They hadn’t dared to tamper with the spell formation for fear of being discovered by Morning Star Magi. However, with these ladybug spies, which were ten thousand times smaller than a speck of dust, everything that every Magus did, and all other matters regardless of importance would ultimately be known by them.
‘I’m afraid even Morning Star Magi won’t be able to detect these…’ Leylin sighed, and a layer of fine black powder appeared on his hand.
As if drawn by some unknown attractive force, the ladybugs advanced in the direction of the powder, and soon lumped together into a ball.
‘A.I. Chip! Begin imitation of the organism’s energy signature, issuing misleading information!’
The A.I. Chip’s feedback was immediate.
[Mission received. Beginning…] Leylin had been low-key for these past three days, and hadn’t
bought anything at the auction. He had held back due to fear of the espionage of these bugs. However, he hadn’t been idle at all. He’d made use of the A.I. Chip’s abilities to continuously scan and collate data about these bugs, learning all there was to know. Knowing the tendencies of large organisations, if they’d rigged the auction to their advantage, there was no chance they wouldn’t do the same with the anonymous barter. In fact, the surveillance would even be much stricter. Therefore, Leylin had prepared well with his own customized potion on top of his disguise. After the powder took effect, Leylin could see through the microscopes that the ladybugs had slowed to a languid crawl. Soon, they all moved back to the mask. Leylin was pleased and smiled. Walking in, he slid the mask on. At the same time, a mysterious current and fine undulations emitted from his body. At the huge barter event, in the centre of a hidden area.

“Reporting to Grandfather! According to feedback from the stardust bugs, everything is working normally!” The present chief of Oakheart reported respectfully to a middle-aged Magus with blue hair.

“Hmm! There are rumours about some convicts from the north heading towards us here. They had stolen some local treasure with intentions to trade and dispose of their stash. Be alert and pay special attention!” The blue haired Magus spoke indifferently, without the slightest degree of power and influence, yet it made the chief of Oakheart nod his head ceremoniously.

“Do not worry. Under the strict surveillance of the stardust bugs, nothing can stay hidden, regardless of the methods they use!” There was a reason for the chief’s confidence. This species of stardust bug was a unique find from another plane. The Azure Mountain King had stumbled upon it during one of his
interplanar experiments. Thereafter, through intensive research, not only had he successfully tamed this organism, he had also given it the ability to work as a probe, becoming the secret trump card of the Oakheart Clan. In the entire clan, only the Azure Mountain King and the current elders knew of this.

Given their minuscule size, their energy undulations could not be detected without a special instrument. Thus, even Morning Star Magi couldn’t find out about them as they were spread everywhere undetected.

The knowledge that these presumptuous Morning Star Magi had the impression that their concealment skill was flawless, not knowing that everything was being exposed, made the chief smile heartily.

Of course, armed with such stardust bugs, he had even used them for his own benefits, to peek at the naked body of female Magi and had even kept the images. However, he was careful not to reveal such details for risk of angering the other Morning Star Magi, and having them turn on the Oakheart Clan and razing the entire clan to the ground.
“You’re in charge of this. The opponent is merely a Magus at the Crystal Phase; with your secret guards, you must take him down,” the Azure Mountain King spoke nonchalantly.

“Understood, Grandfather!” The chieftain nodded before bowing and leaving.

After acquiring all the information, he would first let these fugitives dispose of their goods before he went forth to hunt them down and receive the bounty. This method of taking advantage of both parties was not a foreign concept to him.

If wealth was being accumulated quickly, it would usually involve bloodshed. Even if the Azure Mountain King was a Morning Star Magus, the Oakheart Clan would not have been able to develop so quickly without these methods.

The Oakheart chieftain’s heart was aflame as he impatiently arrived at a control room, rubbing his fingers. “How many Morning Star Magi will come to the anonymous barter this time? I’m looking forward to it…”

“This is the central control room. Commanding all daughter elements to transmit gathered images,” he pressed a crystal and ordered.

Quickly enough, numerous fragmented projections formed a screen with many little squares on it. On the surface were the outer appearances of the Magi participating in the barter, as well as their
true appearances.
Beside the images of some of the exceptionally beautiful female Magi were even full-body images. Of course, they were without clothing. The chieftain’s eyes widened, and he looked excited.
What he did not notice was that in one of the parts in the corner, Leylin’s character had a completely foreign face.
The barter was held in a large karst cave underground. The ground was filled with powerful runes and brands, emanating formidable energy waves.
The mask Leylin had on gave off a black layer of light that resonated with the spell formation on the ground, hiding his body in darkness.
From the outside, all the Magi who entered were black blobs of light, and it was difficult to even distinguish their sexes.
In addition, the strength of the spell formation was something Leylin had never seen before. He could not help but order the A.I. Chip to record the pattern down.
It was evident that this was a spell formation that only Morning Star Magi were able to set up. It was even able to ward off the probing of other similarly-ranked Magi.
This had been verified by the many Magi who had participated in such events in the past.
It was a pity, though. Even if the Oakheart Clan hadn’t tampered with the spell formation, they had surreptitiously placed a deadly spy on all their bodies.
Bugs that were ten thousand times smaller than specks of dust would not be discovered even if on someone’s body. On top of that, these stardust bugs had the innate skill of concealing themselves.
With the Oakheart clan’s nurture and specialised training, these stardust bugs had already turned into dreadful spies that could tell the identities of every single Magus in the trading event.
“So sad…” Leylin strolled along with the numerous black blobs of light, feeling regretful. He had yet to do much research on this type of bug. He could only achieve the effect of hiding himself, but it would require a lot of time to trace the origin and even steal the others’ footage from the central control room. Perhaps, he might need to even develop his own stardust bugs and sneak them in to achieve that goal.

All this required time! However, he only had three days at the auction. It was already amazing to be able to accomplish what he had done. Wasn’t that obvious from how the many Morning Star Magi here had yet to realise the secret of the stardust bugs and how their identities were completely exposed?

When the black blobs of light in the cave increased in number, a crisp bell sounded, attracting the attention of multiple Magi to a circular stage at the centre. Light began to flicker there, revealing a blond middle-aged Magus.

“The many of you may or may not know me. Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Leo Oakheart, the host of the Azure Mountain auction. I shall also be the host of this anonymous barter…” Leo’s expression was brimming with a warm smile.

“I’ll cut to the chase. As the anonymous barter only takes place for one night, I shall not waste any more of your precious time. There are two parts to this event. First, the Magi who need to trade items can come onto the stage in order to show the item you wish to sell, and declare what you hope to obtain in exchange. Each person is limited to three items! When the time for the public exhibition is over, next will be the trade. Everyone may communicate privately, but this place does not permit any fights, and once you are out of range of this cave our Oakheart clan will not be held responsible for any of the items you have traded!”

Nearing the end, Leo’s voice became stern. As if to complement his words, a large pressure emanated from within the spell formation.
on the ground like a huge mountain.

“Please do not worry. All of us are aware of the Oakheart clan’s rules,” a low voice sounded from within the surrounding Magi. It was evident that some of these Magi had been here a few times.

“Good!” Leo nodded, and yielded his position on the platform.

*Swish!* The moment he left the stage, three streaks of black darted forth.

It was obvious that these Magi were all experienced. They knew that it was most advantageous to go up first, since what they needed might very well be in the hands of the next Magus. The sooner they went up, the easier it would be to obtain the items, and their own items would not be traded off so quickly as well.

“Hehe… my apologies…” The black streak in the middle was lightning-quick, and reached the platform a moment before the other two. A robotic voice sounded from the black streak, and it was difficult to identify the gender of this person.

Upon seeing this, the other two streaks of black light hesitated and could only retreat. They knew the rules of the Oakheart clan, and that if they did not obey they would be in trouble. Hence, they did not have any plans of doing things by force or arguing.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, what I have brought to exchange here is an ornament, the “Forbidden Ancient Clock”. In exchange, I require…” The moment he spoke, the audience was in an uproar.

“The forbidden clock? Isn’t that the inheritance of the Lucca clan in the north? Why is it here?”

“Rumours have been circulating recently that a few fearless Magi snuck into the clan and stole it, and then scattered till they were near the Azure Mountain. He can’t be one of them, can he?”

Leo, who was watching on, was also slightly surprised. He had not expected the other party to make their move so quickly.

With a thought, countless stardust bugs crawled all over the Magus’ body in secret. With them on his body, that Magus would definitely
be unable to escape from the Oakheart clan.
“The Forbidden Ancient Clock? A.I. Chip!” Leylin, who was under
the stage, was similarly startled and quietly issued a command.
[The Forbidden Ancient Clock. One of the mysteries inherited
from ancient times. Said to hold the power of time, and is the
treasure of the northern Lucca clan.]
The A.I. Chip quickly came up with a paragraph and a picture. It
was a vivid image from a piece of parchment paper, within which
was a giant black wall clock. The clock hand was twisted, and gave
a strange sense of confusion.
“The power of time?!” Leylin’s eyes widened. “This is an extremely
advanced power. How can low-ranked Magi control it…”
There were many who knew about the rumours surrounding the
Forbidden Ancient Clock. Many Magi stared at the black blob of
light onstage with fiery gazes.
Or to be precise, they were staring at the item the Magus was
displaying.
It was a round ornament. It looked exactly the same as the picture
of the ancient clock that the A.I. Chip had shown. The surface was
the colour of dark copper and did not seem the least bit special.
“A.I. Chip, scan!” Knowing something was off, Leylin commanded
the A.I. Chip to perform a scan.
[Mission established. Beginning scanning. Beep! Interrupted by an
unknown force field. Scanning unable to proceed.]
On the interface of the A.I. Chip, Leylin saw a strange blank region
at the sides of the black item, preventing the A.I. Chip from
scanning.
After advancing to become a rank 3 Warlock, the A.I. Chip had
also been upgraded. Issues like this, where there was interference
from a force field that prevented it from scanning, hardly happened
anymore.
The only possibility was that this Forbidden Ancient Clock was the
real deal. The A.I. Chip was still unable to draw data on the power of time.
“However, what the A.I. Chip might be unable to probe might not be the clock, but some other mysterious item that causes a similar reaction…” Leylin touched his chin and continued watching the platform.
As expected, that Magus continued to demonstrate a few tricks, proving the authenticity of what he held.
A unique treasure, especially one that was related to the domain of time, was more than enough to be highly sought-after by Magi, even if it was merely a small component.
On top of that, this Magus had not quoted a very high price. Not only could it be exchanged with some precious materials, he even accepted magic crystals. This immediately caused the eyes of all the Magi present to go red in desire.
This was an anonymous barter event. Even if they obtained the item, the Lucca clan might not be able to find them. The number of Magi who had this thought in mind was definitely not small.
At the end, another Magus shrouded in black light used an astronomical price of 15 billion magic crystals as well as numerous precious materials and put pressure on the other competitors, finally obtaining this item.
After obtaining this item, the Magus knew that he could not stay for much longer and quickly left in a hurry. The Magus on stage did the same.
In order to protect customers, the Oakheart clan had even set up a random teleportation formation. Customers leaving would be transported to any area near the Azure Mountain, which even the Oakheart clan would not know. Hence, there was no need to worry about being followed.
However, these things were all just to prevent any attention. Leo had long since planted stardust bugs on their bodies. Not just the
seller; even the Magus who had obtained the item was now under his eye.
This feeling of being in control of another’s fate was truly intoxicating.
Leylin noticed that after those two Magi left, a few others in the cave had secretly followed along. Under the enormous temptation, it was evident that Magi did not mind being robbers every once in awhile.

‘It’s a pity that compared to the Oakheart clan, your methods are too cheap…’ Leylin sighed and glanced up at the stage once more.

When the Magus left the stage, another black ball of light streaked over to the position. A friendly male voice sounded, “Ladies and gentlemen, what I shall now display is…”

Leylin watched on detachedly. The items on display were on a whole other level compared to the auction, and there were many precious items, some of which could even be said to have already been lost to time.

The prices of these medicines were lower. Most Magi demanded that their items be exchanged for other items, and they were even willing to trade for lower-levelled materials.

There were few Magi who were like the one before, agreeing to trade for any item, and even agreeing to take magic crystals. Most clearly indicated what resources they required. If nobody had the item, they would not make the trade no matter how many magic crystals were offered up, and might leave regretfully.

In general, though the items here were top-grade, so the chances of success were not very high.

Halfway through the event, it was finally Leylin’s turn. He muttered
to himself as he headed onto the stage, already sure of which items he was going to exhibit.

An ancient black female crown, as well as a few multi-coloured potions, floated above his hands.

“A piece of magic equipment, the Dark Elven Crown. Extremely effective in concealing large groups. There’s also a blood-igniting potion, divine potions and other top-grade potions!” With a push, these items all began to float, undulating with tempting lustre.

“I wish to obtain an astral stone in exchange for all these, or a means to obtain astral stones…” He had produced these items after careful deliberation. The Blood-igniting potion and the many others were top-grade potions, and with his knowledge as a Potions Grandmaster, it was not difficult to brew them again as long as he had all the ingredients.

The Dark Elven Crown was not of much use to him, and it did not quite match his own strength. It belonged to Twilight Zone, and Magi of the central continent would definitely be unable to tell its origins, which made it perfect for sale.

Bloodline treasures or refined bloodlines held very obvious markings that could very well expose him. Unless it was absolutely necessary, Leylin had no wish to sell them.

It had to be said that the items Leylin had displayed were all very practical. The Dark Elven Crown was a piece magic equipment after all, and was definitely valuable.

However, with all of the items together, he would probably only be able to obtain an astral stone the size of a little finger. If he obtained information on how to acquire them, that would be quite generous.

Leylin watched the Magi downstairs expectantly. To construct an astral gate, it might not even be enough to sell himself away to gather enough astral stones. He had no high hopes, however, as constructing astral gates was something only Morning Star Magi were capable of.
All he wished now was to obtain resources to proceed with the preliminary research. For this reason, he merely needed a few of astral stones.

However, the rarity of astral stones exceeded Leylin’s expectations. Though the items he was exhibiting caused a commotion amongst the Magi, nobody was willing to make this trade. If they planned to use information, they lacked real news. One could not underestimate Magi; they were extremely sensitive to the authenticity of this sort of information. The Magi below were also unable to bring any news that would be able to cheat Leylin.

Leylin sighed inside. All of a sudden, he saw one of the black blobs of light flickering at the corner of his eye.

Elated, he immediately commanded the A.I. Chip to use its scanning abilities at full power, even emanating tempting ripples that lured the stardust bugs on the other party’s body to cooperate. In the A.I. Chip’s field of vision, the figure of an old man vaguely appeared. The image from the stardust bugs that Leylin had coerced might have been blurry, but it was enough for Leylin to recognise who he was. This man was someone he had seen before!

‘It’s Vance, the head of the Roolithe family?’ Leylin immediately let go of his hesitation and turned to leave the stage.

“Ladies and gentlemen, what I wish to trade is…” The moment he left, another Magus came up in a hurry, producing materials gained from high-energy creatures. He went on and on, introducing the item...

When everyone Magus had gone up once, Leo immediately announced that the event would now continue to the free exchange segment. This free exchange meant that all the Magi present would have a place to display the items they wished to sell. It was just like a street stall.
This was also the last chance for Magi who had not profited at all from before.
Even if they could not obtain resources they were in urgent need of, they could also sell things here and exchange for more regular items, such as magic crystals.
However, there were Magi who were already content or had no interest in magic crystals who left the anonymous barter after the first segment by the teleportation spell formation.
Leylin unhurriedly came before an area and displayed the Dark Elven Crown and top-grade potions he had exhibited previously. He mentioned that he would only accept astral stones, and had no intentions of obtaining magic crystals.
He caught a glimpse of Vance, who was hesitating not far away, and grinned.
He was now ‘fishing’. The other party had not come forward for some unknown reason, but he definitely had an astral stone or might have some information about it. All this meant hope to Leylin.
“Sire, may I see what you have?” Unexpectedly enough, before Vance came over, another person had been attracted to his stall. This person had blond hair and a very amiable smile. In the entire floor, the only person not using magic to conceal himself would be Leo.
“So it’s Lord Leo. Of course, but I will only accept astral stones!” Leylin waved his arms, his voice already changed using the A.I. Chip. He was thus not recognised.
“Tsk tsk… This magic equipment’s design is very ancient, and even holds the style of the ancient Gloomy Forest region…” Leo evidently had no eyes for the top-grade potions at Leylin’s stall, but was evidently unwilling to part with this dark elven magic equipment.
“My apologies!” After staring at it for a long while, Leo finally put
down the crown regretfully.
“I have a female cousin who really likes things of this style. On top of that, this is even magic equipment! I hope to buy it, so just tell me a price in terms of magic crystals…”
Leo’s expression showed his sincerity. With his status, it was very rare that he would speak so amicably.
“I’m sorry, but I’m not lacking in magic crystals. I only want astral stones, no matter how small!” Leylin politely rejected him, “I’m sorry, but you’re in the way.”
There were a few Magi waiting to watch a good show here with Leo around, but the blob of light that signified Vance seemed to be shrinking back.
“Hehe… Sire, if you are willing to sell it, you shall gain a good relationship with our Oakheart clan!” Leo focused on the black bundle of light in front of him, eyes seeming to look past the concealing formation at Leylin’s face.
“What? Is the Oakheart clan threatening me?” Leylin’s voice went higher, attracting the attention of many Magi.
“Of course not, you’re misunderstanding! I was just impatient. My apologies!” This had not gone the way Leo had expected. It was the first time a Magus had not taken his clan into account.
The prestige of his clan was the foundation of this very auction. He bowed in apology, but a sinister trace glinted in his eyes.
‘You… you dare treat me this way?’ He silently sent down a command, and Leylin quickly found that the stardust bugs that he had hypnotised into submission had received a command. They would reveal information about his looks and ranking, as well as crawl over his body so that he could be tracked.
‘If this were a regular Magus, they would be in trouble, but to deal with me…’ Leylin sneered inside, ‘A.I. Chip, send fake fluctuations!’
[Mission established, beginning task…] Soon enough, false
information was transmitted to Leo through formless undulations, and successfully sent information on his location.
“Hehe… Sire, here is a portion of an astral stone as compensation!” Already thinking of Leylin as a dead man, Leo magnanimously produced a purple embroidered case and placed it before Leylin.
‘Oh? I’m unexpectedly profiting?’ Leylin was delighted and opened the case, finding an astral stone the size of a quail egg.
“I only wanted to try purchasing with magic crystals. Since you are unwilling to accept it, I can only resign myself and part with this treasure.” Leo’s words were elegant, and he had even given up this astral stone that was even more valuable than anything Leylin had on display. He successfully reversed the image of his clan.
“Oh! I was much too hurried just now. My apologies.” Leylin knew when to stop and placed the cosmic stone back properly, “All these items are now yours!” he pointed at the potions and crown at his stall.
With what he had, he could at most only obtain an astral stone the size of a pinky, but Leo had given him one the size of a quail egg. This meant Leylin had obviously gotten the better end of the deal.
Leo kept everything from the stall properly while observing Leylin. He was especially careful with the Dark Elven Crown, though he was snickering inside.
“You must be proud, huh? Excited? It’s a pity, but you’ll only be taking care of that astral stone for a short period of time before you’ll have to spit it out obediently, and even give me your life while you’re at it!”
leylin had long guessed what Leo was thinking. Since they had already dispatched stardust bugs to find out the background of all the guests, the Oakheart Family had probably done their fair share of killing and seizing treasure. They hadn’t been discovered only because they had concealed it well, and the targets they chose were mostly those without power and support. What interested him more was the other party’s obvious desire for the Dark Elven Crown.
‘The concealing effect of this magical device has a large range. Although it is sufficiently extensive, for a Magus, a range that is too large might become a burden to them, making the concealing function less favourable.’ Leylin stroked his chin and squinted.
‘The only reason why this could attract Leo would be its use in war…’ Only a sneak attack in such a wide area would be the place for this piece of magic equipment to be put to use. Therefore, whatever purpose the other party had purchased this magic equipment for would be revealed soon. Leylin absolutely did not believe what he said about giving it to his cousin or any rubbish of the sort anyway.
‘However, having gained something here, Vance…’ Leylin looked over at his empty stall, and glanced outside at the corner of his eye. Indeed, the sphere of light that represented Vance had left together with the Magi who were crowding around to watch the scene.
earlier on.
Although Leylin still did have items of a higher value, it would evidently be inappropriate to put them up.
However, merely letting him go was clearly not Leylin’s style of doing things. He had now completely understood the rarity and scarcity of astral stones. If he had the chance to obtain one more, he definitely wouldn’t mind.
As time passed, the anonymous barter had come to an end.
Groups of Magi left on the teleportation spell formation one after another, rays of light flashing repeatedly. The entire cave quickly became quiet.
At this moment, Leo appeared, along with 7 or 8 Magi behind him. There seemed to be both old and young Magi, but what remained the same across all of them were their frightful energy waves and astonishing murderous aura.
“I will personally handle the Magus that sold the Forbidden Ancient Clock. Number 6 and 7 will be in charge of the buyer! The other party is only a small fry with little power. As long as we kill him and destroy the evidence, there wouldn’t be any consequences…” Leo swiftly delegated missions, occasionally throwing out a locating crystal.
“As for Number 5, you’ll go after the fellow that took the astral stone and kill him. That is his actual appearance, don’t worry! He only has the strength of an initial Hydro Phase Magus!” They were the secret elite force of the Oakheart Clan, and every Magus was in the Crystal Phase. To Leo, dispatching even one of them to deal with Leylin was already thinking too highly of him.
Number 5 was a bulky middle-aged Caucasian. Upon receiving an image, he discovered that Leylin was a young man with brown curly hair and nodded.
“Also, if possible, try to catch him alive. Our clan’s underwater prison has been short of prisoners of a sufficiently high rank…”
Leo laughed coldly, sending shivers down the spines of the other Magi. The Oakheart Clan’s underwater prison naturally would not be any average place. Even rank 3 Magi in the Crystal Phase that entered would surely face death, and would even be sentenced to the cruelest penalty before dying; even their corpses would be an unbearable sight to behold.

‘Looks like this youngster has greatly offended Sire!’ number 5 secretly thought. He slapped his chest and guaranteed, “Rest assured, Chief! I will definitely arrest him for you to punish!”

“Alright! Excellent!” Leo nodded.

“Is everyone clear about the rules of our Clan? If something goes wrong, immediately destroy all evidence. I’d rather you commit suicide than divulge any information about the clan, or else…” He watched the Magi indifferently. The icy-cold look in his eyes made them sweat profusely.

Although they had already risen to Crystal Phase, as long as they were human, there was bound to be something or someone that they cared about or was their weakness. And all of this was secretly controlled by Leo and the clan.

While every single one of them was strong rank 3 Crystal Phase Magi, they did not dare to disobey Leo’s orders because they were deterred by the Morning Star Magus.

“Great! Let’s set off!” With a wave of his hand, the numerous Magi instantly transformed into rays of light, launching in all directions.

……

At this moment, Leylin was following closely behind Vance. He had already set his eyes on the other party at the auction venue. There would only be one outcome when a scheming Leylin and a clueless Vance come together: an easy target. With the aid of the
A.I. Chip, he immediately marked Vance. He wasn’t far from where Vance’s transmitted location was and had promptly followed him.

“Hmm?” Leylin then discovered that the stardust bugs on him had sent him information.

“Someone is chasing after me, and he’s just a mere Crystal Phase Magus? What a pity Leo didn’t come himself, or else I might be able to take the Dark Elven Crown back…” After the experience with Toram, Leylin now had confidence in his combat capabilities. If an average rank 3 Magus in the Crystal Phase tried all the tactics possible, there still might be a possibility of defeating the enemy. However, if the other party had more than 3 people, then his only option would be to ditch the plan and run.

If Leo alone came for him, he thought of making him stay here forever, but since it was just a Magus in the Crystal Phase… “Since I can’t kill you, I’ll annoy you. A rank 3 Magus in the Crystal Phase probably wasn’t easy to nurture…” Leylin stroked his chin, and an evil look flashed in his eyes.

‘However, I will first have to settle with Vance, or it will be an unexpected factor that could easily result in consequences I can’t have thought of.’ After much thought, Leylin used the Transfiguration spell to transform into the image of Blood Rogue that he had used in the auction venue, and stopped Vance in his tracks.

“Who is it? Oh? Mr Blood Rogue?” Vance examined the Magus in his way, stunned. Even after recognizing that he was Blood Rogue, he did not seem relaxed, but instead became more alert.

“I wonder why Sire is blocking my way?” Vance stared at Blood Rogue in fear. His ability to randomly transmit spell formations and find out his whereabouts was definitely something worth being cautious about. Vance’s heart beat rapidly, and he had a premonition that something
bad was about to happen.
“I am the Magus that was selling the Crown of the Dark Elves previously. It seems that you, Sir, seem to have information about astral stones, so I followed you with hopes of obtaining it…” Leylin spoke politely.
“Oh! It’s you!” Having made a great realization, Vance patted his head, but his expression suddenly changed, “But, how did you recognize me?”
At that time, he had been using the concealment spell formation, and had even put on a few layers of disguise!
“About this, of course…” Leylin smiled, keeping an enigmatic expression. But before he could complete his sentence, he turned behind and his face changed.
There, Number 5 had hidden his face and was swiftly coming after him. using up to them.
“Such waves? It’s a Magus in Crystal Phase. You went so far as to provoke someone of this level?” The old man’s eyes widened, and deployed a few layers of defense in succession.
“He came too quickly, what a waste! With a bit more time, I could lower Vance’s defense levels and attack in one go!” Leylin glanced at Vance, “I’ll have to get this done and over with!”
*Whoosh!* Both of his hands abruptly turned blood red, and huge claws grabbed at Vance, making loud sounds.
“I knew you were up to no good!” Vance hollered, as layers of soil made their way onto his body, forming a humongous clay giant that was more than ten metres tall.
“Kill!” Leylin’s face was expressionless, his eyes filled with a piercing look that was sharp enough to kill. His spiritual force, which was already in Hydro Phase, flowed into the Claws of Blood without end.
The massive clay giant roared, raising his fist to greet the strange bloody claws flying towards him.
*Bam!* The blood red claws were sharp beyond comparison, and instantly scratched the other party’s fist, even leaving a deep groove in his chest.

“Hmph!” Vance’s stifled snort came from within the clay giant, his voice filled with dismay, “Such strength? Aren’t you a Magus in Hydro Phase?”

*Boom!* With that, the clay giant immediately turned and hurriedly escaped.

But why would Leylin let him run off? Numerous potions flew in mid-air, and terrifying elemental particles converged, taking the shape of a jet black sickle.

“Rank 3 potion combination spell Death’s Blade!” Gigantic black sickles slashed through the giant silently, without a single wave. The clay giant’s entire body trembled and he suddenly came to a standstill. Soon after, along with the loud rumble, the clay giant disintegrated in all directions, revealing Vance within.

It was just that Vance now had a more pitiful appearance. Both legs were broken at the knees and blood was gushing profusely, but no matter what spells or healing potions he used, it was still useless.

“No! Don’t come over! I can give you anything you want, I… I still have some clues about astral stones… You’ll definitely need it…” Seeing Leylin inch closer step by step, Vance started to panic, promising a whole heap of things.

He didn’t wish to die. He treasured his life, even more now that he had already collected sufficient materials and was about to advance to the Crystal Phase.

“Blame Jessia if you wish!” Leylin was apathetic. He had never believed in intelligence that was revealed in the face of death, and the Crystal Phase waves that were getting closer also meant that he was running out of time.

“I have enough astral stones, the intelligence means nothing to me. If you don’t have any on you, at most I’ll think of it as doing all of
this for nothing!” Leylin had thought this through clearly. He had gone on the trip with the intention of giving it a try. He didn’t need the intelligence, because with a piece of astral stone with him, there wasn’t a need to risk his life for another imaginary desire.

Therefore, Vance’s fate had actually been set from then.

“Jessia?” Vance paused, recalling his grandson’s cheeky wife. “What has anything got to do with her?”

But he didn’t have to think any further, as a blood-red ray of light threw him into darkness…
Leylin searched the other party’s body at the speed of light. His eyes lit up as he tugged the red gemstone off the other party’s ear. Using his spiritual force to swiftly explore the inside of the pendant, an astral stone the size of a fingernail immediately came into view.

“Brilliant!” As expected, Vance had indeed lied about the intelligence that he had gathered before he died. He had always been carrying the astral stone around. Not only that, there were certain materials that were kept inside the earrings that surprised Leylin.

“The Diamond Jellyfish…” Leylin couldn’t help but smile as he glanced upon something that seemed like a crystal figure. “This is indeed a genuine first-rate material that is capable of increasing the chances of breaking through to the Crystal Phase by 35%. No wonder the other party was so confident in advancing.”

He couldn’t help but take a look at his own condition.


It had been a while since Leylin had advanced to the Hydro Phase. In recent times, he had always used the power of his bloodline to increase his spiritual force, instead of using spiritual force potions.
After a century of disuse, his body’s resistance to potions had almost completely worn out. As long as he used this potion once more, he should be able to fulfill the requirements of Crystal Phase. “Vance has indeed given me many good things!” Not only that, most of the things that Vance had painstakingly prepared to break through to the Crystal Phase were also useful for Leylin. This had indeed saved Leylin a lot of trouble to search for them. He couldn’t help but laugh out loud. The Coin of Destiny had indeed guided him well. Vance was practically his lucky star, although the man himself would not think that way. “Found you!” Number 5 descended in front of Leylin, emitting terrifying Crystal Phase energy waves. “Leo didn’t follow you? This is indeed disappointing!” Leylin looked at Number 5 and shook his head as his face showed regret. “How dare you? Even though you’ve just killed a Hydro Phase Magus, you can’t belittle the dignity of a Crystal Phase Magus!” Number 5’s face hardened as he gathered and concentrated the spiritual force all over his body. “I should inform you that I didn’t just kill a Rank 3 Hydro Phase Magus, I also killed a Magus that just broke through to the Crystal Phase not long ago. “Just in time, the specimen that I had gained previously seemed a little weak, maybe I should gather another one…” Upon hearing Leylin’s words, Number 5’s expression darkened. Number 5 looked at Leylin who laughed indifferently, and suddenly felt like what he’d done was ridiculously dumb. Yet, it was too late as there was a black ray of light concentrating on Leylin’s finger….
“I’ll remember this, Oakheart Clan!” On the other hand, a hawk-nosed Magus, with terrible wounds and even scars that were created from spell formations, was currently fleeing in disarray. Even though he has already reached a high level of the Crystal Phase, and his spiritual force is only a few steps away from peaking the Crystal Phase, he was still unable to defend himself from the combined attacks of three Crystal Phase Magi. He lost tragically and even suffered serious injuries. In particular, the leader Leo could be said to be this Magus’ nightmare. He brought along a high-energy creature which was the main cause of his injuries. What made him even angrier was that he was unable to escape Leo’s clutches even when he changed his aura. This meant that the other party had left a mark on him. Unfortunately, no matter how hard he tried, he was unable to find out what exactly the other party had done. The fact that even his communications equipment was restricted made him realize the disparity between the two parties, driving him insane.

“Oakheart Clan, I will definitely expose your dirty tricks to the entire world!” the hawk-nosed Magus howled in desperation as he soon found himself cornered by the three.

“You’ll never get the chance!” Leo showed a ruthless expression as he concentrated a terrifying amount of energy fluctuations on his body.

In that instant, the shadow of a beast that appeared behind him gradually took form as it stood in front of the hawk-nosed Magus. That creature howled, making an unpleasant sound. This creature seemed to be a combination of a wolf and a squid. It has the head and the body of a wolf and yet its lower body was equipped with white tentacles, complete with suction pads, that sent shivers down one’s spine.
The creature, which had eyes that looked like green lightbulbs, stared intensely at the Magus. At the same time, there were traces of dark green gases being emitted from the suction pads. The gas then concentrated on the hawk-nosed Magus’ body, forming a thick layer of adhesive that caused him to slow down. *Roar!* The tentacles, located at the lower body of the creature, bloomed like a flower as they headed towards the hawk-nosed Magus. Leo watched in pleasure as the creature swallowed the hopeless fellow into its stomach. The creature’s stomach didn’t stop squirming as if it was digesting the entire body.

It was always the same cycle. Those he pursued would first curse him, then fear him and his creature, and ultimately they wouldn’t be able to escape their fate of death. Witnessing these Magi eventually die was always a heartfelt pleasure for him. Even though this current target was not a beautiful and skilled female Magus, the fact that he was from an affluent family was enough to make up for his loss.

“This Hocada Beast…” Suddenly, the creature wrapped itself with its uncountable hands, forming a humongous meat lump and even breathing like a human being. “It’s almost reached the stage of evolution. Once it evolves, I’m afraid…” Leo’s expression darkened.

This unique Hocada Beast originally belonged to his Morning Star Magus grandfather who found it among the debris of another plane. The creature was now merely in its infancy, and could still swallow terrifying Crystal Phase magi. Once it was fully grown and its ability increased, only his Master Grandfather would be capable of subduing it. *Snap!* A sharp and clear sound could be heard from Leo’s chest as he stared blankly.
He couldn’t believe it as he took out a rhombus-shaped crystal from his embrace and saw the surface being filled with cracks and at the same time, it wasn’t shining.
Number 1 and Number 2 couldn’t help but narrowed their eyes.
“This is… the crystal that seals the spirit source. Which comrade perished?”
“Number 5. But how is that possible? The other party is only a Hydro Phase…”
Leo hated this feeling as it meant that things went beyond his control. “Exactly what happened? Which Magus concealed his capability? Or was it merely sheer luck that a high-ranked Magus helped him? Drat, there are so many possibilities….”
Leo’s expression turned ferocious: “Number 1, Number 2… I want you…”
“Buzz!” Just at this time, a subtle energy wave was transmitted from Leo’s ring in the form of a blue ray of light as an image was projected in the sky.
In this image was a blue-haired Magus with eyes, more brilliant than the stars.
“Master Grandfather!” Leo bowed respectfully while Number 1 and Number 2 knelt on the ground as they shivered. The dignity of a Morning Star Magus could not be violated even if you were at the Crystal Phase.
The expression of the Magus in the image was awful: “I felt a portion of the dispatched stardust bugs being destroyed.”
Leo narrowed his eyes. The fact that the Oakheart Clan made use of stardust bugs to spy on each and every move of the Magi was a top secret and the consequences would be dire if this secret was to be exposed.
Even the Azure Mountain King, who was also a Morning Star Magus, would not be able to appease the anger of the numerous Magi.
Adding on, once the female Morning Star Magi found out that their conduct and deeds were…. Leo didn’t dare to even think about it anymore.

“No matter what, this has to be resolved immediately. Luckily, the last information that was sent through the stardust bugs is that the other party is not of a high rank, not even to the extent of nearing the Morning Star realm. Go to the location with these coordinates first, I’ll arrive soon!”

The Azure Mountain King’s tone was pressing and commanding. He’d emphasized on the matter at hand when he hung up.

“These coordinates?” Leo looked at the information that the Azure Mountain King had sent him as his eyes narrowed into a line. He remembered very clearly that these coordinates located the direction that the Magus who had killed Number 5 fled to. The scene of his confrontation with the other party flashed in his head.

He remembered the other party’s calm voice and realised how foolish he was back then. Maybe back then, the other party had already seen through his tricks and found a way to free himself as he awaited Leo’s arrival. Once he thought about it, he’d truly been inane! Leo’s expression dropped instantly, now as gloomy as rain.

“Follow me!” Leo’s voice was very dry, as if he was dying of thirst in the desert. Number 1 and Number 2 looked at each other and helplessly forced a smile.

Based on the conversation just now, they had already guessed that something serious had happened and they were aware of the consequences of knowing too much. This was the sad part of being controlled by someone else. Even if they knew they were at a disadvantage, they would not dare to rebel.

“Humph!” Leo turned his head away coldly as Number 1 and
Number 2 followed closely behind him.
The stardust bugs were top secret. In past history, only the leader of the Oakheart Clan and the Azure Mountain King knew of them. Since these two heard the name, they were already destined for death.
Maybe the Azure Mountain King had already thought of this. He was only delaying their deaths because he had a use for them. It was important to clean all evidence once the deed was done. After all, no one could know of the clan’s biggest secret…
*Thump!* Number 5’s body fell on the floor with a small black hole in his forehead.
“Not bad!” Leylin’s breathing was unstable. After all, it was not an easy task to deal with a rank 3 Crystal Phase Magus. Yet, as he looked at Number 5’s ring, his expression brightened.
O
nly after finishing with the plunder of Number 5’s body did Leylin turn his gaze upon the black mask, his expression grave.
“The coercion of the A.I. Chip cannot last a long time. Once it fades, the controller of these bugs will get the news right away…”
The powder he’d used on these stardust bugs would only work once; moreover, once the effect was gone, he was afraid that these bugs would still leak out all the information to the central control room.
Leylin could not allow this. Once he thought of the Morning Star Magus behind the scenes, he felt a chill.
Fortunately, the other side still did not know his identity, so as long as the proof could be wiped out clearly, chances were that he could escape notice.
Once he thought of that, a green flame fell on the mask, growing larger.
Explosions could be heard from the mask, so soft that one couldn’t hear them without the help of the A.I. Chip.
After confirming that the stardust bugs had all perished, Leylin burned the entire area to ashes, laughing grimly before leaving.

……

With his timely retreat, Leylin did not get to see Leo’s crazed look
as he arrived.
Leylin had been very careful to avoid places that could be monitored by Magi, even choosing to forgo travel by airship in favour of making his way on land. He hadn’t even hesitated to pass through some dangerous zones.
By the time he’d arrived at a safe zone outside the region of influence of Azure Mountain City, he’d even gotten news about the great changes there.
Watching the news that Azure Mountain City had imposed a curfew and sealed off the airship network, even starting to hunt for him without restraint, Leylin could not help but feel glad at his early departure.
He did not care about how crazy the Oakheart Family was, and didn’t even plan on spreading the news.
Although announcing the secret of the stardust bug would hurt the Oakheart Clan badly, there were few benefits for himself. On the other hand, this secret would make for a good bargaining chip in the future.
Leylin looked forward to the day he advanced to become a Morning Star Magus and the hush money the Azure Mountain King would provide.
Of course, having such dreams before advancing to the Morning Star realm would be nothing but courting death!
Since he didn’t choose to use an airship, Leylin’s return trip seemed to take a long time.
For the sake of caution, he’d even taken a big detour and only then snuck back into his own territory.
Only after entering his Magus Tower and being greeted by the mechanical voice of the tower genie did he relax completely.
A cup of hot coffee was placed on top of the table, emanating a rich and sweet aroma. Yet, Leylin only sat there without any facial expression, rapping his fingers on the table.
Leylin reflected on his actions after returning to his safe haven and listed out his weakness and gains in detail. He has always been doing that and it is because of this that he could survive without much mishaps in this sinister Magus world.

He had gained a lot on this trip, enough to shock any Crystal Phase Magus. But, at the same time, he’d provoked a power that was very troublesome. Just a little bit of thoughtlessness could’ve ended up with him dead.

The rage of a Morning Star Magus was awful. Once he was discovered, forget Leylin himself, not even his family and friends would meet a good end.

“I’ve cut off all the clues. To the auction house I was just ‘Blood Rogue,’ and at the anonymous barter, I’d disguised myself as well. I even destroyed the evidence afterwards. To think to look for me from all this is nearly impossible!”

Leylin was very confident in his own methods and the A.I. Chip’s coverup.

“As for prophetic spells, they’re very inaccurate on their own, and they work much worse against high ranked Magi. Adding on the cover from my Magus Tower…” This aspect was what worried Leylin the most.

There may be no normal clues, but if any mysterious spells were added into the mix… the thought scared him.

Especially prophetic spells. Those were extremely troublesome. Unless you were much higher in rank than the other party, as long as they paid a certain price, they could find out everything about you!

“Fortunately, there are very few prophetic Magi on the continent, and to correctly trace it back to me with my strength being at the Hydro Phase and the cover of my Magus Tower, it’ll be impossible for those normal ones. And to employ a Morning Star Magus that specialized in prophecy for the task would entail a huge price.”
With the database of the A.I. Chip and his personal experience with the Coin of Destiny, Leylin understood the workings of prophecy Magic much better than any ordinary Magus at his level.

“And the Azure Mountain King is not a prophetic Magus, and to pay the huge price of a Morning Star realm prophet is impossible within a short period of time… I must take advantage of this opportunity and immediately advance to the Crystal Phase. If things drag out until then, it’ll be much better…”

It took much more to predict the location of a Crystal Phase Magus to one at the Hydro Phase. What Leylin needed to do the most now was to improve his own strength so predictions would fail. Strong radiation would be enough to interfere with such things!

Once Leylin advanced to the Morning Star realm, all this would count as a minor matter. Nobody would offend one Morning Star Magus for the sake of another.

Once Leylin advanced to the Morning Star realm, he could use this matter of the stardust bugs to extort the other party. At that time, the Azure Mountain King would only be able to swallow that bitter pill obediently.

‘And there’s no need to worry much about Vance and the Rolithe Family!’ Leylin remembered the patriarch of the Rolithe Family that died at his hands. Because of Jessia’s entanglement and having been detected by Leylin’s Coin of Destiny, he will always be at the losing end, how miserable is that.

He didn’t even know who killed him. As for the Rolithe Family, for them to find out would be even harder.

“Diamond Jellyfish, astral stone!” Leylin touches his chin, muttering, “For such precious treasures to appear in such a small family at the same time is abnormal. Perhaps I should have Parker go watch them…” For the current Leylin, a family with only a Hydro Phase Magus was no matter.

Even were Vance not dead, with all the subordinates Leylin had
amassed in over a century, he didn’t even need to move himself to crush them.
However, for the patriarch of a small family to suddenly advance by leaps and bounds, and at the same time to possess such precious treasures, made Leylin unable to help but suspect that he had found some great treasure or inheritance.
In the central continent, there were plenty of Magi. As a result, there was an abundance of inheritance and historical remains. Almost every day in the Magi World, there would be lucky Magi who would ride on the coattails of their ancestors, and have high possibilities of promotion.
‘No, the Rolithe Family does not know right now that I’m the murderer. It would be too obvious to let Parker go.’ Leylin was not afraid of their vengeance, but he was worried that the Oakheart Family would also associate him with the killer, which would be terrible!
Leylin thought for a bit, and opened up a secret imprint, “Tanasha! Go to the Black River Domain, and secretly watch the Rolithe Family. Report to me their every move!”
“Understood, Master!” came her respectful voice in return.
After slowly separating from the inner circle of the Forgotten Land, this lady had wholeheartedly joined Leylin and become his most powerful subordinate.
For a Crystal Phase Magus, even eliminating the entire Rolithe Family would be no problem, leave alone simply monitoring them.
“Now that the annoyances are out of the way, let’s take a look at the spoils!” After closing the secret imprint, Leylin spat out a breath and waved his hand, causing a few objects to appear on the table.
Inside a purple box were two black stones, one big and one small, each flickering in a weak blue light.
These were Leylin’s main purpose in making the trip, astral stones! The big one was from Leo and was the size of a quail egg, and the
small one was what he’d plundered from Vance. It was only the size of a fingernail.
In fact, the one he’d gotten from Vance was enough to conduct preliminary research on astral gates, but to Leylin there would never be enough. He wasn’t losing money anyway, and one could never have too much of these high-class resources.
Especially after he reached the Morning Star realm. At that point, the number of astral stones he’d need to build an astral gate already made Leylin worry, so even though he had enough for now, the more the better.
“With all these things, this trip was worth it!” Leylin touched his chin, looking at the other things on the table.
The most eye-catching of them all was a crystal statue, bright and pink, that seemed indestructible as if made of diamond.
This was a Diamond Jellyfish, a valuable natural resource that had been lost to time. It could greatly increase the probability of a Hydro Phase Magus advancing to the Crystal Phase.
Although the rest couldn’t compare to the Diamond Jellyfish, they were still very precious treasures, altogether useful enough to increase the probability of a breakthrough further by one or two levels.
Adding the optimised spell formation, it seemed like Vance’s chances of promotion this time were quite big.
Unfortunately, all of this had now become Leylin’s fortune. The goods from Vance and Number 5 had swelled Leylin’s pockets once more.
“No wonder the atmosphere felt strange lately, I better just stay within my tower and breakthrough the Crystal Phase bottleneck…”
Thinking of what he’d heard and seen on the trip, Leylin’s face became gloomy.
Whether it was the Ouroboros Clan, or Azure Mountain City, everyone seemed tense and depressed, as if war was on the
horizon.
ly old Leylin was definitely able to recognise the stifling feeling when a huge war was approaching. It was not just the mood. The bustling activity in the trading hall, the bloody missions, what had happened when Leylin had last been dispatched, as well as the appearance of the Ancient Forbidden Clock at the Azure Mountain Auction event all alluded to Leylin’s premonitions being correct.
The military strength of the central continent far exceeded Leylin’s experience in the south coast and Twilight Zone. The moment Morning Star Magi began using their final techniques, the damages were devastating.
With such terrifying attacks, it was no longer just about harming innocent commoners. Even lower ranked Magi were nothing but cannon fodder!
As such, Leylin could no longer distance himself from the whirlpool of events.
The volcano that was connected to the Twilight Zone was currently filled with lava, and he was unwilling to abandon the Ouroboros Clan now. After all, he was happier with the lifestyle here.
“For a Morning Star to rise, many choose to pave their way with bloody murder. What I lack now is precisely that, a tempering in fire and blood.” Leylin’s pupils blazed with ambition.
‘In the Magus world, the central continent is the highest layer, the place where all the high-ranking Magi reside. If there is disorder
here, it’s likely to spill over into the other regions as well. I cannot have too many considerations that will distract me. The most crucial issue right now is to strengthen myself as soon as possible…’

With that thought, Leylin immediately sent out an order: “Tower genie, close off my bedroom and the main laboratory. Announce that I’m going to be conducting a very important experiment and do not wish to be interrupted in any way. Move all the items from Warehouse 1 to my lab.”

“As you wish, master!” The tiny green genie flapped her wings and bowed midair, disappearing in a flash…

About three months later.

In a quiet room in his Magus Tower, Leylin was seated with a head of messy hair and wrinkled clothes that had picked up dirt. In contrast to his ragged clothing, his eyes were bright, their blackness glorious and intimidating as they sparkled. Beside him were innumerable test tubes piled up, making the whole room look like a messy dump.

“A.I. Chip, investigate my current status.” he ordered, and it faithfully reported back:

[Leylin Farlier. Rank 3 Warlock (Hydro Phase). Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent, Strength: 30, Agility: 30, Physique: 45.5, Spiritual Force: 349.9, Magic Power: 349 (magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force)]

This tremendous increase in spiritual force was the harvest Leylin had been looking forward to for the past few months. It was mainly due to the consumption of extremely powerful potions. These potions, if offered to the Ouroboros Clan, would be enough to last their Warlocks an entire year! Such was the frightening results of piling up his resources.

For the past century while he lived in seclusion, Leylin had resisted the constant temptation of using spiritual force potions. He’d even
concocted many himself, saving and sealing them up. Relying only on his bloodline to advance, he had slowly eliminated his body’s resistance to them. The continuous use of potions would’ve been harmful to his personal growth. Now, however, with his foundations solid, raising his strength to the peak of the Hydro Phase would be as smooth as liquid flowing, with no obstructions whatsoever. “Three phases to the third rank,” Leylin muttered under his breath, “the Vapour, Hydro and Crystal Phases. Spiritual force needs to reach 250 for the first, 300 for the second, and a whopping 350 for the third. Well, now I’ve achieved it. I can attempt to break the bottleneck to the Crystal Phase!” The data computation of the spiritual force in the third rank was split into three sub-ranks and and their corresponding abilities had significant disparities. After all, 100 kilograms of cotton and 100 kilograms of steel might weigh the same, yet their density and durability were completely different. The spiritual force statistic varied widely between the different phases of the third rank. Between the Vapor Phase and Hydro Phase, a huge difference existed, and with the Crystal Phase, the disparity was even more terrifying. Magi with such abilities could already be considered as reserve duty for Morning Star Magi. Spiritual force in Crystal Phase was the exact base material for the construction of ‘point mass’! Once one advanced to the Crystal Phase, they would experience a revolutionary change in their body. Leylin had vague experiences of this change through Toram and number 5. The A.I. Chip too, had been in the midst of diligently exploring such changes. “Warlocks are different from regular Magi after all. We even need to meet bloodline requirements.” He beamed. Prior to this, his personal progress had far exceeded that of his bloodline. When he
was promoted to a rank 3 Warlock, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in him had still been stuck in its infancy. Were it not for the purity of his bloodline, every breakthrough would’ve had him requiring a ton of help.
And now, with constant exposure to the Lamia fingerbone, his bloodline had matured, finally catching up to and synchronizing with the progress of his body.
The bottlenecks that had been holding him back vanished without a trace.
With the addition of Vance’s gift of the precious Diamond Jellyfish, Leylin was exceptionally confident in his breaking through to the Crystal Phase.
[Probability of host breaking through to the Crystal Phase: 89.6%]
The A.I. Chip, too, agreed with his expectations.
Leylin nodded, evidently pleased. He took out his book of secret imprints and flipped to a particular page.
“Tanasha! Any recent news about the Rolithe Family?” He noticed Tanasha had tried several times to contact him, but he had missed it in the midst of his personal advancement.
“It’s extremely strange. This family was already in chaos from before, and it’s said that the reason was that their chief had left without any reason. Three days ago, the whole family disappeared without a trace after a huge commotion…” Although her voice was steady, Leylin could tell Tanasha’s suppressed fear.
“Who’s the person responsible?” He asked in a low voice.
“I do not know! I cannot find any traces of a high level Magus onsite…” Tanasha smiled bitterly.
No Crystal Phase Magus would be able to hide all traces from another at the same rank. The attacker must’ve been higher-ranked than Tanasha!
Leylin furrowed his brows and fell silent. After some thought, he remarked, ”You are no longer needed there. Make your way back,
paying attention to hide yourself well!”
He closed the book. The blood had drained from his face and he’d turned solemn.
The entire Rolithe Family had disappeared overnight. This was much more alarming than if they’d all just been massacred.
He could sense an ever-growing spiral enveloping the whole continent.
The Ouroboros Clan, Lucian, Freya, Robin, Kesha, and everyone else he knew, none would be able to escape. In fact, even he might not be able to escape the same fate as them. At least that was what he’d found out from the Coin of Destiny.
Each time Leylin tried to see further into the future, the coin automatically alerted him that it was exceeding its capabilities. It was obvious that it couldn’t see past that boundary.
“If it is so, I will go ahead and break through now. The more dangerous the situation, the more power is required!” Leylin’s steely gaze burned with determination.
For Magi at his level, refraining from food and water for months would still cause no harm. In fact, there were even some more ambitious Magi who, in a bid to devote themselves further to research, chose to conduct necrosis on themselves to separate themselves from common needs. It was a bitter price to pay; Leylin had no desire to do such a thing.
If he couldn’t find joy in the search for truth, whatever he obtained, be it absolute knowledge or control of the entire world, would not be worth it.
However, although he couldn’t be compared to those necromancers and spirit body types, he relied on his vitality potions and showed no signs of exhaustion himself.
On the contrary, his spiritual force had advanced to a state of perfection. Leylin had a hunch that, were he not to be successful this time, the next attempt was going to be an uphill task. Leylin
had always been one to put a lot of faith into his own premonitions.
With a wave of his hand, the test tubes lying on the ground disappeared. What replaced them was a mysterious spell formation.

[Crystal Phase spell formation (improved version): an essential spiritual force item for all Hydro Phase Magi to advance. Capable of enhancing the crystallisation of the spiritual force and eliminating spiritual force impurities.]

On the surface of the spell formation was a blood red rune that resembled a spiralling snake.
The Crystal Phase spell formations used by Warlocks were not the same as those used by regular Magi. Leylin was not impressed by the kind Vance had bought at the auction, and hence decided to use the one Freya had given him.
Some time ago, Freya had used an enormous amount of precious materials, as well as a set of Hydro Phase and Crystal Phase spell formations to exchange for a single item from Leylin, a bloodline crystal. To her family’s relief, it had assuaged their bloodline deterioration.
And by using the resources he had acquired, he had been able to advance quickly. Now, the time had come for this Crystal Phase spell formation to work its magic.
The A.I. Chip had used the original formation from Freya’s family, but had made some improvements.
The effect of purifying of the spiritual force, though, was something Leylin had prepared himself. Spiritual force that had been amassed using potions meant that it needed to be purified and altered.
Leylin had always placed a load of importance on his personal foundation.
“Begin!” Leylin made up his mind. He pulled out the Diamond Jellyfish from his cosmos pouch and bit down on it.
The transparent crystal cracked as it was crushed under his teeth. He ruthlessly bit into the thing. This was a Diamond Jellyfish, an ancient precious material. It had the ability to enhance the spiritual force and advancements of Magi. He had no idea how Vance had gotten his hands on such a treasure. The Diamond Jellyfish melted in Leylin mouth, becoming a rush of warmth that flowed throughout his body. It made him extremely comfortable, and he finished it up in a few mouthfuls. After the last of it was swallowed down, Leylin felt a terrifying heat emerging from his abdomen. Slowly, he began to feel like he was burning up. [Consumption of essence by host, concluded as Diamond Jellyfish. Spiritual force increasing!] The A.I. Chip responded.
Numerous heatwaves congregated within his sea of consciousness.

Leylin saw the silvery stream of Hydro Phase spiritual force circulate wildly. Even the core nucleus body glowed with strange crimson runes. It had only lacked just that little bit in the centre that would render it complete!

“Activate Crystal Phase spell formation!” The Crystal Phase spell formation set up at the center of the room immediately rumbled, the crimson runes on it lighting up one after the other.

Leylin began to shiver uncontrollably. Compared to the previous few spell formations, the feeling that came from this Crystal Phase spell formation included a terrifying compressive force, as well as a chill that dug deep into his bones.

Streams of icy air flowed into Leylin’s sea of consciousness, combining with the boiling spiritual force.

On one end, there were waves of heat, but on the other end, streams of cold. Leylin felt like his brain had expanded and seemed on the verge of exploding.

With the alternating cold and heat, a huge transformation happened in his sea of consciousness, the boundaries constantly stretching outwards.

Much of the liquid spiritual force shrunk under the immense compressive force, and was refined further by the constant waves of heat and cold, glimmering with sparkles. This led to the
formation of crystals, marking a shift from the Hydro Phase to the Crystal Phase.
Crystal Phase spiritual force was unique to each Magus, and Leylin paid attention to his own. It was made of dark, nearly black crystals, that held a hint of the crimson of fire inside them, denoting his affinity with these elements.
The liquid spiritual force turned to crystals, and decreased in size by several folds. The warm rush of the Diamond Jellyfish stimulated the generation of even more spiritual force, filling up the gaps.

[Beep! Host body breaking through current gene limitations. Stats in all areas increasing.] The A.I. Chip’s voice rang. It had been monitoring him as per usual.

After entering the Crystal Phase, the entire body would experience a complete transformation as a foundation for advancing to the Morning Star realm, and this was only one of the changes.

“As expected, it’s an advancement that affects even the genes,” Leylin’s expression revealed his elation. Amongst lower-ranked Magi, there were few opportunities to break through the limits of one’s genes, and it was thus very precious.

[Beep! Host body’s spiritual force has exceeded threshold, advancing to Crystal Phase Magus. Recalculating stats!]

The A.I. Chip’s prompts came one after the other, and by this point, the waves of heat and cold had calmed and gradually disappeared. Within Leylin’s sea of consciousness, a black crystallised spiritual force covered the area, seemingly indestructible.

His stats had been refreshed once more.

Leylin observed the newly refreshed stats that the A.I. Chip had come up with, and nodded in satisfaction.

“Strength and agility have both increased by five points in one go, which is already pretty good. As for my vitality, if not for finding precious materials such as the blood dragon fruit, I wouldn’t be able to achieve these numbers…”

His spiritual force had completely broken through the threshold of 350, allowing him to enter the Crystal Phase.

Leylin raised his arms. He could sense the modifications Crystal Phase spiritual force would grant his body. This was just the beginning, and though the effects had slowed and were not as obvious as when he had broken through, these imperceptible changes would result in a terrifying accumulation of strength over time!

‘Senior Lucian advanced to the Crystal Phase when he was five hundred, and that speed is already considered rather quick in the Ouroboros Clan. Senior Robin is now only three hundred, and his advancement had shocked the clan, earning him a reputation as the most powerful bloodline talent in the last three hundred years!’

Leylin tidied up the room while forcing a smile.

‘I’m only two hundred and am much too young. If my speed of advancement is let out, it will definitely cause another huge ruckus!’

A Magus who had advanced to the Crystal Phase a hundred years before Robin did, without the help of external influences, would definitely shock even Gilbert. But what Leylin urgently needed now was strength, and he had no choice but to break through.

‘I need to wait for a while longer. When the war begins, everyone will be focused on the battles. Though my speed will still cause a commotion, it will definitely be smaller than if news were to leak now.’ With his mind made up, Leylin decided on not leaving for a while, holing himself up in his tower.
With the concealing spell formation he had set up, as well as the amplification from his Magus Tower, nobody would know that he had secretly advanced to the crystal phase unless Gilbert himself came and checked. This hidden strength would definitely cause enemies who had misjudged his abilities to be in for a huge shock! At this thought, a smirk rose about Leylin’s lips, “I really am quite curious as to who will be the first to barge in…”

……

The underground of the Magus Tower was separated into many little rooms, forming many laboratories. The facilities were first-rate even in the central continent, and Leylin had only been able to achieve this by spending many magic crystals and resources. He even owed quite a few favours. In the past, a few less important laboratories were open to a few high-ranked Warlocks that were under Leylin. Now, however, this layer was empty. The Magi who usually remained in the Magus Tower had followed Leylin’s command and left for a while. Even his disciple, Snoopy, had been chased out. In the innermost, largest and most advanced laboratory, Leylin stood silently, drawing a rune on the floor. Though he had simulated this activity a great many times with the A.I. Chip, he was still extremely focused while he drew, concentrating on the rune and lines on the ground. Compared to the other spell runes used in the central continent, what he was now carving evidently held the style of another dimension. Some parts were even a mess of disorganised figures and lines, but closer inspection revealed that they were strangely three-dimensional. Only when the last stroke was done did Leylin sigh slightly, looking
at the spell formation that had no mistakes. “It’s finally done!”
The long time he’d spent on carving had resulted in a thin layer of sweat on his forehead. With his current vitality, this should have been almost impossible.

[Scanning completed, confirmation that there are no errors.] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded at this moment.

‘Then, the preparations for interplanar experiments are complete,’ Leylin thought as he stroked his chin.

He had gone out and went through the trouble of finding an astral stone. Was it all not for the purpose of preliminary astral experiments? Hence, after he advanced to the Crystal Phase, he had been impatient to begin his research.

All experiments related to the astral plane were dangerous, and this held true even for preliminary ones. Hence, Leylin had no choice but to disperse all the Magi in the tower. This was to eliminate all external influences so that he could concentrate on the experiments here.

Interplanar experiments were a high-level research that only Morning Star Magi could conduct. They were connected to the glory of the ancient era, and Leylin ambitiously hoped to make use of this research.

Hence, this preparatory research work was vital.

Even this research had very stringent requirements. A high-grade Magus Tower, Hydro Phase strength and astral stones were the most basic requirements.

Though the requirement for the Magus was merely to have reached the Hydro Phase, Leylin wanted to be on the safe side. He waited till he had advanced to the Crystal Phase before he began the research.

The more powerful he was, the safer he would be. This was indisputable.

The information for the preparatory work regarding the astral gate
obviously came from Duke Gilbert. By aiding him in many experiments, Leylin had gained valuable experience.

At the heart of this giant interplanar spell formation was the smaller astral stone that he had gained from Vance. The blue lustre on its surface seemed more powerful.

Leylin took in a deep breath and checked everything once more. Only after ensuring was fine did he issue the command. “Tower genie, begin charging!”

[Confirming authority. Magus Tower preserving 10% of energy as base reserve. Remaining energy will be used on the spell formation.] The tower genie rapidly reported.

The Magi outside watched this marvellous scene. The runes on the giant black Magus Tower dimmed one after the other. Besides a very dim glow, it had basically stopped operating.

After its construction over a hundred years ago, this was the first time that this had happened. It immediately gave rise to the panic of residents who knew nothing. This Magus Tower was a safeguard to them, and was the thing that could preserve their lives and safety.

Kubler, who had stayed behind in Onyx Castle, had no choice but to dispatch patrolling officers to put down these worries.

“Grandfather, will Mentor’s experiments be successful?” Snoopy seemed to know more and asked Parker.

“How can the mysteries of the astral plane be something we can pry into? As long as we successfully activate the spell formation, the lord’s experiment can be counted as a success!” Parker forced a smile, “The energy required to probe into the astral plane is much too terrifying. Regular Magus Towers cannot withstand it, but don’t worry about that. The lord’s Magus Tower uses a top-grade set up of positive and negative energy pools, and there shouldn’t be much of a problem in terms of resources.”

*Buzz!* The giant Magus Tower trembled, and terrifying elemental tides formed two large rainbows, one dark and one light. One
disappeared into the crest, the other into the base.
“Tower beginning charging, and positive and negative energy pools are revolving!” The genie reported.
Snoopy was no stranger to this scene, but now he could only silently pray, hoping that his mentor’s experiment would be a success.
He felt a hint of pride at this.
Out of the entire continent, there were few Magi who could do even some of the preparatory experiments into probing through the astral plane alone as a rank 3 Magus. His mentor was one of them!
Within the Magus Tower.

Leylin gazed steadily at the giant interplanar spell formation. With the positive and negative energy pools working at full strength, the runes atop the spell formation lit up one after the other, causing terrifying waves of spatial undulations to converge on the spot.

[Spell formation working as per normal. 67% activated. Gaia cuvatures stabilised.] The A.I. Chip constantly monitored the spell formation, reporting to Leylin occasionally.

With the spell formation slowly activating, the blue rays from the astral stone right in the middle condensed, giving off a resplendent light.

The spatial undulations that had been on the verge of going berserk fused with the blue light and quickly stabilised, surging in a single direction.

At the same time, Leylin sensed that a frightening energy was surging out of the astral stone, supporting the operation of the entire spell formation.

[Spell formation activation increasing in speed. Progress at 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 100%!] The A.I. Chip rapidly intoned.

When all the runes within the spell formation lit up, the spatial energy followed a channel and converged before Leylin, forming a silver mirror the size of a fist. At the heart of the mirror was a small vortex, its destination unknown.
Leylin had seen this situation multiple times at Gilbert’s. This meant that he had now made contact with the astral plane! However, this spiritual force channel of his was much smaller than Gilbert’s. Furthermore, he could not open a few simultaneously, and could only allow the entry of spiritual force seeds to find coordinates. Physical beings could not pass through. It was naturally impossible for there to be a similar situation as the first time at Gilbert’s, where a creature of the astral plane had passed through the mirror and attacked them. Though he had lost the chance to fish for benefits, it was good that his safety was not compromised. In a way, the gains balanced the losses.

Leylin carefully appreciated this feeling. There was large difference between helping with someone else’s experiments and performing one alone. For instance, Leylin now sensed that with the assistance from the spell formation, especially with the energy from the astral stone in the middle, his own spiritual force seemed to be able to peep at the edges of a frightening dimension. This was a confluence of time and space, the peak of the universe. A higher dimension which had an unexplainable existence! Even just the aura that was given off was dazzling and glorious, going on for eternity and stimulating his desires to explore. “Just becoming aware of all this is enough payoff from this experiment…” Leylin sighed.

The opportunity to see the astral plane was a very rare opportunity for Magi. They might not even need other advantages; just observing the astral plane every day would bring about indescribable benefits. Of course, this was impossible. Experiments on the astral plane everyday? Even Morning Star Magi would go bankrupt!

[Beginning projection of spiritual force onto the astral plane.]
Recording data.]
The A.I. Chip instantly intoned under Leylin’s guidance.
A thread of Crystal Phase spiritual force, with the gleam of actual
crystals, appeared from Leylin’s forehead and formed a spiritual
force seed before quickly disappearing into the silver mirror, and
into the vortex.
“Begin localisation support, activate navigation mode!” Leylin
commanded.
Immediately after, his spiritual force seed seemed to find its way in
the chaotic space, and went head on dauntlessly, even going against
the current.
The A.I. Chip quickly began to calculate, and numbers began
flashing before Leylin’s eyes..
[Spatial turbulence estimated to happen in 0.34s. Suggested
directional change is 34 degrees to the left.]
This spiritual communication happened in an instant, and Leylin’s
spiritual force seed immediately moved in a different direction,
accurately avoiding the spatial turbulence. It even joined an
undercurrent that headed east, floating further away.
Compared to Gilbert’s experiments where he depended on luck,
Leylin’s method was evidently more effective, and he would find it
easier to obtain results.
It was a pity that Leylin was the only one with support from the
A.I. Chip, and it was not as if he could expose his secret.
Hence, while he was at Gilbert’s, Leylin tried to familiarise himself
with the A.I. Chip’s functions, but did not dare use it at will. He
could only go through with his plans when he was conducting his
own experiments.
“As expected, with help from the A.I. Chip, chances of my spiritual
force seed being destroyed are much lesser than average!” A hint of
excitement appeared on Leylin’s face.
[Warning! Warning! Spatial storm generated ahead. Time to impact
is 0.0000001s. Retreat is suggested!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded once more. However, it was much too late. Though Leylin’s spiritual force seed tried its best to retreat, its struggle was like that of an ant’s against the flow of time. Besides, time was scarce, and the horrifying spatial storm was generated instantly in front, whirling the seed within.

Leylin fell two steps back, feeling dizzy, but he quickly recovered. He was no longer a newly-advanced rank 3 Magus, and was now at the Crystal Phase, preparing to enter the Morning Star realm. Injuries that could harm his spiritual force then were now nothing to him. Even condensing ten or so spiritual force seeds at one go was not a problem.

“The support system of the A.I. Chip also has its limits. At most, it will allow me to go further than other Magi can.” A wry smile appeared about Leylin’s lips. The dangerous spatial turbulences were extremely terrifying and unpredictable. Even with the frightening calculation abilities of the A.I. Chip, it was difficult to completely establish a pattern and understand them.

In addition, even when knowing there was danger ahead, once held by the spatial turbulence, Leylin’s spiritual force might not be able to escape.

However, even so, Leylin was already content. ‘The A.I. Chip can increase my chances of success from one in a million to one in ten thousand,’ he thought.

One in ten thousand! As long as he persevered and continued trying, he would definitely gain benefits. In actuality, these odds were enough for Morning Star Magi to go green in envy, not considering the other methods Leylin had as well.

“In matters like these that depend on probability, the Coin of Destiny might be useful!” Leylin flipped over his palm, and a dim
golden coin appeared in the middle of it. As this was his own experiment and nobody was around, he could use all of his methods.

A spiritual force seed was formed once again. Leylin rubbed the coin on the seed, and a layer of dim golden luster appeared on its surface.

*Ka-cha!* Meanwhile, a huge crack appeared on the surface of the Coin of Destiny once more, almost breaking it in half.

Seeing the Coin of Destiny on the brink of complete destruction, Leylin felt piteous before he stored it carefully.

The Coin of Destiny was able to predict anything as long as it did not deal with the Morning Star Realm. However, the moment it did, there would be frightful repercussions.

As for the turbulence in the astral plane? This was even more dangerous than Morning Star Magi.

Based on the situation, the Coin of Destiny would probably be completely destroyed after being used like this a few more times.

For the period of time that Leylin had been in the central continent, he had not seen any children of destiny such as Baelin and Longbottom. His instincts also told him that it would be a long time till he could make another Coin of Destiny.

What happened the last time was merely a coincidence. If he wanted to do it again, things would not be so simple.

“I hope the power of destiny will be able to help me proceed forward…” Leylin sighed and sent the dark golden spiritual force seed in.

[Monitoring. Vortex estimated to appear on left, recommendation to move far away.]

Leylin’s eyes were now emanating blue light. The A.I. Chip’s abilities were being utilised to the fullest as large amounts of data appeared before him.

He was like a helmsman who had gone through gales and waves.
Amidst the storms, he continued to guide the seed forward, dodging in impossible ways and avoiding spatial turbulences. Within the gigantic spatial crack, the golden ray was like a little boat passing through gaps in the turbulence, its movements unbelievably agile and smooth.

*Awooo…* At this moment, a giant black figure suddenly appeared in the air, pouncing towards the golden spiritual force seed.

“A creature of the void. I didn’t notice it!” Leylin was extremely annoyed. Creatures that lived in these spatial cracks usually had terrifying spatial abilities, and the A.I. Chip was much too far away to scan and notice it.

“Dodge it immediately!” The dim golden spiritual force seed quickly evaded, but the black figure roared, refusing to let up. A sharp, giant mouth formed on its stomach, hot on the seed’s heels.

[*Beep!* Warning! Warning! Spatial turbulence estimated to happen in: 0.00023s!] The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded again.

“Shit!” Leylin’s eyes were now slightly bloodshot, and he was doing all he could to avoid that region.

*Rumble!* Berserk spatial undulations swept through, and Leylin’s spiritual force seed was caught within.

*Awooo…* That creature noticed that its delicacy had been swept into the spatial turbulence, and could only roar at the boundaries before disappearing into the darkness.

“Is it going to die out again?” Leylin was full of agony.

At this moment, the golden rays on the seed flickered.

*Rumble!* An even more powerful spatial turbulence formed at the side. The two spatial storms collided, wreaking havoc on space itself.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Countless bolts of silver lightning crashed into each other, tearing open numerous spatial cracks.

Leylin’s spiritual force seed actually followed along a crack and,
despite the alarm it had caused, fell in without harm.
“The power of destiny!” Leylin, who had seen this scene, suddenly sighed, holding more reverence for the mysterious, unmeasurable power of destiny.
In a wasteland where little red grass with serrated edges filled the seams of rocks, which were decorated with strange images of humanoid faces, droplets of black rainwater generated within the cracks in the ground, quickly rose, and rained into the horizon. The rain here was actually black, and moved in the opposite direction. A dim golden spiritual force seed lay atop a blade of red sawtooth grass, giving off spiritual force undulations and scanning the surroundings. Leylin admired the sight.

“In that case, I’ll name this place the “Blackrain World”. I never thought I’d be so lucky and find a plane without a protector, and I wasn’t even discovered…

“If Duke Gilbert found this place, he’d definitely go crazy in elation, right? However, it’s much too extravagant for me!”

A complete different plane represented boundless top-grade resources, as well as much information regarding different dimensions. It was more than sufficient to make a Morning Star Magus go insane in envy. When it came to places like this which held traces of life and were possible to reside in, Leylin believed that Duke Gilbert would immediately hold no qualms and open the astral gate to arrive here, no matter the cost. However, all this was much too early to Leylin. What he had
opened up was merely a spiritual force channel that could not transport physical objects, much less his own body. That was a function of an astral gate, and still in the remote future for him.
“If not for this seed being formed from Crystal Phase spiritual force, it might long since have dissipated. However, at this rate, this merely slows down the process…”
The rays from the golden spiritual force seed were very weak. In this environment, it seemed on the verge of being extinguished.
“I can only transmit information here, so what’s most valuable to me here would be the coordinates of this world, high-grade meditation techniques or information regarding the path to power and the like…” Leylin now urgently wished for a high-energy energy creature to take him away.
This was merely a spiritual force seed, and if it dissipated, then so be it. However, if he could make a trade with another party, that would be a frightful profit.
Even if it was just the simple exchange of information, that would be the most beneficial for him.
Ancient Magi had walked the path of glory through studying and imitating the paths of other worlds. If Leylin wished to restore the glory of the ancient era, he would definitely need to go along this road.
[Unable to determine world’s location.] Leylin frowned. With the connection to his spell formation, he could feel that his spiritual force seed had reached a very remote area, and this connection was only faintly discernable, and seemed to be on the verge of breaking down.
“One way of sending out the coordinates is to project a localising mark there. As long as it isn’t destroyed, it can send out waves of information infinitely, and then allow me to infer the coordinates. However, that’s impossible for now.” Leylin furrowed his brows.
How many benefits could be obtained from a new world? It was
enough to cause Morning Star Magi to go crazy. Even Breaking Dawn Magi would go green in envy and work to obtain it! Before all that, what was needed were the coordinates. This method of calculating the coordinates was very complicated. It could not be obtained so easily just by sending a spiritual force seed over. A series of meticulous, complicated calculations had to take place, as well as coordinating with the seed in that world. However, the seed was now unable to hold on for long. Being able to reach the Blackrain World was completely coincidental, and a repeat was impossible.

“There’s another method. I can bewitch the intelligent inhabitants here and get them to set up some sort of altar, which in actuality would be a coordinate projecting device. I’ll then determine…” As long as the coordinates were confirmed, the Blackrain World would not be able to escape his grasp.

Leylin had never heard of the terrifying ability to teleport himself into different worlds, even in legends. In addition, without a protector, Leylin’s spiritual force seed was not destroyed at the outer layer of the world. This meant that the Blackrain World lacked Magi who were at or above the Radiant Moon realm. At most, their highest battle might would be at the Morning Star realm, and therefore they lacked any defence!

“What I lack now is time…” Leylin gave a wry smile. His spiritual force seed could not be replenished in the Blackrain World, and was on the verge of dissipating. The moment it dissipated, it would be a complete loss. How could he take it lying down?

A one in a ten thousand chance of finding a world was not so easily found. The Coin of Destiny had already been damaged to this point, and could no longer be used unless it was crucial. At this moment, Leylin’s brows twitched, “There’s something there!”
Meanwhile, in the Blackrain World, Leylin’s spiritual force seed lay in the plains, while two dark green humanoid beings approached. These two creatures could somehow be said to look human. They had human torsos and two legs, but their bodies were filled with scales, and their eyes held blood-red pupils. The arms were rather terrifying. On one side they had four, and on the other, three. There was even a horn sticking out from their heads.

“Since they have so many arms, let’s call them the “Multi-Armed Race!” Leylin did not hesitate as he named this race, looking as if he was the conqueror of the place. “…”

The two members of the Multi-Armed race gathered a type of green fruit while they conversed in a language that Leylin could not understand. Their language was not sounded with their throats, but information was relayed through something like electrical currents projected from their horns. Even if he identified that information, Leylin still did not understand.

[Discovery of information regarding language of a different plane. Recording!] The A.I. Chip loyally intoned. All methods of communication were definitely practical and universal. With enough samples, simulating them would merely be a question of time. At this moment, Leylin noticed how frightful their physical strength was. It even exceeded that of a few rank 1 high-energy creatures.

“If this isn’t the usual standard in this world, then their strength must be exceptionally high…” Leylin sighed, ordering the spiritual force seed to make a move.

“Hello!” Information in the ancient Byron language through
spiritual force was transmitted into the minds of these two Multi-
armed beings.
“p”
These two were obviously scared by the sound and immediately
retreated, on their guard.
“The ancient Byron language is a languages governed by rules, and
also one that is common to many worlds. I didn’t expect it not to
work here!” Leylin sighed. Though Magi of the ancient era seemed
to have taken over many dimensions, and forcefully implemented
their language and words, the number of different worlds out there
were like the countless stars in the sky. It was very possible for
some to have been overlooked.
“It’s going to dissipate anyway. Any changes in the situation are
better than none at all!”
*Buzz!* With Leylin’s control, the dark golden spiritual force seed
began to vibrate, giving off a dim radiance.
This strange situation immediately attracted the attention of two
other Multi-Armed beings. They gathered in front of the seed and
began to gesticulate at it. When they realised the dark golden seed
posed no threat, they began to argue.
At the end, one of them seemed to have persuaded their comrade,
and used a white animal skin to carefully pick up the spiritual force
seed that was already looking weak, and darting in a direction.
The wind whooshed on both sides, the scenery blurring, and Leylin
had to recalculate the strength of this race.
Tens of minutes later, these two Multi-Armed beings brought Leylin
to a large tribe.
In terms of its appearance, it looked very primal. There were few
houses, all built of bulky rocks that had been piled up, seeming
very boorish.
Many beings of the Multi-Armed race moved around the tribe
every once in a while, even greeting these two after seeing them.
Leylin obviously did not let this chance slip by and carefully observed everything in the tribe. He immediately made a discovery. “Not considering the elderly and children, there seems to be only two types of looks for the Multi-Armed race.”

The Multi-Armed beings had two types of looks. One was three arms on the right, and four on the left, while the other was the exact opposite, with four on the right and three on the left. The latter was usually larger, and their scales were more firm. Leylin inferred that this could be a difference that indicated their genders.

The two Multi-Armed beings did not seem to have a low status in the tribe. They proceeded forth with Leylin and came before a giant cave.

“Hm? This place?” Leylin was immediately wary. From within the cave, he could feel energy particles converging. This meant there was an existence that dealt with magic, and there were even undulations similar to those of spell formations. However, compared to the Magus World, it had a different style. Outside the cave were hung all sorts of materials. Some were from animals and plants, such as the roots and fruits.

“Looks like I’ve been brought to the a place where offerings are made, or where the tribe leader resides. That’s good too, since these people are usually more open…”

The two Multi-Armed beings first kowtowed outside the cave devoutly, and then yelled. “Sknglk…” An answer resounded from within the cave.

The two Multi-Armed beings immediately placed the hide that carried Leylin within on the ground. Respectfully bowing, they then left.

The moment a sound entered Leylin’s ears, he was instantly shocked. “Morning Star!!! There’s actually a Morning Star-rankd being here!”
*Tok! Tok! Tok!*  
Giant footsteps were heard, and immediately after, a being that was two times larger than others of its race appeared before Leylin.  
It stared at Leylin’s seed, giant blood-red eyes shining as it immediately grabbed it before its figure disappeared into the cave.
This was the result of the natural radiation of a creature which had achieved the Morning Star realm.

The space in the hillside was even larger, and many creatures’ remains were casually abandoned at one side. The remaining energy waves on them made Leylin feel suffocated.

In the middle the platform, the livers of all kinds of animals were casually laid out at one side. An entirely black boiler foamed with white bubbles, making Leylin feel as if he was seeing a shaman of his old world.

Be it the insignia on one side or the totem, they were all decorated with bloody brown symbols.

This was Leylin’s evaluation: the entire hillside seemed just like an unsophisticated laboratory, but it already possessed a certain ability for research.

In a flash, the large Multi-Armed Race being threw Leylin’s seed onto an altar in the middle as the surrounding blood-red emblems immediately emitted a faint radiance.

Leylin suddenly felt as if he was isolated from his surroundings, and even if he wanted to explode, he could do nothing at all.

“Spell formation of a different tribe? Pretty interesting!” With the seed in their hands, the worst thing that could happen was just to lose it, hence Leylin was not especially afraid.

“The other… world’s… spiritual force seed?” At this time, the Multilimb Clan member spoke. Using the ancient Byron language,
he stuttered slightly, but Leylin managed to understand his words. “Yes, honourable sir! I am a space traveller, and I accidentally ended up here!”

Leylin’s heart soared. Being able to communicate meant that there was hope for a transaction. “Do you know the ancient Byron language?”

“Yes! Although we of the Quark tribe have already experienced 3 extinctions, our civilisation’s legacy has never been gone!” The large Multi-Armed Race being seemed very proud.

Leylin nodded. In such a brutal tribe, the clan leader, witch doctors and leaders always had deep knowledge. This was a rule that held true in almost every world.

“As you have seen, I am currently only a spiritual force seed, which has nearly dissipated and poses no threat. May I know if it is possible to make a deal with you?” Leylin told him his requirements.

The spiritual force seed needed the person’s own spiritual force to work, and now, it could be said that time was counting down to its annihilation. Even if the other party had a way, they could only delay it at most, without being able to solve the root of the problem.

Moreover, the journey to the Blackrain World this time was entirely accidental. It was impossible to create a space passageway even if he wanted to. Thus, he needed to obtain some valuable items immediately.

From Leylin’s point of view, the Multi-Armed Race member who had already achieved the strength of the Morning Star realm largely fulfilled the requirements.

“Are you really doing this just for a deal?” The Multi-Armed Race member’s eyes were full of distrust, and even more of cautiousness. The blood-red runes on the insignia twinkled, and it actually emitted energy waves similar to that of a lie detector.
“Of course!” Leylin answered without hesitation, almost believing his own lie.
“You are only left with a little bit of spiritual force, I’m afraid we have not much to discuss. Moreover, the previous disasters were all brought about by you all…”
The large Multi-armed Race member evidently showed distrust towards Leylin. The entire altar began to rotate, almost wanting to destroy Leylin’s spiritual force seed completely.
‘Bitch. Which bastard came first? They’re making things hard for those of us who came later…’ Leylin scolded in his heart. Still, he immediately shouted, “Wait, you don’t need my things, but I’m sure your clan members do. I have a lot of remarkable information from different planes, including lots on organisational systems, planting, smelting, alloy-making, even potion-making and alchemy. I believe they will definitely be helpful to you and your clan…”
“I can obtain these items directly from you…” The large Multi-armed Race member laughed coldly. Streaks of blood-red lines emerged on the altar, even scheming to penetrate the spiritual force seed.
“So it’s this kind of soul-searching method!” Leylin’s spiritual force seed suddenly shook, emitting a great dark gold radiance. The streaks of blood-red spiritual force were drowned in the bronze radiance in a flash. Right after that, Leylin’s spiritual force seed seemed to be more illusory, as if it would be forcibly destroyed in the next moment.
“As you have seen, this method is ineffective on me. Even more forced methods will not benefit us both in the end…”
Leylin was secretly relieved. This Multi-armed Morning Star being only broke through to the Morning Star Realm based on his body strength. Similar to that male scorpion in the Icy World, it was a representation of power. Hence, its experience with regards to the spiritual world was still very feeble.
Such a creature could use its strong strength to beat up Leylin, but its power was inadequate to carry out a complicated job like soul-searching. Should Leylin’s spiritual force seed end up in the hands of a similar Morning Star Magus who concentrated on spiritual force, he would only be left with the road to annihilation, even having many of his memories opened up for the other to see. But with Leylin being at the Crystal Phase, it was still possible to somewhat confront a barbarian with Morning Star strength. In the worst case, he could order the spiritual force seed to self-destruct, leaving the other party with nothing to gain.

“What exactly do you want?” The Multi-Armed Race member’s expression turned sour.

“Simple. An equal exchange, both parties will provide valuable information, and as the outsider, I am willing to offer a portion first!”

Leylin’s spiritual force seed vibrated, and sent a few books of information written in the ancient Byron language over shortly after. In those were some primitive introductions of systems, and simple agriculture and alchemy techniques. Although it was not of much help to a matured Multi-Armed Race member who was at least rank 1, it was still enough to use as reference. Furthermore, at the end of the information, Leylin specially attached some information on methods of setting up spell formations to refine their physical bodies, as well as knight-training manuals that were commonly seen in the central continent. Although it was just a starter, it was still valuable. The Multi-Armed Race, a bunch which concentrated on physical strength, would definitely be more interested in items in this aspect. Indeed, towards the agricultural techniques and other information that Leylin sent earlier, the large Multi-Armed Race member did not
show any interest. Instead, he appeared very intrigued by the proposed killing techniques.

“An interesting item!” the large Multi-Armed Race member nodded, “The body refinement spell formations in here is enough to strengthen our children slightly. As for the last part about the killing techniques, although the structure is different, it can still provide some insights. I need the last part!”

“Then may I ask what you have in exchange?” Leylin was no longer anxious now that he had proven his worth. All that was left was for the other party to make his offer.

“You…” The large Multi-Armed Race member growled, but Leylin was not the least bit bothered.

If he were in his original body, he would naturally be very polite to the other party to protect his life. However, the worst case scenario was only losing a spiritual force seed. It was not a big deal, and hence, he was not anxious.

“What do you want?” Evidently, this Multi-Armed Race member also knew that now, Leylin was not afraid of him at all, and would not succumb to threats. If he still wanted that information, he could only give in.

“I am very interested in your training methods. Maybe…” Leylin tried asking. He was there to search for a way to increase his strength. Anything in that regard would definitely be very valuable. A person such as this Multi-Armed Race member seemed to show hope for his own body to break through.

“We Quark tribe people are born warriors. Our strength is not trained, Instead, we are born with it!” The large Multi-Armed Race member proclaimed proudly.

Leylin rolled his eyes, “Then why is there still a great difference between you and your clan members?” Creatures that had achieved Morning Star level in their adulthood, were all abnormally terrifying species. This Multi-Armed Race was
not worthy to claim itself as the Quark tribe. At the very most, they were only capable creatures with hopes of breakthrough to the Morning Star level. This piqued Leylin’s interest, and he wanted to conduct research on it. In fact, the Multi-Armed Race were also bloodline creatures. However, they were able to advance continuously, to a point that such monsters with Morning Star strength existed. This lifted Leylin’s spirits. If he studied their ways of obtaining strength, would he be able to find a method to break through the bloodline shackles? “That is a top secret of our Quark tribe. How can we reveal that?” The large Multi-Armed Race member rejected straight away without hesitation. “I don’t need it to be in-depth. Just the simplest and most basic explanations will be enough. What do you think of that? As long as you give me this information, I can give you all of the missing parts about the spell formation, as well as the next chapter of the killing techniques from before!” Leylin tempted enthusiastically. To the A.I. Chip, these most basic things were the most important, because they represented the foundation of the system! As long as the foundation was complete, based on the deductive ability of the A.I. Chip, there would be a day when this Multi-Armed Race’s hidden secrets would be laid bare before Leylin. “You give it to me first!” The large Multi-Armed Race member said. Leylin pondered for a while before giving a proposition. “From the current situation, none of us will trust the other side. How about each of us hand over the information to the other party at the same time?” “Alright!” The large Multi-Armed Race member agreed helplessly. A huge wave of energy was emitted from its horns and entered Leylin’s spiritual force seed.
“Accept!” Following Leylin’s order, the curtains to the path for evolution was slowly unveiled.
Leylin did not go against his words as well. While receiving the information, he transmitted a large amount of information simultaneously.
When the transaction was over, both parties were relatively satisfied with their gains.
“Very well, visitor from the other world. You didn’t deceive me!” The large Multi-Armed Race member was evidently delighted.
“Of course. This transaction marks the beginning of our trust, and hopefully in the future, we will still…Oh damn!” Leylin spoke halfway and his tone suddenly became exasperated.
The spiritual force seed that represented his existence suddenly became illusory, exploding into a ball of light shortly after and vanishing without any trace…
When spiritual force coagulated, it formed a spiritual force seed. However, when this seed entered another world, it would be unable to supplement itself. Regardless of whether it was the previous experiment or the method of transmitting and receiving messages, they required a huge amount of spiritual force. Naturally, once this spiritual force was drained completely, it signalled the end of the seed.

In the Magus World, the huge interior of the Magus Tower. The terrifying interplanar spell formation shook as the rays of light gradually darkened.

“Damn! Damn! Damn! Just when I managed to build a connection…” Leylin’s eyes were bloodshot as he went berserk.

“That’s a world! An entire independent world! Exactly how many times will I have to experiment before I can find another world that is not controlled by any outsider…” He stroked his forehead as he groaned.

[Interplanar spell formation shut down. Spell formation damage 0.19%, Astral stone energy depletion 37.98%!] At the same time, the A.I Chip transmitted the information to Leylin.

“Astral stone!” Leylin waved his hand and immediately, the astral stone that was in the center of the Interplanar spell formation returned to his hand. However, the astral stone had already shrunk a little; its radiance had dimmed as well.
Originally, one such astral stone was able to support the interplanar spell formation for a long time. However, Leylin realised that in order to merely connect both sides’ spiritual force, the formation had drained a huge amount of energy from it.

“What a pity…” Leylin remained emotionless for a good while before he recovered as his eyes brightened.

“It was indeed a coincidence to discover the Blackrain World without a space route or coordinates!”

“Luckily, I managed to acquire at least some information before our link got cut off…” Leylin’s expression then darkened.

[Multi-Armed Race techniques have been collated,] the A.I. Chip reported in the meanwhile.

Even though that race with the Morning Star being called itself the Quark Tribe, Leylin was persistent in calling it the Multi-Armed Race. Naturally, the A.I. Chip followed his own scheme.

The foundational skills of the Multi-Armed Race were vary fragmented, and most of it was vague. While it was just the basic foundation of their skills, it was obvious that the clan head had done some modifications to conceal some parts of their skills.

However, it was definitely an easy task for the A.I. Chip to collate the different bits of data sent over and derive further information from that.

“From the looks of it, it seems similar to the way Branded Swordsmen and Steel Knights are nurtured…” Leylin had much experience, which made it easy for him to spot this fact.

In the Magus World, most of the ancient branches followed closely the path to strength of the other worlds, hence it was absolutely normal for things to be similar.

“A.I Chip, collate these three datas together and research on them,” Leylin ordered.

[Task established. Proceeding with data enumeration.] The A.I. Chip immediately sent back.
Leylin definitely had little interest in the data on how to nurture Branded Swordsmen, since the data in his possession was incomplete. With this incomplete data, the most he could nurture was a rank 1 Magus, which was definitely of no use to him. Needless to say, even a veritable flood of rank 1 Magi would be no match for someone at the Morning Star realm. However, it was definitely useful to have many subordinates. If he could nurture rank 2 or even rank 3 Branded Swordsmen, then Leylin would have the upper hand in many engagements. For Leylin who was the lord of a territory, such a plan would always be worthwhile and profitable. Moreover, the training method of the Multi-Armed Race, together with their special methods of breaking through, seemed to be valuable for his research into removing his bloodline shackles. Even though he wasn’t yet at the bottleneck to the Morning Star realm, the fact that Kemoyin Warlocks could never advance to rank 5 and beyond had been weighing heavily on his heart.

……

The isolation of the Magus Tower extended to a period of a few months. Those who were waiting outside, such as Parker, witnessed the tower absorbing huge amounts of elemental particles, a phenomenon caused by the spell formation operating the positive and negative energy pools to supply the interplanar experiment. Apart from shock, all they felt was admiration for Leylin’s wealth. It was definitely a rare sight in the central continent for a rank 3 Magus to conduct such research for extended periods of time. The weight of astral stones he had in reserve alone would cause any other to go bankrupt. “Marquis Leylin… This is seriously…”
If even the subordinates of Leylin were amazed, outsiders would definitely be surprised. Take, for example, the Warlock currently standing in front.

This Warlock had a fine appearance, which was common for Warlocks. This made him seem to be as ordinary as any other Magi out there, but the fact that this Warlock had a pure Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline within his veins created a sense of inferiority within Parker and the rest, which also heightened their alertness as they did not dare to take this Warlock lightly.

“Just the amount of astral stones used must be enough to drive a rank 3 Magus to desperation, right?”

The subordinates stared at the huge Magus Tower as they couldn’t help but express their shock when they saw this man.

“Count Timmy,” Parker respectfully stood aside.

Even though Timmy was a mere rank 2 Warlock and a Count, his regal bloodline made it easy for him to advance to rank 3 or even become a Morning Star Magus. Timmy definitely surpassed Parker, who was older than him and also a rank 3 Black Horrall Snake Warlock, in potential.

Besides, Timmy was originally from the Ouroboros Clan, and his network within the clan ensured that he was an individual that one could not take lightly.

“I came here to hand him this invitation. However, it seems like I came at the wrong time…” Timmy couldn’t help but express his helplessness.

“Please do not worry. The lord still returns once every month. It has almost been that amount of time since he last came out, so I presume the Count will only have to wait patiently for a short period of time,” Parker answered.

Timmy nodded his head. He himself was aware that, without prior notice, these high-ranking Magi would definitely not tolerate any interruptions when they were going through very important
research. He wasn’t willing to risk it as even a slight disturbance from the outside world could’ve resulted in the murderous intent of the Warlock being aimed at him.

“I would like to explore the prosperous Onyx Castle that I heard Marquis Leylin used less than ten years to build.”

“That would be our honour,” Parker nodded his head as he called another Warlock who was dressed like a butler. “This is Kubler, the butler of the castle. He’ll bring you around afterwards.”

Governing their territories was just a small matter to a Warlock. Yet, due to Timmy’s age, he would definitely hold some interest in exploring such territories. Another reason was for him to pass the time while waiting.

“Count Timmy, this is Kubler at your service!” Kubler let out his most sincere smiling expression as he bowed respectfully.

……

The Warlocks who were outside joking and talking heartily were definitely ignorant towards the situation of Leylin who was inside the Magus Tower, perspiring madly.

At this point in time, in front of him stood a creature which had a sheep’s head but the body of a crocodile. This creature appeared to be wise, questioning him on various topics.

“Do you know how the cape jasmine blooms?”

“What is one plus one?”

“How many tails does the Infinite Loop of Snakes have?”

The creature wore a black windbreaker and was talking in a foreign language, yet surprisingly, Leylin was able to understand him.

Leylin’s forehead was still perspiring madly and he couldn’t help but mentally let out a bellow of rage. ‘This is impossible! In this frail mirror of dimension, how is it possible for a creature to cross over?’
As a high ranking Warlock, and a long-time assistant of Duke Gilbert, Leylin naturally understood that such interplanar experiments were very dangerous. Many Morning Star Magi had led themselves to death as a result of coming in contact with too many strange and powerful existences, or even just by listening to the sounds of these existences. This curse could even extend to one’s descendants.

Yet, what he’d been doing today was not nearly as reckless. The minute his spiritual force seed entered the astral plane, this creature had found him and even immediately appeared directly within the interplanar spell formation.

[Abnormal energy source found! Engaging countermeasures!] The A.I Chip sounded.

During the construction of this interplanar spell formation, he had naturally considered the problem of other creatures, especially with the deaths of many Morning Star Magi serving as a warning. Following the A.I Chip’s statement, the symbols on the ground lit up to form a cage of crimson lightning that bound the creature firmly.

The lightning, as red as blood, crashed down onto the creature with the formidable strength of Leylin’s Magus Tower.

*Crack!* Blood-red electricity arced along the creature’s body as its clothing turned to ash. It developed sarcomas that leaked yellow pus as they exploded one by one.

The pus and lightning clashed with each other, resulting in an ear-piercing noise.

“How many times does the Frank’s Chime strike in a century?” The rotting flesh on the creature kept sliding off, yet it seemed not to notice as it continued to question him.

“Attack at full power!” Leylin ordered.

With a boom, numerous bolts of the blood-red lightning converged to form a huge sphere that struck down at the creature.
“Do you know…” The edge of the lightning sphere dug into the creature as its body disappeared slowly. The sheep head fell to the floor, still persistent in its questions. The two eyes were already overflowing with blood.

Boom! The lightning struck again, and it seemed as if time and space froze at that moment, only to resume flowing shortly after.

“What?” Leylin looked at the silver mirror in front of him. The lab seemed to be perfectly fine, and even the interplanar spell formation was working alright.

There was not a trace of the creature in the place it had occupied just before…
“Was that an illusion?” Leylin muttered under his breath and turned his attention to the A.I. Chip’s records.

[Unknown forcefield interference detected! Host has entered a state of confusion.] [Interplanar spell formation engaging countermeasures, charging!!”] [Magus Tower prepared to eradicate interference, beginning.] [Host has successfully been restored to normalcy. Alert ended.] The red records made Leylin feel gloomy.

In the middle of all this, the spiritual force seed that he had sent into the astral plane had vanished without a trace into a spatial rift.

“Tower genie!” Leylin called out.

“My Lord!” The green genie immediately flew towards Leylin.

“How much of our energy reserves are left?”

“Energy currently at 1.9% of maximum. Energy boost has been initiated,” it replied instantly.

“What led to such a huge consumption?”

“Records are in chaos!” the tower genie expressed a rare puzzlement.

“Indeed! What happened a moment ago was real. It wasn’t an illusion!” Leylin drew a deep breath.

He’d always known interplanar research was risky. Still, what he’d experienced just now was possibly his greatest research crisis to date.

‘Fortunately, the three astral laws are unbreakable. Hence, the other
creature was unable to pass through and could only create an illusory projection!’
Leylin stroked his chin, pondering about the events that had happened one more time, ‘It was merely an illusory projection and yet it was that menacing. Had I opened an astral gate and allowed the other party to enter, perhaps my entire territory would have been destroyed…’
With such thoughts, he felt his lingering fear wash over him.
“Fortunately, it lacked the power to do anything. The situation was resolved by the countermeasure of the dimension spell formation!”
He exhaled a deep breath and turned his head around.
“Do you know…” A huge decapitated goat head with yellow liquid flowing out of it, appeared behind him.
Two huge lifeless pupils locked onto Leylin’s.
“…….”
In a split second, a layer of black scales surfaced on Leylin’s body and both his eyes turned amber.
“Petrifying Gaze!” Rays of mysterious light hit the opposing wall, and a layer of whitish-gray stone covered it.
The goat head disappeared into thin air.
“This matter is not finished!” Leylin’s face turned gloomy, “A.I. Chip, start scanning!”
[Beep! Mission established! Beginning scan!] It took but a few seconds for it to respond with its findings.
[Remnants of an unknown force field have been detected. Confirmed to be interplanar contamination.]*Buzz!* He stopped the whole interplanar spell formation with a wave of his hand. And then, with a blast at the center, the astral stone turned into smithereens.
The energy from this astral stone that he’d acquired from Vance of the Rolithe Family had been exhausted completely.
Seeing the course of events, Leylin took a deep breath before
stepping up to the middle of the room.
In the library, multiple sprinklers that were fixed to the ceiling and connected to an enormous pool in the center started spraying a fragrant whitish-green liquid.
“Rank 5 purification pool! I hope it’s of help!” Interplanar defense was a compulsory course for anyone performing research in the area. Leylin had gotten Gilbert’s own purification system a while ago and built an enhanced version for himself.
Green liquid dripped from the nozzles, its antiseptic scent strong and sharp. Soon, Leylin was completely drenched.
As the green liquid washed over him, green fur started to appear on the surface of his clothing before being washed off by the same liquid again.
“This is so troublesome!” Leylin assessed his situation and furrowed his brows. He stripped himself naked and jumped into the pool in the center.
*Zi Zi!* An enormous whirlpool formed of pearl-white liquid started bubbling lightly.
Traces of black liquid oozed out of Leylin’s pores, visible to the naked eye.
After several rinses, Leylin stepped into another purification room. Inside, many human-sized flowers and plants were blooming. They opened up their petals and revealed their scarlet red tongues with suction pads…
After multiple purifications, Leylin wore a brand new loose-fitting robe and relaxed on a recliner.
‘I’ve sent many seeds into the astral plane in the past three months, but unfortunately I didn’t have help from the Coin of Destiny. There’s no way to find the Blackrain World again. Not only did I suffer an irrecoverable loss, I have even provoked such a heinous creature…’ Leylin weighed his gains and losses.
He had run many experiments on the astral plane, and had gotten
some substantial gains. Yet, compared to his engagement with the Multi-Armed Race, it was all worth nothing.
With the A.I. Chip’s help, he had figured out the secret spell, and named it Multilimb Strength.
The A.I. Chip’s simulations had proven that such a secret spell had the ability to break apart one’s genetic limitations. So much so, that it could enhance Leylin’s current vitality by five to ten points.
To Leylin, such temptations were irresistible.
The more powerful one’s vitality, the harder it was to advance further. When his vitality was at ten to twenty points, he hadn’t bothered much about raising it. But now, to advance further from his base was an uphill task.
If word leaked of his Multilimb Strength, it would drive body-refining Magi crazy and cause them to act.
Even this one gain was enough to offset all his losses in the past three months!
This was the main attraction of the astral plane. There were both sides to a coin, no profit without loss. After becoming unable to use the Coin of Destiny, Leylin’s experiments had been at a bottleneck, with multiple attempts to proceed resulting in failure.
Especially today. He’d unexpectedly drawn towards himself a completely unknown living creature. It was, in fact, not an organism. Just a formless being with consciousness.
When it flared up, it was potentially more horrifying than an ancient curse.
“My luck had been average, I think it’s time to stop!” Leylin had a bad premonition about the dangers he had been facing.
“……”
He shut his eyes lightly, and when he opened them, the same decapitated goat head appeared in front of him again. Its eyes were filled with death and traces of ridicule.
Leylin sighed. Facing the goat head eye to eye, his face was
expressionless.

Ten seconds later, the goat head once again disappeared without a trace, as if what had just happened was another illusion.

“So troublesome!” Leylin was evidently annoyed, ”How dare it!”

He got up in a flash, grabbed his clothes, and went to the center of a restricted room.

Grasping the knob of the door, another illusion appeared as the yellowish-bronze knob morphed into a familiar goat head, glaring at Leylin, and giving him a sinister smile.

Such circumstances would drive any Magus crazy, and cause many other repercussions as well.

Upon opening the door, a cold mechanical voice was transmitted, “This is the core room! Only host Leylin Farlier is permitted entry. All trespassers will be executed.” Soon after, horrifying spell energy locked onto Leylin’s body.

Rays of red, green, and blue scanned his body. “Scanning has begun. Authority verified. Alarm lifted.” With the last sound, his body felt a rush of relief.

This was a small core room. There was only an experimental table with a crystal ball, and on top of it were intermittent images of a white bone.

Leylin laid down on the experimental table. Soon, he could hear noises from all around. First were some animalistic growls, and then there were the pitiful cries of someone in the throes of death.

Leylin was unmoved and nonchalantly gave the order, “Begin radiation!”

“Beginning radiation!” A mysterious energy appeared from the Lamia fingerbone, streaking across Leylin’s body. Slowly, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in his body was roused to a gentle boil.

Given any other time, he would have enjoyed this process immensely. However, this time he felt different. Streaks of ash-grey fog appeared all over his body, enveloping him like a huge callous.
It made him feel like he was struggling on his deathbed. [Remnants of an unknown force field have been detected in the host. Confirmed to be interplanar contamination.] The A.I. Chip repeated, and then added something else. [It is advised to stop the Lamia radiation.]

“No! Increase the radioactive level. Raise it by 10 times!” an ambitious glare burned in Leylin’s eyes.
The A.I. Chip only had the rights to suggest, not to execute anything. Acting on his will, rays of blue currents radiated from the Lamia bone, causing huge energy undulations. It broke through the grey fog and shone onto his body.
Leylin groaned as he clenched his teeth, both hands holding tightly to the experimental table, using so much strength that he left imprints on it.
Purplish-black patches started to appear on his body, looking similar to sunburns.
[Epidermal cells are now 39.78% damaged! Host is suggested to abort the radiation!] The A.I. Chip sounded once again.
“It seems to be insufficient! Increase intensity, adjust to 50 times!”
Leylin locked his jaw tightly and hissed.
*Zi Zi!* The enormous radiation tangled with the ash-grey fog, turning it into a liquid that dripped down.
The noises surrounding Leylin began to intensify in both volume and chaos.
The white goat head once again appeared in front of Leylin. This time, the fur on it started to be shed one by one and the two horns started to shrink back into its skull, resulting in a huge change in its appearance.
After numerous alterations and transformation, the original goat head had morphed into a female human head. Her eyes were all-white, and were streaming blood.
The force fields have been neutralised. Host body’s contamination is being dissipated.
With the mist surrounding Leylin’s body becoming weaker, the female head in front of him became less distinct and finally disappeared into the air.
When the last bit of mist was gone, Leylin immediately ordered for the radiation to be stopped.
Following that, he saw his skin looking as if it had been severely burnt and smiled wryly.
These injuries would definitely have killed any normal person. However, for Magi, as long as the astral pollution could be gotten rid of, everything else was not an issue.
Leylin wriggled his body, and the wounds on his body began to crack. Skin began to crease in a process similar to that of snakes moulting. Then, as if taking off his clothes, he shed off the dead skin and revealed fair, unblemished skin once more.
In just a few minutes, Leylin, who had seemed like a malicious spirit, had regained his normal appearance.
After changing his clothes, Leylin huffed a long sigh. “It really was quite dangerous this time. That creature with consciousness is still something I am unable to comprehend.”
Just some spiritual force contamination was too much for him to handle himself. This was an existence whose strength definitely surpassed the Morning Star realm, maybe even at the strength of a
Radiant Moon Magus!
If not for his Lamia fingerbone allowing him to treat this through the neutralisation of force fields, he would be plagued with troubles for a long time.
Now, though, even if the contamination through radiation was very powerful, the Lamia was an ancient rank 5 existence. When the radiation from two highly-ranked existences collided, the only result would be mutual destruction.
Leylin had taken a risk with this, but the effects seemed pretty good.
“What happened this time is a warning. It looks like I should pause my experiments for now…”
Leylin walked out of the core room, ordering the tower genie to send him some desserts and drinks, before he asked, “How has the situation outside been in the time that I’ve been experimenting?”
While experimenting, Magi usually disconnected themselves from all communication to prevent any disturbances.
The tower genie now had the role of something like a housekeeper. Not only did it have to intercept messages from the outside, it also needed to filter out the most important information for Leylin to peruse.
“Someone from Freya’s family came here? There’s even an invitation card?”
Leylin touched his chin, “Could it be that she’s already broken through to the Crystal Phase?”
His relationship with Freya was not half bad, especially after selling the bloodline gemstones to her. Though Freya had then secluded herself and not contacted him, they were part of the same clan. He had to give her some face.
Leylin thought for a moment and sent down an order, “Inform Parker that I’ll meet that Timmy tomorrow!”
Besides this, there were a few other miscellaneous matters that
Leylin had to take care of as the one with the highest authority. Without his approval, many things could not be implemented on this piece of land. These were all necessary. Even if they might be complicated and result in lowered efficiency, they could not be avoided…

The next day, Timmy, who had been waiting for a long time, finally saw the well-known Leylin in the Magus Tower. An adamantine puppet sent in some desserts and drinks before withdrawing.

Leylin watched the reserved young man. He was obviously very young, but the purity of his bloodline far exceeded that of Noah from Robin’s family. This descendant of Freya’s family was probably someone that they favoured. Sending him here was a show of how highly they valued Leylin.

“Lord Marquis Leylin’s Magus Tower is truly wondrous!” Timmy praised from the bottom of his heart. Leylin’s top-grade Magus Tower had a reputation of its own within the Ouroboros Clan. There were always guests coming over and gasping in awe over it. However, when these words were produced from Timmy’s lips, there was something very sincere about it that gave Leylin a favourable impression.

After chatting for a while, Leylin asked, “Timmy, what are your intentions in coming here?”

At the mention of his business, Timmy turned solemn, “I was asked by the head of the family to pass this invitation to my lord!” As he said this, he respectfully passed an invitation card to Leylin.

Usually, if it was something common, communication via secret imprints was enough. Getting someone to specifically send an invitation was only something that large noble families would do. Even then, it was only done when there was some celebration or important festival.

There was a sweet scent from the surface of the paper. After
skimming through the content, Leylin nodded. “Freya has already advanced to the Crystal Phase! As expected, it’s a joyous matter. I’ll personally congratulate her!”

For high-ranked Magi, advancement was always very difficult. Each success definitely called for a celebration. When Leylin had achieved the Hydro Phase, he had invited his seniors over. Compared to the Hydro Phase, the Crystal Phase was multiple levels higher and more difficult.

“Many thanks, my lord!” Timmy bowed respectfully.

Though Freya had only just advanced and could not be considered any genius as compared to Robin, she was still quite decent. In addition, their family still had plans of having a good relationship with Leylin. After all, Leylin was so young and already a Hydro Phase Magus. His future was boundless. This was without them even knowing of Leylin’s advancement to the Crystal Phase. If they did, they would definitely value him even more highly.

“I definitely need to go this time!” An invitation from nobility was extremely important. The other party had even especially sent someone over, and if Leylin did not attend, even Freya would feel very uncomfortable.

After sending Timmy away, Leylin lightly sighed. With his current strength, the rank 2 Timmy naturally would not be able to sense his real aura if he wanted to conceal it.

“Crystal Phase at two hundred years of age? That would be too high profile!” Leylin shook his head, “I need to keep a low profile and hide my strength before going there.”

Leylin had gotten used to being a wolf in sheep’s clothing. Right from his days as an acolyte, he’d developed a technique to conceal his aura and spiritual force waves. On top of that, he had obtained that spiritual force compression technique, making things much easier for him,
After reaching rank 3, the effects of these spells became weaker. Leylin improved on them again with the spell models he had obtained as well as those from the Ouroboros Clan. He had even especially created a few secret supporting techniques. Leylin was very confident in his concealing skills. If he went all out, even peak rank 3 Crystal Phase Magi might not be able to see through him. Unless it was a Morning Star Magus in front of him, there was nobody to fear.

‘Freya is the beloved disciple of the Blood Duchess, Emma. She would normally attend!’ Leylin touched his chin, pondering deeply. “Recently, Kesha mentioned that the mentors seem to have found a world that could very well be Purgatory. The three elders have all been deep in experiments on the astral plane, and it’s not quite likely that they’ll emerge.” The desire Kemoyin Warlocks had towards Purgatory was something outsiders were unable to comprehend. Mere traces of the Snake Dowager was enough for all the Warlocks in the Ouroboros Clan to go crazy. After all, the restraints of their bloodlines could only be resolved with her. In addition, the Purgatory World itself was a giant world. It held boundless riches and, compared to the surrounding worlds, it could be said to be a large-scaled world. If not, the Snake Dowager would not have chosen to move her community here. This resulted in many Magi going forth and exploring.

“The Snake Dowager is probably an existence at or above rank 7. Even if they found her, what could the mentors offer her?” Leylin shook his head, not very supportive of Gilbert’s actions this time. However, there was little that could be done. Since the three elders were now consumed in their research on the astral plane, this gave him the chance to take advantage of the situation. The other high-ranked Warlocks could not see through his pretence, and hence, concealing his spiritual force undulations and
going forth to congratulate them was very possible.

......

Fresh flowers filled the ground. This was Freya’s family’s territory. As it was a noble family that had been passed down through generations, the range of their territory far exceeded that of his own. The wealth of the residents was something that Leylin, who had only managed things for a hundred years, could not compare to. Freya’s castle was situated beside a snaking river, with a sea of flowers around it. Diverse, splendid flower petals spilled all over the ground, Leylin even smelt a fishy smell amidst the fragrance in the air. He extended an arm and immediately caught a five-coloured spotted snake under a plant. The scales of this snake were giving off a magnificent luster. Complementing the flower petals all over the ground. It was basically impossible to distinguish them with the naked eye. As if feeling the bloodline in Leylin, the flower snake did not dare resist. Instead, it tried to curl itself up as much as possible, looking rather pitiful. “Looks like another result of crossbreeding!” Leylin was speechless and released this flower snake which had toxins potent enough to break through an ordinary Magus’ innate defensive spell back into the sea of flowers, shaking his head. As bloodline nobility, it would be unusual not to concentrate on techniques on modifying bloodlines. However, for Leylin, who had gathered precious experimental data from the Quicksand Organisation, these experiments were rather unsophisticated. All the creatures which had been created were the type that he
couldn’t even bother catching another glimpse of. In comparison, the castle at the heart of the sea of flowers was what interested Leylin the most. The Ancient Blood Serpent Castle that Freya’s family had inherited was not a mere place for commoners like Leylin’s Onyx Castle. This was a true ancient Magus castle. After the great effort of bloodline Warlocks across countless generations, every inch of the land of the Ancient Blood Serpent Castle was completely soaked in the power of magic. This created a very formidable defence that could defend against even Morning Star Magi for a period of time.
In the Ancient blood Serpent Castle were many phenomena that even their current leader, Freya, could not explain clearly. As a result, when he first saw the crimson structure, Leylin quickly grew fond of the place.

‘This sort of ancient castle is what is truly fit to be the residence of a Magus. My Onyx Castle lacks these details,’ he thought as he sighed.

Freya’s family was rumoured to even have seen Morning Star Magi amongst their ranks in history, and it was naturally something that Leylin could not compare to.

Yet, Leylin was confident in himself. As long as he advanced to the Morning Star realm, he would not need a long time before the Onyx Castle would be comparable to this Ancient Blood Serpent Castle and be a true ancient Magus castle.

A large number of carriages were parked at the plaza of the castle, and in the area were many magical creatures.

A large number of guests entered from the main gate, and the entire area seemed very lively. Greetings were thrown around audibly on occasion.

For someone to come here alone was very rare, and Leylin immediately attracted attention for it.

Thankfully, he was famous to begin with, and many members of the organisation had seen him before. Even for those who hadn’t, there were definitely images and information regarding him.
Naturally, he would not be mocked.
“Leylin, there you are!” After some disturbance at the gates, Freya who was dressed in glamorous attire, came forward to welcome Leylin.
Even though they had not met for a very long time, her face still looked childlike, and even though she had the might of a Crystal Phase Magus, she looked just like a little girl, a huge contrast to her mature and enticing figure.
‘Calling me directly by my name? Am I that close to you?’ Leylin rolled his eyes internally, but still allowed Freya to affectionately hold his arms as they walked into the castle.
This was obviously a signal with an obvious implication.
Leylin knew very well that, in Freya’s heart, she probably did not have any intentions of giving up on him completely. She had always liked to show how close she was to him at public occasions like these.
However, he was just as happy about the situation. This way, there would be fewer female Warlocks coming to cause him trouble.
Only Miranda would have the guts to fight with Freya over a man. However, after being subdued by Leylin, Miranda had become a lot more down-to-earth.
“I’m very happy that you’re here today. I hope to be able to meet you privately after the banquet, and discuss some matters regarding our mentor!” She lightly whispered into Leylin’s ears, and tenderly hugged him before going to entertain other guests.
She was the main lead of the event today, and there were many distinguished high-ranked Warlocks who had made their way here. Naturally, she could not only accompany Leylin.
“Mentor?” Leylin stroked his chin.
From the looks of it, Freya had gained an interest in the rumours regarding the discovery of traces of Purgatory World. However, she seemed concerned as well, and this foresight set her apart from
other Warlocks. Leylin shrugged his shoulders, looked for a corner, and started to quietly enjoy the delicacies and wine.
As fitting of nobles with thousands of years of heritage, the banquet had very sumptuous food, which surpassed Leylin’s expectations.
“Haha! Leylin, do you like being here alone? Aren’t you going to dance?” After sitting for a while on the sofa, Leylin saw a familiar face.
The aura of Robin’s body was gloomy, and the black marking on his forehead had occupied almost his entire face. It made Leylin rather uncomfortable.
He was now smiling at Leylin, holding a crystal glass filled with grape wine. On the other end, many female Warlocks wearing revealing clothes shot coquettish glances over.
“Senior Robin!” Leylin smiled and nodded, “I have no interest in these things…”
“That’s not what you said when you were dealing with Miranda previously…” Robin smiled and shook his head, and sat beside Leylin.
Evidently, he had just used the female Warlocks as a conversation starter.
“The aura on your body… has reached a stage where even I can’t seem to see through…” Robin sized up Leylin and said with a laugh, a glint in his eyes.
After being watched this way, Leylin felt chills down his spine. The greediness Robin was concealing well was causing him to feel apprehensive.
“Senior Robin, stop joking around. I’ve merely mastered a few powerful spells recently…” Leylin smiled and declined. His skills at altering his aura typically could not be seen through by an ordinary Crystal Phase Magus, but Robin had managed to do so, which put
him on his guard.
“Why haven’t I seen Noah around?” Leylin immediately diverted the conversation.
“He…” Robin’s eyes registered fondness, “Noah has already reached the important milestone in his spiritual force’s advancement to the Vapour Phase. He has been staying back in the family…”
“I would have to congratulate senior in advance then…” Leylin smiled, but yet felt like things were not as simple as how Robin made it out to be.
Robin became silent, before issuing an invitation, “All of us have benefitted greatly from the previous expedition. I’ve recently obtained some new intelligence. What do you think? Are you keen on another one? I am willing to give you 40% of the benefits this time round!”
“Expedition? Where to?” Leylin seemed interested, as he tilted his body forward slightly.
“An ancient pocket dimension. I can confidently say it holds an ancient Morning Star Magus’ writings, and might even be related to the ruins of the Quicksand Organisation!” Robin slightly organised his words.
“Quicksand Organisation?” Leylin’s eyes lit up, but the alarm bells ringing in his heart had grown extremely loud.
After deliberating for a long time, he finally gave a reply, “I’m sorry, Senior! I’ve been conducting an extremely important experiment recently, and I’m afraid I will not be able to head out for long periods of time.”
The instant after he said this, he felt chills, as if he was being stared at by a ferocious beast.
“Oh! What a pity…” Robin sighed, then got up and left.
However, Leylin could evidently feel the fury Robin was trying to keep in, and many things that were hidden in the dark.
‘What a terrifying man!’ Leylin heaved a deep sigh of relief after seeing Robin’s back. ‘From the looks of it, the trip to the Quicksand Castle has caused a huge change in him…’ Leylin had a feeling that this Robin was an entirely different person from that passionate and positive man he’d known. However, even if it were the old Robin who had came forth with the invitation, Leylin would probably decline it as well. Currently, he was not short of anything. Since it was very chaotic outside, going out and exploring now would obviously just be a death wish. On top of that, Leylin did not feel at ease with the current Robin. Banquets like those between the elites were relatively boring, at least in Leylin’s eyes. Many bloodline elites liked to flatter each other and flaunt their wealth, and eventually get themselves drunk. Many good looking males and females would even cuddle on the stage, and then leave the banquet together and enter designated cubicles. According to rumours, the cubicles had relatively good soundproofing functions and even if the world were to crumble, the voices within would not be transmitted to the areas outside. The people in the cubicle were therefore free to do whatever they wanted without any worries. The strength Leylin was displaying was that of a Hydro Phase Magus, As a Marquis of the Ouroboros Clan, many high-ranked Warlocks would naturally come forth to flirt with him. Even when he tried to hide in a corner, it was hard to get a break with all the coquettish invitations he was getting. Normally, Leylin did not mind playing this game, but after the banquet, he had Freya’s private invitation to attend to. Robin’s appearance had also caused him to feel uneasy, and that had naturally been a killjoy. It was not until Leylin felt like his facial muscles were cramping from him smiling that the majestic banquet was announced to have
ended.
This was a celebration meant for just the high-ranked nobility. For the low-ranked Warlocks or peasants, they would get to rest for a weekend. Freya’s clan would even provide white bread and rum free of charge.
From the looks of it, such an auspicious occasion had not occurred in her family for a very long time, hence the need for a large celebration.
Leylin did not bother with all of that. After the banquet had ended, under a maid’s guidance, he entered the depths of the Ancient Blood Serpent Castle.
The materials that made up the castle had since experienced many changes due to it receiving the radiation from the many Magi that had lived there.
The walls were coloured a crimson that resembled that of human muscle, and even possessed the same elasticity.
The floor was covered with a red carpet, and large mouths emerged from time to time, swallowing the trash in one gulp before licking their lips, as if after a tasty treat.
There was not a single ordinary human in the castle. With the exception of the low-ranked Warlock maids who were leading Leylin, the majority were slaves of other races.
“Hovlin?” Leylin looked at the team of dwarf-like beings bowing to him in shock. Those dwarves were scrawny, but had very sharp ears.
“Yes, master! The Hovlin not only have long lives; they are also outstanding gardeners and chefs, qualified to perform jobs of varying degrees of intensity, and as a bonus, they have a high degree of resistance to radiation!”
The maid introduced the Hovlin to Leylin.
“I’ve naturally heard of the slaves used by noble families!” Leylin nodded his head.
In actual fact, during the construction of Onyx Castle, he had thought of purchasing slaves, but high-quality slaves like these were pretty rare. Only amongst bloodline nobility like Freya’s Family would one find this many Hovlin. “Master has been waiting in the study room for you!” The maid respectfully opened a walnut wood door and stood by the side. Leylin adjusted his collar before walking in. “Welcome! You haven’t seen my study room before, have you?” Freya had changed into a long loose robe, and had casually used a piece of fabric to tighten her robe. Her face was as youthful as ever. “Yes. Your huge collection of books is shocking!” Leylin nodded his head, and pretended not to see Freya’s attempts at seduction. He knew very well what he could afford to play around with. For girls like Miranda, it was okay to have sex with them. However, it was different for girls like Freya. Leylin was sure that if he was not prepared to take responsibility after his actions, he would definitely be chased down by the Blood Duchess until he perished! Freya’s eyes registered a ray of disappointment, yet she still made a promise. “If you want to, you can flip through any of the books here!”
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“Thank you very much!” Leylin smiled widely as he expressed his gratitude. Freya pulled on Leylin’s arm as they moved to sit on a long sofa. Leylin’s eyebrows furrowed, but not taking such intimate actions to heart.

“What exactly did you ask me to come here for?” Leylin thought Freya was not one to look for him because of a small matter, Miranda would be more likely to do that. Once a serious topic was mentioned, all other expressions left Freya’s face as she turned solemn, “Do you know about the events related to the Purgatory World?”

“As far as I know, the elders seem to have acquired some clues, and now they should be searching for the specific coordinates!” Leylin said with an equally strict expression.

“Actually, the search has almost been completed. According to my master’s plan, I’m afraid we’ll all have to go to the headquarters to participate in the experiments!” Freya added, smiling bitterly.

“This is a responsibility we cannot shirk!” Leylin seemed solemn. “It’s just that… I have a really bad feeling about this…” worry surfaced on Freya’s face, “Even in the ancient era, the Purgatory World was a tremendously powerful world, so how is it possible that it would be so easily found? Even if it is found, how would anyone then go past the protectors to enter?”

“I’m sure the mentors have already considered these questions…”
Leylin considered his own words as he spoke.
“Well, I sure hope so!” Freya breathed a long sigh, then suddenly remembered something else, “These days, the outside world does not seem to be at peace; you must be careful. These are for you…” Freya pushed a box over to Leylin. Leylin opened it to find numerous glittering and translucent crystals neatly placed inside.
“Spiritual force crystals? Those that have had their markings completely removed?” Leylin was taken by surprise. A Crystal Phase Magus could naturally store and preserve his own crystallised spiritual force, and leave these crystals for future use.
But for such a pure colour to appear meant that Freya not only washed away all the spiritual force inside her crystals, but she also eliminated all her spiritual imprints.
To a Crystal Phase Magus, this was no different from reducing their own spiritual force. Although it wasn’t impossible to replenish them, it was still extremely troublesome.
Such crystals with their marks removed could be given to other Crystal Phase Magi to use, and could quickly replenish spiritual force. They were rare treasures, and had always been a top-class resource that was only circulated among Crystal Phase Magi.
For Freya, someone who had just advanced to the Crystal Phase, this gift was extremely precious to give.
Freya stopped Leylin before he could say anything. “Don’t decline it, this is what you deserve. I have yet to thank you for the bloodline crystals from last time…”
Leylin remained silent for a while, but eventually, managed to speak to express his gratitude, “Thank…thank you…”

……

A black horse-carriage slowly exited from the Ancient Blood
Serpent Castle’s main gate..
Inside the magnificent carriage sat Leylin. He was looking at the box in his hand, a bitter smile on his face.
“She’s very considerate…” He sighed lightly. During this period of an unknown crisis, Freya was still able to remember him. This thought inevitably led Leylin’s heart to flutter.
“In the future, if I have the means, I will definitely help you!” Leylin firmly decided in his mind.
“Are you certain the target is inside?”
Not far away, there were tremors felt on the ground surface. Two shadows dressed in yellow appeared. “It is confirmed, inside that carriage is the Ouroboros Clan’s Marquis, Leylin!”
The other figure had a scratchy voice.
“Hehe…this is the Magus who the Demon Hunter put a high price on… And he has Hydro Phase strength!” The person who spoke first immediately laughed coldly.
“Everything is already prepared. Once our target enters the ambush, we spring into action at once!” There was a hint of bloodthirst in that scratchy voice.
“Hmm?!” Leylin, who was just resting on the carriage, abruptly opened his eyes, revealing a cheeky smile.
“Someone wants to attack me?” Although he had not heard the conversation between the two shadows, the A.I Chip’s detection clearly showed that, in the forest not far away, there was a trap.
Even if the other party had already carefully set up three layers of aura-concealing spell formations, from Leylin’s point of view these spell formations were like sieves that were filled with holes.
Especially the radiation from the Magi hidden within, that was as obvious as a burning torch in the night.
“Julian!” He called in a low voice.
“What’s the matter, Lord Marquis?” the coachman from outside replied immediately.
“Maintain the speed, there’s a group of friends ahead of us waiting for a greeting!” Leylin spoke in a low voice, and he was certain the Magus had already understood what he meant.

“Yes, my lord!” Upon hearing this piece of news, Julian’s voice was still ever so steady, like he was not in the least bit worried.

The grand horse-carriage proceeded at a constant speed, moving along on the road by the forest as if unaware. A yellow fireball boomed as it crashed down on them, ruining the walls of the carriage and causing it to break apart. The giant rut and the wheels of the carriage flew out. A waft of smoke rose just outside the area, isolating this piece of land from the rest of the world.

A few men dressed in black immediately pounced towards the carriage. One of them held a huge hammer up high, and smashed down on the carriage directly.

The land rumbled as the huge hammer mercilessly crushed the remains of the carriage and created a gigantic pit, as if by an earthquake that sent out strange ripples.

“Eh? There’s no one?” The person who spoke was someone with the voice of a child, and the body of a seven- or eight-year-old. Yet, he was holding a hammer that was bigger than his own body, making him look a little ridiculous.

“Blacksmith Mia? I don’t recall there being any grudges between us.” Several black tendrils covered the whole area, and Leylin carried the trembling coachman as they walked out of the shadows.

“Hehe! Do I need a reason to kill you?” Mia lifted her hood, revealing a face befitting the body. A face that should have been filled with the joy of a child was instead warped with bloodlust.

Blacksmith Mia was the central continent’s most infamous bandit, a peak Crystal Phase Magus with countless crimes to her name. Under the guise of a little girl hid a vicious, scary monster. She’d once used a metal hammer to kill an entire family of Magi. Male,
female, old, young; no matter who it was, they were simply added
to the mountain of flesh.
“And I reckon these people are courting death too?” Leylin looked
around at the other few black shadows. Numerous elemental
particles transformed into shields and appeared before him.
“Assassin Hill! Brutal Bear Fein!”
A few of the Magi reported their names successively. They were all
characters whose names were known far and wide for their
notoriety. And they all emitted waves of Crystal Phase energy.
“You sure do think highly of me…” Leylin said, smiling while
shaking his head. Without warning, he sprung forth violently.
“Go to hell!” He whirled the coachman who was in his arms
upwards, smashing him towards Mia as if he were a sandbag. The
numerous potion bottles on him scattered outwards.
“Rank 3 potion combination spell, Divine Prairie Flames!” Burning
flames immediately formed a wall of fire in front of him, isolating
Hill and Fein to one side.
On the other end, the coachman who was thrown by Leylin
changed in a bizarre manner. Mia, who was standing in front of
him, whirled the heavy hammer without regard for anything, trying
to smash the coachman into pulp.
He pulled out a golden dagger in mid-air, and his whole
temperament instantly changed. The originally timid man turned
sinister and crazy, as if a cowardly rabbit transforming into a tiger.
“Blacksmith Mia?” He laughed coldly. His whole body seemed to
have become as flexible as a snake’s, and he moved his body in a
way no ordinary person would ever be able to as he avoided the
huge hammer. In the same instant, he stabbed the dagger right into
Mia’s chest.
*Weng!* An aura of gold was emitted from Mia’s body, but even
that was shockingly dimmed as it was stabbed firmly by the dagger.
Mia’s body went stiff for a split second before her innate defensive
spell shattered into pieces under the dagger’s attack. Swiftly after, the sharp dagger mercilessly slashed at Mia’s skin and its sharp blade entered right through her chest, ripping through flesh and entering her internals. Seeing the fresh red blood spurting out, the coachman’s face instantly revealed joy. And yet, the moment he saw a crazed expression on Mia’s face, his heart froze. “Die!” Mia let go of the hammer. Holding on to a dagger, she crashed forward. The sound of bones breaking came from the coachman’s body. His face revealed his astonishment as blood flew from his mouth onto the street. “Boneless Snake Julian?” Mia’s body constantly wiggled, covering and repairing her internal organs and wounds immediately. She looked at Julian with eyes filled with hatred. “As expected of the legendary Magus with body refinement, who soaked in the Corrosion Swamp! To think my strength and magic equipment isn’t enough to kill you in one shot!” Having been revealed, there were slight alterations to the coachman’s face, and Hydro Phase waves were emitted from his body. He was a Magus as well! Or rather, an advanced Magus who had already reached Hydro Phase. The Boneless Snake, Julian, was one of Freya’s family’s most powerful warriors. He was notorious for assassination ability, causing enemies to be terror-stricken at the thought of his existence. “Damn it, I knew those bastards’ plan was not reliable!” Mia’s face changed. “Retreat immediately!” Hill and Fein glanced at each other, doubt surfacing on their faces. Even if Julian and Leylin stood shoulder to shoulder, they were merely two Hydro Phase Magi. On the other hand, their group had a bunch of Crystal Phase Magi who had been famous for a long
time, how could they run away from them with their tails tucked between their legs?
But subsequently, their facial expressions drastically changed.
“Psssssst!”
A menacing Blood Serpent’s shadow abruptly bombarded the surrounding haze. The whole spell formation was immediately breached.
Warriors wearing dark red Magus robes with Giant Kemoyin Serpent tattoos surrounded the area, and covered Leylin who had just been promoted to the Crystal Phase.
“Ouroboros Clan Warlocks?”
Hill cried out beneath his breath, knowing that today’s business would be hard to handle...
You lot knew our plans from the very beginning?” As Mia looked at how they were heavily surrounded, her face turned grim.

The fighting strength of high-ranked Warlocks, especially that of Warlocks like Leylin and Julian, could without a doubt compare to ordinary Magi in the Crystal Phase.

The Blood Serpent Warlock Organisation was the elite force of Freya’s family, not something to be trifled with. They were actually dispatched all at once, and were even led by Freya herself, a Crystal Phase Warlock!

Due to the additional power from their bloodlines, Warlocks were usually stronger than ordinary Magi. Once they advanced to the Crystal Phase, they would immediately be able to compare to peak Crystal Phase Magi.

Given all this, it was no wonder that Mia’s face looked glum.

“All of you have been wreaking havoc near the territory of the Ouroboros Clan! How can we let all of you go so easily?” Freya wore a tight-fitting hunting suit, and looked extremely heroic. Of course, that was only if one ignored the childish face.

“River Agu’s warehouse robbery, the extermination of the Rolithe Family, and Count Oakta’s disappearance. Who exactly is the mastermind behind all these?” Freya stared at the three Magi, and an extreme feeling of danger overwhelmed her.
To subdue and order three vicious Magi in the Crystal Phase was not something that could be done by any ordinary power. With the addition of the chain of events that had occurred recently, Freya had a bad premonition.

“Just the Ouroboros Clan?” Mia’s group of three Magi all registered smiles of disdain.

“Watch out! Lest they…” After seeing that smile, Leylin’s pupils shrank, and he quickly gave a reminder.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Three other rays of black clashed with the Blood Serpent Organisation like lightning, overcoming the strong obstructions before arriving next to Mia’s group.

“Three… Crystal Phase!” Freya grit her teeth, and she sounded bitter.

Little did she expect that the opponents had reinforcements, which obviously meant that they had made preparations with regards to the plan of hers. She was already at the limit of her current strength in subduing three Crystal Phase Magi. But now that there were three more? Freya felt her heart sink.

“What now? If you don’t wish for the elites in your family to perish here, then release us now!” Mia’s voice had a tinge of complacency.

“That’s not enough! He needs to stay!” The three Crystal phase Magi who’d appeared afterwards pointed at Leylin.


“The damage you’ve done to us is not light, and only the Demon Hunter’s rewards can make up for it!” Hill shot Leylin a look before glancing at Freya.

“He is not a Warlock from your family. Miss Freya, I presume you wouldn’t want to simply treat us as your enemies just for a member of your organisation?”

Leylin rolled his eyes internally. It would be impossible for discord to be sowed with such simple tactics. However, due to the fact that
personal interests were involved, this could bring about more trouble.
Thankfully, Leylin had not planned to put his own safety in the hands of others, and had backup plans already.
“The Demon Hunter?” Freya muttered to herself. She had heard of how Leylin and a few others had offended that particular Morning Star Magus. If those Crystal phase fugitives were under the Demon Hunter’s wings, it would be understandable.
Many of the Warlocks thought of that point, and after hearing Hill’s words they looked at Leylin in a different light.
Even though they belonged to the same organisation, and they’d had some friendly interactions before, Leylin was simply not important enough for them to offend a Morning Star Magus without hesitation.
Morning Star Magi in the central continent had power and status, and their dignity could not be infringed upon lightly.
Even though the two organisations were hostile, they hadn’t yet completely fallen out with each other. As a result, many of the Warlocks thought that it was worth it to give up Leylin to get on Cyril’s good side.
A few Warlocks immediately distanced themselves from Leylin. This included the very Julian who had been fighting at his side all this while.
Freya’s face immediately registered a change. She grit her teeth as she looked at the numerous Warlocks from her family.
“Leylin is a Marquis of our clan, we will never hand him over!”
“Master!”
A clamour was started amongst the Warlocks. From their point of view, their family did not have to do so much for an outsider.
“My decision is firm! All of you, quickly get out of my territory, or else you’ll come to regret it!” Freya said firmly.
“The one who’ll come to regret it will be you!” Mia said furiously,
and together with the five figures behind her, turned to leave.

“Wait a minute!” Just when the Blood Serpent Organisation had made a path, an ill-timed voice sounded that caused both parties to look around.

“Leylin, don’t do anything rash!” Freya’s voice betrayed her anxiety.

Even though they were related by bloodline, the Ouroboros Clan was divided into many factions that competed with each other. This was the most she could do for Leylin. Were he to go and provoke them without discrimination, Freya would not risk the danger of her family’s elimination to accompany him.

She looked at Leylin’s back, and bit her lips.

“What? Youngster, you’re lucky today to be able to hide under the skirt of a woman. Next time, you won’t be so lucky!” Mia raised her giant hammer and threatened him.

“Three Crystal Phase Magi for the ambush, and another three as backup… this should be the limits of your strength!” A blue light shone in Leylin’s eyes as he sighed, “Don’t use the Hunter as a facade, he’s not fit for that!”

“Hmmm? What did you just say?” Fury appeared on the faces of some of the Crystal Phase Magi.

“What I’m saying is that you have to stay here today. There’s no escaping from that, even if you’re using the name of a Morning Star Magus!” Leylin’s tone was light, but seemed to emphasise his words. At the same time, a mountainous might instantly erupted from his body.

“Crystal… Crystal Phase! How long have you been…?” Freya covered her mouth in extreme shock.

Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks would typically depend on the accumulation of time to make a breakthrough via their bloodlines. Freya’s own breakthrough to the Crystal Phase at her age had deemed her a genius.
But Leylin? He was only 200 years old, and yet had already broken through the bottleneck to the Crystal Phase!
Freya immediately thought of the changed situation on the battlefield after Leylin revealed his strength.
The other party had a total of six Crystal Phase Magi, and Freya’s side had two with the addition of Leylin Julian and the other members of her organisation could at most resist the attacks of three Crystal Phase Magi. Overall their strength was still lower than that of their opponents.
Of course, in that case, for the other party to want to cause great damage to Freya’s team, their chances at succeeding would be greatly minimised.
With the small disparity in strength and the apprehensions about damages on both sides, ordinary threats would have no effects.
“I’ll deal with these three Crystal Phase Magi! You can settle the remaining ones right?” Leylin had undone the pretense of the transfiguration spell, and had released his entire strength without any qualms as he pointed to Mia’s initial group of three.
“No problem!” With Freya’s Crystal Phase strength and the addition of Julian and the Blood Serpent Warlock Organisation’s support, to annihilate the three Magi would not be a problem. It would only be a matter of time.
“But, are you sure you’re up to it?” Freya glanced at Leylin, and in her eyes was worry that she could not conceal. After all, the enemies were Crystal phase Magi as well.
“Haha… Don’t worry…” Leylin laughed, and numerous black flames shot out like arrows as they trapped Mia, Hill, and Fein within.
He actually wanted to, in one move, deal with three Magi that were similar in strength to him together.
“I’ll grant your death wish! Just nice, my Bloodthirsty Hammer lacks the spiritual wailing of a Crystal Phase Magus!” Mia smiled
coldly as she rushed forward with the metal hammer.

*Bam!* The heavy hammer rippled with terrifying amounts of energy, creating a huge crater on the ground.

“A lass who only uses brute force! I happen to detest beings like these lately!” Leylin’s silhouette grew translucent, giving off a glow which swiftly appeared before Mia.

“I cannot stand you, but it’s a piece of cake to subdue you!” Leylin’s eyes registered coldliness, a black ray slowly appeared from his hands.

“Fatality’s Tip!” The black ray of death tunneled through the hammer and the innate defensive spells, shooting at Mia’s forehead like black lightning. When it exited, it brought with it a large amount of blood as well as brain matter.

*Bang!* It was not until Mia’s corpse fell to the ground that Hill and Fein reacted to it.

What had they seen? The famed Mia who was known for her hammer, someone at the peak of the Crystal Phase, died at the hands of her opponent. The two had not even dueled for a few seconds.

‘Could it be that he has already advanced to the Morning Star realm?’

All of a sudden, an idea that shocked the two appeared within their thoughts, which instantly caused their limbs to become colder.

Leylin himself had not expected the effects of the sudden attack to be so successful as well.

He had originally already reached the state of a rank 3 Hydro Phase Magus, and with his bloodline strength matured to an extent, he had managed to prematurely reach his limits now together with the help of the Lamia fingerbone.

Currently, he not only had a terrifying spiritual force, his other credentials had far surpassed that of ordinary Crystal Phase Magi by a huge margin.
This terrifying strength had the support of the powerful spell tailored for him by the A.I Chip Fatality’s Tip! All the factors had come together, and perhaps with the help of Mia’s complacency, he had managed to achieve such success. Even Leylin himself was grateful for this stroke of luck that arrived just in time.

“It seems that in my current state, few can match up to me unless they’re at or above the Morning Star realm!” Leylin looked at the venue which had instantly quieted down, and let out a sigh of relief.

“What are you looking at?” Freya was distracted for only a short while before she instantly ordered the gathering of the Blood Serpent Warlocks. Leylin’s terrifying outburst had allowed her to see hope for subduing and annihilating the opponents here!

The thought of her earlier humiliation seemed to have triggered the adventurer in her.
“Surround them! Formation number 2!” Under Freya’s command, the Blood Serpent Organisation firmly trapped the three other Crystal Phase Magi in a formation.

With their own strength and the assistance of Julian’s expertise in sneak attacks, the three Crystal Phase Magi in the formation were immediately surrounded by danger.

“It’s your turn now!” Seeing that the three Magi had no hope of escaping, Leylin turned towards Hill and Fein on the opposite end, a brilliant smile spreading across his face.

To the two Magi on the other end, though, this smile was more frightening than that of a demon’s.

Upon seeing Leylin’s grin, they knew that he definitely would not let them off, and immediately rushed to take action first.

The moment Hill had that thought, numerous black thorns instantly appeared, bursting forth in the blink of an eye.

“Umbra Sting!” The many sharp thorns screeched across the sky and scattered down like a torrential rain of spikes.

“Useless!” A layer of dense scales emerged on Leylin’s body. All that the thorns could do on collision with these scales was make a loud noise before snapping apart, merely causing white specks to appear on the black scales.

Leylin’s physique had always been extremely shocking, and the current him could practically fight against any rank 1 or rank 2
Magus with his body alone. With the addition of the Kemoyin scales that strengthened his defense, even if he went up against a rank 3 Magus in the Crystal Phase, any spells used against him would have nearly no effect unless they were prepared over a long time.

In the middle of the black rain, Leylin seemed to have transformed into a giant savage beast, advancing while sheltered from the numerous sparks.

This ferocious posture instantly scared the wits out of the two Magi.

“What we do now? Quick, think of something!” Hill shouted at Fein next to him, cold sweat dripping down his forehead.

He was very clear on how terrifying the effects of his spell were, but the other party had unexpectedly resisted it with a mere layer of scales. How strong was his body?

Perhaps only the legendary Morning Star Magi, whose bodies had been transformed by soul force, could compare to him.

“Gaia’s Cage!” Fein did not waste any time either. A multitude of yellow crystals appeared around him as he muttered a long unintelligible chant without pause.

When he was done chanting, the earth shook, causing the soil to disintegrate and reveal a sparkling jade structure within.

A cage brimming with the resplendent radiance of a gem suddenly fell upon Leylin, covering him and trapping him inside.

“Earth Elves! Listen to my instructions, bury him completely in the abyss…”

A cheery look briefly appeared on Fein’s face before he hurriedly started casting more spells as numerous rays of dull yellow light flashed. Large amounts of soil coagulated to form an even bigger rock that buried him inside. The earth even started to crack apart, as though wanting to swallow up the cage deep into itself.

“Well done, Fein!” Hill, who was on the other side, immediately
yelled excitedly, but then saw his comrade’s forced smile. “Be careful! He’s struggling inside, I can’t control it any longer!” Following loud thumps that made one’s heart palpitate, the numerous rocks swelled and broke apart to form huge cracks. The many cracks then connected to each other and broken rocks suddenly fell everywhere, as though there was a dreadful creature locked up inside that was struggling so hard with mere brute force that the entire cage seemed to have gotten misshaped. With every thump, Fein’s expression grew a little paler, as though he was getting punched hard. By the end of his chant, he spat out large mouthfuls of fresh blood, and almost looked like he was dead. “The… The seal!” Fein tried his best to say as blood gushed out in large amounts from the corner of his mouth. *Boom!* The very mountains shook, and the huge cage of rock was sent into the cracks just before everything completely fell apart. The earth slowly closed up. “Great!” Hill cheered, finally managing to let his guard down. *Thump!* At this moment, he saw his comrade Fein faint, as though he had already used up all of his energy. “Don’t worry, buddy! I’ll take you away now!” Hill’s eyes flickered in multiple colours. Peering over at the few black silhouettes belonging to the Blood Serpent Warlock Organisation who were not far away, he gritted his teeth and left quickly. “Master?” Julian looked over at the location where Leylin had been buried, “Aren’t we going to help?” “Don’t worry. That fellow has never been blocked by an obstacle, he definitely still has something up his sleeve!” Freya rolled her eyes, “Why are you speaking up for him all of a sudden? You clearly approved of the ceasefire previously!” ‘That was when I didn’t know that the other party was so
pervasive!’ Julian secretly criticised, but did not dare to express it in words.

“Lord Leylin actually revealed his true ability and will likely be the biggest hope in our clan. It will definitely grant him a status much higher than before…”

The highest authority in the Ouroboros Clan belonged to the three Morning Star Warlock elders, followed by a whole bunch of bloodline Marquises among whom the ownership was split. But Julian knew that above these ordinary bloodline Marquises were actually a special group of people! They were young Warlocks, children who had already achieved the Crystal Phase and had hopes of advancing to the Morning Star realm! Such people were few and far between in the entire Ouroboros Clan. Their status was only lower than that of the few rank 4 Warlocks, and they were provided with the best resources, aiming for nothing less than advancing to Morning Star.

Although Robin was Gilbert’s main steward, his actual position was previously lower than these seeds by a notch.

Of course, after getting some unknown profits, his strength had improved tremendously, and upon entering the Crystal Phase, Robin was on par with the others.

Now that Leylin had shown that his potential was not inferior to Robin’s, exceeding it in fact, he would definitely receive more attention from Duke Gilbert!

“Now it seems that when Master met him for the first time, you had already discovered that he wasn’t ordinary. Your foresight indeed exceeds that of an average person!” Julian expressed his respect sincerely, making Freya blush.

“You want to leave? Have you even asked me?”

*Boo* The rock exploded, exposing a deep gaping hole in the ground.

A black figure forced his way out recklessly, causing rocks to fly
everywhere.
“Ley… Leylin!” Hill gazed at Fein who had already fainted on the
ground, but couldn’t even bring himself to cry.
At the bottom of his heart, he had already cursed at the people in
charge who initially made this plan. How stupid were they to have
put their sights on Leylin, such a ferocious person?
But he didn’t have much chance to think about it. Leylin, who was
exuding a brazen aura, had already appeared in front of him.
“My Lord! Spare us…” Hill’s voice distorted, and various
accessories on his person exploded, forming many layers of radiant
armor that floated around his body.
“When you dared to ambush me back then, you should have
expected to be killed!” Leylin’s was callous. In a situation where
Morning Star Magi would not appear, there were few things that
could constrain him.
After all, since he was unable to continue hiding his strength, he
had to ruthlessly display it and intimidate the rest who wanted to go
against him.
*Thump!* A black fist attacked the outermost barrier of light,
smashing it into pieces. The other layers of defence immediately
started tottering, on the verge of collapse.
“My Lord! I am willing to reveal the mastermind behind all this!”
Hill gritted his teeth and finally pulled out his trump card.
“Not interested!” Leylin really was not interested in probing behind
the scenes. War was almost upon them, and it would be easiest to
build an atmosphere full of panic by assassinations and by getting
rid of the other party’s weaker troops.
He didn’t want to be implicated and end up provoking a Morning
Star Magus.
Right now, as long as he firmly broke the claws that the other party
was reaching out with, it would be enough!
After sorting out his thoughts, Leylin appeared even more
apathetic, and was indifferent to the other party’s pleas for forgiveness. He eventually ripped apart Hill’s innate defence under his despairing gaze. A sinister-looking head fell onto the ground with a thump even as the body it was previously attached to let loose a shower of blood. It looked like a red fountain had erupted.

‘As for this… I’ll leave it to her.’ Leylin instantly thought of Freya. Fein, who was still unconscious and lying on the ground, would still take some effort to deal with.

Upon inspection, he discovered that Fein’s spiritual force had been exhausted, and swiftly removed all of his spatial objects before forcing his consciousness shut. With his magic equipment and potions all taken away, and his spiritual force sealed, even if Fein was a Magus in the Crystal Phase, he wouldn’t be able to do anything.

*Hiss…* On the other end of the battlefield, in the spell formation formed by the Blood Serpent Organisation, the battle was at its most heated moment.

Although the Blood Serpent Organisation was comprised of the elites of Freya’s family, who were also proficient in many types of formations, Freya had discovered to her surprise that the three Crystal Phase Magi were also experts in all kinds of terrifying secret techniques. Through combining their strength, those Magi had managed to survive the assault of her troops until now, even if they were trapped in a formation.

The three Crystal Phase Magi in front of Freya had now morphed into a monster.

This monster was thrice the size of a normal human, had three heads and six arms, and its body was covered with moving black runes. It looked as though it was a fusion of the three Magi. The head of an elderly man placed right in the centre opened its eyes and issued its last warning to Freya. “Let us go! You don’t
want to pay the price for detaining us!”
“Don’t trust him!” A corner of the spell formation split apart, allowing a ray of light to enter. Leylin stood beside Freya.
“Hill and company have already been completely destroyed, and you still wish to leave? Dream on!” Leylin naturally reprimanded his enemies without restraint.
Seeing that the fused Magi appeared to have made suspicious movements, Leylin immediately turned to Freya.
“You’re in charge of controlling the spell formation, I’ll take care of the front!” he said and then dashed away.
The spell formation of the Warlock organisation was not bad, but Leylin was clear that what it lacked was a pivot who would dare to fight against the other party head on.
His rays of death had been prepared long ago, flickering with a dreadful lustre…
Due to the sudden incident, Leylin’s return was delayed and he returned to the Ancient Blood Serpent Castle to rest. “Thank you so much for what you did this time!” Freya sat beside Leylin and personally poured tea for him, her face full of gratitude.

It was evident that the opponents had come for the Ancient Blood Serpent Castle, and attacking Leylin was only an afterthought. If not for Leylin’s help, the six Crystal Phase Magi would have attacked together. The castle might not have been able to defend against such an abrupt attack, and there might have been colossal damages.

“That’s nothing much. Friends should help each other!” Leylin smiled.

“Just friends?” A gleam of disappointment shone across Freya’s face.

The sudden turn of the situation made Leylin feel somewhat awkward, and he tried to divert the conversation elsewhere, “Were any of the other guests present, they wouldn’t have stood the savage behaviour of those fugitives either!”

During the battle the previous day, other than Fein who had been taken captive by Leylin, all the five Crystal Phase Magi had perished. The announcement of those horrifying battle results had rendered many people speechless, and had caused a lot of commotion in the Ouroboros Clan headquarters.
The only captive, Fein, was naturally sent back to the headquarters. In the meanwhile, Leylin would have the lion’s share of the spoils of war.

Compared to Freya who had to look after her family clan, Leylin had much less pressing on his mind. Whatever he had acquired belonged to him alone, and he had indeed managed to get a huge sum. And there were even more surprises in store for him!

The only thing Leylin could not understand was why Freya did not invite the other guests to assist in subduing the opponents. If only she had invited more high ranking Warlocks, Leylin would not have to be forced to reveal his true powers.

“Them…” Freya smiled wryly, and actually looked pitiful. Upon seeing her expression, Leylin immediately went silent, guessing what had happened.

Freya had definitely discarded quite a few people in the past, offending them while under the wings of a strong, protective mentor. At this point in time, those people most likely hoped for her to mess up.

Furthermore, there were many factions in Ouroboros Clan, and recently there had been immense tension between them. The environment had given rise to an unstable situation.

Power conflicts tended to be more horrifying than battles. Freya could not find even a single person she was confident would aid her.

“Is the situation already that bad?” Leylin stroked his chin.

“Yes. You’re the only one I trust now!” Freya’s eyes became red as she leant her head on Leylin’s shoulders.

“Wait a moment!” Leylin smiled wryly as he shook his head, “I can understand your need to rant. But what’s the point of placing mistletoe powder in the candle?”

The mistletoe was a cherished plant in the Magus world. Seen as a symbol of making love and giving birth, its powder was commonly
used to make enticing medicine. For Magi, it even had the mystical power of increasing impregnation rates, and hence was in excessive demand.

Freya held her breath as she sat in a corner. Her face did not reveal any sense of embarrassment, but was only tinged with anger. Since she knew that Leylin was a Potions Grandmaster, and had techniques that could protect his seeds of life that even Miranda was unable to do anything about, she would naturally not make a forceful move, and instead leave obvious hints.

And yet Leylin acted like a fool. It infuriated her so much that she didn’t want to be near him.

“Master, news has arrived from headquarters!” At that moment, the gates opened and Julian walked in, something that resolved the awkward situation.

“No one here is an outsider. Go ahead!” Freya nodded. In front of others, she had reinstated her prestige.

Julian shot Leylin a glance. A sudden realisation flashed across his eyes, but his face remained solemn.

“According to the orders of the headquarters, Sir Leylin is to become an enforcer of the Ouroboros Clan, and will be in charge of patrolling all the regions under our control! He has the powers to attack any royals under the rank of Marquis. Even if it’s a Marquis, he has the rights to imprison them!”

“That…” Freya could not believe it, ”They just want to put you in a spot!” She could see through the intentions of such an arrangement by the high ranking officials.

“But I have no other choice, do I?” Leylin shrugged his shoulders.

“According to the orders from the headquarters, Marquis, you have to accept the appointment as soon as possible!”

Julian bowed slightly. The powers of an enforcer of the Ouroboros Clan would naturally be great, but if he was not mindful he could potentially offend many people. This did not bode well for Leylin’s
future prospects
But since it was an order, it indicated that the internal affairs of the Ouroboros Clan were not too good, to the extent that they had to rely on Leylin to clean up the system.
‘From the looks of it, I’ll have to leave!’ Leylin got up and gave Freya a hug, “I’m going!”
“Mmm! I’ll be heading over to the headquarters to find Mentor some time soon as well. Please be careful!” Freya’s eyes actually did turn red this time round.
“Don’t worry! There are few people who can scheme against me now!” Leylin laughed with confidence.

……

Phosphorescence Swamp, within the Ouroboros Clan headquarters.
Gilbert’s living quarters were small and narrow like before. The walls on two sides even had some green mould growing on them. If he had not been to the basement, even Leylin would not have believed that this was the residence of a Morning Star Magus.
Leylin saw Duke Gilbert in the study room, not a single strand of hair on his face or head.
“Mentor!” he respectfully bowed.
“Mmmm! You’ve actually advanced to the Crystal Phase! Not bad, not bad!” Gilbert nodded his head, his gaze scanning across Leylin’s body like a ray of lightning.
“I was just lucky!” Leylin obviously would not agree, and he pushed all the credit on to so-called luck.
Thankfully, Gilbert did not continue questioning him either. He held a goose hair pen and started writing on a piece of parchment paper, eventually leaving a marking on the paper using his own secret imprint.
“This is for you! From today, you are the enforcer of the Ouroboros Clan!”
Gilbert passed Leylin the freshly written appointment letter, and his face broke into a sarcastic laugh, “Our organisation has had some matters popping up internally lately. They require your attention!”
“Understood, Mentor!” Leylin let out a long deep sigh inside.
If this was in the past, Gilbert would obviously get to the bottom of things. Even though Leylin had prepared a corresponding response, he had not expected Gilbert to let things off so lightly.
looking at how Gilbert hadn’t even taken his biochemical clothing off completely, Leylin’s heart throbbed. He asked, “About the Purgatory World…”
“Mmm! We have already discovered its direction, and we need only spend a bit more time to get its coordinates!” Gilbert’s eyes lit up, showing his celebratory mood.
“The thousand year search by the Ouroboros Clan will finally see an end! We only need to enter the Purgatory World before we Kemoyin Warlocks won’t have to worry about the problem of our bloodlines declining. There’s even the potential to break through the bloodline shackles and advance to a higher rank!”
Leylin remained silent and looked at his mentor who was beaming with joy, unable to bring himself to say a word.
He had the A.I Chip as his trump card, and the hopes of the Twilight Zone’s Icy World. He naturally wasn’t like the Ouroboros Clan Warlocks, who had a deeper understanding of the pains brought forth by the bloodline shackles.
From the looks of it, a thousand years of hope had caused Gilbert to finally drown himself in jubilation.
For the three Elders, all the battles were simply nonsensical. Even if the Ouroboros Clan was to perish, in front of the Purgatory World, it seemed to have no weight.
As a result, Gilbert had allowed him to pass the ordeal so easily.
“Alright, get down to doing it soon. You can seek help from Lucian and Robin if need be! I still have experiments to work on…”
Gilbert’s experiment was obviously very pressing. Even during his short conversation with Leylin, the secret imprint on his hands had lit up quite a few times. He eventually chased Leylin out, certainly on his way back to the laboratory.
God knows why, but upon seeing Gilbert like that, Leylin felt a sense of pressure.
Greed drove one to madness before it drove them to death. This was a maxim from his previous life, but one that was still applicable in the situation now.
Since war was about to break out, the few Morning Star Warlocks had actually couped themselves up at home, which resulted in their opponents brazenly taking up the offense.
Leylin smiled wryly internally, and yet had no solution to offer.
Since the Morning Star forces had chosen not to show their faces, it was hard for the subordinates to do anything, and now that Gilbert had actually passed on a portion of the authority to him, it was obviously a difficult task.
“Parker! Bring along my capable subordinates and rush to the headquarters quickly!”
Gilbert had only given him a position, but had not allocated any subordinates to him, which had rendered Leylin speechless.
Fortunately, within his own territory, he had nurtured a few talents, and now was the time he could put them to good use.
Kemoyin Warlock Marquises were like feudal lords in the Ouroboros Clan, and had many Warlocks seeking refuge from them. Should there be more time, Leylin could even build an elite Warlock team himself, which he believed would not be inferior to the Blood Serpent Organisation.
“As you wish, Master!” Parker’s voice from the secret technique imprint was firm and determined. He had obviously received some
news already.
“Very good. I’ll be waiting for you in the manor!” After a few words, Leylin ended the call.
As a Marquis, he had a huge manor in the Ouroboros Clan headquarters. Even though the facilities could not measure up to that of the Magus Tower and Onyx Palace, it was sufficient for an ordinary high-ranking Warlock to use.
What’s more important was that the facilities were all complimentary, and Leylin did not have to pay a single penny!
As a result, Leylin had kept the manor and treated it as his residence in the headquarters.
After sending away the two Warlocks who were looking after things, he went into his bedroom and entered deep thought.
A while later, he waved his arms and numerous objects appeared. Many of them had terrifying magic powers. In an instant, the entire room started to glow.
Those were all his spoils of war. The opponents this time round were a bunch of Crystal Phase Magi who were relatively affluent. It had given Leylin a pleasant surprise.
Glancing through the many pieces of magic equipment and precious materials, Leylin set his gaze on a pile of crystals. These were all pure spiritual force crystals. On their surfaces, he could faintly feel the energy of elemental particles. Crystal Phase Magi had the tendency to stockpile their crystallised spiritual force. In times of need, they would use them to replenish their own spiritual force, or trade them for something else due to their value.

Leylin’s move had been quick and violent, leaving no opportunity for the opposite side to use such tactics. Compared to the spiritual force crystals gifted by Freya, these crystals were obviously unclean, and had to be processed before use. “Crystal Phase spiritual force crystals…” Leylin stroked his chin, and a tube of golden blood appeared in his hand.

“It’s unexpected that I managed to gather these two items so quickly. I guess I’ll just go ahead and carry out Quicksand’s experiment!” Leylin sighed, and his eyes flashed with a dark solemnness.

His harvest from Quicksand Castle had been much greater than just the Lamia fingerbone.

After he finished deciphering the experimental procedures, the great amount of data became useful for his own bloodline research. Over the past century, he’d digested it all, and even improved on
some of it. The technique of preserving his genes was just a marginal result of the experiment.
In fact, Leylin felt that his research into bloodlines was amongst the best in the entire Ouroboros Clan, just below that of the elders.
And one of his experiments involved a method of igniting a Warlock’s bloodline to strengthen them.
Leylin had kept this experiment top secret, unwilling to perform it even after he advanced to the Crystal Phase. The effect of the first ignition would be the best, and subsequent ones would progressively decrease in value. Hence, Leylin planned to use his first ignition to break through the bottleneck to the Morning Star realm.
Of course, one measly experiment would not be able to propel him to rank 4. Moreover, he was only at the beginning of the Crystal Phase, so he hadn’t even reached the threshold for advancement.
There was an enormous gap between rank 3 Magi and those at the Morning Star realm. There was an abundance of Magi in the central continent, yet Morning Stars remained few and far between, their positions envied by all.
Igniting one’s bloodline had the potential to boost one’s strength greatly, and even that had slim chances of facilitating a breakthrough.
Still, this bloodline experiment wasn’t the only trick Leylin had up his sleeve.
“My cumulations to advance to rank 3 have been progressing well! I have to start considering the next stage, Morning Star…” Leylin stroked his chin, evidently pleased.
The central continent was currently in a dire state, especially the Ouroboros Clan. Not only were there disturbances on the borders, many families had perished and core members had gone missing. These disastrous events were a bad omen for the future.
Amidst such chaos, the best defence one could rely on was their
own ability!
“I’m sure Mentor Gilbert and the other two have already been
alerted about the circumstances. Why are they yet to make a
move?” Leylin muttered under his breath. Suddenly, he thought
about his own appointment as an enforcer. “Perhaps they were
aware of it and had secret plans of their own that I might have
missed noticing it…”
Time crawled on as he waited in silence.
Later, Leylin welcomed the presence of his own bodyguards.
Boosting his own confidence was the presence of Lucian.
“Do you really wish to do that?” Lucian stood in front of Leylin,
unable to mask his astonishment.
After finding out that the current Leylin had advanced, and was on
par with him at the Crystal Phase, he sighed in his heart.
This junior only needed a hundred years to catch up to his level.
His talent exceeded any member the organisation had ever seen
even in Morning Star seeds. And yet, compared to the
temperamental Robin, Leylin whose potential was much higher
remained humble and earnest. Lucian found this extremely
admirable.
“If we investigate further, the number of people implicated in this
will increase… Although Mentor ordered me to assist you…”
Lucian, after seeing the current Leylin, felt that this junior ought to
have wholeheartedly entered seclusion, waiting for an opportunity
to break through the Morning Star bottleneck instead of focusing
on such small matters. He wondered what his mentor was thinking.
Thoughts about Gilbert made Lucian heave a big sigh.
To these high-ranking Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, the allure
of the Purgatory World was much too huge, and they couldn’t help
but be engrossed in their search.
Thinking about the recent situations and Leylin’s terrifying military
power, Lucian heaved another big sigh.
“I’m in charge of information in the clan. I can give you anything you need. My only wish is for you to not get yourself involved!” Lucian smiled bitterly, took out a translucent crystal ball, and handed over to Leylin.

“As an enforcer, it is imperative that I locate the rebels and all the disruptive elements hidden in the Ouroboros Clan and get rid of them!” Leylin smiled faintly, as if he was not affected by Lucian’s words. But once his spiritual force entered the crystal ball, his face changed.

“The situation has deteriorated to such an extent?” He looked up in disbelief and glared at Lucian.

“Yes…” he answered after a heartbeat, “The chaotic power struggles are not confined to the border regions. Even internally, some ambiguous problems have cropped up. Some of the clans and families especially, their betrayal is pretty much confirmed…”

This top secret information was only available to Leylin because he currently held the position of an enforcement officer. If it were in the past when he only held the position of a Marquis, he wouldn’t have access to such things.

‘What exactly is Mentor doing?’ The thought left a bitter taste in Leylin’s mouth.

“There’s no need for excessive worry. As long as we don’t lose our main base at Phosphorescence Swamp, given the presence of the three elders, we of the Ouroboros Clan will never be vulnerable and weak.”

Leylin let loose a long sigh before he stood up.

“I want the list of confirmed traitors!”

“Alright, I’ll ready them immediately,” Lucian promised, “What do you plan to do?”

“No matter what, since they have the audacity to betray the Organization, they will have to pay the price!” Leylin spoke with a steely voice. With his men behind him, he headed out.
“The Stuart Family at the Stuart mountain range!”
Black fires were blazing furiously. A large number of high-ranking Warlocks were surrounding a huge mountainous brutal bear. Behind the bear was a fort that was half-built into the cliffside.
“Enforcer Leylin, I demand an explanation for this!” In the middle of the castle, the silhouette of an old Magus appeared. It entered the sky, becoming a huge projection.
“Even though you are an enforcer, you do not have the authority to besiege the castle of a Marquis!” The illusory image of the old man roared in his hoarse voice.
“Authority? Only the weak will abide by such rules and regulations while wishing that their predators would abide by them in this way too. By placing your hopes on such enforcements is truly foolish!” Leylin sneered. Still, on the account of the other men that went on this mission with him, he decided to explain further, ”If I have to give you an explanation, it would be your betrayal of the Organization. That is why all these Warlocks are out to kill you, and that is why you cannot escape your fate!”
“Rubbish…” Having his biggest secret exposed, the Magus acted like he knew nothing and was hearing it for the first time. Veins popped out of his flushed neck and he fumed with anger.
“True or false, we’ll know after you surrender.” Leylin’s face was emotionless. A brilliant ray of black ripped through the vast sky and streaked across the brutal bear’s head mercilessly.
*Bang!* The huge mountainous brutal bear’s head was cracked open like a watermelon.
“So long as they are from the Stuart Family, we have orders to kill them without exception. Property and assets will also be confiscated. We’ll be given bonuses of equivalent value!” Parker ordered clearly. Those Warlocks thirsty for achievements, and those who longed for the huge payout from the mission, howled and
dashed forward.
Seeing Snoopy taking the lead and defeating one Magus after the other, some even dying on the spot, Leylin couldn’t help but nod his head.
The reason he’d taken on the job of enforcer, other than to acquire the huge wealth of the rebels, was for him to bring his men together for a round of actual field training.
The bloody battle of magic and death carried on for a short while. Ten or so minutes later, Parker grabbed the Magus that had been speaking from the fort, and pulled him out. With the matter settled, he stood in front of Leylin and reported like a loyal long-time butler.
“Except for this old man, all surviving members of the Stuart Family had been wiped out!”
“Well done!” Leylin looked at the high-ranking Warlock on the ground. The opposite party evidently had the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in him too, yet when he saw Leylin, he began to shiver.
“Do you feel resentment? Desperation?” Leylin stepped up, provoking the old Magus.
“Hopefully, the next time, before your soul is destroyed, you should use some brains!”
*Thud!* After Leylin was done speaking the chief’s head fell to the ground, staining it red.
“A total of three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Families have been wiped out, along with their supplementary small-scale families and other influences. I think we’ll have some peace for a while now…”
Standing at the edge of the overhanging cliff, Leylin glanced at the result of the destruction caused by many Magi, involuntarily heaving a sigh of relief.
“Only a while?” Standing by the side, Parker smiled bitterly.
After numerous episodes, Leylin’s reputation had spread
everywhere. With his formidable strength that could even slay Crystal Phase chiefs, he’d immediately established his status. Soon after, through the ruthless means of wiping out entire families and clans, Leylin’s fame as an enforcer became even more widespread. Thus, he was labelled ‘Annihilator’.
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No matter what, with Leylin happily going on a killing spree, the internal affairs of the Ouroboros Clan stabilised despite the general unrest. Leylin guessed that this had more to do with how the opposing Morning Star powers had yet to make their move. Without these insider spies, it would take more effort to create chaos within the inner circles of the Ouroboros Clan which was currently already on the alert.

With these achievements, his reputation soared not only within the Ouroboros Clan, but even in the nearby regions. ‘After the Stuart family is destroyed, we can take a small break!’ Leylin sighed and asked Parker, “How is it going at Senior Robin’s side?”

After taking on his role as an enforcer, Leylin was stunned at the realisation that this senior of his had accepted the responsibility from Gilbert before him, and was leading his family and pushing down all rebellions.

In addition, there were rumours that Leylin’s senior had a large change of personality. Not only did he like to torture his enemies, he even enjoyed eating human flesh. Upon hearing this, Leylin’s heart sank. Though it was terrifying when bloodline issues acted up in high-ranked Warlocks, Robin’s behaviour had surpassed the pattern of any problems arising from bloodline.
Mentor might have wanted to capitalise on his insanity, which is why he arranged for him to purge the inner regions.’ Leylin took in a deep breath. Compared to him, Robin was going too far. Leylin had merely destroyed families where there was conclusive evidence against them, but Robin went even further. If he had the slightest suspicion at all, the entire family would be purged by him mercilessly. Even a few bloodline noble families who had a deep connection with Robin’s own thus lost their inheritance. Through the list of families Robin had destroyed, Leylin made a discovery. Robin seemed to only to have an interest in pure-blooded families, and the higher the purity, the more pitiful their deaths were. Even their corpses were not complete. Knowing all this, Leylin felt a chill as he put two and two together. Though he knew he wasn’t the best person in the world, he was still better than Robin. He wouldn’t do anything so disgusting. “Complaints against Robin are becoming more widespread. Who knows, we might need to stop him next!” Leylin smiled wryly at Parker. “Robin is master’s senior. I believe Duke Gilbert wouldn’t do this,” Parker consoled him. “I hope so!” Leylin sighed. A distance away, many white dandelions fell down like snowflakes, flying freely atop the ancient castle that had already been ruined. Night fell, and outside what had been the castle, Leylin’s vassals set up simple tents. Iron pots bubbled with meat soup and large amounts of mushrooms, giving off a tempting aroma. A merry atmosphere permeated the camp; the plan had gone quite well, Though Leylin planned to train his vassals this way, he still made his move when the casualties were about to be too high. Hence, they had not suffered much, and instead reaped massive gains. For this reason, they were motivated to continue striving on.
Even the most ferocious Warlock was full of admiration when gazing at Leylin’s tent at the heart of the camp. They had been with Leylin for the longest period of time, and could be said to be the people who knew Leylin the best out of everyone in the Ouroboros Clan. It was because they knew the terrifying strength of their master that they held reverence for him.

Of course, he did not put too much thought into this. As long as he maintained his crushing strength, these vassals would follow him for their entire life.

Within the tent, Leylin was half-lying on the ground, dressed in tight black clothing. His hands were held behind his back in a strange position. There were a few strange runes written on his body with blood. Buzzing sounds were produced from Leylin’s lips from time to time, his entire body slightly moving along to a rhythm. During this process, threads of mysterious energy seemed to be pulled from the air, disappearing into Leylin’s limbs. This process continued for almost an hour. Only then did Leylin stand up, taking a look at his hands.

A prompt popped up at this moment.

[Host body completed a cycle of Multilimb Strength. Vitality increased by 0.5, no changes to strength. Estimated that in 20 days and 13 hours, host body’s vitality will increase by 6.7, and strength by 2.1…]

“This progress is not bad!” Watching his stats that were refreshed again, Leylin couldn’t help but nod. Multilimb Strength was a cultivation technique he had gathered from the race in the Blackrain World. Though the Morning Star realm chief had purposely left out a lot of things, the complete version of this path to strength was completely deduced, with the A.I. Chip organising the data and making inferences.
Toughening his body with this method, Leylin found that his body, which had already developed to the maximum, now held the possibility of advancing even further. Though this increase was small, it was enough for him to be happy. Furthermore, with Multilimb Strength, the toughness and coordination of his body had increased by a whole level. He could even launch a physical attack similar to that of an ancient giant beast. This coordination, when paired with the Knight techniques Leylin had previously learned, turned his body into a frightful killing machine. Still, these were all just serendipitous. What Leylin focused on was the increase Multilimb Strength gave to his vitality. The corporeal body sustained the spirit. If spiritual force was said to be water, then a Magus’ body would be the cup. The larger and sturdier the cup, the more liquid it could contain. Leylin was still unable to peep at the Morning Star realm, but after reaching the Crystal Phase, what he needed to do was continuously increase his vitality and accumulate spiritual force. Once enough had been gathered, his crystallised spiritual force would eventually condense to form point mass. The point mass represented everything to a Magus. It represented their journey, bloodline, strength, and even soul! Hence, this process was irreversible. The moment the ascension to the Morning Star realm failed, and the point mass grew unstable, a terrifying explosion might occur. If a Magus encountered such a situation, they would be left without a corpse. Historically, the Magi who failed to ascend to the Morning Star realm and fell far outnumbered those that had succeeded. Wondering about his future path, Leylin’s expression changed as he asked the A.I. Chip a question, “How is the simulation of
information regarding the Morning Star realm going?”
[Simulation is 13.5% complete. Unable to process deeper calculations without concrete data] The A.I. Chip robotically answered.

If he could gain an understanding of the Morning Star realm now, it would be incomparably useful to Leylin’s advancement.

However, it was difficult to meet with Morning Star Magi, and even more impossible to perform research on them.

It wasn’t as if Leylin could look for Gilbert and tell him that he wanted to do an experiment, and ask him to be a specimen.

It would be a wonder if Gilbert did not destroy Leylin in that instant!

“Perhaps the corpse of the Scorpion Man in Twilight Zone will be useful to me!” Leylin touched his chin. The Scorpion Man was truly a Morning Star creature, and his corpse would definitely be useful as a reference for the A.I. Chip’s simulations.

Immediately after, Leylin overruled his own thoughts. “There’s not enough time. It isn’t the volcano’s dormant period. Furthermore, based on the predictions of the Coin of Destiny, rank 3 Magi will meet with dangers that cannot be predicted in the Icy Cave. Only those with Morning Star strength can be safe…”

Leylin steeled his expression and let the A.I. Chip continue research.

Leylin was counting on the Lamia fingerbone and the bloodline ignition experiment as well as the A.I. Chip’s analysis of the Morning Star realm to advance.

As long as he did persevered in that regard, he would definitely be able to reach the threshold of Morning Star.

If he was a regular Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, just obtaining one of those would be difficult. However, Leylin had everything, and even without assistance all these would increase his chances of reaching Morning Star by a lot when compared to other Morning
Star seedlings.  
Leylin had no doubt about this.

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*Sha sha!* The pendant at Leylin’s waist suddenly emitted bright light.  
Leylin’s brows furrowed, and he tapped on a secret imprint.  
“Is this Marquis Leylin, Sir Enforcer?” A low, hoarse voice was produced from the secret imprint.  
This was the communications officer that the Ouroboros Clan had specifically allocated to him. He was in charge of contacting Leylin alone, and just by hearing his voice, Leylin could guess that something terrible had happened.  
“I am Leylin. Is there anything wrong?” His voice was calm and steady, even causing the voice from the other side to become gentler.  
“Headquarters has received a denouncement. Marquis Miranda is accusing Marquis Robin of attempting to kill her. There is also a large amount of evidence! Based on the information, something has also seemingly happened within Robin’s family.”

“Get to the point.” Leylin raised his eyebrows. The voice on the other end hesitated, but still presented the news.  
“According to the order of the Elder Committee, Marquis Leylin is to head to Robin’s family immediately, and send Marquis Robin back to headquarters.”

“They want me to capture Robin? Do you know that he’s Mentor Gilbert’s student and my senior?” Leylin’s expression became serious.  
“I know. This is Duke Gilbert’s order!” The voice was silent for a while, and then transmitted a black runic imprint.  
This was similar to a person’s signature and could not be forged.
This black rune was Gilbert’s own symbol, and Leylin definitely would not misidentify it.
“I understand.”
Feeling jittery, Leylin ended communications and fell into silence.
“Mentor, what are you thinking?” A long while later, a low voice was sounded in the tent.
Leylin didn’t feel good the entire night due to the orders to capture Robin. Regardless of how things would unfold, it would still be disadvantageous to the Ouroboros Clan. The disciple of a Morning Star Magus had shown signs of betrayal, which would be a fatal blow to the emotions of the Warlocks that had just settled down. But since it was Gilbert’s wish, Leylin could only carry it out. However, he somehow felt that things weren’t so simple.

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“Leylin! Welcome!” Robin hugged Leylin and laughed heartily. He was full of smiles, and looked as though he wasn’t affected by the news. Robin still had the appearance of a very young male, if one ignored the numerous runes imprinted on his face. Compared to the last time they met, the imprints on Robin’s forehead were even more terrifying, and practically occupied more than half of his face. It made Robin’s original facial features seem immensely sinister and horrifying. “Senior Robin!” Leylin put on a stiff smile. After making brief bodily contact with him earlier on, a quiver had run through his entire being and he’d felt every pore on his body contract. Such a feeling was an indication of what a ferocious beast Robin had become, automatically putting Leylin on guard.
Leylin peered past Robin, and he scanned the members of his family behind him. The family that Robin belonged to was known as the Parble Family. In the entire Ouroboros Clan, their bloodline lineage was one of the purest, and they were a long-standing noble family that possessed great influence. On previous adventures, Robin could have dispatched fifty rank 3 Warlocks as he wished, and he even brought along a pure-blooded nephew, which went to show how much of a standing their family had. But now, the teenagers that followed behind Robin had gloomy expressions… Or more accurately, they had an air of death around them. What made Leylin even more shocked was that behind Robin, there wasn’t a single family elder to be seen, and there weren’t many Warlocks who were at rank 3 and above. Even Noah was nowhere to be found. “Such a situation must definitely mean that something huge has happened!” Leylin’s hunch was getting clearer, but his facial expression only became more sincere, and he said slightly apologetically, “I’m sorry, senior, according to Mentor’s orders…” “Oh! Rest assured, it’s a total misunderstanding! I’ll go to headquarters with you tomorrow to explain!” Robin seemed honest. He then enthusiastically invited Leylin, “You haven’t been to my castle and laboratory before, right? Stay here for the night. Your vassals are also my guests. I have prepared a sumptuous banquet for them, and I believe you’ll like it here…” What else could Leylin say when Robin was being so cordial? He could only check into the vacant room that Robin had specially left for him, just as his vassals that had rushed here with him did into
their.
The oaken floor had an oily layer of gloss on it. The smell of incense filled the room, and the four walls were filled with portraits, armour and swords.
Although Parker had never specifically learned about assessments in this aspect, he also knew that this was surely one of the best rooms in the castle.
“It’s just that… My Lord, you…” Parker didn’t have the slightest interest in examining the helmet that was said to have been adorned with the feathers of multicoloured birds, but instead stood in front of Leylin with a worried look on his face.
“I know. You mean to say that I had received orders to apprehend Robin, but yet I’m now associating with him, and this will inevitably make people suspicious and cause them to attack…”
Leylin lay on an armchair embedded with huge rubies, and interrupted Parker with a wave of his hand, brushing him off.
“But what else can we do? Robin is my senior after all, and before this matter has been fully investigated, we cannot make any rash conclusions!”
“Anyway, he has already agreed to return with us tomorrow, so we don’t have to demand anything else…”
Even upon hearing Leylin’s words, Parker’s smile remained bitter. This was, of course, the most normal scenario, but from his point of view, Robin seemed to be showing symptoms of insanity, and it was impossible to deduce his next course of action using logic.
Furthermore, it was hard to guarantee that he didn’t have plans to first numb them and then get rid of all his problems at once.
Among all the bloodline nobility of the land, they were undoubtedly the best, and even orders from the headquarters would sometimes be boycotted by them, openly or secretly.
*Knock! Knock! Knock!* Just as Parker was about to say something, a steady and rhythmic knocking sound came from the
A tender voice sounded from behind the door, “Respected Marquis! The banquet has begun!”
“You may enter!” Leylin nodded.
The door was promptly opened, and a girl dressed as a servant, whose face still had baby fat, appeared in front of Leylin and Parker.
The female servant’s face flushed with nervousness as though it was her first time seeing such high-ranking guests.
“How great it must be to be young…” Leylin pinched her cheeks, hardly standing on courtesy. This made her blush all the way to her neck.
He felt the aura of a pure Kemoyin bloodline from the girl. It seemed that she shared blood with Robin, and they were probably weren’t far removed.
From the bloodline, it seemed that this girl had a bright future, and might even be in the direct line of descent in Robin’s family. But in order to greet Leylin, she naturally had to change into the clothes of a servant.
“What’s your name?” Leylin asked, smiling. Parker stood aside, expressionless, as though he hadn’t seen Leylin’s gesture.
As a high-ranking Warlock, who also once had authority over a Warlock clan, he had become completely immune to such matters.
Even if Leylin did anything in front of him, he would still be able to stand as straight as a pine tree.
“Ed… Edda, Sir! The female servant’s voice held a hint of a repressed sob, as though she was about to cry any moment.
At her age, she obviously knew a lot. If this high-ranking bloodline nobleman wanted her, there wouldn’t be any objections from anyone, regardless of if it was an elder or her parents. They might even send her over with great joy.
Hence, although she was on the verge of tears, Edda held them
back, trying to stay strong.
Luckily for her, Leylin stopped teasing her. He gently asked Edda, whose face was turning fully red, “I also have another close friend in the Parble Family by the name of Noah, do you know him?”
“Uncle Noah?!” the little girl cried out, yet shortly after she seemed to have remembered something, and raised her guard against Leylin.
It was alright, though. From her behaviour earlier on, Leylin became aware of many things.
“No need to be afraid! He and I are good friends, if anything has happened to him, I will definitely help!” Leylin acutely discovered Edda’s hidden hostility, and plastered his kindest smile on his face.
“Uncle Noah… He has been locked up!” The little girl finally mumbled after a seemingly long struggle with herself, and her voice was practically so low that it couldn’t be heard.
“Got it, I will try rescuing him!” Leylin caressed her head and guaranteed.
“What do you think is the possibility of her telling the truth?” Leylin asked indifferently after sending the servant away.
“The possibility isn’t high; after all, she was sent by them!” Parker shook his head.
“I think so too, but it’s also possible that it’s information brought to us by the other powers in the Parble Family…” Leylin stroke his chin.
He had a premonition that this trip to the Parble Family was perhaps not as simple, and it was possible that more unexpected things were slated to happen.
The atmosphere in the drawing room was tense, but a few seconds later, Leylin’s light laugh broke the silence. “Let’s not think too much about this right now, and just enjoy the banquet!”
“Yes, sir!” Parker nodded and followed behind Leylin. He was decked in a black tailcoat, and wore a beautiful tie around his
collar, appearing as if he had made preparations long ago. While Leylin and company were enjoying the wine and delicacies made by the Parble Family, and even the female Warlocks that were brimming with enthusiasm, somewhere in the depths of the ancient castle an invisible darkness spread endlessly.

“Divulging the information to him on purpose? Your plan is really badly done…” In a dim and narrow room, a blue secret imprint hovered in midair, and the voice of a middle-aged man faintly sounded.

“Rest assured! I know him very well, once he knows about this, he definitely will give chase!” A silhouette shrouded in black gas was conversing with the secret imprint. Numerous squirming veins emerged from the black gas from time to time, and were densely packed, making one’s scalp go numb.

“I don’t care about your plan, but Leylin has to be handed over to me!” The blue secret imprint spoke with gritted teeth, apparently harbouring an unforgettable hatred towards Leylin.

“We have been making deals and collaborating on many occasions, you don’t have to worry!” The figure shrouded in the black gas was silent for a while, then continued asking, “Actually, these are all small matters. What I really wish to know is: when are you planning to take action?”

“Very soon… The elders in the Ouroboros Clan will soon become a thing of the past. Then, our plan can truly be launched. After all, the counterattack of three Morning Star Warlocks would be hard to bear even for a Radiant Moon Magus…”

The glow of the blue imprint completely dimmed down with the last words of the middle-aged Magus.

“Very soon…” The figure in the black gas muttered, and suddenly chanted a certain syllable. The gas dispersed, revealing a face all so familiar to Leylin.

Leylin, who was still at the banquet, naturally knew nothing about
all of this. Now, he was like a huge butterfly, dancing gracefully among a cluster of flowers. The enthusiasm of the female Warlocks of the Parble Family practically melted the many Warlocks, and those that Leylin had brought over were also immersed in delight. “Feels like things won’t be that simple…” Parker leaned against a pillar with a glass of wine in his hand, watching Leylin’s performance, yet a puzzled look flashed in his eyes.
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The excitement dissipated with distance from the banquet hall, and the sounds were inaudible from the castle’s dungeons. Dim light shone against the murky walls and reflected numerous shadows that looked like talons. The place reeked.

“We’re getting there!” Leylin knitted his brows and sized up the rooms and walls of the castle.

The dungeons of Magus castles were, more often than not, laboratories or storage rooms. He had yet to discover anything of value.

Most of the preventive and detective spell formations were unable to discover Leylin, allowing him to strut through the castle without being realised.

And the Leylin that everyone perceived in the banquet hall was obviously just a clone. Anyway, nobody would want to provoke him, and with a clone and the abilities of the A.I. Chip, a double was no problem.

On top of everything, Leylin could move freely without obstruction in the castle due to his Crystal Phase abilities. He could weaken the effects of many detective spell formations, stopping them from locating him.

‘Robin’s sudden emotional outburst wasn’t all that it seemed to be…’ Leylin rubbed his chin in deep thought. ‘Moreover, if the situation outside and this were linked, it would spell even more trouble…’

Robin, despite everything, was still his senior and cared a lot for Leylin when they first met. So it’d be unwise of Leylin to make a move before finding concrete evidence.

And Robin’s attitude was upright. If Leylin continued to be so unwilling to spare him, his reputation would likely go down the drain. ‘Biting the hand that feeds him’ would probably top the list of derogatory comments that would be made against him.
‘A.I. Chip! How’s the progress of the scan going?’ Leylin’s figure was engulfed by the pitch black as he looked at the walls and questioned in his heart. [Blueprint of the castle established, spell array formation analysed: 58%, simulation in progress…] The A.I. Chip intoned. A three-dimensional image was projected in front of Leylin, showcasing the structures of many castles. The castle of Robin’s family was comparable to Freya’s impressive Ancient Blood Serpent Castle and there were countless spell formations and bizarre phenomena caused by radiation. Robin himself might not even know all the secrets within the castle. The scanning of the A.I. Chip undoubtedly took a while but if Leylin stepped in to explore himself, he would be pretty much familiar with the whole internal layout after walking around so many times. As for those sections which were yet to be analysed, it was unfortunate that the current capability of the A.I Chip was unable to compute them. But all this was enough for him. Under the gigantic projection, Leylin saw another empty construction buried deep underground. And its outer layer was the most Leylin’s A.I. Chip could reach. The blank spaces were marked out by crimson symbols that prevented any forms of peeping, which surprised Leylin. The core secret of the ancient castle must have been located there. Leylin followed the directions of the map and came face to face with a huge mural. The mural depicted a grand historical scene, a horned demon skull was guillotined by armoured cavalry and robed Magi, bloodstains and burn marks painted all over their bodies as evidence of war. It was realism at its best with a distinct sense of style. The 18 eyes of the demon were wide open and glaring at him, as if it was still
alive.
The existence of this cellar is barely brushing the surface of Robin’s family’s secret. The true secret is hidden behind this mural…” Leylin’s eyes lit up as he stroked the mural. He felt like he could smell the stench of blood and fire as he moved close to the painting. It was as if he was facing the remains of an actual war, where the blood had yet to dry.

[Beep! Ahead is a rank 1 bloodline detector. After thorough scanning, it has been identified to be one that requires a specific incantation and bloodline to pass through.]
The database of the A.I. Chip as of now was as vast as the ocean, just a mere scan could send detailed information to Leylin’s memory.

‘Bloodline detector?’ Leylin touched his chin in deep thought. Since they’d chosen such a defensive measure, it definitely required the bloodline of Robin’s family, or even Robin himself, in order to get past it.

But, of course, Leylin was ahead of Robin in terms of his knowledge on bloodlines for he had dedicated more than one century towards the study of the bloodline experiments of Quicksand. His current situation might have been an unsolvable problem for other Magi, but it was a piece of cake for him.

[Beep! Data is being collected, probing for removal measures]
The A.I. Chip operated at Leylin’s command, and numerous blue symbols floated before him, forming countless dots before entering the mural.
The whole mural began to quiver and buzz as layers of dust collapsed, distinguishing the characters and making them appear more realistic than ever.

Especially the skull of the demon; an eerie green light seemed to be projecting from its eyes.

“Under the ultraviolet rays, the approaching descendant bloodline
will come together and return to its origins…”
Leylin chanted a medieval incantation and a strand of black hair flew from his hand.
It was something that Leylin had stolen from the maid, Edda, when they fooled around, and was specially saved for situations like these.
Warlocks possess the most in-depth knowledge with regards to the power of bloodlines and were thus the most confident as well. So, when they set up traps or other preventive measures, all this would be taken into consideration.
Leylin had thus collected a strand of hair from a direct line of Robin’s family for his use.
*Hiss!* A ball of scarlet light wrapped the strand within itself under Leylin’s incantation.
The hair disappeared as the light dispersed, leaving behind a droplet of purplish-red blood that possessed a savage aura unique to Giant Kemoyin Serpents.
“That’s not enough!” Leylin shook his head vigorously and threw out a handful of crimson rocks. These rocks turned into a fine powder in midair and congregated with the droplet.
The powder transformed into a bright silver liquid upon contact with the droplet, helping it expand even as it diluted the colour of the blood to a washed-out red.
Leylin’s eyes glistened all the more as he watched this.
The incantation sounded more mournful with time and the faded red had agglutinated to a dark red blood clot, emitting a dangerously powerful aura.
If the previous bloodline was only Edda’s, a low-ranked Magus, then the current ball of blood had already reached the level of a Crystal Phase, and its aura was highly similar to Robin’s.
If Robin had installed this bloodline detector, then the key to it wouldn’t be as simple as the bloodline of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent.
Otherwise, it’d be easy as pie for any Magus to uncover the secret here.
Surely, Robin would only use his own DNA as the key. Therefore, Leylin was trying to generate a bloodline aura similar to that of Robin’s through that of his relative. Though the DNA couldn’t be imitated, Leylin believed that it would be almost undetectable by the spells here given the supreme abilities of the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Deduction completed for the removal of the spell!] The A.I. Chip alerted and Leylin’s face lit up as he sang the incantation.

[Beep! Wrong aura, starting automated matching!] The deep red ball of blood underwent some changes before changing into the aura of another Warlock.

“This is..” Leylin was confused for a moment. He quickly shook his head and sent the blood ball straight into the mural causing the two to fuse.

A layer of red started rippling on the surface of the mural and it was frightening. The characters in the mural, especially, took an eerie turn and started changing under the crimson light. Thin scales and cysts started getting embedded their bodies and some of the cavalry even had horns growing on their heads and enormous wings on their backs. The mural had transformed into one of monsters.

The demon head, however, still had a sinister smile painted across his face that made Leylin’s hairs stand.

“There must be more to this mural, this seems foreboding…” Leyin muttered to himself and looked at the demon head again.

“A.I Chip, scan the mural! Find a similar specimen in the database!” Leylin ordered.

[Beep! Mission received, starting scan! Matching similar specimens in database...] The A.I. Chip replied almost immediately while scanning through the database furiously.
[Beep! Similar image found!] The A.I. Chip projected an oil painting in front of Leylin. Within the painting was the huge image of a demon, its horns and eyes shockingly similar to the one in the mural. “What is this?” Leylin looked into the information of that particular section almost immediately.

[The year 2315 of the Holy Calendar, a night where crows wept, the clone of Beelzebub arrived in Verdant City and cause a holocaust before being eliminated by an unknown Breaking Dawn Magus…] The information presented by the A.I. Chip was very simplified. It was a mere few sentences and the image had a few missing portions on the edge.

These were the defects on the ancient book scanned earlier. “Beelzebub, who represents gluttony?” Leylin covered his mouth in shock, “Even if it’s just a clone, the only people who could eliminate it were Breaking Dawn Magi!” Though details weren’t mentioned in the ancient book, the marked calendar system belonged to the ancient era where Morning Star Magi reigned, and there were definitely some in the Verdant City too.

“Amongst those who were injured, exactly how many were at Morning Star or even Breaking Dawn…” Leylin sighed. And right at this moment, both the incantation and bloodline were stimulated and a crack split the mural from the centre, revealing a passageway that led underground. The bloodline detector was broken by an outsider in a situation that did not alarm the owner.
Cries and howls sounded. Indescribable noises echoed past Leylin’s ears as he stepped foot into the passageway. The secret that Robin had kept so tightly was about to be revealed to him.
‘There must’ve been something more to that expedition we did.’ Leylin thought about other matters as he took note of his surroundings.
‘Robin was evidently impatient when we last explored the Quicksand pocket dimension. And the information he held about the dimension was definitely not possible for someone who only worked internally. He’d probably known all the secrets within Quicksand Castle long ago, and went there specifically for it…’ Leylin’s guess was confirmed by the mural.
‘Robin’s family clearly inherited something important, and it might even be linked to the Quicksand Organisation.’
As his journey in the long passageway came to an end, he found himself between two rows of small prison-like cells. The walls in these cells were covered in complex runes, many of which were familiar to Leylin, that were identical to the bindings of his own Magus Tower.
“The number of cells is crazy,” Leylin sized up the rows of cells that seemed to have no end to them, and caught glimpses of shadows within.
‘Exactly how many people is he planning to imprison?’ he thought.
as he came in front of a cell.

“Outsider detected, warning dispatched! Destroy!”

A deep voice masculine voice sounded as Leylin entered Shadow Stealth mode, the man was a formation genie in charge of this area, holding a position similar to that of his own tower genie.

“A.I. Chip,” Leylin lightly called out.

[Spiritual force interface discovered, forcefully manipulating data!]

The A.I. Chip replied mechanically, without an ounce of emotion. The voice started to change in an instant, becoming hoarse.

“Invasion by outsider’s spiritual force! Activating first layer of defences!”

“Defence broken, activating level 2 firewall and alarms! Beginning self-destruction!”

“Invasion of outsider’s spiritual force into centre formation genie. Warning! Warning!”

“Destruction imminent in T minus 3, 2... Warning dispersed! Operation normal! Outsider’s spiritual force intercepted. No information has been leaked.”

Its voice that was initially submerged in fright and hoarseness became choppy. Light shone everywhere, illuminating the surroundings distinctly as it turned into a unique robotic one, that of the A.I. Chip.

An intelligence of this standard was nothing in front of Leylin’s A.I. Chip, it was only a matter of time before it was breached. The administrator of this region had already changed from the formation genie to Leylin’s A.I. Chip.

After he successfully took it over, the place had become Leylin’s backyard. Even Robin would fail to detect him.

Of course, he had to thank his luck that he took care of the formation genie in a short time. Most formation genies would have self-destructed in time, and alerted their owners, landing Leylin in a heap of trouble.
Thankfully, Robin’s formation genie was of a lower rank. If it were a core formation genie set up by a Morning Star Magus, the A.I. Chip would have faced a lot of difficulties. Now, Leylin was in control.

“Activate the observation window of cell 0023!” Following Leylin’s command, a white ray of light shone in the cell, ridding it of the darkness, the prisoner appearing in front of Leylin. And the prisoner appeared in front of Leylin.

“Huh?! This is…” Leylin’s pupils dilated. “I’ve seen him somewhere…”

It was a Warlock; more accurately, a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock. This sense of familiarity between bloodlines was always accurate. The Warlock in front of him looked plaintive; not only was he almost naked only clothed in pathetic rags, his whole body was riddled with large wounds. Some granulation tissue could be seen squirming on the wounds, they were repairing themselves. It looked revolting.

“Don’t… Don’t come any nearer. You monster!” A low voice rumbled from the Warlock’s mouth.

“I’m not Robin!” Leylin cleared his throat and said.

“…” The Warlock raised his head and Leylin could see his goblin-like face. As if on cue, hope filled his eyes, replacing the dread and despair that existed before he saw Leylin.

“Sa- Save me! Please save me, Lord Leylin!” He was like a drowning man that was grasping at the last straw as he crawled to the middle of the cell,

It was then that Leylin realised that both the legs of the Warlock were missing. He was completely disabled. Though it could be healed using limb regeneration spells or other high-grade potions, Robin wouldn’t have been so nice.

“Tell me, what happened? Why are you here?” Leylin looked
dreadfully displeased, and his voice was low as ever. “It’s Robin! He captured me, my wife and my children and caged us here right after he attacked my family! He- He’s a demon!” He seemed to have undergone an overly traumatic experience that caused him to stumble over his words. “Master! Master! Take me away please, I’m begging you!” He shouted himself hoarse as his eyes watered. Leylin could only shake his head at this scene. Though the advancements of Warlock were largely a result of their bloodlines, making moving up the ranks easier, to see such low willpower from a Warlock was still very rare. High-ranking Magi usually had tenacious spirits, and could compose themselves quickly even in huge events. “Tell me, what exactly did he do?” Two rays of lights shot from Leylin’s eyes, and made the Warlock speechless. “He- He-” The Warlock sobbed and hugged his knees close, coiling into himself as he trembled endlessly. “He- How dare he eat my Gwen! Oh Lord, she was only 7…” “And Hugo, and Ron…” He could not stop listing name after name and looked absent-minded. He ended up wrapping his arms around his head, refusing to think anymore. “A drastic change in temperament, imprisoning people, rumours of cannibalism, a mural to Beelzebub, the prince of gluttony!” Leylin let out a long sigh. The pieces came together to form a complete picture in his head. “Wow, this is…” He did not know what to say. Robin’s desire for power had already reached such sick levels. Though Leylin didn’t label himself a good guy, he would never go as far as Robin had. Just then, the A.I. Chip relayed a piece of information to Leylin. [Beep! Scan of underground laboratory completed! 341 prisoners: 34 Giant Kemoyin Warlocks, 22 Rank 3 Warlocks…]
“Other matters aside, things will be over for Robin the moment he gets exposed…” As Leylin went further, he saw that the cells on both sides were full of all kinds of Warlocks. Most of them had portions of their bodies missing, and he even saw a few elders from Robin’s own family.

It seemed like the elders who disappeared were all captured by Robin and locked up here.

Upon seeing Leylin, all the Warlocks went mad; some were wailing, some were bellowing in fury demanding that Leylin punish Robin for his sins. Even the eyes of the elders from Robin’s own family were filled with hatred and rage; they had evidently given up on Robin long ago.

“These Warlocks, most of them should be from the families that Robin eliminated…” Leylin sighed. Who would know that Robin would have the guts to seize his enemies and lock them up in a secret cellar like this?

And judging from their faces, Leylin bet they would rather have died on the battlefield.

Though Leylin pitied them, he didn’t order the A.I. Chip to deactivate the defence in the cells and allow them out.

After all, there were still many prisoners here that could cause chaos if let out.

Furthermore, Leylin still had more tasks to be performed that needed to be hidden from Robin.

“The core cell! Who is the one imprisoned there?” At the end of the passageway was a large cell. A few sparks could be seen jumping along the blood red electrified cage every now and then, firmly caging a Magus inside.

[No information found within the formation genie’s data, this place is marked top secret!] The A.I. Chip sent back.

“Who are you?”

Standing beside the cage, Leylin was curious about the shadow
inside. As the criminal who was under the tightest form of imprisonment in the entire cellar, this person could not be simple. The prisoner raised his head after hearing Leylin’s voice, and Leylin’s pupils constricted in an instant before he broke out in cold sweat.

“Ro– Senior Robin?”

The person in the cage possessed a face that was bewitching, but malnourished beyond recognition. It was as though all flesh and blood had been drained from him. Robin could only force a smile before calling out for Leylin.

“Leylin, you’re here?”

“What is going on? Who is that ‘Robin’ out there?” Leylin’s expression was dark. He felt an unusually familiar aura from this Robin who was in front of him, his smile unforgettable.

When he’d first entered Phosphorescence Swamp, Robin wore this exact same smile when welcoming Leylin as he stood by the entrance to the Ouroboros Clan headquarters.

“You should be able to guess by now,” Robin was very weak and had to pause after every other word. All muscles seemed to have disappeared, leaving Robin a sack of bones.

If not for his features, Leylin would have thought the person in front of him was a skeleton.
“How is he outside?” Robin lifted his head and asked Leylin, hope in his eyes.
Leylin was silent for a moment but still ended up speaking, “He has advanced to the peak of the Crystal Phase, and the curse marks have taken up over 60% of his face. He doesn’t seem to be in a good state of mind.”
“The initial phase has ended. He is now undergoing ‘Flesh Immolation’, but is still quite a distance from the final ‘Gluttony’s Monarch’.”
Robin sighed, “Can you let me out or bring me before him? There are some things that I want to tell him.”
“I’m sorry, but the situation is very dangerous…” Leylin’s expression was grim, “Shouldn’t you give me an answer now?”
“What answer? Haven’t you guessed everything already?”
“Just a part of it. Why are you here?” Leylin asked.
Robin glanced at Leylin and began to speak unhurriedly. “Hehe… our ancestors once obtained some information regarding the ‘gluttony imprint’ and knew that it was within the ancient Quicksand Castle in the Forgotten Land. That was why we were so eager in inviting you all there…”
The gluttony imprint was a fragment of the consciousness of the sin of gluttony, Beelzebub that remained in Verdant City. It was said that Magi who obtained the gluttony imprint would awaken with a terrifying appetite, but at the same time gain several unique
abilities.
This gluttony imprint had once brought great suffering upon the regions surrounding Verdant City. There had even been a situation where a whole city had been devoured.
Only with the work of numerous Magi was this chaos suppressed. Countless imprints were destroyed, leaving behind a few to be used as samples in research.
“My ancestor was one of the lower class members of Quicksand, and there are records in his notes. The gluttony imprint was once collected by Quicksand and improved using large amounts of devouring-type bloodlines, achieving the effect of improving and purifying one’s own bloodline.”
The history of Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks was of course long, and extended to the ancient era. However, the Ouroboros Clan had yet to be established then, which was why entering a Warlock organisation like Quicksand was very common.
Only after the end of the ancient era did the remaining Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks set up the Ouroboros Clan, which had then lasted up to date.
“So you set your sights on that gluttony imprint?” Leylin’s voice was cold.
“Yes. As long as I have it, I’m confident that I can purify our bloodline till it is comparable to the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent, and even reach the Morning Star realm!” Robin’s eyes blazed for a moment before turning dulled once more.
“Looks like the one who initially obtained the gluttony imprint was indeed you, and the one who went up on the airship with us was you. If not, Mentor would definitely have noticed. The sudden change must have happened after our return…” Leylin continued on from Robin’s words.
“Yes. The spiritual contamination from the gluttony imprint is much too terrifying. In just a few short months, I could no longer control
myself. I lost control of my emotions quite a few times…” Robin smiled wryly.
“So you decided to strip it off and look for a guinea pig to reduce this property, And you picked Noah.”
“No, Noah requested that I do that!” Robin roared, and collapsed spinelessly.
“He was such a good child! I still remember his gaze when we spoke, full of hope and resolution… At that moment, I’d thought that only Warlocks like him would be able to subdue the gluttony imprint…
“I now know the consequences.”
Leylin nodded. Whether it was the large change in personality after receiving the imprint or some hatred originally inside Noah, Leylin had no wish to pursue this further. The situation was clear.
Noah imprisoned his own uncle and many elders, holding his family in his grasp. He had even arrested high-grade pure-blood Warlocks and, by devouring their bloodline, purified his own.
Recently, he had even set his sights on Miranda, and was met with a fierce counterattack from her.
“The remains of high-energy beings like that all cause a lot of trouble!” Leylin knew this well. Whether it was the original spirit of the Lamia bone or the spiritual force contamination from his interplanar experiments, this was always the case.
Thankfully, Leylin’s will was strong and decisive, and he could thus eliminate these dangers. If not, he’d be no better off than Noah.
“Using the sin of gluttony to improve his own bloodline?” Leylin touched his chin. This was a rather interesting topic, and the fact that the Noah outside had, from a newly-advanced rank 3 Warlock, broken through both the Vapour Phase and the Hydro Phase to arrive at the Crystal Phase in one go, it was obvious that this had a high possibility of working. All he needed to do was settle the issue
of the spiritual force contamination.

“The situation now is very complicated. I can only save you first and see what headquarters says…” Even Leylin found this difficult to handle. Only the three Morning Star elders had the qualifications to make the final decision.

“A.I. Chip, open the core restriction room.” Leylin ordered.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* The blood-red electricity of the cage died out, and the binding runes in the room dimmed.

The A.I. Chip suddenly sent a warning. [Beep! Discovered foreign spiritual force, determined to be the remains of a spirit genie.]

“He actually set up a second spirit genie to mobilise only if the core restriction room is closed?” Leylin was shocked. Evidently, Noah had not completely lost his mind and was meticulous.

[Beginning eradication of spirit genie. Another party is forcefully interfering with transmission of data and sending out cries for help. Beginning interception.] The A.I. Chip worked quickly, but with the preparations the opponent had made, it could not intercept the data successfully.

[Interception failed. Data has been transmitted.] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded.

“Shit!” Leylin cursed, and quickly left with Robin.

Meanwhile, the face of ‘Robin’ in the reception hall of the castle warped.

“What’s going on?” Leylin, who was holding his wine cup, smiled gently.

“Die!” Noah, who had received the information, could obviously tell that Leylin in front of him was just a puppet, and that he had been duped.

He instantly reddened in fury. Gauntlets of black crystal appeared on his hands as they were struck into the smiling Leylin’s chest.

*Clatter!* The glass cup fell to the ground, creating a clear sound. Scarlet wine flew everywhere.
The hall immediately turned quiet. The guests all looked in this direction, full of disbelief. Lord Robin had dared attack the enforcer at a banquet? Was this a rebellion?

“Ah!” An urgent, panicky female shriek sounded, and the time which seemed to have stopped in the hall moved once more. The Magi present immediately moved. The Warlocks of Robin’s family gathered, while Parker protected Snoopy as he transferred his men over.

Two waves of Warlocks gathered amidst the stream of people like two giant reefs, unmoving in the confusion. Contrary to their behaviour, the musicians, waiters, dancers, clowns, and others were startled. They fled in their alarm, occasionally letting out piercing screams.

Based on this situation, it was obvious the Warlocks on both ends had not let down their guard and were prepared to become hostile.

*Tss tss!* Noah expressionlessly watched the Leylin in his hands. Now, this Leylin who was in front of him, had completely turned black. Droplets of black liquid flowed from the wound and onto the ground, producing white gas.

“I’m going out for a while. Kill all of Leylin’s subordinates!” Noah carelessly dumped the shadow puppet in his hands and turned into a black phantom that disappeared.

By the time Noah had left, the Warlocks confronting each other in the hall first quietened down, and then great amounts of spell rays lit up.

The flood of chaotic elemental particles drowned the hall…

“I wouldn’t be so stupid as to fight with an opponent in their nest, which they’ve operated in for thousands of years!” With one hand on Robin, Leylin crushed a few armoured knights blocking his path into bits.

Under the silver knight armours was only air. These armours, that were meant to just be ornamental, seemed to have received some
order and suddenly began attacking Leylin. Adding to his troubles, many long ash-black tongues filled the passageway behind him, sweeping forwards.

“These knights are ‘Silent Guards.’ Without attacking the core, it’s impossible to destroy them.” Robin, who was pressed against Leylin’s side, served well as a guide yet did nothing else.

Not only was he gravely injured, his spiritual force was in ruins. A large amount seemed to have been devoured, and his strength had fallen to that of a rank 1 Warlock. If not, Leylin wouldn’t be so at ease in bringing him along.

“Rather than the silent guards, you need to be careful of the tongues behind you!” Seeing the forces behind them, Robin’s expression changed. “This is a passageway our family found by accident. It seems to have mutated and made a connection with a majestic existence above. The ash-black tongues are parts of that existence.

“Even a Crystal Phase rank 3 Warlock would find it troublesome if caught, and might even be devoured. A few seniors in the family have died from it.”

Due to the terrifying radiation, a few ancient Magus castles would mutate, giving rise to situations that even Magi couldn’t make head or tails of.

These strange phenomena were taken advantage of by their descendants, who used them as defences.
Can you control them?” With regards to unforeseeable situations, Leylin was always more cautious. He looked at Robin. After all, Robin was the clan leader and should have had some tricks up his sleeve.

“I’m afraid not! Noah’s taken away my authority. Moreover, once the Devouring Corridor is engaged, even the clan leader himself can’t control it…”

“Then what was the point of me saving you?” Leylin rolled his eyes and pulled Robin along, sprinting at a much higher speed. Soon Robin proved that, as a clan leader, he was still very familiar with his castle. Under his guidance, after rushing through three rooms, Leylin managed to jump down from a window pane. The moment before he left the window ledge, numerous tongues swiftly climbed forward and filled the entire room, but had not followed through their attack to the exterior of the castle. It was as if there was a chasm at the fringes of the castle that was difficult to pass through, or even barriers outside. Only at that point in time did Leylin have the leisure to look at his secret imprint.

“Master… they’ve gone on the offensive! The situation here is extremely chaotic!” an impatient Parker transmitted even as the rumble of explosions from spells could be heard in the background.

“Today’s banquet is extremely lively!” Leylin looked at the ancient
black castle. Through one of the windows in the living room, he could see explosions and flames being set off in the room.

“Put your own safety as the priority, and escape as soon as you can!” Leylin did not have the plans to return once more. After all, those still inside the castle were his subordinates. Subordinates fought to the death for their masters, not the other way around.

“Your nephew seems to be coming over!”

After they escaped, Robin’s head had been hanging low, his thoughts a mystery. Leylin indifferently set him down under an oak tree.

After hearing his tone, Robin raised his head and saw a black figure rushing down from the ancient castle, with a terrifying aura on his body. That was the terrifying power of a Crystal Phase Magus. Coupled with the fact that he also possessed the ancient Gluttonous Desire, these had caused even Leylin to furrow his brows.

*Boom!* A figure landed in front of Leylin, and revealed a face that was mostly covered with runes.

“Noah!” Leylin let out a long sigh. Relatives Noah and Robin had very similar face shapes and auras. But with the influence of the gluttony imprint concealing and obscuring things, even Morning Star Magi might not have been able to realise the difference. However, there was no way Leylin would not be able to recognise him.

“Noah…” Noah’s voice was low as he gazed at Robin who was seated on the ground. Complex emotions whirled across his face. Shortly after, the black runes on his face started to move about, causing changes to its shape. His nose became sharper and eyes wider.

It took only a few tweaks for Noah to look drastically different, as he regained his original appearance.

“You’ve changed a lot…” Robin said after a moment of silence.
“I have not changed! Was this not always your wish anyway?” A vicious look flashed across Noah’s face. He bowed to Robin, his etiquette perfect to the point that nobody could nitpick about it. He was the perfect example of royalty.
“Very soon, the aspirations of our clan will be realised. I can feel it. Under the radiation of the sin of gluttony, my Kemoyin bloodline has been purified. I’m only one step away from becoming a pureblood Kemoyin Warlock!”
Mysterious rays shot out of Noah’s eyes as he bit his own finger to show Robin and Leylin the pure purplish-red blood.
Immediately, he greedily sucked the same finger which he’d previously bit, even as his face was immersed in pleasure.
“Crazy! You’ve completely gone insane!” Robin grabbed his head in pain and regret, “I should not have allowed you to inherit the imprint to begin with… No, I shouldn’t even have gone to Quicksand to uncover it!”
On the other side, Leylin looked at Noah proudly showing the purity of his bloodline, and was rendered speechless.
From what he saw, even though the Kemoyin bloodline of the other party was extremely pure, but compared to the first time Leylin had purified his Kemoyin bloodline, there was still an obvious difference.
Just based on the luster, if Leylin’s bloodline was initially a diamond, Noah’s bloodline was at most coal, or even worse than that.
And after having absorbed large amounts of radiation from the Lamia bone, his bloodline had been purified to an unprecedented level, and might even have surpassed the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent!
“I’m not crazy! For those trash to be the foundations to allow for our clan to flourish is definitely an honour for them!”
Noah lifted his hands in despair, his eyes bloodshot, “I have a
feeling that if only I were to eat him, my bloodline would advance to an unprecedented level, and I could even advance to the Morning Star realm!”

Noah pointed at Leylin and his eyes widened, as if he was a plate of some delicacy.

That gaze made Leylin uncomfortable, especially when the other party started to contemplate on where he should start devouring him.

Leylin kept the Memory Crystal Ball that would be the evidence for later before he swiftly asked Robin, “Since he has already confessed, there shouldn’t be a problem if I start killing here in my name as an enforcer, right?”

“…. Robin’s face looked pale, and he did not utter a single word, only waving his hand.

After getting Robin’s approval, Leylin had no more misgivings.

In actual fact, just based on what Noah had done previously, Leylin would not hesitate to kill him. Still, it would be better with Robin’s understanding.

After all, the other party was his senior, and he would have to take note of the potential aftereffects.

“Tsk tsk! He actually dared to utter such words to me!” Noah licked his lips, and the imprint on his face went into action. “It’s decided! I’ll make sure you don’t get to leave this place, and I’ll slowly devour your meat, a kilogram a day!”

There were many ways for Magi to regenerate their muscles, a natural product of their high vitality.

As a result, even though the flesh might have been cut off, it would grow back in a designated amount of time. That was a characteristic that Noah had made use of when he imprisoned many Magi and left them in circumstances where they were better off dead than alive.

“Devour you! I’ll devour you!” Noah’s face warped as he went
berserk, and he rushed towards Leylin like a beast. Black blood vessels rose from his body, and like tentacles, covered Leylin’s face.

At the tips of the blood vessels, needle-like structures appeared. Should it penetrate one’s sick, the bone marrow could even be sucked away in an instant.

“Gross!” Leylin shook his head, and a black ray erupted from his waist. The Meteor Sword brought with it the terrifying Kemoyin venom, and formed a black wall in front of Leylin. Numerous blood vessels were immediately chopped off by the sharp edges of the Meteor Sword. The horrifying venom even started to corrode them, causing them to rot and fall loudly to the ground.

“Grrrr…” Noah opened his mouth, and large amounts of saliva dropped to the ground.

The current him was already under the absolute control of the sin of gluttony, and he had become a beast that moved around merely based on instinct.

Robin had turned his head, and dare not look at the miserable scene.

*Buzz!* During the attack, Noah’s body had been shrouded by a layer of black light. After the light dissipated, numerous pieces of black armour could be seen on his body.

No matter what, Noah was still a Crystal Phase Magus, and Leylin would not dare to belittle his abilities.

“Shadowflame Plague!” He swiftly chanted, and black flames shot forth from his robes like an aura, aiming for Noah who was rushing over. The black flames burned the crystal defence, heating up the surroundings so much that the air distorted.

Noah yelled and, like a beast, rushed out of the sea of fire and appeared before Leylin. The movement was almost instantaneous.

“What a shocking physicality!!” Leylin squinted his eyes as he saw
the other party’s injuries almost instantly recovering on their own. As he saw the skin patching up, he couldn’t help but feel a little fearful.

After which, without any hesitation, he held his Cross Blade and hacked down from Noah’s head.

Sharp sword rays were created with the action as the terrifying venom was dissipated carelessly.

Leylin’s Toxic Bile had far surpassed other rank 2 innate spells, achieving a horrifying power. It was an effect entirely brought about by the maturation of his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline under the effects of the Lamia fingerbone.

“Crossblade slash!” Black light in the form of a crucifix slashed down upon Noah’s body, causing a large vertical wound.

“AHHH!” Noah’s face flushed with blood, but he actually grabbed the blade of the sword.

Large amounts of white mist were emitted as his hands started to rot under the horrifying venom. The scene made Robin feel uneasy. But Noah instantly revealed a smile that suggested that he had gotten away with something, and his eyes were no longer bloodshot.

“You actually were sane all this while!” Leylin cried out. That astonished him more than Noah inheriting the gluttony imprint and replacing Robin.

“It’s too late now to realise it!” The injuries on his abdomen and chest were all covered by a layer of black blood vessels, and his aura increased exponentially to a peak.

“Arcane Art, Cage of Gluttony!”

A black fog engulfed Leylin and Noah, and Robin’s face changed as he heard the gnawing sounds from within.

“The Cage of Gluttony?” On the other hand, Leylin who was shrouded in darkness casually waved both his hands forth in a bid to size up the strength of the formation.
“This isn’t the energy system of our world. It must be a formation from the path of another realm, a result of the inheritance of Beelzebub’s clone!”

Even as Leylin spoke, numerous mouths with ivory teeth surrounded him.
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Leylin’s indifferent tone instantly infuriated Noah who was hiding in the dark, and a sinister voice sounded, “I hope you’ll still feel that way when you are under the attack of the Gluttony’s Kiss!” This voice seemed to come from all directions, making one unable to grasp his location.

“The weakness of such barriers lies in the one who casts them. Once he’s attacked, they will immediately collapse!” Leylin continued speaking in a superior tone, as though he was commenting on Noah’s spell.

“So what if you know its weakness? After undergoing refinement, my Cage of Gluttony now possesses a portion of the power of a Morning Star domain. A mere Crystal Phase Magus like you will definitely never see through it!” Noah’s voice sounded again, but this time, he seemed flustered and exasperated.

Anyone who saw their own enemy being unconcerned when caught in their trap, when by all rights they should’ve been struggling in their death throes, would feel enraged.

With a command, numerous dreadful mouths with sharp tongues started to attack Leylin by gnawing at him.

“Scale Shield!” A multitude of black crystals appeared with a snap of Leylin’s fingers, forming a shield covered in a layer of scales on one side. When the white teeth bit the shield, they produced jarring noises and a great amount of sparks.
Under the attack of the numerous teeth, the defence of the Scale Shield was in imminent danger, and it seemed like it would be smashed to smithereens within minutes.

“Haha… Haha…” Seeing this, Noah let out a carefree laugh.

“Even if you saw through it, what can you do? Won’t you still be ground into mincemeat under the attack of my Cage of Gluttony? I have decided, I’ll preserve your tongue well, and savour it slowly…”

Even though he was clear-headed, he still showed the symptoms of insanity under the influence of the gluttony imprint.

As he listened to Noah’s declaration of victory, and as the Scale Shield around him shattered, Leylin shook his head.

“If it was just this barrier, it would practically be unbreakable by rank 3 Magi, and even I would have to spend a great amount of spiritual force to forcefully break out of it, but what a pity…” Leylin sighed, as though he was genuinely feeling sorry for Noah’s misfortune.

“You shouldn’t have collaborated with the Oakheart Clan!”

“How did you…” Before Noah could complete his sentence, a terrifying ray of death had already pierced through the numerous barriers and hit Noah who was hidden in the cracks of darkness precisely.

Fatality’s Tip! This formidable spell that the A.I. Chip had specially designed for Leylin had the terrifying effect of delivering a fatal blow to a rank 3 Magus.

*Pew! Pew! Pew!* Under Fatality’s Tip, Noah’s defence was torn apart like paper, and even his innate spells were easily smashed apart by the ray of death, as if eggshells meeting a hammer.

“Gluttony! Gluttony! The almighty Beelzebub! You are the sovereignty of Gluttony, controller of Gluttony!” A voice resonated in Noah’s surroundings, as if chanting yet also praying.

Amidst the prayers, the black runes on Noah’s face flashed, and
actually broke away from his face, taking the shape of a black seed that obstructed Fatality’s Tip.
“Power from conviction? Or bestowed from a God?” Leylin was always apprehensive about the legendary world of the gods. Some of his knowledge attained in his previous world regarding deities and gods added on to his understanding of such higher powers. Therefore, upon witnessing this form, Leylin immediately made an association.
But shortly after, he sneered, “If Beelzebub’s original body or even his clone was here, he would be able to crush me with just a finger! But now, a useless seed without the support of the spiritual force of the original body wants to kill me?”
Having conducted interplanar experiments before, Leylin naturally understood the weakness of such spiritual force seeds that descended from other worlds, especially those that had their connections to both sides cut off. It could be said that even if the other party’s original body was beyond rank 7 and they had already reached a terrifying realm, they would still be unable to provide any assistance to the spiritual force seed here.
In fact, this black seed was not even a spiritual force seed, only a product of the annihilated clone’s spiritual contamination, tainted with fragments of its memory.
The rays of death struck the black seed relentlessly, humming coldly.
*Pew!* After the black rays of light flashed, the spiritual force seed fell to the ground with a hole on its surface. As it slowly petrified, it took the shape of a stony rune.
Fatality’s Tip penetrated Noah, who appeared to have given up all hope. If not for Leylin who slanted his finger at the final juncture, Noah’s entire brain might have been fried completely.
But now, Noah lay on the ground like a dead dog, a gaping hole in
his chest. He murmured in disbelief, “How… How did this happen?”

Leylin walked up and destroyed his consciousness ruthlessly, his voice cold as ice. “Speak! When did you start ganging up with the Oakheart Clan?”

“70 years ago. I once went to Azure Mountain City in search of a way to fix the Cage of Gluttony, and at that time the Oakheart Clan helped me find what was lacking…”

After losing the gluttony imprint, Noah seemed like a lost soul. He had regressed to a state where he was even worse off than an average human after his consciousness was ruined, allowing Leylin to get answers out of him by using an illusory spell.

“You actually dared to collude with that clan! You’re really tired of living, aren’t you!” Having interacted with them before, Leylin understood the Oakheart Clan. They were a bunch of people without morals. It was a tragedy that Noah had looked them up.

It was also the Oakheart Clan that had aided Leylin in breaking the Cage of Gluttony in one stroke.

Although the Cage of Gluttony indeed isolated itself from all sorts of detection, such that he wasn’t confident even in the A.I. Chip’s scans, Leylin still discovered minute traces of stardust bug activity on Noah.

There were only a few such bugs, and they probably had concealment spells on them, which was why Leylin hadn’t sensed anything initially.

When Noah had completely burst and dragged Leylin into the Cage of Gluttony, Leylin immediately activated the atomic scanning function of the A.I. Chip.

He initially wanted to find a flaw in the Cage of Gluttony, but who would have thought that he would accidentally find traces of stardust bugs!

Leylin had roughly learnt how to deal with these bugs while at the
auction. The fact that Noah actually had parasitic stardust bugs on him was as good as adorning himself with huge light bulbs, revealing his location to Leylin. There was no doubt as to what would happen next. Leylin aimed his Fatality’s Tip and solved all his problems.

“The Oakheart Clan?” Robin’s expression changed. They were a powerful family with a Morning Star Magus as their backing. His nephew’s dealings with them were completely against his own interest.

“It seems that the recent changes in the Ouroboros Clan have involved the interference of the powers of Azure Mountain City!” Leylin stroked his chin, and decided to evacuate immediately. He was now even more afraid of bumping into this clan. If the issue from before was revealed, the other party would definitely come chasing after him to the ends of the earth, even if he had the support of his Morning Star Mentor.

“Senior Robin! How about we put a stop to the commotion in the castle, then take Noah to headquarters to plead guilty?” Leylin looked at Robin, who was standing at the side, and asked respectfully.

“Of course we should!” Robin smiled bitterly. Did he even still have room to reject?

“Great, let’s…” Leylin was about to say something, but his expression suddenly changed, “Who’s there?”

Numerous potions immediately emerged from the pouch at his waist, combining to form a terrifying rank 3 spell in the air, ‘Death’s Blade’.

A glowing black arc cut across, instantly shaving out a huge plain. Everything in the way stones, large trees, and even small hills were halved by a thin layer of light, revealing flawlessly smooth gaps. A few figures were forced out by Death’s Blade and projected in front of Leylin.
“Leylin Farlier! I finally found you!” The Magi present were all in the Crystal Phase, and their chief was a Magus whose terrifying strength was at the peak of the Crystal Phase. The person who spoke was a middle-aged man, with his gold hair up like flames. The hatred in his voice made Leylin’s hair stand on end.

“Leo!” Leylin bellowed his name. This robed leader was actually the chief of the Oakheart Clan. From his expression, it was clear that he knew about Leylin’s disguise previously.

“A prophecy?” Leylin thought that he had wiped out his tracks cleanly, but the other party had actually discovered his identity nonetheless. He must have prophesied his identity. While the Azure Mountain King himself wasn’t a Prophet, as long as one was willing to pay a large sum it was still possible to enlist the services of other Magi. It was just that the speed of the other party’s reaction, as well as their viciousness, far exceeded Leylin’s expectations. It was likely that, to predict Leylin’s location, the entire Oakheart Clan had paid in blood.

But if one thought about the consequences that the Oakheart Clan would suffer once Leylin exposed their stardust bugs, it somehow seemed understandable.

“Kill!” Indeed, Leo cut to the chase, as though afraid that Leylin would expose him. He immediately got to work once they met, and didn’t give Leylin any chance to speak.

*Boom! Boom!* Terrifying waves erupted from the Crystal Phase Magi next to him, and numerous black chains appeared around Leylin, wrapping him up. A powerful binding force was exerted on him. Leo unrolled a simple and unadorned scroll, and the energy waves that burst forth from it made Leylin feel suffocated.

“A rank 4 spell scroll? You really do think quite highly of me!” Leylin’s pupils contracted, and he immediately whispered to Leo,
“If I die here, I swear the issue with the stardust bugs will instantly be revealed and spread throughout the entire central continent!”
The threatening words only caused Leo’s hands to tremble a little, and the scroll remained tightly in his grip.

Relationships were based on strength, and this was something even more pronounced in the world of Magi. Why would anyone be threatened by an ant? These could affect Leylin even up to the Morning Star realm, and at this point? Leo sneered, his spiritual force continuously seeping into the scroll. At worst, he could just kill the opposite party and invite his Master to take part as they slew the rest of the Magi who could possibly know the secret.

The only powers that could restrain the Oakheart Clan were those at the Morning Star realm and above. The current Leylin didn’t even qualify to bargain.

Leylin understood this principle. What he sought was not a withdrawal, he just needed that moment of pause. The moment Leo froze when Leylin’s voice was transmitted, he sprung into action.

“Kemoyin’s Scales!” “Toxic Bile!” “Intimidating Gaze!” Acting on the chant, all 3 innate spells immediately took effect.

Compared to the other methods of using spells or potions, a Magus’ innate spell would take effect in the blink of an eye. Thus, in times of danger, every Magus would first choose to use their innate spells, and Leylin was no exception. A layer of shiny black scales immediately enveloped his entire
body. The two domains of poison and Intimidating Gaze was launched in his attack without any reservations. At this critical moment, Leylin had burst forth with all his power. Without any apprehensions, the Toxic Bile poisoned Noah who was standing by his side. Thereafter, the ripples struck the surrounding Crystal Phase Magi, creating countless waves. After absorbing the Lamia bone’s radiation, the power of Leylin’s Intimidating Gaze had swelled by a few folds. The pressure was immense even for similarly-ranked Crystal Phase Magi. “Such strength of the domains? Even average Crystal Phase Kemoyin Warlocks are not this strong!” The enormous amounts of life force caused the iron chains to start trembling. The surrounding Magi, numbers 1 and 2, immediately cried out in alarm. “Fatality’s Tip!” At such a juncture, Leylin did not show the slightest reservations. The black rays of death, aimed at the weakest link, number 3. It was like a vicious viper baring its ferocious teeth at its prey. “Number 2, number 4, support!” Number 1 yelled immediately. As the leader of the team, he needed to help stall for time as Leo launched his rank 4 spell. *Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!* Multiple chains appeared like a wall, blocking Leylin’s advance. “Cross Blade Slash!” Leylin held onto the Meteor Sword, its black blade dazzling. The iron chains started to break apart into pieces, dropping to the ground one after the other. The remaining unbroken ones started to erode away, revealing multiple tiny holes. *Pak!* The iron chain was split apart. The rays of death appeared before number 3. “You want my life?” Number 3 looked like a kindly old man, and had extremely thin and long lips. At that moment, he lost all self-
control and started howling as his face warped. “Thunderstorm Shield!” Sparks of blue electricity danced around, forming a massive blue shield in front of him. On top of the shield were flickering multiple streams of current. *Rumble!* The death rays clashed with the blue shield. Two different streaks of brilliance collided in midair. Although the shield was showing signs of being unable to endure for long, it bought him enough time for backup to arrive. Seeing the support, number 3 broke out into a smile. But the next moment, his face froze. With a flash of his body, another identical Leylin appeared in front of number 3 and dashed forward. “Lightning Spear!” Number 3 waved his hand and two shafts appeared in his hands that were bathed in arcs of blue electricity. Following his command, the two long spears darted towards the two ‘Leylin’s. *Crackle!* One ‘Leylin” was pierced by the long spear, and the slight explosion caused darkness to fill the whole sky. The same happened to the other Leylin. “No!” Panic washed over number 3 and he turned around. Yet, it was too late. Leylin emerged from a crack in the darkness and dashed directly towards him. “Multilimb Strength!” A strange, unusual image manifested behind Leylin. It was a huge, tall humanoid covered in green scales. It had three thick and bulky arms on the left, and four on the right. It gave off a thunderous roar. Leylin’s muscles swelled instantly, bringing a kind of shiny luster to his muscular curves. Rays of green and black combined, forming a terrifying energy. “Innate defense spell!” Number 3 revealed his last trump card. Numerous currents covered his whole body, forming an armour made wholly out of blue lightning.
“Break!” Bolts of lightning were flung at Leylin’s body. However, they were absorbed by the Kemoyin Scales. Leylin’s hands violently moved forward and grabbed the opposite party’s lightning armour, tearing it in half!

*Zip!* With his terrifying prime body quality and under the enhancement of Multilimb Strength, the lightning armour was torn apart like paper.

The wild electric current destroyed Leylin’s defences, and branded his skin and muscles in a horrifying black. Yet, Leylin did not even bat an eyelid.

Although he had other ways of breaking through the other side’s blockade, he was in a race against time to succeed. Thus, he believed the best course of action would be this that was simulated multiple times by the A.I. Chip.

His innate defences screeched as they were ripped apart, and number 3 turned pale, trying to flee. But how could Leylin let him do so?

With a huge earth shattering punch, number 3’s head was cracked apart, sending splashes of red and white liquid all around.

“Number 3!” Number 1 and number 2 helplessly watched this execution. Now, with one member absent, their formation wasn’t whole.

Numerous iron chains grouped up into a cage, but Leylin broke through easily with its instability.

The moment he escaped, horrifying white rays of light grazed through the entire region. A large amount of soil, rocks and even corpses were vaporised, forming a long, deep, ravine.

A rank 4 spell wasn’t comparable to a Morning Star Magus’ Arcane Art, but a Crystal Phase Magus would not be able to withstand it. If Leylin hadn’t escaped in time, he would have perished under the horrifying white light.

“Garbage! You’re all a bunch of garbage!” Seeing Leylin’s
silhouette disappearing in the horizon, Leo immediately chided number 1 and 2. They hung their heads low, with pain and sorrow in their eyes.
Leo was breathing heavily. It took a lot for a rank 3 Magus to use a rank 4 spell.
If it had been put to used by a rank 4 Morning Star Magus, things wouldn’t have been so slow, and Leylin wouldn’t have escaped.
“Get him!” Leo vented his anger. He brought along the remaining Magi and gave chase.
“Do not let him get away!” Wild whistles and screams sounded from both sides. Leo’s eyes burned with an unmasked hatred. This was the same Leylin that made him suffer a huge loss with that astral stone!
If it was just that one single incident, all that would happen would be a scolding from his grandfather and it wouldn’t be a big deal. What infuriated him was the fact that Leylin had discovered the secret of the stardust bugs!
My goodness! If his private collections were discovered, he would be brutally torn to pieces by the enraged female Morning Star Magi!

The methods Morning Star Magi used in tormenting others were unbearably cruel, and feared by even the most savage of devils. Naturally, Leo felt the same way.
Unfortunately, the opposite party had managed to destroy all traces, and Leo had been left with no leads to follow.
As such, his grandfather, the King of Azure Mountain, personally made a trip to locate a Morning Star realm Prophet. After paying an enormous price, they obtained Leylin’s definite identity.
As for the enormous price, his grandfather was still working on paying off the debt.
The prophecy showed that Leylin was just a newly advanced Crystal Phase Magus. Hence, the job of hunting him and silencing
him fell on Leo.  
In order to succeed, he’d brought along a large number of men. He even called upon his spy in the Ouroboros Clan, Noah. 
Coincidently, while he was in the Ouroboros Clan’s territory in the midst of discussions with Noah, Leylin showed up and bumped into them. 
If the location had been Leylin’s Onyx Castle, with the presence of the Magus Tower, Leo and his men would not have been able to hide. Furthermore, without any insider help in the Ouroboros Clan’s core territory, Leylin was sure Leo wouldn’t have dared make any opposing moves. But now? They would never give up this golden opportunity! 
Leo’s eyes reddened with anger. At that moment, he noticed Leylin stopping. Watching Leylin descending on a bare rock on top of the hill, he and a few of his men immediately followed up and surrounded him. 
“Why? With nowhere to hide, are you now seeking death?” Having surrounded Leylin, Leo raised his brows and jeered at him. 
Leylin shook his head. He’d been secretly conversing with his A.I. Chip. 
[Beep! Scan completed! Articles detected on the opposite side do not exceed the Morning Star realm. No other Morning Star realm undulations detected in the surroundings!] 
Leylin was pleased with the conclusion and he secretly sighed a breath of relief, “No. You flies are disgusting, it’s about time I cleaned up.” 
Previously, when he’d fled in disarray, what caused him more worry than the rank 4 spell scroll in the opposite party’s hands was the possible presence of the Azure Mountain King. 
However, thankfully, he hadn’t appeared, only sending forth some Crystal Phase Magi instead. 
With Leo leading a team of elite Magi and the use of the rank 4
scroll, it would’ve been no problem to deal with an average Crystal Phase Magus, even one from the Ouroboros Clan. However, Leylin wasn’t your average Magus. Even Morning Star seedlings would be tossed around by him!

“Flies?” Leo’s face swelled as he flushed red, ”Wait till I catch you. I’ll use a magic scroll and turn you into a red-eyed fly!”

‘A.I. Chip! Probe the surrounding space and establish a model. Begin charting the best path for a massacre!’ Leylin’s eyes glinted with a dangerous light.

Since the opposite party had discovered his identity, there was nothing to hold him back anymore. This matter had to come to an end.
leylin was extremely offended by the attempt on his life. Furthermore, Leo was the chief of the Oakheart Clan. If he was killed here, it would be a huge blow to the Azure Mountain King. The chase with Leo previously had not been merely for his entertainment. It was for the A.I. Chip to gather vital data and create a plan. Right now, with the data compiled, the A.I. Chip had come up with a large number of plans. It filtered through them continuously, leaving only the most feasible ones.

[Model establishment completed, simulated combat victory rate: 67.9%!] it reported.

“Enter supplementary mode!” Leylin’s voice was laced with a lethal aura.

[Target number 1 is condensing energy particles. Determined to be the rank 3 spell Aurora Beam! Dodge to the right by 3.7m immediately!] the A.I. Chip warned.

As per the simulation and the A.I. Chip’s deductions, target 1, Leo, activated a necklace of colourful gems in his hands. A powerful aurora burst forth, immediately attempting to swallow the entire area up along with Leylin. Leylin dodged to the side in a flash at the same moment the enemy made his move.

“Aurora Beam!” Leo triggered the high-grade magic artifact in his
hand. Immediately, a powerful multicoloured torrent drowned out the stone that Leylin was standing on, causing the terrain to cave.

[Target defined as Number 3 is undergoing transformation. Estimated to be a descendant of the Banu Tribe. Bloodline activated, morphing into a Barbarian Bear!]

“Aaaoo…” The moment the A.I. Chip ended the report, one of the men standing by Leo’s side let out a thunderous roar and started ripping his clothes apart. He morphed into a brutal bear with stiff white fur.

Countless shards of sparkling ice circled around its body, emitting a freezing chill that formed billows of white fog around it.

“Kill!” Leylin’s eyes gleamed blue. He danced gracefully, and lightheartedly managed to dodge from under the huge bear’s palm, sliding up in front of it instead. The Meteor Sword traced a beautiful arc as it flitted across the bear’s body. The white fur was slashed apart, revealing bright red flesh and an outline of the internal organs. Blood splattered all around.

Unable to believe its defeat, the enormous creature howled loudly at first, but soon its voice tapered away until it fell silent. The earth rumbled as the carcass of the white bear resembling a large mountain collapsed onto the ground, causing large amounts of dust to fly. The fur of the bear started to shrink back into its pores, and soon returned to its original form of a Magus.

“Number 4!” Number 1 and number 2 cried out in alarm, their eyes fixed on their dead comrade. They clearly knew the abilities of number 4, and the fact that after his transformation, he would be able to resist a rank 3 spell easily. And yet, he’d died this quickly!

Number 1’s eyes darted towards the Meteor Sword in Leylin’s hand. His eyes narrowed and his pupils dilated, “Be wary of his sword! There’s something strange about it!”

The Meteor Sword was originally a high-grade magic artifact, but
through multiple improvements and optimisations, its quality had improved to that of a piece of magic equipment. Additionally, with the supplementary power of Toxic Bile, the current Meteor Sword could be considered a big threat to any Crystal Phase Magus!

Leylin enjoyed handling foes like the bear, all brawn and no brain. “Hocada Beast!” On the other side, witnessing Leylin’s explosive retaliation, Leo’s face hardened and he yelled for his trump card.

Howls rang out as a creature manifested out of thin air that had the upper body of a wolf and the lower half of an octopus. It landed right in front of Leylin. The countless suction pads on its arms looked like magnificent blooming flowers.

“It’s no use!” Leylin muttered in a low voice, his silhouette dodging in a flash, avoiding the multiple arms’ attack. He stopped in front of the Hocada Beast.

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“Multilimb Strength!” The silhouette of a Multi-Armed Race member appeared behind Leylin, formidable power seeping into his body.

[Ding! Multilimb Strength in operation. Host’s power is increasing!] The A.I. Chip reported.

Leylin grasped his sword firmly, and hacked at the creature’s brain. The beast started cracking apart as fissures arose on its body as if it was breaking glass. They spread all over its body, before pieces of flesh began to simply fall apart.

By the end, the creature’s body had been sliced into ruin, eventually crumbling apart like dirt.

Damn, ho… how are you so strong?” After executing the Hocada Beast, Leylin turned to look at Leo, the killing intent in his eyes causing the Oakheart Clan chief to feel a chill down his spine.

“You’re next!” Leo could faintly make out what Leylin mouthed, and could see the mockery in the eyes that were staring into his. Having never experienced these circumstances before, it was a huge blow to his self-esteem.
“Number 1, number 2, follow me!” Leo roared ferociously. “Stormwall!” A pale green whirlwind emerged from the short black staff in his hand. The huge whirlwind then formed a terrifying barricade that seemed to be made of sharp blades as it rushed towards Leylin.

Number 1 and 2 nodded their heads, and simultaneously cast their own spells. “Water Elemental Rite!” A huge blue ball of water appeared on the ground under number one’s chant. “Arctic Draft!” Number 2 summoned a huge bout of chilly air and had it adhere to the ball of water. The icy wind sucked away the heat from the ball of water, causing a huge reaction as a frightening ball of ice was formed. “Combination spell Iceberg Torrent!” The huge ball of ice was like a meteorite as it darted towards Leylin, smashing onto the ground. “Impressive!” The blue light in Leylin’s eyes dimmed. His body was covered in frost, and yet the Meteor Sword did not deviate even slightly from its trajectory, forging ahead and crashing into it to open up a pathway.

The cold could freeze the average rank 3 Magus to death. To Leylin, though, all it could do was slow him down. “Shadowflame Plague!” A huge amount of dense black flames clashed with the whirlwind that had now developed into a hurricane. The two clashed, each trying to destroy the other. “Compared to combination spells, it’s wiser to rely on magic equipment. That way there won’t be anything to worry about!” Leylin tore through the hurricane and stepped in front of Leo, his eyes glistened with a piercing chill that gave the other man goosebumps. “Fatality’s Tip!” Black rays of death streaked across the vast sky, reaching Leo in a flash. Just as they were about to strike, a black
wooden cross on his neck immediately flashed and formed a rune that represented new life and regeneration. The barrier shattered as the rays of death dissipated. A majority of the attack had been blocked by the defensive runes, but even then it had only diverted the attack as a thumb-sized hole appeared on Leo’s body, bleeding profusely.

“How…. How can this be?” Leo glared at Leylin, the fear in his eyes palpable.

He let out an odd cry, turned his head and fled. Number 1 and number 2 fulfilled their duties as bodyguards faithfully, blocking Leylin from giving chase.

“Giving up after encountering such trivial problems, you certainly deserve to be called a descendant of a big family!” Leylin shook his head and laughed as his gaze on Leo was filled with mockery.

Seeing the blood-covered Leylin, number 1 and 2 both felt a chill down their spines. In their time accompanying Leo, they had seen their fair share of slaughter. Yet, this was the first time they’d met someone as valiant and ferocious as Leylin.

Both of them had cursed Leo umpteen times for provoking Leylin, but Leylin had what they needed, so they had no choice but to take action.

“Get out of the way, or else you will die!” Leylin drew his sword and pointed at them. Number 1 and number 2 exchanged glances. Determination in their eyes, they both shook their heads.

“Pity!” Leylin had no sympathy for the suicide fighters of large families. Moreover, these two from the Oakheart Clan had no means of defence remaining. Armed with the determination to die in battle, they stood in front of Leylin and blocked his path.

……

“Damn it! Why? WHY?” Leo was fleeing madly, his heart in
absolute turmoil. Not only had he brought along a rank 4 spell scroll for this, he’d even brought with him a large number of potions and magic equipment. He’d even had four Crystal Phase Magi accompanying him!

With such power, to deal with a newly promoted Crystal Phase Magus ought to have been a simple matter. And yet, the opponent was unfathomably terrifying, practically wiping out his entire team. *Krrich!* Suddenly, the sound of two crystals cracking was emitted from his chest.

After hearing the sound, the blood drained from his face and he panicked. He sped up as he dashed along. “Number 1 and Number 2 are also dead? Useless indeed!”

Soon after, he ground his teeth and retrieved a communication device. He punched some secret code on it and the message was sent from his hand.

“I still have a chance! I am the chief of the Oakheart Clan, so long as I make it back, grandfather will absolutely not turn a blind eye to…” Leo cut a sorry figure as he fled in disarray, speaking words of encouragement to himself.

“Got you!” a voice was suddenly transmitted from behind him. He turned his head, only to see Leylin rushing towards him at the speed of lightning, a brilliant black streak. At this rate, he would catch up in about a mere ten seconds.

The new blood on Leylin’s body was obviously from number 1 and 2.

“No! You cannot kill me! I am the chief of the Oakheart Clan! If you let me go, I can give you whatever you want…..” Leo ran madly, his voice turning hoarse as he yelled out terms of surrender.

“I only want your life!” Leylin knew promises made under such circumstances were not reliable. Hence, without emotion, his killing intent increased. He speed increased threefold, and he was but an
arm’s length from Leo and his petrified face. “Die!” Leylin drew his black Meteor Sword. “Stop!” An extremely imposing voice spoke directly into Leylin’s mind.
488 - Confrontation with Morning Star

This voice… a Morning Star Magus?’ Leylin’s pupils narrowed. If someone were to be named as the Crystal Phase Magus with the greatest knowledge of the Morning Star realm in the central continent, it would be himself. Through the A.I. Chip’s simulations and deductions, as well as previously collected information, he already had a deep understanding of the Morning Star realm.

The owner of this voice could not be disguised, the words emanated power and a slight aura of rules… This was not imitable by Magi below the Morning Star rank.

“Grandfather! Save me!” Leo suddenly smiled, and slowed down ahead of Leylin.

In the presence of a Morning Star Magus, Leylin absolutely could not harm him. He completely trusted his grandfather, as well as the strength of the Morning Star realm.

“Hmm?!” However, Leylin noticed something different. ‘Although the nature of the aura has not changed, its power is only at the Crystal Phase at its peak… Could it be a puppet… or some sort of clone?’

This was, after all, within the boundaries of the Ouroboros Clan. If Morning Star Magi from other clans stepped in, it would be seen as a provocation, leading to war.

But the restrictions on this kind of clone seemed unclear.

After all, it was very difficult for Morning Star Magi to create a
clone of equal strength. Very few succeeded because most of them were limited to the strength of rank 3 Morning Star.

With Leylin’s sharp eyesight, he could already see a streak of blue rushing there from afar.

“Haha… You’re done for!” Leo laughed carefreely. But shortly after, his smile faded as his surroundings swiftly shrunk and grew again. A scene swept across like a parabolic curve and he ended up looking at a patch of yellow ground.

“My head, my head was chopped off…” he said with the last of his consciousness.

Leo then fell into eternal darkness.

Space shook as a blue shadow suddenly emerged before Leylin’s eyes, looking at Leo’s headless corpse with an angered expression.

“I told you to stop just now!” His voice was deep. It seemed to carry an irresistible compulsion to obey every word of his.

This majestic aura could only be developed after obtaining absolute power and being in a high position for a long period of time.

Leylin was also analysing this Morning Star Magus. Although he had not seen the Azure Mountain King before, he had read up on him. The other party looked exactly as in the portraits, a head of blue hair with eyes that twinkled like stars.

Yet, those eyes were now blazing in anger. This was the rage of a Morning Star Magus! It was enough to burn Leylin to ashes.

Yet, Leylin simply shrugged his shoulders, “Sorry! I killed him!”

If this was his main body, Leylin would have no chance to flee. However, it was only a clone, and there was still hope for escape.

“Do you know who he is?” The Azure Mountain King’s eyelids drooped. Someone familiar with him would know that this was a sign of irrepressible rage.

“The chief of the Oakheart Clan…” Leylin shook his head and stared at the Azure Mountain King, “I don’t care who he is. Someone who has bad intentions towards me can only repent with
death!"
“Then let me tell you something too. The last Magus who dared to offend the Oakheart Clan still has his ashes buried below the steps of Azure Mountain City!” The sparkle in the Azure Mountain King’s eyes had reached a limit.
A circular mirror appeared in front of him, reflecting Leylin’s figure.
“Strip!” The Azure Mountain King gently pointed to the Leylin in the mirror.
A hum sounded and, as if he had been rejected by the world itself, Leylin immediately felt the elemental particles that were in complete harmony with him previously leave him one after another, as if stripping him down to an ordinary person.
The domain of a Morning Star Magus displayed its terrifying power once again!
“That’s not it!” Leylin was a Magus who had previously experienced a true Morning Star domain when he’d been caught by Demon hunter Cyril. He naturally noticed the difference between this domain and that of a Morning Star Magus.
The situation this time was much better. His connection with the elemental particles was still barely holding on. As long as he used more spiritual force than usual, he would still be able to communicate with them and invoke his spells.
This was just equivalent to his spiritual force being suppressed to a fifth of its normal amount.
A bitter smirk appeared at the corner of Leylin’s lips. Even if the other party was only a clone whose total amount of spiritual force and magic power was around the same as his own, he was no match for him in the understanding of spells and laws. Even this simple suppression had immediately put him in a dilemma.
With over half his body’s strength being suppressed, how was he to fight a peak rank 3 Magus? Leylin shook his head, feeling that he
had been too optimistic previously.
‘However, this is also an opportunity! An opportunity to confront a Morning Star Magus head on, and to gather data!’ Leylin’s eyes sparkled. If he wanted to advance to the Morning Star realm, he could not be lacking in knowledge of it. Although the A.I. Chip had previously used the data he had to simulate some experiments, the lack of samples meant that its progress was still less than 20%. And now, a Morning Star Magus’ clone had appeared in front of him! He had no need to defeat it; he needed only to stall for time as the A.I. Chip gathered data that would be greatly beneficial to him.
‘The A.I. Chip should be able to collect enough data from this fight.’ Leylin’s eyes blazed brighter. He pulled out the Meteor Sword, a metallic hiss ringing from the blade.
At the same time, a layer of dark Kemoyin Scales covered Leylin’s body. The phantom of a huge Multi-Armed Race member appeared behind him as well.
‘Since my elemental particle connection has been suppressed, I can only rely on my physical strength!’ With Multilimb Strength in full effect, Leylin’s entire body enlarged and numerous muscles swelled up as a dark green membrane emerged on the surface of his body.
Following a deep shout, Leylin’s Meteor Sword emitted numerous rays of light that shot towards the Azure Mountain King like a rain of arrows.
“You actually dare to resist?” The Azure Mountain King frowned. How many years had it been since such a low-ranked Magus provoked him? 200 years, 300? He had never encountered this situation since he’d advanced.
After a momentary daze, the Azure Mountain King was overcome by boundless anger. The sound of metal striking metal rang out as a translucent spherical film appeared around his body. Despite seeming like a mere bubbly layer, it actually blocked all of the black rays.
“Die!” Leylin’s figure emerged just as the rays disappeared. He suddenly jumped up, and the Meteor Sword slashed across the void, bringing with it a ferocious wind that was aimed at the Azure Mountain King.

Black gases shot out of both sides of the blade, so corrosive that it seemed like even the surrounding void would melt. The ground was continuously eroded.

*Bang!* The blade, which contained a terrifying poison, was blocked by an aged palm. Although this palm seemed extremely old, with green veins popping out of the skin, it was unmoving like a hill. Even the skin hadn’t been pierced through.

The Azure Mountain King raised his right hand with a mocking smile, watching Leylin’s expression change.

“Abandoning elemental spells and switching to physical strength, this method is not bad when under elemental suppression. Unfortunately, your tricks are too low-levelled…”

“Impossible, your body can’t be this strong!” Leylin blurted out.

The Azure Mountain King chuckled, “Do you know what point mass is? And the meaning of the Morning Star realm? The power of the point mass, soul force, is the only power a Morning Star Magus has! However, it greatly surpasses spiritual force and physical strength, having achieved a terrifying qualitative change!”

A layer of crystal-clear light emerged above the Azure Mountain King’s palm. With his right hand grabbing the Meteor Sword, he mercilessly punched the blade with his left.

The Meteor Sword howled out a sad cry as the blade cracked. The mere physical attack of a Morning Star Magus could actually damage the Meteor Sword, which was comparable to magic equipment!

“Although I don’t specialise in physical attacks, as long as I have the amplification of soul force, my vitality will be able to break through the boundaries and ultimately allow me to attain the perfect
body of Morning Star!
“This strength of yours, and your spiritual force, will only collapse in front of soul force!”
As if confirming the Azure Mountain King’s words, a large number of crystal-clear light blades appeared before Leylin, drowning him within.
The power of the point mass, also known as soul force, was the next evolution of spiritual force. Only Morning Star Magi could possess such a thing, and it was the first time it had shown its terror in front of Leylin.
As he watch Leylin being drowned by the light blades, the Azure Mountain King smiled.
The light blades, which were composed of soul force, were not only powerful in physical attacks. They could even attack the spiritual sea within a Magus’ sea of consciousness!
Magi who were below the Morning Star realm, without a soul force defence of equivalent power, did not have the slightest chance of resisting these blades.
This was the reason Morning Star Magi had almost no enemies at rank 3. Soul force was just too terrifying!
Yet, the smile on the Azure Mountain King’s face only lasted a moment, and his expression immediately hardened.
With his soul force, he sensed that Leylin might have sustained injuries all over his body, but he had survived the slashes from the soul light blades.
Soon after, the Azure Mountain King felt the weight on his hand fade as the Meteor Sword landed in them.
*Bang!* A dark green shadow rushed out of the sea of blades, its scaly body covered by a raging dark green film.
“Multilimb Smash!” Leylin had thrown away the Meteor Sword, and as the physical strength of his hands surged, he threw his fist at the Azure Mountain King’s defence. The mere power of this punch
could shake space itself.
The soul force of a Morning Star Magus surpassed spiritual force in terms of quality. Due to this enormous disparity in strength, most of the methods of Magi were rendered ineffective.
But Leylin was not limited to the methods of Magi. He possessed a secret technique from another world, Multilimb Strength!
A large phantom of a Multi-Armed Race member appeared behind Leylin’s body, growling into the sky.
S
p
iritual force was fundamental to a Magus.
In the beginning, as acolytes, all Magi would start with meditation. They would begin to meditate in a willpower rune of their own, and construct a core spirit body, together with a sea of consciousness.
After advancing to the realm of official Magi, they would have a conversion of elemental essence amounting to 80% or more, in order to advance into rank 2.
After materialising spiritual force in rank 2, and then passing through the three stages of Vapour, Hydro, and Crystal in rank 3, the point mass would finally be formed.
The point mass was fundamental to Morning Star Magi. It was the path for everyone, even spirits! Once they broke past this bottleneck, the spiritual force in a Magus’ sea of consciousness would sublimate to form soul force.
This was a threshold in ancient times, used to mark the difference in strengths between Magi. Only those who were capable of using soul force would be considered to have stepped foot into the world of ancient Magi!
As soul force had a horrifying suppressive power, low ranking Magi would lose their ability to communicate with the elements, and would end up disconnected from the elemental particles. Those who were suppressed would be unable to resist or escape. Many Morning Star Magi liked using this trick in their domains. Hence,
over time, they successfully enhanced the prestige of a Morning Star Magus. 
Since his normal powers had been suppressed, Leylin had no choice but to use another system of power instead. Luckily, he indeed had such a thing on hand, a terrifying secret from another world, Multilimb Strength! Leylin had relied on the dark green membrane to avoid injury and death when drowned in the sea of light blades. A booming sound rang out, as if a tall mountain had collapsed to crashing waves. The phantom stood behind Leylin, performing the same moves as him. Formless streams of air started developing a pressure as even the ground behind the Azure Mountain King started caving in. The wind continuously rolled in, coagulating to form a substance that was stronger than granite. 
*Po!* The defensive layer on the Azure Mountain King deformed completely as a look of disbelief took over his face. 
“Even for a Morning Star, you’re merely just that!” the blood-soaked Leylin burst out laughing. He then threw his fist forward, aiming for the Azure Mountain King’s face. 
*Boom!* The Azure Mountain King slid across the floor like a train hurtling through, leaving long tracks on the ground. “The skin of a Morning Star is thick indeed!” Leylin flung his clenched fist without any traces of excitement on his face. He’d definitely felt it when his punch landed, A barrier with a starry radiance appeared on the Azure Mountain King’s face, blocking his attack. Hence, he was only shaken up slightly by the attack and did not sustain any major injuries. “Soul force defence?” Leylin scrutinised the dull-faced Azure Mountain King as he stood up, secretly conversing with his A.I. Chip, ‘How much data has been collected on the target?’ [Data collection at 12.1%. Further interaction with target needed, it
is suggested to break through the soul force defences!] the A.I.
Chip responded.
‘You still want me to try breaking through soul force?’ Leylin
smiled bitterly and shook his head. If it weren’t for the purpose of
gathering intelligence, he would not be so silly as to clash with a
Morning Star Magus in the first place, ‘Begin simulations, calculate
a path of retreat!’
Seeing how things had turned out to his disadvantage, he
immediately made plans to retreat. But at the current moment, it
was no longer up to him to decide if he could leave. Leylin saw that
the Azure Mountain King wasn’t seriously injured. A huge amount
of the blaze continued to surround him, burning wildly.
Traces of black smoke streamed from his nostrils, eyes and ears. He
was really fuming mad. Morning Star Magi had always been placed
on top of a pedestal, much like kings. At the current moment, he
felt like a king who’d been bitten by an ant as he was walking
down the street.
In the Azure Mountain King’s eyes, as long as one had not reached
the rank of Morning Star, their existence was similar to that of an
ant. To be bitten by an ant, and even be humiliated by it, how could
anyone bear it?
“You… How. Dare. You. Insult. Me…” The Azure Mountain King’s
face scrunched up, his rage-filled words staggered apart.
“Such plaintive whines of defeat, I’ve heard them too often…”
Leylin did not give the opposite party a chance to rebuke him,
dashing forward.
Even in a simple match of speed, Leylin would be lacking
compared to the opponent. Therefore, the only way for him to
escape successfully would be to slow him down by inflicting some
degree of injury.
“I want to incinerate your soul for a hundred centuries!” The Azure
Mountain King bellowed loudly, the imposing aura emanating from
his body. Even the sky started to darken, revealing the sparkling of stars.

Only a Morning Star Magus could thoroughly grasp the power of a domain. In any case, the current Leylin had reached his rank 3 limits, infinitely nearing to a rank 4. Hence, he was able to portray a portion of the power of his domain.

Being enveloped in the Morning Star domain, Leylin felt like he had fallen into a swamp. Every single move was tedious.

“Soul Armour!” A layer of translucent, full-bodied armour appeared on the Azure Mountain King. Judging from his attitude, it looked like he was ready to take on Leylin with pure strength to erase the humiliation.

[Multilimb Strength operating, estimated remaining time: 3 minutes 57 seconds!] Noting the hint of the A.I. Chip, an unrestrained Leylin amplified his power to the maximum. He struck the Azure Mountain King head on.

The earth shook as a silhouette of dark green and another of translucent blue collided with each other continuously. Their every punch and kick seemed to rip the sky apart, creating countless tremors on the ground.

Sharp, ear-piercing explosions boomed continuously from where they struck. Once the dust was dispelled, an entire huge region would’ve been knocked off the map.

*Bang!* A translucent fist from the armoured body smashed Leylin’s chest viciously. Multiple scales cracked and flew with explosive lights of dark green radiances.

Leylin’s face turned red, and some black rays of light appeared on his hand, “Fatality’s Tip!”

As if the reaper himself had descended to the earth, a terrifying explosive light sprang forth. With how close they were, even the Azure Mountain King did not even have the chance to dodge.

Although the other party had suppressed his elemental connections,
he was merely a clone after all, and his main body was not on site. Thus, Leylin could still break through the opponent’s soul force, forcefully converging elemental essence. All it required was a huge spiritual force consumption.

Leylin had held back on his trump card until now. Firstly, there had been no real opportunity to use it, and secondly, he was biding his time, waiting for the Azure Mountain King to take the bait. As for the data on his opponent, he’d constantly kept that in mind.

“You did not abide by the rules!” The expression on the Azure Mountain King’s face said it all. Leylin clearly understood what he meant, yet he didn’t care. There hadn’t been any agreements on the usage of spells in battle. Furthermore, the opponent was a Morning Star Magus who had made the first move. In a matter of life and death, who would abide by rules?

Leylin’s pretence of having supreme bodily strength had successfully tricked the Azure Mountain King.

The most terrifying thing about a Morning Star Magus, and also the fundamental of their power, was soul force spells!

Watching the flustered and exasperated Azure Mountain King getting ready to retaliate, Leylin almost couldn’t hold back his laughter.

The rays of death reached the Azure Mountain King in a flash, clashing with the translucent armour.

“AAAHH…..” The Azure Mountain King yelled, the void and stars behind him shook as a huge amount of blue light converged on his armour.

Explosions sounded as the A.I. Chip reported to him, [Multilimb Strength at full power!]

How could Leylin miss this golden opportunity? He immediately yelled, releasing all the power remaining in him. Feeling the steady flow of energy seeping into his body, Leylin charged wildly towards the defence of the Azure Mountain King.
An enormous iron fist landed on the armour mercilessly, and the translucent layer shook. The Azure Mountain King couldn’t believe his eyes as his armour cracked, blasting apart in a loud explosion. The black rays of death arrived at his chest, and pierced through him like arrows. [Target’s soul force defence breached, data being collected!] The A.I. Chip took the opportunity to collect massive amounts of data while it was available. Leylin too, had unknowingly absorbed some residual form of data from the Azure Mountain King.

“Shadow Prison! Dense Fog Frontier!” Watching the Azure Mountain King cut a sorry figure while retreating, Leylin continued to launch his spells. A menacing black fog spread continuously, swallowing the Azure Mountain King up. The ground split apart as countless yellow bars extended upwards, forming a gigantic dungeon that sealed the fog inside.

“The doubled spell of dense fog formations with the addition of a secret composition makeup should be enough to delay the opposite party by at least three minutes!” Not in the least bit zealous to continue with the fight, Leylin turned around to leave.

Fatality’s Tip did not cause any major injuries to the Azure Mountain King. Adding the fact that he was a Morning Star Magus, he definitely had some trump cards hidden away. After multiple provocations, he could become hysterical, and if that happened Leylin didn’t want to face him head-on. As such, his silhouette immediately morphed into a black shadow, and faded out rapidly in the midst of battle.

*Rumble!* About two minutes later, a huge blue sword streaked across the width of the dungeon, and it collapsed like a mountain that had its summit shaved off. Dust flew and rocks flew everywhere. When the dust cloud dispersed, two bloodshot eyes appeared out of the darkness.
“Leylin! Leylin! LEYLIN! I’m going to KILL YOU!” he yelled at the top of his voice. When he couldn’t locate signs of Leylin, he started to roar furiously.

Following his hiss, massive blue energy waves swept forth, wreaking havoc on the region. Soil rumbled and stones rolled as the very earth split apart. It looked like armageddon had arrived. Everything that had happened had nothing to do with Leylin anymore. After escaping to a safe distance, he’d immediately changed course, ordering the A.I. Chip to clean all traces and marks on his body.

After multiple rounds of purification, Leylin came upon a newly established cave.

“My Lord!” A ray of light shone in the middle of the cave. A beautiful woman with a slender, proportionate body curtsied, behind her standing Parker and the other men.

“Hmm! Looks like you have successfully saved them all. Well done!”
Naturally, this female Magus was Tanasha. As a Crystal Phase Magus from the Forgotten Land, she had a sensitive identity and served as Leylin’s hidden force. Tanasha also participated secretly in several battles. As soon as he’d noticed the sudden change in the Parble family, Leylin had sent her to rescue his Magi in the castle.

“Parker, how are the casualties?” Even so, injuries and deaths couldn’t be prevented, although it was still better than being wiped out.

“Master, we lost two rank 3 Magi this time, one of them at the Vapour Phase…” Parker didn’t look well, and the big loss this time could be seen on his face.

After listening carefully, Leylin sighed. The Magus world was full of danger. Death was common in fights between Magi, so those who fought in battles seldom cared about it.

But as an enforcer, he couldn’t say this out loud. Leylin pointed three fingers to the sky. ”I swear on the name of Leylin Farlier, every Magus who fights to the death for me will be adequately compensated.”

His vassals followed him for different reasons. Some of them wanted to further improve themselves, but many worked for their families like Parker. Thus Leylin’s oath successfully relaxed them.

“What happened in the Parble Family was very complicated.
Prepare a room for me, I need to contact the headquarters.” Knowing there were great dangers, it would be foolish to make further movements.
Leylin had his own forces to back him, and it was time he put them to good use. This clone was only rank 3, and this was his only chance to kill it.
He was very confident in the strength of his forces.
“Your room has been prepared, please follow me!” Tanasha led Leylin deep into the cave.
Although this secret base was temporary, it wasn’t a big problem to construct several rooms using spells.
Parker looked at Tanasha whose face was covered by a black cloth, moving his mouth but finally said nothing.
Only now did he learn that another Crystal Magus served his master! Rich in experience, he felt an aura of danger from the cold-blooded aura of that Magus.
How many hidden powers did master have?
Although he was used to his master performing miracles, Parker felt like he was shrouded with another mysterious veil.
Of course, this was just his imagination, he would rather die than inquire about his master’s secrets or even the woman’s identity. This was how a subordinate should behave.
Not only him, the other Magi accepted the existence of Tanasha immediately as well, as if she had been with them all this time.
And with the help of Tanasha, their base was quickly tidied up.
When facing great danger, great power could give people confidence. This wasn’t limited to ordinary people; even Magi felt the same way.
In a cave dug with earth elemental spells, Leylin found the secret imprint of his communications officer. He pressed his hand on the imprint, and soon the device was covered in black light.
After several minutes, Leylin’s face turned dark, ”It can’t get
through!”
He pressed down on the imprint once more, ”Headquarters! Is anyone there?”
After several attempts, he couldn’t help but admit that the liaison assigned specifically to him, who was expected to be ready for his message any second, had deserted his post.
Knowing this, Leylin frowned. He had no other backing in the central continent except the Ouroboros Clan, and he would be in danger if something happened in headquarters. The pressure from Azure Mountain City alone would force him to hide in the underground of society, with the dregs of the Magus world.
“What the hell happened?” Leylin searched the other pages. There was no feedback from Kesha. Lucian was there but he didn’t say much, just that some accident had occurred and all outer-ring movements were cancelled.
“Cancelled? Now?” Leylin smiled coldly, directly ending contact with Lucian. Judging from his tone, something must have happened in the headquarters that caused them to lose their ability to react.
And from his secretive manner, he still didn’t take him to be a core member, and was suspicious at this key moment.
It was too dangerous without accurate information. Leylin considered calmly for a moment, and flipped to another scale-shaped red imprint.
After a short while connecting, a response finally came in, “Is this Leylin?”
“It is!” Leylin spoke in a low voice, ”Freya, are you in the headquarters now?”
“Yeah, I’m here. Leylin, it’s now an emergency! You better come back immediately and not go out!”
Leylin was surprised about her panicked voice. She hadn’t acted like this even when the bloodline of her own family was
deteriorating. “I have trouble here too. The Parble Family colluded with Azure Mountain City, and even the clone of the Azure Mountain King is here!” Leylin related the information he hadn’t told Lucian just now.

“The Parble Family, a clone of the Azure Mountain King?” she cried out in surprise. Anyone would be nervous if a Morning Star Magus, even if just a clone, appeared in their hinterland.

“I knew it!”
“Knew what?” Leylin asked.
Freya seemed to notice her slip of tongue, and after a while she spoke in a low voice, ”Are you in a safe place?”
“Absolutely safe!” Leylin moved his fingers, and black light covered the whole room.
“Wait a minute, I need to change into an encrypted channel!” As Freya’s voice arrived, the light on that brand first vanished and then returned, now brighter.
“Things don’t seem good…” Leylin listened carefully, he knew that what Freya was going to say definitely affected his life.
“We can’t make contact with Mentor or the other two elders…” Freya’s nervous voice came from the brand.
“Can’t make contact? What does that mean?” Leylin was confused.
“My teacher said they were about to find the coordinates of the Purgatory World, and they needed to conduct detailed experiments and couldn’t be disturbed! Thus, they cut off all connection with the outside. Yesterday, I found that the spiritual flame my teacher gave me was about to die out, so I broke into my teacher’s lab… and…”
“What did you find?” Leylin’s voice also became nervous.
“Nobody was in that lab, even the astral gate had stopped working!” Intermittent sobs laced Freya’s words.
“The same thing happened in the labs of the other two elders!”
“I…I…I…” Leylin was about to curse, so he took a deep breath to calm himself down.

Experiments on the astral gate were very dangerous, and if you didn’t return before the astral stones ran out of power, the Magi who passed through would be trapped in another world.

As Freya said, the astral stones had run out, and even the spiritual flame was extremely weak; they were trapped in another world!

The three Morning Star Magi were the backbone of the Ouroboros Clan. Once they lost them, it wouldn’t be long before the whole clan was destroyed. No wonder the headquarters was in a mess, and even Lucian was thrown into disarray.

“Are you sure?” Leylin felt his throat tighten, but he still held on to hope.

“We have tried everything to contact them, even projecting the spiritual flame. Nothing worked… My Mentor… I’m afraid they’re lost in another world…”

On the other side of the brand, Freya couldn’t restrain her choking sobs.

When someone was lost in another world, it wasn’t as simple as not being able to come back. Big worlds always hated outsiders, and once you were unable to return in time, the Magi stuck there would have no good end.

Nibble away from the safety of the astral gate, and finally reverse the attitude of the world, that was the best way to seize another world.

Now, the three Morning Star elders were like ordinary people lost in the boundless ocean, surrounded by bloody sharks.

Nothing could be worse than this.

After she wept for a while, Freya’s voice finally grew firm, ”Do you know why the Azure Mountain King is here?”

“I have no idea, I thought it was for the Parble Family or me, but now I’m not sure…” Leylin smiled bitterly.
If it was just an experimental accident, there was still hope. But what if the whole thing was set up by their enemies? Thinking about the omens of war recently, and the abnormal behaviour of the Azure Mountain King, Leylin thought this was very possible.

After thousands of years, why did they find the Purgatory World at this exact time? It made sense if this was their enemies’ plot.

“Good job! Good job! One astral coordinate trapped three Morning Star Magi…” Leylin took a deep breath, if he was right, after the Morning Star Magi of the Ouroboros Clan disappeared, they would be dealt with as fast as lightning.

If they couldn’t settle this matter, from now on, whether the Ouroboros Clan would continue to exist in the central continent was a question.

Cutting off the connection, Leylin fell into deep thought.
491 - Obliterating Hurricane

What happened this time round was evidently a conspiracy, a huge conspiracy against the Ouroboros Clan!

First, it was the revealing of the world coordinates so as to attract three Morning Star Magi, which caused them to fall into enemy hands.

After which, the military controlled the borders heavily. First, they created trouble to sound out the situation. Upon confirmation that the three Morning Star Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks were all not around, they would proceed to exterminate entire family clans! During that unstable period, Leylin, who was a rank 3 Magus in the Crystal phase, was considered a small and insignificant figure, and could potentially be exterminated at any time!

“I have to be a more prominent figure if I do not wish to be attacked. More so if I wish to even go against the tide!” After some contemplation, Leylin’s expressions revealed more determination.

“Those who are below the rank of Morning Star are considered insignificant figures, what about those who advance past the Morning Star realm?”

Leylin’s eyes shone, “Only upon advancement to a rank above Morning Star can I decide my own fate. Then, I will not be abandoned or destroyed at the wishes of others!”

“A.I. Chip, what’s the progress on the collection of data with regards to the Morning Star realm?” Leylin immediately asked.
Leylin had always been fixated on data in this area, but due to the lack of actual specimens, the progress was barely halfway through. The recent progress was all thanks to the Azure Mountain King’s clone, which had allowed for the progress to increase by quite a bit. Leylin recalled what he had used when advancing to Morning Star, “The Lamia fingerbone has already been prepared. The bloodline combustion experiment has also been tested multiple times, and there wouldn’t be any errors. The only thing left now is the A.I Chip’s deductions on the Morning Star realm!” Those three factors were the key to Leylin’s confidence in advancing to the Morning Star realm.

On the other hand, the A.I Chip which had to deduce the nature of the Morning Star realm was also a pivotal factor, “The current progress is insufficient. We need a progress of at least 50% and above to be able to avoid mistakes during the formation of the point mass!”

“A sample of the clone of a Morning Star Magus would be sufficient!”

A ray of determination shone across Leylin’s eyes. He turned his palms upwards, where stony rune filled with holes appeared. “If this still doesn’t work, then we’ll add this in…”

A Magi who had just attained Crystal phase and want to construct a point mass in order to be promoted to Morning Star rank would at the very least, take a couple hundred of years of accumulation and hard work. Leylin naturally knew that, but time was not on his side. Furthermore, he had many hidden trump cards, and had a deep enough understanding, which could surpass that of many Crystal phase Magi who had hundreds of years of accumulated knowledge!
At the fringes of Parble Family’s territory stood a starry-eyed Magus with long blue hair, his face red with fury. The numerous high-ranked Warlocks and even larger numbers of common soldiers before him were too numerous to count. Not far away, the outline of a giant city could be seen. Above it there were flames that had started to consume the city. The cries and sobs of the residents seemingly passed through the raging flames and arrived before the Magus. The resentment, together with the extreme agony accumulated could cause a catalyst for a terrifying existence to be borne. As compared to Leylin’s previous life, in this world where the power of energy was more reactive, anything was possible! But the Azure Mountain King had not once furrowed his brows. It was as if exterminating the tens of thousands of people was like swatting a fly, which had not stirred up any of his emotions. “Seven cities have already been destroyed, and there’re more than five million casualties. More than ten high-rank Warlocks have perished…” The Azure Mountain King gave a cold smile: “To think that the Ouroboros Clan is still burrowing its head into the sand like an Ostrich. Looks like Gilbert and the rest have already fallen into the other realms…” His visit this time round was obviously not just for Leylin, but more so to sound out the reactions of the Morning Star Magi. If the other party was around, how would it be possible that they’d watch on as he wreaked havoc? Warlocks typically had very fiery tempers, and they might even have directly attacked Azure Mountain City. But now? The other party’s high-ranked military prowess was evidently held up, and even the reinforcements from the high-ranked Warlocks seemed chaotic. This was why they were so easily massacred.
“I had originally decided to just let my clone perish here. But from the looks of it now, I think I can get far more benefits…”
The Azure Mountain King’s eyes shone with greed that could not be concealed. But he swiftly caressed his face and his expressions slowly became gloomy.
“Leylin Farlier!” He deeply called out the name of the man who had caused him to suffer losses to the extent that he had disgraced the name of his clan.
“I hope you’ll continue living long enough to see the day that I attack the Ouroboros Clan…” The Azure Mountain King laughed coldly.
In an instant, his brows furrowed, and his eyes widened. “This aura? He has the guts to appear here?”
Part of the Azure Mountain King’s facial muscles cramped up, “Since you have a death wish, I’m more than willing to help you with that!”
*Boom!* The entire body of the Azure Mountain King transformed into a blue ray, and in an instant he streaked across the sky and disappeared. It was not until half an hour later that a few cowering low-ranked Warlocks emerged from the sea of corpses. Their faces registered horror, and they did not dare to shoot a single glance at the direction the Azure Mountain King before they swiftly escaped from the area. What had happened today would forever be a nightmare in their lives.
West Sea Canyon.
This was a rank 3 danger zone in the Parble Family’s territory. From the depths of the crevices, a hurricane that could obliterate anything in its path would appear. Any being below rank 4 would not have a chance at surviving the hurricane.
Currently, Leylin was standing at the edge of the cliff. The strong winds caused his robes to flap in the wind.
*Jiu!* An ear-piercing explosive sound could be heard from a
distance.
Pure energy waves led to a chain reaction. Large amounts of air were displaced, instantly forming a vacuum.
*Thump!* The Azure Mountain King’s body landed on the floor steadily. His brows were furrowed as he levelled a deadly stare at Leylin. It seemed as if he was afraid that the minute he was distracted the sly Magus would escape like he did the previous time.

“To think that you still dare to appear before me. Am I supposed to clap for you at your bravery?” After the scanning with soul force, and upon confirmation that there were no Morning Star Magi lying in ambush, the Azure Mountain King caressed his own face. Even though the part of his face where Leylin had attacked previously did not have a mark, the humiliation still lingered on.
The humiliation could only be wiped away with Leylin’s fresh blood!

“Why would I not have the guys to come?” Leylin laughed lightly, “You are but a clone who can’t make a breakthrough to the Morning Star realm… Furthermore, I’m the enforcer of this region. The crimes you’ve committed must be tried by me!”

Obviously, Leylin could not divulge the news that all of the three chief Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan had gone missing. As a result, he skillfully used his status as a smokescreen. As he was the enforcer of the region, after he had confirmed that he could not complete the task himself, the reinforcements from the headquarters took over.
The Azure Mountain King was not a fool, and there was no guarantee of deceiving him. However, as long as he could arouse the Azure Mountain King’s suspicions, it would be considered a success.

If there was a possibility that there were still Morning Star Magi present in the Ouroboros Clan, the enemies would not dare to be
too unruly. The destructiveness of the killing tactics of a Morning Star Magus would definitely do both parties no good. Once a Morning Star Magus was pressured, he would disregard the peace treaties and begin to unbridledly utilise Morning Star Arcane Arts. The destruction that they could cause would be so immense that even Radiant Moon Magi would not be able to account for it.

In other words, even if they were to successfully attack the Ouroboros Clan, the benefits they got might not even make up for the losses that they would suffer from the Morning Star Arcane Art. Magi were not fools, and if the battle would not bring about benefits, and even potentially cause them to suffer losses, they would not be willing to engage in it.

It was under such threats that those with the powers of a Morning Star Magus could peacefully co-exist in the central continent, which was also why there were rarely any large conflicts.

From Leylin’s understanding, a Morning Star Magus was equivalent to a nuclear weapon from his previous life. Countries with nuclear weapons could choose mutual destruction. As a result, they would tolerate each other, which was why the peaceful outlook could be sustained.

But now? If outsiders got wind about how all of the nuclear weapons in the Ouroboros Clan were missing, then a calamity would be imminent.

As a result, in front of the Azure Mountain King, Leylin presented himself as a high-ranking official who was very concerned about his honour.

Before he was certain that the problem could not be handled, he had not requested for reinforcements from the headquarters. That would explain, though barely, why there was no response from the Morning Star Magi.

He had done all that he could, and could not be bothered about
how the Azure Mountain King would react to it. Sure enough, the Azure Mountain King was only thrown off for a while, before a mocking smile appeared on his face. “Do you think I would believe your nonsense?” “It’s up to you to believe it or not!” Leylin shrugged his shoulders, “But you will have to perish here today!” *Rumble!* In an instant, as if to prove what he had said, the calm waves of the West Seas Canyon started to crash against the cliff. As a royal of the Ouroboros Clan, Leylin naturally had access to a lot of reading materials. Since the geological conditions of the West Seas Canyon were not a secret, that piece of information would have naturally have been recorded in the database of the A.I Chip. And Leylin who wanted to keep the Azure Mountain King’s clone had immediately thought of the West Seas Canyon’s unique environment and the obliterating hurricane. His abilities were not on par with that of the opponent, and hence he needed external aid! After serious inspections of the area, and upon using the A.I Chip to stimulate the eruption process of the West Seas Canyon, deducing the concrete timing was merely a matter of time. After which it was the selection of a suitable timing to attract the Azure Mountain King Leylin believed that due to the hatred the Azure Mountain King had towards him, once he discovered Leylin’s aura, he would definitely come forth. Sure enough, everything had worked out as he had expected. *Howl!* The raging hurricane whistled like a giant black dragon, and it suddenly rushed towards the sky, spewing out its rage. Leylin, who was standing in front of the raging flames, was like an ancient heroic knight riding upon a giant mystical creature.
“So you’re relying on this?” the Azure Mountain King laughed coldly, “Do you think you can control this hurricane? It may be possible if I came with my main body…”

Nonetheless, his face was full of fear, and he unconsciously took a few steps back.

“If you don’t try, how would you know?” Leylin chuckled, and suddenly rubbed the ring on his hand. A strange energy wave seemed to pass by at the speed of light.

Miles away, Parker looked at the communicator in his hands with a stern expression. He then ordered, “Activate!”

“Beginning operation! Preparing number 1 energy reactor!” Snoopy shouted immediately.

“The elemental particle gathering device is complete, beginning ground vibration!”

Many Warlocks, as hardworking as ants, began to get busy, and one by one, strange symbols were lit up on the surface of the huge pyramidal reactor.

*Rumble!* At this moment, the surface of the ground seemed to come alive as a large amount of energy was bound and transmitted towards Leylin’s direction.

This violent earthquake did not cause much trouble for the warlocks, as expected. Snoopy wiped away the cold sweat on his forehead and went to his grandfather’s side with an evident look of
worry on his face, “Grandfather, will Mentor be able to succeed? I’ve never heard of this idea before… No! I wouldn’t be able to think of this even in my dreams! Once any node goes wrong, I’m afraid what awaits Mentor will be…”

Before he could finish speaking, a thick, muscular palm pressed down on his shoulders, “Snoopy! You have to believe in your mentor!”

Parker’s eyes did not mask his respect for Leylin, “He is the most profound scholar and the strictest Magus amongst everyone I’ve met! Once the lord makes a decision, it will definitely be correct, we only need to follow and execute according to the plan devised by the lord!”

After interacting with them for more than a century, be it in force or knowledge, Leylin had long ago subdued these men of his.

“Yes!” Snoopy nodded repeatedly, and his previous worries disappeared immediately.

At another place, Tanasha was also doing the same thing.

A perfectly straight lightning rod, almost piercing through the horizon, stood firmly on a pile of black rocks.

Thunder roared and lightning flashed. Many blue electric waves growled and rushed towards the black needle, before diverging in all directions through the path that was laid out.

“Sir! I Hope you will succeed!” Tanasha grew a little excited in her heart, praying silently.

……

“Preparations for node 1 completed, review of node 2 completed, preparing to charge node 3…”

Data kept pouring out from the A.I. Chip continuously and many fluorescent-blue information windows flashed past Leylin’s eyes.

*Rumble!* The howling hurricane that was brewing in the sky
seemed to be controlled by someone, and it slowly began to transform and pack together, converging behind Leylin. The windstorm roared, dissipating the dark gas and silently turning the rocks and plants on the roadside to dust. It then wrapped the Azure Mountain King within.

“How… How is this possible? Why can you……” The Azure Mountain King’s eyes almost popped out. How could a mere rank 3 Crystal Phase Magus possess such enormous power?

After he came here, he had definitely tested with his soul force that there were no other Magi lying in ambush. There were also no signs of any spell formation!

“I am unable to hide anything from soul force scans, hence I did not plan anything here…” Leylin stood above the hurricane, as if he was a deity from another world.

“Thus, the closest spell formation that I’ve set up is 45 kilometers away. The underground hurricane is being manipulated through redistribution points and could be temporarily kept under control! I call this spell formation farcast support spell formation!”

Using the superimposition of small influences from other areas, he ultimately gained control over the hurricane!

It was easier said than done. To do it, the calculations needed were terrifyingly complex, fit to be described as perverse. Even if there was a slight error the data, there was a possibility that the hurricane would ultimately lose all control. As the one to bear the brunt of the damage, Leylin would be the first to die without any remains.

Such horrifying calculations, even the Azure Mountain King felt giddy from just simulating them in his head. Leylin had done something even Morning Star Magi could not thanks to his A.I. Chip, a scientific chip from his previous world which possessed incredible abilities after numerous extreme
transformation and advancements!
“The hurricane can destroy anything under rank 4, you are destined to die today!” Leylin’s expression was calm, his face showing no signs of sadness or happiness.
But the hurricane, which was under his control, suddenly screeched. A large gust of strong black wind surrounded the Azure Mountain King and began to spin around him, as if it wanted to drag him into the eye of the hurricane.
“No! I have not fallen yet!” The Azure Mountain King’s eyes flushed red, and his facial muscles twitched as he suddenly growled.
Explosions rang out as the crystal clear soul force transformed into a defensive film on his body. Terrifying accessories, which had reached the level of magic artifacts, began to explode one by one. The massive explosion caused a horrifying driving force, and even the hurricane was momentarily blocked out.
Using this hard-earned chance, the Azure Mountain King immediately dashed out to break through the barrier.
“You can’t escape!” The large Multi-Armed Race phantom thrashed and growled behind Leylin. The hurricane gathered in Leylin’s hands as he stood before the Azure Mountain King and threw out a sudden punch.
*Boom!* Like the roar of an ancient giant snake, along with the accompanying howls of the many hurricanes, a terrifying energy instantly extinguished the explosion from before, breaking through the Azure Mountain King’s body.
Even if it was soul power, under the the besiegement of the hurricane, it was exhausted too quickly. The protective film immediately crackled and broke.
Cracks began appearing one after another, and due to Leylin’s attack, the Azure Mountain King was once again pushed back into the eye of the hurricane.
While watching Leylin, who stood outside like a war god, a hint of despair surfaced on the Azure Mountain King’s face…
*Rumble!* It was as if the world exploded, reaching its end. Among the many dark storms, a touch of blue light suddenly exploded. It immediately intensified, offsetting the dark storms persistently. The terrifying energy waves dissipated as streaks of silver cracks in the space emerged endlessly. The dark storms howled, but it also seemed to weaken under the blue radiance as time passed. At the same time, the blue radiance slowly began to dim. The earth rumbled, and after what seemed like a sky-shaking and violent magnitude 9 earthquake, everything finally calmed down. Only, the surroundings had already been destroyed beyond recognition. Even a part of the West Sea Canyon was totally wiped out, becoming a large, ruinous rocky plain.
“Master!”
This was the scene that Tanasha and Parker, who had rushed over, saw. Their faces seemed to search for answers anxiously, until they saw Leylin who was standing on a large rock proudly. Their faces were immediately overcome with delight.
“Yes!” Leylin nodded.
Currently, he was in a very bad condition. Not only were there blue wounds all over his body that were bubbling and corroding it, there was also an obvious dent on his chest. In his hands, there was an already prepared crystalised test tube, in which laid a piece of burnt flesh. Surrounding it were some squirming tentacles.
“I’m fine!” Leylin waved, stopping Tanasha and Parker’s greetings.
“I give you all an hour’s time, search this area immediately and look for bloody pieces of flesh like this! No matter what the
outcome is an hour later, we will leave immediately!”
“Yes, Sir!”
Watching his men busy themselves, a bitter smile emerged on Leylin’s face.
The Azure Mountain King was indeed a Morning Star Magus, with an extremely determined mind. After he realised that there was no hope of escaping, he immediately cast some sort of secret spell, detonating his clone.
The self-destruction of a rank 3 Magus’ clone would cause major damage.
Not only was Leylin’s spell formation utterly defeated, he himself had sustained serious injuries. This could be said to be a loss for both parties.
‘But as long as these things can be obtained, it’ll be worth it,’ Leylin put away the pieces of flesh safely, before his heart lightened.
Although the Azure Mountain King had self-destructed, losing him the opportunity to collect his complete body, the tissue structures of these bloody pieces of flesh and such were enough for the A.I. Chip to study for a long time.
And after obtaining these, the A.I. Chip’s deductions on the Morning Star Realm would be able to advance to at least 50% and above!
“If it’s like that, the conditions are more or less all set! We only need to prepare for the Azure Mountain King’s counterattack!” Leylin stroked his chin.
Originally, he and the Oakheart Clan were prepared to give their lives to achieve their goals. Now, the other party’s Morning Star Magus had lost his clone at his hands. Surely the Azure Mountain King would be going crazy.
‘We cannot stay in this territory anymore, we must hurry back to the organisation and evacuate as soon as possible…’ Leylin was stuck in thought.
Although it still seemed peaceful at his Onyx Castle in the core of the Ouroboros Clan, with Robin’s Parble Family reduced to their sorry state, was it really? Perhaps, as of now, only the area at the headquarters of the Phosphorescence Swamp could forcibly maintain stability. Although they lacked Morning Star battle power, under circumstances where outsiders were still unsure, keeping it a secret for a period of time was no problem at all. Furthermore, based on the Ouroboros Clan’s arduous accumulation as well as the spell formations, defence installations and such by the Morning Star Warlocks ancestors, hindering a certain Morning Star Magus for a duration was still not an issue. What Leylin needed most right now, was time! This was because the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan was definitely a point of attack for many enemies in the future. Once it was confirmed that the battle powers of the Morning Star were gone, there was a high chance that they might face a siege from numerous Morning Star Magi. By that time, the headquarters would be a deathtrap! If they lost the other territories, without advancing to the Morning Star level before the Phosphorescence Swamp was attacked, all of the Warlocks at the headquarters could only accept death!
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All in all, Phosphorescence Swamp is going to be the safest right now, but the most dangerous place in the end……”

Leylin smiled reluctantly, ”It’s just that… do I have any other choices?”

At this time, he was sure the Azure Mountain King was hot on his heels. Once he left the Ouroboros Clan, he feared he would not get to live another day.

Unlike his rank 3 clone, the Azure Mountain King was a famed Morning Star Magus! The disparity in power was too large for any strategies to be of use.

Thus, he was left with no choice but to take a gamble. Fortunately, he had already exterminated the opposite party’s clone, earning him and the Ouroboros Clan some extra time!

Otherwise, if they allowed the Azure Mountain King to continue to stir up trouble, word may leak out to other power-thirsty parties, that the Ouroboros Clan no longer had Morning Star Magi defending it! He could imagine them swimming forward like sharks towards their prey.

For now, since the Azure Mountain King’s matter had been settled by Leylin, he’d presumed Leylin’s strength was why Gilbert and the others chose to lay low.

This was what Leylin was striving for, a little of their apprehension!
“Morning Star realm! I must advance to the Morning Star realm!” Leylin clenched his teeth.
At this moment, Tanasha brought forward a transparent box, “My Lord, this is our harvest.”
Inside the box were some scraps of flesh and hair, and even some blood-stained clothes and other fabrics and such.
“Well done! For your contributions, I shall reward you in the form of contribution points later on. Right now, let’s go home.....” In front of his subordinates, Leylin resumed the attitude of a master.

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“My Lord!” Back at his own Magus Tower, upon hearing the green tower genie’s greetings, Leylin felt as if he had been away for a lifetime.
His departure had started with a banquet, celebrating Freya advancing to the Crystal Phase.
Who would’ve thought that, within such a short time, so many drastic changes would take place. Even the entire Ouroboros Clan was in a crisis, and was almost destroyed.
The failed mission of Gilbert and the other two was something Leylin could never have predicted. Morning Star Magi’s failed mission on a whole, was something Leylin could have never predicted.
After losing the deterrence of Morning Star Magi, the Ouroboros Clan immediately showed signs of instability.
“Tower genie, backup the entire experimental data to the A.I. Chip. Destroy all original experiments, starting from the natural resources. Prepare to transfer!” Leylin drew a deep breath, and requested.
“Authorization confirmed. Spiritual force connected, data transmission in progress!” Compared to a human Magus, the tower
genie’s level of compliance is as good as first class. Immediately, a link was formed between it and the A.I. Chip. Leylin had always held the habit of backing up his important experimental data to the A.I. Chip. The amount the genie had was only a small part of the whole, and he took the time to patch up the holes in his database. The most important step was to destroy the experiments themselves. For the past century, Leylin had secretly carried out many bloodline experiments. He had been fortunate to not leave any clues behind, otherwise he would have gotten into deep water. Following the command of the formation genie, many secret paths and doors started opening up, revealing the concealed spaces and storage facilities. Inside, bountiful magic crystals and precious objects glowed in brilliant lights and vibrant colours. It was a feast for one’s eyes. Leylin heaved a sigh and picked out many of the stored magic crystals. He was sure he had provoked the Azure Mountain King to the maximum this time, thus he didn’t have high hopes of being able to preserve the Magus Tower. Compared with the main headquarters at the Phosphorescence Swamp, his Magus Tower would be the first to be ravaged. Since he had decided to seek refuge at the main headquarters, he didn’t want to be taken advantage of and lose his magic crystals. With these thoughts in mind, he turned to the experimental room where he absorbed Lamia radiation. After complicated and meticulous verification, Leylin saw the brilliant milky-white bone in the center of the crystal ball. “A.I. Chip!” Leylin’s face contorted as he yelped. “Begin compatibility scan, unscrambling data in progress…” A huge amount of data flowed in the form of blue streaks of light from Leylin’s eyes, and seeped into the crystal ball held by a
machine. After two minutes of data transmission, a clear, distinct sound echoed, as a tiny pin-sized hole appeared on the surface of the crystal ball, slowly enlarging.

“This is what my advancement to Morning Star will depend most upon!” Leylin exclaimed and sighed. He drew out a box made of crystal and carefully kept the Lamia bone.

Prior to this, he didn’t want the Lamia bone to be kept on him for fear of Gilbert finding out. But right now, there wasn’t even a single Morning Star Warlock in the headquarters, so Leylin naturally had nothing to be afraid of.

“Mentor, are we really leaving now?” Before they set off, Snoopy looked at the black tower and Onyx Castle in the distance, his eyes filled with a look of unwillingness to let go.

Having stayed here for more than a thousand years, he had already developed feelings for it, hence his hesitance to leave.

Similarly, Kubler, Parker and the others who were behind Leylin felt the exact same hesitance and unwillingness, even though they had obeyed Leylin’s orders and packed all their belongings.

“We must leave!” Leylin’s reply was resolute and decisive. “You should know the situation and how things are right now. Except for the main headquarters, everywhere else is dangerous….”

Parker and the rest solemnly nodded their heads. They had not found out about the three missing Morning Star Magi yet. However, the chaos that had happened was enough to keep them on the edge for a long time.

Magi who were able to live past three, four or five hundred years were all intelligent, and the recent spate of events had made them realise that something unusual was going on. Hence, their support for Leylin’s decision was unanimous.

Glancing at his rather muddle-headed apprentice, Leylin shook his head and patted his shoulders:”We will be back! I promise!”
“Mmm. I believe you, Mentor!” Snoopy nodded his head passionately. Parker, on the other hand, forced a smile.

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Inside Phosphorescence Swamp.

Numerous sulphur-filled bubbles rose from the sludge, becoming green balls of flame as they escaped. Erected in the center of the swamp, the Warlock City was as busy as always. In fact, the population seemed to have increased. It wasn’t just one or two families that could feel the oddity in the air. In the early days, when there were instabilities at the border, many Marquises and Counts had reallocated their families and servants over here, blowing up population and city. As for the issues of their territories and such, they had no worry about that.

To the Warlocks at the top of society, commoners were like wild grass. After trimming them, come spring time and they would tenaciously grow again. So if the taxes were reduced for the people, in less than 10 years, the population would boom again. Regardless of whether it was the invading troop or the defence troop, they did not need these commoners as resources, thus the commoners were able to lead a rather good life before and after the war with no major changes.

Compared to these commoners, the Warlocks’ regrets would be losing their castles, Magus Towers and such. Just like Leylin, who had built his Magus Tower in his own territory. He supposed that after the war was over, his tower would be gone too. And it did not matter who the enemy was, they would be ruthless and would helped themselves to the structures. Also, once a tower genie discerned a master, she would never change. Thus, total destruction was the only way.

“Hehe… Leylin, it looks like the bad blood between you and the Oakheart Clan is serious. Looking at this latest intelligence report,
your territory had been occupied by him and your Magus Tower has been demolished…” Freya smiled as she handed the intelligence report to Leylin.

“It is serious!” Leylin stroked his nose, ”Even their chief died in my hands!”

In his heart, he silently added ‘and a Morning Star’s clone’ next to it. Under such circumstances, if the opposite party were to be polite to him, it would truly be odd.

After moving to the Ouroboros Clan headquarters, over ten days had passed and within this time, many things had happened. Every territory had its fair share of unceasing riots, and there were multiple forces would invade these areas. Naturally, Leylin’s territory was not spared.

Freya, too, had lost her territory. Hence, she teased Leylin with a bit of schadenfreude.

However, Leylin could sense the fear and restlessness beneath Freya’s smile. This time, the power of the enemy had surpassed the expectations of many. The Azure Mountain Clan was but one part only, there were other more powerful ones yet to show themselves. The Ouroboros Clan was strong in appearance but weak in reality, and everyone could see it. Hence the minor skirmishes at the borders had escalated to entire territories being taken over.

Even the outer regions of Phosphorescence Swamp were not spared. From time to time, scouts sent by many different powerful families were discovered. Warlocks from the Ouroboros Clan could only rely on the headquarters’ defensive spells as a core, building an extremely narrow defensive perimeter and guarding it resolutely.

Anyone with a discerning eye could tell that if the Morning Star military strength did not make an appearance soon in the Ouroboros Clan, the entire clan could face imminent destruction.

“Over at the astral gate, how is the progress?” Seeing Freya’s strong
and obstinate persona, Leylin couldn’t console her directly, as otherwise, he would have hurt her pride. Instead, he changed the subject and asked her a question.
The truth of the matter was, the root of all the problems were the three elders. If they could appear immediately, even if just one of them could show their face in public, not only would the Warlocks of the entire Ouroboros Clan gain confidence from their pillar of strength, the number of enemy scouts would reduce drastically too.
“Some of the Marquises from the technology department have been working for days in there…” Freya smiled wryly.
“But in the end…. Only someone of at least a Morning Star Magus status, can open an astral gate. Otherwise, no one can support the crossover of the body. Forget rescuing them, we can’t even find someone here qualified to open the astral gate…”
Seeing Freya, Leylin knew deep in her heart that she had some disagreements with the Blood Duchess Emma and the other two Morning Star Warlocks. But since she was a student of theirs, she couldn’t say anything.
“You can’t blame our Mentors, the allure of the Purgatory World is simply too huge…” Leylin sighed.
There was another concern bugging Leylin. As compared to the factions that had shown themselves in Azure Mountain City, what worried him the most was still the Magus that had set the trap. To be able to give up a world coordinate and also successfully entrap three Morning Star Warlocks, he was definitely not a simple person. Furthermore, if Leylin’s mentor, Gilbert, joined forces with the other two Morning Star Warlocks, they would have a terrifying strength on par with that of a Radiant Moon Magus! Since the mastermind could successfully scheme against them regardless of that, it was only a matter of time before his actual strength would be revealed. If the other party came at them openly, the current Ouroboros Clan would not have any strength to resist. Fortunately, for reasons unknown, he had not taken any other action apart from setting the trap. No one knew what qualms he had, or whether there was something holding him back. Leylin secretly guessed that perhaps the other party had suffered a violent counterattack when he’d plotted against his Mentor, and thus suffered a hidden loss. He was likely still in the midst of recovery, or else he definitely wouldn’t have let this chance slip through his fingers. Even so, the pressure the Ouroboros Clan faced was crushing. The
tiniest bit more and they would collapse completely.
After parting with Leylin, Freya took a short walk and arrived at a small garden full of white roses.
A distorted human shadow appeared next to the garden. When the figure came into view, a Warlock dressed in a crimson Magus robe bowed to Freya.
“Greetings, chief!”
“Mm!” Freya nodded, “The crisis that the Ouroboros Clan has met with will require the combined effort of many marquises, but Leylin’s team of vassals is really too weak, and they also suffered heavy losses in the previous suppression. I plan to let the Blood Serpent Warlock organisation take over some of their missions!”
After a long silence, Julian then spoke with a hoarse voice, “This… is not in accordance with the rules! Furthermore, the elders…”
“This is an order!” Freya’s voice turned cold, and an aura that was unique to Crystal Phase Warlocks surfaced on her body.
“Yes! Yes!” Julian quickly agreed, but let out a silent sigh.
Even he could see that his chief had feelings for Leylin, but the other party still showed clear signs of rejection.
It would be understandable if Freya had only lent a helping hand once or twice, but she had already done so many times. This problem had left many elders with authority dissatisfied. It was in stark contrast to how Miranda simply gave up on her pursuit.
In ancient Warlock families like Freya’s, even the chief could not go against the opinion of the majority, and had to take the entire family’s opinion into consideration.
Freya’s actions had already aroused a certain degree of discontent in the family, but was suppressed by her promotion to the Crystal Phase.
However, Julian had a feeling that if Freya continued, the accumulating dissent would one day burst forth.
Judging by her attitude, though, would it be possible to change her
ways?
Julian shook his head and forced a smile, then bowed to Freya and vanished into the sea of flowers.

……

In the depths of a white canyon, a team of Warlocks were hurrying through the steep mountains.
These Warlocks were all clothed in crimson Magus robes, with the Giant Kemoyin Serpent motif on their collars. A platinum-haired high-ranking Warlock led the way.
*Shoom!* At that very instant, a crooked shadow shot out from the side of the cliff like an arrow, right into this Warlock’s hands.
“Be alert!” Kemoyin’s Scales appeared on the bodies of the numerous Warlocks as a mode of defence. Assuming their various positions, they emitted an aura that was full of solemn determination; evidently, they were elites with rich experience who have been fighting for a long time.
“It’s a shadow snake messenger from our family, cancel the alarm!” The platinum-haired high-ranking Warlock furrowed his brows and quickly shouted to the rest. The entire troop was tranquil again, and they slowly started to continue walking.
“They actually want us to offer support to Enforcer Leylin’s vassals?” Upon recalling the content of the message, the leader of the Warlock team seemed gloomy. He was, of course, unhappy about his chief’s actions.
But looking at the authoritative imprint on the back that reflected the family chief’s position, the leader gritted his teeth and yelled out, “Turn around, we’re going to the Teal Tusk Highlands, and fast!” He was still dreadful of the consequences of disobeying orders and betraying his family.
Although they questioned why their leader suddenly gave such an
order, their pleasantly compliant nature allowed this small team to make a full turnaround within a few minutes, and they continued to rush off in another direction.

“Hehe, found the Blood Serpent Warlock organisation!” At this moment, the immature voice of a young boy sounded out, causing the team leader’s expression to change drastically.

“Who’s there?”

The Magi under him immediately broke into formation, with many of them already holding on to multiple magical items for attacking purposes.

*Bang!* The rock wall at the side blasted open, and a gigantic flowering plant emerged from within.

This flower was about 5 or 6 meters tall, its sepals full of sharp buckteeth. It suddenly spread open its petals, and with its huge mouth similar to that of a beast from the ancient times, it swallowed a Warlock who couldn’t dodge in time.

“AHHH…” He let out a distorted, muffled shriek. The innate defence of the snake scales seemed to have no effect on the corrosive juices in the stamen. Through the translucent petals, the Warlocks could see their comrade’s scales corrode, then quickly soften and reveal his skin and muscle tissue…

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Before they could rescue their comrade, more carnivorous flowers suddenly emerged from the rock walls, and started attacking them.

“A military troop of carnivorous plants, it’s…” The expression on the platinum-haired team leader’s face changed drastically. Before he could even exclaim, a carnivorous flower that was more than 10 meters tall bore out of the ground and appeared in front of him in a flash.

On the stolon of this carnivorous flower was the face of a little boy, and it seemed that the voice from earlier was his.

“Innate spell Toxic Bile!” The team leader gritted his teeth, and
venomous gas immediately diffused out into the air. “It’s useless! We have already made special improvements through several mutations targeted at awakening the ability of self-control, just to counter your poison and scales!” A grin spread across the boy’s face. The humongous carnivorous flower ferociously opened up and countless minute pollen grains scattered onto the ground. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock’s expression changed rapidly. He could clearly sense that the venom in the air had been neutralised by the pollen from the carnivorous flower. Not only that, once a single pollen grain landed on him, his scales instantly started to soften. “Haha… Kill! Go on, kill! After today, the Ouroboros Clan and the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks will become a thing of the past!” The boy cheered, while more and more carnivorous flowers started to emerge from the soil and the walls, drowning out the members of the snake bloodline Warlock organisation. The colourful lights of spells exploded, and finally, all was silent again…

……

On the other end, in a small and prosperous town. The shadows of many densely-packed sails appeared all of a sudden in the sky. Numerous huge ships soared through the air like dark clouds, blocking out all the sunlight and casting large shadows on the earth, as darkness enveloped the entire town. “What’s going on?” The Kemoyin Warlock in charge of guarding the place walked out and his jaw instantly dropped. *Boom!* The gigantic cannon stowed at the front of the fleet started to rumble, and terrifying energy waves immediately wreaked havoc throughout the town.
In that instant, the entire city was filled with terrorised cries as blood and fire flooded the land. The ever-plentiful city that had always been under the protection of the Ouroboros Clan was suddenly drowning in calamity. Those who could not escape in time turned into ashes under gunfire, average humans and low-ranking Warlocks alike. After a round of bombardment, numerous silhouettes appeared beside the fleet, and descended to clear out the remaining few high-ranking Warlocks.

“No Warlock that belongs to the Ouroboros Clan will be spared!” A crippled male Magus who was propping himself up with a wooden leg gave an order, his eyes boiling with hatred that he did not even bother to mask. His face was filled with numerous scars and was badly disfigured. “Those damn bloodline bastards don’t even deserve to be alive…” Following his command, the resistance in the battlefield intensified, but all that anyone could do was to struggle in the face of death. After purging the resistance, it was time for a feast, one of plundering and venting their anger. But even in a situation like this, the commander’s face remained cold and indifferent, as though he never saw it at all.

……

Such scenarios continued to play out in the Ouroboros Clan’s territory, and even started to inch closer to Phosphorescence Swamp. The atmosphere at headquarters was gloomy due to the huge war. In one of the rooms in the headquarters of Warlock City, a faint warm glow flickered. A group of Magi gathered around a circular black medieval table. They were all Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, and the aura
exuded by every single one of them was highly terrifying, even exceeding the threshold of the Crystal Phase.

Leylin was among them, scanning through his companions there were more than ten of them.
These people made up the entirety of the Ouroboros Clan’s upper echelons, and they were of the highest ranks apart from the three Morning Star Warlocks. Their decisions would represent the entire Ouroboros Clan!

Lucian and Freya were also among them. Upon seeing Leylin, they nodded in acknowledgement, but anxiety was written across their faces.

A red-headed Warlock stood up, propping himself with his hands on the table, and roared loudly, “Only yesterday! In a mere 13 hours, the attacks we have suffered have surpassed the sum of all the damage we have ever sustained! The Blood Serpent Warlock organisation, the Black Iron Warlock organisation and the castigators have all been razed to the ground! Even Greenflame City that guards our Phosphorescence Swamp has fallen to the hands of our enemy!”

He slammed the table, causing the tabletop to shake vigorously. Leylin could feel his wrath through the vibrations.

“It won’t take long until we’ll be able to see them within the vicinity of the city! Even small fry like the Arm of Vengeance will start hunting us down. Damn it! These were people I could have wiped out single-handedly in the past!”

With that, opinions started to fire across the table, rage filling the air.
leylin watched the performance of these Warlocks, indifferent to it all.
In fact, it was very clear to them that small organisations like the Arm of Vengeance were being used as scapegoats by the hidden forces.
Were Gilbert and the rest to appear, they would just throw out these scapegoats to suffer their wrath, without caring for their life or death.
And even if these small organisations were to find success, they wouldn’t end up with much resources. They could only give the majority of the resources to their backers. Thus, these forces could reap the benefits without getting their own hands dirty. It was a great deal indeed.
Although these Warlocks were completely aware of this, they only dared curse these small organisations that had gone insane in their desire for revenge, but did not dare touch the existence in the background. In the back of their minds, even though they lacked Morning Star forces on their side, they definitely did not have the guts to provoke those acting behind the scenes. To them, on their side, they would not have the guts to challenge the masterminds.
“Never mind that. This place is soon going to become a battlefield, so every one of us must take up our responsibilities. Do you all agree?”
“Agreed!” “Agreed!” “Agreed!” Numerous high ranked Warlocks
nodded one after another.
“That’s great, we still have the two Kemoyin Gargoyles and the spell formation left by the elders. We can still handle a Morning Star Magus if we activate everything… We just need to persist for a period of time, then the three mentors will be able to return from the astral plane!”
The red-haired Warlock was still trying his best to boost the morale, and hence he maintained the delusion.
After he spoke up to that, everyone’s sight immediately shot to an old Warlock who was wiping his spectacles with a white handkerchief.
This old Crystal Phase Warlock was the head of their technical department, Schadt.
Schadt put on his spectacles with a bitter laugh, “Our tests have confirmed that the elders really did open the astral gates and entered another world. However, we couldn’t confirm that it’s the Purgatory World. However, we’re trying really hard to calculate the coordinates. I just need ten days… No! Five! We’ll have it in five!”
The expressions of the numerous Warlocks dulled when the reply they got wasn’t the one they wanted.
The red-haired Warlock forced a smile, and immediately began to assign missions as a leader, “Marquis Schadt, continue to study the astral gate. Headquarters will allocate resources to you as you wish. You have to rescue our three Mentors!”
“I will!” Schadt nodded. There was a great scholarly temperament to him as he still seemed like nothing had happened even in this kind of critical moment.
“Next, Marquis Lucian…” There was pride in the tone of the red-haired Warlock when he heard the other party agreeing to his orders.
Although he was the first disciple of the Grand Elder, his authority was not much greater than that of the remaining Marquises present.
here. But now, when the circumstances required the presence of a powerful leader due to both internal and external pressures, it seemed like he could try to take control!

“Very well! Next…” The Warlock started to assign missions to everyone. Finally, it was Leylin’s turn. “Marquis Leylin, it’s no problem if I leave you in charge of the defense of the West Zone of the city, right?”

“Sorry, I do!” Leylin raised his hand up. He’d heard from Lucian about this Warlock before, although he hadn’t met him in person many times. He was Faisal, and he had held power for a long time in the Ouroboros Clan. Right now, it seemed that even in all this confusion, his first thought was of grasping power.

Leylin was immediately fed up by this sort of thing. With their current situation, perhaps the entire headquarters would be breached tomorrow, and everyone would be finished. He still wanted to scramble for power and profits?

“What?” Faisal wrinkled his brows. He’d met a challenger moments after he set up his authority. This triggered his immense dissatisfaction, so he decided to suppress the challenger ruthlessly.

“I have an extremely important experiment…”

“Experiment? Just for the purpose of an experiment?” Leylin was interrupted by Faisal before he could complete his words. “Did I mishear? You want to abandon your responsibility in this kind of critical moment just for an experiment?”

Numerous high-ranked Warlocks around the round table also started whispering to each other after they heard Faisal words.

“Let me finish!” Leylin pressed his hands down.

“The experiment I’m working on is an interplanar experiment. I’m confident in being able to find the coordinates of the Mentors in three days. Marquis Schadt can testify to this.”

Schadt, who’d been still as a statue from the beginning, also nodded, “Indeed. Marquis Leylin’s fundamental knowledge about
astral experiments far surpasses mine. Especially in accurately searching for coordinates, he leaves me ashamed of my meagre ability.”
“Even so,” Faisal ground his teeth, “The defence of the West Zone…”
“I’ll take care of that as well,” Freya interrupted.
“You?” Faisal was a little astonished.
“Yes. Anyway, my own defence zone is not far from Leylin’s. It’s alright for me to take care of both, right?” Freya looked at Faisal challengingly. The other Warlocks had a knowing smile on their faces when they recalled the rumours about Freya and Leylin.
“You can if you say so, but what if your area has problems first…” Faisal dragged out his speech, looking at Freya who had an unyielding expression. He thought Leylin was getting more and more out of hand.
Freya ground her teeth and stated stubbornly, “It’ll be my responsibility!”
“Fine, I hope you remember what you said today!” Faisal nodded and sat back down.
The person involved, Leylin, sat foolishly at a distance from the beginning. Only after it ended did he respond and look at Freya. This woman had helped him over and over again, even at the expense of her own family’s interests, and was already facing criticism from her elders.
He hadn’t expected that she would be willing to help him to this extent.
Actually, this so-called important experiment was just to pull the wool over Faisal’s eyes. With his knowledge, it was easy for him to convince Schadt by exposing a bit of his abilities.
If Faisal hadn’t agreed even after that, he would’ve looked for an opportunity to shirk his responsibility.
However, Freya unexpectedly took it on for him. Leylin suddenly
felt a bit of a headache as he looked at her. “You don’t need to do this, you know…” Leylin walked to Freya’s side and said softly after the meeting dispersed. “It’s my choice.” Freya gathered her black long hair together and left quickly. She seemed stubborn and firm. Leylin shook his head, then communicated with the A.I. Chip and took a look at the latest data. [Progress on deduction of information about the Morning Star realm: 52.7%]

After more than ten days, the A.I. Chip had finally finished analysing the flesh of the Azure Mountain King’s clone. His information about the Morning Star realm had crossed 50%! With this, the final requirement for his advancement to the Morning Star realm had been fulfilled.

“The future seems exciting. I will look forward to it….” A smile hung on the corner of Leylin’s mouth. He then took a glance at the meeting place and at last moved his legs, leaving with incomparably firm footsteps.

……

In an unknown place, several mysterious conscients (A conscient is a high-level projection of one’s perception across the land. The person themself is not present, physically nor spiritually, only observing casually from a distance) were communicating with each other.

“The attacks of the plant legion have had pretty good results! The progress this time is pretty smooth. The air force has also taken down Greenflame City. It seems like the Morning Star Warlocks are already lost in the astral plane.”

“Not necessarily. Gilbert and the rest are very cunning. It’s possible that they’re feigning weakness in order to bait us into exposing
ourselves,” another voice immediately retorted, “The lifespan of a Morning Star Warlock is nigh endless. Even temporary gains and losses of territory are nothing to them. They can always expand their influence again in the future…”
“What you said also makes sense. We must consider this, and continue to test them. Try to attack their headquarters in Phosphorescence Swamp!” the previous voice said. A powerful stream of thought swept out, “Where’s that old Azure Mountain guy?”
“Hehe… he lost a clone to the Ouroboros Clan. With his main body settling a debt with Felix, I’m afraid he won’t be available for a period of time…” a woman jokingly said.
“She’s clone fell? It must have been at rank 3. Even then, who interfered?” The voice who spoke previously seemed sluggish.
“No one! Azure Mountain’s clone unexpectedly fell at the hand of a member of the younger generation without the interference of any Morning Star powers. It’s even someone who had just advanced to the Crystal Phase. I’m afraid he’ll feel too embarrassed to meet people before he thoroughly washes himself of his shame…” The female voice answered
“To have his clone killed by a member of the younger generation. It’s simply a humiliation to all Morning Star Magi!”
“That’s right!” The numerous thoughts descended into chaos.
“Silence!” the first voice said with immense dignity behind its tone. It immediately suppressed the disturbance.
“Let Azure Mountain’s matter go for now. The area he’s responsible for isn’t that important anyway. The next test will be crucial in determining the existence of those three. This matter also concerns how we’ll be treating the Ouroboros Clan in the future, so we should be serious about it!”
The powerful conscient stated, its imposing aura full of dignity.
“We got it!” Numerous thought backed up a step as if expressing
surrender.
“Great! The plant legion still needs to advance and push the battlefront forward. As for the air force, remain on the defensive for now. The defence abilities of the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan are still decent…”
The most powerful thought immediately started to distribute tasks. Soon after, the thoughts in the secret space left one after the other, and the region quieted down immediately.
A deadly stillness permeated the surroundings.
After this meeting, the attacks that were originally planned against the Ouroboros Clan grew in intensity.
Among these, parties such as Azure Mountain City and Nefas broke apart all pretense and flagrantly dispatched their elite groups into the territory of the Ouroboros Clan. This resulted in a great slaughter.
The frontline also approached the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan in Phosphorescence Swamp continuously. In moments, it was like a storm was raging in the region, which practically affected the weather of the entire central continent.
Numerous Morning Star Magi, Radiant Moon Magi, and even Breaking Dawn Magi all diverted their attentions to the sky above Phosphorescence Swamp.
For the central continent which is in dire straits, any minute changes would be able to cause a huge variation.
The chaos in the Ouroboros Clan was like a stone thrown into the peaceful lake that was the central continent, setting off ripples everywhere.

Due to the mutual deterrence of Morning Star Magi, such a large-scale war was rare.

The information about the current state of the Ouroboros Clan spread throughout the entire central continent like wildfire. Many spies, investigators, and idle Magi rushed towards Phosphorescence Swamp.

They had a pressing need to know how it all began, and what the final outcome would be. They would use this information for their own reference, and in the future would hand it over to the next generation.

“Storm clouds are brewing!”

Phosphorescence Swamp, Ouroboros Clan headquarters. Dressed in skintight leather, Freya stood on a high balcony and observed the huge Warlock City below.

“Even a peaceful, prosperous city like this will have to bear the brunt of battle?” Looking at the gloomy horizon in the distance, dismay clouded Freya’s features.

Seeing Julian and a few other elders heading towards her, her already cheerless self became even more depressed.

Disregarding the few elders, Freya asked Julian directly, “How is the deployment of manpower coming along?”
“They have been assigned accordingly, but…” Julian showed signs of hesitation.

“Let me explain. A while ago, due to your haphazard assignment of the snake bloodline Warlocks, our family suffered huge losses. And now we have to bear an even greater burden because of your decision to take over Leylin’s responsibility of the defences in the West Zone!” An elderly man with a pair of red eyebrows uttered with an icy tone, his face clearly showing his displeasure. The others were the same, dissatisfaction written all over their faces.

“You must understand, our family barely has the ability to defend ourselves, yet you pile up more responsibility on us. We’re going to be short-handed, and when problems arise, our family might even be exterminated!” Another elderly woman exclaimed.

“Aunt… I know that, but…” These elderly men and women were all Freya’s seniors in the family. Many of them had known her since her youth. Even though her status as a Crystal Phase Magus was higher than theirs, there were still many matters that were not easy to bring up for discussions in the course of the conversation.

“I know. You have developed feelings for that fellow, right?” Another elderly man with a cyst on his face asked sarcastically.

“Uncle Ivanov! So what if I have?” Freya’s steely glare was levelled on Ivanov as she drew a deep breath, the tension in the air reaching the choking point.

The cyst on his face trembled and he backed up a few steps, his lips quivering and he remarked, ”This is how you want to treat him? That playboy who not only had a fling with his own female senior, but even that slut Miran…”

“Enough!” Freya suddenly yelled, her face turning crimson. The other few elders raised their brows in shock.

Controversial relationships were common among Warlocks, especially when they were young. Leylin’s licentious lifestyle wasn’t that big a deal. But for Ivanov to bring up the subject, it was
unsettling. However, in hindsight, what Ivanov said made sense. If Leylin was really interested in Freya, they would have gotten together long ago. Right now, it seemed like a one-sided affair for their chief. Freya’s worried aunt asked hesitantly, ”Little Freya, you…..” At this moment, another voice echoed, “Marquis Lucian is here!” Everyone exchanged glances and immediately quieted down. Family scandals like this were best kept amongst themselves. “We will take our leave now, will you reconsider…” the female elder shot a loving look at Freya before leaving with the rest. With their departure, Freya sighed a breath of relief and stepped out to welcome Lucian. “Hehe… Dreadful, right?” Lucian asked with a smile, two other Magi behind him. “Just some minor inconveniences!” Freya fluffed her hair. Glancing over Lucian’s shoulders, she recognised one of the Magi as Leylin’s subordinate, Parker. As for the other female Magus who was wearing a veil, Freya couldn’t recognise her. However, the horrifying Crystal Phase energy waves radiating from her body were unmistakably strong. Such power normally would not be kept under wraps. Even within the Ouroboros Clan, Crystal Phase Magi were few and far between. They could easily form an organisation with the highest authority and take control over everything. “Allow me to introduce you to Parker, I am sure you already knew him!” Lucian chuckled, allowing Parker to make his salutations. He then turned to point at the other female Magus. “This is ‘Shadow’, a Crystal Phase Magus Leylin subdued previously. Having a sensitive identity, she cannot reveal her true name. As for their intentions of being here, Parker!” “Honourable Marquis Freya!” Parker bowed respectfully, “My Lord knows you have insufficient manpower, so he instructed Shadow
and I together with our men to come forth and heed your orders!”
“That’s wonderful!” Freya beamed and her eyes lit up. She secretly heaved a sigh of relief.
In the beginning, when she agreed to take over the defence of the West Zone, she was indeed rendered short-handed. But now with the addition of Parker and his men, a big portion of her concern was put to rest.
Especially… Freya shifted her line of sight towards Tanasha’s black veil. She tried to look through the veil, attempting to figure out her appearance.
Leylin had been keeping such a trump card hidden by his side all along?
A rank 3 Crystal Phase Magus was not easy to subdue. If Freya hadn’t agreed to defend the West Zone, with the abilities of that female Magus and Leylin’s men, they would have no problem defending it themselves.
Perhaps what Freya did was unnecessary… But, since the opposite party sent over their assistants, evidently…
Freya’s mouth curved into a smile which persisted for a short while before she shook her head and abandoned that train of thought.
The current situation had deteriorated so much that no one knew if the Ouroboros Clan would survive to the next year. She could not let her thoughts shift to such superfluous issues.
After watching Parker and Tanasha leave, Freya turned around, ”Marquis Lucian, the intentions of your visit this time was not just to send them to me, right?”
“Yes! There are other matters!” Lucian nodded his head.
“I knew there were more!” Freya rolled her eyes, ”Spill!”
“According to Faisal’s suggestion, I am here to ask you to hand over the authority of the tower genie that your family left at the headquarters!” Lucian muttered in a low voice.
“I think it is time to do that too!” Freya nodded in agreement and
extracted a gold ring tossing it to her. “Take it, I hope their defence measures alongside the Magus Tower can impress me!”
“You will not be disappointed!” With the smooth completion of his mission, Lucian also heaved a sigh of relief.
“What else can I do except comply? Freya forced a smile.
The number of Magus Towers in the Ouroboros Clan headquarters was not small. From her vantage point, the whole area seemed to be packed with them.
These Magus Towers were built by high ranking Warlocks, and many of the towers were heavily subsidised by the main headquarters.
Of course, the main headquarters had their own agenda. In the core of every tower were inscribed defensive runes that were built to be combined with the rest. During a crisis, they would be able to activate all the Magus Towers to unite their defences.
Lucian’s so-called taking over of the authority was just a formality to save Freya’s reputation. Once Faisal shed all pretence of cordiality, he could immediately bypass all the locks on the Magus Tower and forcefully activate the Tower’s energy to bolster the defence.
Leylin knew about this, hence his unwillingness to build his Magus Tower at the main headquarters.
Freya was part of an extensive family and they owned massive businesses. Not only did they possessed Magus Towers in their own territory, they even had some high-grade ones in the main headquarters that were used as experimental laboratories. What Lucian wanted was the authority to those.
“I am glad you understand!” Lucian nodded his head and his expression dulled. ”Even at such times, there are some people who are unwilling to hand over control, not contributing to our Ouroboros Clan. They deserve to be damned!”
“Luckily, that is just a small minority!” Freya nodded in agreement,
knowing those Warlocks absolutely did not deserve to die. After all, they were already dead. After chatting for a while longer, Lucian took his leave. Given his hasty departure, Freya assumed there were some important matters for him to attend to.

With the impending great war, all the Warlocks were on their toes without rest. It was even more prominent for the core leaders, those at the Crystal Phase.

Snapping out of her thoughts, Freya looked to another direction, ”Even with our forthcoming demise, you are really at ease! If you cannot give me a satisfactory explanation, you will be in trouble…”

……

Unknown to Freya, after elder Ivanov left, he locked himself in the room and threw a big tantrum.

“That crazy woman! She is completely sick! How could she be so adamant in betraying our family for an outsider’s benefit!” Ivanov roared in rage, his voice blocked and absorbed by the sound-proofing on the walls that kept the outside world from knowing what was going on inside.

“And Amasha is such an old muddlehead! How could she treat Freya like a child and give her more time… Damn it! Soon, our family will face imminent destruction!” Ivanov’s face flushed red with anger and his cyst bulged.

Hands on his back, he started pacing in circles.

“No way! I refuse to witness the destruction of our family’s ancestral legacy at her hands!” After a few rounds, he clenched his teeth and tore the sleeves off his shirt.

Branded on his arm was an impressive yet odd-looking plant imprint. With the injection of spiritual force, it immediately started glowing.

“*Sha sha……*” After a wave of noise passed, a low, husky male
voice emerged from the opposite end, "You have finally contacted us!"
“Yes! I’ve considered it thoroughly, I cannot sit back and watch my clan die in war!” Ivanov insisted, with an unexpectedly sanctified look on his face.

“Very well! Our targeted enemies are only those evil bloodline warlocks. You guys, who have awakened in time, are still a part of us Magi!” A voice echoed from the imprint.

“There’s no doubt about that! I’m honoured!” Ivanov said excitedly.

Immediately, he asked again with worry, “Is this communication channel safe? The headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan has very strict isolation and tapping capabilities!”

“Haha… Rest assured! This has already been encrypted personally! Our conversation will definitely not be leaked out!”

“Alright then, what do you need me to do?” Since he had already decided to betray, Ivanov was pretty much nonchalant.

“Very simple, you only need to…” The voice softened over time, while Ivanov nodded repeatedly.

The dim light slowly extinguished as darkness engulfed the entire place.

…..

It was only a matter of time before the attacks began.

By the time the Warlocks, who had gotten used to the martial law, discovered that the entire city had been surrounded by a patch of carnivorous plants, many of them felt a sort of relief.
Contrary to the previous uneasiness and tension, these visible enemies made them feel more secure. What followed next would be a great war, the winner would survive, and the loser would be doomed for all eternity. It was as simple as that. Compared to open war, the oppressed feeling of the wait from before was what caused mental breakdowns. But many Warlocks only felt relieved for a moment. By the time they saw the legion of airships all over the sky pressing in like dark clouds, even Faisal had a slight feeling that it was as if his previous efforts to fight for power had become a joke!

“Alert!” He shouted at the top of his voice, a slight tremble to his tone.

“Magus Tower authorisation complete! Constructing core defence system!” Contrary to him, those Warlocks with specific orders could still carry out their tasks orderly.

*Buzz!* A Magus Tower began to shake, and many runes emerged from the surface of the tower as they shot up into the sky. All the towers in the city were in the same situation. The many runes, constructed of strings of light, converged at the heart of the city, taking the form of a bright sun. A water screen surrounding the sun cascaded from all directions with a crystal clear glow on its surface, engulfing the entire city.

“Such a terrifying spell formation, it should be employing at least 50 to 60 elemental reactors and pools!”

In the centre of the enemy camp, a green-haired Magus sneered, “Pity, the other party was too impatient. We were only scaring him, yet he exposed his trump card!”

“Yes!” Another female Magus dressed in red covered her lips and smiled charmingly, “If the Ouroboros Clan’s warlocks are all of such quality, victory will definitely be ours!”

“In fact, as long as the other party’s three elders do not rush back, there will be no change to this war’s result. At most, it will be a
matter of time!” the green-haired Magus corrected. As a high-ranking leader of the legion, the intelligence he possessed was far greater than that of ordinary Magi. He even knew about the disappearance of Gilbert and the others.

“Hence, what we need to do now is to try attacking…” The female Magus bit her lips, seeming rather playful.

In front of her, the male Magus appeared very confident, and he announced a little proudly, “There’s not even a need to test it. We can have the other organisations to help us with everything!”

“You mean the Arm of Vengeance?” The female Magus nodded, giggling immediately and stretching her body in a relaxed manner, “Since we already have them helping us, should we take this opportunity to do other things…”

Her voice was sweeter than the sweetest honey. The male Magus could not help but be intoxicated by it.

Faintly, two other soft voices echoed over, “Those Magi, are they reliable?”

“Just mere sacrifices. Anyway, when the time comes, they’ll be given up. What’s there to worry?”

“I’m still a little worried……”

“At worst, I’ll hand over command to you. You just have to keep an eye on them for me…” In here, all sorts of conspiracies were gradually staged, yet they were completely hidden due to the many green plant legions.

The things that happened here did not attract any attention from the outside world.

Following the encirclement of the plants and airship armies, dark clouds of war immediately filled the region surrounding the Ouroboros Clan. The approaching storm made many of the Kemoyin Warlocks clasp their hands tightly. Just then, the candidate who was to serve as the main offensive walked down from the airship.
The Magus had a pockmarked face and a prosthetic wooden leg. He walked with a limp, and his face burned with the desire for vengeance. He stared at the city of Warlocks, and if looks could kill his gaze alone would’ve burnt it down.

“Ouroboros Clan! Kemoyin Warlocks! To think you’d face such a day too!” An ice-cold voice seemed to be forced out from the crevice between his teeth.

“Sir Lober! According to the orders of the alliance, you will command the first wave of attacks!” said a masked figure from beside him as he slightly bowed down. Even with his expression hidden behind the mask, his tone was oozing with contempt.

Robert clenched and relaxed his fists repeatedly several times, but still gritted his teeth and spoke, “I understand! Please inform the sirs that Robert will fulfil his mission!”

“Very good!” The masked man made a swift bow before his body vanished into thin air.

“Mentor! We’ve finally reached this point!” Another old man, his head full of grey hair, walked down from the airship as well. When he saw the already-surrounded city of warlocks, he could not control himself as tears streamed down his face.

The Magi who descended from the airship were mostly those who had a deep-seated hatred for the Ouroboros Clan. Due to their vengeful desires, as well as the possible benefits, they did not hesitate to take up the role of the coalition’s vanguard. They even embarked on the bloody path of revenge in their own territories, cleaning it up in revenge for all the humiliation and hardships that their ancestors had been through.

And Robert, the chief of the Arm of Vengeance, was the leader elected by the many small groups.

On the other side, many Warlocks were observing the enemy from on top of a great tower. The only difference was, while the other side was quite free and leisurely, even able to pursue the pleasures
of life, their situation was much more difficult. Their expressions, Faisal’s included, were dark and filled with fear. “Azure Mountain City’s Azure Rain Knights! And the Demon Magus Army from the Nefas!” Freya’s hands gripped the railing as she watched the other two armies who had distinct insignias. Her eyes were full of disbelief.

In the direction she was looking, a formation of knights that were armoured in blue with a bunch of giant feathers on their heads were standing quietly. So were a strange-looking group of Magi who possessed scaly bodies as well as claws and horns. The mere energy waves unconsciously emitted from their bodies was enough to suffocate a rank 1 Magus. Even the allied army did not dare to stay too close, and kept their distance.

“The Demon Hunter and the Azure Mountain King have shed all pretence of cordiality; they actually sent their elite subordinates out to attack…” Compared to the other forces who were secretive, the Azure Mountain City’s and Nefas’ forces evidently did not have as many considerations. This explained the other party’s vengeance and hate towards the Ouroboros Clan. It was to the extent that they were already confident that the three elders would not return, so they would give no quarter.

“The Azure Rain Knights are still alright, they are only counterfeits of the ancient Steel Knights, but these demon Magi…”

On the other side, Lucian also frowned, “They are all Magi who have communicated with the demon plane. Their bodies have been altered by demonic power, allowing them to possess a very special power. They even resorted to signing contracts with the demons to awaken all kinds of strange abilities! And only the Demon Hunter can completely subdue them and keep them for his own use. Often, their appearance represents destruction and death…”

“This was all caused by your Mentor,” Faisal sneered. “Moreover,
even at this point in time, your brother Leylin still hasn’t appeared!”
Because Gilbert had forcibly snatched away many portions of the Forgotten Land’s resources from Cyril, the relationship between the two was never good. Faisal did not agree with the way Gilbert did things, hence he naturally had to use that as a pretext to make a fuss.
In fact, if he knew that the Azure Mountain King’s exasperation was caused by Leylin, he would probably go even crazier.
“What we decided originally, is the Elder Association’s decision. Furthermore, the three elders did this together, don’t say that you didn’t use those bloodline treasures at all!” Freya immediately rebutted.

Seeing her speak up for him, Lucian could not help but direct a kind smile to Freya.

“Ahem…” Upon noticing that the situation was descending into a cold war, another old man whose face had mottled snake scales immediately came over to mediate the dispute.

“Leylin and Schadt both have to deduce Mentor and the others’ coordinates. Now is the most crucial moment; it’s normal that they’re not here. We need to work together to overcome our difficulties right now”

Not only did this aged warlock possess Crystal Phase strength, he was also of a relatively high rank. Even Faisal could only display anger on his face, shutting his mouth after.

By this time, they had also noticed the other party’s movements.

Many small Magus organisations swaggered to the city’s borders under another Magus’ lead. They then began to set up a spell formation.

“Robert?! This bastard! He actually dared to come out!” A feminine Warlock licked the blade of the knife in his hand and said, “I should’ve given him a few more slashes that time!”
The Crystal Phase Magi who were on site held their breaths for a moment.

In the past, small organisations like the Arm of Vengeance could only be low-profile, as they would be attacked on site. When did they get the guts to begin a fight?

A well-built Warlock suddenly stood up and exclaimed, “I want to go out and kill them all!”

“Don’t be rash!” Faisal responded while holding the person back, “With the combined defensive spell formation already activated, attacking them now will only ruin our only chances to turn the odds around! Do not let your emotions cloud your judgement!”

Faisal truly was quite capable. At the very least, he was not a fool and could see through ordinary schemes.

But then again, looking at how the enemy was valiantly showing off in front of him, Faisal must have been filled with anger as well; he was only forcing himself to hold back and not act rashly.

“Once this ordeal is over, I will lead my team out again and have all these rats killed!”

“Guys, look at this!” Freya exclaimed, pouting out the window towards the troops.

“Eh?!”

At this point in time, most of the Warlocks had not realised that the massive spell formation that Robert had cast earlier was gradually activating.
*Rumble!* The earth shook repeatedly, giving rise to landslides that covered up the wetlands with all their sludge and sewage. The phosphorescence in the air rapidly dissipated. After the phosphorescence disappeared, the large amount of steam that evaporated from the wetlands turned it into a field of mud and soil. The soil became more compact, and eventually gained a rock-like texture. These tumultuous changes occurred all along the spell formation. “How dare they touch our base!” many enraged Warlocks started to cry out.

The Ouroboros Clan back then had decided to chose this area precisely due to the unique phosphorescent wetlands. The abundant amount of darkness elemental energy particles and fire elemental particles that were present there matched perfectly with the bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Not only was the growth of the Warlocks boosted in this place, but it even enhanced the power of their spells. However, the destruction of large swathes of wetlands meant that the darkness elemental particles and fire elemental particles were gradually diminished, to be replaced by earth elemental particles. Even though the area affected was only this city, the impact it had on the high-level Warlocks was not small.

“Haha… Robert who was outside laughed out loud unexpectedly. “Did you think we hadn’t planned out our revenge? What a big mistake! Even though we were chased all over the central continent, we never once stopped plotting our vengeance. This time round, we’ll uproot the entire Ouroboros Clan!” “There is no other way!” Looking at how the city gradually turned into a wasteland, and how the concentration of earth elemental particles slowly outweighed the now-meagre amount of darkness and fire elemental particles, Faisal’s face turned pale. “Alchemised puppets, attack! Work with the combined spell
formation!” After he gave the orders, his face displayed a moment of shame. He had a sudden realisation that he himself actually initiated the entire defence spell formation, and all of this seemed too rushed. Especially after giving his last orders, it seemed as though he was slapping himself across the face. Upon seeing his actions, Freya and the other Warlocks could only sigh under their breaths. Faisal was relieved that they did not condemn him upfront.

“At least there are still some smart people around!” Lucian surreptitiously nodded his head. Knowing that they had reached a point of life and death, it was not the time for resentments and conspiracies.

From their common bloodline, it was already predetermined that these Warlocks would not obtain the mercy of the rest.

*Crack!* The translucent spell formation that once enveloped the city had split open to form a large opening that had a current of steel streaming out from it.

*Clank! Clank!* What appeared in front of Robert’s eyes was a giant troop of steel puppets. All these alchemised puppets were at least three metres tall, with intricate runes covering the bodies. The barb wires and hooks that hung on their bodies stood out reflected chilling lights. Furthermore, the massive barrels that hung on both sides of the puppets sent chills down Robert’s spine.

“Portable spell-casting barrels! The Ouroboros Clan is not only gifted in bloodlines!” A masked boy, who was in the corner observing the whole scene, started to record everything down immediately. Simultaneously, he asked another observer behind him, “Have you recorded every movement that occurred since the activation of the spell formation?”
The young girl, who only seemed to be seven-or-eight years old and was wearing oversized spectacles and a massive red ribbon, replied formally, “Yes Sir! Everything has been recorded clearly and the energy nodes have all been marked! In the process of calculating the geographical locations of the pressure points and the core!”

“Very good! Continue recording it down! Such micronised cannon spells are still very useful. Remember to inform the rest of our people and I propose that we get this technology in our hands during the distribution of the spoils.”

The masked man waved, clearly in high spirits. To him, breaking through the headquarters was only a matter of time.

“Target locked on! Beginning fire!” The steel puppets that walked out from the city had lasers for eyes that marked a luminous red cursor on their targets. Robert and most of the Magi were locked on to. Just then, sounds of machinery could be heard within their bodies.

“Not good! Hurry up and hide” Robert couldn’t finish his sentence before he was disrupted by the glow of a white laser.

*Pew!* The white laser beam swept through the area horizontally, disintegrating anything that stood in its path. Even the ground caved in where it passed.

“No!” “Sir!” urgent and sharp cries were heard.

A number of Magi did not even have a chance to speak before the laser burned them to ashes.

Even a rank 3 Magus like Robert was put in a difficult situation because of the lasers. His clothes had been destroyed, and his wooden leg had vanished into thin air.

“Initiate destruction!” a cold voice rang out once again, and the steel puppets reacted, firing towards the remains.

It took but a moment for chaos to ensue. Light flashed everywhere, and many of the Magi were severely injured.
The massive spell formation that had been operating till now was destroyed immediately, and the earth started to stabilise.
“Tsk! How dare such a small organisation provoke the prestigious Ouroboros clan!” Faisal laughed out.
“The real enemy hasn’t even begun attacking, and yet you’re satisfied beating these mere distractions,” Freya said coldly while rolling her eyes.
It was indeed true that destroying the Arm of Vengeance was a piece of cake for the Ouroboros Clan. A simple slightly-powerful formation would be enough to send them packing, and even the heavens above would not be able to save them.
However, what worried the Magi the most was how these hostile forces could cold-bloodedly watch the members of the Arm of Vengeance die so easily. They did not seem to even consider the possibility of helping the battered and exhausted Robert out, which was why they stopped considering the option of initiating the spell formation.
“Sir! Why did…” Robert, who was seriously injured, shouted with a sore voice when he was finally saved. However, the rest of the members of the Arm of Vengeance were not as lucky as him; most of them fell at the hands of the steel puppets.
“Don’t worry. Your sacrifice will not be in vain! Now it’s time for us to avenge you,” A green-haired magus said coldly, sounding insincere. He had an air of steeliness about him.
Yet, he was sneering secretly, ‘It’s only a given that we’ll reduce your strength and manpower after we’re done using it. Did you really expect us to leave you with so many benefits after the war? Dream on!’
Not giving Robert, whose fists were clenched, a chance to say anything else, the green-haired Magus waved his hand, “Plant legion, attack!”
*Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!* Many of the vines started moving
and, within a moment’s time, a gigantic Man-eating Flower emerged from the mud and started moving towards the steel puppets.

“Targets locked! Beginning the second wave of attack!” In front of the steel puppets stood a gigantic black steel robot which was more than five metres tall. After its laser eyes marked its target, the gun barrels that were hung on either side of its shoulders begin to roar.

*Pew!* When the white lasers swept past the Man-eating Flowers, many of them fell and thick sludge started to permeate from their wounds.

“Even the Azure Rain Knights would find these kinds of lasers hard to endure. Fortunately for my plant legion…” Looking at this scene, the green-haired Magus displayed a teasing smile.

A large amount of spores started to shoot out from one of the Man-eating Flowers. Before these spores even reached the ground, they began to swell up into a giant ball, and within seconds another one emerged from the earth. The two intertwined, forming a gigantic one, at least ten metres tall, that swallowed the huge puppet from earlier.

The earth rumbled as a war of green and black, nature and machine played out. These two incredible forces were fighting head on against each other. The whole surroundings were filled with white rays and green sludge.

Looking at the scene outside, Lucian sighed.

“I’m afraid that they’ve already found out about our last defence system from their earlier experiments, even keeping their battlefront exactly one kilometer away which exactly reaches our boundary of attack.”

Faisal’s face turned black. Even though none of them said it out loud, everyone knew that this was his fault for initiating the combined spell formation too hastily.

At this moment, another Crystal Phase Warlock screamed, “Look at
this!”

*Gush!* All the Crystal Phase Magi looked up. The sky was enveloped by the giant shadow of a sail that enveloped the place in complete darkness.

“Initiate warzone number 2’s all-over attack!”

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Like shooting stars falling from the skies, bombs were thrown down from the giant ships above, wiping away the mess created by the Man-eating Flowers and puppets. Under these terrible attacks, the original giant puppets became a pile of scrap iron.
With explosions ringing continuously, the Warlocks fell silent as they fixed their gazes on the battlefield, watching the debris from the occasional fights between broken metallic limbs and vines of flowers.

“Their plant legion can obviously regenerate very fast. On the other hand, our steel puppets have complicated structures and use too much of the energy stored in our Magus Towers. This exchange is a huge loss for us…” Lucian smiled bitterly, his voice sounding raucous.

Outside the city, a sea of flowers lay above the ruins, numerous shoots struggling their way out of the earth. The army of carnivorous plants had reformed in a few minutes.

Not only that, the other military forces were closing in along with the Azure Rain Knights and the Demon Magus Army.

“Let’s focus on our own areas of defence! Although we have the protection of the Magus Towers, it will still be best if our Crystal Phase Warlocks attend to them.” Faisal smiled.

The images disappeared with a few snaps, leaving Faisal and a few others remaining.

Most of the people here were just projections of the other Crystal Phase Magi using the network of the Magus Towers. Due to their advanced technology, the projections were almost the same as themselves.

Faisal’s face turned dark, his thoughts indiscernible.
In the meantime, a wisp of dark smoke sprouted from the corner, forming a dark shadow, “My lord! Will you consider what I said before?”
Faisal frowned at his appearance, but he then calmed down. The people here were all his men, and he wasn’t afraid that they’d leak his secrets.
“What are you doing here?”
“Hehe! The Ouroboros Clan is about to vanish! There might be traitors among the people you met just now, my lord. Think about your future, and the future of your family!”
The shadow said slowly and with a confidence derived from the chasm between their absolute strengths.
Faisal’s men grew angry, and even his own face showed some hesitation before he waved his hands.
“I… I need to reconsider this!”
“I hope you reply soon. Our offer only exists up to the city’s fall!”
The envoy said patiently, then disappeared like a ghost.
“Ah…” Faisal sighed after he was gone. Something crossed his mind, and his eyes glowed with a strange light.

……

West Zone. Freya smiled bitterly while looking at the approaching enemies, “Such bad luck. I have to meet these Demon Magi…”
The opponents in her area were the elites of Nefas, the Demon Magus Army!
All members of the Demon Magus Army were at least rank 2 Magi. And since they’d made deals with unknown demons, most of them had mysterious abilities or powerful skills.
What’s more, the Magi from Nefas were wanted men with bad reputations. They were tough and bloody, even more crazed than the uber-emotional Warlocks!
No wonder Freya was unhappy.  
“Hehe! I didn’t expect such a beautiful woman to be my opponent!”
Below the wall, the head of the Demon Magus Army touched his chin with his left hand. A pair of horns were on his head, and his right hand was tied up in iron chains.  
The Demon Magi around him maintained a distance out of fear and admiration. Many glanced at his right hand, their eyes full of dread.  
It was as if some horrible demons existed under the cover of those iron chains.  
This leader paid no attention to the fear of his men, and instead waved his hands, ”Attack!”
Many Magi roared at the sound of the command and their bodies began to undergo massive transformations. Some even grew black wings as they charged towards the city walls.
“Get ready!” Freya ordered with an emotionless expression. Many of the Warlocks couldn’t help but get wound up.
The next moment, the attacks from those Demon Magi reached the defensive light membrane.
“The energy of the defensive matrix can’t be consumed like this. We must attack!” Freya grit her teeth. A layer of black scales covered her body, and her pupils turned amber.
*Swish!* Her body disappeared from on the wall, and when she appeared again she’d already grabbed a Demon Magus and torn him apart. Blood rained down, interspersed with flesh, organs, and bones.
“Petrifying Gaze!” Every Magus below rank 3 she stared at turned into a stone statue. Even Magi at rank 3 would lose their minds for a moment, during which they couldn’t fight back.
“Kill them!” Seeing their chief fighting outside, the snake bloodline Warlocks rushed out with red eyes, fighting the Demon Magi.
Relying on the defensive matrix of their spell formation, they didn’t
have to care too much about their own safety. Thus, they acquired many victories, and a lot of Demon Magi fell.

“I’m your opponent!”

Freya’s attack crashed into a giant hand bound by iron chains as the chief of the Demon Magus Army appeared in front of her.

“Warlocks with the dirty bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent have no right to live in this world!” he said with an indifferent face as a weird energy sprouted out of his right hand.

“Dirty worms that make deals with demons! You have no right to say anything!” Freya frowned. Her opponent’s aura made her feel discomfort, even fear. But since he was an enemy, there was no need for her to hold back.

“Throughout history, branches like the Branded Swordsmen, Elemental Bards, and Steel Knights have continually disappeared. You bloodline Warlocks are meant to join them!” The head of the Demon Magi roared, turning into a streak of black as he crashed into Freya.

Scenes like this occurred all over the defensive perimeter of the Ouroboros Clan.

Magic shone in all sorts of colours, flooding the whole city. However, under the joint defence of the Magus Towers, these attacks just left small marks on the translucent membrane which soon disappeared.

“It seems like the Magus Towers in the Ouroboros Clan’s headquarters have stored plentiful amounts of energy!” Seeing this, the green-haired Magus frowned.

“So what? Inform your guys, they can start their plans now!” A female Magus with red hair sashayed in, rolling her eyes at him.

“Okay!” The Magus nodded, “And that thing, let it out now!”

“You want to use ‘that’ now?” The female Magus with red hair covered her mouth in shock.

“We have to. I promised those lords that we could deal with the
headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan within 3 days!” The Magus with green hair smiled, saying something to his envoy. Something sinister flashed across her eyes as she watched the movements of the Male magus, and she followed him…

……

“My lord!” Even though there was fighting outside, some important places were still under heavy guard. And currently, two elites of the Blood Serpent Family were saluting to Ivanov. “Good!” Ivanov nodded. But suddenly, his eyes suddenly started glittering.

*Schlick! Schlick!* Two black daggers shot out of his sleeves like lightning, disappearing into the guards’ chests. Their Kemoyin Scales were pierced through by the daggers in an instant, as if they were nothing more than a sheet of paper. The light in their eyes dimmed, before they crumbled to the ground. “Hmph! You idiots. Even if they’re innate defensive spells, there are methods to pierce through them. How can you two defend against an elite of the family like me?” Ivanov sneered, and pushed open the wooden door they were guarding. Behind the wooden door was a small sealed room, magic tools and spell formations lying everywhere. It was enriched with energy, and obviously working at full capacity. “This seems to be one of the key points. As long as I ruined this, the defence of the city should be weakened by at least 20%!” Ivanov smiled proudly, and gave the formation genie an order, “Deactivate both the defence and alert mode!” “Please input the code!” A robotic voice sounded from it. “Long live the bloodline!” Since he was one of the elders in the family, he naturally knew the code. At this moment, he thought about Freya. “Fools like you can die, because as long as I’m alive, our bloodline
will be preserved…”
However, Ivanov’s expression changed at the next words of the formation genie.
“Wrong code! Intruder alert! Beginning annihilation!”
“What? What?” Ivanov murmured. At this moment, the image of a well-behaved and sometimes rebellious girl popped into his mind.
“You’re saying she was acting all along?”
But there was no time left for him to think. Blood-red lightning in the form of snakes appeared out of thin air, drowning him within.
Blood red light flashed, and Ivanov was slowly melted within.
After the lightning faded, the space in the room distorted to reveal a red figure.
“Have you decided, my Lord?” The black shadow couldn’t help but feel delighted in front of Faisal. The satisfaction in being able to threaten the leader of the Ouroboros Clan, one of the largest clans on the continent, was something that could not be described with mere words. It was only furthered by the conflicted expression on the other party. The rewards if he succeeded at this were so great he wouldn’t even dare to think of them before.

“Reporting in, my Lord!”

At this timing, a high-ranking Magus pushed opened the door. Ignoring the shadow’s existence, he began his report, “The operation was a success! We’ve captured seven traitors and killed twelve. The energy of the combined spell formation has been conserved, and we’ve only lost a mere 2.75%…”

“What is this supposed to mean?” the envoy questioned, his voice growing deeper and gloomier.

“What is this supposed to mean? It’s exactly what you think it is!” Faisal suddenly gave an empty smile as his body instantly appeared before the shadow, grabbing his neck and lifting him up.

“If you do this, the Lords outside will definitely not let you off!” Surprisingly, even at this moment, the shadow was calm.

“I’ll be waiting,” Faisal nodded his head as he said seriously, “If you think that I’m unable to deal with you just because you’re a spirit projection, you’re wrong. You’re very, very wrong.”
The moment he finished speaking, there was a visible change in the expression on the blurred face of the black shadow and he couldn’t help but give a cold smile, “It’s a pity, but it’s too late!”

*Boom!* Huge amounts of blue electricity rushed towards the shadow, blowing him to pieces.

Faisal sighed. “With such a huge stream of disordered data rushing in, even the main body would have its sea of consciousness suffer irreversible damage!” he said in an unhurried manner.

“My Lord, this is brilliant!” The Magus that had just entered immediately bowed.

“This is nothing, it’s just a little scheme, and it definitely won’t affect the general situation,” Faisal said. He then exclaimed, “The Ouroboros Clan is my family and the pillar of support for all Warlocks of our Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline. I want to be in control of it, not let it be destroyed…”

……

*Thump!*

The green-haired Magus who was standing outside the city fumed upon listening to the grievous news as he witnessed the death of one of his envoys.

“Release the Kyasha Beast immediately!”

“But, my Lord…” Just as he was about to continue, the attendant at the green-haired Magus’ side was interrupted, “I know I have limited authority. I’ll explain things to the other Lords later, but for now, I want those ignorant Warlocks to pay with their deaths!”

“Coo coo…” After the order of the release of the warbeast, the brave and blood-soaked Magi standing on the frontline heard a bizarre roar.

The roar resembled the beating of a broken drum, and carried a heavy pant with it. It created a sense of oppression that made one
feel like they were suffocating the moment it fell on their ears.
*Thump!*
*Thump!*
The ground started to shake. How scary was it for only one creature to cause the entire city to shake with its mere footsteps? Faisal couldn’t help but feel uncomfortable in that moment, as he quickly ascended to the highest vantage point. From there, he saw an incomparably large creature, a four-legged beast with a horn on its head. The creature was so huge and tall that in order to avoid it, the enormous airships in the sky could only wave their flags and ascend further into the sky, opening a pathway for it to walk through. The earth rumbled under this creature’s arrival, its enormous aura even causing Faisal’s breathing to stop momentarily. When it finally stopped right outside the Ouroboros Clan headquarters, Faisal thought he was seeing a mountain range instead.
The Kyasha Beasts roared in anger. A terrifying and violent wave of energy swept across the battlefield, causing everyone to lose their balance.
“Morning Star! It is a Morning Star realm creature!” Faisal’s expression blanked out as he clenched his fists tightly. “I’m afraid the cleansing operation this time provoked the enemy so badly that he’s using the deadly weapons that were used in the last big war. .” On the other hand, the enemy who’d lifted the restriction on the warbeast didn’t feel too good about it either.
“My Lord, is it okay to lift the restrictions now? After all, we haven’t performed final adjustments on it… Besides, a lot of our soldiers will be injured by it as collateral damage…” One of the Magi smiled bitterly as he looked at the giant Kyasha Beast with a heavy heart.
This giant beast was absolutely not a natural creature. It was a
precious experiment created by a Morning Star Magus. When the creature was not in use, it would be sealed in ice. The Morning Star Magus that created it even warned that if they didn’t provide enough food for the beast to eat, even a large troop of Magi would be eaten alive by it.

Naturally, despite such shortcomings, a Morning Star realm creature had its own worth. This was a beast that had a physique at the Morning Star realm. Together with its enormous body and terrifying defence system which included the ability to heal itself, the idea of battling such a creature was a joke.

Moreover, because its intelligence was sealed, even a rank 3 Magus could, albeit barely, control it. This resulted in a great increase in its worth.

After feeling embarrassed and insulted by the other party, the green-haired Magus immediately lifted the restriction on the warbeast.

The green-haired Magus, their leader, clapped his hands. “Don’t worry! The other Lords have given me the authority to lift the restrictions whenever I want to.”

“After all, this is the last experiment. The warbeast summoned by the other party has to be at a Morning Star level to be able to defeat this creature. Since we’ve already made the first move, it’s up to the Ouroboros Clan to retaliate with their last resort.”

The warbeast’s roars shook the earth as it moved closer to the defensive membrane on its long legs. A large number of Warlocks were eagerly showering it with any spells that they could throw.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!*

Blizzards, lightning, flames, and acids were all aimed at the Kyasha Beast. Yet, they were unable to so much as slow the rate of its advance.

While a rank 3 spell occasionally broke through its defences, it was not enough to cause any significant damage in comparison to its
enormous body. This left the Warlocks disappointed. By the time it reached the defensive barrier, the wounds on its body had been healing so quickly that it appeared to never have been wounded at all.
The thought that this creature was invincible caused dismay among the Magi. Adding to the fact that it seemed impossible to wound the creature and they could only wait for their deaths, the Warlocks were extremely discouraged as they felt like the world was coming to an end.
The enemy’s passion for battle increased greatly with the boost in morale brought by the warbeast. This further decreased the chance of the Ouroboros Clan winning the battle. The enemies depended on the strength and ability of the warbeast, it was able to kill all Warlocks standing in its way.
“This won’t do. If this continues we might not even win against the enemy even if we use up all the energy within the Magus Towers…”
Faisal’s expression became gloomier as he snarled into his own secret imprint, “Activating Kemoyin Gargoyles, I need all of you to authorise me to activate it!”
“Agreed!” “Agreed!” “Agreed!” Immediately, Lucian and the rest could be heard as they brought out the runes specially designed for them.
“Two-thirds of the council has agreed, Kemoyin Gargoyles activated,” a robotic voice announced.
Following that, a large and powerful energy wave swept across the battlefield.
The numerous Magi and Warlocks were stunned. The large Kemoyin Gargoyles that were always standing in front of headquarters as if mere decorations opened their eyes, a ferocious glint revealing the huge amber gemstones within. Beams of light were emitted from those eyes, heating up everything in their line of
The stone ‘skin’ on their bodies snapped off as if a huge jacket was being taken off. The statues grew rapidly, and within the blink of an eye had reached half the size of the warbeast.

“Hiss….” The Giant Kemoyin Serpents hissed as energy waves at the peak of rank 3 erupted from them.

“These two gargoyles that are peak rank 3 together have power equivalent to that of a Morning Star. Yet, this is not enough,” Faisal fumed, “Combine!”

*Buzz!* On top of the headquarters, the main defensive spell formation shook as it released a wave of energy, drowning the two heads of the giant snakes.

The two giant snakes hissed as they tangled with each other. A large layer of black light wrapped around their bodies, and when the creatures rose up as one, the body had reached the same standard as the warbeast.

*Rumble!* The Kyasha Beast was no longer relaxed, and its eyes showed caution as it stared at the enemy that was just as strong as it.

The huge two-headed snake in front hissed, and both heads spit out their scarlet tongues even as their amber eyes emitted rays of light.

“It’s just like the rumours say. The “Duo Serpent Annihilator” is a capable puppet that has the power of a Morning Star. Indeed, this is the last resort of the Ouroboros Clan.” Freya looked at the double-headed black snake from afar as she showed a complex expression. This ultimate move was actually used on the first day of the battle. Did this mean that the reign of the Ouroboros Clan would end? Just like this?

Freya and the other high ranking Warlocks suddenly had an ominous premonition.

Despite facing an enemy that was far larger than itself, the Duo Serpent Annihilator took the initiative as it whipped its large tail at
the Kyasha Beast.
*Thud!* The large warbeast that looked like a mountain range was actually swept off the ground by the snake’s tail.
*Rumble!* It was almost as if meteors were falling from the sky. The moment the huge body of the beast came into contact with the ground, it formed a depression and created a magnitude 8.0 earthquake.
The allied armies that were unable to run fast enough were eventually squashed under the huge body of the Kyasha Beast, resulting in chaos.
*Rumble* The warbeast that was stuck inside the hole roared, and a large amount of glittering light gathered on its horn.
*Hiss!* The Duo Serpent Annihilator fearlessly fought the warbeast as it wrapped its long body all over it, layer after layer.
A wild blaze surged up as corrosive artillery shells created a blanket of lightning across the sky. The glows of numerous attacking spells revolved around the Ouroboros Clan headquarters, unfolding in layers continuously at the Phosphorescence Swamp.

In order to protect their organization and their homeland, the formidable Warlocks went all out against their equally-powerful opponents. The earth was stained with blood and bones. Outside headquarters, two behemoths roared ferociously in their entanglement. Every strike sent tremors through the land, as if forming an unending earthquake. This sort of remarkable battle was uncommon even in the central continent, and deserved to be recorded as a legendary one.

The intense confrontation had lasted a full day, yet not the creatures, nor the Magi nor the Warlocks showed traces of backing down. The Magi could bear the intensity of the battle, and the two giant creatures could do it even more easily. On the other hand, Faisal wore a displeased look from within the command room.

“The East Zone is 37% damaged, the city walls 55%. The energy consumed by the Duo Serpent Annihilator is too large, 67% of our combined storage is already depleted. We can’t keep going much longer…”

How could there not be a price be paid for them to maintain a
Morning Star realm combat strength?
The Kyasha Beast depended on a frightening amount of food as sustenance. On the other hand, the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan could only use the stored energy from the multiple Magus Towers to power the Duo Serpent Annihilator.
Faisal understood that a puppet would always remain a puppet. Once the energy supply was terminated, the Duo Serpent Annihilator would revert back to its original form.
The remaining energy was insufficient for them to continue holding the fort.
If this went on, with the exhaustion of their trump card, the Ouroboros Clan looked to be set for extermination…
“Mentor! Please come back as soon as you can!” It didn’t matter what Faisal thought previously. His pleas now were extremely sincere.
“For the Family! For the bloodline! For the glory of our Warlocks!”
At the battlefield at the West Zone, Freya was covered in blood from head to toe, multiple cuts all across her body. Yet, she fought on through sheer force of will and obstinance, directly blocking the Demon Magus ahead of her.
“Admit your defeat! You no longer have the protection of your Morning Star Magi, you are destined to fall…”
The Demon Magus chief’ was out of breath, as he spoke sentimentally, ”There are few Magi who can sustain battle with me for over 30 hours…”
“…” Looking around at the messy battlefield filled with corpses of bloodline Warlocks, Freya shut her eyes for a moment. When she opened them again, they glowed with ferocity.
“I vow not to yield! The glory of the bloodline Warlocks cannot perish in my hands!”
“What a foolish decision!“ the chief chided, ”If it is so, I will not
show any mercy!”
As if a seal had been unlocked, the iron chain on his right hand cracked apart, snapping off and dropping down in segments. Dark black flames rose continuously from the arm, and Freya’s previous sense of danger had increased tenfold.
“This Demon’s Arm is a precious treasure that I acquired after braving countless dangers…”
A terrifying arm, completely coated with scales and tipped with sharp claws, was revealed as the chain broke. Compared to the transformation of the other members of the Demon Magus Army, the horror that this arm exuded was far more terrifying. This could be considered a true Demon’s Arm!
“The Crystal Phase Magi that have fallen to this arm number seven. Today, you shall be the eighth!” The chief roared, swinging his arm towards the front. A frightening black blaze erupted, barricading the whole area like a cage.
With the allied army winning, a loud humph sounded, audible to the entire region. A Magus appeared in the middle of the battlefield. With eyes of silver and brows as sharp as swords and a Magus robe, decorated with the images of tortured demons, draped over his body.
Although he just stood silently in empty space, his presence generated a strong domain that had the whole Ouroboros Clan headquarters engulfed.
In but a moment, the chaos of the battlefield had died down, giving birth to a deathly silence.
Even the Kyasha Beast and Duo Serpent Annihilator had stopped in the middle of their intense battle. They felt a huge, imminent threat from this tiny human body.
“It’s Demon Hunter Cyril! Why did he show himself in advance?” the red-haired female Magus asked in disbelief.
“Cyril, it’s said that you’re a person who doesn’t bother with
reputation!” the green haired Magus looked unimpressed, ”Seeing the positive circumstances on our side, you must have rushed here to forcibly take credit for it!”

“He’s an exalted Morning Star Magus, why would he snatch anything from you?” The female Magus covered her mouth and sniggered.

“Hehe… Cyril’s reputation amongst Morning Star Magi… You will find out soon enough…” the male Magus smiled bitterly. In the world of Morning Star Magi, everyone knew that Demon Hunter Cyril lacked all form of chivalry. He was overbearing and shameless, seizing the resources and treasures of lower-ranked Magi.

“Are you not going to act anymore?”

“Me? How can I interfere?” The male Magus spread out his hand and gestured, “Everyone clearly has made some deals with the Demon Hunter. In front of a Morning Star Magus, I am but a slightly bigger ant, no more than that…”

Thereafter, he laughed at himself and continued, ”No matter what, with the addition of the Demon Hunter, this battle will end soon.”

……

On the battlefield, the Warlocks who had yet to reach the Hydro Phase were confined by the enormous pressure, and even moving seemed to be difficult. Even rank 3 Crystal Phase nobles were helpless as they realised that their ability to gather elemental particles had been halved. Even activating their spiritual force proved to be extremely difficult. Under the effect of the domain of a Morning Star Magus, all lower-ranked Magi were like ants.

“It’s over! It’s all over!” Faisal slid to the ground, witnessing the ruthless massacre of the Warlocks. His expression turned deathly
pale as he felt the life draining out from him. With the support of the domain of the Demon Hunter, the allied military immediately stomped out many regions of defence, even as the last bit of the defensive barrier was destroyed. At the centre of it all, Cyril sneered in mid-air. A projection of huge sharp claws appeared and it reached out and attacked the source of energy at the city center. *Po!* A colourful barrier appeared, blocking the sharp claws. Then, both the barrier and the claw in an instant before turning into ashes, disappearing into the emptiness.

“A rather good item! Pity that it could only block one attack at the Morning Star realm!” Cyril laughed heartily, his body’s radiance growing brighter. Horrifying amounts of elemental particles coagulated once again, as if a tsunami had crashed into the bright barrier.

The membrane cracked, and the energy source was extinguished! The huge defensive spell formation supporting the whole city had been under the attack of the army for an entire day. The combined Magus Towers, as well as the various spell formations, collapsed loudly. Like a screen of water being dispersed, the membrane disappeared, and the entirety of the Ouroboros Clan headquarters grew visible to the enemy.

“No!” Two rolls of tears streaked down Lucian’s face as he cried out. An enormous carnivorous flower that was almost ten meters high devoured him completely. Even though he’d suppressed the other party with all his might, after being weakened by the Morning Star domain he could only await his death.

“Is this it?” Freya’s jaws were clenched hard. She knew she wasn’t a match for her opponent. Under the attacks of the Demon’s Arm,
she now cut an extremely sorry figure, collapsing on the ground after sustaining heavy injuries from the domain.
Seeing the sharp claw advancing towards her and the cold, ruthless eyes of the Demon Magus who owned it, Freya was dazzled.
In the blink of an eye, time seemed to slow to a crawl. Her life flashed in front of her eyes as if she was reading a picture book, flipping page to page.
In the end, her thoughts drifted to a young, black-robed Warlock. He smiled warmly at her, the passion in his eyes enough to sent the hearts of all female Warlocks fluttering. They would be attracted to him like a moth to the flame… Regardless of the danger of the blaze… Regardless, that attraction would end up fatal…
“Goodbye… Leylin…” A single sparkling tear slipped out of the corner of her eyes.

……

The sharp, scaly claw with its dark flames and terrifying energy brought with an intensely violent wind as it aimed at her body.
The Demon Magus across her was very confident in his abilities. He could handle a Crystal Phase Magus that was armed to the teeth easily, forget a Warlock who was seriously injured and suppressed. He was even imagining the death of this female Warlock in front of him, the blood and internal organs spilling everywhere. However, nothing was set in stone.
Suddenly, The chief felt like his hand had been trapped in an iron hoop, rendering him unable to take another step forward. He looked up and was stunned. A Warlock wearing a black Magus robe stood in front of him. He had long black hair, an extremely handsome face and had traces of a demonic charm on him that could attract the attentions of all female Warlocks. He seemed to have appeared in a flash. His right hand gripped the Demon’s Arm, and the other radiated a black serpent-shaped airflow which held Freya in place.
Freya’s shut eyes popped open, and she saw Leylin. Unable to contain herself, she blurted out, “Ley… Sir Leylin! Am I dreaming?”
“No. You’re not dreaming. You’ve exhausted yourself. Take a rest while I handle everything else!” Leylin’s bright smile was soothing and it put Freya’s heart to rest. Drowsy, she fell asleep.
“Who are you?” The chief was shocked beyond words. For someone to be able to remain calm under the Morning Star domain and even cause the chief himself to be helpless, this person must not be easy to deal with.
Besides, he couldn’t even see through the opposing party’s energy. The feeling was as if…
The Demon Magus shook his head, forcing his mind to abandon such thoughts as he didn’t want to frighten himself. He was afraid he might lose all confidence, kneeling and asking for mercy if his train of thoughts was to develop further.
oom! Dark black flames exploded forth from the Demon’s Arm along with sharp knife-like blades. It was obvious that the Demon Magus chief had definitely used everything he had up his sleeves for this attack. Unfortunately, be it the flames or the blades, they couldn’t even leave a scratch on Leylin’s pure white palms. The flame was even extinguished moments after it burst forth.
“Morning... Morning...” This chief’s teeth began chattering. He had a feeling that things were progressing in a bad way. Who knew, the entire alliance army’s plan could have been hindered.
“Master! Save me!” At the edge of life and death, he immediately cried for his master’s help.
“Looking for him? Too late!” Leylin shook his head, and a black blade of light swept across him.
This frightening magus, who was in the Crystal Phase and had an unfathomable strength with the addition of his Demon’s Arm, was sliced into two just like that.
Be it innate defence or magic equipment, they were all like air in front of the black light blade, posing no resistance at all.
Even at the moment of death, the other party’s face showed bafflement.
“Um?” Seeing his best subordinate killed, Cyril naturally had a reaction. By the time he understood the situation, an even more horrified expression emerged on his face. “Leylin!”
“It’s me!” Leylin handed Freya over to his subordinates’ care, and floated up to mid-air. His gaze fixed onto Cyril, showing not a trace of weakness.

*Boom!* As if an ancient beast had awakened, a mysterious yet powerful force field began to emanate from Leylin, rapidly offsetting Cyril’s Morning Star domain.

To their relief, all the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan felt like a load was being lifted off their backs, immediately restoring their previously sluggish spiritual force to full capacity.

“You have already advanced to the Morning Star realm!” Cyril managed to squeeze out from the crevices between his clenched teeth.

“Of course!” Leylin laughed brilliantly.

With just those two words of his, everyone on scene was amazed.

......

A while ago.

“I’ve left Parker and Tanasha at Freya’s side. There’s no need for me to worry!” Leylin, wearing a loose black robe, activated the last spell formation. A mechanical door dropped down, along with the activation of multiple layers of seals.

Vibrant runes wandered close to one another across the surface of the iron door. Leylin had used every bit of knowledge he had about defensive spell formations in this, and together with the A.I. Chip’s deductive capabilities, even a Morning Star Magus would take a while to force his way in.

The walls of the secret chamber were littered with aura isolation runes. This room could be said to be one of the best-hidden places on the continent right now.

There was no choice about it. This matter concerned his advancement to the Morning Star realm, and Leylin wouldn’t dare
to be sloppy.
This was not his manor at the headquarters, but a cellar where he kept his secret purchases. The entire process was controlled by him alone, and to an observer, it would seem completely unrelated to Leylin.

In his own manor, he had set up the same defensive spell formation, displaying the facade that he was still there.

At such a critical junctures, Leylin was extremely vigilant. He even found it hard to trust some of his subordinates.

“As long as we make it through this, everything will be fine and all the future holds for us is boundless open vistas…” Leylin sighed softly. As if he released all of his emotions, his eyes became clear and he calmed down.

He sat on the ground, and some items emerged in his hands.
A milky-white fingerbone with a few narrow cracks on it, a tube of golden blood emitting terrifying energy waves, as well as a messy pile of spiritual force crystals. These crystals were mostly from his spoils, while a portion of it came from Freya’s gifts and his own collection.

“The road to the Morning Star is vast and long. Many Crystal Phase Magi do not even have the chance to come into contact with this bottleneck…” Leylin held a solemn expression.

He had only advanced to the Crystal Phase not long ago, and he was already thinking of breaking through to Morning Star. If it was an ordinary Magus, it would be nothing but a dream!

But he was different. He had a lot of cards in his hand and abundant knowledge, so much so that even some Morning Star Magi could only wish for it.

Even with just the Lamia fingerbone, Warlocks who had been stuck for years would gain the possibility of breaking through.

“A.I. Chip, report my current condition!”

[Leylin Farlier, rank 3 Warlock (Crystal Phase) Bloodline: Giant
Kemoyin Serpent Strength: 40 Agility: 35 Vitality: 55, Spiritual Force: 356.5, Magic Power: 356 (magic power in synchronisation with spiritual force)

The A.I. Chip replied loyally. After advancing to the Crystal Phase, his own spiritual force had increased only slightly. It was instead his strength and vitality that had gotten a growth spurt under the effect of the techniques of the Multi-Armed Race.

“Rank 3 spiritual force varies from 200 to 400. The first threshold for advancing to the Morning Star realm is for it to reach a critical value, filling up your entire sea of consciousness…”

Because the A.I. Chip had already deduced more than half the information about the Morning Star realm, Leylin currently had no doubts as to his path. In fact, this was why he had to wait for the A.I. Chip’s deduction progress to reach such a point before he could advance. Many times, the crucial reason for failure in advancing was exactly a lack of knowledge about the path to Morning Star, as well as the handling of the many real-life problems during the promotion. The A.I. Chip’s deductions on the Morning Star realm happened to make up for this, clearing any remaining confusions that Leylin had. To a certain extent, he also needed to thank the Azure Mountain King for this. If he had not anxiously sent a clone, the A.I. Chip probably would not have been able to progress in the Morning Star deduction to over 50%.

“My spiritual force now can only be said to have just reached the Crystal Phase. It’s still far from the critical value. I’ll need the help of bloodline ignition.” Leylin picked up the test tube which was filled with golden blood.

This was the bloodline of the ancient red dragon, obtained from the Kobold Warlocks of the Forgotten Land. Although it was extremely pure, because Leylin’s own bloodline had long before been fixed,
there was no chance to use it. That opportunity would only arise after he completely analysed the ancient Quicksand Organisation’s bloodline experiment results.
The bloodline ignition experiment, as its name implies, was conducted by burning various kinds of bloodlines to strengthen one’s own power.
Its requirements towards the bloodline was very strict. One had to be a Warlock in order to conduct it, and the grade of the bloodline that was to be burnt could not be too low. If not, the entire experiment would not succeed and could even backfire. The bloodline of the ancient red dragon fulfilled this requirement perfectly.
As for the supplementary resource for the experiment, it was a Crystal Phase Magus’ spiritual force crystals! Only the spiritual force fire produced by such crystals could completely burn the ancient bloodline, and convert it into energy that would serve as the driving force for the Warlock’s advancement.
A complicated, detailed spell formation was already drawn on the surface of the ground. Leylin inlaid the many spiritual force crystals one by one in an orderly manner, filling up the spell formation quickly.
The spiritual force crystal of a Crystal Phase Magus was a top-grade resource in many social circles. It could even be used as a currency on its own and was of high worth.
But now, a large amount of spiritual force crystals were laid on the ground as if they were worthless, radiating a pure, sparkling light.
The marks of the original owners of these crystals had naturally been erased by Leylin.
“The ancient red dragon bloodline is preceded only by that of the Sun’s child. It’s an extremely powerful bloodline that can at least reach rank 5! Frankly speaking, if not for the fact that my bloodline cannot be changed once absorbed, I’m afraid I too would not be
Leylin sighed, taking off his Magus robe. He then smeared the golden blood all over his body, without missing a spot. The golden blood felt viscous to the touch, and smelt like orchids. It was cool to the touch at first, but soon became boiling hot. At the same time, a translucent flame rose from the spell formation below Leylin’s body. Streaks of crystal-clear light were pulled out of the many spiritual force crystals like threads. They then converged at a point, forming a translucent flame comprised of spiritual force! Although this flame was not really hot, once it came in contact with the essence of the ancient red dragon’s golden bloodline, it sparked a violent reaction.

“Ow!” Leylin groaned. His body grew rigid in a moment, and under the burning of the spiritual force flame, he could feel the strange transformation in the ancient red dragon bloodline. It even turned into a blood-red energy, passing through his pores and making it all the way into his bone marrow.

For an ordinary person, such pain was almost unbearable, but Leylin was just more focused on the A.I. Chip’s monitored information:

[Beep! Large amounts of bloodline essence has been absorbed by host body! Identified as the ancient red dragon’s blood, beginning bloodline ignition experiment!] [The curve of the spiritual force’s fire is stabilised, converting the ancient red dragon bloodline into energy…] [Beep! Bloodline energy absorbed by host body, spiritual force increasing!] The repeated prompts caused an expression of delight to surface on Leylin’s face suddenly.

He noticed the initial value of 356 for his spiritual force spiking suddenly, and at the same time, a large amount of blood-red energy was injected into his sea of consciousness, expanding its
boundaries continuously. Black spiritual force crystals, faintly hued red, condensed in large quantities.
Even if his spiritual force was spiking suddenly, with the amplification of Multilimb Strength, Leylin managed to hang on without losing his consciousness. This gave him an opportunity to deepen his understanding of his own body.
His spiritual force rocketed up continuously, exceeding 370, then 380. It reached 385 before it began to slow down.
Shortly after, the value shot past 390, making its sprint towards 400, the limit of the Crystal Phase.
395, 396, 397!
At this value, it began to slow, with the swift change relegated to decimal places.
*Pop!* At this moment, all of the numerous spiritual force crystals were sucked dry, and the spiritual force flame swelled! With the support of this power, Leylin’s spiritual force began to rise again, all the way to 399 before it came to a stop!
With his sea of consciousness swelling up, and the reminder from the A.I Chip, Leylin realised that not only had his spiritual force reached the value of 399, even his sea of consciousness were filled with black, with a tinge of red in the centre, spiritual force crystals.

Inside his sea of consciousness, the three layers of the spiritual force core nucleus started to emit dazzling lights.

‘The results of the first time the bloodline ignition experiment is performed is the best, and they decrease over multiple uses.’ As he could still feel the strong surge of bloodline energy, Leylin ordered, “A.I. Chip, initiate the promotion to Morning Star!”

Numerous amounts of data, both numeric and otherwise, relating to the construction of the point mass began streaming in front of Leylin’s eyes. If not for the Azure Mountain King’s clone, Leylin could never have gotten a hold of all this secret information about the Morning Star realm as easily.

“Lamia fingerbone!” Looking at the other bloodline treasure, he realised that it was actually his biggest gain from Quicksand Castle. If he were to use it then, he could have advanced immediately to the peak of Rank 3, skipping the Hydro and Crystal Phases.
Yet, Leylin was one who did not give in easily to temptations, forcing himself to control his impulses and merely using the radiation emitted by the fingerbone to slowly nurture his bloodline. Even though the Lamia fingerbone could help him advance tremendously, but under comparison with the advancement to the Morning Star realm, he knew which one was more important. So what’s there left to think about?  
*Peng!* The milky white fingerbone disintegrated into ashes, and one of the rays of lights that appeared during the explosion pointed directly towards Leylin’s forehead.  
*Hong!* The Lamia fingerbone was absorbed into his body. A terrifying change started to occur immediately. In Leylin’s sea of consciousness, under an enormous compressive power, numerous amounts of spiritual force crystals moved towards the centre. His face paled under the enormous pressure exerted at the heart of his spiritual force. It was so bad that his whole body started twitching.  
The sea of consciousness was essentially the home of the soul. The moment that it experienced any damage, the Magus would be in deep trouble. Under the immense pressure that the spiritual force was experiencing, sounds could be heard coming from the centre of Leylin’s sea of consciousness. It wasn’t a good sign. “Construct the fourth innate spell!” Leylin commanded with red eyes.  
[Beginning assignment. Supplementary work initiated, transferring atomic microscope!] the A.I Chip replied loyally. Leylin’s sea of consciousness consisted of three layers presently. The outer layer held runes for two innate spells, one for Kemoyin’s Scales and the other for the Eye of Petrification. On the layer beneath was the rune for rank 2, Toxic Bile. The innermost layer held rank 3 spiritual force crystals, consisting of his rank 3 innate
spell, Intimidating Gaze.
Under a sudden flash of red light, the three layers of runes perfectly combined, forming the exquisite image of a Warlock’s rune. Yet, it was missing one final thing.!
At this very moment, a fourth layer of crystals started to appear in the centre of the third layer.
As the centre of the core nucleus had a unique structure, the crystals became smaller as one went closer to the centre, but at the same time, the details on each rune became more intricate and they grew much more specialised.
At the centre of the fourth layer, even though it was a quarter the size of the first layer, it was still important that there be no errors when one was carving the rank 4 rune. That was an out-of-the-world request of a Magus’ spiritual force manipulation abilities.
“It’s no wonder that most Magi fail at advancing to rank 4. Even with the assistance provided by the A.I, Chip, this task seems to be too difficult …”
With the help provided by the A.I. Chip, Leylin who had already initiated the atomic microscope had started to carve down the Kemoyin’s Pupil innate spell on the fourth layer with the innate runes he’d recorded.
This was something every Warlock must choose and only in high-grade meditation techniques do innate spell models like these exist. The attention to detail required to carve a rune in the sea of consciousness was much greater than carving a statue, and the act was much more difficult. Once Leylin completed the final stroke of the rune, his body almost collapsed due to exhaustion.
Under the immense pressure, it seemed like completing the fourth level rune properly was a big challenge. It took a while for Leylin’s consciousness to stabilize.
Once the innate spell had been completed, his entire sea of consciousness started to tremble.
Boundless rays of lights started to radiate from the centre of his sea of consciousness. The four layers of intricate runes started to bind together in a picturesque order, much like a piece of artwork. Once the centremost part was filled up, the entire crystal started to shake violently, strengthening tremendously within seconds and the immense pressure that was present previously had disappeared.

“This rune?” Leylin observed the rune that was a combination of all his innate runes. It represented all of his achievements so far, and hence he commanded the A.I. Chip to record it down. Perfection! The first impression this rune would leave on a person was that of perfection!

A gigantic rune was created by the combination of these small runes, which circulated continuously and looked pretty much 3D. Regardless of how one looked at it, it was flawless.

“Is this… the path of my bloodline?” Leylin mumbled. At this very moment, he was almost moved to tears.

*Rustle!* Once the four layers perfectly crystallized, they started to crumble inwards, shrinking to a point that rapidly started revolving. Much like a black hole, it started to suck in everything in its surroundings.

The spiritual force crystals inside his sea of consciousness started to shrink as they got sucked into the black hole.

[Initiating the construction of point mass. Guidelines activated.] the A.I. Chip reported.

Leylin, too, started to construct his personal point mass according to his understanding and the information from his A.I. Chip.

*Boom!* An immense suction force could be felt coming from the mass point of the spiritual force. Not only were the spiritual force crystals sucked in, even the sea of consciousness was broken through and more energy, flesh and soul aura were pulled in.

*Slap!* Leylin’s consciousness suddenly blurred. Time seemed to pass extremely slowly, and at times it felt like eternity was squeezed
into an instant.
It took the sounds of glass shattering for Leylin to wake up again.
This time, his sea of consciousness felt empty. There was a dim light shining at the centre of the core, the result of shrinking the spiritual force a million times over such that the nucelus core’s density and purity had reached an remarkable level. This was the point mass of a Morning Star Magus!
The source of the light shook, and the purified energy of the Morning Star realm, the energy of the point mass that was also known as soul force, started to leak out into the entirety of Leylin’s body.
At that point, he had entered the Morning Star realm!
[Beep! Host’s Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique has advanced to the fourth level. Host has advanced to rank 4!]
The A.I. Chip sounded out.
[Host’s spiritual force has undergone a qualitative change. Data is inaccurate, recalculating…]
It was a long time for the new data to go up.
[Leylin Farlier, rank 4 Warlock Bloodline: Giant Kemoyin Serpent (complete form) Strength: 50, Agility: 45, Vitality: 65, Spiritual Force: 503.7, Magic Power: 503 (magic power in synchronisation with spiritual force) Soul Force: ???] [Due to a lack of information about soul force, it is currently not possible to calculate stats.]
Looking at the A.I. Chip’s report, Leylin touched his chin and went into deep thought.
After advancing to the Morning Star realm, the original spiritual force would undergo purification and turn into soul force. This energy was on a whole new level compared to spiritual force! Yet, as the information and data that the A.I. Chip had on soul force was limited, there was too little knowledge in the database to display a value. It could only display numbers in terms of spiritual force.
He had to wait until the A.I Chip had collected sufficient data to thoroughly calculate his soul force statistics.
“The boundary of the Morning Star realm is 500?” Leylin felt the terror of having such strong energy and sighed, “This is nearly a hundred higher than a rank 3’s spiritual force value. It is no wonder rank 3 and rank 4 are worlds apart.
“Soul force!” Something came into Leylin mind and a gloomy light appeared above his palm. This was the mutated spiritual force from the point mass, it is also an energy of a greater level.
All Magi at the Morning Star realm and above used soul force. It was only when one reached this stage that they could find their own path in life.
“This is why in ancient times, Magi below rank 4 weren’t even deemed to have entered the world of Magi yet.”
There was a huge difference between rank 3 and rank 4, and the same was true between ranks 6 and 7. Leylin had no idea about what happened one reached rank 7, but after advancing he now clearly knew the differences between ranks 3 and 4.
“Magi at rank 3 and below mainly use spiritual force. However, once that is crossed, the Morning Star, Radiant Moon and Breaking Dawn Magi will have to come in contact with the soul force and pay extra attention to explore the potential in their soul”
Leylin couldn’t help but look at his own point mass. In the heart of his sea of consciousness, that small glow of light continued to spin around, forming a nebular spiral that pulled many of the energy particles around within, only to regurgitate them upon purification.
From this point forth, his spirit had been concentrated into the point mass, creating a truesoul. At the same time, due to the protection from the point mass, his resistance toward the previous spiritual force and soul attacks were largely maximised.
The point mass, with its extreme density, was the last defence of Leylin’s truesoul.
“My truesoul…” Leylin subconsciously remembered the last moment before he advanced. In that instant, it seemed as though he saw the life and death of the universe, and also the rise and fall of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent clan. It was also at that very moment that his soul truly bonded with his bloodline to form one body, making him a true Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock!
Warlock’s path was one of a bloodline. However, before a Warlock reached rank 3, the influence of the bloodline extended only to his body, and was not sufficient to affect his soul. Even if the two were linked, they were completely different.

But after advancing to the Morning Star realm, a Warlock’s true spirit would have harmonised with the power of his bloodline, the two no longer separate.

‘The reason this promotion went so smoothly… Is it that, besides my sufficient preparations, there was a great deal of help from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline?’ Leylin contemplated while touching his chin.

‘The Giant Kemoyin Serpent of ancient times was originally a creature that could reach rank 4 at adulthood. My bloodline is incomparably pure as well. After the complete fusion with the spirit and its maturation under the radiation of the Lamia fingerbone, my body can totally be viewed as a pureblood Giant Kemoyin Serpent. All these factors were key in my promotion to the Morning Star realm.’

Now, Leylin could obviously feel that his spirit body possessed a desolate and distant ancient aura. It even glowed a blood-red on the outside.

“The emotional instability of the Warlock bloodline can no longer pose a problem to me now that I’ve promoted to the Morning Star
realm. It has integrated into me as my personal state of mind and emotions, instead of being under the influence of my bloodline.” Leylin forced a smile, handing over the bits and pieces of the memories he received about Purgatory World and Shadow World to the A.I. Chip for storage. Although these fragments of memories could be incomparably useful, they were likely to tempt the brutality in his heart.

However, as compared to the common bloodline flaw of a Warlock, this innate emotion was even harder to control. Because of how pure his bloodline was, Leylin learned a lot of things from his bloodline inheritance when he advanced to rank 4. “My path as a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, has already come to an end?” Leylin stood up, feeling the strong power surging in his body. He couldn’t help but feel a little depressed.

He had already advanced to the peak of all Giant Kemoyin Warlocks. Those like Gilbert who were older than him had just accumulated more time at the rank. Essentially, there was no difference between the two. Due to the limitation of their bloodline, rank 4 was the highest rank a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock could reach. This was the shackle of the bloodline, and was a curse no Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock could escape from.

Now that his future was bleak, Leylin felt lost. No matter his bloodline or the A.I chip, they clearly told him that in his current state, the Morning Star realm was the limit! And this misery killed him.

This was the most difficult thing for Leylin to tolerate. He was determined to reach the peak of the Magus world. “The stars are boundless, the numerous worlds were even more in number than stars in the universe. Some other world definitely has the solution to this. If not, I can always find the coordinates of the Snake Dowager through the Icy World of the Twilight Zone…”
Leylin comforted himself. His scope was a lot wider now compared to before, and he even had the ability to adventure through astral gates independently.
A Magus who advanced to the Morning Star realm could cross over to other worlds on his own. The knowledge and resources they could gain through this were incomparable to the rewards from using a spirit seed.
“Alright let’s do it this way. I’ll first lay low for a period of time, stabilising my Morning Star realm or even trying to reach the peak. Once that’s done, I’ll immediately adventure through the different planes…” Leylin decided.
At this moment, an explosion sounded as what seemed to be the tremors of an earthquake made it through the multiple layers of defence, being transmitted to the room.
“This kind of effect even after being damped by my defences?” Leylin’s face grew heavy, ”The situation outside has probably escalated to the extreme. The enemy might even have entered the city!”
“It’s time to go!” He waved his hand, and a luxurious black gown was automatically draped over his body. He then disappeared from the secret room as if a shadow.
If he’d failed to advance to the Morning Star realm this time, Leylin could only wait for the opportunity to escape when the city was destroyed by the enemy. Even that was not likely, because he was still being hunted by the Azure Mountain King.
But since he’d already been promoted to one of the most powerful existences in the central continent, he had the confidence to try and rescue the Ouroboros Clan!

……
Looking at the genuine Morning Star domain being issued forth from leylin, even offsetting his own, Cyril’s expression turned
extremely ugly, as if he was a dead person.

Morning Star! This was one of the highest-ranking powers in the entire central continent! It took the protection of a Morning Star Magus for an organisation to be called large-scaled, and such organisations could last for millennia.

And this time, only after seeing the three Morning Star Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan disappear did the allied armies set out to attack them. Their own side wasn’t irresistible. Once a Morning Star from the other side attacked, more than half their legion would definitely be dead or injured. This was why they were very cautious to the point of being timid.

Now that there is a fresh appearance of the Morning Star in the Ouroboros Clan, undoubtedly it will strengthen this operation!

“He… What did he say? Morning Star? He is a Morning Star?”

On the battlefield, Julian’s face grew dull looking at Leylin’s back view and was flabbergasted. He would never have guessed that the Marquis Leylin who had only recently advanced to the Crystal Phase would break through to the Morning Star realm at such a critical juncture!

“It’s mentor! Mentor has advanced to Rank 4!”

On the other side, a blood-covered Snoopy grew so excited he hugged Parker in revelry. Tanasha smiled while watching from the side. She had always been optimistic about Leylin’s future, but she’d never have thought that this day would come so quickly.

Compared to them, the expression of another person was very complicated.

“Leylin Farlier? Wasn’t he searching for the astral coordinates? So it was actually a pretence for his secret breakthrough to the Morning Star realm…”

Inside the main control room, Faisal felt the two large force fields counteract each other and stood up from the ground, his mood very complicated.

With Leylin’s protection, it was possible for them to survive this
crisis.
And what made him feel complicated was that, be it his own
painstaking effort or his persistence, it was still a joke in front of
the sheer power of the other party. He was just like a soap bubble
that could be burst by a mere finger.
“Duke Gilbert! Your student is excellent…” After a long time,
Faisal sighed, covering up all his disappointment and loss.
Shouting himself hoarse through the communications, “Ouroboros
Clan! Strike back!”
*Boom!* Like a signal light, his command brought about an
immediate change.
On the battlefield, the numerous Warlocks that had recovered
suddenly burst forth and struck down the enemies that had come to
invade until they drew back, shifting the battlefront to its initial
location in no time.
Faisal surveyed the battlefield comprehensively without any cheer.
He knew well that the key to their victory was not here, but instead,
the confrontation with Demon Hunter Cyril.
‘Leylin is just a newly promoted Morning Star Warlock. Can he
obstruct the other party?’ With a worried heart, Faisal moved his
gaze up above, and saw an imposing figure blocking Cyril.
“How about just giving up this time?” Leylin started the
conversation. Demon Hunter Cyril was an impressive existence
among Morning Star Magi, not to mention the allies waiting for
him.
Leylin felt the attention of several consciences watching him the
moment he appeared. And one of them even had a scent of deep
hatred and shock.
‘Not only Cyril, there are at least three or four Morning Star Magi
observing from the outside. The Azure Mountain King is among
them!’ He understood the situation after a sweep of his soul force.
“With just you?” Cyril jeered. It was not because he looked down
on Leylin. But Leylin was obviously a newly promoted Morning Star Warlock while he himself was an existence who was well known for a long time in the Morning Star circles. It was impossible that he would be frightened by the words of the opponent. If he was, how could he mix in with the others afterwards? Besides, he still had some impression on this young Warlock. They were the ones who caused him to fall at the last hurdle and lose a huge share of loots from the Forgotten Land the last time. The new and old hate compounded, and there was no way he would cower! Besides, even if he himself agreed, the others behind him wouldn’t. This was a war that they had prepared for over a long time, and the hate had already been planted. How could they back down at his words alone?

“In that case…” Leylin shook his head and seemed very sorry, “I can only request that you die first!”

*Crash!* Leylin tried to attack first, striking like lightning. Powerful energy waves ripped apart the space and formed a huge rift. A silver spatial wave rippled, swallowing both him and Cyril.

“They went to the edge of the world to battle! Let’s follow them!”

“This type of battle between those at this rank is very rare. If we record it, we can definitely sell it for a sky-high price.”

Several Morning Star conscients communicated, but another voice chimed in, ”Although Morning Star Warlocks have the additional power from their bloodline, I still look down on that fellow. Although Cyril has a bad personality, his nickname of Demon Hunter was rightfully earned!”

“I also agree. I bet that Warlock will be defeated in ten rounds! What do you think, Azure Mountain?”

“I…” the Azure Mountain King touched his chin and recalled the loss previously. Although he wished that Leylin could just be defeated and even killed, he still didn’t speak out. “You guys need to be careful, that kid is unfathomable.”
“Hehe! I remember now. Wasn’t Azure Mountain’s clone killed by a Crystal Phase Warlock? Was it him?” Another voice sounded, making the Azure Mountain King’s face turn dark.

“Enough!” The largest consciences spoke, and the place suddenly became quiet.

“Watch their battle carefully. The result of this battle will be the basis of our next actions!”

A battle between Morning Stars usually lasted a long time and it was difficult to kill the opponent completely. Thus, Leylin’s strength would be the key to the upcoming battle!
Although the data paints a similar picture, the magnificent beauty of the edge of the world can’t ever be fully described by mere words and pictures…’

Leylin sighed faintly. Currently, he was in a mysterious space surrounded by darkness. Multiple silver rays of lights streaked across among the stars, and it was like the universe in his previous life, boundless and magnificent.

Cyril sat opposite him with gloom clouding his face. Subtle chaotic flows of turbulence struck him, but were rebounded by the layer of soul force on his body, unable to cause even the slightest of injuries.

All Morning Star Magi possessed the ability to survive in the crevices of space. They relied on it to pass through the different worlds.

Of course, it also depended on the grade of the crevices.

The one that Leylin chose was situated at the edge of the world. The space there was comparatively stable, and the slight spatial turbulence could easily be held off by one’s soul force.

If, by any chance, the space encountered violent turbulence similar to that caused by ancient battles, or due to the wild and violent storms occurring within the crevices of two worlds, leave alone Morning Star Magi, even Radiant Moon Magi were likely to succumb to the force, leaving just ashes. The Scorpion Man from the Icy World had met his death in that exact same manner.
Clashes between Morning Star Magi caused extensive damage. A battle between two could destroy the entire continent. As such, if any Morning Star Magi desired to take revenge, they would choose to settle scores inside these spatial crevices instead. No matter how extensive the damage was, it would not affect the stability of the world. The venue of the big battle this time was the Ouroboros Clan headquarters at Phosphorescence Swamp. If their clash had occurred there, regardless of the outcome Freya, Parker, and the rest would certainly meet death. In fact, the entire Ouroboros Swamp could cease to exist. Leylin definitely would not want that to happen. Hence, he voluntarily dragged the opposite party here.

“You’re good!” Cyril raised his eyebrows in rage, traces of blue current circulating between them. He felt insulted at being outschemed by a junior. Even though he didn’t want to be criticised by the other Morning Star Magi for starting a battle in the main world, he felt he was entitled to choose another location as the battleground instead of being forced here by the opposite party. “Cyril! This and he matter at the Forgotten Land, let’s settle everything today!” Leylin’s voice was soft yet strangely firm. He had not let go of his grudge from when he’d almost been killed in a single blow and was forced to take refuge in the main headquarters for over a century. He’d shelved the idea of revenge then due to lacking power, but now the time had come.

“How dare you bring up the past?!” Cyril fumed as he recounted the interference of these fellows who took away a portion of the gains. If not for them, the natural resources at the Forgotten Land and the Quicksand Organization would have all been his. He had also been suppressed by the three Morning Star Warlocks
and been left with no possible means of escape.
“You have to account for your teacher’s sins too!” Cyril’s silver pupils shone with a sharp icy chill. A long black pike appeared in his hand. Faint, yet audible demonic cries were sounding out from its tip, chilling to the bone.
“You’re a brat who just advanced to rank 4, just how much do you understand about the abilities of the Morning Star realm? Prepare to accept your fate of failure!” Cyril’s growl was steely, ”Rank 4 spell Demon’s Wail!” He tossed out the pike from his hand. *Boom!* The horrific scene was like history repeating itself, when the legendary giant Argyle threw the ahlsipiess that destroyed the sun and killed the Sun’s child!
Violent waves of torrential power descended, and the black pike transformed itself into a ray of black lightning, streaking through the turbulent space before arriving at Leylin. Powered by a Morning Star Magus’ soul force, the results of the spell were earth-shattering!
“Demon Hunter Cyril, you are indeed worthy of your name!” Leylin gasped in admiration, ”Unfortunately, I too am not as weak as you think!”
He had prepared to advance to rank 4 for a long time. During this period, he had managed to acquire some badly damaged rank 4 spell models. With the A.I. Chip’s simulations, he had managed to repair the content, and skillfully grasp them. Besides, the numerous memories he’d inherited from his bloodline also net him a battle experience that was even marginally better than Cyril’s!
The phantom of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent, with large amber eyes, smooth scales, and ferocious razor-sharp teeth hissed from behind Leylin.
“Complying with the ancient contract, I call upon the power of the bloodline, serve me now and transform into a resolute shield…” Leylin spoke with a delicate yet intense tone, similar to the hissing of a giant snake, as he chanted awkward-sounding ancient incantations.

With every syllable distinct and audible, Leylin chanted the incantations before the pike arrived, completing the spell’s preparations and causing everyone an eerie sensation of time disorder.

“Bloodline Shield!”

As if an existence from ancient times, a black-scaled shield that had ferocious Giant Kemoyin Serpent images portrayed on it appeared out of empty space. Crimson lightning still bounced across its surface.

*Bang!*

Like a clash between the sun and the moon, or the impact of a star hitting the earth, the long devilish spike that had transformed into black lightning suddenly bombarded the shield. Blood red and coal black tangled, and the explosive aftermath was horrifying.

A huge spatial turbulence resembling the gushing of a tsunami struck from both sides. If it were the main world, one single wave could have left the entire Ouroboros Clan completely destroyed.

“No– No way!” Cyril yelled hoarsely from afar. From the connection with his soul force, he clearly witnessed the crimson point on his pike fade to its original dull colour. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent on the shield seemed to have come to life as it opened its mouth and ruthlessly chomped the tip off the pike!

The black pike cracked, and violently blew up.

Space itself rumbled as the turbulence started wreaking havoc. It created enormous sharp rifts that even Leylin and Cyril had to avoid temporarily.

“Shield Strike!” The huge shield collapsed like a mountain, taking
aim at Cyril. With Leylin following closely behind, the attack was incomparably fierce.

“No way! No way! No way!” Cutting a sorry figure, a defensive Cyril yelled despondently, ”You’re a newly promoted Warlock. Why…”

He was clearly agonising over his situation. Leylin was not like a newly promoted Morning Star at all, being extremely familiar with battling in spatial rifts. His ability to handle difficulties even exceeded that of Gilbert and the rest!

‘It looks like my inherited bloodline is indeed rare!’ Assessing his expression, Leylin understood his display of abilities had been too outstanding, even exceeding that of the three dukes.

“The exceptional purity of my own bloodline must have meant that the bloodline inheritance I received is more complete. As for Mentor Gilbert and the rest, what they’d received was much weaker…”

The inherited memories of a creature were always stored in its bloodline. Thus, if the descendant’s blood was pure, the arousal of the inherited memories would be greater, and the inheritance itself would be richer, resulting in more benefits.

With the A.I. Chip having purified his bloodline and the Lamia fingerbone’s supplementation, Leylin could potentially be the best of the Kemoyin Warlocks!

Suddenly, Leylin was clear about his fate and he had no intentions to be lax about it.
*Crackle!* Multiple black scales appeared on his right hand, morphing into a sharp blade.

The runes of the rank 4 Kemoyin Scales were even more simplistic and reflected only a minimal amount of light but still carried a uniquely daunting aura.

*Swoosh!* A layer of menacing black light surfaced on the blade, and Leylin mercilessly cut across Cyril’s chest.
The soul force from both sides came into contact. With Leylin’s formidable strength and the razor-sharp blade, he successfully broke through Cyril’s innate defence. The knife-like blade left a huge wound across his chest, and blood splashed everywhere. It left a hole so large even the organs could be seen within.

“How… how can it be?” Cyril attempted to cover his chest while stumbling backwards, disbelief in his eyes.

“How can I lose? And to a newly promoted junior?” Cyril yelled fiercely, his face distorting with anger. The poise he previously possessed evaporated, and the fury tinged his silver eyes blood red.

“No! I have not lost! I have my last trump card!” Cyril suddenly looked up, his body filled with an extremely dangerous aura. ”Leylin Farrier! Today I will show you what it means to be a true rank 4 Morning Star Magus!”

The halo of an innate spell appeared from his body before brightening.

“Rank 1 innate spell Anarchic Forcefield!”

This was followed by the halo of his rank 2 spell…

By the end, Cyril’s aura had risen to the maximum, and four unstable rings revolved around his body.

This was the Morning Star Arcane Art! Forced to the edge by Leylin, Cyril he’d ended up brazenly using his final trump card!

“The Morning Star’s final technique…” The corner of Leylin’s mouth curved up in a smile. His old memories of witnessing one being performed had been refreshed, and it came to life.

“I have one too!” Restraining his smile, the brilliant red glow on Leylin’s body started twinkling.

“First, the rank 1 innate spells Kemoyin’s Scales! Petrifying Gaze!”

A fine layer of black scales covered Leylin’s body entirely, and his pupils glowed amber.

“Next up, the rank 2 innate spell Toxic Bile!” A poison from the ancient times surfaced, swiftly surrounding him.
“Then the rank 3 spell Intimidating Gaze!” After his promotion to rank 4, the dignified aura exuded by Leylin’s body had grown even more terrifying. His body had rightfully regained the power and influence of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent itself. He now radiated the aura of an ancient first-rate predator.

“Finally, the rank 4 innate spell Bloodline Metamorphosis! Combining to form the ancient Morning Star Arcane Art Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!”

The point mass in Leylin’s sea of consciousness started rotating violently, with his and his soul force spurred him on. The four innate spells synchronised with each other, with an amplification that caused a horrifying change.
Hiss!

In the void that seemed to resemble the universe, a gigantic black serpent emerged. With a body more than ten thousand meters long, it looked like it could swat an entire star out of the way with a sweep of its tail.

It was a predator at the top of the food chain which only existed during the ancient times, and was only heard of in rumors and myths. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent had actually descended!

The huge black serpent occupying the void had large amber pupils that resembled stars, and the fine black scales on its body twinkled, reflecting its glossy texture.

This wasn’t a phantom that was combined with his bloodline aura using spells; this was an actual living being, made of flesh and blood!

The Morning Star Arcane Art of Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks was indeed this Kemoyin Serpent Transformation! It allowed the Warlock himself to temporarily revert to his ancestral form, and turn into a terrifying ancient creature!

The ancient Morning Star realm creature was still completely under the Warlock’s control, and he even retained his original spell-casting abilities.

With the terrifying strength of the corporeal body and great magical prowess, Kemoyin Warlocks at the Morning Star realm were definitely a nightmare for many Morning Star Magi!
Cyril broke out in a cold sweat when he realised that the large pupils were staring right at him, and the fear hidden in his deepest corners of his psyche suddenly burst out.
“No! NO! I still have a Morning Star Arcane Art! I’ll give it my all!” At this moment, Cyril had also completed his own Morning Star Arcane Art. Splendid rays of light exploded forth from his body.
“Rank 1 innate spell Chaos Forcefield!”
“Rank 2 innate spell Meteor Force!”
“Rank 3 innate spell Celestial Explosion!”
“Rank 4 innate spell Rites of Turbulence!”
“Combining to form the Morning Star Arcane Art Aerial Meteor! *Bang!* The void exploded, and an enormous meteorite that seemed like a star emerged, transforming into a streak that charged towards Leylin and fire flickered continuously in the space the meteorite travelled through.
The Giant Kemoyin Serpent hissed, greeting the huge meteor in a great clash, just like in the legends.

……

Above Phosphorescence Swamp in the Magus World, numerous Morning Star conscients were at a loss for words.
“How… How could it be… Why is that youngster’s Kemoyin Serpent Transformation so strong?”
After a long silence, the strongest central thought spoke up, “The strength of a Warlock’s innate spell is not only decided based on their rank, but also on the bloodline. The purer the bloodline, the more powerful the Warlock!”
“What you’re saying is that the purity of that fellow’s bloodline is even higher than that of Gilbert and the other two?”
“Yes, it’s such a regret that we didn’t discover him earlier and kill
him… Now that we have allowed him to grow…” The central conscient sighed, feeling that it was a great pity.
“Seems like Cyril is bound to lose…” Soon after, the numerous voices started making gurgling sounds like strangled ducks. Even the Morning Star Magi watching the battle were alarmed.
“You must be joking!” “How is this possible?” They seemed to have seen something unfathomable happening before their eyes, and sank into collective despair.

*Buzz!* Above the battlefield, the void contorted. Leylin changed into his black Magus robe and proudly straightened himself. Upon seeing him, the numerous Bloodline Warlocks below finally heaved a sigh of relief, yelling forth, “Leylin! Leylin!”

However, the shouting from the crowd suddenly stopped. This was because Leylin had lifted up a head, one that didn’t even have the chance to die a peaceful death with its eyes closed. It had thin lips and silver eyes, just that they had lost their luster. This was the head of the Demon Hunter, Cyril!

“Demon Hunter Cyril has already fallen in battle. Which one of you would like to be next?” Leylin stood proudly on the battlefield with Cyril’s head held high, and looked around.

This rank 4 Magus had always been held in high regard for a long time, and was even seen as a Morning Star Magus. But now, he had actually fallen right in front of their eyes?

It wasn’t just the Magi in the allied armies, but even the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan who pinched themselves, unable to believe their eyes, and thinking that they were dreaming.

The battlefield fell into a deathly stillness for a moment. When the Warlocks regained their senses, they all started screaming wildly. All this while, the burden they had been carrying in their hearts was too heavy. Now that they had the chance, they naturally unloaded everything off their chests, and they even seemed to have gone a little insane.
At the same time, Leylin was also communicating with other Morning Star Magi.
“You shouldn’t have killed him!” A large sentient sounded.
“This is a war, an endless fight to the death!” Leylin refused to concede.
“Does this mean that you will fight us to death as well?” The other party was naturally not startled by Leylin’s threat.
“Of course… Not! If you still decide to continue to battle, I will abandon the Ouroboros Clan headquarters and flee, then attack your territory!” Leylin answered without a single bit of shame, and instead caused the other party to be caught in a dilemma.
The battles between Morning Star Magi usually lasted for long periods of time. If one could not subdue the other and let him escape, no organisation would be able to withstand the consequences if he came back for revenge.
Leylin had already proven with his military accomplishments that he wasn’t your average newly-advanced Morning Star Warlock. He had great capabilities, even among those at the Morning Star realm. His enemies, who were Morning Star Magi, would be able to defeat him if they joined forces, but they would have to pay a tremendous price. It would also pose a problem if he ran away after they suffered serious injuries!
The risk was not nearly worth the reward. And with the possibility of a hidden danger being present even Morning Star Magi would not attack head-on.
The many sentients immediately started quarrelling.
“Are we going to let him go just like that? He killed Cyril!”
“Doesn’t Cyril still have a doppelganger?”
“It is only at rank 3, what use does it have? Furthermore, Cyril has bad blood with many other Morning Star Magi, and they won’t let this chance slip by. He’s as good as dead!”
“No! We cannot let him go!” The Azure Mountain King bore the
most hatred towards Leylin.

“Really?” Leylin’s voice was transmitted to his mind directly.

“Dear Azure Mountain King, if the allied armies still decide to start a war in the end, I can guarantee that the stardust bugs will immediately be made known across the whole of the central continent!”

The Azure Mountain King’s was startled. He glanced around his surroundings. Seeing that none of the Magi discovered that he was communicating with Leylin, he spoke with less restraint. “Are you threatening me?”

“Yes I am!” Leylin answered without a tinge of modesty. “Now that I am already a Morning Star Magus, you can’t erase all traces of me. In comparison to you, how many people will choose to believe me?”

He even added another sentence at the end, which ruthlessly pierced through the Azure Mountain King’s heart like a dagger, “Also, I seem to have found some possibly disastrous items among your grandson’s belongings! So many interesting sketches… If they are leaked, I’m afraid…”

“Enough!” The Azure Mountain King’s tone went an octave higher, and he had no choice but to accept a compromise, “I promise you!”

Even as he said this, his heart was bleeding. He understood that with such an agreement, not only would he be unable to seek revenge in the future, he would also be subjected to Leylin’s threats.

However, he had no other way out. After all, his strength was not even as great as Cyril’s. If Leylin could kill even Cyril, using military force against him would just be a joke.

……

“Damn it! How could such a thing happen?”
On the ground, in the command centre of the allied troops, the Bloodline Warlocks on the entire frontline were counter-attacking. This made the green-haired commander hysterical, especially with Leylin having just attacked and killed a Morning Star Magus.

“What do we do? What do we do?” Hesitation flashed across his face, and the green-haired Magus tightly clenched his teeth. “Order the Kyasha Beast to attack with full force, and self-destruct at the end. Even if we cannot reap the fruits of the battle, we have to make sure the other party suffers great losses! We have to at least get rid of that Giant Serpent puppet!”

The Kyasha Beast and the Duo Serpent Annihilator of the Ouroboros Clan were both puppets; artificially manufactured products at the Morning Star level. Although they had partial Morning Star strength, they were unable to fully put it to use. They were not very intelligent either, and were rather rigid. But even so, the terrifying damage one could cause upon self-destruction could not be looked down upon. If Leylin didn’t pay attention, forget the Duo Serpent Annihilator, even the entire town of Warlocks would be reduced to ruin.

Just like how other Morning Star Magi were apprehensive towards Leylin, but did not take action. It would not be wise for Leylin to harm the green-haired Magus just because of the damage he caused. Because threats would always be always mutual.

The green-haired Magus then made a decision. He fished out a necklace from his waist pouch, adorned with emerald. He was about to issue an order.

At this moment, he was greeted with a fragrant smell. A figure that he was familiar with appeared behind him, and the smell of perfume lingered around the tip of his nose.

“Quit playing around, I’m doing something serious!” The green-haired Magus furrowed his brows, but didn’t push the other party away. He knew this person all too well, thus he took no precaution
at all.
All of a sudden, his face turned blank. He lowered his head, seemingly in excruciating pain, and saw the tip of a blade sticking out of his chest. Fresh, scarlet blood stained the knife, dripping down.
A gentle voice explained next to his ear, “The minister of the Dark Serpent department, Trelisse, sends her regards!”
“You… You…” Blood foamed at his mouth continuously. He had not been wary of that female Magus at all, and his innate defence was as weak as paper when faced with that dagger.
“This mission was completed successfully all thanks to you! Also, don’t even think about using the life entrustment spell to reincarnate; I already learnt of the location a long time ago… One last thing, your choice was a grave mistake. You really shouldn’t have turned against us…”
The lady’s voice seemed like the sweetest venom, entering the male Magus’ body along with the dagger. His vitality trickled away unceasingly, and even his vision was starting to blur.
Soon after, a black ray of light flashed and the ring finger on his left hand was burnt to ashes.
As a high-ranking Magus, and also the commander of the allied armies, he had methods that he could use as a last resort to ensure his survival, the most important one being the life entrustment spell. This would allow him to transfer his soul to any part of his body; as long as that part still existed, he would be able to reincarnate.
But what a pity it was that the other party had already seen through it all.
Boom! Upon pulling out the dagger, a beautiful red-haired female Magus grabbed the emerald necklace from the male Magus expressionlessly.

“Command: gklm…” After a series of spells, the aura of the gemstone necklace burst forth, as if a miniature war giant had emerged from its core.

“Get as far from here as possible, beginning self-destruct procedure!” After she coldly issued the command, the necklace in the female Magus’ hands immediately turned to ashes. Shortly after, her entire body was engulfed in a dark green flame, disappearing into thin air…

The headquarters’ allied army had been thrown into confusion. It instantly became a mess, and some of the soldiers had already chosen to retreat.

“Very good! Very good! The ‘Shadow Snake Department’ of your Ouroboros Clan has even infiltrated our main command post!”

The conscient in the middle gritted his teeth.

“How would I know?” In his heart, Leylin rolled his eyes. Previously, his position in the Ouroboros Clan was not one where he would be exposed to such things, but it did not stop him from improvising.

“War is always unscrupulous. Now, it’s your choice. With the current state of the allied army, I’m afraid that even without us attacking, it will immediately descend into chaos…” Leylin spoke
very confidently, as if he was the one who had sent out the female spy.
The Kyasha Beast growled, abandoning the fight with the Duo Serpent Annihilator as it made a run for the outer regions, causing the ground to shake vigorously. The allied army soldiers in its surroundings became minced meat one after the other. Big chunks of flesh fell off its body even as it ran. This was the activation of the previous self-destruct command.
Watching this, many of the conscients fell into a silence, then began to talk to one another soon after.
Leylin smiled confidently instead.
Now, they were evidently carrying out an arduous but unrewarding job, and were in the midst of hesitation. And just now, the most stubborn Azure Mountain King had been changed from opposing him to being a supporter. With these changes, the strong force that had at least two votes had become the one to decide between the two previously evenly-matched choices.
Indeed, after a short moment, the large conscient emitted huge soul force waves, communicating with the many soldiers of the allied army.
After receiving orders, the Azure Rain knights, as well as the other numerous allied Magi, began to retreat gradually. Only the Demon Magus Army, and a few other small organisations like the Arm of Vengeance, held their positions with a look of helplessness on their faces.
“You have won this time!” The large conscient spoke from opposite him.
“Thank you all! I only need to preserve the core territory, which is Phosphorescence Swamp. As for this war, pin the blame on the City of Sins, Nefas, and that Arm of Vengeance…” Leylin quit while he was ahead, speaking with a slight bow.
What he meant, was to maintain the current situation, make the
opponent hand over all the territories they were occupying, and not
to look into the responsibilities of other forces.
Leylin had considered things thoroughly. Because of the support of
the 3 dukes, the Ouroboros Clan could originally hold such a large
territory. Now, with him alone, the results of this war were
considered a success.
Furthermore, with his current frail strength, forming rivalries with
so many Morning Star forces was unrealistic. He could only assign
a few scapegoats to settle the problem.
The Arm of Vengeance was originally a predetermined choice. With
the addition of Nefas, which had already lost its Morning Star
protection, it was enough.
“Very well! You have made the right choice!” A hint of rare
gentleness floated in the conscient’s voice.
“I believe in the future, we will become good friends…”
The interactions between those at the Morning Star realm was this
simple. Once they realised they could not completely annihilate the
other party, it was very normal to humble themselves to form good
relationships.
Two great forces in heated conflict could sometimes bury the
hatchet the next day. All of this was definitely not unlinked to the
Morning Star Magi backing them.
If not for Leylin coming out of the blue this time, how would these
starving wolves have been so easy to convince? Perhaps the entire
Ouroboros Clan would have been swallowed up without any
remains.
*Swoosh!* Many conscients disappeared, and only at this time did
Leylin slowly heave a sigh of relief.
He knew that, at least for now, the Ouroboros Clan had crossed its
predicament.
“Sir Leylin!” “Sir Leylin!” “Sir Leylin!”
On the ground, many of the bloodline Warlocks had injuries on
their bodies. As they watched the allied army retreat, they could not help but rejoice. Especially upon seeing Leylin’s gaze, it was as if they had seen a deity.

Faisal, who saw the scene, could only smile bitterly to himself. He knew that from then on, the entire Ouroboros Clan would probably fall into the hands of the Morning Star Warlock floating above.

......

“Ugh... I... Where is this?”

Freya groaned. After waking up, she looked at the familiar ceiling with a little disorientation in her eyes.

Suddenly, the devastating great war, the blood and flesh flying all over, the appearance of a Morning Star Magus emerged one by one in her mind. At the end, was that pair of gentle eyes.

“The chief has awakened!” The two pretty maids at the side noticed Freya coming to and they immediately rejoiced, scurrying out.

After a moment, Freya who had regained her usual astuteness and capabilities, tidied up her clothing and sat by the bed. Listening to the many elders who had rushed here, as well as Julian’s narration, her tiny lips slowly spread apart.

“That means... Leylin! Oh no! Sir Leylin has already advanced to rank 4, to the Morning Star Realm?” Freya muttered, unsure of the feeling in her heart. Previously, it was because she had been driven by Leylin that she went into seclusion in order to cultivate and advance into the Crystal Phase.

She had originally thought that she had shaken him off, but little did she know that Leylin would display such great strength at the Crystal Phase after that, even advancing before her.

Now, he had even broken through the Morning Star bottleneck directly, achieving the dream of many of the central continent’s
Magi, rank 4. Furthermore, he had even killed Demon Hunter Cyril in one blow, and with a determined stance remedied the Ouroboros Clan’s perilous situation.

“So, without me even realising it, the gap between us has already grown so large?” Freya’s eyes grew hot, almost tearing up. However, after having trained for such a long time, she was able to hold it in by force of will, not exhibiting the slightest bit of emotion on her face.

“Yes! According to Sir Leylin’s previous diagnosis, your spiritual force is exhausted. You require more rest…” Julian looked at Freya carefully, making eye contact with most of the clan elders. Deep in their hearts, they were extremely impressed by Freya’s previous support for Leylin. Now that he had been promoted to the Morning Star realm, even obtaining the great power of making changes the Ouroboros Clan, he would definitely favour their clan in the future.

Even… some elders stole glances at Freya. Because she was seriously injured, Freya’s face was slightly pale yet it did not cover up her touching expression. It was a pitiful look. If this clan leader could mesmerise Sir Leylin, wouldn’t the clan be able to introduce a Kemoyin bloodline of the Morning Star rank? Just the mere thought of it made these elders flush red, and their bodies trembled uncontrollably.

“No need, I’d like to see him!” Freya took the thick fur jacket, draped it over her shoulders, and walked out. The physique of a Crystal Phase Warlock was beyond one’s imagination. With only a short rest, Freya’s body was more or less recovered, posing no problem for her to move around on her own. Julian wanted to follow her initially, but was stopped by an elder with a strange smiling face…
The heart of the Ouroboros Clan’s regime was originally a senate formed by the 3 Morning Star Warlocks. However, with Leylin as the only one left, he could naturally decide everything as he wished.

He no longer worked in his own manor, but in the most luxurious hall in the headquarters. Many high-ranked Warlocks bowed humbly, awaiting orders from the young Magus on the throne.

“Dark Serpent Section, the military, the technical department… 57 Marquises, as well as many Earls and Viscounts have announced their loyalty to your highness. They are all willing to follow your highness, and revere your highness as the highest veteran of the Ouroboros Clan!”

A smile of flattery hung on Faisal’s face. Like the most loyal dog, his back was hunched almost 90 degrees as he reported to Leylin.

“Very good!” Leylin was now wearing a platinum robe embroidered with a fierce black serpent. In the vibrant lights and colours, even the totem of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent was on the robe. At the sides of the robe, many runes were sewed on with thin golden thread.

The robe itself was a low-grade magic artifact! And Leylin, who wore it, seemed much more majestic for it. Being on the throne was like being the central power of the universe, and it had him brimming with dignity.

As he watched Faisal and the other Warlocks giving him an abnormal amount of respect, a playful smirk curled up at the corner of Leylin’s lips.

Ever since the war ended, these Warlocks immediately crowned him lord, showing the utmost respect for him.

The strong rule, this had always been a fundamental truth!

Furthermore, with Leylin’s current strength and the reputation of saving the clan from its perilous situation, even if they disagreed he could force a massacre upon his subordinates. By that time, things
would no longer be as simple as handing over power. Hence these Warlocks were very obedient, fearful of Leylin finding their weaknesses.

*Thump!* After Freya stepped into the hall, two rows of Warlocks immediately stared at her, giving forth a pressure that even she could not endure.

“Blood serpent Marquis Freya greets Sir Leylin!” Freya was also unsure of the feelings in her heart, and she just bowed respectfully.

“Everyone except Freya, leave!” Leylin nodded. The two rows of Warlocks immediately exited in an orderly manner, shutting the door silently to make space for Leylin and Freya.

“What’s wrong?” Leylin stepped down, watching the slightly strong-headed yet confused and fearful Freya, accurately capturing the trace of fear deep in her eyes.

“You… really are different now!” Freya muttered softly as she watched the heroic young warlock before her.

From his aura that was as calm as the ocean that had an extraordinariness to it, one could tell that he had really advanced to that far-fetched Morning Star Realm, and was probably even stronger than her Mentor.

It was just that, such a powerful Leylin gave Freya an urge to cry instead.
With a sweep of his soul force, everything regarding Freya was revealed in front of Leylin.

“Your injuries are pretty much healed up, though your sea of consciousness still needs nourishment. I recommend the Giant Serpent’s Spirit Potion! There are already very few Crystal Phase Warlocks like you in the Ouroboros Clan…” Leylin sighed.

After the great battle, the ten or so Crystal Phase Warlocks had dwindled in number to a pitiful seven or eight. Even Leylin’s senior, Lucian, had been unlucky enough to lose his life at the hands of the plant legion.

In a situation like this where there were few trump cards remaining, Leylin knew that even though he was in charge every single Crystal Phase Magus was a precious resource.

“Many thanks, my Lord!” Freya bowed, seemingly very solemn.

“Oh, right. One more thing. I hope the Blood Serpent Family can help me arrange for my Morning Star Ceremony.” Morning Star Magi had very high statuses in the central continent, especially since it was so difficult to advance. Every instance of it was a joyous matter worthy of celebration with a huge circle of friends, and was even a grand ceremony for the entire continent.

Based on conventional practices, each appearance of a Morning Star Magus meant that there had to be something like a ceremony. This was an announcement of power, which was even more
important for the Ouroboros Clan, given its current state. The bloodline Warlocks, who were in a state of chaos, were in desperate need of a burst of motivation.

“It shall be my family’s honour to do so!” Leaving it to her family meant valuing her. Whatever it was, this was beneficial to the Blood Serpent Family. As the leader, Freya could not reject them, nor did she have any reason to do so.

“I am also planning to release another piece of news during the ceremony.” Watching Freya, who was biting her lips with an odd look on her face below him, Leylin smirked.

“What is it?”

“After the ceremony, I shall organise a huge wedding and marry you into my family!” The words that left Leylin’s mouth were earth-shattering, leaving Freya completely stunned.

“Marry into your family?” Freya repeated it like a mantra, her childlike features perplexed. Leylin was a Warlock who had recently joined and basically had no support from any bloodline families.

“Yes, the Farlier family. Although there’s only me on the central continent for now, I believe we’ll become the first family of the Ouroboros Clan. We’ll even become the best of all bloodline families!” Leylin touched his nose. Though he was the only Warlock in his family and it seemed pitiful, Leylin didn’t care. After all, how could a family with a Morning Star Magus be common? With his pure bloodline, the chances of his descendants advancing were much higher than for other Warlocks. In no time, it would be capable of becoming the greatest family in the Ouroboros Clan!

The central continent was much too large. Though Leylin now held control over the Ouroboros Clan, he needed to develop an organisation that was uniquely his. How could there be anything
that could beat a family he created himself? Others would have another layer of bloodline restrictions, and this would count as insurance for himself.
In addition, he who had already reached the Morning Star realm no longer had to worry about the leakage of information regarding the purity of his bloodline. He now held enough strength to protect himself.
Since he needed a female Warlock to spread his bloodline, Leylin naturally chose Freya. First of all, she was clean and honest, and treated him well. She looked pretty as well. What else was there to hesitate over?
“What if I… reject you?” Freya bit her lips, slightly unwilling. Though she liked Leylin, she didn’t want things to go this way.
“You can’t reject anyway. I rule the Ouroboros Clan!” Leylin’s tone could not be questioned. The rims of Freya’s eyes reddened, and she lightly grasped Leylin’s hands.
“I know you’re unwilling to do this because you’re hoping I’ll marry into your family instead of the other way around. Is that right?” Leylin completely saw through Freya.
Deep inside, Freya still hoped to bring Leylin into the Blood Serpent family, but this was obviously not possible.
The Leylin right now would definitely not agree to this at all. Even before he advanced, he would only get others to do as he wished, and there were never instances of others getting him to do something.
One had to acknowledge that Leylin was a male chauvinist. He would marry Freya of his own accord, and not because he was thankful towards her. And he would definitely not marry into her family.
“You know all this, but why…” Freya raised her head, face glimmering with tears as she protested.
Seeing her reacting this way, Leylin knew that she had pretty much
made up her mind, and couldn’t help but chuckle, “Because I am stronger than you! This is what you’re destined to do!”

Strength ruled the Magus World. This was an undisputable truth.

Since Freya had completely given in, Leylin softened his tone and began to console her, “Don’t worry. I will naturally take care of your family. When we have many children, I can even send a son over to the Blood Serpent family…”

This was an attempt at pacifying her. Since Freya had done so much for Leylin, he had to pay her back. However, Leylin’s nature was such that he had to take the initiative, instead of being begged to act.

Upon hearing this guarantee, Freya nodded, finally at ease.

Leylin could tell that Freya had nodded slightly and agreed, and laughed heartily at that.

……

The battle that happened at Phosphorescence Swamp swept through the central continent like a whirlwind.

In particular, Leylin’s exceptional and powerful appearance, from how he had killed the Demon Hunter Cyril and caused his fall, increased the enthusiasm towards the situation till the extreme.

Demon Hunter Cyril was not a nobody, even amongst the Morning Star circles. Rather, his strength had been proven to surpass the masses, and as a newly-advanced Morning Star Warlock, Leylin had been able to cause his downfall. Such strength immediately led to the dread of other Morning Star Magi.

From the outside, it seemed like not only had the allied armies that had attacked the Ouroboros Clan completely withdrawn from key regions such as Phosphorescence Swamp, they had even drawn a certain line of isolation, seemingly wanting to avoid conflict.

After the fall of the main body of Morning Star Magus Cyril, Nefas, the city of sin, fell into a state of confusion. The Magi there weren’t good people from the start, and mostly comprised of vicious
bandits and those with death warrants for them. Without Cyril’s suppression, the place grew rife with violence. The areas surrounding Nefas gradually descended further into chaos as news about the death of Cyril’s clone came in, confirming his fall. In that period, spells flew everywhere in the city, and the architecture was engulfed in a sea of flames. As many Demon Magi gleefully broke into Cyril’s Magus Tower and were prepared to loot the place as they wished, a large number of elite Magus armies suddenly descended upon them. Under the suppression of the Magus army, as well as with a Morning Star Magus’ help, the chaos in Nefas died down. After losing the deterring power of Cyril, the defenceless Nefas had basically turned into a giant gold mine, attracting the interests of many Morning Star Magi. This was especially true for those few Morning Star Magi in the original allied army. In the name of their comrades, they dispatched forces and took over the city, making up for all their previous losses. By the time the matter with Nefas had died down, an even more startling piece of news spread throughout the central continent. The one who had caused Cyril’s fall based on his own strength, and thus protected the Ouroboros Clan, the Morning Star Magus Leylin Farlier, had invited many friendly organisations to his Morning Star ceremony. In response to this invitation, many large-scaled organisations who had intentionally kept a distance due to their disdain towards the Ouroboros Clan saw a chance to repair this relationship and sent people to attend. Other organisations also saw the ceremony as a great chance to figure out the situation within the Ouroboros Clan, and to better understand Leylin’s strength. They, too, sent out spies or envoys.
During that time, numerous Magi hurried towards Phosphorescence Swamp, causing the swamp to be bustling with life, a huge contrast from the normal deathly silence.

……

Within the city headquarters, Leylin reclined on the couch comfortably, listening to the female Magus reporting from beside him.

“The messengers we sent out have mostly returned with positive replies. Most of the emissaries of those organisations have already set out. Recently, Phosphorescence Swamp has not been very orderly. Though preparations for the ceremony are completed, I think it’s necessary to prepare a few emergency contingencies…”

Freya leant against the couch while holding countless files and wearing a pair of frameless glasses, seemingly very busy.

“Let’s do as you say!”

“Also, the bloodline Warlocks from Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair are about to reach headquarters. You need to take some time out to meet them…” After finishing her report, Freya laughed delicately and moved away from the couch, leaving quickly.

After she left, Leylin’s expression turned serious. He put on white gloves and produced a broken sword. This sword had the style of casting in ancient times. It was cold and sharp, and even time could do nothing to weaken its firmness. There were even traces of golden-coloured blood on the blade.

“I never expected for the bloodline of the Sun’s child and the Wing of the Sun to reach my hands…” Sensing the powerful bloodline strength on the sword’s hilt, a hint of a smile revealed about Leylin’s lips.

This broken sword was one of the treasures from the Azure Mountain auction. Cyril had shamelessly used his status and pressurised others so he could purchase it.

Leylin had really wanted to get his hands on it, but for one he did
not have enough magic crystals. On top of that, he did not dare go head to head with Cyril. However, this was no longer an issue. Even Cyril’s main body had fallen at Leylin’s hands. The items he had hoarded and brought along on his body had naturally been kindly accepted by Leylin. Besides many precious materials and countless magic crystals, what he’d really desired was this item. [Beep! Top-grade meditation technique, Wing of the Sun recorded!] The A.I. Chip transmitted.

“Hopefully it’s useful for Kemoyin’s Pupil.” Leylin sighed, keeping the giant sword well. Kemoyin’s Pupil was merely a high-grade meditation technique with the fourth level as the limit. It was impossible to progress further. For Leylin, this was absolutely unacceptable.
Based on the traditions of the central continent, high-grade meditation techniques had a minimum of four levels, allowing Magi to enter the Morning Star realm. Top-grade meditation techniques needed to have six or more levels, allowing Magi to understand the path to the Breaking Dawn. Kemoyin’s Pupil had merely four levels and was considered the bottom of the pack among high-grade meditation techniques. Leylin naturally hoped the A.I. Chip could simulate the rest of the levels.

Leylin had been trying to solve the issue of the bloodline shackles since advancing to the Morning Star realm. The simulation of meditation techniques was very important. The Wing of the Sun was also a meditation technique for bloodline Warlocks, and there were six complete levels. It would surely be extremely helpful in completing Kemoyin’s Pupil.

Since he had the bloodline of the Sun’s child as well, he could attempt to purify it. Though the Oakheart Clan had already confirmed that the bloodline had lost all vitality, Leylin still had some confidence that he could restore it.

The ancient Sun’s child was a being that could reach rank 6 when it matured. It was even a fixed sun for multiple small worlds, and was, therefore, the best bloodline Leylin had gotten to date.

“With this, I can begin the bloodline experiments…” After advancing to the Morning Star realm, many ancient bloodline
experiments, and things like the interplanar experiments, could be undertaken independently. Leylin was extremely eager to spend all his time on this. However, he still took some time to meet the emissaries from Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair the next day. It wasn’t only the Ouroboros Clan that held bloodline Warlocks in the central continent. There were other organisations and families that had inherited ancient bloodlines, forming a giant alliance. However, the three Morning Star Magi of the Ouroboros Clan had disappeared all of a sudden, resulting in a drop in their value. Hence, no aid had been given. Leylin understood this very well, since even when saving allies, one had to see if they were powerful enough. Otherwise, they would only be bringing trouble upon themselves. Besides, the various Warlock organisations weren’t exactly tight-knit. There were conflicts, and a loose alliance was basically as good as a nonexistent one. Of course, things were different with Leylin’s ascension. It was especially so after he displayed his strength. All these former allies rushed forth to mend their relationship. Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair were the two largest bloodline Warlock organisations that the Ouroboros Clan was close to. “Hehe… Sire Leylin is so young. This was entirely out of my expectations!” The moment they met, the two Warlocks were blown away by the plentiful life force brimming in Leylin. Magi obviously did not rely on appearances to determine age. They usually had their own unique methods to determine it. However, no matter which angle they looked at him from, Leylin was extremely young. He was not like those Magi who were approaching their end and looked young from the outside, yet held a rotting scent. “Hehe… The two of you, please!”
Leylin was now dressed in a platinum robe that was a piece of magic equipment, giving him a more elegant aura. With his experience in controlling places like the Twilight Zone, he had already developed a distinct aura of a ruler in how he treated others, which made him all the more convincing.

Meanwhile, while the two emissaries were stunned at Leylin’s age, Leylin himself was also shocked. He could feel the energy of the point mass on these two emissaries. In other words, they were actually Morning Star Warlocks as well! “Looks like these two organisations are taking this very seriously!”

The smile on Leylin’s face became even more welcoming as he invited the two Warlocks to the couch in his room. Freya brought three cups of coffee over, bowing to the three of them unreservedly as she quickly left.

“By the way, I’ve yet to ask you for your names!” Leylin smiled as he spoke.

“Oh, look at me! I was so surprised when I came that I didn’t introduce myself. How impolite of me!” A Magus with countless tentacles on his face that looked like a giant octopus head palmed his forehead with a tentacle and answered, “I’m Paul, from Spirit Circle!”

“Sir Paul!” Leylin nodded in recognition, seeming serious.

The bloodline Spirit Circle had inherited came from a strange creature, the Spirit-sucking Oddity! It was said that this being not only had a unique spirit body, it even enjoyed sucking the brain juices of intelligent beings, and had the strange ability of peeking at someone’s spirit.

What caused countless bloodline Warlocks to rip their hair out in frustration was that this Spirit-sucking Oddity was no bloodline creature! However, the original Spirit-sucking Oddity Warlock had fused the ability of this creature into his own bloodline and passed it down, resulting in this strange branch of bloodline Warlocks.
This branch was named the ‘Spirit Warlock’ and had a very special strength. They were more partial towards attacks on the mind, and it was difficult to resist them.

At this point, Leylin couldn’t help but look into his eyes.

On the giant octopus head were a pair of dark eyeballs with no pupils, looking like a dead fish’s eyes.

However, the moment their gazes met, Leylin felt as if his heart was being stripped and laid bare before him.

*Weng!* The point mass in his body rumbled, and soul force swept through. The discomfort instantly vanished, and Leylin immediately put on his guard even though he smiled at the other party.

“I am Philip of the Wind Wolf Lair. Greetings, Sir!” The other was a middle-aged, burly white man. His face and body were filled with hair, and his sideburns were very straight.

Compared to spirit Warlocks, Wind Wolf Lair was an orthodox bloodline Warlock organisation that had inherited the bloodline of the ancient Wind Wolves. They were exceptionally sensitive towards wind elemental particles.

On top of that, Wind Wolf Lair was a very well-known bloodline Warlock organisation in the central continent that maintained good relations with other Warlocks. They had very deep roots.

“Sir Philip, and Sir Paul!” Leylin nodded, “It is my honour for the two of you to attend my ceremony…”

Whether it was Leylin or the other two Warlocks, all of them were very satisfied. Though there weren’t any deep discussions, this was a good beginning.

After that, however, Leylin could not bring himself to feel happy, as the two Warlocks brought him shocking news.

“Jupiter’s Lightning?”

After unexpectedly finding out who was responsible for attacking the Ouroboros Clan, Leylin’s expression turned grim.
Even if he hadn’t been privy to the knowledge among the Morning Star circle before his own advancement, even he had heard of this organisation’s fame in the central continent.
Compared to organisations such as Nefas and Azure Mountain City, Jupiter’s Lightning was even more tremendous, and perhaps even surpassed the Ouroboros Clan.
It was a shadow that loomed over the continent, and was perhaps more similar to a bandit guild. It regularly took on assassinations, bounties, and the like, preferring to stir up chaos and exploiting it.
The reason why they were so fearless was due to the manipulator behind them. It was a Radiant Moon Magus!
A Radiant Moon Magus was also a great rank 5 Magus, and they were even rarer than Morning Star Magi, as well as much more formidable. In the entire central continent, there were probably less than twenty of them. It could be said that besides the few Breaking Dawn Magi there were, the rest of them split the central continent amongst themselves.
Hearing that Ouroboros Clan was being targeted by such a person, even Leylin couldn’t help but break out in cold sweat.
Paul and Philip exchanged a glance and, noticing Leylin’s peaceful expression, nodded.
“Don’t worry. As allies, we will provide a certain amount of assistance, such that at least the Radiant Moon Magus will likely not deal with you personally…”
‘Do you mean that if the other Morning Star Magi of Jupiter’s Lightning attack, I have to take them all on myself?’
Leylin rolled his eyes inside, but his expression was that of gratitude, “Thank you so much.”
In reality, he had serious suspicions that these two organisations wanted them to fight. Perhaps they had been the ones to provoke Jupiter’s Lightning, and yet were now pretending to take the brunt of the damage for the Ouroboros Clan, and were insincere about
sending aid.
Of course, he was no child and would not believe everything these Morning Star Magi told him. He would only trust them after performing his own checks.
This was a very simple matter. Though he was unfamiliar with the Morning Star’s conscient, he had already recorded the aura fluctuations. With more Morning Star samples, he would be able to make comparisons.
He even had a spy like the Azure Mountain King, so information was not an issue.
At the thought of the Azure Mountain King, Leylin’s gloomy mood was lifted, and he began to anticipate ascension ceremony.

……

*Boom! Boom! Boom!*
Countless giant fireworks exploded in mid-air. The headquarters of Ouroboros Clan had been painted over, and now no longer had any traces from the battle. There were even fresh flowers and streamers along all the pathways.
The guests from the other organisations in the central continent all had sincere grins on their faces. Under the guidance of the Warlocks of Ouroboros Clan, they headed towards the heart of the city.
This was a palace that had been constructed in a hurry for Leylin, the location of the ceremony.
In order to curry favour with the only Morning Star Warlock in the organisation, as well as the husband of their family’s leader, the Blood Serpent Family Warlocks had done all they could and arranged everything tidily. They had even gone out of their way and brought out lavish liquor and delicacies, many of which were unique resources in the Magus World that could increase spiritual
force and the effects of meditation. There were so many that they seemed dirt cheap, and it resulted in looks of admiration and surprise.

Many guests were gathered in a hall, though they were separated clearly into tens of little circles.

Bloodline Warlocks and Magi had two large circles, and within those, another ten or so were formed based on various factors like power, ranking, level of intimacy and so on.

The Warlocks and Magi were like the ladies and gentlemen of high society, conversing courteously and occasionally toasting each other. The atmosphere was harmonious, and it was unthinkable that some of the people here had been eager for the death of the other party just a few days ago.
“It’s time to start the ceremony!” Parker’s tone conveyed his high spirits and excitement. He was wearing the suit of a compere, and his hair was sleekly styled. His previous investment at this time had gained him the most returns. Leylin was advancing at the speed of light, far beyond his own predictions. It made him feel like he was in a dream. With unanimous joyous cheers, Leylin stepped on the flower petals laid out on his path as he entered the hall, wearing a magical robe with a gold crown on his head. At the same moment, an overbearing and horrifying force similar to that of an ancient beast was slowly released from his body. From his eyes, one could faintly see the image of an enormous black serpent which was several tens of thousands of metres long. Morning Star! The formidability of a true Morning Star made many Magi and Warlocks bow their heads respectfully to welcome him. Some of the sullen emissaries were also so overwhelmed by his aura that they too bowed, albeit rather unwillingly. “In accordance with the rules, Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan who are promoted to the Morning Star realm will fundamentally acquire the noble title of a Duke! Congratulations to you, Duke Farlier!” Faisal stepped up and ceremoniously handed a snake-shaped scepter embedded with jet black crystals to Leylin, who accepted it effortlessly and raised it up.
Numerous bloodline Warlocks stood up and bowed in salutation, “Greetings, Duke Leylin!” This was a tradition of the Ouroboros Clan, something shared by many other Magus organisations. Yet, for Faisal himself to do it meant that Leylin had already succeeded in suppressing internal strife. Seeing this unfold, many influential emissaries were left in deep thought.

“The ceremony shall begin!” Parker yelled after Leylin was seated. “The emissary from the Rustic Woodlands, Louis greets Duke Leylin!” An old fellow dressed in a red suit took the lead and saluted Leylin.

“The Lord’s promotion to the Morning Star is a grand occasion for all of us in the central continent. This is a gift from our Master!” The entourage standing behind him lifted the cloth off a tray to reveal a rock shimmering with brilliance.

“An astral stone!” “Such a huge astral stone is rare indeed!” “The Rustic Woodlands is so magnanimous!” The comments from the surrounding visitors were incessant.

Leylin nodded his head and smiled, evidently very pleased. Such opportunities to receive free gifts without obligations were always welcomed.

“I have just been promoted to the Morning Star, and my need for astral stones is undeniable. Thank your Master on my behalf!” Leylin expressed his contentment, and the emissary was delighted. He bowed again and retreated.

“Duke Leylin! I am the emissary from the Fallor Family, and I present to you a personalized private ride, the Colossal Serpent!” Another emissary stepped forward and presented a core controller. In the middle of it, an image of a private airship could be seen. The detailing and ornamentation of the warship structure were vivid and thorough.

“That is very considerate of you!” Leylin nodded his head.
The Fallor Family controlled the entire airship network. They also had the support of the Monarch of the Skies, and gifting every newly promoted Morning Star their very own airship was their tradition. As such, Leylin voiced, "I thank the kindness of chief Fallor and the Monarch of the Skies..."

Perceiving Leylin to have understood their intentions, the emissary respectfully bowed and retreated. Almost immediately, yet another emissary stepped forward....

The etiquette for this ceremony was complicated, but Leylin still had to receive them one by one and express his own goodwill. It would be extremely important and beneficial for the Ouroboros Clan.

Leylin was brimming with enthusiasm and was all smiles. He conversed casually with many of the emissaries with ease, showing no impatience.

At this time, a Magus with a head of brown hair who was wearing a silver robe stepped forward. Impressive undulations emitted from his body without restraint. He clearly lacked manners, and was disrespectful in front of Leylin.

“You’ve come with ill intentions!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed and he glared at the Magus.

“Greetings, my Lord, from Collins of Jupiter’s Lightning!” Collins straightened his back and looked straight into Leylin’s eyes without a hint of fear.

“Collins is one of the more able ones in Jupiter’s Lightning. He clearly wants to test Leylin’s strength as a baseline comparison...” Paul remarked from the side, smiling at Philip with a wineglass in hand.

“Collin’s abilities are not comparable to Cyril’s. Shall we give him a helping hand?” Philip rubbed his fist, his eyes glistening with ambition.

“There’s no need! Duke Leylin is very powerful, do not ever
underestimate him!” Paul’s dead-fish eyes glimmered with a smile. The atmosphere inside the hall didn’t seem right. All the emissaries’ eyes were locked on the confrontation between the two Morning Stars.

Since it was a celebration, Leylin and Collins did not go overboard. On the surface, it looked like they were just staring at each other in the face. However, a ruthless cross-sword fight between the spiritual domains had already unfolded unknowingly.

A few minutes later, the colour started to drain from Collins’ confident face, and beads of sweat appeared on it. Witnessing the scene, the other Magi thought they had seen a ghost.

Paul and Philip exchanged glances, and both broke out in smiles. “Oh!” A moment later, Collins scathingly stumbled a few steps back. Although there were no differences in his expression, the imposing aura on his body had disappeared.

Leylin, on the other hand, continued to sit upright. No one could tell what he had in mind.

“Oh!” Collins no longer dared to look Leylin in the eye as he presented the gift. Soon after, he left in haste.

All the Magi who witnessed this silent confrontation grew more fervent about Leylin.

The revelry lasted until midnight. After receiving bountiful gifts, Leylin began conversing about his experience during his advancement.

It was, in a way, his means of imparting knowledge. Many of those present were rank 3 Magi after all.

Leylin was forthcoming, pointing out mistakes made during the construction of the point mass, as well as other general tips. Many rank 3 Magi were intoxicated by this essential information, and even some Morning Stars fell into deep thought. When it was time to disperse, many felt reluctant to leave.
After the banquet was over, Leylin chose not to rest, and instead, headed out to meet another guest in a private room.

“Distinguished Azure Mountain King, we meet again!” Leylin smiled calmly and sat opposite the Magus.

The person here was certainly the Azure Mountain King. He possessed the same appearance as his clone, with blue hair and a pair of starry eyes.

He had not come to this ceremony representing Azure Mountain City, and instead snuck in on the pretence of a diplomatic mission. He’d felt threatened by Leylin.

“You can call me Zack!” The Azure Mountain King spoke in a deep tone, without any further intentions of undermining Leylin.

“Alright, distinguished Zack, let’s talk about the compensation that you have to make with regards to my territory!”

Leylin leant back on the sofa, intertwined his hands. He was unusually relaxed. Opportunities for such extortion, where one took advantage of another’s weakness, were very rare.

“Sure! Your people, your land, and any other losses, I’ll pay you for it all. I’ll even pay double, as long as you promise not to leak the matter of the stardust bugs!” Zack said frankly.

He only yielded to Leylin as Leylin knew his biggest secret. If this information was leaked out, the entire Oakheart Clan would be faced with imminent disaster. Even his own life would be in danger.

Leylin was well aware of this. But he also knew that the destruction of the Oakheart Clan, and the fall of the Azure Mountain King, would not net him any benefits. On the other hand, such extortion had the potential for a lot of profits.

As such he didn’t mind letting Zack leave… as long as he paid his
due, of course.
“Let’s not talk about the territory for the time being, you destroyed my Magus Tower. Shouldn’t you compensate me with another?” Leylin laughed with a hint of profoundness.
“Consider it done! I will build you one that is exactly the same!” the Azure Mountain King replied with a rich and overbearing tone.
“Oh! No, no, no! I think you misunderstood something…” Leylin swayed his finger, ” What I need, is a Magus Tower that corresponds to my current status. Do you understand?”
“What…” Zack took a cold breath, and immediately blurted out, “Impossible! This is extortion!”
Although Leylin’s previous Magus Tower was of considerably high quality, it was only fitting for a rank 3 Magus. In the central continent, anything that catered to the Morning Star rank would cost more, especially so for the Morning Star Magus Tower! The construction cost of a Morning Star rated Magus Tower would be at least ten times more than that of Leylin’s previous Magus Tower. Even if he were to sell his territory, it could not even cover the cost of building one level of it. Leylin’s request was like a lion biting a huge chunk of meat off the Oakheart Clan’s body.
Based on Zack’s proposed bill of compensation, the Oakheart Clan wouldn’t suffer a huge loss. But to build a Morning Star rated Magus Tower? Even if Leylin were to decline all the other compensations, this request alone would still be outrageous.
“Indeed, I am extorting you. Didn’t you know?” Leylin mockingly laughed.
“Compared to the matter about the stardust bugs and the whole Oakheart Clan being erased from this world, I think it’s a good deal… With the accumulated wealth of Azure Mountain City, there should be no difficulty in constructing one such Magus Tower, right?”
Being reprimanded by Leylin, Zack’s face hardened as he gritted his
teeth in anger, ”… Fine!”
“That’s the way!” Leylin smirked, obviously pleased. His expression immediately turned from one of hostility to that of friendliness, and this made Zack perplexed.
“Other that the Magus Tower, I have no other requests, so long as you assist me in building an astral gate…”
Having sensed the limits of Zack’s tolerance, Leylin naturally and pursued further benefits without scruples. After all, Zack wouldn’t suddenly appreciate him if he lowered his requests, so he could just as well get a hold of as many benefits as possible.
After some haggling, Leylin and Zack finally reached an agreement. The Oakheart Clan would bear the burden of building a Morning Star level Magus Tower, as well as provide him with all the resources for an astral gate. In return, Leylin guaranteed that he would never divulge information regarding the stardust bugs in any shape or form. The two of them had even made an oath under the Trial’s Eye, which was at the request of the Azure Mountain King. However, he did not notice the look of mockery in Leylin’s eyes. After that, Leylin got Zack to narrate the details of the allied army’s attack on the Ouroboros Clan from start to end. After receiving this information, his eyebrows furrowed. “Jupiter’s Lightning…” After sending Zack away, Leylin half laid down on the couch, massaging his forehead and sinking into deep thought. “I never expected it to be them. Why would a haughty Radiant Moon Magus have any interest in the Ouroboros Clan?” Before Gilbert and the others reappeared, nobody would be able to give him an answer. Leylin himself could only make wild guesses. …… Most emissaries had yet to leave after the end of the ceremony, when another monumental event occurred.
The Morning Star Warlock, Duke Leylin, had announced his engagement with the leader of the Blood Serpent Family, Freya! Bloodline Warlocks were generally very picky when it came to picking partners. This would affect the passing on of bloodlines, and determined the rise or fall of a family. The engagement of a Morning Star Warlock implied that new Kemoyin blood would spread, forming another formidable family! Though there were only two people in the family, Leylin and his fiancee, nobody could deny the strength of a family with a Morning Star Warlock within. Based on some faint rumours, Duke Leylin’s bloodline was unbelievably pure, and perhaps even surpassed that of the other three Morning Star Warlocks! His fiancee was also of a prestigious Kemoyin Family, and her bloodline was pure. The emissaries and Warlocks could envision an exceptionally powerful Kemoyin family rising to power in the Ouroboros Clan. Though they were cursing within, these emissaries all looked elated at Leylin’s engagement, and gave their ‘sincere’ blessings to them. Only after the engagement ceremony was over did the emissaries of the multiple organisations leave Phosphorescence Swamp. They had seen far too much at this celebration and ceremony, and needed to report back to their masters. Leylin could finally relax, handling some miscellaneous work. “Your Grace!” On the way, many Warlocks stepped aside when they saw him from afar, bowing to him from the sides of the road. Leylin’s expression remained solemn. At most, he sent a nod of recognition in the direction of high-ranked Warlocks, his movements revealing boundless dignity. His status in the Ouroboros Clan made it such that he could move
without obstructions. He headed for a building that seemed like a beehive, formed of countless giant laboratories.

This was the headquarters of the technical department. Upon noticing Leylin’s arrival, there was a flurry of activity at the entrance. Schadt, who was wearing glasses, was escorted by Warlocks donning large white gowns as he welcomed Leylin. It made him feel as if he had returned to the research centres in his previous world.

“Your Grace!” Schadt bowed respectfully. He was extremely grateful towards Leylin. If not for his advancement, the Ouroboros Clan would probably have been done for.

“Mm! Bring me to the astral gate!” Leylin said indifferently after a nod. He then followed Schadt as they went in deeper.

After passing through the layers of isolation and detection spell formations, Schadt brought Leylin before a gate formed entirely of astral stones.

The entire gate emanated a starry radiance. The innermost layer actually possessed a stony surface and there were multiple bright runes, floating above the surface of the stone gate.

“This is Lord Emma’s astral gate. We’ve moved it here…” Schadt sighed as he took off his glasses.

“We’ve determined through multiple experiments that there is no problem with the gate itself. However, there was an unknown interference that stopped us from locating the coordinates, making the second attempt at finding the coordinates even more difficult!

“What level of power do you think is needed for this to happen?” Leylin’s eyes shone as he asked.

“I’m afraid…” Schadt’s temperament suited research perfectly. He explained things as they were and did not beat around the bush, “Only interference from a Radiant Moon realm Magus can cause the three elders to make an error in judgment!”

Radiant Moon realm! A great rank 5 Magus! The moment the
words exited Schadt’s mouth, the rest of the researchers all trembled, evidently feeling weak. Just a Morning Star Magus was enough for the Ouroboros Clan to be on the verge of being destroyed by the allied forces. What if a Radiant Moon Magus were to do the job himself? The bleak future immediately caused these high-ranked Warlocks to tremble in fear.

“Don’t be so negative!” Leylin patted Schadt on the shoulder, “Just focus on saving Mentor and the others. You must work hard on this…”

“Understood, Your Grace!” A hint of shame appeared on Schadt’s expression as he lowered his head deferentially.

Initially, he had boldly bragged that he could find the coordinates within five days. However, multiples of that time period had passed, and he had yet to determine which world Gilbert and the others were trapped in. Every time he was about to find the coordinates, he would be obstructed by berserk spatial turbulence, barring him from finding the real location.

If there was the slightest discrepancy in the coordinates, the two areas could be millions of kilometres away from each other, being two separate worlds!

With trouble both internally and externally, the Warlocks would definitely not dare have Leylin take the risk.

On top of that, they had no clue if Leylin would listen to them. In actuality, even if they had determined which world Gilbert and the rest were lost in, Leylin might not aid them.

Since they had already determined the other world was a trap set up by a Radiant Moon Magus, how could he go in like a lamb to the slaughter?

Leylin was not so selfless as to take this risk.

“I should find a chance and take care of those Warlocks.” Leylin
touched his chin, eyes glimmering with a dangerous light. Those who had been urging him from the shadows to save the elders were not anyone else, but the many descendants and students of the three Morning Star Warlocks. Of course, they did not dare request anything of Leylin in the open, but as long as they was no evidence, they were bold in their discussions.
In Gilbert’s case, Leylin was one of them and they thus had the least complaints. With Emma, Freya was a mediator and they were less impatient. Only the students and family of the other Morning Star Warlock pressed him on, and Leylin was preparing to make use of them.
He was no saint, and would not save others and then give up his power to be shared. And yet, Gilbert was his Mentor and had taught him much. Thus he would save him, but now was not the time!
Leylin was confident that with a bit more time, he could set up his own authority and spread his influence. By the time the three Morning Stars were back, they would not be able to affect his status!
Hence, he had to make use of this time. Though he could use his strength and force everything, Leylin did not want to end up with an Ouroboros Clan that was divided.
Schadt’s report was exactly to his liking. This way, it was not because he was not trying hard enough, but that he was lacking information and had no way to do this.
Leylin had long since secretly determined their coordinates. But for his own purposes, he had kept mum until now.
After consoling Schadt and the other members of the technical department, Leylin returned to his castle. There, two precious guests needed to be attended to.
“Lord Paul, Lord Philip, sorry for the long wait!” Leylin apologised to the two Morning Star Warlocks. After the
other organisations had left, these two emissaries had stayed behind for some unknown reason. As they were Morning Stars, this was also good for Ouroboros Clan, which was why Leylin had no complaints and was so welcoming towards them.

“We only just arrived as well. Duke Leylin must have investigated thoroughly, right?” Paul grinned, the beady eyes on the octopus head seemingly able to see into the Leylin’s soul.

“Yes, Jupiter’s Lightning! They went too far!” Leylin clenched his fists, face flushing red and showing his anger. Through the investigation of the Shadow Snake department as well as the Azure Mountain King’s story, he had confirmed that Jupiter’s Lightning was behind this. In this case, he would not reject the good intentions of these two Morning Star Warlocks.

“I’m going to be frank with you. That Radiant Moon Magus of Jupiter’s Lightning has been finding us bloodline Warlocks an eyesore and caused conflicts with the union. Even the organisations backing us are in a cold war with them…” Philip said. The burly werewolf smiled wryly.

Leylin vaguely understood their meaning. The intentions of these Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair Warlocks was to seek external aid. However, he would definitely not reject them. Radiant Moon Magi were not existences he could deal with as of yet. If he could pull someone else over to contend against them, the pressure on him would be slightly lesser.

For this reason, Leylin did not seem to even hesitate as he exclaimed, “If there’s anything you need me for, just say the word!” While that was what he had said, Leylin would not be so stupid as to rush to the frontlines without any benefits. Paul and Philip exchanged a glance and saw the elation in each other’s eyes. No matter what it was, Leylin’s attitude meant that this trip had not been made in vain.
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“Of course, we hope you can form an alliance with us. We wish to take on Jupiter’s Lightning together…” Philip interrupted, “With your current status as Duke, you can definitely represent the Ouroboros Clan!”

“This… I need to think it over… After all, there are many seniors who I need to pacify…” When it came to proper business, Leylin seemed to draw back.

Paul silently cursed at Philip for being too hasty, and also Leylin, for not being willing to be more open until he saw benefits. He merely continued smiling, which was difficult enough with his octopus face.

“Duke Leylin, you don’t know this yet, do you? We Morning Star Warlocks organise a gathering every once in a while, where everyone will exchange information. Sometimes, we even have trade meetings…”

“This gathering is only for bloodline Warlocks, who must be at least at the Morning Star level. Someone even needs to vouch for them. A few elders from Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair will attend as well. How about we continue the discussion there?”

“Gathering?!” A gathering amongst Morning Star Warlocks was still very attractive to Leylin. Furthermore, he was not worried that their leaving the Ouroboros Clan would bring any harm to them. To be frank, the Ouroboros Clan’s safety all depended on him. As
long as he was fine, it would be well fortified even if there was nobody here guarding them. If anything happened to him, the allied armies would immediately level the place. In fact, if he managed to slip out of headquarters without being seen, it would put his foes under a lot of pressure instead. With this in mind, Leylin answered, “Sure. When the time comes, please notify me!”
Seeing Leylin agree, Paul heaved a long sigh of relief before he laughed in answer, “I’m sure that our other comrades are eager to see an up-and-coming youngster like you!”
It looked like this gathering was a small circle where bloodline Warlocks interacted.
Watching his expression, Leylin nodded inside and began to anticipate the gathering more fervently.
Since everything was settled, Paul and Philip had no reason to stay longer. They chose to leave.
With how hurried they seemed, Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair had probably fallen on hard times. As important deterrents, they would not have been able to squeeze out the time to attend if not for Leylin’s ceremony.
“We’re rich, my Lord!” Within the hall, Parker’s eyes glinted as he gazed at the account book in his hands, “Just the gifts from the other organisations is equivalent to dozens of fiefs…”
“But of course. You only ascend to the Morning Star realm once. And it’s a good time for other organisations to form good relationships with them…”
Though Leylin seemed as calm as an ancient, unused well, he was actually very happy; he just kept it in. At the same time, he had gained a better understanding of the great status Morning Star Magi held in the central continent.
The destructive power of a Morning Star Arcane Art was far too high. If a Morning Star Magus were to let go of all qualms and act...
as they wished, the geography of the entire central continent would be destroyed. Radiant Moon, and even Breaking Dawn Magi would regret the damage caused.

As a result, every time a Morning Star arose, everyone would express their goodwill, and intent to be on good terms with each other. These were actions that large organisations were used to.

“The moment I stepped into this realm, everything changed…”

Leylin sighed to himself, the look in his eyes even more intense.

“What would be the scenery be like after the ranks of Radiant Moon or the Breaking Dawn throne?”

In his eyes, rank 4 was far from the limit. His goals were on higher peaks, and he did not pay attention to even the shackles to his bloodline that had troubled bloodline Warlocks for many years.

Of course, he could overlook his opinions while strategizing, but tactics needed to be done properly. Hence, he sent Parker away and ordered for all his gifts to be stored. After handing over the important items, Leylin returned to his laboratory.

He was now the highest power in the Ouroboros Clan, and could mobilise all resources. The laboratory he used was the best they had, which was usually reserved for Gilbert and the other two. This was just another one of the many advantages.

That was not all. The treasury of the Ouroboros Clan was completely open to him, and the treasures accumulated over thousands of years by a large-scaled organisation such at this had Leylin’s eyes going green in envy.

The first thing he did was to take a pile of astral stones and keep them in his spatial pouch.

Though the Oakheart Clan had agreed to build him an astral gate, it was better to have more astral stones in reserve. After all, passing through planes required the usage of astral stones, which was why they were so highly valued. They had always been a strategic-class resource.
“Beep! Ascertaining identity! Welcome, Duke Leylin Farlier!” After passing through the stringent aura detection system and numerous disinfecting procedures, Leylin finally stood in a room seemingly cast entirely in crystal. The translucent crystals emitted beautiful light, and the area was spotless and unbelievably glossy. Seeing the data the A.I. Chip provided, Leylin, couldn’t help but sigh. “Though the strength setup is different, in terms of disinfecting and dust, it can achieve the same effect!” Such an environment was extremely similar to the sterile laboratories in his previous world. Ancient Magi were no fools, so how would they not have noticed the effects germs and the like could have on research? Even without scientific methods, they could use magic to achieve the same effect.

Within a giant glass container at the heart of the laboratory, a broken sword was soaking in a translucent green liquid. This was the same blade that held the bloodline of the Sun’s child and the Wing of the Sun meditation technique. Numerous transparent air bubbles could be seen arising from the hole-filled dull blade, and only the area with the blood was glowing brightly. He’d already recorded all the information about the Wing of the sun through his A.I. Chip. The only thing left of value was the blood, which he had yet to extract. The golden blood was like warm light as it slowly grew on the sword, somehow moving automatically as if breathing. “As expected of the blood left behind by a rank 6 creature. Even if all its vitality has been lost, a slight simulation from the external world allowed it to regain its instinct…” Leylin was full of praise. The ancient Sun’s child was at the peak of Breaking Dawn, and was an existence he could only look up to. Just a single drop of blood could multiply, enough to form life. If it placed its spirit branding inside, an almighty ancient being
could definitely revive itself from just a droplet of blood. The bloodline of the Sun’s child was that terrifying!
Of course, confirmed by the appraisal of top-notch masters, the bloodline of the Sun’s child on the blade had long since lost its vitality and was impossible to stimulate. This breathing movement was only an instinctual reaction and not a display of full revival.
If the bloodline of the Sun’s child could be made use of, the broken sword would not have been sold off at such a low price. Even if the Azure Mountain King, Zack, had to fall out with Cyril over it, he would definitely use force to keep the bloodline.
However, for Leylin who was an expert in ancient bloodline experiments and had the support of the A.I. Chip, it wasn’t an impossible task to stimulate the revival of the bloodline.
He was now gazing at the broken sword in the glass container, a look of satisfaction appearing on his face. “The restoration is coming along quite well! I can begin the second phase…”
He, who had acquired the research data of the Quicksand organisation, had grasped the finest technology of the ancient era. This naturally included many methods to restore bloodlines.
At that point in time, due to his lack of strength, he could not display all his skills. Many of the methods required the coordination of soul force, and Leylin who had only been rank 3 at the time would only be working in vain. Now, however, this was no longer an issue.
“Soul Web!” Threads of black soul force brought with them a simple radiance as they shot out from between Leylin’s brows, forming a web-like structure that disappeared into the green solution. Large amounts of fine runes with unknown functions emerged from the thin web.
The soul web seemed to have no effects on the broken sword and went straight through the blade. However, the golden blood seemed to be attracted, gathering onto it.
Minutes later, all the blood on the broken sword had been shifted to the soul web, causing it to turn golden. *Gulu! Gulu!* As the last thread of golden luster left the blade, the metal immediately corroded into nothingness in the green solution, leaving no residue behind.

“It was only made of the plainest materials. Only because of the will of the Sun’s child had it been preserved for over ten thousand years. The moment the blood is removed, it instantly reverts to its original form!”

Leylin’s eyes shone, no longer focused on the sword. All his attention was focused on the soul web, as he manipulated the golden web to float over to another large breeding pool. Countless loach-like long fish poked their heads out of the dim yellow pool, translucent bubbles being spat out from their lips. These were blood-sucking loaches, and were rarely-seen bloodline creatures. All the reserves of the Ouroboros Clan were stored here. “Go!” Leylin controlled the soul web until it was atop the pool. Drop by drop, the golden liquid fell, being devoured by countless blood-sucking loaches that were trying to outdo each other. Water splashed everywhere in the cultivation pool, and Leylin watched the changes in the loaches without blinking.

Golden threads appeared from the stomachs of these blood-sucking loaches. Then, their eyes rolled back and they began floating in the pool. “The bloodline of a rank 6 creature is too powerful for these loaches…” Leylin shook his head, but did not stop the experiment.
Threads of golden radiance emanated from the carcases of the blood-sucking loaches and were then swallowed by other loaches which had not managed to get the blood the first time. This process was repeated as the loaches died. Leylin watched on expressionlessly. After three rounds, where the blood-sucking loaches could hold on for longer and not die immediately, the golden bloodline seemed to have become more reserved and guileless.

“Looks like I can continue…” A look of excitement appeared on his face. As long as this was successful, there was hope to stimulate the revival of the Sun’s child’s bloodline.

“Maintain this process and ensure there are no less than twenty blood-sucking loaches in the cultivation pool,” Leylin ordered the spirit genie.

Leylin knew this would take a long time. After observing for a while longer, he left the laboratory for his castle. He now had many tasks to direct, and while troublesome it was the best way to exert his authority.

Though the students and families under the Morning Star Warlocks’ care all hoped Leylin would act as soon as possible and rescue their mentors and family leaders, they did not dare exhibit their wishes openly. They were also extremely afraid of contradicting Leylin, all doing
as asked to the best of their abilities. Even when Leylin took all the astral stones in storage, they did not say a word. It had to be said that these Warlocks knew their place. Even so, Leylin could not be bothered to bicker with them over trivial matters. Besides, with his current strength still inadequate to deal with Jupiter’s Lightning and Radiant Moon Magi, he needed to save the Dukes first to increase the strength they had on their side. The issue of when this would happen would depend on him. This was not just about gaining power in the Ouroboros Clan, but also to avoid the trap set up for them! If three Morning Star Warlocks could disappear, Leylin would not be an issue at all. Leylin was well aware of this fact, which was why he did not dare make a move until he made sense of the situation. “Your Grace, there’s a female Magus claiming to be from Azure Mountain City here. Also…” Faisal bowed, with none of his high spirits from before. Humility had taken that place. Ever since Leylin had exited his secluded cultivation, he had been maintaining this attitude. He’d even been the first to side with Leylin, and Leylin relied on him heavily. “Also what?” Leylin found the puzzlement on his face laughable. “She also said… she’s here to help my Lord construct a Magus Tower…” Azure Mountain City used to be the Ouroboros Clan’s enemy. However, they were now coming over trying to get into Leylin’s good books. Faisal had lived for over six hundred years, but even he seldom met with such a situation, which led to his confusion. “In that case, I don’t need to see her. Help me choose a good location in the headquarters. My Magus Tower shall be erected there!” This had previously been decided upon with the Azure Mountain King, and he was merely going through with the agreement. Leylin did not pay much heed to these matters and waved his arms,
sending Faisal away.
The reason he had not built the Magus Tower at headquarters originally was because he was afraid of being made use of. However, things were different now. He was the one ordering others to work, and nobody would come and bother him. Leylin naturally wanted the Magus Tower to be located in headquarters now.

“What’s wrong?” Leylin asked Faisal who stood in the same spot, eyes full of mixed emotions.

Though these were just a few simple words, Faisal felt cold sweat running down his spine. Leylin was now no longer a Marquis he had jurisdiction over, but a great elder! He was the highest authority, the commander of the entire Ouroboros Clan, a Morning Star Warlock!

Every one of his titles was like a huge mountain weighing down on Faisal’s heart. When all these identities gathered on a person, this person was someone he definitely needed to look up to.

“It’s like this. Your Grace. My family, the Dose and Olka families, and the others are all willing to contribute to my Lord’s Magus Tower…” Faisal gritted his teeth and spoke in a low voice.

From his perspective, it seemed that Leylin had accepted offerings from outsiders, which was a very dangerous sign. It signified that he had lost all trust in all these traditional, well-known bloodline nobles, which was absolutely unacceptable.

At this thought, he could not help but begin to reproach his own allies. Though saving the elders was extremely important, they could not be so hasty. As expected, it resulted in this terrible result. Faisal could not help but begin to envy the Blood Serpent Family. As long as Freya was still around, Leylin’s relationship with them was secure. There were even rumours that Leylin would have one child inherit the Blood Serpent’s Marquis position, which immediately resulted in the envy of multiple bloodline families.
The bloodline of a Morning Star Warlock, and especially that of Leylin, who was unbelievably talented! His bloodline was said to be extremely pure and something many bloodline families did not dare hope to have. However, the Blood Serpent Family had gotten this so easily.

It seemed that in the next few hundred years, the Blood Serpent Family would definitely rise sharply. Of course, it would be under the lead of the Farlier Family. Thinking this, Faisal could not help but sigh inside while simultaneously beginning to wonder if there were female Warlocks like Freya in his own family.

“Good! Go and discuss with Azure Mountain City!” Since there were people in a hurry to send him money, Leylin obviously accepted it. With the cooperation of so many families, his Magus Tower would be built more quickly, and its quality could even be raised. Why would he have anything against this? Watching Faisal fall back so fearfully, Leylin couldn’t help but laugh.

“Only trying to mend relationships now?” How could sly old Leylin not know what he was thinking? He never had plans of having anything to do with those families, and this was the situation.

This peaceful life continued for a few months. In these few months, the Ouroboros Clan’s surroundings were calm. He had the few key regions in the Phosphorescence Swamp in his palm, while the allied forces seemed to have some worries. With both sides showing restraint, the region completely regained its peace, and and the fires of war seemed to have been put out. However, only Magi who saw things long-term could see the undercurrents under this calm surface.

In the headquarters of Ouroboros Clan, Warlock City, a giant and awe-inspiring Magus Tower was slowly constructed, full of dignity. Many high-ranked Warlocks and Magi were all crowded around the
tower whose structure had just been completed, and began work on the details. Every lower-ranked Warlock would bow slightly as they passed by, eyes full of reverence as they glanced at the Magus Tower. This was the Morning Star Magus Tower, where their pride lies, of the Morning Star Warlock, Leylin Farlier!

“Your Grace! The main body of the Magus Tower has been completed, and it has also been connected with the cores of all the other Magus Tower in the headquarters. It has the highest authority!”

Faisal tried to curry favour as he spoke, while Leylin had his hands behind his back, watching his own Magus Tower with interest. Compared to the Magus Tower he had constructed himself, the resource consumption of this Morning Star grade one was terrifying. It could be said that the price could not be measured in magic crystals. If not for taking advantage of the huge reserves of the Azure Mountain King, as well as the generous offerings from the old bloodline families, this would not be so successful.

“How much more time will we need?”

Leylin watched the Magi that looked like ants floating at the sides of the Magus Tower, numerous runes flashing in their hands and entering the Magus Tower. He could not help but frown. There was someone he knew among the ones working on the tower. It was the host who he had seen at Azure Mountain’s auction. However, Leylin had no intentions of going forward to meet the said one. He now had a different status, and it wasn’t as if there was anything to say even if he went there.

Faisal produced a white handkerchief and wiped his cold sweat before he spoke.

“The main body of the Magus Tower is the easiest part to construct. As long as there are enough materials, work will be completed
quickly. However, the embedding of the spell formations, and especially the construction of the energy pools as well as the design of the tower genie needs to be done by you personally. Just the preparation for that will take ten years, and that’s the fastest…”

“As I expected!” The blue rays vanished, and Leylin’s eyes returned to black, seeming warm.

“I will be out for a period of time. Handle the matters at headquarters with Freya and Parker. If there are major issues, the majority decides!”

Though secret imprints could be used for communication, they did not extend to a wide area and could easily be intercepted and listened in on, or even used to determine locations. Hence, Leylin typically did not like using them.

“My Lord, you’re leaving?” Faizal’s eyes widened, and he even forgot to wipe off his sweat.

“Yes. There is a bloodline organisation gathering for the upper class. Lord Paul from before invited me!”

There was nothing to hide, and Leylin admitted this easily. He also had thoughts of exploring the central continent. In the past, he had had too little strength, but after attaining Morning Star power, he could go to many places in the central continent.

“It’s very important to be on good relations with other bloodline Warlocks!” Faisal expressed his approval of this and spoke with some regret, “It’s a pity that we can’t be involved in interactions between Morning Stars, and can’t provide you with any useful information!”

Faisal was merely a student, and him knowing which organisations Ouroboros Clan was on good terms with was already a lot. As for which high-ranked organisations the Morning Star Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan were close to, or who their foes were, and who was only friendly on the surface, all that was a shot in the dark. At this crucial moment, he did not dare give suggestions, and Leylin
could only make his own judgments. If not, if anything were to happen, he would not be able to take on the repercussions. “Don’t worry, I will judge for myself.” Leylin nodded.
The sun slowly sank beneath the horizon, the sky a brilliant blend of red and orange. With twilight looming, the town looked shabby and dilapidated.

At the only inn in the heart of the small town, a boiling cauldron of voices could be heard. The aromas of different wines and barbequed meat mixed with the musky smells of sweat and body odour as it permeated the air.

As the night was chilly, the hotel had long shut its windows and doors. Even the cracks were closed up, thickening the smell inside further.

But the drunk patrons with their flushed puffy faces and the exhausted travellers didn’t mind it at all. In such weather, so long as there was a place to keep them warm, allowing them to enjoy some strong wine along with some barbequed meat, they would feel like they were in heaven.

“Master, your meal!” A heavyset kitchen lady efficiently brought forth a few dishes and served a customer. There was only one young man at the table and the kitchen lady only stepped away after stealing a glance at him, blushing with satisfaction.

“A Breaking Dawn Lord! Such a handsome man, he must be a noble lord!”

Leylin couldn’t be bothered by the kitchen lady’s thoughts. His eyes were fixated on the sumptuous meal set in front of him, yet his mind was wandering elsewhere.
After he’d given the orders, and made the necessary arrangements for the entire Ouroboros Clan, he had begun his own journey. As he wasn’t pressed for time and hadn’t had the opportunity to venture far previously, he planned to take his time to explore the vast central continent, which was filled with a fascinating mix of various odd ethnicities and mixed bloodlines who coexisted with other humans. The geographical landscape was also much more confusing. Coupled with the pollution of the radiation of some high-ranking Magi, it was no wonder that almost every location seemed bizarre and puzzling.

Abandoning the convenience of travelling by his airship, Leylin had to admit that with his current walking pace, to cover the entire central continent, he would have to use at least a century as his unit of measurement!

There were many bizarre scenes along the way. However, as Leylin had already been promoted to the Morning Star realm, his scope of vision was extraordinary. Thus, under the probing of his soul force, the number of scenes that he could not understand were greatly reduced.

His current urge to venture to this small town was to seek out a rumoured marvel.

Leylin’s supposed leisurely ventures were not for recreation. He wanted to research these odd phenomena to strengthen his A.I. Chip’s analysing capabilities by accumulating more information in its database.

Leylin pondered about his current situation:


After advancing to Morning Star, limitations of calculating soul force relatively based on spiritual force data started to surface. As
the A.I. Chip lacked the necessary data on soul force, it could not successfully compute the soul force statistics, which somewhat frustrated Leylin. “Before a Magus reaches rank 4, they depend on their meditation technique to accumulate spiritual force. However, after rank 4, other aspects of the soul get involved. My Kemoyin’s Pupil can’t be regarded as an advantage anymore…” Leylin sighed. His meditation technique was way too low-level, and the information that he had gathered was actually from the Wing of the Sun. As compared to spiritual force, the training of one’s soul force was complicated and profound. Even the Wing of the Sun was not able to completely elaborate on the details, let alone allow the A.I. Chip to reinforced to the highest standards. As such, Leylin thought of his previous research into spiritual bodies. Through that, he could accumulate statistics and information on the power of souls in an attempt to complete his own database. After some thought, Leylin couldn’t help but scrutinise the two columns at the sides: [Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique level 5 derivation progress: 6.92%. Soul Force database completion: 26.8%!]
“Ugh… Such a heavy burden with a long way to go…” Leylin smiled wryly to himself. Aside from the derivation of the meditation technique, the Kemoyin’s Pupil had only four levels to begin with. This was the boundary that many Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks failed to break through. Based only on the A.I. Chip’s simulations, Leylin ambitiously wanted to challenge the uphill task of compiling his own fifth level with zero resources. And the collection of the database on souls was even more difficult.
Once the point mass was condensed, one could purify and advance spiritual force into soul force. Looking back, Leylin’s past research as an acolyte and a rank 1 Magus was such a joke. The scientific law of life and death of one’s soul was not easily identified. At many times, there would be a theory that ruled the system on one day, yet on the next day, it would become obsolete and be overthrown.

“The rules and regulations of developing one’s soul are really deceptive!” Leylin was evidently upset. In fact, the souls that he met were not exactly souls, just some remnants and unwilling fragments of memories that were the result of energy transformation. Hence, even if that information proved to be of some use, it could only be a reference.

Only after the promotion to Morning Star and acquiring soul force would he be better equipped to start a further exploration of the soul. And that was what Leylin was striving extremely hard and advancing for.

All in all, the physiques of the humans in the central continent were much stronger than the ones in the south coast and Twilight Zone. Also, with the abundance of energy particles, the probability of dead spirits transforming into souls was greater. Coupled with the mix of radiations of many high-ranked Magi everywhere, this place gave off the feel of a very primitive and complicated place for spirits.

Whenever such an environment surfaced, Leylin would hit the town to collect data. That was the reason for Leylin’s presence here as well. “Every year during hazy winter nights, a ‘Spirit Wave’ phenomenon occurs at midnight…” he mumbled to himself.

At the same time, he acutely felt many pairs of eyes peeking at him, making him laugh to himself.
Seated alone with a huge spread of delicacies and yet eating none of it, he was attracting the wrong kind of attention. After some thought, Leylin picked up his cutlery. The central continent’s standard of living had always been higher than that of the other regions. Even a hotel in a small town served food that was considerably more delicious. Not only did they serve a glass of honeyed wine, they also served white bread and steak. The steak was tenderised with baking soda and a mallet, making it extra tender. Coupled with some honeyed wine, it tasted rich and mellow.

Observing that Leylin had begun to eat his food, the drunk patrons either shot him a glance or cursed him under their breath and thereafter turned their attention away from him. A faint light glowed from the depths of his pupils.

Even at this small hotel, there were some Magi present! It seemed like they had been attracted by the same Spirit Wave phenomenon. With a sweep of his soul force, he was able to immediately identify a few black shadows in the corner. A pair of grandfather and grandson seated next to the counter also caught his attention. “Hmm! A few rank 2 Magi, and another rank 3 Vapour Phase, not bad!”

As a Morning Star Magus, Leylin was now qualified to scan these Magi. And because he was able to restrain the energy undulations on his body to its point mass, Leylin was regarded by those present at the hotel as an ordinary Knight in training that had happened to set foot in this town. No other oddities were detected. The pair of grandfather and grandson caught Leylin’s attention the most. After all, for a rank 3 Vapour Phase Magus to bring along his grandson for such an outing, there must be something important. And if it was indeed related to the Spirit Wave, Leylin was even more interested in finding out about it. The grandson tagging along with the elderly Magus looked to be
about thirteen or fourteen years old. With a pair of wine-red eyes and golden blonde hair, he was very adorable. Judging by the freckles on his face and energy in his darting eyes, it was clear he seldom ventured outdoors.

‘All these Magi can’t be here just to view the phenomenon right?’ Leylin stroked his chin. Although the Spirit Wave was a magnificent sight, he was sure there were no other benefits. With the exception of idle individuals like Leylin, who came specially to collect data and check the Spirit Wave out, the number of Magi who came forth had greatly reduced in recent times, and highly-ranked ones like this old man were a rare sight.

“Hehe…. Spirit Wave is about to begin, I am going to strike it rich this time!”

“Mmm! That’s right, I have been waiting for this!”

Wearing shabby clothing, the drunk patrons were yelling at the top of their voices. Some of them were adventurers, some were mercenaries. Others were gold panners and such. They had all gathered to try their luck.

Although the Spirit Wave had no huge instrumental use for the Magi, it was still considered a gold mine for the commoners. And along with the huge amount of rubbish and remnants left after every Spirit Wave, there was bound to be some good stuff. If one could find it, they might very well have a windfall. This was one of the reasons why the small town was still in existence.

Otherwise, although the Spirit Wave posed no threat, the commoners would have found it difficult to be neighbours with a mass of spirits. Other than Magi, no other would have such courage.

The oppressive, loud chiming of a copper clock rang. Many of the tourists were jolted awake. Even those blurry-eyed drunkards were nudged awake by their companions.
“The midnight bell has tolled!” “The midnight bell has tolled!”
Many adventurers called out in excitement as they started to wipe and polish their weapons.
These weapons had no effect on the spirits and were also not meant for dealing with them. In the face of such enormous treasure, the ones they had to be wary of would be one another instead!
“Let’s go!” The old Magus picked up a napkin to wipe his hand. His movements were elegant and relaxed, evidently having undergone training. On the other hand, the young grandson was still rather stiff.
Leylin followed the crowd and stepped foot outside the hotel.
At this moment, a full moon hung in the middle of the sky. A thin layer of fog surrounded it and blurred the moonlight, forming a silvery-white halo.
The chilly wind whistled. The northern air in the night was known to be bone-chilling. Gushes of white vapour could be seen emerging from the adventurers’ noses and mouths as they breathed.
Many doors in the small town suddenly slammed open and a crowd started pouring in.
A majority of the crowd were well-built men. Some of them looked ferocious while others were old with multiple scars on them. They were carrying baskets or knapsacks, weapons in hand. In short, they were all well-equipped, one way or another.
The residents of the small town were evidently prepared to join the army of scrap collectors. This might also have been the reason why they decided to live here, or their aim in being here. At the same time, they were very unfriendly towards the foreigners who stayed in the inn, casting grave and stern looks at them from time to time, clearly treating them as prey.

As compared to the residents, who were great in number, the adventurers and mercenaries were outnumbered and divided. They gathered together, and couldn’t help but grip tightly onto the cleavers and swords they held. Although they knew that the others did not harbour good intentions, these people who they could consider ‘one of their own’ made them feel more at ease in comparison to the sea of residents outside.

It was fortunate that although the two groups of people both shot glares at one another, they didn’t land themselves in a more heated conflict before the Spirit Wave could begin. At this moment, a bizarre energy wave spread across the town, sending chills down everyone’s spine.

As for Leylin and the other Magi, the feeling was more distinct. “It’s beginning…” Leylin gazed at the haloed moon in the sky. According to the A.I. Chip’s readings, the intensity of a type of dark and cold energy waves was rapidly rising. So much that the
region around the small town seemed to be enveloped in what seemed like a domain barrier.

‘The Morning Star realm? No! Its intrinsic qualities slightly fall short, it can only be a force field belonging to rank 3 Magi at most!’
The appearance of such a barrier made Leylin’s pupils contract, but he relaxed soon after.

“It’s… It’s appearing…” At this moment, a voice sounded, trembling either due to dread or excitement.

Leylin followed the crowd. Numerous rays of light that resembled shooting stars converged into a long, glittering river, flowing slowly from the perimeter of the small town.

Brilliant rays with resplendent streaks splashed across the horizon. Leylin’s eyesight allowed him to see the items in the rays of light clearly.

A single yellow leather shoe flew past, with tiny white wings on each side. The shoelaces were left on the side in a mess, yet the tip of the shoe was polished and shiny.

Behind the leather shoe was a black walking stick, likely processed directly from some sort of vine. Similarly, it was flying with the wings below its handle.

“What… Is this thing…” Leylin’s looked baffled.

Soon after, he also saw a rag doll, a shabby table and chair, and other items fly past, such as the kind of flower vases that were usually placed on counters.

“Is this a gathering of dilapidated commodities?” He was speechless, but still commanded the A.I. Chip to record this scene and monitor the energy waves.

After the junk flowed away along the river, Leylin could no longer bring himself to laugh.

Right behind the flow of light, a faintly discernible white line gradually drew nearer.

When it came closer, he could see numerous unfeeling faces. They
had long, jet black hair, and were clothed entirely in white, slowly walking over along the ray of light… Perhaps walking would be an inaccurate description, because a cloud of mist hung under their feet. Their entire beings seemed to drift forward continuously while suspended in mid-air.

Although the adventurers and mercenaries next to Leylin had long heard about such a phenomenon, their legs still trembled with fear. They couldn’t even keep their jaws shut, and the sounds of teeth chattering could be heard as they shuddered.

In comparison to those people, the residents of this town ought to have gone through this before, and had experience. Although their faces were also deathly pale, they could still compose themselves, and were not humiliated.

The densely-packed silhouettes converged to form an enormous tide, which surged up violently next to the small town.

Leylin stood at the side, solemn, as his A.I. Chip frantically recorded the data. “There are so many spirits. Perhaps something major once happened in the vicinity, and it might be related to high energy radiation…”

In actual fact, many of the strange sightings observed across the entire central continent were caused by battles between high-ranking Magi or contamination by radiation. Such phenomena usually did not die out even after thousands upon thousands of years, and instead expanded outward unceasingly, vying over territory with the humans who lived there.

Hence, the prevention and cure of such contamination was a hot research topic for many of the large forces.

Numerous white phantoms squirmed towards a particular direction unhurriedly. Among them were males and females, children and the elderly, yet they were all expressionless. Their hair was let down, and covered their pupils.

Such an odd phenomenon made even Leylin’s scalp tingle.
Souls have always been seen as something highly bizarre and idealistic. In his quest for more knowledge, he had no choice but to carry on.

“Huh?” At this moment, the grandfather and grandson he had been observing with his soul force suddenly made a move. Upon seeing the wave of numerous spirits, the elderly Magus seemed excited, and fished out a yellowing notebook. He appeared to be making comparisons, and even left the town secretly.

On the other hand, the other rank 2 Magi exchanged looks, then went to their separate corners and took out various materials from their robes to display on themselves.

“They are likely trying to use the power of the Spirit Wave to alchemize the magic items that are coming through!” Leylin’s alchemic skills were high enough for him to be a grandmaster. With merely a slight glance, he immediately found a clue. Feeling that it was beneath him, he snorted coldly and didn’t bother about it.

He thought of leaving a phantom at where he was, while he himself would slip into the cracks of darkness so that he could follow the grandfather and grandson out.

In the notebook that the grandfather had taken out earlier, Leylin had seen something incredible.

“If that’s really the case, it will be interesting!” A brilliant light flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

“Grandfather… Are we… Really going to be around these spirits?” The grandson was only a cowardly acolyte. Seeing the translucent spirits, he tugged the elderly Magus’ sleeve in fear, his face pale.

“These spirits are of the lowest level, and aren’t likely to attack, what’s there to be afraid of?” The old Magus reproached, seemingly feeling a little helpless.

Although his grandson had pretty decent innate skills, he didn’t have much courage to speak of.
“But… We’re about to integrate into the sea of spirits directly! Once they discover that something’s not right, they’ll definitely rip us into pieces!” The old man’s reassurance did not calm the young boy down, but instead made him more fearful.

“If we don’t integrate into the spirit channel, how will we get to the tomb and obtain ‘that’?” An unyielding look was written across the old man’s face. He grabbed his grandson’s arm, then took out a few scrolls and ripped them apart.

*Buzz!* Upon ripping open the black scrolls, the pair was enveloped in a dull white glow. After the radiance dispersed, both of their figures started to become ghost-like, and they even emitted energy waves similar to those of spirits. The hostile glares that the spirits had been shooting at the pair also vanished immediately.

“Done!” The elderly Magus, who was becoming translucent, patted his chest. “This is a spell that has been passed down our family for generations, which can make these spirits temporarily view us as their kind…”

Seeing this, the boy was finally at ease, and squeezed into the stream of spirits together with the old man.

“What an intriguing spell!” A ray of light flashed in the air, and Leylin’s silhouette appeared, “It’s unlike the traditional spells from the central continent, and instead has a style reminiscent of the astral plane!”

Although the spirits were rich in number, most of them were of very low rank. They were absolutely incapable of detecting any flaw if a Morning Star Magus chose to conceal himself deliberately. It was only until Leylin integrated into the Spirit Wave that he finally felt different.

“Space! It’s the power of space! No wonder that guy called this place a spiritual channel!” Leylin muttered under his breath. And
he realised the path that the spirits were taking was oddly isolated from the rest of the central continent, forming a special channel. Here, even if something was visible to the naked eye, it might actually be as far as hundreds of thousands of kilometers away. If one could grasp the rules of this channel, they would be able to use it to do things that many Magi would think unimaginable.

The old man ahead seemed very familiar with this place, and dragged the young boy along, advancing quickly. A blue light twinkled in Leylin’s eyes as he followed them closely. “He’s using the spirit channel to hide something! I’m sure he must have been a Morning Star before his death!”

The further they went down the path, the more serious Leylin became. There were many dangers here that even he would be unable to ignore. If not for the fact that there was someone leading the way in front, he could not be sure if he would make his way through successfully.

There were fewer spirits lingering around at the back of the wave. A silver ray of light had appeared on the ground, and the old man was walking on it together with his grandson.

The minutes ticked by, and when they finally arrived at a particular site, ecstasy spread across the old man’s face. “Found it!”

Leylin’s footsteps came to a halt. The elderly Magus in front of him was standing under a huge butternut tree. The enormous forks in the branches formed an eerie symbol with three heads. Upon seeing this tree, which seemed like some sort of landmark, the old man choked up in agitation, even shedding a few tears. “We’ve finally found it! The ancestral tomb!”

“Right here?” The young boy looked at the forked and ostensibly demonic branches, as the silver moon shone with an oddly nefarious glow, making him shiver in cowardice. “Yes, right here!” The old man was so excited that he nearly broke into a dance. “Our family’s cemetery is almost always hidden in the
spatial rifts. Only when the Spirit Wave hits once every hundred years can we pass through the spirit channel to get here…”

A blazing radiance lit up in his eyes. “In the tomb lies the meditation techniques and magical equipment belonging to our ancestor. Just these items are sufficient to revive our family…”

“If that’s the case… Why didn’t our ancestors just leave this behind?” The young boy asked doubtfully.

“I’m not too sure myself. Anyway, this tomb is our family treasure, that’s for sure!” The old man seemed a little baffled himself, but it would soon be replaced by an even greater madness.
All my efforts in coming here are for your sake.” The old man watched his grandson lovingly.
“You have the best talent in our family. As long as you have a high-grade meditation technique and magic artifact, advancing to rank 2 and rank 3 will definitely not be an issue. You even have hope of reaching Morning Star!”
The old man was so emotional that he trembled, on the verge of spitting froth.
This immediately caused Leylin, who was hidden, to roll his eyes. He was the most qualified to talk about the difficulty of reaching Morning Star, and this old man was just spouting nonsense.
If one could reach Morning Star with just better talent and a high-grade meditation technique, the continent would not have so many Crystal Phase Magi who had lived out their lives without being able to advance.
However, Leylin did not think them completely wrong. The many planes were so vast, and if their ancestor really had some method of reaching the Morning Star realm unimpeded, it could very well be possible.
“But…” The young grandson seemed to hesitate, seemingly not believing in this judgement. If not for the tomb of his ancestor, and his blood-related grandfather bringing him here, he might even have had plans of leaving.
“Awakening the ancestor’s spirit and honour with my blood and
heading towards the door of success, with hell as the final destination…”
The old man took a silver-white dagger and sliced his wrist, dripping the blood on the roots. He continuously chanted something, as if conducting a solemn ceremony. With the blood spreading everywhere, coupled with the eerie surroundings, the young boy shrunk back.

“Grandpa, look!” All of a sudden, his pupils shrunk and he tugged at the old man’s sleeves while beginning to yell. Following his gaze, the blood on the tree roots had been absorbed by the soil and roots quickly. It was as if water had been sprinkled on a sponge.

“This is a defensive mechanism that our family set up. Only the blood of the descendants, coupled with the correct chants, can open it…”

The old man spoke slowly. However, Leylin’s eyes lit up with suspicion, “A bloodline lock. A bloodline lock again! Could they be a Warlock family? They don’t have any Warlock undulations on them though…”

*Huala!* After absorbing the old man’s blood, the giant walnut tree’s messy arrangement of branches began to tremble, and the trunk turned a bloody red.

*Ka-cha!* All of a sudden, the middle of the trunk cracked apart to form a hole, and a passageway that led downwards could be seen.

“Follow me!” The old man walked ahead, and the young grandson followed closely behind, hands tugging tightly on the old man’s sleeves. He appeared terrified.

Leylin bowed his head in thought for a moment, but eventually followed behind them.

The passage was short, and in no time they reached a tomb. The old man lit an oil lamp in the middle, and under the dim light the tomb presented itself to Leylin.
This underground room was very small. There were two gargoyles at two ends, seemingly standing guard over the place. Between the two gargoyle guards, a stone coffin appeared before them, with sealing runes on the surface. The young man’s teeth began to chatter as he pulled at his grandpa’s sleeves tightly, “This—There’s nothing here at all. Let’s leave as soon as possible. I have a bad feeling about this…” “What are you afraid of?” The old man flung his sleeve in annoyance, and a stream of air began to flow. The light breeze blew over the lights and darkened the tomb. “Look closely!” The old man’s voice was hoarse and full of emotion that he could not conceal, “I lit the lamp just so you could see this…” The young man could not help but widen his eyes, his pupils enlarging as well. Through the dark yellow flames, he could see a great number of coloured murals on the walls of the tomb. Through the murals, he could see the process of a Magus acolyte struggling ahead, from rank 1 to rank 3. After that, there was a legendary battle. The Magus in the mural, who was also the owner of the tomb, seemed to have obtained something in the battle and reached Morning Star. The young man’s eyes widened. However, other than a scaly monster with multiple eyes and arms battling his ancestor, he recognised nothing else. “This is the most brilliant piece of our ancestor’s history. It only appears when this oil lamp is lit…” The old man’s voice showed his pride, “If it’s an outsider who doesn’t know this mechanism, they will be attacked!” Leylin had hidden in a crevice in the shadows. He was surprised by the mural on the wall. The monster that had eventually been killed was one he had seen before, on another mural. “We meet again, Beelzebub. Or should I say the Sovereign King of Gluttony?”
Leylin’s voice was light but resolute. In ancient times, a clone of the Sovereign King of Gluttony descended upon the Magus world, causing large numbers of casualties. It was eventually killed, body split into countless pieces. One of the pieces fell into the hands of the Quicksand organisation, becoming the cause of the Parble Family’s tragedy after Robin obtained it.

It seemed like the owner of the tomb had once been a participant in that great war, and had been extremely fortunate to obtain a gluttony imprint.

‘Then it’s obvious how this fellow advanced to Morning Star after victory,’ Leylin touched his chin, “With the power of gluttony, spurring on one’s spiritual force to break through and reach the Morning Star realm is quite possible!”

He already had an imprint like this in his hands, and had even been prepared to use it to advance to the Morning Star realm. However, he had already made ample preparations and ended up not needing external support. Leylin had no wish to be connected to Beelzebub anyway.

This was someone who was probably at or above rank 7! Just a finger would be enough to crush the current Leylin. It was obvious why he would not want to have any connection with him. Even if something related to Beelzebub fell at his feet, Leylin would want nothing to do with it.

“Based on the records of the ancestor, his meditation technique, as well as the treasure that can help one break through, are all within the coffin, accompanying his long sleep…”

The elderly Magus’ eyes shot out a piercing glare as he ambled forward slowly, arriving in front of the coffin.

A mechanism was activated, creaking sounds coming out as a red light shot out of the two gargoyle’s eyes. They shrugged off their stone skin and pounced towards the old Magus.
*Weng!* A golden membrane suddenly rose on the Magus’ body, separating the sharp claws of the gargoyles from his person. A look of disbelief appeared on the old Magus’ face, “I am his descendant and came with directions. Why am I being attacked?”

*Creak!* The gargoyles would not answer him. The two immediately let out piercing sound waves, and as the berserk waves swept through the acolyte immediately fainted.

“Blu!” The old man’s eyes turned red, hands morphing into beast talons.

*Ka-cha!* He grabbed hold of one gargoyle and viciously ripped it into two. Great amounts of soil and rocks flew everywhere, and the other stood very still, the light on its body reserved. It began to emanate a violent energy.

“Want to self-destruct?” Light burst out of the old Magus’ eyes as he charged to the front. A thick layer of light, alike to the kind emitted by a Spear Spell, covered his sharp claws.

*Pu!* A single claw swept forward, and went through the gargoyle’s body like a knife through hot butter. With a twist of his hand, a giant mechanical heart was gouged out.

After losing its power core, the aura on the gargoyle crackled and disappeared, leaving it dead.

“Blu, Blu! Wake up!” The old man undid the transformation of his hands, and a green radiance that was full of vitality wrapped around the young boy.

Minutes later, the young boy came to, looking dazed.

“This is probably not the ancestor’s tomb, but a place sealing some terrifying thing. If not, why would this sort of guard be around?” The first thing the young man did after waking up was warn his grandfather.

“I’m not willing to leave just like this!” The old Magus’ eyes turned red, and he looked stubborn, “Perhaps, those two protectors were a test by the ancestor, or a joke on the younger generation…”
Even so, even he himself could not believe his words. However, his perseverance and the cry in his heart were urging him to open the coffin and obtain the things within.

“I’ll take just one look, I promise! Then we’ll seal this place and leave immediately!” The old man’s eyes were distant as he approached and pushed the cover of the stone coffin away, revealing the items within.

“Hm?!” Leylin, who had been watching at the side, suddenly had a change of expression.

What was inside the giant coffin was indeed the remains of a Magus. His body was rather thin, but his hair and eyebrows were still present. He looked lifelike, and the imposing aura of a Morning Star emanated from his body.

Though his eyes were tightly closed, his features were extremely sharp, with a steadfast resolution and strength. His hands were folded before his chest as if holding something.

With Leylin’s eyes, he was able to see a stone rune without any trouble. Though it was different from what he had, this was definitely a true gluttony imprint!

“I told you there’s a treasure!” The old Magus was in a bad situation. He looked dazed, as if he was being controlled by something. He went forward, hands reaching for the rune.

“Grandpa!” Just as his fingers were about to touch the rune, the young boy’s cries pulled him back.

“What’s going on? Why am I here?” The old man was bewildered, but immediately after, a stranger situation occurred.

With wailing that sounded like hell reappearing, multiple black shadow fingers appeared within the tomb, threads of black gas being dispelled from the old man’s bosom.
“Why is the temperature rising at this rate?” The old man swiftly took out the black notebook from his chest. Not only was the notebook heating up, traces of black currents swirled around it.

*Buzz!* With a sudden spike in the book’s temperature, the old man scrunched his face up in pain as he subconsciously tossed it from his hand.

A big patch of the old man’s hand was scalded from the momentary contact. White blisters started forming on its surface.

Even with a Magus’ physique and the protection of his innate spell, he was still injured this way!

*Woo woo…*

“The almighty Beelzebub, you are the king of hell, the darling of the original sins, with the control over gluttony. The desires for all cuisine lies in your hand….”

The phantom became more intense as the chants and songs of praises filled the entire tomb area.

Leylin had seen such situations in the past, hence he immediately became vigilant. As for the old man and his grandson, they huddled together in a corner with looks of regret on their faces.

A black ray of light swept out from the notebook, and like a remnant of an illusion seeped into the stone rune on the coffin.

After the flow of light had dissipated, as if it had completed its mission, the notebook burned to ashes in front of their eyes.
Colourful light flowed out of the stone rune, and traces of this light started connecting with the Morning Star corpse. Like lightning, the ray scanned through the tomb as the Morning Star corpse opened his eyes and once again descended upon this world!

“I… I… Am I Ezekiel? Or Gordius?”

“No! I am Beelzebub! Sovereign King of gluttony, Beelzebub!”

The Magus’ eyes looked lost in the beginning, but they soon glowed brightly. His Morning Star domain had apparently descended, and both grandfather and grandson fell to the ground.

“Morning Star! It’s our Morning Star ancestor!” By now, the corpse was sitting partially upright. The old man was ecstatic and was about to speak when a flash of ruthless light sparked from the corpse’s face.

A ray of crimson red flashed across the old Magus and he disappeared immediately without a trace.

“Mmm! A pretty good supplement! And it appears to be a direct descendant of the corpse too!” The red glow in the Morning Star Magus’ eyes intensified. He stroked his belly and darted his eyes towards the young teenager.

“Ah…” The scene a moment ago left the young teen on the verge of collapsing. He opened his mouth and attempted to speak, but could only murmur some incoherent words as his body froze up and stiffened.

The gaze from the Morning Star Magus did not linger for long on the young teen, as it swept its line of sight behind him instead.

“Eh….” Following an indistinct sigh, Leylin’s silhouette emerged from the crevice.

“Morning Star Magus?! You’re the kid from before!” The words spoken by the corpse in the coffin were filled with much astonishment, and a lot of deep seated hatred.

“Indeed, projected clone of Beelzebub. It is I.” Leylin admitted his
identity magnanimously. With the opposite party’s gluttony imprint on him, Leylin couldn’t deny the facts. And by now, he should have been able to discern all that had happened anyway. During ancient times, Beelzebub’s clone died and the remains had transformed itself to become a huge rune of gluttony, and thereafter he attempted to invade the different coordinates of the world of Magi. Magi who attained the gluttony rune would have been tainted by the sin of gluttony, and hence have their appetites awakened. They would also get the ability to advance beyond their realms, and additionally with the power of gluttony in their body, they became potential host bodies for Beelzebub himself! The Magus buried here was lucky to have obtained a remnant. And after his own Morning Star breakthrough, he seemed to have noticed something amiss and hence sealed himself in and isolated himself from the probe of Beelzebub. Unfortunately, the notebook that he regularly carried around had been tainted over a long period of time, and it was even entrusted with by of spirit fragments. After a very long time, his grandchild, bewitched by the notebook, had come forth to open the coffin and release the clone. “Unexpectedly, you have advanced to Morning Star!” The Magus possessed by Beelzebub looked extremely imposing. Every single move was filled with an imposing aura, and behind him the image of a huge demon appeared that vaguely resembled the king of hell. “How do you intend to compensate for my previous losses?” It was odd that this clone did not pursue the matter further, and instead hinted at settling it. Leylin looked even more baffled as he stepped up to the clone. He looked it right in the eye, “Do you take me for a fool?”
Once the words were spoken, the clone immediately changed colour. Leylin continued, ”As you are now, you aren’t even a clone, but just a fragment of a spirit with some power of projection! Besides, this Morning Star Magus corpse’s point mass has followed its spirit and returned to the astral plane. While this high-quality body has been contaminated by the power of gluttony, with your current reliance on this Morning Star body, how much strength can you exhibit?”

*Buzz!* As the darkness loomed in, the earth looked like it had been isolated them from the outside world. Silver radiance filled the whole sky, and the stars scattered all around. A real Morning Star domain had descended! Once the clone’s domain came into contact with Leylin’s it immediately shattered. Witnessing the outcome, the expression on the clone was hideous while Leylin heaved a sigh of relief. His previous prediction had been accurate indeed.

Of course, he could have stopped the old man, but he wouldn’t have been able to deal with the Magus inside. Allowing both dangers to happen simultaneously and dealing with both issues at once was Leylin’s preferred style.

After all, he did incur some hatred from the Sovereign King some time ago, and he naturally couldn’t let the matter rest and allow the opposite party to develop their plans. Even though this was just a projection of a clone, it wasn’t wise to ignore him. He could have gone out to replenish himself well, and someday might even become an uncontrollable threat! Leylin definitely wouldn’t want that to happen, yet letting it go was also not an option. The best course of action then would be to destroy him completely when he was at his weakest.

“You…..” Beelzebub’s clone was a mess, with strands of hair standing on end, exhibiting his extreme anger.

“Goodbye!” Disregarding his opponent’s rage, Leylin waved his
hand. Terrifying energy condensed into his palm, forming a red flame that then morphed into a huge blazing serpent that coiled around him.

Under the terrifyingly high temperature, the original stone coffin immediately turned to ashes. Leylin eyed the blaze indifferently.

A black radiance appeared, gradually glowing as it sucked in all the fiery blaze. After the fire died out, Beelzebub could be seen opening his mouth wide and swallowing the flames.

What was even more bizarre was that after swallowing them, his aura seemed to have grown stronger.

“Devouring capability! Your understanding of the power of gluttony has reached the level of laws!” Leylin clapped without flinching. Based on the power of the opposite party’s body, attaining this level was no big deal.

“It’s a pity, though. Your foundation is too weak. How much more energy can you absorb?” Leylin’s words angered Beelzebub so much that his face contorted in rage.

Any absorption of power would have a limit to it. And since the opposite party had no mass point belonging to the Morning Star, there was an obvious upper bound to it. Leylin focused on this point and attacked him mercilessly.

It was advantageous that the opposite party was currently weak. It wasn’t likely that Leylin would have such opportunities in the future.

*Boom!* A torrential blaze, like a huge wave, swallowed Beelzebub. He became unsure, not daring to swallow any more.

Uncountable black tentacles appeared on his body, wrapping him up.

Upon contact with the scarlet red flame, the black tentacles immediately started dissolving. Counteracting each other, the attacks from both sides gradually weakened.

“Ivory Devourer!”
Ferocious black teeth, that seemed to have melted in the void, surrounded Leylin. Yet, it was blocked by a red shield that had Giant Kemoyin Serpents carved on it.

“Indeed, how many more attacks can you sustain?”
The huge black teeth grazed across the surface of the shield, leaving deep grooves and creating big sparks. At this moment, Leylin’s looked like he had a plan in mind.

“You…” Bundled within the black tentacles, Beelzebub could only blurt out a single word and was soon enveloped by the fiery red blaze…..

“This….. What is happening?”
The teen lying on the ground looked up and saw what looked like the aftermath of a big battle. At long last, the Magus with a head of black hair appeared and stood among the stars in the sky. He looked like a God descending onto the earth, moving the fiery red blaze to swallow up the strange creature in the coffin.

A long time later, the shimmering stars started to dim, and the black hair Magus came before the teen. His face looked tired but was filled with delight.

“Your name is Blu?” Securing the other gluttony imprint well, Leylin smiled.
Leylin obviously would not want to keep the consciousness of the opposite party. To deal with a rank 7 and above, one could be drowned in their layers of crafty schemes. Unwittingly, the radiation contamination would have become a handful, similar to the example of the old Magus and his ancestor.
However, these gluttony imprints were very much worth researching. And the laws themselves were of much importance!

The power of laws! It was like a door separating rank 6 and rank 7. Only after attaining the necessary power of laws could one be promoted to the Breaking Dawn realm and above. As such, Leylin showed no traces of politeness and kept the gluttony imprint to
study thoroughly later. Although at the present moment, his rank was considerably low, he would definitely come into contact with it in the near future. “Yes, Master. I am Blu!” The young Blu bowed respectfully to the Morning Star Magus. It was the kind of respect that the whole central continent would give to one!
In a comfortable cabin, Leylin gazed at the copious amounts of books that he had, satisfied. On this trip to the town, not only had he managed to record the Spirit Wave data, he had also ended Beelzebub’s conspiracy, and got rid of that hazard. He even got hold of a gluttony imprint! It could be said that he had reaped huge rewards. He even obtained the research notes and experimental data from the acolyte, Blu. Those used to belong to Blu’s Morning Star ancestor. In return, a few spiritual force potions were sufficient to make the other party shed tears of gratitude. The research and insights of that Morning Star Magus inspired Leylin greatly.

As he hurried off, Leylin did not forget to command the A.I. Chip to record all of this information and enrich his database. After settling the matters regarding the Spirit Wave and Beelzebub, Leylin boarded the private airship gifted by the Fallor Family, the Colossal Serpent. It was about time for the appointment he had arranged previously, thus he decided to abandon his more leisurely mode of transport.

As it was an airship custom-made for a Morning Star Magus, the Colossal Serpent had a comprehensive list of functions. The slightest tremor would not be felt even if it were to be caught in a
thunderstorm. At the same time, all the flight paths and supply points across the central continent were open to the Colossal Serpent, and provided free maintenance services. This caused Leylin to be more impressed by the Fallor Family. Of course, this might also have been the actual intention of the Fallor Family and the Monarch of the Skies. Even though it was an industry under the control of a Breaking Dawn Magus, it still dominated the air freight business across the entirety of the central continent, and had to spend their money somewhere else.

As compared to trading in various aspects, this amount spent on currying favour with a Morning Star Magus was nothing. The Colossal Serpent travelled at high speeds. At full speed, it only took Leylin less than half a month to arrive at his destination, Creevey Highlands!

This area was jointly protected by numerous Bloodline organisations, and was equivalent to a meeting point that was specially open to all Warlocks. It housed many hybrid races, Warlocks and those whose bloodlines had been contaminated. Rumour had it that as long as one had the bloodline of a Warlock, or had any associations with bloodlines, they would be taken good care of here.

Thus, in the central continent where the Magi oppressed numerous races and the humans thrived, Creevey Highlands was like a paradise for those of the other races and mixed bloods who were cast out by both sides.

A private exchange would be held between Morning Star Warlocks in Creevey City, the biggest city in the heart of Creevey Highlands. Paul and Philip had also tried their best to invite Leylin here to interact more with the other high-ranking Warlocks. This, of course, was naturally what he wanted, and he’d immediately agreed.
As he didn’t want to attract too much attention, Leylin did not head towards the airship berth next to Creevey City, and instead, landed in the countryside. He put the Colossal Serpent aside and proceeded to Creevey City by foot. The road was bustling with activity carriages, gold-smelted vehicles, enchanted flying carpets and other means of transport. Numerous Magi from all walks of life formed a vast stream of people who came and left through the main gate. There was a characteristic that most of these Magi shared, and that was the immense saturation of their bloodline aura. Regardless of whether they were Warlocks or people from other races, or even those whose bloodlines were contaminated, none of them were discriminated against like they would have been in the outside world.

Upon passing through the city gates, Leylin intentionally scanned the guard at the side. He was of a humanoid race, and stood at two metres tall. He had a long dog-like nose and ears, but otherwise, the rest of his body apart from his head was similar to a normal human being’s, just with more fur.

‘A Canine Militant?!’ Leylin immediately thought of the Kobold’s close relative. While the Kobold was rumoured to share the same lineage as the ancient giant dragon, the Canine Militant was certainly a species of bestial humans. However, the people of the central continent widely classified them as close relatives, or even considered them as belonging to the same race as Kobolds.

Having purified the bloodline of the ancient red dragon before, Leylin understood clearly that the Kobold really did share the same lineage as the dragon race! Yet he didn’t feel any dragon bloodline aura exuding from these Canine Militants at all, not even the slightest bit.

‘If I write a paper with this as the thesis, perhaps my name will be
made known across the entire continent, although it won’t bring me any benefits…”
Leylin’s mind wandered off, but he immediately trashed this idea that would only bring him endless trouble.
“However, the average strength of these Canine Militants is actually similar to that of the Kobolds. On top of that, they share similar appearances, no wonder the people of the central continent confuse the two!”
Sensing that these Canine Militants had the average strength of a rank 1 Magus, Leylin couldn’t help but regard highly the strength of the Warlocks in control of this city.
Individually, they had outstanding levels of strength, and furthermore, they possessed remarkable tracking and scouting abilities. Just these Canine Militant guards alone were enough to intimidate unlawful people who were waiting for a chance to cause chaos.
“Welcome to Creevey City! This is a Warlock city, please abide by the bloodline rules and respect the other races. Please choose the district you wish to proceed towards from the following: Lava Terrains, Great Woods, Heart of the Ocean, Tomb of Darkness, Central Core…”
Upon entering the city, a prompt sounded in Leylin’s ear. Five huge teleportation formations surfaced in front of him, taking in large amounts of people as rays of light flashed periodically.
The entirety of Creevey City had been divided into five major districts, according to the four creational elements: earth, fire, wind and water. They were split according to the concentration of the elemental particles.
Among them, the Lava Terrains was a blazing district made up of a large amount of magma and soil. The concentration of its earth and fire elemental particles was almost at its maximum.
The Great Woods was actually a humongous ancient tree. All sorts
of Magus buildings were constructed on its leaves, where many Magi lived. The wind and plant elemental particles were the highest here.

The Heart of the Ocean was a gigantic building complex that floated on water, surrounded by vast seas and sandy beaches, exuding strong tropical vibes.

As for the Tomb of Darkness, it was where the darkness elemental particles were present in the highest concentration, and was also the place where one’s aura was the most suppressed. As there were many Warlocks who chose darkness, this location still occupied a firm spot in the city.

If one looked from a bird’s eye view, he would be able to see that the entire city had a golden central district at its core, the rest of the town being equally divided into four parts.

The azure blue sea, the fiery red magma, the lush green of the giant tree, and the darkness with all things wilting; these four districts each presented rich colours, yet were distinctly separate. Dazzling and uniformly distributed, none of the colours bled into the other.

The central district at the heart of it all was naturally the place where the interaction between these four districts took place, and also where the public facilities were located.

Here, the enormous yet complicated geographical landscapes were forcibly mashed together by the power of the Magi, forming a marvel that was a rare sight in nature.

‘In order to balance such a huge wave of elemental particles, and maintain the stability of the environment…’ A blue glow flickered continuously in Leylin’s eyes.

‘At the very least, it requires setting up a gigantic spell formation under the entire city. The sheer number of magic crystals spent on just operating and maintaining it alone would amount to an astronomical figure…’

Leylin gained a deeper understanding of the strength of these high-
ranking Warlocks.
Glancing at the people around him choosing which district to be
teleported to, Leylin tilted his head in thought. He decided not to
head towards the central core and the Tomb of Darkness, but
instead walked into a turquoise teleportation spell formation, being
transported to the Great Woods along with other Magi.
Rays of light flashed, indicative of the teleportation process. Leylin
no longer felt uncomfortable when experiencing spatial changes
during such a short journey. After all, his current body was now
able to withstand teleportation across different planes through the
Astral Gate; this was like peanuts to him.
While the other Magi were still feeling giddy from the residual
effects of teleportation, Leylin had already walked out with both
hands behind his back, and started sizing up the Great Woods.
The place they had been transported to was evidently a crossroad.
When Leylin arrived outside the teleportation spell formation, the
first sights he saw were the humongous leaves and numerous Magi
structures.
He walked to the edge of the path before realising that the wide
road he was walking on was actually just a twig of the giant tree.
Sunlight shone through the gaps between the leaves, casting
mottled shadows on the earth.
As the crown of the tree was too large, the rays of light were very
dim. One could see the glow of numerous Eternal Light spells and
eternal flames in front of the Magus structures.
“Whew…” The Great Woods could just be the highest place in the
whole of Creevey City. Perched on the giant tree, one had a
panoramic view of the other districts. Leylin took in the sights of
the fiery magma, the sky blue seawater, and even the huge gloomy
tomb.
It was only the central core district that was shrouded in a layer of
haze, and it couldn’t be seen clearly.
‘Indeed, that area is an important strategical location, controls must be put in place!’ Leylin thought as he wandered along a branch. Most of the Magus structures in the Great Woods were built on tree leaves, and were evenly distributed all the way to the top. If any Magus wanted to cover the entire district completely, he would have to scale the tree endlessly. On the way, a few yellow and green and birds flew past Leylin from time to time, occasionally resting on high twigs and tweeting, which was pleasant to the ears. Under the effect of the gigantic purification towers, even normal creatures could withstand the radiation contamination unintentionally emitted by Magi, as long as it was not too much. Hence, average humans and other animals were able to exist in many Magus cities across the central continent. “Such an environment seems to be what the Elves would like best!” Leylin couldn’t help but check out the passers-by on both sides. In Creevey City, most of the population was made of Warlocks and other races. However, in the Great Woods district, the most commonly seen race was the Elves, who had pointy ears and tall and slender figures. One had to admit that the appearance of the Elves possessed many special characteristics unique to Warlocks. If not for the difference in their aura, and the ears which gave them away, many Magi would likely mistake Elves for Warlocks.
519 - Picking up Scraps

“Lily’s Cosy Cottage?” Leylin looked at a shop’s signboard made of oak leaves and written in both the continent’s characters and elven language. Compared to all the other shops, this shop was evidently more attentive to details. Even the corners had greenery with plants and flowers sprouting, emitting pleasant flora scents.

“Welcome!’
As he stepped foot into the shop, a boyish-looking elf greeted Leylin genuinely with respect and a smile, ”Respectful customer, how can I be of service to you today?”

“Oh, I am just looking through, I see you sell many miscellaneous things here?”
Leylin’s eye swept over to the sales counter. There was a huge clutter of spell materials like ore, furs from living creatures, scrolls and other handcrafted articles. There was great variety, but almost all of them were without tags and placed haphazardly. And despite that, it looked like an organised mess.

“Yes, from the islands of the south coast to Sky City, everything in existence can be found here!” The elven shop owner beamed and replied proudly.

“Really?” Leylin plastered a smile on his face. These days, the number of objects that could garner his attention had been dwindling. However, from his observations a moment ago, he did notice some valuable materials on display. For a tiny shop like this,
it was rather rare.

“Eh?!”

Leylin was about to exit the shop when an item in a corner caught his attention.

“Is this item for sale too?” Leylin casually picked up a spell scroll. It was a very old scroll covered with dust and marks of damage. Wrapped up between both the horizontal axles was not common spell paper but some kind of beastly skin, with a hint of glossiness in the texture.

Leylin unfurled the scroll and saw the records of a rank 2 spell model. It looked like it was well used as the content had become very faint.

Magi could use their spiritual force to break and extract the knowledge and spell models within scrolls, and many methods of learning included the use of them. When a scroll was repeatedly used for study, it would eventually deteriorate to this state.

Magi required the spell model’s structure to be stable, and would thus demand extreme precision and quality. Hence, a scroll in such a condition would have totally lost its value.

Afterall, an unstable spell model could prove to be fatal!

As such, this old scroll had just been left there, unsold for a long time. Thus, seeing Leylin pick this up, a light of puzzlement flashed in the elven store owner’s eyes.

“This is the spell model of a rank 2 spell Hand of Illumination. The original price was five thousand magic crystals, but since it is your first visit here, my offer is three thousand magic crystals! Just three thousand magic crystals and it will be yours!”

“Is that so?” Leylin gave a smile that was not a smile and looked at the elf till he felt somewhat ashamed and hung his head down.

The price quoted had exceeded way past the original value of the scroll, causing the usually noble and elegant elf a little embarrassment. However for the sake of his livelihood, he had to
do it.
“You are a wind elf, right?”
Leylin could feel the wind elemental particles hovering around the opposite party. It was unusually light and graceful, so Leylin couldn’t help but ask.
“Yes! Yes, my Lord!” The middle-aged store owner lifted his head. There were many Magi who could recognise him as an elf, but not many were able to specifically identify him as a wind elf.
“The wind elven tribe is rumoured to be close to going extinct in the continent. I didn’t expect to meet one here!!”
Leylin smiled and rolled up the scroll. He picked up a black ore from the sales counter, “Including this item, a total of three thousand magic crystals!”
The elven store owner scrutinised closely and upon confirmation that it was just an ordinary ore that wasn’t particularly valuable, he nodded his head in agreement.
Noticing the shame in the elf’s eyes, Leylin did not criticise further. After settling the transaction, he left the shop.
“Sigh… even a graceful and elegant elf cannot escape from nature’s laws…” Leylin turned around to take another look at the exquisite door of the shop.
According to ancient legends, the elves had migrated here from the other world and had many different branches elsewhere.
Among the elves, the moon elves, gold elves and wind elves possessed the highest grade of bloodline, similar to the nobles of the human race, possessing high prestige and good reputation. They were also regularly depicted as protagonists in the works of many poets.
As for the dark elves and such, they were regarded as the odd-one-outs among the race, hence not comparable to the rest.
And so, for a noble and elegant wind elf to fall to this stage, Leylin couldn’t help but sigh under his breath.
“But, since you are the one who started this, you can’t blame me…..”
Leylin laughed as his palm stroked the cover of the scroll. The strange texture of it made him gleam with joy as his eyes lit up.
[Beep! After the database comparison, item confirmed as the epidermis of an ancient creature Horned Rhinoceros!] the A.I. Chip reported and Leylin’s mood lightened.
Although the spell template on the surface of the scroll was not very useful, the material used was remarkable. An ancient living creature, the Horned Rhinoceros was similar to the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Both of them could reach Morning Star in their adulthood. The epidermis contained a high level of spell resistance and was a necessary material for many Morning Star Magi equipment.
For Leylin, being able to obtain this for a mere three thousand magic crystal was indeed a fabulous deal.
Not only that, but the ore he’d picked out was also made of a high-grade material secret silver! Although it was embedded under layers of ore, Leylin’s A.I. Chip was still able to detect it.
‘This small shop made a huge loss from our transaction, their two most valuable items had been bought by me…’ Leylin sniggered silently.
After his promotion to Morning Star, and after attaining the supplementary assistance of soul force, his A.I. Chip’s probing capabilities had increased by leaps and bounds, and could be considered unprecedented in history.
Very few items could hide their true form from its scans at this juncture.
As such, his current advantage was too huge. Even if he did nothing substantial every day and just browsed the multiple shops casually, he might be able to pick up items that were needed for his Morning Star research and breakthroughs.
‘It’s just…’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Doing so would be too
pompous and would attract the wrong kind of attention. If the secret of the A.I. Chip is leaked, there might be more trouble…’
“Besides…..” Leylin’s pupils sparkled.
He helplessly shook his head and arrived in front of a teleporting spell formation at a crossing, where two Magi were waiting.
These two Magi had obvious characteristics of a different race. One had a head that resembled that of an octopus while the other’s body was covered with wolf fur.
Leylin walked up and gracefully made his salutations. “Lord Paul, Lord Phillip! It’s been a long time…”
“We hope we are not imposing on you, Lord Leylin!” Paul laughed and pointed at the ore Leylin held in his hand, both exhibiting a tacit mutual understanding.
“Morning Star Magi are indeed not easy to deceive, your soul force’s probing ability is commendable, detecting the secret in this ore so quickly!”
Leylin rolled his eyes silently but did not mind it much.
After all, the probes by his own A.I. Chip were usually done covertly and until now had not been discovered. Other Magi would have thought that he had depended on his acute soul force to uncover the treasures, and so it wasn’t considered a big deal.
“Yes, we apologise for interrupting your leisure. Our social gathering is about to begin, come…” Philip courteously replied.
Leylin didn’t reject him, “Sure, please show the way!”
He was absolutely sure that the entirety of Creevey City had a specialised spell that was used for detecting Morning Stars. However, he did not use any spell to alter his own appearance and energy waves, as he was confident in his abilities and was certain he would not be easily discovered.
After some careful consideration, he concluded that it was understandable.
Creevey City was the main headquarters of the entire Warlock
Union, it held a lot of symbolic importance. They’d provoked their fair share of Morning Star Magi already. If they didn’t have an increased alertness and powerful warning system, the prosperity of the city was going to short-lived.

Leylin unenthusiastically thought about this as he followed Paul and Philip to the front of the teleporting spell formation. These two made no attempt to conceal the energy waves on their bodies, and caught many looks of reverence. The Warlocks voluntarily stepped aside and left a wide berth for the huge teleporting spell formation, so much so that only the three of them were left using it at that moment.

No matter where they were, Morning Stars carried a terrifying amount of prestige.

Rays of silver light flashed, and when the scenery was visible again Leylin found himself at an unfamiliar place. Every building was short, and the concrete slabs on the road had many depressions on them, appearing very shabby. Even the density of energy particles in the air appeared to be very weak, similar to the rest of the central continent.

"Surprised? For the core area of the Creevey City with its four elements to be so simple and crude is unexpected?" Paul remarked as he led Leylin onto another path.

*Ka-cha!* When Leylin stepped foot on one of the slabs, it seemed to come alive, floating up and carrying Leylin forward at the speed of lightning.

“A little, yes!” Leylin nodded his head in agreement.

“To the core of the castle!” Paul spoke to the concrete slabs and all three accelerated.

Once that was done, he looked back at Leylin, smiling as he explained, “Due to the limitations of our bloodline, we Warlocks in the central continent have experienced a long period of darkness. As such, many of the Masters suggested during the construction of
the city that the core shouldn’t be too extravagant, and needs to be equipped with a good sentry system.”
“I see!” Leylin nodded.
Bloodline Warlocks could make use of their bloodlines to advance rapidly, experiencing no real bottleneck at ranks 1, 2, or even rank 3. All they had to do was wait for their bloodline to mature. They left regular Magi far in the dust, their rate of advancement extremely terrifying. However, there was an obvious disadvantage. Bloodline shackles! This curse hounded bloodline Warlocks eternally, causing them to be forever unable to surpass the power of the source of their bloodline!

It was impossible to notice this disparity at the lower ranks, and wasn’t especially obvious even at the Morning Star realm. However, once one entered the circles of the Radiant Moon realm, there were few Warlocks who had the bloodline to advance that far. Hence, Magi were superior to them at that point. Once the terrifying Breaking Dawn Magi came into the picture, the gap between the two was made even more apparent. Due to the emotional instability from their bloodlines, they were rash and quick-tempered, often offending many Magi. On top of that, many of their bloodline experiments were considered taboo, which resulted in the discontent of many.

As a result, when the Warlocks fell, the Magi joined forces and held them down.

Under these conditions, the original Warlocks in the south coast and Twilight Zone died out.
The situation was slightly better in the central continent. Just as the Warlocks were pressured to the point that they were practically at death’s door, the reopening of the astral gates helped the Warlocks bring in new blood. In the ancient era, the splendour of Warlocks had come from the support of bloodlines from other planes. Though they had not completely regained the glory from the past, there were a few Warlocks who had successfully reached rank 5 and therefore preserved the inheritance of Warlocks. Creevey City had been built under those circumstances. Even the core region was made of buildings passed on from ancient times, and had not been altered. It held traces of the progress in its history. “The glorious efforts of every bloodline ancestor should be studied and revered…” Leylin couldn’t help but praise from the bottom of his heart. If not for the perseverance of the high-ranked Warlocks in the past, all of these traditions would have been destroyed. His environment would be millions of times more difficult to endure than it was now. Hence, Leylin was full of sincere gratitude towards them. *Click!* While they were in the middle of their conversation, the three concrete slabs landed in a depression within the square of a simple castle, setting themselves inside steadily. They seemed to fit perfectly, with no gaps at all. “This is the core of power in Creevey City, The Blood Stronghold!” Paul presented to Leylin. The three Morning Star Magi left the square, approaching the gate to the castle. Leylin naturally began to size up this ancient castle. Its black walls were mottled, bringing about with it the aura of ancient times. Though it looked shabby and was not even comparable to his previous Onyx Castle, the powerful energy undulations and the ancient aura was something that his castle lacked.
“Haha… welcome, welcome! Lord Leylin, we’ve been waiting for you for a long time!”

Outside the gate to the castle, a middle-aged Caucasian man with silver hair had been waiting for a long while. After seeing Leylin, his eyes gleamed as he immediately went forward to shake both of Leylin’s hands.

His palm was extremely thick and warm, full of power. It was akin to the stream of water under a layer of ice, the strength buried within the depths by the layer of ice.

His starry eyes seemed as clear as spring water, and there seemed to be a sense of affinity between them that affected even Leylin.

‘Is he really taking me in sincerely? Especially since we’re meeting for the first time?’ Leylin revealed a smile, looking extremely touched, while he was astonished. Though he was also a Morning Star Warlock, the other party was probably overdoing it by being so enthusiastic.

At this thought, he silently commanded the A.I. Chip, ‘Scan!’

With the bonus from his attaining soul force, the A.I. Chip’s capabilities at energy scanning had become even more outstanding. It could even catch hold of some information from Morning Star-ranked Warlocks.

Under the scanning of the A.I. Chip, the human form before him turned into a 3D image and was projected in front. Data constantly updated itself at the side.

As expected, even if the other party was a Morning Star Warlock, they were still unable to discover the undulations from the A.I. Chip. Leylin, who saw this, could now completely relax.

[Target is a Morning Star Warlock! Determined affinity to be with illusory elements.]

The A.I. Chip’s first conclusion allowed Leylin to make some guesses.

[Beep! Energy undulations have been discovered, determined to be
passive illusions. Target can automatically form an illusory force field around his body, causing all beings in the vicinity to develop favourable opinions of him.]

‘As expected. An illusory ability due to his bloodline? It’s even able to affect Morning Star Magi. how terrifying…’ Leylin silently put up his guard even as he put on the sunniest smile he could. He acted as if he now had an even better impression of the burly man. Upon seeing this, Paul and Philip exchanged a glance, laughing as if they had reached a tacit mutual understanding.

This burly man had inherited the bloodline of the ancient Illusory Crystal Scorpion, a creature whose formidable illusory abilities entered the realm of the terrifying. Even Radiant Moon Magi had previously been affected by his illusions. Besides, he hadn’t even unleashed all his abilities, merely his automatic force field. Even if Leylin did discover this, he still had an excuse.

It was impossible to use just these illusions to manipulate a Morning Star Magus, but if he could influence someone secretly and give hints to the other’s mind once in a while, the other party would unknowingly work in his favour. That was very much possible.

At this thought, the grins that Paul and Philip had on their faces became even brighter.

For young Warlocks, this was a test to enter the core area. At the same time, it was a test of loyalty. It couldn’t be helped, since after the attack by the Magi, these Warlocks were now paranoid.

“I’m Leylin. Leylin Farlier. It’s an honour to be able to meet you!” Leylin snickered in his heart, though his expression looked strangely sincere as he bowed with a noble’s etiquette.

“Haha, we’re all bloodline brothers. Just call me Jalon.”

Jalon and Leylin began to discuss things affectionately, and he secretly sent Paul a gaze that told him he could relax. After the
assurance, Paul and Philip could put their hearts at rest.
“You were the only ones left for the gathering. Come in!” Jalon stood by the gate and invited them. The three immediately entered.
*Po!* As if having passed through a formless layer of water, Leylin immediately felt the excitement boil in his blood once he entered the ancient castle. It was as if he had reached a very comfortable area, his body unconsciously relaxing.
“This…” He revealed a look of astonishment. This was practically a heaven for bloodline Warlocks!
“You must be surprised,” Jalon said with pride. “The bloodlines of all Warlocks will resonate with the Blood Castle, to the point that their bloodline will even mature faster when here!”
There was no need for any more words. Leylin immediately understood how important this place was for lower-ranked Warlocks. It was a godly place that could halve the time one needed to advance!
The Blood Castle was huge, but there was no such thing as a servant here. It seemed rather empty, with at most a few puppets and shadow servants. The barrenness surprised Leylin.
Jalon brought Leylin and the other two deep inside the castle and opened a giant golden door. He then loudly informed the many Warlocks inside, “Come! Let us welcome our newest comrade Leylin Farlier of the Ouroboros Clan!”
“Welcome! Welcome!”
“Come on. Cheers!”
Behind the giant golden door was a large ballroom. There were giant crystal chandeliers all along the ceiling, gemstones glittering with kaleidoscopic light.
The many Warlocks in the ballroom were separated into their own little cliques as they spoke in low voices. Occasionally, one of them would go and lead a few dances.
A few musicians that had been summoned as slaves through
necromancy were seated in a corner, performing elegant and graceful music.
When Jalon interrupted them, the ballroom first lapsed into silence. It was short-lived, however. The Warlocks’ gazes flitted over to him, and they began to cheer for the entrance of another comrade. Leylin immediately felt a twinge of fear, but ultimately relaxed. ‘The number of Morning Stars here nearly exceeds the total number I’ve ever met before. Looks like this is a circle that one can only enter once they have a certain amount of power…’ Leylin returned greetings every once in a while, and he couldn’t help but sigh ruefully when looking at the number of Morning Star Warlocks here.
Warlocks who could advance to the Morning Star realm clearly had bloodlines that surpassed the bloodlines of ancient creatures of the Morning Star realm. This fact was pretty obvious. Leylin carefully distinguished between the mess of tyrannical auras in the hall.
‘The Savage Rhinoceros, Water Monkey, Ancient Velociraptor… There are too many. There are still many completely foreign bloodlines as well! These must be bloodlines of Morning Star creatures from other planes.’ Leylin looked around politely, but he was completely startled inside.
Like every other Warlock, most of those present here looked incredibly stunning. Even the unique characteristics of their Morning Star bloodlines had no effects on their external appearances, and instead added a feeling of natural strength. “Come, Leylin, let’s go sit! We need to discuss Jupiter’s Lightning.” Paul brought Leylin along to greet each circle individually, and then pulled him into a corner.
Jalon had long since taken his leave. Here, multiple long sofas had been shifted to form a circle. The Morning Star Warlocks seated her had frightening energy waves coming off their bodies.
These Warlocks had very distinct features. Among them, some had octopus heads, clearly Warlocks of the Spirit Circle. Besides them were a thin old man and young girl, who had the traits of ancient Wind Wolves.
It was obvious that all the Morning Star Warlocks in this group were from Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair. If this was in the past, Gilbert and the other two were likely to be part of this company. However, currently, Leylin was walking up there alone.

“Lord Leylin, let me introduce you!” Paul and Philip pulled Leylin down to sit, before Paul started the conversation.

“These are the two eldest Warlocks in Spirit Circle, Lords Blair and Brunn!”

“It is my pleasure to meet you two!” Leylin said while bowing respectfully. The appearances of spirit Warlocks were so eccentric that even Leylin could not figure out whether those two were brothers. Their octopus heads made it much harder to differentiate between the two.

Philip also introduced a few others to Leylin. “This is the eldest Warlock of our Wind Wolf Lair, Lord Cybel. Beside him is his granddaughter, Palesa!”

“Greetings, Your Graces!” It was obvious to Leylin that the conversation here would mostly centre around Cybel. After all, even his granddaughter was of Morning Star status, showing that he was not a simple fellow. The aura of his bloodline was so concentrated that it caused even Leylin to feel fear.

Only such a bloodline could produce offspring who were also Morning Stars.
“You’re Leylin? Gilbert’s student?” Cybel slowly opened his eyes, seemingly from a long period of rest. This contrasted with Palesa who was looking at him from the side, her gaze full of curiosity. Leylin seemed to be too young even for a bloodline Warlock.

“Yes!” Leylin admitted.

With a Morning Star mentor as their leader, there was no doubt that Leylin would benefit greatly from joining their team.

“Since you are Gilbert’s disciple, you’re no stranger to us,” Cybel nodded his head, “Philip, pass him the astral coordinates!”

“Yes, Sir!” Philip solemnly passed Leylin a ball of light that resembled a star.

“What is this?” Leylin exclaimed. His pupils shrunk, and the A.I. Chip immediately started analysing it.

[Beep! Discovered astral coordinates. Recording information in astral experiments database.] The A.I. Chip responded immediately.

“This is an astral coordinate, one that is attached to a miniature plane. Do you know what a plane is?” Cybel’s explained slowly.

Leylin recalled a description in an ancient book he’d read as he replied, “It is a place that is not high enough in rank to be called a world. It is a tiny space where the rules are fragmented and incomplete, but the worth of any plane greatly exceeds that of a pocket dimension.”

The difference between a plane and a pocket dimension that could only be located within a world was that a plane could directly take root in a turbulent dimension, and also had the potential to grow into a world, just that it was extremely rare.

Some planes had absolutely no signs of any living soul, but some others nurtured the existence of many powerful beings, and were not much different from worlds, just like the plane the devils resided in.

“That’s right! This is one such plane. It’s the plane where transactions take place between Morning Star Warlocks!” Cybel
exclaimed.
“A transaction plane?” Leylin’s pupils shrunk.
“Yes. Don’t you find it extremely troublesome that every time we gather, we have to travel such long distances, especially when a specific material is required for the transaction? A few Radiant Moon Magi thus gathered to create a miniature plane right next to the Magus World, as the headquarters and base of transactions for Morning Star Warlocks.”
Cybel slowly revealed what was going on behind the scenes. Were it not for his being a Morning Star, and also a bloodline Warlock, Leylin would never have the opportunity to obtain this information. “However… even if it is convenient to have a transaction using an astral gate, the energy it uses up…”
Astral gates opened up passages to a different plane. The energy they consumed to make this possible was extremely overwhelming, especially if an object or even a living organism had to pass through. The amount of energy required might even exceed the value of the object itself, which was shocking enough to make any Magus puke blood.
“Hehe… that’s only when we connect to distant planes…” Cybel shook his head, “The amount of energy required to connect to a plane naturally increases with distance. Forget transactions of goods, even the cost of exchanging spiritual force messages will not be worth it. However, a transaction plane is a different deal. It’s located right at the edge of our world, so the energy required to open a gate to the place is so little it’s practically negligible. Were it not so, we wouldn’t have used such a thing either…”
This explanation was very logical, and Leylin nodded his head in agreement. But on the inside, he was shocked by the Warlocks’ magnanimous gesture.
To forcefully seize a plane and hook it up at the edge of the Magus World as the core of transactions impressed Leylin quite a bit. The
The strength and spirit of these Radiant Moon Warlocks was amazing.

“Once you set up your very own astral gate, you can use these coordinates after branding them on. What you’ll find inside will definitely be a good surprise…” Cybel was speaking extremely slowly, as if he’d fall asleep at any moment. Yet, Leylin nodded seriously, “Thank you, Your Grace!”

Judging from how one needed to be at the Morning Star realm to even participate, the things he could find there would definitely not disappoint him. Furthermore, it would definitely suit bloodline Warlocks especially. On top of that, the mode of transaction was very convenient, and one could even complete the transaction from within their own Magus Tower, which would be incomparably swift.

Were Gilbert still here, Leylin would have acquired these coordinates the moment he advanced. But he wasn’t. Cybel granting him these coordinates was no small matter, and hence Leylin sincerely expressed his thanks.

Cybel closed his eyes with a grunt of affirmation before moving on, “Paul, it’s time to talk about Jupiter’s Lightning.”

Just the mere mention of the name turned all the Warlocks present pale. The deterring power of a Radiant Moon Magus was truly terrifying.

“I do not understand, what is it exactly that Jupiter’s Lightning has against my Ouroboros Clan? I apologise for my lack of knowledge, I spent all my time before this focusing on my promotion, and rarely participated in such affairs…” Leylin’s question revealed his own shortcomings.

“We understand. Breaking through to the Morning Star realm does take up all of one’s time and energy. It is fully understandable that you didn’t take notice of anything else. Let me explain the situation.” Leylin’s specious response and overly young age immediately made Paul think that he had gotten an answer out of
Leylin. He told the story from the very beginning. “You can see for yourself that this so called union is only a very loose alliance. There’s actually a lot of smaller circles within it.” Paul took a sip of the green beverage on the table and pursed his lips. “Yet the three of us Spirit Circle, Wind Wolf Lair and your Ouroboros Clan have always been collaborating with each other. Exactly three years ago, we took control of a region that we had been coveting for, banishing the small Magus organisation already present there!” “We originally only thought that they were a small organisation, and we didn’t expect that they actually had the backing of Jupiter’s Lightning. This was how we invoked their wrath…” Even though Paul’s explanation seemed simple and direct, Leylin felt there was more to it. There was likely to be something in that region that neither side would want to give up on, perhaps some top secret or some other substantial benefit. Magi were shrewd people. If not for such a thing, they would have solved any dispute long ago. It was impossible for something so minor to become such a big deal. “After that, we surrounded that region and began our attack on Jupiter’s Lightning. However, they, too, struck back, ambushing the three elders of your clan…” Paul’s expression was gloomy. One could easily tell that their clan hadn’t had an easy time either during the series of attacks. “Jupiter’s Lightning has a Radiant Moon Magus. How exactly did we manage to endure their attacks?” Leylin finally asked the question that had been stewing in his mind for ages. “We’d managed it due to the alliance between the three Kemoyin Dukes and Lord Cybel. The three Kemoyin Dukes were already accomplished enough to match up to a Radiant Moon Magus. With the addition of Lord Cybel, we even held the advantage…”
Paul sighed before he continued, “However, now…”
Leylin’s expression sank. He realised that with the loss of three Morning Star Warlocks, they were currently in a precarious situation.
“What would you want me to do about the impending war then, my Lords?” Leylin was cautious, already prepared to immediately reject them if they asked him to do anything dangerous.
The moment Cybel, who was sitting in the centre, opened his eyes, it was as though a ray of lightning had streaked through the place. The glow was so bright it hurt Leylin’s eyes. “Even though Jupiter’s Lightning has harmed three of our comrades, we will never admit defeat! We won’t let them off!”
“I’ve already sacrificed quite a bit to invite a Radiant Moon Warlock to help us suppress the Radiant Moon Magus on their end!” He exclaimed, giving them some extremely important information.
“A Radiant Moon Warlock?!” Leylin cried out involuntarily.
Rank 5 bloodline Warlocks were the highest ranking Warlocks in the entire central continent, and it was a reliant source of strength that bloodline Warlocks relied on to oppose the Breaking Dawn Monarchs. They were very rarely seen, and not one had even shown up at this gathering. Leylin was incomparably shocked at Cybel being able to acquire the assistance of one such being.
Due to the reinforcement by the Warlock’s bloodline, he would definitely far exceed a Magus of the same rank. Jupiter’s Lightning’s Radiant Moon Magus would be no match.
With the amplification by the bloodline, the best Radiant Moon Warlock would make even a Breaking Dawn Magus wary of them. This ensured that the heritage and status of Warlocks was passed down in the central continent.
Such characters were the foundation of every Warlock organisation’s strength. It was not easy to ask one for their
assistance. And yet, Cybel had managed to do exactly that. This made Leylin wonder what sort of conditions he’d offered to make that deal.

Leylin rubbed his chin as he looked at his surroundings. Even though this was not the first time they’d heard this news, all the Morning Star Warlocks had excitement written on their faces. Cybel turned fierce. “Our mission is to join forces and eradicate all the remaining Morning Star Magi in Jupiter’s Lightning at once, and then seize Crystal Mountain completely!” “Agreed!” “Agreed!” “I have no objections!” The Warlocks present at the scene all nodded simultaneously in agreement. Afterwards, all the attention was placed on Leylin. It was time to hear his stand on the matter.

“If it isn’t too dangerous, I’ll agree. However, first, I’d like to take a look at the memorandum and crystal records!” Leylin’s face was filled with gloom, but he still eventually agreed to it.
After the banquet ended, Leylin decided to stay at the Blood Castle for a while. During this period, he constantly received intelligence about the situation at Crystal Mountain.

The Crystal Mountains was the main area where the conflict with Jupiter’s Lightning happened, a mountain range that was located near the aisle of Arcelor. The Crystal Mountains were named so because of its production of a type of high energy crystal ore. This ore could, to an extent, replace magic crystals as a power source for puppets, or to build formations and artifacts. This led to a decent demand for the ore, which kept the prices high.

It could be found everywhere on Crystal Mountain, even on the surface. This made extracting the ore easy, causing the place to be regarded as a natural source of wealth.

Of course, even so, it could only entice weaker Magi. It wasn’t nearly enough to draw the eyes of Morning Stars.

Ore mines of such quality were already present in Jupiter’s Lightning, Spirit Circle, and even within the Ouroboros Clan. It wasn’t worth a fight between Morning Stars.

The real worth arose from a rumour about the place. Legends recounted that this was originally the headquarters of an ancient large-scaled Magus organisation Scarlet Crescent. During the war, the ancient Magi had peered into the future and decided to conceal the entire region with spell formations. They left their heritage
there, and it would only appear when it was time. Many Magi had brushed this off in the beginning in mockery, calling it nonsense. But on-site inspections by Cybel and the others revealed that those remains indeed existed, and even hid enormous wealth!

Jupiter’s Lightning had learned of this information at the same time. As such, there was a disagreement about the ownership of Crystal Mountain. Battle soon ensued.

Both sides had shown restraint in the beginning. The battle was restricted to a small spatial rift, and only involved those at or above the Morning Star rank.

But when the Radiant Moon Magus found himself at a disadvantage against the combined forces of the three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks and Cybel, he felt extremely embarrassed. Thus, this matter abruptly intensified.

What followed was the three Dukes being lost in the astral plane, and the allied armies besieging the Ouroboros Clan in the midst of trickery.

Were it not for the unexpected factor called Leylin, the Ouroboros Clan could possibly have been annihilated in this tempest, ending the legacy of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks in the continent.

‘You merely had a small disadvantage, and your revenge was already so vicious…” Leylin had already formed an image of the Radiant Moon Magus of Jupiter’s Lightning. He was a cruel, petty man. Normally, such characters were not to be feared, but once one fellow possessed such enormous abilities, Leylin would dread meeting him.

“According to rumours and the data collected by mentor and his team, the surfacing time of the remains of the Scarlet Crescent would be when the sun, stars and moon converge and when the arc of Oake appears…”

Leylin put down the ‘top secret’ documents, and the A.I. Chip
began calculations. 
[Time format identified to be from the ancient era. Converting into the calendar used by the central continent, date is approaching soon…] 
Leylin stroked his chin, “No wonder the struggle got so violent that they even wanted to get me involved…” 
As for the intentions of Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair, he was very clear on what they wanted. They might have made some pact with the three Morning Star Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan previously, setting regulations about the distribution of the spoils. The other party in the pact had disappeared, but the contract still stood. And yet, they were unwilling to just transfer these benefits to him. 
As such, getting him involved and having him represent the Ouroboros Clan, they wanted to rework the pact imminently. If they didn’t they’d have to share all the benefits they painfully acquired with Leylin, and it was not a welcome thought. However, even Leylin agreed with this matter. Simply put, the benefits were meant to be for the three Morning Star Warlocks. And now, although the benefits had been reduced by a little, they were meant solely for him. 
He was, after all, the sole representative of the Ouroboros Clan, possessing the right to negotiate on their behalf. Thus, it was understandable that they’d give up a few things to garner his support. 
In this scenario, the gains of the Ouroboros Clan, on the whole, would reduce, but he would have good profits himself. With that being the case, why wouldn’t he agree? 
“Lord Leylin, are you there?” Paul’s voice suddenly sounded from outside. 
“I’m here!” Leylin replied as he opened the door. 
“If you have made your decision, we can proceed with the contract
alteration ceremony!” Paul smiled as he conveyed the message.
“Certainly!” Leylin nodded his head and followed Paul to the hall.
Those present numbered five. Along with two spirit Warlocks were
Cybel, Palesa, and Philip. In the centre of the tiny hall was a long
table dressed with a red tablecloth. On it was the contract, along
with a goose-feather pen and ink.
Leylin trembled the moment he stepped foot into the hall. He felt as
if he’d entered a boundless domain, one filled with an air of
righteousness.
“This is the domain of righteousness! This place was the witness
when we signed the contract with the three duke the last time
too….,”” Cybel explained.
Contracts made among Morning Star Magi could not be broken.
With the included effectiveness of this binding, the pact was
absolute. No wonder Cybel, that old monster, still had no choice
but to follow the rules and make allowances for Leylin, getting him
to alter the contract.
Leylin walked towards the table, scrutinising the slight differences
between the old contract and the new.
The new one halved the Ouroboros Clan’s benefits, causing Leylin
to knit his brow. But under the column that noted the beneficiary,
the name had been changed. The names of the three Dukes had
been replaced with Leylin Farlier.
The three Dukes had placed the condition upon Cybel that, were
they to die, the benefits would be transferred to the Ouroboros
Clan. Now, it was all being handed over to Leylin.
“How is it? If there is any problem, feel free to tell us. We will
address it and make the changes right away!”
The urgency in Cybel’s tone was evident; the time for the revelation
of the remains was drawing near, after all. If they hadn’t even
solved internal issues, how were they to vie over other things?
Leylin closed his eyes for a second as he pondered before asking,
“The contract states that additional spoils will be distributed on the basis of military strength and contribution. Exactly what are the criteria?”

“Of course, it will be based on the achievements of the Morning Stars!” Cybel answered without hesitation. In his opinion, the troops below the Morning Star realm weren’t even worth consideration.

“Very well. I wish to add another clause, regarding emergency evacuations. In the event that one encounters an irresistible strength, namely an opponent at the Radiant Moon realm, we are permitted to use any methods we wish to exit the battlefield. This will not change the distribution of the spoils. Any objections?”

Leylin presented himself like one who specialised in law and litigation. Cybel and the others were stunned and they exchanged glances with one another.

“If that is what you wish, sure!” Cybel nodded his head, and Philip immediately stepped forward, making the alterations with the goose feather pen.

“I have no other issues!”

After ironing out some disputes, Leylin finally nodded his head in agreement. He took out a seal from his chest and stamped on the contract.

*Weng!* After the seal was stamped, an image appeared on the light yellow paper. It was that of a black snake biting its own tail swivelling around unceasingly.

This was the official seal of the Ouroboros Clan. It was originally held and controlled by the previous three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, and now it was in Leylin’s hand.

Fortunately, due to some unknown reasons, the three dukes had signed the contract under the Ouroboros Clan’s name, otherwise, Leylin would not have been able to make the amendments.

After the last seal had been stamped solemnly by the last Morning
Star Warlock on the contract, the power of righteousness in the hall rose to the limit. The new contract gradually floated into the air, glowing a beautiful golden yellow as the old contract silently turned into a pile of ash.

“Alright, let us discuss the next arrangements…”

With the contract successfully altered, Cybel and the other Morning Star Warlocks seemed to have been refreshed with confidence and started to develop positive feelings for Leylin. Cybel impatiently urged everyone to begin planning battle strategy; he clearly couldn’t wait.

Leylin plastered a smile on his face, but deep inside he rolled his eyes.

‘How could I not alter it? I’m alone, unlike the three mentors. If I’d persisted, I would end up with nothing in the end, even attracting the malice of your two organisations…’

Weighing his options, Leylin had ultimately chosen to alter the contract. It was the best option under his current circumstances. He believed that even if the three Dukes were to return from ‘Purgatory’ they would not be displeased by his decision.

“Within Jupiter’s Lightning, other than the Radiant Moon Magus, there are over ten Morning Stars…” In the middle of a room that resembled a command center, Cybel slowly explained the details of Jupiter’s Lightning, and Leylin was finally exposed to their strength.

“The other party’s leader will be pinned down by the Radiant Moon Warlock on our side, don’t worry. We just need to take care of the remaining ten plus Morning Star Magi.

“Many of Jupiter’s Lightning’s important territories and missions required Morning Star Magi to oversee them. As such, I suppose not more than nine Morning Star Magi will be at Crystal Mountain!”
Cybel seemed to be very familiar with information about Jupiter’s Lightning. He either had a specialised channel of information, or managed to ambush a spy.
“Spirit Circle can take care of three!” Paul remarked with surety.
“Very well, Palesa and Philip will hold up two of them. That means we are down to four Morning Stars!”
Cybel glanced at Leylin.
“I can take on three. It won’t be a problem to take care of the remaining one, right? After all, you managed to kill Demon Hunter Cyril. I look forward to witnessing you opening the battle with your great skills, hopefully ending quickly and assisting others!”
“No problem!” Leylin stroked his nose.
Cybel seemed to be at the peak of the Morning Star realm and could even take on three Morning Star Magi at the same time. No wonder the other Warlocks respected him so.
After the deployment had been settled, Cybel heaved a heavy sigh, his tone tinged with regret.
“Actually, Leylin, if your mentors were present, we would be at a great advantage. Pity… But it’s all too late now! Besides, you and you alone can take care of this matter, we can only furnish you with logistical assistance!”
“It would be good enough to have all of this!” Leylin quickly declared.
It was fundamentally impossible for one organisation to interfere and provide military support to another. It was an extremely easy way to seize power.
In the event that Cybel had deliberately tricked Gilbert and the rest, causing them to perish in their search for ‘Purgatory’, it would be too late for the Ouroboros Clan to even shed tears.
Although the possibility of this happening was slim, prevention was better than a cure.
As such, Cybel and the rest had to remain low-key to avoid attracting suspicion.
“Alright! We’ll set off immediately, and head towards the Crystal Mountains. This time, we need to get our hands on the historical remains of Scarlet Crescent!” Cybel waved his hand in the air, emanating a heroic spirit.
The other Morning Stars’ eyes gleamed with a thirst for success.

……

At a Magus military base.
The entire place was covered with detection towers and barriers, sinister-looking steel puppets and bio-beasts alongside fangs and cannons.
From time to time, spiritual force undulations of Crystal Phase Magi could be felt as they swept through the area on patrol. In fact, there was even the terrifying aura of an occasional Morning Star Magus, causing the most ferocious of mutated beasts to be petrified and whimper in fear.
“We do not know the concrete location of the historical remains, though we do know that there are a total of thirteen likely sites. Five of them are in our hands and the rest are with the opposite side. This place is one of their military bases. The ones keeping watch here are the hunter Borick and the Marine Giant Siebel…”
The silhouettes of Leylin and Philip appeared at the heavily guarded military base.
“The convergence of the sun, stars and moon and the appearance of the Oake’s arc is very soon!”
Leylin’s eyes sparkled. With the help of the A.I. Chip, his calculations of the star’s trajectory was much more advanced and
accurate than the many astrologers on the continent. 
The lower right corner of the A.I. Chip’s interface stated the time clearly: 1 hour 24 minutes!
Ridiculously, Cybel and the others believed that the historical remains would appear in these two days and they were seizing the military bases everywhere.
It requires a huge amount of calculating and researching to determine where the remains would appear. Even Jupiter’s Lightning along with Cybel and his men could only conclude that these thirteen locations were likely.
As for Leylin, he was certain that this base was more than 80% likely to be the location!
This was due to the amazing processing power of the A.I. Chip. With him joining the union, Cybel had revealed all information associated with the place. Thus, unknown to him, Leylin was able to determine both a time and a place for the reappearance.
Leylin guarded the secret of the A.I. Chip fiercely and would obviously not reveal anything. He only fought for the opportunity to be bestowed this mission and then watched Cybel assign the subsequent missions.
“It’s almost time to start!” Philip looked at the pocketwatch in his hand.
Leylin turned to look at the Wind Wolf Warlock. According to his calculations, this location looked to be the entrance to the historical remains, and Philip along with himself would, unfortunately, be the first Magi to enter and explore.
‘With him here, Cybel and the others will be attracted to come over. I will have no need to worry about being a lone soldier…’
Leylin was very generous. Besides the point that it was mentioned in the contract that one should not attack their own ally, he would not be able to pocket such huge portion of historical remains alone. The starting time Philip spoke about was the time they’d agreed on
to launch their combined offensive. Before the Radiant Moon Magus from the Jupiter’s Lightning was pinned down, no one was willing to make the first move. At this moment, a wave of frenzied energy passed through the area. It was close enough to hear the rumbles from where it passed. Leylin could faintly see the image of a three-headed golden-yellow lion appearing, dragging a Magus whose body was covered in lightning images into a struggle. “This is the power of the Radiant Moon?” Leylin looked at the golden lion and his face revealed a faint sense of loss. This was a rank 5 Warlock, someone who walked the path of the bloodline as well! The guidance he could get from this was incomparable to anything else. “This is the clone of Lord Wayde, the ‘Golden Lion’!” Philip’s tone was filled with respect, and Leylin’s eyes opened wide in amazement. “What?” He pointed at the lion’s golden heads in disbelief; they were spouting fire, ice, and lightning at the same time. “This is just a clone? How formidable is his true form?” “We Warlocks are rightfully much stronger than the Magi!” Philip proudly declared, ”Lord Wayde is one of the main pillars of support of the Warlock Union. His true form is feared even by Breaking Dawn Magi. One clone is enough to deal with a mere Radiant moon Magus.” During their conversation, Leylin saw that the aura that emitted from the phantom of the three headed lion formed a lightning cage that dragged the Radiant Moon Magus into a spatial rift. “Damn! Be careful, I’m sure they have more cards up their sleeves!” The moment the rift began to close, an unwilling violent yell was transmitted that echoed throughout Crystal Mountain. The men at the base Leylin was at had been initially woken by the strong energy undulations. Now the uproar was even more direct,
and two streaks of strong Morning Star undulations appeared. 
“To draw away the enemy, we will have to expose ourselves, this is an inevitable price to pay!”
Philip heaved a deep sigh, “It’s our move now!”
“Indeed!” Leylin nodded his head in agreement. Soon after, he saw the image of an ancient Wind Wolf the size of a mountain manifesting behind the other Warlock. 
This enormous green wolf’s body was covered with a layer of spike-like fur, all standing on end with a steely lustre. Its eyes were glowing with a bloodthirsty aura, and a huge storm covered it, forming a bizarre form of armour.
“Rank 4 spell Storm Annihilation!”
Philip’s voice was deep and gloomy. He did not have the courage to use the Morning Star Arcane Art in the central continent, however regular rank 4 spells were not off the table.
The phantom wolf howled in sync with Philip.
The distant and gloomy howl was extremely piercing and travelled far. Huge wind elemental particles violently came together forming a strong convection current and finally creating a strong violent storm.
Storm Annihilation! This was exactly what Leylin had employed at the West Seas Canyon to destroy the Azure Mountain King’s clone. It had appeared here once more, this time at a much larger scale.
“Stop it!” A flustered and exasperated voice emerged and two streaks of light shot over.
“Haha… It’s too late…” Philip laughed heartily, hastening the effect of the Storm Annihilation to mercilessly crush the military base.
The violent winds whistled. In the face of a storm that had the ability to destroy anyone below the Morning Star realm, the heavy guard of the military base was a joke.
Countless puppets and the mutated beasts turned to dust, followed by a huge number of Magi and buildings runes etched into them.
“Stop them, don’t let them rescue the others!”
Philip and Leylin firmly obstructed the way of the two Morning Star Magi, stopping them from helping the others.
Soon after, the black storm was over, the original military base razed to the ground. The ground itself had sunk down a few layers. In front of a Morning Star, everyone else and any spells cast were as good as nothing!
“You…” Two silhouettes emerged, glaring at Leylin and Philip. One of them was a dwarf with a huge wooden bow on his back, the other a blue-skinned brute who was over three meters tall. An enormous amount of pressure was released from both their bodies.
“Hunter Bolix and Marine Giant Siebel!” Philip gave a wide smile, revealing the sharp teeth in his mouth, “I want the Hunter, you can have the Marine Giant!”
The dwarf with the wooden bow smiled sarcastically as dark green whirlwind sprang forth from his body. He was a Wind Element Morning Star Magus and had been dissatisfied with Philip for a long time.
“No problem!” Leylin moved a few steps to the side and obstructed the way of the blue giant.
“Let’s change the battlefield, shall we?” Philip eyed the opposing dwarf with provocation in his eyes. The huge phantom wolf exposed its sharp teeth.
“Humph!” The dwarf opposite him snorted coldly, grabbing the huge wooden bow from his back.
Space cracked apart in the between them, forming a huge rift. The spatial ripples were as if a curtain that was being drawn, and Philip and Bolix were gone in the next moment.
“We do not need to change location, let’s settle it here!” Leylin locked eyes with the giant in front of him and smirked.
As the damage from clashes between Morning Star Magi was great
and extensive, they usually made their moves in spatial rifts to prevent harming the Magus world. With Leylin’s words, Marine Giant Siebel’s face hardened. For a Morning Star Magus to dare to fight in the open, they were either crazy or absolutely confident in their power control. Evidently, this Warlock was of the latter category.
Leylin chose to battle here right away. He was confident in his energy control, and on top of that, he didn’t want to move too far away. It would be too tragic if he failed to be the first one to detect the reappearance of the remains. He was also prepared to try out an interesting idea. For Marine Giant Siebel, Leylin’s attitude was nothing but a provocation. He shot Leylin a piercing gaze, and soon released the massive power of his domain. The power of one’s domain would only be perfected at the Morning Star realm. The effects of amplification and suppression would intensify, and the range of effect would also be extended. Morning Star domains were a far cry from rank 3 forcefields. Turbulent, vast and immeasurable! White ocean waves and the crystal clear sea surface formed a horrifying scene. The depths of the ocean were darkened by the frantic waves, giving one an ominous premonition. The enormous tides engulfed Siebel, completely hiding his body. Yet, his voice was transmitted clearly, “This is my domain Ocean!” In a split second, the ocean engulfed the entire area, burying the alpines and the wreckage left by Philip’s spells. The boundless blue ocean roared at Leylin in rage. ‘A real Morning Star domain, and the rules he controls are those of the water element…’ A glimmer of blue light flickered across
Leylin’s eyes as the A.I. Chip recorded all data about the fluctuations and the power of the domain. Siebel’s aura rose quickly in this ocean, causing Leylin to be thrilled.

“So you’re of the marine tribe. No wonder your domain is such, changing the battlefield to be underwater.” Leylin’s voice trembled a little. It managed to traverse the depths of the ocean, but there was no reply.

The marine tribe was a non-human species. However, they cohabited the Magus world with humans. They occupied the ocean while the humans occupied the land. It wasn’t like there weren’t any wars, but most of the time it was peaceful. There were legends and records about a Great Magus Serholm who led all human magicians and fought off the enemies from the ocean.

There were also Magi amongst the marine tribe, but they were extremely rare, as their chance of advancement was even lower than humans.

To be able to meet with a Morning Star Magus of the marine tribe thrilled Leylin. He was puzzled as to why Siebel was a part of Jupiter’s Lightning, but soon came to a realisation.

Despite the fact that Jupiter’s Lightning had the help of a Radiant Moon Magus who was one of the top forces of the central continent, it was difficult for even them to nurture a Morning Star Magus.

Other than resources and experience, luck was an important factor in becoming a Morning Star Magus.

Given their high status in the central continent, it was extremely hard for any faction to have ten or more Morning Stars like Jupiter’s Lightning did. It was impossible to rely on training their own, so they would recruit foreign Magi as well.

The auras of the previous Bowman and Marine Giant were pretty
much impure. Leylin was rather puzzled back then, but now it looks like they could be from a different tribe or are hybrid Magi! The enormous waves surged into the sky, forming two dark blue crystal-like hands that gushed down towards Leylin. The sharp increase in the air pressure formed unstable currents and caused the space in the region to be unstable.

[Beep! Data about the Ocean domain has been fully recorded!] Leylin smiled upon hearing the mechanical voice of the A.I. Chip. “Corrosion!” Gently, an ancient Byron runic chant slipped out of his lips.

*Hiss! Hiss!* A large amount of uneven black pores appeared on the dark blue hand, corroding almost the entire arm within a second as if turning it into a beehive.

*Crack! Crack!* The gigantic arm lost its support and fell apart in the air, soon turning into a huge stream of water that merged back into the sea.

“In the name of the Warlock! My power of bloodline!” Leylin chanted out loud as a crimson barrier appeared on his body. “Absorption of bloodline!” Blood red lightning flashed across his eyes, piercing through the pitch dark ocean as it revealed everything. Meanwhile, aiming at a specific spot, Leylin stretched out his right hand and made a grasping motion with great force. An invisible air current appeared, causing a massive whirlpool in the middle of the ocean.

“AAAH!” a voice bellowed in agony from the whirlpool. “All bloodline creatures will be under my bloodline’s control, show up now!” said Leylin, and the blood red glow on his hand converged in his hand as he lifted his right hand into the air. Water gushed up into the sky and rained down like a huge fountain as a gigantic blue figure slowly appeared from the middle of the whirlpool. Numerous veins protruded from the blue skin, as if about to burst
out at any moment. The wriggling veins looked like earthworms, sending shivers down one’s spine. The giant groaned in agony, forced out of the sea while being battered by crimson lightning. “Multilimb Strength!” Leylin’s eyes glittered, and the humongous phantom of a Multi-Armed Race member appeared behind him. This phantom was much clearer than the previous ones, every single scale and pore on his body distinguishable. Even after reaching the Morning Star realm, this foreign Arcane Art could be of great use. Leylin even felt that combining the nourishment of his spirit with the body refinement of Multilimb Strength, he would be able to reach the peak of the Morning Star realm at a much quicker pace, and would end up far more powerful than the rest. The phantom punched out in tandem with Leylin. Even a single arm of the humongous phantom was as large as Siebel. It felt like seven huge mountains appeared out of thin air and came crashing down at the same time when all seven arms smashed towards him. Siebel placed both arms in front of his chest, forming a dense shield of water that was to reduce the shockwaves from the attack. However, it was all in vain. The water shield was destroyed under the force of the phantom’s arms. *Bang!* Siebel was shot backwards by the explosive force of the collision. At the same time, threads of luminous blue liquid shot out from his pores and gathered to form a thumb-sized ball that landed on Leylin’s palm. “The bloodline of a Marine Giant at the Morning Star realm!” Leylin nodded with satisfaction and kept the bloodline in a test tube. This was a rare material for bloodline experiments, and could earn him a good sum even for his current realm.
“You are not an ordinary Morning Star Warlock. Who are you?”
As Siebel regained consciousness, he stared at Leylin cautiously. With the amazing defensive and recuperative abilities of a Morning Star Magus, this sort of injury was nothing to him. Yet, Leylin was completely relaxed as before, clearly indicating that this wasn’t his full strength.
Siebel gazed at the black haired Morning Star Warlock in front of him, running through all the top ranked Morning Stars in his mind, but did not manage to match the face to anyone. That is, until he recalled some more recent information, something that detailed Leylin’s background.
“You are Leylin Farlier! The Morning Star Kemoyin Warlock of the Ouroboros Clan! The one who killed Demon Hunter Cyril!” Siebel was in shock. Demon Hunter Cyril was considered a powerhouse among Morning Star Magi, but he’d been easily slain by Leylin. This accomplishment was much more challenging than a win-lose in an ordinary face-off and Siebel was well aware of that.
‘For now, the best case scenario is that I keep up my defence and sustain myself. I might even have to request reinforcements!’ He smiled bitterly at his own thought. Just then, a ring of pearls glowed around his waist, and he heard urgent voices shouting around, “It’s the Third East Region, we need immediate reinforcements! We’re under attack by Spirit Circle!”
“West Region calling for reinforcements, three layers of defence have been destroyed! Damn it, the Warlocks seem to be fully concentrated in this region!”
“No, you bloody liars! Cybel is in our North Region, we should be the ones getting reinforcements! Ahhhh…”
The transmitted voices had a lot of interference, and there were also loud sounds of explosions in the background that added a violent shudder.
Siebel’s heart hit rock bottom. Knowing that Cybel was here as
well, he felt hopeless.
“So this is your plan?” Siebel looked fixedly at Leylin, but could not get any details off that expressionless face.
“Even if it is so, I signed an agreement with Jupiter’s Lightning. Don’t think you can get rid of me so easily!” Siebel thought in his heart and roared out a jumbled chant of sacrificial phrases.
The serenity of the ocean was broken again by the violent movement of water as large amounts of it gathered around Siebel. When the rumbling ended, a monstrous creature that was a thousand metres tall appeared in front of Leylin.
The monster had the head of a cow, the body of a human and tentacles for feet. It growled like a raging bull.
“This is your original form?” Leylin fended off the water bullets, looking at the humongous form of the magician and chuckled.
he marine tribe were not humans. Born of the ocean as they were, their bodies were like a manifestation of the laws of nature. Those of the marine tribe seen on the continent were similar to humans, and had at most a few scales on their bodies. However, that was only the form they used specifically to communicate with humans. This monster that had appeared in front of Leylin was over a thousand meters tall, and it was the true form of the marine tribe.

After he revealed his true form, the undulations from Siebel’s body surged wildly, inspiring much greater terror than before.

Leylin, however, revealed a grin of excitement. ‘A.I. Chip, begin calculating the trajectory of the homing light rays!’

Endless blue light glowed in Leylin’s eyes, and most of the A.I. Chip’s power was allocated to this task.

[Setting up model of opponent. Calculating trajectory.]

Siebel in his true form growled wildly, and soul force at the Morning Star realm mixed with enormous amounts of seawater, compressing it into just a centimetre wide ball. Flickering with a blue light that transcended any normal brightness, it reached Leylin in the blink of an eye.

“Good timing!” Leylin burst out in laughter. Bloodline power and soul force converged in his palm, the formidable energy undulations finally colliding with the blue ball with a rumble.
The air buzzed and trembled, but there were no intense explosions or spatial cracks that appeared, causing the marine tribe Magus to be confused and his movements to slow.

*Shua!* At this moment, the blue ball of energy was enshrouded by crimson light as it streaked through the horizon like a meteor. The light arched in the direction it headed, similar to a rainbow that suddenly filled the heavens.

“Oa-Oaker Arc!” A shout of disbelief was let loose from the marine tribe Magus’ lips.

He raised his head and saw a bizarre scene. A giant sun suddenly emerged despite the fact that it was night, fusing with the moon and the brightest star, Venus. The dazzling yet harmless light formed a thin line that descended to the earth.

*Rumble!* The air was unstable, and it seemed as if another large space was ‘squeezed’ into the place, causing the two spatial forcefields to overlap.

“It’s a success!” Leylin rejoiced covertly.

Using the A.I. Chip’s terrifying calculation abilities, he had mixed the opponent’s strength with his own, causing the time of opening of Scarlet Crescent to be brought forward.

This had not been his original intention, but he had suddenly been inspired after seeing the other party’s Morning Star Magus. It ended up being an advantage for him.

The early arrival of the ruins would likely cause the specific plans of the person behind all this to be affected. The more chaotic the situation, the more advantageous it was to Leylin.

“This– this– this is… the ruins of Scarlet Crescent!” The Marine Giant’s eyes grew wide as he mumbled in disbelief.

Though he knew it was possible that the ruins could appear at any of the 13 strongholds, it was too much of a coincidence that it had
appeared where he was. Seeing the image gradually becoming more distinct and forming a spatial passage glimmering with dark silver light, Siebel hesitated. However, he still choose to contact the other Magi and even their leader, the Radiant Moon Magus. However, when his soul force touched the communicative device, Siebel was suddenly startled. Their leader, the Radiant Moon Magus, was still in a spatial rift! Messages would definitely not be able to pass into the place. Even his other comrades were busy with the Morning Star Warlocks from the other side. The situation wasn’t going well, but where could he go to find reinforcements?

Seeing the look of hesitation on his opponent’s face, Leylin chuckled and had no intentions of continuing. Though he was certain he could kill his opponent, he would need to use his Morning Star Arcane Art, and it would consume too much time. This was not the time and place. Thus, like pulling open a curtain, Leylin’s hands pushed at the spatial crack and he walked in without the slightest hesitation. After Leylin completely vanished into the spatial crack, Siebel gritted his teeth and spoke a few sentences to the communication imprint. He then followed and allowed the spatial waves to swallow him.

The bodies of Morning Star Magi were able to go through even spatial turbulence. Spatial passageways like these that were similar to teleporting to pocket dimensions generally had no specific teleportation spell formation, and could only be entered through force.

“What? The ruins have already appeared? So quickly?” The Magi of both sides who were battling at the other strongholds seemed to receive the information at the same time. They, who were stunned by this sudden news, stood opposite each other for a
moment without acting, then immediately rushed in the same direction.
At this moment, in the outer regions of the rift in the world.
Boundless stars and vortices were part of the background, filling it
with a sense of vastness and might.
Here, it was as if a great war on the same level as that of ancient
times was being replayed. A majestic lion that had a body of golden
fur and three heads that kept spouting flames, ice and lightning
suddenly stopped, seeming to be deep in thought.
In front of it was a Magus with a luxurious pitch-black magic robe,
a strange moon-shaped rune on his forehead.
“Hehe… Wayde, you made an error in your calculations. Though
you might be able to stall me, someone else is benefitting!”
This Magus was obviously the great rank 5 Magus of Jupiter’s
Lightning. Now, however, his expression held a rare expression of
exasperation.
This strange creature was not Wayde’s main body, but one of his
most powerful clones. It had inherited the innate skills of the
ancient clans, and its strength almost reached rank 5. Even he
would find it difficult to take this being down, and might even be
suppressed here.
“It’s a mistake on the astrologer’s part! It has nothing to do with the
original plan!” A middle-aged man’s icy words sounded from the
middle head of the three.
“Furthermore, I’m different from you. I’m just a clone…” The
three-headed lion raised its claws, looking pleased.
“Could it be that you…” The Radiant Moon Magus’ expression
suddenly changed as he tried to break through the seal and return.
“Trying to leave? How could it be that easy? Stay!” The three-
headed golden lion roared, its three gigantic mouths opening.
A terrifying suction force similar to that of a black hole shot
towards the Radiant Moon Magus. Even the rays of light in his
surroundings were not spared as they were all sucked in. Howls and cries of indignance sounded every once in a while. In the main world, a golden meteor streaked through the horizon. Within the golden rays was a male Magus with long flaming hair that looked like a golden sunshine. His body and face seemed to be formed entirely of gold, and was full of dignity. Meanwhile, however, he seemed to be deep in thought. Outside, in the direction of the ruins of Scarlet Crescent, two groups of Morning Star Magi, and even Philip as well as Hunter Bolix, returned to their factions. After persisting with the confrontation for a while longer, they still charged into the spatial passageway at the same time. The air suddenly became tranquil, and only the deep depressions in the ground and large puddles of water proved that there had been a battle of Morning Stars here. Due to the extremely intense spell radiation, the region would be barren and void of life for a long period of time. There could even be formed a range of phenomena that would attract creatures of different planes, becoming another fearful area that would become famous in the central continent.

*Whoosh…* The air rippled as a breeze blew past, revealing the sudden appearance of another human figure.

“What’s going on? I calculated the timing based on the records of the ancestors. How could it have been brought forward?” A simple-clothed old man with a full head of white hair muttered, eyes without focus.

“The opening of the Scarlet Crescent ruins was initially an opportunity for our organisation to rise, but unexpectedly such complex issues are involved in there…” The old man began to mutter to himself, “First was the discovery of our secret, causing several Warlock organisations and Jupiter’s Lightning to covet it. It even resulted in a war, and the diary that
stated the time of appearance of the ruins was wrong. What exactly is going on?”
Because of Leylin, this old man whose origins were unknown was beginning to have doubts in his outlook of the world.
However, his education from a young age and the philosophy he had developed over the years allowed the old man to quickly regain his calm.
“No matter what it is, my ancestor was a member of Scarlet Crescent. My organisation is also one of the branches that has inherited part of the teachings of the ancient Scarlet Crescent organisation. This ruin should be ours!”
The old man’s expression instantly turned vicious, and a halo of resplendent starlight burst forth.
The spatial passageway opposite began to tremble as if it had sensed something. It, too, shot out a large amount of light, fusing with the splendour on the old man’s body and absorbing the whole bundle of starlight, leaving nothing behind.

……

“What a strange setup!” Leylin currently had his hands behind his back as he strolled along a spatial corridor filled with starlight, his own body shrouded in crimson.
There were multiple spatial rifts that caused turbulence within, but they could not cause even a ripple on his body.
“To completely isolate this region, I can only wait until a specific time. Only then can I enter the passageway through the spatial flow…” Leylin’s eyes were full of praise. “Such an intricate set-up, as well as space-division spells. This is truly frightening.”
The Morning Star realm that he had reached was only the bare minimum of ancient times. There was still a long way ahead, and he would naturally not feel conceited or complacent.
On the contrary, the more he knew, the more Leylin felt that the information he had acquired was much too little. He became increasingly humble. The power who had set up such a spatial spell formation was an existence he needed to look up to and learn from…
Now, the ruins seem to be nearby, but in fact…” Seeing the indistinct space in front of him, Leylin shook his head. He’d just found the entrance. It wouldn’t be easy for him to achieve his goals and enter the place without using the right way.
The others that had come afterwards were in the same situation. After all, it wasn’t likely that they’d find the successors of Scarlet Crescent, so Leylin and the other Magi didn’t bother to deduce the proper way to go in.
With them being Morning Stars, as long as they found the entrance it would only be a matter of time before they broke in.
However, the rules of space were powerful and mysterious. Leylin could only manage to survive in here for now, and he needed to deduce a plan to break through this spatial defence. The other Morning Stars who came after him were also stuck in the same dilemma.
Thus, time was one of Leylin’s advantages against the rest of the Magi.
This was why he’d used Siebel and made the ruins appear in advance. Although they had an agreement about the distribution of the spoils, that was only on the whole. As for who got what, it was largely dependant on who found it first.
Wandering in the spatial passage was like taking a walk in outer space, nebulae of different shapes everywhere. There was even a
silver spatial storm every now and then and spatial turbulence whizzed by on occasion.
Threads of a dubious black material were even coagulating around the passage, forming mysterious black buds and gave off a dangerous vibe.
After walking for who knows how long, Leylin suddenly missed his footing and felt like he was falling down from up high. Even more strangely, he felt like he was rising up afterwards.
After the strong sense of weightlessness passed, Leylin found himself standing in a little garden. The black buds he saw before covered the flowerbed, some even making it onto the hedges. A wooden board covered in tentacles was posted in a corner, the words on it faded.
“Flowers full of malice and danger…” Leylin muttered to himself. The A.I Chip searched the database but found no such ancient plant.
Suddenly, the black flower buds trembled and bloomed, showing a crimson pistil.
*Thump! Thump! Thump!* Like a chain reaction, masses of black buds bloomed, and the garden was instantly full of black petals flying in the air, red pistils emanating a threat like the tongues of snakes.
The faint sense of an ancient curse made Leylin frown.
“This! Is it a final defence against intruders? Or… is it a warning?” Leylin smiled, and his pupils turned into vertical slits that glowed red.
The next moment, a strong and violent radiation was emitted from his body!
This was the radiation of a Morning Star Warlock’s body, containing the power of the bloodline of the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Leylin kept it repressed in his everyday life, but now he let it all out, and it caused a horrible change.
A layer of rainbow-like five-coloured light shone with green and orange fluorescence, filling the whole garden. The air turned hazy, and the scene distorted. After the radiation passed through, the entire space seemed to become still, and the faint smell of rust permeated the air. The original colours of the garden were also diminished with the radiation, leaving only black and white. It started to look like an old photograph.

A cracking sound rang out as a slight fracture appeared in a corner. It spread across the whole grayscale garden, leaving spatial cracks everywhere. And then, like the falling of a glass bottle, a low and jarring sound rang out as the whole garden was shattered apart, exposing the dark void filled with spatial storms.

The storms roared, devouring all those fractures. The silver storms continued to mince the garden for a few minutes before the ruins were visible once again. The black buds in the middle had disappeared, leaving a few broken petals on the ground. It gave the environment a sense of gloom.

Leylin’s pupils returned to their original colour with a flash of strange light. This burst of strength had taken a toll on him, but he had no choice but to employ it to maintain his time advantage. The full strength of a Morning Star Magus was enough to affect the normal functioning of many formations! On top of that, Leylin was not any Magus, but a Warlock with the bloodline of an ancient organism! Combining his own power with that of his Kemoyin bloodline, the power of his radiation was much greater, to the extent of even attracting extradimensional creatures.

Leylin stared at a point in the void, silent. Over there, a conscient, or rather, a group of consciences, was coming through slowly!
Although it was invisible, Leylin could sense the being through his soul force.
“Creatures from a higher dimension? Or a plot of Scarlet Crescent?” Leylin’s eyes showed surprise.
“ Outsider! What have you come here for?” A conscient entered Leylin’s mind through the connection of soul force. The voice was that of an old woman, but it was interspersed with much more, the roars of multiple other creatures.
“To find the truth!” Leylin said with a low voice, providing an ambiguous answer.
“It’s the truth? Even those of Scarlet Crescent were still pursuing it. You’ve come to the wrong place…” The voice sighed.
“I didn’t come to the wrong place. The ways of the ancient Warlocks will be a valuable reference and their experiences will save me time…” Leylin’s soul force countered the unknown creature sharply.
He could sense that this creature did not have a normal body. It was just a ball of light emitting a strange power, perhaps a creature hiding its true body in a higher plane.
Even so, after confronting Leylin’s soul force for a while, the will seemed to yield, ”Follow the Path of Quandary, it will lead you to your answer…”
As the voice faded, the sound of movements could be heard as a brand new aisle appeared in a corner of the garden. The floor was made of grey stone, and black specks spread out along the floor like numerous insects. They had the figures of twisting faces.
Scanning with his soul force, the outline of the Path of Quandary appeared in Leylin’s mind. After ensuring that there was no danger, Leylin bowed to the void and stepped directly onto the path.
The sound of footsteps could be heard as the black garden disappeared from sight the moment his feet hit the stone floor. All that remained was a long sigh.
“Soul Whip!!!”

Massive invisible waves of energy swept through the air as dozens of giant swamp monsters trembled. It was as if they were tortured by some invisible whips, and they hit the floor after a while, their unconscious eyes filled with fear.

“My lord! This seems to be the Maze Lock, we are in a defensive trap of Scarlet Crescent!” Paul reported to Cybel. Although both of them were Morning Star Magi, their powers were far apart, and thus they had widely varying statuses.

“This is the Naraku Type 2 maze, a kind of maze liked by those ancient Warlocks. There should be nine levels, each level having its own keys and riddles. We must break through them one by one, or we’ll never get to the end…”

Cybel nodded. He’d obviously studied up on these things. Beside him, other than Paul, the Warlocks from Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair had all disappeared. And a few unfamiliar Morning Star Magi were just watching everything detachedly.

“Well, it’s our turn this time. According to our agreement, you are up next time!” Cybel took several green gems from the swamp monster as he spoke to those Morning Stars.

“Of course!” their leader replied, his eyes cold. This Magus with a golden headband had no sense of fear even when confronting Cybel.

Seeing this, Paul smiled bitterly in his mind.

The sudden appearance of the ruins of Scarlet Crescent rendered most of their plans useless. The entrance of the ruins contained some mysterious spells cast by ancient Warlocks, and those who entered through abnormal ways would encounter barriers. The dispersion made Paul feel depressed. Were it not for Cybel, he
would have been killed here. After all, they were mortal enemies before, and that was still true. Paul sighed, even the tentacles on his head seemed dispirited. He would be safe following Cybel, but there wouldn’t be any gains. Leave alone those Morning Star Magi, even Cybel would leave him with nothing. Compared to his resignation, the Magi on the other side were hysterical.
How could it be? Someone has already entered the Path of Quandary. That’s extremely close to the core!” The old Magus wearing simple attire observed the light yellow notebook in his hands, letting out a low growl. His expression was that of anxiety.

On one of the pages of the light yellow notebook, a general map had been drawn out with weak black lines. There was a little black dot moving slowly in one of the central passageways that was labeled the Path of Quandary.

There were also other dots on this map, but they were all situated at the exterior regions.

The old man himself was marked with a white dot. Though he was much faster than the Morning Stars outside who were being hindered by the labyrinth, he was still at the middle section and a distance away from the core.

In contrast, Leylin’s black dot was only a few steps away from the core which was marked in red!

“Damn it, damn it, damn it! Why is there a Magus that’s so fast…” the old man cursed, his expression full of impatience and indignance, “It’s a pity that I only have the correct method to enter the ruins. I can’t control all the secret mechanisms, or else…”

Though the old Magus’ ancestor had been a member of Scarlet Crescent, he was merely an ordinary member. While he had participated in the construction of the ruins, he had not been able to
make contact with the core areas. Hence, obtaining this map, the password to enter, as well as some information, was the limits of what could be done.

Leylin had also unexpectedly brought forward the timing of the opening of the ruins, causing things to become disadvantageous for the old man. Even if he was hurrying along, careful not to fall into any traps, he was still behind Leylin.

“I don’t care anymore! As long as I can get to the core area, I still have a chance of turning the tables!”

The old man angrily used his fingers and traced the map, finding another route. However, just when he was about to move, his pupils suddenly shrank.

A black dot entered the edges of a map. It was several times larger than the rest, and was ringed in red.

The few traps and patterns at the exterior were completely destroyed in the face of the large dot, and even their names disappeared from the map. The man wailed in anguish, “A rank 5 Magus rushed here so quickly. Are you even giving me any chance at all…”

While he kept lamenting, the old man’s footsteps did not lose speed. Instead, he began to move more quickly.

If he was slightly slow and allowed the rank 5 Magus to take over this place, this area would no longer be of any concern to him. Besides, there was a certain item at the core region that he needed to obtain, which was his main goal.

“Just wait! Just wait till I get control of the core!”

The old man stared at the little black dot in the Path of Quandary, his expression revealing his frustration.

……

Leylin, of course, did not know that someone had him in their
thoughts. He was now walking on a little pathway of ash-gray stone. The path was surrounded by white fog on both sides, and it became increasingly dense as it concealed the scenery. On the still, empty road, only his footsteps sounded unceasingly. The scenery that was exactly the same on both ends made it easy for one to forget time, giving rise to a strong sense of fear. Combined with the unique power in the fog, even a Magus’ tenacious willpower might not hold out. If it were other lower-ranked Magi, they might long since have broken down, crying and yelling that they wanted to return, begging for release. However, resolution showed on Leylin’s face, as if this was negligible. In the face of his mindset that was ten thousand times more stronger than steel, things that ancient Magi had specifically set up to test one’s will were trivial. As Leylin went deeper in, the surrounding fog became more dense, and even his feet became unclear. Every step seemed like he was walking on clouds. Leylin took a step, and the scenery suddenly changed. Now, the room had dark yellow planks and a mouldy ceiling. The squeaks of mice could be heard from the corner. It was the most common image seen by commoners in the continent. There was not one piece of furniture in this little wooden cabin. Strangely, all that existed was a golden parrot cage at the center, a toad with a pipe in its mouth on top. “Hey, brother! Are you here to give me a love letter on Miko’s behalf? Please tell her that I’m busy and can’t make it to the date tomorrow evening!” The toad was dressed in a black top hat, looking relaxed. It puffed out one white smoke ring after another from the pipe. “… Leylin was dumbstruck as he watched the toad, unsure of
what was going on.
“Are you not Miko’s messenger? Oh! Then it must be Elizabeth. She’s the most beautiful girl I’ve ever seen. That skin, full of folds and spores, as well as those protruding eyes… Oh! She’s my angel…”
The toad jabbered on and on, but what it said only baffled Leylin. At one point, he could no longer take it and asked, “Where is this?”
“Quark’s cabin, Number 232 at the edge of the world. Is there a problem?” The toad put its pipe down, its large eyes that were like light bulbs shooting Leylin a glance.
Could it be that the Path of Quandary is similar to an astral gate? Has Scarlet Crescent’s defensive formation sent me to another plane? This sudden thought left Leylin unable to decide whether he should laugh or cry.
Many ancient defence systems had a last resort when they encountered an enemy that was much too powerful for the spell formations to be of use, banishment to an alternate world! This was akin to an astral gate, teleporting Magi out of the Magus world.
As this was a one-time thing with no definite coordinates, unlucky Magi would usually be sent into spatial turbulences far, far away; or even into a giant storm. It would be extremely lucky to find another plane with life on it. However, returning to the Magus world? There was no need to even think about it.
The current situation caused Leylin to have doubts.
At this moment, the floor suddenly began to tremble, seismic waves passing through every few moments.
“What’s going on?” Leylin tried scanning with his soul force, but found that his soul force had been repressed to the limit. It could not even see past the cabin.
“It’s nothing. I have a new neighbour preparing to move in…”
The toad jumped off the parrot cage nonchalantly, bouncing as it
headed out. Leylin turned his head and thought about it for a moment, eventually following behind it. After opening the door of the wooden cabin, his body suddenly went stiff, eyes flashing with disbelief. In front of him was a large sandy wasteland. There were black holes and distorted nebulae in the sky, and a large green shadow that seemed to have taken root in the cosmos was shifting its body. It was a giant ancient tree, its green leaves spilling with a jade-like lustre. Leylin had seen many ancient trees before, and there were enormous trees in Creevey City where houses could be built on their leaves. However, the entirety of Creevey City was like a tiny thing in comparison with this gigantic tree, not comparable to even a leaf.

“Hello, new friend! Do you need any help?” After seeing this tree, the toad happily went forward to welcome it, jumping onto a root as thick as a mountain. Compared to the tree, the toad was like a speck of dust. No! It was ten thousand times smaller than a speck of dust! Leylin was speechless. Soon after, he realised that he had indeed walked out of a wooden cabin, but the surroundings were a depthless black starry cosmos, and the cabin had been floating in the sky. There was even a shaky scrawl on the bronze door plate, reading ‘Number 232, Edge of the World! This house belongs to Toad Quark.’

On that gigantic root the toad had jumped onto was another little cabin, this one constructed askew. There was a number there as well, 233. The name had changed to Wisdom Tree. Leylin had no idea how the big the other party was or how they entered the cabin. Watching the cabin on the tree root, as well as the toad, he could not come up with anything to say. Shortly after, however, his expression changed. ‘The ancient Wisdom Tree? The intellectual being of the Magus World that once
enlightened multiple great ancient Magi? The culmination of all wisdom?’
*Rumble!* A few large cracks opened up on the tree that extended to the cosmos, sucking in the violent spatial storms and producing soundless whimpers.
Two enormous, yellowish eyes opened, followed by lips full of wooden lines.
“It’s… been… a… long…. time… my… old… friend…” The tree’s words were extremely loud. Just the sound waves were enough to blow everything over. Toad Quark had no choice but to hug the root tightly in order not to be blown away by the violent hurricane.
The Wisdom Tree’s speech was very slow, taking a minute between syllables. It seemed that each thought required a great amount of time.
“And… also… a … new… friend…” *Bang!* The ground exploded, and a root that was like a mountain flew over, raising Leylin till he was before the ancient Wisdom Tree, meeting its starry gaze.
“I smell myself on you…” The Wisdom Tree’s words were hard to decipher, but Leylin immediately understood what it meant.
“Is it the essence of the ancient Wisdom Tree? And this!” Leylin produced a wooden cup, though it was now empty.
It had once contained the essence of the Wisdom Tree, and had been vital in supporting Leylin’s advancement to rank 3. This wooden cup had been said to be made out of the bark of the Wisdom Tree.
“You’re a Warlock… Ah, I remember this feeling. You must be from the Magus World, right?” The ancient Wisdom Tree spoke slowly, each syllable taking a significantly long time. It was enough for any quick-tempered Magus to get annoyed. However, there were no traces of impatience on Leylin’s face. On the contrary, he was full of respect towards the ancient Wisdom Tree, especially since his advancement to rank 3 was all thanks to it. Hence, he bowed deferentially. “Yes! I am Leylin Farlier, a rank 4 Warlock of the Magus World. Greetings, mighty Enlightener!”

The Enlightener was a title given to the ancient Wisdom Tree by the combined decision of all the Magi in the Magus World. It was rumoured that the ancient Wisdom Tree was the culmination of all wisdom. It was even knowledgeable in all the mysteries of the cosmos and the universe. There were countless high-ranked Magi who had gained enlightenment with its help, and even the glamour of the ancient era was, in part, possible thanks to its guidance. However, the mighty ancient tree which had granted enlightenment and solved riddles had disappeared from the Magus World all of a sudden. No matter how hard the ancient Magi tried to find it, no traces were left behind. In the following generations, many Magus historians had attributed
the fall of the ancient era to the lack of guidance from the Wisdom Tree, leading to many ancient Magi walking a path ridden with errors. Though Leylin did not really agree with this standpoint, it was true that it was very knowledgeable regarding Magi.

“The Magus World!” The ancient Wisdom Tree’s large eyes flashed with nostalgia, “I still remember… 20 or 25 dark ages ago, the Magi were all adorable little children. Oh! There was one called Aten, and he was pretty good at barbeques…”

The mighty ancient Wisdom Tree was like an old man trying to chase after the past, jabbering on and on. Leylin waited silently at the side, while Toad Quark was beginning to get annoyed, “Old friend, are you moving again? You’ve only lived here for 87,000 years… I’ve only taken a nap, and you’re already moving again?”

‘An 87,000 year… nap?’ Leylin was speechless.

“Yes, my friend! I feel the descent of terror. Even the end of the world can’t hinder the spying of such power. The aftermath of the ancient era will continue to cause ripples, involving other worlds…”

The ancient Wisdom Tree said something that sounded like a prophecy, causing Leylin to be surprised. However, no matter how he inquired, it would not make a sound.

‘It doesn’t finish its words, ugh…’ Leylin rolled its eyes inside, but then heard the sounds of the Wisdom Tree after speaking to the toad. “And there’s you, you adorable thing. I can answer one question of yours as a present. Of course, it cannot touch upon the topic from before…”

“Many thanks, mighty Enlightener!” Leylin was elated. An opportunity to have the Wisdom Tree solve a riddle was not something any Magus could have even in ancient times. Even a Breaking Dawn Magus would smash their own head in for such a
chance. However, after the moment of ecstasy, he grew perplexed. ‘What should I ask? How to attain immortality? That’s too vague!’ Leylin opened his lips, but eventually did not ask the question. After an intense struggle, Leylin’s pupils flashed with soberness. ‘Even if it’s truly the ancient Wisdom Tree, it’s only one of the ancient legends. It’s probably at rank 8 or 9 as a Magus, and even such a being needs to defend itself. Asking about is pointless. I need to think of something more suitable for myself…’ Having thought it through, the fog in Leylin’s mind finally completely dissipated. Leylin took in a deep breath, clenched his fists, and asked the ancient Wisdom Tree this question, “I would like to know how to break through the bloodline shackles of Warlocks!” For now, there was nothing more important to him than solving this issue. “This…” The ancient Wisdom Tree raised a root and propped it against its lips, looking extremely similar to a human in thought. “You can…” ……

The fog disappeared, and Leylin was started awake. He rubbed his forehead that was slightly aching and glanced at the grey slabs on the ground. The fog was dissipating from the surroundings, and buildings were gradually revealing themselves. The lost look in his eyes disappeared and was replaced with confusion. “Was that scene real, or an illusion?” Leylin glanced at his hands, ‘I’m already at Morning Star. Under the scan of my soul force, any illusory spells should have been seen through. Furthermore…’
Leylin felt his heart beat. ‘The answer from the Wisdom Tree is still deep in my heart. It’s very feasible.’

Such a situation left Leylin bewildered.

Perhaps the Path of Quandary was a superior illusion, allowing intruders to find answers amidst their perplexment about where they were. This answer might already be deep in the intruder’s heart, and only made known at this point. Of course, if it can’t be found, they would remain lost there…”

Combined with his former knowledge and experience, Leylin came to a specious conclusion. Inside, however, he felt as if what had just happened was real.

With the strength of ancient Magi, it was not impossible to create a scene like that. Another plausible reason would be that through endless flowing from the river of time, many scenarios had converged at this point.

In other words, Leylin’s mind had passed through the isolation of time and space, reaching one of the spatial fragments in the ancient era, and met the true ancient Wisdom Tree.

‘Hah! I don’t care anymore! There are only benefits for me here anyway! If it doesn’t make sense, then so be it. When I get enough strength, I might even understand all of this naturally…” Leylin thought optimistically.

There were no cons whatsoever in coming to the Path of Quandary. He had even obtained a method to solve the issue of his bloodline shackles. While this was merely a tentative plan, it was still very precious. It might not even compare to all the benefits from Scarlet Crescent!

‘However, since I’ve gone through the Path of Quandary, I should be getting some rewards.” Leylin touched his chin, watching the large Magus building that had completely revealed itself, as a smile appeared on his face.

What had appeared in front of Leylin was a little western-styled
building that was two storeys high. The window at the balcony was still open, as if the owner had only been gone a short period of time.
The brass door handle had a simple yet splendid lustre, and seemed to have been used regularly.
Leylin knew, though, that this building had been abandoned for at least over ten thousand years. It was naturally magic that resulted in this effect.
*Ka-cha!* After gripping the handle and putting some strength into it, the door was easily pushed open, revealing a hall with a giant fireplace. The firewood in there was still crackling and burning, a wave of heat gathering indoors.
“Besides what’s on their bodies, Magi keep their most precious objects only in the bedroom, study room and laboratory…”
Leylin scanned the area quickly and immediately gave up on the living room, going up to the second level of the building.
He first found the study room. There seemed to have been some spatial spells used here, and upon opening it, what was presented in front of Leylin was an enormous space comparable to a football field. There were large bookshelves that towered at ten or so metres tall, but everything there was empty, leaving behind only a pile of ash in the compartments.
Leylin rummaged through the area quite a few times and had the A.I. Chip check the area repeatedly without giving up, but he eventually resigned himself to the situation and left the study room.
“I never expected that all the books and research materials would have been taken away… What would else would be left?”
Leylin was slightly dejected, but still searched through room after room. He then found the original owner’s bedroom.
Unexpectedly, he was easily rewarded with something on the makeup table.
A blood-red earring in the shape of a crescent moon lay quietly in
an opened jewellery box. After Leylin confirmed it was not a trap, he took it in his hand, and a stream of information was immediately transmitted over.

“Scarlet Earring! High-grade magic equipment. Work of Mefylk! … Ah! This is presented to my goddess, Jonase, my true love…”

From the opened jewellery box, it seemed that the owner had been preparing to wear the earring, but everything had suddenly come to an abrupt stop.

Leylin was confused as he looked through the bedroom, but still did not find anything that looked suspicious.

“A strange set-up!” Leylin mumbled to himself, keeping the Scarlet Earring and adding many seals outside.

Even if it was a trap, a piece of high-grade magic equipment was worth the risk. Besides, Leylin was very confident in his judgment and the A.I. Chip’s scans.

While leaving, he consciously took a look at the mirror frame at the makeup table.

There was a large oval silver mirror inside, reflecting Leylin’s image. Strangely enough, the Leylin inside had a secretive laugh, causing him to be startled.

By the time he came back to himself, everything in the mirror seemed to have returned to normal, as if all that had just happened had merely been an illusion.

But would Morning Star Magi hallucinate? That was impossible!

Leylin’s expression became gloomy as he gritted his teeth, quickly keeping the mirror and running out of the bedroom and out of the villa.

The moment he left the villa, it completely vanished, leaving behind a large depression that looked to have been gnawed at by beasts.

*Bang!*

A fist smashed onto a table, causing dust to fly, “Despicable! Damn
it! He’s actually taken it away! That was the magic equipment that was the easiest to obtain, and it was even of a high-grade at that!”
In an unadorned crystal private room, an old Magus looked annoyed, unwilling to accept this.
“It’s not just that. He even took ‘that’ away!”
The old man’s expression changed a few times before he made his mind.
“No! No matter what, I have to get it back!” The old man took out his light yellow notebook. A map with many black dots appeared on it immediately.

“Find him! Rip him apart! And bring everything back!” Following the old man’s growl, streaks of crystal-clear light flashed in the secret chamber and a few translucent puppets suddenly widened their bloodshot eyes. As if they understood the old man’s words, they rapidly shuttled through the void, gradually vanishing.

……

“This feeling, something bad’s about to happen” Leylin’s eyebrows furrowed. He’d actually been feeling a sense of discomfort ever since he exited the Path of Quandary. It was as if someone was secretly spying on him. However, the scanning of the A.I. Chip and his own soul force could not discover anything. And now, this feeling of discomfort suddenly intensified, even to the point of turning to anxiety!

“The malice that’s pervaded the atmosphere…” Leylin shut his eyes and quickly opened them again. At this moment, his pupils had already turned into a pair of amber slits. A thin, blood-red line flashed across them. Suddenly, rumbling sounds rang out as a large amount of spell
runes flickered. A colourful radiance shot into the sky and formed a gigantic ice cage, trapping Leylin within.

“What? I definitely didn’t trigger any traps… Unless…” Leylin squinted his eyes slightly. This situation caused him to become clear-headed.

“Haha… I, who have gained control over the entire core secret chamber, am an invincible existence in Scarlet Crescent!” In the core control room, the old Magus’ face shone brightly, his hands still grasping a piece of ruby with its tips connected to numerous crystal threads.

Strings of complicated commands were continually transmitted through the ruby in his hands.

Numerous crystal-clear hexagonal snowflakes suddenly condensed within the trap, forming a large quantity of icy blades, shields, axes and such. They all smashed loudly towards Leylin’s head.

Leylin thought of an idea. “Kemoyin’s Scales!” “Blood Flame!” His body was immediately wrapped in a layer of dense, black snake scales as a blood-red flame raged above him, subliming the large quantity of ice.

As if it was provoked, the ice condensed once more with a sizzle. Its blue core became even more crystal-clear, emanating a piercing chill.

The ice, which was covered by the blue radiance, stood firmly while it was being roasted by the flames. A large quantity of cold air was emitted, even breaking through the Blood Flame’s seal. It shot in front of Leylin, who smashed it apart with a frown.

Sharp icy blades slashed his body, only enough to create thin, long sparks. They couldn’t even break through the outermost energy defence.

“Absolute Zero Kelvin!” Leylin’s pupils narrowed and his face no longer had the previous relaxed look.

“This was undoubtedly set up by ancient Magi. Such a formation
that unifies all the runes in the area is definitely difficult for ordinary Morning Stars to withstand… However, It doesn’t seem to be working at full force… That means…”

Leylin seemed to be in a deadlock with the huge icy spell formation on the surface. However, he was actually calculating something in his mind.

*Whoosh!* Suddenly, space twisted and a few rays of white light seemed to have broken through the boundary as they appeared right before Leylin.

The handle, which bore the sharp broken sword, had already pierced the edge of Leylin’s chest.

“So fast!” It was difficult for Leylin to react in time. The only thing he managed to do was strengthen the Kemoyin Scales’ defence to the maximum.

Compared to other spells, the innate spells of Magi were activated purely by thought. With such incomparable speeds, they were the common last-ditch resorts when their lives were in danger.

*Schlick!* A broken sword, seemingly forged out of pure crystal, pierced through the energy defence as well as the runes outside the black scales with much difficulty, coming into contact with the scales themselves.

*Pop!* Leylin frowned, as if at something bursting. Behind him, a large Multi-Armed Race phantom came into existence and channeled a dark green energy to cover his body.

“My goodness!” The muscles on his right hand flexed, hammering a punch at the opponent. This made the translucent figure retreat. After waiting for the opponent to put a certain amount of distance between them, Leylin looked at his chest with a gloomy face.

A bright white line in the shape of a crescent had been carved on the Kemoyin Scales. The sword had left behind a deep pit, taking a few smaller scales with it.

“Puppet?!” When Leylin got a clear view of the figures making a
sneak attack, he shouted in surprise. In front of him were a few translucent figures in pure white, body-fitting Magus robes. In their hands were a large quantity of physical weapons, including the broken crystal sword from before. “A puppet that is able to break through my Kemoyin’s Scales defence, such a rank… I’m afraid can only be created by an ancient Magus…” Leylin looked at the bloodshot eyes of the puppet before him, confirming his conjecture, ‘Someone’s behind all this.’ “So this is the power of a Morning Star? Even the Void Assassin could not take down the opponent!” In the core, the old man’s dignified face warped as he clenched his teeth. “It doesn’t matter. I have the spell formations to control the core and the puppets on hand. Even if it takes up a little more energy, I have to take down the enemy!” With his orders, the arms of the Void Assassins surrounding Leylin warped, revealing daggers, knives, and even weapons that looked like power saws. They were all translucent except for the golden runes twinkling on them, seemingly made from crystal. Space twisted once more as these Void Assassins vanished into thin air again. It was as if they were vipers hiding in the dark, preparing to deal a fatal blow at any time! With these enemies around eyeing covetously at their prey, in addition to the pressure of the icy cage above their head, any ordinary Morning Star would definitely have sustained serious injuries. “It’s a pity that you met me!” A sneer emerged at the corner of Leylin’s lips. Wasn’t the shadow-attribute Giant Kemoyin Serpent even better at concealing itself in the void? He’d previously used spells such as Shadow Stealth to lay in ambush, and he naturally knew about the weaknesses and disadvantages of such spells like the back of his hand.
Although the ancient spell formation was a little more troublesome, the enemy evidently did not have complete control over it. This gave him an opportunity.

“Only…” Leylin laughed coldly as a radiance sparkled in his eyes. A translucent figure shot out from the void with a whoosh, the dagger in its hands aimed ferociously at Leylin’s eyes. Leylin’s face remained unchanged and he suddenly stretched out his wrist. When it came to a stop once more, he was holding one of the puppet’s arms in his hands.

A gigantic blue iceberg, with a great blazing flame at its bottom, started to exert pressure on everything below as it rumbled. At the same instant, a sharp aura suddenly shot out in the other three directions.

“Good! Very soon, that thing will belong to me…” In the control room, the old man watched a pale Leylin. Looking at his wounded body, he could not help but let out a carefree smile.

“Haha… So what if you’re a Morning Star? I’m the king here!” The old man spread out his arms and cheered, but his voice was instantly silenced with a grunt, as if he had been strangled at the neck.

When it came back, it returned as a frustrated curse, “How did he escape?”

In the projection he’d been looking at from the control room, Leylin’s condition had already hit rock bottom. His entire body was soaked in blood, and he seemed ready to die at any moment. However, every opportunity to kill him was thwarted by small problems in the coordination of the Void Assassins, letting him evade it by luck. At least, that’s what he’d seen it as.

And right when he was in the most desperate straits, that lucky Magus had actually discovered a flaw in the spell formation, directly breaking through space and escaping.

The old man roared in anger, smashing his fist violently on the
platform of the control room with a bang.

“If I had known all the control spells, and obtained the highest authority, even a Radiant Moon Magus wouldn’t be able to escape this place, let alone this Morning Star!” What followed the bout of rage was a sense of helplessness.

Indeed, he’d used his map and reached the control room, obtaining partial authority by following his ancestor’s notes. In fact, he didn’t encounter much danger at all. However, his ancestor did not have a high position in Scarlet Crescent. This naturally meant he had no way to gain complete control of the place.

That previous spell formation was actually the limits of what he could accomplish with his current authority. As for those Void Assassins, he had to thank the fact that their creator was none other than his ancestor. That was why he had a backdoor method to take control of them.

“Damn! Damn! DAMN!” The old man’s face was full of indignance, “Just these Void Assassins have already made this trip worthwhile, but the most important item is still not in my hands. Not to mention, this place will definitely be monopolised by great forces in the future. I’ll no longer have a place here…”

He subconsciously shot a glance at the other black dots. They were already very close to the core area, especially the one that represented the Radiant Moon. It seemed to have an unstoppable force, barging its way through and already sweeping past several small-scaled resource points, making the Magus secretly hurt.

Such desire and the strong indignance led this Magus to a decision, “Try again, no matter the result, you have to leave!”

He looked at another screen, pressing the jewel down without hesitation. A huge flame exploded forth, forming an enormous blazing giant that blocked Leylin’s path.

“So it’s fire after ice? But it’s still of the same degree of power as the previous one…” Leylin shook his head, becoming more
confident in his judgment.

“Catch him! Catch him!” The old Magus grabbed the jewel with both hands, his eyes full of excitement and desire. And at this time, Leylin, who was in the screen, suddenly lifted his head and laughed at him. The old man’s hair stood on end…
“Found you, you little rat!” The Magus was able to make out Leylin’s words from his mouth’s movements, immediately causing his eyes to turn red. “Void Assassins, don’t hold back. Kill him!” As if having lost his self-control, the Magus held onto the command stick and roared. *Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!* At least eight Void Assassins appeared instantly, charging straight for Leylin. In front of him, the large flame giant was also snarling as it brandished a large flaming metal whip.
The sealing formation, the flames, and the surprise attacks from multiple Void Assassins would be extremely troublesome for normal Morning Stars to deal with. Even Demon Hunter Cyril would probably be seriously injured under such an attack!

[Beep! Found spiritual force link. Eliminating three areas with fake signals, determining coordinates!]
The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded by Leylin’s ears, causing a smile to rise up on his face. Ever since he realised that there was probably someone behind the scene, Leylin had commanded the A.I. Chip try and identify the location of the core control room.
The slip ups and injuries sustained from before were all intentionally done to get his opponent to take the bait. A spell formation was not able to supply adequate data and information, but the other party had obviously not been satisfied.
He had dispatched someone to attack, allowing the A.I. Chip to discover his traces immediately!
‘From my guesses and the A.I. Chip’s simulation, the other party probably isn’t that strong, and may not even have access to the core control room of the ruins. Otherwise, it wouldn’t be an attack just of this level!’

Leylin watched the sharp blade and flames coming towards him, a strange smile appearing on his face.

A splendid layer of crimson-red rays suddenly emerged from his body, turning into four rings that floated up and down.

“Rank 1 innate spells: Kemoyin’s Scales, Eyes of Petrification!”
“Rank 2 innate spell: Toxic Bile!”
“Rank 3 innate spell: Intimidating Gaze!”
“Rank 4 innate spell: Bloodline Metamorphosis! Combining to form the Morning Star Arcane Art: Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!”

*Rumble!* A humongous serpent that measured tens of thousands of metres long suddenly descended on the region.

Spell formations fell apart, the earth cracked, and multiple buildings turned to dust. Even the air was beginning to shake.

*Po!* The flame giant from before, as well as the many bindings and fire elemental spell formations, were swept away by the large snake’s body. All the runes were destroyed, and even the the spell formations at the base of the buildings flickered out.

In front of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, the Void Assassins that were the size of a regular human were like ants. Their sharp swords could not even pierce through the scales, and instead, were sent crashing to a random area with a swing of its tail.

The Arcane Art of the ancient Morning Star Warlocks, Kemoyin Serpent Transformation. This trump card that would allow Warlocks to transform into a terrifying ancient beast appeared once more!
The giant black snake hissed as it aimed its head in a specific direction, its starry amber eyes the very personification of ridicule. Its body was like a black storm as it crushed the area.

*Thump! Thump! Thump!* On the way, various little flickers of brilliance could be seen on the giant serpent’s body, which then dimmed.

“What’s going on? Is this a Morning Star Arcane Art? He- he dared-”

Having been locked onto by the aura of an ancient, giant beast, the Magus in the core control room went limp and fell to the ground. As he made contact with the other party’s eyes, the fear hidden deep in his genes exploded forth as his body went stiff, unable to move even a finger.

The direction in which the giant serpent had looked in was evidently the location of the core control room. Seeing how the other party was crushing everything in its way, it would probably take seconds to reach him.

This old man shuddered, now regretting provoking this fiendish person.

*Boom!* Like in a magnitude 9 earthquake, all the items in the core control room jumped up and fell loudly onto the ground. Hearing the accompanying hisses, the old man shuddered even more in fright. He knew that the terrifying ancient, vicious beast had now reached the outside of the core control room.

“I have the defensive spell formation of the core control room. It… It’ll be fine!”

The attack from before had been obstructed, giving the old man some confidence. However, before he could struggle to get up, an even more powerful tremor could be felt.

*Rumble!* Bricks fell everywhere and the roof was torn open. Two eyes that were like stars shot out terrifying rays of light.

“Ah!” The old man went limp, a fishy smell even travelling from
the crotch of his pants.
“Little worm, do you think you can hide?” The gigantic serpent suddenly turned small, regaining the size of a regular human. Large amounts of black gas turned into armour that merged onto his perfect body.
Leylin charged into the control room and held the old man by the throat, eyes flashing with a dangerous glint, “A mere Crystal Phase Magus dares attack a Morning Star on the sly?”
His own aura had weakened slightly, the consumption from before had not been small.
Due to the limitations of the peace agreement, Morning Star Magi were not allowed to use Arcane Arts that would affect large areas in the central continent. However, this was the Scarlet Crescent ruins, and technically speaking was not on the central continent. Naturally, that agreement did not extend to this place.
But why did the other Morning Star not use it?
It was because there were usually extremely powerful spell formations in the ruins. If the range of the Arcane Arts were too large, there would definitely be a chain reaction that would not be beneficial to the Morning Star Magi.
The second was because Magi had entered in order to plunder resources. How could they use such a powerful technique and destroy everything? Did they not want the loot?
Only people like Leylin, who thought nothing was taboo and had the A.I. Chip to find the specific location of his opponent, dared to bulldoze through after determining there were no traps or counteracting spell formations.
This also had to do with the old man having yet to gain complete control. If not, with the activation of any of the true ancient spell formations, Leylin would definitely be unable to break through and might even be trapped to his death by the spell formation.
“But since I started it, the situation will immediately change…”
Leylin laughed wryly inside. This was the consequence, but thankfully, he’d already prepared himself mentally. Even if he did not gain much here, it was all worth it.

……

“Hm? These undulations? Morning Star Arcane Art?!” Vicious energy undulations immediately passed through the range of the ruins. Almost all Morning Star understood in that instant. “Since someone has already made the first move, we need to hurry up!”

Cybel glanced at the wall made of large amounts of vines, and immediately looked annoyed, “Get out of the way!”

“Of course, my lord!” Paul, who knew what Cybel was planning on doing, immediately retreated far into the distance in case he got injured.

Afterwards, frightening energy undulations gathered at Cybel’s body, and a giant, all-annihilating storm even more terrifying than Philip’s swept through the place…

“A bunch of youngsters who don’t know how to follow rules!”

At the other end, a middle-aged man, golden all over like a god, shook his head helplessly. He put down a document in his hands. “Anyway, someone has already taken control of a portion of the detection spell formation in the ruins. There’s also that feeling of being spied on…”

The middle-aged man’s brows furrowed, “I’m afraid that this truly must be the headquarters of the ancient Scarlet Crescent, and must have a high value. If news of how I had come here with a group of Morning Stars and yet was one-upped by someone else spreads, it’ll definitely be a huge joke…”

“In that case!” The phantom of a giant gold lion appeared behind the middle-aged Magus.
*Boom!* Just the pressure from the aura was enough for the entire building to collapse, the air shattering like iron chains. “This feeling… These undulations… It’s a great Radiant Moon Magus!”

Collins, as well as the other Morning Star Magi, began to look grim at the other end. The phantom image of a golden lion in the horizon gave them a very bad feeling.

It was not just the Morning Stars of Jupiter’s Lightning. Even the Warlocks of Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair immediately sped up their movements, berserk energy waves emanating from them. When they no longer had reservations, the terrifying destructive ability of Morning Star Magi were showcased completely.

“At expected, after I made the first move, it caused a chain reaction among the other Morning Stars. None of them are holding back anymore and charging in this direction…”

Leylin looked at the notebook that lay wide open. Many buildings had already been broken through by a few black dots, and there were warning sirens everywhere.

*Gurgle… Gurgle…*

The old man was almost unconscious. Never did he expect that, in just a short instant, these Morning Stars would suddenly turn into ancient oppressive beasts, the defensive spell formations like a mere joke in front of them.

At the thought that he had even thought of relying on the spell formations here to deal with them, cold sweat unceasingly dripped from the old man’s forehead.

Leylin had yet to come up with a way to deal with the descendant of Scarlet Crescent. He had a very soft personality, and just by being threatened, he had immediately handed everything over, which included even the jurisdiction to control the Void Assassins. This saved Leylin some time, and also allowed the old man to
escape the gruesome fate of having his soul searched.
It was not just this. On the other party’s body, Leylin found the inheritance from his ancestor, which was quite a large harvest. From his eyes, Leylin could tell that the old man still seemed to be hiding something. Time was scarce, however, and Leylin could not waste more time to settle it.
“What are you afraid of? The setup of an ancient Magus won’t be that simple…”

Leylin shot the man a glance and spoke disdainfully. Though his earlier actions might have seemed reckless, the route had already gone through the A.I. Chip’s meticulous probing and calculations, and he had not triggered any fundamental, large formations. After all, for ancient Magi, Morning Star was the bare minimum level. How could there not be specific countering spell formations? Those Magi would probably soon be in trouble.
With a body thousands of metres tall, a monster with the head of a cow, body of a human and tentacles for feet emanated powerful energy undulations. Behind it, four giant rings of light constantly flickered and fused, and the power of its point mass strengthened immensely from before, forming an alarming spell. Like an ocean god had been enraged, great amounts of ocean water formed horses, goblins, dragons, and various other ancient beasts, drowning the large spell formation opposite it. In front of the Morning Star Arcane Art, the large spell formation had broken out a powerful defensive force, but it was still smashed to smithereens, the vast ocean water bringing a great amount of pressure and washing through.

“This seems to be a cultivation base!”

Siebel’s aura suddenly grew unstable before he returned to his human form that would consume less energy. He charged into the spell formation and began to rummage through as he wished. The Arcane Art left the base in a mess, looking like ruins after the end of the world. Yet, there were still some intact objects lying in the dust and emanating light that attracted hi’s attention.

“This is a Thousand-Eyed Worm Egg. It’s so big, and can practically be exchanged for an astral stone of a similar quality…”

“And very concentrated refined gold. There’s so much…” Siebel’s
eyes lit up, cheeks turning a rosy red. Various famous and also unknown precious materials were lying on the ground like trash. Though many had been destroyed, they were still of high value. Such enormous wealth was placed before him to be chosen from. Even in his life, this experience was very rare.

“Haha… If I’d known, I would have done this long ago. Though it might affect some treasures, I can save time and attack a few other areas…”

Siebel’s eyes turned slightly red, as he scanned the ground and kept anything of value. He then left, reaching another area. The surroundings of the large laboratory were flickering with crystal luster, obstructing Siebel like a city wall. At the door, there was a wooden sign that was a warning.

“Grandmaster Nuuk’s Alchemy Laboratory! Do not disturb if you are not supposed to be here! You will bear the consequences!”

“He’s already been dead for over tens of thousands of years. Who are you kidding?” Siebel had originally been surprised by the crimson words on the sign, feeling a chill down his spine, but the harvests he had reaped caused him to get greedy.

“Once I attack this place, I can move on to the core area. The treasures there must be even more amazing…”

Siebel’s expression changed several times, but he gradually made his decision. Rays from innate spells of various ranks lit up from his body.

Of course, he had also set up several layers of defence, with magic equipment that looked like shells covering his body.

“Be ruined! Morning Star Arcane Art Ocean Crash!”

The azure ocean that stretched as far as the eye could see, as well as the vicious ocean animals, immediately submerged the laboratory in front of him. All sorts of lights exploded, before dying down. By the time Siebel was done, the laboratory had turned into a large
ruins. All the spell runes had either been destroyed, smashed, or had disappeared.

“Haha… As expected! My guess was right!”

The counterattack he had expected did not arrive, and Siebel’s face showed his elation. He first sent a few puppets forth cautiously, and after determining there was no danger ahead, pounced towards the ruins hastily and began to look through it.

Even Morning Star Magi did not get such chances often.

Meanwhile, spilled various violent and dangerous reactions were rapidly happening out of sight.

“Determined to be point mass reaction! Judged Morning Star-ranked enemy at area DK-34, activating counterattack spell formation.”

Up in the air in the secret space, large amounts of vacant spaces fused together and formed the strange shape of a crystal ball. At the heart of it was an unusual human in black robes, eyes giving off crimson rays.

Traces of a mysterious aura were emitted along with the control room’s command. In the area above what had been the laboratory, a concealed spell formation began to operate.


“Hm? What’s going on?” Siebel raised his head, and in that moment, his intuition as a Magus made him feel immensely threatened, some existence was giving him the chills.

“Not good! I need to leave immediately!” He turned into a blue silhouette as he darted out.

However, it was too late. With a terrifying, high-pitched sound, a large, crimson spell formation appeared in the air. Large numbers of runic chains formed a cage, trapping him inside.

“Target confirmed. Beginning annihilation.” The icy, robotic voice immediately gave Siebel the feeling that he was in immense danger.
However, as a Morning Star Magus, he would naturally not sit and wait to be killed.  
“Ah! You want to kill me, just with this spell formation?” Siebel snarled, body exploding and revealing his true marine form.  
At the same time, the enormous undulations from the Morning Star final technique appeared once more.  
“Morning Star Arcane Art Ocean Crash!”  
A tremendous ocean descended, and many ancient creatures thundered as they charged straight for the runic chains.  
*Weng!* The attacks fell on the thin runic chains, but were not able to cause any damage at all. Large amounts of blue light were absorbed by the chains, causing Siebel’s face to immediately turn pale.  
“How-How?” Seeing a spell formation like this that could absorb a whole Morning Star Arcane Art, Siebel seemed to have been dealt a massive blow. Were Morning Star not able to do as they wished in the continent? Their Arcane Arts were even more horrifying, so how could this have happened?  
Only now did he understand how terrifying ancient Magi were, but it was far too late.  
*Xiu!* A giant blue bow appeared, still having some of the power Siebel’s own point mass as it shot out blue flames.  
At the heart of the blue flames, there was a unique long arrow, the arrowhead having alarming black threads that distorted time and space.  
*Pu!* Like paper being ripped through, his defensive layers were pierced through by the blue arrow, and even the Morning Star Magus’ famed soul force was rendered useless under the black threads.  
The giant blue arrow pierced through Siebel’s chest, pinning him to the ground.  
“I… I will actually here… in the hands of a trap…” Siebel’s
expression cycled, and he was unsure if he should laugh or cry. Though these injuries would cause regular people or even Magi to die straightaway, Morning Star Magi had a vigorous life force and powerful vitality that still allowed them to struggle for their lives for a period of time.

“I never thought I’d die here. Thankfully, I still have the marine tribe’s deity egg and can be reborn.”

Siebel had a wry smile on his face, unwilling to part with the precious items and magic equipment he had found. However, there was no way around it. The marine tribe’s deity egg was a secret method of the marine tribe Magi to save one’s life, for Morning Stars and above. It was able to separate one’s blood, flesh and soul in the form of a marine egg, and after the fall of the main body, they would then be reborn in the egg. As it was part of the Magus, after a period of training, it was possible to even return to the Morning Star realm!

Since it was so valuable, it was obviously extensively sought out. However, due to the limitations of the race, only the marine tribe were able to use it, causing many human Morning Stars to wring their hands in defeat. Though there were some Magi who had one or even a few clones, if the main body fell, it was extremely difficult for the clone to reach Morning Star and was even considered impossible.

“Collection of soul aura complete. Beginning obliteration of soul brand.”

At this moment, the icy robotic voice sounded once more, giving Siebel the impression that he was really in trouble. Immediately after, he felt a strange force being transmitted to his body through the bow and arrow, and with the sensing abilities of his soul aura, felt it trace the source and reach a part of the past. A scene suddenly appeared in his mind. It was that of when he had
carefully placed the deity egg in his Magus Tower. At that moment, multiple black threads were sent out, puncturing the deity egg.

“Oh! Noooo…” Siebel yelled while struggling. He could tell that with the changes in the scene, his original connection with the deity egg had been completely broken, and he would no longer have any chances at rebirth. In that case, if he were to die, it would truly be the end...

“How– How did it become like this?” Large amounts of blood spilt from the corner of Siebel’s mouth, which then turned into blue bubbles that exploded. His eyes closed for eternity.

In ancient times, there were many Magi with clones or those who entrusted their lives elsewhere. The methods were strange and hard to be determined, but many Magi who had participated in the great ancient Magus war had still fallen. Once the original was completely wiped out, even a Morning Star would be helpless.

*Poof!* A spot of light that was like a morning star emerged from his body and, with the guidance of a stream of astral light, broke through the space and left. This was a Morning Star Magus’ point mass, holding his soul within.

Based on legends of the ancient Byron Empire, when Morning Star Magi completely died, their soul would return to the astral plane for eternity, floating in the deepest part of the astral plane and waiting for their next chance at reincarnation.

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*Sou!* Taking this opportunity, the large black hands grabbed hold of the point mass, disappearing into the darkness.
Previously, hidden in the control room, the scenes of Siebel’s death were displayed on the crystal screen for a pair of crimson eyes. When the point mass was caught by the person behind this whole situation, the power bar increased by one unit on the side of the screen.

“…” The crimson light in that pair of eyes flickered intensely, but it soon subsided. The chamber turned deathly silent again. A dark figure stayed at its spot, unmoving, unbreathing. Meanwhile, news of Siebel’s death swept through the entire ruins like a hurricane.

“What’s this feeling?” Leylin’s face changed the moment the astral plane opened automatically upon Siebel’s death. He felt the fluctuation in the atmosphere of the astral plane and the point mass. It was the same feeling he’d gotten when he’d killed Cyril, something he’d never forget.

“The death of a Morning Star Magus? The point mass returning to the astral plane?” Leylin mumbled in disbelief. He took a long breath afterwards, “Sure enough, ancient ruins aren’t this simple. Even this core control room could be a mere disguise, with another true one hidden somewhere else!”

Leylin had gotten this suspicion a little earlier. Even if the old man didn’t have full authorisation, the defence of this place was far too
weak. Now, it seemed it was only to be expected if this place was just a ruse that could only control the simplest spell formations. Those powerful spell formations that had the power to suppress Morning Star Magi, and were even strong enough to kill them, were all hidden somewhere in the dark.

Leylin looked at the old man who was lying on the ground with sympathy when he thought of this. It was obvious that his ancestor was of little importance in Scarlet Crescent, he had not even gotten a single bit of information about such matters.

“Anyway, all these things is none of my business. I’ve gotten what’s important, and therefore, it’s time to leave…” Leylin smiled, then flipped open the pale yellow notebook.

Even if the old man’s ancestor did not have much status, they had been very careful and had even noted down a secret passageway for the sake of their descendants. It allowed Leylin to leave Scarlet Crescent directly without returning through the original route, which greatly reduced the level of danger.

“If this works out, the mission this time will truly have gone perfectly!”

Leylin rubbed his chin, “The others only know that I have entered the ruin, but they don’t know what I have gained, there’s still room for manipulation.”

At the bottom of his heart was an idea about how to break apart the bloodline shackles, a gift from the ancient Wisdom Tree. This was priceless information for bloodline Warlocks. Because of this, Leylin had to safeguard the secret, or else he could be rejected and even persecuted by the bloodline Warlocks.

“The timing’s just right. I know Siebel’s dead, but the rest of the Morning Star Magi aren’t aware of this, which means he can be my scapegoat!”

Leylin could not help but sneer as he thought of what he saw in the
The other Morning Star Magi did not have the spell formation of this control room to monitor the entire ruin. At most, they only knew that one Morning Star Magus had perished, but they would not know which one it was.

In this case, it was possible for him to disguise himself as Siebel, it wasn’t like the dead could talk.

“Transfiguration! Projection Technique!” With a thought, Leylin’s aura changed, becoming similar to Siebel’s.

But this was far from enough. His cover would be blown the moment a Morning Star Magus scanned him with soul force.

“I planned to use this for research or just to sell it off. Who knew I’d be using it now…” Leylin flipped his palm, revealing a translucent test tube. There was a tinge of blue blood in it, emanating light.

This was the blood Leylin had extracted from Siebel during their fight.

“Conceal the bloodline! This is going to remove all light and resist detection…” Leylin spoke in a half-singing and half-chanting voice.

These were Arcane Arts that the A.I. Chip had deduced from the inherited memories of the bloodline. It enabled one to use the bloodline of the target, covering up their own aura and imitate the energy fluctuations on the target. Soul force would be unable to detect it.

Moreover, this was a long-lost arcane art of bloodlines. Leylin had witnessed it when he’d awakened his own Kemoyin bloodline. Other Morning Star Magi would definitely not have thought of it.

The spells sounded out as the test tube opened up in tandem with Leylin’s incantation. The blue blood drifted into the air, turning into a hazy shadow that enveloped Leylin.

In the blink of an eye, Leylin looked as if he changed into another
person. Not only did he have the same look as Siebel, even his aura mimicked those of the marine tribe. It was so much so that the energy fluctuations of a Magus were emitted from him, as opposed to those of the vastly different Warlocks. Even the Radiant Moon Magus of Jupiter’s Lightning would find it hard to recognise him under such circumstances.

“Ma– Master?”

The old man who sat on the ground saw Leylin changing completely into someone else, and he could not help but stutter. Leylin soon turned and looked at him, a trace of hostility flashing in his eyes.

……

Tremendous golden flames crackled and melted the void within seconds, clearing out a path of lava. A blonde-haired middle-aged Warlock walked out with both hands behind him, followed by the phantom of a humongous golden lion. “Right here! This is the first location where the energy fluctuations of a Morning Star Magus appeared. The core control room must be nearby!”

His brows furrowed while he glanced through the scenery on both sides. Looking at the huge depression and the remaining seawater, he frowned. “Was I too late?”

*Bang!* Just then, the core control room nearby exploded, and a ferocious blaze engulfed everything. The Warlock snorted with disdain, and a huge amount of fire was absorbed by the phantom at his back in an instant. His powerful soul force scanned around and discovered a blue figure immediately.
“Are you still trying to leave?” He smiled sarcastically, while a ray of golden lightning shot out immediately from the phantom behind him, quickly arriving at the blue figure.

“Arcane Art Myriad Waves!”

An illusory domain in the form of a blue ocean was emanated from the blue figure, and a large surge of waves rushed ahead to form a huge wall that shielded him.

*Ka-cha!* Golden lightning split the waves apart, revealing the original form of the trembling fellow.

This was a giant who was a few meters tall, covered in blue skin. The inhuman aura was obvious.

“Marine Giant Siebel? Indeed, he was the fellow guarding this region, and one of the first to enter the ruins…” The middle-aged Warlock nodded, then he saw Siebel’s figure flicker before he fled quickly.

“You can’t escape!” Wayde, the Radiant Moon Warlock followed after him right away. As the blue giant was the first to reach the core control room, he must have gotten lots of treasure. Just the structural plans of the ruins would have him green with envy.

“Hand me everything you’ve obtained, and I will allow your truesoul back into the astral plane!” Wayde looked indifferent, but the phantom lion behind him started to fidget.

‘Only a fool will stay still…’ Half of Leylin’s body was severely burnt, but his figure moved swiftly in the ruins to escape. Even though the situation was bad, he had managed to escape from Wayde for the moment with the guidance of the map he had acquired.

Leylin put in huge effort to disguise himself as Siebel in this time period. Not only had he changed his aura completely using the Arcane Art, he had also used the data recorded by the A.I. Chip to imitate his domain, perfecting the facade.

With the aura, domain, and even the face matching, even if Leylin
told him the truth now, Wayde wouldn’t believe him. 
Not to mention that he’d spent a lot of effort to conceal his 
powerful spells. With the rush he was in, his opponent would not 
have a single clue about his identity. 
As for the old man and the core control room, Leylin had destroyed 
them both; he would never let someone who knew his secrets to 
live. After all, once the old man fell into another’s hands, his 
disguise would be rendered useless. 
‘I didn’t expect him to be this fast… Moreover, he’s a rank 5 Magus 
who excels at lightning-based attacks!’ Leylin smiled wryly. He had 
disguised himself as Siebel, and even had to mimic his spells. 
Despite the fact that Leylin knew water could not outpower 
lightning, he continued to use water spells to fight against Wayde as 
he could not risk exposing himself. 
What was worse was that the opponent was way too fast. He had 
been caught unprepared. 
However, it was all worth it. 
A trace of a smile showed up on Leylin’s face, and blue light 
flickered in his eyes as he tested Wayde’s patience with the help of 
the numerous spell formations in the ruins. 
At last, Wayde fumed with rage at the slippery moves of the 
Morning Star Magus before him, and did not want to probe Siebel 
any longer. 
“Void Devourer!” His hand reached out ferociously, and the 
phantom opened its monstrous mouth in an attempt to swallow 
him. 
*Buzz!* As if a massive black hole had appeared in the void, 
everything distorted and disappeared into the lion’s monstrous 
mouth. 
‘This was what I was waiting for!’ Leylin’s eyes glinted, and he hid 
behind another huge bell tower. 
*Crack!* The bell tower was broken, and even the foundation was
uprooted by the suction force.

*Buzz!* A strong wave of energy appeared, unveiling a complex
spell formation hidden underground.

“Hmmm, what’s this? Power from the core?” Wayde’s brows
furrowed. Soon, he was buried in crimson spell formations that
came out of the blue.

“Intruder spotted, Radiant Moon Warlock!” A cold mechanic voice
sounded.
“Success!” Not far away, the golden lion phantom was trapped in a crimson spell formation. Seeing it growl continuously, Leylin clenched his fist resolutely. Since he had the guts to take Siebel’s place, he naturally also had a way out. Many important locations were marked out on the notebook he had seized. The energy hub was one of the most important places. Leylin was confident that once this area was attacked, the hidden defense program would immediately be activated. After all, he had intentionally avoided many spell formations along the way, and used Morning Star Arcane Arts with restraint. Thus, he appeared relatively harmless. Needless to say, the program would deal with the more terrifying rank 5 Warlock first. A Radiant Moon Warlock was not to be trifled with. Even in the ancient times, such a Warlock was a strong contender that conquered. The collisions between these two would instantly devastate their surroundings, causing an already chaotic region to become even more disordered. Even if there were any problems or clues left behind, they would have been quickly wiped out in the destruction. As the golden lion phantom continued growling, Leylin smiled coldly, his body completely fading into the void. The ruins no longer held any attraction for Leylin. The dangers
would increase exponentially, and forcing himself to stay wouldn’t bring him any benefits as well. Leylin thus decided to evacuate.

……

Half a month later, Phosphorescence Swamp, Ouroboros Clan headquarters, inside of Leylin’s huge castle.

“How were the ruins of Scarlet Crescent?” Leylin was now wearing a loose robe and conversing leisurely with someone else through the screen in front of him.

Paul’s figure surfaced on the screen, just that he seemed a little gloomy. Even his tentacles were drooping listlessly. Evidently, he didn’t receive any good news.

“It has been confirmed that the ruins of Scarlet Crescent have been completely closed. The coordinates have all become invalid, and I reckon that it has undertaken a spatial jump!” Paul didn’t look too well.

Previously, with the directions from the notebook, Leylin had managed to escape unharmed through a spatial path that had opened up. Hence, he also missed the drastic changes that had taken place afterwards in the ruins. Of course, this was how he avoided danger.

It was only after Paul and company emerged in a fluster that Leylin found out about what had happened in the ruins.

It turned out that the ancient Magi from the Scarlet Crescent had left behind an Adamantine Golem in the ruins, which acted as the control centre.

This Adamantine Golem had an intelligence on par with humans, and could think like a normal human being, except that it was equipped with a program to comply with orders.

What was even more special was that not only had this Adamantine Golem mastered all the ancient spell formations in the ruins, it
could also recharge itself by devouring Morning Star Magus point masses!
During the previous fight, upon discovering that it couldn’t defeat the rank 5 Warlock, Wayde, the Adamantine Golem immediately started attacking the other Morning Star Magi in the ruins. Numerous ancient spell formations had surfaced, costing Paul and company dearly. In front of spell formations specially deployed by the ancient Magi, even Morning Stars were destined to fall. Blair and another Morning Star had fallen straight away from Spirit Circle. On Wind Wolf Lair’s end, Philip was seriously injured while Palesa fell directly. Even Cybel, the strongest of them all, was severely wounded, and was rumored to have almost fallen from his Morning Star position. On the other hand, Jupiter’s Lightning was no better. At least half of their men suffered grave injuries, while the remaining few had superficial wounds. After recharging through absorbing numerous point masses, the Adamantine Golem started to show its prowess. With the assistance of the many ancient spell formations, even Wayde was wounded and eventually chased out. The other Morning Stars had to get themselves out of danger one by one. Paul was lucky; he had managed to jostle his way into a spatial crack, and was teleported to the border of the Magus world, which saved his life. From then onwards, the Scarlet Crescent ruins vanished from Crystal Mountain. Other Magi came forth afterwards, but no matter how hard they tried to scout it out, not even a trace of the place could be found. According to the judgment of a few specialists, the Adamantine Golem must have activated a spatial jump right after attaining sufficient energy, teleporting the ruins away.
Under such a situation, these Magi were so stunned that they could only drop the idea of going in for another round of looting. As for Leylin? He fabricated a lie about how he hadn’t gained a lot after entering the pocket dimension, and had immediately backed out after the rank 5 battle started. This, of course, raised doubts from Cybel and the others, but those were only suspicions. Furthermore, as they had just lost a great deal of strength, they were in no position to question Leylin. Additionally, someone else had taken the limelight away from Leylin.

“Oh right, has Sebel been found?” Leylin asked seriously, trying to contain his laughter. Due to Wayde’s allegations and other evidence, many Morning Stars unanimously agreed that the Marine Giant Siebel of Jupiter’s Lightning had gained the most fortune from the ruins, and had even intruded into the core control room. Jupiter’s Lightning reacted relatively strangely. They declared that Siebel had already fallen and perished. Even the deity egg in the Magus Tower was damaged. This did raise some suspicions. However, the Warlocks led by Wayde were enemies with them, and thus did not receive any response. They could only try to probe for information on the sly.

“He hasn’t! As you know, prophesying about a Morning Star Magus is really troublesome, especially with the presence of the Morning Star domain. Coupled with the radiation from the Magus himself, even a Radiant Moon Magus specializing in prophecy spells cannot solve such problems. We need someone that is at least a Breaking Dawn, and he has to be an expert in prophesies…” Paul gave a forced laugh. A Breaking Dawn throne specializing in prophesies? Leylin smirked. Such a person has never been seen before in the central continent.

“We suffered many losses this time round, and returned with only
injuries. Only you managed to reap some decent gains!” Paul seemed sour, which was rare. He stared at Leylin’s right ear. 
Leylin gave a light laugh and touched his earlobe. A crescent accessory covered his ear, casting a crescent shadow. 
This was a high-grade magic equipment: the Scarlet Earring! After confirming that it didn’t pose any danger, Leylin immediately put it on. 
A high-grade magic equipment! Even Morning Star Magi would be envious. After all, even the raw materials of such an item have disappeared from the face of the central continent for a long time, thus it would be impossible to produce it again. 
Perhaps only the Breaking Dawn noble powers who have explored other worlds and obtained loads of resources might own a few of these items. 
Most of the magic equipment that Leylin had seen before were low-grade items, and even middle-grade items were rare. It wouldn’t be hard to guess the value of this high-grade piece magic equipment. 
Not only did Leylin escape unscathed, he even reaped relatively huge gains. It was no wonder that Paul was envious of him. 
It was only after much deliberation did Leylin that decide to display this magic equipment. His previous actions may have appeared suspicious; if the first batch of Magi who entered left without a single piece of loot, it would attract unwanted attention. 
Now, the appearance of the Scarlet Earring would serve as a reasonable explanation for all that happened. 
Paul thought to himself, ‘If it was me, perhaps I would have been satisfied with the discovery of the Scarlet Earring as well. It would have been enough for me to stop there and find my way out instead.’ 
What was more miraculous was how the complete disappearance of the Scarlet Crescent ruins had made most of the contract that Leylin signed with them obsolete. He didn’t even have to
redistribute what he’d obtained. Initially, when they decided upon the allocation, they had included the entire ruins as one of the most important lands. Now that they had suffered a dead loss, the agreement would naturally lose its validity as well. This was definitely beneficial for Leylin. He was prepared to keep the secret of the ancient Wisdom Tree until his death. It was only an intelligence report anyway, and didn’t occupy much of his share. Withholding this piece of information and then distributing his profits fairly would deceive everyone. Now that he was the sole owner of all the shares, it was even better. As the previous agreement was made obsolete, anything obtained from the ruins would be belong to the person who found it. No matter how jealous Paul was, he couldn’t do anything about it. With such a high-grade magic equipment, it was needless to say that Leylin’s strength would increase exponentially. Now that Cybel was suffering from heavy losses, they couldn’t make things ugly even if they wanted to, as their strength could not be compared to Leylin’s. Not only that, Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair had suffered great losses in terms of strength. The successive fall of their Morning Stars caused problems to surface in their rule. Enemies from before also started getting themselves ready for action. In such uncertain times, they would be more than willing to receive external assistance from Leylin, who had good connections. This would be more favourable than allowing him to side with their enemies. That was how this matter passed. ‘If it were not for the two Radiant Moons!’ Leylin secretly added on. Although Leylin had tried his best to cover his tracks through questioning himself, it was hard to guarantee that he didn’t leave
any traces behind at all. If the Scarlet Crescent ruins were found, or even broken into, it would be possible to find gaps through on-site tests.

There were many tricks up the sleeves of those Radiant Moon Magi, many of which he would not have even thought of. Thus, there was still a hidden danger.

But what was a little risk compared to these returns?

Furthermore, the Radiant Moon Warlock on Leylin’s end, Wayde, was very certain that the Marine Giant Siebel was the main culprit. This imperceptibly lifted immense pressure off Leylin. Since he had long offended that Radiant Moon Magus from Jupiter’s Lightning, a little more enmity wouldn’t make much difference.

“Oh right, Sir Leylin, you seemed to have gained a lot from this trip to the Scarlet Crescent ruins. I have a few items here as well, how about a mutual exchange?” Paul finally revealed his true intention of making the call.

Although both he and Leylin had obtained a few items in the ruins, they might not be fit for use, thus it was vital to exchange items of equivalent value.
Alright, we can make the trade in the Morning Star trading area!” Leylin said after a moment and nodded. He then ended the call.
The point of the transaction was a small plane that was accessed and linked through the astral gate. It was the channel to which Cybel gave Leylin access for trading amongst Morning Star Warlocks.
That was a large camp and trading area built together by a few Radiant Moon Warlocks, and Leylin was delighted.
Though his Magus Tower and astral gate were still under construction, he could still travel through another astral gate.
While pondering over this, Leylin entered a large honeycomb-like structure in the technological section.
Here was an astral gate that could be used.
“Your Grace!” Schadt brought a group of Warlocks in white coats that looked very much like researchers from his previous world, and bowed to Leylin.
“En! I want to use the astral gate here. The rest of you can leave first.” Leylin waved his arms, sending Schadt and the rest away.
With his current status, Schadt did not dare say more. He immediately brought his subordinates away, giving up the spacious laboratory to Leylin.
“Astral Gate!” Leylin saw a giant stone gate in the spell formation at the centre.
Around the stone gate were blue flames that formed a giant bundle of light and covered everything. If Leylin wasn’t at the Morning Star realm, he might not even see the true body constructed of astral stones.
The stone gate was simple yet dignified, spatial runes roving around and revolving every once in a while as they emanated a unique luster.
“Astral plane! What a vast, wide place. I wonder if I’ll be able to explore it to its depths in my lifetime…” Leylin sighed. He had a premonition. Perhaps… When he completely understood the secrets of the astral plane, he would achieve his goal of immortality!
The giant stone gate emitting blue astral light began to rumble, a large black whirlpool appearing in the middle. Boundless silver spatial rays shot out from within, as well as a vast, mysterious astral aura.
“Go!” With a wave of his hand, a point of light that was like a star landed on the astral gate.
These were the coordinates to the Morning Star trading area that Paul had given him. After the A.I. Chip had recorded it down, he could use soul force and turn the location into a point of light.
The coordinates of different worlds and plans were very different from the 2D plane coordinates in Leylin’s previous life. It was definitely not 3D either, but something that constantly warped and jumped in curves. At the same time, they seemed to have some point of reference in the astral plane and formed a specific frequency.
Even with the powerful calculative abilities of the A.I. Chip, it was still unable to simulate the entire process. Only through continuous use could it be completely understood.
When the point of light that was like a star landed on the surface of the stone gate, a startling change happened.
*Bzzzz!* The astral gate trembled, the countless wandering runes emitting an alarming luster. The two sides of the gate opened with a rumble, revealing a spatial passageway that was like a galaxy.

“As expected, the consumption is very little. Just the reserves of astral stones that I borrowed can be used for three days or more!” Leylin was in no hurry to enter, only watching the A.I. Chip as it recorded data, and couldn’t help but nod.

The operating rules of the astral gate still had to abide by the most fundamental physical laws. The further the teleportation, the greater the consumption. The Morning Star trading region was at the edges of the Magus World, and the consumption was obviously low, to the point that it was negligible. It was very convenient in moving manpower or cargo.

“Hm? That’s not right! This Morning Star area is obviously a strategic location for large bases and war movements of high-ranked Warlocks!” Leylin was startled, but immediately understood.

With a point of communication in the Morning Star area, as long as organisations had Morning Star Warlocks and astral gates, they could be sent aid from the Morning Star area through astral gates, and could even have Warlocks from the union lend their support! It could be said that the Morning Star area, along with the astral gates, was a huge teleportation network that linked all bloodline Warlock organisations.

“What an amazing plan! Such a convenient method of receiving aid, and very flexible as well. It’s no wonder that bloodline Warlock organisations are spread throughout the central continent, and are still so close. There doesn’t seem to be any issues that might divide them…”

The more Leylin thought about it, the more clear it was. He
couldn’t help but begin to admire those Radiant Moon Warlocks for their thoughts and decision.
Of course, the requirements to enter the teleportation formation was very high. There needed to be at least one Morning Star Warlock or above, as well as an astral gate.
Any one of the Dukes of the Ouroboros Clan could have sent for help from the Morning Star region through the astral gate. The invaders would immediately be destroyed, and Leylin would not have had to risk his life alone.
At this thought, Leylin had little to say.
If he had obtained the coordinates to the Morning Star region earlier, things would not have been so difficult for him, to the point that he needed to gamble on some things.
However, it wasn’t too late. The connection between the Ouroboros Clan and the Morning Star area was established once again, and he could obtain reinforcements any time. He would not have to be as cautious as before.
Leylin laughed, a trace of dark soul force emitting from the area between his brows and into the passageway.
Since it was the first time he was making contact with the Morning Star area, he would not put himself in danger. On top of that, the consumption of having his body going through as compared to just his soul force was much higher. Using his soul force would save a lot of energy.
It had to be said that sometimes, Leylin was a very miserly Magus. The spatial travel was very quick this time, and the repercussions were mild. Leylin focused his mind on the soul force, and immediately felt it going through the astral gate and linking with another small-scaled plane.
"Foreigner, this is the gathering area of bloodline Warlocks. State your name and status!"
Just as the soul force reached the outer regions of the plane, Leylin...
felt a powerful undulation being transmitted to him. That was the bloodline aura unique to Radiant Moon Warlocks, ruthlessly scanning Leylin’s soul force.

‘A Radiant Moon Warlock, and their real body at that! This must be the protector in charge of the Morning Star area,’ Leylin wondered inside, his soul force emitting a stream of information.

“I am Leylin Farlier of the Ouroboros Clan.” At the same time, the dark soul force instantly sent out a layer of crimson brilliance, with the aura of the Kemoyin bloodline. The unique power of a Warlock’s bloodline, as well as the aura of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, symbolised his status. It was a mark that was difficult for others to imitate.

“En! Cybel’s brought you up before, and the bloodline power is correct. Welcome home, little guy!” The conscient immediately turned friendly, sending Leylin some words of encouragement and retreating into the other plane.

Leylin’s soul force did not hesitate and followed him in.

“Is this the Morning Star area?” A streak of dark light formed a black human figure. Leylin couldn’t help but look around, fascinated.

He was now in a large square. Raising his head, he could see a shattered sky, with nebulae and giant protective stars and the like in the spatial cracks.

Above some of the protective stars, there was a huge ring of light that was even larger than the sun, looking as if it was about to fall. High-ranked Warlocks could be seen walking around the square on occasion. Compared to the small-scaled gathering before, Leylin now saw even more Morning Star Warlocks, and with some, he could not even sense the source of their bloodline.

This was the point where high-ranked bloodline Warlocks in the central continent gathered, and naturally could not be compared to the last time.
Leylin began to observe carefully. The Warlocks here were naturally at the Morning Star realm and above, their bodies all having unique auras. Some looked completely different from regular humans just from their outer appearance.

It was evident that this was not their first time here. They were not surprised by Leylin’s presence in the square, going about their own matters.

Some of them had descended with their real bodies, while there were others like Leylin with just a thread of their soul force changed into flames, bundles of light, or other shapes.

“Paul, I’m here!” Leylin’s soul force turned into a rune and sent out a message to the imprint.

Almost instantly, he received a reply, “Welcome, welcome! Are you at the square? Wait, I’ll come get you!”

Minutes later, a large steel puppet reached the square, its sapphire eyes shooting out light and immediately finding Leylin’s location.

Identifying people by their soul force was the main method Morning Star Warlocks used to distinguish people. They were rarely wrong.

Seeing Leylin staring at his puppet, Paul couldn’t help but chuckle, “Haha… my friend! It’s your first time here. I’ll gift you a steel puppet soon, since it’s slightly inconvenient without a body!”

Morning Star Warlocks used astral stones very sparingly, and if it was not necessary, they would not try to pass through with their real bodies. Instead, through their soul force, they would prepare a clone or puppet, and things would be fine.

The black figure formed from the thread of Leylin’s soul force laughed and spoke, “This isn’t bad either. Aren’t you going to bring me around?”

“Of course!” The large steel puppet immediately led the way, every step causing an earthquake, attracting the attention of many Warlocks.
“This is the Morning Star area, the holy land of bloodline Warlocks. It’s also where all our strength and hope lies!” Paul explained. “You should understand how trading and everything works, right?” “Of course. A network of teleportation spell formations spanning across the central continent! As expected, it’s a huge project!” Leylin sucked in a deep breath.
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“Yes. Through the Morning Star Area, any Morning Star Warlock can get support at anytime. Even if our brothers are spread throughout the central continent, this place can still keep us closely linked.”

Paul’s words held a tone of awe, and the respect he held towards the Warlocks who had thought up this plan was obvious.

“Yes. If I had had the coordinates to the Morning Star Area the last time, things wouldn’t have been so difficult…” Leylin sounded helpless as he sighed.

“Haha… but it’s not too late to know now!” The hand of the steel puppet seemed to pat Leylin’s shoulder, but went through the black figure.

As if trying to hide his embarrassment, Paul immediately laughed as he spoke. “Oh! By the way, all of our bloodline Warlock organisations provide each other with long-distance delivery services. Of course, they take a fee, and need to be on good terms with the other party!”

“Bloodline Warlocks are very united…” Leylin’s eyes shone, immediately knowing the function of this service.

Even if it was the airship network of the Monarch of the skies, it would take years to travel from one end of the central continent to the other. In the process, they had to move across countless dangerous regions, and even Morning Stars would find this troublesome.
Unless it was absolutely necessary, other Magi would stay in their own territories, and seldom conducted super long-distance travels. With the teleportation through the Morning Star Area, travelling to any region in the central continent could happen in an instant as long as there was a Morning Star Warlock organisation there. Of course, as the teleportation was through the astral gate, the arrival would be at the other party’s headquarters or even Magus Tower. This served as a threat to the Warlocks who teleported over. The Warlocks that received them would not easily reveal secrets of their nest to another Warlock. This required a certain amount of trust from both sides, as well as unity. However, Leylin believed that with the huge pressure from the external world, and the coordination of the few Radiant Moon Warlocks in the inner circles, this was not yet a problem. “The space here is large, and there are many uninhabited areas. As long as you take control of it, it’s yours and you’re free to do as you like, as long as you don’t encroach on public territory!” Paul continued on, “I have a castle outside, but you need to be careful. In these uninhabited regions, there are vengeful spirits and the like. Things will get very complicated if you get hurt, since it’s malice that has been amassed in a location.” Leylin looked grim as he nodded, tactfully not asking what had happened to the people who had fallen to this state. “By the way… Where is the trading hall?” Leylin took a quick look. After walking out of the square from before, there were only a few shops here and there, with some puppets or clones inside selling personal items. Some of the shops had even closed their doors, only accepting members. However, just the light from the front desk had Leylin in a daze. The astral stones that he had found so difficult to acquire when he
was rank 3 seemed to be of less value, with each shop having a couple pieces.
There were obviously many treasures here. Leylin even saw quite a few medium-grade magic equipment.
However, what confused Leylin was that the trading hall that he was looking for could not be found. Even after he walked a whole round through the trading area, he could not find anything that resembled a building.
“Uh… Lord Leylin, my castle isn’t too far away. How about we go there and rest, sampling rainbow juice and jewelled meat from the Gourmet World? How about it?” Paul awkwardly laughed.
Leylin’s expression turned cold with dissatisfaction. Paul was obviously afraid that after seeing the trading hall, he would be able to accurately gauge the real value of his items, thus disabling his ability to take advantage of him.
“Hehe… Big octopus, are you swindling newbies again?” Before Leylin had even flared up, a large flower that looked like a rose giggled from the side.
The rose looked about the size of a regular human, its roots twisting around each other and forming something similar to a human’s two feet. A little girl’s face appeared at the stamen.
“Hey, newbie! The public area for trading is above you. Just look up and you’ll know. No need to thank me…”
The giant human-shaped flower hummed while skipping off, while Paul’s face turned red. Thankfully, he was now controlling a puppet, and it was not evident.
“Above me?!”
Leylin raised his head in amazement, staring at the large, starry skies that were like the universe, particularly at the giant star that looked ready to fall. Numerous rings of light formed a pattern around her, bright and beautiful.
“Could it be?!”
Leylin was shocked, soul force immediately extending to the protective star.
*Rumble!* Like a universe exploding, information streamed into Leylin’s brain. If he had not already reached Morning Star realm and had some experience in the past, he might explode from this onslaught of data.
“Selling 5632 g astral stone! Accepting exchange with item of equal value!”
“High grade meditation technique Void Phantom, total of five levels. Complete. Requesting…”
“Purchasing bloodlines, remains or even goods from ancient creatures at a high price. Price will be favorable. Add me immediately!” At the side was a secret imprint symbol.
“Medium-grade magic equipment trade. I need a defensive magic equipment. Any difference in price can be compensated with another hundred star gems!”
“Selling living beings Desolate Bone Wolf tribe, as well as a wolf king with a limit of rank 3!”
“Selling spatial Arcane Art, as well as an incomplete spatial coordinate. If interested, please hurry…”
Leylin’s eyes flashed with blue, the A.I. Chip quickly turning and gathering all this information, forming a large price list and a curved line of the selling price.
Leylin chuckled, clearly understanding the preciousness and general prices of certain items.
“Haha… The weather’s quite good!” Paul laughed. “Lord Leylin, there’s too much chaotic information here. I just wanted you to get some rest…”
Paul said something even he wouldn’t fall for. Would soul force need rest?
Unexpectedly, Leylin immediately agreed. “Lord Paul, please lead the way!”
“Wha- What? You still want to go to the castle? Oh, no, no! I mean… are you not going to take a look at the market?” Paul was slightly confused and even bewildered, to the point that he forgot his words.

“Haha! Spirit Circle is my Ouroboros Clan’s ally, so I obviously believe you! Besides, I’m rather curious about the rainbow juice and jeweled meat!” Leylin lifted his head and chuckled, looking as if he did not mind. Paul was immediately touched.

What he did not realise was in the moment Leylin laughed, there was a cold glint in his eyes.

After walking out of the public area, everything instantly seemed desolate. The Morning Star Area was a plane after all, and no matter how many of their few Radiant Moon Warlocks had dealt with it, they could not attend to every single area.

Even public places were frequented only by Morning Star Warlocks, and thus appeared like a ghost town. The area was large but there were few people, and the frequency of an individual occupying a lot of land was extremely high.

The situation was even worse outside. Besides a few castles and buildings like that near the public region, the other areas were basically a wasteland.

The vengeful spirits formed of malicious thoughts and ill intent were very stubborn and difficult to deal with. Before a complete ‘purification’, even Radiant Moon Warlocks had few methods to deal with it. They could only allow them to lie around idly, not even able to make use of them.

They headed all the way to Paul’s castle.

While it was called a castle, Warlocks’ aesthetics were rather different from those ordinary people. The castle in front of Leylin was a few large spheroids floating in the air, with a column connecting the bottom to the ground.

“Look! This is the castle I designed myself. What beautiful arches!
And that feeling of complete perfection! Oh! It makes me want to recite a poem…” Paul was obviously in a good mood, but Leylin politely declined.

On the ground, there was an installation similar to an elevator. The smart butler immediately recognised Paul’s aura, sending him and Leylin into the castle.

“Haha… This area is rather crude with only a few refined-gold servants. Don’t take offence…” Paul brought Leylin to a strangely-shaped hall to sit, and an intellectual servant immediately brought a round plate over.

Inside was juice that was spilling over with an aroma, as well as roasted meat.

The juice was poured in a transparent glass cup, but revealed a seven-coloured luster, similar to a rainbow. The meat, too, had a tint on the surface similar to jewels.

These two were food from another world. Even Morning Star Magi would have difficulty obtaining this. The taste was amazing, and though Paul usually could not bring himself to enjoy it, he had taken it out and shown off his treasure for Leylin’s sake.

“It’s alright!” Leylin laughed as he shook his head. While he knew that in theory, they could move migrants here to work, the purification was not thorough enough. Besides Morning Stars, even other low-ranked Warlocks might not be able to handle the contamination, much less regular people.

Perhaps… The union head had already attempted at experiments in this area, only to be met with failure.

Leylin did not think into this, picking up his cutlery in a practised manner and elegantly cutting himself a piece of jeweled meat.

“Oh!” The moment the piece of meat on the fork entered his mouth, the delicious juice from the meat combined with a unique aroma and began to attack Leylin’s taste buds, causing every cell in his body to rejoice.
“That is delicious! I’m not going to hold back then!”
Mind ready to take some revenge, he began to enjoy the food without restraint, feeling a thrill go through him as he watched Paul’s heartache.
The Gourmet World was another world in the astral plane. Rumours from ancient times had it that even a brook or a rock would taste supremely delicious there. This was the pinnacle of enjoyable food, and many Magi could not resist the temptation.

Based on Leylin’s knowledge, the Warlock Union had yet to have any records of a successful attack on another world, which made these all the more precious.

Seeing the delicacies in front of Leylin constantly being consumed, Paul’s robotic face seemed to be in anguish, especially the soul force that unwittingly showed his emotions. Leylin was even more cheerful as he ate quicker.

Though his main body wasn’t here, the pleasures felt by soul force could be connected to the main body.

When Paul could no longer endure this, Leylin raised his head properly, “Lord Paul! Seems like we can now discuss the issues about trading the spoils…”

The look of grievance Paul had on his face had Leylin laughing inside, but his expression was even more serious. Paul wanted to vomit blood.

……

After coming out from Paul’s place, Leylin’s expression still held a
smile. Though he had taken a hasty look, the A.I. Chip had already remembered the prices of everything in the trading market, giving Leylin a price list of objects used by Morning Stars and above. With this list, Paul’s thoughts of taking advantage of Leylin’s unfamiliarity with market price was thoroughly fruitless, and he had even suffered a loss of great amounts of treasures from the Gourmet World. Recalling his expression of wanting to vomit blood, Leylin felt the urge to laugh. Of course, Spirit Circle was still Ouroboros Clan’s ally, and Leylin had not gone too far. At least, when he had been eating the meat, he’d thrown a few bones to Paul. When he sold off some of the treasures from Scarlet Crescent at a slightly discounted price, Paul’s dead expression eased slightly. That said, the other party would definitely not dare deceive him anymore. *Boom!* Yellow earth exploded, and a giant black figure strode forward, each step causing the surroundings to tremble. “As expected, a puppet is easier to use than soul force!” Leylin controlled the giant black steel puppet, extremely satisfied. The soul force from before had only been a virtual body, and he could not do many things. On top of that, the energy consumption was high. Now that he had the puppet, it was like giving his soul force a layer of clothing. Not only could he do things that needed a corporeal body, even the energy consumption had lessened. This puppet was obviously not Paul’s. Leylin had teleported one over himself. After negotiating the trade, the two of them had immediately used the astral gate and sent over the items, finishing the trade in an instant. The teleportation fees were meagre, but Paul took responsibility for that. Leylin had taken the opportunity and sent
over a puppet for himself, causing Paul to roll his eyes. “Something I made myself is easier to use. Besides, I don’t dare touch any of that octopus’ things. Who knows what soul scrying techniques or traps are inside…” Leylin was still quite fearful towards the most mysterious branch of bloodline Warlocks, the spirit Warlocks. “Hm?!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, having discovered something. His body turned into a black figure, colliding into a little hill like a savage beast. *Boom!* The hill exploded, sending rocks flying everywhere. While dust flew everywhere, a human figure flew out. The human figure looked thin and small, and its body was translucent. One was somewhat able to see the scenery behind it. “A vengeful spirit that possesses worldly malice?” Leylin burst out in laughter, soul force forming a large hand and grabbing it. By the time his opponent came before him, Leylin realised that the vengeful spirit looked to be only 13 or 14 years old. It looked like a delicate boy, eyes still holding fear. “The environment isn’t bad here, and the vengeful spirit created here is considered top-rate even in the central continent. Should I take over a place and build a spirit experimentation area or something…” Leylin watched the boy’s faint figure in the large hand, stroking his chin. This vengeful spirit was completely intimidated by Leylin’s terrifying pressure, and could only tremble. “Hm? Is this power the malice of the world?” While grabbing the boy, Leylin felt a strange force emitting from the body, and even trying to invade his soul force. This was a force similar to the force of destiny, yet at the same time also similar to Gaia’s extensive will. If not for Leylin having researched deeply into these two areas, he might not even have
noticed it.
“If it was a complete and powerful world, even Morning Stars would be unable to handle its malice. It’s a pity…”
Leylin sighed. This was merely a plane, and it was broken. Even Gaia’s will had been defeated at the hands of Radiant Moon Warlocks till it was in tatters. If not, it would not have only this amount of strength.
Gaia’s will was, in actuality, the culmination of common trains of thought amongst living bodies, and even non-living bodies such as the earth and ocean.
Now, however, all intellectual beings of this plane had been exterminated, leaving behind vengeful spirits, and allowing Warlocks to take over more of it.
Perhaps… Tens of thousands of years later, humans would thrive. Gaia’s will, which would be protective of the new humans and Warlocks’ benefits, would completely replace the original will here, and beat these down.
“This sort of malicious intent depends on the entire plane. If a new Gaia is not created, or the area is completely destroyed, this situation will not completely die away. It will be very troublesome…”
Leylin’s brows furrowed. Soul force began to quiver with a specific undulation, immediately shaking out this malicious intent.
*Bang!* The faint figure of the boy in his hands immediately looked sinister and quickly exploded, turning into streams of black air and dissipating.
“How long will it be until all the mysteries of the soul are laid bare before me?”
Leylin observed the desolate area, sighing ruefully as he commanded, “A.I. Chip! Show me the progress on the simulation of the fifth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil!”
[Beep! Progress of 5th level of meditation technique, Kemoyin’s
Pupil: 30%!] The A.I. Chip loyally intoned. This number had been stuck here for a long while, and if he did not make any breakthrough, he would probably not be able to make any progress.

Looking at this number, Leylin sighed silently.

In terms of a Magus’ progress, progress from ranks 1 to 3 relied on spiritual force. From 4 to 6, it would touch on the soul. The even more mysterious rank 7 required the grasping of some power of the world, or in other words laws!

Leylin was now stuck in the training of the soul. Kemoyin’s Pupil only had four levels, and there was no elaboration on the later realms. Leylin could only grope around blindly.

However, soul force was hard to understand. Even the A.I. Chip now could not completely come up with the date of others. How could he conduct simulations and the like?

‘Perhaps even rank 5 or 6 Magi or Warlocks might not be able to fully understand the working of souls. In addition, while strengthening soul force, one can only rely on meditation techniques and long periods of time…’

Leylin couldn’t help but recall the Wing of the Sun. Even this top-grade meditation technique’s explanation about souls was not clear. The author had often marked speculation and guesses. That meant that even a terrifying rank 6 being like the Sun’s Child did not have enough understanding of the soul, and only depended on the characteristics of its race to gain power.

‘Compared to Magi, Warlocks use the power of their bloodlines to strengthen the soul. Most of the time, nobody understands how it works. Meditation techniques mostly teach how to activate the power of the bloodline, which is why their knowledge on souls is even lesser than that of Magi! Maybe that’s one of the reasons why, amongst bloodline Warlocks, there haven’t been the appearance of any rank 6 thrones…’
Leylin touched his chin, beginning to make conjectures. “First thing’s first, I have to completely revitalise the bloodline of the Sun’s Child. With the Wing of the Sun, I might be able to gain something. Next, I have to purchase large quantities of renowned works on souls by Magi and Warlocks, and I must obtain level 5 or 6 high-grade meditation techniques…” “These two methods are the most practical. For the latter, I can solve it right here!” At the thought of the information at the trading market, Leylin’s eyes brightened. *Rumble!* Though it wasn’t the first time he’d seen it, he was still awed by the large amounts of soul force and conscients mixed together. The scene of uncountable amounts of data streaking through still left Leylin with his mind blown. On the giant planet of the Morning Star area, basically all Morning Star Warlocks left a trace of their soul force or will here to conduct trades. Some wills stayed here, relying on selling information and earning large amounts of top-grade resources. Leylin noticed keenly that the use of magic crystals had been lowered to the utmost, and they were almost completely unseen. This was very normal. Among Morning Star Warlocks, who did not have a few or even tens of large-scaled magic crystal mines? This could not be used as something of much value. The currency here was something else that Leylin was very familiar with astral stones! Astral stones had become the norm, and were the currency being used. If Morning Star Warlocks had something they needed, they would usually sell off what they had on hand and, after accumulating enough astral stones, buy it. For Morning Star Warlocks, astral stones were an eternal, hard currency. They would not depreciate in value. The information in the market changed completely every few
moments, making Leylin think back to the stocks, securities, and futures markets of his previous world. It caused him to feel dazzled.
I. Chip, begin scan! Keywords: Soul force, high-grade meditation technique.

Thankfully, Leylin had the A.I. Chip which was fused with his soul. It responded instantly to his thoughts, [Beep! Mission established, starting scan!]

Soon enough, a blue display was projected in front of his eyes, showing a very long list. Leylin gathered himself and started looking through the information carefully.

“High-grade meditation technique Void Phantom: Five layers in total and complete. As long as…”

“Ancient soul force Arcane Art Multi-luster Sacrificial Rite: Able to strengthen soul force and improve the power of spells that are rank 4 and above by 50%, all in exchange for the egg of a Nefarious Filthbird!”

“Crystallised soul force: 500g of the crystallised soul force of a Morning Star in exchange for astral stones of the same quality!”

“Ancient Bloodline Offspring of the White-scaled Illusory Tiger: Not only can it keenly sense soul force, a contract with it has the extraordinary effect of strengthening the soul. Prices to be negotiated face to face!”

The large amounts of data dazzled Leylin, every item on the screen nearly causing him to salivate. He realised then that he was poor. He was way too poor!

Whether they were from his plunder of Twilight Zone or his other
sources of wealth, his resources that could originally be sold off at astronomical prices were dispensable to Morning Stars. Other things, such as his bloodline refinement method and the data on Quicksand’s experiments could not see the light of day. Leylin suddenly found that the only things he could take out to sell were the astral stones he’d appropriated from the clan treasury. “This won’t do! I need to find a source of revenue as soon as possible!” Leylin watched the items on the screen, eyes turning slightly red.

These Morning Star Warlocks had gathered too many amazing items. As long as he obtained a portion of any of them and hand it over to the A.I. Chip to experiment with, the progress on the analysis of soul force would definitely increase rapidly. This was very important to him.

“But… a source that suits a Morning Star, and it needs to be regular as well…”

He found himself in a bind. Other Warlocks would surely have taken such sources over already, how would he get a chance? His only option was to think up a brand new source of income. Leylin flipped through the pages absent-mindedly, and finally found some things he was interested in.

“Teleportation required: I need to reach Sunset Mountains within three days. If any friends have teleportation points, please contact me. Prices are negotiable!”

“Requesting help: Rebellion by Marine Dragon Whales at the East Region. Need at least three Morning Stars to suppress them. Each will be guaranteed a minimum of 1000g of astral stones, and additional rewards will be given to those who capture their enemies…”

“Assistance required in attacking the Mage Basin. Once conquered, offering 5% of their yearly profit!”
All sorts of conscients gathered at the other end of the trade area, communicating rapidly. The deals were near-instant. “If there isn’t anything else, I’m afraid I’ll have to take on some missions here, becoming a mercenary of sorts…” Face grim, Leylin followed a thread of information to a dark conscient, “May I know if Sire here is selling high-grade meditation techniques?”

Floating in front of Leylin was a bundle of black light. An extreme darkness full of terrifying energy converged on it. Though it was merely a conscient, it was still enough to cause Leylin to feel fear. “En!” The other party answered unwillingly, as if not really interested in this deal. Unlike other items, this sort of knowledge and special techniques could be sold off multiple times and not even at a very high price, which was Leylin’s first target.

After all, he had already gained a top-grade meditation technique, Wing of the Sun. With this one, as well as the other accumulations from before, the A.I. Chip’s research would reach a whole new level and he could obtain more information. “May I know the price?” Leylin calmed down, readying himself to negotiate with the other party. He did not have a lot of astral stones, and there were a lot of good resources here. He needed to be frugal.

Besides, the requirements listed by the other conscients were just unbelievable. Even Leylin could not take it, especially the one asking for the egg of the Nefarious Filthbird. He’d blacklisted that choice right away. The Nefarious Filthbird and Trial’s Eye were at the same level and had the ability to traverse worlds. How could it be of equal value to an ancient Arcane Art? Just thinking of this, Leylin felt that they were crazy. As for the soul

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force crystals, he could just produce himself. They weren’t all that useful anyway.
In general, since there was news of people hoping for an exchange, they obviously wanted to sell items off at a higher price. Hence, very few deals were made in this trading area. Most of the idle soul forces and conscients lazed around here, and once they saw a cheaply-priced trade, immediately pounced forth like a bunch of sharks that smelt blood.
Morning Star Warlocks were erudite, and also had the detective ability that soul force offered them. Each and every one of them was old and sly, and while it was not impossible to get pick up cheap gains, the effort and time one needed to put into it was too much.
This was the conclusion Leylin came up with after surveying the scene multiple times. Hence, he gave up on the thought of picking up cheap deals and began to trade honestly.
“My Void Phantom not only has five complete levels, but also includes an affinity to the element of illusion. It’s at an unconditional price of 5000g of astral stones!” The dark conscient didn’t seem to care if Leylin actually wanted to purchase it.
“Mm! However, its requirements for the users is too high. Besides, we’re all Warlocks. The high-grade meditation techniques of Magi are only for reference, which makes your price too…” Leylin frowned. With his knowledge of high-grade meditation techniques, just a few casually-thrown-out sentences caused the conscient to begin hesitating.
“Furthermore, haven’t you sold this meditation techniques many times already? How can it have the same price as before?” Realising he had a chance, Leylin immediately attacked.

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After a complicated negotiation similar to the business deals in his previous world, Leylin finally bought the high-grade meditation technique, Void Phantom, at a low price just like he wanted to. However, the astral stones he had gotten from the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan had been practically halved in that instant. He calculated it all carefully. The real wealth was definitely on the three dukes, and all that was left in the headquarters were merely scraps.

Leylin had too few astral stones left on him after buying the meditation technique. He took a look around, and upon finding nothing special quickly found a little corner, his soul force withdrawing from the Morning Star area.

“Hah…” In the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan, at the core laboratory in the technological department, Leylin gave a long huff and observed the black crystal in his hands.

[Beep! High-grade meditation technique Void Phantom has been recorded. Saved into database under high-grade meditation techniques] The A.I. Chip’s emotionless voice sounded.

“Very good!” Seeing the progress bar that was now progressing again, Leylin’s heart that had been aching was finally consoled. He left the technical department and came before the bloodline laboratory from before.

This was the core laboratory of the Ouroboros Clan, and only the three Morning Stars were allowed access to it. Of course, after Leylin took over, he had used this as his own laboratory. The experiment on the revitalisation of the Sun’s Child bloodline had been performed here.

“Tower genie, how’s the situation with the specimens?” Leylin asked.

“The specimens are currently doing well. The number of surviving blood-sucking loaches is being kept at 20 and above, and they have consumed 32.7 tons of culture fluid.”
The tower genie projected a series of data in front of Leylin, to which he nodded his head. At the beginning, the blood-sucking loaches’ numbers had rapidly dwindled, but after the other specimens had gotten used to the bloodline of the Sun’s Child, they could finally survive for a longer time. At this point, a decent number of them could remain alive at a time. Leylin came to the cultivation pool from before. The liquid in the pool had already turned a dark green, with occasional streaks of gold flashing underwater. It had also expanded tenfold from before.

Water splashed everywhere, and a golden monster jumped out to bite at Leylin, its mouth full of sharp teeth. It was even spitting out flames! *Tsss!* Before the flames could reach him, they were blocked by a layer of white light. Black lightning grouped together to form a large hand, slapping it back into the water.

“Mm! It’s very lively!” Leylin chuckled, judging this mutated blood-sucking loach. Perhaps, calling them blood-sucking loaches was no longer suitable, since what was in front of Leylin was a whole new species that had gone through the stimulation from the bloodline of the Sun’s Child.

It had expanded in size by ten times and was full of golden scales. There was even a strange horn-like thing on the head, and it had scarlet eyes and sharp teeth below. It growled, on the offensive. As if the attack had given rise to some chain reaction, multiple golden streaks jumped out from under the water with a splash, beginning to attack each other and roaring. Some of these loaches had grown a pair of sharp claws at the stomach area and were unusually ferocious as they launched attacks at their own kin.

“The offensive abilities of the blood-sucking loaches has increased by a large amount. Every time there’s a bloody battle like this, the
surviving blood-sucking loaches will gain even more strength. The most powerful blood-sucking loach is estimated to survive for 45 days and 21 hours. Its bloodline was from a blood-sucking loach king…” The tower genie introduced by Leylin’s ear.

“Is it this one?” Leylin had noticed the golden blood-sucking loach right at the centre. It had already bore no semblance to its previous form, and had grown to become a more powerful being. Flowing scales covered its entire body like a layer of smooth liquid. The bloodied look in its eyes had not ebbed, but it now seemed to have some intelligence.

After observing for a while longer, Leylin ordered, “That’s enough. Prepare the next phase!”

*Rumble!* The ceiling above the cultivation pool suddenly opened, and some mysterious fluids were poured in from a translucent crystal container.

As if it had been exposed to a stimulant, even the largest blood-sucking loach immediately immersed itself in this ‘civil war.’
I'm afraid the conditions here are still inadequate for the last bloodline purification and activation process!” Leylin scrutinised the entire laboratory, the crystal-like ground as well as the unique radiance emitted by the walls.

Such an environment was a good location for experiments even for a Morning Star Magus.

Even so, some of the steps required to activate an ancient bloodline were very troublesome, and even posed a certain amount of danger. It was still best that these sorts of experiments were conducted in one’s Magus Tower.

But there was still a period of time before Leylin’s Magus Tower could be completed, hence it was still necessary to remodel and reinforce the place as appropriate.

As he looked at the muddled breeding pool, he was no longer bothered by the yells and struggles inside it. Instead, he gave a few orders to the formation genie before leaving the place directly.

“Morning Star Magus Tower!” Although Leylin had only been gone a short period of time, the headquarters of the Ouroboros Clan had undergone many changes.

The number of Warlocks in the place had increased. With the war having calmed down, many refugees from other territories had fled here. On top of that, there was now a tall tower built in an eye-catching position.
This Magus Tower was not only a few times larger than his old one, it was also filled with a sense of terrifying grandeur, its peak appearing to pierce through space itself. This was the Morning Star Magus Tower than the Oakheart Clan and the other bloodline Warlock families of the Ouroboros Clan had cooperated to build for Leylin. Although the construction of the tower could not be completed this soon, the rough framework had already been set up. A large number of high-ranked Warlocks, as well as Magus craftsmen and formation Magi from other regions surrounded the Magus Tower, working tirelessly.

“Your Grace!” Faisal and Parker immediately came to greet him at Freya’s side. “You guys have done well during this period of time!” Leylin smiled at Freya before speaking to Faisal and the others. “It’s because we adopted Your Grace’s blueprints and followed your advice. We’re confident that we’ll be able to complete the construction more quickly than normal.” Faisal reported respectfully.

There was still a slight shock in his heart. In his view, with Leylin being able to promote to the Morning Star realm at the mere age of 200 or so, his talent as a Warlock was incomparable to begin with. What he did not expect was that Leylin could actually focus on both the construction and formation spells whilst undergoing Magus practice. It made Leylin seem monstrous. Of course, those thoughts were hidden within his heart. He definitely couldn’t show them on the surface.

“Good! Pass down my command: the work is to be halted every night. I want to handle it personally, in a more in-depth manner,” Leylin said plainly. “Could it be that you want to…” Faisal’s eyes sparkled, and he left shortly after.
“Now, who can overthrow you?” Leylin looked at his own Morning Star Magus Tower, a confident look emerging on his face. His previous Magus Tower had been destroyed by the Oakheart Clan, but now they’d had to pay with a Morning Star Magus Tower instead. Furthermore, Leylin was now confident in his own strength. Even in the entire central continent, there were not many who could destroy his Magus Tower again. He also would not allow himself to fall into such a low. Leylin looked at the huge landmark-like Magus Tower and a slight joking expression flashed in his eyes. “Perhaps, after millions of years, this Magus Tower will come to symbolise me. Let it stand here forever!”

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Deep in the night. There was not a single Magus around the Morning Star Magus Tower anymore, even Faisal and the others had left the place long ago. They understood that the Magus Tower was the core of a Magus’ power. Surely Leylin had some secrets that he would set up, and the fewer that knew the better. Moreover, the intense radiation of a Morning Star Warlock would exert great pressure on them. It would be safer to avoid it. Leylin walked alone inside the empty Magus Tower. Most of the runes and spell formations hadn’t been set up yet, and many of the basic amenities were also unused. The Tower right now was just an empty shell without a defence. “A.I. Chip! Begin scanning the entire Magus Tower, slowly adjust the radiation power!” Leylin commanded. [Mission acquired, beginning synchronisation! Adjusting...] The A.I. Chip immediately responded.
Accompanying the A.I. Chip’s sound, a 3D structure appeared before Leylin. A brilliant radiance was also emitted from his body that began to merge with the entire structure. Compared to the previous time where his radiation spread out without discrimination in Scarlet Crescent, destroying everything, Leylin was currently extremely careful in controlling it. This process allowed the Magus Tower to slowly accept it and adapt. High ranked Magi could revitalise ancient materials through their radiation, and even produce many anomalies. This was common knowledge in the central continent. Although Leylin’s Magus Tower made use of high-quality materials, he still needed to use his radiation to unify the materials in order to let it reach its peak condition.

Many rumours held that there were often ghosts, vengeful spirits, and other such things where Magi lived, a byproduct of the changes a Magus’ radiation caused in the surrounding territory. Leylin was currently strengthening his Magus Tower, and at the same time leaving his own mark on it. Even if it was deliberately held back, the radiation of a Morning Star Magus was a disaster for weaker Magi. This was why Faisal had immediately transferred those Magi away as night arrived. As for other times? Based on Leylin’s control, as well as the compressive abilities of the point mass, he had long since become able to securely lock up the radiation in his own body. Since he didn’t leak the slightest bit, there would be no problem.

If someone looked from outside, they would see a beautiful view. Standing out from the surrounding darkness, a Morning Star Magus Tower seemed to be wrapped up in a colourful radiance. Even the dark sky was dyed with its colours. If they got closer, they would hear an increasingly clear hiss of a giant serpent, causing one’s hair to stand. What accompanied the hissing of the giant serpent was another
sound which seemed like a singing curse yet at the same time like a worshipping voice. It surrounded the entire Magus Tower, making it seem mysterious.

Because Leylin had joined in himself, the construction of the Magus Tower had been sped up. The building seemed to be morphing day to day.

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“It has finally reached this point!” Leylin’s pupils gleamed with excitement as he watched the gold creature in the large confinement room.

Now, the blood-sucking loach had completely lost its previous image. Instead, it had transformed into a terrifying creature that was similar to the golden dragons from legend. Golden scales covered its entire body, their glimmer making it seem as if it was a god from the ancient times. On its forehead was a rune in the shape of a sun, emitting a blazing light.

Leylin had a premonition— if it was not for him suppressing this beast all this time, the first thing the creature would do was probably to transform into a gigantic fireball, rising from the ashes and advancing to the Morning Star realm.

In other words, this was a Morning Star creature!

Now, creatures of this level were already very rare. If it were placed among the circles of Morning Star Magi, it would probably cause a huge sensation, even more so encouraging the emergence of another bloodline Warlock clan.

Upon seeing Leylin, the golden dragon howled and a blood-red light flashed in its pupils. It immediately turned towards him, emitting an aura unique to the dragon race.

The layer of glass in front was instantly drowned in a brilliant golden flame.
The tempered glass warped under the extreme heat, cracks beginning to form on its surface.

“Oh! You deliberately kept your firepower a secret, huh. This level of intelligence already surpasses that of a wild beast!” Leylin laughed without much ado. As he watched the golden dragon displaying its invincible might, he could not help but think of the ancient Sun’s Child, wondering what rank of power and influence it possessed!

“What a pity! I created you, and I can also destroy you at any time!” A chill suddenly appeared in Leylin’s pupils, making the golden dragon retract its neck.

“Blood seal!” A crimson radiance flashed in Leylin’s eyes as his right hand reached out to grab the golden dragon.

*Bang!* Immediately, a large amount of blood began to flow out from beneath the golden dragon’s scales, turning it red in a moment. Its original dignified roar had been replaced by a pitiful cry.

“Even locked to 35% of its bloodline, it’s still so terrifying?” A hint of worry flashed across Leylin’s face as he watched the shrieking creature.

The experiment that he had performed on the golden dragon previously out of convenience had immediately allowed him to understand the stubborn nature passed down through its bloodline. ‘However, this sort of attitude verifies the Wisdom Tree’s hypothesis. Now all I need is extended research, clinical trials, and then…’ Leylin stroked his chin and made up his mind.

‘But the good thing is that the bloodline of the Sun’s Child has been completely activated. It’s the bloodline of an ancient rank 6 creature after all, and even a drop is enough to create another Morning Star creature!’ The corner of his lips curled up in a slight smile.

“Now, onto the final phase…”
*Boom!*
A ball of golden blood which was the size of a fist floated in the air like a fireball. It released a terrifying amount of light and heat, slowly raising the temperature of the room.
The temperature was so high, in fact, that space itself distorted, rifts appearing near the blood. This was the unstable phenomenon resulted from the burning of the sun’s flame.
“Activate!” Leylin said emotionlessly as he watched the scene.
A great amount of light emerged with a whoosh, strengthening the surrounding walls. Many runes shot out one one after the other, locking the blood down. At this point, it looked like a miniature sun.
Leylin had specially reinforced this secret chamber, with the express intent of locking the bloodline of the Sun’s Child. From how it looked, the effect wasn’t rather bad.
He nodded secretly before looking at the A.I. Chip’s status screen.
*[Beep! Completing the genetic makeup of the Sun’s Child, beginning imitation, deducing according to the meditation technique, Wing of the Sun…] The A.I. Chip intoned loyally.*
The Wing of the Sun was a top-grade meditation technique that was meant to complement the bloodline of the Sun’s Child, and was abstruse and unfathomable. Even the A.I. Chip had not been able to analyse it.

Now, however, the combination of the real bloodline of the Sun’s Child and its DNA sequence worked together to solve the many difficulties that had been confounding him.

With the Dragon King’s Mystic Might he had obtained in the past, he now also had the Void Phantom, which came to two complete meditation techniques. This meant he had a decent, accurate database to draw upon.

The simulation of the fifth level of Kemoyin’s pupil saw some progress once more.

Seeing that his main objective was satisfied, Leylin couldn’t help but sigh with relief. “Rank 6, top-grade creature Sun’s Child!”

Leylin observed the blood that was like a little sun, and began to furrow his eyebrows. With this and the Wing of the Sun, he could instantly create a powerful Warlock family.

Warlocks with a bloodline stemming from a rank 6 creature hadn’t yet appeared in the central continent.

“If another Warlock or Magus were to find out, things would get complicated for me…” A wry smile appeared about Leylin’s lips.

How could it be only ‘complicated’? The moment this news leaked, even if malicious Warlocks weren’t an issue, it was highly likely
that the Breaking Dawn Monarchs would be alerted. After all, they would not want to see the rise of another Breaking Dawn bloodline Warlock, which would affect the current equilibrium of power. “It’s a pity… If not for my bloodline being permanent, I would long since have used the Sun’s Child’s bloodline…” Leylin heaved a long sigh. But his eyes immediately cleared up, “Classify this area as a forbidden region of the highest grade, confidentiality rank X. Anyone who comes in here besides me is to be killed. No exceptions!” His voice was cold, as if every word of his carried with it chilly air that contained millions of ice shards. “Understood!” The spirit genie’s similarly unfeeling voice sounded. Perhaps only beings that lacked human intelligence would not understand the terror that was Leylin. “On top of that,” Leylin looked at his empty surroundings, gently stroking a crystal ring on his finger. *Whoosh!* Five translucent phantoms appeared around him like a breeze, as if voluntarily squeezing out from the void. There were no energy waves, just five pairs of bloodshot eyes staring at him as their owners half-kneeled on the floor. “Protect this place well. Any who dare intrude are to be eliminated immediately,” Leylin said as he sent out a spiritual command through the ring on his finger. The five phantoms nodded speechlessly, and immediately disappeared into the air. With them concealed, even the A.I. Chip could barely discern their auras. “These Void Assassins are pretty useful. It’s a pity that there are only eight left…” Leylin was full of admiration as he watched the assassins disappear, touching his chin. These eight Void Assassins were naturally his gains from Scarlet
Crescent.
He had carefully checked before. Every one of these Void Assassins had the strength surpassing a Crystal Phase Magus. Their method of travelling through the void was stealthy and hard to defend against. Even a Morning Star Magus would be in danger if five of them acted in tandem, ambushing him.
With these defences, he could somewhat relax.
‘I can’t keep it here, and I need to use it as soon as possible. Alternatively, I can wait till the Magus Tower is completed and deposit it there!’ Leylin pondered.
Using the bloodline of the Sun’s Child to perform experiments on bloodline ignition was too much of a pity. Leylin still had other uses for this blood. The bloodline of an ancient rank 6 creature was an invaluable treasure.
“Next is to amass more strength and push for the advancement of my soul force. The best would be for the A.I. Chip to represent soul force numerically, which will make everything much simpler…”
Leylin subconsciously looked at his status.
After entering Morning Star, the aim was to make progress in regards to the soul. His spiritual force and other stats would no longer undergo major changes.
At this thought, Leylin looked into the progress of the A.I. Chip’s simulation of soul force and found it to be stuck. He couldn’t help but roll his eyes.
“The analysis of soul force cannot be done in a day or two…” A thread of understanding rose in Leylin’s mind.
Five years passed in the blink of an eye. The original Ouroboros Clan had now completely stabilised. Though the other allied forces still occupied a part of the territory that had belonged to them, a larger war had not occurred. From how a few organisations were silently withdrawing their forces, the general situation was progressing positively. Those Warlocks seemed to have forgotten their hatred from the past and the situation at Phosphorescence Swamp stabilised as they continued with their lives and research. And yet, the subconscious bloody glint that remained in the depths of their eyes proved that the traces of the war were still present. Or rather, the seeds of revenge were buried deep in their hearts. They were lying quietly in wait for these seeds to grow, until the day they began to thrive and became strong and healthy!

Leylin couldn’t wait to see it happen, and even added fuel to the flame. From his perspective, the bloodline Warlocks before led far too comfortable lives, particularly the Kemoyin nobility. They spent their days in their territories intoxicated, not spending any time on their Warlock training. Thankfully, after this war, most of these vermin had disappeared, leaving behind many capable and hardworking descendants, each of them outstanding. These talents were the strengths and assets that he regarded as important.

As long as he could lead these Warlocks and complete their revenge, he might instantly gain their undying loyalty. That would allow him to completely control the Ouroboros Clan, and even the return of the three Dukes would not change anything. Through these five years, Leylin had extended his authority to all aspects in Ouroboros Clan. He had even secretly influenced many
Warlocks of the new generation, and they completely accepted his rule, thinking it was normal for things to continue like this forever. Faisal and those few bloodline families had become smarter after the attack, and Leylin could find no opportunity to deal with them. That was rather regretful. However, no matter how long he tried to delay matters, there were things that needed to be done…

“Blood Extraction!”

Above a geographical basin holding an ethnic group, Leylin wore a luxurious platinum Magus robe that was actually a piece of magic equipment. His expression was stern as he reached out his hand, and a formless giant vortex appeared in the air with a grab. Large amounts of blood beaded down, turning into a stream as it gathered in his hands. It formed a highly concentrated crystal that looked similar to a ruby.

Below him, a giant tribe of a different race had suffered heavy casualties. Besides a few high-ranked Magi, almost nobody had survived. All of them had their blood drawn and turned into dried-out corpses.

“This bloodline drawing method is truly tyrannical!” Leylin nodded.

The Arcane Art he was using to extract blood came from his own bloodline inheritance. In ancient times, it had only been a convenient spell to draw blood on a large-scale. However, with his modifications, as well as the power from the soul force of a Morning Star, the effect was truly terrifying. Its strength was enough to destroy a country.

That was not all. The bloodline gems gathered from the bloodline extraction were also a very important resource for Warlocks. Crimson light flashed in Leylin’s eyes as he tucked away these concentrated crystals that sparkled like blood diamonds.
“You of a different race! You dare…” A roar full of denial and pain sounded out, bringing with it energy waves at the Morning Star realm.

“My job is done. The rest is your business.” Leylin bowed with a smile, and retreated to the back.

“Leylin, you really know how to goof off!” In front of him were a few Morning Star Warlocks. The burly man who was the head teased Leylin, but still went forward.

“Who exactly are you? Why did you come here?” The rays of light dimmed, revealing the Morning Star that had hastened over. It was a giant formed of flames, eyes full of fury.

“There’s no reason. If you want to blame something, blame yourselves for occupying this area!”

The burly man sneered, the phantom of a large black goat that was thousands of metres tall emerging from his back. This goat not only had the horns of a demon, but also a torso that was similar to a human. However, it was full of black fleece, looking to be like the demonic satyrs of the underworld.

“Morning Star Warlock?” The giant fire elemental elder couldn’t help but blurt out.

Following that, others in black clothing stood up before him. The Morning Star auras they similarly emitted caused the fire elemental elder’s pupils to shrink.

*Rumble!* The few Morning Star Warlocks surrounded him, in an enormous formation. The energy undulations extended to the horizons, and even dispersed a few large dark clouds.

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Once everything was over, the burly man from before approached Leylin, “Lord Leylin’s blood extraction truly is worthy of its reputation. Here is your reward!”
The burly man tossed a little pouch full of astral stones to Leylin, “The total comes to 13423 grams of astral stones. Check the amount!”
“Many thanks!” Leylin sighed heavily. This time-consuming and very lengthy mission was finally over.
Besides concentrating on his own research, he would take on a few missions from time to time from the Morning Star region, earning astral stones to purchase other items to nourish the soul.
The task this time was a mission to help the burly man suppress the fire elemental elder.
“Hmph! These tribes actually worship an elemental being from another world! Even death cannot wipe out their sins!” The burly man scolded, still angry.
listening to the mission leader’s complaints, Leylin remained silent.
The large-scaled tribe that he had massacred was not a fire elemental tribe. However, they had obviously been influenced by the fire elemental Morning Star to the extent that they formed a faith that worshipped fire.
It might have to do with them being of a different race, but Warlocks obviously did not give them preferential treatment, nor were they tolerant towards them. Though the Warlock Union claimed to take in those with all bloodlines, that was merely talk. It sounded nice to listen to, but those who believed that were fools. Leylin knew how things worked in the union. If they were a race protected by a Morning Star, they might have some status in the Warlock Union, and could help their own people.
However, if they were a race without the protection of a Morning Star, then they would probably have to struggle pitifully, enduring exploitation and oppression.
After all, the leader of the Warlock Union was a mighty bloodline Warlock!
They did not think themselves human, but nor did they think themselves to be of another race. Hence, their attitudes towards completely different races seemed rather hypocritical. Especially for beings like these who hadn’t even joined the union and sided with the enemy; there was no consideration for them.
Of course, Leylin did not bother with these trivial matters. He had taken on and successfully completed the mission, and had thus gotten the rewards. It was that simple.

The time spent on investigation and combat was already annoying him. In addition, with his experience from his previous world, he was beginning to feel concerned.

Why would a Morning Star-ranked fire elemental elder appear here? He had even bewitched many tribes to be on his side. If not for them finding out and eliminating him in time, this entire region was likely to have fallen into chaos soon.

And yet that wasn’t what worried him the most. The other party had already begun spreading a religion, and that put him on his guard.

Recruiting believers and propagating religious beliefs was a very dangerous signal. Leylin, who had experience from his previous life, understood the gods that the westerners worshipped purely based on some misinformation, legends, or even utter nonsense.

This act of preaching was evidently different from that of high-ranked Magi, and it wasn’t the sort of primitive worship of uncivilised communities. Real gods, and not only one at that, were spreading their own religions!

It was not just the worship of fire. A plot was also afoot to revive Beelzebub, the Sovereign King of Gluttonous Desires. It all gave Leylin a very bad premonition.

Even though Leylin rarely bothered with religion in his previous world, he wouldn’t get this wrong. Of course, this was just a conjecture, he had no idea what the real World of Gods was like after all. Most documentation from the ancient era did not touch on this.

The appearance of the World of Gods was the beginning of the ancient Magus World’s decline. Hence, the amount of books that had survived that era were the fewest. This was why Leylin had yet
to gather much data on it despite his status. This could, therefore, be a misunderstanding on his part, but Leylin did not want to continue down that line of thought. No matter how superficial his thinking might be, he knew that the real gods in the World of Gods were, at the very least, at rank 6 and above. They were existences who had grasped a certain power or law, and such great strength was what Leylin needed to look up to. The moment he were to be caught up in giant complications like this, only death awaited him. With his current strength, at least, he would amount to nothing.

Leylin had always stood by the motto that one could only accept responsibility equivalent to their strength. That was how he had been able to live till now. He knew himself well; the games and contests between the gods and Magus world? Let the higher ranks take care of it. In any case, there were still many Breaking Dawn Monarchs in the central continent!

Rejecting the burly man’s sincere attempts at urging him to stay, Leylin travelled through the astral plane, instantly arriving back at Phosphorescence Swamp. Blue light flashed, and Leylin’s figured broke through the enormous astral gate.

“The feeling of long-distance teleportation is really…” Leylin shook his head and laughed. The spatial pressure that had almost killed him while he was at rank 2 was like a cool breeze to him right now, not affecting him much.

“Welcome home, master!” A green elf similar to the tower genie from before flapped its wings and flew above Leylin.

“En!” Leylin nodded. The A.I. Chip linked with it, and he then knew all the recent events in the Magus Tower like the back of his hand. The large astral gate behind him stopped humming, and the light from the blue flames above it began to fade.
After the light completely dissipated, the astral gate returned to its state of an unadorned stone gate. The teleportation from the Morning Star area required the astral gates of both sides to be linked simultaneously. Leylin had obviously entrusted this task to his loyal tower genie.

“You did well!” Leylin nodded in praise.

“It’s my honour to serve master!” The tower genie had inherited the A.I. Chip’s partial intelligence, and had an icy expression. There were no fluctuations in its voice.

Leylin had long since gotten used to this. After all, one could not have very high expectations of a program. He was pragmatic; it would never betray him due to the A.I. Chip’s commands, and that was what was important!

Outside the astral gate were many laboratories and binding rooms. A few terrifying adamantine and mithril puppets, even Void Assassins on occasion, would appear in the corner every once in a while.

Streams of black air seemed to constantly flow down the walls on both sides, bringing with them a mysterious lustre and colour, causing the decorative oil paintings to change slightly.

This was the inner section of Leylin’s Magus Tower. With his own participation, as well as the ‘selfless’ financial aid from the Oakheart Clan, the construction was already completed.

On top of that, the other party had supplied a large amount of astral stones and helped Leylin build an astral gate of his own, the one he had just exited.

Based on the intelligence he had, the Oakheart Clan had practically exhausted their reserves and even sold off many properties to build the tower and gate. It was a huge setback for them.

Leylin obviously cared little about this. Instead, he was very satisfied with this Morning Star Magus Tower.

Furthermore, with the influence from his radiation, the entire
Magus Tower had somewhat gained a life of its own. The tower body was now very harmonious, and automatically generated a few shadow servants, dark serpent tentacles and the like, perfecting the defensive abilities of the building. Suddenly recalling something, Leylin told the tower genie, “Tell your mistress that I’m back, and that I plan to have dinner with her tonight!”

“Your will shall be carried out!” The tower genie bowed, and quickly retreated.

Evening, in the hall of the Magus Tower. There were brilliant lights and vibrant colours everywhere. A few high-ranked Warlock maids who were lucky enough to be selected to enter the Magus Tower were tense as they worked busily, laying the long dining table with intricate gold and silver cutlery, candles, and the like. While everything was completed with nervousness, Leylin held Freya’s hand and walked in slowly.

“Your Grace! My Lady!” A few maids immediately bowed to Leylin and the woman at his side.

Beside him was obviously Freya of the Blood Serpent Family. She had married Leylin years ago, and now dressed like a noble. She looked very poised, and had an inborn noble temperament, though there was a trace of gloom between her eyebrows.

“I know what you’re worrying about…” Leylin couldn’t help but console her in a tender manner after noticing it, “But I think there might be a chance for my bloodline to become even more perfect, or perhaps advance to an even more powerful realm. Hence, my bloodline still isn’t mature, and the children borne of this will become a regret. None of us want to see this, do we?”

After listening to Leylin’s explanation, Freya seemed to feel better, revealing a smile that even enchanted the maids. Leylin chuckled. His previous words were half-truths. However, through the Scarlet Crescent ruins as well as the
conversation with the Wisdom Tree, he now had an idea as to how he could solve the issue of his bloodline shackles. Hence, he was in no hurry to leave behind children. If not, he would be harming his own blood. When he advanced to a higher level, the descendants he had would definitely have a higher starting point and potential. This would be beneficial to both of them, and even if Freya were puzzled by this, Leylin would still persist. “I’ll listen to you!” Freya pursed her lips and laughed, and then got Leylin to sit.

Within the Ouroboros Clan, Leylin was an existence that could hide anything from the masses. His will was the will of all the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks in the Ouroboros Clan. Freya naturally did not say more. Furthermore, in the deepest part of her heart, she was very trusting of Leylin; this would affect the Farlier Family, after all. “By the way, how are Parker and Faisal? And Snoopy too; was his trip to the Demon Garden successful?” Leylin spoke to Freya while eating the delicacies that the chefs had thoughtfully prepared. Most of the time, he was the one asking the questions, while Freya answered. When the heartwarming dinner was over, and while Leylin was enjoying his black tea, Freya finally asked, “Leylin… How long are you going to stay here this time?” A trace of anticipation flashed in her pupils. “Probably longer. The missions from before are finished, and there are still a few experiments that have to be done in the Magus Tower…” Leylin began to speak endlessly while beating around the bush. Freya’s palms were under her chin and her eyes were full of worship, almost emitting stars as she smiled gently and listened. *Ka-cha!* This comforting moment did not continue for long
before it was interrupted. When the sound of glass breaking was heard from Freya’s body, her expression changed drastically.

“This is the necklace Mentor, Duke Emma left for me. Inside is a thread of her soul flame!”

Freya yanked out a platinum necklace that had a large blue gem at the center. The blood-red flames leapt out, but at this moment seemed to have withered.
The spiritual flame of a Morning Star Magus had an intricate relationship with their body. Its strength also reflected the time the Magus had remaining. That Freya’s necklace had encountered such a situation meant the original body of Blood Duchess Emma had likely been dealt severe damage in the foreign world. Trauma would weaken a Magus’ vitality, which in turn caused such a change in the spiritual flame they left behind.

“Mentor… Mentor!” Freya’s eyes turned red as she covered her mouth, but Leylin’s secret imprint twinkled before he could try to console her.

“Yes, Faisal?” Leylin frowned as he tapped the secret imprint open. “Your Grace, my Mentor… the spiritual flame of the First Elder was extinguished a minute ago…” Faisal’s voice was husky. It was as if his heart had sunk, and he was feeling hopeless.

“Extinguished?” Leylin touched his chin. If the spiritual flame had been extinguished, the Morning Star Warlock’s originally body must have perished. The only thing that supported the First Elder’s group was that he was still alive. There was still hope for them to return from the foreign world. And now, that final hope had been shattered. Faisal’s change was understandable.

“But what happened? Wasn’t it all good until now?” Leylin felt
puzzled, it seemed like a conspiracy was afoot. Another connection request came up before Leylin could end Faisal’s secret imprint call, and Kesha’s panicked voice sounded out.

“Leylin! Leylin!” She called his name directly, forgetting about his current status. It showed how desperate she was.

“What happened?” The ominous feeling in Leylin’s heart grew stronger.

“… Forgive me, Your Grace!” Kesha paused to correct her misbehaviour before continuing, “It’s Mentor. The spiritual flame Duke Gilbert left behind has grown extremely unstable, and is flickering strongly. I… I’m very worried…”

“I got it!” Leylin nodded, and his voice turned serious and solemn, “Pass down my orders, all Crystal Phase Warlocks are to report to the meeting room. We might be in trouble…”

The Warlock elites were now congregated here instead of residing in their own territories. Since they were all in Phosphorescence Swamp, they could gather immediately after Leylin’s orders were passed.

Leylin reckoned that these people would not have come so fast if it was not related to their teachers.

“Duke Farlier!” The panic-stricken Warlocks calmed a little upon seeing Leylin dressed in his huge robe.

“Please, sit down and be at ease!” Leylin sat at the head chair. With his battle experience, he had long since acquired a dignified aura that turned the meeting room solemn.

“Thank you, Your Grace!” A number of Crystal Phase Magi bowed and settled down in order.

By virtue of being his wife, Freya occupied the seat next to Leylin, a fact that left some of the rest in envy.

Leylin sighed while looking at the handful of Crystal Phase Warlocks in an upright position. The last war had caused
tremendous loss to the Ouroboros Clan, and the loss of their elite forces was especially tough to recover from. It would take at least a few hundred years for them to recover to peak condition.

“Schadt, report!” Leylin said after glancing across everyone and called for Schadt only when everyone settled down. “Master!” Schadt wiped off the fog that was on his thick spectacles, bowing to Leylin immediately after he stood up. He spoke in a dignified manner, “The spiritual flames of the elders that we’d kept in our technical department started fluctuating vigorously 24 minutes ago, and the First Elder’s has completely died out. I’m afraid that…”

Leylin too felt somewhat frustrated and aggrieved. After all, this was the fall of another Morning Star Warlock. Even though Schadt did not continue his words, Faisal and one of the Crystal Phase Warlocks had lowered their heads. Losing the First Elder was definitely a huge blow to their morale.

“I’ve asked the other two Morning Star seeds as well. It’s not just a single spiritual flame that flickered, it’s all of them. The other two elders must be in the same plight as the First Elder in the foreign world…”

There was not much to say for now. After Schadt sat down, the rest of the Warlocks placed their focus on Leylin. Upon seeing their reaction, Leylin cleared his throat, “Schadt, have the coordinates of the foreign world been confirmed?”

“My apologies! The technical department and I have been working on this problem endlessly. There are two possible coordinates on our list, I will send them to you after this!”

A tinge of shame surfaced on Schadt’s face. This incident was a humiliation to the entire technical department. They had been overconfident and bragged that they were going to solve the problem in a few days’ time, but took them nearly five years. It was
such a dereliction of their duty.
The Crystal Phase Warlock who had tears in the eyes just like Faisal slammed the table and shouted, “Schadt, you old fogey! Are you pulling strings and intentionally not revealing the coordinates of the foreign world?”
The moment he heard these words, Schadt fumed with rage. “Nonsense! I vow in the name of everyone in the technical department, never have I orchestrated something like that!”
Before, he’d suffered in silence because it had been difficult for him to locate the coordinates. Afterwards, there seemed to be another strange interference that added to the complexity, leaving him grasping at his hair.
‘Could it be the interference of another organisation that is not eager to see our Dukes being saved?’ A thought surfaced in Schadt’s mind, but was quickly suppressed as it was too sinister a plot.
However, Faisal remained silent. His reaction affirmed the Warlock’s suspicion, but before he could snarl at him, Faisal dragged his arm with force.
“What the hell are you doing, Faisal!” The Crystal Phase Warlock growled.
“Watch your manners, Marquis Ordofo!” Faisal’s voice was equally low, but it carried within an undeniable order.
“I’m sorry, I acted out of line! Please forgive me, Marquis Schadt!”
The Warlock’s face blushed, but he stilled apologised to Schadt and bowed to Leylin who was in the head seat, “Please forgive me, Your Grace!”
“Never mind!” Leylin waved and stared at Faisal with intrigue until sweat glided down his cheeks.
Leylin took a last look at the Warlocks before he spoke in a low voice, “I have come to a decision, I will set off tomorrow to rescue the Elders!”
There was a minute of pause, which then quickly recovered as excitement and joy could be seen in everyone’s eyes. Still, they did not dare to show their emotions. They kept reminding Leylin not to fall for tricks. “My dear…” After all the Crystal Phase Warlocks had been dismissed, only Freya was left behind, her eyes filled with worry. Emma was her Mentor, but Leylin was her dearest husband. This situation was complicated, like a spider web that pulled her heart apart. At last, she asked, “This time round… is it going to be dangerous?” “Yes, there will be danger, but it’s a chance too! Trust me, I’ll bring your mentor back!” Leylin gave Freya a reassuring, heart-warming smile. Seeing Leylin with such confidence, Freya felt more at ease. However, she had missed the trace of complication in Leylin’s eyes. After returning to the Magus Tower, Leylin went straight to the astral gate and fell into deep thought. “This time… I’m afraid that I really have to make the trip!” Leylin was very clear on the fact that there were voices asking for his help being circulated in the Ouroboros Clan, and they had grown stronger now. He had suppressed these messages as long as he could. He had to do something now, otherwise the entire Ouroboros Clan might fall apart. Luckily, he had already gotten what he wanted during this period of time. Even if the other two Morning Star Warlocks returned, his power in the clan was unshakeable. Also, Leylin was not too worried about the trip as he had already formed a more complete strategy after getting to know the existence of the puppetmaster behind the scene. …..
Almost at the same time, high up on a throne that was made from eternal darkness and rumbling thunder. The rank 5 Magus that had a moon rune on his forehead was exchanging thoughts with someone through telepathy.

“How are things going with the Ouroboros Clan?”

“Everything has been prepared and we are ready to take action! As long the opponent enters the foreign world, we can block him completely from this world and wipe out the entire Ouroboros Clan!”

“You disappointed me the last time. I do not wish to see it again!” The Radiant Moon Magus warned with great dignity.

“There is no need to worry, Master!” The Morning Star conscient dispersed on its own, and the Radiant Moon Magus sat still in the throne, pondering.

“Was it really that kiddo in the ruins of Scarlet Crescent? What an interesting pup!” A mysterious voice sounded in the air, but the Radiant Moon Magus did not seem surprised at all.

“I wasn’t quite confident, but Siebel’s already dead; he’s the most suspicious!” Radiant Moon Magus spoke in a cold tone, “I have to get him!”

“He’s just a Kemoyin Serpent Warlock, even if he had any trump cards, the bloodline shackles will be his Achilles heel!” the mysterious voice sounded in disdain.
The Radiant Moon Magus nodded his head, and he suddenly felt a lot less uncertain. “That’s right! Even though the rascal has immense, inexplicable strength, the bloodline shackles will be enough to stunt his growth. Kemoyin Warlocks can reach the peak of rank 4 at best, after which he won’t have any room to grow…”

“Keke… you’re right. Who would still care about a rascal that’s confined to the Morning Star rank?”

The mysterious voice suddenly changed to that of a lady, gentle and soft. “Your real enemy is…”

“Shut up!” The Radiant Moon Magus who had originally been sitting down stood up abruptly, looking sinister, “Shut your mouth this instant! Don’t you know that as long as you mention his name, even if it is unintentional, he will be able to detect it? The power of a King isn’t something a person of your lowly status can belittle.”

“Fine… but isn’t it just a Breaking Dawn Magus?” The female voice replied indignantly, and she felt rather uneasy. It was as if everything that she had said carelessly today was inappropriate. This mysterious intuition had been left behind by the host of the body before her.

“I don’t care about who you were before. Now you’re but a damaged soul…” The Radiant Moon Magus’ voice was cold and assertive.
“But don’t we have the same interests currently? I can help you, and in return you can offer me…” The female’s voice trailed off… Leylin did not know explicitly that Jupiter’s Lightning’s Radiant Moon Magus had already made special arrangements to deal with him, but anyone with a brain would be able to infer it. As a result, he had to make preparations for his imminent trip.

An enormous satellite hung in the sky, looking about to fall at any moment. It was surrounded by a nebula in the vast universe.

“Please take a look at this contract. You can sign here if there are no problems.”

Leylin rarely used his real identity, but now he was doing so. He was having a conversation with three other Morning Star Warlocks, with an already drafted contract on the table.

Leylin picked up a cup of coffee and talked to the Warlocks opposite, “During the period of time when I’m away, I would appreciate your help in guarding the Ouroboros Clan in my place. Also, I would like you to prioritise helping my wife Freya and the tower genie should they require any help. Any questions?”

In front of him were Paul, Philip, and another stranger.

Since he was looking for protectors, it was naturally better to rely on allies. There was no need to ponder much about Philip. He had the bloodline of the ancient Wind Wolf, and was hot-blooded. And with respect to Paul, after being taken advantage of by Leylin the previous time he now admired him even more. Based on hi’s words, his people respected highly intelligent beings. Leylin immediately thought of the rumours of them being fond of sucking up souls and drinking brain juices, and could not help but shudder. However, since they had already signed the contract, there wouldn’t be any issue.

The last Morning Star Warlock was a good friend Leylin had made recently, Mars. With these three in control, the might of the contract as well as the supervision and urging of the Morning Star area,
Leylin was rather assured of the safety of the Ouroboros Clan after he left. Everyone was familiar with each other, and the conditions that Leylin had offered were very generous. Though the terms of the contract were harsh, the three Morning Star Warlocks signed the contract without hesitation.

“Good luck!” Philip patted Leylin’s shoulders. Out of the three of them, he was probably the one who hoped the most for Leylin’s success.

“Many thanks!” Leylin was comforted as he punched Philip in a friendly manner. Ever since the happenings at Scarlet Crescent, the Wind Wolf Lair had not only lost a Morning Star Warlock, Palesa, their most important fighter Cybel had been beaten down to become a regular Morning Star, and had to withdraw and conceal himself.

A lot of pressure weighed on Philip’s shoulders, and Leylin had lent him a hand. This had gained him Philip’s gratitude, and the Wind Wolf Warlock now treated Leylin like kin.

These were Philip’s words, of course. However, Leylin obviously did not believe that and rolled his eyes in secret.

Of course, the relationship on both ends had gotten increasingly better, and had even surpassed that of Leylin with the Wind Wolf Lair and Spirit Circle. That was the uncontestable truth.

……

Phosphorescence Swamp, within the Morning Star Magus Tower. After sending everyone away, Leylin came before the astral gate alone.

“Tower genie! Once I leave, seal the Magus Tower immediately. Do not let anyone enter, and await further instructions!” hr instructed. He had prepared a lot of things for this expedition.
This was different from the previous experiments where he just projected spiritual seeds. He was on a rescue mission, and needed to move with his real body. This was extremely dangerous, and he could be completely lost in another world. Hence, the astral gate had to be kept completely safe!

Nobody would trust someone else with a job like this. He could only leave this to the tower genie which had no human emotions. In actuality, Leylin had prepared another safeguard. Even if this tower genie were rendered ineffective, he wouldn’t end up stuck in another world. However, this was one of his deepest secrets, something only he could know.

*Rumble!* With Leylin’s order, the Magus Tower shut down, runic chains and defensive layers sealing off each and every pathway. Large numbers of puppets and void assassins with red light in their eyes began to patrol the area rigorously.

“Leylin, you must succeed and come back safely!” Outside the Magus Tower, Freya’s hands clutched tightly at her white dress as she prayed in her heart.

Beside her stood Parker, Snoopy and a few other high-ranked Warlocks, all watching the Magus Tower that was being completely shut down. Their expressions were complex.

Leylin obviously did not bother with this. His focus was entirely on the astral gate in front of him.

Leylin had already calculated the coordinates of the world that Gilbert and the other Dukes were lost in long ago. However, this was only for his own consideration, thus he had not announced it and even interfered with Schadt’s work in secret. This went on for five years.

Now, it was necessary that he rescue the two Dukes right away. Apart from Emma, Gilbert was his mentor and had taught him a great many things. The feelings and relationship between them was enough for Leylin to take this risk.
Besides, that was another world!
“Even if it’s a trap, they handed over the coordinates of another world!” Leylin was emotional. Even the lowest-grade world was definitely more powerful than a plane! The resources there were plentiful, enough to make Morning Stars and even Radiant Moons go green in envy.
“You didn’t mind revealing the coordinates of a world just to trap Mentor and the rest. I wonder what your expression will be like if I completely take control of that world?” A slight smile appeared across Leylin’s lips. It was as if he could already see the flustered, exasperated look of the Radiant Moon Magus of Jupiter’s Lightning.
A ball of light that looked like a star floated out from Leylin’s hands and disappeared into the astral gate.
*Rumble!* Through the connection of the astral gate, Leylin’s soul force seemed to come into contact with an extremely complicated and tremendous world.
The aura of sulphur and flames could be seen spilling over in copious amounts at the edges of the world.
The astral stone reserves that acted as the energy core rapidly decreased, almost falling to a level that would issue a warning.
Through some sensing, Leylin could confirm that this world was very far from the Magus World. Just the consumption from opening the astral gate once would leave one tongue-tied and wide-eyed.
“An aura full of flames and sulphur?” Leylin was startled at first, but immediately eased up. “It’s no wonder that Mentor and the others mistook this place for Purgatory World. If not for the memories from ancient times, I’d be misled too…”
“Tower genie, maintain the energy reserves required for the astral gate. Be prepared to retrieve us immediately!” Leylin’s voice was low.
“Understood!” The tower genie that was like a green elf immediately nodded.

“Prepare for the crossing of the main body,” Leylin took in a deep breath. Though he had experienced teleportation to the Morning Star area, the idea of travelling such a long distance still had him slightly worried.

[Beep! Beginning collection of data. Establishing folder in database.] The A.I. Chip immediately intoned. This was very rare, but expected. Even if it was an A.I. Chip, it lacked first-hand research materials, and they could be supplemented at this moment.

“However, using myself as a guinea pig is really rather…” Leylin rolled his eyes. The lights on the astral gate got increasingly brighter until he was eventually swallowed into it.

*Rumble!* The bright tail of a blue beam appeared from the spire of the Magus Tower like an aurora, streaking through the dark skies like a magnificent meteor.

“It’s beginning!” Freya’s felt her heartstrings tighten.

“It’s beginning! Activate interference procedures. Things must be the same as before. Break off all of his communications and make him lose his way as well!”

In a jet black world crack, Collins, who Leylin had seen several times before, was talking to a group of technical staff who were fiddling with some instruments. There was a large amount of data showing up on the screen.

“Energy interference mode activated!”

“Warping forcefield structure completed. Interference can be engaged at any time.”

“Energy particles taking form. Beginning tracking of trajectory and intercepting opponent…” Multiple high-ranked Magi acted like the most cautious scientists as they quickly operated the instruments in their hands, reporting various data.

“Good. Begin immediately!” Collins swept his hand down
viciously. It was as if he could already imagine Leylin’s features contorted by terror, and the pleasure of vengeance immediately flooded his heart. He could not help but burst into laughter.

“We’re here!” Even though he was still in the midst of teleportation via the astral gate, Leylin was still clear-headed. The A.I. Chip was now sending him warnings.

[Detected unknown forcefield reaction. Determined to be interference particle ripples!]

“I’ve been waiting for you!” An intelligent glint flashed in Leylin’s eyes.
Knowing that it was a trap, those who still jumped straight in were idiots!

Leylin was obviously not an idiot. Since the other party had revealed that they had the ability to interfere with astral gates, Leylin obviously would not ignore them.

In fact, in these five years, he had been silently surveying the other world. He had even attempted projecting spiritual seeds, all in order to thoroughly understand the other party’s ability to interfere.

Through the five years of probing that seemed to only last a day, he had long since understood the methods they could use like the back of his hand. He’d even prepared a contingency plan.

“It’s offensive pattern number 3. Activate corresponding countermeasures!” Leylin’s eyes glinted with intelligence.

[Task initiated. Spatial anchor being projected. Tracing target’s coordinates…] The A.I. Chip began to operate methodically.

A layer of mysterious spatial undulations was emanated from Leylin’s body.

[Target coordinates have been determined. Proceed with attack?] The A.I. Chip asked with a robotic voice.

“Yes!” A smile appeared about Leylin’s lips.

*Bang!* *Boom!* A glass meter exploded, and many pieces of apparatus burst into flames. Collins, who was watching on, was about to go berserk.

“What’s going on? Who can tell me what’s going on?” Collins
roared, his eyes red. Even Breaking Dawn Magi would find it difficult to obtain this high-grade spatial interference apparatus. This time, so many pieces had readings that went off the charts, and his master would probably murder him.

“The other party seems to have grasped some sort of spatial technique and is counter-attacking!” An old man pushed at the lens in his glasses and concluded.

“Are you kidding me? Do you know how valuable research on spatial techniques is? How did he get it?” Collins’ first reaction was that of disbelief.

“But that’s the only explanation! If the other party’s spatial knowledge reserves are vaster than ours, we’ll probably have to be on our guard against the following spatial attacks!” The old man spoke rapidly.

“Spatial attacks?” Collins was stunned, and immediately after, saw the earth-shattering spatial turbulence that submerged the area…

“The effects aren’t half bad!” Listening to the prompt from the A.I. Chip, Leylin’s mood immediately improved. Arcane Arts and knowledge regarding spatial coordinates were obviously insanely expensive. They were rarely seen, even in the Morning Star area.

However, he had the A.I. Chip and did not need very complete information. Hence, he had purchased just a few incomplete ones. Though he could not be considered a great master in this area, attacking a few guys who were similarly newbies wouldn’t be a problem.

“You dare…” An enraged voice sounded. Another Magus with a black moon rune on his forehead suddenly appeared at the boundary of the world, trying to intercept Leylin. “I am your opponent!” Along with the sounds of a lion growling, another Warlock with hair that seemed to be cast out of gold
appeared in front of that Magus. “Wayde…” The Radiant Moon Magus called out in a low tone, his expression revealing his fear. “The other plan has been launched! Is that the Radiant Moon Magus from Jupiter’s Lightning?” Leylin turned and took a glimpse, storing the other party’s appearance in his memory. *Whoosh!* As he was breaking through the protective sphere of a world, enormous astral forces had been activated and Leylin felt himself go dizzy. His body seemed to turn into a streak of light and then completely disappeared. Compared to a prepared teleportation formation, the strength one required to move freely about the astral plane was much higher. The huge pressure was as if a slab of steel was pressing down on Leylin’s body. Cold, stifling, frenzied! Leylin immediately felt his bones creaking, and the defensive aurora on his body began to shatter bit by bit. ‘Perhaps even the pressure tens of thousands of meters under the sea can’t compare to this…’ This was the last conscious thought Leylin had. Before he completely fainted, the only thing he could do was to use Multilimb Strength and cover his body with dark green energy.

……

In a world of lava, large crevices could be seen in the earth, magma surging inside like a network of red rivers. Space distorted on the surface of a large black rock, forming a translucent gate of light. It incessantly generated lightning in the surroundings. The lightning crashed down more and more frequently as the entire area was filled with a dazzling white light. *Boom!* The white light exploded, forming an eye-piercing
radiance. When all the light vanished, the original gate of light and the lightning had all disappeared, leaving behind only charred traces that recounted the strange events that had just occurred.

“Hah… I’ve finally entered!” Leylin furrowed his brows, sensing the large amount of fire elemental particles surrounding him. “This concentration… Magi would believe it if someone said this was the fire elemental world!”

Intense pain could be felt from various parts of his body, causing him to groan and bend his back.

“A.I. Chip!” Leylin immediately ordered, “Check my current condition!”

[Beep! Host body’s soft tissue damage is at 30.87%. Fractures found at 7 areas, and signs of bruising observed on internal organs. Immediate treatment is recommended!] The A.I. Chip loyally intoned, transmitting a 3D human figure to him. The blue image held many signs of wounds.

Even with Leylin’s current vitality, he was still injured to this degree. Other regular Magi would probably have completely disappeared without a trace.

His astonishing vitality and Warlock bloodline were slowly mending the injuries in his body, allowing his tightly furrowed eyebrows to relax.

“That was really dangerous. I almost died outside the protective sphere…” While recalling what had just happened, Leylin couldn’t help but break out in cold sweat.

The protective sphere! This was the edge of a world, and even included part of the void. It could be said to be a large world’s strongest defence!

In general, every world had this protective sphere, though its strength varied. The most famous protective sphere was probably the World of Gods’ crystal wall.

Its powerful isolation ability was enough for even Magi at ranks 7
and above to be forced to return in defeat. It included a large world and various planes, forming the World of Gods’ unique culture of strength. It even cut off attempts at peeping from other worlds, save for that one time when the ancient Magi had invaded them. Before reaching the Lava World, Leylin was able to regain consciousness with the protection of Multilimb Strength, preventing him from being in a bad situation.

If one wanted to use a metaphor, a large world’s protective sphere was like customs upon entry to a country. If Leylin had not woken, he would need to force his way in, and would definitely be met with attacks, especially from the malicious intent of the World Will. The method Leylin had employed this time was akin to slipping through a barrier. He had not been discovered by the World Will, and the focus on him was evidently minimal, which would aid in his later movements.

“And this!” Leylin pulled a silver necklace full of astral light from his neck. After sensing that the connection was undamaged, he could completely relax.

This necklace represented his connection with the astral gate in the Magus world. As long as the connection there was not broken, he could teleport back at any time through the gate.

Right when Leylin had left the Magus world, Collins’ attack had been in order to completely cut off this connection, leaving Leylin stranded in another world and unable to find his way home for eternity.

Gilbert and the other two had been defeated using this method. Of course, Collins had been made a fool of by Leylin, and would probably not be able to emerge for a long time. The largest danger had been obstructed by Wayde, and Leylin finally had some time to do what he wanted.

Saving the two dukes also fit with Leylin’s plans for benefits. After all, he was not strong enough to go head to head against
Jupiter’s Lightning. He needed a few other people to relieve the pressure, and Gilbert and Emma were very good candidates for this. Furthermore, Gilbert was Leylin’s mentor, not someone he could abandon so easily. After considering for some time and finding the best way out for himself, Leylin still chose to come forward and save them. “But… This world is so huge. Where am I to find them?” Leylin watched the lava lake that stretched as far as he could see, as well as the burning clouds in the sky, and couldn’t help but laugh bitterly. [Beep! Testing surroundings…] At this moment, the A.I. Chip immediately projected the analysis of the surroundings before Leylin. “This…” Leylin’s soul force was sent out to explore, and he immediately sensed the difference from what he was used to. In the Lava World, his spiritual force seemed sluggish, a result of the laws of this world not being harmonious with his own. “As expected, with a switch in worlds, the dimensions, energy levels and even the the interactions between particles are starkly different. The changes in laws are definitely a huge obstruction to Magi who travel between worlds.” A thread of understanding flashed in Leylin’s eyes. This was the precious experience that many ancient Magi had gathered through their blood and sweat. “Thankfully, I’ve already condensed my point mass. Soul force is still useful in most worlds, and only needs some slight alterations. If it was still spiritual force, I’m afraid…” Relief rose in Leylin’s heart. Soul force was a high-grade power, and could be used in many worlds. Its practicality trumped that of spiritual force.
Leylin estimated that if he still used spiritual force here, he would probably have to deal with the awkwardness of not fitting in. He might even need to cultivate it from the beginning and turn his spiritual force into the spiritual strength unique to this world. Though there would be no bottleneck, it would definitely require a lot of effort.

Now, with the use of soul force, this issue was mostly solved. “It’s no wonder that ancient Magi placed Morning Star as the minimum rank to attack other worlds. So there’s this factor!” Leylin touched his chin.

[Beep! Data on surroundings completely gathered. Generating elemental map. Analysing world’s laws. Beginning fine-tuning of host body’s soul undulations...]
Over five years of progress and the addition of a large amount of information on the soul from Leylin’s end that he’d acquired through trade and missions, the A.I. Chip’s analysis on the soul had reached a whole new level. Though it still could not completely enumerate soul force, it was not far from this goal, and could perform many unbelievable deductions and integrations. Things like altering the soul undulations being emitted by him were only one part of it.

‘Mm! The concentration of fire elemental particles is the highest here. If I modify the spell models of the Magus World, I might achieve an even more astounding bonus to my power!’ Leylin touched his chin and watched the elemental map, his eyes glowing. Meanwhile, his aura had already begun to change. A dim layer of light flickered into existence and quickly covered his body. The entire space seemed to distort for a while, but at the same time, it seemed as if nothing had happened.

Leylin suddenly sighed deeply, and his body seemed to incorporate itself seamlessly into the surroundings. “I’ve finally rid myself of that feeling of being spied on! World Will…” he sighed, tone showing his relief. “Luckily, the protector of this world is similar to the consciousness of Gaia, and not some living being. If not, I wouldn’t have been able to dupe them so easily…”
After travelling to another world, there was an issue of how to deal with the ill intent from the world. The undulations of Morning Star Magi were as obvious as a lit torch in the darkness. It would definitely attract the attention of the world, and things would be even more troublesome in a world that was not their own. If he completely infuriated the World Will, it was like inviting a god of death to his side. It would bring about unceasing bad luck. Even Morning Star Magi would be played to death, forget anyone else.

Leylin’s aura changed, and he was now just like the occupants of this world, not standing out in the least. “This way, I have completely descended into this world. I wonder where Mentor Gilbert and the others are…” Leylin furrowed his eyebrows, and a tremendous and terrifying soul force was sent out to scan the surrounding areas.

Though soul force had no form and was intangible, the instant a Morning Star power exploded, the entire space would seem to halt, and even the lava would stop roaring.

The world was a fiery red! With the spread of his soul force, he could see much more of the lava river network. This place seemed like it was near a crater, with practically no signs of life. The reason why he said there was practically none, was because Leylin had found a plant. This was a plant similar to a Black Metal tree. The roots were fixed firmly in the ground, almost entering the lava, and the whole trunk had a black luster. Even the high temperature of the lava did not cause this tree to wither at all.

“At least there’s some signs of life, or else I’d have assumed only elemental beings could survive in this world…” Leylin nodded, but his expression suddenly changed as he glanced in a direction. There, he had keenly felt the undulations of some being, and it was
a large one at that!
“The aboriginals?” Leylin chuckled. His body merged into the air, and began to move in the direction that the energy had come from. Not long after, he reached his destination and watched a large battle.

At one side of the battlefield was a group of beings, each two to three metres tall and looking similar to humans. Even when boiling hot lava made contact with their glistening black skin, it did not result in a large reaction, which meant their resistance to heat was very high. They also had a single little horn on their heads. There were about ten or so one-horned beings, holding black lances and other weapons as they surrounded and attacked a giant monster.

This monster was completely red. There was a thick layer of rocks on its body that looked like a shell, lines of lava flowing down like little streams.

It was ten or so metres tall, looking like a large worm with its lower body submerged in lava. It seemed to be a being that lived only within the lava.

*Pak!* With a ferocious sweep, several of the one-horned beings were flung away, and the creature spat out a golden liquid from its mouth. The liquid was of an unbelievably high temperature, and the moment the liquid landed on the ground, it began to burn fiercely. Even the one-horned beings were in trouble, and those that had the golden liquid splashed on them immediately showed signs of burns appearing on their bodies.

“Kkngsg_fkamg-…” The few leaders of the one-horned race immediately began to yell using a very strange method. They did not seem to employ vocal chords, instead making sounds directly from the lower abdomen. It was similar to the ventriloquists from his previous world.

“As expected, I can’t understand it at all…” Leylin was speechless,
but luckily, issues like this were not a huge problem. Secretly following them for a period of time and having the A.I. Chip analyse their language would work, but Leylin had an even better method.

*Whoosh!* A thread of dim soul force quickly disappeared into the head of a one-horned being who was heavily injured.

“Ugh…” That one-horned being began to struggle vigorously, and yet could only whimper uselessly. His fellow clansmen thought he was crying out in pain, and hence this did not arouse their interest. Meanwhile, images flashed in front of Leylin’s eyes like in a movie. Soon enough, this being’s entire life was presented before Leylin, from his birth, including his growth, to his death. Everything was clearly recorded by the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Identified unnamed language. Saving in database!] [Beep! Generated map of vicinity, as well as basic information on Lava World and the races…]

From the great amount of memories, the A.I. Chip had found much useful information and began to organise them systematically, sorting them into the corresponding fields of knowledge.

“Good! Set the name of this unnamed language as ‘Lava Language’ and transmit it to my memories!” Leylin immediately used this function.

In less than a second, Leylin had learnt the language of this world. Though they had different bodies, that was a problem easily solved by magic and some illusions.

Only at this point did the meaning of the yells of those one-horned beings emerge in Leylin’s mind accurately.

“Wook’ma, leave!” A being with a body larger than the rest of the one-horned clansman stood in front of the lava worm, pushing a one-horned being with a smaller stature away.

*Chik chik…* The giant lava worm roared, opening its mouth and swallowing this one-horned being.
The one-horned being called Wook’m’a was stunned as she sat on the ground, eyes losing their focus.
“Damn it, Wook’la’s finished. The ceremony is a failure. How were we so unlucky as to encounter a lava worm?”
The other one-horned beings’ faces were filled with remorse, and one of them began to curse, “It must have something to do with Klin clan. When the time comes, I’ll definitely kill them…”
Hearing this, bitter laughs sounded from the other one-horned beings. In this situation, being able to survive was already a luxury. What was the point of saying things like that?
The terrifying spit of the lava worm had already reached Wook’m’a, and it was much too late for rescue attempts. A few of these clansmen closed their eyes, unable to watch.
Wook’m’a had only just grown to adulthood, and was usually a passionate, bright child. To think she would die here… A few other young clansmen were already roaring while they pounced forward.
*Roar!* The expected pain did not come, and Wook’m’a opened her eyes curiously, finding a strange being in front of her.
This being looked very strange. He had no horns, no black skin, and physically looked small. He looked about the size of a three or four year old in the clan.
However, it was this small figure that had easily blocked the attack of the lava worm, and from the opponent’s howls, there was a trace of… fear?
Yes, Wook’m’a was sure of it. The powerful lava worm was actually afraid of this little thing.
“Are you alright?” The weird being in front of her spoke, using the language of her tribe. Wook’m’a naturally understood.
“I- I’m fine! Are you of the ant tribe? Though you don’t have their feelers, your skin colour and physique match!” Wook’m’a seemed to have forgotten the danger in front of her and began to strike up a conversation with Leylin.
Leylin was speechless at the actions of this tribe, and instead exerted strength in his arms.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* A giant red hand that was ten or so metres long fished the lava worm up easily. Its five fingers exerted a force one by one, causing the lava worm to roar in pain. Layer after layer of rock fragments peeled off and fell from its body, and by the time the magma armour had disappeared, its physique had obviously become much smaller. Even its aura had strangely weakened.
“Hm? Interesting.” Leylin watched the magma shell dropping off. The golden liquid from before was transported through a series of complicated pathways through which its effects were amplified, turning from ordinary lava to the powerful golden lava.
“An amplification spell formation? But I don’t see any resemblance to one…” Leylin’s eyes shone with interest, the large hand exerting more force. More layers fell from the lava worm’s body. Yet another layer of magma fell, and the lava worm was now only two or three metres long. Its aura suddenly weakened till it could not match up to the most ordinary one-horned clansmen.
‘A.I. Chip, remember these patterns!’ Leylin secretly commanded. There were many paths and research methods in these other worlds, and also ample experimental materials. All of these were things that Magi would go berserk over, and also one of the main reasons they were willing to risk death to explore other worlds.
*Boom!* The last of the magma slid off, and the lava worm that had seemed enormous had turned into a fat, meaty worm that was just over a metre long.
“Thank you for saving Wook’ma, revered Powerful One!”

Rather than the young female, two other one-horned beings came forward with their right arm on their chest, doing a strange action.

“May I know the Powerful One’s name?”

Leylin noticed an investigative glint that had been concealed well in their eyes. There were even traces of suspicion, but he had already come up with a plan.

“I am Ley, of the winged people! I am currently travelling to learn more about different cultures, so there is no need to thank me. The great will of lava was the one who orchestrated all this…”

With the memories of that one-horned tribal, Leylin’s speech was just like that of the Lava World’s aboriginals, and his disguise was seamless.

The so-called winged people were a shield Leylin had found for himself. Through the other party’s memories, he had found that all the different races of Lava World looked totally different from regular Wooks, and only the winged people tribe were somewhat similar. As for the wings? With his skills in magic as a Morning Star, creating two wings was too simple.

“So you are a friend of the winged tribe! Welcome to the Blazing Thorn Land!”
The winged people were a peace-loving minority in the Lava World. They were usually scattered throughout the land, and did not cause any trouble with any large organisations. Hence, these two one-horned beings, even if they didn’t let their guards down completely, lost a lot of their suspicion. They invited Leylin enthusiastically to a city nearby to rest.

Leylin, who had other intentions, naturally rejected them for a while, before going with the situation and agreeing. Overjoyed, the two clansmen immediately used whatever they had at hand and conducted a banquet in Leylin’s honour.

What surprised Leylin the most was that their meal today was the lava worm. It had to be said that when one repressed the disgust at placing the lava worm’s meat in their mouth, the expected terrible taste did not appear. The meat was actually similar to chicken, and also had a fragrant and sweet juice; it was a rare delicacy.

This was especially true in the Lava World. Food that had high water content was actually one of the rarest ingredients!

“Lord Ley, thank you so much! Also…” Wook’ma thanked Leylin with a tone full of admiration, passing over a large portion of the meat of the worm.

“What is it?” Leylin answered, finding the situation funny.

“May… May I see your… wings? I’ve heard that the wings of the winged people are the most beautiful things in the world!” Wook’ma’s eyes were full of admiration, but that only had Leylin feeling like laughing and crying at the same time.

“The most beautiful? I’m afraid us winged people can’t take that title, but I can fulfill your request.” Leylin nodded, not caring if this was just the pure fantasies of a little girl, or if someone was trying to sound him out.

After he stood up, the clothes on his back tore open, revealing a pair of large, snow-white wings. When spread out, they were a good four or five metres long, and the wings that looked like that
of an angel wrapped Leylin within. At the edges of these fine, pure white feathers, there were traces of a golden luster.

‘With this appearance, I could even pretend to be an angel in my previous world…’ Leylin thought with a laugh. At the same time, he saw that behind Wook’ma, who looked full of admiration, the other two one-horned clansmen were surprised.

Based on their previous conversation, Leylin knew that one was called Wook’e, and the other was Wook’bor. They were part of the largest one-horned clan nearby, the Wook Clan.

In the Lava World, matured one-horned clansmen had to hunt for food by themselves, a rite of passage.

However they had been unlucky, or rather been plotted against. That was why they had encountered a lava worm, and an enraged one at that. If not for Leylin acting, these people might all have died here.

“Mister Ley, I heard that you’re a traveller. Can you tell me stories about other places?” Wook’ma’s hands were under her chin as she laid on her stomach in front of Leylin like a curious baby.

Combined with her almost three-metre-tall stature and horn, she gave off an appearance that would scare any regular child into crying in his previous world. The contrast was stark.

“This… Please wait for a while. I still want to discuss something with your uncles!” Leylin smiled. All the information he had obtained had come from the unlucky guy who had died. If he was asked about some other matters, that might expose his identity, and he had hence quickly changed the subject.

Alright! Wook’ma, go to bed. We still have things to discuss with Mister Ley!”

Wook’e stood up. He sent the pouting Wook’ma away and chuckled, finding this embarrassing, “My apologies, Mister Ley, she’s only a child!”

“Indeed, I don’t blame her,” Leylin shook his head. The glint from
his eyes made the two clansmen afraid to look him in the eye. “But… Why did you try to probe me?” “Nothing gets past Mister!” Wook’e and Wook’bor exchanged a glance and began laughing wryly.
The blazing bonfire gradually died out, and only the red lava river in the distance slowly emitted dark red rays. The flickering flames covered the faces of these beings, giving a feeling of light and darkness being unable to be determined.
Leylin, who was listening to these two speak, also had a grim expression as he nodded or shook his head from time to time, looking to be deep in thought.

……

The next day, Wook’e and Wook’bor announced that Leylin would temporarily join and return with them. This immediately resulted in many cheers, with Wook’ma’s the loudest.
Seeing Wook’e and Wook’bor’s confident expressions, Leylin had the urge to laugh.
Last night, they had told him about some conflict between organisations and some persecution they were facing. Though Leylin had not understood much, nor could he be bothered to, his expression looked like he understood completely. His outward hatred immediately netted a favourable opinion from these two. From the looks of it, they seemed to think of him as a reliable power. Or rather… as a saviour of sorts?
Leylin found this hilarious, but had to endure it.
“Mister Ley, what are you thinking about…” Wook’ma immediately began to cling to him, and Leylin pressed against his forehead with nothing to say.
Leylin could work independently and find where the large creatures gathered, searching the strongest one’s soul and therefore obtaining
more information in a convenient manner. However, this would cause a huge ruckus and arouse needless suspicion, as well as the attention from the world’s will. The cons outweighed the pros.

Even without attention from the world’s will, the Lava World was a world and definitely had someone with a battle might of at least the Morning Star realm. The moment he besieged and enraged large powers, even Leylin could not be certain he would be able to escape safely.

His motive was to save the two Kemoyin Dukes, which was why he had to maintain a low profile until he found them.

Though this method of blending in was slightly troublesome, the advantage was the safety, and there weren’t any loopholes.

What allowed Leylin to feel at ease was that time flowed different in other worlds and in the Magus World. One year might have passed in the Magus World while only a month or even a few days had passed here, which was why he still had plenty of time.

“Since Jupiter’s Lightning set up a trap here, they must have found this world’s coordinates long ago and occupied an area here…”

Leylin’s thoughts began to gain clarity.

“Perhaps even that Radiant Moon Magus has quite a few clones here in charge. They might have set up some traps and are waiting for me to get caught, which is why I can’t make mistakes…”

After following the group for a few days, a silhouette of a black city could be seen in the distance.

That was a giant city of rock. Whether it was the houses or city walls, they were all made of giant black boulders. Though the city wall was low, the men of another race who were standing tall above it were robust and valiant.

“We’re home!” Many single-horned clansmen immediately cheered, but at the thought of their siblings who had died, they could not help but begin to lower their heads and weep.
‘This is a place where intelligent beings gather, but my soul force has yet to make any discoveries of them…’ His concealed soul force swept through the place, but Leylin’s expression did not change despite his sighing inside.

In a palace constructed of large black rocks, Leylin saw the leader of the one-horned race’s Wook Clan. These leaders were usually called the “Intellectual One.”

“Revered Intellectual One, please accept the blessings of a guest from far away!” Following custom, Leylin placed a few portions of lava worm meat in front of a wrinkled one-horned being as a gift. At this moment, only the two of them were in the large palace. Wook’e and the rest had long since hurried back.

“Lava worm? These beings usually like to stay in lava and seldom come out. After being aggravated, they will explode with terrifying lava attacks. It’s all thanks to you that Wook’ma and the rest could return safely!”

The elderly Intellectual One nodded, grabbing at the lava worm and beginning to eat without reservations. Juice splashed everywhere and fell from the corner of its mouth, droplets landing on the straw mat.

This was a tradition of the one-horned race. Enjoying the gift in front of the guest was a sign of respect.

Leylin appeared to be sitting at a side respectfully, though in actuality, his soul force had already covered the surroundings.

“This intellectual being has pretty good abilities, at the strength of a rank 1 or 2 Magus. It’s a pity that it’s still too weak…”

The old one-horned clansman obviously did not notice Leylin’s gaze that held pity, and when it was done with the meal, it touched its lips. “Well then, is there anything I can help you with? Just say the word!”
“Of course! I have a difficult problem that I need your help with…” Leylin smiled slowly while softly stating his request.
It was the early morning and the air was refreshing, a situation that seldom occurred. Even the lava rivers weren’t boiling hot right now.
The large black city gates opened slowly, and a small caravan made its way through.
Within the caravan were many black one-horned clansmen. Their mode of transport was a giant creature that looked like a snail. Their shells towered high, a few openings in them made expressly for the easy retrieval of items.
There were no goods in the huge shell of the largest mount, and only a space that was specially cleared for Leylin to sit in, with his legs crossed.
Though this snail’s movements weren’t especially quick, it was advantageous in that there were practically no jolts from the travel. Even the temperature of this place was different from that of the surroundings, and it left Leylin feeling very satisfied.
At the thought of the unwillingness to part on Uma’s face, as well as Wook’e and Wook’bo’s stunned expressions, Leylin had the urge to laugh.
He had no plans on interfering with matters relating to other races. That ‘Intellectual One’ had also known from the aura undulations that Leylin had intentionally emanated, that he was not to be provoked, and did not want to keep a time bomb like Leylin around.
Hence, everything clicked together. The one-horned race immediately agreed to bring Leylin along on their next travel. With the travelling merchants as the guide, they brought Leylin to a bigger city.

In all honesty, compared to the city where many different races lived together in harmony, the black city that the one-horned race had built was like a town in the countryside.

“Woking City! The largest city in the Blazing Thorn Land. I hope it won’t let me down!” Leylin’s eyes flashed with a glint that nobody could see through, while his hands began to move quickly. Large amounts of Magus materials were fished out of his spatial ring and arranged to form a small-scale spell formation. The whole process was covert, and not the slightest sound was made. It was not just the one-horned beings outside. Even the snail that Leylin was sitting on did not feel it.

*Buzz…* An extremely slight undulation that only Morning Star ranked Kemoyin Warlocks could detect was transmitted into the distance.

“Go!” Two dull spiritual flames appeared on Leylin’s hands, quickly disappearing into the spell formation.

Following that, Leylin closed his eyes, a thread of soul force linking with the spell formation. His mind seemed to pass through the snail shell and arrive outside, spreading further.

A long while later, Leylin opened his eyes and shook his head.

‘It still isn’t working! This is the limit of what I can do. I’m afraid the two Dukes aren’t in this region…’ Leylin sighed, his expression complicated.

A world was much too large. It could be said that the Lava World far surpassed the central continent in terms of surface area. To find two people in such a large area, a needle in a haystack couldn’t even begin to describe it.

Though Gilbert and the rest were Morning Star Warlocks and
would definitely make a name for themselves wherever they were, one had to remember that Jupiter’s Lightning definitely had an organisation here. It was possible that before he could even find Gilbert, the Radiant Moon Magi would be at his doorstep wanting his life.

‘But… Morning Star strength is rare even in other worlds. If I was a Magus from Jupiter’s Lightning, I would probably scheme to seize control of large-scale organisations and find a way to lure other members to come over as well…’

Leylin began to envisage the plans that Gilbert and the others would make after coming here suddenly, and immediately had several trains of thought.

‘I’m afraid I’ll have to go to other large cities. Intelligence groups there must have the information I want!’ Leylin’s eyes shone, and he pointed at the spell formation in mid-air.

A layer of crimson flames immediately started to rage, swallowing the spell formation and the two soul fires within.

In the crimson flames, the spell formation that had originally been large and oversized shrunk down into little droplets that rolled around and disappeared into a soul crystal.

When the crimson flames had died out, all that was left was a red crystal the size of a fist.

At the heart of the crystal were two fine silver-white flames that intertwined, forming the strange shape of the Ouroboros.

‘Alright! The sensing technique has been set. I won’t need to go through the troublesome task of setting up a spell formation every single time in the future.’ Leylin looked relaxed as he kept the crystal properly. Immediately after, he felt the whole group come to a halt.

“What’s going on?” Furrowing his brows, Leylin opened the shell of the snail and went outside.

“Mister Ley, there’s a battle going on outside. The undulations have
already reached the Earth grade, hence I’ve ordered the group to stop!” A giant one-horned clansman came before Leylin, looking very respectful.

Initially, he had had qualms regarding Intellectual One’s plans, but after Leylin had shown some tricks, the other party was immediately taken in. His gaze towards Leylin was full of deference.

“Oh? I didn’t notice that just now.” Leylin nodded, spreading a pair of large white wings from his back. A powerful strength flowed through them, allowing his body to fly into the air.

This expansive view immediately allowed him to view the scene far away.

Energy undulations were spread recklessly, and two figures moved to and fro in the lava, filling the whole sky with magma droplets.

“Indeed, energy at the Earth grade,” Leylin nodded.

This world naturally did not have the same classification system as the Magus World, but several beings with extraordinary strength still existed here, though the differences in ranking were not as distinct.

From what Leylin knew, individuals who had exemplary abilities only had a few divisions. Exemplary, Earth, Sky, Star!

Based on Leylin’s understanding, ‘Exemplary’ referred to knights and acolytes, and they were beings which possessed the slightest bit of extraordinary strength. They were the lowest stratum. Earth referred to the equivalents of official Magi, or perhaps those who could reach rank 2. Similarly, Sky were the strong ones, as strong as rank 3! And those of Star rank were beings who existed in legends and myths, and were on par with the Magus World’s Morning Star Magi.

The classification of ‘Stars’ allowed Leylin to guess that Lava World definitely had been influenced by the Magus World. Or, at least, there had been a few Morning Star Magi that had paid
attention to this world. If not, the classification of Stars would not be so similar. As for strength, the one-horned race that Leylin had seen up to this point depended completely on their body. Only the Intellectual One he saw that day seemed to have awakened some magical ability, which was rather decent. The two beings of another race that were fighting in front of Leylin paled in comparison to the Intellectual One from before, whether in terms of the intensity of their energy or undulations. However, after observing for a long while, Leylin made a discovery, “A summoning ability? And it’s the power of a totem?” These two were obviously not of the one-horned race. One of them was extremely obese, to the point that their waist couldn’t even be seen. A long nose hung from its face, making it look like an upright elephant, except that its skin was bright yellow. The other was green, and from the big-headed race. It had an exceptionally small body and very nimble arms, with many runes and spell patterns rolling from its fingertips and being carved into the ground. “Ignite!” With its voice, the image on the ground suddenly brightened, a layer of soil solidifying to form a berserk bear-like creature. A pentagonal spell formation appeared on the elephant clansman, and in the next moment, the space seemed to shatter. A large double-headed cheetah descended from another space. The two creatures looked each other face to face, and then began to tear at one another viciously, powerful energy undulations sweeping through the region. ‘There’s a shadow of the Magus World here! It seems that the ancient Magus World once took over many worlds and made use of the strengths of this place, giving rise to many strength-based systems. Looks like the rumours were real!’
Leylin watched on with interest, occasionally finding traces of some systems similar to that in the Magus World from their usage of energy. However, his attitude of watching leisurely had clearly offended the two of them.

“You damned bird person. What are you looking at?” The elephant man roared, and it summoned a large goshawk, its sharp feathers and claws like steel as they emanated glints that inspired terror. The goshawk cawed out and pounced towards Leylin, its large talons seemingly able to tear through anything. The other opponent seemed to have slowed his movements, standing aside and waiting to watch a good show.

“Really…” Leylin couldn’t help but shake his head, watching the goshawk that was throwing itself at him speechlessly. Never did he expect that watching such a spectacle could cause trouble.

‘Summoning methods can technically be divided into elemental summoning, spatial summoning, bloodline summoning, all the way to the greatest, which is world summoning! The summoning methods here are probably those of the lowest level, spatial summoning. They can only instantly summon contracted beings of this world before the summoner…’

Leylin touched his chin, watching the goshawk that was pouncing over, and suddenly laughed. For some reason, after seeing that smile, the elephant man on the ground felt a chill, as if he had done something very wrong.

Soul force invaded the insides of the goshawk’s mind. Leylin immediately found a spell formation that symbolised a contract. It was twinkling, and as if it had discovered the invasion of another being, it began to retaliate.

However, soul force was far too powerful. With just a sweep, the elephant man’s low-grade spiritual force was utterly defeated, and the spiritual branding had also been erased. The large goshawk felt...
giddy and suddenly found the white-winged person in front of it favourable, circling around Leylin.

“Impossible!” The intense spiritual attack, as well as the erasing of his mark immediately caused the elephant man to be seriously injured.
He involuntarily cried out and spat a mouthful of fresh blood, crumbling down on the spot.
The other opponent seemed to be scared out of its wits and stayed rooted to the spot.
How could this summoning partner of his be defeated in such a straightforward manner? The green-skinned clansman felt like his thoughts came crashing down.
He was beginning to pity his opponent. Just a casual act had provoked such a terrifying existence. They had to be at least of the Sky rank!
“Mister Ley!” The rest of the Wooks celebrated upon Leylin’s return, worship in their eyes. There was a respect for power that was imprinted into their very bloodlines, and now it had shown itself.

“It’s all settled, let’s continue!” Leylin returned to the seat in the giant snail shell, looking calm.

Indeed, the two rank 1 Magi did not warrant Leylin’s attention. However, it had surprised Leylin how much the A.I. Chip had advanced after deriving the energy transformation formulas of the rank 1 Magi.

[Beep! Decoding of 15 rank 1 Fire element spells, 7 rank 2 spells and 3 rank 3 spells has been completed.]

Leylin’s face broke into a smile after hearing the notice from the A.I. Chip.

Due to the difference in the rules of the Lava World, spell models of the Magus world could not directly be used in it, and had to be slightly altered.

For other Magi to do such a thing would require a lot of research; something that was potentially troublesome. The spells had to each be studied and analysed individually.

However, Leylin had the ability to analyse the spells in batches and instantly managed to understand many of the spells.

‘In this case, I can recover most of my strength before we reach Woking…’ A streak of light flashed and he slowly closed his eyes.
The giant caravan started to move slowly after the short pause, the Wook clansmen at ease. After all, with the almighty Mister Ley overseeing them, there was not much to worry about during the journey, be it the bandits of the wilderness or disasters of nature and beasts. As a matter of fact, with Leylin around, they were rarely affected by natural disaster, and even avoided huge crises many times. After some time, The one-horned race eventually worshipped Leylin like a god. They had never been at such ease before, usually losing more than half their merchants and consuming large amounts of supplies for every trip. Their parting with Leylin was full of reluctance. The chief of the caravan tried his best to persuade Leylin not to leave, even hinting that he could stay even if the Intellectual One refused. But how would Leylin agree? He left with a smile.

Woking City, the largest city in the Blazing Thorn Land. The entire city was built in a huge barren desert, with raging winds roaring every once in a while. The place appeared desolate. But Leylin knew that such living conditions were considered exemplary in the Lava World. In the Lava World, the intelligent creatures thrived best in the areas where there was no lava flow. Other than the pure fire elemental creatures, few species would enjoy living near the edge of the lava. In here, other than the shortcoming that the temperature was slightly higher, it wasn’t very much different from that of the deserts in the Magus World, and hence was considered conditions that were good enough. “Nevertheless, these non-human species are really…” The dress code and appearances of the Magi in Woking City differed greatly from what he was used to. Leylin was a little speechless at the unique structure of the buildings and the large crowd of passersby, who were predominantly non-human. To Leylin’s surprise, the one-horned race whom he had
encountered early were actually more human than most, at least they looked similar to normal humans. With non-humans who had numerous eyes and limbs were barely considered normal, Leylin was completely shocked when he saw a humongous green caterpillar, with hat and stick, in a store. It, ignorant of his gaze, was in a heated argument with the store’s owner. Despite his adventure experience in the Magus world, Leylin had mostly only been exposed to humans. Although the central continent held many non-humans, humans were still the majority while the rest eked out an existence in the shadows, even if they were mixed bloods who looked human. However, in this place, Leylin felt like he was the odd one out. This feeling of isolation was new to him, and interesting. “No wonder the antique books say that the process of conquering a foreign world is actually a great challenge for Magi. It’s extremely difficult to even think of such a thing now, especially the act of going against the whole world by oneself. Truly, insane…” Flames fumed in Leylin’s eyes as he mumbled under his breath, his eyes flashing with excitement. “I really wish to give it a try… The feeling of conquering a world…” His exclamation was well and good, but time had arrived that he settle serious matters. Leylin stopped a long-haired, two headed green being that was drooling out some unknown liquid. “I need to get some information, is there any place can fulfil my needs? If u can bring me there, this will be yours!” Leylin took out a pinkish crystal and tossed it in front of the non-human, making his eyes brighten up. “I– I’ll bring you there!” The sturdy man by the side of the two-headed being hemmed and hawed, as if he had to invest a lot of energy in speaking each and every word.
“Great! After you!” Leylin’s eyes flashed with a trace of a smile.

……

Clearly, the two headed being was pretty familiar with streets of Woking, every step of his long legs taking him a few meters ahead. He was originally worried that Leylin could not keep up with him, but after seeing Leylin at ease he sped up. When they reached a remote alley, the two-headed fellow turned around and stammered, “Right– right here!”

“Is it?” Leylin looked around. The huge shadow of the building covered the region, blotting out the sun and leaving the entire place in darkness. A tinge of a sombre mood was felt, and there was not a single person around.

“Hehehe, look, what Strap brought us!” A green, multi-limbed being who looked like a grasshopper climbed along the side of the wall. The pair of crimson eyes on top of its triangular head stared at Leylin with a malicious intent.

“Ant Tribe? Or Winged Tribe? Whatever, Old Hawk will surely pay a high price for his meat anyway…”

In concert with his voice, many other non-humans climbed out of the corners, all looking bloodthirsty and ferocious.

“I knew it… I just knew it would turn out this way…” Leylin sighed helplessly, “Why do you want to force me to use violence when we can resolve this peacefully?”

Leylin’s puzzled look made the nonhumans tremble, feeling as if they had done something wrong.

“Just as well! In any case, I’m short on quite a few foreign specimens!”

Leylin played with the ring on his finger, gracefully taking out a silver surgical knife. He looked focused and devoted.
"Oh no! Please let me go! I don’t know anything, they forced me…"
Half an hour later, the alley was filled with the reek of blood. All the non-humans had disappeared, leaving behind only the two headed being kneeling on the ground, begging for mercy. However, it was a high-pitched female voice this time, coming from the other head.
"Really?" Leylin wiped the silvery surgical knife, mirth in his eyes. It terrified the two-headed being, whose hair stood on ends.
"I can help! I know the best information broker in the city, it’s Old Jake. I’m telling the truth! He even knows things about other worlds! I can bring you there right now!" The being revealed its intelligence at the boundary between life and death, finally securing its life from the surgical knife Leylin had placed in front of it.
"Good! Bring me to him now!" The surgical knife stopped right before the being’s eyes, only a millimetre away.
"Yes, Master! I will bring you there now…" The creature wept, even wanting to die. If not for the fact that it was in its resting period and if it had let its younger brother go out instead, it would never have come near a malefic like Leylin.
It was useless to say anything now, though. It knew very well that it would end up like the scattered piles of flesh and bones if it did not bring Leylin to his destination and help him get what he wanted. It was no doubt that he was the local tyrant. In a short while, he had brought Leylin to an extensive basement area. Leylin got excited upon entering the place. This atmosphere of this place was pervaded with feelings of passion, madness, and death, causing the darkness elemental particles to be very concentrated here.
‘It wouldn’t take too long for this kind of place to give normal humans a mental disorder…’ Leylin stroked his chin, followed after the two-headed being.

“What brings you here Strap? Do you wanna play some games?” A creature with the head of an ox patted the two headed creature’s shoulder with great strength. His right leg was missing, instead replaced with a giant metal limb.

Leylin smelled an odour similar to that of marijuana from the ox-head, coming from the crimson drink in his hand. It seemed to be an alcoholic drink of this world.

“No, I’m here for Old Jake! You see…” The two headed being pointed at Leylin and started to whisper to the ox-head with flattery.

“Off you go!” The Ox-head took another look at Leylin, perhaps it was the attractive thin figure of Leylin that set him off guard.
Passing through a rusty metal door, Leylin entered a large underground arena.

There were cheers, howls, even berserk roars sounding incessantly. At times one could hear the sound of weapons clashing, at others the sound of a body being pierced. The atmosphere was insane. The audience, who were composed of multiple races, waved pieces of paper in their hands as they yelled towards the middle of the arena.

“This…” Leylin looked down towards the centre with interest, and immediately made a discovery.

In a large cage made of steel was a were-lion with golden fur. It was matched against several large monsters. These monsters looked like eight-legged crocodiles with mouths full of sharp teeth. Their mouths actually looked like saws with all the sharp teeth, boasting a viciousness and frightening power that would cause weaker beings to faint.

Their opponent, the were-lion, was unarmed, and could only fight these monsters with its own fists. Heaps of muscles bulged on its body, holding in store its formidable strength.

Just as Leylin glanced over, it mercilessly grabbed onto one of the crocodiles’ tails and ruthlessly flung it onto a metal bad. A large number of metallic thorns stabbed into the creature’s body, and blood gushed out. The injury looked fatal.
In exchange, the were-lion’s back now had several bloody scratches that were dripping with blood.
“A place for underground wrestling, with bets and alcohol?” Leylin nodded, beginning to have some expectations towards Old Jake.
The heads of such underground organisations were usually the people who acquired intel the most effectively. He would definitely have a huge network.
After all, selling information was very profitable, and he would definitely not let this opportunity go.
“Come with me!” The ox-head limped as he led the way, guiding Leylin through several bar counters where many were raising their wine cups and roaring madly. He then opened a small wooden door.
This door truly was tiny. Leylin’s physique would be considered slender among the races of this world, and even he had to lower his head, half bowing before he could enter.
*Boom!* The sturdy wooden door closed, isolating the room from the clamour outside.
The moment before the door closed, Leylin vaguely saw the were-lion successfully taking care of two other monster crocodiles. Though it had paid a large price, it had still managed to keep its life.
Large numbers of bets failed, and those who had lost their money bellowed, the cacophony almost overturning the entire arena.
And still, when the wooden door closed, it was as if everything outside had no relation to this place.
“Serenity and insanity are only separated by a single door. Isn’t that feeling amazing, Mister Ley from the one-horned race’s territory?” A dwarf that was around a metre tall walked out. It had on a long silver robe, the bottom dragging on the ground. It held the same wine cup as the rest, an excited blush on its face.
Its eyes, however, were cold. They were like a mass of ice, not a
single ripple within them.
‘A rational lunatic!’ That was Leylin’s first impression of this dwarf. For it to be able to take control of such a large organisation, it was evidently not a simple character.
“You know me?” Leylin had arrived at the Lava World a few days ago, and he had only made contact with the one-horned race. The knowledge that the other party had found information on him so quickly caused him to be delighted. In this case, there was a higher chance of his plans being realised.
“Of course! There are few who can defeat the summoner, Klito. A Sky ranked master is definitely worthy of my respect!” The dwarf bowed slightly, and Leylin was moved.
It must have been a member of the ant race with its brown skin and two little antennae. For some reason, it had broken away from its community and formed a large underground organisation in Woking City.
“Was it the merchants of the one-horned city?” Leylin pondered over it for a moment and immediately answered. Pretty much the only ones who knew him in the entirety of Woking City was that lot.
“Indeed, it was them! Since they were escorted by Mister Ley, I’ve already sent down orders that all their goods will be sold off at 10% higher than the market price!”
The dwarf of the ant race invited Leylin to take a seat, and personally poured a glass of something similar to red wine for him slowly.
The slight smell of alcohol, mixed with all kinds of fermented items that had anaesthetic effects immediately surrounded Leylin’s nostrils.
“The alcohol of other races is really terrifying. They aren’t even afraid of harming their bodies…”
Leylin shook his head, a little speechless. Though he was not afraid
of these with the quality of his body, his tastes were well-developed. Such a crudely-made thing was not worthy of his attention, even if this alcohol was the best out of this dwarf’s collection.

“Alright, respected guest! May I know your purpose in seeking out pitiful old Jake?” Seeing Leylin putting the wine cup down without taking a sip, Jake’s expression did not change. He’d taken the initiative to bring up the topic, his eyes smiling.

“Everything!” Leylin chuckled lightly.

“Everything?!” Jake cried out involuntarily. “What do you mean by everything?”

“All the intelligence you have. Everything you know. That includes this region, as well as other areas. Whether it’s a big or small issue, I want everything as long as it’s valuable…” Leylin’s voice was low, and had a unique charm to it.

“Hehe… Mr Ley, do you know how much this information will cost?” Jake laughed, but his voice turned cold.

“I know, but I can definitely afford it!” Leylin answered without hesitation.

“What are you going to use to pay for it?” Jake had already assumed he’d met a lunatic, or someone with a screw loose.

“Your life. Is that enough?” Leylin spoke coldly.

“Crap!” Upon hearing Leylin’s words, Jake immediately bowed and retreated, throwing himself behind a study table with a jump. With a push of some mechanism, a defensive layer of energy appeared instantly.

Its movements were fluid, as if it had trained for this countless of times.

Only after the layer rose did its expression become calm. A sneer raised on its lips, “Mr Ley, don’t you think you’re going too far for a mere guest?”

“I’ve never felt that way towards the weak!” Leylin’s voice was
dull, and that caused Jake’s face to flush. As if Leylin’s words had touched on some nerve, Jake instantly grew furious. “Get him!” It called out suddenly, and a pink mist filled the room. Two figures rushed out from within, emanating powerful energy undulations. “The two mice finally dare show themselves. You’re only at the Sky rank, is that so amazing?” Leylin laughed slightly, a dark green layer of energy appearing from his body as a large hand grabbed forwards. *Boom!* Space itself seemed to freeze in place, and the two fierce black figures halted abruptly. Leylin held each of them by the neck. What appeared in his hands were two other dwarves that looked very similar to Jake. Energy undulations similar to that of a rank 3 Magus were continually emitted from them, but to Leylin this was far too weak. They were like a candle in a hurricane, a random wisp of wind enough to destroy them. “Is this all you have to depend on? Any others?” Leylin opened his mouth, and a vortex appeared in the air. The pink mist that had pervaded the air was sucked into Leylin’s stomach. One of those that Leylin was holding suddenly seemed to recall something, and even began to stutter, “This powerful? You– You’re a Star rank…” He sent the two flying, and they fell with a thud, fainting from their injuries. *Swish!* Seeing Leylin unravelling his trap and defeating two Sky ranks so easily, Jake, who was within the defensive layer, could only grit his teeth and remove it, kneeling before him. “Revered Master Ley, please forgive the petty me for offending you unknowingly. Jake is willing to hand over all power and information to you…” “You’re smart and understand the situation. Good, I like people like
“you!” A smile appeared on Leylin’s face, but to Jake it looked like that of a devil. “I don’t want your organisation or anything like that. I just need some information from you. Because you’re tactful, I’ll only purge a portion of your memories. Don’t worry…” Hearing Leylin’s words, Jake immediately knelt in gratitude, while forcing a laugh inside. Just a Star rank was enough to destroy Woking City, and he had no means of fighting back.

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A few hours later, Leylin who had obtained what he wanted, left the Underground Wrestling Arena, satisfied. The atmosphere in the arena was still very heated. Now, however, there were great battles between various races. Leylin even saw a few one-horned clansmen who were mere cannon fodder. The soundproofing effects of the wooden door were superb. There seemed to be some spell formation, and even though Leylin had caused a mess inside, nobody outside found out. Even that ox-headed person would not know that over the course of the past few hours, the leader of their organisation had thoroughly bowed down at the hands of this young being of a different race. Of course, Leylin spurned the head of an underground organisation. After using methods of psychological hints to confirm that it had handed over all the information, he had immediately modified its memories and even created a fake experience. This completely concealed the happenings of the day. After leaving the arena, Leylin found a random inn and, after paying with precious gems, received a large house. Of course, this wealth had been obtained with the generous
sponsorship of Old Jake.
The Lava World was vast, and a few hundred years would not be enough to traverse the entire world. Based on the information he obtained from Jake, this continent that Leylin was on was the largest in the Lava World, called ‘Blazing Crown’.

Around Blazing Crown, was an ocean formed of lava. Within this lava ocean were all kinds of terrifying high-energy beings, and it was a much more dangerous place than the oceans in the Magus World.

Hence, communication between Blazing Crown and the other continents was minimal. Even the most powerful extraordinary ones rarely left the continent.

To Jake’s knowledge, Blazing Crown was the heart of the Lava World. The other ‘continents’ were merely slightly large islands.

‘What an interesting world! An ocean formed of lava? If those fire-elemental Magi were to find out about this place, they would be willing to migrate over even if it cost them a fortune.’ Leylin touched his chin, beginning to browse through the intelligence he had obtained from Jake.

Though the information was very complicated, the A.I. Chip had recorded everything and could quickly filter out the wrong and useless information, leaving behind the great amounts of valuable intel. It then combined a few pieces that seemed to be linked.

Soon, Leylin managed to form an image of the true Lava World.
This was a world of flames. Fire elemental beings and lava creatures occupied over 80% of the area here. The one-horned race, as well as the ant race that Jake was a part of, could only somewhat survive at the edges of the continent.

On the complete map of the continent, there were no signs of the single-horned city. Woking City was merely a black dot at the edge, and was basically a remote and desolate place.

Three organisations stood at the apex of Blazing Crown. There was the Divineflame Empire made entirely of fire elemental beings. The Atlan Union was made up of the Emberwing race, a life form similar to humans, and then the Allied Kingdom was made up of the rest. There weren’t any others at the same level as them.

Of these three, the Divineflame Empire was the most powerful. The Atlan Union and Allied Kingdom had to collaborate to stave off their invasions.

Wars were incessantly fought as they tried to seize good territory from the lava and fire elemental beings. It was to the point that huge military campaigns were launched every few years.

As for the divisions in their ranks, it was the same as what he’d already encountered. The weakest was Exemplary, followed by Earth, Sky, and Star.

As for those above the Star rank, beings that possessed the strength of Radiant Moon Magi, he hadn’t come across any such thing. Although it could just be that Jake’s organisation hadn’t acquired that level of information yet.

Even so, Leylin’s current strength allowed him to do as he liked in the Lava World as long as the other Star ranks or Jupiter’s Lightning didn’t set their sights on him.

“If I were Gilbert and the others, I would either find a place and hide myself completely, or build an organisation in secret that would give off a distinct signal to the outside, letting any rescuers
“know where I am….”
Leylin’s eyes flashed, and the A.I. Chip immediately began to search through the data.

Soon enough, a distinct heading attracted Leylin’s attention. “Riot at Eastern City of Atlan Union. Rebel army ‘Triserpent Sect’ has taken responsibility for the event. There are conjectures that this could be a retaliation in response to the large-scaled attack of the Union…”

“Triserpent Sect?” This phrase that was full of meaning immediately got him to make a mental association.

“Isolate all information about the Triserpent Sect!” Leylin commanded. With the keyword found, the A.I. Chip’s search went more quickly. Almost instantly, information relating to the Triserpent Sect was projected in front of him.

Through reading this information, Leylin gained a deeper understanding of this organisation.

The Triserpent Sect, which was also called the Triserpent Resistance Army, was an up-and-coming organisation, and its development was rapid. With the goal of overthrowing the rule of the Atlan Union, their operations were unpredictable and very much supported by the lower class commoners.

It was said that there were three heads of the Triserpent Sect, and they were terribly powerful, the Atlan Union’s attempts at cornering and annihilating them were to no avail.

However, days ago, the Atlan Union had suddenly announced that they had achieved victory while trying to eliminate the Triserpent Sect. Not only had they destroyed many of its branches, they had even killed the head.

The news of rebellion that Leylin had seen was retaliation launched by the Triserpent Sect.

“Triserpent Sect? Interesting! Is it really the three dukes, or is this bait?” Leylin touched his chin, but it was obvious that in the Atlan Union, there were clues of the location of the two Morning Star
dukes!
For this reason, Leylin had to go there no matter what.
‘I keep having this feeling that the Atlan Union is very suspicious.’
Leylin touched his chin and sank deep into thought.
The three dukes had no grudge against the Atlan Union. Why
would they suddenly attack them? Unless… They had made some
astounding discovery in the Atlan Union!
‘Come to think of it, Jupiter’s Lightning found this world first. It
would be strange if they did not painstakingly manage it. Hence, if
the ones working behind the scenes in the Atlan Union were
Jupiter’s Lightning, that would explain everything…’
Leylin wondered as explored different possible solutions.
Compared to the Divineflame Empire that was against all foreigners
and full of fire elementals, the Atlan Union formed of the
Emberwing race similar to humans were easier to manipulate.
On top of that, their strength was only second to the Divineflame
Empire in Blazing Crown, and was more suited to the needs of the
Morning Star Magi of Jupiter’s Lightning.
However, while this made sense logically, Leylin believed things
could not be so simple. The same intuition that had helped him
obtain astonishing harvests during dangerous moments was blaring
sirens at him.
‘No matter what it is, I need to go the Atlan Union! As for the
Triserpent Sect, we’ll see…’ Leylin sighed.

……

Boiling lava and fiery red light formed the only luster of the Lava
World. And yet, even under this dazzling redness, life was growing
stubbornly.
This was a grassland, and little steel trees similar to the one Leylin
had seen before and filled the area, along with vegetation whose
leaves had jagged edges. A few slender channels of lava could be seen every once in a while, flowing past like little streams in the grasslands. Yet, they could not harm the area at all. These plants that were like grass that had their roots firmly and deeply in the ground, even boring into the lava and absorbing its energy for their growth. The stubborness for life had Leylin feeling surprised.

“Uncle Ley! Why do you like watching this iron-thread grass?” A very fair girl cloaked in red darted over, the sparse red feathers covering her forehead bouncing up and down. This girl was no different from an ordinary human child, if one disregarded the feathers on her forehead and on the back of her hand. This was the Emberwing race. In the Lava World, besides fire elemental life forms, they were the largest racial group, and formed the largest group in the Atlan Union.

“I just like them for their resilience!” Leylin chuckled as he handed over a large piece of meat to her. “Take this! I’m afraid we’ll have to part here.”

“Uncle Ley, are you leaving?” The little girl sucked on her finger, looking reluctant.

Though they had met on the road, the powerful aura of this clansman even had her father in awe. Based on her father’s guesses, this Mister Ley must be at least an Earth rank working hard to temper oneself and fervently hoping to advance to a higher realm.

“Brother Ley, are you already leaving?” Not long after, another large man of the Emberwing race rushed over. He had obviously just heard the news, and looked anxious.

Leylin now had a few fine red feathers on his forehead. This was the appearance of the Emberwing race. In the Atlan Union, it was much too eye-catching if he were to
continue pretending to be of the winged race.

“Yes! Working hard in this world can’t stimulate my progress anymore. Hence, I’ve decided to join the army! Perhaps competing against those evil fire elementals of the Divineflame Empire will help me advance to a higher level!”

Leylin’s expression was callous, “Besides, I’ve had a dream since I was young. I wanted to punish those flame bastards with my iron fist… Just in time for me to steel my skills in the upcoming battle at the Death Grand Canyon Battle!”

“D… Death Grand Canyon!” The large man’s eyeballs protruded. That was the frontlines of the battle between the Atlan Union and Divineflame Empire. That was also where the most casualties were.

“You…” The large man only moved his lips, but seeing the resolute look on Leylin’s face, he did not say more.

“My good brother, help me kill a few more fire elementals!” The large man could only pat Leylin’s shoulders as if wishing him luck, and he watched Leylin’s figure disappear into the horizon…

“Hah… I’ve finally arrived…” Leylin saw the outline of the Emberwing race in the distance, and let out a long breath.

The moment he had obtained intel on the Triserpent Sect, he had immediately set off and hurried here in secret.

However, as the Lava World was much too big, and Woking City was located in a very remote area, he had expended much time and effort to reach this place.

As for the large man and family of Emberwing race, they were only a few companions he had joined out of loneliness on the way here.

“Compared to the Magus World, many Exemplary ranks join the army directly in the Lava World and hold high rankings. If I want to obtain any information or intel, that would be the most convenient place.”
Compared to the Magi of the Magus World who liked to work behind the scenes, the strong in the Lava World were more willing to take the stage and take control of the organisations.
The kingships of large-scaled kingdoms were taken up by Star ranks. In that case, it was understandable for there to be a large number of Exemplaries in the higher ups of the Atlan Union’s army.
Furthermore, the army was the quickest place to advance in status, especially during wartime. As long as one was capable, had outstanding results, and nobody obstructed them, people were usually promoted rapidly. This was a method that was much better than others, and also the way that Leylin liked the best.
“But… There’s so much hardship in being a soldier. I don’t want to be trampled on…” Leylin’s eyes swivelled around as he had an idea.
Days later, in a special building within the city.
“Are you here to apply for the Special Task Force? Come with me!” A female Emberwing race member said. She was dressed in a military uniform and was expressionless, yet looked to be formidable. She carried a stack of documents and forms and turned to leave, leaving Leylin and the rest with a view of her elegant back.
“This doll is really…” A burly man beside Leylin began to
complain.
“How callous. I like it…” Another pale young man’s eyes glowed green, leaving Leylin speechless. Those with Leylin were all of the Emberwing race. However, what made them distinct from the rest of their clansmen, was the obvious energy undulations from their bodies. Since this world had Exemplaries, it was obvious that they had special treatment and missions. Things like the Special Task Force were formed for this reason. With enough strength, Emberwing clansmen were allowed to be selected into the Special Task Force. Not only would their positions be high, they had the best treatment in the army. Leylin wanted to sneak in, and he obviously formed a fake identity and signed up successfully. What Leylin cared about was that the Special Task Force often needed to deal with riots that had to do with Exemplaries. As long as he was there, he would definitely bump into the Triserpent Sect. For this reason, he was in no hurry at all. He would swing in and sneak into the Special Task Force and hide away there while gathering more information. After all, he was not quite sure about the background of the Triserpent Sect, and he needed to remain cautious. If this was a trap and he still charged right in, wouldn’t he be seeking death? Leylin and the young male Emberwing looked just as nervous and excited as the rest while they followed the female soldier to a large square. A middle-aged soldier in silver armour was already waiting there, his expression grim. “We’re beginning the test now! Who’s first?” The middle-aged instructor’s voice was so loud that everyone’s eardrums seemed to have gone numb.
“Me!” That pale young man seemed to be too anxious to show off and darted to the front.
“Fine. Use all your strength and attack the black obelisk ahead!” The military instructor stepped aside and revealed a giant black crystal before everyone.
“Hah!” The young man took a deep breath, and a layer of fire-red light was emitted from his body. Streams of air were dispelled as dust filled the air.
*Rumble!* He threw a punch, and it landed on the black crystal. While it did not budge the slightest, a dim layer of red light appeared on the surface.
Red light filled the obelisk with some difficulty, and fine rings appeared on the surface.
A total of five red rings appeared, before completely disappearing. Upon seeing this, a look of satisfaction flashed by the young man’s expression.
“Mm! Fifth level of Fireplume Technique. Exemplary status. Pass!” The officer nodded, with no surprise in his expression.
“Next!” His voice was icy-cold, causing the young man’s original complacency to disappear.
“Me!” The one who went up was plump, and similarly used Fireplume Technique. However, only three ringed runes appeared on the obelisk.
“Third level of Fireplume Technique. Fail!” The officer’s voice was callous, and two soldiers immediately went forward and dragged him out.
“Ah… Wait! Give me another chance, I can definitely…” From a distance, the sounds of his wails and pleas could be heard, causing great fear amongst the crowd in the square.
“Next!” The officer’s expression remained cold as he continued. One young man after another went up, and most passed the test, though there were a few who failed. The officer was ruthless as he
commanded the soldiers to chase them out.
Leylin watched this scene coolly from below.
Fireplume Technique! He had heard of it before, and knew that it
was used by the Emberwing race. It could be said to be found
everywhere, and practically everyone knew it.
There was nothing special about levels one to three of Fireplume
Technique, and was similar to the breathing techniques of the
Magus World. It could increase one’s vitality and endurance
slightly, with some tolerance towards fire elements.
Once one got to the fourth level of Fireplume Technique, it would
be similar to a meditation technique and allow the Emberwing
clansmen to have a rapid increase in strength.
The fourth and fifth level was the strength of an Exemplary rank,
while six and seven meant Earth rank. Eight and nine were
considerably powerful existences and were comparable to the Sky
rank. Once one advanced to the tenth level, of which there had
been no precedent in history, that was the door to the Star realm!
Though the fundamental parts of Fireplume Technique could be
found everywhere, the fourth and fifth levels were kept somewhat
secret, and were considered the essence of the race. As for the next
few levels, they were kept secure, and could only be passed on in a
few places. The reason why so many young people wanted to enter
the Special Task Force was probably because they wanted
information on the later levels of the technique.
As for the tenth level, that was something only the family of the
head of Atlan Union possessed. Most had never even heard of it.
A grave, burly, middle-aged Emberwing clansman went forward.
Extending a scarlet palm, six fire rings immediately appeared on the
obelisk, and even the officer couldn’t help but give the man a
second look, “Sixth level of Fireplume Technique. Earth rank.
Pass!”
“How amazing! It’s someone at level 6, the Earth rank!”
“These sorts of people can survive anywhere. What is he doing here?”
“It must be for the information regarding the eighth and ninth level of the technique! It’s only passed on in the army…” The appearance of what was the best results till now immediately gave rise to loud discussions in the queue.
The man from before stood expressionlessly aside in answer to the looks of curiosity or reverence, and the officer couldn’t help but have an expression of approval.
“Next!” The officer yelled again, eyes scanning through the crowd that was beginning to thin.
‘I’m afraid that this burly man is the one with the best results in this batch. It’s not a bad harvest! At least one is passable!’ The officer was stuck in this train of thought, but then he saw another slender clansman stand up.
“Hm?” Though this above average looking man seemed frail, the officer’s eyes brightened as he lapsed into thought.
‘This little guy doesn’t seem to be simple!’
Leylin obviously cared little about what the officer thought. In actuality, he was now performing research and gathering information on the path of Fireplume Technique.
‘Interesting. Interesting! At the beginning, it’s Knight training, and after that, there seems to be content infused with some conscient runes…’
He was interested in such techniques.
“But I need to get through this!” Leylin shook his head at the ruckus in the crowd due to his being in a daze for too long.
A Morning Star Magus’ point mass was a minute dot that could contain the terrifying strength of a Morning Star without leaking any energy. With the A.I. Chip’s help, there was no issue with simulating the energy belonging to Fireplume technique.
‘It’s a pity… The strongest person here is only the officer, who is at
the Sky rank with the eighth level of Fireplume Technique. The next few levels, as well as that of the Star rank, can’t be obtained as of yet!’

Leylin slowly extended his palm. Yet, it seemed like a layer of melting flame came to life, spreading across its surface. This immediately silenced the crowd.

“Hah!” Leylin controlled his strength, looking as if he was attacking with all he had.

*Rumble!* The entire obelisk began to tremble as bright fiery runes appeared one after another.

One, two, three… The light from bright flames were dazzling, and spread till there were seven on the obelisk. There even seemed to be half a ring extra.

The officer’s eyes shone and he immediately asked, “Seventh level of Fireplume Technique. Peak Earth rank! Very good. What’s your name?”

“My name is ‘Ley’, my lord!” Leylin performed a military salute, something the officer immediately found pleasing.

At this moment, the silent crowd suddenly became boisterous, hearts filled with jealousy that could not be suppressed while observing Leylin’s handsome face.

As long as this young man did not die in battle, he would become the rising star of the Special Task Force, or even the entire union!

“Hm?” At this moment, Leylin acutely felt a gaze land on his back.

“It’s the large man from before at the sixth level. This feeling of jealousy and hostility? Though it’s normal, why is there killing intent?”

The corner of Leylin’s lips rose in a cold smile. An enemy of this level was too boring.

When all those who had failed cleared out, the officer stood before Leylin and the rest, voice booming.

“Welcome to the Special Task Force! I am your officer, Schiker.
You’ll soon find that the Special Task Force is the best place to be. As long as you complete your missions, we can give you techniques, money, status or land…”
It had to be said that the officer was silver-tongued. In a short amount of time, he had incited the hot-bloodedness of the youths. Leylin’s expression was also one of excitement, though he found this all ridiculous on the inside.
“Now, follow me to participate in your first mission!”
Powerful undulations were emitted from Schiker’s body. Only then did the members realise that their officer was actually at the Sky rank!
Different from ordinary troops, this elite group formed of Exemplaries needed to start on missions right away. The Atlan Union had spent much manpower and physical resources on supporting the Special Task Force, and they were naturally not to be underestimated. However, this method of mentoring through fighting had resulted in the dissatisfaction of some members. Of course, with Sky rank Schiker around suppressing them, it was as if nothing had happened.

“Hi, Ley! I’m Mies. This is our first time on the battlefield, how are you feeling? Nervous?”

The pale young man who had been the first for the testing leaned towards him, looking to fawn on him.

“Alright,” Leylin answered indifferently, and then pointed towards the burly man who had mastered the sixth level of Fireplume. “What’s his name?”

“Him? He’s Loke, and rumours have it that he was an expert at being a mercenary. Look at that pretentious display, as if all eyes are on him…”

Mies played the role of a lackey very well as he immediately stood in line, his instinct now to help his boss beat down the number two.

“Oh!” Leylin said lightly, and did not continue inquiring.

As fresh recruits, they had gotten a set of new clothes that were
very pliable, and could even protect against high temperatures and ordinary knife slashes. As far as this world’s treasures went, they were alright.

“Look at these clothes, how chic!” Mies looked at the completely black uniform, and could not help but be infatuated with it as he arranged his collar.

Watching him act so foolishly, Leylin had little to say, “We’re on a mission. Focus!”

Upon hearing this, Mies froze for a moment as he continued to move quickly. Immediately afterwards, he looked in the direction of Schiker guiltily. Seeing that the officer hadn’t been focusing in their direction, he relaxed and heaved a sigh of relief.

After the excitement, Mies calmed down. He looked uneasy, his slight nervousness apparent as he looked towards Leylin, “Ley, what kind of mission do you think we will be assigned to?”

In his eyes, this comrade was exceptionally mysterious, and had a calm that most lacked. Even just staying by his side gave him a feeling of security.

“Whatever it is, it won’t be easy,” Leylin spoke dully.

In actuality, he was guessing that the mission was a test for the recruits. There was no better proof than real battles. Through intense fights, the weak would fail and be eliminated, while the strong would survive and gain even more resources. This was the ruthless order of nature.

Leylin guessed that this operation might be tailored just for them. Were it not so, the difficulty would be too high. Most of the members, maybe even the entire squad, would be wiped out.

The Atlan had enough strength and backing. That was enough to attract numerous willing participants, and there was no fear of the lack of manpower.

‘But… Am I going to bump into the Triserpent Sect on the first mission?’ A trace of doubt streaked through Leylin’s mind.
He had yet to gain enough information and knew little of how things stood with the Triserpent Sect. It was not a good idea to make contact with them recklessly. Thankfully, Schiker, who was standing in front, began to speak coldly, and dispelled Leylin’s doubts, “Our mission this time is to eliminate an extremely evil, bloody sect, a branch of the Mobius Organisation. Kill all members!”

They were now far away from the barracks and city, and had come to an open, desolate area. Large amounts of red lava reflected an orange splendour that even dyed the horizon crimson. With the bonus from Fireplume, these Special Task Force members all maintained a vigorous physical strength, and were still in good condition even after running across a long distance.

“Mobius Organisation?” Mies immediately cried out in surprise, “That disgusting sect that likes blood sacrifices and dismemberment?”

“A disgusting sect that likes blood sacrifices and dismemberment?” Leylin’s brows furrowed, seeming having heard the large Emberwing man he had befriended previously speak. The sect seemed to be very secretive, and the higher-ups held enormous strength. There were rumours that it was being spread even in the Divineflame Empire, and could not be destroyed.

Of course, with their extreme methods, they weren’t that welcome. “That Mobius Organisation?” “Heavens! I hear that they’re insane. To avenge one of their bishops, they massacred a city…”

The members began to discuss this softly, the sounds of endless whispers mixing together.

Seeing this, red light emitted from Schiker’s face. “Silence!” he shouted as tremendous sound waves covered the region. If not for having sensed a sound-proofing barrier being set up just prior, Leylin would have assumed that Schiker was a spy, intentionally notifying the Mobius Organisation.
“We’re soldiers. It is our duty to obey orders. Isn’t it just a Mobius Organisation? What are you afraid of? Don’t forget, you’re now Special Task Force members. The moment you disobey an order, I’ll immediately execute you. Even if you can escape, you’ll have to deal with being the target of a kill order from the union!”

Schiker’s words were eerily cold, and with the powerful forcefield undulations of a Sky rank, the original tendency towards disorder was wiped out.

“Do you want to betray the union?” Schiker’s dark words immediately had the Special Task Force members grow resolute as they answered in unison, “No, definitely not!”

“Good! These are the warriors our union needs!” Schiker seemed satisfied. “The organisation has only a few Earth ranks in charge. What does that count for? After succeeding, just the rewards alone are enough for you to spend for quite a few months! You might even accumulate points towards becoming nobility… Now, we’ll allocate tasks…”

“Hm?!” While Schiker was immersed in his unceasing narrations, he had failed to realise the interesting change in Leylin’s expression.

With a sweep of his soul force, the concealed undulations and even a full view of the structure below was presented in front of Leylin, and he laughed.

‘Looks like the union received relevant intelligence and know the military strength inside the stronghold like the back of their hands. Based on Schiker’s plans, our side should have had a large chance of success, but it’s a pity…’

With a scan of his soul force, Leylin found that there were quite a few Earth rank priests in the Mobius Organisations. On top of that, there even a few bishops wearing red religious attire, emitting the terrifying undulations of Sky ranks.

‘This is obviously a trap, though I don’t know if this is aimed
specifically at Schiker. Whatever it is, he’s in trouble…’ Leylin’s expression held traces of pity.

“Good. This is the overall plan. Move!” Schiker obviously knew nothing of Leylin’s thoughts right now. On the contrary, he wanted to watch how Leylin, Loke and the rest performed and grade them.

*Rumble!* Along with a giant explosion, the barren land that was initially empty blew up, revealing a large building with a number of floors.

What first appeared was a glorious distorted black sculpture. The lines were simple and crude, and yet they gave Leylin a demonic impression.

Under the sculpture were many decorative designs that gave it a style similar of that of an altar. There were limbs and livers from living beings on it, and the blood had not dried yet. The fresh blood kept dripping and filling the spell formation.

The process of a sacrifice had obviously been interrupted, and a few low-ranked worshippers let loose roars of ire.

“Leave none alive. Crush them!” Schiker howled.

He didn’t actually need to yell. The Special Task Force members had long since seen red and pounced forward, boiling hot rays flickering on their bodies. Fireplume activated, giving them immense support.

*Pu!* A palm filled with flames extracted itself from the body of a worshipper, and the accompanying flames burnt this vicious-looking worshipper to ashes. “You must all die!”

Loke’s chilly voice swept through, voice spreading, and Schiker nodded unceasingly while watching in secret.

Meanwhile, Mies might seem cowardly, yet seemed to have had his thirst for blood kindled, especially after seeing his side winning all engagements. Many members were in high spirits as they went deeper in.

“What is this Ley doing?”
Schiker nodded in satisfaction, but when his eyes were on Leylin, his face scrunched up in dissatisfaction. Leylin, who he’d thought should rush to the frontlines, was wandering around within the group. Even when he did make a move, it looked like he was cowering and seemed listless, falling behind Loke by a large margin in terms of his kill count.

“Hm? That’s not right. His way of moving forward implies he’s having reservations about something. Has he discovered something?”

Schiker instantly became cool-headed, going through Leylin’s actions and the information he had gotten previously. As he saw his troops continuously heading in after their victories, his pupils shrank as he realised that his members had lost their formation.

“Crap. Come back!”

Schiker shouted loudly, but it was much too late.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Large amounts of sparks exploded, forming a heat wave that wiped out most of the Special Task Force members. Even with the protection of Fireplume, the high temperature surpassed their limits caused them to turn into charred corpses.

“Keke, Schiker, we meet again!”

A few figures wrapped in light stood before Schiker, accompanied by warriors and worshippers, donning garments of their sect.

“Sky rank! Two Sky ranks!” Mies, who was lucky to have survived, watched the two tall figures in the air and cried out in pain and despair.

“It’s you… So it was a trap.” Schiker remained collected.

“Yes. This is a trap specifically to deal with you! What happened fifteen years ago can be settled properly now!” The two bishops in red clothing held hatred in their eyes.
All members, break free from the encirclement!” Schiker’s shout after the momentary silence surprised the two bishops. Red flames surged from his body, even forming a giant phantom of a flying beast behind him.
This was a perfect creature like those in legends, bathed in fire like a god born of the flames!
“The eighth level of the Fireplume! Schiker, you’ve gotten this old, yet you still haven’t made any progress!” The two bishops exchanged a glance and took a step forward together, a huge pressure dispersing in all directions and suppressing the phantom of the fire phoenix ahead.
As if night had fallen, great amounts of black mist bound Schiker to them. A great battle was about to happen!
“Kill them!”
Numerous members of Mobius Organisation yelled, and figures in dark robes with daggers or the like in their hands darted out of the shadows.
The sounds of shouts were unceasing. Most of the members of the Special Task Force were new, and the surprise attack resulted in heavy casualties. Their morale immediately fell, and there some members who were outside who roared as they escaped into the distance.
*Thud!* Schiker was ruthlessly smashed to the ground by a fist,
patterns that seemed to be multiple curses creeping up his body. Even the horrifying flames of the eighth level of the Fireplume was useless. The large quantity of flames was even contaminated by the curse runes, and gradually died down. Over time, even the fire phoenix behind Schiker’s back was beginning to whine. Schiker was pale, a few large wounds appeared on his body, countless black runes digging their ways in like earthworms. “Haha… Schiker, you’re going to die today!” One of the bishops in red smiled relaxedly, “Let me…” “Let the instructor go!” The sudden yell interrupted the words of the bishop in red, and he furrowed his brows. What saw were two Emberwing clansmen with flames around their bodies charging over as if they had gone mad, looking frightened and worried. “Keke… What hot-blooded young things! Schiker, you’re still as capable at brainwashing as before!” The other bishop laughed coldly, “Let me slaughter them before I take care of you…” The old man had a drunken look. Merely killing the other party was not enough to satisfy his interest. The hatred that had lasted over a decade gave him the urge to torture him for over a period of time and, just when Schiker had given up all hope, kill him. Such a method of revenge was the sweetest! “You guys…” Schiker clutched his chest, twisting his head to watch the figures rushing over, touched but also anxious. “Leave! You aren’t a match for him! Try your best to break out!” “Keke… You can’t escape!” The old man sneered, and got his partner to watch Schiker while he blocked the path of those two young Emberwing clansman. “Instructor, hang on!” Leylin’s face was flushed as he called out, the Fireplume exhibiting its full strength at his hands. Terrifying
flames burned, causing a few Earth rank worshippers to suffer. Expressions of dread appeared on their faces as they kept a distance.

‘This display would probably be similar to a hot-blooded lead character in my previous world, the kind who’ll have a breakthrough at the most crucial moments…’ Leylin made fun of himself while putting on his best act. At the same time, he ran his gaze across the surroundings.

Due to the ambush, the casualties the Special Task Force sustained were very serious and practically all the members had died in battle. That kid Mies, however, had smeared blood on his face and collapsed, using some secret technique to hide his aura. This had allowed him to survive. He was much more fortunate than those who had escaped and been chased after and killed. He hadn’t sustained many injuries, and was on a whole other level.

Noticing the look of gratitude on Schiker’s face, Leylin grew speechless.

“If you knew that the two who seemed to be risking their lives to save you actually had other intentions, I wonder if you’ll start vomiting blood…”

Leylin’s shot a glance to the side. The cool burly man at the sixth level of the Fireplume was now fighting with all his might, looking enthusiastic and impulsive and seeming completely loyal.

In actuality, he was also someone harbouring malicious intentions. There was the obvious aura of another race on his body, but that had been concealed very well. If not for Leylin having probed him with his A.I. Chip and soul force, he might have been duped as well.

“Ley, I’ll hold them down. You go and save the instructor!” Loke shouted after seeing Leylin looking in his direction. Large amounts of flames shot out of his body and surrounded the few Earth rank worshippers around him. The sounds of explosions could be heard
unceasingly, and the battle was obviously fierce.
“Damn it! You found a bunch of low-levelled cannon fodder to protect yourself and gave me two Sky ranks!” Leylin rolled his eyes but still rushed forward with a roar, throwing a fist at the bishop in red who was standing in the middle of the path.
*Bang! Scree* The ear-piercing sound of an explosion sounded, seeming to be an enthusiastic call from a phoenix. A fire phoenix slightly smaller than that which had appeared behind Schiker emerged on Leylin’s back, the bright red flames so splendid that they were like sunlight, giving Leylin a layer of golden armour.
“Hm?! The peak of the seventh level of the Fireplume!” The bishop, who was blocking the way, cried out in astonishment. Though the Fireplume was a compulsory technique for all Emberwing clansmen, with practically every adult having reached between the first to the third level, there were few who reached the fifth level or above that. The peak of the seventh level meant he was just one step away from the Sky rank! With how young this Emberwing clansman appeared to be, he was absolutely a rare talent.
“Little guy, you’ve got pretty bad luck to have met me.” The bishop in red snickered. Wiping talents off the face of his world was his guilty pleasure. Even if these talents would have a boundless future, a dead talent was not even comparable to a dog.
*Snap!* Turbulent black streams of air surged through the air, forming a giant scorpion that blocked Leylin’s path.
“Explode!” With a loud cry, the red force in Leylin’s hands became even more vigorous and seemed to turn into a bundle of flames, darting towards the scorpion.
The flames initiated by the Fireplume crackled as they scorched the surface of the scorpion’s large black pincers. Parts of the black air dissipated.
However, that was all the flames could do. *Pak!* The black gas scorpion waved its other pincer around, and Leylin was sent flying, fresh blood spilling from the corner of his lips. “AH! Let the instructor go!” Leylin collapsed and appeared ‘gravely injured’, but He crawled back up, charging forth again. The giant fire phoenix phantom was less imposing than before, but still let loose a booming cry. *Crash! Crash! Crash!* Leylin was flung backwards time and time again, and it seemed the bishop in red wanted to make Leylin waste all his energy. This would agitate Schiker even more, which was why he had held back a little every time and allowed Leylin to struggle up again. “Ley…” Seeing Leylin tenaciously struggling on and not giving up, even if Schiker’s heart was as hard and cold as steel, he still felt a warmth boiling up from his chest. Hot air went up to his eye sockets, leaving him on the verge of tears. “Give up, child. Leave!” Schiker yelled uselessly. “No, I won’t ever give up!” Leylin yelled out words that made himself want to vomit while waving his fists, the fire spilling everywhere burning the ground till it was scarlet. *Crash!* He was sent flying again, and the bishop in red took several steps forward, “I’m already getting tired of this game. I’ll take care of you the next time!” *Huala!* The large black scorpion dissipated, and the streams of air converged before the bishop, terrifying energy undulations radiating. “That Ley… Is he really a fool?” Meanwhile, Loke had just ‘happened to have’ finished dealing with a few of his opponents, and had crept closer. ‘Almost there. Once Ley dies, I can save Schiker with that and request a higher position…’ A determined look rose in Loke’s eyes. His hand already extended into his clothes, touching a round
object.
‘Ley, you’re a good person with astounding talent, but it’s a pity. This is a dog eat dog world. Your enthusiasm will not give you anything in return and will only leave you dead. Rest in peace…” Loke spoke in his heart, like a leopard waiting before a hunt as he hid in wait.

All of a sudden, his eyes widened, eyeballs protruding and almost popping out, mouth huge as he bawled in disbelief, “I… Goddamn! Does that even happen?!”

“For love and justice!” Leylin, who was bathed in flames, looked even more saintly. As he saw the bishop closing in, he had a holy look on his face.

Following that, with his yells, great golden flames surged out and healed all his wounds. Even the terrifying phantom of a phoenix that seemed omnipresent formed at his back.

If the phantom that Leylin had summoned before was a mere illusion, each feather of the phoenix floating behind him was undeniably real. It was as if a real ancient fire phoenix had descended.

The powerful undulations of Fireplume broke through the boundaries of the peak of the seventh level, and entered a much more powerful level!

‘Shit, he actually broke through!’ Loke cursed.

The eighth level of the Fireplume signified the Sky rank. In other words, Ley was now on the same level as the two bishops in red and Schiker!

“This… This actually happens?” Compared to Loke, the bishop who was the main lead felt as if he had received a huge blow. How could a hot-blooded idiot actually have a breakthrough right before death? And he had even advanced and was on the same level as himself? This did not make sense!

Schiker, on the other side, was filled with elation.
“Die!” Terrifying waves of heat of the eighth level of the Fireplume immediately shrouded Leylin as he charged before the old bishop in red. Boiling hot waves swept through and even broke through his opponent’s defence, causing the old man’s eyebrows and beard to start to burn.
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The iron fist wreathed in scarlet flames ruthlessly struck the old bishop clothed in red, causing him to fall back while coughing blood. The large phantom phoenix at Leylin’s back let loose a frightening cry. Pressing forward, Leylin immediately charged to the other bishop in red.

“Even if you’re also a Sky rank, you’ve only just advanced. You definitely know too little about battles between Sky ranks. Kid, looks like I’ll be the one to have to deal with you!” The bishop who was on his guard against Schiker yelled. The reason for the defeat of his ally before seemed to be an underestimation of his enemy, which was why Leylin’s sneak attack had been successful.

“Let instructor Schiker go, and I can pardon you!” With a ferocious roar, Leylin and this bishop collided.

*Rumble!* A red blaze and a black storm intertwined as they engaged in battle. The soil was devastated, opening up to reveal the bedrock.

“Things… should be fine, right? Even if Ley suddenly broke through, those are two Sky ranks!” Loke touched the item in his hands, preparing to dash out.

He had come here with a mission. He was to gain Schiker’s trust and successfully sneak into the higher ranks of the Special Task Force. However, with Leylin suddenly interfering, he was obviously annoyed.

*Pu!* A streak of fiery red rays broke through the storm and made
a quick stop by the area Schiker was located. The man disappeared. *Whoosh!* In the next moment, Leylin brought Schiker and appeared before Loke and pushed Schiker into Loke’s arms, “Leave with the instructor!”
“…”
Though Leylin did not know what kind of expression Loke had on his face right now, he was sure that he wanted to curse him and his family.
Due to his escape, the storm which had initially lost its target was madly rushing in his direction. The bishop ahead who had been attacked by Leylin had already come rushing over to hunt him down with a grim expression.
‘Damn, damn, DAMN! Ley was at the peak of the seventh level, so it made sense that he suddenly broke through, but I only showed power at the sixth level. It’s no use breaking through.’ Loke watched the two Sky rank red-robed bishops who were dashing over, and began to wail inside.
“I don’t care anymore. I have to use this!” Loke gritted his teeth, and a black metal egg flew out.
*Swish!* Black light flashed, and a slender metal egg exploded in the air. Large amounts of smoke flew out and a large construct appeared, blocking the area in front of the two red-robed bishops.
“A binding construct!” The bishops’ cries of surprise were transmitted into Leylin’s ears, and he grinned inside.
In front of Leylin, Loke’s little schemes were like children’s pranks that could be seen through by any adult, even forcing him to showcase his talents to this extent.
“This is… a spider model construct! So you’re…” Schiker looked weakly at the construct, eyes glinting as they held more kindness towards Loke.
“The family treasure that I inherited can hold them for at least 5 minutes. Let’s go!”
Loke displayed a smile that looked even more ugly than a crying face and carried Schiker on his back, a defensive layer from Fireplume emitting from his body. “Wait- wait for me!”

Hearing they wanted to break out of the encirclement, one of the corpses on the floor leapt up, revealing Mies’ bloody face. “Big brother Ley, bring me along!”

“So there’s one more!” Loke rolled his eyes powerlessly, feeling that the number of unexpected situations he had met in his life before this could not compare to this day.

“Good. Let’s go!” Leylin chuckled, surging flames brimming on his body. He opened up a path of flames through the encirclement by the Mobius cultists.

The two Sky ranks were temporarily out of the way. Leylin used his Fireplume at the eighth level and swept through the area immediately. Whether they were ordinary worshippers or crazed fanatics, none could withstand the attack of the crimson-golden flames. Most of the ordinary followers would begin to burn if even the smallest spark touched them, turning into giant human-shaped torches.

……

“Take a rest here. I need to go out and do something!”

After returning to the camp in the city, Schiker had pretty much recovered and could even move around freely. On the surface, it was hard to tell that he was injured at all, besides his slightly tattered clothing.

“Understood, instructor!” Leylin and the other two immediately puffed their chests out and shouted.

“Mm!” Schiker’s gaze now held gratitude towards Leylin and Loke. Before proceeding forward, he patted Leylin and Loke’s shoulders.
“Ley, you did well this time and even broke through to the Sky rank! I will recommend you for a promotion. And Loke… I hope to be able to speak with you tonight!”

“That would be my honour!” Loke immediately shouted. From his expression, Leylin guessed that it was anything but bad. It looked like the origins of that spider construct had attracted Schiker’s interest.

‘The organisation backing Loke has truly put in a lot of effort for him to sneak in…’ Leylin sighed inside, but little did he know that Loke was green with envy. If looks could kill, Leylin would probably long since have turned into a human torch.

“As for you…” Schiker’s eyes turned to Mies, immediately causing the young man’s face to turn as white as snow.

“I’d initially wanted to penalise you for escaping right in the face of battle, but this happened because of a lapse of judgement on my part. I’ll let you off.”

“Many thanks, instructor!” Mies answered loudly, his apprehension disappearing.

“But if there’s another instance of this happening, I’ll stuff your head up your arse. Do you hear me?” Schiker shouted, and Mies little face crumpled.

“Alright, you’re dismissed.” Schiker left in a hurry, and Leylin was stuck deep in thought while watching his back.

Just from the murderous aura he had that was unafraid and not planning on backing down, Leylin knew that some people in this base were in trouble.

Schiker returned very quickly, and there were even some spots of blood on his collar and cuffs.

He swore constantly while throwing a gold badge and a set of new military uniforms in front of Leylin. “You’ve been promoted to be a captain of the Special Task Force. You’ve also obtained a second class medal of honour of the union, as well as points for a rank as
nobility. You now have enough to pay for the lowest authentication as a knight. Wear the uniform for now. The real documents and procedures will come in a few days later.”
“Loke, while you haven’t been promoted, you’ve obtained a medal of honour from the union as well…”
“It is my honour!” Loke’s voice was full of spirit, to the point that there were faint tremors in his voice.
Seeing the fake look of excitement on his face, Leylin immediately realised the value of this medal of honour of the union thing.
However, this had little to do with him.
After this matter, Schiker would definitely place him in higher regard, and would allow him to look at some confidential information. That would be helpful.

……

The average temperature of the Lava World was at least 50 degrees and above. Astounding heat waves filled the air. As a result, most of the outer walls of buildings were very thin and had the function of absorbing heat.
The buildings of the Emberwing race were of a different style than in Woking City. They were more similar to bamboo houses, and Leylin’s residence used a rock that constantly emitted cold air, keeping his room always cool and refreshing.
The benefits of being in the Special Task Force were generous. Even normal members had their own residences and allowances of resources for their training. As the captain, Leylin had a villa of his own. This chilly stone was a very precious resource, and those who did not have the captain rank could not enjoy this.
Mies often found excuses to hang around at Leylin’s, enjoying the cool air.
Leylin currently held something like a monitor in his hands,
skimming over something. With his authority, much of the information of the Special Task Force was open to him, and he had also gathered much information on the Triserpent Sect. The full view of this organisation appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

“The Triserpent Sect! Looks like it really has a connection to the three dukes!” Leylin put down the monitor and rubbed the space between his eyebrows, unconsciously tapping at the table.

“From the intelligence, the Triserpent Sect seems to be trying to overthrow the government of the Atlan Union, allowing other races to have more space to survive. In actuality, they’re a bunch of terrorists. They intend to attack the city of every Emberwing clansman and loot them. They don’t have any special activity… Hm!”

Using the A.I. Chip, Leylin went through the cities that had been attacked. The data on the losses was arranged in a unique database, and the relationship was quickly found.

“This resource seems to be the favourite of the Triserpent Sect!” Leylin’s eyes brightened. He’d found that the Triserpent bandits seemed to have a vested interest in a type of special ore. Perhaps the attacks on other cities were all in order to obtain the ores, but this target had been concealed well and not been discovered.

However, through the comparison of gargantuan amounts of information, the A.I. Chip had managed to accurately pinpoint this common ground from all the data on the destruction caused.

[Firasource Stone: A treasure said to be able to increase progress in Fireplume, and a top-grade ingredient only possessed by the Atlan Union.]

Leylin touched his chin, observing the projected image given by the A.I. Chip as well as the explanation next to it. He sunk into thought. The reason why the people of the Triserpent Sect liked this firasource stone this much must be because of something unusual. Anything that would cause these Morning Star Magi to go so frantic
had Leylin very interested as well.
“I remember that with my merits and status, I’m able to apply to purchase limited-grade resources. I can use this opportunity and get a sample for research…”
Leylin made his mind and commanded the A.I. Chip to scan and record the other books of the Emberwing race.
It was the accumulation of a civilised society in another world, and definitely held much research value for him.
“Time to go!” Leylin kicked Mies who had almost fallen asleep.
“Erm, where are we going?” Mies shrank back a little, his vision blurred.
If there was a choice, he would still have preferred to sleep here as the weather outside was so hot that it could make him pass out.
“Hurry up!” Leylin raised his brows, Mies stood up immediately, feeling speechless.
“Okay! We shall go to the logistics department and check out the mission of the month. It’s almost time…”
“Alright, alright. You’re the boss.” Mies shrugged his shoulders.
Ever since the last incident, Leylin had gotten promoted and became a captain of the Special Task Force, while Mies was put in his unit, becoming one of his men.
As for Loke, he had his way around. Even though he was not promoted after the last mission, he soon achieved lots of merit for the following events and got promoted to be a captain like Leylin just a few days ago.
The logistics department of the Special Task Force was not far from his residence. Every staff were as obese as pigs, they resembled nothing from the slender and good-looking traits of the Emberwing race. This had Leylin and his men shunning them.
“Hand me all of my special offerings of the month, and an exchange list,” Leylin spoke to a big fat guy with oily hair who was
sitting behind the counter with glass windows.
“At your service, Captain Leylin.” The fat guy was full of smiles and had a gingerly look.
Leylin’s fame had long ago become widespread in the Special Task Force. He had been able to achieve level 8 in Fireplume at such a young age, becoming a Sky rank elite! His prospects were definitely boundless.
Moreover, he had saved Schiker’s life. This was someone who was known to have a powerful background, tactical brilliance, and more importantly a person that favoured his own men.
Thus, Leylin was assured to have a bright future.
Some people speculated that becoming a captain was not the end of his road. He could possibly become a Marshal of the union with one star.
This fatty wouldn’t dare to neglect such people, and he handed Leylin his complete set of supplies. These supplies were a benefit enjoyed by every member of the Special Task Force.
The Atlan Union depended largely on their supplies and nobility; they had attracted and recruited numerous unbounded extraordinary ones.
Leylin threw the supplies to Mies, who followed Leylin like a valet. He then opened the exchange list.
The contents of Fireplume were at the top of the list, the first eight levels being recorded. This included some practical experiences as well as the special techniques of different individuals. It was everything he needed, totally perfect. Except for one thing.
It had no record of techniques at the tenth level, the Morning Star realm. This caused him to furrow his brows.
Having stayed here for quite a period of time, Leylin had discovered that their Special Task Force actually had high clearance to access in the Atlan Union despite their infamous reputation. Even a captain like him was equivalent to a major general in the
Leylin grew a little discouraged at not being able to learn the tenth level of Fireplume even with his current status. He was keen to know the second half of this technique.

Currently, Fireplume was the only path to power Leylin knew that combined physique and the soul perfectly. In his own world, these two paths were separated into Knights and Magi.

Nonetheless, even with the help of Schiker and the others as specimens, the information the A.I. Chip could simulate only pulled Fireplume to the ninth level. A lot of time and power would be required to deduce the tenth level, the Morning Star realm.

‘Only when one reaches the Morning Star realm along a path will it become obvious. Levels 1 to 9 can be deemed creative, but I’m not sure what the real path to power is like…’

Rumour had it that the Emberwing race descended from the phoenix, but Leylin disagreed. He had already tried it out, and had hadn’t found any genetic segments related to the ancient bloodline. Still, when Fireplume reached a certain level, it was clearly linked to the phoenix. This was what had Leylin confused.

“We can put aside doubts about Fireplume for now, let’s look for the firasource stone!”

Leylin flipped down the page and an image of a fiery ore appeared, “Firasource stone: Increases the rate of advancement, or even assists in breaking through to the next level of Fireplume. Top-grade treasure, valued at 100 nobility points for a gram. Only available for ranks Captain and above.”

“A hundred nobility rank points for a single gram?” Miles shouted exaggeratedly from beside Leylin before he could comment on anything.

“I don’t think I could afford such an expensive item even if I sold myself!” he stuck his tongue out.

Designation of nobles was very prestigious in the Atlan Union.
Thus, audit was very strict. The only way for one to achieve a noble rank other than through the Special Task Force was to head to the Death Grand Canyon Battles. Therefore, everyone in the force protected their nobility rank points like their own eyes. For example, Mies felt repulsed just looking at the incredulous price of the stone.

“Hehe…but this is a firasource stone. It’s exclusively supplied to top ranks like us in the union, with just one gram being able to get you through six levels of Fireplume.” The fatty laughed from behind the window, mockery in his eyes.

“Six levels?!” Mies’ eyes widened. It was very difficult to break through the latter stages of Fireplume. He had currently been stuck in the fifth level for a long time. Once he reached the sixth, he would become an Earth rank elite! The difference in position from now went without mentioning.

And yet, Mies glanced at the price tag, somewhat unwilling to give up his points. After all, being able to acquire nobility was a rare chance, and he could not bear to spend all the points he had earned.

“Yes, I’m exchanging all my points.” Leylin nodded. Immediately, Mies shouted without a thought, “Captain! Have you gone mad?”

“Of course I haven’t! I’m very calm and know what I’m doing.” Leylin shook his head. After all, this was a foreign world. Nobility here meant nothing to me, and it was something he would have to think about even if offered for free. Thus, his points were better spent on resources.

“Ho–Hold on, Captain. Your transaction somewhat exceeds my authorisation limit.” The fatty behind the window found it hard to sit still, and beads of oily sweat trickled down his forehead. They were cleaned off along with his white handkerchief.

He could only exchange one or two grams of firasource stones at best, that was the limit of his authority. But this obviously did not
satisfy Leylin’s needs.

Soon, another fat guy had received the notice, and he came to Leylin.

He had strong energy fluctuations of the Sky rank, at the boundary of Morning Star.

“Chief!” Leylin and Mies bowed down slightly. The one who had just arrived was the chief of the logistics department, and had a higher military rank as compared to Leylin.

“Hey, Ley, you have enough nobility rank points to earn you the title of a Baron. Are you really going to trade them all away?” The fat chief looked at Leylin with pity, he’d thought highly of this genius.

“Yes!” Leylin was firm, “As compared to nobility, I would liked to focus on my abilities first. As long as I have what it takes, I’m going to get more valuables and higher positions!”

“Brilliant!” Someone at the side clapped loudly, Schiker had come beside Leylin without notice.

“Exchange for him!” Schiker nodded at the fatty, then exclaimed, “If I were to think like him while I was young, I would have gotten more achievements than I have now.”

“Alright then… as you wish…”

The fat chief wiped his sweats on his face using a gold handkerchief, “Follow me. The exchange of nobility rank point isn’t a simple affair, but it should be alright since Schiker is around…”

……

……

After settling on a series of authorisation documents, Leylin had finally gotten the firasource stone. He thanked Schiker and the Chief once more before he returned to his place.
“Firasource stone!” Leylin opened his palm, revealing a fiery ruby. It seemed to contain a large amount of liquefied ore. The entire ore was only the size of Leylin’s fingernail, this was all that Leylin’s nobility rank points could be exchanged for. Despite its petite size, the chief of the logistics department spent much efforts to gather it, even having to transfer some from other regions to barely make it enough for Leylin. A phantom of a phoenix showed up behind Leylin, letting out whistles of excitement. Leylin had the premonition that once he made use of the fira source stone, his level 8 Fireplume would advance greatly, even to the extent of breaking through level 9. But it was not the strange phenomenon of the fira source stone that caught Leylin’s attention, it was the notice from the A. I. Chip. [Beep! Special object detected Firasource stone! Gathering information.] After a period of examination and simulation, the A.I. Chip sounded again. [Special soul object Firasource stone! Able to strengthen Magus point mass, increases soul force to an unknown extent!] Looking at the A. I. Chip’s notice, Leylin’s eyes widened. It could increase soul force! Who knew this fira source stone had such an effect? The advancement of a Magus and the power of their spirit were inseparable. From ranks 1 through 3, one trained in spiritual force. Soul force came into the picture after one entered the Morning Star realm. Soul force was the most mysterious amongst all. Even though there were many great meditation techniques, they could only result in a strengthening of the soul over a long period of time. One could not be sure of the pattern. Even those great meditation techniques required at least hundreds
of years to improve one’s soul force, and it was even worse in Leylin’s case. Kemoyin’s Pupil ended at rank 4, not giving him a single bit of information as to how to increase his soul force. Thus, he could only continuously try his luck.
Now, a wide golden path had appeared in front of Leylin. As long as he gathered enough firasource stones, his soul force would increase greatly. Even the soul force of a Morning Star Magus who had thousands of years of experience using the top meditation techniques might not be as strong. “If the Morning Star Magi in the Magus World learn about this, I’m afraid they will go mad over it!”

Leylin stroked his chin, finding it a little puzzling, “A precious source like this is a fatal attraction to Morning Star Magi. If so, why would Jupiter’s Lightning use this world to trap the Elders despite risking the exposure of the coordinates? This doesn’t make sense…”

At that moment, everything that had happened previously left Leylin confused. “Maybe they had confidence in getting rid of the Elders, but did not expect that they could get away, which had them caught unprepared. Or maybe they didn’t even manage to find a source like the firasource stone? After all if they don’t have the help of the A. I. Chip, they will only know the amazing function of the firasource stone if they conduct an on-site inspection…”

All he could do was to speculate. “Anyway, the reason the Triserpent Sect is so eager to get the firasource stone could very well be that their Morning Star Magus has already found out the function of it… Now I have to gather as
many firasource stones as possible.”
The fourth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil already had little effect on Leylin. It had helped his advancement for quite a while already, but there was no change to his soul force at all.
In actual fact, many Morning Star Magi faced the same difficulty. It was very hard to improve their soul force, even with top-grade meditation techniques.
“This trip to the Lava World was such a great decision!” Leylin held his grid tightly, his eyes were filled with excitement.

……

In the capital of the Atlan Union, a huge and prosperous place.
A void was created deep underground, a massive flame ball staying in the middle of it like a sun, showing the vague figure of a phoenix.
A continuous high-pitched whistling of the phoenix was transmitted through the flame ball, the entire ball breathing in and out as if it was alive.
There was a huge pentagram-shaped spell formation there, in the middle of which rays of crimson light were been drawn out and immersed into the flame ball.
The Phoenix inside was extremely excited, just like it had benefited greatly from the rays.
There were some remaining crimson light rays dropped down at the side of the spell formation, they solidified over sometime and turned into Fire stones!
Moments later, the Phoenix in the flame ball stopped the flame. It transformed into a human bathed in a stunning golden light.
This was a handsome male, he had scarlet hair and brows, his aura filled with surging waves of power.
Even the void around him fluctuated, an aura of the peak power of
a Radiant Moon Magus surrounded him. The scarlet-haired man had a regal crimson robe draping over his shoulders, fully dressed on the inside. He went to the other basement which was empty save for a giant mirror, leaving only large amounts of binding runes appearing regularly.

“…We meet again, my dear President of Atlan Union, Your Highness Durut!”

A hologram of someone in Radiant Moon Magus robe with a crescent mark on his forehead appeared in the mirror. Weird dark power was released strangely, his aura somewhat able to compare to Durut’s.

The Magus who appeared in the mirror was the leader of Jupiter’s Lightning, a rank 5 Magus!

“Hello, my guest from a foreign world!” Durut smiled, his crimson feathers radiating lust.

The Magus in the mirror turned silent for a while, as if he had sensed something. Moments later, he opened his eyes and smiled, “It seemed like you have accepted my suggestion! How is the effect?”

“It was great, my friend! Just some improvements to be made…” Durut nodded his head.

“This requires me to put in more time and effort. Most importantly, I was unable to get enough on-site information. Unless you allow me to go over….” The Radiant Moon Magus in the mirror shook his head.

“Of course not! My friend, we are both the elites above the Morning Star realm, and this world needs protection!”

Durut rejected immediately. Welcoming a foreign world’s elite was definitely a trouble for himself. Durut had only thought of making use of the Magus with caution, never had he thought of other possibilities.

“Alright! Then next let’s talk about the deal.” The leader of
Jupiter’s Lightning in the mirror said helplessly. A Morning Star Magus was like a little stone on a beach in the world, a little hard to recognise without careful inspection. A Radiant Moon Magus like him, on the other hand, was more obvious, an elephant in the room. The moment he tried to cross over, Durut would attack him mercilessly. On this matter, Durut was able to gain the support from the world’s will, which made him way more powerful than any ordinary rank 5 Magus. Thus, despite being a similar rank 5, the man in the mirror had never thought of getting himself into trouble. He could only send some of his man over to run errands for him in secret.

“That’s right, my friend, as long you keep your promise, we of the Emberwing race will show great hospitality!” Durut smiled. The Magus opposite rolled his eyes, “Since you are very satisfied with the Energy Withdrawing spell formation, I have quite a few others you can try it out… In return, I want 500 grams of Morning Star Gold, arcane ore, paradian feathers and also firasource stones…” He continued with the names of numerous resources, and Durut agreed without any hesitation, “Sure. As long your spell formations work, I will transfer them right away…”

……

After Durut had left the chamber, he sneered, “You think I wouldn’t know what you are really up to just by hiding the firasource stone among the long list of sources? How naive!” Upon reaching the study room had some documents viewed, he was outraged, “The Triserpent Sect! And the Mobius Organisation! These foreign tribes are way too much! I have to warn them and give them a lesson!”
Immediately he took a device from the table which looked like a telephone, strings of letters appearing from his fingers and vanishing into the speaker.

“All Special Task Force units in action, destroy every base of the Triserpent Sect and the Mobius Organisation in the Union’s territories!”
Durut recalled something after he had put down the phone, and he passed down another urgent order, “Schiker, take charge of the East region!”
“That little pup should be back now after the contribution!”
Durut’s face finally showed rare tinge of gentleness.

……

“The increasing of soul force feels really amazing…” Leylin was far from the capital, therefore he was not aware of the silent undercurrents that developed throughout the Atlan Union. He was still indulged in the joy of the advancement of his soul force.

The feeling of using the firasource stone was utterly fantastic, making him feel giddy as if he was drunk. Once the effect ended, his body was much more vigilant than before, and his soul force much more active than usual.

Leylin took a look at his stats:

[Leylin Farlier, Rank 4 Warlock Bloodline: Kemoyin’s Serpent(complete form) Strength: 50 Agility: 45 Vitality: 65 Spiritual Force: 539.7 Magic Power: 539(Magic power in synchronisation with spiritual force) Soul force:???

“Even though the soul force is not shown, the spiritual force had increased by 30 plus units, it’s probably a side effect of the increase in soul force!” Leylin was over the moon. This advancement in soul force was comparable to the process of those Morning Star Magi having had to practice top-grade meditation techniques at
least 10 years. With how things looked, as long as he had enough firasource stones, his soul force would continue to increase at an incredible rate.

“How is this firasource stone related to Fireplume? How is this produced?”

Leylin’s eyes brightened. He had even put behind the rescue mission, and finding and gathering of enough firasource stone had become his top priority.

“Boss! Boss!” At the same time, Mies’s call sounded from outside, making Leylin frown.

“What is it? Didn’t I tell you not to disturb me?” Leylin pulled opened the door, displeased.

“Not me, it’s Instructor Schiker. We’ve got a big mission now!” Mies’s face reddened due to agitation, and he was still panting.

“Big mission?” Leylin remained calm before Mies, “Look at how you’re behaving! All those trainings went down the drain…”

However, a weird premonition had taken shape in his heart.

“Is it related to the Triserpent Sect?”

He was not too confident in handling this organisation for now, despite there being a huge possibility that it was established by the three Elders. Now that the firasource stone had popped up, however, there were a lot of variables.

Because it was very likely that those Morning Star Magi under Jupiter’s Lightning to found out about the secret of the firasource stone. Thus, they were forming connections underground and gathering them.

“Oh! And Instructor Schiker wants to see you now in his office!” Mies finally caught his breath and finished the message.

“Got it. Wait for me here.” Leylin closed the door and left Mies, dumbfounded, standing outside the room.

He did not have to wait long. Minutes later, Leylin had changed into
his military outfit and shown up in Schiker’s office.
“Ley! Here are your orders. Clear out these bases with your squad.”
Schiker signed some documents before handing them over to Leylin.
What mission is it?” Leylin took the document that was labelled ‘top secret’ on the cover, and unconsciously furrowed his brows.

“The union has ordered that our Special Task Force is to attack the Triserpent Sect and Mobius Organisation within the territory of the state. I am the person in charge of the eastern region!”

Schiker’s voice was that of a hardened war veteran.

“Your squadron is in charge of a few strongholds of the Triserpent Sect that have been discovered recently. I will personally take care of the Mobius Organisation’s side!”

It was obvious that their trap had thoroughly enraged Schiker. Now, he wanted to exact revenge properly!

“The Triserpent Sect?” A look of interest appeared on Leylin’s face, though he was sighing inside.

His intention in coming to the Atlan Union was to obtain some information regarding the Triserpent Sect, but so many things had happened, especially with the appearance of the firasource stone. That one resource had dispelled all other thoughts.

However, just when he was hoping to continue concealing himself, this matter had suddenly cropped up, and it just so happened that he was involved. This left him not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

“The order this time was personally signed by the head of the state. The garrisons from all regions will coordinate with our operation.
In other words, once we succeed, we will appear in front of the head immediately. Chances like these are hard to come by!” Schiker seemed to be reminding him.

“Understood.” Leylin saluted, his back ramrod straight, though he began making some guesses. It seemed that Schiker had an unusual relationship with the union head, to the point that he could obtain the position of the person in charge of such a vital operation. He must have a very powerful backing, no wonder that Loke wanted to get close to him no matter what.

“Good, you may leave. Get Loke to come in!” Schiker nodded in satisfaction.

“Yes!” Leylin saluted and left. Every movement was like a textbook example and seasoned as a soldier. Schiker nodded inside after seeing this.

“Captain Loke, the instructor is calling you!”

After walking out, Leylin found that Loke was already waiting aside. Compared to before, there was more calm and steadfastness on his expression, and he had ‘unwittingly’ broken through the sixth level and reached the seventh level of Fireplume. He could now be considered an Earth rank.

Of course, this was all a facade. Leylin believed he was at least at the Sky rank, but he had somehow snuck in for some unknown reason and gained Schiker’s trust.

In the operation this time, Leylin was in charge of dealing with the Triserpent Sect, while Loke was to follow Schiker and was in charge of the matters of the Mobius Organisation. Just this point made it clear to Leylin that Schiker trusted Loke more.

In the Special Task Force, there had long since been rumours spreading that Ley and Loke were Schiker’s left and right-hand men, and Schiker himself did not deny this directly.

‘It’s a pity… When you find out the two subordinates you’d thought were your helpers were actually enemies sneaking in as
spies, I wonder what expression you’d have? Whatever it is, I’m sure it’ll be amusing!’ Leylin touched his chin, a smile on his face as he ruminated.

“Leader Ley, is there anything else?” Loke observed Leylin who was acting in this manner. For some reason, he felt a chill in his heart, and seemed to have a bad premonition.

“Oh, nothing much. I was just thinking about the scene from our previous mission. Quick, get in!” Leylin patted Loke on the shoulder, and calmly sauntered away.

Loke kept drawing back and stared at Leylin’s back. Though he seemed to be sending Leylin off respectfully, there was a strange glint that flashed in his eyes.

“Soon… things will be different…”

A flicker of jealousy and hatred appeared in Loke’s eyes. Though both Leylin and he were captains, one was a Sky rank while the other was only at the Earth rank. That naturally gave rise to criticism.

Though Loke was considerably powerful and was on good terms with Schiker, he seemed to be a level below Leylin in many aspects.

He might not seem bothered on the surface, but that was because he was trying to be conceal himself. He wasn’t preparing for a life in the Union anyway, but he still somehow felt strange.

Of course, this was hidden well, and even the person closest to him had not realised it.

“Loke, what are you waiting for?” Schiker’s dissatisfied voice travelled from within the room. Loke was startled and immediately returned his expression to the original honesty with a trace of shrewdness and admiration, nodding and bowing as he entered the office. “Reporting in!”

……

Back in his residence, Leylin was carefully browsing over some
information in the documents. Only after some time did he put it down and sigh.
The information within was so detailed that it was excessive. They even knew the strength of the leaders there, and it seemed that the Atlan Union definitely had hidden some spies and the like inside.
“The Triserpent Sect will probably suffer heavy losses this time…”
Leylin stroked his chin. He still could not confirm if the Triserpent Sect was an organisation formed by the three Giant Kemoyin Serpent Dukes, and he was not prepared to make a move.
They were a few branches and strongholds anyway. Nothing would be missed even if everyone died, and with this, he could even gain a higher standing and more trust from the Union. That would make it convenient to pry into the secrets of the firasource stone!
With this thought, the light in Leylin’s eyes gradually dimmed, a bone-chilling iciness within.
“B…Boss… Wha- What’s going on…”
Mies chose this moment to push the door open and met Leylin’s gaze. Instantly, he collapsed, cold sweat pouring, and was left stuttering.
“It’s nothing. Our official mission has been handed down. Take a look!”
Leylin chuckled, and it was as if all that ice had melted with the smile. Warm sunlight shone down, and Mies was no longer limp on the ground, and could struggle to take a hold the document.
However, while looking through it, his hands were still trembling slightly. Mies swore that he’d never have imagined that when Boss Ley’s expression was grim, it would be so frightening!
That bone-piercing chilliness was something he had never experienced before. Swearing in the name of the honour of the Emberwings, he never wanted to meet that sort of gaze ever again.
Heavens! He now felt that even the sweltering heat outside was
more comfortable than staying in this room.
“How is it? Have you finished looking through it? Tell me your thoughts!” Seeing Mies in this state, Leylin smiled gently and crossed his arms, body half leaning on the chair as he appeared to be at ease.
“This… Since it’s an order from the headquarters and the head of state, we can only obey. However, the members of our squadron don’t have enough strength, and I’m afraid we will need to mobilise and coordinate with the garrison!”
Mies was no fool to have been able to survive up to this point. With some slight reflection, things immediately became clear to him, and he even had a contingency plan in mind already.
But… Mies stealthily peeked at Leylin, who was expressionless, and decided that before he could understand the man’s thoughts it was best not to speak his mind.
That bit of bloodthirst earlier had frightened him.
“Mm, very good! I’ll leave contacting the local garrison to you. Don’t disappoint me!”
Unexpectedly, Leylin did not ask about his plans and instead gave him a task.
Though Leylin did not explicitly state the consequences of not completing the task, Mies could somewhat guess that it was something he absolutely did not want to bear.
“Understood, Captain!” As a long-term habit, while Leylin was issuing the command, Mies subconsciously stuck out his chest and saluted, expression full of respect.
Ever since he had entered Leylin’s unit, he was completely convinced by Leylin and understood how he worked. It was consistently simple and crude, and he did not allow for retorts. Mies was naturally tactful.
“Mm, send down the order that I want our unit to assemble!” Leylin waved his arms, and Mies immediately escaped as if he was
faced with a huge enemy. Though Leylin was usually very easy-going, to the point that Mies could get benefits like stealing some cool air here, the Leylin in missions was very resolute about killing. He was not going to make things bad for himself now.

After sending down the order, their unit assembled quickly. On a field, Leylin wore military attire and walked past the orderly line, looking satisfied.

The Lava World was a world with Exemplaries. Their individual abilities far surpassed their collective strength, which was why this group was very small, with only ten or so members. However, every single one of them was at or above the fifth level of Fuming Wings, meaning they were at the peak of the Exemplary rank. He had three Earth ranks, and all had been forced to submission by him in missions. This was unthinkable in the eyes of many people.

After all, Earth ranks were considered top-rated strengths even in the Atlan Union. They could take on important roles in the corps, so how could they be the subordinates of a little captain? However, Leylin had done it, and many were in awe.

In reality, Leylin’s methods were simple. He had achieved victory with strength, and forcefully suppressed them. Even so, he had not intentionally taken in these three. They were an unexpected harvest.

For him, Earth Ranks were comparable to rank 1 or 2 Magi or Warlocks in the Magus World. He could kill a large number of those who possessed this level of strength with just a breath, and he did not even need to spend much energy on it. Even Sky ranks, who were comparable to rank 3 Magi, were nothing much.

The ones able to affect Leylin were Star ranks, who were of a similar strength! The attention of a Morning Star would forever be
focused on enemies of the same level!
“Based on the intel, the commanders of the few Atlan military districts are all Star ranks! Rumours have it that the head of the union far exceeds the Star rank, and could be at rank 5, the Radiant Moon Realm…”
Learn touched his chin, a look of anticipation flashing in his eyes…
“I really want to try my hand at fighting an enemy of this level of strength…” A fierce desire for battle burned in Leylin’s eyes, but was quickly withdrawn.

Though he was looking forward to the Radiant Moon Realm, he was no fool. Power at rank 5 was still far from him as he was now. Before he himself became a rank 5 Warlock, he was not going to fight with any Radiant Moon Magus, no matter who they were.

Leylin currently had his arms behind his back and after inspecting these members, he shouted, “Everyone, the head has issued our newest mission, which is an order for elimination! With us the Special Task Force taking the lead, the garrison troops will coordinate with us to uproot the Triserpent Sect strongholds that are throughout the Atlan Union!”

“Long live Atlan!” Many members yelled together, an agitated flush on their cheeks.

Compared to those troops formed with regular people, they were mostly people who were enlisted in a hurry and had not experienced much hardships so it was expected if they had unrealistic delusions. Furthermore, this time, it was clear that union was serious, and since the head had issued the command himself, it meant multiple opportunities to perform meritorious deeds.

And those meritorious deeds would net them higher level techniques, large amounts of information, and even the status and glory of nobility quite easily. How would they not be riled up?
“Good!” Leylin obviously knew what these people were thinking; On the contrary, he was no saint. Hence, he did not destroy their hopes right now. “There are a total of fifteen strongholds in the eastern region that belong to the Triserpent Sect. I will now hand down the assignments…” In actuality, Leylin had not even told them how to choose their targets. In his perspective, only he and the three Earth ranks were mildly useful in his group. The others would probably only be useful running errands outside, or providing moral support. It didn’t matter, since they were only destroying the branches of the Tri-serpent Sect, and the most powerful people there would probably be only at the Sky rank.

……

Within a large desert, boiling-hot temperatures caused slight distortions in the sky. Heat waves surged, causing the scenery in the distance to seem blurred. “One of the branches of the Triserpent Sect is here! General Gilfah, your mission is to seal off this region and not let any suspicious characters escape. Any questions?” In a simply constructed tent, Leylin pointed at a large map on the table and spoke to a white-haired Emberwing. This Emberwing was obviously not young, and even his mottled red feathers were falling down. However, the tenacity was as strong as ever. What had Leylin raising his eyebrows in surprise was that this old man was a Sky rank. “No problem!” Gilfah nodded matter-of-factly. “I will order the army to surround the area. Even a bug will not be able to escape!” This high-ranking officer by the name of Gilfah was in charge of
this region. He had been contacted by Mies. While he had control over the troops by order of the head, Leylin had gotten this general’s support after displaying his strength. “I hope you can destroy this nest in one go. A lot of disappearances in my jurisdiction are related to it,” The general brought up. “I understand. Let’s go!” Leylin nodded and left the camp, suddenly waving his arms. *Rumble!* His body turning into a tornado, he charged into the depths of the desert with a few similarly powerful pillars of light. “This stronghold of the Triserpent Sect is really covert. If not for the vast network of spies controlled by the union, it would have been unlikely that I’d find this place…” Light flickered in Leylin’s eyes. The Atlan Union was much too vast. Even if he had his bloodline and soul fire crystal and searched from city to city or even ran through the outskirts, it would still take several decades to cover the country. Even then, he could end up not even finding a trace of the Triserpent Sect. They had long since been chased by the union, and their actions had always been secretive. Leylin had no confidence that he would coincidentally bump into them. With the map, however, all the branches of the Triserpent Sect were bared before Leylin. There was no difficulty in finding them now. “But… Did the three dukes really create the Triserpent Sect?” A giant, fire-red lake had appeared before Leylin’s eyes. At the heart of it, flames were vaguely seen. Based on the intel, the branch of the Triserpent Sect was under the lava lake. Soul force surged through the lava and the desert to scan below, and it resulted in a marvellous expression on Leylin’s face. “This…” With his soul force, Leylin could clearly see the many experiments in the laboratories of the Triserpent Sect branch, as well as the modified Emberwings.
“Bloodline modification experiments?” As a Warlock himself, he was no stranger to this, and could even be said to be a subject matter expert. With just a look, he could find many traces of what the Magus World, even the Ouroboros Clan, were used to operative procedures. “Could it be… that the Triserpent Sect really is an organisation set up by the three dukes?” Leylin’s eyes flashed, a crimson crystal already appearing his hands, two threads of pale soul flames twining around each other. “No reaction… The two dukes aren’t here.” Leylin shook his head. Though the range of bloodline and soul sensing was already quite vast, it was still too small in comparison to the whole Atlan Union, let alone the entire Lava World. “Attack!” Thoughts whirling in his mind, Leylin unhesitatingly gave the order. A gigantic phantom phoenix made of fire appeared behind him. Bathed in pure golden flames, it was as if the real ancient phoenix had been reborn! This was the pinnacle of the eighth level of Fireplume. Seeing this display, nobody would believe it even if Leylin himself admitted to not being an Emberwing. The point mass of a Morning Star was incomparably tiny, and massive strength could be held within this tiny point. It would not cause any clashes with other energies. Leylin had the A.I. Chip to analyse and perform simulations for him. In reality, he had secretly already practised up to the peak of the ninth level of Fireplume. In other words, the limit of rank 3! However, as he lacked the training technique for the tenth level, he had been unable to progress further. Even if the A.I. Chip could simulate it, too much time would be spent on it and Leylin had thus lost his patience. Hence, he had focused on Schiker. He was sure that with Schiker’s
status, it was very possible for him to have access to the tenth level of Fireplume!

To Leylin’s knowledge, there were ten levels to Fireplume. The first three were for regular people, but the fourth and fifth, it would begin to touch on exemplary strength. The sixth and seventh were comparable to rank 1 and 2 Magi, while the eighth and ninth meant being able to battle rank 3 Magi! As long as he entered the tenth level, he would be a Star rank, which was comparable to a Morning Star Magus in the Magus World!

Leylin did not have much interest in the first nine levels of the technique, and was only invested in the tenth level.

After advancing to Morning Star, it meant that he had already chosen a path for himself. While Leylin had no plans of giving it up, other paths to power still had a lot of useful experience to give him.

Fireplume was one of the most advanced techniques among those of foreign origin. It could combine both physical and spiritual aspects, and this train of thought was a breath of fresh air for him. If he could obtain the tenth level of Fireplume and gain clarity on the Emberwings’ path and system, it would definitely be of much use to him.

“Come out!” Leylin shouted, and an ear-piercing explosion sounded behind him, like a high-spirited phoenix cry filled with heat and excitement.

Amidst the cry, Leylin abruptly made his move. The flames that filled the sky were as splendid as the wings of a phoenix as they swept through the ground and shaved a layer of soil off the earth. The ground kept trembling, and rocks and dirt were scattered everywhere. As if a geyser of water, the lava from the lake shot upwards as its surface emptied out, revealing a giant secret base underneath.

Many members of the Triserpent Sect raised their heads. Upon
seeing the dazzling phantom phoenix, they yelled in alarm, “It’s Atlan’s Special Task Force! Those black leather dogs have caught up to us.”
The members of the Special Task Force were usually ruthless in their methods, possessed extraordinary power and dressed in black leather uniforms. That had netted them this title.
“Aren’t you wearing black robes too? What about it?” Leylin, who was in mid-air, grew speechless as he observed the followers who wore black, wide robes with an image of three black snakes intertwining on the surface.
While he was quibbling, a few streaks of powerful undulations rose, and two black-clothed people who were obviously the leaders blocked his way, dressed in luxurious robes. The sounds of members of the Triserpent Sect howling could be heard from within the stronghold.
“Take care of that trash as soon as possible!” Leylin’s brows furrowed. He could not sense any special aura from these two black-clothed people.
If they were higher-ups within the Tri-serpent Sect and had made contact with Morning Star, there should be some radiation residue or the like on their bodies, but there were no traces at all on these two leaders. This led to Leylin’s disappointment.
“Understood, leader!” A few streaks of red flames shot out, and Leylin’s Earth ranks immediately began their massacre, doing as they liked amongst the ordinary followers.
Crimson flames flashed, turning the region into a sea of fire.
Facing this attack that was at the Earth rank, these ordinary disciples were mowed down like grass. Under the prowess of the Exemplaries that he led, no matter how much battle intent the ordinary followers had, it all proved futile. That was the main reason why Leylin had brought a small team of only ten or so people, and dared to forcefully attack the enemy’s large-scaled
base!
“You’re Ley, the genius of the Special Task Force in the eastern region? One of the dogs that Schiker’s raising?” The black-clothed person opposite him spoke with a hint of scorn.

“You’re looking for death!” Leylin’s eyes opened suddenly, as if two balls of flames were being launched from them.

*Shua!* His entire body seemed to transform into a thread of flames, boring through his opponent’s forehead and coming out through the back before turning back into a humanoid figure.

*Crackle!* The black-clothed person who had not been the least bit modest with his words had a dazed look on his face. Seconds later, he turned into a torch of fire and began to incinerate fiercely.

“Whorf! Whorf!” The other person in black was clearly stunned, before beginning to shout. The voice was lovely, and evidently belonged to a woman.

“You dare… You dare kill him…” The woman raised her head, eyes full of hatred as she glared at Leylin, itching to hack him to pieces.

Leylin merely hummed coldly as if he did not care. If looks could kill, what was power for anyway?

These two heads were Sky ranks, but they had obviously used some secret potion or taboo techniques to forcefully break through. Their auras were rather unstable, and were at most comparable to the peak of the Earth rank. Perhaps any expert at the eighth level of
Fireplume could dispose of them easily. Of course, this was understandable. If the three dukes had created the Triserpent Sect, they could not have gathered many techniques given the difference in the flow of time between Lava World and the Magus World. Support for advancement and methods that would result in instant benefits were necessary things. The woman did not rush over to fight with all her might. Instead, she ordered something into her communicative device in her hand, “Activate the Berserk Legion!”

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* A steel door in the base opened, and many Emberwings with dazed expressions walked out. Their crimson eyes radiated a feeling of indifference. Their bodies were filled with strange runes, and parts of their bodies had obviously been strengthened and altered. Many of the Special Task Force members had difficulty even telling that they were Emberwings. After being let out, the lost look in their eyes was replaced by viciousness as they let loose howls that were similar to those of beasts.

*Boom!* A researcher nearby was immediately beaten to the point that blood splattered everywhere. A crimson rain fell on this berserk legion, causing them to appear even more malicious and terrifying. The legion that had already gone insane began to destroy things without distinction. Whether it was the Special Task Force members or their own people, all were attacked. Due to the differences in numbers, the berserk legion landed the most critical attack on the followers of the Triserpent Sect. Leylin, who saw this scene, could not help but shake his head. This woman was obviously treating these modified people who were as of yet unable to control their bloodlines as her trump cards and weapon for revenge.
“Ahaha… Whorf’s dead. I want all of you to die with him.” The woman shouted maniacally, her voice so sharp that it could pierce through eardrums.
“This woman’s gone crazy! Or she wasn’t mentally sound in the first place…” Leylin shook his head.
Watching her with pity, Leylin did not hold back. An enormous fire phoenix soared across the sky, its giant wings sweeping across the woman. It sent her retreating, coughing up blood.
“Boss, what do we do?” Watching the berserk legion, especially whose members consisted of Emberwings, Mies was caught in a dilemma.
Not only were those of the berserk legion insane, their battle might was astounding. On top of that, they were his fellow clansmen, so Mies found it difficult to attack.
“It doesn’t matter, I’ll take care of it. Their blood might be infectious, so be careful not to make contact with them!” Leylin’s voice travelled over faintly, but Mies suddenly had a bad premonition. “Boss! You’re not going to…”
But it was too late. Mies raised his head and saw Leylin turning into a streak of golden light, as if fusing with the phantom phoenix on his back.
The phoenix’s cries were even louder than before, practically piercing through the clouds. Golden flames were emitted from its body.
In that moment, the phantom image of the phoenix had turned into a giant, blazing bird!
“The apex of Fireplume Undead Aves!” Mies’ eyes grew wide as he muttered to himself.
He had only heard of this killing technique in legends. Based on the rumours, only those who had trained in Fireplume up to the Sky rank and above, and only ones with incomparably pure bloodlines could exhibit this ultimate technique, restricted to the Emberwing
Royal Family!
‘Could it be that Ley is a member of the esteemed Emberwing Royal Family?’ Mies watched the Flaming Undead Aves soaring in the skies, suddenly feeling as if his brain had short-circuited.
*Rumble!* With a shake of the flaming bird’s feathers, large amounts of fiery-red light shone down on the region. A spark fell onto the shoulder of one of the members of the berserk legion, and he immediately began to burn up fiercely, turning into a torch. With elated cries, the gigantic Undead Aves dived towards the ground!
“Crap, get away! Drop down!” The other Special Task Force members’ voices, distorted due to their nervousness, travelled into Mies’ ears, but he could not manage to process it. He wore a stupefied expression as he stared ahead.
The terrifying giant flaming bird was like a falling meteor descending upon the ground, bringing with it horrifying tremendous waves of flames. All Mies could do was hug his head and crouch down.
In the face of this strength that was like a natural disaster, he felt as tiny as an ant.
The flaming bird descended into the heart of the berserk legion, and the flames swallowed them in an instant.
Moments later, the flames gradually went out and revealed a tall figure.
“Boss… Is actually this strong?” Mies mumbled, hot blood rushing to his brain as he darted forward, glancing through the remains on the ground, eyes filled with tears, “Captain! They… They were also…”
“There are only enemies on the battlefield!” Leylin’s voice was icy cold, and the heat in Mies’ body went cold.
“I’m very disappointed in you!” Leylin had his arms behind his back as he left this hell slowly, leaving Mies in a daze.
“He’s right, child!” At some point, the general from before was at Mies’ side.
“If we don’t do this, if the legion or any of these contaminated bodies escape, there could be a terrifying plague in the surrounding cities…”
“Furthermore, with Ley’s efforts, we’ve successfully destroyed this stronghold. No fire-feathered clansmen will have to be ruined by it anymore…”
The general patted Mies’ shoulders, “Cheer up, little guy!”

……

“There seems to be some change in this little thing. I hope I haven’t ruined his outlook on the world…”
Watching his bloodshot eyes as he darted to the frontlines, a smile of rumination shot up on his lips.
The desert branch of the Triserpent Sect had been destroyed, but there were still many other branches and organisations remaining in the eastern region of the union.
They were now within a giant Emberwing city.
The members of the Triserpent Sect had actually set up a secret base within a city, something that only managed to increase Leylin’s respect for them.
To be able to come up and make use of this meant they were absolute geniuses. It was a pity that in a time when physical strength was of utmost importance, intelligence automatically decreased in value to the point that it was negligible.
The army surrounded the area, while the Special Task Force rushed in. Leylin had long since gotten used to arranging things like these. After that matter the other day, Mies had seemed depressed for a few days, but seemed to become mature immediately after. In the next few battles, he was in an unusual state where he would charge
to the frontlines, and was ruthless in his attacks. It was as if he believed that the more he killed, the lesser the number of his clansmen that would be oppressed by the enemy, or something to that effect. It was a certain level of maturity, although still naive.

“It’s good to be young…” Leylin observed the hot-blooded Mies, and could not help but get emotional.

His real age had long since surpassed 200, and he was even older than his grandfather’s grandfather in his previous world. Watching Mies now was like looking at a child.

“Captain, the stronghold has been purged. No enemy was caught.” Mies reported to Leylin with indifference, blood on his body.

“Good! Go back and reorganise yourselves, the spoils of battle won’t reduce!” Leylin’s arms were tucked together as he nodded.

At this moment, a female soldier rushed over in a hurry, holding a communicative device similar to a handset, “Captain Ley, a call from Lord Schiker!”

“Instructor!” Taking the handset, he immediately heard the sounds within.

Though the principle of this thing’s operation was different, it was still like the cellphones of his previous world.

“I know everything you’ve done. Very good!” Schiker’s voice sounded from within the handset, praise in his tone. Evidently, he had heard of the results of Leylin’s battles.

However, Leylin had astutely realised the trace of fury hidden in his voice. That was obviously not aimed at him.

“Looks like Schiker met with some trouble during his operation at destroying the Mobius Organisation!” Leylin thought. As expected, Schiker mentioned this right after, “Captain Ley, I now command you to bring all your members and hurry to Wox City and meet me!”

“Understood!” Leylin answered loudly. After waiting for a moment,
he lowered his voice and asked, “Did anything happen there?”
“Yes. There’s are some issues!” Schiker answered vaguely after a brief silence. It was obvious he did not want to touch on it.
“Alright, I’ll hurry there now!” Leylin obviously knew what to say in this situation.
After putting down the handset and sending away the female communications officer whose expression was full of admiration, Leylin sank into deep thought, his hand finding his chin.
“Mobius Organisation… Is this organisation more difficult to deal with than the Triserpent Sect?”
There were many rebellious organisations in the Atlan Union, as well as various sects. However, the union leader had only chosen to act against the Triserpent Sect and Mobius Organisations, which led Leylin to make a mental association.

If the Triserpent Sect was targeted because of its three foreign Morning Star Warlocks, what about the Mobius Organisation? What did they have?

A trace of a smile appeared about Leylin’s lips. “Interesting! It’s getting increasingly interesting!”

He abruptly turned back and shouted, “All members, assemble…”

As Leylin had very few subordinates, he could act swiftly and decisively, bringing his unit to the Wox City Schiker had spoken of the very next afternoon.

After entering the city, Leylin sensed that the level of security was much higher than before. Even Leylin and the others were checked over once before being allowed entry. Uneasiness seemed to permeate the air.

‘Could the Mobius Organisation have caused a huge ruckus? Curious!’ Leylin touched his chin as he arrived at the area Schiker had spoken of, which was also the current station of the Special Task Force.

“Ley!” Loke welcomed him, pleasantly surprised. “It’s great that you could come so quickly!”
“What’s going on?” Leylin’s brows furrowed in feigned concern. “We might have found the Mobius Organisation’s headquarters. The attack that Instructor led was met with a violent counterattack from the other side. It’s best that you personally take a look…” Loke smiled wryly as he got out of the way. There was a gloom between his brows that would not disappear easily. It was so well-faked that Leylin cheered for him on the inside. It was rare to find actors of this calibre.

As he opened the door and found Schiker inside, Leylin displayed an expression of ‘alarm’. “Instructor, how did you…” The Schiker in front of him now was in a pitiful state, wrapped up to the point that he seemed like a mummy. His right arm was hung in front of his chest.

“Ley, you did well!” Seeing the worry on Leylin’s face, Schiker looked gratified, “You only took a day to get here…” “It’s my honour to serve my lord!” Leylin looked devoted. After all, the other party had connections in the capital, and was his best route to getting firasource stones. He could not give him up so easily.

“What exactly happened?” Leylin clenched his fists, sparks emitting from his body.

“This level… It means your Fireplume is about to break through to the ninth level, entering the peak Sky rank…” Schiker watched Leylin, eyes full of an unspeakable radiance. “In terms of training, you’ll probably surpass me soon enough…” “Not at all! It’s all thanks to Instructor’s nurture!” Leylin bowed slightly to show his respect.

“Mm! We underestimated our opponent this time. I’d assumed it was an ordinary branch of the enemy, but never could I have expected that we’d found their headquarters…” Leylin listened closely. Schiker, with Loke and the rest as well as the support he garnered from the army, should have been able to
complete the operation of destroying the Mobius Organisation smoothly. However, while wiping out one of the branches nearby, they’d found quite a few red-clothed bishops!
Schiker, who had realised he had found a big opportunity, was obviously excited as he gathered quite a few Sky rank generals and prepared to eliminate these bishops at one go.
However, when the time came for the actual attack, Schiker found out he had completely wrong.
There had been a mistake in his calculations. This wasn’t some branch of the Mobius Organisation, but their headquarters!
They had astounding harvests under the joint effort of the Sky ranks at first, and had even seized much of the resources the Mobius Organisation had stocked up on. Suddenly, Schiker was unwilling to say more, a hint of fear appearing on his expression.
This expression immediately alarmed Leylin. For the fearless Schiker to become this way, the matter could not be simple.
“I’ve gathered you only so that you can take over the next operations of the Special Task Force, especially since I’m in this state!” Schiker raised his arm and laughed bitterly.
“As for the issues there, there will be people coming in from the capital to take care of it. Don’t worry!”
Leylin came out, still baffled, and went to look for Loke. Under the questioning of this new ‘superior’, Loke narrated all the parts Schiker had failed to explain clearly.
As it turned out, while transporting the resources back, Schiker and the rest had been met with an ambush, resulting in total annihilation. Even the resources had been lost, and a few Sky rank generals had perished on the spot. Only Schiker had somehow managed to survive.
“Oh? How many people were there?” Leylin had some conjectures, and asked curiously.
“Ju– Just one, but he was more terrifying than thousands of troops
and horses, because... that was a Star rank!”
Loke’s voice was low, as if afraid to alarm anyone. There was an obvious hint of joy in the fact that he was weak and useless in a battle between Sky ranks, and had thus not participated in that operation. Otherwise, he’d be dead right now.
“A Star rank?!” Leylin seemed to breathe in sharply, although his mind was actually working quickly.
Star ranks were the most powerful members of the Lava World. They were on the same level as Morning Star Magi of the Magus World, and were absolutely certain of their cultivation path. They were existences who had already generated a core.
Every single one of these existences was celebrated. Their achievements would be written in history books or even as legends, passed down for eternity.
Facing such an expert, Sky ranks would only be courting death unless there were other Star ranks suppressing them.
If Schiker had met one, it meant he had incredibly bad luck.
‘On top of that...’ Leylin touched his chin, deep in thought, ‘Schiker’s backing must be quite firm for even a Morning Star Magus to have qualms about killing him and leave him alive!’
Leylin, who was also a Morning Star, naturally knew the terror of rank 4s. For Morning Star Magi, Sky ranks were just like slightly large ants.
The generals, who were also at the Sky rank, had all died, leaving only Schiker behind. Leylin did not think that this Morning Star Magus had a good heart and let Schiker go. It was very likely that the real reason was because he feared the person backing Schiker.
‘Looks like Schiker’s background is very mysterious! I’ll need to pay more attention and take advantage of that!’ Leylin decided resolutely.
“That’s the basic situation... With the motivation from this event, many branches of the Mobius Organisation that had begun to
disperse seem to be congregating again…”
Loke shrugged his shoulders, the wry smile not diminishing at all,
“But we only need to push through during this period of time. The
Northern Duke will reach this place soon, and when that happens,
we can…”
‘Just continue acting!’ Leylin rolled his eyes inside, while he looked
to be in favour of his words.
“The Northern Duke? That’s a famous Star rank of the Union! With
him around, the Mobius Organisation won’t be able to settle down
and have a peaceful time!” he exclaimed in admiration.
At the same time, he now understood the reason for Schiker’s
listless look. Since someone with a higher status was taking over,
his own position was dispensable, and his achievements would be
wrested away from him.
Though the Northern Duke might not think much of these merits,
Schiker would not want to accept charity from others. Leylin knew
very well what type of person he was, and he was not one to admit
defeat.
“In that case, I should return and quickly take over the defence of
the Special Task Force, preparing for the counterattack!”
Leylin and Loke hastily bid farewell.
Leylin did not like this idea. The Mobius Organisation had Star
ranks, as well as many helpers and followers. After noticing
something, they would definitely retreat, and by the time that
Northern Duke reached, he would only see an empty nest.
However, all this was none of Leylin’s business. What he focused
on was the resources that had been stolen by the mysterious Star
rank.
“To be able to get a Star rank dispatched after them, these resources
must be especially precious. There might even be firasource stones
inside…” Leylin’s eyes flashed. He was in dire need of these
stones, but he did not have that many points to exchange them.
Since the proper way wasn’t working, he would need to think of other methods.
Not long after Loke left, Leylin’s expression changed.
He came to his room and took out the crimson gemstone from before.
Rays of brilliance were twinkling, the two threads of pale flames beginning to increase in intensity at the middle.
Seeing this, a smile showed on Leylin’s face, “They’ve come together…”

……

At the bottom of the lava not far from the city, in a secret space that had been opened. Two figures were facing each other, sitting cross-legged.
All of a sudden, a bald male with no eyebrows or a beard opened his eyes, eyes full of doubt, “I felt a trace of my soul flames! Which Warlock has arrived here?”
“I had the same feeling!” Opposite him was a young girl in blood-red robes. Her eyes were strange vertical pupils that would make people shudder in fear.
“Is this a trap?” Gilbert muttered to himself and asked slowly.
“It doesn’t seem like it, unless the Ouroboros Clan was completely breached and Freya and the rest have all died.” Blood Duchess Emma was very confident in the loyalty of her students.
“Then… Have the reinforcements from the Warlock Union arrived?” Excitement appeared in Gilbert’s tone.
“Hmph! If they were reliable, we wouldn’t be in this situation!” In contrast, Emma’s retort showed that she did not have a good impression of the Warlock Union.
“‘t’s not for us to decide anyway, since they’ve already taken the initiative to come here!’

Crimson flames flashed on Emma’s body as she appeared in mid-air, Gilbert right behind her. Eventually, the two came to a stop, standing side by side.

“The soul flames are closing in very quickly, and the other party’s aura is very powerful! It’s a Morning Star, but… This blood line undulation… How is it possible…” Gilbert turned to Emma in disbelief, only to be met with Emma’s eyes filled with similar astonishment and suspicion.

From the incoming person, they felt the purest Kemoyin bloodline aura. But how was that possible?

There had always only been three Morning Star Warlocks in the Ouroboros Clan.
‘Did the First Elder come back to life?’ An idea rose in Gilbert’s mind, but was quickly extinguished. He had personally seen the death of the First Elder, and his point mass had even returned to the astral plane.

From the thickness of the bloodline, the purity of the other party’s Kemoyin bloodline was even above that of themselves, even that of the First Elder!

“Who is it?” Gilbert and Emma watched the red rays that were shooting over from the distance, filled with curiosity.

*Sou!* The light rays dissipated, revealing the appearance of a
handsome young man.  
A bright smile on his face, and he rushed to bow towards Gilbert.  
“Mentor… I’ve arrived!”

In the next moment, Gilbert and Emma’s mouths were just as wide, their eyeballs almost popping out. “Leylin? How’s that possible?”

……

A good while later, while Gilbert and Emma seemed to have accepted Leylin’s promotion to Morning Star as reality, there was still a shock that could not be concealed in their eyes.

“… This is how it happened. I advanced to Morning Star just when Phosphorescence Swamp was about to be breached, and then killed Demon Hunter Cyril. The allied forces withdrew, and both sides are restraining themselves. The situation has now stabilised…”

Leylin gave a brief overview of what he had experienced in the Magus World. Of course, anything that touched upon his secrets, such as the A.I. Chip, the Lamia fingerbone and all that, was obviously hidden and not discussed. Gilbert and Emma had not asked either.

Of those who had reached the realm of Morning Star, who did not have their own secrets? Even the two of them had many fortuitous meetings while at rank 3, and received inheritances from ruins and the like, which had allowed them to thankfully advance to rank 4.

“In that case… That guy, Cyril, is really dead…” Emma’s eyes were filled with astonishment as she sized up Leylin. Compared to her own age, Leylin was much too young right now.

However, it was this adolescent Warlock who had caused Demon Hunter Cyril’s fall?

Emma couldn’t help but recall Cyril’s terrifying demonic spells, as well as his power and abundant experience. Her opinion of this young man raised immensely.
“Alright! Well then… Are the two of you willing to return to the Magus World now?” Leylin took off the silver-white necklace on his neck that was emanating the rays of stars. Gilbert and Emma’s breaths immediately became heavier. This was the projection of the coordinates of Leylin’s astral gate. It could open the astral gate and allow them to return to the Ouroboros Clan. However, Gilbert and Emma exchanged a wry smile, and did not speak. Instead, the area turned strangely silent. “I understand. It seems like Your Graces still have very important things to do in the Lava World!” Leylin laughed, not minding the least. “Yes!” In the end, it was Emma who spoke up. “Leylin, you’re a Morning Star just like us, so you don’t have to call us ‘Your Grace’. Just call us by our names…” “Alright, my Lords!” Leylin looked solemn as he began to make guesses. “Is it because of the firasource stones?” The moment the words left his mouth, Leylin noticed the change in Gilbert’s expression, while Emma cried out in alarm. “You’ve actually found out!” “Of course! It’s a treasure that can strengthen the soul and even the point mass. Any Morning Star would go crazy over it!” Leylin nodded as he admitted. “Alright. In that case, we don’t have to keep hiding it from you like before.” Emma immediately threw away all hesitation, “Although Jupiter’s Lightning had duped us, we were much stronger than they had anticipated. This was especially so in another world, where their Radiant Moon could not intrude. While we did suffer a bit, we managed to break out, and while searching for the road back we found out about the firasource stones.” Emma sounded emotional, “How can we let go of this treasure that can amplify soul force? We three Morning Star Warlocks thus led
the way and took in a few oppressed races within the Atlan Union, creating the organisation, the Triserpent Sect. On the surface, we want to overthrow the government of Atlan, but in reality, we prioritise gathering firasource stones!”

Leylin nodded. In this meeting, he had found that the two Dukes’ soul undulations were obviously much more powerful than in the Magus World. It seemed to be the effect from the firasource stones!

“Then… where’s the First Elder?” Leylin asked, and the atmosphere immediately became gloomy. A long while later, Gilbert spoke, his voice hoarse.

“There are many powerful beings in the Lava World. At the peak are a few who have a strength similar to Radiant Moon Magi. At the beginning, with the three of us working together, everything went smoothly, and we even seized quite a lot of firasource stones. However, the organisation Jupiter’s Lightning set up here was obviously much larger, and even had relations with the higher ups in Atlan. The head of their union was one who had trained up to the thirteenth level of the Fireplume technique, which was unheard of in history. He was a peak Radiant Moon Magus! Under his assault along with many other Magi, the First Elder fell… while trying to protect us…”

Though Gilbert explained it in a simplified manner, Leylin could tell how desperate that battle had been. He could keenly tell that Gilbert had concealed some things.

Whatever it was, he would never believe the First Elder was so selfless, but Gilbert and Emma had not asked why Leylin had not come here right after the battle and instead done so only now. Leylin thus would not make his opinion known.

“This means Mentor and Madam Emma are preparing to stay here for a period of time and conspire to obtain more firasource stones? In that case, we can collaborate!” Leylin touched his chin. He held the same thoughts as these two Morning Star Warlocks. With two
Morning Star helpers, he had more confidence.
“That’s great. With you joining us, Leylin, our strength will increase by a large amount, and we will even have a way to retreat!” Emma and Gilbert exchanged a glance, the elation obvious in their eyes.
It looked like they had been planning to cause a huge ruckus before leaving this world.
Leylin could not help but feel his scalp tingle. The unrestrained attacks of three Morning Star Warlocks would definitely throw the entire Atlan Union into chaos.
However, this was none of his business. As long as he could obtain enough fira source stones, he didn’t mind pushing the union into the abyss, or breaking it into smithereens.
Leylin patted his head, suddenly remembering something as he spoke. “Right! I’m lying low in the Special Task Force in Atlan for now. In order to obtain their trust, I destroyed a few of Triserpent Sect’s strongholds…”
“It doesn’t matter. Those are just the surrounding organisations. We can just create a few more soon. To really obtain their full trust, it doesn’t matter even if we hand over the whole Triserpent Sect.”
Gilbert waved his arms, not minding the least.
“In actuality, we’ve also been keeping a low profile in the Atlan Union and even obtained titles. Most of the intel regarding the Triserpent Sect was intentionally divulged by us!” Emma laughed, a layer of sparkling red feathers appearing on her body.
“The Emberwings and Fireplume,” Leylin chuckled. Morning Star Warlocks were all grandmasters at remodelling bloodlines. With Emma and Gilbert’s experience, passing off an identity as an Emberwing was way too easy.
On top of that, these two were ruthless and had even sold away their organisation just to obtain trust. That was probably how they gained their titles, and why they did not mind Leylin’s actions.
Leylin was rather speechless at that, feeling like he still needed to
learn much more from his seniors in these dark areas. If the followers of the Triserpent Sect found out they had been betrayed by their leaders, they would probably just break down. Leylin could not help but begin to pity them.

“Do you have any intel?” Leylin asked. These two Warlocks had been laying low here for longer than he had, and definitely knew more secrets.

“Of course!” Gilbert laughed proudly.

“Based on our sources, there is only one place where the firasource stones are being generated, and that’s the capital of the Atlan Union, Tylasus! It only comes from the head himself, which means the source is being controlled by him. There are very few reserves outside!”

“The head who is at the thirteenth level of Fireplume, the peak of Radiant Moon?” Leylin sighed lightly, knowing things were going to get troublesome.

Three Morning Stars cooperating was still not enough to snatch something from this opponent.

That was not all. Fighting in another world, foreign beings like them obviously had a disadvantage compared to the people of this land. The World’s Will itself would also have a bias and help its own people, and even if a peak Radiant Moon were to head over, they might not be able to deal with this opponent.

“Gilbert and I have already set up a plan. We’re planning to sneak into Tylasus two months later, on the Holy Solar Day. You’re just in time!” Emma exclaimed.

Leylin touched his chin. Holy Solar Day was a very important festival of the Emberwings. During that time, the head would have to make a speech, participate in the feast and whatnot. There were more than enough opportunities to sneak into his residence.
561 - Setting A Plan

“Good! I’ll be there then!” Leylin nodded.
“Of course you will, because you’ll have the greatest chance!” Gilbert chuckled.
“Oh? Why’s that?” Leylin’s thoughts were lightning quick as he immediately came up with a reason. “Could it be…”
“Hehe… that’s right. Lord Schiker is the illegitimate child of the head of Atlan. With this connection, and you yourself as part of the Special Task Force, you’ll get the most opportunities to sneak into his residence.” Emma revealed.
“No wonder I’ve been thinking Schiker has a very solid backing and very powerful connections. So he’s the illegitimate child of the head of the union…” Leylin spoke in understanding.
“Hehe… This is called an opportune moment. We’d wanted to sneak into the Special Task Force too, but the bloodline scanning there is very strict. We can only imitate up to the seventh level of Fireplume, which is pretty much useless. Even if we got in, we’d only be at the bottommost level. You’re different. Not only is your Emberwing aura unbelievably pure, you’ve even improved in Fireplume up to the ninth level. What a genius!” Gilbert praised. He was now feeling he’d been blind not to have noticed a super talent like Leylin. However, he had managed to take Leylin under his wing, which was a huge relief.
“Alright! I’ll do my best and follow Schiker back to the capital!” Leylin nodded, watching these two Kemoyin Dukes. Before
heading to the Lava World, he’d been worried that they were injured or something like that, but now, it looked like there was nothing to worry about.
What was difficult for Morning Stars to heal from were injuries to the soul, but as long as fira-source stones were in their possession, even the most troublesome soul injuries could be healed quickly.
In actuality, Leylin guessed that these two Kemoyin Dukes had used all their fira-source stone reserves to heal the injuries from breaking away from the attack. If not, they would not have had just this slight improvement to their aura.
“By the way, there’s someone called Loke under Schiker. Is he also someone you arranged for to be there?” Leylin suddenly thought of something and asked.
“Loke?!” Suspicion flashed on Emma and Gilbert’s expression as they exchanged a glance. Even Leylin, who had been observing their facial expressions, could not tell if these expressions were genuine.
“No, I don’t know him! He’s not a spy we sent out. Is there something wrong?”
“A little. I suspect he’s from another race who feigned an identity to enter the Special Task Force!” Leylin casually brought this up.
“In that case…” Gilbert rubbed his shiny bald head, “You’ll need to be more wary of him. He’s most likely someone from the Mobius Organisation!”
“Mobius Organisation? Do you know that organisation well?” Leylin’s interest was piqued at this. Or rather, at the large amount of resources and fira-source stones that this organisation had stolen.
“Though this is just a guess, we are almost certain that it’s Jupiter’s Lightning’s organisation here!”
Emma looked grim, “Due to the suppression from Atlan, Zegna of Jupiter’s Lightning does not dare come to this world. He’s only dispatched a few Morning Star Magi here to secretly build up an
organisation!
“Zegna?” Leylin touched his chin. It was only now that he found out the name of this rank 5 Magus who had been opposing him. “In this case, Loke is probably a spy or something to that effect sent out by Zegna?” Leylin chuckled.
“Just a mere pawn. It doesn’t matter even if that’s true. As long as he’s not a Morning Star, he won’t be that vital in this game here…” Ruthlessness flashed in Gilbert’s expression, “If you really think he’s annoying, then dispose of him. If it’s not convenient for you, just tell us, and we’ll handle it…”
Though Gilbert and Emma seemed to be nobles in the Atlan Union, they were actually one of the three wicked leaders of the Triserpent Sect. It was obvious that they would seek trouble with the Special Task Force, and Loke’s death wouldn’t be that significant anyway.
“Let’s keep him around for now and not alarm the Mobius Organisation. By the way, is that Morning Star who had caused major casualties and stole a lot of resources still around?”
“Why? You want to know where he is?” Emma and Gilbert both had on something that seemed like a smile.
“Of course! I don’t really care about other resources, but I must get those firasource stones!” Leylin answered decisively, “Besides, I can gain more of Schiker’s trust with his help. Think about it, if I give Schiker news of the Morning Star who landed him in his current state, what would happen?”
“Actually, we’ve been trying to track him down and seem to have found some trails…” Emma exclaimed, “Just as well! That is Collins of Jupiter’s Lightning. Neither of us is certain we can kill him, but with you around, we have enough strength. We shall divide the firasource stones equally though!”
“That’s fine!” Leylin immediately thought of Collins, who he’d
disciplined at his ceremony, and the corner of his lips quirked up in a smile.

……

*Rumble!*
The earth split open, the sky falling. Space was constantly being destroyed, causing turbulence. Silver storms wreaked havoc and ravaged the region. At the very centre, three phantoms in the form of indistinct giant black serpents streaked across the horizon, surrounding a figure. “Collins, hand over everything you have on you, and we can let you off!” Gilbert yelled loudly. Trapped in the middle was Collins, who Leylin had seen once before. Now, bloody wounds were all over his body, and it was obvious that his injuries were not mild. His own strength lost to even Leylin. Under the joint attack of three Morning Star Warlocks, he was actually pretty good to have survived so far. “Lord Zegna won’t let you off…” The energy undulations from Collin’s body were all over the place. The battle with Morning Star Arcane Arts had already landed him in a critical state. “Zegna? Hmph! Even if he doesn’t look for us, we’ll look for him. We can’t just forget about what happened with the First Elder.” Emma snorted coldly. Collins could only whine about the situation inside his mind. Though his strength surpassed that of Demon Hunter Cyril, he was still no match for three Morning Star Warlocks working together. Unfortunately, Jupiter’s Lightning was huge, and needed many Morning Stars taking charge in the Magus World. There were few Morning Star Magi in the Lava World, and he was the strongest of all those sent over, having committed a serious sin that he had to
make up for.
But now? He first had to think about how to save himself!
“Alright! I can give you all the firasource stones, but you’ll need to swear on the astral plane that you won’t harm or imprison me!”
Collins shouted. This was usually what happened in battles between Morning Star Magi. It might be easy to define the winner, but killing the opponent was difficult and often not worth it. That was why after being defeated, it was common to agree to an unfair contract and concede to a huge compensation.
“You don’t have any leeway to bargain over this!” Leylin’s tone was firm. With his opponent’s life in the palm of his hands and unable to escape, there was no space for negotiation.
“Alright. In that case…” Collins seemed to acknowledge his fate and placed his hands on his waist. All of a sudden, his expression turned sinister.
Berserk black lightning closed in with him in the middle.
Above his right hand, a simple leather scroll was slowly opening, revealing the phantom image of a Magus with a black moon rune on the forehead.
“It’s a rank 5 magic scroll!” Emma’s expression instantly changed, countless blood-red rays exploding forth.
A giant black snake that spanned across the horizon appeared, charging in his direction.
“Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!” Gilbert and Leylin, who were trailing behind, immediately acted as well. The power of a rank 5 spell was not to be underestimated, and they had to go all out.
On top of that, since this was another world, there was no danger even if they destroyed anything. Their methods were frenzied and cruel, not considering the destruction of the environment.
“Hisss…” A giant black phantom snake collided with the lightning, and the energy undulations created could be felt even hundreds of kilometers away.
*Boom!* A human figure was sent flying, Collins’ figure. Black blood shot out of the corner of his mouth, and there were traces of rot that continuously penetrated deeper within. Even his Morning Star body was full of bloody holes.

While he flew backwards, he flung large amounts of fiery-red ores, and even some other precious resources and treasures of his collection. They flew in all directions, emitting brilliant light.

“The firasource stones are all here, as well as my collection. Don’t go too far!” he yelled, his figure turning into a streak of light and disappearing into the horizon.

*Swish!* The fog dissipated, and three black figures floated down, gathering the many firasource stones.

“What do you think of this?” Leylin spoke first.

“Since we’re acting, we need to seem genuine. I’m going to chase him for a while longer…” Gilbert nodded, before dashing towards the black streak.

“Well then, Madam Emma, I’ll head back now!” After keeping the portion of firasource stones that belonged to him, Leylin was in an exceptionally good mood and bowed to Emma.

“Mm! Take care of yourself. I don’t want Freya to become a widow at such a young age,” Emma hummed, though there were hints of concern in her tone.

“I understand!” Leylin was slightly touched, nodding as he turned back into Ley the Emberwing. He returned to the Special Task Force encampment in Wox City.

“Boss, the energy undulations just now?” The moment he entered, Mies rushed over hurriedly, his expression grim.

“It’s probably a fight between Star ranks!” Leylin obviously knew the reason for the change in his expression.
562 - Leaking Intel

To Mies’ knowledge, Star ranks were the most powerful existences in the Lava World.
He, who had not seen much in the world, was not aware there was an even more powerful realm after the Star rank. However, just one Star rank was enough to cause their leader, Schiker, to be heavily injured, and Sky ranked experts to die in large numbers. If another one had appeared? Mies didn’t even want to consider that.
“Has his Grace, the Northern Duke, arrived?” he guessed.
Well aware of all that was going on and actually the main offender himself, Leylin had a serious expression, “I’m afraid not! I’ll need to see the instructor!”
On the way, Leylin met Loke again. However, the man seemed to have much on his shoulders, and he could not tell if this was real or a pretence.
“Reporting in!” Leylin and Loke shouted outside the door.
“Come in!” Schiker’s slightly weary voice sounded from within.
After entering the room, Leylin’s nose twitched, the smell of disinfectant and ointment filling his nostrils.
Schiker was still looking like a mummy, but looked to be in a better mental state. He could now perform simple actions.
“Did you feel those undulations too?” Schiker asked with his eyes unfocused, watching a gigantic white tree whose light yellow flowers were blossoming.
The undulations from a Star rank battle were as dazzling and bright as a torch in the dark night. Most likely, all the Earth ranks in a 500km radius around them had sensed it as well. Leylin and Loke nodded.

“Sigh… Looks like one more powerful person has appeared apart from the previous Morning Star… The situation does not look good. Ley, send down the directive. Our Special Task Force is to wait for orders. Do not act recklessly!”

“I know!” Leylin apprehensively did as he was asked, but seemed hesitant.

“What is it?” Schiker asked. Seeing Leylin this way, he found it funny.

“Actually, instructor, I actually went into the battlefield in secret…” Leylin mumbled.

“What…” Schiker’s mouth went wide, as if he had just seen a rare beast.

Just a single stray wave from a Star rank battle could easily cause serious injuries or even death to Sky ranks. And this fearless fool had actually rushed in?

It was not only Schiker. Loke who was at the side was also stunned, feeling like he had to refamiliarize himself with this ‘Ley’.

“Hehe…” Leylin touched his head, looking embarrassed.

“I heard about what happened to Instructor and went to take a look and search for trails of that Star rank. It was in preparation for the arrival of His Grace, the Northern Duke…” With Leylin’s hot-headed displays in the past, this was a very plausible situation. Hence, Schiker merely nodded, not doubting anything at all.

“You…” Schiker had no idea what to say. “He must have thought little of a Sky ranked kid like you. On top of that, you must have had enough luck to come back safely. If not, we’d only be seeing your corpse now. No, we wouldn’t even have seen your corpse…”

“Your courage is really one of a kind…” Schiker nodded. “Well
then, what did you see?”
“This is the report I prepared. Sir, take a look!”
Leylin immediately produced a sketch with two faces on it. The first sketch was someone Schiker did not recognise, because it was a portrait Leylin had drawn of nobody in particular. The other image, however, had Schiker’s eyes turning red, his throat letting loose a roar, “It’s him! He’s the one who attacked me!”
“Quick! Tell me everything you saw!” Schiker’s remaining arm held Leylin’s tightly, eyes hopeful.
“Alright. I…”
Leylin narrated the story he had come up with previously. All of it was the truth, though he took himself out of the equation.
“In that case, the Star rank who attacked me was defeated, and you remember which direction he fled in? You did well!”
The ruthlessness was apparent in Schiker’s eyes. He could sense that this could be his only chance at taking revenge.
*Thud!* A stack of documents fell to the ground, and Loke who was at the side cried out in surprise.
“What’s wrong?” Leylin watched Loke, who had panicked, and found the situation hilarious as he went forward and asked in concern.
“N-Nothing. I was just shocked!” Concealing the panic and anxiety well, Loke regained his previous demeanour.
“Oh, is that so.” Leylin nodded. He could now confirm that Loke was most likely a spy sent in from the Mobius Organisation, and his superior might very well be Collins.
He obviously knew where Collins was hiding, because he had done something to Collins’ body. Only Leylin, who had the A.I. Chip, was able to place an imprint that would determine Collins’ location without arousing suspicion.
Of course, he wouldn’t be so stupid as to reveal he had placed some symbol on the other party’s body. He just needed to point in a
direction, and with this important clue, finding Collins was a simple matter with the entire Atlan Union working on it.

“Calm down, calm down!” Schiker stood and began to pace around the room. His face was flushed as he cursed. After standing straight for a long while, Schiker lay back down, disappointed.

“No! Even a heavily injured Star rank isn’t someone we can just walk up to!” After calculating the power he had at hand, Schiker announced that he was giving up. Only his tightly-clenched fists signified unwillingness and desire for revenge.

“Sir, are we going to let him off like this?” Leylin seemed to be extremely impulsive as he yelled.

“Yes! Instructor, we can’t just let them off like this!” Loke relaxed inside, but shouted along as well.

“I know, but…” Schiker smiled bitterly.

“There’s no ‘but’s!” A resolute voice sounded from outside, and the door was pushed open. A tall, sturdy Emberwing walk in, dressed in military uniform. “Schiker, I will help you take your revenge.”

An intense aura took over the room, and the atmosphere grew as heavy as lead.

“Thank you so much, Uncle Martin!” Schiker’s eyes turned, looking ready to cry. This was the first time Leylin and Loke had seen such an expression on him, and their eyes grew wide as they watched on in surprise. When would they see Schiker, who had gained repute for his tenacity, having such an expression? If not for pinching himself firmly, Loke would think he was dreaming.

Compared to Loke, Leylin was more focused on the energy undulations. “Fireplume, the tenth level of Fireplume! He must be the special commissioner, the Star rank Northern Duke!”

This was the first time Leylin had seen an Emberwing at the Star
realm. He did not dare let down his guard and hid his point mass and soul energy completely and leaving only Fireplume operating outside.

“You must be Ley, right? Not bad! You’re brave! If you ever go to the Thunderroll Legion, remember to look for me!”

Martin extended a large hand that was like steel and patted Leylin’s shoulders, eyes full of praise. “Now, bring me to the place where they battled…”

A surging bloodlust was present in his eyes.

“Understood, sir!” Leylin sounded excited as he yelled, though he was actually giving a long sigh inside. “Luckily, he didn’t see through my pretence. Looks like a high-levelled Fireplume and the concealed strength of my point mass is enough for me to get away with this situation even in front of a Star rank Emberwing…”

Having ascertained this, Leylin now had more confidence in sneaking into the Atlan capital, Tylasus.

“Let’s go!” Fiery-red flames lit up, and Martin and Leylin left before Loke could come back to himself.

“In-Instructor, he’s…” Loke was tongue-tied.

“Haha, he’s the Northern Duke. A Star rank who once killed 18 fire elemental commanders in the Death Grand Canyon!”

A flush appeared on Schiker’s face from his elation; he was extremely excited.

“I heard from Father that even among Star ranks, Uncle Martin is still the best. The other party is now injured, and if Uncle Martin finds him, he definitely won’t be able to escape!”

He ferociously punched forward, hope and carefreeness in his expression, “My revenge will be taken quickly…”

Schiker went on and on excitedly, not noticing the hint of concern in Loke’s eyes.

……
Days later, a piece of shocking news spread through the eastern region of the Atlan Union. There were even indicators that this news would be spread to other countries. A patriarch of the Mobius Organisation, who was a terrifying being at the Star rank, had been killed by the union’s Northern Duke, Martin!

In that instant, the Northern Duke Martin’s reputation spread throughout the eastern region, causing many rebelling organisations to be panic-stricken. However, few knew that Leylin and two others had been adding fuel to the flames.

The fall of a Star rank was a huge blow to the Mobius Organisation. Ever since Collins’ death, the progress of the purging operation in the eastern region was lightning quick. The squadron that Leylin led showed no mercy as they uprooted all organisations and strongholds that had anything to do with the Mobius Organisation. Such a fierce method instantly netted a favourable evaluation from Schiker, and with the intel from before, Leylin sensed that Schiker now treated him as a trusted aide.

As for Loke? That kid had been restless nowadays, and was not as enthusiastic in his missions. This had resulted in Schiker’s dissatisfaction. Of course, Leylin knew the reason, but he would not make it known.

A month had passed by in a flash after the large-scaled purging missions were over. The most magnificent and important festival of the Emberwings was now fast approaching, Holy Solar Festival!
A fleet of vehicles slowly drove out of Wox City. Leylin turned to look at the city, a ruminating smile about his lips.

The Atlan Union’s operation had dealt a huge blow to both the Mobius Organisation and the Triserpent Sect. As he had found the opponent’s headquarters and killed a Star rank, the eastern line that Schiker was in charge of was instantly rewarded by the leader. Now, they were heading back to the headquarters of the Atlan Union to have their merits evaluated after giving their reports.

Within another vehicle, Schiker’s injuries had pretty much healed and he watched Martin, deep in thought and sitting upright. He restrained himself for a while, before he could not help himself and asked, “Uncle Martin, what are you thinking about?”

“Oh, it’s nothing.” Martin seemed to recover from his daze and looked tired.

“I’m letting my imagination run wild in my old age,” he laughed, mocking himself. “The opponent this time is from another world. I keep having a feeling that if not for his being injured, I might just have…”

“Hss…” Schiker sucked in deeply, “Someone as powerful as Uncle Martin! How about the person who injured him?”

“Exactly! The mysterious person who exchanged blows with him is a giant threat, but no matter how hard I tried to find them, I
couldn’t find any traces…” Martin rubbed his brows.
What worried him more was that with his intuition as a Star rank, he had a feeling that something big was going to happen at the Holy Solar Festival. However, there seemed to be a veil that he could not see through.
“With the head around, who else could create trouble? I’m thinking too much into this…” Martin chuckled, and closed his eyes to get more rest, not realising there was someone watching him from the outside.
“Tsk tsk… Tenth level of Fireplume! I really want to use him as a guinea pig and do some research…” Leylin withdrew his gaze.
Martin was obviously an existence that had broken through to the Star rank, and in Leylin’s eyes, was like a specimen with very high research value.
If he were to make a move on the sly, he had a very good chance of taking him down and obtaining the secret of the tenth level of Fireplume.
However, for the greater benefits, Leylin restrained himself.
Besides, even regular contact throughout the day was enough for the A.I. Chip to gather data on the energy undulations and forcefield of the Emberwing, speeding up the simulation of the tenth level.
……
The sacred land of the Emberwings that was also the capital of the Atlan Union, Tylasus City appeared before Leylin.
As the Holy Solar Festival was fast approaching, the whole city was in a state of merriment, with multicoloured streamers everywhere.
In Leylin’s eyes, Tylasus City was not that vast, but since it was constructed on cliffs and precipices, it gave one the feeling of it being a boundless city in the sky.
Red floating feathery cotton-like items floated down into the city
like snow.
Schiker and Martin parted ways at the entrance to the city, and brought Leylin and Loke to another area.
Passing through a large square and a commemoratory forest full of large stone sculptures, Schiker arrived at a building as large and as majestic as a palace, the whole body made of some sort of white jade.
“This is the leader’s residence?” Loke’s voice trembled, as if extremely emotional. Leylin, however, shot him a discreet glance. This spy from the Mobius Organisation, which was also Jupiter’s Lightning, was probably targeting this place. That excitement was probably not feigned.
Leylin, on the contrary, had a change in expression when looking over this residence, as a trace of solemness appeared in his eyes. In his line of sight, there were powerful energy lights all over the residence, as well as many probing spells and the like. This was a normal sight.
However, there seemed to be a terrifying feeling emanating from within the residence. This aura was scalding hot and dense, where the radiation from powerful fire elemental particles was felt. A humming sound pervaded the area as the world seemed to come to a standstill in Leylin’s eyes. Everything was monochrome, and there were distortions in the lines of the building. Eye-piercing red lights constantly leaked out to form an ancient fire phoenix that faced the sky and gave a long cry.
*Chirp!* This fire phoenix was almost alive, eyes filled with wit as it glanced in Leylin’s direction. Surprised, Leylin immediately curbed all the undulations from his body, where his soul force holed up within his point mass. A great heat wave swept past, and red rays of light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, causing him to momentarily be dazed.
“What’s wrong, Ley?” Schiker immediately noticed him acting
oddly and turned around, looking concerned. After all that had happened, he now treated Leylin as his trusted aide, and even depended on him more than Loke. They had a very good relationship.

“Oh, it’s nothing. I was just thinking about how we’re going to see the magnificent leader of the state, so I was somehow lost in thought!” Leylin still looked slightly distracted but had obviously regained his senses. It seemed that only Schiker had seen him in that state.

“Haha!” Schiker patted Leylin in understanding, causing a trace of jealousy to arise in Loke’s expression.

“Lord Schiker!” The guards at both sides of the residence saluted with their bodies straight, not hindering Leylin and his group. It was obvious that they had known of Schiker’s identity beforehand.

“Instructor, so you’re the son of the leader! It’s truly an honour to be able to serve you…” Loke entered the resistance, so stirred up that he seemed about to spit foam. In order to get these two talents to submit more wholeheartedly, Schiker had revealed his identity as the leader’s son on the way to Tylasus.

In actuality, while he’d assumed that his identity was kept secret, Loke and Leylin had long since found out. However, they obviously appeared to be shocked, and were only one step short of grovelling at Schiker’s feet.

“I’m going to bring you to see Father. Remember to be cautious with your words!”

There was no excitement on Schiker’s expression, and his expression instead turning darker. This evidently had to do with his status as the illegitimate child, and Leylin and Loke naturally did not say more. There was a second wall after they entered the residence. Schiker
did not enter directly, but instead brought Leylin and Loke to another area similar to a duty room. 

Leylin glanced at the inscriptions beside the room. There was a line of small wording written in black on a red base: Military Office. ‘Could this be the Atlan Union leader’s personal force?’ Leylin could sense the Emberwing undulations from outside the place. He found that the auras of all the soldiers inside the office were immensely powerful, and none were below the eighth level of Fireplume. He could feel powerful crimson flames in a few other directions, causing his Fireplume at the peak of the ninth level to turn somewhat sluggish.

‘Star ranks! Perhaps only the leader of the Atlan Union will be able to order Star ranks around. He’s probably a rank 5 Magus…’ Leylin wondered.

“I am Schiker, bringing two of my subordinates to see the leader. I’ve made an appointment,” Schiker spoke to a staff member at the military office, passing an emblem-like item over. The staff member had a stern expression. From the undulations from the ninth level of Fireplume, he was also a peak Sky rank. Taking Schiker’s emblem, he placed it on a piece of apparatus and scanned it. *Beep!* The screen on the apparatus leapt up, and showed information on Schiker’s appearance and some other basic details.

He stood up, performing a military salute, “Officer Schiker, you can bring two subordinates inside.”

“Thanks” Ever since Schiker entered the residence, he had spoken sparingly, to the point that every single word was as precious as gold. Leylin and Loke struggled to suppress the excitement in their hearts and followed behind him as a military official led the way. ‘A.I. Chip! Record information on the structure, as well as powerful energy responses. Whether it’s heat, electrons, radiation
or chemical reactions, record everything!’ Leylin was inwardly communicating with the A.I. Chip, making the most of his time and creating a topographic map of this residence.

‘The moment those two Kemoyin dukes found out about my status, they immediately threw this job at me while they relaxed. Sigh…’ Leylin rolled his eyes inside, but knew that they had already prepared this operation for a long time. Coming in mid-way of their plans meant he had lucked out, so he did not take this to heart.

‘Firasource stones… This soul treasure is only distributed from the residence of the leader. There’s definitely something wrong!’ A glint flashed in Leylin’s eyes and withdrew again as he lowered his head and followed the official in front. They passed through several sentries and corners one after another. These security measures were all shown on the surface, and there were probably many more in the unknown.

In actuality, Leylin disapproved of these measures. For the leader, they were probably a burden, and at crucial moments, only his rank 5 strength could suppress everything.

However, this was the anguish of a person occupying the top seat. Even if it was impractical, it was needed for a person befitting his status.

“His Highness, the leader, is inside. You have half an hour!” The official brought Leylin and the others before a large red door and gave a deep bow before retreating.

Schiker took in a deep breath and held the brass handle of the door, “Father!”

“Come in!” The voice was gentle, yet held within an irrefutable intent. Even the air seemed to distort, obstructing the usual operation of rules and physics.

‘There’s a rank 5 inside, but I have the A.I. Chip, as well as Fireplume at the peak of the ninth level as a cover. That’s enough
to conceal my original strength!’
Leylin, who had faith in his strength, followed him in.
Leylin was clear that this was a huge test for him. If his disguise did not get through the leader of the Emberwings, everything was over. He could forget gaining his trust and the entire plan would have to be revised. Hence, he had to go through with this, but it wasn’t as if he was entirely unprepared.

At least, the two Giant Kemoyin Serpent Dukes had stealthily entered as well and were constantly on the watch outside the residence. If the leader noticed anything, Leylin would immediately use his Kemoyin Serpent Transformation and attack. With three Morning Star Warlocks together, it would probably be enough to escape.

After all, the three Kemoyin Elders from before had the record of fighting evenly with a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus. Though the most powerful First Elder had already fallen, Leylin believed he was no less powerful than him.

With three Giant Kemoyin Warlocks working together, it was enough for them to escape even if they could not win. That was what the three of them had counted on before daring to draw up this plan.

“A.I. Chip!” Leylin called out in a low voice.

[Beep! Beginning to conceal energy undulations.] The A.I. Chip intoned loyally, causing the aura on Leylin’s body to become more obvious as if he was a pure Emberwing.
The hidden strength of the point mass of a Morning Star, the secret technique to hide bloodlines as well as the support of the A.I. Chip gave Leylin the confidence that he could get away with all this under the rank 5’s nose!

Taking a deep breath, Leylin followed Schiker into the room, bowing to the figure at the middle.

This was a large study room. Simple armour, oil paintings and the like filled it with a history that changed the atmosphere. What surprised Leylin was the feeling that a domain had automatically been created in the study room.

This was not the domain of Morning Star, but a special space that had been formed due to the long period of time it had existed.

“Schiker, you’re here!” The head’s voice was gentle as he watched Schiker and the rest enter.

“Father!” Schiker called out after he went through a thousand different expressions.

“It’s been hard on you, get up. Are these your two subordinates? Excellent!” When the sound fell, Leylin felt his heart squeeze, and entire self get nervous. Immediately after, he felt something like a boiling hot gaze sweep at his body, causing him to tremble.

When the gaze was on his body, his point mass shuddered, as it his soul force defences was being forced to the surface, but Leylin firmly stopped it.

Meanwhile, his Fireplume, which had reached the peak of the ninth level, formed a giant energy tide that kept the point mass within. Terrifying flame energy began to revolve spontaneously, resisting the spying from outside.

“Hm?” The head made a light sound of surprise. “You must be Ley, right? Raise your head.”

Though the voice was gentle, it held the hint of an irrefutable command. Almost at the very moment the voice was heard, Leylin raised his head like it was a conditioned reflex.
Following that, he saw a handsome young man with red hair and eyebrows, looks slightly similar to that of Schiker. He wore a loose white robe, and his eyes seemed to hold… praise, within them? “Pretty good strength, and a pure flame energy.” The red-haired young man nodded, and turned in the other direction.

Loke’s body shivered, but the head said nothing. It was no surprise either, though. Just a soldier at the seventh level of the fire feathered technique was not enough to attract the leader’s notice.

“I’ve already looked through your achievements in detail. I hope you will continue to work hard in the future and protect our Union…” The handsome head encouraged them and waved his arms.

Leylin and Loke immediately retreated with expressions of reverence.

*Thud!* The door to the room closed, leaving only Schiker and the head inside. The head’s aura changed once more, and his expression while watching Schiker turned emotional, “It’s been hard on you these past few years!” “It’s service for the union!” Schiker had a taut expression while speaking, but his clenched fists displayed the dissatisfaction in his heart right now.

“Forget it. I know you care nothing for using my name and working, so I’ll let things move according to the usual procedure. Your contributions are enough for you to be promoted to be an admiral. Make some preparations, you will work at the Tylasus garrison!” The leader’s voice was gentle.

“Understood!” Schiker answered coldly. Seeing this expression, the leader’s brows furrowed slightly.

“One more thing. There’s something off about your two subordinates, Ley and Loke.”
“What’s wrong? I don’t need to say more about Ley’s loyalty, and as for Loke, he’s a descendant of the Eiffel family…”

The muscles on Schiker’s face tensed. He cared quite a lot for these two subordinates.

“There’s not a large issue with Ley. He’s long since broken through to the ninth level of the fire feathered technique, but he’s been concealing it and only revealing the strength of level eight. It’s probably on purpose,” the red-haired head commented.

“He must have a pretty high potential to reach this level at such a young age, and you can definitely consider roping him in. His intentions are too complex… Give him the tenth level of Fireplume later, I’m sure he’ll definitely be even more loyal to you after that…”

“So he’s already reached level nine?” Schiker ducked his head, slightly ashamed. From his point of view, Leylin had probably hidden his strength because Schiker had yet to advance himself. He did not want to pressure his superior.

He raised his head to look at his father, the number one genius of the Emberwings, and could not help but let his head hang down, defeated. He did not seem to have inherited even an ounce of talent from his father, and no matter how hard he worked, he still could not measure up to those geniuses. This was why he had been discouraged and left Tylasus City.

“I understand.” Schiker huffed out a long breath and nodded.

The head’s next words caused Schiker’s brows to raise. “Loke, however, is a very serious problem.”

“His appearance is a pretence. I’m afraid the real Loke has already died, and the one in front of you is of another race!”

“Another race?” Schiker cried out in alarm.

“Yes! I can’t tell if he’s from the Triserpent Sect or Mobius Organisation, but he probably has his eyes on the Holy Solar Festival.” A sneer appeared about the leader’s lips.
“I’ll seize him immediately!” Schiker got up, understanding the situation. His heart was filled with fury from the betrayal. Never had he expected that Loke, the man who usually worked hard, was responsible, and very much to his tastes, was a spy from the enemy. The shame from not realising this hovered in his mind.
The leader stopped Schiker, “There’s no hurry. They’re just a few bugs, what do they matter? What you need to do now is…”

……

After leaving the residence, Leylin bade Loke farewell and found an inn to stay in. Though the Special Task Force members had a station in Tylasus City with many unoccupied rooms and better facilities, Leylin was obviously not going to choose to stay there. He would perhaps go there later, but for now, it was better to find a place that would not attract attention.

After sending the maid away, Leylin locked the door, and the light in the room dimmed.

“How is it? Are things going well?” Two translucent figures emerged from the dark corners of the room. They were Gilbert and Emma.

“Is this place safe? Make sure it’s secure!” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

Emma replied, “Don’t worry. We’ve long since set up a concealing spell formations and boundaries. Even the staff and guests of the inn have been hypnotised, and we’ve also used some spiritual force pressure…”

Leylin did not ask more and began to narrate the happenings of the day slowly, “Things are going well on my end. I’ve obtained part of the map of the building, and even met the leader successfully…”

“So he didn’t suspect you? Tsk tsk! So that leader is a pretty boy!” Emma giggled.
“Probably not, but he did notice my faked Fireplume, something I intentional revealed,” Leylin laughed. He had long since gotten used to how these female Warlocks jumped from subject to subject so suddenly.

“How powerful is he?” Gilbert’s focus on his power more than his appearance was only expected. They had exchanged blows with the leader before, but wanted to know Leylin’s opinion.

“I can’t tell…” Leylin looked absent-minded, as if he was recalling the scene from the meeting. “But I can confirm that his soul strength is very powerful. It’s probably the strongest out of all the Radiant Moons I’ve seen!”

“He is the best of another world. He’s trained up to the thirteenth level of Fireplume, so he’s probably not any weaker than Radiant Moon Magi with level 5 meditation techniques in the Magus World. Not to mention he’s been using fira source stones and supplementing his soul…”

Gilbert sighed, recalling the scene when he had fought with their opponent, and his body involuntarily trembled.

“In our operation this time, we’ll try our best not to make contact with him, and all should be fine…”

Leylin’s heart sank but he continued and asked Emma, “How’s your preparation going?”

“It’s smooth-sailing. Hehe… From now, you need to call us Viscount Flower and Earl Violet…” Emma giggled. It looked like she was doing well.

Leylin was rather speechless. The Atlan Union had actually let outsiders do so well that they became earls. He had no idea how Emma had gotten through the nobility examination.

“Also, we’ve found traces of activity of several Jupiter’s Lightning Morning Stars in Tylasus!”

Gilbert’s other piece of information immediately had Leylin’s attention, “Are they here to take revenge on us?” he asked as he
touched his chin. After all, Collins was slain by them.
Gilbert shook his head. “I’m afraid not. Their target should be the
same as ours.”
“Is that so? Then the difficulty of our operation should increase by
a large amount. Of course, things might also become more
convenient for us…” Leylin’s eyes glinted profoundly.
Leylin walked out of the inn, with the hypnotised boss and attendants left behind. After he left, these people would forget his appearance and him having been there at all, and would not even doubt their memories. This was a spiritual force intent planted deep in their minds.

He had learnt this technique from the Spirit Circle Warlock, Paul. He returned to the station to find Schiker waiting for him, having come in secret. After a lengthy conversation with him, Leylin was left wanting to both laugh and cry as he looked at the item on the table.

This was a little book with a fiery-red cover. Within was the information on the tenth level of the fire feathered technique! Schiker had come over just to give him this. The tenth level of Fireplume that had been on Leylin’s mind had landed in his possession quite easily.

“I don’t know how to react…” Leylin commanded the A.I. Chip to destroy the book after recording the thing down. “But it looks like he has gotten rid of all suspicion towards me…”

On top of that, the item he had been desiring had landed in his palms. Leylin was in a pretty good mood.

[Beep! Recording of tenth level of Fireplume complete. Beginning analysis…] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, and Leylin carefully looked through the contents in his memory bank.
Compared to the ninth level, the tenth touched on the Morning Star Realm, and was a path that focused on strength. Given that this had the unique characteristics of a foreign world, Leylin believed it would have very high research value.

Many ancient Magi were all-embracing, incorporating these paths from other worlds into their own systems to advance. By making use of others’ strengths to make up for their own weak points, they had been able to achieve the splendour of the ancient era. And Leylin, too, wanted to do the same!

“The tenth level of Fireplume!” Leylin’s expression gradually became solemn.

The more he watched on, the more he felt that the person who had created this technique had a talent that was off the charts. This was definitely a powerful technique that could contend against many other top-grade meditation techniques!

As the A.I. Chip’s analysis progressed, Leylin’s aura gradually changed.

Within his body, the boiling hot energy from the ninth level of Fireplume gradually purified and turned transparent, emanating a frightening might.

Large amounts of fire elemental crystals appeared, and even seemed to turn into a whirlpool.

*Skreee* A high-pitched phoenix cry sounded by Leylin’s ear. It felt as if his spiritual and soul force had made a connection with some unique existence!

At the bottom of an abyssal starry river, a giant, terrifying beast with a body that spanned several worlds suddenly opened its eyes, gazing at Leylin coldly.

“Could this be the legendary ancient fire phoenix? With this aura, it’s probably the king or even primogenitor of fire phoenixes!”

Leylin knew very well that even if what he saw was merely a phantom, such an ancient existence was mysterious and difficult to
fathom. It could perhaps even use its phantom to display its strength.
The rage in the phoenix’s eyes caused Leylin to feel a biting cold.
‘Crap, it’s realised that I’ve been wearing a disguise!’ A thought flashed in Leylin’s mind, and immediately after he sensed a tremendous crimson current flooding towards him.
*Rumble!* The sound of shattering was heard in Leylin’s lower abdomen, and he immediately turned pale, spitting out a mouthful of blood. His expression, however, was that of rejoicement.
“Luckily, I’ve already condensed my point mass!” Leylin could still feel fear as he looked into his body.
His point mass, which had already turned silent, had suddenly appeared when Fireplume was writhing, ready to break through to the tenth level. That had shaken the crimson energy essence that had gathered and broken the process of the advancement to the tenth level of Fireplume, the Star rank. For this reason, Leylin had been pulled out of that dream-like fantasy, or else the consequences would be dire.
“That fire phoenix that was like a world itself… Could it be the ancient lord of phoenixes?”
Leylin recalled that terrifying giant fire phoenix. In his mind, it could only be compared with existences such as the Snake Dowager, Trial’s Eye, and a few others.
“It looks like Fireplume and the fire phoenix have a relationship, and the tenth level of Fireplume requires connecting with the fire phoenix, and even withstanding the corruptive power radiating from it. Of course, the Emberwings would call that power an additional boost”
The true body of the tremendous fire phoenix was obviously not here, but with sacrificial rites, or other techniques absorbing some sort of energy, disseminating power was a method used by many existences to traverse worlds.
If not for Leylin having already reached Morning Star and having his own path, forcefully interrupting the advancement of Fireplume might have immediately caused his death at its hands!

‘So Fireplume at the Morning Star rank is a path of sacrifice! By offering sacrifices up to the ancient fire phoenix or even changing one’s bloodline, one will ultimately become part of its family…’

Leylin touched his chin. These methods were similar to the belief in various gods, but was still different. Gods focused on quantity, while the path of sacrifice was passed on on a large scale, but then focused only on the elites. It was more like a chosen community of its own.

Leylin’s expression grew grim, as he thought of something, ‘These methods, this feeling of being suppressed…it’s very similar to the rule of the Snake Dowager…’

“A.I. Chip, begin modification of Fireplume. Moderate the force of point mass and simulate fusion of the two, eliminating the possibility of being controlled via sacrifice…”

Since he would attract attention from the fire phoenix after reaching the higher levels of Fireplume, Leylin obviously would not persist. However, he was rather interested in modifying the technique and fusing it into the Magus World system.

In the ancient era, these thoughts had been proven countless times to be workable. On top of that, the element he had the second most affinity with was the fire element, and in this area he had a natural advantage.

This led to an even more insane thought.

‘Since all this has to do with the bloodline, meditation techniques and controlling cultivation pathways, I can probably make use of this Fireplume and find ways to deal with the Snake Dowager…’

Leylin’s eyes turned darker. He was unwilling to serve beneath anyone, and while he had not gained the attention of the Snake Dowager yet, he could not tolerate the idea of being manipulated.
He was already preparing for the day that will eventually come. Whether it was attempting to break through bloodline shackles or abandoning the bloodline restraints from meditation techniques, it was all for this cause. ‘Where is the fun in having immortality at the peak yet being under the oppression of another?’ A trace of profound thought flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

[Beep! Beginning fusion simulation, mobilising 80% of task resources. Tenth level of Fireplume, meditation technique Kemoyin’s Pupil… Estimated time: 16 days, 14 hours, 34 minutes and 56 seconds…]
The A.I. Chip loyally intoned.

After Leylin had entered the Morning Star realm, its calculations and simulation techniques had been reinforced, and the time limit set was now precise to the second. This was a rare occurrence while simulating techniques in the past. “16 days? It will be completed right before the Holy Solar Festival. That’s not bad!” Leylin touched his chin, rather satisfied with this outcome.

……

In the residence of the leader, at the deepest part underground. Boiling heatwaves of hot lava expanded and withdrew, but were unable to advance due to an isolated maroon spell formation. Within the maroon spell formation, there were many crowded buildings that formed a large number of private rooms. In one of them, the leader, with his red brows and hair and young looks, was now meeting the gaze of another black figure in a mirror on the ground. The figure in the mirror donned loose, majestic Magus robes, with a moon rune on his forehead. Those eyes were now filled with
Zegna’s voice was low. “Scarlet Eye! You obviously knew that the Mobius Organisation was mine, and yet you still made a move? On top of that, there’s the fall of Collins as well. You need to take responsibility for it…”

The leader of the Atlan Union, Scarlet Eye, snorted. “When we last communicated, I reiterated many times that the Atlan Union is my territory, and I won’t let any outsiders spy on us, particularly Magi from other worlds. You seem to have forgotten that, my friend.”

Zegna, who was in the mirror, sighed lightly as if finding this a pity. He obviously knew what was taboo to the other party, but how could he have a large world right there but not do anything about it?

“But a Morning Star from our end has fallen! Do you know how much resources we would need to compensate that?” Zegna’s voice became sharp.

“Based on the intel from my subordinates, he was already seriously injured and on the verge of perishing when we found him. Those three enemies of yours had attacked him…” There was a hint of schadenfreude in Scarlet Eye’s voice.

Zegna’s voice was stilted, and he was slightly regretful.

When he had used this world and set a trap, he had been absolutely confident in taking care of the three dukes. That was why he had not minded the leaking of this world’s coordinates. However, he had grossly underestimated his opponents’ abilities, and they had used quite a few bloodline treasures to break free from their trap forcefully and descended down to this world. That had made things very troublesome for him.

If he could turn back time, he would probably not do the same thing.

“Besides… you have not kept to your word. Trading between us needs to be halted for a period of time…” Scarlet Eye tossed him a
heavyweight bomb.
“No!” Zegna immediately cried out, and instantly saw the mocking smile on the other person. He lowered his head unwillingly, but said little more. The other party did not mind losing the support of his technology, but he could not let go of the firasource stones. That was his only hope at having a glimpse into the Breaking Dawn throne! Hence, he had no choice but to duck his head and gentle his tone. “Revered leader, I’m afraid we both have to take some responsibility, but this shouldn’t affect our friendship…” “That’s right, my friend! As a cost of you violating the promise between us first, you will need to halve the price of the secondary element balancing spell formation you promised the last time!” “Alright!” Zegna was practically gritting his teeth as he agreed. When the communication was closed off, he stood up while roaring. The black throne under him continuously creaked, terrifying air waves dissipating in all directions. “I’ll definitely kill that Scarlet Eye someday and roast his soul above my Magus Tower for ten thousand years!”
A Morning Star Magus would not dare face the wrath of a Radiant Moon.
Outside the elegant palace, a few Morning Star Magi looked at each other and kept their distance, leaving the low-level servants hugging their heads and trembling at the side. A reckless energy wave swept across the area near the throne, and soon there was not a single living thing in the area.
“Rage is the natural enemy of all Magi! Don’t tell me, you’re a bloodline Warlock as well?” A soothing gentle laugh sounded in the air like a clear spring, mocking at Zegna. Shockingly, upon hearing the voice, Zegna calmed a little. Besides slightly heavy breathing, he showed no significant difference from before the contact.
“You are right! But soon or later I’m going to wipe out the bloodline of those damn Kemoyin Warlocks!” Zegna returned to his throne, and the moon on his forehead glowed with bright light, brightening up the entire palace.
“In your current state, you might not be able to deal with Scarlet Eye even if you use a large amount of firasource stones to increase your soul force. Unless you can lure him out of the Lava World, or find a way to eliminate the resistance of the world’s will…” The woman said in a cold voice.
“You’re still pestering me to use that?” Zegna replied in the same tone.
“Yes! I am the most experienced in the tests of secondary clones. I can reduce the percentage of error such that it’s lower than one out of a million, and the best method for you to go to Lava World…” The female voice seemed to analyse the situation in a very composed manner, sounding very charming.

“If you want to use rank 5 strength in the Lava World, this is the only way. Furthermore, you won’t be detected as an enemy by the foreign world through some cleansing of the mind of the clone.”

Zegna fell into complete silence upon hearing the last sentence. A foreign world’s will was the biggest hindrance to any Magus, and once it worked to support that world’s inhabitant, even a Radiant Moon would not dare to defy its terrifying power.

Perhaps, only those who were at the peak of the Breaking Dawn Realm would have the power to destroy the world’s will.

Zegna’s face turned solemn and gloomy all of a sudden. “Pass down my order. All Magi of Jupiter’s Thunder are to return and assist in the preparation of a pathway to the Lava World. All proposals and backups are to be effective immediately. Let’s give Scarlet Eye’s Holy Solar Festival a big gift!”

Zegna’s voice lowered gradually as his facial expression turned malevolent.

In the Lava World, Leylin had not noticed any of this. He had reached the head’s place with Loke And Schiker.

“You guys are really lucky. I was transferred to the central garrison. Since you lot were from the Special Task Force, I recommended all of you to enter the Martial Officer Department of the head.”

Schiker was wearing the uniform of an Emberwing general as he brought the rest to the Martial Officer Department.

“I am truly honoured and thankful for your recommendation!” Both Leylin and Loke showed gratitude towards Schiker.

With them being allocated here, they would hold high positions wherever they went in the future. It was also obvious that they
would have the benefit of getting closer to the head. As for Leylin and Loke, they both had unspeakable secrets, so the main reason why they got close to Schiker was to use him as a stepping stone towards the head. Since that dream of theirs had come true, they were both thrilled.

“Good! So long as you know I mean well!” Schiker patted Leylin’s shoulder. He did not wish to spare a second glance at Loke, but he still gave Loke a smile as he recalled his father’s words. “It’s different here, completely unlike being in the Special Task Force. You have to be extra careful. Once you violate law and order, I won’t be able to help you…”

While Schiker was giving them reminders, he walked them into a small office, “This is Bowens, and he’ll be in charge of you in the future.”

A blond-haired middle-aged man in the office got off from his seat and came up to welcome them when he saw Schiker. He seemed to be rather easy going, “Haha, Schiker! You haven’t been here in quite some time. So these are the ones? Don’t worry, I’ll take good care of them.”

But Leylin and Loke dared not ignore him. Not only would Bowens be their superior in future, his aura was somewhat similar to the Duke they had encountered previously. This new superior of Leylin’s was also an impressive elite, a Morning Star Magus that had already reached level 10 of Fireplume.

“This familiar aura! He was one of the elite Morning Star Magi I sensed earlier!”

The red progress bar was currently already halfway full. The A.I. Chip had already begun to smoothly merge the essence of the tenth level of Fireplume into his Morning Star point mass, which would greatly increase his power.

“I’m not sure how the modified tenth level of Fireplume will be…”
How will it compare to these true Emberwing elites? I can’t wait to find out…’ Leylin curled his lips in a subtle movement, showing great interest.

Bowens was totally oblivious to the decision of his new subordinate, who was planning on getting rid of him after completing the new Fireplume. He instead found this Ley quite genial and amiable, instantly growing fond of him.

“There are specific duty rooms and bedrooms in the Martial Officer Department, you guys cannot stay in the Special Task Force anymore, you have to move in from now on. You do have any missions yet, I want you two to join the night patrol team and attend trainings during the daytime for now, any questions?”

After Schiker had left, Bowens turned and looked at them, his tone was less courteous, his aura full of dignity.

“Yes, Sir!” Leylin and Loke bowed together.

Night arrived.

“Something is just not right…” Leylin straightened up his body, feeling good that everyone had their individual bedrooms despite the limited area.

“Schiker has always treated us as his trusted aides… Now that he’s going to the central garrison, why didn’t he bring us with him?”

Leylin rugged his chin, “Even though being in the Martial Officer Department means to have a very promising future, it is also considered as being his father’s bodyguards. It’s unlikely that he put both of us in here, unless… someone got exposed…”

Leylin had full confidence in himself, but Loke could not even fool him much less a rank 5 elite.

“Now it seems that they’re not as cautious about me anymore, even sending me the tenth level of Fireplume. However, I’m obviously here under observation. It seems like they don’t trust me unconditionally yet…”

“As for Loke, he’s basically bait. They’re ready to net the entire
organisation behind him…”
Leylin grew more assured of his assumptions as he thought it through. Suddenly, a red light glowed from the ring on his finger. Leylin was shocked for a second, but then he lifted a map written on pale yellow parchment from the top of the table. A little black dot was moving slowly on the map.
“I knew you couldn’t wait, but I never expected you to be this impatient.” Leylin smiled and laid down. A thin black string drifted swiftly out of his body and emerged from the darkness.
Hidden in the shadows, Leylin made use of his fine manipulation and the perception of the A.I. Chip, carefully avoiding numerous sentry devices and traps in the leader’s area as he followed the other party. That person was holding onto a black pearl, which had helped him get through many detection formations and the like. It seemed to be recording something.
‘Collecting information, eh? It seems like Jupiter’s Lightning wants to get rid of the leader of Atlan too…’ Leylin smiled, discovering the other figure who had also secretly followed after Loke. He shook his head and hid himself further. He was here in his real body, while inside the room was a mere shadow puppet. Still, with the A.I. Chip’s abilities, it was not a problem for the puppet to cover his absence for a short period of time.
‘This fellow didn’t even realise he was being followed. He only has himself to blame…’ Since Leylin already knew that this was a setup, he wanted to return to his bedroom, and hence he hid in silence. Just when he was about to leave, a horrifying ferocious energy wave fluctuation in the air caused his body to come to a violent stop.
‘What’s this fluctuation?’
He raised his head, gazing at the sky nearby, ‘Morning Star Arcane Art? No, not that! It’s more like another path to power. It seems like magic, but it’s actually a combination of fire elemental spell formations, not an Arcane Art.’
Together with strong fluctuations, a point of scarlet fire lit up the sky. The heavens rumbled as if they contained muffled thunder. A rain of lava dripped down, spreading over a vast range and almost covering up the entirety of the head’s residence.
‘He dares to attack this place directly?’ Leylin felt at a loss for words, unsure as to how he should praise that person’s bravery.
The ghastly lava rain had wrapped up the entire place, every single drop containing a power of over a thousand degrees. If they were allowed to hit the ground, all the officers except the head and a few elite Star ranks would die, and the whole place would be razed to the ground. The leader would turn into a huge laughingstock.
“Stop!”
“How dare you!!”
A few ferocious and reckless voices sounded around the whole place, and dazzling energy light pillars shot up forming into a light shield that covered the whole place within.
“Kekeke! How many can you save?” A quirky voice sounded in the midst of sky, followed by a huge amount of lava rain, it extended fiercely, covering the entire city of Tylasus.
A drop of the lava rain could kill all the normal citizens easily. Were this to happen before the Holy Solar Festival, the head of the union would land in deep trouble.
Thus, Leylin judged that that person would surely take action.
“How dare you!!”
Just then, a ferocious bird, huge scarlet body complemented with a stunning tail that was covered by flames flew out of the residence, the high-pitched whistle of a phoenix sounding out…
kree! The gigantic bird of fire dashed out of the building. It opened up its wings in a flash of light, and glorious flames shot out from its body as it enlarged in the blink of an eye. Its humongous wings closed, wrapping up the entire city of Tylasus. The drops of lava with over a thousand degrees of power fell onto its wings, being absorbed by the flames. When the lava storm passed, the city had emerged unscathed. A bright light flashed across Leylin’s eyes as he looked at the scene, ‘Such a transformation is very similar to that of an ancient Warlock. It looks like the body of this Emberwing Morning Star has the bloodline of the fire phoenix.’ Warlocks were always fond of high-level bloodlines. As for the fire phoenix, Leylin had already seen its incredible power when he’d been trapped in the illusion previously. It was likely at least as strong as the Snake Dowager. This bloodline posed an irresistible attraction to Warlocks even if it was diluted through sacrifices and projections. ‘Before we launch our plan, I should try to get some of the bloodline of a Morning Star Emberwing. It would be even better if I manage to get it from their leader, Scarlet Eye.’ Just as Leylin’s eyes brightened, the phoenix soared down from the clouds in the sky, revealing several gigantic, hundred meter long silhouettes made of flames.
The fire elementals were the most powerful living beings in the Lava World, and the most populous. They did not have blood or flesh, and instead had bodies covered in fuming flames and rocks. Their eyes were like deathly white flames that arose from the very soul.

“Divineflame Empire! It seems like you lot didn’t learn your lesson at Death Grand Canyon!” Scarlet Eye’s voice boomed across the sky, and the humongous wings wrapped up the giant fire elementals, flinging them away.

Its body rumbled as explosions erupted all over it, but it did not seem bothered at all.

By the time the phoenix vanished, half the flames in the sky had subsided. Leylin widened his eyes.

‘They even have such a method? Are there still people undercover in the leader’s residence? And does that mean this was a ploy to lure the tiger out of its den?’

Hidden in front of him was Loke. He sighed in relief and pulled out a circular disk as he saw the phoenix leave.

On the surface of this disk were weird runes with countless interconnected crimson lines that formed a vertical pupil.

‘Haven’t I seen something like this before?’ Puzzlement crossed his eyes as he immediately checked with the A.I. Chip’s database. The answer showed up within a second. ‘A copy of Gaia’s Disc? Such a technique actually exists…’

Loke stopped at an empty ground in the building. He placed the replica on the ground as he showed a tinge of excitement.

*Ssshh!* The very moment the disc touched the ground, a large amount of sand split apart like it was a stream, revealing a pitch dark tunnel that led underground.

“Here it is! Now I’m at the weakest part of the entire building. Together with the power of Gaia’s Disc…” Loke’s eyes grew impassioned. He had endured a lot of humiliation during this
mission, and now he could finally succeed in his task!
‘That was good cooperation, but I’m afraid it won’t be of help.’
Leylin saw the agitated Loke enter the underground tunnel, soon to be followed by a gloomy Bowens. This was the superior they had just met that day.
It seemed like Loke’s luck was at an end.
However, Leylin had one more doubt, ‘Since they wanted to coordinate between the inside and outside, why don’t they just send a Morning Star Magus in, isn’t that much simpler? They already sent so many just to attract attention, one more wouldn’t be too hard…’
He did not think much of it since that was a question that wouldn’t see an answer soon. Instead, he followed the two and entered just as the tunnel closed up…
*Boom!* Schiker entered Leylin’s room.
“Instructor!” ‘Leylin’ got up from the bed, bowing even with blurry sight.
Schiker first looked around with a cautious gaze, and he looked relieved that Leylin was still around. Soon, he reprimanded the boy, “You’re still asleep under such circumstances?”
“Master Bowens and so many of his colleagues are around right now. If they can’t solve the problem, what can I do? I might as well just continue sleeping…”
‘Leylin’ threw his hands up, seemingly helpless. With the support of the A.I. Chip, every action of this puppet was a perfect copy of Leylin’s behaviour, even its character was flawless. Forget Schiker, even Gilbert was unlikely to be able to notice the difference.
“You…” Schiker was dumbfounded, but the waves in his heart secretly calmed down…
Inside the underground tunnel, Leylin followed closely after Bowens. He had weakened his breath to the maximum, and not a single energy wave fluctuation broke out. Additionally, Bowens
seemed to have put his full focus on Loke, and he did not realise he was being shadowed.

“Gaia’s Disc was used by the Hero Moncordol of the Emberwings’ legend to lift open the stratum, it is also the powerful weapon which slew the demon king Falsace; this can easily crack open a huge underground tunnel even if it’s just a replica.”

Loke’s voice trembled in agitation, “The organisation possessed such a precious weapon that let me avoid triggering numerous traps. Truly, this is…”

As he reached the bottom, blood vessels popped out from under Loke’s skin, his aura growing berserk.

“The final layer of defence!” Loke was frantic in excitement as he saw a crimson defensive membrane.

He suddenly attacked, and a huge amount of fire exploded forth from his hands, rushing into the spell formation.

Crackling sounds rang out as the spell formation shook. A terrifying wave of energy was returned in counter, and surged through Loke’s body. His skin peeled off, revealing the flames burning within.

Loke’s body had been completely shredded by the formation’s counterattack, revealing a two-meter tall fire elemental, composed of flames and rocks.

The flame surged in all directions, and Loke’s aura rose to the pinnacle of the Sky rank, the equivalent of a peak rank 3 in the Magus World.

‘Hmmm? Loke is a fire elemental?’

Leylin was rather surprised. He had always thought that Loke was an undercover agent of the Mobius Organisation, Jupiter’s Lightning’s operations here, but now it seemed like he did not know the length of it. Jupiter’s Lightning had also approached the Divineflame Empire, and had signed some terms of agreement with each other.
After recovering his original appearance, Loke marched up to the scarlet spell formation. A dot of a golden flame shot out of his body, burning a round opening in the spell formation’s light shield. Loke turned into a ball of flames, entering from that tiny opening in the spell formation and soon returning to his normal form.

“Hahahaha… All of Scarlet Eye’s treasures and secrets are mine for the taking!” As Loke laughed, he explored the chamber. His flaming legs left a black burn mark with every step he took. He seemed rather familiar with this area, running straight towards the chamber in the centre.

The gigantic chamber was spacious, with nothing around except a large spell formation. Strings of runes interlocked with the energy circuit. It was so refined that a Magus would go dizzy simply by staring at it for a length of time.

In the middle of the formation was a weak red light, its energy as it flickered causing Leylin’s heart to palpitate. ‘This aura is so familiar… Yes, the firasource stones! Wait… it’s a living creature?’ The A.I. Chip had made a judgement that threw Leylin into confusion.

“Found it!” Loke celebrated in his excitement. He took out a big black key, walking towards the spell formation. Just then, a membrane of light blocked his path of return, the surging wave of energy sweeping him onto the ground in an instant.

The gigantic fire elemental fell flat to the ground with a thud, causing the chamber to shake a little.

“What happened? Doesn’t this place just have a single defensive layer?” Loke touched his head, puzzled.

“Obviously it is used to guard against people like you.” Bowens sneered, exiting stealth and walking out from the dark.

“B–Master Bowens?” Loke was totally taken aback.
“Hmm! The leader knew long ago that there was something wrong with you. It seems you hid quite a lot from us.”

The fuming lava hand dropped onto the ground, and the black key was snatched from his hands.

“You are a very important captive. The leader and Schiker will take great interest in you.” Bowens spoke coldly as the flame on his hands turned into ropes which tied Loke up.

Loke could not fight back against the power of a Star rank. Rather, he was so flabbergasted that he did not even struggle or otherwise resist.

While both of them were unaware of their surroundings, Leylin snuck close to the membrane of light. The A.I. Chip scanned the formation, revealing the entry condition, [Aura of level 10 Fireplume required for access.]

Watching Loke being taken away by Bowens, Leylin followed them out of the basement. He recalled the shadow puppet after returning to his bedroom.

He had lots of questions, ‘What was that red orb in the middle of the spell formation? Bowens settled Loke so quickly, and obviously he wasn’t used as bait. Was it merely for Gaia’s Disc and that black bronze key?’
Gilbert, Emma; the tides have turned. The Mobius Organisation might be colluding with the Divineflame Empire. Be very careful!

Unable to come up with anything even after a long time, Leylin specially informed Gilbert and Emma about the situation. He then returned immediately to the leader’s residence. His actions were not in the least bit unusual.

Yesterday, Scarlet Eye had returned to the mansion right after Leylin followed Bowens out, making Leylin secretly heave a sigh of relief.

If he had chosen to take action then, it was likely that even after he tackled Bowens, he would have bumped into Scarlet Eye who was rushing back. That would have spelt trouble.

Furthermore, he didn’t want to make a move before understanding the situation.

“Officer Schiker! Where’s Loke? Why haven’t I seen him around recently?” Leylin questioned ‘curiously’. Upon the mention of this name, Schiker’s facial muscles twitched, and he was silent for a long while before he spoke. “He has been assigned to a top-secret mission, and will be away for some time!”

“I see!” Leylin seemed to have gained some understanding. He moved closer to Schiker and asked, “Instructor, about that night… what happened in the end?”

“What else? The leader emerged victorious of course! He struck
two of the masters from the other party who were at the Star rank. He took one of them prisoner, and the foreign affairs department will negotiate with the Divineflame Empire!” A look of admiration flashed across Schiker’s eyes, but Leylin’s heart sank.
‘They paid such a high price, yet ended up with nothing. Those people from the Divineflame Empire definitely will not take things lying down. Furthermore, the trap they set previously that caused the loss of the combat abilities of the Morning Stars was not very wise. What is the truth behind all of this?’
Combining that line of thought with the intelligence given by Emma and Gilbert in the past two days, Leylin suddenly felt as though the future was shrouded in a dense fog.
‘I’m afraid I’ll have to modify my previous plan. This Holy Solar Day will not pass in peace. Divineflame Empire, Jupiter’s Thunder, and even the Ouroboros Clan will take action. When that time comes, this place will be plunged into chaos…
‘Well, at least there’s this to look forward to!’ Leylin saw that the progress bar on the A.I. Chip was quickly filling up, and couldn’t help but smile.
The tenth level of Fireplume was the gateway to the Star rank. Leylin’s energy had already been condensed to form a point mass, and if these two systems could be fused successfully the formidable power produced would definitely not just be additive. There would be a horrifying qualitative change in him, amplifying his powers to a great extent.
Additionally, Leylin had long since used up all the firasource stones he had earned from Collins, something that caused his soul force to improve by leaps and bounds. His strength after all this would surely give many enemies a surprise.
His eyes glowed crimson as the corners of his lips rose to form a wicked smile.
The bloodline of the apex predator, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent,
was pressing him to slaughter! He wanted to destroy everything, to bring it all to flaming ruin!
The emotional instability that was common to bloodline Warlocks had begun to act up. After he advanced to the Morning Star realm, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s soul had fused with Leylin’s own, causing him to inherit these violent moods. These were no longer an external thing, but instead part of his own nature.
Once such an illness acted up, it would have a far-reaching effect on the Warlock’s personality.
Previously, Leylin had always made a conscious effort to restrain himself, preventing his feelings from eroding his character away. Now that war was upon them, he was facing unprecedented pressure, and some strange emotions managed to worm their way out…
No matter what others thought, time was still ticking by. Finally, the day of the Emberwings’ festival, the Holy Solar Day, had arrived.
During his recent trips, Leylin saw the streets and markets starting to bustle with activity. Many teenage Emberwings now went against the taboo, playing on the road. The atmosphere was filled with clamour.
The various district representatives from the Atlan Union and the other tourists who came on their own accord arrived at Tylasus City one by one. The place was packed to the brim, even overcrowded, resulting in multiple cases of breaches in public security. Even Leylin, a martial officer from the Military Office, had to step in at times, something more than evident of how thin the security had been stretched.
According to the information given by Gilbert and Emma in private, many of the elites from the Mobius organisation and Triserpent Sect had also snuck into Tylasus City. They were the ones who stirred up trouble here, making the place chaotic.
Additionally, the arch-enemy of the Atlan Union, the Divineflame
Empire, had also sent a large team of ambassadors, causing more trouble.
“It just seems like things will get relatively more troublesome!” Leylin lamented. He donned the dashing uniform of a military official, and stood tall and straight. He and his colleagues lined along both sides, while Scarlet Eye stood in front of a huge fitting room mirror, adjusting the butterfly-shaped necktie on his collar.
“Your Highness! Your schedule for today is as follows: first up will be the parliament lecture, followed by welcoming the envoy from the Divineflame Empire. The banquet in the afternoon…” Standing next to Scarlet Eye were a few secretaries with pen and paper in hand, chattering away. There were also a few maids who were tidying up the creases on the coattails of his dinner suit.
Schiker, Bowens and the others were also dressed neatly and stood at the side. Outside the window, lots of fireworks and gun salutes could be seen. Colourful confetti filled the sky, and the place was filled with a festive atmosphere.
“Alright! I have my own plans for today’s matters!” Scarlet Eye furrowed his brows and waved his hand, sending away the secretaries who were still chattering endlessly.
“Schiker, you shall accompany me today.” These words seemed to move the leader’s son to tears.
Seeing his odd mix of being both moved and apprehensive, Leylin felt at a loss for words.
‘The private life of this state leader is quite confusing. His previous marriage did not produce a heir, and now that he only has Schiker, his illegitimate child, does he hope for him to inherit his political legacy and even become the next leader of the union?’
If the other officials knew that Leylin was silently cursing their almighty leader, they might have come together to tear him apart, and the outcome wouldn’t be pleasant.
“Let’s go!” After quite some time, Scarlet Eye finished his
preparations and took the lead as he mounted a chariot that was drawn by numerous scarlet birds. Schiker followed closely behind. Bowens walked behind everyone. He suddenly glanced at Leylin and commanded, “Ley, you come too!”

“But… The duty of a humble servant is to stay behind and guard the residence!” Leylin appeared to be hesitating, but he was secretly cursing in his heart.

His duty for today was to stand guard at the residence. This was perfectly normal as he lacked the proper qualifications, and thus could not show his face at the parliament. However, this was what he wanted. After all, the places that Scarlet Eye would go to today would not be tranquil, and there would not be any advantages from following him out. How would that be more enjoyable than being able to hide in the residence and unearth treasures the minute he discovered that something was off?

What did he stand to gain from going out with Scarlet Eye anyway? That one casual sentence from Bowens disrupted his plans for the day.

Leylin felt a little gloomy as he looked at Bowens. Maybe Bowens sensed that something was amiss, or maybe he just found Leylin an eyesore, but he had been causing a lot of trouble for Leylin on the sly.

“.. Yes, Sir!” To the others, it seemed that Leylin only hesitated for a while before agreeing immediately in a loud voice, ecstasy spreading across his face. This made many of the officials who were staying behind envy him, yet they did not know that Leylin was secretly rolling his eyes.

Bowens was his superior after all, and Leylin could not do much even if he disagreed.

Leylin stood at the back of the fleet and reflected, ‘Might as well! When the moment comes, I’ll join Gilbert and Emma directly. Once something is amiss, we will immediately activate the coordinates
and return. I don’t believe that Scarlet Eye will give chase and follow us back to the Magus World.’
Gilbert and Emma had first found their way into the ranks of feudal nobility through a small noble family by disguise and strength. They then wantonly betrayed the secrets of the Triserpent Sect against their interests, and attained the positions of Earl and Viscount, allowing them to attend today’s celebration.
If the three Giant Kemoyin Warlocks were together, even Scarlet Eye would find it hard to capture them successfully, so there was at least some form of assurance in terms of safety.
‘Bowens, however, has to be killed! He better not run into me today, or else…’ Leylin lowered his head slightly, hiding the brutal crimson radiance in his pupils.
Leylin kept Scarlet Eye company at the parliament while listening to an illogical and boring speech. Afterwards, he tagged along with the leader of the state and the other major ministers as they proceeded to the plaza where people pledged oaths and celebrated their victories. They were preparing to welcome the emissary from the Divineflame Empire.
Positioned behind Scarlet Eye were the delegates from several major districts, as well as a large number of high-ranking officials and influential ministers.
*Boom! Boom!* it was as though there was an earthquake. Fire flashed in the distance, and Leylin noticed the arrival of copious amounts of fire elementals.
These fire elementals existed in various sizes, and some were not even humanoid. There were quite a number of beasts, bodies constituted of flames and lava, burning at temperatures that could scorch anything.
Although they moved as a delegation, they left two long burn tracks on the ground. The temperature of the entire plaza started to
rise steadily. It was fortunate that most of the Emberwings practised Fireplume. The high-ranking officials and nobility present in the plaza had all mastered at least three levels of the technique, and thus didn’t find it hard to bear. Creatures that were able to survive in the Lava World had a powerful resistance towards high temperatures. The officials who were specially put in charge of diplomacy appeared, and engaged in a series of complicated rites and etiquette, something so boring that Leylin yawned multiple times in succession. Regardless of as a scientist in his previous life or a Magus now, he did not have an ounce of interest in such rituals. In contrast, he was more willing to perform a few more experiments in his laboratory, or expound upon a few hypotheses, or even meditate! This was a common understanding between an overwhelming majority of Magi in the Magus World. In the Lava World, the circumstances were evidently different. As compared to Magi who were much like researchers, the Emberwings who studied Fireplume were more similar to knights. They had a great thirst for the secular benefits of various territories. The Magi of the Magus World often withdrew to the second line of duty, and manipulated the countries from behind the scenes. Those who held authority in the Lava World, however, were different. They liked to handle things personally, and preferred to take control of the entire system in the foreground.
leylin obviously did not think that everything done in the Magus World was right, but he did not approve of the methods in Lava World because they were too time-consuming.

Of course, that might have to do with him being a Magus, since he consciously wanted to protect his own interests.

“Greetings to the Atlan Union Leader. I am Saka, the envoy of the Divineflame Empire!”

Walking ahead of the diplomatic mission was a flaming giant who was over ten metres tall, looking like a fire demon from myths. Him bowing down to a tiny Emberwing seemed rather laughable, but nobody would actually dare to do so.

Scarlet Eye merely stood there like an eternal mountain, a sky which people could only look up to.

“Also… Our empire seriously condemns the leader, Scarlet Eye, for killing one of our personnel without reason.” Saka’s next words caused the atmosphere to turn chilly.

“Condemn?” Scarlet Eye chuckled lightly. “Anything else?”

“The leader has to take responsibility for this matter, apologise and resign! If not, the Holy Solar Festival that is a celebration for the Emberwings will mark the beginning of a war between us!”

“What?” There was a clamour amongst the audience, and even Leylin’s pupils shrunk. Never had he imagined that the Divineflame Empire’s purpose in coming here was to declare war!
Scarlet Eye’s personality was quite open. Was it possible to get him to apologise and resign? When those words exited the envoy’s mouth, Leylin felt a chill down his spine, as if a vicious ancient beast was staring him down. This was the imposing aura that the strong unwittingly gave off, filled with a sense of danger. “Is that so?” Scarlet Eye narrowed his eyes, and the fire elemental giant opposite him took quite a few steps back. The terrifying energy emitting from his body reached the Morning Star realm. This member of the diplomatic mission was actually a Star rank, and that was not all. A few of the other fire elementals behind him had an abrupt change in their physiques, their bodies emanating powerful energy undulations. “With just a few Star ranks? That’s hardly enough!” Scarlet Eye’s half-closed eyes opened slightly, as if he was stating a fact. However, all the Emberwings knew that their leader was already at the brink of fury. “How could we inconvenience the leader to make a move against them? Uncle Bowens!” Schiker was so frustrated that he had flushed red, suddenly standing up. “The Military Office does not permit anyone humiliating our leader!” Bowens stood up, crimson energy covering his entire body. With a wave of his hand, military officials charged out and surrounded the diplomatic mission. Seeing Bowens taking the initiative, Scarlet Eye’s brows lifted. “Bowens, you should first…” At this moment, he suddenly turned his gaze north-west. *Rumble!* An immense blast sounded from that area. The earth swished along like a metal plank that floated on water, drifting up and down. Giant waves rippled, and a large number of cracks appeared, spewing crimson lava and scorching flames. It was as if there was a large flame demon underground. The
cracks that formed were like a spiderweb that extended in the direction of Tylasus City.
The moment these cracks closed in, the tremendous mountain that the city stood on would completely sink, and the city itself would not be spared.
“Haha… Scarlet Eye, do you feel touched that this emperor came to congratulate you personally?” The earth split open, and a large arm that could cover the sky emerged from within, filled with flames and red lava.
Scarlet Eye’s expression was the most stern it had ever been.
“Archibald…”
Accompanying the large hand was the frightening suppression of power at rank 5, causing the many Emberwings to feel suffocated.
‘A rank 5! Could this be the Divineflame Empire’s emperor?’
Leylin took a few steps backwards, making use of the shadows from a few buildings to hide. Amidst the terror caused by rank 5 might, his little actions remained undiscovered.
Scarlet Eye’s expression was somewhat dark. He knew that if the other party’s attack was successful, the entirety of Tylasus City would suffer great losses, and many high-ranked officials and nobles would die. Hence, he had no choice but to make a move!
A high-pitched cry appeared as a phoenix abruptly appeared in the sky, brilliant flames surrounding its body as its scarlet wings collided with the arm.
*Boom!* The earth and sky seemed to disappear in that instant, and everyone fell into a daze. When their eyes could finally see again, they saw the giant fire phoenix that Scarlet Eye had turned into circling a flame giant that seemed able to support the skies. The two battled further into the distance, but the residual energy undulations still inspired fear.
“Go!” Bowens’ expression was grim as he cried out. Flames with energy at the Star rank blazed on his body.
*Swish!* The military officials seemed to act on a conditioned reflex as they headed straight for the diplomatic mission from the Divineflame Empire, with some soldiers and nobles following behind.

Among the Emberwings of the Atlan Union, true nobles trained up to at least the eighth level of Fireplume, the Sky rank. None of them was weak. There were even a few Star rank experts keeping watch, but not revealing their strength.

However, the diplomatic mission of the Divineflame Empire was not a pushover either. There were a few fire elementals who had already broken through the Star rank, and in that instant the two sides had reached a deadlock. Flames and lava flew everywhere, destroying the square where pledges of peace and victory were to be made beyond recognition.

Leylin hid under a gigantic sculpture of the founder of the country. The people nearby had yet to realise there was a military official breaking away from the formation and escaping.

At this moment, the sound of Gilbert’s questioning voice sounded in his ear, “What should we do?"

Leylin transmitted back calmly, “Watch the changes in the situation, but don’t make a move. Only the fire elementals of the Divineflame Empire have appeared, but there isn’t news of the Mobius Organisation which Jupiter’s Lightning controls.”

He had a feeling that this situation probably had more to it than met the eye. Scarlet Eye was not someone so shallow, and wouldn’t have made no preparations. Hence, there could very well be a dramatic change in this situation later on.

In this spectacle, three Morning Star Warlocks like them were not considered top strengths, and definitely needed to conceal themselves and wait for a chance to go in for the kill.

‘Besides…’ Leylin looked at the screen that showed the A.I. Chip’s status.
The bar that signified the progress of fusing Fireplume’s concepts with his point mass had reached 99.9%. Only a tiny bit was left. A large amount of energy from Fireplume condensed within his body, but this time it was being contaminated by great amounts of darkness elemental energy particles. The energy turned darker than its original scarlet red, now tending towards black. His point mass, as well as the nebula surrounding it had appeared as well, beginning to take in large amounts of the dark red energy from the modified Fireplume, constantly condensing and assimilating it. With the point mass’ purification, the energy of Emberwing had become richer. At the same time, its colour grew increasingly darker, giving it a sinister feeling.

“Ley, what are you doing?” All of a sudden, a stern yell and a piercing gaze swept towards Leylin’s location. Bowens’ gaze now could practically kill Leylin, “What are you doing? Trying to desert the army?” ‘Damn it, why did he set his sights on me?’ Leylin walked out, speechless. Seeing the quick changes in Schiker’s eyes, he knew he could not explain this half-heartedly, or he would be attacked.

“Bowens is getting increasingly annoying!” Leylin took in a deep breath, Fireplume at the peak of the ninth level exploding from his body, like a dazzling meteor streaking through the skies. “Our people have already acted according to plan. All that’s left depends on you!”

A distance away from the square, in a residential building. The original owner had long since disappeared. The walls were filled with red runes, revealing a maroon luster. Some of the blood had yet to dry, and droplets of it were still dripping down, causing long blood-red lines to form on them. Within this building, a few people dressed in black robes were watching the scene in the square from afar through the window.
The fire elemental delegation acted immediately and began to fight many military officials and nobles. Such an act caused chaos among the spectating commoners.
The attacks from the fire elementals were ruthless. If lava brushed across a commoner’s body, it would reduce them to ashes in an instant. On top of that, the military officials and the nobles of the union didn’t really bother themselves with protecting them. As a result, a huge number of the people watching died, resulting in great casualties. The mix of piercing screams and feeble cries for help were filled with the taste of horror.
Many commoners of the union were wailing, pushing everyone else as they tried to leave the blazing hell that was the square. This resulted in the chaos intensifying, leading to more innocent deaths.
“Hehe… Resent us! Cry out! These souls filled with hatred and fresh blood are the best nourishment for our spell formation…” An aged voice sounded from within the mantle of a black robe.
“Don’t worry, my friend. Us of the Mobius Organisation always trade fairly!” The old man’s voice was as piercing as an owl’s screech, and would cause goosebumps on anyone who listened to him. Yet, the fire elemental opposite him did not seem to mind.
“The chaos we’re creating can only last for a while longer. You’ll need to make a move quickly!”
“Alright, alright!” the old man cackled, touching a dark green metal bracelet, “How’s the set-up on your end?”
White noise sounded from the bracelet, followed by the voice of a middle-aged man, “Enough flesh and blood have been gathered. It’s just difficult to obtain vengeful spirits full of resentment. Only 80% of the charging process has been completed.”
“That’s enough!” The old man laughed coldly. “On my command, begin!”
“Number 1, order received!” “Number 2, order received!” “Number 3, order received!”

Along with the old man’s command, three different voices sounded from the dark-green metal bracelet.

“Begin extraction of aggrieved souls! Start the sacrifice…” The old man’s voice was calm, yet held within it a bone-piercing chilliness. At the same time, all the Star ranks in Tylasus City felt a chill in their hearts.

“This feeling?”

“A spell formation from the Magus World, an undead element spell formation aimed at aggrieved souls!” Leylin, Gilbert and Emma immediately recognised this unique energy.

Seeing the flesh and blood flying everywhere in the square, Emma laughed bitterly, “Such an environment will do wonders for an undead spell formation!”

Even if the Morning Stars restrained themselves, they would still cause major damage to the surroundings. On top of that, it was currently the Holy Solar Day, and those gathered here were not just the residents of Tylasus City. Tourists, followers from different regions, and many others had packed the city to the brim, and the square especially held a large crowd. Now, they had all been turned into minced meat.

Even if they were high-ranking officials or nobles, many had died. Obviously, nobody would bother with the commoners.
“I’m afraid the Magi of Jupiter’s Lightning have made their move!”
Leylin tangled with a two-headed fire elemental hound as he transmitted to Gilbert and the others.
In front of Leylin was a giant flaming hound about two stories high and with inverted steel spikes on its body. Its savage gaze settled on Leylin through its skull, similar to the Cerberus of the underworld in myths.
This was also one of the members of the delegation, and the energy on its body had already reached the limits of rank 3. Hence, Leylin found ‘some trouble’ when dealing with it, and even needed to depend on support from other team members to somewhat handle it.
Making use of the chaos in the square, Gilbert and Emma secretly came to Leylin’s side. The three Morning Stars made a team that might seem to have been formed by chance, and surrounded the double-headed flame hound.
There were many temporary team-ups like this in the square already. Besides, at this point not many would pay attention to Leylin.
Of course, Bowens was an exception.
“Schiker, do you see that?” Despite the chaotic situation, Schiker was devoted to his duty and was guarding at the centre, with Bowens at his side.
“There’s definitely something off about that Ley! One of the nobles near him is an Earl, and the other a Viscount. Both are people on the list for thorough investigation. Furthermore, Loke has pointed out that their existence itself is suspicious…”
“Let me think about it! Let me think…” Schiker clutched at his forehead, feeling a headache coming on. At this moment, he was more concerned for his father. As for Ley? That was just a trivial matter. As long as his father was still around, there was nothing that could not be solved.
Just when Schiker had made up his mind, the undead spell formation set-up by Jupiter’s Lightning was activated. “What’s that…” Dark green rays flashed out of the ground, forming a mysterious round symbol in the air. Phosphorescent green lights shone gloriously. “It’s the symbol of the Mobius Organisation. They’re here too!” Many loud cries sounded, and caused the square to descend even further into a state of chaos. This was especially so after many Emberwings found that the green ring of light was absorbing the energy in their bodies, and even their flesh and blood! Streams of black gas were emitted from the body of a noble. Before he could sense anything was wrong, he had already collapsed to the ground, a strange expression on his face as his body dried up. The weaker nobles all lost their lives instantly under the mysterious spell formation deployed by the Mobius Organisation. Even experts at the eighth level of Fireplume and above could feel the strength being sapped out of their bodies. “We can’t wait any longer!” A few Emberwings at the peak of level nine exchanged glances and charged into the air, blazing flames behind them forming the phantoms of large phoenixes. *Boom!* The flames and the dark green light collided, but that only resulted in a few of them being sent flying, spraying blood everywhere. “You guys can’t do it. I’ll take care of this!” Without waiting for these Emberwings to reach the ground, a pair of large powerful arms stopped them from flying. The streams of black gas being emitted from their bodies were burnt to nothingness by the flames. “The head of the garrison!” These few Emberwings recognised him. This was the head of the garrison of Tylasus City, and they immediately saluted him.
“Mm!” He was a man of few words. He had a head of long, soft silver hair, his handsome face currently filled with annoyance.

“The Mobius Organisation! Those little mice that only know to hide in the gutters and shadows… Looks like teaching them a lesson by destroying their headquarters wasn’t enough!” He snorted, and the force field of a powerful Star rank fighter exploded forth. He soared into the air, a red fiery streak shooting towards the distorted dark green circle of light.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!*

The streak of fire was obstructed midway, and multiple human figures appeared. A total of seven Magi dressed in black robes floated in mid-air, unique undulations from their point mass causing this Emberwing to have a huge change in expression.

“So many Star ranks?!” Shock instantly filled his mind. According to his intel, the Mobius Organisation was quite small. Though their sacrifices were bloody and insane, they didn’t even have as many as the three patriarchs of the Triserpent Sect.

Now, however, they had deployed seven Star ranks to fight him. How could it not be appalling?

There were likely less than seven Star rank Emberwings in the entire capital! The addition of such a powerful force instantly reversed the situation.

There was one more thing to consider. If the Mobius Organisation had been concealing their strength in the past, what were they planning now?

There wasn’t any time left for him to ponder on these things, and ferocious energy was emitted as the seven Star ranks cast their spells.

Their Morning Star domains appeared, overlapping with each other to form a starry sky. This caused the Star rank Emberwing to turn deathly pale. His body had been suppressed.

“Using spells in other worlds is much too troublesome, but
thankfully our organisation has prepared and analysed countless spell models. Though our Morning Star Arcane Arts don’t suit the rules of this world well, rank 4 spells are enough for now. Prepare the combination spell!” The Morning Star Magus standing in the middle spoke coldly.

A ferocious tide of elemental particles surged towards his palm like a tsunami, forming a terrifying energy spheroid. More condensed into it, and it strengthened continuously.

“Rank 4 spell Binding Forcefield!” A female on the right pointed at the leader of the garrison.

In that instant, the leader felt like he was stuck inside a rock. The air around him became incomparably heavy, and even just moving was becoming difficult.

“Rank 4 spell Five Sense Severance!” Another Magus spoke up, their voice sounding strange. It was like a continuous shriek, piercing to the ear.

“Rank 4 spell…”

Rank 4 spell after rank 4 spell was cast by these Morning Star Magi, binding the Emberwing tightly and draining all his strength.

The overlay of seven Morning Star domains had practically created an independent space. With the strength of their combination spell, they had even sealed off this region. It left the Emberwings outside with no choice but to watch on furiously, with no way to send help.

“In the name of the flesh of Mobius, I bestow unto you your death…” As if chanting, the Morning Star Magus in the middle passed his judgement.

*Boom!* The Emberwing’s silver hair drifted in the wind. This garrison head’s body now completely lacked any form of an aura, and even his soul had been destroyed, giving him no chance at revival.

Though this was another world and executing spells was slightly troublesome, seven Morning Star Magi had joined hands and even
used a combination of rank 4 spells. This strength did not lose out to some Morning Star Arcane Arts!

Indeed, a Star rank had fallen with a single move. The Morning Star Magi from another world showed their sharp teeth in front of the other races once more.

Even as the corpse of the garrison head fell to the ground, many Emberwings stood there in disbelief. Though there had been a large battle from earlier, this was the first time a Star rank had died!

On top of that, this was the Holy Solar Festival, a celebration for all Emberwings. This was the first time a Star rank clansman had died at the celebration, and that was the ultimate ridicule!

In that moment, the Emberwings felt like they were dreaming.

“Haha, friends of the Mobius organisation, you’ve appeared just in time!” The fire elementals, who had been at a disadvantage, suddenly roared and quickly transformed into tremendous lava giants, beginning to wreak havoc in Tylasus City.

With the addition of seven Morning Star Magi, the Emberwings were put at an immediate disadvantage. Though they won in terms of their numbers, they were at a disadvantage in terms of their Morning Star strength.

In front of Morning Stars, tactics of victory with numbers were a joke, especially with these seven Magi of Jupiter’s Lightning specialising in water and ice elemental spells. This caused the many Emberwings who had never encountered such a situation to fall into trouble.

With the retreat of military officials and high-ranking bodyguards, the entirety of Tylasus City collapsed into a mess of blood and fire. The whole city seemed to be crying and yelling. The flying flesh and blood broke off and burnt many of the banners that had been put up in celebration, mocking them.

Seeing this scene, Schiker’s fingernails dug deeper into his flesh, and blood even began to flow. However, he was told by many
bodyguards to retreat.
‘Father, end the battle quickly and save your people!’ Schiker could not help but silently pray in his heart.
on’t mind these people. Our priority is to break into the residence!” The leader of the Morning Star Magi glanced at the many nobles and commoners trying to escape and shook his head. Leaving them to the fire elementals, he darted straight for Scarlet Eye’s residence.

“You seem to have other intentions in this joint operation. Is it convenient for you to tell me more? As allies, we hope to provide some support!” At some point, Saka had arrived beside this Magus, and he smiled gently as he spoke.

However, when coupled with his huge stature and fierce face, this smile just seemed horrifying.

“It’s nothing much. We just have a few old enemies hidden amongst the Emberwings and need to take care of them,” the Morning Star Magus replied politely.

“Oh? Are they Magi from the other world like you?” Saka asked. This topic had him interested.

It had mostly been thanks to them that he was able to break into the capital and cause such huge damage. For this reason, he had a huge interest in these mysterious spells and this rumoured other world.

“Yes. However, they’re just a bunch of vile creatures that live off bloodlines, interested in the bloodlines of all living things. They don’t mind committing murder for this, they’re the source of all sin!” The Morning Star Magus’ criticism sounded righteous, as if he hadn’t been killing without restraint just a moment ago.
“I didn’t expect the situation to turn out this way already. Quick! Back to the leader’s residence!” Schiker’s hand subconsciously touched the pendant hung at his neck as he issued the command. Bowens’ body was brimming with energy as he flew with Schiker, the flames in the air leaving behind a long blazing tail. The speed of a Star rank far surpassed that of a chariot. In less than a minute, Bowens had brought Schiker back into the residence. Schiker looked distracted. Just this morning, he had been in a good mood as he dressed formally to go out and celebrate with his father. Never could he have expected that he would return in such a pitiful state. Even with his many years of military experience, he could not adapt to these changes instantly. A few military officials that had been left behind as guards immediately rushed forward in salute as they noticed him, “My Lord!”

When they’d heard the explosions in the square and seen the flames, their sense of responsibility as soldiers had told them that they should continue guarding this place. “Mm! Notify everyone that war has arrived. Activate all defences in the residence!” Bowens exclaimed, and the command was quickly sent down. A golden layer of energy that looked like an overturned bowl covered the entire residence. “Father…” Schiker touched the pendant on his neck, his eyes glinting with a decisive light. “So you got here first?” Seven terrifying figures flew in his direction. Even before they arrived, the powerful pressure caused everyone in the residence to feel suffocated. “Desas’ Flying Palm!” With the incantations sounding out, a giant palm with countless runes twining around it appeared in the air, slapping the golden shield. The golden shield shook, but still stubbornly held on. Yet, cracks
had already appeared on its surface.
It was as if an earthquake had occurred the moment the flying palm hit the shield. Multiple buildings cracked, and the sound of glass shattering rang out as cups constantly fell to the ground.
“Uncle Bowens, can you take care of them?” Schiker had turned deathly pale.
“There are seven Star ranks who hold the power of water and ice. Even one on one I wouldn’t be confident, let alone against seven. The rest of the commanders either died in battle or are stuck outside…”
Bowens laughed bitterly and then patted Schiker on the head, his eyes full of love, “But don’t worry, I’ll protect you!”
“Uncle Bowens!” Schiker’s voice trembled, his eyes turning red.
“The defence in the leader’s residence is rather weak! Just a Morning Star is enough to deal with it…”
Outside the gigantic golden layer, Leylin and two other Morning Star Warlocks had long since snuck in. Seeing this scene, Emma rolled her eyes at Leylin, “From the map you showed me, the defensive spell formation should not be that simple…”
“Yes! Usually, this spell formation can take on one attack from a Morning Star, but can also be recharged and have its strength increased by several times! The key is in Schiker’s hands… Of course, I made a copy as well…”
Leylin laughed, retrieving a golden gem from his sleeves. Within it, one could see the image of a flaming phoenix.
Schiker had already trusted him too much, and was not powerful on top of that. With the A.I. Chip’s scans and some psychological hints, obtaining information from him was much too easy. Leylin had even found out about this last resort, and made a copy of it.
“You’re really quite something!” Gilbert’s eyes brightened. “With this, we can sneak into the residence without being discovered. It would be even better if we could take control of the central
administration of the spell formation.”
“Don’t even think about controlling the spell formation. Besides, since Scarlet Eye left it behind for Schiker, he probably hasn’t shown all his cards yet. We need to wait longer…”
Leylin saw these two Kemoyin dukes whose eyes were beginning to flare red, and his voice turned cold.
His tone seemed to have some unique power, causing the red in Gilbert and Emma’s eyes to dissipate. The two of them began to laugh wryly, “Seeing the situation, I got a little affected. My apologies…”
Immediately after, Emma’s eyes were full of astonishment when looking at Leylin, “The emotional instability from your bloodline has such a small effect, and you can even indirectly affect us…”
“With such a concentrated bloodline, it probably surpasses that of all Kemoyin Warlocks in history… Perhaps, the hope of overcoming our bloodline shackles lies with you!” Gilbert was beaming.
“My willpower is just slightly stronger than most others!” Leylin laughed wryly, ruthlessly pushing down the destructive desires inside him.
Even after reaching Morning Star, a Warlock could curb the emotional instability from their bloodline fusing with their soul. It was just that it was much more troublesome. Matters that had to do with the soul could not be resolved with just regular potions or other methods. For now, he could only rely on his own willpower.
*Skree!* At this moment, the replica phoenix phantom in his hands began to call out.
“Schiker is about to use this! We’d better sneak in quickly!” Leylin chanted a few syllables, and the scarlet energy from Fireplume poured into a gemstone. It produced a golden yellow layer of energy that encompassed the three of them.
The moment the golden energy layer made contact with the
residence, the two began to blend, causing Leylin and the other two’s figures to disappear. At the same time, an even more glorious layer of gold appeared outside the residence. The cries of a phoenix rang out, blocking the attacks of all the Morning Star Magi.

“This level of defence?” The leader of the Morning Star Magi immediately turned grim.

Without being discovered by the Morning Star Magi and officials, Leylin and the two dukes successfully snuck into the residence. While Leylin was leading the way, he seemed to be very familiar with the area.

“Strange. Did you feel that?” Leylin looked absent-minded as he judged the second activation, deep in thought.

“A life extraction spell formation! The second level of this formation is evidently a method to steal life force. It can even defend against the combined attacks of multiple Morning Stars by stealing life force, and even soul force, from a gigantic living creature…” Gilbert nodded.

“On top of that, from the course of the energy, the energy that is being extracted comes not from the energy pool of the residence, but from… underground!” Emma touched the surface of the ground and confirmed.

Those of the Magus world were much more advanced than those from the rest of the worlds, mostly because of their foresight and minds that were suited for research.

After acquiring vast inheritances from ancient Magi, there were few races in other worlds that could surpass these people of the Magus World when it came to knowledge or capabilities at identification.

“In that case, there might be a powerful ancient creature confined underground, and it’s the type with a long life…” Gilbert gave a hollow laugh, his face changing, “The firasource stones can’t be connected to this, can they…”
“That’s very possible!” Leylin’s expression was serious as he nodded, recalling the time he had followed Loke underground and the red rays that had formed from the heart of the large spell formation. For some reason, a sense of sadness surged inside as he thought back to that time.

“These feelings?” With the instability from his bloodline, Leylin paid a lot of attention to his emotions. He immediately discovered the source of the sorrow he was feeling.

‘Fireplume? If I hadn’t changed the nature of its energy, the effects would be even more prominent…’

“This feeling?” Bowens touched his chest, looking gloomy. “What’s going on?”

“I- I don’t know!” Schiker seemed to sense something as well, and began to sound flustered, “Father gave me this key in the morning, telling me that if there came a danger that could not be handled, I was to escape back into the residence and activate the second layer of defence!”

“Is that so?” Bowens’ eyes glinted with mixed emotions, “Since the lord has made preparations for this, then that’s great!”
This is the Northern Duke! I hereby command all residents of Tylasus City to return to their homes. You are not allowed to leave. Anyone outside will be killed without discretion!” While the defensive formation was being reinforced at the leader’s residence, a tremendous sound was transmitted to the city.

“I am Kiel, commander of the southern military. Nobody is allowed outside from henceforth!”

“I am the commander of the eastern military. Nobody is…”

“This is an order from the Western Duke…”

Loud sounds echoed continuously throughout the city, and an expression of glee surfaced on Schiker’s face.

“It’s my uncle the Northern Duke, Turin, and the others…” The dukes and military commanders were the pillars of the Atlan Union. Every single one of them was a Star rank. This sudden aid had excited him immediately.

Along with the voices of the Star ranks, orders were passed down and the city was sealed. A layer of fiery-red isolation layer kept Tylasus within.

“Scarlet Eye really did have something planned. Is he trying to deal with all of us at once?” The leader of the Magi sized up the spell formation from a distance away as he floated in mid-air.

“A fire-type isolation spell formation and the reckless assault of elite troops truly can stall us. With the attacks from others of the
same rank… Scarlet Eye really has a huge appetite!”
Saka seemed rather confident, on the other hand. “Don’t worry! Our emperor will come and bring us back!”
“I hope so!” The leader of the Magi laughed. Watching the many troops entering the city in an orderly manner, suppressing the chaos, and taking over the defence, he couldn’t help but sneer.
*Rumble!* Large amounts of fire energy were emitted from the bodies of the Northern Duke and the rest, fighting against the few Morning Stars.
Fire sparked in the sky above the capital, space itself crumbling as silver storms wreaked havoc on the land.
“The leader knew you were going to do this, and had set a trap in advance. All of you shall die here today.” The Northern Duke’s expression was firm.
With the addition of the many legions and the participation of the Star ranks, the Emberwings’ impending doom was reversed, and the scales had now tipped in their favour.
“Do you think you can stop us just like this? How naive!” The leader of the Morning Stars produced multiple mechanical arms, protecting himself with the mass of steel. Seeing the Northern Duke and the others charging over, his eyes shone with pity.
“In this war, what determines victory can only be a strength above the Morning Star realm!”
“Above… Morning Star? Do you mean?” The Northern Duke and the others glanced towards the outside of the city in disbelief.
A flame giant that towered into the very heavens was contending against a similarly large, terrifying phoenix. Every attack of theirs seemed to shake heaven and earth, destroying their surroundings. It seemed like the end of the world.
This was the battlefield between Scarlet Eye and his opponent, the Divineflame Emperor. In a battle between rank 5s, Morning Star Magi could not even attempt at interfering unless there were
enough of them.
*SKREEEEE!* And at this moment, the winner seemed to have been decided. The giant phoenix’s calls sounded out as gigantic sharp claws ripped apart the elemental’s breastplate to a shower of lava and fire.

“You’ve lost, Archibald!” Scarlet Eye’s voice sounded from the phoenix’s mouth. As they heard this sound, glee appeared on the faces of the Northern Duke’s party. The leader that they had placed their hopes on hadn’t betrayed their trust!

“Yes, I’ve lost,” the fire elemental giant clutched at his chest, rocks falling out from the huge injury, causing earthquakes as they hit the ground.

“You really are a genius, Scarlet Eye, you’ve already reached the peak of rank 5… I made the right decision today. If not, you could’ve been the key to changing the status quo between the Divineflame Empire and the Atlan Union!”

The Divineflame Emperor’s voice boomed like a thunder that rumbled throughout the heavens.

“Decision?” Scarlet Eye seemed to be confused, but immediately after the giant phoenix retreated.

However, it was too late! Large amounts of thunder clouds formed in the sky, and terrifying bolts of black lightning struck down. The dark clouds covered the skies, blocking the brilliant sun. The lightning came together to form a lance, and a Magus suddenly appeared, gripping it.

This Magus’ forehead was marked with a rune in the shape of a moon. “Goodbye!” he called out in a low voice as he tossed the lance.

*Swish!* As if it was a deity from the World of Gods that had been enraged, a world-extinguishing bolt of lightning shot down from the skies. This horrifying black lance seemed to transcend the limits of time
and space, and even the void was subdued under the tip of the lance, carrying the might of an apocalypse. This terrifying instrument of destruction appeared before the phoenix.
*Skree!* The phoenix called out, the sound this time filled with sorrow and suffering.
*Ka-cha!* As the dazzling white light formed by the collision dissipated, the Star ranks noticed that the Phoenix Scarlet Eye had transformed into had suffered a gigantic injury. Feather after flaming feather fell to the ground before bursting into intense flame. Within this fire, the feathers somehow seemed even more magnificent.
Leylin’s pupils shrank as he saw this scene. Even if this was just a transformation, the parts that left the body still managed to retain their shape. This showed just what level his fire phoenix transformation had reached!
“Leader!” While the Northern Duke and the rest clamoured over this sneak attack, Leylin and the others who were hiding in the residence watched on grimly.
“That Magus is Zegna from Jupiter’s Lightning! How did he get here?”
Leylin obviously knew the Magus in the black robe. This Zegna had come to stop him when he had travelled here from the Magus world. However, he’d pitifully been stalled by Wayde.
The rank 5 energy undulations, as well as that face that left a deep impression, were both things he could never forget.
“The Zegna now is different from the one we met before. It’s probably just a clone, but why does it have the undulations of a rank 5 Magus? Even if it’s much weaker than before, it’s still a Radiant Moon!” Gilbert looked to be distressed, evidently unable to make sense of this.
“It should be some sort of ancient secret technique! A rank 5 clone is an exceptionally powerful trump card. I’m more curious about
the how he deceived the Lava World’s World Will and was able to sneak in successfully!” Leylin stroked his chin.
“Zegna, even you betrayed me!” Scarlet Eye’s voice was produced from the body of the giant phoenix, the injuries on its wings quickly regenerating.
“Esteemed leader!” Zegna, who was in mid-air, first bowed slightly to him. “Our relationship only extended to a cooperation between us. Rather, it was but a transaction that consisted of mutual benefits. So then, how could there be a betrayal?”
“Alright! Scarlet Eye, that was the first round. The second round is about to start now!” The towering fire elemental giant roared, and Zegna sprung into action as well. Black lightning and powerful lava encircled Scarlet Eye…
“Leader?!” The Northern Duke, the supporting troops, and the others immediately had a change in expression. Though Scarlet Eye was at the peak of Radiant Moon, his opponent was not weak. This long-time enemy of the Atlan Union, the Divineflame Emperor, had teamed up with a terrifying rank 5 Magus from another world. Even the most stupid person could tell that their leader was in trouble.
“Everyone, this is the day to dedicate yourselves to our country!” The Northern Duke sighed, a rare solemnness appearing on his face. It was evident that he was already expecting his death.
“Haha… Vape, Sulu, we’re heading off first!” A few Star ranked elders erupted into an insane laughter, their expressions showing their readiness for death.
Seeing such a solemn expression, the leader of the Morning Star Magi began to hesitate.
While the Star ranks of this world had fewer secret methods than Magi, if they really went all out his side could suffer a large number of casualties.
Morning Stars like them, who had been nurtured by Jupiter’s
Lightning through and through, were few in number. Most of their Morning Stars joined from other races, and only Zegna could keep them suppressed. In the face of great casualties to this core team, he was beginning to hesitate.
The dukes and commanders who were all veterans in battle exchanged glances, all having noticed the strange look in their opponent’s eyes.
“Alright! It’s been revealed that the Morning Star Magi are afraid of casualties. This battle is going to be fun. Zegna is probably going to cough up blood…” Emma exclaimed, taking joy in his misfortune. This was reality. Even if the Morning Star Magus leader could harden his resolve, the other Morning Star Magi might not be willing to. After all, they had merely signed a contract and joined Jupiter’s Lightning, and there were no rules that stated they had to give up their lives for the organisation.
When the opponent made use of this fact and displayed they were not afraid to sacrifice themselves, and that they would take their opponents down at any cost, then they would be involving themselves in a pointless fight.
“I’m afraid Zegna’s already foreseen this. He won’t be that enraged.” Leylin shook his head, stating his opinion. “The Divineflame Emperor’s plan should be to kill as many Star ranks and weaken the Atlan Union as much as possible. However, killing these people won’t do Zegna any good, and it could even have the opposite effect, hurting his own forces. Thus, he won’t grow mad. His main objective is likely the firasource stones. We need to monitor the residence. I believe Zegna is about to make a move!”
“You’re right.” Gilbert nodded to acknowledge Leylin’s prediction after a momentary silence.
The battle pushed on and things turned out just like Leylin expected. The Morning Stars immediately yielded to the Emberwings who were going all out. Their inefficiency drove Saka
insane, but there was nothing he could do about it.
Uncle Bowens, how’s the situation?” Schiker’s gaze was set outside the city, at the battle between the Star ranks.

He had not advanced to the Star rank yet, and naturally lacked Leylin’s vision. All he could see was space continually being torn apart, the stray energy destroying the architecture. The defensive layer shook continually, and he couldn’t help but look to Bowens in his worry.

“Don’t worry, they’re fine! Morning Star Magi will not act without benefits, and Saka and the other Star rank fire elementals can’t match up to you Emberwings.” Bowens’ expression was slightly strange as he spoke.

“I guess I can relax now.” Schiker patted his chest, but his expression quickly changed. He had sensed something off about Bowens’ tone.

Bowens was much too knowledgeable about that black-robed person. On top of that, what did he mean by ‘you Emberwings’?

As he turned around and saw the strange expression on Bowens’ face, his heart sank. “U–Uncle Bowens, you… heart sunk. “Un-uncle Bowens, you…”

*Schlick!* Before the words left his mouth, a black scorpion had crawled onto his neck as a black stinger piercing into an artery.

The defence of eighth level Fireplume turned out to be useless. Schiker’s eyes rolled up into their sockets, his consciousness lost.
“What’s going on? Officer Bowens has attacked Lord Schiker!” The few remaining military officials mental strength crumbled at this sight. If this was a nightmare, all they wanted was to wake up from it as soon as possible.

“This Schiker is a spy who I’ve discovered long ago. Seize him! Do your duties!”

Bowens’ large hand quickly sought out the gem at Schiker’s neck, retrieving the key with the phantom image of a phoenix within it. His words caused the minds of the military officials present to short-circuit.

The illegitimate son that their leader thought so highly of, their Lord Schiker, was… a spy?

Many of them felt like they had just heard the joke of the year, but seeing the flame-ringed Bowens, the could not bring themselves to laugh.

“Officer, please let Lord Schiker go!”

Bowens was not completely in charge here. While the remaining Star rank commanders were either trapped outside or dead, their subordinates were still around. Even if Bowens’ own subordinates approved of his actions, these people would not.

“What? You want to attack me?” Energy at the tenth level of Fireplume exploded forth, and a large amount of flames formed the terrifying phantom of a phoenix. The energy was similar to a domain of flames, and put the entire area under Bowens’ control.

The official who had spoken of his suspicions was merely at the ninth level of Fireplume. Even though he was considered powerful among Sky ranks, he was nothing in front of Bowens.

He took several steps back, face flushing red as he stood straight, “You have restrained Lord Schiker for no reason. Please provide proof that he is a spy, or else…”

“Or else?” Crimson rays flashed, and the official who had just been speaking disappeared. All that was left on the ground was a pile of
ashes.
“Did you really think I wouldn’t kill anyone?” Bowens sneered, carrying the unconscious Schiker and heading towards the back of the residence. Many officials looked around at each other, but none followed.
Leylin looked at the other two dukes from their hiding spot in the shadows, “What do you think?”
Gilbert spoke slowly. “Bowens is probably Jupiter’s Lightning’s real spy. Loke was most likely just a bait.”
“Mm! And what’s more interesting, he’s practised Fireplume to the tenth level…” Leylin’s eyes glowed with curiosity. He had needed the A.I. Chip to modify Fireplume to harmonize with his point mass. How had this person done it? Furthermore, he couldn’t have survived for so long as a spy without even Scarlet Eye finding out if he didn’t have an Arcane Art that dealt in bloodlines. That was intriguing as well.
“Whatever it is, Bowens picked a good time. Scarlet Eye is engaged, and the other Star ranks are fighting hard outside the residence. As long as Bowens has the fight outside under control, he had no need to fear for anything…”
Emma did not mention the rest of the military officials within the residence. In a Morning Star’s eyes, anyone weaker than rank 4 was an ant. She didn’t think that they could stop him.
As expected, once Bowens showed that he was not to be trifled with, many of the officials retreated, unwilling to go forth.
Bowens snorted and went deeper into the residence. Those who dared to hinder him were burnt to ashes under his flames.
“What should we do next?” Emma glanced at Leylin.
She could not make much sense of this young man at all. He was good at tolerating things, for one. Were she here alone, she would have struck out long ago. How could she have restrained herself until now, when the best benefits were available? Furthermore, the
techniques he’d used to conceal himself had duped even Bowens, which was amazing.
“We’re obviously going to follow him.” Leylin chuckled, pointing at Bowens who was ahead.
“He’s definitely a spy from Jupiter’s Lightning. He can be the scapegoat, taking all the damage from traps and conspiracies. We just need to follow him and get those firasource stones…”
“Haha… As expected of a student of mine. Leylin… you’re definitely very sly. I like it!” Gilbert burst out into laughter, looking delighted. Emma rolled her eyes at his response.
Bowens’ speed was very fast as he carried Schiker to a place that Leylin was familiar with. This was the area where Loke had used Gaia’s Disc that day.
“Could it be…” Leylin watched Bowens’ actions, realisation dawning upon him.
Soon enough, he saw Bowens take out a round plate, eyes on its surface formed from countless veins. He shook his head at Loke’s previous actions, “This is probably something used specifically to send equipment and confuse others…”
The earth split apart like an ocean, revealing a deep tunnel. Bowens smirked and darted in. Leylin and the two dukes glanced at each other and followed.
Very soon, the scarlet spell formation previously had appeared before Bowens, fragmented and drifting through the air like butterflies.
Bowens was very familiar with this place as he walked up to the huge secret room in the centre. A crimson spell formation in the middle of the room lit the place up, the light flickering at its edges. A humming sound was produced as the formation let loose a layer of flames to block Bowens’ advance.
Bowens’ eyes only grew brighter at this. “It’s here! The barrier that Scarlet Eye set up himself.”
Blue light gathered at his hands, flickering. At the same time, Schiker woke up from this period of unconsciousness. His eyes were blurred for a moment, but he still immediately raised his guard. “This… The underground saferoom! Uncle Bowens, you actually betrayed us…”

“Look closely, kid. Who’s your Uncle Bowens?” ‘Bowens’ sneered, his muscles and bones shifting. The red feathers that marked an Emberwing disappeared. In the blink of an eye, he had turned into a completely different person. The energy of a Morning Star domain burst forth.

“So Uncle Bowens is already dead…” With this sight, Schiker heaved a sigh of relief. If it really was Bowens who had betrayed him and his father, he had no idea what to do. “Hehe… Do you still not understand? I am Bowens, but Bowens isn’t me! Whatever, the people of this land won’t understand even if I explain it…” Bowens snickered, and that caused Schiker’s heart to sink further.

“If not for needing the tenth and higher levels of Fireplume as well as the blood aura of the leader to break through this barrier, do you think I’d have brought you here?” Bowens laughed coldly, preparing to make his move.

Schiker shook his head and closed his eyes. “It’s better to wait!” However, a familiar voice sounded by his ear, giving him the illusion that something was wrong with his ears. “Ley? Didn’t he die in the square?” Opening his eyes, he found ‘Ley’ in front of him, and somehow, there were traces of… fear, on Bowens’ face?

“I knew something was off about you!” Bowens watched Ley, his hands still trembling. Leylin had easily taken care of his attack, which that this person was at the same rank as him. “Must’ve been a wild guess. That bait Loke can’t have given you that much information!” Leylin answered indifferently. As he was
speaking, the characteristics of an Emberwing faded away. By the time he was done, he had morphed back into a black-haired, dreaded Warlock.
“As expected, it’s one of the remaining devilspawn of the Ouroboros Clan!” Bowens gritted his teeth.
In the meanwhile, Schiker’s jaw had dropped. He was dazed at the sight of this unfamiliar Morning Star Magus.
“So… So you’ve been lying to me too? Haha… You, Loke, you’re all liars! Have you been treating me like a fool?” Schiker roared, large droplets of tears falling from his cheeks. The cold-faced instructor from before had all but disappeared.
“Did his mental wall crumble?” Leylin shook his head, but had no plans of explaining himself.
Whatever the case may be, he’d made use of Schiker and now he’d repaid that by saving the Emberwing’s life. In his mind, this act canceled out with all the help and guidance Schiker had given him. He couldn’t care less about Schiker’s thoughts. If the man was so dumb as to attack or obstruct him, he would not hold back.
How about you? Who exactly are you? How could you progress to the tenth level of Fireplume?” Watching Bowens in front of him, Leylin was filled with curiosity.

“Take a guess,” Bowens sneered, “But know this. If I hadn’t come and hidden myself here in the Lava World for such a long time, Collins would definitely not be the strongest Morning Star in Jupiter’s Lightning!”

A vicious, berserk aura burst forth from Bowens’ body. Starlight twinkled behind him, forming a unique Morning Star domain. Two orbs of golden flames appeared in his hands, emitting the powerful energy of Fireplume.

“Congratulations, you get to see this new spell I came up with after combining the path of a Magus with Fireplume. Fire Phoenix Slice!” Berserk energy from Fireplume was amplified by magic, resulting in a barrage of powerful blades of fire that sliced towards Leylin.

“Indeed, there are no fools among Magi. It’s only to be expected that someone would try to fuse the two different systems of power… What a pity, though…” Leylin shook his head, sympathy in his gaze, “A pity that you met me!”

Leylin’s knowledge of Fireplume far surpassed that of Bowens. On top of that, he was a Morning Star Warlock whose soul had been strengthened with firasource stones. His current might was
incomparable to that in the past.

“Bloodline Shield!” Leylin snapped his fingers, and countless large crimson shields came into existence. The Kemoyin Serpent carvings on the shield looked vivid, lifelike, their eyes shooting out vicious glares.

*Clang! Clang!* The blades of fire slammed into the shields, and the result was a piercing noise that sounded like a torrential rain.

“You still don’t have enough of an understanding about the two paths… What a disappointment…” Leylin sighed, and a large phantom of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent appeared behind him. The two pupils were like giant stars; the ancient, ominous aura causing Bowens’ expression to warp,

*Rumble!* Two orbs of dark red fire emerged in Leylin’s hands, beating back the energy from Bowens’ Fireplume. Leylin darted in front of the man.

“No… How’s that possible?” The move that he was most proud of had been defeated so easily by his opponent, and it seemed to have no value at all. Bowens frowned.

“Nothing is impossible!” Leylin extended his right arm, the hand passing through the opponent’s defences and grabbing onto his throat. The A.I. Chip began a scan.

[Beep! Scanning opponent’s energy pathways. Discovered areas that can be optimised! Recording into database, adding into simulation fusion experiment!]

Details on Bowens’ point mass and the operation of his Fireplume appeared in Leylin’s mind, and the information gathered allowed the A.I. Chip’s simulations of fusing Fireplume into his path grew more complicated. Though the progress was still stuck at the final bit, the originally dark red energy from Fireplume seemed to have undergone a secret transformation, advancing to form a higher power.

‘Fireplume energy with darkness elemental particles fused in can
easily break through the defence of the tenth level of the original, even restraining the opponent. What’ll happen if I take this a step further?’ A look of anticipation flashed in Leylin’s eyes. His practice of Fireplume was undergoing a wondrous transformation. Even without advancing himself, he could use it to beat others at the tenth stage of the original, something that cause his expectations to increase.

“Here you are!” Shadow arms emerged, taking all of Bowens’ items from his spatial storage as well as Gaia’s Disc. When he caught sight of the black copper key, his eyes sparkled. He had personally seen Loke use this thing to break through the final spell formation, and Bowens had kept it safely himself. It definitely had a special function.

“Let me go, Lord Zegna will offer a good ransom for me… Or we can even sign a contract! After my contract with Jupiter’s Lightning ends, I’ll side with the Ouroboros Clan!” Bowens had been trounced thoroughly, and had lost all methods to resist. He quietened down, the viciousness in his expression disappearing as he began to bargain calmly.

He did not want to die. As a Morning Star Magus, he believed he could still be of some value to Leylin, and began to look for ways to save himself rationally.

“That isn’t a bad deal… The loyalty of a Morning Star is worth letting you off…” Leylin stroked his chin. “What do you think?”

“It’d be more convenient to kill him. We don’t have the time to set up any powerful restriction formations on him, and he can probably destroy any regular contract.” Ice-cold bloodlust filled the room as Emma’s voice sounded out. Space distorted, and she appeared out of hiding along with Gilbert.

“So, all three of you are here!” Bowens resigned himself to his fate. He hadn’t even been able to win against Leylin alone, so what could he do when the three of them joined hands?
Hearing Emma’s unhesitating words, Bowens began to panic, “Wait! I have a crystal contract in my spatial belt! Even Breaking Dawn Monarchs won’t be able to subvert or break it. This way, you can be at ease about me. On top of that, I know a lot of inside information which will definitely be useful…”

Even though he knew Emma had likely said it to frighten him, he didn’t want to take the risk.

“Good! Tell us all that you know, and we’ll discuss how to deal with you!” Gilbert nodded while grinning.

Leylin agreed tacitly. He was now certain that Bowens was but a vile character. If one could defeat him thoroughly based on what he had been relying on, he would completely be crushed. Not only would his initial arrogance disappear, he would even betray Jupiter’s Lightning to survive.

“What do you plan to do? Are you going to kill me?” Seeing Leylin take care of the Star rank Bowens so easily, Schiker seemed defeated. He had not taken the chance to flee during the battle, instead just standing at the side.

Seeing Leylin’s gaze turning to him, he laughed wryly.

“I don’t like wanton killing,” Leylin shook his head. Red rays flashing in his eyes, and Schiker crumpled to the ground.

At this time, Bowens spoke from Leylin’s side like a follower, “Scarlet Eye’s bloodline is needed to break through this flame defence. Along with the tenth level of Fireplume, our leader acquired an Arcane Art that will allow Schiker to be sacrificed to simulate his aura.”

This was the very reason he had even dragged Schiker here. Leylin shook his head in response to his suggestion. “We have our own methods to replicate Scarlet Eye’s aura from Schiker’s bloodline.” His nail scratched out a bloody line on Schiker’s neck, and fresh pearls of blood spurted out, floating in the air.

“Bloodline Trace!” Leylin’s eyes flashed and he began to chant a
strange, bleak runic incantation. With his incantations, Schiker’s fresh blood began to boil, even forming a phantom image of Scarlet Eye with red eyebrows and hair.

“My lord’s techniques are indeed superior, I am impressed. You can even do something as awesome mimicking Scarlet Eye’s Aura without using Schiker as a sacrifice!” Bowens took the opportunity immediately, trying to flatter him.

Leylin rolled his eyes on the inside, having no expectations towards the integrity of this Morning Star Magus.

“Tenth level of Fireplume!” Leylin’s hand filled with dark red flames, and he pressed it to the layer.

*Buzz!* The defensive layer began to tremble.

“Go!” With Leylin’s indication, the pearls of Schiker’s blood flew to the defensive membrane, a blood-red colour spreading across it. The dark red flames on Leylin’s hands fused with this layer, and the defences gradually fell apart.

At this moment, something odd happened. Scarlet Eye’s enraged voice resounded in the basement.

“Despicable robbers, die!” Blood-red light converged in one spot, forming an image of Scarlet Eye.

“Crap, it’s a trap! There’s a full power attack from him hidden in the defences!” Leylin’s pupils shrank.

……

*SKREE!* The cries from the tremendous phoenix were unceasing as it fought against the towering giant and the black-robed Magus. The fight had taken them to the boundaries of the Lava World, black spatial rifts opening up all around them as they warred.

Just at that point, Scarlet Eye received some information. “Hm? Someone is breaking into my secret room! Schiker and Bowens!
“How useless!”
“Scarlet Eye, what’s going on? Is there trouble in your nest?” Zegna burst out into laughter, black lightning flashing in his hands. The Divineflame Emperor, Archibald, roared as he heard the words, blocking Scarlet Eye’s retreat.
“You’re the ones who forced me!” The phoenix that Scarlet Eye had transformed into shouted with rage. With his words, terrifying flames spread throughout the phoenix’s body, causing the flying beast to turn into a horrifying bird of flame. At the boundary of the world, space itself was set on fire, distorting under this power.
“Flaming Undead Aves!”
“This Arcane Art burns life force for power! He’s putting his life on the line!” Zegna and Archibald quickly retreated. However, it was too late. How could Scarlet Eye let them off? The flaming bird spread its wings and terrifying flames swept through the area, swallowing Zegna and Archibald within…
*Boom!* The fierce firestorm wreaked havoc, even eliminating the spatial turbulence and leaving behind an exceptionally ugly black scar at the border of the world.
Flames flashed, and Scarlet Eye’s figure appeared once more. Now, however, his face was filled with fury and his aura was unstable. He glared at the storm of fire that had burst forth and immediately turned back, his palms opening up a spatial passageway like drawing apart a curtain. He immediately re-entered the Lava World. *Rumble!* Tens of seconds later, black lightning and a large rock smashed into the firestorm, revealing the miserable figures of Zegna and Archibald. *Woosh!* Cracks spread across the rock like spiderwebs, and large fragments began to fall off. At the end of it all, Archibald’s body was much smaller than before, and could even be called ‘pocket-sized.’ Zegna was in an even more pitiful state. Not only were their traces of burn wounds all over his body, even a great portion of his hair had been burned off. “Haha! After this, the injuries on Scarlet Eye’s body will probably take at least a hundred years to recover!” Archibald was unusually carefree as he burst into laughter. He then glanced at Zegna, “So? Should we chase after him?” “Forgive me, Your Highness! This body of mine probably won’t be able to take the intensity of the next battle!” Zegna laughed wryly. “Then forget it. The losses the Atlan Union suffered this time should be enough to give them a headache for a long while.”
Archibald laughed, “My Divineflame Empire should have been the victor in the power struggles, but with Scarlet Eye being an Emberwing, we can’t let our guards down…”
“I believe that with your guidance, the fire elementals will remain the leaders of the Lava World!” Zegna had a smile on his face. Reputation and nice words meant nothing to him. As long as there were enough benefits, calling the other party the leader of the Lava World was not an issue.
“Haha…” Even so, that was enough for Archibald to laugh heartily.
“Alright, based on our previous agreement…” Zegna wanted to continue on, but his expression immediately changed. “Damn it! Bowens and the rest are such trash!” he cursed, turning into a streak of black lightning and disappearing in that instant.
“Hehe… interesting!” Large flames appeared under Archibald’s feet, lifting and moving him forward as he followed. Though he had joined hands with Zegna, he had never let down his guard against this guest from another world.

……

Underground, next to the giant spell formation. Leylin had met with a crisis as well. The barrier that Scarlet Eye had set up had actually been a trap. The moment it made contact with an external force, it had immediately shown the image of the Emberwing himself, and unleashed an attack.
This was the terrifying attack of a Radiant Moon! It could seriously injure if not kill even the current Leylin. ‘Schiker’s bloodline can’t be fake, and my Fireplume shouldn’t be a problem either. Is it Bowens?’ Leylin quickly shot Bowens a glance, but found him equally panicked, evidently not expecting this situation.
“Despicable thieves, die!” Scarlet Eye’s figure roared, hair and eyebrows seemingly beginning to burn up. Tremendous, fierce flames formed a blazing phoenix that charged towards Leylin’s groups.

As if this phantom had a will of its own, its first target was the traitor, Bowens.

“AAAAH!” In the face of the suppression from a rank 5, Bowens’ Fireplume energy was destroyed quickly despite his desperate attempts at saving himself. He cried out miserably as he burst into flames. In one move, Bowens of Jupiter’s Lightning had died at the phantom’s hands.

After taking care of the traitor, the phantom looked straight at Leylin and the other two. Leylin seemed to have become the primary target.

Goosebumps appeared on Leylin’s body.

‘Is there no other way but to undergo Kemoyin Serpent Transformation with the other two? If we do that, the entirety of this underground room will be destroyed!’ In a short period, a variety of thoughts passed in Leylin’s mind, and he gave up on this plan.

“I can only use Fireplume to fight it out.’ A glint appeared in Leylin’s eyes as he made up his mind.

[Beep! Simulation of Fireplume at 100%. Mission complete.] The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded out.

The A.I. Chip’s progress in fusing Fireplume’s energy with his point mass had already reached 99.9% completion before. Scanning Bowens’ version of Fireplume was enough for it to take that last step.

“Oh!” Leylin’s expression changed, Fireplume energy turning black as it was absorbed by his point mass.

His point mass buzzed as it shook vigorously, rotating at a high speed. Powerful energy undulations were emitted from it.
The nebula surrounding the point mass had increased in area by half a fold before it slowed down and stopped. The tenth level of Fireplume had been modified to fuse with his point mass. This result was not just an addition of one plus one. Furthermore, this was a perfect fusion, not the bastardised version that Bowens had created. The amplification of power was even greater than Leylin had expected.

[Beep! Fireplume modification complete, point mass is being upgraded. Host body…] The A.I. Chip’s voice was intermittent, but Leylin had no plans of listening carefully.

He felt power overflowing in his body, and facing the incoming rank 5 attack he made his move without hesitation.

After the modification, the energy of Fireplume was driven by the force of a Morning Star’s point mass. The resulting power was terrifying.

*Crackle!* Devilish black flames appeared around Leylin, forming a phoenix wreathed in black fire. The phoenix cried out, and this screech brought with an aura of devilish power.

“Modified obscure tenth level of Fireplume Soaring Demonic Phoenix!” Leylin spread his arms like a soaring phoenix, slashing towards the phantom Scarlet Eye with grace.

*Chirp!* Melodic phoenix cries were heard, and the blackfire phoenix streaked across the horizon to welcome the phantom. Confronting this blackfire phoenix, Scarlet Eye’s face was tinted with confusion, even fear. The earth rumbled as black and gold flames intertwined, creating a shockwave that spread throughout the area.

Following that, the black flames actually began to devour the other side, becoming even more exuberant as time passed. Soon enough, it had exterminated the other party’s phoenix and even drowned out Scarlet Eye’s figure.
‘This modified Fireplume is this good at absorbing other Fireplume energy as fuel and fusing with it?’ Seeing Scarlet Eye’s phantom struggling amidst the black flames and gradually disappearing, even Leylin himself was shocked, and he was the creator! He felt that with the A.I. Chip balancing and fusing the essence of Fireplume into his point mass, the power of this already formidable technique had been furthered and reached a horrifying degree of power.

It was a pity that the A.I. Chip was unique to him, and only he could train in this Dark Fireplume version.

“What… What just happened?” Gilbert and Emma were dazed. What had they just seen? Leylin had wiped out the phantom of a rank 5 Magus in just one move?

That was a full-out attack from a rank 5! In that moment, Gilbert and Emma felt as if they were dreaming.

It took a while before Gilbert spoke. “Ley–Leylin, did you break through to rank 5?”

“No, I just made some progress in Fireplume…” Leylin answered truthfully. Though the fusion of Fireplume energy with his point mass had immense benefits, it had not allowed him to cross over into the Radiant Moon realm. If this had been an attack by a phantom of Zegna instead, it wouldn’t have been nearly as easy.

His easy dispatchment of the Scarlet Eye phantom was most likely to do with the modified Fireplume.

“I have a intensified feeling,” Leylin raised his arms and watched the demonic black flames, “that these mutated black flames are the bane of all traditional Fireplume energy.”

“Whatever it is, we need to leave after getting the firasource stones! It’s a pity we lost Bowens.” Gilbert watched the flames piteously. A bright point mass was received by starlight and floated into the astral plane.

Not caring about Bowens, Leylin pointed his hands at the flame
shield. “Open!” The membrane began to be burned down by black demonic flames.
No, it was not burning. It was being corroded! The top-grade flames from Scarlet Eye’s Fireplume were corroded by the modified flames from Dark Fireplume, gradually revealing a giant hole.
“Let’s go.” Leylin and the other two arrived before a complicated spell formation.
Emma touched the runes on the ground, looking solemn. “Spatial binding runes. Dormant sacrificial runes and life absorption runes as well! This spell formation is probably used to extract the life force of some being.”
“Could that lifeform be at the centre…” Leylin immediately focused his gaze on the red light at the heart of the spell formation. It was weak, flickering like a candle in the wind. And yet, it somehow survived with all tenacity.
‘The energy undulations are similar to those of firasource stones! I can somewhat guess what it is!’ Recalling the sorrow he had felt before, Leylin sighed and produced the black copper key he had obtained from Bowens.
The large black copper key rose into the air and projected a large number of complex data and light rays.
The spell formation on the ground began to activate, and the sound of a key clicking was heard continuously.
At the same time, the runes on the ground were unsealed one by one, revealing a giant cage.
*Rumble!* Scalding red light filled the entire room, and the cage in the middle opened up to reveal a scarlet egg.
Could this egg be the legendary phoenix egg?” Leylin guessed absent-mindedly.

Only a creature as ancient as that would be able to automatically push Scarlet Eye’s progress in Fireplume to an unprecedented thirteenth level. On top of that, it could create amazing soul treasures such as firasource stones!

The reason he thought that way was because the moment this egg that was bathed in scarlet radiance appeared, his own Fireplume began to operate more quickly. A large, demonic version of the blackfire phoenix appeared behind him, and extreme desire filled his heart.

The blackfire phoenix chirped for a long while, extending its wings. The scarlet energy emanated by the egg was continually being absorbed by it.

[Beep! Change detected in host’s Fireplume. Energy levels increasing rapidly, currently at peak of level ten.] [Beep! Qualitative change has been detected in host’s Fireplume. Entering level eleven.]

[Beep! Unknown essence being absorbed by host. Scans show atomic configuration is similar to that of firasource stones. Soul force is being enhanced.]

[Beep! Density of host’s point mass increasing. Affinity with fire elemental particles increasing.]

The A.I. Chip’s constant prompts left Leylin stunned for a moment.
The egg’s great amounts of energy had constantly been absorbed by Dark Fireplume, and with the assistance of the A.I. Chip’s simulations he had broken through to the eleventh level! The eighth and ninth levels of Fireplume marked the Sky rank, while the tenth and eleventh marked those at the Star rank, the Morning Stars. The twelfth and thirteenth belonged to rank 5, the Radiant Moon realm. Scarlet Eye, being at the thirteenth level himself, was at the peak of Radiant Moon.

Now, Leylin’s Dark Fireplume had been pushed to the peak of the Morning Star realm at the eleventh level.

‘This is definitely a phoenix egg! What other than a real phoenix could propel the progress of Fireplume and enhance one’s soul?’ Leylin immediately became incomparably excited. ‘I’ve only just taken in a part of its energy. If I use all…’

He scanned his stats.


“What a terrifying enhancement to the soul! Though I don’t know how much exactly it was, just the difference in spiritual force is frightening.” As he was mumbling, Leylin took a look at his innate elemental affinities.

The red line that was in second place, the one that marked his fire affinity, had risen by a large amount. Although it still couldn’t compare to his darkness affinity, it left the third place far in the dust.

‘This isn’t bad either. If my darkness affinity was too high, I could easily have been forced under the control of the Snake Dowager, walking the full path of the Kemoyin Serpent. With this fire elemental affinity, I might be able to change my direction…’ Leylin’s eyes were glistening; the benefits he’d gained from this
phoenix egg were immense.
“This egg is definitely the source of all the firasource stones. Let’s take it and go!” Gilbert and Emma saw the egg emanating a scarlet radiance, and their voices began to tremble in excitement. With their knowledge, they could obviously tell that this was the egg of some ancient being, and one that was very strong at that! Such powerful ancient creatures had been lost to the Magus World for tens of thousands of years. If the Ouroboros Clan could hatch one… Gilbert and Emma couldn’t help but immerse themselves in this beautiful fantasy.
“But…” Through the black flames, Leylin could see the energy in the egg falling rapidly, “So sad…” A piteous look flashed in his eyes.
“It’s had its life force extracted by Scarlet Eye multiple times. I took some just now myself, and its life energy has become far too weak for it to be hatched. We can only use it as an extremely precious fire elemental treasure.” Leylin sighed, moving to stow the egg away.
“YOU DARE…” an enraged voice sounded, the earth cracking apart and rumbling as it spoke. High-pitched phoenix cries sounded, and a whole layer of earth was ripped off, even the rocks and soil burnt to void by the flames.
A rare light illuminated the area, and the trio looked up to see the earth above them being dug up. Scarlet Eye charged down, looking like a sun with the flames he emitted.
“He came this quick? Zegna and that Divineflame Emperor are useless…” Leylin shook his head, but he didn’t stop the motion of his hands. “Withdraw immediately, I’ll hold him off for a while.”
Normally, Gilbert and Emma would have thought Leylin a fool for such a thing. He was, after all, a Morning Star trying to stop an enraged Radiant Moon. However, the series of miraculous breakthroughs in his strength had them thinking it was the opposite way around. They actually believed in him, and even
subconsciously listened to his instructions. They took out necklaces that were emanating starlight, preparing to leave.

“Return it to me!” Large flaming claws motioned to grab the egg at the center, fighting the black flames over it.

“Leader Scarlet Eye! It’s been a long time.” The energy of the black flames increased rapidly as they attempted to devour flames at the thirteenth level of Fireplume. They exploded forth with power. Leylin grinned as he soared up, the demonic black flames that began fill the area actually rivalling Scarlet Eye’s own.

“You’re… LEY!” Scarlet Eye’s pupils shrank. “Wretched Magus from another world, how dare you deceive me!”

*Swish!* Leylin made a grabbing motion with his palm, and Schiker’s unconscious body flew into his hands.

“Let’s make a deal, shall we? Let us go, and your son won’t come to any harm.” Leylin felt no guilt in using Schiker to blackmail the Atlan Union leader.

*Rumble!* The tremendous flames immediately wreaked havoc on the area, but Scarlet Eye flushed red. Leylin’s words obviously had a huge effect on him.

A long while later, he spoke through gritted teeth, “Alright, but the phoenix egg stays.”

With the A.I. Chip’s scanning and the opponent’s own behaviour, Leylin immediately made a discovery. ‘Hmm? He’s injured?’ This conjecture delighted him. With the suppression of the eleventh level Dark Fireplume alone, he wasn’t too confident in his chances. But now?

“No!” As the words left Leylin’s mouth, he and Scarlet Eye transformed into huge phoenixes. Two birds, one red and the other black, pounced towards the scarlet egg.

The one Scarlet Eye had transformed into was huge, and had an overwhelming aura. And yet, although Leylin’s black phoenix was smaller, it burnt with devilish black flames that could devour all
*Yuuu!* *Scree!* Two different phoenix calls sounded as they slammed into each other. Flames of black and gold surrounded the phoenix egg as the two began a bloody battle.

“Don’t you care for your child anymore?” Even in the midst of the fierce battle, Leylin did not miss the opportunity to disturb his opponent. Every sliver of fear he caused was an advantage.

“I won’t give it up, not even for Schiker! Besides, do you think you qualify to threaten me?” Scarlet Eye’s cold expression contrasted heavily with the fire energy he emanated, the flames burning even the air as it formed a giant phantom map of the Lava World. This image trapped Leylin.

He was ambitious and ruthless. He did indeed love Schiker, but it was not to the extent that he could be threatened by Leylin. However, even that slight bit of reservation was more than enough for Leylin himself.

‘Damn it! Is this really Fireplume? Why are the flames black?!’ Scarlet Eye’s expression grew dark. This opposing Magus was also using the Emberwings’ Fireplume, and had progressed to the eleventh level in it. However, what was shocking was that his black flames were capable of controlling his own, and if not for him being at a higher level his flames would already have been completely eaten through.

‘This Magus cannot remain, his technique is forbidden!’ Malice flashed in Scarlet Eye’s eyes, and golden flames wrapped around the true body of the phoenix.

“Flaming Undead Aves!” The terrifying attack that had seriously injured two rank 5s appeared once more, its ferocious flames causing the clouds in the sky to be burnt to nothingness.

The gigantic flaming undead aves streaked through the sky, causing all the battles to cease. The Emberwings began to revere the undead aves as if they had seen their god.
“This attack would have forced me into retreat at your peak power, but what a pity…” Leylin laughed madly, black flames engulfing everything as his entire person turned into a terrifying blackfire phoenix.

“Mutated Obscure Fireplume Soaring Demonic Phoenix!”

The Emberwings in the capital of the union saw a unique scene in the sky that day. A demonic black flaming phoenix rammed into their leader’s own phoenix form. Even the sparks from that battle would cause most Star ranks to quiver in fear.

The leader’s entire residence was burnt to ashes by the flames, and besides a few Star ranks who coughed up blood and retreated quickly, everything was incinerated.

“Haha… Scarlet Eye, the Atlan Union leader, doesn’t amount to anything much!” Arrogant, hearty laughter sounded as a figure covered in black flames withdrew, his face filled with an insane smile.

“The leader… was defeated?” The Northern Duke who had met Leylin once flew backwards as he mumbled in disbelief.
The Northern Duke had never expected that the kid Ley, who he had once met and had a good impression of, was actually of another race! Furthermore, the Dark Fireplume that Leylin used gave him a sense of fear. Perhaps if not for his dignity and resolution as a soldier and someone with power, he might have fled. This was especially true since he did not seem to be losing against his most revered leader. Instead… he was winning? “Great Mother Phoenix! Could I be dreaming? Please help me wake up as soon as possible.” While the Northern Duke’s will was strong, even he was beginning to find this situation absurd. “Phoenix egg!” At this moment, two other powerful auras descended. Zegna observed the giant red egg at the middle of the battlefield, unable to conceal his desire. Archibald could not stand it either. This was the peak of all fire elemental beings! “It’s mine! The phoenix can only exist in our Divineflame Empire for all eternity!” he roared in rage, and the earth began to shake. He charged forward, large hands grabbing towards the large scarlet egg. *Swish!* Zegna was even faster than him as he turned into a streak of black lightning, heading right for it. “So this is the source of the firasource stones. This phoenix egg must be mine! With it, I’ll be able to advance to rank 6…”
“Go away!” A black wall of flames obstructed Zegna’s path, the boiling temperature causing him to subconsciously slow his steps. “Warlock Leylin! A mere Morning Star dares stop me? Aren’t you afraid I’ll eliminate your Ouroboros Clan? Give me the phoenix egg right now, and I guarantee your Ouroboros Clan shall be greatly rewarded!” Zegna’s expression was sinister.

What answered him, however, was a wave of fire that covered the skies. “Soaring Demonic Phoenix!” A large phantom of a blackfire phoenix sent Zegna flying. Black flames constantly devoured the radiation energy from their opponent, causing him even more serious harm.

“Hmph! A gravely injured clone still dares say such things to me. Do you have a screw loose?” Leylin snorted. Noticing Scarlet Eye and Archibald fighting. He could not help but turn back.

With him shielding them, the undulations from the battle did not spread to this side, and the arrangements of Gilbert and Emma weren’t interrupted. A door came into existence, one wreathed in starlight.

“There’s not much time left, I need to finish this quickly. The black flames on Leylin’s body gradually weakened, and substituting them were four horrifying rings of blood coloured light. The energy rings that signified his innate spells flashed one after another and gradually fused, forming a terrifying spell, the Morning Star Arcane Art, Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!

*Rumble!* An ancient vicious beast appeared in Tylasus City, one that was thousands of metres long. Just its descent alone caused the destruction of a great amount of architecture. Even if Scarlet Eye could hold onto his position today, he would have to relocate his capital.

The Giant Kemoyin Serpent hissed, a terrifying aura emanating from its body. Regular Star ranks could not help but tremble in
fear.
These low-ranked beings all shared the common fear that came from being placed in front of a top level predator.
Compared to his previous times, Leylin’s current Giant Kemoyin Serpent transformation at the peak of Morning Star was vastly different. Not only was it much larger in size, there were now more red patterns on the scales, with darkness and fire elemental particles surrounding the body and forming a mist around it.
“A Giant Kemoyin Serpent of this size…” Even as Morning Star Kemoyin Warlocks themselves, Gilbert and Emma were stunned by Leylin’s Morning Star Arcane Art.
“How did this kid get so large? It’s about three times the size of my transformation…”
Gilbert sized up the body of Leylin’s transformation that spanned hundreds and thousands of metres, absolutely astonished. It was obvious that he was envious as well. Even amongst the bodies of real ancient Kemoyin Serpents, Leylin was definitely the king.
“I’m afraid… Leylin can be considered the strongest Kemoyin Warlock in history!” Emma sighed.
“Eye of Petrification” Two amber pupils that were like stars stared hard at Zegna who was flying backwards.
“Crap!” Before Zegna could react, his magic equipment had already exploded, and a layer of petrified skin appeared on his face as his movements ground to a halt. A petrification cast by an ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent would affect even Radiant Moon Magi.
*Boom!* With a flick of its tail, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent struck the petrified Zegna. The earth shook wildly, and many buildings collapsed. Cracks spread in the shape of a web.
*Boom!* The petrified Zegna exploded, being obliterated into dust that flew around in the air. A huge pit was formed in the ground.
In front of the enhanced Giant Kemoyin Serpent, the clone of a Radiant Moon Magus had died just like that.
“Let’s take care of him first, or it’ll do us no good!” Scarlet Eye roared as he stopped his fight with Archibald upon witnessing this scene. Archibald halted his movements as well, fear evident on his face.

*Hss!* Leylin obviously would not let two rank 5 Magi attack him together. He took the initiative and spewed out a few large black flame blades.

*Boom!* The giant flame blades did not move in Scarlet Eye’s direction, but instead, headed towards the phoenix egg in the middle of the battlefield.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* In the midst of immensely powerful explosions, the giant scarlet egg had cracked apart into countless fragments. Under the disbelieving gases of everyone else, a boiling heat spread in all directions.

“HOW DARE HE… How could he do that?” Scarlet Eye almost vomited blood in his fury. Never had he expected Leylin to destroy such a precious treasure.

However, he unconsciously headed towards the remains. Archibald did the same, and really, all the other Star ranks had the same thought.

This way, the recently formed forces against Leylin was dispersed. Leylin was obviously unwilling to damage such a treasure, but he saw the big picture and knew that it was very difficult to leave safely with all their enemies watching. It was even more impossible to get the phoenix egg.

Though this treasure was precious, Leylin could still make the decision when met with issues of his own safety. Besides, he could take advantage of such a chaotic situation.

*Hsss!* The Giant Kemoyin Serpent charged around violently, and the Star ranks were forced away. They could only stare wide-eyed at its defensive scales. Leylin did not hesitate as he swallowed the remaining third of the egg into his belly, pulling back until he was
in front of Gilbert and Emma. He had returned to his human form. “Let’s go!” Leylin shouted.
“Let’s go!” Gilbert and Emma knew they had to leave no matter how unwilling they were. After all this chaos and contest was over, they would immediately be sieged by the entirety of the Lava World, and while they were reluctant they immediately made their decision.
The gigantic door of light expanded and swallowed the three of them, dissipating with grace.
*Boom!* The moment after that door disappeared, a streaking flame turned that region into a sea of fire. Atop this sea of fire was Scarlet Eye’s body, but now his eyes were bloodshot.
“Damn it, damn it, DAMN IT!” He looked at the sparkling, beautiful red gemstone in his hands that was emanating warmth. After the phoenix’s egg had been smashed apart, it had turned into this state.
He had not obtained even a quarter of the gains. Everything had been taken by Archibald and the other Star ranks.
Even if they were Star rank Emberwings, it was impossible to make them return something they had taken.
“AAAH…” Scarlet Eye, who had suffered massive losses, began to cry out hysterically…

……

Jupiter’s Lightning headquarters, Magus World.
At the same time, Zegna was shouting as well.
Black lightning flashed and wrecked the palace, turning it to ash.
“LEYLIN! I won’t let you off!” Zegna could feel his heart bleeding. That was a phoenix egg! If he’d obtained that, he could have immediately advanced to become a Breaking Dawn Monarch! Now, however, all his dreams were ruined.
First, his secondary clone had been killed, “LEYLIN! I won’t let you off!” His secondary clone had been killed by Leylin, so he had no chance to contest for the fragments of the egg. In that sense, he’d gotten no returns for all the work he’d put in. Even the surviving Morning Stars of Jupiter’s Lightning had been fortunate enough to get part of the fragments, and they would definitely not give it to him unless there was a trade of equivalent value. However, where would he go to find something comparable to a treasure like the phoenix’s egg? If he used violence, he would force all the Morning Stars away.

“Ah… AAH…” After thinking for a long while, Zegna’s face contorted as he roared, “Leylin, Leylin, Leylin. I won’t let you get away with this, I swear!”

“Impulse is the devil’s emissary!” The mysterious female voice sounded once more. “It’s all your fault. If my main body had gone over, how would my secondary clone have been killed?” Zegna thundered.

“Hehe… Can your true body go over?” The female voice asked, and Zegna immediately became quiet. “I taught you the method of making a secondary clone without any compensation, and even told you about my experiences. This is how you repay me?” The female’s voice turned cold. “Alright! Forgive me for that. Tha kid made me lose my calm.”
Zegna was a Radiant Moon Magus after all. Even if he was enraged, it would only be for a short period of time. “The key now is to deal with this Leylin Farlier! I have a feeling that he’ll hinder my advancement to Breaking Dawn.” Zegna looked fierce as he muttered softly. “Oh? Has he risen to rank 5? Bloodline shackles aren’t so easily broken.” The woman’s voice now held a trace of curiosity, her interest in Leylin having been piqued. “He didn’t break through, but he’s reached the peak of Morning Star. With some strange techniques from the Lava World and other methods, I’m afraid…” Zegna wore a sour look. He had to acknowledge that Leylin really was a genius seen once in thousands of years. He had gained such strength even with the low-levelled bloodline of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent and its inheritance. Now, even if his main body were to act, defeating him wouldn’t be a problem but it was just a dream if he wanted to kill him. That was, unless he could find his opponent’s weak point. He would then have to wage a life-and-death battle. But was that possible? Zegna recalled the intel on Leylin and gave up on that. He knew that, to some level, they were the same type of person, and would not risk their lives for anyone or anything. Enemies who were powerful and lacked any weaknesses that could be exploited were the most frightening!
Zegna rubbed his forehead, feeling a headache coming. After being silent for a while, the female spoke again, “In that case, let’s engage our previous plan. How about it…” “Do you mean…” Zegna’s eyes brightened.

……

“Finally home!” At Phosphorescence Swamp, Gilbert and Emma stood behind Leylin, watching the familiar surroundings with eyes full of an indescribable fondness and emotion. “What should we do next?” Gilbert asked. Emma glanced at Leylin. They were now treating Leylin as their main pillar of strength. After witnessing Leylin’s strength, the two Warlocks would not protest even if Leylin used them as mere figureheads. With the yielding of these two Morning Star Warlocks, the real power of the Ouroboros Clan now completely lay in Leylin’s hands, and his authority was even more solid than before he had left. Such a result would cause anyone to be astonished. “We don’t have to do anything, just maintain our current stance!” Leylin shook his head. “Leylin, have you risen to rank 5?” Fervent hope could be seen in Emma’s expression. In her eyes, if Leylin could break through to rank 5 and had a method of circumventing the issue of bloodline shackles, that would be the best. “How’s that possible?” Leylin smiled wryly. “I’m only at the peak of Morning Star and only have a few cards up my sleeves!” This was the truth. Leylin was quite exact when it came to evaluation of his strength, and while he’d seemed invincible in the Lava World as he defeated Scarlet Eye and even obliterated Zegna’s clone, he was aware of his own situation. Scarlet Eye’s main body had been gravely injured in the battle
before, and had also been constrained by his technique. That was he had been unlucky enough to be defeated.
And when it came to Zegna, not only was it just a clone but it had also been seriously injured in his fight with Scarlet Eye. Faced up against Leylin’s all-out Morning Star Arcane Art, his Kemoyin Serpent Transformation, it could do nothing.
When Scarlet Eye and Archibald looked like they were about to cooperate, Leylin rushed to escape, because he knew he would meet his death if he did not leave at that moment.
However, Leylin would not belittle himself either. With his current strength, he might not win against a rank 5 Radiant Moon, but he had a large chance of survival.
“Just a few cards up your sleeve?” Hearing his words, Gilbert and Emma rolled their eyes inwardly. Those frightening black flames and the strange Kemoyin Serpent Transformation were ‘a few cards up his sleeve’? What did that make them? From the beginning, they had only stood at the side like cheerleaders, unable to make any moves.
“But our Ouroboros Clan is now unafraid of external threats, and can start a new journey!” Leylin beamed as he gazed at the sun, the golden rays wrapped around him in radiance.
There were few in the central continent who were unafraid of Radiant Moons. Those rank 5 Magi would not want to provoke an enemy that could contend against them. Hence, with the Ouroboros Clan in Leylin’s hands, they were definitely going to expand well.
Emma and Gilbert were aware of this fact, and their gazes towards Leylin were full of hope…
“Your Graces, Gilbert and Emma, it is the fortune of our Warlock Union that the two of you could return safely!”
Within the headquarters, Leylin and the other Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks were in discussion with Paul, Philip and the helpers they had called over.
The Crystal Phase Warlock, Freya, stood respectfully behind these few Morning Star Warlocks, her eyes full of indescribable emotion. Though even the First Elder’s side had smiles on their faces, they could not conceal the sorrow in their hearts. Leylin’s abrupt rise to power, as well as the return of the other two Kemoyin dukes meant that they would lose a large portion of their benefits. There was no Morning Star who would support them anymore.

Of course, there were few Warlocks with this mindset. The students and clansmen of Gilbert and Emma were now full of glee, and extremely grateful to Leylin. Due to her relationship with Leylin, Freya was wedged between Leylin and Emma. Her eyes glanced past Leylin, Emma and Gilbert occasionally, and she came to a conclusion that made her gasp. ‘Mentor Emma and Duke Gilbert are now letting Leylin call the shots!’ Though Leylin was a newly-advanced Morning Star, he was the one taking charge of receiving all these Morning Star Warlocks, and he was even seated right in the middle in the Master’s seat. Freya, who had astutely discovered this, was astonished. This meant that even Emma and Gilbert acknowledged Leylin’s rule!

For some reason, Freya sighed with relief as she found this out, even though her seniors and juniors were unwilling and perplexed. She was Emma’s student and they were on very good terms, but that still lost out to her relationship with Leylin. If the two began to vie for strength, she really had no clue about where she would stand.

Now, however, all was solved! Freya sneaked a peek at her husband, the reverence in her eyes unable to be hidden. Seeing his wife adopting a childlike behaviour, Leylin laughed inwardly. If Gilbert and Emma did not know how to act even after he displayed his strength that was comparable to rank 5s, he would
probably have to employ certain other techniques. However, Morning Stars were no fools. Gilbert and Emma especially understood the situation, which made things easier for him.

“Yes! When we first found out the two of you were lost in another world, we were extremely shocked. Next was the battle with the allied forces, but thanks to Leylin…”

Regardless of the Crystal Phase Magi’s thoughts, the Morning Star Warlocks discussed amongst themselves. Philip was observing Leylin, but could not make sense of his sitting at the master’s seat. He glanced at Gilbert and Emma, and could not help but sigh.

The magnitude of the events in the past few years had exceeded that in the past few centuries. Under crisis after crisis, many Morning Star powers in the continent had gone through a round of reshuffling.

Spirit Circle and Wind Wolf Lair had lost most of their Morning Star forces in the Scarlet Ruins, and now only had one Morning Star maintaining their organisation each. Their losses were massive. The Ouroboros Clan had been on the brink of destruction, but a terrifying genius had suddenly appeared and successfully saved two of the dukes. Now, their strength had not diminished, and was instead increased.

‘I’m afraid the situation of our three organisations in the alliance with equal power will be broken. In the next hundreds of years, Duke Leylin of the Ouroboros Clan will be calling the shots..’

Philip watched Leylin whose aura was even more profound than that of the previous First Kemoyin elder, and a thought rose in his mind.

‘Whatever it is, our Wind Wolf Lair had been on good terms with the Ouroboros Clan, and my personal relationship with Leylin is more solid than his with Paul. As long as I stay cautious, nothing
will happen. With Leylin as an external support, I’ll be able to protect my Wind Wolf Lair until the next generation grows up…’ Philip might be hot-headed, but he was no fool. Having understood this, he treated Leylin with more respect, and this attitude left Paul rather annoyed. “Alright! Based on the contract in the Morning Star area, here are your rewards!” With a wave of his arms, three streaks of light shot towards Paul and the other Morning Star Warlocks, black light shining on a spatial item. After Paul and the others used their soul force and checked, looks of satisfaction appeared on their faces. “The Ouroboros Clan being safe is all thanks to all of you, and you’ve chased away a few people. Hence, I’m giving you thirty percent more on top of the promised rewards.” Leylin’s smile was very gentle. It was like a breath of fresh air for Paul and the others. This was obviously feigned, but when feigned by Leylin who had a rather unique status, he seemed more amiable and mysterious. Paul and the rest were solemn, but their facial expressions displayed their thanks, and seemed touched. Leylin shook his head inwardly, though the smile on his face remained, “Also, our Ouroboros Clan is planning to launch a war campaign and retrieve our lost territory. Please bear witness to it!” Upon hearing Leylin’s words, the Morning Star Warlocks all carried different expressions.
If not for Leylin’s appearance, the Ouroboros Clan would probably have been annihilated in the attack by the allied forces.

Even if Leylin showed off his terrifying battle might and talent, and used various methods to get the other side to withdraw their troops, all the land and resources that had been occupied would not be taken back easily.

Leylin had merely been a newly-advanced Morning Star then. How could he request a territory as large as that of the other three Morning Star Warlocks? If they were to be attacked again, he would not be able to suppress it alone.

The amount of strength he possessed dictated the treatment he could command. Leylin was very clear on this fact. Now, with the return of the two dukes and the rise of his battle power, Leylin felt that he had enough under his belt to request this.

As for whether this would offend Jupiter’s Lightning… Hadn’t Leylin already done so in the past? Since he had completely offended them, doing anything more wasn’t a huge issue.

“Mm! The Black River Domain used to be one of the territories of the Ouroboros Clan, and it being occupied by some other organisation is an insult to us Bloodline Warlocks!” Philip stood up, looking indignant, “I’ll definitely tell the union!”

Seeing him acting this way, Paul and the other Warlock rolled their eyes inwardly but did not retort against him. Rather, they were in
favour of that decision. Those territories had initially belonged to the Ouroboros Clan, and they were merely recovering them. In addition, they would at most show their support verbally and not actually act, unless the Ouroboros Clan was willing to make more compromises for their benefits.

However, Leylin was only requesting that they be witnesses, and was not planning on having them act.

Not considering his current strength, just Gilbert and Emma working together would be enough to handle this.

Hearing that Leylin had intentions of reclaiming their old land, the Crystal Phase Warlocks around did not speak, but they were very emotional.

The allied forces still occupied their lands and ruled their people. That was the ultimate humiliation!

The fact that the battle had come all the way to the headquarters and they had almost completely been uprooted was still fresh, and was deeply carved into the minds of these Warlocks. With these seeds of hatred planted, they were stirred up on hearing that Leylin was going to lead them to enact their vengeance.

Seeing this, Leylin nodded.

The reason for this expansion was to increase the size of the pie so as to avert dissent. With three Morning Stars now in the Ouroboros Clan, the resources of the area they controlled were not enough to divide amongst all of them, leave alone the rest of the people under them.

Furthermore, by leading them to take revenge, Leylin’s reputation would reach an unprecedented level, which would make it more convenient for him to take control of the organisation.

This was an open conspiracy. Even if Gilbert and Emma could tell, they would not be able to say much.

Having agreed on the time, Philip and the others took their leaves,
and even Freya and other high-ranked Warlocks left automatically. Only Leylin and the other two were left.

“Are you going to declare war on Jupiter’s Lightning now? Didn’t you say to maintain the current state?” Emma asked worriedly.

“When I said to maintain the current state, I meant our current state of preparing for battle!” Leylin laughed grimly, a tyrannical aura emanating from his body. “Besides, Jupiter’s Lightning is probably too busy with their own matters…”

“Oh? How is that?” Gilbert was interested. He was always elated when there were methods to trim Jupiter Lightning’s strength. From Leylin’s perspective, this was a deeply embedded enmity.

“When I went to the Lava World, I asked the rank 5 ‘Golden Lion’ Warlock, Lord Wayde, to help hold up Zegna. He accidentally let a rank 5 clone go, but the main body did not descend. For that reason, I’m going to hold to our agreement!”

“What agreement?” Gilbert and Emma exchanged a glance. Ever since they had known Leylin, they had never seen this kid at a disadvantage before. There must definitely be some deep meaning for him to do this.

“He helped me hold Zegna back, so in return, I will give them the coordinates to the Lava World!” Leylin laughed. “Just now, Wayde received my message…”

“What?” Gilbert and Emma stood up abruptly, “That’s a world! Do you know what you’ve done?”

A large alternative world meant unprecedented benefits. Just the strength systems and paths to power they had were extremely helpful for Magi, and could help them progress rapidly.

Not considering other matters, those Breaking Dawn Monarchs had taken over entire large worlds before advancing. The fact that Leylin had obtained such benefits was also proof of the value of a world.

Hence, organisations would guard these coordinates with the
highest security. If not for Zegna being absolutely confident and having been bewitched by somebody else, he would not use these coordinates to trap the three Kemoyin dukes.

A world that had not been exploited yet was very attractive. It was not as if the three Kemoyin dukes didn’t have their suspicions, but they still fell into the trap. The fact was that the benefits were immense, to the point that it affected their rationality!

Of course, it was Zegna who had lost everything. Not only had he gained nothing, he had also suffered greatly.

Now, Leylin was giving such a huge secret away? Emma and Gilbert could not comprehend this.

After all, in their eyes, only they and Jupiter’s Lightning knew of the Lava World’s coordinates. At this point, it was best to keep this secret to their death and when the time was right, they could destroy Jupiter’s Lightning and completely take over the Lava World!

“You guys…” Leylin shook his head helplessly, “How could another world be so easy to take control of? Besides, there are numerous rank 5s there, as well as Jupiter’s Lightning eyeing this strength.”

“What we need the most now is not another world, but enough time to rest and regain our strength.”

“Wayde is part of our Warlock Union. By luring him there, Jupiter’s Lightning will definitely launch an intense battle for control of the Lava World. That will give us ample time for developments.”

Leylin spoke frankly and assuredly, tone full of confidence and eyes emanating an incomparable vigour.

“There are rank 5s on both ends. How could the Lava World be so easily taken over? In this period of time, it’s enough for us to take advantage of the chaos and gain benefits!”

“On top of that, once we obtain more strength, it’s not like we can’t forcefully retrieve the Lava World from the other party’s hands!”
Not only did Leylin make the final decision, he even presented a pretty picture for Emma and Gilbert.
“If you say that…” Gilbert and Emma looked each other in the eye begrudgingly.
Seeing them acting this way, Leylin was laughing inside.
He obviously didn’t care much for the Lava World, because he’d already gotten the most benefits from there. Not only had he obtained the mutated Fireplume and caused his Morning Star point mass to grow to the limits, he’d even gotten a third of the essence from the phoenix egg.
These were basically the greatest treasures of the Lava World, and Leylin was obviously satisfied with his gains.
After the matter with the Holy Solar Festival, he had offended the heads of the two largest organisations in the Lava World, Scarlet Eye and Archibald, and it could only be resolved by the death of a party.
Just the knowledge that he had obtained fragments of the phoenix’s egg would be enough to cause the strong ones within the Lava World to hunger after his gains.
The reason Leylin had handed over the coordinates to the Lava World was because he had considered this as well. With Wayde in control, he could still hold onto what he had. Besides, he’d already handed the coordinates over already. If Wayde or others wanted some? It was simple, they could go to the Lava World themselves and contend with each other for it!
“That Zegna from Jupiter’s Lightning is probably coughing up blood right now, given that I threw these coordinates away.” Leylin stroked his chin, a malicious grin about his lips.

……

He sent the two dukes away after their discussion. Following that was a conversation with Freya over dinner before Leylin finally returned to his Morning Star Magus Tower.
The place was as towering as always, full of archaism and grandeur. As he entered the tower, the intelligent tower genie flew out, “Master!”

“Hmm. Show me all the recent records, as well as the current state of operation of the Magus Tower,” Leylin commanded.

“In the time that master has been away, the astral gate has been operating at the lowest energy level. Astral stone storage has been completely used up. Magus Tower is now running on minimal energy required. 3.78% of the Host’s health is injured. Supplies-wise, ….”

The tower genie was expressionless and began to send in the reports methodically. It was extremely meticulous, as if he was the most thorough of butlers.

“Keke… I’ve practically used up all the astral stones I’ve accumulated as well as the power source of the Magus Tower.” Leylin sighed, feeling his heart ache.

“But in comparison to such a huge harvest, this investment is very worth it. The profits were immense! Of course, that’s because I have the A.I. Chip and can unearth the resources of foreign worlds to the highest degree.”

Back in his study room, Eternal Flames emitted heated light. Seated behind the study table, he began to compare his gains.

“I’ve successfully met my goal and brought the two Kemoyin dukes back. The Ouroboros Clan’s strength has risen rapidly, and just this alone means that I’ve gotten more than I invested.”

Leylin’s eyes were twinkling as he spread out a black notebook on the table and began to scribble on it.

“In terms of resources, there’s the essence of the phoenix egg. That is definitely a world-class treasure. Not only can it accelerate progress in Fireplume, it’s remarkably useful for a Magus’ soul and point mass. The resources that I especially collected from the Emberwings can also be considered to be abundant!”
n terms of techniques, the mutated Fireplume is probably comparable to a top-grade meditation technique…”

Leylin checked on the point mass in his sea of consciousness. After devouring the essence of Fireplume, the point mass had not only become more concentrated, with the nebula outside expanding by half, it now emanated a trace of fiery-red amongst the darkness.

After obtaining Fireplume, his aptitude had changed. Previously, his darkness elemental affinity was the main element. Now, his fire elemental affinity had been raised, and while it was still not up to par with the darkness element, it was catching up.

“My Kemoyin’s Pupil is no longer a meditation technique solely for Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks, but a top-grade one infused with Fireplume.” Leylin obviously would not start training in Fireplume all over again. He was, at his roots, a Magus, and a bloodline Warlock at that. Hence, while running its simulations, the A.I. Chip had fused the essence of Fireplume into his point mass.

Fireplume fused with Kemoyin’s Pupil. The two had been made compatible with previous simulations, and they now fused together to form a slightly mutated meditation technique.

The effects of the technique far surpassed that of the fourth level of the original Kemoyin’s Pupil, and even allowed Leylin to see hope of simulating the fifth level!

Once simulation of the meditation technique was complete, Leylin
only needed to solve the bloodline issues and he would be able to
rid himself of the bloodline shackles of rank 4, and pry open the
realm of the Radiant Moon!
“Kemoyin’s Pupil doesn’t have a fifth level anyway. I’ll just
continue calling this upgraded fused meditation technique the same
thing.” Leylin continued to use the already given name with no
intention to think of a new one.
Whether it was the twelfth and thirteenth levels of Fireplume or the
fifth level of a meditation technique, they all enabled one to enter
the Radiant Moon realm. Even if Leylin had some rough ideas
about that, it would require a large period of time for him to
comprehend them all.
Even so, it was still much better than having no hope at all.
“Besides Fireplume, I’ve recorded a lot of information regarding
the culture, technology and geography of the Lava World. The A.I.
Chip’s database is much more complete, and I’ve benefited quite a
lot!” Leylin stroked his chin.
The advantage of having the A.I. Chip meant that he could leave
Magi far behind in the dust in terms of his learning speed. In other
worlds, he was basically like a fish in water, recording even the
most complicated information with just a sweeping scan by the A.I.
Chip. He could analyse and understand everything quickly, and was
much faster than Magi who had to study one book after another.
For this reason, he could rapidly gain clarity on the path of strength
in other worlds and fuse it into his own body, a unique advantage
for himself.
“In general, the harvests were so immense during this trip to the
Lava World, that my absorption is bursting at the seams…” Leylin
glanced at his stats.
(Matured Body). Strength: 50, Agility: 45, Vitality: 65, Spiritual
force:956.8, Magic power: 956 (Magic power is in synchronisation
with spiritual force). Soul force: ???]
“The lowest numbers for spiritual force among Morning Star is 500 and above, and I’ve almost reached 1000! However, soul force has yet to be enumerated.”
Looking at the numbers, a wry smile appeared on his face.
He had obtained much in the Lava World, especially with a few advancements in his soul that allowed his soul force to rise sharply in power. While the A.I. Chip could not show the numbers, just the difference in spiritual force implied that there was a large change.
Soul force was a higher-grade version of spiritual force. Hence, advancements in the soul could be seen through advancements in spiritual force.
“However, an increase of around 400 is already beginning to exceed the limits of what my body can handle!”
The wry smile at the corner of Leylin’s lips grew even more obvious. Fireplume and the phoenix egg were treasures that put emphasis on the elements, but did not do much for strength.
While he had a large increase in spiritual force at one go, his body had already begun to show signs of an inability to endure.
This was because there was too much water in the cup, and the cup was too small. Though there weren’t any obvious residual effects yet, Leylin could only turn into a spirit and walk the path of a spirit Magus if he did not treat this in time.
“To solve this, the essence is to strengthen my vitality and allow the body, as well as the spiritual force that suddenly increased, to grow harmonious once more, and get everything done once and for all.”
Leylin commanded, “A.I. Chip, with my current control, how much vitality do I need to sustain my spiritual force?”
[Beep! Mission established, scanning of stats of host body. Beginning construction of model. Beginning deduction…]
The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice was heard as it formed a blue human figure in Leylin’s mind. Terrifying spiritual force undulations were
emanated from the model.

[Deduction completed. To completely match with spiritual force, host must have a vitality of 100 or above!] The A.I. Chip intoned loyally.

“A vitality at 100 or above?” Leylin touched his chin.

As the body was a vessel for spiritual force, Magi took vitality rather seriously. They even had some techniques and body-tempering spell formations just for this.

With Leylin’s current state, with a vitality as high as 65, 90% of the techniques for increasing vitality were useless to him.

However, with his knowledge and the accumulations from his explorations in the past, he immediately had an idea.

“Not considering those remote techniques, Multilimb Strength is very suitable for me right now. Even in the worst situation, I can control my current condition and prevent it from getting worse!”

Leylin stood up with a flash of understanding and headed to another training room.

*Ka-cha!* His body suddenly contorted in a strange manner, arranging himself such that he looked like a strange rune. Bizarre joints and muscles could be heard vibrating within him.

These vibrations combined and gradually formed a slightly hoarse voice.

The voice seemed to be chanting some sacrificial text, full of a great, ancient feeling that also held within a barbaric air.

“Multilimb Strength!”

“Aoooo!” A shrunken seven-armed figure appeared behind Leylin, and with his chanting, more runes appeared from the Multi-Armed Race figure and disappeared into Leylin’s back.

When the ceremony was over, the rays of light from the Multi-Armed Race member disappeared into Leylin’s back and formed a strange golden image of the Multi-Armed Race, looking like a vivid tattoo.
Multiple golden threads scattered on Leylin’s skin and muscles, and everything quickly quietened down.
Leylin got up, looking at his palms. The skin was pale, bones slender, and there didn’t seem to be much of a difference. Occasionally, though, faint flashes of gold would be seen flashing within.
There seemed to be a layer of dense armour on his body, which made it heavy. This was nothing to Leylin. More importantly, the instant the tattoo was completed, the pressure from having his spiritual force straining his body at all times, while not completely dissipating, had reduced.
Seeing this result, Leylin heaved a long sigh of relief.
“Though Multilimb Strength can’t increase my vitality, it has an effect of sealing and reinforcing the body, which can maintain my current state. When I find more body-tempering spell formations…”
“Now, I need to quickly take care of the allied forces who are still occupying the territories that belong to the Ouroboros Clan. I’ll then make use of the Ouroboros Clan’s forces and get them to help me find treasures, potions, or spell formations and the like that can increase my vitality…”
Leylin made plans for himself, feet continuing to move until he reached another secret room.
On the door, there were many seals that formed a chain, locking the door tightly. However, a boiling heat could still be felt.
*Buzz!* A black flame automatically appeared from Leylin’s body, and it absorbed all the heat.
“Pretty good level of heat! It’s like another form of the phoenix’s flames!”
“A.I. Chip!” Leylin commanded inwardly.
[Beep! Limits to authority opened! Passed scanning!] Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, two blue streams of data flashed from
Leylin’s eyes, millions of ant-like golden words flickering and entering the seal.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* The runic chain broke open, and terrifying golden flames surged out from behind the door.

*Skreeee!* As if provoked or challenged, the black flames on Leylin’s body grew more exuberant, forming a black layer of isolation that kept the door tightly shut. Large amounts of golden flames were eaten into and devoured by the black flames as they strengthened themselves. Such a devilish process left Leylin in shock.

After entering the secret room, one could see a giant world of ice and snow. At the heart, however, a golden sun was emanating rays of light. Numerous ice runes formed chains that restrained the sun, but it still produced a boiling heat. In that moment, there was a deadlock between the icy blue and fiery gold.

“The bloodline of the rank 6 Sun’s Child!” Leylin’s eyes were unfocused, the black flames automatically forming the figure of a devilish black bird. Crimson eyes were glued onto the little sun in the middle, looking fearful.

“It’s a pity…” Leylin sighed once again. This was the highest-ranked bloodline he had gained thus far.

After the phoenix egg had broken, it automatically formed a dense crystal and there were no traces of its bloodline remaining, leading Leylin to start wondering if the phoenix was a bloodline creature at all. There was no way to refine any ancient bloodline in this case.

“I have a feeling that the bloodline of the Sun’s Child is very compatible with Fireplume, but it’s a pity… I already have another bloodline…” Leylin sighed. If he had the bloodline of the phoenix, he would change his bloodline no matter how difficult it would be. However, the bloodline of the Sun’s child? That was only rank 6, and wasn’t
powerful enough to motivate him to take this risk.
I t’s too wasteful to use the Sun’s Child’s bloodline for an ancient bloodline ignition experiment. Besides, the Ouroboros Clan is about to wage a war against the allied forces of Jupiter’s Lightning. After that, I still need to look for body-tempering spell formations and explore the Icy World. I need exceedingly powerful methods that can inspire terror!” Leylin stroked his chin.

With his current strength, he could escape from a Radiant Moon, but he had nothing that would be able to threaten them. Hence, he needed powerful, intimidating trump cards.

Kemoyin Serpent Transformation, being a Morning Star Arcane Art, was indeed one, but people would learn to counter it if he used it too often. Leylin was looking to prepare a few other killing techniques.

“Using a rank 6 bloodline to create a one-time bloodline imprint should be enough to threaten the life of a Radiant Moon, right?” Leylin predicted, “Though it’s a pity, there’s no other choice.”

A bloodline imprint could be able to display the strength of certain ancient beings when they were at their peak. Even one attack at such strengths was frightening.

In the past, Leylin could do nothing with the bloodline of the Sun’s Child even if he had these thoughts.

Now, however, not only had he risen to the peak of Morning Star and gotten a huge boost in strength, he had also gained control over
the phoenix flames, which could rival this sun’s flames. For that reason, creating a bloodline imprint was a real possibility.
“Let’s begin…” Leylin watched the golden flaming sun at the heart of the secret room and took a deep breath. Dense, demonic black flames were emitted from his palms, and burst forth in the form of a thin thread…
The creation of the bloodline imprint took a few days. When Gilbert and the rest in the Magus Tower outside were beginning to get impatient, Leylin appeared before them.
They could feel something was different about him, but Gilbert and the others could not pinpoint it.
“I’ve made my decision. Gather the army, and we shall begin reclaiming our lost territory!” Leylin wore a platinum Magus robe and had on white gloves. His temperament was full of dignity, and upon hearing his declaration, multiple Ouroboros Clan Warlocks began to cheer. They had been waiting for this day for far too long. After showing himself and setting the hearts of everyone at ease, Leylin sent Gilbert and the rest away and took off his gloves. Observing the back of his hands, his face could not hide the ecstasy he was feeling.
Complicated runes in the form of a sun occupied the backs of both his hands. The outermost layer was a ring of black flames, as if a seal to store the power of the sun in his hands.
‘With the support from the A.I. Chip and the suppression from the phoenix flames, I finally moulded the bloodline of the Sun’s Child into a bloodline imprint!’ Leylin paid close attention to the bloodline imprints. After a long while, he sighed deeply and wore the gloves once again.
‘I didn’t expect for the blood to be sufficient to form two imprints. And I can even feel that Fireplume is nourishing these imprints on my hands, altering them in some way. They seem to have been upgraded. If I were to activate this suddenly, even a rank 5
wouldn’t be able to withstand the attack!’
Leylin’s Fireplume and the bloodline of the Sun’s Child had some mysterious response to each other, and the bloodline imprint’s power was being nourished and amplified. The A.I. Chip estimated that each of these two bloodline imprints was as strong as two all-out attacks from the ancient rank 6 Sun’s Child!
With such a great killing technique with him, Leylin now had something to count on, and was utterly confident in waging this war.
Greenflame City. This stronghold which acted as the bridge between the allied forces and Phosphorescence Swamp, was also a key strategic region for the Ouroboros Clan.
Since the Sky Legion had taken over this place, this stronghold had been in the hands of the allied forces. Even the commoners there had accepted this fact.
Gradually, after a few years, they had recovered from the fires of war before, and were now showing signs of prospering.
“No matter which Magus organisation governs them, none would attack regular humans for no reason. Hence, their loyalty is not guaranteed. Practically all leaders will be easily accepted, or should I say, this is the survival instinct of people with low social status?”
Above Greenflame City, Leylin and a few other Morning Star Warlocks stood in the air. Seeing the prosperous city, there was little they could say.
The Ouroboros Clan had occupied this area for thousands of years, but they never expected the people to react this way.
“We’ve never had much of an interest in this area. It’s fine as long as they can provide a certain amount of provisions and materials, as well an annual influx of fresh blood.” Gilbert stood aside, slightly red in the face.
“Oh well! At least, we won’t have to feel bad about dragging them back into war once more!” Emma sneered, eyes completely red.
The news that the allied forces had attacked the Ouroboros Clan brazenly after she had disappeared had completely riled her up. The fury of a Morning Star could only be eased with fresh blood! “If you don’t make a move, I’m going to do it!” Emma watched Leylin and the others who had been invited such as Paul, who were unmoving. Laughing coldly, her robes began to sway and make sounds with the breeze. “The flame elf of the immemorial times, please listen to my decree and descend, turning into a rain of flames!” Emma chanted loudly as terrifying elemental particle emanated from her body like a black hole. Endless elemental tides formed a surging tsunami. A bit of red appeared in the sky, and it accumulated to form a layer of dense flaming clouds. “Rank 4 spell Descent of the Heavenly Flames!” Large amounts of flames streaked down like meteors, leaving splendid long tails as they descended upon Greenflame City. Soon enough, successive sounds of an explosion could be heard, and a large amount of black flames formed that spread everywhere. “Enemy attack! These energy undulations… Morning Star!” Within the residence of the city’s mayor, a sentry yelled in disbelief at the data they had seen on the screen. At the same time, he hung his head, closed his eyes and prayed, “Great Lord! Has the war between Morning Stars begun once again…” He knew how terrifying wars between Morning Stars were. If Greenflame City was going to be the battlefield, none of the low-ranked Magi like him would be able to escape. Just the stray spells and large amounts of horrifying radiation could easily take their measly lives. “Crap! The base of the airship forces!” After praying, this alarm watcher suddenly recalled something, and his expression changed as he activated a secret imprint in his hands.
“Hello? Is this the base of the airships? This is the mayor’s residence. This is a rank 4 warning. I repeat, this is a rank 4 warning. A Morning Star is attacking!!”

No matter how much he shouted, there was no reaction from the imprint. Knowing things were bad, he darted out of the surveillance room and immediately saw the shower of flames. The violent sounds of explosions that accompanied them meant that the airship base stationed beside Greenflame City was now caught in the blazing flames.

“It’s too late!” He laughed bitterly, about to leave the battlefield.

*Rumble!* Boiling hot meteoric flames fell and wrapped around him, the fierce flames burning violently.

“Warning, warning! Energy from the barrier has been consumed. Unable to maintain energy defence!”

The piercing sounds of alerts could be heard everywhere in the base. There were panicked Magi and technological staff everywhere, and the interior of the airship base was in chaos. Occasionally, a few airships would take flight, and would then be ruthlessly smacked to the ground by a few gigantic black arms, causing large sparks in the base.

“These airships aren’t half bad, but it’s a pity they’re useless to me!”

Leylin sighed, but his hands did not stop moving. Large black Giant Kemoyin Serpent figures streaked through the skies, absorbing life force without care. All enemies in the vicinity of these figures had their life force sucked up and turned into dry corpses, with not even a bit of moisture left within.

The Ouroboros Clan was unable to handle so many airships, and besides, arrangements after the war were going to be very troublesome. Leylin could not be bothered to wrangle with the Morning Stars over this, and found it simpler to just obliterate the fleet.
“Stop!” Such unbridled actions immediately gave rise to the fury of other Magi. A streak of blue light shot out and appeared before Leylin and the others, revealing the figure of a young Magus. The undulations of a Morning Star were also being emanated from this young Magus’ body. From his bright eyes that had seen through the ways of the world, there was now merely rage. However, after seeing Leylin, Paul and the others, which came up to six Morning Stars working together, his pupils shrank slightly, and fear appeared on his face.

“Duke Farlier, are you planning on destroying the peace treaty from before?” Leylin knew this Magus. He was one of the Morning Stars that had besieged Ouroboros Clan, and was one of the leaders of the organisations that depended on Jupiter’s Lightning. Of course, to the current Leylin, he was as weak as an ant.

“Peace treaty? Hmph! That was just a temporary armistice!” Emma took a step forward, a snake-shaped spore landed in Greenflame City below.

*Bang!* The spore clung onto the body of a Magus, and fear was apparent on his face as many warts appeared on his body.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Seconds later, the warts broke open, and even more spores flew out.

In a short period of time, the entire Greenflame City had sunk into an abyss of suffering.

“You-!” The Morning Star Magus was anxious but did not raise his hand. With six Morning Star Warlocks here, he would be the one in trouble the moment he made a move. Hence, he could only glare at Emma with hatred, “His Highness from Jupiter’s Lightning will not let you off!”

“I’ll wait!” Leylin chuckled and stepped forward while he continued the conversation.

Of course, in the eyes of outsiders, he had gone completely insane! Even with three Kemoyin dukes joining hands, as well as support
from the Warlock Union, it was naive to think they’d be able to challenge a Radiant Moon!
This Morning Star began to snicker but immediately realised something was odd.
“Only Leylin out of all the Warlocks here has recently advanced. It’s understandable if he doesn’t understand the gap between them, but how can Gilbert and the others not know the power of a real Radiant Moon? Why do they look so relaxed?”
Every Magus possessed knowledge and wisdom that far surpassed that of ordinary men. How could any such person knowingly provoke a rank 5?
There were only two ways that such a thing would happen. They were either absolutely confident in victory, or had a trump card that guaranteed them their lives.
Though this Morning Star couldn’t guess what trump card Leylin and the rest had, he could tell that the situation today was not in his favour.
“Alright! Give me five minutes, and I’ll order all my Magi to withdraw. I’ll leave Greenflame City to you,” he relented, albeit grudgingly.
The city and territory were all small matters to him. His Magi were what truly mattered, and he did not hesitate to make this choice even if he was unwilling.
“There’s no need for that. Whatever the Ouroboros Clan lost, we will retrieve it with our own strength.” Gilbert shook his head and rejected the other party’s suggestion.
“Also, even if it’s you, whoever dares offend our Ouroboros Clan will need to pay the price,” Leylin added from the core of the group of Warlocks.
“What?” The enemy Morning Star Magus was enraged. “The nerve! You dare threaten me?”
He had been infuriated. Morning Star Magi lorded over the central
continent. With their Morning Star Arcane Arts, they had trump cards capable of taking their opponents down with them, and they’d thus developed a pride rooted in the belief that they were unrivalled.

He acknowledged that he had been defeated, and taking the initiative and withdrawing was already giving his opponent face. However, the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan wanted him to pay a price?

“Lunatics! You bunch of Kemoyin Warlocks are all lunatics!” The Morning Star’s expression turned frosty.

If he knew of Leylin’s previous battle achievements, he wouldn’t dare say things like this.

Now, however, the Magus was determined to teach Leylin a lesson, and terrifying elemental energy gathered on his body as rings of light formed one after the other.

“That’s right… Since you don’t know what’s good for you, then let this area be completely destroyed!” The Morning Star Magus yelled maniacally. If a Morning Star were to disregard everything, the Ouroboros Clan’s territory would be ruined.

“Stand down. Let me do this.”

Unexpectedly, the Warlocks opposing him had not withdrawn from his threats. Instead, Leylin had stepped out.

“A mere newly-advanced Morning Star is going to stop me?” This Morning Star suddenly had the urge to laugh.

Soon enough, though, this smile turned stiff.

*Hssssss!*” Along with large amounts of demonic black flames, the giant phantom of a serpent appeared behind Leylin’s back. This large serpent was quite similar to the Giant Kemoyin Serpent of the Ouroboros Clan, but there were red patterns on the scales and large amounts of black flames twining around its body. It was as if it was
wreathed in a layer of flaming armour. A forcefield even more terrifying than those of ancient rank 4 beings spread out, covering him.
*Crack!* The rings of light broke, and the energy of this Morning Star Magus’ point mass began to seep out and enter the black flames.
“Wha– What monster is this?!” The Morning Star Magus’ expression changed, regret filling his mind. He now knew that this newly-advanced Morning Star was the most terrifying of this group of Warlocks!
“Hssss!” The huge serpent snarled and devoured the Morning Star…
*Rumble!* Air shook and created shockwaves. Gilbert, Emma and the rest shot glances at each other and began to stabilise the space around them.
*Whoosh!* A moment later, a blue figure escaped from the giant phantom serpent, making a strange sound as he fled pitifully.
Leylin stood quietly where he was, not even a wrinkle in his clothes or a strand of stray hair jutting out. He did not proceed to give chase.
“Why did you let him go?” Gilbert and Emma asked. They knew it was intentional on Leylin’s part, after all they had personally seen his prowess.
“Our goal right now is to regain our territory. Now isn’t the time to start wars with others. Battles between Morning Stars would attract the attention of Breaking Dawn Monarchs."
Leylin shook his head, "Besides, the injuries to his body will take a few hundred years to heal. There’s no need to take notice of him in the future!"
It had to be said that Leylin was very meticulous in some matters. Gilbert and Emma looked to give him their approval.
“Ley– Leylin, you’re so amazing? Goodnes! That was a Morning
Star!” Philip was gaping. He had to admit that what he had seen today was just too amazing, and something rarely seen even in his long life.
Leylin could actually forcefully suppress a Magus by interrupting them while they were performing their Morning Star Arcane Art. He had even gravely injured his opponent, and was confident in killing them!
This was not a strength that belonged to rank 4s. It was the might that only great rank 5 Magi possessed!
“Leylin, Your Grace. Have you advanced to rank 5 already?” Paul asked a question that Gilbert and Emma wanted to enquire about as well.
“Of course not!” Leylin shook his head, but that only gave Paul the feeling that he was enigmatic and unmeasurable.
“Alright! Since the Morning Star has already been chased off, Greenflame City shall return to the arms of our Ouroboros Clan!” Gilbert said a few words to a secret imprint, and soon enough troops formed of multiple high-ranked Warlocks arrived at the place.
Having already been attacked by a rank 4 spell and seeing their Morning Star flee in defeat, the high-ranked Magi of the enemy had no plans of fighting on. Teleportation portals flashed and people flew away as they fled.
Greenflame City returned to the Warlocks’ control in less than an hour.
“I remember that this place once belonged to the Mair Family, right?” Emma spoke, implying something.
“Yes! As the Mair Family did not guard their territory properly, I suggest we reduce their land and take Greenflame City, giving it to other bloodline nobility!” Gilbert immediately spoke.
This was a reshuffling of power. With Leylin’s powerful, abrupt rise, as well as the fall of the original First Elder, there were
definitely conflicts of interest when it came to the allocation of benefits. The war was a perfect excuse to make changes to this. Leylin stood silently at the side, not seeming to have any intentions of seizing power. However, even outsiders like Paul and Philip could tell that most of the territories that were being reclaimed would definitely be placed under Leylin’s Farlier Family and Freya’s Blood Serpent Family. After the war, the Blood Serpent and Farlier Families would immediately rise in power. There was no doubt about that. “Alright, let’s get to the next area!” Once all affairs at Greenflame City were taken care of, a few Warlocks immediately continued on a new journey. With Leylin along with Gilbert and Emma as support, the organisations that relied on Jupiter’s Lightning and had merely one or two Morning Star Magi were swept through. While Philip and Paul did not do anything, just their presence represented the stance of the Warlock Union. Even Rank 5 Magi had to reconsider the consequences. Hence, the frontlines were pushed forward smoothly. In less than a month, all the land that had been occupied had returned to the high-ranked Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan. Of course, there were naturally changes when it came to allocation, but no Warlock dared complain. “Hah… Onyx Castle! I’m back!” Leylin stood above Onyx Castle in his territory, and was speechless. The Magus Tower not far away had long since been overturned by the Oakheart family. Of course, they had immediately compensated Leylin with a brand new Morning Star Magus Tower. The Onyx Castle below had obviously been destroyed and reconstructed. That must have been the Oakheart Family trying to curry favour with him since they were already here. “Are you very familiar with the Azure Mountain King? The
moment you arrived, he immediately withdrew his troops, and even looked impatient in doing it!”
“I just have something on him, so we’re temporary allies.” Leylin shook his head and chuckled.
“Temporary?” Emma observed Leylin’s profound smile, suddenly feeling like the breeze in the skies was slightly chilly. She began to mourn for the Oakheart Family.
“News has come in that the Green Snake Marshes have been taken back. Our Ouroboros Clan has now regained all its past territory!” Gilbert’s figure appeared by Leylin side, a sigh in his tone. “What should we do next?”
“Nothing. Just work on consolidating our original territories.” Leylin knew when to stop. Though he did not know if it was his existence or the intimidation of the Warlock Union, Jupiter’s Lightning had displayed a high degree of tolerance towards the Ouroboros Clan’s recent activities, and practically did not interfere at all. This was also why Leylin and the rest had been able to reclaim their territories so quickly.
Of course, Leylin did not believe that they were afraid of him or the union.
Zegna probably had something more important to focus on, which was why he was temporarily enduring his activities. As long as he killed Leylin, the Ouroboros Clan would quickly fall apart even if they took up half of the central continent.
Leylin always had his guard up against this Radiant Moon.

……

“The Ouroboros Clan has completely expelled our organisations and restored their territories!”
“In the Lava World, Wayde has brought a group of high-ranked Warlocks and is going around annihilating the Mobius
“Damn it, Damn it, DAMN IT! Leylin, Wayde… One day, I’ll bury your skulls under my palace’s steps, and have your souls wailing within the flames of my lights…”

Zegna’s eyes were bloodshot as he sent the reporting Morning Star Magus away. Recently, all that was being delivered to him was bad news.

Wayde had actually gotten the coordinates to the Lava World, bringing a whole group and vying for territory with him. His previous actions had lost him his friendship with Scarlet Eye, and Archibald had become hostile with him after this matter as well.

While Zegna was in terrible shape worrying over these, Leylin had meanwhile reclaimed all the territory that had once belonged to the Ouroboros Clan!
It’s all your fault, Narsha! Didn’t you say that as long as we make use of the Lava World’s coordinates as a trap, we can get rid of them and make them disappear into a spatial rift? You said nobody would know!”

The moon rune on Zegna’s forehead dimmed as he narrowed his eyes.

“How would I know that three Morning Star Warlocks, when teamed up, were as powerful as a Radiant Moon Magus…” The mysterious female voice sounded like that of a spoilt little girl.

“Are you calling me useless?” Veins surfaced on Zegna’s forehead.

“What? How could I do such a thing? You’re my student, after all!” The little girl’s voice was suddenly replaced by a mature one.

“All we have is a trade, an exchange of benefits.” Zegna was breathing heavily as he stated this fact.

“Allright, alright! I know what you want. Wayde is fighting you over the Lava World, and Leylin is challenging your might in the central continent… But all this does not matter. As long as we succeed in our plan, you can advance to Breaking Dawn and become a King! Even wiping out the entire Warlock Union would be a piece of cake, let alone just them.” Her voice was very gentle and extremely easy to be caught into it.

With the comforting words from the female voice, Zegna gathered his composure and returned to a dark secret chamber in his Magus Tower.
Passing through layers of restrictions, one would find nothing in the room except a circular fountain in the centre. A large amount of turbulent black air was boiling within it, and a few expressionless, pale human faces were floating on the surface.

“Wuuu Wuuu!”

A little white stream of air rose up, before forming into a few tall human figures that moved slowly around Zegna.

“How is it? I spent all my treasures for this, and even…” Zegna’s voice lowered.

“It’s looking good. The Pond of Lamentation configuration is almost complete, all that’s left is a few last steps…” The female voice turned a little cold.

……

[Beep! Reserves of the Sun’s Child bloodline imprint strengthened!]
[Beep! Host’s fire elemental resistance has increased!]

Along with the timely prompts from the A.I. Chip, Leylin’s mind wandered off for a bit as he stared at the sun-shaped runes on the back of his hands.

‘I prepared this specially for Zegna, but he didn’t even show up!’ Leylin had to admit that he hadn’t predicted the opponent’s reaction. Zegna was a narrow-minded villain, but he had remained composed under such provocation. This was out of Leylin’s expectations.

‘Or maybe someone else persuaded him not to act!’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘If that’s the case, it must be someone holding a prestigious status in Jupiter’s Lightning. Which one is it?

‘Eh, it’s better like this anyway. We got back all our territory, and I didn’t even have to use one of my bloodline imprints…’ These bloodline imprints were almost as strong as rank 6 spells. They
were definitely a trump card of Leylin’s, and it was best that he continued to hide them. Also, Leylin could feel that the bloodline imprint in his skin resonated with the modified Fireplume, and they complemented each other. With the passage of time, this resonance became more and more obvious.

‘Could it be that the ancient Sun’s Child was related to the phoenix?’ Leylin dismissed his own thought with a laugh.

“Mentor! These are all the documents related to the body tempering in the Ouroboros Clan!”

The door to the study opened, and Snoopy entered with tons of black documents and crystal ball recordings. All the documents had been piled up on Leylin’s desk, forming a small hill.

“Mm, great job!” Leylin nodded his head in encouragement to this handy student of this. He sent him off as he started on the documents.

There were many different types of recording apparatus in the Magus World, and they came in different shapes, sizes, and materials. Books made of real paper were very scarce. In fact, Leylin had even seen a book made entirely out of bronze before, as well as books made of bone.

After all, the Ouroboros Clan was one of the top organisations in the central continent, and the very first thing Leylin had thought of after browsing through the documents was to find a way to improve his vitality.

The side effects of the massive increase in his soul force had yet to be resolved. Moreover, judging from his current health, there were very few spells and refining methods that would be of use to him.

Leylin casually flipped opened a thick dictionary-like book. On the pale yellowish page was a brightly-coloured rose, the leaves and petals seeming to tremble a bit.
“Ah…Dearest Trivish! I adore you, adore your eyes which are so pearl-like, and…”
As he flipped through a huge amount of mixed content, he found what seemed to be like short lines left behind by a bored bard. The phrasing was poor and the text somewhat incoherent. Yet, Leylin browsed through the thing without much thought. He placed his fingers on a piece of paper with raised markings on it, gently sliding across every letter. It was then that something bizarre happened.
A line of fire appeared at the part Leylin touched, and the rest of the letters started to twitch. There were even little black feet growing on them as they started to rearrange themselves.
“The following text contains information on the initial stages of the reformation of Hodo Worms. Only official Magi and above can attempt to…”
Another instructional line appeared, and the A.I. Chip sounded at the same time:

[Beep! Object letting out inductive radiation detected, based on the activity rate of the detected radiation, it can be transferred into the Host’s vitality. Probability: 0.000000001%!]

Leylin closed the book, feeling rather speechless.
Such hidden techniques and methods of induction could only be created by those at rank 3 and above. Rank 1 or 2 Magi who practised this would have their vitality stimulated, and would begin to improve.
However, such a thing was way too weak for Leylin.
“Reform through Hodo Worms? There’s a maximum increase of 3 vitality, and added resistance against poison!” Leylin’s eyes glowed blue as he stroked his chin, “But the new look would be simply too ugly… And it’s useless for me currently anyway…”
He shook his head and moved on to the next source.
With his position in the Ouroboros Clan, he could use any
resources he wanted. He’d finished browsing through all the
documents in a few days.
No other Magus would have been able to accomplish much after
one quick browse through. They would have to spend time to
understand and memorise the information. Unlike them, however,
all the information was now in Leylin’s memory, never to be
forgotten.
“A.I. Chip, scan through the new data and look for methods that
can improve my current vitality,” Leylin ordered.
Not only had he looked through all the documents about body
refinement spell formations, he had also organised all the rumours
and legends that related to improvements in vitality, giving it all to
the A.I. Chip to analyse.
Even though he did not have much faith in the Ouroboros Clan’s
library, just a few clues were good enough for him.
[Beep! Search complete. Found 3 methods that suit the host.]
Along with its report, the A.I. Chip projected some information
into Leylin’s mind.
[1: Conversion into Adoforke. Will result in a one-time increase of
40 vitality.] [2: Acquire the title of Virtuous Sky Sage and come in
contact with the Endowing Scepter. Will assist in advancement of
host’s physical strength by two ranks at once.] [3: Consume the
Giant Dragon Potion together with Hades’ Blood Sacrifice. Will
result in an approximate increase of 10 vitality.] These were the
three methods the A.I. Chip had found, the methods most suited to
Leylin himself.
Of course, they were deduced from rumours and scientific content.
Leylin would have to do his own work to get all the resources
required to proceed with them.
Even so, it was much better for him than for those Magi who were
clueless when they encountered problems, having to try all
methods one by one.
“Conversion of Adoforke? Where on earth am I going to find such an ancient spell formation for the conversion of vitality?” Leylin smiled bitterly.
“Let’s leave that aside for now. As for becoming a Virtuous Sky Sage…” he muttered as he touched his chin, sinking deep into thought. The Sky Castle was under the control of the Monarch of the Skies, but it was open to all scholars. The title of Virtuous Sky Sage was an honorary title in that place.
For strictness of the Magi, those who were able to get the titles were all the masters of the scholars. Coming into contact with the Endowing Scepter would be the benefit of the entitlements. Rumours had it that it could increase Magus’s physique without any side effects.
Of course, with the help of the A.I. Chip, Leylin was quite confident in passing the tests. However, the Sky Castle was located in a Monarch’s territory, and he was not sure of the attitude of the Monarch of the Skies held towards bloodline Warlocks. Hence, he wasn’t confident in that plan.
“As for the last thing, the Giant Dragon Potion and Hades’ Blood Sacrifice are quite simple to get. I can use a bunch of kobolds to refine some dragon blood, and I also have a spell formation for Hades’ Blood Sacrifice…” Leylin’s eyes flickered with light. “The increase is a little on the low end, but it’s good enough!”
He had finally realised how hard it was for Magi to advance. His vitality was already great as a Warlock, and he still faced so many difficulties in advancement. Imagine how hard it would be for Morning Star Magi?
There were probably many Magi stuck in the Morning Star realm due to a stagnation in their soul force and vitality.
“Let’s do this for now. I’ll prepare the Giant Dragon Potion, use it to increase my vitality, then proceed to the Sky Castle!” Leylin had made up his mind.
“Leylin!” Gilbert and Emma had come over while Leylin was deep in thought. Their eyes were twinkling with joy.

“What’s this? You’ve acquired an interest in body tempering?” Emma had immediately made the connection after glancing at the mess of materials on the table.

“Mm. My soul has strengthened too much recently, and my physical body hasn’t been able to keep up.” Leylin nodded. This wasn’t any information worth hiding after all.

“Seriously,” Gilbert sat down speechlessly, “Us bloodline Warlocks have the advantage of increased vitality due to our inheritance of ancient genes. We’re ahead of Magi in this field, and normally we only have to worry about how to increase our soul force. There are practically no other people in your situation!”

Leylin’s monstrous growth rate was something Gilbert found difficult to digest.

Leylin laughed, and asked the two dukes some other questions about body tempering. However, both of them knew even less than he did, and could hardly give him any useful information.

In the end, Leylin could only ask, “How much do you know about Sky City?”

“What?!” “Don’t tell me you’re going there!?” Both Warlocks stood up in shock.

“Why? What’s the matter?” Leylin asked with a smile.
The Endowing Scepter kept in Sky City was a treasure that only Virtuous Sky Sages could come in contact with, and it had the ability to increase his physique by two levels without any side effects. To the present Leylin, that was a huge temptation.

Two levels was roughly twenty points of vitality. With the additional ten points from the Giant Dragon Potion, his vitality would grow very close to a hundred points. The remainder could be increased slowly through Fireplume or Multilimb Strength. Therefore, if he couldn’t find other methods to substitute for it, he had to go through with this.

After a moment of silence Emma spoke. “Leylin… Even though the Monarch of the Skies hasn’t targeted Warlocks before, you know the situation with our Warlock Union…”

Due to unknown reasons, bloodline Warlocks had been rejected and were treated as enemies by the regular Magi of the central continent. They had even reached the verge of extinction. Despite the tremendous efforts of the few Radiant Moon Warlocks, most Warlocks still felt quite unsafe. This was why the Morning Star Area had come up.

If the Monarchs hadn’t given the suppression of Warlocks their tacit approval, this would have been impossible.

In Emma’s eyes, Leylin was an up-and-coming talent who she had high expectations for, even someone who she considered a son-in-law. She naturally wouldn’t want Leylin to leave and expose himself to danger.

“Mentor Gilbert, what do you think?” Leylin could only laugh wryly inside, his eyes focusing on Gilbert.

“Let’s not talk about the Monarch of the Skies. Sky City is a holy land for Magi in the central continent, and is considered the Palace of Truth. Countless top-grade masters, artisans and scholars gather there, calling it the cradle of knowledge. In terms of innovations and advancements in spells, rapid progress is made every single
day!"
Gilbert scratched his bald head, recalling some fond memories from the past as his eyes shimmered.
“If you hadn’t already become a Morning Star Warlock and the pillar that’s propping up our Ouroboros Clan, my very first recommendation would be to go to Sky City if you intend to travel across the continent!”
“If this is the case, I’m even more interested in going there!” Leylin stroked his chin, yearning evident in his expression.
“Alright then, but you have to be extra careful. It’s best to hide your true identity.” Gilbert and Emma smiled wryly at each other. They knew Leylin well enough. He was the stubborn type, and now that he had already made his own decision, he would not change his mind easily. He just wanted to listen to their suggestions.
“I know!” Leylin crossed his arms, leaning slightly forward.
“Well then, is there any reason for you to come all the way here now?”
“Oh yes, of course! We’d even forgotten about that!” Gilbert slapped his forehead. He passed Leylin a recording crystal.
“After a month of hard fighting, we have finally regained all our territory. This is the new map we’ve drawn out.”
Leylin sent his soul force into the crystal, and immediately perceived a giant map. Different colours were used to divide the regions that belonged to the different bloodline nobles. Compared to the previous map, there was not much of a change on the whole, but much of the nobles’ territories had been greatly modified.
Primely, the territory that belonged to the nobles under the previous First Elder’s wings had been greatly reduced, reallocated instead to the Blood Serpent Family and more significantly the Farlier Family. ‘On the whole, both the dukes’ rights and benefits remain the same as before, while I get a hold of the territory and resources that
originally belonged to the First Elder?’ Leylin pondered over this in his mind, though on the surface, just nodded, “I think this is fine! Let’s go with this redistributed map!”

Only after Leylin agreed to this redistribution did Gilbert and Emma feel as if a weight had been lifted off their shoulders. After all, Leylin was far too crucial to the Ouroboros Clan, and if he was dissatisfied with the distribution and left the clan they would be in deep trouble.

Leylin laughed and shook his head as he saw both of these ‘senior’ Morning Star Warlocks in fear and trepidation before him.

……

“Master! I’ve captured a third batch of Kobold Warlocks, and placed them in the binding room.” Tanasha bowed to Leylin as she reported. This Magus who was currently wearing a black dress had afforded him even more respect since his advancement, She had become very cautious with her work as well. At Leylin’s command, she had captured large numbers of Kobold Warlocks in the blink of an eye.

“Mm, good job!” Leylin knew exactly what she wanted. He laid lazily on the couch, waving his right hand slightly. A demonic dark flame formed on her forehead, leaving behind a distinct brand in the shape of a black snake.

*Hss! Hss!* Surrounding the snake were hazy flames. The snake looked as if it was alive, about to break through the thin membrane of skin at any moment,

“Master!” Tanasha knelt down in trepidation. She could feel terrifying power from the mark, enough to crush her into powder!

“This is my secret imprint, and is representative of me. I’ve also stored within a one-time attack from my own hands. Normal Morning Stars won’t be able to withstand it….” Leylin closed his
eyes slightly as he spoke slowly. In the meanwhile, Tanasha was thrilled by his words.
“I’d once promised you at Quicksand Castle that once I was strong enough, and not afraid of retaliation, I would grant you your vengeance.” Indeed, this was the reason that Tanasha had chosen to serve under him.
“Yes, Master! It’s just that I never thought this time would come so soon…” Tanasha sounded a little unsteady. Leylin’s rate of advancement was far beyond her expectations.
“The family that you are going to take revenge on has no Morning Star. I have also talked to their backing organisation, and they won’t get in your way. You should be able to handle everything. The secret imprint I’ve left on you is your last resort!”
“Thank you, Master!” Tanasha’s choked as she sobbed, her eyes red as the memories of her being harmed and chased after came up. It was still extremely vivid in her mind, how she’d even have to hide in the wilderness to survive.
“Go!” Leylin waved his hand, and Tanasha exited respectfully. After exiting the Magus Tower, Tanasha felt the secret imprint on her forehead, especially the immense power within it, and her eyes glinted with strength. “How have you been, Dove? I will be back soon…”
Most would think Tanasha and this Dove were very good friends from her words, but they would be frightened upon looking at the terrifying expression on her face.
“Deeply buried hatred that hasn’t dissipated over time. It’s instead fermented and grown…” After Tanasha left, Leylin stood up slowly, and announced something that sounded like a prophecy. He had a feeling that Tanasha’s trip back would be accompanied by a great amount of bloodshed and pain. The misery of being forced to leave home and the experience of hiding for survival was enough to turn Tanasha into a terrifying goddess of vengeance.
But the history between them didn’t matter to him. No matter what had happened, Leylin would surely side with Tanasha, and for a very simple reason. He had no relationship with the other party, whereas Tanasha was his subordinate.

Leylin had always favoured people of his own. He followed his own set of rules, and would definitely side with his own people if they were engaged in conflict with outsiders. Were Freya to fight his subordinates, for example, he would support her. But in case the two of them fell out, he would choose to protect his own benefits.

His personal benefits was in the core of his set of rules. The closer an external circle of benefits was to the centre, the more priority it received.

As for fairness? Justice? To things like that…Haha.

“Tower genie! Begin the modulation of Kobold Warlocks based on the bloodline operation sequence I had entered earlier on!”

Take now for instance. Leylin’s interests were in conflict with those of the Kobolds, so he would not hesitate to sacrifice them.

[Beep! First stage of modulation beginning, increase in activity of bloodline…] The tower genie’s voice sounded. Meanwhile, sounds of mournful cries could be heard from the multiple cages under the Magus Tower…

……

After days of experiments, Leylin held a purplish red bloodline potion in a test tube, his face filled with satisfaction, “Even though there were some failures in between, the Giant Dragon Potion is finally ready!”
eylin had tremendous achievements in Potioneering, to the extent that he’d even surpassed the realm of Grandmasters, reaching a higher level. Even though the Giant Dragon Potion was rare and difficult to make even during ancient times, it was only a matter of trial and error for Leylin. Even these few failures were not due to his technique, but because experiments were prone to failure themselves. “Since the Giant Dragon Potion is done, I can begin now!” Leylin took a glance at the surroundings. It was a huge public square located in the Morning Star Magus Tower, created with the help of the tower genie. On the ground were complex designs and magic runes, and even vicious totem images. Surrounding the entire spell formation were four gigantic pillars, every single stone pillar the thickness of three men combined. Above them was something like a huge hollow tunnel, it seemed to be split open by sharp weapons, full of a wild ancient aura. [Hades’ Blood Sacrifice spell formation, progress 99.9999%] the A. I. Chip responded after scanning through. “Hades’ spell formation, what an affinity between us!” Leylin laughed. Hades was one of the most terrifying dark Magi of ancient myth. His level of dark magic was said to be unreachable, and rumour had it that he had even completely grasped the rules of death. He
possessed eternal youth, and was full of desire for flesh and souls. But of course, Hades was nothing more than a super powerful dark Magus in the eyes of Leylin and other Magi, and some even looked up to Hades as a motivational target and tried to surpass him. When Leylin was trying to advance to rank 2, he had made use of the opponent’s spell formation to harvest spirits.

Of course, the current blood spell formation was a few levels higher than the one back then, it could even absorb the sacrificial offerings’ bloodlines by force in order to increase the Morning Star Magus’s vitality.

Leylin took a look at his current status:


“I have more than enough spiritual force, but vitality is so hard to increase!” Leylin smiled wryly. This was the side effect for his sudden, huge advancements recently.

Moreover, if his vitality still could not reach 100, it would be a huge problem once the Multilimb seal was broken.

“Begin!” Leylin’s eyes shimmered with crimson light.

*Crack! Crack!* Under the manipulation of the tower genie, the entire square started shaking, and grieved howls could be heard from a near distance.

That was the mourning of the strengthened Kobold Warlocks. After the bloodline extraction, these creatures were being treated as waste material and processed by Leylin.

Waves of a terrifying aura rose continuously within the spell formation. Once the mourning of the Kobolds weakened, the whole spell formation started to change.

The four gigantic stone pillars surrounding the square began to shake. From the tunnel up above, a huge amount of sticky liquid
that was blood red in colour dripped down. Mixed in were white objects that looked like crushed bones.
The red liquid first filled the pillars to the brink, before it slowly spilled out like blood flowing in veins, causing the pillars to turn crimson.
The liquid flowed all the way down, finally reaching the runes of the spell formation.
The concentrated blood red liquid filled the runes in order. The entire process was full of a certain solemnity, and the stagnant atmosphere was stifling.
The spell formation kicked into action, and an enormous layer of crimson light shot up from the runes.
Under the attraction of the crimson light rays, the vacant void above the spell formation was broken. Light took on the form of symbols seen in sacrificial rites, as it began to radiate waves of summoning.
*Awoooooo…* The phantom of a monstrous two-headed wolf hovered in the sky above the spell formation, howling ferociously. Greed filled its green eyes as saliva dripped down its jaws.
‘I’ve never seen such a summoning technique before, is it a summoning from a foreign world or from a different time and space?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed blue. He had ordered the A.I. Chip to record the scene down into his database for future use.
*Awooooo…* The two-headed wolf did not start to feast on the pulp of flesh, bones and blood immediately. Instead, it turned to Leylin, a ferocious look in its eyes as it glared at him as if he was one of the offerings.
‘It has a certain level of intelligence? Could it be a clone of Hades?’ Leylin stroked his chin, started as he sized up this two-headed wolf. This carefree behaviour of Leylin greatly irritated the phantom as it howled and aimed to pounce onto Leylin.
*Sssssii* A malevolent phantom of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent,
this one with crimson scales, appeared behind Leylin and bared its jaws at the wolf.
A magnificent aura emanated from the Kemoyin Serpent, causing the wolf to waver.
“The summoning of a creature from another world is indeed troublesome!” Leylin snorted, started to activate a spell.
*Rumble!* Eye piercing white flashes of lightning struck the phantom, causing it to howl as it lost some of its dark form.
After the lightning passed, each of the two wolf heads now had a collar on, with spikes that faced the neck.
The two-headed wolf was threatened by the spikes, and dared not rebel. It then dashed into the crimson light before starting to feast on the flesh hungrily. The formation grew silent except for the bone-chilling munching noises.
After a few minutes, the flesh and light inside the spell formation were both devoured by the two-headed wolf. It then roared to the sky, the sound waves travelling far and wide as it howled loudly.
The spell formation started to warp once more under these terrifying howls.
Starlight shone down through the Magus Tower, revealing the image of a bright moon.
Under the howls of the wolf, the moon gradually turned red before it stretched into the sides and formed the shape of a human eye.
An icy gaze swept across, causing Leylin to shudder in fear. He felt as if he had called upon a disaster and his body tensed up. ‘This pressuring aura must surely belong to a high levelled Magus!’
Leylin inhaled deeply. Fortunately, the crimson eye did not fix its gaze on him. Instead, it only spared him a short glance and focused on the two-headed wolf.
An eerie scene formed as the two-headed wolf howled continuously under the gaze of the crimson moon-eye.
*Pop!* The sound of a bubble bursting was followed by a crisp
explosive sound, and the phenomenal sights in the area disappeared without a trace.
The two-headed wolf, the full moon and the starlight suddenly seemed to be an illusion, and a tinge of purple light twirled around the spell formation.
[Conscient of greed from a foreign world has been attracted, summoning of ancient Hades phantom is complete!] A notification from the A. I. Chip sounded, reminding Leylin that what he had seen just now was not a hallucination.
“Phew…what a weird spell formation! Hades, the king of the ancient dark Magi, is truly a powerful elite!” Leylin let out a long breath and stepped into the spell formation.
*Boom* The rumbling of the formation acted like a signal, and a huge amount of purple light converged on Leylin as it entered his body.
“Argh!” Leylin let out a stuffy groan and started to spasm.
After the purple light rays entered his body, they started wriggling like earthworms. This feeling was indescribable; if not for his superb vitality and great endurance, he would have passed out or even died due to the pain!
“The Giant Dragon Potion!” Leylin kept himself composed, using the purplish red medicine which he had long since prepared in his hand.
*Pow!* There seemed to be a chemical reaction when the potion entered his stomach, and the amount of pain increased tenfold.
Leylin’s vision turned pitch black, but he managed to persevere through it with his strong will.
[Beep! Host is undergoing Hades’ sacrificial rites! Muscle fiber strengthening in process.] [Beep! Host is absorbing quintessential materials, vitality increased.] [Beep! Giant Dragon Potion has taken effect. Radiation is creating the best environment for absorption.] The notifications from the A. I. Chip sounded continuously.
After the last wave of pain had passed, Leylin felt a stream of boiling heat gushing all over his body.

[Beep! Host vitality increasing, currently at 66.7! 67.5! 68.3! 69.9!]
The value showing Leylin’s vitality kept on increasing in the A. I. Chip’s database, and surpassed 70 within a split second before continuing on.

71! 72! 73! 74! 74.5!
In almost an instant, the number had rocketed up by ten. It only stopped upon reaching 74.9.

Leylin straightened his body after the effects of the potion passed, and crackling sounds rang throughout it.

[Host data changed, readjusting!]
Leylin took a look at his stats and discovered a huge change in them.

[Leylin Farlier, Rank 4 Bloodline Warlock: Kemoyin’s Serpent (complete form) Strength: 50 Agility: 45 Vitality: 74.9 Spiritual Force: 956.8 Magic Power: 956(Magic power in synchronisation with spiritual force) Soul force:???

“Hmm! Vitality had increased by 9.9 units! Pretty close to the estimated data from the A. I. Chip!” Leylin nodded in satisfaction. Right now, he had reached a monstrous value in terms of his vitality.
Based on Leylin’s understanding, vitality represented defence as well as regenerative abilities. His value of 74.9 was very close to the terrifying numbers that ancient creatures possessed. With his current body, regular rank 1 and 2 spells could not break through his defences. Even rank 3 spells would only give him tiny injuries, and he would recover instantly. His frightening vitality gave him an equally terrifying healing ability. After checking everything once over, Leylin nodded in satisfaction. “With the strength of my body, even if the seal of Multilimb Strength suddenly gives way, I can still hold on for a period of time. Next, if I can gain the title of a Virtuous Sky Sage and receive the blessing from the Endowing Scepter, I’ll be able to solve the issue of the repercussions from having my soul force rise too rapidly!” Leylin had to go to Sky City no matter what. Though that was the territory of the Monarch of the Skies, and a Warlock like him going alone could be troublesome, it was already the simplest method that the A.I. Chip could come up with. Techniques and body tempering spell formations that could increase the vitality of Morning Stars was very rare in the central continent. On top of that, Leylin’s strong foundation as a Warlock made things more difficult. The A.I. Chip had summed up all of Leylin’s knowledge and used
the Ouroboros Clan’s large database to find these three methods. They were already the best out there.
However, Leylin had yet to find any clues on the transformation spell formation in Adoforke, and only knew it was in some ruins in the central continent from a legend. To him, taking the risk to explore ruins was too troublesome and dangerous.
He had already used the third method, and could not repeat it within a short period. If he tried, leave alone getting results, he would only face possible side effects.
Hence, the most reasonable choice to make was the second. He would head for Sky City and the Endowing Scepter.
Of course, Leylin was rather confident in his travels. He was a peak Morning Star and could escape with his life even if he met with a Radiant Moon Magus.
The two bloodline imprints from the bloodline of the Sun’s Child gave him more than enough confidence.
Sky City was the home to the Monarch of the Skies. He did not wish for there to be a rank 6 battle at that place!
‘Besides, I haven’t provoked the Monarch of the Skies at all. I just have to be careful of Jupiter’s Lightning…’ Leylin stroked his chin and sank into deep thought.

……

A few days later, in the area surrounding Phosphorescence Swamp. A completely black private airship that looked like a water droplet soared into the skies. In just a few minutes, it disappeared into the horizon.
Atop high towers, countless figures stared at the floating airship in a daze until it disappeared.
“Relax, Freya!” Emma patted the back of Freya’s hands, looking at her lovingly, “Leylin is now comparable to a rank 5 Warlock. He’ll
be fine!”
“Indeed. Leylin is very powerful. We just have to do our duty here at the Ouroboros Clan,” Gilbert consoled her.
“Your Graces are right!” Freya bowed slightly, the concern in her eyes still not completely gone.
After all, Leylin was going to the territory of a Monarch. What if something happened? Freya did not dare think further.
“Haha… Ever since little Freya got married, she doesn’t listen to her mentor!”
Emma grabbed Freya’s hands and began to repeat, “You don’t have to care about other things right now. What’s most important is to spread the bloodline of the Farlier Family. Leylin has a lot of secrets on him, and his Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline is the best I’ve seen… No! It’s THE best Kemoyin bloodline! If you don’t spread it, it’ll be a true waste…”
“Mentor, what are you saying?” Freya protested coquettishly, two attractive flushes of red rising in her cheeks. Yet, that had eased her worry.

……

*Bang!* The Colossal Serpent parted the clouds and shook off the winds, breaking through the troposphere and reaching a higher part of the sky.
One could see intense sunlight shining down through the glass windows. Below was a seemingly boundless white sea of clouds, the scenery incomparably beautiful.
The private airship was very quick, but it was not obvious from the scenery which seemed to be still.
After he finished setting up the automatic navigation system, Leylin sat alone on the sofa with red wine in his hands as he watched the scenery on both sides through the windows. He looked on
absentmindedly.
A long while later, he sighed. “I’m not treating Freya well!”
Ever since Leylin had returned from the Lava World, he had extremely busy with reclaiming territory and contacting other bloodline organisations. He had basically given Freya the cold shoulder.
Now, he was going on a solo journey to Sky City. Though Freya had been strong and not displayed it, Leylin could feel her worry as she sent him off.
Whatever it was, Leylin would definitely not bring her along. He was going to take a risk here, and this was no holiday. If he were alone, it would be easier to escape, but if he had someone else around, things would get difficult.
‘I’ll make it up to her in the future!’ Thinking this through, Leylin focused on other things.
“A.I. Chip, how much longer till I reach Sky City?”
[Beep! Based on the speed of Giant Serpent, estimated time of arrival: 45 days, 13 hours, 46 minutes, 19 seconds!] The A.I. Chip loyally intoned.
“That’s really quite far. If not for me having my personal airship, it might have been even more troublesome!”
Leylin was speechless. If it required such a long time with the speed of his personal airship, it was quite obvious how vast the central continent was.
‘This is a great time to meditate! Besides, there are still some more improvements to be made to the fusion of the Fireplume and Kemoyin’s Pupil…’
Leylin sunk deep into thought, eyes glowing a blue that was indicative of the workings of the A.I. Chip. Numbers, letters and runes from different worlds were processed by the A.I. Chip. The A.I. Chip operated continuously, calculating and deducing information, forming a wondrous cycle of numbers…
Within a hidden Magus Tower.
This was a Magus Tower constructed by a Radiant Moon, filled with black thunder and lightning. It gave off a dark atmosphere that would cause one’s heart to palpitate. These flashes of lightning constantly flickered around, causing the Magi walking along the passageway to break out in cold sweat.
“The feeling of this area really gives me the chills…” The Morning Star who spoke was one of Jupiter’s Lightning.
After the incident during the Holy Solar Festival, Wayde had brought along a group of high-ranked Warlocks to attack them. The Mobius Organisation lost time and time again in the Lava World, and quite a few Morning Stars were either killed or heavily injured. This led to a lack of manpower in Jupiter’s Lightning.
At such a critical time, the leader of Jupiter’s Lightning, the great Radiant Moon Magus Zegna, had suddenly announced he was going to seclude himself in meditation, which had given rise to protests and confusion. Of course, that was only in the hearts of his subordinates. Those that would dare oppose Zegna overtly had been turned to ashes hundreds of years ago.
Passing through the alley, the Morning Star Magus arrived at a bronze door. The uneasiness he felt had reached its peak.
“Your Highness, this is Loki seeking an audience!” he transmitted after a momentary silence.
“Come in!” Zegna’s voice was heard. It was the same old voice, but there was something oddly jarring about it.
While wondering about it on the inside, Loki showed the utmost respect as he bowed and entered. Behind the large brass door was a giant secret room. The walls were full of binding and summoning runes, as well energy isolation
At the heart of the room was a large pool where streams of black gas surged, producing bubbling sounds. Zegna stood by the pool, clad in black and gold. His eyes were fixed on the current of the black gas.

“Your Highness!” Loki bowed, watching the pool with some curiosity. This was what had caused his uneasiness! Yet, he would not dare to ask Zegna about it. He did not even have the guts to probe it with his soul force.

“What is it? You even used the emergency communicator to contact me.” Zegna’s hands were behind his back, but Loki knew that this meant His Highness was beginning to be enraged. If his next words were unsatisfactory, he would be in trouble.

“Your Highness had put me in charge of information about the Ouroboros Clan, and in particular the Warlock named Farlier. I’ve acquired some intelligence!”

Zegna was paying close attention to Leylin, and hence he turned back to stare at Loki. “Speak!”

“Leylin of the Ouroboros Clan left Phosphorescence Swamp yesterday. His destination is most likely Sky City!” Loki hastily reported, but strangely enough, Zegna merely listened quietly and did not do anything special.

“Your Highness?” Loki raised his head and saw the dazed look on Zegna’s face. There were a few distorted spirit bodies hovering around him, pale, crooked palms grabbing at his collar.

Loki felt his heart lurch, but after sneaking another glance at Zegna, everything seemed like it had been an illusion. This discovery had him sink deeper into fear.

“Your Highness, do you need me…” Loki asked as he tried to sound out.

“I’m conducting an exceptionally important spirit body experiment. I’ll take care of Leylin myself. Don’t bother with it anymore!”
Zegna answered coldly.
“Yes, sir!” Loki bowed once more and left. Only after leaving the Magus Tower did he let out a long sigh. He felt like his entire top half was drenched in sweat.
His Highness, who had always been very enthusiastic about destroying the Ouroboros Clan, had been reduced to this state. The scene just then even had Loki in shock.
“Could that just now have been…”
Within the Magus Tower’s secret room, at the side of the Pond of Lamentation. The silent Zegna was in a daze, only turning back after he left and lifting up the sleeve on his right arm. On his right arm, crests and troughs formed on what should’ve been smooth skin, taking on the shape of a mysterious female face. “What should we do about the Ouroboros Clan?” Zegna asked. Two cracks opened in the skin, rolling apart to form a vivid pair of eyes. “You are now at the advanced stage of the transformation. Your main body will probably not be able to…” the mysterious woman’s voice sounded. “You mean we should let go of this opportunity?” Zegna raised his eyebrows. “No! We…” The woman’s voice grew softer and was quickly concealed by the waves of water in the black pool.

……

Above the troposphere. The large amounts of white clouds gathered to form a boundless white sea. A black streaking was soaring through this see, a private airship with a smooth structure. Currently on its surface was a faint layer of defence, allowing the interior to be silent. Leylin sat cross-legged on a platform in the bedroom, a phantom
Kemoyin Serpent slowly taking form behind him. Light flickered on the phantom causing it to seem illusory, and it looked more regal as fine red stripes appeared on it.

Meditation was something Leylin did every day. Even though he’d already reached the peak of Morning Star, he would not set this task aside.

After he absorbed a large amount of darkness and fire elemental particles, the phantom behind him shrunk down and entered his body.

*Whoosh!* Leylin’s eyes opened, and it seemed like large amounts of lightning streaked past the room.

“Mm. With the A.I. Chip’s optimisation, the fusion between Fireplume and Kemoyin’s Pupil is now half a fold more effective than before!” This was the most precise number he could come up with through his own personal experiments.

Having a top-grade meditation technique such as the Wing of the Sun for reference, Leylin knew fully well that other than not having enough levels, Kemoyin’s Pupil was rather similar to a top-grade meditation technique.

At this thought, Leylin could not help but focus on the A.I. Chip, “How is the progress on the fifth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil?”

[Beep! 76.5% completed! The remaining path is being optimised.]

The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice intoned loyally.

“It seems like the fifth level will be completed soon.” A hint of glee appeared on Leylin’s expression.

The bloodline shackles had ensured that no Kemoyin Warlock had ever broken past the Morning Star realm. Hence, Kemoyin’s Pupil which was specialised for his bloodline only had four levels to it.

This was a type of bloodline shackles. The meditation technique itself would hinder a Kemoyin Warlock from breaking through!

Now, Leylin could hope to destroy these shackles! The meditation technique may be just one part of them, but it had a hole in the
bloodline shackles. Now, all he had to do was pry it open. Leylin believed that, one day, he would manage to break through these shackles as long as he persevered.

‘Meditation techniques are only one tiny aspect of the Warlocks’ bloodline shackles. The fundamental issue is still the bloodline, as well as restrictions on the spirit…’ At this thought, Leylin turned gloomy. Though he was confident in his future, that did not mean he thought the troubles ahead of him were easy to deal with.

‘The limit of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent is rank 4. I, who have fused with its blood and soul, am now bound to rank 4 as well.’ The limits imposed by a bloodline would extend to the soul once one reached the Morning Star realm. This was the true issue of the bloodline shackles.

The soul was just too complicated. Even Morning Stars could only graze the surface in researching it.

‘How do I break through the restrictions on the soul?’ Leylin touched his chin, ‘Do I have to begin experimentation on synthesising and altering bloodlines?’

Leylin, equipped with large amounts of information from the ancient Quicksand Organisation, was no stranger to all this. He also had much experience under his belt.

Leylin was perhaps the only one in the central continent in altering Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline or form a new one!

‘However, artificially-constructed bloodlines always have defects. They are less lively in comparison to those that have gone through the order of survival of the fittest, shaped by nature and history.’

This was the disadvantage of artificially-made products. The only other option was if Leylin was willing to expend much time and wait, allowing the formed bloodline to grow in nature for up to several tens of generations and slowly ripen. However, the amount of time required far exceeded Leylin’s lifespan.

Besides, though altering bloodlines could result in the creation of
more powerful types of bloodlines, the chances of failure were equally high. Leylin was not going to gamble on his future. Hence, this very attractive train of thought lingered in Leylin’s mind but was eventually abandoned.

“If this doesn’t work, I can only rely on the plan the ancient Wisdom Tree came up with! It’s a pity… At my level, I can’t use it yet…” A deep wrinkle appeared on Leylin’s forehead.

In terms of just intelligence and knowledge, it was impossible for him to measure up to the Wisdom Tree which had lived since time immemorial. He knew that it’s suggestion was definitely viable. The A.I. Chip had also performed many simulations and verified its feasibility.

It was a pity that these plans were still far away for Leylin. His current strength was insufficient for him to carry them out.

“Besides, the method it gave me can take care of this issue once and for all. If I use it now, the effects definitely won’t be as good as me employing it in the future! I must use it as a trump card, because this might be the only thing I can count on when I meet the Snake Dowager!”

Leylin’s eyes glinted. “Perhaps… My ideas were wrong from the start. Rather than finding other forces to contaminate the bloodline, I should focus on developing my own bloodline. I might even get some results from that!”

Leylin made up his mind.

[Beep! Reached vicinity of Sky City! Arrival in 1h, 24min, 13s.] the A.I. Chip prompted.

“Hm? A month has already passed?” Leylin was puzzled, but then looked through the time records the A.I. Chip had created and could not help but burst out in laughter as he shook his head, “I’ve long since heard that high-ranked Magi have experiments that go on for years or even decades. When they come out, nothing will seem to have changed but that would be untrue. I never expected to
find myself in this situation. Just meditating a few times and going through a few conjectures and proofs on experiments had time passing so quickly…”

To outsiders, Magi possessed great strength as well as an enviably long life. Even rank 1 and 2 Magi could live for hundreds of years, which seemed endless.

However, Leylin knew that their time was short, much too short. Besides meditating, they had to conduct experiments and embark on explorations. Each incident of these could take up decades, even centuries! Hence, even after reaching rank 4 and acquiring a lifespan of over a thousand years, he still felt that there wasn’t enough time.

‘This is why so many Magi transform into undeads or become spirit bodies. However, that’s merely struggling at death’s door. The body cannot do anything about the death of its soul, and there will be huge side effects, even going so far as the degeneration of their intelligence.’

Leylin could not help but shiver at that thought. Even if he was at the end of his lifespan anyway, he would not choose to use this method. While he could live for a longer period of time, the price to pay for that would be becoming slow-witted, a fool or lunatic. He would rather return to the astral plane with a clear mind.

*Buzz!* At this moment, the Colossal Serpent began to tilt upwards.

‘Am I finally there? Sky City, the holy land of the Magi of the central continent, said to be the cradle of truth and knowledge!’

Anticipation glinted in Leylin’s eyes as he walked to the deck of the airship. The great wind and atmospheric pressure did not affect the defence of the Colossal Serpent at all. Leylin, who was inside, felt nothing. At this moment, the head of the airship tilted further, climbing upwards rapidly.
From the troposphere where the weather was peaceful, he had broken through the stratosphere, arriving even higher than that. [Beep! Air pressure around host has dropped, oxygen supply dwindling.] The A.I. Chip prompted.

“Hehe, not yet!” Leylin shook his head, and the Colossal Serpent became a flaming arrow as it began to shoot up almost vertically. [80 km altitude. 200 km. 500 km!] The A.I. Chip rapidly refreshed its prompts.

“If I was in another world, I’d probably have broken through the warm layer and arrived above the ionosphere, right?” Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip curiously. He noticed that besides the strange reduction in temperature and a change in the behaviour of ions, there were no other changes.

“No!” Leylin looked up. He did not see a universe, but just the sky from before. However, the sunlight seemed more vast and dazzling. “The Magus World it just a world amongst many others. It naturally can’t be the same as in my previous world!” Leylin seemed to mock himself as he laughed.

At this moment, dark clouds appeared above the Colossal Serpent, as if shrouding the whole sky. When he got closer, he realised that these gigantic dark clouds even had lightning snakes within, thunder booming constantly inside.

“The thunder layer of Akev! Sky City’s first line of defence!” Leylin chuckled, piloting the Colossal Serpent and charging straight in.

*Whoosh!* The lightning seemed to be enraged and struck downwards suddenly!
The multiple bolts of lightning twined together, converging into a giant lightning serpent. There even seemed to be a hologram behind it, as it faced the unwanted guest that had just entered its lightning zone.

*Bzz Bzz!* Sparks flew madly on the surface of the Colossal Serpent, and the original defensive layer began to deform, seemingly unable to endure further.

“Emergency alert? The strength of each lightning bolt is above 300 degrees?” Leylin touched his chin.

An attack strength of 300 degrees was rare even amongst rank 3 Magi. Even Crystal Phase Magi would find it difficult to take on the combination of the lightning storm and the atmosphere.

Other than Morning Star Magi, perhaps only a fleet of tens of rank 3 Magi could gain entry using the airship’s defences augmented by a continuous supply of magic crystals and potions.

This had caused tickets into Sky City to become immensely expensive, enough to make official Magi go broke.

‘If not for caring little for this meagre source of income, Morning Star Magi could earn quite a lot of money if they took charge of these airships!’ Leylin thought indifferently.

Of course, Morning Star Magi were exceedingly rich and cared little for such a meagre profit. In addition, their arrogance would not allow them to do something like this.

Leylin was not staying idle right now. A terrifying soul force
emanated from this body, wrapping the Colossal Serpent within it. *Buzz!* With the support of soul force, the Colossal Serpent’s defensive membrane immediately stabilised and was now reinforced with another thick layer. It was now like a solid black crystal.

The deck of the Colossal Serpent, that had been shuddering all this while, was now as solid as a mountain.

That was not all. Tiny black flames clung to the energy defence. The lightning could not even reach the Colossal Serpent itself and was instead absorbed by these flames. In fact, the Colossal Serpent’s energy reserves grew rapidly.

The black flames seemed to form a pathway in the air, not allowing any lightning to strike in its path.

The Colossal Serpent was then free to move as it liked, the lightning no longer daring to attack.

“Oh?” Leylin scanned an area and chuckled. The Colossal Serpent turned into a black streak as he quickly left.

“Hah…” A long while after the Colossal Serpent disappeared, the clouds dissipated to reveal an elemental sprite whose lower body was covered by a spiral of unlimited lightning elemental particles.

“What a terrifying human!” Only now did it dare mutter to itself, a tremble in its voice, “He’d long since found me! Just his gaze alone was paralysing… Even the earlier Morning Stars haven’t given me this feeling, could he be a great Radiant Moon Magus?”

This lightning elemental sprite with a body of lightning energy particles shuddered as it looked in the direction Leylin had departed, eyes full of fear…

*Boom!* The black clouds parted as a similarly black streak flew across the skies, with black flames trailing behind as it left a magnificent path in the air.

“Hah… So this is Sky City, the airborne holy land of the Magi!” Leylin observed a large floating city from the deck in amazement.
This city was constructed on a hemispherical island. The city itself was massive, glowing with light from all types of spells. Once in a while, a few ant-like black dots would move in the distance horizon. With Leylin’s sight, he could tell that they were no ants, but magic airships that were bigger than even the most gigantic cruises in his previous world.

In comparison to the floating city, these large airships appeared to be tiny.

“And to think I still knew that Sky City was afloat. Pictures and words can’t describe the mind-blowing nature of this view.” As the Colossal Serpent approached it, the city seemed to grow even larger. A faint golden light rose from the heart of the city, seeming to create a holy radiance in the sky.

“Peace and harmony! What a beautiful city!” Even Leylin could not help but sing its praises right now.

[Beep! The Colossal Serpent has received a communication request.] the A.I. Chip sounded. The floating city had obviously discovered the communication devices on Leylin’s personal airship. ‘As expected of something from the Fallor Family, they’d tampered with the airship!’ Leylin’s eyes flashed coldly. While he had known of this, he had allowed it because it made communications easier, which did not go past his bottom line.

Leylin had intentionally used the Colossal Serpent to come here. If he were to sneak in alone, who would discover him?

Through the communications channel, a polite and humble voice was heard. “Airship number DKGW1394! Distinguished Duke Farlier, welcome to Sky City! Please follow our guiding airship and park at the private port we’ve allocated!”

“Mm!” Leylin agreed, and the Colossal Serpent began to slow down while following the mentioned route before it stopped.

Meanwhile, in the command room somewhere in Sky City, things were in chaos!
“Morning Star undulations detected! Determined to be at Four Stars!”
“No issues with the Colossal Serpent. Kemoyin Duke Farlier is confirmed to be inside.” Information was flashed through red warning lights and many staff members gaped at the gigantic airship. The figures working the deck felt faint.
“A Morning Star has come to visit us. Why were we not notified earlier?” A burly middle-aged man shouted as he barged in after bursting through the door. He looked panicked as he snarled, “Do you know who he is? He’s the most powerful Kemoyin Warlock in history, the one who killed Demon Hunter Cyril. It’s Duke Leylin Farlier! If this kind of person flares up at us for how we receive him, we’re finished!”
Immediately after, he looked at the red warning alarm and couldn’t help but hold his head in his hands, feeling the desire to end his life there and then. “Four Star undulations? The upper-tier of Morning Star? Gods, just let me die!”
Morning Star Magi were a rarity in the central continent, and there were naturally no clear methods of classifying them. They were normally classified based on their reputation and battle achievements among others.
As the holy land of Magi, Sky City was the most advanced research centre in the central continent. It had independently come up with a standard to measure the strength of a Morning Star. They had divided Morning Stars into five levels represented by five Stars, with a One Star Magus being the weakest. A grade of Four Stars was already at the upper tier of Morning Stars, while Five Stars was the peak!
Of course, since Leylin had intentionally hidden some of his strength, their detection was not accurate.
However, even Four Stars was already terrifying. Most of the Morning Stars were around One to Three Stars. Morning Stars at
Four Stars or above were absolutely powerful, and even Radiant Moons would be apprehensive when up against them. Sky City might be called the holy land of Magi, but there were few Morning Stars of this calibre among their ranks. People like them in charge of the ports could not afford to offend him. Even if they were exposed to the radiations on his body, there would be massive casualties here!

“We’ve already sent out the signal and requested that he stop at the personal dock. He’s accepted our guidance airship, and is probably here with kind intentions…”

A golden-haired young man produced a handkerchief and wiped away the cold sweat on his forehead. “What we need to do now is to report this news to the Sage Committee, and then all of us should welcome him!”

“Oh, yes, yes! You’re right. Quick, report it in!” While the Sage Committee which controlled Sky City had their own methods of detection, as their subordinates, they had to do their utmost as well. The burly man from before looked like he had just woken up as he snarled, “What are you standing there like that for? Report it in, and follow me to welcome him!”

“No need for that.” A white-gold flash appeared in the control room.

“Lord Boffel!” The staff of the control room immediately bowed to the man.

“He comes with good intentions and doesn’t want to act ostentatiously. I’ll see to him myself. Go back to your posts and forget about this!” The white-gold light spoke and diverged into many rays of light.

“Good, good! With our Morning Star taking over, anything that happens next isn’t our problem!” The burly man sighed, hands behind his back as he left the control room.

The other members in the control room looked relieved as they sat
back down. The young man who had reported this earlier continued to work diligently, concealing the envy and feverish look in his eyes.

*Boom!* The Colossal Serpent steadily descended atop a lawn with a large rune on it, not flipping up any dust.

“Is it Lord Leylin? Welcome!” Due to the urgent message just now, there was no staff member around. A young man with platinum hair and wings of light similar to the wings of angels stood under the elevating platform of the airship.

“I am Leylin Farlier. You are…?” The door opened and Leylin walked out, looking friendly.

Though Gilbert had suggested that he sneak in and conceal his identity, Leylin wanted the title of a Virtuous Sky Sage in Sky City, and he would need to make contact with the Endowing Scepter. He would definitely be interrogated thoroughly and would even attract the attention of the Monarch of the Skies. How could he conceal himself?

Hence, Leylin had chosen to step forward without any tricks. The title of a Virtuous Sky Sage from Sky City was an honour open to all Magi of the central continent, and large numbers of scholars would be attracted here. It was not shameful in any way that he wanted to obtain this.
The title of Virtuous Sky Sage was an honour given by Sky City to top scholars. As long as Magi had achievements in academics and were acknowledged by the Sage Committee, they could be awarded this title.

Not only was it an honour to become a Sage, there were benefits to it as well. Not only could they gain a bonus of two levels to their vitality from the Endowing Scepter, they also had the opportunity to join Sky City themselves. Even if they did not enter, the Monarch of the Skies would still protect them, and they would be able to move around the central continent without obstruction.

Hence, whether it was for the fame, the benefits, or just to make up for their weaknesses in academics, large numbers of scholarly Magi came here every year, which allowed Sky City to gain the good reputation of being the cradle of truth.

Even if he couldn’t pass, just gaining the favour of the Monarch of the Skies and being baptised by the Endowing Scepter once was no big issue.

Leylin was now feeling very confident. The gift he had prepared would surely move rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magi!

How could the coordinates of another world not be enough? He’d never promised Wayde not to give away the coordinates of the Lava World to a third party anyway.

It was attractive enough that the Monarch of the Skies could make an exception.
He was just unsure if Wayde and Zegna would cough up blood after finding out about this.
Which Magus would not take the secret of a world’s coordinates to their grave? Only a freak like Leylin would actively go around, using it as a gift and giving it to others.
“Boffel!” The person who had arrived announced his name.
As he began to judge the Magus opposite him, the first word that came to Boffel’s mind was ‘Young’! Whether it was his handsome face or the surging life force, everything gave him a sense of youth.
“Based on the rumours, Lord Leylin should be less than three hundred, yes? You’ve already become a Morning Star and gained such a huge reputation!”
Boffel observed this genius Warlock. He wore gilded robes and gloves. His eyes were full of warmth and his smile was like the sunshine. With the crescent dangling from his earlobe, his handsome face was the type that young, teenaged girls or even female Magi would go crazy over.
“So it’s Lord Boffel!” Leylin looked at this person who seemed very similar to an angel, and had no idea how to react. However, the Morning Star radiation from his body was something that could not be imitated.
The Monarch of the Skies held control of various organisations across the continent, and had quite a few Radiant Moons under his wing. Obviously, the Morning Stars subordinate to him were much larger in number. Boffel here was one of them.
Official Magi could make modifications to their own bodies. By the time a Magus reached Morning Star, they were almost guaranteed to have something strange on their bodies. Presently, Leylin could not tell if the other party’s shining wings were due to his bloodline or some sort of spell. The only way to confirm would be to run tests on him.
“Are you here as a representative of the Ouroboros Clan, my Lord?
What is it that you require?” Boffel asked after the greetings. This was a question that had been weighing on his mind for a while. He had heard of the Ouroboros Clan’s recent activities, as well as of their conflict with Jupiter’s Lightning. It was unlikely that Leylin would come out at such a crucial time for a holiday.

“Mm! I heard that the appraisal for Virtuous Sky Sages is about to begin. I’ve come bearing the truth!” Leylin did not conceal his motives.

“Appraisal?!” Boffel was dumbstruck. Never could he have expected that Leylin would actually be interested in this,

The title of Virtuous Sky Sage was only something that made it more convenient for scholars to travel across the continent. However, Leylin was already at Morning Star. Which organisation would not give him face?

Benefits, honour and the like were as fleeting as cobwebs to Morning Star Magi. Perhaps the only thing they would regard with importance would be the baptism of the Endowing Scepter for them, the only thing that they regarded as important would be the baptising through the Adept Scepter.

An increase of almost 20 points in vitality was very attractive even to Morning Stars.

“The Sage Appraisal is a public selection of Magi throughout the central continent. Am I not qualified?” Leylin asked with a smile.

“Of course you are! Lord Leylin’s presence is sure to make the appraisal more exciting than usual!” Boffel answered without any hesitation.

The Sage Appraisal had long since gained a reputation for its independence of factions and status. It held the unanimous approval of all of the central continent’s Magi, which was how it had become a holy land in the first place. It took in fresh blood all the time, and Boffel would be a fool to refuse Leylin.

“Hehe… In that case, please follow me to the temporary villa we’ve
prepared for you. You can organise the thesis that you wish to present as well as your experiments, and wait for the appraisal to begin!”

Boffel’s invitation was enthusiastic. Though they were few in number, Morning Stars were known to attend the Sage Appraisal, and Sky City had its own policy on dealing with this.

In general, as long as the Magi who came forward did not break laws and had no restrictions placed on themselves, they could do as they wished and would need to be received warmly.

“Many thanks!” Leylin did not reject Boffel’s invitation.

No matter where he went, he would be monitored anyway. He could just move into the place that had been specified, and he would be treated well too.

……

“My Lord!” A maid wearing a pure white silk gown was respectfully holding a towel and other items, waiting for Leylin’s summon.

“This is a pretty good place!” Leylin had on a loose white robe and was half reclining on a chair made of jade and stone. Within arm’s reach were fine food and good liquor.

He was now inside a gigantic white villa. The whole place seemed to be made entirely out of white marble, resulting in an aura of refined elegance. Three fountains were placed next to Leylin, spurting out fragrant spring water.

Outside was a flowering garden with a lawn. The lands of the villa were very expansive, and in Sky City where every inch of land was extremely valuable, this was practically unbelievable.

Of course, special privileges and preferential treatment were inevitable and only rightful when it came to Morning Stars.

After bringing him to this area and instructing the staff inside to
take care of him, Boffel left in a hurry, probably to report to his superiors.
Hierarchy was etched deep into the minds of the people in the Magus World. Even if Leylin displayed his incredible battle might and terrifying talent, the one receiving him was merely a Morning Star.
The real ruler of Sky City, his Majesty, the Monarch of the Skies, was still acting behind the scenes alongside with the other Radiant Moon.
“You are a Lightwing?” Leylin couldn’t help but ask after seeing the white feathers behind this maid’s back.
“Yes, my lord!” This maid was rather tall and slender. Her legs and body were perfectly proportionate, resulting in a smooth curve. The Lightwings were one of the winged races. They had an exceptional sensitivity to light elemental energy particles, and usually had very good results when training in light-type high-grade meditation techniques.
She seemed to be using a three level meditation technique. Of course, if she were of Boffel’s level of strength, Leylin would be unable to identify her bloodline and specific meditation technique, as they were both at the Morning Star realm.
“What’s your name?” Leylin took a towel from the other party and wiped his hands as he asked in curiosity.
“Yuro, my lord!” The Lightwing maid spoke as if in a hurry. Leylin’s presence just put too much pressure on her, even if he intentionally withheld his energy undulations.
“Accompany me outside.” Since he had come to the place called the cradle of truth, how could Leylin miss a chance to go out? Besides, he had come as a guest. Boffel would be stupid to dare restrict his freedom. However, he was currently in someone else’s territory. With Boffel being backed by the Monarch of the Skies, Leylin had to give him
some face and bring the maid along. “Al- Alright!” Yuro lowered her head deeply. As a maid of this villa, she obviously knew her duties. “Let’s go!” Leylin stretched before taking the lead.

“Do you know where the Great Library is?” Leylin was most interested in this place. The information in his A.I. Chip only came from the Ouroboros Clan and what he’d gathered himself during his travels. Compared to the entirety of the central continent, that was like a drop in the ocean. The Sky City, however, was different. Not only was it the territory of the Monarch of the Skies, it was also the holy land of knowledge, the academic center of the entire central continent. The knowledge they had accumulated was bound to be at a terrifying level. How much would the A.I. Chip grow after he acquired all of it?

Knowledge was power among Magi. This was no longer just a maxim, and had instead become a fundamental truth. “The Great Library is beside the Sky Plaza. Would you like to go there, my Lord?” Yuro asked in a low voice. As she raised her head, Leylin’s near devilish handsomeness warmed her face. “Of course! I’ve long since been interested in the largest library in the entire central continent!” There was a hint of worship in Leylin’s tone. There was a thirst and worship of knowledge specific only to those who were keen to learn the truth. “Understood, my Lord. Please come with me!” Yuro began to lead the way.

Her long, soft hair came loose, occasionally floating above the feathered wings on her back, as it it were sitting on a gentle breeze. Leylin rubbed his nose and followed with a laugh.

After heading out of the residential area, the shadows of conical buildings were seen as the buildings covered the glaring sun in the sky. There were plants growing beside the spotless streets. The
bustling streams of people travelled back and forth, making Leylin feel like he had returned to his previous world.
Seeing some of these structures, Leylin suddenly understood a fact. ‘Sky City occupies a small region of land, but it has a burgeoning population. It’s obvious that every bit of land here is expensive. The villa that I was allotted to was probably in the wealthiest region. In this place, nobody below the Morning Star realm can have such a luxury…’

There were streams of people on the streets, and practically all the different races in the central continent could be seen here. The Magi here possessed scholarly auras and were dressed in luxurious clothing, treating the others with respect.

‘Through the influence of civilisation, the behaviours of the residents of the city have evolved…’ Leylin exhaled deeply. Only a place like Sky City which was under the protection of a Monarch could display such a moving scene.

As Leylin had withdrawn his aura, he now seemed like the most ordinary of low-ranked Magi bringing his maid out as he took a stroll. He did not attract any attention.

As he was walking, he saw many Lightwings like Yuro. Quite a few were dressed like servants, following behind Magi. This made him observe Yuro herself, and he found her to be lacking.

Lights flashed in Leylin’s mind. Yuro’s talent was nothing in Sky City, and if she truly wanted to stay here she would need to rely on the Magi. Her best option was to become a servant.

Of course, those who were already considered excellent amongst
the Lightwings obtained a higher status. However, no matter how much status they had, they could only remain as subordinates in front of their owners. This was rather uncomfortable, and feeling sorrow for their own kind living this way was understandable.

*Boom!* There was a sudden explosion in the streets, and the place immediately turned chaotic.

“Hm?” Leylin moved several steps backwards without leaving behind any marks, and Yuro grew nervous as she looked around them.

‘This intense energy wasn’t targeting me, it seems to be a coincidence.’ Leylin thought. He had stepped backwards in order to avoid trouble and waved his hands to get the nervous Yuro to back down. He then turned his attention to the scene.

A group of white-robed Magi with jewelled crowns on their foreheads and curved blades in hand were in a fight with another group of Magi.

‘These energy undulations… They are at rank 3, but they possess a frightening vitality. Not bad!’ Leylin easily saw through the veil that the Magi had cast upon themselves.

The white-robed Magi had astoundingly high vitality. This was especially true of their leader, his curved blade launching terrifying glints of light as it forced the dark Magi opposite them to withdraw.

Leylin was rather interested in gaining information about tempering the body.

“Do conflicts like this happen often here?” Leylin shot a glance at Yuro.

Yuro shook her head, “No! I’ve been here for decades, and this is only the fourth time such a thing is happening! The Sage Committee will react soon enough!”

“They’re already there.” Leylin looked towards the sky, a smile on his face.

*Rumble!* Platinum flames flickered, forming a clump of light
from which a Magus in platinum robes stepped forth. He looked extremely young, even childlike. However, the moment he arrived, a frightening energy swept across the area.

*Thud!* The two groups of Magi who were in a tussle were immediately blown backwards. The leader fell to his knees as his bones exploded under a suppressive force. Finally, he collapsed to the ground like a giant toad.

Morning Star domain! This little imp was actually a Morning Star Magus! And what’s more, Sky City’s first reaction to such an issue was to send a Morning Star to suppress it!

*Swish!* In the meanwhile, even more Magi dressed in Sky City’s uniform had rushed to the scene. None of them was below the Hydro Phase in terms of power, and all of them had a hardened, bloody aura and indifferent expression.

With the suppression from a Morning Star as well as the arrival of a large group of elites, the two groups were immediately restrained. Even their seas of consciousness were bound as they were escorted away. Their heads hung low.

‘Hehe! As expected of Sky City. Their strength is so great that they can send out such elite forces quite casually.’ Leylin envied them.

Yuro misunderstood his gaze. Seeing this lord watching the direction in which these Magi were taken, she thought he might be wondering how they would be taken care of.

“They’re done for. Since they dared create trouble in Sky City, people from both ends will be punished. At the very least they’ll be expelled, and they might even be forced into labour…” she explained to Leylin in a low voice.

“Mm! Who are they?” Leylin was not really interested in the state they would end up in. What he was more concerned about was the body-tempering spells that the Magi had used. Though it was merely a quick glance, Leylin could tell that their body-tempering methods were complete. If there was information
for Morning Stars, then it would definitely be able to affect him to a certain extent.
“I don’t know, but based on their attire, they should be people from the Northern Desert!” Yuro answered.
Suddenly, she felt a chill in her body and looked around, realising something had changed.
Under the domain of a Morning Star, be it the Magi or the residents, they were all lying on the ground, too afraid to move. Actually, they couldn’t move at all, and yet she was standing as if nothing had happened. She and Leylin seemed extremely out of place in this scene.
‘Is this my Lord’s strength? After all, he’s a Morning Star as well!’
The Magus floating in mid-air discovered this strange situation quickly. With a flash of platinum flames, the childish Morning Star appeared in front of Leylin.
“I never expected to see a Lord here!” Upon seeing Leylin, the arrogance on his expression was moderated.
When the young man turned and saw Yuro, recognition dawned in his eyes. “I remember you! You’re a maid in Boffel’s villa!”
“Yes, Lord Weyers!” Yuro knelt respectfully, making introductions “This is an important guest of Lord Boffel’s, Lord Leylin Farlier of the Ouroboros Clan!”
“So it’s you! The strongest Kemoyin Warlock, someone who killed Demon Hunter Cyril right after advancing to Morning Star.”
Leylin could do little about this. As there was no obvious method of classifying Morning Stars, their reputation and achievements in battle had become their distinguishing characteristics.
And what he was currently famous for was killing Demon Hunter Cyril. As for the title of strongest Kemoyin Warlock in history, he had no idea how that had come about. It left him speechless.
“Lord Weyers became a Morning Star even before reaching a hundred years of age. Even in the entire history of the continent,
he’s among the top hundreds!”

“Before reaching a hundred?” Leylin nodded in understanding. When someone advanced to become a Magus, they would permanently keep their original appearance. This fellow must have become an official Magus extremely early, and the following advances had helped him retain his looks. This was why he appeared this juvenile.

‘It looks like he probably became an official Magus at eight to nine years old. What a demonic genius!’ Leylin’s pupils shrank. When he was eight to nine years old, he probably didn’t even know what a Magus was.

‘To reach that level, one needs an astonishing aptitude, but that is not enough. There also need to be top-grade meditation techniques and expansive resources, as well as the mentorship of famous teachers. It looks like this Weyers has a great backing.’

Even as he wondered about such things inside, Leylin feigned shock. “Lord Weyers is a rare genius in the continent! Morning Stars like us can only blush with shame…”

Words of flattery were free of charge, and he specifically picked out the nicest words. As expected, a look of pride rose on Weyers’ face.

Face was something he had long since thrown into the drain. With this Magus’ strength, talent and backing, one could not show distaste on their face unless it was possible to kill him in one move and eliminate his backers.

Leylin had nothing against him, and he began to assess his own strength. It was probably difficult to destroy Sky City, which was why his words of flattery were boundless.

Even if they were merely pleasantries, it also depended on who was saying them.

Weyers had been treated as a genius since he was young, and he had probably heard many compliments like this before. However,
praises from Morning Star like Leylin evidently put him in a good mood.

“Of course not! If I, as I am now, were to be matched against Cyril, things might be slightly difficult. I quite admire Lord Leylin…”

Geniuses were perhaps the loneliest of people. Weyers had never had someone at a similar age to his who could speak to him as an equal. While Leylin was slightly older than he was, they were somewhat around the same age. Apart from being a Warlock, Leylin had some reputation in Potioneering too. Hence, Weyers felt like he had found a companion at the same age and began to converse with Leylin.

“…Haha, Once this matter is over, I’ll definitely drop by for a visit, Leylin.”

By the end of their conversation, Weyers had automatically dropped the formality of the Lord title, calling Leylin by name. It showed that they had gotten closer.

Weyers and Leylin conversed for a long while as if nobody else was present. Whether it was the Magi on the ground or the other guards, nobody dared disturb them, and they could only wait pitifully.

Of course, due to the power of the Morning Star domains, they could not hear the contents of the conversation between the two. All they knew was that this Lord of theirs, who had always looked cold, seemed to be in a good mood.

There were very few Magi who the Lord found to be pleasant company. The guard team was astonished as they all snuck peeks at Leylin before departing with Weyers.
“Let’s go! Leylin watched Weyers as he left and brought Yuro with him. He had yet to arrive at his intended destination, which was the Great Library. To him, whatever just happened was like a circus act and nothing more. When Leylin’s figure had disappeared as well, the remaining Magi present immediately got up, their faces full of grime. Being affected by the battle out of nowhere and being suppressed by a Morning Star domain for a long time had now left them in a pitiful state. Afterwards, the officials who had arrived slowly began to tidy up the roads and calculated the losses. Everything was methodical and thorough.

“Gill!” back in the office, Weyers’ voice was low. The arrogance from before had completely vanished.

“Master!” A black shadow silently surfaced from the floor.

“Investigate this! Who’s responsible for the incident at the Floating Feather Avenue? Who was it that did this on my watch?” Weyers’ voice was frigid as he spoke in a discerning manner.

“Understood!” The black figure answered and withdrew noiselessly.

Once Weyers was alone in the room, he frowned. He began to sift through the memories of the day’s events, and a cold smirk appeared on his lips. “Trying to use me as cannon fodder, eh? Good! Very good!”
How many among those who had reached the Morning Star realm were fools? No matter how young he looked, even if he seemed like a child, Weyers had lived for almost a hundred years. It was clear to him what had happened.

Provoking a Morning Star Magus just for some false reputation? He would not do anything so stupid. Even if his backing could take on the backlash, pointless actions should be avoided if possible.

“That Warlock Leylin from today was quite interesting. Like me, he’s being bound by some pointless reputation.” Through the events that had occurred that day, Weyers had formed a favourable impression of Leylin.

He was currently enraged at the person who had set up this situation. “Perhaps I’ve been keeping a low profile for too long, and some people have begun to think I’m an easy target…” he muttered to himself after a long period of silence. The temperature dropped as his voice sounded, and the place turned into an icy wonderland…

Of course, Leylin was not aware of any of this. After Weyers had left, he had arrived at the Great Library under Yuro’s guidance.

“Truth is my calling!” “The pursuit of knowledge is the foundation of all strength.”

Leylin was currently observing a large number of statues in a seemingly boundless palace. They were proportionate, and so detailed one could differentiate the strands of hair on their bodies. It made them seem lifelike.

The pedestals under these statues held information like their time periods, maxims, achievements and the like.

Leylin turned his attention to the time period of the central statue after reading its maxim. “Illesme. Year 1327–?”

“Just a birth date, and no death date. Could he have lived for over five thousand years?’ Leylin stared at this statue in astonishment. He saw a kindly old man there, a spotless white beard floating in
front of his chest. A pair of wise eyes hid behind circular rimmed glasses.

“This is the Great Sage, Lord Illesme. He was the first generation ruler of Sky City and is a Breaking Dawn Magus. While his whereabouts are currently unknown, many still believe that he is alive, and is perhaps risking his life exploring foreign worlds…” Yuro was full of admiration as she made the introduction.

“Mm!” Leylin had seen some information regarding this Great Sage, but those were all mixed in with legends and rumours. None had been as specific as the base of the statue. He circled the forest of statues with interest, finding that only Morning Star Magi and above were allowed here. They were scholars who had made significant contributions to Sky City or the Magus World.

There was a small number of Magi who were like Illesme, with only a birth but no death date. This meant there was a good possibility of them still being alive, perhaps stuck in foreign worlds or ancient spell formations. However, if they were to appear as a group, the strength they possessed was enough for the entire central continent to tremble.

“Without the contributions of the past sages, there would not be the Magi of today!” Leylin looked solemn as he bowed to the many statues, “I, Leylin Farlier, shall complete all your unfinished work, and resolve all regrets!”

Of course, he could only say this inside his mind. If Yuro heard it, things would be slightly troublesome.

Though the continent was full of ambitious Magi, there were few as egotistical as Leylin.

After they paid their respects, Yuro brought Leylin to the entrance of what seemed like a greek temple. “My Lord, here is the entrance to the Great Library. The collection here in the Sky City is open to
all Magi with no restrictions.”
What surprised Leylin was that the entrance to the library had no doors, nor were there any guards. Everyone could move about freely.
A comfortable warm glow from eternal light spells filled the area. Magi would pass by Leylin every once in a while, but while there were quite a few of them, they were generally very quiet.
Yuro spoke in a low voice by Leylin’s ear. “The Great Library is set up above a gigantic spell formation and is being managed by a sentient spirit genie. It’s in charge of all management, and while there aren’t any guards stationed here, there has never been an incident thus far!”
“There’s never been an incident here?” Leylin nodded. This meant that on top of the basic effects of repelling dust, moisture and flames, the gigantic spell formation also possessed an exceedingly more powerful defensive ability.
“Yes! Rumour has it that the defensive spell formation of the Great Library can even confine a Morning Star…” She was apprehensive while she spoke, peeking at Leylin while afraid he would grow angry. However, Leylin remained calm, and Yuro could not tell if he was happy or annoyed.
“Not bad! My expectation on the information here has risen further now!”
With the spirit genie managing the area, every single corner of the library was probably being monitored. With the ability to suppress even Morning Stars and the Magi of Sky City being ready to provide support very quickly if anything were to happen, there seemed to be an impenetrable defence. There was obviously a vast amount of information.
There was a large bright hall past the entrance that could hold over a thousand people without becoming crowded. At the middle were hundreds of tables, and what looked like terminals.
“The Great Library is separated into seven levels. The first three are open to all Magi, and you can browse through once you pay a certain number of magic crystals. The information and documents at the fourth level and above are kept very confidential, and one can only browse through them using information points.”

Leylin stood aside, watching a Magus operating the system. After inserting pure magic crystals into the terminal and using spiritual force to interface with it, he took out a blank crystal ball at the opening of another device. Large amounts of information was transmitted, instantly filling the crystal ball up with information.

“Transmission of data, as well as a backup!” Leylin shouted in surprise. Thankfully, the terminal could not directly send information to the Magus’ memory, or Leylin would be worried that something like the A.I. Chip existed in this world.

“Yes! As long as it’s information that the spirit genie has a backup of, it can be duplicated using the terminal. Of course, there is a required fee.”

Some information was stored in certain special materials, and it could only be presented in that specific format. For example, there were some books that the spirit genie was unable to make a duplicate of, and required that one read using the physical copy.

Leylin now had so many magic crystals that he cared little for them. He asked Yuro, “How do I obtain information points?”

“There are two methods. One is to complete missions by the Sage Committee. The second is to furnish the spirit genie’s inner library with information it still does not possess. One will be awarded information points based on the value of the added information.”

Yuro laughed wryly, “But I don’t recommend the second method. This could have been possible in the early days, but with the addition by generations of Magi, there’s very little information that the Great Library has yet to obtain…”

After hearing how the library operated, Leylin was quiet for a long
while and took a deep breath. “How bold!” he exclaimed. Even the first three levels being made public showed how bold they were. The system of information points conversion also allowed the library to become more abundant in information, and by this point, it had accumulated a vast trove of knowledge.

Such a huge amassment of information had allowed Sky City to withstand the test of time. Considering it one of the strongest organisations in the central continent was not even a stretch.

Yuro brought Leylin to a terminal. After paying the magic crystals, she passed a white crystal card to Leylin. “This is a blank crystal card. Every newcomer here will obtain one! “You may choose to seal it with your spiritual force, or you can leave it open. However, you will then need to keep your crystal card properly, or else anyone can choose to use it!”

With a sweep of Leylin’s soul force, the library card began to emit a black luster. He placed the card in a small depression, and the terminal’s screen instantly brightened. A few lines in a familiar script appeared on it and gave him a few choices.

Leylin did not try to skim through the table of contents, but instead chose to obtain information points through providing data. Though Yuro mentioned that the database was already quite complete, Leylin was confident. His A.I. Chip had a lot of information regarding the Lava World! The Great Library couldn’t have information from foreign worlds, could it?
Beep! Spiritual force data connection detected, proceed with transmission?] The A.I. Chip intoned. Although Leylin had placed a crystal ball on the transmission port of the terminal, he was actually mobilizing his A.I. Chip for it instead.

“Try this first!” Leylin selected a piece of information regarding the one-horned clan of the Lava World and uploaded it.

“Serial number ZXC678 has chosen to contribute information. Processing…” A progress bar suddenly appeared on the terminal screen.

As the progress bar reached completion, it was replaced with new content.

“Helix Tree composite image: 89% complete! Initial inventory: 40% complete! Effectiveness: 51%! Initializing fusion of data… Helix Tree composite image: 91% complete! Your contribution has been evaluated and you will be awarded 26 information points!”

*Whoosh!* A golden light flashed, and the number 26 appeared in a new row on Leylin’s library card.

He drew a sharp breath. ‘It even contains knowledge from such a remote place as the Lava World, even if it’s flawed…’

After a moment of thought, though, he came to a realisation, “The ancient Magus World was in control of a great number of other worlds. Sky City obtained a portion of the ancient world’s database, so it’s no strange matter that it contains some pieces of

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flawed content!”
After that one attempt, Leylin had to restrain his excitement. “I’ll be living here from now, so don’t disturb me unnecessarily,” he instructed Yuro. Soon after, he left the dumbfounded maid alone and buried his head into the sea of knowledge.

……

The huge library in Sky City could be said to have everything. Its information was not limited to that about the central continent; there was data about other worlds as well. Further in from the data terminals and the hall was the gigantic library that resembled a palace. Some sort of technique had been employed to expand the space within. At a glimpse, one would see bookshelves as massive as mountains, all so densely packed and numerous that there seemed to be no end. Leylin was now standing at the foot of a bookshelf that was tens of metres tall. The giant wooden ladder brought him in front of a row of little black catalogues as per his wish.

“Mm! Raphael’s Poetic Saga!” Leylin nodded, his eyes glistening. “The many ancient myths and legends actually contain a large amount of intelligence, it’s just that those who recorded these accounts have beautified and romanticised them. Thus, we have to separate the wheat from the chaff in order to obtain the most accurate information. Raphael was a famous poet in ancient times, yet he also had a hidden identity as a Magus. Therefore, all the accounts that he recorded have high research value…” Leylin muttered to himself as his eyes glistened. He fingered through the numerous volume numbers of a series of books and stopped when he reached volume 239. When he tried to pull out the book, the robotic voice of the spirit genie rang in his mind, “Beep! You are requesting to read Raphael’s
Poetic Saga, Volume 239. Fee is 2 information points. Do you wish to proceed?”

“Yes!” With a motion of Leylin’s soul force, 2 information points were automatically deducted from his library card. The energy that had been protecting Raphael’s Poetic Saga also disappeared suddenly, allowing Leylin to remove the book easily from the shelf. He clicked his tongue. “Although I know that library books of grade 3 and above are very expensive, even these mere historical records have such exorbitant costs…”

Leylin shook his head. The wooden ladder, as though a living creature, automatically transported him onto the ground. Leylin was now in the fifth storey of the library, which was much quieter than the previous levels he had been to. There was practically no one there, and beside the tens of bookshelves, there would always be a small area where Magi could peruse the books. Leylin found a random chair and sat down as he began to flip open the jet black cover of Raphael’s Poetic Saga.

“I have come…. I can see…”

The pages of the book were a dazzling flame-like red. The words, especially, were like fire sprites, jumping around the pages.

‘A.I. Chip, record this!’ Leylin commanded inwardly.

[Assignment established, beginning scan! Beep! Raphael’s Poetic Saga, Volume 239 discovered. Supplementing Raphael’s Poetic Saga in the history folder!] The robotic voice of the A.I. Chip sounded. Seconds later, the entirety of Raphael’s Poetic Saga had been recorded.

“I’ve been searching high and low for this portion of Raphael’s Poetic Saga, and was lacking just these few volumes. Who would have thought that this huge library would actually contain the full set! Now that it has been supplemented…”

An expression of satisfaction surfaced across Leylin’s face. As a bonus, he had discovered the shortcomings of the spirit genie and
the data terminal.
Through data transmission, the spirit genie could only fully engrave low grade data records into crystals. However, Magi would still have to obtain the knowledge within them through studying them, unlike the A.I. Chip which was able to directly transmit information to one’s memory.
Comparing the time consumed by the two methods, the disparity was rather frightening. This further proved that the A.I. Chip’s operational and analytical abilities were far better than that of the spirit genie.
Moreover, content that was at grade 3 and above were mostly engraved using the Magus’ own energy. The materials the books were made of were also very special. The spirit genie was unable to duplicate such information, and thus Magi had to come down personally to study the content from the physical book itself.
“Even so, this huge library is still rather overwhelming!” As compared to his previous database, the amount of information in the entire library was seemingly like a vast ocean, boundless. It was incomparably enriching. Leylin felt like a person who was nearly dying from thirst being thrown into a freshwater lake all of a sudden. He absorbed all the content as though his life depended on it, and never stepped a foot out of the place.
The same went for the A.I. Chip. As its database grew with even more detailed and complex subjects, its technical ability was supplemented unceasingly.
The copious amount of information in here formed a foundation for all disciplines of magic scholarship.
Leylin had a premonition that the numerous resources he had amassed this time would result in a relatively drastic upgrade for the A.I. Chip. After this upgrade, he would definitely reap harvests that he would not have even dreamed of before!
[Beep! Supplementation of foundational information complete.
Refreshing and restarting system, estimated time: 2 hours, 34 minutes and 13 seconds!] The A.I. Chip prompted, startling Leylin.
“It actually grew to such an extent? What surprises will be the renewed database bring me?” This was a happy occasion, and Leylin’s face almost lit up with delight.
“Indeed, I made the right choice to come to Sky City. Even if not for the Endowing Scepter, I just had to make this trip.”
Although there was loads of information in the huge library, Leylin felt that content that was grade 3 and below were the most important. This was because he possessed a near unlimited amount of magic crystals, and coupled with the data terminal the convenience of information transmission was unparalleled. In just a short span of time, the foundational information that could be duplicated by the spirit genie had all been backed up into the A.I. Chip.
As for more advanced content that was above grade 3, Leylin had tossed out all his information to the spirit genie, as long as it was eligible for conversion and would not attract any trouble, of course. This allowed him to exchange his data for a monumental amount of information points. He then specifically searched for topics that Warlocks and the A.I. Chip lacked information on before commanding the A.I. Chip to scan and record it.
With the A.I. Chip, a large amount of academic content could be derived from just the foundational information alone. No matter how high the grade, the content could still be deduced.
After all, now that he already had a great foundation, all that was left was to perform derivations that would consume copious amounts of operational energy.
Leylin used his information points to directly access the content that the A.I. Chip did not have the ability to derive, thus completing his database.
In this manner, within the short span of a month or so, he had
already recorded roughly all of the content in the huge library. One must know that even Radiant Moons, Breaking Dawns and other Magi or scholars who grew up in Sky City wouldn’t be able to remember so much. The excessive accumulated information would have conflicting information, causing the Magus to forget some things. They would have to constantly refresh their memory. With their standards, being able to remember all the grade 1 and 2 information would mean that one was an absolute genius. Leylin, however, had exceeded them by leaps and bounds. He’d accumulated a lifetime of information!

If others knew about his terrifying rate of progress, Leylin would definitely attract a lot of trouble. Thus, he could only be secretly satisfied with himself, not revealing anything.

“When the A.I. Chip is done refreshing, I’m afraid that I will be worthy of being called the most learned person throughout the entire central continent, and will be knowledgeable about even the research done in other worlds…”

Leylin had now thoroughly understood the meaning of the phrase “knowledge is power!”

While his further studies did not increase his strength by a single bit, the underlying effect on his foundation was truly terrifying.

“This is just right! The information points are mostly spent, so I might as well use up all of the remaining ones as well!

Leylin fished out his library card, the thin lines of golden numbers immensely glaring. They couldn’t be compared to the single long line of numbers on his card previously. The astronomical number of information points had only lasted him a month or so.

*Crash!* Opposite Leylin’s desk, a female Magus raised her head and peered over her book curiously, gazing at Leylin’s back. A pair of spectacles with thick lenses was perched on the bridge of her nose, and her hair was tied in two braids.

She had been paying attention to this strange Magus in front of her
for a long time now. He didn’t seem to lack information points, which could be seen from how he often referred to thick stacks of resources. Even if she worked all day and night for a month without rest, she wouldn’t be able to earn the amount of information points required for such information.

After selecting his resources, he didn’t read the information carefully, but instead flipped through it briefly before casually casting it aside. This made her heart ache. Library resources that were grade 3 and above were only for private browsing in the reading room. They couldn’t be brought out of the library or exchanged with others. Under the supervision of the spirit genie, there were no loopholes. Thus, this female Magus could only drool with envy at the mountains of resources Leylin had acquired with his information points, and couldn’t do a single thing about it.

Without the scanning abilities of the A.I. Chip, Leylin could only depend on reading the resources himself to obtain knowledge. Thus, he chose a book on how to optimise one’s vitality, and laid back in his chair as he slowly started to read. The eternal light spell was adjusted by the spirit genie, gently tuning the light rays for a better reading experience. Time ticked by along with the rustling sound of the pages turning.

‘This odd Magus is finally acting normal!’ The female Magus secretly nodded, then continued to immerse herself in her books. Time was precious, and she could not afford to waste any of it.
“Good! Let’s see if there are any differences in the upgraded A.I. Chip!” His attention immediately wandered from the book, and he focused on his A.I. Chip.

“So soul force has finally been enumerated…” He had been at a loss due to the A.I. Chip’s inability to enumerate soul force for a very long time. All this while, he had collected a lot of information on the soul, and performed many experiments and thought of numerous conjectures. However, all that had not been able to complete the database on the soul.

Now, the A.I. Chip had completely deduced this information.

“96 soul force? What does ‘five star’ mean?” Leylin asked.
Soon after, a passage of information was shown by the A.I. Chip, [The star rating is a method that the Sky City has come up with to evaluate Morning Stars, based on organisms in the astral plane. Newly-advanced Morning Stars are at one star, while the peak is at five stars…]

“I see. What beings are used as the standard?” Leylin wasn’t that interested in this star system. Instead, he was rather tempted to perform research on the organisms that had been set to be the standards for Morning Star Magi.

[The organisms that have been set as the standard are the beings of the astral plane, the Heavenly Astral Race! At birth, they possess strength at the Morning Star realm, and it’s unknown how powerful they can become. The race was wiped out during ancient times. The Magi of Sky City obtained some of the data from ancient times, which is how it became the standard when it came to evaluating strength!]

“Heavenly Astral Race? Beings from the astral plane? Morning Stars at birth?!”

This piece of information had Leylin completely stunned. Never did he expect there to be dwellers in a place like the astral plane, and they were even so powerful that they had Morning Star strength right from birth.

If compared to the Heavenly Astral Race, Giant Kemoyin Serpents could only cry. Their end point was this race’s beginning! There was no way to begin to compare them since they weren’t even on the same level.

“Even such gifted creatures went extinct. Looks like the events during the ancient times were unfathomable…” Leylin sighed deeply.

[Acquired information on a standard individual of the Heavenly Astral Race. Change standards?]

Leylin’s current system of measurement used the standards from
his previous world, which was why the numbers in each attribute seemed to be so phenomenally high, especially since they were calculated with regular humans in mind. If he used the standard criteria of the Heavenly Astral Race, his stats would immediately drop sharply.

Compared to before, with the standard strength of a regular person at 1, this was now compared with the terrifying strength of a Heavenly Astral Race at 1. There would obviously be a marked difference in quantity.

‘Changing the measurement units? Let’s try!’ Leylin touched his chin. “Display it!”

[Beep!] A blue light flashed, and the numbers immediately changed before Leylin.


Seeing the numbers that had decreased drastically, Leylin was rendered speechless.

‘In other words, my strength and agility are only slightly higher than a Heavenly Astral Race at Morning Star. My vitality is twice that of theirs, while my spiritual and soul force are more than four times greater. All in all, I can take on two or three of them at once?’

This comparison had stunned Leylin. He was now considered to be at the apex amongst Morning Stars in the central continent. He could even rival a Radiant Moon, and yet he was only slightly stronger than a child of the Heavenly Astral Race?

This was quite a blow to his ego.

‘Forget it! Show the numbers according to the units from before. At the very least, the smaller the base numbers, the higher the precision!’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘When the numbers in all aspects increase by a large amount, I’ll then begin using the units of the Heavenly Astral Race. That’s better!’
With a flicker from the A.I. Chip, all his data reverted to the original.
[Display host’s soul diagram?]
At this moment, the A.I. Chip showed another prompt.
“Of course!” Leylin did not hesitate at all. After the soul force database was completed, his grasp on soul force was even greater, and he could do things that would have been very difficult before. One of these included the structural diagram of his soul.
*Bzz!* A diagram that had been magnified countless times was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes.
His soul, which was also the truesoul of a Morning Star, was protected within the point mass. The point mass’ terrifying density and strength was the last defensive layer protecting a Morning Star’s truesoul.
There were few Magi who could clearly observe their own truesouls within their point mass, and make appropriate changes to train the soul. In fact, there were practically none.
With the help of the A.I. Chip, he could finally pass through this barrier.
In the diagram, Leylin’s truesoul was like a tiny star, emanating bright rays of light, with a tinge of crimson within. It was as if a crimson Giant Kemoyin Serpent was cruising inside the thing.
[Beep! Host’s soul composition is loose and not dense enough. Suggestion…] Through the diagram and the A.I. Chip’s analysis, Leylin’s issues when training the soul were made apparent, and the A.I. Chip gave concrete suggestions.
If other Morning Star Magi were to know of this, they’d want to commit suicide out of envy.
When had the mysteries of the soul ever been displayed before Magi?
‘It was probably because of the hasty infusion of Fireplume.’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Luckily, I can still salvage the situation
through the improved meditation technique.’
Every three ranks in training as a Magus was a major hurdle. The first to third focused on training spiritual force, and the fourth to sixth on the soul. If problems with the soul were not resolved now, there would be huge issues during his future advancements.
However, this was not the end of the surprises that the A.I. Chip had to offer.
[Beep! To generate a conjecture of Radiant Moon soul and compare it to a diagram?] The A.I. Chip asked robotically, “Yes!” Leylin obviously chose that option.
Afterwards, beside his soul diagram, a few other similar ones appeared, marking out the initial, middle, and late stages of Radiant Moon.
In the diagram, the difference between Morning Stars and Radiant Moons was made obvious. The soul of a Morning Star was similar to a star, dazzling and condensed, but a Radiant Moon who had just advanced had a soul that was tens of times larger than that of a Morning Star, forming a large and full sphere.
In other words, it resembled the moon.
As for the Radiant Moon stages, those who had just advanced had souls which only emanated bright rays from a small portion of its full area. The rest of the moon was dim, forming a crescent. It was like a new moon being blocked by the sun.
Magi at the middle stage of Radiant Moon had half their soul emanating clear rays, like a half moon. Peak Radiant Moon Magi had light that was dazzling and transparent, like a full moon.
“Name these stages New Moon, Half Moon and Full Moon!” Leylin did not hesitate to label these Radiant Moon stages.
Of course, his soul was now merely a star and was a large distance away from reaching Radiant Moon.
‘There were mistakes in my previous conjectures. Zegna was probably merely a New Moon, while Scarlet Eye was at most a Half
Moon. He had yet to achieve the peak, Full Moon!’
Leylin’s eyes suddenly flashed with understanding. He had not obtained the twelfth and thirteenth levels of Fireplume, so it was plausible that the fourteenth level could still be at the Radiant Moon realm, and was representative of the soul reaching Full Moon.
‘In that case, the road from rank 4 to rank 5 has completely unraveled in front of me!’ Leylin looked ecstatic. The third and fourth ranks had a very large disparity between them, with spiritual force upgrading to soul force. There was another huge gap between rank six and seven, with soul force upgrading to the manifestation and wielding of Laws. Hence, all these gaps were immense and usually caused tremendous changes.
Advancing from rank 3 to 6, one’s training was mostly on the soul, because it was the level of one’s soul that signified one’s strength.
“First is Morning Star, where the soul becomes a tiny star, with power from one star up to five. Next are the New Moon, Half Moon and Full Moon phases at the Radiant Moon realm!” The path through Morning Star and Radiant Moon were completely presented before Leylin.
‘That’s basically it. Of course, there might be some odd geniuses at the apex who break through these boundaries, but in general, that’s how this is divided.
‘This upgrade was definitely worth it! Even just the completion of the soul force database alone would have been enough, not to mention the rest.’
An expression of elation rose on Leylin’s face as he could not hold himself back and burst into laughter.
“My Lord!” At this moment, Yuro’s voice travelled over. It was very low, and she was obviously afraid of disturbing the other scholars.
“Mm?” Leylin turned back and saw Boffel behind her.
“Haha! So Your Grace has been staying in the library all this while.
Such a thirst for knowledge is definitely admirable, but the Sage Appraisal is about to begin. Besides, the Monarch of Skies would like to meet Your Grace…”

Boffel had on an amiable smile, while the female Magus beside him looked rather flabbergasted.
Boffel? Could it be the ‘Divine Luminescent Wing’? And calling him ‘Your Grace’? Isn’t that a title used in ancient times for Morning Stars? And the Monarch of the Skies? Oh, goodness. Could this Magus be a Morning Star as well?’

The female Magus who had a pair of thick glasses on peeked at Leylin, feeling like he was as unfathomable as the mountains and the seas. She could not help but lower her head, feeling ashamed at her previous conjectures.

Boffel did not spare her a glance. Since violence could not be employed in the library, the usage of Morning Star domains was restricted. She could hear some of what they were saying, but since this was an honest conversation there was nothing to be hidden anyway.

“Oh, my apologies. The information here is just so abundant that I forgot about the time!” Leylin stood up, looking apologetic.

“Anyone who disturbs a Magus immersed in the ocean of knowledge should have their souls scorched in the flames of the ninth hell. Why would I mind?” Boffel had a very witty way of speech, and Leylin immediately formed a better impression of him.

Boffel was not at all surprised about Leylin staying in the library all day. Many scholarly Magi would treat the Great Library as their home upon reaching Sky City for the first time. There were people who stayed within from a few months to even decades, and if not
for having too little information points, they would even stay there for their whole lives! Compared to these people, Leylin had only been there for a month, which was very normal. Boffel felt that he seemed to have too many information points, but then again, considering he had just returned from a foreign world, he must have gained large amounts of knowledge from it, so this was understandable.

“Alright. I shall head there now.”
Leylin placed the book back in its original position. He had reaped a great harvest this time, and the Great Library currently did not have anything especially useful to him. Besides, the Monarch of the Skies had summoned him, and it was best that he tidy himself up. This was a necessary part of etiquette.

“And you, earnest young lady!” Leylin shot a glance at the female Magus who only wished she could hide behind her book.

“Your Grace, Boffel, and this… your Grace. Please forgive me for my offensive behaviour!” Cold sweat was already dripping from the female Magus’ forehead.

Though Sky City was a peaceful area that paid attention to the law, Morning Stars always had privileges. The moment Leylin or Boffel found her an eye sore, she would wind up in a pitiful state even if they didn’t act themselves.

“Haha… don’t be afraid! I want to thank you for accompanying me while I studied for this past month. Treat this as a gift!”
Leylin laughed, and the library card in his hands flew out. Scanning the female Magus’ library card, he transferred his remaining information points to her.

The Great Library now held little meaning for Leylin, which was why there was no point in having these information points with him.

“This…” Though Leylin felt that the number of information points left was pitifully low, to the point that it had almost hit zero, this
was still a gigantic amount for the female Magus! She immediately cried out in surprise. By the time she had recovered from her shock and wanted to thank Leylin, she found that they had long since left. “Your Grace’s act of providing financial aid to other Magi is truly admirable!” Boffel could not understand Leylin’s actions, since the information on him showed that Leylin was not someone so charitable. “Hehe… I’m just in a good mood!” Leylin chuckled. This explanation rendered Boffel completely at ease. Warlocks were truly a group of Magi who were very emotional. In such good moods from the benefits from the library, they could indeed reward any low-ranking Magi as they wished. This unusual situation lost all strangeness when Warlocks were involved. Boffel did not pay much attention to Leylin’s momentary act of kindness, and instead brought to attention some things to take note of when meeting the Monarch of the Skies. “I don’t get it…” Leylin immediately asked Boffel, “I’m merely a Morning Star. Why would the Monarch of the Skies want to see me?” The other party was a Breaking Dawn Magus with influence all over the central continent. He had complete control of the airship networks, and possessed a foreign world of his own that had been completely taken over. The Morning Stars and Radiant Moons under him were innumerable. This sort of person should, by right, be far superior to him. Why was there the sudden desire to meet Leylin? Leylin had once had the idea of making a trade with the coordinates of the Lava World, but he’d never once expressed these thoughts. ‘Something’s suspicious…’ Leylin stroked his chin and immediately, Jupiter’s Lightning came to mind. It could not be helped. He had few enemies in the central continent, and Zegna was
the only one of them could influence the organisation behind Sky City.
‘I was just worried you wouldn’t come!’ A smirk appeared about
Leylin’s lips.
The heart of Sky City was a large-scale floating garden, forming the
‘floating’ landscape that gave the title of the floating city.
This garden, the Drifting Garden, was the heart of Sky City’s
power. It was also the temporary imperial residence of His Majesty,
the Monarch of the Skies.
“This is Boffel. Step aside.” Boffel flew all the way to the Drifting
Garden with Leylin in tow. The Warlock had tidied up and was
now dressed in formal attire.
The deeper into Sky City one went, the more the instances of
probing and detection, to the point that Leylin’s expression changed
slightly. If not for Boffel guiding him, it would have been
inconvenient for him to sneak into the Drifting Garden without
being detected.
Looking down from the edges of the Drifting Garden, one could
see all the sights of Sky City. It left one’s heart free and unfettered.
Further in was a cobbled lane. On both sides of the path were Devil
Fungi Taro, Heavenly Intoxicating Nectar, and large amounts of
other precious plants that Leylin did not even know the names of.
They were numerous, and all in full bloom. If not for the A.I. Chip
detecting powerful shackling runes there, Leylin would have had
plans of taking a bunch.
“After walking through this area, we will arrive at His Majesty’s
residing quarters. I can only accompany you up to this point.”
Boffel laughed as he spoke, “His Majesty is a very amiable person,
and he’ll definitely…”
“Boffel, you seem to have brought someone new here. That’s
against the rules!” Another voice sounded, and Leylin especially
went stiff, feeling like he was being stared at by a poisonous snake.
“You!” He raised his head, seeing what looked to be a kindly old Magus approaching them.

“Lord Stuart! This is Duke Leylin Farlier of the Ouroboros Clan, here to meet His Majesty.” Boffel bowed. At the same time, he introduced the person to Leylin in a quiet voice, “This is Lord Stuart, a Radiant Moon Magus. Since His Majesty is often absent, he is usually in charge of managing Sky City…”

“So it’s Lord Stuart!” Leylin bowed, neither too enthusiastic nor too cold. His sensitive soul immediately found a trace of ill intent directed at him. In that case, he wouldn’t bother being too cordial.

“Hm?!” Such an attitude rapidly increased the distaste that Stuart already had. He did not hold back and began to criticise Leylin. “As expected, it’s a little chap with no manners. Is it really alright for this kind of person to meet with His Majesty?”

“Lord Stuart, Leylin is a treasured guest of our Sky City.” Boffel coughed and answered with a warning. Stuart’s attitude was obviously biased, and he could not watch further.

“Your Highness, Stuart, you are in no position to judge whether I have any manners!” Leylin retorted without restraint.

This immediately left Boffel dumbfounded. This was a Radiant Moon, a great rank 5 Magus! In Sky City, he had tens of thousands of subordinates under him, and yet, Leylin was not giving him any face?

In actuality, if the other party was merely a little arrogant, Leylin did not mind humbling himself and treating him the way he did Weyers. However, Stuart was obviously here to create trouble, finding Leylin an eyesore before even meeting him. No matter how much Leylin tried to endure this, he would only be humiliated, and all for nothing. There was therefore no reason to be courteous.

“Good! I’ll teach you some manners right now!” Hearing Leylin’s tone, Stuart was evidently exasperated. Never did he expect a Morning Star like Leylin to speak to him in such a manner!
*Rumble!* Formless soul force was like a raging sea as it gushed towards Leylin. He had intentionally controlled the might of the spell, such that it affected only this small area. With Stuart’s control, he was confident that he could keep the battlefield within the area and not alarm anyone else.

Boffel could only laugh wryly. While he did agree that Stuart had gone too far, he only stood aside.

“Hmph! Is a rank 5 so fantastic?” Leylin sneered, his soul force that had reached five stars surging forth.

The gigantic phantom of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent with scarlet lines on it appeared behind him, hissing at Stuart.

“Hss!” The ferocious soul tide formed a gigantic black snake, colliding fiercely with Stuart’s soul force.

“Hm?!” Stuart’s eyes widened, not expecting to have difficulties in dealing with Leylin. ‘Five star soul force? Didn’t the intel say four stars?’

Crackling sounds rang out as the two bouts of soul force cancelled each other after the collision. The forces that went astray caused an explosion.

*Pak! Pak! Pak!* The sounds of countless runic chains breaking could be heard. The concealing spell formations that Stuart had previously set up were completely broken through!

“Urgh!” Leylin staggered backwards, face completely red. Stuart, on the other hand, stood completely still as he stared at Leylin expressionlessly, not intending to pursue this fight.

The strength of this Morning Star before him had exceeded his expectations, and he was a five star Warlock! It would take a large amount of time and energy to take him down.

What was even worse was that this would not be hidden from His Majesty, and Stuart’s expression turned dark.
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“Hmph! Count yourself lucky!” Stuart glared at Leylin with resentment and dissipated into wisps of soot.
“What are you waiting for? Let’s go!” Leylin neatened the creases in his shirt with an indecipherable straight face.
“Y–You…”
“You managed to withstand an attack from Lord Stuart? But he’s a Radiant Moon Magus! Hold up, what did he say just now? Five Stars? You’ve reached Five Stars?” Boffel stammered and pointed a trembling finger at Leylin. Uncertainty brewed inside of him.
Leylin reaching five stars carried a great amount of significance. There were less than thirty Five Star Morning Stars in the entire central continent, and Leylin was one of them. He was someone at the peak!
Furthermore, being able to withstand a strike from a Radiant Moon? The more Boffel looked at Leylin, the more he thought that this fellow was a monstrous genius like Weyers.
“You’ve found a rival, little Weyers.’ Boffel laughed bitterly in his mind before he walked forth. As he looked at Leylin, he felt helpless and lost.
“Let’s move quickly, we shouldn’t have His Majesty wait,” Leylin said considerately.
He already realised the intention behind Stuart’s behaviour. The man was obviously trying to catch him unprepared. The ideal
situation was to be able to capture him directly, but if that failed he could always sow the seeds of mistrust between Leylin and the Monarch of the Skies. If those seeds were to sprout, Leylin would be done for.

Of course, Leylin was still patient about it all. Even though Stuart was already a dead man in his eyes, none of his thoughts surfaced on his expression.

“Oh! Indeed, we can’t let His Majesty wait!” Boffel seemed to have woken up from his daze.

After passing through the garden, they came upon a chain of fragile and complicated buildings that seamlessly formed a sort of circuit. Green vines coiled snugly around the spotless marble pillars decoratively, but a thorough scan by the A.I. Chip showed that there were actually a huge number of spell circuits here.

“Circuit structure?” Leylin was slightly taken aback. “Could it be that of a perpetual motion disk?” He remembered coming across such a thing in the library.

“Right! This is it, rumoured to be able to move indefinitely without an energy source!

“The sages of the Sky City will join hands with the addition of you, my Lord, to perfect this hypothesis and create an energy source for the whole Drifting Garden.” Boffel continued.

“Sadly, this system is still quite a distance away from actual perpetual motion. As it is right now, it consumes 9826 magic crystals a month, and it’s also impossible to expand the system to use it for the entire city.”

“Still, it’s impressive enough that it can support the whole of the Drifting Garden for an entire month with just that amount of energy!” Admiration was painted all over Leylin’s face.

As for it being used for the entire city? If such a thing had succeeded, the entire continent would be filled with floating cities, and Sky City would definitely not be the only one.
Leylin held back his admiration and sauntered into the palace alone, leaving Boffel behind. He had actually wanted to bring Boffel along, but the person himself refused outrightly. This left him at a loss for words, but he was also astonished at the imposing presence of the Monarch of the Skies.

In front of him was a jade-built snow-white door, at least ten metres tall. It exuded a sense of divinity and dignity, and instantly led Leylin who was standing in front of it to think that he had arrived in a land of giants.

‘No traces of spells or restrictive measures?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed blue as he scanned past the gargantuan door and the enormous statue in front.

‘Can I not detect something set up by a Breaking Dawn yet? Or are such things no longer of any significance to the Monarch of the Skies?’ Leylin believed in it being the latter assumption, but he secretly hoped for it to be the former.

“But…” He stroked the white gloves in his hands, seemingly gaining strength from that action. He then took a deep breath before arriving in front of the door.

The door rumbled open upon sensing Leylin’s arrival and revealed the spacious site within, closing once more with a thud as he stepped in.

“This is…?” Despite being stunned for a bit, Leylin observed his surroundings, realising he was in a big hall. The two side walls were littered with countless paintings, mostly depicting scenes of war between Magi and other races, but also demons on occasion. The deeper in the hall one went, the more abstract the paintings, slowly turning into mere meaningless lines and streaks at the end.

Directly opposite Leylin was a huge statue; a human with six pairs of wings walking out of an enormous shell accompanied by horn-blowing angels and petal-throwing maidens.

The entirety of the statue was carved with such realism that it had
an aura of life about it. This was especially true for its eyes that were made of black pearls. They seemed to move, focusing upon Leylin.
“Leylin Farlier!” A voice resonated within the hall.
“Huh?!” Leylin turned his head to the statue. Its eyes were pinned on Leylin, and it seemed to be smiling.
*Snap!* The statue moved all of a sudden, and walked out of the shell, ripping off the plaster on the wall.
The whole hall seemed to have come to life in tandem with the male statue’s descent, differentiating itself from the outside world and forming two distinct domains.
“Greetings, Your Majesty!” Leylin knew the identity of this person by now. The difference in their statuses was clear; even if this was only an embodiment of the Monarch of the Skies, he still had to show the utmost respect. Not only was his etiquette perfect, even his expression shouted out ‘humility’.
Leylin did not mind bowing down in front of someone he could not oppose at the moment. Furthermore, the Monarch of the Skies was a pioneer in the pursuit of truth, a good role model who deserved Leylin’s salutations.
“Leylin! You’re a fine lad! I apologise for Stuart’s rude actions!” A gentle voice sounded from the statue.
At the same time, Leylin was slightly taken aback by its sharp observation as he felt its gaze on his earrings and the two gloves.
“Is the purpose of your visit to enhance your vitality with the Endowing Scepter? If so, I can grant your wish directly!” the winged statue said unhurriedly.
Yet, Leylin had other plans in mind. “No, Your Majesty. Only a Virtuous Sky Sage can come into contact with the Endowing Scepter, that is a tradition of Sky City. I don’t wish to break this balance; I’ll obtain it through the proper channels, honourably!”
“…”
His reply was clearly unexpected; he felt a dignified yet hidden force scanning across his body. He didn’t show anything in his expression, but the A.I. Chip had already begun working its magic. In the past, Leylin would have been worried about his secrets being revealed. But now, with the advancement of the A.I. Chip, if he could not manage to hoodwink the mere embodiment of a Monarch, he might as well give up on life.
The only things the statue found out were the things he wanted it to.
The force circulating on his body was retracted, and it was apparent that the Monarch of the Skies did not detect anything out of the ordinary.
“You’re good! Very good!” A voice sounded from the statue after a good while.
“Your Majesty! I am willing to offer you the coordinates of the Lava World!” Leylin took action immediately upon sensing the imminent departure of the statue and presented his long-awaited gift. A ring of shining coordinates flew to the side of the statue.
“Hmm?!” The twelve-winged statue did not accept it readily, but rather stared at Leylin, “Leylin, I believe you recognise the value of foreign worlds. The fact that you offered such a treasure means that you want something.”
“Your Majesty, I only wish for Sky City to remain neutral when conflict breaks out between the Ouroboros Clan and Jupiter’s Lightning,” Leylin replied humbly.
“To remain neutral?!” Leylin felt the statue’s gaze pause at his hands before it replied, “Alright!”

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“My Lord! There is a Mister Leylin who wishes to see you!” A phantom reported in Weyers’ room.
“Leylin?” Weyers raised his petulant face, shock evident in his eyes, ‘Didn’t he go see His Majesty? Is he done already? And why did he come to me first?’

Even if he was taken aback, Weyers still managed to pass an order, “Invite h– no; I’ll go pick him up myself.”

Leylin did not beat around the bush when he entered the room, dropping the bomb directly. “Weyers, do you want to go up against Stuart?”


“Is that so? Then why do I feel like you’re someone who bears grudges? Moreover…” Leylin smiled and pointed a finger, causing a blue light screen to appear. It showed two people in the midst of a conversation, one of them that sinister-looking old man, Stuart. His eyes were burning with hatred, “You lied to me! That Leylin was obviously a Five Star Warlock. I’ll have to sacrifice a lot more in order to go up against him. Zegna had better give me a remuneration I’ll be satisfied with!”

In front of him was a Morning Star engulfed in darkness, bowing his body and looking extremely humble,

“Lord Zegna said Lord Stuart has been a close friend of his for many years, and would definitely help him out. Also, our plan to pin the blame on Weyers almost succeeded, didn’t it?”

Weyers was appalled enough by Leylin’s Five Star status, but his expression turned even darker as he listened to the conversation.
“Sudden Attack

“Sudden Attack

So what if our previous plan failed and Leylin managed to pass the Monarch’s test? We still have a chance!” This Morning Star from Jupiter’s Lightning was still trying his hardest to persuade Stuart. “Leylin is about to participate in the appraisal for Virtuous Sky Sages. As long as we get Weyers to participate as well, they’re likely to come into conflict eventually… After all, they’re both geniuses, and those kinds of people love glory and solitude…”

“Your plans are just too troublesome…” Stuart shook his head, “I can tell you from experience, the more complicated a plan is, the more slip-ups there are. The simpler plans usually have a higher rate of success! Leylin is merely a Five Star Morning Star, and no matter how crafty he is, he can’t break through the bloodline shackles and reach rank 5. I’ll just have to deal with him personally the moment he leaves the vicinity of Sky City. Of course, the price will double.”

Weyers not falling into the trap had instilled a sense of crisis in Stuart.

“If Your Highness can do this for us, we will be grateful!” The Morning Star Magus in the black mist immediately bowed in thanks.

“Actually, the rewards can still be the same as before, but you’ll need to help me eliminate someone.” Stuart’s voice turned low.

“Who is it?” This Morning Star suddenly had a bad premonition.
“Weyers!” Stuart looked vicious all of a sudden.

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“Enough!” Weyers announced coldly, black lightning breaking the screen apart. “What do you want?” He was beginning to trust Leylin. Though images like these could be forged, the screen from before had displayed even the soul undulations belonging to the other party, and Weyers had no choice but to believe it. At the same time, he was now beginning to feel terror towards this Leylin who had the ability to spy on even Radiant Moon Magi! This was a rank 5 Magus! On top of that, from what Weyers knew, the other party had something similar to a world’s protective sphere that could isolate his residence from everything. Yet, Leylin had been able to snoop on him!

‘This is just too terrifying!’ Weyers glanced at Leylin. The Warlock’s smile suddenly sent a chill down his spine. “Simple! I’ll go and take care of them. You just have to stop the powers of Sky City from interfering!” Leylin straightforwardly explained his plan.

As for how he had found out about the other party’s scheme? Of course, that was due to the stardust bugs! This formidable, incomparably minute being of the Oakheart Clan could not be detected by even the most advanced spell formations. It was the best way to spy on someone, and he’d planted them on Stuart’s body in secret during their clash. Leylin’s previous methods only allowed him to discover when he was being spied upon by stardust bugs. However, after reaching the Morning Star realm and extorting the Oakheart Clan, he had obviously gotten a hold of some young stardust bugs by force, using the A.I. Chip to form his own way of manipulating them.
He’d wanted to learn of Stuart’s plans, but he’d never expected to see such a scene which had much more potential to be exploited. ‘Weyers is an absolute talent, and there are definitely people in Sky City who oppose him…’ Leylin was confident in this assumption. Weyers was an arrogant person, and someone trying to make use of him or take his life was not something he could take lying down. He was sure Weyers would act on this. Leylin merely wanted him to stop the interference of external parties and took on the more dangerous job himself. Thus, there would not be any issues. However, Weyers had one last question, “What if the Monarch of the Skies finds out?”

“Haha…” Leylin burst into laughter, “I just returned from meeting him, and he agreed that Sky City would remain neutral in a conflict between the Ouroboros Clan and Jupiter’s Lightning. You can go ask him if you want!”

“That’s not possible!” Weyers cried out in alarm, and began to say a few words into a secret imprint. His expression immediately changed, and his voice even turned hoarse, “What did you use to move His Majesty?”

“Coordinates to a foreign world. Is that enough?”

“Enough! You’re insane, but I like it. Let me accompany you in your insanity!” Weyers’ pupils began to burn with what seemed to be an ambitious fire, growing gradually in intensity.

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Leylin and Weyers stood side by side in the sky, watching a building in the distance that had a large number of runes flickering on it.

“Stuart’s villa is over there! He’s a Radiant Moon though, can you handle him?” Weyers’ voice was low.
“That’s my problem to deal with. You just have to focus on holding down the fort. Besides, even if we can’t handle Stuart, we just need to get that Morning Star from Jupiter’s Lightning. That’ll be enough to discourage him from further action. The higher-ups in Sky City will also be disappointed in him, which will lead more Magi to side with you!”

Weyers didn’t refute Leylin’s calm analysis. Since the two of them were already working together, all attempts at concealing anything would merely be a joke.

“In the future, I will definitely take on any of the pressure that Sky City might exert on you, as well as suppress Jupiter’s Lightning’s forces!” Weyers’ voice was icy cold. He’d already discussed these terms with Leylin, and they’d even inked a contract.

“That’s enough!” Leylin chuckled, turning into a streak of black light and piercing into the dense spell formations like a sword. A large amount of runic chains flickered into existence, but they were quickly shredded apart.

“He actually dares to barge into the nest of a Radiant Moon. Where does he get his confidence from?” Weyers muttered to himself in the distance.

“Stuart, prepare to meet your maker!” A booming voice was transmitted into the entire area, causing many Magi to gape in shock. Since when did someone dare to barge into the residence of a Radiant Moon Magus in Sky City without an invitation, even acting so unbridled? Was something changing?

A large number of conscients gathered at the place, watching the alarming scene nearby.

“Soaring Demonic Phoenix!”

*Chirp!* The phantom of a terrifying phoenix wreathed in black fire emerged along with high-pitched cries, its gigantic wings breaking apart the spell formations in Stuart’s residence. Black flames spilled in all directions.
The remaining spell light was devoured by the black flames, and the formations completely lost their might. Yet, the giant blackfire phoenix was still unsatisfied, and it pushed at a building underneath.

*Rumble!* Like a natural calamity, the black flames swirled through the area and all that was left behind was merely a huge pit, as well as two stunned figures. All other life energy was gone.

With Leylin attacking at full power, besides Stuart and that Morning Star who could somewhat take it, the region had been completely levelled. The many maids, servants, and the like were completely obliterated.

The might of just one attack had reached this extent!

The onlookers grew crazed at this scene, thinking they were still dreaming.

“That is Lord Leylin!” Yuro’s hand clamped on her mouth.

“Ah! It’s that Morning Star who gifted me information points!” In her shock, the spectacled female Magus dropped the books she was holding.

“What’s going on?” Stuart was still in a daze. He had obviously reacted, but long years of a pampered life had resulted in his disbelief when someone dared to attack his residence. What’s worse was that they succeeded!

The stupefaction was soon replaced by rage.

“You… You dare…” Stuart snarled, terrifying energy undulations sweeping through the area. Weyers, who was already a distance away, immediately moved much further backwards, now more fearful as he watched Leylin’s back at the centre of all of it.

“I am Duke Leylin Farlier of the Ouroboros Clan, here to kill the Morning Star of an opposing organisation, Jupiter’s Lightning. All unrelated personnel are to leave!” Leylin did not wait for Stuart to speak, an immense voice travelling everywhere instantly.

“What? He’s that Leylin, the most powerful Kemoyin Warlock in
history?"
“Yes! The Ouroboros Clan and Jupiter’s Lightning are now at war!”
The clamour from around the female Magus with thick glasses allowed her to get Leylin’s name. Watching Leylin’s back, traces of concern and admiration flashed across her face.
“Die!” After proclaiming this, Leylin did not give Stuart any opportunities to speak. A gigantic Kemoyin Serpent phantom with scarlet stripes on it appeared behind his back. As it thundered forth, two vertical pupils like stars gazed at the Morning Star wrapped in black mist.
“My– My Lord, save me!” Though similarly a Morning Star, he knew that there was too large a disparity between him and Leylin, and only Stuart would be able to save his life.
“You’re going too far!” Terrifying flames began to burn around Stuart, all a result of his anger.
He even vowed, deep in his heart, that no matter the cost he had to kill Leylin right here on this day!
“It’s you that I want to bully!” Leylin laughed manically, the gigantic phantom serpent swallowing both Stuart and the Morning Star whom he did not know the name of. Frightful energy undulations were immediately dispelled, and if not for the two of them controlling the situation, these undulations would have spread to the outside.
Even so, Weyers’ expression changed as he activated quite a few layers of defence, ensuring that the battlefield was only above Stuart’s residence.
A red signal alarm sounded in the control room of Sky City along with a voice, “Beep beep beep! Beep beep beep! Warning: dangerous energy detected! Warning: dangerous energy detected!
“Discovered intense energy undulations. Location: Above Lord Stuart’s residence!” The phantom images of two Magi fighting
appeared on the screen, showing another Morning Star that could only hide in a corner.
The screen locked onto Leylin. “Determined target to be a Morning Star Magus!”
“What? The person who’s fighting at the same level as Lord Stuart is actually a Morning Star? Have you gone stupid?”
The person in charge smashed a file on the supervising staffer’s head.
“Recanning. Confirmed to be a Morning Star Magus!”
As the spirit genie’s voice rang out, the person in charge was silenced. One instance could be considered a glitch, but what if it happened a second or third time? He watched the figure on the screen in disbelief, “What level is he at? Display his star grade!”
The screen quickly changed, “Target is Leylin Farlier. Saved data: Four Stars.”
“What a joke! Rescan him.” He was practically yelling at this point.
*Swish!* An energy bar appeared, and the four star level was filled almost instantly. The meter arrived at five stars.
“So it’s a peak Morning Star. It’s no wonder that he can contend with Lord Stuart. But don’t worry, he can’t hold on for long…”
He sighed suddenly, but immediately after, the monitoring staff pulled him to look at the screen once more. In that moment, he practically turned to stone.
On the screen, the meter filled up even the five star grade, and then burst through it!
The screen glitched out and was restarted. The spirit genie then gave another evaluation.
“A Morning Star at the Six Star grade! It’s a monster, a monster!”
He collapsed feebly onto his chair.
“My Lord! What do we do?” The staff watched the man in charge, hesitating to speak.
“What else can we do? Activate the most powerful defences and ensure that their battle won’t affect any other regions. We can’t handle the other matters…” The man’s eyes rolled back as he lost consciousness.

......

Weyers was on the battlefield, and he slowly gained more clarity on Leylin’s strength.
“This level of strength….” Weyers watched the giant phantom of a serpent soaring through the sky as it let loose terrifying sounds. He had become slightly dazed, “This is definitely stronger than a Five Star. Is he a legendary Six Star Morning Star?” There were only five normal ranks for Morning Stars. However, history always produced frightening geniuses that defied common sense. This was the Six Star grade! A Morning Star who could match up to a Radiant Moon!
“He’s actually reached this level?” Weyers clutched his fists tightly, thinking about his pride at breaking through to Four Stars, and he suddenly flushed red. He wanted to find a place to hide in.
*Swish! Swish!* Large numbers of elites rushed over, looking solemn and preparing for death.
Platinum flames flashed, and Weyers stood in their way, “I’ll take over here. Step back for now.”
Though he was envious, he still had to abide by their agreement. Weyers watched these guards and the Morning Star that arrived behind them in a lofty manner, and offered his greetings...
*Boom!* A tremendous energy tornado split open, and a blackened Stuart was ruthlessly sent flying as he arrived beside Weyers.
Leylin threw the Morning Star Magus to the ground, the black gas already completely removed from him.
“It’s a Magus from Jupiter’s Lightning!” “The spirit undulations are
correct as well. I’ve seen him once before, and those can’t be hidden!”
Many Morning Stars looked at each other.
“Everyone can see that Lord Leylin was merely attacking the Magus from the opposing organisation, Jupiter’s Lightning. Based on the decree of the Monarch of the Skies, our Sky City is to maintain a neutral stance,” Weyers stood up and spoke righteously.
Many Morning Star Magi exchanged glances, and watched Leylin who did not back down despite his injuries. In the distance, Stuart looked exasperated as he maintained his silence.
Leylin and Weyers glanced at each other, grinning. The outcome had been decided.

……

Information about this huge battle in Sky City spread like a storm. The Warlock Leylin took on a Radiant Moon Magus by himself, only suffering light injuries to capture a Morning Star Magus from the other party. His name spread far and wide, and Stuart had been delegated to a supporting role.
The commotion grew further and further, dwarfing that over the Sage Appraisal.
Now, Weyers watched on as a black airship left Sky City from a private port. A strange expression was on his face.
The person leaving was naturally Leylin. Though he had successfully taken care of the Magus from Jupiter’s Lightning and humiliated Stuart, he had completely ruffled the feathers of Sky City.
After all, he had ruthlessly attacked on of their esteemed elders in their own territory! If not for Weyers helping him control the situation, the Magi of Sky City might have just declared war against him.
Weyers obviously did not go uncompensated for his help. They had discussed that part beforehand, which was the only reason Leylin was cocky enough to rush to the frontlines. Even then, knowing that he was garnering too much attention, Leylin did not dare stay in Sky City much longer. He accepted Weyers’ proposal and went through unofficial channels to be baptised by the Endowing Scepter, keeping a low profile along the way. With his vitality increased by about 20 points, he secretly left the area, not participating in the appraisal. As long as he obtained the profits, Leylin did not particularly care for such a title, and he tossed the conversation he’d had with the Monarch of the Skies to the back of his mind. Leylin looked at his stats.


“My vitality increased by 20 points, which means my body is pretty much adapted to the increased soul force now. The Endowing Scepter was truly essential!” Leylin couldn’t help but mumble to himself as he recalled the scepter.

He had realised during the baptism that the Endowing Scepter was the energy core of Sky City. If it was attacked, the entire city would fall to the ground, leading to a horrifying disaster. The Endowing Scepter was not an actual scepter, but instead a gigantic energy reaction furnace. Its refined looped structure was something Leylin admired, and he had the impulse to steal it and study it.

Leylin suddenly came back to himself, a slight smile about his lips. “It’s about time they caught up to me.”

*Rumble!* Immense energy undulations swept through the area,
and the Colossal Serpent vanished in a puff of smoke. Leylin, who had been prepared, merely stood in mid-air while staring at Stuart who had suddenly appeared ahead of him.

……

Within Sky City, Weyers watched the direction Leylin had left in, and muttered to himself, “Though I agreed to help you take on the pressure from Sky City, you’ll need to deal with Stuart’s retaliation yourself!”
His gaze was full of complicated feelings, “Leylin, I admit that you’re the biggest genius I’ve seen, to the point that you can tussle with a rank 5. However, the disparity between ranks is not something one can step across so easily…”
In the battle before, Leylin had successfully captured the Morning Star Magus alive, but he had also paid the price of getting injured. Meanwhile, Stuart had been covered in dirt, but he had no real injuries.
Now that he was away from Sky City, it was hard to tell the outcome if he was was caught.
The most likely outcome was that, after an intense battle, Stuart would end up with serious injuries and Leylin would wind up dead.
Insanity flashed in Weyers’ eyes, “There needs only be one true genius, and that will be me!”
“Is he gone?” Flames flickered, and a Magus stood beside Weyers that looked similar to him. The Radiant Moon energy he gave off was even more terrifying than Stuart’s.
He glanced at Weyers with a look of encouragement, “You did well this time! With Stuart dejected, our organisation can now make ourselves known in Sky City!”
“Leylin’s already gone. I’ve also received news that Stuart has
followed him!” Weyers’ voice held a trace of laughter. Weyers daring to oppose Stuart was not because he was a fool, but because someone else was backing him.

“Weyers, do you know why His Majesty, the Monarch of the Skies, promised not to interfere in the battle between the Ouroboros Clan and Jupiter’s Lightning? A Radiant Moon isn’t nearly enough for His Majesty to do this…”

The Radiant Moon looked serious as he spoke.

“Could it be…” Weyers’ expression changed.

……

“Leylin, you can’t run this time. I will return the humiliation you gave me today tenfold! No, a hundredfold!” Stuart’s voice was distorted, and his expression vicious.

Though Leylin was powerful, his total strength could still not match up to his own. This was what he had depended on when he chased after Leylin. Besides, he had help today, and could absolutely kill Leylin here!

……

Meanwhile, Jupiter’s Lightning headquarters, in a Magus Tower.

“Is it all prepared? It’s about to begin!”

Observing the bubbling Pond of Lamentation, Zegna’s expression fluctuated as a female voice was heard.

“This will consume 21% of the Pond of Lamentation’s energy reserves, and might even affect your transformation! Have you thought it through properly?”

“I’ve thought it through enough. Do it!” Zegna’s voice was low.

“Alright! Give me a portion of the control rights…”

Mysterious, complicated incantations sounded in the secret room,
and multiple black masks arose, disappearing into the void.
“Hm?” Leylin, who was facing Stuart, had a change in expression. Large numbers of black masks suddenly surrounded his body, sticking onto his face.
[Beep! Host has been inflicted with a curse. Vitality and soul force have weakened!] the A.I. Chip’s voice transmitted.
“A curse? And it’s a long-distance ancient curse?” Leylin’s pupils shrank.
“Haha… You’re fated to die here. I will extract your soul and torture you for a thousand years!” Stuart laughed madly before he charged forth.
A terrifying rank 5 spell formed a snarling black monster that opened its large, ferocious mouth in Leylin’s direction.
“Scarlet Earring!” Red light flashed from Leylin’s ears, and a crescent-shaped blade of scarlet light slashed out...
The scarlet crescent of light slashed through the sky. The humongous black monster howled in grief as it disintegrated into black vapour and dispersed.

From the black vapour came Stuart’s voice, full of fear, “A piece of high-grade magic equipment! You actually have a piece of high-grade magic equipment!”

He looked at the crimson earring hanging on Leylin’s ear, his eyes filled with restraining fear and insatiable greed, “I’ll kill you! All of this will be mine!”

‘A.I. Chip, begin resisting the radiation from the curse, and find the source!’ Leylin looked solemn as he secretly gave the command. If it was in the past, such an ancient curse would be highly troublesome to deal with, but with the vast amount of information from the Great Library as his trump card, and the A.I. Chip’s ability to successfully quantify soul force, he had formed a decent database, allowing him to resist.

The same went for the Scarlet Earring. Before he thoroughly understood its origin and functions, he didn’t dare to use it much. However, he had managed to find the history of and a detailed introduction to the Scarlet Earring in the Great Library, including operational instructions. This naturally allowed this piece of high-grade magic equipment to be put to full use.

Most of the magic equipment circulating around the central continent was low-grade. Middle-grade magic equipment was rare,
and high-grade magic equipment would make even Radian Moons green with envy!
His ability to use the Scarlet Earring had boosted Leylin’s strength tremendously in one go, especially against things such as suppressive curses like now.

[Beep! Task established, begin projection of soul interference. Searching for source of curse!] The A.I. Chip immediately intoned. A layer of light yellow light was emitted from Leylin’s body, while the numerous black masks rushed up like moths to the flame.

‘A curse way beyond my expectations! And with such horrifying crippling abilities! It must’ve been cast by a Radiant Moon. I’m 90% sure Zegna is behind this. Who would’ve thought that he had talent in the field of curses…’

An icy glare flashed in Leylin’s eyes. Even he could not deploy such an ancient curse, especially if it was a technique that involved crossing space. This even exceeded the boundaries of what a rank 5 could do!

‘Or maybe… Someone is helping him? An even stronger Magus at that?’ This idea had Leylin face turning darker. Not only did he have to fight against two rank 5 Magi who had joined forces, he had to pay even more attention to as mysterious high-ranking Magus who was spying on him.

“I really underestimated you previously!” Seeing that the black masks attacking Leylin from all sides were decreasing in number, Stuart unexpectedly did not continue attacking him, but instead started to gasp.

‘He actually has a method to resist the ancient curse. He may be at the peak of a Morning Star formally, but his strength is comparable to that of a Radiant Moon Magus! And he even possesses a piece of high-grade magic equipment! If I had known all this earlier, I wouldn’t have taken action even if Zegna multiplied his remuneration by tenfold!’
No matter how he felt, Stuart was a Magus after all. After his rage had subsided, he regained his senses and grew rational. However, Leylin had a rather bad feeling about Stuart’s calm and straightforward manner of speaking.

“What a pity… Since the seeds of hatred have already been planted, I will not allow them to take root and germinate!” Stuart looked at Leylin with a profound look in his eyes, “If I cannot make you fall today, the day you advance to rank 5 will be judgement day for me! Even the Monarch of the Skies will not be able to save me…”

Leylin was silent, and didn’t say much. Indeed, his enemy understood him best. Once he had sufficient strength in the future, he would definitely return for revenge and even eliminate him completely. He was not the only one who thought of this, as Stuart had as well. Neither of them tried to conceal it.

“So you must die here today, lest I be destroyed and return to the astral plane!” Stuart was resolute. Bizarre undulations appeared on his body, and the rings of light representing his five innate spells flickered into existence behind him. Even spacetime seemed to have been frozen at that moment.

“A Radiant Moon Arcane Art?!” Leylin’s expression was extremely solemn.

Morning Stars, powered by their point masses, could combine their four innate spells to produce the Morning Star Arcane Art, and Radiant Moons could do the same with their five. This terrifying fusion of powers was strong enough to cause massive destruction even at rank 4; how strong, then, would it be at rank 5?

Leylin had never seen a Radiant Moon Arcane Art before, but it was evident that the entirety of Sky City would be hard pressed to survive Stuart’s attack.

If not, he would have long used his Radiant Moon Arcane Art when he was humiliated then. He wouldn’t have been so afraid of the Monarch of the Skies and forced himself to endure for so long
before finally taking action now!
This place was rather far from Sky City. Even if the undulations spread to the Sky City, its defence mechanisms and the Magi inside would be able to handle it. Thus, Stuart could go all out without any qualms!
At this moment, Leylin seemed to have seen Stuart’s truesoul through his point mass! His soul was sparkling with the frigid, dazzling radiance of a crescent moon!
‘The superposition of innate spells to form a Morning Star Arcane Art does not result in a simple additive effect. With the introduction of a fifth, rank 5 innate spell, the formidability of a Radiant Moon Arcane Art is definitely exponentially greater. It should be at least ten times as strong, if not more!’
Leylin stared at the fused rings of light behind Stuart, fear rising within him. They were rippling with a bright radiance that seemed like it could destroy the world in one sweep!
“Stuart has really firmed his resolve. He actually dared to show his Radiant Moon Arcane Art in the main world!” Leylin sighed deeply and didn’t go on the offensive directly. While Stuart was casting the Arcane Art, a frightening protective mechanism had automatically formed around him. If he attacked now, he might have to face the dreadful wrath of the Radiant Moon Arcane Art directly!
‘The disparity between our powers is too large. Such a formidable strength is enough to cause my fall!’ Leylin’s face flushed red. ‘The only way now is to….’
He slowly took off the white glove on his left hand, revealing an imprint in the form of a sun that was surrounded by black flames.
[Beep! Curse procedure found. Initializing tracking mode. Source confirmed.] At this instant, the A.I. Chip brought him a piece of good news.
“Might as well settle them together then!” Leylin’s eyes glistened as he rushed towards Stuart…
Sky City.
“What does that mean? Didn’t Leylin obtain an agreement of neutrality from the Monarch of the Skies in exchange for the coordinates of the Lava World and his outstanding strength that could match a Radiant Moon’s?” Weyers gazed at his elder, puzzled. The Radiant Moon Magus, however, shook his head. Weyers could even detect a bitter smile at the corners of his lips, much to his astonishment.
This elder of his was relatively strong among the Radiant Moon Magi, so why would he have such an expression? Could it be that Leylin’s strength had already grown to the extent that even he felt helpless?
Weyers shook his head firmly, as though trying to expel this thought from his brain. He didn’t consider that the more he did this, the deeper this conjecture took root in his mind.
*Rumble!* Horrifying vibrations were transmitted over, accompanied by dazzling white light.
“This is… a Morning Star Arcane Art? No! An energy undulation more terrifying than a Morning Star Art… Could it be Leylin?” Weyers lifted his head, gazing at the bright flames in the distance with a glint in his eyes.
“Stuart could not control himself in the end!” The Radiant Moon Magus sighed deeply, then said to Weyers, “You’re lucky to be able to witness a Radiant Moon Arcane Art in the main world; and even other, greater things!”
“Greater things?” Weyers was rather confused, but soon after his mouth dropped agape in shock.
What did he see? A sun! An existence from ancient times, a boundless sun that was incomparably vast! It suddenly eclipsed the
radiance of the Radiant Moon Arcane Art. The degree of heat and undulations of heat waves emitted by it struck terror in his heart. Weyers knew that even a thread of those flames was sufficient to seriously injure or even kill him! Under the rays coming from this sun, the white radiance of the Radiant Moon Arcane Art popped like a bubble. The corona had grown enormous and still continued to expand, quickly spreading to the outskirts of Sky City. *Boom! Boom! Boom!* Numerous defensive spell formations shattered one by one. Terrifying golden-red heat rays intruded into the place, and it was as though the sky had disintegrated and the sun had fallen. Many buildings collapsed as the entirety of Sky City descended into chaos.

“Ah…” Weyers’ jaw hung open. He had never imagined that Sky City, which had always been incomparably stable and never experienced a single tremor, would waver like a small sailboat in the stormy seas under such a horrifying attack, facing destruction and death at any moment.

Under the dreadful might of a rank 6 spell, even Sky City, the most academic progress in the entire central continent, was on the verge of collapse!

The humongous floating city wobbled violently in the storm of pure gold flames, seemingly about to fall apart any moment!

“This cannot do! We must escape as quickly as possible, and be far away from the range of this spell. This is utterly terrible…” Weyers murmured to himself.

Just as his defence mechanism could hold no longer, a hand landed on Weyers’ back, stabilising him instantly.

“Don’t panic! We still have our lord! The Monarch of the Skies will not sit still and allow the fall of Sky City!”

The words of the Radiant Moon Magus seemed to have a strong reassuring effect, allowing Weyers to recover from his previous
state. Still, the shock in his pupils did not fade for a long time. “That spell… Is it… No! That’s no longer a spell! It’s the law! The law of fire!” Weyers had never acted like this before. Never had he felt that he was so immensely insignificant and powerless. The disparity between him and Leylin was huge.

*Chirp!* Spotless white feathers floated down like snowflakes, accompanied by pleasing chirps. They firmly wrapped around the entire city, blocking out the flames. With the assistance of this strange force, Sky City started to regain its stability.

“It’s the Monarch of the Skies! He has made a move!” The Radiant Moon Magus gasped.

The numerous Magi in the Sky City kowtowed devoutly in the direction of the Drifting Garden, expressing their gratitude to the monarch for saving their lives.
The Monarch of the Skies wrapped his city up in a strange energy barrier, and the tremors grew less violent. After the energy storm outside passed, Weyers looked at the sight not too far away from him, and suddenly cried out involuntarily, “The thunder layer of Akev! Where has the thunder layer of Akev gone to?”

Below Sky City was originally a gigantic sea made of black thunderclouds. This was a natural skyscape that acted as the first defence of Sky City. Even Crystal Phase Magi would find it so difficult to pass through it was practically impossible. Now, however, the gigantic sea of black thunderclouds had disappeared, leaving only a fog formed of condensation. “Obviously, everything has been destroyed. Even the city itself has been reduced to this state…” The Radiant Moon Magus laughed wryly.

Weyers recovered from his surprise and glanced at Sky City, which was now in ruins, and lowered his head as if in disappointment. Even if they had been protected by the Monarch of the Skies, which prevented the city from being destroyed completely, most of the buildings had been devastated by the firestorm. Even if the core hadn’t been destroyed, the losses were still hard to estimate. Even most of the gigantic floating island had been burnt to a crisp,
and it seemed incomparably ugly.
“Wha- What’s going on? Could Leylin have done this? How’s that possible?” Weyers’ eyes looked lost.
“The peak of rank 6, a power that’s already beginning to touch on the might of laws. That should be the ancient Sun’s Child’s ‘Sun Scorching Nirvana’!” The Radiant Moon Magus’ voice was solemn.
“Leylin was somehow able to obtain the bloodline of the Sun’s Child, and he’s probably unrivalled in his knowledge on bloodline spells. To be able to recreate ancient attacks like this using a bloodline imprint…”
“Leylin?” Weyers grew bitter. “Then Stuart…”
“With Sky City in this state, how do you think he ended up?” The Radiant Moon sighed slightly, “We were still colleagues…”
Seeing his colleague fall just like that, he wasn’t feeling that good.
“Stuart went against my decree and took part in the battle between the Ouroboros Clan and Jupiter’s Lightning. I hereby declare his expulsion from Sky City!” An odd voice rang in Sky City.
“It’s the Monarch of the Skies’ voice!” Weyers cried out involuntarily. “‘Even His Majesty isn’t willing to provoke Leylin?’ Only now did he realise the disparity between Leylin and him, to the point that he felt utter despair…”

……

*Rumble!* The void was shattered, and large amounts of golden-red flames surged into the area.
‘What is that?’ Zegna had this one thought before he was swallowed up by the golden-red flames in an instant as he cried out sharply.
The golden-red flames did not let anything slip by and began to wreak havoc on the surroundings. Even the Magus Tower of a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus could do nothing against it.
The faint sound of a woman’s piercing scream was sent out from Zegna’s arm. “Damn it, it’s the ancient Sun’s Child!” “Curse of ancient times, heed my command. Show me the wrath of time and space…” The woman’s voice quickly chanted. *Tss tss!* Accompanying the strange and terrifying incantations, the black gases in the Pond of Lamentation surged outside, tangling with the sun’s flames. Multiple distorted souls appeared in the air, forming a durable layer of light that disallowed the roasting flames entry. Once the storm passed, the black streams of gas from the Pond of Lamentation had decreased by a large amount, and all that was left of Zegna was a charred arm on the ground. *Whoosh!* The charred arm exploded, and flesh and blood began to grow at a rapid rate, forming Zegna once more. Now, however, his expression was terrible, and he had frightful burn marks on his body. “The ancient flames of the sun thankfully exploded a fair distance away from us, and through the and a great part of its might was reduced through the spacetime channel. If not, it wouldn’t be just you losing your life…” The mysterious woman’s voice sounded. “Damn it, DAMN IT! How did it come to this? Everything should have been smooth-sailing… Ugh…” Zegna roared in his fury, but suddenly, he stopped, as if his throat was being clutched. Little flames were beginning to burn on his body once more. “The Sun’s Child was at the peak of rank 6 Magi, and a being beginning to comprehend laws. Its flames hold within some of the power of law, and cannot be so easily taken care of!” A hint of helplessness could be heard in her voice. Large amounts of water from the Pond of Lamentation flew into the air, forming a black robe and draping over Zegna.
“Ugh…” Zegna sighed in satisfaction. After he wore the black robe, the terrifying golden-red flames finally went out.
“Sun’s Child? How did he do that?” Zegna was puzzled, and even afraid. He had to admit that Leylin was full of miracles, and seemed to be his nemesis.
“I don’t know.” Narsha’s voice turned cold. “What you need to worry about is the Pond of Lamentation… To save a fool like you, I consumed more than half of its energy. You need to begin amassing resources more…”
“What?” When Zegna saw that there was only a thin layer of black gas left, his face fell, “That’s not possible! I put in all of my accumulated wealth to construct this…”
“Then you’ll need to launch the next plan…” She spoke slowly.
The secret room descended into silence, and only after a very long while could a low sound of acknowledgement be heard.

……

The incident in Sky City ended with the fall of a Radiant Moon Magus. The fall of someone of such status immediately swept through the continent like a hurricane.
This was a great rank 5 Magus! There were few of them even in the entire central continent, and they were truly among the top strata of the Magus World’s society. They were the goals of all young Magi, and each one held an immense reputation for their battle strength. Even if they weren’t in control of the large organisations, their statuses were second only to Monarchs. Their experiences could be written down as legend, forming an enriching story!
Someone like that had actually fallen? And at the hands of a Morning Star Magus?
The first reaction most Magi had after hearing this was disbelief, but when conclusive evidence was shown, and especially with the
announcement of Stuart’s subsequent expulsion by the Monarch of the Skies, the central continent sank into a strange silence. The Magi collectively lost their voices. This was killing a Radiant Moon at the Morning Star realm! It was no longer the purview of a genius. Leylin was a demon! If he could even kill Radiant Moons, what were Morning Stars worth? How many organisations had Breaking Dawn Monarchs in their midst in the central continent? Hence, many Magi organisations added Leylin to the list of people they absolutely could not provoke. The Ouroboros Clan even received regular expressions of goodwill and discreet inquiries, both out in the open and in the shadows. It kept the two dukes extremely busy. The main character in this story, the most powerful Kemoyin Warlock, and the most powerful Morning Star in history, went missing. Duke Leylin Farlier had mysteriously disappeared from the public eye.

……

Torrential rain fell down from the skies. There was lightning everywhere, and one could see meteorites every once in a while. The heart of the fight between the Radiant Moon Arcane Art and rank 6 bloodline imprint had been in Sky City, but close to 10% of the central continent had been affected. Abnormality in the climate was only a small part of it; spatial rifts had opened up everywhere, and would likely have to be closed up by Monarchs. A secret room had been opened in the middle of a desolate mountain. There were no channels for external communication, and countless concealing runes filled the surroundings, sealing this place up. A figure dressed in tattered platinum robes was half-leaning on the
rock walls, observing the back of his hands and looking deep in thought.
“My battle might right now is comparable to Radiant Moons! On top of that, the bloodline imprint of the rank 6 Sun’s Child has an immensely terrifying radiation. Even if all the Prophets in the central continent work together, they still won’t be able to track me down…”
Leylin was very confident in his hiding abilities. It would require a Breaking Dawn Prophet to act, and even they would only be able to find slight traces of him. However, there were few such Magi across all of history, and there were likely none in the present. Hence, he was rather at ease when it came to his safety.
“I never thought that the backlash from the Sun’s Flames would be so immense!” Recalling the scene from that day, a wry smile appeared about his lips. Under the threat of Stuart’s Radiant Moon Arcane Art, Leylin had brazenly used the bloodline imprint on his left hand and launched a terrifying attack.
It was as if the ancient Sun’s Child had been revived. The moment Sun Scorching Nirvana was launched, the Radiant Moon Arcane Art was torn apart, and even Stuart had fallen there and then.
That was not all. Leylin had even followed the path of the curse and sent a portion of the might of the spell to the caster. Even if Zegna wasn’t dead, he would at least have some injuries at this point.
Such a terrifying rank 6 spell had been launched through a bloodline imprint, and had still almost extracted everything from Leylin.
As Leylin was not rank 6 and definitely not the Sun’s Child, he had also been hit with a backlash from the Sun’s Flames.
If not for him having another of the bloodline imprint to protect him and the black flames of the Emberflame Technique having the unique effect of controlling those flames, he would not only be
gravely injured but even die!
There were definitely more than one or two in history who had
died from the backlash of employing a spell that far surpassed their
ability, and Leylin had almost followed in their footsteps.
“Thankfully, I’m fine. It would’ve been way too sad if I’d been
killed by my own spell…” Leylin’s heart was still palpitating in
fear.
“Whatsoever it is, I’ve finally healed all of my injuries today. What
should I do next? I need to think it over properly!”
I. Chip, show me my condition!’ Leylin commanded in his mind.


His vitality had finally broken past 100, solving the issue arising from the rapid advancement of his soul force. Seeing this, Leylin could finally heave a sigh of relief. After all, his main goal in coming to Sky City was to solve this issue completely.

The Endowing Scepter had initially increased his vitality by two levels, the equivalent of twenty points. Afterwards, the disaster that was the Sun’s Flames had actually resulted in a profit for him. His Fireplume had managed to take in quite a bit of the energy from it, and it resulted in a surprising transformation that pushed his vitality past the mark.

Now, he had completely reached his target, and all that was left to deal with were the repercussions, which were slightly troublesome. At this thought, a wry smile appeared about Leylin’s lips as he grew gloomy.

After all was said and done, Stuart was still a Radiant Moon from Sky City. There were few even amongst the subordinates of the Monarch of the Skies who were ranked as highly as he was.
And now, such an important person had fallen at Leylin’s hands. Even if the Monarch of the Skies expelled Stuart from Sky City afterwards, it was likely just to avoid provoking him for now. Leylin would not believe that the Monarch had no thoughts on this matter.

Leylin could very well raise his hands and leave just like this, but the Monarch of the Skies could not. He had to pay the cost of Leylin and Stuart’s battles, which included things like mending the spatial rifts and the like. However, it wasn’t his fault that this occurred in his domain. Leylin had been left without a choice. He was sure that, at this point, the Monarch hated him to the core. In fact, he had probably provoked the entire organisation of Sky City.

After all, Leylin had used the coordinates to a foreign world and the help of some other Sky City Magi to put pressure on Stuart. This had already depressed the Monarch of the Skies, but it was still acceptable.

However, even Weyers and his backers would feel sympathy for his killing of the man. By the looks of it, the entirety of Sky City harboured no favourable impression of Leylin, and could even act against him.

“This is getting troublesome…” Leylin laughed wryly, and the cold glint in his eyes became increasingly obvious. Since others were going to plot against him, he would prepare his vengeance. Besides, the other party was just a Breaking Dawn Magus. How amazing could he be? With the A.I. Chip, the advice of the ancient Wisdom Tree, and the Kemoyin bloodline, Leylin was confident that he would reach that realm in due time, even surpass it.

“However, I still have to face the real problems. As I am now, I can somewhat deal with New Moon Radiant Moon Magi. If I activate the bloodline imprint, I can even threaten Full Moon Magi!” Leylin had an accurate estimation of his battle might.
“However, there’s only one chance left to activate the bloodline imprint of the Sun’s Child. After this, there’s nothing left… Even if it’s the attack from the ancient Sun’s Child, a Full Moon Magus still has a chance of survival. A Breaking Dawn Monarch can definitely take it on, obviously, and it’s just a matter of the price to be paid in exchange…”

“If I appear now, there might be Full Moon Magi, even Breaking Dawn Magi trying to kill me in fear of my potential. I won’t be able to defend myself against them at all.” That was why Leylin had been in hiding all this while, and the reason he had not returned to the Ouroboros Clan headquarters. Though such a scenario wasn’t likely, he was still prepared for the worst case.

If he really was caught by a Breaking Dawn, there was no chance of survival even if he used his trump card.

One only lived once, and Leylin didn’t believe he’d get one more opportunity to travel to another time after death.

“I’m afraid that, before I reach Radiant Moon, I’ll need to hide in the shadows.” Leylin sighed.

The moment he reached rank 5, Radiant Moon, the strength of his Warlock bloodline, in addition to his methods as well as trump cards would give him a chance to flee with his life even when faced with a rank 6 Magus.

If that was possible, he would be a Magus at the peak in the central continent, and he would no longer need to fear any attacks, whether in the open or in the shadows.

“Rank 5, Radiant Moon!” Leylin sighed. “How could the bloodline shackles of Kemoyin Warlocks be solved so easily… It doesn’t matter; I have to break through them no matter what, else I’ll have to remain in hiding for the rest of my life. If that were the case, it’d be better to start anew in another world!”

At this thought, Leylin flipped through the book of imprints in his hands and tapped the image of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent.
After a static sound, Gilbert’s agitated voice was heard. “Leylin, is it you?”
“It’s me!” Leylin answered concisely. Though there were restrictions when it came to secret imprints, both users were Morning Star and with the amplification of soul force the distance across which information could be transmitted was increased by a large amount.
“It’s great that you’re alright, hehe… You’ve done something incredible! Emma and Freya are very worried about you.” It was no surprise to hear Gilbert’s wry laughter from the other side of the secret imprint.
“My apologies for making you two dukes worry. Also, please help me apologise to Freya! I probably won’t be able to return for a period of time…” Leylin’s voice was low.
“What? Are you in trouble? Do you need us to come over?” Gilbert began to get worried. Leylin was currently not just the pillar of support of Ouroboros Clan, but also their hope!
“I’m fine! I’ll just need to go on a journey for a period of time. I shall leave matters of the Ouroboros Clan to both of you in the meanwhile.” Leylin concealed his imminent attempts at breaking through to Radiant Moon, and gave Gilbert the impression that he was going to wait until the fuss died down.
It was enough for the two Morning Star dukes to be in charge of the Ouroboros Clan. Leylin, who had disappeared, would act as a huge deterrent anyway. Before he popped up again, any Magi who wanted to attack the Ouroboros Clan would have to consider the consequences of offending a Magus with the might of a Radiant Moon!
“Alright, that works.” Gilbert was old and wise, and quickly thought of this matter in a short period of time.
After a brief silence, Gilbert presented another piece of news. “… Actually, someone from the Warlock Union looked for me. He
hoped that you’d go to the Morning Star Area, and they’d definitely ensure your safety!”

‘Morning Star area? Warlock Union?’ Leylin pondered over it, ‘With a few Radiant Moon Warlocks in charge, safety should not be an issue, but throwing this idea out at this time… Are they trying to rope me in, or is this a conspiracy?’

Thoughts churning at lightning speed, Leylin quickly answered, “It’s alright. Thank them for their goodwill on my behalf!”

Even if they were protecting him without any ulterior motives, Leylin would not go to the Morning Star area. He would never place his own safety in the hands of another person. In other words, even a Radiant Moon Warlock was not qualified to guarantee his safety.

“Even rank 7, 8 or 9 existences can’t be relied on. The most steady method is to count on oneself.” Leylin’s eyes were full of mirth as they shot out his resolution.

“Alright. Oh, you….” Gilbert on the other end could only laugh wryly.

“Well then, take care!” “Take care!” After they bade their farewells, Leylin closed off the channel and left the area.

It was still possible to monitor communication via secret imprints. This was merely a temporary place used to recuperate, and he had long since planned to leave it. If not, he would not take the initiative and communicate with the external world.

After Leylin left, blazing black flames immediately began to burn, turning the desolate mountain into ashes.

*Bzzz Bzzz!* Not long after Leylin’s departure, space began to ripple as it twisted on itself, forming a door flickering with light.

A few human figures walked out, their bodies emanating terrifying energy undulations. Seeing the mountain that had turned to ashes, they sighed, “We’ve come too late.”

A figure stood above the ashes and tightened his fist, but could
only shake his head helplessly, “He was very cautious and did it cleanly, not leaving behind any trace of his scent. It’s impossible to chase him down.”
“Prophetic spells are useless against him. Are we really going to let him go?”
The few black figures began to discuss amongst themselves.
“This Warlock has the highest potential out of every one I’ve seen. At rank 4, he can kill a rank 5, and once he reaches Radiant Moon, how much more powerful can he get?”
“You seem to have forgotten something. He’s a Giant Kemoyin Warlock, and he has the problem of bloodline shackles. The limits of his own strength are rank 4. This is a restriction on his soul! Since ancient times, there have been so many bloodline Warlocks, and yet none have broken through it. Do you think he can?”
There was a trace of pity in this new speaker’s voice, “But I must admit that Leylin is definitely a genius. He’s among the best in all history, but it’s a pity that he’s chosen the path of a Kemoyin Warlock. If he walked the path of a Magus, we might have seen the rise of another Monarch!”
“It’s not a pity. It’s fortunate instead, fortunate that he chose the path of a Warlock!” The black figure right in the middle suddenly spoke, his tone icy.
“Yes! It’s fortunate that he’s chosen to be a Warlock!” The other black figures agreed with each other, turning into great amounts of black gas and dissipating.
Leylin knew nothing of what happened after his departure. He had not even left stardust bugs behind.
Though this method was very discreet, Radiant Moon Magi had terrifying soul force, and there was a chance of being discovered. Leylin was not going to allow people to track him by making use of the bugs.
He quickly switched locations, his methods of destroying his scent...
all because of his cautiousness. Thankfully, he had dodged this bullet.
‘How should I begin to tread the path of rank 5, Radiant Moon?’ Leylin had now used an altering spell to change his outer appearance and arrived at another area in the central continent. What was in front of him was a sea of fire…
A tremendous volcano thundered and bellowed, as if a giant from the legends launching a flaming iron fist into the skies.
Lava fell like rain, forming rivulets that flowed together to become a network of rivers.
The black volcano towered high into the sky, looming over the region just like the clouds and causing the skies and the ground to turn dark.
The lava glowed red, flickering between dark and bright. The scene was magnificent, a rose amidst the thorns.
“Mount Asura! It’s been such a long time. I’ve never come back since I arrived at the central continent…” Leylin’s eyes were filled with a certain profoundness. The events that brought him to the central continent and the people and his history with Twilight Zone became incomparably vivid once more.
Indeed, Leylin was preparing to leave the central continent for a while and return to Twilight Zone. Even though that place was barren and inadequate compared to the central continent, it held a treasure trove that only he knew of.
‘The body of the Scorpion Man, as well as the blood of the protector of the Icy World!' Leylin’s thoughts drifted to the contents of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s memories that he had acquired from its bloodline when he explored the Icy Cave.
That terrifying ancient battle still brought shivers to his spine to this
day; even Morning Stars barely met the requirements to participate in it.
The remains of a Morning Star level bloodline creature were only a small treasure to Leylin, and didn’t mean much, but the bloodline of that bronze female giant wasn’t so simple.
That was a bloodline that crossed rank 7, one that had already begun to touch upon laws! In front of that, the current Leylin was like a moth drawn to the flame. Whether it be refining the ancient bloodline into an imprint or trying to assimilate it, either one of these actions would be extremely helpful to him.
Parts of his hopes for advancing to the Radiant Moon realm were placed on this. Furthermore, the protector of such a world would definitely have information about the world’s coordinates in its bloodline and genetics.
That was the powerful ancient Icy World that even the Snake Dowager coveted and yet was unable to occupy! It was an unknown number of levels more important than the Lava World, and Leylin would be the sole benefactor of it.
It was because he had this that he was confident enough to give away the coordinates to the Lava World as a gift.
Leylin had other plans for the Icy World and the female giant’s bloodline.
When she had been killed by the Snake Dowager, would her body retain any scent or aura from the Purgatory World, which would allow him to deduce the coordinates of that world?
Even if it wasn’t on her body, the Icy World had been invaded by the Snake Dowager who had come from the Purgatory World, so how could there not be any traces left behind?
With the Icy World as a springboard, the difficulty in locating the Purgatory World would be reduced by a large amount. Once at the Purgatory World, finding the bloodline primogenitor, the Snake Dowager, would make breaking through the bloodline shackles a
simple task. Of course, the whole process wouldn’t be that simple, but the general idea wasn’t bad, and it was the best way to break through the bloodline shackles. Of course, Leylin did not dare confront the Snake Dowager just like that. That was basically sending a lamb into a tiger’s den. He didn’t believe that he had any way of resisting strength that had surpassed that of Breaking Dawn and controlled Laws. Therefore, ample preparation was necessary, and this method could only be used as a last resort. Unless all his other options were exhausted, Leylin didn’t even want to consider this option. He would lie low in the Twilight Zone, and find a way to break through to Radiant Moon. That was Leylin’s basic plan. “Mount Asura will be dormant for a period of time every hundred years, which makes it the best time to go underground right now!” Leylin recalled the time he had come up from the subterranean world. While he had grasped the right timing and prepared well, it had still been very dangerous. He could not help but smile slightly at that. He came to the crater of the volcano, and observed the terrifying lava channel. “The volcano is filled with boiling hot lava all year round, and only when it’s dormant will a channel show itself. It’s still not time yet… even if a Crystallised Phase Magus were to charge down there, they would be burnt to smithereens….” Of course, that was for rank 3 Magi. After he reached the Morning Star realm, what should have been horrifying and dangerous was as safe and stable as the garden in his backyard. *Rumble!* A layer of black flames appeared on the surface of Leylin’s body, forming an oval layer that wrapped him within. A black bubble parted the lava, quickly disappearing into the depths…
The terrifying heat from the lava was absorbed by the black flames, blocking all from Leylin who was contained within. As time passed, the black bubble endured the spurts of lava to head straight down.

He was withstanding a natural disaster on his own and going through the lava against the current. Even Mount Asura erupting could do little against him. This was the power of a Morning Star!

*Boom!* In the subterranean world, large amounts of magma flew out of a pool, accompanied by tremors. A bubble of black flame burst through the thick, durable rocks at the top and fell to the ground. Leylin’s figure appeared once more as he withdrew the flames.

Compared to before when he had to rack his brains and look for opportunities, the current Leylin could travel anywhere as and when he wished. It was extremely convenient.

Seeing the dark sky and the stifling rock ceiling, Leylin sighed, “Twilight Zone, I’m back!”

Feeling the large difference in the concentration between the central continent and this place, Leylin shook his head, “It’s no wonder that Morning Stars pay no attention to this, the elemental particle concentration is so low here.”

Compared to the central continent, this place was like the barren countryside, if even that. The restriction of a low particle concentration would reduce the might of any spells used here by a large amount.

Morning Stars cared little for this place, and regular Magi had no way to pass through the lava channel. Hence, Twilight Zone still retained its own path, and the influence from the external world was minimal up till Leylin’s arrival.

One sweep of his soul force and the surroundings were displayed in his mind. He had been the master of Twilight Zone in the past,
and was somewhat familiar with the general area. He knew where he was instantly.

“When I left, there wasn’t even a rank 3 Magus in Twilight Zone, right?” Leylin touched his chin. Here, even rank 2 Magi could be considered the rulers, while rank 3 were the emperors. Morning Star? There hadn’t been one in years.

“Am I like a high-levelled player in a newbie village, crushing everyone here?” Leylin touched his chin, a grin on his face, “But I like it!”

It was a fool’s behaviour to still try to fight even when the enemy was powerful. Even if one could win for a while, a single failure would leave him with no hope of reprieve.

Leylin did not like these methods. Often, he would act only when he was very confident, and all he hoped for was for the Magi in the world to all be at rank 1 and 2, which made it easy for him to manipulate them.

It was because he had this stable mindset that he could leave till today.

“I wonder how Nature’s Alliance Academy is doing. Has Celine been able to take care of it? And then there’s the dark elves, gnomes and other races…” After he determined the direction, Leylin’s body turned into a streak of light as it hurried towards the headquarters of the northern Nature’s Alliance academy.

……

The northern region, Nature’s Alliance academy.

Eternal Light spells brightened up the room, reflecting a black desk with innumerable documents on the surface, as well as ink, quill pens and other stationery.

A female Magus with a delicate face wearing luxurious upper-class clothing kneaded at her brows with slender fingers, seeming very tired.

“Director!” The door was pushed open, and a female Magus
hugging a file ran in hastily.
“Urgent news from the frontlines! Potti City has been attacked again. All of our subordinates were killed, and two professors were even…”
“Alright.” The beautiful director nodded her head from behind the desk, giving a drawn-out sigh. “Almost a hundred years ago, the fall of the northern region also started from Potti City. I just don’t know if anyone will come and turn the situation around this time…”
She stood up and pulled the curtains open.
There was a gigantic square of the academy outside the windows. At the middle, the statue of a young Magus stood proudly, still having a slight radiance.
“Leylin, where are you? With your strength, I’m sure you must be doing well wherever you are, right?” This beautiful director was naturally Celine.
When Leylin had left Twilight Zone, he had left behind a series of tricks, allowing Celine to take control of Nature’s Alliance academy for almost a century. She had also advanced to rank 2. However, the academy was now facing the largest crisis since its establishment!
The tide of darkness creatures had come forth once more! And in this wave, there were countless beast emperors that had mutated and reached rank 3!
That was not all. The gnomes and elves had now joined hands in rebellion and distanced themselves from the humans. They were now attacking in the north as well.
The defensive stronghold of the north, Potti City, had fallen under the cooperation of the three races, and two rank 2 professors from Nature’s Alliance had fallen as well.
“Director, we need to react to this, or Lord Banker will use this opportunity to create issues! The exchange between academies is
about to begin as well, and I’m afraid…” Concern was evident on this female Magus’ face.

After hearing this, the look of helplessness on Celine’s face grew more obvious. The immense pressure came not only from the outer world, but also the inner departments. Banker had initially been an ordinary professor of Nature’s Alliance, but he’d had a miraculous encounter and gained the inheritance of some ancient Magus. His strength had shot up, and had now entered rank 3! With power, he obviously desired the corresponding status. In Banker’s eyes, that would be Celine’s position.

Though he was fearful of Leylin, which meant Banker did not dare go too far, there were still countless Magi who sided with him. After all, Leylin had already disappeared for almost a century.
The passing of time could erase everything. More than a hundred years passed, and the number of Magi who could still remember the mighty Leylin were few and far between. If not for the longevity of Magi, the situation now would definitely be much more severe. Celine might even have been stripped of her position as director long ago.

But even now, things were far from good. Among the Magi in the entire Twilight Zone, Banker was the only rank 3, and thus he had a good reputation. He even tried to imitate Leylin, and wanted to crown himself as the Radiant Guardian, and even the emperor of all of mankind! His attempts, however, were futile.

Celine could distinctly see the ambition in Banker’s eyes, but could not stop him. Most of the academies in the other regions were already relying on Banker’s help. There was no doubt that he would exert pressure on Celine during the exchange between the academies, as well as the establishment of the allied armies.

‘How will I get through this one?’ Celine was at a loss. The tricks that Leylin had left her could only deal with rank 2 Magi at most. There were clearly limitations if used against a rank 3 Magus. The mere proof of Leylin’s existence would not be enough to
obstruct this Magus’ insatiable greed and ambition. Celine was very clear about this.
*Bang!* At this moment, the door of the office suddenly swung open, and a youthful Magus entered.
He had wine red eyes, and his long blue hair was not tied up, but instead cascaded down to his shoulders. There was a frightening power surrounding him.
“Lord… Lord Banker!” Another female Magus from before hurriedly rushed to salute him.
“Director! I bring good news. Doroy Snail Academy and Ray College have acceded to my request, and have agreed to rely mainly on us, Nature’s Alliance. They will elect the allied armies as the ruling party!”
Banker eyed Celine’s silhouette greedily.
Celine furrowed her brows, “Banker! Don’t you know that you have to knock before entering my office? Or do you no longer have the most basic of manners?”
“This place will soon undergo a change of hands anyway!” Banker seemed absolutely unrestrained.
“Have you considered my previous suggestion?”
“Impossible! Don’t you forget that I am Leylin’s wife!” Celine’s face flushed red.
“Indeed! A woman who has been abandoned in the Twilight Zone for more than a hundred years…” Banker shrugged his shoulders. He looked at the obsidian statue in the plaza, especially the radiance above it. A trace of restraining fear flashed distinctly in his eyes.
“When I become the leader of the allied armies, this statue will be destroyed! Only a statue of me, Banker, is qualified to stand tall here! The next few days will be your last chance, think about it carefully!” Banker walked out, but his voice still resounded in the room.
Not only was Celine regarded with tremendous prestige, the Magus
that Leylin left in her hands was controlled by the spirit. What was more crucial was that Leylin himself was still around. Although no one knew where he was, he was still alive, somewhere.

Banker was still rather afraid of his senior. If not for these apprehensions, he would have forcefully seized the position long ago.

Even so, Banker’s patience was rapidly wearing thin.

“What now, Director?” There was a hint of a sob in the female Magus’ voice.

“Let me think about it!” Worry was written across Celine’s face as she gazed at the statue of Leylin in the plaza. It might have been an illusion, but when she turned around, she felt as though the radiance above the statue seemed to have turned… brighter?

……

As the days passed by, numerous Magi rushed into the northern region unceasingly. Due to the underlying reason to deal with the other races, the exchange between the institutions was even more important.

The turbulent undercurrents in the subterranean world never stopped flowing. Not only were the human Magi plotting conspiracies of their own, the other races also played an extremely important role in the impending chaos.

In the vast yet solemn venue, the directors of all the academies were sitting around a long round table. They couldn’t help but turn their gaze towards the main seat in the centre.

The golden chair was adorned with many ornamental gems and appeared incomparably gorgeous. This seat was still vacant at present, but it could be inferred that only today’s victor would be able to occupy that spot and cry out his commands.

“President of Nature’s Alliance, Celine, and House Professor,
Banker, have arrived!” A voice sounded abruptly, making the numerous directors turn their gazes towards the entrance. Celine was there, dressed in a splendid ceremonial robe. She was accompanied by Banker. Banker was even walking in front of her. “That’s too much! He’s not even the director yet!” Will, who was seated amongst the spectators, secretly clenched his fist. He was brimming with rage at the thought of the director whom he had always admired being coerced into this. But as a mere official Magus, he had no way to confront a rank 3. This was a lesson he had learnt the hard way, through tears and blood. “Director Celine!” “Director Celine!” “Director Celine!” A few well-acquainted Magi profusely greeted her, but even more people gathered around Banker, just like stars revolving around the moon as they grouped around their revered leader. ‘These fellows!’ Celine was secretly angry. When Leylin was still around, these Magi who were now kissing up to Banker, were all itching to kneel at her feet to express their loyalty. Now, they were betraying her without the slightest hesitation. Even though she knew that the society of Magi followed the law of the jungle she couldn’t help but feel a tinge of discouragement. Just as she was walking towards the seat in the centre, another Magus obstructed her. “Wait a minute!” “What’s the matter, Director Barca?” Celine recognised him of course. This Magus was the president of Ray College, and had already been completely subdued by Banker. “This is the main seat, only the president of Nature’s Alliance Institution is qualified to sit here! Don’t tell me you’re trying to disobey him?” Celine raised her eyebrows. A greatly menacing air surrounded her. She was no longer the weak female Magus from before, but a formidable Magus who had undergone the trials of blood and fire, and had been promoted to rank 2!
The appearance of such an aura immediately weakened Barca’s imposing manner.

“Indeed! This conference should be hosted by the president of Nature’s Alliance Institution!” Banker walked out and the first sentence he uttered surprised Celine.

“Therefore, before the conference begins, I propose to first conduct the election for the president of Nature’s Alliance Institution!”

“You!” Celine was utterly enraged. The director of Nature’s Alliance had always been her, and that had never changed. Based on the traditions of Nature’s Alliance, only Celine’s disciples were qualified to succeed the institution. How could they choose the president based on an election?

However, Banker was now making use of this crucial moment, with the support of the other directors, to make Celine step down from office.

“That’s right! I am completely in favour of Banker’s suggestion. Besides, the strength of our lord Banker surpasses everyone else, and all of the Magi presents unanimously approve of his moral character. Thus, I recommend our lord, Banker!” President Barca raised his point immediately after some thought.

“That’s right! We stand by President Barca!”

“Well said!” Many Magi started to cause a din, especially a great many of the rank 2 professors from Nature’s Alliance Academy, who all stood behind Banker.

Only a handful of students and Magi who used to be controlled by Leylin stayed by Celine’s side.

“All of you…” Celine looked at the hostile Magi, and suddenly felt as though she was among a pack of wolves.

The green tint of greed glistened in the eyes of these Magi, seemingly waiting to tear her to shreds before devouring her.

“Look at that! The majority of the professors all support me! It seems that we don’t even need an election!”
No matter how self-restrained Banker was, he couldn’t help but be pleased with himself. He walked next to the main seat, and looked at Celine. “How about now? My suggestion from before still holds! I hope you won’t make a choice that will anger me!”

‘Among Magi, trickery and these tactics can only assist you, but ultimately it is one’s strength that is the deciding factor!’ Celine now understood why Leylin could abandon everything in the Twilight Zone, and resolutely go off in search of strength. But it seems that it was a little too late.

“All of you!” Celine raised her head, her voice suddenly filled with pride. “Have you forgotten the former Radiant Guardian? Once Leylin returns, he definitely will not let any of you get away with this!”

Celine’s voice was sharp. Most of the Magi present knew how savage Leylin could be, and couldn’t help but hesitate at this point. “Hmph! He’s just a rank 3 Magus all the same! If he dares come here, I will let him know who the ruler of the Twilight Zone is!”

Banker snorted coldly. Powerful undulations of a rank 3 Magus shook the place, and the illusion of holy light appeared behind him. “A forcefield with such energy intensity that is infinitely close to a domain? Perhaps it can even surpass Leylin!” The other Magi were all in awe.

That’s right! Leylin still existed, but it was not known if he would return to Twilight Zone. Banker, however, was a true blue rank 3 Magus! Even more importantly, merely relying on one’s reputation to make others cower in fear was not enough.

Thus, many Magi started saluting profusely to Banker, “Lord Banker, please assume the position of Director of Nature’s Alliance, and lead the allied armies!”

The voices rose to a clamour, and Celine, who was sandwiched in between, seemed incomparably pale.

“Hahaha…” Banker started laughing like a maniac. The dream he
had had for years has finally been fulfilled, and his heart was brimming with ecstasy. He could already see himself unifying the entire Twilight Zone, and the moment where he would become the supreme emperor!

Banker’s eyes twinkled and was about to take his place on the main seat. Right at this moment, strange changes started to occur.

“Is that so?” A black silhouette suddenly appeared, standing in Bank’s way. The mere eye contact they shared was enough to fill Banker with dread, as though he was meeting his nemesis.

Upon the sight of this figure, tears started to rush out of Celine’s eyes involuntarily.

“Who is he? Why do I find his appearance so familiar?” The many directors were dazed. It seemed that they knew all found him familiar, but couldn’t seem to recall his name.

“It’s the Radiant Guardian! The Radiant Guardian, Leylin Farlier!” Will, who was standing next to Celine, clenched his fist and shouted, his eyes aglow.

“Lord Leylin!” Following which, Iren, Gordius and the other elderly subordinates under Leylin’s previous command immediately bowed respectfully.

“It really is him!” The numerous Magi suddenly had a realisation. Didn’t this Magus look exactly the same as the obsidian statue in the plaza of Nature’s Alliance?
Leylin Farlier!
This name was a legend in Twilight Zone, a myth. His stories were passed down as legends, sang of in praise by numerous bards!
And now, this legend had once more appeared before their eyes.
“Quite a few interesting things seem to have happened in my absence.” Leylin looked around as he said this, and many directors took a few steps back in order, be they rank 1 Magi or rank 2. Finally, a rank 2 Magus could not take it anymore. He fell to his knees with a thud, and called out, “Master Leylin, please forgive me! I never wished to betray you, and was only forced by Banker.” As someone from the same generation as Leylin, this Magus named Akazawa knew well about him and his ruthless ways. This was why Leylin’s appearance frightened him, almost to the point of wetting his pants.
And just like that, as if via a domino effect, more and more Magi knelt, all their knees banging into the ground. Regardless of the effort Banker had put into establishing ties with them and threatening them, it was all a joke in front of Leylin..
“Didn’t you want me to come before? Well, I’m here now, what do you have to say?” Leylin glanced at Banker, almost not bothering to even talk to small fry like him. Banker realised the sarcasm in his tone immediately.
“Loke’s Shadow!” Banker’s face turned green for a moment, then
red before his fake domain spread out. Energy at rank 3 spread out, and a low-grade magic artifact twinkled in his hands. Banker unleashed his strongest attack with confidence, and dashed straight towards Leylin. He was very clear that Leylin’s appearance had ruined all his plans. He only had one hope now; he had to smash apart the myth with his own hands, to defeat Leylin! And he was confident in doing that, in his inheritance.

An enormous ‘domain’ opened up, pushing even many rank 2 Magi to the side. The ferocious and berserk force caused a change in the expressions of many Magi.

“What a commendable courage!” Leylin squinted his eyes slightly, and the piece of low-grade magic equipment in Banker’s hands shattered apart inch by inch. Following that was the fake domain, The rank 3 radiance was snuffed out, and a layer of ash grey stone appeared on the surface of Banker’s body. Within moments, he had become nothing more than a stone statue.

The surface of the statue captured the frantic look on Banker’s face perfectly. It was like a clown trying to run away, highly comical.

“Didn’t you want to be honoured, for your legacy to be passed down? Very well, this statue can be placed at the plaza of Nature’s Alliance, it’ll be a good contrast!” Leylin nodded, and the place fell into a dead silence. Many of the Magi present felt like they were dreaming.

What had they just seen? The strong rank 3 Banker had attacked Leylin at full force, but his opponent simply blinked his eyes and he’d turned into a statue. Even his soul had been annihilated! This Radiant Guardian was evidently quite a bit more terrifying than in the legends!

“What? Anyone else wants to interfere in the internal affairs of my Nature’s Alliance Academy?” Leylin looked around.
By this time, Barca and Banker’s other loyal followers had already had a bad premonition, and began to retreat one after the other. The lights of teleportation burst forth as well. Unfortunately, it was already too late.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Blood sprayed like fireworks as Barca and the rest combusted into bits and pieces, filling the whole sky. A scalding rain of morselized flesh fell onto the faces and shoulders of the Magi present on scene. However, not a single person dared to wipe anything off, forget stopping it.

‘The Radiant Guardian didn’t even move his hands, and there were no energy waves from spells at all. How did those rank 2 Magi…?’ Shocked to the extreme, the hearts of the Magi at the scene were already growing sluggish.

“N–No, no objections at all! Director Celine’s achievements are obvious to everyone!” They really did not dare to come forward again.

As for these rank 1s and 2s, Leylin could indeed easily kill a whole bunch of them with just a slight puff of air. He simply could not be bothered with people of their power anymore.

“Leylin!” Celine stepped forward, an excitement in her voice which surprised him.

Originally, he’d thought that after he left the power hungry Celine would not be eager at all for his return. But from what it seemed, the passage of time had instead made this woman think about his good points.

Leylin could not help but break into laughter. He directly sat in the host’s seat while Celine stood respectfully at one side.

The eyes of the other Magi who had supported Celine previously, like Iren, Gordius, Will, and the others, were all brimming with ecstasy.

They were mostly under Celine due to her having their spirit sources, and had no choice but to force themselves to support her.
Although this was the case, with Leylin’s reappearance, not only had things taken a new turn immediately, their efforts were even more than amply rewarded.
Leylin did not care about Iren and the others. Instead, he directed his gaze onto a young Magus. This brightly handsome Magus was actually the one who was the most supportive of Celine just now.
“This is Magus Will! A second generation student of Nature’s Alliance Academy. He has already advanced to become an official Magus and is a professor in the institution…” Celine rushed to introduce him to Leylin.
“Of course I know that…” Leylin smiled. As he looked at Will, he found his face familiar.
“Your mother, is she well?” Leylin suddenly asked.
“Hm? My mother?” In his heart, Will was extremely shocked. He did not know why Leylin suddenly asked such a question but he still answered, “My mother was just an acolyte, it’s been over 50 years since she passed away…”
“I see…” Leylin sighed with a rasp in his tone, “Time is the great enemy of all living creatures…”
“Lord Radiant Guardian, did you know my mother?” Will became excited. Ever since he was born, he had never seen his father. He heard from his mother that his father had gone to do something very important and righteous but never returned. Could it be…
Leylin’s question and Will’s answer had an extremely deep meaning. Not only the surrounding Magi, even Celine made a bad association. She looked at Leylin, and analysed Will. Her eyes reflected a thoughtful expression, and nobody knew what she was thinking.
If her conjecture was true, even if Will was a capable assistant, she would have to suppress him slightly in the future in secret. However, on the surface, they should appear to be more intimate.
If Leylin knew about Celine’s thoughts, he would definitely roll his
eyes ruthlessly. Even though time had passed, Celine was still that power hungry creature from before.

“We pay our respects to the Radiant Guardian! We hope the Lord will lead us to defeat the allied armies once again!”

By this time, Banker and his followers had all been annihilated. With the support of Leylin whose strength was unfathomable, what other choices did the attending Magi have? They immediately knelt down respectfully.

Although Banker and Celine had invited them as allies, in front of the fierce Leylin how would these Magi dare to act big? One after another, they began to label themselves as subordinates.

Leylin’s eyes scanned over them slightly, and, “You all disappoint me…” The very first sentence he spoke made the many kneeling Magi break out in such a fierce cold sweat that it drenched their clothes.

“The other tribes’ allied army has already reached the gate, and you’re still fighting for power over such a trivial thing.” Leylin shook his head, pity in his expression.

“Gate?” Celine covered her mouth and gasped in surprise.

“What?” The Magi below also began to clamour; this news was really too shocking.

“Why? You thought that those other tribes would wait quietly at Potti City?” A mocking smirk flashed across the corner of Leylin’s lips as he thought of an idea.

The Magi who were present suddenly felt an enormous force locking up their entire bodies. They were unable to use any sort of spells, and soon after they felt very dizzy as if the whole world was spinning.

When they came back to their senses, they had already left the venue as a group and were somewhere outdoors.

Opposite them, a group of dark elves, gnomes in mechanical suits, and even beast emperors were staring with wide open eyes,
surprised by their sudden appearance.
Celine’s eyes were filled with confusion for a moment, but she responded immediately after that. “This is... the mountainous region outside Nature’s Alliance, you all were indeed preparing a sneak attack!” Her limbs could not help but feel ice-cold.
In front of them were obviously the elites of the other races. Every one of them had strength at least equivalent to a rank 1 Magus, and there also quite a few rank 3 powerhouses. If they had taken the opportunity to launch an ambush while she was fighting Banker, it would certainly spell a great defeat for the humans of Twilight Zone. Forget the rest, even Nature’s Alliance Academy would not be able to protect itself. And after Banker died, the entirety of Twilight Zone... Celine didn’t dare to think further.
‘To be able to suppress all of us Magi instantly, and bring us here without any resistance, that means that if the Radiant Guardian wanted to, he wouldn’t need much effort to just eliminate us all....’
Contrary to Celine, the other Magi were instead shocked at the terrifying strength that Leylin had displayed.
Not only had he just killed Banker a few moments ago, but he had also transported this entire group. This had used just a small fraction of Leylin’s strength, and it left them without the slightest thought of resistance.
“Human Magi! You could actually see past our concealment?” A laughing voice spread out as the dark elves separated to expose a queen dressed in a golden robe.
This queen had an exquisite face, sharps ears, and the energy waves emitted from her body had impressively reached the rank 3 level.
After she came out a sturdy dwarf as well as a gnome steering a large machine walked out as well. Beside them, a few beast emperors that let loose terrifying howls.
“Rank 3! All rank 3 powerhouses!” Numerous Magi murmured
despondently.
Leave aside the legendary queen of the dark elves for now, it was unexpected for the tribes such as the dwarves and gnomes to produce rank 3s after a long period of suppression. Including the beast emperors, there were a total of six rank 3 powerhouses gathered here!
Since when has the strength of other tribes and the darkness creatures grown to such a point?” Celine bit her lips, blaming herself slightly and feeling a little remorseful.

Leylin’s rule had forced the other races in Twilight Zone to slavery, only to be exploited by human Magi. It was unexpected that in just a hundred years’ time, they had actually gotten powerful again.

If not for Leylin’s appearance today, even if the opponent hadn’t launched a sneak attack they could’ve won just based on this army that infiltrated their borders. It could practically wipe out all the human Magi.

After all, before this the humans had only one rank 3 Magus, Banker.

“Luckily, there’s still him!” Celine looked at Leylin’s silhouette, eyes filled with an unconcealable pride.

As Leylin looked at the beautiful ruler of dark elves, he could not help but let out a chuckle, “Alicia! I didn’t expect to see another familiar face. Not only have you advanced to rank 3, you’ve also become the queen of the dark elves. It’s truly worth congratulating!”

However, as this laughter echoed in the opposing queen’s ears, her entire body grew rigid. It was as if she had been struck by lightning.

The many humiliations that the owner of this voice had brought to
the dark elves immediately appeared in her mind, something that Alicia would never forget. Yes, this new ruler of the dark elves was impressively, Leylin’s old ‘friend’ the matriarch of dark elves, Alicia. Even that time, it was her who had surrendered to Leylin outside Potti City, personally offering the high-grade meditation technique of the dark elves and their piece of magic equipment. “You’re Leylin! Leylin Farlier!” The opposing queen directed her gaze that was on Celine towards Leylin, gritting her teeth. When Leylin restrained himself, he seemed just like an ordinary person, and it made the other rank 3s overlook him. But with Leylin speaking, a sort of confidence that came from a control of the overall situation emerged from him, making him seem outstanding and superior. “It’s him! The humans’ Radiant Guardian!” “I’ve seen his portrait before, I’m definitely not wrong!” One after another, the other races exploded with rage. The fear that Leylin instilled in them was etched deeply. “Mass murderer! Butcher! Leylin Farlier, repay my father’s and the other tribes’ hatred with your blood!” The sturdy dwarf ruler jumped out, a hammer in hand which seemed to be made of thunder. “Oh! I remember now, you’re that lucky survivor from the dwarf royal family right? The little rascal who hid in the corner of the palace, not daring to move at that time…” Leylin patted his head with an amiable sense of familiarity. Yet, this expression and his words had instead caused the dwarf to instantly fly into a rage. Leylin was not bothered by him. He turned his attention to the gnome steering the large robot, “Hm… a mechanical colossus… You gnomes have managed to create another one? The craftsmanship has improved as well, and the problem of low
battery has been solved as well!”
“Sir Leylin’s knowledge really leaves me in awe for life. Furthermore, if you hadn’t seized our most precious gnome’s book at that time, I believe we could still have sat down happily for a chat…” The one controlling the frightening colossus was an old, senile gnome whose hands were covered with all sorts of scars and burns.
“Oh, there’s also rank 3 beast emperors,” Leylin looked at the three mountainous darkness creatures at the side, “This is great!”
“What’s great? Is he mad?”
“Even if he is the former Radiant Guardian, for a rank 3 to think of fighting us all together is too arrogant of him…” Many of the tribes began to clamour.
Alicia, on the other hand, was different. People like her had seen how terrifying Leylin could be, and they had a bad premonition instead.
Even if she had advanced to rank 3, the fear she held towards Leylin had once more surfaced from deep in her memories after she saw him in person.
On top of that, he had such a confident expression and there was an enigmatic aura on his body…
Alicia’s expression changed several times, and at last, she kneeled in front of Leylin before the widened eyes of the many Magi and tribes, “Alicia greets the Lord, the Radiant Guardian! Please forgive my tribe’s mistake this time!”
“Grand Matriarch! How can we just let them go like that?”
“Is the humiliation that the humans have already brought us not enough? How can we simply grovel at their feet like that?” Even before Alicia’s allies spoke, the matriarch under her caused an uproar.
“Enough! I am the Grand Matriarch of the dark elves. I will take responsibility for this matter alone!” Alicia responded coldly.
“Haha… Good! Alicia! I admire your ability to have a clear view of things!” Leylin clapped and laughed heartily.

*Roar!* Seeing that something seemed amiss, a small black elephant, one of the beast emperors with large fleshy wings on its back started howling in tandem with a two-headed leopard. Both of them pounced towards Leylin. A terrifying power beyond the normal rank 3 level caused the earth to tremble.

At the same time, a beast emperor in the form of a large blue ape secretly slipped away from behind.

The movements of a few emperor darkness creatures seemed to trigger some sort of chain reaction; the tribes at the opposite side had join forces to attack Leylin together. Ignoring the indecisive dark elves and Alicia who was still kneeling, the dwarf ruler threw the large hammer in his hands with a howl, and terrifying blue thunderbolts swept across the area. The colossus, too, created a roaring sound that caused many rank 2 Magi to retreat with pale faces.

These tribes were attacking with a common target in mind, Leylin! Four rank 3 attackers led the charge! On top of that were a whole group of fighters that were as strong as rank 1 and 2 Magi, many of them using treasures. Such an attack would leave even Crystal Phase Magi seriously injured as they fled.

In the face of this earth-shattering attack, Leylin’s kept an unchanging expression, chuckling as he spoke, “Do you know why I said this is great just now? It’s because, with all of you gathered together, I don’t have to go through the effort of going to your lairs to finish you off one by one!”

Immediately, a terrifyingly strong energy wave burst forth from his body. A starry domain expanded, engulfing the entire area within it. Many energies were snuffed out in an instant, and all of the energy attacks within the Morning Star domain had completely dissipated, exposing the silhouettes of the foreign races, all of them at a loss.
All Leylin had done was release the power of his domain, and the joint attack of the many tribes had been nulled completely! Surging waves! Surging waves of disbelief and fear rolled in their hearts!

All the Magi who had been worried about Leylin just now were stunned. Seeing the tribes’ combined attack, they’d thought nothing could surpass that amount of power. However, the moment Leylin made his move was the moment they realised that what they’d been looking at was like the glow of a firefly in the night. Although such a glow was visible in the dark, once the sun came up, they would disappear without a trace.

The frightening aura being emitted from Leylin’s body was so powerful that these Magi could not help but kneel down, not daring to harbour any other thoughts at all.

“Such strength?” Will stood behind Leylin, but he could not help but kneel either. He only felt that the Leylin now was entirely different from before. He was like the sun, moon and stars in the sky, up high and eternal.

“This… this is the domain that belongs to a Morning Star!” Celine murmured, her tears spilling out helplessly. She finally understood the magnitude of the opportunity she had lost at that time, and that she could never get it back.

*Ka-cha!* As if hitting emergency brakes, the elephant and the two-headed leopard suddenly stopped. They retreated with even greater speed, their bodies bursting forth with blood-red light. Their massive bodies rapidly grew emaciated, making it obvious that they had utilised some secret technique which exhausted a lot of energy.

“Still want to escape?” Leylin shook his head.

Two gigantic, yellowish-brown palms extended from the ground with a sudden boom, grasping the two beast emperors within. The sound of bones shattering could be heard, and be it physical attacks
or magical attacks the two could not leave a scratch on the palms.
The two beast emperors looked at Leylin, an obvious plea in their eyes.
“You’re quite smart, even comparable to ordinary humans!” Leylin gasped slightly in admiration, but the pair of gigantic hands suddenly exerted a bit of force.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Following two loud sounds, the two rank 3 beast emperors had been pinched so hard they exploded.
“Ra– Rank 4! You’ve already advanced to rank 4. You’re a Morning Star Magus!” A voice like that of a dead man echoed from within the throat of the gnome inside the colossus.
Morning Star!
The crowd was sluggish for a moment, unable to react instantly. Only after a while did they suddenly realise what that meant. Indeed, only a Morning Star Magus would be able to withstand the attacks of the numerous tribes without changing his expression, and even slaughter two beast emperors with just a light touch.
It was just that this happy news for the human Magi was a total tragedy for the tribes!
What did a Morning Star represent? In Twilight Zone, such a person was invincible! And with Leylin’s youth, these tribes would probably have to be enslaved for thousands of years.
This was still fortunate. If Leylin wanted to hold them responsible for their rebellion, their entire race would probably go extinct! A Morning Star’s anger was exactly that terrifying.
The large hammer-shaped magic artifact in the dwarven ruler’s hands fell to the ground with a bang, and two streaks of blood flowed down from his eyes. Although many of the tribes had been stripped of all their abilities in the Morning Star field and were lying limp on the ground like dead dogs, he was still barely able to stand, “Oh, Fate! Why are you so unjust, even allowing that murderer to become a Morning Star in the sky? And for us of the
other tribes, there’s only suffering?” Pearls of blood flowed down his eyes with each word he spoke. And just as his resentful questions ended, the radiance in the dwarven ruler’s eyes dimmed. He was dead. “There’s still one more!” Leylin stretched out his hand and grabbed the air, and it was as if a huge hand appeared out of nowhere and a large blue ape was captured. Once the large blue ape fell onto the ground with a bang, it kowtowed to Leylin repeatedly, continuously begging for forgiveness.
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There were a total of three beast emperors who had snuck in to launch the surprise attack.

This giant blue ape was obviously a lot more intelligent than its two companions, and from the very beginning, it had planned to escape, secretly heading to the edges of the battlefield. Seeing Leylin extending his Morning Star domain, it ran even harder without regard for its life.

It was a pity that little ruses like these were akin to jokes in front of a Morning Star.

“Blood Extraction!” Crimson light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, giving the giant ape a feeling that catastrophe was coming. However, under the suppression of the Morning Star domain, it could not resist.

Blood dripped from its pores, quickly taking form in Leylin’s hands. With the loss of such large amounts of blood, the ape’s aura grew increasingly weak, and its howls of pain gradually turned into whines.

*Thud!* A withered corpse fell to the ground, turning into multiple pieces of dried meat with no nutrition.

[Beep! The weak aura of an ancient bloodline has been discovered. The source has been determined to be the Water Monkey.] The A.I. Chip quickly prompted.

“Oh? Not bad! No wonder it’s much smarter than the rest of the darkness creatures.” Leylin glanced at the scarlet and crimson
intertwined with a trace of blue, and stowed it away. The terrifying Blood Extraction was still kept up, but the bloodline crystals being formed weren’t nearly worth Leylin taking them. He tossed them to Celine, Will, and the others, and they stowed them away like they were treasures.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Their blood having been drawn out, the beings of the other races fell to the ground, dried out. No matter how powerful they were, they were but ants in the face of a Morning Star domain. In just a few breaths, most of them had disappeared, and all that was left was a bunch of fragmented corpses. The essence of their bodies had already been taken away with their blood, and their bodies now held less nutrition than even the soil. They would soon crumble apart.

After Leylin withdrew his Morning Star domain, the human Magi had realised that besides Alicia and a few other matriarchs who were kneeling, all members of the other races, as well as the indecisive dark elves, had been eliminated. In a single move, countless rank 3 rulers and a hundred years of accumulated power had gone up in a wisp! Many Magi almost fainted as if they were in a nightmare.

……

In the snow-white passageway, Leylin had his hands behind his back, surveying the surroundings with interest. Celine followed behind him, constantly giving him reports.

“All the academies have sworn their allegiance to us once more and are willing to listen to the commands of Nature’s Alliance. The allied armies of the other races have been completely exterminated. Congratulations, the whole of Twilight Zone is now under you once again!”

“Oh!” Leylin agreed with a sound, eyes still sizing up the ice on the walls, as if all of Twilight Zone was not as important as this piece
of ice. Seeing him act this way, Celine could not help but sigh inside. If this was in the past, she would have grown ecstatic due to the power she had been given. Now, however, her previous experiences had dulled her thirst for power. She simply tucked her hair behind her head and continued making the report. “Our armies have already broken through the dwarves’ palace and mechanical capital of the gnomes. All of them had enslaved.”

The terror of a Morning Star was immense. After Leylin was done showing off his power, the other races had learnt the meaning of overwhelming despair. Though conspiring together had raised their strength to a certain extent, nothing could be done about a disparity as wide as the distance between the heavens and the earth. Hence, the humans had quickly unified the area, and it was all under Leylin. The foreign races, who had lost many powerful commanders, could not resist the humans’ attacks at all.

“Also, at the dark elves’ side, the Grand Matriarch has already retreated to their original territory, and is willing to sign a firm contract that the dark elves will be the humans’ vassals and servants for all eternity.”

This kind of agreement that affected the whole elven race was very harsh. If violated, the backlash could cause the entire race to be killed. Hence, this was just secondary to being exterminated. The last time, Leylin had merely forced them to escape to the edges of Twilight Zone, and they had to offer tributes every once in a while. There had not been any pledges like this. Now, with the deaths of the dwarves and gnomes, even this was quite a good choice for them.

“Alicia is quite tactful!” Leylin laughed, but that only caused Celine
to grow jealous as she felt an impending crisis.
Walking through the icy tunnels, Leylin and Celine came before a rift where large amounts of chilling winds surged out, even having attacks from icy blades and the like.
*Buzz!* A green defensive layer appeared on Celine’s body, but could not withstand the corrosion of the ice. Her expression changed. The cold winds of the cave were something even rank 2 Magi could not resist!
Just as Celine felt the chill about to enter her body, Leylin finally made his move. Black flames formed a wall of fire in front of them and kept the cold outside.
“When did this area become like this?” Leylin sized up the cave, looking grim. This was the entrance to the Icy Cave, but its appearance had changed drastically. Terrifyingly chilly storms surged within, so cold that even rank 2 Magi could not hold on for long. Things like having acolytes practising inside was naturally not possible anymore.
“87 years ago, the storms inside the Icy Cave grew increasingly violent. First, the acolytes could not take it anymore, and after that, even the guard Magi had no choice to leave and abandon this area.” Celine watched the Icy Cave, feeling as if she was seeing an ancient monster opening its mouth ferociously. She could not help but hide behind Leylin.
“Based on the scanning by our academy, the icy caves’ icy radiation has already reached dragon-grade! Even rank 3s cannot enter the place anymore…”
“Mm!” Leylin nodded. He had long since found that there was an even larger world of ice under the Icy Cave, a world stemming from the radiation caused by the blood of the female bronze giant from the Icy World. This miniature version of the Icy World was vast and full of dangers, a place even he would not have entered at rank 3.
And by the looks of it, this world of ice was growing larger.  
“The blood of a being that has grasped laws is this powerful even after death!” Leylin sighed ruefully, his eyes emitting blue rays as he peered through the darkness of the caves and into its depths.  
“Leylin, you— you want to go down?” Celine asked from the side in concern.  
“Yes, there’s something I want to retrieve from there!” Leylin nodded. There was no harm in admitting this. He feared nobody in Twilight Zone. Even if all the Magi here teamed up with all the members of the other races to oppose him, they could be taken care of with a single Morning Star Arcane Art.  
“Be careful!” Celine bit her lips. Leylin had not shown a whit of interest in anything in Twilight Zone after his return. The only thing he’d done was take care of the attack by the other races.  
She felt like Leylin had returned just for the Icy Cave, and would leave once more soon enough.  
Even so, what could she do? She watched as his figure disappeared into the Icy Cave with a complicated expression. She couldn’t even handle the chilly gusts, so how was she to catch up to his footsteps? She could only sigh.  
“Is the difference between me and Leylin already so huge?” In that moment, Celine was disappointed and frustrated.  
With the howling of the winds from both sides, Leylin no longer bothered with Celine. He had only helped out with Twilight Zone because he’d encountered it on his way. If not, even if the entire Twilight Zone was placed in front of him, he probably wouldn’t really care.  
Twilight Zone really was too barren for a Morning Star. It held nothing valuable other than its large lands.  
Leylin had only one goal in coming here, and that was the world of ice!  
At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded out. [Beep!
Ambient temperatures dropping rapidly. Activating real time detection. [Current temperature: 173 Kelvin... 123 Kelvin...] The number in the field indicating temperature dropped continuously, eventually even dropping below absolute zero! Terrifying cold covered the area, and even spacetime seemed to freeze over. The place was bathed in blue light.

“As expected, one can’t use common sense from my previous world here. Even the physical constants have changed...” Leylin’s body had been wrapped up in black flames, like being covered in an armour of flames.

The ground he was walking on was blue, the rigid ice as glossy as a mirror and yet surpassing even many magic alloys in terms of hardness.

The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded again. [Beep! Detected icy radiation. 69% similar to radiation in database from the Icy Jade Scorpion. Strength multiplier is 178.6.]

“The world of ice has already expanded to this point?” Leylin was shocked.

In the meanwhile, he looked at the topographic map that had been stored inside the A.I. Chip’s database. It was evident that the terrain of the Icy Cave was similar to before, but the surface now had a much firmer layer of blue ice on top, and many creatures had been affected.

*Chik chik...* Not far away, a being called out, and the A.I. Chip immediately sent a reading. Leylin’s expression changed as he walked over.

In front of him now was a creature he was very familiar with, an Icy Jade Scorpion!

Compared with the elite Icy Jade Scorpion he had seen before, what appeared in front of Leylin was several times larger, and the strength of its energy had reached rank 2! Even the female face on its back seemed more vivid.
“Has the radiation from the blood of a creature that comprehended laws begun to affect even physical growth?” Leylin grew serious.
The foraging Icy Jade Scorpion saw Leylin, and immediately lifted its two giant claws. The stinger of the large beast swayed as it positioned itself, ready to attack.

“Good timing!” Leylin laughed at the sight, and a fiery shadow appeared on the back of the Icy Jade Scorpion.

*Chik chik!* The scorpion tried to struggle, but a palm with a terrifying energy and intent covered its head. The intent in the palm immediately smashed apart all resistance, and the large Icy Jade Scorpion crouched down. From this person’s body, it seemed to feel a familiar and amiable energy that belonged to an emperor.

“Let’s go!” Leylin commanded, and the Icy Jade Scorpion immediately stood up, carrying Leylin on its back and running ahead...

In the frosty world of ice, a green figure carried a black dot on its back as it moved forward at an extreme speed.

It had to be said that in this underground version of the Icy World, Icy Jade Scorpions were very useful tools for transportation. Not only did they have a high tolerance for icy radiation, their limbs were like hooks, every step digging holes in the steel-like icy ground. It did not slip at all.

The large Icy Jade Scorpion was intimidating and could avoid a lot of little inconveniences. At the very least, regular beings of the
world of ice would not dare provoke it.
“Here! This is the limits of the map Celine gave me before.”
*Thud!* A large green figure jumped up and fell on the ground, its pincers sweeping across and opening a hole in the wall, revealing deep pathways inside that had obviously been altered with time.
Watching them Leylin’s eyes filled with pity. At that time, he had brazenly captured a bunch of Icy Jade Scorpions to treat the emotional instability stemming from his bloodline.
‘The icy radiation has been strengthened, and the Icy Jade Scorpions have mutated. I wonder if there’s anything now that can heal the emotional instability at Morning Star?’ Leylin thought as he touched his skin. Then, he had only used a peak rank 1 Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor to suppress his emotional instability until he became a Morning Star.
Now, even the regular Icy Jade Scorpions had strength equivalent to a rank 2 Magus, so the Icy Breath of a rank 3 elite or emperor would definitely be effective at dealing with the emotional instability of Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks at the Morning Star realm.
This was especially true for Leylin. The A.I. Chip managed to deduce that the Icy Breath of an Icy Jade Scorpion was very suitable for his Warlock physique, and therefore he would have no more issues in that aspect.
‘After I extract the bloodline of the female bronze giant, the world of ice underground will probably collapse due to losing the icy radiation. I should capture an Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor.
‘Of course, things don’t need to be so complicated! The bloodline of the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor comes from the Scorpion Man, and as long as I obtain his remains, the effects will definitely be better than from regular emperors. Perhaps it could solve the issue permanently…’
“Let’s go!”
The laboratory was completely empty. When Leylin left previously, he had brought everything inside with him. Now, he was only here to determine the coordinates. After a brief moment recalling it, Leylin patted the head if the Icy Jade Scorpion under him. *Chik chik…* The large Icy Jade Scorpion whined as it brought Leylin into the depths of the world of ice. This place was out of the bounds of the map he possessed and had many dead ends filled with unknown mysteries. Of course, there was also danger! *Whoosh…* The chilly gale howled as it accompanied the Icy Jade Scorpion deeper in, the surrounding temperatures lowering continuously. The ferocious icy radiation became even more violent. A green luster began to form on the shell of the Icy Jade Scorpion; even it was starting to find it difficult to withstand the temperature. The tremendous darkness completely shrouded the region, and only the green light from the Icy Jade Scorpion’s body could light up the path ahead. Pairs of large eyes were filled with bloodthirst and greed as they appeared around Leylin like flames hidden in the night. *Chik chik…* The large Icy Jade Scorpion did not really want to move forward anymore. It was merely a rank 2 creature, and while it was considered powerful in Twilight Zone, it was nothing in the world of ice that was deep within. Any of the creatures shrouded in the darkness could capture and kill it easily. Normally, the Icy Jade Scorpion would scurry away in retreat, but right now it was quite confident. It was not alone now, and its owner possessed a terrifying power! “Rank 2 and 3 creatures?” Leylin, who was sitting on the Icy Jade Scorpion’s back, suddenly laughed.
Though these creatures didn’t seem like much to him, they would definitely be a disaster for the Twilight Zone if they ever left the Icy Cave.

Rank 2 Magi were already considered powerful in Twilight Zone, while rank 3s were rulers. If they were to see the world of ice, this miniature version of the Icy World, their eyes would probably fall out of their sockets.

“Even Celine probably doesn’t know how dangerous the interior of the Icy Cave is.” Leylin shook his head, the void behind him distorting and exerting a terrifying pressure. The phantom of a terrifying snake that was tens of thousands of metres long came into view, producing loud snarls.

Winds surged, bringing with them the might of an ancient being at the top of the food chain as they spread in all directions. The spying eyes were immediately filled with fear, and the sounds of footsteps and bumping sounded. Large numbers of eyes quickly retreated, bloody battles occurring in the darkness just for the escape route. Explosions and shrieks of horror sounded everywhere.

No matter how intense these battles were, none of the icy creatures dared take another glimpse in Leylin’s direction.

“You useless thing!” Leylin was annoyed at the incompetence of the Icy Jade Scorpion under him. It had lain on the ground the moment the Giant Kemoyin Serpent figure appeared, and would not get up no matter how he shouted at it.

*Hss…* The large Kemoyin Serpent phantom lowered its head and looked at the little green thing that could pass between the gaps in its teeth. It opened its mouth threateningly, revealing a crimson tongue and fierce teeth that were like little hills.

*Chik chik! Chik chik!* The Icy Jade Scorpion that had been lying on the ground suddenly got up, and began to run like lightning. Strong winds constantly blew at Leylin’s ears, and he didn’t know
whether to laugh or cry. “This scorpion is really…” Explosions boomed as a large amount of icy rocks flew into the sky. A layer of ice broke from the top, and a large scorpion that was carrying a black figure jumped through the hole and landed firmly on the ground.

“Hah… Here!” Leylin led the Icy Jade Scorpion to higher ground, looking over the surroundings.

This was a world of ice! Ice and snow covered the place, leading the ground to sparkle. Even the hills and rivers were made of ice! The vegetation that was spread around the area was covered with frost as well. Flowers bloomed and trees bore fruit, all with a terrifying chill.

Things that looked like ribbons hung from large trees, with eyeballs that looked like longans on them, emitting a blue lustre.

‘This scene is so similar to the Icy World in the Scorpion Man’s memories!’ Leylin touched his chin, and a powerful soul force scanned over a large area.

The beings within hundreds of kilometers seemed to have met their natural predator. Whether it was the mountainous icy monsters or the tiny snowflake bugs, everything fell to the ground, trembling.

After a long moment, Leylin opened his eyes once more.

“Just from what I’m able to see, this place is already more than a tenth of the size of Twilight Zone. Could this be the second layer to the subterranean world?” There was naturally more than just one layer underneath the Magus World. It was rumoured that there were seven layers that the ancient Magi had taken over, and the further one went the more dangerous it was. There were even existences like Matriarch of the Abyss.

Of course, the resources there were more plentiful as well. They could be called places where risk met reward.

Twilight Zone was merely in the first layer, and it was quite a normal place. It was only a region which was isolated from the
external world.
‘No, that’s not right! The distance is far too small, it can’t be the second layer. It should be in the empty space between the first two layers instead…’ Leylin stroked his chin.
‘When the Scorpion Man fell through the spatial rifts that popped up during that ancient battle, he was transported here. The continuous radiation from the blood of the female bronze giant had transformed this area until it grew similar to the Icy World. It even included the formation of a large number of creatures of the ice.’
Leylin’s expression turned solemn. Existences like these that had stepped across the two-thirds of realms and entered rank 7 were the most troublesome, as they had grasped laws.
Just a droplet of fresh blood from the original body had such a powerful effect. How powerful would the original body have been?
“With such a large area, I wouldn’t find it strange even if I found icy beings of the Morning Star level…” Leylin sighed. The Morning Star realm was a threshold, and if there were Morning Star icy beings here, the difficulty in exploring this place would increase severalfold.
To be direct, if Leylin had come here when he was rank 3, he would definitely have died. Even after he’d advanced to Morning Star, he might not have been able to completely unravel the mysteries of the Icy World.
Of course, Leylin was no longer the same as before. He had improved through his excursions to both the Lava World and Sky City. His true strength now far surpassed the Morning Star realm, and he could even rival Radiant Moons!
Hence, after entering the Icy World, he could use his soul force and probe the area without fear of inadvertently alerting any enemy. Power was enough to pulverise all conspiracies.
‘From the reaction to my soul force just now, the life undulations from here are the strongest!’ Leylin patted the Icy Jade Scorpion
that was now seated, and it immediately budged. Jade green limbs began to move with rhythm, each step carrying them a good distance as it crawled in the direction Leylin pointed.
When the formidable soul force of a peak Morning Star, which could even rival a Radiant Moon, swept across the area, the entire world of ice started to bubble with activity.

The power of a rank 4 was something that a great many of the icy beasts could not resist. When Leylin’s soul force swept over, they could only lower their heads to express their humility, hoping that they wouldn’t anger the owner of this soul force.

The energy of a Morning Star, however, also awakened other presences.

In the depths of a castle constructed completely with ice, the frost radiation was so rich that it had hit its limit. Colourful streams of light could even be seen twinkling continuously in the air.

“Arwen!” A cold voice resonated in thin air. Although there was no radiation of energy, it could make the surrounding space tremble faintly.

“Your Majesty, your most loyal servant Arwen is here!” An elderly man dressed in the clothes of a butler walked out of thin air and kneeled towards the source of the voice. He looked incomparably respectful. This man’s hair was combed so neatly that not a single strand was out of place, yet his eyes shone with a strange crimson radiance.

His skin was eerily fair, exposing translucent green veins and red arteries.
“Did you sense it?” The female voice asked. 
“Yes! A foreign Morning Star has arrived in your territory!” The old man spoke with respect. He was able to sense that Leylin’s soul force was different, which had to be of Morning Star rank at the very least!
“A foreign Morning Star is very important to my evolution. Go! Capture him and bring him to me!” the female voice said. 
“Your wish is my command!” The old man accepted his orders respectfully and retreated. 
It was when he got up that an abnormality appeared. While the top half of his body had the appearance of a human, the bottom half strangely took the form of a scorpion.
When the butler left, the entire icy castle immediately started to rouse from its slumber like a lion and went into operations.
“All of you, go! Immediately send out a signal once you discover an unfamiliar strong intruder!” The butler, Arwen, stood on top of the tall castle, his voice spreading to every corner below.
As he overlooked everything, large amounts of icy giants in armour started to roar, circular icy shields and blue spears in hand. 
The huge door of the icy castle creaked open, and squadrons of icy giants headed out just like human patrol teams. They disappeared into a flurry of snow as far as the eye could see in minutes.
Only Arwen was left standing alone at the highest point of the castle, his thoughts a mystery.
Leylin, of course, had no idea about what was happening there. However, he had already mentally prepared himself after displaying his soul force. Thus, with the icy scorpion under his control, he hurried towards the place nearby where the life aura was the most concentrated.
The Icy Cave that Nature’s Alliance controlled previously was only a passageway. It was here that the real world of ice lay…
The humongous icy scorpion galloped wildly across the ice plains
with Leylin on its back. Leylin sat cross-legged, dispatching a few shadow servants in his tracks from time to time to pick a few fruits as well as botanical stems, leaves and the such.

He was now examining a fruit that looked like an apple, his eyes aglow.

[Beep! Unknown fruit detected, composition has been recorded. Please give it a name!] The A.I. Chip responded faithfully.


[Recorded. Graphic and composition have been recorded under Icy World data, subject: Botany.]

“Mm,” Leylin nodded. The apple in his hand was covered with a layer of blue ice. Using his fingernail, he swiftly sliced a piece and popped it in his mouth.

It felt like a piece of ice, no, a sensation even colder than that of ice spread in his mouth. If it was any normal human, a mere touch would perhaps freeze them to death, forget consuming it! Yet, Leylin who had a vitality of above 100 was already immune to most of the dangers in the world of ice. Hence, to him, it was as cold as ice cream was for an average person.

“Tastes pretty good, just that it’s a little too sweet.” Leylin had little interest and threw the frozen apple in his hand to the Icy Scorpion.

*Chik chik!* The Icy Scorpion whined excitedly and swallowed the frozen apple in one bite. After arriving here, it seemed to have become more lively. Leylin watched this while lost in thought.

‘Judging by the number of rank 3 spies and guardians at the passageway previously, the Icy Jade Scorpion wouldn’t have made it here if it came alone…’ Leylin raised his head and took a look at the world of ice. “The icy radiation here is even more terrifyingly concentrated; maybe if we stay for a while more, this Icy Jade Scorpion will be able to evolve to a higher level…”

Since the world of ice was born from the blood of the female bronze giant, the icy radiation would grow more powerful the
closer one was to the source. 
As long as he searched for the place on the basis of this rule, all conspiracies and methods of concealment would be rendered useless. 
Moreover, Leylin discovered that more icy creatures gathered at the places with more icy radiation. They seemed to serve as a form of all-around protection. 
“Hmm... The source of the radiation... there’s a Morning Star there, but there’s also an even stranger aura...” Leylin furrowed his brows. Initially, though the aura was very weak, it felt exceptionally dangerous, hence he did not dare to act rashly.
“They should have discovered me already. I wonder how they will deal with me?” The corners of Leylin’s lips curled into a faint smile. At this moment, the huge Icy Scorpion had broken through an ice tornado, and it arrived opposite an ice canyon. 
Enormous icicles littered the place, layering on top of each other to form a fortified hill village. There were even a few icy creatures patrolling above. 
“Intelligent icy beings?” Leylin exclaimed, and then he urged the Icy Scorpion to head towards it. 
“Stand still, intruder! If not, you will suffer from the combined attack of the Aufker Canyon!” The guards on the fort had long discovered Leylin, and hence began to yell at him. 
With his astonishing vitality came powerful vision; it allowed Leylin to clearly spot the creatures in the canyon in a split second. 
They both belonged to entirely different species. One was a giant more than three metres tall with icy-blue skin, patterned with ice elemental runes. It was covered in a layer of frost. 
These giants had boorish facial features, and the harsh lines across their faces emphasised their manliness, a distinctive feature of male creatures. 
The other type was an elegant snow fairy with translucent wings
and a slim figure. Large amounts of ice energy particles condensed around them, much like a miniature tornado. Most of these fairies were very pretty, and they were likely all female.

‘Wait, are these the two genders of the same race? The frost giant males being exceedingly strong in terms of physical strength and defensive capabilities, and the snow fairy females that specialise in ice element spells?’

Leylin noticed one other thing as he made his conjecture. He understood their language, and this was because it was some variant of the ancient Byron language.

Seeing that their language was centered around the Byron language, it seemed like the influence that the Magus World had on the Icy World had was not small.

“I am a foreign Magus, and I wish to see your leader!” Leylin made the Icy Scorpion stop in front of the village, and slowly started to speak. Although his voice was not very loud, it was somehow transmitted far away.

There was some movement, and soon after, a few frost giants came running down.

Leylin seemed to be waiting quietly, but he was actually using the A.I. Chip to scan for information and statistics on these intelligent icy creatures.

[Frost Giant (unnamed) Strength: 50.9, Agility: 10.1, Vitality: 40.1, Spiritual force: 80, Innate skill: 1) Frost Skin: The skin of the frost giant has extremely high resistance towards frost radiation, which may even cause the natural formation of a spell rune. It is an important material in the manufacture of some frost magic weapons. 2) Freeze Rebirth: Its astonishing vitality gives the frost giant terrifying recovering powers. In the Icy World, if increased by two energy levels, such recovering powers may even achieve the effect of regrowth of broken limbs!] [Snow Fairy (unnamed) Strength: 10.3, Agility: 37.6, Vitality: 20.5, Spirit: 157.3, Magic
Power: 157, Innate skill: 1) Frost Attraction: Snow fairies have a natural affinity for ice energy particles, and may produce innate ice spells following advancements in rank. 2) Ice Tornado: The rich ice energy particles provide extremely strong defence for snow fairies. They automatically generate an ice tornado for protection, that has a similar effect to the Magi’s Defiant Ring of Flame.

He randomly drew data from two of them, and the A.I. Chip immediately displayed specific statistics on the targets. The current A.I. Chip could get information about even those in the Morning Star realm without their knowledge. These members of this race were only at rank 1 or 2, and would not be able to detect it at all.

“Indeed, these two races, which have such glaring differences in body size, are in fact just two forms of the same race!” Leylin gasped secretly. The work of nature, and the mysterious majesty of the other worlds, all contributed to his strong thirst for knowledge.

They didn’t make him wait for long. In practically a few minutes, the gigantic ice doors opened with a rumble. Squadrons of frost knights riding on huge icy monsters came forth. These riders were all frost giants, and they were seated on all kinds of monsters, all with strange, unique appearances. There were wolves, bears, cheetahs and other forms, but they were all covered in blue frost. It was as though humongous ice sculptures were roaring at Leylin with deep voices.

In the centre of the riders’ formation were many snow fairies who had rich concentrations of ice energy particles swirling around them. They stood guard around a double-headed creature.

This creature examined Leylin, and although its eyes revealed a trace of bewilderment, it still spread open its arms, “I am the leader here, Yamos Andre. Welcome, guest from a foreign place!”

Leylin sized up this leader. He was flabbergasted but instantly restrained himself.
The leader of the Arctic Tribe who had appeared in front of Leylin was an impressive double-headed creature. Not only that, its body shared characteristics unique to both the frost giants and snow fairies. A blue radiance flashed in Leylin’s eyes for a moment, unbeknownst to the leader opposite him. A three-dimensional hologram formed in Leylin’s mind, projecting information on this creature.

It was almost three metres tall and had a sturdy yet well-proportioned body, a pair of beautiful translucent wings on its back. What was special was that above its shoulder were two heads, one of a frost giant and another of a snow fairy. They both looked somewhat aged.

The A.I. Chip displayed the rest of the statistics at lightning speed.

1) Twins: A fully grown member of the Arctic Tribe integrates the features of both the frost giant and the snow fairy. It has two hearts and two sets of body organs, and thus they two lives. They can recover from any attack that does not completely devastate the body, and also make up for a deficiency in vitality in their other halves.
2) Frost Skin: The Arctic Tribe’s skin has extremely high resistance
to icy radiation, and will even cause the natural formation of a spell rune, which is an important material in the manufacture of certain frost magic weapons.

3) Frost Affinity: The Arctic Tribe possesses an affinity for ice that surpasses that of the snow fairy, and has the ability to produce innate ice spells following advancements in rank.

4) Ice Tornado: The rich ice energy particles provide extremely strong defence for the Arctic Tribe. They automatically generate an ice tornado for protection, that has a similar effect to the Magi’s Defiant Ring of Flame.

‘These stats show that the members of the Arctic Tribe are an amalgamation of the snow fairy and frost giant, completely inheriting the advantages of both. It’s quite strong for a rank 3.’ Leylin’s pupils glowed.

“Hehe… Does our guest find our tribe’s form very astonishing?” Yamos Andre discovered Leylin’s amazement and started to explain to him, “During infancy, a member of our tribe has two different forms. Only upon reaching adulthood and finding their other half will they conduct the Arctic Blessing Ceremony, after which they join together as one body and become a true member of the Arctic Tribe!”

The one who explained was the head belonging to a snow fairy, its voice was similar to a female’s.

“Oh, my apologies!” Leylin hurriedly waved his hands. Peeking into another party’s private affairs was considered disrespectful no matter which world one was in. “I was just curious for a moment!”

“Haha… Our Arctic Tribe members appear somewhat odd indeed. Even the other creatures in the Icy World were surprised when they first saw us, so it’s understandable for a guest to feel this way…”

The speaker this time was the frost giant head. His voice seemed to be filled with a bold, heroic air.

“Since you are a visitor from far away, we would like to invite you
to rest in our village…” The double-headed chief of the tribe, Yamos Andre, invited him in cordially.
At this moment, the low-pitched sound of a bugle horn sounded from the lookout post, following the trembling voice of a frost giant. “Chi… Chief! Ice troops have been discovered headed our way!”
“What?” Both of Yamos’ heads cried out together involuntarily. The frost horsemen on the sides even started to fall back one after another, incessant dread written across their faces.
“Why would they come here? Is it because of you?” Doubtful gazes instantly focused on Leylin.
“Oh? I didn’t expect that the Morning Star here holds a decent amount of power!” Leylin stroked his chin. He didn’t say it directly, but he’d already admitted it with his words, and there was no more room for doubt.
“We do not welcome you here. Please leave immediately. Do not bring disaster to our tribe!” Yamos immediately became hostile, and the frost horsemen lifted the spears in their hands, angling the points towards Leylin. It seemed like they were ready to attack him at a moment’s command.
“May I know who’s coming?” Leylin seemed as if he did not care about the Arctic Tribe’s attacking stance, and instead asked a question while engrossed in thought.
“You’ve already provoked the Arctic Queen, and you still pretend to be unaware?” The female head of Yamos seemed furious, already about to break down.
“The Arctic Queen is the dictator here, and the source of all fear. She is the root cause of all calamity and suffering, and everyone who is related to her will suffer from a curse…” The female head muttered a few words. Leylin was not sure if it was a prophecy or an ancient expression, but it was eminent that its dread towards the Arctic Queen was present.
“The Arctic Queen?” Leylin stroked his chin, “I’m actually interested in meeting her…” “Foreigner, leave at once! Do not bring disaster to our village!” The female head of Yamos screeched once more, an ice element storm already formed on her hand. *Thump! Thump! Thump!* The tightly packed sounds of many footsteps sounded, and another frost giant sighed. “Yamos, it’s too late!”

As their chief sighed, the guards from the castle had already surrounded the place under the lead of someone mounted on a huge horse.

The cavalry riding the arctic horse was covered in a set of heavy blue armour from head to toe, and in their hand was a large translucent sword that was burning with ice-cold flames. Two balls of pale soul fires lit up from within their mask, first scanning coldly across Yamos and the rest of the Arctic Tribe, then focusing all of the attention on Leylin.

“Noble Arctic Knight, Duchess Rose! You are the most dazzling star in the Icy World; even the most beautiful snowflake is not comparable to your beauty!” Leylin was rendered speechless as he saw the members of the Arctic Tribe all crouch on the ground, loudly praising the Arctic Knight. This made him roll his eyes. ‘They really speak without thinking. This is a creature who even revealed its soul fire! Perhaps under her mask is nothing but a human skeleton. You’re seeking your own death…’ However, much to Leylin’s surprise, the Arctic Knight appeared to enjoy their praise. “All of you have committed a crime! You actually dared to interact with this criminal here. But seeing that you did not let him enter the hill village, I will spare you this time…”

The Arctic Knight brandished her huge sword, but did not take further action.

“Ah! Duchess Rose, our lord! Your benevolence is just as
boundless as all the oceans in the universe…” Sparkling teardrops flowed out of both of Yamos Andre’s heads, forming something similar to a glass ball before falling to the ground. It made a crisp sound.

Hearing their response, Leylin felt goosebumps rise all over his body.

“As for you, foreigner, return with me to the castle! The Arctic Queen wishes to see you!”

*Swish!* The many giant guards turned their spears towards Leylin.

With their physique and their resistance towards the cold, an average rank 3 Magus would be unable to handle the all-round attack of this small team.

But Leylin didn’t seem to mind a single bit, and even asked with interest, “Was it that empress’ order to capture me?”

“It was General Arwen’s command. But his word is the same as that of the empress.” The Arctic Knight clearly did not wish to speak much to Leylin. She straddled her giant horse and was about to escort Leylin away.

“Then… Did he tell you that you have to be careful and immediately send out a signal once you see me, particularly that you should not confront me alone?” Leylin laughed lightly, which gave Duchess Rose a bad feeling.

“Be careful…” Almost the moment these words left her mouth, a few black sparks appeared on the bodies of the surrounding troops.

*Boom!* More than ten black columns of flames burst out in human form. The guards who had an even stronger physique than frost giants were burnt to ashes without a chance to resist.

“You citizens are to blame!” Duchess Rose roared, and the huge ice horse that she was on suddenly leapt up. The Duchess on the horse’s back brandished the gigantic translucent sword in her hand. The flames on the sword rose suddenly and ruthlessly came down
upon Leylin.
*Ting!* The huge sword with terrifying strength that had advanced without fear was stopped by a single finger, unable to budge an inch.

“If we were to use the Magus World’s classification, you’re at least a Crystal Phase Magus, and you even cultivate pure physical strength. It’s quite a rare thing to see, but it’s such a pity that all that’s useless…” Leylin seemed to sigh as his finger slashed out.

A crescent of light hummed as it pierced through the Arctic Knight’s armour, forming a humongous slit. Her body was flung backwards as fast as an incoming train, leaving a deep gutter trail in the solid ice, which extended far into the distance.

Even the huge arctic horse she’d ridden was smashed and shattered by the tremendous force, splintering apart into a heap of sparkling fragments.

“……”
“…”

Silence. The entire scene had fallen into a deathly silence. Yamos Andre found it hard to even swallow his saliva. He looked at Leylin, unable to believe his eyes.

‘Almighty Arctic Queen, what did I just see?’ The Duchess Rose who had been renowned for her strength, the Arctic Knight who struck fear into the hearts of all the denizens of the world of ice, was defeated by this mysterious Magus with just a single finger?

It was not just Yamos Andre. The other frost giants and snow fairies had lifeless looks on their faces as well. They felt like they were hallucinating.

“So? Do you still welcome me now?” Leylin turned and smiled at Yamos Andre. Yet, to Yamos it seemed like the smile of a demon.

A few timid snow fairies were so intimidated that they hid behind the frost giants, as though Leylin was some ancient fearsome creature.
“Of… Of course!” The frost giant head of Yamos nodded, “Please forgive my rude behaviour earlier. Respected lord, you are the saviour of the world of ice, our new master!”

Leylin rolled his eyes, dumbfounded. The Arctic Tribe was completely hopeless when it came to morals.
“Found it! It’s there!” The moment Leylin defeated the Arctic Knight, a hint of happiness emerged on Arwen’s face. He’d been waiting in the castle at the core of this world of ice the whole time.

He pulled out a few pieces of black crystal from his arms, among which one had already cracked quite obviously.

“It’s the canyon area that Rose is in charge of!” After discovering the target, Arwen’s entire person blurred into a phantom as he shot towards the canyon area.

Of course, he’d never hoped that his subordinates would capture a Morning Star; that would just be a joke. Those he’d sent out this time would serve as nothing more than a warning.

Once they came into contact with that Morning Star, Arwen who was in control of their spirit sources would know immediately.

Hence, that Duchess Rose from before was just cannon fodder in his eyes.

Arwen who was far away had an indifferent and emotionless expression. In a battle between Morning Stars, it was in fact very extraordinary that Duchess Rose ended up being cannon fodder.

……

At the same time, in canyon area within the hill village of the Arctic Tribe, Leylin looked at Yamos speechlessly as the creature crawled
and knelt at his feet, both hands clinging to his boots.
“My Lord! The Arctic Queen is the most evil of demons! She greedily exploited our Arctic Tribe’s resources, and even asked our matured members to become blood sacrifices… She has brought us great suffering and tears of blood. We beg you, Sire must help us with our vengeance! Defeat the Arctic Queen…”
Yamos was over two metres tall, veritably a small giant. For such a creature to kneel before him and cry so hard left Leylin at a loss for words.
The chief of the snow elves, Amos, was also apologising with tears in his eyes, complaining about the Arctic Queen’s evil deeds simultaneously.
“Actually, other than a regular tribute and having your matured members become blood sacrifices, it seems as if this Arctic Queen hasn’t committed any evil?”
Yamos was clearly just one person, but there were different thoughts from two different brains buzzing beside Leylin’s ears continuously, making him feel a little fed up.
However, he still endured it by force of will in order to obtain the information, all the while plotting something in his heart.
The situation in the world of ice also grew clearer to him. From Yamos’ introduction, he learned that the place was very vast, with many tribes scattered across it. They were all being ruled by someone called the Arctic Queen.
This queen seldom appeared in public, and it could be said that she had almost never shown her face before.
All the affairs were handled by her butler, Arwen. The man possessed a formidable strength. The tribes that had been exploited and oppressed had allied together in several crusades but had easily been defeated by him. After a few bloodbaths, there was no one else in this miniature Icy World who dared to go against the Arctic Queen’s regime.
Leylin felt like the tribute this Arctic Queen demanded was still quite mild. It was only her demand for blood sacrifices that was terrifyingly huge. There were almost no adults other than the chief in the Arctic Tribe. Based on Yamos’ accusations, they had either fled or were sent to the castle to be used as blood sacrifices.

‘It seems like the Scorpion Man’s remains and the female bronze giant’s bloodline are definitely related to the Arctic Queen. They may even be right in her castle!’ Leylin stroked his chin, thinking of something, ‘All these blood sacrifices, could it be…’

His eyes sparkled, and soon after he suddenly lifted his head and looked into the distant sky.

A small black dot grew larger and larger, pressing down like a small mountain. The approaching figure was that of an icy creature who was half human, half scorpion. His upper body was dressed in a butler’s suit, the bloodshot eyes leaving a deep impression.

“It’s Arwen! Oh God, Sir Arwen has come personally!” Yamos burst out at a shocking speed, and with a whoosh it arrived at the platform where Yamos had arrived and knelt down. Emotional tears flowed down from all four eyes.

“Sir Arwen, you’re finally here! This criminal has committed a grave mistake, we need you to judge him! Yamos is your loyal servant…”

Before Yamos could finish speaking, a faint blue light enveloped it in a moment, turning it into an ice sculpture. A web of cracks emerged on this sculpture, covering it up entirely before it shattered into pieces. It sounded like a glass cup had fallen to the ground.

Yamos, along with the ice sculpture, had turned into dust. Faced with such strength, even the Arctic Tribe’s innate ability of symbiosis was rendered completely ineffective.

“Greetings, foreign Morning Star!” After killing Yamos, Arwen
pulled out a clean, white handkerchief and wiped his palms, greeting Leylin as if he was an unconcerned person.
“Hello, powerhouse of the world of ice!” Leylin bowed. Arwen’s form was slightly similar to the Scorpion Man he had previously seen. However, there were also major differences. His figure was smaller and did not carry the fierce aura that came with the bloodline of an ancient creature. Having the Giant Kemoyin Serpent Bloodline himself, Leylin could easily identify it. But seeing how he had shown up here, and also his appearance, he was related to the Scorpion Man.
“I represent my master, the Arctic Queen, in inviting you to her castle. I wonder if Sir is willing to accept her invitation?” Arwen bowed humbly.
“I’ve admired the Arctic Queen for a long time. But what if I refuse?” A mocking smile emerged at the corners of Leylin’s lips. “That would be a great pity!” Arwen shook his head, as if he was feeling sorry for Leylin’s irrationality.
A blood-red light shot out of his eyes in a flash. As if the entire earth was shaken, thunder roared and his entire body jumped into motion from his stationary state, coming before Leylin as if he had broken through the boundaries of time and space,
*Swoosh!* A long and translucent dark green needle rushed towards Leylin, a bright, dazzling radiance at its tip. A tail was attached to the long needle. It was the tail section of a scorpion!
However, Leylin already knew about the Scorpion Man’s strong body from the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s memories. How would he let Arwen get his way?
A small round shield emerged to block the stinger almost the same moment it rushed forth, blocking the unavoidable strike. Giant Kemoyin Serpents moved around on the shield’s surface, hissing on occasion.
The dark green needle broke through the center of the bloodline shield with a snip, arriving in front of Leylin.

“Kemoyin’s Scales!” Instantaneously, the innate defence emerged on the surface of Leylin’s body. After his vitality surpassed 100, this rank 1 innate spell seemed to have undergone an intriguing change. Not only was there an additional layer of blazing stripes on the scales, they had even grown dazzling.

*Ka-cha!* A small white dot emerged on the black scales and Leylin’s figure retreated. At the same time, the red crescent of light from his earring swept across Arwen’s chest. Dazzling sparks flew out as it collided with a translucent icy armour that suddenly appeared.

“High-grade magic artifact?” Arwen looked at the huge crack on his chestplate as a trace of apprehension appeared on his face. Large amounts of white, icy fog solidified, mending the damage to the armour.

‘There are no weaknesses to exploit in a Morning Star!’ The confrontation just now had occurred very quickly, and was very dangerous. Although the spells that Morning Star Magi took most pride in were not used, the mere confrontation in strength and vitality created a lingering fear in Leylin.

Arwen’s previous attack was very strange. If not for his vitality breaking past 100 and the addition of his bloodline, an attack at such close quarters would have probably injured him severely.

‘Morning Stars from a foreign place may not excel in magical abilities! Hence there’s a need to pay attention to all aspects!’ After opening up some distance between them, Leylin directed a cold gaze at Arwen.

“You’re the first person who was able to escape my ‘Breath of Doom’!” Arwen looked at his own stinger, his face seeming a little regretful yet gratified.

“Damn you! In this world of ice, is there another Morning Star
apart from you and your queen?” Leylin secretly rolled his eyes. Because the outside world did not have any icy radiation, it was very rare for Arwen to go out even after he advanced to Morning Star. In fact, because he had to protect the Arctic Queen, he probably even rarely left the castle. He used Morning Star strength to bully the aboriginals of the world of ice, yet he still had the nerve to act like an expert. Although he felt a little speechless, Leylin still looked at his opponent carefully. Arwen would rank as a Four Star Morning Star according to Sky City’s rankings. If his body’s special abilities were included, his strength would probably even reach Five Stars.
A certain amount of effort would be needed to take down such an enemy.
A splendid starry sky suddenly emerged behind Leylin, illuminating a sea of blood. Facing Arwen, Leylin emitted his own Morning Star domain. His terrifying pull on bloodlines attracted Arwen’s own, making his face flush slightly red.
With him being a Warlock with an ancient bloodline who had also received that bloodline’s legacy, Leylin’s Morning Star domain was naturally connected to it.
“So this is the Morning Star domain of a Magus… In our world of ice, we call it the ‘Power Aura’ or ‘Vitality’s Forcefield’!” A realm of ice emerged behind Arwen as he spoke, offsetting Leylin’s Morning Star domain. The two huge domains collided, making even the void vibrate. The illusory walls shattered, creating the feeling as if the world being destroyed.
However, Arwen’s icy realm was evidently suppressed by Leylin’s domain, causing his expression to change.
“Did you know the most terrifying thing about us Magi is still our spells?” Leylin’s smile made Arwen’s hair stand on end…
Magi mastered the usage of laws through knowledge and comprehension. Using their spiritual force, they manipulated elemental particles to form all sorts of spells. This was their path to power. They didn’t stop at that, though. Along with comprehending laws, they also integrated other power systems into their own spells. This was what led to the glory of ancient times.

Leylin knew from the Scorpion Man’s memories that the creatures of the Icy World were famed for their strength and vitality. Arwen, who stood opposite him, had evidently inherited these traits. Although Leylin was a bloodline Warlock, he still did not measure up in a contest against an actual ancient creature. Hence, as a true Magus should, he tried to shift the battlefield to one in his favour. As in the words from his previous life, one had to match one’s strengths to their opponent’s weaknesses. After widening the distance between them and using the domain to restrict movement, the efficacy of Arwen’s frightening speed and strength, as well as his powerful stinger, had been minimised.

In the meanwhile, Leylin could unleash a barrage of spells, obtaining the greatest result at the lowest cost. This was what ‘Knowledge is Power’ meant!

“I’ve experienced the Morning Star creatures of the Icy World. Now, it’s your turn to taste the terror that is a bloodline Warlock…” The enormous phantom of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent emerged...
behind Leylin. Two starry pupils shot out petrifying rays of light as the huge snake’s body coiled up, covering Arwen within. The earth rumbled as terrifying energy ripples were transmitted across the sky, completely annihilating the Arctic Tribe in an instant. The frightening energy ripple destroyed the entire fortified hill village to a state beyond recognition, and it happened in a flash. It was like the apocalypse had hit the village. Arctic Tribe members who had previously been sluggish due to the death of the chief were now all shrieking, running out of the fortified hill village in hopes of getting far away from this place. To put it bluntly, this place was completely destroyed. Explosions sounded one after another. The competition between the two Morning Stars even affected the void, causing space to splinter away.

“What’s going on? How is this Morning Star infiltrator so powerful?” Arwen grew more and more shocked. He had a bloodline’s legacy and even the guidance of a mysterious presence, which made him think himself a powerhouse in the Morning Star realm. But today, the foreign Morning Star that the queen wanted him to capture was much more powerful than he was. Those casting of spells that emerged endlessly and the strange innate skill of the bloodline made it very troublesome for him. As the void shattered with a bang, Arwen and Leylin both fell into the crack between the worlds.

“I have to seize him! It’s an order from Her Highness!” Arwen looked at Leylin who was in front of him with a determined gaze. Streaks of dark green energy suddenly emerged from his body, forming strange patterns that covered it. The skin on his back exploded with a boom and a huge figure rushed out from his back. This huge mountain-like scorpion’s entire body was dark green in colour and there was the extremely distinct face of a woman on its
Arwen’s previous human body was now like a piece of skin, floating in the void.

“Icy Jade Scorpion!” Leylin cried out involuntarily. Arwen’s true form was actually a large Icy Jade Scorpion! With such a figure, it probably surpassed the existence of species like that Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor he’d fought before.

“Chik chik!” The large scorpion yelled. The huge claws in its hands were like falling meteorites as they smashed towards Leylin with a terrifying force.

This frightening strength caused even the void to shudder.

“Hoho… It seems like I share a destiny with you Icy Jade Scorpions. Moreover, the breath of an Icy Jade Scorpion at the Morning Star realm will surely have an unimaginable effect on my bloodline disease. I’ll have to modify my plans…” Leylin’s pupils sparkled.

Although his battle prowess was comparable to a New Moon, and he had killed a Radiant Moon Magi before, all of that power was only acquired using the imprint of the Sun’s Child bloodline.

As for his true power, he could still take down a Five Star Morning Star, but it would require a great fight and there was a chance that he’d let the enemy escape.

Now that his opponent had revealed his true form as an Icy Jade Scorpion. Leylin’s desire to capture him alive grew even greater.

If he used the bloodline imprint to cast Sun Scorching Nirvana, Arwen would undoubtedly be burnt to nothingness. But Leylin still hoped to obtain his breath to try and treat the bloodline disease at the Morning Star realm.

“I admit you are very useful, Arwen! I won’t kill you that easily as you have things that I want!”

Leylin spoke indifferently. Four scarlet halos lit up behind him. and even fused together to form a terrifying spell.
“Rank 1 bloodline innate spells, Kemoyin’s Scales, Eyes of Petrification! Rank 2 innate spell, Toxic Bile. rank 3 innate spell, Intimidating Gaze! Rank 4 innate spell, Bloodline Metamorphosis! Combining to form the Morning Star Arcane Art Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!”

With Leylin’s point mass and bloodline giving him Six Stars of strength, the power of the Kemoyin Serpent Transformation had almost reached the peak that all Kemoyin Warlocks desired. The earth rumbled as a giant serpent, nearly a hundred thousand metres in length and with blazing stripes on its body as well as starry pupils emerged. The Icy Jade Scorpion from before was like a tiny toy in front of this behemoth.

Its huge claws slashed across the serpent’s scales. They managed to cause some sparks to fly, but could not even push the giant serpent away slightly.

“What? You’re not a bloodline creature, why can you carry out atavism?” A voice full of disbelief echoed forth from the Icy Jade Scorpion. Before the terrifying Giant Kemoyin Serpent, almost all of the stubbornness and pride inside Arwen disappeared. This was the technique that only Morning Star Kemoyin Warlocks possessed, the Morning Star Arcane Art Kemoyin Serpent Transformation! Once again, it displayed its monstrous might in front of this foreign tribe!

Although the ancient Morning Star Magi possessed a large variety of spells, they were nothing much to flaunt in front of the powerful Morning Stars of other worlds. Amongst the many Morning Star tribes, there were plenty of Magi whose abilities surpassed those of Morning Stars. However, the greatest strength of ancient Magi was that they were good at learning. By imitating their opponents, ancient Magi obtained all sorts of
powerful abilities and even figured out the way to modify and stabilise innate spells through meditation techniques, creating the first of the Morning Star Arcane Arts!
Against the terrifying Morning Star Arcane Arts, the powerhouses of all the other worlds retreated one after another. Even the World of Gods had suffered heavy casualties.
Arwen was someone who’d only been born much later. He hadn’t even left this world of ice in his entire life, and thus he naturally couldn’t understand such terror. It led to him receiving a great shock.
*Hissss…* Of course, Leylin would not explain anything to Arwen. The enormous Giant Kemoyin Serpent directly crushed the creature down, firmly binding the Icy Jade Scorpion. At the same time, a petrifying light danced about on its body.
The large Icy Jade Scorpion wailed continuously for a short while…

……

With the writhing of the void, a dark passageway opened up. Leylin, dressed in a black robe, walked out with one hand holding the petrified Arwen.
Arwen had already regained his human form, just that his entire body was covered in a layer of stone. He was like a statue.
Only, the fearful expression on this opponent’s face had not disappeared. It was as if he had seen something extremely terrifying before he was petrified.
“Too easy, simply too easy!” Leylin sighed, “In fact, Morning Star Magi and strong Morning Stars of the other worlds don’t have much of a difference in their nature. Their energies are almost at the same level, but once the Morning Star Arcane Art is used, we can steamroll over the other worlds’ powerhouses!”
Take for example this instance. Both he and Arwen were Morning Stars, one at Five Stars and the other at Six Stars. Common sense dictated that, if he were facing another of the Magus World, he could defeat his opponent but without using the Sun’s Child imprint, it would be relatively difficult for him to kill them. The opponent could always use his Morning Star Arcane Art and flee. However, Arwen was different. When confronted with his Morning Star Arcane Art, he seemed to be suppressed without any resistance.

“No wonder the ancient Magi could crush a lot of the other worlds!” Leylin could not help but admire the ancient Magi who attempted high-level meditation techniques and used point mass to activate the innate spell fusions to create a terrifying killer move. Even for him at the present, it would require a lot of time to deduct things from scratch, and it may not even be successful. However, the ancient Magi managed to do it and from this, the strong foundation of the Magus World was established!

“It’s not such a bad harvest this time! I can probably use his Morning Star icy breath to curb the emotional instability that comes from the Purgatory World.” Leylin analysed Arwen’s statue as he stroked his chin.

The bloodline disease of Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks originated from the Purgatory World. Due to their defeat in the Shadow World, the Snake Dowager brought all her clan members with her and migrated to the Purgatory World. However, descendants of the Snake Dowager that were originally had darkness element attribute were all contaminated by the chaotic World’s Will in the Purgatory World, giving rise to berserk characteristics. In order to solve this problem completely, the Snake Dowager thought of the using Icy World, and that was the battle that Leylin had witnessed.

According to the A.I. Chip’s deductions, the Icy Jade Scorpion
tribe here possessed excellent curbing effects for Leylin’s own emotional instability. Last time, he’d managed to use just a peak rank 1 Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s Icy Breath to suppress his emotional instability all the way up to Morning Star. And now, with an Icy Jade Scorpion at the Morning Star realm, Leylin was confident in eradicating his bloodline disease. With the A.I. Chip having completed its database on the soul recently, Leylin could now control his influence on the soul much easier, boosting his power even further. Leylin tilted his head as he pondered. Arwen’s statue in hand, he transformed into a black streak that disappeared into the horizon. Only after that did the frost giants and snow fairies who did not manage to leave in time pop their heads out from various corners, eyes full of consternation as they looked towards the direction that had Leylin departed in. What had they just seen? The Arctic Queen’s chief lackey mass murderer Arwen, was actually defeated by a foreigner just like that? Their fear towards Arwen even exceeded that towards the Arctic Queen. After all, although this place was ruled in the name of the Arctic Queen, she basically did not appear in public at all, and all affairs were taken care of by Arwen. One could imagine the kind of shock that Arwen’s defeat brought them.
The very moment Arwen was taken away, a piercing sound exploded in the icy castle, causing the air to quiver and the ground to tremble. Large numbers of guards knelt on the ground, shuddering as they begged the Arctic Queen to quell her anger. However, their prayers were to no avail.

A dazzling blue light swept out, wrapping up the entire castle within. The icy beings in the castle, be they guards, maids, servants, or prisoners, all turned into ice sculptures. Streams of blue light gathered from their bodies, tunnelling into the ground like earthworms.

*Whoosh!* When all the blue lustre disappeared from the ice sculptures, numerous cracks appeared on them as they crumbled apart to form a snow-white powder. The castle sank into a deathly silence.

Meanwhile, in another place deep underground.

The steel-like ice opened up automatically, showing a structure similar to a basement. An Eternal Light spell illuminated the entire area.

Many beakers and tools were placed on a translucent tabletop, seemingly in a mess yet possessing some kind of order. Some of the beakers were full of colourful, even smelly fluids.

Leylin stood at the simplified laboratory table, watching the stone
statue that was once Arwen at the centre of the spell formation, a teasing look on his face. This Five Star Morning Star, someone who was considered the leader of the world of ice, had now been turned into a mere stone statue. Even his soul had been frozen completely, leaving behind a shell that still had life force within. Based on previous experience, he would get the best results when the breath of the Icy Jade Scorpion was used together with icy radiation. And in order to preserve the freshness of the material, Arwen was forced to suffer, becoming Leylin’s captive. He would definitely not meet a good end.

“When I probed the area during my entry to this place, there was still a more mysterious aura than Arwen’s in the icy castle. Was that the Arctic Queen?” Leylin frowned, and threads of blood-red light were emitted by a spell formation with but a thought. They began to spread to the inner parts of the stone sculpture. “Hand over your memories, little lamb that has lost its way!” Leylin’s eyes were serene as he chanted some kind of ancient incantation with a strange pitch. Runes began to disappear into the spell formation.

*Ooooo* A woman’s wail sounded out, and three long-haired female figures appeared within the spell formation. These three female youths wore blood-red dresses, not looking a day over thirty years of age. They seemed very pretty, but their expressions were varied. One was beaming, the crescent of her eyes so pronounced that they were practically closed. The other showed distress, while the one in the middle was emotionless, like a block of ice.

“Go!” Leylin pointed towards the statue. The three female figures floated and circled the stone statue, occasionally extending translucent hands into the stone statue’s brain.
Afterwards, three red figures entered Arwen’s mind, and the stone statue shook continuously. The spell formation had no choice but to strengthen the seal.

“Arghhh” In that moment, the ghastly wailing increased tenfold in volume, a layer of demonic blood emanating from Arwen’s body. [Reached critical period. Target is about to break down.] The A.I. Chip produced a timely reminder.

“Come back, my darlings!” Leylin’s eyes were filled with a strange light as he made a very attractive sound.

As if some invisible force-field had appeared, the three figures were pulled out from within the stone statue.

The three figures’ varying expressions had been enhanced further. They shrank to a tenth of their original size, gathering on top of Leylin’s palm. Boiling hot, complicated emotions flooded Leylin’s mind.

“Chaotic emotions as well as memory fragments…. A.I. Chip!” Leylin immediately commanded.

*Rumble!* The surge of complicated emotions seemed to have hit a tall mountain. Though Morning Star Warlocks had intense emotions, they were merely complicated hormone secretions to be recorded down for the unfeeling A.I. Chip.

Once the emotions were intercepted, the A.I. Chip began to arrange the scattered and fragmented memories.

One after another, scattered images were formed in front of Leylin’s eyes. They were very fragmented, and even with the A.I. Chip’s reorganisation Leylin could not find any information that was significant.

After the extensive data was transmitted, the three spirits in Leylin’s hands exploded, dissipating like a fog. Leylin’s expression did not change as he sighed.

“Extracting the memories of a Morning Star is truly troublesome…”

The soul force of a Morning Star Magus was extremely powerful,
and memories protected by it were akin to the most stable fort. Leylin could destroy it with ease, but he would find it difficult to find the content within, even with the support of the A.I. Chip. However, with its strengthened abilities and the database on the soul, the A.I. Chip was able to give Leylin a nice surprise. An image that was not quite as incomplete was projected before Leylin. This was a map of the world of ice, with a red dot of light at the centre. It was extremely dazzling. As he zoomed in, the red light was magnified, revealing a castle built entirely of ice. Multicolour light formed a splendid view of it. “Such dense icy radiation?” Leylin sucked in a cold breath. He could now confirm that the bloodline of the female bronze giant was within the palace. “But where’s the Arctic Queen?” Leylin asked with doubt as he skimmed through the other information found by the A.I. Chip. However, there were no records of this Queen, which was rather interesting. Even if the Arctic Queen rarely showed herself, Arwen who was her number one subordinate should have had opportunities to meet her. “Memory seals?” Leylin touched his chin. Some Magi could choose to store or seal their important memories, and that was an even easier task for Morning Star Magi. ‘It looks like this mysterious Arctic Queen has a lot of secrets…’ Leylin shook his head and commanded, “A.I. Chip, begin the second phase. Obtain the Icy Breath and purify the bloodline.” Arwen’s memories were merely an appetiser. The full course that Leylin was waiting on was the unique Icy Breath that belonged to the Icy Jade Scorpion. It was very effective for his emotional instability. On top of that, Leylin had the premonition that for Giant Kemoyin Serpents, rank 4 should not be the limit. However for some reason,
be it because of genes restrictions or the influences from the Purgatory World, Giant Kemoyin Serpents had lost the ability to evolve further. If he could completely treat his emotional imbalance, his grasp of the Kemoyin bloodline would reach unprecedented levels. Only after reaching this state would he have the confidence to attempt at tackling the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline issue.

With Leylin’s command, the A.I. Chip began its precise task. Arwen’s statistics in all aspects were recorded, and it formulated the most accurate plan of operation, presenting it before Leylin. “Record all the information in its entirety!” Leylin took out a silver surgical knife with complicated patterns on it, eyes emanating a heated radiance.

‘Dissecting an ancient bloodline creature completely, especially one at the Morning Star realm, is not an easy opportunity to come by…’


“Begin!” Leylin was now wearing a snow-white gown, the plastic gloves on his hands having gone through rigorous sterilisation. With the power of magic, while it looked primal, the level of this laboratory was rather similar with the one in Leylin’s previous world, and in certain ways even surpassed it!

*Thud!* A layer of rocky skin fell, revealing the skin and flesh on Arwen’s arm.

Under Leylin’s surgical knife, the two were easily separated to reveal translucent blood vessels…

*Swish!* A black ray of light streaked through the horizon, as glorious as a shooting star.

Leylin’s eyes were like stars, a hint of glee in his expression. “I feel better than I’ve ever felt before!” Feeling the coldness in his mind and no longer having any jittery emotions, Leylin was in a great mood.
The icy breath from the Morning Star ranked Arwen was the best medicine for Leylin’s emotional instability. Added to the soul treatment with help from the A.I. Chip, the negative effects that came together with fusing with the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s soul had been completely eliminated.

In other words, the chaotic World Will that had come from the Snake Dowager migrating the entire species to the Purgatory World was now forever gone from his body!

[Beep! Host has removed influence from chaotic World Will. Kemoyin bloodline being purified…] the A.I. Chip called to his attention.

When he looked with his soul force, the purplish-red bloodline in his body now ran deeper, and each time his heart pulsed a purifying force was pumped to all parts of his body. The various parts of his body reacted strangely to this purifying force, resulting in a complete transformation from head to toe.

‘Morning Star soul force is supposed to nourish a Magus’ body, transforming it qualitatively in order to form the perfect Morning Star body… That is supposed to be equivalent to the standard of a normal Heavenly Astral. Not only does my current body already surpass this so-called standard, it even has a chance of evolving further…’

Leylin felt that after his bloodline’s transformation was complete, he would be able to peek at an even more terrifying realm. The natural rank of their bloodline was what prevented Kemoyin Warlocks from ever advancing to rank 5. However, there was currently a high possibility that he would be able to break past that!
black shooting star streaked across the horizon, its magnificence amplified under the translucent icy sky. Leylin was sending out a thread of soul force every once in a while, scanning the energies of the surrounding beings. ‘It seems like Arwen’s fall caused some sort of chain reaction.’ As far as he could see, the various regions in this world of ice had been disturbed at least on some level. Many of the intellectual icy beings, such as the Arctic Tribe, and even the ice leopards and the frost dragons were beginning to rebel against the Arctic Queen’s rule. ‘It’s understandable though. The other races never could stand being under her rule anyway. Since she’s fallen, a frenzied rebellion is only to be expected,’ Leylin thought as he touched his pouch. Extracting the Icy Breath to treat his emotional stability was not the only thing he’d done. He hadn’t wasted any part of the body, not even his bloodline. It was all currently stored in his pouch. There were still many survivors who had seen Leylin defeat Arwen, and news had spread quickly. Without the suppression of a Morning Star, the rebellion of these various races was not surprising. ‘But the Arctic Queen has been in power for so many years… It doesn’t make sense for everything to fall apart so bad so quickly…’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled with a distinct light. Even with Arwen’s death, the Arctic Queen’s guards should not have been defeated so
quickly. It was like the headquarters had been destroyed with no clear commands given.
At this point, Leylin suddenly had a thought, ‘Could there be something wrong at the Arctic Queen’s palace?’
That was all he managed to think of. The shooting star that was Leylin whizzed faster into the horizon, only leaving behind after-images in the sky.
Even rank 3 creatures could only crouch on the ground, unable to move after seeing Leylin hurtling past. They were terrified by his speed and prowess…
The castle of ice was located at the heart of this world, and when Leylin came here he found that the vicinity of the place had gone up in smoke.
The many suppressed races had formed an alliance, gathering troops at the centre of the icy plains.
The few remaining guards were led by Arctic Knights as they used the terrain of the great valley at their stronghold to fight back, but it was a losing battle. It looked like this alliance would be able to enter the castle in no time at all.
‘Keke… With Arwen’s death, the entire castle’s defence is rendered useless!’ Watching the bustling camp of the allied forces, a smirk rose about Leylin’s lips, ‘When they breach the walls of the palace and, instead of victory, see the Arctic Queen who’s even more terrifying than Arwen, what kind of expression will they have?’
Leylin’s eyes did not stop on the battlefield, and instead switched to the castle.
There were a few loyal guards and the like who wanted to stop him, but they were no match for him at all. They were not even able to hold him back for a few seconds.
What Leylin found strange was that the closer he got to the castle, the weaker the resistance grew. The moment he arrived on top of the place, the guards only dared to look at him from afar, not
advancing. It was as if there was some kind of terrifying danger within the castle.

‘This is the place? There’s no life force in here at all, only some kind of absorptive force…’ Leylin hovered above the castle of ice and observed its magnificence, though his eyes only held solemnness.

The icy radiation had peaked here, and the concentration was hundreds, even thousands of times greater than in the outer world. It was constantly changing and growing, distorting continuously.

“Those below Morning Star probably won’t be able to survive here…” The radiation was far too powerful, to the point that no ordinary beings could handle it; it had become a life-threatening poison!

However, what astonished Leylin was not the concentration of the radiation, but the mysterious absorptive force coming from the ground.

The area under this castle of ice was like a terrifying black hole to his senses, continuously absorbing the life force of everything on the ground. On top of that, it was expanding without end.

A thick layer of white, icy powder had formed on the ground, left behind by some unlucky fighters.

Blue light shot out from Leylin’s eyes, and he cried out involuntarily. “No! It’s not their life force that’s being absorbed… It’s the frost energy and the icy nature of their bloodlines…”

Suddenly, as if having sensed Leylin’s arrival, the entire surface of the castle began to quiver.

That vague scent and aura Leylin had sensed began to awaken, its strength increasing.

“Ugh…” The mumble of a female voice resounded above the icy castle.

Large amounts of winds and snow gathered, forming the statue of a female giant.
The woman had a crown on her head, a dignified pair of freezing eyes under slender eyelashes. She extended her arms towards the distant battle.

*Rumble!* Terrifying blue pillars of light emerged from the ground, and seemed to break through into the heavens, releasing endless ripples of energy.

The eyes of those who had been embroiled in the bloody battle were suddenly filled with confusion and regret.

“All hail the Queen!” “All hail the Queen!” “All hail the Queen!”

A guard was the first to toss away his lance and shield, running towards the danger zone that he’d avoided as if it was a den of scorpions and snakes, looking extremely enthusiastic.

His legs were frozen as a blue light emerged from them and travelled underground. They then cracked off.

The guard did not notice at all. Even when his two legs were torn off, he still tried to get to the castle on his hands, the injury clotted with a layer of frost.

The frost continued to expand, covering the entirety of the guard. Traces of blue light were absorbed by the ground, causing his life force to weaken continuously.

He was zealous unto death, as if the Arctic Queen was his goddess to whom he was willing to sacrifice his everything.

‘This is even more terrifying than an illusion. Even his soul isn’t his own anymore…’ Leylin sighed from high in the sky, watching everything apathetically.

It was not just the guards. Even the opposing allied forces threw their weapons away, showing the same fanaticism after one glance at the female giant. They rushed towards the castle as well.

Countless icy statues formed and then broke down, forming a thick layer of white powder on the ground. Yet, even that did not prevent them from surging forth, wave upon wave.

Blue light was emitted from Leylin’s eyes, and great amounts of
information were stored in his database. With the A.I. Chip’s
collection of statistical data, everything was presented before him.
‘The attraction of the bloodline? The icy radiation too had affected
their behaviour!’ Leylin touched his chin. This was not a temporary
control from illusory spells, but a terrifying effect that was formed
over a long period of time. That was why the effects were so good,
such that even rank 3 beings could not escape.
“Looks like this is a blood sacrifice…” Leylin suddenly guessed.
Perhaps the Arctic Queen had herded the various races in this
world like livestock. Every once in a while, they would be
harvested after reaching maturity.
“If that’s so, the Arctic Queen is probably…” A flash of
determination appeared in Leylin’s eyes, Morning Star radiation
engulfing the area.
The void itself seemed to tremble, and the world instantly turned
black and white.
The scope of the radiation continuously widened, and the few that
had yet to enter the range of the castle suddenly showed looks of
pain and suffering as they collapsed to the ground, their faces
distorting. Even their internal organs swelled and ruptured.
Leylin had already reached the peak of Morning Star. He usually
kept his radiation sealed, which was how he brought no harm to
his surroundings wherever he went. Now, his suddenly unleashing
it was difficult for the rank 3 beings to bear.
The sufferance was enough for these icy beings to regain their
senses. They raised their heads, eyes full of terror as they stared
hard at the floating Leylin and the female giant. Making some
strange sounds, they escaped without turning back.
Even so, they’d come into contact with Leylin’s powerful radiation.
There were a few rank 2s and 3s at the side who could still use
their own strength to rid themselves of the contamination, but those
weaker than that would probably die if they were contaminated. It
was only a matter of time.
Before their lives were completely burnt through, they would still have to deal with bearing the pain from the contamination.
The disturbance seemed to spread further and further as more of these tribals regained their sanity. No matter what camp they were in, these life-and-death enemies all escaped pitifully, only wanting to get as far away as possible.
The female giant in the air suddenly turned back, her eyes focussing on Leylin. Coldness was laid bare in them, but Leylin met her gaze head on.
He hadn’t interfered at first because he needed to collect information and calculate the way the energy was used. Yet, once all was said and done, he wouldn’t be so stupid as to let his opponent grow in power.
The giant made of ice snarled, and a large icy tornado was formed at her fist, hurtling towards Leylin.
A gigantic Giant Kemoyin Serpent appeared at Leylin’s back. Compared to before, it was now even larger, and its eyes glowed with greater intelligence as it hissed at the giant.
*Boom!* Formless sound waves clashed with the tornado, and snow filled the sky.
“A mere clone wants to attack me?” Leylin sneered, the phantom Giant Kemoyin Serpent behind him rapidly shrinking. Its body was now more substantial, and its scales reflected a dazzling luster. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent snarled, its tremendous tail whipping at the female giant like a mace. *Boom!* The female giant’s body blew up, and snowflakes fluttered in the sky. The aftershocks were transmitted to the castle below, and large cracks began to appear on the walls. *Whoosh!* As the wind and snow calmed, the entire area turned strangely silent. The white powder formed from the life energy and consumption of frost energy of the many icy races covered the ground. There were also the remains of armour and weapons, which made the area seem even more desolate. Leylin heaved a long sigh, producing a test tube from his spatial pouch that was filled with a purple liquid. The seal at the mouth of the test tube opened automatically and a liquid dripped down to the ground, spreading quickly. Large amounts of white powder were dissolved by the potion, creating a gigantic pool of water. There were countless bubbles constantly being produced on the surface, and they instantly turned the surroundings of the castle into a purple swamp.
The purple swamp continued to expand, also showing signs of going deeper.
‘I’ve made calculations with the A.I. Chip and developed this potion from Arwen’s blood and flesh using his memories. Let’s hope this is effective.’ By this point, Leylin had guessed the origin of this Arctic Queen. Hence, he was currently feeling very serious, hoping that his conjecture was wrong.
However, what he had just seen had validated his suspicion. Large amounts of purple bubbles were constantly produced, and the original castle of ice was beginning to be eaten into, the main body of the building slowly sinking down.
*Buzz!* A pure, powerful spiritual force extended and began to fuse with the surroundings. Almost instantly, Leylin found himself in another wondrous environment.
The sky was no longer filled with ice, it wasn’t the crust of the earth. The moon sparkled in a starry sky, and below was a white continent that spread a vast ocean, as far as the eye could see. Ice Mountain Wyverns, Chilly Giants and other creatures were roaring out, and most had surpassed the limits of Morning Star.
“This is… the real Icy World!” Leylin muttered to himself. He, who possessed some of the memories of the ancient Scorpion Man, was naturally somewhat familiar with this place.
“Yes. The real Icy World, my homeland! Foreign Magus, can you fulfil my wish of returning to my homeland?” The Arctic Queen spoke with a gentle tone as she appeared by his side. Looking somewhat similar to the giant from before, she had on a crown and platinum imperial robes.
“Arctic Queen?” Leylin’s pupils shrank as he scanned the surroundings. “Not a bad illusion!”
“The most beautiful of illusions is still not reality. Even the fake world of ice in reality does not measure up to a smidgen of the
splendour of the real Icy World…” The Arctic Queen sighed, her tone so sorrowful Leylin couldn’t bear it. He wanted to speak up, helping her solve the issue.

“As long as you’re willing to help me, you shall be the sole emperor of the entire Icy World!” As if she had seen Leylin wavering, the Arctic Queen added a bargaining chip.

“Pretty good conditions! It’s a pity that I don’t see any sincerity in them at all. How can someone who uses illusory magic on potential allies be trusted to abide by their promises?” Leylin shook his head, his words causing the expression on the Arctic Queen’s face to change.

Blood-red flames came into being on Leylin’s hands. They crackled as they were shot to the Arctic Queen’s feet without hesitation, starting to burn her.

“You’ll regret this!” The Arctic Queen, who was now covered in flames, showed a wavering energy. Yet, she was like an expressionless paper doll as she spoke.

“If I agree to your conditions, I might regret it even more!” Leylin was still slightly fearful at this time. He’d believed that he had a very powerful resistance to illusory magic, and yet he had easily been pulled into the illusion that his opponent had created, and almost lost his senses.

If not for the A.I. Chip’s timely warning, as well as the many secret techniques of Spirit Warlocks he’d learnt from Paul, he might very well have died here.

After all, who would have thought that the ruler of the Icy World was proficient in illusory psychological hints?

“You’ll regret this!” “You’ll regret this!”

An icy female voice resounded in the illusion, causing his hair to stand.

Paper dolls that resembled the Arctic Queen sprang up one after another, the icy world collapsing with a rumble. Whether it was the
stars in the sky, the continent, or the creatures upon it, everything turned into an Arctic Queen, giving Leylin a terrifying glare. 

[Beep! Host’s brain is suffering from an unknown influence. Determined to be illusory magic,] the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded. “That’s obvious damn it, but my connection to the real world hasn’t been severed. If I die here, my main body outside will probably die as well…”

Morning Star energy rippled as traces of soul force lingered around the surface of Leylin’s body, giving him a few layers of protection. Such a high-level illusion could render a Magus’ spiritual force useless. However, it could not restrict a Morning Star’s soul force, which still had a good effect. However, this was the opponent’s home ground. If he used up all of his soul force, he would be in trouble.

“A.I. Chip, scan the structure of the illusion and search for the point of three-dimensional construct and Wors’ Space!” Leylin silently sent down the order.

The A.I. Chip did not have a good method of dealing with such a situation before, but now with the database on the soul, its ability at analysis had improved by leaps and bounds.

“You can’t escape!” Like the many galaxies in the universe, countless three-dimensional Arctic Queens were formed. These clones that looked like inverted images of the original held weapons in their hands, going on the offensive against him.

*Ting!* Soul force condensed to form a blood-red cross blade in Leylin’s hands.

Leylin quickly took a step forward, the cross blade blocking large numbers of icy blades that produced dazzling rays of light.

“Cross Slash!” A cross-shaped light flashed, and tens of paper dolls turned into fragments that filled the skies.

“It’s of no use. This is my spiritual world! No number of deaths
will cause any exhaustion to me. How long do you think your soul force can last you?” The doll accompanying this icy voice was torn to shreds, but it then reformed into the Arctic Queen once more. “Stop resisting when it doesn’t even matter. Together, we can…” *Schlick!* Before the Arctic Queen could finish her words, her head was chopped off. The flat head that was like a piece of paper fell to the ground, and continued to chatter on, “Your only choice is to serve me! Hand over your soul source and become my servant. This way, I might even let you off!” *Rumble!* Red flames flashed and burnt the paper into ashes. There was a cold smirk on Leylin’s face. “I’d be a fool to listen to your commands!” “Kill him!” As if the Arctic Queen had been enraged, large numbers of two-dimensional paper clones pounced on him. “Cross Slash!” Leylin’s expression was cool as he launched attack after attack, sending fragmented paper flying into the skies, filling it like butterflies. They even covered Leylin’s clothes, his weapon, and his hair. “I told you, you can’t escape!” The paper on Leylin’s body became as heavy as lead, a few pieces joining to form the face of the Arctic Queen. Leylin’s body grew sluggish as a blade swiped at his chest. The fine Kemoyin’s Scales unexpectedly could not hinder the blade at all, and a wound opened up on his chest, blood spurting out. “I told you this is my mental world. Even if your defences are extremely powerful in the external world, I am the ruler here!” The paper doll standing in front of Leylin spoke slowly. “Is that so?” Leylin’s face was pale, his body in the external world evidently receiving a real injury. “If it’s true, wouldn’t you have killed me long ago? Why would you still be here spouting so much nonsense?”
“Nonsense?” The Arctic Queen’s brows lifted and raised her arms. Leylin had no idea which part of his speech had irritated her. The number of illusory figures increased greatly, and in practically an instant the area was completely filled with paper dolls of various colours.

“Since you wish to die, let me fulfil your wish!” Countless Arctic Queens pounced forth.

At this moment, however, a slight smile appeared about Leylin’s lips. “Found it!”

He suddenly moved forward, soul force undulating at his body and gathering on the cross blade, resulting in rays of flaming light that seemed endless.

“Cross Slash!” The gleaming cross blade sliced at a point in the sky.

*Crack! Crack!* It was like a mirror being shattered, and numerous shivering, spotted lights that resembled tadpoles appeared behind it.

“No! Impossible! How did you find out?” The Arctic Queen’s voice became high-pitched and piercing.

“Haha…” Leylin laughed maniacally, ignoring the fury of the Arctic Queen behind him and rushed headfirst into the sea of tadpoles.

“A.I. Chip! Begin destruction based on the previous plan…” Countless black threads appeared in Leylin’s hands and quickly dispersed. Even more mirrors shattered.

*Bang!* A slight tremor was produced by Leylin’s body, and his eyes instantly focused. He glanced at the icy castle and purple swamp as well as the cut on his chest and sighed, “I’m finally out!”

*Chi chi…* At this moment, a furious, high-pitched sound was emitted from under the castle.

“The opponent’s illusory spells are too powerful. I need to leave for now!” Just now, Leylin had lucked out. Depending on the A.I. Chip’s ability to find the gaps in the illusion, he’d managed to escape. The next time, the situation would be different. Even if he
could find the gaps again, successfully breaking through them was still an issue.
Leylin’s eyes flashed as he moved a long distance away in an instant.
The central region of the icy plains, outside the castle. Dazzling blue pillars emitted bright light, the most radiant of landmarks.

Groups of icy race clansmen and even beasts were attracted by the blue rays of light. The appeal was so strong that anyone who barred their paths was considered an enemy to be attacked. Leylin thought the pillars were like terrifying large-scale summoning spell formations. Anyone that possessed a bloodline related to ice and had grown up here could not resist the allure. Currently in front of him was a strange group. Savage icy beasts mingled with snow fairies and other intelligent beings, the only thing they had in common the desire and fervour in their eyes. They crossed land and water, heading in the direction of the palace as if on a pilgrimage.

Leylin had seen this many times already. After the illusory fight at the icy castle, the Arctic Queen had not moved to chase him, evidently being limited somehow. Instead, the range of her spell formation extended further, encompassing the entire world of ice. Icy beings flooded into the area day after day, nourishing their Queen.

Leylin obviously would not just watch on. Looking apathetic, he pressed down with his right arm.

*Rumble!* A gigantic palmprint appeared on the surface that was formed of solid ice. The snow fairies, ice leopards, and other
creatures all turned to powder.
Having taken care of this, Leylin’s brows furrowed as he hurried in another direction in which an even larger group had formed.
How populous was the world of ice? Even if Leylin did all he could to intercept them, many still managed to break through, turning into powder at the icy castle.
“Such absolute control… It’s a tragedy for the other races.” Watching the scene, Leylin sighed a little. It was obvious that the bloodlines of the various races in this world of ice had originated from the Arctic Queen, so when she decided to take them back, they could not resist at all.
The same situation would apply with the Snake Dowager. With her might and bloodline control, Leylin would probably be unable to rebel even if he was ordered to die. This was also what Leylin was trying his utmost to avoid.
‘It looks like the Arctic Queen has some sort of restriction on her body, which was why she had to groom Arwen. She also had to groom the many races in this world of ice, and use regular blood sacrifices to obtain strength, life force, and…’
Lights flashed in Leylin’s eyes. ‘The previous incident obviously enraged her. She actually summoned all the races in this miniature Icy World to their sacrificial deaths! Her aura is strengthening every day…’
At this thought, Leylin produced a few test tubes and flicked them out with his fingers.
Streaks of purple splashed on the backs of a few gigantic rank 3 beasts, forming strange runes that sank in. Noticing Leylin wasn’t blocking them anymore, they roared as they pressed forward towards the castle of ice.
Leylin frowned and arrived at a temporary dwelling. He’d been doing such a thing every day, but could not determine the efficacy of such an act.
“A.I. Chip, how’s the simulation of the soul defence coming along?”
[Beep! Soul defence spell pattern deduction at 97.6%! ] The A.I. Chip loyally intoned. It projected a faint phantom of a spell model that was almost complete.
[Rank 4 spell Soul Guard! Summing up the bloodline models of the Spirit Warlocks, the information from the database on the soul has been used to deduce a spell to defend against soul invasions. Referenced material: ‘Way of the Soul’, ‘A Primer on Spell Models’…]
There was a detailed introduction under this model, including the referenced materials which made up a long list.
Leylin wanted to deal with the Arctic Queen’s invasion into his soul. That she could actually break through his point mass to drag his truesoul into an illusion had horrified him. The moment a Morning Star Magus’ truesoul lost the protection of their point mass, it was extremely fragile. He had been lucky enough to escape the last time, or else with the opponent’s ability at connecting her illusions with reality, he would have died in the real world if he died in the illusion. This was why he’d had the A.I. Chip simulate a spell model urgently to protect his soul.
With the opponent not able to move freely, Leylin had a good opportunity. However, with the terrifying summoning currently underway and the vast region within which she could absorb life force, Leylin had no choice but to plan his move quickly.
He had considered using his Morning Star Arcane Art to destroy the castle, but he had no idea where the bloodline and remains of the Scorpion Man were. Furthermore, even the Giant Kemoyin Serpent would be restricted by the opponent’s main body, and wouldn’t be able to destroy the place in a single move.
An ancient bloodline creature’s usage of soul force could not compare to that of a Morning Star Magus, and they were
particularly vulnerable to such attacks. “Based on the current progress, it should be completed by tomorrow!” Leylin’s eyes glowed with intelligence. A normal Morning Star Magus would have to spend decades, even centuries, to deduce a rank 4 spell. This was especially true for one that dealt with the mysteries of the soul, and it would take even more time. With the A.I. Chip, it was merely a matter of how much processing power was allocated to the task. Once the model was done, it could directly be transmitted to Leylin’s memory, and even the process of familiarising himself with it could be done away with, saving him much time.

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A day later, above the castle of ice. Creatures and other beings with bloodlines related to ice would approach this place with a dazed look in their eyes, turning to powder at the place. The region of the energy absorption had grown several fold, and even the purple swamp had been weakened. “It looks like the Arctic Queen’s been working hard!” Blue light shone from Leylin’s eyes, and an energy beam struck down, opening up a pathway. Through continued observation and calculations, he’d long since learnt the details of this method of absorption. Finding an energy node based on the distribution was a simple task. “Rank 4 spell Soul Guard!” A green lustre appeared in Leylin’s eyes, spreading throughout his body. Fine runic chains formed in his sea of consciousness, yielding an even tighter defensive layer around the point mass. Footsteps sounded in the pathway that had been created by the explosion. What was formerly only a basement currently had a
number of roads and spaces below it.
The surface was full of solid ice, forming intricate patterns and images on the top.
Leylin took in a deep breath and stepped into the basement, “Arctic Queen, I’m here!”
The path was long, and light was sparse, only some feeble jade-green light leaking from the walls on both sides.
The terrifying icy radiation even affected spacetime here, causing Leylin to feel a sense of disorder.
A dense smell of rust spread throughout the channel as a multicolour light spread from the end. It was piercing to the eyes.
“Do not… come…” “Sinner…”
Deformed sounds were intermittently transmitted to Leylin’s ears, the contents only faintly discernible. The soul force of the Arctic Queen spread out, attempting to break through Leylin’s point mass and pull his truesoul into another illusion.
Prepared as he was, the green rays grew brighter on the surface of Leylin’s body, creating an illusory layer that began to tremble vigorously.
Large amounts of soul force were consumed as Leylin persevered under the Arctic Queen’s relentless attack on his soul.
[Soul invasion detected. Soul Guard has been engaged to resist. Beginning automatic adjustment of defensive structure.] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded continuously. With its precise calculations, Leylin’s soul force consumption was suddenly reduced. The external layer of green light somewhat stabilised.
“You will regret it!” “You will regret it!”
As she noticed that she was unable to break through Leylin’s defences, the Arctic Queen’s voice became piercing and seemed to hold within a poisonous curse. It then disappeared.
“I will only truly feel regret if I don’t get what I want!” Leylin sneered, eyes full of an intense resolution as he stepped onto the
unknown path ahead.

*Boom!* Large amounts of solid ice turned into powder, the jade-green runes breaking apart and then revealing the exit.

“You even needed Arwen to help you set up the defensive spell pattern! Seems like your body can’t move at all!” Leylin sighed as he walked out. After leaving the pathway, everything suddenly seemed spacious.

Leylin surveyed his surroundings. This seemed to be a natural underground cave. At the top was a tremendous slanting passageway. Deep imprints could be seen in it.

At the heart of the cave was a large depression, rays of jade light flickering within like fine threads that formed an enormous network.

Terrifying radiations were being emitted from within the depression, so dense they were practically tangible.

Leylin advanced grimly, finding a terrifying corpse at the centre of the depression. It was emitting Morning Star ranked energy undulations.

This was the real aura of an ancient bloodline; deep and lofty, bringing with it a sense of history that was filled with grandeur.

Arwen seemed like a mere inferior product in comparison to the giant corpse in front of him, full of flaws.

“We meet again, Scorpion Man!”

Leylin could not help but recall the ancient memory fragments that he had acquired from the Icy Jade Scorpion Emperor’s bloodline. Those fragmented pieces of information had originated from the Morning Star creature before him.

Leylin glanced at the depression and then the trail at the top, a scene appearing in his mind. The void had shattered, and Scorpion Man had dropped into the crust of the earth like a meteor, forming a tremendous depression. The radiation from his body had altered the area, forming the world of ice, and the being that succeeded
him had built the icy castle above the depression!
his is the source, the source of everything!” Leylin sighed. If not for the Scorpion Man dying here while carrying the bloodline of the female bronze giant, the entire world of ice would not have been formed. Hence, it wasn’t too much of a stretch to call him this world’s progenitor. Leylin’s body floated up to the place and slowly descended, arriving at the floor of the hollowed-out area. After seeing the Scorpion Man in full view, his pupils suddenly narrowed. In front of him was reclined the corpse of an enormous creature, half human half scorpion. Streaks of icy blue connected to the Scorpion Man through his skin like a spider web, injecting great amounts of life force and icy energy into him. And on the back of the Scorpion Man, strange green blood wriggled as if it had a life of its own. It even covered the Scorpion Man’s entire back, spreading in all directions. Green veins bulged all over the Scorpion Man’s body, writhing around. They were like lifeless pupils, full of eeriness. The corrosion of the green blood and blood vessels had slightly transformed the Scorpion Man’s appearance. Compared to the body in Leylin’s memory, the Scorpion Man’s now seemed thinner. Even its face had become more exquisite, appearing more feminine. Female characteristics were showing on its upper body as well. “Oh, no no no! This isn’t a corpse!” Leylin was astonished. Only
after drawing close had he realised that the Scorpion Man had a weak breath, his chest slowly throbbing. However, the small waves of life force seemed incomparably small when paired with the huge body, so small in fact that Leylin had neglected them at the start. “This Scorpion Man is actually alive!” Leylin stumbled a few steps back. At the same time, the Scorpion Man suddenly opened his eyes. “You’re here!” A familiar soul force wave began to attack Leylin’s defences. “You’re not the Scorpion Man! You’re the Arctic Queen… No, you’re the guardian of the Icy World, the female bronze giant!” Leylin blurted out. Dense black scales covered his entire body, and a few test tubes containing potions exploded out, forming a huge screen of light. His earring was activated, in standby to attack. Even as he was currently, Leylin did not dare to take the risk of facing an ancient creature that comprehended laws. Although he had made a rough guess before, the truth coming out still dazed him slightly. As he saw this scene, all the events flashed across Leylin’s mind rapidly, and he managed to establish a picture of what had happened quite quickly. The Snake Dowager had attacked the Icy World, and the female bronze giant had died during the war. A drop of her blood fell on the Scorpion Man’s body as he fell into a spatial crack, accompanying him as he arrived here by chance. The Scorpion Man had died on the spot, but the green blood on his back had survived! The female bronze giant was a terrifying creature that had crossed rank 7! She could even control certain laws and can reborn from a single drop of blood! Her bloodline inherited a part of her spiritual imprint. On top of that, even if the Scorpion Man’s Morning Star strength faded, his
body retained its vitality. The drop of such an ancient bloodline could obtain a new life here after separating from the main body. Yet, it was incomparably difficult to be reborn from a single drop of blood. Hence, it acted like a virus, seeking life to live off of, attempting to infect another party and transform it as required. And in Twilight Zone, was there any creature more suitable for this than the Scorpion Man? Without considering other factors, the mere problem of distance was enough to make a decision! Thus, the giant’s bloodline began living off the Scorpion Man’s corpse, even transforming it. This led to the emergence of female characteristics in his appearance. Such transformations not only required a large amount of time, but also a terrifying amount of life energy. Hence, the imprint of the giant formed a miniature Icy World through icy radiation, even producing life in this world of ice! Soon after, she used a portion of the Scorpion Man’s flesh to create a guardian for herself, Arwen. A guardian at the Morning Star realm was enough to suppress anything else in Twilight Zone. Hence, the giant hid behind the scenes while Arwen took charge of all the matters on the surface, regularly gathering icy creatures as blood sacrifices. This was to strengthen the Scorpion Man’s life energy, so as to nourish the giant’s blood. Initially, all of this was close to success. Once the transformation was successful, the giant would be reborn from the Scorpion Man’s body and become a new life. That is, it would have if Leylin hadn’t appeared. However, there are no ifs in life. Leylin’s appearance, and especially Arwen’s death, left the giant with no choice but to come forth personally and hasten the collection of flesh and life energy until this point. The Scorpion Man stared at Leylin and a calm soul force was transmitted from his body. “No! I am only a part of the giant. The
current me is a combination of a synthesised memory imprint and this Scorpion Man’s body! Thus, I am indeed the Arctic Queen!”

Upon hearing that, Leylin heaved a deep sigh of relief. Even if the opponent had the blood of a creature that controlled laws, its body was still not done with the transformation. It could not be considered a full resurrection yet, only a bloodline imprint struggling at death’s door.

Hence, the current Scorpion Man could not move at all. Even speaking needed to be accomplished through soul force, never mind anything else.

“If it’s like that, I still have a chance!” A brilliant glow burst forth from Leylin’s eyes.

Even if the Scorpion Man was done with its body’s transformation, it would only be a peak rank 4 at most, and by relying on the bloodline’s strength be comparable to a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus. However, Leylin had many cards in his hands and could still put up a fight. The opponent’s inability to move even gave him an advantage.

“Scorpion Man? This is the creature’s name?” Leylin asked.

“Yes! But I don’t like this appearance and need to modify him to draw him closer towards a Scorpion Woman. After all, the Scorpion Woman’s illusory ability is well known in the entire Icy World. Coincidentally, this innate skill matches with my bloodline as well. It’s just that this process and the reincarnation both require a lot of time…”

The Arctic Queen began answering Leylin like she was obliged to, as if she had suddenly become a different person.

“No wonder…” Leylin nodded but his pupils reflected a mocking look.

With a bang, the ground shook and something that seemed like a blue root emerged. Branches and leaves merged with the blue antennae on the Scorpion Man’s body, forming a cage which sealed
Leylin in it.
Snow white fog emerged from the Scorpion Man’s pores continuously, merging with the blue antennae and even forming a natural frosty rune on the surface.
“But luckily you’re here! With a human Morning Star’s flesh, by using Wor’s Sacrificial Rites to offer your point mass to the Ice Sovereign, I believe I can speed up the transformation process, even take it till completion!”
The Arctic Queen’s voice was cold, “Since you’ve killed Arwen, use your flesh to pay back your debt!”
A blood-red light blade emerged on Leylin’s palms, slashing the cage suddenly and causing a piercing boom.
Many snow white runes flickered, even forming a layer of hard blue ice. It froze the blade on the cage, and many more blue arms stretched towards Leylin.
“A 700 degree attack is also ineffective?”
Leylin dodged and retreated, analysing the runes on the cage, “Mere energy loops cannot have such an effect, could it be these runes?”
“Frost confinement runes from the ancient Icy World, with a record of imprisoning even Radiant Moon Magi! If you won’t believe that, you can try it for yourself!” The Arctic Queen began laughing hysterically, “Did you think that I won’t have the strength to strike back because I cannot move? I’ve said this before, you’ll definitely regret coming in!”
Leylin was not bothered by her piercing laughter, instead minding his own business as he came to the edge of the cage. “A.I. Chip, conduct a scan.”
“I’m afraid, with such a level, I could only escape from this place
by attacking a few times with full strength, using Kemoyin Serpent Transformation,” Leylin sighed, “Only, is there a need to?”

He stretched out both his hands, revealing a purple radiance. The moment this purple radiance came into contact with the cage, something bizarre happened. Black spots began spreading across the cage, unstoppable even by the ancient confinement runes. The entire cage was like an old wooden frame. It began to corrode rapidly, and thousands of holes appeared on it.

Leylin only exerted a slight force with his hands, and a huge hole opened up in the cage. He then walked out.

“Impossible!” The Arctic Queen’s piercing laughter immediately stopped.

“Nothing’s impossible! You ‘analysed’ my potion in detail, even removing the poison, but how can a potion I created be so easy to defeat?” Leylin laughed as a purple rune on his fingertip flickered irregularly.

As if this rune triggered some sort of chain reaction, large amounts of purple dots appeared on the Scorpion Man’s body, even sealing off the blood on his back.

Through his previous setup at the castle of ice and the trick he’d played on the icy creatures, Leylin had turned the tables in an instant, gaining the power to take the initiative.

“Hmph! Mere poison!” The Arctic Queen hummed coldly.

“I know. A bit of poison won’t affect an ancient Morning Star creature, unable to even last a few minutes. However, I only need a few minutes anyway…” Leylin averted his gaze from the Scorpion Man, watching the green blood on his back.

“You still don’t know right? I’m actually a Warlock, even a bloodline descendant of the Snake Dowager that caused your death! And for us Warlocks, separating blood and purifying genes are the simplest things ever…”
eylin’s voice held no enthusiasm as he mercilessly released thread-like rays of crimson light that pierced into the Scorpion Man’s back. The green blood began to squirm as if it had just seen its worst enemy.

Unfortunately, it was not just the blood of the female bronze giant that was affected by the poison. Even the voice of the Arctic Queen was turning sluggish.

Leylin paid no attention to the fervent pleas and offers of the Arctic Queen, instead focusing on refining the bloodline in his hands. With his manipulations, the green blood from the Scorpion Man’s back was slowly extracted, veins showing themselves one after the other.

“Ahh! The Snake Dowager… The Snake Dowager again.” The Arctic Queen’s voice calmed. “Even if I’ll die right away and be damned for eternity, I won’t let the Snake Dowager prevail!”

The green blood began to boil and rumble, bursting into verdant flames.

‘Hm? The toxins were removed ahead of time… As expected, the vitality of an ancient Morning Star creature is more powerful than that of one from the present. The potion’s been counteracted…’ Leylin’s brows furrowed, but he did not do anything to indicate he would give up.

It was way too rare to acquire the chance to refine the bloodline of an ancient creature, especially one that could comprehend laws.
Such a thing was almost never seen! Obviously, Leylin didn’t want to give up just like this.  
*Hss!* A large phantom snake appeared, and space immediately froze. Great power burst forth from Leylin’s body, locking onto the Scorpion Man and the blood.  
“Plan B then,” Leylin’s voice was cold, his eyes without any emotion.  
Great amounts of blood-coloured threads dug into the Scorpion Man’s back, forming forbidden runes after mixing with the poison. It caused the Arctic Queen’s movements to grow even more sluggish.  
“Give up! I know everything already, and have come up with a method specifically to deal with you!” Leylin’s voice held no sympathy, he spoke the truth.  
After a period of external observation, he’d run over ten thousand simulations with the A.I. Chip, preparing many contingency plans for this trip underground. He’d predicted this situation already, and prepared specific countermeasures against it.  
Leylin had stored tens of spell patterns to seal ancient bloodline in the A.I. Chip’s database.  
The Arctic Queen could not move about freely and had not finished her resurrection. In front of Leylin who had made meticulous preparations, her various attacks were destroyed in practically a single blow.  
Her cries had transformed into mournful wails. Even her sorrowful cries grew softer and softer. Her soul was being suppressed and weakened.  
“If your main body was around, you’d definitely be able to crush me like an ant, but it’s a pity that you’re only a droplet of her blood. You haven’t even revived yourself completely…” Leylin spoke calmly, eyes flashing with a peculiar light.  
There was no reply as the soul force from the other side died.
down, and then began to weaken at a terrifying rate. Large amounts of green blood withdrew and returned to the back of the Scorpion Man, and the green blood vessels rejoined with the blood. Green blood mixed together, decreasing in volume yet becoming brighter and more vibrant. It emitted a dark, bronze light.

‘What’s going on? Has she really given up?’ Suspicion flickered in Leylin’s mind. He put his guard up, but still retained the same front. With the Arctic Queen’s movements, the green blood that had been spread out gathered to form a single droplet of resplendent bronze blood.

“The original blood of the Icy World’s Guardian?” Leylin’s eyes grew dazed, his voice full of emotion. This was the blood of an existence that controlled laws, an existence with rank 7 strength at the very least! It even held the imprint of its original owner, able to revive the being from this single drop.

The effects of Leylin’s purification began to show themselves as the blood condensed on the Scorpion Man’s body.

“Yield!” Leylin took out a notebook with a slightly yellow cover. He opened it up to reveal a slight lustre from the title page. At the centre of the page was a round sealing spell formation.

“Bloodline Sealing Tome? No!” The Arctic Queen’s originally feeble energy undulations suddenly reverberated once more, her voice distorting, becoming androgynous as it turned hoarse.

“The Snake Dowager and her blood, the Icy World shall forever be your enemy!” Her voice became masculine, awakening some sort of ancient memories and sending a malicious curse Leylin’s way.

“As the bronze empress, the Guardian of the Icy World, I offer a sacrifice… skmgkl…” Leylin did not recognize who exactly she was making a sacrifice to.

“You may have had the upper hand today, but you could never have thought of laws! That is a strength that surpasses your
understanding…”
“I offer up all the laws I possess. Strength of skmgkl, descend!”
The dark green flames crackled as their strength grew tenfold, and even the tremendous Morning Star body of the Scorpion man was eaten into rapidly.
Large amounts of runic chains cracked, and the poison withdrew. Even Leylin’s bloodline extraction spell was forcefully interrupted.
“This is… the power of laws? Unthinkable! It’s only a single drop of blood…” Leylin’s face grew pale, suffering the backlash from a spell being interrupted.
However, he did not have the time to think further. That droplet of blood which contained laws had already been offered. After breaking the seal, it turned into a shooting star as it charged towards Leylin.
The energy defences shattered layer by layer as the blood advanced, unimpeded even by the Kemoyin Scales and the Scarlet Earring.
The blood slammed into Leylin’s chest, splattering all across his body. One could hear the hissing as it corroded him away.
White fumes shot up as the Kemoyin Scales on Leylin’s chest fell apart visibly, piece by piece. A pool of green liquid had latched onto his chest, burning into it.
The Kemoyin Scales softened and fell off one after another with no end in sight, revealing charred flesh and bones.
[Beep! Host’s chest has severe burns. Immediate treatment recommended.] [Beep! Detected corrosion of host by unknown energy. Expulsion procedures recommended] the A.I. Chip reported immediately.
“I’ve burned the power of the laws in my body as well as the remains of the Scorpion Man. The result is an explosive force that can kill even Radiant Moons…
“Let us be buried together in the ice and snow, you who contain the
bloodline of the Snake Dowager!” The Arctic Queen’s voice grew lower and lower as it eventually disappeared. The terrifying green blood had spread from his torso to his limbs, verdant blood vessels crawling over Leylin’s face. It caused him to look sinister and horrifying.

[Beep! Warning! Warning! Life and soul force of host is being consumed at a heavy rate. Immediate action required. Time until collapse of genes: 34s…]

The prompt box that the A.I. Chip ejected had a very dense blood-red colour in the frame, displaying the danger of the situation. If he was not careful, he could lose his life.

“It’s finally reached this point…”

Though half of Leylin’s body was being corroded by the green blood as he laid on the ground, there was no trace of dismay on his ice-cold face. Instead, it seemed as if a scheme of his had succeeded.

“With 3410 possible scenarios as well as 982 sudden occurrences, the opponent chose the method of mutual destruction. Not like that was a surprise…”

Even with preparations, the corrosion from the bloodline of a creature that comprehended laws caused Leylin to cough violently, large amounts of fresh blood seeping through his fingers.

*Hss…* Behind him, the tremendous figure of a Giant Kemoyin Serpent came into view once more. Now, however, its energy was unstable. Tinted dark green, were burning on the body of the giant serpent.

It was not just the figure behind him. Leylin felt even the Giant Kemoyin bloodline in his body being eaten into; expelled and even destroyed!

“Bloodline Ignition!” Blood-red light surged from Leylin’s eyes as the purple blood of the Kemoyin Serpent was enriched several fold which was now filled with insanity and fury.
A large amount of his own blood bubbled up, purple confronting green. Leylin rolled to his side and got up. Though using Bloodline Ignition to fight was like fixing thirst by drinking poison, he now had control over his own body again, albeit temporarily. “The A.I. Chip has already simulated this several times, and the rate of success is as high as at 90%!” Leylin clenched his fists tightly. “A 90% chance is enough for me to take the risk!” A resolute look appeared on Leylin’s face. “If I can’t climb to the top in this lifetime, I would rather die and rot as sludge! “Sun’s Child imprint!” He abruptly took off the white glove on his right hand, the golden-red bloodline imprint emitting dazzling light. [Activating plan ‘Thoroughfare’. Support and trajectory activated!] The A.I. Chip intoned. An enormous blazing light spread in this underground world, as if a sun had risen within. Everywhere the flaming light, be it soil, rocks, or spells of ice, everything was vapourised immediately, causing the underground cave to expand rapidly. The beings still in the world of ice could see a tremendous sun rising from the castle, imparting heat and light to this underground world. The ever-unchanging ice began to melt, mountains collapsing as doomsday seemed to have arrived. Ice melted into flowing water, which quickly evaporated itself. The white vapour spread everywhere, turning into a layer of fog in the surroundings. Quickly, the original dark brown soil was revealed once more. The range of this heat continued to expand, as if ready to transform the entire world of ice.
Sun Scorching Nirvana! Formed from the similarly ranked bloodline of the Sun’s Child, this was a rank 6 spell that Leylin had spent a lot of effort to create. It had finally displayed its terrifying prowess. The last time it was used, not only had this spell caused the fall of a Radiant Moon Magus, but it also caused near irreparable harm to Sky City.

And now, the emergence of the golden sun was about to completely melt this world of ice.

“Here we go!” Leylin’s right palm was placed on his chest, terrifying rank 6 spell undulations flowing out berserkly like a stormy tide. The rank 6 spell this time was going to be used on himself!

Boiling heat caused Leylin’s body to immediately turn transparent as if turning him into a human-shaped light bulb. If not for his outstanding vitality and Fireplume operating at full strength, Leylin would probably have turned into ashes in that instant. Perhaps it wouldn’t even be ashes; his body and soul might just have been burned to nothingness.

However, with his high resistance towards fire, the fact that he had experience using this spell, and Fireplume, he could somewhat control the strength of the spell. With the immense control of the A.I. Chip, golden energy flowed past Leylin’s body, tangling with the greenish bronze blood.

“Energy of the sun, destroy the power of laws found in the bronze
bloodline” Leylin howled maliciously, his facial muscles contorting. *Rumble!* Boiling golden flames vapourised the green blood. In the process, threads of energy that had been purified to the extreme began to emanate from the bronze blood, flowing into Leylin’s limbs and bones. The Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline that had been bubbling and boiling began to absorb this energy frantically, resulting in a strange transformation. The colour of the blood grew deeper, and the phantom serpent grew silent as it was surrounded by a layer of greenish gold flames.

By now, the Kemoyin bloodline was rid of the contamination of the Purgatory World’s will and its seals were unlocked. It operated and surged madly in Leylin’s body like the bluster of a gigantic dragon. [Beep! Host bloodline absorbing unknown energy. Evolution has begun…] the A.I. Chip loyally intoned, at the same time displaying a progress bar that rose quickly with help of that bronze blood.

“It’s a success!” Leylin’s lips twitched, though the tremendous pressure on his body made even such a small action difficult.

Indeed, this has been his original plan! Leylin had no better options regarding the bloodline shackles, and had been looking for a way to bypass them. Through the database he’d acquired at Sky City as well as the A.I. Chip’s terrifying calculation and simulation abilities, he’d acquired two methods to do it.
One was to try changing his bloodline, though that would cause issues with the soul. With the A.I. Chip as it was now, though, he had some confidence in achieving this. The second method was to dig deeper into the power of his own bloodline. Bloodline shackles restricted Warlocks to the upper limit of their base bloodline. Practically everyone thought this was rank 4 in the case of Kemoyin Warlocks, but what if he could dig into the roots of the Kemoyin’s genes itself, evolving the bloodline further into the realms of rank 5 and above? That way, he could
advance to Radiant Moon successfully!
Of course, both these methods still had the same fundamental problem. They could not break the bloodline shackles themselves. Whether it be changing bloodlines or improving his own, it would only push the bar higher. The bloodline shackles would remain, waiting to present themselves at a higher rank.
However, Leylin still had the method given to him by the Wisdom Tree. Although it was feasible, it was not something he could accomplish with his current strength. Thus, he was confident that once he possessed more strength, he could execute his other plans. This was why his main objective in this journey to the subterranean world was to strengthen his bloodline.
Leylin’s soul had already fused with that of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, so he would not be foolish enough to try and change his bloodline. Even if he could succeed somehow, it would still cause devastating damage to his fragile soul once he did it. Thus, digging deeper into the power of his own bloodline was the only method.
Through Arwen’s Icy Breath helping him resolve the problem of his emotional instability, the purity of his bloodline had reached an unprecedented level. Now, it had a chance to advance further. And the bronze giant’s bloodline? It was just the kind of powerful force that could push this sort of advancement!
With the Sun’s Flames suppressing the world of ice, he had burned away the miscellaneous soul imprints, spirit imprints, and other such things out of the bronze blood, leaving behind only the primal strength of the bloodline itself. This was what allowed him to advance the power of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent.
This was the plan Leylin had come up with. For this reason, he had deliberately provoked the Arctic Queen. For this reason, he’d forced her to offer up the laws in her body in an attempt to deal him a fatal blow!
Now, with no more free will, the bronze blood could no longer
stand the burning of the Sun’s Flames. Not only did it reduce in volume, even the bronze lustre on its surface gradually died down. [Beep! Host body igniting ancient bloodline. Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in process of evolution. Progress: 80%… 95%… 99%…] the A.I. Chip loyally intoned.

*Rumble!* At this moment, the bloodline imprint on Leylin’s right hand completely dissipated, and the Sun’s flames grew to their greatest intensity. Terrifying golden flames fused with the bronze bloodline and the two suddenly exploded, destroying each other. A bloodline energy that seemed as vast as the starry sky burst forth from that explosion. Leylin cried out as this burst of strength pushed it over the edge. The A.I. Chip showed that the progress bar had been completely filled!

[Beep! Host bloodline evolution complete. Searching for information… Determined to be Kemoyin Serpent Emperor!]

[Kemoyin Serpent Emperor: A rare evolved form of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent. Possess a great strength and magical ability. Having broken through their original limits to enter a higher level, these creatures rule colonies of Kemoyin Serpents. Rank 5. Attributes: Darkness, Fire. Supplementary abilities:
1. Control: The Kemoyin Serpent Emperor possesses sovereignty over all Giant Kemoyin Serpents and their descendants.
2. Devouring. The Kemoyin Serpent Emperor can digest all energy not supported by laws to supplement its own life force.]

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded once more, but Leylin was unaware of this all. The moment his bloodline evolution had succeeded, he felt dizzy, his body practically floating. Large amounts of images streaked past his eyes. In the boundlessly vast starry skies, numerous Giant Kemoyin Serpent figures appeared, lowering their gigantic serpent heads to him as if welcoming their ruler.

At the same time, a terrifying giant serpent that was over a hundred
thousand metres long appeared behind him. It had beautiful scales and flowing, graceful curves. On the head, a few protruding bones formed something similar to a crown.
The whole serpent was filled with an elegance and grandeur typical to a ruler, the original savage and terrifying aura having dulled. However, Leylin knew that this ruler of snakes was far more terrifying than before. This graceful demeanor was a facade, concealing the bloodthirst and insanity within.
With but a slight though, Leylin could sense Freya, Gilbert, Emma, and the other Kemoyin Warlocks through their bloodlines.
‘This terrifying control… truly worthy of the emperor of Giant Kemoyin Serpents!’ Leylin smiled as he observed his truesoul. His soul had gained the most through this evolution.
Crimson light expanded rapidly. His truesoul was now several times larger than before, half as large as the soul of a Radiant Moon Magus. The light within it even surpassed that within the soul of a New Moon Magus!
The soul had begun to expand, about to transform into a full moon.
“With the strength of my soul, I can probably be considered a rank 5 already. As long as I go back and settle things, it won’t be a problem to break through.” Leylin huffed roughly, but the elation was evident in his expression.
He was currently not in very good shape. Though he had prepared ample defensive measures, it was still no easy task to let his body be a battlefield between the Sun’s Flames and the bronze blood.
Leylin laughed wryly as he scanned his body. The injuries to his chest were the most serious of all; skin, blood and flesh had melted away, revealing internal organs that were pulsing slightly. An arm had disappeared, and the rest of his body was severely damaged as well.
If this were a regular Magus or Warlock, such grave injuries would probably have long since resulted in their deaths. However, Leylin’s
heart was still throbbing powerfully, displaying his tenacious life force!

[Beep! Damage to host body at 45%. Recommendation: Immediate cryostasis in combination with the usage of bloodline force to recuperate.] the A.I. Chip loyally reminded him.

“That isn’t urgent. Show me information on the fifth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil!” Leylin commanded. Immediately after, he was delighted to see that after attaining the bloodline of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor, the A.I. Chip’s deduction of Kemoyin’s Pupil had proceeded successfully. The fifth layer of the meditation technique was completed!

“The last piece of the puzzle is in place…” Leylin muttered. Having reached Morning Star, he had been thinking about how to break through to Radiant Moon. The bloodline shackles and meditation technique were the two biggest problems, and now that he’d evolved to an emperor bloodline and the fifth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil had been deduced, Leylin had spent much effort on them, and now, the fifth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil had been deduced, there were no more problems in this aspect. It could be said that all his problems had disappeared.

*Hss!* The phantom of an enormous Kemoyin Serpent Emperor appeared behind Leylin, wrapping him in bloodline energy.
Gigantic and graceful, the phantom of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor that held an elegance befitting a ruler appeared behind Leylin’s back. Large amounts of blood-coloured energy shrouded him. The serpent emperor snarled as a black hole appeared in front of it, sucking in the surrounding ice, earth, rocks, the remains and even the air.

Once large amounts of materials disappeared into its mouth, Leylin felt a powerful life force begin to circulate within his body. His body buzzed as first the skeleton, then his internal organs, blood, flesh, and finally the skin was regenerated. With the help of a powerful life force, the injuries on his body recovered at a frightening rate.

‘Could this be the rumoured devouring ability of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor?’ Leylin had a thought. Immediately after, he felt his arm go numb, and the limb that had been broken off began to regenerate. In just ten or so seconds, the grave injury was completely recovered.

This speed left even Leylin in shock. ‘With this rate of recovery, I can recover quickly even in a battle against a Radiant Moon. I could even endure a Morning Star Arcane Art with just my body, immediately restoring myself afterwards! If the devouring ability is already so terrifying, what about that of control?’ he wondered.

The information about the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor had been lost in ancient times, and a large portion of the information that was
gathered had been derived by the A.I. Chip from his bloodline memories. It was rather small, but just looking at the description he could tell that his control over Kemoyin Warlocks was great. Great enough, in fact, that if he commanded a Morning Star Kemoyin Warlock to die, the other party would not be able to resist at all.

*Hss* Though he had completely recovered, the Giant Kemoyin Serpent figure at Leylin’s back was still unsatisfied. It abruptly broke through the layer of soil and soared into the air.

A terrifying suction force appeared, and everything, be it living or otherwise, was dragged towards the black hole that had appeared in the serpent’s mouth.

The force spread out farther than even the bounds of the castle, radiating into the surroundings. Leylin could see several powerful creatures, many at the Crystal Phase, dragged from the sky by force as they disappeared into the black hole.

Practically every being in this world of ice automatically bowed their heads in respect and fear, trembling bodies paralysed under the suppression of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor.

The accumulated life force was enormous, eventually forming a cocoon that covered Leylin. The Kemoyin Serpent Emperor at Leylin’s back continued to snarl unceasingly, and only after almost devouring the entirety of the central icy plains did it pull back into the cocoon of light, satisfied.

Leylin was undergoing a wondrous transformation within. Powerful bloodline energy fused with boundless life force, aiding Leylin in his bid to charge into rank 5.

He was becoming a rank 5 Warlock, a Radiant Moon! There were likely no more than twenty Radiant Moons in the entire central continent, second only to the Breaking Dawn Monarchs. It was also precisely due to the Radiant Moons in the Union that bloodline Warlocks still survived to this day.

On top of that, this event was even more significant for Leylin. He
had finally moved past the bloodline shackles of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, and now had the wherewithal to try to become a rank 5.

“I already reached the peak of Morning Star after fusing Fireplume into my point mass, so I already meet the requirements for the advancement. And now that the bloodline and technique that were holding me back are solved…” Leylin chuckled lightly.

With the cooperation of the bloodline of the rank 5 Kemoyin Serpent Emperor, his advancement was smooth. The fifth level of Kemoyin’s Pupil that the A.I. Chip had just deduced began to operate slowly.

The point mass in his sea of consciousness buzzed as it revolved quickly, growing in density as the nebula surrounding it began another round of frantic expansion. Another layer of fine black runes emerged on top of it.

With the probing of the soul through the A.I. Chip, Leylin could see the truesoul located at the heart of the point mass beginning to evolve.

Probing through his A.I. Chip, Leylin saw his truesoul at the heart of his point mass breaking through its limits at the peak of Morning Star, expanding to form the shape of a moon. It was glittering with a fine radiance that filled it with a sense of perfection.

Soul force was constantly poured in, causing the round moon to emanate a cool lustre. Once that was completed, his soul that was a size larger than that of normal Radiant Moon Magi had on it a layer of soul force that looked like a crescent moon that emitted an intense radiance.

‘I don’t have enough soul force to fill my truesoul. In fact, I don’t even have enough to fill half the volume… It seems like I’m a New Moon…’ Leylin suddenly came to an understanding of how Radiant Moons trained.

Ranks 4 to 6 involved the training of soul force. Morning Stars
were still fumbling around without direction; it was when one advanced to Radiant Moon that they began true training. The soul, which was in the shape of a moon showed how much soul force one had with its radiance. Rank 5 Magi had to train and fill it up. The different amounts of fullness represented the different stages of New Moon, Half Moon, and Full Moon Magi.

[Beep! Host’s soul force has been strengthened. Chip upgrade commencing… Time to completion: 4m24s.]

With the advancement of his soul, the A.I. Chip was undergoing its upgrade immediately as well, having been fused into it. Perhaps it was because it had already gained quite a bit from Sky City, the advancement this time was quite rapid. In less than five minutes, it had completed its upgrade and rebooted.

The sounds of the A.I. Chip rang once more. [Beep! Host’s Kemoyin’s Pupil meditation technique has reached the fifth level. Advancing to rank 5 Warlock!]

[Beep! Host has advanced to become a Radiant Moon Warlock. All statistics have been significantly strengthened, recalculating…]

The familiar robotic voice seemed to be accompanied with a changed interface, the screen projected in Leylin’s mind even more solid than before.

‘Looks like the A.I. Chip has undergone a huge transformation!’ Leylin touched his chin.

[Data collection complete. Display?] The A.I. Chip launched another prompt. Leylin nodded as he voiced his approval. The A.I Chip immediately projected the refreshed numbers before Leylin’s eyes.


“It really deserves to be called the bloodline of the Kemoyin
Emperor. The numbers were raised to such a huge extent!” Leylin’s expression was filled with glee. Not only had his spiritual force broken through 1000, his strength and agility which had not improved in a very long while had increased as well. His vitality had been raised by over 30 points, which was just terrifying!

“I never expected that the growth of Kemoyin Warlocks would only become more frightful with time!” Leylin read through his stats and could not help but sigh.

He felt the soul energy in his body that was as cool as water. It was soul force that had reached rank 5, and was of a higher quality than that at Morning Star, therefore having better effects. However, there was no elation in Leylin’s expression.

“The issue of the bloodline shackles still has not been dealt with. I’ve only pushed it back by a rank, and this time there’s no such thing as raising the rank of my bloodline anymore!” Leylin gazed at the prompt at the bottom of the stats frame and turned grim.

[Host’s Kemoyin bloodline has reached limits of genes. Unable to advance further.]

The A.I. Chip was plainly telling Leylin that after reaching the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor, he had reached the limits of his bloodline. At least Kemoyin Serpents had no way to advance to a higher realm.

An ominous feeling, like his future path had been cut off, emerged in Leylin’s mind…

*BOOM!* The cocoon of light in the world of ice burst apart, revealing Leylin within.

“Whatever it is, I’ve finally attained my goal in coming to the subterranean world this time. I just didn’t expect the remains of the Scorpion Man to be burnt up along with my opponent. It’s slightly regretful that I didn’t manage to obtain the coordinates to the Icy World…” Leylin sighed ruefully, turning into a black figure that disappeared into the void.
The long majestic river that was the astral plane flowed on, many foreign worlds like the stars in the galaxy. They were a brightly coloured array, twinkling with varying lustres.
In one such world, full of flames and shadows, a boundless darkness formed a dense fog that completely covered the continent. Numerous ancient, terrifying serpents grew and multiplied in this place, terrifying auras at Morning Star advancements appearing everywhere.
At the heart of the continent, the holy land of all snakes, Morning Star serpents could be seen everywhere. The closer one got to the centre, the more horrifying they became, as rank 5 and even ran 6 snakes flashed by on occasion.
In a gigantic spatial crack, a coiled ball of snake the size of a star revealed the alluring figure of the Snake Dowager. The moment Leylin reached rank 5, she opened a pair of misty eyes that seemed like water.
“I’d never thought that today, after the end of the ancient era, an Emperor would awaken among the Kemoyin race!” The eyes of the Snake Dowager seemed to penetrate across multiple worlds and the astral plane, locking onto the Magus World and a young Warlock.
To her, a Morning Star was just a basic soldier. Rank 5s and 6s were worthy of attention, and such a thing as the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor that could control the Giant Kemoyin Serpents was even more worthy of interest.
“The power of destiny is guiding you here…” The life and death of multiple worlds flashed across her beautiful eyes. Two mandara flowers, one bright and one dark, bloomed in them before dissipating.
Destiny, seen through the eyes of the Snake Dowager!

The beautiful eyes of the Snake Dowager seemed to see into fragments of the future, penetrating the long river of destiny.

After her prophecy, the Snake Dowager coiled back into the ball, seeming to sink back into a deep slumber.

“What’s going on? I feel like somebody’s watching me and I have an ominous feeling!”

The very instant the Snake Dowager’s sight set into the Magus World, Leylin who was in the midst of flying, felt his hair stand on end. An odd mixture of terror and reverence appeared in his mind.

“The Snake Dowager…” Leylin felt a bitterness in his mouth. Never had he expected that once he had advanced into a rank 5 Warlock, he would arouse her interest.

‘But this is the Magus World. It isn’t that easy for her to come over!’ Whether this sort of attention was good or bad, Leylin had no wish to form any sort of relationship with an existence at such a level. He’d always liked to operate after careful planning, and even if it was the Snake Dowager, he hoped to seek her out only after making his own preparations. That was better than being passive and letting her find him.

‘A Radiant Moon strength shouldn’t be enough to arouse the interest of the Snake Dowager, unless…’ Leylin touched his chin, light flickering in his eyes, ‘Could it be that my Kemoyin Serpent Emperor bloodline is making her feel… threatened?’
Leylin couldn’t help but turn his attention back to the summary the A.I. Chip had given him about his bloodline, specifically the row that detailed his control ability.

“Kemoyin Serpent Emperors have a total dominance over Giant Kemoyin Serpents and all their descendants. Could this result in some overlap and conflict with the Snake Dowager’s own rule?”

Leylin suddenly had the urge to try it out. If he and the Snake Dowager were to give a Kemoyin Warlock an order at the same time, what would they do?

However, such an insane idea was quickly suppressed. With his current strength, challenging the Snake Dowager’s authority is equivalent to death.

The ability of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor to rule over others was, in fact, a breakthrough for him to resist the Snake Dowager’s control over himself. It was like a seedling that needed to be watered regularly until it bloomed and bore fruit.

Before all this, he needed to keep a low profile, silently amassing strength and prepare to soar, waiting till he completely broke through the bloodline shackles and also broke free from the control of the Snake Dowager!

……

“I’ve found it! This is Mount Asura…” A few figures robed in black appeared over a volcano. Large amounts of lava spurted into the sky, but it bypassed their bodies without even so much as a ripple.

“Time Recall!” One of the black robed figures looked solemn as he used a spell, dazzling light being generated at his fingertips.

The translucent face of a mirror suddenly appeared before him, revealing a blurred scenery.

After summoning this mirror, the black-robed figure seemed
fatigued as he spoke to another Magus behind him, “Carol, it’s up to you now, you’re the most adept in this aspect…”
“Alright!” While the Magus behind him was wearing a black robe, her physique was evidently smaller than the others, and her voice was gentle and agreeable.
“Aura Extraction!” She stood before the screen, right arm as smooth and bright as jade as it went through the surface, grabbing hold of a black gas.

*Wooh wooh…* After this stream of gas appeared, the magic equipment on the bodies of these people displayed a dazzling luster and made noises.

“The nose of the hound has reacted. Looks like he was here before, and not too long ago either!” The leading Magus spoke with conviction.
A Magus began to gnash his teeth. “And here we were thinking he’d return to the south coast. Who’d have thought he’d escape into the underground like a mouse!”
Leylin’s concealing techniques were far too complicated, and even Magi who excelled in prophecies could do nothing against him. Things were even more complicated for these Magi.
However, the powerful organisation backing them had gathered a lot of information, and through the method of elimination, they’d found a trace of Leylin’s whereabouts.
The Magus who had spoken before evidently was very hostile towards Leylin, emanating a dangerous air. “Warlocks have enhanced bodies, and their skin is the best raw material for art pieces. This Leylin’s skin will be a perfect addition to my study room!”
The female Magus from before shrieked, “Eugene, if you don’t change that disgusting hobby, I’ll break off all relations with you!”
“Enough! Though the target is merely a Morning Star, it’s publicly acknowledged that he possesses battle strength at the Radiant Moon
realm. Don’t underestimate him!” The leader said, putting a stop to their conversation, “Be more careful. He’s taken a Radiant Moon down before; if you don’t want your truesoul to be thrown back into the astral plane, buck up and don’t look down on your opponent!”

“Hmph! I alone can take care of two Radiant Moons like Stuart!” Eugene huffed disdainfully, but did not continue speaking after that. After all, he believed that he could defeat Stuart, but he had no methods that could cause the other party’s death. Not even a peak Radiant Moon or Breaking Dawn Monarch dared guarantee that they could eliminate a Radiant Moon Magus without letting their opponent escape. Leylin, who possessed the power to kill a Radiant Moon Magus, was very outstanding.

“Though he made use of a bloodline imprint to kill Stuart, even I have to admit that he’s a genius to be able to push the Giant Kemoyin bloodline to the peak of Morning Star until it is comparable to Radiant Moons. He’s a real genius! Even in ancient times, he would be one of the most dazzling stars!” Carol’s voice held a sigh within.

“A genius amongst Warlocks!” The leader spoke coldly, causing Carol to fall silent, “The more geniuses the enemy has, the weaker we are. Leylin must be erased!” His voice was icy cold, and Eugene and Carol nodded solemnly.

“Boss, I just don’t understand. Even if Leylin’s amazing now, he has the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline. Kemoyin’s Pupil only has up to four levels, and the Morning Star realm is his limit. Why are we hunting him down so fervently? Even while we were chasing Golden Lion Wayde when he was a Morning Star, we didn’t operate on such a large scale…” Carol’s face was full of doubt, and Eugene’s ears perked up.

“That’s because you don’t understand the terror that is the Giant
Kemoyin Serpent…” The leading Magus answered coldly, but did not continue, leaving Carol and Eugene bewildered.

“I don’t care what you think, but whatever it is, killing Leylin Farlier is the most important task sent down by our organisation. It must be completed, even at the cost of our lives!” The leader’s expression was solemn.

Carol and Eugene nodded coldly. Amongst Magi, this was truly a rare sight. To be able to bind the ever-rational Magi to this extent meant the organisation backing them was exceptionally powerful.

“In addition, Leylin as he is right now is very difficult to deal with, especially with people from the Warlock Union meddling. They’re rather protective of this younger generation…”

In spite of the warning, Eugene was full of confidence. “Don’t worry, boss! If the real bodies of those Warlocks dare emerge from the Morning Star area, our Monarch wouldn’t let them off so easily…”

“Mm! Based on the intel, the target had been a ruler of Twilight Zone for a period of time and must be extremely familiar with the situation there. We need to act very cautiously when we go down there…”

The leading Magus continued to express his caution before three flickering rays of light pierced into the lava like sharp blades, following the lava pathway and sinking downwards.

If even Morning Star Magi could pass through the barrier, there was no issue at all for Radiant Moons.

……

In Twilight Zone, the headquarters of Nature’s Alliance Academy. The academy had now regained its previous vibrance. Ever since Leylin’s return, the humans of Twilight Zone broke away from the darkness of war, and even gained a glorious victory! All this would
have been unimaginable in the past, but had been easily attained with Leylin’s arrival.
Leylin’s gigantic black stone statue was still at the center of the bustling square in all its glory, but now there was another in the corner.
This statue had a distorted human face, nose and eyes squeezed together due to extreme shock and terror; it seemed rather comical. Coupled with the assumed motion of the body, it looked like a clown, creating a stark contrast with Leylin’s statue in the middle. Whenever a few of the official Magi in the academy passed by the statue, their eyes filled with a trace of panic that did not dissipate for a long while.
This clownish stone statue was naturally that Banker from before. Though he was a rank 3 Magus who was once regarded as the strongest human, he’d been killed by Leylin without any chance to retaliate. Even his body had become a stone figure, exhibited here for eternity to be sneered at by later generations.
This method immediately resulted in incessant terror in the Magi’s hearts. There were also some who were filled with reverence towards Leylin.
“What is it? Is there anything else?” In the luxurious villa, Leylin reclined on the sofa, watching the Magus that seemed to be short of time.
It was obvious that this young man was extremely nervous, his eyes showed his admiration and apprehension at meeting his idol face to face.
“Lord Protector!” Will’s face was filled with emotion and uneasiness, “If you knew my mother, would you know about my father?”
“Jenny never told you?” Leylin watched Will with interest. It had to be said that he was still somewhat similar to his father.
“No. Everytime she talked about it, she got so sorrowful…” Will
hanged his head low.
“There are some things we don’t know, and something things we can’t tell you even if we knew!” Leylin laughed as he stroked Will’s head. “The only thing I can tell you is that I’d chosen to bring you into Nature’s Alliance Academy…”
Will walked out dejectedly. He had gained no further insight than Leylin’s encouragement. Other than that, he felt that this father whom he had never seen before was shrouded in a layer of dense fog.

“What’s wrong with Will?” Celine had instantly noticed this anomaly as she walked into Leylin’s villa carrying a silver plate.

“Freshly grounded coffee, personally made by me!” On the silver plate, white mist floated above the beige can and mug.

“Nothing much! Just a youth’s confusion!” Leylin smiled, held up a cup of coffee and said, “The taste is still as good as before!”

“You… How long are you going to be staying this time?” Celine bit her lips, watching Leylin with an evasive gaze. Compared to the previous time they met, Leylin now seemed like an ordinary man; there were no powerful energy waves being transmitted from his body anymore.

And yet, she knew that this was only a sign of Leylin becoming more powerful. It seemed like he had gained many things during his journey to the Icy Cave.

However, even if she’d known beforehand, Celine could only smile bitterly. One could only gain as much as their strength allowed them. Even if she knew about the existence of the world of ice before Leylin, any one of the giant icy creatures in there could kill her without even leaving her corpse behind.

And now, Celine keenly sensed that Leylin had already gained what
he wanted, which was why Twilight Zone no longer attracted him. This discovery immediately made her uneasy.

“It may be quite some time, but it won’t be longer than a year!” Leylin took a sip of the rich and mellow coffee. However, the words he said caused Celine’s face to turn pale.

For a Magus, a year’s time was too short. Regardless of what was being done, it was not nearly enough. Even an experiment required a lot more time than this.

Seeing Celine’s unwilling expression, Leylin secretly sighed, but he did not say anything else. The entire Twilight Zone was just too barren. This place where even a rank 3 Magus could act like a tyrant and become a ruler was honestly too small. Only the larger central continent and the astral plane where there were endless profound mysteries were worthy of Leylin’s residence, allowing him to travel as much as he wanted in the future.

“In that case, can you let me follow you to the central continent?” Celine clenched her teeth.

“Of course you can, but I have to tell you a few things first!” Leylin looked at Celine with a profound expression in his pupils, “In the central continent, rank 2 Magi are merely like ants, their sheer number inconceivable. With your current strength, you will only be in the lowest rung of society there. Also, I already have a wife… Are you going to be willing to give up everything in Twilight Zone and leave with me?”

After hearing Leylin speak honestly about him already having a wife, Celine stumbled a few steps back, obviously not expecting it. And upon hearing that she had to give up the entirety of Twilight Zone, her expression darkened even further.

After a long silence, she finally made a decision. Smiling bitterly, she said, “Alright! I cannot give up on Mentor’s wish, nor on Twilight Zone. This is my home!”

Leylin smiled, “Perhaps I can make it up to you in other aspects!”
For example, didn’t you want my bloodline very badly before?”
This was a decision Leylin had made after long and careful deliberation. His current Kemoyin’s bloodline had already evolved to an extreme point, even reaching its genetic limits. There was no more room for improvement. Hence, the time was finally right to grow his family.
A rank 5 Warlock’s bloodline would be sufficient to form a terrifying power in a short period of time. With the restriction of the bloodline and his own ability as emperor to control all Giant Kemoyin Serpents, these bloodline descendants would become his most capable assistants in the future. Since he was prepared to grow the Farlier Family after his return, there was no harm in leaving another child behind in Twilight Zone.
“Really?” Celine’s eyes sparkled, and her face even flushed red with excitement. The terrifying innate abilities Leylin had displayed was proof enough that his descendants definitely wouldn’t turn out too bad. They might even inherit some powerful abilities from him. Such a bloodline was one that many female Magi sought, but few could obtain.
One Morning Star’s family always had a great chance of producing another among their ranks, much greater than that of other Magus clans. Perhaps one of her own descendants would be a strong Morning Star as well!
As she thought along this line, Celine’s breathing could not help but gradually get heavier.
Seeing Celine in such a state, Leylin could not help but burst out laughing. Although this woman had changed slightly, she was still that same old Celine in essence.
However, he did not hold much hope for her at all. Even if she was willing to give up everything in Twilight Zone and return to the central continent with him, she would at most be another good friend for Freya.
Furthermore, letting his bloodline grow in multiple places was also safer overall. Leylin stroked his chin. His decision to grow his bloodline in many different places was certainly not about something as simple as expanding his influence. Through his endless study on bloodline mutations and gene changing, he’d come to know that, with enough descendants, there was a chance that a genetic mutation would occur, allowing the individual’s strength to rise further than normal. Although such odds were small enough to be disregarded, there was always hope. In fact, many Kemoyin Warlocks and other bloodline Warlocks practised this method. Whenever descendants of exceptionally rich bloodlines appeared, they would perceive it as fate’s blessing. ‘I have to go back once my Kemoyin Serpent Emperor bloodline has fully matured and I develop my Radiant Moon strength.’ Leylin’s pupils dimmed…

The boiling lava boomed endlessly. Many fiery dragons splashed about, and rocks shattered to expose a passageway that led upwards. A few black figures rushed out of the place directly. “Damned Leylin and damned Twilight Zone! Chief, don’t you know that concentrated fire elemental particles are a great enemy for a female Magus’ skin? My maintenance charges for this mission are going to increase!” Carol pouted coquettishly, taking out a mirror and looking her skin over carefully. However, the leader and the Magus called Eugene evidently did not care much. “As long as this mission can be completed, no one would care even if you rested for a hundred years!” the leader snorted coldly. He ignored his subordinate’s complaints, much more interested in this territory. “Tsk… This underground… the elemental particles are already so barren… It’s simply a desert for Magi!” On the other hand, Eugene
also sighed while clicking his tongue, showing his disdain towards the barrenness of the Twilight Zone.
“Compared to the central continent, this place is indeed a desert. However, the darkness and earth elemental particle concentration is still passable, even if barely. Use spells of these two elements as much as possible to conserve your soul force…” The chief’s head tilted to one side, looking at Carol, “Carol, found the opponent yet?”
“Let me see…” Carol took out a transparent crystal ball. In the core of this ball was a black wisp of air that swayed back and forth. This was Leylin’s aura, collected from Mount Asura. Although Leylin had covered his traces very carefully, as long as such Magi had the correct location and suitable spells, finding his tracks was only a matter of time.
A black stream of air emerged on Carol’s face. After pondering for a moment with her eyes closed, she pointed towards the north and spoke confidently. “He’s in that direction, I’m sure of it.”
“Good! Now that we’ve discovered the opponent’s position, won’t three Radiant Moons like us be able to deal with a simple Morning Star?” Eugene licked his lips, “That rascal made me run about outside for such a long time. I want him!”
This leader nodded, “We can. But the target is still as strong as a Radiant Moon himself, do not underestimate him. However, I have information that the target still has a weakness. Even if he has fighting strength at the Radiant Moon realm and powerful bloodline imprints, he is still a Morning Star at his core. The strength of his truesoul is limited to the peak of Morning Star. If we cast curses or attack the soul…”
“It’ll be very safe!” Carol nodded. “Just nice, there’s been some progress in my research on soul curses recently, just leave it to me!”
“The two of us will assist!” The leader looked at Eugene, and the
latter agreed with a little reluctance, “Alright! You’re the leader. Whatever you say goes!” Evidently, he was a little depressed because he was unable to draw blood directly.

……

“Leylin! Hurry to school, you’re going to be late!” A foreign yet familiar voice echoed in his ears, making Leylin a little confused.
“Where is this? A.I. Chip?” Around him was a road, cherry blossom trees in full bloom on both sides. Blossoms drifted down to the street one after the other.
The ground was very clean, without any sorts of paper scraps. Leylin looked at his own hands, his skin that was milky white without much musculature was full of youth.
“…” There was no response from the A.I. Chip, causing Leylin to fall into a deep silence.
At this moment, a large chunk of memory entered his brain. “I’m Leylin! Innocent Saints High School, year 3 student! I also have an elder sister and a younger sister in my family, I’m supposed to go to the campus festival….”
Why… Why do I feel like I’ve forgotten something important, and what is an A.I. Chip? Why did I remember it subconsciously?” Looking at the checkered shirt on his body and the student name tag on his chest, Leylin became quiet in an instant.
“Hey Leylin, what’s wrong with you?” A blonde haired student walked over, pulling Leylin’s arm along with him.
“Serway…” Leylin called out the student’s once he opened his mouth, which made him fall into greater confusion, ‘I need to calm down… Why do I know his name? Where exactly is this?’
“What are you waiting for? We won’t make it in time!” Serway stopped a taxi, shoving Leylin into it before following closely behind, “Driver, Innocent Saints High School!”
“Have you lost your mind? The famous singer, Carol has a concert at the campus festival today…”
“Carol?” Leylin leaned back against the couch while feeling the familiar rumble of the engine, his mind fuzzy. ‘Seems to be a very famous singer, said to be the idol of teenagers in the Furze Federation… Also seems to be slightly related to me, but… I don’t remember anymore…’ Memories related to the other person immediately emerged in Leylin’s brain, ‘Only, why do I keep feeling that something’s wrong? This shouldn’t be my life… My life…’ Leylin stretched out his right hand and a word suddenly emerged in his brain: “Fire!” This was pronounced in the ancient Byron language, but tens of seconds passed and nothing happened. “What’s wrong with you Leylin? Devising new words? Why haven’t I heard this before, is this German or Spanish?” Serway asked thoughtlessly as he looked at the scenery outside the window from time to time. “Neither! I may have pronounced it wrongly…” Leylin’s face was slightly flushed, but his heart was stirring, ‘What happened just now, why did I have a premonition that something interesting would happen after reading that phone… No! Why do I remember this syllable?’

*Skrrrr!* Following the sound of sudden brakes, the taxi stopped in front of a beautiful institution. A large coniferous tree and a holly tree stood on both sides of a white marble statue. In front of the entrance was a banner, Innocent
Saints 57th Campus Festival.
Below the banner, there was a row of tiny words written in black ink using felt-tip pens and spray paint ‘Welcoming the beautiful Miss Carol’s arrival’. We will support you forever! A smiley face was even drawn after it, and Leylin felt like laughing upon seeing it.
“This lad is a student of Innocents Saints High School? Work hard…” The taxi driver waved his hand and disappeared into the road. Leylin secretly rolled his eyes at the hand that was stretched out of the car’s window.
After walking into the school, Leylin could see the bustle of a large crowd. Many teenage boys in shirts and teenage girls in dresses hovered around a colourful tent that was set up temporarily. From time to time, playful giggles also echoed from within. Colourful confetti fluttered gently while a sweet, symphonic music permeated the place.
“Brother! Why aren’t you moving? You were the last one we were missing!” A small girl came over and pulled Leylin by the hands, giving him a feeling of warmth.
Leylin fell into a trance for a moment as chunks of memories emerged one after the other in his mind. This young lady was his younger sister Gail, currently in year one. And yet, this familiar face seemed foreign as well, causing him to be somewhat dazed.
“Aren’t I here now?” he said in reply.
“Let’s go! Let’s go!” Serway and Gail, one behind the other, brought Leylin to the side of a large open stage.
“Hurry and start work, oh Debugging Master!” Serway pushed Leylin to a mechanical platform that was filled with joysticks and buttons, taking out a huge heart shaped bouquet of roses from his back as if he was performing magic. He shifted his attention towards a tall girl in the dance team, a sight that caused Leylin to roll his eyes.
“What’s the matter? Is there a problem? Nooo! Miss Carol will be here soon!” Gail was looking at Leylin who stood looking silly in front of the debugging platform. Thinking that the machine malfunctioned or something, she couldn’t help but pace back and forth as a layer of tears appeared in her eyes.

Seeing Gail like that, Leylin secretly heaved a sigh of relief and came before the debugging platform, “Oh it’s fine, I was just thinking about something and my mind kind of wandered off…”

The moment he came in front of the platform, his hands moved to its surface, beginning to work subconsciously. Numerous lights lit up, and the curtains on the stage were slowly drawn back.

‘Okay! The joysticks and sliding platforms are all normal, just do it according to the previous procedure and it’ll be fine…’ Leylin rubbed his forehead, feeling that things had grown more unexpected. The knowledge of the debugging machine seemed to have been shoved into his brain all of a sudden, and although he felt extremely familiar with it fear began to rise in his heart.

“Yay! My brother is the best, you’re awesome!” Gail jumped in glee. Seeing her like that, along with the gentle and kind memory of his elder sister, Leylin suddenly felt that such a life… didn’t seem all that bad.

This thought seemed to have only come up for a moment, but it made his heart stir as if he discovered something incredible. Fragments of memories poured into his mind, as if he was watching some sort of movie.

He’d seen an ignorant and underdeveloped world that was filled with a mysterious force called magic. He seemed to have been exploring that place.

‘Hmm… Is this what I dreamt of last night? Maybe I can use it as an idea for a novel or something…’ Leylin stroked his chin, but he still had the nagging feeling that things weren’t so simple.

While Leylin had sunk into deep thought, a loud, deafening
clamour sounded out. Many people rushed out to gather at the front of the stage in a flood, breaking his train of thought.
“Look! Sister Carol is here!” Gail shouted in excitement as well, squeezing forward on tiptoes.
“Isn’t she just a celebrity? Just you wait, I’ll get a few autographed photos and postcards for you later!” Leylin snorted.
“Of course you can take as many photos of her as you want, but the current scenario is different! I’m so excited…” Gail squeezed forward even more, but Leylin grew confused, “Wait, what do you mean I can take as many as I want, am I very close to her?” But Gail had already disappeared into the crowd, making Leylin lose someone to question.
Carol slowly walked to the centre of the stage, accompanied by the hysterical shouts of the crowd. The many spotlights emitted a dazzling brilliance even in the day as colourful mist spread out and surrounded her.
“Carol!” “Carol!” “Carol!” “We love you!”
Numerous teenagers screamed at the top of their lungs, almost to the point that Leylin could not help but cover his ears, feeling as if his eardrums had been destroyed.
At the same time, his gaze shifted, attracted to the girl at the centre of the stage. Carol wore a magnificent costume that wasn’t the dazzling kind, with two plaits hanging down gently from her haid. Her face was so exquisite she looked like a doll.
“Thank you! I love you all too!” Carol looked at the fans below and smiled sweetly, causing many fanatical fans to cover her in another round of adulation.
Her voice was very airy, melding well with her personality to form a unique aura. Even a few words from her generated an extraordinary attraction.
“Next, let’s invite Miss Carol to perform her famous song for us, Flight!” Because of Carol’s presence, the two emcees were almost
forgotten. Patiently waiting for their chance, they immediately announced the song.
“Okay! Start the background music!” Leylin wore his headphones, but Carol who was on the stage, made a signal to stop.
“Wait! I have another piece of news here for everyone,” Carol smiled, carrying a rare hint of excitement in her voice. “My trip to Innocent Saints’ campus this time was on my boyfriend’s invitation. Yes! I’m in love!”
The place instantly fell into a deathly silence. Carol, who was famous across the entirety of the Furze Federation and had always been lovely idol, was actually in love, and with a high school student?
This storm immediately petrified the surrounding audience. Soon after, a howl echoed, livening the atmosphere at the scene.
“What? No! Carol, you’re my goddess, how can you…” “Oh! No! How is that possible?” Many teenage boys clenched their chests in pain and collapsed. Leylin even felt like he could hear the sound of their glass hearts shattering.
But even more of the audience waved the fresh flowers, lightsticks and other items in their hands and said, “Carol, we support you!”
“Thank you!” Carol bowed at the audience below with reddened eyes, “I’d like to invite my boyfriend up to sing Flight with me! To commemorate this day…” Upon hearing this, many of the students looked at one another, as if they were trying to identify Carol’s boyfriend.
‘Wahaha… This Carol’s boyfriend is going to get unlucky!’ Leylin thought gloatingly.
“Then, aren’t you going to hurry up there?” Who knew since when, Serway and Gail had appeared beside Leylin again, pulling him onto the stage.
“Brother! Sister Carol has already mustered her courage like that, what are you still waiting for?” Gail tugged on Leylin’s sleeve,
laughing like a small fox that had successfully stolen a chicken.
“Eh? What what? It’s me?” Leylin pointed at his own nose, “Carol’s boyfriend is me?” Suddenly, another memory appeared again.
“Leylin, remember our promise!” Wearing a pretty ribbon on her head, Carol pulled Leylin’s hand.
Only at this moment did Leylin recall. it seemed… As if… Should be… Roughly… Carol had actually been his neighbour for 3 years, and it was at that time that the two had embarked on a romantic relationship.
After being dragged onto the stage with Carol pulling his hand, facing the multiple spotlights and the fervent gazes of many geeks, Leylin’s face was still a little stiff.
“Are you serious? This scenario just isn’t right…” Leylin felt slightly dizzy. At this moment, the gentle background music started playing, and an angelic voice echoed from beside him.
Leylin looked slightly dazed as he watched this beautiful fairy-like girl beside him. Her voice was airy like no other, as clear as spring water. It seemed like even her spirit could cleanse him, it was extremely refreshing. This was especially true of her eyes. Those eyes were full of emotion as she sang, making it extremely difficult for him to part with her.
‘An affluent life, and the admiration of a celebrity, all this is so wonderful… What am I still waiting for?’ Leylin could not help but question himself.
But at the same time, the uneasiness in his heart grew stronger, a feeling that he would regret the wrong decision here for the rest of his life.
‘That’s right! My dreams, my goals, my original pursuits, what exactly are they?’ Leylin asked himself repeatedly.
“My goal?” Leylin stood on the stage. Although he was the focus of attention of thousands of people, his mind still wandered off.

“Is it to live my life ordinarily and peacefully? Yes! With time, money, and a wife who loves you, what’s there to hesitate?”

‘But why, why do I still feel a little indignant deep in my heart?’ Leylin touched his chest, ‘If everyone is like that, then fine. But if there is a path leading to eternal life, and I don’t try and pursue it, how could I face myself? Eternity? Eternity! Yes, pursuing the ultimate of everything and obtaining eternal life, that is my pursuit!’

Leylin’s pupils instantly grew resolute. Grabbing Carol’s hand, he gently said, “Sister Carol… S–Sorry…”

Right at this moment, an intense rumbling explosion echoed, engulfing the place in crimson flames. The crowd screamed and dispersed as a black, armoured car barged recklessly into the campus, stopping at the side of the stage.

Numerous figures in steel armour jumped out in an orderly manner. Clearly, they were well-trained.

“External armour? And nuclear-powered laser guns?” As Leylin looked at the metal skeleton in their appearances and the oddly shaped gun barrels, he could not help but show a shocked expression, his pupils narrowing rapidly.

“Seize her!” These armoured men did not even notice the other
students running about, as if all of them were ants in their eyes. They lunged towards the centre of the stage directly with cold expressions in their eyes. This was the disregard one developed for life through years of bloody warfare.

“Carol! Their target is Carol!” Leylin was surprised.

“Brother Leylin!” The girl shrieked, holding Leylin’s hand. Given that she was a celebrity, she naturally had a few bodyguards by her side, but they’d been burnt to ashes by the lasers before they could even pull out their weapons, becoming what seemed like piles of charcoal.

In an instant, the screams of the crowd grew more intense. Those armed soldiers looked like steel mountains. All obstructions they encountered on their way, be it furniture or even human life, were ruthlessly destroyed.

‘These people… they’re definitely not normal soldiers or mercenaries…’ Leylin’s pupils narrowed and every muscle on his body stiffened. And yet, the moment he looked at the pathetic Carol beside him, her face full of panic as she nearly fell limp to the floor, he suddenly started running.

“Go!” He shrieked, pulling her along. Using the obstruction from the crowd, he successfully brought her off stage and headed in the direction of a teaching block.

“Seize her, we don’t need that boy alive!” A person who seemed like the leader of the soldiers commanded. Immediately, Leylin saw many laser guns aimed at him.

“Get down!” He suddenly pressed Carol’s head down, pinning her to the ground.

A dazzling radiance shot out as laser blasts sounded everywhere. When they stopped, the stage behind him had already become flat ground. A broken, burnt arm fell in front of him.

“Leylin!” Carol’s eyes turned white, her fingernails tearing into Leylin’s hand and causing it to bleed.
“I know! Go quickly!” For some unknown reason, Leylin felt very used to such bloody scenes and did not feel the slightest bit of discomfort. He was still able to think calmly in this situation.

‘The opponent’s target is Carol… At a crucial time, if I abandon her it’ll give me the chance to survive!’ He then glanced at Carol, ‘Still, we’re neighbours and lovers after all. I’ll escape with her for a while, but if we’re unable to pull away from the enemy even with our best efforts, I can only give up…’

Although a bad thought stirred in his heart, a determined look emerged in Leylin’s face as he grabbed Carol and ran. At a corner, he glanced at the entrance where many students had gathered in a crowd, no longer daring to look at the figures in black. It was like they were some sort of monsters.

He caught a glimpse of Serway’s eye-catching blonde hair and the small girl beside him.

‘Hmm… Serway and Gail are both there, I can’t draw fire to the place…’ Immediately giving up on the entrance where the students were, he brought Carol along as he ran into another crowd.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* Large amounts of flesh flew into the sky. With Leylin and Carol drawing the enemy’s firepower to this place, these people were instantly met with annihilation.

With the bombardment of laser guns, these students grew more panicked in their frantic running, Under the bombardment of the laser guns, these students ran around in an even more panicky way, making it difficult for the enemy to recognise people.

And with this as a cover, Leylin successfully brought Carol and escaped to the teaching block.

“Stay here! Don’t run!” Leylin shoved Carol into the changing room’s cabinet as he chose another ventilation duct for himself and crawled in.

‘There’s another way out here. I should be able to escape through this duct if Carol gets caught…’ Leylin’s eyes glowed from their
depths. His relationship with Carol only consisted of fragmented memories. Although both Serway and Gail said that Carol was his girlfriend, Leylin still felt a strong sense of disconnect. The weight of these ‘feelings’ in his heart had dissipated completely during their escape. Or, put in other words, this relationship was only worth so much to him.

After this, she would have to rely on her own luck. If she faced the fate of being captured, Leylin would not rescue her, as in doubt as he was right now.

Furthermore, the enemy evidently wanted to capture Carol alive and did not care about others’ lives. Leylin would certainly not risk so much for her. Carol would still have a chance of survival after falling into the enemy’s hands, but for him, it would be game over. Thus, he naturally knew his choice.

“Close this place off! I saw them escaping into the building and they never came out!!” A large boom echoed, accompanied by footsteps. They were heavy footsteps, every thud beating right into his heart like the steps of Death itself.

“Search every room. Don’t miss even a single corner” the enemy’s cold voice echoed over again.

Now, Leylin could only smile bitterly and pray. How could he and a small girl outrun such elites? It was only because of the cannon fodder that he’d managed to get here successfully. If he’d left the shelter of the building, he would be a sitting duck.

Moreover, this was a school! With something like this happening, as long as they waited for a period of time there would definitely be some sort of response from the authorities.

As the seconds ticked by, the rummaging sounds coming from the surroundings echoed out without end, drawing closer and closer to the changing room. It made Leylin feel a little suffocated.

“Dammit! The government is useless in this area, I’ll never vote for them again!” Leylin scolded hatefully.
Right at this moment, the changing room’s door was pushed open violently and numerous footsteps invaded the place violently. The rummaging sounds continued for a moment, followed by a girl’s alarmed cry. Leylin’s heart stopped, knowing that Carol had already been captured by the enemy. His body slowly moved backwards, already prepared to retreat at any time.

“And the other student? Where has he gone to?” A buff man asked. “I’m not saying!” Carol’s stubborn yet airy voice echoed, but it made Leylin roll his eyes instead. Two crisp slaps sounded in reply to it.

“Not saying instead of not knowing, which means he’s nearby. But we don’t have anymore time! Let’s go!” That hefty man waved his hand, taking Carol out with him.

Through the blinds, Leylin saw a member of the troop throw a round metal object on the ground as they left, the thing shining with light.

Leylin cursed. “Damn it! A High-explosive magnetic grenade!” His entire body suddenly moved backwards as he began crawling desperately.

A blue glow suddenly swept across behind him, followed by many blazing flames. The sound wave caused even Leylin’s ears and nose to bleed.

A blind was kicked opened with a bang, and Leylin suddenly fell down along with large amounts of dust and rubbish.

“Finally out!” Leylin heaved deep breaths and patted his chest. However, when he looked at the surrounding scene, his expression changed.

Dozens of soldiers in steel armoured were walking over with a girl in tow, their faces growing dazed for a moment when they saw Leylin.

“Brother Leylin, I knew that you’d be back to rescue me!” Carol, who was being escorted by them, began cheering instead.
“I…” Leylin rolled his eyes speechlessly. It was like the saying went: Man proposes, but God disposes.
“We meet again, you rascal. What a lucky life you have!” A man wearing a steel skeletal mask came out, eyes shining with a vicious red radiance, “Kill him!” The opponent looked at Leylin as if he was looking at a piece of garbage.
The dazed Carol then realised something and immediately began begging, “No! Let Brother Leylin go! I’ll go with you!”
However, she seemed unable to change these men’s attitudes even slightly, and a dazzling white light shot out from a cannon. Leylin’s vision went black.
Suddenly, time seemed to stop at the moment, and a voice echoed out of nowhere, “Between Carol and yourself, who do you choose?” Confusion emerged in Leylin’s eyes.
“Of course I choose…” Leylin glanced at Carol, whose face was frozen in a panicked expression.
“Neither, you idiot!” A hint of calmness appeared in Leylin’s eyes once more, “I finally regained a portion of my memories… Trying to trick me into signing a contract?” The stagnated time shattered apart with a crash, as numerous lasers shot to him once more…
“Fire!” Once again, Leylin read out a word from the ancient Byron language. Only this time, the moment the rune syllable was heard, space itself seemed to be mobilised. A large amount of an unknown energy gathered together, combining to result in an amazing transformation.
Magus created spells by using his spiritual force to draw the energy particles in the air. The current Leylin could cause a mysterious change with just a spoken rune syllable and the injection of spiritual force. A ball of flames formed in front of Leylin and a huge wall of fire spread out, blocking the white light. The figures that were armoured in black could only see a huge amount of flames appearing out of thin air to collide with the laser. The teen himself was still safe and sound.

*Plop!* An armoured man loosened his grip and dropped his laser gun. A peculiar scene such as this was still a first for them despite their years of war experience and the gory training they’d undergone.

“Mutants!” The leader cried.

“Mutants? Is this what your world calls people with mysterious powers?” Leylin laughed and placed his hands behind his back, sizing up his surroundings with a sense of nostalgia. ‘Is this a dream? Or a world generated from my memories? Though there are many similarities to my previous world, there are still quite a few differences…’

“Our target is her, you can leave!” The leader said in a low voice. Being one of the few higher-ups that knew of the existence of Mutants, how could he not be afraid of Leylin’s abilities?

“Scram!” But Leylin only looked at them apathetically as if he was
looking at prey.
“You-” The leader’s face flushed with anger.
He pulled out a glimmering ring from his waist.
“Magnetic Hybrid Storm No. 2! This is specially created to counter
weapons created by Mutants! If you are to leave now, we will treat
it as nothing happened.”
“Hm, interesting!” The ring disappeared from the leader’s hand in
an instant and showed up in Leylin’s.
“Spatial power? Or high-speed movement?” Cold sweat gathered
on the leader’s forehead.
“How ignorant and stupid!” Leylin looked at them sympathetically
and colour drained from the leader’s face.
This was a Mutant who allowed him no chance of resistance and
who could snatch the weapon from his hand in seconds. Leylin
was definitely someone beyond what he could handle, and it was
highly possible for his whole team would die here!
“We have to leave quickly!” The leader shouted as a mini laser gun
appeared in his hand. He aimed several fatal beams at Leylin.
*Pew!* All the laser rays were blocked by a golden curtain before
flames burst forth.
The massive flames illuminated the surroundings with a fiery red
glow, the last sight this leader would see before he left the world.
Carol stood rooted to the ground, suddenly realising that the Leylin
in front of her was very much different from the Leylin she knew.
He seemed a lot more confident and exuded a monstrous aura.
Although she thought of things such as power and aura as a joke,
she learnt then that there was true power in this world.
Just a mere flash of red light could turn those threatening enemies
into ashes. If someone with such power wasn’t greater than the
rest, who was?
“You are Carol, right?” In front of her stood the person she was
familiar with speaking with a voice she was familiar with, but she
couldn’t help but move back.  
“Who are you? Don’t come near me! Where is Leylin?” Tears gathered in the girl’s eyes. She wanted to leave this person, but an invisible force brought her in front of him.  
“Are you the focal point in this world?” Leylin smiled gently at her and began to say things that made her mind spin. “Through the allure of choices presented to me and tricking me into making decisions through emotions, my truesoul will forever be confined in this makeshift world huh?”  
Carol knew the meaning of each individual word Leylin was saying but was confused at their intended meaning.  
“Seems like someone’s been targeting me…” Leylin touched his chin, “A.I. Chip, how do I get out?”

[Beep! Host body affected by unknown radiation, truesoul at a loss.] [Beep! Fog appeared in host’s sea of consciousness, affecting cognitive abilities. Beginning projection of guiding coordinates…]  
The A.I. Chip’s reply came instantly this time, accompanied with numerous status updates.  
The A.I. Chip was fused with leylin’s very soul. No matter where he went, his truesoul’s survival meant the A.I. Chip’s survival. Enemies stood a chance of intercepting this connection for a short while, but they couldn’t break it.  
The A.I. Chip was continuously trying to awaken Leylin’s truesoul. This was also why he was so quick to see through the hazy world so quickly.  
“A.I. Chip, begin scan. The target is this entire world.” Leylin commanded.

[Beep! Mission established, scan beginning…] With the update after his advancement to Radiant Moon, the changes were not merely cosmetic. The Chip’s various functions had been updated as well.  
[Scanning 3D structure! Instability detected! Absence of plane
curves, concluded as unstable world!] [Curse detected. Concluded as dream curse.]
The A.I. Chip responded quickly.
“As expected, someone dragged me into a trance with a curse… “
Leylin’s face slowly warped as he read through the data.
“In order to break out of this trance, we have to start from the ‘key’ of this world and then neutralise the counterattack!” Leylin came to Carol.
“W-What do you want? Don’t come near me!” Carol moved backwards in fear, but Leylin maintained his poker face and pointed a finger at her forehead.
*Boom!* The world shook, and Carol fell down.
Though she had yet to die, Leylin could feel the connection between her and some form of entity weakening.
“Carol is only a shell, the counterattack should be coming soon after I’m done dealing with the ‘key’!” Leylin said, floating in mid-air as the very space vibrated.
“Gail, look! That person over there, he looks like Leylin!” Serway’s jaw dropped.
“It, it really is him! Did he become a superhero?” Gail ruffled her hair and seemed to be a little dizzy. Had her useless brother been pretending all along, hiding a secret life as a superhero? Was he one of those who secretly guarding the world’s peace?
A piercing anti-aircraft alarm sounded, and violet light filled the entire city. A large number of UFOs surrounded the area, armoured men flying out from within. Complex energy circuits flashed from on their armours, that worn by the troops from before complete trash in comparison.
These people with peculiar energy undulations should’ve been the Mutants that the leader of those troops was talking about. They looked pretty advanced.
“UFOs… Is this the extraterrestrial colonisation fleet of the
federation? God!” Many students and passersby started screaming on the ground. The few figures in front especially made them feel like they were suffocating just by looking at them. Delusion and reality, illusion and mystery, things that only existed in conjectures, were all suddenly appearing in front of everyone’s eyes, giving them a strong sense of intangibility. A ray of blue light scanned over Leylin’s body, and the scanned data flashed across the glasses of the person leading the troop. It was like he instantly knew Leylin’s identity. “Leylin, year 3 student of Innocent Saints High School… How dare you use your powers carelessly in public as a Mutant? Return with us to the headquarters to receive your punishment!” “Well…” Leylin shook his head and sighed, “Why weren’t you here before when we were being attacked? And now you come over with such speed when everything’s solved? I protest!” The mocking tone in Leylin’s voice caused the person to furrow his brows. He decided to teach a good lesson to the arrogant young man in front of him. “Who do you think you are? The headquarters only take actions against our own kind; humans are exempted. Prepare to be tried for your crimes!” The troop leader waved his hand, and two figures ran towards Leylin. “Hmm… As expected, weakness is a sin no matter what world you’re in.” Leylin sighed, and frenzied energy undulations burst forth from his body. *Whoosh!* Huge clouds of smog wrapped around two Mutants. The sound of blood dripping was heard, and when the smog cleared, a few damaged bones and metal components fell down. The two people were nowhere to be seen. *Booam!* The glasses of the leader’s eyes exploded, the scratches from the shrapnel forming blood red lines across his face. Yet, he
didn’t seem to care at all, only glaring at Leylin as he muttered in disbelief, “Silvan-ranked! He is a Silvan-ranked Mutant!”

Many of them took a step back, as if realising they’d been surrounding a monster all this while.

Mutant of the Silvan-ranked is the highest of all the levels as of current times. They only existed in rumours, and were strong enough to cause energy probes to blow up!

The thought of going against someone of this standard made many of the troop members shudder.

“If the situation is as such, your Grace, shall we…” The leader clenched his teeth and walked forward, but Leylin did not want to waste any more time on them.

“What a group of clowns. The counter-measures of this world are weak, so weak that I’m disappointed!” A tiny black orb appeared on his finger, and he flicked it forward.

“You lot haven’t seen real strength! The pitch-black orb absorbed all light, causing space itself to collapse.

The terrifying turbulence enveloped all the UFOs and enemies.
Storms and turbulence wreaked havoc in the huge space, wiping out the entire troop within seconds. This terrifying scene rendered all onlookers speechless.

“Leylin is… actually so strong?” Gail looked at Leylin’s back view, a little confused. Large amounts of light started to leak out from the spatial crack, the scene within seeming like an entirely separate galaxy.

“First, it was the key, then it was the counterattack. I have to open up a path for myself next!” Leylin muttered under his breath as a dazzling moon rose up behind him. Space stabilised as the translucent moonlight scattered and revealed a silver pathway.

“Come here!” Before he left, Leylin waved his hand. Gail, who was on the floor, flew to him.

“Brother…” The little lass called out hoarsely before she kept silent, realising that Leylin was not the same person she knew.

“The power of destiny gave us a chance to meet in this world. Although I cannot be sure if this is reality or an illusion, let this be my present to you!” Leylin chuckled lightly, and directed a spot of light into Gail’s forehead before stepping through into the pathway.

Twilight Zone, on top of an altar.

The surface of the black altar was filled with runic circuits full of energy, and Carol was seated at the center. Opposite her was the crystal ball that had collected Leylin’s aura, streams of black air circulating around it continuously. Eugene and the other Magus
could only watch on.
Suddenly, the crystal ball cracked and the black air dispersed. Carol screamed at the top of her lungs before fainting.
“What happened? The curse backfired?” The leader of the Magi knitted his brows together, and a bright green weapon flashed before going into Carol’s body and awakening her.
“What’s going on? Didn’t you say that your soul body spell has reached the state where you can enter any dreams and fool any Morning Star Magus?” Eugene bellowed.
“We’ve been had! He’s already reached the Radiant Moon realm! The truesoul of a Radiant Moon is not something that a low-levelled dream manipulation could confuse…” Carol looked a little out of focus, “Furthermore, even though I couldn’t perceive everything in the dream, I’m sure that Leylin is hiding a huge secret!”
“That’s obvious. How could someone who broke through to the Radiant Moon realm have no secrets?” The leader’s voice turned icy. “Prepare for battle! He has definitely noticed us!”
Leylin was currently floating in the void, feeling weightless. He’d been in this state ever since he escaped from that dream world, only seeing a misty fog in front of him. There seemed to be no end to it.
“I can’t let this continue. I need to get back quickly!” Leylin pushed ahead, putting in all his strength. His soul exuded a cooling radiance under which the fog dissipated to reveal a small island.
As he stepped foot onto the island, the steady feel of the ground gave him a sense of security. The place wasn’t too big, at most a thousand metres in diameter. At its centre was a miniature fountain, a few lights moving about in the waters.
*Grr! Grr!* “Hi there!” On top of a black palm tree, a single-eyed owl greeted Leylin happily.
“Hello, friend! Where am I?” Leylin waved.
The A.I Chip reported in secret. “This is the gap between Dreamscape and the real world. Hmm… the last time someone visited was 572 years after you, that was a very pretty lass!”

Leylin grew confused by the owl. “Wait… Isn’t this the dream world from the curse? How could someone from the future arrive before me?” he asked.

“Dreamscape is a dimension created by the dreams of all intelligent creatures. It is everywhere, and unfathomable. Time and space are intangible here.”

The owl looked at Leylin, “Your dream is, therefore, a part of Dreamscape!”

“Is it?” Leylin grew suspicious. He had heard about Dreamscape before. Even in the ancient era, it was a place that caused many Magi to tremble. There had even been an invasion from Dreamscape once that caused great harm to the Magus World. There were a lot of demons in Dreamscape that were not weaker than rank 7 Magi which wielded laws.

Of course, there was a lot of instability in this world. Even the weakest worm could grow into a powerful demon the next day, and the strongest demon could disappear in the next moment.

Due to this characteristic, the invasion of Dreamscape dissipated quickly, but to the Magi of the ancient era, this was a taboo, not to be spoken of.

‘Many Magi from the ancient era have explored Dreamscape. I never thought I’d get this chance as well…’ Leylin touched his chin, ‘Not mentioning anything else, what would happen if I found the dream world of powerful Magi, or even the dream of the ancient Wisdom Tree or the dream of the Snake Dowager… Wouldn’t it be too strange?’

“Then Sir, how does one return to the real world? And if I wish to
come back here afterwards, how can I accomplish that?” Leylin bowed to the owl on top of the tree.
“I like your courtesy, lad!” The owl hooted again and shook its wings. A single grey feather fell into his hand.
Leylin looked at this feather. It was very soft, but the tail region seemed to have a certain sort of power to it.
“It’s easy to leave Dreamscape, all you have to do is wake up. As for coming back, that feather over there might be of some help!
“Now, I need to return, I have a dinner appointment with the past me. Have a nice dream, sir!” As the owl disappeared from his sight, Leylin’s grip around the feather tightened.
“Will it be alright as long as I wake up?” He muttered to himself, looking a little perplexed.

……

*Boom!* Leylin’s muscles tightened as he felt as if he was falling, and he abruptly sat up.
“Dear, are you okay?” Celine switched on the lights and came over in concern.
“This is… Nature’s Alliance Academy?!” Looking at the familiar yet strange ceiling and the surrounding decorations, Leylin’s pupils dilated and he quickly sobered up.
“Are you alright?” Celine looked worried. After all, for such a powerful Magus to have nightmares was something beyond rare.
“I’m fine!” Leylin raised his right hand, and a grey feather appeared in his left palm.
Leylin muttered under his breath, “Dreamscape! The strangest of planes, an ensemble of consciences in a messed up time and space. One day, I will reveal your secrets. A.I. Chip, show me my previous condition!”
[Beep! Host body facing an unknown disturbance, truesoul
weakening.]
Various pieces of data showed that Leylin’s experience just now wasn’t merely superficial.
[Beep! Target coordinates found!] In the last line, Leylin saw a position.
This was the location the A.I. Chip had traced back from the curse. “It isn’t too far… it looks like this sort of dream curse requires a certain amount of proximity…” Leylin’s face darkened, and he began radiating a murderous aura.
“Whoever you are that spied on me, die!” An explosion sounded out as he turned into a phantom, disappearing from the room. Celine could only look into the space Leylin disappeared to, uncertainty filling her face.
“Quick! The curse has been countered, Leylin will find us!” Carol seemed to wake up from her trance upon hearing the leader’s reminder.
“What should we be scared of? He’s just a newly advanced Radiant Moon. As long the three of us combine powers, we have nothing to be afraid of!” Eugene said indignantly.
“Leader, why are you…” Carol looked anxious at first, before growing shocked as she glanced at the sky not far away. A black tornado was whirring with energy as it headed for them in full force.
“It’s not that we’re choosing not to leave. He’s already found us,” the leader said bitterly.
*Hss!* The person heading towards them at full speed was obviously angered by their provocation. The horrifying phantom of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor appeared behind his back. Concentrated black gases engulfed everything in their path, sweeping in their direction.
*Whoosh!* The obstructions on the way, be they stones, mud or
anything else, turned into nothing in a split second.
Eugene’s pupils constricted as he stared at the person charging at
the with the speed of light. “Is that the Giant Kemoyin Serpent?
Why do I feel so repressed? It looks so different from the phantom
in the data, and…” his hand trembled, “Why does a newly
advanced Radiant Moon have such a powerful aura?”
“All of you! Die!” The phantom behind Leylin devoured
everything even as he was shouting.
“Shit! We have to leave!” Sparks of black fire flashed, and it
seemed as though the serpent took a big bite of every place Leylin
passed, loud snaps echoing again and again.
“This is not the Giant Kemoyin Serpent… It’s their ruler! It’s the
Kemoyin Serpent Emperor!” The leader seemed to have thought of
something as he exclaimed, “That rumour is actually real!”
Legend?” What legend?” Carol wiped off the blood at the corner of her lips. Her truesoul had been injured by the curse in the dream, and she was no longer in the best shape.

“I’ve heard the Monarch mention that Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks carry the bloodline of the Snake Dowager. Although very low, there is a chance of a rank 5 emperor appearing amongst them.” The leader’s voice was very low, and Carol and Eugene could even hear a tremble in it, “And after the appearance of the Kemoyin Emperor, the entire Kemoyin Race will unify under them to regain the glory of the bloodline Warlocks…”

“That’s obviously just a prophecy. Who’s going to believe that?” Eugene pursed his lips in disdain.

“If it were merely another prophecy, nobody would believe it, but what if the person who had made it was the great astrologer, Magus Derrick? And what if I told you he sacrificed his life to do it?” The leader glanced at Eugene.

“Derrick? That legendary Radiant Moon Magus who was the most likely prophet to reach Breaking Dawn?” Carol exclaimed, her eyes now full of fear towards Leylin.

“That’s why, even as we suppressed the bloodline Warlocks, we’ve been paying close attention to the Ouroboros Clan. If we hadn’t been afraid of turbulences of ill destiny appearing, which would cause them to join the dark side, we would long since have
eliminated them…”
This Magus slowly revealed some confidential details.
“So Leylin is the hope of their bloodline?” Carol’s expression turned grim.
“Yes! No matter the cost, Leylin must die today!” The Radiant Moon Magi used their soul force to open a communication channel, and made a decision in practically an instant. It was at this moment that a large black serpent attacked them.
A crimson crescent of an energy blade shot out from the giant serpent phantom’s stomach, heading straight for Carol.
“It’s an attack from a piece of high-grade magic equipment!” Their expressions changed, and Carol quickly retreated, her innate defensive spells flickering into existence. The undulations of energy from middle-grade magic equipment burst forth, fighting against the crimson blades of light.
The crimson blades only dissipated after three pieces of middle-grade magic equipment exploded in quick succession, revealing a Carol who looked deathly pale.
“So you’re the ones plotting against me from the shadows?” The giant phantom serpent coiled up, and the devilishly handsome face of a magus was revealed as Leylin stared at these three Magi coldly. Just the sweep of his gaze caused these three Radiant Moon Magi to feel their scalps go numb, as if they were being watched by some terrifying unmatched being.
Indeed, the opponent had a very handsome face. Even if she’d videos and acquired information about him before, Carol had to admit that a high-ranked Warlock like Leylin was someone who female Magi would go crazy over.
This unwitting charm he was giving off was very similar to a high-grade illusory attack.
“Who are you?” Leylin watched the three Magi, the gears in his mind turning.
His greatest enemy in the central continent, Jupiter’s Lightning, only had one Radiant Moon Magus in Zegna. However, none of these three was weaker than Zegna, and were total strangers to him.

‘Could they be from the Monarch of the Skies? Or is it someone else afraid of my development?’ Thoughts flashed quickly past Leylin’s mind. At this moment, the A.I. Chip had transmitted to his mind all the information it had gleaned.

‘Two peak New Moons as well as a Full Moon Magus! If it were the past me, I wouldn’t be able to kill them even if I used Sun Scorching Nirvana...’ These three Radiant Moon Magi were obviously here to kill him, and Leylin’s guard immediately went up.

“Who exactly are you?” He spoke slowly while the A.I. Chip scanned their auras and undulations in detail. There were only a few Radiant Moons in the central continents. He could search them up in the future, and he would eventually find out where they were from.

Currently, Leylin only needed to vent the fury in his heart! It had to be said, that dream curse they’d used on him had enraged him to no end.

The leader of the Magi watched Leylin, his eyes first flickering with terror but then glowing with a staunch resolve. “Leylin Farlier... So you were able to break through the bloodline shackles of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent and reach rank 5! You’re the most powerful bloodline genius I’ve ever seen, but it’s a pity that no matter how talented you are, you have to die here today!”

“Radiant Moon spell formation, three souls in one!” The bright figure of a full moon appeared behind the leader’s back, and Full Moon soul force burst forth, bringing with it a piercing chill.

Eugene and Carol stepped into formation behind him, each of them at the three corners of a triangle with this leader at the head. The soul force from their truesouls merged as well. Three cold radiant
souls unified, appearing in front of Leylin like lightning.
“A competition between truesouls?” The giant Kemoyin Serpent Emperor roared, and crimson runes began to spread across Leylin’s body.
Even after reaching Radiant Moon and becoming a rank 5 Warlock, his truesoul was still weak in comparison to the combined truesouls of his opponents. With their spell formation, they’d suppressed his to the maximum, to the point that even his domain was weakening. “Though my soul force has been stimulated by my bloodline to reach the peak of New Moon, it’s too strenuous to fight three Magi at the same rank, let alone one with power at Full Moon…” Leylin’s brows furrowed, the image of a truesoul similarly appearing behind him and soul force at rank 5 being released. Cold moonlight that brought with it a terrifying soul force competed with theirs.
The danger of such a battle was far greater than one of the spells. Just a slight misstep could push any of them to a point of no return. The void was still, with no sound being emitted. A formless ripple was quickly spreading in all directions, and all beings in range of this battle between soul force, ordinary or otherwise, collapsed without a sound. This even included rank 3 beings. Terrifying soul undulations even spread as far as Nature’s Alliance Academy, and even with the defensive formations Leylin had set up before there were massive casualties.
*Pu!* Leylin abruptly staggered back as his blood flowed down from his eyes. In the battle between soul force, he had clearly been on the losing end.
However, the Radiant Moon Magi weren’t faring very well either, the huge loss of soul force causing their faces to turn pale. “He’s already reached peak New Moon?” The leader stared at Leylin in disbelief.
He knew full well how difficult it was for Radiant Moon Magi to
advance, and the opponent was a newly-advanced Warlock. In such a short period of time, he had pushed his soul force to peak New Moon, and that was a huge shock for him. Traces of jealousy began to form in the depths of his heart, even, nibbling at his spirit like a toxic serpent.

“Admit defeat! You’re not our match when it comes to soul force. Injuries to soul force will reflect on your body, there’s no way out for you!” The Magus Leader watched Leylin, whose blood was seeping from his skin, and hummed coldly.

“Is that so?” Leylin sneered instead, giving his opponent a bad omen.

“Devour!” The tremendous and elegant Kemoyin Serpent Emperor figure appeared behind him, widening its huge mouth towards the three Radiant Moon Magi. A terrifying black hole was produced, causing everything within range, even light and space, to be sucked in. The powerful attractive force gave rise to a horrifying energy storm.

*Rumble!* In an instant, the ground under the three Radiant Moon Magi turned nothing as an unending stream of life force flowed to all parts of Leylin’s body, allowing his wounds to heal quickly. With the Devouring innate skill, he was practically immortal, and could even mend his truesoul using his body. No matter how grievous the injury, he could recover quickly. In a battle between Magi, this was completely like a cheat move.

*Pu!* The opponents cooperated to deal another blow, soul blades carving out a huge wound on Leylin’s chest. However, large amounts of life force were channelled instantly once more, and blood and flesh regenerated. In the blink of an eye, he had recovered.

Leylin exchanged blows like a lunatic, injury for another injury, crimson energy blades flying everywhere and causing the three Magi to find it difficult to keep up. This was especially so for the
frail Carol. Due to the backlash from before, she was now on the verge of collapsing.

“This isn’t working. His regenerative ability is just too terrifying!”

The leader of the Magi felt a chill in his heart. They had to fend against not just Leylin’s attacks, but also the devouring force of the black hole. Leylin was contending with them with no qualms whatsoever, and he was finding this precarious situation difficult to manage.

“The opponent evidently regains life force through devouring matter. Let’s go into a spatial rift. There shouldn’t be much for him to absorb there!” His eyes flickered as he found the way to get around this devouring ability, its weakness.

If he were in a void, Leylin’s devouring ability would definitely be affected. While he could devour space, the efficiency would definitely decrease, and the amount of life energy generated would be lessened.

“Trying to leave?” Crimson light flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

*Hss hss!* The terrifying amber slits of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor’s eyes fixed onto the weakest member, Carol. A layer of ash-white stone began to emerge on her body.

*Boom! Boom!* Leylin let the opponents’ attacks land on his back, scales and flesh flying as he charged into the centre of their spell formation. Numerous black shadow claws appeared and forcefully grabbed Carol.
Light burst forth as the spell formation that combined the power of three souls was broken through. “Let’s go!” Eugene and the leader grasped this opportunity and, quickly pulled Leylin into the spatial crack.

The tremendous snarling figure of the giant serpent was still devouring the dust and space all around it, but the life energy being generated was obviously reduced. It was obvious at the slowed recovery of the injury on Leylin’s back. “Carol!” At this moment, the opponents were gazing at Carol, who was in Leylin’s control, and a trace of despair appeared on their expressions.

Under the gaze of the Eye of Petrification, the female Magus had turned into a limestone statue. Though there was a layer of soul energy resisting the corrosion from the petrification, Leylin currently possessed a Serpent Emperor’s eyes, and the damage his innate spell could cause had risen greatly. Even Radiant Moon Magi would not be immune to such an attack. “Carol? She’s the Magus who brought me into that dream? Very well!” Leylin lifted the statue, the Scarlet Earring emanating dazzling rays of light.

“What are you going to do? If you dare to attack Carol, our King won’t let you off!” Eugene exclaimed.

“Hehe… At this stage, there’s no need to discuss anything about letting people off. Don’t treat me like a child. Trying to deceive me
like this is an insult to my intelligence!” Leylin’s voice was light, but his tone was ice-cold.
“What I want you to know now is the price of provoking me! Whoever you or your backers are, you will all perish!” *Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Numerous fine rays of light streaked past, and the stone statue that was Carol burst into smithereens.
In that moment, Eugene and the leader were caught in a daze. They had never expected Leylin to be so powerful, and for him to be so merciless.
“Did you think that’s all I would do?” Leylin suddenly snickered as he commanded in his mind, ‘A.I. Chip!'
[Beep! Recorded opponent’s soul undulations. Beginning search for corresponding coordinates!]
There were many methods to save one’s life in the Magus World, clones being a popular one. This was especially true for Magi at Morning Star and above, all of whom had ways to prevent their fall.
Carol naturally had a few Morning Star ranked clones, considered to be a last insurance, but she was facing a Radiant Moon Warlock! His truesoul had already matured, and he had the ability to take care of all of his opponent’s clones.
Eugene and the other Magus, their leader, saw the truesoul image on Leylin’s back that was like a clear crescent moon turn blood-red.
A terrifying giant claw followed the path that Carol’s truesoul had taken after her fall and disappeared into the void, seeming to arrive at some area.
A strange energy undulation was transmitted, and Eugene and the other’s expressions changed.
“The astral plane! The astral plane opened up to receive her
truesoul! Was there really an issue in Carol’s transfer to her clone?”

They could not help but gaze at Leylin with fear in their eyes.

*Boom! Boom!* In the central continent, at almost the very instant
the giant claw had appeared, a Morning Star clone of Carol’s
collapsed onto the ground, eyes blank and void of any aura of life.

Meanwhile, a spell rune emitting green light mysteriously broke in
Carol’s Magus Tower, and the spirit genie’s voice rang out with ear-
piercing warnings, “Suffered unknown attack. Reserve clone has
fallen!”

“Magi only have one truesoul. Regardless of how many clones
there are, all life-preserving methods are useless once the truesoul
is damaged or sent into the astral universe…” Of course, the
transfer of truesoul was a speedy process. Most Radiant Moon
Magi seldom succeeded in killing others even with their soul force.
However, given the help of the A.I. Chip, Leylin did not find such
a thing difficult.

A notification wave flashed, and the leader stared at Leylin blankly.
“News from headquarters. Carol’s clones and the spirit of the life
regeneration pool have all fallen!”

When Carol was being killed by Leylin, the fury he had displayed
in fact only half true, as he did not believe Leylin could do it. Now,
however, seeing that Leylin had actually completely wiped out a
similarly ranked Radiant Moon Magus, dread arose within his
heart.

“You won’t be able to leave today!” In the spatial rift, surrounded
by boundless starry rivers, Leylin had his hands behind his back,
looking confident.

“Arcane Art Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!”

*Hss…* A terrifying ancient might descended, and the two Radiant
Magi had to retreat. A gigantic serpent that was over a hundred
thousand metres long appeared, every scale on its body looking
very vivid. The intelligence in its eyes made it seem grand and
Compared to the previous Giant Kemoyin Serpent, Leylin had currently turned into a real rank 5 being. He was now the ruler of all Giant Kemoyin Serpents, the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor! With the serpent’s gaze fixed on them, Eugene and the leading Magus started sweating bullets. The power of an ancient rank 5 existence far exceeded what most Radiant Moons could bring forth. A being like this, a ruler, possessed even more power, taking on the role of a predator. “We’re going all out!” The leader and Eugene exchanged a glance, looks of determination rising in their eyes. Dazzling light converged at their bodies, and a terrifying and tremendous might burst forth. “Ancient rank 5 Arcane Art Seal of the Abyss!” “Ancient rank 5 Arcane Art Spatial Grave!” With the push from their soul force, the two Radiant Moons each had five innate spells fusing as a tremendous arcane art was used by their hand, surging towards the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor. “Eye of Petrification! Toxic Bile!” Terrifying rays of petrifying light shot out of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor’s eyes into the opposing black stream. A large amount of black gas fell as it turned to stone, but was shortly after replaced with more. A large brass seal charged out from within that abyss even as, under the other Magus’ directions, silver spatial turbulence converged to form an even more horrifying spatial storm that swept up the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor. “Hss…” The Kemoyin Serpent Emperor thundered, petrifying rays striking the gigantic seal. It instantly froze up, and with a swipe of the Emperor’s tail, the entire abyss crumbled as the large brass seal vanished. The spatial storm caught up while Leylin was focussed on dealing with the seal. The silver storm wreaked havoc, and piece by piece
the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor’s scales fell off, revealing fresh, bloody wounds.
“Devour!” The Kemoyin Serpent Emperor opened its mouth while facing the spatial turbulence, and a terrifying black hole appeared. Large amounts of this silver spatial turbulence were unexpectedly swallowed, transformed rapidly into life energy that allowed the wounds on its body to heal.
“He can even devour spatial storms. He’s a monster, a monster!” Personally seeing even rank 5 arcane arts dealing negligible damage against Leylin, the two Magi immediately sunk into depression.
They exchanged a glance, making plans to escape. However, how could Leylin give them another chance like that? In practically the blink of an eye, the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor swept through the region, submerging the figures of Eugene and the leader…
In the spatial crack that was like a universe of its own, the tremendous Giant Kemoyin Serpent snarled. Beside it, two bundles of various-coloured rays gradually grew dimmer, on the verge of disappearing.
At this moment, the bundle that was the more radiant of the two suddenly shattered, revealing the figure of a man who was gravely injured. He glared poisonously at the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor, and no longer daring to dawdle turning into a multi-coloured streak as he left.
A voice full of unwillingness resounded behind him, “You actually abandoned me!” Eugene yelled furiously. However, the bundle of light that represented the strength of his own life dimmed even further, and then finally disappeared.
When the last trace of light dissipated, the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor’s body turned into black gas that condensed to form Leylin’s actual body once more.
He stood in front of Eugene who no longer had any aura of life, eyes emitting blue light.
“Though one ran away, such a result isn’t half bad!” Leylin muttered as he nodded. This time, not only had he killed two Radiant Moons, he had also caused a Full Moon Magus to flee, seriously injured. Even a Breaking Dawn Monarch would feel heartbroken about such a thing for a long while. It could be said that this was a critical counterattack on his part towards the opposing organisation they were a part of! Furthermore, once news of him reaching Radiant Moon spread, the stream of Magi who wanted to eliminate him as soon as possible should halt for a while. Of course, if they decided to proceed further, those coming after him wouldn’t be mere Radiant Moons.

At this point, boundless light filled the void. The astral plane opened up, and traces of starlight moved to take Eugene’s corpse. The blue light in Leylin’s eyes grew even more pronounced. After Eugene’s body was brought into the astral world, Leylin could vaguely see that the ash-brown rocks that had gathered around Eugene’s body had turned him into a bare isle. The isle seemed extremely sturdy but looked barren as it became to float in the astral plane. In the limitless void behind it were so, so many barren isles like this one...

“After Morning Star Magi die, their point mass will return to the astral universe. If Radiant Moon Magi fall and if the corpse isn’t damaged, it’ll turn into a barren isle?” Fear suddenly arose in Leylin’s heart. How many Radiant Moons had fallen in history? Someday in the future, would he turn into an isolated island like that?

“Even so, I must pursue eternal life! If I die while pursuing my dreams, I’ll die with no regrets. I would have lived a marvellous
life!” Leylin’s eyes emitted a boundless spirit.
In the air above a region of Twilight Zone, countless distortions combined to form a spatial channel. Leylin, dressed in loose black robes, stepped out from the passageway. The battle between rank 5s had resulted in extensive damage even within a spatial crack. Had it been fought in Twilight Zone, perhaps most of it would have been destroyed. Even so, just the probing attacks from before had led to devastating harm to the land. Even if the affected area was not huge, the radiation and curses that remained would constantly corrode the land, even spreading out further. In a worse case scenario, there might be the creation of malicious Conscients or attracting different World’s Wills to descend here. Whatever may happen, it would result in nothing good for Twilight Zone. “A battle amongst Radiant Moons is far too destructive. It’s not just the direct damage, but the indirect pollution as well…” Leylin watched the land that was in a terrible state and frowned, “If a Magus were to do this in the central continent, they would become a public enemy…” Even the A.I. Chip had no quick methods to heal the land from such destructive damage, only waiting for nature to take its course or, at most, conducting some slow, suitable treatment. Leylin’s gaze suddenly turned to another region in the sky. “Now, onto the other guest who’s been watching for a long time. Aren’t
Not only could he sense the soul of a Radiant Moon in that direction, there was also the aura of a bloodline. Though it wasn’t that of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s, the person there was a sort of Warlock.

“Hehe… Your Highness has discovered me!” Crimson light flashed, and a large blood-red bat emerged from that direction. On its abdomen was a young face.

The human face on the abdomen of the bat laughed as it spoke, “Your Highness! The last time we met was when you first explored the Morning Star area. I never expected you to catch up to us old things so quickly!”

After an attempt, Leylin quickly identified this person, “Such familiar undulations… You’re the protector of the Morning Star area!”

This was the conscient he’d interacted with when he’d entered the Morning Star area. He had long since gotten the A.I. Chip to record the aura of this rank 5 existence, there was no way he could be wrong.

The crimson bat chuckled. “Yes, I’m Jeffrey! I was afraid that they would harm Your Highness, but it looked like my worries were for naught…”

“Whatever it is, I’m still thankful for your help. How should I address you, Your Highness?” Leylin bowed slightly, and a look of puzzlement appeared on his expression.

“Our Warlock Union uses the same feudal system as your Ouroboros Clan. Rank 4s are Dukes, and rank 5 Warlocks are addressed ‘Your Highness’, we’re basically Archdukes,” the blood-red bat explained.

Leylin nodded. “I see! Well then, what business do you have coming here, as a fellow Archduke?”

“Oh yes! I hereby extend a solemn invitation to Your Highness
Leylin. We hope you’ll come to the bloodline Warlocks’ final fort, the Morning Star area!” The human face on the bat’s abdomen looked serious.

Leylin agreed, “Indeed, I should go there. There seem to be some big problems between the Warlocks and Magi in the central continent.”

In actuality, Leylin was feeling somewhat annoyed. Initially, the only mortal enemy that he had provoked was Jupiter’s Lightning. Though the organisation of Sky City was hostile towards him, they wouldn’t go so far as to send people to hunt him down and kill him. Hence, after attaining rank 5 and taking care of Zegna, he was supposed to be able to do as he wished in this place.

However, reality dealt Leylin a huge blow. The appearance of Carol and the others indicated that there was another organisation that stood against Warlocks, and even took up the task of hunting down and eliminating Warlocks as their mission in life.

As the most dazzling of bloodline Warlocks with a meteoric rise, Leylin had unfortunately become their target.

‘Luckily, I’ve already reached rank 5. With the bonus from the Kemoyin Emperor and the aid from the A.I. Chip, I’ll still be able to escape even if I were to face a Breaking Dawn Magus. That’s enough…’ A cold glint flickered in Leylin’s eyes. This sneak attack against him had thoroughly irked him.

‘I don’t care who you are and how large your organisation is. Even if you have a Breaking Dawn Monarch backing you, there will come a day that I, Leylin Farlier, will completely erase you from the central continent. I swear on it!’

……

Leylin was a very clear-cut person. He had little holding him back in Twilight Zone, and after sending Celine a simple message and
mentioning what had happened he immediately followed Jeffrey out and into the Morning Star area. Standing within the Morning Star area that had congealed, Leylin felt extremely emotional as he watched the shattered universe and gigantic stars within the space. Though he’d visited this place numerous times with his soul force, this was the first time he’d entered the place with his real body. Sending his soul force out, the auras of the many bloodline Warlocks in the surroundings put Leylin’s mind and body at ease. “Your Highness, Leylin. It’s nice to meet you again. Or should I say it’s nice to meet you again? I’m so happy that you’re joining us, our Warlock Union’s might has risen once again!” A Warlock with the same face as that on the abdomen of the bat emerged beside Leylin, his long crimson hair untied, flying in the air. “Your Highness, Jeffrey!” It was obvious that this young man was a rank 5 Warlock. This was the main body of the Morning Star area’s protector, Jeffrey. “Alright. I know you have many questions, but they’ll be answered once we reach headquarters.” Jeffrey enthusiastically brought Leylin all the way to the Warlocks’ headquarters in the Morning Star area. In a gigantic receiving room, Leylin saw two other rank 5 Warlocks. One had a completely golden body, seemingly able to be likened to a god of battle. He was very familiar with this person, rank 5 Warlock Golden Lion Wayde. He’d had quite a few transactions with him before. “Come, let me introduce you. You already know Wayde, the person beside him is Offa,” Jeffrey smiled as he pointed to the Warlock beside Wayde. Leylin took the initiative and bowed, “Your Highnesses!” “Leylin Farlier! Once a Kemoyin Duke and now an Archduke. We’ve talked through imprints many times, but this is the first time
we’re meeting face to face!” Wayde’s smile seemed to be bathed in sunshine, his body emanating a charismatic aura.

“Your Highness is truly a talent. With you joining us, I can be at ease… Cough Cough” Offa who was beside Wayde was like an old man approaching death, his aura full of decay. It seemed like he was but a step from the grace, and yet Leylin wouldn’t dare belittle him.

From this coughing old man’s body, he could feel soul force at the peak of Radiant Moon!

“Based on the previous rumours, the arrival of a few rank 5 Warlocks deterred the Breaking Dawn Monarchs from attacking, thus preserving the inheritance of Warlocks. If my guesses aren’t wrong, Warlock Offa is one of them…”

“Alright, let’s sit! What is it, are you astonished to see there being three rank 5 Warlocks in the Morning Star area?” Jeffrey laughed as he got Leylin and Wayde to sit, beaming as he got the robot servant to serve refreshments.

“A little!” Leylin nodded in admittance. From both his own perception as well as the scanning of the A.I. Chip, these three Warlocks were here in their main bodies.

This meant the ones who were active in the Magus World were merely their clones. At this stage, Leylin knew just how much Warlocks were feared.

“We’re trapped here due to the suppression of the central continent’s Magi. We need to be on our guards against the Blazing Flame Monarch,” Jeffrey said solemnly.

“Blazing Flame Monarch? The Breaking Dawn Magus?” Leylin immediately recalled the Fiery World that he’d found when probing through the astral plane before ruthlessly being expelled by the organisation of the Blazing Flame Monarch.

“Yes. The other party has a terrible attitude, and even wants to attack us…”
Leylin touched his chin, “Then, are there other organisations in the central continent that are on good terms with us Warlocks?”
“No… Basically, all Magi are worried about our rise, and there are people who are just waiting to watch us run out of luck. Still, there’s only one organisation who’ve been attacking us brazenly, hoping to completely exterminate us, and it’s that of the Blazing Flame Monarch.”
Jeffrey and Wayde exchanged a glance before Offa spoke. “I can tell you this: those that attacked you, Carol, Eugene, and the rest, were subordinates of the Blazing Flame Monarch…”
“At the beginning, it was also this Blazing Flame Monarch who wanted to end the inheritances of us Warlocks. If not for Offa and the other elders advancing in time and transforming the Morning Star area into a gigantic battle fort, we Warlocks would probably have gone extinct due to him…” Wayde spoke in a low voice.
“Battle fort?” Leylin thought of something else. ‘Transforming a small world into a gigantic weapon in war to be manipulated by three rank 5 Warlocks is something to be feared, even by Breaking Dawn Magi…’
“Well then, do you know why the Blazing Flame Monarch is hell bent on killing us?” Leylin asked gloomily.
“It could be because of some conflicts of interest and some old grudges…” Jeffrey didn’t seem quite sure about this either. “Our intelligence officers have also discovered an interesting prophecy…”
“What prophecy?” Leylin’s spirits were lifted. “In this century, before the waves of extreme weather returns, the King of Bloodlines shall rise in splendour, crushing all the other thrones in the central continent!” Jeffrey’s body began to tremble with excitement. “A Monarch of bloodline Warlocks?” Leylin shook his head, “How could there be something so easy?” Wayde’s expression turned a little gloomy. “However, once a rank 6 Warlock does appear, they will surely exceed Breaking Dawn Magi in strength. Perhaps the Blazing Flame Monarch intended to nip the danger in the bud. This is also why the other Monarchs in the central continent are supporting it.” “That certainly makes sense as well!” Leylin stroked his chin. “And there are only a few candidates left that may fulfill the prophecy, one of them being Your Highness Leylin. Hence, for your safety and considering the futures of us Warlocks, we request that Your Highness stays in the Morning Star area as much as possible. Even if you wish to go out, please use some sort of clone…” Jeffrey said sincerely. “Why? Do you think I can advance to the Breaking Dawn realm?” Leylin’s heart stirred but his facial expression was that of stupefaction, “Even if my bloodline evolved to become that of a Kemoyin Emperor, I am still limited to rank 5!” “Of course, we are aware of the difficulty of bloodline shackles,
but even a rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor will be one of our greatest military strengths…” Wayde pointed out meaningfully.
‘This attitude… could it be that they really found a bloodline Warlock that can advance to rank 6?’ Seeing Wayde’s attitude, Leylin already had some ideas in his heart.
“I’m naturally bound to do my duty for the Warlock Union. But there’s one problem. I still have to resolve the grudge between Jupiter’s Lightning and my Ouroboros Clan…” Leylin’s expression showed a hint of hesitation.
“There’s no need for Your Highness to worry about that. Regarding this, there’s no need for Your Highness to worry at all. According to our intelligence, the chief of Jupiter’s Lightning, Night Phantom Zegna, is already dead…” Jeffrey sneaked a glance at Offa, before he made the report to Leylin.
“What? Zegna has fallen?” This news immediately caused Leylin’s eyes to widen into full circles. He’d never expected that this enemy who’d caused him such tremendous stress before would just die so quietly.
Although he was confident in killing the man on the spot with his current strength, his opponent meeting an end still left Leylin depressed. It was like he’d punched out with all his might just to hit cotton.
“How did he die?” Morning Stars normally had lifespans of over a thousand years, and Radiant Moons usually lived to several thousand years old.
Given how young Zegna was, his death was definitely not due to old age.
“We don’t have any news about that, sadly. But we did receive information that Jupiter’s Lightning was taken over by a female Radiant Moon Magus after Zegna’s death. On top of that, they announced the end of all current diplomatic and military
movements. This means your Ouroboros Clan’s emergency has been solved…”

“Female Radiant Moon Magus?” For some unknown reason, Leylin immediately thought of the power hiding behind Zegna. During their previous fights, he had faintly sensed that Zegna certainly had assistance from a Magus who was more knowledgeable than him. This turn of events led to his instincts saying so even more

‘Was it really an accidental death, or was it man-made?’ Leylin’s pupils twinkled in a myriad of colours.

“As for the two Dukes, your wife, and any others, we can totally arrange for them to stay here to ensure their safety!” Wayne guaranteed, seemingly worried that Leylin still had other considerations.

“Thank you so much Your Highness, but let’s wait until I finish everything on hand before visiting Freya and the others.” Leylin nodded in gratitude. He’d had some suspicions and concerns about the Warlock headquarters at this Morning Star area, but now it just seemed like they really wanted to protect a promising bloodline. Although most of his suspicions had been eliminated, Leylin would still run his own inspections before he’d make a decision.

Leylin now more or less understood the peak military strength of the Warlock Union. The Morning Star area was their base camp, and of the executives among them, Jeffrey, Wayde, and Offa were all here. There was only one mysterious rank 5 Warlock hiding in the outside world, the last card in their hands.

It could be said that the current Leylin was already at the peak of bloodline Warlocks, one of their five magnates. His position in this Morning Star area could no longer be described as just respected. He instead was a partial ruler!

He’d even gotten access to some of the union’s resources, and the first thing he did was to enrich the A.I. Chip’s database with even
morning information.

……

Morning Star area, in a castle specially built for Leylin. A few months had passed by in a flash. Now, Freya was putting the books in her hands down and stretched, caressing her stomach. Her face was brimming with joy and love. Passing through an astral gate, the two Kemoyin Dukes and Freya had seen Leylin in the Morning Star area. She couldn’t believe that her husband had advanced to rank 5, even upgrading his bloodline to that of the terrifying Kemoyin Emperor. Rank 5! This was a painful topic for all Kemoyin Warlocks, but now the bloodline of the Kemoyin Emperor was already growing in her womb. “Kemoyin Emperor, the ruler of all Kemoyin Warlocks…” Freya mumbled with blurred vision as her eyes brimmed with joy. This was the right and proper ruling bloodline, one that had a guarantee of being able to advance to rank 5! Freya had a premonition that the Farlier Family would become the royalty of the Ouroboros Clan. All of the female Kemoyin warlocks would go crazy in order to obtain Leylin’s bloodline, even resorting to unscrupulous ways! “With the injection of a rank 5 bloodline also has so many benefits for my Blood Serpent Family. Forget falling, our bloodline will definitely rise in rank now!” Thinking about how she’d successfully gained hold of these things that she wouldn’t have even been able to beg for before, Freya was filled with rejoicement. And with that admiration came a further increase in her admiration and trust towards her husband… Thinking up to this point, Freya couldn’t help but tilt her head to look in another direction. Outside the translucent glass, not far away from the master
bedroom was a large laboratory for experiments on the astral plane as well as a breeding room for bloodlines. The two buildings stood tall like large monsters, even engulfing all the light in their surroundings as they made one feel stifled.

Inside the bloodline experimentation lab, Leylin was looking at a body in the breeding pool, a thoughtful expression emerging on his face.

[Constructing the clone’s body! Estimated to be a perfect body of a Morning Star!] The A.I. Chip’s scans and prompts were transmitted continuously.

Leylin was currently trying to create a clone of himself. Generally speaking, such a clone would be a rank below that of the Magi who created it. In order to obtain a clone of a same rank as the main body like Wayde’s, one required not only time and large amounts of resources, but a certain amount of luck as well.

“Beginning copying of soul imprint!” Two bright beams of light shot out of Leylin’s eyes and into the clone’s…

Half an hour later, the clone’s eyelids suddenly raised, its eyes containing a slight vigour. Energy undulations at the peak of Morning Star began to spread out.

“Based on the Heavenly Astrals’ blueprint and flesh that has been added to my own body, this clone’s battle prowess pretty decent in the Morning Star level!”

Leylin nodded in satisfaction. Truth be told, such a clone wasn’t very useful. Although they worked when dealing with weak enemies, they were only bugs in front of Radiant Moons.

However, its advantage lay in its simple structure. This type of clone was good cannon fodder that could handle some unimportant matters.

[Based on the main body’s spiritual conditions, at most three imprints can be maintained at once!] the A.I. Chip’s voice echoed once more.
“In other words, under normal circumstances, I can at most maintain 3 Morning Star ranked clones?” Leylin stroked his chin. He had a certain understanding towards the situation with this kind of clone. Because truesouls were inseparable, many Magi had clones like this that only possessed a spiritual imprint. Its death would not have much impact on the main body, but on the main body’s death, the truesoul could shift into the clone and successfully revive itself. Still, this process had its dangers as well. For instance, Leylin had taken a Radiant Moon Magus’ clones out with them, causing a thorough death by killing the truesoul itself. ‘This kind of method is not very safe… Legends talk of a way during ancient times to break up one’s truesoul. A clone formed in that way unifies both sides, but they don’t necessarily affect one another. Even if one dies, the other can live on without a hitch. That is true cloning…’ Leylin thought of some confidential information he’d acquired before. ‘Only, because one is breaking up their truesoul, such a cloning may result in different personalities because of the different environments and experiences. There could even be a situation wherein the clones turn against each other and become enemies. That’s too dangerous…’

The technique he was using currently was like that of creating a photocopied substitute. Although it would not have any special abilities, it was better in terms of stability and safety. Of course, another reason for Leylin choosing this method was simply that he had no desire to break up his truesoul. All such cloning required was a great amount of material resources and a piece of memory he could duplicate by using the A.I. Chip. It could be considered a bargain. Thinking of this, Leylin could not help but take a look at his own status.
Leylin Farlier rank 5 bloodline: Kemoyin Serpent Emperor (Complete body), Strength: 76, Agility: 62, Vitality: 138.9, Spiritual force: 1329.7, Magic power: 1329 (Magic power is in synchronisation with spiritual force) Soul Force: 133 (New Moon)
Here’s a significant increase in all my statistics… The rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor bloodline is truly terrifying!” Leylin let loose a sigh of satisfaction at the sight of his status.

The Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline originally provided additional bloodline power to a Warlock, and once it evolved this support only grew greater in magnitude.

Leylin could feel this royal bloodline changing his body with every breath, breaking even into his truesoul and colouring it a slight red. His soul force was constantly being strengthened.

‘Although this Kemoyin Emperor bloodline helped me achieve rank 5, even to be considered strong amongst Radiant Moons, it isn’t without its consequences…’ Leylin could not help but think of the feeling he had when he was being spied upon at that time. The Snake Dowager’s attention from the Purgatory World had left him nervous and uneasy to this day. He could not help but put in extra effort into improving his strength.

He had a premonition that the moment he chose to fight the Snake Dowager, even betray her, the bloodline in his body would lead to an unpredictable end.

Leylin could not help but recall the situation when he met the two Kemoyin Dukes. As he’d already advanced to Radiant Moon himself and even awakened the Kemoyin Emperor’s bloodline, he’d felt like he could completely bypass their willpower and give
them any commands he wished. They would likely carry out his orders even if he told them to die.

As for Freya? She’d already fallen completely into his control, from her body to her spirit. This feeling of controlling everything about another person really had Leylin somewhat intoxicated.

Everything naturally came from the Kemoyin Emperor’s innate skill of control. However, this had also given Leylin an idea of the type of control the Snake Dowager would have over serpents. If, by any chance, there was conflict between them, Leylin didn’t have any confidence in himself…

The laboratory door opened with a bang and Freya stood up with a pleasant surprise, “Leylin! Is the experiment proceeding smoothly?” Shortly after, she sharply noticed that this ‘Leylin’ was a little different from usual. After being in a daze for a while, Freya then pursed her lips in astonishment, “You… Your body’s aura, why has it fallen back to Morning Star?”

“Very smoothly!” ‘Leylin’ smiled. Behind him, another Leylin with a deeper aura walked out, “Even you didn’t notice the anomaly at first. It seems like the spiritual imprint was also very successful!”

“This is your Morning Star clone?” Freya looked at the Leylin who came out first and her eyes sparkled.

“Yes! Although my main body will remain in the Morning Star area, there are still matters that I have to resolve in the outside world!” The Morning Star clone nodded before turning around and walking out.

In its stead, the real Leylin walked up, looking at Freya’s slightly bulging stomach with a smile. Through the bloodline’s reaction and the ability of the Kemoyin Emperor, he could clearly sense a tiny life growing sturdily in there.

It wasn’t just the child. Freya was growing as well, although in another sense. Her strength had skyrocketed from one who’d just stepped into the Crystal Phase, and at some point, she’d
unknowingly broken through to the limits of rank 3. With how her bloodline was constantly being purified, there was a chance she’d break through to Morning Star!
All of this was, of course, due to Leylin’s imperceptible influence. The two dukes hadn’t gained much, but with Freya, there was an obvious increase in power.
“Scary! Is this also the ability of the royal bloodline? Subtly influencing and transforming one’s own kind, evolving them to become more powerful…”
‘The power of a royal bloodline is truly frightening… To subtly influence and transform one’s kin, evolving them into a more powerful state…’ Leylin’s pupils sparkled. He had finally experienced the true terror of a royal bloodline. Not only could it amplify his individual military might, but it could also upgrade his entire clan!
If he stayed at the Ouroboros Clan for a hundred years, most of the rank 1 Mankestr bloodlines would probably evolve to rank 3, becoming Black Horrall Snake bloodlines. As for Black Horrall Snake Warlocks themselves? They stood a chance of becoming pureblood Kemoyin Warlocks! The bloodlines of many of the royal families would grow even purer due to Leylin’s existence.
Of course, all of this was also related to the distance between them and Leylin. For example, Freya who was closest to him experienced the deepest influence from his radiation and aura, showing results in just a few months’ time.
“A.I. Chip! Establish mission, maintain the current radiation from the regal bloodline that is influencing the community and form an energy tower that will be in this eternal state!” Leylin commanded.
[Beep! Mission established, regal bloodline’s influence on the community! Beginning to gather the main body’s radiation, simulating…] The A.I. Chip responded quickly.
Leylin would certainly not treat himself unfairly, making himself a
breeding machine or radiation source. To enhance the strength of all the Kemoyin Warlocks, he would instead build a tower that radiated similar energy to his.
As he was looking at the smiling Freya, Leylin suddenly grew dazed. His field of vision shifted, going past the Morning Star area to arrive at the dim subterranean world. In an ornate office, Celine caressed a stomach with an even greater bulge on it, a faint loneliness in her face.
Through the Kemoyin Emperor’s power of control, nearly all of the descendants of the Kemoyin bloodline in the Magus World could be seen by Leylin, and he had control over them.
Of course, Leylin’s ‘preparations’ weren’t limited to Freya alone. Besides his wife on the surface, he also entered intimate relationships with many female Warlocks. It was obviously voluntary, they’d done it to obtain his bloodline. In fact, there were even a few duels that had broken out in private as many of them fought for such a place.
“The growth of my bloodline has begun…” Leylin himself was also unclear about how he felt in his heart, and ended up just sighing…
An astral gate flashed with brilliant light, and Leylin’s Morning Star clone stepped through the curtain of light and onto the floor of his Magus Tower.
“Welcome back, Master!” To the tower’s spirit genie, this clone who had the same energy waves as the main body and was familiar with all the traps and passwords would be a master as well.
“Okay, time to see the two Dukes!” The current Leylin could be said to be the backbone of the Ouroboros Clan, and all major decisions needed his permission. Although it was still possible to contact him through secret imprints, there was still a large amount of information and even documents to sign and the like. A physical body was still required to resolve that type of thing.
Ever since Leylin had purified his bloodline into that of a Kemoyin
Emperor, Gilbert and Emma no longer treated him like a junior. Instead they gave him the sort of respect one would their liege. Perhaps strength was a part of the reason why, but the main cause was probably the royal bloodline’s natural coercion and secret influence.

With regards to this, Leylin could only shake his head. After meeting the two dukes who were evidently slightly trembling with fear, Leylin plunged into a sea of documents. Fortunately, with the A.I. Chip’s assistance, he handled these matters with blazing speed while still avoiding even the slightest of errors.

After finishing up all these miscellaneous affairs, Leylin left Phosphorescence Swamp to arrive at a commoners’ city. This was Borre City, located at the borders of the Black River Domain. It had constantly suffered the tragedies of war for decades as it bordered the Warlocks’ territory. Although it seemed desolate, humans had a natural knack for survival. By the time Jupiter’s Lightning changed chiefs and the war ceased, this place had regained its prosperity once more.

Many horses, mules and scooters pushed their way through on the streets that were filled with the pungent smell of faeces. Mercenaries in leather armour, businessmen with accounting books, clowns with colourful faces… there were all sorts of scenes in this bustling city.

All sorts of bars and hotels were open round the clock, and some drunkards could be seen lying limp at the corners of the streets. These people were ultimately dragged away by patrols and thrown in jail without any regard for propriety. Unless someone bailed them out, they could only be forced into labour.

“Due to the war, ordinary people in the Ouroboros Clan’s territory will have to rebuild their homes. Furthermore, many new settlers are moving in here. Thus the marketplace is born!” Watching the flourishing and booming scene, Leylin thought of a reason
instantly.
Without stopping his footsteps, he directly came to the downtown commercial street, entering the most luxurious and beautiful cold beverage store.
Leylin was currently wearing a gold-rimmed tuxedo restricted to nobles. With the enchanting face resulting from his being a Warlock, unknown numbers of waitresses blushed as they looked at him.
However, he was already immune to such scenes. Minding his own business, he came before a seat.
“Can I sit here?” The girl sitting opposite him had a freckled face with vestiges of baby fat still on it. She could not be considered very pretty, and could likely disappear within a crowd. Yet, if one paid close attention, they would realise she had a special temperament to her.
This ‘special’ girl currently had her face stuffed with desserts, one hand holding tightly onto a cone of ice cream while the other constantly sent fries dipped in ketchup to her mouth. There were also many discarded food boxes piled up into a small, thick mountain at the side. It was unknown how she’d managed to digest that much food.
“You’re finally here! I’ve been waiting for you here for two days!” The girl mumbled with a full mouth. Her speech was blurry with all the food in it. She casually swept away the messy snacks that were in front of Leylin and made an inviting gesture. Leylin sat down without any restraint.
Right at this moment, he seemed to hear the sound of many hearts shattering, and many jealous gazes were directed onto the girl.
“Say…” Leylin looked at the girl pigging out opposite him with a bizarre look in his pupils, “If people knew that the person they were being hostile to was a female Magus, and even a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus, what would their expressions be like? That
would certainly be very interesting!”
“You have to understand my problem. I’ve been a soul for 3572
years, and have never been able to enjoy these!” The girl said
resentfully.
On the commercial street, a handsome guy and a girl who was a glutton sat face to face inside a dessert and drinks store. They appeared to be a common couple just like any other, but their conversation would have terrified anyone who heard it. And yet, due to some unknown reason, the surrounding customers and waiters in the vicinity acted like they did not hear a word of their conversation, preoccupied with their own things. The only thing was that a few beautiful girls and waitresses stared daggers at the girl seated opposite Leylin. If looks could kill, the girl would’ve been killed a million times over.

“Haha…This is such a great feeling! The jealousy of others is so amazing, perfect. I feel so blessed!” The female Magus was full of joy, twinkling little stars ready to burst out of her eyes.

Yet, Leylin was not easily fooled by such fake displays of emotion. He was very clear on how cunning the freak sitting opposite him was; after all, even Zegna had fallen into her trap.

“Stop beating around the bush! So, rank 5 Magus, ruler of Jupiter’s Lightning, what is it that you want from me?” Leylin asked in a low tone, his arms crossed with his elbows on the table, covering his face.

This female Magus opposite him was the current leader of Jupiter’s Lightning, and there was a high possibility that she’d taken care of Zegna to usurp his throne. Just a while ago, she’d contacted Leylin and requested a meeting here. Needing more information, Leylin...
had made the trip.
“Wait till I finish this ice cream strawberry pie, I’ve wanted it for quite a while! These things weren’t even there in my era... Whichever Magus created this is truly a genius!”
The girl was still trying hard to stuff a strawberry pie topped with ample cream pudding into her mouth, her fingers fully occupied by the white ice cream.
“Let me introduce myself. I’m Melinda... I guess you can call me Zegna’s teacher... sort of...” the girl blurted out.
Leylin’s pupils shimmered a little, ‘A.I. Chip, search this name in the database.’
The A.I. Chip responded quickly. [Beep! Searching history database, 391 matches for Melinda. Refining criteria, rank 5 and above... No matches.]
Even in Leylin’s database that had been strengthened with nearly the entire knowledge of the Great Library, there was not a single mention of this female Magus.
If she wasn’t using an alias, then she must have had another title that was more widely known. As for her real name, it was probably long buried in the past.
“So Melinda, you only asked me out to enjoy desserts with you?”
Leylin’s stare turned a little cold.
“Okay, fine!” Melinda tried to gobble down the pie quickly, only stopping after she finished a cup of apple juice. Lastly, she wiped the crumbs off her fingers with the tissues on the table.
After she cleaned up, Leylin felt a sudden change in her. It was as if she’d suddenly matured completely, having something special in her aura.
“Great job getting rid of my student, young Magus.” She looked at Leylin like a kind senior encouraging him.
Leylin rolled his eyes, “YOU’RE the one who got rid of your student.”
Leylin wasn’t really surprised by her split personality. Existing as a soul for thousands of years would change anyone, even a highly intelligent Magus. Put into perspective, Melinda’s condition was relatively mild.

Worse things had happened in the past, such as a Spirit Magus engaging in bloody massacre after walking out of a ruin.

“Is that so? Oh hahaha… I’d almost forgotten. I warned poor little Zegna about the dangers in making the Pond of Lamentation. One would be counterattacked by all the spirits if they ran out of power…”

Melinda changed emotions instantly, appearing to be really sad for Zegna. Watching the show she was putting up, Leylin confirmed his suspicions on Zegna’s death. He decided to keep as far away from this woman as he could in the future.

Leylin began to lose patience, and cut straight into the topic.

“Anyway, it’s great that Zegna’s dead and the battle between the Jupiter’s Lightning and the Ouroboros Clan has ceased! So, what did you call me here for today?”

Realising Leylin’s urgency, Melinda spoke her true intentions, “Right. Are you interested in partnering up with me to kill a Monarch?”

“Kill a Monarch? You’re a nut-case! Meeting you here today was the worst decision I’ve ever made!” Leylin’s face turned a cold white as he stood up from his chair.

“Hehe! Wait a moment, lil’ Magus, I’m just joking. However, it really is a good idea for us to ally with each other when dealing with the Blazing Flame Monarch.” Melinda seemed to have switched personalities again.

“Do you have any grudge against the Blazing Flame Monarch?” Leylin asked, seemingly having suppressed his anger as he sat down again.

“To be honest, he played a big part in my death back then…”
Melinda smiled wryly as she revealed a bit of her secret past, “And I don’t think I need to mention his relationship with you Warlocks? I have much more information about him than you do, here you go…”

An hour later, Leylin left the dessert store speechlessly. He’d been forced to foot the bill. Refusing to take another glance at Melinda, he transformed into a ray of light as he left the city.

In the midst of his quick movement, he was running through what she’d said. She was supposedly best friends with the Blazing Flame Monarch, but they’d fallen out due to some matter and he’d plotted against her. It had cost her her life, and she’d been turned into a spirit body struggling for life.

It was much later that she met Zegna, helping him become a Radiant Moon Magus and set up Jupiter’s Lightning. She’d used some means to regain her life, and now she’d definitely be a thorn in the Blazing Flame Monarch’s eye. Therefore, she’d sealed her aura using an Arcane Art, but it was just a matter of time before he found out that she had come back to life. This was why she’d been eager to acquire his support.

However, Leylin did not believe a single part of these craps. Leylin didn’t believe a single ounce of her crap, but his plight was somehow similar to hers. Thus, he would love to have the necessary help, and would continue to be cordial on the surface.

“You will see my sincerity in future!” These were the exact words Melinda had left behind before they separated, but Leylin was still in doubt. Someone who’d kill her very own student to revive herself wasn’t very reliable. Even though he was no kind soul himself, he still detested those Magi who were tricky and cunning. It was probably because like poles repelled.

“FOUND YOU!” An explosion sounded as fire started to bubble, forming a crimson ocean in front of Leylin. The bubbling flames formed an enormous human face, terrifying rank 5 energy blocking
Leylin’s path.
Scorching hot flames that could burn even spacetime away caused the surroundings to turn into a formless mass.
“La– Laws of Fire! Breaking Dawn Magus! You’re the Blazing Flame Monarch!”
Leylin blurted out while he was swaying and cursing Melinda in his heart, ‘Melinda! Damn that woman!’
However, the giant face did not bother replying to Leylin. A mass of crimson light hit directly engulfed him.
Breaking Dawn Magi could begin to comprehend laws, advancing to rank 7 when they fully grasped them. Leylin was incapable of handling such a thing as the law of fire right now.
Leylin’s layered defence collapsed in a flash of light, the massive will crushing into his body like a mountain crashing down on an egg. It even bored into his sea of consciousness.
*Pow!* Leylin immediately turned fierce, a mass of destructive power arising directly within his sea of consciousness, forming a horrifying thunderstorm.
*Rumble!* The violent explosion was engulfed by the crimson sea of fire. A vague voice sounded out, “It’s actually a clone? That’s a pretty good cover up!” Fire elemental particles were activated just by the voice causing their density in the region to increase tremendously.
[Beep! Spiritual imprint is self-destructed!] The A.I. Chip notified emotionlessly within the Morning Star area. Leylin was absorbed in looking at the last images sent by the clone.
He had only lost a clone. As long as he had enough resources, he could easily make more with some time and the A.I. Chip. It was actually more difficult to observe a Breaking Dawn Magus’ attack.
The death of a clone caused only a little loss in soul force, while the death of the main body would cause great damage to a clone. The relationship between the two was never balanced.
“The Blazing Flame Monarch… Someone who can control the laws of fire…” Leylin murmured, data and equations flashing past his eyes as the A.I. Chip slowly deduced data on the battle might of the Monarch.
“A.I. Chip, simulate combat with the Blazing Flame Monarch.”
[Beep! Simulation has begun…] With the sound of the A.I. Chip, numerous images flashed into and out of Leylin’s vision, the future seeming to hold infinite possibilities.
The A.I. Chip couldn’t predict the future even with its current calculative power, but he was confident in its deductions for combat after a few optimisations, even if the opponent was a Breaking Dawn Monarch.
[Beep! Deduction complete, battle results between host and Blazing Flame Monarch: Host being badly injured and fleeing: 15.7%, Host dies and the opponent is lightly injured: 45.3%, 39% unknown] the A.I. Chip concluded.
Leylin’s expression changed when he saw the deduction produced by the A.I. Chip.

‘That’s to say, if I meet the Blazing Flame Monarch, there’s only half a chance of success? And I die in the other half as well…’ Leylin narrowed his eyes at the result.

Although a twenty percent chance of surviving a Breaking Dawn Magus’ attack was actually quite reasonable, it still felt rather low for Leylin.

Were he to meet the Blazing Flame Monarch today, it was too much of a risk for him to bet on that 39% unknown result.

Looking at the vague data, Leylin guessed it was probably due to all the secrets about himself that he kept. Thus, there would be more such unknown results. He didn’t dare to bet on his luck.

“Is the Blazing Flame Monarch really that powerful? Or is it that all Breaking Dawn Magi are just that strong?” Leylin stroked his chin. He felt like there was a huge gap among Breaking Dawn Magi, entirely dependant on their ability to comprehend laws.

“No matter what, the most important thing is to increase my power.” Leylin flipped his palm over to reveal a piece of flaming red ruby, releasing waves of mysterious energy.

This was the phoenix egg, something that was great for the soul. Leylin had used it previously to increase his soul force to the peak of Morning Star, unable to extract more afterwards.

At that point in time, his truesoul had already reached its maximum
capacity, unable to store any more Soulforce. Now that he’d advanced to Radiant Moon, the truesoul was like a vase that had grown bigger, now able to store a greater amount.
The phoenix egg was currently a great cure for the soul damage from the death of his clone.
“The Lava World is currently in the hands of Wayde and Melinda. I can use our alliance to get a chance to enter it, collecting the remaining scattered pieces of the phoenix egg…” Leylin rugged his chin.
The mysterious creature called the phoenix had been of great help to Leylin. Wayde and Melinda would’ve acquired all the easily obtainable pieces, but he still wanted to give it a shot.
“This current fragment is good enough to last me a long while, though…” A miniature phantom of the Kemoyin Emperor appeared behind Leylin’s back. A stream of black flames shot out of his fingertip as well, coiling onto the firasource stone.
With the assistance of Fireplume, streams of pure soul force flowed out of the phoenix egg like water from a clear spring. Leylin was joyous as his truesoul was rejuvenated, the speck of dullness caused by the fall of his clone quickly being filled up again by a brilliant glow.
Soul force which seemed as taintless as the moon spread continuously, filling up his truesoul and rapidly advancing it towards the Half Moon stage.
“Awesome yet terrifying, what a unique soul force!” Leylin heaved a sigh as he glanced at the message by the A.I. Chip, [Beep! Large quantity of phoenix egg essence has been absorbed by host. Soul force increasing, spiritual force strengthening.] [Beep! Host status has changed, recalculating statistics.] Leylin was shocked by the A.I. Chip’s notification as he realised the rapid increase in his soul force and spiritual force. His soul force had reached 161 units in just a few short seconds.
The moon that was his truesoul shone brightly, almost at the Half Moon stage. His spiritual force was stimulated by the abundant soul force as well, so much so that the sharp increase even burdened his body.
Leylin stopped extracting essence from the fragments once he realised something was wrong. His statistics had changed drastically once more.
The A.I. Chip finished its recalculation.
Gazing at the shrunken Phoenix’s egg in his palm, Leylin murmured to himself, “My spiritual force has increased by nearly 300 units in one shot? And my soul force by thirty? If I were to absorb the entire egg, my truesoul would probably advance to the peak of Full Moon. But…”
Leylin smiled bitterly. Such a growth rate placed an extreme burden on his body. Unlike the Kemoyin Emperor’s bloodline, the phoenix egg would only support the advancement of his soul force, rather than give him holistic development over a period of time.
Such an increase in a single element was troubling Leylin greatly. It was the main reason why he couldn’t just use the entire egg.
“The new plans to increase vitality need to be brought forward… Thankfully my Kemoyin Emperor bloodline is still growing, and it still has room to improve my vitality…” Bloodlines greatly improved Warlocks’ physiques.
“Hmmm… Why do I feel like using my devouring ability to absorb the egg should yield a better result?” Leylin’s eyes brightened, and he ordered the A.I. Chip to start simulations comparing it with his current method,
It was a blessing for a Magus to find any method to utilise such a
rare object, but Leylin felt like he was being wasteful. Such rare objects could never be found normally, so he could not let even a tiny bit of it go to waste.

[Beep! Trial completed! Efficiency of absorption: Fireplume: 87.8%, Devour: 92.6%. Devour also has a certain chance of inheriting the bloodline power of the ancient phoenix]

“Inheriting the bloodline power?” Leylin shook his head. If even the A.I. Chip was vague about the result, it showed that not only was such a thing very troublesome, it really depended on luck. He was not very confident in his luck. It’s not like it wasn’t good; in fact, he was just like any other normal person, his luck good at times and bad at others. It’s just that he would never rely on luck in such matters.

If the efficiency of absorbing the soul force was higher while devouring it, Leylin would definitely use this method. However, he would not harbour hope for anything else. After all, the higher the cliff of expectation, the greater the fall.

“It seems like I’ll be able to build up a foundation of soul force for the breakthrough to Breaking Dawn soon…” Leylin could not help the tinge of excitement that was growing in his heart.

This was rank 6! The realm of Monarchs! Rank 6 Magi were the elites among the Magi of the central continent, its rulers. They even had the power to control and direct the continent’s development!

To be exact, once Leylin advanced to rank 6, he would hold his fate in his own hands in the Magus World.

However, there was a huge problem at the moment. His bloodline still shackled him! To evolve from a Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlock to a Kemoyin Emperor Warlock had pushed Leylin’s genes to their limits, and the A.I. Chip had confirmed this. His bloodline would evolve no further. Great amounts of calculations and the help of the A.I. Chip only managed to push the bloodline shackles from Morning Star to Radiant Moon. They still
pressured down on him. On top of that, the attention of the Snake Dowager had disturbed Leylin further. He’d always been cautious of this mythical being. Her control of the darkness element was something Leylin’s could not begin to compare to. It was definitely not a good sign for her to pay attention to him when he advanced to Radiant Moon. Leylin didn’t like putting his safety in the hands of someone more powerful than him, viewing it as extremely pathetic. It was a viable option if he was weak, but now that he had the power to control his own future he would only be a fool if he remained in hiding.

“Bloodline shackles and the Snake Dowager… Maybe these two are two facets of the same problem!” Leylin’s eyes twinkled with rays of hope, as numerous possible methods were brought up in his mind only to be denied quickly. Many different possibilities for the future were quickly deduced…

Suddenly, a call came for him, his book of imprints glowing. It was an imprint in the form of a funny clown face, a new one that was at the back. Leylin thought for a second and tapped on it, “Melinda, you can actually send messages directly into the Morning Star area? You still owe me an explanation for what happened just now!” It was such a coincidence that Leylin had been attacked by the Blazing Flame Monarch right after he parted ways with her. Thinking over the incident, Leylin refused to believe that it was just a coincidence. This Melinda’s mysteriousness was the exact reason Leylin wouldn’t develop a close relationship with her. He had the feeling that he would end up like Zegna if he had trusted her, dumped mercilessly when he was no longer of use. Finally, Melinda replied after a long silence, “What would you do if… if I intentionally attracted the Blazing Flame Monarch’s clone to test your ability?”
“Test my ability?” Leylin sneered, “If it’s true, I’ll slaughter you and imprison your soul, having it burn for a million years.” The coldness in his voice seemed to drop the ambient temperature.

“Haha… I’m just joking with you! It was definitely an accident!” Melinda’s voice had once again switched to that of a sweet little girl, “Anyway, I prepared a gift to make up for my dear brother’s loss. Open up the astral gate.”

“A gift?” Leylin furrowed his brows, but soon arrived at his astral laboratory and opened up his gate. Flame-like blue light gathered together to form a passageway.

Leylin was very cautious about Melinda. The astral stone energy that was inputted and the spell patterns only allowed for the transfer of non-living objects. If there was any invasion of external force or spiritual force, he would shut the passageway immediately. However, Melinda seemed to have been honest this time, and a black cube was sent through the gate. In spite of the high energy consumption, this was a popular way of transferring parcels in the central continent, especially among the Morning Stars of the Warlock Union.

There were numerous seals on top of this black box. At first glance, there seemed to be an ice elemental rune that kept whatever was inside fresh.

Leylin blew at it, and the rune on the surface of that black box split
apart. The box then opened on its own, revealing its contents. A stench of blood immediately spread around the room.
“Urgh? What happened to this Magus?” Inside the box was the head of a Magus! Worse still, Leylin was very familiar with him! It was the leader of the Magi who’d attacked him in Twilight Zone! This was the Full Moon Magus who’d escaped from his attack!
“It’s not just the face. The soul fluctuations match as well,” Leylin nodded after a check by the A.I. Chip.
It was pretty easy for any Magus to counterfeit a fake body part like the one before Leylin, but the lingering aura of the soul and the strong resentment were hard to fake.
“Hehe…What do you think about this? His name is Marriott, the top lackey of the Blazing Flame Monarch! It took me great effort to get rid of him while the Blazing Flame Monarch was away. So, dear brother, are you satisfied with the surprise?”
“Of course! I’m more than satisfied!” Leylin’s hand made a gesture and the head of Marriott floated into the air, the resentment on his face evident and the level of hatred accumulated beyond what words could describe.
Dark Magi could often extract memories and information from a fresh brain; despite being a Radiant Moon Magus, Marriott was still subjected to such means.
“This gift is definitely something more than just a surprise…” To be able to kill a Full Moon Magus, she was surely no less powerful than a Breaking Dawn Monarch.
Leylin had long understood that she could not be underestimated, having become a Radiant Moon right at rebirth. Even though Marriott had been severely injured by Leylin before he got killed, he could not deny the fact that she was incredibly powerful.
“I have to admit that you’re good enough to work with me!” Huge black flames shot out of Leylin’s palm, and Marriott’s head slowly melted under the heat until there was nothing left.
“Hehe! You’re the bes… Umm, hold on for a sec; she’s coming out!” The little girl’s voice turned mature once more, “Hello there, young Magus. We meet again.”

‘You freak! Here’s another one with a split personality,’ Leylin rolled his eyes in secret. “Let’s get straight to the topic, why do you want me?”

“To get rid of the Blazing Flame Monarch. Are you interested?” The female Magus was frank and straightforward.

This time, though, Leylin did not beat around the bush as he had before, “Yes, but we aren’t strong enough!”

“I know the Blazing Flame Monarch’s weakness, as well as when he’ll be at his weakest. I’ve also roped in a few other friends…” Melinda sounded very confident, evidently having an extraordinary understanding of the Monarch as well as great amounts of intel on him.

“In that case, why look for me? Wayde and Offa should be rather interested in this as well, right?” Leylin stated his query.

“It’s because you’re the most powerful Warlock in the Warlock Union. Furthermore, after the fall of the Blazing Flame Monarch, the fewer the participants the greater the benefits. If more people come and share the profits, it’d be such a shame…”

“On top of that, those rotten old bloodline Warlocks only focus on the Warlock who’s inherited a bloodline from a rank 6 being, which is just inflexible and shortsighted of them…” Melinda seemed to have issues with the rank 5 Warlocks in the Warlock Union.

“You can inform them of our operation of course, but I am sure they won’t be interested. Even if you get them to come, you won’t get any extra for it… This communication channel is extremely secure, so there’s no need to be worried about eavesdropping or anything. I’ll hand over this method later, so let’s keep in contact in the future!” Having said this, Melinda broke off the connection,
leaving Leylin behind in deep thought. A long while later, Leylin touched his chin, “It seems like Melinda’s true identity shouldn’t be simple, she might have a deep relationship with the Blazing Flame Monarch!”

In reality, Leylin was in favour of Melinda’s methods. From the memories he extracted from Marriott’s head, Leylin himself had acquired a lot of information and intel. At the very least, him chasing Leylin to Twilight Zone and attacking him there was confirmed to be by order of the Monarch.

With Leylin’s temper, he would viciously fight back in answer. However, it was impossible to accede to Melinda’s requests. Even if she suddenly became benevolent and did not try to backstab him, she would definitely possess most of the benefits. Leylin had no desire to tussle with a Breaking Dawn only to end up with nothing. It was very important to first conduct a few probes and rope in many people.

Other Magi might think Leylin and Melinda were lunatics, lacking the calm and rational judgement typical to Magi. It was a joke for two Radiant Moons to even think of causing the fall of a Breaking Dawn Magus! In reality, however, Leylin and Melinda were extremely confident in their own abilities, and could not be compared to regular Radiant Moons. However, at their cool appearance, an underlying fervent desire coursed through them. They both shared a common goal in seeking revenge, hence the formation of this paper thin alliance.

‘Who else did Melinda find though?’ Leylin had his doubts, ‘There are at most over twenty Radiant Moon Magi in the central continent, with five in our Warlock Union. Those who came up by themselves like Zegna are extremely rare, and most are subservient to other Monarchs… Could Melinda be thinking of convincing some other Monarchs?’

There weren’t that many Radiant Moon Magi in the central
continent, and even if there were hidden Magi in large organisations, Leylin estimated that there definitely wouldn’t be more than thirty.

He had eliminated two Radiant Moons who worked under the Blazing Flame Monarch. Along with Marriott, who Melinda had brought him, perhaps the Monarch no longer had any subordinates of great power, having to come attack Leylin himself. This possibility was very likely. Perhaps there wasn’t even a single Radiant Moon under the Blazing Flame Monarch now.

And now, he probably held a deep-seated hatred towards the main causes of such a disaster, Leylin and Melinda.

If not for the Morning Star Area being renowned for having fended off Breaking Dawn Magi before, he would likely have rushed over long ago.

As for Melinda? This woman was just too mysterious, and she might even have more trump cards than Leylin and definitely had aces up her sleeve. Leylin wouldn’t bother worrying about her safety.

“I heard from her that after eliminating the Blazing Flame Monarch, I can get some amazing benefits…” Leylin’s pupils shone with light from the A.I. Chip as large numbers of images and scenes flashed in front of him.

The A.I. Chip’s processor had been stretched to the limit, and it had begun operations.

‘Her words are very credible. In that case, I won’t need to invite Wayde and the rest. Of course, I can still get the Warlock Union to gather intel and stuff like that.’ Leylin made up his mind.

It was not just the Warlock Union. Leylin was already preparing to command the Kemoyin Warlocks in the Ouroboros Clan to expend all effort on finding news regarding the Blazing Flame Monarch, especially anything that had to do with Melinda.

He had a feeling that the relationship between the two was
definitely not as simple as it seemed, and perhaps when the truth was revealed at the end, everyone would be shocked.
However, rather than gathering information, Leylin was more focused on the information she had leaked.
“So there’s a Warlock in the union whose bloodline has reached rank 6?” Leylin’s eyes began to flicker with intelligence, “It should be that Radiant Moon Warlock who hasn’t shown himself yet…”
Even though his Kemoyin bloodline had risen to that of a Kemoyin Emperor, his bloodline was still at rank 5, a level lower than a rank 6 bloodline. Such a person would only encounter bloodline shackles at the end of rank 6, which was much better when compared to a Warlock like Leylin.
Of course, before a rank 6 bloodline appeared, Warlocks with rank 5 bloodlines could be said to be regal amongst Warlocks, and they were the ones who had been supporting the Warlock Union.
The inheritor of a rank 6 bloodline was their hope, someone who could cross over into Breaking Dawn and become a Monarch of bloodlines.
I’m afraid the reason that Jeffrey and the rest invited me to help manage the Morning Star Area is in order to increase its security!’ Leylin pondered silently. With a rank 6 bloodline appearing and that prophecy, all the high-ranked Warlocks probably believed that that person would be their hope to rise once more.

Leylin wasn’t the least bit envious. No matter how talented a Warlock was, they would still need to grow over a period of time. Those with high-ranked bloodlines would need even more time to develop, and before such a person matured, he was just a Warlock that showed good potential.

Leylin would happily encourage and guide the Warlock along, even sending some items to him as an investment. However, if that Warlock did not meet his requirements, he would need to be taught reality.

And if the Warlock started to hate him for it, he might just make the fellow ‘disappear.’ No matter how much of a genius one might be, they were nothing before they had the chance to completely develop. As for the hopes of the Warlock Union to have a Monarch among their ranks? Leylin had never bothered with that.

He would never entrust his hope to someone else to accomplish. He could only rely on himself.

“Those Radiant Moon Warlocks hid something so important from me, and I even had to find out from an outsider…” At the thought
of what the Radiant Moon Warlocks had done, Leylin shook his head in disappointment.

Of course, he was aware that the Warlocks had their reasons. A Bloodline Monarch meant too much to the Bloodline Union, because that meant hope for the rise of Warlocks! Hence, it was a necessity dispose of any dangers before they could develop.

Leylin’s own background was mysterious and obscure, and he’d spent little time in reaching the realm of a rank 5 Warlock. Not considering the possibility that he was a spy, the fact that he could go head to head with that genius had these Warlocks frowning.

It was good for one hero to take care of another, but in the Magus World two absolute geniuses who did not see eye to eye would likely end up hating each other. It was natural for the high-ranked Warlocks to worry.

Hence, they chose not to be direct, instead only mentioning it to Leylin in passing. Their line of thought was simple: once that genius advanced to rank 6 and widened the gap between them, there would be nothing to worry about.

Though he was aware of what these people who were originally his higher-ups were thinking, this did not mean Leylin agreed with them.

The development of a rank 6 bloodline was terrifying. With the passage of time, he would eventually surpass Leylin. But, these high-ranked Warlocks did not know that Leylin had a lot of trump cards up his sleeve, which was why they were more biased towards the other Warlock. That was not surprising.

It was impossible for Leylin not to have any opinions about the Warlock Union. However, he only cared about himself. Once he broke through the bloodline shackles to arrive at the realm of rank 6, these Warlocks would come and surround him instead.

In the Magus World, strength meant everything. Though it wasn’t as if organisations were useless, but if there was a huge disparity
between an organisation’s power and the individual’s strength, it was like gilding the lily.
At this thought, Leylin began to snicker as he tapped on a secret imprint in the shape of a bat, “Your Highness Jeffrey? I have something to ask you.”
“Leylin! I’ll be there soon.” These rank 5 Warlocks all had their main bodies in the Morning Star Area, so moving around was easy. Shortly after the call ended, Jeffrey arrived at Leylin’s castle.
Multi-coloured petals floated on hot tea, giving off hot steam and emanating a rich fragrance. A few adamantine maids served snacks and then bowed elegantly towards Leylin and Jeffrey before leaving quietly.
“Your Highness, these robot puppets of yours have great workmanship. There’s something especially unique about their movements…” Jeffrey watched the backs of these maids, seemingly deep in thought.
In his opinion, Leylin’s puppets were created with great precision, and they were at least at the level of a Grandmaster Alchemist. This was rare, and even Radiant Moons would have to expend some effort for it. The programming of these puppets was such that their movements carried a unique air. Their lack of stiffness was something to reflect upon.
As most movements had been thought of and executed, the workmanship of the puppets had attained an even higher appraisal.
“Hehe… it’s something I did whilst bored. If Your Highness likes it, I can send you a few!” Leylin laughed. The blueprint was something stored in the A.I. Chip from his previous world, and he had now used it only for some nostalgia.
The etiquette in his previous world was different from that in the Magus World, and it was understandable that Jeffrey had noticed it.
Ever since the inception of astral experiments, the Magus World
had an increasing amount of contact with the other worlds. At most, Leylin’s works would be believed to have some influence from other worlds, and there was nothing strange about it. After they made some small talk, Jeffrey finally cut to the chase, “May I know what Your Highness has invited me here for?”

“Well,” Leylin placed his teacup on the table slowly, “I met the leader of Jupiter’s Lightning recently. This female Magus, Melinda, invited me to attack the Flame Monarch’s organisation…” Leylin summarised his experiences and, of course, omitted the content about Melinda inviting him to deal with the Flame Monarch himself together. That was just too crazy, which was why he merely mentioned attacking the other party’s organisation. Even so, that caused Jeffrey to turn pale with fright.

“What? You’re laying your hand on a rank 6 Magus’ organisation? Is she crazy?” Jeffrey shot to his feet, a trace of suspicion on his face, “Melinda? I seem to have heard this name somewhere, but it’s been too long and I can’t remember.”

“Based on what she said, she’s confident she’ll be able to keep this under control. When the time comes, she’ll split the benefits with us… What do you think…” Seeing how he had reacted, Leylin shook his head inside, but still said the words that he prepared beforehand.

“I don’t agree,” this suggestion was rejected without hesitation. “A Monarch is not an existence we can provoke at the moment. Though you’ll be working alone, you’re still representing the Warlock Union. I don’t want you to do this…” Jeffrey watched Leylin, eyes showing his sincerity, “I know you must be feeling indignant, but what we need to do now is wait. With another hundred and fifty years…”

“How did you know about that?” Learning that Leylin was
aware of this earth-shattering news, Jeffrey’s eyes went as wide as saucers, and he almost spit out a mouthful of tea.

“Melinda told me!” Leylin betrayed his teammate bluntly. Seeing Jeffrey’s fearful look, he knew that Jeffrey would definitely use all his sources and strength to check up on her.

“On top of that, I’ve already heard several lines that seem like prophecies, and some that have to do with me…” Leylin answered, as if finding it funny and embarrassing.

From Jeffrey’s point of view, this was Leylin mocking his own bloodline. They, who were restricted by their rank 5 bloodlines, could never reach rank 6 unless they destroyed their bloodline shackles. However, this was an issue that had plagued countless Warlocks since ancient times. How could it be so easily solved?

“The prophecy of that Radiant Moon? I’ve heard of it,” Jeffrey nodded, “Actually, we leaked out quite a few ourselves, to conceal the true content…”

“What content?” Leylin shifted slightly forward.

“Before the wave of chilliness flows back in the cycle of this world, which means within a hundred and fifty years, there will definitely be a Warlock who will rise to become a Monarch!”

Jeffrey’s face flushed, his eyes emitting rays of hope. Warlocks had accrued a ton of hatred during this long period of suppression, and this prophecy had given them great hope as a result.

“Due to the bloodline shackles, Radiant Moon Warlocks like us cannot reach Breaking Dawn even if our truesouls have reached the peak of rank 5. However, things are different now. Someone with a rank 6 bloodline has finally begun to grow, and with the bonus strength from his bloodline, his breakthrough to Breaking Dawn will definitely be much smoother than that of regular Magi. Afterwards, he will only grow stronger, bringing about the revitalisation of us Warlocks!”

Jeffrey began to exaggerate. As for Leylin, his eyes were only filled
with pity as he watched the man, ‘Another fool who’s placed his hopes on someone else! Even if he gets stronger, he’s only trash.’ Intelligence began to flash in Leylin’s eyes, ‘How many Warlocks out there are like Jeffrey, putting all their hope on that fellow? How many others out there do not wish to see the growth of that Warlock? I’m quite interested…’ “He’ll only advance in a hundred and fifty years? You mean…” Leylin pretended to make a guess. “That’s right. The one rank 5 you’ve yet to meet, our final trump card, is the Warlock who carries a rank 6 bloodline.” Jeffrey bowed towards Leylin with sincerity, “Please forgive us for keeping this from you. It is just too important a matter for us bloodline Warlocks!” Leylin helped him up, looking solemn, “I truly admire Your Highness for your feelings towards this. Rest assured, I will do all I can to protect him!” While Jeffrey didn’t necessarily believe Leylin, this show would definitely keep him satisfied. After setting up a specific time and space to meet with that Warlock, he got up and left Leylin’s castle.
After Jeffrey left Leylin’s castle, the sunny smile on Leylin’s face slowly crumbled, a brooding look taking its place. “A Warlock that has inherited a rank 6 bloodline? Interesting. Very interesting!”
Till now, the highest bloodlines he’d seen were those of the Sun’s Child which was rank 6, and the blood of the rank 7 bronze female giant who’d comprehended laws.
As for the fire phoenix, perhaps that wasn’t even a bloodline creature at all. Even though he possessed the egg, Leylin had no way to extract a bloodline from it.
The bloodline of the Sun’s Child had been completely exhausted after Leylin had created two bloodline imprints, and the bloodline of the bronze female giant had been a huge driving force in Leylin’s bloodline evolution. Not only were the quantities of blood in both cases meagre, neither had even come with a real body. After they were used up, they had disappeared.
Things would be different with a Warlock who had inherited a rank 6 bloodline. The fellow would have a complete body, and even if he were to lose some of his bloodline, he could probably make up for it with the natural regeneration of blood by his body.
‘Based on what Jeffrey said, he has already become a Radiant Moon Warlock. The bloodline in his body meets my requirements as well, even if barely. However, if I want the best effects, I should wait till he advances to Breaking Dawn. When his bloodline force
is at its best, I can reap the most perfect fruit…” Leylin stroked his chin, his lips curving up.

Though Warlocks had the ability to regenerate blood, bloodlines were not quite as simple. Leylin believed that ancient bloodlines inherited by Warlocks could not be extracted without limit, as they had a close connection to their sources.

There was no issue if a small part of the bloodline was extracted, but if the other party was used as a bloodbank, their bloodline would soon be exhausted. This would have the same effect even on ancient creatures.

Whatever it was, the bloodline of a rank 5 Warlock, especially that from a Warlock who had inherited his bloodline from an ancient Breaking Dawn Creature, was basically a moving treasure trove for Leylin. Forget purifying it or making imprints from it, just observing how a rank 6 bloodline interacted with the body would bring great benefits to his bloodline experiments.

But of course, the other party would definitely not let himself be treated as a guinea pig.

‘Forget that for now, I’ll decide on that after looking at his attitude. Right now, I need to think about the Blazing Flame Monarch.’ Leylin stood up and entered the astral laboratory.

Melinda had tried to entice him into dealing with the Blazing Flame Monarch together, stating that she knew of his weakness. In order to gain his trust, she’d even given him some information, and the A.I. Chip had tested its veracity. However, the most important bit was still in her possession, and there was nothing Leylin could do about that.

He obviously knew that she wouldn’t divulge key information until the time for the operation came. There was no other way about it. And since the other side would give him no more information, Leylin could only begin thinking of ways to increase his own strength. No matter what the situation was, he could not go wrong
with that.

‘Truth be told, it’s best that I hole myself up and deal with the Blazing Flame Monarch only after I reach Breaking Dawn.’ Although Leylin thought this way, it was a pity that he had been attacked by the Monarch. He now knew that this was impossible.

Leylin could feel an obvious malicious desire from him. It told him the Monarch was intent on eliminating him. The only reason for the current silence was that the opponent needed to recover some strength. Once they reacted completely, the most terrifying of strengths would be brought to bear on Leylin like lightning.

‘Shit! When did I ever provoke them? Even if it was the previous time, he was the one who dispatched Magi to attack me!’ Leylin felt that he was being wronged, and was rather confused.

There was no reason for the Flame Monarch’s hatred towards him. Of course, the Blazing Flame Monarch had always had a strange temper. Back then, if not for Offa and the other rank 5 Radiant Moon standing up to the leader of the Warlocks purge campaign in time, perhaps the central continent would not exist today.

After cursing the opponent a few times, Leylin found he could not do anything about it. He’d been walking as he delved into thought, and the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded automatically the moment he walked through the laboratory.

[Beep! Host body has entered range of astral laboratory. Beginning sterilisation and disinfection. Beginning automatic sterilisation and disinfecting.]

Once the voice sounded, Leylin’s body was covered with a layer of black as fiery red light cleaned it top to bottom.

This was an essential procedure for interplanar experiments. With such complete measures that cleverly made use of magic, Leylin felt like this laboratory matched up to the high-end laboratories of his previous world, even surpassing them in some aspects.

Completing the sterilisation and having prepared his defences,
Leylin arrived at the astral laboratory. He did not head for the astral gate straight away, instead entering one of the binding rooms beside it.

Blue light rippled in a massive pool made not of water, but condensed lightning. Densely packed confinement and isolation runes separated it from the outside. This sort of strict defence was obviously prepared to confine a creature or material from the astral plane.

After he reached Radiant Moon, Leylin’s ability to explore the astral plane had improved greatly. With the additional help of the A.I. Chip, he’d obtained various harvests every time he activated his gate. Though he hadn’t yet found a foreign world with no World Will, he’d acquired quite a few scraps, even meeting a wanderer in the astral plane and making a few deals.

There were even a few astral beings who were unlucky enough to charge headfirst into Leylin’s side, arriving at this world through his gate. These beings eventually became Leylin’s spoils from his explorations, and were all collected here.

Large numbers of confinement runes formed several separate frames at the bottom of the pool. Various strange items were placed within each. One of them was a creature similar to a black octopus with numerous illusory tentacles touching the edges of the frames, as if trying to probe something before being frightened back by the terrifying current.

*Wooh wooh…* Practically at the very moment Leylin arrived, the octopus quickly withdrew into a ball, as if Leylin was some horrifying demon.

“Looks like I was too rough with it…” Leylin laughed as he read through the records by the A.I. Chip.

[Spectral Octopus: Astral Being. Period Since Capture: 15 days, 9 hours. Currently in good condition, no distinct need to eat.]

The image that the A.I. Chip provided had numbers all over the
different parts of the octopus, with some conjectures included. Everything about this spectral octopus was being shown to him.

“Training the soul is extremely troublesome. The method the ancients passed down is to constantly probe the astral plane, simulating and understanding its rules to allow one’s own soul to evolve…” Such a method took too much time and consumed a tremendous amount of astral stones. However, it was safe and effective.

The vast astral plane was truly boundless, and it encompassed all things. Experiencing the working of such a thing was very beneficial for a Magus’ truesoul.

Leylin, however, had the cheat that was the phoenix egg. He had no need for this. If not for his own vitality being unable to keep up and his fear of the issues that would arise due to a lack of coordination between the body and a rapidly strengthened soul, he would long since have broken through to the peak of Radiant Moon.

To him, interplanar experiments carried a whole different meaning. “I’ve already pushed the paths of a Warlock and Magus to the limits for now. If I need to strengthen myself quickly, the only ways left are in other worlds…”

Leylin’s eyes were calm. He who had the A.I. Chip constantly analysing things for him knew very clearly the paths of Warlocks and Magi. He understood that his strength had reached its peak until he could deal with the issue of body-soul balance, which was why he’d shifted his attention to the astral plane.

Since he had reached a bottleneck in his own path, it was a good idea to walk on others. Such a thing would definitely be beneficial to him.

On top of that, Leylin had never given up his search for the Purgatory World!

The attention from the Snake Dowager had given him a terrible
premonition. He did not want to meet her when he was caught unprepared one day, and wished to solve this problem himself. Finding the coordinates to the Purgatory World was therefore of extreme importance.

The coordinates to the Purgatory World were something the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan yearned for, which was why after obtaining the information left behind by those Kemoyin Warlocks, Leylin’s progress in this area had increased rapidly.

Leylin, who had the innate ability of control due to his Kemoyin Serpent Emperor bloodline, naturally knew how terrifying a creature like the Snake Dowager was.

If possible, he obviously did not want to meet her now, but it was necessary to make some preparations for the future.

“I’ve been using so many astral stones without care, and I only got so much…”

Leylin gazed at the items in the restraining lightning pool, speechless, “It’s no wonder that Morning Star Magi spend so many resources to no avail. Things like this that rely on luck are too scary. This is my result with the aid of the A.I. Chip; other Magi won’t even have this much…”

Leylin’s astral stone consumption had reached a terrifying stage, and he’d even used up all the astral stones belonging to the Ouroboros Clan. If not for the Warlock Union replenishing his supply, he would’ve faced a problem with the energy for his future experiments.

Even then, he wasn’t lucky enough to have gathered many resources, and he was facing a net loss…
trip to the astral plane is like a sea voyage during the era of exploration. Few people successfully found new continents, returning with gold. Most just ended up as skeletons buried deep under the sea…” Leylin sighed. He left the binding room and came before the astral gate, a grey feather appearing in his palm. This feather looked very ordinary, with nothing different about it, as if it was a regular feather from a bird. However, Leylin knew how unordinary it was. The feather had been a gift from the owl which had come from the crack between reality and dreams.

“Dreamscape is in actuality another world of dreams. I wonder if I can make contact with it using the astral gate.”

Before this day, Leylin had already used the A.I. Chip to scan the feather multiple times, performing many experiments. However, he’d had no results. The results showed that this was the most ordinary of feathers. Now, with no other ideas, he decided to use it in an interplanar experiment, hoping to link to Dreamscape. In the boundless astral plane, the two most powerful worlds he knew of were the Magus World and the World of Gods. Of course, due to the ancient war, both of these worlds had been weakened, though the Magus World was now gradually regaining its former glory.
Dreamscape was the strangest and most mysterious world! Time and space were misleading and the place was filled with various indefinite laws.
Things that were obvious and followed common sense did not exist there. In other words, everything was topsy-turvy, and it was a world with no real laws.
Even the ancient Magus World had been taken aback when met with the invasion by Dreamscape. Of course, it was also due to this very instability that Dreamscape’s attack had started strong but sputtered out.
“Though it’s full of all sorts of strange things, that’s an opportunity for me!” Leylin’s eyes gleamed. Other worlds had existences that abided by objective laws. Personal growth required much time and energy there.
However, anything was possible in Dreamscape. If he wanted to obtain the most strength in the shortest amount of time, he would have to go in there and try his luck.
Of course, he had to be prepared to return with no benefits.
‘A.I. Chip!’ Leylin commanded inwardly. When he had entered, Leylin’s soul force had long since taken control of all the apparatus and energy sources here, and then handed it over to the A.I. Chip to manage.
Though Leylin had set up a spirit genie here, that was just a ruse. How could such low-levelled programs match up to his A.I. Chip?
[Beep! Energy source beginning preparations. Routes detected to be normal. Rate of wear and tear at 0.0017. Beginning connection with astral gate] The A.I. Chip quickly intoned. Along with its robotic prompt, all the apparatus in the laboratory activated methodically. The rays of light and the sounds combined to form the most splendid of symphonies.
Under the control of the A.I. Chip, Leylin’s usage of everything in
Astral gate has been engaged!

In the laboratory, the stone gate emanating weak starlight rumbled, being covered by blue light in the form of flames. Countless mysterious links were generated in the flames, and the void crumbled, revealing the shadows of innumerable unknown places.

A river of light was formed entirely out of blue stars that were the shadows of these foreign worlds, majestically surging into the darkness unknown.

“No matter how many times I see this, I can’t help but praise it…” Leylin murmured as a glint of fervour shone in his eyes. After his advance to the Radiant Moon realm, the form of this astral gate before his eyes had been changed as well, and his exploration of the astral plane had become more thorough.

A great, ancient aura was being transmitted from the astral gate, and Leylin immediately turned serious as he closed his eyes, sensing everything attentively.

Bits of blue starlight covered his body, and with the passage of time, the rays on it grew more solid, to the point that they resembled actual flames.

Within the point mass, the crescent that was his truesoul abruptly emanated clear rays of light. It seemed to have absorbed something from the astral plane, in the process becoming more pure and dazzling. His soul force that had been supplemented greatly by the phoenix egg seemed to be rinsed and purified as it completely stabilised.

“The mysteries of the astral plane, and its resonance with the soul…” Leylin’s eyes seemed different as he opened them, “I need a complete harmony between my soul and the rest of the world. Once I reach the realm of that fusion, the next step will be to synchronise my soul with the astral plane. No matter what path to
power I use, at the end it still feels strangely familiar, like I’m coming back home…”

It was great that this experience strengthened his truesoul. However, when he glanced at the astral gate the elation on his face turned into a wry smile. The blue flames on the surface of the gate had shrunk to about half their original size, and part of the astral stones outside had lost their lustre, becoming fragmented. Leylin froze before asking the A.I. Chip, “A.I. Chip! How long was I out of it for?”

[Beep! Host has been standing for 2h 34min 12s.] The A.I. Chip answered faithfully.

“So much time has passed already…” Leylin shook his head and suddenly came to a realisation, “No wonder most of the energy from the astral stone reserves has been consumed…” He now knew why Morning Star Magi did not use the astral gate to train their souls. There was no other reason than that it was too extravagant. Leylin had prepared a lot of astral stones for this experiment. He had merely been a little absorbed in feeling the aura for a short period of time, and this had happened.

If he were to be caught in a trance for a while longer, he might just use up all the astral stones here. The amount of astral stones here was something many Morning Star Magi took decades to earn, and would use over ten years.

Since the effort put in and the rewards were not proportional, it was understandable that this method had been discarded.

“Even Breaking Dawn Magi will find it painful to engage in such an extravagant method of training. Even they might not be able to keep up with the cost…” Leylin shook his head and produced the grey feather.

The soft feather fluttered and, following a breeze, slowly flew through the air towards the blue flames of the astral gate.

“What kind of world is Dreamscape? Is this attempt going to be
useful?” Leylin seemed slightly nervous. Using the feather as a coordinate and throwing it into the astral gate was something he did with no other option. Whether he succeeded or failed, the feather would completely disappear, which was why he was rather apprehensive.

*Pu!* The moment the edge of the grey feather made contact with the flames, there was a wondrous change. Large amounts of blue fire crawled onto its surface, and with a gentle sound they began to flash. The owl’s feather burned to ashes in the flames.

*Rumble!* As if gas had been poured onto them, the flames rose several metres high, being coloured a bright orange. The whole stone gate began to shake, as if it had been linked to some immensely powerful existence.

‘Have I succeeded?’ “A.I. Chip!” Leylin called out lowly.

[Record of data from astral gate complete. Beginning search of coordinates…] The A.I. Chip’s emotionless voice rang out, and the flames grew more intense.

The shadows of countless worlds came into view and quickly slipped away, flashing past in front of the astral gate allowing it a mere fleeting glance. Leylin, whose soul force was linked with the astral gate, seemed to see a very mysterious world.

On the exterior, numerous dream worlds formed a long starry river. The world itself was like a twisting hourglass, full of mystery and a feeling of asymmetry.

“Is this Dreamscape?” Leylin muttered.

However, this scene did not last for long. A piercing warning sounded. [Warning! Warning! Astral gate undulations have grown unstable. Recommended action: Halt search!]

“Are you kidding? I’ve only just seen the edges of Dreamscape, and haven’t been able to deduce the coordinates…” Leylin’s eyes were fixed on the scene in the astral gate as he muttered, “Faster. Faster!”
Cracks appeared on the surface of the astral gate, but the scenes behind were gaining more clarity. Leylin didn’t bother with the change as he took several steps forward.

*Rumble!* At this moment, however, the fissures on the gate expanded, forming large explosive ripples that swept Leylin within.

The virtual image of Dreamscape immediately disappeared. Amidst the explosion, Leylin’s roars could be heard, “No, damn it! I just needed a minute, or even half a minute! With that, I can completely determine the coordinates of Dreamscape!”

[Host’s laboratory has exploded. Handling using emergency plan number 3. In process of stabilising space. Allocating usage of rank 2 rune.] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice rang.

With its operation, groups of robotic puppets went ahead, coordinating with the spell formation and beginning to clean the rubble in the laboratory.

A neutralising water current that carried the piercing smell of disinfectant was sprinkled from the ceiling of the laboratory, drenching everything.

In just ten or so minutes, the rubble in the laboratory had been cleaned, and the radiation from the other world had been isolated.

At the heart of the explosion, Leylin stood expressionlessly, a black layer emerging on his body. He had not sustained any injuries in the explosion.
Leylin stared at the large pit in front of him absent-mindedly, hands still maintaining the position from when he had been casting the spell.

In front of him, all that was left of the astral gate were ruins. Terrifying electric currents and radiations were still present in some places, but with the A.I. Chip’s directions those, too, were quickly isolated and extinguished.

Though the explosion of the astral gate was dangerous, danger depended on the individual facing it as well. In the face of Leylin’s Kemoyin scales that had been strengthened to rank 5, the stray undulations from the explosion were nothing. Even the area around him was completely safe.

Even so, the destruction of the astral gate, as well as the loss of the coordinates, left Leylin’s heart aching.

The amount of astral stones needed to construct an astral gate again was negligible with the large organisation of the Warlock Union backing him, and amassing even more astral stones wouldn’t be a problem given some time. However, the loss of Dreamscape was a huge blow to him.

“Did I fail…” Leylin sighed, expelling the sorrow in his heart. When he raised his head once again, his eyes were now calm once more.

“If the coordinates of Dreamscape are gone, then so be it. I was expecting too much when I thought I could use the material from a
strange creature and find the coordinates anyway. Furthermore, as I am now a foreign world is too powerful for me to explore…”
Leylin shook his head as he ordered, “A.I. Chip, tidy up the place!”
He turned to leave the laboratory, but when he pulled the door open, Leylin’s pupils shrank.
“This place…” In front of him was a tremendous barren desert. Three strange suns shone in the skies, boiling heat waves everywhere. The friction between his shoes and the rocky yellow sand was audible.
Leylin looked up and around, finding the place completely desolate. At the base of a hill, he could see the broken tip of a building. The thing seemed to have toppled over an unknown amount of time ago, the signs of age extremely obvious on the surface.
‘A.I. Chip, begin scan!’ Leylin picked up a signboard that had landed near his feet. He could not read the words, but he felt a sense of familiarity from them. The black board did not feel too heavy in his hands and creaked with the slightest application of strength, as if ready to break into smithereens at any moment.
Blue light from the A.I. Chip scanned the thing, and it immediately came to a conclusion.
[Based on carbon 14 dating, estimated age: 21982 years, 11 months…]
“Over twenty thousand years ago?” Leylin stroked his chin and tossed the signboard. As soon as the thing hit the ground, it cracked apart into fragments, some bits even turning into powder.
“Where is this place?” Leylin raised his head, looking at the three strange suns that were still scorching the place.
Of the three, the one on the left was distorted, like a circle that had been twisted multiple times. The one in the middle was round, but there were numerous tentacles on the outside that made it seem rather horrifying. The one on the right? It was a complicated
polygon, with its sunlight holding a different tint. Leylin turned back, and found his astral plane laboratory still standing tall, its doors still open. However, the surface was visibly ageing. Silver metal was being corroded and fell off. Very quickly, his brand new laboratory had aged to a state where he would have to abandon it.

“What’s going on? The metal on the surface of the laboratory is an alloy known for its resistance to corrosion…” Leylin’s eyes swept over the place, but he could not find anything in the vicinity that was related to his castle.

The situation now was as if he had brought his laboratory along and, as one entity, crossed over to another plane from the castle.

“Could this be Dreamscape? Or did the accident with the astral gate bring me to another world?” In that instant, all sorts of conjectures appeared in Leylin’s mind. He took a deep breath and re-entered the laboratory.

*Boom!* He closed the door.

“If it’s another foreign world, I’d definitely have felt like I was travelling through space, and from my experience, there’s only one world that can take me elsewhere without any warning, the Dreamscape!”

The phantom of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor appeared behind Leylin’s back. Its amber pupils blinked open, scanning the area with vigilance.

“Bring it on!” Leylin opened the door once more as the Eternal Light spell shone ahead of him. There were many small roads around, connecting the laboratory with other constructions within the castle.

Leylin raised his head, the shattered sky unique to the Morning Star area entering his line of sight.

He glanced at the surface of the laboratory. The signs of ageing had
long since disappeared, as if all he had witnessed was a mere illusion.

“Master!” With Leylin’s will, a few metallic puppets arrived before him.
The A.I. Chip confirmed their identities, leading Leylin to ascertain that he was truly in the castle in the Morning Star Area.

“Interesting!” Leylin’s eyes flashed with curiosity. He pondered over it for a moment and returned to the laboratory.
When the door was opened once more, the barren land and oddly-shaped suns appeared before him again.
Compared to before, however, there were some changes in the surroundings. Traces of yellowish-green weeds tenaciously grew from the seams of rocks, and the collapsed buildings were now covered with vines and seemed full of life.
There were even some small shrubs in the distance, growing with vigour.

“The life force here has grown richer, as if tens of millennia have passed…” Leylin narrowed his eyes. The three strange suns now shone with a green hue which he could not get used to.
Arriving back at where he’d tossed the signboard, Leylin found that the thing wasn’t in pieces anymore, and was instead at its original place. The cracks from before seemed to have faded to an extent.

‘A.I. Chip, test age.’

[Beep! Based on carbon 14 test, estimated age: 1328 years, 7 months…] the chip quickly replied.
“Time is behaving strangely here… Only an unbelievable world like Dreamscape could be in such a situation…”

“But… The last time I came here, my soul had been caught in a trap, and this time I managed to enter with my body as well… Am I in someone else’s dream?”
“What is the boundary between dream and reality?”
The further he pondered, the more Leylin found that the secrets of Dreamscape were terrifying. However, there was not one riddle he could solve.
“There are even such strange changes. Is it a spacetime wormhole? Or perhaps some sort of garbled effect from Murphy’s Law?”
Seeing the vines climbing all over the laboratory, Leylin walked in and closed the door. Opening it once more, he found himself in the Morning Star area.
Leylin immediately ordered, “Categorise this area as a special first rank region! Seal the whole region, and move away all nearby constructions. Carve runes to protect it from radiation and contamination.”
The metallic puppets immediately got to work, startling Freya. “What’s going on, darling?” Freya was currently in a loose nightgown, looking dazed.
Leylin went forward and pulled at Freya’s hand while consoling her, “Nothing, something just went wrong with an experiment, and the contamination from the radiation is growing more intense. It’s best you move out for a while, staying far away from the castle…”
While he didn’t really understand the current situation, that explosion in his astral laboratory had resulted in an even more mysterious change. It had now become a bridge between this place and Dreamscape.
One needed only enter to change what space it was connected to, something that immediately piqued Leylin’s curiosity.
He could now move between worlds without consuming any energy. If any Magus were to find out about this, they would go insane. Hence, using the excuse that an experiment had gone wrong and he was afraid that the contamination would leak, he was taking necessary emergency measures.
However, the reason for this situation still had Leylin befuddled.
‘Is it because of that owl feather? Or was it the explosion of the astral gate? Or did both those events somehow affect each other causing this mysterious change…’ he thought as he stroked his chin.

Whatever it was, this accident was a good thing. Not only had he obtained the coordinates to Dreamscape, but he’d also acquired a bridge between the two worlds.

“However, this can’t last forever,” Leylin recalled some spatial theory. The Magus World and Dreamscape were like two parallel sheets of paper, and his astral laboratory was a point between the two, the only link between them.

However, with how space worked, this point would eventually break. In other words, his laboratory would eventually lose its connection to Dreamscape.

“I need to speed up my exploration!” Leylin’s heart was burning. Dreamscape was the most mysterious of worlds, one that had even invaded the ancient Magus World.

It was an extraordinary place whose inhabitants lacked true bodies. Formed of the dreams of intellectual beings, it had a mystical strength.

If he could find the dreams of some ancient Magus that had comprehended laws and obtain his understanding, he would reap huge benefits. Basically, in front of Leylin was a gigantic treasure trove…
‘Dreamscape is a huge treasure trove, but it holds perilous dangers within…’ Leylin pondered deeply over this.

Unlike the Magus World, Dreamscape hadn’t suffered any damage, and was still a terrifying world that retained its ancient splendour. The demons inside this place were beings even ancient Magi had been fearful of.

On top of that, Dreamscape was even more dangerous than the real world. The slightest of mistakes in there would result in the loss of one’s truesoul. Whether it was an encounter with a demon or some other danger from the environment itself, everything would be extremely terrifying for him.

What if they found his laboratory and used it as a springboard to get to the Magus World? Just the thought of it left Leylin’s scalp numb.

While he didn’t mind being treated as a traitor to humanity, he wasn’t going to do anything that would not benefit him.

Besides, Leylin had long since begun treating the central continent as his own. He did not want an even stronger organisation to occupy it. With the consolidated might of the central continent as it was, just a random demon would cause the Magus World to tremble in fear.

There would be nothing for him in that situation.

‘It’s better to keep a low profile and focus on exploration!’ Leylin
consoled Freya and immediately made the decision to move the castle. He’d completely sealed off this area, turning it into an observation zone.

Freya was very considerate, leaving quickly. It was quite normal for there to be issues during high-ranking experiments. Leylin was the most serious she’d ever seen him, which meant that this particular incident was extremely dangerous. Reasonable as she was, she immediately supported his decision.

Truth be told, she had no other choice. Such powerful contamination would be very dangerous for low-ranked Warlocks and Magi, and she was not going to risk her child for that.

As for Leylin, he stayed behind in the name of surveying the contamination.

Through many disastrous experiments, the various situations and processes were excellent research material. With the feigned traces of a failed experiment formed by the A.I. Chip, many Warlocks were deceived, not in the least suspicious of his actions. His secret exploration of Dreamscape could continue unperturbed.

His astral gate had now turned into a strange bridge connecting the Magus World and Dreamscape. Leylin currently stood before a half-body statue of a human, looking deep in thought.

‘As expected, Dreamscape’s invasion has already begun?’ Noticing the unwanted presence of this statue in his laboratory, Leylin stroked his chin in contemplation. As the bridge linking the two worlds, the laboratory itself was greatly contaminated by Dreamscape. Especially after a few experiments on Leylin’s end, the laboratory had now undergone some changes.

Leylin could sense that the invasion from Dreamscape hadn’t ceased for even a moment, constantly modifying the materials and other things in the lab. If not for Leylin having moved everyone away from the castle, something big might have happened.

The laboratory now seemed extremely dangerous even by the
standards of the Radiant Moon Leylin. He couldn’t help but move forward, his hand running along the surface of the statue and allowing him to feel the coarse texture.

[Beep! Scan completed. Target has no obvious signs of radiation. Style is from the Eiffel era. determined to be constructed 6231 years ago…]

The A.I. Chip projected some densely packed data before Leylin’s eyes, but it did not contain what he wanted to see the most.

“From my past observations, this should be the time when the invasion from Dreamscape peaks. Afterwards, the space between it and the lab will widen until the link to Dreamscape is lost…”

Dreamscape and Magus World were two completely different large worlds. They were like two parallel lines, and the laboratory was the point that connected the two together.

It might have been because of the owl’s feather, or the unique explosion of the astral gate. Whatever it was, the chance of such a thing happening was almost negligible, and it was impossible for Leylin to create it.

With the movement of space and the worlds themselves, they would eventually separate and the laboratory would lose its mysterious function.

This would not last for a long time. The energy required to connect two separate worlds was massive, and though Leylin did not understand the specific principle of how this connection worked he was quite sure it would break.

Through the tests of the A.I. Chip, it was made known that the concentration of dreamforce within the laboratory had reached its peak.

‘Given how high the rate of corrosion is, demons might be able to come over as well…’ Looking through the graphic the A.I. Chip had given him representing the corrosion, as well as the graph showing the density of dreamforce, cold sweat appeared on
The connection between his laboratory and Dreamscape had reached a peak, and it would weaken past now. However, this peak was enough for even someone at rank 7 and above to pass through. In other words, if a demon in Dreamscape found the laboratory, it could very well make use of it to enter the Magus World! This was a convenient path, not requiring all the blood rites and soul sacrifices that were currently obstructing the demons’ invasion.

‘Thankfully, there aren’t any demons on the other side, and this peak period will last a few days at most...’ An expression of relief flashed on Leylin’s face. In this short period of time, the chances of demons finding the laboratory were extremely low, and his luck would have to be very poor for it to happen. Because of that, he could be at ease and use this time to explore Dreamscape.

At this thought, Leylin surveyed the items in the laboratory. Besides the statue, there was now another experimentation table where the astral gate had been, with large amounts of plants and ore samples gathered atop it. Many items from the dilapidated buildings, such as abandoned coats and hats, were placed in a messy pile. Around it were powerful binding runes, isolating their auras and radiation.

‘Dreamscape is a illusory world. How is it that these things can continue to exist even after they enter the Magus World?’ This question had vexed Leylin greatly. The owl had told him that Dreamscape was created out of the dreams of all intellectual beings, so all things there should have been virtual. Something in a virtual land could be brought into the real world, and even ancient demons and the like could actually appear in the Magus World. There were too many mysteries surrounding Dreamscape.

‘Could the main culprit of all this be dreamforce?’ Dreamscape and
the Magus World were different. Even the concept of air might be absent there, and regular humans could suffocate the moment they entered. However, the flora and fauna was still abundant, which confused Leylin further.

Dreamscape was permeated by an unusual energy, a power that Leylin had named dreamforce. He believed that it was this very power that resulted in Dreamscape being so strange and not following any rules.


Astral Vision was the unique visual ability of the Heavenly Astral race. As they were beings of the astral plane, their eyes could see things that Magi could not.

Having gathered information about them from Sky City, Leylin had tried to imitate the structure of their eyes. With the ability Warlocks had at working with bloodlines, he’d managed to create a strange effect.

With the robotic voice of the A.I. Chip, Leylin’s eyes were wrapped up in a sparkling blue light, as if having turned into sapphires. Colours were filtered out of his vision layer by layer, leaving behind only a dark red. Unlike the crimson of bloodline force, this red was filled with a certain darkness, as if containing the malicious intent of the world. It made Leylin feel incredibly uncomfortable.

‘The dreamforce wasn’t this dense yesterday!’ Leylin watched the dark colour grow increasingly deep scarlet and shook his head, feeling anxious.

He came before the experimentation table, sweeping away the miscellaneous items atop it away to reveal a fine Petri dish that seemed to be formed entirely out of crystal. One could even see its contents from the outside in spite of it being covered.

Inside was a tiny organism, what looked like a black bug with
massive compound eyes and six limbs with reverse hooks on them. It was squirming around.
Leylin could see large amounts of dreamforce amassing in his sight, entering the bug as if supplementing it.
“Dreamforce! A muddled mix of illusion and reality, a power that exists to transcend laws?” Leylin mumbled to himself, hands emitting a layer of sparkling white light.
*Whoosh!* Dark red streams of air were caught in his hand and quickly dissipated. The soul force of a rank 5 Warlock that he was proud of could actually do little to this dreamforce!
“It’s something of a completely different system…” Leylin laughed bitterly, mulling it over for a moment and then submerging the petri-dish in another pool crackling with thunder.
“Begin experiment number 581!” Leylin had been performing all sorts of experiments, looking for something capable of interfering with dreamforce that would allow him to use this strength himself!
Were there treasures in Dreamscape?
Yes, and many at that! Dreamscape housed many Rank 6 and above beings with various kinds of materials and treasures, they were all enough to drive Radiant Moons and even Breaking Dawn Magi crazy.

But the dangers that Dreamscape offered were terrifying as well. The world was ever changing, and the bug that one stepped on today could grow into a powerful fiend tomorrow, stomping you to death.

It was a world full of uncertainties where the real and the virtual, past and future were all mixed up. It was one that Leylin did not wish to easily come into contact with. He hadn’t even finished exploring the surroundings of his laboratory yet, precisely because he didn’t dare to go in too deep.

Furthermore, he didn’t think treasures and comprehension of the dreamforce were the most precious things in Dreamscape. No, Dreamscape’s biggest offering was precisely the dreamforce that was everywhere!

Dreamforce was the foundation of Dreamscape. Whether demons or strange treasures, they were all based on it, and if one could control this power not only could they avoid most of the dangers in Dreamscape and explore it freely, there would also be a great benefit to their body.

‘Dreamforce… I’m afraid it’s slightly more powerful than even
soul force and bloodline energy, a higher form…’ Leylin’s pupils sparkled with desire, ‘If I can completely control this power, not only will I be free of obstructions in Dreamscape, I can even just abandon the laboratory and try to form a connection to Dreamscape by myself…’
The connection between this laboratory and Dreamscape was definitely going to break one day. Leylin wished to take precautions, finding a way to communicate with Dreamscape himself.
“Activate the isolation layer. Enable circuit number 52, adjust power level to 5.” With Leylin’s command, terrifying thunderbolts suddenly gathered together in the pool as it rippled endlessly. A few plates made of silver slowly rose, forming a metal box that completely isolated the Petri dish within.
Large amounts of lightning adhered to the top of the plates, forming a blue surface. It was as if there was a layer of blue at the top.
“Enter observation mode.” The blue radiance grew more intense, almost piercing through the air before him. In his field of view, the dark red dreamforce passed through the cage of lightning without the slightest obstruction, stopped by the metal plates for only a moment. It then drilled into the beetle’s body without hesitation.
[Experiment failed.] The A.I. Chip’s cold sound echoed, making Leylin’s expression darken.
“Again!” Leylin had already experienced this many times, whether it be in this life or his last. He didn’t feel dejected, and instead began once more without expression.
“None of the third series alloys work. I have to replace…” Leylin’s eyes blazed with an endless fighting spirit.

……
Time crawled by, making Leylin feel a little numb. His hand movements remained extremely meticulous though, and he made not a single error in replacing the components as he redesigned the parameters of the experiment.

A large number of electric runes formed, attaching to a glass-like material in which the petri-dish was kept. The black beetle climbed continuously, trying to pry open the seal with its mandibles.

*Pop!*

The beetle’s movements grew sluggish, as if it was weighed down by something. It’s figure suddenly distorted slightly.

[Dreamforce has been isolated, creature’s vital signs are unstable! Beep! Interference detected, unable to scan…]

Backdropped by the robotic voice of the A.I. Chip, the beetle in the Petri dish suddenly turned manic, sounding out harshly. The piecing insect screech was extremely sharp, carrying a hint of anxiousness and igniting Leylin’s spirit in an instant. He looked at the outermost glass pane as a blue radiance emitted from his eyes.

In his Astral Vision, he could see a large amount of dark red vapour being blocked out by the glass pane, leaving it unable to enter the Petri dish.

Due to the simulation from the experiment, streaks of dark red gas were continuously emitted from the beetle’s body. Whenever a streak of red gas emerged from the surface of its body, the beetle’s figure grew duller, causing the lines to become unstable. It made it seem like this beetle was just a virtual projection after all, and its source was now being disrupted.

*Bang!*

After the last bit of dreamforce was extracted, the beetle let loose another sharp cry as its entire body exploded. A little black light dissipated, finally disappearing entirely without a trace.

[Mass in Petri dish is now 0, no traces of any remains found.] The
A.I. Chip followed up.

“Indeed! Illusory things are still illusory in the end, but because they’re transformed by dreamforce, they can exist in real life…” Leylin stroked his chin. This experiment’s success had also authenticated many of his conjectures.

“The demons… Although they are almost omnipotent in the Dreamscape, in the Magus World and even any other real world they will be weakened significantly. Once the dreamforce stored in their bodies is nearly exhausted, they’ll need to return to Dreamscape to replenish it… Perhaps this is why they ultimately gave up on the invasion, vanishing without a trace…” Leylin felt that the events around the invasion and ultimate end of ancient Dreamscape had been lifted off their mysterious veil now.

Because of the initial intersection of the two worlds and the abundant dreamforce, even ancient Magi were rendered helpless by these fiends. However, the Magus World was too big, even containing a seven-layered subterranean world that was not in the least inferior to the surface. As they invaded downwards, the assistance of dreamforce reduced, and with the separation of the two worlds, it was dwindling anyway.

In the end, had these demons not withdrawn of their own accord, what awaited them was probably being annihilated like the beetle.

‘Dreamforce… even if it’s a powerful weapon, it still has serious restrictions!’ Upon reaching this state, Leylin had begun to pity these demons instead. Although they were almost omnipotent in Dreamscape, once they reached the outside world and without dreamforce supporting them they were weaker than bugs.

“In comparison, although the systems of the Magi and the Gods would be affected in other worlds, they were still quite common and they could retain a large portion of their strength. Precisely because of that, the leaders of the ancient world were the Magi and the Gods. No matter how mysterious and powerful Dreamscape...
was, it was ultimately just short lived…”

Leylin looked at the obstructed dreamforce and fell into deep thought. ‘I can dabble into the system of dreamforce, but I absolutely cannot make it a fundamental. Otherwise, once I’m targetted and restrained, the consequences will be too severe…’

“A.I. Chip! Record this experiment, list all the parameters as classification level one, begin simulating the possibility of affecting dreamforce…” Leylin commanded. The success of this experiment was only the first step. What he had to do next was to grasp the basic properties and regulation of dreamforce through continued experiments, assimilating it into the path of a Magus so he could develop a spell that mainly relied on it.

This was what the ancient Magi did as well. Discover everything, study everything, use everything! It was the essence of the path of magic.

‘Although dreamforce is extremely limited, if it’s deployed as an ambush the effect will be equally terrifying!’ Of course, Leylin would not underestimate his opponents because of dreamforce’s limitations. The power of the ancient demons had been recorded firmly in the A.I. Chip’s database.

‘After I’m familiar with dreamforce, I can then make use of this period of time to begin exploring Dreamscape…’ Leylin stroked his chin, a faint glimmer in his eyes.

He had lost a great opportunity to explore Dreamscape because of this research. Now, the two worlds were almost separated from each other already. Still, for Leylin this contribution was definitely worth it.

Compared to the mere coordinates of a world, his control would now be a guarantee for him in Dreamscape from now. Furthermore, his expectations were different from that of the owl. If he successfully gained control over dreamforce he could then enter and exit Dreamscape freely from anywhere.
After all, Dreamscape was different from other worlds. It was existing everywhere, and in theory communicating with the dreams of all intellectual creatures was even more boundless than the Astral Realm, one had to transcend the worlds and dimensions connected.

Of course, this was only the best assumption, but Leylin had seen unlimited possibilities in it!

“One day, all the profound mysteries of Dreamscape will unravel before my eyes!” A smile emerged in Leylin’s blue pupils…

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* And at this moment, a fine shattering sound suddenly echoed into Leylin’s ears.

“What’s the matter?” He turned his head over, directing his gaze onto the half-statue that had suddenly appeared today.

As the laboratory that connected with Dreamscape was most affected by dreamforce, some strange things happened almost every day. Leylin had almost reached a point where he was inured to these strange things.

A great amount of cracks emerged continuously on the statue of half a human. And yet, once he used the A.I. Chip to scan it he saw an undamaged statue instead, without the slightest cracks.

“What’s going on? Is it that I can only see this scene through Astral Vision?” Leylin revoked Astral Vision, and all he saw was an undamaged statue. A profound chill suddenly emerged in his heart.
The sudden appearance of a half human statue, and the hairline cracks that could only be seen through Astral Vision… all this caused a chill in Leylin’s heart. The things in Dreamscape were way too mysterious, but the attraction they held for Leylin was incomparable. Precisely because of this, Leylin who had all along been immersed in experiments had slightly neglected the extreme dangers contained there. Leylin looked at the continuously enlarging cracks on the statue, and could not help but say with a deep voice, “Seal!”

*Ring!* A blood-red radiance emerged from underground, instantly transforming into a translucent cage. The runes he’d previously set up near the statue began to flicker as well. Suppressive energy waves gathered together, firmly sealing the half human statue within. The range of cracking on the statue grew wider even as it was sealed off, all the cracks coming together to form a terrifying large mouth.

A wave of tiny black bugs wriggled out of the big mouth, each one the size of an ant. They crawled out of the statue layer after layer, covering the ground in a flash. The concentration of the dark red dreamforce was amplified several times as it formed a dense whirlpool that rippled back and forth in the air.

‘Why is the dreamforce circulating so fast?’ This discovery dulled a
lot of the joy from the experiment’s success. Leylin began reflecting on himself. With just one insignificant step in the study of Dreamscape, he had only pulled off a corner of the veil. He still needed to be wary of the unknown. The little bit of complacency that had appeared was immediately suppressed.

*Squeak!* Accompanied by a creepy screech and a fine gnawing sound, Leylin found to his horror that the binding runes were shattering apart one by one. Even the spell formation on the ground was terrifyingly being corroded.
The dark red dreamforce constantly darkened further, and its strange power even caused Leylin’s expression to change.

“Damn it! If I wait until tomorrow, I’ll use up all the isolation materials found today…” Leylin’s heart was very hateful, but he was helpless.

“Destroy!” He suddenly attacked, and a strange black flame swept across the room violently, completing drowning all the places the half-human statue had previously been.
The temperature of the entire laboratory rose to an extreme for a moment, before falling rapidly once more.
The original floor had melted due to the high temperature, hollowing out. At the bottom of this hole were all sorts of molten materials that mixed together and solidified again, forming colourful gem-like crystals.

*Creak!* Black spots started appearing on these crystals one by one.

Although the statue disappeared, those black bugs had impressively survived Leylin’s demonic flames.

‘They’re based off dreamforce, I need to solve the problem from its roots.’ Leylin’s eyes turned gloomy. He waved both hands, and the current experimental boards in the lightning pool flew out in a flash, exploding to form dust in the air. As if some power was bringing them together, they then formed a fine membrane,
covering the area where the black bugs were.
“Isolate!” A great amount of lightning covered the membrane and formed an isolation layer similar to that of the previous experiment. Dark red dreamforce was isolated to the outside.
A large amount of dreamforce condensed, unexpectedly causing many holes in the membrane, causing it to crack under the attack.
Although the dreamforce can be isolated, it can also break through the latter. My last experiment only targeted an ordinary Dreamscape creature… So this kind of thing can happen when encountering something of a higher rank…” Leylin’s pupils narrowed.
This meant that, if he encountered an even more powerful existence, this membrane he set up would likely be torn apart immediately.
Thinking over it once, that made sense as well. A rope net could catch small fish, but how could it catch a tiger shark in the ocean?
The priority is to completely eliminate all these hidden dangers before the opponent gains Dreamscape’s support!” Determination flashed in Leylin’s eyes as the demonic flames burned once more.
This time, the black ants that lost dreamforce melted apart very quickly, turning into motes of black light and dissipating.
As if due to this event, the dreamforce outside the membrane grew richer, causing fine cracks to appear on the membrane. It would rupture at any time.
“Faster! Make it faster!” Leylin shouted deeply. Cold soul force merged, being injected into the flames.
The black flames immediately burned tenfold more vigorously, burning all of the black ants into ashes. And the instant when the last ant disappeared, the isolation membrane emitted a saddening cry, unable to bear the heavy load any longer as it shattered. The dreamforce had lost its target though, and it hovered for a while before dissipating automatically. It caused Leylin to let out a deep breath. He turned around.
All of a sudden, it was as if the half-human statue was pasted in front of his eyes, the huge cracked mouth seemingly ridiculing him! A terrifying gloomy breath was constantly emitted from the crack that was the huge mouth.

Leylin’s pupils narrowed as dense Kemoyin Scales emerged in an instant, New Moon soul force bursting forth from his truesoul to cover his body.

*Squeak!* The terrifying black ants emerged once more, covering Leylin’s entire body. His Magus robes, which were a magic artifact, did not even manage to block them for a moment, thousands of holes forming on it instantly.

The black ants covered Leylin’s body, and even the rank 5 Kemoyin Scales could not resist the opponent’s fangs. An intense pain was transmitted from his skin as countless nicks appeared on Leylin’s body.

*HSS* Behind him, the phantom of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor emerged, growling as a layer of black flames burned on Leylin’s body.

“Huff…” After the flames stopped burning, Leylin was momentarily taken aback. When he came back to his senses, all the black ants had disappeared.

However, fine black wounds were still densely packed on his body, making it seem a little horrifying.

“Is this the invasion of Dreamscape?” Leylin looked at the blue lightning pool, the hollow ground, and the scales that had automatically emerged on his body, heaving a deep sigh.

Dreamscape was a world where reality and virtuality were mixed, and all sorts of things could happen in there.

‘I’m afraid that with that sort of influx of dreamforce, this lab has already become a building of Dreamscape. Even the nature of the materials has changed…’ Such a situation was very similar to the process of a high-ranked Magus irradiating his castle on his own
accord, only at a much deeper and more overbearing level.
‘A.I. Chip, raise the alert level once more. Forbid all entry other than my own!’ As he walked out of the laboratory, Leylin was slightly gloomy. The feeling of being shrouded in an illusion, as if he had been struck by magic but had not realised it, really left him uncomfortable.
Moreover, although dreamforce was not like magic, it could still affect reality. No matter what he experienced in dreams, it would all be reflected on his main body.
‘Dreamscape experiments are indeed full of dangers!’ Leylin sighed. Even the current him did not dare to live near this laboratory.
“Your Highness Leylin! You’re finally out?” Jeffrey’s voice was heard as Leylin walked out of the castle. This rank 5 protector of the Morning Star area had actually been waiting outside the castle without his knowledge.
“What’s the matter, Your Highness Jeffrey?” Leylin asked curiously. This was considered his personal territory, Jeffrey could not intrude on his own. It would be considered disrespectful to its owner.
“I tried to contact you several times, but there was some hindrance so I could only wait outside…” Jeffrey shrugged his shoulders with a bitter smile.
“I see. Forgive me, I was immersed in an experiment!” Leylin immediately apologised as an embarrassed look emerged on his face. The effect of the pollution and isolation of dreamforce was much more terrifying than other spells.
If a laboratory in such an environment was still able to receive communications from the outside world, that would truly be something fishy!
“What experiment are you performing? I heard that there was even an accident before, and the pollution caused by the leakage is very serious…” Jeffrey looked at the tightly guarded castle behind
Leylin that had no signs of life, seeming curious. Of course, the leakage due to an experiment was something Leylin had deliberately made up so he could tighten the vigilance in this place openly and seemingly righteously.

“Nothing much... Just the leakage from an interplanar experiment. Something seems to have escaped as well...” Leylin’s words were both true and false, showing the great improvement in his acting skills. Even without the A.I. Chip’s coordination, he was able to deceive an old sly fox like Jeffrey.

“It’s a cute, timid creature. In order to play hide and seek with it, I had no choice but to seal off the entire castle...” Leylin smiled.

“Oh!” Jeffrey nodded but did not pursue any further. Magi’s experimental information was definitely top secret, not to mention that both Leylin and himself were rank 5 warlocks of equal ranks. It would have been way too out of line.

“This Sir Leylin has not invited us in even now, isn’t he too rude?” At this moment, a Warlock standing beside Jeffrey spoke up indifferently, actually displaying slight hostility towards Leylin.

“Hm?!” Leylin was also shocked. Only now did he notice this figure beside Jeffrey. He was very handsome, his eyes containing an exuberance and vitality. His body’s aura was extremely abstruse, yet also very easily neglected.
This is?” Leylin was on guard. This person was able to hide from his sense, which meant he was no ordinary fellow.

“Hehe… Let me introduce him to you, Leylin. This is the person I mentioned before. He’s Bevis, the last of the Radiant Moon Warlocks in our Warlock Union!”

Following Jeffrey’s introduction, Bevis proudly lifted his head slightly. “Archduke Leylin, you come out to meet your guests looking like this. Aren’t you violating etiquette?”

Leylin was stunned, and quickly looked at himself. Due to the mishap previously, his robe was now utterly tattered, and he did seem rather impolite.

“My apologies, that was my mistake! Please, come to Black Serpent Castle next door. It’s not far away, and my wife is there as well.”

Leylin apologised sincerely, and directed them there while still in front of his castle. He did not intend to invite the both of them in to tour this castle.

According to Leylin’s plan, this area would be completely isolated and abandoned. After what happened today, he surely had doubts about the safety here.

The invasion of Dreamscape came as silent as the night, yet contained a vast amount of terror.

Even rank 5 Radiant Moon Warlocks might not be able to effectively protect themselves in the face of such an invasion.
Before having complete control over dreamforce and being able to defend himself, Leylin would maintain distance from this place. His safety wasn’t a joke.

Seeing that Leylin acknowledged his mistake and apologised so readily, Jeffrey’s smile became more gentle. After all, he didn’t want to see a divide between the military powers of his own organisation. As for Bevis, a trace of astonishment flashed in his eyes, but he concealed it well.

Leylin, who noticed all of this, sighed secretly, ‘This Bevis… he isn’t the haughty and brainless person he appears to be…’

Previously, Jeffrey had mentioned that there were a group of Warlocks that had the highest hopes of obtaining a throne, and Bevis was the last Warlock that did not appear back then. He’d always thought that this fellow was outside of the Morning Star area, but didn’t expect that he would actually appear right in front of him directly.

‘Is his ability to block me from probing also brought about by the rank 6 bloodline?’ Leylin carefully sized up this Warlock who possessed the bloodline of a rank 6 creature.

As he tried to probe him, a rich layer of bloodline energy that surrounded Bevis like a dense fog warded off any prying eyes. Perhaps it was because of this ability that he was able to avoid the hostility of many Magi, and thereby grow to this stage.

‘A.I. Chip, is it possible to bypass this isolation layer from his bloodline energy?’ Leylin appeared to be talking cheerfully to the two Warlocks as they walked along, but he was actually commanding the A.I. Chip and making continuous attempts to gather information about this Warlock.

[Beep! It is necessary to break the protective layer to gather information about this Warlock. This will attract his attention. Continue with action?] the A.I. Chip swiftly intoned.

‘No!’ Leylin wouldn’t be so reckless of course, he didn’t want to be
seen as an enemy.
‘Ancient bloodlines at rank 6 that possess concealment abilities are few and far between…’ Leylin stroked his chin and glanced at Jeffrey.
‘Jeffrey himself should have the bloodline of a rank 5 creature, an ancient bat. Bevis on the other hand… A Crystal Dragon? Or a Misty Fog Giant?’ The many possibilities surfaced at the bottom of Leylin’s heart. After the A.I. Chip made continuous comparisons, it finally narrowed it down to the two most probable bloodlines. Bevis was of course, unaware that, within a short span of time, Leylin was already close to completely understanding him inside out. He was aloof throughout their journey, standing at the side while Leylin and Jeffrey conversed. He only occasionally interjected.
After connecting to Dreamscape, Leylin had constructed another Black Serpent Castle next to his original castle, and shifted Freya and the servants over.
The Morning Star area was extraordinary in that the land available was endlessly vast, hence Leylin effortlessly obtained ownership over a large amount of land. As for the construction of the castle, it was made simple with the assistance of spells and numerous giant adamantine puppets following his orders.
A short moment later, Leylin and the guests took their seats in the living room of the new castle. The maid served milk tea and some light refreshments. Freya came out to meet them for a while, but retreated soon after, leaving the space to the three Warlocks. Leylin fiddled with the cup in his hands, and didn’t take the initiative to speak.
He hadn’t expected Jeffrey to bring Bevis here. However, since he already knew about the rank 6 bloodline, Jeffrey probably didn’t have anything to hide as well. Perhaps he brought Bevis over with the intention of resolving misunderstandings and to remove any
grudges that Leylin might harbour. After all, the Warlock Union had intentionally hidden Bevis’ existence for a long time. If not for Leylin’s discovery, they might have continued hiding him. He could sense how distanced their relationship was merely from their attitude. Bevis’ attitude towards him was also worth pondering over… Seeing Leylin behave in this manner, Jeffrey felt somewhat embarrassed. After all, they were in the wrong to begin with, and now could only smooth things over. “His Highness Leylin is the Warlock who has spent the shortest amount of time in advancing to Radiant Moon in the history of bloodline Warlocks. His innate talent is astonishing, and his future is limitless…” “Hmph…” Bevis spoke coldly, “If not the fact that I sealed myself previously in order to conceal my bloodline, I wouldn’t have let this achievement go to someone else…” Judging by the additional strength of a rank 6 bloodline, Bevis might just have been able to surpass Leylin’s record. Hence, it was very normal for him to have complaints, but Leylin felt that it wasn’t that ordinary. ‘Sounds like he seems to be… dissatisfied with me?’ Leylin glanced curiously at Bevis. Today should have been the first time they met, yet he was in a hurry to show off. What was he trying to do? ‘Could it be that the prophecy led him to feel like he was about to face some kind of crisis? Or perhaps it is purely because he’s a spoilt brat? Or even more likely, is he trying to make the other Warlocks declare their position through such an attitude?’ Leylin suddenly had a premonition that his existence would create problems for Bevis. Bevis had always been thought of as the last hope of the Warlocks, and one could not imagine the extent to which he was valued. Leylin’s appearance at this moment was a forceful attack on his position.
He advanced to Radiant Moon faster than him, and was even younger than him. Even though there were bloodline shackles to consider, he had a history of creating miracles, and it was not as if there was no hope for him to break through them. Furthermore, even though Leylin’s limit was rank 5, he was already a top figure among the Warlocks, and was worth investing in. Thus, the entire Warlock Union was now more inclined to allocate some resources to him. Even though it was just a tiny portion, it was enough to arouse discontent and vigilance on Bevis’ end.

‘Afraid that my recent rising will affect your status?’ Having had an exceedingly rich experience with power struggles, Leylin immediately sniffed out that something was different. Still, this possibility left him speechless. Sometimes it was easy to build animosity. Perhaps it was because of baseless conjectures, or maybe purely because Bevis found Leylin an eyesore.

“Your Highness Bevis’ bloodline is beyond me…” Leylin paused for a moment, then continued, “But as the hope of the Warlock Union, what Your Highness should do now is break through the boundaries of rank 6 as soon as possible, and become a Monarch so you can acquire a larger space for us Warlocks to live in.”

Since Bevis’ attitude was clear to him, there was nothing for Leylin to be courteous about, and he directly returned the ‘compliment’. Leylin was proud of his age and experience, and this attitude instantly made Bevis turn red with anger. Leylin was practically instructing him like a child!

In fact, Bevis was doing pretty well. Leylin didn’t have to break through his barrier to find, with the help of the A.I. Chip, that he was already a Half Moon Radiant Moon. With the amplification of strength by his bloodline, he could probably match even Offa in battle, albeit with difficulty. He would probably be ranked second in terms of strength within the Warlock Union.
Such was the terror of a rank 6 bloodline. Any ranks below rank 6 could be slowly cultivated and broken through with the strength of the bloodline. With such a huge asset on his side, it was perfectly fine for Bevis to have a slightly arrogant personality. Besides, since he had always been taken good care of, he probably didn’t have much life experience to speak of. The emotions of rank 6 creatures were far more frightening, and would be a fatal weakness for him.
Hence, after hearing Leylin’s provocation, Bevis erupted without the slightest hesitation, “I am here today because I have something to say regarding Your Highness Leylin’s suggestion from before!” “From before?” Leylin looked at Jeffrey, puzzled.
“Your Highness Leylin mentioned it previously. It’s about taking action against the powers of the Blazing Flame Monarch. Although I think it’s better that we do not take part, we should discuss it!” Jeffrey explained awkwardly.
“Your Highness Leylin, as a Radiant Moon in our Warlock Alliance, how can you enrage a rank 6 being such as the Blazing Flame Monarch because of your personal hatred, without a care about our interests as a whole? Even if it’s done in your name, this cannot do. Can you guarantee he won’t take out his anger on the other Warlocks?”
Bevis’ voice was very loud, and he appeared to speak forcefully and with justice.
“Personal hatred?” Leylin gave a light laugh. “The recent persecution of Warlocks nearly ended our legacy. It was quite recently that he dispatched assassins to end our excellent bloodlines. The numerous offences he’s made are mere personal grudges in your eyes, Your Highness? Don’t forget that you too are a Warlock of the Union!”
Having never experienced such mincing words before, Bevis was at a loss for words momentarily.
S

eeing Bevis flush red with embarrassment, Leylin spoke
slowly and deliberately. “Our Alliance nurtured Your
Highness Bevis in hopes that one day you would be able to
lead us to break the Blazing Flame Monarch’s seal. If you don’t
have the courage to even come to terms with his powers, I am
greatly disappointed…”
“When did I…” Bevis’ face turned red in a flash, yet he couldn’t
find the words to retort.
Even Jeffrey, who wasn’t part of the conversation, seemed to be in
deep thought.
Just as Leylin said, they had spared no effort in grooming Bevis,
and didn’t hesitate to put everything on the line just so that they
could assist him in being promoted to rank 6 so that he could face
the Magus Monarchs.
However, if Bevis’ performance was so weak, then even if he
successfully advanced in the end, whether he would fulfill his
promise was another question altogether. After all, if he didn’t even
have the courage to go up against their enemy, what would he
defend the interests of the Warlocks with?
Leylin did this to make the other rank 5 Radiant Moons plant seeds
of distrust in their hearts. What was more crucial was that he was
telling the truth, which left no room for Bevis to explain himself.
Bevis was gloomy, and practically looked as though he was about
to cry because of Leylin’s sinister motive.
The discussion between the two ended on bad terms. When Bevis left, Leylin inwardly stroked his chin as he looked at his retreating back. It probably wouldn’t be a bad idea if he made a few more rank 6 bloodline imprints.

……

Inside Dreamscape. Leylin was clad in an entire set of protective gear. Having successfully built new isolation technology, he could now repel a large amount of dreamforce. Due to the protective gear he was wearing, Leylin appeared very swollen. He was like a humongous human-like stuffed animal trudging through the lush forest with difficulty.

“The environmental changes in Dreamscape are happening too quickly…” After dealing with a gigantic man-eating banyan tree, Leylin stood at the top of a mountain peak. From here, he could see the circular open-air structure of his laboratory not far away. But now, numerous vines surrounded the laboratory, and there were even a few bright red flowers blossoming on them.

The lush greenery covered the entire area, nearly blocking off the huge laboratory from view.

When Leylin was here for the first time, this area was still a barren plot of land. The second time he came, it turned into a grassland. And now, the landscape had given way to a primitive jungle.

‘The rate of the change in dreamforce is too high. Even the operational capacity of the A.I. Chip cannot catch up with these undulations. Is this also the reason why there are so many complex changes in Dreamscape?’ Leylin guessed as he gazed at the sky.

The three suns hung in the sky, each shaped differently. The circular sun in the centre had the brightest corona surrounding it, and the blue rays made it even more dazzling.

At this moment, the robotic voice of the A.I. Chip sounded, [Beep! Gathering dreamforce… Vessel 1 has been filled, vessel 2 filled to 76%!]
In front of Leylin were two metal balls hovering in mid-air. Now, one had turned dark-red, and more than half of the other was also filled with dark-red.

“Not bad!” Leylin nodded, and kept the metal ball that had already been completely filled.

“Dreamscape is full of treasures everywhere!” Leylin was greatly satisfied with his harvest of Dreamscape energy. Such power was more than half a grade higher than bloodline strength, and was even comparable to the legendary power of laws. It was incomparable, and was very attractive to Leylin.

With such a huge Dreamscape waiting for him to explore, it would be extremely silly to tangle with a Warlock like Bevis.

“If I can thoroughly exploit the power of Dreamscape, and use this as the basis to create spells unique to me, then I’m afraid that even a Breaking Dawn Magus will suffer greatly!” Leylin was rather excited. In his previous experiments, he had only found methods that could slightly influence dreamforce. To thoroughly understand clearly the fundamentals of dreamforce and even develop customised spells was a heavy responsibility for him, and there was a long road ahead to get there.

However, with the assistance of the A.I. Chip, there was hope. He didn’t have to completely understand what constituted dreamforce. That was an impossible task, and anyone who could do so would become the world’s master. What Leylin hoped to do was to slightly utilise the formational laws of dreamforce to allow him to gain a bit of control over it, so that he could make use of dreamforce in his attacks.

As long as he could achieve this, it would be a great spell. However, dreamforce was ultimately a whole other system of energy, so he still needed a lot of time. Leylin could already feel Dreamscape breaking away gradually, especially after the peak of the two worlds’ connection had passed.
It wouldn’t be long before his laboratory would lose the effects of such a convenient spatial gateway. It was exactly because of this that it was necessary for Leylin to collect a few items and store them up as reserves while he still could.

‘Dreamscape is different from other worlds. It is everywhere and is connected to the dreams of every intelligent creature. Perhaps, after I understand the workings of dreamforce, I will be able to free myself from the complications of traversing worlds through a laboratory, and instead be connected to this world directly…’

Leylin was looking forward to it. The snippet of understanding he had about dreamforce gave him the confidence to explore further away from the laboratory.

“My puppets have never even been to this place!” Leylin stepped foot on a black plot of land, cautious. Due to the unique rules of dreamforce, even if he used an adamantine puppet or servant or the like, he wouldn’t be able to explore beyond a fixed range from the laboratory.

Whenever they stepped outside of the confinements of this fixed distance, the puppets and servants would automatically lose contact with him, and Leylin had no way around this.

[Warning! Warning! Concentration of dreamforce has exceeded rank 5, and reached top warning level!] A red box showed up from the A.I. Chip at this moment.

The dark red dreamforce surrounded Leylin, extremely concentrated. It had already materialised in the real world, and was now trying to break through Leylin’s protective gear and enter his body.

In a matter of seconds, Leylin felt as though he was at the bottom of the sea, surrounded by a terrifying water pressure everywhere which even made him feel weak and oppressed.

“If it’s to such an extent, it’s already very dangerous…” Leylin’s heart tightened, and he couldn’t help but clench his fist tighter.
Inside was the Scarlet Earring.

*Ding Dong Ding Dong…* The cheerful and lighthearted sound of a bell sounded from afar as colourful neon lights flickered, making Leylin stop in his tracks.

He glanced around his surroundings. The dense forest had disappeared who knows when, and a hazy mirage appeared in the distance that seemed like a gigantic amusement park.

‘Have I entered someone else’s dream? Or some other dangerous area? These are still too perilous for me, I must leave…’ Leylin treasured his life greatly, and upon seeing these sights that were out of the ordinary, he made plans to retreat.

But at this moment, the A.I. Chip suddenly sent a warning.

[Beep! Energy undulations detected ahead, rank 1 creature detected! Heat radiation and chemical reactions comply with the criteria, determined to be the characteristics of the existence of a living being! Probability of existence of an intelligent creature: 52.9%!]

The prompt, which came out of nowhere, dumbfounded Leylin completely.

“Is it the indigenous people of Dreamscape?” Leylin muttered, his pupils burning with fervour, “If it’s them, their understanding of dreamforce will be greater than mine. It would be even better if they have their own path to power, which will save me a lot of time…”

Leylin’s pupils twinkled continuously, and he was clearly weighing his options.

“Although there is danger here, with the isolation provided by the protective gear I’m very certain that I will at least be able to retreat in one piece. The possibility of finding intelligent beings in other places is very low, so this is totally worth fighting for!” After assessing the pros and cons, a trace of resolve appeared on Leylin’s face and he entered the hazy mirage directly.
Leylin felt his body turn heavy, as though he had jumped into a pool. At the same time, it was just like he had broken through a world boundary and arrived at another world.
The dreamforce around him was extremely active, and the sights that appeared startled Leylin slightly.
A merry-go-round moved to a lively melody as colourful lights flickered. Not far away was a humongous Ferris wheel, and other recreational facilities, such as a balloon machine and a viking ship, could be seen everywhere.
“Huh? How could it be… Isn’t this a replica of an amusement park from my previous world? No! This layout is centuries older than modern amusement parks. I’ve only seen them in exhibitions that are in fond remembrance of times past…”
Leylin was slightly taken aback. “Were they formed according to my leaked memories, or is this another dream from a similar world?”
Lights twinkled throughout the amusement park as various kinds of machines operated automatically. A humongous clown statue wobbled back and forth, and let out a gentle chuckle.
Not a single living creature was in sight in the entire amusement park, which made Leylin feel a little afraid.
“A.I. Chip! Activate probe, launch navigation!” A blue fluorescent light crept into Leylin’s pupils.
[Beep! Navigation activated, searching for life undulations.] The A.I. Chip replied robotically, and it found a response very quickly.
[Target position: 1900 metres ahead and to the left! Surrounding dreamforce undulations are clear, and it is a level 5 threat.]
“Level 5!” Leylin was mildly hesitant. “It seems to be higher than what I expected, but still within a controllable range!” With a stamp of his feet, his body immediately transformed into a phantom that vanished into thin air.
*Whoosh!* A ray of white light surged into the distance, the most
splendid brilliance. Regardless of what buildings obstructed its way, be they steel or concrete, they were all cut apart, revealing a sleek incision.

The white light seemed to have almost caught up with the fleeing shadow ahead of it in a flash. The shadow grunted and dodged aside, but its arm rubbed against the periphery of the white light. Its sleeve was directly smashed into smithereens, the skin and muscle underneath it cut apart, exposing a violet tissue.
Bztt bztt! The white rays that had lost their energy disappeared into the ground. One end was stuck in the floor, and the body of white light was still trembling, revealing the face of a poker card, the seven of spades! On the white poker card, some traces of purple, as well as the fresh blood spilt by the fleeing figure ahead, was left behind. Even with a heavily injured arm, the short black shadow seemed exceedingly strong, not stopping for even a second as it bounded into a gigantic pool of coloured balls to the side. The balls flew everywhere, some landing outside and bouncing continuously. Countless streaks of white whizzed forth, each holding the face of a poker card within. These thin cards seemed to have been bestowed with a terrifying slicing ability, and whether it was the balls or the buildings, everything was cut evenly into halves. The coloured balls fell apart, scattering all over the ground, but there was now no sign of the black figure from before. A pair of black leather shoes rubbed against the floor, producing crisp sounds. The poker cards on the walls seemed to be drawn back by some invisible line, and automatically returned to the hands of a person to form a thick deck. This person wore a well-ironed suit with a hat to complete the ensemble. Their features were obscured by a white mask, and they seemed similar to a dealer in a casino.
*Creak!* A robotic sound was transmitted from his body as his head turned a full 180 degrees, aiming at an area beside him. His body swayed wildly as he ran with motions that didn’t conform with physics.

He collided with a steel railing, bending it out of shape even as the building crumbled down loudly. White streaks were sent forth once more, and the supporting rods of a tremendous Ferris wheel broke down as a gigantic black figure toppled down.

Amidst the flying dust, the thin little black figure crawled out pitifully. Turning back to glance at the dealer, fear arose in it as it began to run even faster.

*Boom!* All of a sudden, it crashed into a human body in front. This was someone in white protective attire, with a bloated form. A handsome face could be seen through the transparent glass.

“kakdgmoagkmlamgal…” The thin black figure said something hastily, but Leylin could not understand it at all. However, his soul force picked up a feeling in the general vein of ‘The thing behind is dangerous. Run!’

“Don’t worry, little fellow!” Leylin gazed at this intelligent being in front of him. It was similar to a human, with four slim limbs and a head on top. It looked like a human child, only that its entire being was black, and it was impossible to tell its features apart. It was wearing clothing made of a coarse sackcloth.

One other difference between it and humans was the fine purple patterns on its body. They were like tattoos, but emanated a demonic luster.

There was a wound on its arm, revealing purple musculature inside. Large amounts of dreamforce gathered around this wound, allowing it to recover.

Leylin’s pupils shrank as he patted the head of the little creature, the peaceable undulations he emitted allowing it to calm down.

*Creak!* The figure that looked like a casino dealer from Leylin’s
previous world appeared before the two, the white mask still covering its face.
As it noticed the dealer, Leylin felt the little fellow next to him grabbing onto his clothes tightly, the uneasiness it was feeling peaking.
“Has he been chasing after you?” Leylin turned around, and then laughed involuntarily, “I forgot that we can’t communicate!”
A few poker cards whizzed towards him, and Leylin dodged them easily.
“Fire!” He indifferentely chanted a word. Though most of the laws in Dreamscape were different from those in other worlds, magic could still be used in other worlds. It was just a matter of how effective it would be.
A bundle of crimson flames engulfed the dealer opposite him, the tongues of fire spreading everywhere.
The little fellow beside him widened its eyes, evidently not expecting Leylin to be so powerful. Meanwhile, however, Leylin frowned.
“A rank 4 spell from the Magus World can only do so little in Dreamscape?”
The paths followed by the Magus World could be used in many worlds, but their effectiveness would vary. Evidently, the suppression caused by Dreamscape was at the limit. Of course, the common power here was dreamforce. Powers from foreign places would not have an advantage.
A black humanoid figure slowly walked out of the flames. Swathes of fiery tongues devoured the dealer’s black suit, where the wounds festered and even caused terrifying injuries on its body. However, there was no emotion in its eyes.
“Another Conscient that has manifested… How troublesome!” Leylin’s brows furrowed, the Scarlet Earring shooting out a blood moon that crashed into the opponent’s poker cards.
*Buzz!* The light trembled, and the poker cards were separated into two. The crescent of scarlet light brought with it the energy of high-grade magic equipment as it swiped across the opponent’s neck.

The dealer’s body froze for a second, and then rumbled in continuous explosions.

“Let’s go!” Knowing the opponent would not fall so easily, Leylin took hold of the little fellow’s hand beside him and began to run at a rapid pace.

*Rumble!* Some red and white powder that Leylin had scattered suddenly fused, forming a complicated energy attack that caused the area behind him to be submerged in a sea of energy.

The scenery on both sides quickly disappeared behind them, and with Leylin’s terrifying speed, he had brought the little fellow and fled from the scope of the theme park in the blink of an eye, appearing within a primitive forest outside.

Upon reaching this place, he could sense from the little fellow’s breathing and pulse that it had regained its calm.

“Kalfgmaklmgalk!” The little fellow struggled and exclaimed.

“I forgot we can’t communicate!” Leylin laughed, tapping a finger on the little fellow’s head and sending a strand of soul force in.

Communication through soul force transcended language. With Leylin’s current knowledge of the soul, he could grow proficient in a language in an instant.

“It’s safe here now…” The little fellow repeated, and Leylin could now understand what it was saying.

“Who are you? You’re amazing! How did you win against those monsters?” It gazed at Leylin, eyes sparkling with worship.

“Those monsters? Are there a lot of them?” Leylin asked.

Noticing that the little fellow still seemed slightly weak, he found level ground and passed over biscuits, white bread and the like over to it. It received the items with suspicion, first smelling them...
with curiosity and, as if it had seen some treasures, gnawing at them carefully.

What surprised Leylin was that it only consumed a small portion of the food and kept the rest well. Seeing what it was doing, Leylin nodded inwardly, now having a better understanding of the scarcity of food in Dreamscape.

Leylin did not waste any time as the little fellow ate. The A.I. Chip had constantly been sounding out as it scanned all the physiological characteristics of it, sampling it. The priority was the purple patterns on its body.

These patterns seemed to be naturally formed, possessing the ability to attract dreamforce. The wounds on its arms had already completely recovered, leaving behind a mere scar.

“Thank you for your this, Mister. You must be very wealthy.” The little fellow seemed rather curious about Leylin, especially regarding his protective gear and the lack of patterns on his skin.

“Wealthy? Perhaps,” Leylin chuckled, “What’s your name?”

“Gillian, Mister, my name is Gillian,” the little fellow answered. Leylin laughed as he asked another question, “Alright. Well then, can you tell me what happened just now?”

Though Gillian was doubtful of Leylin’s question, perhaps Leylin’s smile had allowed her to lower her guard. It might have been some sort of bewitching spell which caused her to disclose all that she knew involuntarily.

……

After a long while, maybe tired after a day of running for her life, Gillian wrapped herself in Leylin’s blanket and fell asleep. In the meanwhile, Leylin looked to be deep in thought.

‘Is this what Dreamscape is about? Preposterous, bizarre, and even
somewhat terrifying…’

Gillian said she was an inhabitant of Dreamscape. She’d been fleeing for her life along with her family since birth. It seemed like the area was filled with dangers, and even if they found a place to live in peacefully for a few years, it would still meet the ultimate destiny of being destroyed.

This seemed to be a common situation. The land and buildings had been wrecked in a night and her elders, accustomed to this as they were, continued their journey since they had been forced away from their home.

Based on what Gillian said, the theme park from before was a ‘node’.

In Dreamscape, situations like these were common and nodes could appear at anytime, engulfing the surrounding people.

The items and buildings within were very strange. There were some they knew of, and some that were odd to the extreme. There might even be all sorts of living creatures.

Some of Gillian’s elders had gathered immense benefits from the nodes, but others had died within. For them, the nodes in Dreamscape were places where risk met reward.

A node like this where a terrifying monster appeared was the most terrifying of all, and Gillian had been unlucky enough to be swept in. If not for Leylin’s help, she probably would have wound up dead.

‘Based on what Gillian said, her race is the bottom-most stratum of Dreamscape… She hasn’t even left this region before…’
Leylin was slightly disappointed after listening to Gillian’s story. It would be excessive of him to expect any good power system or training method from such a weak race. ‘However, they are the natives after all. There should be some valuable items or information…’ Leylin stroked his chin. ‘Furthermore, Dreamscape can’t be judged with common sense. Perhaps the next time I come, she’ll have turned into a terrifying existence. Of course the chances of that are so meagre they’re negligible, but even if she’s more likely to die instead there’s some hope…’

“No… No… Don’t go…” Gillian seemed to be restless in her dreams, her hands clutching the blanket and her brows deeply furrowed. Her eyeballs were rolling around under her eyelids, and she looked miserable and pitiful.

“DON’T LEAVE ME… Hah… Hah, it was a dream…” She suddenly sat up, looking bewildered. It was only after she saw the bonfire blazing constantly that she huffed out a long breath. “Nightmares?” Leylin laughed and pushed a piece of roast meat in front of her. Grease and roast meat combined to present the most tantalising of scents, one that caused Gillian to swallow.

“This is… for me?” Gillian’s stomach growled, much to her embarrassment, but she still questioned in disbelief. “Of course!” Leylin’s smile was very gentle. There had not been any unhappiness between them, and was giving her roast meat and
bread considered a waste? This bit was nothing at all to Leylin, so he obviously wouldn’t mind being gentle and kind.
Experience told him that such a pretence was very effective in concealing him in an unfamiliar environment. On top of that, Leylin didn’t mind showing benevolence to stray cats and dogs.
“Thank— Thank you!” Gillian spoke in a low voice, and immediately grabbed the meat and began to bite at it ravenously. Halfway through, she suddenly sounded like she was choked with emotion and began to sob.
“There’s no hurry, I still have a lot of food. Finish eating first, then I’ll bring you to your companions.” Leylin understood what she was feeling very well. He comforted her slowly, and the girl eventually calmed down.
……
*Ka-cha!* Withered branches snapped when stepped on. Leylin and Gillian carefully skirted the theme park, pushing through the primitive forest.
“Those terrifying monsters never leave the scope of the node. As long as we don’t go there, there shouldn’t be any problems…” Gillian was wearing the hunting attire that Leylin had given her, her cleaned face revealing a vigorous spirit that made her seem pretty.
“What’s truly scary in Dreamscape are the wanderers and masters! They can cause tempests to descend at any time, destroying homes and crops, resulting in massive casualties on our end…” Her voice became low. “If not for them looking down on us and treating us like ants, we would probably have all died long ago…”
At this point, she gazed at Leylin. From what she could remember, the methods Leylin used were very similar to those employed by the masters.
“No need to worry, I’m not anything like that. I’ve only just studied some other methods. Haven’t any of you met with other intellectual
lifeforms and interacted with them before?” In front of Gillian, Leylin did not conceal his identity as a foreigner.
“Yes! It’s not just in the forest, but even in the nodes. There are existences that we can communicate with, but they seldom appear. Normally it’s just monsters that only know how to kill.
Gillian tilted her head as she thought it over, “I heard from Father that long, long ago, a giant castle appeared at a node. An old grandpa with a white beard lived inside, and he was like the masters with the ability to control lightning and fire. He even passed down methods to manipulate these powers to Uncle Morin…”
“Hm?” Leylin’s interest was aroused, for this sounded quite similar to a Magus, “And then?”
“And then….” Gillian’s eyes grew dazed, “After grasping the tremendous power, he said he would take us away from the forest to see the outside world… and then, he disappeared… never to return…”
“What a sad story… Oh, my apologies!” Leylin had nothing to say in response to that.
“It’s nothing!” Gillian seemed rather strong, and after seeing a sign by the road, she even cheered excitedly, “We’re quite close to our camp!”
*Whizz!* A bone arrow landed in front of Leylin, the arrow’s feathers still shaking.
“Who is it?” A deep voice sounded from the forest. Leylin laughed, not answering. He had actually noticed the other party long ago, but it was obviously better for Gillian to deal with him.
“Uncle Mark! It’s Gillian!” She happily yelled into the depths of the forest.
“Little Gillian!” The trees on the opposite end began to shake, revealing a middle-aged burly man with sideburns. This man, who was clothed in animal hide, spoke out, “I heard that you’d fallen
into a node. I thought you’d died! Do you know how much I cried for you…”
“Uncle Mark!” Gillian went forward and hugged him tightly, “I’m sorry for making you worry! Here, let me introduce you. This is Mister Leylin who rescued me from the node!”
Gillian pulled at Mark’s hands and dragged him before Leylin. Evidently, the lack of purple patterns on Leylin’s skin left the man on guard.
Leylin chuckled, not minding at all. It was fine as long as he found the place. After all, given his abilities, could the natives even block his attacks?
Of course, Leylin did not dare overstep his boundaries due to the mysteries of Dreamscape. It was best not to use violence when it could interfere with him obtaining any harvests.
After all, this was a world filled with the unknown. The warped reality and complexities in here far exceeded his expectations.
Perhaps the next time he came here, these natives would have undergone a tremendous change. If he were to invest some effort here and strike up a good relationship with them, it would be worth it in the future.
What happened next was obvious. After Leylin displayed his kind intent, and with Gillian’s vouching for him, Mark brought Leylin to their camp.
Leylin took a look around. This was evidently a temporary base, with many wooden piles that had been cut down and were yet to be tidied up in the surroundings.
At the back of the camp were traces of a large fire, as well as a small plot with vegetables and the like.
‘These farming methods are rather ancient.’ Leylin shook his head, but he knew this was inevitable. These natives could find the next time they woke up that their land had lost all fertility, turning into an arid desert, a forest, a river, or even a volcano. There was no
need for more effort than this. Such simplicity extended even to the buildings. A wooden house was made with a few trees put together. Many of the natives chose to rest out in the open or found a hole in a tree. Leylin felt that the tent he had brought along could be considered a palace compared to this.

In the simple and crude wooden house, Leylin met Gillian’s father. He seemed like a haggard middle-aged man, hard work over a long period of time making him look as if he already had one foot in the grave.

“Cough cough… thank you, guest from distant lands! Gillian is my everything. I really don’t know what I can do to show you my gratitude. There’s this food as well… this…”

The middle-aged man surveyed the white bread, biscuits and other food piled in front of him, a flush rising on his face. Such first-rate food was something he could not normally enjoy.

“Please don’t mind it! Gillian is a very lovable girl. Nobody would want to watch her come in harm’s way!” Leylin smiled gently.

“Please forgive my bluntness, but based on what Gillian has said, you… are a Magus?” The man coughed for a while before asking suddenly.

“Yes!” Leylin’s astonishment was outweighed only by his curiosity, “Have you seen a Magus before? Where did you make contact with them?”

“Cough cough… It was Morin who told me this…” The flush on the middle-aged man became even more serious, to the point that Leylin sensed that the fires of his life were about to be extinguished.

“Morin was once viewed favourably by a Magus and studied under him for a period of time. We were told many epic stories, but unfortunately…” Leylin had heard about what happened after from Gillian before.
“May I know if the node where the castle was still exists?” Leylin was rather curious about his kind.
“No. On a certain day, the entire castle and the node completely disappeared. If not for Morin spending the night elsewhere that day, I’m afraid…”
The man shook his head, and seemed to think of something. Shivering uncontrollably, he produced a portion of animal hide and respectfully placed it in front of Leylin.
“This is what Morin left for me. Though I can’t understand it, it’s definitely got to do with the Magus. Take this gift as my thanks!”
“This…” After taking the skin, Leylin’s pupils suddenly shrank. Atop the animal hide were some brown designs and runes. It was no wonder that the man couldn’t understand it; the real information was concealed by spiritual force within the hide.
[Beep! Discovered data interface. Information being transmitted!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice was transmitted as well, and a look of glee appeared on Leylin’s face.
‘I am Morin, what Mentor calls an inhabitant of Dreamscape. If you see this information, please treat my clan members well. What you will see next is the path that Mentor has come up with after spending decades studying my body, a Magus…’
The information on the animal hide gave rise to a look of elation on Leylin’s face.
Magus coincidentally chancing upon Dreamscape who was enchanted by the bizarre environment here and took in an inhabitant as his acolyte…’ Leylin secretly made a guess about what happened at that time.

‘To adapt to this environment, he even specifically targeted dreamforce and the acolyte’s vitality, developing some kind of customised meditation technique and spells…

‘And due to some external factors which could not be resisted, the castle of this Magus had turned into ashes overnight and that acolyte disappeared soon after…’

That should’ve been the gist of it. Leylin wasn’t all that interested in investigating the incident. As long as he gained information, this expedition into Dreamscape would be considered a success.

‘That Magus that was stranded here was at least a Breaking Dawn, and might even been a higher existence that comprehended laws…’

The more he studied the information on hand, the more Leylin grew to admire that Magus.

The A.I. Chip’s assistance was why he could make an analysis of dreamforce relatively effortlessly. However, other Magi did not have such convenience on hand, and this one had to have slowly worked out and perfected an energy system that suited Dreamscape using his own experiences.

To Leylin, obtaining this system of dreamforce was more important than anything else. The uses for it would aid him greatly.
“Thank you so much, this information is very important to me!” Leylin put away the animal skin with a cautious expression, interrupting the hesitant speech of the middle-aged man opposite him, “I have important matters and there’s always great danger beside me. I’m afraid I cannot take reciprocate your kindness enough. These two documents contain methods to obtain strength. I hope you will accept them!”

Light shone in Leylin’s hands and two rolled documents emerged. These were methods for the cultivation of knighthood and magic. Although each only contained a basic portion, that was already enough for these inhabitants.

The steps for cultivation were very easy to follow. Leylin even wrote it down in their language so that they could understand it. “This… truly…” The middle-aged man looked to be taken back by surprise, but he still accepted the two gifts. After all, these things Leylin was giving him were way too important for his tribe.

This left Leylin slightly doubtful. Why hadn’t that Morin spread the power system when he obtained it? Once he mulled over it, he thought it might be because the Magus left him with strict orders at that time. Either way, he had already disappeared, and this would probably remain a riddle.

Leylin’s eyes sparkled upon seeing his gift being accepted, and he said with a smile. “I actually have more diverse types of food as well. I was thinking of a trade… are you interested?”

“Trade? Of what sort?” The middle-aged man was a little doubtful. What would this Magus from a world rich with products need?

“Various kinds of specimens, be they plants or animals. Also anything of unknown purpose. You can sell it all to me, and I’ll purchase them with food.” Leylin spoke without even blinking his eyes. He had many spatial artifacts with him anyway, and he’d grown into the habit of bringing piles of rations with him whenever he went out. As such, his supplies were extremely abundant.
Moreover, even if there wasn’t enough, he would have to make a trip home at the worst. With the rich resources in the Magus World, who would be afraid of a lack of food?
“Specimens? That Sir from last time asked for the same thing as well… Please rest assured, I will definitely fulfil this request of yours!” The middle-aged man patted his chest as he made the guarantee.
“Then I’ll be here waiting for good news.” Leylin smiled faintly. He was a single person, with only so much time and energy. Matters like gathering ordinary specimens were best left to the inhabitants. Moreover, the animal skin they’d given him had inspired him greatly as well, giving him hope that there were even stranger things on their hands.
Food was abundant in the Magus World, but it was scarce here. This gave Leylin a bargaining chip, and for the sake of his benefits Leylin didn’t mind becoming an unscrupulous businessman. Compared to everything he had invested, those gains would only be insignificant.
Once this news was announced, the entirety of the temporary camp went wild.
Large amounts of plants, animal tissues, and even rocks were sent to Leylin. He welcomed it all; as long as it was a specimen he hadn’t seen before he would give them a portion of food for it. Because they lacked manpower, even Gillian and her father were hired specifically to do this work. To these inhabitants, Leylin was a fool who used precious food to exchange for these items.
Unfortunately for Leylin, this kind of opportunity to make unrestrained purchases was quite rare. Given that the value of all this food added up wasn’t even worth a few magic crystals, he was simply making a huge profit.
For now, both parties were very satisfied.
“Uncle Leylin, take a look look at this!” Gillian passed Leylin some bizarre flesh that looked like numerous eyeballs bound together, “I’ve never seen this thing before!”

“Hmm…” Leylin tried to analyse this bizarre material, a blue glow being emitted from his eyes.

[Detected unknown article, unable to scan!] The A.I. Chip immediately responded.

“Where did you find this?” Leylin glanced at the inhabitant behind Gillian. It was a youth, the purple pattern on whose forehead formed an odd flower bud-like shape.

When Leylin’s gaze swept over him, the youth grew very tense, even beginning to stammer. “Near… Near the new node!”

“This is pretty good! You can get three pounds of black bread for it, or anything else of equal worth.” The youth immediately laughed when Leylin nodded. Something that he’d casually picked up already had such value, it was simply a giveaway.

Leylin casually took the item from Gillian’s hands and stowed it away. Truth be told, this bit of expense was nothing at all to him. Even if the items they handed over was worth nothing much to him, as long as Leylin hadn’t seen them before he would basically accept it.

With such a high rate of accumulation, it was a short period of time before Leylin effectively controlled the surrounding geological and botanical specimens.

Plenty of strange, unknown items were now in Leylin’s possession. Although most of it was junk, as long as even one bit had value he would profit.

“Uncle Leylin, the number of people is much smaller today!” Gillian came before Leylin, both eyes turning round and round. Her
thoughts were indecipherable.

“That’s obvious of course. I already have the basic specimens with me, and specimens from distant areas require time to collect…” On the contrary, Leylin had already guessed this long ago. He had the A.I. Chip after all. As long as things were already stored in his database, he wouldn’t need a second copy.

“That… Uncle Leylin…” Gillian also had a hesitant look.

“I know what you want to say, little Gillian!” Leylin stroked Gillian’s head, “But it’s very dangerous beside Uncle, and also very troublesome. If you follow me, it’ll be a disturbance…”

Watching Gillian lower her head, Leylin comforted her again with a laugh, “Hasn’t your father found a batch of youths, preparing to pass down what I’ve taught him? You can go and learn as well…

“Also, I’m preparing to make a trip back home. I’ll come back in a few days. You can hoard all the items you receive for now, and I’ll bring even more food and supplies next time…” Leylin sent Gillian away and began checking the day’s gains.

After the botanical and mineral specimens were sterilised, they were numbered by the A.I. Chip and kept away properly under their own categories in his waist pouch.

The resources in the Warlock Union were very abundant, and a Radiant Moon like Leylin could deploy some of them as long as he didn’t touch the bottom line. He’d found himself a magic equipment pouch, whose capacity greatly exceeded his original storage pouch.

Even so, his food reserves were almost all used up. After all, he’d stored it with only himself in mind, and it was already a big thing for it to have lasted all this while.

‘In fact, if not for the restrictions on astral gates, trading with other worlds would be the best!’ Leylin’s eyes sparkled, and he sighed. ‘Trading, then colonisation, followed by complete dominance! Although other worlds have differences in power systems and
other aspects, they still follow this principle. Of course, Dreamscape is different. This world is too strange, and any investment can cause us to lose everything…’
The next day, he bid farewell to Gillian and the inhabitants at the temporary camp. Loaded with specimens and strange items, Leylin embarked on a journey back home.
“Judging from the laboratory’s energy waves, this space-time-travel can still be supported for a period of time. I’ll have just enough time to get ahold of all the surrounding specimens and strange items littered throughout this camp!”
Leylin stroked his chin, “Moreover, that Gillian seemed to be leaning towards me. So long as I tempt her a little more, she will enter the Magus world willingly. At the same time, I could secretly capture some inhabitants, which would guarantee enough specimens in the future…”
The current Leylin was taking precautions in case he couldn’t use his astral lab anymore.
“However, no matter what, the Magus’ message on the animal skin is already a great harvest!” Leylin smiled in satisfaction.
[Warning! Warning! Astral laboratory under attack. Activating rank 1 runes, stored energy at 34.7%!]
At this moment, the A.I. Chip flashed a red warning, immediately making Leylin anxious.
After all, if the astral laboratory was destroyed, not only would he lose his channel to Dreamscape, he would be trapped here, forever.

“Impossible! I set up a concealing technique and spell formation before leaving. I even left behind…”

Leylin’s mind began to work rapidly. He was confident in his setup, but the warning from the A.I. Chip definitely wasn’t false.

‘Could it be some kind of unique creature that can see through my illusory spell formation? Or… is it demons?’ The possibility instantly turned Leylin gloomy. He suddenly sped up, coming to the area where his laboratory was…

But the scene that came into his vision made Leylin’s eyes widen gradually. “This…”

In his sight was a huge spider the size of a tall mountain, spitting out threads that wrapped up the entire laboratory.

The runes around the laboratory flickered continuously, rippling with a dazzling lustre. The defensive layer and spider web depleted each other.

On the spider’s abdomens were large numbers of patterns, coming together to form a distorted male face. A whimpering sound echoed from its wide open maw.

[Warning! Warning! Formation genie energy reserves at less than 10%, approaching critical value. Immediate countermeasures recommended!] the A.I. Chip’s red warning window shot out
“Is it possible to scan the opponent?” Leylin quickly asked.

[Mission established, attempting to scan. Beginning to break through opponent’s force field.]

*Chik Chik!* Even as the A.I. Chip sounded out mechanically, the huge spider in mid-air seemed to be provoked by something. Its compound eyes turned, aiming directly at Leylin.

A forceful scan would release a feeling of a malicious invasion. It was likely to trigger the opponent’s hatred, something Leylin expected long ago.

The male face on the spider’s abdomen let out a sob, and terrifying sound waves swept past the area where Leylin was, tearing off the topsoil to reveal the thick bedrock.

Leylin had taken precautions the moment he commanded the A.I. Chip to scan. His body was covered in a layer of Kemoyin Scales, and a few blood-red shields emerged.

*Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* The blood-red shields and the sound waves came into contact, and it seemed to be unable to defend for much longer. Many cracks emerged on the surface of the shields, and they soon shattered.

The sound waves swept across Leylin, causing intense pain to be transmitted from his Kemoyin Scales.

“Argh… This power!” Weirdly enough, a hint of happiness emerged in Leylin’s eyes. At the very least, he could confirm through this attack that his opponent had not comprehended laws. The opponent was not a regulatory existence. This was more important than anything else.

If not, he could only have turned around and fled, abandoning the laboratory and wandering alone in Dreamscape.

[Beep! Target has resisted scanning, not all data has been obtained. Display what is available?] the A.I. Chip asked mechanically.

Of course, Leylin assented unhesitantly. The A.I. Chip responded
immediately, projecting a data panel with many incomplete fields before him.


‘That Detection ability should be why the opponent could discover the laboratory in spite of my meticulous concealment.’ Leylin sighed. He was reminded of the saying, ‘Man proposes, God disposes.’

He had observed this area for a long time. Only after ensuring that there weren’t any terrifying creatures did he go out to explore with peace of mind. He hadn’t expected that such a terrifying monster would be attracted when he was out.

‘The opponent is a rank 6 creature at most, there’s still a chance!’ Leylin’s figure twinkled endlessly as he dodged the snow-white spider web in mid-air. His thoughts were running endlessly.

Of course, the beings of Dreamscape did not follow the Magus World’s rankings. Because of the inherent uncertainty of dreamforce, their rankings were very vague.

But through the A.I. Chip’s detection and his own observations, Leylin could already confirm that the opponent was at least a rank 6 creature, ferocious and powerful.

‘These kinds of creatures all occupy their own territories normally. Why did it come out for no reason?’ Leylin immediately shook his head even as this thought came to mind, ‘I’m too foolish! This is Dreamscape, why would it follow such rules?’

Right at this moment, the abdomen of the spider in mid-air suddenly bloated as it let out a cry, expanding and lastly exploding! Large quantities of densely packed spiders fell from the sky like raindrops. A translucent thread at all their tails connected them to the main body.
An even finer radiance flashed across these closely packed threads. Terrifying amounts of dreamforce condensed with a bang, converging on that man’s distorted face as he let out a horrifying growl in the sky. “kdalkgmalk!” Terrifying dreamforce crashed down on Leylin’s body, causing the defensive suit to begin cracking inch by inch. “So powerful! Is this the power of rank 6?” As Leylin mumbled, a blood-red radiance burst out from his body. The power from his point mass had concentrated to an extreme as it boosted a spell, resulting in a new transformation.

“Radiant Moon Arcane Art Kemoyin Transformation!” Along with a terrifying hiss, an enormous serpent over a hundred thousand metres long suddenly appeared in the sky. The large bones at the top of its head formed something like a crown, the smooth and elegant lines of its scales emitting the aura of nobility. This was the ruler of the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpents, the rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor!

*Whoosh!* A huge phantom flashed across the sky. The Kemoyin Emperor suddenly flung its tail out, which struck the face in the sky and caused it to explode. Mysterious petrifying light short from the amber pupils that were like Morning Stars. Many of the tiny spiders were petrified right in mid-air, turning into rocks and falling down.

“Innate skill Devour!” Along with Leylin’s soul force, the Kemoyin Emperor suddenly widened its serpent’s jaw and a big black hole formed faintly before him. The spider web in the sky was directly broken, disappearing into the terrifying black hole with the surrounding rocks, branches, and even light itself.

“Get out!” Accompanying Leylin’s explosive shout, the enormous serpent suddenly crashed into the large spider in the sky. With a mountain-cracking, space-shattering rumble, terrifying
shockwaves of air swept out in all directions. The large spider that was hovering in front of the laboratory was struck some distance away.

*Chik chik!* This kind of attack obviously enraged the spider. With ear-piercing yells, a few blades of dark light suddenly burst forth, leaving deep scars on the Kemoyin Emperor’s body. Large scales fell down as blood splashed in all directions. Yet, under the effect of the innate Devour skill, the serpent recovered very quickly.

A poof sounded as countless black streams of air gathered together, restoring Leylin’s true body. There was an unusual blush on his face as numerous black flames formed on his body making him resemble a demonic phoenix.

“Soaring Demonic Phoenix!” Together with an exalted phoenix cry, the blackfire phoenix tore open the layers of webbing that had wrapped around the laboratory and Leylin dashed inside.

“Go!” Various potions were thrown out from Leylin’s body, forming a terrifying combination spell. It mixed with attacks from the Scarlet Earring, and they drowned the enormous spider that was rushing over.

He did not even look at the outcome of that, suddenly closing the door of the laboratory.

*Bang!* When he opened it again, the surroundings of the laboratory had already transformed into the scene of an ancient castle.

“I’m back!” Leylin murmured. His expression suddenly changed and a great amount of dark red dreamforce shrouded his body, forming the phantom of a huge spider.

“Indeed. I still can’t resist the attack of a rank 6 creature…” He mumbled with a bitter smile on his face. Suddenly, his expression showed another drastic change.

*Rumble!* Glaring blue lightning bounced around the
surroundings of the laboratory, even emerging in Dreamscape. A huge red spider spat out a large amount of thread from the other side that seemed to stretch across the void. With his Astral Vision, Leylin saw a large amount of thread twisting on top of the laboratory, aiming to drag it back into Dreamscape.

“No! If this goes on, no matter whether the laboratory is dragged over there or that thing gets access to the channel leading here, it isn’t going to be something I wish to see.” A rare look of hesitation emerged on Leylin’s face, but ultimately dissolved into resolution. “I need to break the connection!”

Leylin had studied this space-switching of the laboratory extensively. Although he hadn’t had many results, he’d still deduced how to stop this phenomenon.

Leylin’s right hand dropped a little powerlessly. “A.I. Chip, command the formation genie to activate self-destruct procedures!” [Beep! Authority confirmed, enforcing command.] Without human thoughts, the A.I. Chip only carried out his orders mechanically. As it sounded out, a slightly dark red gas emerged from the floor of the lab.

The dark red dreamforce grew more concentrated as it converged, eventually even forming a layer of dark red flames.

With a series of bangs, a great amount of webbing melted and broke apart. Even the laboratory itself began to melt slowly.

*Chik Chik Chi…* Leylin felt like he could hear the furious growls of the spider all the way from the distant Dreamscape.

The loud sound was originally very intense, but is soon softened as it gradually disappeared. The dark red flames then extinguished, leaving a big black hole where the laboratory had originally stood. It had disappeared without a trace.
“Dreamscape…” Leylin sighed. He could sense that the unusual area that connected two spaces had vanished. From hereon, this place would completely lose its link with Dreamscape.

Though he had expected this day to come, Leylin was still dejected. “This is only a temporary farewell; Dreamscape, Gillian…”

With large amounts of dreamforce and valuable information at hand, Leylin was confident that he could enter Dreamscape on his own. However, that would require a lot of research and experiments. He would not be able to make contact with Dreamscape in the near future, but he would eventually establish a connection between the two sides using his own strength, then return there.

“What a pity…” Leylin’s eyes showed sadness within. With how things were, he could’ve continued interacting with Dreamscape, getting even more profits.

Still, Leylin would not regret his decision. After being discovered by a rank 6 creature, keeping a spatial node around was just irresponsible towards his own safety.

That gigantic spider had almost descended into the Magus World. If it attracted even more high-ranked existences, Leylin would be left with no option but death. It was worth losing this channel.

“Thankfully, most of the specimens and research materials from those surroundings are with me. Most important is the dreamforce
system I obtained from the natives, and the runic structures on their bodies…”
Leylin’s eyes flashed as he pondered.
“With all this, I’m more confident in deducing a dreamforce spell that’s suited to me. I can use it as a fatal secret attack…”
Leylin had experienced the mysteriousness of dreamforce himself. It was a powerful force that was comparable to Laws, and it could even suppress them. Even existences at or above rank 6 would be troubled by it.
Hence, a spell that relied on dreamforce would be a terrifying issue for many rank 6 Magi, even though he himself was at rank 5.
‘The information I got only details the usage of low-ranked dreamforce, and is specifically targeted at the natives. I’ll still need a lot of time to alter it to construct a rank 5 spell model…” Leylin touched his chin.
At this moment, he suddenly jerked. Large amounts of dark red gas condensed to form various faces and spiders that crawled on his clothing.
“Boo hoo…” Wails crawled into Leylin’s eardrums, causing him to go deathly pale.
“Go away!” His eyes immediately turned into amber pupils, a terrifying phantom of a Kemoyin Emperor appearing behind him.
*Boom! Boom! Crackle!* Large numbers of faces exploded, but the rest persevered on as they surrounded Leylin’s body.
“Dreamforce! It’s from the injury!” Leylin’s expression darkened.
The gigantic spider was a rank 6 existence after all. Leylin had been extremely lucky to catch the spider off guard and enter the laboratory, but he had suffered an injury while doing so. Even though he’d devoured matter to make up for the loss in life energy, the dreamforce from the attack still lingered on.
The mysteriousness of dreamforce was something Leylin knew quite well. If not for him having done some research in the area
and producing some antibodies, the backlash would not be so meagre.
‘It looks I need to solve the issue with my body before I deduce any new spells!’ Leylin laughed wryly, a dense layer of black air covering the surrounding masks and spider figures.

……

A few months later, within a laboratory. White fog at boiling temperature caused a wave of hot air. Crimson light reflected off the wall, forming a projection of something like fire. In the middle of the laboratory, Leylin sat within a gigantic red pool, his eyes closed as if in thought. Within this red pool, one could see a lustrous black ink-like fluid constantly oozing out from Leylin’s pores. After leaving his body, the black ink quickly dispersed and contaminated a large region. Faint sounds of wails were emitted from it.*Skree!* A large phoenix phantom appeared above the red pool, spreading its two flaming wings over it as scarlet flames arose. “Wooh wooh…” The cries grew even more mournful as the black ink gradually became fainter within the red flames. It even began to evaporate, returning the pool to its original colour. A few hours later, there was even more steam in the laboratory, practically becoming a fog that shrouded the entire area. Within the scarlet pool, the thin threads of black that seeped out from Leylin’s pores gradually turned brown, weakening completely. “Malicious intent and hatred from a foreign world is truly difficult to deal with…” Leylin muttered to himself, grabbing at the towel on his face as he gazed at the red pool. The injuries caused by the gigantic rank 6 spider in Dreamscape
had been very serious. It took till now for the harm to be somewhat dealt with.

“Thankfully, that annoying resent has been completely expelled. All that’s left is pure dreamforce, which I have other uses for.” Leylin changed out of his loose robes and arrived at the other end of the laboratory.

[Beep! Retinal scanning passed. Brain waves verified. Unlocked through soul force. Opening.] With the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounding, a wall section opened up to a crevice. The walls on both sides automatically withdrew, revealing a large, glossy door.

One could see two rows of shelves lined with precious materials upon entering, intricate runes carved into the wood like the most delicate of artwork.

*Thud!* The large door closed automatically, causing the light to dim. Once Leylin grew accustomed to it, he could see the many items on the shelves flickering with a dark red lustre.

Atop the shelves were a few leaves kept in glass bottles, as well as ores and the like.

“Thankfully, with the other dreamforce I collected before and the dreamforce the items themselves have, they can stay in this world for a large period of time…”

Leylin was very pleased. This was his dream laboratory, in which the A.I. Chip took care of central administration. The defensive measures here were especially strict. Most of the things he had obtained from Dreamscape previously were placed here.

‘I’ve finally expelled all the malicious intent from Dreamscape. If not, I wouldn’t dare meet Freya!’ Leylin went past the shelves and came before a black metallic instrument. Seeing the results of the scans, he heaved a sigh of relief.

He had antibodies against dreamforce, and was a rank 5 Radiant Moon Warlock. The dreamforce in the attack before had merely caused him some troubles. However, things were different for
Freya. She was still a rank 3 Warlock, and being contaminated by even a bit of dreamforce could have a terrifying effect on her. Hence, before he was certain he had completely rid himself of all dreamforce, Leylin hadn’t dared return to the castle. He’d stayed here instead. It was only now that the malicious intent that Leylin had on his body was completely expelled.
Leylin gazed at his arm. The skin now had a dense layer of red around it, filled with a type of energy. This was not bloodline energy. It was the dreamforce that had been purified after the ill intent was eliminated.
“Great timing! I’d already determined that I’d need to alter my body to employ dreamforce. This dense dreamforce from a rank 6 being can help me build my foundations!” Leylin’s eyes flashed with intelligence as he commanded, “A.I. Chip, begin!”
The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded out, [Beep! Beginning Dreamscape alterations. Microscopic scanning used, searching database, affirming runes…]
Meanwhile, the large instrument in front of Leylin changed its shape. A few large metallic arms extended forth with crackling noises, all sorts of strange tools on them.
[Partial adjustment to host’s body beginning!] With the A.I. Chip’s voice, the skin on Leylin’s arm first experienced some changes. A layer of dark red light appeared, forming fine patterns. These were very similar to those on the body of Gillian from Dreamscape, but even finer. They were more orderly and had a unique feel to them, with a beauty to this smoothness.
With the A.I. Chip in charge, and the large arms of the instrument helping, Leylin’s body was branded with a layer of red runes.
‘Why does this remind me of Branded Swordsman? There really is a certain amount of similarity here…’
After the modification was completed, Leylin snapped his fingers and a silver mirror immediately appeared in front of him. The
image within was that of a human body filled with strange red runes. A demonic lotus pattern was on his forehead, and he looked very similar to the Branded Swordsmen he’d created before. ‘It looks like no matter what kind of path one takes, there’s bound to be some similarity somewhere!’

“A.I. Chip!” Leylin commanded.

[Beep! Beginning second procedure!] With the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice, the demonic red runes abruptly emanated bright rays of light, completely absorbing all the dreamforce that the rank 6 spider had left on Leylin’s body and disappeared into his skin. Leylin called out in a low voice, feeling powerful energy flowing in his body. At this point, with the disappearance of the large amounts of dream runes, he had regained his original appearance.
Beep! Host’s Dreamscape alteration has been completed. Dreamforce adaptability has increased. Host has absorbed the remaining dreamforce. Vitality and spiritual force increasing, recalculating data.

Following the A.I. Chip’s voice, Leylin saw his stats being refreshed.


“I didn’t expect the alterations from dreamforce to have so many benefits!” Leylin nodded, rather satisfied with the upgrades.

The most important thing about this alteration was that with the absorption of dreamforce, his body was beginning to get used to this strength. That was a prerequisite to employing dreamforce based spells.

Now, Leylin could see a strange red bar on the histogram that showed his elemental affinities, a third place below darkness and fire but still ahead of even his ice affinity.

“Affinity with dreamforce?” Leylin muttered to himself, knowing what this represented.

Elemental affinity, or the attraction of specific forces, was the prerequisite to Magi being able to cast spells. His affinity with
dreamforce surpassed his expectations.
[Beep! Host body’s dreamscape alterations completed. Gained dream ability Illusory Dream! Might when casting illusory-type spells increased by 50%. Resistance to illusions increased by 35%. Host has a possibility of creating a dream forcefield around the body, bewitching intellectual creatures!]
The A.I. Chip called all this to his attention.
‘It seems like this Dreamscape alteration had a lot of benefits. If not for dreamforce being too unstable, it wouldn’t have been bad to focus on training it.…’ Leylin stroked his chin.
Dreamforce was very powerful. If a Magus were to train in this area, the rise of their strength would definitely be very quick. However, Leylin was not going to consider this. There was the aspect of his own affinity to it, but more importantly the instability of dreamforce left Leylin unwilling to gamble on it.
Leylin’s view was that the dreamforce would have restrictions when being used in a different world, and also had terrifying variance in the power. If other sources of power ranged from 1000 to 1500, then that of dreamforce would be from 1 to 10000! This meant that creatures in dreams might be frail little bugs a day ago, but could turn into a demon god the very next day.
Beings that were demons the day before could very well turn into creatures not even comparable to bugs due to the weakening of dreamforce.
More importantly, these changes had no pattern! They might never happen, but could also happen continuously, which made it seem like a fraud.
Hence, Leylin would at most use dreamforce as a tool, but not train mainly in it.
“However, with an affinity with dreamforce, I can now cast basic dream based spells…” Leylin came to the centre of the laboratory. A thick isolating glass there held within a gigantic ball of dark red
dreamforce that was dense to the extreme within. This was all the dream energy that Leylin had collected in this period of time. With the push from a few incantations and soul force, an illusory spell model floated above his hands. [Opening Sluice Gate No. 1.] Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, one of the channels on the glass revealed a tiny opening. Dark red dreamforce squeezed out like an earthworm, revolving around Leylin and seeming extremely lively. Seeing that the dreamforce was enough, the sluice gate ruthlessly closed once more, leaving the dreamforce that had escaped outside. “Rank 1 dream spell Eternal Light!” A spell model that was complex and strange, with the energy node within constantly changing was sent from the A.I. Chip to Leylin’s memories. With the push from a few incantations and soul force, an illusory spell model floated above his hands. The dreamforce around Leylin immediately disappeared into the model. *Rumble!* The energy from a rank 1 spell caused dazzling white rays of light to fill the laboratory. [Beep! Casting of rank 1 spell ‘Eternal Light’ is successful. Undulations and data has been recorded. Recording into spell database under dream spells, rank 1] The A.I. Chip quickly intoned. [Eternal Light: A rank 1 spell that creates light for eternity. Estimated duration to be 50 years, 8 months. Power: 100 – 300 degrees.] Following that, even more detailed information was shown on the screen of the A.I. Chip. “A regular rank 1 spell should have a power between 20 and 80 degrees. The amplification from dreamforce is so terrifying…” Leylin touched his chin, gazing at the light on the walls that would
not extinguish.
“Regular light magic and even Eternal Light can last for at most a few years… However, the energy provided by dreamforce can last for 50 years…”
It had to be said that the great effects of dreamforce surpassed Leylin’s expectations.
“Once I research and create an offensive rank 5 dream spell, even rank 6 Magi can only tremble under it!” Leylin’s eyes flickered with a fervent heat.
The spell model of the rank 1 dream spell he had just cast had come from the animal hide of the natives that had come from Dreamscape. The anonymous Magus had spent decades and come up with a system suitable for natives of the Dreamscape to use. He had even invented a series of dream spells. Though they were only from rank 1 to rank 3, that was still astonishing to Leylin.
To be able to incorporate dreamforce into a Magus’ path and then invent usable models meant that this Magus’ attainments in spells could even surpass himself.
The information left behind by this person had allowed him to avoid detours, and even aided him in creating a good foundation, thus saving him much time.
Even with the foundations and systems, deducing rank 4 and rank 5 content would usually take Magi a long period of time, but for the A.I. Chip it was just a matter of how much power it allocated.
“With such sensitivity towards spells as well as knowledge of laws, the Magus who accidentally landed in the Dreamscape should at least be rank 6, or even a rank 7 Magus who grasped laws!” Leylin’s eyes shone with yearning, and he threw himself into the nerve-wrecking experiments.
Time was fast approaching to fulfill the arrangement he had with Melinda. Before that, he had to constantly amass more strength so that he had enough to save himself, and even escape her schemes.
Whatever conspiracy there was, strength would be key. Once the difference in strength grew insurmountable, any conspiracies or plots would be useless. Whether it was dealing with the Blazing Flame Monarch or other dangers, dream spells could be used as Leylin’s hidden trump card and be the deciding factor of victory!

Hence, Leylin dedicated most of the A.I. Chip’s operations into the experiment.

…..

‘One needs to employ dreamforce for dream spells. Though I’ve done all I can to prepare some, I can’t use it more than a few times. The energy needed for spells at and above rank 4 is terrifying…’

Leylin donned a large white gown, translucent goggles in front of his eyes. Watching the ball of dark red dreamforce behind the wall, his eyes twinkled.

Dark red dreamforce constantly drifted from the ball. It was similar to a scarlet python that swept across the wall, but it was forcefully blocked.

This was the material that Leylin had identified to isolate dreamforce over many experiments.

In a situation where no people rigged it, just the instinctual attacks of the dreamforce could do nothing against the isolating reinforced glass.

‘Based on my estimations and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, this dream energy can only be used to cast a rank 4 spell 6 to 10 times, while a rank 5 spell can only be cast 3 times or less…’

Leylin’s expression was dark. After breaking the connection with Dreamscape, gathering dreamforce had turned into a large issue.

No matter how he tried to store them properly, dreamforce was constantly dissipating. While this was a slow process, the keen A.I.
Chip had discovered it. Finding a way to store and transport dreamforce was another aspect that it was working hard on. ‘Spells that use dreamforce as a base are most effective when related to illusory spells. Dreamforce and the illusory magic are extremely similar, and fusing them is the best option!’ The spell model that the A.I. Chip was calculating constantly improved by his conjectures, and gradually revealed its true form. A spell model with numerous illusory runes flickering to and fro, emanating multi-coloured misty brilliance that all seemed like a dream began to take shape in the A.I. Chip’s simulations. [Remaining time till rank 5 dreamforce spell is deduced: 3h 41min 12s.] The A.I. Chip had now given an accurate prompt. “3 months and 9 days for the deduction of a rank 5 spell to be completed?” Leylin’s excitement could not be concealed. While he had been recuperating and altering his body, the A.I. Chip had not been idle, analysing and studying this area. Now, the fatal dream attack that he had been anticipating was about to be completed! While he was waiting, time seemed to flow incredibly slower. Finally, Leylin heard the prompt from the A.I. Chip. [Beep! Rank 5 dream spell deduction completed. Progress of construction of spell model: 100%!] What had always been a robotic voice sounded incomparably gleeful in Leylin’s ears. “It’s finally done!” Leylin clenched his fist and immediately read through the content given by the A.I. Chip.
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In the simulation space of the A.I. Chip, a spell model that was extremely intricate and had multi-coloured flowing runes had completely taken shape. The A.I. Chip’s voice transmitted at this point.

[Beep! Rank 5 dream spell Radiant Moon Dreamforce Spell Distrait Dream. Type: Dreamforce. Illusory effect: Causes target to sink into their own dream realm and lose all senses with the external world. 90% chance of causing confusion to a Radiant Moon Magus’ truesoul. Effects weaken slightly depending on number of times used.]

“An illusory technique that targets the truesoul, with a success rate of 90%!” Leylin’s pupils shrank. He had experienced the mysteries and dangers of Dreamscape for himself. If not for the A.I. Chip and some luck, he might not have been able to escape at all.

It had such a high rate of success amongst those of the same rank, and could even bypass ranks even if the effects would be weakened. Still, the rate should be above 50% then as well.

In other words, the moment Radiant Moon Distrait Dream was employed, there was a 50% chance that even a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Monarch’s truesoul would get lost in confusion.

A Magus who lost their truesoul was basically a piece of flesh anyone could take advantage of. Even as the creator of the spell, fear lingered in Leylin’s own heart for the terror it held.

“It’s a pity that I need to use dreamforce sparingly. I can’t test the
might of this spell in the real world…” A look of regret rose in Leylin’s eyes, before he grew dazed.

“A.I. Chip, begin the simulation of a dream. Create a virtual world using the rank 6 spider as a standard…” This was a unique ability of the A.I. Chip. It could run simulations in virtual reality, and after its upgrades, it could simulate all existences under rank 7, under those that comprehended laws.

White light flashed, and Leylin appeared in Dreamscape once more. Not far away, a large spider with a strange male face on its stomach hovered in the air, countless webs shooting out and covering the laboratory. Every single thing was the same as it had been in Dreamscape.

Dense dreamforce continuously surged from around Leylin, causing him to almost feel suffocated. ‘It can even imitate Dreamscape to this extent!’

Leylin gazed at his hands. There seemed to be no issue when he launched soul force, so he could not help but nod in satisfaction. ‘Even a rank 6 existence was imitated flawlessly. There’s practically no difference from the being I saw before!’ Though this was all simulated by the A.I. Chip, everything had been reconstructed exactly the same as the scene from before.

*Chik Chik* The gigantic spider ahead discovered Leylin and immediately began to snarl, its abdomen exploding to release a large amount of tiny spiders.

“Good, I can test this out against a rank 6 existence!” Leylin chuckled and darted forward, terrifying dark red dreamforce forming a tide around his body.

“Rank 5 dreamforce spell Radiant Moon Distrait Dream!” Strange ripples spread with Leylin’s voice, swirling around the gigantic spider…

In the real world, Leylin’s pupils flashed and he regained his consciousness, though the amazement on his face did not decrease.
“A rank 5 dreamforce spell has such a frightful effect…” It had to be said that even though he’d already had a conjecture about it, the shock that came from watching it in a real test had rendered Leylin speechless.

“Very good. With this spell, there’s a much greater chance of me surviving against a Monarch, and I’ll even have a fatal attack!” Leylin touched his chin. He had always liked planning ahead, first considering the losses before the victory. With confidence that he could retreat unharmed, he was even more interested in the hunting scheme that Melinda had proposed.

After all, the Blazing Flame Monarch had never expressed any interest in letting him off. Even when Leylin had been hiding in the Morning Star area, he’d received a lot of intel regarding the Ouroboros Clan being spied upon. Even Emma and Gilbert had met with danger several times. If not for the Warlocks from the Morning Star area lending a helping hand in time, the two dukes would probably have died already. He evidently wanted to use the two dukes to lure Leylin out, but Leylin hadn’t fallen for that at all, instead holing himself up. This had allowed him several months of peace.

Sometimes, compromising in the face of a threat would only cause the other party to become even more aggressive. Only when the enemy knew you didn’t care for their blackmailing could the passive side grow active and gain the upper hand.

The Blazing Flame Monarch found that Leylin had no intentions of making a move, and didn’t care for his side’s lives. Hence, any plans he had along those lines were dismissed, and the harassment the Ouroboros Clan faced was reduced. If Leylin had made the wrong choice, the situation would’ve turned worse and worse.

“The Blazing Flame Monarch! A Breaking Dawn Magus who is like a blazing sun, eternally illuminating the entire Magus World from
the horizon? Hah,” A cold smirk appeared on Leylin’s face as he stroked his chin, “Even a star will lose its light and warmth one day, turning into a black hole. You’re merely a rank 6 Magus…” The underlying tone of his words lay a boundless bloodlust. Having thought this through, Leylin placed a call through a secret imprint, on the encrypted channel Melinda had given him before. “Melinda? It’s me.” “You’ve finally made up your mind!” Melinda’s voice sounded from the other side. It was a mature female voice, not the voice of the small girl. “Yes. I cannot stand an opposing organisation constantly eyeing me from the shadows like a vermin. I believe you feel the same way!” Leylin’s voice was low. “Hehe… a mouse? I like your metaphor.” Melinda’s cheerful laughter came from the other side. She was just like Leylin, caring little for law and having no natural morality. Hearing the meaning in his words, she grew excited as well. “I know all the weaknesses of the Blazing Flame Monarch. Sometime in the near future, his strength will be at its lowest. With a few other helpers I’ve found, we can definitely kill him in one go!” “I hope things are as you say they are.” Leylin began to tap the table with his finger subconsciously. He expressed his tentative support of Melinda’s plan, but not so much so that he would involve himself in some trap. In all honesty, even if he was cooperating with her, he would not let himself become a leader. When working together with a sly old fox, just a slight blunder would result in him falling into a trap. Leylin was very cautious about this. What he wanted to make use of was her knowledge of the pathways and the opponent’s weaknesses. Once he gained all of that, he would come up with a plan of his own.
Melinda then tossed out some bait, “The items we get afterwards will definitely be able to satisfy you…”
“I’m anticipating it.” Leylin’s voice was extremely calm. After agreeing on a time and place with her, he ended the communication.
“Rank 6…” Only Leylin was left in the room. He sunk deep into thought for a long while, and then rubbed his temples, ‘Time is scarce. I’ll need to start preparing a lot of things…’
In the central continent, rank 6s were at the top of the pyramid. They were emperors among Magi.
The current Leylin didn’t have any hope when dealing with them, but even he had little confidence. Other people would even think he was crazy.
However, Leylin and Melinda were both clever. They possessed battle strength at the peak of Radiant Moon, and if they found a few other helpers at the same rank who would fight with their lives on the line when the opponent was weak, there was a huge chance of success.
With ample preparation, Leylin could practically be in an invincible position, something which made this transaction acceptable.

……

Silver spatial turbulence streaked around outside the Morning Star area, bringing a dark silver lustre to the pitch-black galaxy.
A bit of faint light appeared in the distant starry skies, like that from a firefly. Black light flashed at the edge of the space, and Leylin’s figure appeared.
His eyes were bright as they scanned the area, his thin and nice eyebrows furrowing before they relaxed. “Come out!”
It was tranquil in the void, with no sound at all.
Leylin snorted, and two streams of black air converged to form a
double-headed snake that pounced on an area not far away, the space there fluctuating, “Your Highness Bevis, did you think I was playing with you?”

*Crash!* Space was pulled apart as if it was a door, leaving behind a bundle of fog.

Large amounts of this fog converged to form a human body. The face was that of Bevis, who had previously visited Leylin and left with the two on bad terms.

“How did you see through my innate ‘fog’?” Large amounts of white fog emanated from Bevis’ body, drowning the double-headed snake. Bevis’ expression was dark as he stared at Leylin with malicious intent. It seemed like he was quite miffed at being discovered.

“What should I tell you?” Leylin gazed at Bevis as if ridiculing him, causing the latter’s face to flush red.

“Leylin Farlier! On behalf of the organisation, I’m here to stop you. You act wilfully as if the resources you obtain from us are a trifling matter!” Bevis yelled.

“Hmph! Representing? Who are you representing? Offa? Wayde? Or Jeffrey?” Leylin glared at Bevis as if provoking him, “Where are they? Did you think you alone could represent the Warlock Union? Even if you ascend to Breaking Dawn you won’t possess that kind of authority!”

In the Morning Star area, Offa and the other two Radiant Moons were huddled together, watching the scene through an old stone basin.

Multiple scenes and voices were transmitted through the basin, of the confrontation between Bevis and Leylin.

“Everyone… Isn’t how we’re treating Leylin and Bevis a little…” Jeffrey spoke slightly anxiously.

“This is a matter between the two. It’s not right for us to interfere. Besides, there’s one thing that Leylin said that was absolutely
correct!” Offa spoke coldly.
The Warlock Union isn’t the personal property of a single Warlock. It’s an alliance between all Warlocks, each of whom have their own wills and requirements for benefits,” Offa’s voice was icy, “Even when Bevis reaches Breaking Dawn, he still won’t have the authority to represent us all!” Wayde and Jeffrey did not refute out of their desire to protect their own interests.

Furthermore, Leylin wants to raid the Blazing Flame Monarch in his own name, and Bevis is trying all he can to stop this. In principle, neither of them are wrong. Hence, let’s give them a chance to sort it out among themselves. We’ll appear later to adjudicate. Isn’t that appropriate?” An intelligent glint flashed in Offa’s eyes. As the oldest and most powerful Radiant Moon Warlock, his might in the Warlock Union could not be underestimated.

“That’s true. They’re young people after all, they need to be hot-blooded sometimes!” Wayde exclaimed from the other side. Completely golden, he looked like a god of battle. “But… Bevis is someone who can advance to Breaking Dawn. If some enmity arises between the two Warlocks because of what happens today, the future of the Warlocks of our union…” Jeffrey was slightly worried.

“Bevis has yet to attain Breaking Dawn. Besides, how are you so
sure that he will be the one to become a rank 6 Warlock?”
“How can I not be sure? He has…” Jeffrey instinctively retorted, and then saw Offa’s expression that was somewhat like a smile but not quite. He immediately went mute, sinking into deep thought. Though Offa kept saying he wanted to be impartial, one of the two involved was a Warlock with a rank 5 bloodline and the other a Warlock with a rank 6 bloodline. Letting the two fight out a personal battle was already unfair to some extent.
‘Perhaps Offa has great expectations of Leylin?’ Jeffrey suddenly understood this fact.
Seeing his look of sudden realisation, Offa nodded in gratification, “The prophecy didn’t indicate who it was that would reach Breaking Dawn. Although Bevis being the one is most probable, Leylin still had hope as well. Even you and I, as well as all the Warlocks limited to Morning Star, have a chance. That’s why we need to make some bets when we need to, that is how we can maintain our influence. Although we’re putting a lot of our hope on Bevis, we can’t reduce our support towards other Warlocks…”
“I understand!” Jeffrey nodded solemnly.
Offa beamed as he spoke, “Good. No matter who wins or loses, you just need to express goodwill to the loser and show our kindness…”
“Could it be that Your Highness thinks Leylin has a chance of winning?” Jeffrey gaped, “Not only has Bevis reached Half Moon, he has a rank 6 bloodline…”
“Hehe… Someone who can become a rank 5 Warlock with his own abilities isn’t a nobody!” Offa laughed, as if hinting at something. He pressed in closer, his eyeballs that were glazed over glinting with a strange light, “Leylin is someone who can create miracles. Nobody can tell the results of this fight, but whatever it is, it’s pointless to speculate further. Let’s watch!”
Hearing Offa say this, Jeffrey and Wayde watched the battlefield
grimly.

Leylin had long since noticed the concealed Bevis with the A.I. Chip’s scans. The other Radiant Moon Warlocks weren’t around, something Leylin found strange.
‘Offa and the rest didn’t come with him to put pressure on me... Are they maintaining a neutral stance? Rather unexpected.’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with intelligence, ‘Their meaning is quite clear. If I don’t exceed Bevis, there’s nothing else to say, but if I achieve victory over him or breakthrough I can do as I like?”
‘Their placing their bets on both of us... What a bunch of sly old foxes indeed!’ Leylin lamented.
Immediately after, his gaze towards Bevis turned piteous. No matter how talented he was, he lacked experience. He evidently hadn’t pondered over this, and was still frustrated by the previous events.
“Aaah! Leylin Farlier, I won’t let you off. Come back with me obediently!” Bevis roared, a large fog surging from his body.
“Just as well. I’ll play with you as a warmup. Besides...” Leylin laughed, and large amounts of demonic black flames suddenly emerged from his body. High-pitched phoenix cries sounded from within.
All of a sudden, the flames flew into the sky, gathering to form a devilishly enchanting blackfire phoenix.
“Soaring Demonic Phoenix!” With the high-pitched buzzing of flames breaking through space, the arrogant phoenix spread its wings, spurring on immense tides of black flames. Space itself was melted down, and the fog that Bevis emitted was devoured and absorbed.
After acquiring the devouring ability of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor, Leylin found that the same ability of his black flames had
been upgraded as well, the two seemingly complementing each other well.

“Is that what you’re so confident in? A black phoenix? What kind of bloodline ability is that?” The vigorous fire energy and the demonic devouring ability caused Bevis’ expression to change slightly.

“Whatever it is, in front of my bloodline, all odd abilities need to bow down!” His eyes immediately turned crimson. A powerful and profound force from an ancient bloodline emanated from his body, even suppressing Leylin to some extent.

That unique aura that came from an ancient rank 6 bloodline was something regular rank 5 beings did not dare offend. Just this alone gave Bevis a huge advantage when battling Warlocks with bloodline sources of a lower rank than his own.

However, Leylin was different. As the ruler of a race, the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor had a high resistance to the pressure from a rank 6 being, and the suppression was far lesser than what Bevis had expected.

[Beep! Host affected by opponent’s bloodline suppression. All statistics have decreased slightly.] Leylin was speechless as he saw his stats. The only decrease was in the unit place.

“Is the suppressive ability of a rank 6 bloodline so weak? Or is the Kemoyin Emperor too overbearing?”

*Chirp~!* Under Bevis’ disbelieving gaze, the blackfire phoenix flew before him without being affected in any way. Two wings that were like long flaming blades crossed each other, and terrifying black flames instantly devoured him.

“How is this possible? My bloodline is… rank 6. How can’t it suppress a mere rank 5 bloodline?” After the wave of black flames passed, Bevis looked to be in a sorry state. There was a thick layer of fog armour wrapped around his body, resulting in him receiving very slight injuries. The blow to his ego, however, was
incomparable.
“Isn’t it just the bloodline of the Misty Fog Giant? It’s not as if it was the peak of ancient rank 6 beings or something… Is there a need to conceal this?” Leylin snickered disdainfully, and Bevis froze up, “How… how did you find out?” “What do you think?!” A look of satisfaction hung on Leylin’s face, which only made Bevis want to vomit blood.

His bloodline had the innate ability of concealment, which was one of his trump cards. Even those other Radiant Moon Warlocks had not seen through this, and yet it was nothing in front of Leylin.

Fear of Leylin rose in Bevis’ heart. It grew increasingly intense, and much of it transformed into hatred.

“You must die. You MUST DIE!” Bevis howled.

*Rumble!* Large amounts of fog exploded, forming the figure of an immense giant.

This giant had four thick and sturdy arms, and a vertical eye at the top of its bald head. Its skin was coloured in the green of marble, large amounts of grey fog being produced from its pores. Its body seemed rather misty.

Since Leylin had seen through it, Bevis had nothing left to hide.

*Awoo…* The gigantic Misty Fog Giant’s four large arms were held high as it began to howl fiercely. The dense dog spread to form a large grey fog space.

‘It really is the Misty Fog Giant!’ Leylin’s pupils flickered.

Now that they were fighting, Leylin had nothing holding him back. He immediately ordered the A.I. Chip to forcefully break through the opponent’s force field to obtain the correct information on his bloodline. Everything about the Misty Fog Giant was presented to him in detail.

[Appearance of Misty Fog Giant, rank 6 being: Ancient times. Habitat: A wetland with dense fog, or in abandoned Magus Cities. Rumoured to be the descendants of the ancient Thunder Giant,
with the ability to manipulate fog. Likes eating plants like green algae. Gentle nature. Special ability has been concealed.

Innate talents: 1. Fog Concealment: Covers up one’s aura and information about their bloodline.
2. Grey Fog Space: Creates a subspace that can be maintained for a short period of time.

“AAAHH. Leylin! I want to kill you. Kill you!” Bevis snarled, the insanity in his eyes growing even more obvious. “Arcane Art Giant Transformation!”

His body crackled as his body grew larger, fusing with the phantom behind him. Two extra arms grew underneath his ribs, and with the execution of the Arcane Art, he turned into a real Misty Fog Giant.

‘Mm! It’s a head shorter than the one in the database. It should only be half-grown at rank 5.’ Leylin laughed, red rings of light fusing behind him. He dissipated, turning into large amounts of black gases that reformed into a terrifying Kemoyin Serpent Emperor.

“Innate Arcane Art Kemoyin Serpent Transformation!”

*Rumble!* Within the grey space, a giant serpent with a body over a hundred thousand metres long collided with a four-armed giant. Much of the void shattered under this power, the stray undulations causing the Morning Star Area nearby to shake slightly.
What’s the matter? Didn’t we agree before that he’d only stop his opponent? Why has it gone this far?” Jeffrey was a little stunned at the side. “This isn’t good. I’m afraid Bevis’ extreme personality has led to an emotional breakout at rank 6. Quickly, go and stop him! If not, His Highness Leylin…”

Even if the Warlock themselves weren’t as strong, metamorphosis to a rank 6 creature was definitely more powerful than that to a rank 5. Jeffrey was worried that Bevis would harm Leylin, which wasn’t good for the Warlock Union. After all, Leylin was in the Radiant Moon realm and was one of their executive members.

“That’s a rank 6 bloodline growing emotional. I’m afraid it will affect us as well…” Wayde, standing at the other side, grew very worried instead.

“There’s no need for that. His Highness Leylin is still there,” Offa waved his hands, seemingly very relaxed, “Not only he did see through his opponent’s bloodline, he even forced Bevis to fall into his own trap step by step. His Highness Leylin is truly growing more and more amazing… Perhaps he’ll give us many more surprises…”

“What?” Jeffrey and Wayde exclaimed involuntarily, “Does His Highness still have more strength remaining?”

“I cannot say,” Offa waved his hands as he watched the battlefield with more concentration.
The Misty Fog Giant growled, and large amounts of grey fog seeped out of its pores, forming armour and a weapon. Its destructive power was great enough to shatter space itself with every attack. Bevis’ heart was already filled with anger, and he even wanted to directly kill Leylin. This was very different from his previous intention of just teaching him a lesson. His shame and anger at being discovered and irritation at his pride taking a blow had erupted. Especially after seeing Leylin’s unexpected and incredible strength, the flames of jealousy and insanity in the genes from his bloodline mixed together to form something even more terrifying. The result was that Bevis’ rationality had all but disappeared, and he was prepared to kill Leylin here regardless of the consequences. “What a pitiful child,” Leylin’s voice was transmitted from the enormous body of the Kemoyin Emperor. Layers of black runes constantly emerged from its scales, easily blocking even the Misty Fog Giant’s fog attacks. Leylin watched the four-armed Misty Fog Giant in front of him attentively, and it seemed as if a mysterious radiance was shot out of his pupils. “Eye of Petrification!” The Kemoyin Emperor’s gaze turned the four-armed giant sluggish. A layer of ash-grey stone instantly emerged on his skin. “NO, how can my bloodline lose to this low-ranked creature?” Bevis growled frantically as large amounts of blood-red light burst forth from his body, forcing the petrification out. However, the Kemoyin Emperor had taken this time to rush directly in front of him, its huge tail sweeping across the horizon. A power that seemed like Armageddon burst out from it. An explosion sounded as the Misty Fog Giant was swatted away. The large amounts of fog in the surrounding area shattered,
exposing the original starry sky.

“This rank 6 Misty Fog Giant bloodline, I’m taking it!” A whisper sounded in Bevis’ sea of consciousness. Before he could even figure out the situation, the Kemoyin Emperor had already opened up its maw, its two fangs ruthlessly piercing into his neck. A terrifying attractive force was transmitted from its fangs, causing Bevis to shriek hysterically. Large amounts of fog shattered with a bang, and the Misty Fog Giant began cracking up inch by inch. Light flashed within the grey fog, and Bevis’ true body appeared once more.

Only, the current him had two large bloody holes in his neck, and looked battered and exhausted. His gaze towards Leylin was as if he’d seen some sort of demon.

“Ah…” When he gazed at Leylin’s pupils, Bevis seemed to receive a great deal of shock. He let loose a weird shriek as his body transformed into a ray of blood-red light that rushed back to the Morning Star Area with extreme speed.

“Indeed… small and weak…” Radiant flames emerged and Leylin returned to his normal form as well. The lack of battle experience and willpower was a shortcoming that had caused Bevis great losses.

With a card like the A.I. Chip up his sleeve, Leylin had abundant experience and strategies that were shrewd and ruthless.

“It’s more or less enough, time to go!” He sneered, looking at a point in space with a dazzling radiance in his eyes. Soon after, his entire body turned into black flames that disappeared in the sky.

……

Within the Morning Star Area, Offa and the other two Radiant Moon Warlocks looked at each other in dismay. “His Highness
Leylin actually discovered us spying on them? But this Tracing Pensieve is a piece of high-grade magic equipment…”

“Forget that. I’m more amazed by his battle strength. Even a Half Moon Magus like Bevis isn’t his match…” Wayde crossed his arms, and a strand of short golden hair stood up vertically like a steel spike.

One had to admit, Leylin’s military strength gave them a great surprise. Not only was Bevis at the Half Moon stage, he also had a rank 6 bloodline inheritance in the Misty Fog Giant. Originally, he was only second to Offa in the Warlock Union.

And he was defeated just like that? Didn’t that mean that Leylin had strength comparable to a peak Radiant Moon?

This conjecture was something too crazy for Wayne and Jeffrey to accept immediately.

“Moreover, His Highness Bevis’ bloodline seemed to be slightly damaged at the end. Should we tell His Highness Leylin about this and hope he returns that blood?” Jeffrey asked a little hesitantly.

“Do you think that’s possible?” Offa speechlessly rolled his eyes. Now that he recalled, he felt like he’d underestimated Leylin. From the start, he had obviously laid a trap for Bevis, who walked in like a fool. Leylin had played him step by step like a marionette.

‘What an interesting kid! He started by stimulating his opponent and causing him to harbour killing intent. Then he defeated Bevis openly and righteously, seizing his bloodline… Did he plan all this out before? Then… if we appeared, did he have other plans for it as well?’

The more Offa thought of it, the more his previous indifference was replaced with fear of Leylin. This junior’s tyrannical strength and meticulous planning had left him heavily surprised.

“Maybe he’s the one who’ll fulfil the hopes of the Warlocks.” Offa found growing expectations in his heart.

“Then what about us?” Jeffrey didn’t really know what to do.
Bevis’ defeat was a totally unexpected situation to him.  
“What else can we do? Just allow Leylin to go out, he’s attacking under his own name anyway. With the Morning Star Area’s fortress, even if it’s the Blazing Flame Monarch, can he break through our defences directly?” Offa flicked his fingernails, his tone carrying a will that did not allow any questioning.  
“Also, increase the security of the Ouroboros Clan and Leylin’s relatives by a level, especially for Lady Freya. We cannot allow the Blazing Flame Monarch or any others to find even a single loophole, get it?” Offa looked at Jeffrey meaningfully.  
“Yes! I will visit Lady Freya myself soon!” Jeffrey nodded with a bitter smile.  
“Our rules cannot be broken. There shouldn’t be any desperate infighting within us Warlocks, that is our bottom line,” Offa said, “I’ll go and remind Bevis about this in the near future.” All the Warlocks present nodded in agreement.  
After all, if such a thing happened internally to an organisation that was supposed to be unified, it would be a huge blow to their soldiers’ morale. Furthermore, if one person crossed the bottom line, the enemy would definitely counterattack with the same level of danger, causing both sides to suffer. Magi were intelligent people, they knew what to do.  
The only thing that needed to be done was suppressing Bevis’ emotional craziness. After he calmed down, everything would become easy.  
“We cannot relax our support for Bevis either. Send the skeletal remains of the Misty Fog Giant in the warehouse to him after this!” Offa suddenly said something that shocked Jeffrey greatly.  
“Your Highness… Why?” Jeffrey’s jaw dropped.  
“If Leylin advances to Breaking Dawn, what will we use to suppress him?” At this moment, Offa stroked his beard and said something that left a deep impression on Jeffrey.
“I’ve gained quite a bit this time!” On the other side, Leylin looked at the bloodline in the test tube in his hands that was emitting a misty luster. A hint of happiness emerged on his face.

“Although the Misty Fog Giant isn’t some kind of high-grade being amongst ancient rank 6 creatures, it creates bloodline imprints using its blood as materials, this explains its ability to cast ordinary rank 6 spells…”

It could be said that Bevis had fallen into Leylin’s scheme from the moment they met.

Moreover, because the opponent had displayed his killing intent during the battle, even if Leylin forcefully extracted his bloodline those Warlocks could not say anything.

After all, compared to Bevis who was in hot pursuit of him, Leylin was instead very ‘magnanimous’, even letting Bevis go ultimately.

Probably, even if the current Leylin were to draw blood from him, Bevis himself wouldn’t have the face to ask for it back, as it was too embarrassing.

“Seeing from the attitudes of Jeffrey and the others, we can still temporarily ease our worries regarding the bloodline alliance. Surely they will also try their best to contain Bevis, making him calm down. They won’t attack my forces!”

A thoughtful glint flashed across Leylin’s pupils.

These kind of things were mutual. Once Bevis exceeded the bottom line, igniting the flames of war with him, Leylin would definitely follow suit, even paying back tenfold.

Hence, so long as a Magus had a little rationality, he would not do something like this that caused both sides to suffer.
chandelier hung loosely and emitted a dim orange light in the hazy night. The light from the street lamps was diffused, making one feel sleepy.

Beside the chandelier was a bar that was already closed. A ‘Thank You’ sign was hung on the door, the surroundings quiet.

After a day’s hard work, the residents nearby had already entered slumber in their tiredness. Even the drunkards, tramps, and the like had found their own cosy kennels, not intending on sleeping outdoors on the streets in such cold weather.

At this moment, the sound of leather boots rubbing against the ground echoed through the area. A tall figure walked out of thin air, coming before the door and knocking on it.

*Thud Thud Thud!* The dull sound carried a unique rhythm and charm.

The door opened after a while, exposing the face of an old lady. There was a slight reverence amidst her vigilance, “Sir! You’re finally here!”

“I was slightly delayed by some matters on the way.” The person walked into the bar and took off his hood, exposing his original appearance. His handsome face was strange, and his long black hair casually stuck to the back of his head. He seemed very youthful and capable. Mysterious spirals spun continuously in his black pupils, even a single glance able to draw in a person’s soul.

After defeating Bevis and obtaining his bloodline, Leylin had
worked incessantly on turning it into an imprint. He’d even almost missed his appointment with Melinda because of this. However, Leylin felt like all this was worth it. Spending more time here would add another bloodline imprint to his deck, and was definitely worth more than the cost. After all, he was here this time to deal with a Breaking Dawn Monarch! This was the highest level of existence in the central continent, and Leylin could not afford to not be more careful.

After entering the bar, Leylin followed the old lady to a cellar. Passing through a helical dark and damp passageway that smelled like rot, Leylin finally saw Melinda once more.

“Leylin! You’re finally here, we’ve been waiting for a long time!” Melinda’s eyes sparkled upon meeting Leylin, and she spoke a little coquettishly.

“We?” Leylin’s gaze twinkled, immediately looking at the few other ‘people’ in the room.

The old lady had already withdrawn respectfully. There were three other strange figures remaining in the room besides Melinda. One of them was a hefty fellow who wore black armour, and another was a woman whose entire body was wrapped in a black Magus robe.

The last one didn’t even look human anymore, and was simply a black shadow in the mirror.

“Spirit Magus?!” Leylin looked at the shadow in the mirror attentively, and could explicitly sense that he was not using any kind of clone. He couldn’t help but utter a deep sigh at the fact that the shadow was his main body.

The spiritual force of a Magus was tyrannical like no other. Even after death, there was a very high chance of transforming into some sort of evil spirit. And if this kind of evil spirit still held their rationality, they could learn spells and become a Spirit Magus!

And for a Morning Star who possessed soul force, transmuting the
soul was but a small operation. Although Leylin had heard some things about Spirit Magi, that circle was very narrow and remote. He’d never expected that Melinda would actually be able to get one here, and a Radiant Moon Magus one at that.

“Your insight is still as good as before!” Melinda gasped in admiration, “This Jin He was once a good friend of mine. The other two are Clarke and Joanna, assistants I’ve hired.”

“As for the Twin Gemini, I’ve long since heard of you two! I didn’t expect that Melinda would actually be able to bring you here as well!” Leylin greeted Clarke and Joanna with a smile. According to his intelligence, these two Radiant Moon siblings assisted each other in the central continent, and each was fairly famous on their own. They were also the rare type that didn’t have any organisations attached to them.

“Your Highness Leylin!” Joanna, whose entire body was wrapped in a black robe, seemed to be bad at socialising. All of these matters were settled by the hefty black armoured Clarke.

“And Sir Jin!” Leylin looked at the shadow in the mirror again. Although he knew perfectly well that he was a Spirit Magus, he still felt as if there was something hidden to this person, their aura making him uncomfortable.

“Zzz… Your… body…” The shadow in the mirror suddenly fluctuated for a moment, emitting the strength of a Conscient, “Has something… that makes me feel… danger…”

“It’s what I specially prepared for this operation,” Leylin smiled. His right index finger suddenly felt tighter, and a grey ring now on his finger emitted a mysterious light. This ring would normally be very inconspicuous, as if the shoddy work of some slipshod salesman in an ordinary shop. However, it was indeed notable when it appeared in the hands of a Radiant Moon Warlock like Leylin.
After hearing Jin’s words, Clarke and even Joanna who’d been quiet all this while looked at Leylin with interest, as if wanting to find out about his cards.

“Alright! No matter what Leylin brought, it’ll be useful to our operation this time.” Melinda clapped her hands, “Comrades, don’t forget why we gathered here.”

“How could I forget?” Clarke let loose a deep howl, blue veins popping out on his hands as his entire person stirred up. Seeing his distorted face, Leylin was certain that he definitely had some painful past related to the Blazing Flame Monarch that was unbearable to recall. However, this did not concern him at all. He was instead constantly calculating the probability of using him.

“No need to worry, brother! I will help you this time!” Joanna placated Clarke by patting the back of his hand, causing the berserk aura to fade. He then regained his rationality, “Sorry, I was too agitated…”

Clarke, who had sobered up, bowed deeply. There was an unwavering determination on his face, carrying the smell of blood.

“As for Sir Clarke’s previous encounter, I’ve also heard a little about it…” Melinda nodded but did not continue.

“Everyone present here has hatred for the Blazing Flame Monarch. And today, we’ve gathered to act on it!” Melinda’s voice suddenly grew dignified.

“Stop spouting rubbish… I’m only concerned with your promises, when can you fulfil them…” The Spirit Magus in the mirror said with initiative.

“Hm… I agree as well. We’re already at this point, you should explain clearly about your plan and the Blazing Flame Monarch’s weakness. And what about the benefits that come afterwards?” Leylin parroted Jin’s viewpoint.

Joanna and Clarke shot a glance at each other and both nodded,
“We agree as well!”
“I only waited for everyone to arrive before I said it!” Melinda glanced at Leylin with a slight look of grievance.
“As everyone knows, there are only two large bottlenecks as a Magus. One from rank 3 to 4 and another from 6 to 7. The challenges at both these times are extremely huge, but a breakthrough also has abundant benefits. It is to the extent that those who do can steamroll over those who haven’t…” Melinda began to speak with fervour and assurance.
“We already know all this! There’s a limit to my patience!” Clarke yelled deeply.
“Relax, I’m almost there,” Melinda rolled her eyes at Clarke.
“The gap between Breaking Dawn and Radiant Moon, although not as obvious as that between rank 3 and rank 4, it is still an insurmountable gap… But at that time, a problem occurred during the Flame Monarch’s advancement. There was even a period of time where his strength was at the lowest point! This is why I absolutely had to gather all of you here at this time!”
Melinda’s mouth curved in a smile, but it carried an intense hatred!
“The Breaking Dawn Monarchs in the central continent are all very terrifying, they’ve even begun to touch upon laws and the origin of the world. The Blazing Flame Monarch is the same, in the process of familiarising himself with the laws of fire…”
Melinda’s voice seemed to carry a strange attraction, “The Blazing Flame Monarch is at his weakest, almost falling below rank 6. I know the layout of his lair like the back of my hand; if we can kill the opponent at this time, we may even be able to obtain his Law Comprehension Crystals!”
“Law Comprehension Crystals?” Clarke exclaimed, and a sparkle appeared in Leylin’s eyes.
“Yes! The Law Comprehension Crystal that contains all of a former Magus’ understanding of the power of laws, and even some of his
previous experiences, memories and such. It will be very helpful for our promotion to rank 6…”
Melinda looked at the few Magi present, “Even if it’s a Breaking Dawn, one’s ability to comprehend laws is a huge threshold that divides strength. If we can obtain the Blazing Flame Monarch’s Law Comprehension Crystal, we’ll be able to attain rank 6 the moment we advance there, and even be at the boundary of rank 7!”
“Indeed, among the rank 6 Magi, the only discernible intra-ranking is whether they can access the laws or not!” There was a clear understanding look in Leylin’s gaze.
Breaking Dawns were very knowledgeable in the truesoul and soul force. After reaching rank 6, they would soon near the limit of their spirit, and the only difference would be how much they could comprehend laws.
A Breaking Dawn who didn’t have contact with laws and one that was beginning to comprehend its power were on completely different levels.
Once a Magus gained complete control over a certain law or power, they would also enter the rank 7 realm.
Leylin was faintly excited in his heart. He was beginning to vaguely discover the path after rank 5.
‘Magi practice spiritual force before rank 4, soul force before rank 7. Rank 7 is when one has gained control of a certain law?’ he stroked his chin, ‘In that case, what does dreamforce represent?’
Based on what Melinda said, whether one had begun to comprehend laws made up for the greatest power distinction among Breaking Dawns. The Monarchs of the central continent had obtained the strength of the worlds they conquered, and each began to touch upon a specific law. This was why they were called ‘Monarchs.’

The Blazing Flame Monarch obtained extra strength from the Origin Force of the Fiery World, and began touching on the law of fire.

Once he completely wielded the power of flames, that was when the title of Monarch could be held high in the sky, when one could advance to become a rank 7 Magus that controlled laws. The knowledge and memories that Magi at this level of strength had about laws was very beneficial to a Radiant Moon like Leylin.

“The Blazing Flame Monarch’s power is at a low? How long will this last?” This was what Leylin was focused on.

“At least a month, and it could approach a hundred days. Three months, effectively.” Melinda laughed like a little fox, “Because of certain reasons that everyone knows, the Radiant Moons under the Blazing Flame Monarch like Carol and Eugene are dead. This means his defences are definitely weak.”

Leylin stayed silent. Those two Radiant Moons had died at his hands. Of course, Melinda had been even more vicious in eliminating the remaining peak Radiant Moon.
Now that he thought about it, everything that Melinda had done so far was to clip the opponent’s wings before dealing the final blow. It all had meaning to it. “I’ve invited all of you here so that we can take care of the Blazing Flame Monarch in one go. Do you have any questions?” Terrifying energy waves rippled out from Melinda as she spoke, showing a strength at the peak of Radiant Moon. Her voice had lost its childishness, the callousness now as chilling as winter’s ice. Clark started by yelling out, “Alright! As long as I can have my vengeance on the Blazing Flame Monarch, I’ll do anything!” “Brother’s decision is my decision!” Joanna watched her brother, her eyes full of tenderness. “Keke… Law Comprehension Crystals will be distributed without any issues. What’s so bad about doing this?” The Soul Magus in the mirror laughed coldly. “How about you, Lord Leylin? The Blazing Flame Monarch seems to have you in his thoughts, plotting so many attacks against the Ouroboros Clan…” Melinda seemed rather knowledgeable regarding this matter, which led to a hint of dissatisfaction inside Leylin. However, their goals in attacking the Blazing Flame Monarch intersected, and they would get the same benefits. Leylin nodded. “I’m joining in as well. One thing though, how will you ensure the benefits are distributed evenly? Can you ensure that each one of us will get what they want?” Having said this, Leylin’s eyes twinkled as he watched Melinda intently. Meeting his gaze, Melinda could only laugh wryly, “I can’t guarantee that the operation will definitely succeed, the opponent is a Breaking Dawn Magus after all. However, I can ensure that the earnings from this will definitely be distributed evenly. We can even sign a contract under the Trial’s Eye! With our strength, the Trial’s Eye we summon will definitely be a clone with its own
thoughts. It won’t glaze over any loopholes that we can make use of!”

“Alright then, that’s fine by me.” Leylin nodded his head. Every word of a Radiant Moon had enough weight to it that one could consider that a contract in itself. With the restrictions by Trial’s Eye, he had no way to break the agreement.

After all, the Trial’s Eye that they could summon was a highly ranked existence that had its own sentience, and was linked to the main body at all times.

With such a Trial’s Eye, the solution of the Nefarious Filthbird’s feathers would no longer have any effect unless a clone of the Filthbird itself descended as well. However, that would cause too great a disturbance.

“Good! Since everyone has agreed, let’s discuss the plan.” A streak of light flew from Melinda’s hand to the air, forming a translucent screen.

“My intel says that the target isn’t hiding in his nest, but instead holed up in one of the world cracks surrounding the Fiery World with many mazes constructed around him. Our objective this time is to launch a surprise attack on his nest, Düz City. The opponent’s astral gate and the coordinates to the Fiery World are all there. Afterwards, we’ll force our way into the Fiery World and kill the Monarch.” Melinda waved her arms resolutely, extremely determined.

She glanced at every one of them, “There might not be a single Radiant Moon in Düz City right now. There’s probably just a group of Morning Stars subordinate to the Blazing Flame Monarch watching over it. After we take it down, we can obtain all the wealth of a rank 6 organisation…”

After they listened to Melinda’s plan, a light glinted in the eyes of the Magi in the room, save for Leylin. An organisation with a Monarch at its head, its members had plundered the central
continent for thousands of years. Even if only a small portion of that wealth was in Düz City, it was enough for rank 5 Magi to grow quite wealthy.

“There’s no time to lose. Let’s set off now!” Melinda’s hands were on her waist, her chest puffed out and her voice back to its original childlike tone. The huge contrast with her solemn expression almost caused Leylin to burst out in laughter.

The other Magi didn’t have as many doubts as Leylin. A few streaks of green light rumbled past, and Melinda and the others completely disappeared from the underground room. Endless darkness engulfed the area.

Düz City. The capital of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s organisation had thick city walls that had many reinforcement runes on them. Giant adamantine cannons had their own great history as they displayed the prowess of the Monarch to his people.

There was an unending flow of wandering Magi and scholars here, each of them having arrived due to its reputation. Most of the new arrivals were full of reverence towards this gigantic Magus City.

This was Düz! With the protection of a Breaking Dawn Magus like the Blazing Flame Monarch, it was said that this place would never fall!

Düz City did not have any floating techniques like Sky City, nor did it have such rich reserves of knowledge, but it did occupy much more land than Sky City. The city was divided into many districts, with the Monarch’s residence occupying the centre.

A bundle of unending flames burnt at the heart of the city, radiating a holy light that proclaimed its glory and might to the masses.

However, all of Düz’s glory and might would become history today!
It all started with the rumble of an earthquake. The sand on the ground began to pulse without pattern, the vibrations becoming increasingly intense. This earthquake spread through the houses, rocks, and mountains. It was as if the ground had softened, forming constant waves like the sea.

A large number of clouds filled the skies, completely blocking the sunlight. Dazzling white snakes made of lightning rolled about in the clouds, seemingly shattering space itself. Terrifying spells rippled with boundless might, pressing closer towards the city. Countless Magi within the city looked up, staring at the scene with incomprehension. Only a tottering old man seemed to think of something, beginning to tremble, “SPELL ATTACK!”

*Pu!* He immediately turned into a white streak of light. Grabbing a few youngsters behind him, he ignored the ban on flying and fled quickly.

‘There’s actually someone who’d dare attack Düz City? We’re in a huge crisis!’ In spite of his shock, the old Magus’ abundant life experience had instantly alerted him of the approaching danger. An existence that could disregard the might of the Blazing Flame Monarch and brazenly challenge him was definitely no fool. Since they had come here, then they must have been extremely confident. The Blazing Flame Monarch was a rank 6 Magus, a peak existence in the central continent! Even a finger from either party could crush an old Magus like him. They probably didn’t even need that, just the stray undulations from battle would reduce his body to nothingness.

Hence, he immediately thought of fleeing, bringing his descendants away from this place that would soon become a battlefield.

“Wha– What’s going on, Grandfather?” A youngster was still confused. Immediately after, he cried out involuntarily, “How’s it possible…” Terrifying earthquakes and thunderstorms could be seen in the
direction of his gaze. It was as if a natural catastrophe had struck Düiz city, and was now wreaking havoc. The Magi below the Morning Star realm could not withstand this apocalypse, and died in swathes. Faced with the ire of high-ranked Magi, all these low-ranked Magi were as minute as ants. The acolytes and regular humans, who were even weaker, obviously suffered massive casualties. Only those like the old Magus who acted quickly and fled from Düiz City left the scope of the disaster with some difficulty, watching Düiz City in fear. “The capital of the Blazing Flame Monarch has been attacked. Oh, goodness. Heavens, am I dreaming?” A few children exclaimed in shock, “Quick! Look!” Following the direction of a child’s finger, the old Magus looked into the sky where there were five existences that seemed like gods. The berserk lightning disappeared around them, forming a strange vacuum. Tens of figures appeared in the air, surrounding them. However, it was the side that had more people that seemed to be feeling dread. ‘Perhaps only existences at Morning Star and above have the qualifications to take part in this battle…’ The old Magus sighed inside and flew even quicker.
Seeing only a few streaks of light fleeing from the range of their attack in Düz City, Leylin sighed in disappointment, “Even Magi have lost their awareness of danger…”

“It’s not that they’ve lost their awareness. It’s just that they don’t believe it. The safety of Düz City is as guaranteed as the fact that the sun rises in the east and water flows downhill. It is their truth, their law! They never considered that there would be a day when their city is attacked.”

Melinda spoke disdainfully, “Magi like these are a disgrace to our Magus World, vermin! Let me purge them!” Her hands pushed downwards with complete coldness.

*Rumble!*

*Ka-cha!*

The earth rumbled and countless lightning snakes crackled, their berserk behaviour intensifying tenfold as they charged towards Düz City. The earth seemed to cave into some formless pressure, forming a pit. It was as if the air itself was being crushed.

Countless acolytes and regular humans instantly turned into a bloody mist. The thunderstorm crashed down on Düz City, causing the rank 2s and 3s who’d been lucky enough to flee to suffer massive losses.

“Thunder Purgatory! Wash away all that filth!” Melinda’s expression was callous, her voice strangely spreading far and wide. Lightning struck down violently, ploughing through the city.
‘This woman is insane!’ Leylin’s pupils shrank as he felt the power hidden within the rank 5 spell. Though he wasn’t any sort of good Samaritan, he wouldn’t kill people for no reason at all. His murders were committed for benefits. Melinda’s actions made it seem like she was venting some repressed emotions after a long period of time. Leylin touched his chin, having some conjectures of his own.

“Enough!” It was at this juncture that someone like a retainer to the Monarch yelled from amongst those Magi at Leylin and the rest, “Even if all of you are Radiant Moon Magi, you can’t trample on the territory of a Breaking Dawn like this! The Blazing Flame Monarch will punish you!”

The tens of Morning Star Magi surrounding Leylin and the rest all wore Magus robes with flame runes carved into them; it was similar to a uniform. This Magus who was like a Retainer was their leader. “Hoho! He said they want to punish us. I’m so scared!” Melinda covered her mouth, voice turning into that of a young girl.

“How are you going to punish us? Just burning our souls? It’s been long, have you no creativity?” Though she looked innocent, what Melinda said caused the surrounding Magi to shrink back.

“What? Aren’t you going to come and punish me?” Melinda took a step forward, and the tens of Magi around her couldn’t help but retreat, cold sweat on their faces.

Good heavens! While they were subordinates of the Blazing Flame Monarch, they were only Morning Stars facing five Radiant Moon Magi. If Carol, Eugene or the other Radiant Moon were around, they definitely had the courage to do so, but now?

“Hehe… If you’re not coming here, then I’ll go there!” Melinda’s eyes seemed to flash with white lightning, and she turned into a gust of wind.

“What do you want to do?”

“I won’t let you do whatever you want! Morning Star domain!
Arcane Art…” The Morning Star Magus that looked like a retainer struggled, the rings of light that represented four innate spells beginning to flicker behind him.

*Boom!* In that moment, Melinda had arrived in front of him and raised her arms, her pale slender palms penetrating his innate defences. Under his astounded expression, the rings from his innate spells were extinguished.

“You… How’s that possible?” The old retainer spat out blood. The backlash from his spell being interrupted had even cracked his sea of consciousness.

“Power of isolation again? You really do lack in creativity,” Melinda shook her head, grabbing him by the neck.

“Peak Radiant Moon! She’s a peak Radiant Moon Magus!” Everything Melinda had just done was executed exquisitely, but even so, it would require a strength at the peak of rank 5. Only that would suffice to suppress a Morning Star Arcane Art and even cause a backlash.

After this was made obvious, the many Morning Star Magi stared at Melinda in immense fear.

The retainer who was being held by the neck flushed red, gritting out a few words from between his teeth, “Ma– Master Blazing Flame Monarch won’t let you off!”

“I’ll be waiting. Even if your master doesn’t come for me, I’ll go look for them!” Melinda chuckled. Her outrageous words resulted in even more dread on the part of the Morning Stars.

“Warning! Large numbers of enemies have appeared. Determined to be at rank 5. Automatic defences have been activated, dispatching Discipline Legion.” A robotic voice sounded in the golden flames at the heart of Düz City. This was the spirit genie that controlled the city’s defences. The giant adamantine cannons and defensive runes on the city walls that were yet to be destroyed flickered to life with its words.
"Rumble!" A short distance away, two legions of Magi advanced like a black tide. “Mmm… It reacted in less than ten seconds and even dispatched troops. Not bad,” Leylin praised. “Hehe… That’s the Monarch’s elite corps, the Crimson Fire Legion and the Discipline Legion. It’s a pity that their leaders have all fallen at our hands….” Melinda surveyed the area, and then asked disdainfully, “Which of you are going to take care of this?” The moment she jabbed forward, a black streak charged into the Discipline Legion. A gigantic black sword could be seen weaving through the troops, spilling blood and flinging flesh. Their terrifying magic attacks seemed to have no effect on the giant sword, and the legion immediately fell into chaos. “Keke… Since Clarke has chosen the Discipline Legion, I’ll go for the Crimson Fire. Just as well, I need a large number of spirit bodies as supplements anyway…” Jin snickered from nearby. He currently looked like a hologram, his extremely blurry body suddenly increasing in size. His black robes spread around to cover the Crimson Fire Legion like a curtain. “Woo woo…” With a strange whistling, the Magi of the Crimson Fire Legion collapsed one after another, rays of light that seemed like souls floating from their heads. These things that were similar to white flames were all absorbed by the black robe. Whether it was rank 1 and 2 Magi troops, or even the squadrons of rank 3s and 4s, everything completely fell apart. Numerous Magi howled as they cast blindingly bright spells, with some Morning Star Arcane Arts even, but Jin easily blocked them. With ruthless resolution, the black robe continuously absorbed the souls. ‘A spell that specifically targets the soul?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed. ‘Though it can only deal with Magi below rank 5, it’s best for harvesting weaklings.’
In their short confrontation, the Blazing Flame Monarch’s two elite legions completely crumbled down, and many of their Magi immediately tried to flee.
The few Morning Stars at the corners exchanged glances, coming to a mutual understanding as they turned into streaks of light and disappeared into the distance.
“Don’t… Go…” The Magus that Melinda was holding onto by the neck was still struggling, but unfortunately, it was to no avail. In a situation where the two elite legions were decimated, and the Blazing Flame Monarch was not showing himself, the Morning Star Magi would be fools if they continued to stake their lives on this and fight Radiant Moons.
“Let me do something as well,” Leylin stood up at the moment, staring at the giant cannons and adamantine puppets controlled by the city’s spirit genie, “It’ll be strange if I don’t.” He laughed slightly, producing a few grey test tubes from his pouch and tossing them into the air.
The sound of shattering glass sounded as the test tubes collided in mid-air. A white powder spread from the point of impact, constantly increasing in volume until it covered all of Düz City in a few moments.
The giant adamantine cannons on the city walls creaked as if under an incredible burden, eventually collapsing with a rumble to reveal a frame that had been completely corroded. A thick layer of rust formed on numerous adamantine puppets, as if a long period of time had passed. They turned into a huge pile of scrap iron.
Numerous runes lost their lustre inch by inch, and even the spirit genie’s voice from the heart of Düz City seemed to lose its coordination, as if something powerful was interfering with it.
“Hehe, good job Leylin! If the spirit genie continues to control the defensive forces of the city it would’ve been comparable to a Radiant Moon. Though we aren’t afraid of it, it’s best to eliminate
such troubles.” Melinda encouraged him with a smile on her face. “How did you know?” The retainer in the air widened his eyes in astonishment. “You don’t need that information. Look how the city has crumbled, you should die and rot with it.” Melinda sighed, and the light in his eyes gradually dimmed. *Swish!* At this moment, something strange happened! The void beside Melinda crumbled, and a translucent figure emerged to form a bayonet spike that pierced towards her abdomen. Rank 5 energy was emitted from this translucent figure, even if only at New Moon. This sudden attack was enough to land Melinda in trouble! However, she still chuckled as she let go of the retainer’s corpse, a crystal shield appearing in front of her. In the distance, Joanna suddenly ended her inaction. Large amounts of vines spread through the space, wrapping around the assassin. “So you’re the hidden trump card of the Blazing Flame Monarch. A Radiant Moon assassin? Just Düz City alone has tens of Morning Stars and a Radiant Moon guarding it, I’m growing more interested in my future profits!”
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The translucent figure being bound by the vines had a pair of deathly still eyes. Even though the assassination had been unsuccessful, there were no undulations whatsoever despite his life being at risk.

*Rumble!* A terrifying force from his truesoul formed five different rings of light.

“Radiant Moon Arcane Art…” His voice was hoarse, as if he had not spoken for a long time. The surrounding Morning Star Magi also gritted their teeth, power pouring forth from their point masses to support their Morning Star Arcane Arts.

This Radiant Moon evidently had made contact with these Morning Star Magi at some point and arranged a counter-attack!

*Pak!* Leylin instantly came before a Morning Star Magus, a giant serpent figure from his hands ruthlessly piercing through the other party’s innate defences, causing him to cough blood while quickly retreating.

The backlash from a Morning Star Arcane Art being interrupted caused that Magus to howl in agony.

“If the ten or so Morning Stars were to attack me together, I might find it slightly troublesome, but now?” Leylin looked towards Melinda. A terrifying rank 5 energy storm was swallowing the region around her.

However, Leylin could sense Melinda’s aura. She was fine.

“After so many years, it’s only these few Magi that are loyal to the
Blazing Flame Monarch? How pitiful.” As Leylin’s eyes scanned past the area, the Morning Stars could not stand the immense pressure and the rings of light from their Arcane Arts collapsed behind them. They held their heads and escaped.

*Rumble!* Radiant Moon soul force spread brazenly about the battlefield. A few rays of light suddenly pierced through and dispersed the energy storm, revealing the figure of that rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus.

Although there was a cross-shaped wound on him that was corroding into his body, a terrifying Radiant Moon Arcane Art had taken form in his hands. “Void Flames…” The Radiant Moon murmured under his breath.

A formless flame energy emerged from the void that caused even Leylin’s expression to change. ‘Melinda and Joanna, those two idiots. How could they let their opponent finish his Arcane Art?’ he cursed, fingers pressing on the grey ring causing fog to permeate the area.

Melinda saw her opponent casting Void Flames from in front of her, but surprisingly her expression was as if she’d gotten away with something.

She began chanting, seriousness emerging on her face. Her right hand pointed in the direction of the Void Flames.

“Adhering to the ancient agreement of the truesoul, Void Flames! Devour everything before me for my sake…”

The formless flames crackled and flowed backwards, enveloping the very Magus who’d cast them within. Boiling heat spread through the area as the sound of an innate spell crumbling mixed with cries of disbelief and pain.

“Impossible… Why can you manipulate the Flames… You… You’re…” He was cut off at this point, devoured by the formless flames. His blood and flesh separated from his skeleton, and in the end even his bones melted down.
The energy from a truesoul being destroyed spread out, this Radiant Moon Arcane Art even targeted the soul! Seeing the opponent’s figure being annihilated, Leylin removed his palm from his ring, pupils shrinking, ‘Controlling a Radiant Moon Arcane Art and causing it to act on the user? This is more difficult than interfering with it. Unless…’

*Swish!* Seeing that their Radiant Moon had fallen and the Blazing Flame Monarch still wasn’t showing himself, the remaining Morning Star Magi completely lost their will to battle on. Air exploded and light flashed as they fled or teleported away.

“This Radiant Moon should have been the Blazing Flame Monarch’s last line of defence…” Having done all this, Melinda seemed to be in a strange state. She seemed sorrowful yet relieved, as if a heavy weight had been lifted off her shoulders.

“The rule of the Blazing Flame Monarch hereby ends.” Melinda sighed, hand making a grabbing action towards the heart of Düz City.

*Rumble!* A large white palm appeared in the air, grasping the holy fire right at the centre. Under such an attack, even the tower genie was completely wrecked instantly.

Düz City quieted down, and the light from its large-scale defensive spell formation dimmed.

“Could it be… Is Düz City is going to have a different master from today on?”

“What about the Blazing Flame Monarch? Where is he?” The surviving Magi let out noises of disbelief. Yet all of them had one premonition from the extinguishing of the holy fire. Today would be a turning point in the history of the central continent!

……

Groups of Magi wearing robes with lightning patterns on them arranged the defences outside in an orderly manner, gathering
resources and the like. Occasionally, a few old people worked on decrypting the warehouses’ defensive formations. These lightning patterned Magus robes were the signature of Jupiter’s Lightning. Besides them were Magi with a Gemini sign on their robes, doing the same thing.

Seeing Melinda and Clarke so brazenly ordering their organisations to plunder the area, Leylin was left speechless. He hadn’t considered these matters when they’d set out. Even if he wanted to dispatch the Warlocks of the Union, he didn’t have the authority yet. As for the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan? They were too low-ranked, and would only serve to embarrass him.

Melinda approached Leylin and stared at the Magi of Jupiter’s Lightning outside, her eyes undecipherable, “My subordinates will set up defensive spell formations and guard them, which will help us gain some time.”

She had helped Zegna build Jupiter’s Lightning, and now the whole organisation was in her hands. If Zegna were still alive, he might have died of rage.

The Magi with a Gemini symbol on them belonged to Clarke and Joanna. Seeing the bulging sacks under their clothes, it was obvious that they had obtained many treasures.

Düz City was the core of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s territory, and the precious items within were innumerable. If not for the Blazing Flame Monarch currently being in a weak phase, staying somewhere else to avoid danger, Leylin and the rest would not have taken the area down so easily.

With the action of five Radiant Moons, the change in leadership of Düz City had occurred smoothly. Besides Leylin and the rest who had obtained some great items, even their subordinates had gained ample rewards.

*Awoo…. Roar…* At this moment, Leylin saw a monster formed of several gigantic beasts charging forward, showing berserk
determination and bloodlust.
“What is that thing?” Leylin stared at what seemed to be a giant mutated slime formed from gelatin and was stunned.
“That’s the biological laboratory of the Blazing Flame Monarch. I let out all the experiments being imprisoned there.” Melinda took out a mirror and tidied her long hair, not really caring about this.
“Such a dangerous thing…” Leylin was speechless. Some of these monsters were evidently as powerful as Morning Stars. One of them was laying low, and Leylin could sense its desire for slaughter.
Once let out, a calamity would descend on this region. Even Morning Star Magi would be in trouble if they were besieged by these creatures.
“It’s not our organisation nor our territory. Is there a need to worry about this?” Melinda blinked at Leylin, seeming innocent.
“Alright! Come with me, everyone. I’ve already analysed the coordinates of the Fiery World from the astral gate!” Joanna’s voice sounded, and all the Magi gathered at the heart of the room.
A flaming astral gate was there, already activated. This was the gate in Düz City’s astral laboratory, and the coordinates had been decoded from it. It was also why Melinda was confident in bringing Leylin and the rest to their final target, the place where the Blazing Flame Monarch was hiding.
The Blazing Flame Monarch was currently at their weakest. Leylin and the rest had already plundered Düz City, which would completely offend the Monarch anyway. If they didn’t want to be attacked in revenge, the only way was to strike first and eliminate the Monarch!
‘Perhaps this was also why this woman had us break Düz first, to compel us to follow through.’
Leylin shot Melinda a glance. The female Magus seemed to be very calm now, but he could see a trace of emotion in her eyes.
“The opponent has hidden the coordinates to the Fiery World within a pile of wrong data, but I still managed to find it!” With a tap by Joanna, a few sparks flew towards Leylin and the others. [Beep! Discovered spiritual force information, determined to be astral coordinates! No records in database.] The A.I. Chip immediately intoned. All the information in the spark was immediately transmitted to Leylin. Melinda nodded, “The coordinates to this world was one of the prizes from this operation. We’ve agreed before on everyone having it.” Immediately after, the spark was flicked into the astral gate. Blue flames flickered violently, forming something like a door. A terrifying boiling heat was transmitted from behind the astral gate. “The last step in our operation shall be completed in the spatial crack of the Fiery World. Let’s go!” Melinda was the first to step into the astral gate. “We’ve all left behind puppets or clones here. If the situation is off, we can immediately open the astral gate and return,” Joanna spoke slowly, “Outside there’s the chaos from the beasts, and we have subordinates keeping watch. We have ample time for warnings.” Having said this, she walked in together with Clarke. “Let’s go!” Leylin watched Jin who was in void form and rubbed his nose. They stepped into the radiance of the astral gate together.
Leylin had already experienced spacetime travel several times, and by this point was used to it. The moment he passed through the astral gate, the peak New Moon truesoul in his sea of consciousness began to twinkle, a layer of gentle and quiet yet very solid soul force enveloping his body. Whether it was spatial turbulence or terrifying World’s Will, everything was kept out by it. Even Morning Stars could roam around nearby world cracks using just their body defences. This was no issue at all for Radiant Moons.

Through a soul force scan, Leylin sensed a world full of fire elemental particles. Unlike the Lava World he’d been to before, this place lacked rocks and other energy particles. It was a world of pure red, filled only by fire.

The world’s origin force of fire elements was several times greater than that of the Lava World. If the Lava World was a celestial body, then although one couldn’t liken this world to a boiling sun, it would be a moon.

‘The larger a world, the richer its world origin force. Under the influence of the origin force here, it’s not strange for a rank 6 Magus to comprehend some laws of fire…’ Leylin sighed.

As a rank 6 Magus that had taken over the whole Flame World, the Blazing Flame Monarch was undeniably the ‘World’s Child’ here. With the support of the world’s origin force, his comprehension of
the laws of fire could progress rapidly. It was natural for him to understand them.
Leylin suddenly understood a fact, ‘It’s no wonder that all Magi, whether ancient or recent, frantically take over the surrounding foreign worlds. So there’s this type of benefit to it! Once you take over a world, you can gradually combine with the world’s origin force and finally comprehend laws, breaking through into rank 7…’
‘If one Magus can completely take over the Magus World, which is much more powerful than the Fiery World, and be nurtured by its origin force, what sort of benefits can they get?’
Leylin’s heart was set aflame. The Magus World was vast, and even the surface had yet to be explored not to mention the countless subterranean worlds, It was much easier for a Magus now to conquer these areas as compared to the ancient era where there were many existences who comprehended laws.
Just taking over a small world would bring immense benefits. What about taking over the largest, the Magus World?
“If someone can successfully unify the Magus World and obtain the nurture of its world origin force, they can make use of this strength to reach the limits, to reach rank 9!” Leylin mumbled to himself. He could not conceal his desire to enter the highest realm that a Magus could achieve.
Did achieving the peak of rank 9 grant immortality? This was a question that was swirling through Leylin’s mind. However, it was also a question that he could probe into only when he did attain that rank.
Immortality was Leylin’s goal, magic simply a means to an end. If a rank 9 Magus was not immortal, then he would explore further and look for something else. He would not regret it even if he died in the process!
This was a path of hope. He would not tolerate doubt, weakness; he
would not waver. ‘Not even ancient Magi could unify the Magus World, but I’ll take this task on!’ Leylin clenched his fists.

Golden and crimson was everywhere in the flames, and the already boiling heat only continued to increase. The air was very dry, to the point that one felt suffocated. A few fire elementals roamed within the flames. Although the Fiery World was hell for any life form made of flesh and blood, it was their heaven!

Lightning flashed in the void, opening up a gigantic, sparkling door. The door opened to reveal the figures of Leylin and the remaining Magi. Energy at Radiant Moon caused the flames to part automatically, not daring to approach and harass them.

“What high temperatures! The Fiery World really isn’t a place for non-elemental life forms.” Melinda carefully placed a defensive layer of icy water on her skin, something that caused Leylin to roll his eyes secretly.

She turned around after taking care of her skin, looking serious, “Be careful. The Fiery World is the Blazing Flame Monarch’s nest. Most of the fire elementals at Morning Star and Radiant Moon are stationed here. If not for having to suppress the rebellion of the fire elemental particles and the pressure from the world, he would long since have sent these elementals to the Magus World…. ...”

Leylin and the other nodded. How many Morning Stars and Radiant Moons could a world produce? If they went over to the Magus World, they could probably cause a huge ruckus.

However, there was an issue with this as well. Not considering their duties as guards of Fiery World, a change of environment and the additional suppression from being inside another world were large issues.

The Magus World was one of the most powerful worlds, and its suppression of foreigners would be one of the most terrifying. A drop in several ranks would be considered slight. The unlucky
ones would directly be crushed by the world origin force itself, joining the boundless dust in the void.
For Leylin and the rest, going from the Magus World to other worlds was like going from a high-ranked dungeon to a lower-ranked one. The suppression of the world wasn’t that serious, and there wouldn’t be instances of drops in rank. Things weren’t as rosy for those who went from lower-ranked worlds to higher-ranked ones.
For instance, if Scarlet Eye entered the Magus World, he was likely to drop to Morning Star from Radiant Moon. This would be even more serious for elemental life forms like the fire elementals. The most suitable environment for them was the Fiery World.
“The Blazing Flame Monarch is hiding in one of the world cracks of the Fiery World. There are many maze spells as well as powerhouses of the Fiery World guarding it. There are many rank 4 and 5 fire elementals, and this is a world where they get the greatest increase in strength. They’ll outperform themselves.” Melinda spoke slowly, and Leylin and the rest looked grim.
It would be hellishly difficult to defeat large numbers of Morning Stars and Radiant Moons in a hostile environment and then butt heads with the Blazing Flame Monarch who was at rank 6.
And yet, that was all that was required for a Monarch to fall. The Blazing Flame Monarch was currently at his weakest point anyway, something that allowed Melinda’s group this opportunity.
“Don’t worry. When the Monarch massacred my people, I vowed to the astral plane that I would use his blood and wash away the humiliation!” Clarke brandished the large black sword in his hands, terrifying sharpness exploding, “My baby is also thirsting for blood…”
“No matter what brother does, I’ll be supporting you!” Joanna looked towards her brother.
“Morning Star and Radiant Moon fire elementals are nothing
much… Keke…I’m having more expectations towards the Blazing Flame Monarch’s comprehension of Laws…” The blurry phantom of Jin snickered.

“Since we’re already here, we’re prepared for all that!” Leylin chuckled, fingers brushing over his ring involuntarily. The cold surface of the ring felt smooth, giving him more confidence.

“Many thanks, everyone! We’ll definitely win this time, and the rewards will definitely satisfy you! Please wait for a while, I’ll use a technique to look for the spatial crack that the Blazing Flame Monarch is hiding in!”

Melinda’s eyes suddenly changed colour, her pupils shrinking and disappearing to leave just the whites behind. Gazing at her eyes, even Leylin felt as if his mind was empty, all his secrets being exposed. His heart couldn’t help but palpitate with fear.

“Found it!” All of a sudden, Melinda opened her palm and a purple daffodil floated out of it. It gave off endless energy waves. Space was pulled apart like a door, revealing a pitch black tunnel.

‘So quickly?’ Leylin was slightly astonished, but he followed her in anyway.

Light flashed and space rumbled, and Leylin and the rest instantly appeared outside a world crack. Within, the Fiery World was like a blazing sun, filled with dazzling rays of light.

A large-scaled labyrinth floated outside the world barrier, as if the highest ruler of the Fiery World.

Outside the black building, many eyes flickered with various lights. They were Morning Star elementals. Even more powerful auras were transmitted from within.

Leylin even felt like he was being spied on, causing his hair to stand.

Joanna sucked in a cold breath, “Such a complicated labyrinth, and so many fire elementals. This will be difficult…”

“Now is the best opportunity to kill our target!” Melinda did not
take another glance at Joanna. “This is the Alanore Labyrinth. Each Magus that enters will be sent to different areas, and we’ll only be able to meet again in the main hall. I’ll be off!”

Melinda turned into a streak of lightning, and practically in an instant broke out of the perimeter of the fire elementals as she disappeared into the labyrinth.

“Haha… Blazing Flame Monarch, here I come! Tremble! Repent! I want you to pay the price for all that you’ve done!” Clarke’s expression was excited to the extreme as he waved his terrifying large black blade and charged in.

*Schlick!* A three-headed giant fire elemental dog in his way was slashed into two, boiling lava blood flying everywhere. Seeing her brother this way, Joanna sighed and followed closely behind him.

“I hate elemental life forms the most. The lack of souls will cause my works of art lose their beauty!”

Jin muttered to himself, turning into a large black shadow that covered practically half the labyrinth. The black figure began to pervade through the insides.
‘They’re all lunatics!’ Leylin could only sigh at how insane his group members were, ‘Lunatics with power are the most troublesome lot!’

*Hss* A tremendous Kemoyin appeared behind him, and a terrifying black hole formed that exerted a tremendous suction force on the fire elementals.

“Devour!” The terrifying might of a rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor drew everything in, be it flames, light, or even space itself. The fire elementals began to bawl miserably, looking ready to retreat. However, their bodies were constantly being pulled into the black hole, and they were eventually devoured. There was a clear path in the space when Leylin moved.

The five Radiant Moons had successfully broken through the outer layer and entered the interior of the labyrinth. Powerful auras could be felt occasionally from its various parts.

……

At the heart of the gigantic labyrinth, on a throne of pure gold. A human figure shrouded completely in flames raised their head, a translucent mirror forming in front of them. Footage flashed, showing Leylin and the others. The Blazing Flame Monarch’s eyes constantly twinkled as they scanned past Leylin, Clarke, and the rest. Their eyes rested on Jin’s body for a brief
moment before focusing completely on Melinda. “The power of fate has brought everything back to its original trajectory,” the Blazing Flame Monarch murmured, two red figures splitting from his form and darting in different directions… The numbers on the screen of the A.I. Chip were in constant flux until it came up with a conclusion. [Beep! Scan completed. Determined to be the first level of the Alanore Labyrinth. 12,800m ahead, high-grade energy has been detected, determined to be a rank 5 being. Possibility of it being a fire elemental: 87.18%.] “So I’ll need to break through all the barriers ahead to reach the Blazing Flame Monarch?” Leylin was now walking along a large and wide passageway that was tens of metres high. It looked like an area made specifically for giants, and he seemed minuscule in it. “It also prevents teleportation, and has such scary confining runes!” Leylin shook his head, “Any loopholes or gaps that can be taken advantage of have been plugged. One can only move forward step by step with momentum! “Why does this feel like clearing the stages of a game from my previous world?” Leylin touched his chin in speechlessness. The blue light in his eyes did not weaken. The A.I. Chip’s scanning ability had been employed to its limit. This maze-like structure had completely split the five of them apart. Even if Leylin wanted to search for and make contact with his companions, there would be no response. If Leylin was the Blazing Flame Monarch, he would be a fool not to take advantage of this and attack his enemies when they were divided. Hence, besides being cautious of traps and obstacles, he was very focused on the possible attacks from the Flame Monarch. *Rumble!* Boiling heat waves blew towards Leylin as he walked out of the passage, and a gigantic lava lake appeared before him. White air bubbles constantly exploded in the area, giving off a very
The lake stretched as far as the eye could see, into the boundless red horizon. ‘Is the rank 5 creature the A.I. Chip detected in here?’ Leylin’s eyes focused on the lava lake, seemingly penetrating through the thick lava and into its depths. “Come out!” he said with a smile on his lips as a gigantic two-headed figure abruptly darted into the lake, splashing around at will. The lava exploded, crashing down everywhere like rain. A black figure grew in size as it suddenly emerged from the bottom of the lake, revealing terrifying mandibles similar to that of an alligator.

*Crack!* The two-headed snake figure was torn up by the alligator’s mouth, and the large black figure continued to ascend from the lava lake. *Roarrrr!* The alligator-like being in front of Leylin had flames burning all over it. Droplets of scarlet lava dripped down from its scales and cracks constantly, its thin body still enormous. Its sinister looking teeth were set in a large mouth, above which were two scarlet soul flames.

It looked like a flame alligator that had evolved vertically, possessing the arms and long legs of humans. Its fingers were like black reverse hooks, and appeared very sharp.

‘A.I. Chip, conduct scan!’ Leylin ordered without hesitation.


The A.I. Chip quickly projected a 3D image of a large Fire Sovereign King in front of him. Beside the image was also a
column with data in it that presented the opponent’s statistics in detail.
“A rank 5 fire elemental life form with such stats!” The figure of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor appeared behind Leylin.
If he didn’t want to use his trump card, Leylin would have to make use of certain methods to deal with a Radiant Moon rank creature.
“Roarrr!” The Flame Sovereign King snarled, and three dark red bundles of light separated from its body, falling into the lava lake.
Dark red bundles of light constantly expanded and eventually exploded, revealing three fire elemental life forms that had strange forms. Each of them had energy undulations that were at least at Morning Star.
*Swish* Scarlet energy channels appeared at the Flame Sovereign King’s legs, and the water level of the entire lava lake sank. With the absorption of a large amount of lava, the toll on it from having a few subordinates separating from it had completely disappeared.
“A summoning spell that allows it to split up into beings with Morning Star strength, and it even has methods to replenish its energy!”
Leylin stroked his chin, “This guy’s vitality is just too powerful in the Fiery World. With just a slight misstep, I’ll have to deal with an arduous battle, which is rather disadvantageous.”
*Roar!* The three Morning Star fire elementals charged out at this moment, accompanied by the enraged howls of the Flame Sovereign King
“Bloodline Seal!” Leylin spread his hands and red bloodline force formed a ring of light, binding a Morning Star fire elemental.
“Icy Sphere!” At the same time, a sparkling giant ball of ice exploded in the air, and snowflakes fell everywhere, even causing the temperature of the lava lake to drop by a few degrees.
The two fire elementals that were attacking were covered by a layer of frost, solidifying and fusing with the ground. They were
completely frozen.
[Warning! Warning! Energy in the opposing fire elemental’s body has violent undulations, determined to be on the verge of self-detonation. Host, please take note.]
The A.I. Chip’s prompt caused Leylin’s expression to instantly change. At this moment, the sounds of the Flame Sovereign King’s roars were transmitted over.
*Awoo!* *Bang! Bang!* Along with terrifying sound waves, the three Morning Star fire elementals were filled up with a bright layer of red as they exploded, boiling hot heat waves spreading through the area.
Though Leylin had gotten a warning beforehand from the A.I. Chip and darted away in time, he still hadn’t escaped completely unscathed.
*Roar!* *Roar!* *Roar!* *Roar!* At this moment, four bundles of glimmering dark-red balls formed four Morning Star fire elementals, and Leylin’s expression went dark.
“If I don’t take care of the main body, this will be endless!” Demonic black flames formed around Leylin’s body, devouring the waves of fire from the previous detonations.
The black phoenix flames raged in the Fiery World, their devouring ability causing the opposing elementals to retreat. Even the Sovereign King was put in fear.
“Obscure Fireplume Technique Soaring Demonic Phoenix!”
Along with a high-pitched phoenix cry, a large black phoenix appeared in the air, two blazing flames sweeping across the region. The four elementals immediately burst apart, and their flames were absorbed by the black, demonic fire. This allowed the black phoenix to become even more enormous as it charged towards the Flame Sovereign King.
*Roar!* The Flame Sovereign King bellowed, a layer of flaming skin covering it as it collided with the tremendous black phoenix.
Demonic black flames flew in all directions just as the scarlet flames did, both using up each other’s strength and devouring each other. The enormous vibrations spread in all directions in the labyrinth…

In another area, Melinda chose a path with extreme familiarity. She’d met almost no dangers along the way, and was moving without obstruction. Her eyes were now glimmering with something brighter than light itself. “I’m here. Are you ready?”

All of a sudden, the immense waves caused by Leylin travelled here, causing even this path she was taking to shake.

“The helpers this time are very powerful!” Melinda laughed in satisfaction, her figure disappearing into the darkness.

……

*Whoosh!* A giant black blade slashed out, the sword lights instantly causing four attacks that each beheaded an elemental. Four large heads fell, blazing with raging flames.

“You did well, brother!” The sword-wielding fighter was naturally Clarke. Behind him, Joanna stared at him with an unspeakable tenderness within her eyes.

These two rank 5 Magi had somehow bypassed the limitations of the Alanore Labyrinth and were working together!

“Soon, Joanna. Soon, Brother will bring you along to take revenge!” Clarke chuckled.

All of a sudden, his expression changed. “Be careful!”
void shattered, and a red figure appeared beside Joanna. Endless flames lay docile on his body, flickering with scarlet light. This was evidently a peak rank 5 Magus. He solemnly grabbed at Joanna, pure golden flames turning into sharp claws that caused Joanna’s defences to break inch by inch.

“Blazing Flame Monarch!” Clarke howled with fury, arriving in front of her. The sharp, flaming claws ruthlessly grabbed him, causing the steel armour to break. Even the skin underneath had been roasted a charred black, revealing bright silver, metallic bones.

Within the Alanore Labyrinth, there was only one person who could move freely. And that was its owner, the Blazing Flame Monarch!

Clarke spat out fresh blood as he and Joanna were sent flying.

“Brother! BROTHER!” Joanna kept screaming, eyes instantly turning blood red. “HOW DARE YOU HARM MY BROTHER. I WANT YOU DEAD!”

Thin, translucent threads emerged from her hands, and even the void itself was cut through as they headed in the direction of the red figure in the air.

Fierce golden flames struck the translucent threads. Under the burning of the flames, the threads gradually melted. Not far away, Joanna turned pale.

“Joanna, get behind me.” At this point, Clarke stood up once again,
as if he did not have a life-threatening injury on his chest, “Blazing Flame Monarch, I’ve waited for this day for a long time.”
*Bzzt!* Clarke’s hands were on his giant black sword, emanating the terrifying undulations from high-grade magic equipment. The sharp rays of light were bright and dazzling, and even the void was constantly crumbling in front of it.

“Sorrow of Gaia!” Clarke yelled in his anger, the phantom of a vast land appearing behind him. An aura of rot converged on his body, forming terrifying sword glints.

“Death and decay are not something a living soul can control.” The scarlet being in the air spoke slowly, a red sword with flames on it similarly appearing in its hands. “In the name of Fire, your only destination shall be the stillness of an eternal death.”

The whole world seemed to tremble and cheer as large amounts of fire elemental particles wound automatically around the surface of the flaming sword.

These two longswords that had surpassed the limitations of space connected in the next instant, the dark green force that represented death and wilting up against the scarlet fire. Their collision formed a storm that annihilated everything. Red sword light flashed in the roiling storm, and Clarke’s whole body fell backwards.

To be precise, ‘half his body’ fell back. Everything under Clarke’s lower abdomen had completely disappeared, as if he had been chopped in half at the waist. It revealed a mechanical backbone and translucent fluids.

The scarlet figure of the Blazing Flame Monarch was revealed once more as the energy storm dissipated. He stared at Clarke’s wounds and suddenly laughed.

“It’s not even a mechanical modification, just the puppet of a soul servant. The true Clarke should have died long ago.” He turned around, staring at Joanna who had tears in her eyes.

“A pretty good soul division technique. It’s no wonder the two of
you weren’t separated when you came in, you are one and the same. Clarke’s your courage, longing and hatred; after removing these qualities, your main body is only left with weakness.”  
“No, my brother isn’t dead.” Joanna cried out like a kitten whose tail had been stepped on, tears spilling out of her eyes.  
“Don’t… cry… sister…” The half-bodied Clarke on the ground consoled her with a smile, but the voice grew increasingly rigid, and the sound intermittent. It eventually turned robotic.  
“Ah, wait. I seem to remember only a little girl surviving during that massacre then. Was it you?” A strange smile appeared on the Blazing Flame Monarch’s face, “You actually placed all your hopes on someone else. Even if you’ve reached rank 5, you’re still trash.” Words that were as sharp as a blade caused Joanna’s face to turn deathly pale. “No, I’m not…” She hugged her head, on the brink of a complete breakdown.  
The Blazing Flame Monarch looked proud, and just as he was about to deal her another blow and upset her further, his expression suddenly changed.  
Joanna was still hugging her head, but streams of black gas were dispelled from her body. A dangerous aura formed around her, one that even had him considering retreat.  
‘What’s going on? Wait, she’s the descendant of that deceased clan. Could it be…’ The Blazing Flame Monarch’s eyes shrank, and large amounts of flaming shackles appeared and shot towards Joanna. He was one step too late.  
Joanna looked up and began to scream. An endless terrifying undulation immediately enveloped the whole region…  
*Thud!* The terrifying rank 5 fire elemental, the alligator-human hybrid Flame Sovereign King toppled down, the flames on its body extinguishing bit by bit.  
The two bundles of soul flames gradually dimmed in its eye sockets. Soul light was constantly dispelled from the body, bringing
with it dense fire elemental particles that were like fireflies. They quickly disappeared into the air.

*Chirp!* A high-pitched cry sounded and a large black phoenix descended from the skies. The flames withdrew to reveal Leylin who was within.

“The rank 5 Flame Sovereign King really was quite troublesome. I almost had to use my Arcane Art…”

Leylin stood at the edges of the lava lake. After the death of the Sovereign King, the black walls of the labyrinth at the other side of the lake pushed and pulled each other like toy building blocks, revealing a pitch-black pathway.

“It’s hard to tell how many stages there are in the labyrinth, unless…” Leylin stroked the ring on his hand. A maze set up by a rank 6 Magus was something a rank 5 like him could only solve directly. It required another rank 6 to act to break it, or other special circumstances.

“AAAAAAAHHHH…” An ear-piercing screech was transmitted to Leylin’s ears, the hatred and terrifying energy it held causing Leylin’s expression to change slightly. “It came from there… Did anything happen?”

*Boom!* One of the walls slowly crumbled following the explosion, and large amounts of black dust fell down.

“The labyrinth is already showing signs of collapsing. This power seems to be a unique type that’s rumoured to have existed in ancient times.” Leylin’s eyes glinted coldly. While he was focused on the energy undulations, space suddenly collapsed around him. A scarlet figure appeared before him like before.

Flames seethed in the opponent’s hands, seemingly breaking their limitations to possess a terrifying heat. They caused the other energy particles to constantly draw back. There were only flames within this domain.
“The Origin Law of fire. So you’re the one who’s been spying on me,” Leylin snickered, his right hand unhesitatingly activating the silver ring. Streams of fog dissipated, instantly forming a world of fog. “Roar!* The phantom of a four-armed cyclops with hard skin emerged from the ring. “The Fog Space of the ancient Misty Fog Giant.” The world of fog enveloped Leylin and the person who had launched a sneak attack. The opponent’s law of fire was already tangled up by the fog, using up its energy.

With the blood from Bevis as the basis, and via in-depth processing by the A.I. Chip, Leylin had successfully created a bloodline imprint of the Misty Fog Giant and sealed it within the ring. Since it was a spell that could be activated using a bloodline, Leylin’s bloodline imprint had reached a might of rank 6. ‘Is this… the law of fog?’ Leylin could sense a deep-seated force in this world of fog. This was the law that controlled it. Due to its connection with the bloodline imprint, he gained some rudimentary control as well. Large amounts of grey fog were like the most docile stream of water to him, allowing him to do as he liked. “Crush him!” With Leylin’s command, great amounts of grey fog immediately turned into hardened rock, bringing with them the World Will as they rained down on the red figure. “This isn’t your own ability, it’s an ancient rank 6 spell!” The tremendous force caused the scarlet figure to cry out involuntarily. He was covered by the fog immediately after. Red light constantly penetrated through the fog, yet it grew increasingly dark. “This is the real ancient Fog Space! If Bevis had used a spell like this, I might have long since been defeated or even killed…” Leylin sighed.

While Bevis did have the blood of the Misty Fog Giant, he had no
A.I. Chip and it wasn’t as if he could endlessly consume his bloodline for spells. Leylin was different. After being purified by the A.I. Chip, the blood of the Misty Fog Giant now displayed its might like in ancient times.
“Damn it, there’s another one.” Another voice sounded from within the fog, and it soon turned deathly silent. The world of fog dissipated, returning to the scene of the lava lake from before.
“Another one?” Light flashed, and Leylin’s figure emerged. “Looks like it isn’t the first time he’s been at such a disadvantage, and…” Leylin stared at where the scarlet figure had been. There was now nothing there.
“A rank 5 clone? Looks like the Blazing Flame Monarch has no helpers nearby, and has no choice but to do this himself…”
“Good timing. I’ll make use of this.” Leylin waved his arms, and the fog that had not completely dispersed spread out, completely corroding the walls of the labyrinth.
*Crack! Crack!* The labyrinth walls that had already gone through immense damage could not hold on any longer and began to break apart inch by inch. Much of the wall turned into powder, and this was still spreading further.
The Alanore Labyrinth was a maze pattern that a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magus had painstakingly set up. The Magi who wished to intrude would have to advance by passing through all of the stages, only then reaching the end. Now, after withstanding all this damage, as well as two intentional attacks on Leylin’s end, the labyrinth had begun to crumble. Bit by bit, the walls split open, glowing runes turning to powder. The lava lake from before was gradually drying up, revealing a surface full of cracks. The pathways were continuously crumbling with this area as the centre.

“The collapse of the Alanore Labyrinth is happening earlier than I expected,” Melinda furrowed her beautiful brows and sank into deep thought. A dark shadow then charged towards the heart of the labyrinth at a quicker pace. Within the barriers of the boundless world crack was the Fiery World. It was like the sun, the exterior of which was the imposing and serene Alanore Labyrinth.

All of a sudden, the labyrinth creaked. It was like it could no longer hold its burden, and began to collapse inch by inch. Once the foundations completely crumbled, the large building began to topple with a loud rumble, and the surrounding fire elementals fled for their lives. Along with a tremendous rumbling sound, the labyrinth completely broke down, revealing a minor plane.
Light flashed in the air, and Melinda took the first step onto this minor plane. This minor plane was like the Morning Star Area, a world that was yet to mature. This minor plane was obviously much smaller than the Morning Star Area, with only a single layer. One could even see it end to end. With just one look, Melinda could see a flaming figure sitting on a throne of pure gold at the middle of the place. At the same time, the flaming figure turned and met Melinda’s gaze. Terrifying energy that reached rank 6 emanated from the opponent’s body, hovering around him. This was a rank 6 Magus, a Breaking Dawn. It was a Monarch! The Magus sitting on the golden throne had evidently grasped some bits of the laws of fire. This was the Blazing Flame Monarch, the ruler of an enormous territory and the one who almost caused the extinction of the bloodline Warlocks! “You’re here?” The Blazing Flame Monarch asked, the voice androgynous. “Yes. I’ve returned to take back what belongs to me!” Melinda muttered, her tone becoming increasingly resolute. “You were mere emotions that I intentionally dispelled so that I could advance to Breaking Dawn. You’re just garbage I tossed out. What are you taking me back for?” The flames dissipated, revealing the figure of the Magus on the throne. Yet, this Magus was obviously female. What’s more, her face bore some semblance to Melinda’s. “No! I am the consciousness of the main body, you’re only a thief that took it over. A despicable thief!” Melinda’s face flushed red. “So you’re making use of this opportunity and trying to steal everything back?” The female Magus on the throne chuckled, as if she was watching a mischievous child making a fuss in front of her, “But I have to admit, the allies you’ve found are excellent
Magi. They’re powerful and hold the possibility of advancing further. They could very well become new Monarchs in the future!”

“Everything’s over! Return what’s mine to me!” Melinda took a step forward, her aura fluctuating abruptly, seemingly even exceeding the peak of rank 5.

“Having lost me, you’re at your weakest. And the more powerful I am, the weaker you get!” Melinda took several steps forward, eyes glimmering with light.

“As long as I can suppress you, I’ll be able to obtain everything!” Pure golden flames rose once more, and the female Magus atop the flame throne slowly got up, “You’re wrong. No matter how weak a Breaking Dawn Magus is, they’re still a Breaking Dawn at the core. It’s already been three thousand years. Did you think I did nothing at all in this time?”

“It’s just an issue pertaining to the soul. With the support of fire origin force, as well as the amassed knowledge of the Magus World, I found a way to mend the loss of a part of my truesoul.”

As if to verify her words, a golden sun appeared behind the female Magus. Boiling hot strength rippled out from the truesoul, emanating energy waves that put Melinda on the verge of suffocation.

This was a Breaking Dawn’s truesoul! The icy cold of moonlight had transformed into terrifying, boiling light; its volume and power showed that it had reached the peak!

“You’ve… recovered?” Melinda abruptly halted her footsteps.

“Not only have I recovered, I’ve even forged ahead to greater heights!” The Blazing Flame Monarch stated, an unquestionably terrifying energy held within her.

“Keke, I seem to have heard something amazing!” A translucent figure emerged, and Jin’s hoarse voice sounded from the shadows.

“So Melinda, you’re my enemy as well!” Joanna and Leylin hurried
over around the same time. Joanna was quite different from before, and Clarke hadn’t appeared, as if he’d disappeared. Joanna was now glaring at Melinda with hatred, “I trusted you so much in the past, but you betrayed me?!?”
“Hm?” Leylin observed Joanna’s state, ‘So it’s her. I’d thought the first vibrations were from Jin or Melinda… This appearance, she looks quite similar to one of the twelve top-grade bodies written down in ancient records…’
The A.I. Chip completely recorded down Joanna’s external appearance, and presented it to Leylin with a projection. The Joanna in the projection had completely dark purple hair, and a strange flower-shaped pattern appeared on her forehead like a tattoo. Yet, it rippled with some sort of lustre.
[Beep! Detected abnormal radiations from target’s body. Vigorous increase in ability to attract energy particles with runes seen on the surface of the body…]
The A.I. Chip began to present the results of its scanning, and in Leylin’s eyes Joanna’s body seemed to turn into a gigantic magnet, attracting the free energy particles in the air. They formed a mysterious circuit in her body, allowing her spiritual and magic power to replenish itself continuously. It even seemed to rise, breaking through a bottleneck.
“I really want to…” Leylin lowered his head, eyes flickering with an intelligent glint.
‘I really want to study her! It’s not just her physique. This ability clearly has something to do with a natural ability to increase the aptitude of the soul itself. I can increase elemental affinity, but a natural gift like this to strengthen the soul has practically gone extinct in the central continent…’
“Whatever she did to your clan occurred after I separated from her. It’s the same with the bloodline Warlocks. I am not your enemy!” Melinda glanced at Joanna and Leylin, smiling wryly as she gave an
“Her strength slightly exceeds my expectations. I’ll need your help!”
“I don’t care about that!” Jin was the first to retort, “You promised to share the Law Comprehension Crystals with us once we killed her. Was that all a lie?”

It was only at this point that Leylin remembered that Melinda had promised to split the Law Comprehension Crystals from the Blazing Flame Monarch’s death evenly. She didn’t even seem to mind losing her own share.

At that point, they had all been against the Blazing Flame Monarch, and Leylin had assumed Melinda was like them as well, only satisfied with the Monarch’s death. However, by the looks of it, she had left behind a loophole that wasn’t quite a loophole.

She was part of the Flame Monarch’s soul, and once Melinda returned to her main body and gained control over the Blazing Flame Monarch, that meant the Monarch was ‘dead’.

Yet, as the other party had not truly died, it was impossible for there to be any Law Comprehension Crystals, and even more impossible for there to be any distribution.

‘This woman harboured terrible intentions from the very beginning and wanted to use us as labourers!’ Leylin shook his head inside, ‘Though I never did expect much from her, this is still quite upsetting!’

He could tell that if Melinda succeeded, their only gains from this mission would be what they got from Düz City, nothing more.

On the other hand, Melinda would have become the Blazing Flame Monarch. Even they wouldn’t dare to complain about a rank 6 Magus even if they had thoughts against it.

Melinda’s plan was very perfect, but she had not thought Leylin and Joanna would have strength surpassed her expectations. On
top of that, the Blazing Flame Monarch had actually eliminated the issues from the breaking up of a truesoul, and was perhaps now at her peak!

“All who have the audacity to violate my city are to kneel and repent before me!” Boiling hot soul force was like steel that sealed the space around them. The Blazing Flame Monarch’s low voice resounded through the area, putting Leylin under immense pressure.

Melinda’s expression was first terrible but quickly brightened up.

“No, that’s not it! We still have a chance! If her injuries were really completely healed, she wouldn’t hide here and watch us invade and destroy Düz City, even letting her subordinates be massacred at our hands!

“Leylin, Joanna, I’m depending on you now. No matter what requests you have after this is over, I’ll agree to them!”

Before, Leylin and Joanna’s strength had been too outstanding and caused there to be some changes in Melinda’s calculations. However, it was these changes that gave her hope!

“How ridiculous!” Before Leylin and the rest could reply, the female Magus in front of the throne snickered.

Golden rays of light were like a world of their own, dazzling gold soul force pouring out with large amounts of flames. It led Leylin to almost believe he was watching the rebirth of the Sun’s Child here.

In the midst of this scorching first sunrise, a pitiful cry rang out. When Leylin opened his eyes once more, Jin was now raised and held in the Blazing Flame Monarch’s hand.
Out of all these people, you were the one that I felt was the most dangerous. I didn’t expect it to be an old friend!” The female flame Magus stared at the faint human figure in her hands, a slight smile on her face. “I don’t know what you’re saying…” Jin’s voice was hoarse and robotic. “Kellard! I cannot tolerate any outsiders peeping in on my land of flames!” The Blazing Flame Monarch seemed to be confident in herself. A terrifying golden soul force entered Jin’s body with her declaration, threads of gold travelling through the faint body as they burst into golden flames.

The Blazing Flame Monarch conjured an illusory scene from of Jin’s body. A platinum figure seemed to be seated on a throne within a spacious place. The golden flames seemed to pierce through the void, descending in that area.

A low sigh was heard from the platinum figure. A feather appeared, turning into an odd-looking longsword amidst white light. There were feather-shaped ornaments on the hilt of this sword that swung down viciously. The void surged and separated, the palace from before disappearing. Jin exploded like a balloon in the Blazing Flame Monarch’s hands. ‘Kellard? Is that the Monarch of the Skies’ real name? I’d assumed Jin was a Spirit Magus… To think he was actually a puppet. It
looks like it isn’t just Melinda that’s plotting against the Blazing Flame Monarch.’ Intelligence flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and he looked towards the Blazing Flame Monarch who seemed completely fine but was silent.

‘But a Monarch’s plot can’t be so weak, can it?’ A hint of anticipation rose in Leylin’s eyes. After all, this was a Breaking Dawn Magus working behind the scenes. Jin shouldn’t be so easy to deal with.

*Bzzt bzzt!* At this moment, a few pure-white goose feathers fell on Leylin’s shoulder like snow, causing him to freeze.

Immediately after, a snow of feathers fell down on the place. The ground was covered by a thin layer of white that even shrouded the Blazing Flame Monarch’s golden soul force. Cracks began to appear on the boundary of the half-dimension, but the effects were even worse on the Blazing Flame Monarch herself.

*Rumble!* Golden flames burst forth from her body, immediately burning the feathers that drew close to ashes. However, there was still some white that managed to pass through her defences. Her expression changed, “Damn you, Kellard!”

*Boom!* The feathers exploded, causing her to sway a little. Immediately after, the scorching sun that was her truesoul suddenly dimmed, and the temperature nearby quickly lowered. The oppressive aura in the half-dimension was reduced. Brown crack streaked across the faint figure of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s truesoul, and even the Monarch’s own aura weakened.

“So you still can’t completely suppress your injuries!” Melinda moved forward, an odd aura being emanated from her body as it pounced towards the Monarch.

“Die!” Joanna was even faster. Her aura had already reached the peak of Radiant Moon, and purple gas converged to form a trident that pierced towards the Blazing Flame Monarch.

“Get out of the way!” The golden flames on the Monarch’s body
grew tenfold as exuberant with her cry, incinerating everything the Monarch of the Skies had arranged. After launching that attack, the Blazing Flame Monarch staggered backwards, and cracks began to appear on the golden throne behind her. Facing the attacks of Melinda and Joanna, the Monarch’s expression grew solemn. It was as if she was a god when she made the declaration. “I am the Blazing Flame Monarch. The laws of fire in this world shall be controlled by I alone!” Large amounts of scarlet fire particles appeared, forming something on a level higher than a domain that completely enveloped the area. “You’ve comprehended the laws of fire? Even just a bit is already so powerful…” Leylin’s head hung down a little, covering his eyes that were constantly emitting light. He could feel with his senses that the moment the Blazing Flame Monarch summoned this plane of fire that was even more powerful than a domain, the fire elemental particles that he could normally control seemed to have an aura that rejected the summons of his soul force. This was much more intense than the elemental isolation of a Morning Star domain. Leylin even felt that the fire element now had a life and will of its own, and was automatically rejecting his control over it. ‘Just comprehending a tiny portion of a law gives you a huge advantage over weaker existences…’ Leylin sighed. At this moment, the Blazing Flame Monarch’s right hand ruthlessly grabbed forward, “Law of fire!” *Rumble!* A bundle of flames emerged in front of her, seeming neither strong nor very hot. However, it was like the most primal fire in the world, filled with a great ancient aura of leadership. The tip of the purple trident sizzled and melted the moment it came into contact with the fire. The sound caused Joanna’s expression to
warp.
The scarlet flames seemed to have a life of their own in the Blazing Flame Monarch’s hands, and immediately flickered as they turned into a fiery whip. Joanna’s body was sent flying backwards, a long luminous burn mark on her body.
“I am the master of the flames, one who has grasped the power of law. You can’t stop me!” A berserk soul force radiated from the Blazing Flame Monarch as if to prove her point.
Melinda took several steps backwards. The soul force at the Breaking Dawn realm had caused a backlash to her hand, and two streams of blood dripped from her eyes.
She quickly retreated, and transmitted to Leylin, “You’re not going to fight back?”
“I can do that, but what benefits will you give me?” Leylin’s arms were bunched together as he stared at Melinda coldly.
“What do you want?” Melinda was about to go crazy. At this point, Leylin was still ignorant of the big picture. Did he not know that once the Blazing Flame Monarch killed her and Joanna, he wouldn’t be able to escape either?
“I want the method you used to divide your truesoul and sever the soul!” Leylin was very confident that he could flee, which was why he was in no hurry and was even bargaining for the best benefits.
With his strength, he was confident he could escape even the Blazing Flame Monarch at her peak, much less now when she was incomplete.
He was rather interested in the technique of soul separation that she possessed. Though he wouldn’t do it himself, it would be a good supplement for his database.
“Alright!” Melinda agreed to Leylin’s condition unhesitatingly. As of now, the priority was eliminating the Blazing Flame Monarch. No matter how important the technique of severing souls was, it was just some information. There was obviously no issue at all.
This was not all. Leylin instantly sensed Melinda’s sincerity.


After Leylin chose to allow the transmission, large amounts of information instantly emerged in his mind. Though he did not go through it in detail, the A.I. Chip’s scans showed that this was the real deal.

“The power of laws can only be dealt with by laws.” The grey ring on Leylin’s right hand exploded and a puff of fog appeared, forming a grey world that contended with the opposing Monarch’s flame plane.

“A rank 6 bloodline spell?” Grey fog and scarlet flames each consumed the energy of the other, and space itself was torn apart where these two tremendous domains met. A cry sounded from the Blazing Flame Monarch’s side.

“Darned bloodline Warlocks! I should have completely destroyed you long ago!” These words that were filled with hatred did not cause Leylin to stop. He smiled instead, “I’ve always loved listening to the anguish and ire of those who want to eliminate me. It means they’re completely defeated…”

Even if Leylin had sealed a bloodline imprint from Bevis’ Misty Fog Giant bloodline in the ring, he could only launch two attacks. One had been used on the Blazing Flame Monarch’s clone, and the other was being employed here.

‘A.I. Chip, focus on collecting information!’ Leylin ordered. With the Chip as a medium, Leylin could somewhat sense and manipulate the laws of fog. How could he not record such precious information?

[Beep! Beginning to record under Laws of Fog...] the A.I. Chip quickly intoned.

At this moment, large amounts of grey fog formed a monster with three heads that was under Leylin’s control. Toxins, lightning, and
frost were being spewed out by these heads, striking the flame plane. 
Even stray energy from the toxins, lightning, and frost caused Melinda and Joanna to retreat in a hurry, afraid to get hit. “My bloodline imprint only has one attack left. If you have any methods, use them now. I’ll break through the opponent’s defensive laws.” Leylin stared at Melinda and Joanna without much emotion. The three-headed monster roared and tore at the flame plane, revealing the main body of the Blazing Flame Monarch.
*Whoosh!* A sharp grey claw descended and extinguished the flames that the Blazing Flame Monarch had summoned, and even tore apart the flame shackles.
At this moment, a trace of astonishment appeared on the Monarch’s confident face. She had evidently never thought that Leylin’s control over the power of laws would grow this quickly.
“Brother, wait for me! I am about to be done with my vengeance!” A deep hatred rose in Joanna’s eyes for the Blazing Flame Monarch. She pounced forward, streams of purple gas appearing from her back to form a gigantic plant that was similar to the flower on her forehead.
“Let’s perish together!” Joanna had on an insane smile. It was as if death was not the end for her, only a beginning.

Many roots formed from her body, wrapping around her and the Blazing Flame Monarch. The faint image of the purple plant solidified, and the roots wound tightly together as the two fell into the half-dimension. Branches and leaves spread out, the bud at the very top growing and blooming.

With the Blazing Flame Monarch’s infuriated howls, a purple flower bud with unworldly beauty slowly blossomed in the half-dimension. A terrifying strength took form at the same time, forming purple light that spread in all directions. Even the world of fog was affected as it crumbled down.

“This is bad!” Leylin’s pupils shrank. The remaining fog force immediately created a thick wall-like structure in front of him, behind which Melinda squeezed in unceremoniously. Following that, purple light spread through the skies and drowned the area. The half-dimension hidden within the labyrinth burst apart under the purple light, and many black holes appeared in the region, devouring the surroundings. The scene looked to be of the world’s end. The stray energy from the explosion still bombarded the protective sphere of the Fiery World, causing it to shake.

Once everything calmed down again, the original world crack now looked completely different.

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Large amounts of irreparable spatial rifts had appeared in the place, and endless turbulence streaked past the void, causing what was now in ruins further damage. Even the nebulae around the place, what was similar to his previous world, had completely dissipated in the explosion. Bits of dimmed starlight flashed every once in a while from the edges, as if fading away and reconciling to this fact.

A large bundle of fog dissipated in this shattered void, revealing the figures of Leylin and Melinda. “As expected from the physique of an ancient clan. The destructive force from her self-detonation…” Leylin seemed to be praising it, yet there was still some regret in his words. He was very interested in studying this sort of physique, and had never expected the other party to so resolutely detonate herself.

The terrifying storm that formed as a result was enough for Leylin and Melinda to be affected even with the defence from the rank 6 energy of the Misty Fog Giant, and they cut sorry figures. “The bloodline!” Leylin’s eyes turned red, and a small-scale vortex formed in his hands. Some of the items in the void seemed to be attracted by some formless strength and automatically reached Leylin’s hand. Large motes of light condensed to form a droplet of purple blood with bits of gold shimmering within.

“So this is all that remains? What an overbearing spell!” Leylin sighed, stowing the blood away. “Not yet! The Blazing Flame Monarch isn’t dead!” There was glee following Melinda’s gasp of surprise. This was the best situation for her, with the Blazing Flame Monarch heavily injured and unable to resist her claim to dominance.

“She’s a Breaking Dawn Magus after all. How could she die so easily?” Leylin nodded solemnly. He’d never dared to underestimate such a high-ranking Magus. On top of that, the A.I.
Chip did not give any conclusion of sorts, and instead scanned the space for the aura of the Blazing Flame Monarch. This made Leylin even more acutely aware of the result. Golden flames abruptly surged in the void, increasing in volume to form a giant blazing door. The Blazing Flame Monarch walked out of this giant door, her detached eyes full of ruthlessness. *Rumble!* The flaming door quickly shrank to form a golden Magus Robe that draped over her body, “I never thought a bug like you would interfere with the ‘reincarnation’ procedure this time. It seems like ancient clans like these and the bloodline Warlocks should all be exterminated…” A peak rank 6 aura was being emitted from their opponent’s body, and Leylin and Melinda shared a glance as they laughed bitterly. “The ability to be revived by flames?” Leylin stroked his chin, “Seems rather well-suited to the fire element. It even has a healing effect which shares some similarities to the Icy World’s Freezing innate skill…” “We’re already in this situation, and you still have time to think about that?” Melinda didn’t know whether to laugh or cry in response. Yet, the Blazing Flame Monarch had already raised her right hand, and a longsword made of raging flames appeared in it. “In the name of the Blazing Flame Monarch, I shall judge you!” Immense flames surged out with sword lights. These flames were not ordinary, they were from the law of fire! Just the descent of a few wisps drew out all the fire elemental particles in the region in an instant. All the other elemental particles were tyrannically rejected and repelled. With her rebirth from the flames, not only had the Blazing Flame Monarch managed to survive Joanna’s self-detonation, but she’d also healed all her injuries. She had regained her strength as a peak rank 6 Monarch.
“Get out of the way!” Leylin pushed at Melinda, and a large amount of crimson light surged out, “Bloodline Shield!”

*Rumble!* The flaming sword struck the shield, emitting a frigid sound. On the other side, Melinda tossed out a piece of magic equipment similar to a statue, blocking the Blazing Flame Monarch’s attack.

With Joanna’s death, Melinda and Leylin were the only two invaders remaining. Leylin’s rank 6 bloodline fog had left a deep impression on her, so Melinda transmitted a query to him, “Do you still have another bloodline imprint?”

“No. Do you think a rank 6 bloodline is so easily obtained? The amount of blood I had was only enough to create two imprints!” Leylin glared at Melinda, waving his right hand. He was speaking the truth. The ring on his hand had long since disappeared.

Upon hearing this, a hint of despair appeared in Melinda’s beautiful eyes, “I can’t take this lying down! Am I really going to die with Big Brother here?”

‘She’s going crazy again!’ Watching Melinda, whose voice had turned into that of a little girl once more, Leylin was rendered speechless. It seemed like the original Blazing Flame Monarch had discarded more than one portion of her soul, which was why Melinda had such bizarre emotions and a split personality.

“Despicable Warlock Bloodline and the trashes that I had disposed of before... Let me purge you completely today!” The Blazing Flame Monarch that had regained her full strength took several steps closer, the peak rank 6 strength causing Leylin’s expression to change.

Only when face to face with her did he realise how terrifying the might of a Monarch was. The opponent’s truesoul was like a scorching sun, tens of times larger than that of a Radiant Moon and of better quality. This golden soul force exceeded the strength of Radiant Moon soul force, and made even Leylin feel suppressed.
“Erosion of the Sun!” The Monarch raised her sword once more, the faint image of her truesoul appearing behind her. Black light formed at the heart of the sun, converging on the tip of the flaming longsword.
From the black spot, Leylin could feel a terrifying energy that could obliterate everything in its path.
“Opposing qualities huh? This is incomparably close to the antimatter theory in my previous world…”
“Purify!” Along with an exclamation, the Blazing Flame Monarch swung her sword out, pitch black light beginning to shoot towards Leylin and Melinda.
Full of destructive energy, it surged like a stormy sea and roared. The world origin force of the Fiery World beside them boiled and disappeared into the Blazing Flame Monarch’s body, causing this attack to grow even more powerful.
“An attack befitting one at the peak of rank 6!” Leylin sighed, and then did not hesitate as he commanded, “A.I. Chip, begin defensive plan number 2!”
[Beep! Mission established, beginning usage of Host’s energy and forming defence.] The A.I. Chip’s icy voice intoned immediately.
Meanwhile, a layer of black Kemoyin Scales appeared on the surface of his body. He tossed out large numbers of potions that formed a colourful defence. At the outermost layer, the Bloodline Shield changed its shape with the manipulation of the A.I. Chip, welcoming the black light headed their way.
*Rumble!* Space itself crumbled. Even a world crack could not withstand such a powerful explosion, and spatial storms were formed everywhere.
Leylin emerged from the explosion, much of his Magus robes torn apart. There was a trace of blood at the corner of his lips.
“So, Melinda, are you dead yet?” Leylin’s eyes flashed with wit as he glanced in Melinda’s direction.
White light flashed in the void, and Melinda’s head appeared. Her body had completely severed from below the neck, and on those body parts, there were signs of burns that had clotted and turned into scars.

“If I died, you’d definitely have died before me!” Melinda’s face was now as pale as a dead person, as if she had lost all blood.

“I can’t hold this for long. Do you have any other methods to deal with her? I have one more…” Melinda, who now only had a head, glanced at Leylin and seemed to have made up her mind.

“Yes!” Leylin pretended to struggle with the decision and spoke in a low voice, “But that’s my life-saving trump card. Once it’s used, I’m not going to bother with you!”

“You don’t need to. As long as you can successfully suppress her for a period of time, leave everything to me. All the benefits that I spoke of in the contract will be given to you.” Melinda gritted her teeth.

“Fine!” Leylin chuckled, and a few balls made of crystal appeared. Within these sparkling crystal balls was a dark red gas that was like a river.

*Boom!*  *Boom!*  *Boom!* Many of the balls exploded, and a strange power spread outwards.

“It’s no use! I’ve already grasped authority over flames! Any attacks below laws…” The Flame Monarch stopped abruptly, her beautiful eyes suddenly showing astonishment.
In actuality, the Blazing Flame Monarch was still on her guard against Melinda and Leylin. Not taking into account her opponent’s secret plan before, the tens of crystal balls that Leylin had sent out and exploded made it seem as if he was about to cast some spell. That already made the Flame Monarch feel some unease. This was an ability similar to prophecy, and was common among high-ranked Magi. However, it was extremely rare for the Blazing Flame Monarch to get one with such a violent warning. Hence, she instantly made her move and golden soul force swept the area as the law of fire covered the void. However, her strength strangely had no effect on the dark red fog, and no matter how hot the golden flames blazed, the dark red streams of gas still flowed in the air undisturbed.

“Damn it! Erosion of the Sun!” The Blazing Flame Monarch raised her longsword high in the air once more, the black point swelling and emitting a terrifying aura that was even more terrifying than before.

‘This is about half of the dreamforce that I amassed!’ Leylin’s heart was aching as well. There was a limit to how much dreamforce he could store. He needed to use vessels from Dreamscape, and for this reason he’d used up much of what he’d acquired. It could be said that in order to create this environment, he had thrown in most of his gains from Dreamscape. However, it was
because he had put in these hard-earned savings that the effects were extraordinary.
Leylin could sense the dense dreamforce spreading through the area, something that caused even Melinda’s eyes to glaze over slightly.
Dreamforce was no weaker than the power of laws, which was why the Blazing Flame Monarch’s fires had little effect on it. After all, she had yet to completely grasp the laws of fire anyway, or she would long since have advanced to rank 7 instead of hovering around rank 6.
At this point, the results from the A.I. Chip’s scans were presented before Leylin’s eyes. [Beep! Emission of dreamforce complete. Meets standards of using dreamforce!]
“It’s not as if I’ve never defeated a rank 6 before!” Leylin’s lips quirked up in a smile, and immediately a complicated and illusory spell model with colourful rays was used in that instant. Dreamforce condensed in boundless tides around his body.
“Radiant Moon Dreamforce Spell Distrait Dream!” Leylin’s eyes seem to glaze over, and formless waves enveloped the Blazing Flame Monarch.
“This is…” The Monarch’s eyes showed her confusion as the energy undulations from her body strangely came to a complete stop.
Distrait Dream. This rank 5 dreamforce spell targeted a Magus’ true soul, and had a 90% chance of being effective on a Radiant Magus, leading them to be unable to control themselves even if they were about to die. Even when facing a Breaking Dawn Magus, it had a success rate of over 50%!
The Blazing Flame Monarch was now in a dream, her true soul having lost its way. She was completely unable to move, and her only defence came by instinct.
“Quick! I can only hold it for 3 seconds!” Leylin yelled at Melinda.
“I never expected you to have a trump card like this!” Melinda’s head stared at Leylin, eyes full of meaning. Immediately after, flames began to burn and incinerate the remaining flesh and blood she had. A pure white soul figure suddenly emerged amidst the flames.

“Though I have a strong desire to expel the opponent’s conscient and return to my body, there’s no time!” The soul figure suddenly broke through the boundaries of spacetime and appeared in front of the Blazing Flame Monarch. She was now in a despondent state, and her instinctive defence had no effect towards Melinda. The soul figure disappeared into the forehead of the Monarch, the entire process going through without a hitch.

“Damn it! Get out!” The dreamforce quickly dissipated, and the Blazing Flame Monarch had regained her senses. However, her expression kept warping, and her muscles trembling. She abruptly raised her right hand, as if trying to pull something out of her forehead. Yet, the left hand strangely grabbed the right. It was as if there were two people fighting in her body.

“As expected, in a situation with no other methods, Melinda chose to return to the main body!” Watching this, a smile appeared on Leylin’s lips.

Melinda was merely an incomplete soul, while her opponent had the main body that had been tempered over thousands of years. Her soul force was tremendous beyond belief, and Melinda was surely no match for her.

Her initial plan was to take advantage of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s strength being at a low, using Leylin and the rest to deal the Monarch a serious blow. She would then destroy the soul and place her own conscient in the Blazing Flame Monarch’s body.

It was a pity that the Blazing Flame Monarch had a method of suppressing the injuries to her soul, which had caused setbacks in Melinda’s plans. Thankfully, with the Monarch of the Skies helping...
from behind the scenes and the surprising strength of Joanna and Leylin, the situation had reached this stage.
The situation was currently do or die. Perhaps Leylin had a chance of surviving a Breaking Dawn’s hunt, but Melinda was definitely going to die. As part of the opponent’s soul that had awakened its own senses and wanted to eliminate the main conscient, she would definitely be hunted down endlessly by the Monarch.
Hence, after weighing the pros and cons, the only thing she could do was take the risk and enter the other party’s sea of consciousness and strive to achieve control over the main body.
Though there was a powerful conscient in the sea of consciousness, it wasn’t as if Melinda lacked any advantages. At the very least, she had an ally in Leylin.
The Blazing Flame Monarch had accumulated injuries over the various battles and the self-detonation, but she either had some secret methods or was forcefully suppressing them. This was why she was confident in her success. Though her chances weren’t greater than 50%, this was a better option than dying without even a corpse remaining.
“Die, you unnecessary trash!” An unusual scene appeared on the Monarch’s body. A few illusory female faces appeared on her own, like layered masks.
There was malevolence, anger, even peace on some. The one similarity was that they all looked like Melinda.
“I am the ruler of flames. How can I lose to you…” A white illusory face abruptly emerged, its appearance and tone very similar to the Flame Monarch.
“Stop struggling. You are me! In addition, my control over the law of fire isn’t inferior to yours!” Melinda’s face appeared as well.
Following that, this face switched to one that was childlike, eyes full of tears as it gazed up at Leylin, “Big Brother, help me!”
“How?” Leylin’s expression was cold.
“I can temporarily suppress her defences. You use your soul force and invade the Blazing Flame Monarch’s sea of consciousness. Believe me, this will be extremely beneficial to you!” The young Melinda’s expression was miserable and moving, yet Leylin remained apathetic.

“Yes. There are definitely benefits from experiencing how energy revolves in a rank 6 Magus’ body, and I’ll even be able to make contact with the law of fire. However, I’ve my own method of dealing with this!” Leylin chuckled, a malicious intent gleaming in his eyes.

“Don’t worry, I’ll help you now!” Crimson rings of light formed at Leylin’s back, causing him to transform into a terrifying ancient Kemoyin Emperor, two gigantic amber pupils staring at the Blazing Flame Monarch.

“You’re thinking of– “ The young Melinda showed the expression of a struggle before she went silent, and the Blazing Flame Monarch’s face got out.

“Damned Warlock, what are you going to do?” Boundless golden shackles appeared around the Monarch.

“I’m obviously going to help!” A callous voice was transmitted from the Kemoyin Emperor, and petrifying light burst forth and caused the flame shackles to be covered with a layer of stone as they cracked.

The Kemoyin Emperor’s tail ruthlessly struck the Blazing Flame Monarch, and with a flicker of black light she flew backwards a great distance. The defensive magic equipment on her body shattered.

With the Monarch’s wealth, she definitely had at least a piece of high-grade magic equipment on her person, but under Leylin’s attack it was as fragile as paper-mâché. This wasn’t purely because of the frightful offensive ability of the Kemoyin Emperor. It had to do in part with there being nobody controlling it.
“You…” The Flame Monarch suddenly stopped speaking, and the sound of bones breaking could be heard, causing the soul’s face to contort with pain. The light dulled by a large extent.

“Very good! Continue attacking her and attract her attention!” Lights flashed and Melinda’s face appeared.

“It’s my pleasure to do so!” Leylin laughed, and immediately after terrifying rumbling could be heard in the void.

*Pak!* Pow!* *Pak!* Pow!* The terrifying force from an ancient rank 5 creature caused the void to shake in the world crack. The Blazing Flame Monarch at the centre had now sustained injuries that were difficult to even imagine. If not for the support of the law of fire, as well as the durability of the body of a Breaking Dawn Magus far exceeding that of regular people, she would long since have become minced meat.

Two tiny wormlike souls nibbled away at the largest soul body on her face, causing the Blazing Flame Monarch to let out cries of misery. Gradually, the soul’s light dimmed and allowed Melinda to gain the upper hand.

“Good! That’s enough, stop attacking! When I’ve gained complete control over the body…” Melinda’s face showed her glee, but that quickly turned into an enraged shriek, “What are you doing?” She could see the Kemoyin Emperor that Leylin had turned into constantly shrinking until it turned into a python that was only tens of metres long, abruptly charging towards her. Its fangs were bared…
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The Kemoyin Emperor was originally over a hundred kilometres long, but its figure had shrunk a thousandfold as it became a python that was only tens of metres in length. Terrifying light burst forth from what used to be its scales. The two eyes of the python stared straight at Melinda, and her heart couldn’t help but palpitate upon seeing the merciless expression in them.

Leylin’s voice came from the python, “You’ve had enough, but that doesn’t mean I have. According to our deal, I’ve come for my reward.”

Following these words, the humongous python suddenly spread its mouth wide open, and a black hole formed within.

“Innate ability: Devour!”

“Nooo…” In the midst of Melinda’s pained cries, the Kemoyin Emperor that Leylin had transformed into bit ferociously onto the arm of the Blazing Flame Monarch. Soon after, it ripped open the space without hesitation and escaped.

*Buzz!* Its scales flashed with a glaring brilliance and even had traces of blood. Leylin had obviously used some sort of secret method that allowed him to disappear from Melinda’s senses almost instantly.

*Whoosh!* Golden blood droplets suddenly started splashing from where the arm was broken. Blood dripped into the empty space drop by drop, forming a large ball of golden flames in the blink of
an eye.
It was only now that Melinda started to let out a hysterical blood-curdling screech.
As a Breaking Dawn Magus, limb damage was not even considered a severe injury to her, but what Leylin had used earlier was his own innate ability, Devour. He had bitten into her flesh and devoured her bloodline! This even included a portion of her comprehension of laws and her soul! Her comprehension of laws had been stolen! The anguish of her soul being ripped apart almost made Melinda think she’d returned to the moment when she’d split her soul.
It was at this time that the Blazing Flame Monarch’s conscient, which had been suppressed, appeared suddenly and unleashed a ferocious counterattack.
“Damn it! Damn it!” Melinda roared, and horrifying golden flames spread out in all directions continuously.
Her other losses were still tolerable, but the disappearance of her comprehension of laws and the damage done to her bloodline could even make her drop in rank. The counter-attack by the Blazing Flame Monarch’s conscient at this moment left her without any time to chase after and attack Leylin. She could only roar in depression and once again concentrate her energy on fighting the Monarch.
The pure gold flames gradually filled up the region, and even traces of dust were burnt until there was nothing left. Only the gigantic golden yellow cocoon in the centre was still throbbing rhythmically, as if a phoenix waiting to rise from the ashes.
In a world where flames were everywhere, space was pulled apart as though it were a curtain, revealing Leylin’s silhouette. He peeked at his surroundings before giving a command without hesitation, “A.I. Chip!”
[Beep! Begin connection sequence! Activating astral gate!]
With the A.I. Chip’s voice sounding out, an enormous door bathed
in blue flames slowly formed in front of Leylin, and he stepped into it without the slightest situation. The world began spinning with a single step, and when he ran his eyes over his surroundings once again, he had already arrived in the laboratory at Düz City. Faint roars and shrieks could still be heard from outside, Düz City having descended into chaos. Outside of the laboratory, the subordinates of Jupiter’s Thunder and Joanna stood on guard, and all seemed still.

In the midst of such a disorderly scene, it appeared even more eye-catching.

A few civilians and such came forth to request for help from time to time, but were all rejected without mercy. The bodies on the ground still emitted a strong aura of death, effectively intimidating the few who still wanted to try their luck.

As for the biological beasts? Having seen the terror that Leylin could bring, they had run away as far as they could long ago. Whether they created disasters elsewhere was not of Leylin’s concern.

“Sir!” A few of the Morning Star Magi who were standing guard saw the astral gate open. Upon seeing that only Leylin had returned, their expressions changed.

“Hm!” Leylin nodded his head, indifferent. His entire being then transformed into a ray of black flames which dispersed. In just a few flashes, he vanished into the horizon.

The Morning Star Magi from the other powers looked at each other in dismay as they gazed in the direction that Leylin vanished in. They were of Morning star rank at most. Forcibly stopping Leylin was simply an impossible task, and having seen how cold-hearted Leylin could be they didn’t dare to do anything that would provoke him.

……
In the air. Blood was still seeping out of the corners of Leylin’s mouth, yet his face was filled with excitement. “Those few Morning Star Magi are rather tactful. I didn’t have to take any further action…”

“A.I. Chip, erase all the useless memories and emotions!”

At this moment, layers of flesh suddenly grew from Leylin’s body, carrying along with dense comprehension of the laws of fire. His Devour skill was still digesting the arm of the Monarch. The A.I. Chip swiftly operated per Leylin’s orders, getting rid of all the useless memories and emotions in what he had obtained. The useful information was then processed into specialised folders, and the Blazing Flame Monarch’s comprehension of laws, the most important part, was carefully extracted by the A.I. Chip into a specially established database.

‘The most important bit, the comprehension of laws, has been obtained!’ Leylin was brimming with excitement.

To him, no matter how plentiful the Blazing Flame Monarch’s treasury was, it was not enough. The only thing he was currently interested in was the pursuit of an even higher realm, one to which the power of laws was key.

Leylin still couldn’t believe himself as he recalled how he had made use of his devouring ability to absorb the comprehension of Laws and memories from the Blazing Flame Monarch’s body.

The exhilaration and delight almost made him break through the boundaries that he had set himself, and greedily take in everything that the Blazing Flame Monarch had to offer. Luckily, at the final juncture, he forcibly controlled his body with an unwavering determination that was as strong as steel, and left the Fiery World. He didn’t deal any killing blows to the Flame Monarch directly as he was afraid of her counterattack.

Regardless of the differences between Melinda and the original
Blazing Flame Monarch, with their lives under serious threat there was a definite possibility of an alliance.
In fact, the A.I. Chip’s derivations revealed that if Leylin took advantage of the time when both of them were battling, there wasn’t even a 10% probability that he would be able to directly take one of them out. The remaining possibility was that both parties would ally under immense pressure, which would result in Leylin returning without achieving anything, or even resulting in his fall.
In such a situation, Leylin would, of course, choose the method that was in accordance with his own interests, and leave after fishing up the best gains.
Although he was unable to get rid of the Blazing Flame Monarch, making her suffer some losses was good enough.
Initially, when he was extracting the Blazing Flame Monarch’s bloodline and laws, Leylin had almost lost control of himself, and the A.I. Chip’s had alerted him in time. He was so close to even being a threat to the Flame Monarch’s life, which would cause unforeseen repercussions to the situation.
But fortunately, all went according to Leylin’s script.
Although his final blow made the Blazing Flame Monarch suffer heavy losses, it did not exceed Melinda’s tolerance. Hence, she didn’t choose to reach a compromise with the original conscient, and instead continued to annihilate her greatest enemy. It was because of this that Leylin managed to escape successfully.
As for what happened prior to that, Leylin had simply scoffed at how Melinda had invited Leylin to help.
While his soul force was relatively powerful, it also depended on what it was being compared to.
In the face of the Breaking Dawn soul force of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s, his soul force was so meagre that it was not worth looking at. Even if he was called in to help, he would just be a mere soldier who wouldn’t even have autonomy over his own soul
force; his life and death would be controlled by his opponent. What annoyed him even more was that after fighting such a tumultuous battle, the items received would depend on whether the other party would fulfil their promises and also their mood. Leylin wouldn’t do such a silly thing, of course.

“However, I didn’t think that merely the arm of the Fire Monarch contained such a crazy amount of energy. Furthermore, there seems to be a mystery hidden in the knowledge and memories of the laws of fire…” Leylin faintly felt like his body grew bigger, but it was actually an illusion due to the excessive energy in his body. The corners of Leylin’s mouth curled up in a bitter smile as he recalled the past few times where he had transformed into the Kemoyin Emperor. No matter what he had devoured before, nothing had possessed such terrifying energy.

‘It’s fortunate that I chose to devour only one arm. If I’d chosen to swallow her whole, I’m afraid that even if she didn’t retaliate I would’ve burst apart due to this force.’ Leylin’s gaze flickered, as he changed his route of travel, his silhouette turning into a phantom.

This ability was brought about by dreamforce. Not only did it strengthen his resistance towards magic, it formed an illusionary forcefield which was effective at concealing his tracks.

The fruits of this battle were plentiful, so much so that even the almighty Leylin needed to find a spot to digest them fully.

……

Leylin didn’t expect that what he originally thought would be a simple digestion process would end up extending into a few months. The Blazing Flame Monarch had her own imprint of power of flames, and one of its characteristics was that it was extremely concentrated. This had given him a headache.
A squirrel bounded about continuously, a pine cone cupped between its paws as it nibbled on it with its buckteeth as quickly as lightning. White mist encircled the mountain range that stretched endlessly into the distance. Together with the green forest, it formed a dreamlike scene straight out of a fairytale. Countless runners formed a natural protective screen under a humongous tree, leaving a rather big space inside. Black fog filled the air here, hiding and isolating the place. In the heart of the fog, Leylin slowly let out a breath and opened his eyes.

‘The energy composition of a rank 6 Magus and its characteristic concentration is truly horrifying!’ Practically all of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s flesh was densely constructed by the most concentrated of fire laws, and merely the digestion process required vast amounts of effort on Leylin’s part. He still felt traumatised at the thought of it.

In actual fact, without the innate devouring ability of the Kemoyin Emperor, analysing the Monarch’s arm would have been a huge problem. It had taken him this long to finally figure it out. Just a moment ago, Leylin had not only fully swallowed the last trace of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s bloodline energy, but he had also completely sorted out the memory fragments and made the comprehension of laws his own.
The structure of a rank 6 Magus’ blood and flesh as well as information on the modifications to their body gave Leylin much inspiration and sprouted fresh ideas. He had also obtained many other benefits from the Blazing Flame Monarch’s abundant life energy.

He pulled up his stats with a thought, and quite a few of the information on the A.I. Chip’s screen was refreshed.

[Beep! Discovered high-grade cell structure. Simulating… Host has absorbed large amounts of life energy. Vitality increasing!] [Beep! Host’s soul has been strengthened. Spiritual force crossed bottleneck, reached Half Moon!] [Beep! Host’s stats have changed. Regathering info…]

It was after these messages that the A.I. Chip showed Leylin’s new stats.


Leylin had long since expected a rise in soul force, but the huge increase in vitality gave him a great surprise.

With a treasure like the phoenix egg, raising his soul force wasn’t an issue. It was just that his body couldn’t keep up.

It was funny now that he thought about it. Most Warlocks’ vitalities surpassed the growth of their spiritual force, but he was different.
He progressed much too quickly, to the point that his spiritual force advanced by leaps and bounds and left his vitality far in the dust. ‘A Half Moon truesoul, and such soul force!’ Leylin focused on his point mass. His truesoul was perfectly round as before, but the cold light of his soul force already occupied over half of it. ‘A truesoul like this is very powerful, but in comparison to a rank 6 Magus, it’s quite lacking…’

Leylin sighed, thinking back to the truesoul of the Blazing Flame Monarch that was like a scorching sun. The soul force seemed to have solidified. A truesoul like this could be said to have reached a peak, and could exist for a long time even without the Magus’ body. Soon after, he couldn’t help but burst out in laughter, finding himself too greedy. The path of a Magus was one of accumulation. Not only was the Blazing Flame Monarch of a higher rank than he was, she had spent tens or even hundreds of times longer than he had on searching for the truth. He was confident that, once he reached Breaking Dawn, his truesoul would not be second to hers.

“And this…” Leylin began to check all his profits. He’d been assigned many treasures from the attack on Düz City, a portion of the holdings a rank 6 organisation had amassed over time. Whether Morning Stars or even Radiant Moons, everyone would go green in envy at such wealth.

And yet, these things were all additional items to Leylin, not something he paid much attention to. What he was more interested in was the information recorded in the A.I. Chip.

“So... Soul splitting technique?” Leylin glanced through a document in the A.I. Chip while muttering to himself. He’d gotten this terrifying technique that could split apart a Magus’ truesoul when he’d taken advantage of Melinda earlier.

This technique could separate a truesoul into two parts, forming individual bodies that could think for themselves. It could also be used to discard unnecessary emotions or memories from the main
body of a Magus, an extraordinary effect.
“Sometimes, psychological issues can be a hindrance to the advancement of a Magus. This technique is even better for Warlocks. Perhaps Offa and the others would be more than willing to take out all their wealth in exchange for this…”
Leylin stroked his chin. After obtaining this truesoul splitting technique, they could strip off the berserk emotions from their bloodline instability by placing it in another soul. To some extent, this was a way to completely cure the Warlocks’ bloodline instability. A rational Warlock still retained their advantages but had no weak points. It was a terrifying thought, but it had one small issue.
After the truesoul was split into two the separated soul was, in some way, an individual body of its own. It could even become like Melinda, forming a will of its own and becoming hostile towards the original Magus.
However, because they had originally been one body, Magi could not just destroy this parted soul, or else their truesoul would be affected. They could only choose to banish the soul or suppress it, which would leave a danger lying around.
‘Whatever it is, this technique is very valuable. If not for that being an emergency, Melinda probably wouldn’t have given this to me…’
Leylin thought about Melinda. The female Magus had initially been one with the Blazing Flame Monarch, but there seemed to have been some issues when splitting the truesoul which led to her returning for revenge.
‘She’s lost part of her energy and bloodline, and is also facing issues from the cracked soul which haven’t been solved yet. It’ll be difficult for her to recover to her original strength…’ Leylin’s eyes flickered.
This was a situation he had intentionally created. The conscient of the original Flame Monarch was done for, and Melinda had to heal
the wounds to her body and soul. None of these were easy tasks. It would be a miracle if she could even remain at rank 6. Leylin thus concluded that the Blazing Flame Monarch’s organisation would die down for a very long time. After gaining control of the body, Melinda wouldn’t be the same as the Monarch was before and it was unknown whether she would come after him in the future. He’d made the best choice in the situation.

“A.I. Chip, show me the database on the Blazing Flame Monarch!” Leylin commanded. Immediately after, a large file was projected in front of Leylin, the information within an incomplete mess. Leylin hadn’t just devoured his opponent’s flesh and blood with his innate skill. He’d also managed to absorb her memories and her comprehension of laws. However, due to a lack of time, the memories he had were incomplete. Yet, they were good references for the A.I. Chip. Leylin’s eyes scanned through these incomplete memory fragments and came to the deepest ones. The few fragments here were like crystals that gave off a majestic aura, emitting burning hot rays of light.

Given that this was how the information was being displayed within the A.I. Chip’s database, it aroused Leylin’s interest.

[Beep! Comprehension of the laws of fire incomplete. Unable to scan and present as data, host needs to perform a soul force probe.] The A.I. Chip’s explanation rendered him speechless.

This was the bit on the comprehension of laws that the A.I. Chip had separated from the remaining memories in the bloodline Leylin had forcefully obtained. However, it was currently in a strange state that even the A.I. Chip could not decipher.

“This is the issue of having different power systems,” Leylin sighed.

In his view, the world was one complete existence that had various focuses. His previous world was one that focused on atomic
studies. The Magus World, on the other hand, was a world of energy and laws.
In reality, there was only one real world. Atoms, energy and laws were all just the same thing viewed from different perspectives. These differences in perspective allowed Magi and the people of his old world to come up with different conclusions.
The A.I. Chip was a result of microscopy, and it could not decrypt things like the comprehension of laws. It was only something to be expected.
However, with its continuous upgrades and the establishment of the database on the soul, the A.I. Chip had made continuous progress. It now accepted the embodiment of energy and laws.
Leylin was very confident in the learning abilities of the A.I. Chip. Some day, it would be able to analyse anything in the universe, becoming the best tool to search for the truth with. For now, the current ability of the A.I. Chip to store the comprehension of laws separately already left Leylin satisfied.
Though it could not be sent to him, perhaps comprehending laws himself was the best way to go about it.
Leylin closed his eyes. Half Moon soul force spread out from his truesoul, making contact with the scarlet Law Comprehension Crystals.
*Rumble!* A vast current gushed forth, and Leylin felt like an ordinary being standing amidst a flash flood in the mountains. Terrifying force weighed down on him from all sides, pushing and pulling at him with immense power. Many different scenes flashed before his eyes without end, detailing the comprehension the Blazing Flame Monarch had towards the laws of fire.
The red fire elemental particles seemed to be magnified a million times over as they appeared in front of him, their mysteries being unveiled layer by layer. Never had he felt as close to the fire
This feeling came and left very quickly. In a few seconds, Leylin regained his senses from this comprehension.

[Host’s brain waves in a peculiar state. No records in database!]
[Beep! Host’s blood flow rate has increased. Increase in energy wave radiation.] [Beep! Host’s fire elemental affinity has increased. Aptitude has been slightly strengthened.] ……

The A.I. Chip’s new prompts caused a smile to appear on Leylin’s face, ‘Comprehending the laws of fire can increase soul aptitude on top of increasing my elemental affinity?’

Leylin had never worried about his elemental affinity. His foundations were not half bad, and he’d never misstepped. Through the advancements in and strengthening of his bloodline, his control over darkness and fire exceeded that of most Radiant Moons.

However, his original soul aptitude was only at grade 3. Compared to grades 4 and 5, or even special geniuses, he still had a ways to go. His few advancements had only pushed him to the peak of grade 3.
Not only did Leylin have a lot of information on methods to increase elemental affinity, he’d also attempted some of these methods himself. There were ancient records detailing this field in the central continent, and the A.I. Chip had recorded the information down and used it well. However, even the central continent that was touted as the cradle of the revival of the glory of Magi had very little information on soul aptitude. It had been extremely unlikely for Leylin to find a physique from an ancient dead clan, and it might have been useful to him. However, Joanna had ended up self-destructing, something Leylin found a huge pity. With what he understood, Leylin found that the power of laws could alter his soul aptitude. How could he not go crazy in excitement? ‘The power of laws is boundless and inexhaustible, and can even modify a Magus’ soul aptitude!’ Leylin’s eyes brightened. While he was a bloodline Warlock, he still paid much attention to his soul aptitude. ‘But…’ At the thought of what he had comprehended, a look of hesitation rose on his expression. The Blazing Flame Monarch did not have complete authority over the law of fire, else she would long since have advanced to rank 7.
Her comprehension of laws was incomplete, and what Leylin had found from her memories was pieces of a fragmented version. He’d comprehended less than a tenth of the power of the laws of fire, and it was impossible for him to fully understand them and become a rank 7 Magus with this. With the A.I. Chip’s lack of research and information on laws, it was impractical to rely on it to simulate the complete version of the law of fire.

“Hah… There’s no way around it…” Leylin sighed, “Profiting through that risk was already extremely lucky. Do I have to sneak attack another Magus that has comprehended laws and steal their comprehension?” He was unwilling to go up against someone who had completely grasped the power of a law and obtained control of it.

The World of Gods had a special title for existences at rank 7 and above; they were called True Gods. This was because once one completely understood the power of laws, even a regular human would step into the domain of divinity! The gap between the two was even wider than the gaps between ranks 1 and 6.

Hence, while Leylin and Melinda dared to grievously harm a Breaking Dawn Monarch, they definitely wouldn’t set their sights on a rank 7.

He wanted to live for a long time, hopefully peeking at and transcending to a state of immortality. Why would he intentionally seek death?

“Those things don’t matter yet. For now, I need to break the bloodline shackles as quickly as possible and break through to Breaking Dawn. After all, only peaking the power of my soul force will give me the foundations to begin to comprehend the power of laws…”

At the thought of what had happened during the comprehension process, Leylin’s expression turned grim. With his current soul
force, analysing and comprehending the power of laws was much too difficult. Even though he had compiled all of the information, he had only felt a bit of the aura of the law of fire, and had not even understood 0.00001% of it.

Only Breaking Dawns could comprehend laws. Even being able to achieve what he had was because Leylin was talented and had the great help of the A.I. Chip.

“Whatever it is, I need to obtain the power of laws as soon as possible. Breaking the bloodline shackles will depend on it…” Recalling the meeting with the Wisdom Tree as well as its ‘gift’, Leylin’s eyes blazed as he immersed himself in understanding the law of fire.

……

Crimson light fluctuated around Leylin under a tree in the darkness. His eyes were closed tightly, as if he was in contact with a world full of mysteries. Large amounts of this light surged around his body, the endless information forming a strange code as they hovered before his eyes.

He tried to stretch out and grab those flaming words, but the action was in vain. He could sense some flaming words continuously dig into his body like earthworms, causing him to tremble slightly. The comprehension of laws had begun.

*Bzzt bzzt!* Just as Leylin’s comprehension of the law of fire was about to begin, a massive amount of crimson light interrupted him.

“No! What’s going on?” Leylin almost roared. The state he’d been in was clearly one that was hard to come by, and it had been interrupted just like that. It filled him with a near-insane bloodlust.

“Wah! Wah!” Both his bloodline and the innate controlling ability of the Kemoyin Emperor laid a scene out before his eyes.

In an extravagant bedroom the dark subterranean world, a bed
sheet had blood stains on it. A woman who was sweating profusely trembled as she held onto a wrinkled baby.

“Goo Gaa!” The baby with jet-black eyes still had amniotic fluid on its body. The umbilical cord had just been cut, and as if noticing Leylin peeping, the crying baby beamed up at him, causing the woman to be shocked.

“My blood! My blood has been born in Twilight Zone!” Leylin opened his eyes wide. All Magi had a strange sensitivity to their own blood, and given that the Kemoyin Emperor was the ruler of a race, Leylin’s sensitivity was even greater.

“Has the child I left to Celine been born?” His gaze penetrated through the ground and arrived at Twilight Zone. He hadn’t let the A.I. Chip control his interactions with Celine, intentionally leaving behind his bloodline with her. It was about time for the child to have been born.

Because these children were Warlocks, they would be different from regular humans. They would have some inborn talent, and could cause elemental storms or leak radiation at birth. Celine was a Magus herself and had defences against these situations. Most regular women would be done for.

The younger generation would mature quickly with Leylin’s rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor bloodline, and they would definitely be terrifying beyond belief.

With Celine’s influence, what kind of changes would be brought to Twilight Zone? Leylin’s eyes showed he was deep in thought.

And yet he was the same detached Magus after all, and he waited for a long time after observing the law of fire. With a slight sigh, Leylin placed his attention on himself, and the A.I. Chip’s prompts popped up.

[Beep! Host beginning to grasp unknown force, determined to be power of the law of fire. Fire elemental affinity increased by 50%.] [Host’s soul aptitude has been strengthened. Recalculating…]
Determined to be upgraded to grade 4.

‘My elemental affinity and soul aptitude have been upgraded after crossing the threshold of comprehending laws?’ Leylin was surprised by this. From his days as an acolyte to the current day, he’d only been able to raise his soul aptitude to the peak of his initial grade of 3. This one step he took into comprehending laws had pushed it up a grade, something with a terrifying meaning.

However, that would be it for Leylin’s current soul in terms of comprehension of the power of laws. He was only a Radiant Moon Magus after all, and his truesoul was still at Half Moon and hadn’t even reached peak Full Moon. It couldn’t support the study of laws.

In other words, Leylin himself wasn’t good enough to accommodate a greater understanding. He had to upgrade himself to break through, and that had to be accomplished by reaching rank 6, Breaking Dawn.

This discovery rendered Leylin speechless. Though he had stolen about 10% of the Blazing Flame Monarch’s comprehension of the laws of fire, he had only understood about 1%. The rest would have to be shelved due to him not meeting the prerequisites.

“My injuries have completely recovered, and I’ve gone through pretty much all of my profits. It’s time to return…” Leylin suddenly sighed, figure turning into black flames and disappearing from the area.

……

In an astral river, countless light-years away from the Magus World. A starlike coiled up snake in the Purgatory World revealed the figure of the Snake Dowager. Every strand of her hair was a different serpent, emitting different kinds of energy. Her face was extremely exquisite, and her eyes held within them the life and
death of worlds themselves. Every inch of her body seemed to embody the law of darkness, and it was full of perfection and harmony. Currently, there was a rare grimness in the Dowager’s eyes. “The Emperor of the Kemoyin has already begun to make contact with the power of laws? Its bloodline has begun to spread as well…” The Snake Dowager could see the events in the faraway Magus World from across the astral river, causing her to sink deep into thought. Though the Kemoyins were only a small branch of her bloodline, they still represented a portion of her abilities and authority! The imperial bloodline had left her on guard. This uncontrollable variable could one day become a power that would tear apart her divinity. “Through the shore of clouds and stars, my bloodline shall all return to my embrace…” The Dowager’s voice was faint and tender, giving one the urge to lose themselves within it. With what sounded like a prophecy, a tremendous illusory world slowly emanated from behind the Snake Dowager, and as if she was stepping through time and space, she entered the Magus World.
It was as if he had gone through a long fall. Leylin felt like he was in another world when he finally touched the ground.

‘What… is this place?’ Observing the dusky fog of the mountains and the black forest in the distance, he sank into deep thought.

*Caw! Caw! Caw!* A crow with three blood-red eyes spread its wings and took off from a tree branch beside him, leaving behind a few fallen feathers. Its piercing shrieks spread far and wide.

‘A.I. Chip!’ Leylin subconsciously commanded.

[Beep! Beginning scan of surroundings. Scan completed! Begin…] The A.I. Chip’s voice was normal at first, but near the end, it suddenly grew rough as if it was facing some strong interference.

“AAH! AAH! AAH!” After some time, the voice changed to become piercing feminine shrieks. They grew higher and higher in pitch until they threatened to blast Leylin’s eardrums apart, at which point he had no choice but to order it to halt operations.

“Wind probing…” Leylin stretched his arms out, and light green wind elemental particles gathered around him, the slight green wind elemental particles gathering extremely slowly, causing his brows to furrow. Soul force appeared, causing a light green gust of wind to spread in all directions.

‘This seems quite familiar, but I just can’t put my finger on it!’ Leylin frowned, feeling as if his memories were shrouded by some fog. Yet he managed to remember a lot of things, such as his magic.
Still, he seemed to have forgotten something important, and it gave him a bad premonition.
Soon enough, the scattered wind gave him some results which let him know of his current location. He was outside a forest, and there was even a dark red river flowing nearby. There was a wooden house not far away, with what seemed to be a human figure inside.
‘This range…’ Leylin’s brows furrowed, ‘Not only is it difficult to use spells at all, even their effects have been suppressed to a large extent. Could this be some high-ranked World?’
The temperature of the forest lowered with the setting sun, and the fog around him grew denser. It even turned a dark red, which sent a chill down Leylin’s spine. He quickly got out of the area and arrived at the wooden house he had discovered.
Golden roses were in full bloom behind the fence, and traces of grey smoke rose from within that allowed Leylin to feel some warmth. The wooden door creaked open, and a kindly woman walked out. The woman seemed rather young, around twenty years of age at best, but the intelligent glint in her eyes made Leylin feel like she was someone with abundant experience.
“Little brother! You’re back!” The woman chuckled after seeing him, the brilliance of her smile leaving Leylin intoxicated. It was as if the flowers surrounding her bloomed with her laugh.
“Who are you?” Leylin couldn’t help but ask.
“Me? I’m your sister. This is your home!” The woman’s face was beautiful, and the brilliant golden strands of hair that blew in the wind felt familiar to Leylin.
“My… home?” Leylin mumbled.
“Yes, your home! Welcome back!” His gentle sister spread her arms wide open, as if wanting to give him a warm embrace.
“You’re my… sister?!” Leylin kept repeating it over, and the beautiful woman’s face gradually matched to one in his memories.
“Yes! Little brother, you’re finally back!” There were tears in the woman’s eyes. And yet, he suddenly felt immense terror as her arms approached him for an embrace. An unknown malicious intent caused him to quiver in dread. ‘WAIT! I’m Leylin Farlier, a bloodline Warlock from the Magus World. Why am I here?’ a voice kept shouting out in his mind, but Leylin could no longer control his body. His limbs moved automatically, and he was only one step away from pouncing into a hug.

“Defiant Ring of Fire!” “Shadow of Quandary!” “Dark Serpent Tendrils!” Spell models flashed one after another in front of Leylin’s eyes, but his spells that had already been suppressed to a large extent seemed to lose all their abilities. No energy was emitted at all. “Come back!” “Come back!” “Come back!” The faint voice caused Leylin’s eyes to show further perplexion, and the surroundings of the wooden house underwent a huge change. The dark red fog grew more dense, and the bright golden rose gradually wilted to reveal white skeletons below. A few small snakes slithered out of the occasional eye hole.

The wooden house had changed behind the roses, becoming a coiled up bundle of snakes. A few triangular serpent heads popped out from it, spitting out a dark red poison. In an instant, the peasant home had turned into a terrifying hell.

‘This feeling of suppression is familiar…’ Streams of dark red fog automatically invaded Leylin’s body, and it caused the familiarity to grow more intense.

Finally, light flickered in the depths of Leylin’s eyes.

“It’s dreamforce! This is Dreamscape! I’ve been dragged into a dream!”

[Beep! Host determined to be in Dreamscape!] As if the fog in his memories had been completely swept away, the A.I. Chip’s voice was no longer that of a shrieking woman; it grew clear once more.
Feeling his elemental control and his soul force being isolated, Leylin’s thoughts flashed to something, ‘Dreamscape is a profound world that rejects all powers that are not dreamforce.’

“Come back!” At this moment, the fingers of the woman nearby were about to touch Leylin’s face.

“In that case,” a spell model was abruptly transferred to him by the A.I. Chip, “rank 4 dream spell Illusory Scepter!” Large amounts of dreamforce waves gathered in Leylin’s hand, forming a strange ancient scepter.

“Go away!” Leylin pointed the scepter at the woman, and dark red demonic flames sprayed out of it.

“AAAHH!” The woman screamed, covering her face and retreating.

“Who are you?” Leylin’s expression was very serious as he watched the woman who stood up once more. A large portion of her face had disappeared, but strangely enough she had no reaction to it. There wasn’t even any blood at the site of the injury.

“I never thought you’d have already altered yourself for Dreamscape and grasped control of dreamforce…” The woman spoke dully, but the familiar voice made Leylin’s pupils shrink, “You’re… The Snake…”

*Rumble!* The scene broke apart, revealing an astral river that stretched through the void. A starlike bundle of snakes opened up in the river, revealing the Snake Dowager within.

“My child, return to my embrace!” The Snake Dowager’s voice held within it some bizarre attractive force, causing the blood in Leylin’s body to boil, out of his control.

A voice inside urged him to submit and fall at the knees of the Dowager. Large numbers of giant snakes were hissing and roaring at him, the sound waves causing his expression to change. “This is not Purgatory World, but a dream.

“My free will shall not be controlled by anything else! Snake
Dowager, your biggest mistake today was dragging me into Dreamscape!” A decisive look immediately appeared in Leylin’s eyes, and an even more illusory, dazzling spell model formed in his hands.

“Rank 5 dream spell Distrait Dream!” Strange undulations shrouded the region… Feeling wetness across his cheek, Leylin opened his eyes to find a strange large beast looming over him with its mouth wide open. Its scarlet tongue licked at his face, and a terrible stench assaulted his nostrils.

“The central continent’s Bone Grey Badger? Then this is the real world, which means I’ve escaped?” Leylin’s eyes regained their radiance as he easily chased the monster away, glee apparent on his face.

He took a look around, and found skid marks on the ground, greenish yellow soil peeking through the tracks made in the grass.

“That’s right. I was on the way back to the Warlock Union, but the Snake Dowager pulled me into a dream, which is why I suddenly fell…” Leylin touched his chin, guessing what had happened.

“Darkness and dreams share a strong connection. It’s no surprise that she can use the power of dreams. The only thing she didn’t expect was that I’d already undergone Dreamscape alteration and be able to use dreamforce…” Cold sweat streamed down Leylin’s back. If not for his prior experience with Dreamscape, the consequences of being pulled into that dream would have been disastrous.

There was a huge gap between the Magus World and Purgatory. With the added limitations of protective spheres, the Snake Dowager would not be able to attack Leylin so easily.

Yet, Dreamscape was different. Space itself was muddled there, and everything was everywhere. An attack through dreams would be the most energy efficient.
Though there were some limitations, it should have been enough for the Snake Dowager to suppress Leylin. Perhaps the only thing she hadn’t considered was that Leylin had already made contact with dreamforce, and his body was used to it. This allowed him to snap out of it automatically, and even use a rank 5 dream spell. While he could do little to her, the time he had gained was enough for him to escape.

“Snake Dowager…” Leylin muttered, his eyes flickering with light. Her attack had made it clear to him that she would not tolerate any descendant escaping her control. The more outstanding he was and the faster he progressed, the more intense the conflict of interest would grow.

‘I never expected that a tiny existence like me would catch the attention of the Snake Dowager.’ Leylin’s lips quirked up in a bitter smile. He’d already felt like he was being watched when he’d evolved to become a Kemoyin Emperor Warlock. He just hadn’t expected this day to come so fast.
A. Chip, conduct a full body scan!” Leylin commanded. He had just escaped from the Snake Dowager’s dream. The Dowager was an existence that surpassed rank 7, and her power exceeded the limitations set by worlds. She could cross world borders and attack through Dreamscape, a strength that was unimaginable for Leylin. When dealing with someone like her, it wouldn’t hurt to be cautious. Hence, thorough checks were a necessary thing.

[Mission established. Beginning scanning procedures. Atomic microscope has been authorised, beginning scan…] Large amounts of blue light scanned every region of Leylin’s body after the A.I. Chip sounded, the images resolved to the cellular level. The atomic microscope scanned everything. The blue light took the form of countless threads that swept through him.

[Skeleton normal. Internal organs normal. Scanning bloodline and sea of consciousness…] Leylin looked rather calm, but when the A.I. Chip’s rays scanned his blood and sea of consciousness his expression changed. Tiny black runes wiggled out from the surface of his body, and after they emerged Leylin felt the blood circulation in his body abruptly speed up tenfold! The increase in blood flow caused his face to flush, and fine blood appeared deep inside his pores. The black runes crawled to his forehead, forming the image of a
little black snake. Around this snake was a ring of tiny pointed runes, resembling chains and a cage that kept the snake within. “What’s going on?” Leylin felt the bloodline force in his body show signs of going berserk, and the rune on his forehead began to exert more strength. It was restraining him! His bloodline force was rebelling against its owner, and restraining him. It sounded like a joke, but Leylin did not find it funny at all. “Quiet down. Innate spell of control!” Leylin exclaimed.

*Hss* The terrifying image of a Kemoyin Emperor appeared behind him. Currently, the phantom was encircled and bound by a circle of black chains as well. The massive Kemoyin Emperor hissed and roared, but it had no effect on the bindings. There were even sharp barbs on the chains, and they pierced through his scales into his flesh. The intense pain was transmitted directly to Leylin’s truesoul.

*HSS* The Kemoyin Emperor roared again, but this one seemed very feeble. Still, the will of a rank 5 ruler could somewhat control the rebellion of the bloodline force, and allowed the odd phenomenon in his body to calm down. “What is this?” Feeling the binding rune on his forehead absorbing his bloodline force on top of suppressing him, Leylin’s expression grew grim.

He’d already guessed that this was something left behind by the Snake Dowager. She was someone who exceeded rank 7, an existence that had grasped laws. Even though she had been careless enough to let him escape, she still had enough time to leave something behind. As the source of Leylin’s bloodline, manipulating his bloodline force slightly was a simple task for her. ‘The rebellion of bloodline force… All those who walk on the path of bloodlines will eventually be shackled by the very bloodline itself…’ For some reason, Leylin suddenly recalled the time when he’d first obtained Kemoyin’s Pupil, more specifically the
inscription by Great Magus Serholm.

[Beep! Host has been struck with an unknown curse. All stats decreasing.] The warning from the A.I. Chip was bright red, showing the urgency of the situation.

“Show me the information!” Leylin grew grim as he felt the weakening of his body. The rebellion of the bloodline force as well as the suppression of a portion of his strength made him feel unprecedented weakness.

‘I was too careless before! Strength that depends on a bloodline might be very useful initially, but there are going to be some hidden dangers no matter what. If not for my bloodline having evolved to the Kemoyin Emperor and having gained some degree of independence, this mark could very well have caused me to lose all my strength and become subject to the whims of the Snake Dowager!’ Leylin’s expression was incomparably dark.


Leylin now looked worse. These stats pulled him down to the level of one who had just stepped into Radiant Moon.

Though it had only been a short period of time, the curse had lowered his strength by about half, and there was a possibility of worsening.

Leylin looked at the ‘future undetermined’ in his status screen, and his voice was icy as he asked, “What does ‘future undetermined mean?’

[Based on evaluation of model, the curse will continuously absorb the host’s bloodline and increase its capabilities. The host’s stats are set to continue to decrease, and there is a possibility of a permanent
The A.I. Chip quickly answered him, but Leylin had nothing to rejoice over.
“Decrease? To what extent?”
[Unknown. Possibility exists of a complete loss of bloodline force.] The conclusion given by the A.I. Chip caused Leylin’s expression to grow even more serious.
‘Is it the bloodline shackles or a backlash? Or is this something the Snake Dowager chains her younger generations with?’ In an instant, Leylin’s mind came up with many possibilities.
This force was evidently linked to his bloodline force, and the closeness far exceeded Leylin’s expectations. In order to go further on the path of a Warlock, one would need to be modified by bloodline force, which was why it equated his own power.
However, when the Snake Dowager became hostile, Leylin finally knew the terror of the incomparably tame bloodline force when it rebelled.
Debts had to be repaid. Bloodline Warlocks relied on their bloodline force to amplify their progress, and be it in rate of advancement or battle strength, they exceeded their peers at the same rank. However, they were restricted by bloodline shackles, and once one met the source of their bloodline there was no way to fight back against them.
No. They, whose souls fused with the source of their bloodlines, would not even have thoughts of rebellion!
Leylin was sure that if Gilbert or any other Kemoyin Warlock was in his position, they would not even resist the Snake Dowager. Their wills were all subservient to her. This control extended past their bloodlines and into their souls. This was a powerful manipulation of souls! Unless one changed the soul, it was impossible to eliminate any influences.
‘Hehe… Once I have the intention of rebelling against you, you
strike me down and make me a regular human? How overbearing!’ Leylin stroked his chin and suddenly began to laugh coldly. ‘But I will never let anyone take control of my freedom. Bloodline force? It’s my bloodline, and even though it originates from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, it’s been altered and refined by the A.I. Chip. I even had it automatically evolve to become a Kemoyin Emperor, you can’t control me so easily…’

[A similar record has been found in the database] the A.I. Chip intoned at this moment. With the accumulation of knowledge from Sky City and the Warlock Union, the A.I. Chip could be said to be a museum of the Magus World. No matter how rare and obscure a topic was, information could be found about it.

[Allsnake Curse: The Snake Dowager of the Shadow World has supreme control over all of her progeny. This is a blessing and also a curse, one condensed with bloodline force. Once a descendant has thoughts of disobeying the will of the Snake Dowager, the Allsnake Curse will appear and automatically absorb as well as seal off the descendant’s bloodline force, turning into the most powerful bloodline curse. Effect: Continuous weakening of power of Warlock, until target’s death.]

There was also a projection of an image beside this introduction, and it was a carbon copy of the one on Leylin’s forehead. “Till death? I like it!” Leylin snickered, “A.I. Chip, based on this rate, how much time do I have left?”

[Beep! Based on current situation, host will fall from Radiant Moon in 26 hours, and in 267 hours lose Morning Star strength. 312 hours later, bloodline force will be completely lost and host will become a regular human.]

The complicated calculations were completed by the A.I. Chip in an instant, giving him a conclusion. “It’s too rushed. Is there anyway to slow the process?”

With its massive calculative ability, Leylin was given an answer.
[Host can suppress their own bloodline force and seal off their Radiant Moon strength. Such a situation can easily extend the period by three years in tandem with the Medusa’s Gaze potion.]
The Allsnake Curse was a curse that absorbed his bloodline force, which was why sealing his own strength would slow the effects of the curse temporarily.

Leylin nodded, but suddenly froze.
“Sealing off my Radiant Moon strength means I’ll be able to maintain this condition for three years, but I can’t use any strength at rank 5. In that case, if I were to meet a powerful enemy…” Leylin knew fully well that the more he used his own power, the closer he was pushing himself to death.
However, his enemies would not let him off so easily, especially the Snake Dowager. With the attacks from Dreamscape, he’d been forced to run for his life constantly, and this situation would force him to use his bloodline force. He had then suffered the backlash from the Allsnake Curse, which was probably her intention.
“In that case, she definitely won’t give up after one attack!” Leylin’s pupils shrank abruptly.
“Hss” At the moment these thoughts emerged, his truesoul was distracted as he entered Dreamscape once more.
A terrifying gigantic white snake was spitting out its tongue, its gaze of one looking at a dead man.
“A.

I. Chip, conduct scan!” Leylin ordered, and the A.I. Chip quickly sent a passage of information to him.

[Alabaster Devilsnake: Rumoured to be a descendant of the Snake Dowager that inherited dreamforce. Likes to torture its prey in their dreams before digesting them. Matures at rank 5.]

It gave him a thought. ‘Even the Snake Dowager needs to use a large amount of energy in order to send dreamforce to a faraway world. That’s probably why she just activated the Allsnake Curse and then left the rest to her children…’

*Hss* At this moment, the Alabaster Devilsnake was flicking its scarlet tongue as its blood red eyes were fixed on Leylin. Its body rumbled as it moved abruptly, turning into a streak of white lightning.

‘There’s no choice but to act!’ Leylin laughed wryly, the energy in his body beginning to boil, “Dream spell…”

White lightning seemed to flicker through the void, and when things returned to normal Leylin was back in the real world. At this moment, his face looked wretched. The Allsnake Curse on his forehead spread a lot of black veins, greedily absorbing his own bloodline force and turning the strength from his own body into a curse. It was a continuous cycle with no cure.

[Warning! Warning! Host’s bloodline force has reached the threshold and is about to drop from Radiant Moon.]
The red warning prompt the A.I. Chip sent out caused Leylin’s heart to sink. While he’d done his best to hold back his strength, in order to escape from Dreamscape he had no choice but to use dream spells and his bloodline force. It had provided the Allsnake Curse with an opportunity to act up.

‘No, this can’t go on! A.I. Chip, set up a maze in Dreamscape,’ Leylin quickly commanded. The possibility of being dragged into a dream and assaulted from all sides caused his face to turn dark.

[Beep! Mission established, beginning projection of guiding coordinates. Setting up Dreamscape firewall] the A.I. Chip immediately intoned. That was the result of Leylin’s studies on Dreamscape. He could try to prevent others from pulling him into a dream, and while he did not know how well it would go, it was still better than nothing.

Making use of this borrowed time that would be hard to come by, Leylin immediately started on other plans, ‘A.I. Chip, begin procedure D-23, let’s forge the Mask of the Dreamless!’

This command was to make the necessary preparations for the Snake Dowager attacking through Dreamscape.

[Mission established! Beginning simulation. Materials required: 300g of Luk Alloy, tooth of single-eyed snake…] These were all materials Leylin had found could isolate dreamforce in his previous experiments. A black gas appeared on his body with the A.I. Chip’s report, and the materials it had mentioned floated out from a flickering light in his waist pouch.

A bundle of demonic black light was formed, devouring the materials. Leylin looked calm as he watched the materials dissolve in the flames, occasionally making some seals and transferring some refining runes into the flames.

Just these few casual movements were extremely fluid, exhibiting the terrifying abilities of a Grandmaster alchemist.

With Leylin’s powerful control, it wasn’t long before a mask with
only one half hovered above the flames. This mask was completely black, its fluid lines and decorative designs giving it a unique aesthetic. A strange aura was emitted from it. The mask flew out and covered Leylin’s face, blocking the Allsnake Curse on his forehead. Leylin seemed to change after wearing the mask, and now seemed to have some mysterious charm. The A.I. Chip soon listed the ingredients and all sorts of information about the mask. [Unique Magic Item Mask of the Dreamless. Weight: 200g. Material: Luk Alloy, tooth of single-eyed snake. Effect: Prevents being spied on with dreamforce. Protects truesoul from invasions from Dreamscape…] The icy cold mask covered part of Leylin’s skin, making him feel at ease, “Thankfully, I’d already been focusing on dealing with dream invasions, and had invented the Mask of the Dreamless.” His fingers stroked the mask, feeling the complicated and intricate patterns. This mask was formed from simulations based on the A.I. Chip’s database. On top of that, with Leylin’s eye as a Grandmaster alchemist and his creativity allowed him to create this item. It only had a singular function in blocking dream invasions, which meant it couldn’t be classified as a magic artifact or equipment. However, it’s ability did not lose out in value to some magical equipment either. To Leylin, who’d altered himself for Dreamscape and was sensitive to dreamforce, the Mask of the Dreamless was something that finally allowed him to relax. ‘Unless the mask is destroyed, my opponent’s can’t just drag me into a dream and use up my strength…’ Leylin now fully comprehended the terror that was the Snake Dowager. Even while they were in different worlds, he could do nothing against her. Thankfully, with this as a buffer, he could now calm down and think through this matter.
“A.I. Chip, check the database of all the simulations I authorised and find a method to solve the Allsnake Curse.”
Leylin’s voice was low, and the A.I. Chip quickly began to operate as large amounts of information appeared in front of him. Countless formulae were used, and a faint image of the Snake Dowager even appeared in the virtual space.
With the countless calculations, the A.I Chip came up with a conclusion. [Host has 3 options:
The Snake Dowager removes the mark of her own accord.
Host gets the blessing of a rank 9 existence, using their origin force to purge the Host’s bloodline.
Host completely breaks through bloodline shackles, severing all ties with the Snake Dowager.]
‘Plans 1 and 2 are impossible, there are too many uncertain variables. I can’t do anything for a high-ranked existence, so I’d have to rely on luck,’ Leylin touched his chin, light glinting in his pupils, ‘The only choice is to break through the restriction on the bloodline and break away from these shackles completely!’
The control and curse of the Snake Dowager came from the Giant Kemoyin Serpent’s bloodline force. If Leylin could completely shatter the bloodline shackles and become an independent being, he would no longer be affected by her.
As he was now, this was the most feasible plan.
“But I didn’t expect to meet her so quickly. I’ll have to find a way to break the bloodline shackles. I can’t skip this, and I’ll have to go to Purgatory World…”
Leylin looked grim, ‘With my current state, I need to keep a low profile for a period of time…’ With this thought, he transformed into a bundle of black flames and disappeared.

……
In the Morning Star Area. Jeffrey wore a black swallow-tailed coat with not even a hair out of place, seeming like the most upright gentleman.

“Lady Freya is about to give birth. This is something worthy of celebration for our Warlock Union!”

“Yes! The rank 5 bloodline in our union now has been passed on! With the talent His Highness Leylin has shown, the future of his bloodline descendants is going to be bright…”

Offa laughed as he spoke. He was now waiting with Jeffrey above the castle for Leylin.

Flustered maids and servants ran everywhere in the castle. A layer of crimson energy spread through the area, gradually enveloping a room and still travelling outwards. The low voice of a woman sounded within.

“This is a rank 5 bloodline! Is it the Giant Kemoyin Serpent? What’s going on? Does the Kemoyin Serpent have an ancestor or something like that?” Jeffrey was rather curious about this.

“No. His Highness’ bloodline is the purest Kemoyin bloodline, there’s no doubt about it. Based on my observations, the bloodline he’s inherited might very well be that of the ancient Kemoyin Emperor, the ruler of the Giant Kemoyin Serpents!” Offa’s voice was soft, as if he was revealing some huge secret.

“Hss… In other words…” Jeffrey sucked in a breath of cold air.

“Yes! The royal family of the Ouroboros Clan has appeared. There is no leader more proper than the Kemoyin Emperor!” Ruling bloodlines held immense control over bloodline clans. This was the same case with the Snake Dowager over Leylin, and based on his Kemoyin Emperor bloodline Leylin had authority over the lives and deaths of the Kemoyin Warlocks under him. His bloodline definitely ruled the Ouroboros Clan!

“The Ouroboros Clan will forever be subservient to the ruling bloodline to the day that the bloodline dies off. Unless that
happens, betrayal will not occur for eternity!” Offa’s voice was still as low as before, “We have to be even more prudent when dealing with His Highness.”
“That I know, but… Bevis…” Jeffrey could only laugh wryly.
No matter what organisation it was, the appearance of talents like Bevis and Leylin were worthy of celebration. However, the two geniuses did not see eye to eye, which resulted in a great catastrophe.
To be honest, the reason they were here was to serve as protection and as a warning.
If not, Leylin would definitely not let Bevis go. If he were to do anything drastic the consequences were not anything they wanted to see.
Otherwise, even for the birth of a child with a rank 5 bloodline, there wouldn’t be two Radiant Moon Warlocks on guard duty.
At the mention of this, Jeffrey seemed to think of something and suddenly asked. “Lord Offa, did you see the news regarding the Blazing Flame Monarch?”
O

f course! The Blazing Flame Monarch’s lair in Düz was destroyed! Even the whereabouts of a Breaking Dawn like the Monarch are unknown now, how would I not know of something so big?” There was a bitter smile at the corner of Offa’s lips.
This was the biggest news these days in the central continent. No, for the core of a rank 6 Monarch’s power to be struck so severely, this was something that hadn’t happened in the past few thousand years!
News concerning the Blazing Flame Monarch themselves being seriously injured and their whereabouts being unknown horrified Offa and the other Radiant Moon Warlocks.
This was a rank 6 Magus, a Breaking Dawn! It was someone who’d come into contact with the power of laws!
Even with the amplification from their bloodlines and having transformed the Morning Star Area into a large fort, in front of such an existence they could only defend themselves. In contrast, Leylin not only struck at and robbed the Blazing Flame Monarch’s Düz City, but he also left his opponent missing, with no news whether they were dead or alive. Such a terrifying strength and methods caused Offa and the others to grow even more vigilant and fearful.
“Really, this time His Highness Leylin…” Even the highest authority of the Warlock Union, Offa, could not help but feel shocked at
Leylin’s boldness and strength. His group had originally thought Leylin wanted to launch a surprise attack on the Blazing Flame Monarch’s troops for revenge; they’d never expected that he’d been targeting the Monarch themselves all the while.

The most crucial thing was that he seemed to have succeeded! His courage and exemplary strength were displayed through his success, and it even left Offa incessantly frightened.

Jeffrey was a little speechless as well. “I’ve received news that the outside world not only placed Leylin’s rank 5 bloodline as the Union’s most powerful inheritance, it even listed him as the most powerful Radiant Moon. They’re claiming he’ll bring about the rise of bloodline Warlocks.”

He’d thought before that he already had a deep understanding of Leylin’s prowess, but he hadn’t thought that his previous performance was only scratching the surface of his abilities.

“However, His Highness Leylin’s military success will awe many people,” Offa lifted his head and looked at the surroundings. A smile emerged at the corner of his lips, “It seems His Highness Bevis won’t be coming this time. That’s great!” He was happy that he could avoid internal strife.

Jeffrey rolled his eyes. “After learning of Leylin’s feats, how would he have the guts to come here? We’re just here in case anything happens.”

Even he had no choice but to admit a slight fear of Leylin’s methods. You dare offend me? I’ll show up at your doorstep to kill you. I won’t bother with your soldiers or anything, I’ll eliminate the mastermind directly. How many come is how many I will kill, even if the opponent is a Monarch. This method that went against common sense would usually be suppressed by the masses, but if one possessed enough power to contend against the opponent, they would turn into the largest threat.

At the very least, it was very clear now to Bevis that if he tried any
tricks, even if he didn’t act himself, if Leylin thought he did it he would find and kill him. Be it Offa or Jeffrey, their counsel would not help.

As for the other Warlocks of the Union? Even if the Blazing Flame Monarch hadn’t been eliminated, they’d at least sustained grievous injuries. Did Bevis believe that their help would equate to Breaking Dawn strength?

“Actually, this is also a good thing!” Offa let out a faint smile, “For now, His Highness Leylin, said to be invincible below Breaking Dawn, is the Warlock with the greatest hope of advancing to rank 6. Gaining a military deterrent like that will greatly improve our circumstances in the central continent…”

“Invincible below Breaking Dawn?” At this moment, a figure emerged before Offa and Jeffrey. His voice was extremely familiar but it caused their expressions to change.

“Your Highness Leylin?” Jeffrey looked at Leylin who suddenly appeared, fear secretly emerging in his heart.

He and Offa were Radiant Moon Warlocks, and on top of that they were actively monitoring their surroundings. Even the flow of energy particles in the air could not escape their senses, yet Leylin had bypassed them so easily to appear behind them. Didn’t this mean that, if Leylin intended it, he could mount a sneak attack on any of the Warlocks here?

Only now did Jeffrey truly realise how different Leylin was from before. The current him indeed was the hope of the bloodline Warlocks, the Warlock invincible below Breaking Dawn!

Leylin was wearing a dark gold Magus robe, and it was as if the aura on his body had completely vanished. It left Jeffrey unable to measure him clearly. On top of that, Leylin currently had a strange black mark covering half his face, and it caused him to be slightly doubtful.

“This is…” Offa took the initiative to ask.
“Ah,” Leylin touched the mask on his face, “A small injury I got a while ago.” Trying to cover it up would easily arouse suspicion, so he felt like he might as well admit it.

“Indeed, the terror of a Breaking Dawn is hard to resist,” Offa nodded, deep in thought. The opponent was indeed a Monarch; no matter how powerful Leylin was, avoiding injury was impossible. Offa had formed his own picture of things with Leylin’s misleading words. The wound on Leylin’s face had automatically been categorised as the aftermath of his confrontation with the Blazing Flame Monarch.

“Before I forget, it’s been a long time Your Highnesses,” a wicked smile adorned Leylin’s face as he took the initiative to make a bow, “Freya and the Ouroboros Clan have been in your care during my absence, this humble servant is thankful.”

“Don’t mention it. Your Highness managed to destroy Düz City in one move, even inflicting serious damage to the Blazing Flame Monarch. Compared to such great news for us suppressed Warlocks, is this anything big?” Offa and Jeffrey answered respectfully. No matter what, the friendship of a Warlock invincible below Breaking Dawn would be extremely beneficial for them.

“Let’s skip the words of thanks, may our friendship last forever!” Leylin smiled; he certainly knew what these two Warlocks wanted. “Of course! Our friendship is like a bond of brotherhood,” Offa and Jeffrey were both Warlocks with age and much knowledge, while Leylin, too, had a multitude of experiences. The three Warlocks kept flattering each other and beat around the bush, but did not get to the point.

Watching Leylin’s carefree attitude, even as if he didn’t care much for Freya who was in labour downstairs, Offa could not help but secretly call him an ‘old fox’ in his mind. Still, he took the lead to question him, “We’re not sure what the results of Your Highness’ trip this time was. The Blazing Flame Monarch…”
Of course, the life and death of the Blazing Flame Monarch was their priority; and how could the news in the outside world be more accurate than the account of Leylin who was one of the parties involved? This also was a measure of Leylin’s military strength, and would have an inexpressible change in the dynamics of the central continent afterwards. They had no choice but to be concerned.

“Oh, about that. I’m sorry,” Leylin laughed with ‘embarrassment’, “Although I took Düz down with some like-minded friends, and even attacked the Fiery World and inflicted serious damage to the Blazing Flame Monarch, I still couldn’t quite kill them.”

Although this was just a short and simple explanation, just the dangers implied by them caused Jeffrey and Offa to break into cold sweat in terror.

Hearing that the Blazing Flame Monarch was seriously injured but not dead, relief flooded Offa’s heart despite his slight disappointment. If Leylin was already able to get rid of a Breaking Dawn Magus, he didn’t know what sort of attitude to hold towards him anymore.

“However…” Leylin deliberately paused, causing Offa’s and Jeffrey’s hearts to grow alert again.

“Although we didn’t manage to get rid of the Blazing Flame Monarch, we were successful in inflicting serious damage on the opponent instead. Not only would it take a long time to recuperate from such a thing, it’s hard to say whether the Monarch will even be able to remain at rank 6 even after a full recovery…”

He then dropped another bomb before Offa and Jeffrey could digest this shocking news, “It’s also worth wondering if the Blazing Flame Monarch will treat us as enemies in the future. I don’t believe that will be a huge issue…”

The explosive news that Leylin dropped one after the other caused Offa and Jeffrey to be dazzled. They couldn’t understand at all. The
Blazing Flame Monarch could possibly fall in rank, and on top of that end their enmity with Warlocks even in spite of such great losses? How was this even possible?
However, looking at the proud Leylin, Offa and Jeffrey couldn’t help but consider this possibility from all angles.
Leylin smiled. The ‘Blazing Flame Monarch’ had lost a part of her laws of fire, sustained serious injuries, and worst of all experienced the trauma of her truesoul being split and fused back together. With so much damage being stacked on her, if Melinda was able to recover even within a few hundred years, Leylin would look up to her.
Furthermore, the Blazing Flame Monarch’s will could thoroughly be suppressed or annihilated by Melinda before that. Whether the current Blazing Flame Monarch could still maintain her previous attitude of desiring the extinction of bloodline Warlocks remained to be seen.
Although Leylin was ruthless in his betrayal, they were still ‘allies’ after all. With her power weakened, what she needed now was a peaceful environment to recuperate in, not an impetuous vengeance. Leylin believed that an old witch like Melinda would easily be able to think of that.
Hence, it was almost certain that even the extremist portion of the Blazing Flame Monarch would choose to stay low profile and live in seclusion now.
Although this was the case, the obstinate ruthlessness the Blazing Flame Monarch showed towards Warlocks was deeply seared into their minds. They wouldn’t be able to react to this quickly at all.
Seeing them like that, Leylin could not help but feel slightly amused. And at this moment, “Wah! Wah!”, an infant’s cries echoed from the castle.
The loud and clear cries strangely reverberated through the entire castle, a hallmark to this child’s remarkability.
And now my second descendant is born,” Leylin didn’t know himself what he was feeling exactly, but the birth of a descendant still caused a slight tenderness in his heart.

“Please excuse me,” he said to Offa and Jeffrey, knocking them out of their stupor.

“Of course Your Highness, go handle your own matters first,” they answered with understanding.

Black flames flashed as Leylin disappeared, only to arrive at a room in the castle. This luxurious room was filled with the smell of blood and amniotic fluid. A few wet nurses had already collapsed on the floor, the main culprit being the infant that was still crying out loud.

These wet nurses had been carefully selected, and almost all of them were rank 1 Warlocks. Still, the power from the rank 5 bloodline in the child’s body surpassed the limits of what they could bear.

After all, Leylin, Freya, and the rest normally suppressed their vital radiations on purpose to avoid polluting the surrounding environment. A newborn couldn’t possibly have such awareness.

As the infant wept, darkness elemental energy particles emerged and began circling around it. Black flames burnt constantly, beginning to wreck the surrounding furniture and bed sheets.

“Its spiritual force and bloodline force are rebelling?” Instead of
frightening him, this news actually made Leylin glad. “This child’s innate skill is very high!”
This degree of rebellion did not bother him, and he easily suppressed it as he held the infant up. Seemingly due to sensing the bond of their bloodline, the infant immediately stopped crying upon seeing Leylin, and even let out an innocent smile.
Being a peak rank 3 Warlock whose vitality surpassed most others, Freya had managed to maintain her consciousness till now. When she saw who had arrived, she was shocked at first but then relaxed, “Dear… Our child…”
“Yes, our child is born. It’s been hard on you,” Leylin comforted her gently, his palms still caressing the forehead of the infant in his embrace. Black light flashed in the room, causing it to fall into a deep slumber.
Just like this, Leylin embraced the child and accompanied Freya quietly. Even though she was a Warlock, the fatigue due to the pregnancy and labour of a child with such a unique bloodline still caused her to fall into a deep sleep very quickly.
‘A legacy of the bloodline, eternal from generation to generation.’ Leylin seemed to grow some special feelings as he looked at the soundly sleeping infant in his hands.
The pursuit of eternal life was the dream of all humans, but there were almost none who succeeded in the endeavour. Hence there was another method; by producing offspring and passing down their bloodline, one could achieve a sort of immortality of genetics. Then there was a sort of spiritual immortality. By passing on one’s own knowledge and perception of the world to others, teaching students of one’s culture and wisdom, one could achieve an immortality of its own.
Descendants would need to be nurtured. One would need to inculcate their own ideas in their blood descendants, spreading their knowledge. This, too, created an eternal life in some sense. As
long as this tradition was passed from generation to generation, one could be considered as having partly accomplished the goal. Hence, be it in his previous life or in this world, humans always held feelings for their descendants. Although individuals who broke this norm did exist, they were not the mainstream. To Leylin, passing down his bloodline was not only a means to form his power. His descendants would inherit his ideas and legacy. Although true eternal life existed in the Magus World, something much more attractive than having descendants, that did not hinder him from keeping them as a last resort.

‘The power of its bloodline is very rich, but it also conceals some dangers!’ Soul force swept through the infant, revealing everything about its body before his eyes. Leylin’s eyebrows furrowed. At rank 5, the Kemoyin Emperor bloodline would definitely be detected by the Snake Dowager. With him taking the heat, these bloodlines that were diluted with others might not be given much attention, but even small movements, combined with the infants’ inability to stay on guard, would lead to complete annihilation. Hence, he had to take precautions.

‘A.I. Chip, construct a Dreamscape defence,’ Leylin commanded. The A.I. Chip quickly responded. [Beep! Mission established! Beginning to transfer runes…]

Misty runes began to appear on Leylin’s hands one after the other, forming a unique seal that merged into the infant’s back before flickering and fading.

‘The possibility of his bloodline attracting attention was already very low. With the addition of these defences it should be negligible,’ Leylin was nodding as he thought of Celine, ‘I still need to find the time to make a trip to the Twilight Zone.’

The main door was pulled open with a thud, and he walked out while carrying the child. Outside the door, Gilbert and Emma were waiting alongside Kubler and his other subordinates, all of them
with excitement in their expressions. “Congratulations, Master!” His first subordinate Warlock knelt down respectfully. Kubler’s actions were followed by the loud sounds of congratulations. “Mm,” Leylin nodded, raising the infant in his hands above his head, “This child shall be called Syre. Syre Farlier, son of Leylin Farlier!”

In the language of the central continent, the name Syre carried the connotation of being honourable and blessed. It was a very good name. Hearing Leylin’s announcement, Kubler and the others momentarily drowned the area with cheers, “Syre! Syre!”

……

A grand feast was held that night in celebration. Not only did Offa, Jeffrey and Wayde attend, even Bevis had to force a smile on his face and come over to congratulate Leylin. After the grand feast ended, Leylin gathered Gilbert, Emma, Offa, and the others, announcing his decision to set out on a long journey. He told these people that he’d discovered another world, and was preparing to delve into a long-term expedition. Although Offa and others did not really understand Leylin’s actions, they still consented and promised to support the Ouroboros Clan as they always had. To the outside world, the Warlock invincible under Breaking Dawn was going to conduct long-term research, and he would hence stay in the Morning Star Area for a very long time.

Leaving aside the effect this news had on the central continent’s current situation, Leylin had left the Morning Star Area the very next day in secret. His departure this time was very low-profile. By the time someone realised it, they’d already lost his tracks.
... Twilight Zone.
The lake of lava burst apart, revealing Leylin’s figure, looking expressionlessly at his cuff. There, the lava had impressively burnt a round hole, leaving a mark.
‘Indeed. Now that I’m sealed, I’m not as strong as the last time I came here. I can only be considered an ordinary Morning Star now...’ A bitter smile hung at the corner of Leylin’s lips.
Due to the restrictions from the Allsnake Curse, he could no longer utilise power at Radiant Moon, even having taken the initiative to seal his bloodline force. Still, all that had only bought him three years of time.
He had to use this time to break through the shackles of his bloodline, resolving the curse. If not, the consequence would be his bloodline being completely sealed by it, something that would lead to immediate death!
Now that he’d taken the initiative to seal a large portion of his bloodline, the A.I. Chip evaluated him to be no stronger than a Morning Star Magus. The best proof of this was the lava passageways. He could run amok in them before, but now it had managed to break through his defences and even leave a mark on his clothes.
‘This doesn’t feel good,’ Leylin’s eyebrows furrowed.
Being sealed due to the Allsnake Curse, he was now inferior to an ordinary Radiant Moon Magus. He had to conceal his own aura in the Morning Star Area to deceive people, so how would he dare to stay there for any length of time? With his strength having suffered great losses, the central continent was too dangerous for him. He had to go into hiding for some time.
Leylin never believed in fairness and good blood. Only the most
meticulous plans would guarantee his safety as he advanced on his path. Remaining in the Morning Star Area would cause unending problems. Going out instead was better for both parties. Before confirming that Leylin had thoroughly died, who would dare to harm the Ouroboros Clan, Freya and her child? There was, in fact, a darker thought deep in Leylin’s heart. If anyone reached out for his power, he could at most come back for revenge later on, paying them back tenfold. Those with no qualms made the most terrifying of enemies.

‘After resolving the matters in Twilight Zone, I’m afraid I’ll need to make a trip to the south coast.’ Making silent calculations, Leylin suddenly lifted his head to look at the gloomy rock ceiling, letting loose a quiet sigh.

The current him had to leave for the Purgatory World to resolve the Allsnake Curse. With the Snake Dowager’s lair being there, the amount of danger could not be described. Thus, even Leylin wasn’t very confident in his outing this time. Thus, settling all matters on his hands evidently became important. The central continent was taken care of, and next would be Twilight Zone.

After that, he still wanted to return to the south coast in his heart. Be it the rank 3 Magus who inflicted serious damage on him at that time and force him to flee underground, or the matters related to the Farlier Family on the Chernobyl Islands, he needed to tie up all loose ends.

Even a Morning Star like the current him would be invincible in the south coast.

Only when these matters were totally resolved would Leylin be able to abandon everything completely. He could then enter the Purgatory World, striving for his own path forward even at the cost of death.

‘Twilight Zone’s matters are easy. Only, should I leave behind a
hand in the shadows?’ Leylin stroked his chin. His entire figure suddenly transformed into a black flame, whistling into the horizon.
Celine was currently beside a cradle. Looking at the figure that suddenly emerged beside her, she exclaimed with pleasant surprise, “Leylin!”
He named his first child Daniel. After setting up some isolation spells and asking Celine to hide herself for a period of time, he reckoned everything should be fine. With his business done, he headed for the south coast. Though the surroundings were filled with dangerous areas that even rank 3 Magi were known to be unable to escape, this north coast that was isolated from the world seemed to Leylin like his backyard.

“It’s been so long, I wonder how those friends and enemies are now?” Leylin looked at the clouds through his window, and familiar faces appeared in his mind. George, Nyssa, Damien, Number 4 and 5, and the former principal who were all his friends and servants. There were also his enemies like Gargamel and Alric as well. Memories were dusted off one after the other, especially of him taking an airship to the south coast before he was even an acolyte. It all seemed as if it had happened yesterday.

“Time flew by in the blink of an eye…” Leylin raised his arm, glancing at his youthful and energetic palm as his mind drifted away once more.

“With fifth-grade aptitude, Jayden should be alive and well even now. As for George and Kaliweir… After all, one’s soul aptitude is the most important thing for a Magus.” Leylin sighed. If not for choosing the path of a Warlock, he would
likely still be stuck as a rank 1 or 2 Magus, even with the help of his A.I. Chip. Forget Morning Star, the current him had even reached the Radiant Moon realm, something unheard of in the south coast. His bloodline had a large part to play in these advances. Things were always unpredictable…

“Besides…” Leylin looked at the near Volcano City and let out a sinister smile.

Red light circulated around his hand, and through his bloodline he could feel the activity of other Farlier descendants in the nearby Teljose City.

‘Descendants of Viscount Farlier?’ Leylin laughed, ‘Didn’t I not have any siblings before I left? Viscount John Farlier is very much like our ancestors indeed…’

Leylin still held some attachment towards the Farlier family; after all, his current body came from them. Even though he’d sent Damian over to protect them along with Number 4 and 5, he still couldn’t thoroughly cut his ties to them. Still, because it was difficult for him to face them at that time, he’d done it anyway.

A few hundred years had passed since then, and all that would be left of his relatives and friends would be ash and bone. This would make things easier for him; all he needed to do was give a few benefits to his descendants and everything would be fine.

“Attention to all passengers. The airship is arriving at the terminal in Teljose City! Please gather your belongings and leave the ship in order,” The gentle female voice sounded again, “Furthermore, the next flight will begin half a year later. The airship will circle the eastern line. Please make any reservations if need be. One final announcement: Traces of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect have been detected in the eastern portion of the city. Please be careful.”

The first few announcements didn’t net much of a reaction from the passengers, after all the airships here were not comparable to those of the central continent and needed a period of maintenance
after each flight. If not for the fact that Teljose City was the trade center of the south coast, they wouldn’t have set up any airship routes at all. The last announcement with regards to the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect, though, it wreaked havoc in the hearts of the passengers when it was made known.

“What do we do now, Darlie? The Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect’s disciples are all madmen, won’t it be too dangerous for us in town?” A few female Magi near Leylin got anxious.

“Rest assured. Teljose City is one of the main camps of the light Magi, and Lord Alric is protecting us. Nothing will happen here. Forget that, aren’t the Death Soul Protection and Soul Pollution Isolation spells our forte?” The girl named Darlie quickly calmed her partners down. The presence of the light Magi and Alric gave them a lot of confidence, and even the rest of the airship’s passengers started to quieten down afterwards.

‘Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect? Alric?’ Leylin laughed, ‘It seems like I can settle that debt quite easily this time.’

He hadn’t taken this airship out of convenience. There was a slight sentimental value to it, but most important was that it would allow him to collect crucial information. With his current abilities, just his dreamforce forcefield could force many Magi to hand over a large amount of information that included their secrets. With the A.I. Chip’s abilities added on top, Leylin grew more or less clear on what had happened in the south coast after he’d left.

During his escape after the fight for the essence of the Wisdom Tree, the light Magi had suffered great losses. This incident had sparked off the third great Magus War!

With multiple rank 2 light Magi injured or killed, the dark Magi were stirred into action. With the additional encouragement from the incident with the Wisdom Tree, they started vying over the Eternal River pocket dimension and launched the war.

High-level members, all previously hidden from the world’s eyes,
emerged in an unprecedented battle above the Thousand Soul Island. Spells of darkness and light blotted out almost half the sky, and the battle ended with the island sinking down. Both parties had suffered great losses.

The third Magus War was supposed to last for a long time, but it was halted abruptly due to the appearance of another strong party. Right after the battle at Thousand Soul Island ended, the ancient Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect took advantage of the fact that both sides were severely damaged and rose quickly in power and position. Their leader was rumoured to be the terminator of all souls, Gargamel! Members of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect were demon fanatics, and even wantonly collected souls in the south coast, regardless of whether they belonged to magicians or humans. They also didn’t care whether they were attacking light magicians or dark ones, all in their sights were attacked.

With so many souls in hand, Gargamel’s power recovered quickly. It had even advanced to the peak of rank 3 in a short period of time!

With all this, both sides decided that they could not let such a thing go on, quickly ending their original war and cooperating to suppress Gargamel’s rise along with her Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect.

Finally, in an intense ambush, the rank 3 Magi of all three sides suffered grievous injuries or even death, and the Magi used their many inherited treasures to inflict great damage to Gargamel and the sect.

But Gargamel was indeed an ancient demon; it had managed to escape from the dark and light Magi and recuperated in hiding, silently waiting for a chance to make a comeback.

Rumours in recent times said that Gargamel’s wounds were healing quickly, something that explained the increasing activity of the sect’s members. They were conducting massive blood sacrifices
and collecting souls. The entire south coast was laden with anxiety. ‘So to say, the south coast is currently experiencing a three-way stalemate between the dark Magi, light Magi, and the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect…’ Leylin yawned, even if he’d sealed the majority of his abilities, enemies of such a level were still ants to him.

‘Let’s end things here quickly and find the Purgatory World. My time is far too precious!’ Leylin stood up and came to the entrance queue, waiting to alight. Darlie and his partners were in front of him.

“Hey Darlie, look. The hunk who sat with us before is here too.” The female Magus in front tugged on Darlie’s sleeve.

“Yeah, let’s go strike up a conversation! I’ll count myself lucky today, none of you can fight me!”

“You guys…” Darlie’s voice was soft and she looked like she was done with them, “Aren’t you guys afraid of offending him by speaking so loudly when we’re so near? And didn’t you guys try the other time as well? that sir over there hates to be disturbed…”

The female Magus looked at Leylin stealthily again after Darlie finished her words. The elegant black robe exuded a sense of royalty and the black mask on his face gave Leylin a few pints of mysteriousness. Though only half his face was revealed, the charm he gave off unknowingly was driving all the female Magi mad.
H
e had to say, with his bloodline strengthened his charm had also achieved a new peak. The current him could even charm ghosts and humans of any age. Even Darlie’s face flushed and she lowered her head.
At this sight, Leylin couldn’t help but feel a little good about himself. He smiled at Darlie.
Unfortunately, the action misled the female Magi in front of him, “Oh my god! He smiled at me!” “No! It was me!” Frustration coloured their faces as they fought over it.
“It’s so good to be young!” Leylin shook his head, sauntering out of the airship after it came to a halt.
“Sir over there must be a Magus with a rich history.” Darlie watched as Leylin walked away, curiosity burning in her eyes.
She was someone with pretty good aptitude and could be considered a talented person. On top of that, she was hardworking and had advanced to rank 1 at a young age. She’d even started on her elemental conversion already!
Despite this, her past few attempts at probing Leylin failed, and she realised that Leylin was not any ordinary Magus.
Sadly, her other companions did not seem to notice this; she sighed as she looked at her starry-eyed friends.
‘Teljose City still looks the same as it did…’ Standing in front of the city wall, this large city built around a volcano seemed to have remained the same. The only difference was the aging of the walls.
Leylin couldn’t help but think of the first time he’d come here. That poor Magus, Jenna, and her meditation technique of Sacred Flame. He managed to enter the city quite smoothly when he revealed his power as a Magus. The place was as bustling as it used to be, and had been separated into different strata. As his soul force probed through the city, he managed to find his old villa. However, it was now decked out with a whole new set of spell formations, set up by the Magus currently residing there.

Leylin shook his head and dismissed all thoughts of probing further, instead moving towards a tavern. He’d gotten a general idea of the current situation, but there was still some information he needed to probe further into; this was especially true of the issues surrounding the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect. Furthermore, since he was already here, Alric and the other Magi wouldn’t be able to escape him. He could wait at ease.

“Descendants of my blood, heed my command. Head here!” Leylin’s eyes turned crimson as his terrifying soul force spread out. His power, however, couldn’t be detected by anyone. Soul force was far too advanced to be detected by anyone in this city.

Still, it was a bad omen for the Magi who’d been picked by him. A fountain pen broke apart in Alric’s hand as he stood up clutching his chest. “What… is this? What’s going on?”

Magi usually had accurate premonitions. As a rank 3, Alric’s intuition had saved him from umpteen dangerous situations. That same sense of danger hit him again, and this time it was ten times as strong as the previous times. How could he stay calm with that?

“Someone get in here!” He shouted.

A handful of old Magi arrived in order, standing outside the door, “What may I do for you, my Lord?”

“What has the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect been up to lately? I need to know everything about them, and I mean everything!”
Alric looked gloomy.
“Yes sir!” the Magi echoed, looking at Alric as if he were their God. A rank 3 Magus was the top of the pack in the south coast. After the third Magus War, the status of rank 3 Magi had even increased by a huge amount given how many had perished in it. Alric himself actually oversaw the entirety of Teljose City, and was one of the best light Magi. Naturally, his orders spread out like wildfire. It took no time at all for everything about the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect to cover his desk.
“That’s all?” he asked, flipping through indifferently.
“Whatever we could find is in here, my Lord. The recent batch of sect members who came here seem to be hunting someone down instead of collecting souls.”
“Mm, I saw the report. For a rank 2 Magus to be leading the team, it seems like those they’re after are a force to be reckoned with…” Alric sat back down once again, and rubbed his forehead. Bothered by the look of hesitation on the aged Magus’ face, he asked, “Is there anything else you’re hiding from me?”
“I wouldn’t dare, my Lord!” Now intimidated, the Magus immediately knelt before him and sought forgiveness, “It’s just that there are a few rumours related to the Magi we caught. However, we wouldn’t dare come to any sort of conclusion before verifying them…”
“Speak!” Alric’s face grew gloomy.
“Of course,” The old Magus shot Alric a look, and started breaking out in a cold sweat, “The rumours state that the Magus who’s being hunted down by the sect members is a member of Leylin Farlier’s family.”
All the Magi present tensed their bodies the moment the name was mentioned. That name was an absolute taboo to Alric. His only son had died at Leylin’s hands!
When he’d chased after him, he’d instead been used by Leylin who escaped with a teleportation spell formation. Furthermore, he barely escaped the rank 2 Magus’ trap, something that had caused him immense humiliation.

*Boom!* A terrifying energy ripple spread out, and all the objects in the room began to shake.

“A surviving member of Farlier’s family?” Alric’s voice held a tinge of bitterness. In his hatred towards Leylin, Alric had once disregarded the unspoken rules of the south coast and brazenly sent troops to exterminate Leylin’s family clan. During that operation, the entire Farlier Family seemed to have been uprooted. Only a few specific bloodlines seemed to have received the protection of some mysterious characters.

“My– My Lord, I can’t be too sure of this as well, but the only thing I know is that they have already infiltrated our city,” the old man stuttered out. Despite being a Magus himself, he was only rank 1 while Alric was rank 3, the peak of the south coast’s Magi. The disparity between them was simply too huge.

“Go look for them now!” Alric commanded, and all the Magi rushed out of the room while cursing at their target.

“Leylin…” Alric’s gritting teeth echoed throughout the room after all the Magi had left.

……

“Please come back, my Lord.” An elderly man accompanied Leylin to the entrance of his shop, maintaining a half-bow until Leylin’s back disappeared from his sight.

He ran a store that specialised in the sale of information and data. He’d met hardly any customers who were as straightforward as Leylin was in his store. Moreover, the energy coming from Leylin’s body had stifled him slightly.
‘Things seem to be the same but the people have indeed changed!’ Leylin sighed in thought as he wandered the streets.
The information he’d acquired on the airship only formed part of the picture, barely scraping the surface. After they touched down in the city, he obtained a lot more detailed information through the information broker he’d found from the tavern.
First was the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. Leylin’s alma mater still seemed the same as it was before, the only difference was the Dean of the academy had changed. Siley was nowhere to be found, but other than that there were no anomalies.
And even though the Four Seasons Garden greatly suffered after their encounter with Leylin, they’d slowly recovered due to their strong foundation.
Other than stronger groups like the Four Seasons Garden, many names which Leylin was once familiar with had all vanished into the annals of history.
Leylin had even gone to the extent of intentionally revealing the names of his past friends like George and company, but that got him nothing. After all, when Leylin left he was only an acolyte, it was impossible to leave footprints. Or maybe the events in the Eternal River pocket dimension had discouraged all of them so greatly that they chose to hide themselves from the world.
On the other hand, it was Leylin himself who caused trouble between the dark and light Magi. Even now, his work was being described in detail and with much cursing.
Furthermore, many Magi and even the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect had put a bounty on Leylin’s head. Learning that it hadn’t been taken down till date, he was left speechless.
“Sir, I really am capable. I know some things about alchemy and potioneering, and I know how to…” A female Magus was dragged violently out of a store, the owner a Magus as well. Many of the onlookers took a step back, not interfering. The owner himself was
actually a semi-converted Magus, a faint halo of elemental particles surrounded him.

“Sir! My Lord! Please give me a chance, I really need this job…” The female Magus grabbed onto the hem of her skirt, pleading with urgency and yearning. Still, she was rejected mercilessly.

“Don’t make me repeat the same thing twice!” A tremendous amount of power started to bleed from the owner’s body and Darlie started moving back uncontrollably.

A powerful supporting force surfaced suddenly and helped Darlie to her feet. “Thank you! Oh? Aren’t you the Mister from…” “Count yourself lucky!” The store owner had obvious reservations about Leylin and stomped back into his shop while shaking his head.

“Are you alright?” Leylin looked at Darlie, thinking this situation was a little ridiculous. Judging from Darlie’s current state, she was evidently in a poor predicament. “Want to go for a drink?”
Leylin and Darlie sat facing each other in a fruit juice shop. Leylin was watching the passersby outside the French window as he listened to Darlie narrate her experiences after they parted ways. Darlie was a talented Magus who had perseverance. She had a fault, however, in her youth. Knowledge was the foundation of a Magus’ power. She was extraordinary for advancing to become a Magus at her age, but compared to those old freaks who’d amassed knowledge over hundreds of years she was nothing. Hence, she had completely failed recruitment into the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, being rejected at the start itself. Her other female companions had fared the same way, and after the setback from the huge difference between their ideals and reality, they had long since returned to their hometowns. Some had even given up completely. Only Darlie had not let up, persevering and staying in Teljose City. Soon enough, however, she was faced with a serious issue, she had gone broke!

Official Magi might seem extremely wealthy, but those who had just advanced had used up all their resources and magic crystals while breaking through. They weren’t particularly skilled in any
area, and since they lacked magic crystals to purchase spell models and the like to grow in strength, it was an endless cycle. Magi were normally at their poorest after advancing, and the costs of Teljoce City were too much for someone like Darlie. On top of that, she still needed to obtain more magic crystals in order to purchase things like spiritual force potions and spell models. Hence, after racking her brains, she had no choice but to swallow her pride and look for a job. However, reality dealt her a ruthless blow. Darlie cared little for regular jobs, but she did not meet the requirements for jobs that needed official Magi. She had hit a wall many times already before bumping into Leylin today.

“It’s been just a few days, but you’ve already had so many experiences…” Leylin had the urge to laugh, but he forced it down. Since he’d advanced as a Warlock, he was always stronger than others of the same rank as him. On top of that, the A.I. Chip was a cheat that allowed him to amass knowledge that did not lose out to those old freaks. He’d never experienced such things. In actuality, Magi like Darlie were the norm in this world.

“Is there anything I can help with?” Leylin asked kindly. He had some magic crystals lying around, and it wasn’t like they were of much use to him. They were effectively rocks to him, and he obviously wouldn’t mind showing some generosity.

“It’s alright. I’ve taken on a mission to gather starlight grass, and the rewards aren’t half bad. I’ll be able to survive for a while…” Darlie said in rejection. She was a strong and prideful child, and obviously would not accept such charity.

“Starlight grass, huh…” Leylin checked with the A.I. Chip, “That ingredient is only produced in Ebole Town. Though it’s not far from Teljose and it’s easy to gather it, a wave of disciples from the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect fled there recently, making it more dangerous…”
“No wonder…” Darlie covered her little mouth, “I was wondering why the task was so simple, yet the rewards were so generous. Damn it…”

Seeing her finding this difficult, Leylin could not help but laugh, “I need to go there anyway. Let’s go together…”

“Mister…” Darlie grew extremely emotional, tears forming at the corner of her eyes.

“I really have something to do there!” Leylin emphasised. With a few days of soul and bloodline hints being transmitted, the Farlier descendant had come here, and was about to reach Ebole Town as well.

Leylin wasn’t someone with too much time on his hands. If not for such a thing, he’d just give her some magic crystals. Why would he waste his precious time and accompany her?

“Many thanks!” Darlie bowed deeply, a red flush appearing on her cheeks and spreading downwards.

……

The wheels kept turning, producing creaking noises. The uneven surface of the road left the carriage constantly shaking.

Within the carriage, Darlie was watching Leylin’s mysterious face that was covered with a black mask. She hesitated for a long time before she spoke, “Mi– Mister, my name is Darlie. May I know…”

As Leylin had kept his mask on all this while, Darlie had assumed that he was hiding his identity, which was why she had not asked for his name. Now, however, the two of them were going to Ebole Town together, and it seemed too lacking in manners if she did not inquire into this properly.

“Oh, I’m Leylin!” Leylin told the truth plainly. In his senses, the bloodline descendant was very close to the town.

However, the life aura on his body had been weakened to a
maximum, and there was even an aura of death coming from him. If Leylin didn’t save him, it wasn’t likely for him to make it back to Teljose City.

“Leylin…” Darlie repeated the name a few times, and her expression suddenly changed, “The name ‘Leylin’, it’s the same as a Magus who’s in our history textbooks!”

“Oh?” Leylin stroked his chin. The Third Magus War and the rise of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect were very serious issues for the Magi of the south coast, and every detail about them had been noted down.

Leylin was mentioned, obviously. After all, he’d been the person who somewhat sparked all these issues. With Darlie’s own studiousness, she’d remembered it to this day.

“Hoho… I didn’t expect Lord Leylin to have the same name as that Magus in history. How interesting! Heehee…” Darlie covered her mouth, shoulders shaking slightly.

Perhaps it was because she was not wary of Leylin at all, or because she was charmed by the dreamforce surrounding him. She hadn’t even considered the possibility that Leylin was the same one from history.

“Oh? May I ask what the books say about him?” Leylin was rather curious of how the historians of the south coast evaluated him.

“Of course!” Darlie nodded, closing her eyes and seemed to recall content about him:

“Poison Sovereign King, Leylin Farlier of the Chernobyl Islands. A rank 2 Magus, and an important figure who caused the Third Magus War. Initially a student at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, he betrayed them and then fled to Four Seasons Garden. Countless battles allowed him to garner a reputation, with the most famous being the battle at the Eternal River Plains’ pocket dimension, as well as that at the Brambles Iron Door. Whereabouts currently unknown, he is wanted by both dark and light Magi. Evaluation: A
A rare Magus talent, seen only once in a thousand years in the south coast!”
It was as if she was reading the textbook itself, and the words she recited left Leylin laughing at himself.
“I never thought there would come a day that I’d enter a textbook!” Leylin touched the glossy and cold mask on his face, and couldn’t help but feel incredulous.
“What about your opinion of him?” Leylin asked her curiously.
“That Leylin?” Darlie’s eyes glazed over, as if a layer of fog had gone over them, “He’s a genius! There are rumours that he’s even a Potioneering Grandmaster, but he isn’t of high moral standing. I don’t like him!”
“Looks like I left behind a bad impression on the south coast!” Leylin could only shake his head, “Actually…”
“Actually? Oh, by the way Mister Leylin, why do you keep asking me questions about that fellow?” No matter how dim witted she was, she finally reacted.
“Oh, it’s nothing… just that we’ve reached Ebole Town!” Leylin opened the window on the carriage and nodded.
Starlight grass was a distinctive product found around Ebole Town. Irregular silver spots dotted its tender green leaves, sparkling with a charming light. It was hard to mistake it for something else.
Due to the threat of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect, which caused Ebole Town to lose all contact with Teljose City, the mission of gathering starlight grass now yielded very generous rewards.
“There are so few people in the town. I can’t even get people to buy from if I try…” Darlie felt helpless.
Since she knew how dangerous this place was, she was unwilling to stay longer. If she could purchase enough portions of starlight grass, she wouldn’t be at such a loss. However, the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect’s bad reputation of going around collecting souls, not even leaving commoners, left the town practically empty.
Many residents had left this area and fled, causing the town to become desolate. The Potioneers and those who gathered materials had disappeared.

“Ugh… looks like I’ll have to do it myself…”

Darlie lowered her head sadly, and then glanced at Leylin, who was beside her, “Sir Leylin, what are you here for?”

Leylin wore gorgeous clothing, just one of his gloves worth everything she was. Combined with his great bearing, he probably came from some ancient noble family. Why would a person like this find value in things like starlight grass?

“Me?” Leylin chuckled, “I’m waiting for someone!”

“Oh! You agreed to meet someone outside Ebole Town? If it’s convenient, could you tell me his name? I’ll look out for him,” she asked.

“Yes! He’s a younger generation member in my family. As for his name…” Leylin scratched his head. He had used the power of his bloodline to guide the descendant from the Farlier Family over. How was he to know the child’s name?

“Oh, there’s no need for that. He’s arrived.” Leylin’s eyebrows raised up, and he walked out. Darlie followed closely behind, her eyes showing her curiosity.

The scene of a chase appeared quickly in front of Darlie as she followed him out of town…
hat’s…” Darlie watched the streaks of light that were pursuing someone vigorously, and felt herself getting tense. In front of her were Magi from the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect. They wore loose blood-red robes emblazoned with an inverted silver cross on the back. A white skull was at the heart of the cross, its eyes filled with an abyssal darkness. It seemed to be smirking at her.

This was the standard attire of the disciples of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect. She could feel the traces of elemental conversion from all of these Magi, ‘They’re at least semi-converted Magi. And that leader, he’s… he’s…’

Practically the very moment she turned her attention to him, the leader suddenly turned to face her, the terrifying silver light from his eyes paralysing her, “A– a rank 2 Magus! Someone who’s materialised their spiritual force?”

When Darlie felt her knees go weak and was about to fall, her shoulders suddenly moved and her body was supported by a powerful force. Immediately after, Leylin’s gentle words entered her ears, “Don’t worry, it’s fine.”

His voice seemed to be infectious, and she managed to recover from her crippling fear.

“Thank you!” Darlie chanced a glance at Leylin, and felt immediately at ease.
From her point of view, with someone as powerful as Leylin whose strength could not be fathomed beside her, she could escape successfully, even from the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect. Mind calm, she now was able to focus on other things. These sect disciples were chasing a young man with sky-blue eyes and brown hair. The elemental particles surrounding him were near substantial, and helped him move faster and resist the attacks.

‘Peak rank 1, with elemental conversion at least 75%? Who is he? Why is he being pursued by the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect?’ Darlie’s eyes flashed with puzzlement.

“You can’t escape!” the rank 2 Magus yelled in a low voice, and silver spiritual particles converged to form an incredibly fine silver whip that was tens of metres long. With an elegant flick of his wrist, the long silver whip snapped straight, pushing towards the back of the fleeing Magus.

“Fallen Star Pendant!” With the Magus’ yell, a layer of dark-red light formed a faint armour around his body.

*Thwack! *Boom!* A dull thud was heard from his back, and the dark red armour shattered. The young Magus flushed red.

Because of that, the silver whip halted its movements. It allowed the young Magus to dart towards the entrance of Ebole Town, the same place Leylin and Darlie were heading for.

“Don’t expect a mere middle-grade magic artifact to be able to save you!” Seeing his opponent escape the blow that should’ve taken care of him in one shot, the rank 2 Magus’ expression grew dark. Phantom skeletons twisted as they brought darkness and despair to the surroundings.

Darlie could see practically every pore on the escaping Magus’ face, as well as the crazed disciples whose eyes were glinting with bloodlust. She couldn’t help but pull at Leylin’s sleeve, “Mister! My Lord! Let’s go!”

“Go? Why should we?” Leylin chuckled indifferently. He had
merely summoned the male with his soul and bloodline, and not saved him personally. This was to gauge his strength and luck. Seeing this scene, he concluded that the little guy’s strength was passable and that he had rather good luck, something that caused him to nod inwardly.

The young Magus who was currently fleeing was naturally the Farlier Family descendant who Leylin had sensed. He was likely related to a brother or sister of Leylin’s, and he could see similarities to his father and even himself in the young man’s features.

‘Damien has already met with them? He’s passed my Fallen Star Pendant over too…’ Leylin touched his chin. The magic artifact that emitted the dark red armour was the intricate cross pendant on the youth’s neck. It even had some broken gems on it. This was the middle-grade magic artifact that Leylin had created in the south coast, the Fallen Star Pendant.

Middle-grade magic artifacts had little effect past rank 1, which was why he’d handed it over to Damien in the hope that he would hand it over to the outstanding descendants of the Farlier Family. It looked like Damien had completed his task well.

“Mister Leylin… is he the person you’re waiting for?” Darlie pointed at the fleeing Magus, something suddenly hitting her, “He’s a member of your family, so you’re especially here to save him?”

“Something like that!” Leylin’s eyebrows raised, and he then glanced up towards the sky, a ruminating smile on his lips, “It’s quite lively today!”

“You can’t escape. When we of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect want to kill someone, we’ve never fail!” The distorted skeletal images soared out with what sounded like a prophecy from the rank 2 Magus, turning into a few bone necklaces that instantly locked around the young Magus’ ankles.

*Thud!* The Magus lost his balance and fell, seeming very pitiful.
as blood-laden bandages were revealed on his chest. Evidently, this was a wound from his time being chased.

“Weren’t you running? Go on, run some more.” The rank 2 Magus steeled his expression as he approached the fleeing Magus, watching him from above.

“I said that there’s never been a Magus who’s escaped on our kill list. Consider yourself lucky, our sect master will meet you personally and extract your soul, boiling it in fire for a hundred years…”

“Just… Kill me!” The Magus who had fallen turned over with difficulty, spitting out the words with no hope in his eyes.

The long hunt as well as being unable to join any large organisations had already left him weary to the bone, “I’m sorry, Grandpa Damien. I couldn’t help you in your vengeance…”

“Lock him up properly. Be careful,” the rank 2 Magus instructed the disciples behind him. He then scanned Leylin and Darlie who were at the entrance of Ebole Town.

The aura Darlie emanated showed that she was a newbie who had recently advanced. With Leylin concealing his abilities quite well, he was treated like small fry.

“Kill them all and extract the souls of the residents in the town. We finally managed to get out, so it’ll be good to bring something back…” The leader commanded, and the sect disciples answered loudly. Crimson appeared in their eyes as they drew closer to the two with malicious intent, as if beasts that had found their prey.

“Mi– Mister Leylin! You’re very powerful and can defeat them quickly, right?” Darlie took multiple steps backwards. All of those disciples were semi-converted, and could suppress her easily.

“There’s no hurry. There’s someone else yet to arrive.” Leylin replied without enthusiasm.

“There’s someone else yet to arrive? What does that mean?” Her little face had turned deathly pale.
“Keke, this female Magus has pretty good meat. How tender!” A disciple pulled at his nose, displaying an evil grin.
“You can do whatever you want with the body, but you have to extract her complete soul. The soul of an official Magus isn’t too bad, and you can even exchange it for points…” a dried-up old man him while snickering.
“I…” Tears appeared in the corner of her eyes. She was a traditional light Magus, and in Four Seasons Garden the most danger she had ever met was some accidents while taking part in some outdoor experiments. However, there had been mentors around and she had always survived, shocked but safe. She had never met with a situation like what was happening now.
“Don’t come over!” Darlie wailed, like the last cries of a feeble lamb. It only stimulated the appetite of the ravenous wolves in front of her.
“Rest in peace.” Just as the disciples were about to make their move and Darlie was in despair, the air seemed to freeze. Piercing sounds echoed out from explosions in Teljose City, and a terrifying gust parted the clouds themselves.
A white light in the horizon grew increasingly dazzling, finally forming a faint world of holy light. The unprecedented terrifying pressure caused Darlie to go limp and fall, feeling suffocated. The disciples surrounding her all collapsed, and the rank 2 Magus’ expression changed. Watching the white world of light, he turned grim, “Holy Light Domain! A rank 3 Magus!”
A Magus appeared out of nowhere in the hazy domain, holy light forming an illusory scene behind him.
“Lord Alric of Teljose City! Are you here to break the balance in the south coast?” The Magus yelled, though everyone could hear that he was only putting on a brave front.
This was a rank 3 Magus, a peak existence in the south coast! Alric’s strength was well-known even among rank 3 Magi, and he
was in charge of Teljose City which was a large base of the light Magi. He was in the top stratum of light Magi. Someone like that could kill a mere rank Magus like him easily, especially with how tense the relationship between their opposing factions was.

Alric coldly answered the rank 2 Magus’ question with a word. “Scram!”

“You–!” The rank 2 Magus flushed red and finally gritted his teeth, “Take him. We’ll be off!”

“You can go, but you’ll have to leave him behind,” Alric pointed at the Magus on the ground.
“No, he’s my assignment!” The rank 2 Magus of the Spirit Slaying Sect rejected immediately. Apprehending this Magus was the very reason he’d even come here.

“You’ve gotten this wrong. I’m not here to discuss terms with you, this is an order! Since you wish to die, let me help you!” Alric couldn’t be bothered to listen to reason, and he instead made his move. A violent, aggressive power crushed down on them, forming a domain of holy light.

*Rumble!* The forcefield of a rank 3 Magus left no way out for any Magi below that rank. The disciples of the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect melted down in the holy light, their blood and flesh just dissipating away. Piercing screams sounded out.

“Lord Gargamel won’t let you off!” The silver spiritual force surrounding the rank 2 Magus flashed, abruptly forming a cloud of black fog as he planned to flee into the distance.

“What a bunch of noisy flies! Let Gargamel look for me.” Alric’s brows furrowed as his right hand began to grab towards the black fog. Boundless holy light converged to form a giant blazing claw of platinum. The cries of the rank 2 Magus sounded out as well.

With the flames burning it up, the black gas seeped out from the gaps between the fingers. Silver spiritual force light gradually dimmed, and eventually was extinguished completely.

In mere seconds, that arrogant sect disciple who left Darlie with no
way out was annihilated.
The holy light vanished, turning into a gold_trimmed scholar’s cloak that appeared on Alric’s back.
Meanwhile, Darlie was completely frozen on the ground. Only after some time did she manage to yell out, “It’s Alric, Lord Alric! A rank 3 Magus!”
For the light Magi, Alric was synonymous with light and justice. His sort of strength and his terrifying influence were the life goals of all light Magi.
“You’re a descendant of the Farlier family?” Alric did not bother with Darlie, instead slowly descending as he looked at the Magus on the ground like he was looking at a corpse. His voice held the chill of millennia of winter, and would cause anyone to shiver in fright.
“Hehe… another one!” The Magus could not be bothered to move, or rather he knew that there was no hope of escape in front of a rank 3 Magus.
“You’re very unlucky.” Alric’s eyes were like two balls of flames, “If you were caught by the people from the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect, they’d at most torture your soul for a century. I’ll instead torture your soul to death, extracting all your blood to prepare bloodline sensing magic so the Farlier bloodline will be destroyed completely…”
It was as if he was narrating something that happened every day. The cruel words laced with bloodlust left Darlie shuddering, ‘What’s going on? Wasn’t that young Magus being chased down by the Spirit Slaying Sect? How has he offended Lord Alric too?’ She felt giddy with confusion.
“Wait, the Farlier family? I seem to have read something about it… In the battle at the Brambles Iron Door before the third great war, Alric’s sole son Jojane died at the hand of Leylin Farlier. Because of the modifications he’d made to himself before, Lord Alric had
lost the ability to reproduce further, and this turned into a blood feud…” As a top scorer, Darlie was familiar with this piece of history as well.

However, the consequences of her having the time to even think of this resulted in Alric fixing his attention on her, eyes full of a chilliness. She dropped to her knees, “My– My apologies, Lord Alric. I didn’t mean to…”

“Ha… haha!” The Magus on the ground began to laugh maniacally, “Alric, you’ll never have a kid even till your death. It serves you right to have no blood kin!”

“Damn it, damn it, damn it! You must all die!” With salt sprinkled on his wounds, Alric’s facial muscles began to contort as flames began to emerge from around his body.

“Die!” Light surged forth from his body, the milky white rays of death able to melt flesh and cause Magi to die an excruciatingly painful death.

*Clap! Clap! Clap!* Applause sounded from within the light, interrupting Alric’s attack. He could not help but shift his attention. It was only then that he realised there was someone standing at the side, wearing a luxurious black scholar’s robe and a mask on his face. He had no aura undulations, which was why Alric had overlooked this man’s existence before.

This realisation caused his pupils to shrink, and suddenly left him with a bad premonition. A Magus that could conceal his aura so well would definitely be someone difficult to deal with.

“Who are you?” Alric glared at Leylin coldly, finding the face familiar the more he gazed upon it. The half of the face that could be seen seemed extremely familiar, yet there seemed to be a fog in his mind that made it hard for him to remember the name.

“Who am I? Alric, you should know best!” Leylin chuckled, and turned to encourage Darlie, “You explained it well!”

“That voice…” Alric’s brows were furrowed and the fog of
confusion dissipated slowly. He had the feeling he was about to find the name he was looking for, hidden in the depths in his mind. All of a sudden, Alric’s body trembled and he was instantly wide awake. Immediately after, Leylin’s face lined up with the one in his memories, causing him to bellow hysterically, “You’re… Leylin Farlier!!”

“Leylin Farlier?!” Two cries of alarm were heard from the sides, and the Magus on the ground’s eyes were filled with emotion as he stared at Leylin’s figure.

Darlie was completely horrified, ‘He– He’s the legendary Toxic Sovereign King? The rank 2 existence who worked behind the scenes and caused the Third Magus War? He’s Leylin Farlier?’ Her hands covered her mouth, and her brain halted.

‘Right… He never denied he was that Leylin. I was the one who wishfully treated him as someone with the same name…’ Scenes of her time with Leylin flashed in her mind, causing Darlie’s face to turn as red as an apple.

‘He- He’s very different from the legends!’ Darlie watched his back, eyes showing her worry. ‘Alric is a rank 3 Warlock! Can Mister Leylin…’

“Hah… hah… you’re Leylin Farlier. That voice and that face… Even if it’s half covered I won’t be wrong.” Alric huffed, his body twitching like he was an epileptic. He was so excited that he was practically frothing at the mouth.

“You finally appeared. Great, I can finally enact my vengeance!” He roared in a low voice, terrifying energy undulations exploding forth from his body that seemed to touch upon the Crystal Phase.

“Indeed, it’s sensible that hatred can drive one’s improvement. Alric, you’ve improved so much from before.” Though Alric’s improvement surprised Leylin slightly, those under Morning Star were still like ants to him. It was no big deal.
The terrifying forcefield of a rank 3 Magus caused the Magus and
Darlie to lie on the ground like toads. The young Magus couldn’t help but yell towards Leylin, “My Lord, be careful!”

“Any amount of cautiousness is useless! The hatred from Jojane’s death, as well as the torture of the long wait… It can only be purged by all the blood in your body!” Alric roared, and holy light dazzled as it formed a gigantic cage ringed with pillars of light. He had learnt his lesson from chasing Leylin down before. He knew that Leylin was powerful, and what’s more, quick. With just a slight misstep, Leylin could flee. In order to prevent such a disaster from happening again, he had to limit his opponent’s range.

“Die!” Having set everything up, Alric made his move. Boiling heatwaves converged in his hand, the light forming a gigantic statue of a goddess, her two wings spread to form a bow. A holy aura emanated from the bow that had formed. A ray of light condensed to form the bowstring, and a terrifying energy undulation was released as Alric pulled back on it. Platinum flames converged, rushing forth from his fingertips to form a blazing arrow.

An explosive screech could be heard as the arrow was launched, leaving behind a glimmering white trail in the air. “You’re focussing on long-ranged attacks? Looks like the lesson I taught you was deeply engraved in your mind!” Leylin shook his head and extended a finger, tapping on the flaming arrow. This slight motion caused Alric’s expression to go dark, and the Magus and Darlie both were filled with concern.

“Unfortunately… Just this is far from enough” The flaming arrow struck Leylin’s finger, producing a crisp sound. Immediately after, Alric’s expression quickly changed. The flaming arrow had fallen down, split in two. It charred the surrounding land before the flames went out.

“If that’s all you have, you’re too disappointing.” Leylin smiled at Alric, who in turn staggered back. It was only then that he realised
that Leylin was no longer the rank 2 Magus who needed to keep fleeing from him.  
His opponent was considered the greatest genius the south coast had produced in a thousand years. With hundreds of years having passed, what level of strength had he reached?  
“What– What rank are you at now?” Alric slowly stepped backwards, two snow-white wings of light extending at his back.  
“That question isn’t important. You just need to die obediently…” Leylin spoke without a care. Coupled with how he was dressed, he seemed very much like the stereotype of a huge rebel.
At this moment, the young Magus that had collapsed to the ground immediately shouted out, “Lord Ancestor, you can’t let him off so easily! He attacked our Farlier family and even indirectly caused Grandpa Damien’s death!”

“Oh?!” Leylin furrowed his brows. Black flames blazed as he instantly moved to the youth’s side. With just a scan, he understood the youth’s body like the back of his own hand. “Did the Spirit Slaying Sect give you that wound on your chest?”

“Yes. I got hit by the attack of a soul plague from the sect disciples, and was also poisoned by a Malaria Spider!” The youth looked defeated, but then had an excited flush on his face.

“A small issue.” Leylin’s finger moved, and the bandages around the youth’s chest automatically fell off to reveal twisted muscles and horrifying wounds.

“Bear with it for a bit.” Leylin dripped a crimson potion onto the youth’s injuries. White gas steamed from the wounds, causing the youth to cry out in pain involuntarily. Shortly after, black gas streamed out of the wound and the flesh began to mend itself rapidly. The wounds were healing.

“What?” Darlie shouted from not far away, “That’s even faster than a rank 3 healer! Is this an ancient healing potion from legends?”

Leylin had no wish to answer Darlie’s question. Instead, he noticed Alric beginning to make a move. “Tch, so stubborn.”
*Rumble!* Countless holy javelins made of platinum flames appeared around him, shooting towards Leylin like thousands of arrows being launched at the same time. Alric himself revealed a large pair of wings as he took to the skies.

“I said, stay there quietly. Did you not understand the first time?” Leylin’s expression darkened, and an aura several times more terrifying and powerful than Alric’s descended. Formless energy rippled, causing those javelins to explode in the air and dissipate into motes of light.

Seeing Leylin take care of his attack, Alric made a strange sound from mid-air, spreading his wings and escaping as far as he could go.

“Get down here!” Leylin’s right hand pulled downwards, and Alric gave a blood-curdling cry from within the streak of light. He fell down, the two wings on his back being torn off by a formless force. Some flesh and blood remained at the end, revealing long gashes on his back from which blood spurted forth.

The cage with pillars of light that sealed off the region had, with a sound as if it could not hold on for longer, exploded bit by bit.

“…” His wound completely healed, the youth now stood up and watched the scene silently. He was surprised, yes, but the events that had played out so far had far exceeded what he could take. He was now numb to everything.

When he’d been fleeing from the sect disciples, a voice in his mind urged him to change course, veering towards Teljose City. Before the Spirit Slaying Sect disciples who were after him could attack him, Alric appeared. Faced against the sect disciple and a rank 3 Magus who both had grudges against him, the youth would rather be caught by the sect that even see Alric’s face.

However, things were far from over. Just when he thought everything was done for, an even more bizarre thing had happened. Leylin, the genius from his Farlier Family who’d been missing for
centuries, had suddenly reappeared. On top of that, he dominated and defeated Alric the moment he showed himself! The youth watched Alric lying on the ground like a dead dog, his expression stiff. He had a strong suspicion that this could be a mere clone, or perhaps a fraud. Since when was a rank 3 Magus, the best of the south coast, so weak?

‘Or is it that he isn’t weak, but the Lord Ancestor is just that powerful?’ The youth watched Leylin’s masked face, his eyes full of admiration. He was fully privy to Alric’s prowess. Under the forcefield the rank 3 Magus had shown off, he would have been killed like an ant…

However, Leylin had defeated his opponent with a mere wave of the arm. How large was the disparity between them?

“Your wounds are all healed up. By the way, what’s your name?” Leylin’s face held some rare gentleness as he faced this descendant.

“My– My name is Krupp, I’m Audi’s descendant…” Krupp knew Leylin had no interest in his family tree, and directly mentioned the person in Leylin’s generation.

“Audi? Did this happen after I left?” Leylin stroked his chin.

“Yes, he’s your brother, born two years after you left…” Krupp carefully watched Leylin’s expression, and then pointed at Alric, “Lord Ancestor, he once sent people to attack our Farlier family and almost caused us to be completely uprooted from the Chernobyl Islands. Only a few of us escaped under Grandpa Damien’s protection. You must take revenge for us!”

Having said all this, Krupp clenched his fists tightly, his eyes brimming with tears.

“Don’t worry,” Leylin nodded. After hearing news that the Farlier family had almost been destroyed, he strangely felt no anger. It was as if he was hearing someone else’s story; even he was surprised at his reaction.

Leylin immediately thought of the reason for this. He was someone
who’d come from another world, and wasn’t the original Leylin who was just a playboy. Because he had the A.I. Chip and was a grandmaster in the field of souls, issues with things like soul fragments that were retained from the original soul causing melodrama wouldn’t be an issue for him.

The old Leylin’s soul had long since been annihilated, with not a trace left behind. He would not be able to affect Fang Ming the slightest. Hence, after hearing that the Farlier family had almost been wiped out, he’d only nodded slightly in acknowledgement.

Emotions and the responsibility towards one’s bloodline were different, however. Leylin believed he still had some work to do in that regard.

Krupp and Darlie felt the temperature of their surroundings lower in an instant. A slight explosion could be heard from Alric’s body, and it seemed like he was strangled at his throat by a formless strength. He now hung before Leylin.

“My…” Alric tried to sound from his throat. With a blink of Leylin’s eyes, his face had flushed red. He squirmed as the blood drained from his face; it turned an ashen grey.

In that short moment, Leylin had destroyed Alric’s spiritual force. He was now just slightly stronger than a regular human.

“You’ve really got some guts. To dare go against the unwritten rules of the south coast and take revenge on my family…” Leylin’s hand grabbed at the void, and crackling sounds were heard from Alric’s body. The bones automatically broke apart inch by inch, but Alric was still awake and had to deal with the suffering alone. Soon enough, blood spurted from his mouth, and some of his teeth were broken.

“I believe there’s a need to set a precedent, so that the other Magi will be aware.” A thin crimson thread was extracted from his body and hovered in front of Leylin.

“Let’s see!” A trace of blood-red light could be seen in Leylin’s
eyes as countless translucent mirrors opened up before him, revealing vague figures within.

“NOO…” Alric immediately grew agitated upon seeing them, his body trembling unceasingly as his eyes pleaded with Leylin. However, Leylin himself cared nothing for this, “Mm, you don’t have any direct descendants yourself, but there are a lot of other branches. Siblings?”

Alric did not answer, his tongue had long since been bitten off. If not for Leylin intentionally keeping him alive, he would have died long ago. Alric would much rather die early than face what was to come.

“You know my character. I rarely use curses or other spells in that vein. It’s not because I’m unfamiliar with them, but because they’re troublesome; not only is the preparatory work tedious, there’s also a backlash,” Leylin continued on as if he were chatting with a friend, “But things are different here. The backlash from some rank 1 and 2 Magi, and even regular humans, means nothing to me…”

As he spoke, leylin produced a large amount of materials from his spatial pouch, carving strange altar-like runes on the ground.

“Trace back the path of the bloodline to all branches…” Terrifying curses rolled off Leylin’s tongue in a strange accent, “Ye of his blood, shall become the source of the curse!” After a few ceremonies, Leylin extracted some blood with a dagger and threw it onto the altar under Alric’s look of despair.

“AAAAHH…” With sounds of anguish being transmitted from the altar, a faint distorted face with empty eyes wailed as it pounced into the air.

“Go!” Leylin snapped his fingers.

*Bzzt bzzt…* Formless ripples spread, and immediately after a blond Magus’ expression changed in one of the round mirrors, green warts appearing all over his body. They then exploded, spurring out corrosive liquid that caused him to become a pile of
white bones amidst his howls.
Black fog occupied the entirety of a castle elsewhere, and broken limbs were thrown out of it every once in a while.
“Noooo…” Alric lowered his head. All that remained in his dead eyes was boundless hatred.
“Did you think that was all?” Leylin could not help but laugh as he saw Alric in this state.
“Soul extraction!” A translucent figure was pulled out from Alric’s forehead.
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“A. I. Chip, organise Alric’s memories, separate the information I require.”

[Beep, mission established. Beginning analysis. Extracting data from target.]

As a Grandmaster in the field of soul research who possessed the help of the A.I. Chip, Leylin found what he needed in mere seconds.

Alric’s body died once his soul was pulled out. Now translucent, he’d regained the ability to speak. Information was extracted from his soul as he let out cries of misery. Having memories extracted from your soul wasn’t exactly pleasant. “AAAHH… What are you doing? I won’t let you off! I curse you and I curse all that is yours!”

“Oh, so you have a brother who you’re not on good terms with. It’s a bit of a pity that he died under the curse as well,” Leylin said as great amounts of data streaked past him, “Whatever. If he’s dead he’s dead. Did you think it would just end like this?

“Void Assassin!” A translucent figure appeared instantly with a flutter of his sleeve. These servants that he’d gained from the ruins of Scarlet Crescent each had a strength of up to rank 3, and with their ability to travel through the void even Morning Stars had to guard carefully against them. They were practically invincible in the south coast.

“Here’s the information. Kill all his friends, acolytes, and anyone
else he treasures.” With a stretch of his arm and a tap, Alric’s soul was sealed into the Void Assassin’s head, “Make sure he watches everything. Once you’re done, sink into the lava underground and have his soul roast for eternity…”

“Understood.” A robotic voice sounded from the Void Assassin. Immediately after, its body disappeared into the void, leaving behind Alric’s despairing cries that seemed to echo in this land.

“Are you satisfied with how I handled this?” Leylin turned to look at Krupp.

“Yes, very satisfied! No matter what Patriarch does, you’re the most correct!” With Leylin’s eyes on him, Krupp stiffened in his nervousness.

At the thought of what his ancestor had done, Krupp couldn’t help but break out in a cold sweat. This was someone who already knew of the darkness that lay in the Magus World!

‘Using a method to extinguish one’s bloodline and not even letting off their friends or acolytes… ’ Krupp secretly wiped off the perspiration, ‘Patriarch is no saint…’

Having taken care of Alric, Leylin glanced into the horizon and beckoned to Krupp, “Let’s go! A few worms will come and disturb us if we don’t leave quickly.”

But before they got onto the carriage, a thought flashed through Leylin’s mind. He looked at Darlie, ‘It’s my fault that she got involved. Since she came with me, I should at least bring her to the next city…’

Leylin pointed at Darlie, but the female Magus was in a state of complete shock. The roaring skeletal horse was blazing with black flames; it seemed like a demon from a nightmare, it’s hooves leaving behind flaming marks.

The large carriage sped down the road like a black whirlwind. Krupp sat inside with some reservation, occasionally sneaking glances at Leylin’s black leather boots. Darlie was still frozen,
hiding in the corner and trembling with her arms wrapped around herself.
The recent events had dealt a huge blow to this female Magus. In reality, if not for Leylin intentionally protecting her, she and Krupp wouldn’t have been able to live past the moment Alric burst out. However, she didn’t believe that her survival was some stroke of fortune.
The fall of a rank 3 Magus, and the curse that accompanied it, made it easy for her to imagine what kind of chaos was going to arise in the south coast. And as the witness, she was in a bad situation. Though the light Magi revered order, they were the first in line to trample over their own rules for the sake of benefits.
Darlie shut her eyes, and could already imagine a large number of high-ranked Magi cutting open her skull and extracting parts of her brain.
Though the dark Magi were more famous for it, Darlie knew very well that many light Magi were no inferior at the skill of extracting memories. They could probably clone all her thoughts from her childhood with not a single error.
As for what would happen to her? That was something no Magi would ever care about. Sacrificing herself for the big picture and for all light Magi was something that she should feel honoured to do. They’d expect her to serve herself up voluntarily.
Darlie only realised how helpless she was under such immense pressure. While she’d always been prideful of the order and glory of the light Magi, all she wished for now was their destruction.
In matters of life and death, everything could be renounced.
‘But as long as this lord is around…’ Darlie peeked up and saw the figure that had caused her immense fear. That stern gaze that shot out from behind the mask seemed to pierce her body, suffocating her.
She quickly lowered her head respectfully, her breathing becoming
rough, “Starting with Alric’s fall, the return of my Lord will bring about great changes in the south coast…”

Leylin knew what this female Magus was thinking of immediately, but he couldn’t be bothered with it. To him, she was but a stranger he’d picked up somewhere and embroiled in this because of a coincidence. Even if he wasn’t with her, having taken on the task of gathering starlight grass she would’ve come to Ebole Town anyway. Without his protection, she would probably be in even worse a condition by now. Thus, he believed she owed him a favour.

That last thought was because they’d travelled together and grown slightly more familiar with each other. Reaching a rest point and then tossing her away was a very simple alternative, however based on Krupp’s expression this might be a variable that would change things. Leylin chuckled at that thought.

Leylin suddenly spoke. “Krupp, give me the Fallen Star Pendant around your neck.”

“Oh, of course, Patriarch!” Krupp deferentially took the pendant down and passed it to Leylin with both hands.

Light flickered from the broken gems on the dark red cross’ surface. The slight weight in his hands left Leylin nostalgic.

“Grandpa Damien gave it to me and he even told me…” Krupp watched Leylin hesitantly.

Leylin nodded in acknowledgement, “Yes, this is a magic artifact I created. Damien was under my orders to protect the Farlier Family in the Chernobyl Islands.” He observed the creation in his hands. With his current insight, he naturally noticed the defects in his original craftsmanship, and the immaturity when he’d made it.

“Though the materials in this Fallen Star Pendant aren’t all that great, it isn’t as if there’s no room for improvement…” Crimson light wrapped around the cross in tandem with Leylin’s words, causing it to float into the air and emit powerful energy waves that
shocked Krupp and Darlie.
“This– This is…” Darlie looked stunned, “He’s working without any tools? Only Grandmaster Alchemists from legend can do something like this…” The red glow expanded unceasingly, gradually forming a beautiful flaming daffodil that slowly bloomed within the carriage.
When the last petal withered, the pendant suspended in the air now looked different. It was more slender before, its dark red surface more pure. Many fine black lines were on it, making it seem like the back of a python.
“I’ve re-smelted the artifact, and added a few functions. On top of that, I’ve restricted its use to those with the Farlier bloodline…” Leylin said lightly, and then Fallen Star Pendant fell into Krupp’s hands.
‘He re-smelted a magic artifact so quickly, and upgraded it to become a high-ranked magic artifact!’ Still hiding in the corner, Darlie’s eyes were now shining. Only rank 2 or 3 Magi were qualified to possess things like high-grade magic artifacts in the south coast.
For low-ranked Magi like her, just taking a glance at a treasure of this grade was like a dream come true.
The person who was across her, however, had refined one without so much as a change in expression, and gifted it away as if it was nothing.
‘Perhaps… my hopes for the future will all rely on this person…’ Darlie made up her mind, vigorous flames bursting forth in her heart.
“Many thanks, Patriarch!” Krupp took the pendant, pleasantly surprised. This magic artifact had always been very useful, and it was an unexpected surprise for it to be upgraded to become a high-ranked one.
However, after his spiritual force made contact with the pendant,
his eyes grew as round as saucers. It was as if he’d been struck by lightning.
“What? Is anything the matter?” Leylin found this descendant rather funny.
“Magic— A piece of magic equipment! The Fallen Star Pendant!”
Krupp spoke of the grade of the item, “Patriarch, you upgraded it to magic equipment?”
It was already a huge surprise for the Fallen Star Pendant to be upgraded to a high-grade magic artifact, but the fact that it had become the legendary magic equipment was shocking.
This was magic equipment! It was of a level even greater than magic artifacts, and regular rank 3 Magi weren’t even qualified to have them! These were the trump cards of the largest organisations! However, this ancestor of his had casually managed to refine a middle-grade magic artifact into one…
Krupp was rendered speechless…
m. Because of the materials used to make the Fallen Star Pendant, it can at best only become a piece of low-grade magic equipment.” Although Leylin found this quite a pity, Krupp instead grew so excited he was about to froth at the mouth.

On the other hand, Darlie grew even more emotional. Seeing that the Fallen Star Pendant had really been upgraded to become a low-grade magic equipment piece, she was at first frozen before she pounced at Leylin’s feet. “Revered Lord Farlier, please take me in as your disciple… No, how could I qualify to be the disciple of such a great Magus? Please give me any chance regardless of what it is. Whether as a maid, a servant, or even a guinea pig, just give me a chance to learn from you!”

“You– You’re serious?” Leylin watched this female Magus. With her thirst and pursuit of knowledge, she was very similar to how he had been back then.

Krupp had a stiff expression. It was nothing much for a Magus to become a disciple, but becoming a servant or a guinea pig would effectively render one dispensable to a dark Magus. This female Magus seemed to care nothing for her life. Rather, she was giving up her very life for the pursuit of truth!

“My Lord…” Krupp gaped but was unable to speak.

He was merely Leylin’s nephew. There was nothing beside that relationship that bonded them together. Before he was sure of what
place he held in Leylin’s heart, speaking out like this seemed rather risky.
“I don’t have plans to teach anyone now, and I’m not lacking in servants either.” Leylin spoke indifferently, causing Darlie’s eyes gaze to dim. But Leylin’s next words brought her from the depths of hell to heaven. “But I give you permission to observe and emulate me for a period of time. How much you learn will depend on you.”
“Many thanks, my Lord!” she replied, tears lining her eyes. However, Leylin had yet to finish speaking, “What can you offer me though, that is of equal value?”
“My everything!” Darlie’s tone was firm.
“Good. Swear it. Swear it on your soul and your honour, that from hereon out your power, your body, your soul and everything will belong to the Farlier Family branch head on the south coast, Krupp Farlier!”
Leylin sounded unenthusiastic, but Krupp’s eyes went wide, “What? Me?”
Darlie took a look at Krupp who was beside her, and immediately made a vow with her soul, “I swear on it!” With Leylin as a witness, it would haunt her throughout her life unless a Magus who comprehended laws aided her. Of course, the chances that an existence at or above rank 7 would help Darlie were pretty much nil.
“As the descendant of our Farlier family, you should help our family continue the bloodline!” Leylin chuckled, “Darlie is a great choice. She’s talented, and you’ve seen her willpower and good qualities for yourself…”
Astute as he was, Leylin had long since noticed Krupp’s slight crush on Darlie. This meant nothing to him, but as he was the real descendant of the Farlier Family he placed more importance on
Krupp spreading his blood than his vengeance. Having done this, he now felt that he’d done enough to make up for everything he owed the family. Hearing Leylin saying something so shameless out in the open, a trace of a blush crept onto the faces of Krupp and Darlie, Magi as they were. “*Cough cough*… My Lord, where are we going now?” Krupp directed the conversation elsewhere. He’d been running for his life ever since birth, and experiences like this one were rare. The only reason he’d felt anything for Darlie was that she was pleasing to the eye. “Let’s go to the Abyssal Bone Swamp. I want to see how the academy is doing, and there are also some people I want to find out about.” Leylin smiled, considerably changing the topic, “It also looks like I need to show off some strength, display that the Farlier Family has a solid backing. It’ll be very troublesome if we keep getting harassed like this.” “Troublesome?!” Krupp was first baffled, but his expression quickly changed. An aged voice was transmitted to them, “Mister Leylin, could we trouble you to come out of the carriage?” “Let’s go out, we have guests!” Leylin beamed, shaking his robes as he got to his feet. Krupp and Darlie exchanged a glance and lined themselves up behind him, seemingly with good chemistry seeing how they occupied his left and right. The nightmare horse snarled in dissatisfaction and the carriage stopped. Getting out of the carriage, Leylin caught sight of a few aged Magi. At the front was a white-browed old man with layers of wrinkles on a face that was covered with spots. He looked about to die at any moment, wearing a simple grey robe that contrasted the dazzling golden staff in hand. He seemed to be the speaker.
Beside him was an old woman wearing the clothing of aristocracy, her hair that had pearls and gems embedded within it tied in a bun. The two stood on top of a large banyan tree which was blocking Leylin’s path. A large face emerged from the trunk. This banyan tree was actually a Magus, and its life force was the strongest amongst the three Magi!

The three immediately went on guard when they saw Leylin coming out. The one holding the staff was the first to speak, “Leylin Farlier?”

“That’s me.” Leylin’s body floated up, and he stood on top of the carriage. While the lack of an aura coming from his body gave no reason for it, the Magi opposite him felt a great feeling of danger.

“I am the Saint Nonov Ciel Andrew; you can call me Nonov. Beside me is Mistress Marjorie, and this giant tree is Lord Keefa!”” The auras of Crystal Phase Magi became apparent as the old Magus introduced his party. All three of them were mighty rank 3 Magi whose spiritual force had crystallised!

Leylin could also sense scattered undulations from some bloodline treasures and other unique magical items, and there was even a high-grade magic artifact on them. It was apparent that they’d brought everything they had.

“Mm, you must be the leaders of the light Magi.” Leylin nodded.

“Yes,” Nonov said as he forced a smile. Even face to face he couldn’t sense Leylin’s aura. It was like his immediate vicinity was a boundless sea, drowning out any probes and leaving no traces behind.

“Is this about the issue with Alric?” Leylin asked casually. He could eliminate ants like these in one blow, but for the sake of the Farlier Family it was prudent to leave them alive to spread word of the terror he wrought.

“The matter with Alric was a personal feud between you and him. Though my Lord’s methods are a little… overboard… they aren’t
unacceptable.” Realising that Leylin was not to be trifled with, Nonov immediately changed his plans. His conceding seemed quite pathetic to Leylin. If he was considered weak, these Magi wouldn’t have bothered with such words and instead just killed him. They would cut the person who had tarnished the reputation of the light Magi up into a million pieces. However, realising Leylin wasn’t going to be pushed around, Nonov gave up his pursuit of enmity on Alric’s behalf. After all, it was irrational to provoke a powerful Magus for the sake of a dead person, what more one whose family, organisation, and subordinates had all disappeared. It was all for the ‘big picture’. The casual sacrifice of Alric even left Leylin wanting to sneer in response. This sort of thing was exactly why he was hellbent on becoming stronger himself, rather than depending on organisations. “However, Lord Alric was still a colleague of ours. Shouldn’t Mister Leylin do something about this?” Nonov finally got to the point. “What ‘something’?” Leylin watched the old man playfully. “Mister Leylin was once a professor at Four Seasons Gardens, which means you were once a light Magus. As a light Magus, it’s our obligation to fight against evil!” Nonov seemed to be spouting righteous words. “The source of all evil in the south coast, the ancient demon that the Spirit Slaying Sect believes in, the Gargamel is alive. Is Lord Leylin willing to aid us in destroying the sect? I’m sure that once you contribute enough, Four Seasons Garden will be very willing to welcome you back…” ‘They can’t beat me, so now they’re trying to assimilate me to their cause’ Leylin chuckled inside, but Nonov had already begun stating his conditions. If Leylin were to attack the Spirit Slaying Sect and even kill the Gargamel, they would compensate him by admitting him once more into the Four Seasons Garden, even allowing him
full control of it. It was indeed an enticing offer. If Leylin was a peak rank 3 Magus, he would have put some consideration into it. However, there was no need to fake courtesy with his current strength. “I reject your proposal!” he exclaimed unceremoniously. Though the Gargamel had long since entered the list of beings he had to kill, he hated being threatened to do anything.

“What?” Such a blunt answer put the old man in shock, and his expression dimmed.

“There should be some enmity between my Lord and the Gargamel, no? Wouldn’t this be getting the best of both worlds? Or are you thinking of siding with the evil dark Magi?”
“Y ou learnt about that too… It seems like you know me quite well,” Leylin shook his head, “But did you know that the thing I hate the most is being coerced?”

His expression instantly darkened. “Furthermore, it’s better to deal with dark Magi than the likes of you. As long as I display enough strength to shock them, they become even more obedient than dogs, and won’t resort to sneaky actions in the shadows…”

“It looks like Sir Leylin is very prejudiced against us light Magi. What a pity…” Nonov spoke slowly, the golden scepter in his hand emitting even more dazzling rays of light.

“Are you done with all that nonsense? Like I said earlier, we should just eliminate him. He started out as a dark Magus!” Marjorie, who was beside Nonov, began to speak with a piercing voice.

*Sou sou!* The giant tree Magus under them did not speak, but large amounts of roots spread out from it to envelop the surrounding region. It formed a grid of roots in the area.

“Increasing your vitality by combining your life with plants”? How pathetic.” Leylin shook his head, seeing through the tree with a slight glance. While he didn’t say more than that, the look of pity in his eyes threw the banyan tree into a violent rage.

Boundless green light spread around the area. It was like it had formed a translucent crystal in the air, sealing the air around Leylin. “As we discussed before. Keefa will be in charge of restraining him
while you amplify our power. I’ll take the charge.” As he said that, Nonov took the lead, the golden scepter in his hands abruptly increasing in size to become a golden holy lance.

“Understood!” Marjorie answered quickly from behind him. All sorts of complicated and mysterious runes appeared from her body, disappearing into the giant tree and Nonov’s body. With that support, more of their spiritual forces crystallised, approaching the limit.

“Even after the amplification, they’re still only close to the limit of rank 3?” Leylin sighed, the disappointment evident in his eyes as he waved his arm.

*Rumble!* Black flames began encircling the horse carriage in defence. “Wait here, don’t come out and block me.” Numerous tendrils that had come to probe the area sizzled, instantly burnt to ashes by the black flames. It caused the large banyan tree to let loose a miserable cry.

The black flames looked to be about to burn right up the roots, and the tree had no choice but to sever the affected ones, cutting its connection with them. Jade-green sap flowed out of the wounds in great amounts.

“AARGHORH…” The human face on the trunk let out roars that nobody could make sense of. On the other hand, the faces of Nonov and Marjorie changed.

“These flames burn the very soul! Lord Leylin seems to have obtained some amazing inheritance in his time away.” Golden light was produced from the lance, covering Nonov’s body as if some kind of golden armour.

“You think I’m relying on some inheritance? You think that’s what gives me my strength?” Leylin replied, disapproving.

“Heaven’s Lance, make a judgement for light and justice!” Nonov’s body seemed to burst into golden flames. He hurled the lance in his hands into the distance, and it seemed like a golden meteor was
launched. The lance reached Leylin in the blink of an eye. Black even streaked near the tip of the lance, fine spatial cracks being formed.

“I must say, you’re quite good for a rank 3 Magus.” Leylin stretched out his hand as he yawned. In front of that pale hand, be it the golden flames or the spatial cracks, everything was destroyed. The terrifyingly sharp tip of the holy golden lance could do no harm to his skin as he grabbed it.

“It’s best not to show this stuff and humiliate yourself.” As if in answer to all the taunting from the three Magi, Leylin exerted a bit of force with his two hands. The golden lance broke apart at the center, the screech it left behind sounding miserable. Golden sand fell from where it had broken apart, causing the main body to quickly collapse.

“No, how is that possible?” Nonov took several steps backwards, blood flowing from the corners of his mouth due to the backlash of having his holy lance destroyed. Two streaks of red fell from his eyes, “This is a treasure that’s been passed down in our academy! Even peak rank 3 Magi shouldn’t be able to so much as move it!”

“Let’s go! He’s even more terrifying than that Gargamel!” Marjorie pulled at Nonov, and the banyan tree below them abruptly pulled up its roots and fled like a giant, each step allowing it to cover hundreds of metres.

“Activate the interference formation we’d planned for the Gargamel!” Nonov seemed to have recovered, but his eyes still held a trace of shock. He took out a white handkerchief to cover the blood from the corner of his mouth even as he gave his command.

The earth rumbled as four pillars of light, red yellow, blue, and green, shot up around Leylin. Smoke and multi-colour light appeared in the air, forming a tremendous spell formation with runes snaking around its surface.
“Nonov, the enemy is far stronger than we expected. The four-pillared stone seal shouldn’t be able to hold him down for long. We’ll need to use our final treasure!” Marjorie exclaimed solemnly. “Roar…” The banyan tree Magus under them thundered, emitting spiritual undulations of approval.

“In that case…” Nonov’s expression underwent several changes before he finally gritted his teeth and reached into his robes.

*Rumble!* All of a sudden, loud thuds sounded from the sealing formation, causing shivers to go down the spines of the three Magi. It was like some powerful ferocious beast had been set free in there, bursting forth with enough force to break it open. Bumps appeared in the barrier, and the runes on top of it shattered like glass.

“How is that possible? That’s our four-pillar rock seal, even the Gargamel was trapped inside it for a few minutes. How long has it been?” Marjorie let out a piercing shout.

“Prepare to strengthen the seal. Use the Aquatic Devil Seaweed and help me gain time. Quick!” Nonov looked exceptionally sinister.

“But that’s the last secret trick we have. There’s only enough of the Aquatic Devil Seaweed to be used once…” Marjorie obviously hesitated.

“His strength is the greatest catastrophe for us. I even suspect… quick!” Nonov coughed out blood.

“Fine.” Marjorie merely hesitated for a moment and immediately grew clear-headed, tossing a dried-up seaweed into the formation.

“Emissary sleeping deep within the sea, please heed my call…” With her chants, the small dried-up marine seaweed abruptly swelled in mid-air, as if it had absorbed a large amount of moisture. Even its surface grew wet.

Large amounts of moisture gathered within it and formed a dark green ball of plants, with all sorts of seaweed on it. The plant ball shifted above the sealing spell formation before it suddenly
exploded, threads of black seaweed forming a web that covered the area.

“Alright! Even if it’s a peak rank 3, the Aquatic Devil Seaweed can still achieve…” The glee in Nonov’s eyes only lasted a short while. His eyes nearly popped out from their sockets and he lost all of his previous demeanour, “How is that possible?”

He could see a gap in the middle of the formation, be it the four pillared stone seal or the threads of seaweed. A Magus wearing dark-golden scholarly robes and a mysterious mask on his face walked out arrogantly. Immediately after, a black hole appeared in his hands, sucking in the surrounding seal and the aquatic seaweed.

*Pow!* A slight explosion sounded in the air, and in the blink of an eye, the spell formation and the devil algae seal had turned into a miniature model in Leylin’s hands.

“This is far beyond rank 3. You’re a Morning—” Nonov’s face immediately seemed to lose all blood, becoming so pale that it was frightening.

However, Leylin did not give him the chance to kneel and beg for forgiveness nor flee, “The tasteless games shall end now. I’ll return this to you!” He tossed the model in his hand lightly in front.

The seal that was compressed a thousandfold rumbled, abruptly blowing up along with the devil algae. Formless energy buffeted all directions, shaking the earth itself. Multi-coloured light rippled in the air, the magnificence concealing a deadly danger.

“I’m warning you right now. Don’t provoke the Farlier Family, or else…” Leylin gently landed above the carriage, and under Krupp and Darlie’s reverential gazes headed inside.

The demonic nightmare horse neighed and galloped wildly, several times faster than before. It even soared into the air after a while, turning into a flash of light that streaked through the horizon.

The terrifying explosions continued for a while in the place they’d left behind before gradually ending to reveal two figures, both in a
sorry state. Keefa, the gigantic banyan tree of a Magus, had already disappeared; he’d used his body to absorb most of the attack. “Keefa!” Marjorie was not in a very good condition, but what had given her the greatest blow was not her injuries. It was instead that terrifying and invincible figure. “It’ll be fine! Though his body was destroyed, his seed is still alive.” Nonov produced a green seed.
Keefa has already become a living plant. As long as this trueseed of his still exists, he can revive at any time. However, it’ll take a long while for him to amass the amount of life force he had before…” Nonov sighed, fixing his eyes on the green seed. It was the size of a grown man’s fist, with complicated plant runes on it. She could vaguely sense a familiar spiritual force undulation coming from it, as if there was a gravely injured life that had fallen asleep inside.

“He seems to have let us off intentionally, restraining himself at the last minute. If not, none of us would have been able to survive…” Nonov laughed wryly, “What do you think?”

“We still have our final treasure. If we’re pushed to the limit, we can use it to deal him immense damage,” Marjorie said hatefully, before her expression suddenly changed, “What?”

The sound of an item shattering could be heard from Nonov’s body. More specifically, it was from a secret compartment in his robes where the final treasure was kept.

“What’s going on? Could it be…” A chill rose in her heart. Nonov expressionlessly shoved his hand towards the area and fished out a few shattered metallic pieces. There still remained powerful radiations and complicated, intricate patterns and clearly was a part of a high-grade magic equipment.

“The Blade of Avarice! What’s going on? It’s a high-grade magic
artifact. How can it suddenly shatter?” Marjorie yelled, her extremely sharp voice even dispersing the clouds in the sky. This high-grade magic artifact that was the final treasure of the light Magi could recharge itself automatically. It produced a terrifying attack that could destroy peak rank 3 Magi, hence it was regarded as the final trump card of the light Magi, being safeguarded tightly. It wouldn’t be used unless it was a life or death situation. It was this very item that had injured the Gargamel previously, but now… Nonov looked at the blade fragments in his hands, and suddenly felt like the honour and glory that the light Magi upheld seemed to be collapsing magnificently.
“… To be able to go past my defences and even destroy the Blade of Avarice without my knowledge, lowering the energy waves to the limit so that the explosion wouldn’t injure anyone… This strength…” Nonov felt as if all the bones in his body had been extracted as he collapsed to the ground. He took a deep breath and then guessed, “He must be stronger than the peak of rank 3, having reached the unfathomable Morning Star realm!”
“Morning Star… A rank 4 Magus!” the old woman shrieked, “What kind of joke is this? A Magus of this rank in our south coast… a Magus of this rank…” She kept repeating the words, her voice becoming softer. She was beginning to believe in this conjecture. Perhaps only Magi at and above the Morning Star realm could break out of their attack so easily, leaving them powerless and in despair. After staying silent for a long while, she asked a very practical question. “What should we do next? What kind of attitude should we use to face that… Lord?”
“I don’t know,” Nonov laughed wryly, “But what I do know is that the whole situation in the south coast is going to experience a tumultuous change soon. Whatever it is, we know one thing for
sure, never provoke the Farlier Family!”
At the end, Nonov’s expression turned incomparably grim…
Flames streaked across the sky. Krupp was instantly terrified by their speed once he opened the door to the carriage.
“If we’d hurried on at this speed earlier, those light Magi wouldn’t even have had any time to react, right? Why…”
“Why did I deliberately slow down and let them chase up to us?” Leylin reclined on the sofa in the carriage, his eyes narrowed slightly. His expression was hidden by the half-mask.
“Per–perhaps Lord Leylin wanted to exhibit his strength to them. This can be seen from how Lord Leylin let them off at the end!” Darlie stammered out while clutching at her skirt.
“You said it well!” Leylin nodded in praise. Darlie was a smart girl, and her talent and qualities were all good. In addition, with the limitations of her soul vow, she could never go against the will of the Farlier Family, and instead become Krupp’s valuable companion.
“These Magi are obviously nothing to Lord Leylin, but my lord is making plans for us? My Lord is taking precautions so that once he leaves, they will be too terrified to give us trouble,” Darlie guessed.
“Patriarch, are you leaving?” Krupp turned pale in fright.
“Mm, the south coast is just too small. This place is too barren for me and there’s nothing worth my attention here. If not for the Farlier Family being here, as well as some debts I had to settle, I wouldn’t have returned.” Krupp grew disappointed as Leylin nodded, “I’ll leave the task of restoring the Farlier Family to you. The reputation I’ll leave behind won’t count for much; what you’ll really need to rely on is your own strength. I’ll teach you and Darlie well in this period of time…”
…..
News of Leylin’s reappearance did not shock most of the lower-ranked Magi in the south coast. What made them sigh with sorrow
was the change in the leadership of Teljose City, as well as the strange death of the rank 3 Magus Alric along with his friends, disciples, and family. The acolytes and rank 1 Magi were too far removed from the upper echelons, and the news that spread to them was limited. Hence, they believed that Alric had been struck by some unknown curse. Suffering a curse due to some lab accident or mistaken summoning was common in the Magus World, even ones that ended one’s lineage. It was just that the scope of the curse this time was far more terrifying.

Though their guesses were rather close to reality, never did they expect that the one who had caused Alric’s fall was the wanted Magus, the Toxic King Leylin, the name that was just a symbol in their history textbooks. However, no matter which organisation they belonged to, the higher-ranked Magi were shaken. This trend did not seem to vanish, but instead became increasingly intense. The fall of Alric and his families was like a giant rock being thrown into a lake, resulting in immense ripples in the south coast.

As a rank 3 Magus, Alric was probably one of the top five in the light alliance. Yet he’d been killed just like that. Even his family and disciples hadn’t been let off. Such a ruthless power caused terror in the hearts of both light Magi and dark.

What they did not expect was that the death of Alric was merely a prologue of sorts. The fact that the higher-ups amongst the light Magi had surrounded the murderer and fought him was concealed originally, but eventually it leaked. The Magi that heard of the real situation sank into a mysterious silence. The news was just too shocking, to the point they believed it to be fake. Three peak Crystal Phase Magi had been grievously injured and lost the Golden Staff, Aquatic Devil Seaweed and countless other treasures. Even the Blade of the Avarice had been reduced to
pieces! Such a terrifying battle might dumbfounded the high-ranked Magi of the south coast.
Meanwhile, news of Leylin’s achievements spread like wildfire, and many Magus historians flipped through thick tomes hoping to find all traces of him in the historical records. The most important order now was not to provoke Leylin or the Farlier Family. It wasn’t just the light Magi, even the dark Magi enforced this rule.
In such a situation, a carriage that was being pulled by a flaming skeleton horse slowly entered the boundaries of the Abyssal Bone Swamp.
*Caw! Caw!* A few red-eyed crows flew in the sky, causing nostalgia to arise in Leylin’s eyes. Having moderated his aura, he seemed like a regular human. The only thing that showed he was not normal was the aura of nobility that he inadvertently leaked.
The Abyssal Bone Swamp belonged to the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, which was Leylin’s destination. As the place that had guided him into the ranks of Magi, Leylin still felt something for his alma mater.
As the place that had guided him into the ranks of Magi, Leylin still felt something for his alma mater. Furthermore…
“Kroft, Bicky, Neela, Jayden, Dorotte, Nyssa…” Leylin announced the names slowly, “Though a lot of them have probably disappeared, I still want to take a look…”
Huge tombs appeared before him after he crossed through the dark forest. Several enormous stone statues of gorillas lined the sides of the tallest tomb in the centre came to life and screeched “INVADERS!”
Shrill alarms began to ring, and white human skulls emerged from the earth one by one. They were followed by torsos and then the rest of their skeletal bodies. The skeletons emitted a dense aura of death as they grabbed rotting metal weaponry before slowly surrounding Leylin and his party.
A few double-headed dogs growled gruffly, with pus flowing profusely from the gaps between their teeth as they circled around them.

“Lunatics who dare offend the dignity of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, you will learn what it means to pay a price in blood!” The largest stone gorilla snarled, and the undead troops began to attack.

“Wait!” An imposing voice sounded out, accompanied by large amounts of green flames. Many human figures emerged from underground, all having energy undulations of at least rank 1.

“Director!” The magical beasts bowed towards the new arrivals, but what surprised Leylin the most was that standing in front of the many professors was a female Magus.

‘Wasn’t the director of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy Siley? So it’s someone else now?’ Astonishment flashed in Leylin’s eyes as he curiously watched the person in front of him.
The director of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, standing in front of their many professors, was a female Magus. This had exceeded all of Leylin’s expectations. On top of that, Leylin felt like her face was familiar.

Leylin couldn’t help but begin to inspect her features closely. She had long, wavy blonde hair and a doll-like face. Her starlike eyes, small stature with some baby fat remaining on her face making the woman whose skin was as pale as snow seem lovable and adorable. Materialised spiritual force at the peak of rank 2 was being emitted clearly from her body.

‘Huh… These energy undulations are different from those of regular Magi, she must be from an ancient branch. Was she fortunate enough to obtain some ancient inheritance?’

“Lord Leylin!” The female Magus opposite him curtsied, her pleasant voice sounding like a black-naped oriole, “Welcome back! Abyssal Bone Forest shall forever be your home!”

She was obviously showing her good will, and her voice immediately made Leylin think back to the bonfire at the acolyte camp. He remembered her as a person, but her appearance had drastically changed that he no longer remember her original visage.

“You are… Nyssa?” Leylin spoke slowly. This female Magus was the one who had been deceived by her Mentor. The one who had turned into a disgusting freak due to a failed experiment. Contrary to her former nickname of ‘swine’, the Nyssa now was the very
personification of beauty.
“It’s me. Thank you for all your support and encouragement in the past.” Nyssa’s chest bounced up and down, she evidently had many things to say. Immediately after that, she ran her eyes over the surroundings, “Lord Leylin is no enemy. You may return.”
“Understood.” The stone orangutans saluted respectfully and brought the skeletal troops back to their original places.
“Everyone, let me introduce you. This is Leylin Farlier, the eternal pride of our Abyssal Bone Forest Academy! Let us welcome him warmly.” Nyssa spoke with the poise of a leader to the professors behind her. She was completely different from the fragile and weak girl of the past.
“He’s that Leylin!” “The Toxic Sovereign King?” “No, I heard that…”
His previous actions had earned Leylin a reputation second to none in the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. People quickly began whispering under their breaths when his name was announced; some of them who were ranked high enough had received some information that caused them to humble themselves further before him.
The chattering stopped with but a wave of Nyssa’s hand. This simple action showed off her authority.
She shot a sweet smile at Leylin, and it seemed to light up the whole graveyard. “I know there’s a lot you want to know. I have a lot to say myself, so it’s best we continue this in my drawing room below.”
“Mm,” Leylin nodded. Following that, he entered the underground construction that was the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy escorted by the many Magi.
The surface of Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was a graveyard, but it had a huge underground structure that could accommodate thousands of Magi and those doing odd jobs inside. It was like a
complicated but precise beehive.
In the main drawing room, Leylin put down the black tea in his hands and listened to Nyssa as she gave an account of all that had occurred after they parted ways.
“... And so I acquired that sage’s inheritance and successfully became an official Magus. Two centuries later, I reached rank 2 and was elected the director of the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy.” Nyssa tucked her long hair behind her ear.
“Mm, it’s been hard on you,” Leylin watched the girl in front of him. While what she said sounded simple, he could imagine the price she’d had to pay for all these changes. However, she wasn’t willing to share more and he wouldn’t pour salt on her wounds. It would do him no good.
However, since she wasn’t willing to share more, he wouldn’t pour salt on her wound. More importantly, it would do him no good.
“I’d thought I’d need to deal with some bugs and trash in the academy, but it looks like there’s little for me to do!” Leylin laughed as he spoke bluntly.
Three Magus families had managed everything when he’d been studying at the academy, even electing its director. He’d fought with the Lilytell Family which was one of the three, and was left with no choice but to leave. Though he later dealt the family a huge blow, circumstances hadn’t allowed him to completely uproot it from the academy.
However, the fact that Nyssa was the director and nobody from the Lilytell Family disrupted his arrival was telling.
“I’ve already completely uprooted the Lilytell Family, and the other two have been affected as well. They can’t meddle with anything to do with the academy anymore. Come to think of it, this is all thanks to you. If you hadn’t killed a peak rank 1 grand elder who had a chance of reaching rank 2, the families would never have grown imbalanced in power. And that was what sparked everything...”
Nyssa was all smiles as she watched Leylin. Although her words were light, the carnage behind them did not need to be described. Whatever be the situation, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was merely a small-scaled organisation with its most powerful Magus being Siley who was only a middling rank 2. However, Nyssa was at the peak of rank 2, which made it easy for her to push him off his throne.

“Since the Lilytell Family has been completely destroyed, it saves me a lot of trouble…” Leylin chuckled, “There are a few other people I want to find the whereabouts of…”

Hearing this, Nyssa’s eyes dimmed, “I can guess who you want to ask about. Our companions, Guricha, Dodoria, and even Jayden have all died… Only the two of us remain from that batch…”

“Even Jayden, with his grade 5 aptitude…” Leylin shook his head, looking grim. However, he would never admit his knowledge of the reason for his death.

“Jayden’s Mentor, White Bone Dorotte, went missing during an expedition into some ruins. News spread that his life imprint dissipated, which means there’s little chance of his survival….” Nyssa spoke calmly. She hadn’t dealt much with either Jayden or Dorotte, and her sorrow for their deaths couldn’t compare to what she’d felt when Guricha and Dodoria died.

In reality, magic study and research was filled with dangers. For two acolytes from the south coast to survive and even achieve such dazzling results was quite rare.

“Mm… How about my mentor, Professor Kroft?” Leylin asked on. “Potioneering Professor Kroft died peacefully of natural causes a century ago. His grave is right behind the academy, should I take you there?” Leylin immediately went silent upon hearing Nyssa’s words, and scenes of Kroft’s lectures emerged in his mind.

He wasn’t surprised that Kroft had died of old age, though he was still a little sad. The professor was merely a rank 1 magus, and even
if he was adept at Potioneering there was a limit to his lifespan. Leylin had no idea how long Kroft had lived before he’d become his student. Since he hadn’t advanced to rank 2, it was natural for him to die of old age.

Such a death was actually pretty good in the Magus World, and it didn’t really cause Leylin any grief. It only made him think that time was indeed the largest foe of life. This event only strengthened his resolve to pursue immortality.

Leylin stayed silent for a while longer before his voice sounded out, “Thank you very much, Nyssa. I plan to stay here for a period of time, and there are a few other people whose whereabouts I need to trouble you for. Neela, Bicky, and Anna who’s from Extreme Night City. She’s a human who once took over my manor…” He announced a few names.

“Alright, I’ve remembered their names. I’ll give you an answer within a week,” Nyssa quickly replied.

“Many thanks. I’d like to be alone now.” Leylin reclined on the sofa, waving his arms as if in weariness.

“Then I’ll take my leave.” Although Nyssa was the host, she seemed to obey Leylin unconditionally. She bowed slightly before retreating in caution.

……

“Kroft Leslie…” The lettering on the mottled black tombstone had dulled with the passage of time, but Leylin was still able to read the name out. He was currently among a large number of tombs; numerous black tombstones and upside down crosses covering the area. It caused the place to feel ominous and cold.

The tomb in front of him belonged to his ex-mentor, Kroft.

“Mentor… I’m back!” Leylin said, the words emerging after a long period of silence. The cold wind kept blowing, causing the black
trees to rustle.
“Professor Kroft left very peacefully, and he didn’t leave behind any descendants…” Nyssa walked over, “Also, I’ve gotten an answer about what you wanted me to check out…”
“Tell me.” Leylin’s voice was calm, but that only caused a shiver to run down her spine. It was as if she had met some natural enemy.
“First is Neela. It can be confirmed that she passed away 129 years ago, and her family was extinguished 67 years ago due to a leak during an experiment… Those from Extreme Night City have also returned to report, saying that Anna did live there for a period of time, and even developed the organisation to the perimeters of Extreme Night City. She was a very capable woman and never did marry. She later died alone of old age. Her organisation withered away after her passing. As for Bicky…”
Nyssa glanced at Leylin, “She’s… gone missing…”
“Gone missing? Clarify!” Leylin furrowed his brows.
“After you rescued her in the Tyler Family, she left and travelled the continent by herself, apparently to look for you. Nobody knows where she is…”
Nyssa sounded very gentle, “The person who was the head of the Tyler Family at that time has been waiting here. Would you like to meet him?”

“There’s no need for that,” Leylin waved his arms. He’d never been interested in those who were so brazen in looking for benefits. Noticing him sinking into silence immediately after, Nyssa retreated tactfully.

After a long while, he sighed deeply. “Neela was a very smart woman after all, while Anna was slightly foolish. I never thought Bicky would have the perseverance to do that…” Leylin knew Neela’s personality very well. She was adaptable and knew when to advance and retreat. It was only expected for her to meet a good end.

Anna’s organisation had only been a way out that Leylin had prepared while he was an acolyte. It was understandable that it could not hold out for long.

What Leylin found the strangest was Bicky. With her personality, she evidently wasn’t the kind of Magus who liked to work hard. It seemed like that matter had influenced her greatly, to the point that her personality had changed.

All three of them were good friends of Leylin’s, perhaps even closer than that. If he could still see them, he would naturally want to help. However, it didn’t matter if he couldn’t.

Leylin left the graveyard after indulging in nostalgia for a while,
returning to the luxurious room that the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy had prepared specially for him.

“Patriarch!” Krupp bowed deferentially. Now, however, he seemed vastly different from before.
The colour of his eyes and pupils had changed, and they were turning pure black. The lines on his face were more gentle, and he had grown more handsome, emitting a unique charm.

“How’s your body? Can you get used to it?” Leylin’s eyes shot out blue light that scanned his body up and down.

There were many methods that could be used to raise one’s strength quickly, but the most suitable for Krupp was the modification of his bloodline.

Krupp had been receiving a transplant of Leylin’s bloodline all this while. It was rather like contaminating a lower-ranked being with the power of a higher-ranked one.

Though Krupp had chosen the path of a Magus, he was still only a rank 1. With the methods Leylin had currently, it was easy for him to push him onto the path of a bloodline Warlock.

Not only was the aura of a bloodline Warlock rippling out of Krupp’s body currently, his energy undulations had quietly crossed the threshold of rank 2.

“I’m alright. It’s just uncomfortable, like even my marrow is burning…” Krupp was feeling very emotional right now. A bit of pain was a cheap price to pay for the modification to a Magus’ bloodline, something that would give them great power. Such a chance was rare, not something one would find even if they were begging for it.

Now that he’d crossed over to rank 2 by drawing on the power of Leylin’s bloodline, Krupp was completely subservient to him.

“Mm. That’s natural with bloodline transplants. Remember to meditate using Kemoyin’s Pupil a few times when you return.” Leylin said, nodding inwardly at the information the A.I. Chip had
Leylin had planned Krupp’s modifications out. After all, the south coast branch of the Farlier Family needed a powerful guardian. And once Leylin transported a Kemoyin bloodline into the boy, his ability of control as a Kemoyin Emperor have him great control over him.

‘A rank 5 emperor bloodline will have an extraordinary effect. Just this bloodline force pushed Krupp to rank 2, and might get him to rank 3 in just 50 more years. The possibility of breaking through to Morning Star is…’ Glints of intelligence flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

He’d naturally used the Kemoyin Emperor bloodline, but it wasn’t his own. Leylin’s own bloodline was far too powerful, and just a single drop of it would cause Krupp to explode. Since a first generation Warlock’s bloodline was too much, Leylin had instead given Krupp the umbilical blood that had been gathered from Syre’s birth.

A second generation Warlock bloodline may be weaker than Leylin’s, but it was still real rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor blood. It was diluted and hadn’t matured, but that’s what made it suitable for Krupp.

Now that he carried Syre’s blood, Krupp could be considered a third generation Warlock. In other words, he was effectively Leylin’s grandson.

At this time, the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded again. [Beep! Bloodline weakening graph completed. Estimated degeneration to Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline: 15th generation. Estimated further degeneration at 34th generation….] The weakening of Warlock bloodlines was something that couldn’t be avoided. In order to keep the family bloodline pure, they had to practice endogamy or use even more sinister methods with hopes that the deterioration of the bloodline could be drawn out. However, no matter how much was sacrificed the process wouldn’t
be pushed back more than a century.
‘In other words, the chance of a rank 5 Warlock appearing in the Farlier Family is pretty high before the fifteenth generation?’ Leylin pondered over this thought while stroking his chin.
It wasn’t true that everyone with the Kemoyin Emperor bloodline would become a rank 5 Warlock. Even within the Ouroboros Clan there were many with Kemoyin bloodlines but only Gilbert and the other two dukes had reached Morning Star. Even Bevis with his rank 6 bloodline wasn’t guaranteed to reach the Breaking Dawn realm and become a Monarch. He only had the potential to do so.
Hence, while descendants that inherited Leylin’s rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor bloodline only needed to work hard and would easily reach rank 4, whether they reached rank 5 was still a question.
As someone who had gone through this process himself, Leylin understood clearly that advancing as Magi did not only require a large amount of resources and hard work. Luck was a very important factor as well.
Other Magi did not have an A.I. Chip at the side like Leylin; they couldn’t run simulations and predict possibilities for advancement.
“Understood, my Lord!” Having been modified by Kemoyin Emperor blood, Krupp’s respect towards Leylin had evolved into a dependance and reverence from his very soul. He had the Kemoyin bloodline, and humility before the king of one’s race had been carved into his very blood and genetics. It could not be changed.
‘This is truly an intoxicating feeling…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed as he continued to think, ‘As I am right now, Krupp probably wouldn’t say no even if I were to order him to kill everyone he loves and then commit suicide. He’d even risk his life for this mission… The Snake Dowager’s control over other serpents the same… I’m probably the only one of my kind.’
Leylin’s finger kept brushing against his cheek. His forehead had been covered by the cold mask, and the Allsnake Curse’s mark was
dead silent with no visible movements. However, Leylin could sense traces of fine bloodline force being absorbed by it from all areas of his body as it increased in strength. Though there wasn’t much of an effect on him now considering the rate at which it was happening, his bloodline force would be absorbed completely in two more years, leaving him a regular human once more.

Krupp’s display showed how the controlling ability of the Kemoyin Emperor was a revolt against the Snake Dowager’s own authority. Were he to break through his bloodline shackles, perhaps all Kemoyins would break away from her rule. This was something she would never accept. Hence, a conflict between them definitely could not be avoided.

“Also, Director Nyssa is waiting outside and hoping to see you!” While Leylin was deep in thought, Krupp had been standing respectfully at the side like the most loyal soldier or servant. He’d moved forward to make his report only when there was a reaction from him.

“Nyssa? Is there anything else she needs?” Leylin’s brows furrowed slightly.

“It should be about other visitors. Ever since news spread that my Lord is staying at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, many dark Magus organisations have dispatched emissaries to meet you. Some leaders have even come over personally, the head of the Lighthouse of the Night being one.” As he said this Krupp sighed slightly in his mind.

Tyrants among the dark Magi like the leader of the Lighthouse of the Night were absolute existences in his eyes, ones to be looked up to. However, they’d come forward so humbly and waited for a meeting with his patriarch. It made him feel honoured.

“Also, a few light Magi organisations have secretly sent emissaries as well…” Krupp saw the calm look on Leylin’s face and
continued, “My Lord, do you think…”
“Set a time. I’ll see them all.” Leylin waved his hands.

……

“I never thought my Lord would visit the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy. It truly is the honour of our professors and students!” Elsewhere, Nyssa was speaking to a Magus clad in black robes whose eyes flamed a dark green. She was accompanying him on a stroll through the interior of the Abyssal Bone Forest.
“The Abyssal Bone Forest managed to produce a genius like Lord Leylin. It surely has some redeeming qualities!” The black-robed man was evidently the leader of the Lighthouse of the Night, the strongest dark Magus organisation.
With its massive network, he’d quickly gained intel on Leylin’s terrifying battle achievements, followed by other general information on him. He couldn’t remain seated after he heard it all. After all, this Lord Leylin was very likely a great Magus who had entered the Morning Star realm!
Just some advice on his path of advancement would leave him very grateful.
“Lord Leylin relied on his own talents. The Abyssal Bone Forest Academy was merely lucky enough to instruct him…” Nyssa did not dare exaggerate when it came to this, and instead told the truth.
“Whatever the matter, Lord Leylin is Abyssal Bone Forest Academy’s greatest success and fortune!” the glance the leader of Lighthouse of the Night shot at Nyssa hinted at something, and no matter how hard she tried to conceal it a hint of glee appeared in her eyes.

The greater Leylin’s reputation was, the better it was for the academy. With his fame, the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would definitely be able to expand enormously under her administration. She could even accomplish more than what all the previous directors had been able to. This was the petty and low reason for which Nyssa was trying so hard to invite him to join them.

‘If I could make use of their good relationship and get Leylin to become a famed professor at the academy…’ Just the idea had Nyssa trembling in her excitement; she was perhaps smiling even in her sleep.

“Also… I seem to see a lot of old friends from the light Magi here!” The green-eyed Magus stared at Nyssa with a half-smile.

“Yes, there are quite a few. Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Four Seasons Garden… Practically all the large light Magus organisations have secretly sent people to make contact with us.” Since it was basically impossible to hide it from him, Nyssa just nodded and admitted it.

“Hu huu… looks like his reputation has terrified them…” The leader laughed in a strange manner, like an owl in the night.

The Magi of light and dark coexisted in the south coast. However,
the light Magi were evidently much stronger and occupied most of the resource-rich regions, and the dark Magi could only eke out an existence hidden in the corners. The leaders of the light Magi had steadily suppressed them.

With the appearance of the Gargamel, there was now a three-way confrontation. The dark and light Magi might have temporarily stopped fighting, but the enmity between them had not been resolved, only inhibited by the existence of a powerful external enemy.

Now, with a Morning Star Magus who had started off as a dark Magus, this was more than enough for the old light Magi to be like cats on hot bricks.

At this thought, a sneer appeared about the leader’s lips.

“Director Nyssa and this lord here!”

At this moment, Krupp appeared before Nyssa, and it was as if the figure of a snake flashed in his eyes. The bloodline aura he had caused even the leader, who was a rank 3 Magus, to feel his heart palpitate.

“The Patriarch is willing to meet you. Please come with me!”

Krupp’s hair and eyes almost turned completely black, darkness elemental particles extremely dense as they strived to outdo each other and wiggle into his pores. Such a scene astounded Nyssa and the leader.

Having said this, Krupp led the way while Nyssa and the leader transmitted each other messages secretly.

“So this Magus is that lord’s grandson? The descendant of the Farlier Family?” The leader’s eyes were filled with curiosity. After all, a powerful rank 2 Magus was very rare in the south coast. Any one of them could take over an organisation and still hold immense power.

“He’s obviously only advanced very recently. While in history, it’s common for that to happen to the descendants of high-ranked
Magi, but…”
A hint of hesitance appeared in his voice.
“Yes! This Magus isn’t Sire Leylin’s descendant, but only a branch from his brother!” Nyssa knew what he wanted to ask and gave the answer.
“A lateral relative?” His eyes went wide, before he lowered his head to chuckle, “I now have even more expectations towards Sire Leylin!”
“We’re here!”
Krupp brought Nyssa and the leader into a large hall. There, many Magi were already in wait, but there were two entirely different groups.
At one side were Magi, with many wearing black Magus robes. Their auras were ice-cold and evil. After seeing the arrival of the leader of Lighthouse of the Night, many drew close and greeted him like moths to a flame.
The Magi at the other side who saw this mostly huffed, not looking very good.
They were clad in white robes, with many decorations of plants that represented life on it. Light and a holy aura began to emanate from their bodies.
“He called them all at one go? I’ve been greeting the leader of the Lighthouse of Night all this while, but this…”
Nyssa gritted her teeth, and her expression became a wry smile.
With Leylin’s absolute power, that bit of authority she had as the director was probably even lighter than a feather in the eyes of the Abyssal Bone Forest professors.
Hence, after being ordered by Leylin, they carried out what he asked without hesitation and even gave her the misconception that they had abandoned her.
No! This wasn’t a misconception. Nyssa knew very well that as long as that man were to say that he wanted to be the director of the
academy, she would immediately be made to renounce her position. Thankfully, he had never been fond of power and status. Furthermore, the academy was just much too small for him, to the point that he might turn his nose up at it.

Nyssa, who thought about this, finally relaxed, the bit of worry she had disappearing.

“Everyone!”

Krupp stood on the platform in the middle of the hall with Darlie beside him. While she had not undergone bloodline modification, she’d been observing Leylin and learning from him. Leylin’s knowledge was abundant and he could give perfect answers to all her questions, which very beneficial to her without her being aware of it.

Flames flickered, and Leylin floated above the place where the master should be, black eyes scanning his surroundings.

A terrifying and vast aura that was like countless stars in the skies filled the hall. All the Magi that Leylin looked in the eye, whether the rank 2 Nyssa or rank 3 leader of Lighthouse of the Night felt a piercing pain in their eyes, and subconsciously lowered their heads, even bending their waists.

“Greetings, Lord Leylin…”

Having personally sensed Leylin’s aura and how terrifying he was, the Magi had no disillusions about his strength.

“Rise!” Seeing the many Magi who had bowed, Leylin raised his arms slightly.

Immediately after, the Magi below the platform felt themselves being raised by a warm draft, holding within strength that they could not oppose.

The Magi could not help but stand up straight, eyes full of astonishment.

“I’m afraid it’s true that this lord has already advanced to be a Morning Star!”
The leader of Lighthouse of the Night’s pupil’s flashed. He now had no doubt at all towards Leylin, who had easily defeated a top-notch master of the light Magi and even destroyed their final trump card, the Blade of Avarice.

Leylin glanced through. Lighthouse of the Night, Ennea Ivory Ring Tower, Four Seasons Garden, Skeleton Throne… Besides the representative from the Spirit Slaying Sect, everyone in the Magus World from the south coast had arrived.

These top-grade dark and light Magi organisations were very well-known back in the day. Now, however, they could only creep at his feet.

However, Leylin did not even twitch. The Magi under the platform could not tell Leylin’s expression under the mask and merely lowered their heads humbly.

Leylin continued to speak, “I wonder what all of the Magi here have come for?”

The Magi exchanged glances. The reason they were here was mostly to verify Leylin’s might and his attitude. Based on what had happened, there was no question about his strength. Just displaying the tip of the iceberg had them gasping in admiration, and nobody dared personally test it out with a battle.

Besides that, this lord’s attitude towards the two factions seemed rather mild. It wasn’t good or bad, as if he had no ambitions to unify the south coast.

This discovery had many light Magi sighing in relief.

“Lord Leylin!” At this moment, the leader of the Lighthouse of the Night stood out.

“Speak.” Leylin extended his arm and made a polite gesture for him to go on. Inside, he was sighing a little. In his acolyte days, he’d once seen the leader during the bloodbath for the secret dimension. At that time, just a gaze could cause him grievous injuries or kill him. However, the tables had turned. With just a look, he would
immediately be stricken with terror and die miserably.

“Please forgive me for my boldness in saying this, but... have you... already become a rank 4 Magus?”

The leader of the Lighthouse of the Night hesitated but eventually asked.

Things like status had long since lost interest to him. The only thing that would attract him and cause him to invest his mind and body in was a thirst towards a higher realm.

Hearing this question, the hall quieted down. Everyone watched Leylin expectantly.

“This question...”

Just as he was about to answer, a smile appeared about his lips, “Please forgive me, but I will answer this later. Let us first meet a friend!”

“A friend?” The leader was stunned, and immediately noticed two translucent faint figures pressing on either side of a demonic being that suddenly emerged from the void.

“That’s... the Gargamel of the Spirit Slaying Sect!”

Between the two void assassins was a soul demonic being. It had a mask of a horned demon, and its body was as concentrated as a black crystal. Vast soul undulations was transmitted from its body, causing the expressions on these Magi to change.

This was a level that surpassed all of them who were advancing towards the path of Morning Star.

“Is that really the Gargamel?”

“Definitely! This strength that’s mixed with resentment and lunacy is something all Magi who’ve seen it even once can’t misidentify...”

Many Magi whispered incessantly amongst each other, and then watched Leylin with reverence in their eyes.
With the appearance of the Gargamel, the Magi present sank into a mysterious silence. They knew very well how terrifying and troublesome the Gargamel was. Not only was it powerful at magic, it could support its body with vengeful dead spirits, allowing it to maintain peak condition at all times. Even when struck by the light Magi’s final trump card, the Blade of Avarice, it had only been injured and not killed. It only went low-profile for a while before making waves again.

If not for the Magi being unable to deal with it, the Spirit Slaying Sect wouldn’t be able to rise in the south coast to be regarded equal to the dark and light Magi.

Now, however, the sect chief, the Gargamel that the disciples fiercely believed in had been seized so easily. The demon that had caused so much terror was suppressed under the platform. The huge contrast left the Magi questioning whether they were in an illusion.

However, they had no choice but to admit that this was reality after a few tests. Even Leylin’s subordinates had the ability to take down a peak rank 3 Magus! Capturing someone at the same rank alive was more difficult than killing them. This was something known to all Magi. They would perhaps only have a slight increase in respect if Leylin had captured the Gargamel himself. However, this was his subordinates’ work,
the effect on them was so great that it couldn’t possibly be better from Leylin’s perspective. The two void assassins bowed slightly and disappeared into the void. Such strange methods caused many Magi to have changes of expressions. Now, they understood very well that with just a command, he didn’t have to do anything at all. Just his two subordinates could eliminate all the Magi here! Recognising that, they no longer dared to have any thoughts about Leylin, fearing he would notice.

“Gaga… gege… you are… Leylin!”

A hoarse voice sounded from behind the Gargamel’s horned white bone mask. It sounded intermittent, but was evidently much more quick-witted than when he’d first seen it.

“Yes. How’s’ that pitiful Magi mother and daughter doing?” Leylin asked indifferently. He was obviously talking about Old Devil and her daughter in Teljose City then. The old witch had made a deal with the Gargamel to revive her daughter, and even tried to offer Leylin up as a sacrifice. Of course, after Leylin’s counterattack, they had suffered consequences and fused to form a strange being.

“Them? I ate those two useless pieces of trash long ago!” The Gargamel’s speech became more fluent.

“Is that so…” Leylin seemed to be in a daze for a moment, as if recalling some distant memories.

“Ga ga!”

At this moment, two bundles of crimson flames emerged from under the Gargamel’s bone mask. Numerous runes burst on its body, and a layer of thick black fog spread.

“Crap! It’s gotten out of its bindings!” The Magi shouted in their fear and anger, bodies flickering with colourful innate defensive spells.

“The home of all living things can only be the tomb of the soul for
eternity… the Gargamel!"
The Gargamel yelled as if chanting runes of sacrifice that constantly echoed.
*Boom!* Amidst the curse, the Gargamel’s body exploded and countless figures emerged from its body. There were the old, young, male, female, and the one common point they had were their vicious faces as well as eyes that were dripping blood.
“Keke, let’s destroy everything together. Soul Disaster!”
The bone mask exploded with a rumble and turned into powder that flew through the air. Bits of light fused with the figures from before, the terrifying aura they emitted causing even the leader of the Lighthouse of the Night’s expression to change.
The peak rank 3 Gargamel had now was treading on the threshold of Morning Star. The dreadful attack formed by ruining its own body meant he had no thoughts that he could survive as a rank 3 Magus himself.
He knew very well that once such a spell completely broke out and spread, the Magi in the hall would die, and even the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy would not be spared.
“I’m going all out! Though using secret techniques will consume much of our measly life force, it’s still better than dying here!”
The leader called out in a low voice, a layer of fine black runes appearing around his body. They were like tadpoles cruising through the air, as if about to collide with that soul body of nothingness.
*Weng! Weng! Weng!* At this moment, blue starlight descended, and the leader’s body quivered. He found that his spiritual force had gone stagnant, and even the secret technique he was risking his life force for was forcefully being suppressed. He felt no weakness, and the backlash had evidently been pushed down and not consuming his life force at all.
“This– This…”
His eyes went wide as he watched the stars that spread from Leylin’s back.
The light blue starlight brought with it a cold brightness that penetrated through the layers of defence and ground of the Abyssal Bone Forest, arriving in the hall. This made it seem as if the top of the hall was a dome showing the night sky with bits of starlight projecting and showing inverted images of gorgeous lights.
Accompanying the lights was a terrifying pressure that caused elemental particles to be rejected. The night domain that the leader had always been proud of exploded with a rumble in front of the pressure like bubbles.
“Ahh…” “Ga ga…” “Zhi zhi…”
The numerous spirit bodies in the sky were like bugs frozen in amber, unable to move at all. No Magi were injured.
“This– This is…” The leader trembled, crouching down almost involuntarily, “The Morning Star Domain of a Morning Star Magus!”
Compared to the fake domain of a rank 3 Magus, the exhibition of a real Morning Star domain with prowess that was terrifying to the extreme made him seem to be a joke.
“Gargamel, did you think I really didn’t notice what you’d been doing?”
Leylin looked calm as he watched the many faint figures in the air. He grabbed forward casually, and a soul that looked dazed automatically flew over.
Immediately after, the look on the soul’s face became sinister, body covered with black and two horns growing on the tips of his head as it growled at Leylin unceasingly.
“You look like you’re going to implode yourself, but you actually hid your soul in one of the figures. As long one of these figures and vengeful spirits escape, you can use that body and revive
yourself?”
Leylin coldly scanned the numerous vengeful spirits in the air.
“Very impressive. Perhaps regular Morning Star Magi might not notice and let you escape, but it’s a pity… you met me!”
Leylin clenched his right fist.
*Boom!* Large numbers of vengeful spirits were like popcorn as they popped, a silver vortex forming and pulling the many figures and their remains within.
“No~~!” A very unwilling roar was heard in the air before it finally became softer and disappeared.
The many spirits formed from the Gargamel’s self implosion, as well as the one that Leylin had specifically picked out, all disappeared as they entered the silver vortex.
*Pak!* The Morning Star domain dissipated, and all that had just happened was like a dream, yet had happened in real life.
“Anye, greeting Morning Star Magus, lord Leylin Farlier!”
At this moment, the leader of the Lighthouse of the Night sounded. He knelt on the floor respectfully, looking as if he were a pilgrim.
“Greetings to Lord Leylin…” Now, the other Magi knelt like they had just woken from a dream, faces filled with excitement.
All that had happened just now and the appearance of the Morning Star domain made it clear that the Magus sitting at the main seat, Leylin Farlier, had truly entered the rank 4 realm.
In the south coast, after thousands of year, a Morning Star had finally appeared once more!
In that moment, some elderly Magi felt their eyes go blurry, filled with heat.

……

In front of the metal door where many light Magi were guarding, many peak rank 1 elite troops were with rapt attention as they did
their job. Not far away, there were many rank 2 Magi undulations transmitting from a few buildings. *Sou! Sou! Sou!* Three human figures appeared in the air, flying towards the metal door. “Stop right there! This is the entrance to the pocket dimension of the Eternal Plains, and it’s protected by the Lighthouse of the Night. What do you think you’re doing?” A spiritual force undulation was transmitted. Immediately after, the Magus standing leftmost hummed coldly, eyes emitting dark green light, “It’s me!” “Revered leader!” The rank 3 Magus’ undulations dispersed, and the Magi who had been on their guard had their right hands on their chest as they greeted him. Three human figures touched down, revealing two figures on top of that of the leader. At the rightmost was a beautiful female Magus who had an exquisite face like a doll. Now, however, she and Anye automatically took a step back and allowed a space, as if not daring to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Magi between them. The Magus in the middle wore dark golden, black scholarly robes with a cutting that was very proper. He had a very noble aura and had a black mask on his face with mysterious patterns on it. Such dressing and to be accompanied by their own leader immediately rang the warning bells in this guard Magi. Before, there had been no Magi that could stand on equal ground with their leader in the south coast. However, this situation had changed tens of days ago. The guard Magus knelt respectfully and shouted the arrival’s name, “We welcome, great Morning Star Magus, Sire Leylin Farlier…” “We want to enter the Eternal Plains pocket dimension. Make
preparations immediately!” Anye ordered. Leylin nodded casually and stood by the metal door with Nyssa. “The Eternal Plains pocket dimension… it’s been so long!” Leylin watched the large metal door before him, eyes full of nostalgia. Scenes of the danger when he had advanced to rank 2 seemed to appear in his mind in that instant, every person extremely lively.
The Eternal River pocket dimension had been discovered when Leylin was just a rank 1 Magus. The fact that it still hadn’t been divided into respectful affiliations was something that surprised Leylin. Looking at the detailed patterns on the large metal gate that towered into the clouds, Leylin couldn’t help but recall the scene when he’d advanced. That year, he’d used a large amount of this metal gate’s spiritual force as well as the souls of numerous Magi, to push himself forward and advance to rank 2 in one move. Memories of all that had happened were still fresh in his mind, yet all of the people in them had disappeared. Leylin felt slightly regretful.

“Yes, Sir. Please wait a moment.” That guard immediately placed his hands on the surface of the large gate. The metal gate immediately rumbled, emitting a dazzling radiance.

“Eh.” Looking at the guard captain, Leylin let out a soft gasp.

“Did you discover something, Lord Leylin?” The head of the Lighthouse of the Night laughed from the side.

“Mm,” Leylin nodded, “This Magus is the reincarnation of the original core of the metal gate’s consciousness?” When he heard these words, the guard captain’s body suddenly trembled.

“Indeed. We put a lot of effort in then and managed to subdue the gate’s core of Consciousness. We then nurtured it and had it
reincarnate, finding it a suitable corporeal body required great
effort…” Anye chuckled at the side.
“However, with this person, manipulating the gate of the pocket
dimension has become much more convenient. Now, it is our Dark
Night Lighthouse’s honoured professor Jeans!”
“Jeans? Good name!” Leylin analysed him.
Until the other party was a little creeped out, he then chuckled and
a spot of light flew into Jeans’ forehead.
The surface of his body made a futile attempt to emit a layer of
metal defence but to no avail. He could only helplessly watch as the
radiance entered his forehead.
“Sir Leylin, this is…” Anye grew anxious, but he did not step out
and stop him.
One reason was that he knew Leylin’s strength, that he would only
invite humiliation upon himself by doing so. Another was that
recent interactions caused him to realise that Leylin was not a
Magus that was easy to kill. His personality was also good, so he
was doing this with some unique intention.
“Lad, just treat this thing as my gift…” Leylin chuckled, stepped
into the large gate while Nyssa followed closely behind.
“You guys be careful!” Anye was confused, but still followed him
in, only leaving behind Jeans who stood there in a trance.
He didn’t feel pain after the light invaded him. Instead, it
transformed into a message that entered his sea of consciousness,
instantly causing him to fall into a trance.
Many alphabets formed the beginning, “High-grade meditation
technique: Dark Gold World, suitable for metal innate skill!”
“My Lord?” Anye asked after he followed Leylin into the Eternal
Plains pocket dimension, unable to endure it any more.
“Relax, I’m just giving him some benefits!” Leylin smiled. He owed
his rank 2 advancement to the core consciousness of the metal gate
to the Eternal River Plains pocket dimension. Now that he’d found
a body with the same core origin, he naturally wanted to make up for what he’d done.
All of this followed his personality, but Leylin wouldn’t shackle himself: if he hadn’t seen Jeans today he probably wouldn’t have thought of this at all.
“Central continent, south coast, Twilight Zone, and Chernobyl Islands…”
Leylin’s gaze flickered continuously, “Once I’ve broken free from the threads of destiny, it’ll be time for me to let go of everything and break through my bloodline shackles!”
Although he didn’t know why he wanted to do this, Leylin had a feeling that this would bring him only benefits.
“Huff…” After listening to Leylin’s explanation, although Anye was still slightly curious as to why Leylin favoured Jeans, he still finally heaved a sigh.
Three rays of glaring light streaked across the sky, suddenly pushing their way through the Eternal Plains pocket dimension.
Light flickered continuously in Leylin’s eyes. Ever since he’d displayed strength at Morning Star to subdue the light and dark Magi, he’d essentially become the uncrowned king of the south coast. The Magi vied with each other to complete the tasks he wanted done. Whether they were a light Magus or dark, just a single command from him would make them work desperately for him.
Such an inconceivable thing had happened due to Leylin’s power. It caused many uninformed people from the lower classes to cry out in incredulity. There were even some busybodies who proclaimed that the south coast would soon welcome an era of peace. But in fact, they were all thinking too much.
With the power of the masses at his beck of call, Leylin quickly made progress on finding people and dealing with past grudges. Krupp and Darlie were also married in the meantime, Leylin having
hosted the ceremony. With that done, they returned to the Chernobyl islands to establish a kingdom in the original lands of the Farlier Family.

After everything was resolved, Leylin wanted to leave everything behind. But, the dark and light Magi made a request of him. Although he wanted to leave, the Farlier Family would remain behind here, and furthermore Leylin was quite interested in what the dark and light Magi had mentioned. Hence, he still came to this place.

Leylin and the other two weren’t ordinary Magi. They moved at extremely high speeds, and it was but a short while before they arrived at the centre of the pocket dimension. A continuous building complex was present here, with the symbols of various Magus organisations in the surroundings. These were clearly large-scale ruins.

There was a momentary uproar in many of the camps present at their arrival, but soon after a white light transformed into an old white-browed Magus who welcomed them. The moment he saw Leylin, he immediately bowed down in respect, “Nonov pays his respects to Your Highness Leylin Farlier, the great Morning Star Magus! I hope Your Highness will forgive our rude actions before, we are willing to pay any price…” This Magus was one of the impressive higher-ups of the light Magi that had originally attacked Leylin.

Ever since they’d been rebuffed by Leylin and had the Blade of Avarice destroyed, the three highest executives of the light Magi fell into silence.

Only, once news about Leylin advancing to Morning Star spread, Ennea Ivory Ring Tower which was Nonov’s organisation carried out Leylin’s orders the most thoroughly. They were at his beck and call, handling many issues with the obvious intent of atonement and to curry favour.
Hence, as Leylin looked at this old scoundrel, he only rolled his eyes, “Rise!”

“Thank you Lord Leylin! Your benevolence is like the torrential ocean, vast and boundless, as if it can contain the entire universe…” Nonov stood up smiling to please him and consciously stood behind Leylin, causing Nyssa and Anye who were at the side to be utterly speechless.

“I’m not here for that matter today, let’s go!” Leylin arrived in the sky above a patch of the ruins and looked over everything. The buildings were simple and unsophisticated yet solemn, carrying a unique appeal. They were arranged in a surprisingly logical manner, and seemed to surround a mysterious spell formation.

“This is…” Leylin’s pupils narrowed, and his face turned gloomy. “My Lord?” Anye and Nonov closed up and surrounded him. Leylin waved his hands at their inquiring gazes, “I can’t confirm anything for now, let’s talk after we enter the core hall.”

“Of course. Please come with us, My Lord,” Anye and Nonov hurried to the front to lead the way. With those two leading, Leylin would of course be unobstructed in the remains.

“This place is a base that emerged after the destruction of a large gate pocket dimension. At one time, we thought that the secret of the person who made the Eternal Plains pocket dimension was here, and fought many battles for it. In the end, we still wound up concluding on a joint expedition…” Nonov seemed to be a little regretful.

“We initially found many good things in these ruins, even remains of the ancient Wisdom Tree. We finished our exploration of the place 55 years ago, but who’d know we’d discovered even more incredible items than that…” Anye added from the other side. It wasn’t convincing.

As the two spoke, Leylin explored the buildings one after the other to arrive at the centre-most ground.
This was an unnamed temple. There were large white stone pillars on all sides, and with no door and no walls, it could be entered from any direction. The roof exposed a large circular gap where the sky could be seen through the dome. The hall was absolutely empty, it was only the ground that retained even more complicated and detailed patterns.

“Lord Leylin, look…” Anye and Norov glanced at each, with looks of agony on their faces. Leylin though wasn’t paying attention, mesmerised by the large patterns on the ground, “This is…”

‘A.I. Chip, conduct scan!’ he immediately commanded.
[Beep! Mission established, beginning scan!] The A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice echoed, and there was a response soon after.
[Ancient combined sealing spell formation! Already discovered technique: Annihilating runes, dimensional seal, powerful isolation…]

“Indeed, the building complex here is a part of the large sealing spell formation, and the core is right here!” Leylin looked at the ground. The complicated patterns began to move around, as if they had a life of their own.

“The special nature of the ruins’ core caused both parties to keep fighting around it. It wasn’t until the appearances of Gargamel and the Primordial Spirit Slaying Sect that both of us united together to explore the ruins. It caused a rapid increase in progress, then we found… we found…”

Leylin lifted his head, “You found that this place was an entrance to the subterranean world’s first layer, but it’s been sealed?”

Nonov and Anye both looked at Leylin with shocked expressions. Even with their age they’d had to flip through many antique books before they could know, but Leylin could actually recognise it at first glance. This ability… Could it be that because he was a Morning Star Magus, he was
really omnipotent?
ord Leylin is extremely erudite,” Nonov said in praise, “Ever since the ruins appeared the seal has slowly been lifting. No matter what methods we think of, we haven’t been able to stop this process…” “And you’ve come to me as a last resort.” Leylin’s snort had Nonov and Anye break out in cold sweat but he didn’t concern himself with them, instead stroking his chin as he fell into deep thought. Although the subterranean world was rich in resources, with the violent invasion of the ancient Magi many of the tribes there didn’t have a favourable impression of humans. Although humans remained there, after so many years would they side with the humans or the subterranean world? The latter possibility was more likely.

The subterranean world was vast and boundless, and wasn’t lacking in powerful Morning Stars even in the first layer. There should even be rank 5 existences there. Twilight Zone was only a very small part of this first layer, just like how the south coast was just a part of the surface world. Furthermore, even in spite of its long isolation, there were many terrifying tribes there. Thus, it wasn’t hard to understand why Nonov and Anye grew extremely panicky seeing the seal wither away.

“A.I. Chip, based on the current rate, how much longer will the seal last?” A blue light shone from Leylin’s eyes before he had the
answer. With a series of calculations, the A.I. Chip gave an extremely precise answer. [Beep! Calculating with current rate of decay, estimated time to total disintegration is 28572h 34min and 12s.]
To the A.I. Chip which had already been renewed several times, this level of operation was only the simplest.
“You invited me here, what exactly is it for? If it is to strengthen the seal, I’m afraid I can only delay it for at most a hundred years’ time…”
After he finished calculating, Leylin stroked his chin and said to Nonov and Anye.
“How… How can this be? Sir is a Morning Star ranked Magus!”
Such an outcome caused Nonov and Anye to be a little in disbelief.
“Hmph! If it’s just to strengthen the seal, although it’s relatively harder, it’s not that I’m unable to do it, but now, the entire Eternal River pocket dimension has been completely developed for several hundred years, most the remains here have also been destroyed by you…”
Leylin snorted, watching Nonov and Anye, his tone was very hostile, “In fact, the entire Eternal River pocket dimension is a part of this seal. The Magus who set up this pocket dimension had long before installed the time when the pocket dimension would appear, he even used your greed and sped up this process artificially…”
“Until now, the breaking of the entire seal is already something that’s unavoidable!”
“We’re done for! We south coast, are we really going to be completely destroyed?” Nonov’s both eyes were slightly despondent. If it really linked to the underground, apart from his Ennea Ivory Ring Tower moving to a distant place and collectively migrating, there was no other better way.
On the other side, Anye’s expression was also very dark. Towards the viciousness of the underground tribes and their hatred towards
humans, he who had the reference of historical books knew even more clearly.
Once they were attacked and occupied, probably not just Magi, even ordinary humans would face extinction.
Watching these two Magi who had sunk into a struggle, Leylin’s pupils were very calm.
In fact, with the Radiant Moon strength and the assistance of the A.I. Chip, if he made an all-out effort, not stinting on cultivating more precious materials, it was not impossible to entirely seal this pocket dimension. However, the crucial thing was, how would that benefit him?
Nonov and Anye were both rank 3 Magi, they were small and weak like ants before the underground tribes. Naturally, they would not wish to see them infiltrate the surface and threaten their positions.
But Leylin was different! He was already a rank 5 warlock! His military strength was outstanding and the underground world’s first layer was also the weakest underground world, he totally had the premise of associating equally with the underground powerhouses!
With the underground world’s rich mineral resources, their legacy that had been passed down from the ancient times and the entirely different spell system, they could definitely bring Leylin great benefits.
He believed, not just himself, even if it were other Morning Star existence in the central continent, once they knew about this passageway, they probably would not choose to seal it too.
“How? Have you thought about it? If you are willing, I can step out and strengthen the seal, gaining you a hundred years’ time…”
After a few minutes, Leylin spoke indifferently.
“Then… please, Sir!” Nonov and Anye took a glance at each other and in the end still gritted their teeth and requested.
No matter what, if there was another hundred years’ time, be it discussing a countermeasure or directly retreating, there was more
allowance for them.
“Okay! Pass down my command, seal this area, I want to set up a strengthening spell…”
After hearing them say that, Leylin nodded but instead sent away the two Magi who wanted to stay and help.
A Morning Star light screen enveloped the entire central hall with a buzz. Blue radiance was emitted in all directions, isolating it from the outside world.
“Ancient combined sealing spell…” The blue radiance in Leylin’s pupils flickered, many materials were casually taken out from the space equipment.
According to his original intentions, it was naturally to open the seal as soon as possible and gain the benefits. However, his current condition was not good, the Allsnake Curse was like a sharp sword hanging above his head, causing him to have to end things here as quickly as he could and head towards the Purgatory World to resolve the bloodline’s shackles.
Hence, postponing the disintegration of the seal for a period of time was also something that was in accordance to Leylin’s interests.
“Perhaps, there might be a need to move the Ouroboros Clan here in the future, grasping trade with the underground world…”
Leylin had already drawn out a blueprint regarding the development of the Ouroboros Clan in his mind. The expansion of the entire Ouroboros Clan in the central continent had already reached its limits. Even without the appearance of the Flame Monarch, it would meet the resistance of other Magi sooner or later.
Although the elemental particles environment in the south coast was not much, towards warlocks that relied mainly on bloodline force, the influence in this aspect was much smaller than Magi.
Moreover, the entire central continent had not yet connected to the underground world’s passageway, what was discovered
occasionally, were just a few totally sealed miniature underground space like that of the Twilight Zone. Once a passageway that connects to the entire underground world was developed, even simply controlling trade between the two places would bring about huge benefits, enough to allow the Ouroboros Clan to make a rapid development.

“The top priority now, is still to confirm if this connects to that ancient completed underground layer of the underground world or the miniature sealed area like that of the Twilight Zone…”

Leylin stroked his chin, there was even a radiance constantly flickering in his pupils, “If the place this links to is really that ancient underground layer, as long as we occupy here, the profits gained by the Ouroboros Clan would definitely not a little bit less than the Monarch of the Skies that has control over the entire central continent’s airship network…”

“A.I. Chip! Export spell formation layout!”

[Beep! Mission established, beginning coordination with supplementary assignment…] The A.I. Chip’s sound was as mechanical as usual, without the slightest emotions in it.

A complicated yet detailed formation diagram was rapidly exported from the A.I. Chip’s database and was being projected by fluorescent light onto the hall’s floor.

The spell formation diagram illustrated by the fluorescent light combined with the original patterns on the floor harmoniously, forming a brand new formation.

[Beep! Separating black hole spell formation deduction setup completed, estimated rate of success 98.99%!]

The A.I. Chip sounded again.

“Very good!” A piece of mithril with black spots was melted into juice before Leylin, spreading out evenly onto the ground at the position where the fluorescent light had originally shone.

With Leylin’s current alchemy grand master’s academic
achievements and the A.I. Chip’s fine and detailed assistance, the entire setting up of the spell formation proceeded very smoothly and was thoroughly completed in almost half an hour.

Only, when setting up, Leylin would certainly not do it according to Nonov and Anye’s requests, he included many of his own smuggled goods in it instead.

The entire spell formation continuously rumbled with a buzz, streaks of silver radiance rippled on the ground.

[Beep! Spell formation energy operating normally! Compatibility of connection 91.673%!]

Large amounts of data floated across Leylin’s eyes, he could not help but nod secretly, “It is a linking technique that is acquired after all, to have 90% compatibility is already not bad!”

“Then…” Leylin took in a deep breath. “A.I. Chip!”

[Open up the connection assignment, attempting to establish a spatial link, searching coordinates!] Accompanying the A.I. Chip’s sound, the patterns on the ground suddenly changed, its circulating speed was continuously increasing. Faint silver light emerged, undulating in mid-air, even slowly forming into a state of a semicircular arched door.

Opposite the arched door, was a patch of thick darkness and a mirror-like radiance was constantly emitted.

This was the smuggled goods Leylin had added. At the same time while strengthening the seal, Leylin also left a way of escape for himself, and could even reach the other side of the space with the prerequisite of not damaging the original seal by directly going through the crack in the spell formation.

“You guys guard here, no matter who comes, kill them all!”

Leylin flicked his hands and four translucent void assassins emerged. He faintly ordered a few sentences and these four assassins immediately vanished into the void.

Possessing rank 3 limit strength and with the addition of this kind
of ability to go through the void, void assassins were almost invincible existences in the south coast.
Four void assassins along with the spell formation outside that Leylin had set up, even if the dark and light Magi joined forces, they would definitely not be able to fight their way in.
Although Leylin was more reassured towards Nonov and Anye and he also knew that they did not have the guts, he would not entrust his hopes on their reverence towards him just like that.
Countless historical examples have all proven that this was something very foolish, Leylin would certainly not do that.
After preparing his backup plan, Leylin swished his robes and entered the arched door in mid-air. An icy membrane rippled as he passed through it. The moment he materialised, Leylin realised he’d stepped into another place.

A dark, frigid aura permeated the air, one that was specific to the subterranean world. The density of darkness and earth energy particles was even greater than in Twilight Zone.

“This is the other end of the spatial tunnel, huh?” Leylin swept his gaze across the surroundings. He was currently in a palace hall of sorts, where bizarrely styled sculptures were scattered around the vicinity.

Once the light in the spell formation subsided, a thick layer of dust could be observed in the area.

“Inextinguishable Flame!” Leylin pointed ahead and a bright and beautiful flame floated in front of him.

“This place seems to have been deserted for a very long while. Is it the depths of an ancient ruin?” Leylin scanned the surroundings with his soul force, before realising that the whole area seemed to be protected by a layer of mysterious energy. This mysterious energy even suppressed the soul force of a Magus.

However, given that his truesoul was at Half Moon, he could still cover a sizeable portion of the area. It wasn’t long before he discovered several passageways leading out.

“I hope there aren’t any complex spell formations outside, this will
become very troublesome.’ Leylin walked towards a large door, the unadorned yet awe-inspiring stone standing over ten metres tall. On the left of the doors was the sculpture of a devil, on the right that of a beautiful angel.
*Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!*
Leylin stretched his hand forward as he pushed the door. Suddenly, two powerful streaks of lightning flashed and struck Leylin, but was repelled by Kemoyin Scales.
A pitch-black tunnel appeared in front of Leylin and without any hesitation, he stepped forward.
“I never expected that I would chance across some Magi on an expedition. This will save me loads of time!”
The corners of Leylin’s lips curled upwards as he blended in with the darkness, before moving at a speed that defied the logics of physics.
.....

On the other side, a group of adventurers were running for their lives, escaping from something in the tunnel.
“Quick! It’s catching up!”
This group of adventurers had a warrior adorning armour, an archer carrying a wooden bow, and the one that made up the most numbers were a group of Magi garbed in robes and carrying strange tools. This party composition was still rather decent. However, this small party now were scurrying away in fear from something behind them, their clothes torn and tattered. Traces of blood tainted their body, revealing profuse injuries.
*Dum dum! Dum dum!* Behind them, in the darkness, thuds of heavy footsteps were heard.
Upon hearing these noises, the people in the small party had their colour drained from their faces as they continued to flee at a faster speed.
*Crash!* A dark streak of light flashed, carrying a black long spear.
It immediately penetrated the innate spell defense of one of the Magi, pinning him to the floor.

“Xander! Damn it!” The leader, a brown haired youth, turned back and saw his companion pinned to the ground with blood streaming out of his mouth. However, he gritted his teeth and continued fleeing.

“Run! Hurry and run!” His eyes turned bloodshot as he screamed at the top of his lungs.

At the same time, a blazing flame of unwillingness and regret gnawed at his soul bit by bit. “We were too careless! With our combined strength of three stars ranking, this vestige is way out of our league! Damn it! The danger level here is at least five stars! As long as I manage to make it out, I will definitely slay that damned asshole!”

“No! Xander! The female archer slinging the bow on her back halted immediately as she knelt beside the Magus pinned to the ground. She then took out a green vial of potion and poured it on his wounds.

“It’s no use!” The leader roared, but he never stopped running. Tens of seconds later, that blood curdling scream of his female party member sounded. The leader’s face turned even more pale as he sped up.

*Dum dum! Dum dum!*

The footsteps sounded behind him, like that of a death god who had come to reap their souls. Although the footsteps were slow, the speed was extremely fast. Not long later, the youth heard several more wretched cries behind him.

It was only until now that he realised, to his astonishment, that not one of his companions had remained.

“No! I can’t die here! I have to be a five stars adventure and even the crowned King Adventurer! I have goals yet to be fulfilled, and to return the glory of my family, the revenge, and also my…”
Another beam of black light shot towards him and stopped his train of thoughts. Although the youth had attempted to maneuver out of the way, he was still grazed by that black light, causing him fall to the ground and cough out a pool of blood.

*Dum dum! Dum dum!* Along with the footsteps, a giant figure emerged from the darkness.

It was a giant that stood tall at over three metres, with two long shafts of spears slung on its back. Complex runes covered his body, giving off a metallic lustre.

There was a grim expression on its face, as if it belonged to a dead creature. Only two scarlet rays of light were projected from its pupils.

“It’s… It’s here….” The youth teeth clattered. This undead creature that stood in front of him was a defense mechanism of the vestige. Previously, when the group had broken through a tomb like room, it had started to chase them.

The undead giant had a powerful physical attack, with a high resistance to magic spells. It led the youth to despair; he could only watch on as his party members perished one by one under the hands of this giant. Ultimately, he was the only one left standing.

*Dum dum! Dum dum!* The giant walked over as he unsheathed one of the spears on his back.

“No! I don’t want to…. Please…” Tears poured from the youth’s eyes as he start to turn deranged.

*Whooosh!” The spear thrust forward, but funnily enough, it remained hoisted in midair. The anticipated pain did not come, which caused the youth to reopen his eyes.

He saw a black shield protecting him at the front, engaging in a deadlock with the spear.

“I’m…I’m saved!” The youth collapsed weakly and laid on the ground, with tears of joy flowing from his eyes.

“Ahoooo!” The giant withdrew his spear and turned his body to the
back, howling towards the darkness. Very soon, he staggered half a step backwards, as if some sort of ferocious predator was in front of it.

“Interesting!” ‘Although it seems to be a body made of flesh and blood, there seemed to be some modifications added to it. It’s rather akin to a metallic bodied demon right now huh? Even it consciousness was wiped out, with the only defense mechanism within it remaining…’

Leylin stepped forward from the shadows, blue light shining from his eyes as he scanned the giant in front of it.

“Moreover… These runes on the body, it seemed really similar to that of Branded Swordsmen…”

Leylin always held onto part of the Branded Swordsman’s inheritance, but it was extremely lacking of information. Even after the simulation and conjecture from the A.I. Chip, it could only reached the strength of a rank 1 Magus, which was not of much use.

Right now, after the A.I. Chip had upgraded several times and even added troves of information from the Great Library, it could raise the power of Branded Swordsman from rank 1 to 3. However, for Leylin who had the backing of the Ouroboros Clan and the Warlock Alliance, these Branded Swordsman were relatively useless to him. Hence, Leylin did not mass produce these Branded Swordsman cannon fodder.

However, at this moment, Leylin could clearly see the runes of Branded Swordsman on this giant.

Although the style is slightly different, with modifications made on top of the original school of thought, this is no doubt the runes of Branded Swordsmen.

Just from looking at the runes and the energy that it radiated had gave Leylin many fresh ideas and inspiration about the Branded Swordsman.
Perhaps, after combining the knowledge found on the continent and in the subterranean world, the A.I. Chip might be able to produce runes which can create Morning Star Branded Swordsman.

“Arghhhhh!” Although the giant has discovered how powerful Leylin was, the defense mechanism inside its consciousness still made it reach out his hands. Two black spears soared towards Leylin like two dragons.

*Peng!* *Pa!* A layer of black scales emerged from Leylin’s palms. An astonishing scene was created accompanied by sparks and screeching sounds.

The two black spears that the giant hurled had been caught firmly in Leylin’s palms.

“Hmm! The explosive power isn’t bad, with the strength at 50 degrees of so. It is rather similar to a rank 3 Magus attack!” Leylin nodded his head, but the youth at the side had his eyes bulging out. During the escape earlier, he had seen many of his companions perish under the mighty black spear. Even magic defense spells proved to be no defense against it.

However, Leylin had managed to catch it in his hands.

“This Magus, is he a monster too?” The youth looked at Leylin’s appearance, garbed in luxurious black robes with a mask. Leylin gave off a regal yet mysterious aura, yet he did not seem to be a savage or tyrant.

“Groarr!” The giant was stupefied momentarily before giving off a huge roar. The sound waves involuntarily forced the youth to cover his ears. At the same time, black energy particles which could be seen by the naked eye surged towards the giant like water to a sponge, as the runes on the giant’s body began to flicker.

“Groarrrr!” With the howling noises made, a spell began to surface. The image of a dark creature’s head appeared, baring its razor
sharp fangs as it was sent flying towards Leylin. “Rank 3 spell Darkness Crunch?” This spell seemed to be missing on the continent for thousands of years. Only the Great Library in Sky City had mentioned of this before.

Leylin rubbed his chin. A lost and forgotten spell need not necessarily meant that it was powerful. It could be due to not keeping up with the times and entered natural selection. He would definitely not make the assumption that anything ancient is powerful.

The blue light in Leylin’s eyes flashed and the A.I. Chip made its calculations.

Seconds later, the principle of this rank 3 spellcasting and even the spell model had been conjectured by the A.I. Chip. “So this is how it works! Although this spell isn’t too bad, but it requires a huge amount of darkness elemental energy particles. No wonder the central continent had phased this spell out!”
With the A.I. Chip’s deductions, Leylin instantly obtained the spell’s model, and learnt all of its weaknesses.

‘The darkness elemental particles just aren’t concentrated enough in the central continent. Perhaps it can only be used in a paradise for dark Magi like the subterranean world.’

“Fight darkness with light!” A holy white radiance was formed at Leylin’s fingertip. While he was a dark Magus himself, it wasn’t like he couldn’t use any life or light element spells.

In reality, with enough spiritual force and access to spell models, Magi could employ spells of any type. However, there was a difference due to vitality and elemental affinity. Leylin might be extremely proficient with darkness spells, even having an added bonus to their power, but he would find it difficult to use light and life element spells, and the power could even be diminished.

Now, for instance, the light-type spell that Leylin was casting consumed a lot of energy to produce a spell half as strong as one by a regular Magus. He’d long since solidified darkness elemental particles, something that only made it harder for him to use light spells.

However, with Leylin’s current strength, even a small portion of his power would cause the spell to be a bane to all darkness. Leylin seemed to move exceedingly slowly, but somehow arrived above the monster before it could do anything. The light-tipped finger tapped the centre of the monster’s skull.
“Awoo!” A bit of light shone above the monster’s head, before it began to flicker and become more dazzling.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Like the sound of glass breaking, many cracks appeared on its head and it then exploded, melting into nothingness amidst the white light.

“Mm! Light-type spells can still restrain darkness-type spells, but that also depends on the strength of both parties.”

Leylin had his own understanding of the relationship between elements. If darkness elemental particles were to be likened to fire, then light-type energy particles would be like water. While a ladle of water could extinguish sparks, it could do nothing against a sea of fire.

On the other hand, if the fire was intense enough, a few droplets of rainwater would be evaporated.

“Awoo…” After the monster head was easily smashed by Leylin, the black giant took several steps back. In its dull, mechanical eyes, traces of terror could be seen.

He let out a few meaningless howls and made to escape.

But how could Leylin let go of such a great guinea pig?

“Stay here!” Along with Leylin’s slight smile, a few black shackles appeared in mid-air and bound him tightly. No matter how the giant kept snarling, there was nothing he could do against these chains.

Soon after, his figure shrunk in size till it entered a crystal ball in Leylin’s hands, like a bug that was frozen in amber.

“Mm! The hoarding spell works, which means he isn’t some living being but a magic being without a soul!”

While it was just a short period of time exchanging blows with him, Leylin now had an understanding of the composition of the giant. He had evidently gone through the refining of a Branded Swordsman and had even reached a very high level. His body had already gone through elemental modification and become crystallised and somewhat translucent.
This material was the best to make magic beings. After elemental modification, flesh not only retained its original defensive and offensive abilities, it could use spells without obstructions. In just a short period of time, this was all Leylin could tell. For things on a deeper level, he would need to do more experiments and dissection.

“This… lord, thank you for… your help!”

At this moment, Leylin noticed the young adventurer collapsed on the ground at the side. He was evidently a Magus, though he had a very low rank. This was all the strength he had, and yet had come to explore. He was rather lucky not to die from the mechanisms or curses.

“Hm? This language?” His thanks meant nothing to Leylin, but the language he spoke in delighted Leylin.

“It’s very similar to the Twilight Language, though there are minute differences in pronunciation. There’s no need to learn a new language!”

Leylin was surprised, but then found this reasonable. Twilight Zone was a part of the subterranean world, and was only isolated because of the battle between two Morning Stars. Before that happened, they must have been using the same language and writing as the subterranean world.

“Mm. What’s your name?” Since the issue with language was solved, Leylin had no desire to search his soul. The information he needed was too high-levelled, and someone with such a tiny role would not know much.

With Leylin’s Dreamscape force field, he was confident he could make this person reveal basic information on the culture and geography unwittingly.

“My– My name is Jo– Jorgian!” The young Magus was silent for a while and then stated his name.

“Your name is very unique!” Leylin commented. It wasn’t
unexpected for the social customs of the underground world to be different from Magi on the surface.

“By the way, where is this... What’s the world outside like?” Leylin asked without holding back. A hazy force field was produced from his body. This was the ability he had gained after undergoing dreamscape modification, and he possessed powerful illusory strength. Ever since he had gotten this, Leylin would not search souls or any similar methods unless it was truly necessary.

A Magus who played around with souls would not have a good name in the Magus World. When unnecessary, Leylin still wished to maintain his reputation. A good reputation was still a benefit. If used well, he might even obtain unexpected rewards.

“This is the Thunderbird region, and rumoured to be the holyland of the Lyas family...” After Leylin’s words, Jorgian first looked daze, eyes losing focus, before he began to disclose everything unwittingly.

The more he heard, the more Leylin looked solemn.

“Poor little guy! He’s been enticed into adventuring into someone else’s restricted area...” After he’d listened to everything, Leylin watched Jorgian, eyes full of pity.

‘This little guy has definitely fallen into some huge conspiracy...’ However, this was none of his business. He’d found out that this was the territory of the Arthur Empire underground, and this was a massive empire. There were large numbers of other races outside, and had a surface area countless times larger than Twilight Zone.

In the Arthur Empire, there had never been a lack of Morning Star ranks. There were even rumours of Radiant Moon Magi. Such good news allowed Leylin to confirm that there was a huge possibility of this place being the complete first layer of the underground.
“Hm?” After Leylin got all the intel he wanted, Jorgian immediately looked alert, and then turned sorrowful, “My apologies… at the thought of my companions, I became absent-minded…”
In his memories, Leylin had only asked why he had come to these ruins. He, who thought back to his comrades, was lost in thought. A sad feeling rose in his heart, and he did not suspect any changes to his memories.
When it came to manipulating memories, Leylin was at the level of a grandmaster. This little Magus had had his memories altered and yet not discovered it at all.
As long as Leylin wanted to, he could work out a brand new set of memories from childhood to adulthood for any Magus below Morning Star without the other party noticing.
This was obviously something normal Radiant Moons or even Breaking Dawn Monarchs could do, but with the A.I. Chip’s abilities to simulate reality, it just took more time and effort on Leylin’s end.
“Alright, Mister Jorgian! I understand all you’ve gone through. Forgive me for my bluntness, but this is a place you really shouldn’t be in. It’s better for you to leave with me!”
Leylin took several steps forward. In exchange for the intel he had been given, he didn’t mind saving the boy on the way and send him out of the ruins.
“Mm, thank you so much, my lord!” Jorgian’s eyes were full of gratitude as he followed closely behind Leylin, as if afraid he would be left behind.
After all the dangers today, he knew very well that if Leylin did not bring him along, he would be trapped in the ruins sooner or later and die by the hands of the mechanisms.

……
*Hualala!* Numerous pitch-black lightning formed a cage with all types of beasts roaring. A black dot the size of sesame constantly grew in size amidst the lightning and eventually turned into two figures, dashing out while braving the lightning.

“Alright, we’re out!” Leylin shook his robes and put Jorgian, who was in his arms, down.

“We’re… out?” He still looked dazed. He had never known how dangerous the ruins were. Things had been smooth-sailing when he had entered, but while exiting, they had met with many dangers, especially the lightning jail at the exit. He’d remembered that when he had first arrived, there was no such spell pattern sealed here. Seeing this, he was extremely relieved. If not for Leylin, he would probably die in the ruins even if he had nine lives.

Jorgian couldn’t help but look at the black structures behind him. The ruins were now like a monster with its mouth wide open, swallowing the lives of all adventurers.

“My lord, do you think… we should… leave now?” Jorgian asked carefully. He’d grown to understand Leylin’s terrifying abilities after following him around.

“That’s not possible now.” Leylin shook his head.

“Why?” Jorgian could not understand, and his expression quickly changed.

A few streaks of blue figures appeared around them at some point, surrounding them.
“How brazen of you, intruding into the restricted area of the Lyers Family!” The Magi surrounding Leylin and Jorgian wore robes and had long, ocean blue hair. To his surprise, these silver-pupiled, fair-skinned people had an obvious aura from a bloodline on them. They were a group of Warlocks!

‘Bloodline Warlocks! I never thought there’d be Warlock inheritances in the subterranean world!’ Light flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

‘No, this is only to be expected. After all, the subterranean world is much more vast than the surface world, and it’s normal for there to be ancient Warlock inheritances. I just never expected that there would be Warlocks protecting the other side of the tunnel in the Eternal Plains pocket dimension…’

Leylin surveyed his surroundings. The Warlocks surrounding them looked very young, but this was a side-effect of their bloodlines. They were in face much older, and the aged aura created a huge contrast with their handsome faces.

‘They’re at least rank 2… Also, this bloodline?’ A light blue tint covered Leylin’s eyes. The surrounding Warlocks were just as shocked seeing that two people had been able to exit the restricted area.

;A.I. Chip, scan their bloodlines and match it with the database!; Leylin commanded inside his mind.
These Warlocks were under Morning Star, and did not notice any of Leylin’s actions. The A.I. Chip quickly obtained what he wanted.

[Collection of bloodline data complete. Comparing with database… Determined to be ancient Thorned Thunderbird.]

Immediately after, the A.I. Chip showed all information on the ancient Thorned Thunderbird.

[Beep! Ancient Thorned Thunderbird, rank 6 being! Rumoured to be descendant of the primordial Thunderbird. Possesses powerful thunder and lightning abilities and soundwave attacks. Likes to dwell in areas with plentiful metal elementals. Evaluation: Incomparably dangerous. The nemesis of ancient metal race!]

“Bloodline Warlocks from rank 6 beings! No wonder I felt the bloodline giving me some slight pressure!”

Leylin watched the surrounding Warlocks with some pity in his eyes, “It’s a pity that the Warlocks’ bloodlines have weakened quite a bit and can’t be purified to its original rank 6!”

The Warlocks surrounding Leylin might have bloodline from a rank 6 ancient Thorned Thunderbird, but their status was similar to the Black Horrall Snake Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan. The bloodline had weakened and lost all the power from their ancestors.

“However, since they exist, there must be powerful people within this Warlock family. I should be able to purify their bloodline…”

Leylin shot a glance at these Warlocks with malicious intent, giving them a feeling as if calamity loomed.

“However, this is the Lyers family’s restricted area, and you intentionally got these adventurers to enter. Seems like there’s some unspeakable secret inside…”

Leylin thought about it for a while and did not eliminate the possibility of the Lyers family giving out this news in order to get blood sacrifices, attracting adventurers to come and explore.
If that was the case, it would explain why Jorgian and his crew were obviously low-ranked, but could enter the ruins without obstructions.

“Why are you still talking to them? All Magi who sully our Lyers Family have only the ending of death!”

The Warlocks of the Lyers family were urged on by someone like a leader and immediately chose to attack without hesitation. Fine, minute static electricity force field were produced from their bodies, forming a powerful domain that kept Leylin and Jorgian within. Leylin could practically feel their bloodlust, and they evidently wanted to keep them here no matter the cost.

“This spell?” Seeing these Warlocks all having blue electricity shooting everywhere that formed a large-scaled static electricity field that merged and amplified each other, Leylin looked slightly interested.

[Rank 1 spell: Static electricity field! Determined to be opponent’s rank 1 innate spell that can produce static electricity force field on a large scale. Energy consumption at the minimum, and has effects of amplifying each other.]

The A.I. Chip transmitted the functions of the spell at this moment.

“Kill him!” The leader donned a layer of lightning armour, and two gigantic blue bright wings stretched behind his back, causing his speed to suddenly increase. He almost turned into a streak of blue lightning.

[Rank 2 Thorned Thunderbird Warlock Bloodline Spell determined to be: Lightning Armour, rank 3 bloodline spell: Wings of Lightning.]

Through the opponent’s bloodline activities and spells, the A.I. Chip managed to gather much information, and large amounts of data was showed in front of Leylin.

“As expected of an ancient rank 6 bloodline. These innate abilities are very practical!”
Leylin sighed slightly. It was a pity that there were no Morning Star Warlocks in their midst. No matter how useful a spell, they were pointless if they did not reach a certain level.

“Break!” Leylin spat out a syllable and terrifying darkness-type elemental particles spread like a rising tide. Surging energy particles thundered as they turned into a giant beast with a weapon, attacking the opponents’ joint static electricity forcefield.

*Tss tss!* Blue sparks flashed and mixed with streams of black gas. Immediately after, there was a dull sound of thunder, and even the ground shook. Miserable cries rose and fell in succession, and the Thunderbird Warlocks who were only rank 1 and 2 crumpled to the ground.

*Chiu chiu!* The leader in the air who saw this emitted a piercing cry, turning and then transforming into lightning and leaving.

“Get down here!”

Leylin’s eyes were never on him, but a faint image of a double-headed black snake had already appeared on him, four blood-red eyes giving him a dead stare.

“Hss hss!” The snake kept flicking its tongue and quickly drew this leader into its mouth. Blue lightning flashed everywhere and then disappeared. The double-headed black snake meandered to the ground and spat out the leader. However, he had already fainted, and the lightning around his body had disappeared without a trace.

“Too weak. Much too weak! This extent...”

Leylin narrowed his eyes. A bloodline like this wasn’t enough to even arouse his interest to extract it.

“My- my lord! We...” At the other side, Jorgian, who had seen Leylin and Lyers fighting had been so afraid that he’d fainted before. The Lyers family’s reputation was like a sun in the sky within the...
Arthur Empire. It was said they had a Morning Sar in charge. Wasn’t this Magus seeking death by provoking him?

However, the crux of the issue was that whether Leylin or the Lyers family, Jorgian could not afford to offend either side and almost burst into tears.

“I’ll wait for a while more here. Leave first!” Leylin shooed him away.

“How– How can I leave my lord behind to confront the Lyers family?” He hesitated, but Leylin obviously could tell.

“Once their reinforcements come, it wouldn’t be just these sort of low-ranked characters. What, you mean you’re thinking of going against the Lyers family with me?”

Leylin had a half-smile on his face as he watched Jorgian.

“No, no, my lord! I shall take my leave first!” He immediately turned pale and fled at lightning-speed after bowing, as if there was some ferocious beast chasing him.

Watching his back, Leylin shook his head. He was just a tiny character after all, and if he really did stay, unafraid of death, he’d definitely be affected. Choosing to leave was a rather sensible decision.

Now, Leylin could not be bothered with this boy. He watched a trace of lightning shooting over from the distance, a smile lighting up his face slightly.

“Chiu chiu!” It was as if tens of thousands of birds were calling at the same time. When the lightning disappeared, there was another figure in the sky.

“You attacked them?” The newcomer was very young, and his brows were furrowed in his anger. He’d evidently been angered by the miserable state of the many Lyers family Warlocks on the ground.

“They offended me. I’ve been benevolent enough not to kill them. If I did things like I usually do, they can only descend to the
underworld and repent for their sins!” Leylin shrugged.

*Huala!* White electric current streaked past, as if tearing through the sky. In mid air, the Warlock’s overbearing and furious words could be heard, “Good, very good! Then I’ll let you see a bit of my ‘benevolence’!”

Terrifying energy from someone who had reached the realm of a rank 4 Warlock and attaining Morning Star burst from his body. Countless dark clouds converged, enveloping the whole region.

*Rumble!* Eight blue pillars of light instantly descended. Boundless lightning shot out from the pillars, forming a large purgatory.

Lightning and fire gathered in purgatory and trapped Leylin within.

[Rank 4 Thorned Thunderbird Warlock Bloodline Spell determined to be: Berserk Lightning Prison.] The A.I. Chip projected the opponent’s spell before Leylin at this moment.

“A rank 4 spell. Looks like I have to get a little serious!”

Leylin’s expression became grimmer. He, who now was struck by the Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes, could only display Morning Star strength and was on par with the opponent.

*Chi chi! Huala!* Numerous electricity snakes surrounded by flames opened their mouths full of blood and devoured Leylin. Dazzling lightning was very harsh on the eyes, but a hint of black rays leaked from the electricity.

The black radiance grew until it cut through the lightning, turning into an illusory, terrifying giant serpent and appeared behind Leylin.

“Hss…” The serpent had shackles with metallic stings, but it still paid that no mind as it snarled at the lightning clouds in the sky.

“Warlock? Such a terrifying an evil bloodline force?”

From within the thunderclouds, the Warlocks’ bewildered voice could be heard. Following which, the voice silenced and turned into the piercing sounds of rumbling.
*Chiu chiu!*
A streak of dazzling blue radiance abruptly burst forth from the clouds, landing on Leylin’s shoulder.
“Booming Thunderclap!” The opponent’s voice only reached Leylin after the electricity struck Leylin.
Since he was struck by an attack that was faster than the speed of sound, Leylin could only hear it after the fact. His expression showed his confusion as he glanced at his shoulder. His black scholar robes had already been torn up, revealing fine snake scales. However, they were now charred, and a few pieces had even fallen off. Traces of dark red could be seen where he was wounded.

“Not bad, you could break through my defences!” Leylin looked slightly stunned. Following that, terrifying black streams of gas converged on the serpentine figure behind him. It swelled up, flicking its tail forth.

*Boom!* A pillar of lightning broke down, and as if some chain reaction had been triggered the seven other pillars of lightning fell in succession, causing the Berserk Lightning Prison to crumble. The giant serpent bellowed with rage, the sound waves engulfing the entire area and causing the thunderclouds in the air to be torn apart to reveal a tremendous bird. The giant bird was dark blue, with each spike of a feather lustrous like steel. Streaks of blue lightning twirled around the bird, and it seemed magnificent, its eyes glinting with wisdom.

“The ancient Thorned Thunderbird? No, it’s just an immature one that still isn’t at its final stage.” Warlocks with high-ranked bloodlines might have Morning Star Arcane Arts that allowed
atavism, but they could only transform into a young version of their source creature. Bevis was the same. The Misty Fog Giant he’d transformed into was only an adolescent. Only after reaching the peak of their bloodline could a Warlock have the full might of the ancient creature.
The Thorned Thunderbird was a rank 6 being in ancient times, while the Warlock here was only at rank 4. The Thorned Thunderbird that he’d transformed into was naturally still young and immature.
However, it was a rank 6 being after all, and even if it was at its immature phase, it still surpassed many rank 4 beings.
*Chiu chiu!* The tremendous thunderbird called out as it soared in the air. Boundless lightning fell with each flap of its wings.
The electric arcs on his body grew increasingly dazzling till they enveloped his whole body and turned him into a large lightning bird. With ear-piercing rumbling, the lightning bird swooped down. Lightning flashed in the surrounding area constantly, creating a terrifying region of lightning.
“Interesting!” A smile adorned Leylin’s lips and the Kemoyin Emperor’s figure grew even more distinct, as if the ancient creature had truly come to this world.
“Hss…” The giant serpent snarled and collided with the lightning bird, giving rise to countless ripples.
*Rumble!* The earth tremored and energy undulations swept through the region. The smoke in the air formed a huge mushroom cloud, frightening power extending into the sky. The bedrock cracked, and large amounts of boulders that were tens of thousands of tonnes tumbled down to form giant pits upon collision.
Once all the smoke and dust settled, the area where Leylin had been now only had a large depression and pit. Much of the rock had just melted to form a unique crystal.
“Hah, hah…” One figure walked out from within the pit holding a
black one.
“Damn it! If it weren’t for the Allsnake Curse, this mere Morning Star Warlock wouldn’t be able to harm me at all!” Fury was evident in Leylin’s expression. Most of his clothes had been damaged, revealing the muscles below. He cut a sorry figure.

The opposing Morning Star Warlock, on the other hand, had completely fainted and was now held in Leylin’s hands.
“Based on the intel from before, this Morning Star Warlock is only an elder in the Lyers family. There’s still a Warlock who’s surpassed Morning Star…” Leylin turned grim, “Kid, you’re in luck! You might not have to die here today, but…”

*Pak!* Leylin tossed him to the ground casually, and a large syringe appeared in his hands.
“Though your body is only at rank 4, the blood concentration isn’t half bad. It’s enough to be used for samples and as a guinea pig.”

……

A short distance away from these black ruins were dark hills. Lights were reflected from atop the hills, making it as dazzling as crystal. These hills had peaks made out of metal, and had at their heart a metallic castle that stood tall.
This was the Lyers Warlock Family’s main base and where their headquarters was.
“It’s rumoured that the Thorned Thunderbird likes places where high-grade metallic ores are in the surroundings. Looks like it’s true!” Leylin floated in the air, observing the large castle. The Warlock from before looked dispirited while being held in Leylin’s hand, eyes full of terror.
“Your humble servant, Leylin Farlier, is here to greet the Lyers family!” Leylin transmitted with a thick and low voice, not bothering with the Warlock in his hands. His voice resounded in
the castle, making contact with endless spiritual force and soul force.
“Who is it?” “What a terrifying and sinister bloodline aura!” “Hm? Look who he has in his hands!” “He dares take an elder of our Lyers family captive. How bold!”
Various roars mixed with spiritual force charged out, but Leylin easily evaded them.
These people who were a dime a dozen obviously could not draw his interest. What Leylin focused on was the aura hidden deep inside the castle. This person had obviously passed through the threshold of Morning Star and entered rank 5.
Leylin floated in the air and waited for a long while. There were quite a few Warlocks with varying abilities that came out, but the owner of that aura wasn’t even alarmed.
Leylin thought about it for a while, and his rank 5 Kemoyin Emperor figure appeared behind him. A trace of his Half Moon soul force surged out like a huge dragon.
The power of someone at the same rank immediately got the other party’s attention. Violent lightning caused the earth to rumble and mountains to break as a powerful conscient came over.
“Who dares disturb my sleep?” Terrifying rank 5 aura was transmitted, wreaking havoc like a storm. Those Warlocks knelt down respectfully, “Grand Elder!”
A streak of lightning was like a godly sword that broke through the first floor and appeared in the air, revealing the figure of a middle-aged man.
His features were characteristic of the Lyers family, dark blue long hair, silver pupils and slightly pale skin. However, his expression was ripe with arrogance, as if nothing in the world was worth troubling himself over.
After seeing Leylin, his expression grew less intense, “A rank 5 Warlock?! Why have you come to create trouble in our Lyers
family? Hm, no, that aura…”
“My friend, how about we go to a remote area to discuss this further?” Leylin chuckled and flung the Warlock in his hands into the group of people, creating chaos amongst their ranks.
“Come with me!” The Warlock took a look at Leylin and disappeared like lightning, moving like a meteor.
Leylin followed behind him, large amounts of black gas surrounding his body. He did not move urgently, but while he didn’t seem fast he kept up with the Warlock with no signs of falling behind.
The Warlock ahead brought Leylin along to a large oceanic lake before stopping.
“Good day, Sir. I am Leylin Farlier, and I hope…” Leylin began to speak, but his expression suddenly changed.
Dark blue lightning crashed down once more, and an attack that surpassed the Morning Star realm struck down. Booming Thunderclap appeared once more.
However, this time the spell’s destructive ability was far more powerful than before. There were now five rays that attacked from different angles, sealing off Leylin’s path of retreat. Afterwards, a gigantic Thorned Thunderbird phantom appeared behind Eam, widening its sharp beak in Leylin’s direction.
Terrifying sound waves brought with them the power of thunder and lightning. “Rank 5 spell Thorned Thundercry!”
The opponent had cast the spells quickly, and each one was hidden quite well. He practically didn’t have to think at all. If this was a regular rank 5 Warlock, not having enough time to defend would be a very dangerous problem. However, Leylin was different, and his thoughts moved faster than electricity.
Just at the moment the lightning was about to reach his body, the tremendous phantom of a Kemoyin Emperor burst forth and wound itself around Leylin. A gigantic black hole began to form in
the snake’s mouth.
“Rank 5 Kemoin Emperor innate skill Devour!” The five streaks of lightning were instantly sucked into the black hole, turning into an unending stream of life force.
Following that, piercing sound waves that were mixed with lightning and fire rushed forth and smashed into the large Kemoyin Emperor. Scales flew everywhere, but then regenerated at a rapid pace.
After these two waves of attacks passed, the Kemoyin Emperor figure dissipated to reveal Leylin who was not the least bit injured.
“Sir… What is the meaning of this?” Leylin asked in a cold voice, the iciness extending to his gaze.
‘A.I. Chip, if I completely undo the seal, how long can I fight?’ Leylin asked inside his head. His bloodline was still sealed, and dealing with a Morning Star Warlock was already quite tough on him. With a rank 5 bloodline Warlock with the bloodline of the ancient Thorned Thunderbird against him, things were even worse. However, if the opponent wasn’t tactful, Leylin had no choice but to completely unseal himself and teach him an unforgettable lesson, perhaps by ensuring his fall.
[Beep! Allsnake Curse will increase absorption rate if Host undoes seal. Maximum resistance time: 7min 34s] the A.I. Chip loyally intoned.
‘In other words, after I undo my seal, I’ll need to eliminate the opponent in seven minutes and then reseal my bloodline? Even if I manage that, there should be terrible consequences. A.I. Chip!’
[Beep! Each unsealing will reduce the time left to the curse flaring up by 7 months, even if successfully resealed.] the A.I. Chip intoned.
Leylin had previously sealed off his bloodline force to stop the curse from flaring up. Naturally, he could undo the seal in times of danger and restore his strength to the peak of rank 5. However, the curse would absorb even more energy from him every time he did so.
Even if he successfully sealed himself up again, the time he had left would be brought down by about seven months. Leylin had only two years left. Unless it was absolutely necessary, he definitely would not do this.
However, he would have no choice but to use this method in times of crisis, even if the temporary help resulted in long-term danger. Leylin’s cold pupils were fixed on the rank 5 Warlock in front of him.
“Good, very good! Since you were able to take on my attack, you have the right to speak to me on equal grounds!”
Unexpectedly, the great elder revealed a rigid smile, “Let me introduce myself. My name is Eam, Eam Lyers. Rank 5 Warlock and the grand elder of the Lyers family!”
Seeing the opponent withdrawing all the electricity around his body, Leylin was rendered speechless. He could tell that this Eam was definitely a very arrogant Warlock. Unless he showed enough power to threaten him, it would be impossible to speak to him on equal terms.
Now, after attacking and finding out Leylin’s abilities, he suddenly
was more approachable. Though still on his guard, Leylin was more than willing to avoid needless conflicts, “I’ve already introduced myself before. My name is Leylin! Lord Eam’s way of greeting others is really quite unique.”

“Hehe…” Eam merely smiled in answer to Leylin’s words and did not address them. Instead, he observed Leylin with interest, “You aren’t a Magus of the subterranean world, are you?”

“Indeed.” There was no way for Leylin to hide this. Were he a rank 2 or 3 Magus, he could conceal himself from Eam since it would make sense for there to be no mention of him anywhere. But a rank 5 Warlock of unknown origins was rather suspicious. Given that this was an inherited bloodline, how could there be no information on it? Would the Lyers family not know beforehand about a Warlock family with a rank 5 serpent bloodline? Leylin had burst out of nowhere, and this rank 5 Warlock had no information about him. That led Eam to his conclusion.

“As expected, my Lord is a Magus from the world above ground!” Seeing Leylin admitting this, Eam nodded and looked confident.

“Yes, I do come from the surface, and I’m the head of the Magi organisations in control of the passage to the surface. Lord Eam shouldn’t be any ordinary Warlock, right? The passage in the Thunderbird Holy Land…” Leylin shot Eam a glance.

To expand the passage between the surface and underground, he needed to find something like a spokesperson here. It seemed that Eam and the Lyers Family suited this role well. Not only was he very powerful, there was nothing he didn’t know about the passage. More importantly, they had long since gained control of the exit.

“We obviously know about it. In actuality, it’s a secret that my ancestor found out. Ever since then, our Lyers family has settled here, and we’ve been trying to make contact with the surface that’s
been sealed from us…” Though Eam was speaking in very vague terms, Leylin could imagine the carnage involved. Things like vying for this territory, trying to damage the seal and attracting adventurers to become blood sacrifices here were perhaps merely the tip of the iceberg.

There was still much that was unknown regarding what they had attempted on the sly. What was most crucial was the fact that they had persevered for so long.

“Since you were able to come over, the seal at the surface world should be about to crumble right?” Eam looked at Leylin, frowning slightly, “Based on my estimations, the seal should still hold for a period of time…”

“Actually, I secretly came over through a crack in the seal. On the surface, the seal can still hold for about a century…”

“A century? That seems rather long. Did anything go wrong with the sacrifices? Or was the construction of coordinates on both ends not done well, resulting in a huge energy consumption?” Eam’s expression went dark while Leylin maintained his silence, not admitting that he’d tampered with it.

“But for Sir Leylin to pass through the cracks in the seal must mean that your attainments in spell formations must be at the level of grandmasters…” Eam’s gaze towards Leylin had now turned more gentle. People who were grandmasters in fields of magic were highly regarded.

“This tiny ability really isn’t worth mentioning. Well then… Since we own one end of the passage each and both have great influence in our respective regions…” Leylin mentioned what he had been preparing to say for a long time.

“Forming an alliance is beneficial to both of us!” Eam spoke straightforwardly, the smile on his arrogant face widening. He stepped forward while beaming and extended his right arm towards Leylin. “Welcome, partner!”
“It’s my honour,” Leylin grinned and extended his right arm as well.
The two hands grasped each other, and golden light flowed out. Fine golden letters were like ants as they crawled everywhere. An alliance between Magi was even more important and solemn than an agreement. Most of the time, a very serious ceremony would be conducted, and even a third party would be invited to be the witness.
Leylin and Eam were both rank 5 Warlocks. While they didn’t need to go to the trouble and do all that, a basic oath was required. However, what they were agreeing to now was a general purpose oath, and the details would be determined through discussions afterwards by their subordinates.
After the oath was done with, the two of them had gained a tacit understanding. They laughed, feeling like their relationship had gotten better.
Though this sort of oath could be violated, they each had control of their sides of the passage, which signified a great amount of benefits. Leylin would not want to destroy this unless he’d gone mad.
As for how things would progress after this… That probably wouldn’t have much to do with him anymore.
By that time, he would either have broken through his bloodline shackles and soared into the sky leaving Eam in the dust, or be sealed to death by the curse mark. He, whose bloodline force had been completely severed from him, would die.
Whatever happened, there would not be any issues here.
“Sir Eam…” Leylin laughed as he spoke.
“Just call me Eam, Leylin, you’re qualified to do so!” Eam chuckled, though his facial muscles were obviously a little stiff. However, that just made this moment all the more rare.
“Alright, Eam! I’m quite interested in the spell you used just now
and that instantaneous effect…” Leylin smiled and asked. The instantaneous lightning spell was very frightening, and Eam had been able to produce five streaks. Leylin was very interested in this technique.

“Oh, this?” Eam nodded, “We of the Lyers family inherited the bloodline of the Thorned Thunderbird, which means we’re proficient in lightning-type spells. Booming Thunderclap is one of the Arcane Arts we created from experiments where Warlocks at Morning Star and above combine different innate spells. While the might isn’t as powerful as a real Morning Star Arcane Art, it’s quite effective.”

Leylin couldn’t help but nod. Experiments of combining bloodline spells and creating a correct Arcane Art might sound easy, but was definitely far from it.

A Morning Star Arcane Art was the fusion of rank 1 to 4 innate spells. The opponent’s Booming Lightning Thunder only used one or two bloodline spells and, matched with specific energy undulations and other spell models, formed a unique Arcane Art.

“Though I don’t mind telling you the principle behind the Arcane Art, it’s a pity that you aren’t of the bloodline of the Thorned Thunderbird. You can’t use it…” Arcane Arts like these usually needed specific bloodline spells, and some needed the usage of bloodline force. That was why Eam wasn’t afraid of revealing this information.

“Actually, I don’t want to know about that. Rather, I’m interested in the technique where you amplified a streak of lightning five times…” Leylin said as he hastily shook his head. He could not express interest in bloodline spells, or else he’d be thought to be coveting Eam’s bloodline. No matter how good their relationship might be, this would entail burying a thorn in Eam’s heart.

What Leylin truly wanted to know was how he had amplified the lightning force.
With the A.I. Chip, he could clearly see that Eam had only produced one Booming Thunderclap, and it was only slightly more powerful than that of the Morning Star Warlock. However, it had transformed after passing through some carved inscription that was like a spell formation, and been amplified till it was almost terrifying.

“Oh, that!” Eam patted his Magus robes in pride, a ring of dazzling light floating around his body and creating a gigantic ring of lightning. Unbelievably large lightning runes that exceeded Leylin’s expectations undulated out with a complicated radiance.

“This is one of the works that I’m most proud of!” Eam watched the complicated lightning runes and seemed to be intoxicated.

“These are runes that I obtained from a primordial lightning tree. It seemed to have been created naturally, yet held some mysterious strength. I couldn’t copy the strength, so all I could do was embroider it onto my robes…”

The silver lightning ring spell formation returned and shrank to become a dazzling silver rune, emitting a splendid luster on Eam’s Magus robes.

“With this Primordial Magic Robe, other lightning type spells are amplified a little as well, but it can increase the might of Booming Thunderclap fivefold!” Eam lovingly touched the robes he was wearing, completely engrossed.

“If being in bliss is an ability, then Eam, you must be the darling of the heavens!” Leylin smiled slightly and spoke flatteringly, a trace of blue flashing in his eyes.
A magic robe made from an antique oddity was extremely fear-inducing, even though the effect of amplifying the spell fivefold was only unique to a certain type of spell. Leylin, of course, wouldn’t be so silly as to ask Eam for the Primordial Magic Robe so that he could study it for a while. He would definitely be met with rejection. He didn’t even entertain such a thought, instead using a better method to study the spell formation.

‘A.I. Chip, how’s it going?’ Leylin asked secretly.

[Beep! Magic robe spell formation has been recorded. Determined to be an antique lightning rune, 89.7% of it usable!]

The A.I. Chip sent its feedback faithfully. At the same time, a humongous collection of lightning ring spell formation images was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes. Over a hundred thousand lightning runes were clustered together, densely packed and appearing incomparably exquisite.

‘Such a spell formation… It shouldn’t be limited to just Booming Thunderclap or even lightning spells; it should be able to be used at other levels as well…’ Leylin’s pupils shone brightly. ‘Eam can’t do it himself. Even though he has the spell formation he can’t perform a systematic break-down or derivations. After all, the brain of a Magus cannot be compared to a technologically-advanced brain. The operational load involved is sufficient to make him crumble in despair, but all of this isn’t a problem for me!’
At this thought, a smear of excitement spread across his face.
“Great! Let’s return, Leylin. In order to celebrate our alliance, I intend to hold a majestic banquet at my residence!”
Eam’s pupils contained a joyous look, and he seemed to think that Leylin was also in high-spirits because of their strong alliance.
“I would be honored!” Leylin smiled modestly, as his body floated up and he returned alongside Eam to the Lyers family’s headquarters, which was a castle in the Metal Mountains.

……

Night fell. Although the subterranean world didn’t have a concept of night and day, Leylin continued to artificially use spells or sun stones to adjust his biological clock to work and rest.
The lights went out in order, or rather became more dim. The castle, where the grand feast was just held, started to quiet down as though it had entered a deep sleep.
Leylin, who was cordially received by the Lyers family, was now in a luxurious bedroom. The bedroom was decorated exquisitely. All the objects in it showed indications of being maintained by spells, and they appeared to be very precious.
After sending away a beautiful maid, Leylin laid on the sofa by himself, his pupils twinkling with the radiance of the A.I. Chip.
[Beep! Antique amplification lightning rune has been recorded. Beginning analysis…] With the A.I. Chip’s horrifyingly fast operational capacity, the lightning spell formation that Leylin had scanned previously was now being broken down continuously at lightning speed. The many lightning runes distorted themselves and looked just like tadpoles. They were firmly recorded by the A.I. Chip, which analyzed their specific functions.
Although this spell formation contained over a hundred thousand runes, and could be said to be extremely complicated and refined, it
was an easy task for Leylin, who had the A.I. Chip. It was only a matter of time.

Leylin, who was temporarily idle, recalled the scene during the banquet, and a smile couldn’t help but creep onto the corners of his lips.

The Lyers family was certainly not very well-adjusted to this unfamiliar Magus. Previously, he’d fought so hard with them, but after a trip out he had turned into a distinguished guest.

This was especially so for the Warlock that Leylin had held captive previously. Seeing Leylin was practically like meeting a ghost, and he almost made a run for it, which was a great blunder.

Regardless, Magi and Warlocks were all humans who turned superior and skillful with age. After Eam announced the news of his alliance with Leylin and the other affiliated powers, they had lost themselves initially but managed to adjust themselves to it soon after.

Even the Morning Star Warlocks who had committed a mistake earlier specially came over to apologize later on, and regained the graceful bearing unique to Morning Star Warlocks. This left Leylin secretly impressed.

Furthermore, although Eam had kept the information about Leylin hailing from the surface confidential, he didn’t cover up Leylin’s identity as a rank 5 Warlock. After all, not any random Magus was able to form an alliance with the Lyers family.

When Leylin’s status as a rank 5 Warlock was declared, the other elders from the Lyers family immediately cleared their doubts about Eam’s decision, who was their Grand Elder.

This was a rank 5 Warlock! Such a big shot was not a common sight in the Arthur Empire. For example, the only rank 5 in their entire family was their Grand Elder, Eam.

On average, the strength of a Warlock far exceeded that of a Magus of the same rank. There was simply no doubt about that. Therefore,
Leylin alone was qualified enough to be an ally of the Lyers family. Even without elder Eam’s subtle revelations to back him up, Leylin the Warlock possessed a great amount of influence.
“However… They’re really being overly enthusiastic…” Leylin stroked his chin. Recalling the unmasked anticipation in the maids’ eyes, he sighed rather helplessly. He was now busy analyzing the ancient lightning runes. Where would he find the time and effort to do such things?
Besides, although bloodline Warlocks could bear successors with bloodline energy when coupling with Magi or even some humans, for some unknown reason Warlocks with differing bloodlines could never produce descendants of mixed-blood. According to Leylin’s conjectures, this was because the bloodline energies of both parties would fight too much, and thus mixed-blood descendants were not possible. But if their bloodlines were from identical sources, such as if they were both Kemoyin Warlocks, for example, this wouldn’t pose a problem, and the purity and saturation of their descendants’ bloodline was guaranteed.
Leylin thought about something else. ‘If Eam doesn’t mind, I could probably intermarry an average Magus in the future, and obtain the bloodline of the Thorned Thunderbird. After all, this is the ancient bloodline of a rank 6 creature. Even if they want our Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline in exchange, it would be worth it…’
Although the Ouroboros Clan was made up of descendants of Kemoyin Warlocks and other bloodlines, there were no Warlocks within a few external organizations.
Leylin had only transformed Krupp’s bloodline in the south coast. There were others who had gathered by his side over these few days, people who were initially descendants of the Farlier Family. Most of them were average humans, but it was still feasible if they were to intermarry with this bloodline.
‘But why does it not seem very possible? Even if it’s a concubine’s child, it’s not very possible that they would allow them to marry out of their family. Many Warlocks are incomparably prejudiced when it comes to the orthodox practice of protecting their family’s bloodline and preventing it from leaking out…’ Leylin felt rather glad after tossing this thought out of this head in an instant. Fortunately, he hadn’t been discovered when he was extracting bloodlines today. Even that Morning Star Warlock was in a disoriented state and had been confused by Leylin’s Dreamscape forcefield, leading him to believe that he was weak because of his grave injuries. If Eam knew about this, perhaps there would be more trouble.

‘No! He might already know about this, just that he’s restraining his emotions. If that’s the case, I’ll have to adopt some measures in preparation…’ Leylin stroked his chin, his pupils showing that he was in deep thought.

Even though they had already established an alliance, he didn’t trust Eam very much, and it was probably the same for Eam as well.

In actuality, if not for the fact that both of them happened to be situated at both ends of the passage, each controlling the other’s weak point, this alliance wouldn’t have been established so easily. Both parties would put up the necessary preventive measures.

……

“Leylin, are you serious about not staying here longer?”

“No, it’s really fine!”

Leylin and Eam were now standing where the Thunderbird Holy Land used to be, outside the palace where the passage was. After briefly inspecting the area, Leylin had gained some knowledge about this region. He wanted to return above ground on
the pretext of the energy needed to sustain passage crack being on
the verge of exhaustion, and was bidding Eam goodbye.
“The trade between the underground and the surface poses
tremendous profits. I believe that both of us will have endless
benefits from this exchange. With cooperation from both sides, we
can maintain this mode of transport for our benefits!”
Before he departed, Leylin looked at Eam with a sincere expression
in his eyes. “Of course, perhaps you might want to come with me
and see what it’s like above ground. Although the Magus World
above ground has declined for a long time, it has gradually begun
to regain its glory from the ancient times, and there are beings who
are not in the least inferior to King Arthur…”
King Arthur was the legendary founder of the Arthur Empire, and
was also a Magus of at least rank 6, an equivalent of a Monarch in
the central continent.
There was movement in Eam’s pupils. Upon hearing that there
were Magi above ground who were not inferior to King Arthur, it
seemed as though a different kind of radiance flashed in his shining
eyes, a complex emotion that was an amalgamation of restraining
fear, anticipation and traces of dread all mixed together.
Eam thought for a while, before shaking his head and refused.
“Alright, but that will require a bit of time. There’s a lot of family
affairs that I need to tend to due to my long sleep, as well as some
preparations before we begin trade. It’s all complicated…
“Actually, I hope that the people above ground can cooperate with
us to break through the seal together. In this manner, things will be
a lot more effortless on my end, and we’ll be able to bring forward
the time of the passage opening, bringing us much more profits…”
“Of course! I will start on the tasks in this aspect once I return.”
Leylin nodded and gave a slight salute. His actions were
incomparably smooth, and his etiquette was so perfect that there
was nothing to be picked on, just like an ancient nobleman who
had put in hard work and numerous revisions. “Farewell then, Mister Eam!” As he spoke, a ray of light that formed an arched door had already formed behind Leylin.

“I look forward to meeting you again!” Eam nodded, his face expressionless as he resumed his previously proud and aloof image.

Leylin smiled and stepped into the arched door. The radiance vanished with a puff as the place reverted to its dark and tranquil state. Eam stood there, stupefied, his pupils occasionally flashing with all kinds of light. His thoughts were a mystery…
Light flashed as Leylin’s figure appeared in the central hall of the Eternal River pocket dimension.

Enormous white stone pillars stood erect across the hall, and through the circular open space at the top one could see the light from a Morning Star spell formation.

‘This expedition underground was really successful!’ Leylin looked around his surroundings. The four void assassins were still strictly adhering to his previous order. He couldn’t help but laugh before putting the void assassins and defensive spell formations away.

“Lord Leylin!”

“How’s the situation, my Lord?” Once the mechanisms outside were removed, two silhouettes rushed in. They were the highest ranks of the light and dark Magi, Nonov and Anye respectively. The impatience was clear on their faces, yet there was nothing they could do except wait outside.

“This won’t do. The seal has been badly damaged. Although I tried my best to mend it, it’s still hard to predict whether it can be delayed by a century like I said before. We might only have a few decades left, or even less time…” Leylin said with a straight face, making both Nonov and Anye turn grim.

“Is there no other way, my Lord?” Nonov asked, one last glimmer of hope in his voice, But the only reply he got was a slow shake of Leylin’s head.
Time flew by in the blink of an eye, and more than ten days had passed. Leylin had also concluded his investigation into the Eternal Plains pocket dimension, and returned to his hometown in the Chernobyl Islands.

Krupp had led a few of the remaining Farlier descendants there, successfully regaining control of the territory that originally belonged to the Farlier Family. Under the assistance of numerous external forces, not only had he acquired their old territory back but he’d also expanded it, preparing to build an empire that would belong entirely to the Farlier Family.

Leylin had waited outside the castle that initially belonged to the Farlier Family for days, receiving all of the descendants of the Farlier family. It was only after he put a good deal of arrangements in place that he vanished mysteriously.

What the Farlier family proclaimed to the outside world was that their ancestor had already left the south coast, and had gone to a vaster part of the Magus World.

Although they didn’t know if Leylin’s departure was true or false, and couldn’t confirm whether he would return in the future, both the dark and light Magi heaved a unanimous sigh of relief.

To them, Leylin was a representation of the realisation of a higher realm, but he was also a pair of shackles that bound them.

There was simply no room for a being of Morning Star status in the tiny south coast.

Even the historical Great Magus Serholm mysteriously disappeared after his glory days. According to speculations by Magi later on, he had gone away in search of more vast worlds.

Leylin did not leave behind any methods to break through to Morning Star, which made a few rank 3 Magi feel that it was a great pity. However, having one less contender suppressing them was
like taking a burden off their shoulders. The influential groups within the dark and light Magi cast their sights on the empty land left behind by the Spirit Slaying Sect after they were eliminated. After so many years of unrest, as well as the sudden collapse of the Spirit Slaying Sect after the Gargamel’s extermination, an exceedingly plentiful amount of space was left for the dark and light Magi. Open rivalry and veiled strife centered around the inheritance of the Spirit Slaying Sect, which caused numerous ripples within the dark and light Magi. The real influential powers such as the Ennea Ivory Ring Tower and the Lighthouse of the Night watched on with a detached point of view, and were even secretly pulling back their powers, preparing to move at any moment. For these deep-rooted Magus powers, the few decades that Leylin had given them previously was not particularly sufficient for them to move. Just the search for an environment suitable for Magi to survive in outside of the south coast was enough to give them a headache. Of course, no matter how unpredictable the changes in the south coast would be, the dark and light Magi and even other wandering Magi, did not dare to evoke the wrath of the Farlier Family. It was a family that was sheltered by a Morning Star Magus! Krupp, who had been promoted to a rank 2 Warlock, was not someone to be belittled, much less Leylin who might return at any moment. Besides, who knew if Sir Leylin had left some kind of trump card for his own family? Theoretically, as long as that Magus had bestowed a few of those transparent servants to the Farlier family, they could suppress the entire south coast. Hence, the powers within the dark and light Magi had unanimously placed the Farlier Family at the top of their lists of people they
could not provoke. The entire Chernobyl Islands was even seen as out of bounds to all Magi. The Farlier Family, along with the empire that they had established, grew stronger and more prosperous with the passing of time...

A bright flame lit up in a pitch-black environment, bringing white light to its surroundings. Numerous more flames started to burn more and more vigorously, until they eventually formed an arched door.

A masked figure stepped out from the arched door, his body immediately shrouded by a layer of dense black fog.

“Disperse!” Following the voice coming from the figure, the rays of light and undulations immediately faded until they disappeared completely.

“Secret technique: Shadow Stealth!” The figure seemed to be at unease. A rune representing concealment and hiding suddenly flashed within the fog.

Soon after, the entire cloud of fog shook and became completely transparent, blending in with the surroundings.

Under the cover of the fog, the entire silhouette seemed to have penetrated into the shadows in the cracks, making its way through the ruins at lightning speed and avoiding a large number of Warlocks from the Lyers family.

Even a few of the Morning Star elders did not discover the silhouette’s aura, allowing him to escape successfully.

After he was far away from the Thunderbird Holy Land, the dense fog transformed into a black ray of light, and streaked across the horizon like a meteor. It was only after fleeing for a few hours that the silhouette finally revealed himself.

The man wore golden robes and had a black mask over his face. There was an air of elegance about him, giving him a sense of mystery.

“It doesn’t seem like I’ll be tracked down here,” Leylin exhaled
gently. The preparations that the Lyers family had put in place to
guard against him were not what he had expected. They weren’t too
strict, instead too relaxed.
‘It makes sense anyway. With Eam’s haughty temperament, he must
have been certain that even if I could access the passage, I would
still have to go through him to interact with the subterranean world,
or even dump my goods and establish commercial trade here.
Thus, he must have felt secure with the knowledge that he has the
upper hand. What a pity that he had the wrong idea from the
start…’
Leylin stroked his chin. Entering the subterranean world was a
decision that he had made after careful deliberation.
He needed the Purgatory World’s coordinates to travel to it. There
were far too many highly-ranked Magi in the central continent, and
Leylin could not be at ease at all. Furthermore, not only were the
Twilight Zone and the south coast both small in size, the density of
elemental particles was too low.
Initially, Leylin was prepared to find a random spot in the endless
ocean to build the astral gate and attempt to search for the
Purgatory World. But after seeing the Eternal Plains pocket
dimension, he instantly saw a better alternative.
What was different from the worlds above ground was that the first
subterranean level was very covert. Even if Magi came chasing
after Leylin specifically and followed his footsteps, they might not
be able to discover this place.
Besides, the rest of the subterranean world wasn’t like the Twilight
Zone from before. Even though it was the first level, the area of all
the land added together was about the same as the entire central
continent. If those Magi wanted to find Leylin here, it would be no
different from finding a needle in a haystack.
“Everything has been settled. What’s left is the Allsnake Curse…”
Leylin inhaled deeply, and his entire being transformed into a ray of
light than disappeared into the horizon.
More than ten days later, in a mountain range. This was a desolate mountain commonly seen underground. As it lacked plants and the radiance from a sunstone, the entire mountain was bare. Only a few fungi and vines that didn’t require sunlight continued to grow sporadically.
Vast quantities of black rocks and bare soil lay exposed outside the place. There weren’t any large organisms on the entire mountain, and even the smaller darkness creatures were basically extinct.
A few rooms had been opened up temporarily in the belly of this place. Remnants of clay made from mud and the radiance from everlasting spell effects were left on the walls. It was obvious that it hadn’t been long since the work here was finished.
Some of the rooms here had been remodelled into bedrooms and study rooms, while the one in the center had been transformed into a gigantic laboratory. A starry blue radiance illuminated the place, but was obstructed by the energy absorption rune on the wall.
In the heart of the laboratory was a simple and unadorned door made of stone. Blue gems studded the door, just like stars.
Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip’s report and the energy composition chart, and couldn’t help but exhale a deep breath, “Phew… Finally done. I was running out of materials…”
In front of him was an astral gate which had undergone several transformations by the A.I. Chip, one which Leylin had invested a great amount of his life and family possessions in. It was his hope of breaking through his bloodline shackles!
Upon the thought of his bloodline shackles, Leylin’s expression became somewhat gloomy.
“How much time do I have left?” Leylin’s voice seemed rather hoarse.
[Beep! According to the current condition of the host body, the countdown to the activation of the Allsnake Curse is 2 years, 4
months, 13 days, 8h 55min 43s.]
The A.I. Chip projected a series of numbers. From the years to the
seconds, the numbers were all arranged clearly, and the ‘second’
counter was constantly adjusting itself, making Leylin’s eyelids
palpitate.
“I still have two years…” Leylin stroked his chin and started to
mutter irresolutely to himself.
The Allsnake Curse was a curse belonging to the Snake Dowager,
and was also the nightmare of all Serpent Warlocks. Apart from the
Snake Dowager herself personally freeing the person, one could
only rely on the help of a rank 9 being or break through the
bloodline shackles oneself to escape it.
But to Leylin, the Snake Dowager and rank 9 beings both
represented a dead end. It was only through actually breaking the
chains on his own bloodline that he could free himself from the
Allsnake Curse and completely regain freedom.
And the hope to smashing his bloodline shackles lay in the
Purgatory World!
Hence, no matter how much danger the Purgatory World contained,
he had to go there…
“Ah, the Purgatory World……”

Light seemed to flash in Leylin’s eyes, “In the ancient times, it was an extremely famous and formidable world. Not only does it have the Snake Dowager, but there are also numerous existences of the same rank keeping watch there. Moreover, the Purgatory World has not completely declined like the Magus World, as it still possesses the strength of ancient times…”

‘Forget the dangers of the place itself, even finding the Purgatory World’s coordinates is already a considerably huge problem!’ Leylin rubbed his chin in thought, ‘According to the information from the legacy left behind by the Ouroboros clan’s ancestors, it is fundamentally possible to confirm that the Purgatory World is located in the Calm Jade constellation. However, the specific positioning is still a problem!’

The Snake Dowager’s bloodline shackles were still present, and the Ouroboros Clan’s ancestors had never given up on exploring the astral plane.

From the information and experience that they accumulated from generation to generation, and adding the A.I. Chip’s analysis and deduction, it was already possible to lock down the coordinates of the Purgatory World to within one region.

It was a pity that the Calm Jade constellation was just too big. Finding the Purgatory World in it was like finding Leylin’s old
Earth in the Milky Way.
And what Leylin now wanted to do, was to ascertain the position of that ‘earth’ within the galaxy’s myriad of stars, planets and other celestial bodies.
Without having to be said, this was an extraordinarily tremendous undertaking. Even though Leylin had the A.I. Chip’s assistance, he also needed to wait for a very long time. But now, the Snake Dowager’s curse evidently did not afford him that luxury.
‘And even if the coordinates of the Purgatory World have been found… This curse!’ Leylin couldn’t help but reach up to his cheeks, feeling the icy sensation emitted by the Mask of the Dreamless.
Although this mask had prevented him from being drawn into Dreamscape, he constantly felt the ill intent from the dream world. This intention possessed tremendous cruelty, and there were constant attacks on the mask’s defenses. It appeared like they were waiting for Leylin to relax, or the Mask of the Dreamless to shatter one day.
‘The Snake Dowager is the master of the bloodline, I’m afraid her response towards my descendants will be incomparably cruel. Not to mention the Allsnake Curse… Once I appear in the Purgatory World, what if she realise it? Won’t I be delivering myself to her door?’
Leylin’s face darkened. Despite how much her power had been suppressed in reaching out to the Magus World, she’d still managed to leave him with a fate worse than death as she’d pleased. If he entered the Purgatory World…
Consequently, before going to the Purgatory World, it was absolutely necessary to have an effective method to conceal himself.
“A. I Chip! Establish mission, conceal my aura. Find a way to prevent discovery by the Snake Dowager!” Leylin commanded.
The A.I. Chip’s feedback was very prompt.

‘The preparation needed to leave for the Purgatory World is really too much…’ Leylin knitted his brows in vexation, ‘I need to look for the world’s coordinates, develop a concealment technique, and also find time for space concealment technology. I then need to hide myself, and find a method to avoid piquing the interest of the World Will, and then try to escape the guardians…’

If it was a normal small scale world, these inconveniences could be reduced a little, but the Purgatory World that Leylin wanted to go to was a gigantic world. In the ancient era it was second only to the Magus World and the Astral World, and there existed many at or above rank 7 there. One misstep would mean death… Actually even death would be a luxury, so Leylin absolutely couldn’t afford to be careless.

[Simulation complete! Possibility of hiding from the Snake Dowager: 89.7%! ] the A.I. Chip rapidly projected the results, putting a smile on Leylin’s face.

“The probability is quite good, what do I need to do?”

[Exporting program… the host needs to commence modification of spiritual force and soul force, and the Mask of the Dreamless must correspondingly be remodelled…… ]

The A.I. Chip specifically laid out the steps one by one, forming a checklist that appeared in Leylin’s consciousness.

‘Mm… The A.I. Chip has stored materials and the required techniques. All I need is time…’ Leylin stroked his chin: “I don’t have much time left, it is necessary to act as quickly as possible…”

……

Several months had passed in a flash. Leylin had remained inside the belly of the mountain in this period, sequestered from the
outside world.
With regards to Leylin, although the subterranean world’s resources and enormous knowledge attracted him greatly, under the effect of the Allsnake Curse his priorities had been made clear. If he couldn’t resolve the Allsnake Curse and break through the bloodline shackles then his path forwards would be completely cut off. This was a situation that Leylin absolutely could not endure! Thus, he put his utmost enthusiasm into his work, throwing himself into the preparations…
‘I’ve worked hard for several months, but there’s still two things left to do…’ Leylin looked at the black petri dish in front of him, within which a lump of dark brown liquid was spreading continuously.
“The mix of corrosive water from the Pool of Lamentation, and ground ancient bones…” White powder was thrown into the petri dish, making the dark brown liquid swell up at once.
“Weeping spirits who creep in the Abyss, in the name of the Nefarious Filthbird, I summon the power of chaos…” The ancient curse was cast, and amidst the bleak and mysterious words the dark brown liquid suddenly transformed into a formless blue mass.
“Finished!” A hint of joy emerged from Leylin’s eyes, and he gritted his teeth with resolution in his face.
*Bang!* He took off the Mask of the Dreamless, throwing it into the dark blue mass.
Very quickly, an evil intent arrived from a distant world. It was as if he was falling, and by the time Leylin understood what was happening he was already in a world of ice. White trees were everywhere, and the ceiling was dotted with shards of barb-like ice. A white python flicked its scarlet tongue at Leylin.
“Alabaster Devilsnake, we meet again! I thought you would be replaced by a three-headed python this time!” Leylin laughed in the ugly face of the Alabaster Devilsnake, waves of dark red...
dreamforce appearing in his hands, “I do not have much time, I am afraid I cannot play with you for too long. I need to dispose of you quickly!

“Dreamforce spell” Leylin’s eyes flashed with a trace of blood red, and piercing rays of light were continuously released from his body. Misty light wrapped Leylin up along with the Alabaster Devilsnake in a flash. Faint trembles spread to every corner of this dream world.

*Schlick!* The enormous serpent roared with that sound, and the misty light withdrew to reveal the silhouette of the Alabaster Devilsnake. Only, there were many pure white scales scattered on the floor, and there was a fresh wound in the serpent’s skull. Scarlet blood continuously flowed out, dyeing the white snow red. It was a terrible scene,

“How could I waste the blood of a rank 5 creature?” Leylin lightly chuckled, and the blood floated up into the sky. It turned into crimson pearls that gathered in his palm, forming a ball of dark red.

*Hsss* At this moment, the body of an enormous snake faintly emerged outside this icy world. It only exuded a tiny breath, but even that filled Leylin with a sense of heavy oppression.

‘That should be an existence at rank 6 at the least. With these endless reinforcements, I’m afraid even the strongest enemies will be dragged down completely. What a pity…’

Leylin bowed his body a little, as if he was leaving the field. He then called out to the Alabaster Devilsnake and the existence outside, “Farewell, gentlemen!”

*Boom!* A gentle and pleasant light emerged, and Leylin’s shadow disappeared into the light, leaving behind the useless roars of the two pythons.

[Beep! Set time has passed, beginning forceful awakening!] When Leylin heard the cold, mechanical sound of the A.I. Chip, it was
more touching than any music.  
“Phew… On the whole, there weren’t any errors in my calculations.” Leylin wiped his cold sweat, in reality, his actions today were certainly risky. Fortunately the end result was not bad, and it seemed as if fate was on his side. 
A ball of dark red blood was floating in his hand, undulating with a frightening strength that was faintly mixed with dreamforce.  
This was the Alabaster Devilsnake blood that Leylin had collected. Dreamscape was both illusory and real, and if this power of confusion could be used properly it was more frightening than any spell.  
*Rumble! Rumble!* White bubbles frothed around the Mask of the Dreamless in the petri dish, and Leylin threw the ball of blood into it.  
*Bang!* A layer of demonic blood-red flames burnt up the surface of the Mask of the Dreamless. Accompanied by special undulations, traces of golden-red patterns began to slowly appear on the mask.  
‘Once dreamforce is intercepted, it’ll take a while for it to dissipate. I need to take advantage of this moment’ Leylin’s eyes reddened as he used many complex alchemy techniques on the mask. The entire laboratory was lit up with brilliant lights and colours.  
At the last moment, the Mask of the Dreamless changed its appearance: It could still only cover half the face, but there were many fine lines on it now. On the surface of the mask were even strange patterns of red and gold.  
[Beep! Mask of the Dreamless remodelling has been completed!] The A.I. Chip’s voice rang out, and it even displayed the data of the redone mask.  
Dreamscape, protect the truesoul from suffering invasion from Dreamscape. 2. Can release Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline and soul force undulations, and conceal the host’s information…] “Success!” Leylin placed the ice-cold mask on his face, and with a single thought he emitted the aura of the Alabaster Devilsnake.
‘I can still get past the common origin of our bloodline force to hide myself from the Snake Dowager like this…’ Leylin stroked his chin in thought.

This was the solution the A.I. Chip had suggested previously. Using the original bloodline’s power, he could interfere with the Snake Dowager’s probes. The rank 5 bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake was clearly Leylin’s best choice at present.

‘The method to conceal myself has been resolved, next is the issue of the coordinates!’ Leylin asked the A.I. Chip, ‘How is the analysis of the ancient lightning runes going?’

These were the runes that he had secretly scanned from the Primordial Magic Robe worn by Eam, which had the frightening ability of amplification. Leylin was keenly aware that this kind of amplification ability could be applied to other things, and as a result had ordered the A.I. Chip to continue analysing it.

[Beep! Primordial Magic Robe analysis progress: 100%. 127651 lightning runes have been recorded, 112319 runes fully analyzed. Lightning Amplification spell formation has been completed. Possible to effectively increase the power of Lightning magic by 80-230%!] The A.I. Chip faithfully gave its analysis.

‘So this is the result of the amplifying magic? After completely analysing it?’ A tinge of regret coloured Leylin’s eyes, ‘Such a pity… I’m not a Magus who specialised in lightning. Even if I demand such Magi to give everything they own in exchange for
After analysing and reconstructing it, the A.I. Chip concluded that this Lightning Amplification spell formation wasn’t just limited to Eam Lyers’ Booming Thunderclap. Rather, it could be used to amplify all lightning magic!

Having adapted it for that purpose, the value of these runes increased a millionfold.

As for attracting those Magi who specialised in lightning, it was a given. Even Leylin, who wasn’t attuned to the lightning element, could exceed many lightning Magi with the use of this formation.

“The result weren’t bad… Allocate this information to the primary database,” Leylin commanded. “Also. how’s the progress on improving it?”

[Beep! Data has been recorded at the highest grade of confidentiality. New spell formation setup is at 87.99%, has been constructed using data from Ancient Amplification Runes, Aufker Techniques, High-grade Spell Formation Theory…] The A.I. Chip projected the progress report directly into Leylin’s consciousness.

Already half done, the A.I. Chip had used a multitude of resources, the information on ancient runes occupying first place.

This was the task that Leylin had laid down from the beginning, even though the ancient runes could only be used to amplify the strength of lightning-type Magi, but with further understanding by comparison, and adding the A.I. Chip’s huge database and deduction abilities, creating another type of special amplification rune was a very achievable matter.

Leylin’s brows relaxed somewhat, and he shortly asked, “Name the new model of spell formation the Destiny Spell Formation’. A.I. Chip, simulate the extent of the Destiny Spell Formation’s amplification ability.”

[Beep! Mission established, Investigating data… Not enough information on Destiny Spell Formation. Beginning simulation,
experiment has started…….]
A strange spell formation immediately appeared in front of Leylin, the upper part of the runes looking like delicate and twisting tadpoles full of the characteristics of ancient runes. It looked completely different from normal formations.

[Beep! Simulation test complete! Estimate: Destiny Spell Formation can amplify normal spells by around 50%, and for the effects of unique magical items, the amplification can increase to above 80%.
“Very good! Discarding the other amplifications, if it is focused only on unique magic items, is it possible for its power to increase further?”
[If discarding all other amplification runes, the power of unique magical items will be amplified by over 100%.] The complex operation was completed in a flash, and the A.I. Chip immediately gave a reply.
“Very good, do it! As for unique magic items, just use this as a template!” A great amount of soul force was sent out from Leylin’s body, entering all the data from a magic item into the A.I. Chip.
Before the Destiny Spell Formation was thoroughly completed, such a modification was still very feasible.
The reason why Leylin did not hesitate to face certain danger from stealing the ancient runes from Eam was largely for this purpose. It could be said that, after obtaining this amplification spell formation, the final weak point in Leylin’s plans had been mended.

[Beep! Data has been imported, starting to modify the structure. Estimated completion time: 58 hours 32 minutes 41 seconds.] The A.I. Chip immediately reported.
“Very good! Two of the most important preparations are almost done. Next will be some other experiments and planning…”
Leylin touched the substantially modified Mask of the Dreamless on his face, caught in the middle of a more intense experiment….
Time unwittingly passed by. In the middle of the experiment room, the radiance of the gate to the astral plane became increasingly dazzling. The rays of light above the star gems seemed connected by invisible threads, emitting even more dazzling brilliant rays. Bang! A doll-like puppet was caught by Leylin’s hand, letting out a human like giggle.

“The puppet clone has been completed!”

After the puppets had been put away, Leylin let out a relieved sigh, to make the trip to the Purgatory World, he had done an extraordinary amount of preparations. However there was not a lot of certainty. According to A.I. Chip’s most optimistic calculations, even if there was this much preparation, his probability of succeeding of around 5% was already not bad.

However, if he did not try and struggle, then it would absolutely fail, and as a result of this great probability, it was worth Leylin gambling on it.

However, in light of Leylin’s cautious personality, it was certain that before taking risks, all of the preparatory work would be done to the highest standard.

“Lucky spell formation and Mask of the Dreamless are both completed, as well as my clone puppet and so on. As for the remainder, finally there is only this!”

From within another instantaneously opened summoning chamber, the surrounding walls were covered with a huge amount of binding runes, it was a technique with the power to isolate dimensions, every single rune was incomparably complex and precise, to the point where it could make a rank 1 Magus or rank 2 Magus immediately faint.
In the very center of the summoning room, was a black pentagram breathing out the terrifying power of evil which was continuously lingering, and from time to time it generated a flow of black air above the matrix.
*Crash!* After a flash of light, Leylin received two white eggs of light.
*Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* Numerous cracks appeared on the eggs of light, and they finally broke open, exposing two stony imprints.
One by one, the evil runes above twisted, full of strange feelings, so much that even the center of the pentagram was attracted, the black stream of air above intensified, and even let out a terrible whining sound.
“Gluttony imprint!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed a glimmer of light, these two runes were impressively from when he first gathered the leftover fragments of the Gluttony Monarch Beelzebub’s doppelganger.
From his senior Robin and from the Quicksand tomb, Leylin had in total obtained two pieces of these imprints, every piece contained a mysterious will and evil power, although it could help a Magus breakthrough the Morning Star boundary, yet it could cause the Magus himself to be contaminated by the Gluttony King, and finally become Beelzebub’s doppelganger.
[Beep! Binding the entire open matrix, starting isolation of dimension energy technique!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded at this moment, and even though it was a matchless machine, it made Leylin feel nervous.
“Go! Two pieces of the stony imprints suddenly flew, without entering the pentagram array.
*Bang!* Dark black light suddenly skyrocketed, finally taking shape as an enormous portal.
The keen soul power of the Half Moon made Leylin tense up, he could clearly feel a deeply terrifying will. Attracted by the array and
runes, it descended!
Lord Beelzebub! You are the ruler of Gluttony! And the god of all
demons! The original power of gluttony will forever linger on in
your domain, becoming the most shining star on your crown……”
Like a ballad, and like the sound of a funeral march, suddenly the
entire summoning room was full of sound. Although it was in an
unknown language, Leylin could still completely understand the
meaning.
“This is some sort of language of ancient laws, and similar to the
ancient Byron language, it is the language of laws! As long as the
soul power reaches a certain level, it is possible to naturally
understand!”
Leylin’s expression was solemn and respectful, commanding the
A.I. Chip to record this unknown language of laws.
“Mortal! We meet again! Thou dare to take the initiative to call me!
It makes me respect your boldness!"
Illusory black flames suddenly formed into a tall shadow, it was
naturally a growing twelve pairs of wings, with horns on its head
and multiple pairs of eyes demon, otherwise known as– the devil!
The power of evil dispelled continuously from Beelzebub’s every
pore, and from somewhere suddenly came the power of a law.
“Gluttony…… the law of gluttony?” Leylin’s eyes radiated light.
Beelzebub was clearly an existence from an unknown dimension or
world’s rank 7 laws, and had already completely understood one
type of law, even though it was only a doppelganger arriving, this
type of level was able to be clearly expressed.
Yes! You are the sovereign king of Gluttony! The ruler of existence,
but what of it? This is the Magus World! The most powerful world,
so how much have you been suppressed? And besides, in this
summoning room I have arranged binding runes, at the very least it
can block 50% of your power from passing through… This is only
your doppelganger, how much strength do you have left?”
“In fact, I admire you as well. Fully aware that this was a trap, you still dared to come.” Following Leylin’s words, blood-red light burst forth from the summoning room’s four walls.
The demonic wings on the back of Beelzebub spread out, and wings of bone wrapped by a black membranous film collided with the wall. It let out a piercing light of thunderous lightning followed by an immense amount of blood-red and white smoke. Leylin’s facial expression turned completely gloomy.

Soon after, Beelzebub’s many compound eyes let out a strange light: “How can a mortal know the thoughts of a God?” “The Gods?!” Leylin was surprised, but assumed a sneering expression: “In my view, you are just prey! Just this and nothing more! And so, Sovereign King of Gluttony Beelzebub, until we meet again!”

Leylin placed his hand on his chest and executed a graceful aristocratic bow with irreproachable form. However with this motion, the entire room was quickly swallowed up by bloody lightning.

“Rank 5 Emperor Serpent Innate Skill- Devour!” His body shrunk by several times, but the shadow of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor appeared solidly behind Leylin’s back. Although it was still constrained by thorny chains, it did not reveal any trace of fatigue and instead, a frightening black hole materialised in front of Leylin. Ka-cha! Ka-cha! Piercing lightning struck without pause, tearing apart the flesh on Beelzebub’s body. Gigantic chunks of flesh entered the black hole without stopping,
and finally became a terrifying blood-red life energy. Leylin’s face flushed a little, but he did not completely absorb the energy, instead using his innate skill Devour to continuously purify Beelzebub’s energy essence, until it finally became a small bottle’s worth of red liquid.

“Mortal! Vile magus! I will not let you go! I vow this in my name, in the name of Beelzebub!”

In the prison of bloody lightning, Beelzebub’s voice and struggling became smaller and smaller, and finally faded away.

When Beelzebub had completely disappeared, the entire pentagram star array and powerful runes on the surrounding walls had collapsed in an instant. There were even a lot of bite marks left, as if some terrifying creature had devastated the area.

The existence of this type of law, even though it was only a doppelganger, it was still not easy to handle. However, Leylin resided in the Magus World and could borrow the entire word’s strength to suppress Beelzebub, so he firmly held the advantage. Through the array and binding runes, Beelzebub’s strength was continuously suppressed, and finally it had become an excessively weak clone.

In the original history of the central continent, Beelzebub had several clones wreaking havoc. Finally he was suppressed but his body had been splintered into fragments, leaving behind these Gluttony imprints.

And so Leylin’s current power was still on the strong side even in the ancient times. Consequently, handling a weakened clone was not an issue at all.

When Beelzebub’s voice had entirely disappeared from the secret cell, and even the laws of gluttony had completely vanished, only then did Leylin stroke his chin, with a trace of a smile on his lips, “A god?! This statement is quite interesting…”

Having vaguely guessed Beelzebub’s origin, Leylin did not take his
warning and curses to heart, but instead looked at the dark red liquid in his hand.
The extremely dense dark red pus seemed to have the tendency to crystallize, and its evil aura continuously lingered around the area of the test tube, which seemed very terrifying.
[Beep! Unknown body of energy! High purity! Contains the intense power of laws. Rich in corrosive energy, not recommended for use by the host!] The A.I. Chip scanned the substance and immediately gave its feedback.
“As expected, even after purification and being stripped by the innate skill Devour, this type of energy from the clone contained the original Beelzebub’s genes and energy particles information?” Leylin stroked his chin in thought.
With the existence of the laws above, it was already possible to brand his own imprint on his soul, flesh and even his energy, as well as anything else.
Even this projected clone contained Beelzebub’s imprint, just like with the Icy World’s female bronze giant, even if there was only one drop of blood, after traversing worlds it was still possible to open the spirit, and rebirth into a new life.
If Leylin were to use this type of energy essence, although he would gain huge advantages in a short space of time, and even understand the laws of Gluttony, in the end he was certain that he would resemble history’s many Magi, such as Robin.
Leylin was fully aware of this corrupt practice, and of course would not be that reckless.
Layer upon layer of sealing techniques appeared, revolving around the sides of the test tube. It sealed the power of the original dark red energy and only after completing this was Leylin able to put the test tube away with relief.
“The final step of the preparations has been completed!”
After finishing everything, Leylin did not immediately attempt his
last-ditch effort, but on the contrary, he returned to his bedroom and slept very well.  
A sleep without meditation, without calculations and without any burdens, relaxed Leylin’s body and mind greatly.  
Soon after, he found a quiet room and slowly began to recall his memories.  
From the beginning of his birth in his previous world, growth and after his final anti-matter experiment failed and his passing, and from the Chernobyl Islands to his apprenticeship at the Abyssal Bone Forest Academy, Teljose City, Extreme Night City, and the Central Continent.  
One by one, the fresh memories continuously emerged, along with the many people, friends and enemies. Through slowly combing through these memories, Leylin felt that the Half Moon ranked True Soul within his point mass had become even more pure and thorough, tending towards the change into the Full Moon rank.  
This type of calm reflection continued for five or six days, Leylin’s aura became weaker and weaker, and finally he resembled an ordinary person, with only the radiance in his eyes becoming more bright like the stars, and finally slowly and softly lessened, becoming like an ancient well without a single ripple, his innermost heart was peaceful and quiet, impervious to desires.  
Until the last moment, Leylin’s heart no longer had any nervousness or confusion, only the determination to dauntlessly move forwards.  
He stood up suddenly, and went into the Star Realm laboratory.  
The simple astral gate radiated a piercing light with a glittering blue flame forming a round arched door. Just like a silver-coloured spatial mirror, at its core was a complicated black vortex and opposite was a brilliant galaxy, leading to unknown places.  
Beside the Astral Gate, there was a huge and complicated spell formation, and above it every rune was incomparably precise,
minute and full of a sense of beauty. Over ten thousand of the runes seemed to swim like tadpoles, continuously sending out mysterious undulations.

At the core of this formation, there was a round groove, and what it was used for was unknown.

[Beep! The Lucky Spell Formation arrangement has been completed! Estimated amplification power: 107.6%!] The A.I. Chip’s feedback was promptly transmitted.

Leylin had created this amplification spell formation, according to the amplification techniques from ancient runes and with the A.I. Chip’s terrifying deduction and simulation ability. Due to discarding its universality and specially targeting a magical item’s effect, it was amplified to over 100%! As for as Leylin was concerned, this could be considered an unexpected joy.

“Let’s begin!” Leylin’s eyes had a resolute appearance. Once you fly, you soar. Success involved completely breaking free of his bloodline shackles, an unexpected and frightening result!

[Beep! Astral Gate has been opened, searching coordinate database!]

Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, the brilliant river of light within the silver mirror drew constantly closer, until a star resembling a vortex appeared, and the screen’s depiction ended there.

This was the Calm Jade constellation, the location of the Purgatory World. With the predecessor’s data and adding the A.I. Chip’s continuous deduction, it could only progress to this step.

Within the Calm Jade constellation were tens of thousands of worlds, along with many half-planets, different dimensions and broken spaces, their numbers were as vast as the numbers of stars in the sky. To find the location of the Purgatory World from so many possible coordinates was tantamount to fishing a needle from the sea.

Although Leylin had the A.I. Chip, he still needed a lot of time to
do this. And what he lacked now, unfortunately, was time!
“At this step! The role of the A.I. Chip and information has already been exhausted, I can only slowly search and rely on luck!”
Leylin seemingly sighed, and with a flash of golden light, a simple gold coin appeared in his hand.
This shape of the gold coin was very simple, and it was surrounded by a circle of dark golden light. One side of the coin had a skull on it, the other side the pattern of a lucky bird. The gold coin currently had several cracks, and it almost split the coin apart.
This was the unique magic item— Lucky Coin! It was Leylin’s greatest gain from Extreme Night City, holding it was just like grasping a thread of the power of destiny!
Even in the field of Star Realm experimentation, the power of destiny could exert a terrifying might. Leylin was initially able to find the Black Rain World, obtaining Multilimb Strength, thanks to the power of destiny.
From that time onwards, Leylin had completely sealed the Lucky Coin and had not even used it despite several crises, preparing to get the most use out of it.
And now! It was time to use the coin!
“Go!” A golden arc flashed from Leylin’s hands, the Lucky Coin streaked across space in a shining trajectory, into the groove in the center of the Lucky Spell Formation seamlessly, as if they were originally one.
Bzz! A great deal of light twinkled, threads of golden power were released from the spell formation, following the ritual into the Lucky Coin, making the coin’s dark golden light become even more dazzling.
“Due to the material constraints of the Lucky Coin, it is only possible to make predictions up to the Morning Star level, but once it touches upon powers beyond Morning Stars, it will meet with a
horrible backlash!
Leylin watched the dark golden light of the Lucky Coin intensify, a peculiar expression flashing in his eyes.
I will first use the Destiny Spell Formation to amplify the power of Destiny’s Coin, and then draw out the power of fate from the coin all at once. I had previously narrowed down the location of the Purgatory World in the vast astral realm to the Calm Jade constellation already……”

“Staking everything on the destruction of Destiny’s Coin, the attempt this time– It has a 70% chance of success!”

A blazing light shone from Leylin’s eyes, and he held up his hands: “The power of destiny! Please guide my way and lead me to the Purgatory World!”

Bang!
At the moment of Leylin’s chant, the radiance of Destiny’s Coin was at its highest point. The entire laboratory was wrapped up in the dazzling dark golden light.
The power of destiny reached its peak at this moment. At this moment, all of the astrologers in the entire Magus World raised their heads in amazement, sensing that the undulations of the river of destiny was shifting.
Threads of dark golden light continuously touched the door to the Star Realm, the image of the Calm Jade constellation grew ever smaller on the surface of the silver mirror, moving slowly towards the location of the Purgatory World.

Ka-cha! Ka-cha!
The Purgatory World, however, was the world where the laws of
the Snake Dowager existed. Even though it had merely calculated the coordinates, fine cracks constantly appeared on the surface of Destiny’s Coin.

[Warning! Warning! Destiny’s Coin is rapidly destroying itself! Countdown: 1.1s! 1.0s! 0.9!]

The A.I Chip quickly produced a blood red countdown frame.

At this time, although he was continuously drawing closer to his goal, the Purgatory World had not yet appeared.

“Ah…… It’s not enough! It’s still not enough!” Leylin’s face flushed red and he suddenly commanded: “A.I. Chip! Commence the overload of the Destiny Spell Formation!”

[Beep! Further amplifying the Destiny Spell Formation, currently overloading at 200%! 300! 400!]

Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, the energy stack around the Destiny Spell Formation immediately let out an ear-piercing explosion. The terrifying power of amplification emerged once again.

Crackle! A vast amount of energy unceasingly flowed about in all directions. Many runes even exploded, and the entire Destiny Spell Formation collapsed in a flash.

Just before the spell formation collapsed, the frightening power of amplification had appeared on the surface of Destiny’s Coin.

Bang! First, the skull which represented misfortune on one side of the coin exploded. Shortly after, the destiny bird seemed to come alive, unfolding its wings and letting out a resounding cry.

Destiny’s Coin suddenly exploded into fragments.

At this time, a ray of dark golden light slashed open the display of the Calm Jade constellation as if it was a sharp sword. This caused the Astral Gate to show the edge of a dull-colored star on its surface.

[Beep! The Destiny Spell Formation and Destiny’s Coin have been destroyed! Discovered the Purgatory World’s coordinates!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded out and made a cheerful expression appear on Leylin’s face.
“Success! The wish of all Kemoyin Warlocks! There is even a method to resolve the bloodline shackles!” Leylin resolutely clenched his fist.

[Beep! The Purgatory World’s coordinates have been targeted. Initiating the opening of the space portal!] Accompanying the sound of the A.I. Chip, a blue gate of light opened up before Leylin with a loud rumble.
A frightening feeling was transmitted from the gate, giving Leylin a sense of formidable oppression.
The Purgatory World! It was a very formidable world in ancient times. Until now, it had never declined, and it even contained the violent existence of the Snake Dowager and other powerful laws.
“Taking this step, there is no possibility of turning back!” Leylin smiled softly, and stepped entirely into the radiant light.
Bang! The blue rays of light exploded with a flash, wrapping up the entire laboratory and bringing it along.

……

A blue ray of light, like a meteor, streaked across the vast Star Realm.
In this blue light was Leylin, looking at the dull star which was growing larger and larger in his field of view. It finally transformed into an enormous world.
This world was shrouded entirely in a dense grey fog, and he couldn’t see clearly. He could only see pieces of the continents and the ocean with great difficulty.
Any of these continents could be comparable to the size of the central continent of the Magus World. The faint atmosphere of great power was emanated, making Leylin shiver a little.
Rapidly, the power of the Astral Gate brought him to the border of the Purgatory World, which was outside of the world boundary. However, when Leylin wanted to enter the Purgatory World, there was a sudden change!

“Who is it? Where has this outsider come from, who dares to offend my majesty!” A frightening amount of energy undulated outside the Purgatory World and took shape. An enormous shadow appeared, and even the storms and turbulences of space all avoided it.

There was a strong and overbearing atmosphere. The power of laws constantly undulated from the shadow’s body. This shadow possessed very large and deformed wings, its entire body was as huge as a mountain. A giant skeletal hand reached out towards Leylin and grabbed him, as if it was a giant snatching a fly.

“There are Rank 7 and above laws here! Damn it! There are obviously many strong people, but they are unexpectedly vigilant against outsiders?”

Leylin’s expression changed, and soon after the golden-red patterns on the Dreamless Mask continuously flashed with light. The bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake from earlier was released.

“En! This is the bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake! Although it was once the master of the Shadow World, now it is part of our Purgatory World!”

Accompanied by the voice of another woman, an enormous eye with vertically slit pupils appeared. A profound intent was issued from the giant eye above. Soon after, a great amount of black lightning engulfed the giant eye, and struck the enormous hand which had grabbed Leylin.

“Apologies! Complying with the contract is the foundation of order! In accordance with the contract we had previously signed together! The bloodline of the Snake Dowager has the right to enter the Purgatory World!”
Within the mass of black lightning, the enormous skeletal hand shattered to pieces, which made the shadow let out an infuriated roar in response, “Damn you, Trial’s Eye! I won’t let you off, one day…… One day……”
“Chirp chirp……”
Just when Leylin had let out a sigh of relief, accompanied by a cheerful chirp, an enormous grey bird flew emerged from the Purgatory World.
“All who belong to the Trial of the Contract, are the enemies of this bird!”
The giant wings of the bird seemed the shield the whole world from Leylin’s view.
“Sss……” At this moment, an even more violent thought was projected over, making Leylin feel that he was surrounded by a pack of wolves.
The phantom of a ball of snakes as large as a star was forced out from the void.
Many giant snakes roared directly towards Leylin. An indistinct figure appeared from within the coiled snakes. With one look, Leylin’s bloodline nearly rose in rebellion.
‘Snake Dowager! Although it is only a phantom…’ Leylin’s pupils constricted.
“Oh? It looks like this descendent appears to be quite interesting. Even the Snake Dowager is in a hurry to get her hands on him?”
The bird bantered ridiculously, as if it was a person.
“In that case……” It fanned its huge grey wings and the obstacles in front of Leylin disappeared. A terrifyingly powerful space storm followed this, which rapidly increased its speed. In a moment, it had crashed through the world boundary.
“Bird! You dare! ! !” A rather angry voice came from behind Leylin’s back, along with the monstrous hissing of the gigantic snake.
It seemed as if many stars behind him had all exploded, and all of the terrifying energy contained within made the whole space begin to faintly tremble. The gigantic Purgatory World silently endured the aftermath, showing off the foundation of a truly powerful world.

“The beings that appeared earlier should only be merely consciens and clones, and unexpectedly they were this terrifying!”

There was a trace of bitterness in the corner of Leylin’s mouth, and also the sense of being very fortunate.

The process of crossing the world boundary was viewed by the unusually sensitive Rank 7 existences in the Purgatory World as if bandits had conspicuously trespassed into their own home. It was impossible to not be discovered.

Fortunately, although the Rank 7 laws overseeing the Purgatory World were not little, they seemed to be full of contradictions with each other, which finally gave Leylin a precious chance to take advantage of them.

“Descendent of my blood! Return to my embrace!”

At this moment an enormous will swept across Leylin, and made his mind tremble.

“Entering the Purgatory World and smoothly blending in, was instead easy to handle. The stone outside is very dazzling, but if I fell into the river above, to resolve it again, it would not be such an easy matter! And……”

Forcibly suppressing the rebellion of his bloodline, a puppet suddenly appeared from Leylin’s hands.

“Haha……” The puppet laughed sweetly, and it continuously undulated a Soul Force and bloodline power which was extremely similar to Leylin’s.

“Go!” With Leylin’s voice the puppet clone floated in midair, and moving to and fro like a meteor, took a different direction from Leylin.
“I hope that the puppet will win me enough time! And also!”

[Beep! The Dreamless Mask is activating, concealing the bloodline for the second time!]

Accompanying the A.I. Chip’s voice, was a layer of fine white snake scales, suddenly appearing from the surface of the Dreamless Mask. Mixing with the bloodline aura from earlier, the undulations exclusive to the Alabaster Devilsnake concealed Leylin’s Soul Force and bloodline power in a flash.

“In the Purgatory World, the clan of snakes that the Snake Dowager is in is also an enormous species. Even the other side surely cannot thoroughly distinguish between every Alabaster Devilsnake?”

[Beep! Collecting the laws of the Purgatory World! Initiating adjustment of host undulations!]

With the A.I. Chip’s voice, many laws of the Purgatory World were collected to be analyzed, and slowly altered the undulations coming from Leylin.

Very quickly, Leylin’s entire self resembled the natives of the Purgatory World, and no longer had the incompatible feeling of an outsider from another world.

“Everything has been completed!”

Leylin breathed a sigh of relief, his face shortly flushing red.

The confrontation of the different laws just a moment ago had left him with a not inconsiderable injury.

“All that could be done has been done, and next, it depends on luck!”

Leylin was just like a fallen meteorite, and now, the enormous wills following on his heels had completely lost his presence.
flaming star shot down from the skies, smashing into the waters with a huge splash.

“Ugh!” The icy cold water immediately left Leylin clear-minded, and a salty taste attacked his senses.

‘This is… an ocean…’ His mind was quickly reinvigorated, ‘Those existences above rank 6 saw me, but I was lucky enough to get through the barrier into the world. I even had to let my substitute clone leave… In that case…’

“This is the Purgatory World!” Seeing the dark lustre in the horizon as well as the chaotic will unique to Purgatory, Leylin’s lips quirked up in a broadening smile. “Haha… I’ve succeeded!”

Leylin had finally taken the first step on his path to breaking the bloodline shackles. The elation in his expression grew more and more pronounced.

As a foreign entity, Leylin would obviously affect the world barrier while traversing into the Purgatory World. Those existences above rank 6 had sensed this, hence Leylin wasn’t surprised that so many conscients were present there, even making some preparations. However, the events had far exceeded his expectations. Not only were their more beings in the Purgatory World than he’d expected that comprehended laws, they weren’t all in the same camp. He’d even noticed a few familiar faces.

“It’s not just the Snake Dowager, but the Trial’s Eye and the Nefarious Filthbird are here too? I wonder if it’s their main body
here, or just a clone…”

Leylin floated on the surface of the sea and was pushed along with the waves. With the checks by the A.I. Chip, his injuries were slowly recovering and he would soon regain his ability to move. Floating on the ocean was very dangerous and could attract bloodthirsty sharks or other high-energy beings. However, Leylin had no aura undulations at all and was like a block of wood. He wasn’t bothered by anything at all.

While recovering, his thoughts were still moving quickly.

“Trial’s Eye and the Nefarious Filthbird. They’re a group of old mortal enemies, and I never thought I’d see their true bodies… Even if they’re clones, they probably possess about half the strength of their main bodies!”

The ancient Trial’s Eye was commonly used by Magi to make contracts. As an arbitrator and protector, it spread its might across multiple worlds.

This extended to even Breaking Dawn Monarchs and all the way down to acolytes. While making contracts, Trial’s Eye could be summoned to bear witness. Of course, the Trial’s Eye that different Magi summoned were fundamentally different.

However, in Leylin’s point of view, Trial’s Eye was not doing all of this for nothing. Through safeguarding these contracts and judging those who violated them, it did gain immense benefits too.

The laws it comprehended could very possibly be ‘Contract’ and ‘Trial’ or something to that effect. Hence, through these activities, it not only amassed more comprehension towards the rules but could even obtain the attention of the world origin force to increase its strength.

On the contrary, the Nefarious Filthbird likely comprehended something like ‘Betrayal’ and ‘Chaos’. Hence, the two of them became arch enemies and engaged in battles that spanned across several worlds.
Now, Leylin had found the projections of their consciences in Purgatory World!
This meant that a very capable clone or even real body of these two beings were now in Purgatory World!
“What kind of secrets were being kept in the ancient Purgatory World? It’s not just the Snake Dowager but also Trial’s Eye and the Nefarious Filthbird, amongst other beings, that have set their sights on this place…”
Leylin pondered silently over the effects the appearance of the Trial’s Eye and Nefarious Filthbird would bring to his plans, and whether they would be able to help him.
“Based on what I saw, the Trial’s Eye seems to be a protector of laws, which was why it helped me out and let me off leniently after seeing I was a descendant of the Snake Dowager. The Nefarious Filthbird was clearly opposed to the eye and, after seeing that the Snake Dowager had not protected me and even wanted to kill me quickly, changed its initial plans and sent me into Purgatory World…”
Leylin’s eyes flickered with wit as he analysed the scene multiple times.
“If I really had to divide them, Trial’s Eye is probably on the Snake Dowager’s side. Of course, I can’t rule out the fact that it was just following the contract. The Nefarious Filthbird obviously thinks nothing of the Snake Dowager. There’s hatred on both ends… As for that strange beast with destroyed wings that appeared at the beginning, it’s probably sitting on the fence…”
“Of course, this could be misleading. However, these beings are very arrogant. It’s too unlikely that they’d team up to cheat a mere rank 5 Warlock like me, and the possibility is almost negligible… but it’s not bad to be on my guard against it…”
Leylin felt himself getting a headache. Having to deduce so many secrets regarding these beings as a mortal human himself made him
feel like his brain just wasn’t doing enough.
“A.I. Chip, how’s the analysis of the surroundings and world law?”
Leylin shut his eyes and let his body drift along the waves and
communicated with the A.I. Chip inwardly.
[Beep! Scanning of surroundings completed. Constructing
elemental diagram!] The A.I. Chip quickly projected the image of
an elemental composition diagram.
“Mm! The water elemental particles are very dense, which is
understandable since this is like an ocean. On top of that, there’s
darkness and fire-type elemental particles. As expected of
Purgatory!”
Leylin read through the analysis of the surroundings and couldn’t
help but nod. The concentration of elements around was slightly
lacking compared to the central continent, but they were almost on
the same level. That really made it worthy of being called an
ancient powerful world.
[Beep! Deduction of host’s location complete!] The A.I. Chip
projected a map in front of Leylin. This was a scene of Purgatory
World that he had seen from outside the barrier. Within was a hazy
continent and gigantic ocean, and on the image, Leylin was situated
near to a continent in the ocean. He was represented as a dazzling
red dot!
“Though I know my approximate location in Purgatory World, I
don’t know which continent to go to…”
Leylin laughed wryly. The map the A.I. Chip had used was
everything he had seen before, and it was much too simple.
Considering the startling area of Purgatory World, any mistakes
here would reach a terrifying extent.
“A.I. Chip, check my stats!” Not bothering with these longer,
Leylin commanded again.
[Beep! Mission established, beginning scan. Collecting host’s stats.]
The A.I. Chip quickly intoned the results.

Though it was just a confrontation between a few tremendous conscients, Leylin had been caught in the cross fire and almost died.

The terror of rank 7s and above were something he couldn’t stand up to as he was now.

“Due to the Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes, my stats keep dropping! On top of that, I’m grievously injured. If I still had my vitality from before, I’d probably be able to recover in a few hours. It looks like I’ll need around two days…”

Leylin observed the beautiful starry sky and sighed slowly.

Meanwhile, he could feel that his body was like a sponge, with the darkness-type elemental particles in the air and even moonlight being absorbed into his cells, restoring his life force.

“This… Kemoyin Serpent’s devouring ability, or a natural occurrence in the Purgatory World?” Whatever it was, Leylin was rather stunned at this discovery. Purgatory World truly was most suitable for the Snake Dowager and her clansmen. If not for that damned Purgatory chaotic intent that resulted in a bloodline illness, it could even be comparable to the Shadow World before.

[Beep! World law analysis at 2.16%. Determined to be not letting foreign creatures and souls have too drastic reactions.]

At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s newly investigated conclusion was placed in front of him.

“In other words, the Purgatory World has nothing against the entrance of the powerful? It’s no wonder the Snake Dowager, Trial’s Eye and the rest chose to come here!”

Leylin suddenly understood.
Most worlds’ latent wills were very opposed to foreigners. All those who entered would feel a terrifying malicious intent. Even their bodies would be suppressed by the World Force and cause them to drop in rank.
A situation like that would be very obvious in the Magus World or World of Gods.
However, Purgatory World seemed rather exotic as well. It accepted all foreigners and its degree of openness was second only to the Dreamscape. When he had just entered, Leylin had not felt any pressure whatsoever from the World Will.
After he completely adjusted the frequency of his aura and soul undulations to the Purgatory World, he was more like a native. There was no longer the feeling of being pressured and spied on by some malicious intent.
“What a mystical world! However, the will of Purgatory World was initially already very chaotic. That’s normal!”
Leylin nodded. For World Wills, all from outside were locusts that would even take over their precious origin source. Hence, they were very against this. Some Worlds even had their natives in chains, and then expelled them after their strength went past a certain level.
Only Purgatory World with chaotic intent like this could tolerate the existence of foreigners like the Snake Dowager.
“Even then, perhaps the Snake Dowager wouldn’t brazenly absorb the world origin. If not, no matter how chaotic the will of the Purgatory World is, there would be a powerful opposing force. That might be my chance…”
eylin never forgot his primary goal, he had to break through his bloodline shackles and rid himself of the Allsnake Curse!
Sneaking into Purgatory World and lying low was the first step to success. While he still didn’t have a concrete plan for what happened later, he needed to keep adjusting and then adapting it anyway.

“Now that I’ve gotten into Purgatory World and have the help of the A.I. Chip, my aura and undulations are now adjusting so that it’s more similar to natives. With the bloodline concealing by the Mask of the Dreamless as well as my wooden puppet used as a target amidst the chaos, the Snake Dowager shouldn’t be able to find signs of me in a short period of time no matter how powerful she is. Unless she’s reached rank 9, where there’s nothing she doesn’t know or cannot do…”

Rank 9 was the highest realm for all Magi. It was said to be where one grasped truth and there was nothing they could not do or did not know.
In Leylin’s eyes, this surpassed the power of gods. However, that was what had been described in ancient volumes. Who knew whether this narration was real or fake.
Even during the most splendid ancient era in the Magus World, the records of the most powerful Magus had only reached rank 8. Real great rank 9 Magi had never appeared before.
Perhaps rank 9 was just a fantasy for a highest rank. Leylin was certain that the Snake Dowager was at most comparable to a rank 8 Magus. It was impossible for her to have reached rank 9.

Purgatory World was vast and boundless, and also had many rank 7s and above in charge. It was possible that even the Snake Dowager would have to search for him continent by continent. Hence, based on Leylin’s deductions, she would probably trace back to him on the sly using his bloodline or order his capture. The most stable and possible method she would use would be waiting patiently, because Leylin could not break through the bloodline shackles without any contact with her. In this short period of time, it was impossible for Leylin to rank up several times such that he could be on the same level as the Snake Dowager.

“The priority right now is to blend into Purgatory World, find the natives and understand how the organisations are divided…” Leylin pondered over this silently and then closed his eyes. Under the moonlight, there seemed to be a layer of vague luster passing over his body and emitting sparkling rays within the ocean.

……

Night passed and orange rays rose from sea level, the reflection gleaming atop the waves. At the end of the reddish-orange rays of light was a dark red sun. Dim golden lights spilled down and the surrounding white fog gradually dissipated. “Hm?” Leylin, who was lying on the surface of the water while recuperating, flexed his fingers. In this situation where he could only rely on the natural ability of his body to heal, he was bored out of his mind and shifted his attention to other things.
“The outline of the sun in Purgatory World seems much smaller than in the Magus World. Based on my deductions last night, the nights here are at least 20 hours long, and based on the speed at which this star is rising…”

Leylin watched the first glimmer of dawn that had now entirely left sea level, and his mind began to calculate things quickly. Though incomparable to the A.I. Chip, through advancements and nourishments through his spiritual and soul force, the ability and speed of his brain when it came to calculating things did not lose out to the top minds in his previous world. “Four hours and fifteen minutes! It might be even shorter than that, but that’s the time for this sun to complete a whole cycle of ascending and descending.”

Leylin was very confident in his calculation skills, “Purgatory World isn’t like a planet. This only has a boundless land and sea that are of almost the same volume. That’s why whether it’s sunrise or sundown, it’s uniform no matter where I am…”

“The day is so short, which makes sense why darkness elemental particles are so ample. Beings lacking in sunlight and energy have no choice but to focus on other sources. That’s probably why the fire elements are used extensively…”

Leylin was able to see through how Purgatory World had generally changed over time. This ability to see things long-term was the result of his scientific research in his previous world and abilities in magic in this life. This perhaps even exceeded the abilities of many rank 7s. “The amount of daylight in Purgatory World is rather low compared to many Worlds. Only Shadow World that has never had sunlight can probably top it. It’s no wonder that after the Snake Dowager failed to get control over the Shadow World, she led her people and migrated here, which is quite suitable, if one were to disregard the chaotic intent here…”
Leylin’s lips quirked in a slight smile, “The chaotic intent of Purgatory World has its pros and cons. It’s precisely because of its chaotic nature that the Snake Dowager could take advantage of a loophole. However, her descendants aren’t at rank 7 and can’t resist the invasion of chaotic intent. That’s what resulted in the bloodline hysteria in them. That can only be completely healed with the world origin force of the Icy World…”

“Perhaps I’ll be able to find powerful natives of Purgatory World to help me in my plans…”

Leylin’s eyes flashed with intelligence.

*Yo yo!* At this moment, a few snow-white seagull-like creatures that were ten times larger than their counterparts flew in the air. The giant birds soaring caught Leylin’s attention.

“This is…” Leylin’s pupils shrank slightly.

[Beep! Found traces of a large ship. Based on course, possibility of encountering host is 99.999%! Discovered abnormal heat energy and radiation undulations, determined to be existence of Exemplary Strength.]

The A.I. Chip loyally intoned.

“It’s been about only two days and I managed to bump into a native already. I’m in such a vast ocean, which means I have pretty good luck!”

Leylin turned slightly, “Is it because the place where I landed is close to some continent?”

In the direction in which Leylin had turned where the water met the sky, a tiny black speck appeared and then increased in size, sailing over like a little mountain.

*Yo yo!* The gigantic birds flying overhead in circles chirped intensely, so excited as if they had found their relatives.

“Someone’s pets? Seems like I was discovered long ago!” Leylin’s injuries had yet to completely heal, and he could only do very slight movements. For this reason, he was still lying here.
A tremendous black figure that covered the skies finally revealed itself. This was a huge group of ships, and there were three with large white sails like canopies and a hull tens of metres high. At the moment that the ships arrived, the skies above Leylin were completely hidden and created great shadows.

[Beep! Detected life force undulations from large creatures. Position: 1200m below host’s location.]

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded at this moment.

Two large eyes that were like searchlights in the deep sea suddenly brightened from the black depths of the water underneath him.

“It must be some creature like the giant dragon-whale in the south coast. Looks like the main driving force of these ships is obtained by subduing creatures!”

Leylin decided. When they were much closer to Leylin, a cry of alarm sounded from atop the deck.

Great eyesight allowed Leylin to see a few heads that seemed to belong to humans from above the deck, yelling at him.

The ship parted the water into waves, and Leylin’s body began to move again.

Finding that shouting was pointless, the sound of a bugle horn could be heard from above the deck. The sound that was low and held a hint of fragility was made from maybe a cow horn or conch. Along with the sounds of the bugle horn, Leylin could sense even more life undulations appearing from deep in the sea and arriving around him.

“Merman? The Marine Tribe?”

Leylin watched the beings surrounding him, shock evident in his eyes.

Those who had been attracted by the sounds were a group of merfolk with the upper body being a human and lower, a large tail. There were shells, corals, algae and all type of decorations on their bodies. They looked very similar to a branch of the Marine Tribe in
the south coast, but there were still some differences.
“skngaklng……”
“skngaklng……”
There were scales on their faces and the parotid gland unique to fishes at their cheeks. In their hands were harpoons and other weapons. One of them with the best physique and that was situated closest to Leylin made a sound.
“It’s similar to the Byron language, but it’s still different!” Leylin had already gotten used to the inability to communicate from the usage of different languages.
“Thankfully, with the recuperation in this period of time, I can use part of my soul force!”
Clear and cool soul force spread from within his eyes and then quickly flitted across all the merfolk, and especially the leader. Leylin’s half-moon rank soul force invaded his sea of consciousness without his knowledge, and he obtained large amounts of spiritual force undulations.
The A.I. Chip worked quickly and tidied up a new language, inputting it into Leylin’s memories.
“Looks like I’ll need to invent a spell that allows me to be proficient in all languages! If not, it’s going to be very troublesome every time.”
Meanwhile, seeing that Leylin had not replied after a long while, the leading merman asked, “Who are you? Why are you here?”
Though they’d seen many people caught in danger from the ocean, there were truly very few who were like Leylin, floating on the surface of the water.
The atmosphere was stifling, and a few surrounding merfolk grasped the forks in their hands tightly.
“Oh, my apologies. I was just too emotional just now.” Leylin finally spoke, using the same language as them.
His gentle voice seemed to hold some strange ability that caused all
the merfolk to relax.
“I am a traveler who got into trouble at sea, which resulted in me sustaining grievous injuries. I had to be in this state temporarily in order to heal up…”
As he spoke, he got up from his previous position, where he’d been lying down.
Watching him get up and stand on the surface of the water, the leader of the merfolk’s pupils shrank.
An Exemplary!” The leader of the merfolk cried out involuntarily, his eyes now holding a trace of reverence towards Leylin. However, he wasn’t all that surprised either. From what Leylin had done, it was evident that he was no ordinary person.

“We are people from the Eden trading company. If you don’t mind, you could come up our ship and get some rest. I believe the rest will be delighted to chat with an Exemplary…” The leader of the merfolk spoke reverently.

This was the reason Leylin showed his strength. In a primitive world in an era during the age of discovery, there must be sins everywhere behind the scenes. The law of the jungle was utilised to the utmost.

If this was just Leylin alone without any power, he would be robbed and then thrown to the bottom of the sea.

Just the luxurious material of his clothing could be the cause of his death.

The moment he showed his mysterious strength, the treatment he got immediately changed.

Without making certain Leylin’s strength and his background, the Eden trading company would not dare lay a hand on him.

“Many thanks!” Leylin expressed his gratitude aloofly, refusing the drawbridge that they let down for him and instead flying onto the deck.
Standing on deck, Leylin was slightly surprised by these crew members’ strange appearances. The few sailors beside him all looked very strange. There were some similar to the merfolk that Leylin had seen, but their tails had turned into two legs. They wore what labourers did and clearly did not have a high status here. Besides the merfolk sailors, Leylin saw another type of creature. This was a person escorted by the merfolk that evidently had a higher status. However, their appearance was totally different from a regular human being and they only had a large pupil. The pupil alone had a diameter of 1 decimeter, and around its socket, large amounts of tendrils hung down, forming something like limbs. Appearance-wise, it was very similar to the Beholder Leylin saw in games in his previous world.

“Alright! Though I’d long since guessed that this world wouldn’t be made up of humans, this appearance is really quite rare…” Leylin ridiculed it in his mind. Perhaps due to adapting to the environment or some other reason, there were multiple different tribes but they all had bodies similar to humans. A head, four limbs, a torso became the most common structure of all beings, and there were at least one or two races similar to humans. Like the merfolk he’d seen, while they maintained having a tail on their lower bodies when in water, that instantly turned into humans’ legs once they got on shore. Creatures that were completely different from humans like the Beholder did exist, but were never that common. Leylin had already named this being the ‘Beholder tribe’. In Purgatory World, it was unexpectedly this sort of race that was in charge and enslaving those similar to the human race.

“Revered Exemplary, please accept the sublime respect of I, Geiger Guguno Axde.”

One of the Beholder’s tendrils went upwards, and Leylin suddenly
received spiritual undulations. The greetings within seemed to be rather flattering.

“Greetings!” Leylin obviously had a more profound understanding of the usage of spiritual force, which was why his usage of it was effortless.

However, what he found strange was that this Beholder tribe used spiritual force, which was similar to brainwaves, to communicate. “Perhaps this form is because they’re highly intelligent creatures!” Leylin nodded inside.

“You must be someone of the Ceraph Continent, yes? It is only at that area that there are humans!”

The gigantic Beholder pupil stared hard at Leylin, and he could even see an inverted image of himself in the eye. After a short moment the Beholder sent spiritual force that held information.

“My apologies, but I must keep my origins a secret. I promised my Mentor that before I gained any fame, I would not reveal my history!” Leylin answered righteously, but that only made the other party more grim and respectful.

“Your mentor must be an amazing Exemplary!” To become famous far and wide was extremely difficult even if on just one continent. To be able to do that meant he must be an extraordinarily powerful Exemplary.

“Mm! He is indeed an elder worthy of respect, full of wisdom and resolution…”

A hint of nostalgia rose in Leylin’s eyes, and he then asked Beholder, “I met with some troubles at sea and had to float on the surface for a long time. May I know where this is?”

“Oh, this is the end of the shipping route of the Hail Continent, which makes it very close to the Hail Continent. You came so close but still got into troubles, and I can only say that you and your boat have very bad luck…”

The Beholder seemed to say without malicious intent. Noticing the
slip of its tongue, many tendrils waved around, flustered, “Oh, my apologies! I didn’t say that on purpose. It’s just that there are far too many storms and ferocious beasts in the ocean, and because there’s no law or regulations, even the Golden Deity Fleet can’t say they’re safe until they reach the port and stand on land.”

“I understand,” Leylin waved his arms, but a hint of sadness and lingering fear showed on his expression. “I’m quite tired. Would it be possible for me to have a room and get some rest? Also, please send me to the nearest port. I’m willing to pay for it with something of equal value…”

While speaking, Leylin astutely realised there was someone spying on him from the shadows. This should be the Exemplary that he had discovered previously.

Their strength was not half bad and seemed to be at peak rank 3. They also had a few powerful magic artifacts and unique magic items.

“Seems like this is the protector or owner of this fleet who’s at rank 3?”

With the A.I. Chip’s adjustments, his aura was also at around rank 3. With his Mask of the Dreamless, he was rather charming.

“This…” Beholder seemed to hesitate, but immediately after, a streak of concealed spiritual force undulations was transmitted that caused it to change its words.

“No problem! We were planning to make a stop at the nearby Elias Port, and you can get off there. On our ship you are our most esteemed guest, so please don’t mention anything about paying…”

Beholder’s eye squinted which seemed to be a way of expressing its respect…?

“Alright!” Leylin nodded, and under the guidance of a merperson that the Beholder called out, entered the hold of the ship.

“My lord, here is your room. If there’s anything you need, please tell us!”
The merperson humbly lowered his head, and once Leylin got familiar with his room, retreated.
“It’s not bad!” Leylin looked around his surroundings. This was the higher levels of the ship, and besides important personnel, perhaps even the leader of the merfolk did not have the authority to stay here.
Light blue shells and red coral decorations adorned the room, making it look beautiful.
Inside, there was something like a bed that was covered with the fur of some unknown being. Just by looking at it, it was obvious that it was soft and smooth.
What attracted Leylin’s attention more, however, was the large blue pearl at the heart of the room.
In the A.I. Chip’s scan, the pearl seemed to be breathing, sucking in the turbid air in the room and, after going through some unknown transformation, released pure oxygen and was even able to clean the air. This eliminated the fishy smell of the ocean.
“A.I. Chip, scan!” Leylin commanded.
[Beep! Mission established. Beginning scan.] The A.I. Chip intoned loyally, and immediately after, probing undulations scanned through and did not miss any corners.
[Scan completed! Yet to find any suspicious items or spying spell formations.] The A.I. Chip intoned.
“Alright, looks like they aren’t playing any tricks. I just need another layer of protections so I can be at ease though.” With a tap of his finger, a blue rune appeared and rapidly disappeared into the wall.
In the blink of an eye, a resplendent blue layer of light appeared within the hold of the ship and quickly disappeared.
[Defence and warning spell patterns completed. Activation of comprehensive control. Simultaneous detections ongoing.] Once the A.I. Chip sent information over, Leylin could finally
completely relax.

“Hah…” He lay on the soft bed and huffed out a sigh, “At least I managed to regain a portion of my mobility before they found me, or things would have gotten complicated!”

“However, after recovering up to this point, the rest of the injuries aren’t that bad. I can even use external items…”

At this thought, Leylin’s palm touched at his waist. Silver spatial rays flashed and a dark red healing potion appeared in his palm. With Leylin’s attainments as a grandmaster at Potioneering, as well as the vast amount of resources provided by the Bloodline Union and Doze Imperial City of the Blazing Flame Monarch, he’d long since made a huge quantity of potions at the grandmaster level that he constantly kept at his side to deal with any unexpected situations.

The expedition into Purgatory World was of utmost importance, and he obviously brought everything along.

“With my vitality and rank as a Warlock, high-ranked potions probably won’t do much for me unless they’re primordial potions…”

The dark red potion didn’t taste all that good and even had a spicy taste that seemed to sting his nose. However, without even a flinch, Leylin drank it.

The potion worked quickly. A flush first appeared on Leylin’s face, before the sound of cracking was heard everywhere in his body, as if his bones were breaking. At the same time, it was flourishing with life like a plant.

After treatment using potions was used a few times, Leylin no longer had the feebleness of before.
What’s most important now is to figure out the general geography of Purgatory World!”

Leylin’s face was extremely solemn, hidden beneath the Mask of the Dreamless. He only had about two years left, and the Purgatory World had quite a few continents. He had to determine where the Snake Dowager was. If she’d gone to another continent, it would take years of journeying to find her, which was something he just would not accept.

“It’s a pity that those merfolk sailors aren’t that intelligent, and even the Beholder didn’t seem to be very knowledgeable. In order to gain more precise information, I’d have to rely on the concealed rank 3 Magus…”

*Knock knock!* At this moment, the door was lightly rapped.

“Come in!”

“My Lord!” The merperson from before reservedly bowed towards Leylin, “Esteemed guest, Lord Geiger Dole has invited you to dinner with him!”

‘Dinner?’ Leylin grew slightly confused by that. It seemed like the healing process he’d gone through had taken quite a bit of time.

“Of course, let us be off!” However, he reacted in time. This Geiger Dole should be the powerful being he’d sensed on the ship before. With his identity as one who gave the orders, he should have great understanding of the Purgatory World.

Leylin had now recovered about half of his original strength, which
was enough for him to take control of the fleet of ships and even search the soul of the rank 3 Magus. However, this was the Purgatory World. Leylin needed to keep a low profile, and the bloodline force he had as a Warlock was best not exhibited. If not, the chances of the Snake Dowager finding him would be increased by a great extent, which would be very disadvantageous for him. Besides, now that his safety was guaranteed, Leylin was willing to provide something of equal value to those people who had helped him, in exchange for what he wanted. Whatever it was, using violence to solve problems might be simple at the beginning, but it was easy to get addicted to this method, resulting in the firm mindset of using violence for all situations. Leylin felt that he hadn’t gotten to that point yet, but it was necessary that he change.
“My lord, please come with me!” The merperson led the way respectfully, while Leylin followed behind at an average pace while speaking once in while. Most of the time, Leylin was the one asking questions while the other party answered. It didn’t seem abrupt at all, as if he trusted Leylin and even bared his soul without reservations. Occasionally using dreamforce and all sorts of confusion techniques didn’t make Leylin feel the least bit ashamed. It was a pity that the merfolk weren’t that intelligent and information about their world was less important than filling their stomachs. Hence, Leylin heard things like “the meals of the basic sailor aren’t that tasty. That kelp should be fed to Beagle Beasts!”, “The caviar of the Liszt Fish is the best!” “The large Tamaha Spur Octopus during the flood season have the most tender flesh!” and similar information, which rendered Leylin speechless.
“These merfolk probably have gotten off their ship once or twice. They move about only on the ship!” Leylin clutched his forehead, giving up on conversing with him further to gain intel.
“Looks like if I want to do anything, I’ll need to deal with that Beholder…”
With this thought, Leylin followed the merperson to the top-most floor in the hold of the ship.
A scarlet carpet, white tablecloth, silver tableware and a candle holder had Leylin feeling like he’d returned to Earth and its aristocracy.
The four walls with decorations used by different races as well as this person of another race at the main seat reminded Leylin that this was Purgatory World.
“Hehe… welcome, Exemplary from afar! I am Geiger’s father, and my name is rather long, so just call me Geiger Dole…”
Sitting at the head of the table was a large Beholder. Compared to Geiger, the body of this Beholder was even larger. Some of the tendrils on the ground were snow-white, and seemed to be ageing.
However, the dense spiritual force undulations that it emitted showed that it had reached peak rank 3 if using the rating of the Magus World.
“Greetings, Geiger Dole. I am ‘Ley’. Thank you so much for your help!” Leylin introduced himself, and then sat at the other side of the table.
“A spiritual energy that isn’t half bad. Such purity means there’s a possibility of developing into soul force, which seems quite similar to the Spirit-Sucking Creature in the legends…”
Leylin sized it up, realising that the spiritual energy it emitted was different than that in the Magus World.
“The owner of our Eden trading company is a very benevolent and just sage. I imagine they would not mind us saving you. On the contrary, if they were to find out that we had met someone in need
and ignored them, they would probably get mad!”
Geiger Dole, who was in the middle, chuckled and then transmitted a spiritual force undulation, “Serve the dishes!”
A few female merfolk from the kitchen carefully walked out holding earthen jars that emitted heat. One of them stood beside Leylin and placed the head of the jar towards Leylin’s silver bowl, beginning to pour.
“This…”
Leylin was slightly disconcerted. Seeing this dish that he had no clue was soup or the main course, he began to hesitate slightly.
In front of him was clearly soup. Amidst the dense and creamy light green soup were reddish and white eyeballs floating.
These eyeballs’ shape and size were similar to humans, and Leylin frowned slightly.
“A.I. Chip, scan!”
A flicker of blue appeared in Leylin’s eyes and quickly scanned the soup in front of him.
[Beep! Scan completed. Derived composition: Protein, glutamic acid, high-energy albumin. Unknown trace element determined to be from the eyes of a physically large tribe. Great effects in regaining energy and can restore some spiritual force.]
“What? Dear guest of mine, do you not like it?” The Beholder Geiger Dole opposite him ate with gusto, its many tendrils agilely using the ladle and making slurping sounds.
“The Merfolk Eyeball Soup from the Deep Gem Coral Sea is quite famous…”
“Oh, I was just wondering about that!” Leylin laughed and scooped up some soup. No matter what the taste was like, it would at least give him nutrition and help him restore spiritual force, which was not bad.
“Could it be because it has such a large eyeball that it has a huge desire for the eyes of other creatures?”
Seeing how the other party was devouring the food, Leylin judged him silently.
With the dinner, time passed quickly. Leylin and Geiger Dole chatted.
While conversing, Leylin astutely found that Geiger Dole had secretly made inquires and spied on his history, and had even set up discreet spells that would detect lies.
Leylin could understand where it was coming from, since it was strange for there to suddenly be a strange being in the middle of the deep ocean.
However, what kind of wily old fox was Leylin? He not only did not reveal his past but spoke in a roundabout way, obtaining much information from it.
After the dinner, Leylin returned to his room and closed the cabin door.
“A.I. Chip, how is it?”
Immediately after, Leylin half-lay on the bed and closed his eyes, silently communicating with the A.I. Chip.
[Beep! Conversation from before has been recorded. Deleted 68.23% of useless portions and obtained definite intel. Beginning reorganisation.]
Soon enough, a 3D projection of the map was projected into Leylin’s mind.
As he had been able to see a rough outline from outside the barrier to the world, the map was now more intricate with information from Geiger Dole, and even the precise scale had been obtained.
There were seven gigantic continents in Purgatory World. Each had an area as large as the Magus World’s central continent. Between each continent, there was an enormous sea, and there large organisations within the sea that even rank 6 Magi did not dare intrude on.
Around the continents and sea were a series of small islands that
Determined host’s location!

Nearby the hail continent, a blue shipping route had been clearly marked out. The area where the route began was where Leylin was situated, marked with a red dot.

At the heart of the shipping route was a fragmented mark of an island, as well as a sign with Magus letters, Elias Port.

“The hail continent?” Leylin stroked his chin and sunk into deep thought.

“Based on what Geiger Dole said, the hail continent is land governed by another race filled with barrenness and primitivism. Many areas still have yet to develop and find joy in killing as well as giving up offerings.”

“On the Hail continent, there is one species with the most beings around, and that is the high-energy snakes! It’s rumoured that deep inside hail continent, there are temples for all snakes!”

“If I didn’t guess wrong, the Hail Continent should be the Snake Dowager’s territory!”

Leylin’s eyes suddenly sparkled with light.

While traversing through the world barrier, he intentionally moved based on his bloodline and landed near his bloodline source. It seemed that while he was slightly off, he wasn’t that off.

If not, if he were to land on some other continent, Leylin would just die of tears if he had to travel such a distance.

Meanwhile, Leylin was pondering other things that Geiger Dole had mentioned.

“Based on what it said, there is a ‘dignitary’ leader on each continent. They have the power to destroy the continent and are worshipped by all races and turned into a religion of sorts! The Beholder tribe evidently worship the ancient Trial’s Eye…”

Leylin thought to himself.
As its World’s Will was in disorder, the Purgatory World was a very suitable place for powerful existences from other worlds to migrate to and settle in easily. From the distant past to the present, it wasn’t just the Snake Dowager who had moved here with all her kin. Over the years, seven ‘dignitaries’ had appeared amongst the powerful natives and intruders. They each held control over one continent and did not interfere with each other’s rule of their respective continents. Many commoners treated these dignitaries like legends, and even gods to be worshipped. And to some degree, they were indeed quite similar to gods and perhaps even surpassed them.

‘But… are there only seven existences who possess laws in the Purgatory World? What kind of joke is that? Forget those living in seclusion, these oceans are even larger than the continents! It would be even more suspicious if there weren’t a few dignitaries occupying these vast oceans!’ The more he thought about it, the more Leylin felt there was to the Purgatory World, and the more he felt it would become a huge variable in his plans.

‘I need to find a way to make use of these dignitaries, or at least stop them from spoiling my plans… There’s also the World Will, which could be the most important…’ His brows furrowed tightly in thought.

……
A chilly wind blew across the deck, and the sky was filled with shining stars. The moon here seemed to be much larger than the one in the Magus World, and it even glowed with a purple radiance. *Moo… Moo…* Great sounds of breathing came from under the speeding ship, and white streams of water sprayed out from it on occasion.

“Mister Ley!” “Good Morning, Lord Ley!” Many of the merfolk sailors immediately bowed to Leylin after seeing him come their way. He waved his arms and sent them away, coming to the side of the deck to watch the black surface of the water. It was impossible to tell what he was thinking about.

Below the surface of the water was a large silhouette of what seemed to be some prehistoric creature. Though he could only see only one scale and half a claw [1 Bits and pieces] of it, it still showed off a frightening strength.

‘What an enormous body it has, and so full of life force too!’ Seeing the image of the creature from the A.I. Chip’s scans, as well as the data that had been gathered, Leylin sighed in praise.

‘Compared to an Evil Eye like Geiger Dole who is limited to rank 3, this being seems to be the most powerful on this ship. With this beast here, dangerous creatures wouldn’t dare to provoke these sailors…’

“Mister Ley!” Geiger Dole dragged his many tentacles across the ground and arrived at Leylin’s side. His current expression was more respectful than it had been before.

After all, this Mister Ley was an extraordinary exemplary that was not at all inferior to his father, this was something that his father Geiger Dole had told him himself. That alone was enough to earn his respect.

“Mm…” Leylin only nodded slightly, but Geiger did not find this attitude strange. Exemplaries and other mysterious beings naturally
had short tempers, and Leylin’s indifference was already a better attitude than most.
“You’re interested in our Godric?” He asked with a smile as he came to the edge of the deck. His large eye peered down at the shadow under the ship.
“Godric? Is that its name?” Leylin’s interest was piqued. Noticing Leylin’s attention, Geiger put more effort into his explanation, “Godric is the name we’ve given these creatures. In our ancient language, the word Godric means large and powerful; we named them this because mature Godrics are often as powerful as Morning Stars. Though this one is only an infant and likely won’t mature further, we Evil Eyes had to send out quite a few elders to subdue it.”
Geiger had a rather proud expression while mentioning that point, “Getting the Godric hasn’t just helped the ship avoid trouble. It’s even allowed us to speed up even when there’s no wind. It’s really saved us from a lot of inconvenience.”
“It’s not bad!” Leylin nodded.
“But it’s also because of this Godric that we can only sail along the Hail route. More faraway places like the Deep Valleys, Path of Bones, and Golden Coast have Godric communities, so we can only give up on them…” Geiger’s tentacles rose in what seemed to be regret and sorrow.
Leylin knew very well that some intelligent creatures hated seeing their kin enslaved. If the ship was spotted, they were likely to face ferocious attacks. It seemed like it was because they were aware of this that they avoided the areas where Godrics could appear, and only used this shipping route. Though there was still some risk of danger, it was much better compared to the dreadful problems they faced before.
“So you intentionally sealed its growth to block its breakthrough to Morning Star, so it wouldn’t become uncontrollably powerful?”
Leylin shot a glance at Geiger who was beside him, but did not say more.
The law of the jungle ruled supreme, be it in the Magus World or other unknown worlds. From Leylin’s experience, the commoners of the Magus World were considered to have higher standards of living compared to those of other worlds.
However, the commoners and even the nobility of the Magus World did not enjoy lives as good as the ordinary people from his previous life. However, Magi led rather satisfying lives which were perhaps even better than the citizens of his previous life. Yet the chances of joining the Magus community and overcoming one’s commoner status was practically negligible.
‘In a highly powerful and mysterious world like this one where only the strong survive, the weak can only form organisations to band together and rely on social order…’ Leylin looked absentminded, but he was deep in thought.
The robotic voice of the A.I. Chip snapped him out of his reverie.
[Beep! High-energy radiation discovered at a distance of 18762m. Target determined to be hostile.]
‘There are dangerous beings even in coastal waters? If it doesn’t care about the Godric it must be powerful…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed slightly. He suddenly exclaimed, “Mister Geiger; if I were you, I’d retreat a little!”
“Hmm? What do you mean?” Although he was slightly confused, Geiger still obediently followed Leylin to the heart of the deck.
“Something huge is heading for us rapidly.” Leylin didn’t conceal anything as he spoke bluntly. After all, mysterious beings and Exemplaries had their means of detection, and even Geiger would’ve realised it soon enough. He just thought to do them a favour.
Whatever be the case, they had saved him and allowed him on their ship. As long as there wasn’t a conflict of interest, he had to repay
them.
“Something huge? What do you mean? Wait… Monster attack?”
Geiger was stunned at first, but he immediately began to roar. Terrifying spiritual force encompassed the deck, and even spread outwards.
“Attention, crew! Protect our goods! If we lose anything I’ll turn you into fish soup for tomorrow!” Hearing this command, the merfolk on the deck froze for an instant before beginning to pull the mooring ropes as if they’d gone mad. Some of them darted into the warehouse.
Just as the situation on deck grew chaotic, a dark red light covered the entire ship and calmed the merfolk down.
“Prepare for enemy attack! It should be a deep sea being, see if the Godric can scare it away!” Geiger’s voice resounded throughout the ship. He then thanked Leylin.
Leylin was half-hearted in his assistance, more interested in such spells that could envelop the area. ‘Let’s see… There’s Soul Appeasement, Maximise Potential, Natural Instinct…’ Though paths to power varied in different worlds, Leylin would rather analyse such things from the viewpoint of spells.
Seeing the calm merfolk sailors having their strength and agility enhanced, Leylin could obviously notice the changes to their power.
‘According to what I learnt from our discussions, the Evil Eye tribe is more like a community of bloodline creatures. Their power grows with age, and they can even awaken some innate abilities.
“But I can’t just ask about the Purgatory World’s paths to power, they’ll grow suspicious…” Leylin stroked his chin in thought, ‘Just as well. Though there’ll be a little danger, I’ll get to see the power of this world’s natives, as well as how they channel energy. Anything else will have to wait until I get to Port Elias or the Hail Continent so I can understand in detail…’
*MOOO!* A low voice that sounded like a cow’s came from under the ship while Leylin was still speculating what was happening. A gigantic black figure rose from the depths of the ocean, appearing in its entirety before Leylin.
This sea monster was absolutely enormous, and looked similar to a manta ray with many irregular brown stripes everywhere on its body. There were many thick iron shackles firmly binding it to the body of the ship.
The Godric roared, and terrifying sound waves burst out in a specific direction. A large figure slowly emerged from that spot, starting with many metallic spikes that looked like sharp blades rising from the surface of the sea. The creature parted the water into two long white sea waves.
The large head that poked out was like that of a fish, and two pectoral fins followed. The beast’s entire body was covered in a metallic jet-black luster, and its orange eyes were like searchlights in the deep ocean. A bloodthirsty, ruthless aura erupted from its body.
Could this be… the Thornback Ironwhale?!”

Traces of fear could be felt in Geiger’s spiritual force, “How’s that possible? How can there be deep sea predators here when we’re so close to the coastline?”

The Thornback Ironwhale was a large being unique to the deep sea. Every single one of them had immense strength upon maturing, but their most terrifying characteristics were their temperaments. Once one set its sights on a target, it wouldn’t lose track of it until it managed to seize it.

The Thornback Ironwhale’s terrifying aura overwhelmed even the Godric’s, and it was the reason for Geiger’s fearful expression.

“Watch out!” Just as Leylin gave the warning, the Thornback Ironwhale charged forth, its large metal thorns piercing deeply into the Godric’s body.

*Moooeo!* The Godric cried out in pain. As the two gigantic beasts collided, huge tremors travelled throughout the ship.

“Oh…” Under such tremendous force, Geiger collapsed to the deck, unable to hold his weight. His numerous tendrils wrapped around the mast like vines.

Geiger was still in quite good shape. In the moment of the collision, there were a few merpeople sailors at the sides of the deck that had been sent flying off by the huge crash, letting out piercing screams as they fell into the waters. Along with their kinsmen in the sea, they were drawn into the battle between the two gigantic creatures.
In the end, they were turned into mincemeat. All that was left of them were traces of red on the waves. Usually, the chains fastened around the Godric were immensely helpful for sailing. Now, however, they were no more than a huge burden. Noticing this, Geiger immediately commanded, “Break the chains!”

A few sturdier mermen soldiers pounced on the control valve with furious eyes, using a thick hammer to split it open. *Crash!* The Godric’s gigantic chains then broke away, and the tremor on the ships lessened greatly.

“Turn the ship at full force! Leave this sea region!” At some point, Geiger Dole’s voice could be heard at the bow of the ship, body floating in the air. Great spiritual force undulations swept the area and even forcefully took control over the merpeople sailors, causing them to begin to work with reddened eyes.

*Creak! Creak!* The large ship suddenly turned around and left the two large beasts behind.

Water kept splashing into the air, and terrifying sounds could occasionally be heard from under the sea. Even though they were under the effect of magic, a lot of sailors trembled in fear.

“Prepare the cannons at the bow of the ship! We need to eliminate that Thornback Ironwhale, or it won’t let us off until it sinks us to the bottom of the sea!” Geiger Dole exclaimed as he flew towards the scene of the battle. Geiger had evidently regained his composure and scared the sailors witless, making them work even more intensely.

“Hurry! Prepare it!” Geiger’s large vertical pupil was filled with blood vessels, and its tendrils seemed to turn into powerful whips that kept hitting the merfolk, hurrying them to carry a large and heavy harpoon that was around 5 meters long above the cannon.

“The Thornback Ironwhale has the metallic skin ability, with an effect similar to physical damage reduction. We need to use this!”
Geiger produced a few black and white spotted stones and began to rub them together as if he was starting a fire. A layer of black and white light suddenly enveloped the steel fish.

‘Oh? It’s using temporary enchanting techniques? What is the medium? Is that a sacrifice or a scroll?’ Leylin’s eyes gleamed as he watched from the sidelines.

The enormous monsters kept roaring at the other end of the battlefield, causing huge waves that resulted in the ship swaying violently.

The Godric of the fleet was no match for the Thornback Ironwhale. Although it had the potential to reach the Morning Star realm, the sad truth was that after being treated as a slave for many years and being specially sealed, it could no longer completely develop its bloodline power.

The same didn’t apply for the Thornback Ironwhale. For all of its life, it had grown up in the treacherous deep sea and was extremely experienced in fighting.

Hence, at the very start of the fight, the Godric had a huge chunk of its flesh bitten off by the Thornback Ironwhale. That was not all, the whale’s sharp iron thorns also left many wounds on the Godric’s body.

An enormous amount of blood flowed out from the Godric without stopping. The blood shed by the merfolk from before was nothing compared to this, as the entire region was dyed red with the Godric’s blood.

*MOOoo…* The Godric’s thunderous voice gradually became weaker, and there was even a pleading note in its voice.

“Damn it!” At this moment, Geiger Dole had rushed to the site to support the Godric in battle. After witnessing the scene unfolding in front of him, his large pupil immediately went completely red with rage.

The Godric was still the valuable property of the Eden trading
company. If anything happened to it, or worse, if it died, then the amount that needed to be paid in reparations would be astronomical, enough for the company to go bankrupt. Geiger and his crew could be sent to some barren or dark region to be forced labour. On fleets like this, there was a shipment of very valuable goods which absolutely could not be lost.

Geiger Dole immediately acted in violent rage. A great deal of formless spiritual force turned into whips as it was pulled from the void. The seawater in the surrounding area converged to form a large wall of water.

“Mm?” At this moment, Leylin froze on the deck, as if he had discovered something.

“Is there any problem, Lord Ley? What do you think of this situation?” Geiger transmitted to Leylin after noticing his actions. Although he was extremely busy, he’d kept his eye on the area.

“Oh! There’s a stalemate right now, and with your father and the Godric working together you have an advantage.” At first, Leylin consoled him. However, he then spoke in a solemn voice, “Nevertheless, the Thornback Ironwhale has a high resistance against spiritual attacks. You need to be careful!”

According to most theories, the larger a monster that relied on its physical strength, the more it would be lacking in terms of the spirit and soul. This Thornback Ironwhale was obviously an exception to that rule. Not only did it have a high resistance against Geiger Dole’s spiritual force attacks, it could also reflect them back at him.

“The Thornback Iron Whale already has the steel willpower trait. If it goes crazy again…” Geiger was filled with unease, “Mister Ley…” He looked at Leylin expectantly.

“Mm, don’t worry. Since you went out of your way to help me, it’s only natural for me to return your kindness!” Leylin nodded, and hearing this made Geiger relax considerably. He then began to operate the cannons himself, and aimed at the giant Thornback
Ironwhale that was fighting both the Godric and Geiger Dole. With a loud bang, the giant cannon roared. The force of the recoil sent the ship backwards by a large distance, and even caused the stern to sink slightly below the water. A thunderous explosion, like the roar of a monster, rang out. A black ray that was tens of meters long shot out, striking the triangular fin on the Thornback Ironwhale’s back.

*Roar…* Large amounts of blood spurted out, and the whale let out enraged howls.

*Pak!* At this moment, a chain filled with runes was pulled until it was stretched out.

“Now’s the time, pull!” At the other side of the chain was the ship from before, Geiger’s spiritual force undulations intensified to the limit as he howled in anger.

The ship was pulled with such force that the hull started to shake abruptly. A game of tug of war was now happening between the Thornback Ironwhale and the ship, hindering its movement. As this opportunity revealed itself, Geiger Dole launched his final attack from the air.

“The King of Evil’s True Eye, Death Ray!”

Tremendous amounts of dark red rays appeared from Geiger Dole’s large vertical pupil, piercing into the eyes of the Thornback Ironwhale. It suddenly closed its eyes and its body started to convulse and thrash wildly, as if it was having a fit.

*MOOOO!* The Godric immediately roared, and charged towards the Thornback Ironwhale.

After shooting that ray, Geiger Dole seemed to have spent all his energy. He slowly fell to the deck, even the tendrils on his body no longer able to help in maintaining a standing position.

“Father!” Geiger immediately came over, using his many tendrils to help his father stand up.

*Roar!* Following its berserk howls, the Thornback Ironwhale’s
eyes flew open once more. However, there was now a significant amount of blood pouring out from both eyes.

“The Thornback’s Bloodthirsty Berserker transformation! I never thought it would awaken its bloodline!” Geiger Dole stared at the outburst of strength from the Thornback Ironwhale as it sent the heavily injured Godric flying; his complicated feelings couldn’t be masked by his spiritual force.

Geiger Dole saw the crazed Thornback Ironwhale charging towards the ship and immediately came before Leylin, pleading with him, “Mister Ley, please help us!”

“Don’t worry!” Leylin revealed a good-natured smile from behind the Mask of the Dreamless, and arrived before the giant cannon.

Due to the iron chains and the harpoon anchoring it, the whole fleet’s movement was restricted. It was as if there was a deep sea demon that was tugging on the chains, trying to pull the entire fleet into the sea.

‘This World’s paths of power seem to be reliant on awakening one’s bloodline innate abilities as well as on sacrifices… I can’t use anything too outstanding, otherwise it’ll raise suspicion…’ Having decided what action to take, Leylin came beside the chain and placed his palm on its surface.

The ice cold metal was shaking slightly, and only now was Leylin able to deeply understand the immense strength of the Thornback Ironwhale while in its enraged state.

The best spell model for the situation was transferred to him by the A.I. Chip, and immediately after a dim layer of light covered his hands. “Metal Animation!”

The whole length of the iron chain seemed to transform, and it began to ripple like a wave down from the top of the chain until it reached the other end.
The enormous Thornback Ironwhale roared, and didn’t charge at the ship again. Its gigantic body continued to spin in place, and it finally began to start twitching. The merfolk on the deck, and even Geiger and Geiger Dole, were completely stunned as they watched the scene. This terrible deep sea creature that had nearly destroyed their entire fleet had been left like this with one strike from Mister Ley? They couldn’t even understand what method he had used! For a moment, they gazed at Leylin with reverence. However, it was as if he didn’t notice that at all. His eyes were still locked on the struggling Thornback Ironwhale. After a short while, the whale’s struggling grew less and less pronounced, until it finally became completely still. Clouds of black smoke emerged from the harpoon wound it had sustained. *Whoosh!* The enormous harpoon returned suddenly, bringing with it a white lump of brain matter. By the time the harpoon was back on deck, Geiger Dole was shocked to find that it had already transformed into a giant palm of steel,. The hand sifted through the brain material of the whale, before finally passing a solid black lump of material to Leylin. Immediately afterwards, it withdrew into the opening of the cannon and returned to being a harpoon once more. It seemed to have lost all of its previous vitality. ‘What terrifying power!’ Geiger Dole felt a trace of fear in his heart.
‘That type of living metal, once it entered his body…’ just the thought of it made him shudder all over.

From Leylin’s view, it was foolish to wish the entire world would know about every impressive fight one fought. A Magus was someone who grasped the power of the truth, and ought to know how to use a minimal amount of power to reap the maximum amount of benefits.

As a result, he only modestly shook his head and said, “My current strength doesn’t count for much…”

“It’s all thanks to Mister Leylin’s strength that our fleet survived! If not for you, I’m afraid our fleet would have suffered great losses this time.” Geiger Dole expressed his thanks sincerely.

“Mm… Also, this is the Thornback Ironwhale’s most valuable resource,” Leylin raised the dark solid in his hand, a fishy smell spreading from it.

“Congratulations, Mister Leylin! This is the essence of the whale, a resource unique to the Thornback Ironwhale. It’s very rare to see such a big piece!” Although Geiger Dole said this with some envy, he didn’t have any sinister thoughts. If Leylin was a normal person, he would have already snatched this kind of precious material away and thrown him into the ocean to feed the fish. However, he didn’t have the courage to do this to Leylin, in fact he wouldn’t even think of it.

“Oh,” Leylin nodded, and simply tossed the whale essence to Geiger Dole. “Treat this as compensation for allowing me passage on your ship.”

This type of material wasn’t worth much in Leylin’s eyes, so he’d given it away without thought. However, Geiger felt that Leylin was shrouded in mystery. An adventurer who could so easily give away such a treasure was likely to be very strong.

Under Geiger Dole’s command, the fleet of ships then arrived at the place where the battle had taken place and began to strip the
Thornback Ironwhale to pieces. Every part of a rank 3 sea creature’s body was precious, not to mention the special whale essence. This was worth up to five times more than the original goods they were carrying! Leylin did not care about that sort of thing, but it was serendipitous for Geiger and Geiger Dole. Leylin did not interfere with the resource gathering, only watching them break down the Thornback Ironwhale as they cut out pieces of its flesh and skin. Simultaneously, the Godric was once again called back to the ship, with groups of merfolk sailors roaming around its body, applying a gelatinous material to its wounds. This continued for nearly a day. Although the majority of the Purgatory World’s daily cycle was night, the bright moonlight made it seem like day. By the time the fleet had set sail once again, the smile in Geiger Dole’s large vertical eye was so pronounced he was almost squinting. They’d had no choice but to discard some of the miscellaneous low-value goods in order to lighten their shipment weight. The Godric had recovered from most of its injuries as well and had regained its vitality. It pulled the ship even against the strong headwinds and after the sails had been let down, even the larger ships ran at a decent speed. An unbroken group of islands appeared on the horizon after the third sunrise, looking like a string of pearls. A few white seagulls let out excited cries as they circled the sky. “Port Elias? We’ve finally arrived!” Leylin was leaning against the mast, looking at the nearby waterway. This was the last supply point on the Hail Continent route, and was a prosperous port. Surveying the area, Leylin was pleased to find many boats. These boats had aged model numbers similar to Geiger’s, and there were even metallic warships in the place. There
were also many ships far larger than the ones in Leylin’s party. It wasn’t just alchemy technology, magic drove the extraordinary ships as well. Leylin even saw a pirate ship that was entirely under the control of undead creatures, with numerous skeletons and flame spirits manning the deck. A tattered black skeleton flag that was triangular in shape hung from the top, reeking of a bloody and savage aura. However, what surprised Leylin the most was that they weren’t attacking the other vessels.

“This area is the domain of Port Elias. Under its protection even pirates obey the law. Even if they readily commit crimes in the deep seas, they must obediently restrain themselves in this place,” Geiger kindly explained, “Although Mister Leylin possesses awe-inspiring strength, it is better to abide by Port Elias’ rules. After all, there are some strong people overseeing Port Elias, who possess power comparable to those of the Star rank.”

“Mm, I understand. Thank you for your kindness!” Leylin nodded. He had understood the power ranking of the Evil Eye tribe completely, and they weren’t as strict as the Magus World about it. They simply judged strength by age.

The tribe members only had a few stages of strength. There was the stage of infancy, followed by adolescence, adulthood, and at the peak were the elders. There was less than one Elder Eye among ten thousand Evil Eyes.

As for Geiger’s description of the port overseers having strength on par with the Star rank and things like that, those who were talked about in that way could be considered Morning Stars. Although a thorough classification was impossible, it was still possible to understand the rankings to some extent.

Once someone was labelled a Star rank, in the eyes of the Evil Eye tribe only the oldest of the Elder Eyes could compete with them. Geiger was considered to be in his adolescence, possessing a strength similar to rank 1 or 2 Magi. As for his father, Geiger Dole
had entered adulthood, and roughly had the strength of a rank 3 Magus. Their innate racial abilities gave them a slight edge over Magi of a similar rank.

“If there is nothing else Geiger, let us part here,” Leylin said as he looked at the fast approaching port and the densely populated ships, some of which were unique.

Hearing that Leylin wanted to leave the fleet made Geiger anxious immediately. “Lord Ley! Did we do something lacking in respect? Why are you in such a hurry to leave?”

Leylin was, after all, someone who possessed great strength but wasn’t greedy. No matter which ship’s captain he met, they would try to rope him in. And although Port Elias was already very close to the mainland, they still required a month of sailing. If they ran into any danger, Leylin would be a safeguard.

“My apologies. I wish to stay in Port Elias for some time, and enquire after my own fleet. Although the chances of my companions surviving is very slim…” Leylin’s eyes seemed to grow dazed, and seeing him like this Geiger could say nothing more. After all, it was only right and proper to search for one’s companions.

When Geiger Dole received this news, his tendrils immediately blanched white at their ends. He moved on deck. “Mister Ley will be leaving? What a pity!” A feeling of reluctance and regret was transmitted with his spiritual force undulations.

“I’ve already dallied here far too long. I’d like to thank the Eden Trading Company and the two of you once more for your selfless help. May the glory of the Purgatory World be with you!”

Having spent some time exploring it, Leylin already knew the conversatory etiquette of the Purgatory World. He spoke without a single mistake, and seemed like a real native.

“What a pity! Since it’s like that, please accept this gift!” Geiger Dole waved his hand, and a merman immediately handed a scroll
made of skin to Leylin respectfully. This scroll even had a fine layer of fish scales on top of it, and the light it reflected was dazzling. It looked extremely bright and beautiful.

Leylin reached out and took the scroll before gently unfurling it. The scroll unfolded to show a light yellow map, next to which were some simple rules.

“This is a map of Port Elias, and it includes some matters to take note of, I trust that it will be of some use to you!” Geiger Dole sent over a wave of spiritual force.

The A.I. Chip scanned the scroll, and committed the information to Leylin’s memory in a flash. He wouldn’t ever forget this information now, but he still rolled it up and put it away, and expressed his thanks, “Many thanks. This map will be very useful to me!”

“We will be resting and restocking our supplies here at Port Elias for a while. If Mister Leylin has any other needs, please don’t hesitate to come and find us…”
Geiger Dole and his son appeared to be completely cordial towards strong individuals, and Leylin only responded with a smile.

“Attention! Attention! You have now entered Port Elias! This area is under the protection of the mighty master of the void, the Flapwing, the Dignitary of the Asak Continent: the almighty Nefarious Filthbird! We advise that you abide by the Port’s rules, lest you suffer the wrath of the Port’s guardians and the Supreme’s punishment!” A mechanical voice transmitted the message onto the ship, carrying a trace of a threat with it. Geiger Dole, however, was evidently used to this and did not react.

After all, the port was being protected by a powerful Dignitary, so they could only follow the rules.

“The Nefarious Filthbird?! Asak Continent’s Dignitary?!” Leylin’s eyes flickered slightly as he looked towards the top of the Port and saw a giant statue of a bird atop an enormous mountain.

“Isn’t this place near the Hail Continent? How can the Dignitary of another continent spread its influence all the way here? Unless…” Many ideas ran through Leylin’s mind. On the surface, however, Leylin was calm and collected as he followed Geiger Dole off the ship and into the docks.

There was a flood of people on the ground, and the clamour in the place was spectacular. Even the air in the region seemed to be sizzling slightly. The fishy smell of sea trade, the odour of livestock...
and other assorted scents blended into a stench that could make anyone feel nauseous. Even Leylin’s brow creased a little in response.

*Crash! Crash!* A huge mechanical arm rumbled monotonously, grabbing goods from the holds and decks of the ships and transporting them down. At the end of the endlessly operating transport belt was a gigantic body and, and next to it were tall and very muscular humanoids. They shouted as they transported the boxes of raw goods away. From time to time, the urging and condemning of a yardmaster could be heard.

If they used extraordinary magical power, the entire process could be sped up considerably. However, without even considering whether that would be cost-effective, why would those extraordinarily powerful people condescend to perform such menial tasks?

“Mister, your ship was confirmed to be an ancient type 3 model, accompanied by a huge life form of rank 5 physical status. You will need to pay…” At this moment, a flexible-looking giant octopus that was holding a notebook, a fountain pen, and other such tools arrived in front of Geiger Dole.

“I know, I know!” Geiger Dole waved his hand, throwing a little black bag to the octopus. Furthermore, Leylin saw Geiger Dole stuff a pink pearl into one of the octopus’ tentacle suckers. The pearl disappeared in a wink and Leylin was left speechless. Apparently, no matter what era it was, this sort of thing was unavoidable.

“Alright then, Mister Geiger Dole, Mister Geiger! I shall take my leave first.”

As soon as Geiger Dole finished his procedures, Leylin bid them farewell with a smile and, shortly after his figure disappeared into the bustling crowd.

Geiger Dole and Geiger looked in Leylin’s direction, and they
couldn’t help but covertly exchange spiritual undulations with each other for a while.

“Mister Ley left just like that?” Geiger still couldn’t resign himself to this.

“Cheer up, son!” Geiger Dole’s spiritual undulations were transmitted over, “Even without our help Mister Ley had enough strength to arrive at the continent by himself. It was only a matter of time. Furthermore, we have already benefited a lot from the Thornback Ironwhale he gave us, so we shouldn’t make too many unreasonable demands. Fair trade and complying with the law, that is what our almighty senior, the Trial’s Eye, has taught us. We must follow his doctrine thoroughly.

“Yes, you’re right, Lord Father.” Geiger’s vertical eye showed his low spirits, as did his tendrils. “However, I still feel like it’s a pity….”

“Lord Ley’s departure is actually good for us!” There was still a trace of dignity in Geiger Dole’s large vertical eyes.

“What do you mean?” Geiger didn’t seem to understand.

“I am afraid the secret Mister Ley carries isn’t a small matter. Although I haven’t made in-depth contact with him, I’m already near the bottleneck of the Elder Stage, and even with my spiritual sight Mister Ley was still shrouded in fog. Occasionally, his aura makes me feel oppression and fear that not even the Elders can generate.”

Geiger Dole still seemed to have some lingering fear, ”If such a person were to have an outburst and attack us, it would be a disaster to the fleet and the entire Eden Trading Company! Now, however, he decided to leave us of his own accord. Since we’re still on friendly terms, it’s good for both parties.”

“So that’s the case! Mister Ley was actually this powerful?” Geiger looked at his father. Suddenly, he became aware that there was still a lot of things left for him to learn.
‘A.I. Chip, what’s the progress on the data collection?’ Leylin leisurely strolled around the streets while secretly communicating with the A.I. Chip. [Beep! Collecting data on the outside world… 79 new species were discovered… 34 species match information on the database, 25 unknown. 20 species are completely foreign organisms.] The A.I. Chip’s reply was lightning quick, and it projected a great amount of data in front of Leylin. In ancient times, the Magus World was incomparably powerful and had taken over many worlds. Ancient Magi had even made contact with the Purgatory World, which meant that it was possible to find the descriptions of some lifeforms in the large amount of ancient data that the A.I. Chip had collated. Leylin opened an image at random and, from the picture, a ball of thick black mist that did not have a fixed form emerged. This was a member of an alien tribe he had seen earlier. [Blackmist Clan, a semi-elemental lifeform. Enjoys living in environments full of darkness particles, suspected to be native to the Shadow World. In ancient times they had migrated to many other worlds, and there are currently 12 subspecies that have been discovered.] The many passersby on the street did not make a fuss over the appearance of the ball of black mist, so they were clearly accustomed to it. In addition to the Black Mist Clan, Leylin had discovered many ancient tribes that were recorded in the ancient books and even some completely unknown creatures. All these existences lived harmoniously and prosperously in Port Elias. Different tribes had different lifestyles. This could cause some
contradictions and disrupt harmony, especially for those kinds of dark existences at these docks, but Leylin didn’t notice any intense conflicts or fights. It was clear that they were under strong suppression.

‘In terms of biodiversity and number of special species, the Purgatory World has probably surpassed the Magus World…’ Leylin’s expression was slightly grave.

Just the power of laws that the Purgatory World’s seven dignitaries possessed was enough to crush the surface Magus World. If not for the Magus World’s World Will suppressing foreign laws to a terrifying degree, perhaps it would already have been conquered by powerful beings from other worlds.

‘No. I’m afraid the World Will’s suppression wouldn’t be enough to deter the Snake Dowager and the others,’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Even if they’ve been suppressed, entities that wield laws can very easily deal with Rank 6 Breaking Dawn Monarchs. Only creatures of equal rank could make them worry… Could it be that there are some rank 7 or greater Magi from ancient times still in the Magus World?’

‘Perhaps they are hiding in a secret location and have become enough of a formidable force to intimidate other worlds. No! It they were on the surface, no matter how low a profile they kept, rumors of these entities would have spread, unless… they are underground!’ Leylin’s eyes suddenly lit up.

The Magus World still had a deep and vast subterranean world. Even the powerful Magi from ancient times had only explored and discovered seven layers of this underground world.

Going into the subterranean world was too dangerous even for the ancient Magi. If an Abyssal Matriarch-ranked existence appeared in the seven layers of the subterranean world, it was enough to rival the strongest Law Magi. Therefore, ancient magi were not able to completely control the subterranean world they had discovered.
If it was like this within the seven layers then how about even deeper underground? Leylin suddenly felt somewhat fortunate, the underground of the Magus World was indeed deep and no one knew what terrifying existences or shocking secrets were hidden there.

He had boldly cooperated with the Lyas family to develop the underground, and as expected it was a sensible decision. Otherwise, if they attracted the attention of some powerful existence, let alone Magi who wielded laws, even with the assistance of the strongest Breaking Dawn Monarchs there would be no profit left for him and Eam to make. All the influence would be taken over by others, and it would be working for nothing. This outcome was something he could never accept.

‘Although the probability of the power of laws appearing in the first layer of the subterranean world was small, there would definitely be Magi on the level of Breaking Dawn! Then there was that King Arthur who had established the Arthur Empire. He had to be a Breaking Dawn Magus, and could even be a powerhouse among the rank 6 Magi!’

Leylin’s eyes twinkled without end, ‘Boldly exploring the subterranean world, even if only the first layer, is truly an irrational thing to do before reaching rank 6.’

With this thought, Leylin couldn’t help recalling that Thorned Thunderbird Warlock clan’s elder- Eam Lyas.

Perhaps Eam was indeed making preparations to explore the subterranean world, and was waiting for Leylin to return?

However, right now it was impossible for Leylin to return in the short term, and the earlier treaty was merely an agreement of intentions. The most crucial point was that Leylin had not agreed on a specific time to explore the subterranean world with Eam. Thus, it could not be said that he was violating the contract.

‘I’ll have to ask you to wait a bit longer, Eam. Wait for me to
advance to Breaking Dawn, then I will definitely go and fulfil our agreement!’ The corners of Leylin’s mouth curved into a smile.
Port Elias not only had the title of the Pearl of the Hail Continent, but also housed so many different races that even Leylin was left overwhelmed. That was not all; both sides of the busy road were filled with multiple shops, selling anything from the lowest quality armour and protective gear to the highest grade equipment such as high-grade sealing scrolls and other things. Everything one might need was present in these shops.

Based on Leylin’s understanding, the beings in Purgatory World were of varying races, each relying on their physical bodies and bloodline specific innate abilities to battle. There was no need for them to train themselves; their bloodlines would increase their strength with the simple passage of time until they reached their peak.

Of all the systems, only two were used throughout the whole world: sacrificial offerings and beast spirits. These offerings meant sacrificing something, or someone, to a certain dignitary. After obtaining their blessing, an inhabitant would have their power increased in some form, be it a pure boost to their strengths or mysterious new abilities.

The path of offerings was more like an exchange in Leylin’s eyes. The natives would offer up items that were of value to their chosen dignitary, and in turn, they would these dignitaries help the natives increase their strength. Such methods were very similar to the gods...
in the World of Gods, while still being somewhat different. Since he hadn’t delved deeply into the subject, he couldn’t be certain what exactly the difference was. Perhaps it had to do with the devotion that these beings held for their chosen dignitaries, but they did not request the beings to bring offerings every day or at fixed intervals. There were even some that could rely on their support even though they hadn’t offered anything at the time; although there was the need to have offered something of extraordinary value to the dignitary prior to that. This was a distinct difference from the gods of the World of Gods.

‘It looks like even power systems from the World of Gods were assimilated during ancient times, and those past rank 6 in the Purgatory World have made some changes to them…’ Leylin touched his chin.

In this enormous universe, the Magus World and the World of Gods were like two extremes. They were the greatest in size and held the most powerful beings. These two worlds had real information about existences up to rank 8 in power. The primordial entities deduced that only when one of the two managed to seize the other’s resources and gain their laws, power systems, and their knowledge that they could advance to eternity, to rank 9. This was what sparked the Ancient Magus War. Having already advanced to the peak of rank 8, there was nothing else that would attract the attention of the Magi in the myriad other worlds. Only the guidance and understanding necessary to reach rank 9 would ignite their desire to fight for it, no matter how slim the chance! Of course, as these two worlds were about equal in power, the result was that both sides were severely crippled. The collective strength of the Magus World deteriorated greatly, and the World of Gods had gone so far as to completely seal itself.

It wasn’t just these two worlds that were involved in the war,
countless smaller and weaker worlds suffered from collateral damage as well. Their unique strength and advancement systems had been leaked, and through real battle experience the systems were refined to become more accessible. The path of offerings was something Leylin believed was an evolution of the system of faith that the gods used. They removed the restrictions between gods and their followers, and turned it into a system of equivalent exchange. It was only after these changes that it fit the Purgatory World’s circumstances. After all, not every world’s laws were suitable for the spread of religion.

As for the second common method, the path of beast spirits, Leylin had previously listened to some explanations about it from Geiger Dole. As the Purgatory World was a home to various races, with numerous ferocious beasts and high-energy entities occupying it, some intellectual beings invented the concept of hunting these ferocious beasts and extracting their souls. After doing so, these would be sealed into the user’s body, summoned during battles using certain techniques. Since sealed beasts differed in strength, it created different ranks for these beast spirit masters. On top of that, when one’s beast spirit magic reached a higher rank, the corresponding beast spirit masters would be able to seal even more spirits. Ancient legends even spoke of a beast spirit master who had reached an unprecedented realm. He had sealed innumerable beast spirits at the level of Morning Star all over his body, and had enough power to destroy a whole continent!

The energy from the sealed spirits could even aid in the cultivation of a beast spirit master, allowing them to reach a higher rank faster. “Offerings and beast spirits are the main power systems in Purgatory World,” Leylin mumbled to himself, his eyes scanning
for shops with related material. These two strength systems could be considered the main paths to power of the sentient races in the Purgatory World. Looking at how vast the world was, it wouldn’t be strange to find that smaller branch races had their own systems. Leylin wouldn’t even be surprised if there were magic inheritances here.

With a long period of data collection, and adding on the current lightspeed thought process of Leylin’s own brain, he’d learnt much of the common languages in the Purgatory World with the help of the A.I. Chip. At the very least, daily conversations were already no issue.

‘Here it is,’ he though soon after setting his sights on a shop that looked like a huge open clam. He then walked in. He could sense a powerful aura pervading the shop, and given its location and the attitudes the pedestrians had towards it he reasoned that this shop would have something worthy of his attention.

‘Welcome to my shop, revered Alabaster Devilsnake, descendant of the Dignitary Snake Dowager!’ A voice sounded in Leylin’s head the moment he entered the shop. It surprised him; although he was still using the Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline to conceal himself, it was very rare for someone to have the ability to even notice that layer of concealment.

The shop owner clearly took him for a member of the Alabaster Devilsnake family, and sounded rather humble. After all, Alabaster Devilsnakes grew to rank 5 upon maturity. In addition to their being descendants of a dignitary, they had a very high status.

“Where are you?” Leylin surveyed the interior of the clam, which was just a white space with multi-coloured lights floating in the air. Information appeared in Leylin’s mind. This was not spiritual force, but an even more mysterious kind of communication. [Beep! Detected soul force undulations coming through. Deny or
accept?] At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s prompt was transmitted. Now, Leylin had found a lifeform that could use soul force directly. “State your name!” Leylin’s lips did not move, but mysterious soul force was sent out. There was even a chaotic luster in Leylin’s eyes, which let him immediately discover the energy core located in the middle of the white space.

A green bundle of light was hidden within the layers of the void, with countless green soul force threads that linked it to the room. “The customer was able to find my core?” At this moment, the information transmitted from the core held a trace of alarm. “Also, this energy is soul force?!” It was clearly shocked by Leylin’s ability to use soul force and was extremely afraid.

“This is the first time I’ve seen someone do something as stupid as allowing others into their own body,” Leylin placed his hands behind his back and began to browse the shop’s items, occasionally using soul force to communicate with it. “Don’t you know that once someone who can use soul force discovers your soul core, they could destroy you in an instant?”

Once the words left his mouth, Leylin felt the whole place shudder, especially the core. It was then that a trembling soul appeared. “Lord Alabaster Devilsnake, please forgive me!” A little white person came out of the core and grovelled at Leylin’s feet. “Don’t worry, I’m just an ordinary customer,” Leylin couldn’t help but console this being after seeing it on the verge of fainting.

‘Ordinary customer? Can ordinary customers use soul force? Do they posses such a terrifying aura of power?’ The little person’s thoughts were bitter, but it could only follow behind Leylin carefully.

“Though your methods can scare other races who don’t know about the soul force system, this is still far too risky!” Leylin lectured it as he grabbed a blue bundle of light. A roaring snarl was transmitted from the bundle of light. Through
the blue screen, Leylin could faintly see a small and exquisite sea fish. Its mouth was like a sharp pike which shone with a little luster.

“This is the Golden Pike Trout. This beast spirit is very suitable for beginners seeking to become beast spirit masters!” Seeing Leylin seemingly interested in the beast spirit, the little person immediately went beside him and began to introduce the fish with a fawning expression on his face, “If my Lord likes it, I can…”

Suddenly, the thought that drawing in a person that could take control of his life and death had the little person apprehensive and in fear. Perhaps even if Leylin wanted to take everything in its shop for free, it would be forced to agree.

“No thank you! This sort of thing is useless to me.” Leylin waved his arms.

“Do you have anything with a general introduction to the pah of offerings and beast spirit spells? The more detailed the better!”

“Yes, yes I do!” The little person smiled and waved his arms. Two tremendous red bundles of light flew over. The rays dissipated and revealed a cow horn bugle and a pink shell.

Leylin picked up the bugle horn and immediately received a prompt from the A.I. Chip.

[Discovered spiritual force data interface. Accept or deny?]

Evidently, the two items were like crystal spheres in the Magus World, acting as a medium to store information.
‘Acccept!’ With a thought the cow horn bugle in Leylin’s hand was enveloped in a layer of light that slowly turned it to ashes.

Many images and words appeared in Leylin’s mind, getting recorded and analysed by the A.I. Chip. Soon after, the same happened to the pink shell.

Two new documents were stored in the A.I. Chip after this process, making a look of satisfaction to appear on Leylin’s face. The little person, however, looked heartbrokenly at the pile of ashes. Gathering the complete set of information, as well as finding an expert to record it into a storage system, had taken a large amount of effort and wealth.

[Beep! New folders recorded: ‘Path of Offerings’ and ‘Beast Spirit magic’ (incomplete)] The A.I. Chip’s prompt appeared. Leylin could understand the incompleteness, after all a tiny shop like this wouldn’t normally have such profound information.

When he saw that the techniques led all the way to the Morning Star level, Leylin was slightly shocked. In the Magus World it was extremely rare to own a high-grade meditation technique with four complete layers. This was certainly the greatest treasure you could find within a small scale shop like this.

On the surface, however, Leylin still furrowed his brows in dissatisfaction. “This information seems to be incomplete…” he said, causing the little person to quiver in fear.
“My lord, my lord! These two sets of information were sent over from the Hail Continent. Both have been inspected by the Holy Land, and are most certainly complete. With these, one can cultivate to the Morning Star level. There’s no doubt about it!” The little person exclaimed resolutely.

‘Morning Star? It seems as though the Purgatory World follows the Magus World’s ranking system.’ Leylin nodded and asked, “Then how would I be able to get techniques above the Morning Star level?”

This question seemed to put the little person in a difficult spot, “My lord, there are various races with techniques above the Morning Star level, but these are considered absolute secrets. Even getting this set of information was quite risky.”

The little person had spoken immediately upon seeing the grim look on Leylin’s face, and he continued, “Wait, my lord, I know! You can definitely find something within the Holy City of the Hail Continent, which is also the city of the Snake Dowager’s descendants. Furthermore, you belong to the Alabaster Devilsnake clan, so you’ll make it inside without any problems.”

‘The Snake Dowager’s Descendants? Holy City?’ These names surprised Leylin. This was probably the Snake Dowager’s base camp.

Though Leylin still needed more information, revealing his unfamiliarity with the Holy City would raise suspicions. Moreover, killing this little person to shut his mouth would attract guards and make things even more difficult.

“The Holy City is too far away. Are there no other methods?” Leylin’s eyes narrowed as he sized up this little person in front of him.

“I’m sorry my lord, but there really are no other ways!” The little person had a suffering expression, and Leylin confirmed that he was telling the truth and did not pressure him any further.
Immediately after, Leylin proceeded to wipe the store clean. The little person’s life was in Leylin’s hand, so he could do nothing about it.

‘Hm? A map of the continent? Though it doesn’t seem to be very detailed, it will still prove useful…

‘This should be the beast spirit of a Godric. So even souls of Morning Star beings can be collected? Though it’s only in its infancy, this spirit can still be used.’

“I’ll also take this, and this, and that,” Leylin’s insight allowed him to eliminate all the good things from the shop.

“My- My lord!” The little person called out in a sobbing tone. He felt desperate as he saw all his collection of treasures disappearing, and he secretly regretted letting Leylin even enter his shop.

Leylin found the little person’s manner hilarious, “Who do you think I am? Do you really think I’d rob you and have you call for the garrison or the guards? After all, I know the rules of Port Elias well!”

Leylin’s words frightened the little person even further, “Respected lord! This little one didn’t mean to…”

“Alright, alright! I already told you I’d pay, so just take this,” said Leylin as he threw a bag of pink pearls to the little person.

Neither magic crystals nor astral stones could be used as currency in the Purgatory World. Thus, Leylin wouldn’t take them out and risk revealing himself.

Since the Purgatory World was not unified, there were all sorts of currencies and measuring systems in the different dignitaries’ territories. Consequently, bartering was still the main strategy in long distance trading.

While on Geiger’s ship, Leylin had gathered many deep sea items using his own strength. Although it was just for fun, he had collected quite a few good ones with the A.I. Chip’s assistance and his soul force. Geiger was left stunned when he discovered this,
and ended up purchasing most of Leylin’s items with a pile of pink pearls.  
Leylin was also willing to sell them, and in exchange receive items of equivalent value that could be used in this world.  
These pink crystals were very popular here and had very high value. One small bag was enough to buy everything in this shop.  
“Many… Many thanks, my lord! Oh, my lord, you are like the stars in the sky, the darling of the many dignitaries! Your greatness, selflessness, impartiality and fairness will be immortalised in song and spread throughout the myriad of worlds…”  
Seeing that Leylin was serious about a fair transaction and was not threatening him, the little person became emotional. A song of praise for Leylin sprang from his lips immediately, but that only made Leylin shudder with goosepimples.  
“Alright, alright, now our deal is complete, I’ll be off!” Unable to tolerate the little person’s singing, Leylin took his items and left.  
After all, sound transmitted through soul energy was worse than harsh noise.  
*Crash!* After he left, the two large shells outside the shop closed and abruptly began to move, falling into the ocean nearby and splashing water everywhere.  
“Hm? Why is Old Cripple’s shop closing so early today?” A few passersby were astonished, “Doesn’t he find joy in prying into his customer’s secrets? There was even that saltwater octopus who was scared to the point of going mad…”  
Soon after, they seemed to have thought of something, and they looked at Leylin, who had just walked out of the shop, with reverence. However, he quickly squeezed into the sea of people and disappeared without a trace.  
“It seems like this shop has quite a reputation? Though it doesn’t seem to be a particularly good reputation,” Leylin shook his head speechlessly, and went further inside the port.
He could now confirm that the Snake Dowager was the dignitary that ruled over the Hail Continent. He had to thoroughly plan how to conceal himself from her and how to break his bloodline shackles.

The first thing he had to do, however, was to settle down in Port Elias. The night curfew here was very strict and if he did not get proof of his residence before night fell, he would probably be forced to leave. However, he was only a pink pearl away from resolving this issue.

……

When night fell, Leylin was standing on the balcony of a luxurious private room in a hotel. He was gazing at the specks of light in Port Elias, and the faraway lighthouse in the distance and the pitch-black sea.

Near the port, many bright and beautiful images of every kind appeared, filled with enchanting splendour.

“It really is a prosperous and beautiful port…” Leylin’s eyes seemed to be filled with a deep expression as he sighed lightly.

After closing the curtains, he laid half his body down on the soft sofa and sank into deep thought. The Snake Dowager was an unavoidable obstacle he had to overcome if he wanted to break the bloodline shackles. Fortunately, she resided in the Hail Continent.

‘With my concealment techniques as well as the cover provided by the Mask of the Dreamless, I should probably be able to hide from any large-scale soul sweeps she attempts. Even within the Hail continent’s Holy City of snakes, I might be able to hide myself as long as I don’t meet her personally…’ Leylin’s eyes glinted.

Not even beings who comprehended laws could quickly scan an entire continent, let alone detect the life of every creature within it. Only if she reached Rank 9 would the Snake Dowager be able to
do so. Right now Leylin was emanating the aura of an Alabaster Devilsnake. With this layer of concealment, he could travel through the Hail Continent as if it was his own back garden. Due to his research into bloodlines, Leylin was confident enough that even an Alabaster Devilsnake itself would not be able to unveil his disguise. Unless, of course, he came across a Rank 7 Alabaster Devilsnake or an Emperor. Leylin knew, however, that the Snake Dowager would not allow the existence of such a creature. “It looks like it’s necessary to risk entering the Hail Continent! I’ll need to change my appearance.” Leylin had not altered his appearance on Geiger’s ship, and afterwards he had just hid under his cloak in Port Elias. To be safe, he decided to change his appearance to sneak into the Hail Continent. “I’ll need to add another layer of concealment to the Mask of the Dreamless. In the Hail Continent, there will definitely be descendants of the Alabaster Devilsnake with mixed blood. I just need to keep resembling them completely…” After thinking it through, Leylin looked gloomily at the large gray animal statue on the tall mountain through his window, “What does the existence of the Nefarious Filthbird here signify?” This was a port that belonged to the Hail Continent, yet people still followed the Nefarious Filthbird. Leylin could not understand it, but the implications presented here were worth ruminating over.
Based on the information that Leylin had obtained, various dignitaries ruled over the different continents in the Purgatory World. Although the Hail Continent was the territory ruled by the Snake Dowager, there was a port that worshipped the Nefarious Filthbird in close proximity to it. This could only be some sort of test and provocation.

‘The Snake Dowager and the Nefarious Filthbird must definitely be on bad terms!’ Leylin nodded as he recalled the scene where he’d gone through the barrier of the Purgatory World.

‘But I have the feeling that things aren’t quite so simple…’ Leylin stroked his chin as he thought of something, ‘That father and son pair, Geiger and Geiger Dole are rather suspicious!’

As they were Beholders, they worshipped the ancient Trial’s Eye. This port, however, was under the protection of the Nefarious Filthbird. Even if entry into the port was freely allowed, it was still rather strange for them to come here.

Of course, in an era of pirates navigating the open seas, there were bound to be stolen goods; prosperous and free ports were areas where they could dispose of them safely. If Port Elias could shelter even the most evil and fierce pirates, allowing the Beholders to trade here would be fine.

However, Leylin still felt that something was slightly amiss. Previously during the Thornback Ironwhale’s attack, Geiger Dole
had only used the bloodline abilities unique to his race, and did not reveal any skills related to the path of offerings or spirit beast magic. It was as if he did not know anything about them, and he was obviously hiding something.

‘In that case, I can finally put that plan into action! It was something I originally came up with while I was bored, but…’ Leylin touched his chin. Even if they had not come to his aid, Leylin could still have reached the port alone. Geiger Dole had only provided information, service and a ride to Port Elias. By helping them fight against the Thornback Ironwhale and gifting them its resources, they were now even.

“A.I. Chip, begin!” Leylin commanded.

[Beep! Mission established, beginning connection with stardust bugs. Collecting information!] the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice loyally intoned. A multitude of glowing lights flickered in front of Leylin, turning into a screen. A variety of sounds were transmitted as well.

After bidding farewell to Geiger and Geiger Dole, Leylin had secretly left behind a few stardust bugs on their bodies, to ensure his secrecy would be maintained. With neither of the two having reached the Elder phase, the Morning Star realm, they couldn’t even discover the stardust bugs let alone get rid of them.

At this moment, the screen zoomed in on a scene. In a cellar-like area, orange-yellow candle light flickered, showing Geiger and Geiger Dole’s large pupils.

‘Hm? This…’ Leylin immediately focused on the scene with interest.

The A.I. Chip analysed the spiritual force communication, translating it into words that were displayed on the screen.

At the back of the cellar was a third figure. They were clad in a large cloak that did not reveal their race or gender.

This person seemed to hold a very high status. Geiger could only kneel in a corner while Geiger Dole reported respectfully, “My lord,
this time there were no issues with the transportation of our goods.
Although we met a Thornback Ironwhale, the casualties were minimal!”

“Also, along the trade route we met with a humanoid Exemplary who called himself ‘Ley’. Not only does he have powerful magic abilities, which allowed him to face the Thornback Ironwhale head on, he’s also proficient in metal alteration spells…”

Geiger Dole did not hesitate to betray Leylin, and no thoughts of protecting him seemed to cross his mind.

“Ley? What an unfamiliar name! A powerful humanoid? There doesn’t seem to be any information about him in the nearby seas!”

A robotic voice came from the cloaked figure.

“Nevertheless…” Its tone changed, causing Geiger Dole’s tendrils to quiver.

“Are you not aware that, based on the rules of our organisation, should you find anyone at or above rank 3, you are to rope them in or even make them accept the ‘Holy Eye Baptism’, so they too can feel the greatness of the mighty ancient Trial’s Eye?”

Seeing this lord on the verge of flaring up, Geiger, who was kneeling on the ground nearby suddenly exclaimed, “My Lord! The truth is, we already did all we could to keep that Mister Ley around, he, however, seemed to be very resolute in going on his own way. As we were afraid that he would notice anything, we did not press him further to stay…”

“Geiger!” Immediately after, Geiger Dole turned back and shouted, a whip of spiritual force had already formed.
Alas, it was too late.

“You seem to be… dissatisfied with my reprimand?” The dark figure shot Geiger a cold glance; along with its words, the temperature in the cellar lowered.

*Hss… Hss* With a terrifying hiss, the faint image of a giant snake appeared from under the cloak, and abruptly bit Geiger.
*Pak!* Geiger’s large, only eye enclosed in many bloody veins. Numerous tendrils shrunk back, leaving only a ball of meat, unceasingly rolling on the ground.

“My Lord, I beg of you, please forgive Geiger’s rashness!” Geiger Dole’s giant eye quickly touched the ground.

“Make sure this never happens again.” The black figure looked completely calm as it watched Geiger screaming and rolling on the ground. Ten or so minutes later, the giant snake finally withdrew its teeth and dissipated into a white light.

“Geiger, quick, apologise and thank our lord for his benevolence!” Countless tendrils extended from Geiger Dole’s body and helped Geiger up. Geiger’s eyes were now filled with fear, and the aura on his body had decreased in strength; his soul had evidently received some damage.

“Many– Many thanks, my lord!” Geiger struggled as he spoke, even his spiritual undulations were intermittent.

“Mm!” The black figure moved its head, and its tone immediately changed, “The transport of the goods this time is very important. It’s an important material that my master needs to resist the power of chaos, thus it cannot be lost. Although you only sent the spare portions, it’s not bad…”

“We are grateful for the blessing of our dignitary, the Trial’s Eye…” Geiger and Geiger Dole answered solemnly.

“After resting here, send these supplies to the Hail Continent. This port is protected by evil and chaotic power, and although most wouldn’t expect us to come here and make use of it, we still shouldn’t delay…”

The black figure looked grim as it spoke, and the Beholder pair agreed. At the end, as if in passing, it suddenly asked, “Did you check the origins of that Ley?”

Hearing the topic that had caused him to be punished again, Geiger shrunk back while Geiger Dole laughed wryly, “He seemed quite
mysterious to me. While he wasn’t clueless about the Purgatory world, there was something off…”
“I have received intel from the Holy City. The dignitary of the Hail Continent, the mighty Ruler of All Snakes, has secretly set up a bounty, offering a large reward for a Magus from another world…”
The black shadow suddenly brought up something else, and only Geiger Dole’s gigantic eye blinked.
“Does my lord think that Ley could be that Magus from another world?”
“I can only say that it’s a possibility. No matter how small the chances are, it’s still worth investigating. After all, the ruler’s rewards are very generous and our organisation is on rather good terms with the Holy City. As their allies, it is our duty to help them, right?
The black figure then looked at Geiger Dole, “Since he’ll be staying at Port Elias for a while, lead me to his location so we can pay him a visit and proceed with the final verification.”
“Understood, my lord!” Geiger Dole bowed respectfully.

……

The screen flickered off, and Leylin was left silent. After a long while, a wry smile appeared on his face, “As expected, it seems that no matter how cautious I am, it’s easy to be seen through. I can’t use this appearance anymore…”
This current identity was what Leylin intended to use while learning the customs of the Purgatory World. Once he perfected his speech and could blend in with the natives, this appearance would then be abandoned. Now, however, he had to do this earlier than planned.
‘What I never expected was that something I had set up just as a precaution would become useful to me!’ Leylin looked grim, ‘Also,
evil and chaotic power? Weren’t those the characteristics of the Nefarious Filthbird? Based on the battles with the Trial’s Eye in various worlds, I’m not surprised that organisations that belong to the Trial’s Eye have malicious intent towards this port. What’s more, it looks like they even have support from the organisations in the Hail Continent…’ He did his best to connect the dots.

‘It appears like Geiger Dole is a small part of a large plan set in motion by a subordinate organisation of the Trial’s Eye. The timing was just right for me to get involved in it…

‘Although I was prepared to change my identity, I think it’s better to make this organisation disappear…’ Leylin had no conflict of interest with Geiger Dole before, so he naturally didn’t mind being kind to them. Now, however, since it’d been revealed that they would threaten his core, he would take no pity on them. He had decided to eliminate them.

‘I can’t do it by myself though, the target is simply too large., there should be a better way…

Perhaps this is an opportunity! An opportunity to infiltrate their organisation, and enter the core of the Hail Continent!’ Leylin’s eyes brightened.

This was a territory protected by the Nefarious Filthbird. The moment the protectors of the port found out there were a bunch of believers of the Trial’s Eye sneakily plotting against them, what would the consequences be like?

There was no need for precise information. Just spreading some misleading rumours would be enough for the two sides to become hostile, and even attack each other.

No matter what the result of the battle would be, they would definitely not have any time to think about Leylin’s whereabouts.
‘Still…’ Leylin stroked his face which was covered by the cold Mask of the Dreamless, a mask which had traces of golden-red lines engraved upon it, ‘This mask is too conspicuous. It wouldn’t be good for hiding.’

A wave of pure white light suddenly emanated from Leylin’s body. Within the radiant and dazzling light, dense white scales appeared on the Mask of the Dreamless, and a bloodline aura unique to Alabaster Devilsnakes unceasingly strengthened.

In the end, the whole mask became illusory and disappeared into Leylin’s skull. However, a thin layer of white scales replaced the mask.

After the flash of light, Leylin’s face underwent a huge transformation. His brows became thinner and longer, his now crimson eyes emanating terrifying light. His tongue grew slightly forked, and finally his teeth became incomparably sharp and menacing.

He continuously radiated dreamforce, and it condensed to form a thin layer around him.

Leylin fashioned a mirror of water and looked at his new appearance in the reflection with satisfaction, ‘A mixed-blood descendant of the Alabaster Devilsnakes should look like this.’

A layer of serpentine skin and many white scales were left on his face, forming complex and intricate patterns that gave him a unique aura. He now looked exactly like a half-snake, a hybrid between a
python and a human.
In the end, pretending to be a mixed-blood was a simple task with
the A.I. Chip’s abilities and the blood of an Alabaster Devilsnake.
*Clang! Clang! Clang!* Leylin listened quietly to the dull sound of
a gigantic copper clock hanging at the heart of Port Elias.
The large clock rang twelve times. Its piercing rings ceaselessly
rang out and caused the glass window to shake slightly.
‘It should be midnight.’ Leylin put on a black cloak, quickly
disappearing from the balcony. Since he had already changed his
appearance, it was obvious that he would need to give up this
residence. Besides, there was much that he needed to do in the
depth of the night.
As for the port’s nightly curfew, it certainly was not as important as
the preparations he needed to make.
‘The dark night is the perfect cover for a great many things’ Leylin
gazed at the round moon in the sky emitting blue light, and
chuckled slightly. His figure melded into the darkness.

……

What really happened that night would become an everlasting
mystery. The only thing the residents of Port Elias knew was that
the next morning, the guards in charge of security were encircling a
warehouse.
Many patrols and battleships surrounded all of the Eden trading
company’s ships in the sea. Even the Godric had been attacked, and
its low roars rolled out with the white waves of the sea.
“What is this? We are honest merchants. The Eden trading company
has always traded legally, you can’t do this.” Seeing the guards
ready to attack, Geiger collapsed in fear but Geiger Dole maintained
its calm. One of its tendrils was waving a badge around as it
released intense spiritual force undulations, “Do you see this? This
is the badge of your vice-captain Ayker. We are his guests. You
can’t…”
“Ayker was captured long ago” an indifferent voice sounded from
the back as the troops split in two, creating a passage. A human-like
being with grey feathers stepped forth, exuding the aura of
someone who had been a leader for a long time. The armour he
wore had an image of the Nefarious Filthbird’s wings on the
breastplate.
“There’s no need for you to wait for help. Ayker has been charged
for corruption and colluding with the enemy, he’s as good as dead.”
This being from a different tribe stared at Geiger Dole coldly, its
eyes filled with bloodlust, “You damned Beholders, we open the
portal to you and you dare to conspire against our leader’s rule?
Even the fires of the ninth level of hell cannot cleanse you of your
sins!”
‘Elias’ governor? Isn’t he the one in charge of the chaos troops?’
Geiger Dole’s eye went cold, knowing that his cover had been seen
through, “How did you find out about us?”
Piercing red light shone from his large eye, stunning a few guards
for a moment.
“Dead people don’t need answers. Take them out, leave none alive!
In the name of the almighty Flapwing!” the governor ordered
coldly. The guards beside him roared with a fanatical expression in
their eyes. They pounced forth while brandishing their weapons.
These guards were all natives of the continent, devout worshippers
of the ruling Nefarious Filthbird. The Beholders were their greatest
enemy.
“True Eye of the Nefarious Monarch, Death ray!” Rays of death
that were even more terrifying than before burst out from Geiger
Dole’s eye. A few giant sea lions nearby crumbled to the ground,
and even their soul undulations were completely destroyed.
This time, Geiger Dole did not collapse after using the rays of
death. A few ash-grey tendrils extended from his body, at the very tip holding eyeballs of an unknown creature. “Almighty Ruler of Justice! Protector of all Contracts! Selfless Judge, Extraordinary Dignitary! The Trial’s Eye that has existed across the past, the present and the future, accept this offering from your humble servant!” Geiger Dole released strange spiritual force undulations, causing the air to shimmer. A multitude of light rays transformed into a small spell formation. An orb of red flames floated atop the spell formation, wrapping around the animal eyes in Geiger Dole’s tendrils. *Tss…* A shadow of the Trial’s Eye appeared behind Geiger Dole, and its expression showed approval. Threads of pure energy surged forth from this phantom, pouring into Geiger Dole’s body. “Ah…” Having gained strength from the Trial’s Eye, Geiger Dole’s body expanded. A berserk aura was released, and any weakness from before disappeared completely. *Swish!* Large pure-white tendrils grabbed a guard with the head of an ox, lifting him into the air. Geiger Dole snarled, and the guard made pathetic sounds as the tendrils slowly tightened around him. Blood and crushed bones leaked out of the gaps, dripping to the ground. “A rank 3 Sacrificer, we’ve caught a big one!” Elias’ governor looked extremely solemn as he watched Geiger Dole who seemed to have gone insane. In addition to the abilities of his own race, Geiger Dole had evidently trained the Path of Offerings to the third rank. The Path of Offerings seemed very simple, as it only required a suitable item to sacrifice in exchange for power. However, it was quite troublesome when it came to raising one’s rank. After all, there weren’t that many things a dignitary would covet. A rank 3 Sacrificer not only had offered something unique to the
dignitary, but also devoutly followed the dignitary’s doctrine. In other words, this was someone who had been brainwashed. For the Trial’s Eye, a rank 3 Sacrificer was a devout believer that should have its wishes answered very quickly. Furthermore, other than the territory of the Dignitary they followed, Sacrificers weren’t welcome in any other places. Hence, when the Thornback Ironwhale appeared, Geiger Dole decided not to show his power as a Sacrificer. After all, using this power would show that he was a crazed believer of the Trial’s Eye. A person with that status would not be accepted in a free port like Elias. Sacrificers of this rank had to be closely monitored any time they went to a continent that was not under the rule of their dignitary.

“A Rank 3 Sacrificer can use the power of their dignitary to reduce fatigue and replenish spiritual force. If one becomes a Sacrificer of the highest rank, it is said that the dignitary will even be willing to share the power of laws.”

Elias’ governor muttered to himself as Geiger Dole went crazy, “As expected, that enormous eye doesn’t harbour good intentions. He even used such a high rank Sacrificer to infiltrate our territory…”

At this thought, the governor’s face went grim and he patted his chest. With a deafening roar, a giant bear over ten metres tall sprung out of his chest. This giant bear had coarse orange fur all over its body. Its paws were very big and had dark, thick fingernails. At its chest, white fur converged to form a strange rune.

“Beast spirit magic summoning technique- Berserk Boltbear!” *Crackle! Crackles!* The white lightning rune flickered on its chest, and sparks converged on the bear’s paw. The paw was now sheathed in powerful lightning. The giant bear summon snarled, smacking downwards with its sharp lightning-enhanced claws. *Crackle!* *Rumble!* The roof of the warehouse was completely
lifted and sent flying away, and thick smoke spread out on the ground, which rumbled as if an earthquake had occurred. Once the dust had settled, a huge pit was left behind on the ground, with scorch marks around the edges. The Berserk Boltbear continued to roar thunderously, and with a single swipe a red figure was sent flying out.
The one who was sent flying so impressively was obviously Geiger Dole. He now had three cauterized slashes on his body, obviously an injury from the lightning claws of the Berserk Boltbear. Afterwards, Geiger was dragged out by it, curled up into a ball.

A powerful force rippled through the area once more, suppressing the lightning burns that Geiger Dole had sustained. “Get away!” he screamed, spiritual force sweeping out to send a few guards flying immediately. Blood and brain juices began to leak from their eyes and ears, pouring out like a flood.

Many Sacrificers liked to draw the support of offerings to suppress their injuries.

“Thinking of leaving?” The Elias governor’s eyes flashed ominously, “Summon Nighthawk!”

An enormous tattoo of a black hawk suddenly emerged from his forehead. The large hawk was so vivid it seemed alive, and after the governor issued a command the beast spirit instantly transformed into a streak of light. A high-pitched cry sounded out as it soared into the air, its enormous wings spreading to blot out the skies.

‘Hmm? This beast spirit…’ Leylin was amongst the onlookers in the distance, wrapped up tightly in a black cloak as he watched the battle attentively with his blue eyes.

‘A giant beast at Morning Star! It looks like the governor isn’t
simply playing around…’ Leylin knew very well that the governor was at least rank 4. The Berserk Boltbear he had previously summoned had only been rank 3, and it was obviously used to toy with Geiger and Geiger Dole. No, instead he had not even taken notice of them. He was far more interested in the depths of the warehouse, and in the hidden presence in the cellar. Leylin could sense a terrifying bloodline force hiding deep underground that was even draining most of the governor’s strength. As it were, the strength of a Morning Star was not something an elder like Geiger Dole could withstand. With a high-pitched cry, a pair of black wings streaked past Geiger Dole like a sharp blade, destroying the sacrificial spell formation behind him. Losing its communication link, no matter how unwilling it was the figure of the large eye could only slowly dissipate. Geiger Dole crumpled to the ground. Having lost his dignitary’s support, the frailty and injuries from the battle had resurfaced. His tendrils began to pale, the colour spreading until it reached Geiger Dole’s eyes.

‘Such temporary strength has a lot of flaws…’ Leylin watched on from the sidelines, leisurely commanding the A.I. Chip to gather data. He was making use of this time to analyse the pros and cons of the power systems of the Purgatory World. ‘The path of offerings is limited in the strength it can supply. No matter how powerful the Sacrificer is, such power is only borrowed. Once the communication is broken or the dignitary retreats, the Sacrificer will be trapped in a dire situation…’ Leylin’s eyes flickered, ‘The information shows that there are some who obtain a permanent bonus to their strength or racial upgrades. However, those require huge sacrifices and even require completing specific missions, such as offering blood sacrifices of
higher-ups from an enemy organisation.’
The path of offerings seemed very primal to Leylin. He was even beginning to suspect that this system was the original path to power in the Purgatory World.
‘In that case…’ Leylin stroked his chin, suddenly thinking of other aspects, ‘I’ll probably need to dabble in the training the path of offerings. No, it can’t be superficial. I need to be proficient in it in order to complete my final plan!’
The hawk’s cry sounded once more at this moment, and outside the warehouse the hawk soaring into the air descended like a victor, its sharp metallic talons ripping Geiger Dole to shreds.
“AAAAH! FATHER!” Geiger cried out pitifully, but couldn’t escape his own fate of death.
Seeing the two Beholders perish one after the other, Leylin’s expression did not change at all. Everything that had happened was obviously a result of the information he’d spread to the governor and his troops in secret. He’d mostly done it because Geiger Dole had made a futile attempt at putting Leylin in an unfavourable situation. No matter how pitiful the two ended up, Leylin wasn’t moved the slightest in his heart.
On the contrary, he was here personally so that he could see what happened, and remove all chances of Geiger Dole’s survival. Even if he had managed to escape, Leylin would’ve acted afterwards.
Seeing the soul undulations of the two being extinguished completely, Leylin could relax slightly. At the very least, there was now nobody who remembered him. He was now focused on the black figure in the shadows.
‘That person was clearly Geiger Dole’s superior. They are unusually powerful and have been laying low all this time, waiting for the most opportune moment to strike.’ Leylin surveyed his surroundings. With Geiger Dole’s death, the merfolk sailors soon lost all willpower to fight on and sank to their knees, begging for
mercy.
At the anchoring point of the port nearby, the Beholder tribe’s ship was already completely surrounded and had surrendered. The giant Godric was already floating on the surface of the water, rolled over and revealing its white belly.
‘It’s all settled. If it were me, this would be the best chance!’ Leylin’s eyes were fixed coldly on the warehouse.
At that moment, a deafening bang sounded out. Leylin could sense that the black shadow had finally made its move!
Rocks and earth flew everywhere the moment it acted, turning into marbles in the sky that fired into the surrounding area.
*Thud! Thud! Thud!* These marbles formed of soil and rocks possessed a kinetic energy so immense that they could even penetrate through steel armour. A large number of guards fell with a miserable cry. Blood flowed out profusely from their wounds.
“Kill them!” A black cloak flew into the air, and a white figure was like an illusion as it arrived in front of the Elias governor so fast it was hard to see with the naked eye. Sharp fingernails tipped the scale-covered hand that sprung forth.
The governor’s beast spirit was currently outside, so he lacked his most powerful defence.
“Monkdarse Turtle!” Dark rays appeared at the Elias governor’s chest, and immediately after a dark turtle shell emerged to block the area in front of him. Mysterious patterns appeared on the shell, and it emitted a metallic feeling that made it seem indestructible.
Beast spirit masters could not only summon beast spirits to battle, but could also use part of the abilities of the beast spirits that had been sealed into their bodies.
The Monkdarse Turtle was a marine beast known for its defence, but the strongest ones were at the peak of rank 3. Still, although the Elias governor wanted to summon something more powerful, he had no beast spirits that were more formidable.
Beast spirit magic was a common strength system in the Purgatory World, and almost all intellectual races had their hand in this. Beast spirit masters were divided based on ranking, from rank 1 to the legendary rank 9!

However, in the Purgatory World now, masters at rank 6, 7 and above had been consigned to legend.

The requirements for each beast spirit master to advance were simple. One had to seal enough powerful beast spirits and have enough soul force to control the sealed beast spirits. However, beast spirit masters that wanted to advance in rank needed to subdue a beast spirit of a similar rank.

To advance to a rank 7 beast spirit master, it was necessary to subdue the soul of a rank 7 beast with laws, and seal it into one’s body. Only the dignitaries of the various continents possessed such a strength in this world, which made it practically impossible. Just the thought of extracting the Snake Dowager’s soul and sealing it into their body would leave a beast spirit master quivering in fear.

A rank 1 beast spirit master could at most only control a rank 1 beast spirit, while a rank 2 could control a rank 2 beast spirit. As long as one was powerful enough and one’s soul could take the stress, there was no issue with sealing multiple beast spirits into one’s body.

However, it was evident that the Elias governor was a newly promoted rank 4 beast spirit master. The most powerful creature it had was the rank 4 Nighthawk beast spirit. The others were at rank 1 or 2 and wouldn’t be brought out, because they would only bring shame to him.

This rank 3 Monkdarse Turtle was the most powerful beast spirit he had left.

From Leylin’s perspective, a beast spirit master was very much like a summoner. Though the beast spirits that could be controlled were powerful, the master was a weak point.
‘No! Rather, a newly advanced beast spirit master is at a weak point. The largest difference between a beast spirit master and a summoner is that beast spirit masters can seal beast spirits into their bodies, and make use of some of the abilities of a beast spirit. If they bide their time and seal enough spirits, they’ll gain a lot of power.’ Leylin touched his chin, ‘The beast spirits sealed inside the body can constantly nourish the beast spirit master’s own body and soul. As long as no bottleneck is reached, he can keep advancing!’

*Crash!* With just one attack from the palm covered in alabaster scales, the turtle shell in front of the governor began to fragment, showing its powerful strength.

Whether it was the Berserk Boltbear or the Nighthawk from before, even if they were hurrying over they were still a distance away. The governor was in a very dire situation.

However, Leylin merely watched on coldly, not having any plans to make his move. In his opinion, the governor had obviously discovered the other party and still sent out his Nighthawk, evidently having plans of his own.

“Die!” A low voice that was distinctly feminine came from the person who had launched the sneak attack. The figure of a white python suddenly appeared, emitting a bloodline aura that caused Leylin’s pupils to shrink.
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This bloodline force… Alabaster Devilsnake?’ Leylin’s pupils shrank. As a Warlock, it was impossible for him to make a mistake in recognising bloodline force, but what this represented shocked him.

‘A descendant of the Snake Dowager actually has such a high status in an organisation of the Trial’s Eye. Is it for personal reputation, or is it some kind of exchange of benefits between the Snake Dowager and Trial’s Eye?’

The large serpentine figure was covered in smooth white scales all over, its scarlet pupils emitting a chill that could almost suffocate a person. The tooth of the giant python merged with the palm of the attacker, bringing with it even more terrifying energy.

The white scales on Leylin’s face were now beginning to flicker uncontrollably.

[Beep! Discovered undulations of bloodline of Alabaster Devilsnake that host is using for concealment. Accept or deny?]

The A.I. Chip prompted at this moment.

“No!” Leylin’s eyes flickered and chose to deny it.

A trace of bloodline force emerged from his body, and in that instant, the attacker sensed it. Leylin could clearly see the moment where they looked over to investigate it.

At this moment, they definitely could not withdraw their attack. The terrifying palm that was reinforced by bloodline power grabbed the Elias governor’s chest with their sharp nails.
Besides the silver armour on his chest, the governor had no other defences. There was no question that his stomach would be ripped through, *Bang!* However, the palm with sharp fingernails halted in mid-air, not able to descend further. What grasped this slender scaly hand was another large hand that was like steel.

“Did you think… I only had my beast spirit magic to rely on?” The Elias governor’s voice was low, and he exerted force from his hand. Like an iron hoop, it tightened around the attacker’s wrist until creaking sounds were produced.

“Hnn!” The attacker made a sound, and an orb of white flame extended from their hand. The flames crackled as they crashed into the body, their boiling temperature causing even the surrounding air to distort.

However, it was to no effect. The governor’s entire body was currently enveloped in a layer of dark grey light. In front of the flames, this powerful barrier wasn’t the slightest bit damaged. In the meanwhile, the phantom of a huge grey bird appeared behind the governor. Its feathers closed around him as if wrapping around him.

The large grey bird seemed to be very vivid. While it was a clone, there was a world of difference between it and the one summoned by Geiger Dole.

“My master, the mighty Flapwing! You are the master of chaos and the very personification of freedom!” Upon seeing the large grey bird figure, many residents of the port who were watching them immediately knelt to the ground, looking pious. This was what happened when followers saw the real gods they prayed to and believed in.

‘Sacrificer! A rank 4 sacrificer!’ The attacker quickly retreated, at the same time exposing their identity.

A face with patterned white scales was topped by a head of snow-
white hair. This slender person was evidently a demisnake that had descended from the Alabaster Devilsnake. With the sharp voice and distinctive traits, Leylin could confirm that this one was female. However, her right wrist began to twist at this moment, falling down without strength. She’d obviously received serious injuries from the governor’s counterattack.

‘A hybrid snake-girl? Interesting…’ Leylin looked ‘worried’, as if concerned for her safety. Meanwhile, the A.I. Chip was constantly scanning the Elias governor. He was more interested in a rank 4 Sacrificer than the snake girl.

On top of that, the governor was at the fourth rank in both the paths of offerings and of beast spirits!

‘Rank 4, comparable to a Morning Star in the Magus World. A Sacrificer at this level is a treasure to any dignitary. It’s a devout follower who has complete faith in their path! The mighty dignitary even lets them borrow strength in advance, leaving the sacrificial offering for later…’ Leylin immediately recalled the information he had gathered before. ‘Furthermore… being a rank 4 Sacrificer is the base requirement for some ceremonies to strengthen one’s body permanently!’

The snake girl had inherited the bloodline of the primordial giant Alabaster Devilsnake and had a vitality and strength that was so high it was frightening. However, he had been able to block the snake girl’s attack, obviously having gone through multiple permanent power-ups. His strength and vitality was incomparably terrifying, and it even exceeded the power the snake girl got from her bloodline.

[Beep! Target is enveloped by an unknown force. Determined to be the law of chaos. Unable to scan.] At this moment, the A.I. Chip projected some information in front of Leylin, causing him to sink into deep thought.

‘A Sacrificer has regular contact with their dignitary… The power
of a rank 7 is something the A.I. Chip still can’t analyse… Is that why it can’t scan him?
‘The snake girl is in danger!’ Leylin looked at the demisnake, who was now secretly giving him a stern look.
‘Hmm? She’s warning me not to do anything!’ Leylin was surprised.
‘The governor of Elias is a rank 4 beast spirit master and Sacrificer. If he’s from some special race his battle might could even be comparable to a Six Star Morning Star from the Magus World. The snake girl is no match for him, but she still worries about the life of someone from her race?’
In that moment, Leylin couldn’t figure out whether to laugh or cry. Of course, his thoughts went further, ‘Since she places so much importance on bloodline, I might be able to make use of that…’
The tables were quickly turning. With the advantages from being a rank 4 Sacrificer, the Elias governor had a terrifying physique and battle might. Added to his power of a rank 4 beast spirit master that allowed him to use all sorts of magic and long range attacks, he was practically at the peak of rank 4.
*SKREE! RRAAAAR!* At this moment, the Nighthawk and Berserk Boltbear had arrived behind the snake girl, sealing off her escape routes and teaming up with the governor to encircle her. Due to the soul connection between the beast spirit master and the beast spirits, they could be used like the governor’s clones.
“Admit defeat! You aren’t a match for me. In order to set this up, I’ve allocated a lot of elders here as well. Your subordinates and other organisations won’t be able to run!” The governor slowly closed in, and a black gale sprung forth from the Nighthawk.
“In your dreams, follower of chaos and evil!” The snake girl’s eyes went red, and a figure similar to that of the Alabaster Devilsnake appeared behind her. Profound dreamforce began to ripple slightly.
‘The Alabaster Devilsnake originally inherited a part of the Snake
Dowager’s dreamforce. This is probably why this is her trump card…’
Dreamforce scattered out, forming a ring of dark red smoke. A few weaker commoners and guards had already fallen unconscious, evidently dragged into Dreamscape.
Things began to get chaotic, and taking advantage of this Leylin disappeared into a corner.
‘It’s a pity… if she really was a traditional Alabaster Devilsnake the sudden eruption of dreamforce would be enough to help her escape. Sadly her bloodline isn’t pure enough, and the dreamforce she can muster is far too weak…’ Leyln’s mind kept working, and his thoughts quickly turned to another direction as he gazed upon the battlefield.
The governor grew dazed amidst the dark red fog for a while before he regained his senses, “This… Dreamscape illusion!”
He immediately sobered up, and the Nighthawk that his soul was connected to let out bright chirps. Its two wings created gales as if trying to blow the dreamforce away.
“You can’t escape!” He stared at the snake girl, who now had scales all over her body and had completely entered battle mode.
“Lord Governor! Part of the enemies in the port have been eliminated. We’re here as support!” With several bright sounds, three streaks of light hastened over, each of them having rank 4 energy undulations.
After seeing this, glee shone in the governor’s eyes, and the snake girl was left in complete despair.
She secretly glanced in Leylin’s direction, but when she realised he’d already disappeared, a wry smile appeared about her lips, ‘Thankfully, that little guy escaped, or else he might have been involved…’
‘Looks like it’s time for me to take the stage!’ Meanwhile, Leylin was standing on the rooftop of a building and watching on, eyes
flickering with intelligence.
In his opinion, it was even more valuable to save her now. As for the fact that he intentionally spread this secret and attracted the enemy… Leylin had selective memory when it came to this. Anyway, benefits were his primary goal. As for other methods like taking advantage of someone and helping them the next moment, there was no pressure on him due to it.
‘Magic seems to require more effort in this world…’ Closing his eyes, Leylin felt the difference between the Purgatory World and the Magus World.
‘Just as well. I can recycle the dreamforce she left behind. Even if she’s a descendant of the Alabaster Devilsnake, her usage of dreamforce is really too crude.’ As he ridiculed her for a moment, Leylin’s finger twitched.
It was like he was the most brilliant of weavers. Foggy dreamforce suddenly rose under Leylin’s hands, rippling with a blood red glow. Great amounts of fog condensed to form a large spell formation.
“Crap, be careful!” The governor’s expression suddenly changed, evidently not expecting that the snake girl who should have been waiting to be captured had a companion!
‘What’s going on? Isn’t she the leader of the organization?’ The Elias Governor doubtfully looked at the snake girl, only to find that she was similarly perplexed.

‘It doesn’t matter, the first task is to capture her! Those who try to insult our master’s glory must be punished!’ The governor would not have reached rank 4 as a Sacrificer if he didn’t worship the Nefarious Filthbird so fervently.

However, how could Leylin really allow him to make a move? ‘In any case, he is still a rank 4 elite from the Nefarious Filthbird’s group, so it won’t be possible to just take him down in one strike…’ The power of dreamforce spells was amplified to an alarming extent by the array, like charcoal being transformed into diamond, “Rank 4 dreamforce spell Distorted Labyrinth!”

Dreamforce surged out violently to create an enormous labyrinth which enveloped the governor and the three Morning Stars who were assisting him. The walls rumbled under impact, and the Nighthawk’s cry could be heard as the dreamforce labyrinth began to morph and warp.

“Let’s go! I can’t trap them for too long!” Leylin transformed into a black hurricane that swallowed the girl up. Even though he’d conjured the spell himself, it was being sustained by the dreamforce the girl had summoned and not much remained. Leylin was not certain of how long it would last, so it was necessary to
quickly flee the scene.
The snake girl’s scarlet eyes flashed as she sensed the bloodline power within Leylin, and she did not resist. The dark hurricane screamed with destructive power, drawing life force from the miscellaneous fish along the way. Only mummified corpses were left behind.

As they continued on, there were still some who tried to stop them. Soon, however, they disappeared into the horizon.

*Bang!* *Rumble!* After ten seconds, a great amount of lightning appeared above the dark red labyrinth. Shortly after the lightning struck down, and the elated chirp was let loose by the gigantic hawk.

*Crash!* The entire labyrinth fell apart, exposing the silhouettes of the flustered Elias Governor and his companions, “Chase after them and send out a warrant! Do not let that woman escape!”

The Elias Governor’s eyes had reddened and even his voice had become hoarse, frightening the surrounding bodyguards into chilly silence.

……

‘The Purgatory World seems to be different from the Magus World. The atoms’ chemical bonds seem to be sturdier. Consequently, more power is needed to manipulate them.’ Leylin was thinking of what had happened before when he used his full magic power as he ran away with the girl.

Ever since he had snuck into the Purgatory World, he had always maintained an extremely low profile. He had previously used the Metal Activation spell formation once, and that remained the only time he had used such a large-scale spell in this world.

‘This is worse than before, the physical laws here are even more severe. While the power of spells has decreased, the cost to activate
them has instead increased.’

Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip as it projected the newest results into his memory bank.

[Beep! Based on on-site detections and theoretical experiments, all levels of magic from the Magus World are weakened by 89% in the Purgatory World!]

‘This weakening effect is very strong. Could it be that the Purgatory World didn’t allow entry to other strength systems in ancient times?’ Thinking of this other idea, Leylin ordered the A.I. Chip, ‘A.I. Chip, search the database. Find the most suitable strength system for the Purgatory World’.

[Beep! Mission established. Scanning.] The A.I. Chip found the answer immediately.

[Based on simulations, the two most suitable power systems are: 1. Path of Sacrifices 2. Beast Spirit Magic.]

Leylin wasn’t surprised by the results, he had already guessed this outcome, ‘As expected, these are the most suitable systems. They seem to be the Purgatory World’s most fundamental paths.’

As a result of differing world laws, every world had its own unique points and paths to power.

This inspection made it clear that the path of sacrifices and beast spirit magic were the most suited to the Purgatory World.

‘It looks like I’ll have to rigorously train to a high realm in both methods…’ Leylin stroked his chin in thought. Although he was restricted by the Allsnake Curse, it only affected his bloodline force. While it was still a weakness, the curse had no effect on other paths to power.

“Fireplume!” Leylin called out, and a ball of black flames appeared in his hand.

“Multilimb Strength!” The phantom of a Multi-Armed Race member appeared behind Leylin, boosting his strength. These other cultivation methods were what had allowed Leylin to retain
strength at Morning Star even after his bloodline force was sealed. His bloodline force, however, was the main source of his strength. If the Allsnake Curse was not removed, he would be drained until he fell. Even if he encountered success with other power systems, the outcome was still set in stone.

Since he chose the path of bloodline as his main path, he had even let his own soul be affected by the bloodline. Consequently, other paths could only be considered the icing on top of the cake.

‘As expected, the Purgatory World will suppress the strength of those from other worlds.’ Leylin’s expression became gloomy. Dreamforce was another usable source, but its intensity was unpredictable. Therefore, Leylin did not hold many expectations towards it.

‘My bloodline force has been sealed, so I can only rely on other methods. When these other methods reach their highest realm, I will probably be able to use them to remove the Allsnake Curse.’

Leylin steeled his resolve, ‘The A.I. Chip will allow me to quickly advance in rank. The paths of sacrifice and beast spirit magic are of the utmost importance, and Fireplume and dreamforce come afterwards.’

As for Multilimb Strength, the original information that Leylin had gotten was extremely lacking. Even with A.I. Chip’s calculations, it had hardly improved. Thus, Leylin decided to abandon it as it could at most serve as support.

By this time, the snake girl had opened her eyes. She said in a frigid voice, “Put me down!”

“This place is over 300 nautical miles away from Port Elias, it should be safe for the time being!”, Leylin shrugged as he stopped on a barren island. The black hurricane disappeared, exposing both their silhouettes.

Only now did Leylin have the time to carefully size up the snake girl.
She had long, snow-white hair and scarlet pupils. The white scales on her face were patterned, giving her a distinct aura but not seeming sinister. These features paired well with her air of superiority, giving her a unique charm.

‘It appears as though all bloodline descendents of the Snake Dowager have this characteristic, with charm to spare! Could it be that she specialises in illusion techniques?’ Leylin was left speechless. The A.I. Chip, however, had had enough time to collect information.

[(Unknown Name), Snake Girl. Sex: Female, Paternal Bloodline: Alabaster Devilsnake (Mixed), Maternal Bloodline: Unknown (deduced to be a humanoid species) Strength: 79, Agility: 50, Strength: 65 Spiritual Force: 463, Soul Force: 46. Passive Abilities: 1. Illusory Forcefield: Shrouds the area around the body in a layer of illusion forcefield, lifeforms with spiritual energy below 200 cannot resist, losing their free will. 2. Dreamscape Attraction: The Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline possesses the ability to draw dreamforce.]

The A.I. Chip very quickly projected the snake girl’s image and specific data.

‘Morning Star realm. This snake girl’s stats are actually pretty good.’ Leylin nodded his head surreptitiously as his thoughts hovered around the ‘Mixed’ tag.

‘Even though her bloodline is of a Rank 5 creature, it is clearly not concentrated. It can’t even match the one I embedded in my Mask. No wonder I don’t feel any suppression whatsoever from her and her ability to attract dreamforce is so weak…’

‘But the ability to connect to Dreamscape is worth more intense research,’ although he already possessed a number of Dreamscape spells, he had reached a bottleneck when it came to using dreamforce. The appearance of an Alabaster Devilsnake, however, gave him hope to resolve this issue.
This rank 5 species had inherited the Snake Dowager’s talents in controlling dreamforce, to the point of being able to connect to Dreamscape. This ability was very useful to Leylin. The most crucial point was that he now had in his grasp the pure bloodline of a rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake.

‘Although dreamforce isn’t reliable, it is still useful as a contingency plan. This girl doesn’t seem to have the ability to travel to and from Dreamscape, but she might be able to give me some inspiration,’ Leylin shamelessly observed the girl, making her feel rather angry.

“Are you done looking at me?”, the snake girl snorted coldly.

“Don’t tell me you’re going to treat a clansman and your saviour like this,” Leylin smiled slightly, “After all, without me intervening I’m afraid you would not have escaped the Elias Governor’s hands.”

“So what?”, the snake girl appeared to be unyielding, “I clearly warned you to run away, so why did you not leave immediately?”
“You and I are of the same type, and I had the ability to save you. How could I just leave you?” Leylin spoke in a righteous tone.

“Fool,” the snake girl snorted coldly, but it pleased Leylin inwardly to notice her gaze softening considerably. She continued in a gloomy voice, “Mixed bloods like you are actually very rare.”

Listening to Leylin’s words, the snake girl immediately became uncommunicative. Her expression grew so damp it seemed like she could drip water. Leylin secretly nodded to himself as he saw this scene, ‘I wasn’t wrong. A half-breed will always suffer discrimination, no matter what world you live in.’

Leylin understood from the snake girl’s bitter expression that she had suffered a lot. However, she was still able to show incomparable concern for those who were similar to her. He took advantage of this ‘misery loves company’ attitude to gain her full trust.

“Oh, that’s right, I still don’t know your name.” Leylin smiled sunnily at her.

“Belinda. Yours?” Belinda stared at Leylin, focussing especially on his facial scales. Her eyes grew dreamy.

“My name is Nick, my lovely lady!” Just this little praise caused Belinda to flush, showing her lack of experience in dealing with others.

“So, Belinda, what do you intend to do next? And what was that at
the port? Why were you attacked?” Leylin asked her as if he had no idea about what had happened. He acted as if he wasn’t the one who spread information on her.

“Nothing, just the final struggle of a group of Beholders.” The mention of the earlier incident caused Belinda’s expression to turn cold. It was evident that she felt extremely resentful.

Leylin understood her feelings. After all, her organization hadn’t planned to act against Port Elias. At most, their plan was to turn the port into a hub and use it to smuggle some goods. Thus, it was normal to feel resentful when their plans went down the drain.

“Nick, I have a question” Belinda looked at Leylin with a solemn expression, “Are you a follower of the Snake Dowager or a part of the Beholder crowd? Or do you believe in other dignitaries?” Identifying which dignitary you followed was an extremely serious matter in the Purgatory World. The hostility between opposing factions often led to battles to the death.

“I am a wanderer. I have yet to choose an Exemplary” Leylin naturally caught the hidden meaning behind these questions and answered without the slightest hesitation, “I am, however, more inclined towards the Matriarch. After all, she is our progenitor”.

The Matriarch! This was the title that the snake descendants, in the Purgatory World, mainly used to address the Snake Dowager.

“Since your belief is skewed towards the Matriarch, there is no risk of conflict between your belief and mine in the Beholders!” Leylin expressed his understanding. It seemed as though the Snake Dowager and the Trial’s Eye made an alliance.

“I am under the command of the Trial’s Eye. I came to Port Elias to receive some resources to use in the rebellion against the powers of evil and chaos.” Belinda told Leylin of her origins. She explained the conflict between the Trial’s Eye and the Filthbird and went through the history of how civilization had developed in this world. And in the Purgatory World, where the two Exemplaries’ original
bodies were located was an endless conundrum. There was no peace at all between the Sacrificers on both sides. Every time they met, there would be a fight to the death. “No wonder you were attacked. Port Elias is the territory of the Nefarious Filthbird,” Leylin showed a shocked expression. “The Port is a territory of the Chaotic power. There isn’t much hope for them!” Belinda saw Leylin’s expression and snorted coldly. “Oh? What do you mean?” Leylin asked interestedly. “I already reported what happened to my superiors. The organization will surely send support. The head of the organisation is, at the very least, a Rank 5 Sacrificer!””, a flash of gloominess appeared on Belinda’s face, “Port Elias dares to forcefully seize our goods and kill our members. This is the Hail Continent’s territorial waters. No matter how powerful Elias’ backer is, this place still belongs to us”. At this point, Belinda was very confident. Port Elias had been sneakily founded through the Bird’s influence. It had not received approval from the Hail Continent’s Holy City nor the Snake Dowager. After all, the Snake Dowager had allied herself with the Trial’s Eye. As a result, even if Belinda and her compatriots destroyed the entire port later, and even killed the Governor of Elias, nothing much could be done. The most Port Elias could do was to secretly order the arrest of Belinda and the others. “A Rank 5 Sacrificer?”, Leylin was rather curious. He had seen the frightening abilities of a high-ranked Sacrificer from the Elias’ governor and witnessed the capacity to go through your limits without any bottlenecks. ‘This kind of high-ranked Sacrificer should be the favourite offering of hostile Exemplaries.’ Leylin stroked his chin as the corner of his mouth curved into a smile. Since Leylin decided to practice in the Path of Offering and the
Beast Spirit Magic, he gained some understanding of these two cultivation techniques. Although it wasn’t a lot, the information he got, the practical data and the A.I. Chips deductions allowed him to gain deep knowledge on the two systems.

In the Path of Offering, choosing an Exemplary was the most important step. It was also important to choose one whose doctrine aligned with your beliefs. Sacrificial rites were based on equivalent exchange; as long as an offering was made, power would be lent by the Exemplary you followed. But truly devout Sacrificers would be able to receive greater benefits.

Moreover, worshipping opposing Exemplaries was an incredibly stupid thing to do. Even if such a Sacrificer managed to not get targeted, his benefits would be greatly reduced.

‘As for myself, becoming a Snake Dowager or a Trial’s Eye Sacrificer would be courting death. The best option is the Nefarious Filthbird.’ Leylin thought to himself, ‘Furthermore, if I make a great sacrifice when I first communicate with the Exemplary, I should be able to reap great benefits. I might even receive the Unspeakable Baptism.’

Presumably, the Bird was enemies with the Trial’s Eye and the Snake Dowager. Consequently, it would be happy to see Leylin grow strong and break through the Snake Dowager’s seal.

The Bird was not an almighty Rank 9 so it couldn’t remove Leylin’s Allsnake Curse. But perhaps, it would be able to temporarily suppress the curse.

Leylin himself could only suppress the curse for 2 years, which was too short. Possibly extending the suppression time would become a great advantage.

Even though Leylin had gone through a great amount of thoughts, on the surface he only seemed to hesitate for a moment, “Belinda, you should be a high-ranked Sacrificer under the Trial’s Eye, right?”
“Yes, that’s right. I am already a peak Rank 3 Sacrificer and should be close to breaking through. Too bad I wasn’t able to finish this mission.” Belinda admitted it without the slightest hesitation.

“Why don’t you follow the almighty Matriarch? She is our benevolent and beautiful progenitor”, Leylin had an expression of incredible disbelief.

Although the Snake Dowager had allied herself with the Trial’s Eye, it was still considered a betrayal for a descendant to believe in a different Exemplary. If she ran into a more radical snake, it might try to eliminate Belinda, the ‘Disgrace of the Mother’.

“The Matriarch? It is true that she is everything to us but she is just too aloof and remote. We belong to the lowest rung of society so we only need fairness and justice. And the only one who can give us that is the God of Contracts.”

Belinda laughed coldly at some unknown thought and became excited. Her expression revealed that she was remembering an unbearable event of the past. It was probably the oppression she had once suffered from the purebloods, something she could never forget.

“As a mixed-blood, don’t tell me you have a good impression of those so-called ‘pureblood’ Alabaster Devilsnakes.” Belinda stated as a layer of translucent tears appeared on her eyes.

Leylin pretended to become silent in response.

“Well, let’s not speak of these unhappy memories! I have already issued the signal and reinforcements from the head of the Order will arrive very soon. You should leave!” Belinda exhaled a deep breath, glancing at Leylin.

“Alright.” the organisation was approaching and, since they had different beliefs, staying any longer would arouse suspicion.

Besides, he had made a lot of profit today. Not only had he eliminated hidden dangers, he had even established a good relationship with Belinda. In the future, he would arrange another
‘coincidental meeting’, so there were no problems at all.
713 - Threat and Action

Beep! High-energy magnetic field discovered. Determined to be from a Rank 5 being. Host is advised to be careful.] The A.I. Chip’s immediate prompt surprised Leylin.
‘Looks like I can’t leave even if I want to at this point,’ a mysterious smile rose at the edges of Leylin’s lips. Still, he pretended to be oblivious to everything, planning to leave after bidding Belinda farewell.

Just as Leylin was about to move, tremendous soul force undulations full of astounding strength and intent was transmitted over, “Wait, he can’t leave!”

A figure gradually appeared from the surface of the water. A layer of transparent distortions gradually dissipated, revealing a large Beholder.

This one, however, was different from Geiger. It had three different giant eyes of varying sizes. The three eyes were in triangular formation, with the central one connected to a few fleshy-red channels. Pure white tendrils drooped to the ground, forming the Beholder’s legs. A great and powerful aura emanated from its body.
‘This one should be an Elder Eye of the Beholders,’ Leylin judged inwardly.

An adult Beholder had the strength of an ordinary rank 3 Magus. Elder Eyes usually had strength at Morning Star.
This Beholder was even more uncommon. Besides the power from
its own race, it was a powerful Sacrificer! The power of judgement emanated from its body, causing Leylin’s eyes to narrow. "This Beholder should be the leader that Belinda mentioned. Doesn’t that mean it is a rank 5 Sacrificer?"

As a Rank 5 Sacrificer, this Beholder had strength comparable to a regular Radiant Moon Magus. What was most terrifying, however, was that its body had been fully branded by the Trial’s Eye and even the A.I. Chip was unable to scan and determine its stats.

“Greetings, Lord Bayclark!” Belinda knelt reverently while pulling at Leylin’s clothes to do the same.

“Greetings to Sire Bayclark!” Leylin merely bowed slightly. This made him seem arrogant, and a hint of disapproval was evident in the Beholder elder’s large eye. It glanced towards Belinda, transmitting tremendous soul undulations. Fury was evident within its eyes and it criticised her, “Belinda! Your actions today have tarnished the glory of our master. And it’s not just your failure at Port Elias’ stronghold… All your decisions so far have been rash!”

“Lord Bayclark!” While still kneeling, Belinda straightened her back, “Your subordinate is responsible for the failure at Port Elias, but allowing Nick to leave was a very ordinary matter. He might not be a subordinate of our Master of Order, but he is a descendant of the Matriarch.”

“And a fellow clansman of yours,” the Beholder added coldly, “I have long warned you to not be too kind towards those of your kind with mixed blood. They can only bring trouble!”

“Lord Bayclark, I can vouch for Nick. He’s on our side, he helped me at the port.” Seeing Bayclark’s eyes flash with red, Belinda gritted her teeth and spoke on Leylin’s behalf.

“Alright, I’ll let him go. I hope your luck continues, or else there’ll be another pair of vertical pupils in my collection!” Bayclark twisted his body and turned towards Leylin, “Or should I say, two
pairs.”
Belinda was badly frightened by this rank 5’s threats, ridicule and lack of trust.
Leylin obviously wasn’t the same. Outwardly he seemed indignant at this, his face and ears turning red. However, he was making a calm analysis on the inside, ‘It arrived far too quick. That means it was already nearby, perhaps it was the commander of this operation while Belinda was the one in charge of Port Elias…’
Numerous sea tribes arrived as Bayclark and Belinda conversed. Mermen, octomen, and sharkmen, each outfitted in custom-made armour, brandished their assortment of weapons that included pikes and choppers. There were even magicians among their rank, neatly spread out into rows that formed a huge legion of staffs behind Bayclark.
“Followers of the Master of Order! Evil, chaotic power has taken over Port Elias and even killed our companions. This entity has committed the worst sin under the skies. What should we do?” The Beholder elder turned, transmitting tremendous soul force undulations and radiating it in all directions.
“Eliminate them!” “Suppress them!” “Burn them to death!” The marine people in Bayclark’s legion raised their weapons and roared.
“Very good! You are all devout believers of our master!” The Beholder elder’s slit eyes seemed to be filled with traces of red, “I hereby order all of you to attack. The target is Port Elias!”
At that, the clamour from the cries of these beings was enough to disperse the clouds in the sky. The surface of the water split apart amidst their thundering voices, countless enormous sea creatures revealing expansive level backs.
All the troops climbed atop the enormous marine beasts in an orderly manner, making them look like terrifying war forts.
“You, mixed blood of the Alabaster, believer of the Mistress! You
must come with me and use the blood of chaos to prove your loyalty!”
“What right do you have to do that?” Leylin exclaimed in annoyance, pretending to be a hot-headed person.
“What right do I have? Well, I can kill you whenever I want to,” Bayclark chuckled, while vast soul force wrapped tightly around Leylin. This was clearly a threat. Leylin was playing the role of a mixed blood with at most Morning Star strength, so he immediately paled.
“Belinda…” he looked at Belinda who was still kneeling and giving him a pleading look, “Fine, I’ll do it!”
“That’s the spirit! Chaos is an old enemy of your Matriarch too. Your actions will surely earn her favour.” The Beholder elder released his soul force. It went near the coastline where a large golden octopus appeared, which let Bayclark stand on its head.
“I merely approve of some of the Matriarch’s ideologies. I don’t follow the path of sacrifices. A bloodbath won’t bring me any benefits.” Leylin looked grim as he mounted a large marine beast with Belinda.
Belinda was apologetic, and she transmitted over to him, “I’m sorry, Nick. I dragged you into this. When the time comes, just protect yourself. Leave the rest to me.”
“It’s not your fault,” Leylin smiled with difficulty while a trace of coldness flashed in the depths of his eyes, ‘A rank 5 Sacrificer, and someone with a high position in the organisation, would make a great gift for the Nefarious Filthbird.’

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A curfew had been imposed in Port Elias due to the recent events. Streets that were usually bustling with life were exceptionally quiet. Boat wreckage and blood could be seen floating in the ocean, and
the houses that had been wrecked in the incident were left desolate, yet to be repaired.
Groups of troops jogged around in an orderly manner on the streets, occasionally charging into shops and demanding they be allowed to search the area. It was pure chaos.
At this moment, an urgent alarm rang out and a piercing defensive air signal sounded.
From a high vantage point, one could see a large wave of giant marine beasts with countless figures on their back surging forth like a tide on the surface of the waters. Aggressive beings approached the port from the sky as well.
This scared a few of the free merchants, and they secretly put away their goods and escaped. After all, they could not afford to provoke either organisation. Doing so would only lead to a horrible death.
Merchants were not the only ones. Even the most evil pirates ran from such a dangerous place. They would rather fight the local troops trying to run away than stay here any longer.
Just as the chaos was about to escalate, the bright cries of a hawk sounded out. A large Nighthawk beast spirit spread its wings as it circled above the port with a figure on top of it. Terrifying power descended that was at the peak of rank 4, and the pier finally managed to regain its calm.
A swishing sound could be heard as something surged towards them. Soon, numerous streaks of light flew in from various locations to stand behind Elias’ Governor, bowing in greeting, “Lord Governor!”.
They all had Morning Star-ranked strength, but they could not conceal the worry in their expressions.
“They are Trial’s Eye’s followers. I can sense that nauseating smell coming from their bodies even from here.” A white-haired elder with a hook-like nose and hawk beak spoke coldly.
“This should be about what happened this afternoon. I’ve already
asked for support from the headquarters. However, they are too far away. Even if they used a teleportation spell formation, they would still need to use it several times. It seems our enemies have been preparing for a long time,” Elias’ Governor looked grim as he clenched his fist, causing the air to explode with an ear-piercing shriek. It seemed that he had been thoroughly enraged.
“Hm?! That’s…” At this moment, the opposing enemies had already drawn closer. Hundreds of large marine tribe beasts came to a standstill, just their enormous size enough to put immense pressure on others. The governor of Elias also noticed there were a few acquaintances in their midst!

“We meet again, governor!” Belinda stood up, sounding light-hearted and cheerful, “You never expected we would meet again so soon, did you?”

“I just hate the fact that I didn’t catch you back then. If not, I’d definitely have skinned you and turned you into a rug!” The governor exclaimed hatefully. He then shot Leylin who was beside her a glance. He evidently recognised this person who had rescued Belinda, causing a failure at the gates of victory. It was a pity that looks couldn’t kill, else Leylin would’ve died countless times over. Leylin himself appeared aloof, the lord here had yet to speak.

The Beholder elder Bayclark cackled, “Keke… so you’re the governor of Port Elias? I don’t like the colour of your pupils. Eyes like these are far too common amongst my collection…”

“An Elder Eye, and rank 5 Sacrificer… Eye-Gouging Butcher Bayclark!” The governor quivered in fear as he called Bayclark’s name. Upon hearing this nickname, even the Morning Star elders beside him took several steps back, evidently having heard of the notorious butcher.
“You actually dare appear here! Could the new cycle of continental wars have begun already?” Evidently, Bayclark’s appearance was a huge shock to him.

“Keke, you seem too lenient. This is the territory of the Matriarch and not of the powers of chaos. Even if I killed you, what could they do?” Bayclark waved his white tendrils, “Attack!”

“Roar!” “Raarrr!” “Awooooo!”

The large marine beasts roared clamorously, setting off tremendous waves that gushed towards the port. The guards could only watch, frozen as the sea rose tens of metres. They were then drowned by the furious waves.

The marine legion that Bayclark had brought was evidently very powerful, and with the large marine beasts around to boost their morale, it was as if they had gained an absolute advantage in a flash.

Port Elias immediately descended into chaos. Many sea merchants turned to pirating to take advantage of the situation, waiting for their chance to gain some profit. They only worsened the situation.

“Keke! Henceforth, Port Elias shall become history!”

At this moment, the Elias governor and the rest did not have time to worry about the port any longer, because even they were in immense danger. With a rank 5 Sacrificer like Bayclark taking the lead, they were surrounded by a group of rank 4 beings.

“Nick, it’s time for you to prove yourself! Choose your opponent and kill them!” Bayclark exclaimed, obviously harboring evil intentions.

“…” Leylin inwardly rolled his eyes. The governor and the others were still rather powerful for Morning Stars, but they were the underdogs. With his current fake strength, even the weakest of that group could overpower him. Perhaps after he had been soundly beaten to death, he would even be easy pickings for Bayclark’s subordinates.
“Beast spirit magic Summoning Godric!” While cursing inside, Leylin still went forward, summoning a figure that looked like a large manta ray, a Godric. The Godric would be boosted greatly in the sea. While this beast spirit was only at rank 3, its mature form would have Morning Star strength so it had a good foundation. With Leylin’s secrets modifications, it was halfway at the threshold of rank 4.

“Moooo!” Blue waves splashed out from the Godric, enveloping the opponent with the hawk beak.

“Kill them!” “Go!” As if this was a signal, light flashed fiercely on both sides, and many pounced forward for the kill. Bayclark leisurely ordered the large golden octopus to roam around the battlefield, as if searching for the opponent’s weak point. This gave them immense pressure.

“Soldier on! Once I’ve dealt with my opponents, I’ll help you!” Belinda’s transmission sounded near Leylin’s ear, and he couldn’t help but laugh from on the back of the beast spirit.

‘However, the role I’m playing now is a mixed blood Alabaster Devilsnake who has just entered rank 4. Some things must stay secret! Just as well, let me test this beast spirit magic!’

Due to the lack of appropriate sacrifices and not having made his decision yet, Leylin had yet to make any progress in the path of offerings. Beast spirit magic, on the other hand, was not as troublesome.

The largest issue with training in the path of beast spirits was the strength of a beast spirit master’s own soul and its capacity. There was also the resilience of the body among other things, but all this wasn’t an issue for Leylin. Magi were the most proficient at anything that had to do with spiritual force and the soul.

“Moo, moo!” The large Godric beast spirit disappeared under the sea, becoming a large shadow. Immense water pillars would gush out occasionally, and with Leylin’s direction the Godric exhibited
strength even more terrifying than when it had been alive. It was even able to make things difficult for his Morning Star enemy. The one with an eagle beak was evidently a beast spirit master, and upon seeing Leylin’s summoned Godric his pupils shrank. The tattoo of a blue snake appeared on the back of his hand, “Beast Spirit Summon Azure Trench Serpent!” Dazzling rays of light exploded, and the azure tattoo disappeared into the sea, instantly turning into an enormous figure of a blue sea snake. “Hss…” The figure hissed, and engaged the Godric in a battle. In battle, while the Azure Trench Serpent had the upper hand, the Godric could still persevere on. The summoner could not help but exclaim in his disbelief. “How is that possible? My Azure Trench Serpent is a rank 4 beast spirit, while this Godric is obviously only rank 3!” “There are no weak beast spirits, only weak beast spirit masters! You’re out of date, old man!” Leylin exclaimed, acting like some hot-headed fellow while snickering inside. The process of sealing a beast spirit was very precise and painstaking, requiring the support of many diagrams. The higher the rank of the beast spirit, the more intricate the diagram for the seal would be required. Even if a grandmaster of spell formations were to do this, their chances of success would not exceed 50% and they might not complete the seal perfectly, and could perhaps damage it. However, Leylin was different. Not only was he a grandmaster at spell formations himself, but he was also aided by the A.I. Chip. He could perfectly seal a beast spirit every single time, with a 100% success rate. This meant that his beast spirits could utilise their full power when he summoned them. That was not all. With modifications by the A.I. Chip, the Godric that had died immaturely as a rank 3 adolescent had gotten a great
boost, basically making it on par with Morning Stars. With all these factors and Leylin’s extremely meticulous work, the Godric could defend itself against the Azure Trench Serpent, albeit with some difficulties. It performed the impressive feat of resisting a rank 4 beast spirit as a rank 3.

However, that was the limit to what it could do. After all, there was a huge disparity between rank 3 and 4 that was difficult to surpass. No matter how close the Godric was to rank 4, it was not a true rank 4. No matter how battered the Azure Trench Serpent became, it was still a rank 4 beast spirit, which was why Godric being able to stay on equal grounds while obviously at a disadvantage was a startling achievement. As for trying to kill the rank 4 spirit? That was something that couldn’t even be considered.

Leylin watched the scene and smiled wryly inside, ‘This Godric’s rank is far too low, and there are no cases of beast spirits advancing either. Its strength is limited to rank 3, which just isn’t enough. I’ll need to replace it immediately!’

Without taking cost into account, beast spirits at rank 4 or above needed the soul of a beast at Morning Star. This was enough for many large organisations to treat them as important strategic resources.

Rank 1 to 3 beast spirits were common on the market, but rank 4s were very rare. Unless one entered some large organisation and poured in blood, sweat, and tears to gain enough merit points and contributions, a rank 4 beast spirit was unattainable.

Of course, beast spirit masters could opt to hunt large beasts on their own and extract the beast spirit. However, before even considering if they could complete such a technical task, how could one kill a large rank 4 beast using a group of rank 1 to 3 beast spirits, even if one was a master at extracting beast spirits?

Hence, it was understandable why rank 4 beast spirits were so valued.
Even the governor of the port, with his elevated and important status, only had one rank 4 beast spirit.

‘However, not only do I have the strength of a rank 3 beast spirit master, I’m also a rank 5 Warlock. Killing these rank 4 giant beasts and extracting their souls is just too easy…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed.

When it came to calculating strength in the Purgatory World, one always looked at the highest rank. Bayclark, for example, might only be a rank 4 Beholder, but he was also a rank 5 Sacrificer under the Trial’s Eye, which made him rank 5. He was comparable to a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus in the Magus World.

Leylin’s highest rank was a rank 5 Warlock, and despite being weakened by the Allsnake Curse it was no problem for him to kill rank 4 Morning Star beasts. With some prudent setup and some luck, he was confident he could kill even a rank 5 beast.

If he could successfully seal a rank 5 beast spirit, then he would immediately become a rank 5 beast spirit master, catching up to his power as a Warlock.

‘Sealing beast spirits, augmenting the original soul and then managing the beast spirits, then killing giant beasts to obtain more powerful beast spirits… This turns into a positive feedback cycle. As long as one’s body is strong enough, advancing in the system of beast spirits in the Purgatory World can be achieved fairly quickly…’

In reality, after sealing the Godric’s beast spirit, Leylin could already feel the boost to his soul.

Though his truesoul had already reached half-moon and this tiny boost couldn’t be considered much, it was a huge event for those rank 1, 2, and 3 Magi.
‘Sealing a rank 3 beast spirit could perhaps bring forward the advancement of a rank 2 Magus to a rank 3 Magus by 20 years!’ Leylin stroked his chin and began to ponder the A.I. Chip’s precise analysis of the situation. ‘Of course, the strength of soul and body of an average rank 2 Magus could never endure a seal from a rank 3 beast spirit, unless they were a Warlock…
‘Besides, there is a limit to the soul’s capability and strength, which serves as a bottleneck to beast spirit techniques. As such, in the Purgatory World, rank 6 beast spirit masters have never been seen, let alone anyone above that, either Sacrificer or beast spirit master…’
At this time, the enemies were dumbfounded at the swift defeat of their rank 4 Azure Trench Serpent by the Godric. How could a rank 3 beast spirit contend with a rank 4? It shook their beliefs.
“Beast spirit summon Four-winged Bird!” No matter how shocked and unwilling, they had to accept the reality. When the Azure Trench Serpent could no longer withstand the Godric’s attacks, a tattoo flashed once again on the body of the hawk-nosed man. A giant four-winged bird emerged from him, wind elemental particles around its body circulating ferociously to form a violent energy, a wind blade!
A giant pale green light blade split the ocean apart, revealing the silhouettes of the Godric and the Azure Trench Serpent’s battling it
out.
Upon seeing that the Godric could not be beaten, the enemy once again called upon their rank 3 four-winged bird. When it was coupled with the Azure Trench Serpent, Leylin’s Godric was caught in a tough battle. The wind blades sliced its body apart over and over, if not for having transformed into a beast spirit blood would have been gushing from its wounds.
Even as a beast spirit, the Godric’s voice gradually grew more muffled, and its soul dulled.
‘Indeed, when beast spirits are involved a rank 3 fighting head on against a rank 4 is kind of a stretch…’ Leylin vaguely swept his eyes across the field. At this moment, Belinda was already fighting her opponent in their own small battlefield.
Not entering the stage himself, Bayclark focused on the governor of Elias, occasionally turning with a hint of gloating in his eyes.
‘What a narrow-minded and prejudiced old fool!’ Leylin was filled with disgust, and he secretly afforded him the death penalty.
‘I can’t use my energy and magic as a Warlock, which extends to the Kemoyin Emperor magic. I can only hide myself by using Alabaster Devilsnake magic…’ A thought flashed across Leylin’s mind, and a layer of white scales emerged from his body.
With the Mask of the Dreamless and an Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline, it would be difficult for anyone, even Belinda, to discover that his abilities were just an imitation.
[Beep! Host is currently using Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline. Scale simulation accuracy at 99.99%. Vitality and defence have increased, dreamforce has strengthened] the A.I. Chip’s voice transmitted over. Having completed the transformation, Leylin’s body was covered in a layer of delicate white scales, and sharp fingernails burst forth from his hand. The scarlet tint in his eyes seemed to grow deeper and purer.
“Devilsnake bloodline!” The enemy shouted.
“Die!” Leylin shouted, a white phantom as he launched towards them. His sharp claws chilled the air. Though he was confident in his own disguise, fake was fake. He was bound to leave a clue with the passage of time, so it would be good to end the fight quickly.

“Damned hybrid!” The hawk-nosed man opposing Leylin glowed red with anger, and he started hitting himself in the chest. A faint blue circle sprouted blue flames that engulfed his body, and a hard mane grew on his face.

“Beast spirit union! Rank 3 Blueflame Phantomwolf!” At the lowest point, the opposing beast spirit master had already completed the union, turning into a half man half wolf monster. His energy grew tremendously.

‘Blueflame Phantomwolf? It seems to be some kind of advanced creature, powerful with fire and close combat. It’s strong physically too…’ Leylin managed to identify the beast spirit’s characteristics from an archive he’d found on the market. He also remembered its strengths and weaknesses.

A beast spirit master at rank 4 or above could fuse with his beast spirit, using some secret techniques to acquire the abilities of the beast spirit they’d sealed. With an increasing number of beast spirit, the beast spirit master became more terrifying as well. This technique solved the problem of a weak body, so much so that one could say that without it any beast spirit’s value would be halved.

*Awooo!* Blue flame covered the enemy’s palm, one that had already turned into a furry paw. It looked like a layer of glass. The giant wolf claw shot out, sharp and on fire. He charged violently towards the white phantom.

A huge explosion sounded in the air, and a flash blinded onlookers. Leylin and his opponent retreated, and a few white scales fell to the ground with blue fur.

‘Borrowed strength is still borrowed strength. Even if I were to use the rank 4 Giant Kemoyin Serpent power I could defeat him easily.’
Leylin’s eyes filled with pity, and his opponent grew furious. This half-snake half-human wielded massive power, able to fight on par with and sometimes overpower a rank 4 beast spirit master. He hadn’t gained much of an advantage from the four-winged bird, and it was obvious that this battle would continue for some time. However, that would prove fatal in this battle. Belinda would come upon ending her own fight, and even otherwise Bayclark’s presence shook his confidence in being able to defend Port Elias. At this time, the battle at the port was already near its end. Engulfed in thick smoke, the port was left in tatters, with large paw prints all over the once bustling street. Walls everywhere were destroyed, and the road was steeped in blood. Obviously, Bayclark had made meticulous plans so that the backup team at the port couldn’t fight back. In this instant, unless a rank 6 warrior joined the fight, their defeat was inevitable. Unfortunately, they were near the Hail Continent’s coast. This was the territory of the Snake Dowager, and the Nefarious Filthbird sending a high-ranked warrior here would be a command of suicide. As the battle on the ground drew to a close, the battle in the sky ended as well. “The Alabaster Devilsnake Devours!” Belinda’s applause sounded as a giant Alabaster Devilsnake phantom emerged, its scarlet eyes focused on a broken-armed Filthbird phantom from a sacrifice. A dark red mist filled the surroundings, bringing with is a psychic power that instilled fear into even the Morning Star fighters. They did everything they could to avoid it. This dreamforce posed a threat to those that hadn’t come in contact with or couldn’t comprehend Dreamscape. In the meantime, this Nefarious Filthbird who Belinda was focused on melted like wax into a mixture of blood and fat. “Nick! Hold on!” The giant Alabaster Devilsnake phantom
suddenly turned and charged towards Leylin.
‘Finally. I just had to endure for a little while and Belinda’s come to help. She’s defeated her own opponent, and I won’t have to reveal anything else.’ With everything within control, Leylin let out a smile, expressing his relief.
The enemy’s eyes were filled with despair, and he gave up the fight with Leylin. The Azure Trench Serpent was forcefully ordered to retreat. Blocking Leylin’s path, he jumped onto the back of the giant four-winged bird, ready to escape.
“Trying to run away?” An icy voice came from under the Alabaster Devilsnake phantom, “Dream on!”
Under the enormous Alabaster Devilsnake, the Azure Trench Serpent looked negligible and weak. Even Leylin could not help but feel pity for him.

……

Leylin’s opponent escaping was a signal to the others. After seeing their comrade flee, the rest of the Morning Star guards were prompted to plan their escape too, and the governor of Elias was no exception.
A rank 4 beast spirit master on top of being a rank 4 Sacrificer, he could unleash the full power of Morning Star. If not for Bayclark, the fight would’ve been much easier for him. Unfortunately, this giant Elder Eye set his eyes upon him the moment they met.
“Let me handle him! You try to block the other Nefarious Filthbird followers!” The Elder Eye’s soul force radiated outwards, and he wrapped himself and the governor up completely.
;What a ruthless and vicious way to claim victory!; Leylin was left completely speechless, and he took the initiative to retreat backwards and gave up the battlefield to others.
After the fierce battle, the Morning Star military were all injured and had wholeheartedly broken out from the enemy’s siege. Without having any fight left in them, they had put in so much work for nothing.

Leylin chose to withdraw at this moment- a selfless and noble model of action that many were grateful to emulate. Of course, there were some who took him for a fool.

But Leylin paid no heed to this, and expressionlessly retreated to the back to rest and watch the great battle.

“Although our enemies continue to battle half-heartedly, if they can’t find a way out, a fight to the death with them would be frightening! The most important thing is that I am not a follower of the Trial’s Eye, so there is no incentive for me to risk my life for this battle…”

Leylin shook his head and formed his own thoughts.

“And now is the chance!”

“A.I. Chip! Execute Plan 1!”

[Beep! Mission established! Initiating plan! Intelligent Body No. 1 is ready!] The A.I. Chip replied faithfully.

“Very good, undo the bloodline seal!”

With Leylin’s will, his body’s formerly dormant bloodline power became berserk, although the Thousand Snake Curse had absorbed a lot of bloodline power, the strength of a rank 5 Warlock could still awaken in Leylin.
“This feeling is the strength of a Warlock! Shadow puppet! ” Leylin almost wanted to roar loudly, but managed to hold back. This was urgent after all, and a spell formation was transferred out immediately.

A shadow puppet that looked exactly like Leylin began to take shape, and with the help of A.I. Chip, it simulated Leylin so perfectly to life, to the point where even acquaintances could not differentiate between the two, let alone these strangers.

The enormous shadow of a serpent emerged like a black arrow shooting out from under the surface of the sea where Leylin was standing, and quickly disappeared into the deep sea. Due to the secretive nature of the giant snake, with the help of the power of the shadow, those fixated on the battlefield failed to notice anything.

“The Evil King’s True Eye! Death Ray!”

At this time, the battlefield had reached its climax. Several Guardians tried to flee but were stopped, and the war continued. In the core of the battle, an enormous illusory shadow of a Beholder emerged.

The elder Beholder Beyclarke demonstrated the power of its innate skill, which was stronger than the power displayed by Geiger Dole. Not only did its phantom look real, the death ray that emerged from its pupils was also substantial, with a strong aura of death.

“My lord Flapwing, the Ruler of Chaos! Please watch over us and come to the aid of your loyal subjects, and resolve our current predicament…”

In the face of this death light, even the governor of Elias did not dare to be careless.

In the midst of the high-spirited chanting, the bird Dignitary behind the governor unleashed a enormous grey-coloured power, without even asking for the slightest sacrifice.

This was also the privilege of a rank 4 Sacrificer, they were able to
receive power first, then sacrifice later. The grey power was all over the governor’s body, not only suppressing all his injuries but steadily flowing into the body of the Nighthawk under him.

“Oh oh!” Accompanied by loud and clear cries of the hawk, the giant Nighthawk seemed to be covered in an extra layer of gray feathers. Its body even enlarged considerably and began to change from its original form as a Nighthawk, transforming into the appearance of the bird dignitary.

After the transformation, the Nighthawk’s aura became even more powerful, and its aura even suggested a breakthrough from rank 4. With a terrifying gale, it suddenly charged into the death ray. A massive red ray of light exploded with a faint roar, and even those with the strength of Morning Star could not look directly at it. From the core of the explosion, a few pieces of grey feathers seemed to float down softly.

After the glare had dissipated, the Nighthawk flew back to the governor. It barely suffered any visible injuries, but the death ray from earlier had disappeared without a trace.

“Haa! Using both Sacrificer and beast spirit magic to this level, governor, you are pretty good!”

Bayclark seemed to be rather surprised and said, “Your eyes are now worthy of being in my collection!”

While emitting the soul undulations, the shadow of the Trial’s Eye emerged from behind Bayclark, along with gold lightning flickering midair.

“Trial’s Eye!” “Trial’s Eye!” “Trial’s Eye!”

The friction from the thunder and lightning caused a sizzling sound, along with the faint whistle of a gale. The sounds all came together to form a deafening roar, as strong Trialforce descended through an unknown channel, Belinda and other priests were affected, seemingly reaping benefits from that.
“Haaa! The gap between ranks renders all efforts futile. I am still a rank 5 Sacrificer, and I can unleash a little Trialpower! Under the Lord’s trial, everything will be burnt to ashes!”

Bayclark looked incredibly pious as he made the announcement, which seemed more like a declaration. With that, a golden light fell and swept away the gray power.

The gray power clashed with the golden light, and like snow melting away from the sun, it quickly began dissipating. The Elias’ governor’s face turned deathly pale as he watched this scene.

The reason why this had happened was not because the Filthbird was not as good as the Trial’s Eye, but it was due to their Sacrificers being of different ranks, resulting in the different level of power being called upon.

The ranking of the Sacrificers were of the same as the Magi, with an insurmountable chasm between each rank.

If a rank 4 Sacrificer’s communication channel was like a river, then the rank 5 Sacrificer’s communication channel was like the ocean; the quality and quantity were unrivalled. Therefore, Elias’ Governor’s defeat was inevitable.

“Dignitary! My clan and my dream will all fail just like this?”

The great Trialpower, even when it was isolated to this area, made the transmission of the Filthbird’s power much more difficult. It even severed his final escape route. The governor immediately looked all around him, and was utterly devastated at the sight of their soldiers and elder guards’ defeat.

The time where he had come to the Hale Continent and established the colonial base was filled with hardships. The subsequent crises where he had faced life or death choices all came back to him, and the governor went into a trance-like state.

This sort of situation happening to this formidable person was almost unconsciable.

“Haaa! Have you lost all hope? Heathen, I’ll completely restrict
your ability, and then complete the final ritual. With your physical qualities, you might give me a pleasant surprise! Heee…” Bayclark laughed sinisterly, and suddenly, three vertical eyes widened.

“That’s wrong! In this instant, he hadn’t slipped into his fantasies of his own accord, but this is…dreamforce! Retreat!” A massive force of Trialpower flowed into Bayclark like a golden electrical current, forcing out traces of a dark red fog.

It was then that Bayclark discovered they had already been surrounded by a layer of dark red fog. It was also because of the influence of dreamforce that made the governor of Elias see illusions.

“Belinda, Nick! What are you both doing?” Under the influence of the dreamland, even Bayclark’s men displayed a certain degree of a trance-like state, allowing some important targets to escape. Upon seeing this, Bayclark immediately burst out shouting.

“What’s going on? Is there someone from the same clan here?” ‘Nick’ looked at this scene in shock, his eyes were filled with surprise. The shadow puppet and A.I. Chip’s intelligence worked together, vividly projecting Leylin’s gestures and actions.

“No! This ability to connect to dreamforce is not a mixed-blood’s ability. This was the work of a pure-blooded Alabaster Devilsnake!” Belinda also recovered from her trance, but the price was the opponent fleeing the battlefield, though now she couldn’t pay any attention to that.

Although some of the mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnake had the ability to connect to the Dreamscape, when it was so large-scale and it could even pulled Bayclark into its illusory trap, it could not be the work of a mixed-blood! Belinda was very sure of this. Belinda shuddered at what this could mean.
“Even if they were a direct descendant of the Matriarch, is it possible for them to fight against the Filthbird? Perhaps they have fully matured, otherwise they absolutely couldn’t have concealed themselves from Lord Bayclark…”

Thinking of this, Belinda quietly moved to Nick’s side.

“Something is wrong! Take care of yourself and pay attention to my command!” Belinda whispered to Nick secretly.

“Do not worry! I know we don’t have to force ourselves. If we face a pure-blooded noble, the bloodline suppression would be enough to make us lose most of our strength…”

The A.I. Chip’s imitation of ‘Nick’ was filled with a look of worry.

“Who is that? Come out!” Golden lightning swept across and the increasingly concentrated red fog tangled together continuously.

It was very obvious that after the initial rage and shock, Bayclark also realised that the huge amount of power used to summon dreamforce could not have been the work of Belinda and Nick, both rank 4 mixed-blood.

To its knowledge, this could only be done by a mature Alabaster Devilsnake or a Pale Devil clan member. Also, the Pale Devils had always been loyal to the direct descendants of the Snake Dowager. The meaning behind these actions aroused the suspicion of Belinda and Bayclark.

With loud rumbling sounds, the crimson dreamforce began to stick together, forming a few red silhouette which surrounded Bayclark and the rest.

“Let’s go!” A giant force pulled the governor and several other survivors into the red fog.
Watching the Governor of Elias and the other survivors scurrying to flee the waters, Leylin revealed a trace of an evil smile. There was no doubt that Leylin was responsible for secretly constructing the massive field of dreamforce.

Originally, due to the restrictions of dreamforce, although Leylin was familiar with most of the Dreamscape spell formations below rank 5, he was ineffective in bringing out its full power. However, with the appearance of Belinda, and the rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline on the Mask of the Dreamless, Leylin met the necessary requirements to do this. The Alabaster Devilsnake had the ability to connect to the Dreamscape, and through the analysis of Belinda’s energy pathways, Leylin was able to quickly familiarise himself with the details of doing this. Belinda was completely not wary of ‘Nick’ since he was one of them, it was relatively easy to gather intelligence or scan her system.

Taking the next few steps would now be simpler. Leylin, who had secretly escaped from the battle, had decided to draw on the Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline and summon a huge wave of dreamforce, saving Elias’ governor and the others in a single move. After all, compared to the Snake Dowager and Trial’s Eye, the Nefarious Filthbird was still an ally and Leylin had to be more considerate when it came to the Filthbird’s power.
In addition, there was still a need for him to keep in contact with the Nefarious Filthbird, hence he could not risk performing poorly now.

To conceal his identity, the dreamforce was clearly the best choice and the blame could even be placed on the Alabaster Devilsnake’s clan, which killed two birds with one stone.

“Benevolence has been shown, and next, time for the greetings!” Leylin stared coldly at the centre of the huge dark red fog. Within it came a huge golden flash of lightning, which seemed to pierce the sky like a sword, carving out a terrifying channel.

“Who exactly are you? Why do you want to rescue the governor and the others?” Golden thunder filled with overwhelming Trialpower surrounded Bayclark completely.

The crimson wall of fog exploded in an instant, revealing an indistinct figure.

What appeared in front of them was a giant over five meters tall, whose body was enveloped in the crimson fog.

The overwhelming dreamforce formed into a malevolent-looking armour on the giant. There were dark red spirals on the surface of the armour which once again gathered shattered pieces of dreamforce.

“I’m obviously here to take your life!” An oppressive voice came from the fog giant.

Bayclark’s face darkened upon hearing the rude answer, “I will kill this shady fellow!”

Although the fog giant possessed a powerful aura, it had failed to break through to the realm of rank 5. Bayclark was relieved at this discovery. Shortly after, Bayclark got more frustrated at this thing—it was unforgivable to disturb the great Bayclark when he was enjoying his games! Also, its behaviour was so secretive, which unexpectedly corresponded with what Bayclark had in mind.

He had always considered Leylin as a powerful member of the
Alabaster Devilsnake’s clan, and his presence in the coastal area of Hail Continent as well as his rescue of the Nefarious Filthbird’s disciples put Bayclark in a tough position.

It was much simpler now that this fog giant did not reveal its identity, Bayclark could treat this thing as hostile and exterminate it! Thereafter, Bayclark instantly used his greatest attack.

“True Eye of the Evil Monarch, Death ray!” A more terrifying death ray than before shot out from its eyes. The golden ray of lightning filled with overwhelming Trialpower faintly enhanced the death ray.

From afar, the death ray resembled a powerful rifle with a handle decorated with gold lines, with a sense of determined and courageous advancement, and it fired directly towards Leylin.

“A blitzkrieg strategy? [1 A strategy to resolve everything in the shortest period of time] Great!” Leylin looked at Bayclark’s performance, nodding in agreement as if this was also his plan. After all, Bayclark was a rank 5 Sacrificer. Leylin feared that this opponent would have a hidden ace up its sleeves. And it would be an even more incredible feat if Bayclark managed to summon a clone of the Trial’s Eye.

They had only used a portion of the dignitary’s power in the previous battles. If Bayclark had called out a clone with the main body’s intelligence, Leylin did not have the confidence to keep up his pretense.

“Its power is rather good, it’s comparable to a rank 5’s killing move!”

Watching the approaching death ray, Leylin evaluated the situation calmly, but the strange thing was that although there was only a small distance between him and the death ray, it never seemed to hit its target. This feeling of confusion sickened Bayclark to the point where it wanted to throw up blood.

Although Leylin had sealed his bloodline and had the Allsnake
Curse absorbing his bloodline energy, he had now been restored to full strength. He possessed the power to usurp the Blazing Monarch! For Leylin, the fact was that Bayclark was just an ordinary rank 5 and therefore insufficiently strong.

“To capture Bayclark, I must hide my true identity. The only thing I can use is the Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline and dreamforce!” Leylin glanced at Bayclark as though he was looking at an ant and said, “You have the privilege of having a taste of the power of a former peak-ranked Radiant Moon Magus…”

For a moment, Bayclark was rather puzzled, but his attention immediately turned to Leylin’s hand that emitted brightly coloured rays of light. It was fascinated by the countless streaks and fast-moving spell formations.

[Bleep! Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline depleting, drawing energy from the Dreamscape!]

With the A.I. Chip’s reminder, the golden red lines on the Mask of the Dreamless faded a little, and immediately Leylin’s true soul connected to an incredible world.

A violent wave of dreamforce surged and converged on Leylin, the power that formed was enough to shake the heavens.

“Rank 5 Dreamscape Spell Formation Splendid Lunar Illusion!” Leylin’s currently strongest Dreamscape spell formation which could trap even Breaking Dawn Magi burst out violently.

Dreamlike undulations spread out suddenly, and Belinda and others were the first to space out, glassy-eyed. Bayclark bore the brunt of the attack and lost vision in its three giant vertical eyes, and even the energy shield on its body dissipated.

Splendid Lunar Illusion utilised by Leylin, the A.I. Chip’s projected Dreamscape spell formation was able to penetrate through all defenses, directly transporting the opponent’s true soul into the Dreamscape with a 90% attack accuracy against a Radiant Moon Magus!
Bayclark was clearly not a strong rank 5, and after getting hit by the Splendid Lunar Illusion, had completely lost all its will to fight. “Let’s go!” Leylin’s silhouette instantly appeared in front of the despondent Bayclark, and many seal charms entered into its body, the most important point being it’s now sealed three giant vertical eyes.

When the seal was complete, the place where Bayclark was standing initially was left with only a huge iron chain sphere.

[Beep! Hidden Triple Seal complete! True seal has been completely sealed! Dreamscape seal has completely penetrated! The target’s energy undulations: 0]

A.I. Chip returned the the updated information from the scan.

Leylin held onto one end of the iron chain, his whole body instantly changing into a long crimson streak, as he was dragged by the iron ball to leave this place at lightning speed.

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Belinda and the other Morning Stars only recovered after the red streak disappeared from the horizon.

“This is too scary…Is this the power of a pure-blood? I have a premonition that if I were to face that power, my true soul would probably be forever stuck in the Dreamscape, never to return to my body…”

Belinda’s eyes blurred and she was shocked by a loud scream.

“Lord Bayclark!! Lord Bayclark!! Lord Bayclark was captured by the attacker!!!”

Another Morning Star shrieked with sorrow, reminding Belinda of their current predicament.

Although the operation had been very smooth in the beginning, their main target – the governor – had escaped, and even their commander had been taken away. This was the utmost insult to
their dignitary, the Trial’s Eye!
It was highly likely that everyone involved would be punished, being frozen was considered the most lenient punishment. Belinda felt bitter and bewildered about her future. “Don’t worry, Belinda, no matter what happens, I’ll always help you!”
At this time, a familiar figure came over. ‘Nick’ gave a smile that warmed Belinda’s heart. With Nick’s support and encouragement, Belinda regained her strength. “Everyone!” She stepped forward with great strength, looking over her panicking comrades. “Things have happened, whatever we do now will be useless. The most important thing we have do is to report this back to the headquarters and inform them of this incident. A loss of a rank 5 Sacrificer is enough to alert the Master of Order… Now, we can only wait…”
The role of a leader was important in times of crisis. Those Morning Star warriors left the ocean surface with the sea creatures and soldiers as if they were awakening from a dream. They did not seem too concerned about the ruined Port Elias. From Nick’s point of view, they just wanted to find a scapegoat. Belinda being here was just what they needed, being able to pin all responsibilities and blames on her. Afterall, by the time the headquarters sent someone to here, Belinda would draw most suspicion. Her Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline would make her an easy target.
“It seems that even with the dignitary’s influence, corruption was unavoidable…”
The intellectual body of Nick looked coldly at this scene.
S

wish! A brilliant blood-red arc of light cut through the air, wiping out the massive flames. The outside world looked extremely distorted from within it, and it gave one a momentary feeling of isolation. It was clear that this streak was moving at great speeds.
The ray of light vanished in an instant and all became still, but it did not seem too abrupt. A black silhouette revealed itself, and beneath it was an enormous iron hammer with many iron chains firmly sealing a large number of runes.
‘This place is at least a thousand miles away from Port Elias. It should be far enough.’ This was naturally Leylin. After snatching Bayclark, he had been afraid of arousing too much suspicion so he’d used a lot of concealment and bewitching spells, quickly fleeing from the scene.
Although he did not know how much effect the spells he cast had, it was always better than nothing. Leylin finally let out a sigh of relief after making sure that he’d fled this far without being followed.
‘However, for the sake of safety I should settle this as quickly as possible.’ Leylin’s figure descended unhurriedly, arriving at a lonely island.
This island was very small, and was comparable to a single drop of water in the middle of the vast ocean. It also looked desolate, with no vegetation or fresh water sources that could be found.
However, Leylin nodded his head in satisfaction, especially after sweeping the area with his soul force, ‘This should be a good place, especially as it keeps moving.’
While laughing softly, Leylin lightly stamped his right foot, causing the ground to hum. A tremor was sent through his foot, which grew larger and ended up forming a small earthquake and a tsunami.
*Rumble* Broken rocks rolled over the coral reef, and a small fissure appeared. By the time the earthquake had calmed a little, even stronger vibrations began to sound out.
An oppressive hiss from an animal, like the cry of a dragon or the roar of a tiger, sounded out from the dark sea.
*Crash* All of a sudden, Leylin’s isolated island began to move. The black rock rose higher and higher from the sea, with kelp and black shells attached to it. In the end, the small island became a huge and irregular piece of circular land.
*Crash* On one side of the island, numerous rocks fell to the bottom of the sea, revealing a large, pitch-black hole. Promptly, a snake-like head stretched out from this hole.
The howl from earlier had evidently come from this monster’s throat. Its body was immense and its eyelids were still covered in algae and green moss.

[Beep! High energy undulations have been discovered, scan completed!] Accompanying the A.I. Chip’s voice, a complete image of this monster had already been projected in front of Leylin.
This monster was an impressively huge tortoise whose length reached tens of thousands of meters. Leylin’s ‘island’ was actually part of its shell, and since the monster had been floating motionlessly for far too long, it had started to show vestiges of life. “It’s a miracle of life, or should it be called the beauty of this world? It really is quite fascinating!” Leylin murmured a few words of praise. This type of giant tortoise could sleep for thousands of
years at a time. If this island had been discovered by ignorant people, even a city could have developed on the tortoise’s back.

“Good day, your Excellency. Sorry to disturb your rest. I was wondering if you could give me a ride? I’ll be sure to make it up to you later.”

The A.I. Chip had determined the giant tortoise to be rank 4, but it still had to be subservient to him when faced with his Half Moon truesoul. Thus, it began to slowly move through the depths of the sea.

‘Very good,’ Leylin nodded his head, and his body automatically descended into the bottom floor of the coral island. It was as if the floor had melted under him. ‘A moving target is clearly less likely to be discovered. Now, I have to dispose of this fellow, lest it becomes a hidden danger.’

Soon after, a small yellow light radiated out to clear out an expansive underground space. The walls fused to become a marble-like material, the structure evidently stable.

Leylin sat cross-legged on the dry floor, with a very solemn expression on his face, “A.I. Chip, transfer the content on the Purgatory World’s Sacrificers.”

[Beep! Establishing task, commencing transfer……] Along with the A.I. Chip’s feedback, a large amount of data was very quickly gathered and saved in Leylin’s memory bank.

The path of offerings had a very long history in the Purgatory World and had become the main strength system after many years of decisions.

In the past, Leylin had believed that this kind of sacrifice was a technique from the World of Gods. However, there seemed to be evidence that the technique had appeared before the end of the Great War.

Although the origin of the path of offering could not be verified, it had gone through such a long period of development that it was
very rich in core content. The so-called Sacrificers offered sacrifices to a higher existence, which required that the receiver have some comprehension of laws. This way, amplification power could be sent down through their subconscious communication channels. The higher existence would amplify the Sacrificer’s strength. Even if it was for a limited time, it was still an extraordinary thing. With the correct sacrifice it was possible to almost borrow the power indefinitely. Assuming the Sacrificer could endure it, of course. The Sacrificer’s rank could be improved through continuous sacrifices, and once they reached rank 4 they could perform a ceremony to permanently increase their attributes. After the ceremony, the Sacrificer would be branded by their chosen dignitary and their sacrifices wouldn’t be accepted by others. After many amplifications, the Sacrificer could receive power that surpassed their race. Take the Governor of Elias for example, his physical prowess exceeded even Melinda who was a mixed blood rank 4 Alabaster Devilsnake. Furthermore, not only could rank 4 Sacrificers borrow power first and sacrifice later, they could also try to summon a clone of their dignitary. From what Leylin understood, the sacrifice represented the limits of what you could get from the dignitary. So high level sacrifices meant receiving greater attention and a quicker response from the dignitary. This was why he had to run far away after capturing Bayclark. Since he was a rank 5 Sacrificer, he was sure to capture the attention of the Trial’s Eye. A Rank 5 Sacrificer could even borrow a tiny bit of the power of laws from their Exemplary, such as the golden lightning and trial power.
Relying on that, Bayclark was not weak for a rank 5. Leylin’s own strength just surpassed his greatly.

‘According to the A.I. Chips speculations, a rank 6 Sacrificer can borrow the dignitary’s power over laws. It would be possible to borrow up to 90% of this power if the Sacrificer and the dignitary are highly compatible. Their strength would surpass the power of the Blazing Flame Monarch…’ Leylin’s expression became rather imposing.

‘Of course, the path of sacrifices has its disadvantages as well. After all, the power of laws can only be borrowed, and not retained. No matter how harmonious the relationship is, Sacrificers cannot rely on this to reach Rank 7. Those dignitaries won’t allow others to grasp their laws. Therefore, rank 6 is the peak for a Sacrificer. However, there may be exceptions…’

As if he had thought of something, the corners of Leylin’s mouth curved into an excited smile, and his entire being seemed to be eager to try something.

[Beep! Transmission of Sacrificial Array has been completed!] A complex spell formation formed in Leylin’s mind.

This was not just the Sacrificial Array he had recorded, but one that he had modified and optimised with the A.I. Chip. Not only could it accept more sacrificial power, but it could also minimise any loss. If Leylin was willing to sell this modified version, it would make him extremely rich. Of course, he wouldn’t do such a thing.

‘The decisions made in the first sacrifice are incredibly important and the offering is a crucial point. The better the offering of the first sacrifice, the more attention and benefits will be given by the dignitary.’

Leylin’s spatial pouch flashed, and many resources appeared. He began to draw the modified Sacrificial Array whose power surpassed the Purgatory World’s most powerful secret techniques. It was all thanks to the A.I. Chip and the enormous amount of
labour and resources that Leylin had poured into it.
“Also…” After arranging the Sacrificial Array, Leylin looked at the surrounding walls and swept his palms across them. Layer upon layer of blood-red lightning runes automatically emerged.
“Summoning across worlds!” “Powerful binding!” “Annihilation ray!” “Breath isolation!” “Location interference!” A great number of advanced ancient runes steadily emerged on the wall, which were the same standard as those used in astral laboratories. Although Leylin was prepared to practice the path of offerings, it was still necessary to be cautious. By the time he was finished, he looked a little tired even though his soul force was still frighteningly vast.
*Crash* The black runic chain was broken, exposing the Elder Eye Bayclark within.
Bayclark’s soul force was currently sealed, to the point where he couldn’t even express himself. His three vertical pupils were filled with terror.
“We meet again, Elder Bayclark!” Leylin faced Bayclark and greeted it.
Bayclark trembled in fear when he saw Leylin, especially after he noticed the Sacrificial Array.
[Beep! Sacrificial Array has been completed, simulated success rate is 100%!]
At this moment, the A.I. Chip transmitted some information…
Multiple strange symbols emerged on the A.I. Chip’s screen. These symbols seemed to transcend the three-dimensional screen, possessing a strangely ancient feeling, with an aura of the power of laws. Leylin looked silently at these runes. The A.I. Chip illustrated 7 runes in total, one for each continent’s dignitaries. Among the 7, there were a few that Leylin was naturally familiar with. A vertical eye rune, a twisting snake rune and a rune of a giant bird spreading its wings.

“Trial’s Eye. Snake Dowager. And the Nefarious Filthbird.” Leylin murmured the names of the three dignitaries represented by the runes. These three had left the deepest impression on Leylin, albeit not the most pleasant ones.

“A sacrifice target selection: Nefarious Filthbird!” Leylin held out his hand and lightly touched the rune of the giant bird spreading its wings. The rune was, almost instantly, copied into the previously empty core of the Sacrificial Array.

A foul and chaotic power seemed to have penetrated the barrier through deep and unknown channels, reaching this place. Threads of grey mist lingered above the array, and it was possible to hear faint crowing sounds coming from within.

Seeing this scene, even though he was firmly sealed, Bayclark’s
body reacted slightly in anticipation of a fight. After all, being sacrificed to the Order of the Eye’s greatest enemy was unacceptable to this pious believer. Unfortunately, no one would listen to the barking of a loser, be it in Leylin’s previous life or in the Magus World. “Almighty Ruler of Chaos, the Flapwing, the free will that soars in countless dimensions! I, Leylin Farrier, call you reverently…” Leylin chanted in the complex and obscure ritualistic language, which created faint undulations of soul force. From the movements of the soul force, the ritual language acted like a mysterious key which opened a giant door somewhere. The entire Sacrificial Array rumbled, and the giant bird rune seemingly came to life and let out an elated chirp. A large amount of grey light condensed and the space seemed to faintly warp. When it finally reached the limit, it loudly exploded. *Crash* A grey flame suddenly emerged from the core of the Sacrificial Array. “Almighty dignitary, Your Excellency the Nefarious Filthbird. Please accept my offering.” Leylin’s eyes held a trace of indifference, and the Beholder on the ground was pulled into the core of the array by an invisible string. *Rumble!* The little flames suddenly grew to engulf the entire Beholder. “Ah…… I curse you…… Curse you……” In the grey flame, the huge Beholder began to melt like a wax sculpture. Even his truesoul was corroded. Leylin could still hear Bayclark’s dying curses ringing in his ears. Just this sort of thing could not change his expression even slightly. Leylin’s eyes, however, were fully absorbed in the sacrificial process, and he occasionally still made adjustments. It was very clear that for a beginner Sacrificer, it was nearly impossible to get a strong rank 5 being as an offering, let alone a
Beholder who was a rank 5 Sacrificer of the Trial’s Eye.
The original Sacrificial Array that Leylin had bought in Port Elias wasn’t anything special. Although it was enough to get someone to rank 4, it was inadequate for the current situation.
When the Beholder Elder was completely melted, a horrifying energy overflowed from the wax, while an unbearable lamenting cry sounded from the Sacrificial Array.
‘Really…’ Leylin speechlessly shook his head, and proceeded to further strengthen the array with his soul force.
Since this was a high-level sacrifice, the laws of the world had finally been attracted when the Beholder was almost completely melted.
The high-spirited chirps of a bird followed. Then, the runes set in place by Leylin began to flash explosively. Some of them even started to fall apart. In the end, the Sacrificial Array produced a piercing light.
The grey flame became scarlet red in a flash, and the blood-curling screeches of the Beholder Elder increased in pitch.
*Bang* The blood-red flames completely swallowed up Bayclark, a rank 5 Sacrificer and Elder Eye. A huge amount of wax concentrated into a ball, constantly twisting and changing shape while it broiled within the scarlet red flames. Finally, it became a clever-looking little grey bird.
“We meet again, almighty Flapwing! Your Excellency, the Nefarious Filthbird!” This was obviously the Nefarious Filthbird’s clone, and Leylin bowed in greeting without delay.
The little grey bird’s eyes were rather glassy, but soon it was occupied by an intelligent personality. It looked at Leylin, its eyes expressing an obvious smile.
“We meet again. Snake Dowager’s blood descendant, Kemoyin Serpent Emperor.” A greatly changed and mechanical voice rang directly in the bottom of Leylin’s heart.
The little grey bird fluttered its wings, while seemingly very interested, “I am very satisfied with your offering, but your heart still seems to harbour some distrust.” The bird obviously pointed towards the strong binding and isolation runes on the walls. Leylin just smiled slightly, “Please forgive your humble subject’s precautions. However, I believe that for a mighty dignitary like yourself, these are just like fine rain and cannot harm you at all.” “Sly little fellow, you act as though this isn’t the first time you summon me. Nonetheless, I sense leftover marks of the Trial’s Eye’s contracts.” The little grey bird said this with certainty, after sniffing Leylin’s body.

Leylin’s eyes flashed with an expression of sudden understanding. This must have been back when he was a rank 1 Magus and he used the Nefarious Filthbird Feather Solution to clear the Trial’s Eye’s contract. But, after improving his knowledge, Leylin was sure that the Nefarious Filthbird Feather Solution was merely some kind of medicine’s name. The main material was definitely not the feather of this entity, otherwise no one would let Leylin use it.

Certainly, the Trial’s Eye’s contracts used by rank 1 and rank 2 Magi were not high-level due to limits of these Magi’s strengths. Thus, they could still be erased by Leylin’s accidental use of the Nefarious Filthbird Feather Solution. Although he had only borrowed a millionth of the bird’s power, the bird still keenly perceived it.

“Yes. At the time, I was able to break the bonds of the Trial’s Eyes. I need to thank the dignitary for your power,” Leylin respectfully expressed his thanks.

“You don’t need to thank me, young man. Breaking the bonds of the Trial’s Eye is my mission and duty.” As a result of this introduction, the Nefarious Filthbird regarded Leylin with much gentler eyes, “You did the right thing. If you had not immediately
offered this Sacrificer, the Trial’s Eye would have found you within 10 hourglasses’ time.”
At this point, the Nefarious Filthbird sent another message, “Now, it can no longer find you. Furthermore, everything that pertains to you will be concealed by chaos and filth, thanks to my power of chaos here.
After hearing this, Leylin’s expression relaxed considerably.
As expected, to fight against a dignitary, Leylin could only borrow the power of another one. The Nefarious Filthbird’s concealment made his earlier risks worth the trouble.
“So, Magus, tell me your request.” The Nefarious Filthbird spread its wings, looking incomparably solemn.
“Almighty Ruler of Chaos, please, may I ask if it is possible for you to remove the Allsnake Curse from my body?” Leylin restrained the excitement in his heart, and asked in a dignified voice.
“The Allsnake Curse comes from the Snake Dowager. We are of the same rank, so I am unable to completely remove it.” The little grey bird shook its head but, just when Leylin became disappointed, it continued, “However, the Power of Chaos is enough to postpone the flare-up from the curse. Do you want to suppress it?”
“Please, go ahead.” Leylin gnashed his teeth. It went without saying that entering the Purgatory World was already a risk, so he would not reject this offer.
“This seal will consume half of the sacrifice’s power.” The little grey bird looked deeply into Leylin’s eyes, and shortly after the terrifying grey power of chaos began to pour into Leylin’s body. The immense power of chaos spread through his skin and flesh, then extending to his sea of consciousness and soul.
[Beep! Invading energy detected, eliminate?] A red warning box popped up from the A.I. Chip.
“No,” Leylin gnashed his teeth, “But continue monitoring.”
[Removing resistance! Initiating monitoring mode!] The A.I. Chip dutifully sent back.
A great quantity of chaotic power spread through Leylin’s body. In the end, it converged in his forehead, forming a silver seal around it.
The Allsnake Curse seemingly squirmed, but very soon it was suppressed by the vast amount of chaotic power.
[Beep! The Allsnake Curse’s seal has been reinforced! Estimated time to outbreak: 20 years!] Leylin’s status box was very quickly refreshed with new information.
[The host’s Sacrificer Rank has risen! Current Sacrificer target: the Nefarious Filthbird! Rank: 4] [Detecting that the host’s bloodline power has been released, the sacrifice strength has increased as well. Host’s stats have fluctuated greatly, re-collecting data!]
Soon, the A.I. Chip showed the new stats.
[Leylin Farlier, Rank 5 Magus, Bloodline: Kemoyin Serpent Emperor (Complete Form). Strength: 51 (76), Agility: 46 (62), Vitality: 135 (176.9), Spiritual Force: 1575.8 (2003.5), Magic Power: 1575 (Magic Power is in synchronisation with Spiritual Force), Soul Force: 158, Status: Rank 4 Sacrificer strength is increasing in force! Estimated time to the Allsnake Curse outbreak: 20 years!]
“Freeing part of my bloodline force, and the growth in rank as a Sacrificer, has actually restored so much of my strength.”
After seeing his stats changing greatly, an ecstatic expression immediately appeared on Leylin’s face.
The Allsnake Curse caused all of Leylin’s stats to fall and sentenced him to die in 2 years. These problems felt like a rope constantly tightening around Leylin’s neck, stifling him. But now, with the Nefarious Filthbird’s help, Leylin finally felt less pressed for time, allowing him to relax a little.

“My Laws of Confusion Seal can delay the Allsnake Curse from flaring-up for up to 18 years. After 20 years, even if you contact a rank 8 being again you won’t be able to strengthen the seal and postpone it any further. Unless, you are able to find a Rank 9 Everlasting One…”

The Nefarious Filthbird’s voice was heard again. However, the small grey bird in front of Leylin seemed to have become slightly illusory, as if it had consumed too much energy.

“Thank you, almighty dignitary.” Even if the curse wasn’t completely resolved, Leylin still thanked the Filthbird sincerely. After all, if it wasn’t for it, he wouldn’t have 20 years to solve his problems.

“There is still half of the power of sacrifice left. Tell me your other requests.” The bird spoke within Leylin’s consciousness again. Leylin pondered for a while and spoke of his plans, “Almighty Flapwing, I hope to obtain something to conceal myself. After all, I am bound to go deeper into the Hail Continent if I want to completely remove the Allsnake Curse.”

He had already discovered long ago that, in the Purgatory World
where the path of offering was prevalent, there was still a fatal weakness in any disguise he could come up with. The weakness was the existence of a dignitary’s clone when one sacrificed. As long as the Sacrificers reached rank 4, they would be able to summon the clone of a dignitary. And, if those clones were intelligent, they would definitely be able to expose Leylin’s disguise. During the previous skirmish, both the Elias Governor and Bayclark were only able to summon a phantom of their dignitary and not a complete clone. Hence, Leylin was able to conceal himself. However, he knew it was impossible to avoid them forever, especially in the Hail Continent. Therefore, suitable methods for concealment were necessary, and they had to be able to deceive the dignitary’s clones. Furthermore, these existences may have some special detection methods. In particular, the Snake Dowager, who was the source of Kemoyin bloodline descendants, would have such methods. There might be some kind of special reaction towards her own descendants. Although Leylin had already prepared all sorts of countermeasures, it still did not stop him from adding another insurance. “You are very intelligent,” the Nefarious Filthbird nodded in approval, “Once you appear within a range of 5 kilometers from one of our clones, you will definitely be unable to escape our detection.” “I bestow upon you the Feather of Chaos. The one who holds this item receives the protection of chaotic power. As long as you don’t come into contact with the dignitary’s real body, you won’t be discovered.” The small bird’s silhouette became even more faint. In the end, it transformed into a grey illusory feather that floated in front of Leylin.
“Snake Dowager’s descendant, Kemoyin Serpent Emperor. Travel the Hail Continent as you wish, and tear the Dowager’s godly status apart.”
The grey Nefarious Filthbird’s clone vanished. Only a residue of its conscient reverberated in the secret chamber. In a flash, the Sacrificial Array exploded with a bang and turned into flying dust.
“I gained more than what I expected.” Leylin let out a long breath, feeling rather glad.
Doing business with the Nefarious Filthbird was like dancing on a tightrope. Leylin had no choice but to consider all worst case scenarios.
Luckily, due to the arch-enemy relationship between the Nefarious Filthbird and the Trial’s Eye, it was very willing to see the Trial’s Eye’s ally, the Snake Dowager, be defeated. This was the foundation of the deal between both sides
Leylin’s own power and his meticulous arrangements were the most crucial part of his plan. Even had the Filthbird’s clone suddenly turned hostile, he had the confidence to break the Sacrificial Array and escape from it instantly.
With a common enemy, and since Leylin himself could escape, the Nefarious Filthbird was willing to see him as a pseudo-ally.
Furthermore, Leylin still wasn’t able to completely trust the Nefarious Filthbird, since there was only a mutual relationship of wanting to use each other between them. Of course, the Nefarious Filthbird still had the greater advantage and their interests did not clash. Therefore, it was possible to maintain their agreement.
For instance, for Leylin who was an insincere sacrificer, being promoted directly to rank 4 level by the Nefarious Filthbird was a very good testimony that they could work together.
There would never be a lucky person who became an Everlasting One in the world. Only through careful, meticulous considerations and anticipating worst case scenarios would one be able to
guarantee success.
‘Rank 4 Sacrificers can already begin to amplify their body’s attributes through attracting the dignitary’s energy into their own body, and solidifying it permanently.’
Leylin muttered to himself, “This kind of promotion often comes with a price. The whole body might be branded by the Nefarious Filthbird’s energy which creates a tissue and cellular transformation that cannot be opposed. Ultimately, one might even be controlled by them. A.I. Chip, conduct an all-round inspection of my body’s energy structure.”
[Beep! Mission established, beginning to scan!] The mechanical sound of the A.I. Chip echoed. Soon after, fine blue light continuously swept across every part of Leylin’s body.
[Discovered unknown energy structure! Determined to be the Nefarious Filthbird’s energy branding! Eliminate?] Without spending much time, the A.I. Chip responded.
Leylin had long prepared for this outcome. Hence, he did not look surprised at all, and he commanded very calmly instead, “Show me the image.”
Soon after, Leylin was looking at the image of a cell that was magnified several times on the A.I. Chip’s screen. At the center of the cell was something that looked like a sea urchin, with peculiar energy waves of confusion.
[Beep! This energy is the crucial element to suppress the Allsnake Curse. If eliminated, it would trigger irreversible changes. Probability of Allsnake Curse showing advance in effect: 99.99%. Eliminate?]
The A.I. Chip’s sound caused Leylin’s expression to become slightly gloomy, “It seems this would be the kill switch that the Nefarious Filthbird imposed on me. Although currently it’s only used to threaten others and maintain its own position, I still need its strength. I need chaotic power to suppress the Allsnake Curse.
Numerous rays of light continuously flashed across Leylin’s pupils. However, he commanded, “Focus on monitoring. For the time being, maintain the original shape.”

[Beep! Mission established, activating real time monitoring procedure within the body!] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s orders.

“No matter what, I still profited this time. Not only was the Allsnake Curse’s effect delayed, I even obtained something to rely on when I infiltrate the Hail Continent.” Leylin murmured, stroking the walls with his palm.

A layer of black liquid flame emerged from his palm, spreading rapidly as if it had life of its own, consuming the entire place almost instantly.

Soon, the binding runes and Sacrificial Array vanished without a trace under the black demonic flames, and even its aura was burnt away. After the place was thoroughly cleaned up, a yellowish radiance emerged from Leylin’s body and blent into the surrounding walls.

A circular light floated above the coral island with a whoosh and, shortly after Leylin’s figure quickly flew out, “Thanks a lot, big fellow.”

Leylin looked at the large turtle and waved his hand while smiling. Afterwards, a slight green ray of light flew out of his fingers in a flash and merged into the turtle’s forehead.

Although that fine green beam was like dust when compared to the turtle’s huge head, Leylin still heard a hint of pleasant surprise from the creature’s whistles, especially after the ray merged. Its turbid eyes seemed to become somewhat quicker, and there was a hint of kindness in its expression while looking at Leylin.

“This is a gift from a wise man of ancient times. Although it only has a faint external aura, it still has exceptional effect in raising creatures’ wisdom. I know you want more but, unfortunately, I still
have a need for these. I cannot give you anymore.” Leylin smiled. His body transformed into a long black streak that vanished into the distant horizon, leaving the turtle with a regretful expression. The turtle howled in Leylin’s direction as if it was seeing Leylin off. The loud howl sounded continuously, even causing huge waves to form on the surface of the sea, which continued for half an hour. Ultimately, the turtle’s body gradually sank to the bottom of the ocean, leaving behind a huge white whirlpool.

……

The strong wind whistled into Leylin’s ears hauntingly. Leylin’s expression turned solemn. Although he had already thought about how to sneak into the Hail Continent, even when the plan had yet to be implemented, he had some slight concerns. “Partial AI #1, report your position!” Leylin pressed his temples and a faint blue radiance was revealed from his pupils. [Beep! Current coordinates: Taking the main body as the origin, southeast; 786.67 nautical miles!]

An unusual message was directly sent by the A.I. Chip. [The people around the area are all agitated. Possibility of a conflict between military forces. It is advised that the main body arrive immediately, otherwise the puppet’s identity will be exposed.] At this moment, a warning sign was transmitted from the A.I. Chip again, making Leylin’s speed rapidly increase. Although using the A.I. Chip to control the shadow puppet allowed it to imitate all of Leylin’s actions and even his aura to the point of being impossible to check its authenticity, it would still be exposed once it made a move. By that time, even if Leylin managed to rush there and kill them all, he would probably still be unable to stop the news from being transmitted. Consequently, he would have to abandon the identity he had created, Nick.

The most important point, however, was that the plans he had
previously set up would have to undergo modifications. The risks would be greater and this was something Leylin could not accept. “What exactly happened that caused things to escalate to this degree?” Leylin carefully observed the report sent by Partial AI #1, and everything that happened after Port Elias’ military campaign appeared immediately before his eyes.
The organisation that Belinda belonged to was obviously subordinate to the Trial’s Eye. They had been preparing to act against the Nefarious Filthbird, using Port Elias as a transport point to offload a large amount of prohibited goods. However, with Leylin cutting in, this plan was dealt a fatal blow before it could even begin.

With Leylin’s disclosure of the information about their operation, the Port Elias setup had been completely exposed. All the people in charge of the different organisations were nabbed in hiding, and only Belinda had been able to escape with Leylin’s protection. For the Trial’s Eye’s organisation, this was an intolerable humiliation! The loss of goods and intel was something they could not bear.

Hence, Belinda’s superior Bayclark had brought a huge army and hastened over, planning to destroy Port Elias in one go. With Bayclark’s strength as a rank 5, the governor who was only at rank 4 could not even resist.

Originally, everything should have gone smoothly. In the Hail Continent, the governor didn’t have any support. However, it was a huge pity that a plan was just a plan and there could always be other variables. The moment Leylin laid his eyes on Bayclark, only tragedy awaited the Beholder.

With Leylin’s deliberate plans, the governor and a few higher-ups of the Nefarious Filthbird’s organisation had escaped. Even the
rank 5 Sacrificer, Bayclark, had turned into an offering for the Nefarious Filthbird, temporarily solving his personal issues while Bayclark’s truesoul was destroyed. Even in the Purgatory World, a rank 5 was very rare, especially one with the status of a Sacrificer. In his organisation, Bayclark had high standing and managed this region. The loss of someone like him was a huge disaster for Belinda and the others! Though Belinda had done all she could to save the situation, and had pushed the troops in order to reach a rest point, a paradoxical situation had been unavoidable despite her best efforts, landing her in her current dilemma.

No! This couldn’t be called a paradox, but a conspiracy! When Belinda had stepped out as a leader, she immediately turned into an offering or scapegoat in the eyes of the Morning Stars. “Why? Why did things turn out like this?” Belinda half-leant against the corner of a wall, arms hugging her shoulders as if that would bring her even the slightest bit of warmth. With her body, she wouldn’t feel any cold in temperatures above absolute zero.

It had been a subconscious act. She was currently in a cold, dark, humid room. There were multiple reinforcement runes on the walls, and the door was a cold steel grill. A few marine folk surveyed her icily from not far away. Morning Star forcefields undulated from their bodies without any restrictions, and they were clearly the marine tribe that had gone to battle together with Belinda before. Now, however, their target had changed and they even kept Belinda on house arrest. The accusation was laughable, ‘colluding with the enemy’! Belinda did feel like laughing, sending troops to Port Elias was a joint decision by the higher-ups, but they’d changed the narrative and said she’d bewitched Bayclark to do it.

Belinda’s calm actions after being caught by the leader of the allied forces was also taken as proof of trying to win the support of the
enemy. What other reason could she have for doing this than to collude with the enemy? Besides, compared to the Beholder race and marine tribe that had from the very beginning believed in Trial’s Eye, someone like her who was a descendant of the Alabaster Devilsnake just did not fit in. Was she not a readily available scapegoat? It had to be said that whenever it came to suspicion of there being spies, outsiders like her were the first to be attacked. “Belinda, are you feeling better?” A voice was heard from her side, causing her to raise her head slightly. Through the dusky light, she saw the figure of her kinsman. After seeing who it was, a wry smile appeared at the corner of her lips, “Nick, you’ve been captured too?” The shadow clone controlled by Partial AI #1 was watching Belinda ‘worriedly’. When the marine tribe had suddenly turned hostile on her, Belinda practically turned into a wooden puppet, not resisting arrest. With only the strength of a shadow clone, the partial AI also didn’t dare make a move lest it was caught. Thankfully, perhaps because they were afraid that the two would resist violent methods and cause needless deaths, they were only under house arrest. Their truesouls weren’t sealed or anything like that, and they were even placed together. [Target is now in a poor mood and in a state of bewilderment. If appropriately consoled, it is possible to improve her impression of the host.] An analysis presented itself to the shadow clone. However, its orders were merely to prevent ‘Nick’ being exposed as Leylin. Without Leylin’s explicit orders, emotional issues like this were the most difficult for Partial AIs to deal with. Hence, Nick merely stood around in a daze, as if similarly shocked. “I’m— I’m sorry for dragging you into this, but don’t worry, Nick.
Our organisation believes in the master of order and is the most fair and just. It will definitely prove our innocence, and you’ll soon regain your freedom…” Seeing Nick in this state, a hint of disappointment showed in her eyes, and she could not help but hug herself tighter, her whispers sounding from the gaps between her arms.

“This girl hasn’t given up yet?” A translucent figure penetrated the wall full of seals and shackles, entering the room. Seeing the state she was in, a strange smile appeared on his lips, “Why is it that I always have to be the one to shatter the purity and fantasies of children?”

The translucent being melded into Nick, and the A.I. Chip took over Partial AI #1. From the outside, it looked like Nick’s eyes went blank for a while before returning to normal. Nobody noticed this change, and having recalled the shadow clone and Partial AI, ‘Nick’ was Leylin once more.

After getting the warning from the Partial AI, Leylin had hastened to reach this place in the shortest time possible. The guards and spell formations outside were no issue for him. When it came to spell formations or runes, the research by Magi in the Magus World was leaps and bounds ahead of the marine tribes.

Leylin had regained most of his strength, and he could do all sorts of things with ease. Most importantly, he was now a rank 4 Sacrificer of the Nefarious Filthbird and had the Wings of Chaos. This made it even easier for him to break through the seals set up in the name of the Trial’s Eye.

These two were not just arch enemies, but their strengths restrained each other. Of course, when compared to Leylin, the marine tribes outside were useless.

“Belinda!” Leylin spoke slowly in a low voice, “At this point, are you still harbouring fantasies towards the marine tribes outside?”

“Fantasies? No! Even if they’re driven by benefits and greed, the
master of order will come and save me…” She spoke resolutely. With her devoutness to the Trial’s Eye, he felt like her only being a rank 3 Sacrificer was a waste.

“Yes! Anyone can see how foul the marine tribe is. It’s not just the dignitary, Trial’s Eye. Even the higher ups know that…” Leylin spoke nonchalantly, almost with a hint of sarcasm. Without waiting for her to speak, he continued, “But… so what?”

“With the situation right now, where Bayclark has disappeared and the operation has failed, someone will have to take responsibility. Bayclark is an Elder Eye of the Beholders and has a great amount of power; he clearly fought with all his might. There’s a chance that he might survive, and nobody would dare offend a rank 5…”

“What’s left is to find people to take responsibility, such as you. The marine tribe is very harmonious, and if they really had to incriminate someone, it’d be you.”

At this point, Leylin saw that her shoulders were trembling even more violently. He added on, “However, the losses incurred by this is something your higher-ups definitely don’t want to see. Hence, this matter cannot really be pursued. A scapegoat is needed, or rather a sacrifice has to be found.

“At this point, is there someone more suitable than you? As an outsider with no background, you don’t have a group to back you up either like the marine tribe…” Leylin started to sound like he was ridiculing her.

“No! Even if they’re all like that, the mighty master of trials, the dignitary of fairness and justness, will definitely not abandon me…” Belinda raised her head, her scarlet pupils filled with insanity and hopelessness.

“I won’t say more about that.” Leylin shook his head, “But I hope you are aware that if the Trial’s Eye is in favour of absolute justice and fairness, it would long since have fallen and disappeared into the dust of history. To survive up to this point and spread its ways
in so many worlds, it must know compromise. In order to uphold
fairness and justness to a certain extent, the master of trials is
already quite successful…”
“No, I don’t believe it! I don’t!” The despair in her eyes
immediately dissipated and she crumpled to the ground like a ball,
boneless.
“Hm? She can’t take this blow? Or has she thought of something?”
Leylin shook his head inwardly, ‘Is her mind too weak, or is there
some particular injury to it?’
At this moment, the steel fenced door was abruptly pulled open, and a circle of higher ups from the marine tribe walked in.

The leader’s face had a few blue scales on it. He looked towards Belinda coldly, and read from a sheepskin scroll, “Belinda, the headquarters has decided that you’ve turned your back on the Master of Order, profaning the glory of the dignitary. We judge you to have committed the crime of colluding with the enemy.”

“No, no! This is impossible!” Belinda completely crumbled down.

“Nothing is impossible!” The marine tribe leader tossed the document in front of her, the seal from the headquarters at the bottom right corner. It emitted dazzling lights, and wasn’t something that could be faked.

After seeing the scarlet words of judgment on it, Belinda had almost completely given up.

“Even… even if the headquarters is infected by chaos and filth, I still have the dignitary. I’m still a Sacrificer…” Belinda trembled, a sacrificial spell formation appearing at the tip of her finger. Compared to Leylin’s, there was only a rune of an eye at the heart of the formation.

*Pak!* The eye cracked and the spell formation dissipated, not giving a reply. This situation signified that the dignitary, the Trial’s Eye, did not accept Belinda’s offering. In other words, she had been abandoned.
Of course, the common people did not know that on the path of offerings, ‘equal exchange’ meant that even if the dignitary broke off the connection with the Sacrificer or did not accept their offering, what had been given would not be returned. This was a trade of equal exchange, and since the Sacrificer had offered something up it wouldn’t be returned.

It was similar with the governor of Elias. If he gave up his belief in the Nefarious Filthbird, or it did not accept his offerings, then he would at most not be able to obtain a boost from it. However, the results from previous ceremonies were permanent and remained. This was unlike the priests of gods. Once gods abandoned them, they would lose all their status and magic power. That way had its own advantages and disadvantages.

“No! NO, why? Why did things turn out this way?” If the decision from the headquarters had pushed Belinda to the verge of collapse, this was a fatal blow.

“Why… not just the headquarters, but even the mighty dignitary did not believe that I’ve been slandered and treated unfairly…”

“Cheer up, Belinda! The mighty dignitary definitely knows the truth, but you need to make a sacrifice for its sake.” Leylin quietly stood beside Belinda, gently patting back of her hand that was on her shoulder.

In all organisations, the members would need to make sacrifices for the big picture. It was a normal thing, and if they didn’t do so they would be criticised by the public. In these days, it seemed like if a superior wanted a subordinate dead, the subordinate had no choice but to die.

Everything was for benefits. The benefits of a collective group took priority over personal gain. When met with this situation, complaining wasn’t even possible. One would have to take the initiative and rush to sacrifice oneself, else it would bring trouble to their family and friends.
Of course, if this person did not care for their lives, nor their friends and family, and had nothing to be concerned about, things would become difficult to handle. However, these people were usually unstable, posing as a threat to their communities, and needed to be eliminated. For the current situation, the Trial’s Eye had made this decision despite knowing that Belinda had been maligned. Belinda would thus be sacrificed.

Perhaps after pacifying the marine tribe, the headquarters would send people over to tidy up, removing any malignant tumours and people who could not be controlled. After decades or a whole century, there would be political change and Belinda might even be given the title of a ‘saint’, revered by the later generations and turning into a leader. However, if the person was dead, what was the point?

However, Leylin could not deny the point of the organisation’s actions. In a physically weak world, joining forces to form organisations was the way of the powerful. When one member’s benefits were sacrificed, they could do nothing but exhibit enthusiasm for it. However, this was different! When a person’s personal strength was immense, they would have the right to go against the organisation. In a world where extraordinary strength existed, individuals who were powerful became important. Especially in the Purgatory World, where a few dignitaries governed all the continents, murder and plunder was the best proof of this concept.

Hence, besides obediently dying, there was no other better option for her. Of course, she still had other options, like how Leylin was preparing to work some magic.

“There’s no slandering or conspiracy. This is the truth! Belinda, you colluded with the organisation of the Nefarious Filthbird and
entrapped Lord Bayclark. We are going to punish you.” Seeing Leylin stand out, the marine tribeman’s pupils shone with dissatisfaction.

This was a natural feeling when a subordinate dared go against a superior’s authority.

“Alright! I’m not of your organisation and obviously can’t commit the crime of colluding with the enemy. I wonder when I can leave?” Leylin spread his arms and laughed.

“You must be a believer of the Nefarious Filthbird, and must be communicating with the enemy organisation with Belinda. You must be punished as well!”

The leader did not even blink as it spoke. Leylin almost wanted to give the leader applause, as he had guessed a truth that not even the Trial’s Eye knew about.

It had to be said that the leader had gotten it completely right by luck.

“What’s with all the bullshit, just kill them!”

A Morning Star beside it already had shining undulations of a beast spirit summoner.

For them, leaving Belinda and Leylin around was just going to create more issues. They’d had to contact headquarters before, and now that they had the permission to there was nothing left to consider.

“In that case…” Leylin shrugged his shoulders. Suddenly, his aura changed, turning from a little rabbit to a large, fierce tiger.

*Hssss* A tremendous Alabaster Devilsnake phantom suddenly squeezed out behind him, producing ear-splitting roars.

*Rumble!* *Bang!* Terrifying explosions reduced the room to fragments.

“Kill them! Don’t hold back!” The leader yelled out, and a large shark-shaped beast spirit appeared, roaming in the air. Light flashed, energy undulations from sacrifices and beast spirits
constantly appearing. It caused even this islet to begin shaking slightly.

“Wahaha… you’re all liars. Liars!” At this moment, Belinda, who had been under Leylin’s protection, suddenly seemed to go mad, and her face flushed unusually.

“I was treated that way and even by the Trial’s Eye! What value does my faith and persistence have?” Along with her complaints and questions, two rows of bloody tears flowed from her eyes.

“In that case, let filth destroy the world!” An evil aura emanated from her body, and large amounts of dreamforce filled the surroundings, even turning black.

‘Could this be… the rumoured black conversion?’ Leylin wanted to say something, but he stopped himself.

“It’s not the time to say such stupid things. Let’s go!” The dreamforce that was summoned by Belinda abruptly converged in Leylin’s hand. It seemed to be weaved subtly, transforming into an even more powerful force.

A large black net brought with it an oppressive force that gave rise to despair as it enveloped the islet. Deafening roars were heard everywhere, but whether it was the rank 4 sea shark beast spirit that belonged to the marine tribe leader, or the attacks from others, nobody could take on this large black net.

Hazy dreamforce even caused the guards to lose their sight and crumble to the ground.

“Sinphobic Flames!” With Leylin’s soul strength, countless black flames appeared on the large black net. Differing from his phoenix fire, the black flames held a large amount of hatred within.

The sea species that had been burnt by the flames grew despondent, their bodies losing life undulations while their carcasses were preserved.

“Those flames target the soul! Careful!” The leader roared, and the Aquatic Shark beast spirit he summoned feared the black flames
immensely.
After all, when it came to this kind of spirit body, the Sinphobic Flames were like their natural enemy.
In the span of one attack, all of the marine folk below rank 4 near the islet had been annihilated by the black flames. The net then constantly shrunk, trapping the Morning Stars in a tiny space.
“This strength… this strength…” The leader now looked deathly pale. If he had known Belinda had this ability and Nick was so vicious, he would have employed more gentle tactics.
However, it was too late at this point. The leader still tried till the end though.
“Wait… Belinda, we’re willing to send out a joint declaration to free you of all injustice, and we’ll even repent to the Master of Order. Please don’t…”
“Haha… haha… do you think I’m the same as before?” Belinda laughed madly, body filling with some red patterns. The dark dreamforce was being extracted unceasingly.
‘Vampiric Berserker transformation? Or is it an attack that consumes the bloodline?’ Leylin shook his head, not hesitating as he made use of her dreamforce, increasing the black flames in the large net.
At this moment, a strange undulation was transmitted as a rank 4 Sacrificer tried to summon a clone of the Trial’s Eye.
“Dream on!” Leylin sneered, and with a flash of his Feather of Chaos, chaotic power spread out, disrupting their coordinates and causing the Sacrificer that was summoning the clone of the Trial’s Eye to cough up fresh blood.
their final struggles taken care of, the truesouls of the many kinsmen of the marine tribes were corroded by the black flames and they all died with a loud rumble.

“You did well, annihilating so many Sacrificers of the Trial’s Eye. Here’s a reward!” The chaotic force of the Nefarious Filthbird was projected into Leylin’s mind with a royal declaration, great amount of chaos power descending through subconscious communication.

[Beep! Discovered large amounts of the law of chaos. Absorb?]

“No! Store it all.” With Leylin’s command, the large amount of chaotic force turned into grey crystals that he secretly stored. The black flames gradually died out, revealing an islet that now had no other traces of life.

“Keke… so they all died just like that? I thought they’d be more fun…” Belinda laughed maniacally.

Leylin appeared behind in her in that instant, light shining in his hands.

“What are you doing?” Belinda shrieked. Immediately after, her eyes rolled back as she fell unconscious.

“Mm… The bloodline consumption was so huge that even her mind is exhausted.” Leylin shook his head. She had obviously gone half crazy. If not for that, no matter how discreet he was in gathering the chaotic power she would have noticed it.
“Ugh…” With a light hum, Belinda slowly opened her eyes. What entered her sights was a scene where abundant stars filled the skies, as well as the flickering firelight from a bonfire that lit up the area. Slight crackling sounds sounded from the fire, and a few grilled fish that were skewered on tree branches were stuck in the ground beside the fire. An aroma of greasy food spread out from the fish unendingly.

“You’re awake! Would you like some?” Leylin chuckled as he handed a branch with a few grilled fish on it to Belinda. Belinda took it without thought, her eyes still filled with bewilderment. Immediately after, the betrayal of the marine tribe as well as the decision from headquarters, even the memories of the failed offering to the dignitary of trials emerged.

“Ah…” The snake girl exclaimed, the grilled fish falling to the ground.

“Was all of that real?” Belinda raised her arms, watching the little sacrificial array branded into her skin. Now, however, the rune for the Trial’s Eye had completely dimmed; there were even cracks on it. She went quiet. The frailness of her body was proof of her crazed slaughter before, and it caused a wry smile about her lips, “I’d thought my faith was strong… I didn’t expect it to be so fragile.”

“I think you did very well already!” Leylin smiled, passing over another portion of grilled meat, “Whatever it is, you’re alive. That’s the greatest blessing!”

“…” Belinda sunk into silence for a long while before she took the meat from Leylin.

“Thank you.” The sound was as soft as the buzzing of a fly. If not for his exceptional senses, he wouldn’t have been able to hear it.
“Why did you save me? Did you hope I’d be your mate?” Belinda asked after a silent meal. The question left Leylin stunned.

‘Mate? Ah, she’s of another race and even a snake at that. Her ideas of this sort of thing are a little different.’ Leylin nodded without a change in expression even as such a thought coursed through his mind. “That’s the smallest part of it. It’s more because we are of the same species. Mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnakes are dwindling in number, and I can’t just watch you die…”

“My life is very complicated, and I even betrayed the Trial’s Eye. I’d bring you many troubles if we work together!” Belinda seemed to have recovered from her previous shock, once more the strong, able woman she was.

The branch in her hands snapped as she huffed, her whole body relaxing as she seemed to have come to a decision.

“Since I’ve already offended the Master of Order, we can only hide in the depths of the Hail Continent…” Belinda calmly analysed, “Though the Matriarch and the Trial’s Eye are allies, they wouldn’t send out a bounty just for this. With our bloodline, going to other continents would only lead to discrimination. My own situation is a good example!”

“It’s not an issue for me. I’ve been travelling around the archipelago; I’ve been thinking about going to the Hail Continent…” Leylin was in favour of her decision.

In reality, that was his main goal. If not, why would he spend so much effort on saving her?

“We will enter through the borders of the nearest continent and then traverse through the Serpent Plains to reach the Holy City. I have connections there, so they might be able to help us…” Belinda stood up, “In return for your help, I will find you a mate with a bloodline purity that does not lose to mine. Of course, if you’re certain about your choice, that’s not a problem!”

“Alright,” Leylin touched his chin, appearing ‘embarrassed’. He
was actually rendered speechless at her using such a simple method to thank him.

“Beast spirit summon Godric!” A layer of blue patterns emerged from Leylin as he stood by the coast. Their rest was done, and the figure of the quick-witted Godric appeared. It was just that the injuries from the last battle left it dull. Healing beast spirits was a very advanced technique. Only a few high-ranked beast spirit masters in the Purgatory World could do such a thing, so even if Leylin had methods to heal his beast spirit he couldn’t show them now,

The large Godric mooed as it turned into a streak of light. It spread its two large fleshy wings on the surface of the waters, its expansive back as flat as land.

“Let’s go!” Leylin said while jumping on. Belinda soon followed as well. Her scarlet pupils scanned the Godric and she shook her head, eyes full of pity, “Godrics mature to rank 4 beasts, but they’re very difficult to control. Those merchants capture young creatures and then seal or even extract their souls. That’s just…” Following that, she glanced towards Leylin, “I see that the beast spirits you have on you is meagre… don’t you have a healthier beast spirit? Injuries to the soul will only grow more serious in such a state, and even healers won’t be of much help…”

“I’m merely a rank 3 beast spirit master,” Leylin touched his chin, slightly embarrassed. He had bought this Godric at the port, using it as a temporary substitute. He had bought this Godric at the port, using it as a temporary substitute. He had no plans of healing it, and at most was prepared to make use of this trash once more. “I’m more proficient in innate spells and the manipulation of dreamforce.”

“Mm!” Belinda nodded, evidently recalling Leylin’s astounding skill at using dreamforce.

“Since we’re companions for now, we should be honest with each other. Let me reintroduce myself. My name is Belinda, and I’m a
rank 4 beast spirit master and rank 3 Sacrificer. Of course, my identity as a Sacrificer is of no use…”
The Godric flew along the shipping route quickly, leaving long trails of white lines. Belinda gathered her disheveled hair and smiled at him.
“A rank 4 beast spirit master? I don’t think I’ve seen you use your beast spirit though?” In the crazed state before, she had even ignited her bloodline source and yet did not summon her own rank 4 beast spirit, which left Leylin surprised.
“My beast spirit is a little special. If possible, I won’t use it in my whole life…”
She forced out a smile, her facial muscles stiff. She clearly recalled some bad memories, and Leylin tactfully did not question her further.
“My name is Nick, and I’m a rank 3 beast spirit master! I’m more proficient in physical battles as well as using the Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline force.” Leylin replied with a very sincere expression on his face.
“Which port are we going ashore at?”
“Though the Hail Continent doesn’t get information from the outside that often, some ports might have long since announced for our arrest. We can probably only choose coasts with no beings around. Thankfully, we’re using a beast spirit, so there won’t be issues with anchoring and maintenance.”
Belinda naturally knew more about the Hail Continent than Leylin. After all, no matter how hard Leylin tried to gather information, it was all theoretical. Nobody would know the place better than its inhabitants.
The Gordric’s low moos continued to sound as the two gazed into the distant coastline, looking to be deep in thought.

……
Two days later, beside a wasteland.
The black rocks outside emitted a pungent smell. Leylin was bored to death, leaning on a rock while quietly in wait.
A large port showed itself in his line of sight, pure white marble carvings, lighthouses, and all sorts of noticeable buildings exuding an incomparable beauty.
The whole port was bustling with life, and large numbers of beings of other races could occasionally be seen walking the streets.
After sneaking into the Hail Continent, Leylin and Belinda had stealthily hidden themselves near a port so they could gather important information, maps, and supplies. Belinda had volunteered to make some inquiries for more information. Knowing she was more experienced and familiar with this than he was, Leylin sensibly did not oppose her.
“Catch!” A linen pouch flew over as a loud shout sounded.
*Thud!* Leylin extended his hands and caught it, “What is it?”
“A map, and some other necessities.” Belinda currently wore a thick cloak, covering all her characteristics as a demisnake. She was obviously very cautious.
“How is it? What kind of information did you get?” Leylin asked impatiently.
“So, are you finally scared?” Belinda, on the other hand, teased him.
“O f course I’m afraid!” Leylin seemed to be very confident, “After all we destroyed a port belonging to the Master of Chaos and even massacred a branch belonging to the Master of Order! Oh, mighty dignitary, the Matriarch! I hope they don’t join together and put a bounty on us, else we really will become famous!”

Leylin’s performance was a huge success, and the look of suffering on his face caused Belinda to mock him.

“Hmph! A port? Port Elias was only an illegal private port that their governor established himself. He didn’t get any permission from the Hail Continent, and even amongst the high ranking Sacrificers of the Nefarious Filthbird, very few acknowledge it… In a colony like this, it’s merely an attempt on the Filthbird’s end. It would be great if it went well, but even if it were to fail, there aren’t any major losses…

“Besides, this is the territory of the the Eye of Order’s ally, the Matriarch! The Master of Chaos and the Eye of Order are arch enemies, which is why they’ll at most pursue us on the sly but won’t do anything too drastic… the only thing I’m worried about is the organisations belonging to the Eye of Order.”

Belinda was clearly worried, “I’ve already looked through the announcements at the port. Unfortunately, I seem to be wanted by the Eye of Order, and news will spread very quickly…”

Immediately after, she looked towards Leylin, with eyes full of
reservation, “While you did murder most of them, no news about you has spread. If you want to leave now, there’s still time!”

Leylin was quiet. He obviously knew that this wasn’t just because he’d silenced them, but because of the cover of chaos power. That was why the his traces had been reduced to the bare minimum. However, watching Belinda, who was slightly nervous, Leylin merely smiled, “Did you think I would leave you for my own safety?”

“Why not? News of me being wanted by Trial’s Eye will spread through the Hail Continent!” Belinda laughed coldly, “When the time comes, you and I will be pursued till the ends of the earth because we’re working together!”

“Oh. That seems rather interesting.” Leylin stroked his chin apathetically.

“You…” Belinda was so furious that her whole body began to shake, and she appeared rather agitated.

Leylin astutely noticed the change in her mood. Laughing inside, he still looked serious, “Where do we go next? Can the Holy City at the heart of the Hail Continent still take us in?”

“You’re… you’re really a fool,” Belinda’s eyes filled with tenderness. She stared hard at Leylin for a while, but she still ended up explaining, “Don’t worry, the Holy City is a sacred land for all descendants of the Matriarch. With my connections, there shouldn’t be any problem…”

“That’s good!” Leylin patted his chest, looking slightly afraid.

“You…” Belinda was so frustrated that she laughed instead, finding herself unable to speak while Leylin spread out the parchment paper in his hands.

“This map is… so vague! Are we now at the port of the Andersus Union?” This map that was yellowed at the ages was very crude, with only the names of a few places on it. Furthermore, this was only the map of a region.
Leylin understood the reason for this. In this age, a complete map that had very high precision of the continent was so expensive that perhaps most Magi would need to spend their whole fortune on it. Belinda being able to get a hold of this was mostly thanks to them being at a trading port.

While commanding the A.I. Chip to record the information, Leylin recalled the the resources he had gathered, and the general appearance of the Hail Continent slowly emerged in his mind.

The Hail Continent was one of the seven continents of the Purgatory World, ruled by the Snake Dowager. Its lands were extensive with many undeveloped regions. Barbaric beings who ate raw meat and fowl, and even prehistoric giant beasts were common there.

The main inhabitants of the continent were all descendants of the Snake Dowager. All sorts of pure-blooded giant snakes, mixed-bloods with characteristics of giant snakes, and other species of snakes who were very distant relatives took up about two-thirds of its populations.

The remaining races, such as Beholders, Purgatory Pygmies, energy lifeforms, elementals and even humans were spread out across the continent. Of course, compared to descendants of the Snake Dowager, they were insignificant. They had tribes and clans, and existed between the cracks of two large cities or organisations.

Something worthy of note was that the ruling structure of the Hail Continent was a system of city states governed by clans. War among various city states were common, whether between two different races or amongst the same race.

The so-called Holy City was established with the joint decision of the descendants of the Snake Dowager. In theory, this was the core government of the Hail Continent, and was said to be the place the Snake Dowager favoured.

The Hail Continent would have to listen to the commands from the
Holy City, though in actuality it depended on the individual masters of the various city states.

“From here all the way to the Holy City, it’ll take us more than a year even if we hurry there with all our strength…” Belinda unhurriedly pointed at a marking of a port on the map. At this moment, all sorts of emotions flitted past her face until she eventually grew resolved, “But I found a very special route here. As long as we pass a certain region, we can make use of a teleportation spell formation and reach the Serpent Plains, which will save us a lot of time…”

“Is that so? Then let’s do as you say!” Time was of essence for Leylin, and the more convenient things were, the better for him. As for whether she would find him suspicious, he had nothing to fear with his current strength.

He, who had regained much of his strength and had a boost as a rank 4 Sacrificer, felt like he could contend against even a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Monarch.

Breaking Dawn Monarchs, rank 6 Magi, had all grasped part of the power of laws. They were exceptionally more powerful than most other rank 6 beings. Of course, being able to contend against them did not mean he could defeat them. Leylin believed he was only comparable to a weak rank 6 at this point.

However, in the Purgatory World, it was said that there were a total of seven beings at rank 7 or above, and a small number of rank 6s. With Leylin’s current strength, if not for his fear for the Snake Dowager he would be free to do as he liked in the Hail Continent. Belinda currently had strength at the Morning Star realm at best. What could she do?

‘Seeing her expression right now, she seems to be prepared to cut off her past. Could she be planning to settle some disputes within her family?’ Leylin wondered while stroking his chin.

‘Adult Alabaster Devilsnakes can only reach rank 5, which won’t be a huge issue. I really want to gather a pure bloodline. After all,
high-energy beings which can use dreamforce and connect with Dreamscape are very rare…” Though the Alabaster Devilsnake was a descendant of the Snake Dowager and was well taken care of, it was because they were right under her nose that she would definitely not allow the appearance of a Serpent Emperor amongst them.

Even a rank 6 Alabaster Devilsnake Emperor would not have a community of its own. For Leylin as he was now, it was like a dish served on a platter.

‘I just need to be careful while operating in the Hail Continent. If the Snake Dowager discovers me, perhaps the Feather of Chaos could be helpful…’ Leylin’s palm subconsciously touched the area at his chest, where a grey Nefarious Filthbird feather emanated a hazy glow.

The Nefarious Filthbird’s law of chaos had the effects of concealment and misleading others. With the boost from the power of chaos, Leylin now had more confidence in hiding his tracks. If not, Leylin wouldn’t be confident in sneaking into this nest of the Snake Dowager where there were so many Sacrificers.

Compared to his previous infiltration attempt which had been very difficult, he was now much more assured in his success. In spite of the slight restrictions, the deal with the Nefarious Filthbird was worth it.

‘But I still need to defend against the bird. If it were to betray me at the last moment, I might just turn into a gift for the Snake Dowager to improve their relationship instead…’ Leylin’s eyes shone with blue light, the Nefarious Filthbird energy in his body under strict surveillance.

Leylin did not have to worry about the same with the Trial’s Eye, the Nefarious Filthbird was arch-enemies with it and their rivalry extended across numerous worlds. That was perhaps something that extended to the current day from primordial times, an
irreconcilable hate. But things were different with the Snake Dowager. She was merely an ally of the Trial’s Eye, which might not even mean that much to her. If it could pay a price and entice the Snake Dowager to join its side, he was sure that the Filthbird would be very willing to do so. Though this was a tiny possibility, Leylin had to prepare for it. Such was the sorrow of the weak; Leylin was currently walking on thin ice, a small misstep causing irreparable harm.

“Oh, right, I bought this too!” With Belinda’s voice sounded, the roars of two large beings travelled to Leylin’s ear. At this moment, Leylin saw her pulling the reins, and the two beings’ silhouettes gradually emerged from the shadows. What appeared in front of him were two large earth-yellow lizard-like creatures. There were even man-made seats fixed atop their backs. “Since we are going to traverse through rather special environments, this sort of mount is essential.”
Under the radiant light of a purple moon, two dirt-yellow figures were galloping across the fields at a fast speed. These two yellow figures were naturally the two yellowish-brown earth lizards. The two figures sitting on their backs had their entire bodies tightly wrapped up, only exposing their scarlet pupils which flashed coldly from time to time.

“This earth lizard is a rather good way of getting around!” Leylin looked at the lower limbs of his mount. Above the lizard’s barbed feet was a translucent membrane, rich in energy particles which converged around its surface. With this, it could very easily traverse jungles, swamps and other complex terrain.

“When we cross the Dreamscape Forest, we will arrive at the Whiteriver Valley. That’s where my family is…” Belinda’s voice did not carry a single trace of joy.

“Dreamscape Forest? Why the name…” Leylin had some misgivings, and soon looked all around him. Their surroundings were all grasslands, and there was nothing like a forest nearby.

“Dreamscape Forest, Dreamscape! You mean…” Leylin’s pupils constricted slightly. His thoughts drifted to the Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline skill and he thought of a possibility.

[Beep! Spatial undulations detected ahead, determined to be Dreamscape access points.] The A.I. Chip’s mechanical voice transmitted over as well.

“That’s right. We’re also known as the Alabaster Devils, my clan
stays in the cracks leading to Dreamscape, and we often lure travellers in to prey on them.” Belinda’s voice was cold. Leylin’s thoughts, however, drifted to the A.I. Chip’s introduction of Alabaster Devilsnakes, ‘They enjoy tormenting their prey within Dreamscape before eating their meal!’

Traces of dark red fog appeared, making the surrounding area foggy and hazy. By the time they had passed through this fog, a strange forest immediately appeared in front of Leylin. The black branches and tree leaves criss-crossed, and there were many giant trees without a single leaf showing their bare form, like a grotesque withered arm waving about without stopping.

[Beep! Host has entered a Dreamscape zone!] the A.I. Chip transmitted in reminder.

‘Dreamscape zone… This isn’t actually dreamscape, nor is it the Hail Continent. It’s instead an intersection of the two places, resulting in a myriad of strange events… And now I’ve entered using my real body!’ There was a strange expression in Leylin’s eyes. Rather than his most recent experiences in Dreamscape, he was thrown back to his first time researching this world, with his real body fully entering it.

Even though he was physically protected and dreamforce should have less of an effect on his truesoul now, if something were to happen then it would be very difficult to escape.

“The bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake will temporarily protect us from the attacking Nightmare Creatures. Follow me closely!” Belinda shouted as she advanced forwards in front of Leylin.

‘The Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline!’ Leylin allowed a layer of white scales to cover the surface of his body. As expected, after entering the Dreamscape zone, these scales became even more brilliant. They seemed to come to life, breathing in the dark red dreamforce. It was like a traveller had returned home, and there was not the slightest sense of unfamiliarity.
The earlier oppressive feeling that Leylin had felt from the Dreamscape Forest also disappeared without a trace.
‘Alabaster Devilsnakes are darlings of Dreamscape. As expected, they are direct descendants who inherited a part of the Snake Dowager’s ability with Dreamscape.’ There was an admiring look in Leylin’s eyes, ‘A.I. Chip! Scan the entire area and establish task: Probe the Alabaster Devilsnake’s ability to travel to and from Dreamscape!’
[Beep: Task established, beginning data collection!] The A.I. Chip faithfully implemented Leylin’s command.
A pure-blooded Alabaster Devilsnake could travel through Dreamscape to the outside world; this was how one had originally attacked Leylin. A mixed-blood like Belinda only inherited a weakened form of this ability, and could merely communicate with Dreamscape and draw upon the strength of dreamforce. Although Leylin did not belong to the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline, he possessed the blood of a rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake, and was even in such a good environment to use it. Using the A.I. Chip to find a way for a real body to travel through Dreamscape would be very beneficial for him.
‘If I grasp this technique, I’ll be able to enter and leave Dreamscape anytime I want, anywhere I want. Perhaps…’ There seemed to be fires blazing in Leylin’s eyes.
Freely entering and leaving Dreamscape would require a huge amount of dreamforce as well as the resources of an enormous world. But the important thing was that he could use the infinite space of Dreamscape to travel to different worlds!
After all, limits such as distance and time were simply a joke in Dreamscape.
‘It seems like the transport array was a lie. Belinda wants to use Dreamscape as a springboard to travel directly to the Serpent Plains…’ Leylin concluded in secret.
Of course, using Dreamscape as transit wasn’t easy either. Forget the monsters and dangers that lurked there, just the extremely indefinite nature of Dreamscape gave Magi a great headache. It was likely that Belinda’s ancestors spend countless painstaking hours to explore the region and find this passageway.

The Dreamscape’s drop point was just a hair’s breadth away, but it could completely defeat their purpose. If the hadn’t possessed the Alabaster Devilsnake’s Dreamscape ability, they wouldn’t have dared to experiment so boldly.

Leylin sped up his earth lizard and moved to Belinda’s side, “Belinda! Is it possible to enter this Dreamscape Forest at any time?”

“Of course not! Although the Dreamscape Forest has always been in the wilderness plains, only those with the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline and the special opening ceremony can make the Forest appear. Otherwise they could travel the entire wilderness and only see the grasslands and sand…” Belinda hadn’t even turned to give him this immediate answer, “This is how…”

A spiritual force message immediately entered Leylin’s mind, full of information about incantations and signalling runes as well as special refining techniques. Seeing this, Leylin immediately realised how much Belinda’s clan had sacrificed to open up this safe pathway. And now he’d gone so far as to give this huge secret to him?

Leylin remained silent for a while, then asked, “Aren’t you afraid that I will sell this secret to other Alabaster Devilsnake clans?”

There were definitely other Alabaster Devilsnake clans in the Hail Continent. There were ten noble Alabaster Devilsnake clans, each varying in size, and these clans also had their respective branches and extended relatives.

Because of their open-minded nature, there was a large number of mixed-bloods and illegitimate children. This led to a huge number
of bloodlines draining out, and it was only because of this that Leylin dared to impersonate a mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnake. According to what Belinda said, her family was only a branch of a pure-blooded clan, and only her father, the head of the family, was a pure-blooded Alabaster Devilsnake. The rest were all mixed bloods or young children.

“Do as you wish! I’ve already given the information to you anyway, so it belongs to you.” Belinda seemed very casual, and her attitude shocked Leylin deeply.

‘It looks as if Belinda’s preparation to break off her relations with her clan will not be some easy matter. However, does this really concern me?’ A sly smile slowly curved at the edge of Leylin’s mouth.

‘This could be my chance. Not just for a bloodline, but also for research materials on Dreamscape, and even beast spirits and sacrifices among other things…’

“Haha……” At this moment, a yellow figure flashed in front of Leylin’s eyes.

Although the earth lizard’s speed in the forest was already very fast, the yellow figure clearly effortlessly surpassed them, flashing past them like a phantom.

“What is that thing?” Leylin asked in shock.

After a startlingly brief glimpse, he had seen the full view of the yellow figure from earlier. Wearing an outfit of ridiculously wide-fitting trousers, with clothes that were brightly coloured strips of cloth, this being had a face painted with oil colours. It looked like a clown from a play, but it managed to run at lightning quick in spite of cumbersome wooden shoes.

No! He couldn’t call it running. This clown was actually kind of floating, leaving many afterimages in its wake.

“Nightmare Creatures! They are a special patrol of the Dreamscape Forest. They don’t normally appear,” Belinda looked very imposing,
“But if they drag us into the real Dreamscape even if we’re mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnakes it will be hard for us to escape. After all, we’re not purebloods and don’t have the ability to freely traverse it…”

‘Nightmare Creatures?! Are they after me?’ Leylin was shocked, and an idea flashed in his head. After all, he didn’t have a true Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline, and even his ability to to link together with dreamforce came through consuming the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline. As a result, this anomaly of being discovered by the Nightmare Creatures could be understood.

“Haha… Haha……” They continued to advance towards Leylin, and the yellow clown appeared more and more frequently.

“Go away!” Belinda’s face was very impatient and she suddenly roared, scarlet ripples loudly exploding forwards, splashing on the trees and grass.

By the time the explosion had passed, the forest across them had been cleared into a bare pathway. The yellow clown that had been there had vanished without a trace.

“Coo coo……” The sound of fluttering bird wings could be heard, and soon after a gigantic black tree next to Belinda came to life,

“Ahh!” Belinda’s earth lizard was quickly bound up by vines, and let out a high-pitched lamenting call.

“Eternal Light!” A scarlet light suddenly appeared in Leylin’s hand, making the vines shrink back swiftly as if they had seen their natural enemy.

“Let’s go!” Belinda flew behind Leylin, and his earth lizard began to flee at the speed of lightning.
“These vile Dreamscape Creatures, we clearly had an agreement before for the protection of our bloodline!” Belinda snarled rudely, flushing red with anger.

“Dreamscape’s changes are too strange, we can’t judge it by normal standards…” Leylin had already faintly guessed the reason for the creatures chasing him, but naturally he wouldn’t say tell her, “Perhaps these Dreamscape Creatures are not the same as those you signed the agreement with…”

Hearing his words, Belinda became silent.

“Indeed. The strength of Dreamscape Creatures is not governed by any laws. Perhaps the Nightmare Creatures we had previously signed an agreement with have all died. These new Nightmare Creatures could even have evolved from earthworms yesterday.” A wry smile appeared on Belinda’s face, as if she had figured it out.

“Even with our bloodline, our use of dreamforce cannot match that of these natives, we’re in trouble.” She looked at Leylin with a twinge of regret in her eyes, she clearly felt very apologetic about involving him in this.

“Nevermind, I agreed to this path myself.” Leylin spurred on the earth lizard he was riding, making it increase its speed without stopping. However, the rays of light in his hand did not fade in the slightest.

‘A.I. Chip, attempt to detect the position of these Nightmare Creatures.’ While silent, he was conversing with the A.I. Chip in
his mind.
[Beep! Scanning… Unknown interference experienced, unable to determine positions.] The A.I. Chip’s answer filled Leylin with regret.

*Crash!* At this moment, waves seemed to be traversing the earth itself, causing it to violently rise and fall. A great number of the giant black trees roared, unrooting themselves from the earth. Their vines were so thick that they obscured the sky completely, sheltering the trees from the light.

*Whoosh!* A black bat shot across the sky like a hurricane, extinguishing the light in Leylin’s hands.

“We cannot lose our way! I can only be sure of our safety on this route!” Belinda’s expression became rather urgent.

“Roar…” A great number of the one-eyed Ents combined to form a wall of wood, covering the original path. Leylin and Belinda were blocked off firmly.

‘Damn!’ Leylin cursed in secret. The A.I. Chip’s prompt came over as well, [Violent dreamforce undulations discovered from underneath the host, it is recommended to move away.]

“Go!” Leylin grabbed Belinda and began to leap quickly away.

*Whoosh!* Just as Leylin had risen into the air, a dark red spot suddenly appeared on the ground, transforming the void into innumerable streaks. The streaks twisted and warped, revolving to form an irregular sphere.

This sphere suddenly shrank and began to emit terrifying undulations.

A massive explosion rumbled out, and Leylin’s mount was immediately reduced to a skeleton before even its bones vanished completely. Leylin and Belinda were immediately caught up in a frightening shockwave halfway into the sky, sent flying violently. It was as if they struck a wall of solid steel.

*Bang!* Leylin fell to the ground, and even the clothes on his back
were shredded open, exposing a layer of fine scales beneath. It was because of this layer of protection that he hadn’t suffered a massive injury from the earlier explosion.

“Belinda! Belinda!” Leylin flicked away the soil on his body and loudly shouted, but did not receive any response.

He looked around him. He was in a neat garden, with clear spring water splashing out of a white marble fountain. Belinda and the forest from earlier had completely vanished without a trace.

[Beep! Scanning complete, dreamforce intensity increased, host determined to be in Dreamscape.] The A.I. Chip’s prompt appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

‘As expected, that explosion earlier took me directly from the crack between Dreamscape and the Purgatory World to Dreamscape itself. This…’ Leylin had a premonition. If he could completely analyse this process, it would be of great benefit to the A.I. Chip’s mission of analysing Dreamscape transport.

After completely comprehending the law behind this sort of transport, he would no longer need the bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake to enter Dreamscape. Transporting himself to other worlds would bring about great benefits.

‘Dreamscape…’ Leylin looked upon the realistic scene of the garden and fountain with a contemplative expression.

This time, he had entered Dreamscape with his real body. Without his main body serving as the coordinate, and without the astral laboratory linked with it, perhaps he would be trapped here for the rest of his life.

‘However, the Alabaster Devilsnake blood that I possess is the key to entering and leaving Dreamscape.’ Leylin stroked his chin in thought. His mind drifted to another topic.

“Almighty Ruler of Chaos, the resolution of free will, I call for your arrival…” The chaos crystal Leylin had collected earlier exploded in his hand, converging quickly into a Sacrificial Array.
The rune of the array depicted a giant bird with wings spread open, and it emitted a brilliant radiance.

‘It was very difficult to link up. Because I’m only a rank 4 Sacrificer, I used up a chaos power crystal…’ Leylin shut his eyes, his truesoul experiencing the power of the link.

The path of sacrifices was only common to the Purgatory World, and it naturally had its limits. The main one was that, once one left the Purgatory World, their connection would experience enormous interference.

On the whole, it was not beneficial for experts from other worlds to train in the path of offerings. It was like the distribution of goods: It didn’t have many problems in the Purgatory World, but once one left it was like the trade route had become longer and on top of that various obstacles were added. It was terrible, and on a whole Sacrificers would make a loss every time some power was bestowed. Naturally, this path wouldn’t be used in that case.

Consequently, those in the Magus World would at most use the Trial’s Eye to sign a contract or the Nefarious Filthbird to renege on it. These two had few real Sacrificers there due to the frightful weakening effect of the world itself.

It was the same in Dreamscape. However, with Leylin’s unwavering perseverance and lack of regard for the consumption of chaos power crystals, his truesoul finally linked up to a certain will.

Compared to the Purgatory World where the Nefarious Filthbird’s will could descend anytime and anywhere, it was extremely troublesome here. It was just like receiving a bad signal from a transmitting station, even the information that got there was disjointed.

“You are… in Dream…scape…” The Nefarious Filthbird’s voice seemed to be a little intermittent, but Leylin could still understand its meaning.

“The forces separating us are too powerful, even I am unable to
transmit too much power. Perhaps only my Feather of Chaos can give you some hope…”

“Feather of Chaos?” Leylin still had some doubts, but the Sacrificial Array did not have any other response. The communications had quickly broken down, and even receiving these few short sentences had consumed nearly half his chaos crystal reserves.

It was necessary to understand that this chaos power was a part of his reward for getting rid of a portion of the Trial’s Eye forces in the Hail Continent’s coastal waters. He’d even dispatched many rank 4s to acquire it.

In actual fact, these crystals with the Nefarious Filthbird’s power were enough for a rank 4 Sacrificer to amplify his attributes by more than tenfold, and at the very least they would reach the level of the governor of Elias.

“Dreamforce, chaos power… these two share some similarities…” Leylin reached into his bag and took out a grey feather.

‘The power of the Feather of Chaos lies in chaos, concealment. Dreamforce itself is full of uncertainties. There seem to be some similarities, but there is a greater number of differences. How will chaos power affect Dreamscape?’

“A.I. Chip, record the following scenes and store all data!” Leylin commanded.

[Beep! Establishing mission, opening omni-directional mode!] The A.I. Chip’s voice was transmitted.

‘Chaos power!’ Leylin took out yet another grey chaos crystal, putting it next to the feather.

*Buzz!* Bright, coloured light burst forth from the crystals, and soon after the chaos power turned into a stream of light that entered the Feather of Chaos.

A layer of grey mist radiated in all directions. The areas illuminated by the feather’s radiance began to experience strange
transformations, and a great number of flowerbeds began to warp and deform. Some directly cracked, and the others grew irregular. Other areas turned into places filled with human faces. The white marble of the fountain turned pitch black in a flash, and began to fall off layer by layer. In the blink of an eye, the clear spring water within had also turned blood red, and the entire pool seemed to be filled with blood, a demonic stench emanating from it.

Even the space in this area disintegrated under the grey radiance, the entire place appearing to come to a standstill. It drained of its colour, becoming like a black and white photograph.

“Coo! Good afternoon, mister! We meet again!” A grey owl fluttered its wings and landed on the side of the fountain. Leylin felt incomparably familiar with it.

“Indeed, we meet again,” Leylin bowed slightly, “Your Majesty gave me my key before, and it was of great help to me. But I’m afraid I’ll have to trouble you again, does Your Majesty know of a way to leave Dreamscape?”

“What key? Are you talking about my future self?” The owl nipped at its wings, “That doesn’t concern me at all, that was my future self acting on its own initiative… As for the issue of leaving… perhaps Madam Minaz could help you..”

“Madam Minaz? Where is she?” Leylin eagerly made his inquiry, but at this moment the owl that had appeared so suddenly earlier had completely vanished with a trace.
When did it disappear? Why didn’t I notice at all?’ Leylin’s pupils shrank as he watched the now-empty fountain of blood. Crackling sounded as the fountain disassembled itself at a faster rate. The bricks, rocks, soil, flowers, and grass all came apart into tiny beads that banded together to form a twisted humanoid figure. This twisted figure constantly drew in parts of the garden and became increasingly solid, until at last it turned into a woman who had a black beach umbrella with her.

“I heard from Owl that you’re looking for me?” The woman had her back to Leylin, dressed in black clothing and using the large area of the umbrella to cover her upper body. Leylin could only see her black dress and crystal shoes, and hear a pleasant rich voice that could subconsciously intoxicate a person.

“Looking for you? Could you be Madam Minaz? Yes, I’d like to know if there are any ways to freely leave Dreamscape!” A layer of black Kemoyin scales emerged on Leylin’s skin, and his pupils even turned amber and vertical. After all, the way she had appeared was rather mysterious. She looked to be a personification of the garden.

After turning into Madam Minaz, the garden had now turned into an empty land, and even the surface of the ground had disappeared.

‘Dreamscape is far too mysterious. If I have no confidence at all, I
should definitely not set my foot here…’ Leylin was slightly jittery, loathing the fact that he was in a world with such factors that could not be controlled.
Perhaps it could be said that no Magi really liked Dreamscape. It’s lack of adherence to rules led to most of their methods becoming ineffective. Of course, some would say that this was because the absolute laws governing Dreamscape hadn’t been discovered yet. One could simplify the analysis of Dreamscape once that law was found, and the Magus who managed to do so would likely get immense benefits.
“Yes. That owl! It’s the best at causing trouble for others!” The woman holding the black umbrella turned.
Leylin took several steps back. The front view of this Madam Minaz was quite surprising. She had a distorted face with no eyes, and a nose and mouth at different locations. Her visage looked like an abstract work of art. Her upper body had numerous lifeless eyes on it that were staring at Leylin.
“Thousand-Eyed Woman! It’s rumoured that a gaze could cause a Magus to fall permanently!” Leylin exclaimed, and a tremendous Kemoyin Emperor phantom appeared behind him.
“You’re afraid? Why?” At this moment, her voice had undergone a huge change. It lost its previous tenderness, becoming robotic and icy, even hiding a hint of contempt. The eyes on her upper body suddenly released a multitude of rays of light.
Light spread into the skies and blanketed the region, making the so-called death rays of Beholders look like child’s play. The powerful radiance seared Leylin’s eyes, forcing him to cover them.
The moment he opened them again, Leylin was stunned. Around him was a dark forest, and the one-eyed Ent from before had long since disappeared. The earth lizard was still moving up and down underneath him.
Belinda’s voice was heard from the other side, “Do whatever you
like! Since I’ve already given it to you, it’s yours!”
‘This scene… It’s when I just entered the Dreamscape Forest and commanded the A.I. Chip to analyse this…’ Leylin’s pupils shrank, and he looked at the records of the A.I. Chip. However, it left Leylin disappointed, even in shock. The Chip’s records were all blank since the moment he’d ordered it to analyse the methods the Alabaster Devilsnakes used to traverse Dreamscape.
‘Why did this happen?’
[Beep! Unpreventable interference encountered. Records are abnormal.] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice caused Leylin’s expression to go dark. Immediately after, he saw the newest records. [Beep! Analysis of ability of Alabaster Devilsnake to traverse Dreamscape has been completed. Dreamscape can be entered at will by consuming a bloodline imprint. Host lacks enough blood at the moment and cannot refine a bloodline imprint.]
;That’s impossible. Didn’t it say that a large amount of time was needed?;
Leylin’s eyes showed how deeply in thought he was, ‘So everything that happened was real! The ability to enter and exit Dreamscape was not analysed by the A.I. Chip, but given by the Thousand-Eyed Woman, Madam Minaz…’
‘Time…’ Leylin sighed. Even the concept of time had been warped by Dreamscape. Encountering such a scene, he was still terrified even after it ended.
All the dangers he’d encountered previously with dreamforce paled in comparison to the warping of spacetime that occurred. It probably wasn’t just him. Perhaps even a rank 7 could do nothing against these illogical events in Dreamscape.
‘Dreamforce, the ability to warp time and space… that’s a realm I can’t even make contact with as I am now…’ Leylin sighed.
“What’s wrong? After going through Dreamscape Forest, we’ll reach Whiteriver Valley. Once we pass that we’ll be at the Serpent Plains. That’s a month away from the holy city.” Belinda slowed down and arrived beside Leylin, her eyes full of concern.

“It’s nothing, I was just lost in thought,” Leylin smiled a little and shook his head.

“Though the Dreamscape zone isn’t as mysterious as Dreamscape, the ample dreamforce here is enough for Magi to unknowingly be dragged into illusions, with even more terrifying wretched Dreamscape Creatures here… Of course, for mixed blood Alabaster Devilsnakes like us, this isn’t a large issue… After all, we’ve already made a contract and have the protection of our bloodlines…” Belinda explained.

‘But that wasn’t what happened!’ Leylin cursed inside, but did not speak. After all, things that dealt with warping time and space were too frightening.

Unlike last time, this trip went very smoothly. There was no clown or Ent coming up and stirring trouble, and the Nightmare Creatures seemed to abide by the contract and did not harass them.

The dark red fog slowly dissipated, and the dark forest became more sparse. Occasionally, bits of clear moonlight shone down from above.

*Whoosh!* An unceasing sound of flowing water could be heard, and the earth lizards grew exceptionally excited, darting forward at a greater speed. Not long after, a vast river appeared in front of Leylin. The earth lizards cheered and lay down at the river, their thick barbed tongues extending into the water as they lapped it up.

“The white river, we’ve arrived!” Belinda’s voice showed her admiration, a glint showing in her eyes.

Leylin turned back. The black forest and dark red fog had long since disappeared without a trace. It seemed that without the summoning of Belinda or other descendants of the Alabaster
Devilsnake, it would not appear again. Unlike the previous barren lands, there was now a river valley nearby. Even the temperature and concentration of elemental particles had undergone a drastic change, allowing Leylin to know that the short period of time where they had run at night had allowed them to traverse a huge distance.

‘Using the indeterminacy of Dreamscape’s space and hurrying along a world crack to leave through a node… This is something like teleportation! The person who thought it up was a genius… Either that or a lunatic!’ Fear still lingered in the depths of Leylin’s heart.

From the port at the edges of Hail Continent, they had travelled about halfway through the continent. Were they to have used a teleportation spell formation, even one from ancient times would have consumed a huge amount of resources. Here, besides the preparations for the summoning Belinda had not done much. Just from how prompt it was, it was several levels ahead of these teleportation spell formations, if one could disregard its limitations and dangers of course.

As the Dreamscape Forest belonged to Dreamscape, only Alabaster Devilsnakes or bloodline creatures that could make contact with Dreamscape could discover or summon it. This in itself was a huge limitation, and what was more troublesome was the dangers near the end of the journey. Dreamscape was the riskiest of all the worlds Leylin had seen. What he’d witnessed this day probably wasn’t even the strangest thing about it. In the Dreamscape zone, he couldn’t even disregard any attacks from Dreamscape Creatures despite a prior agreement. Furthermore, in the eyes of the powerful devils, perhaps their attacks were not intentional attacks and were instead like a show of curiosity or intimacy with other beings.

It was a pity that a rank 5 being could do nothing against that
‘curiosity’.
“After the white river we’ll come to the whiteriver shore valley, another settlement for Alabaster Devilsnakes.” Belinda sounded muffled, and looked towards Leylin, “That’s also where my family is.”
“Oh! Are we going there to visit them?” Leylin nodded.
“There’s no need to. We’ll recuperate nearby. Meanwhile, I’m preparing to go there and take care of some matters, so don’t interfere!” A resolute look appeared on her face. This was a realisation through several life and death experiences, giving Leylin a premonition that this would involve blood. Of course, he wasn’t against it.
‘Looks like Belinda and her family have a very unique story.’ Leylin watched Belinda’s back and stroked his chin.
“This is good timing. The A.I. Chip has already analysed the bloodline imprint to traverse Dreamscape. It’s not bad to gather some materials…”
It was obvious how determined Belinda was, and how adamantly she was against Leylin’s interference. After settling Leylin at the Whiteriver Valley, Belinda regularly headed out early and returned late, seemingly in a hurry as she prepared for something.

Seven days later, she brought a girl who was about fifteen or sixteen, pulling her in front of Leylin. “This is my sister, Sophia. How is she? Do you like her?”

“Lord Nick, good- Good morning!” The girl called Sophia pulled at her skirt and bowed towards Leylin.

“Sister Sophia!” Leylin laughed as he sized her up. She looked similar to Belinda, with long silver hair and eyes that were like rubies. However, there was a hurry and uneasiness on her face.

“You… What’s this about?” Leylin glanced towards her, not knowing if he should laugh or cry in this situation.

“It’s nothing much. There’s stuff I need to do, so I’m hoping you can take care of her for a while…” Belinda ruffled her hair lovingly, “When she was young Sophia was seriously affected by a leakage in an experiment. Her appearance, and even her intelligence have been frozen at age fifteen. I secretly brought her out of the family…

“Sophia, when your sister is not around, you have to listen to Brother Nick obediently, alright?” Belinda pulled at Sophia’s hand and carefully reminded her.
“Alright, sister, and Nick… Brother Nick!” Sophia ducked her head, and her cheeks flushed. Leylin was left at a loss for words.

……

The Purgatory World only had four hours of daylight everyday. The sunlight wasn’t burning hot either, instead exuding an extremely rare warmth. The bright light shone down on the plains. All of Sophia’s fears from coming to a foreign environment had dissipated, and she was cheerfully watching a few butterflies that emitted light. A childlike beam plastered her face.

A distance away, Belinda and Leylin stood side by side.

“I can rest at ease now that I’ve handed her to you!” Belinda spoke as if she had been relieved from a burden.

“I hope you can treat her well. With her bloodline, your descendants will definitely be pure and of the Alabaster Devilsnake nobility…” Belinda spoke calmly, while Leylin merely rolled his eyes.

“It’s like you’re entrusting an orphan to me. Are you prepared to die?” Leylin asked without reservations.

“Die? No, just tying up some loose ends!” Hatred was evident on her face, “With all the years I’ve been making preparations, it should be enough to…”

Seeming to realise what she had said, Belinda hastily stopped, “Of course, I’m only requesting that you take care of her for a period of time. Once everything here is settled, I’ll meet with you. Let’s meet at the holy city.”

“ Seems like that was your plan from the start,” Leylin was unhurried, “And your preparations are the petals of the Serpent Intoxicating Flower, as well as the stealth magic equipment you have? Please forgive me for being so direct, but while Serpent
Intoxicating Flowers are remarkably effective against high-energy snakes, they’re still lacking if you want to deal with pure-blooded rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnakes. Your magic equipment might have the function of hiding your tracks, but I don’t think your plan will go well. That’s a community belonging to a rank 5…”

“How did you know?” Her expression changed as she subconsciously took several steps back.

“I’m rather well-versed in potions, and I smelled the Serpent Intoxicating Flower on you…” Leylin laughed and rubbed his nose.

“Even if you have insiders there, your preparations shouldn’t be enough…”

“No, it’s enough! You don’t need to know what’s going to happen. Anyway, as long as I’m still alive, I’ll definitely meet you at the holy city!” Belinda shook her head resolutely, as if she had returned to her previous state as an unfeeling leader. It seemed like she had made more preparations in that area.

“In that case, I’ll go with you…” Leylin spoke deliberately. He was going to harvest the bloodlines of Alabaster Devilsnakes sooner or later, he could just do it now.

“No! You just need to take care of my sister. Don’t mind any other things. If anything happens to Sophia, I won’t let you off…” Belinda glared at Leylin and disappeared into the shadows, not even bidding Sophia farewell.

“What a staunch resolve!” Leylin’s eyes seemed to smile as he headed towards the sunlight and back to Sophia.

“Brother Nick!” Sophia exclaimed sweetly.

“Mm! Sophia, darling, can you tell brother where your home is?” Leylin now had a smile that was as bright as the sun.

“I… Sophie doesn’t know… there are a lot of strange uncles in there who all look scary… When Sister brought me out here, I couldn’t recognise the way…” She gnawed on her finger, looking dazed.
‘This… is this a natural intellectual disability or a seal that was placed later?’ Blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes as he stroked his chin. Soul force rippled through the place, and he found that Belinda really had left without bidding farewell. ‘Such a stubborn lass… it’s a pity…’ Leylin’s lips quirked up in a smile. With his strength, it was far too easy to find Belinda even if she was trying to conceal herself. Some stardust bugs or a soul mark would do the trick. After all, he was using methods of the Magus World, while Belinda would be on her guard against probes and local abilities of the Purgatory World. The huge differences between the two was enough for her previous preparations to come to naught.

“Well then, Sophia! What do you think of Brother bringing you home?” Leylin felt like he was grinning like a big bad wolf. “I– I don’t want to!” Sophia, however, suddenly paled and grasped his hands tightly, as if recalling something horrifying. Even her body began to quiver.

“But your sister, Belinda, is there. How about we bring her back? How does that sound?” Leylin used a bit more strength in his hands, as if giving her strength and consoling her.

“Sister Belinda!” She looked around and, after noticing Belinda was nowhere to be found, she was now feeling anxious. “Sister! Sister!” She jogged around and began to call out, tears pooling in her eyes.

“Sister can’t go back, or else Father won’t spare her!” Two rows of tears fell from her eyes, and she looked immensely frightened.

“Is that so? Let’s go and get her!” Leylin didn’t really want to bother with rivalries amongst families. All he knew was that he needed the bloodlines of Alabaster Devilsnakes, and there were purebloods amongst Belinda’s family at Whiteriver Valley. That was enough for him.

“Alright, let’s get sister!” Sophia bit her lips, evidently having made
her decision.
“Mm, let’s go!” Leylin had to resist the urge to pinch her exquisite cheeks. A black energy storm formed with a twirl of his fingers, enveloping the two of them within.

……

After the Whiteriver Valley was a huge plain. There were only a few scattered tribes and towns in the vast region, and it was no small feat to find a specific family. However, Leylin had already placed some stardust bugs on Belinda’s body, so this task was easy for him.
In order for this to go smoothly, Leylin specifically came slightly later and gave Belinda enough time. He followed slowly with Sophia in tow, and even secretly took the time to do some other things.
‘I never thought there’s another race making use of a town as a cover near the valley…’ Using the stardust bugs, after Belinda had made her move Leylin brought Sophia to enter a little town with an obviously foreign style.
The buildings here were made with black rocks and coated with nice colours. The sharp roofs were like upside down awls, and even the pavements were very orderly and even.
Sophia grabbed Leylin’s hands after reaching this place, evidently having thought of something. It was still the wee hours of the morning and the town was quiet, only the occasional sounds of wind resounded in the empty streets.
*Creak!* A wooden door opened, and a resident looking dazed walked out with a basin used to store water in her hands. This resident looked very similar to a human, with numerous triangular scales that formed strange flower petals on her.
Her eyes flashed with some astonishment upon seeing Leylin. But
when she saw Sophia beside him, especially her silver hair and scarlet pupil’s, she dropped her basin causing a dull thud.
“Ala– Alabaster Devill! The Alabaster Devil has come…” The woman collapsed to the ground, her sharp voice piercing through the skies.
“What?” “What’s going on?”
A clamour sounded as a peasant holding a metal pitchfork darted outside of the house. However, upon seeing Leylin and Sophia he fell to the ground. “Revered noble Alabaster Devil! Our, our blood taxes this year have been paid…”
‘Blood taxes? So they forcefully demand blood sacrifices or something…’ Leylin shook his head, quickly regaining the calm on his face. Doors and windows creaked open or closed, and an aura of panic gathered in the town.
Accompanied by cries of “The Alabaster Devil” “The Alabaster Devil’s here!”, panic spread like a plague and enveloped the whole town. The people of the town were now not as boisterous as before, and some even quivered in fear in their own homes.

‘Seems like Belinda’s family doesn’t have a good reputation here.’ Leylin entered the town that had descended into a state of panic and shook his head while speechless. On second thought, though, he wasn’t all that surprised.

These people were only slightly stronger than regular humans, while Belinda’s family had rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnakes in their numbers. The huge disparity in strength led to an imbalance of power, and in this situation Leylin would actually be more astonished if the residents were treated well.

“Tell me, where is the Whiteriver Valley?” The crimson in Leylin’s eyes flashed as he watched the pair who were trembling in fear.

“Re- Revered master, there aren’t any valleys at all nearby!” The peasant finally answered while shivering.

‘Oh? That is true. How would they know about that place…’ Leylin somewhat understood. The base of the Alabaster Devilsnakes might be nearby, but concealing it from regular humans was a very simple task.

‘Based on the location, my target should be here. However, there’s some sort of interference and I can’t determine the location.’ Leylin
stroked his chin. There had to be many reinforced spell formations in the base of such a powerful family, isolating and blocking them off from scouting. Even just the radiation they let out unconsciously could amass to result in mysterious changes in the terrain. It was only that, for some reason, these beings that looked like humans with scaled foreheads had a resistance to high-energy radiation that was greater even than low-ranked Magi, allowing them to survive and reproduce. Perhaps the Alabaster Devil family had moved them here to exploit and pressurize them.

‘Since it’s nearby, I’ll definitely be able to find it!’ Under the peasant’s reverent gaze, Leylin’s body began to float. In the blink of an eye, he appeared above the town, truesoul at Half Moon sweeping out. Every resident, every change in the terrain, even the bugs and microbes in the cracks of the town were revealed in front of him. His soul force expanded out, and the range of his sense was expanding further.

‘The feeling of the pinnacle of power, of having control over anything… This can make anyone feel intoxicated!’ Leylin felt like a god as he looked down on the town. He now knew the area like the back of his palm, and he would be able to take all the lives in the place with but a thought. He felt drunk on such power.

‘Only with this amount of power can I strive for eternity!’ Only limitless torture and suffering awaited those lacking in strength. Only by fully grasping his freedom and immortality would Leylin achieve his life’s goal.

“Mm, found it!” Leylin descended with a flash of light watching Sophia who was clearly uneasy, “Sophia, we’re going to get your sister. If we meet with any danger, find somewhere and hide yourself. Don’t mind me. Understood?”

“Mm, I’ll listen to brother!” She nodded obediently.
Just as Leylin and Sophia headed off, a black figure appeared from the shadows of the town and turned into Leylin’s previous appearance. He turned and donned a large black cloak, disappearing amongst the morning light. Because he had to perform some unspeakable acts, Leylin used a method he’d employed before, using the A.I. Chip to control a shadow clone to bring Sophia away. He was prepared to make his move on the sly. Dragging Sophia along would probably not arouse Belinda’s suspicions, and especially… Leylin’s eyes glinted with intelligence.

……

After he passed through the dreamforce fog, as little white valley appeared in front of Leylin. ‘Mm. There are so few people here… I’d thought that Belinda’s family would be huge, but there are only tens of people here. And about half of them are half-bloods or have bloodlines that are yet to mature…’
Surrounding it were multiple snaking pathways, with a constant surge of dreamforce being radiated out. Deeper in was a set of buildings that were close together. It was obvious that this was where Belinda’s family was located.
Though there were few people, the valley was bustling with life. The hissing and snarls of large snakes sounded from time to time. ‘Seems like I’ve come at a good time!’ With a sweep of his soul force, most of what was in the valley appeared in front of him. A few Alabaster Devilsnakes that were like little hills were spread in all directions, their life auras now at their weakest.
A huge battle had turned the royal mansion in the depths of the valley to rubble. In mid-air, Belinda was laughing maniacally with bloodstains all over her body, holding onto an ancient mirror. There were even a few obvious claw marks on her arms. She had
evidently paid a huge price for this.
In front of her, a middle-aged man with short silver hair and crimson pupils looked ready to gobble her whole, his eyes filled with malice. Terrifying undulations at rank 5 flowed out of his body, causing even the surrounding space to shudder. Still, even that seemed like an attempt to refrain from provoking her and causing more harm.
‘Can high-ranked descendants of the Snake Dowager take human form?’ Leylin wasn’t very surprised by this. Though the ancient Giant Kemoyin Serpent lacked this ability, that didn’t mean it would be the same for the rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake. Besides, the Snake Dowager and snake girls were all humanoid. Hence, even descendents of the large ruler of all snakes would have no problem taking human form if they had sufficient bloodline force or intelligence.
Some tasks were more convenient with a human body rather than that of a giant serpent, and the energy consumption was obviously much lower. That was how half-bloods mixed with humans were formed. If not, with the body of these giant snakes, even mixed-blood descendants would turn into monsters with bodies as large as mountains.
“Belinda, you dare return and even covet our family’s greatest treasure?!” The middle-aged man with silver short hair exclaimed, the fury in his eyes almost able to reduce Belinda to ashes.
“On the day Sophia was kidnapped, I’d already reinforced the defences, but I didn’t expect you to have bribed even Lisa and secretly obtained the keys into the secret room… You even got so many Serpent Intoxicating Flowers!”
Belinda, on the other hand, laughed carelessly. “I didn’t bribe her. She betrayed you of her own accord, poor, silly father.
“Your disgusting methods to carry on the inheritance of bloodlines in order to gain the favour of the Snake Dowager have long since
given rise to fury amongst the family… I only sparked the fire!” Belinda watched the ancient mirror in her hands, hatred in her eyes, “I could have done this long before I left home. However, the Trial’s Eye taught me to prize order, and not wilfully engage in vengeance. But now, everything has changed. There is nothing holding me back…”

“Give me the ancient bloodline mirror, and I can pretend none of this happened. If you don’t, it’s not just you. Your sister Sophia will also suffer the worst of punishments… just like your mother did!”

A large Alabaster Devilsnake phantom abruptly appeared while he was speaking, and an enraged howl caused even the surrounding red fog to grow more concentrated. There were even signs of a link to Dreamscape.

“Haha… mother?” Belinda’s crazed laughter eventually turned cold, “You don’t qualify to speak of her!” It was like she had been triggered. Crimson light exploded in her hands, and the ancient mirror creaked, unable to bear the pressure.

“Don’t!” The middle-aged man’s expression immediately changed and he made his move. A terrifying red hand appeared and grabbed at Belinda, even as a large number of dark red tendrils appeared and extended towards the mirror from beside her.

“Keke… Such a pity, it’s too late!” Black light burst forth from her body, forming a layer of black armour that blocked the tendrils.

*Clang! Clang!* Black cracks now appeared on the ancient mirror in her hands, spreading out before it exploded.

*Boom!* At this moment, Belinda was thrown backwards by the large red hand, and the black armour on her body was smashed to pieces. She coughed out mouthfuls of blood but still looked at ease as she laughed.

“NOOOO!” Crazed snarls sounded, and the ancient bloodline mirror turned into a large black hole as the cries of a woman
sounded out from the middle. Spirit after spirit appeared, all turning into multicolour figures that dispersed unceasingly. All that was left in the end was the sound of a distant lament, and the ancient bloodline mirror completely disappeared.

“Do you know what you’ve done?!” The man’s facial muscles contorted. “With just another century… With just another century, I’d be able to refine our family’s bloodline further such that it enters the ranks of the pure-blood nobles! It’s all your fault!”

Formless power was sent out, and Belinda was dragged to the front of the man. Without the ancient bloodline mirror, he now had no reservations against acting. In front of his powerful rank 5 strength, even a full strength Belinda couldn’t resist at all. Not even taking into consideration the exhaustion from stealing the mirror, the discovery and pursuit had caused a great loss in her strength.

A formless giant beast in the sky widened its mouth and bit down. *Ka-cha!* A large portion of Belinda’s flesh and bones disappeared, causing her to let out a low grunt.
I swear that your death will be incomparably miserable…” The middle-aged man’s face was contorted. The plans that he had meticulously thought up had been completely destroyed, causing him to sink into exasperation and fury.

Thin scales appeared on his hands in an instant and shot out like a giant cannon, striking Belinda’s abdomen. Pure-blooded rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake strength caused Belinda to fly backwards like she had been hit by a train, and the sounds of fracturing bones rang out. Some of her internal organs were even ripped apart, mixing with blood as they spurted out of her mouth.

“Did you think you would die? No, no no. Let me heal you, and we’ll repeat this process unendingly!” A large white snake figure emerged from the smoke, with a furious middle-aged figure at the bottom.

He came before Belinda, eyes sparkling a bloody red. Belinda’s body floated in the air, and as if she was being crushed by tens of thousands of tons, her bones were crushed inch by inch, but for some reason, she remained clear headed. Her expression was that of one suffering incomparable pain.

“Now, tell me. What kind of pain would you like to feel?” The man approached Belinda, a palm with a few tiny white snakes writhing their bodies appearing and flicking their tongues at her. *Bzzt!*
At this moment, light flashed on her body, and a beast spirit tattoo flickered. A translucent beast spirit figure appeared, obstructing him. This was a humanoid beast spirit that had characteristics of a snake woman. It had rank 4 undulations, and some rationality still remained in its eyes. For beast spirits, this was practically unthinkable. When Belinda was in the face of danger, the beast spirit had automatically appeared and protected her, and even retained some memories of when it had been alive.

“It’s you!” The man now had a demonic charming grin as he watched Belinda, “So you’re still protecting that trash? How about I annihilate you first? I believe our precious Belinda will be very agitated…”

“Don’t… you… dare…”

An intermittent an unclear voice sounded from Belinda’s lips. “No wonder she hadn’t been using her beast spirit. So this was the reason…” Leylin nodded in understanding. As a rank 4 beast spirit master, Belinda had not summoned a beast spirit with Morning Star strength, and Leylin had long since found it strange.

At this point, Leylin found that the beast spirit and Belinda had very similar faces. “With this show of automatically protecting her, it seems that this rank 4 beast spirit on Belinda’s body should be her mother, and seeing what’s happening, this should be the work of her father…”

When it came to matters like this, it was no wonder that Belinda’s nature had changed and she’d prepared for a bloodbath to take revenge.

This had first been repressed by the teachings of Trial’s Eye, but she now had no reservations. “You dare…” Belinda almost broke her teeth from how hard she was gritting them, eyes wide as she glared at her father.
“Keke… And what would I not dare do? This low-life woman was only a mixed-blood maid. I gave her glory and a good life, and in return, this is what she should do… don’t you think so?”
The man stared at the beast spirit like a sick pervert. It was a pity that after being refined into a beast spirit, the woman had now lost most of her memories and emotions, and only protected Belinda subconsciously and answered the gaze of the man emotionlessly.
“Sigh… This work isn’t that perfect.”
He shook his head with regret and suddenly snapped his fingers, “Belinda! How about I seal your sister? What do you think? The process must be just as beautiful?”
Watching Belinda begin to struggle violently, he smiled, now having the upper hand, “And now… let me…”
Large amounts of dark red fog turned into a cage, binding the snake woman beast spirit within.
“Hss…” The snake woman’s eyes were wary as she hissed, but she, who only possessed rank 4 strength, could not really resist.
“Pfft! And that’s the end of this drama. Is it time for me to make my move?”
A terrifying black chain appeared in the air and was like a sharp sword, appearing and splitting up the man and Belinda.
“Who is it?”
The man abruptly raised his head, looking fearful.
He was a rank 5 after all, and yet someone had stealthily entered without anyone noticing. Just this ability alone had him in fear.
Following which, he found a figure in a black cloak standing, a pair of eyes full of malice watching him.
“No, not malice, but apathy! It’s like a regular person stomping and killing an ant. That’s how he feels about killing me!”
In that instant, the man, who had understood the meaning of the indifference in Leylin’s eyes, became violent.
“Who is it? Who dares belittle I, Kenta! Mighty Alabaster Devil
nobility, descendants of the Mistress…”
A large Alabaster Devilsnake figure abruptly emerged and snarled at Leylin, dark red dreamforce floating in its surroundings.
“This is…” Belinda’s vision went red, the figure in black seeming familiar.
“Right! He’s… it’s the same person who took Lord Bayclark away… or perhaps it’s just his temperament that’s similar. But why did he appear here?”
“Keke…” At this moment, the black-cloaked man in the sky laughed coldly, the malice causing everyone around to tremble in fear.
“If a rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake is turned into a beast spirit, I imagine it’d be very powerful even amongst rank 5 beast spirit masters, right?”
“Beast spirit? You dare have such thoughts and dare use the descendants of the mighty Mistress as a beast spirit?”
The man’s eyes widened like saucers, evidently astonished by Leylin’s gutsy behaviour. In the Hail Continent, the descendants of the Snake Dowager were naturally the mainstream, and because of their statuses as large beasts, they were repulsed by practices of capturing snakes and refining them into beast spirits.
This was especially so for descendants of the Snake Dowager. That was a huge taboo, and all beast spirit masters who were found making use of the descendants would be chased till their deaths regardless of how they were obtained.
Hence, on the Hail Continent, beast spirit masters never dared use the descendants as beast spirits, and that extended to snake species disappearing as beast spirits.
Even on the other continents, in order to avoid being viewed as hostile by the great Hail Continent, the beast spirit masters who controlled snake beast spirits were few and far between, and even had to live their lives secretly.
In these circumstances, Leylin’s words were offensive and shocking.
“You’re dead meat! You’re dead meat! The Mistress and all of her descendants on the continent will be your enemies…”
The man roared, “For you, who dare offend our revered bloodlines, I, Kenta, will give you the appropriate punishment!”
“Hmph, what nonsense!”
Leylin snickered, and a demonic pressure released from his body, giving him a feeling of being in the presence of an emperor.
“Dreamforce is useless to me! Don’t bother!”
Leylin waved his arms, and the great amounts of dark red fog congealed in his hands, forming a black bundle of light.
“Rank 4 dream spell Chains of Dreams!”
Dark red chains shot out and, like a spiderweb, sealed off the whole space and left behind what was similar to a poisonous snake, biting towards Kenta.
“He makes use of dreamscape and can even do this?”
Kenta’s expression immediately changed, “Who exactly are you? Are you from the Devil Scorpion Race or the Dreamscape Elves?”
This person’s abilities at manipulating dreamforce was clearly above his, and Kenta could already feel that the two of them were now wrestling over authority over the dreamforce, and the winner could appear at any moment.
These two races were the most capable at manipulating dreamforce of all that he knew. Amongst the descendants of the Snake Dowager, besides the Alabaster Devilsnake, there were no others that had contact with dreamforce.
“You don’t need to know this. Just die obediently and let your soul be extracted!”
Dark red chains of dreamforce formed a spider web that wrapped him inside.
“Is that so? We, who have inherited the bloodline of the Mistress,
could never lose to someone like you who only knows to act slyly in the shadows!"
*Crackle!* Kenta’s body exploded, and a large white shadow appeared in the air, squeezing and breaking the dreamforce chains. “Hss…” The white figure soared into the skies and, with a terrifying pressure, presented itself as a terrifying giant snake that was tens of thousands of metres long. The large snake had white, jade-like scales filled with the luster of dreamforce. Scarlet pupils were filled with madness and ruthlessness, staring straight at Leylin.
In comparison, Leylin’s body was as tiny as an ant. “This isn’t a Morning Star Arcane Art but a natural transformation of the body!” Leylin muttered to himself, eyes shooting out blue rays, “This sort of boost to the body is terrifying! As expected, the power from one’s original form will be able to show the best strength!”
Meanwhile, Leylin was in more awe towards these ancient Magi. To be able to create combinations and make up the Morning Star Arcane Art to somehow simulate their true bodies and even gain a boost, they must have sacrificed much time and effort! A rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake had a terrifying pressure that caused the onlooking members of the family to bow down. “Too weak! Too weak! This Alabaster Devilsnake family is too weak!”
Leylin surveyed the area. Though his truesoul had probed and found that there were tens of life undulations, many had clearly lost their ability to battle. It was obvious that Belinda’s Intoxicated Serpent Flowers were the cause. Even without this, Leylin did not pay mind to the rank 4s who were weak, dying, or youths. “But that’s good. This Alabaster Devilsnake somewhat meets my requirements!
Leylin stared at the giant white snake in front of him and grinned.
The large snake figure that was even taller than a mountain stood before him, with large energy undulations of rank 5 emitting from it.

This aura caused many of the family members with the blood of the Alabaster Devil to fall, yet Leylin was not the least bit affected. His expression did not even change, still assessing this huge beast in front of him as if picking and choosing goods.

Evidently, this attitude had led to Kenta’s great wrath.

“How’s that possible? How can there be someone more powerful than me? I am favoured by the Mistress, a rank 5 of the noble Alabaster Devils!”
*Boom!* Immediately after, a streak of black flashed, and Kenta coughed up blood as he frantically retreated.

“There’s nothing that’s impossible! While a giant rank 5 serpent is powerful, there’s still a huge disparity when compared with the primordial Thousand-Eyed Giant, Golden Titan and the like.”

Leylin’s black figure slowly emerged, a mysterious Multi-Limb Race appearing at his back. The figure was now shimmering with gold and seemed to have solidified, turning into a golden deity statue.

Though it looked very delicate, there seemed to be a primordial giant beast concealed under Leylin’s black cloak. The strength hidden within caused even the Alabaster Devilsnake to look fearful.

“Hand over your blood and soul obediently, and I might even let you die more comfortably.”

As Leylin closed in step by step, Kenta let out a strange shriek and transformed into a streak of white, preparing to abandon his family and escape.

*Pak!* Many dark red chains appeared once more, sealing the whole White River Valley.

“Your strength and speed are all lacking! Even your manipulation of dreamforce can’t measure up to me.”

Leylin stated the truth calmly while ambling over.

“No!” Kenta kept falling back, almost pressing his body on the chain walls.

Such a ridiculous pose filled Belinda with pleasure and eased her desire for revenge, but she then found this pitiful.

“Mighty Mistress, I am willing to give up everything that I am. Please release a clone and protect your descendant!”

At his wit’s end, Kenta’s expression suddenly flashed with ruthlessness and began an offering spell formation.

Silver rays of light flashed, and immediately after, blood and flesh
splattered everywhere. An arm that was still dripping blood fell onto the spell formation.
“The offering shall be the flesh and blood of your child!”
*Rumble!* Crimson flames flashed, and the attention of a conscient in the void descended on the area.
Under the red flames, Kenta’s arm was melted till it turned into a blood-red mask, the tremendous conscient making use of this item and descending.
“Oh Mistress, please protect your descendant!” Watching the mask take shape, Kenta might look pale and had an arm on the shoulder with a gaping wound, but his eyes were filled with elation.
“Begin the experiment!”
In front of him, Leylin merely muttered something.
“Chirp chirp…”* Grey rays of light flew from his chest. Within which was a grey feather that was like an illusion, bringing with it the power of chaos.
The grey luster spread in the surroundings, forming an overcast sky.
“While the Feather of Chaos might be able to conceal and have the power of misleading others, how effective would it be after the Snake Dowager’s clone is summoned and descends? That’s worth investigating!”
Leylin’s eyes glinted with intelligence. While the Nefarious Filthbird had already told him this, Leylin preferred to determine this for himself.
If he found there was an issue here, he wouldn’t need to head to his death in the holy city.
“A.I. Chip! Record the following scene carefully. Remember to collect data!” Leylin commanded inside.
The crimson mask opened its eyes, revealing a pair of bewitching
pupils. Just meeting the gaze caused the bloodline force in Leylin’s body to begin rebelling.  
“The clone of the Snake Dowager!” Leylin muttered to himself.  
“Mighty Mistress, it is he who futilely tried to kill your descendant and even tried to refine us into beast spirits. Such evil behaviour must be punished!”  
Kenta roared, while the conscient in the crimson mask stared at Leylin silently.  
“We finally meet, Snake Dowager!” Through his truesoul, Leylin’s voice was transmitted to the mask in the offering spell formation.  
“Emperor of the Kemoyins, you dare appear before me?” The eyes in the mask showed doubt followed by ire, a great voice sounding in Leylin’s mind, “The power of chaos! You’ve sided with the Nefarious Filthbird and sealed off this region?” Eyes swivelling, they rested on the gray feather in the air.  
“Let’s just say this is a temporary cooperation.” Leylin’s expression showed his sincerity as he bowed towards the clone of the Snake Dowager and greeted her carefully, “Well then, mighty Mistress, is there a possibility of us settling this?”  
“If you take the initiative and abandon your Kemoyin Serpent bloodline and let me seal you myself!” The clone went silent for a while and then answered coldly, as if this was the furthest she was willing to go, while Leylin’s pupils showed his hostility in answer.  
Sealing his emperor bloodline meant there was no chance of advancing forever, and his Warlock rank would fall to 4. That was not something he could bear to let happen.  
“Then… This discussion will come to naught? As expected,” Leylin sighed and manipulated the feather of chaos in his hands. A crystal with the power of chaos from before appeared in his hands, burning up fiercely. Great amounts of the power of chaos, mixed with Leylin’s own
strength, swallowing up the offering spell formation like a tsunami.
*Whistles* Crimson rays emanated from the mask and quickly showed signs of being unable to endure the pressure, and was then drowned out by large amounts of gray power of chaos.
“How- How’s that possible? Kenta watched the scene, stunned, feeling like all the faith he had had crumbled.
Leylin and the Snake Dowager’s clone had chosen to communicate through the soul, which was why these outsiders could not understand what had just happened.
All they saw was that the black-cloaked being, Leylin, and the Snake Dowager’s clone in the mask had gazed at each for an instant and, immediately after, the clone had been swallowed by the grey strength.
The Snake Dowager was a mighty dignitary for them, and was everything to all bloodlines. How could it be extinguished so easily?
The shock rendered them speechless, and Kenta lost all will to resist.
[Beep! Recorded all data. Confirmed that no information has been leaked.] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded, allowing Leylin to heave a sigh of relief.
He had used the power of chaos to seal off the area, so that the clone had no way of returning, and even all information would not be transmitted back.
If not, even if he were to dispose of the clone, he would immediately be found by the Snake Dowager herself.
Thankfully, with the help of the Nefarious Filthbird and its strength being proficiency in misleading, it had even temporarily cut off all connections between the clone and the Snake Dowager.
“The reason the clone had lost was not that it had lost to the Nefarious Filthbird, but because it was caught by surprise, as well as a boost from me…”
Leylin clearly understood the situation and would not be proud that he had been able to destroy an energy clone. The loss of a clone was, to the Snake Dowager, like a human losing a strand of hair. It was not worth even mentioning. However, this was a good start. At the very least, Leylin was certain that with help from the Feather of Chaos, he could conceal himself completely and sneak into the holy city without trouble.

“By concealing myself with the law of chaos and help from the A.I. Chip. I’ll be able to hide myself unless I meet with the main body.” Leylin completely sighed in relief, gaining more confidence in his plans.

“How can the Mistress of all snakes, a dignitary, be defeated and die so easily? How can that be?”

He headed over to Kenta. This guy was now not in his right mind. For bloodline holders, the Snake Dowager was everything to them, and they could not accept this fact.

“Once he regains his wits, he might begin to harbour doubt towards her. I’ve planted the seed, allowing them to understand that she’s merely a powerful existence. That seed will then sprout and grow till he begins to seek to surpass his limits and obtain more power… With that tiny possibility of one in a million, that could awaken the emperor bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnakes and allow him to become a rank 6… Next, he’ll be like me and try to break away from the restraints of the Snake Dowager, or be sealed with the Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes and have his bloodline absorbed till his death!”

The A.I. Chip analysed, and a large number of possibilities in the future appeared. This was not the power of destiny, but precise estimations based on a massive amount of analysis and behaviours of individuals. Though its rate of having inaccuracies was quite high, Leylin was confident that someday, the A.I. Chip could be like a god of the
future, simulating everything that had happened and could happen in a world.
“If it reaches that point, I would probably have reached rank 9 by then…”
Leylin sighed, “It’s a pity, but you won’t get that opportunity!”
Dark red blades of light slashed, and Kenta’s head fell to the ground.
After death, Kenta’s corpse swelled and regained its form of a giant snake that was tens of thousands of metres long.

A flicker of a truesoul abruptly emerged, as if about to accept guidance into the cosmic world and turn into a floating island for all eternity.

“Trying to leave?”

Leylin sneered, terrifying power sealing the surroundings. Dark red chains trapped the truesoul and was emptied into the black crystal ball in Leylin’s hands.

“The soul of a rank 5 is the main ingredient for a rank 5 beast spirit!” Leylin muttered to himself, keeping the crystal ball properly.

“The materials for the dream imprint have been gathered!”

Leylin came before the gigantic carcass of the Alabaster Devil. After having much of its blood extracted, the body looked like it had shrunken, but was still tremendous.

“Return!” With a flash of spatial undulations, the large snake carcass disappeared without a trace. This was the body of a rank 5 giant snake, and even without blood, it still had a very high value.

“Next is all of you!”

Leylin surveyed his surroundings. The nobility of the Alabaster Devils who saw that Leylin had killed their family leader without any trouble and they themselves affected by the Intoxicated Serpent.
Flowers, they were now completely in despair. “Their bloodline force is too varied. What a disappointment.” Leylin grabbed forward, and crimson blades of light appeared, decapitating the giant Alabaster Snakes that had been lying on the ground. Leylin gathered the materials and only left behind Belinda and the rest of the mixed bloods. Leylin set up a humongous, grey offering spell formation where he placed the rest of the materials that he did not need.

*Chirp chirp!*

The figure of a giant grey bird appeared, large amounts of grey flames absorbing these offerings. “You did well! Not only did you kill one of the clones of the Snake Dowager, you even sacrificed the descendants of the Snake Dowager. I am very satisfied!”

Large amounts of the power of chaos descended. If Leylin was willing, he could raise his offerer ranking up to rank 5, but Leylin did not want to do so. After rank 4, he would need to place the dignitary’s markings on his own body, which was completely unacceptable for Leylin. Hence, he chose to gather all this power and turn them into crystals to be stored. Leylin then charged into the mansion, gathering all the treasures and documents before leaving in satisfaction.

……

“It’s over? So that powerful person is a follower of the Nefarious Filthbird! The offerer rank should be at or above rank 5…” A long while after Leylin left, Belinda struggled to get up and gazed at the White River Valley that had turned into a pile of ruins. Only a few mixed bloods survived. Due to her traps and the Intoxicated Serpent Flowers, many had lost most of their strength
and could be killed easily. Noticing Belinda looking over, these people immediately gazed at her imploringly. “Hehe… family!” Belinda shook her head. While she had already completed her revenge, it still felt like something was missing. Elated, she was just about to leave when, at the entrance to the valley, she saw two people that left her in shock. “Why did you come here? Are you trying to create trouble?” “Sister!” Sophia yelled and threw herself into Belinda’s arms. “Brother Nick and I were so worried for you! Sister… boohoo…” Sophia’s eyes went red, and while Belinda consoled Sophia, she glared at Leylin venomously. “Hehe…” Seeing the sisters embracing each other, Leylin merely laughed and rubbed his nose. He had already retrieved the shadow clone secretly. With his strength, he wouldn’t find any trouble hiding from a bunch of rank 4 or 5s, much less a little lass. “So? Is everything settled?” “Everything’s settled!” Belinda turned and gazed at the White River Valley that was now in a very sorry state, patting Sophia’s head, “Let’s go and never return…” “Mm, alright!” Sophia answered, looking excited. It seemed that she did not have many happy memories here.

……

On the plains that were moving up and down occasionally, gigantic snake paths could be seen, as well as moulted skin and scales. The round moon in the sky emanated a purple luster and looked especially evil. An orange-yellow bonfire flickered on the plains with a warm
luster, with several simple tents nearby.
“There are descendants of the Mistress on the Serpentes Plains, as well as many mixed bloods. We need to be careful and try our best to be as far as we can from these snake paths…”
Belinda gazed at Leylin meaningfully, “Also, try your best not to attack. These large snakes have parentages that can be traced back to various large families…”
Amongst the descendants of the Snake Dowager, even in the family of the Alabaster Devilsnakes, there were many branches. The top were of course the tens of pure-blood families, where practically every member was a pure blood.
Belinda’s family was a mere distant branch with a bloodline that was not very pure. In the whole family, only her father was a pure blood, and his lifelong wish was to refine the family’s bloodline till it was pure. He did not mind committing sins for this reason, which had resulted in much suffering during Belinda’s childhood years.
Of course, all of this was already over. Belinda was now just warning them.
“Alright!” Leylin smiled tenderly, passing over the grilled meat with sizzling oil that was emitting steam.
“Thank you…” Belinda extended her arm and took it, and then passed the food to Sophia. He watched her tear it into pieces carefully, smiling so much that his eyes were like crescents and traces of gentleness could be seen on his expression.
“Did you notice anything?”
Leylin had a varying opinion, “Yes! Even if I get Sophia to be an alibi, the timing at which I appeared both times is too coincidental. Anyone would suspect that. Of course, that’s merely a suspicion…”
Belinda was no fool. At most, she had guessed that Leylin had hidden his true strength as he was a follower of the Filthbird, but would definitely not connect him with the fugitive Magus.
“Besides, the few times I acted were all for her sake. Even if she
discovers anything, she won’t leak news of it…”
Leylin was confident in this. He could tell Belinda’s nature, and her reliance on those of her own race was so much so that it was almost abnormal.
This time, especially, she had passed her sister to him. That already indicated that she regarded her as someone close to her.
In this situation, the possibility of her betraying Leylin was low. Furthermore, she didn’t know Leylin’s true identity.
“But I still need to guard myself against this situation!” Leylin rubbed his chin. He had yet to retrieve the stardust bugs he had left on her.
Whether it was on the Serpentes Plains or the holy city, he needed a guide. Take for instance the traversing. Without her providing the Dream Forest, Leylin would probably still be hastening along along the coast, and it would take about half a year to even reach the Serpentes Plains.
For Leylin, who was tight on time, this was very useful.
“You guys can eat first. I’ll go get some rest!” Gobbling up his food, Leylin elegantly bade the sisters farewell and entered his tent.
On the surface, he merely lay on the soft mat and closed his eyes to rest. Inside, however, he was conversing with the A.I. Chip.
“A.I. Chip, have you reorganised all the materials gathered yet?” Leylin asked. These were naturally items gathered from Belinda’s family. After killing the leader, Leylin had charged into their mansion and plundered it, taking not just treasures and resources, but also all sorts of books.
This information was then passed on to the A.I. Chip to tidy up.
If Belinda were to find out that the thief who had robbed from her family was now flipping through her family’s collection unabashedly, he wondered what her expression would be like. She had made some guesses in the past before, and was even subconsciously denying this thought.
[Beep! Reorganisation complete. Calculated to be 34 printed resources, 13 with beast skin, 142 with content stored with spiritual force. Conversion to stats completed.]
The A.I. Chip loyally intoned.
[Others have been categorized. Related to strength systems: 16. Related to geography: 24. Related to materials: 9. Others have been deemed to be general or miscellaneous information.]
With the A.I. Chip’s abilities, it could quickly scan and categorise the information and form a complete library for Leylin to browse through.
“Mm! Show me information regarding rank 5 beast spirit masters, especially the part about the spell formation to seal beast spirits!” Leylin commanded.
[Preparation of related information has been completed. Transmitting to Host’s memories.]
Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, Leylin felt there was another portion of content in his memory that was related to the training of higher-ranked beast spirit masters. It felt very familiar to him, as if he had recorded everything painstakingly himself.
“When it comes to training, rank 5 beast spirit masters need to have a good truesoul as a base. One must completely destroy the remaining conscience that remains in the rank 5 beast spirit and use a rank 5 soul sealing spell formation. The boosts and support from using beast spirits will also be on a higher level.”
Leylin carefully pondered over the differences between a rank 5 beast spirit master and one weaker. Power at rank 5 and above was academic knowledge that was tightly sealed. In the Elias port, Leylin had only gathered information up to a rank 4 beast spirit master. Anything above that was strictly against the rules.
However, Belinda’s family was Alabaster Devil family and had a long history and even a rank 5. The content on this was therefore very detailed and thorough.
“I have the theory and knowledge, and the beast spirit is also in my possession. What’s left is to do it…”
“The most important part of a beast spirit master is the training of his soul power. Any Magus will not face any issues in this aspect. After sealing the rank 5 beast spirit, and adding the other tricks that I prepared beforehand, it should be possible to push the truesoul to advance to the peak of rank 5 at Full Moon…”

Leylin stroked his chin, his eyes emitting large amounts of light.

“A.I. Chip! Based on my previous calculations, what is the rate of success of this method?”

[Beep! Task established. Inputting data, constructing main model, in the midst of simulation experiment… Beep! Success rate is 78.99%!] The A.I. Chip immediately intoned faithfully.

“A rather decent probability. If it’s the peak of a rank 5, there will be an additional guarantee to the feasibility of my final plan…”

Leylin muttered to himself.

His fundamental purpose of coming to the Purgatory World was to break the bloodline shackles, the eternal curse that perplexed all Warlocks!

Due to the restrictions of the bloodline shackles, even if the Warlocks could have advanced by leaps and bounds in the earlier stages, so much that they could be stronger than Magi of the same rank, these chains still held them back. A mere look at the current central continent would reveal that there were many rank 6 Breaking Dawn Thrones among those Magi, yet not a single
Warlock was of that status. If not for the support from the Morning Star fort and a few rank 5 Warlocks, the entire Warlock heritage would be broken off, and one would be able to imagine what would happen next!

According to Leylin’s own understanding of the bloodlines, and the guidance previously given by the Wisdom Tree in the Scarlet Ruins, Leylin had obtained a greater knowledge of such bloodline shackles.

“Bloodline shackles! The root cause is still the bottleneck in bloodline strength, which has infiltrated every single cell, and even the genes, of Warlocks. It was much like the ‘gene locks’ hypothesis proposed in his previous world, but of course, even scarier, forming a shackles that restricts the soul…” because it had transformed one’s soul and turned into a spiritual chain…”

“And to break through the confinements of the bloodline strength, it requires an advanced force that is at least of a higher grade than bloodline strength! Also… the blood of the origin!” Leylin’s pupils twinkled with a fervent glow, which even contained a hidden trace of… fear!

Leylin previously did not know about a force that was of a higher grade than bloodline strength. But upon entering the rank 5 realm, his horizons had been broadened, and he had already found two types during his experiences in a great many other worlds. The first was Dreamscape energy at its peak value, not the kind at its lowest point. The second was the power of laws, and it had to be complete, or above 90% at the very least; not the kind of semi-finished goods like the Flame Monarch’s, which didn’t even have half of the comprehension of laws.

No matter which type, they were not easy to obtain.

Firstly, the Dreamscape energy. Although the Dreamscape energy that Leylin usually brought with him seemed incomparably tough, it was far from its peak value.
After all, at its peak value, it was possible for Dreamscape energy to bear demonic spirits!

Based on Leylin’s train of thought, perhaps… Only the real Dreamscape demonic spirits would be able to summon the Dreamscape energy at peak value! The deceptive uncertainty of the Dreamscape energy made implementing this plan especially inconvenient.

As for the power of laws, it was needless to say much. As of now, Leylin hadn’t even fully comprehended even one percent of the fire laws. To truly come into contact with the energy of the rules, one had to be at least a rank 6 Magus, and to completely gain control of it was something that only a rank 7 Magus could do.

This formed a paradox: in order to break through the bloodline shackles, one had to grasp either the Dreamscape energy of the energy of laws, or they would be unable to advance to realms that were above rank 6. Yet, these two types of energy required one to be at least a rank 6 before they could attempt to master them. But without breaking through the bloodline shackles, it was absolutely impossible for Leylin to promote to rank 6!

This mere vicious cycle was enough to dash the hopes of all Giant Kemoyin Serpent Warlocks who wished to break through their bloodline shackles, much less satisfy the other conditions after that.

Fortunately, the gift from the Wisdom Tree previously, as well as the information obtained in the Purgatory World allowed Leylin a method around this knowledge gap.

The second condition was the blood of the origin, which would be the blood that was the source of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline.

This origin was something that Leylin felt a trace of dread towards. The origin of his bloodline was a rank 8 being, the Exemplary of the Hale Continent, master of all snake species: the Snake Dowager! Stabbing a rank 8 being? Heh… It was probably easier to
think of how to die…
But no matter how challenging, Leylin would not give up. This was a stumbling block in his journey to become a rank 9 Warlock at his peak, and his pursuit of an eternal path.
Without removing it, it was simply impossible for Leylin to advance to a higher realm.
However, the difficulty of having to stab a rank 8 being was something that Leylin could only laugh bitterly about.
Anyway, in order to stab the Snake Dowager, the problem of whether he’d be able to defeat her aside, he would have to find her at the very least, no matter what.
Therefore, Leylin had no other choice but to head towards the holy city of the Hale Continent. Besides, this was the sacred place of the descendants of the Snake Dowager, and also a place rumoured to be favoured by the Snake Dowager herself.
According to the intelligence reports and the analysis of a few resource materials that Leylin had gathered, the possibility of the Snake Dowager being there was high.
After all, every once in while on the ‘Snake Dowager’s birthday’, the Dignitary Snake Dowager would appear, giving rise to the holy city’s rumour of it being her favoured place.
Other than waiting idly outside the holy city and leaving it to chance, Leylin didn’t have a better plan.
Of course, if she didn’t appear in the end, Leylin would have to take the initiative to show himself instead. He believed that she would definitely rush over by hook or crook upon discovering his tracks. But in doing so, Leylin would lose his chance to make the first move, and he thus dared not take action.
What he hoped for was to secretly stay low in the holy city, then find a suitable opportunity and strategy so that he could firmly seize the upper-hand and give himself the advantage of making the first move.
“Although I already have a defined draft and contingency plan in mind, why do I feel like I’m indulging in a wild fantasy?” Leylin gave a bitter laugh. Taking into account his strength as a rank 5 Warlock, wanting to challenge the Snake Dowager and even seize control of the Dreamscape or energy of laws was a wild thought no matter how he thought about it.
However, he didn’t regret choosing the Warlock path then. After all, at that time, Leylin was an acolyte who did not even hope to obtain other high-ranking meditation techniques.
Moreover, with his average natural endowments, if he didn’t pick the bloodline path, perhaps he might still be a rank 2 or 3 Magus fooling around in the south coast.
Without the supplemented bloodline energy, even if he had other methods, he would be far from having the graceful bearing of someone practically without a rival of the same rank, which had allowed him to acquire more resources.
In both the Magus and Warlock paths, the greater one’s strength was, the more one gained. The weak would only be slowly tossed to the sidelines, and eventually lose all hope. Even if they lived longer than ordinary people, and grasped formidable strength, it would still be hard to escape the evil palm of death.
“When in pursuit of the path to eternity, naturally the faster one walks, the more one is at an advantage!” Leylin reminded himself and ingrained it in him. As he had chosen the bloodline path, he was now a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus, and would be considered a decent contender in ancient times.
Additionally, due to the amplification of the bloodline energy, his multiple advancements were strangely quick. As compared to his life, which would be thousands of years long, he was still in his infancy years. This was under the circumstances in which spells that contributed to his life expectancy were not considered.
Even if those rank 5 Magi possessed all sorts of spells that would
increase their vitality, they would have spent a great amount of time climbing to the rank 5 realm, and it would be amazing if they could live for another millennium.

In comparison, Leylin virtually held a huge advantage.

Of course, everything evened out. Since Leylin had obtained extraordinary strength and a longer life span, he naturally had to carry the burden of the corresponding restriction: the bloodline shackles!

Once this restriction was broken through, it would be time for Leylin to shoot for the sky!

“Even if it’s a gamble, so what? If I can’t obtain eternity in this life, what’s the point of me travelling here? For my body to decay in another world, for my truesoul to be annihilated, and to turn into filthy soil?”

Large amounts of radiance glowed in Leylin’s pupils.

“On the other hand, even if I fall on my journey in pursuit of eternity, I would have accomplished my dream and achieved a marvelous life experience, second to none!”

“Now that I’ve laid my cards on the table, this would naturally increase the probability of success. Although a Half Moon and Full Moon would appear like ants to a rank 8 being, the main difference being their size, but at a critical moment which would determine life and death, an increase of the success rate by even a millionth would be useful!”

Leylin communicated with the A.I. Chip, “How’s the progress on the analysis of the rank 5 spirit seal spell formation?”

[Beep! 100% of the spell formation has been analyzed, ready for optimization.] The A.I. Chip projected a simple and unadorned spirit seal spell formation in front of Leylin. The runes on it reeked of the distinct style of the Purgatory World.

[Optimization will lower the beast spirit’s willpower to resist, raising the degree of a harmonious relationship by 15%.]
“This probability is slightly lower than the rank 4 spirit seal spell formation from before. But it’s understandable considering how the quality of the spirit seal spell formation gathered by Belinda’s family was already very high…”
A gloomy radiance unknowingly came into view all of a sudden, forming a barrier that isolated the inside of the tent from the rest of the outside world.
Shortly after, a crystal ball appeared with a flip of Leylin’s palm. Within the crystal ball was a small white snake, its pupils a deep red. Its forked tongue showed from time to time, as though trying to probe the seal on the crystal ball.
The aura of a rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake kept radiating out. If not for the barrier that Leylin deployed, it would have definitely been sensed by Belinda, who was outside.
“A rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake… Even though its a beast spirit, it’s very formidable, and a rare find amongst rank 5 creatures. Of course, unless I wish to become a fugitive wanted by everyone, I can’t use it often here because this is the Hale Continent. It’s even better if I silence those who come face to face with it…”
“We meet again, Chief Kenta!”
Leylin smiled weakly. A soul force of Half Moon rank probed into the crystal ball, and it immediately sensed the tremendous and brutal spiritual force engulfing it, complete with hostility.
Since he wanted to train it into a beast spirit, its memories had naturally been destroyed long ago. However, its enmity towards Leylin was instinctively left behind, and was still considered an inconvenience.
The beast spirit had to be attacked personally, resulting in a blood feud between the two. Its hostility, along with its instinctive resistance against being enslaved, simply made subduing this beast spirit a fantasy for any average beast spirit master.

“Resistance is futile!” Leylin shook his head. Magi and Warlocks definitely cultivated their truesouls to a greater degree compared to the aboriginals of the Purgatory World.

With his tricks and refined manipulation techniques, it was possible to even extract the hatred from the beast spirit directly, as though it was a highly precise surgery. This would greatly reduce the difficulty of subduing the beast spirit.

However, in comparison to making use of one’s truesoul to defeat it, the difficulty of such a surgery would be much higher, and the time required would be much longer.

Thus, Leylin chose to subdue it forcefully, instead of taking an approach that would make the beast spirit’s hatred simmer down.

“If I get rid of the beast spirit’s will to resist entirely, as well as its hostility, I’m afraid that perhaps even a rank 4 beast spirit master would be able to make this rank 5 beast spirit submit to him, especially Belinda. With the effect her bloodline energy has, the probability of success is much higher… Of course, it’s of no use to me all…”

Leylin was aware that he might have unintentionally unearthed an
even more terrifying way of utilizing the Purgatory World’s beast spirit spells. It was a pity that he didn’t belong to this world, and that he didn’t major in beast spirit spells. Hence, he could only toss this idea to a side.

*Hiss…*

Following the invasion of Leylin’s soul force, the alabaster phantom within the crystal ball started to appear abnormally irritable. The scarlet tongue kept flashing continuously.

“It’s just like a mantis trying to stop a chariot!” Leylin snorted coldly. The horrifying soul force that followed after immediately made the little snake shrink to a corner, as though it had been struck by lightning. Even the radiance in its pupils became dull.

“If we maintain this pace, it would be possible to thoroughly tame it within roughly half a month’s time. Before arriving at the holy city, this beast spirit can be sealed…”

Leylin nodded as he assessed his progress.

For an average beast spirit master, the amount of time spent on subduing this beast spirit would often need to be measured in years. Leylin’s method of removing the fragments of resentment from the beast spirit would also take as long. Only the most simple and cruel method of subduing it would require the shortest amount of time.

“It would take about a month to traverse the Serpentes Plains and arrive at the holy city. In that case, I should be able to advance the truesoul to Full Moon rank before we reach the holy city…”

Leylin stroked his chin.

Judging by the strength of rank 5 beast spirits in repaying their owners, advancing the truesoul to Full Moon was initially a feasible task. But now, with the presence of the Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes, Leylin probably needed to prepare a few more things.

“Taming a beast spirit is not something that can be done in a day. It
will need some time to prevent it from crumbling straightaway.”
When his work was done for the day, Leylin kept his crystal ball.
There was a hint of rumination in his eyes.
“Since we’ve arrived at the Serpentes Plains, ‘it’ should have
started…” A glaring chill was dispelled from Leylin’s pupils. It
reeked of extreme evil, and it even made the temperature of the
surroundings fall greatly.
Fortunately, he had deployed a barrier. Otherwise, Belinda and her
sister would have detected that something was off.
By then, after seeing what Brother ‘Nick’ had turned into, it would
be questionable whether Sophia would still continue to stick to
Leylin like before.

……
*Swish! Swish!*  
The yellowish-green underbrushes swayed continuously. Shortly
after, the stout shadow of an animal ran across in a flash, making
Sophia scream in excitement.
Maybe it was because she wasn’t very intelligent, or perhaps it was
the result of being constrained within the family for a long time,
but everything that the young girl had witnessed on her journey
amazed her incessantly. It even made for a few jokes.
“Sophia!” Belinda yelled. She was unhappy, but didn’t reprimand
the child directly.
With both her and Leylin around, they could naturally confirm that
the little chap that just ran past was the most harmless creature
around that would cause no harm to Sophia.
After all, Sophia was the hybrid borne of a rank 5 Alabaster
Devilsnake. It wouldn’t be a problem to achieve the standard of a
rank 2 or 3 Magus merely through the strength from her bloodline.
She might not even need to cultivate her energy, and may even rise
to higher realms solely through ageing. It could be said that she was
enjoying a natural advantage, just that her childish mentality might
not allow her to put them to good use.
“A dusty pink rabbit!” Contrarily, Leylin recognised the name of that creature. With the A.I. Chip’s amazing learning abilities, Leylin was no longer the clueless fool that he was when he had first stepped into the Purgatory World.

[Dusty pink rabbit. Strength: 1.3, Agility: 2.5, Vitality: 1.9, Spirit: 0.7. A creature special to the Hale Continent of omnivorous nature with an extremely extensive diet. Innate skill: breeding. As long as it obtains a sufficient amount of food, the dusty pink rabbit’s ability to propagate knows no limits. Its breeding season occurs all year round, throughout the four seasons. (Note: The mapping of the above-mentioned creature’s genome has shown anomalies. Discovered that the part about reproduction contains traces of artificial optimization!)]

Although such a rabbit would definitely be considered a demonic animal among the normal humans in the Magus World, it was as weak as an ant in Leylin’s eyes. What caught him by surprise was the modification made by the A.I. Chip in the annotation.

“It’s not just a dusty pink rabbit!”
*Hiss…* At this instant, a giant snake as thick as a person’s arm slithered by the roadside. A giant grey rat hung from its mouth. Through the A.I. Chip’s analysis, although the grey rat’s data was endlessly similar to the dusty pink rabbit’s in all aspects, it was clear that their reformed reproductive abilities were exactly the same. This made their already formidable innate skill even more terrifying.

“Wow…” Sophia was slightly startled by the gray snake, but she still went forth without fear, seeming as though she wanted to touch its head.
*Hiss…* The giant grey snake let Sophia do as she pleased without resisting at all. This made Sophia giggle with laughter, and at the
end, the giant grey snake even placed the food that it had caught in front of Sophia as a show of its subservience. It was only until Sophia explicitly declined, did it then continue to hold the rat in its mouth as it slithered through the bushes.

The bloodline of a rank 5 Alabaster Devil had the ability to restrain most of the common snake types across the Serpentes Plains. This was why Belinda was so at ease.

Leylin, on the other hand, gazed at the trail left behind by the grey snake, seemingly in deep thought.

“I’m afraid that the Snake Dowager was the one who tampered with the animals at the bottom layer of the food chain. It’s rumoured that there are all kinds of giant snake types in the Serpentes Plains that are incapable of transforming. These include the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, the Double Loop Snake, the Three-Headed Python, the Purgatory Fire Python and so on, as well as a great many mixed-bloods and other subspecies. Even though the Serpentes Plains is incomparably plentiful, it might not be able to withstand such a tremendous consumption of energy. But if it’s just the bottom layer of the food chain, perhaps there wouldn’t be enough…”

Leylin grabbed a weed at random. There was fresh soil on the stem, and the pale yellow roots felt moist.

“Sure enough, even the dusty pink rabbit’s food had been taken into consideration. There must be more changes in the environment to come, and even things such as them getting fatter at fixed times…”

“Seems like the entire Serpentes Plains is basically a cultivating ground for giant snake types…”

The corners of Leylin’s lips revealed a slight smile. Just by observing the Snake Dowager’s method of doing things, he knew that its academic attainments regarding bloodline experiments were definitely not few.
“Individuals manufactured in the laboratory are bound to have defects. The best method is still to seek for coincidentally mutated animals born in nature! The Snake Dowager’s plan is actually identical to the hypothesis that the A.I. Chip raised previously, just that…”

A hint of suspicion slowly appeared on Leylin’s forehead.

“What is the Snake Dowager trying to achieve from this? By creating an even stronger individual, isn’t it afraid that something more powerful would emerge?”

“No! Perhaps it wouldn’t allow a powerful being from the various tribes to arise, but maybe a first-rate mutated individual would be permitted… Or maybe she’s trying to cultivate an emperor bloodline that can fully take control…”

“It’s also possible that she’s performing these experiments purely out of curiosity. Or perhaps she wants to break through a bottleneck herself, and attain the rank 9 eternal realm or something… There are way too many possibilities…”

All sorts of possibilities flashed across in Leylin’s mind, making him frown slightly.

“Anyway, no matter what, the environment here is much better than I expected. There will absolutely be no problem in carrying out the plan…”

“Nick! What are you thinking about?”

Belinda walked over unhurriedly. Ever since she had gotten her revenge, she seemed to have unloaded a heavy burden worth thousands of kilograms. Even her usual grim expression had melted more or less, of course this was only true in front of Leylin and Sophia.

“Oh! Nothing much, I’m just wondering if the Serpentes Plains will be dangerous…”

Leylin smiled.

“This place is indeed a treacherous for other foreign tribes. After
all, among the snake clans that cannot transform, there are dreadful giant snakes that are rank 5 or 6… Even strong rank 6 contenders would be besieged by these humongous pythons, and I’m afraid that they would only end up falling…”

“But we’re different. The descendants of the Snake Dowager will never be attacked on the Serpentes Plains! Of course, this refers to those rational giant snakes. If we bump into those that are as stubborn as a rock and are influenced by their instinctive appetite, then we have no other way out even if it’s us. But fortunately, such snake types that are affected by their instincts are usually only rank 3 or below…” Belinda seemed rather proud.

She clearly understood the Serpentes Plains very well. She even had connections in the holy city. This was why Leylin was insistent on bringing her along.

“Hm!” Leylin nodded, then looked at Belinda, “You are a wanted for a trial. About that contact in the holy city…”

“Rest assured! That’s my close friend. Besides, this is the Hale Continent after all!”

Belinda was obviously highly confident. “Nick, you haven’t entered the holy city before, have you? Then you’ll have to register your identity. It will be more troublesome for such a frequent traveller like you, but no matter, this friend of mine will come in handy…”

Leylin identified himself to Belinda as a mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnake who had always been on the go, and he hadn’t even been to the holy city. Although such situations were rare, the Hale Continent was so vast that anything could happen. Besides, Leylin’s Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline could not be falsified, and thus Belinda was convinced.
The journey through the Serpentes Plains was extremely smooth as the Giant Serpentes avoided Leylin whom had carried the Devilish Alabaster bloodline on him,
As for those snakes without intelligence that tried to harass Leylin or treat him as a prey, they were swiftly slain by Belinda, which gave Leylin the cold shudders.
Perhaps, amongst the snakes, only those with intelligence could be considered as the same family. Those without any ability to think or those that only acted on instincts were not considered as part of them.
Furthermore, between the different races under the Snake Dowager, cannibalism and wars were often executed.
These races were mostly hovering between ranks 1 and 2, even Sophia could deal with them easily without Belinda’s help.
Over time, Leylin’s party gradually entered the deeper regions of the plains.
Under the purple moonlight, the plains were extremely tranquil.
Time to time, flickering red light from burning coals surfaced, bringing heat to the surroundings.
Suddenly, Leylin’s figure appeared above a tent with burning charcoal beside it, before flickering into concealment again.
“The distance is just right, it’ll be here!”
Leylin looked up at the moonlight high up in the sky as he muttered and left the camping grounds.
He left behind a puppet equipped with basic A.I. Chip capabilities, which would be enough to deal with most situations. Not long later, a marsh appeared in front of Leylin, where puddles seemed to be strung together on the plains, like starry shining pearls in the sky. In this vicinity, Leylin felt large amount of energy waves which were concealed, time to time hearing the hissing and roars of giant snakes nearby. Oftentimes, battles between creatures would surface to vye for the water source. Leylin had passed through this region with Belinda a few days ago. However, to avoid unnecessary battles, they avoided this area. However, Leylin had etched this place into his memory back then.

“Sssiii…..”

A giant snake with the circumference of a vat emerged from the marshes and opened its bloody jaws, wanting to swallow Leylin in just one bite. “Scram!” Leylin’s brows furrowed. The snake roared and escaped right after it was flicked away. “These useless things that don’t know their place are so troublesome!” Not every low ranked snake would be subjugated to Leylin’s bloodline. Back then, the grey snake that Sophia had encountered had only been subjugated due to it being extremely weak. However, the moment rank 2 and 3 giant snakes without intelligence appeared, Leylin would only be akin to a tasty prey to them. “Because they share the bloodline from the snake dowager, a higher ranked snake would not strike fear in them?” Leylin suddenly grinned, “This is the right specimen that I want!”

*Boom!* A gigantic white snake phantom the size of tens of thousands of meters surfaced from behind Leylin’s back, as two
scarlet vertical pupils the size of stars let off a ferocious roar. At the same time, the regal aura emanated from the huge snake. Right now, those giant snakes without any intelligence had also slithered away quickly and left the vicinity. Leylin was not a Warlock with mixed bloodline, hence just with the tiny trace of regalness emanated would stop the giant snakes with insatiable greed to devour him. Instead, these giant snakes with no intelligence were now extremely frightened. “Slick…” Beds of snakes continuously left the marsh, forming a tide of giant snakes. Mixed bloodlined snakes and even those that Leylin could not identify were escaping. “Huh! As expected, they’re all weak. There aren’t any traces of rank 4 species here, but it is also logical, since no matter how low their intelligence was before, they would undergo a transformation after they enter rank 4. Leylin’s gaze swept through the horde of snakes, before his eyes brightened, “It’s you!” A giant black snake was writhing and crying as it struggled in the grasp of Leylin. This snake had black scales and its vertical pupils were filled with horror and plea. As for its strength, there were rank 3 energy waves emanating from it. “Black Horrall Snake! The subspecies of Kemoyin! We meet again!” A trace of remembrance shuttered past Leylin’s thoughts as he watched the snake in front of him, keeping its silence. Back then, his Kemoyin bloodline was extracted and purified from the Black Horrall Snake. Thinking of it now, even though the great Magus Serholm left his inheritance behind, it was not as powerful as it seemed to be, as he did not have any intentions of passing down the Kemoyin bloodline. Perhaps, in Serholm’s eyes, a rank 3 Warlock was strong enough to
conquer the south coast and he did not want his inheritor to be swept up in the perilous dangers of the central continent. However, it was all for naught. Even the great Magus Serholm did not expect that his inheritor would be this heaven-defying, purifying the Black Horrall Snake’s bloodline into the Giant Kemoyin Serpent, turning into a powerful presence.

“I have already done this much, now I will need your strength!” A dark red test tube appeared in Leylin’s palms, where the contents within continuously frothed, filled with an ominous aura.

“The quintessence from the clone of the Monarch of Gluttony Beelzebub! Leylin muttered. This was the huge risk he took to summon Beelzebub through the constraining spell formation before he entered the Purgatory World.

Although it had been purified many times, the quintessence still contained large amounts of Beelzebub’s branding. Once used, the target will definitely be affected by the sin of gluttony. The target’s intellect will disintegrate, turning into Beelzebub’s puppet or the preparatory body of a clone.

“Purgatory World is too quiet, I have to introduce chaos to this place!” Leylin chuckled as he poured half of the contents of the test tube into the Black Horrall Snake’s jaws.

“Sssii!….Grrroarrr.” The Black Horrall Snake struggled continuously within Leylin’s grasp as dark coloured runes appeared on its body, so much that the scales seemed to be breaking apart, as if a devil within its body was trying to break free.

“Go!” Leylin tossed the Black Horrall Snake back into the horde of snakes.

Immediately, the Black Horrall Snake attacked the other giant snakes beside it. Its pupils were filled with a type of overzealous rage, as the aura on its body exponentially increased.

*Ka-cha!* A giant boa had its head bitten off by the Black Horrall...
Snake, before it was devoured completely by it.
*Sssii!* A crackline appeared on the head of the Black Horrall Snake and expanded continuously until it exploded.
Large amounts of skin were molted. Now, a larger, stronger Black Horrall Snake appeared, its strength nearing that of a rank 4 Magus.
The Black Horrall Snake with it increased strength continued to devour the other snake species. Eventually, another head appeared from its neck, accompanied by fiendish flames spewed from its mouth.
“The fiendish transformation is even more apparent now!” Looking at the scales on the Black Horrall Snake that looked even more malevolent now, Leylin shook his head.
“Sssii…” The double headed Black Horrall Snake in this Purgatory World had advanced into rank 4, yet it did not dare to provoke Leylin.
After looking at Leylin with fear in its eyes, the black coloured purgatory snake dashed into the distance, leaving behind a trail of corpses.
“Not so stupid huh. Although you won’t live happily ever after, claiming yourself as the king amongst all snakes on the plains for a short while should be a blazing glory as you were originally only rank 3 huh?
Leylin muttered, as he tossed the other half of the test-tube into the marsh behind him.
*Gulp! Gulp!* Dark red colour contents that were frothed expanded quickly in the marsh, leaving behind a peculiar smell lingering in the air.
Under the enticement of this scent, very soon a huge grey rat conquered its fear of snakes and scurried over, before lapping the water.
With each mouth, this rat only grew larger in size. Very soon, its eyes turned red, as if in an enraged mode.
Very soon, more grey rats scurried over. There were even white rabbits, accompanied by more snakes. After these organisms had finished quenching their thirst, they began to attack other animals ferociously, at the same time transforming into unrecognisable creatures.

Looking at this scene, the corners of Leylin’s lips curled up maliciously.

“Heyo Beelzebub! Are you satisfied with this Purgatory World that I found?”

By just thinking about it, Leylin knew that Beelzebub hungered for this world. It was a huge world with abundant resources. Even with the chaotic World’s Will, it did not reject these new life forms on the world.

To Beelzebub, such a world held an incomparably huge enticement. Even if Beelzebub knew what Leylin was scheming out in the open, he would still be attracted by the benefits and take a gamble. It was an irresistible trend.

“Of course, the power of gluttony is still weak in the beginning and has to be protected!”

Leylin smiled, as a pair of chaotic grey wings appeared, with the power of chaos, enveloping the marsh and its nearby region with a grey barrier.

“With this disguise, high ranked organisms would not be able to notice it until it’s too late!”

Leylin laughed blandly.

Although the Snake Dowager was considered a dignitary, she would not be able to understand the continent like the back of her palms, much less monitoring the happenings across the Hale Continent.

Furthermore, with Leylin using the power of chaos intentionally for disguise and concealment, nothing can be changed when the Snake Dowager has realised it.
Moreover, this was the marshes. Any organisms which were attracted were just expendables. Leylin would not feel the pinch in his heart even if all of these creatures were completed dead.

“Man-made environments are often the weakest type of ecosystems. After this has blown out of proportions, I’m sure it will cause the Snake Dowager and the Holy City enough headaches for a few years…”
Manmade environments were often the weakest and the most susceptible to external influences. Through the Snake Dowager’s power that boosted reproduction rates, coupled with the defilement of gluttony running rampant through the plains, the combined results of both of these would not just be a simple addition, but a powerful immeasurable change in the rate itself. Even Leylin himself highly anticipated the changes that were bound to happen.

The most important thing was that those effects were all due to the power of laws. Leylin had barely done anything at all to make that happen, which fully removed him from the situation. Even the Snake Dowager herself would only suspect that it was the Monarch of Gluttony invading from another world, and thus her attention would be diverted away from Leylin.

With these two law wielding existences vying to control this world, what sparks would it bring about? Just thinking of it amused Leylin.

Finally, Leylin gave one last lingering look at this marsh that was riddled with chaos and gluttony, before leaving and not giving one more glance at it.

Now that the seed has been planted, how it would develop and grow would no longer be under his control.

The next morning, Leylin brought Belinda and Sophia away from this area.
“What’s wrong? Nick? Did you sense any danger?”
Belinda felt that Leylin’s actions were somewhat suspicious.
“I have a premonition that something hugely unfavourable to us is happening behind our backs!” Leylin put on a solemn face, his eyes filled with worry.
“Mm, Sofia also felt it, that evil sensation, full of chaos and gluttony…” Belinda was still half-suspicious, but what surprised Leylin was Sofia, who stood to the side and nodded in agreement, her eyes filled with fear.
“That frightening evil feeling has become a vortex just behind our backs, and its range is still expanding, sister! Let’s leave this place right now, please!”
Sofia’s eyes widened and her shoulders began to tremble slightly.
“Alright, we’ll leave at once,” Belinda put her arm around Sofia’s shoulders and began to gently console her, no longer having any thoughts on Leylin’s proposal to leave. However, Leylin looked at Sofia and took measure of her with great interest.
“I really couldn’t tell, although her bloodline power isn’t particularly concentrated, she has this innately sharp perception… Does it originate from the sensitivity of her soul?
Although Sofia had sharp perceptive powers, it was a pity that she was facing Leylin, who was an old hand at this and was already in the middle of his long life. He was long able to bury his own emotions at the bottom of his heart, and put an end to anyone sensing or peeping on his feelings.
Consequently, Sofia thought that brother Nick smiled gently and had a comforting expression, and never discovered even the slightest trace of his investigations, hidden deep within.
“This sort of innate soul sensitivity, although there is still room for it to develop, for now it is far too weak,” Seeing this, Leylin could only shake his head and urge on the giant earth lizard once again to continue its journey.
With Leylin’s secret calculations, and with his true body faintly emitting a powerful aura, the beasts afflicted with the desire for gluttony didn’t dare to come and offend him as he gradually left the area behind. Sofia had also slowly calmed down, and had recovered to her original childish appearance. Leylin had left a wake of terrifying desire for gluttony behind, and its influence continued to spread. Afflicted rank 4 and rank 5 continuously emerged and began to fight those intelligent Morning Star serpent clans. By the time the Snake Dowager took it seriously, it was already too late.
The abundant resources of the Allsnake Plains, as well as the superior snake species living in it were nurtured by the Snake Dowager with utmost care. However, it had become a paradise for gluttony to grow. Naturally, as this area was too vast, gluttony was limited to wreaking havoc in the tiniest part of it. With Leylin’s arrangement and interference from chaotic power, even though it spread quickly, it did not attract much attention. Only with the passing of time did this situation become more and more complex, and became even more frightening. As the originator of this disaster, Leylin didn’t particularly manage the matter further. After ten days had passed, after they passed through yet another long journey, the Holy City of all snake descendents and the heart of the Hale Continent had appeared before their very eyes.
“At our current speed, we will arrive at the Holy City tomorrow at noon, at the very latest!” Belinda looked at the map in her hand and spoke confidently.
Leylin only lightly nodded. In reality, he had already seen some changes on their journey today.
A few small snake hybrids began to appear, and there were even established ranches and botanical gardens. Everything he had seen told him he had entered an area of superior intelligent species.
“My friend, Aegnis, holds the post of the highest ranked guard in the Holy City, I believe she will definitely help us!”
Belinda looked rather excited, and Leylin knew what she was thinking about.
As a wanted criminal of the Trial’s Eye, Belinda definitely felt that it was a horrible situation to be in. If she could not resolve this affair, perhaps she would have to go into hiding with Sofia for the rest of their lives.
However, this place was the Hale Continent, and Belinda hadn’t really betrayed the Trial’s Eye, but had only rebelled against one of its forces, even if she had gone a little overboard.
If she gained the protection of a powerful person in the Holy City, although it couldn’t undo the Trial’s Eye influence and repeal the arrest warrant, it would be possible to keep the affair under wraps. Belinda certainly would be able to live with Sofia freely in the sunlight.
“To do this, one would need to be rather powerful. Belinda’s previous status wouldn’t let her do it, unless her friend is a direct descendent from a major clan…”
Leylin stroked his chin and had already guessed everything.
“That Aegnis, is she from a great clan in the Holy City or an influential direct descendant?” He directly asked.
“You really guessed it,” Belinda froze, apparently surprised at Leylin’s perceptive abilities, but she did not deny it. “Yes, Aegnis is from the Steward family, one of the top 10 most influential families in the Holy City. They possess the Matriarch’s most noble bloodline as direct descendants, and for generations they have served as the
Holy City’s fundamental defenders.”
“As long as I rely on the Steward Family, the earlier ‘Eye of Sacrifice’ organisation I was in wouldn’t dare to offend them. So after some time, there is some hope for me to renegotiate with them about the arrest warrant!”
Belinda had evidently planned everything out, “And so, with her help, we will definitely be able to secure a settlement certificate. Nick, are you…”
Belinda was clearly rather worried that Leylin wouldn’t be able to save face in this situation, but this was something she was needlessly worrying about.
“Don’t worry, I have no issues with this,” Leylin smiled.
What was the point of saving face? Leylin didn’t care about it at all. Additionally, he had helped Belinda from the very beginning, and had even secretly taken her feelings into account, wasn’t it all for this purpose?
Leylin had previously heard of the stringent rules of the Holy City. If one didn’t have a powerful guarantor vouching for them, then with his status as an unidentified foreigner, it would be incredibly difficult for him to settle there, to the point where it would be easier for him to fly than to become a citizen.
Especially after he had secretly set things into motion, one could gather that the Holy City would become more and more lively. Without any real basis for entering, perhaps he would suffer a lot of harassment.
Compared to that, saving face in this situation was definitely not an issue.
Leylin had always focused solely on benefits, and with his current identity as a mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnake and as Nick the wanderer, no matter how humiliating it was, how could it bother him?
It had to be said that in some respects, Leylin’s moral integrity was
rather heinous.

“That’s good,” Belinda’s eyes grew warmer, with a satisfied look. In reality, she was confident about settling down herself in the Holy City, but if Leylin didn’t agree to bow his head and give in, then his unknown origin would definitely pose a huge problem. Seeing that he had now agreed to yield made her immediately feel more relieved.

“I still have some savings, and with our strength we can accept missions in the Holy City. The pay will be sufficient for us to live on! As for Sofia, I must hire a governess or a nanny to prepare her for marriage in the future…” Belinda seemed to be immersed in her plans for the future, until the last part where she secretly stole a glance at Leylin. She secretly blushed, but then immediately forced that expression away.

“I-It’s already getting late, we should rest…” Belinda seemed to become unconsciously shy, and pulled Sofia, who was still playing, into her tent. Sofia’s dissatisfied cries of “No, no!” could be heard.

Leylin looked in the direction where Belinda had left and stroked his chin, with a strange smile appearing on his face.

……

“Then… Goodnight, girls!” Leylin came to their tent and softly spoke to them.

“Goodnight, Nick,” Belinda’s voice was rather shaky, and finally he heard Sofia’s voice, “Brother Nick, I want to tell you…” “Ah!” Sofia’s voice was interrupted, and immediately Belinda’s humiliated and angry scolding could be heard.

Seeing the noisy and unstable tent, Leylin only smiled a little and returned to his own tent.

If it wasn’t for the Allsnake Curse on his body, and how close he
was to the Holy City and the Snake Dowager, he wouldn’t have minded playing more games with Belinda. However, Leylin wasn’t in the mood due to the huge pressure of the curse. In fact, if his willpower and acting skills weren’t so good, perhaps Belinda would have seen through him already. After his everyday routine had been arranged, Leylin’s expression became solemn and imposing. “Tomorrow, we’ll arrive at the Holy City, the headquarters of the Snake Dowager.” There was a dark expression in Leylin’s eyes, “Everything I have, as well as my hopes of breaking the bloodline shackles—whether I fail or succeed all depends on my next move!”
ut before that, I should finish doing everything else.” A crystal ball emerged in Leylin’s hands, with a red-eyed little snake, with scales as pure white as jade, wriggling around within. Bound within the ball was Belinda’s father, a rank 5 pure-blooded Alabaster Devil. This was the beast spirit of Kenta! If Belinda were to find out, things might get troublesome, but Leylin didn’t really care about her anymore. Besides, Leylin was very confident in his concealing techniques. Now, the hatred and obstinate look in the beast spirit’s eyes had disappeared, and all that was left was bewilderment. Leylin was very satisfied upon seeing this.

[Beep! Scan of target completed. All hostility in its subconscious has been removed.] At this moment, the A.I. Chip prompted in a robotic tone. “Good! My hard work for almost a whole month hasn’t been in vain! I’ve finally tamed him.” Leylin pressed his fingers against the crystal, allowing the little white snake to break free of its bindings. It flit between his fingers, and even seemed to have a sense of dependence on him. A month ago, that would have been unthinkable. “No matter how poor my spirit sealing spell formation is, it seems that there’s a chance of success over 50%!” Leylin’s lips quirked in a smile, “Just as well. I’ll seal him
completely tonight!”

Leylin was very attracted to the Purgatory World’s strength systems. In this period of time, he had almost completely figured out and understood the strength systems here.

In Purgatory World, besides the innate abilities of the various races, these two strength systems were the most widespread: The path of offerings and the path of beast spirits!

The path of offerings entirely depended on the dignitary. If you gained the dignitary’s favour, you would attain more power and reach a higher Sacrificer rank even if you weren’t as devout, or even if the offerings were lacking. However, the price was having your body completely branded by the power of the dignitary, or even breaking off all possibilities of entering rank 7, the realm of laws. Of course, for devout followers, this method of ‘existing together with one’s god’ might perhaps satisfy their thirst and desire even more.

The path of beast spirits was more primal. This path depended on hunting large beasts and refining them into beast spirits, and then sealing them to be ordered around in combat.

Though it sounded simple, every time they sealed a beast spirit there was a huge challenge to a beast spirit master’s own soul, in terms of its cultivation and strength. If the seal failed, there were far too many instances in Purgatory World of the beast spirit devouring the master instead.

The higher-ranked the beast spirit, the more terrifying their resistance was. Hatred that retained from the soul were extremely dangerous for all beast spirit masters.

Of course, once a beast spirit of a certain rank had been successfully sealed, the beast spirit master would naturally rise to that rank.

After sealing, the beast spirit master could not only order the beast spirit to fight, one could also enjoy the many benefits to the soul
from the beast spirit. For this reason, there were so many beast spirit masters who did not fear death and pursued high-ranked beast spirits and did their best to seal them, though failure was very common.
While Leylin had a deep understanding of the path of beast spirits, beast spirits were very difficult to obtain. He only had a Gudrick beast spirit that was rank 3 and yet to mature. Hence, his beast spirit master ranking was only 3!
That was fine though. At the White River Valley, Leylin had massacred Belinda’s family and extracted the soul of her father, refining him into a beast spirit.
A rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit was very rare even in the whole Purgatory World.
Even on the Serpentes Plains, there weren’t many rank 5 giant snakes. Leylin hadn’t seen any, and most of them travelled around in groups. If it were to move, the whole race would move along with it.
In Leylin’s eyes, these giant snakes were less outstanding compared to the Alabaster Devilsnakes.
“Whether as a bloodline imprint or as a cover, this beast spirit will be the most helpful to me!”
Leylin observed the little snake in his hands. The snake even flicked its scarlet tongue, constantly licking at his fingertips.
He had gathered much of the bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake and even attempted at creating bloodline imprints, giving him the key to entering the Dreamscape at will.
If he had the beast spirit of the Alabaster Devilsnake as well, whether a bloodline imprint was made, used, or if he were to explore Dreamscape, he would have great advantages. Leylin had always liked preparing things well, and if his plan were to fail, then dreamforce would be his trump card. Hence, Leylin’s research had been focused on exploring Dreamscape.
Besides this, for Leylin who had snuck into holy city, having an Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit was another insurance for him. While he had the bloodline traces on the Mask of the Dreamless, as well as the cover from the Nefarious Filthbird’s power of chaos, Leylin didn’t mind adding another layer of security.

“What comprises of a life form is both the bloodline and the soul.’ Leylin mumbled, “With replenishment from her family, the consumption to the Mask of the Dreamless’ bloodline has been made up for. With this beast spirit, I can use it in place of my soul at crucial moments. Even if the Snake Dowager were to scan over a large area, I’m sure I can hide from her…”

Using the aura of a beast spirit as a substitute for his own might be just a dream to the inhabitants of Purgatory World, but this was no issue for Leylin. What was more important was that the main material for the beast spirit was a soul. Hence, there was nothing that would not merge. With the A.I. Chip, Leylin was very confident.

“Hence, the beast spirit of the Alabaster Devilsnake is my best choice!”

Leylin’s eyes shone with determination, “Furthermore, after becoming a rank 5 beast spirit master, my truesoul will probably reach full-moon.”

The increase of strength in any amount was a chance hard to come by.

[Beep! Beginning seal of beast spirit. Setting up rank 5 soul sealing spell formation.] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded. Meanwhile, an intricate soul spell formation diagram was shown.

Leylin was only a rank 3 beast spirit master now, and if inhabitants of Purgatory World were to hear that he wanted to seal a rank 5 beast spirit, they would say he was merely dreaming.

Even rank 4 beast spirit masters did not dare do this even after obtaining a rank 5 beast spirit. At the very least, they would have
the confidence to attempt this after sealing more rank 4 beast spirits and nourishing their soul for centuries.

A rank 3 beast spirit master? The body would probably not be able to bear the powerful undulations of a rank 5 beast spirit and just crumble, with there being a chance of exploding into bloody mist!

But Leylin was no ordinary person. His truesoul was at half-moon, and his body, which had been strengthened by bloodline force and various techniques overtime gave him this confidence.

“Compared to rank 5 beast spirit masters of Purgatory World, rank 5 Magi souls have already condensed their truesoul. The density and quality is incomparable. The power of their soul, what the soul can withstand and precision in controlling it exceeds that of a rank 5 beast spirit master by several levels! Besides, my body and vitality has already gone through bloodline force and Multilimb Strength and received boosts from body tempering spell formations. A mere rank 5 beast spirit…”

Beast spirit masters of Purgatory World could seal beast spirits as long as they were lucky enough. Their bodies would then be nourished by the beast spirit, which meant just lying around would allow them to increase their strength. Once they hit the limits of the beast spirit, they could just seal a new spirit. This turned into a cycle.

Compared to Magi who had to be cautious at all times, study continuously and advance, their method might seem comfortable and easy, but it lacked the most important experience and knowledge!

At the soul level, Magi of the Magus World could definitely look down on these beast spirit masters. If they obtained suitable beast spirits, the speed at which Magi would adapt to and seal the beast spirit would be faster than beast spirit masters.

“The reason the path of beast spirits did not prosper in the Magus World is related to the different laws of the world, and might have
something to do with the extinction of species in the central continent. After all, which world has as many beast spirit resources as in Purgatory World?”

Making sense of his thoughts, Leylin looked solemn. The path of beast spirits was worthy of Magi looking into. At the very least, the soul sealing spell formation, the beast spirit turning on the owner, coordination between the soul and the flesh were all huge inspirations for Leylin to conduct experiments.

While he focused on the path of bloodline Warlocks, Leylin would not look down on other strength systems. No matter how insignificant it might seem, anything that was passed down was definitely worthy of looking into. Only by constantly studying would the path of Magi be filled with fervour and life.

[Starting atomic microscope. Helping with carving of rank 5 soul sealing spell formation.] Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, an intricate spell formation began to appear at the back of Leylin’s hand.

At the heart of the profound spell formation was a twisted pentagon diagram and many soul runes filled with mystery and savagery. These were key to subduing beast spirits, and even led to beast spirits turning on the beast spirit master.

Even the A.I. Chip was unable to analyse some of the runes and could only use them as much as possible.

The rays emitted from the spell formation enveloped the Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit, and the little snake began to float.

“Hss…” While already tamed, the little white snake showed signs of resistance.

However, the familiar soul force from Leylin’s eyes felt very familiar to the little white snake, and it now had an internal conflict. Gradually, the bundle of light around the little white snake came closer to the spell formation on the back of Leylin’s hand.
“Now’s the time. Seal!”
Along with Leylin’s cry, the soul sealing spell formation suddenly emitted rays of light that absorbed that bundle of light.
“Next up… is a contest between souls!”
eylin closed his eyes.
Now, in his gloomy soul space, his half-moon truesoul showed itself. Opposite it was the little white snake from before.
“Hss…”
This contest had already happened many times in the past month. Hence, after sensing the familiar soul aura that belonged to Leylin’s truesoul, the Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit immediately became fearful.
“Obey or die!”
Leylin did not give the beast spirit much time and immediately warned, boundless half-moon truesoul strength descending and pressing the little white snake to the ground.
“Hss…” The snake flicked its tongue and chose to obey. A flash of cold, clear moonlight entered through its eyes, controlling it completely.
Gradually, the eyes became dazed, and a half moon appeared…
[Beep! Host has successfully sealed rank 5 Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit. Promoted to rank 5 beast spirit master!]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded. Everything had gone extremely smoothly with how everything had been set up.
A beast spirit above rank 4 usually had some malicious intent or memory fragments from the body. For a soul like this that had lost all its will and was defiant, beast spirit masters found this very
troublesome. Even if the beast spirit was successfully tamed eventually, a part of the beast spirit’s soul source would be consumed from battle and cause it to weaken. However, Leylin had long since tamed it, which allowed the sealing process to go smoothly. The soul sealing spell formation had already been optimised by the A.I. Chip, which raised the compatibility between the beast spirit master and the beast spirit to the highest. Hence, not only had Leylin successfully become a rank 5 beast spirit master, but he also could display the full strength of the original Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit!

“But the process of sealing a beast spirit has already been deduced by the A.I. Chip to have a success rate of 90%. The process of the boost is the most important…”

At this thought, Leylin looked more grim than before, and placed his focus deep in his sea of consciousness amongst the point mass nebulae.

[Beep! Boost of rank 5 beast spirit beginning.] Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, a fantastic change happened in his sea of consciousness. On the back of Leylin’s hand, a vivid tattoo of a little white snake appeared and roved around. A stream of pure soul force spiralled as it was absorbed and devoured into the point mass vortex in his sea of consciousness. The refining process was repeated and then abruptly poured into the point mass.

The point mass of a Radiant Moon Magus had already formed, the two innate runes on it were extremely dazzling. Within the point mass, Leylin’s half-moon truesoul was cheering excitedly. The point mass, that was like a full moon that was already half filled with light, suddenly expanded, charging towards filling the other half.
After entering the realm of a rank 5 Radiant Moon, a Magus’ truesoul was like a full moon, signifying fullness. The strength of soul force would show on the surface of the round moon. From the crescent to the half-moon, and then to the most powerful full moon; these would show the various phases of rank 5 Magi as they trained. 

Leylin’s truesoul had only been at half moon, but with the help of the Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit, he began to make a burst for the full moon!

[Beep! Rank 5 beast spirit boost has begun. Host’s soul force is being enhanced. All stats are changing…]
The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded at this moment.

[Beep! Detected that Host’s soul force has reached threshold. Beginning upgrade. Now at 210.] [Beep! Host has absorbed a large amount of purified soul origin. Soul force upgrading. Now at 220.] The A.I. Chip’s prompts kept refreshing, and accompanied by its robotic intones, Leylin’s half-moon truesoul within his point mass filled up, beginning to transform into a full moon rank.

230! 240! 250! With the boost from the rank 5 beast spirit, the rate of progress of his truesoul could be said to be terrifying.

His truesoul that was already full began to expand in size, the luster from a full moon practically filling the whole truesoul.

At this very moment, something strange happened!

“Hss!” At Leylin’s forehead, a black snake rune that was bound by thorny chains appeared, with a seal from the concentrated power of chaos circling it.

[Beep! Detected disorder from the Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes. Determined to be triggered by sudden increase of soul force. Now flaring up.]

With the A.I. Chip’s voice, Leylin felt that there seemed to be a terrifying black hole in his body that began to absorb much of his bloodline and soul force.
“No!” Leylin’s eyes were filled with wisps of blood immediately. Though he’d already known that with the seal of the curse, it would be difficult to increase his strength, Leylin did not expect it to be this serious. Based on his plans, after raising his truesoul to full moon, he would then reach peak rank 5. Even with the suppression of the curse mark, he could still regain his strength and even surpass it. After all, if Leylin’s previous strength was 10 and the seal decreased it by 2, the strength he had left would only be 8. But once Leylin reached peak rank 5, the limits of his strength would rise to 15, and even with the weakening of the seal by 2, he would still have 13 which far exceeded what he currently had. However, the terror of the curse mark and the Snake Dowager’s adeptness at curses exceeded his expectations. “Power of chaos!” A grey illusory feather appeared in Leylin’s hand. Large amounts of crystallisation of chaos combusted, beginning to support the seal on his forehead. “The curse mark even has the function of automatically increasing strength along with the increase of strength in the host body!” Leylin looked terrible at this point, and his expression turned into one of determination. He’d already had a contingency plan for this, but it wasn’t a crucial time yet and he didn’t want to waste this. “Fine! Don’t you want to absorb me? I’ll give you everything!” With his eyes red, Leylin ordered. A fiery-red jade-like crystal suddenly appeared from his spatial item, with flaming red luster and the indistinct phoenix cry! The Soul Unique Item the essence of the fragments of the phoenix egg, also the gem of Lava World! It could enhance soul force as long as the host’s vitality could withstand it. Though Leylin had already reached the limits before, after sealing a beast spirit, his own vitality had been enhanced. On top of what he had been amassing all this time, it was enough for him to use this
A black demonic fire phoenix suddenly emerged from Leylin’s back, devouring the phoenix egg.
*Rumble!* Golden, brilliant flames burnt around him, and turned a demonic black.
Terrifying soul force that brought with it boiling fiery rays appeared around Leylin’s body, and filled the black hole of the curse mark.
*Chirp chirp!* Compared to bloodline force, the soul force that had the burning powers of the ancient phoenix caused the black hole to ripple, fiery-red rays flashing from deep within the black hole.
“Get lost!”
With Leylin’s roar, the curse mark on his forehead abruptly pulled back and even had a red scratch on it. Great amounts of the power of chaos formed a seal around the mark, suppressing it.
[Beep! Host has absorbed essence of phoenix egg. Obtained much soul origin. Soul force numbers increasing.]
With its voice, Leylin’s soul force numbers shot forward like a rocket, and in almost that instant, broke through the 250 bottleneck. After a few jumps, it broke through the critical point of 300!
[Beep! Host body’s soul force has broken through 300, reached full moon. Host’s stats have all changed. Recalculating.]
The A.I. Chip’s voice was still transmitting, but Leylin had no energy to investigate. His attention was now on the truesoul in the point mass.
The truesoul that was like a full moon had not only swollen up to the extreme, its whole body was filled with clear luster that gave off a feeling of perfectness.
“This is… the truesoul of peak rank 5 at full moon?”
Leylin mumbled as he gazed upon the gigantic full moon truesoul, looking drunk. The full moon not only had a clear luster, there was...
also a golden line that shimmered in and out of existence at the heart of it. However, it was covered by the brightness surrounding it. Unless he stared at it, he wouldn’t notice it.

“This is… when soul force has a qualitative change…”

Leylin’s eyes momentarily showed confusion, but was then filled with elation.

“I know, this is rank 6 truesoul force! Once Radiant Moon Magi reach full moon, their truesouls have already reached the limit. The next thing to do is to change the soul force from negative to positive energy, turning into the truesoul like a scorching sun of rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magi!”

“This golden line signifies my truesoul has already reached the limits of rank 5 and is beginning to transform into rank 6!”

Leylin sighed. For regular rank 5 Magi, getting their truesoul to full moon was already exceptionally difficult. They would have to work unceasingly to get their truesoul to fill completely and then automatically upgrade. That would take centuries, but Leylin had reached full moon in an instant.

“With negative soul force, I need to produce positive energy from this dark negative energy in order to gain solidified positive force. It’s not something a rank 5 beast spirit can achieve. The only explanation would be the essence of the phoenix egg!”

Leylin’s pupils brightened, “The phoenix egg contains not just a large amount of soul origin force that can strengthen a Magus’ soul, but also possesses anode soul force, and its the guide for full moon Magi to promote. That’s saved me hundreds of years of hard work!”

In that moment, Leylin thought of the reason.
The method to refine negative soul force into positive and obtain the essence of positive soul force was the key for a rank 5 Radiant Moon Magus becoming a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Monarch.
The phoenix egg was the treasure of the Lava World after all, and the positive power it possessed could save most Radiant Moon Magi centuries worth of hard work.
If this was seen by those Breaking Dawn Monarchs who had broken through with hard work or peak rank 5 Radiant Moon who were still training desperately, they might be so jealous of Leylin that they might go crazy with envy.
“But that means the phoenix egg has been completely used up…” Leylin found this result quite a pity. With the boost from the rank 5 beast spirit, that was enough to push him to full moon. The phoenix egg left behind could be used in training at rank 6.
With the abundance of positive soul force in the egg, which could even help a Breaking Dawn Monarch advance at lightning speed, using it recklessly now as a rank 5 made him feel extremely wasteful.
Due to the limitations of his bloodline, Leylin’s truesoul already had signs of transforming into an substantialised positive soul, and he would never be able to succeed unless he completely rid himself of his bloodline curse.
“It’s too early to talk about rank 6. I’ll need to focus on the benefits
that I now have!” While he found it a pity, Leylin was optimistic about the use of the phoenix egg. Due to the interference of the Allsnake Curse, he would not have been able to reach full moon if not for the power of the phoenix egg.

If the same thing were to happen again, Leylin was sure that he would make the same choice.

Ridding himself of other thoughts, Leylin gazed at the A.I. Chip’s stats column. As he had forcefully broken through to full moon, much of his stats had undergone huge changes.


“As expected, after advancing, all the limits have increased. Even with restrictions of the curse marks, I’ve basically returned to my most powerful state before, with some increases even!” Leylin’s eyes shone as he felt the power in all parts of his body and couldn’t help but clench his fists, “Only this power would be enough for my plans in the holy city!”

“But…” Leylin, who had regained his calm, watched the insides of the tents that now looked messy and could not help but laugh wryly, “Thankfully, I set up a seal. Otherwise, Belinda and Sophia would have been alarmed.”

“The flare up of the Allsnake Curse happened with the Snake Dowager so close…”

Leylin looked incomparably serious, “A.I. Chip, activate strongest preventative measures!”

[Beep! Mission established. Initiation underway.]

Numerous white scaly patterns formed the most intricate patterns
on Leylin’s face. Meanwhile, the Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit tattoo on Leylin’s body began to wander around, emitting a unique soul undulation.

After making all the preparations, a tremendous conscient was like a tsunami, spreading from the holy city.

“What is it, Mighty Mistress? Who dares go against you and caused you such ire?”

Such a terrifying conscient shocked many in that instant. Belinda and Sophia had walked out of their tents and knelt in the direction of the holy city, bodies trembling in the moonlight.

“She’s naturally looking for me!”

Leylin snickered inside, though on the surface, he looked to be kneeling in reverence and trepidation, praying that the Mistress would calm her anger. Of course, Leylin knew that before he was captured, this would be impossible.

Sensing this conscient roaring above him and passing him by, yet not doubting him at all, his lips quirked in a smile.

“As expected, the double cover of my soul and bloodline, as well as support of the feather of chaos, makes it impossible for the Snake Dowager to find me with this kind of scan with her conscient unless she sees me personally.”

This was definitely good news to Leylin.

Though the Nefarious Filthbird had guaranteed this, Leylin did not dare place too much hope on it.

When it came to life and death situations, he would not mind using all methods possible to increase his rate of success.

“Hss!” Realising that doing that would not help her find Leylin, the temporary wave of soul undulations passed and instead, a bright bundle of light rose like the sun from holy city.

Within the sun was a gigantic snake ball figure that was like a sun, and there were even sounds of sacrificial chanting from there.

These sounds were very ancient and had some strange pitches that
caused one to be intoxicated in it.

“This…” Just after hearing a little, Leylin’s expression immediately changed.

[Warning! Warning! Host’s curse mark is acting up.] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded in time, before a rune began to flicker on Leylin’s forehead.

Thankfully, Belinda and Sophia now had their heads down as they closed their eyes to pray, or else they’d definitely notice the change in Leylin.

“Feather of Chaos, ignite the crystals and get back!”

The blood vessels on Leylin’s face writhed, and immediately after, two forces began a dangerous confrontation inside.

*Chirp chirp!* At this moment, the flame imprints that were already on the curse mark began to flash with red lights, and Leylin seemed to hear the cry of a primordial fire phoenix.

With the joint work of the two, the flare up of the curse mark was suppressed.

Only after the illusion from the holy city disappeared did Leylin sigh deeply, and hastily reinforced his appearance-changing methods to hide any external changes, which was how Belinda did not notice anything different.

Even so, it was impossible to hide everything that had happened.

No matter what repercussions there were from the Snake Dowager’s sudden anger, Leylin and the others had to carry on their journey.

“Nick! I…” Belinda glanced at Leylin, who was the same as before, and seemed to have something to say.

“What’s wrong?” Leylin turned, a tender look and smile on his face as if nothing had happened.

“Oh, no, it’s nothing!” Belinda looked dazed, and also a little confused, “It just feels like something about you has changed, but I don’t know what it is for sure.”
“It’s the smell!” Sophia, who was ahead, turned back, eyes full of happiness as she sniffed at Leylin. “The smell on Brother Nick’s body is even more aromatic, and Sophia feels more close to him!” “Stop it!” Belinda grabbed at Sophia’s little face, causing her to frown. Meanwhile, Leylin was stunned at her keen senses. “I was discovered so quickly! Such a pure and sensitive soul is rather rare.” Leylin naturally knew the reason why Belinda felt something was off, since a peak full moon truesoul was worlds apart from what things had been the previous day. Even if Leylin did all he could to conceal this, there would still be a subtle difference. Besides, the rank 5 beast spirit that Leylin had chosen to seal was Belinda and her sister’s father! The bloodline aura from someone of the same kind and family had caused Sophia to realise what was off. “However, from her experiences, I doubt she’s discovered this. If she found out the feeling of feeling closer to me came from her father, she might be fearful. After all, Kenta didn’t give the siblings a good impression…” Pondering over this for a while, Leylin continued the journey with the sisters. Though nothing had changed from the previous day, and Leylin was still chatting and joking with them cheerfully on the way, he was actually reading the contents of the prompt on the A.I. Chip, and his heart could not calm. [Beep! Affected by Snake Dowager’s undulations. Variation to Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes, increasing corroding ability.] [Curse of Corrosion—High grade variation of the curse mark. After entering region of Snake Dowager’s influence, Host’s life force will constantly be absorbed till death. The process is irreversible.]
“After realising she can’t find me, she’s used this method to force me to show myself?”
Feeling the life force in his body unceasingly being seized from his body, and his body heading towards death gradually, Leylin’s lips quirked in a smile instead, “But… for you, who can only do this much, does it mean you have no other ways of limiting me?”
“It’s not just my bloodline and soul force, but even my life force is being absorbed by the curse, subduing my strength.]
Leylin raised his arm, his pale skin and firm muscles full of life. However, he could feel a sense of losing something.
“Under the effects of the corrosion, my body’s life energy is quickly dissipating. Though there aren’t obvious changes on the outside, in just a few years time, my appearance will become that of an old person… Even with appearance changing techniques, it wouldn’t be able to conceal these changes…”
“Just from the bloodline curse, I have about 19 years left, but with the curse that corrodes my life force…”
He smiled wryly.
He had a feeling that this sort of complex curse would have even worse effects the closer he got to the Snake Dowager.
This would go on till the day the curse mark completely flared up and ruined his soul, causing him to die, or until he would be discovered by the Snake Dowager.
“So many restrictions and so much pressure! How… enjoyable! This is too enjoyable!”
Leylin brushed the back of his hand against his lips slowly, “Such power restrictions is so enjoyable! The greater the pressure, the worse the backlash! I can’t wait to see the day I destroy these restraints and soar!”
740 - Reaching Holy City

The Hail Continent’s holy city!” Leylin muttered as he sized up this city that seemed to have been built by giants. The entire city was filled with brilliant lights, and what was the most unforgettable was the giant sculpture at the very heart of the city.

It was a very bewitching female with long hair with separated out and transformed into exotic snakes of all kinds. There were the iant Kemoyin Serpents, the Alabaster Devilsnakes, Three-headed Pythons, and many other species could be found within the hair of this snake chieftess.

“The sculpture must have been made with the Snake Dowager as the model. I can see it so clearly even outside the city, and if I were to determine the scale, it must be over tens of thousands of metres tall…”

Leylin’s eyes were full of admiration. If not for the spell formations and other assistance from other worlds, a statue of this scale could never have been accomplished.

The secret undulations hidden in various parts of the holy city made Leylin’s expression change slightly. While he was unable to detect rank 7 existences, the radiation from rank 6 Breaking Moons could no longer resist the A.I. Chip’s scans.

Hence, Leylin was certain that there were at least ten rank 6s in the holy city, and they were all descendants of the Snake Dowager!
‘From the intel and what I saw yesterday, the Snake Dowager is here, but I don’t know where she is.’
“Keke…” Leylin suddenly began to cough.
“What’s wrong, Nick?” Belinda and Sophia looked over, their eyes full of concern.
“It- It’s nothing!” Leylin laughed forcefully, hiding his palm that now had traces of blood.
“In the holy city, where the Snake Dowager’s aura is even more concentrated, the rate at which my life force depletes is even faster. With this rate, I might not be able to hold on for a few years, but thankfully, these few years should be enough!”
“I was just a little emotional after seeing such a huge city. Let’s get in! Have you notified your friend yet?”
“I’ve already notified Aegnis. She’ll be here soon!” Belinda laughed.
The three of them now stood outside the huge holy city. There were three huge triumphal arches, and a bridge that was tens of metres long. Below it was a surging moat, though the waters were black and gave an ominous feeling.
The gates of the city opened, and many half-snake people and even pure-bloods passed by in an orderly manner.
“That’s…” Upon seeing this, Leylin’s eyes narrowed.
The queue that wound around like a long snake suddenly had a small disturbance near the gates, and immediately after, a half-snake person with black scales on its face wailed as he was separated out, and was pushed into the black moat.
“Ah…” Its mournful cries vanished in an instant, and Leylin immediately saw only white bones, and even then, they melted quickly.
“Just now…” Leylin’s eyes shifted to the stone sculpture of snakes on the city gate. The vertical pupils of the sculptures were now flickering with green light.
“Seems like when that snake being passed by, the eyes of the sculptures turned bright red! Is that some sort of bloodline identification system?” Leylin was slightly afraid, because he had not found anything strange about that snake person earlier.

“That is the Snake Sculpture found everywhere in the holy city. As long as there are residents whose souls or bloodlines aren’t pure, or have not gotten permission, all will be detected and thrown into the Howling Abyss!”

There was a grim look on her face, “Based on the system of the holy city, whether it’s bloodline beings with unknown origins or wanted criminals, none can stay in the holy city!”

“Oh! In other words, if you and I were to enter, the sculpture’s eyes would turn red, and many soldiers would be attracted?”

Leylin stroked his chin, “What benefits are there, for so many of them to scramble there?”

“Benefits?” Belinda smiled wryly, “There are obviously a lot! First of all, all those who get permission to stay in holy city will have their safety guaranteed. In the Hail Continent, there are few organisations who dare treat residents of the holy city roughly!”

“Absolute protection?” Leylin nodded. In this era of living from hand to mouth, absolute protection was a dream come true for the weak.

“Also, the holy city is the core of the Hail Continent. You’ll be able to get anything at all here, even the most highly-ranked strength systems, the best offerings and beast spirits... but most importantly...” At the mention of the holy city, she evidently became excited.

“What’s most important is that the entire holy city has gained the favour of the Mistress, and all of those who live here will have the purity of their blood not fall in rank and even continuously increase based on the length of time they stay here.” Another voice sounded from the side, and along with a streak of black light, there
were two more figures appearing.
“Aegnis!” Upon seeing who had arrived, Belinda grinned brilliantly.
“Belinda, my sister! We haven’t seen each other in around 132 years!” Someone headed over and gave Belinda an enthusiastic hug. This must be the good friend that Belinda had constantly mentioned, Aegnis.
Leylin could not help but size up this being. She had short brown hair, a tall stature, fair and glowing skin, and she wore tight-fitting armour that seemed to be made of crystal. Her fine nose was raised, and she had a heroic air to her. While a female, she had a gender-neutral beauty to her.
What surprised Leylin was the bloodline aura of her body. This even caused him some fear. This was definitely the bloodline of a rank 6 giant serpent, and Aegnis herself had already reached rank 5.
‘She evidently has the formidability of pure blood nobility! She’s only half-mature, and already has rank 5 strength. Once her bloodline completely matures, reaching rank 6 isn’t an issue! I can’t tell her Sacrificer and beast spirit master ranks though…’ Leylin silently began to judge her strength.
Compared to a mixed-blood like Belinda, she had a pure bloodline from a giant serpent. In other words, her main body was a python, and her human form was just for convenience.
“It must have been a miraculous coincidence that these two could have become good friends from the beginning!”
“Don’t worry! I won’t let off those people of the Trial’s Eye organisation for treating you that way! I told you before not to go to that sect made out of lunatic eyes. Only the might Mistress is worthy of our faith!” Aegnis warmly held Belinda’s hand, completely ignoring Leylin’s existence.
She held Sophia, eyes sparkling, “This must be your sister, Sophia, right? How adorable! I’d only seen her in portraits before. Don’t
worry! I’ll take care of you and your sister’s identities. You’ll definitely be able to get the residence permit and gain the right to stay in the holy city permanently!”

Seeing how she was itching to hug Sophia close and her facial muscles twitching, Leylin suddenly thought of another word from his previous world.

“Alright, alright. Aegnis! I have a friend who I’ve yet to introduce to you!”

Her friend’s invasive gaze full of fervour was a little too much for Belinda, and she huffed as she struggled out of the devilish grasp of Aegnis, before pointing at Leylin.

“This is the person I talked to you about, and a good friend who’s rendered me a lot of help: Nick!” Belinda placed emphasis on the two words, ‘good friend’.

“Good friend? Him?” It was only at this point that she noticed Leylin and glared at Leylin challengingly.

“He doesn’t seem all that strong? He’s only a rank 5 mixed blood Alabaster Devilsnake! Oh, sorry, my beloved Belinda, I wasn’t talking about you. Whether it’s the blood from your father or mother’s side, they have combined magnificently on you, whether it’s your ruby-red eyes, or long silver hair full of luster… they are so intoxicating…”

“Aegnis, Nick is my friend just as you are!” Belinda smiled wryly and had to repeat herself.

“Alright, alright. Friend!” Aegnis flicked at the hair at her forehead, “Since it’s your friend, I’ll do it too!”

“Wait, sister, how can you let people with unknown origins just enter the holy city? Did you forget our work?” At this moment, the person behind Aegnis suddenly spoke.

“Hm?” Leylin noticed the person at this moment. He had short brown hair like Aegnis, and there was a faint resemblance. It seemed that they had blood relations.
“Oh, Belinda! So this is the useless brother I’ve mentioned before, Thomas! Thomas! Come here and say hello!”

“Good morning, beautiful ladies!” Thomas bowed respectfully, he looked enchanted and intoxicated as he gazed at Sophia, who was like a little girl,

“Aegnis!” Noticing the siblings ignoring Nick, obviously trying to infuriate him, Belinda was slightly annoyed.

“If you still keep that attitude, I’ll leave with Nick! Anyway, besides the holy city, there are tons of places we can go.”

Based on what she had mentioned, after obtaining permanent residency in the holy city, they could receive preferential treatment everywhere in the Hail Continent. It was the best method to counteract the fact that they were on the wanted list. Now for Leylin’s sake, she was unexpectedly discarding this opportunity, it could be said that this was very unusual.

‘But come on, don’t you know that the closer you seem to me, the more trouble you’ll bring to me?’ Leylin was speechless. He could already sense two pairs of eyes that were willing to burn him to ashes.
“Hehe… we were only joking earlier, don’t mind us! Of course, I’ll take care of Nick’s situation as well!” Aegnis smiled along, and Belinda immediately looked at ease. After all, she had asked a favour of Aegnis.

“Alright, I’ll bring everyone in to go through the formalities,” Aegnis rested her arm around Belinda’s shoulders, and with her other hand pulling Sophia along, she did not forget to yell at Thomas, “Kid, why haven’t you apologised to Sire Nick yet?” Seeing what she was doing, Belinda smiled once more, no longer resistant to her actions.

“My apologies, Sire Nick!” Watching the backs of the three females walking ahead, Thomas shouted loudly. However, his lips mouthed something else, “You weakling who only knows to rely on women!”

Leylin merely shrugged in answer to his provocation and insult and continued to follow behind Belinda, which left Thomas flabbergasted; it was the first time he had seen someone so shameless.

Leaving the stunned Thomas far behind, Leylin followed behind the three ladies expressionlessly with an air of resignation. In reality, however, he was snickering in his mind. What glory or reputation did he care for when he was dying? Was that important? The Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes was now eating his life force away, and he did not have many years left. In this
situation, would he abandon such a simple method of entering the city and look for something else?
Whether he would succeed or not eventually, wasting time on reputation would be treating his life too lightly. When comparing his life to being taken as a fellow who could only rely on women, what loss was there for him?
“You…” Thomas puffed his cheeks out and followed behind them, but could do nothing against Leylin’s shamelessness. Aegnis, in front, seemed to have noticed this, and her eyes glinted.
“Go away, you peasants! Don’t block the path of us noble Stuards!”
As if trying to vent all the anger he’d gained from Leylin, Thomas flicked a nine-segmented whip of a snake leader, unceasingly creating crisps ounds and threatening the group of half-blooded snake beings in front of them.
*Pila!* Seeing the half-blooded snake beings fearfully separating to two sides and giving way, Leylin couldn’t help but stroke his chin. It seemed that the siblings who were in the Stuard family had a rather terrifying reputation in the holy city.
“Are you guards blind? Why aren’t you here to welcome us?”
Immediately after, the guards who had been like fiends and slaughtering people as they wished instantly came over to help out with Thomas’ call, bringing Belinda and the rest to the main gate. Thomas had his nose in the air as he peeked at Leylin, eyes full of arrogance.
Leylin merely rolled his eyes in answer.
In the Magus World, this sort of person would have died several times over already, but this was the Hail Continent! This was where the descendants of the Snake Dowager had high statuses, and there were few bloody contests for power over them. Such a state had continued for tens of thousands of years, and had even become an iron rule.
Hence, it was entirely understandable that Thomas who had grown up in a sheltered environment was acting this way. This was one who had been spoilt by superior living conditions. Leylin obviously would not stoop to the level of weaklings like him. His focus was now on the sculpture at the main gate.

“Mm, bloodline appraisal! A test of the soul! Though I’m confident I can pass through with no problems, the identification proof is a problem. After all, I can’t invade the holy city’s core database and create a fake history. What I said before had too many loopholes…”

Leylin looked slightly gloomy, which Thomas took to be a accomplishment on his part.

“You’re very lucky! You should know that very few half bloods like you can stay in the holy city for a full year!”

Thomas jeered at him disdainfully, “Of course, you might not even be able to handle the living expenses here… But even if you stay here for a short period of time, it’s enough for you to shine in the Hail Continent, or… You can write this in your diary, and some low-ranked bloodlines might be attracted…”

“Thomas, that’s enough!” Evidently, even Aegnis could not watch on any longer.

Of course, Leylin had strong suspicions that Aegnis only felt that Thomas was bringing shame to the Stuard family with his words, which was why she got him to stop.

“Come, Belinda, and adorable little Sophia! This is the residence permit that I especially requested for you. As long as you bind it to your bloodline and soul, you will be recognised as free citizens of the holy city!”

Aegnis smiled slightly, producing two jade-green crystal cards. From the envious gazes from the half- or even pure-blooded snake beings, they should be amazing items.

“Thank you so much, Aegnis!” Belinda took the crystal card. With
this identification, she could join organisations under the Snake Dowager’s command. Trial’s Eye would not be so brazen and might even automatically withdraw the order of her arrest. “Then… how about Brother Nick?” Sophia bit at her fingers, finding that something was off. “Sire Nick? When Belinda contacted me, she didn’t mention it, so I didn’t prepare it…’” Aegnis rubbed at her feelings as if embarrassed, “Permanent residence permits are hard to take care of in the holy city, so…” Seeing that Belinda seemed to be on the verge of flaring up, Aegnis shook her hands, “Though I didn’t get a permanent residence permit, I still have a temporary certification! It’s for ten years, which should be enough for Sire Nick. In these ten years, I’m sure he can handle the procedures for his identification!” “This… Nick…” Belinda peeked at Leylin slightly embarrassed. She had obviously noticed that Aegnis was purposely making things difficult for him. “Sire Nick, a ten year certification is already very rare! For half-blooded snake beings who provide services for us residents of holy residents, their certification needs to be changed daily in order to prevent any tarnish to our noble holy city!” Thomas, who was at the side, snorted. “That’s enough! Thank you very much, Lady Aegnis!” Leylin smiled slightly, taking another residence permit from her. Ten years was enough time. In the holy city, where the Snake Dowager’s radiations were the most concentrated, with the the Curse Mark of Ten Thousand Snakes increasing in intensity, Leylin would probably be reduced to pile of bones if he could not solve the bloodline shackles within ten years. Compared to Belinda and Sophis who had permanent residence permits, his own was duller, though there were intricate runes and
concealing techniques on it.
“This pattern… Even with a sample, it’s not easy for the A.I. Chip to make another one. On top of that… what’s more troublesome is the soul and bloodline binding!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed.
“Alright! Since you three now have the pass, please bind it to you. If the permits are lost, things will get very troublesome, so please keep it well and love them as you love your eyes!”
Aegnis spoke with an accent.
“The binding ceremony is very simple. Drip a droplet of blood and then use your spiritual force to scan the detection runes!”
With Aegnis’ guidance, Belinda was the first and dripped her blood onto the crystal card. Once the dark red liquid touched the card, it was like water reaching sponge and was absorbed.
In the next instant, the whole green crystal card shone brilliantly and with flowing luster, Belinda’s image emerged.
“Boo hoo… Sister, Sophia’s afraid of pain!” Hearing that she had to bleed, Sophia’s eyes were full of fear. Such a pitiful stance immediately had Aegnis on the verge of turning into a big bad wolf.
“Keke… don’t be afraid, little sister. Let your big sister help you!”
Aegnis, who was watching, only seemed to shock Sophia and bit at her finger to complete the binding process. Aegnis watched on with regret.
When Leylin was done with the procedure too, with Aegnis in the lead, they passed through a round arched door. Of course, there were sculptures ahead.
*Hss hss!* The miniature sculptures were even more intricate. They were made of some crystals similar to rocks, and especially the faces were carved very vividly, their eyes seeming to be connected to some enigmatic soul.
Belinda and Sophia passed by, and the sculpture produced green and tender rays.
[Currently concealing with bloodline of Alabaster Devilsnake. Beast spirit undulations covering. Preparation to activate Feather of Chaos at anytime.]
Along with the A.I. Chip’s voice, Leylin took a deep breath and passed through the formless boundary.
“Hss hss!” The eyes of the sculpture immediately produced green, tender rays, and caused Leylin to sigh in relief.
Immediately after, he was dazzled by lights.
Once Leylin got used to it, he began to size up the holy city of all descendants of the Snake Dowager.
On the ground, walls and even in the sky, a thin layer of light lined the area, causing everything to seem glorious.
The giant sculpture at the heart was filled with milky-white rays like a shining human being, giving off the feeling of holiness.
[Beep! Detected large amounts of radiation undulations. Curse Mark is being strengthened.]
The A.I. Chip intoned, while Belinda and Sophia beside him had a flush on their faces, looking intoxicated. Even their undulations were reinforced, and they obviously had obtained some benefits.
Rumours say the Snake Dowager favours the holy city, granting huge benefits to all her descendants…” Leylin thought, watching the siblings who were drunk on the feeling. ‘Truth be told, the holy city is just affected by the presence of her main body. The radiation from it refines their bloodlines.’ Of course, there was a limit to this process. However, the guarantee that their bloodlines wouldn’t deteriorate was enough for all of them to scramble here without delay.

‘Pity. This sort of high energy radiation is basically poison to me now.’ Sensing the curse mark continuously absorbing radiation and gaining strength, Leylin could only smile wryly. The Allsnake Curse had been sealed, but the closer he was to the Snake Dowager the more obvious the flare ups would become.

Hiding any signs of abnormality and taking the initiative to get closer to the Snake Dowager day by day, he was dancing on the edge of a knife.

‘But at least it’s confirmed that the Snake Dowager’s main body is close to the holy city.’ Leylin’s eyes lit up. Just for that, he had to stay here in spite of the threat to his life.

“The Matriarch’s sculpture is the core of the city, with the circles extending outwards from it. In the business district are Night of the Beast Spirits and Imagia’s Cabin, which are pretty good. Once you’ve settled down, I can accompany you on a stroll.” Aegnis was evidently extremely excited as she brought them to a region with
majestic mansions around.
“This region belongs to us Stewarts. I’ve arranged for Belinda to stay in a villa near me. We can…”
*Trring! Trring! Trring!* Before Aegnis could finish speaking, she was interrupted by a series of rings from her vambrace. She opened a notification on her arm, her voice showing her discontentment. “What is it? Didn’t I specifically mention that you are not to bother me no matter what happens tonight?”
“My sincerest apologies, Lord Aegnis, but this incident is so strange that it requires your personal attention.”
“What is it?” Aegnis grew serious. For a subordinate who knew her personality to still trouble her, it would be something difficult to deal with.
“It has to do with a mutant contamination. It’s at least grade 4 in danger.”
“Fuck!” Aegnis cursed, evidently surprised. Immediately after, she closed off the communications and apologised to Belinda, “I’m so sorry Belinda, Sophia! There’s something I need to handle, but I’ve already booked a room at the Spiral Serpent Restaurant. Please do go!”
“Alright Aegnis, hurry on with your work!” Belinda nodded in understanding, pressing her cheeks onto Aegnis’ causing the woman to smile cheerfully.
“Thomas, I’ll leave the rest to you. If Belinda and little Sophia are the slightest bit unhappy, you know what will happen!” Aegnis left hastily after assigning this task. Leylin’s lips quirked up in a mysterious smile as he watched her leave.
“Alright then! My ladies, and this Mister Nick, please come with me!” Thomas said with a clap. He evidently wanted to act like a gentleman in front of the sisters.
Belinda and Sophia held no distaste for him and cheerfully chatted and joked around with him until they reached a gorgeous villa. The
entire villa lit up there with a snap of his fingers, warm light flooding every corner with a beep sounding. Motes of multicolour light flew out into the little garden like fireflies, like little stars as they appeared before Sophia’s hands. “The lights are voice controlled, and dust removal spells activate at specific timings everyday. There’s another spell formation here that can set the temperature. And every piece of furniture here was prepared specially by my elder sister. Since she didn’t know your preferences, she’s prepared for it and allowed you to choose things like your servants…” Thomas smiled warmly. In the meanwhile, Belinda and Sophia were very satisfied with this villa. “Most importantly, sister’s place is nearby. It’s easy to contact her.” Thomas smiled as he handed the keys over to Belinda. “Thank you both, for everything you’ve done for us. What about Nick’s place?” Belinda glanced at Leylin. “Mister Nick? I’m sorry, but this is area is restricted to female guests,” Thomas waved his arms helplessly. He made an alternative suggestion, “How about you two ladies get some rest while I bring Mister Nick to his room?” Though Belinda and Sophia were slightly discontent with this, Leylin appeared to very enthusiastically agree, and let the two sisters stay behind.

……

Thomas waited until he and Leylin left the villa to show his true colours. “Listen to me, kid. I don’t care who you are or what happened with those siblings on the way here. Just remember this. This is the holy city, and they aren’t people you should expect anything from. Understand?” he asked, levelling a threatening gaze at Leylin. He
already had a plan; if Leylin tried to resist or look for the sisters, he would get the guards and throw this guy into the moat. In any case, the Stewart family was strong and had powerful defences. It was simple to get rid of a lone traveler with nobody to rely on.

As for those sisters? After wailing over Leylin for a while, they could only end up accepting it. ‘Such is life!’ Thomas laughed wickedly. He loved that phrase. However, contrary to Thomas’ expectations, ‘Nick’ actually seemed to be terrified and even had a flattering grin on his face, saying, “Alright, Mister Thomas. I have no expectations towards those sisters, and I’ll break off all relations with them from hereon. This humble servant here only wishes to have a stable life in the holy city, and I am already extremely satisfied. Why would I expect other things?”

Leylin looked completely sincere as he continued, “Only Lord Thomas is worthy of Miss Sophia!”

“Mm, you’re absolutely right!” This huge change in attitude dazed Thomas momentarily. He quickly recalled Leylin’s indifference to his provocation, and passed it off as a show of cowardice and weakness in retrospect.

‘Such a weak personality. He’s probably someone the sisters made friends with on the way here,’ Thomas wondered to himself, and suddenly found Leylin less of an eyesore. A dark thought reared its head in the depths of his heart, ‘In the future, if I bring the sisters over here, Nick’s amazed expression will be very amusing…’

Leylin’s position had lowered in his mind, from a love rival to a mere tool to be used. His malicious intent abated. ‘If those sisters won’t agree, wouldn’t it be fun to have Nick knock them unconscious and then send them to my bed?’ Thomas stroked his chin, daydreaming of this beautiful scene in the future. His lips
arched.
“Well then. Lord Thomas, may I know where my lodging is? The prices in the holy city, they’re really… Without anyone vouching for me, I can’t rent a good place,” Leylin seemed to hesitate before making his request.
However, Thomas, who now found Leylin less of an eye-sore, did not hesitate to agree. How could he make life difficult for Leylin if he did not have anything over him? In addition, placing the man right under his nose was better than having him going out by himself, where he could even try to hit on the sisters.
“Come with me!” Having thought this through, Thomas brought Leylin to another region. Compared to the luxurious villas before, this packed place seemed to be cheap. It was the difference between heaven and earth.
Thomas brought Leylin to another district, “This is the place! This estate belongs to our family, just that I don’t know which idiot bought the rights to it then…”
Before him was an attic room. There were swirls on the wood of the walls and floor, and the place seemed dark and wet. It looked to be on the verge of collapse. It was also extremely small. There was a huge disparity between this and Belinda’s luxurious villa.
Of course, this wasn’t half bad considering the neighbouring residences.
“What do you think? This one isn’t too bad compared to the surroundings. At the least, you wouldn’t be able to pay a year of rent here even if you used up all your money…” Thomas laughed meanly without a care, “But I’m kind. You can live here as long as you want, no need to pay rent. I’ll tell the guards.”
“Thank you so much, my Lord!” Leylin bowed down nearly ninety degrees with a humble smile as he took the runic keys from Thomas. After multiple agreements not to look for the sisters, he finally managed to send a content Thomas away before activating
them and sizing up his residence. The wooden door let out sad creaks, as if unable to handle the stress. Leylin began to suspect that if this wasn’t supported by the strength of spells, the whole building would immediately turn into a pile of rubble.
‘However, it’s still not bad!’ After scanning the room, Leylin nodded lightly. The place was a little small, lacked furniture, and was covered in a thick layer of dust, it would still fetch a sky-high rent in the holy city, where an inch of land was worth as much in gold. Since he could live here for free, why would he be dissatisfied? What made Leylin feel even more satisfied was that this place was the Stewart family’s property, and Thomas had even specially registered it for him. With Thomas vouching for him, even if the entire city was thoroughly searched in the future, this place would be as steady as a rock.

Leylin had his own reasons for his actions today. They were only performed after careful deliberation. The holy city would be entering troubled times, and without a strong patron a simple search would be very troublesome. Why else would he live here? He had no lack of valuable materials to sell.

For one, he didn’t want to offend Thomas. Another reason was that he was borrowing the Stewart family’s tiger skin [1 Putting on a false facade to intimidate others] to shield himself. Of course, once his plan was exposed it would implicate the Stewart family, especially Thomas. That would be an incredibly sad matter for them, but it was all within Leylin’s considerations.

In reality, the idea had flashed after he saw Aegnis and her brother’s infatuation with the sisters. Once they got him into the
holy city, Belinda and her sister had almost exhausted their potentials, and they would just spell trouble in the future. In this dog eat dog world, beauty without strength was the most troublesome.

His options were clear. On one hand he could maintain his relationship with Belinda and her sister, but in the process offend Aegnis and her brother. By extension, he would offend the Stewart family who backed them. On the other, he could renounce his relations with Belinda and gain the family’s understanding and protection. From Leylin’s perspective, the answer was obvious.

Some people chose to head down a path of ruin, refusing to live quietly and even blatantly standing out despite being weak. Only an author sticking out their Golden Thumb1 would be able to save such cases.

Although Leylin couldn’t be considered weak, in the Purgatory World, and especially this holy city, he was as frail as someone who would die to light being shone on them!

Indeed, he could reveal his strength and ruthlessly strike Thomas down. That would be followed Aegnis, then the Stewart family’s position in the top ranks. He could move the entire holy city! All for a single moment, it would be an incomparably glorious scene. That is, until his origins aroused suspicion. Then, with one glance the Snake Dowager would know immediately that he was the one she was looking for, and he would’ve delivered himself to her on a plate. Then Leylin truly would have lost everything.

And looking back at the root of the problem, it would be for what? Two women? Were they really worth all that?

Leylin had no feelings for Sophia and Belinda, they were simply companions he had met on the road. Belinda had a vaguely good impression of him, and would at most casually joke around from time to time. For Leylin to have to fight for her and ultimately lose everything- wouldn’t that be outrageous?
With the Allsnake Curse on his body, and at a time where he was slowly inching towards death, worrying about trivial matters like affection was just foolish.

‘What I need now is to spare no effort in hiding myself, and conflict with the Stewarts, a tyrannical snake family, is clearly very unwise… And especially over two women…’ Leylin shook his head. Compared to directly clashing with Thomas and finally triggering that situation of completely exposing himself, Leylin simply chose to implement a plan which would minimise his influence and give him the greatest benefits.

‘However, Thomas couldn’t tell that his greatest enemy in getting Belinda and Sophia isn’t me, but his sister Aegnis!’ Leylin stroked his chin thoughtfully, with a trace of an sneer on his face. With Aegnis at the sisters’ side glaring covetously like a tiger watching its prey, Thomas’ plan could be declared a successful failure before it even began. And of course, once he broke through his bloodline shackles Leylin could naturally make Thomas pay the price for today’s insults.

With this thought, he’d handed Sophia and Belinda over to Aegnis for a while, letting her safeguard them while he received a rare guarantee of safe entry into the city. It wasn’t a difficult thing for him to accept, and in fact he had more important matters to attend to than this.

Without greeting the envious neighbours around him, Leylin immediately shut the door. This two storey apartment building with a little courtyard outside it met his expectations.

After seeing a small flowerbed in the enclosure, Leylin’s face blossomed into a smile.

‘Not bad. It really is decent! All that’s left wanting is for nobody to come and bother me. Unfortunately, that is impossible…’ Leylin sighed, looking at the palm of his hand.

Blue-green veins were revealed under the light, and he could still
faintly feel his life force ebbing. His body even looked a little weak. ‘This situation…’ Leylin laughed bitterly, ‘A.I. Chip!’

[Beep! Calculating data on host’s life force……. Analysis completed! The Allsnake Curse’s corrosive ability has been amplified in the holy city. New estimated time: Three years and two months!]

“Even if I seal off my bloodline and soul, this life drain is still unavoidable… It really is too difficult to break through the shackles of a rank 8 existence…” There was a trace of a sigh in Leylin’s expression. No matter how carefully he prepared, how far-reaching his plans were, the effect of a single seal from the Snake Dowager could instantly put him back in square one.

This was the result of an absolute gap in strength. Leylin himself always liked to bully the weak, and what he hated most was a situation where he was forced to challenge those who were much stronger than him.

Those thrillseekers who liked giving themselves heart attacks instead of safely profiting from a situation were all lunatics!

‘Fortunately, I have my experience. Along with my Full Moon truesoul and all the preparations I’ve made, I still have a chance… Ha!’ Leylin coughed, and entered the apartment building.

After spending half a day, Leylin had inspected almost every corner of this shabby apartment building, and had even secretly replaced all the defences with his own.

Leylin couldn’t trust this kind of property that belonged to a family, there could be monitoring and probing equipment inside. With the A.I. Chip’s atomic-level scanning and Leylin’s own sight as a Grandmaster of spell formations, the few devices that had been set up couldn’t escape him.

Naturally, Leylin did not choose to dismantle them immediately, which would cause him to completely fall out with the Stewart family. Instead, he prepared a layer of seals apart from the
monitoring devices, to make the family feel that this place was still in their grasp. In reality, not a single trace of Leylin’s actions would be leaked out to them. Once night fell, the fence surrounding the courtyard was covered with a layer of grey runes which slowly vanished from sight.

“Although it’s just a temporary construction, it should be enough to deal with my neighbours!” Leylin muttered to himself, arriving at a completely sealed room with no windows. The rotten floorboards emitted an unpleasant odour, and there was even a lot of dust on the floor. As it did not have any windows, the entire room looked extremely gloomy.

He immediately prepared a sacrificial spell formation, with a rune depicting a giant bird in the middle. Traces of grey power flowed above it continuously, making the rune of the giant bird seem as if it had spread its wings to fly.

“Almighty Ruler of Chaos! The Wings of the Storm! Free will from another dimension! Your majesty, the Nefarious Filthbird! Your Sacrificer requests that you give me your attention!”

A wave of intent burst forth from Leylin’s body, containing the power of a Full Moon truesoul. It instantly linked up with someone through the spell formation.

“Kemoyin Emperor! You have actually already entered the holy city! Good! Very good! Excellent!” Excitement could be felt from the Nefarious Filthbird, although it didn’t have a body to descend to. After all, they were in the Snake Dowager’s back garden, and they were under strict surveillance.

In reality, were Leylin discovered to be making a Sacrifice to the Nefarious Filthbird, leave alone himself even Thomas would be hunted down and killed immediately.

This was the Hail Continent’s holy city! Only one dignitary could ever rule it, and that was the Snake Dowager. Even an ally like the Trial’s Eye couldn’t spread its influence here, let alone the
Nefarious Filthbird.
Consequently, seeing that Leylin had unexpectedly infiltrated the enemy’s frontlines without a hitch, the Nefarious Filthbird’s excited mood was understandable.

“Almighty dignitary, I appeal for you to bestow your chaos power, and conceal all the affairs in this apartment building so that I can escape from the gaze of the Snake Dowager!” Leylin sincerely prayed, but he did not offer any sacrifices.

“Of course! It will be your reward for bringing the power of chaos into the Holy City! If you are willing to sincerely offer sacrifices to me, in the future you will definitely become my helping hand, a rank 6 Sacrificer!”

A gentle chirp could be heard, and shortly after a grey circle began to rise up from the floors and walls, rapidly covering the entire apartment building. Everything was done in the dark and in secret, without emitting any strange undulations or radiance.

Watching the spell formation’s radiance dim, a strange expression flickered within Leylin’s eyes. Although he had not offered any sacrifices this time, the Nefarious Filthbird still magnanimously assisted him in concealing himself, and had even bestowed a great amount of power. This was obviously not just out of kindness.

The Nefarious Filthbird seemed to not have given up on the plan of using his chaos power to thoroughly contaminate him, and for him to finally become its underling. However, they were both currently reluctantly united due to their common enemy, the Snake Dowager. If a difference in opinion occurred in the future, they would very possibly become enemies instead.

“It looks like my success in infiltration excited the Nefarious Filthbird!” Leylin laughed coldly, “Unfortunately the bird has nothing to do with my future plans, and I will never find it again! The Nefarious Filthbird’s plans are destined to be all for naught!”
The Nefarious Filthbird and the Trial’s Eye were eternal enemies. Since the Snake Dowager had allied herself with the Trial’s Eye, it was normal for her to be a target of the Nefarious Filthbird’s resistance and hostility. Hence, Leylin decided to rely on the Nefarious Filthbird’s support, using its chaos power to conceal himself.

Now, the Nefarious Filthbird saw Leylin take yet another step towards success, so its increased investment in him was understandable. It was too bad that Leylin had never placed his hopes on the Nefarious Filthbird.

From the beginning, Leylin never trusted the Nefarious Filthbird. After all, it was a treacherous and powerful dignitary from another world. When he came to the Purgatory World, he had always hidden his most important abilities and his trump cards, and had never revealed a single part of any of them.

‘A.I. Chip! Initiate mission!’ Leylin began to communicate with the A.I. Chip in secret.

[Beep! Mission established, opening the second spell formation.] Dark runes mixed with chaos power appeared on the walls and fence after the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, before they disappeared completely.

These were Leylin’s own preparations. Apart from their concealment effects, they had all been arranged for this moment.
100% capacity, No signs of rejection.] The A.I. Chip loyally transmitted the information.

‘Excellent,’ Leylin nodded his head. With this spell formation, all the spying elements that the Nefarious Filthbird could have left behind would be exposed. Only now could it be said that this apartment truly belonged to Leylin.

‘Time, time! I hope I still have enough time.’ Leylin sighed and walked to the flowerbed, with his hands clasped behind his back. What vegetation had originally been planted here had been completely uprooted by its host, leaving only a few agave plants with their pale yellow stamens behind.

A dense circle of yellowing grass wound around the plants, which themselves appeared to be full of vitality. ‘All things in this world are like illusory flowers, and cannot endure the passing of time. This is why I must pursue eternity!’ Leylin seemed to have an intoxicated expression in his eyes, as if he was absorbed in the plant’s beauty. Soon, however, the plants were wrapped up in a radiant light.

Shortly after, Leylin took out a small garden hoe and began to fix the small flowerbed. He got rid of all the weeds and agave plants, and erected a wooden fence around it.

The flowerbed was semi-circular and very small, its area even less than one square meter. However, it was a lot better than the places around him, with more than a dozen people clustered together like an unbearably chaotic hotel. Although it wasn’t the best, there were others who were less fortunate, so he would be satisfied.

The black soil seemed to hold a lot of water, and was clearly rich in top-grade nutrition. Obviously, all the radiation in the holy city would probably change the most ordinary of soil as well. However, Leylin could not help but take out a few pieces of grey crystal. Within his strong grip, the crystals were immediately
reduced to ashes and scattered evenly within the flowerbed. Lastly, Leylin covered them up with a fresh layer of soil. After the preparation work was complete, Leylin grew even more cautious. A silver beam flashed, and space fluctuated as a translucent grey crystal appeared in Leylin’s palm. One could see green at its core if they looked through the magnificent exterior.

‘The Seed of Wisdom… It’s finally time to use senior’s gift.’ Leylin’s eyes had a tinge of reminiscence. He had encountered the Wisdom Tree in the Scarlet Ruins when he was but a rank 4 Warlock. This was the origin of wisdom! Thanks to it, Leylin had learnt to break through the bloodline shackles. In the end, he had even obtained a gift from the Wisdom Tree, the green Seed of Wisdom.

‘Rumour has it that the Wisdom Tree is the apex of wisdom in the entire astral plane, including all dimensions, planes, and worlds. It is an ancient and powerful existence that has enlightened many living creatures including Magi. Its offspring also possess many unfathomable powers.’

“Sprout, root of all wisdom!” Following Leylin’s voice, the A.I. Chip emotionlessly notified him, [Beep! Releasing the seal on the Eternal Crystal.]

The translucent crystal shattered into a fine white powder which gradually disappeared with the wind. A ring of green light formed, growing in intensity within Leylin’s hands. A bit of the green light caused even the agave plants that had already been uprooted to flutter happily. These plants were already being transformed into intelligent beings, even though they had only been touched by a small amount of it.

“Disappear!” Leylin said lightly, and all of the agave plants on the floor turned into ash.

‘If I hadn’t prepared the spell formation in advance, it would have been a mess.’ Leylin looked at the seed in his hand. The brown
coating had complicated patterns on it, and the top end exposed a core that was as green as an emerald.

‘If this Seed of Wisdom were to grow for a very long time, would it ultimately mature into another Wisdom Tree?’ Leylin lost himself in his daydream for a while, but shortly after he buried the seed in the flowerbed and covered it with solid earth.

Afterwards, Leylin acted the part of an industrious farmer as he attentively took care of the entire flowerbed, paying no attention to the clumps of dirt on his elegant robes.

‘My seed of hope has been planted. From now on, I have to continuously water it, apply fertiliser, and wait until the day it puts down roots and grows to its full size.’ Leylin took up his spray bottle, with a hopeful expression in his eyes…

A lot had happened that evening, and in contrast a resident of the holy city planting a seed in his flowerbed was something extremely insignificant. While Leylin was engrossed in his flowerbed, a pair of Imperial Bodyguards solemnly stared at the scene before them, outside the Holy City.

“What did you see?” Aegnis touched the scratch on the floor and sensed the intent left behind by the creature, especially its intense hunger for food. This left her fearful.

“Very clean. Extremely clean.” Behind Aegnis, a black haired youth took off his helmet and placed a clump of soil squarely in front of his nose.

“What do you mean? Tell me the important stuff!” Aegnis glared at him.

“I meant that the marks left in the scene show that there were clearly two giant creatures here. I reckon the probability of it being a giant snake is over 70%. Thus, it is clear that the winner got everything from the loser.” The youth took out a device similar to a magnifying glass and attentively looked at the small purple crystals within the soil. The expression on his face was both sincere and
focused.
“What I meant by ‘clean’, was the winner’s behaviour. It ate so cleanly that not even a single drop of blood fell to the ground. This level of food craving surpasses normal biological limits.”
“Biological limits?” Aegnis wrinkled her brow in confusion.
“Right! Creatures of nature, including serpents who devour each other, will always leave some traces of their meal, either blood, scales or any other remains. However, there’s none of that here. There’s nothing left. It seems that the winning serpent is under the control of a powerful evil existence instead of its own instincts.”
“Was it contaminated by a different kind of energy? Which dignitary dares reach out to the Serpent Plains? Don’t they know that this is our Matriarch’s forbidden land?” Aegnis’ anger was immense. It was clear that she resented being dragged here to carry out this mission.
The dark haired youth tactfully avoided trouble, stating with a businesslike expression, “Taking into account these traces, I believe that this case is connected to the violent occurrences in Central.”
“Are you saying that the contamination has already spread all the way here? So quick!” Aegnis’ pupils contracted. After all, even rank 4s or 5s like Leylin and Belinda, needed almost a month to cross the vast Serpent Plains.
“In that case, it’s only a matter of time before the contamination spreads to the holy city!” Aegnis had a heavy expression on her face.
“That’s correct. The contamination has already extended here. Although I would like to say it is only an isolated accident, we absolutely cannot take it lightly.” The dark haired youth put down the device in his hand with a trace of fear in his eyes.
“This type of contamination spreads quickly, and can also affect intelligent rank 4 and 5 snake tribes. It is a serious threat to those giant serpents in the wild. I propose we immediately report this to
the Snake Dowager.”
“Are you joking? Just because of this small matter? Some gluttonous snakes? You want to alarm our almighty dignitary?” Aegnis looked incredulously at him. Although she felt that the situation was rather serious as well, she had never thought that it was to the extent where she had to report to the Snake Dowager. The Stewarts, as the Holy City’s garrison family, could not allow such a humiliating thing to happen.
“Continue the search! Find a damned person! I want to cut open their stomach and finally see what’s inside!” Aegnis ordered. She had a faint premonition that this event could delay her for a very long time.
‘It’s a shame. Belinda… Little sister Sophia…’ In her heart, Aegnis was wailing with anguish, but she maintained an appearance of an icy commanding officer. The small squad went deeper and deeper into the plains. Soon, a cry specific to serpents was transmitted into Aegnis’ ear.
“Excellent! Let’s chase it!” Aegnis excitedly chased after it. What happened afterwards, however, became a nightmare that haunted her for life.
That night went down in the records of the holy city, remembered as the beginning of the Calamity of Gluttony.
‘There seems to be some disturbance in the holy city today.’ Leylin looked at the sky. The sound of a piercing alarm could be heard, but he ignored it as he continued to water his garden.

‘According to my plan, those serpents contaminated by gluttony should have reached this place. It seems like the guards have discovered something,’ Leylin was unhurried, busying himself with his own matters.

In reality, with all the time that had passed gluttony had already permeated the Serpent Plains. This epidemic wouldn’t disappear unless the plains were completely destroyed. That was how certain Leylin was of his own work.

With a push on his end, the original power of gluttony on the plains had become unstoppable. The large amount of giant high-energy snakes, combined with this terrifying power that made use of food intake to break through, created a horrifying effect that exceeded even Leylin’s expectations.

‘With this speed, perhaps even those rank 5 or 6 creatures won’t be able to avoid being contaminated by the power of gluttony,’ Leylin’s lips quirked up in a smile.

Even a rank 6 snake nest on the plains had no choice but to run away or be consumed by their gluttonous desires, and ultimately consume others or become fodder. There was no other way out.

As for the Snake Dowager? She might an incredibly powerful rank
8 being, and the dignitary who ruled over the Hail Continent, but the Sovereign King of Gluttony, Beelzebub, was no pushover either. As a being who was equally at rank 8 and someone who had grasped the laws of gluttony, he ended up discovering the Purgatory World and making use of his power to take over the whole plains.

Now, it was too late even if Beelzebub decided he wanted to halt the war with the Snake Dowager. After all, as an invader, how could he give up such a huge, splendid area in the Hail Continent? Consequently, unless the Snake Dowager were to abandon the entire holy city and hand over the Serpent Plains, the two of them would not be able to come to an agreement.

If she chose to give in and gave up the plains, it would be an invitation to share rule over the Hail Continent. This was equivalent to slowly committing suicide, which was obviously unacceptable. It was foreseeable that the conflict between them could only increase in intensity.

The earth trembled, sending pebbled jumping around on the ground. A ball of coiled snakes that was like a star rose above the skies of the holy city.

“It’s the Matriarch! The mighty Holy Mother!” In that moment, the residents of the holy city all began to pray. Leylin appeared to be doing the same, but on the inside he was raising all of his defences. *Rumble* Like an earthquake or an erupting volcano, a conscient that was extremely terrifying began to spread in all directions, with the sculpture at the very centre of it all. Leylin could sense the Snake Dowager’s immense fury from the terrifying wave. The other free residents could only lie on the ground, trembling.

‘The laws the Snake Dowager has grasped… Are they of bloodlines, serpents, or reproduction?’ Leylin seemed to react the same way as his surrounding neighbours, even looking more devout than some of them.
However, he was inwardly attempting to trace the source of the Snake Dowager’s laws through her conscient’s undulations.

‘It seems to be the mix of a few. There’s also a trace of darkness.’ His astounding knowledge, coupled with the A.I. Chip’s tremendous database, allowed Leylin to somewhat identify these laws.

‘The Snake Dowager is terrifying. Not only does she grasp multiple laws, but she has already begun to refine her comprehension of her laws and fuse it with the law of shadows to form an entirely new law…’

The realm of rank 8 was naturally superior to rank 7, where only one law had been grasped. From this wave, Leylin had pried into the path that she had probably taken.

‘Rank 7 Magi have to grasp the powers of a single law, but in order to grasp multiple laws, rank 8 beings have to attempt refining them?’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Then what about rank 9 Magi? The legendary most powerful realm of all? Does it mean containing all laws in one body and trying to create something more powerful?’

A murky understanding seemed to dawn on Leylin’s mind. The Snake Dowager’s path might be wrong, but her actions still gave Leylin, who was going in blind, a great enlightenment.

‘Let’s leave that aside for now. The Snake Dowager must have discovered the contamination from the power of gluttony, but I still don’t know how Beelzebub will react.’ Leylin watched the battle from the shadows.

“I am the Snake Dowager, source of all snake bloodlines.” The ball of snakes uncoiled, revealing the charming face of the mother of all snakes. Every strand of hair represented an astounding amount of power that caused the air to distort.

While she was transmitting her will, Leylin abruptly felt the Snake Dowager launch a probing force even more powerful than before.

‘Seems like she still has yet to give up on finding me. Or, has she
guessed that I’m the one behind all this? But even if she has noticed it, what can she do?’ Leylin snickered.
He was now using an obvious scheme. Using the Purgatory World and the Allsnake Plains as bait, Leylin had attracted Beelzebub over. And, as long as he had the desire to take over this world, Beelzebub would never reach an agreement with the Snake Dowager.
Beelzebub had previously suffered great losses under Leylin’s hand, and nothing would change this fact even if they had a common enemy in the Snake Dowager.
In their eyes, Leylin was merely a tiny bug that could easily be pinched to death. Why would they pause their conflict to work together and attack him?
This was reality. As long as there was a victor, either side would have no problem dealing with Leylin later. This situation gave Leylin the amount of time he needed.
“Purify!” The eyes of the Snake Dowager held benevolence and compassion as she spread her arms. Holy golden rays of light rained down in every direction, with the holy city at the heart of it all.
Bits of a dark red liquid were repelled from the roots, water sources and even pores of some giant snakes, and then neutralised by the golden rays, turning into pure water droplets.
‘The Snake Dowager of the Shadow World has such knowledge on light-type purification spells? As expected of an ancient being who has lived through the ancient war. She has no weaknesses…’ Leylin’s pupils shrank as the the A.I. Chip recorded the information, trying to simulate the limits of her power.
While the A.I. Chip couldn’t really tell how much power an existence like the Snake Dowager had, just having a vague idea was still helpful for Leylin.
Under the golden holy light, the region around the holy city was
completely purified. The area continued to expand all the way to the depths of the Serpentes Plains.

Watching what should be a worrisome scene, Leylin’s eyes glinted with delight, ‘It’s a pity. If I was the only one behind this, just a few purification processes by the Snake Dowager would save the Serpentes Plains. However, there is someone else who lords over the power of gluttony.’

At this very moment, a strange happening occurred with a loud crash!

Large amounts of the dark red contaminated liquid that should have disappeared began to boil. The red motes of light converged and formed a huge ball of red light that soared into the air like a bloody moon.

“Hail to master Beelzebub! You are the Sovereign King of Gluttony, the child of original power, the master of everything in this world.”

A resonant praise that held traces of insanity began to echo in the holy city, striking the Snake Dowager’s holy light display.

“This feeling… you’re…” The Snake Dowager’s enraged voice was heard from within the holy light, before it was drowned out by large amounts of crimson lightning.

The crimson lightning looked like long lines that danced in the air, tearing out cracks and revealing huge terrifying spatial rifts.

Two webbed hands with seven fingers each pressed on the side of a rift, causing it to roar as it expanded. There seemed to be a terrifying existence at the other end of the spatial crack trying to squeeze in.

“Ha, Beelzebub! You can’t endure it anymore? That makes sense– a place where the World Will is this chaotic must be heaven for you.” Leylin laughed as if he had the upperhand. With the temptation of a huge world lacking a will, Beelzebub decided to take the risk. Even if this wasn’t his real body, it was at least a clone with 50% of the strength of the real body. For Beelzebub, the losses incurred if he
were to fail would cause his main body to be severely injured and enter a deep sleep, or he could possibly die. It made obvious his intentions.

“You dare trespass on my territory? Do you attach any importance at all to the treaty of alliance, which has been in place since time immemorial?” If Beelzebub was full of determination, then the Snake Dowager was full of fury. After all, anyone would be in a foul mood if they were relaxing at home and someone else just decided to barge in.

While the Snake Dowager fired her questions, the golden holy light seemed to transform. A layer of darkness appeared like a huge web, vast and layered, dispelling the crimson lightning out of the holy city. After being challenged by someone of the same rank, the Snake Dowager finally showed her true strength.
Rumours said that the Snake Dowager could take over the Shadow World, it was clear how great her comprehension of the power of shadows was. As expected, the moment the power of shadows appeared, it replaced the purifying holy light from earlier. Even the crimson lightning and spatial storm’s destructive power could not affect it, and it remained as steady as a rock.

“Allsnake Devour!” The dark power of shadows transformed to form numerous giant snakes, revealing their fangs to the huge monstrous palm opposing them.

“Hah! The doors to a new world shall be opened by me!” A multitude of terrifying grey snakes hissed at the owner of this voice. Alabaster Devilsnakes, Giant Kemoyin Serpents and practically all of the Dowager’s descendants could be found amongst the shadow snakes. Terrifying and tremendous force, backed by the corrosive power of shadows, immediately left lacerations on the monstrous hand.

However, Beelzebub paid no mind at all. His skin and muscle was completely shredded, with dark red blood falling like raindrops, but he still resolutely endured the pain. The two huge hands abruptly spread out, using their strength to completely tear apart the spatial crack.

A streak of black light suddenly darted out from the crack, fusing with the crimson moon in mid air.
The ball of light squirmed and then formed an enormous phantom figure. A pair of enormous wings made of membranous meat, riddled with holes, were attached to arms with seven-fingered hands. Black muscle tied everything together; the many compound eyes on the face formed a soul spiral; the flames of the Devil King blazed around him, showing off his might and power.

Beelzebub, the powerful Devil King, child of the power of gluttony, had descended into the Purgatory World! In that moment, it seemed as if the whole world was suffocating. Numerous terrifying consciences focused on this place from afar.

‘A clone?’ Leylin carefully observed Beelzebub. From traversing worlds and the attack from the Snake Dowager, he seemed to be in a rather miserable state, especially with those two devilish arms that were now heavily injured. He also had numerous terrifying injuries from his travel through space.

However, this did not deter the spread of his power or the feeling of evil. Even the air seemed to be polluted as it spread.

‘The main body must be too powerful and he can’t bring it over, so he chose to separate his soul from his body and move over with his soul…’ Leylin’s eyes darted around.

‘Compared to moving physical materials over, the consumption of having just the soul travel over is much lower. Even so, he was gravely injured from moving between worlds... Of course, if this weren’t the Purgatory World, he would probably just die...’

The resistance that Beelzebub experienced in travelling to the Purgatory World was minimal. If he dared to enter the Magus World, the suppression from the World Will and the spatial storms combined would kill even his soul.

The more powerful one was, the easier it was to get suppressed by the World Will. Beelzebub could place clones at Morning Star or Radiant Moon in the Magus World, but separating his truesoul like this was far too powerful, and he would easily be suppressed.
And if he were to find some small world, where the World Will could do nothing against his descent, it could just self-destruct and make things backfire on him.
Hence, as he could not go to high-ranked worlds nor smaller ones, the discovery of the Purgatory World was like that of a precious treasure!
He didn’t hesitate to split his truesoul to reach this place.
‘But in his ‘half truesoul’ form without even a corporeal body, he’s definitely not a match for the Snake Dowager. They won’t be able to fight today…’ Even as the residents of the holy city were quivering in fear, Leylin’s thoughts moved further, ‘Of course, with his power as the Sovereign King of Gluttony, finding a body is very simple. As long as he has enough food, he can regain his strength. Also, with him around, it won’t be so easy for the Snake Dowager to purify the Serpent Plains…’
Though Beelzebub could not do much against the Snake Dowager now, she might not be able to defeat him. This was the truesoul of a rank 8, which meant they were at the same level!
“The power of Gluttony shall rule this place henceforth!” As he soared in the skies, Beelzebub’s numerous compound eyes surveyed the Snake Dowager without fear, though his body was gradually becoming more transparent.
Whether in terms of the grasp of laws and flawless wisdom for a rank 8 existence, Beelzebub immediately chose to leave after realising he would not be gaining benefits from the Snake Dowager today.
Similarly, she would not let go of a chance that was so difficult to come by.
“Shadow Cage!” A circle of shadows spread from her body, and instantly turned into a cage formed of numerous shadow snakes that enveloped the whole holy city. Terrifying shadow chains were like agile snakes, twining around Beelzebub’s truesoul.
“It’s no use! I am the personification of laws, and I cannot die in the presence of gluttony. I will not be destroyed…” Along with his voice, that was like an announcement, his body exploded. A large amount of energy spread, but it did not harm the shadow cage around it. Once the explosion ended, there was nothing left in the chains.

“Damn it, he even found this world…” A few tremendous consciences that carried the will of the dignitaries conversed above the holy city. Immediately after, the Snake Dowager’s face turned extremely grim. Along with loud explosions, the shadow cage disappeared. Finally, a purple moonlight shone down, making the last battles feel like a mere illusion.

However, the slight spatial storms in the surroundings as well as the wrecked regions around the holy city were hard proof of what had happened.

‘In an area where his law exists, he will never die nor can he be destroyed?’ Within the holy city, Leylin’s eyes were on the ground as he pondered over Beelzebub’s words. ‘From his words and abilities, they might all be existences that deal with laws, but Beelzebub’s path is evidently different… Furthermore…’

Leylin brightened up, ‘The Snake Dowager seems to be rather fearful of him, or rather, his world…’

This provided some verification to Leylin’s previous conjectures.

‘But that’s all in the future! Now, with Beelzebub around, the Snake Dowager won’t place too much emphasis on a wretched mortal like me…’ Leylin immediately felt relieved. Compared to an arch enemy like Beelzebub who was rank 8, he was like a mere ant, where none of the two could be bothered with him.

It was only at this time that he would be able to pull chestnuts out of the fire!

‘Fight! Fight! Go on, fight!’ Leylin snickered inside, while looking incredibly calm.
“Just fight, while I quietly tend to my garden and wait…” He spoke light-heartedly as he picked up the watering can and took care of the little flowerbed, as if putting all his efforts in here.
*Bang!* However, his peace did not last for long. Practically the moment after the Snake Dowager’s figure dissipated, the sounds of the door being bashed on could be heard.
“What’s going on?” Leylin opened the door and watched two snake beings who were like guards. They had emblems on their uniforms and were obviously looking for Leylin. They were clearly the guards of the holy city.
“By order of the Holy Mother, all snake beings in the holy city are to be searched!”
The head of the guards had Morning Star strength. This would be impossible in other worlds. Only in the holy city where the bloodlines of the descendants were concentrated to the extreme would guards have such powerful military strength.
“Sure! But this is property of the Stewart family, and I am a guest of Young Master Thomas. I hope you won’t make things messy in my home!” Leylin smiled and leant towards the side.
From this position, he could see teams of guards in light armour already on the streets, perhaps conducting searches on the whole region.
“Sir, we have found nothing!” As if due to Leylin’s warnings, the guards had roughly looked here and there through the area vaguely and returned to report.
Due to Leylin’s arrangement and the concealment of the power of chaos, none of them had discovered everything, and the little flowerbed was nothing special.
“How about your residence permit? Can I take a look at it?” The team leader sized Leylin up and spoke in a low voice.
“What are you doing? Which squadron are you from?” At this moment, a voice full of haughtiness sounded. Leylin took a look
and found it was Thomas, along with Belinda and Sophia. They had arrived at his door.

Thomas now wore a luxurious silk robe, looking obviously humiliated and angry. It was clear that this team leader had not respected his reputation at all, and he was feeling very annoyed about it.

“Which squad are you from? Do you know that this is property of our Stewart family, and Nick here is my guest?” Thomas narrowed his eyes, fingers about to poke at the team leader’s nose.

“But… the order from the higher-ups…”

“There are no buts! I’ll take responsibility for Nick,” Thomas waved his arms around, “Order from higher-ups? Is our Stewart family not important enough to be given special treatment?”

The Stewart family had control over the defences of the holy city. If it came down to it, Thomas could very well rank above his own superiors, which was why the pair didn’t even dare to squeak in answer.

“Everything’s fine now. Thank you very much, Young Master Thomas! He was merely doing his job, so don’t make things difficult for him!” Leylin mediated and then passed his residence permit to the team leader.
Soul undulations, bloodline detection, identity testing, pass!” A mechanical voice transmitted from a small sculpture of the Snake Dowager held by the squad leader. Sensing the detecting undulations sweeping past him, Leylin inwardly sneered. With his soul force and bloodline concealed, and especially with Aegnis inadvertently protecting him as his original information had been entered into the database, the identity test that was most likely to expose him had its leaks completely sealed. Even if they examined him again, it would be to no avail.

“Haven’t you finished the inspection? Shouldn’t you get lost then?” Thomas looked at the bunch of guards who hurried away in confusion, with a satisfied look in his eyes.

“Little Sophia! These guards all belong to the Stewart family. If you encounter them in the holy city, don’t be frightened, just give them my name!” Shortly afterwards, Thomas made this solicitous offer. Leylin secretly rolled his eyes. He knew that if it wasn’t for Belinda and her sister, Thomas wouldn’t have so hot-bloodedly rushed out to support him.

“Nick, are you alright?” Belinda and her sister went into the little courtyard, and when they saw how narrow the place was and how cramped the apartment was, they wrinkled their brows. “Would you like to come and live with us instead?”

“That’s not necessary!” “That’s not necessary!”
Leylin and Thomas spoke almost at the same time, and seeing the threatening expression in Thomas’ eyes, Leylin inwardly sneered. He switched to a smile and said to Belinda, “This place is very nice! And besides, Young Master Thomas is letting me live here entirely for free, this is very rare in the holy city… To be honest, being able to become a free citizen of the holy city, even if it’s only for 10 years, I can’t ask for anything more than this……” Leylin intentionally emphasised the last few words, and from Thomas’ point of view, this was Leylin surrendering to him, so he nodded his head with satisfaction.

Belinda, on the other hand, looked at Leylin with astonishment. From her impression of him, Leylin definitely wouldn’t behave like this.

“But… Brother Nick! How can you live here? Sophia’s heart is distressed…” Sophia tugged at Leylin’s sleeve.

“Alright, alright! The both of you, don’t come back and give me trouble!” Leylin didn’t care, pushing Belinda and Sophia out with an impatient expression. He then shut the door in their faces.

“Very good. You’ve done well.” Once the door had been shut, he heard Thomas’ secret message, but at the same time he heard other news.

Immediately after, Thomas’ arrogant and proud voice could be heard just outside. “Don’t bother with that Nick anymore. Look! He actually treated you both like this. Little Sophia, shall I bring you to play at the Holy Mother’s Sculpture?”

As their voices grew more distant, Leylin shook his head with a laugh.

“Sometimes, when you don’t want trouble, trouble comes to find you instead! Did I put on too good a performance when we were on the road?” He currently wished for the entire world to forget him, and let him quietly farm properly.
Night had fallen, and the purple halo of the moon had slipped down. Inside the holy city there was none of the clamor of the day, and even the places filled with holy light had all dimmed down. After a full day of searching the entire city, and with dozens of unlucky people without papers thrown into the moat, dissolving until their bones couldn’t be found, the streets were completely deserted with a desolate atmosphere.

“Activate the bloodline imprint!”

In the small courtyard next to the flowerbed, Leylin looked at his right arm. On his wrist were ten small white snake imprints lying side by side. These were naturally the bloodline imprints he had made using the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline.

*Hss* A rank 5 beast spirit tattoo appeared before his eyes, making Leylin’s control over the bloodline imprint much easier.

“The beast spirit’s power has an effect of resisting suppression, and can maximise the imprint’s effect!” There was a trace of a smile on Leylin’s face, and soon he saw the brand on his hand fading rapidly and disappearing.

[Beep! The host has consumed the Alabaster Devilsnake’s bloodline imprint, initiating connection with Dreamscape!]

The innate skill of the Alabaster Devilsnake was the ability to travel to Dreamscape. Leylin himself had acquired this ability through the bloodline imprint. However, in his heart, he had some doubts about it. After all, this was something he gained from the Thousand-Eyed Woman on his previous adventure in the Dreamscape. As a result, when his true soul connected to the monstrous and dazzling world, Leylin did not choose to immediately enter it. Instead, he attempted to draw on some dreamforce.
*Ssss* The air seemed to shimmer and warp like in a hazy heat, and traces of dark red dreamforce began to fall in without end, sinking into the earth of the flowerbed. The green Seed of Wisdom seemed to welcome it, and absorbed the dreamforce. It even budded a little green shoot, and seemed to be filled with the breath of life. The dark red dreamforce was like a fog, and lingered on around the small bud. It was continuously absorbed by the bud, and appeared to have become a nutrient source.

At this moment, it sounded as if a bowstring had snapped in the void. An oppressive voice sounded, and the dreamforce rapidly faded, disappearing in a flash. “What’s going on? I used the bloodline imprint to pull dreamforce in, and it’s just this little… It’s not equal to the previous times I’ve used it… Don’t tell me…” Leylin’s expression immediately turned gloomy.

[Beep! Dreamforce has rapidly decreased, determined to be at the nadir.]

“What bad luck! To think that it also had this uncertain and deceptive characteristic…” Leylin could only laugh bitterly.

Although dreamforce at its peak phase could be compared to the power of laws, it was full of uncertainty. Now it had declined, dropping from the zenith to the nadir. Currently, it was perhaps far weaker than bloodline force.

“I can feel it! The entire Dreamscape seems to have sunk into stillness, and all dreamforce has vanished!” Leylin had a solemn expression. He could feel a lot of things through the Alabaster Devilsnake beast spirit and bloodline. Not only had dreamforce fallen into its weak phase, even the Dreamscape itself had sunk into silence, meaning that if he wanted to draw out dreamforce, he needed to waste even more power than before. And its effects would be greatly reduced as well!
‘As expected, choosing not to rely on dreamforce was the correct decision; this random and uncertain behaviour is basically used to cheat people…’ Leylin shook his head, and at the same time he suddenly understood, ‘No wonder the Snake Dowager’s performance today was so poor! She seemed evenly matched with the divided truesoul clone of a rank 8, it was because dreamforce had fallen into its trough phase and reduced her strength… ’
The weakness of dreamforce was both a blessing and a curse for Leylin. The best advantage was that the Snake Dowager clearly could not use dreamforce without restraint, which was the same as cutting off an arm.
‘If it’s like this, the advantages of Dreamscape entering its silent phase outweigh the disadvantages for me!’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Besides, I have my reserves of chaos power and so many bloodline imprints. I can afford to use them up a little, I can still complete the plan.’
From Leylin’s point of view, if one bloodline imprint from before could draw over 10 units of dreamforce, then now it was only enough to draw over 1 unit. For those who primarily used dreamforce, this terrifying reduction was a complete nightmare!
Once dreamforce grew weak, perhaps even existences on the level of the God of Evil could only withdraw into Dreamscape or even take the initiative to lie dormant and reduce their consumption until dreamforce was restored.
However, Leylin staked it all on his abundant bloodline imprints; even if he wasted a few, it wasn’t as if he couldn’t make up for it.
In any case, he had reaped many bloodlines from Belinda’s family and it was enough to support his consumption, and it wasn’t as if the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline was limited to that family.
“When you think of trouble, trouble will arrive!” Leylin’s brows pressed together, and he sighed helplessly. With a wave of his right hand, a whirlwind of energy particles appeared and swept across
the flower garden. Although he had already prepared for this, the energy aura from earlier could leak out some things, and Leylin naturally would not leave such a huge leak without caring.

After a moment, a dreamlike figure came out from the moonlight. “Nick!” She looked at Leylin with a complicated expression on her face.

She had long golden-white hair which shone with vibrant lustre under the moonlight, scarlet eyes which were as beautiful as rubies. She seemed like the very personification of beauty, and she had a strange attractive force about her.

“You’ve come!” Leylin greeted her without even turning his head. “I already left a message for you earlier, you know this!”

Belinda went directly to Leylin and looked at him with her beautiful eyes that were devoid of restraint, “I know that the outsiders from earlier could have given you trouble so I’ve come secretly, the other’s don’t know. Did Thomas, that disgusting fellow, pressure you?”

It had to be said that Belinda was a very intelligent girl, she was after all a senior Sacrificer for the Trial’s Eye who even mercilessly exacted vengeance on her own family. How could she not be scheming? Leylin’s transformation was far too obvious, anyone could see the difference.

“Even if he did, so what?” Leylin spread out his hands helplessly: “In the holy city, do we have any other choice?”

“I’ll kill him!” Belinda let out a murderous aura, and it wasn’t faked.

“And after that? After becoming a wanted criminal of the holy city, and really flee to the other end of the world? How childish!” Leylin coldly refuted her.

“So what?” Belinda bit her lip, and her eyes seemed to sparkle a little: “Even if I don’t kill him, we can just move out and become
mercenaries and do missions, we will still be able to live in the holy city…”
At the end, Belinda’s voice was choked with sobs.
Leylin looked at how Belinda was speaking in her tearful voice, and was rendered speechless. ‘Alright I didn’t think my acting would have such a great effect, did the mental suggestions affect her too deeply?’

However, what he needed now was to be low-profile, and he couldn’t be together with Belinda and bring trouble onto himself. The beauty of the two sisters would be a source of chaos anywhere.
Knowing this, how could Leylin put himself in danger?
“Become mercenaries? Hah, how would we afford the holy city’s rent and prices? Particularly with the Stewart family, you can’t just break away from them just because you want to. Against this family who have extended their tentacles in all corners of the holy city, what can you possibly do?”
Leylin could only play the role of a realist, and coldly strike down Belinda.
“Nick, you’ve changed! You weren’t like this before!” The callous words made Belinda a little dull, and she looked at Leylin with a rather foolish expression.
“I haven’t changed, I’ve only accepted reality! Go!” Leylin seemed to wave his hand impatiently, and also violently began coughing at the same time.
“Uh, no!” Belinda stepped forward and directly brushed away
Leylin’s palm, and finally saw the blood that Leylin had coughed up.

“Your life force! How could it become this weak, and why do you have all these symptoms? What happened to your strength? Has it disappeared?”

Leylin’s life force was continuously degenerating, and although his appearance was the same as before, his vitality was constantly sapped away. Compared to before, it was like the difference between a candle and a torch.

“It’s an old wound from past adventures, it’s nothing!” As for this, Leylin did not try to hide it, and it could no longer be concealed either.

This was the reason he had done his best to avoid conflict. With his strength in decline, unrepentantly provoking formidable powers could only be described as foolish.

“I knew it! You were afraid! Afraid of burdening me and Sophia!” On the contrary, Leylin’s condition made Belinda seemingly join the dots.

“Are you afraid of becoming a burden to me? It doesn’t matter, I can certainly cure you!” Belinda looked deeply into Leylin’s eyes, her figure disappearing into the moonlight.

Leylin stood there somewhat speechlessly: “She actually thought of something? Although it’s not quite the case at all…”

However, if Belinda wanted to think of it like this, it didn’t seem like it would do him any harm. Leylin thought about it a little, but did not intend to expose himself.

“Now… perhaps after the Sovereign King of gluttony’s appearance today, the structure of the holy city is likely to have changed dramatically…” After Belinda had left, Leylin took up his sprinkler again and attentively tended to the budding shoots in his flowerbed. His expression was peaceful and serene, and he seemed to have nothing to do with the outside world.
In fact, this truly was the case. On the second day, along with a heavily injured Aegnis returning home, an even more terrifying news came about, mad beasts contaminated by gluttony had appeared near the holy city!
Even if the Snake Dowager had already discovered this and carried out her purification, with Beelzebub’s disruption her schemes clearly could not succeed.
However, her earlier purification still had some effects. At the very least, Aegnis still managed to retain her life, but she had suffered severe injuries, which filled many serpent guards with endless fear.
According to Aegnis’ report, a group of giant serpents contaminated by gluttony had already broken through into the holy city. The neighbouring half snake people had suffered enormous losses.
The members of the squad that was with her had all unfortunately perished, and even their corpses had been swallowed up by those insatiable beasts, until there was nothing left.
After all, compared to ordinary food, snake flesh of a superior species was abundant in energy, especially those snake people who were of high rank. It was even easier for them to become the targets of the gluttonous beasts!

gluttonous beasts! This description had come from Aegnis, and was very quickly widely adopted to distinguish them from other giant serpent species.
No matter what creature it was, once it was contaminated by the power of gluttony, it would enter a horrifying state of hunger where it didn’t mind what it ate. They were all called gluttonous beasts.
The holy city and the Stewart family attached great importance to this report, They prepared both the city defence soldiers and a great number of reserves. They declared that the holy city was imposing martial law, and even released a large number of tasks for mercenaries and adventurers to target the gluttonous beasts
invading the holy city.
In a short while, the entire Serpent Plains seemed to ripple unpredictably with activity, and this chaotic scene seemed to spread ceaselessly in the Hail Continent.
What the ordinary citizens of the holy city didn’t know was that this situation would continue for a very long time. Furthermore, in a short span of time, the gluttonous beasts would replace all the previous natural and manmade calamities to become the primary threat to their survival.

……

Time seemed to pass in a flash, and a year went by before he knew it.
“Brother Nick! Sophia is here to see you!” Looking like a younger Belinda, Sofia pushed open the door and walked in. She wore a hunting outfit and looked very exuberant and heroic, overflowing with the vitality of youth. Looking at her, Leylin felt a little envious.
“You’ve come, Sophia!” Leylin smiled and greeted her, inwardly shaking his head.

Although he had come to a tacit understanding with Belinda, Sophia clearly did not know much. Not only this, neither Leylin or Belinda could possibly tell her that much, because with her intelligence it was impossible for her to keep secrets.
As a result, although Belinda had cut back on coming to Leylin’s place, Sophia still remembered her brother Nick, and came over from time to time.
“Brother Nick, haven’t you recovered from your illness?” Sophia drew closer to Leylin, with obvious worry in her eyes. It was now possible to tell that Leylin was beyond saving. Although his appearance had not changed too much, wrinkles had appeared on his forehead and the back of his hands. His body’s life force
continuously disappeared, giving an account of just how weak he was.
“*Cough*… It’s alright! *Cough*…” Leylin took out a white handkerchief and covered his lips. The back that stood so tall and straight in the past seemed to have become a little hunched.
“It’s already become like this, how could you say it’s alright? The Spring of Life that elder sister Belinda asked me to bring last time, are you using it?”
“I have!” Leylin smiled, and picked up his sprinkler.
A milky-white spring water with a rich fragrance was poured into the soil.
The budding shoots in the flowerbed before had now grown into a small tree, the glistening verdant leaves appeared even more full of vitality after being watered.
“Oh! This small tree has unexpectedly grown so tall?”
Sophia was a little surprised: “Only… Brother Nick, why are you giving your medicine to the small tree? Is it also ill?”
“No. To be honest, it needs this more than I do…” Leylin had a deep expression in his eyes, but did not continue his explanation. Instead, he picked up a small gardening hoe and slowly plowed the soil and removed weeds, just like an earnest gardener.
Sophia appeared very familiar with Leylin’s behaviour, and immediately sat by his side and began to talk to herself:
“Recently, the Calamity of Gluttony has gotten even more serious! Sister Aegnis said many garrison squads have suffered heavy losses, and the frontline reached the Crescent Moon Lakeside for a while, which isn’t far at all from the holy city. There are still lots of giant serpents that have been contaminated, and even rank 6 Serpent families cannot escape. Over half of the Serpent Plains are now occupied by gluttonous beasts…
“The entire Serpent Plains already does not have many places for us to live, and recently even a lot of the holy city residents are
beginning to flee, which complicates things for sister Aegnis…
“And sister Belinda, she recently keeps on accepting missions, it’s said that she’s thinking of exchanging it for the highest grade Holy Light Crystal, and to get it she took on a very dangerous mission, and will leave tomorrow…”
“Oh!” Leylin’s hand stopped slightly, but then continued to move. He could understand Belinda’s current situation a little, she seemed to accept the holy city’s missions without stopping, and exchanged her contributions for materials full of life force, then secretly sent them to him.
These things were almost of no use to him, otherwise with Leylin’s methods, he wouldn’t need to keep living in seclusion here.
“The Holy Light Crystal?” Leylin shook his head, this type of life crystal was full of life force, and had good effects on purifying and suppressing various curses, it was said to be the Hail Continent’s peak grade material, and even though Belinda was rank 4, obtaining this was not an easy task.
An even more crucial point was that this material wouldn’t be of much use given his current condition, but it could have an even better effect on the Seed of Wisdom.
*Bang! Bang!* At this moment, a rough sound sounded out.
“We’re inspectors!”
“Ah…” Leylin sighed in recognition and came to the door. “Please come in, sirs!”
Seeing a large group of guards boorishly rush in, Sophia stuck out her tongue: “There’s a lot of people. Sophia doesn’t like them. See you, brother Nick!”
The young lady prepared to say goodbye and left, and soon after the guards did the same, fully explaining that they were absolutely not here for inspection, but to serve as a reminder and a warning. Leylin could only bitterly laugh.
Although in the space of this year, borrowing the Stewart family’s
and Thomas’ name saved him a lot of trouble, Sophia was still an enormous problem. Leylin had already felt that as Sofia came to visit him more often, that Thomas had the tendency to become even more impatient.

“Ah… Just how is Belinda managing her sister?” Leylin helplessly massaged his temples.

He had a very bad feeling that if Sophia’s vague affection for him was discovered, the good relationship that he had with Thomas would be gone forever. He’d already failed at shutting her down after several attempts.

He was afraid that his position would go back up in Thomas’ mind, from the tool he was currently to something along the lines of a love rival or competitor.
he small courtyard that had been peaceful and quiet for over a year had recently received more and more visits from guards, and that was because of that Thomas’ secretly hostile behaviour.

‘Perhaps he will come and have a showdown with me soon?’ Leylin sighed, ‘This sort of situation is so troublesome, especially at this crucial moment…’

Shortly after, Leylin shut his eyes. ‘In this situation, even if I don’t fight back and make some vows instead, Thomas won’t ever believe me again. After all I’ve done that many times already, and having Sophia pretend is also not desirable. With her intelligence, she’d be found out.

‘Unless, I directly take over her consciousness, but that would demand too much from me… Or I could send her over to Thomas’ bed? No, Belinda would probably go crazy. It’s fine if she does, but if she mobilises Aegnis, that’ll be more troublesome than that moron Thomas…’

In just a moment, Leylin had completely thought over the outcomes from the situation, and discovered that it seemed as if he had no other option apart from running away.

But that would be impossible! After entering the holy city and planting this seed of Wisdom, Leylin had not taken one step out of the courtyard.

After all, the thing that held the power of life or death over him
was here, how could he possibly divert his attention to something else? Besides, if he left his camp for too long, with all these hidden rats around, he wasn’t sure he would be able to continue hiding in the holy city.

‘I can’t show weakness… It looks like I can only demonstrate my strength!’ Leylin stroked his chin. Sometimes a reasonable show of force could still be put to good use.

However, he would definitely face Thomas’ counter-attack afterwards, but from Leylin’s perspective he only needed a little bit of time for his plan to succeed.

“This period of hesitation, I think it can still be obtained!” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

“Keke…Sophia, wait a moment!” After thinking clearly about his plan, Leylin immediately called out for Sophia.

“Brother Nick, is there anything else?” Sophia jumped and hopped to Leylin, the fragrance of a young lady mixed with the vitality of youth lingering in Leylin’s nose.

Shortly after, the warning gazes from the guards from earlier could be seen.

“Oh! I have something that I need you to give to your sister!” Leylin acted as if he hadn’t seen the warning glares from the guards, and smiled at Sophia.

“What is it? Is it delicious food? The roasted meat that brother Nick made last time tasted good!” Sophia’s eyes lit up.

“It isn’t something to eat, you little glutton!” Leylin shook his head and smiled, he never thought that his cooking skills from his previous world would have fans in a different world, “It’s a protection amulet! Take it to your sister for me! Perhaps it will be of assistance to her in her mission.”

It needn’t be said that a mission where the holy light crystal could be obtained would have a frighteningly high difficulty. Just relying on Belinda, even if she was Rank 4, even if she had support from
Aegnis and the Stewart family, it would still be extremely dangerous. However, in his current situation, it was not suitable for him to go out by himself, so he could only entrust it to Sophia and believe that no matter how naive she was, she would be able to hold on in the face of her own sister being in danger.

“Alright! Sophia will definitely bring her this thing to her!” Sophia clenched her fist and nodded her head.

“I believe in you!” Leylin immediately went to the side of the flowerbed and plucked a single leaf from the small emerald-green tree.

“It’s this, help me pass it to your sister!” The dark green leaf had a faint lustre, and Sophia’s eyes lost a little of their spirit.

“I know!” Sophia put away the leaf like it was something precious, and even her eyes seemed a little more quick-witted.

It appeared that coming into contact with the leaf for such a short time had already changed her a little. This was beyond Leylin’s expectations.

“Let’s go! Unless you want to be scolded by Brother Thomas?” Sophia shot a glance at those guards who watched her like a tiger guarding their prey, and immediately walked out aloofly, just like a refined princess.

And these guards looked at each other and hung their heads down in dejection, following behind Sophia like bodyguards protecting their princess.

‘The effect is this good? She merely touched it a little!’ Leylin’s pupils contracted as he looked at the little green tree in the flowerbed.

‘The Wisdom Tree’s branches are so inconceivably formidable. They can provide such great enlightenment and wisdom!’

‘No! Sophia was so diligent in coming here, so perhaps she had been influenced by it. Knowing that this place could bring her great
benefits, she did not hesitate to disobey Belinda’s guidance as a result!’ Slowly, Leylin suddenly understood the reason behind Sophia’s determination to visit him, and it seems that her previous goodwill was only a small part of it. To break through her sister’s command, perhaps only the craving for wisdom could do that.
‘This is good, it gives me more confidence in my own plan!’ Leylin secretly clenched his fist.

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At the same time, next to a street not too far away from the courtyard stood Thomas, with a gloomy expression on his face.
“That slut!” Seeing Sophia leaving Leylin’s courtyard with a brilliant smile, Thomas’ expression grew very dark.
“And that Nick, he actually dared to ignore my warning, and continue to meet Sophia!”
*Bang!* Thomas’ fingers directly left long marks on the nearby wall, and a lot of powder fell from it.
“Get ready to go down there! I want to properly teach that Nick a lesson! It looks like I have been far too lenient to him this year……”
“As you command, Young Master!” the other two appeared to be captains of the garrison, but they respectfully knelt before him.
“Also, carefully investigate his background and strength!” Thomas added.
As a descendent of an influential family, although he was infatuated with Sophia, he couldn’t lose his head over her. After all, he understood restraint before power. As a result, if he was prepared to fall out with Nick, he would first investigate him as much as possible.
However, his influence as the heir of the Stuart family, as long as Leylin wasn’t the top of a small family of descendants, he could
easily be crushed like a little ant. Still he would first investigate, just in case.
“An Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline! Even if you are rumoured to be the purest White Devil nobility, I’ll still send you to hell!”
Thomas looked at Leylin’s courtyard, with a cold light flashing in his eyes.

……

“Sister! Sister!” Sophia threw herself into Belinda’s arms and began to act spoilt, but Belinda’s expression was like ice, “Did you go to Nick’s place again? Haven’t I told you many times not to do that, or you will bring him a lot of trouble? Why don’t you ever listen?”
Belinda rarely spoke so strictly.
“But… I wanted to go!” Sophia felt wronged. She twined her fingers as she said, “I feel comfortable and very happy in Brother Nick’s place.”
“Oh? What did he do to you?” Belinda’s expression suddenly grew alert, even her finger joints began to crack.
“It’s not like that! It’s the small tree, just smelling it makes me feel good!” Sophia’s face flushed red.
“Nick’s darling tree?” Belinda shook her head, and felt that she had thought too much.
Belinda could not understand why Nick treated that tree like a precious treasure, and because of it she had consulted many resources and almost considered the Seed of Wisdom as some demonic thing that could bewitch a person’s heart.
She felt somewhat dissatisfied by his continuous attention to the tree, without even a care for himself.
“Mm! Also, Brother Nick let me give this to you, and said it would be very useful to Sister’s mission!” Sophia’s expression seemed a little reluctant, but she still gave the leaf to Belinda.
“What is this? Is it a calming amulet?” When the leaf touched her palm, Belinda did not feel any powerful sensation, only a slight chill from the leaf helping her mood to calm down a lot.

“It’s just some calming amulet? It doesn’t seem to be of much use! Why did he give this to me?” Belinda’s eyes seemed puzzled.

“No! Sophia feels that this leaf will be very useful to Sister, so you must bring it!” Sophia nevertheless had an imposing expression on her face.

“Alright, alright! I really can’t deal with the both of you…” Belinda’s face was brimming with a warm smile, she put away the leaf safely and stroked Sophia’s head, then her expression changed: “This is wrong!”

She looked Sophia up and down and stared at her sister without pause, “Sophia, why do I feel like you’ve gotten smarter…” Due to an accident in her childhood, Sophia’s intelligence was like a child’s, but today her speech was very orderly, which was a ceaseless surprise to Belinda.

“Have I? I’ve always been very smart, it must be that sister has gotten it wrong!” Sophia smiled sweetly, but a crafty light flashed in the depths of her eyes.

“What? Perhaps the stress of tomorrow’s mission is too much! Has it driven me insane?” Belinda touched her own forehead.

“Belinda!” At this moment, another figure charged towards her, with an expression of unconcealed rage.

“Why did you take that mission? Don’t you know that the Crescent Lake has already become a dangerous area of glutinous beasts?” Aegnis asked. The armour on her body hadn’t even been removed, and was still stained with blood… As the leader in charge, Aegnis spent almost every day active on the battlefield with the glutinous beasts.

“I’ll leave first!” Seeing this situation, Sophia stuck out her tongue and slipped out of the door at lightning speed.
What mission are you talking about?” Belinda said, with a blank look on her face.

“You’re still trying to deceive me?” Aegnis’ voice rose an octave higher, “Don’t forget that as the leader of the holy city’s garrison, I have jurisdiction over both the adventurer and mercenary guilds!”

“The Crescent Lake Acquisition mission is extremely difficult, and has a Rank 5 danger level! Even those who are Rank 5 will have to face certain dangers, and you think you can do it?”

Aegnis bitterly exhorted her: “If you’re doing this for that holy light crystal, then just leave it to me!”

“Thank you Aegnis, but I have my own reasons……”

Belinda forced a smile on her face.

“I know, is it because of Nick? Even though you haven’t gone to find him for over a year, I know all about how you ask Sofia to bring things to him.”

“Is it because of him that you aren’t willing to accept me?” Aegnis’ said in a dark voice.

“It’s not what you think it is!” Belinda didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry.

“It’s exactly because of him! That bastard, sooner or later…”

Aegnis slammed her fists together fiercely.

“Aegnis!”

“I only consider you my good friend. I’m giving you a final
warning, if anything happens to Nick, you’ll definitely regret it!”
Belinda’s expression grew darker.
“For him… You’re acting like this for a filthy man! You dare to
actually argue with me?”
Aegnis emanated a terrifyingly powerful aura, and many shadows
converged at her back to become the likeness of a three-headed python.
“Precisely!”
Even under the innate oppression of her race, Belinda still
staunchly looked Aegnis in the eye.
Seeing Belinda acting this way, Aegnis’ chest heaved violently. “As
you wish!” she panted out vulgarly.
The sound of armour dropping to the floor rang out, followed by
the distant footsteps of Aegnis as she left.
Once she had left the villa, Aegnis’ expression grew completely
dark.
“Bang!” A snake whip slashed out suddenly, and many rose petals
and tulip petals flew into the sky.
“Nick!” Aegnis ground her teeth in frustration, but it soon became
a cold laugh.
“I promised Belinda not to harm him, but Thomas hasn’t agreed.
However, shall I go about this a little more secretly?”

……

“It should be here!”
Belinda looked at the map in her hand and appeared to be very
cautious.
Currently, she was in a wasteland which had an aura of death and
decay, which made her unconsciously become nervous.
Ever since the Calamity of Gluttony broke out, the entire Serpentes Plains was not how it used to be.
War, hand-to-hand combat and gluttony spread with incredible speed, leaving the plains covered in blood. Even the Snake Dowager’s radiance could not move those savage gluttonous beasts, because they were also protected by an Exemplary.
The Sovereign King of Gluttony—Beelzebub. Although it had not been 2 years since Beelzebub’s descent into Purgatory World, his name was known by everyone. It was to the extent where it could immediately make little snake children cry. In this situation, because of the gluttonous beasts’ terrifying consumption, food shortages had broken out in the holy city. In the past, this would have been an absolute joke, but now it was something that had really happened.
In fact, the gluttonous beasts were facing the same food shortages, which were even more serious for them than the snake people. They were already at the stage where they were killing each other for food, otherwise they would have already invaded the holy city. It was different from previous calamities. Belinda had a feeling that once the gluttonous beasts had occupied a territory under the Sovereign King of Gluttony’s command, it wouldn’t easily be relinquished ever again.
The Snake Dowager’s large-scale purification that had happened in the beginning could never happen again. When she thought of this, a fog immediately shrouded Belinda’s mind.
“Once I pass through here, I will be very close to the Crescent Lake!” Belinda muttered to herself, although she had disguised herself, she felt very unsafe in this sort of place.
“If Becker and the others had come, perhaps I would be able to relax more easily. It’s a shame……” Belinda smiled bitterly. In her career as a mercenary, she had gained
a few subordinates and the like, but once they heard that she had taken on this mission, they had rejected her one after another. If Belinda had just a little more time and used her own methods, it would be effortless to unite some powerful and loyal subordinates. But just a year wasn’t even enough to bind them to her through familiarity, and certainly wasn’t enough to persuade them to take risks with her.

“However, my mission this time is just to collect blue quartz within the Crescent Lake. If I don’t disturb those gluttonous beasts, the danger should be quite low!” Belinda pondered over this in silence, and soon passed through the plains. Past the sloping fields, the scene ahead was reflected in her eyes– a blue lake shaped like a crescent extended across the plains as far as the eye could see. A sparkling radiance and a hint of chilliness was emitted from the Crescent Lake.

“This was once the holy city’s valued resource point, but after falling to the gluttonous beasts, it has already grown wild. If the holy city wasn’t so short of resources with they urgently need to replenish, perhaps they wouldn’t have put such a high price on this mission…” Belinda bit her lip in distress. With Aegnis there, she simply did not need to come out and take risks. If she was willing to forget her pride and plead with Aegnis, a piece of Holy Light Crystal would easily fall into her hands. However, Belinda did not want to owe her so much and moreover, she was not willing to give up her dignity to do this. Because of this, Belinda had not hesitated to risk her life to do this mission.

“If only the gluttonous beasts weren’t here, then I would have more of a chance,” Belinda’s eyes lit up. A tattoo of a white eyeball
appeared and flew up to a high altitude, and images of the scene were transmitted to her.

“Roar…” “Hiss…”

It was unlucky that there were several gluttonous beasts lingering next to the Crescent Lake, tearing apart the corpse of a giant serpent.

Powerful undulations that were on par with a Rank 5 were emitted from a gluttonous beast that was the size of a small mountain.

“Oh damn it! My luck is awful today!’ Belinda cursed silently.

Through the surveillance eyeball, Belinda had already received images of the scene which were transmitted directly into her consciousness. Amongst those gluttonous beasts, one was a giant serpent with many tentacles that had been split open from head to foot. There was also a giant rat with two heads, one bigger than the other, which gnawed its food at lightning speed.

The final beast appeared to be the corpses of different animals stitched together into a giant ball of meat, with a giant crack in its centre. A red tongue licked its white teeth incessantly, and it gave off the strongest undulations. It seemed to have reached the peak of Rank 5.

The corpse of the giant serpent on the floor was clearly also Rank 5, but it was definitely not a match for these three gluttonous beasts and had become their food.

“What a pity……” Belinda tightly clenched her fists.

That Rank 5 giant serpent was clearly a giant serpent descendent of the Thousand Snake Plains, but it couldn’t escape from its fate and became prey.

Although the Snake Dowager and the holy city had done their utmost to rescue and evacuate the giant serpents, the Thousand Snake Plains were too vast, and these unlucky ones often surfaced.

Although Belinda was furious, she was rational enough to not rush out hot-headedly and die.
“Gluttonous beasts have to eat very frequently, so sooner or later they will leave after they finish eating here…”
Belinda very patiently waited and hid herself.
These gluttonous beasts had astonishing military power and a frightening ability to consume, but their intelligence and detection were rather weak. This gave her a chance.
“Click! Click!”
These three gluttonous beasts ate very quickly, and not even the bones were spared. Even the drops of blood on the floor were greedily lapped up until there was nothing left— The blood of a Rank 5 giant serpent was full of nutritious energy, and one drop of it was said to be better than eating ten low-ranked beasts.
When food is short, the gluttonous beasts probably massacre each other! In that case…”
Belinda’s eyes lit up a little as if she was a lone cheetah, waiting for the opportunity.
“Roar…” “Hiss…” “Coo! Coo!”
After eating the prey they had caught together, the three gluttonous beasts sized each other up and let out a huge roar which shook the void.
After obviously testing each other, the sewed-up monster and the tentacle snake left one after the other in opposite directions.
The gluttonous beasts digested things quickly, so they almost had no time to rest. They had to spend the rest of their lives fighting and hunting for food.
The two-headed rat that was left seemed thirsty. Leaning against the Crescent Lake, the two rat heads began to drink up the water in the lake. The surface of the lake seemed to drop in volume continuously, exposing the dried up lakebed.
Within the lakebed, small blue rays of light began to flicker.
It was a blue ore that looked very bright under the rays of light.
“Blue quartz!” After seeing the goal of her mission, Belinda grew
very excited. However, the actions of that two rats made Belinda feel endless frustration.
After the two-headed giant rat had drunk its fill from the lake, it unexpectedly lay next to the lake and sunk into a deep sleep. The rat’s body emitted traces of black gas to its surroundings, and it breathed it in again. In this process, its body grew even more enormous, with a sarcoma growing on its neck. Its aura grew even more powerful, and was approaching the peak of Rank 5.
“Damn! I’ve unexpectedly run into an evolving gluttonous beast!” Belinda’s expression grew exceptionally unsightly. Gluttonous beasts rarely rested, one exception was when they absorbed too much energy and started to evolve!
After their deep sleep, the power of gluttonous beasts would undergo an earth-shattering transformation!
The holy city had paid a price in blood to gather information about the gluttonous beasts, and in return Belinda had been taken advantage of by those dishonest profiteers when she tried to get a hold of the information. However, the information was worth the exorbitant price. It was unquestionably genuine, and had helped her escape danger several times.

“This won’t do. If the gluttonous beast evolves, its capabilities will have grown even greater. It might even discover my presence…”

“Even if I continue waiting patiently for the beast to leave, there will still be others. This place is obviously a gathering point for them, otherwise the mission wouldn’t be marked with such great difficulty. And now… The aura given off by this evolving beast is making the others subconsciously keep away from this place…” Belinda’s eyes flashed.

“This might be my best chance!” she said, with a resolute expression in her eyes.

“Dreamforce spell Hollow!” A crimson trace of dreamforce lingered on Belinda’s skin like a scarlet veil, and she looked like she had just stepped out from a fairytale.

As a mixed-blood Alabaster Devilsnake, she had naturally inherited the ability to manipulate dreamforce. After her black conversion, her innate skill had strengthened considerably even. However, at this moment an anxious look appeared on her face.
‘The dreamforce has weakened…’
The dreamforce that Belinda had pulled to this world was several times weaker than before, and its power had clearly fallen. She had a feeling like all of Dreamscape had perished, and there was not a single trace of life. Even the intensity of the dreamforce had greatly decreased.
Dreamscape had sunk into its silent phase, and those with the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline like her could only consider it as bad news. During this testing time of the Calamity of Gluttony, Belinda could tell that many Alabaster Devilsnake bloodlines had been massacred on the battlefield due to losing the dreamforce they had mastered.
‘Almighty Matriarch, please bestow your blessings on my clan!’ Belinda prayed inwardly and soon vanished into thin air.
Borrowing the illusionary powers of Dreamscape, Belinda concealed herself completely and approached the Crescent Lake. The nearer she drew to the two heads of the mountainous rat gluttonous beast, the more she could feel its ghastly energy that cared for nothing in the world, as well as its sinister will to satisfy its appetite at all costs. Her skin prickled with fear, as if an edge of a sharp sword was pressing against her soft cheek.
‘It’s going to be alright.’ The gluttonous beast’s ability to respond to this type of invasion had diminished, and as Belinda drew closer to the Crescent Lake, her eyes glimmered with joy. Belinda warily passed by the two-headed giant rat and reached the Crescent Lake’s lakebed, and the precious stones which radiated a blue glow disappeared without a trace into her hands.
‘Blue quartz!’ After the success of her operation, Belinda had a feeling that things had gone beyond her expectations.
‘Excellent, with the holy light crystal Nick should be able to carry on for a bit longer…” Belinda clamped down on the excitement in her heart, stowed the blue quartz away safely, and prepared to leave
immediately. A monstrous cawing suddenly filled the air. It was at this moment that the two-headed rat’s body suddenly transformed. It opened its eyes in a flash, revealing four green irises filled with an oppressive manic insanity. The purple veins on its body throbbed explosively, and innumerable blood clots and tumours pulsed beneath its skin in a horrifying manner. The gruesome sarcoma on its neck was enclosed in a crimson light, and was steadily shrinking and swelling.

‘Its evolution failed!’ Belinda was astonished. It was clear that the gluttonous beast had not accumulated enough energy, leading to a failure in its evolution. This was the worse case scenario: after failing its evolution the gluttonous beast would enter a fearsome foraging state to make up for its lack of energy. The gluttonous beast was now even more psychotic than the average beast, and it would fear nothing, not even death. The beast roared, its inhuman cry bursting forth into the surroundings. The sound of something breaking could be heard as fine cracks began to appear like a spiderweb on Belinda’s veil of dreamforce. As it began to crumble, Belinda’s expression changed in an instant. The sky flashed red, and her figure was immediately revealed. No later than that were the beast’s four enormous green eyes fixed on her. The rank 5 beast converted its rage over the failed evolution and its hunger into a berserk killing intent, and its fearsome gaze left Belinda feeling suffocated. “Run!” The enormous phantom of an Alabaster Devilsnake formed behind Belinda, and wisps of dreamforce converged like a crimson wave in front of the giant rat. She didn’t turn back as she fled in a hurry, becoming a streak of red in the landscape as she struggled to escape. However, the rank 5 existence was still a terrifyingly powerful beast
contaminated by gluttony, and its power far exceeded Belinda’s capabilities. With a berserk roar, the giant two headed rat approached the impenetrable wall of dreamforce and the figure of a giant serpent within it. The insanity only grew deeper in its eyes as it charged straight through.

The sound of a shrill scream and a frightening explosion pierced Belinda’s ears. The rat was covered by wisps of green smoke and the odour of rotting flesh. The corrosive dreamforce had eroded its previously smooth coat into a festering mess, riddled with bald spots that exposed the tender white flesh beneath. It looked extremely grotesque.

The wall of dreamforce and the shadow of the Alabaster Devilsnake had been obliterated with a single strike from the giant rat. Like a black hole, it had sucked all of the dreamforce and even the soul projection into itself.

With a flash of yellow light, the two headed rat’s serious injuries healed immediately, and its aura grew even more tyrannical. If it had enough food, the gluttonous beast’s injuries could recover completely at a frightening speed, and it didn’t even have to overcome any bottlenecks to advance. This was the truly terrifying aspect of the gluttonous beasts!

“Oh.” Belinda grew faint at the sight of her soul projection being extinguished. Two lines of blood trickled out from her eyes. It wasn’t only that; her traumatic injuries ripped apart the streak of light, she was no longer able to rapidly flee the battlefield.

The two headed rat chirped as it stared at Belinda, sizing up where it would take its first bite. To this gluttonous beast, a rank 4 adventurer was rather good nourishment.

“You disgusting bastard, let’s go!” In this life or death crisis, Belinda grew extremely fierce. An enormous black battle sword appeared in her hands.

The only way she could deal with this kind of gluttonous beast was
to use large-scale destructive techniques, and heavy duty weaponry could also show good results. The colossal two headed rat was as fast as lightning once it started moving. Belinda only saw a yellow flash before a titanic force swept towards her, knocking the black sword out of her hands and driving to her knees. Blood spilt from her mouth. ‘A rank 5 existence! It’s even on the verge of breaking through, at a higher state that I could never hope to reach…’ After receiving this life-threatening injury, Belinda could only smile bitterly. The sound of sharp crunching made Belinda look up, only to see that her extremely expensive battle sword which had received the Matriarch’s blessing had disappeared into the giant rat’s toothy maw. “It actually ate it…” Belinda lost her ability to smile, and her eyes narrowed, “Don’t tell me that my fate is to disappear into this gluttonous beast’s stomach?” The rat beast finished its meal of her battle sword and pounced towards Belinda, its sharp front claws ripping through Belinda’s defense and disembowelling her. “Farewell, Sophia… and Nick…” In her final breaths of life, Belinda’s expression was serene. Apart from a trace of regret, she didn’t seem to have any feelings of fear. *Thud!* A shock wave suddenly sent Belinda flying back, yet the sharp pain she expected didn’t come. Her eyes grew wide with confusion, and she recognised the mysterious object that protected her. “Isn’t that… Nick’s amulet?” She recalled Sophia’s reminder, and her heart grew warm. The green light began to tremble, fluttering like a leaf in the breeze. The giant tree leaf seemed to be full of a brilliant radiance within the sacred light. The veins and stem of every leaf were clearly pronounced, and each one seemed like a piece of lustrous jade.
The boundless green light dispersed, and with the green leaf at its core a giant human-like figure that was over ten feet tall appeared. The giant person’s body had a wooden grain texture, with vines and green leaves decorating its shoulder and body. It looked like a giant tree soldier.
“My esteemed mistress, you’ve been injured!” The Ent said in a droning and nasal voice.
“Who are you?” Belinda asked expressionlessly.
“The Protector of Wisdom! I am from the clan of Eternal Ents, you can call me Benny,” the Ent seemed to smile at her, “I will stay behind and hold back this beast, so please leave this place as quickly as possible!”
Afterwards, Benny the Ent bellowed and charged towards the two-headed giant rat.
Chik! Chik! The large two-headed mouse bellowed, a pair of sharp claws being enveloped by yellow light. A huge wound was torn open on Benny’s chest, but for the Ent who didn’t have any weak points or even flesh and blood, there was naturally nothing like a scene of blood spurting out. On the contrary, there was no pain on Benny’s face. Instead, a green circle of light was emitted from his chest and it began to heal immediately. Even the giant claws were caught inside, inducing the large rat’s fury.

“Bind!” Green leaved vines were like the most terrifying of law-shackles, extending from Benny’s arm and twining around the giant rat.

‘Powerful regeneration abilities and such physical strength… Could this be the Primordial Ent rumoured to be from ancient times?’ Belinda watched the two monsters fighting and gritted her teeth, making use of this hard-to-come-by chance and beginning to flee. Meanwhile, the mysterious feelings she had for Leylin grew even stronger…

*Rumble! Rumble!* Terrifying earthquakes wreaked havoc near the crescent lake, causing dust to fly everywhere. Two huge figures could vaguely be seen in battle. Wooden arms or vines were sent flying on occasion, and this would be accompanied by a terrifying crunch.

The Ent was evidently not a match for the giant mouse, but due to
its characteristics it could buy a lot of time for Belinda to escape. By the time the giant mouse achieved victory, it could only roar in fury at the pile of wood shavings.

Someone else was spying on the battlefield from the darkness.

“This darned old mouse. Get an entire brigade over here for me. I want it dead!” Aegnis glared at the giant two headed rat hatefully, her eyes showing her wrath. The few soldiers behind her could only agree meekly.

‘Thankfully, Belinda’s fine.’ Aegnis patted her chest, a pondering look in her eyes. She was obviously worried about Belinda going on a solo mission and had followed her secretly. If not for the appearance of the Ent, she probably wouldn’t have been able to keep from acting herself.

‘Nick seems rather interesting! Are otherworldly summoning techniques his trump card?’ While sacrifices and beast spirits were the norm in the Purgatory World, there were also other paths to power. Even Magi existed here, hence Leylin’s summoned Ent didn’t surprise Aegnis too much. At most, she would think he’d inherited some relatively obscure abilities.

‘But this Ent that he so casually summoned has the power to hinder a rank 5 gluttonous beast for a while…’ Aegnis stroked her chin, ‘I should warn Thomas and get him to stop his plans for now. I should look up Nick’s history, he might be someone who’ll give us a huge surprise.’

However, Aegnis had no idea that when Leylin’s true identity was revealed, she wouldn’t be surprised, but horrified.

“Yes, ma’am!” one of the guards immediately bowed and withdrew.

“Next up, it’s you, you disgusting old mouse. How dare you harm my adorable Belinda? I’m going to tear your bones apart and use your brain juices as gravy!” A vast and horrifying three-headed snake appeared abruptly in tandem with her announcement, pouncing towards the giant two headed rat.
The rest of the soldiers exchanged glances. In the end, despite their unwillingness, they could only follow their leader and charge forward as well. A massive battle was about to ensue…

Aegnis had grown slightly fearful after Leylin revealed that tiny bit of his strength. Thomas’ plan for revenge had been put on hold, which gave him valuable time.

However, battles generally grew more intense, and things had almost gotten desperate.

In order to contain the wave of gluttonous beasts, the holy city had already arranged campaigns against them several times. Even the Snake Dowager herself had sent out a clone, but in the face of Beelzebub’s huge army of gluttonous beasts, they yielded tiny results. Several of her clones were even destroyed. The bloody loss of life caused the holy city to be in an extremely unstable situation.

A few months later, after several attempts to meet the beast wave, the battle line was pushed to the edges of the holy city. The city walls, and the triumphal arch that used to be filled with holy light, had now turned into the last line of defence for the snake beings.

Furthermore, compared to the spread of gluttony itself, the Gluttonous Army had Beezlebub himself in charge. Even the Snake Dowager would not be able to deal with them easily.

It could be said that the holy city was now in a desperate state of emergency and on the brink of life or death.

There were many residents within the holy city, and they would often hear the roars of the gluttonous beasts as they slumbered. They had no choice but to contribute and help with the holy city’s defences.

“I’ve told you many times already! This is property of the Stewart Family, and I am a guest of Young Master Thomas. Unless you get his consent, you have no right to look through anything here. Scram!” Leylin sent a group of patrolling officers away sternly.

Even while using the name of the Stewarts, Leylin had no choice
but to take the risk to use a mental hint, and only then did the patrolling officers leave obediently.
After sending them away, Leylin laughed wryly. “Is it already the fourth time this month? Each time they seem to be even more urgent. Looks like rumours of the gluttonous beasts being on the verge of breaching the holy city have spread widely…”
He then came to the flowerbed. The little green tree had already grown quite tall and was completely emerald green, like a flawless work of art.
Even with concealing spell formations, this strange scene had attracted some attention from others. If not for Leylin spending most of his time close to it, perhaps there would be someone brazen enough to come in and steal it.
“The ‘holy light crystal’ that Belinda sent over seems to have a good effect on the Wisdom Tree! Cough cough…” Leylin sized up the little green Wisdom Tree, looking quite satisfied. Even while he was coughing, the hope in his heart grew.
‘I had to courteously bow to Thomas in the past, hiding my true strength for later. It’s given me two years, which was just enough for this stump to successfully grow. Destiny is on my side!’ Leylin’s eyes burned with passion.
Ever since he found out that holy light crystals were beneficial for the little Wisdom Tree, he had secretly acted and committed a few alarming crimes, gathering large amounts of crystals and bringing the growth of the Wisdom Tree forward.
Leylin had always acted with caution and did not leave any traces behind. Since they were at war, their intent to hunt down criminals was weaker than usual. With this as a cover, he had been able to hoodwink them easily.
After all, who would suspect an old geezer on the verge of death?
Yes, in two years the Allsnake Curse had practically extracted all of Leylin’s life force. Even with facial transfiguration techniques,
many wrinkles still appeared on his forehead and palms.
“A.I. Chip, how much longer do I have?” Leylin inwardly asked.
[Beep! Gathering data on Host’s life force… Establishing conjecture model! … Experiment completed. Estimated time till death: 34 days 12 hours 23 minutes 32 seconds.] The A.I. Chip intoned faithfully.
“A little more than a month? It’s shorter than I expected. Is it because I helped out the last time? Cough cough…” Leylin began to cough hard again, his handkerchief covered in scarlet blood.
“The rejection is also becoming more and more serious,” Leylin smiled wryly and threw the blood-stained handkerchief aside.
He was now already at his very weakest.
The frightening part of the Allsnake Curse was that it was essentially fatal for all of the descendants and Warlocks who made use of the Dowager’s serpent bloodlines. It was already an incredible thing that Leylin had managed to hold on for so long.
*Roar!* *Awoo!* *Rumble!* *Clatter!* Load roars, multi-coloured flames and the cries of many snake beings could be seen and heard. The ground shook underneath them all continuously. This was another attack from the gluttonous beast wave outside towards the holy city.
The Snake Dowager and Beelzebub had yet to act, and seemed to have come to some tacit agreement, handing down the responsibility of victory to their subordinates. Thus, these attacks happened a few times everyday, resulting in many sacrifices and refugees.
With the protection and the support they believed he had, many neighbours came to Leylin and prayed for help. Leylin ruthlessly rejected all of them.
“No!” “I don’t want Daddy to go!” “Please, don’t send me to the battlefield! I don’t want to die!” Noise could be heard from the streets, and the moans and cries of wretched souls travelled into Leylin’s ears.
“How chaotic.” Leylin shook his head and returned to his deckchair, narrowing his eyes as if taking a nap. “Grandpa Nick, we’ve come to visit!”

*Bang!* The door was pushed open, and Sophia as well as Belinda walked in. In Sophia’s eyes was an unconcealed sense of sorrow. From his life aura undulations, Leylin did not have long left. Even Belinda no longer had any reservations and came to visit him often. “Hey, you’re here!” Leylin’s smile was like that of a lonely old geezer, kind and friendly as he watched little children dropping in, “I’ve just made some tea!”

The dilapidated courtyard was the same as before, just that beside the green tree Leylin had made a round table and deck chair, not leaving the area at all. On the wooden round table was a porcelain teapot that was emitting steam.

“Come and try my new brew!” Leylin was very friendly and made a cup of green tea for Belinda and Sophia. “Oh, it’s very fragrant!” While holding the teacup, Sophia looked extremely content.
"Sophia seems to be recovering well, she doesn’t need to come here anymore!" Leylin reclined on the deck chair and spoke leisurely.

"Mm, thank you very much!" Belinda’s eyes seemed to become a little emotional. For some reason, ever since Sophia began drinking the mysterious ‘tea’ Leylin made from his little green tree, her condition had greatly improved. She had become much more mature and intelligent.

"By the way, what is this ‘tea’? Is it some sort of medicine?" Belinda was puzzled, but at the same time was filled with gratitude towards Leylin. She naively believed that Leylin had grown the tree in order to treat Sophia, and Leylin obviously would not uncover this beautiful misunderstanding.

"Oh! It’s just the name of a drink from my hometown. It’s made from plants, where the essence of leaves is extracted through liquid. It is rather similar to this drink," Leylin obviously did not want to elaborate.

"Is it the culture of some overseas isle? I really hope I can travel there with you one day..." Belinda’s eyes seemed to be luminous and sparkling.

"Mm, there will be chances!" Leylin yawned, not seeming to be in good spirits.

"Alright, Sophia. What stories have you brought for your Grandpa Nick?" He turned to Sophia. She had already drained the tea.
“Oh! I heard from sister Aegnis that the holy city is preparing for a huge counterattack. Even the disciplinary corps will be moved…”
“Also… The entire holy city is now under a strict curfew. There are even plans to gather all the residents and manage them all together.”

……

“Thomas is really incredibly stupid! If I just throw a random tantrum, he’ll divulge all the sensitive information he knows. Isn’t Sofia amazing?” Sophia raised her head arrogantly with a crafty glint in her eyes.
“Yes, Sophia is the best!” Leylin nodded slightly in praise. He had gained a lot of information about every corner of the holy city from her daily accounts. However, the more she spoke, the more his head began to droop, until his eyes finally shut as he sank into a deep sleep.
Sophia immediately stopped speaking when she noticed this, and her eyes reddened with emotion.
“Let’s go,” Belinda’s voice trembled as she draped a fur coat over Leylin. She then led Sophia away. They were very busy everyday, and their free time was limited. Perhaps it was also because they were unwilling to see Leylin in this state.
However, after they had left, Leylin’s eyes sprang open brightly and animatedly, “So it’s already come to this? It seems like the big decisive battle is approaching soon, it’s about time to start my plans.”
“Meanwhile… I’ll take care of a few little rats,” Leylin’s eyes slanted to the side, as if he could see through the wall to watch another place far away.
After that he closed his eyes, and like a tired old man sank into a deep sleep.
*Clatter!* A valuable crystal bottle fell to the ground, shattering into fragments.

“At a time like this, as a noble of the Stewart Family, even I have an obligation to fight on the battlefield, and yet he stays there doing nothing. I have no idea what sister is thinking!” Thomas huffed. The armour he wore was covered with bloodstains.

“Young Master Thomas, our Stewart family has been part of the garrison over generations in the holy city. Protecting the holy city has always been our duty! As for that man, he is just a free resident…” The white-haired middle-aged butler advised. He had completely lost one eye, and there was only a deep hole left there.

“Furthermore, my Lady seems to have discovered that he he is hiding some trump card and ordered us not to offend him. I believe that with the Madam’s foresight, she won’t be wrong!”

“But… I can’t take it! And then there’s those two bitches… It’s not just Sophia but even Belinda goes over to visit him so regularly. What do they take the Stewart Family for?” Thomas yelled, and the butler could only sigh.

They were clearly free residents, and Belinda had even taken the initiative to help out with the guarding of the holy city. She was merely taking some time to visit her friend, and there was no reason to get mad over that. Of course, this good-for-nothing young master wouldn’t listen anyway.

“I can’t take it! I can’t take it anymore! Mumbas, find a way to make Nick disappear forever! It should be easy since it’s wartime!” Thomas’ expression turned dark, bloodlust evident in his eyes.

“Yes, honourable young master! Your will is our command! However, the second elder is now preparing to lead the counterattack of the disciplinary corps. Please be patient…” The old butler bowed a full ninety degrees.
“I know, I know! This damned situation!” Thomas groaned in annoyance but did not retort further, allowing the old butler to heave a sigh of relief. What he did not realise was that the bloodlust in the depth of Thomas’ eyes did not fade. It instead grew more forceful…

Night had fallen. Aegnis was wearing her crystal armour as she stood on the walls of the holy city. Her line of sight extended past the triumphal arch, fixed on the dense army of gluttonous beasts outside.

They had already been contaminated by the law of gluttony, and it was difficult to make out what their original bodies looked like. The only similarities they shared were their terrifying and powerful energy undulations, as well as their desire for food. Aegnis shivered in fear at this sight.

Days were short in the Purgatory World, which was why many beasts were more active at night. These gluttonous beasts rarely rested, and when their physical strength declined they would feed on their own kind that had died in previous sieges, which was why they seemed even more full of vigour than ever. What this meant was that their appearance was even more frightening at night than during the day.

Watching this uproar at the frontlines by the nearby beasts, the experienced Aegnis knew this was a signal for them to attack. She abruptly turned to watch the soldiers on the city walls with her. They were mostly the troops that the Stewart Family were in charge of. Some of them were volunteers, and some were labourers who were forcefully conscripted.

Aegnis took a deep breath, her voice spreading through the frontlines. “Mighty Matriarch! My blood brothers, can we allow those filthy and despicable beasts to set foot in the holy city and pollute the glory of our dignitary, the holy mother?”

“No!” “No!” “No!” The residents in the holy city were now so loyal
that they were ready to die for the Snake Dowager, and they naturally howled loudly in denial.

“Very good. Tear them apart for me, our holy city must be victorious!” Aegnis brandished the nine-tiered whip in her hands that had a snake head, thundering.

“To Victory! “To Victory!” “Long Live Stewart!” “Long Live Stewart!” Many soldiers shouted loudly, the atmosphere heated to the extreme.

Seeing that she had taken care of the soldiers’ morale, Aegnis sighed in relief and retreated from the city gates.

“You did very well, Aegnis!” Belinda walked over in martial attire.

“Is that so? I feel that it’s far from enough though,” Aegnis smiled wryly and draped an arm around Belinda’s shoulders, “How are the second elder and the disciplinary corps?”

“Preparations are complete. We are prepared for battle anytime!” Belinda did not struggle against her and sounded calm, “If all goes well and this operation is a success, we can probably push the battle line close to the Crescent Lake…”

“Hah… if it goes smoothly?” Aegnis chuckled, pressing her lips close to Belinda’s ears, and spoke to her in a low voice, “Belinda, leave! Take Sophia and maybe even Nick. Leave this place; go as far as you can!”

“Why?” Belinda was stunned, Aegnis’ warm breath tickling her ears as they flushed red, “Do you have no faith in the holy city?”

“If my enemy is an army from another dignitary, I wouldn’t be afraid even if they surrounded us, but…” Aegnis shook her head, “You know how the gluttonous beasts work. Belinda, what’s most terrifying isn’t their strength but that they are infectious! 14 of our own family have been infected by the power of gluttony in battle. In order to prevent the infection from spreading, we had no choice but to obliterate them.”

“So that’s what happened!” Belinda’s eyes widened, extremely
shocked.
“If that damned Sovereign King of Gluttony isn’t eliminated, there will never be a victory over those gluttonous beasts. Do you get it now?” Aegnis coquettishly lifted Belinda’s chin.
“Then come with me!” Belinda gritted her teeth. After all, she had treated Belinda and Sophie quite well, and Belinda wasn’t willing to watch her die here.
“Hehe… you can all leave, but I can’t.” Aegnis laughed, though this gave a bad feeling.
“For your family?” Belinda’s expression was complicated.
“Yes. Our Stewart Family has been protecting the holy city generation after generation. As the next in line, how can I leave now?”
Aegnis pushed Belinda while laughing maniacally, “Go! Pursue your freedom!”
“This is giving me an ominous feeling!” Belinda’s eyes reddened, on the verge of tears. So many things had happened recently, and even this strong girl could not really endure it.
‘Mighty Matriarch, please show mercy and save us all!’ Belinda looked towards the statue erected at the heart of the holy city and could not help but kneel piously, making a silent prayer.
The mighty statue watched everything expressionlessly, as if it had seen through everything with a slight smile. It seemed like everything was guided by her hand, but nothing really changed. The wind blew, and Belinda felt a chill come on, a sense of terror rising within her.
Outside the holy city, the great war was on the verge of beginning. Leylin was also caught up in the imminent crisis.

A guard with slanting eyes and a sullen face reported to Thomas: “Young master! Our people in the coastal division have sent news. There isn’t the least bit of information on this Nick, and he seems to have appeared out of thin air. In addition, the other pure-blooded Alabaster Devilsnake clans have been contacted and they couldn’t find this Nick wither, perhaps he is from some remote branch clan…”

“You couldn’t discover his origins? That’s fine, arrest him on the charge of espionage. Set off immediately!” Thomas stroked his chin, with a trace of menace in his eyes. He couldn’t bear it any longer.

As for considering the bigger picture? He chuckled gently. This was not something that young master Thomas would ever consider!

“Yes sir,” the slant-eyed guard immediately accepted his order. If the butler from earlier, Mumbas, was still there, he would perhaps try to dissuade Thomas. However, this guard clearly did not intend to do that and even seemed to add fuel to the fire.

After all, small fry like them only wanted to seize all opportunities to climb up, and as for the overall situation, what about it? It made one want to laugh.

A squad aggressively arrived in front of Leylin’s building, pushing
the door open smoothly.
“Nick, you are being arrested on the crime of espionage!” Thomas raised his head with a carefree smile on his face, as if he had already seen Leylin’s panicked expression.
‘Oh? He’s really restrained himself until now, it looks like Aegnis’ doing.’ Only, it seemed that Leylin’s response had gone beyond Thomas’ expectations. After hearing this, he unexpectedly showed no fear, and only thoughtfully stroked his chin.
“What’s the matter?” An awful sense of foreboding suddenly enveloped Thomas’ heart. He felt faintly regretful, and felt that he had done something extremely foolish.
“Capture him!” The slant-eyed soldier next to Thomas, however, didn’t think too deeply. after seeing how senile Leylin looked, with his life force at its very limits, he immediately issued an order without thinking.
Several soldiers charged forward immediately, and there were even sparks left in the air. The guards of the holy city were naturally all outstanding. The minimum requirement to enter the garrison was rank 3, and even the captain had the power of a rank 4 Magus.
Leylin was half-seated on the couch. Without even budging his fingers, he spat out a single word, “Obliterate.”
The sound of something breaking filled the air, and everything seemed to still as the loud crash of crystals shattering echoed in the room. The guards that had charged ahead earlier along with the slant-eyed soldier had been destroyed by a black gas, and not even their souls remained.
“This strength… and the black destructive gas… You must be the thief who stole away so many holy light crystals, the great thief Daudet!” As the heir to the Stewart family, Thomas possessed at least this much knowledge. His teeth began to chatter in fear.
The great thief Daudet! This was a new rising name in the holy city, and he’d only needed to do one thing to trigger an awfully
dangerous situation. In the strictly guarded holy city, he plainly dared to make his move and pilfered the entire reserve of holy light crystals, and had even killed several of the strongest guards! Daudet’s greatest strength was this black destructive gas! If they weren’t currently in the midst of war, Thomas believed that with these battle accomplishments alone, Daudet’s name could spread to the entire seven continents.

Daudet’s actions were clearly an insult to the Stewart family who guarded the holy city. Even Thomas’ sister Aegnis had vowed to apprehend the thief, but unfortunately there wasn’t even a single clue for her to follow.

Thomas could never have thought that this frightening great thief Daudet was unexpectedly hiding in his own home, and he was actually Nick! The strange difference between Daudet and Nick made Thomas feel a strong sense that none of this was real.

“You’re the great thief Daudet, then why…” Thomas took several steps back with a panicked expression and felt utterly humiliated. He had already realised that when Leylin had so easily tolerated him and conceded the sisters to him, he was actually being used as a shield. When he had been so immensely pleased with himself before, he was actually being played for a fool.

“You really… really dared to treat me like this, I will absolutely get my revenge on you, I swear it!” Of course, on the surface Thomas still had a fearful and humiliated expression on his face. There was a ring laden with a huge red gem on his hand, which was secretly emitting unknown undulations.

“Do you know why I acted so directly today, and didn’t hesitate to expose myself?” Leylin calmly asked. He seemed as if he hadn’t sensed Thomas’ secretive action at all, but was still half-lying on the couch.

“I… I don’t know,” Thomas leaned against the wall, extremely afraid that if he went a few steps further, he would be pursued by
Leylin. In his heart he was wildly roaring to himself, ‘Yes, yes! Just like this, before you catch your prey, you’ll humiliate me a little? Very well, come! Give me a bit more time until my family’s reinforcement arrives and I’ll pay you back a hundred times the humiliation you’ve given me!’

“Perhaps you are thinking that I’m acting like I’ve just caught my prey, and first I’ll humiliate you a little before killing you?” Leylin indifferently said, right at that moment. His voice was teasing and his bright eyes seemed to have completely seen through Thomas’ actions.

“No, how would I dare to think that?” Thomas knew that it would be harder to laugh than to cry. This feeling of being seen through made his heart sink a little.

‘Isn’t it almost time?’ Leylin didn’t bother with Thomas anymore, but looked at the position of the triumphal arc of the holy city. Just as Thomas began to feel suspicious, a violent earthquake began to shake, and Thomas nearly fell.

With a great rumble, a loud sound came from the city gate. With the cries of countless gluttonous beasts and the sound of killing, a violent commotion began to spread within the city.

“Do you know why I didn’t respond to your little secret action earlier?” Leylin stood and ridiculed Thomas, who was anxiously wringing his hands. Thomas’ face paled immediately, as if all the blood had drained from it.

“It was because… The Stewart family, or the entire holy city, will become history after tonight. How could I care about your cry for help?”

“How.. How is that possible? Our holy city is under the protection of the Matriarch!” Thomas’ voice was very hoarse, as if he was a desert traveller about to die from thirst.

With a whistling sound, two black daggers shot out from Thomas’ sleeves like two concealed vipers in a flash, baring their fangs at
Leylin.
Even though Thomas was a playboy, as Aegnis’ fellow clansman and with a pure rank 6 bloodline, even if he hadn’t really practiced he was still in the Morning Star realm.
Thomas’ twin daggers which were pitch-black with a dark lustre, emitted undulations which were not inferior to any high-grade magical equipment.
*Swish! Swish!* In an instant, the daggers were already flying towards Leylin’s eyes, and he could even see Thomas’ malevolent smile behind them.
With a crackling sound, countless sparks appeared, and shortly after a huge force could be felt. Thomas even felt like the daggers had pierced into steel, and could not even move an inch more.
“How is this possible?” Thomas’ expression changed in an instant. It felt like he had been sent flying after being hit head-on with a train. As his chest caved in completely, he threw up a huge amount of blood and fragments of bone.
Thomas fell to the floor like a dead dog, and seemed to have lost most of his fighting strength in that moment. However, his pupils dilated abruptly, as if he had seen something unfathomable.
“The daggers are rather fine, it’s a pity I can’t use them,” Leylin looked at the daggers he had caught in his hands, and sighed.
The powerful magical equipment that Thomas had shot out had been caught by him in both hands, and hadn’t really been able to inflict any damage to him.
Thomas’ astonishment was not because of this, however. He was surprised to find that phantoms of tiny snakes began to appear within the twin daggers, charging towards Leylin’s hands to bite him.
Sizzling sounded, and several wisps of white smoke appeared which caused Leylin to wrinkle his eyebrows and throw the dagger away.
With two puffs, the twin daggers slammed into the ground, and two traces of what looked like burn marks appeared on Leylin’s hands. “My daggers are my family’s treasured heirlooms, and have even received the Matriarch’s blessing! You dared to…!”

“Haha… Ahaha… You’re definitely dead! Through the daggers, the almighty Holy Mother will definitely know about you, you’re definitely going to die! Haha…” Thomas began to laugh wildly.

“What? I’m afraid that she won’t have the time to care about me!” Leylin shook his head.

“What’s happening?” Thomas had also realised something was wrong, especially when the sounds of fighting at the city gate gradually grew weaker, and even began to spread inside the city. The sound of blood-curdling and surprised cries could be heard in response.

“You still don’t know? The city gate has been broken! The gluttonous beasts have murdered their way in, and what the Snake Dowager needs to consider now is how to confront Beelzebub instead,” Leylin looked down arrogantly at Thomas, his eyes filled with pity.

“Since the Stewart family is full of trash like you, no wonder you couldn’t guard the holy city.”

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A little into the past. After she had bid Belinda farewell, Aegnis’ expression grew firm and resolute. “What’s the situation like now?” she asked once she’d reached the city wall.

“The preparations are complete, the disciplinary corps have been dispatched. Judging from the beasts’ response, our chances of success are very high,” a secretary-like snake man reported to her.
The disciplinary corps was the most elite squadron in the entire holy city. Every snakeman there was a blood descendant of the Stewart family, and possessed strength at least at Morning Star. The leader of the disciplinary corps was the Stewart family’s esteemed second elder, who had no faults as a commander. If these troops were appropriately deployed, they could indeed reclaim the perilous situation they faced, and would at least bring the battlefront to the same level. However, Aegnis felt a fluttering feeling lingering in her chest. “What’s happening?” She climbed onto the tower and immediately saw the disciplinary corps. Compared to the last few times she had seen them, the disciplinary guards had an even more tyrannical aura around them, and Aegnis could not help but breathe a sigh of relief. “The preparations for the guardian technique have been completed!” “Activate the technique, and initiate activation of the holy city protection matrix!” “Rank 2 Alchemy Cannon is ready, and can fire at any time!” Commands were continuously issued, and a spell formation that permitted free movement into the holy city was engraved onto the disciplinary corps’ armour. “Attack!” At the heart of the guards’ square formation, where a
large golden flag waved in the wind, a gentle but firm voice rang out.
“Disciplinary corps, move out!” Standing at the very front was a white-haired elder shouting, an explosive aura at rank 6 undulating from him.
‘No, this is wrong!’ Aegnis finally realised that something wasn’t right. All of a sudden, her eyes widened and even her voice became shrill, “Second uncle’s aura, how could he have suddenly grown so strong? Even if he used forbidden magic it wouldn’t be possible, unless…”
Aegnis suddenly roared out, “Be careful!”
However, it was too late.
“Disciplinary force, with me!” The numerous soldiers of the disciplinary corps roared. Their bodies secretly swelled, and ghastly demonic energy erupted from them in an instant.
With a loud rumble, many spells were fired out, and the power of the guards were concentrated into one force, merging together in the second elder’s hands.
“Thunder of discipline!” The second elder cried in a frenzy, and a massively destructive attack landed straight on the city gate. Several deafening crashes could be heard, and black lightning swept across the area with a blazing radiance.
The guards on the city gate were vaporised in an instant, burnt to ashes. Then, they were obliterated right down to the atomic level. Soon after, the holy city’s entrance was also destroyed by the spell, and many protective runes began to fall apart completely.
“No, not this!” Aegnis held her head as tears began to subconsciously flow from her eyes.
The holy city’s defensive techniques were extremely powerful, with even laws being inscribed in the arrays. Even the disciplinary corps would have found it difficult to take it down in one strike; it was the method they were most confident in for obstructing the
gluttonous beasts. Now, however, the disciplinary corps had the defensive array’s approval, and it was destroyed from within. Immediately, the holy city had lost its greatest defense. It wasn’t just that. The ones who had suffered the most under the earlier attack were the elites of the Stewart Family, Aegnis’ clansmen! Even her father, the patriarch of the Stewart family, was there.

“In the name of gluttony, kill!” The traitorous second elder began to laugh wildly. His body exploded into a gruesome three-headed python, with deeply twisted blood vessels rooted in its irregular scales. It looked inconceivably horrifying. Afterwards, the turncoat disciplinary corps immediately began to attack the stunned allies around them. Blood-curdling screeches could immediately be heard as the carnage began.

“Why? Why?” Aegnis rushed in front of her uncle. She was lucky that the area she was responsible for wasn’t the most important section, and it had suffered fewer losses. However, the most important defensive array had now been destroyed. The battle now had lost all its meaning and suspense.

“Why, second elder? Why did you betray our guardian family’s honor?” Aegnis’ eyes were full of tears, and she was still in disbelief.

“Why?” The three headed python’s slit eyes were full of ridicule and madness.

“The guardian family?” he chuckled, “Do you rejoice in being the Matriarch’s guard dog? With our bloodline shackles and chains, unable for all eternity to break through our roles as gatekeepers… I have had enough!” The three-headed python hissed menacingly, and the snakemen who couldn’t escape in time were swallowed up. Its blood vessels incessantly circulated blood-red energy throughout its body,
making the python grow even more demonic and enormous. It even appeared to reach the peak of rank 6, sprinting towards rank 7.

“This is true power, how amazing!” The three-headed python had an intoxicated expression in its slit eyes.

“Gluttony, the power of gluttony! So you’ve been contaminated by the Sovereign King of Gluttony?” Aegnis felt slightly relieved. If her uncle was being manipulated, then it would make her feel a little better.

“Contaminated? No, I asked for this! This is the only way I could become strong. And it wasn’t just me, every single guard of the disciplinary corps chose this.” As the second elder spoke, the disciplinary corps’ guards all laughed wildly and transformed into giant serpents. They too had grotesque appearances, and had clearly been contaminated by the power of gluttony.

“Aegnis, retreat! He has gone completely mad!” With a giant crash, the ruins of the city gate exploded, and the figure of an elegant three-headed python emerged. The scales on its body had begun to come loose, and it had severe injuries.

“Father!” Aegnis cried in surprise.

“Teehee! My beloved brother! You haven’t died yet?” The second elder laughed.

“Demon who actively sought the power of gluttony, you are no longer a clansman of our family. I want to correct our family’s mistake!” The three-headed python charged immediately at the second elder.

At the same time, a tremendous force flung Aegnis far away and called to her, “Leave immediately!”

“Teehee! Elder brother, now I will prove that I have always been better than you, and better-suited to lead our family!” The three-headed python that had been transformed by gluttony aggressively tangled with the patriarch.
The rank 6 beast’s bloody crushing ability had instantly created a blank space and isolated area. Whether it was guard or gluttonous beast, all who approached it were shocked to death. Deafening roars filled the air as many gluttonous beasts immediately poured through the gap into the holy city. The surviving guards entered bloody close-quarters combat. Aegnis’ face was filled with tears, and in the end she could only faintly see the tremendous smoke that filled the air as her father’s powerless body fell, accompanied by the second elder’s mad laughter.

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The sounds of explosions filled the air. As gluttonous beasts devastated the holy city, the giant statue of the Snake Dowager at the center began to emit dazzling light, as if she had heard the innermost prayers of her citizens. In this layer of light, the entire holy city seemed to experience an enormous earthquake and many deep cracks began to appear in the ground. Many buildings in the holy city began to twist and collapse with loud crashes, as if the heavens were torn and the earth had been split asunder. The giant statue of the Snake Dowager began to sink down without stopping. Finally, an immensely deep hole appeared in the ground.

“The power of gluttony, and the concealing power of chaos! Beelzebub, have you joined hands with the Nefarious Filthbird?” A coiled ball of snakes floated up from the depths of the hole like a star. Many giant snake heads uncoiled, exposing the Snake Dowager’s puzzled face.

Overwhelmingly powerful undulations spread out at rank 8, and the entire holy city grew quiet in an instant. Many gluttonous beasts
were engulfed by the shadow and burnt to ashes.  
At the holy city’s most critical moment, the Snake Dowager finally appeared!  
“The Matriarch!” “Almighty dignitary!” “Invincible ancestor!”  
The surviving inhabitants of the holy city immediately knelt down, and tears of joy began to overflow from their eyes. The one who had just appeared wasn’t a phantom image or a clone from sacrifices; it was the real body of the Snake Dowager!  
Every scale on the Matriarch’s body had the most realistic feeling of true flesh, and even exhibited the aura of laws. Just the aura that emanated from her body gave innumerable benefits to her descendants.  
“Dowager! It was you who first violated our agreement, and began to meddle with my affairs!” Accompanied by wild laughter, a demonic python emerged from the gluttonous beast army outside the holy city.  
No, calling it a giant python would be inaccurate, as it had only the body of a python. However, it had grown a pair of extraordinary demonic wings, and its purplish-brown muscled arms had sharp talons at the end of its legs. It had many compound eyes just like an insect.  
It looked as if Beelzebub had fused his soul with a mixed-breed snakeman’s body, whose power had reached the limit. It could even meet the Snake Dowager as an equal.  
After seeing Beelzebub’s form, the Snake Dowager’s eyes flashed with amazement.  
“Haha! This body’s raw material appears to be your descendents, but my gluttonous power has made it even more perfect than before. That’s all thanks to a gift from a certain little fellow,” Beelzebub split open his huge mouth, a purple-black barbed tongue licking his sharp white teeth and said, “In return, I’ll swallow him up later and let him forever be part of the almighty Beelzebub…”
The impulsive power of gluttony and the omnipresent power of shadows began their confrontation with the holy city’s walls as its boundary. In a moment, many guards and gluttonous beasts turned into ashes.

For two rank 8 existences to cross swords, it could be said that this bout decided the Purgatory World’s future to an extent. Many powerful conscients descended here, and the faint chirps of the Nefarious Bird and traces of the Trial’s Eye’s power appeared.

“That crafty little fellow, I didn’t think that he would bring me this much trouble!” The Snake Dowager’s eyes became a little dispirited, and she looked directly into an area within the holy city.
“Since the people involved have arrived, it’s about time for me to make my appearance!” Leylin watched the enormous sphere of snakes rise up, and as he saw the terrifying figure of Beelzebub flapping its large fleshy wings, he suddenly laughed.

Thomas, who was still on the ground, had already been scared out of his wits. The second elder and the disciplinary corps had rebelled! The holy city was under attack! The true bodies of the Snake Dowager and the Sovereign King of Gluttony had emerged! Every single one of these events were terrifying changes for him. And when they had all happened at once, Thomas was simply at a loss as to what to do.

“Oh! Aren’t you responsible for public security in this area during wartime? I’m sorry to trouble you, this place will only descend further into chaos from now.” Leylin apologized to Thomas like a gentleman, yet this messed with Thomas’ mind even more.

“Greater chaos? What do you mean?” But Thomas didn’t have time to think. An enormous beam of grey light suddenly shot out from the walls and the floor of the loft, heading straight towards the sky. This was the last scene that Thomas witnessed. Soon after, he was melted by the horrifying energy, left without even a corpse.

“We meet again, Snake Dowager, and the Sovereign King of Gluttony!” A smile was plastered on Leylin’s face as he saluted them smoothly, just like someone greeting good friends whom he
had not met in a long time. Compared to the tremendous figures of the Snake Dowager and Beelzebub, the pillar of light beside them was like a thin thread. Leylin, who was within the light beam, was even tinier than an ant. Yet it was this insignificant being who had attracted the attention of both the Snake Dowager and Beelzebub! Any average rank 4 Morning Star Magus would have melted straightaway under the powerful and malicious gaze of the two rank 8 beings. Even Leylin had a similarly strong reaction.

“Keke…” He suddenly coughed out a large amount of blood. Blood even started to overflow directly from the tips of his fingers.

“Emperor of the Kemoyin Serpents! You little fellow, I’ll admit that you have succeeded in infuriating me!” The Snake Dowager’s voice was very calm, but an enormous shadow of a serpent’s head had already spread its jaws wide open, as if it was about to completely devour Leylin whole in one bite.

“Beautiful lady! Please wait, he belongs to me!”

A large, invisible mouth seemed to appear in thin air, biting down and breaking the shadow of the serpent head. Beelzebub flapped its dreadful wings, his numerous compound eyes all fixated on Leylin, “Thank you for letting me discover this world! But what a pity, Magus! An ordinary mortal like you cannot pry into the power of laws. Are you thinking of sowing discord between this lady and I, and benefit by being a third party? Such a strategy is destined to fail. With your mortal intelligence, how could you think of becoming a god?”

“According to the agreement between Mister Nefarious Filthbird and I, this Magus belongs to me!” Beelzebub proclaimed while facing the Snake Dowager, as though he was declaring his sovereignty.

“Indeed, you and Nefarious Filthbird are in cahoots, and you have shielded yourself with the support of his chaos power… Cough…”
Numerous grey lights shot out from Leylin, weakening him further. At this point, the chaos power from the Nefarious Filthbird that had previously been accepted began to rebel. It was as if it was going to imprison Leylin and send him as a present to Beelzebub.

“Heh heh… what a pity…” Leylin appeared even more fragile, as though he would die in the next moment. However, a stream of laughter came from his lowered head.

“What’s a pity?” Beelzebub clearly wanted to continue teasing its prey.

“Hehe… It’s such a pity that I’ve never once thought of depending on either you! And I didn’t place my hopes on the fact that you would fight each other! I set up all of this just so that both of your true forms would be attracted here!”

Leylin laughed maniacally, his gaze filled with intent, “You are all my prey!”

“What… this premonition… A new fork has appeared in our path of destiny, a variable has appeared! No matter what, stop him at all costs!” The sweet smile that had always been on the Snake Dowager’s face suddenly changed.

“Heh heh! It’s too late!” Leylin laughed wildly. Numerous sacrificial ritual runes emerged from his body.

“Initiate established program!” He suddenly commanded.

[Beep! Program #1 has been activated, initialising forceful expulsion of chaos power.] The robotic voice of the A.I. Chip sounded.

When he had made his first sacrifice to the Nefarious Filthbird a long time ago, Leylin was already on guard against it. Afterwards, he had even ordered the A.I. Chip to monitor it at all times. During the few times he’d been baptised by chaos power, he hadn’t directly come into contact with it, only using it as a raw material. He had been saving it all just for this moment!

“Oh!” Leylin’s face instantaneously flushed red. A grey layer of
filth suddenly emerged from the hair follicles beneath his skin. Even the chaos power that had dug its way into his cells had been forcefully removed. In just a moment, he was clean.

*Bang!* A sacrificial spell formation emerged. The rune of the Nefarious Filthbird in the centre suddenly shattered, and an enraged cry of a bird could be heard.

“I offer the power of the Nefarious Filthbird as sacrifice! Mighty Purgatory Will, please descend!” Leylin’s gaze was incomparably fervent, yet it was also filled with his extremely calm judgment. These completely contradictory emotions made his eyes look highly demonic.

*Buzz!* An incomparably vast sacrificial spell formation with complex patterns began to surface, with the room that Leylin previously resided in set as its centre. This particular sacrificial spell formation was much bigger than those for the previous few dignitaries. The one receiving the sacrifice in the center was, impressively, a rune representing the Purgatory World’s World Will!

*Whoosh!* In a flash, the entire Purgatory World seemed to have come to life. A mighty conscient, which was like the projection of the whole Purgatory World, suddenly turned its attention to them. As the violent winds howled, an enormous funnel cloud appeared in the sky, taking on a chaotic formless mass. A grey radiance instantly descended from the heart of the chaotic mass, and collided with the Snake Dowager’s attack. Although it turned darker, it still protected Leylin from harm.

In the Purgatory World, Sacrificers who practised the ways of sacrificial rituals only cast their sights on the seven dignitaries, yet forgot that there was one more alternative. While this being was exceptionally disordered, and often neglected, no one could deny that it was the origin of the entire Purgatory World!

“Heh heh… So this is what you’re counting on, Magus? A chaotic
Beelzebub laughed maniacally, “Judging by the strength of such a defense, it can’t even resist any being of laws…”

“Indeed! The Purgatory World’s will is extraordinarily chaotic, and it doesn’t even possess the slightest ability to respond. Even if I use a portion of the Nefarious Filthbird’s energy to attract its attention, the protective powers that are cast on me will not be able to protect me, much less defeat all of you…” Leylin’s voice was gentle, almost serene. However, the Snake Dowager and Beelzebub didn’t seem to think of it as a good sign.

“However… What if it awakened?” A green glimmer of light gently rose from the light beam. It was the Seed of Wisdom that Leylin had been cultivating before!

A splendid green brilliance rippled from above the little dewy green tree. Even those gluttonous beasts who had lost all semblance of intelligence seemed to have an expression of intense desire for this tree.

“Is this… the ancient Wisdom Tree? Don’t tell me that he’s thinking of…? Stop him, quick!”

A humongous grey bird spread open its wings. Its voice was full of anxiety, as though it had flown over from an endlessly chaotic place.

“Almighty Purgatory will! I offer the Wisdom Tree to you as a sacrifice! Awaken!” Leylin’s eyes were glistening with resolution, and his hands moved strangely quick. Following his sacrificial song, the little green tree transformed into a ray of green light, becoming one with the chaotic sky.

*Whoosh! Whoosh!* A wild beast seemed to be hiding within the grey chaotic mass. The intensity of its undulations increased exponentially, and the area was slowly filled with a green radiance.

“Almighty Purgatory will! You are the master of the Purgatory World! The original power of the Purgatory World itself! You are
the epitome of all that exists! Please open your eyes and take a good look at these thieves! They wilfully plundered your strength and polluted your world, causing the entire Purgatory World to continuously sink into ruin... I, Leylin Farlier, a lowly Magus, sincerely beseech for your strength to get rid of these filthy beings, and return the Purgatory World to how it used to be!”

With Leylin’s prayer, the numerous undulations from the chaotic mass stopped, revealing a pair of cyan pupils. Shortly after, the entire world seemed to have come to a standstill. The gluttonous beasts and the snakemen not far away had all been rendered immobile.

The gigantic cyan pupils represented the world’s will, and its gaze was fixated on the Snake Dowager, Beelzebub and the others who were still mobile.

Rage! Rage! Rage! The entire world seemed to have come to life, and was venting its anger, making the hearts of the Snake Dowager and other formidable beings palpitate.

“The world’s will has awakened!” The Snake Dowager’s face was deathly pale, as though she had seen the most frightening thing ever.

A hole ripped open in the sky. An unending stream of the original power of the world gushed forth and surged violently, much like the turbulent flow of a river. This amplified Leylin’s growth rate, even making him feel as if he was the world itself.

*Whoosh!* In a flash, Leylin’s figure sharply grew and he became a giant who was able to support both heaven and earth. The previously enormous holy city now looked like a miniature model to him.

“Success! Power that exceeds rank 6! Now I’m at least a rank 7 Sacrificer!” Large quantities of chaotic cyan runes appeared on Leylin’s body. When he clenched his fist suddenly, even the very air seemed to shudder.
“This… is what I truly relied on!” The joy of having his plan succeed almost made Leylin shriek wildly into the sky. From the beginning, his trump card and all that he was relying on was the Purgatory Will.

In order to break through the bloodline shackles, Leylin required a bloodline origin and the power to surpass it, both of which which he didn’t have. When he had still been bound by the Allsnake Curse, searching for enough strength to defeat the Snake Dowager was practically only a fantasy.

But through the Purgatory World’s path of sacrifices, Leylin discovered a glimmer of hope! The path of sacrifices was originally used to pray for the strength of highly ranked beings, and was a method that would allow the weak to defeat the strong. The passing down of the sacrificial strength system inspired an even more fearless idea in Leylin.

Instead of offering sacrifices to a few dignitaries, why not offer sacrifices to the entire Purgatory World’s World Will? After all, the World Will, which was just like a programmed intelligent being, was much more trustworthy as compared to the temperamental dignitaries.

And speaking of offerings, what else would be more suitable than the roots of the ancient Wisdom Tree that could bring about enlightenment?
The Purgatory World was a bizarre world. It was extremely vast, second only to the few strongest worlds such as the Magus World, World of Gods and Dreamscape. The world had originally been full of power.

Yet what was strange was that the Purgatory World Will had always been rather muddled. It was as though it was in deep sleep, or perhaps it was just foolish, allowing many formidable beings from other worlds to invade it, turning it into a paradise for a great many foreign beings.

However, the ancient Purgatory World was not like this. It also had its own powerful conscient!

Every world had its respective World Will, which would abide by its instinctive need to safeguard its own interests. After receiving such information from the Wisdom Tree, Leylin instantly saw hope in defeating the Snake Dowager and obtaining the bloodline origin!

Since the Purgatory Will was currently dormant or perhaps muddled, then Leylin would rouse it from its sleep! Judging by the Wisdom Tree’s powerful ability to bestow intelligence and wisdom, this would be a simple task. It went without saying as to how the World Will would treat the Snake Dowager and the rest after it was awakened.

To visualize it, the Purgatory World Will was like a swarthy man guarding his house. While he was asleep, a gang of bandits had broken into his house and were acting like tyrants to his people.
What would he do to them once he woke up?
Furthermore, the Purgatory World was an exceptionally strong world, unlike the small worlds where rank 8 beings could not fit in. It was at least of the same rank as the Icy World, which had been enough to suppress beings such as the Snake Dowager and many others, causing their invasions to fail.
Now, the Purgatory World was awake and clear-headed. Sure enough, upon seeing these thieves wilfully stealing the origin power on its turf, it immediately boiled over with fury.
Since Leylin had taken the initiative to offer sacrifices in order to awaken it, it went without saying that he would receive credit. Additionally, he had requested to banish these robbers, and it was reasonable that the World Will would hold him in high regard. It was so much so that upon obtaining additional support from the World Will, Leylin could now be praised as the son of the world!
Everything he had done was to carry out punishments in the name of the heavens!
“It’s the Purgatory World Will! It’s awake!”
“Hasn’t it always been muddled? Why did it come to its senses all of a sudden?”
“I sense a hint of wisdom. It’s because of the assistance of the ancient Wisdom Tree!”
When the pair of eyes opened to reveal its the cyan pupils, a terrifying and oppressive force instantly descended on the entire world. These beings of laws could now sense it even more strongly. This was a suppressive force that originated from within the world. No matter in which corner one hid in in the Purgatory World, they would be unable to escape. This exemplified the horrifying amount of authority that the Purgatory Will possessed!
The suppressive force from inside this formidable world could even make foreign beings such as the Snake Dowager and the Nefarious Filthbird fall, and it could be said that there was nothing
more terrifying than this!
A few other conscients kept their distance, and were filled with restraining fear. Even if they were rank 8 beings, the gains of starting a war against the World Will definitely would not make up for their losses.
This was especially since this was the Purgatory World, which was the homeground of the Purgatory Will. The moment someone got its attention, he would be left in a miserable state.
The winds howled. Numerous powerful conscients and spies from the deep sea immediately disappeared without a trace, cowering in fear.
*Chirp chirp!* The Nefarious Filthbird, which seemed to have flown out of nowhere, hastily made an elegant turn upon seeing the situation, trying to escape.
“Get lost!” Leylin raised his hand as though he was about to swat a housefly. Each and every move that he made seemed to bear the strength of the entire world, making the Nefarious Filthbird fly far away in the opposite direction as it wailed. Numerous grey feathers floated to the ground.
‘Even though the strength is only temporarily borrowed, it’s relatively horrifying!’ Leylin could sense that every single cell in his body was filled with the tremendous energy. Furthermore, as compared to the other dignitaries who only allowed rank 6 Sacrificers at best, the Purgatory Will was clearly much more generous. The energy that Leylin had temporarily drawn support from had been amplified to the realm of a rank 7 Sacrificer. Even though it could not last for long, and had to be returned afterwards, at least it gave him enough external strength for the time being for him to be on par with the other contenders.
“The fellow who has been such a hindrance has left. Seal!” Leylin spread open his arms and cast vast amounts of cyan chaos chains on the Purgatory World. It seemed that this region had been
sealed shut, and a horrifying amount of lightning was attached directly to the chains.  
This was an enclosure formed by the chaos chains and lightning laws. Beelzebub and the Snake Dowager were about to make a run for it, but their expressions turned gloomy.  
With the aid of the A.I. Chip, as well his Full Moon truesoul, Leylin had a detailed estimate of his own strength. ‘Three times! With the assistance of the world origin force, I’m left with three times at most to exhibit this peak of power!’ he thought to himself.  
He knew inwardly that rank 8 beings had the power to contend with the suppression of the World Will. After all, it too was an intelligent being, and its support for Leylin couldn’t possibly be inexhaustible. Even if Leylin was willing to work under it and defeat the others on its behalf, the World Will might be reluctant to expend so much energy.  
If they declared war against so many rank 8 beings at once, they would be devastated even if they emerged victorious in the end. The entire Purgatory World could even crumble under the attack.  
However, with Leylin’s current rank as a Sacrificer, it would still help him get rid of these few if Leylin cashed in all his contributions.  
‘The sacrifice of the Wisdom Tree contributed to the World Will regaining its clear-headedness once more. With all of that, I only received these few chances to take action?’ Leylin was very clear about this sentiment.  
‘As expected, rank 8 beings are extremely powerful indeed. But three chances will be enough!’ Currently, the Snake Dowager and Beelzebub were both suppressed by the World Will in this region that had been sealed shut. They had fallen by a rank, and were now about rank 7 or so.  
On the other hand, Leylin had been amplified to rank 7, and even exceeded that slightly. The tables had turned instantly!
“Kemoyin Emperor, my descendant! Although you have the support of the World Will, you will not be able to deal with us! I can lift your curse, and even help you become the new progenitor of the Allsnakes. All I want is for you to vow your allegiance to me!”

As they both shared a common enemy, Beelzebub and the Snake Dowager had gotten a little closer. The Snake Dowager had also given a suggestion to bring about peace.

“Haha… Before I possessed such power, I wasn’t even eligible to talk to you. And now you’re actually appealing for peace? What’s the use of such a weak alliance?” Leylin laughed maniacally. The original power of the Purgatory World wouldn’t be entwined with him forever. Once this sacrificial ritual was over, he would still be that tiny rank 5 Warlock from before. Then, would he still entrust the security of his life to the Snake Dowager’s benevolence?

“All living things in the world will collapse eventually. Only strength is eternal!” It was now that Leylin had gained a profound understanding of how the law of the jungle worked. If he didn’t want to be assaulted and sacrificed, the only thing he could do was to make himself powerful. Everything else was bullshit!

“First strike!” After laughing to his heart’s content, Leylin brazenly made his move. The entire Purgatory World seemed to boil. An abundance of the origin power of this world tethered to his hand, giving him the illusion that he could destroy the world.

“Allsnake Devour!” The Snake Dowager bit her lip. The demonic energy even made the entire world slow down. Numerous giant snake shadows suddenly appeared and attempted to bite off Leylin’s hands.

*Crash! Crash!* Terrifying lightning shot out from Leylin’s hand, annihilating the many shadows into ash and smoke. Leylin’s giant-like figure, stretching from the earth to the heavens, instantly came in front of the starlike sphere of snakes.
“Sever the Kemoyin bloodline!”
An attack that transcended time and space made the Snake Dowager’s face turn lifeless in an instant. Soon after, out of the many giant snakes that had extended under her body, the head of a Kemoyin snake with vertical slit-like amber pupils suddenly broke apart.
*Hss* The many snake heads started to tremble at once, and anguish was apparent even on the Snake Dowager’s face. This was an injury suffered by her real body, something which even damaged her bloodline origin.
The head of the enormous Kemoyin serpent tumbled in mid-air, and continuously dissolved to form a large ball of purplish-red blood with hints of cyan.
“The bloodline origin!” Leylin’s eyes lit up. He could feel the longing in every single cell of his body. He suddenly went forth and swallowed the large amount of blood.
[Beep! Host body has consumed the origin blood from the Snake Dowager. Gene strands have been broken apart and recombined, recalculating data.]
In practically an instant, the genes of the Kemoyin Emperor broke apart from their limit. His bloodline accepted the fenes from the great amounts of origin blood. Under the A.I. Chip’s command, these recombined genes did not follow the conventional path of the Snake Dowager. The instead underwent greater evolutions under Leylin’s command.
These changes eventually extended to his soul. The barbed iron chain on Leylin’s forehead cracked apart instantly. The head of an enormous black giant serpent suddenly emerged from within, hissing excitedly behind Leylin as its body seemed to undergo even greater changes.
[Beep! Allsnake Curse has been lifted!] The sensation of removing the chains in one move made Leylin feel entirely free from worry.
“Beelzebub! Do you know why I released the Trial’s Eye and the Nefarious Filthbird, but insisted on keeping you behind?” Lightning flashed violently. The origin power of the world encircled Leylin from head to toe as he came in front of Beelzebub. In comparison to the gigantic Leylin, the devilish body of Beelzebub was as insignificant as a rag doll.

Without waiting for Beelzebub to answer, Leylin continued, “Because I have my eye on the laws you hold! Your laws of gluttony are just too compatible with my own innate skills. I can’t help but wish to take action. Thus, I specially summoned you to come to the Purgatory World for this purpose. And I even gifted you a clone!”

“A clone? This Black Horrall Snake?!” Beelzebub kept retreating, and fear was apparent in its numerous compound eyes. To him, Leylin was the real devil.

“No! Impossible. I definitely inspected it very carefully!”

“I didn’t rig your clone, because to me, as long as its original form is a Black Horrall Snake, it would be sufficient!”

Leylin’s pupils were burning with fervor. He spread open his arms and ferociously grabbed Beelzebub’s devil wings.

“Second strike!”
Our Wings of Gluttony will belong to me!” Along with Leylin’s announcement and Beelzebub’s miserable cries, the monstrously dark wings were forcefully torn off, splattering blood everywhere.

*Hss* The phantom Kemoyin Emperor behind Leylin opened its mouth wide, and it seemed like there was a black hole at its depths. It immediately devoured the entirety of the devil’s fleshy wings.

*Pila! Pila!* Two lumps of flesh surfaced on the snake’s back. It then spread out a tremendous pair of fleshy wings that looked similar to Beelzebub’s own.

“The law of gluttony…” Leylin sounded rather bewitched by them, “Combined with my own abilities, what kind of result will there be?”

The terrifying black hole wreaked complete havoc, devouring Beelzebub’s entire body. In front of the Kemoyin Emperor’s innate skill of control, the devil’s mortal body which had been created with the Black Horrall Snake as its source material was suppressed to a huge degree. Beelzebub’s body gradually disappeared as the Kemoyin Emperor devoured it.

The Kemoyin Emperor easily digested the power of gluttony that came from the source body of the Black Horrall Snake. A comprehension of the power of gluttony combined with Beelzebub’s memories as it surfaced in Leylin’s sea of consciousness, surging towards Leylin’s truesoul barriers like a
raging tide.
“Keke… I am the true master of the law of gluttony, its contamination isn’t something the likes of you can resolve. Thank you very much, this body is great!” A barely visible shadow appeared above the Kemoyin Emperor, and Beelzebub’s voice sounded from within the blazing demonic flames.
Under his influence, the Kemoyin Emperor quickly digested that large bundle of energy. Even as it evolved, Leylin’s own will was being eroded.
Beelzebub had completely comprehended the law of gluttony, and to steal this power Leylin would first have to face the retaliation of his conscience. It released a large amount of power that mixed with the laws of gluttony as they approached Leylin. “Gluttony’s corruption!”
Seeing that demonic palm, Leylin maintained an icy expression. He didn’t look to be in pain, only releasing a powerful green lightning containing the power of the world origin force in his body. His cold voice sounded, “Strike three!”
*Crackle!* “NOOOOO!” Leylin’s gigantic body immediately disintegrated, and an unwilling bellow rang out. Under the suppression of the Purgatory World’s will, Beelzebub’s conscience melted away like snow in the sun, leaving behind only the purest energy and comprehension of laws.
[Beep! Genetic recombination complete!] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, and the Kemoyin Emperor behind Leylin behan to transform once again.
Two sharp claws stretched out, and the horn on its forehead protruded even further. The devilish wings became increasingly mystical, and black rhombus-shaped scales covered its body, emitting a mysterious luster.
“A new bloodline? No!” The Snake Dowager who watched this scene from afar could no longer keep her calm. Even though she
was afraid of the protection of the World Will, she still attacked. “Allsnake Shadow!” The murky Shadow World almost appeared to have been summoned by the Snake Dowager, attacking the Purgatory World.

Leylin did not counterattack. Instead, he spoke a few words, “I am Leylin Farlier, lord of all Kemoyin. As of this moment, all of the Kemoyin bloodline shall leave the control of the Snake Dowager!” Leylin’s eyes held traces of turmoil within them as he made this solemn announcement. His voice practically rang throughout the world; as long as it was a descendant of the Giant Kemoyin Serpent bloodline they heard his voice and couldn’t help but kneel respectfully in subservience.

*Hss* The giant snake behind Leylin completed the core of its transformation. No longer feeling the suppression of the Snake Dowager, it snarled at her.

“Ugh!” The pain on her expression was even clearer than before. Power from another plane seemed to be surging into Leylin’s body.

“I shall destroy your godly status,” he murmured, and with a vicious bite from the giant serpent behind him the sound of glass shattering could be heard. A huge gap had formed in the network of blood vessels on the Snake Dowager’s back. The excruciating pain caused the enormous serpents in the sphere of snakes to groan piteously below the Snake Dowager, and the faint image of the Shadow World promptly crumbled.

Losing a part of her bloodline force caused great damage to the Dowager’s authority. It was enough to grievously injure her, and force her into a deep sleep.

“Leylin… Leylin!” The Snake Dowager snarled, no longer daring to stay here. The gigantic sphere of snakes rammed against the shackles of chaos.

Even more giant serpents were continuously struck by the lightning. However, they opened up a gap in the World Will’s
restrictions that allowed the Snake Dowager to escape. She had the feeling that if she’d stayed here longer she would’ve died.
‘She escaped? Makes sense, she doesn’t know I’m limited to just three uses of this power. Furthermore, with my control of the bloodline and devouring power, as well as the attention of the World Will, she’d be in trouble if she stayed any longer.’ Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he did not chase after her. He currently had more more pressing matters at hand to attend to.
[Beep! Optimisation of host’s bloodline is completed. Law of gluttony and Allsnake origin blood have been added, currently at rank 6. Please rename the bloodline.] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.
“Targaryen. Call it the Targaryen bloodline!” Leylin decided on a new name.
[Beep! Recorded. Bloodline evolution has been completed. Targaryen has been saved to the database, currently at rank 6.] As it sounded out, the A.I. Chip formed images of Leylin’s new bloodline patterns, naming them Targaryen. A circle of blood-red energy enveloped Leylin’s body.
The bloodline force of the Kemoyin Emperor had been changed to an entirely new bloodline. This change even extended to Leylin’s truesoul. It was like glass shattering as a bottle exploded; the feeling of breaking through a bottleneck of the soul caused Leylin to tremble involuntarily.
The new bloodline force surged violently, and with irresistible power the golden line in Leylin’s Full Moon truesoul expanded to envelop the entire thing. It was like a flame had been ignited.
[Beep! Host has broken through bloodline shackles. The positive energy of the truesoul is beginning to advance to rank 6] the A.I. Chip transmitted.
For a Magus to advance from rank 5 to rank 6, the most important point was to completely convert negative soulforce to positive soul
Leylin’s truesoul had already shown signs of the transformation, but due to the bloodline shackles the full process had been interrupted. Now, without the shackles, the process could be completed. [1 Negative and positive soul force are yin soul force and yang soul force. Just didn’t use those names because most of the novel has stuck to a western theme so far and actual Chinese concepts weren’t prevalent before.]
The bloodline shackles had been like an enormous mountain weighing down on Leylin, putting him under a lot of pressure. With them gone, the power he had amassed allowed him to soar. His truesoul rumbled in that instant, the moon set ablaze as it turned into a blazing golden sun. It grew severalfold in volume, emitting powerful and concentrated energy.
With the strength he possessed, Leylin’s success in breaking through to rank 6 was a given. Yet, that was not all. The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded once more. [Beep! Host has reached rank 6. Huge changes have been made to body’s condition. Recalculating…]
It then intoned loyally once more, [Beep! Host’s rank 5 innate skill Devour has been affected by law of gluttony. Devour has reached rank 6, now able to digest any energy, even that powered by opponents’ laws.]
‘Devour has been upgraded to rank 6 from rank 5… So I can devour laws from now?’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled, ‘Great! This innate bloodline ability is worthy of the rank 6 Targaryen bloodline!’
Past rank 6 was the realm of laws, and a bloodline that could devour laws and make them his own was obviously terrifying. This was also why he had spared no effort in getting Beelzebub to come to the Purgatory World. The law of gluttony and the innate skill of Devour complemented each other just too well. They were the best pair in Leylin’s view.
The ability to break through without end as long as one possessed enough energy was something Leylin coveted. He considered it to
be the best catalyst in the process of breaking through his bloodline shackles.

[Beep! Host’s comprehension of law of devouring(transformed from law of gluttony) now at 99%] [Beep! Host’s body has been converted to a body of laws. Progress: 99%. Body’s stats have surpassed standard limits, unable to be quantified. A switch to the Heavenly Astral Race’s measurement units is suggested.]

Seeing the last prompt, Leylin’s lips quirked as he burst into a wild laughter. Such terrifying strength caused even the air around him to shake. Since he had taken such huge risks in this adventure, he would obviously want to get the best benefits.

After reaching rank 6, the soul of a Magus would basically reach its limits, and its soul force would become tangible. Once they grasped a certain law, they would reach the realm of a rank 7 Magus. While Beelzebub’s law of gluttony was pretty good, Leylin did not like it all that much. After all, he still felt some lingering fear towards that insane appetite.

Having the abilities of his bloodline influenced by the power of gluttony, he could thus form the law of devouring. It was something Leylin had long since anticipated.

Leylin had grasped many laws even as he reached rank 6. He was no ordinary Breaking Dawn Monarch. In fact, he could be said to be halfway to rank 7!

Once he completely comprehended the last bit of the law of devouring, there would be nothing holding him back from becoming a Magus who comprehended laws.

Breaking Dawn Monarchs couldn’t grasp the power of laws the moment they broke through. They would have to wait to enter the peak of rank 6 before they could even peer into the world of laws. But Leylin had done it! He had done something that was practically unprecedented in the Magus World’s history.
The challenging risks had paid off. Leylin had staked everything on a desperate gamble, and it came through. Not only had he broken through his bloodline shackles, he had even grasped the power of laws! He was now comparable to a rank 7 law wielding Magus, and there was only a small barrier to his advance.

He was now so powerful that the A.I. Chip’s original units of measurement couldn’t quantify his strength any more. He had to switch to another unit of measurement.

‘Near rank 7 in power… If I stay in the Magus World, I won’t even need to be afraid of the Snake Dowager.’ Leylin was now completely relaxed, and he even had the urge to yell out into the heavens. ‘It’s a pity that I couldn’t lure Beelzebub out completely, and the law isn’t complete. However, just the damage to his soul is enough to cause him to go into a deep sleep or even die. Worse comes to worst, I’ll attack his lair and then seize the last bit of the power of laws. Naturally, I’ll be able to enter rank 7 after that.’

‘As expected, the power of a Magus changes drastically in rank 6. Those who grasp laws can’t even be measured by the A.I. Chip…’

“A.I. Chip, show what can be displayed,” Leylin commanded, immediately discovering a drastic change in his stats.

Comprehension of laws, Devour: 99%

‘Hah… What a change!’ Leylin’s eyes narrowed, ‘This boost is much greater than that of my previous advancements. It’s basically tens, or even hundreds of times! The boost from the power of laws is so terrifying…

‘Based on the calculations, I must have over 10000 spiritual force, causing an overflow…’ Leylin stroked his chin and commanded, ‘Alright. Recalculate with the stats of the Heavenly Astral Race as the model.’ [Beep! Recalculating host’s data... change completed]

the A.I. Chip loyally intoned and showed the stats to Leylin.


The units of the new data were based on the Heavenly Astral Race. Every unit was more than ten times its previous standard. The numbers in spiritual force had condensed a hundredfold, allowing it to be quantified. Because Leylin’s soul force and power of laws had been merged into one, it was not shown on the A.I. Chip.

‘Mm! The A.I. Chip’s method of calculation is rather direct. Doesn’t this mean even the slightest of my actions equate to hundreds of Heavenly Astral Morning Stars?’

Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Our strength might be similar, but the boost from laws hasn’t been calculated into it by the A.I. Chip…’ Things would’ve been different if he was an ordinary Breaking Dawn, but Leylin had already stepped into the realm of laws. The boost from the power of laws caused his strength to increase so violently that it was terrifying.

*Rumble…* Large spirals of chaotic energy dissipated gradually in the air, and that pair of green eyes also vanished without a trace. The sacrificial rune on Leylin’s body disappeared quickly, crumbling in practically the blink of an eye.
“The will of the Purgatory World has left…” Leylin muttered to himself, looking slightly desolate. As he had already reached rank 6 and comprehended laws, the World Will had sensed that Leylin had already surpassed many Monarchs.

“While I helped the World Will to gain some wisdom, it has helped me defeat my opponents and allowed me to advance. We’re even now…” Leylin could tell that his status as a Sacrificer had dropped as quickly as it had risen. He was now back at square one.

“The Purgatory Will is merely a robotic intellectual body. The help before was merely a transaction. If I want to become a child of Purgatory, I’ll have to join its side and allow its intent to pervade my body, becoming half a puppet.” Leylin stroked his chin. World Wills were rational and unfeeling. Even if Leylin had helped it before, were he to reveal even the slightest intent to harm the Purgatory World it would still treat him as an enemy.

Wills worked like artificial intelligences, programs with procedures programmed into them. While he could not influence such a thing with emotions, he would be safe against backstabbing. Settling the transaction once and for all was quick and convenient.

This was unlike dignitaries like the Nefarious Filthbird. With it, no matter how devout one was in their prayer it would still think of ways to take control of them, turning them into a bargaining chip. Something like that would never happen with the Purgatory Will.

“But my path is still that of magic, the path of truth. Turning into a half-puppet doesn’t suit me,” Leylin shook his head, abandoning all thoughts of settling in the Purgatory World. It wasn’t just becoming a subordinate of the Purgatory Will; just the thought of the other dignitaries here left Leylin’s scalp numb.

Leylin may have grown close to rank 7, becoming an existence that was thousands of times stronger than before, but he was still no match for a rank 8. He might have seemed courageous and unstoppable, but that was because he had the cheat that was the
Purgatory World Will.
With the World Will around, those rank 8s had to deal with its suppression. They would only have about 50% of their original strength, and on top of that they had to deal with Leylin who had reached rank 7 as a Sacrificer with it. That obviously made things dangerous.
However, Leylin had depended entirely on an offering of the genetic clone of the ancient Wisdom Tree, which had given him great support from the Purgatory Will. In the future, he would not have an offering of that grade. If he were to meet with the Snake Dowager and duel fairly, even escaping could be difficult.
“I’ve awakened the will of the Purgatory World. That’s akin to finding an owner above those rank 8 existences who’s constantly thinking about ways to expel them from the Purgatory World.” Leylin felt pins and needles on his scalp.
In order to break through the bloodline shackles, he had roused the Purgatory Will from its slumber. That had had a great effect, but also thoroughly offended all the foreign dignitaries of the Purgatory World. However, if the situation were to repeat itself, Leylin would still make the same choice.
Still, staying in the Purgatory World was now a very irrational thing.
With so many rank 8 existences hostile towards him, and with him being an arch enemy of the Snake Dowager, not even the tiny bit of him would be left behind if they joined hands.
“The only choice is to hide in the Magus World,” Leylin’s eyes were filled with resolution. He was a native of the Magus World, and the powerful Magus World Will would naturally not suppress him. If foreign beings like the Snake Dowager were to enter, the suppression would be more terrifying than in the Purgatory World. After all, the Magus World was one of the two most powerful worlds!
Weighing his options, Leylin was confident the rank 8 existences could reach the Magus World, but they would not be able to leave. Of course, there was a higher possibility that they would just give up. After all, they were no fools and would not seek death.

“Alright! Since I have a bit of time left, I should wrap everything up and leave as soon as possible!” Leylin’s expression was rather urgent.

*Roar* *Wooo* At this moment, the restrictions from the World Will dissipated, and the world resumed its movement. Numerous gluttonous beasts roared at Leylin with an air of provocation. There was no lack of rank 6s among the beasts Beelzebub had nurtured. They had astutely sensed that if they could kill Leylin and steal his comprehension of laws, there would be a drastic transformation to their bodies.

If they were alone, they might not have dared do this. Now, however, the many gluttonous beasts turned into a horde. Leylin could be a peak rank 6 on the surface, but with the horde and many rank 6s surrounding and attacking him, there was a slight possibility of him being killed.

“Kill him!” “Kill him!” The three-headed python that was the second elder of the Stewart Family provoked the gluttonous beasts around him to advance.

The earlier events had progressed too quickly, and on top of that there was a seal from the World Will. Many gluttonous beasts and even residents of the holy city were yet to react to it. Only the rank 6s felt a sense of fear when it came to Leylin, but the hope to break through to the power of laws enticed them to take the risk.

*Roar* The gluttonous snakes that were as enormous as mountains surrounded Leylin, accompanied by the terrifying zombified monsters.

“Is this clever?” Leylin watched the three-headed python hiding
behind the berserk rank 6 beings, a slight smile on his face, “Even an ordinary peak rank 6 would find trouble when attacked like this, no? It’s a pity though… I’ve already passed through the realm of rank 6. The power of laws is something you cannot imagine…”

Having nearly grasped the law of devouring, Leylin had changed drastically. The immense increase in his stats reached the requirements of rank 7. At the very least, the Blazing Flame Monarch that Leylin had seen before definitely did not have such extreme numbers when it came to spiritual force, and perhaps had yet to even reach the ten thousands.

After all, she had merely comprehended a bit of the power of flames, and only understood the tip of the iceberg. How could that be comparable to Leylin, who now had a body of laws?

“Submit!” Leylin merely spat out this single word while he was encircled by the many rank 6 gluttonous beasts.

In that moment, the terrifying power of laws exploded from his body, causing the world to come to a standstill once again.

*Thud!* *Thud!* There were hints of struggle in the beasts’ eyes, but their bodies automatically knelt down.
With one word, the numerous rank 6 beings bowed their heads to him. The power of laws shockingly had such an effect!

“It shouldn’t be difficult to control these beasts given some time with just the law of gluttony. Pity…” Leylin gazed at the eyes of the large gluttonous beasts and shook his head.

“I can’t bring them back to the Magus World. Besides, I’m relying on the law of devouring which isn’t compatible with these gluttonous beasts. Most importantly, their power originates from the gluttonous power of Beelzebub. Now that the root of their power has been warped, I can’t fix them even if I try.”

“Perish! Innate law Devour!” A terrifying, monstrous winged serpent that extended across the horizon appeared behind Leylin, and a horrifying black hole was formed in an instant. Numerous gluttonous beasts wailed in anguish, but seemed to be suppressed by some kind of invisible force that rendered them immobile as they watched themselves disappearing into that black hole.

“No! I’m the second elder of the Stewart family, destined to break through the bloodline shackles and bring my family to glory. Why… Why did things turn out this way?” The enormous three-headed python discovered something was amiss when the black hole appeared, and he began to flee for his life. However, that wasn’t enough to escape the fate of being devoured. Along with
howls of indignation, his voice slowly disappeared into the black hole.
The invisible pull spread across the plains, and the many gluttonous beasts were thrown into the black hole while howling in anguish. Their rank didn’t matter. Minutes later, all of the gluttonous beasts surrounding the holy city were completely gone.
“I feel a little full now,” Leylin touched his belly, speechless. After devouring so many gluttonous beasts, the bit of heat that he felt surging through his body had disappeared in an instant.
At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s prompt was transmitted. [Beep! Host has taken in a small amount of essence, boosted by rank 6 innate skill Devour. Strength has risen by 0.001. Vitality has risen by 0.002.]
“After reaching semi rank 7, energy below that of laws is useless to me.” Leylin shook his head. He, who had now almost completely grasped the law of devouring, had a body of laws that was incomparable to what it had been before.
The essence of the gluttonous beasts of the Serpent Plains was just a tiny supplement for him.
“It’s time to leave.” Leylin’s eyes swept across the holy city. As he had intentionally spared the city before, the power of devouring had not taken in any resident of the holy city. Hence, all the snake beings within the holy city gazed at Leylin dumbly and took particular notice of that terrifying Targaryen serpent, practically losing all ability to speak.
“What’s going on? I only saw the holy mother appear, but after that, everything seemed to have gone stagnant. When did that thing appear?”
Belinda stared dumbly at the figure of the monstrous winged serpent, “Why… Why does this give me such a familiar feeling? Is this some hidden power of the holy mother?”
“Found you!” A gentle voice was heard by Belinda’s ear, and she
then felt her body grow light, as if someone was lifting her, and her surroundings changed before her eyes in an instant. When she regained her senses, she was already standing outside the holy city.
“Sister!” An elated voice could be heard. Sophia threw herself into Belinda’s arms, her tears falling without pause, and she evidently looked frightened.
“My precious Sophia!” Belinda patted Sophia’s back, and then glanced towards Aegnis, who looked despondent and down. Of course, what attracted her attention the most was the the figure standing at the side and wearing black magic robes, who was just like some sort of god.
The black hair, pupils that were like the dark night and the face of this young stranger was like that of a god who had come down to this world… Everything about him was incomparably flawless, but Belinda felt a sense of familiarity with him.
“Belinda, Sophia and Aegnis, we meet again! Let me reintroduce myself. I am Leylin Farlier, and my name of Nick from before was just my alias,” Leylin gazed at the three uniquely different snake girls and laughed slightly, while saying things that caused their expressions to change drastically. Using the power of laws to search the city and bring the three of them here had taken just a second.
“You’re… Nick?” Belinda gaped, looking stunned. No matter how she tried, she was completely unable to match this man, who had gotten rid of countless glutinous beasts with a wave of his hand, with the Nick she knew.
On top of that, Nick had had long silver hair, scarlet pupils and many wrinkles from aging. No matter how she looked at it, it was impossible for her to link the two of them.
No! If she were to disregard those features, his features were still rather similar! Belinda’s eyes narrowed, now finally knowing where that sense of familiarity was coming from.
“So should I call you brother Nick or brother Leylin from now on?” Sophia merely bit her fingernails, looking perplexed.
“That’s up to you, but I personally prefer being called Leylin!”
“Leylin Farlier, the wanted Magus! The person cursed by the holy mother!” Aegnis expressionlessly recited Leylin’s background.
“Good job exploiting our Stewart Family. Where’s the holy mother?” While she still looked grim, her heart was sinking.
First was the betrayal of the second elder, which meant that the Stewart Family had not fulfilled its duties. It was because he had the protection of the Stewart Family that he had been able to cause so much damage to her.
After this disaster, would the Stewart Family have a chance of revitalising itself?
Not exterminating the whole Stewart Family should already be considered magnanimous on the Snake Dowager’s part.
“The Mighty Mother of All Snakes is obviously fine. She just left temporarily!” Leylin chuckled subtly. He then glanced towards Belinda, “So? Have you accepted this yet?”
“You’ve been… using me? You’ve already accomplished your aims, so why did you get me here?”
Belinda stood up, a dead look in her eyes.
“I can’t deny that.”
Leylin nodded, and then noticed Belinda’s body swaying.
“Then why?” Belinda’s eyes were full of complicated feelings.
“It’s obviously so that I can take you away!” Leylin laughed.
“Take us away?” Belinda never imagined there would be this sort of answer.
“Where are we going? Will it be fun?” Sophia’s eyes twinkled, her focus evidently quite different from the others’.
“That’s not happening. I need to stay here. My family needs me.”
This was Aegnis’ reply.
“I’m afraid that’s not up to you,” Leylin said calmly. Belinda and
Aegnis suddenly realised that they had lost all their strength. Whether their elemental affinity or bloodline force or even power as a Sacrificer, everything descended into stillness and could not be used at all.

“You can hate me, Belinda, but you must obey me and leave this world with me,” Leylin sounded serene, but there was an intent there that could not be resisted.

“My actions here, hm… how do I put it? I’ve completely offended the Snake Dowager. I’m obviously not afraid of her, but she might take her anger out on you guys. Hence, you’ll need to leave the Purgatory World…

“This reason is very applicable to Aegnis’ situation.”

Leylin stared at Aegnis, who now looked dull. If not for the fact that she had taken care of Belinda and her sister, Leylin wouldn’t even have cared whether she lived or died. However, the Snake Dowager would absolutely take out her anger on the Stewart Family and they would be destroyed. This was a matter already set in stone, and if she were to stay behind, she was most likely doomed.

“Offending the Snake Dowager and having her anger taken out on us? O mighty dignitary! What have you done?!” Belinda was immediately stunned by these affairs, which were like that had only happened in legends.

“It’s nothing! I just made her bleed a little and also tore her godly status apart,” Leylin shrugged his shoulders, “Alright, enough idle talk. It’s time to go.”

“Hss…” The enormous monstrous winged snake hissed and struck at the air, opening up a huge black hole. Leylin flew into the air and, bringing the other three along, abruptly entered the spatial pathway.

*Whoosh!* Many fresh flowers bloomed to full flower on the grassland, turning the area into a sea of flowers. The wind whistled
and brushed past, sending petals flying as beautiful music was heard, as if the Purgatory Will was sending Leylin off. The snake beings in the holy city could only watch on cluelessly. The faith of some of them wavered, beginning to worship Leylin. This began the legend of a winged serpent dignitary, spreading in Purgatory World…

*Pila!*

A terrifying spatial storm was formed, and much lightning formed an arched door. Four figures traversed the lightning gate and descended to another place. The sky was dark and gloomy and gave a repressed feeling. The air was full of negative energy and earth-type elemental particles.

“The localisation was rather successful! Though the astral plane coordinates long since stopped working, I’m not the same person I was before!” Leylin surveyed his surroundings, finding that this was close to the laboratory from which he had traversed to the Purgatory World, and he could not help but nod in satisfaction.

An existence of laws could wander around in the astral plane, and he’d long since known of the Magus World’s coordinates. There was no trouble in getting back. Powerful solidified soul force and the power of laws allowed Leylin to get a deeper understanding of the Magus World.

Like a mother whose child who had been traveling had returned, the Magus World received Leylin with open arms without the least bit of suppression.

“The Magus World’s Will…” Leylin closed his eyes, the figure of a Targaryen serpent emerging at his back, “So it’s already sunk into a slumber?”

“However…” Leylin glanced at the three whose auras had obviously become weaker, “Even deep asleep, it still subconsciously rejects existences from other worlds and even causes fear amongst rank 8 existences. How powerful could the
World Will be at its peak condition?”
Here... is this?” Belinda looked bewildered, the energy undulations on her body suppressed to below Morning Star. Sophia on the other hand was much weaker, and she did not change very much.

“This... is this your original world?” Aegnis was no better, having almost fallen to Morning Star herself.

The more powerful a world was, the more its residents would be suppressed in the Magus World. Since those like Sophia posed no threat, the suppression she faced was the weakest.

Upon seeing this, Leylin looked to be deep in thought before he clapped his hands. “Ladies, welcome to the Magus World. This is the first level of the underground world. I hope you like it!” Now that their attention was on him, Leylin rubbed his nose.

“Now that you’re here, you’re free to do as you please. Of course, if you follow me, I’ll take care of you. One more thing. I’ve already gotten married here. Still, although I have more than one wife already, I wouldn’t mind having a few more…”

“Oh, so Brother Leylin is already married! Can Sophia meet the other sisters?” Sophia spoke in a manner as if she knew Leylin well. While her disease had been healed, she was rather childlike in her everyday manners. Of course, while watching her crafty eyes, Leylin knew what she was thinking.

“You scoundrel!” Belinda cursed once at him, but did not leave. Aegnis watched her and followed expressionlessly.
“Alright! So you’re not planning to leave yet? Follow me for now. I’ll teach you some general things about the Magus World and the language. Next, we’ll visit the Arthur family and have you settled,” Leylin laughed and brought the three snake girls along. While they were leaving, his eyes slanted towards the east, a hint of a smile within them.

This was a place very far from Leylin’s laboratory, in a huge kingdom’s capital city. Many beastmen, dwarves, elves and subterranean humans coexisted in peace, and the place seemed to be very prosperous.

“Hm? The aura from another world?” A streak of black light burst out from a secret room in the capital of the Arthur Kingdom. Flickering in the air a few times, it howled towards the heavens. The many defensive spell formations seemed not to notice the black ray of light, allowing it to enter without any resistance at all. “King Arthur!” “King Arthur!” many powerful beings exclaimed. Within the palace, a middle-aged man wearing a crown was completely shocked, “Has the ancestor been awoken from his slumber? Have there been any major changes?”

……

“An outsider from another world has invaded, and is even in our kingdom…” Said a fair, blond man within black light. His eyes were blue, and his features so sharp he seemed chiseled. He had an aura of hot-bloodedness and firmness. “What is this faint feeling that makes my heart beat so quickly?” A trace of concern surfaced in the white man’s eyes, but he quickly drowned it out. As a peak Breaking Dawn Monarch, he was like a lightning flash. He was able to find Leylin’s previous laboratory in the shortest time possible, and though it had already been abandoned, he was still able to discover a great many things.
“It’s in the style of what is used in the central continent. There’s an astral gate as well. Is it an existence from another world brought back by some Magi? In that case, this person’s strength…” While he was bewildered, he heard a transmission. The information contained within immediately got the middle-aged man to get moving again, chasing after Leylin and the others. “Brother Leylin, why are we suddenly stopping?” Sophia was extremely curious about everything around her, and her questions had no end. “We’re waiting for someone.” Leylin indifferently twitched his lips in a slight sneer. “Friend or foe?” Belinda got to the point. “He isn’t qualified to be either,” Leylin waved his hand dismissively. Immediately after, a streak of dark light burst through the skies, and while it was heading closer the soul strength it emanated caused Aegnis’ expression to change, “Rank 6, it’s a rank 6! No, peak rank 6!” As one who had been a rank 5 and a guard of the holy city, Aegnis’ knowledge and perception was clearly ahead of the two sisters’. But then her face changed, and Aegnis ridiculed herself with a wry laugh after taking a glance at the calm Leylin, “Then again, what is a rank 6 to you?” Even though she hadn’t watched the terrifying battle between Leylin and the other dignitaries, she had seen Leylin devouring numerous rank 6 gluttonous beasts, and her mind had been completely blown. “Revered Magus, my name is Arthur. I welcome you to the subterranean world!” At this moment, the black ray arrived before Leylin and the others, revealing the figure of a fair middle-aged man. “Arthur?!” Leylin’s brows furrowed slightly, but they quickly
smoothed out, “The king who established the Arthur Kingdom? Pardon me for my rudeness!”

“Your humble servant prefers to be called ‘Arthur’. What does the power of kings mean to us?” Arthur smiled gently and seemed affable, lacking any arrogance in his bearing. Of course, this could have to do with Leylin’s strength. If not for it, he wouldn’t be treating them with such a good attitude.


With just a short exchange, the A.I. Chip had silently gathered his stats. It had evolved with Leylin’s own advancement, and had begun to touch the power of laws itself. Nothing below rank 7 could hinder its scans and analyses.

‘These stats aren’t those of the past, but formed using the new measurements of the Heavenly Astral Race?’ Leylin rubbed his chin, ‘While we’re both peak Breaking Dawn, based on the previous standards his spiritual force hasn’t even reached 10,000. This shouldn’t happen... Is there a difference in the comprehension of laws?’

Leylin had a feeling that those horrifying stats he had were not comparable to regular peak Breaking Dawn Magi.

‘Based on the information given by the A.I. Chip, as well as my instincts, while his comprehension is above that of the Blazing Flame Monarch, it’s still only at 20 to 30%...’ Leylin stroked his chin.

Within Arthur’s eyes, this black haired Magus seemed young but his aura had an unfathomable depth to it. It had a force field like a giant beast who could devour everything, and a hint of sincere dread began to surface in Arthur’s mind.

‘How can that be? I’ve gone through countless bloody battles in the subterranean world, and I’m the person who set up the Arthur
Kingdom! I’ve even seen those existences of laws before…
existences…” King Arthur’s eyes suddenly widened as if he had
thought of something, and he unconsciously used a little bit of the
power of the laws of earth.
The three girls fell to the ground. From their point of view, the
entire subterranean world had begun to move. The suppression
from the phantom figure of the continent made them feel that their
souls would be extinguished in the next second.
“You’re probing me?” Leylin chuckled. No matter how terrifying
that force was, everything around him was melted away by limitless
devouring power. It finally even swallowed up Arthur’s phantom
world in one bite.
“Hah…” Arthur panted roughly. After seeing this, he did not
hesitate to kneel down on one knee, “Arthur hereby greets the
mighty lord at rank 7! Please bestow upon me your name, and
please forgive me for my previous actions!”
“Rank 7?” Leylin laughed involuntarily, “I’m at most half a rank 7.
As for my name… just call me Leylin.”
“Yes, Lord Leylin!” Arthur felt like he was being raised up by some
invisible gigantic force, involuntarily moving his body to into a
standing position. The expression on his face became even more
reverent.
“Why… what makes you think I’m a rank 7 Magus?” Leylin’s
brows furrowed as he asked Arthur…
Through the King’s explanations, he managed to get a better
understanding of the path forward for rank 6 Magi. Based on his
words, even peak Breaking Dawn Magi would not possess strength
like Leylin’s. All their stats, including spiritual force, were about
the same as his own. Only their comprehension of laws was
different.
“Once comprehension of a law crosses 50%, Breaking Dawn Magi
will descend into a dormant state and undergo a terrifying
qualitative change where all stats increase by a large amount. If comprehension of the law cannot be completed to reach rank 7, one will be unable to wake up for eternity?” Leylin touched his chin, thinking back to his own situation.

His situation was extremely unique. His law of devouring had completely captured Beelzebub’s law of gluttony, but because the true body still existed there was still a bit left before the law could be completed. He was now right at the boundary of rank 7.

‘But I’ve basically passed through the stage of the qualitative change that rank 6 Magi go through, and my body has already begun to be infused with the power of laws. The distance to rank 7 is paper-thin…’ Leylin instantly thought this through. He basically had one foot in the door to rank 7, and his stats were definitely comparable to regular beings of laws.

Those rank 6 Breaking Dawn Monarchs whose stats were similar to King Arthur would only undergo a huge increase in strength after the period of deep slumber. At that point, they would either die or successfully reach rank 7. Leylin was a special exception.

“Only Breaking Dawn Magi who comprehend above 50% can undergo a qualitative change due to the power of laws?” he asked indifferently.

“Yes, my lord!” Arthur glanced at Leylin bewilderedly. From his perspective, this person was definitely a rank 7 Magus of laws, but for some reason he couldn’t understand he denied it. Whatever it was, treating him as respectfully as possible would never be the wrong decision.

“Though I really wish to enter rank 7, the realm of laws, the path of the comprehension of laws is too challenging. Thousands of years have passed, and I still have yet to reach that threshold…”
Arthur forced a smile as he spoke, a hint of fear in his voice, “Even after reaching the threshold of 50%, I wouldn’t dare enter the slumber of qualitative change and go through with such a huge gamble!”

“Why? Because of the rate of failure?” Leylin suddenly understood. “Yes, my lord!” Terror was evident in Arthur’s eyes, “The Magi who sink into that stage of slumber will gradually reach their death in their sleep if they cannot completely comprehend the law… Ever since the ancient final war, I’ve never heard of anyone who has succeeded…”

“In other words, no Magi have advanced to rank 7 since the ancient war?” Leylin stroked his chin, suddenly feeling like he had been extremely lucky. Though his method of advancing had been different from regular Magi, and it had also happened in another world, he had escaped some trouble.

“Yes!” Arthur nodded grimly, “Until today, the only existences of laws that I know are the Mother Core, Death Sovereign King and all those Monarchs who existed during the ancient era. They stay below the seventh level of the subterranean world and rarely show themselves…”

‘As expected, it’s not that there aren’t powerful existences protecting the Magus World. They’re just staying in the subterranean world!’ Leylin nodded, eyes glinting. He’d already suspected this. With the Magus World’s status, even
after going through the ancient final war there should have been some rank 8 existences that still remained. Just a dormant World Will would not be enough to hinder those from other worlds who comprehended laws from spying on it.

‘In that case, the underground of the Magus World is more valuable to those existences than the surface? It seems that they see the central continent like it sees the south coast. That’s why they treat it with disdain…’ Leylin suddenly understood how their thought process.

This was the only reason that made sense. If not, with their strength the central continent would be quivering at their feet all the time.

“Are there ample resources in the subterranean world?” Leylin suddenly looked towards Arthur. This question evidently stunned Arthur for a moment. From the astral laboratory, he could tell that this Lord Leylin had come from the surface. Was he perhaps coveting the subterranean world?

While he was agonised about doing so, Arthur did not dare conceal anything, “The seventh level that’s already been opened up has more ample resources than the central continent. The lower the level, the more this proportion will increase. Many great items have appeared that even Breaking Dawns would go crazy over as well… Though I’m not sure about the levels below the seventh. There are rumours that the world there is monstrous and grotesque, holding huge benefits for those who’ve comprehended laws…”

“Huge benefits?” Leylin touched his chin, ‘The resources on the surface of the world are meagre for beings of laws. The only thing they need is further comprehension, and guidance on their path ahead…

‘Could it be that there are places in the subterranean world that make comprehending laws easier?’ At this thought, Leylin’s eyes brightened. ‘Perhaps I should find an opportunity and explore the depths of the underground… After all, I can be considered one of
the upper class in the Magus World. It’s easier to improve if I can interact with similar beings,’ Leylin made some plans, but obviously would not state them.

“Arthur, did you come here for them?” Leylin pointed towards Belinda and the other two.

“Yes.” Only then did Arthur glance at the girls, but he no longer seemed to mind, “It is my responsibility to take care of the security of this administrative region. However, with Lord Leylin around, there’s no need for me to do so…” It had to be said that this Arthur could easily adapt to changing circumstances. Of course, that might be because he had understood and experienced Leylin’s strength, which was why he no longer had any thoughts of rebellion.

“Good! I’m going to meet an old friend, come with me!” Leylin nodded and headed towards the Lyas family. Arthur laughed wryly, and like a servant ducked his head while following at the back.

……

This was the territory of Eam’s family. Numerous steep hills emitted a metallic luster, and at its heart was the Lyas Family’s residence. Huge blue thunderbirds descended every once in a while, bringing with them the booming of thunder. This was a perilous area for all outsiders, but for Leylin there was absolutely no danger.

“Eam, your old friend’s here!” His tangible soul force scanned the area, and Leylin immediately broke through the heavy defences of the Lyas family, finding Eam in a secret room.

“This voice? And this sort of…” Eam Lyas’ hand shook in the midst of his experiment, and a test tube exploded. However, he paid no mind to this and turned into a blue thunderbird that soared into the sky.

“Leylin, my friend! So it’s you!” The body of the blue thunderbird
immediately shrank. The hill-like creature turned into a blue-haired Magus with silver pupils and fixed his attention on Leylin.

“I’ve already made the necessary preparations here, but you made me wait for so long. On top of that, why have all my attempts to reach you been blocked?”

Evidently, the contract Leylin had signed in order to placate the Lyas family was not of much importance to Leylin, and he lacked sincerity in going through with this. After all, he’d been under the Allsnake Curse then. Who would put more effort in this area?

This was only because it had only been a short time of a few years. A few years meant nothing to high-ranked Magi, which was why despite Eam’s unhappiness, he did not seem too aggressive about this. Otherwise if he were to see Leylin now, he might even have tried to attack him.

“My apologies! I got caught up with some work. My reason in coming here is to restart the plans and agreements. Of course… some conditions must be amended,” Eam was a rank 5 Warlock that had inherited an ancient bloodline, but that was nothing in Leylin’s eyes. If not for his family’s usefulness, Leylin would just have devoured the whole place.

“Restart? Amend? And also… your aura…” Eam’s expression showed his obvious doubt. He sized Leylin up and down, suddenly feeling that Leylin’s aura was somehow different from before. However, he couldn’t quite say what had changed, which made him want to vomit blood in his frustration. With Leylin’s current strength, concealing his energy undulations was very easy, though he wouldn’t need to do that usually.

Just the slight change to his appearance, combined with the power of laws pervading his every move, had caused eam to feel like his vision had been blurred.

“I’ve found a very suitable partner in this trade! Arthur, continue talks with him,” Leylin waved his hand.
At this point, he didn’t care much for the trade and profits between the first level of the subterranean world and the central continent. He even felt that it was unimportant. However, this business would be a huge help for the Ouroboros Clan, so he finished it.

Here in the subterranean area, Leylin had even found genuine overseers and partners. Belinda and Aegnis both had experience in managing large organisations, and were pretty strong themselves. They would probably just take some time to get used to the workings of this business and completely master it.

The profits from managing this area were enough for them to survive luxuriously in the Magus World without needing to rely on Leylin.

“Long time no see, Eam!” Having been mentioned by Leylin, Arthur rubbed his nose and stood out.

“You are… Your Majesty!” It was only at this point that Eam noticed Arthur standing behind Leylin. Leylin did not emit much of an aura, but a body of laws naturally had a very powerful attractive force that caused Eam to completely disregard the people beside him.

“Your Majesty, why have you come here?” Eam’s mouth went wide open in his shock. As the person who had established the Arthur Kingdom, King Arthur’s name had spread throughout the first level of the subterranean world. He was a peak rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magus whose battle prowess surpassed all others. It was his exceeding his peers that had allowed him to build the foundations of the kingdom.

The glorious reputation of the name ‘King Arthur’ was not gifted by anyone. Arthur had built it himself through trials of blood and fire. There was enough blood from high-ranked Magi on his hands to dye his entire palace red.

As the leader of the Lyas Family, Eam was King Arthur’s vassal. After all, the Lyas Family was on the Arthur Kingdom’s land, and
even if he wanted to save his family from anything, Eam would still have to lower his noble head to the man.
“I obey Lord Leylin’s instructions and am here to assist, as well as be a witness,” Arthur bowed very deeply. He had long since treated Leylin as a rank 7, and just a mere thought from this existence could consign him to eternal damnation. He obviously would not dare to slight him by appearing even a little arrogant.
After hearing these words, Eam’s eyes were filled by shock. “Lord… Lord Leylin?!”
‘For even the peak Breaking Dawn King Arthur to call him a ‘lord’?!” Eam looked frozen, but he already had an inkling of what was going on. Leylin, whom he had seen years before, probably had an earth-shattering transformation in strength, or perhaps… Had he hidden his true strength right from the start?
Meanwhile, with the support of the Arthur Kingdom and with King Arthur as the witness, it was necessary that they proceed with the trade with no reservations. However, perhaps the entire Lyas Family would now sink to a subordinate position under Leylin’s strength.
Eam smiled wryly and knelt before Leylin, “Eam Lyas greets Lord Leylin!”
Multi-coloured carpets and pieces of furniture gave off a slight aroma within a luxurious room, as if there had been some special incense burnt here that gave a simple yet elegant feeling.

Leylin surveyed the surroundings and nodded in satisfaction. Though he had been a guest here before and already experienced the VIP rooms of the Lyas Family, the grandeur of this room had reached a whole new level. This had once been Eam Lyas’ mansion. Of course, once Leylin revealed his intentions to stay overnight, he had arranged this place for him with the fastest speed possible.

Leylin currently stood before a huge oil painting, observing the portrait of a blue-haired Warlock. The man in the portrait looked somewhat similar to Eam; it was probably the founder of his family.

After being focused on for a period of time, the portrait’s eyes flickered, revealing an expression full of terror as if it was alive. However, it could not speak nor move, and only watched Leylin imploringly.

“Mm! The slight remnants of a conscient…” Leylin nodded, taking in the oil painting. “There seems to be a secret semi-plane as well, with the bloodline and body of an ancient mature Thorned Thunderbird. Looks like this must be the final trump card of the Lyas family…”

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Eam had no way to withdraw this important mechanism in such a short time. He must’ve been counting on Leylin not discovering it, or caring for the more luxurious items, which was why he’d failed to conceal it.

“Interesting… Interesting!” Leylin stroked his chin while sitting on the sofa, allowing the portrait to heave a sigh of relief before it returned to its previous frozen expression. Leylin truly held no malicious intent towards something like that. Though a rank 6 bloodline would’ve been very attractive to him at rank 5, he had currently reached the peak of Breaking Dawn, almost entering the realm of laws. He cared nothing for it.

“Brother Leylin, this couch is so comfortable!” Sophia was holding a little bear bolster, rolling on the sofa like a mischievous little child. However, the crafty glint in her eyes made it clear that she had other intentions. The sisters had always thought well of Leylin, especially Sophia. She had practically glued herself to his side. Furthermore, even though Belinda had her doubts about this, it was a matter of time before she accepted him. Perhaps there was another one coming his way.

Of course, Leylin naturally accepted benefits that fell at his feet. He stroked his chin, his lips arching at an angle. With a wave of his arm, the surface of the oil painting was covered by a layer of darkness, “Sister Sophia, do you want to play a fun game with me?”

……

The time of pleasure soon passed. Sophia’s legs had gone weak, and she had to be taken away by Belinda. While leaving, the snake girl glared hard at Leylin, a myriad of emotions hidden in her look. Aegnis herself had watched on like it was all a show, but she too
didn’t understand why a blush had appeared on her cheeks.
‘What clever women they are,’ Leylin thought in evaluation as he
closed the door apathetically. These women had been smart enough
to leave him in privacy.
“Come out!” Leylin now looked extremely calm as his eyes shifted
to the cupboard.
*Plop! Blop* The ground seemed to melt in an instant, emitting
black bubbles. A layer of orange appeared, crawling through the
room. In the blink of an eye, the room had changed around Leylin.
Watching it, a thought sprang to his mind. ‘Is this some space
folding apparatus?’ He stroked his chin.
In this new environment, a black door of light appeared from the
cupboard and was pulled open. A Magus wearing a swallow-tailed
coat and a hat slowly walked out with a walking stick in hand. The
man wore a pair of golden spectacles with round lenses, a
complicated and intricate chain linking to them from behind his ear.
“Nice to meet you. This humble servant here is called Ignox,” The
Magus who came forward took off his hat and bowed elegantly.
‘A being of laws, who has only just reacted to me now? That’s
beyond my expectations,’ Leylin sized up this person with interest.
Through his comprehension of laws, he had evidently realised that
the body of this person was merely a form that the other party had
chosen at will. The main body, on the other hand, was merely a
bundle of mist with a complicated black ring of light at the middle
that had some unique rhythm, enveloped by the dense power of
laws. A deep and dark aura emanated from it like a bottomless
abyss, intimidating and overwhelming.
This was a true rank 7 Magus, a being that had completely grasped
a certain law!
“I am Leylin Farlier. Greetings, my Lord!” Leylin was not that
surprised that this being had arrived. The soul force of those who
comprehended laws could scan the entire central continent in an
instant. Though it could not be used to scan every single ant on the ground, immense energy waves could not escape its detections. Leylin himself hadn’t concealed the aura of his laws, something that allowed him to easily be sensed by others who at such ranks. This encounter was his goal; for better or worse, he was from the Magus World and he had to make contact with the original beings of laws there.

“Tsk tsk… the power to devour all mass… and such a terrifying bloodline force… I hadn’t seen such a bloodline source before…” Ignox’s eyes showed his astonishment, “Even without having passed through the boundaries to become an existence of laws, Mister Leylin’s strength isn’t lacking at all when compared to us.”

Leylin accepted Ignox’s flattering without hesitation. His body was now incomparably close to rank 7, and on top of the mysteries of his devouring law, his other abilities put him on par with a rank 7 law-wielding Magus.

“Our Magus World hasn’t given birth to a new rank 7 since the ancient war! Mister Leylin’s existence is truly a cause for celebration!” Ignox seemed very excited.

“I’m only a minor Warlock from the south coast, and I know little regarding the world of rank 7s and higher. I hope Mister Ignox can properly guide me,” Leylin’s words were humble.

“But of course! As the higher ranks of the Magus World, it is our duty to help each other!” Ignox nodded solemnly, “Also, there are some things that I need to warn you about. While you’ve yet to completely enter rank 7, your strength has already reached that point, which is why some restrictions apply to you.”

“That’s reasonable, I won’t go against them,” Leylin nodded. Ignox noticed there seemed to be a loophole in Leylin’s words but he paid no heed to it, laughing while not the least bit concerned, “It’s very simple. You cannot deliberately prevent the Magus World’s World Will from recovering. Also, each of us has a fixed
region whose defense we’re in charge of, and you’ll need to thwart the invasions of any beings of laws. For instance, I’m in charge of the first to fourth levels of the subterranean world. Other than that, even if you were to massacre a whole continent nobody will bother with you!”

Leyln’s eyes twinkled. “Is the World Will still dormant? Is it because of the ancient Final War?”

“Yes, the ancient Final War! The dusk of the Gods and the fall of the Magi’s glory,” Ignox narrated in a singing voice, a trace of fear in his words.

“What exactly happened during the ancient Final War?” Leylin asked urgently.

“You will find out the specific details soon enough. To sum it up, the two worlds fought in order to achieve the chance to reach rank 9, and a large number of existences of laws fell…” While Ignox said this in a relaxed manner, Leylin could picture the mountains of corpses and seas of blood.

Even at its peak the Magus World wouldn’t have spawned an existence of laws in a thousand years, but so many had died.

“After the war, our World Will sank into a deep sleep. The combined conscient of the World of Gods and the higher gods was the same. They even engaged their crystal system and prevented any outsiders from spying on them. Left behind, we first withdrew to the subterranean world, guarding the World Will as close as we could while comprehending laws,” Ignox said.

“Is the Magus World’s Will sleeping at the earth’s core?” Leylin stroked his chin, ‘The nearer the place is to the World Will, the more conspicuous the laws become. The world origin force will also take care of Magi. It’s no wonder that those existences of laws stay deep underground and won’t come out!’

“After signing the contract, Lord Leylin will become a part of us too!” Ignox got to the point, “I am here to notify you about this.
There’s about a decade until we’re done with the preparations for the contract, and when the time comes we’ll send you an invitation!”

He seemed to never have considered Leylin’s rejection. Of course, Leylin wasn’t foolish enough to make enemies out of the existences of laws in the Magus World.

“I understand,” Leylin nodded solemnly.

“And the area of governance?” Ignox rubbed a large ruby in his hands, “Lord Leylin came from the surface world, so how about taking care of that area? The danger is at a minimum there, and there aren’t any other existences of laws guarding it anyway…”

“Danger at a minimum?” Leylin had no idea whether to laugh or cry at this point. Perhaps getting him to guard the surface was purely from Ignox’s good intentions.

Of course, this matched Leylin’s plans, and so he agreed without hesitation, “Of course!”

With the important business done with, Ignox and Leylin continued to chat, his enriching and wide knowledge astounding Leylin. The important matters to be noted after reaching rank 7 were extremely beneficial to him. When he had to leave, Leylin felt reluctant to part with him.
“Thank you for your magnificent hospitality, but I must be off. I look forward to my next meeting with you!”

Ignox waved at Leylin and entered the door of light in front of the cupboard.

A great deal of rust vanished, and the room returned to what it had looked like before. The feeling of another space being connected here gradually dissipated. Leylin’s eyes were filled with an inquisitive glint.

“This travel… is it an evolution of the laws he grasped? It seems rather effective when travelling between worlds and the astral plane…”

……

“My lord, may we enter?” Eam’s voice was heard from behind the door. It had only been a short conversation, but that had taken up the whole night.

Of course, for beings like Leylin this was nothing at all. Even labouring for ten years without any rest would not give rise to feelings of exhaustion to someone with a law body.

‘Is it an innate upgrade of the body itself, or just part of a sequence of transitions?’ Leylin gazed at his pale palm, looking lost in thought. He could sense that he was coming into a more powerful state, which was what he was aiming for anyway.
“Come in,” Shaking his head, he no longer dwelled on these matters. He ambled over to the sofa and took a seat while watching Eam, Arthur and the rest enter.
“I hope Lord Leylin had a good rest yesterday?” Eam gave him a smile, trying to flatter him. For someone like him who was incomparably arrogant, making such an expression was difficult. His facial muscles even twitched uncoordinatedly.
However, after learning from King Arthur that Leylin had already passed the realm of Breaking Dawn and reached rank 7, becoming a Magus of laws, Eam no longer had any arrogance left in him. That bit of bloodline and strength that he possessed was nothing at all in Leylin’s eyes.
The Lyas family could only quiver under Leylin’s gaze. Their life or death could be decided in just a mere second with a single thought from the Warlock.
It was natural to bend and try to curry favour with the strong when it came to the life or death of the family; he was the one in charge after all.
“It was okay,” Leylin nodded, answering indifferently.
“If we can satisfy Lord Leylin with our service, then it will be an honour for the entire Lyas family!” Eam said with a smile. As a noble he had taken lessons in etiquette before, and while most things were long forgotten it hadn’t taken long for him to master it again.
“Alright, I’ll tell you the arrangements for the passage and trade deal,” Leylin said as he gesticulated. He’d long since gotten tired of hearing these words of flattery, but he had more important things to do than insult this family head.
“Please instruct us,” Arthur and Eam immediately bowed respectfully.
Belinda and Aegnis nearby seemed despondent as they viewed this scene. No matter how they felt, being able to subdue a rank 5
bloodline Warlock and a peak rank 6 Monarch had already proved Leylin’s incomparable strength. “Alright. I’m planning to open up a plane that serves as a passage for trade between the two sides. The supervisor here will be Eam, with Arthur assisting. Any questions?” “The Lord’s will is our command!” Eam and Arthur lowered their noble heads deferentially, and appeared exceptionally docile. They had no resistance towards Leylin. “Good. Your rewards shall be 30% of the net profits of the trade!” Leylin did not hold back at all and disregarded the previous agreement. With his strength, the two of them would not even resist even if he got them to work without any benefits. 30% of the profits was already very kind of him. No, it wasn’t quite kindness either. Leylin sincerely wanted to keep the trade here going, and as a huge source of revenue for his organisation, it was necessary to give the two supervisors here some benefits that would motivate them to work harder. If not, if he put too much pressure on them things would only work out in the short run. There would definitely be long term problems. While Leylin would be able to suppress and pressure the others to keep control, was it necessary? His own organisation would live well and eat well, while the scraps would be given to those outside. That was the way for things to maintain like this in the long run. “Understood!” Eam immediately agreed. While it was much lower than the previous agreement, he was already very satisfied. With such differences in their strength, how could they come to a fair agreement? The Lyas family’s benefits had shrunk by a large amount, and he would still need to share it with King Arthur. The other man would take most of the profits, but there were still benefits for himself. He wouldn’t need to invest anything at all and it would still be considered a source of income for the Lyas Family. In addition… Eam peeked at Arthur beside him.
With benefits as the reason to tie them down, it was already quite a good situation for the Lyas family as this would give them a connection with King Arthur, not to mention the more terrifying Leylin.

“That’s not a problem.” Arthur naturally did not oppose this. He, who had already reached peak Breaking Dawn, knew even better how terrifying existences of laws were. If Leylin were ever to rage, the Arthur Kingdom could very well be destroyed in a single night. Hence, no matter how harsh the conditions were, Arthur could only agree. Leylin was evidently not using his strength to force him to work without any benefits, so he would not consider resisting.

Leylin had guessed what they might be thinking, and since everything was within his expectations, he nodded. Though the two Magi definitely had their own selfish motives, they definitely wouldn’t dare show their unhappiness under the knowledge of Leylin’s crushing strength; as long as they could maintain their distribution of benefits, that is.

“Another thing. Belinda and Aegnis will become my representatives and supervisors in the subterranean world, managing the matters here,” Leylin then looked towards Belinda and Aegnis.

In his calculations, these two snake females would be the main people in charge and the key to expanding his organisation. The two levels of trade profits from both the subterranean world and the surface could not only could be used for expansion costs for the organisation, but would also be more than enough for these three to lead a luxurious lifestyle with resources for their cultivation.

‘The trade they were talking about… both sides exceed a continent of the Purgatory World in surface area. The benefits we’ll be getting…’ Aegnis made a quick calculation in her mind. Just a thought of the future profits left her wavering, unable to contain herself.
She had easily deduced that the profits of such trade would be an astronomical number. Even her previous family would go crazy over it, and yet Leylin had merely tossed this over to them easily. It only made the gap between them more obvious.

‘Is this… the way a dignitary thinks? Even the wealth of two continents is dispensable to him?’ Aegnis stared at the unfathomable Leylin, and then glanced at Belinda beside her, clenching her fists and making a decision.

“But… I’ve never done it before. Is that okay?” Belinda hesitated slightly, perhaps worried that she could not complete the task that Leylin had entrusted to her well.

However, this attitude resulted in a smile on Leylin’s face, because this meant that she had already accepted the task, “You don’t need to worry about that. I’ve always had faith in your capabilities. Besides, Aegnis, Arthur and the rest will help you!”

“In that case, I’ll agree to it,” Belinda nodded.

“Good,” Leylin nodded, and numerous rays of lights were emitted. *Boom!* It was as if the world stopped in that instant. Even the most powerful amongst them, King Arthur, felt like he was a little boat in the vigorous, furious waves of the ocean, about to capsize at any moment.

A streak of light shot in his direction, and he instinctively caught it. Arthur retreated several steps, looking stunned as he saw a black rune sizzling in his hands.

The illusions had vanished. Now, he found that everyone around had the same rune in their hands.

“This is my mark, and also a token that can be used for all trades. You can also use it to contact me. It’ll go through as long as I’m in the Magus World…” With strength incomparably close to that of laws, all sorts of miracles appeared about Leylin. A law rune that represented himself was just a part of it.

Being given this symbol was tantamount to being branded by
Leylin. Even if they met with other existences of laws, they could get special treatment. Of course, that did not include his nemesis like the Snake Dowager, in which case they would meet a face worse than death.

After this ceremonial procedure, those with the runes could even make sacrifices to Leylin, getting boosts in power from his law of devouring that could fill their bodies.

“Though the Magus World isn’t suitable for the large-scaled path of sacrifices, it should be able to sustain my unique method of passing on my power. With this, your safety is guaranteed.” Leylin briefly explained the usage of the rune, while Arthur and Eam knelt in elation.

“Why are there only two? How about Sophia’s?” Belinda questioned without any restraint.

“I gave it to her last night,” Leylin’s lips quirked in a slight smile, but Belinda immediately turned red as she cursed.

“Alright. You can return and make all the necessary preparations. Three days later, I will unseal the passage!” Leylin waved his hand, and the rest withdrew. Even Belinda, who looked like she had something to say, retreated unwillingly after being pulled away by Aegnis.

“What a beautiful world!” Leylin headed to the window, pulling the curtains open. There were many Lyas family members around, as well as the distant scenery, all within his line of sight.
Just looking at beautiful scenery is also a way of enjoying yourself!” Leylin’s eyes had a different look to them. He had previously been afflicted with the Allsnake Curse, and had no choice but to struggle against the heavens. He had taken the risk to enter the Purgatory World, dancing on the edge of a blade with no extra time to do something as mundane as enjoying the scenery.

Now, however, after completely ridding himself of the curse on his bloodline, his body of laws, near rank 7, would last him over 100,000 years.

With this much more time, he finally had time to breathe, released from his tight schedule. This was why he had spent so much effort on dealing with this bilateral trade.

He had previously been someone who could not even take care of himself, so why would he bother with others? Now, with a lot more time and freedom, Leylin finally had the chance to consider the development of Ouroboros Clan, the Farlier Family and so on.

“Taking care of this land and its profits should be able to keep the Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan living well for thousands of years if managed well… and then there’s the tiny issue in the central continent…” Leylin stroked his chin.

He was planning to use around a decade to take care of matters in the central continent and perhaps the whole surface of the Magus World. Besides getting his own people to succeed in life, he wanted
to build up his own power. Whatever it was, based on the oral agreement with Ignox, he was going to have to take care of this land anyway. The subterranean existences would pay no heed to his actions.

‘In their eyes, the surface of the Magus World is not only incredibly small, but also produces few resources. It possesses no resources beneficial for those existences of laws. Amongst the Magi, there are only a few rank 6s, and it’s a remote and desolate place. They’re not losing out by tossing it to me. After all, Ignox was tasked with the first to fourth levels underground, and each level is comparable to the surface world…’

Of course, the reason Ignox had done so was because Leylin had yet to properly advance, and he wanted to ease his work.

‘That’s better for me anyway. I’ll definitely go to the depths of the core, but not yet. Furthermore, I can do a lot with the surface world when it’s completely under my control…’

……

Three days later, in front of the Thunderbird Holyland. Numerous members of the Lyas family, under Eam and Arthur’s lead, gazed at the figure before them with respect. Leylin had long since gotten used to this and continued to discuss matters with Aegnis. “How has the progress for building the organisation been?”

“It’s going alright,” Aegnis tucked her long hair behind her ear. She had changed into feminine attire which made the lines of her body more gentle, as if she was trying to show off her feminine charm.

“In terms of manpower, the Lyas family and Arthur Empire have already provided me with a lot authority and help. Of course, I hope to use my own people.”

Aegnis seemed very capable and experienced as she said,” Tryxis,
for instance, is the second-in-command of the subterranean organisation Shadow Toro. He recently eliminated the head and brought the whole organisation to us. His earth elemental spells aren’t half bad and he has some experience commanding organisations. He’s been a great help!”

“Oh?” Leylin’s truesoul force swept forth in an instant, and all the details of this Tryxis that Aegnis had pointed out appeared before his eyes.

“He recognized the power of our side so quickly, and his acts were so brazen… He has pretty good foresight…” It was a pity that this was all. No matter how smart he was, he barely entered Leylin and Aegnis’ sights. In the face of absolute crushing strength, scheming lost all effect.

“You can decide on that with Belinda. I’m giving you free reign. Now, let me completely remodel the ruins. The current place just isn’t suitable as a trading base.” Leylin floated into the air like a god. An awe-inspiring might like that of a divinity descended in that instant, causing many low-ranked Magi to faint.

A howling Targaryen appeared, with a pair of monstrous wings, single malevolent horn and pair of sharp claws growing from its belly. A unique spiritual force wave was transmitted to every Magus in the surroundings. “Hss… I am the king of devouring, the ruler of chaos and the void!”

“Devouring… the king of devouring? Is this the power that the lord wields?” King Arthur murmured to himself, taking the initiative to kneel. This was his aspiration, the end he desired on his path. With his lead, the Magi behind him all sank to their knees one by one. Immediately after, they heard Leylin speak softly in mid-air, “Innate skill: Devour!”

*Crash!* It was as if a terrifying invisible mouth swept through the sky, large enough that once it passed the entirety of the ruins had disappeared. Whether it was the defensive spell patterns of the
ruins or the seals and reinforcements added by the Lyas family over the years, they could not affect it at all.

There was no lightning, no flames. Nor was there a backlash from any of the mechanisms in the ruins. It was as if the place had never existed. A wide expanse had opened up in the ground. An aerial view would show that the ruins had gone missing, replaced by a terrifyingly deep pit that looked like something had eaten into it.

Many of the Magi were dazed, but some of the younger ones grew zealous as they cried out, “The master of devouring!” “The devouring ruler!”

“All the unnecessary facilities have been destroyed, only the sealed pathway remains.” A dark door brimming with light appeared slowly deep within the pit, seeming desolate.

“Let there be soil!” Leylin spoke faintly, and the earth howled. The ground trembled violently, and large amounts of earth squirmed upwards to fill the deep pit. The power of an existence that comprehended laws was divine, terrifying beyond belief.

“Moving mountains and suppressing seas with just a single thought! Is this the ability of a rank 7 Magus of laws?” Leylin was very satisfied with his current control over laws. Through his comprehension and usage of laws, he even had the misconception that he was the world.

“Everything in the world is composed of and affected by laws. With my control and influence using my law of Devour, even if I have less than 0.01% control over of other laws, it is enough to unite the laws to form a fundamental change in everything…” Leylin looked intoxicated by this.

Rank 1 to 3 Magi might be more powerful than regular humans. Those at and above rank 4, the Morning Stars, Radiant Moons and Breaking Dawns had all grasped the power to massacre and destroy countries. Those at rank 7 and above at the realm of laws lived and breathed with worlds, like the gods that overlooked all life from
high ground. The radiance of eternity was already beginning to appear before Leylin. “Let everything that exists in this world continue to exist for all eternity!” Leylin’s voice seemed to hold within holy light, scattering all over the beautiful surface of the earth. *Rumble!* A brand new construction with multiple buildings rose, encircling the spatial passage at the heart of it and creating a gigantic triumphal arch. Numerous green stones flickered with dazzling lights on the construction. “This is… Everlasting solidification spells, reinforcement runes, conscient runes.. The effect from this combination is enough for all the buildings to last without corrosion for above ten thousand years. That’s the effect of only one sentence from my lord…” A white-haired Magus with thick presbyopic glasses twitched as if he had epilepsy, eyes even glimmering with tears of happiness, “This is the pinnacle of magic, to be able to directly leverage the power of the original laws?” “All seals shall corrode, and only the passage between the two areas shall remain eternal!” *Hualala!* The arched door of light immediately emitted elegant and beautiful luster. The layers on the seal crumbled one after the other, and the door of light unceasingly expanded until it merged with the whole triumphal arch, emitting shining rays of light. “The spatial passage that has been reinforced with my laws should be able to be maintained for thousands of years even if it works in overdrive everyday.” Blue rays flashed in Leylin’s eyes, giving him this information in an instant. After grasping the power of laws, his thoughts were not lacking at
all to the ultimate brain of his previous life, and perhaps even exceeded it.
Only the A.I. Chip, which had been with Leylin all this while and merged with his body had gained immense benefits, and could therefore surpass Leylin’s mind when it came to calculations.
The tremors of the ground continued, and numerous buildings kept rising from the ground. In the blink of an eye, a whole Magus City had been established.
“This area shall be the base of your organisation, and the name… Let’s call it ‘Alabaster City!’”
Leylin smiled at Belinda as he spoke, and saw the glint in her eyes. With Aegnis’ command, the many Magi before surged into the city, beginning more meticulous work and alterations, as well as any moving required.
Leylin was accompanied by Belinda and Aegnis and came to the heart of the spatial door.
“You’re not going back with me?”
Leylin glanced at Belinda. This pair had already accepted him long ago, and even Aegnis seemed to have an inclination to do so too. It was just a matter of time.
“No, I won’t go! Don’t you have a wife there?”
Belinda bit her lips stubbornly, “I want to stay here in the city you made for me to guard all that is yours!”
Leylin had already guessed Belinda’s thoughts. That matched with his wish anyway.
“As you wish! This place will belong to you. Even the organisation on the surface will have to heed your words after coming here.”
Leylin nodded while he stepped into the spatial door.
In a flash of light, Leylin’s figure disappeared immediately, and reappeared in the Eternal River pocket dimension.

“Mm, let me think…” Leylin’s expression was rather intrigued, “The Twilight Zone, central continent, south coast and now the new subterranean world, it seems that I have more and more companions too…”

‘Could it be that this is the realm for me to spread my seed across the world, and father many illegitimate children?’ Leylin thought, rather speechlessly.

“However, in terms of diversity, the more base samples there are, the higher the probability of mutated bloodlines cropping up. Belinda and the others’ Alabaster Devilsnake and three-headed python bloodline combined with my own Targaryen bloodline, is something to look forward to…”

Leylin’s followed the customs of ‘when in Rome, do as the Romans do’ he had already accepted the Magus World’s traditions and did not feel like he was doing anything inappropriate.

“Only, compared to gathering them together and forming an enormous harem, perhaps scattering them across the continent like this would be easier for them to accept…” Leylin stroked his chin and had a slight headache, and soon stopped thinking about it.

The essence of his soul force began to slowly spread along the laws that were everywhere around him, making Leylin grasp everything around him in an instant.
Afterwards his mouth slightly fell agape, and he made a small sound of surprise.
“I never thought that they would arrive so quickly!” Accompanying Leylin’s thoughts, several figures appeared in the main hall.
The first was Freya, carrying an infant. She looked rather more mature now, with the bearing of a young married woman. She looked as if she could only see Leylin, and nothing else.
Gilbert, Emma and the other higher ranks in the Ouroboros Clan also appeared immediately. Even the Bloodline Alliance’s rank 5 Jeffrey appeared, who couldn’t stop staring at Leylin with a bewildered expression.
Towards the back of the crowd, there were still two others. The heads of the light and dark Magi, Nonov and Anye, forced a smile towards him.
“Ley…Leylin, you’ve returned!” Freya’s eyes were filled with tears as she approached Leylin.
“Yes, I’ve returned,” Leylin smiled at her, and picked up Syre easily.
His child was now a few years old, and he sized up this rather familiar stranger with an inquisitive expression.
After seeing him, Leylin immediately thought of his eldest son in the Twilight Zone, Daniel, who was being raised by Celine. He was presumably as big as Syre.
“After I received your news, and was made aware of the teleportation spell formation here, we immediately brought the elites of the Ouroboros Clan and came here.”
“Mm, we took control of this pocket dimension on our way, and all of the entrances have been guarded by our Kemoyin warlocks,” Emma smiled at Leylin and Freya and told them their reason for coming before, with a strange glow in her eyes.
Only Nonov and Anye stood at the back, and exchanged glances with each other. They then looked at how Leylin couldn’t care less
about them and their hearts were filled with bitterness. They naturally now knew that Leylin had deceived them before, and monopolised everyone’s thoughts here.
However, even if they knew, what could they do about it? The Ouroboros clan’s strength, although it wasn’t particularly outstanding in the central continent, was still considered absolutely monstrous on the south coast. Those who are known as light and dark Magi could not be their opponent at all, and so they had immediately occupied the entire Eternal River pocket dimension.
With just Gilbert and Emma, the two Rank 4 warlocks were enough to make all the Magi bow down before them. Especially once they knew Leylin was actually a Rank 6 Breaking Dawn Warlock, the highest ranked Magi of the entire central continent, they didn’t dare to breathe one word of complaint and dejectedly surrendered their benefits.
Leylin could clearly predict all of their thoughts, and was only slightly shocked at how quickly they had acted. Even the Bloodline Alliance had been alarmed.

“Ley…Lord Leylin! Was the earlier transmission…real…?”
At this moment, Gilbert respectfully bowed at the waist, and his eyes were full of expectations.
At the same time, Jeffrey who had been silently standing at the side nervously clenched his fist.

“Oh, so it was because of this! The declaration I made when I broke through to Rank 6, all of you heard it as well?” Leylin smiled a little.

“So… So you’re saying that… You…have already broken through the bloodline shackles and entered the realm of Breaking Dawn?” Jeffrey nervously swallowed hard and asked in a hoarse voice.

“Yes, I have already completely broken free of the bloodline shackles, and broken through to the Breaking Dawn Throne,” Leylin nodded, there was nothing in particular for him to deny.
Also at the same time, he released a little of the imposing aura that he had been suppressing.
With a loud hiss like the long warble of mountain rivers, an overwhelming, earth-shattering bloodline power with the essence of soul force swept across them. A projection of his true soul seemed to fill the room with the golden light of the sun, and rays of light seemed to pour down upon them. A powerful feeling of oppression could be felt, and only Freya and Syre at Leylin’s side seemed completely unaware of it.
Syre even opened his eyes widely, and seemed to try and grasp at the golden flames of soul force with his delicate, plump little hands. Naturally, the powerful flames of his soul was controlled by Leylin to be like an exquisitely gentle spring rain to Syre, and did not harm him in the slightest.
“The emperor! The bloodline warlock emperor! The emperor of our Kemoyin warlocks!” Gilbert and Emma kneeled down, with a face seemingly full of tears. They had felt a hugely imposing aura from Leylin, which was far greater than the aura of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor that he previously possessed. This kind of feeling was as if he was their entire universe, and also the progenitor of their bloodline.
Freya nervously caught her husband’s hand, as if she was afraid he would slip away if she wasn’t careful, “The illusion I saw earlier was true, you’ve really become the new progenitor of our bloodline?”
“Yes, it’s true. From now onwards, our Kemoyin Warlocks have all completely escaped the Snake Dowager’s suppression!” Leylin nodded as he stroked Syre’s head.
“Our wish! Our Ouroborous clan, and all the Kemoyin Warlock’s long-cherished wish has finally been realised…” Emma said, while choking on her sobs.
The Ouroboros clan was soaked in the tears of blood
overwhelming suffering] that the overpowering bloodline shackles caused, and now they finally had someone who succeeded in breaking the curse. The inspiration and hope that this success brought was absolutely incomparable.

Leylin now was in the position where even if he made preposterous commands, the entire Ouroboros clan would perhaps cheerfully accept them.

“As expected, a rank 6 warlock, the power of the bloodline emperor! No wonder I had no ability to resist when you willed us to move here,” Jeffrey mumbled, but the fact is he had gone in the wrong direction.

A normal bloodline emperor, even if he could easily murder rank 5 warlocks, could not render them entirely unresisting, and teleport them to places. Only those who were more powerful than laws could do this sort of thing, but the scope of Jeffrey’s knowledge was too weak, and he had never seen a more powerful bloodline. Therefore he had naturally misunderstood and made this connection, and Leylin could not be bothered to correct him.

In any case, in their view it didn’t matter whether it was a rank 6 bloodline warlock or a rank 7 with the power of laws. For them, this was completely unreachable and they were powerless to resist.

“According to the prophecies of legends old, the most powerful Bloodline Monarch has finally appeared! I didn’t think that the prophesised one was you, and not Bevis!” Jeffrey said, with a complicated expression on his face.

“So you’re saying that... You had heard what Gilbert and the others said about the bloodline manifesto, and specifically came over to check because of your suspicions?” Leylin stroked his chin, looking very calm.

In the entire central continent, there was now no one who could deal with his strength. Naturally they remained extremely motionless, and there seemed to be nothing to worry about.
“That’s right, once we heard his declaration, we all thought it was unbelievable. If it wasn’t for elder Alpha hypnotising many Kemoyin bloodline descendants, and receiving the same news from everyone, we probably would have thought that you were drumming up a scam…” Jeffrey’s expression was rather complicated, as the Bloodline Alliance had pinned all its hopes on Bevis, and paid much less attention to other bloodline geniuses like Leylin. After all, as far as the Warlocks knew, the idea that bloodline shackles could not be broken had already been accepted as unshakeable common sense. As a result, compared to those warlocks with the potential to only reach Rank 5, one can understand the reason why they had put most of their hopes on Bevis, who had a rank 6 bloodline. However, Leylin had now not only risen to a rank 6 Bloodline Warlock, but he had even broken through the bloodline shackles, the curse that afflicted all warlocks. How could Jeffery not be amazed by this?

“Perhaps once the news spreads, the entire Bloodline Alliance, no, the entire central continent will go mad! And also there’s Bevis… Oh dear…” Jeffrey shook his head.

“Mm, after I finishing handling my business in the South Coast, I will definitely take you back!” Leylin nodded his head, “Now, please give me some time with my wife and my child, I want to attend my duties as a husband and father…”

Seeing Leylin so impolitely chasing him away, Jeffrey and the others didn’t dare to resist, and left the great hall after politely bowing.

Once they left the place and spread the news, it did not concern Leylin as to what kind of riotous scene appeared. Because at this time, Freya had already tightly grabbed Leylin’s hands and began to burst into tears.
And Leylin tenderly patted the back of Freya’s hands and placated Syre.
After this was all done, night had already fallen.
“So you mean… During all this time, not only did you go underground, you even directly went to the Purgatory World, and even saw the Snake Dowager, Trial’s Eye and all those legendary beings?”
Leylin and his family were now sitting at a sumptuous dinner table, and Leylin occasionally spoke a little of his experiences– of course it was the censored version, and he had hidden many of his secrets, but just that version was enough to shake Freya to the core.
“I’m sorry my beloved, I could not accompany you,” Freya’s eyes seemed to redden, covered in a layer of sparkling tears.

“No, you’ve raised Syre. For me, and our Farlier family, this is the greatest contribution,” Leylin stood up with the adorable little fellow.

As his son had inherited his Serpent Emperor bloodline, his appetite was enormous. Occasionally he was full of uncontrollable energy and emotional issues with his bloodline power arose. Naturally, for high-ranked Warlocks, these couldn’t be considered problems at all.

“...In that case, the bloodline shackles of Kemoyin Warlocks are all gone?” Freya thought of the most crucial point.

“No, strictly speaking, only my bloodline shackles have disappeared. Your bloodline origins however, now originate from me instead,” Leylin spoke truthfully, “but with my help, it won’t be a problem for you to advance to rank 6. As for Syre, since he has my bloodline, there’s an even greater probability for him to advance.”

“What do you mean, an even greater probability?”

“Syre, come here!” Leylin smiled as he waved Syre over.

“Father!” The little boy ran to Leylin, with traces of fruit juice and grease still on his hands, “Hug!”
“Alright,” Leylin smiled as he hugged the boy to his chest.
“Syre, my blood, I give you my blessing. You will be blessed with incomparable glory, and the holy light will be at your side forever!” Leylin declared.
At that moment, the world seemed to come to a standstill. A tall phantom of a Targaryen winged snake appeared behind him. Leylin assumed a solemn expression on his face, as if he was a God proclaiming an oracle.
It was a pity that all of the maidservants had long fallen into a dead faint, and only Freya was able to stubbornly remain clear-headed. However, the powerful phantom behind Leylin was also faintly trembling.
Syre was already fast asleep, but a small phantom of a Kemoyin Serpent Emperor appeared on his skin.
“Although I could do this after you’ve grown up, but it would be easier to advance the bloodline when you’re small…”
There was a tumultuous expression in Leylin’s eyes as he said, “My son, Syre, thou shalt inherit my endless and eternal strength, and become the Ouroboros Clan’s King!”
“From today onwards, thou art Ouroboros, the serpent of infinity, Ouroboros!”
With a hissing sound, the Targaryen winged snake behind Leylin opened its jaws widely and poured out a great deal of smoke, which engulfed the phantom of the Kemoyin Serpent Emperor completely.
The smoke finally transformed into a cocoon that had the phantom of the serpent emperor wrapped up within it. It seemed to be undergoing some mysterious metamorphosis.
Syre was still sound asleep, but his aura had clearly changed.
“This… This is…” As Freya saw this, she had completely lost her ability to speak.
“He must be very tired, do take him away and let him have a good
rest. Take care to increase his milk by several times today and tomorrow,” Leylin smiled as he withdrew the phantom snake and his immense power, to the point where he appeared to be a normal Warlock. He had a gentle smile on his face, but the way he spoke made it clear that his orders were to be obeyed.

“Yes… Of course,” Freya absent-mindedly carried Syre away, and one could tell that she was mired in bewilderment and shock— the power that Leylin had shown was already beyond the mortal realm. Even the Blazing Flame Monarch was infinitely inferior compared to him.

After completing this, Leylin walked to the window alone. His gaze seemed to pass through the Eternal River pocket dimension to the starry sky outside.

“Daniel, my eldest son!” Leylin said in a low voice.

His soul force exploded with power that seemed to surpass the laws of the world, and penetrated directly into the Twilight Zone.

“This… What is this power?”

His young wife, Celine, had a look of horror on her face as she was awed by the powerful force.

With a loud crash, innumerable black particles began to converge into an enormous face. The intimidating aura flowed from its pupils gave off a suffocating feeling.

However Celine felt incomparably familiar with that face and said, “Ley…Leylin? You’re Leylin!”

“My son, Daniel!”

The enormous dark face continued to speak, and Daniel struggled violently out of Celine’s arms and ran towards the dark face.

“Thou will inherit my devouring and Dreamscape ability, and become the World Serpent, Jormungandr!”

Along with the face’s proclamation, laws of ‘Devour’ and dreamforce poured like a stream from it and engulfed Daniel completely, immediately changing him at the cellular level.
“I’ve returned, please take care of Daniel!”
At the end of the ceremony, Leylin’s voice came from the enormous dark face, and soon after disappeared without a trace. However, the powerful feeling from earlier remained. Celine stroked her face, and was finally convinced that she wasn’t dreaming or was affected by some illusion.

“Daniel, my Daniel!” Celine flew to Daniel’s side, but after she realised he was only unconscious and not dead, she finally breathed a sigh of relief.
At this moment, she discovered that Daniel had slightly changed. The most noticeable change was the black rune that he was tightly grasping in his hand.
This black rune had a pure quality to it, as if it was the only one of its kind in this world. It had an inscription of a demonic Winged Devilsnake, which seemed to be connected to some unfathomably powerful being.
“This is Leylin’s aura, this is his rune!”
Celine stowed the black rune away with a look of astonishment on her face, and looking at the sleeping Daniel, she couldn’t help but to mutter to herself, “Leylin... What level has he reached now?”

……

“From today onwards, the infinite serpent Ouroboros and the World Serpent Jormungandr will be the two main bloodlines of my Farlier family,” Leylin leaned against the balcony, with a tumultuous expression within his eyes.
As Syre was the son of his first wife, Leylin envisaged him as inheriting his eternal and infinite power. However, this was only a seedling of a thought, and he would only be able to let Syre walk a future path to an even stronger bloodline if Leylin himself continued to constantly improve himself.
As for Daniel, his eldest son, his inherited abilities of Devour and dreamforce was already stabilised and mature, and would very quickly become his main strength in battle.

“Speaking of this, Syre’s bloodline still has far more potential for growth, and is full of unlimited possibilities. However, it is still far from perfect! And Daniel’s bloodline is the most violent, but the future has already been fixed for him,” Leylin stroked his chin, a smile blooming on his face.

“Their present and the future will be up to them!”

As an existence that was infinitely close to Rank 7, Leylin now had the ability to do what many high-ranking Magi thought was unimaginable, which was to make use of origin force.

To pass on his own bloodline, and even make a copy of his own abilities, for Leylin it wasn’t a particularly difficult thing.

Only, the paths these two bloodline branches would follow was just within Leylin’s imagination, and with the A.I. Chip’s assisted deductions, it still had some imperfect aspects.

In reality, the titles he had given earlier such as the the World Serpent and the Infinite Serpent were only given because they sounded nice, coupled with his momentary bad taste.

However, he had the confidence that after several hundred years had passed, these two mature bloodlines would absolutely dominate the entire central continent, and eclipse other bloodline warlocks.

Even when Leylin had arrived at the Rank 9 Eternal Realm, these two bloodlines of his would not be even a little bit inferior to those legends of old.

“Although I have already helped them to remodel and advance their bloodline, their bloodlines all originate from me, and for the time being their highest potential is only to rank 6. They can only continue to advance once I break through to a higher rank…”

Leylin carefully pondered this situation. He was thinking of
establishing his clan, reproducing his bloodline, and investigating
the probability of evolving his bloodline, and these were all tasks
that the A.I. Chip was constantly researching as well.
Leylin very much looked forward to the surprise the bloodlines he
had passed on would bring him, after going through nature’s
survival of the fittest and natural selection.

......

The limitless azure sea, as far as the eye could see, with white
waves sweeping across it.
Leylin and the others stood on the deck of an enormous sailboat,
and their bodies moved up and down with the waves.
“So you’re saying that the work of transporting Kemoyin Warlocks
to the south coast is still ongoing?”
Leylin supported himself on the railing and slightly furrowed his
brows, “This speed is really far too slow. Within a month, the entire
Ouroboros clan’s headquarters must be moved to this place, only
then do we have enough people to develop the subterranean
commerce!”
Although he had only complained a little, Emma and Gilbert broke
out in a cold sweat behind him.
In the end, it was only due to Gilbert and Leylin’s earlier
camaraderie as a master and disciple, that he could stand out and
say, “The south coast has many dangerous areas, and some have
even reached the extent of Rank 4 in danger. We can only use
reinforced models of airships and ship holds, and dispatch a
Morning Star force to escort them, and consequently the pace is
slow…”
The dangers near the south coast weren’t considered much to
Morning Star Magi, but for those Rank 3 Magi, it was as if it was a
natural barrier to them.
“Mm, although your argument makes sense, you really have to increase the speed!”
“Of course we all want to seize the generous profits of subterranean commerce as quickly as possible, so it’s a pity…” Emma and Gilbert exchanged a glance, with a wry smile on their faces.
“On my map, this most dangerous area is the Dragon Whales territorial waters here?”
“Yes it is, my lord!” Emma involuntarily answered him.
“Very good, then perhaps I can help!” Leylin smiled lightly, but his expression suddenly turned icy, “Come out now!”
A ghastly sound with icy majesty could be heard along the surface of the sea, but it was the energy undulations that came from their periphery that made Gilbert and Emma’s expressions change drastically.
A heavy noise sounded from the bottom of the ocean and that was followed by a terrifying shadow, constantly emitting strong life force undulations. The pressure from its gigantuan body alone created a tsunami of magnitude 10, causing the ship that Leylin was on to waver violently.

“Float!” Gilbert commanded with a sharp voice.

*Phew! Phew!* Thick streams of air sounded with unbounded energy and propped the entire ship, resulting in it being suspended mid-air.

However, things were not so fortunate for the other marine tribes present. A mass of sharks, turtles and a mishmash of sea creatures were carried away in the waves of this catastrophe, many were even crushed to pulps of flesh, dyeing the surrounding waters red with blood.

The shadow grew exponentially, its size comparable to that of a continent. And in the blink of an eye, a huge mountain blade tore through the surface of the sea like a knife blade, revealing an enormous black back.

“T-This…is the Dragonwhale?!” Emma’s jaw dropped.

“The leader amongst them, more accurately. And it could be the totem of the marine tribe!” Leylin’s smile faded quickly. “Keep the noise down!”
The boundless sea calmed in tandem to Leylin’s order. Two eyes the size of planets roamed in the deep sea, with beams of light projecting out of them. A phantom appeared, and it showed a middle-aged marine tribe man.

“Ulaz is here to meet my lord!”

“A rank 6 king of the Dragonwhales! His physical size is already equivalent to that of a small continent! Thank god only rank 4 Dragonwhale appeared instead of this one when we were previously moving…” Gilbert’s eyes narrowed and he immediately thought that he was hallucinating.

“What? He called Leylin ‘My lord’? Aren’t they of the same rank? Moreover, a Dragon-whale with such an impressive size “Are you the one in charge of the Dragonwhale territorial waters, Ulaz?” Leylin readily asked.

“Yes my lord, as well as the neighbouring few islets and the continent’s marine tribe!” This soul phantom called Ulaz replied in a cute manner.

Even the lowest ranked Dragonwhale could create great storms and waves in the south coast before, which led to great losses, and even Leylin had heard of it back when he was a Rank 1 or Rank 2 Magi. Now however, not even the strongest Dragonwhale King was trash worth mentioning in his eyes.

“This form is abundant in bloodline force and if I devour it, the most it will increase my constitution by is 0.003!’ Leylin’s blue eyes flashed as he instantly got the answer, and the Dragonwhale King suddenly shivered underwater.

‘It’s too little, and I also still have other uses for it!’ Leylin inwardly shook his head and gave up on devouring the Dragonwhale.

“Ulaz, I have something for you to do,” a powerful force from Leylin, who possessed power over the creature’s life or death, naturally began to speak to it.
“My lord, please command me, your humble servant will not refuse under any circumstances!” For the same reason, after sensing Leylin’s unfathomable power and knowing its life was in Leylin’s hands, the Dragonwhale King answered with the utmost respect.

“Very good, I am the Ouroboros Clan’s elder, and should you see the flag of the Ouroboros Clan hung on any transportation, you are not allowed to attack them, and must even protect them, do you understand?”

“I will follow your command, almighty expert! I will also send my children as escorts for your ships!” Ulaz delightedly agreed.

“Very good,” Leylin nodded. After he showed his intent to try to catch him, the enormous Dragonwhale disappeared from the ocean surface, as if it was being chased away by some powerful magic.

“For the south coast, the rank 6 Dragonwhale King is an undefeatable existence…” Leylin stroked his chin and said, “Fortunately, it didn’t pay much attention to the south coast in the past, or perhaps it had been dormant, otherwise the entire south coast could not endure its fury…”

Just the gathering of the Dragonwhale’s children could isolate the south coast from the outside world, and if the Dragonwhale King itself personally attacked them, looking at its form, it could have easily devastated the entire continent.

After all, although the south coast liked to toot its own horn as a continent, from the view of those Magi from the central continent, it was only a slightly larger island.

“Did you hear that? Move everyone as soon as possible! I trust that there won’t be any dangers from now on,” Leylin said to the two Kemoyin warlocks after following the Dragonwhale King’s departure with his eyes.

“U-Understood!” Gilbert wiped the cold sweat from his brow. Just seeing Ulnaz from earlier made him feel fearful in his heart.

And the person who could send the powerful Dragonwhale
bending its knee, what rank had Leylin reached?
“Lord L-Leylin! Would it be possible for you to tell us your current rank?”
Jeffrey, who had been equally terrified, stood at the side. He was more powerful than Gilbert and the others, and was already a rank 5 Radiant Moon warlock. However, because of this, he could understand the Dragonwhale’s power even more.
At the same time, he began to perceive Leylin’s change.
In any case, even if it was the entire central continent’s strongest monarch, could not be on the same level as the rank 6 Dragonwhale King, and this gave Jeffrey an enormous shock.
“Me? I’m still a rank 6 warlock!”
Leylin smiled and hid nothing.
“How could this be?”
“However, I am only half a step away from rank 7,” the latter half of Leylin’s sentence sent the warlocks on the deck into a sluggish state.
“Seven… Rank 7! The rumoured god, with the existence of laws?”
Jeffrey’s eyes widened and his mouth gaped wide open, as if he was an enormous toad. He foolishly looked at Leylin as he entered the hold of the ship.
“Duke Gilbert! Duchess Emma! Please could you confirm if I imagined that?”
After a moment of great bafflement, only then did Jeffrey try his best to readjust his expression back into place, and involuntarily ask.
“I’m afraid that you didn’t mishear, your royal highness Prince Jeffrey!”
Gilbert and Emma exchanged a glance with a wry smile on their faces and said, “However, we’re already quickly getting used to it. Lord Leylin has always been good at creating hopes and miracles!”
Now even Gilbert would not dare to consider himself as Leylin’s
mentor anymore. After all, he was an existence that was reaching rank 7! Rank 7! What could it mean? In the ancient times, it would still be considered the position of a celebrated expert. The conqueror of many worlds, many native tribes could only tremble and weep… And now, the Ouroboros clan had the strength of this rank? Gilbert realised that he could only giggle at this thought, and Emma was also leaning towards it.

“Rank 7? Rank 7, ah… Bevis, Offa, your plans will all come to nothing!” Jeffrey could only react to that after a long time, and suddenly sighed with a lonely expression on his face. No matter who it was, once they had dealt with Leylin for some time they would feel as if they had been struck a blow. Jeffrey had previously felt this several times, but this time it was an even more powerful blow.

“However, with Leylin, the springtime of our bloodline warlocks has arrived!” After he had sighed, Jeffrey’s eyes were filled with hope. Even if the central continent was currently filled with many Monarch ranked Magi, to a semi-rank 7 they were as insignificant as ants. With just one slap, swathes of them would die. Jeffrey could already see the scene where bloodline warlocks would dominate the central continent.

The enormous benefits that conquering the central continent would represent rendered their earlier schemes and all those things they had previously worked hard to defend seem ridiculous. “Perhaps this was exactly what that lord wanted?” Jeffrey looked in the direction of the ship’s hold and secretly clenched his fist, an abnormal red flush appearing on his face.
Under Leylin’s operation, they had completed the long journey from the south coast to the central continent in the space of the few days. When Gilbert and the others had made this journey before, they had needed a few months. If it wasn’t considered to have been too wasteful, Emma had even wanted to set up an astral gate in the south coast. Passing through the astral gate and Morning Star realm’s hub and establishing a transportation spell formation that could cover the entire central continent was an important trump card to the bloodline warlocks. However for the relocation of the entire organisation, operating the astral gate might use up a little of their resources, but the numerous times used would all add up to an enormous figure that would make even Gilbert and the others faint. Even their entire family fortune wouldn’t be able to afford it, and they could only use this long distance travel to carry out their move. The astral gate’s transportation could only be used to transport several people or several important goods, and wasn’t suitable for the work of large-scale relocation. However, after everything was settled, Leylin was already prepared to construct an astral gate on the south coast. Not just the south coast, even in the Twilight Zone and the subterranean world, he wouldn’t leave them out. Although large-scale transportation wasn’t possible, but it would be very convenient for him to transport himself. Within the Morning Star realm. Alpha looked even more old and clumsy compared to before, as if his body had decayed. His eyes, however, still had an energy that was difficult to hide. “Wade, do you think Jeffrey’s previous summon was real?” Offa
rubbed his hands somewhat excitedly. He and Wade were both waiting at the transfer point, and even Bevis was also there, although his face was already incomparably gloomy.

“Jeffrey, as you both and I know, would not deceive us on this sort of thing! In addition, if that person has really risen to rank 6, we can confirm it once we meet face-to-face!”

Wayde said with a smile. Jeffrey’s messages were lagging behind a little, and once these two could truly acknowledge Leylin’s strength, perhaps they would be in for a great surprise.
With a buzz, the Morning Star realm’s transportation area suddenly flickered with a brilliant light.

“They have arrived!” Offa and Wayde’s eyes lit up at the sight, but Bevis’ expression became rather probing and had an unyielding look to it.

Several figures wrapped in a gentle ray of light appeared. After the light had dispersed, it revealed the figure of Leylin, Jeffrey and the others.

“Sir Offa, Sir Wayde and Sir Bevis! It’s been a long time since we met,” Leylin walked in front of the rest and greeted them with a smile.

“Sir Leylin, you- have you broken through?” Offa twisted his hands together, and appeared very excited.

“Yes, I have already reached the realm of rank 6,” Leylin smiled, and behind his back, the essence of his sun-like truesoul appeared, its piercing golden flame sweeping across everyone with powerful energy undulations.

“As expected, this is the power of a Breaking Dawn rank!” Offa’s eyes were bright and filled with tears, “our organisation’s long-cherished wish has finally been realised, Sir Leylin, no, your majesty Leylin! You are the pride of our Bloodline Alliance!”

Offa respectfully bowed, along with Wayde and even a seemingly unwilling Bevis.

“Your highness? Have I been promoted to a new title?” Leylin
seemed to find it funny as he raised his hand to support Offa and the others up from their bow.

With this hierarchy, as Leylin had now advanced to a rank 6 warlock and impressively become a Warlock Emperor, so he was now called ‘his highness.

‘What a funny way to give titles, so when Bevis also advances, wouldn’t the Bloodline Alliance have two highnesses?’

Leylin humorously thought of the aftermath of that scene.

“1557 years, it’s already fully been 1557 years! Our Bloodline Warlock Monarch has finally appeared, but never had I thought that it would be his majesty, Leylin!” Wayde said, which made Bevis’ expression darken.

He was still a rank 5 Warlock, and did not have the strength to act against Leylin. He could only respectfully express his allegiance. No matter how he had schemed before, in front of this absolute strength, it was an insubstantial as a spider’s web that could be brushed away without leaving a trace.

“However, I can also reach that rank. In a hundred more years, very quickly…”

At this moment, Leylin’s gaze had also gone past Offa and Wayde, and had arrived on Bevis.

“Sire Bevis!”

“Yes!” Bevis put in his greatest effort to make his smile slightly more natural, but he disgracefully failed at doing so. His twisted expression made everyone who looked upon it want to laugh.

“Your fog giant bloodline, when amplified by another set of giant’s remains, you still have 87 years left before you break through! Work hard, you still have 65.1% chance of advancing to rank 6,” Leylin said with a smile, and he looked as if he had completely seen through Bevis.

‘How did he know?’ Bevis raised his head with amazement. He had always considered the fog giant’s remains that he had obtained
from Offa as his final hope and trump card, and never had he thought that Leylin would be able to tell.

‘The gap between him and me has grown so big?’ Seeing that Leylin had a greater understanding of his bloodline than he himself, and had even calculated the probability of advancement, dealt a devastating strike to Bevis’ confidence.

Until now, he realised that his actions before made him look like an absolute clown, and he looked extremely ridiculous.

“Lord Leylin!” After Leylin and the others had welcomed them into the headquarters, Offa and his group saw Leylin sit down. They still stood there ramrod-straight, with solemn and respectful expressions on their face.

“Mm! I’ve come to the central continent today to relocate the Ouroboros clan, and also take care of some other trifling matters. After that, I might permanently settle there,” Leylin said. This surface Magus world was all the same to Leylin, and no matter how concentrated the elemental particles were, it would not be of any use to advancing his strength now.

“Relocate? Settle?! Is it because of the subterranean commerce? I’ve heard about it, but please let me speak bluntly, your majesty. Although we Warlocks rely on bloodline power, the south coast’s weak elemental concentration will definitely still affect us…” Offa and the others had anxious expressions on their faces.

Their long-awaited rank 6 Bloodline Monarch had finally appeared, and they thought they could exact their revenge on the central continent, so how could they let Leylin go so easily? Would they really have to wait another hundred years for Bevis? Seeing Offa’s expression, Leylin immediately knew what they were thinking in their heart of hearts. However, he did not expose them.

“Be at ease, I know what you are all concerned about. Before I leave, I’ll settle this matter completely!” Leylin indifferently waved his hand, but Offa and his group were still a little dissatisfied. They
seemed to want to say something else, but they were all stopped in their tracks by Jeffrey’s most severe glare. After Leylin had left, Jeffrey was surrounded by Offa and the others. “What’s the matter? Why did you stop us?” Offa asked very calmly. They had been comrades for a very long time, so he was very clear about how Jeffrey was as a person and knew that he definitely had his own considerations. “The earlier situation shocked me a little too much, and the news from the distant continent was rather delayed, so I couldn’t tell you all about the latest situation…” Jeffrey said with a wry smile, “Lord Leylin is not an average rank 6 Monarch, he is the person that we must pin all our hopes on…”

……

Afterwards, the shocking news began to spread throughout the entire central continent. The Bloodline Union’s Warlock king, Leylin Farlier, had already stepped across the threshold of Breaking Dawn, and entered the realm of rank 6! After the Morning Star space had verified this news, they immediately invited other organisations to attend Leylin’s celebrations. Many powerful Magi organisations and even some Monarchs had one-by-one expressed their intention to come themselves and meet with Leylin. In a short while, the entire Phosphorescence Swamp once again became the gathering point of the central continent, and it seemed like all the Magi were discussing this matter, and how it would affect the central continent.

……
Sky City, the Drifting Garden.
“What?” the parchment in Weyer’s hands dropped to the floor, “How is this possible? He’s already advanced to rank 6, and reached the same status as the Monarch of the Skies? How long has he taken?”
“The Monarch of the Skies has already accepted Leylin’s invitation, and will definitely personally attend. This news is very trustworthy. This is reality, you must get used to it and accept it, my child!” A middle-aged Magi that looked rather similar to Weyers helplessly said.
He knew, of course, how great the shock this news would pose to a genius like Weyers. His small achievements were nothing compared to Leylin. That terrifying fellow’s speed at advancing made all the central continent’s geniuses despair and crumble.
“Being born in the same century as him is your greatest misfortune but also your greatest fortune! I hope you can step out from his shadow,” the middle-aged man looked at Weyers with undisguised concern in his eyes.
“I want to go as well, I want to see exactly how far the gap is between me and him!” Weyers gnashed his teeth, with an obstinate expression all over his face.
“Oh, you…” the middle-aged man helplessly sighed.

……

The reconstruction of Düz City had happened, under the Blazing Flame Monarch’s direction, many slaves put out their utmost effort and had completely rebuilt from the original ruins in the shortest period of time. The sacred flame had been relit, to represent the Blazing Flame Monarch’s strength and might.
Inside the city, within a giant sphere of flames, the golden blaze’s
boiling hot temperature had the power to melt the surrounding buildings.
This phenomenon continued for nearly a few hours, and afterwards a slender figure emerged from the flames.
The person was wrapped in a red cloak, and had a small crown of flame upon their head. It turned out to be Melinda, who was now the Blazing Flame Monarch.
“Over the years, after consuming so many precious materials and the power of Dreamscape Elven stones, finally I have mended my soul to 80% of its original self…”
The present Melinda had not only regrown a new arm, her aura had also reached the stage of rank 6.
“Leylin Farlier! You really have given me a huge shock!” Melinda’s expression was very complicated. She had previously been able to take revenge thanks to Leylin’s help. However, he had attacked at the most crucial point and made her suffer enormous losses. Only now had she been able to recover.
“He’s already broken through to rank 6? How interesting! Even bloodline shackles and the Snake Dowager couldn’t stop him?”
As an old monster who knew of many ancient secrets, Melinda naturally knew what it meant to break through the bloodline shackles— he had the strength to resist the originator of his bloodline!
“It looks as if I can’t take my revenge now, and I even need to try to mend our relations,” Melinda licked her lips with a rich smile on her face.
“Just as well! That freshly caught little fellow would be a rather good gift!”
With Melinda’s thoughts and a loud clap, a fire elf immediately appeared before her.
“Almighty master, please bestow your orders upon me!”
The elf knelt on the floor with a respectful and humble attitude.
“That freshly captured witch, I think she’s called Natasha, command the others to erase her attitude and make her compliant! Put her as one of our guards!”
“Your orders will be put into effect!” The elf spread it’s blazing wings on its back and flew out from the door.
“I really am looking forward to the ceremony!” Melinda laughed brightly, and the fire in the rear hall suddenly grew several times more intense, as if it wanted to scorch the entire sky.
In just a moment, the entire central continent was full of hidden undercurrents as everyone turned their gazes towards the Phosphorescence Swamp.
770 - Beginning The Ceremony

In the Phosphorescence Swamp.
Due to the withdrawal of numerous Warlocks of the Ouroboros Clan, the space had become empty. They were replenished with Warlocks that had been urgently dispatched from the Warlock Union, which was why everything seemed to be in order.
After long talks with Jeffrey, Offa and the rest were now completely subservient to Leylin.
A huge palace constructed to last for eternity, a building which could hold ten thousand people, was now urgently in construction. Large amounts of precious resources were used without fear of the expenses.
“You did well!”
Leylin’s arms were behind his back as he gazed at the high mountains in the distance while speaking to Offa and the rest behind him.
“It is our honour to be able to toil for Your Majesty!” Offa and the other answered respectfully, the gratitude in their eyes genuine.
Their true bodies had already arrived at the Phosphorescence Swamp, rather than staying in the Morning Star Area.
The Warlock Union in the past was far too weak, and could only protect itself by having the rank 5 Warlocks banding together, coupled with the battle might of the fort. For this reason, the true bodies of these rank 5 Warlocks could not leave, and they could
only move about using clones. This was the greatest humiliation to the Warlock Union!
Now, with Leylin around, they had the confidence to exhibit their true bodies under the sun and not having to sneak around like mice in the Morning Star Area. The feelings of gratitude they now had were true.
“By the way, your highness, are you really going to develop here? There may be benefits of the underground trade here, but the central continent is so much more vast!”
Offa spoke slightly hesitantly, but with obvious hope in his expression.
“Though the resources on the central continent are exceptionally plentiful, they’ve long since been taken by the many other organisations.”
Leylin watched Offa with a half-smile on his face, as if he had completely seen through Offa’s thoughts.
“Of course, our organisation can eliminate all those in our way and even launch a Magi hunting campaign and burn them all at stake… And then?”
“And then?” Offa’s face flushed red, evidently being stirred up by Leylin’s words.
“After I disappear, what’s going to happen to you all?”
Leylin’s voice was icy cold, and left every Warlock’s first deathly pale as if they had fallen into a world of ice.
“Why? Your Highness, you’ve already entered the realm of laws. What is there on the continent that can be a threat to you?”
Jeffrey and the others could not comprehend.
In answer, Leylin merely chuckled, “In the Magus World itself, I’m not a match for those rank 8 existences who survived the ancient final war. The astral plane is so vast and there are countless worlds out there. Besides, I haven’t reached the realm of immortality yet, and who out there can say that they are everlasting or immortal?”
Watching Offa and the rest leave, Leylin’s eyes flashed with ridicule. What he’d mentioned was only part of the reason. More importantly, the benefits in the south coast were already enough for the Ouroboros Clan to survive and develop. No matter how amazing the resources in the central continent were, they were useless to him.

In order to conquer the framework of profits in the central continent that had been formed over a long time, it would expend some time and effort on his part as well as make enemies with Monarchs just for something that was useless to him. If this was for Freya, Celine, or Gilbert and Emma from the Ouroboros Clan, Leylin might perhaps make the effort. However, who was Offa? An ally from a scattered Warlock Union. This status was not enough for Leylin to be moved. Anyway, once he showed his strength and completely terrorized the Magi Monarchs, they would definitely yield some profits to win him over and express their goodwill.

After allocating all the resources to the Warlock Union, Leylin believed he had repaid them for all that they had done for him. On top of that, with him as a deterrence, the Warlock Union’s future in the central continent would be shining. At the very least, those so-called Anti-Warlock Campaigns would no longer appear out in the open.

With these, Leylin felt he’d done enough for the Warlock Union. While Leylin had thoughts of things like conquering the central continent and constructing a Warlock empire or something like that, he gave up later. After all, for him as he was now, no matter how large an empire and organisation he could make, all there was for him was pursuing eternity after becoming a rank 7 Magus. That was the number one goal of the existences of laws.
The realm of laws, existing together with these laws was an eternal glory. Eternity was no longer but an excessive hope, but there was now a chance! For this little chance, these existences of laws were willing to give up everything, and Leylin was no different! “Once this ceremony’s over, I’ll meet those existences of laws in the Magus World, sign the agreement, and then settle down…” Leylin’s eyes were profound. He had advanced be leaps and bounds and had even made contact with the wide-ranging and deep power of laws. The various mysteries held within as well as his long life span gave him the urge to seclude himself for thousands of years and concentrate on researching, regardless of everything. With a higher status and more power, at a point where everything was easily obtained, all worldly things in the world did not seem as important to Leylin. It must be the same for those other laws of existences…

……

“A giant airship has been discovered! The symbol says that it’s from Sky City, an organisation with a first class invitation!” The sun shone brightly in the cloudless azure sky. All of a sudden, a large airship appeared in the air, the smooth surface of the warship as nimble and sharp as a swordfish, the metallic luster dazzling and flickering with light. The people at the interim command centre on the ground were immediately flustered. “Issue the guiding signal!” “Issue the guiding signal!” “This is the centre ground of the Ouroboros Clan. Airship that belongs to the esteemed Sky City, please follow our guide and park at lot 23!” Important information was relayed thrice, before there came an
answer, “Alright!”
*Rumble!* The giant airship landed on the ground. Compared to the surrounding airships, it appeared manifestly superior and majestic.  
The cabin door opened. The first person to exit was a winged person with three pairs of wings, the pure white wings making him seem like an angel descending, full of a holy feeling.  
“It’s the Monarch of the Skies’s true body!”  
The surrounding stream of Magi all went silent, and many bowed to show their respect.  
“Esteemed Monarch, please come with me! His Highness, Leylin, has come all the way to greet you!” At this moment, a female snake Warlock went forward and bowed reverently, showing the Monarch of the Skies the way as he descended from the exit.  
From time to time, some consciens whispered privately.  
“The true body of a Monarch! Even in the central continent, Breaking Dawn powers rarely show themselves!”  
“Don’t you know what this is for? With the rise of a Monarch, there needs to be a true body with a similar status coming forward to congratulate him, which would otherwise be impolite. We might see the arrival of all the Monarchs in the central continent here. This is a ceremony of the Monarchs!”  
Behind the Monarch of the Skies were many Magi from Sky City, all having scholarly auras.  
As an organisation with the most ample intellectual resources, scholarly Magi existed in hordes in Sky City.  
“Everything has changed!”  
Weyers followed the crowd with a low profile, occasionally observing the surroundings,  
Besides the organisation in Sky City, all the other high-ranked Magi in the central continent had practically gathered here, creating a huge stream of people.
With the Morning Star strength that Weyers was proud of, it wasn’t that common but also not that conspicuous. It was only at the arrival of rank 5 Radiant Moon Magi that there were gasps from the crowd, and with the appearance of a Monarch, there was a large-scaled commotion.

“Leylin! Leylin Farlier! So you’ve already left me so far behind and reached the apex of the central continent?”

Weyers lamented inside. Everything, meaning the ceremony and all the glory, belonged to the young man, who he could not even begin to envy.

Though they were all geniuses of the same generation, they had practically snatched all the glory that belonged to this generation!”

“Even in ancient times, his talent must be that of a monster, right?”

Weyers laughed bitterly. He no longer had any thoughts in his head. When the disparity between them was so vast that it was incomparable, all resentment and insanity was pointless. Weyers knew this very well.

“No, rather than that, he was extremely young. At this age, one would be lucky just to be at rank 2 or 3 at this age.

“Nice to meet you for the first time, or rather, we meet again, Sire Monarch of the Sky!” The procession suddenly stopped, and Weyers lifted his head, seeing a young men wearing black Magus robes standing in front, a gentle smile on his face.

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“We’re not on the same level anymore!”

Seeing his appearance, not one person in the procession dared move and bowed as they retreated, giving up the area to the two Monarchs. Weyers might be unwilling to do so, but he had no choice but to follow the card.

“It’s great to see you, Sire Leylin! I must say that you truly gave me a surprise!”

The Monarch of the Skies spoke up, voice gentle and full of a
magnetic force, “My name is Zabofel. You can just call me Zabofel!”
“Alright, Zabofel! Please come with me! The Blazing Flame Monarch and others of the continent have all arrived!”
Leylin led the way.
“So fast!?” Shock was evident in his eyes. He’d thought he had come rather quickly, but to his surprise, there were others ahead of him.
It seemed like the shock and interest from everyone towards this newly advanced Monarch was terrifying.
While they were conversing, Leylin was observing Zabofel’s true body.
He’d seen Zabofel twice before, once in Sky City and during the besiege of the Blazing Flame Monarch. All he’d seen were clones.
In a sense, this was the first time they were truly meeting.
The magnificent ceremony held in Phosphorescence Swamp was a very successful and influential meeting. Leylin had not done much in preparation, and instead left everything to Offa and the others, at most just showing his face when greeting guests and accepting gifts. He also displayed his Breaking Dawn abilities. This whole process meant that the time that Leylin had showed himself was meagre, causing many high-ranked Magi to grit their teeth in frustration. However, Offa and the rest were very experienced and made sure the ceremony was very lively, and even held several auctions and private trade meetings amongst many others.

It had to be said that due to the vastness of the central continent, it was inconvenient for Magi from various regions to make connections. They could interact and exchange services through this ceremony, which was definitely a nice surprise for them. Even centuries later, there were still Magi who still constantly recalled this ceremony.

Of course, the higher-ups in large organisations were focused on something else. While Leylin had not shown himself often, the rank 6 Breaking Dawn strength that he showed, the solidified soul flames, were definitely not fake. This meant that the prophecy that had been circulating for a long time regarding the most powerful bloodline Monarch amongst
Warlocks had been realised! Many Magi had complicated feelings towards the rise of Warlock organisations, and there were plenty who were dissatisfied. However, before they could join forces or plot something, Leylin did something unthinkable. Under the fervent stares of the audience, Leylin requested a battle with the Breaking Dawn Monarchs! This wasn’t just a one-on-one match. He was going to go up against all the Monarchs by himself! When Leylin first suggested this, practically everyone thought that he had gone insane. Even as a Warlock with a boost from his bloodline, how could a rank 6 Warlock who had recently advanced be a match for the many Breaking Dawn Monarchs? There were even many Magi who believed that the Monarchs wouldn’t accept Leylin’s proposal and felt that this was an insult. However, the way things progressed shocked them. For some reason, the Breaking Dawn Magi actually agreed. Due to the site and the destructive force, they did not choose to have the battle in the main world but in a spatial crack. This prevented many low-ranked Magi from looking in, and the bare minimum to enter was raised to rank 4, Morning Star Magi. The battle ended quickly, and practically the moment the rank 2 and 3 Magi began to get anxious in their wait, numerous high-ranked Magi returned from the spatial crack. However, they all looked extremely pale, and some even began to mutter under their breaths, as if they were under shock. The few Radiant Moon and even Monarchs had the same expression, followed by Leylin, who looked carefree. The results were obvious. The shock this gave to all the Magi was terrifying beyond relief. Leylin had confronted all of the Monarchs alone and actually
achieved victory, and in such a short time at that, and with such ease! Numerous Magi exchanged gazes, having a feeling that there would soon be a drastic change to the central continent. After this, while many Morning Star Magi did not dare breathe even a word of this, there were quite a number who had watched the battle and had close friends or family they shared this with. The details of the battle gradually leaked.

From what they had said, Lord Leylin had displayed extraordinary strength from the very beginning. Whether Morning Star, Radiant Moon or even Breaking Dawn Monarchs could only quiver before his energy undulations. The moment they fought, the Monarchs all lost at one go and even received injuries of varying degrees.

No! Perhaps before they had even fought, they had already been defeated.

Such an unimaginable and outrageous matter immediately caused much suspicion, but when rumours spread but nobody going against the rumours, the central continent descended into a deathly silence.

The only change was that even in private discussions, those Magi did not dare even mention Leylin’s name and instead replaced it with the ‘Bloodline Monarch’.

Leylin’s fame thus spread at a startling speed, and the Bloodline Warlock Union took advantage of this, thus developing largely. Of course, that is what happened in the future.

……

For Leylin, the ceremony was extremely boring. The precious gifts the organisations offered to him to show their goodwill were nothing to him. For the battle against the Monarchs, he had merely emitted less than 1% of the aura of his main body,
but these Monarchs could not even withstand it. All of this caused Leylin’s interest to wane. After the hasty ending, he surprisingly got enough time to do as he pleased. Within the extravagant palace, Leylin was now making some coffee. Whether it was the grinding of the coffee beans or the later procedures, everything happened smoothly and there was a certain beauty to his actions. There was even a unique charm and order to everything that lingered in one’s memories. “Hehe… Weyers seems to be rather shocked.” Melinda was clad in a fox-skin coat, a fox tail around her neck while she sized Leylin up and down with interest. “That little guy?” Leylin chuckled, and then shook his head. Now, any talents or the like were nothing to him. Melinda sipped at the coffee and then put the cup down, looking serious. Though she had already overestimated Leylin, the terrifying strength he exhibited still exceeded her expectations. Even what he had shown could very well be the tip of the iceberg! Melinda straightened her back slightly, looking glum, “Lord Leylin, you… have you already touched upon the realm of laws?” “Yes!” Leylin nodded, hearing Melinda’s sharp intake shortly after. As an old freak that had lived for a long time, Melinda was definitely aware of the terror of laws. Leylin was definitely not one of those who liked to brag, yet were inexperienced and narrow-minded. Instead, he had probably entered a deeper realm, which had resulted in such a terrifying change. “No wonder…” Melinda forced out a laugh, “No wonder it was effortless for you to deal with us…” Leylin glanced at her. In his opinion, Melinda was also a crafty person with origins even more mysterious than the other Monarchs, and seemed to know many ancient secrets. She had not expended much effort this time
either, and even any backlashes or injuries might be all for show.
“Well then, what are you future plans? Are you going to unify the central continent?” She asked nervously.
She had already made her mind up anyway. If Leylin had a wish, she would be the first to show her sincerity.
The terror that were the existences of laws were impossible to be stopped by a rank 6 Magus like her who had only made slight progress on the flame law. With his will, the whole central continent could only tremble in fear and obey. Melinda was sure of that.
“No, I’ve never considered that.”
Leylin first stared at Melinda, and only when she began to squirm in unease that he chuckled in answer.
“I’ve no interest in the central continent. Just as you’ve seen, the Ouroboros Clan is now moving to the south coast. Only one branch of the clan will be left as a link to the central continent.”
After hearing Leylin’s guarantee, Melinda heaved a sigh of relief inside. She knew that there was no need for him to fool her.
“Then I’ll thank you on behalf of the Magi of the central continent! Thank you for exempting them from the fate of a bloodbath!”
Melinda spoke and bowed to Leylin solemnly, and Leylin accepted this all apathetically.
“Oh, I’ve also prepared a small present for you. I hope you like it!” Belinda smirked like a little fox and clapped her hands.
“Lord Leylin!” A female Magus dressed in black walked out from the corner, kneeling to the ground.
“It’s Tanasha!” Leylin nodded. He no longer paid any mind to a rank 3 like her. After she had accepted his present, she had walked the path of revenge.
“This girl relied on the power you gifted her, and had already gotten her revenge against Harper. Somehow, she managed to mysteriously offend a few organisations and became stranded in
“Of course, I’ve already helped to take care of those tiny issues!”
“Mm,” Leylin answered, “Tanasha, you’re right in time. We’re planning to move. Look for Mistress Freya. She’ll settle you in…”
Surprisingly, Leylin felt nothing as he watched Tanasha leave deferentially.
With just a thought, there were large numbers of rank 4, 5 or even 6 who would hastily come over to run errands for him. This rank 3 subordinate was now hardly enough.
Of course, she was one of his people, and he would naturally give her a way out.
“Thank you for the matter with Tanasha. I’m rather interested in the soul splitting technique you mentioned before, and I’ve had some other thoughts regarding it. I hope to discuss it with you…”
After chatting for a while longer, Leylin shifted the conversation to more proper matters.
This was the real reason he was meeting Melinda.
“Methods to split the soul into two? If my lord is interested in such a dangerous technique, I will naturally present everything I know!”
While Melinda was astonished, she still agreed easily.
Watching Melinda leave after giving him what he’d wanted, Leylin heard the A.I. Chip’s response and touched his chin. He had taken advantage of Melinda and obtained her soul splitting techniques. This time, with an in-depth discussion to fill up the gaps, he had made much progress.

This technique was extremely important for Leylin, to the point that it would affect with how he would grow in the future. Having taken care of the issue of the technique, Leylin was in a great mood and took care of the hidden damage to Melinda’s soul, much to her gratitude.

‘The procedures to splitting the truesoul have been completely deduced. It has a very high success rate, so next is how to control the other half of the truesoul…’ Leylin touched his chin, sinking into deep thought.

While the soul splitting technique that Melinda had provided was very feasible, there was also a huge issue, the inability to control the clone’s truesoul! Even the Blazing Flame Monarch herself had ruined herself with this, and was later destroyed by Melinda, who was later formed and took over by force.

Leylin had no wish to be met with a situation like a soul betraying him, and hence had to nip this issue in the bud.

At this moment, Gilbert and the rest had walked in, accompanied
by Offa and others who had complicated expressions on their faces. “Your Majesty, the preparations for the tidying up and moving of the Ouroboros Clan are complete!”

While Leylin had shown immense strength and supported them, the fact that they would leave the central continent and develop in the south coast was something they were uncomfortable with. However, Leylin’s fame was more than enough for the Warlock Union to take care of itself. Hence, it couldn’t be helped that they had complicated feelings regarding this.

“Alright then, let’s move as soon as we can!” Leylin was very calm, and he even seemed rather relieved. The reason he had taken the time to do something so senseless was because of the favours and debts he owed. Once everything was done, he would be able to focus entirely on the search for eternity.

……

Soon enough, another bomb was dropped on the central continent. The most powerful Monarch, the Monarch of Blood who had suppressed many other Monarchs single handedly, had moved the Ouroboros Clan far away from the central continent, to a desolate place lacking in Magi. Leylin Farlier had moved to the south coast. While the Warlock Union had done all it could to conceal this fact at the beginning, in this situation where the entire organisation was moving it could not really be hidden. The bloodline Warlocks who were only just making themselves known could only howl in grief, and temporarily reign in their arrogance.

Meanwhile, with the development of the Warlock Union the safety of the many Bloodline Warlocks was not an issue. They even expanded their reach in the central continent. In the end, it would develop into the largest organisation in the central continent, one that would continue for a long time.
Of course, this had nothing to do with Leylin. Even if he found out about it, he would think nothing of it. After settling the Ouroboros Clan in the south coast and hosting an underground trade, Leylin completely released his hold over everything. Other than accompanying Freya and tending to Syre, most of his time was spent in the laboratories. The Ouroboros Clan’s strength was more than enough to suppress the south coast. With the added development of the underground trade, they got back on track and expanded their power quickly. After going through with all this, Leylin could finally be at ease. He turned his attention back to his interests…

Deep underground, in a laboratory with an unknown location.

“Begin test number 2419!” Leylin’s voice sounded, and the A.I. Chip’s robotic prompt showed. [Beep! Beginning experiment. Recording data.]

From behind a huge glass wall, Leylin was now watching the two bodies he had nurtured. Both had the unique characteristics of the subterranean race, and what was more shocking was their illusory faces, which made them look like they were wearing translucent masks.

Electric current constantly surged through them under Leylin’s orders, and on the back of the guinea pigs were numerous transparent tubes that wiggled about, pouring a myriad of unknown fluids in different colours into them.

“Ugh…” “Keke…” The two experimental bodies both displayed different behaviour. Their flesh was twitching as if tiny rats were burrowing under their skin, and meaty tumours kept rolling and turning on their bodies. They looked disgusting and terrifying.

What attracted the most attention was their faces, where that layer of an illusory soul mask had become even more dazzling, and their expressions grew even more complex.

[Targets are operating well. No signs of rejection] the A.I. Chip
loyally intoned, [Initiating attempt to remotely control targets.] Strands of translucent threads drooped down, attached to the phantom figure of a six-legged golden spider at the very end. The translucent threads first spread over the face of an experimental body, the many legs probing its face and causing it to writhe in intense pain before it moved on to the next. “Gulu!” “Gulu!” After the translucent threads connected with the other experimental body, its body suddenly began to twitch vigorously.
[Beginning soul resonance. Experimental body number 2 is convulsing. Soul waves are fluctuating violently.] “Continue. Adjust the ratio of the second potion mixture and the third life strengthening essence such that they’re five units fewer than before,” Leylin looked grave. [Initiating adjustment. Target’s waves are now trending towards stability.] “Have I succeeded?” Watching the interior of the lab that had become quiet, a look of anticipation appeared in his eyes. However, his expression soon changed. Along with yells and an intense explosion, the two experimental bodies self-detonated, sending blood and filth spraying onto the glass walls. [Targets have died. Souls have been extinguished. Experiment failed.] The cold voice caused Leylin to sigh. “I failed again! Is it an issue with the Vitri Spider? Perhaps I should use a better adhesive next time.” After his experiment failed, Leylin readjusted his mood and began to record the results of his experiments. “Hm?” Immediately after, with the raise of his eyebrow, he put down the pen in his hands. “It’s been ten years?” He muttered to himself, suddenly disappearing from a laboratory and arriving at another space.
“Lord Ignox, long time no see! Has the agreement been prepared?” Leylin smiled as he greeted the Magus in front of him, a being of laws.

Ignox smiled and nodded. “Yes, Lord Leylin! As well, a lot of our comrades are extremely excited after learning about your existence, They couldn’t suppress their desire to meet you!”

“Then let’s go! I only hold deep admiration for those ancient and powerful beings!” A hint of intelligence shone in Leylin’s eyes, and the two of them turned into light and vanished.

While on the way, Leylin transmitted a message, “Also, Lord Ignox, about the trade with the underground world…” After all, he had to let the protector of the first few levels of the subterranean world know about it.

“That? It’s not an issue. If you like, I can even gift you the first level!” Surprisingly, Ignox did not seem to mind. For existences of laws like them, the benefits of trade that only affected the first level were pointless and such a thing would not offend them at all.

“Then I’m relieved. Also…” Making use of this opportunity, Leylin began to chat again. After all, since Ignox was his senior, he possessed a lot of knowledge that Leylin currently needed. The discussion went delightfully on the way. Ignox was rather amazed at how multi-talented and erudite he was. After all, as an existence of laws who had recently advanced, Leylin’s expansive and profound knowledge far surpassed his peers.

As they conversed, they kept going deeper and deeper into the subterranean world. They ended up breaking through the seventh level, and entered a dark and unknown space.

‘Based on what I know from my previous world, we should already have reached the core. This…” Leylin sized up his surroundings. The void and darkness were like the unknown layers within the universe, holding the mysterious World Will within them.
The closer he got, the more Leylin could sense the existence of the World Will. While it was weak and slumbering, just the natural power it emitted startled him.

“Welcome to the deepest region of the underground, as well as where the higher-ups of the Magus World reside!” Ignox had completely lost his human form and transformed into an unknown existence.

“Laws…” Leylin shut his eyes. Here, he could clearly sense the existence of a multitude of laws, and some were even explicitly conspicuous. The environment here was much better than the surface of the Magus World.

[Beep! Traces of destroyed spacetime pathways discovered. World origin force is being dispersed.] The A.I. Chip prompted at this moment.

‘Is this shattered world core left behind from the ancient Final War?’ Leylin now knew why all the rank 8 existences stayed here. With laws being exposed and the origin power of the world emanating from it, the attraction it held for all these existences was incomparable to anything else.

If it were him, he would definitely stay here all the time as well…
Welcome, newly advanced comrade!” A streak of boiling hot light suddenly rose from the darkness, and Leylin seemed to see flames from the core of the earth.

“This is the Mother Core, the strongest amongst us!” Ignox introduced at the side. A few other powerful consciences descended as his voice sounded.

“This is the Death Sovereign King!” “This is the Abyss Master!” Many rank 8s, some who were said to only exist in ancient legends or myths and some Leylin had yet to even hear of began to show themselves.

“Hello, everyone!” Leylin greeted them. A huge phantom Targaryen appeared from behind him, and the power of devouring twined around it.

“What an interesting fellow! He actually grasps the power of devouring!”

“This path is very difficult. Do you still remember that bubbly teapot 320,000 years ago? He seemed to have walked the same path then…”

“You’re a descendant of the Snake Dowager yet broke through your shackles? Congratulations!”

The many existences began to discuss amongst themselves or expressed their goodwill. Just the transmissions from their minds was enough for those Breaking Dawns from before to explode and
die.
“Silence!” With the voice of the Mother Core, the many conscients quietened down.
“First, let us welcome Leylin Farlier, our newest comrade!” It was evident that the Mother Core was the most powerful here, and many existences of law let her take the lead.
“The agreement has been prepared. You can take a look!” An ordinary board of soil flew out from the core and landed in front of Leylin, an agreement written out using the words of laws.
Leylin took a look. The conditions were broad, stating that as a member of the Magus World he had to take initiative to safeguard the Magus World and prevent foreigners from invading. In return, he would be able to comprehend a few years’ worth of the power of laws here every century, and even have the chance to absorb some of the world origin force.
“There’s a limit to the world’s origin force. Even existences of laws can’t absorb it from the world without any limits, or else everything would be ruined… Even if it’s us, we can’t draw the power of the world without reservations. There has to be a limit.” The Mother Core explained to Leylin.
“It’s fine by me!” Leylin naturally knew the reasoning behind this. He nodded, and a black Targaryen seal appeared at the end of the soil board. The soil board crumbled in an instant, and seemed to draw the attention of the World Will, sending threads of mysterious force pouring in.
“With the great Magus World Will as a witness, I hereby announce the signing of the contract!” The Mother Core’s voice was grim, and the rest of the other existences roared and yelled.
“Welcome, kid!” “Ever since the ancient battle, we haven’t had new blood in a long time!” It was obvious that after signing the agreement, these guys now truly treated him as one of their own. After conversing with them, Leylin first comprehended some of the
world laws that the Mother Core had exhibited, and also absorbed a portion of the origin force before leaving the area guided by Ignox. “Please rest assured, my friend!” Right as they were leaving, Ignox seemed friendly and gentle, “I’ll find a way for you to solve the issue of controlling a split truesoul!”

“Thanks a ton, I’ll leave it to you!” Leylin nodded gratefully. This sort of high-ranked soul technique would require a lot of time even with research and help from the A.I. Chip. His only other choice was to employ the help of other existences of laws.

“Actually, regular clones should already be enough for us. Why are you trying to do something as dangerous as split your truesoul?” Ignox bit his lip and began to advise him.

“I know… Clones are very useful, but the connection with the host body cannot be broken off. There’s also a huge issue…” Leylin answered.

Leylin could naturally make clones like that of the Trial’s Eye or the Nefarious Filthbird right now. Perhaps those could not even be called clones, just a projection of his strength.

And as an existence of laws, Leylin knew very clearly the weakness of such projections. “Once the connection is broken, the projection is useless and can’t be controlled again…”

“Alright! I’ll take care of this. With the Wisdom Library passed down in the family through generations, I believe I should get a result in the next three centuries!” Ignox stared at Leylin meaningfully, his astute gaze almost piercing through Leylin’s mind and seeing through his plans.

“Well then, I’ll be off, my Lord!” Leylin bowed slightly, turning into a streak of black light and disappearing. He left Ignox standing in place, looking deep in thought.

‘Truesoul splitting? Perhaps even the Mother Core would not dare attempt something like this. Interesting…’ Ignox mumbled to himself, a mysterious smile quirking about his lips. He turned into a
bundle of mist and, as if he had merged with the world, completely disappeared.
The speed of an existence of laws was unimaginable. With just a bit of time, Leylin was back in his laboratory. Half-reclining on his sofa, he halted his research, instead rubbing his temples.
“A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!”
“Just taking in a bit of the world origin force allowed my vitality to grow so much!” Advancing a full unit was extremely troublesome at the level of an existence of laws. All the energy Leylin had devoured from his massacres couldn’t raise his vitality by such a degree, but all his stats had now grown.
“World origin force is truly the best supplement for existences of laws!” Leylin stroked his chin. He thought back to the Magus World before the ancient war. Numerous higher ups of the Magus World were enthusiastic about invading other worlds and seizing their world origins. This fact probably had something to do with those actions.
“It’s a pity… For the me as I am now, regular world origin force has little effect for me… Only enormous worlds like the Purgatory World or those of higher ranks would be useful for me…” Leylin’s eyes were glazed over. He knew a few powerful worlds like Purgatory: the most powerful Magus World, the World of Gods, Dreamscape, the Icy World, the Shadow World and a few others.
“It’s no wonder that those ancient Magi didn’t giving up on invading the World of Gods and that resulted in a tragedy. With the only origin force comparable to the Magus World for existences of laws, this is a deadly poison…” Having signed the agreement, he
was now one of them. They might not have told him everything, but they still imparted a lot of general knowledge to Leylin. Amongst this was the realm after rank 7 and paths to power. With his comprehension of laws and the simulations and analysis of the A.I. Chip, Leylin could confirm the truth of this information.

“Rank 6 to rank 7 is the refining of laws and the beginning of a qualitative change, as well as an evolution!” Leylin thought back to the information he had obtained.

“Rank 6 Magi have solidified souls and have already reached the limits of their paths, the peak. The only thing they can break through in is laws!”

“After completely grasping the power of laws, a Magus will enter the realm of rank 7, and there will be a qualitative change in all aspects. In primordial times, these existences are worshipped like gods or totems.”

“The path of rank 7 is completely grasping a certain law. Rank 8 involves grasping multiple laws and finding one’s own path, using a medium to smelt all of them together into one’s own…” Leylin immediately thought of the Snake Dowager.

“The Snake Dowager, for instance, definitely grasps more than one law, and the medium she used to smelt them should be the power of shadows, which is the origin of the Shadow World!” With shadeforce as the carrier, completely smelting the power of laws would probably allow the Snake Dowager to rise to peak rank 8 and even begin to look into the realm of rank 9! Hence, she had a huge desire to completely control the Shadow World and did not even mind causing a war to seize it. That was understandable.

Of course, to Leylin’s knowledge, her efforts had come to naught in disgrace, and had even forced her to run with her tail between her legs, bringing her whole community and hiding in the Purgatory World.

In the ancient Magus World, there were many who had smelted
numerous laws and found their own paths! Leylin was even beginning to think that the Mother Core had been one of those existences. And they could sense that the way to break through to rank 9 lay in the World of Gods! “Based on the thoughts of these existences, seizing the gods’ laws and origin force of their world, as well as the origin force of the Magus World, and fusing the two powers would be enough for them to break through the threshold into rank 9, reaching eternity!” Leylin’s eyes showed his admiration and fear, “What crazy logic! This…” Lunatics were not scary, but powerful lunatics were enough to destroy the world. Whatever happened next turned into the ancient Final War. Neither the Magus World nor the World of Gods received benefits, and both suffered devastating defeats. Many existences of laws died, resulting in the fall of both sides, only able to struggle on at death’s door now. “In order to seize a world’s origin force, it’s necessary to eliminate the other side’s existences of laws, which refers to the gods, and then destroy the World Will…” Just the thought of it gave him chills.
“Lunatics! They’re all lunatics!” Leylin was fearful, “Such insane methods definitely resulted in a frantic counter-attack from the entire World of Gods, which finally developed into a hatred between the two that could not be resolved… Perhaps even the World Will of the Magus World would not agree to this…”

Those crazed rank 8s must have fought to their limits and fallen in the ancient Final War. Of course, there was a possibility of them surviving, hiding in the darkness and silently licking their wounds, perhaps even waiting for the next opportunity to fight again.

After all, once one reached rank 7, their life force and adaptability would be boosted to an incredible degree.

Things like creating tens of thousands of clones, rebirth using a droplet of blood was no issue for these beings who had reached the limits of power.

“Perhaps… Out of all the existences I’ve seen, there might be some people who are still ambitious and wish to invade it…”

Leylin stroked his chin, his lips quirking in a smile, “but I like it!”

“The advancement after reaching rank 7 is much too slow. It can’t be compared to the speed of plundering to achieve more power.”

The Mother Core had even told Leylin an important piece of information that had to do with the gods of the World of Gods.

Though they were also rank 7 Magi who had comprehended rules, their paths differed from Magi like these, with theirs being called
the path of faith!
By gathering the emotions and even dissipated soul force from intellectual lifeforms, they would then be fused with their own laws and then burn with divine flames, thus beginning to tread down the path of a god.
As each world was different, their strength systems differed. Some worlds did not even have this, this was something that Leylin had a deep understanding of already.
Though the path of faith was similar to the path of offerings, it was essentially different.
Of course, Leylin didn’t focus on this, but on another piece of important information that Mother Core had divulged. The power of laws that the gods possessed were easily seized by Magi!
During the ancient war, many Magi had killed gods and seized the power of laws, thus advancing quickly!
On top of that, there were rumours that the gods could do the same, but had to pay a huge price.
“Power to seize laws?”
Leylin chuckled. He’d known this long ago and even put this into practice!
Yes. The Sovereign King of Gluttony, Beelzebub, was a god from the World of Gods!
Of course, it was more suitable to call him a demon. Anyway, there seemed to be camps split up into good and evil, and the beings that maintained order were called gods, while the opposite were called demons, devils or the like.
No matter how the names changed, it was undeniable that they possessed immense strength that other intellectual life forms could only worship them in fear.
“As existences who have both grasped laws, it’s impossible for me to seize Ignox’s laws. Perhaps I’d gain that ability once I reach rank 8, but I’d have to pay a huge price and put in much effort, and
that’s even after I completely grasp the law of Devour. But Beelzebub’s different. In my previous advancement, the process seemed much too easy even with the aid of the Purgatory World Will and my previous plans…”

He came from the World of Gods, and the fact that his power of laws was so easily seized was one of the reasons why Leylin had targeted him.

If not, Leylin could focus on just the Snake Dowager, but stripping her of her laws would be an impossible task. It would undoubtedly have give rise to enormous variables that could have affected his previous advancement.

“Based on what Mother Core said, the existences of laws in the World of Gods have a certain characteristic. Their strength comes from the combination of a theocracy, divine fire and the power of faith. If a correct method is found, it’s much easier to seize the power of laws from them as compared to other worlds. This is the reason why many Magi of the ancient Magus World agreed to declare war on them. Powerful beings could then seize the World of Gods’ origin source, while the other existences of laws would hunt down gods and obtain all sorts of laws, thus advancing quickly…”

“Of course, there were other variables.”

Leylin pondered over this. If things were just that simple, the World of Gods would have been destroyed long ago.

“These gods might typically be weaker when battling outside the crystal walls, but if they fought on the land of the World of Gods, they would gain huge boosts and even surpass the strength of similarly ranked Magi!”

“Perhaps, from the demi-plane domains that they create, these boosts might reach an unimaginable realm that would allow them to fight those above their rank…”

The allied forces of the Magus World were not just limited to the
Magus World. It was an era where the ancient Magi were at their most brilliant and splendid. From the worlds they had conquered, a surge of powerful Magi arrived and joined the war. The final results, however, was that the World of Gods had been able to resist against the many powerful worlds. The fight had ended with both sides defeated and grievously wounded. Such a terrifying result caused many Magi to turn pale after hearing about the gods. “It is the strength system of the most powerful world after all. The path of faith definitely has its merits!”
Leylin’s eyes glinted. The more powerful a god was, the more terrifying the path of faith was, which only served to increase his curiosity. “Perhaps the ancient existences did not get it wrong. Only by fusing gods and Magi can one achieve strength that surpasses eternity…”
Leylin’s eyes burned with fervour within, “Ancient existences, I shall take over your unfinished work!”
In order to transcend the material world and achieve eternity, Leylin did not mind conquering the World of Gods. All obstacles that were in his way would be crushed without hesitation! “Also… when it comes to conquering the World of Gods, I have an incomparable advantage!”
Leylin’s mouth quirked in a smile, rays that were like the stars flickering into existence in his hands. This was the coordinates of a world, giving off a unique aura and held within the feeling of a great history. “The coordinates of the World of Gods exists in Beelzebub’s memories! That saves me the effort of exchanging for it from other existences of laws…”
Leylin preferred hiding his motives. While those who had participated in the ancient Final War definitely knew the location of
the World of Gods, Leylin did not wish to trade for it from them. Announcing his plans to the public was not a wise choice. Furthermore, from the failure of the Magus World the last time, it was evident that breaking in forcefully would not work. A more covert method must be used instead.

“The coordinates is merely the entrance. There’s still a huge issue to truly enter the World of Gods…”

Leylin couldn’t help but recall the introduction to the World of Gods. Compared to other large worlds, the structure of the World of Gods was extremely unique. On the material dimension, there were many other dimensions that were as packed as a beehive. Outside the many dimensions was a crystal wall layer that was so sturdy that it was terrifying. Leylin was used to calling it the barrier of the world. This crystal wall had once prevented existences of other worlds from peeping in.

After the ancient war, the World of Gods had even consciously reinforced the crystal wall, the resulting isolating power making it such that even if the ancient Magi were to reappear, they would still be unable to penetrate it.

Of course, once the crystal wall was attacked, there would be a backlash and hostility from the World of Gods. Leylin did not think that it would be difficult for those remaining or newly advanced gods to take care of him. No matter how powerful he might be, he was still incomparable to those gods who had survived the ancient war.

Of course, this referred to his current situation. Things might change in the future.

“In short, the coordinates of the World of Gods is not an issue. The problem is how to break through the defensive crystal wall… And when it comes to this, I have a great teacher!”
Leylin chuckled.
A way to cleverly break through the crystal wall must be something the other existences of laws were working on fervently. However, until now, nothing had borne fruit or else the ancient war would have erupted once again.
The crystal wall was like a city under siege. People might want to enter from the outside, while the people within wanted to leave. Evidently, the Sovereign King of Gluttony, Mister Beelzebub, had succeeded.
He had obviously grasped the loopholes of the crystal wall and bypassed the power of isolation, arriving outside. He’d gone through a series of activities, including some investments and disseminating faith.
He had been in hiding and, while he had been extinguished a few times while entering other worlds, no Magi had realised his true identity and only took him for an existence from another world. However, no matter how carefully Beelzebub had hidden his identity, Leylin had him on the palm of his hand and turned his plans into a tragedy.
Not only did he turn into a stepping stone for Leylin to advance, most of the power of his laws had been seized, causing his main body to be either grievously wounded or in a deep sleep. Even the way in and out of the World of Gods was now known by Leylin, becoming an accomplice to his own fall. Evidently, if Leylin could successfully enter the World of Gods, the first thing he would do was kill Beelzebub and seize all his strength, allowing himself to completely enter the realm of rank 7.
“Next up is to perform many astral experiments. While solidifying my strength, I’ll find ways to get behind the crystal wall…”
Leylin had clear plans on what he wanted to do in the future.
What Beelzebub possessed was the way out from inside, and because he was a native of the World of Gods, it was easier for him
than it would be for Leylin. What Leylin needed to do now was to do more in-depth research on the path Beelzebub had used, until he was able to completely assume a false identity and enter that world.
Time passed in the blink of an eye. The world continued to turn and change. For someone like Leylin, he often would not feel the passing of time once he wholeheartedly devoted his heart and soul to something. While he was at work, hundreds of years could slip by stealthily.

Of course, to beings of laws who had life spans that were easily ten thousands of years long, such a tiny amount of time was perhaps considered just a nap. But to average humans, this meant more than ten generations of cycles of life and death.

This was a relatively long period of time even for Magi. A few low-ranking Magi perhaps didn’t even possess such a long life expectancy. Only the almighty high-ranking beings would pay no attention to the passing of time like that.

For the average Magus in the south coast or even the subterranean world, the news of the outside world that left the deepest impression on them in this long period of time, was probably the sudden rise of the Ouroboros Clan to power.

The present-day Ouroboros Clan had long broken away from the embarrassing phase of having only two or three small fry. Instead, it had grown to become an influential power that spanned across the entire Magus World. Its formidable influence even extended to the subterranean world.

The Farlier family that led the Ouroboros Clan was even acclaimed as the “first bloodline family”!

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The powerful bloodline that had been passed down generations overshadowed every other Warlock family in the central continent. Their extraordinary military capabilities were quickly revealed. Among Leylin’s direct descendants, this sort of prowess was made even more obvious. Even the bloodline energy of collateral relatives with many generations between them was enough to make other Kemoyin families benefit greatly. Freya’s and Maggie’s families were evidently the ones receiving such benefits. They followed the Farlier family closely, taking up the role of their subordinates. They had also greatly purified their own bloodlines through marriages and other methods, increasing their proportion of high-ranking Warlocks higher and higher until they seemed to emerge like an endless stream. This new generation of Warlocks possessed extraordinary bloodline energy, and zealously believed in Leylin as their bloodline originator. They became the foundation of the Ouroboros Clan’s rule. Leylin, who was gradually seen as a divine being, had already become a part of the legends. He did not appear in public for decades at a time, and was surrounded by an air of mystery. Syre and the other Warlocks, the sons of his second generation, slowly took control over the authority in the Ouroboros Clan.

A team of Warlocks clothed with garments with the Ouroboros motif was travelling through the subterranean world unhurriedly. Behind them were many captives and supplies that had obviously been plundered.

“Chief Lucca! The headcount has been checked. Nothing has been left behind. I can confirm that their clan has been completely destroyed!” An average-looking blond Warlock reported, with a worshipful look in his eyes.

“Very well! Imprison them in chains. Prepare to sell them as highly-ranked slaves!” Lucca said without the slightest hint of hesitation.
The Warlocks under him received his order as per normal, and carried everything out methodically, as though they were already very accustomed to all this.

“The subterranean world! Such a gloomy sky is rather hard to get used to indeed. Perhaps after this mission has been accomplished, I should apply to rest on the surface for some time…” Lucca gazed at the dark rocky sky, and couldn’t help but to sigh to himself.

As an elder of the Ouroboros Clan, he was already more than 500 years old, and had experienced all the major events from the initial attack to the glory that followed. His youthful appearance was already unable to conceal the continuous exhaustion of his body.

“Indeed… Recalling all of this, it truly seems as though I am in a dream.”

Lucca couldn’t help but murmur as he glanced at the numerous captives and the troop that was moving forth once again.

Everything all began from when the lord had entered the Ouroboros Clan. It was as though he was born to be a strong contender. The speed at which he was promoted was so fast that it practically exceeded the limits of Lucca’s imagination.

“These damn lowly beings. How dare they disobey the Ouroboros Clan’s orders! They are simply digging their own grave! Of course, it’s only with Chief Lucca that we could have easily destroyed them!”

The blonde team member came to his side and said, trying to curry favor with him.

“Me?! Haha… In the past, perhaps I was still worth noticing with the strength of a rank 3 Warlock, but now… Don’t make fun of your Uncle Lucca!”

Lucca gazed at this Warlock as a doting look flashed across his eyes.

“In comparison to the true bloodline nobilities, the blood serpent
clans and the Maggie family, my tiny achievements don’t count for anything, much less when compared to the Farlier family. After all, they directly inherited the lord’s bloodline.”
Lucca’s voice became extremely respectful. A look of admiration also spread across the young Warlock’s face.
“A rank 6 bloodline! He didn’t even need to work especially hard to enter the realm of Morning Star, and even Radiant Moon …”
The young man’s face was full of envy and self-disappointment, “If only I could also…”
“Lukard! Stop those unrealistic fantasies of yours! Lord Leylin didn’t have an outstanding bloodline in his early days, yet he made it to his current level all the same.”
Lucca’s tone turned rather stern, “Now, what you need to do is to look after the order!”
“Yes Chief!” Seeing how Lucca spoke so harshly and with a serious expression, the young Warlock immediately saluted him and ran to the back of the troop.
“This chap is really…”
Lucca shook his head, with a helpless expression in his eyes.
The rise of the Farlier family and the families of their subordinates was definitely a huge blow to the original bloodline nobilities.
Of course, under the crushing suppression of absolute strength, these bloodline nobilities didn’t even dare to let out a fart. They accepted the Farlier’s family unconditional authority with complete sincerity.
Something else that had risen into popularity at the same time was the abnormal worshipping of the ‘Emperor bloodline’. Of course, having such a mentality was perfectly normal to Warlocks.
It was a pity that the Farlier family’s control over their bloodlines had always been very strict. There were few cases of the bloodline outflowing to other families.
To date, only a scarce number of the original bloodline nobilities
managed to obtain that special privilege. A great many of the older nobilities had already predicted that the rising Emperor bloodline would shuffle the cards on the table. They were willing to pay any price in order to obtain the new and powerful bloodline. Of course, they didn’t entirely dare to actually plot to seize the bloodline. Currying favour with the Farlier family and even the other subordinate families at all costs was their fundamental policy. At the same time, anyone who tried to illegally covet for the Farlier family’s bloodline was bound to face a bloody death in their hands.

“Sigh… Although Lukard’s bloodline is considered rich, it’s nothing compared to the Emperor bloodline. Besides, with our family’s status, having the bloodline spread to us would only happen far away in the indefinite future…”

The slight thought of those noble descendents who followed like flies behind the ladies of the Farlier family all day long made Lucca’s scalp prickle with pins and needles. He hadn’t had the heart to tell his junior this cruel reality, afraid that he would become discouraged.

“Sigh… Hopefully Lady Luck will smile upon that silly boy, and let him be favoured by one of the young ladies of the Farlier family. Even if he’s marrying into her family, it’s still acceptable…”

Lucca couldn’t help but begin to let his imagination run wild. He then laughed involuntarily.

“Forget it, I think it would be more realistic to think about my earnings that the captures this round will bring me…”

Those in power in the Farlier family certainly were informed about this contradictory situation. However, the proliferation of a bloodline was originally a highly serious matter, and it would take time. Thus, the only thing they could do now was to constantly develop
new ways to gain benefits and challenge that contradiction. Although deep in his heart, Lucca was not satisfied with his family not obtaining the new bloodline, he was clearly attracted to the profits he was about to gain. Once it was confirmed that his profits from this round was enough for him to accumulate a certain value of contribution points, he would be able to even exchange them for precious materials for his dash towards the crystal phase. Lucca’s face was wreathed in smiles.

“This is the advantage of having control over the transaction channel! Who would have thought that I, Lucca, would actually have the opportunity to advance to rank 3 crystal phase…”

The profits that the Ouroboros Clan gained from the bilateral trade were considerably high. The result of this was the plentiful resources for training and cultivation. This alleviated the contradiction to a certain extent.

“Take note, we’re about to reach the City of Alabaster!” Lucca’s voice made the entire troop turn restless. Even he himself couldn’t help but look forward to it.

The channel of the City of Alabaster was of great importance, and was practically the lifeline of the entire trade industry. Thus, the level of security was at its highest, and it was also the most bustling part of the city.

Although the exchanges between the subterranean world and at the surface had penetrated their society, both parties have never found a channel more convenient and faster than this one. Therefore, it further highlighted the importance of the location of the City of Alabaster.

While the astral gate could resolve the problem of only being able to transport important supplies and people within a smaller distance range, it would definitely suffer losses if huge amounts of trading content was involved.
Until now, the entire subterranean world had already come to a common understanding: whoever seized control of the City of Alabaster would reap enormous profits. Under the temptation of such great benefits, perhaps the other underground powers who originally conducted the trading processes and were infringed on had never given up on lusting after the City of Alabaster. Although they absolutely did not dare to launch a direct attack, they carried out many other little tricks. The City of Alabaster loathed such powers who were like rats in the dark gutters. The moment they were discovered, they were sentenced to the firmest form of repression and annihilation. But as long as the Ouroboros Clan continued to exploit the subterranean world, one would imagine that such resistance would not be lacking. This time, Lucca was precisely acting under orders to eliminate one of the smaller powers by force. Those superior overlords and the profiteers were not in the least bit afraid of these insignificant little pests. Their stance was unusually unanimous, which was a resolute decision to destroy them! In the face of such overwhelming strength, no matter how determined and solemn the defending party was, their final outcome was death. Lucca glanced at the line of captives behind him, the corners of his mouth twisting into a look of utter disdain.
The fight for profits and the crushing repression that came with it was bloody and merciless. Lucca didn’t seem to sympathize with these captives even in the slightest bit. Perhaps those Warlocks of the new generation would have their doubts. However, having experienced the turmoil in the central continent, the hostility of the Magus World and the glory afterwards, Lucca definitely wouldn’t entertain such a mentality. “When we’ve arrived at the City of Alabaster and delivered our task, everyone can have a good rest!” Lucca yelled loudly, leading to his men joyously echoing his words. It was interjected by cries of fear from the captives. This scene was rather amusing. “Also, everyone knows the rules, right? You don’t need me to say anything.” Lucca then shot a fierce look across the people behind him. There was an exceptionally distinct hint of warning in his eyes. The other Warlocks instantly turned sluggish. Lukard, on the other hand, forced a smile, “Please rest assured! Everyone absolutely will not show disrespect to the three madams of the City of Alabaster…” “Very well!” Lucca was clear of the situation at hand. Although he knew that many of the Warlocks were reluctant to comply, his facial expression turned gentle. While the City of Alabaster was under the control of Lord Leylin’s subordinates, it was obvious that freedom was maintained to a
certain extent. Not only was there no mutual interference between the Ouroboros Clan and the the City of Alabaster, Lord Leylin also had his own staff that only took orders from the Lord himself. They had a firm control over the other end of the bilateral trade. If not for the newly formed organization which didn’t have much manpower, Lucca and the rest wouldn’t be doing such missions like exterminating people.

Even so, before entering the subterranean world, these Warlocks had been ordered repeatedly that it was necessary for them to comply to the commands from the City of Alabaster. They were not allowed to violate them.

As for the fellows who daringly attempted to go against these instructions, their bones had already been turned to ashes. Only their soul was left behind in the Endless Prison in the City of Alabaster, full of remorse…

Of course, there seemed to be some secret rumor going around that this situation had an some unclear connection to Lord Leylin and those three madams.

Although he was already quite convinced of it deep in his heart, it was evident that Lucca would not publicly announce it even till his death.

The vast cityscape of the City of Alabaster gradually started to appear ahead of the troop. The everlasting radiance at the top of the structures was exceptionally gorgeous and dazzling, and had an extremely special feel to it.

“Rumor has it that the City of Alabaster was established in an instant when the Lord fully put his powerful Magus abilities to use. It received blessings from the Lord himself, and now has an everlasting quality.”

As he watched streams of people enter, as well as the envious and stunned expression on the face of the young lads in the troop, Lucca felt a sense of pride that couldn’t be put into words.
“No matter how many times I’ve seen it, it’s really so hard to believe!”
Lukard came to Lucca’s side, his eyes filled with admiration. The ability to move mountains and suppress the seas was something that he could only look up to. Just touching the boundary of that sort of strength in his remaining years was hardly even possible.
“The city of underground commerce: Alabaster!” Lucca’s voice had a rare hint of agitation in it. “When we’ve delivered our task, we’ll be able to go home!”
“Go home! Go home!” The many youngsters cheered together.
“Bah!” At this moment, the sound of a frivolous spit could be heard amongst the cheers, and was exceptionally ear-piercing.
“Hm?!” Lucca glanced over to see where the sound came from. It was from a young Magus with a distinct aura of someone highborn. Only noble Magi or had such a special feel to them.
“I remember you! You’re the first wife’s son of the family we destroyed this time. You’re rumoured to possess a noble bloodline, and you’re the most highly-ranked slave here!”
“You bunch of damned invaders! The mighty underground Magus Alliance will not let you off!” Although there were wounds on the young Magus’ face, and his body was bound by forbidden magic chains, he still raised his head stubbornly.
“The underground Magus Alliance? That disordered resistance organization?” Lucca felt like laughing, “I’m sorry, your wishes won’t come true…”
“Everything is witnessed by the almighty Mother of the Abyss,” The youngster was evidently very resolute. The look on his face made Lucca furrow his brows.
This sort of firm resolution was not because he was rooted to his beliefs, but stemmed from a confidence in some kind of trump card.
“Then… Can you tell me what makes you so confident in that?”
Lucca asked inquisitively. In such a circumstance, he was simply unable to see any possibility in the tables turning. This fellow was about to sold as a slave, and would just be adopted as a boy toy at best by some highly-ranked Magus who took a fancy to his appearance and bloodline. However, Lucca didn’t mind chatting with him for a while more.

“You’ll see!”

The young man shot a fierce look at Lucca before looking away. “You damned swine. Who do you think you are now? What position are you in to actually try to rebel against the reign of the Ouroboros Clan?!” Lukard shouted harshly, itching to lash him with the whip in his hand.

“Forget it, Lukard.” Lucca grabbed Lukard’s hand, and his voice turned gentle, which was a rare sight. He felt that he was still capable of showing mercy and compassion when dealing with this loser.

“Hmph! When we arrive at the slave market, I’ll be sure to ‘take good care’ of you. You can spend the rest of your life rolling around in mud and becoming a lowly experimental subject and filthy animal…” Lukard gave the slave a menacing scare, making his face turn rather pale. His fist was clenched so tightly that his finger joints had turned white, yet he did not lower his head and continued to hold it high.

“This is the capital of commerce: the City of Alabaster! Remember to show your identification credentials and observe order, or you’ll meet with expulsion or even be arrested!”

A few of the Magi from the City of Alabaster were on patrol around the city gate. They shouted this with the help of sound amplification spells, allowing their voices to travel far. The many merchants and Magi roaming about seemed to be very familiar with this. They lined themselves up in a composed manner,
and everything appeared neat and orderly.

“Ahem! I have some contribution points from exterminating the enemy powers, as well as these highly-ranked slaves. How much are these worth altogether?”

At this point, even the other Warlocks in the team couldn’t help but beam with joy after calculating their profits. However, strange distortions suddenly appeared in the sky in the distance. An enormous black stormcloud suddenly moved quickly across, and it had many strange skeleton runes at its centre.

“Let go of Vick!”

The angry bellow of an aged person could be clearly heard from the dark clouds, causing the area around the city gate to become chaotic. Lucca’s legs also started to turn wobbly, even though his strength was at rank 3.

“This… This feeling… Rank 5! No! A being that’s rank 6 or above! Wasn’t he just from a small family? Why would they be involved with this power?”

At this moment, the young slave had gotten a pleasant surprise, and was full of smiles.

“Lord of the subsidiary clan! I’m here!” A crimson radiance emerged from the young man’s body, which was evidently some sort of indication of his location.

“A subsidiary clan? Is this a conspiracy? Or a coincidence?”

Lucca’s thoughts were a mess.

King Arthur certainly wasn’t the only Breaking Dawn contender in the first layer of the subterranean world. However, the majority of the other monsters lived in seclusion, and spent their days cooped up in their laboratories. The City of Alabaster obviously wouldn’t offend them just for such insignificant benefits. Thus, both sides appeared to show restraint.

But now, a monster was clearly being dragged into the situation.

“How daring of you! You actually had the nerve to attack my
affiliated clan!” Anger could clearly be felt radiating from within the black cloud.
The overbearing pressure of a solidified truesoul made all the Magi and Warlocks crouch on the ground. Only the slaves were left standing, their faces glowing with happiness.
“Haha… Haha… You lowly bloodline bastards. How dare you offend the noble young master, Vick! I will execute every single one of you! No! Before execution, I’ll let you enjoy all the torturous punishments the subterranean world has to offer!” The young man laughed maniacally.
“We’re done for! Unless Lord Leylin or King Arthur happens to be here, even the chief of the Lyas family cannot match up to a rank 6 being…”
Lucca’s pupils shone with desperation as he watched the white arm bone reach out from the dark cloud.
“We cannot tolerate anyone violating the interests of our bloodline Warlocks!”
At this very moment, a booming voice suddenly sounded from within the City of Alabaster.
The voice was accompanied by a wave of terrifying bloodline strength. A scarlet radiance washed across the entire sky, as though it was inexhaustible and everlasting, pushing the dark cloud to a side.
“What bloodline is this? It definitely isn’t the Giant Kemoyin Serpent!” A furious voice boomed from within the cloud, and there was even a hint of fear in it.
“It is I, Ouroboros! The limitless and everlasting snake: Ouroboros!” Lucca then saw the frighteningly enormous phantom of a giant snake burst out from the heart of the City of Alabaster, with a body that seemed to extend across the entire horizon.
Whether it was the gigantic body of the snake or the bizarre scales on it, it had a completely different appearance from a Giant
Kemoyin Serpent. Yet, it made Lucca feel like bowing in worship. “Is this… Is this the legendary Emperor bloodline?”

Even as a veteran Warlock of the Ouroboros Clan, it was his first time witnessing the Emperor bloodline explode firsthand. But the familiar feeling from the bloodline and the orders originating from within his genes made Lucca bow down right away, his eyes involuntarily brimming with tears.

Having inherited Leylin’s bloodline directly, the Emperor bloodline was also conferred the ability to grant these Kemoyin descendants life or death.

It was only now, after coming face to face with the might of the Emperor bloodline, did Lucca thoroughly understand the actions of the other bloodline clans. Such an astounding bloodline was indeed worth sacrificing everything for.
How is that possible? How could the City of Alabaster have a rank 6 Magus?” A voice of denial sounded from within the dark crowd. The owner of the voice clearly did not expect this, as he thought he had already performed a detailed background check on the City of Alabaster before he dramatically knocked down their door. However, reality slapped him in the face.

“Nothing is impossible! Watch out you old bastard, the one and only consequence for those who offend the interests of the bloodline Warlocks is death!” The monstrous Ouroboros roared with an outburst of terrifying energy. It seemed still as eternity, yet was filled with infinite kinetic energy.

*Rumble!* The earth’s crust shook violently, roaring. Even space itself was warped and the elements were pushed away. The only thing that came out unscathed was the City of Alabaster, which was under the protection of the Ouroboros.

*Pss!* The dark cloud split open, exposing an elderly man in black robes.

“Impossible! How could a rank 6 acquire this power?” The elderly’s heart was full of regret. If he was given another chance, he would never choose to be Ouroboros Clan’s enemy. Sadly, he would not have the chance to do so.

“Go and repent in the astral plane!” The monstrous serpent swallowed the elder mercilessly, and a terrifying quake shot out.
took over ten minutes for the earth to settle completely.
The phantom of a mountainous infinite serpent shrank, and with a
flash of light merged into the body of a teenager with black hair
and eyes. These features were proof that he was a pureblood of the
Ouroboros Clan.
“Master!” Lucca and Lukard greeted him respectively.
“Mm” He nodded and disappeared into the air.
“Captain, could that be…” Lukard asked Lucca with disbelief.
“If I’m not wrong, that master should be be the the son of the
Monarch of Blood’s first wife Master Syre! He’s actually achieved
rank 6 at a few hundred years of age! The bloodline of the
Master… Sigh…” Lucca looked at Lukard worriedly, and he could
see a tinge of loneliness from Lukard’s eyes.
“Legend says the pure bloodline of Master Leylin comes with two
forms, the first is infinity, and the second is the world! So, that
Master had inherited the bloodline power of infinity?” Lukard felt a
sense of desolation. Both he and Syre were about the same age, but
Leylin’s son’s achievements seemed out of his league.
Lucca had no choice but to shout for his attention. “Let’s stop
thinking about that, hurry up and escort all the captives in.”
“No worries, Cap. No matter what bloodline they’ve inherited it’s
good for the clan!” Lukard bowed to him with full respect, and
soon started to manage the crowd.
Many of the captives were chased inside, while the arrogant teenage
captive was totally dumbfounded, stuck in place. Needless to say,
the fight caused a sensation. However, Syre just flew straight back
into the heart of the city.
“Aunt Aegnis!” A noblewoman with elegant hair stood in the living
room, the perfect image of a nobility.
“Congratulations, little Syre!” Aegnis’ eyes were full of surprise as
she exclaimed, “You even entered the realm of Breaking Dawn
directly. Leylin’s bloodline really is extraordinary…”
“This is nothing to be proud of. After all, my brothers and sisters are just as powerful.” Syre smiled humbly.
“Yes, your siblings…” Aegnis had a benevolent smile on her face.
“I’ve still got lots of things to work on. Daniel advanced far before I did!”
“His path is already fixed, all he needs to do is to stick with the path and keep on upgrading himself. If I were to compare, your effort definitely deserves much more appreciation…” Aegnis knew very well the differences between Leylin’s two bloodlines, but either once was terrifying beyond her imagination.
“Anyway, Belinda and Sophia are rather caught up in something, would you like to see them?” Syre rejected her suggestion. “No need. Nobody will dare to take any action for at least some time now that that Magus’ plot is ruined. I want to return to the surface and visit Father.”
“Hmm… It’s being a long time since I last met that fellow!” Aegnis sounded dissatisfied as she talked about Leylin, and Syre could only smile wryly in response to the past affairs between his elders.

……

Within a laboratory in some unknown dimensional void, Leylin opened his eyes. They seemed to flash with black lightning.
*Buzz! Buzz!* Leylin’s body shook, and a layer of stone came loose and fell from the surface of his clothes.
[Beep! The analysis of the World of Gods’ apparatus has been completed! Time spent: 67 years and 13 months. ] The A.I.Chip’s voice faithfully reminded him.
‘It’s been over 60 years… Together with removing memories and the preparations for the experiments, nearly 300 years have passed…’ Leylin’s handsome face remained just the same as before, as though the power of time was completely lost on his
body, ‘However, the wait was extremely worthwhile. I managed to gather the required data.’
Leylin was deep in thought. When he swallowed Beelzebub the power of laws he’d gained had caused great agitation and chaos to his own memories. This was especially true because Beelzebub was an old freak who’d lived for an unknown length of time. His memories contained all sorts of information, including many secrets about Gods. Leylin did not want to put it to waste, hence he’d had the A.I. Chip record every single thing. It was why it took so long for him to wake up.
“However, all my efforts were worth it, I can finally start something practical!” Leylin came to a astral gate with an excited expression on his face.
This specific astral gate was incomparably enormous. On top of that, there were many strange runes on it that included Leylin’s personal comprehensions of the power of laws.
“Gods!” An ancient yet dazzling light shot from Leylin’s hand, merging into the huge stone gate.
*Buzz! Buzz!* The entire gate shook violently, and there were even some strange energy undulations in the laboratory. With his powerful soul force, Leylin connected to the entire astral plane in a moment.
The vast sea of stars which were as old as history washed over Leylin’s own soul force. This feeling was rather different than his previous experiences, if not for his near rank 7 soul force the destructive power of the astral plane would have completely erased him.
The splendid nebulae seemed to ebb and flow continuously, distorting numerous rings of stars. It was like Leylin’s body was a huge black hole, engulfing everything around him.
“This kind of extreme long-distance projection serves to be a great challenge for the soul force of a Magus!” Leylin remained calm, his
soul force seemingly indestructible. He sat and watched the galaxies flow away before him. Finally, after what felt like a century, his expression changed as he almost saw the end of the astral river.
“Such a special feeling…” A simple premonition had Leylin sighing with exclamation, “The Magus World and World of Gods are like oceans at opposite ends of a galaxy. No wonder those ancient Magi were still attached to this universe.”
In spite of his vast database, Leylin was still awed by the marvelous scenery in front of him after the indescribable sensation faded. There was a dense crystalline wall in front of him, shimmering like a well-constructed beehive. In the astral river, it looked magnificent and infinite.
Within the crystal wall was a radiant light, the light of the Gods!
“Ugh…” Leylin’s body trembled, and a phantom Targaryen appeared immediately, its slit eyes filled with desire and familiarity.
“The World of Gods! The world origin force of such a powerful foreign world would be so great… Not to mention the law of devouring originates from here…” Leylin appeared to be rather calm despite every single cell in his body longing for it. Deep in his heart, he maintained his cold determination.
“This crystal wall system…” Leylin’s soul force encircled around the huge crystal wall, feeling the immeasurable depths of its power.
“The culmination of the worlds origin force, and there’s also the consciences of Gods there…”
Leylin’s expression turned more solemn the more he sensed, “It stubbornly rejects everything from outside, and has blocked all connections from the outside world. It’s as solid as steel, and just as unyielding…”
With a simple probe Leylin understood clearly that even the creator of this system couldn’t destroy it, of that he was pretty sure. “It’s impossible to break through such a system, the only way is to use Beelzebub’s method to smuggle myself in…”
“Beelzebub only needed to leave the World of Gods, and he was a native himself. It’ll be much more difficult for me. It’s only expected that I had to spend 300 years of simulation to find a safe method of passing through…

“Manderhawke plate!” Layers of virtual light gathered in Leylin’s palm, forming a circular disc. On the disc were peculiar patterns, especially the huge chipped edge, and it looked like it was bitten off by some unknown creature.

In the memories of Beelzebub, this was the key to secretly pass through the crystal wall system!

“The main material plane in the World of Gods also had strong isolating power, it’s hard even for the Gods to transfer their powers. It was the same for Beelzebub who was located at the ninth of hell…”

Leylin recalled this bit of information that the A.I. Chip had organised.
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The path of the gods, known as the path of faith, was the foundation of the laws of the World of Gods. Whether it was gods, demons or even devils, their desire for believers and souls was frightening.

The competition on the main material plane had been fierce from the very beginning. Compared to the gods who had resources and money to spare, a devil like Beelzebub was already on the losing end and had no choice but to wrack his brain for ideas. His reputation in the main world was awful as a result.

However, this all changed one day.

Beelzebub obtained a fantastic divine device, the Manderhawke plate! He had named it himself, since he had never seen any description of this device in history, although its effects were extremely powerful.

This Manderhawke plate had the miraculous effect of reducing the suppressive effects of a world boundary.

In other words, if Beelzebub wanted to transmit his godly power to the main material plane and would normally be taxed 90% of his power, the Manderhawke plate would reduce the amount he needed to pay to 10% or even fewer.

This consumption was much cheaper and convenient for him as compared to the gods of that realm.

Because of this advantage, Beelzebub had been able to develop and flourish in the main world, gathering large amounts of the power of
faith and souls, establishing his status in hell in one fell swoop.
Of course, the gods were no fools. After a period of investigation,
they had banded together and complete purged of the organisation
that worshipped him.
Evidently, Beelzebub who resisted the many gods alone had no
choice but to get lost. Not only did all the resources he had amassed
in the main material plane disappear, with only a few followers
slipping past the net and on their last legs, he wasn’t doing well in
hell either, where he was suppressed by the other hell sovereign
kings.
Thankfully, the secret of the Manderhawke Plate had not been
leaked, or else there was no way he could settle this matter so
easily.
Even after all this, Beelzebub was already paranoid and did not
dare take any more action in the main material plane.
He, who had the Manderhawke Plate, set his sights on areas outside
the World of Gods.
In the limitless astral plane, there were many intellectual beings.
The power of faith they could generate was a huge temptation for
him, and it was even better because no gods or other enemies could
notice this!
After a period of experiments, Beelzebub succeeded.
Of course, after that, he had been unlucky enough to meet Leylin.
His main body was probably grievously injured and now in a deep
sleep, and he could even die if he was unlucky. After all, hell was
not a peaceful place.
“The power to extinguish the barriers between worlds…” The
glowing disc arrived at the periphery of the crystal wall, where
numerous runes were flickering. It seemed to attract some existence
within the wall, which made the area surrounding the wall soften.
This made Leylin wonder if this situation would spread to the rest
of the wall.
“No! This isn’t from a flaw in the laws. This was a way out left behind from the very beginning, set up during the design process…” With Leylin’s foresight, he immediately saw how extraordinary the Manderhawke plate was.

“Based on Beelzebub’s thoughts, the Manderhawke plate could very well be an imitation of the most powerful deity device in the World of Gods, the Clay Plate of Destiny. This is very possible. Perhaps this plate might even be a part of the Clay Plate of Destiny…” Leylin’s eyes burned with fervour.

What he had in his hands was obviously not the real Manderhawke plate, or else he would long have been able to enter the World of Gods. Why would he have needed to go through all this trouble?

The shining plate in Leylin’s hands was merely a specific device made by the A.I. Chip from Beelzebub’s memories, as well as the precise calculations down with knowledge on the equipment of the World of Gods.

With data from experiments on the real thing, as well as long periods of observing and doing research to imitate it, Leylin had great confidence in this imitation.

Things were as expected. Under the rays of the fake Manderhawke Plate, the region of the crystal wall here was already beginning to melt, revealing a large passageway.

“It was this easy?”

Leylin furrowed his brows, but still separated a thread of a soul seed, which disappeared into the pathway.

“Get lost!” The moment the soul seed touched the crystal wall, a terrifying voice sounded, bringing with it a powerful isolating conscient.

*Pu!* The seed was immediately annihilated, and even the Manderhawke Plate was floating unsteadily.

“Has the World Will of the World of Gods awoken? No, this is just its subconscious mind! This extent is just…”
Instantly, Leylin knew what had happened. This was an instinctive reaction of the crystal wall, which repelled souls like Leylin who tried to enter. His different type of soul force was immediately discovered, without leaving any room for doubt.

“You’re the one who should scram! You’re just a sleeping subconscious will. Scram!” Two streaks of black lightning shot out from Leylin’s eyes, his black hair flying while he looked to have turned into an ancient demon.

“Hss…” The tremendous body of a Targaryen emerged behind Leylin, its energy undulations and rank 7 will resisting the crystal wall.

*Buzz Buzz!* At this moment, the Manderhawke Plate in Leylin’s hands flashed and completely enveloped the entire area, not allowing any information to be transmitted.

Near rank 7 power was something that even the wills of small worlds could only somewhat resist. While the World of Gods was incomparably powerful, it was still slumbering, and there was only a small region resisting. It had not activated its full force and the Manderhawke Plate had even removed a portion of its sensing abilities, so therefore it was at its weakest.

*Pak!* In that moment, a surge of powerful emotions disappeared, revealing a small space.

“Now’s the time!” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and numerous soul seeds separated and disappeared into the crystal wall.

*Boom!* Practically the very moment the soul seeds disappeared into the pathway, the entire Manderhawke Plate crumbled into powder. Leylin was sent flying backwards, numerous terrifying wounds already appearing on his body as he turned pale. Fresh blood spurted everywhere, but it returned to Leylin’s body at an even faster rate, as if his body had become a huge magnet. The terrifying injuries disappeared in an instant, though Leylin’s face was still obviously pale.
“Just the backlash from a small portion of the crystal wall reduced me to this state, despite the protection of the Manderhawke Plate…” Leylin’s eyes were filled with admiration. He had not attacked the wall forcefully before, or else he would have met the counterattack of the crystal wall and fury of the gods, which would have turned him into ashes in an instant. This sort of powerful ability not only failed to make Leylin afraid, but it left him longing to best it. However, Leylin’s sighs of admiration disappeared in an instant. He was now putting effort into maintaining the connection with his soul, and the terrifying consumption continued. Unlike separated truesouls, one couldn’t sever the support to a soul seed if they wished to maintain it. Even for an existence like Leylin, the consumption from behind the barrier in the World of Gods was astonishing even though things had happened only for a short moment.

The A.I. Chip was now quickly recording. The process of traversing through the crystal wall was not smooth, and soon information on the soul seeds being annihilated was transmitted. [Soul seed #1 extinguished.] [Soul seed #2 extinguished. Estimated time that host can maintain support: 31h 24min 12s.]

However, this lessened the consumption on his end, allowing Leylin to go on for longer.

*Swish!* An orange meteor streaked through the night skies, descending in a dark forest. “This is… the World of Gods?” Leylin’s soul seed scanned the surroundings. It was a dark forest, and his blaming flames had already caused the area arounding him to be charred, creating an empty area there.

“An enormous malicious intent, as well as these laws!” Leylin’s soul seed did all it could to gather data, “The terrifying World Will of the World of Gods might only be suppressing me unconsciously,
but that’s enough to suppress the range of the soul force’s scanning to within 10 metres… On top of that, these limitations on otherworldly power…”

Leylin could clearly sense that this was an exceptionally strict world, with extremely powerful limitations on otherworldly strength. Even if Morning Star Magi came here, they would not possess powerful strength, and it was impossible for them to do what they could in the Magus World.

‘The energy particles are very stable here and easy to manipulate… The exemplaries of this world must find it hard to break through individually. The norm should be to work in groups, ten adventurers in a group would be a good arrangement… Even if my main body comes, I’d probably be suppressed by one to two ranks and only be able to exhibit strength of Morning Star or Radiant Moon… Under such stringent conditions, how terrifying would the gods who have been able to break through be?’

At this point, Leylin suddenly found that he had underestimated the gods. Their strength far exceeded his expectations, especially since he was being suppressed by such a large degree.

“Ovanna, look! Is that a meteor? It landed in the forest!”

In a little village by the forest, a little boy with some freckles on his nose glanced at the sky, suddenly speaking to the pig-tailed girl beside him, “I’ve made a decision. I’m going to look for it!”

“Tiff, have you gone mad? The priest has already said that a meteor is a bad omen!” Ovanna glanced her friend in worry.

“Priest…” Ovanna’s eyes showed her fear. “That’s true! Then I’m not going!”

The meteor from before had evidently brought a large change to the village. Many adults gathered, looking worried, and all began to pray nearby a little altar in the village.

Ovanna and Tiff quickly separated, but what the young girl did not
notice was that after parting ways, Tiff ran outside the village, an excited look in his eyes.
A meteor shower signifies the fall of a powerful being…” Tiff’s eyes glinted, “Though it represents something ominous, I don’t really care. Such a great opportunity is hard to come by! In no time at all, this area will be crowded with adventurers. I have to be the first to get the good stuff… who knows, I might walk the path of an adventurer and become a respected noble!”

From the perspective of a young child, those adventurers who passed by the village once in a while wearing their armour were amazing and powerful. The knights nearby were even more more of a big deal.

“If there’s another legendary item…” Tiff’s eyes were shining, and some saliva dripped from the corner of his mouth.

“Don’t those wandering bards always talk about these in their stories? While the heroes are young, they’ll pick up some deity device by chance and thus walk the path of destiny. That’s so cool…” With his reverence towards heroes, Tiff gathered his courage and entered the dense forest.

At this moment, Leylin’s soul seed was in huge trouble.

“Damn it! With this rate of consumption as well as the restrictions on otherworldly power!”

Leylin found himself completely immobile, and his remaining soul force was quickly being depleted by the pressure from the enormous pressure of the world.
“No! A naked soul seed completely bared is just too weak. I need to find a body to rest on!”

Leylin’s soul force was constantly being depleted, and all the items within ten metres entered his sight, but were all denied.

“No living beings! These plants won’t work because they’re too weak. The rocks are alright, but if I can’t find a substitute item…”

Near the end, Leylin’s soul seed finally found an item that he was somewhat satisfied with.

This was a rusty and mottled broken sword that had been buried here for years. It was concealed by the rotten soil, and Leylin’s appearance would allow it to see the light of day once more.

“Soul attachment!”

A thread of dark red luster flashed on the blade of the sword, and Leylin’s soul seed disappeared.

After entering the broken sword, Leylin was delighted to find that the consumption on his end had lessned, though it was still terrifying.

Meanwhile, a feeling of weakness was transmitted from within Leylin’s soul seed.

“Just the movement of my soul used up most of my reserves. At this rate, even with support from my main body, I won’t last even a few days. I need to find a way to replenish it or gather some data…”

With the World of Gods’ powerful wall as an obstruction, the support from Leylin’s body would have to go through the barrier, which meant the consumption was tremendous. Even Leylin’s main body could not last so long.

Once the main body recalled the energy he was providing, the soul seed would automatically be destroyed.

[Beep! Gathering data on air and elemental particles. Attempting to analyse world law. Recalculating physical constants.]

At this moment, the A.I. Chip was constantly scanning the
surroundings, sending over the most precious firsthand information back.

“Even the rules are different. With the malicious intent and suppression from worlds like these, I’d be unable to display too exceptional strength even if my main body were to go over. All spell models must be modified.”

Leylin looked solemn. Immediately after, external soul strength immediately sensed the approach of another life form.

“Hm?!”

In the senses of his soul force, the area around him in the forest was rustling. Following which, a boy with a head of fiery-red hair made his way in from the grass.

He wore linen clothing that looked tattered and had traces of being mended, showing that his family situation was not very good. In his eyes, Leylin saw fear and anticipation.

“Is this an intellectual lifeform of this world? It’s the same as in Beezlebub’s memories and no different from ordinary humans!”

With Beezlebub’s memory database, Leylin was not completely clueless about the World of Gods.

“From his appearance, he should be a child from a village nearby, or… I could make use of him. It’s not bad to gather intel on the lowest level of the social hierarchy and the format of their organisations.”

At this thought, Leylin immediately decided on his actions.

“This should be where the meteor landed… Hic…”

It was already night. The cool moonlight fell through the treetops, and the dark forest was whistling with cold winds. The temperature had evidently fallen quite a bit, and Tiff could not help but wrap his arms around himself.

The fear of the future as well as the dark surroundings in the forest left him fearful.

*Bugu!* *Bugu!*
Two bird calls were heard from the treetops, immediately causing Tiff to jump like a cat that had its tail stepped on. “Who is it! Who’s there!”
The youngster’s sharp voice pierced through the skies, alarming a few black birds.
The sound of flapping wings was heard, followed by dark figures that disappeared into the skies.
“Hah…” Tiff found that his heart was beating as hard as it ever could, to the point that it might even jump out from his throat.
“Mighty goddess of the spring waters, please bless me! Let me complete this expedition and find those hidden treasures! Tiff swears that he will go to your church and make contributions later…”
Tiff’s hands were now clasped together as he prayed. He believed in the goddess of the spring waters, which was the main religion of the village. Though she was a new god and lacked much strength, it was for this reason that she was very generous to her followers, and therefore the prime selection for the peasants in poverty-stricken areas.
After praying, nothing happened, but Tiff was now more courageous.
His hands were shaking slightly as he pushed the grass aside, but his footsteps were firm as he headed to the empty land.
“Nothing… there’s nothing at all other than a huge charred pit!”
After noticing this, Tiff obviously looked disappointed. Unwilling to admit failure, he rummaged through the area, still mumbling, “How can there be nothing? Where’s the legendary weapon? Magic item? Oh gods, even a few golds are enough…”
“Yet another fool ruled by greed!” Leylin’s soul seed watched on and judged disdainfully.
“But I can make use of that!”
With this thought, threads of light shone from the sides of the
broken sword, exceptionally obvious in the pitch-black night.
“Damn it! The amount of energy here is enough to use a Morning
Star spell in the Magus World, yet it only produces dim rays of light
here…”
As he compared the rules of the two worlds as well as the
consumption from using spells, Leylin’s heart sunk.
With this consumption, the soul seed would not be able to cause
any fatal damage to this lifeform even with Leylin’s main body
supporting energy.
“With the reserves of my soul force, I can’t even use the most
fundamental Intellectual Lifeform Bewitchment! However, metallic
items are still quite valuable here. Especially for a boy full of
fantasies, a broken blade can still attract his attention…”
Leylin judged.
As expected, after noticing the light, Tiff’s eyes brightened as he
arrived before the broken blade from before.
He expended much effort, pushing aside the soil and rocks and
used his filthy hands to run his hands over the blade, allowing it to
see the light of day again.
“The rays seemed to have been produced from this sword…” Tiff
was rather confident of this, but as he observed the rusted sword as
well as the signs of corrosion on the hilt, he was less sure now.
However, even if this broken sword wasn’t any magic artiffct, it
was still very attractive to Tiff.
After all, boys had a passion for weapons from the depths of their
heart, especially for boys like Tiff who had many fantasies.
“Mm! Blacksmith Uncle Glan could buy it. This is worth at least
three coppers! No, five!”
Tiff held this broken sword in satisfaction, the heaviness making
him feel extremely pleased.
The sword with only half its original length was much lighter, but
Tiff’s attempts at a few moves still failed.
“Mm! I’ve made my decision. Even if Uncle Glan gives me five coppers, I won’t sell this!”
Tiff nodded surely and kept his spoils well, humming nursery rhymes as he returned near the village.
Of course, the price of exploring on his own was being taught a lesson by his father, and he was also given a stern warning not enter the forest again.
Tiff did not care about this at all. While his ass was smarting with pain, he cleverly kept the spoils from his adventure amongst some firewood. If not, he knew very well that his father would definitely sell off this sword and turn it into a few cups of cheap rum mixed with water, pouring into his stomach and completely disappearing.
This was the key to Tiff’s life as an adventurer! How could it be squandered away so easily? This couldn’t be allowed, even if it was for his father’s sake! The boy made his decision.
With this thought in mind, the boy contentedly entered dreamland while daydreaming about being an adventurer and hero, while the surging darkness in the outside world never once stopped.
“With orders by the mighty oracle, purge this place of heresy!”
At some point, a group of knights had already encircled the village. Their metallic armour as well as the runes unique to a church was intimidating.
This was the church of a god, and was also the army of the church! It represented a god’s will and was not to be disobeyed!
The oracle said this place has been polluted by a foreign force. A purge is necessary!” At the middle of the group of knights was an old man wearing the attire of a bishop, looking devout and pious. He seemed extremely stern.

“Lord Bishop, we have completely surrounded the area!” A knight reported respectfully after urging his horse over. He was chiseled, his features as sharp as a knife.

“Good! Divine corps, be prepared to coordinate with each other. Don’t let even a single heretic escape!” The bishop waved his hand. Numerous youthful and resolute priests dressed in white ceremonial clothing followed behind him, followed by the groups of knights in an orderly manner.

A serious crisis immediately enveloped the little town, but the residents did not notice at all.

“Hm? An exemplary polluted by the power of other laws…” Though his detection abilities were largely limited, Leylin still sensed the people surrounding the village. It was a pity that there was nothing he could do. In his current state, he needed Tiff’s help just to get out of the forest. There was no way to break through this besiegement.

“The surveillance by the gods is extremely strict!” Leylin exclaimed in admiration. He’d noticed the altar when he’d first entered the village, as well as the laws it emitted.
Of course, there were some differences between the laws here and those of beings from other worlds. Perhaps a more appropriate name for it would be divine force. With the protection of divine force, the whole village was akin to a domain. Though the effects were extremely weak compared to a real domain, they had similar characteristics. “A foreign being like me would be discovered the moment I enter the domain!”
Leylin sighed, “Unless I find an area where the truly faithless gather or evade places with altars or shrines, there’s nowhere for me to hide when I’m in this form… It’s a pity that it’s impossible…”
In Beezlebub’s memories, practically all intellectual beings of the World of Gods had faith in various gods. Here, being faithless was very frightening. Even those followers of another religion or those who had faith in the devils were treated better than the faithless.
It was rumoured that after death, the souls of the faithless were not accepted by any gods, and could only howl and wail as they were crucified while alive.
“Faith in the gods spreads like numerous nodes throughout the World of Gods. Each follower’s soul will be branded by the gods!”
Here, massacres were obviously not forbidden. However, all research done on souls were seen as a blasphemy to the gods, and those discovered doing so would be burnt at the stake.
It was fine to kill the followers of the gods, but if he tried to influence their souls in the slightest degree, the gods would notice in an instant.
The fury of having one’s child touched by someone else was definitely enough to induce fury from the gods.
“The souls of priests, deity officials, devout followers and sacred warriors must definitely not be touched, or else their god will be provoked and surely won’t take this lying down!”
This was the most important lesson Leylin had learnt from Beezlebub’s memories.

“In other words, in the World of Gods, it’s impossible to massacre and devour souls in order to quickly regain strength. If I do that, there’d be something like a tracker on me, and I’d be discovered by the gods no matter where I go. Of course, in a foreign world, my soul strength isn’t much. I won’t be able to escape…”

After determining the situation, Leylin strangely felt relaxed. He was only a soul seed at this point, and it being exterminated would not really affect the main body much. He could make use of this opportunity to gather more data.

“Come at me, sacrificers to the gods!”
A streak of dark red flashed from the broken sword, with a bloodthirsty radiance.

……

The sounds of the neighing of horses, high-pitched roars, the blood-curdling screams and profound pleas for help.
Tiff used the back of his hand which was cleaner and rubbed his eyes, and then yawned.
He, who had been awakened by the sounds, saw the fire outside his window. The trotting of horses, the slamming of doors and shouts lingered by his ear like the mumbles of a devil.
“What’s going on? Is this a nightmare?” Tiff’s mind was in a state of confusion, unable to react to what was going on.
“What did you come out for? Get back in there!” After Tiff left the room, he was immediately pushed roughly back in.
On his father’s face was a grimness and solemnness that Tiff had never witnessed before.
But before he could obediently return to his room, a tall, handsome steed rammed into his garden.
Mounting the horse was a knight wearing steel armour. The luxurious armour made out of steel rendered Tiff speechless, for this usually belonged to lords who were knights or some family heirloom belonging to nobility, such as barons. Even the baron who was closest to this area might not have goods of such quality. Tiff’s eyes were full of fear and envy. Meanwhile, he also noticed a crest on the armour, this was the crest of the Spring Water Goddess!

“It’s the holy knights of the Spring Water Goddess! What are they doing here?”

It had to be said that these holy knights used to be Tiff’s idols, but what they were doing now was just destroying his dreams. “Esteemed lord, may I know…”

Tiff’s father gathered his courage and approached the knight. Before he could finish his sentence, however, he was ruthlessly sent flying and crashed to the ground. “I’m only saying this once. All residents are to gather at the altar. Everyone!”

The knight burst through Tiff’s front door, and what followed was the sound of trunks and boxes being rummaged through. Tiff’s mother, brothers and sisters were chased out. Following his father and the rest of his family, Tiff left through the front door and headed to the heart of the village to gather. It was only at this point that Tiff noticed, stunned, that the other villagers had been expelled from their homes and, like flowed like a stream to converge at the center of the village. “What– What’s going on?” Tiff still had no idea of what exactly was happening. All he knew was that his mother had a tight hold on his hand, to the point that it was painful. In front of him was his father, whose expression was dark and full of uneasiness.
Even when the famine had happened for the past few years, and when the tax officers had come to the village, Tiff had not seen such an expression on his father’s face before.
The many villagers gathered like herded sheep. The knights raised their torches and surrounded them, shining brightly in the night sky.
Around the knights were also many priests. Their clothes were even more extravagant than the priest he had seen previously in the village. To make it simple, all of them must be amazing people.
“Cough cough… cough cough…” The solemn atmosphere as well as the arrival of the deity officials and knights caused Tiff to begin to feel fear, though he had no reason why.
“Lord bishop, all the villagers have gathered. This is the village chief.”
A knight with golden patterns on his armour tossed an old man who was trembling hard before the bishop.
“Lord bishop, our Kahn Village has always been piously worshipping the Spring Water Goddess and never dared go against her!”
From Tiff’s perspective, this village chief who was usually very capable was like a baby here, weeping and sniffing in front of the old bishop.
“The god has taught us to treat every follower with love!”
The old bishop kindly helped the village chief up and even bent to his knees to help brush off the soil, immediately giving rise to feelings of gratitude from the chief.
“The reason I’m here is because I was instructed by the god to purge this area of foreign forces.”
After the chief calmed down, the bishop expressed his purpose in coming here.
For some reason, Tiff saw his father’s body swaying and almost
crumpling to the ground. Even his mother was beginning to sob quietly, and the surrounding villagers looked as if the world was ending.

It was only a long time later that Tiff knew that the gods were very brutal when it came to dealing with foreign forces. Even the commoners in the area that were affected had terrible, miserable conclusions to their lives.

Of course, he was a mere child now. All he knew was that after the bishop who seemed very influential spoke, the many villagers, including the chief himself, went limp and fell to the ground, unable to even plead.

“Oh mighty Spring Water Goddess, your humble servants piously offer sacrifices to you. Please open your godly eyes and differentiate the foreign force here!”

In front of the altar in the little village, the bishop devoutly prayed. Immediately after, milky-white rays of light surged from the altar, bringing with it a holy, clean luster.

“Come here one by one so we can separate you. The god will not misidentify anyone.”

The old bishop announced. Immediately after, those knights began to grab hold of the villages, pressing them down under the altar and forcing them to kneel and repent.

The villagers were forced to go through with this ceremony under the altar one after another, and the rays of light on the altar stayed white.

“Next!” The old bishop looked ruthless, as if nothing in the world was worth him frowning or hesitating over. The holy knights were like demons, only knowing to complete their tasks robotically.

Finally, it was Tiff’s family’s turn. First was his father and sister, and then Tiff.

Tiff knelt on the cool ground, feeling very uncomfortable.

“Quick, repent!” A tremendous force could be felt on his back, and
he had no choice but to bend down.

“Mighty Spring Water Goddess, Bynx, you are the god of all spring waters, and also the stars in the sky, the one who loves us like a mother. I confess to you…”
Tiff was muddle-headed as he prayed, but he’d already performed this ceremony of repentance in the past. Even if he stammered over his words, there were generally no mistakes.

“It can’t be!” “We’ve found it!”

However, Tiff found that the aura in his surroundings had changed afterwards. The gazes gathered on him were like those of wolves, causing every hair on his body to stand on end in his nervousness.

“What’s going on?” Tiff raised his head, stunned. He immediately saw that the milky white lights from the altar had turned a demonic dark red.

“Foreign force!” Tiff felt his neck being grasped, and his entire body was yanked into the air.

The old bishop in front of him now looked incomparably sinister. He could faintly see his father wailing before he was struck to the ground. Now even the villagers isolated his family members, keeping away from them like they had the plague.

“No! Once more, please try it once more! My Tiff definitely would not blaspheme against the goddess!” The cries lingered in Tiff’s ears, but the grasp on his neck was becoming increasingly tight, to the point that he was feeling suffocated.

At this moment, the palm released its hold on him, and long-awaited fresh air poured into his windpipe. Tears and mucus flowed out of him. “Say it, Heretic! How did you go against the
teachings of the goddess?”

The bishop’s brows furrowed slightly at the sight of this heretic. This heretic’s strength was much too weak and was incomparable to the powerful blasphemers from before. Such a small threat would not have warranted the goddess descending and commanding them to act.

“Truth spell!” A dot of golden light flew from the bishop’s hands, disappearing into Tiff’s forehead. Following which, Tiff found his mouth beginning to move involuntarily, answering all of the bishop’s questions.

Tiff’s life had been very normal to the point that it was boring. When he was asked about the exploration earlier in the day, the bishop’s breathing evidently became rougher.

“Quick, surround the kitchen at the back of this home!”

A tremendous force flew out, and Tiff felt like his body was floating high up in the clouds before falling into a gigantic iron hoop, making his whole body ache everywhere.

With the escort of many soldiers, Tiff and his family members arrived in front of their house. Immediately after, waves of knights rushed forward as if meeting with some great enemy, finding a mottled iron sword.

“Lord bishop!” The leading knight respectfully offered up the sword with both hands.

The powerful, sinister strength from the iron sword caused the bishop to frown, “A demonic item, or a temptation from the devils? Even appraisal techniques are useless on it.”

Though he had no idea what the characteristics of this item was, the bishop had already decided what would be his current target.

“If I purify this item, the favour and care I get from the goddess should be able to raise my ranking as a priest by a whole grade, right?”

The bishop’s eyes showed how bewitched he was by this notion
before he repented piously, “Oh mighty Spring Water Goddess, please forgive your servant for his greed…”
For some reason, there were no strange changes to the iron sword that Leylin’s soul seed was residing in. It docilely allowed the bishop to add all sorts of seals to it, and with numerous knights escorting it, they arrived at the altar in the village.
“This child’s soul has already been polluted by the power of the foreign force…”
The bishop stood before the altar, stating his final judgment on Tiff.
“Burn him to death!” “Burn him to death!” “Burn him to death!”
Before Tiff could react, the many villagers began to howl maliciously.
Such a zealous atmosphere and the large difference from what Tiff was used to seeing caused him to break out in tears.
Even his family were bound by the infuriated villagers on wooden crosses that had been made on the spot.
Tiff had a very bad of feeling of what was going to happen.
“No! Please forgive them. I… I did nothing! I only brought an iron sword back. I’m willing to repent for that!”
Tiff wailed and pleaded for the last time, “For the goddess’ sake, you can punish me, but please let my family off!”
“The family of the heretic must also be purified!”
What answered him was the bishop’s grave expression.
Immediately after, amidst large amounts of flames and the cries of children, Tiff fainted in his fear.
“Mighty goddess, your servant piously invites you to descend…”
After burning Tiff’s family at the stake, the bishop began to pray in front of the altar devoutly with his other sacrifices.
As the chief offender, Tiff and that iron sword contaminated by evil needed to be personally dealt with by the goddess herself.
“Hm… is this the path of faith?”
The soul seed in the iron sword was watching all that the bishop was doing, “Using religious ceremonies to spread fanatic behaviour, while gathering the extreme emotions and soul force emanated from the followers…” Leylin calmly analysed.

In his current state, he basically could not resist at all. Hence, he placed all his effort on gathering intel.

Through this period of observation, the details on the surface of the World of Gods were shown in front of him, clearer than Beelzebub’s memories.

“First is the surroundings. Otherworldly power is limited to a very harsh degree. The regular beings here, with even the most common peasant, has a body that surpasses that of regular people in the Magus World by a huge degree, and even by several times. And then, we have the priests and knights here…” Leylin could clearly sense the strength of another existence’s laws from the priests.

Though this path was very similar to Purgatory World’s part of offerings, there were still differences.

The chief difference was that the usage of the power of faith was very wide-ranging. Just the slight disturbance he had caused had allowed Leylin to see so many of these so-called priests.

The number of people here were obviously gathered only from the surrounding regions.

If power was to be poured into all of the priests there were, the many dignitaries of Purgatory World would go bankrupt, and yet it was a simple matter for the gods here.

Furthermore, there were differences when compared with the trade of equivalent exchange of the path of offerings. The Sacrificers here all thought themselves to be the servants of the gods and believed they had very low statuses.

This situation aroused Leylin’s interest, urging him to find out
more.
“Furthermore… as there are too many, the gods can’t focus on
every single one of their followers, unless they are invited to do so
or if there are blasphemous souls…”
Leylin watched the bishop that began to pray, the feeling of an
existence of laws descending beginning to tingle in the area.
“I need to do something!”
He made his decision, and then placed his focus on Tiff.
Leylin, whose body was now but a broken sword, had no way to
resist. He needed some sort of medium.
Come to think of it, this guy was rather suitable.
Blood and fire! And then there were the malicious smiles from the
villagers, knights and priest… This was what Tiff saw in his
dreams.
The heavy feeling of being suppressed was like a huge mountain,
destroying this child’s soul.
In this situation, manipulating Tiff was just too easy for Leylin.
“Hey kid, do you want to take revenge?”
Many flames shot out all of a sudden, converging into a huge face
that stared at Tiff.
“Of course! No matter what you are, whether a demon or devil, it’s
fine even if you want my soul. Please give me the strength to take
revenge!”
Tiff began to weep in his dreams as he knelt.
“How astute. I like it!” The flaming human face smiled evilly,
turning into a gigantic blazing winged serpent that disappeared into
Tiff’s body.
“Remember. My godly name is Kukulkan, the feathered serpent
Kukulkan! Your soul, flesh and everything shall, from hereon,
belong to me!”
A voice sounded in Tiff’s mind, and immediately after, he felt as if
his body was lit with flames, and felt like it was burning.
“What’s going on?” “This kid’s body is burning!”
The clamour around him caused Tiff to open his eyes once more, but the charred crosses not too far away only resulted in tears of disappointment.
The boiling hot feeling did not dissipate as Tiff stared at his palm. This was no longer like a human. Strangely enough, there were scales with flames around, looking like a palm of vengeance that had come straight from hell!
“So… it wasn’t a dream!” Tiff mumbled.
At this moment, the bishop and knights were startled by Tiff’s appearance. From their point of view, he had suddenly been enveloped by a layer of fire, turning into some demonic thing that had come from hell.
“Kill him!” Holy radiance flickered from the bodies of a few knights as they brandished their large swords and charged towards him.
“Ah…” Tiff yelled, and the seals on the broken sword that Leylin had attached himself to crumbled, and then fell into his hands.
“Die!” The broken sword slashed and created a few mysterious red streaks. Immediately after, the knights’ bodies fissured, with blood and innards flying everywhere alongside the horrified cries of the villagers.
As if there was a limitless amount of strength being poured into from the hilt of the broken sword, Tiff was like a death god as he reaped the lives of the surrounding knights.
“His life rays have gotten more powerful. He’s at least comparable to a level 15 officer!”
“Goddess Bynx, how is this possible?”
“Goddess, please bless us!” The many knights and deity officials yelled in fury.
However, Tiff cared nothing at all for things like this. His mind had already been filled with the thirst for revenge.
One after another, the enemies were destroyed under his bloody red field of vision, which then focused on the bishop.

“Mm! Let’s end this with a final experiment. Innate ability: Devour!”

With Leylin’s will, Tiff’s arm grabbed onto the bishop’s shoulders. Following which, his flesh began to melt at a visible rate.
The goddess… will not let you off!” The bishop said as he put up his final struggle. His face was filled with the fanatic expression of someone who had died for a good cause. Leylin simply did not give a hoot about all of this. “Well! The transformation efficiency of his flesh is not bad. His divine force is also rather decent. Next up… the soul, the most important part!” However, when the broken sword came into contact with the bishop’s soul, the situation changed drastically!

“You… You actually have the cheek to profane my soul?” The excruciating pain from somewhere deep within his soul made the bishop come to his senses. A mix of despair and resolution surfaced on his face, “Almighty goddess! Your devotee sincerely offers his own life, and longs for your arrival! Divine art Deity’s Descent!”

The powerful counter-attack made Tiff take many steps back in succession. The summoning ceremony that had been interrupted resumed, now moving very quickly. After all, the bishop had been working himself before but now the goddess only needed to take the initiative to descend.

“Indeed… The soul of a devotee is a forbidden zone.” Leylin gave a forced laugh, and immediately sent a command to Tiff’s brain, telling him to go far away and leave the iron sword with the soul seed behind.
‘My power has almost been used up. Leaving now is useless, so I might as well contribute whatever strength I have left!’ The broken sword suddenly turned scarlet. Molten iron started to dissolve and finally formed the outline of a humongous devil.
The badly damaged demonic wings, gigantic compound eyes, the devilish hand which had six fingers on it, and even the law of gluttony it grasped was all identical to the Sovereign King of Gluttony.
“After all, I also control Beelzebub’s power of gluttony. Passing off as him will be far too easy…”
Leylin took control over the body of devil and looked over at the bishop in front of him, just that he was now lifeless. Yet, his body floated eerily in midair.
A powerful conscient was being implanted in the bishop’s body, filling him with some sort of divine sensation.
Soon after, Leylin saw a pair of golden pupils.
“Now!”
Leylin did not dare to actually meet the other party face-to-face, or his flaws would definitely be seen. At the very moment when the Spring Water Goddess descended, he suddenly manipulated the body of the devil to explode spontaneously!
*Boom boom!!* The scorching flames, along with the power of laws, completely wiped this tiny village from existence.
Even the residents in the neighbouring towns could see the orange sky in the distance.
In the entire Kahn Village, not a single soul survived except for Tiff.
This incident was determined to be caused by the invasion of a devil. Through facilitation by the Spring Water Goddess Church, a new round of exercises took place across the entire central continent to root out heresies.
Of course, all of this didn’t have any relation to Leylin.
The huge door of the astral gate disintegrated inch by inch. Leylin sat on the ground, his face as white as a sheet.
Weakness spread across every part of his body. Ever since he had transformed into a laws being, such a feeling was already very rare.
“The World of Gods is indeed incomparably powerful. A mere force that wouldn’t even be able to support the soul for a day almost led to excessive depletion, and endangered my origin!” Leylin smiled bitterly.
“Moreover, this experiment has proven that any other force is extremely conspicuous in the World of Gods. It simply cannot be concealed, and the consumption is way too high, which is disproportionate to the benefits…”
There was a profound look in Leylin’s eyes.
‘The suppression and hostility in the World of Gods is something that even I am incapable of resisting against in my current state. In that case, it seems that the best method at present would be to walk the old path.’
After this experiment, Leylin had already made up his mind.
In the World of Gods, it was necessary to adopt a brand new format, which would be different from his former expeditions in the other worlds.
“I’ll make my moves through an independently acting body, and he cannot receive any kind of power from the host body. Also, it’s necessary for him to grow entirely based on the laws of the World of Gods.”
Leylin stroked his chin.
“When he matures to a certain level, at least rank 7, then we can coordinate and work together to break through the crystal wall shackles.”
“If we’re going to do this, the Truesoul Splitting Technique that Melinda provided previously still needs to be improved on. Additionally, the method to maintain control over the body must be
experimented as soon as possible.”
A multitude of ideas emerged from Leylin’s mind, and was arranged according to the level of importance.
Only when all of this was complete and the experimental data fully recorded did Leylin then step into the outside world.
“Yes!” Leylin shut his eyes and immediately knew of Syre’s breakthrough using the sensing abilities of his bloodline origin.
“He’s already advanced to rank 6? The limitless and everlasting power of Ouroboros seems to be highly compatible with Syre!”
Although his pace was slower than the eldest son Daniel, Leylin was extremely satisfied.
Both of his children that branched out from his bloodline had grown healthily, and even had a strong grip on the other Warlock families in the Magus World.
It was a pity that such lightning-speed advancements were only possible before these two bloodlines reached rank 6. When they attain the comprehension of laws, they would definitely meet with a bottleneck of greater difficulty.
Leylin knew this as clear as day.
“However, Daniel and Syre haven’t made any achievements in the comprehension of laws, and are currently only equivalent to newly promoted rank 6 Magi. But with the additive effect of the bloodlines, their true combat abilities shouldn’t be inferior to Magi like the Flame Monarch. I’ll be able to execute my plan with ease.”
Under the protection of the two rank 6 Warlocks Daniel and Syre, the Ouroboros Clan no longer feared clashing against others in most ordinary situations.
The remaining beings of laws naturally wouldn’t provoke them as well, out of respect for Leylin.
After all, even the current Ouroboros Clan was just like a child’s plaything in their eyes.
With such assurances, Leylin could finally let go of the Ouroboros
Clan completely and concentrate on his own matters. “A.I. Chip, show my current statistics.” Leylin commanded. [Leylin Farlier, rank 6 bloodline Warlock: Targaryen (rank 6). Strength: 185.64. Agility: 133.21. Vitality: 263.11. Spirit: 469.77. State of soul: peak of Breaking Dawn. Comprehension of laws: 99% engulfed. Host body has already been saturated with the original power of the Magus World, and is unable to be raised further.] The A.I. Chip gathered and displayed Leylin’s latest data. “Indeed! The original power of the Magus World is now ineffective to me. Unless… I advance once more?” Leylin’s gaze seemed to shine brightly. Within the past 300 years or so, he had three opportunities to enter the underground world to absorb the original power of the world and the comprehension of laws. It was a pity that no matter how astonishing his combat abilities were, which were even level to average law beings, he had no way of changing the fact that he was still at rank 6. In comparison to the real laws beings, his current capacity was like a small cup, which had already been filled to the brim with the original power of the world. If he wanted to continue absorbing the original power of the world, the only path he could take would be to advance to rank 7. “In fact, the rank 7 realm has already been completely laid out in front of me. I just need to get rid of Beelzebub and wrest control of the last bit of his power of laws!” Leylin’s eyes seemed to be ablaze with excitement. The repeated absorptions of origin power and comprehension of laws made him gain a greater understanding of the Magus path. It even allowed him to plan which direction to take in the future to a certain extent. All of this had to be realised in the World of the Gods.
“Hmm?! Syre is requesting to communicate with me. Is it about the secret snake den? Forget it! I’ll let him take full responsibility for it, he doesn’t have to report to me.”
Leylin then spent the next few moments casually dealing with the work that he had accumulated.
The secret snake den was in actual fact a pocket dimension that Leylin had constructed himself. It mimicked the same method that the Snake Dowager had used for the Serpentes Plains, and many different highly-skilled snake species were bred there. Among them, it was only natural that the Kemoyin Serpent descendants were the most common. The bloodlines of the Alabaster Devilsnake and the Three-Headed Python, as well as a small amount of the Targaryen bloodlines also circulated among the snakes.
Through gradually reproducing over a long period of time, the secret snake den had turned into a paradise for highly-skilled snake species. A few variations had also appeared in some specimens. Of course, this was still a far cry from the standard that Leylin expected. However, that didn’t matter. With his current life expectancy, he absolutely had the patience to continue waiting.
“Although the probability of success of such experiments in variation is almost insignificant, it’s still a glimmer of hope! My financial ability and physical resources are also sufficient for this experiment to carry on without taking the cost of production into account.”
Leylin supported his chin with his left hand, and suddenly lifted his eyebrows.
“Is this feeling a calling from the Dreamscape?”
The familiar sense of a bloodline caused a strange smile to creep onto the corners of Leylin’s lips.
After receiving the bloodline of the Alabaster Devilsnake, his
understanding of Dreamscape was already so deep that he had even obtained the ability to travel there directly.
His advancement to the halfway point of rank 7 as well as his comprehension of laws strengthened this ability significantly. It could be said that the current Dreamscape was no longer some kind of backyard garden to Leylin, but a homeground that he was extremely familiar with.
Just moments ago, Leylin had sensed a call from Dreamscape, and the source was actually the Snake Dowager!
Ever since suffering a major loss at Leylin’s hands when he had been promoted, the Snake Dowager hadn’t appeared, making Leylin feel rather regretful.
He had looked forward to fighting her in the Magus World. Judging by the powerful and oppressing strength there, the Snake Dowager definitely wouldn’t be able return home. Evidently, she wasn’t a fool and didn’t let Leylin fulfill his wish.
Leylin had also been tactful enough to hole himself up inside the Magus World and didn’t give any Purgatory Exemplaries a chance, thus they could only fume with rage between gritted teeth. “The Dreamscape? How interesting!”
In the infinite astral plane, the Magus World and the World of Gods were like the two ends of an hourglass. They were both extremely formidable, yet there were numerous smaller worlds in between them.

Among these worlds were large-scale worlds such as the Purgatory World, Icy World and the Shadow World. Although they couldn’t be compared to the big two, these worlds were still plentiful in origin force.

Dreamscape, however, was even more marvelous. It didn’t have a fixed form yet it spanned across many worlds, as though it was everywhere at once.

At its peak, dreamforce was comparable to the energy of the Magus World. However, this strange yet terrifying world was now at its lowest point because of how weak dreamforce was right now.

This characteristic of Dreamscape was evidently exploited by numerous beings. They used it as a bridge for communication and interaction. This was especially so for the Snake Dowager, who had mastered dreamforce.

“Since it’s an invitation, I’ll go!” Leylin smiled and suddenly disappeared from his laboratory. He was confident in dreamforce himself, and although he couldn’t defeat the Snake Dowager in his current state, he was strong enough to buy himself the time to escape Dreamscape.

With such a premise, it was naturally impossible for the Snake
Dowager having come to attack him. She likely wanted to make peace.
After all, no matter how unwilling the Snake Dowager was, Leylin had already broken free of his bloodline shackles and had even advanced to become the primogenitor of a new bloodline. This was an undeniable fact!
The Snake Dowager had the ability to live for countless years, and she had even successfully survived the final ancient war. It was impossible that she was still unable to accept this reality.
A scarlet flame flickered as a huge door appeared on the plain, and Leylin’s figure emerged from the door frame.
“Is this… still Dreamscape?”
Leylin raised his eyes and gazed into the distance. What he saw was all withered trees and dried up streams and lakes. The entire world seemed to be an arid wasteland, and there wasn’t even a trace of life.
Although he long knew that the entirety of Dreamscape had also entered a dreary phase in the wake of the value of dreamforce dropping, such a situation surprised Leylin.
“By the looks of it, I’m afraid that perhaps the entire Dreamscape has fallen in the hands of death…”
Leylin frowned slightly. He recalled the time when he was still at rank 5, and all the aboriginals he had come across in Dreamscape.
“I wonder what happened to little Gillian and their community? I’m afraid that things probably didn’t end well for them…”
The Dreamscape aboriginals that Leylin had met previously were from the most lowly community in Dreamscape. Even though he had imparted his teachings to them previously, it probably only gave them a little more power to defend themselves.
In the face of the Master that was natural disaster, this tiny bit of power was like an ant, the difference being that it was just slightly bigger.
The deterioration of dreamforce was something that even those lords that could cause calamities had to defend against. Judging by Gillian’s community’s capabilities, it was likely that they were unable to survive.

“However, seeing how Dreamscape can be so strange and beyond belief, it’s not that Gillian’s community didn’t have any hope of surviving at all, just that such a possibility is so small that it’s practically negligible enough to be disregarded.”

Leylin shook his head and didn’t think further.

“The degradation of the world… exemplifies the fundamental truth of the astral plane. Even if I am a being of laws, I cannot escape from my final destiny, which is to perish… Forefather of Targaryen… What do you think?”

The surrounding land turned into nothingness, and the entire wasteland seemed to have transformed into a boundless sky in an instant.

A ball of snakes appeared like a star, and the heads of numerous giant snakes hissed angrily, revealing the Snake Dowager’s charming face.

“It’s precisely why it’s able to excite me and vow to pursue eternity and to transcend worldliness, and I will abide by this even till death! Oh Snake Dowager, if you’re of this level, you don’t have to put up an act in front of me.”

Leylin laughed gently and took a step forward with his boot.

*Snap! Snap!* Jet black cracks started to appear in the starry sky, and made horrifyingly loud sounds.

Shortly after, many of smaller cracks started to extend like a spiderweb. Numerous spatial storms rippled across the surface, and the entire sky shattered under Leylin’s feet. The surrounding environment reverted into the original Dreamscape.

The Snake Dowager looked on as Leylin trampled the sky into smithereens. Her beautiful eyes shone with a profound radiance,
and it was a good while before she spoke slowly, “Leylin! Your current strength is worthy enough for me to meet you head on!” Her voice had an inexplicable charm to it.

Of course, the Snake Dowager was expressing her natural bloodline abilities, which had long lost its effect on Leylin.

“The premise of a relationship is to have equal strength.” Leylin had already understood this principle earlier, thus his facial expression did not change. He then asked unhurriedly, “I don’t think you invited me here to discuss this issue, right?”

“Yes…” The Snake Dowager’s voice was melodious.

“To have a being like you among my descendants is my luck, and also my misfortune. But since the bloodline origin has already been taken from me, it will be of no use to be entangled with you.”

“So it seems that you have a method to resolve this?” Leylin was evidently ridiculing her, but the Snake Dowager didn’t seem to feel it.

“As long as you assist me in seizing the Shadow World, I can write off all the previous incidents in one stroke, and even help you to become the other origin of the Ten Thousand Snakes. Together, we can share the power of the Shadow World.”

The Snake Dowager bit her lip, as though she was making a huge sacrifice. Such a lovely and pitiful posture would make any male creature go crazy.

Leylin, however, was not enchanted by her graceful bearing. Instead, he was astonished at how fearless the Snake Dowager was.

“Seize the Shadow World? Mighty Snake Dowager, you have such an enormous appetite!” Leylin drew in a deep breath, and at the same time also recalled an intelligence report regarding the Snake Dowager.

“But that’s right! You initially made use of shadow force to cultivate your own laws and form paths of laws, hence you would covet the Shadow World more than anyone else. You tried to
capture the entire Shadow World in the ancient times, but unfortunately, you failed…”
The path taken by rank 8 beings was to exploit some kind of medium, continuously refine their own laws, and form a path that was exclusive to them only.
If one was able to achieve this, they would reach the peak of rank 8! They would be able to spy on beings in the rank 9 realm, such as the Mother Core, for instance.
The Snake Dowager’s previous attempt failed, thus she had no choice but to migrate out of the Shadow World along with her descendants, and arrived at the Purgatory World.
But the origin of the Shadow World was crucial for the Snake Dowager to achieve the peak of rank 8, therefore she couldn’t give it up.
Consequently, it was highly normal for her to launch an offensive once more. What Leylin didn’t see coming was that her actually approaching him for assistance.
“Aid you in seizing the Shadow World? I’m afraid I’m impotent!” Leylin was understood the level of the Shadow World thoroughly. It was a powerful world, much like the Purgatory World, and possessed numerous law beings.
In other words, if he was on the same camp as the Snake Dowager, he would have to take on many other law beings one on one. Leylin even strongly suspected that there was an extreme being similar to the Mother Core within the Shadow World, otherwise the Snake Dowager’s plans wouldn’t have been thwarted.
In such a situation, wouldn’t it be suicide to form an alliance with the Snake Dowager?
“In reality, there aren’t as many law beings in the Shadow World as you think! Besides, you inherited my bloodline. The same additive effect applies to your strength in the Shadow World as well. The assistance that the Shadow origin will provide you with will
“definitely go beyond what you imagined…”

The Snake Dowager evidently knew Leylin’s considerations. For beings like them who had reached this level, most of her crafty conspiracies had already lost their effect. The only effective way was to tempt him directly with benefits.

“Does the Snake Dowager actually have so much confidence in seizing control over the Shadow World?” Leylin couldn’t help but ask this question directly upon seeing her self-confidence.

“I almost succeeded the previous time! All I lacked was an assistant of the same origin.”

The Snake Dowager shot Leylin a profound look, yet it made his scalp go slightly numb.

“An assistant of the same origin? Makes sense. We are, in fact, beings of the same bloodline origin. Even our powers can work in harmony and complement each other! If she really missed by only a hair previously, then coupled with my powers, perhaps…”

Leylin’s pupils twinkled as he quickly analyzed the situation.

Of course, no matter how the Snake Dowager made it sound like a deluge of heavenly flowers, he wouldn’t fall for her trap.

Just a vague and insubstantial agreement that she would write off all their previous grudges in one stroke, coupled with a promise that they would share the profits together, and she wanted him to sacrifice his life for someone else? What kind of joke was this?

What was more dangerous was that he was still a semi-rank 7. If they were in the Magus World, even if the Snake Dowager came down personally, he was confident of making sure that she would land herself in serious trouble. But if they were to fight for the controlling rights of the Shadow World, it was inevitable that he would have to make the trip using his actual self and descend within the Shadow World.

Since it was a foreign world, and also the Snake Dowager’s home ground, Leylin wasn’t foolish enough to deliver himself up straight
into her mouth for free.
In all likelihood, the Snake Dowager might gobble him up straight away even if she couldn’t capture the Shadow World, to properly make up for it.
“My apologies, I’m still incompetent when it comes to matters like these.”
After much consideration, Leylin immediately rejected her without hesitation.
The moment the words left his lips, he could feel the surrounding space come to a standstill. The Snake Dowager’s beautiful pupils nearly became as narrow as a straight line, as a horrifying sensation dissipated from the ball of snakes.
Leylin, however, was not fearful. The gigantic Targaryen phantom appeared behind him and started hissing at the Snake Dowager in anger.
Large amounts of bloodline energy seemed to begin to grow restless, and was about to fly out from the Snake Dowager’s body. Having already extricated himself from her control over his bloodline, not only was Leylin no longer under the Snake Dowager’s control at all, but his body even had an odd restraining ability towards her.
No matter how mystical this force was, it still didn’t have any effect in the face of such a tremendous difference in terms of strength. But there was absolutely no problem for Leylin to break away from the Dreamscape during this short amount of time. And the Snake Dowager could only grudgingly choose to reach a compromise upon seeing this.
"My descendant, the Targaryen Emperor! You may put forward another request!" The Snake Dowager’s voice had a hint of helplessness. Her eyebrows, which were slightly knitted, were especially heart-breaking to see.

"The power of this charm she uses incessantly is really…" Leylin smiled wryly to himself. Her seductive powers were produced naturally, just like the aura of Warlocks, and had extremely high potential.

However, the Snake Dowager’s position also made him fall into a state of contemplation. She seemed really sincere right now, but if his own safety couldn’t be guaranteed Leylin definitely wouldn’t partake in this plan.

If he could actually form an alliance with the Snake Dowager and form friend from foe, it would be of great help. After all, he had only truly offended very few beings of laws, and they were Beelzebub, the Snake Dowager, and the Nefarious Filthbird. Amongst them, Beelzebub was already thoroughly done for, and he could only wait for Leylin to wrap up the loose ends. If the Snake Dowager turned from foe to friend, then the Trial’s Eye would definitely do the same as an ally. The number of the people in his opposing camp would immediately be reduced by more than half, which would in turn significantly lower the pressure Leylin was facing.
Maybe by then, he wouldn’t have to continuing holing himself up in the Magus World, and could instead travel with a peace of mind. Leylin pondered for a moment, before speaking, “Well, your conditions piqued my interest, but I do have a request.” “Please speak your mind.” It seemed that the Snake Dowager really did view Leylin as someone of equal rank. “Firstly, I must truly advance to rank 7 before I will agree to embark on this project. Furthermore, I also want…” Leylin listed the requirements that he had already thought of. “Wait for you to advance to rank 7?” The Snake Dowager’s gaze swept across Leylin, “The laws of Gluttony that you are in control of is considered an exceptionally outstanding ability even among other rank 7 beings. I’m afraid that it would require a lengthy amount of time to fill in its gaps completely. As for your other request…” The Snake Dowager also started to mutter to herself. “You will not have to worry about my advancement. I’ll definitely be able to fully comprehend the laws of Gluttony within at least a thousand years. The other request is my bottom line. If you are unable to agree to it, then I can only express my regret.” Leylin wasn’t willing to give in by even an inch. “Will do!” It was a long time before the Snake Dowager spoke, “In addition, we will have to agree to and sign a bloodline contract, with the Dreamscape as our witness.” ……

After a short while, the gigantic ball of snakes gradually vanished from the starry sky, and the surrounding environment had been restored to its deathly still state. Leylin stood in the middle of the wilderness, seemingly having a penny for his thoughts.
“The Snake Dowager agreed to such a condition, and even signed a contract. Seems like she really is sincere about it. Moreover, my strength at that time must have undergone an earth-shattering change. I wasn’t even afraid that she would fall out with me…”

Leylin wasn’t a battle maniac, of course. If he could reduce his enemies as much as possible on the premise of protecting his own interests, it was certainly a good thing.

Besides, this contract also allowed Leylin to win over at least a thousand years of peace for his development, which was essential.

“Is this the way the beings of law communicate? Compromises are necessary because it’s highly challenging to exterminate one another. Also, the ones who have greater strength frequently have the upper hand, yet the interests of the weaker ones are also protected.”

After today’s incident, Leylin had once again gained an even deeper understanding of the way law beings behaved.

However, assisting the Snake Dowager in fighting for control over the Shadow World was not an easy task. Fortunately, the contract did not stipulate that they had to begin right away, and instead gave Leylin a long period of time to prepare.

After all, a thousand years hadn’t even passed since his birth. Yet, he had already attained what other Magi could only dream of achieving all their life, which was to master the laws.

If given another millennium, to what extent would he grow to by then?

Even Leylin himself couldn’t help but anticipate it.

“Since I’m in Dreamscape, I might as well visit Gillian and the others.” After being carried away by a whim, Leylin suddenly had an idea.

Highly-ranked Magi frequently had the mysterious ability to make prophecies. They could even sense future episodes that would be detrimental to them, and in addition, evade them.
More often than not, the result would be that the more one didn’t want something to happen, the more likely things would spiral down a worse track. Leylin’s sudden thought about Gillian and the others was also classified as the same kind of prediction. “This would also imply that… perhaps Gillian and the rest were not completely wiped out, but are still living in some corner of Dreamscape. And does this even mean… That they would be of some help to me in future?” Leylin stroked his chin as his lips curved into a smile. Soon after, he transformed into a long blood-red streak that disappeared into the horizon. Time and space were distorted in Dreamscape, thus it was very inconvenient to travel. The same applied even to beings of law like Leylin. However, there were also advantages of Dreamscape sinking into stillness. At the very least, the other evil spirits in the Dreamscape had also fallen into a slumber, and a majority of those bizarre scenes seemed to have disappeared, which allowed Leylin to avoid a lot of trouble. Those evil spirits were beings of law as well, and they could have been a huge inconvenience to Leylin otherwise. Once he was drawn into the strangest kind of space-time settings of Dreamscape, he might even die in his current state. If not for the degeneration of dreamforce, Leylin might not dare to swagger along as he explored the place, not even if he was braver by ten thousand-fold. “The place where Gillian and the rest have gathered is not far away from my previous laboratory.” Due to the previous failure of his space-time experiment and the spatial alignment, Leylin’s laboratory had strangely become a place which was linked to Dreamscape.
Leylin seized the opportunity of course. Not only did he gather vast amounts of precious data and Dreamscape materials, he had also made some arrangements near his laboratory. Now, he was attempting to find the place that he had travelled to from his previous laboratory by tracking the signal that he had deployed beforehand.

A red radiance twinkled in Leylin’s eyes while he hovered in mid-air. He seemed to have transformed into an afterimage as he chased the faintly discernible traces of connection, constantly changing the direction he headed towards.

As he made his way there, there were multiple times when Leylin could sense beings of the same rank as him. Here, the whole sky turned pale in an area that was being destroyed by endless snowfall. There was bound to be a demonic being that was fast asleep in the heart of the area.

Leylin certainly did not dare venture to infringe on its territory, and could only decide to make a detour, which was a longer route. The limitations of the A.I. Chip’s scan, coupled with his abilities, allowed Leylin to only see a vast stretch of sparkling and translucent crystals in the middle of the snow. It seemed like an extremely powerful seal.

“Did the evil spirit choose to seal itself up, or was it arranged by the Dreamscape? If it’s the latter, then these evil spirits are in such a miserable plight…”

Leylin shook his head. After passing a few territories that belonged to the evil spirits, he could sense that he was drawing near to the signal that he had deployed at that time.

“Huh?!” Leylin’s facial expression changed in an instant. The solidified soul force allowed him to sense a tremendous aura ahead of him. What astonished him even more was that the owner of this aura actually had the strength of a rank 7 Magus as well! Moreover, it didn’t seem to have the slightest intention of sealing
itself up or entering a deep slumber.
*Rumble!* The earth split open, revealing an enormous yellow eyeball, and followed by a thorny back that resembled a hill. A pair of gigantic fleshy wings spread open across the land, and even blocked the entire sky from view.

“Hoho…” An enormous one-eyed dragon suddenly burrowed its way out from the ground. Its body was like a diamond, sparkling with brilliant lights and vibrant colours. Its huge eyes were fixated on Leylin, and it emitted an immensely powerful draconic aura, making the surrounding air come to a standstill.

“Welcome, young Magus!” It spoke in the ancient Byronic language, which pleasantly surprised Leylin.

“May I ask if you’re from Dreamscape? Also, have you seen other Magi here before?”

“Oh hoho… I once witnessed the ancient glory of Magi with my own eyes, and have experienced the destruction from the ancient battle. I exist in the past, the present, and will inevitably extend to the future…”

There was evidently an issue with this dragon’s brain, or perhaps its line of thought was far too complicated, which gave Leylin the urge to roll his eyes.

Fortunately, the one-eyed dragon finally regained its senses after a round of self-praise, “An aboriginal of Dreamscape? No! I’m certainly not! The almighty Gigakell Dragon race only comes from the Ultron World. In fact, during the period of Dreamscape’s deterioration, many beings were fond of coming here to travel and try to pick up scraps. Just 200 years ago, I met a master on his travels. He had found a damaged destiny tarot card, but unfortunately he was immediately hunted down and killed by an evil spirit whose seal had been lifted.”

Although this one-eyed dragon was very narcissistic, Leylin
managed to obtain some useful information.
According to its statement, majority of the strange scenes in Dreamscape had vanished as numerous evil spirits had fallen into a deep slumber during the deterioration of dreamforce. Thus, it had become a paradise for explorers. This place was not lacking in beings of law as well.
Presently, the Dreamscape certainly no longer had anything good to offer. Even if it had, it would be on territories where the most evil spirits lived.
In order to get their hands on them, one would have to run the risk of getting hunted down and killed by those evil spirits. If they were fatally attacked, no matter how much they dreaded consuming their power, these enraged spirits would still jump out of their sleep to kill.
“Heh heh… Those fools. The stagnation of dreamforce has immersed the most precious of treasures into the world’s core. What other profitable items would still be left on the surface?Oops! This is terrible! I let it slip by accident!” The humongous one-eyed dragon covered its mouth with its claw.
“Goodbye, Magus!”
The enormous one-eyed dragon once again made its way underground like a groundhog. Leylin almost burst out laughing at its nimble and practised movements.
Imagine

So the original place has now fallen to this barren state?” After bidding the one-eyed dragon farewell, Leylin finally arrived at the area where he had last left his signal. However, this terrain had obviously changed compared to when his laboratory had originally connected to this place. The many forests had all disappeared, and the bumpy terrain gave rise to feelings of familiarity. The former location of the lab had long since been swallowed up by seawater, and the rank 6 spider he’d met before had also vanished without a trace.

“Where are Gillian and the rest?” Based on the map saved by the A.I. Chip in his memories, Leylin found no difficulty in finding the place they had gathered in, though it was now completely empty. The pots and metal on the ground looked completely corroded.

“To this extent?” Leylin picked up an iron sword. This was something he had gifted them, made from the best steel and forging techniques of the central continent. Now, however, it was turning to powder in his hands, corroding inch by inch before disappearing entirely.

‘It’s only been three centuries, but from the items it seems like they’ve gone through thousands or even tens of thousands of years… Is this a change from dreamforce when it was still very active?’ Leylin stroked his chin, arriving at where Gillian and her
father had resided. Or rather, this was only the remains of what had been. The old house had long since withered away, and there were only slight traces left on the ground. “The settling of time should show the truth before me…” Leylin’s eyes looked profound as he said words that were like an incantation. As beings of law, Magi had already surpassed things like incantations and spell formations. They touched on the most fundamental powers of magic, and had the power of the magic take effect as words were spoken.

*Rustle!*
The soil separated and the rocks caved in, revealing a few broken bones, and even some corroded household utensils. “Seems like after I left, Gillian lived for a long time…” As time was turned back, Leylin gained a deep understanding of what had happened in this area.

*Bztt bztt!* At this moment, the ground had caved into to the limit, and a black bundle of light with some tattered cloths within appeared. Atop the tattered cloth were a few badly damaged markings that could not be recognisable. “This… isn’t it the notebook I gave to Gillian?” Leylin’s eyes shone. From the A.I. Chip’s analysis of the image, these items that were like cloth were actually multiple pieces of paper stuck together, a strange situation a result of being pushed down with tremendous force.

“Reveal!” Leylin reached out and touched them. Soon enough, lines of tiny words were projected, emitting multi-coloured luster in the air. The A.I. Chip quickly accepted this information and arranged this information based on the time they had been made.
‘It is a good day. Father and the rest made use of the method Uncle left behind and trained many outstanding clansman. We accepted other tribes, and our community is constantly expanding. It’s just that Uncle has yet to return, and Gillian is very worried…’

At the beginning, there were only daily happenings recorded in the notebook. After gaining Leylin’s support and help, Gillian’s tribe expanded very quickly. Following which, from between the lines, Leylin could sense a strong sense of fear.

‘First is a famine, and then the plague! Has this area been cursed by the master of calamities? Do we have to give this place up? Father is very bewildered. All the explorers he has sent out have not come back with information on good places to move to, as if the world has suddenly been struck with famine…’

“The begin of the wane? Mm! And this time… this is before the weakening of dreamforce?”

Leylin’s eyes flashed. After which, the writing on the notebook became a mess. It seemed like its owner had not spent much effort on recording this. There were merely few words here and there, all representing death and despair.

‘In this period of time, many clansmen have experienced changes to their bodies. They first become mysteriously stronger, but at the same time, they seem to lose their rationality with the gaining of strength. In order to suppress them, there have been many casualties on our best. Gods! I hope I won’t end up like them…’

This passage was full of terror, and Leylin read through a few times with interest.

‘All crops have vanished. We need to abandon this place. No matter how serious the calamity in the north is, it’s still better than our base now… I will leave this notebook behind in hopes of someone finding it, hopefully it’ll be Uncle…’
On the very large page, the words were all written messily, and it was obvious she had been in a hurry. ‘Famine, plague, war, and then destruction…’ Leylin recalled the content in the notebook.
It seemed that the camp here had long since moved, and there had been a strange transformation that happened to the batch of natives with Gillian. “They became mysteriously stronger, and most lost their rationality? Is it an effect of dreamforce doing this of its own accord? I never thought they’d be so unlucky…” Dreamscape was full of mystery. What might be a little worm might turn into a devil the very next day.
Before the wane of dreamforce, such a change would be very severe, and those natives had evidently profited. If not, in such a cruel environment, they might not even live to be able to move away.
“I wonder how they turned out in the end?” Leylin stroked his chin. If Gillian and the rest had grown in strength, that would be beneficial to him too. “But the calamity in the north?” Leylin forced a smile. He’d obviously already checked that direction, but that was only filled with the domains of devils. Even at his most powerful, he wouldn’t dare intrude. The clues from the natives could only be given up on at this point. “These aren’t the main point anyway. It’s good if it works out, but there aren’t any losses even if I fail here…” Leylin consoled himself, “Since the seeds have been planted, next is to wait for Dreamscape to completely wane, and I’ll then wait to see what hat I can harvest…”
Taking another look at this area, Leylin’s figure became increasingly translucent until he disappeared. *Pila! Pila!* After he left, the remains of the notebook from before
was completely eroded, turning into fragments that flew in the winds.
Dark red luster shone once more, and once everything was over, Leylin was back in his laboratory in the Magus World.
“The silent Dreamscape is not only a bridge of communication amongst various beings, but also a paradise for adventurers. The natives have all disappeared though… What an interesting change.”
Leylin sank into deep thought and then pressed on a circular, twisted rune.
“Ignox, it’s Leylin. How’s it going with the thing I previously asked you about?”
Distorted rings of light emitted silver luster in the air. Minutes later, Leylin heard the unique voice that belonged to Ignox transmitted from it.
“Crackle… my apologies… the signal isn’t all that good here… As for the method you mentioned about wanting to increase the ability control your truesoul clone, I’ve already found it in the library. Shall we go through with the trade now?”
“Of course!” Leylin exclaimed, surprised.
He then saw a shrivelled palm grab a black, dried up apple and extending from the distorted circle.
“This method of spatial transmission is slightly terrifying!”
Restraining himself from rolling his eyes, Leylin took the apple from the hand with a layer of fur on it.
[Beep! Discovered soul force data interface. Permit transmission?] The moment he had the dried up apple in his hands, Leylin immediately noticed something had changed. At this moment, the sound from the A.I. Chip’s prompt was heard.
“Yes!”
With Leylin’s order, a string of information flashed into his eyes. This was the method to resolve the problems that came with controlling truesoul clones. While he had yet to test it out, Leylin
could generally ascertain the authenticity of the information.
“Good! That’s exactly what I needed. The item I agreed to give you
before will be sent to you soon.”
Leylin nodded in his satisfaction.
“It’s great that it’s useful to you! Honestly speaking though, I don’t
recommend you go through with this. It’s too dangerous…”
From the other side came Ignox’s kind warning.
After thanking him for his kind intentions, Leylin closed off the
communications.
“If this were just a simple exploration of worlds, I wouldn’t want to
do this, but…”
Based on the information Ignox gave, Leylin looked grim.
Though most of the preparations were done, it was not that easy to
be resolute and go through with it.
Yes! His preparations were all for the World of Gods!
The crystal wall of this world was far too obstinate, and it was an
unsolvable issues for even other existences of laws.
Leylin had the Manderhawke Plate and Beezlebub’s memories, so
he could somewhat get through, but the consumption was so huge
that even with his body of laws, it was difficul to endure.
What Leylin could not accept was that the soul force from foreign
beings were very conspicuous, and would be discovered no matter
where one went. Hence, it was impossible to force his way in.
If he could not force his way in, then he had to do something from
the inside.
Leylin’s plan was to place a portion of his truesoul in the World of
Gods and become a half-independent clone that would grow in
strength independently, without taking in any power from the main
body.
Once the clone grew to become a god, it would have enough power
to coordinate with Leylin outside and open up the crystal wall of
the World of Gods.
In order for Leylin’s plan to succeed, a clone was of utmost importance. Because he could not use his soul seed, it was necessary that he separated a part of his truesoul and give it enough authority to act independently. Leylin had already obtained the technique to split his truesoul from Melinda, and the method to control it had just been given by Ignox. “Next is to fuse these two techniques and find out ways to reincarnate in another world… With the Manderhawke Plate’s ability, my clone will then secretly enter the World of Gods… Since it will be an entirely independent body, my truesoul clone will also be considered a native of the World of Gods and won’t be monitored too closely, so I can quietly grow in strength… “Even if I fail, I’ll only lose a clone. If I luck out, I won’t even need to take over the World of Gods. As long as I fuse with that clone once more and absorb all the origin force of the World of Gods from it, I’ll gain immense benefits… Obviously, if I do succeed, then the whole World of Gods shall be mine!” Leylin’s eyes burnt with fervour. Since he had his goal set now, he could begin the rest of the preparations. While a deep sleep lasted hundreds of years for some existences of laws, Leylin had a pile of things to take care of. On top of that, he had plans for his family and descendants. It did not take him too much time or effort to deal with these common things, but the
sense of satisfaction they gave him made it all worth it.
The entrance of the laboratory that had been silent for a long time
revealed a dark path. The brass lampstand emitted a hazy luster,
and the undying flames above it continued to emit bright, blazing
flames and heat.
“With a life span of over a hundred thousand years, it feels like a
hundred years passed in the blink of an eye…”
Leylin looked grim as he walked out through the secret pathway
and arriving at the outer world.
On an afternoon in a castle, the warming rays of the winter sun
shone down, creating a cosy feeling. There was even some snow
on the peaks of a few hills surrounding the castle, while also
having some life around.
The place Leylin had exited from was the core area where security
was at its strictest in the castle.
In the castle, many high-ranked Warlocks supervised and patrolled.
The castle had an atmosphere of splendour and grandeur.
Every underground patrolling Warlock’s eyes was filled with
reverence towards the castle.
What they were guarding was the most powerful Monarch in the
central continent! The pride of bloodline Warlocks, the rank 6
Warlock and the most powerful of the Ouroboros Clan, Leylin
Farlier and this was his castle!
Yes, this castle was the newly-built core power of Leylin’s power in
the south coast, and the main camp of the whole Farlier family.
“The Targaryen Castle is still the same as it was before!”
Leylin chuckled slightly, disappearing in mid-air and instantly
arriving in the hall of the castle.
Numerous ceremonial items began to shake and produced the most
splendid music. The throne at the centre began to release a black
radiance, as if welcoming the arrival of an emperor.
With a flash, Leylin sat on the throne, the upper part of the throne
automatically curving to allow Leylin to sit very comfortably. “Mm, not bad!” Leylin nodded, and then sensed an elated conscient in the hall. This belonged to the emotional undulations of the castle.

With Leylin’s ability, just the powerful radiation that he unwittingly gave off could, within a short period of time, completely modify the Targaryan Castle.

When he had first built it, Leylin had also intentionally vitalised the materials of the castle due to his radiation and modifications. The whole Targaryen Castle had long since become a real ancient Magus castle that did not lose out to the famed ancient Magi castles in the central continent. It had even created a conscient of its own, serving under Leylin.

The whole castle also had all sorts of mysterious abilities and powerful defences.

“Without my approval, perhaps rank 5 or 6 Magi might find it difficult to just move around in here!”

Leylin was rather confident of this fact.

“Notify everyone that I’m here!” Leylin patted the armrest of his seat.

*Clang! Clang!* At the heart of the Targaryen Castle, atop a large black bell tower, a cumbersome brass carillon began to move even without wind, producing dull sounds that somehow seemed to penetrate through everything.

The heavy carillon resounded in the whole castle, causing many Warlocks to watch with their mouths wide open in shock.

“Ni- Nine times in a row? This signal…”

A newly advanced Warlock looked stunned, as if he had seen something unthinkable.

“You’re really lucky, kid, that you managed to witness the moment lord Bloodline Monarch leaving his research!” Beside him, his team leader had given him a ruthless shove to his chest, with some
desolateness in his voice, “It’s a pity that the central meeting hall is not a place we can go to… Only the enforcers, housekeepers and family of the Bloodline Monarch have the authority to enter…” “Enforcers? I’ll reach that point someday! When that happens, I’ll…” The young Warlock eyes seemed to be ablaze. “Do your job well!” The team leader patted his head and then laughed encouragingly. *Clang!* *Clang!* *Clang!* *Clang!* *Clang!* *Clang!* After the clanging of the bell, bundles of jade-green flames burnt within the discussion hall. Every once in a while, figures could be seen coming out from the flames, bowing to Leylin respectfully and then standing by their assigned seat, eyes full of fervour. Amongst them were obviously people who had yet to have the ability to shift locations easily. However, since this was the Targaryen Castle, this sort of teleportation was not an issue with Leylin personally allowing this, as well as help from the castle itself. “Father!” An even larger bundle of green flames burst into a blaze, revealing two Warlocks’ figures. The leading one was obviously Syre from before. He looked somewhat similar to Leylin, his long black hair and eyes full of a mysterious charm. Standing beside Syre was Freya, dressed like an upper-class woman. Now, however, her eyes concealed some sort of grudge and bitterness. “Freya, come!” Leylin waved them over and got Freya to sit beside him, accepting
the greetings from everyone else.
He was actually aware of her unhappiness towards him.
It was a pity that what Freya truly wanted was something Leylin could not give her.
For Leylin, he could spend a bit more time to arrange things for the people or matters he knew well, but he could not keep staying by their sides.
His gaze was always on the distance, attracted by the glamour of eternity.
Before he reached his goal, Leylin would not halt his footsteps.
However, Freya evidently loved him. She did not mind if Leylin played around outside indulging in sensual pleasures, but she was very dissatisfied with Leylin doing an experiment for a whole century.
While she hid this sentiment, Leylin still realised it.
It was a pity that it was impossible for Leylin to yield to her in this matter. He could only make it up to her with other methods.
Perhaps, after truly gaining eternal life and freedom, would he then have the time to accompany her without restrictions.
Now, under the steps were a large number of high-ranked Warlocks aside from Syre. They were all Leylin’s housekeepers and enforcers in the castle, and their eyes were filled with fervent zealouslyness.
It was as if Leylin was a god in their eyes.
After the burdensome etiquette was done with, Leylin asked a few questions, mostly regarding the latest news of the Ouroboros Clan.
After getting his answers, Leylin was now up to date with the development of the organisation under him.
The Ouroboros Clan had long since gone through a complete transformation. With the limitless benefits from the underground trade, they not only had control of the south control but was also spreading towards their surrounding organisations.
Even the branch in the central continent was working out well, its
reputation there flourishing even more than it had been. The Farlier Family made rapid progress. Syre and Daniel, the two second generation descendants had already grown, and there were even a surge of talents from the third and fourth generation descendants.

Of course, many of them were fervently being sought out by many bloodline nobility, and it was obvious they would find many troubles with this in the future.

“Syre, you did very well with the underground trade!” Leylin apathetically praised Syre as he watched the other Warlocks below.

“The reason I came out was to notify everyone that I intend to go through with experiments at an even deeper level. The next time we meet might be hundreds or even over a thousand years later. In the time I’m not here, I will hand everything regarding the Ouroboros Clan and Farlier Family over to my wife and beloved son, Freya and Syre…”

The other high-ranked Warlocks had long since gotten used to this sort of commands. After all, Leylin had done the same thing in the past and pushed the responsibility to others. This was just making things official.

Meanwhile, Leylin’s nonchalant attitude towards the hundreds of years that might pass gave rise to the envy of these Warlocks. Experiments that would last for over a thousand years? For Warlocks like them, not getting past the hurdle of Morning Star meant they might not even live through one round of Leylin’s experiments…
“Father… you…” After hearing Leylin’s intentions, Syre couldn’t hold himself back even if the Warlocks sitting below had no objections. At the same time, although her expression hadn’t really changed Freya was already tightly clasping her dress.

Leylin noticed all of these minute movements.

“Of course, before the experiment, I’ll definitely make time to stay with you…” Leylin glanced at Freya and consoled her. Meanwhile, his eyes scanned across those below him, “Everyone, please allow me some time to be with my family…” Since Leylin had spoken, the high-ranked Warlocks naturally did not say more and bid farewell, leaving the space to the family of three with the highest authority.

“I’m sorry, Freya, but there’s a reason I have to do this!” Leylin watched his wife apologetically, “I promise! This temporary parting is all preparation for us to be together for eternity… Please believe in me…”

Freya’s eyes reddened, and Syre scratched his head.

“Alright, let’s not talk about stuff that will dampen our moods. Send the order for a banquet to be prepared! I’ll spend good time with you for now.” Leylin watched Syre tenderly and smiled.

……
Several months had already passed by the time Leylin had returned to his laboratory once more.
At the thought of how he’d been rushing everywhere for these months, even Leylin could only rub his nose and laugh wryly.
There was not just Freya and Syre in his family. Whether it was Celine and his son in Twilight Zone, Belinda, her sister and Aegnis in the underground Alabaster City and the rest who had had intimate relations with him, all needed to be pacified.
While the time he spent with each of them was short, the amount of time it added up to came to a terrifying amount.
Of course, with Leylin’s personality, he only spent more effort appeasing Freya and a few others. The rest of the women were consoled with just some transmissions.
After all, Leylin clearly knew which women held more importance to him.
“Besides taking care of those affairs, there was also the development of the Ouroboros Clan and the Farlier Family…”
Leylin merely set a rather approximate aim when it came to this and got his subordinates to do the rest. With Syre and Daniel, the two rank 6s in charge, there was little he needed to worry about.
“Next… is to vigorously do research on reincarnation techniques and do all I can to make a strategy for the World of Gods!”
Leylin’s eyes displayed his anticipation as he immersed himself in experiments and research.
Time flowed like water, and the years passed by in a blur. Things of the world outside his word seemed to lose all importance to Leylin, who’d sunk into experiments and getting proof.
In his mind, the truesoul splitting technique he had gained from Melinda, the method to maintain control over a truesoul clone that he had obtained from Ignox and many other techniques were already being broken up and re-organised to form an even more complex and profound body.
The mysteries of the truesoul began to unveil itself before Leylin, allowing Leylin to touch on the truth of the world on a deeper level.

“Universe and truesoul, macroscopic and microscopic, matter and conscient… At the very heart of it, everything mysteriously has its similarities. Is this the secret of the universe?” Leylin looked intoxicated.

In front of him, dazzling starlight fused into one body, yet its form seemed to be constantly changing. From the outside, it seemed to be an irregular spheroid formed of starlight. There were scenes of the explosion of the universe and shrinking of the black hole, which then gradually formed into a human figure.


The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded, followed by an even more detailed introduction to the spell.

[Alternate World Reincarnation. Rank 7 spell. Ability to split the truesoul of the main body and project the body to another world to be reincarnated. The main body will have absolute control over the truesoul clone and synchronise completely with the world origin force’s frequency, getting treatment as a native would.]

In the Magus World’s history, there were few rank 7 spells, and much less spell models to record them. This was because the existences of laws, after reaching rank 7, could make use magic at its source and bypass the process of using the spell model. Besides, spells at rank 7 and above usually needed the corresponding power of laws as the basis, and had no properties that allowed it to be used widespread.
The spell formation that Leylin had specially developed was much different from the original soul splitting technique. "It can be said that this ‘Alternate World Reincarnation’ is actually a new method of traversing to another world. If used on an ordinary person, it would still have the same effect.”
Leylin’s lips quirked up into a smile.
His rank 7 spell not only made use of the intelligence of Melinda and Ignox, but also included what he felt was important. Amongst this was the A.I. Chip’s simulation analytical skills as well as the transformation by the world origin will.
In his reincarnation spell, the truesoul had to go through a transformation by the world origin force. Hence, the clone that successfully descended into the World of Gods would be no different from a native, and even gods would not notice. Only with these would his clone have enough space and time to develop.
Of course, because the clone had abandoned all its original abilities and lacked any power from the main body, the clone would start off in the weakest state.
However, with Leylin’s truesoul memories, the clone would definitely grow quickly and then begin to spy on the domains of the gods.
It was only after reaching the realm of the gods and synchronising with the world origin force that the clone would possibly coordinate with the main body, in order to break through the barrier of the crystal wall.
“The theoretical and practical experiments for these have been completed. What’s next is to put everything into practice…”
Leylin looked very grim. Neither the splitting of his truesoul and reincarnating it in the World of Gods were simple tasks. Even with Leylin’s semi rank 7 body of laws, he had to treat this very seriously.
“So I’ve finally reached this point?”
Leylin’s eyes were filled with emotion. All his memories flashed before his eyes, from starting off as an ordinary little noble that developed into a being filled with fear in the Magus World, to his memories of glory and splendour afterwards.
Leylin’s mind lingered with the mysteries and vastness of magic, the glory and mystery of the World of Gods, as well as the limitless strength system and the supreme truth.
Now, he was completely giving up the path the ancient Magi had walked, entering the World of Gods in order to search for the origin or to meet his end.
The slight wavering in his emotions was suppressed by him in the blink of an eye.
Soon, his eyes went back to a state that was impervious to desires and passions.
Leylin arrived in the astral laboratory. Here, an astral gate exactly the same as before had been rebuilt.
The large stone gates and the strange, simple patterns seemed to be narrating some ancient and great history.
“Manderhawke Plate!” Leylin’s right hand flickered with light, and a round stone plate appeared. There was even a large part missing at its edge, as if something had taken a bite out of it.
“Based on the data from the previous experiment, I’ve modified it further and made an imitation Manderhawke Plate with the addition of some other materials!”
Leylin’s eyes flashed as the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded.
[Manhark Plate (Imitation). Weight: 2451g. Effect: Weaken world force, makes it convenient for transmission of energy. This is an imitation, made from the Manhark Plate Beezlebub possesses. Holds 46.5% of power of the original. Maker: Leylin Farlier.]
“Mm! Compared to the previous inferior versions which only had 20 – 30% the effects of the original, this imitation is evidently more
powerful. It should help the plan work more smoothly…”
Leylin touched his chin, suddenly looking resolute, “Let’s begin!”
*Rumble!* A dazzling golden, blazing sun slowly appeared from behind him.
This was a projection of Leylin’s truesoul, representing a peak rank 6 Warlock. This was the strength of the highest quality soul!
The golden soul flames that appeared physical wreaked havoc in the laboratory. Besides the astral gate, everything was incinerated into nothing.
“First up… the splitting of the truesoul!”
Leylin looked incomparably grave. Based on the technique to split the truesoul into two, a powerful tearing force entered his point mass.
At the heart of the point mass, which was where a Magus’ soul and strength gathered, the peak rank 6 truesoul began to tremble abruptly.
Pain! The intense pain of tearing one’s soul apart! Leylin bore the sudden attack, which made him turn pale with cold sweat running down profusely.
At his back, his blazing sun truesoul quivered, and even the Targaryan appeared, producing hisses of misery and suffering.
“Hah! Split!”
Leylin looked extremely malicious, as if a devil from hell. With his yell, a white streak of electricity fell, striking the figure behind him.
*Crash!*
The golden sun split in an instant, forming two truesouls, one larger than the other.
“Ugh” At the moment his truesoul was split, Leylin’s mind went completely blank, and his eyes were filled with confusion.
“Such weakness…”
Once he completely regained his senses, he forced a smile as he sensed the terrifying injuries to his truesoul.
“Just breaking off a small part of my truesoul is already so terrifying…”
Leylin gazed at the two irregular truesouls. While they had both turned into flaming suns, the physically larger one was obviously tens of times bigger than the smaller truesoul.
Injuries to the truesoul are the most terrifying. Even existences of laws will sink into a deep sleep in order to heal them…” Leylin laughed wryly, “This is a result of splitting a small part of my truesoul. If it’s anything like what Beezlebub did, it’s very possible that my main body would just die…”

The phantom Targaryen behind Leylin’s back withered and slowly disappeared. A bit of faint red light flew out from between his brows and disappeared into his hand, flashing like a firefly. This was the smaller truesoul that Leylin had split. The experiment had to begin immediately, lest it dissipate from prolonged exposure to the external world.

“Astral gate, open!” Leylin huffed in a low voice, and a procedure identical to before was executed. His soul force waded through the long astral river until it arrived at the tremendous crystal wall surrounding the World of Gods.

“Manderhawke’s Plate!” The stone plate in Leylin’s hands came to the crystal wall, emitting a light that caused a portion to seem to be on the verge of melting.

At the moment a channel opened through the crystal wall, Leylin’s eyes brightened and immense rank 7 spell undulations were emitted from his body. “Rank 7 spell Alternate World Reincarnation!”

Time seemed to stop in that instant. That bit of truesoul in Leylin’s hands was enveloped in the brilliance of the Alternate World
Reincarnation spell as it disappeared into the World of Gods. Everything happened quickly. Once it was done, the Manderhawke Plate exploded into powder, and the crystal wall from before closed itself quickly with no trace of a flaw.

“It’s all up to the truesoul now…” The huge astral gate gradually collapsed, and Leylin could only smile wryly. With his serious injuries, he could only slumber in his laboratory, recuperating with time as he controlled his clone in the World of Gods.

“These injuries are enough for me to sleep for a few hundred years. If I don’t get any benefits from the World of Gods, it would be such a huge loss…” With this thought, Leylin’s body disappeared into the ground under the laboratory. With the slumber of his main body, all of his attention was focused on that clone.

The brainwashing and refining from a world origin was a very terrifying process. Leylin’s truesoul could sense that ever since he entered the World of Gods, terrifying energy whirlpools had formed next to him, tirelessly washing away all traces of the power he used to possess. Evidently, this was an effect of the rank 7 spell, Alternate World Reincarnation. It allowed Leylin to reach the core of the World of Gods and be altered by the origin itself.

Once this modification was over, he could perhaps wash off all traces of being from another world and truly become a native of the World of Gods.

This alteration happened extremely quickly. The luster of the Manderhawke Plate had diminished by a huge degree after opening just the external layer of the crystal wall, and after opening up the World of Gods, it had been directly destroyed with no traces of it left at all.

Next was the power of the rank 7 spell, the reincarnation spell that
allowed Leylin to arrive in this world. Its luster gradually dissipated.
Just like stripping off a greatcoat, once the rays of light of the reincarnation spell dissipated, Leylin’s truesoul was fully bared in the immense darkness.
Vastness! Terror! Boundlessness!
This was Leylin’s truesoul’s first thoughts. Compared to this enormous world, his little truesoul was nothing and couldn’t even be compared to an ant, and it could only tremble in the corner.
The and powerful source immediately invaded into Leylin’s truesoul.
The truesoul, which had already been shrunk and condensed to a large degree, surprisingly gradually became slower under the alteration of the world force.
“Even soul force has been forcefully removed…” Leylin’s truesoul watched this process, able to only laugh.
The truesoul was constantly altered, to the point that Leylin’s own conscience was gradually becoming fuzzy.
Gradually, the changes from the world force went on to the deepest layer of his truesoul, where his memories and his most important elements of self were.
The tremendous soul force ruthlessly invaded it with no intentions of stopping.
“Could it be that… I’m going to be defeated just like this? With such a laughable method?”
Leylin’s truesoul was on the verge of death, and only this little thought appeared tenaciously, as if making its last struggle.
*Bzzt bzzt!* At this moment, a bright silver white light shone from Leylin’s truesoul memories.
Under the influence of the white rays of light, the world force hesitated for that slight moment, and then let go of Leylin’s memories, altering other areas.
“Could… could this be the power of the Alternate World Reincarnation spell? So it still has a bit of energy left, stored in my memories? Or… it’s something else?”

Leylin’s truesoul was perplexed, but having been diminished to the limit quickly sank into a deep sleep.

Time seemed to stop at this moment, but at the same time, a long time seemed to have passed.

“Where… is this?” Leylin, who regained his consciousness, sized up his surroundings, stunned.

Perhaps ‘sizing up’ wasn’t the right term for it, because he no longer had a body, and naturally had no eyes or organs like that.

What he was now doing was using his senses to explore the area like feelers.

Darkness… It was darkness all around with no light at all. Leylin, who was now conscious, measured up his surroundings and felt helpless.

“Even my truesoul has vanished. I’m just a body that’s a mixture of memories and a fragmented soul now?”

Leylin’s conscient was suddenly enlightened. At this moment, there seemed to be a black hole in the air that sucked his conscient in.

Leylin’s conscient found itself getting dizzy as it sunk into a deep sleep…

“How long have I slept for?”

When his conscient re-awakened, the surroundings had changed once again.

While it was darkness all around, orange-red light could be seen. He could even hear some low hums in his confusion.

Thankfully, while his conscient was weak, Leylin could tell that his conscient was no longer without a source but had something maintaining his life.

“In this state, what I need is to do what I can to reduce consumption of energy and allow the conscient to rest in order to
Leylin’s conscient sank into sleep once more. However, before going back into a slumber, Leylin gave himself a prompt. The terrifying calculation abilities of his main body now became the most precise stopwatch. Once it reached 17280 000 in his mind, Leylin reawakened.

“Mm, 17280 000 seconds, which is two hundred days have passed?”

Awake, the conscient was elated to find that it had gotten stronger. There was the obvious feeling of energy being transmitted, as if there was a warm rush unceasingly pouring towards his stomach.

“Stomach? Mm!!!” An electrostatic force swept across him, and immediately after, Leylin felt his right leg twitch.

“This…” His conscient abruptly became clear as he then went through a more detailed probe.

Thanks to this slumber, the area that he could explore expanded, gradually forming the image of a baby hugging his head. The veins and even bones could be seen.

“I have a body now! So what happened was that I’ve always been in a pregnant woman’s stomach as an embryo!” Leylin abruptly understood.

“So it seems like the Alternate World Reincarnation spell formation succeeded!”

However, Leylin soon found himself at a loss, “Do I have to start off as a baby? This is simply too shameful!”

However, with Leylin’s thick skin, this embarrassment only had him turn red for a moment, before he began to consider this situation as if nothing had happened.

“A baby is far too weak. With my current state, my parents should be regular human natives of the World of Gods. It’s a pity that in this situation, I have no way to protect myself. I can only leave everything up to fate…”
All the previous energy he possessed had been washed off and removed from him. Even the soul energy that Magi were the most proud of had completely disappeared. Besides a bit of awareness, he was no different from other unborn children and naturally had no way to protect himself.

In addition, just thinking for this moment left Leylin feeling dizzy. “This isn’t good! A baby’s brain has yet to fully mature. In this state, I should try my best to withhold my thoughts. It’s better to sleep.”

Leylin understood everything.

Conscients cannot exist without a body. This was even more so in the World of Gods, where laws were even more stern. Leylin now had lost all his solidified soul energy. His conscient and spiritual force could only rely on this developing body of a fetus and he naturally could not overdo it. If the woman were to have a miscarriage because of this, Leylin would be doomed.

Leylin, who understood this well, could only sink into a deep slumber while hoping this pregnant woman would be safe.

“Ugh…” At this moment, in a port city in the World of Gods. A noble young lady clutched at her swelling stomach, brows tightly furrowed.

“What is it, darling!”

A young man immediately came over to help her along, looking anxious.

“It’s the child. He kicked me…” The woman looked gentle, brimming in the radiance of motherly love.

“What a cheeky fellow!”

The young lad bent down, pressing his ear tightly to the swollen stomach, to which the lady protested coquettishly.
Waiting was always boring and painful, especially when one’s safety was entrusted to someone else. Thankfully, this torture was about to end. Through his own senses, as well as the information he’d obtained from the outside world, Leylin knew he would be born soon. He’d even felt the invasion of an extraordinary energy during the long pregnancy. It was a pure white positive energy, used to heal and increase vitality. Having experienced it several times, Leylin quickly understood what it was. ’The blessings of a priest! Great!’ This blessing was very beneficial for the development of fetuses, and Leylin naturally accepted it without restraint. What made him even more satisfied was that a family who could afford to call for the blessing of a priest several times would not be ordinary. He was starting in a better environment, so the chances of a successful birth were much higher.

With a good background, he could even have a better life. After all, the chances that those with high social status got were always greater than the what peasants came across. This established trend would never be overturned.

Just as Leylin was pondering over this, he felt the placenta around him tearing, and a terrible odour filled his sense of smell.

Meanwhile, in the master’s bedroom at the very centre of a vast manor, the piercing screams of a woman sounded with many panicked voices. “OH! HE’S COMING OUT…”
A nobleman was pacing around on a bright velvet carpet, clenching his fingers so tightly that they had turned pale with stress.

“Don’t worry! He’s been blessed by the gods, so he will definitely be born safely…” a priest in a white gown consoled him in a gentle voice. On his sleeves were several shining threads of gold, and he had a unique emblem on his chest. The emblem looked like a thick tome, with some mysterious runes on it. The priest was evidently the bishop of the region, loyal to the God of Knowledge.

His presence wasn’t necessary given his status, but this was a family of devout believers of Oguma. They were also his primary supporters in the region, so he’d ended up coming for the birth of their descendant.

“Thank you so much, Bishop Tapris! The Faulen Family will forever remember and abide by the teachings of the God of Knowledge…” The young man did all he could to suppress the anxiety in his expression.

“WAAH!” At this moment, a resonant cry could be heard from the bedroom, causing him to freeze. Immediately after, numerous maids and a wet nurse came to congratulate him, “She’s given birth! She’s given birth! It’s a healthy young master!”

“Really? Let me see him!” The young man’s expression was filled with fervour as he took the baby over from the nurse. There were signs of the umbilical cord being cut off on the stomach, but his limbs were thick and sturdy. His blue eyes were as deep as the ocean, and it was especially moving that he was a new life.

Meanwhile, the baby was wailing and bawling away, and the young man was left at a loss.

“What a strong child! God shall bless you!” Tapris had a kind smile on his face, and white light tenderly caressed the child’s head. The divine force placated the baby, causing him to fall asleep.

“Please allow me to donate a hundred gold coins to the church to
show my humble respect!” The young man told Bishop Tapris, and these words immediately caused him to freeze before the smile on his face widened, “God definitely knows of your goodwill! I will personally pray for the baby as well…” This bishop had originally intended to take charge of the baptism and even become the godfather of the baby to further deepen his relationship with the Faulen Family. Now, though? A hundred gold coins didn’t seem half bad, since it was a huge amount of money. ‘Nobles are all sly and greedy. They definitely won’t close off all the escape routes they have.’ Tapris suddenly recalled the education he’d received and watched the young man meaningfully, but he did not get angry. After all, ever since he had dedicated the rest of his life to the mighty Oguma, rage and the like had grown rare. The mighty God of Knowledge taught his followers and priests to always remain rational, and fury was the biggest enemy of rationality. Hence, Tapris seemed rather elegant as he chatted with the young man before hinting that he was going to leave. Before that, the bishop seemed to remember something. “Oh yes. I’ve yet to ask the young master’s name…” “Leylin!” Leylin Faulen! This is the name his mother picked for him!” The young man exclaimed excitedly. “Leylin? That’s a good name.” The bishop gracefully bade them farewell and left. The young man impatiently entered the labour room, comforting his exhausted wife. However, none of them noticed that the baby who was sleeping peacefully in the cradle opened its eyes for an instant. Its eyes were full of glee before it closed them once more. Such emotions were an extreme thing for a newborn. Leylin was exclaiming inwardly, ‘World of Gods, here I come…’ Leylin was rather satisfied that his name remained the same in this world. It had been intentional; he’d hinted it to his mother from
time to time as a fetus in her body.
‘So this is my family in this world… I seem to have a good background!’ Leylin had seen most of his surroundings in that glimpse. The valuable velvet carpet, the silver crystal chandelier, the soft red brocade duvet, the large curtains embroidered with green daffodils, and lastly the numerous respectful maids and the wet nurse made it clear that Leylin was at least a minor noble in this world, or perhaps one with an even higher status.
After all, not every noble child’s birth would warrant the visit and protection of the regional bishop.
The birth was followed by a clamour. His father here was now receiving the friends and family who had come to congratulate them.
His mother beside him was already deeply asleep, while Leylin appeared to be the same. Inside however, he was getting excited.
Leylin took in a deep breath. ‘A.I. Chip!’
[Beep! Authorisation to unlock seal has been obtained. Beginning activation procedures.] Familiar robotic sounds could be heard, and immediately after numerous blue virtual lines were projected before Leylin’s eyes.
‘As expected, the A.I. Chip’s here as well!’ Leylin’s eyes were filled with ecstasy. The A.I. Chip had already been fused with his soul, and the truesoul that had been split naturally carried a portion of the A.I. Chip’s abilities. ‘No! Only a subroutine of the A.I. Chip has been separated. Still, even just that possesses a large portion of its abilities!’ Leylin was very excited.
With his extraordinary knowledge, he could definitely rise up quickly in the World of Gods even if he started off with nothing. With the A.I. Chip’s powerful storage system and analytical abilities… Leylin could not begin to imagine the great life he would soon have…
‘It’s a pity… this is the World of Gods, and the influence of gods
permeates every single aspect. I can’t be too outstanding… For now, it’s necessary to act like all other babies. Otherwise, I’d get suspected or even treated as a foreign force or a being possessed by a devil…”

Leylin was grim. Gods treated the purity of noble bloodlines as an important thing. The bishop that had come today wasn’t just a nanny. At the very least, Leylin found many traces of magic in the room, such as [Detection of Evil] and [Soul Defence]. If not for using the rank 7 Alternate World Reincarnation spell and been baptised by the World of Gods’ origin, his soul no different from the other natives, he would long since have been discovered. When the time came, even his identity as a noble would not save him.

‘Of course, there are also disadvantages of being a native… My strength has been completely removed! Everything is blank right now. I can’t even begin to train yet, and I’ll have to climb up through the strength system of this world…”

With the baptism by the world origin force, all traces of Leylin being a Magus had been wiped. Besides his memories and the A.I. Chip, he was no different from a baby here. Most importantly, even though he had numerous high-grade meditation techniques, he could use none of them at all. Those were the paths of Magi, and even if Leylin were to gather spiritual force using those meditation techniques the gods of this world would soon sense the foreign force. This body would suffer the same fate as his soul seed.

‘But there must be a way to use spiritual force in the World of Gods… There’s no need to hurry. I just need to grow slowly, and I’m bound to find it someday…” Leylin consoled himself.

At this moment, the A.I. Chip completed its first scan. [Beep! Scanning of surrounding humans complete. Establishing database regarding races in the World of Gods.]
‘Alright then… Set up my statistics with the average humans of this world.’ Leylin instructed.
Neither his original standard of measurement nor the standards of the Heavenly Astral race fit into this context. The former was too low, while the latter started at Morning Star, which was too powerful. He needed to set up a new standard of measurement.
Soon enough, a 3D image of a body appeared in front of Leylin, with concrete information next to it.
The A.I. Chip projected Leylin’s current data in a small blue font next to the image in the database. It was a tragic sight.

‘Alright… Except for spiritual force which is closer to that of an adult because of the memories I’ve retained, the rest are standard stats for an infant.’ Leylin was rather embarrassed. He was currently more weak than when he’d first crossed over into the Magus World.

‘However… the standards of the adults here are different from those of the Magus World. They can’t be compared.’

Leylin understood the new criteria that the A.I. Chip had adopted. The current statistical units represented the standard of the commoners of the World of Gods. As the laws were more rigid in the World of Gods, there were even changes in the physical constants of the world. It was thus perfectly normal for the average stats here to be greater than in the Magus World.

At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded once more. [Beep! Unknown energy source has been discovered. Radiation is determined to have a beneficial effect on the host’s body.]

‘Hm?’ Leylin identified the location of the problem discovered by the A.I. Chip, and saw a milky white brilliance within his lower abdomen which was continuously spreading outwards.

“This is… the divine force of the bishop from earlier!” Leylin was
very certain about this.

“What effect does this radiation have?”

The A.I. Chip quickly gave an answer, [Radiation appears to be in a state of weak radioactive decay. Estimated to completely dissipate in 279 hours, and at the same time increase the host body’s strength by 0.1, agility by 0.1 and vitality by 0.2.]

‘Is this the blessing of a god?’ Leylin laughed sarcastically, ‘A privilege that only the strong get!’

Of course, Leylin recognised that this was indeed a privilege. With these blessings, his growth would definitely surpass his peers. He would also possess greater strength and a more well-built physique when he grew older.

‘The disparity between classes is set from birth! The difference in the starting lines mean that the children born of the commoners are destined to be unable to match up to the children born of nobility, favoured by the gods. Even if they put in a hundred times more blood, sweat and tears, and get a little lucky, perhaps all they can see are the backs of those noble children.’

Although Leylin was confident in eventually reaching the peak even if he started off as a lowly commoner, he obviously wouldn’t reject a higher social position.

“Where’s the baby? I want to see my cousin!”

*Clang!* The door to the room was pushed open even as a tender and lovely voice sounded. The person speaking evidently wasn’t very old, talking in a childish manner. The other maids seemed to recognise the source of the voice, and allowed her to lean against the side of Leylin’s cradle.

“Oh! He’s awake!” The little girl cried out in surprise.

‘Is this a relative?’ Leylin opened his eyes unhappily, and sized up this reckless person who interrupted his train of thought.

The girl had azure pupils like him. Strands of her silky gold hair caressed her fair and delicate forehead, lending a delicate charm to
it. Her beautiful small nose was raised up slightly, and below it was a little mouth which revealed her cute canines as she smiled. There were also two tiny dimples, one on each side of her cheeks.

“Isabel, you’re disturbing him!” The voices of the other adults could be heard at this moment, accompanied by footsteps. The little girl was pulled to the side, and the occasional discontented voice sounded out from her.

‘Isabel, eh? What an energetic little brat!’ He sensed great trouble from those inquisitive eyes, she clearly had great interest in him. He predicted that this elder cousin wouldn’t let him have peace.

What drove Leylin a little mad that he had absolutely no power whatsoever to resist her right now.

‘Dear God, Please send that Isabel back home right away. It’s best if it’s on the other end of the continent…” he started to pray piously. Such a pity; the World Will didn’t seem to hear his prayers.

Soon after, his elder cousin Isabel decided to stay in his family’s manor. Apparently, this young lady would be staying with the Faulen family for a long period of time.

Leylin’s next few days were extremely tough. He could still tolerate her squishing his cheeks or smothering his face with cream, but the most serious of all was that this female cousin actually tried to imitate the adults by changing his diapers!

Oh goodness! It was already shameful enough to be fiddled with like a baby after reincarnation, and now his elder cousin who was still a young girl wanted to change his diapers?

‘Dear God!’ Leylin really had an urge to kill himself right there and then. If only the gods knew of their plight in the future, they would definitely show their strong support and approve of this decision. Unfortunately, there was no such thing as ‘if only’ in this world…

With Leylin’s bottom line and character, these were just trivial matters. After simply blushing in embarrassment a few times, he no longer had as many mood swings. He even quickly discovered the
ultimate trick to deal with Isabel. It was crying loud, relentless crying!
In any case, he was a young baby, and it couldn’t be more normal to wail when he was bullied. Once he did, either his mother or some servant or maid would come to his rescue. They even firmly reprimanded the girl at times, which made him feel inexplicably carefree.
After a few such incidents, Isabel didn’t dare to do anything unusual that would make Leylin unhappy. She even seemed to be a little afraid of him, which pleased him greatly. It also had to be said that, in certain aspects, Leylin’s strong character made one’s hair stand on end.
These awkward incidents of life were just trifling matters. Thanks to his identity as a baby, many adults didn’t intentionally stay away from him when they discussed matters. Who could guess that a child just a few months old would have the ability to remember anything?
Leylin thus managed to gather a lot of intel. With the A.I. Chip’s valiant ability of gathering information and the things the subordinates and servants unintentionally revealed as they chatted, his understanding of the family quickly surpassed that of most others. He even learnt many secrets of theirs.
After all, being able to gossip about their masters without worry while they were not around was practically instinctive to those servants. On top of that, Leylin was still an infant and they wouldn’t avoid him. Yet, they would never have imagined that their little master already had a will, and even remembered every single thing that they said clearly.
Although the majority of the things these subordinates discussed were very vulgar and were accompanied by exaggerated imagination, Leylin soon managed to gain a profound understanding of his own family, and even used the A.I. Chip to
produce a family tree. First off would be his father, the baron of the kingdom. Jonas Faulen’s father had great military accomplishments. Because of his inheritance, he’d obtained some feudal land, becoming a rising nobleman in the kingdom. He had a few younger siblings and they formed the current line of descent for the Faulen family. His mother, Sarah, was a gentle and benevolent upperclass woman. As a noble family in military service, they’d had to go through an extremely wretched process to obtain a fief. There was nothing that could be done about it.

Leylin’s respected paternal grandfather seemed to have been the head imperial bodyguard of the kingdom. He was on friendly terms with the previous prince, who was also the current king. In the wars that followed, there were a few times when his grandfather almost lost his life, and he ended up with a body full of injuries that couldn’t be cured fully even by divine spells. Only then had he barely managed to seize the opportunity to develop the kingdom’s territory and became a noble landowner. He was then conferred the title of baron, and breathed his last not long after. And that was exactly where Leylin’s manor was.

Speaking of which, his father Jonas was actually a highly accomplished leader. Upon arriving at his feudal property, not only did he actively open up new lands for agriculture, expand production processes, and breed numerous kinds of cash crops, but he also established a decent port on a remote island. Through providing potable water, food and maintenance services for boats that passed, it had slowly developed. They had managed to resist a few pirate attacks, causing them to retreat.

Now, the Faulen leadership had already undergone earth-shattering changes as compared to before. Their land was acclaimed as the “jewel off the coast of the kingdom”, and it certainly led to veteran
nobilities lusting after it. However, all of this was still within the range of Jonas’ capabilities. At least there weren’t any intense conflicts at present, which made Leylin heave a sigh of relief.

Isabel was also living in the manor with the family of three. Her parents seemed to have forgotten about her after throwing her here, and she herself seemed to be indulging in too much pleasure to care about her home.

Apart from Isabel, the entire manor was filled with servants of the Faulen family. The grey-haired butler Ryan had the highest status, and there were also a large bunch of kitchen ladies, maids, servants, apprentice knights, and the like present.

The Faulen family’s feudal lands were really huge. There was an independent farm, mill, stable, workshop, vegetable oil extraction factory and other facilities. There were even entire plots of fertile farmland that employed farmers, both male and female.

The entire manor was able to supply flour, vinegar, wine and similar items in large quantities, as well as iron farm tools in smaller amounts. Even if they closed their doors to the outside world, they would still be self-sufficient for a very long period of time.

Leylin viewed it as the typical economic situation of a feudal villa. Due to the Faulen family’s short history, they still didn’t have the financial ability and physical resources to build their own castle. In actual fact, constructing a castle required the consumption of vast quantities of stone and food, and even the assistance of priests and numerous extraordinary beings. Even ancient noble families often did not have the money to finance a castle.

Of course, once construction was complete, it would be the pride and symbol of the family. The defensive abilities of castles belonging to noblemen in the World of Gods were top-notch. The castles were protected by spell
formations, and even military troops wouldn’t be able to bring it down in a short span of time. When interacting within the circle of nobility, one would often feel as though he was shorter than others by a head without a castle of their own.
Crackle! Crackle! The bright flames burning in the exquisite fireplace licked at the top-quality pinewood, and it exuded a fragrant scent. A warm flow of air circulated around the main hall, sharply contrasting the cold dark world outside it. A long wooden table stood unassumingly in the centre of the hall, a white tablecloth draped over it. On it were silver lamps and precious china, all laid out carefully by maids with beautiful figures. This china was exceptionally glossy. All of the tableware was luxury goods; imported from rare elves and even more exquisite and smooth than a newborn’s skin. Decorated with extremely elaborate floral motifs, they were simply high-quality pieces of art, and brimmed with the perfectionist style of elves. The price of this tableware was certainly terrifying, and couldn’t compare to the family properties of all the maids even if added together. If they broke a piece by accident, the great baron would definitely fly into a rage. Chicken covered in juices and smooth, tender calf loin were all roasted to perfection, and arranged neatly on the dining table. There were long strips of white bread in a weaved rattan basket, and a honey-coloured china pot containing milky-white mushroom broth at the side gave off a rich fragrance. At the edge of the soup pot was a copper ladle for everyone’s use. Every seat had in front of it silver knives and forks, but there were also china trays and a
few small plates containing fine salt mixed with sesame and powdered black pepper.
Leylin was adeptly using his tender fair hands with the fork and knife. He dabbed a piece of tenderloin evenly in pepper before delivering it to his mouth.
The chef’s skills were not bad; the beef was very tender and chewy, which made Leylin nod his head slightly.
“Haha… Look at that! Our child is now a grown-up too!” Jonas laughed joyously from the head of the table, a glass of grape wine in hand.
Leylin’s family of three and Isabel were the only ones seated at the huge dining table. The other servants and maids could only stand at the side and wait. The butler, who had quite a high position in the manor, held a white towel in his hand. He stood respectfully behind the baron, and so did the other apprentices.
This was evidently a family banquet.
“Of course. My little Leylin is the best. Look at how much he’s eating. With such an appetite, he’ll definitely grow into a wonderful young lad who the girls will go crazy over!” Lady Sarah laughed as well.
It couldn’t be denied that the current Leylin had inherited both of his parents’ genes, and had a pretty good body. His face already held marks of the handsomeness that he would inherit. Isabel nodded from the other side, continuing to focus her attention on the apple pie in front of her.
“Alright. Sarah, I wish to say something!” Jonas put down his wineglass, his expression slightly serious, “I think Leylin’s ready to enter a profession, enlightening himself with scholarly knowledge.”
“But he’s still so young…” Sarah seemed rather concerned.
“No, he’s already 5 years old! Other nobles’ children all receive education at this age. Do you want our child to lose out to others on the starting line?” Jonas asked a question in reply, rendering
Sarah speechless.
Leylin was drinking and eating, but he was listening carefully.
‘Education at 5 years old? Seems like I’ll be able to interact more deeply with this society. After all, Beelzebub’s memories are all related to devils and hell, and have little to do with the main material plane.’
Leylin was also awed by the education methods of these noble families. Their identities as noblemen were not innate. In order to maintain their illustrious glory and position in society, they would have to invest great effort.
Every heir of a noble family would receive strict and harsh education from a young age. This was passed on down throughout the generations, and even though there would be the occasional good-for-nothing fellow once in a while, a majority of them were the most wise and learned people in the world.
‘Implementing elitist education and monopolising knowledge?’ Leylin thought secretly to himself. At the very least, he understood that the education fees here were simply frightening. As a result, among all the servants in the manor, only the butler and a handful of the knight apprentices were able to read, while the rest were illiterate.
Evidently, the commoners that grew up in such an environment were absolutely unable to compete with the later generations of the noble families. If this was the case even in terms of intellect, the amount of power they were in control of would be worse.
“How about you, Leylin?” Jonas looked at Leylin.
“I think I’m up for it, father,” Leylin’s response was very composed. He’d had more than enough of pretending to be a child.
“Haha… Now that’s a true descendant of the Faulen family! Excellent behavior!” The baron laughed heartily and downed the red wine in his glass in one gulp. He then started discussing with Sarah about the problem of which scholar they should hire.
Leylin, of course, was in no position to interfere, and could only drink his mushroom broth in silence. “You’re in troooooobleeeee~~” Through the gaps between her actions, he could see his elder cousin Isabel, making a face at him as she mouthed the words. He just pretended to not see her teasing him, causing her to roll her eyes. After he had eaten his fill, Leylin returned to his own room. This was a benefit that he had tried his very best to fight for. Although the baron and his wife had generally agreed to this request, they also had other terms. Next to his room would be an experienced made, someone separated by only a silken curtain ready to take care of the young master at all times. Leylin, of course, absolutely did not give her a chance to do so. His early maturation made the baron’s wife very pleased, yet she also felt a little upset and regretful. A faint light flashed in Leylin’s eyes as he heard light breathing sounds from next door, ‘A.I. Chip! Show my current statistics!’ [Leylin Faulen, Strength: 0.4, Agility: 0.3, Vitality: 0.6, Spirit: 1.0, Condition: Healthy.] The A.I. Chip sent the information faithfully. Leylin’s current stats were much better than other kids of his age, and even his spirit had been restored to the average standard of ordinary people. Even so, this made Leylin frown in dissatisfaction. ‘It’s taking too long to restore everything! The laws of the World of Gods are really the harshest among all the worlds.’ Through many minor experiments, Leylin was now able to confirm that although there were extraordinary powers in the World of Gods, they rejected beings that were overly powerful. Even if they were deities, it was compulsory for them to leave the main material plane after advancing, and establish their own kingdom in the outside world. The physical constants here had also undergone changes. The
attractive forces between all kinds of particles seemed to be oddly strengthened, which made it even harder to attain extraordinary powers.
In short, even deities had to expend great effort and strength if they wanted to have a great influence in the World of Gods.
‘The knowledge aspect is alright, but the education of professions…’ Leylin’s pupils glistened with anticipation.
In the World of Gods, those who possessed extraordinary strength were unanimously named ‘Professionals.’ They seemed to be able to have occupations at such places as guilds, and they obtained all kinds of privileges and benefits for doing so.
The number of Professionals among Baron Jonas’ subordinates seemed to be scarce. Of course, the Faulen family’s fortune was based entirely on their port. Leylin secretly speculated that perhaps the main powers of the family had always been defending that area.
The baron acted swiftly. Early in the morning the very next day, an elderly man who was dressed up completely had been invited into the manor.
“Good morning, Mr Leylin Faulen!” This scholar had the air of someone who had intensively read all the traditional books, and his manner of speaking was also very fitting for his profession. It seemed that he and Baron Jonas had hit it off very well and they had a pleasant conversation, thus he was asked to be Leylin’s tutor straight away.
Leylin met his teacher in a small drawing room that had been opened up temporarily.
It was a pity that his wealth of knowledge far exceeded that of his tutor’s by leaps and bounds. However, his understanding of the World of Gods obviously surpassed Leylin’s, thus Leylin kept a respectful expression.
“Good day, teacher! May I ask how I should address you?” Such refined and courteous actions clearly surprised the scholar. He
raised his eyes, and the interest in his pupils grew stronger. Having such an intelligent and gifted child as his student would be an extremely fortunate matter for him.

“You can call me Anthony!” The scholar said as he smiled, “What a polite young mister!”

“Good day, Teacher Anthony!” Leylin saluted once more, but he was actually secretly doing a thorough check of his tutor’s details and background information using the A.I. Chip.

[Scan complete. Name: Anthony. Strength: 0.9, Agility: 1.2, Vitality: 0.8, Spirit: 1.7, Evaluation: Normal human, slightly spiritually gifted.]

‘This is a typical average scholar…’ Leylin sighed to himself. Initially, he had hoped to run into a Magus or some other being that used magic. After all, the identity of a scholar was an excellent disguise for these professions.

But Anthony, who was sitting opposite him, clearly wasn’t such a person.

“Then, may I ask what you can educate me about?” Leylin dove straight into the main topic.

This attitude evidently startled Anthony. “As the heir of a noble family, there is much knowledge that you will need to master, such as languages, writing, etiquette and simple arithmetic. Linguistics is my forte, thus I will be developing a course for you on the common language used here. This would also be the most appropriate arrangement for a five-year-old. As for the others that follow… My apologies, but that will depend on the baron’s opinion…”

“Alright then, let’s begin!” Leylin nodded. Although he had already obtained a vast amount of content regarding languages when he had first been projected into the World of Gods a long time ago, that was obviously insufficient.

After all, as part of a noble family, he had to master specialised
pleasantries and even certain speech mannerisms, or else he would be treated like an unsophisticated country bumpkin. Although Leylin loathed the idea of formality, he still had to take the initiative to adapt to the laws as he didn’t have the capability to break them. This was the principle of survival.
The accurate usage of formalities and the mastery of titles and honorifics at different levels is a complicated subject,” Anthony wiped the small blackboard behind him, “Before we begin the course, I would like to introduce a respected deity to you.”

Anthony fished out a badge from his chest pocket. On it was a sacred logo in the shape of a book which had a dim luster.

“Can you recognise this?” Anthony asked softly.

“I recognise it! This is the emblem of the almighty God of Knowledge, Oguma!” Leylin nodded earnestly.

The smile on Anthony’s face spread even wider, “That’s right! All of us scholars believe strongly in the almighty God of Knowledge, Oguma, who is also the origin of all knowledge.”

He shot a profound glance at Leylin, “It is also the religion that the Faulen family believes in. Do you pray frequently?”

“I’ve seen my parents do it!” Leylin replied. After all, you couldn’t expect much of a child.

“Very well. Now, follow my actions.” Anthony’s expression grew sincere, pure, and holy, “Almighty God of Knowledge, you are the origin of all knowledge, the controller of truth…”

Leylin was secretly rolling his eyes vigorously, but he could only follow Anthony and pray, “Your glory will be scattered upon the entire world, driving out barbarism and ignorance, and bringing about the golden age of civilisation…”
A young voice continuously reverberated in the small drawing room. Jonas and Sarah, who were hiding outside the door, had smiles plastered on their faces.

‘So apart from giving me language lessons, this teacher is also here to give me lessons on the divine…’ Leylin was secretly gloomy, but didn’t express the slightest bit of impatience on his face. Instead, he was conscientious and focused, at which Anthony couldn’t help but nod approvingly to himself.

In actual fact, Leylin knew that there was totally no way for him to avoid this. After all, the influence that the deities had on this world was honestly too deep. If he wanted to continue living under his false identity, he had to transform into a believer.

A person without faith in the World of Gods would be considered a freak, and would have absolutely no room for survival. Fortunately, the deities only had great influence on and branded the souls of their own devout followers and fanatics. They didn’t pay much attention to the general believers who had only been slightly influenced by the glory of the gods.

What was even more ingenious was that unless one assumed the position of a priest, it was practically impossible to tell the extent of faith that one had. Anyway, all he had to do was just pray at fixed times and occasionally make donations at the church. Leylin felt that he could totally act out such superficial deeds very well.

Based on what Leylin knew, the God of Knowledge, Oguma was a deity that many noble families and scholars believed in. It could be said that he was rather someone all cultured people believed in. Of these two specific types of people, one set cared only for their interest while the other laid special emphasis on practical laws. They definitely weren’t as religious as they claimed to be. Leylin wouldn’t stand out if he mixed with them, thus this deity could be said to be the best option.

‘There’s only one other option in the Faulen family’s territory…"
The God of Sufferance Erma…’ Leylin shuddered. Erma was a deity brimming with devotion and sacrificial spirit. Most of her teachings advised her believers to exercise patience and compliance, making her a deity that many rulers liked to introduce into their territory.

Naturally, the same applied with Baron Jonas. These two churches were the only ones currently in his fief, resulting in a scenario where the upper class prayed to the God of Knowledge and the farmers and sailors prayed to Erma.

Although the Baron also wished to introduce the church of the Goddess of Wealth Waukin into his territory, he hadn’t been successful. The island’s trading industry wasn’t very prosperous yet, and was even boycotted by the combined resistance of both the current churches. The wealthy pastors who knew how to earn money more than they knew how to preach naturally wouldn’t be attracted to this place.

‘Excellent!’ Upon seeing a white cloud of holy light floating up from the religious emblem and draping itself over Leylin, every single wrinkle on Anthony’s face was smoothened out with a smile, “The almighty God of Knowledge has received your prayers. In the future, you may follow your parents to the Knowledge Shrine and Church to participate in scripture-related activities and donations.” “That would be my honor!” Leylin replied methodically as he secretly rejoiced, ‘Sure enough, my soul is now wholly native to the World of Gods, and I haven’t aroused even the slightest amount of suspicion from Anthony. As long as I maintain this level of faith in future, and do not attract his attention, there definitely won’t be any problem.’

Of course, Leylin also knew that he had no path as a priest. After all, priesthood demanded great faith. Not only were priests expected to understand the entirety of their deities’ doctrines and
follow them, even their souls belonged to the deities themselves. If his own soul was laid bare under the gaze of the deities, Leylin wasn’t certain if he’d be able to conceal the truth. ‘However, with my attitude, I’m afraid that I wouldn’t be able to achieve even the lowest level of a priest…’ Leylin grew speechless at these own thoughts of his.

“Alright, let’s begin today’s lesson. I’ll just mention that the remuneration I get from your father is three golden coins every time the hourglass runs out!” Anthony started to write on the blackboard. He wrote in cursive, which appeared highly complicated and beautiful.

“Three gold coins?” Leylin deeply exhaled. Even a young child like him knew that the purchasing power of gold coins in the World of Gods was extremely high.

“Knowledge is priceless…” Anthony nodded satisfactorily at Leylin’s show of poor manners, then began the morning’s lesson. This level of teaching was simply considered nothing in Leylin’s eyes. He had even specially lowered his speed of learning by a great deal in order to conceal how exceptional he truly was.

Even so, the abilities that he displayed had earned exceedingly high praise from Anthony. He strongly commended Leylin in front of the Baron and his wife, and even predicted that he would become a mighty scholar one day, which made Lady Sarah’s eyes twinkle with delight. The Baron lifted Leylin up and tossed him around in the air many times.

After enjoying a sumptuous lunch under the maids’ care, Leylin followed the Baron to a small field behind the manor. This was the place where farmers usually lay their grains under the scorching sun. It was very spacious and empty, a wooden frame upright at the side holding hammers, daggers, pikes, knight spears, and other kinds of weapons.

A warrior dressed in leather armor was already waiting in the centre
of the field.
“Leylin, this is the chief imperial bodyguard of our family. You may call him Uncle Jacob!” The Baron introduced him to Leylin.
Leylin could distinctly sense a menacing aura from him, one that could only be cultivated by traversing mountains of corpses and oceans of blood. He also felt his formidable strength; Jacob clearly possessed some sort of extraordinary ability, and was a Professional.
“Uncle Jacob!” Leylin immediately shouted sweetly.
“Your Uncle Jacob has always been in charge of the patrol team at the harbor. I specially transferred him here to take responsibility and teach you martial arts. He is your instructor from today, understood?” The Baron’s voice grew stern.
“Teacher Jacob,” Leylin secretly rolled his eyes as he greeted him seriously once more.
“Jacob, I’ll hand Leylin over to you!” Jonas hit Jacob’s shoulder.
“Rest assured, Sir, I will definitely teach the young master all that I know!” Jacob straightened his chest.
After the Baron left, only Leylin and Jacob were left on the small field. “Before we start on the warrior training, I have a question for you, young master. Do you know what a Professional is?”
Jacob had a very boorish face. Having had a long-term job that required him to oppress others, he was brimming with a deadly aura. Even if he tried hard to make himself look gentle when he smiled, his looks would intimidate many imps, so much that they would cry.
“I’ve heard about it before…” Leylin scratched his head.
“A so-called Professional is someone who possesses formidable strength. Even in other countries, they receive preferential treatment, especially so for Professionals who are rank 5 and above.” The muscles in Jacob’s right hand bulged, as though trying to make him more persuasive. They were covered in a misty
brilliance.
“Look carefully! This is an ability that only rank 5 warriors and above possess. Fighting Spirit!” With a loud bellow, Jacob smashed his fist onto the ground.
*Rumble!* Smoke and dust scattered throughout the air, as though a small-scale earthquake had occurred in the field. When the smoke and dust dispersed, a huge sunken pit could be seen next to Jacob.
“Wow…” Leylin’s jaw dropped open, and he appeared to be extremely shocked. He reacted in about the same way as other children would, but he was actually secretly estimating Jacob’s capabilities.
‘Such destructive power… It’s almost the same as knights who’ve activated life energy. There’s no doubt about it; the harsher restrictions on extraordinary powers in the World of God means that Jacob’s true strength should be even greater than this. He should be close to a rank 1 Magus in strength…’ Leylin made secret calculations as the A.I. Chip immediately revealed Jacob’s stats.
[Jacob, Warrior. Rank: Rank 5 or above (insufficient information). Estimated stats, Strength: 3, Agility: 2, Vitality: 3, Spirit: 1.5. Evaluation: Dangerous!]
Leylin sighed in silence. At the same time, he had also roughly gauged Jacob’s strength. ‘This body is too weak. Even the A.I. Chip’s scanning abilities are limited.’
“I’m only a warrior, thus I can only show you the strength of a warrior, young master.” Jacob said regretfully, “There are many different types of Professionals, who possess strange yet mysterious abilities.”
It was clear that Jacob was faithfully fulfilling his duty and using his formidable strength to lure the young master into walking on the path of strength.
“Then… what is your rank as a warrior, Uncle Jacob? Can you tell me?” At this point, Leylin fully put his advantage as a young child
to use, and constantly tried to acquire information.
“Me? I’m just a mere rank 6 warrior!” Jacob laughed, seemingly embarrassed.
A rank 6 warrior? How about my father? What rank is he? Is he rank 15?” Leylin appeared very innocent and vulnerable. After all, in the hearts of children, parents were unequalled.

“Rank 15?! Cough cough…” Jacob almost choked on his saliva, “Esteemed young master, Professionals above rank 5 are already valued by nobility. Those beyond rank 15 are treated with excessive respect even among the highest strata of society. There are very few of them on the continent…”

“Is that so?” Leylin stroked his chin. He’d heard about this ranking while he had still been a soul seed, and it seemed like after borrowing a medium to use, the strength of his soul seed was not half bad.

Of course, no matter how powerful he was, he was still a foreigner. Nothing could be hidden from the glory of the gods, and he would easily have been destroyed.

“Uncle Jacob, what happens after rank 15? Are there more powerful beings?” Leylin was like a little guy filled with curiosity.

“After rank 15… ah…” Jacob’s eyes were dim, “Then there are only the Legends! Legendary beings can make whole kingdoms retreat, and are the most powerful forces of the continent…”

“Legends?” Leylin’s eyes flashed.

“Alright! Let’s start training today. First is long-distance running!” At this moment, Jacob realised that Leylin’s questions had pushed
him off topic. He turned grim.
“Fine, fine…” Leylin began to run around cheekily like a little cheetah full of energy, his smooth motions causing Jacob’s eyes to brighten.

……

Deep in the night, in the baron’s study room.
Jonas sat behind the work desk, arms crossed as he looked deep in thought. “You’re saying Leylin’s body has good potential, and if he were to go through warrior training, he has high prospects?”
Jacob stood before Jonas, speaking sternly. “Yes, my lord! The energy in young master Leylin’s body flows very smoothly. On top of that, with a great body from birth, I’m certain that the young master will gather fighting energy and break through to become a rank 5 warrior in ten years if he perseveres with warrior training!”
“Alright. You may leave,” Jonas waved his arms tiredly. Only after Jacob bowed and left could he laugh wryly. “Outstanding literary talent and an outstanding physique! Leylin, you truly are a gem gifted to me by the gods!”
Jonas grabbed at his hair in frustration. Every parent hoped their child would be a genius, but when Leylin was outstanding in both of these respects, Jonas grew distressed as to how best to nurture the boy.
“It’s obviously necessary to continue the cultural lessons, but what about the warrior training?” Jonas knew Jacob’s strength well, and if Leylin truly had talent, it would be a waste for him to be training under Jacob.
On top of that, warriors had low status in the World of Gods given how common they were. While they could grow extremely powerful at the higher, more profound realms, one would unavoidably be treated like cannon fodder in the beginning. Jonas
was hesitant about it.
“What are you worrying about?” At this moment, a gentle voice was heard from outside the study room, and Jonas’ eyes brightened.
“Ernest! Welcome!” Jonas stood up while beaming sunnily, watching a figure walk out from the shadows.
The figure had a head of long, soft, silver hair. His eyes were filled with wisdom, and while he looked young he had a great aura. He wore a yielding gown similar to those of scholars, and had a mysterious golden decorative motif on his chest. Powerful magical force twined around his body, giving him a very menacing aura. Evidently, Ernest was a powerful magician.
This was a magician! The spellcasters of the World of Gods grasped powerful abilities in magic, and were existences that could control the natural elements around them. More importantly, every spellcaster was extremely well-learned. Their breadth of knowledge was above that of many famed scholars.
Of course, due to the great amount of resources and time that had to be poured into magic, magic was a Profession of nobles. Regular commoners definitely couldn’t pay the expenses required to study and conduct experiments.
“We meet again, Jonas!” Ernest smiled gently, giving his friend an enthusiastic hug.
“I’m sorry I couldn’t get here in time when your child was born. Experiments that probe the abyss are too complex and time consuming…” Ernest looked sorry.
“Treat this Ring of Light as my belated gift!” He passed a glimmering silver ring to Jonas, “Though the light spell in this can only be used thrice, it’s not bad for a child’s toy…”
“Thank you very much, on behalf of Leylin as well!” Jonas took the ring carefully, moved by the present. With his knowledge, he knew that even a temporarily enchanted item like this could easily
fetch ten gold coins. Magical items were that expensive! Often times, they could not even be sold due to their exorbitant prices. With the Faulen family's background, they would at most befriend a few useless magic scholars, and it was impossible to make connections with powerful spellcasters like Ernest. Meeting him was a pure coincidence. After finding out his true identity, Jonas had spent much effort to build up a great friendship with him. After they sat down, Ernest continued his query, "Jonas... What’s worrying you?" "Well..." Watching the powerful spellcaster, Jonas had to conceal the glimmer in his eyes. He laughed wryly, "You know Leylin is already five, right? His talent is worrying me. I’m worried he’ll lack the guidance he needs, which will cause him to walk the wrong path and not be able to show his outstanding talent..." Jonas mentioned Leylin’s display in detail. It had to be said that even while he was hiding a lot of information, Leylin’s was definitely a talent amongst the natives here. As Jonas continued, Ernest’s eyes brightened, "Tomorrow! Let me see the child tomorrow. If he really has talent, I can consider taking him in as my student!" "Thank you so much!" Jones stood up, elated. "It’s nothing!" Ernest smiled slightly. He had already noticed Jonas’ objective, but he didn’t particularly mind. He had gotten a huge sponsorship from Jonas before, and taking a child in as a student wasn’t much in return. Of course, the child needed to have talent in magic, even if it was at a low level. The next day, Leylin was informed that all of his classes were postponed, and that he was going to meet someone important. "Leylin, my child!" Jonas stood before Leylin, looking extremely serious.
“I will bring you to see a powerful magician later. Even in the entire continent, he is a very terrific person, so you must be respectful. Is that understood?”
“Yes, father!” Little Leylin nodded vigorously, looking forward to this. ‘A magician? A spellcaster in this world? I can finally walk the path of the elements again…’
Leylin was more than aware about whether he had talent in casting spells. In addition, he didn’t have plans on choosing a different profession having restarted his life. He was a Magus, and it was much easier for him to reach the peak of the path of magic.
Of course, he had not considered becoming a Warlock once more. He had gone through a great number of trouble to break his bloodline shackles in the past, and wanted nothing to do with it again. Hence, becoming a magician was currently Leylin’s best choice.
“I hope you’ll become a powerful magician. If that happens, our Faulen family…” Jonas’ tone held hope and anticipation as he rubbed Leylin’s head, bringing him to the drawing room. In there was a magician with long silver hair, gazing over him with eyes as intense as lightning. Goosebumps arose on Leylin’s skin.
“Ah!” A low hum could be heard from his lips.
“Come! Leylin, this is your uncle Ernest!” While perplexed by Ernest’s expression, Jonas immediately hinted at Leylin to greet him.
“Good morning, Uncle Ernest!” Leylin bowed respectfully, his bright eyes full of curiosity.
“Good child, come here.” Ernest’s eyes were filled with excitement. Even Jonas could tell that he was holding his emotions back.
“Hold this!” Another silver ring appeared in his hands. Unlike the previous one, this looked like an exquisite work of art, and had a glistening gem embedded at its crest. Jonas could tell at first glance that this was a magic item with a permanent spell inside. Compared
to the one from before that could only be used thrice before it was rendered useless, it was at least ten times the value.

“Thank you, uncle!” Leylin respectfully took the ring, while he held it with contempt in his mind.

‘A magic artifact that can be used only when my spiritual force has reached a certain level? What a primitive method of sensing…’

The moment he held the ring, the energy pathway and structure within was laid bare before Leylin’s eyes. ‘I’ll take this chance to show off my ability then!’
zzt bzzt! A bundle of bright white light emanated from the ring on Leylin’s hand. Piercing white light startled Baron Jonas, blinding him temporarily.
Baron Jonas rubbed at his reddened teared-up eyes, finally managing to recover from the blindness caused by the light spell. What he saw in front of him after that was a wizard who was at a loss for words.
Dear gods! Jonas rubbed at his eyes, watching Ernest in front of him while unable to believe his eyes.
Was this the wizard that he knew? Everyone knew that wizards were the symbol of wisdom and calm. There were few matters that could make them lose themselves, forget leaving them at a loss.
“Haha… very good, Leylin. You did well!”
“Ernest… do you mean that… Leylin passed?” However, Jonas no longer thought of the other matters, because he had already come up with another possibility at the sight of Ernest’s expression.
“Passed? Ah, of course! His talent is so great that he might even have a place in the Magic Association! Even my mentor would be jealous of me taking in such an excellent student…”
Ernest spoke sternly once he calmed down, “Jonas, my friend! It is my responsibility to inform you that your child Leylin has great talent in the path of magic! Even now, his spiritual force far surpasses those of his age, and with the correct guidance I believe he might even break through to the realm of a grandmaster, or
even…” Ernest’s body was beginning to twitch without his knowledge.

“Alright, alright! Well then, Ernest, are you willing to take my son as your student?”

“Of course! Why wouldn’t I?” Ernest already considered Leylin the student who would carry on his legacy. Had Jonas not allowed it, he might even have resorted to force to acquire him.

“Then that’s great! I want to announce this great news to everyone. I’ll hold a celebration!” Jonas’ face glowed red with pride. The fact that the young master of the Faulen Family had been taken in as the student of a powerful spellcaster definitely raised the family’s status and influence in the kingdom.

Jonas was already becoming impatient, “Well then, are there any other procedures for Leylin to study under you, what about fees?”

“We can talk about that later. For now, please give us some time alone…” Ernest respectfully waved his hand, and an invisible force pushed Jonas out. The door closed itself automatically.

“Don’t be surprised. That was merely the effect of ‘Mage Hand’. It’s a parlor trick.” Ernest turned, putting what he believed to be his kindest smile on his face as he consoled the startled little guy.

“Ye- yes, mister!” Leylin shrunk back on himself as if in fear, yet his eyes secretly held a shrewd expression, ‘A.I. Chip, has this been recorded?’

[The wizard’s spellcasting has been recorded. Storing data!] The A.I. Chip quickly answered.

‘Great! However, the power of this spell is rather…?’ Leylin could clearly tell that something was different about this person. Even in the Magus World, high-ranked Magi needed to practice for a long time in order to cast spells with such instantaneous effects.

‘No! He doesn’t have the ability to cast spells instantly. It’s like he had already prepared this spell beforehand and stored it. With a designated gesture and command, the spell model was activated…’
Leylin himself was an expert in spells, and he immediately saw through the process. ‘Though I’m not too sure about the theory behind it, this seems to be the way spells are cast in the World of Gods. Compared to the Magus World, there seem to be many differences.’
“This… this is magic?” The young voice quivered, yet it held a curiosity within.
“Yes, this is magic! With just a slight move of a finger, you can call on the power of nature!” Ernest rubbed his hands, and flames appeared in the air, turning into a little bird, a man, and many other shapes. Finally, it abruptly dissipated, turning into a small flame. Seeing that he had successfully captured the little guy’s attention and admiration, Ernest’s lips curved in a proud smile.
Yes, with just the slight movement of a finger, immense power could be called upon. There was no need to be like those warriors or other physical Professionals, labouring, bleeding, and sweating like a fool. Such things were very crude and violent. Besides, even the lowest ranked wizard would gain many benefits from copying scrolls or performing alchemy. Compared to the Professions of those low lives, magic was obviously a more mysterious and noble path. Of course, such a thing would capture a child’s heart.
Ernest felt very good about himself, having arrogant thoughts. Of course, the terrifying expenses and harsh requirements for talent while one studied to become a wizard was something he ignored.
“Then… Can I become a wizard?” Finally, Ernest heard Leylin’s apprehensive words, which made him feel like he was in the clouds.
“Of course, my child! You have the talent to be an outstanding wizard! I, Ernest of the Burning Shadows, am very willing to be your guide on the path of magic!” Ernest did his best to seem solemn.
“But… there’s something I need to remind you of. While you have an astounding talent, you’ll have to put in more effort than ordinary people. The path of wizards does not allow for laziness,” Ernest expression was stern as he began instruction…

Soon enough, news of young master Leylin of the Faulen family coming under the tutelage of a powerful wizard spread its way around the port.

In the World of Gods, wizards usually represented power, mystery, and power that could not be withstood.

Wizards represented torrential power and mystery in the World of Gods, a strength that could not be withstood. The Faulens had produced a magic student, and he was even very talented. That meant that there was a huge likelihood of the appearance of a powerful wizard in this family!

This potential immediately caused many to disregard the fact that this family was a new and upcoming noble family. Many traditional nobles began to accept the existence of the Faulen family, and many made plans to extend an olive branch to them.

Baron Jonas cleverly made use of this opportunity, helping the Faulen Family gain many advantages, bettering the lives and the environment of the family.

Of course, this had nothing to do with Leylin. He was far too young and could not help out in matters of the family. The only thing he did was to accompany Ernest to attend a banquet, gaining the blessings of everyone in the land.

Bishop Tapris, who followed Oghma the God of Knowledge, personally came forward to express his regret.

Leylin’s powerful spiritual force did not only give him talent as a wizard. If he could accept the teachings of the God of Knowledge and abide by them in body and mind, he would have a smooth path to priesthood, and he could even advance faster than other priests. With such a great seedling snatched away by a wizard, Tapris
naturally felt very regretful. It was a pity that he would never know that it was impossible for Leylin to rely on the God of Knowledge, nor would he ever become even a rank 1 priest…

After they made their relationship as master and student official, Leylin’s lessons as a wizard began. Under Jonas and his wife’s enthusiastic attempts at making him stay, Ernest had decided to remain in the manor, completing his duty of instructing Leylin in magic.

In actuality, he was a wizard without a fixed residence and did not possess anything like a magic tower. Based on the intel Leylin had received on the sly, mostly from his mentor letting it slip by accident, he was only rank 9 and far from rank 15, the rank of a grandmaster wizard. He was even further from becoming a Legend. If they wished to build a magic tower, unless they were favoured children backed by the most powerful of organisations, even grandmaster wizards had to save up for centuries.

Leylin maliciously thought that Ernest had nowhere to go, which was why he had no choice but to freeload at the Faulen family’s place. Of course, even a rank 9 wizard was an outstanding person on the Faulen territory, hence Jonas and his wife both agreed to it. Both sides were willing.

Leylin’s magic courses were scheduled for the morning. His culture teacher Anthony could only come in the afternoons, and Jacob was laid off his initial job of instructing Leylin in his path as a warrior. If not for Leylin coming up with the reason of needing to train his body, using half an hourglass’ time everyday, he would probably be patrolling the ports.

“Spells are actually gods’ gift to wizards. The Weave, created by the mighty Goddess of the Weave Mystra, is the source of all magic…”

In the very first lesson, Leylin almost choked as he heard Ernest stating this seriously.
“Spells? Gods’ gift? The Weave?”
“Yes!” Ernest looked extremely grim. It seemed like these were his true thoughts.
“Alright!” Leylin nodded seriously, but he was snickering inside.
‘It’s obviously his own strength, yet he has been shackled. How should I judge him…’ As Ernest spoke, Leylin acquired a better understanding of the wizards in the World of Gods.
The spellcasters here, or rather wizards, essentially used meditation to increase their spiritual force, communicating with the devil web that was everywhere to create spell models and then store them as magic.
This conclusion left Leylin speechless.
In that case, master, if a wizard can only store magic one day before using it the next, then isn’t it necessary to determine which spells to use on the day before? And once the spell slots have been used up…” Leylin raised his hand and asked.

“Yes! All wizards need to prepare all the magic they will use a day prior. It’s important to know which spells to prepare, and as for the issue of spell slots being used up…”

Ernest looked very stern. “Remember this well, Leylin! Once a wizard uses up all his spells and has no scrolls or magic artifacts on his body, he is no different from an ordinary person. Hence, you can never let yourself get into that situation. This is very important! I’ve seen many who used up all their spells and were unlucky enough to be gnawed down the core, without a scrap of flesh left on their bones!”

“I understand!” Leylin sat back down speechlessly.

‘Based on what he said, wizards actually use their spiritual force as a currency to buy the authority to use magic from the Weave. While this method makes the requirements to become a wizard less stringent, this is basically a nightmare for those who are talented enough to build spell models by themselves…

‘So in general, wizards are impotent and diminished versions of Magi?’ Leylin felt disconcerted. ‘So while it allows those without enough aptitude to use magic, this Weave is inflexible and confines
true talent in magic!’
Leylin’s eyes flashed, ‘Perhaps this is the goal of the gods, to prevent the rise of a wizard who is too powerful. Could this be an effect from the final battle with the Magi? In that case, I should look up the history of this Weave Goddess. If my guess is correct, she must be a new god that only gained popularity after the ancient final war!’
Despite knowing this, Leylin obviously would not stick out his neck and try to change things. His goal was to remain low-profile as he grew up, and he absolutely would not do something like challenging the gods.
Before having the confidence to break through the power of laws, he had no choice but to explore the path of wizards.
“Next… I’ll teach you a meditation technique, and then you can start making contact with the Weave…” Ernest continued to teach from the lectern, unaware that this pupil that looked studious on the outside was exploring many new ideas.
‘Meditation here isn’t too different from Magi’s meditation techniques, but the effects are slightly weaker. Of course, coupled with the laws of the World of Gods, there are many areas I can learn from. As for the Weave…’ Leylin’s spirit began to extend outwards.
Using the method that Ernest had taught him, his spirit seemed to touch upon a powerful existence. It was a network of invisible energy shaped like a spiderweb, and it enveloped the entire World of Gods with its powerful energy.
Even the surface density of the energy pathways left Leylin’s scalp prickling.
‘Are those nodes spell slots? I never thought that just the surface layer of the Weave would be enough for me to feel stunned like this,’ Leylin watched the Weave, his eyes full of admiration as he grew more convinced in his guesses.
‘So powerful… It must have been created as a joint effort by the
gods. Mystra should be one of the most powerful of peak rank 8s,
which is why she was selected to manage it.’ Leylin knew very little
about the gods. All he knew was that there were a few stages to the
most powerful of them, second to the World Will that was the
Supreme God. Unlike in the Magus World, there were greater gods,
the middle gods, and the lesser gods.

Mystra was definitely among the most successful of the greater
gods, having tremendous divine force. Even if Leylin’s main body
were to fight her it was unlikely that he’d hold the upper hand.

“I’ve already given you the meditation method. Next up is to
continue practising the use of your spiritual force and making
contact with the Weave. Other students might need up to three
months, but you’ll be able to do it in a month!” Ernest spoke
frankly.

All of a sudden, a strange undulation spread, causing his
expression to change.

“Weave! You’ve made contact with the Weave!” Ernest charged
forward, grabbing Leylin’s slender arm. His eyes went read,
“Leylin, is it really your first time touching upon magic?”

“Of course, master! I’ve rarely even left the manor since birth!”
Leylin’s eyes gleamed as he answered innocently.

“Then tell me! Are you the illegitimate child of the Weave
Goddess?” Ernest asked extremely seriously…

……

Come fall, there were scenes of a great harvest everywhere. Grain
and flour filled warehouses, and many farmers looked gleeful at
the sight.

This harvest was enough for them to pay their taxes, and would
even leave enough food for them to live through the winter and
plant seeds at the beginning of spring. At this thought, they could not help but begin to pray, singing praises in the favour of the gods, as well as the benevolence and generosity of the lord.

With the profits from having a port and with many residents moving from the continent to the island, the Faulen family’s taxes were set very low, which could be considered a very benevolent act from them.

Haystacks were piled up high in the training grounds of the manor, forming forts in varying shape. Two figures were now clashing on the ground.

“Pay attention to your centre of gravity, I’m coming!” Along with the warning, a blonde teen in white training clothes brandished a metal sword like a viper, twisting his body in an arc in mid-air, spinning around to arrive next to his opponent and thrusted his sword forward at an unexpected angle.

Leylin’s opponent seemed middle aged. His face had marks of age on it, his hands were full of calluses, and he now looked as if he was battling his greatest enemy.

“Hah! It’s this way!” He called in a low voice, holding the heavy sword in his hand horizontal.

*Clang!* The two swords produced a dull sound as they collided with tremendous force.

“Crap!” The man’s expression changed and he slipped. Having lost his centre of gravity, his entire body was thrown off balance.

*Boom!* He felt a tremendous force slam into him, but the force turned gentle when it hit his chest, and he seemed to be sent flying away rather delicately, as if he was light as a feather.

When the middle-aged man opened his eyes once more, the blonde teen’s metal sword was already at his chest, “You’ve lost, Jacob.”

“Yes, young master Leylin, I’ve lost!” Jacob laughed helplessly.

“Your earlier parry was not agile enough, and you lacked instinct in your movements!” In front of him was obviously Leylin. However,
Leylin was now guiding Jacob in detail as if he was the teacher instead. Jacob listened obediently, watching him in admiration.

After sending Jacob away, Leylin picked up a white towel and wiped off the sweat on his face before walking into the bathroom. The steady rise of the cloudy steam made the room look a little hazy.

Coming before a precious mercury mirror, he judged his appearance. He had curling golden hair, blue eyes, and a handsome face which inherited his parents’ excellent features. While the fine hair near his lips betrayed his true age, it did nothing to conceal the mature charm he possessed.

‘It’s been ten years since I’ve started training to become a wizard!’ Leylin sighed. He followed it up with an order, ‘A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!’


After fumbling around for many years, Leylin had developed more functions for the A.I. Chip, and even the stats were now more detailed. He turned his attention to the description of his innate skills.

[Innate Skill. Sturdy: Host has persevered through warrior training, and possesses a sturdy physique. (Strength +0.5, Vitality +0.3)]

[Erudite: Plentiful experiences and great knowledge has allowed the host’s willpower and spirit to expand and become more resilient. (Spirit +1)]

‘The stats that the A.I. Chip shows includes the bonus from my innate skills…’ Leylin looked rather solemn, “In other words, besides the strengthening of my spiritual force from birth, my body is practically comparable to a regular adult?”

After the passing of so many years, Leylin found that due to the
limitations by the world’s laws, it was extremely difficult for humans to raise their strength. There seemed to be some kind of bottleneck when raising any of his stats, and once they reached an average of one his progress had stalled. Only his spiritual force, which was related to him being a wizard, was still somewhat increasing, but it too seemed to have reached a bottleneck.

‘When it comes to my body’s stats, Jacob still surpasses me in many ways. The reason I could defeat him was technique… Is this some added bonus from being a warrior?’ Leylin stroked his chin, sinking into deep thought.

While the increase of his strength would be shocking to his peers, this did not satisfy him.

“Perhaps I should find an opportunity and go on a trip outside!” Leylin inwardly made a decision as he bathed in the warm water. He naturally had ideas about how to increase his strength, but he obviously could not implement them at home. Travelling abroad now seemed to be a rather good idea.
I. Chip, how’s the progress on the analysis of the Weave?’ Leylin inwardly asked, closing his eyes.

[Beep! Analysis prioritises concealment of the host. Current progress: Rank 0 Weave 87.69%, Rank 1 Weave 37.61%, Rank 2 Weave 2.33%!]
The A.I. Chip quickly replied.

This was one of the many reasons why Leylin was advancing so slowly as a wizard, and he was very interested in the existence of the Weave. If he was able to completely analyse the Weave without being discovered by Mystra, it would make it extremely convenient for him to cast spells.

Even with such a huge project on his hands, Leylin was still able to reach rank 5 as a wizard. This display was already enough for Ernest to rave and exclaim that he was a genius, even a monster.

Wizards in the World of Gods were ranked according to their level of contact with the Weave. Those below rank 3 could only make contact with its surface, memorising and using rank 0 spells. They would acquire a deeper understanding of it upon reaching rank 3, gaining the ability to use rank 1 spells.

Leylin was now a rank 5 wizard, able to make contact with the second layer to use rank 2 spells. He was doing rather well for himself. On top of that, being a wizard in itself gave him great status. If he was lucky, he could even be conferred a lordship as he was in a large noble family, and it was highly likely that he’d gain his own land with meritorious deeds, passing it down the
generations. This was the dream of commoners. It was a pity though; at this level everything was like the dirt on the ground to Leylin, filling him with disdain as he trod on it.

‘Ranks 1 to 5 are considered normal in the central continent, and those from rank 6 to 10 are considered elites. From 1- to 15 are experts and those above are true powerhouses who enjoy great reputation in the continent. Even if they aren’t considered Legends, they are the apex of power, and those who appear most often. Legends could care less about worldly matters, placing their ambition and hopes on obtaining divinity, perhaps igniting their godfire and obtaining a place as a deity…’

This was Leylin’s current understanding of the power hierarchy in the World of Gods, obtained from the intel he had acquired as well as his own conjectures. Gods were set on a pedestal here, living in their divine eternal lands while their churches and priests raised followers for them.

The prime material plane prevented all powerful forces from entering, and even if a god were to make a material body and descend they would only have the strength of a peak Legend at most. Of course, they held another title; they were called Saints. Even if their real bodies descended they would still have the same name.

Hence, there were many situation in the prime material plane where high-ranked Legends besieged Saints and caused their fall. Sometimes they even managed to rob them of their divine force. Those gods would basically not let their real bodies descend and could only do that with their clones.

‘Legends are the most powerful in the prime material plane. If I can become one quickly, I’ll have enough power to protect myself. Besides, I need to do that to gain divine force.’ Leylin stroked his chin. As he had gotten enough nutrients growing up, he was
already rather tall for a 13-year-old, as could be seen in the mirror. Besides his face being immature, he was practically a little adult.

‘Is the reason for the bottleneck in my stats that I’ve yet to fully develop?’ Leylin pondered over his situation, ‘Based on this progress, it’ll probably take centuries of training to reach the rank of Legend. That’s too long, and I haven’t even considered what comes after…’

Leylin conjectured that the Legends of the World of Gods were quite similar to Morning Star Magi. They possessed abilities that surpassed imagination, and while one used legendary magic the other used Arcane Arts. In addition, they both met the bare requirements for entering the ancient war campaign, and after advancing, they would undergo a massive transformation.

‘Compared to the rankings of Magi, the division of ranks in the World of Gods are greater in number. In addition, those high-ranked Legends have abilities comparable to rank 5 Radiant Moon Magi…’ Even in the prime material plane, there were many powerful beings amongst the natives of this world. While there were high-ranked Legends, there were still many children of gods, divine beings, and even demigods.

Based on Leylin’s thoughts, their abilities would not lose out to rank 6 Breaking Dawn Monarchs, or even a near rank 7 like him.

“The World of Gods is filled with danger,” Leylin sighed. Not only were there churches and followers all over the continent, the gods had eyes everywhere in their children and family. The moment abnormalities were discovered, and he attracted the attention of the gods… Leylin instantly felt his scalp prickle in fear.

‘Perhaps… Adventuring is not a good option. There are many ways to increase the lifespan of wizards. I can use time to train… Besides, my main body can afford to wait for me!’ Leylin changed his mind.

Without external dangers, he didn’t mind spending more time if
that would ensure his safety.
“Young Master Leylin, your afternoon classes are starting! Don’t make Master Anthony wait too long!” A gentle voice was heard from outside, and Leylin was pulled back to reality.
“Alright!” Leylin found a towel and wiped at the droplets of water on his body, and then headed to a room outside.
There were two maids with pretty faces and blushes on their cheeks. They went forward, using their tender little hands to straighten the creases on his clothes.
In a feudal family, the family head and young master’s personal maids were very important. They not only had to serve their masters in their daily lives, but also take care of their master’s bodily needs. If nothing went wrong, this role was usually taken on by the daughter of the housekeeper.
The Faulen Family obviously could not do away with this custom. Leylin’s two personal maids were the daughters of the main housekeeper Leon. It was obvious that they had already prepared themselves mentally and were even slightly excited, but Leylin had no plans to do anything.
‘I’m only thirteen. Although young masters might have become experienced in that area at this age, they can’t be compared to me…’ Leylin knew how to control himself.
“Claire, Clara! Has Master Anthony arrived?” Leylin watched these two sisters, and only when the flush spread down to their pale necks did he ask them teasingly.
“Ye- yes, young master!” Claire blushed as she answered, feeling slightly relieved yet also disappointed.
“I can’t let my teacher wait for too long…” Leylin smiled as he left, not forgetting to tease them for a while.
“But this’ll only go on for these two years…” Smelling that sophisticated aroma, Leylin mumbled to himself.
Rays of sunlight shone in through the window, brightening up the hall.
“Mentor Anthony!” Leylin respectfully bowed. While he’d already learnt all the knowledge that the scholar knew, Leylin did not act too rudely since manners were compulsory for nobles.
“Leylin, you did well!” Anthony was already an old man, his kind voice low and his eyes shining. It was obvious that he truly liked this student.
“I’ve already taught you everything in terms of etiquette and speech in the continent. Today, we shall delve into its history…” Anthony produced a thick yellow tome that looked like a dictionary and placed it on the desk.
History was a rare subject even among nobles, only a few scholars focused on it. However, Leylin differed from the rest; he was extremely interested in this subject.
“History is confusing and tasteless. Many nobles hate it. Can you tell me why you chose this?” Anthony caressed the cover of the volume, looking rather nostalgic.
“It’s because knowing history makes one wise. It’s like a mirror that allows us to know ourselves better. No matter how foolish or absurd a situation, it’s already occurred in the past. We need to prevent such things from repeating.”
“A novel idea… cough cough… that makes sense… cough cough…” Anthony’s face was flushed, but he suddenly began to cough, his body bending into a stooping position.
“If you can see that, you’re definitely my student… Of course, you have Ernest as your master and might not think much of this, but I hope you’ll take this!” Anthony’s hands trembled as he produced a white silken bundle and unwrapped it layer by layer, revealing the emblem within.
“This is the proof of my glory as a scholar, presented to me in the king’s capital by the God of Knowledge. It is now yours… Cough cough…” Anthony’s hands trembled as he placed the emblem in Leylin’s hands, “I believe you will not tarnish its glory!”

“I swear on it!” Sensing that this old man’s life force was already fading, Leylin answered seriously.

While he already had a wizard for a mentor, Leylin had not abandoned his studies of culture, and Anthony taught him very seriously. It could be said that in these 8 years, the old man had already spent a lot of effort on him.

‘What a great teacher!’ Leylin judged inside, but had no plans of helping him. On one hand, he wanted to avoid revealing himself, and on the other, the concepts in the World of Gods were different. In the eyes of believers, death was merely another beginning. With the guidance of a priest, their souls would rise with glory to the land of the gods, where they could live an eternal life.
The followers of the gods would definitely be redeemed after death. That was the basis of the teachings of the gods. For this reason, the teachings of the gods spread throughout the world, causing the rise of numerous zealots who were willing to give up their lives for their beliefs. Any research relating to the soul was made taboo here, and was considered to profane the dead or the gods. ‘How foolish they are to place their hopes on someone else…’ Leylin sighed, but did not try to change this mindset. He knew very well how difficult it would be to change an ideology that had turned into a culture over tens of thousands of years. For this reason, his master Anthony faced death in a very calm manner, and it did not interfere with his daily work. “Perhaps some day in the future… Your name shall be carved in the church of knowledge, and if my name were to appear in the introduction, I’d have no regrets in my life…” Anthony stated his wish. The church of knowledge had a wall of glory, where the many names of those who helped pass on knowledge and wisdom were inscribed. It was considered the greatest honour amongst scholars in the continent. Anthony’s hope was that when others saw Leylin’s name there, they would find his own in the introduction, where he would be mentioned as a young Leylin’s teacher.
“I will work hard, master!” Leylin was speechless, but he could only answer in a vague manner.

“Good! Let us start today’s class. Flip to page…” After hearing Leylin personally agreeing, Anthony’s face glowed the red of fire that had just been fed oil. The tiny bit of life force he had emitted a vigorous energy.

Leylin listened to him and turned to the page, and an ancient map appeared before him. Due to the many fingers that had touched it, the lines of the map were incredibly blurred.

The black lines of charcoal drew the outline of a broken continent, with many little islands like stars surrounding it. The edges of the ocean were full of darkness, marked out with symbols of danger and the unknown.

“The history of our prime material plane is the history of great discovery. From the beginning, where there were written accounts of the redbud flowers up till today, the continent has evolved to the state that you see right now…” Anthony spoke unhurriedly, “The rise and fall of many nations resulted in many dangers to the continent. You’ll find the changes to the borders of these nations on the next page… Now, I’ll need you to mark out where we are on the map!”

“This…” Leylin watched Mentor Anthony speechlessly while he kept rolling his eyes inside.

“Our Faulen Territory is in the territorial waters of the southeast part of the Dambrath Kingdom. It was a newly developing land that was found and occupied after the kingdom’s third sailing expedition…” Leylin pointed to a corner in the northeast on the map, where there were the vague words of ‘Dambrath’.

Due to the the scale, the entire Dambrath Kingdom was just a grain in the vast ocean. While this was what Leylin said verbally, his eyes were beginning to blaze with excitement and fire.

The World of Gods was vast beyond words, and there were even
kingdoms established by the beastfolk and elves. Similar to the Magus World, there were things like the underground, where many dark races resided.

On the surface of the continent were hundreds of kingdoms and dukedom, and an inexhaustible number of villages.

Humans, beastfolk, elves, dwarves, pygmies, goblins, jackalfolk, death spirits… all sorts of races and gods of varying types showed the legends that had happened on the continent.

There were hot-blooded adventures, secret conspiracies, many races, various cultures and even wars and peace between gods!

Every dimensional being, whether devils, demons or anything else, were all watching this area with lustful eyes, hoping to gain a portion of it despite the watchful eyes of the gods.

“This is… the beginning of the legends…” Leylin’s heart blazed. He was already itching to begin wandering around the continent.

Of course, this desire was quickly suppressed by the cautiousness that lay in his genes.

With his might as a rank 5 wizard, he might be considered an elite in adventuring groups in this dangerous continent, but there were far too many existences that could take his life.

“Alright! Let us take a look at the Lionheart Nation at the middle of the map. On the calendar year 37628 of the holy calendar, 30 years ago, Lionheart King Charlie…” Anthony began his lessons while Leylin listened attentively.

However, Leylin’s thoughts were wandering.

‘The holy calendar! That’s the calendar established by the gods. While on the surface, it began because of the birth of the gods, in reality, the first year is actually a year after the end of the ancient Final War!’

This dark history was obviously not written in historic records. This was information Leylin had gathered through his resources, as well as Ernest and Anthony accidentally letting this slip, and a
conclusion that he had eventually come to.
‘The ancient Final War practically left the World of Gods in ruins, and the continent was even split into several parts. Civilisation was destroyed in the prime material plane in an instant, and they sunk into their darkest time. Many gods fell, but there were also those who were fortunate enough to gain their divine powers and rose rapidly, igniting their godfires and becoming new gods. The Goddess of the Weave Mystra is the best example! They must have established the holy calendar after the new gods created their churches!’
Leylin’s eyes were shining, “Hence, amongst the gods, given the division of the ranks of the gods, which is that between the old and new gods, the old gods must have powers that generally surpass that of the new gods…”
Evidently, if Legends in the prime material plane wanted to slaughter gods in order to obtain their divine powers, the new gods were their best choice, which also applied to Leylin.
‘On top of that, in the World of Gods, it’s already been 37,000 years since the ancient Final War?’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Looks like time flows differently in the God of Worlds as compared to the Magus World…’ After the class was over and he had sent Mentor Anthony away, Leylin returned to his room.
“Young Master! Young Master! You have received a letter from Miss Isabel!” At this moment, Claire jogged over, holding a pink letter in her hands. She was breathing raggedly, her chest was bouncing, and even her little face had flushed pink and filled with beads of sweat.
“Thanks for your trouble!” Leylin touched her hand, causing the maid to flush pink bashfully and run off.
“Hehe…” Having teased her successfully, Leylin chuckled in satisfaction as he sat back on the couch, tearing open the pink letter in his hands.
“To my beloved cousin, Leylin Faulen,
Dearest Leylin, are you doing well? Do you still need to have your
diaper changed? It’s been about five years since I left the Faulen
Island, but I still can’t get used to the darkness and dampness of
this city, especially the moss on the ground that practically extends
all the way to my room…”
On the letter was a little girl’s immature handwriting. She began
with banter, but that then turned into longing and complaints.
“Has it been five years?” Leylin sighed, recalling the time he’d been
with Isabel. While she liked to bully him, she obviously felt
protective of him.
However, she had her own family as well, and when Leylin was
eight, they had come to get her. While leaving, Isabel had bawled.
Leylin still remembered the feeling of her grabbing his hand tightly.
‘Based on Father’s arrangements, I will enter the Grain Goddess’
church and become an apprentice priest. I’ve heard that rules are
very strict there, and I hope I’ll still get the chance to communicate
with you through letters… Isabel.’
“Becoming a priest?” Leylin nodded. In noble families, besides the
first son needing to take over the feudal status, the rest of the
children seldom received money and were even chased out of their
homes.
If the second son was intelligent, they would study management
and become the housekeepers of some noble family. The rest might
become knights or enter churches.
The daughters would take on the great responsibility of getting
married to other families. It was very common for there to be old
husbands and young wives, or old wives with young husbands.
For Isabel, being able to study as a priest meant that she would
have power of her own, as well as support from the church. Even
if she would need to marry someone in the future, this was not half
bad.
But… At the thought of the shrewish cousin of his who would need to bemoan the state of the heavens and fate of the people, carrying the name of the gods by her lips all day long, Leylin had the urge to laugh.
After reading the letter, Leylin went to the side in his home.
There was a small-scaled smelting room. On the laboratory table with a metal surface were numerous valuable glass apparatus.
Just purchasing these items had led to the earnings of the Faulen Family diminishing for a few months.
Besides, Leylin was still starting out with the miniature versions. The real stuff was with his mentor, Ernest.
With such terrifying rates of expenditure, it was understandable that many magicians came from noble families.
Besides the lucky, only nobles would be able to bear the terrifying cost of the materials for casting spells and experiments.
A pungent herbal odour wafted through a dimly lit room, mixing with the strong smell of incense. The two scents mixed to leave one light-headed.

An old scholar lay on a bed with an exquisite brocade silk quilt draped over him, on the last leg of his life. The atmosphere was heavy, and light sniffs sounded out on occasion before they were suppressed.

Leylin was clad in black ceremonial attire as he stood amongst the guests, expressionless as he watched the old man on the bed. There was no sign of the inexperience on his face from before, and instead he seemed more mature, like a handsome young man.

It was obviously Anthony on the bed. This scholar was a normal human after all, and his life force had been diminishing for a long time. Being able to hold on to till date was already something that greatly surprised Leylin.

On top of his role as a student about to send his master off, Leylin had a more important matter to attend to.

At this moment, Anthony’s body twitched and his throat moved. There was a slight flush on his face, and it was obvious that death was near.

“Priest! Get the priest!” His wife shrieked, and the children around her burst into tears.

The crowd split into two, revealing the sorrowful face on Bishop Tapris. “The gods will watch over you from the divine realm.”
“Thank you! Thank you, Lord Bishop!” Anthony’s wife wept. As a bishop of the god of knowledge, Tapris evidently had a high status on Faulen Island, and being able to have him attend meant Anthony was given face. While Leylin suspected this had to do with his powerful family, it was still a good thing, no? Tapris waved his arms, showering him in holy light and stabilising Anthony’s condition. Afterwards, the scholar began his last prayer. It might instead be called a narration of his memories. “My life… began at the island of Sicily….”

“Leylin, my student, I hope to see the day you succeed. Even in the divine realm, I’ll be rooting for you!”

“I understand, master!” Leylin quickly hastened forward, the A.I. Chip’s detective abilities being raised to the maximum. Tapris was moved by Anthony’s mention of Leylin, something he’d done even after reciting his will. It showed how well Anthony thought of his student; his own investment hadn’t been wasted.

“I… I see the glamour of the gods…” Anthony struggled for the last time, raising his palm. The light in his eyes dimmed, and his arms powerlessly fell to the side of the bed.

“Nooo…” “Anthony…” “My dearest Anthony…” Many cries began to sound in the room.

Tapris’ face grew even more pious as he began Anthony’s eulogy, “He was a learned scholar and a good samaritan, one who was willing to help others. As a follower of the god of knowledge, Anthony Blunton used his entire life to pass on the teachings of the gods. The gates to the divine realm shall open for him in death…”

‘It’s here!’ A trace of emotion flickered in Leylin’s eyes. Through his powerful senses, he saw huge, shining golden gates. The gates opened to a bright holy light, within which Anthony’s soul rose from his body on its own. After taking another peek at the world of the living, he threw himself inside…

‘The divine realm, situated in a plane above the prime material
‘Normal followers’ souls must first enter the soil and, after being evaluated by the God of Death, advance into the divine realms of the various gods. However, Anthony’s soul bypassed that procedure. Is this a privilege from the bishop?’ Leylin wondered.

After the souls of followers reached the divine realms, they would in theory become petitioners, henceforth breaking away from mortality. As long as the god and their divine realm were not destroyed, they would basically exist together with the god.

To a certain extent, this was a sort immortality, but they could not be bothered by external forces.

‘It’s rumoured that high-ranked petitioners can undergo a transition in terms of their souls, becoming something like a holy spirit… Every such one is a precious asset of the god, but their numbers are…’ Based on Leylin’s thoughts, these holy spirits were souls that could not die nor be extinguished, very similar to materialised souls.

This meant that, in theory, every holy spirit was comparable to the truesoul of a Breaking Dawn Magus.

‘While the formation of holy spirits relies entirely on external forces, there is the benefit of living a stress-free immortal life while depending on the gods. Over time, the defences of the gods’ divine realms must have grown extremely terrifying…’

With a limitless number of believers, holy spirits, and the power of being the authority in that realm, gods were basically invincible in their own divine realms. Even the more powerful deities couldn’t easily dispose of the weaker ones if they were in their own realms, and they would have to pay a terrible price.

As for those Magi who had accidentally intruded into a divine realm… the result was obvious.

‘Evidently, master Anthony’s soul has a ways to go to meet the requirements to become a holy spirit. The mighty god of
knowledge, Oghma, would obviously not make an exception for him... But with the bishop paving the path for him, he’d probably be in a better situation than many petitioners.’

After the divine lights retracted and the guiding force disappeared, Leylin’s tense body relaxed. Bishop Tapris approached him then as well, having completed the ceremony, “Leylin!”

“Lord Bishop!” Leylin bowed to him respectfully. After all, he was a follower of the god of knowledge even if in name.

“Anthony was a pious follower. He will definitely be treated well in His kingdom, there’s no need to worry...” Tapris consoled him, and seemed to have more to say.

Leylin and Tapris left the room, heading to a garden. Those people around had voluntarily left this area to them. “If I don’t remember wrong, you’ve already held your coming of age ceremony. You’re now a true man!” Bishop Tapris shifted the topic to Leylin.

“Yes, it was conducted last month...” Leylin answered modestly. Based on the customs of this world, boys would be considered adults once they hit 15, and could marry and have children.

“I was by your side when you were born... At that time, you were a little guy, still in your infancy. You’ve gotten so big in the blink of an eye...” Bishop Tapris laughed gently, as if reminiscing. As a rank 10 priest, the years did not leave marks on his face. In reality, he was much older than Anthony.

“But... I rarely see you attending celebrations at the church. Baron Jonas might be busy with work, but Lady Sarah is a very devout follower...” Tapris’ voice showed a hint of disapproval.

“My apologies, lord bishop! I often conduct experiments with master Ernest and I must lose track of time...” Leylin quickly apologised.

A look of helplessness appeared on Bishop Tapris’ face. Wizards in general had the least piety in them. Many of them were just general followers, and he’d long since expected this. In reality, while the
entire Faulen family might be followers of the god of knowledge, they had never completely lost themselves in the teachings of the god.

In many areas on the continent, the worldly authority that nobles had were perpetually in conflict with gods’ authority. Even Baron Jonas had brought in a new god, Ilmater the Crying God, while the church of knowledge already existed. He planned to build a church of wealth, allowing other gods to spread faith in them amongst the followers.

This was the instinct of a noble, but Tapris obviously couldn’t accept it. His plan was to pull in the next generation head of the Faulen Family.

It was a pity that wizard Leylin was just like his father. While he never forgot to donate and make sacrifices to the church, he rarely took part in zealous religious ceremonies. On top of that, he was a wizard and had help from his mentor… Tapris’ expression grew darker.

“My apologies for my rude actions, Bishop Tapris! Please allow me to donate ten gold coins to the church to repent for my sins. On top of that, please inform me the next time there are celebrations and gatherings!” When it came to matters of faith, Leylin had long since planned to treat them with less importance. However, since Tapris had brought it up, he had no choice but to do this.

Anyway, he already had plans to go to the church’s celebrations every once in a while, pretending to be a follower.

“Good! There will be a holy baptism seven days later. It is a day in remembrance of the god of knowledge’s feat in reforming the demon, Angmar. The church will hold a grand celebration, so I hope to see you there…”

“It would be my honour to. I’ll definitely go!” Since this was a personal invite from Tapris, Leylin agreed straightforwardly.

“Good!” Tapris nodded, and was then asked away by someone
who had been waiting for him beside them. Besides Anthony’s funeral, there were many matters he had to attend to. After the Lord Bishop left, Leylin remained in the garden, watching the white rose behind the wooden railing while deep in thought. ‘He wants me to go there personally? What is that supposed to be? A warning?’

In reality, with his status as a noble the power of the church was not as immense as one would expect it to be. If Tapris dared overstep his boundaries, he would definitely be jointly resisted by the entirety of the nobility in the Dambrath Kingdom.
799 - Sudden Change

The battle for authority between gods and royalty had always been a problem. As the next leader of a low-grade noble family, Leylin was considered royalty. Tapris could not do anything to him, at least not out in the open, else the royalty would declare war on him. Even the pope of the god of knowledge would only choose to sacrifice Tapris and pacify the royals.

‘Besides… it’s not like Oghma is the only god on the continent. There are still many new churches that are crying out, trying to gain more followers. Of course, this is only what might happen in the worst-case scenario. Things probably won’t get that bad…’ Since he could now predict Tapris’ future actions and the worst consequences, Leylin felt at ease as he returned to the manor.

He first met with his master Ernest, and mentioned Tapris’ demand. He thought nothing of it and answered with a grunt, and then sent Leylin out. It seemed as if he was preparing to immerse himself in a very important experiment, and his mind was wandering while he was speaking to Leylin.

‘Perhaps I’m motivating master to work harder as well. A few days ago, he was saying he was about to reach the fifth level of the Weave or something like that…’ Leylin’s rapid progress must have been a huge motivation for Ernest, who had been stuck at rank 9 for a while now.

In reality, he was actually far from truly reaching the fifth level of the Weave. Leylin cleverly hid a portion of his own strength as
Half-reclining on the sofa in the room, Leylin waved his arms and got Claire to come over and massage his head while he communicated with the A.I. Chip.

‘A.I. Chip, what’s the recent progress on the analysis of the Weave?’ he commanded with his eyes shut.

[Beep! Progress on analysis on the Weave: Rank 0 Weave 100%. Rank 1 Weave 41.22%. Rank 2 Weave 2.3%.

After seeing these numbers, Leylin sighed noiselessly.

‘Two years have already passed, but there hasn’t been progress in the two layers after rank 0. The analysis of rank 2 has completely halted…’ Though Leylin knew that this was due to his command to maintain stealth, he still felt dejected by it.

‘But analysis of the rank 0 Weave has finally reached 100%! What kind of surprises will it give me?’ Thinking this, Leylin instructed, ‘Give me the information on the rank 0 Weave.’

In that instant, Leylin felt like his line of sight was drowned out by words of laws. All of them held the power of laws, and Leylin felt like he was losing himself within.

[Beep! Analysis of rank 0 Weave complete. Obtained all rank 0 spell models!] The A.I. Chip intoned loyally while opening up a subdirectory. Within it were rank 0 spells of varying types, all arranged in an orderly fashion.


A whole array of rank 0 spell models of varying types that included spells Ernest may or may not have taught him before were displayed on the A.I. Chip.

“Based on what master said, wizards can be separated into varying
factions. There is abjuration, conjuration, enchantment, transmutation, divination, evocation and necromancy, which comes up to a total of eight schools. There are also spells which everyone can use… A wizard can choose to train in two to three spell schools before one’s energy is completely exhausted. Master Ernest, for instance, is versed in evocation and transmutation spells, and he can’t even use the spells of other schools at all…” Leylin muttered, “But now, I’ve grasped control of all the rank 0 spells of the eight great schools as well as those that can be used by all wizards…”

[Beep! Host has obtained all rank 0 spell models. Removing restriction on rank 0 spells. Host has obtained authority to cast all rank 0 spells without any restriction! Exempted from effects of forgetting spells!]

Having conquered one layer of the Weave, the benefits that Leylin obtained were terrifying. While he could not match up to the controller of the Weave, Mystra, having these benefits made it simple and very convenient for him.

This means that besides being proficient in all rank 0 spells, I won’t need to prepare rank 0 spells the day before and can use them on the day itself…” Leylin was rather excited. The flexibility this allowed was enough for many wizards’ eyes to go green in envy.

“Furthermore, not needing materials when casting spells and not forgetting spells…” Leylin’s eyes brightened. Many rank 0 spells required magic materials to cast, something that wizards usually spent the most of their money on. Forgetting spells was also what had many wizards fuming with rage. After casting a spell, wizards would completely forget the original spell model and would have to relearn and memorise it.

From Leylin’s point of view, the controller of the Weave had drawn all their spirit and soul strength and slowly exploit them. The gods who were at the top of the Weave were practically vampires. However, with these effects, Leylin could now do away with the
limitations of the rank 0 spells.
“Since I’ve only analysed the first layer of the Weave, this only works for rank 0 spells… But wizards have always been wise about what spells to cast. Even a rank 0 spell can turn the tables if used correctly…” While he would only have these effects when it came to rank 0 spells, that was already enough for Leylin to be elated.
After completely analysing the rank 0 Weave, Leylin could even steal other wizards’ spell slots and get them to cast the spell in their memories for him. It was a pity that Leylin was not the Goddess of the Weave. While he could make things convenient for himself, it was best not to go too far.
If he did so, the wizards who noticed something was off would definitely investigate and report it to the gods. It was much too easy to be discovered, which was why Leylin dared not do this.
“At the last part, once the A.I. Chip completely analyses the Weave, I might be able to challenge the Goddess of the Weave herself…” Leylin’s eyes flashed.Meanwhile, white rays of light flickered at his fingertips.
“Ah…” Claire, who was massaging Leylin, let out a shriek.
“What, have you never seen the power of spells before?” Leylin watched her teasingly. Before the coming of age ceremony, his two personal maids had fully committed themselves to their duties and helped their young master become a true man. Of course, this was only in terms of his body.
“N- No…” Claire’s eyes were filled with envy. The power of magic obviously left her intoxicated. Due to the harshness of the Weave of this world, wizards cherished their spell slots like they did their eyes, planning their spells everyday. Nobody would be like a spendthrift like Leylin, playing with magic even if it was only rank 0 magic.
“There’s something more fun!” Leylin watched Claire, a teasing look on his face, “Mage Hand!”
The sounds of girl’s screams and coquettish laughter transmitted from the room, causing the maids who passed by to turn red…

Sudden, hurried footsteps destroyed this beautiful scene.
“Young master, young master, something’s happened!” Clara, the other sister, ran in. She’d even forgotten the courtesy of knocking. She was met with the sight of her sister all flushed, and her young master, who was in a state of undress.

Though it wasn’t as if she’d never seen this, Clara still turned red. “My- My apologies…”

“There’s no need to bow. Tell me what happened!” Leylin stood up leisurely. He knew that for Clara to become so frantic, it must be something very serious. In comparison, his entertainment obviously came second, and Claire focused on not herself, but arranging Leylin’s clothes.

“Miss Isabel has already reached the manor. Madam Sarah has requested you to go over quickly!” Clara calmed her ragged breathing and finally managed to present the information in its entirety.

“Cousin Isabel?” Leylin was confused, “Wasn’t she apprenticing as a priestess for the Goddess of Agriculture? She can’t leave for three years, so why’s she suddenly here at the Faulen lands? She’s obviously not here on a vacation…”

Hurriedly pulling on a coat, Leylin went to the other side of the manor. For safety during their training and experiments, he and Ernest stayed far away from the couple. He headed to outside the drawing room and saw his housekeeper, Leon, standing outside resolutely while looking sorrowful and strong.

This housekeeper was also Claire and Clara’s father.

“What happened? Is this about Isabel’s family?” Leylin approached him and asked.

“Miss Isabel is inside. Please persuade her! I’ll let Madam tell you what happened.” Housekeeper Leon bowed low.
‘What is this? I have a bad feeling…’ Leylin had an ominous feeling that there was trouble incoming, but he still walked into the drawing room while bracing himself.

“Mother! And… Cousin Isabel!”

After greeting his mother, Leylin glanced towards the other person in the room. However, she had changed so much that he could not believe his own eyes.
Isabel stood in the drawing room, and she still had the long golden hair and blue eyes that Leylin was familiar with. However, her pretty face was stern and icy, and her sharp gaze held an aura of danger. She wore tight-fitting soft leather armour and had a black scabbard for a longsword at her waist, her slender legs forming a beautiful arc. Leylin sensed an iciness and despair in her temperament, as well as the flames of revenge hidden deep within. There was also evil.

“Long time no see, cousin Leylin! I’m so glad you’re still doing well!” Isabel drawled in a hoarse voice. Her icy gaze seemed to melt a little while watching Leylin, becoming more welcoming.

“Aunt, I’ll be off now!” Isabel bade Sarah farewell, while the rims of Sara’s eyes turned red.

“What happened?” After Isabel left, Leylin’s expression turned dark.

“Ahh… my pitiful little sister…” Madam Sarah began to weep, and Leylin could only stay by her side. Through the inarticulate descriptions from his mother, Leylin somewhat guessed the situation. Cousin Isabel’s family had been struck by a disaster months ago. Her family had been massacred in cold blood, and there were traces of demons and devils left behind at the scene, which meant it might have something to do with an evil deity’s ceremony.
Practically no one survived other than Isabel, and that was because she’d been at the church of the Goddess of Agriculture. While Isabel’s father was not a true noble, he did have a temporary status as a baron. While this status would only last for his life, these actions immediately resulted in anger from the church and royalty, and the town hall even announced that they would find the murderer.

There was another issue. Her family had always been a liaison between the Faulen Family and the Dambrath Kingdom on the continent. The consequences of this act was that the Faulen Family would lose all means of contact and news from the continent. Needless to say, there were also many troublesome matters which needed settling. Whatever it was, having a devil involved made things complicated. Leylin’s father in this world had already set sail after he had gotten this information, planning to go to the continent and solve the problems.

“You have to console your cousin Isabel properly. She only has us left, and I heard that she even had to deal with an attempted assassination just recently! Oh, my poor child…” Madam Sarah wept, while Leylin nodded seriously.

Cousin Isabel just now obviously lacked the temperament that a priest should have. Evidently, the revenge she wanted to exact, or perhaps the series of shocks she had endured after the incident had caused her to walk the path of blood and vengeance. Who knew, she might even be involved in some ceremony or sacrifice to the gods.

“Hm? This timing… does it mean Bishop Tapris already knows about this?” Leylin came to a sudden realisation. With the communication between churches, it was very possible that he had received the news before Leylin had, which made his recent invitation very interesting.

“A storm is coming…” Leylin walked out of the drawing room. As
he watched the overcast skies, his expression became as gloomy as the weather.

‘Something seems off…’ Leylin touched his chin, ‘Her family can almost be seen a branch of our Faulen family in the Dambrath Kingdom. This act against them seems to be aimed at us…’

‘Are the up-and-coming Faulen lands now being coveted by the nobles? Or is this an effect from us eliminating a few pirate crews sometime ago?’ A multitude of possibilities arose in front of Leylin. When he regained his senses, he was already standing in front of Ernest’s room.

“Is it Leylin? I still have important experiments to finish…” Ernest’s annoyed voice could be heard from within the room.

“I’m sorry, master, but I feel like we need to have a serious talk,” Leylin’s smile had no effect on him.

“Fine, but only for half an hour!” The door was pulled open, revealing Ernest’s haggard face. His hair was messy, and there were dark circles under his eyes.

One could see filthy clothes and all sorts of junk everywhere upon entering the room. There was practically no place that was clean save for the laboratory.

Leylin flung a grey shirt that had been tossed onto the sofa away and sat down. Ernest seemed to think of something at this point and wiped his face, watching his prodigious student.

“Leylin! You seem to be have met with some trouble… does it have to do with the church of knowledge you mentioned in the morning? It shouldn’t trouble you this much; is it something else?” Ernest was rather concerned when it came to this student of his, someone who had a bright future ahead of him.

“Yes. It’s a huge problem…” Leylin laughed bitterly and began to narrate the situation.

“So you want me to act and maintain the safety of the manor?” Ernest’s brows fluttered, as if he had seen through Leylin’s plans. It
had to be said that this was perhaps the best choice.
“No, no! I actually want to ask master…” Leylin shook his head instead and requested something else, causing Ernest to watch his student in wide-eyed shock.
A moment later, a gigantic flying bird soared from the manor, with was a figure seated atop it.
“My student really knows how to order his teacher about…” This figure was evidently Ernest, though he was now hastening his journey and cursing along the way.
“The strength of Father’s guards and a rank 9 magician should be enough to take care of the dangers and challenges…” Leylin muttered as he stood by the window, watching the bird shrink into a tiny black dot as it flew away.
If he was the one who had orchestrated the elimination of Isabel’s family, causing Baron Faulen to lose his connection to the mainland, it would only be the first step. Next he would create traps and hinder the baron who was heading towards the continent,
The Faulen family was a noble family that was new and still developing. Once Baron Jonas died, there would only be a widowed mother and an orphaned son left behind. He didn’t have any support either, and was the easiest to deal with.
Hence, protecting the baron and his men was the key in this situation. And the only high-ranked power the Faulen Family could rely on right now was the rank 9 wizard Ernest.
“The meagre benefits of our island and port are far from being sufficient for those great nobles. The power that the other party holds shouldn’t be too powerful. Hopefully, with master Ernest’s strength coupled with that of the family, we should be able to successfully take care of this matter…” Leylin’s eyes flashed.
Of course, while he focused mostly on Baron Jonas, it wasn’t as if he prepared nothing for the Faulen Family. Initially, he had planned to get Ernest to handle everything. In the worst case scenario,
Leylin and his mother themselves would be safe. Perhaps this was something Baron Jonas realised as well, which would be the reason he hadn’t invited that old friend of his on the journey. However, Leylin had spoiled his plans.

“With master Ernest, there’s no need to worry about the baron, but the defences of the manor are diminished by a great degree…” Leylin sighed, “I’ll have to make up for it myself…”

Leylin had always been training his abilities as a wizard on the sly, but he’d never had the chance to use them in real battles. Of course, with his experience prior to this reincarnation, this wasn’t a huge issue. He rather anticipated practicing on a few dumb bandits and the like.

“Alright, now to see what master left for me…” Leylin returned to his room and fiddled with a few artifacts on the table. Ernest was no fool, and he’d obviously made preparations for his student’s safety by leaving behind a few protective artifacts.

“Hm, let me see…” Leylin’s eyes were filled with curiosity as he tidied up the artifacts on the table. Ernest had only left three artifacts behind. There was a black ring and two unknown scrolls with some magic patterns on them, emitting a mysterious luster.

“Appraisal!” Leylin tapped on them, and several streaks of white light burst out, returning with information about them.

“A magic ring with a protective shield that displaces attacks, as well as two rank 4 spell scrolls. Mm… One’s a Stone Skin spell while the other is an offensive Blizzard spell…”

Given the types of the spells, Ernest had evidently made them himself. They were the best quality artifacts he could make given his rank, and on top of that there was the additional costs from the high rate of failure.

Leylin put on the ring and played around with the scrolls in his hands. In many cases, rank 4 magic scrolls could even turn the tides of battle from defeat to victory, and Leylin was very aware of
what they were worth. Though many of the materials to make the scrolls had been supplied by the Faulen Family, Leylin still felt his heart warm.

“These things give me some more security… I might need to modify the plan…” Leylin muttered to himself as he returned to his room, sending the sisters away.

“A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!” Leylin commanded.

A wizard’s advancement required large amounts of time and energy, and the difficulty of advancing increased the further one walked the path. Two years had passed, and yet Leylin’s ranking as a wizard had only risen by one. However, his speed far surpassed his peers and was a huge motivation for Ernest.

“Although I’ll get an additional spell slot after I advance to rank 6, I won’t be able to reach a deeper level of the Weave… What a pity. If not for that I could’ve gotten a rank 3 spell slot and had a greater chance of victory…” Leylin looked at his stats, his eyes full of regret.

Wizards were ranked based on their achievements with the Weave. Only rank 7 wizards could make contact with the third level, and gain the authority to cast rank 3 spells. Similar to rank 5 wizards who had just made contact with the second level of the Weave, rank 6 wizards could only use rank 2 spells as well. The difference was that they had greater spiritual force which meant that they had more spell slots. If Leylin could advance once more and have his spiritual force access the third level of the Weave, it would be a great advancement for him. However, his time was scarce.

When he noticed the question marks behind the rank zero spell slots, Leylin finally beamed. With a complete analysis of the rank 0 Weave, Leylin would never be limited by rank 0 spell slots and
wouldn’t even need materials when casting spells. He wouldn’t forget spells either. It could be said that Leylin could use the Weave anytime he wanted to cast rank 0 spells, and there was no need to prepare things like spell slots. He had substituted the inflexible spell slots with his own mana, making it the only limit on his casting of rank 0 spells. As long as he had enough mana, he could cast as many rank 0 spells as he wanted.

“Perhaps I should prepare a rank 1 or 2 spell and reserve enough spiritual force for casting rank 0 spells…” Leylin muttered to himself. Being able to flexibly use rank 0 spells was the best trump card up his sleeve. If enemies tried to evaluate him based on the ranking system of wizards in the World of Gods, they would be in for a nasty surprise.

“I’ll memorise Web for a rank 2 spell, and Animate Rope and Mage Armour for rank 1. That would save me a lot of spiritual force…” Leylin had an advantage in this aspect. Wizards prepared their spell slots a day in advance. After a night of restful meditation, most of his spiritual force would have been replenished until it was almost full. As a result, he could use more of his spiritual force. While he could only use rank 0 spells, it wasn’t half bad…

Leylin was flipping through an ancient spellbook. It was made of the leather from some animal skin; there were even traces of scales on it. Powerful magic emanated from the tome. This was something Ernest had passed on to Leylin, a spellbook containing multiple low-ranked spells. Ernest himself used it quite often. Wizards always forgot their spells. Once they stored one in a spell slot, all memories relating to it would become fuzzy, even vanish. It was necessary to relearn them again and again. Hence, a spellbook that recorded all the spells the knew became extremely important. In many situations, spellbooks were wizards’ most valuable items.
This specific spellbook had been given to Leylin by Ernest, and had been made of the skin of a landwyrm. It was worth hundreds of gold coins.
The paper in the spellbook seemed rather new, and did not match with the old cover.
Ernest had clearly taken the advantage to remove the spells he had recorded in there. Wizards recorded the spells that they were proficient in inside the spellbook, and it was a very important task for them to accomplish. This was something that they could not commission others to complete for them.
“Web, Animate Rope, as well as Mage Armour…” Leylin flipped through the spellbook and quickly found the relevant information.
Leylin placed less emphasis on spellbooks than other wizard. The A.I. Chip itself was a comprehensive collection of spellbooks, and the efficiency at which it transmitted spells to his memories far exceeded that of studying from paper.
Most of the time Leylin spent on this book was just to deceive Ernest or use it to learn spells. He could then compare the spells to those from the Magus world, appreciating the difference in the power of laws within them.
With his finger stroking a looping spell rune, Leylin immersed himself in the analysis of the spells.
“Compared to the spells of the Magus World, the magical circuits and nodes here are very simple. Wizards have to go through the Weave first, and it’s impossible to compare the complexity of these two types of spells. Simply put, Magus spell models require spiritual force to form an entire template for the spells, while the spell models here act more like keys…” With Leylin’s powerful learning abilities and memory, there was practically no difficulty in recording spell models here.
Within minutes, the A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded.
[Beep! Spells have been stored. Rank 2 spell slot: Web. Rank 1
spell slot: Mage Armour, Animate Rope!]
Leylin somehow felt like part of his spiritual force had disappeared. There were now three more nodes on the Weave, which represented the three spells he had remembered. Tomorrow, he could cast them using specific gestures or commands.
“Besides the convenience and speed, the plus point for wizards here is only that the requirements are less stringent when compared to Magi…” Once his spiritual force was completely extracted, Leylin found that the memories of the three spell models had disappeared without a trace.
‘Damn it, that greedy god!’ Leylin cursed inside in annoyance, but did not dare say it aloud. As a Magus, seeing how the wizards were made use of so thoroughly rendered him furious and frustrated.
In a bad mood, Leylin had no plans of studying the spellbook further. He instead sent a command out in his mind, ‘A.I. Chip, prepare for transmission of spell models: Web, Mage Armour, and Animate Rope!’
[Beep! Mission established. Beginning transmission…]
The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s instructions, and soon enough Leylin found information related to these three spell models in his mind. The A.I. Chip raised his learning speed unfathomably.
“I’ll probably have to endure this cycle of preparing ammunition and enduring exploitation for a long while,” Leylin looked dejected, but he quickly sorted out his feelings, “Preparations of the spell slot are complete. I can try a counterattack now. Before that, I still have to take care of the matter with the god of knowledge…”
After Leylin checked the strength he possessed, he began to assess other issues.
‘Bishop Tapris must have gotten information somewhere, but he might not be trying to eliminate our Faulen Family. After all, our family is made up of followers of the god of knowledge, and if
they swapped another family in here, they might not be more suitable than us. However, it’s obvious that he’s trying to nudge us… We’ll need to yield for now and gain support from the church…”

All sorts of possibilities and sudden events flowed before Leylin’s eyes, the future revealing itself before him. The dim yellow light from the oil lamp stretched his shadow further and further…

Soon enough, it was the day of the celebration at the god of knowledge’s church. Leylin was clad in a fitting attire with an armless leather breastplate inside. There were two spell scrolls in there as well. It was not that the Faulen Family lacked better metallic armour, but metal often interfered with the flow of magic for wizards, causing their spell casting to fail. Unless they found precious metals like mithril or adamantine, wizards would not use metal tools.

“Morning, Cousin Isabel!” Leylin found a surprising figure at the entrance to the manor.

“Morning, Cousin Leylin!” Isabel was still wearing that tight-fitting armour. Coupled with her perfect body, she emitted a sense of attractiveness and danger.

In reality, ever since their last meeting, Isabel had stayed hidden in her room. She had become very reclusive, and besides a few banquets this was the first time Leylin was truly seeing her.

“Are you going to the church of knowledge at the port?” Isabel rested against the doorframe, black sheath touching the ground, “It’s rather dangerous out there now. I want to go with you!”

“That’s my overbearing cousin!” It was only at this moment that Leylin felt his childhood playmate had returned.

“But!” He stepped forward slightly, causing Isabel to subconsciously grab the hilt of her sword. “I can handle these trivial matters myself!”

Seeing how she was prickly like a porcupine and was resisting the
urge to draw her sword, Leylin wanted to laugh. While he would like to draw closer, it was not the time to give her more stress. “Let’s go!” Leylin jumped onto the carriage. The one driving it was the rank 6 warrior Jacob, and along with his skilled shouts and the sounds of whipping, the carriage marked with the Faulen Family’s crest slowly went on its way. “You idiot!” Behind him, Isabel was stamping her feet in annoyance, while a small blush appeared on her face. “While my cousin has become very threatening towards strangers, she’s still the same person who is warm on the inside like before. Good…” In the carriage, Leylin laughed lightly. “But there seems to be some huge issue with her, especially that evil power. If it isn’t solved, I’m afraid…”
Lively streams of people filled the bustling pier. The air was filled with the smell of sea and rum.

As the horse carriage entered the port, Leylin watched the busy scene outside through a little window within. Sailors, farmers, soldiers, adventurers, and all sorts of people entered his sights. They were quickly classified, marking those who had decent strength and harboured malicious intent.

As he had been immersed in the study of magic, Leylin rarely came out from the manor, much less came to this area. ‘It seems like the Faulen Family has managed this place extremely well; it even surpasses my expectations. It’s understandable that someone might covet this place.’

Leylin glanced towards the group next to the crossroad. A wandering bard was now performing there, and he could not help but exclaim in his surprise. ‘Hm? There are even bards wandering around!’

Bards in the World of Gods weren’t just street performers. They were usually spies that were primarily responsible for probing for intel, or they made a living out of selling information. Most importantly, they were usually very powerful.

With how much the Faulen Pier was flourishing, quite a few bards had come forth to perform or on vacation.

“Jacob, what’s the name of that bard? How long has he been here for?” Leylin enquired.
“That one? I heard that he’s called Xuno and comes from the faraway Northern Lands. His poems are always very pleasant to listen to and there are always interesting stories. The baron was even thinking about inviting him to perform in the manor some time ago…” Jacob answered quickly.

The commoners here quickly gave way and presented their greetings to the authority that managed the island and port. Sitting in the middle of the horse carriage, Leylin was however unperturbed by everyone’s reverence and instead furrowed his brows, “There are far too many people here, and yet the frequency at which the patrol appears is too low…

“Jacob, how much strength does our family have?”

Jacob froze for a moment, surprised by Leylin’s question. “Are you referring to the patrol, young master?”

However, for someone like him who had once been the commander of this place, Jacob knew the situation with the patrol very well. “We have two groups here that come up to a hundred people total. They’re all great little guys with good strength.”

“Great little guys? Good strength? That means there aren’t any with exemplary strength, and they are only able to suppress those sailors and thieves?” Leylin grew speechless, “Out of this hundred, how many have professions? How much armour do we have? And long-range weapons such as crossbows?”

In the World of Gods, where exemplary powers were suppressed to the utmost, armour and weapons were a huge factor when it came to strength. Troops with great equipment and training would find no trouble dealing with those with professions below rank 5. If there were enough of them, even those at rank 10 and below did not dare go head to head with soldiers.

Of course, after rank 10, numbers would not be enough to make up for the lack of quality.

“Professions? Armour? Crossbow?” Jacob’s surprised voice
sounded in front of him.
“What? We don’t have them?” Leylin sighed.
“Professions? The leaders of those two groups are retired military officials that the baron recruited. They’re low ranked warriors who haven’t even been certified to rank 5. As for armour, those who are vice leaders and above all have one set, and there are a total of twelve. And crossbows… Our patrol doesn’t have equipment like that, though there seem to be a few stored in the manor…” Jacob looked a little flustered as he spoke.
“Too little, it’s much too little! This is too weak…” Leylin seemed to be complaining.
“Young Master, why do you say so?” A look of surprise appeared on Jacob’s face, “A Baron has over a hundred elite troops. Even in the kingdom, that power is equivalent to what a viscount can have… In order to bear the costs of this group, the baron throws in a large amount of his earnings…”
“Baron… this…” Leylin had a sudden realisation. The Faulen Island was a newly developed territory with no population. It was difficult to even get farmers to plow the lands here, not even considering recruiting troops.
If not for the Faulen Island being on an isolated piece of land, having to deal with numerous vicious pirates, Baron Jonas would long since have halved the number of troops here. In order to recruit enough people, there was no way but to hire them by offering large amounts of money, and he probably had to take care of their food and their families.
While the barons in the Dambrath Kingdom could have many troops, they never had so many unless it was wartime due to the great costs.
If not for the benefits from the trade, the Faulen Family would long since have gone bankrupt due to the army.
“The rise of a noble family is truly difficult…” Leylin sighed inside.
The father of this body had gone through hundreds of battles, and with difficulty obtained this uninhabited island as his territory. With his hard work over half his life, Baron Jonas finally made this area a little popular, yet now his work was immediately coveted. “If all of the hundred were to have equipment…” Leylin calculated it. Creating armour was extremely expensive in the World of Gods, and a complete set could even be a knight’s treasure passed on through generations. The value was equal to even a small manor. If modified by magicians or blessed by priests, the armour’s price would be even more terrifying and perhaps comparable to a city! “It’s not practical to change the armour of the patrol, but I can think of something when it comes to their weapons. At the very least, they can’t use rusted metal…” Leylin sighed and clutched at his forehead.

He was no longer in his original body, where he was exceedingly wealthy. In the World of Gods, he spent only a few gold coins every month, and most of it was spent on spell materials. ‘There are ways for low-ranked magicians to earn money, but that’s mostly labour from copying spells or brewing low-ranked potions. There’s not enough time… Sigh, in the World of Gods, the small nobles don’t do that well. Only the churches are truly wealthy. The paladins of the church of the Goddess of Singing Waters all had a full set of metal armour, and some even had been blessed with divine spells…”

Leylin could not help but think back to what he had seen before as a soul seed. The wealth of the churches of the gods were renowned in the continent, especially that of the Goddess of Wealth. It was said that their headquarters had been built with gold and silver, and even the ground was paved with gold bricks. Leylin, who was going insane over his poverty, had even decided to steal everything once he made his mark on this world.

“Then… Can I use them?” Suppressing the immoral thoughts he
had, Leylin asked Jacob who was outside.
“Of course! As the next-in-line of the Faulen Family, the young
master’s wish is our command!” Jacob answered resolutely, “Do
you need me to send down the signal?”
“No, there’s no need to for now. I want to go to the church of
knowledge, and it shouldn’t be too dangerous. Tell them…” Leylin
spoke apathetically.
He added some more words on the inside, ‘You’re useless against
priests or holy warriors. On top of that, few would be willing to
fight against the church and god they believe in.’
After Leylin was done with his instructions, the carriage once more
sank into silence. He did not continue speaking and only judged the
terrain and buildings outside curiously.
As the carriage reached a spacious area, Jacob’s voice was heard,
“Young Master, we’ve reached the Knowledge Shrine!”
Leylin looked outside the window. The streets were clean and tidy,
and the passersby were very cultured. Whether it was farmers or
soldiers walking past, all would control their footsteps such that
they were softer, appearing prudent and reverent. Put next to the
bustle and chaos at the port, the two were practically worlds apart.
A lofty and majestic church emitted dazzling light through the
carriage. The churches of the gods were always constructed
splendidly, being beautiful and solemn,
“O god of knowledge…” Many voices could be heard saying their
prayers.
As this was a day of celebration, many followers of the god of
knowledge had congregated here. The spacious floor was crowded
with people.
In order to worship the god of knowledge, Jonas had dedicated the
best section of land on the port and did not accept even a copper
coin. In the eyes of the priests however, this was a given.
“Seems like the ‘cultured people’ of the port are here!” Leylin
sighed as he rubbed his face, changing his expression to a sunny one.

“Young Master Leylin!”

“Welcome, welcome!” “My, look who’s here!”

Many familiar faces crowded around. They included his uncles and aunts, and he had no choice but to smile and greet them one by one.

With Anthony as his mentor, Leylin had no faults when it came to his manners. What he showed off was his most perfect image as the next-in-line of a noble family, and everyone sang his praises.

The price, however, was that after the many greetings Leylin found his facial muscles had begun to stiffen, and much time had passed. ‘I know this is troublesome, but it’s necessary. Nobles…’ Leylin sighed as he entered the large shrine and threw a small bag of gold coins into the donation box. The pot-bellied priests beamed in reply.

Leylin looked around. The ornamentation of Oghma’s church wasn’t half bad. There were bookshelves and statues all around, and it was filled with a scholarly atmosphere…
After finishing his prayers in the main hall of the church, a few maids finally led the way to bishop Tapris. Tapris was very frank the moment he started speaking, “My child, you seem to have run into some trouble!” “Yes, respected Bishop. I urgently need teaching and guidance from the god of knowledge.” Leylin secretly grew a lot more relaxed just due to Tapris’ attitude. He was indeed like what Leylin had suspected, and only intended to take this opportunity to knock his family’s confidence. He didn’t have any plans to actually replace the Faulens. If this was the case, foregoing a few benefits in exchange for his help was not a difficult issue for him to discuss.

Judging by his behaviour, Bishop Tapris must have also been nodding secretly to himself. As heir to the Faulen family, Leylin’s promises would have to be fulfilled even by Baron Jonas, and this was one made in a church with a deity as their witness. ‘It seems like Baron Jonas has an outstanding successor!’ Tapris thought slowly to himself, then looked at Leylin, “Dear little Leylin, have you heard of Viscount Tim?” “Viscount Tim?” Leylin’s voice was filled with doubt. Under Anthony’s guidance, he certainly understood the upper class nobles of the Dambrath Kingdom, yet he hadn’t seemed to have heard of any deeds performed by this viscount. “Oh, look at me, getting ahead of myself! Viscount Tim was just
crowned a few months ago, so it’s perfectly normal for you not to have heard of him before. His father, on the other hand, is a distinguished person you must have heard of before. Marquis Louis!”
Tapris watched Leylin’s expression expectantly.
“Marquis Louis? The king’s brother!” Leylin exhaled lightly. Although he knew that things wouldn’t be simple this time, he didn’t think that the nobles involved would have a direct connection to royalty.
The nobility was never a tight knit community. The power struggle between the regional and central nobles had never ceased for even a moment, and although there was a possibility of them uniting as one in the face of divine authority, an instinctive battle for benefit would begin once the moment the pressure from the outside world was reduced.
Within the kingdom, the regional nobles and the kingdom’s central nobles were the two factions that put up the fiercest fights.
“That’s right. Viscount Tim is already of age. Although he’s the second son, Marquis Louis adores him very much, and even wishes to obtain a piece of feudal property for him…” Tapris held his tongue, and left the rest to Leylin’s imagination.
“So that’s how it is!” Leylin nodded seriously. Although the king and his people ruled over the entire Dambrath Kingdom, they couldn’t possibly own all the territory. Moreover, after the division of property across the generations and the emergence of other noble families, the amount of territorial land that the king now governed directly was already quite small.
To date, all the territories in the kingdom had been divided until there was practically nothing left. Even if one was a prince or princess, if they were not particularly favoured by the king, they would not even receive any hereditary titles. The highest ranked titles they could receive was that of an Count Palantine 1, or a
Marquis, and they would only possess a few manors. As a brother to the king of this generation, Marquis Louis was still able to fish up a decent amount of benefits. The Baltic archipelago was his fief, and the total area of the whole stretch of islands far exceeded that of the Faulens. He even owned several decent deepwater ports.

To put it bluntly, even the Faulens had to rely on a tremendous volume of trade in the Baltic Archipelago and play second fiddle in order to toil for money.

However, Louis still had to consider his first son. It would be very foolish of him to divide his territory, and hence he had set his sights somewhere else. Perhaps he had now turned his gaze towards the Faulen’s territory. Stripping another noble family of their inherited territory for no reason would definitely send huge waves rippling through the circle of nobility. But if this family was extinguished with no successor and Marquis Louis had Tim carry on their family name, then things would be a lot easier. His influence as a marquis would also minimise the consequences of this incident.

“Many thanks for being straightforward, respected bishop. From now on, the church of knowledge will be fully accepted by the Faulen territory. Additionally, we will portion out another plot of territorial land in the eastern part of the island to offer as tribute to the church,” Leylin rose and gave his thanks.

Although this was only an intelligence report, he felt like the possibility of it being true was extremely high. Firstly, the territory under the Faulen family actually did thin out Marquis Louis’ profits. Even though it was only by a little, it was enough to upset him. Secondly, the Faulens were a newly rising noble family, and they didn’t have complicated relationships with other nobles that would have been difficult to deal with. There were only minimal consequences associated with making his move
‘Could it be that this is also a contest between the regional and central parties?’ Leylin had experienced much more trickery than this, and had depth in his foresight.

‘The Faulen Family started out with military service, and were the king’s imperial bodyguards from the beginning. Thus, they could be regarded as part of the central party. But ever since they obtained their feudal property and arrived here, the family was actually already inclined towards the regional party. That was also how my father the baron handled it. However, what was awkward was that the people of the Faulen island had very little contact with the people from the mainland, as it was a lonely island situated far away. Hence, they haven’t been accepted by the regional nobles yet… Which is the reason why this family is now in an awkward situation in which we cannot rely on either side…’

After thinking thoroughly about this, Leylin was suddenly struck by a huge realisation, ‘No wonder. If I saw this situation, even I wouldn’t be able to resist taking action. There are plenty of advantages, yet the risks are very minor. Perhaps Viscount Tim is also pitifully begging for this opportunity…’

In fact, Leylin’s second guess was much closer to the truth than his first guess, but there were a few minor differences.

Although his opponent was just a viscount and seemed relatively less capable, he was backed by the marquis and was even the king’s nephew. If one took their eyes off him for even a second, he would easily trigger chaos.

However, it was fortunate that he was just a favoured second son. Even Marquis Louis wouldn’t spend much energy on him, much less alert the king. As long as he didn’t kill his opponent, there probably wouldn’t be much of a counterattack.

After all, when it came to issues like schemes to seize the territory of smaller families, because most of the bigger nobles did it on the
sly, these rumours were restricted only to their thoughts, and could not be spoken of in polite company. Tapris personally sent Leylin out of the shrine. Just as Leylin was about to board his carriage, Tapris muttered softly in a deep voice next to his ear, “It seems that a surge of pirates have escaped to the vicinity recently. I hope you’ll take care! May the god of knowledge bless you.”

“Got it!” There was a glint in Leylin’s eyes, and he gave Tapris a profound look before boarding the carriage.

The body of the carriage kept rising and falling as the wheels rolled on. Leylin sat in the carriage with his eyes shut, yet his thoughts kept moving.

‘That cunning Bishop Tapris. Is he preparing to lay his bet on both parties?’ As a matter of fact, Leylin really did want to get assistance from the church this time. If he could personally exert pressure on the marquis with the power of the church of knowledge, the marquis would surely give up on making such moves.

But this was evidently impossible. Even Bishop Tapris did not own some labour headquarters for him to exert his authority. If they dispatched warriors and priests from the shrine, they would be deemed to be in favour of the Faulen family. Tapris had also clearly rejected doing so.

Now it seemed that although Tapris had only given a bit of the intel, he had managed to immediately gain a heap of profits. Even if Baron Jonas was here, he wouldn’t dare to go back on his word. If Viscount Tim succeeded, he wouldn’t forget to rope in Tapris as well. If placing his bets on both parties would guarantee him profits, why wouldn’t he?

Of course, it wasn’t that there was no other way to obtain assistance from the church, but that would require dedicating all his territory to them. However, both sides would suffer and be destroyed indiscriminately if he used this method. Additionally,
they would be boycotted by all the nobles from the mainland, and be seen as traitors by the nobles!
After weighing the matter, Leylin reached the conclusion that things hadn’t escalated to such a nasty stage, and he didn’t have the courage to abandon his social class. There was no doubt that he would use ‘that’ method.
“Pirates?” The look in Leylin’s pupils seemed distant. Since the other party was also a noble family that controlled overseas trade and had numerous harbours, they evidently had a formidable maritime force.
Even the pirates nearby might be secretly under their control. It was highly possible for them to send out a group of men to cause a commotion in the Faulen Island and use this to create pressure, or even attack the manor directly and silence the Faulens. They did it once long ago anyway.
“Relying on the hundred man patrol to get rid of this wave of pirates is rather challenging…” Leylin stroked his chin. He had never underestimated his opponent’s strength. With a marquis backing him, that viscount could easily dispatch tens of professionals.
“Someone above rank 15 is absolutely impossible, but there might be one who is above rank 10, and a few elite professionals above rank 5… It won’t be easy to defeat them…” Leylin quickly evaluated his opponent’s strength, just at the most basic level.
Of course, the Faulens didn’t only have the harbour patrol, but the real masters were definitely travelling with Baron Jonas. Only the the wizard Ernest had stayed behind to take care of things, but this source of help had also been dispatched by Leylin himself.
“The other party will obviously focus their main strength on the baron. The force they have sent over here should only be a small portion of their main force. It’s not like we can’t fight them with everything we have!” Leylin had a distant look in his eyes.
In fact, he had also considered cowering and hiding in some corner of the mainland, avoiding the situation at hand. He would then slowly accumulate skills and become a great wizard, maybe even a strong Legend. But putting aside the affection from the baron and his wife, even if he could heartlessly abandon everything he had, he was unable to give up on the benefits that the Faulen Family brought him.

A sea of resources was needed for a wizard to advance. Be it expensive materials for him to perform sorcery, or all kinds of magic books and such, a great amount of gold coins was required to purchase them. Without an influential power to gather wealth for him, Leylin would simply be incapable of meeting his needs alone.
A great wizard could not rise without the support of an extremely influential power. It was a pipe dream to achieve such success alone. Were he to try to build up his power and wealth through underhanded means, he would obviously provoke many people.

In comparison, the Faulens had only met with a small inconvenience. Even if Leylin broke away from the family, he would still run into the same problem when trying to make a name for himself.

It was needless to say that his identity as a nobleman was rather decent. At least it allowed Leylin to travel unimpeded in any place where human civilization gathered. He couldn’t bear to give that up.

With the speed at which his strength was improving, the Faulens would one day be unable to meet his demands, thus he had to expand the interests of the family.

If he ate more, others would have less to eat. Leylin had long predicted that the Baltic archipelago and the numerous natural ports owned by Louis’ family would become stumbling blocks in his family’s rise in society.

Even without this incident, the Faulens would one day become enemies with Marquis Louis. After growing aware of this, Leylin’s gaze turned as cold as ice. ‘If that’s the case, I’ll move those blocks away!’
“Compared to the rich and imposing maquis, the Faulen Family is simply not prepared as of now. Even if we emerge victorious in this incident, we are destined to keep a low profile. It would be best… Huh?”

Leylin’s eyes suddenly widened, ‘This energy undulation… A.I. Chip!’

[Beep! Task established, initializing scan… Suspicious person discovered in the vicinity! Gathering of high energy detected! Person is determined to be in possession of powerful explosives.]

The carriage seemed to have turned translucent in the A.I. Chip’s display, revealing the streets and people in the form of numerous lines. A few passersby were sneakily drawing closer to it, and they were marked out by the A.I. Chip.

“Are they assassins? Jacob…” Jacob was currently rushing the carriage along, but hearing Leylin’s voice stunned him for a moment.

“Don’t stop! Don’t show any signs of suspicion or panic. Let’s change direction!” Leylin’s command was transmitted to Jacob, yet it seemed like no else heard it.

Jacob stopped for a moment. He had already viewed voice transmission as an ability unique to a wizard. Being experienced, he immediately knew what the young master had discovered.

*Crack!* The crisp sound of the horsewhip sounded. The carriage, which had been going forth, suddenly made a sharp turn, and entered another junction.

“They’re still following us? Hah… Did they vow not to give up until they achieved their goal?” Leylin could see the route that the assassins were taking through the A.I. Chip, and he couldn’t help but force a smile.

“Jacob, follow the route I’m about to give you.” As the young leader of the Faulen Pier, Leylin couldn’t allow its prosperous image to be damaged, come what may. If word got out about a heir
to a noble family getting attacked in a ruckus at the port, it could be a huge blow to the port’s prestige. Many of the less influential merchants would be afraid of getting into trouble, and would rather take a detour than come back again to replenish their supplies. Hence, although Leylin had already discovered the assassins, he couldn’t take action in the middle of the city centre. Jacob clearly knew this as well, and firmly followed the route that Leylin gave.

Under Leylin’s directions, the carriage swiftly drove out of the market as smoothly as a loach. They arrived at a small road in the countryside, and the assassins hurriedly surrounded them one by one.

“Are you ready? Jacob, break through their line of defense right away, and send a signal to gather the patrolling team!” Leylin appeared very confident.

“But young master, your safety!” Jacob was rather hesitant.

“That’s not an issue. Don’t forget that I’m a wizard, and someone stronger than you at that.” Leylin said without a trace of politeness.

Jacob’s face flushed red, as though he had recalled the few experiences when he had suffered defeat under Leylin’s hands, “Your wish is my command, young master!”

At this moment, a few shadows that appeared to be highly bewildered pounced on them. They had evidently realised that they had been fooled by Leylin earlier on at the port. Their fury even led to them drawing out their murder weapons immediately.

“Are these the bombs of a goblin alchemist?” Leylin shook his head in disapproval as he saw a few jet black objects launched towards the carriage.

If they were attacked by these prohibited items with such immense power in the port, even if Leylin himself wouldn’t suffer the slightest damage, Jacob would definitely sustain injuries or even die, much less the civilians involved.
But now they were in the wilderness. With a widened field of view and Leylin’s prior warning, even Jacob would be able to avoid it.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!*

The violent explosion even caused the entire carriage to disintegrate into pieces, and numerous splinters shot all over the place. But before this happened, two figures had jumped out of the carriage.

“One, two, three, four. There’s still one more!” Leylin said to himself as he noticed the four figures surrounding him. He had detected five people through the A.I. Chip, but now it seemed that there was another fellow hiding in the darkness, who was evidently their leader.

“Quick, leave!” Leylin turned around at yelled at Jacob, who had a few traces of blood on his body. He was clearly affected by the explosion just now. “The power of the alchemical bombs are not bad, but unfortunately they are prohibited items. Even if there was a channel to smuggle them, the quantity from before should be their limit.”

“Young master, take care!” Jacob shouted loudly. His muscles were bulging, a sign that his fighting spirit had been aroused. With his hands clenched tight around a decapitator, he rushed swiftly in the direction of the port.

“One of you, follow him! Don’t let him get away!” The four figures seemed to still be immersed in how it was a pity that the alchemical bombs earlier weren’t effective. Seeing how Jacob actually abandoned his master and escaped, their eyes were filled with disbelief. However, as compared to the leader of the imperial bodyguards, Leylin was clearly more important. They made a decision after a few moments of a daze.

A black snake-like figure chased after Jacob, while the other three assassins surrounded Leylin in a triangular formation.

“Heh heh… A noble young master with such thin skin and tender
meat!” One of the assassins licked the dagger in his hand, as green light shot out from his eyes like a wolf.

“Act quickly, this is still his territory after all. Someone will come soon!” The explosion earlier on obviously couldn’t be hidden. The three assassins kept drawing closer, their eyes fixated on Leylin’s heart, throat and other vital points. They evidently weren’t planning to let him live for long.

“He’s a wizard, be careful of his tricks!” The moment the voice stopped, a few figures started to encircle Leylin as fast as the wind, and they didn’t even give him the chance to speak. Three daggers that resembled viper fangs surrounded Leylin. The sharp breeze even sliced at Leylin’s skin.

“They’re well trained.” Leylin quickly made a gesture at the speed of lightning, and he suddenly spat out a single syllable. *BOOM!* A deafening explosion sounded out, louder than the earlier boms. It deafened the three assassins, and was followed by a ball of fiery white light bursting out from Leylin’s finger. It caused them to involuntarily close their eyes.

These were the rank 0 spells Rank 0 spells Flare and Sonic Snap! Given the situations, instantaneous spells like them were the most appropriate to use. Moreover, Leylin could also adjust and select the spell to his liking, basing it on the circumstances he would encounter. This was much better than those inflexible wizards.

Although they suffered a double blow which caused them to go blind and become giddy, the daggers of the three assassins still sluggishly headed for Leylin. Yet at this instant, Leylin suddenly made his move.

His hand stretched out as quick as lightning, and the dagger of the assassin in the middle came to a stop. An acupoint on his arm seemed to have been hit, and it fell limp and feeble like a dead snake.

‘No…Oh no!’ Before the assassin could even finish this thought,
the dagger in his hand had changed ownership and was now in Leylin’s possession.
*Thump! Thump!* Two figures flew backwards. The assassin in the centre, however, was not as fortunate. He knelt on the floor with his hands held behind his back, while the dagger that was previously in his hand was pressed against his neck. The sensation of the sharp blade made every single strand of hair on his neck stand on end.
“Did you think that I was just a wizard?” Leylin laughed coldly. Wizards were all relatively solitary. Leylin had moved out long ago by himself, thus practically no one knew about about his wizard rank apart from Ernest. Even his expertise in martial arts was concealed by Jacob under the Baron’s orders.
“I wanted to ask who sent you guys, but it seems like you won’t say…” Leylin’s deep voice sounded like the muttering of a demon to the assassin who was kneeling on the floor.
Moments later, the dagger in Leylin’s hand suddenly cut straight through the assassin’s throat. Great quantities of fresh blood started gushing out of his throat as he gasped greedily for air. The radiance in his eyes slowly dimmed, and he collapsed onto the ground.
Seeing how Leylin killed as if it meant nothing and how he did not even seem to have an uncomfortable reaction to it, the other two surviving assassins stole a glance at each other, both intending to flee.
They never knew that the target they were up against would be this difficult to handle. Not only did he possess rather good magic abilities, he was also proficient in combat. His exquisite control over the battlefield and his merciless killing style were not things that a young nobleman who was inexperienced in life would be capable of.
Now, they practically suspected that some sort of devil resided in this young nobleman’s body, or perhaps this was someone else
impersonating him.
‘But we still have hope!’ Determination flashed in both of the assassins’ eyes, and they suddenly started to make their escape.
“Trying to leave?” Leylin sneered as the dagger flew out of his hand. With a violent scream, it dove straight into the assassin’s back. This was the rank 0 spell, Launch Bolt. With Leylin’s own powers, the dagger he threw was out comparable to a crossbow bolt. Miserable gasps sounded out briefly before the assassin fell to the floor. Provoked by the death of his companion, the other one ran even faster. Leylin chased after him as well, not seeming to have noticed the dark figure that was constantly closer. These two assassins were bait, and the real surekill strike would come from the leader who was hiding in secret.

*Smack! Smack!* Leylin chased up to the fleeing assassin in a flash. The fellow had long been scared out of his wits, and was already down on the floor after being beaten up a few times. Leylin unhinged his jaw and broke all of his limbs. At this moment, he showed joy on his face. This was the reaction that a powerful juvenile ought to have after obtaining the first victory in his life. The young man stood in front of the assassin who had collapsed. Although he had tried his best to conceal it, he still radiated the aura of someone high and mighty, “Speak! Who sent you?” “I… I’ll speak….” The assassin’s voice was gentle. He played the role of attracting Leylin’s attention very well, and coordinated with
his leader’s attack. His lips kept opening and closing, yet the sounds he made were exceptionally indistinct, which made Leylin irritable, “Speak clearly! I can’t hear you!”

Leylin was half-squatting beside the assassin, and almost all the crucial points of his back were completely exposed.

‘Now!’ The assassin who was lurking in the dark widened his eyes. An arrow with a blue tip pierced through the air, and came close to Leylin’s back in an instant.

“Huh?!” Leylin opened his eyes wide, and a trace of panic finally appeared on his face.

“Mage Armour!” A transparent protective force field appeared, and the number of rank 1 spells that Leylin had prepared fell by one.

*Poof!* The arrow collided with the invisible force field, producing a sharp whistle. Yet it eventually deviated from its original course, and brushed past Leylin’s face.

The tremendous force from the contact made Leylin take a few steps back in succession, and he fell to the floor.

“Awoo!” “Awoo!” Numerous green eyes emerged from the darkness. A few strong and healthy figures pounced forth, their canine teeth covered with saliva as they tried to bite Leylin’s neck.

“A rank 1 Monster Summoning spell?!” Leylin cried out in alarm, but the expression on his face was quickly replaced with unwavering determination. He swiftly recited a few phrases, and pointed towards the wild wolves. A gigantic white web materialized out of thin air, trapping the three wild wolves in it. The white web seemed extremely sticky, rendering the wolves immobile.

“Who exactly is it?” The young man got up, evidently flustered and exasperated, but his expression was even more so filled with a faint hint of dread. At this very moment, the air behind him distorted and a silhouette emerged. The emerald dagger was heading straight towards Leylin’s heart, about to stab in.
“Shadow Step?! A rank 7 assassin?!” The young man made a startled cry and a rope flew out from his embrace.
“Animate Rope!” Under the influence of the spell, the rope seemed to have a life of its own, and threw itself towards the silhouette, curling around it tightly like a python.
*Thump!* The silhouette had his hands and legs tied, and collapsed onto the ground. Yet he had turned into a puppet.
“A substitute!” The expression on Leylin’s face was now that of horror. Soon after, he saw a blade of icy light appearing out of thin air, thrusting right into his throat.
Clear-cut! Quick! An a lethal attack in one strike! This was the style of a high-level assassin. Moreover, he had clearly found out about Leylin’s wizard rank through certain means, and had been patiently waiting until he’d thought that Leylin had exhausted all his spells before taking action. This one move didn’t leave Leylin any chance at all.
Within such a short distance, there wouldn’t be enough time even if he used any magical items. After all, those magic scrolls couldn’t take effect instantly.
From his opponent’s graceful glance, Leylin saw a deathly stillness. It was as though he wasn’t about to assassinate a human, but a pig or dog, or some other animal. His profound gaze, however, held a trace of agitation. It was obvious that getting rid of this magic genius would bring him a particular sense of accomplishment.
However, when the assassin saw the look in Leylin’s eyes, his expression changed. At this moment, Leylin’s face was not filled with any panic or fear of death whatsoever, but just a smile of a person who had gotten his way.
‘I finally caught you!’ were the words he could infer from Leylin’s smile.
‘What does that mean? Caught me?’ The assassin felt dizzy, but then saw the glaring radiance of a spell shine in front of him.
A blue ray shot straight into the palm with which he was holding the dagger. A layer of ice immediately spread until his entire palm was completely covered, and it even extended along his arm towards his body.

Shortly after, there was an excruciating pain from his thigh, along with the ear-piercing sound of bones breaking.

‘He broke my legs!’ The assassin’s heart sunk. He immediately lost his center of gravity and collapsed onto the floor.

Leylin didn’t let him go. A fist as hard as steel landed heavily on his face, making him spit out a few teeth covered in blood, and a small ball which contained highly poisonous toxins.

‘That wasn’t easy! If a rank 7 assassin wishes to escape, I might not be able to catch him!’ Leylin said, sighing after he finished with the formalities.

Everything had gone almost flawlessly in the battle earlier. These few assassins could only act according to the script that Leylin had written, and on the stage he had put in place. They had ultimately ended up being completely wiped out.

“You… Why do you still have a spell left? You… Aren’t you a rank 5 wizard?”

The chief assassin sputtered a few undecipherable words, along with a large amount of bloody foam.

“It seems that a spy has appeared in my family? Also… Who told you that I’m just a rank 5 wizard?” Leylin shot a glance at the assassin, and appeared extremely disdainful.

“Heh heh… So… So you already advanced to rank 6 a long time ago!” The chief assassin seemed to be convinced, “As expected, you’re worthy of being the legendary magic genius. But what a pity… In the face of our power, you will be unable to avoid your ultimate downfall…”

“Stop spouting so much rubbish!” With a stroke of Leylin’s blade, the assassin fainted.
This assassin leader had a very high status and a decent amount of strength. He definitely knew a lot, and this was why Leylin was bent on plotting to capture him alive.

“He even knew that I’ve already advanced to a rank 5 wizard. Although this information is from several years ago, I’m afraid that it’s necessary to purge the family once through…” Leylin looked over at the chief assassin, who had already fainted. The list of traitors would certainly have to be fished out from the assassin’s own mouth, but no matter; he could be said to be an expert when it came to interrogation and psychological probing.

Perhaps the assassin in his hands would feel better off dying right away.

“Young master! Young master!” At this moment, there was a commotion at the port in the distance. Jacob had finally brought the patrol team over.

“This is– Ah….” An anxious Jacob immediately exhaled deeply after scanning the place.

The assassins at the scene had all collapsed on the ground, and there was even an additional person. Jacob understood the strength of these assassins very well. Each one of them had strength close to at least a rank 5 elite in their profession, and the one lurking in the dark was stronger.

If he was in Leylin’s shoes, Jacob would not have be able to avoid such attacks no matter how he tried, and it was very likely that he would have died there and then. However, his young master had rounded all of them up in one clean sweep, and didn’t even sustain any injuries.

This knowledge immediately gained Leylin Jacob’s respect, and this was even more true for the rest of the patrol team members.

“What happened to the person who was chasing after you?” Leylin looked at Jacob. Seeing the new wounds on his body, Leylin had already made a guess.
“We killed him, but his last counterattack in the face of death also took away the lives of two of our team members…” Jacob appeared rather embarrassed, especially after seeing the two people that Leylin had taken captive.

“You can bring that guy with you, and interrogate him in detail! Leave the other one to me!” Leylin threw the more average assassin to the patrol team, and left with the chief assassin.

The other fellow was evidently cannon fodder, and wouldn’t know much. Compared to him, Leylin was more interested in the chief assassin. A rank 7 Professional wouldn’t be attracted to someone so easily.

Moreover, he was 80% sure that the chief assassin still controlled the hidden spy in Leylin’s manor, and he was even the source of intel for the pirates that had come ashore. Leylin absolutely would not hand him over to the useless patrol team before digging out everything in his brain. If not, he suspected that he would hear news about this chap committing suicide the next day.

“Jacob, take him with you. Don’t let him leave my line of sight!” Under Leylin’s commands, Jacob lifted the unconscious chief assassin onto his shoulders and followed behind Leylin.

The patrol team members looked at each other in dismay, and could only bring the remaining survivor back with them. They clearly wanted to vent all of their fury on him. Of course, they were also in charge of things like cleaning the battlefield. They had to bury the corpses to prevent an epidemic.

After they were all done, the area had barely regained its tranquil state. Only the ditches in ground and numerous blood stains spoke of the danger during the earlier battle.

“Who would’ve thought that my younger cousin has gotten so strong. Seems like I was worried for nothing…” A black figure flashed, revealing Isabel’s sturdy black attire. As she gazed in the direction Leylin had left in, her eyes turned gentle for a moment.
The softness was quickly replaced by a frigid gaze.
The cold floor and the endless pain all over his body forced Mahnke awake.

He seemed to be in a cold and damp cellar. Ice-cold droplets of water dripped down his skin, and Mahnke could not help but sneeze, his eyes quickly beginning to grow clear.

“Right, the ambush failed. I’m a captive now… A captive. What a joke…” He could feel a sharp pain in his thighs and arms. The lack of his teeth left a sense of emptiness in the cavity that was his mouth.

By the dim light, Mahnke could see the noble who had achieved victory over him. The man looked exceptionally calm with not the slightest hint of joy in his expression, which only made him feel more fearful.

“You’re awake?”

“You— you’re dead meat! Dead meat!” Mahnke shivered as he exclaimed in a strange voice. The sounds he produced were distorted by the air leaking out of his mouth.

“Oh, is that so? And you’re going to do that?” Leylin’s expression was full of ridicule, “Or perhaps it’s him?”

The clothing on Mahnke’s arms slowly ripped apart, revealing a church emblem branded into his skin. This was a strange rune made up of a head and fresh blood.

Leylin’s impression of the God of Murder, Cyric, was that of someone powerful who liked provoking deaths and conspiracies.
He found joy in causing civil wars in regions, and was one of those gods who liked to stir up shit. Even so, a real god’s church would pose tremendous trouble for Leylin as he was right now.

“Stop bullshitting. You’re just a follower of the God of Murder, and the mighty god would not shift his attention to a mere mortal, not to mention a piece of trash who is also a failure.” There were always followers of gods dying on the continent, and unless they were saints or high-ranked priests, the gods would not place much focus on them. Regular followers and the like were obviously neglected.

Unless Leylin used techniques to profane the soul of a believer, that god would not be angered into giving him divine punishment.

This deep understanding caused Mahnke to freeze, with a lifeless expression on his face.

“Tell me! How many mad dogs are there like you under Tim, that useless son of Marquis Louis?” Seeing that he had successfully shattered his defences, Leylin tossed out a huge bomb.

“You knew?” Mahnke exclaimed in surprised, which confirmed Leylin’s suspicions.

“So the information that Tapris had was real. Marquis Louis has been the one behind all of this!”

“Since you know, you should understand that you can’t win…” Mahnke cackled, “Even if your talent as a wizard is startling, you’re nothing in the eyes of the real royalty even if you’re a rank 6 wizard…” It was obvious that his loss at Leylin’s hands was still fresh in his mind.

All that talk about him being rank 6? Leylin happily watched Mahnke guess wrong, and did not have any plans to correct him. After all, the fact that he was hiding his wizard rank and wasn’t restricted as much by the Weave was more believable than him being able to use rank 0 spells without limit, and he was less likely to be exposed because of it.
“Alright, I don’t have much time to chat with you. Now I need to know how many men there are under Tim. Where they are, when the pirates plan to come ashore, as well as the plans of the continent… Whatever it is, you must tell me all you know.” Leylin’s expression turned cold, his eyes flickering.

“Keke… I’ll say nothing. Aren’t you just going to torture me? Bring it on!” Mahnke, however, began to sound like a scoundrel.

Pirates and assassins naturally went through some training, and possessed great endurance against torture.

“Seems like you’re very confident in your endurance?” Leylin glanced at Mahnke, his eyes holding within them a sense of… pity?

“You’ll soon know how much happiness there is in death. All that you’ve experienced before is nothing…” Leylin cracked his knuckles loudly. There were few in the World of Gods with as much experience as him in torturing the body and soul.

His astonishing surgical skills and knowledge of potions allowed him to claim someone’s life with ease, and on top of that, he also had the spells that could affect their minds. Leylin’s eyes flickered with an evil glint. Soon enough, the other party would find how blissful it was to be able to choose death.

Mahnke gave in very quickly. Three hours later, he was weeping and sniffling as he revealed everything to Leylin, only begging for death. Leylin hadn’t used even a hundredth of his abilities.

Once he had gained all the information that Mahnke knew and confirmed the truth of his words, Leylin did not kill him or torture the poor child any longer. Instead, he threw him in jail. Such a high-ranked guinea pig with a profession was very difficult to obtain.

After gaining the intel, Leylin first personally purged the manor. With his experience and the detection abilities of the A.I. Chip, the hidden spies grew completely obvious. Soon enough, numerous little rats were seized, including a kitchen lady, two stable lads, and
a few servants.
At crucial moments, Leylin never cared about not involving others when it came to crimes. He took control over their families, and such ruthless methods caused all those serving in the manor to tremble in fear. Even Claire and Clara grew afraid of him. Of course, with what had happened as a pretext, his absolute domination of them extended further.

‘How many people can I gather?’ Leylin asked Jacob from behind the baron’s desk. His arms were crossed.

“Reporting to young master,” Jacob was wearing leather armour, and was cloaked in a powerful aura. His respectful attitude pleased Leylin greatly. “We’ll do our best at the port. We can transfer fifty men from the guard, and with the guards of the manor, there will be eighty men!”

“Eighty men?” Leylin muttered to himself. It was true that there were very few people that he could use, and at the very most those that he could were farmers with a few days of training, comparable just to militia.

The real elites were obviously by Baron Jonas’ side.
‘Things should be easier on their side with my warning,’ Leylin had obviously sent Baron Jacob the information he’d obtained, and it was sure to be useful for him. At the very least, they weren’t going in completely blind and knew who the enemy was.

“Gather them and prepare to annihilate the pirates with me!” The group or pirates who could come ashore at any moment was the most urgent threat to Leylin, and he wasn’t going to watch them wreak havoc on his territory. Taking the initiative to make the first move thus became the most necessary choice.

“Understood! We shall become the sharpest blades in young master’s hands!” Jacob guaranteed.

“I look forward to it!” They were Leylin’s only hope. Though these militia could do little against those with professions, they would
still be of some use to regular pirates. With his current strength, it was impossible for him to eliminate so many pirates. It was important to have help from subordinates.

“Mm... This should be enough power to deal with the regular pirates, but based on the information from Mahnke there’s a rank 10 leader amongst them, and we don’t have enough high-ranked powers...” Leylin stroked his chin, muttering to himself irresolutely.

‘If we talk about high-ranked power, Cousin Isabel should be alright, but it’s better that she protect Madam Sarah.’ At the thought of her, Leylin immediately asked, “What’s that cousin of mine, Isabel, been up to?”

After hearing this question, Jacob looked hesitant.

“Tell me!” Leylin’s expression went cold.

“Does young master still remember the spies that were captured?” Jacob gritted his teeth.

“Didn’t I tell you to take care of them?” Leylin’s brows furrowed.

“Out of all of the captives, she picked two servants and took them away and there hasn’t been word on her location. Ever since she entered her room, it’s like she has completely disappeared from the world. Based on what the patrolling guards said, miserable cries have been heard from her room...”

Jacob’s expression was filled with unspeakable horror. After all, people of this world easily related these happenings to ‘devils’, ‘demonic rituals’ and the like. Isabel’s actions were of a similar vein.

“Alright...” Leylin rubbed his forehead, feeling a headache coming on, “Anything else?”

“The miss seems to have some interest in the family members of the spies, but I persuaded her...” Jacob said.

‘I almost forgot that’s a problem. Things would get troublesome if the people from the church were to find out...’ Leylin sighed, “I’ll
take care of Isabel’s matter personally. Don’t tell anyone about this. Demote the families of these criminals to slaves and don’t lock them up in the manor for some more time. Get them to the pier and put them in hard labour, or just sell them…”
It was important to set the norms at this point, whether they be positive or negative. Whatever it was, the people had to see the serious consequences of betrayal if he wanted to intimidate them effectively.
“Alright!” Jacob did not have any objections and carried out his orders, leaving Leylin alone.
Leylin watched the tranquil night sky outside, and suddenly sighed.
Leylin wandered through the door and over to Isabel’s room. Isabel had grown very reclusive since their meeting, and had even chased out the original maids.

*Knock! Knock!* Leylin knocked the door politely.

“Who is it? Didn’t I say I was not to be disturbed?” Isabel’s voice seemed rather angry.

“It’s me,” Leylin said calmly. The door pulled open to reveal Isabel’s face. However, there was an unnatural flush on her cheeks, as if she had been going through some rigorous exercise, or perhaps a ceremony.

“What’s the matter? I’m preparing to get some rest!” After seeing Leylin, Isabel appeared flustered for an instant.

“Are you not going to invite me in?” Leylin smiled.

“It’s not gentlemanly to enter a lady’s chamber at this time of night, you know! Or perhaps you’ve become a degenerate, my dear cousin?” Isabel’s eyes glinted and she rested languidly against the door, speaking coquettishly.

Leylin secretly had the urge to laugh in reaction to her pretentious pose. When it came to experience, the amount he had under his belt far exceeded hers.

“Have I turned into a degenerate? Would you like to find out?” Leylin closed in with a naughty smile on his face and ruthlessly sniffed her fair neck, inhaling the scent of a girl’s body mixed with a particular smell.
“What are you doing?” The girl dodged him as she turned red, and Leylin took the chance to enter the room. There wasn’t much of a change in the arrangements here, but there seemed to be a vague bloody scent permeating the air. Though she had cleaned up and made an attempt to conceal it, Leylin’s brows still furrowed.

“Is there anything you would like to tell me about?” Leylin sat on the sofa and tried to sound as genuine as he could, “You’re my cousin after all, and I don’t want you to bear this burden all alone.”

“It’s nothing… That’s all over…” Isabel froze, and then spoke as if she did not care. Leylin sighed in answer to her attempt to appear strong. Of course, he knew that there was no benefit to revealing the truth. Though there were traces of negative energy polluting the room, her own actions were as pure as those of a little white rabbit when compared to the experiments he conducted.

Leylin changed his mind. He had originally believed that letting her stay behind would be a good decision, but by the looks of it, leaving her in the manor would only attract more attention and trouble. “Fine! I’m here to ask for help!”

“What is it about?” Isabel’s eyes flashed with a chilly glint.

“Well…” Leylin scratched his head and then revealed the news about Marquis Louis and Viscount Tim, and also the imminent attack of the pirates.

“In that case… They were responsible for the annihilation of my family?” Isabel’s hand twitched, and a portion of a black ironwood chair was broken off. Wood shavings scattered from between her fingers.

‘Such physical strength?’ Leylin’s pupils shrank, ‘She exceeds a rank 5 professional, and is close to rank 10… Those devils and demons are really quite generous, though the price is the soul of the sacrificer…’
Leylin had heard about the continuous offers of blood required to gain demonic energy. Followers of demons were rounded up and annihilated on the continent. If news of the Faulen Family protecting her went out, there would be troubles even more pressing than Marquis Louis.

“But I don’t know for sure yet. That’s only a possibility…” Leylin stroked his chin and did not lie about this.

“Fine, I’ll verify it for myself. Those pirates even dare trespass and offend our Faulen Family’s territory! We must have them pay the price in blood and have their souls repent in hell!” Isabel’s pretty eyes narrowed, filling with a murderous thirst.

“Thank you so much, cousin!” Leylin silently cursed to himself inside, but in the meanwhile the smile on his face was dazzling.

“Don’t worry, we’re cousins after all. I’ll take care of you!” Isabel promised, looking steadfast and resolute.

After thanking her again, Leylin withdrew, though the smile on his face had dissipated. His eyes flickered, obviously deep in thought.

‘The open sea is vast and filled with all sorts of trash and scum from the continent. Sailors from this era can’t be considered good, and faithless people and followers are mixed in with them. There shouldn’t have any trouble if she hides amongst them…’

As the follower of a demon, Isabel obviously could not stay in the family; It would cause him an endless amount of trouble. After all, the power of the churches were at its peak in the prime material plane, and once it was discovered that the Faulen Family housed a demon follower the consequences would be extremely dire.

Thus, the vast open seas would be the best place for her to hide.

‘On top of that, the demon might have given her a lot of strength, but there’s definitely a price to pay. That might even be her soul…’

Leylin looked grim, ‘A few useless sailors disappearing from the open sea shouldn’t count for much. That can temporarily satisfy the demon and gain her more time…’
In this time, Leylin would obviously become stronger. As long as he was powerful enough, whether it was Marquis Louis closing in on them or the demon contract that his cousin had, he was confident he could eliminate all of those problems, problems that a rank 6 wizard could not solve.

‘Plans constantly change… And right now, I urgently need strength. It might be alright to take a risk…’ Leylin secretly made up his mind.

This attack would evidently expose part of his power. From the very beginning, Viscount Tim had already sent out an assassination squad with a rank 7 leader, which meant that the pirates had to be even stronger. Help from his cousin and the subordinates wouldn’t be enough, he needed to increase his chances.

After returning to his room, Leylin headed straight for his laboratory. By his command, even Claire and Clara could not enter, and there were also a few warning spell patterns set up that were hard at work.

On the glossy laboratory table were many test tubes and glass tools neatly stacked together. There was also various alchemical equipment that was enough for poorer wizard students to go green with envy.

It was a pity that, in Leylin’s eyes, it was all a mere cover.

*Crack!* *Crack!* After Leylin pulled at a handle under the laboratory table, the sounds of gears grinding against each other rang out. Along with the gentle sound, the entire table moved to the left, revealing a pathway that led downwards.

‘While wizards have great trust in magic, there are too many items and techniques in the world which can detect spell undulations. On the contrary, simple mechanisms like these can conceal even more secrets…’ Leylin carried an oil lamp as he went down the staircase. After going about ten metres in, he arrived in front of a large rock. The large granite gave the feeling that it was indestructible as it
stood tall inside, blocking the road completely as if this was a dead end.

“Arcane Mark, activate!” A spell rune flashed in Leylin’s hands, and amongst the light the surface of the granite began to soften as it revealed a shining channel. Leylin did not hesitate at all as he walked in, hanging his oil lamp on the wall.

What appeared behind the large rock was a small-scale laboratory. He had used mechanisms to prevent magic probes here, and created a trap at the bottom. That was enough to show how highly Leylin valued this laboratory.

As this was deep underground, the laboratory had an area of only several square meters. A large, ancient wooden table had already taken up most of the area, and there was little space left for one to stand. The ceiling was also very low and the entire room felt very stifling.

The smell of tar grew obvious on the floor and corners, indicating an even more terrifying self-combustion mechanism. If Leylin suspected anything, just a small spark would be enough to char this whole place and hide everything here.

The reason for this was because Leylin’s experiments were far too shocking. If ever discovered, they would be deemed heresy!

“It seems like it’s almost complete…” Leylin observed the giant solution in the petri dish. Large amounts of boiling, fresh red liquid gave people an ominous feeling that this was blood.

“And then… this!” At the corner of the table was a wooden statue. It had a pair of demonic wings, multiple compound eyes and six fingers that formed a demon, emitting an evil aura.

This was a statue that Leylin had constructed of Beelzebub based on his memories. The possession of such a statue would have one burnt to death if they were caught by the churches, and even a king wouldn’t be spared this treatment.

Of course, these taboos meant nothing to Leylin. His courage was
enough to stupefy many gods. “Looks like Beelzebub has really sunk into a deep sleep. He doesn’t react at all to prayers or sacrifices…” Leylin’s hands caressed the devil’s statue with an unspeakable expression in his eyes. Come to think of it, he was the main culprit behind this. If he had not stolen so much of Beelzebub’s laws and even destroyed most of his truesoul, the Sovereign King of Gluttony would not be so seriously injured that he had to sleep it off.
Of course, according to this world, my main body deprived Beelzebub of most of his divinity and divine force. This greatly damaged his divine soul and he hence fell into a deep sleep, now he can’t even answer the prayers of his worshippers…”

Devils were always extremely sensitive towards sacrifices and prayers from the prime material plane. Through his many probes, Leylin was absolutely sure that this great master devil had already fallen deep asleep, completely unresponsive to the outside world’s stimulation.

This sent Beelzebub’s followers in the prime material plane into chaos. Had Beelzebub not hidden his main body well, Leylin might even have received news of his death.

“Regardless of whether one is a god or a devil, once you lose the ability to respond to prayers and the power to grant wishes, you will not be far from death…” Leylin sighed. There were cases where gods had died not to external factors, but to decreasing power of worship. This was truly pathetic.

‘Gods rely on believers for their existence. Despite having great powers and abilities, they are restrained by the very same power of faith. Except for someone who’s merged with the world origin force and become an existence that has comprehended an extraordinary divine force…’ He let out a deep breath, ‘Such an existence would be equal to a rank 8 Magus who’s found their own
path. There are few such beings even in the World of Gods.’ He gathered his thoughts and turned his attention back to the statue, “Since Beelzebub is in a deep sleep, then I don’t have to be so cautious of using his name anymore…” Truth be told, with his possession of a majority of Beelzebub’s memories, Leylin was like a real devil king. He could even steal Beelzebub’s believers and usurp his position. However, doing so required great power, and Leylin was only a rank 6 Magus. Needless to say, he also had to acquire the power to grant his believers’ wishes. To usurp a god’s position he first had to acquire divinity.

“The laws of gluttony and devouring are great, but they’re already considered fiendish in the World of Gods. If I use such power here…” Leylin shook his head regretfully. If he wished to survive in the prime material plane, he could not rely entirely on divinity as his foundation. He hadn’t carried these abilities over his reincarnation, but even if he had they would’ve been useless, wiped out by the world origin.

“It’s best to take it step by step. Thankfully it takes a while for faith to erode. The worshipers of the Sovereign King of Gluttony will not vanish so quickly…” Moreover, even if they do disappear, it’s just one less convenient path and reduced income for me. It’s not really not worth the risk, so it’s better for me to stick to the original plan and be steady…” Leylin’s eyes brightened, and he suddenly tightened his grip.

*Crack! Crack!* Turing the statue of the Sovereign King of Gluttony into ashes, dropping it to the floor bit by bit.

“I must admit though, the devil got many useful things.” Leylin stuck his hand into the petri dish, and soon fished out a knife covered in blood. The pocket-sized knife had a beautiful curve to it, and it looked like a very fine work of art. A fierce demon skull tipped its handle, numerous eyes on it giving
off a savage glare. Two devilish wings made up the hand guard, and complicated patterns that looked like veins covered the entire handle. Its demonic looks were only enhanced by the faint crimson glow and the blood dripping from its tip.

“So the Devilblood Dagger’s done!” Leylin’s eyes flashed with joy, and the A.I. Chip followed up with data on the Devilblood Dagger.

[Devilblood Dagger. Weight: 9182g, Length: 9in, Ingredients: Cockatrice bones, fresh blood, weeping spirits. Effects: Possesses the power of a devil, able to absorb a target’s flesh and blood to increase one’s own power. Description: An extremely vicious weapon that even gods fear, the Devilblood Dagger represents ominous death. Creator: Leylin Faulen.]

“It’s rather good!” Leylin fiddled with the dagger, causing it to glow with a dark light. There were many, many items like this in Beelzebub’s memory; he’d used their easy power to lure people from the prime material plane to his side.

This Devilblood Dagger was a very good weapon from Beelzebub’s memories. If a believer wanted to be bestowed this dagger, they would have to sacrifice a rank 15 or greater priest from a hostile god, or even slaughter a small city to even think of getting it.

‘The devils are the best way to increase my power in a short amount of time currently. They treat both the young and the old honestly, but the price one has to pay in the end is usually even more frightening…’ Leylin heaved a sigh.

His cousin Isabel had clearly been seduced by a demon after giving into despair. She had succumbed to it in the end, and had now gotten herself in tons of trouble.

Unlike her, Leylin didn’t become a collector for demonic sacrifices. He’d done something much more vicious, nearing becoming a devil king. All the flesh and blood devoured by the Devilblood Dagger would go to feeding his own power!

‘Even if I’ve crafted it, I still need to perform some experiments on
this dagger, especially the problem with contamination.’ Leyin furrowed his brows, the main reason why he had taken so long to make the dagger was because he was working on changing its properties. He wanted to avoid some of the side effects of its use. After all, Beelzebub was no kind soul. His treasures were used to lure followers into depravity, and the Devilblood Dagger was no exception. It slowly corrupted one’s mind and soul with use, turning them into a devil.

Being one himself, Beelzebub had no problems with using the dagger, but Leylin was different. He needed to remain human, as he would come into contact with churches and high-ranked priests in the future; turning half-devil would impose great restrictions on what he could do.

‘Although The A.I. Chip already solved the corruption problem, there’s still the issue of its radiance. It screams depravity and evil, I’m not sure I could get away with it…’ Leylin walked straight into the manor while he was still thinking.

“Young master!” A trained guard saluted. The man wore leather armour, and the longsword in his hand sparkled. Obviously the manor’s security system had greatly been upgraded after the attack on Leylin.

It was obvious at a glance that this fellow was merely a trained farmer, just a little stronger than a regular human. “Howard, right? Follow me!” Leylin said.

“Roger that!” Howard could not disobey the young master. He followed right after Leylin to the dungeon. Once the rest were cleared out, only Leylin and Howard were left there. Of course, there were also the two unfortunate assassins who were lying on the ground.

“Can I trust you, Howard?” Leylin’s voice was soft, but it had a special tone in it.

Such a special tone gave Howard an ominous premonition, but
loyalty occupied his mind and soon he replied with a straight back, “I would risk my life for you, young master!”

“Great! Now, look into my eyes!” Leylin ordered Howard to raise his head, it felt as if there was a mysterious spiral in those pupils of his.

“Rank 1 spell Charm Person!” Under Leylin’s spell, Howard’s pupils soon lost their focus, turning him into a zombie.

“This rank 1 spell…” Leylin mumbled, “It can only charm the mind… It’ll work perfectly on regular people, but it’ll be weak against professionals. It would probably only render Jacob a little dizzy for a few seconds…”

“Take this, chop off one of his fingers!” Leylin ordered, passing the dagger to Howard.

“Ugh…. Ughh!” The strange situation gave Mahnke the feeling that something catastrophic was about to happen. However, his limbs had all been broken earlier, and his body was thoroughly tied up. He could only struggle in vain and had no other method to resist.

Howard carried out Leylin’s order with the Devilblood Dagger in hand, a soulless expression on his face. His other hand pinned Mahnke’s down to the floor, and he chopped off a finger without hesitation.

*Schlick!* The dull sound of blade slamming against flesh could be heard, together with Mahnke’s sorrowful sounds. A bloody pinky was chopped off, and it twitched on the floor like a worm.

*Keke…Ughhhhh…* At the same time, the dagger emitted a radiant light, and the demonic skull at the hilt let out a sinister laugh. The numerous eyes shot out a demonic lustre.

Layer upon layer of veins began to squirm on the handle, swallowing the blood on its surface. Many tiny blood-coloured strings penetrated into Howard’s body, and the pinky on the floor gradually shrunk before their eyes. It soon turned into a dried out piece of charcoal. Looking like firewood.
“How do you feel now?” Leylin asked.
“The dagger is very hot, and the heat is spreading to me!”
“A.I. Chip, examine his stats!” Leylin’s eyes began to glow.
Beep! Mission established, beginning scan!] The A.I. Chip carried out Leylin’s commands loyally.

Soon enough, the latest results were transmitted. [Compared to previous data, target’s vitality has risen by 0.01, strength by 0.02, spiritual force by 0.005. No obvious adverse reaction.]

“The flesh of high-ranked professionals does indeed provide a great boost for regular humans…” Leylin nodded. He understood that these numbers were exaggerated, and if it were himself the amplification to his stats wouldn’t reach even 0.00001. This was the difference created by the varying base stats.

“Oh… you devil! You’re a devil worshipper!” At this moment, Mahnke, who was still on the ground, shrieked. Though Cyric the God of Murder had always possessed a bad reputation, he was still a good samaritan when compared to demons and devils.

Knowing that the wizard keeping him captive was a follower of a devil, Mahnke completely lost all hope. As a member of the dark realm, he naturally knew that the followers of devils liked to sacrifice flesh, blood, as well as the souls of the followers of gods in order to obtain rewards from the devils.

“Kill me! Kill me quickly! Don’t profane my soul, else the gods won’t let you off!” Mahnke yelled hysterically, but paired with his dry throat his voice was like a broken bellow and it couldn’t travel out of the jail.

“Shut up!” Leylin’s brows furrowed as he kicked outwards,
causing Mahnke to faint.

“Now, here’s the most important part. Detect Alignment!” A bundle of white light in Leylin’s hands covered Howard. Soon enough, glee appeared on his face, ‘The alignment is still neutral! It seems like as long as it doesn’t profane the soul all the terrible consequences will be taken up by Beelzebub. The ability to grow in strength by devouring flesh and blood is rather valuable…’ Of course, Leylin knew very well that the part with the greatest energy was the soul. The energy he would acquire from a person’s flesh and blood alone wouldn’t even be half the total that the body had.

However, profaning the soul was labelled chaotic and evil. Leylin could only resign himself to part with that desire of his. Leylin nodded and retrieved the Devilblood Dagger, giving Howard an instruction, “Alright, you may go! After you leave this jail, you will forget everything you’ve just done!” “Understood!” Howard staggered out, leaving Leylin alone in the jail, deep in thought.

‘It takes a lot of energy to turn the power of flesh and blood into spiritual force. On top of that, I’ll need to ensure that I wipe out the memories of the soul in its final moments…’ Numerous possibilities streaked through Leylin’s mind, allowing him to make more plans regarding the Devilblood Dagger.

He’d originally planned on travelling outside to use the Devilblood Dagger, hunting to quickly increase his strength. But due to the need to keep a low profile, he had no choice but to exercise patience.

But now? The situation was now very different. Leylin had been bullied in his home territory, and he urgently needed great power. Otherwise, the Faulen Family could very well be wiped out just like Isabel’s!

Of course, there were slight differences in their circumstances.
Isabel needed to pray for strength from devils and demons, while Leylin only needed to rely on himself. “After a little modification, I will be done here! Mister Mahnke… It’s now your time to shine…” Blood red radiance flickered on the surface of the Devilblood Dagger, reflecting Leylin’s expressionless face. He glanced at Mahnke on the floor the way he would at a dead man, or perhaps a swine before slaughter. The devouring power from the dagger was intoxicating, but with his own grasp of the law of devouring Leylin could control it skillfully. An unceasing stream of heat gathered in the dagger in his right hand, extending to his entire body. A sense of comfort stimulated a great breakthrough in his spiritual force, sending it spurring towards a deeper level of the Weave. At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded by Leylin’s ear. [Beep! Detected change in stats to host body. Vitality increased by 0.2, spiritual force increased by 0.05.] Countless prompts refreshed, allowing Leylin to see his stats increase. His spiritual force, which had long since reached the peak of rank 6, finally broke through with this burst of strength. *Crack!* A slight sound could be felt directly from his soul, and Leylin felt his spiritual force making contact with an even more terrifying level of the Weave. He understood what had happened, “The third level of the Weave! I’ve contacted the third level of the Weave and officially become a rank 7 wizard!” At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s voice was transmitted. [Beep! Host’s spiritual force has contacted level 3 of the Weave. Advanced to rank 7 wizard (spiritual force +0.5)] [Host has advanced to rank 7 as a wizard. New additions: Rank 3 spell slot (1), rank 2 spell slot (1), rank 1 spell slot (1)!] [Detected drastic changes to host’s stats. Recalculating...] The A.I. Chip refreshed the screen with more information. In just a moment, Leylin’s stats...
were renewed.


‘Forget the spiritual force, I’d long since reached its limit. But the increase to my other stats… It’s practically the sum of my fifteen years of growth…’ Leylin’s eyes flickered, ‘Could it be that now that I’ve reached fifteen and become an adult, my body’s stats have all reached the average standard, and more importantly, my growth is now complete? This way, I’ll be able to advance and accept more strength?’

Leylin looked at the spell slots, “As expected. I got a rank 3 spell slot after advancing to rank 7, it looks like this Goddess of the Weave is impartial to all wizards…”

The increase in spell slot numbers followed unfathomable rules. Some enchanted tools could increase the number of spell slots, and it was rumoured that those the goddess favoured could have more spell slots after advancing. However, there were two ironclad rules: One, one could have no more than 9 slots for a rank. Two, Only after reaching a certain level could wizards gain spell slots of certain ranks.

In other words, Leylin was now a rank 7 wizard, and he could at most only have rank 3 spell slots. It was impossible for him to have rank 4 spell slots, and even if he were to find a bunch of enchanted rings that could increase the number of spell slots, there would still be a limit of 9. It was impossible to have more than that, even for rank 0.

Furthermore, this iron rule was for all wizards. Even legendary wizards and those related to gods were treated the same way, with no change. Seeing the limitations that the gods put on wizards, Leylin’s lips curved.
‘Seems like the Magi left a very deep impression on the gods during the ancient war, to the point that they felt fear. They didn’t hesitate to shackle the spell-casting professions. Is that to prevent a repeat occurrence of the Magi?
‘If there comes a day that the shackles of the Weave are destroyed, what sort of interesting things are going to happen?’ Leylin chuckled, beginning to feel a little anticipation.
‘And then there’s the power from devouring flesh and blood…’ Leylin stood up, staring at the skeleton on the floor. He put the Devilblood Dagger away, and his brows began to furrow.
He felt that his body was swelling like an obese person who had eaten far too much, to the point that even his soul could not take it.
‘It seems like this ability can’t be used too often, especially before the body has digested all the energy. If that happens, the berserk life energy could become the most fatal toxin!’ Leylin shook his head, knowing that this Devilblood Dagger should not be used lightly.
‘In addition, no one can know of this, or else I’ll be confirmed to be a devil worshipper. It’ll be game over for me then…’ At this thought, Leylin immediately began to clear up the skeletal remains on the ground.
Things that made it evident that they had been used for evil rites and the like and could not be left lying around. They were best removed by burning.
As for the souls the Devilblood Dagger absorbed, Leylin had modified its effects on them. They went through unimaginable suffering before their death that served to completely fragment their memories, leaving no traces at all.
‘With the Devilblood Dagger, all my accumulations can allow me to pass through the many ranks of wizards quickly…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with a glint of light, ‘This means it’s necessary to find something to hide all this…’
This advancement was unnatural, and if just one person found something was off, Leylin knew that he would probably need to move away alone and hide himself in the name of training in seclusion.

After gaining enough strength, he would immediately travel in order to hide his unusual growth. And the many battles with Viscount Tim’s pirates would clearly be a great source for such a thing. Viscount Tim, and even Marquis Louis, would very soon find out that in a bid to obtain more profits, they had chosen a very terrifying enemy!

The devil was thirsting for his enemy’s blood to grow, and would soon take over the World of Gods.
With the Faulen Family’s prestige and reputation in the island, it wasn’t difficult to cobble up a patrol. However, on the field where grain was drying, Leylin frowned at the sight of his subordinates. “Getting fifty from the port and another thirty from the manor… Is this our limit?” A sparse crowd stood at the field, awaiting Leylin’s inspection. While they had done all they could to rub their leather armour and weapons till they were sparkling clean and tried their best to stick their chests out, Leylin still felt they looked like nothing but a bunch of rowdy people.

‘It’s alright if you get them to patrol and maintain order, but once you bring them to a bloody battlefield…’ Leylin shook his head inwardly, though the expression on his face showed excitement. “Residents of the Faulen Island! There are a group of horrible, evil pirates about to reach the coast. They will slaughter your parents, steal your copper and bread, and humiliate your wives and daughters. Those low-lives are capable of anything!” Leylin did his best to sound agitated to stir up the masses.

Was there a need to announce what the pirates would do to them? The troops began to get restless and immediately knew that Leylin spoke the truth. It might even be an understatement. “Well then… tell me! Are you willing to let this happen?” Leylin’s sharp voice resounded in the field. “No!” “No!” Though many of them were mercenaries who only
worked when money was involved, most of them were farmers who had enlisted. Their families were here, and even the mercenaries had settled down here. At the very least, when it came to protecting one’s family and wealth, these people were rather enthusiastic and hot-blooded.

Hence after being provoked, all of them were flush with anger as they roared with all the strength they had.

“Good! As the master of this territory, I call on you to pick up your weapons and prepare to fight bravely to protect your home!” Leylin spoke so loudly that his voice could be heard from every corner of the field.

In such a feverish atmosphere, there could be one or two who remained timid or rational, but they would soon be drowned out by the crowd, dragged along with the flow.

“Our Faulen Family will not treat any of you unfairly!” Leylin clapped his hands, and two bodyguards went up on stage with numerous boxes.

The large copper locks were opened, revealing brand new armour within. There was even some chainmail that was made of metal rings. Not only did this metal armour provide a greater defence than leather armour, it was more flexible to boot. It was practical, but there were high requirements on its forging so these items had no market.

Beside the armour were even greater quantities of shining weapons. Vorpal swords, curved blades, hammers, lances… there was anything one could need.

On top of that, these weapons were in good shape and they had a layer of oil on the surface. There were no signs of rust or corrosion, and they radiated a lustre from their sharp edges.

“All those who take part in this operation can choose a weapon of their own! Vice captains and those ranked above can all choose a set of armour!” Leylin’s scanned the crowd. Evidently, these
excellent weapons were attractive to the point that people would risk their lives for them. Leylin found a few fellows whose eyes were shining.

‘Of course…’ For this reason, he raised his voice intentionally, “If you can contribute in this battle, there is no reason why we can’t reward you with these weapons and armour!”

With this promise, there was a huge uproar in the crowd below. In this age, metallic weapons and armour had a very high value and could even be said to be treasures passed down generations of knights. Many of them didn’t dare to believe Leylin’s promise.

“There’s no need to doubt me, I vow in the name of the Faulen Family!” Leylin looked especially solemn, making this guarantee with his name as a noble. Though this meant nothing to him, with the values of the World of Gods the promise of a noble still held quite some value.

Hence, many soldiers could not help but begin to cheer.

Leylin cleared his throat and urged for the last time, “In addition… If there are injuries or even deaths in battle, I will offer compensation. If you die in battle, your rewards will be given to your family!”

“Faulen!” “Faulen!” The soldiers below began to cheer in their excitement. Injuries and death were the worst fates for veterans in a feudal age. Leylin was even willing to compensate them for it, which was something even churches didn’t do!

‘This should be able to somewhat boost their morale, right? Though… it’s just this once!’ Leylin stared at the soldiers whose moral was at the peak while laughing bitterly inside.

With his actions, he would suffer losses even if they won the battle. It was the entire reason why lords seldom did things like this. Those weapons and armour alone were the accumulations of the Faulen Family over the year, and a large part of the family’s wealth. However, this was a special circumstance, and Leylin had no choice
but to do this. After all, if the Faulen Family were to cease existing, these items would be useless.
The soldiers outside began preparations for battle, while a small meeting was being held in the manor.
“We’ll leave the manor to you, Uncle Leon,” Leylin spoke to the housekeeper on his right, “I’ve already sent down the order that you’ll be in charge of everything in the manor.”
“I will definitely protect everything for you!” Leon’s placed his right hand on his chest as he promised.
Leylin nodded, feeling assured. His mother, Claire, and Clara had all been sent to the church of knowledge at the port in secret.
With how shrewd Bishop Tapris was, it would probably be the best place for them on the island if he and his father met danger.
Based on what Mahnke said, the assassins he had captured were the only ones that the enemy had sent, but Leylin considered the fact that Viscount Tim might be driven to desperation.
After Leon left, only Isabel, Jacob and a few leaders with professions remained. They were the strongest, and Leylin had nothing to hide from them.
“Based on the information I’ve received, there are over a hundred people amongst the pirates, and the leader is a rank 10 Professional!” At this point, Leylin looked grim, and everyone except Isabel gasped.
“A hundred men, and a rank 10 Professional? This kind of strength isn’t second to the power of a famous pirate crew! Why would they come here?” Jacob gasped.
In reality, the truly strong would not do something as beneath themselves and dangerous as become pirates. With their strength and reputation, they could become public security officers in any large city, and could even become nobles.
It was illogical for someone like them to attack the Faulen Family.
Leylin nodded as he sneered. “Hehe… This is a famous pirate
group. Have you heard of the Black Tiger?"
“Black Tiger Pirates?” The shock in Jacob’s eyes grew even more profound, “They… they operate in the seas of the Baltic archipelago, and they shouldn’t have any grudges against our Faulen Family…”
“Sometimes, there needn’t be grudges to start a fight for benefits. What aren’t those greedy pigs capable of?” Isabel stood out, unsheathing the black longsword in her hands.
*Swish!* A flash of black light passed, splintering the table in front of them and splitting it apart.
“Or… are you scared?” There was a murderous glint in Isabel’s eyes, as if she would kill if anyone dared say no.
“Ah, I forgot to tell all of you. My cousin is a rank 9 and will act with us!” Leylin cleared his throat.
‘This strength… It’s clearly above rank 5. I just don’t know if she’s a warrior or knight-errant…’ Though Isabel looked like a little girl, these team leaders here did not dare belittle her. A rank 9 was enough to crush them.
Jacob nodded, a hint of glee flashing in his eyes. Since she was a rank 9, with a young master who was a wizard, taking care of a rank 10 was not entirely impossible.
If Jacob could see that, the old foxes were obviously aware of that too. Hence, they immediately knelt on one knee to express their loyalty to Leylin, “We are willing to be young master’s blades and obey all your instructions!”
‘These people…’ Leylin shook his head instead, feeling a little fed up with the situation. However, he had no choice but to continue pretending.
“Good, we leave now! We have to strive to catch them off their guard!” With a traitor like Mahnke, Leylin knew the strength of the Black Tiger pirates and what they could be hiding like the back of his hand.
“It’s too foolish to wait for them to reach the coast. I don’t want the battles to affect this territory…” Leylin looked around, spreading out a yellowed map. It showed the detailed topology of the area surrounding Faulen Island, and even contained information about the ocean currents and wind directions. Just this map alone had a value of over ten gold coins, and it was something the Faulen Family had gained over decades of hardship and exploration. It definitely was not to be sold outside.

“The Black Tiger pirates are now here.” Leylin tapped at the map. This was an uninhabited island not far from the Faulan Island, and there wasn’t any shipping route nearby. Even with their opponents on alert, it was still possible to hide for a period of time.
hoosh! The night sea winds had a fishy, chilly smell that made Jacob shrink back.

As a member of the Faulen Family, he might have long since gotten used to these winds and waves, but the deck that was creaking up and down, as well as the billowing sails above, made him as if he was in a dream. This feeling reached its peak when he saw Leylin, standing proudly at the head of the ship. They were in a typical double mast sailboat. They weren’t squeezed together even with over 80 people there. But it wasn’t difficult at all to acquire such a thing with the Faulen Family’s status. No, what shocked Jacob was Young Master Leylin’s behaviour!

‘No… Actually everyone is shocked…’ Jacob looked at the leaders beside him who were scared out of their wits, yet at the same time had a fire burning in their eyes, and chuckled wryly. Just before they had left, Leylin had cast Nondetection in front of everyone. By Oghma! This was a rank 3 spell, and the young master had not used any items or scrolls at all! That he could cast a rank 3 spell by himself meant Leylin was rank 7. Without any warning, their young master had become a rank 7 wizard!

‘Gods… Isn’t advancing as a wizard supposed to be the most challenging? Young master’s advancement to rank 5 just two years ago was already enough to have mouths fall agape… And now…’
Jacob sighed. His abundant experiences as an adventurer left him clear on what exactly a fifteen year old rank 7 wizard meant. If nothing were to happen, he could possibly become a great rank 15 wizard in a few centuries of training! There were few great wizards in the Dambrath Kingdom, and a few of them hired by the royalty had great statuses. His majesty the King had generously given them positions as Earls and territory to rope them in. However, no great wizard cared for such things that drove others crazy with envy. At their level, the only thing in their sights was the realm of Legends.

And now, a great wizard was about to appear in the Faulen Family? Jacob suddenly felt giddy.

“Cousin Leylin, you’ve worked hard in deceiving me…” Beside Leylin, Isabel didn’t have as many thoughts. While she seemed to be complaining, it was obvious that she was delighted by Leylin’s achievements.

“I never thought my cousin was a genius as a wizard!” Isabel’s eyes twinkled like there were countless stars in them.

“Hehe… everyone has their secrets, just as you do!” Leylin got closer, causing her to look panicked, “I anticipate the day where you will tell me…”

“What kind of joke is this?” Isabel turned her head and left, while Leylin sank deep into thought.

‘There’s no other choice but to do this…’ Leylin sighed. The reason he had shown his strength right before the battle was to strengthen his men’s confidence and will to resist. Otherwise, the moment they knew that they could be against the personal guard of a Marquis of the Kingdom, even if moral did not immediately crumble, it would be greatly diminished.

Now, with such a young wizard, some would think it was worth it to risk their lives. Even if those regular soldiers did not know what being a 15 year old rank 7 wizard implied, others would gladly
warn or tell them.
‘Furthermore, our target this time is only a notorious group of pirates. Even if someone intentionally leaks this out, many would not believe it…’ Leylin sighed once more. He had already done all that he could to the best of his abilities, and all that was left was their luck.

“My lord, we’re here!” A sailor with triangular eyes and a gaze as sharp as a poisonous snake came before Leylin, reporting quietly. There was a thirst in his eyes for blood, as well as a fervour for destruction.

If this was a gaze seen in the manor, Leylin would send down the order for this person to be hung, but now?

‘This is the right attitude if you want to kill someone!’ Leylin was confident that with his methods, even if this person was a poisonous snake, he’d be able to tame him.

“Your name is Robin Hood? You’re a great first mate and navigator! Are you in charge of this ship as well?” Leylin observed the man. He could sense a bloody aura that came from frequent killings, which made it obvious that this person had a very ‘exciting’ life in private.

“Yes, young master Faulen!” Evidently, Robin Hood was surprised that Leylin had been able to remember his name.

“Good!” Leylin had his hands behind his back as he watched the faint image of the islet from the fog. He quickly commanded, “Send down the order. Everyone is to remain hidden. Try not to make any sounds.”

In order to take precautions against the detection and divination spells, Leylin had especially boosted himself with Nondetection before leaving, and had been exceptionally cautious and nimble along the way. It could be said that the chances of being discovered were very low.

Besides, even if they were discovered, nothing much changed
except for the scale of the losses that would be incurred. When the first wave sneakily swam up to the shore and began to mount a secret attack on the opponents’ anchored ships, Leylin knew that the general conclusion had been decided.

Watching the bloody battles, Leylin suddenly laughed. “Seems like the pirates aren’t as strong as I imagined them to be…”

Initially, he had thought that they had the support of the nobles and might have superb equipment and even maybe a magic weapon, but from the looks of it… These pirates wore shabby clothing, and there were even some people of other races and mixed blood in their midst. There weren’t really powerful people in there, and it felt like they were just cannon fodder and not the real deal.

‘Even if we manage to subdue these pirates, they would just be treated as replaceable?’ Leylin stroked his chin as he thought of something.

In such a situation, where his side had been prepared and launched a secret attack with equipment of superior quality to theirs, there was no possibility of failure if their numbers were about equal.

‘Of course, this is a world of exemplaries. The situation might change if a few powerful people show up,’ Leylin stared at a corner of the camp on the barren island. He could sense powerful energy undulations from there.

“Is that leader of the Black Tiger pirates a rank 10 Professional?” Leylin sneered, “Jacob, take over the command. Pay attention to their ships and don’t let anyone get away!”

“Understood, young master!” Jacob answered loudly. He already wanted to prostrate himself when he looked at Leylin’s skills as a commander. Leadership came naturally to the young master, and such a thing was something he had never been able to learn himself.

‘This potential… Does that mean there really is a darling child of the gods in this world?’ Jacob had no time to be bothered by the
shock to his worldview, and did all he could to constrain the formation of the troops and surround the camp.
“Isabel, come with me. Let us see to that leader, Steve!” Leylin rapidly moved towards the frontlines of the battle, with Isabel following closely behind.

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As the infamous leader of the Black Tigers, Steve had the boorish and villainous face unique to pirates. He had long since lost an eye and an ear, the price he paid when his first mate mutinied against him.
Of course, this fellow who dared betrayed him had soon gotten his limbs cut off, and was tossed into the sea. The man could only repent with the sea god.
After being recruited by Marquis Louis, it had been made clear that if he were to be successful in this operation, he would become a knight with land of his own, and he might even become a real lord!
‘I’ll become a lord in the future!’ Every time he thought of this, Steve could not help but gaze at his right hand. He had lost it, among many other things, in ten years of bloody fights and struggles. Still, he felt like the sacrifice was worth it. As he was right now, he was a rank 10 fighter, and the Black Tigers that he led had made a name for themselves in these waters.
‘The target this time is only the manor of a baron that has lost most of its elites. How powerful can they be?’ Steve thought indifferently. If not for him restraining them with all his might, all his underlings would have gone out to have fun long ago.
Up to this point, everything was going well without a hitch. But all of a sudden, yells and shouts could be heard that immediately woke Steve up from his reverie.
“What’s going on?” Steve tossed the bottle of rum in his hand
away, and his right hand opened up a huge tear in the tent. He arrived at the camp.
“It’s an enemy invasion! There are too many of them, and they have excellent equipment!” His second mate, a tiger-headed merman, came before him, expression unable to hide his panic.
After noticing the situation, Steve’s face twitched. This crafty captain immediately felt that this was not going well, “Where did they come from? Why did the detection spells and alarm points not react? More importantly, who are they?”
Even now Steve didn’t think these people were sent by his target. With Leylin’s Nondetection spell, the detection magic artifacts he had bought at exorbitant prices lost their effects. The alarm points had all been discovered and removed by Leylin.
Steve grabbed the collar of the second mate and shouted, “Get the men and charge to the ship!”
The ambush was a huge blow to the Black Tigers’ morale. Still, Steve retained some confidence in his men. Though they were nothing more than scumbags and trash, they possessed many skills. They would be able to stay alive despite the bad situation they currently found themselves in.

For what it was worth, they were pirates after all. Land fights were never their forte. Their true expertise lay in bombing, boarding, and fighting with ships. If he could only retreat to the ship, it would be perfectly easy for him to mount both offence and defence. It could even be possible for him to turn the tables.

‘When the moment comes, I must absolutely wring this daring bastard’s head off!’ Steve thought to himself viciously.

With their captain’s signal, the crew began to draw closer to the ship. However, a wave of burning heat suddenly approached them, causing the colour to drain from Steve’s face. “Shit! Dodge, quickly!”

*Boom!* The enemy’s fireball landed less than five metres away from him, and the resulting sea of flames engulfed almost everything in its vicinity. Steve managed to escape, but the rest weren’t half as lucky. Even his trusty second mate, the one with the head of a tiger shark, was burnt to a crisp.

“Fireball! They have a wizard!” This sudden news was like a slap across Steve’s face. Not only was his opponent sufficiently equipped, they even had a strategic resource like a wizard.
Just then, he caught an eye of the said wizard. It was a young lad, his curly golden hair matching his deep blue eyes. He was barely an adult.

A wizard of this age? Steve furrowed his brows as he realised that the young lad looked faintly familiar.

“Hold up, he was one of the target of this mission! That’s the Faulens’ young master!” Steve was immediately reminded of him, and he had the urge to curse at his informant, “Wasn’t he supposed to be rank 5 at most? It doesn’t seem like it…”

“I want his head!” Steve was rid of any other choices at this stage of the game, and he could only roar orders as his muscles constricted.

Leylin spotted Steve at the same time. The extraordinary vibes he gave off showed that he was their leader, and he shouted as well, “He’s the head of the pirates. 50 gold coins for anyone who can finish him off, and on top of that you don’t have to pay tax anymore!”

“50 gold coins? And you get to not pay taxes? Charge!” Many of the guards went into a frenzy. This price alone was enough for ten lives; the guards charged up front without any second thoughts.

Of course, Leylin didn’t stand and watch idly. Two powerful buffing spells descended upon his men, increasing their drive and strength. “Bear’s Endurance, Bull’s Strength!”

‘The wizards of this world are supported by the Weave, allowing them to use magical attacks and buffs extremely quickly…’ Leylin knew better than to neglect the importance of the Weave. The fact that it was able to continue to exist for so long meant it had to have some advantages.

And during the battle, Leylin realised that his men usually fared better if he enhanced their abilities using his power. Moreover, the Fireball from earlier was like a missile. Common people would not be able to escape its destructive powers.
‘With the support of the Weave, won’t a wizard with enough spell slots be a walking cannon?’ Leylin smiled, if the power of this world was how he imagined it to be, the status of wizards would probably be even higher.

At the same time, Steve showed what it meant to be a rank 10 warrior. “AH! Rapid Charge!” His entire body was enveloped in a hazy light. After triggering his distinctive warrior skill, it was as if he had turned into an armoured steel tank as he charged towards the guards.

*Thump! Thump! Thump!* With his great energy, he knocked down many of the guards. They were sent flying, as if they’d been hit by a high-speed train, and every now and then the sound of bones cracking rang out.

But the damage went both ways. Steve was injured by many of their spears and swords, and many bloody wounds appeared on his body. This degree of injury posed no hindrance to him, but the blood continuously leaking from his wounds would cause a bit of trouble. This was especially true as the pirates were surrounded, about to be wiped out by the oncoming soldiers.

“Surrender now, and in my name as a noble I’ll treat you right as a captive.” Leylin said. As long as he could capture Steve alive, maybe even have him become an eye witness, he would’ve gained incredible advantages for the Faulen Family.

“Surrender? To a brat like you?” Steve mocked back. It was like he’d seen something ridiculous.

“Or should I say… Do you think I’m limited to just this ability?” A sinister smile slipped onto Steve’s face as a sacred light engulfed him wholly.

‘Is this… Divine force?’ Leylin stepped back. He had little experiences with this sort of power, but the impression it left was engraved deeply in his mind.

“Bless, Cure Light Wounds, Nightshield!” In the blink of an eye,
Steve cast three rank 1 spells on his body. Leylin’s brows wrinkled as he watched Steve’s wounds recover quickly under the brilliant light of divine force.

‘Divine force is indeed troublesome! Instant spells like these can be restored through daily prayers, so even with the usage limitations it’s still unfair…’

Steve was back to his prime condition after the buffs, and his injuries had healed.

“Kill!” He charged towards Leylin with great power, and a clandestine glow covered the sword in his hand.

“Eldritch Blast!” The qi of a rank 10 fighter concentrated in his hand to become a shining blade which blasted out.

*Schlick!* The soldiers in front of Leylin were hacked into two halves, and blood and gore splattered in all directions.

‘Well, this is troublesome…’ Leylin sighed, massaging his temples.

[Data collection completed! Creating target entry.] The A.I. Chip reported, quickly projecting Steve’s details in front of him.


‘Right hand?’ Leylin looked at the iron hook in Steve’s right hand. The originally dull blade was now drenched in blood, with strips of flesh hanging off it. It looked exceptionally macabre.

“I’ll go up to block him! You wait for an opening to try and cast spells!” Isabel drew her black sword out as she saw Steve nearing Leylin, becoming a human shield.

“Where did this wench come from? Piss off!” Steve’s eyes were bloodshot. The sword in his left hand slashed down mercilessly, violent like a gust of evil wind. It had none of the protective care one normally held for a lady.

*Clang!* The machete was blocked by a black sword, and the
The collision created a profound noise.
“My revenge starts with you!” Isabel’s expression was ice-cold.
“There’s so many incompetent idiots I’ve killed, who knows which ones you’re from?” Even with such a reply, Steve had already grown wary of Isabel. Considering that she could hold off a rank 10 fighter who was going all out, she was no easy opponent.
*Thump!* The iron hook in Steve’s left hand shot out like a venomous snake, but it too was blocked by Isabel’s sword. Sparks flew everywhere.
The impending battle between the two caused many pirates, and even her own soldiers, back away subconsciously. They didn’t dare to get caught in the fight.
‘Looks like I still don’t have enough manpower to kill a rank 10 fighter.’ Leylin thought in worry as he watch the gruesome exchange between the two.
‘According to the data, I’ll need at least 200 fully armed elites to kill Steve, and even they will have to be willing to give up their lives and pay a painful cost. Of course, if we have more Professionals the injuries would be halved, but all in all I don’t have enough manpower right now…
‘And although Isabel had enhanced her own strength through demonic sacrifices, she still isn’t enough to be an opponent…’ Progress in one’s profession wasn’t as just incremental. And anyway, Leylin didn’t believe that those demons wanted nothing from Isabel anyway.
“Ugh…” Suddenly, a groan sounded from the battlefield. It was Isabel’s.
One of her arms had been fractured, and she was forced to hold it in her sleeve. And yet, she remained as stoic as ever. Things like that which could have caused ordinary girls to weep and scream did not disturb Isabel at all.
“I’m afraid this cannot go on, I’ll have to unseal it! But…” Isabel
throw a glance at the onlookers and hesitated. “Isabel! I think it’s time to withdraw!” Just as Isabel was about to give it her all and charge at Steve, Leylin’s voice came through. Out of her confidence in Leylin, she abandoned her original plan and start backing away. “Thinking of leaving?” The expression on Steve’s face was sinister as ever, but that changed when an arrow was shot. *Shoo!* The arrow was like a venomous snake. Its angle was tricky, leaving Steve with no choice but to retreat. *Splat!* The arrow shot into the ground behind him, its feathered end still quivering, making it look like a small snake trying to burrow into the ground.
That was close!’ Steve could feel some cold sweat on his palm. Only he knew how dangerous that had been. Once he regained his senses, he glanced at Leylin. The youth now had a crossbow in his hands, and there was a merciless expression on his face. Isabel had pushed her way to stand beside him, and aside from her Jacob and a few other soldiers had rushed over in a hurry as well.

With Isabel delaying them, Leylin had enough time to defeat the enemy and even seize the pirate ship. Now, Jacob brought the rest of the soldiers and the many crossbows in the Faulen Family’s collection and surrounded the area.

The Faulen soldiers had gained the upper hand in all the other zones, and more and more soldiers gathered together. Under the light of the flames, Steve’s face turned pale as a corpse. He knew very well that after the battle was over, the Black Tigers might just be erased from history.

‘What’s going on? Why did things turn out this way?’ Steve was completely dazed. However, his fox-like cunning that had been honed over the years told him that this was the time to escape. As long as there were some people left alive, he would be able to pull the Black Tigers back together, and bring about their rise once more. When the time came, he would exact extreme vengeance on this young wizard!

“Shoot!” But how could Leylin give him the chance to do so? With
his command, the countless crossbows that Jacob directed on his own produced terrifying sounds. Numerous arrows blocked all the escape routes that Steve had.

“Damn it!” Steve cursed, his figure twisting at a strange angle in midair. A dark shield appeared, crashing into a sharp arrow.

The dark-coloured shield shattered to pieces, but the power of the arrow was greatly reduced. It could only leave a shallow cut on Steve’s body.

*Boom!* Steve’s body fell freely to the ground. He glared at Leylin venomously, and then rushed out of the camp. Once he got outside, he would definitely be able to leave with ease. He was still a rank 10 fighter after all.

At this moment, things suddenly changed! A huge white spiderweb opened up from the ground, shrouding him in darkness.

‘But when did he—?’ Steve’s expression filled with fear as he recognised this web, ‘Rank 2 spell, Web. Once it twines around me, I’ll be caught…’

He looked fierce as he raised the sword in his left hand. However, Leylin had long since set this trap. How could he give Steve the chance to escape?

“Ray of Enfeeblement! Sleep! Restrict!”

A few rank 1 spells flashed over Steve’s head. With the drain from the huge battle just prior, Steve was unable to dodge them in time. Immediately after, he felt a sense of confusion, as his body suddenly weakened.

*Clang!* His machete fell to the ground, and immediately after Steve was caught up in the web. It was extremely sticky, and even a reckless bull would not be able to escape from it.

“Take aim. Prepare to shoot! The opponent is a rank 10 warrior, so be careful!” At this moment, the soldiers holding crossbows aimed at Steve calmly. Only morons would miss an immobile target like this.
“You’re still thinking of running because you have a trump card up your sleeve, don’t you?” Leylin approached the spiderweb, watching Steve from above, eyes full of mockery.

“Don’t think you can hide the Lifesteal effect on your right hand. I’m a wizard!” When Leylin said this, he could see that Steve’s eyes were first filled with fear and despair, followed by a desperate struggle.

Leylin snickered, quickly retreating and dodging the bloody rays shooting from his hand.

“Be careful. The hook on his right hand has the Lifesteal effect. Don’t let it touch you, or your life force will be absorbed…” Leylin smirked at Steve, causing him to pale even further. The terror from being completely seen through caused the pirate to feel muddle-headed. “You’re a devil. A devil!”

“Knock him unconscious,” Leylin’s eyebrows furrowed, “And then get rid of his arms and legs!” Without the assistance of a powerful cleric, such terrifying injuries would end up crippling him.

As for how to deal with this person, Leylin did not have plans yet. As he had been at the forefront in hindering the Faulen Family, he should have made contact with Viscount Tim before, which made him a pretty good witness. But who would believe the words of a pirate? At the most, it would cause some slight trouble for the Viscount.

“His true value is in keeping him from Tim…” Leylin watched the amputated Steve who was now unconscious, his eyes profound. In his view, the pirate only had two functions. One was as bait, attracting more assassins and experts over from the other party so he could ambush them. However, things could easily go wrong that way. If an existence that Leylin could not deal with arrived, that was just shooting himself in the foot.

On the other hand, he could use Steve to negotiate with Tim, forcing the Viscount to back off. After all, the Faulen Family
wasn’t the only one with land in the seas. Once his side showed their power and sent Steve back, saying that they had no plans to go to war, he could be able to achieve a period of harmony. Of course, Leylin never counted on the benevolence and hesitation of his enemies for his own safety. However, giving himself more time was a good method. After all, his strength was still increasing by the day, and on top of that with the complete wipe-out of the probing on the Faulen Family, perhaps they would pause for a bit anyway?

Leylin stroked his chin, “Be quick about it. Bring all the slaves. Kill those who resist.”

“Understood!” Numerous soldiers yelled together. After seeing that their leader, Steve, had been taken captive, most of the pirates had lost their morale, and with the suppression by Isabel and the crossbowmen they were utterly defeated. Even those futilely thinking of swimming across the sea were killed by the sailors on the ship, not letting any leave. Soon, a whole region of the sea was dyed red.

In this situation, even the fiercest pirate would involuntarily have thoughts of surrender. Soon enough, the sounds of weaponry being tossed to the ground sounded. The soldiers hurried to tie these people up and sent them to the ship.

“Set fire to this place before we leave,” Leylin commanded.

Following that, he returned to the double mast ship he had arrived in. At the moment, the seized pirate ship had been tied up behind theirs. It was the spoils of their battle.

Seeing the sea of red, Leylin listened as Jacob reported, “Nine soldiers are dead, fifteen critically injured. The rest have some form of light injuries…”

This was even though this was a surprise attack and they had the advantage in equipment. Jacob could not help but feel embarrassed at the results. He’d gotten a better understanding of the
ferociousness of pirates today. If the Black Tigers had managed to set foot on Faulen Island, the consequences would’ve been dire.

“Mm. What have we captured?” Leylin looked calm, not minding such a tiny issue.

“We have killed 37 pirates and taken 52 prisoner. There are a few with unknown whereabouts. We have taken Steve, and the Black Tigers can be said to be completely wiped out.” At this point, Jacob began to look excited, “It’s a pity that there aren’t any spoils. There’s only some rum and jerky. We haven’t found any letters or anything…”

Leylin shook his head and laughed involuntarily, “Pirates are poor anyway. What more do you want?”

These low-ranked pirates did not have much money on them anyway, and if they were lucky enough to get a large amount, that would quickly be wasted on the bad alcohol in the harbour, barbequed meat and gambling dens. When, on the next day, they had not a single copper in their pockets, they would follow their captain to sea like wolves, roaring as they attacked other ships.

‘Even if you add up the wealth of all the prisoners, that would still be nothing compared to Steve’s own private hoard!’ Leylin chuckled.

‘I really need to interrogate Steve well. Though it’s unlikely that he has a letter from nobility, I need to know about his stash and things like that…’

If he could find evidence of a connection with Viscount Tim, Leylin would not have to be vexed. However, this was impossible. The other side would not be so foolish as to leave letters and the like behind. Hence, Leylin could only give this a try without placing too much hope in it.

As for money… that was just a consolation prize. At the very least, these soldiers would need to be rewarded amply for the deaths, else nobody would be willing to work under him.
Having taken care of everything, Leylin walked to the hold of the ship. As there were many more captives to return with, the concealed hold was very squeezy and somewhat chaotic. Leylin naturally would not imprison the group on the pirate ship behind them, that would only be creating trouble for himself.
Even in this situation, Isabel had a room of her own. This was a privilege reserved for the nobility and the strong.
“Can I come in?” Leylin asked after walking up to her door.
“Please!”
Opening the door, Leylin entered the room and cast a silencing spell. This immediately resulted in a serious look on Isabel’s face. Leylin twitched his nose. There was a herbal smell in the air, and Isabel’s clothing was slightly in disarray. Evidently, in her hurry, she had not had everything arranged properly.
“You won’t be able to do things like that easily on your own, you know.” Leylin chuckled as he sat beside Isabel, pulling at her arm.

“Don’t…” Isabel began to struggle.

“Sit properly!” Leylin’s thunderous expression made Isabel’s momentum to flag. Even the strength she possessed seemed to weaken greatly.

Leylin rolled Isabel’s sleeves up. What he saw was not the pale and exquisite skin belonging to a young girl, but a strange arm filled with scales. On the upper arm, there was a curved injury that had been caused by Steve.

“Demonification? And it seems to be a rather high-level conversion ritual…” Leylin raised his shoulders, and then skilfully used magic energy to heal her wounds. He then bound them.

“It’s ugly, isn’t it…” At some point, Isabel turned away, her voice choked with sobs.

“No, in fact it’s still alright,” Leylin answered seriously. He didn’t look much better when he transformed as a Warlock, and became an existence which had practically abandoned its human form.

“One more thing…” Leylin appeared to be focused on healing her, and he spoke softly, “I want to set up a private fleet. I hope for your help.”

“Become a pirate? Why?” Isabel was dazed for a moment. A private fleet was only a dressed up way to refer to a pirate crew.
Leylin smirked at the question. “They’ve come and bullied us, it’s only fitting that we repay the favour.”
“As for the people to be used… I was planning to use my status as the master of the territory here to hang the Black Tiger pirates. Let’s just consider it recycling our trash!”
“In addition, I’ve found a pretty good first mate for you. Robin Hood performed well today, and more importantly, he is used to the ways of pirates. With our people as the backbone and the pirates at our foundation level, we can use the pirate ship we seized and Steve’s wealth to quickly assemble a crew. I’ll need you to control them tightly…”
Leylin swiftly bound her wounds in gauze, and Isabel wiped away the tears on her face, regaining her robust and healthy image. However, Leylin felt that the crying girl from before more suited the memory of his young cousin.
“Why do you think I will agree?” Isabel looked at Leylin.
“Because it’s a request from your dear cousin!” Leylin chuckled, resulting in a flush on Isabel’s face.
“I’ll consider this matter. Go out first!” Evidently, Isabel was feeling cramped in the narrow hull alone in a room with Leylin.
“I quietly await your favourable response!” Leylin headed out, closing the door politely. In reality, he knew that she would agree; this was also good for her.
‘A high ranked demon? Goodness…’ Leylin stroked his chin, his eyes twinkling.
Controlling a pirate crew may seem slightly immoral on the surface; after all, it was dishonourable for a noble to do something so sinful. However, Leylin knew that under the cover of glory, sophistication and grandeur, the nobles of this world all concealed some sort of evil within them. Every gold coin they used was stained with the blood and tears of innocents.
Even his father, Baron Jonas, had always wanted to obtain support
from some pirates, or create a raiding fleet to attack others himself. He had been working hard on this, but he had been a noble for far too short a time. It was difficult enough to just get his own territory organised, so he had yet to fulfill his wishes.

As for offending pirates? Heh, no noble was going to care about that!

‘This outer sea was discovered recently, so there aren’t a lot of great powers operating here. It’s still a piece of blank paper. How could Marquis Louis alone get all the benefits on the sea?’ Leylin snickered. Whether it was purchasing high-grade spell materials or creating a wizard tower, everything required a huge amount of resources and gold coins. How could he surrender the profits he could get on the outer sea?

On top of that, he wasn’t one to take beatings without retaliating. He would definitely ruthlessly pay the Marquis back for his ‘favour’. He was just someone with control over the Baltic archipelago, a trade fleet, and a few pirate groups, so was he that amazing? If not for having apprehensions about the families on Faulen Island, Leylin alone could take him on in a war, and give him a huge headache.

‘After establishing a pirate group, cousin will have a place to take shelter. After all, the gods don’t focus much on a place like the outer sea where crooks mingle with honest folk. The occasional sacrifice can be hidden as much as possible…’

Whether Isabel could understand the reasons behind Leylin’s painstaking efforts was another matter. Leylin was sure that as long as he was the one making the request, she would not reject him.

The waves kept crashing into the body of the ship, shaking it slightly. A few seagull-like birds were soaring in the sky, producing cries from the distance.

“This isn’t too far from Faulen Island. It’s a short journey, so this shouldn’t be a problem…” Leylin held onto the railing, watching
the dark sea below him. The sea was never a peaceful place. Tsunamis, storms or even numerous deep-sea creatures could destroy a whole fleet in an instant.

Hence, for sailors on the outer sea, it was like treading on thin ice every single day with the possibility of entering the embrace of death at any moment.

‘There seem to be countless gods with dominion over the sea, like the Storm Goddess that Steve worships.’ Leylin began to look serious.

Steve surprisingly had some abilities as a cleric. While he could only cast low-ranked divine spells, that was enough for Leylin to be on his guard.

Fortunately, the Storm Goddess was known for being temperamental. She regularly caused tsunamis and storms, destroying numerous ships and fishing boats. Her faith stemmed from the terror she induced.

As a result, Steve must have made the Storm Goddess feel delighted during a certain ceremony or while praying, which was why she had made an exception and bestowed some divine force to him. If not, no matter how Leylin looked at it, he could not link Steve to a clergy.

Even so, that was still very troublesome. No matter how much of a bastard Steve was, he was a cleric, and Leylin could not get rid of him easily.

If he was alone outside, he could eliminate him easily. As long as news did not get out, all was fine. However, there were too many people here and so many prisoners. There were also the escapees.

There was no way to dispute the fact that Steve was in his hands. If he were to die, things would be difficult to handle.

Leylin did not want to attract even attention of the church of a real god, much less hostility.

‘What a pity. He’s a rank 10 warrior, and a cleric at that…’ A hint of
red light appeared in Leylin’s hands. The Devilblood Dagger flew between his fingers, rippling with a dangerous luster that quickly died down.
While he could now transform the flesh devoured into spiritual energy and hasten his advancement as a wizard, it wasn’t without any requirements.
He needed to completely digest the energy he absorbed between successive devourings. In addition, this sudden increase in power would be a great test in his control as a wizard.
If a rank 1 wizard rapidly became a Legend, he would first be destroyed by the berserk, uncontrollable magic in his own body. Thankfully, Leylin had a huge advantage in this area. His main body was already half god, and his control of energy was exquisite. Magic was similar both here and in the Magus World, and his strength as a wizard was only equivalent to that of a rank 1 or 2 Warlock.
This set of worries was why Steve had been lucky enough to survive this far. Otherwise, Leylin would have long since reduced him to a pile of bones.
Leylin had specific requirements when it came to flesh now. Only Professionals or powerful demonic beasts met his requirements for life force. As for those pirates? They were nothing to Leylin, and even if he were to devour all of them, they could not be compared to Steve. This was even ignoring the impurities in their energy.
“The ranking of energy in this world is very strictly regulated…” Leylin took a look at his stats. As he had not used the Devilblood Dagger, they stats were the same as before.
“For an adult, 1, 10 and 20 are all thresholds!” Leylin had a greater understanding of these numbers.
It was difficult for a normal human to break past the value of 1 in any stat, becoming a Professional. And these difficulties compounded in the future the stronger one became.
10 points was a huge threshold to break through. Leylin’s own greatest stat was his spirit at 7. Based on his calculations, it was only after he became a rank 10 wizard that he could break through this barrier.

‘Wizards above rank 10 are considered experts in the World of Gods… So is this the boundary line that divides us? Just one stat breaking past 10 makes one an expert…’ Leylin had a feeling that increasing his stat points in this world would be very hard, increasing in difficulty the further he got. Once his spirit reached 10, and especially after he became a great wizard, perhaps even the Devilblood Dagger could only give him light support.

‘A stringent world that suppresses power that is out of the ordinary. Even the gods have to abide by the rules of the world…’ Leylin’s eyes burned with fervour, eager to give this a try.

At this moment, he heard cheers elsewhere, “We’re here! I see the lighthouse at the harbour!”

Leylin raised his eyes and looked into the distance. As expected, there was a yellow light seen from within the fog. It represented the warmth of the Faulen Harbour, and Leylin could not help but reveal a smile.
815 - Return and Secret Plans

The moment he got off the ship, Leylin saw someone unexpected. The housekeeper of the manor, Leon, had come before him. It was evident that he had been waiting for a long time, and there were even water droplets on his clothes formed from the mist. “Young master, young master! The master is back, and he’s said that you are to notify him once you’re on shore!”

“Father has returned? Good, I’ll see him right away. Take care of the things here, as well as the spoils of war and the captives…” Compared to sneaking around during the last attack, Leylin was now strutting aboutboldly. He was even hoping to intimidate those who were harbouring unlawful thoughts with this victory.

However, the only ship entering the harbour was Leylin’s own warship. The Black Tiger itself had disappeared with his cousin Isabel, accompanied by a portion of the pirates. Only a few unlucky pirates were here besides the few spoils of war. Of course, there was also the ex-captain, Steve.

“Understood, young master!” Leon bowed low. Just the injuries from the soldiers behind Leylin alone made it clear that this battle had been very intense.

“Mm. Jacob, get Steve. Let us be off!” Leylin got on the carriage by himself, followed by Jacob with their prisoner. Steve had a black sack over his head, as Leylin did not trust such a high-ranking captive to his subordinates. If he did, there was a chance of
something going wrong.
“Father…” The moment the carriage got to the manor, Leylin saw his current parents, Baron Jonas and Lady Sarah. They stood in wait at the door of the manor, eyes full of worry. Leylin immediately got off the carriage and was pulled into Mistress Sarah’s arms, “Oh, my poor child…” It was obvious that even though she somewhat had an idea of what Leylin had done, Mistress Sarah was still worried.
“It’s good that you’re alright!” Baron Jonas maintained his poise as a noble, though there was a hint of joy in his eyes.
Leylin looked past his father, and then at his mentor Ernest. The wizard gave him an encouraging look of approval, and dragged his wizard robe closer around himself, hiding with the crowd. Wizards weren’t that good at expressing themselves.
At this moment, Leylin saw numerous elite troops behind Baron Jonas, all wearing armour. Their cold gazes made him feel a sense of danger.
“Rank 5 warriors! And there are so many at that. Father, where did you get them from?” Leylin could see respect in the eyes of the fighters, especially from their leader, but there wasn’t the reliance and concern that their own men had. These troops were evidently reinforcements from an external source.
However, this was a trivial matter.
“Child, don’t get so reckless in the future. It’s unbecoming of a noble to rashly lead troops alone…” Jonas admonished Leylin. If his only successor were to die in this battle, he would not be able to handle it.
“By the way, Father, please allow me to show off my spoils as well as the captives…” Leylin clapped his hands, and Jacob himself brought Steve up.
Though his limbs had already been cut off, and he was basically a cripple without the help of high-level divine spells, he still needed
to be watched.
“Oh?” Baron Jonas’ eyebrows lifted, not reacting at all to the captives and junk blades that Leylin showed. In his opinion, Leylin had merely eliminated a small wave of pirates, maybe less than 20 in total. They were probably fishermen who had lost to their desire for wealth, which was why he didn’t pay much attention to them.
But then Leylin lifted the black sack over Steve’s head, exposing the malicious face to the daylight. Due to the blood loss, his face had paled, which did nothing to reduce the fear caused from looking at his face. Even Mistress Sarah shrieked, taking a few steps back in her shock and disgust.
“Leylin, you frightened your mother. You shouldn’t dirty the eyes of a noblewoman with such a lowly captive…” Baron Jonas had been born as a noble of a military family, and he did not feel uncomfortable when met with this situation. But even his brows furrowed slightly.
Jonas could not understand why Leylin had brought a disgusting captive with sweat, blood and grievous wounds in front of him. What he did not see was that the elite warriors behind him now had a different look in their eyes. Although Steve was crippled, the thick calluses on his body and the firm muscles mixed with the powerful aura of a high-ranked fighter that had yet to dissipate. They had an inkling about what this was.
“This is Steve, leader of the Black Tigers.” Leylin said simply, but that caused Baron Jonas’ eyes to widen.
“Gods!” Baron Jonas no longer cared about the filth on Steve’s body as he approached him, pushing aside the messy hair at his forehead to size him up carefully.
“Indeed it’s him. This is the leader of the Black Tigers, rank 10 fighter Steve! Numerous large chambers of commerce have jointly set up a bounty of 500 gold coins for his capture! One of the
bounty postings is even at our port, I couldn’t get it wrong…”
A long while later, the baron sighed and stared at his son with a complicated expression. This child seemed to always surprise him. His expedition might even have resulted in him being killed by assassins had Leylin not requested Ernest to come help out. Still, he asked with disbelief, “Since Steve is here, where’s the Black Tigers?”
“They’ve been wiped out,” Leylin answered lightly. Jacob and the soldiers behind puffed up their chests in pride, staring hard at the elite warriors behind the Baron.
“Good! Seems like we need to have a serious talk.” Baron Jonas had a complicated expression on his face.
After Leylin came back, laughter and merriness returned to the manor once more. Even the housekeeper Leon, who always looked gloomy, revealed a rare smile as he directed Clara and Claire to prepare the banquet.
During this period of preparation, the baron stayed in his study room, having chased the maids out to leave only Leylin and Ernest behind other than himself.
“The information Leylin provided was very helpful. Even though I had to pay a huge price, I’ll take care of the issues with the church of knowledge…” Baron Jonas’ voice was hoarse and low. Leylin astutely noticed his bloodshot eyes and the bits of white hair near his ears.
It was obvious that being oppressed by a person of high status like Marquis Louis left the baron stressed and vexed. Though they could now act a bit more freely, the trauma from the Marquis’ actions had yet to dissipate.
“It’s only my duty. After all, I’m part of the Faulen Family!” Leylin appeared to be very humble.
This attitude had Baron Jonas nodding inside, “Since we know who our opponent is, things will be easier. Though I met with a
few assassination attempts during the trip to the continent, I’m thankfully unharmed. I even got to see Earl Griffith!”

“Earl Griffith, the warlord of that place?” Leylin’s eyes twinkled, immediately remembering him. It seemed that Baron Jonas had paid a price, yielding a share of profits to acquire some support from the regional nobility.

“They’ve dispatched a group of horsemen with numerous rank 5 fighters. The leader is a rank 9, which will be enough to ensure the safety of our manor…” Baron Jonas watched Leylin with a sorry look in his eyes.

He believed that the assassination attempt on his son was because he had taken most of the elites. If not for that, he wouldn’t have been forced to struggle against a terrible group of pirates. He had tried to leave behind Ernest and Jacob who were both Professionals to protect the port. However, relying on the protection of others was not a long-term solution. Leylin frowned slightly.

Baron Jonas saw all this, and it caused him to nod even more. ‘This child already has enough wisdom to lead our family.’

“Well then, how do you think Steve should be dealt with? After all, he is your prisoner…” Baron Jonas chuckled, wanting to see how Leylin would act.

“Dispatch a messenger to make negotiations and then return him to Marquis Louis. In exchange we can set up a peace treaty. How about that? Our family is quite weak after all…” Leylin did not hold back as he spoke.

“Good!” Baron Jonas was on the verge of applauding his child. He definitely had not been so rational at such an age; he would have complained about his vengeance after the humiliation.

Seeing this ability to give up and maintain a low profile, Baron Jonas would hand the family over to Leylin even if he was useless in other areas.
“Who do you think is the most suitable?”
“Bishop Tapris of the church of knowledge. He’s a friend to both sides, so he would make a suitable messenger.” Leylin emphasised that he was a ‘friend’, and Baron Jonas obviously could tell what Leylin was implying.
He muttered to himself, “He is a good choice…”
With his status as a bishop of the church of knowledge, Tapris was the most suitable mediator. He could even increase the prestige of the god of knowledge this way, so he probably wouldn’t reject them.
After everything was settled, Leylin mumbled, “Father, I still have some things to tell Master Ernest…”
Leylin’s solemn tone immediately had Jonas on his guard. He glanced towards Ernest, and the man immediately flicked his fingers. He’d cast Nondetection and Sound Isolation.

With all the preparation done, Leylin spoke quietly, “I’ve already become a rank 7 wizard…”

“What? …. Wha– what?” Ernest’s eyes grew as round as saucers. He’d been completely thrown off his lack of reaction.

“Hasn’t it been less than a year since you broke through to rank 6?” Ernest’s expression was comical, as if he wanted to both cry and burst out in laughter.

“Oh Goddess, do you speak the truth?” Ernest’s face was on the verge of pressing into Leylin’s nose.

“In the name of the Goddess of the Weave, Mystra, I swear that all I say is true!” Leylin looked serious as he swore on the name of the goddess that numerous wizards held faith in.

The price of offending the Goddess of the Weave was that one could possibly be permanently restricted from using the Weave, rendering them a piece of trash. Leylin’s pledge was very serious, and Ernest believed him immediately.

“Heavens, what are you? A bastard son of Mystra?” This rate of advancement immediately depressed Ernest. He was still a mid-rank 9 wizard, so by the looks of it Leylin would probably catch up to him in a year or two.
It was normal to be overtaken by one’s student, but to be surpassed by a punk who wasn’t even twenty yet? Ernest grew very dispirited, almost on the verge of hiding away into a corner and drawing circles on the ground. Meanwhile, Baron Jonas turned awkward, not getting it at all. He truly knew little about wizards, so he immediately suppressed his awkwardness to ask, “Ernest, my friend, what does this mean? Why the reaction?”

“Oh, my apologies, my friend!” Ernest flushed, and then replaced that with more fervour, “Leylin is a fifteen year old rank 7 wizard! From what I know this talent puts him among the top hundred talents of the past 300 years!”

At this point, he turned serious, “Don’t underestimate this ranking. Many of them became great wizards in the future, with some even becoming Legends…”

“…Cough cough… So…” This instantly shocked Baron Jonas. He watched his son, eyes full of disbelief.

“While I don’t have any acknowledgment from the wizard guild, it’s no problem to cast rank 3 spells…” Leylin looked towards his mentor, “If news of this gets out during negotiations, do you think Marquis Louis will back off?”

The great chances of Leylin becoming a great wizard was enough to inspire fear. After all, few high-ranked wizards in the Dambrath Kingdom obeyed the royal family. If they found out that the Faulen Family had a genius wizard, the possibility of the other side conceding was high.

Of course, the other possibility was that they would be driven into a corner, sparing no expense to eliminate Leylin so as to avoid any repercussions. This way, they would not be harmed. Of course, they might be driven to a corner and spared no expense to kill Leylin in order to take care of whatever repercussions there might be. This way, they would not be at harm.
“Well, that’s very possible, but there are also other options. After all, growth and talent don’t represent power…” Ernest warned.
“No, no! This news absolutely cannot get out. I will send down an order for everyone to keep their lips sealed!” Baron Jonas immediately understood. Even if there was a mere 0.0001% possibility, he was unwilling to risk Leylin dying. After all, with Leylin’s talent, it would only be a matter of time before he became a high-ranked wizard if nurtured well. He even had hope to become a Legend! Compared to that, the losses now meant nothing.

Seeing his father and master so resolute, Leylin could only laugh wryly and toss this thought away.
“Alright! However, Father, please allow me to train my magic in secret outside the manor in the future…”
“Training in secret…?” Ernest could not understand it. Wizards weren’t the kind to practice hard like that; was there a need to abandon a life of luxury in order to train one’s will?
But watching this student of his, a 15 year old who had become a rank 7, Ernest wisely chose to shut his mouth. Leylin’s achievements would represent everything. Who knew, this method could allow him to make rapid progress.
Ernest touched his chin, feeling that he might should probably start training like this.
“Since your mentor isn’t against it, I have no opinions. Remember that you’re the future of our family, always prioritise your safety! Even if I were to lose the Faulen Island, I can’t lose you. Do you understand?” Baron Jonas warned.
“Yes!” Leylin nodded then followed up, “There’s something else, and it regards the management of the family.”
“Oh! Seems like you’re giving me a lot of surprises today!” Baron Jonas was actually extremely fatigued now, but he still rubbed at the area between his eyebrows, looking like he was listening
closely.
“I think we should alter our system of giving rewards based on the services rendered at our family port.”
Leylin’s first words were already astonishing, “I noticed that this occurred because we’re too weak to protect our own territory. It’s likely that we’ll have a lot of enemies coveting our land. We need to recruit even more soldiers and Professionals to expand out power, which means we need more sources of revenue.”
“That’s easy to say, but most of the trade on these seas is taken up by Marquis Louis’ Baltic archipelago. What can we offer?” Baron Jonas smiled wryly. No noble would reject opportunities to expand their strength and wealth. He’d also explored this before, but had not gotten any gains.
“Leylin must’ve mentioned this because he has a proposal. Let’s consider it first.” Ernest was aware that this student of his always made plans before acting, and would never say anything without thinking it through beforehand. This aroused his interest.
“I’ve checked, and there are only three things that make great profits with a foundation in sea trade: slaves, sea salt and sugar,” Leylin’s eyes glinted, “The slave trade has a bad reputation and it’s been controlled by Marquis Louis. We can’t interfere with that, so I’d choose sea salt and sugar!”
“Sea salt and… sugar?” Baron Jonas scratched his hair in confusion, “But our island isn’t anything like those in the south with spices and cane sugar. Those plants can’t survive here…”
“No! I plan to buy coarse sugar, and then refine it into high-grade white sugar for sale. As for the sea salt, I’m planning to use fish floss!”
“Fish floss?!”
“Yes! Mash the flesh of the fish and dry it in the sun, and then use techniques to preserve it for a long time. Because there’s salt and meat, I’m sure it will be welcomed by the commoners and
adventurers on the continent!”

Leylin was someone who’d travelled over from another world. He’d be foolish if he didn’t use the knowledge he gained from his previous world to gain some benefits. Though there were differences in the physical laws of the two worlds, there were still some similarities. Concerned about the family’s strength, Leylin was trying to expand their revenue to help himself in the future. He’d long since thought this through.

While he only somewhat remembered the methods to refine sugar and create fish floss by drying them in the sun, that was alright. He was a noble! As long as he supplied them with a general idea, his underlings would make it a reality. Though Leylin remembered a lot more as well, he’d run tests through the years and he realised that he could only build an industry around these two items, they complemented the laws of the World of Gods.

As for other techniques, it wasn’t that they could not be used, but they would destabilize the situation now. Paper would definitely be valued highly by the church of knowledge, so he could easily gain the favour of Oghma. However, he would attract the ire of the other gods, and Leylin was afraid of that.

Refined sugar and fish floss were two things that wouldn’t have as great an effect.

After Leylin explained his thoughts on this industry, Baron Jonas sank into deep thought. While he did not know about this, Leylin’s words seemed to be plausible. At the very least, Ernest beside him had eyes that were twinkling as if he had seen sudden huge profits. “In that case, you can try that!” At the end, Baron Jonas agreed. After all, Leylin had proven with his battle achievements that he was not just a braggart. What was the harm of letting him try? At worst, it could be considered business training.

As a successor of a noble family, one might not need to know how
to manage businesses, but they couldn’t afford to be cheated by businessmen.
“However, be cautious!” Jonas warned after thinking it over once more. He was still worried.
“I understand. Many thanks, Father!” Leylin stood and bowed.
In reality, he just needed to have the approval of the Baron in name. As for the people and money? Steve would probably be more than ‘willing’ to provide that.
“The banquet’s almost prepared, let’s go together. By the way, where’s your cousin Isabel?” Jonas asked suddenly at the end.
“Oh… I let her leave…” Leylin’s eyes flashed with his unhesitating answer. He still didn’t want to divulge the fact that he was establishing a pirate crew.
“Is she gone? That’s good too!” Baron Jonas nodded and did not ask more, leaving with his hands behind his back.
It was evident that he’d long since had his own conjectures on Isabel’s change. However, the situation had been urgent then, and he’d felt bad about abandoning a diligent branch member of the Faulen Family. That was why he’d said nothing then, and now that she’d left, there would now be no awkwardness between them.
'Looks like Father already knew about it long ago…’ Leylin immediately arrived at his own conclusion after listening to the baron’s words. Had he not promptly made the decision to send Isabel away, the baron would perhaps have dealt with her upon his return. After that, terrible rumours might have spread, and his cousin might even have ‘died of illness’. After all, the churches in this world did not even slightly tolerate the followers of devils and demons, and even their friends and family would be implicated. With a tacit mutual understanding, the father and son went to the banquet, as if they had completely forgotten about Isabel. The banquet was bustling with noise and excitement. Xuno, that wandering bard who had been seen at the port lately, had come to perform. His voice was as sweet as a skylark’s, and the few short poems he recited earned cheers from the whole hall. However, when it was over, Leylin saw that Xuno was invited to his father’s study room. It seemed like the Baron had not invited him purely for the performance. However, that meant nothing to Leylin. He was planning to move out after the banquet, giving the pirates their orders and settling matters regarding the trade. Of course, he had to ease the tension in his family’s relationship with Viscount Tim, handing over the prisoner and signing an agreement.
*Thump!* A crisp slap landed on a young man’s face, making his fair skin swell into a bruise.

“Gods, how could I have gotten such a stupid child like you!”

A furious middle-aged man dressed in exquisite noble attire stood in front of the youth. Complex designs were sewn in with golden thread on the fringe of his clothing, fully in the elven style. Exotic rings laden with precious gems lined all ten of his fingers in varying colours, and a few of them emitted powerful magical light.

This was the person controlling the Baltic archipelago, the younger blood brother of the Dambrath King. It was Marquis Louis.

The king obviously was not stingy when it came to titles, bestowing a dukedom upon him, but Louis evidently thirsted for power. Hereditary land was something even the children of the King might not be able to obtain.

Marquis Louis was very satisfied with the kingdom’s offshore development and the growing trade profits. The only thing that made him frown was that in this vast open sea, there was some land that belonged to small noble families, as well as a bunch of disobedient and barbaric pirates that were a thorn in his side. Hence, when his useless son begged for some territory, Marquis Louis had agreed.

However, looking at Viscount Tim in front of him now, he couldn’t help but feel resent for failing to meet his expectations. “You’re a disgrace! You do things without following any kind of rules. Not only do you try to assassinate someone on the continent, you can’t even take care of the sea! You even lost the Black Tigers…”

At this point, Marquis Louis felt a little sorry. While the deaths of those filthy despicable pirates didn’t faze him regardless of numbers, a rank 10 fighter like Steve was still a capable underling.
On top of that, his own group of bandit assassins had been lost. “Also!” Marquis Louis’ chest kept heaving up and down as he flung a letter at Tim’s face. “Look. This came specially for us from Griffith. Not only did you gain no advantages at all, you even pushed the Faulen Family towards those hicks!”

Tim let the letter smack on his face, feeling the unceasing stinging pain that caused his eyes to be filled with fiery fury.

Viscount Tim looked extremely similar to Marquis Louis, though he was much younger and had a pair of long and narrow eyes. He was now bowing respectfully, “Father, please give me another chance! As long as you assign Boruj to me, I can definitely…”

“Scram!” What answered him was only a hysterical yell from the Marquis.

The door slammed shut, and Tim gently caressed his swollen face. The stinging pain doubled the fury in his heart.

The surrounding maids and the like naturally did not dare provoke Tim, who was in this state. All of them fervently wanted to be ostriches so they could bury their heads in the carpet. However, another noble youth strolled in with a mocking expression.

“Haha… my beloved little brother, you seem to have met with some trouble!”

“Big brother!” Tim clutched his face, feeling dazed and awkward when looking at the new arrival. This was the marquis’ first son, born of his primary wife. Hee would one day take over the Baltic archipelago. Given that his mother was a noble as well, his status was much higher than that of Tim, who could only rely on the whims of the marquis.

“Oh my, are you injured? Quick, get a priest!” The young man shouted at the servant behind him, as if he was an elder brother caring for his younger brother. However, Tim could see the mockery deep inside his eyes…

“Damn it. Damn it!” Only when he’d walked out of the mansion
did Tim’s expression darken. “I’ll never let the people who’ve humiliated me off. I swear on it!”
“And then there’s the Faulen Island, and that little noble called Leylin. I’ll definitely force you all to hell and have you repent there!” Tim’s expression was sinister, like a savage beast that was letting out howls of pain.

……

Leylin naturally knew nothing of this, but he could somewhat guess what was happening. However, his attention was now focused on other matters.
The place that Leylin had chosen to hide away in was at the other end of the Faulen Island. Since they hadn’t occupied this place for a long while, they didn’t have as many farmers and slaves as they’d need to occupy the whole island. Leylin chose this area because there were few people, and also because he favoured the low-lying shoal nearby. Such a level terrain was very rare on the Faulen Island, and enough for Leylin to do a great many things.
Up till now, Leylin had only built a few wooden plank houses nearby, as if preparing to go into training. He was kept updated on his family through Jacob.
“The prisoner was handed over, but Tim refused to sign an agreement?” Leylin stared at the coastline in the distance, his eyes flashing.
“Yes, young master!” Jacob stood behind Leylin, looking humble and respectful. After the few battles before, he was completely subservient to Leylin, and his loyalty could even be comparable to Baron Jonas’.
Staring at the blue surface of the sea for a long while, Leylin suddenly laughed and spoke slowly, “Seems like he’s unreconciled to this.”
“That’s for sure. However, he hinted that there would be no attacks against our family for now. The Baron has also agreed.”
“It’s just temporary peace. His plans were disrupted, so he needs to reorganise everything. We need to amass some strength here.”
Leylin could already tell what this was. It was no peace, just a temporary armistice. Once they reorganised, they would definitely attack the family once again.
Of course, Leylin did not mind this, what he needed right now was time.
“How’s the preparations on the slaves we need, the coarse sugar and the fishing boats?” Leylin enquired. This was the preparation for the sugar and fish floss trade that he had brought up with the baron earlier.
“I’ve already found a merchant in the port, and he’s willing to give us a channel for the slaves and sugar. As for the fishermen and fishing boats, an announcement has been pasted on the territory; commoners who come willingly will get a discount from taxes…”
Jacob reported deferentially.
“Good. Don’t worry about the finances. Steve’s little treasury should somewhat be enough for the initial investment. Father has already to let me use everything…” Before handing the slave over, Leylin had naturally squeezed out all the value that Steve had left and obtained his precious wealth.
He’d also learned of the locations that had treasured buried in them. Pirates usually used gold which was a stable currency, and the habit of hiding it on barren islands.
It all added up to around a thousand gold coins, which was enough early money. There would be more money required near the end, but Leylin had already prepared Isabel and the pirates for that.
“Slave trade? I’ll need slaves that are proficient at carpentry and masonry. I don’t mind if they’re pricy…” The Dambrath Kingdom was expanding into the seas, and numerous barren archipelagos
were found. There were many natives, tropical forests, minerals, primordial creatures on the islands. Of course, there were also many diseases and death. As the commoners of the continent rarely agreed to follow their master and find new land, slaves were essential if one wanted to completely develop an island.

Marquis Louis of the Baltic archipelago was the one with the most profits from the trade. He had a tremendous supply chain that had deals with pirates and its own slave hunting outfit. Untrained slaves were naturally the lowest class, and could only be used in wrestling rings or as sacrifices to gods. Once they were tamed, natives would be worth twice as much, and if they could plow land or had skills with carpentry and masonry, the price would keep going up.

However, they were still the lowest of the low. High-grade slaves were actually Professionals, or gorgeous women who had gone through special training. Every one of them could be sold in the continent for an astronomical price!
“Slave trade, hehe…” Leylin snickered. While Marquis Louis’ business was focused on the slave trade, Leylin wouldn’t believe that the Baltic archipelago wasn’t involved in the sugar trade and the like. At the most, they would be side businesses is all.

He knew very well that if he was successful in forming a supply chain with this, his profits would be massive! It would bring about a lot of envy and hatred, causing conflict with Marquis Louis. However, even if he didn’t delve into these two very profitable businesses, the Faulen Island wasn’t going to be ignored anyway. What was the point of trying to get along with them?

As he was speaking to Jacob, a group of slaves were rushed along to the beach by his soldiers, accompanied by carriages of food and the like.

“Jacob, let’s go and take a look as well.” Leylin brought Jacob to the front of the group.

“Young master!” The soldiers bowed, and the slaves lowered their heads, peeking at their future master with humble eyes.

“Are these… the natives of the outer sea islands?” Leylin knew that most of the slaves traded in the outer seas were natives. In fact, the higher grade ones were picked out and sent back to the mainland. Transporting slaves from the mainland to the outer seas was expensive, and slave traders would be satisfied if they didn’t make a loss with such a thing.
The natives here were very short, coming up to Leylin’s shoulder at the tallest. Most did not have any clothing, revealing their thin limbs and tanned skin. It reminded Leylin of chimps.

“Young master, there are a total of twenty slaves. With three of them being carpenters and another two stonemasons, it comes up to a total of 321 gold coins…” In reality, the price of these stonemasons and carpenters probably took up more than half of the total price.

“Mm…” Leylin nodded. Even this slight amount had caused him to spend a portion of his recent profits. Relying on slaves in order to build up the business he was thinking of was a pipe dream, Leylin wouldn’t put his hopes on it.

“Your mission is to build a camp for me here. Of course, fences are necessary as well.” Leylin naturally did not understand the language of the natives, but that was no issue for wizards. Comprehend Languages could solve that. While these low-ranked spells could not analyse the languages of demons, the heavens, and all sorts of highly ranked languages of law, it would be more than enough for these natives.

After hearing Leylin’s words, the group of slaves began to get restless.

“Quiet!” Leylin flicked his finger, and a ray of lightning shot out.

*Pila!* As if something huge had happened, many of the natives crouched down or even knelt after the violent streak of lightning passed.

Rank 0 spell: Lightning Lure!

“As you can see, I am a wizard that possesses immense strength. These fully equipped soldiers will continue to monitor you, so don’t even think about escaping or you’ll all be hanged. On the other hand, if you’re hardworking and complete your task in time, I’ll give you a reward, and even dismiss you from slavery.” Leylin’s hands glinted with sparks, making him look like a god in the eyes
of the slaves.
In reality, wizards had always been rare existences in the World of Gods; there likely weren’t many even serving under Marquis Louis. This abnormal strength was the best way to terrorise these natives, having them believe he was a spirit of the elements or worship him like a god.
At this moment, there was a disturbance amongst the slaves. One of them who looked rather old crawled to Leylin’s feet, kissing the ground. “Powerful being who grasps the power of lightning, Nunooker is willing to listen to your teachings and obey your commands!”
“Very good! Nunooker, you shall lead these slaves from now.” They’d already been tamed by the trader’s leather whips, so Leylin could understand this situation. Whatever it was, the first ones to surrender their loyalty to him would be rewarded.
Nunooker was elated and he kowtowed again and again, “Esteemed master, Nunooker will definitely manage your assets well.”
“Mm… Tell them that those who are diligent will have enough black bread and fish soup.” After taking care of these matters, Leylin retreated to his own room. He just had to give the slaves a general idea, they would do the rest. The remaining bit would be left to Jacob to handle.
The first thing the frenzied slaves built were a few simple and crude houses. These would be their temporary residences as they built to the plans that were created by Leylin, making good use of every inch of land here.
Night fell. Having stuffed themselves with black bread, mushy fish meat and seaweed soup, the slaves slumbered deeply. In their eyes, someone like Leylin who possessed extraordinary strength yet was benevolent enough to let them eat well was a good master that was hard to come by.
A few soldiers patrolled next to the slaves’ accommodations,
swapping out from time to time. While it wasn’t likely that the slaves would escape, Jacob had still arranged this.

In the deep, quiet night, the soldiers huddled around a bonfire. They looked listless, their eyelids about to fall shut at any moment. None of them noticed that their young master had left.

Fly! Leylin’s body soared into the air, flying at a speed of 60 feet a second. He quickly left the vicinity of the camp.

“I can finally fly, but it’s so slow!” Having grasped rank 3 spells, Leylin now had the ability to fly again, but the speed was not enough to please him.

In reality, wizards that could fly not only possessed the ability to quickly leave the battlefield in dire situations, but also to turn into death gods in the skies. Since most troops lacked the ability to fend off aerial strikes, wizards could hover in the air and cast spells from above like a nightmare!

Under the bright white moonlight, the surface of the sea was clear and gleaming, having a cold aura. The deep sea was filled with dangers, and numerous sea monsters began foraging for food in the night.

A black pirate ship was still, anchored on the surface of the sea. A swordswoman with a black longsword was standing on the deck, clad in skintight armour as if in wait for something.

*Whoosh!* A dark shadow slowly appeared by the horizon, and then turned into a human figure.

“Cousin Isabel, Robin Hood!” Leylin landed on the deck and acknowledged the two.

“Kid, why are you only just getting here!” Isabel whined, though there was no trace of discontent in her expression.

“Young master!” Compared to her, Robin Hood was more respectful. After all, a wizard that could fly had immense destructive power when above the sea. Robin Hood knew this very well.
Most of the times, such wizards could send their opponents on their way before the ships could even line up with each other for battle. “Call all sailors to deck!” Leylin commanded. Followed by a disturbance, numerous sailors gathered together. Amongst them were guards originally from the Faulen Family, although most of them were Black Tigers.
Now, however, all that was left in their eyes was fear, and their numbers seemed to have lessened. Leylin scanned the area, and Isabel lowered her head with burning cheeks. Robin Hood stood out, “Young master, in order to tame the pirates, we had no choice but to kill a few people to set a precedent…”
‘That’s probably not all…’ Leylin glanced at Isabel but did not pursue this further. All he needed was for these pirates to be obedient anyway.
Leylin’s eyes scanned the crowd. He then announced, “I have gathered you now because I’m planning to establish a private raiding fleet!”
It seemed like these people had already had their suspicions. They accepted the truth calmly, and the eyes of Robin Hood and a few others even flushed red with desire.
There were few truly good men who accompanied Baron Jonas to the barren island as he developed the territory. His companions had likely done all sorts of things in their free time, including playing at piracy. They might even have had the baron’s tacit approval and support.
Leylin made plans for the family of those who had been guards to move to his camp. This would allow him to care for them, and control the spread of the news. While it was impossible to hide this for long from the baron, things would have all been done by then and he could do very little to interfere.
As for the pirate slaves, loyalty, justice and things like that didn’t compare to money for them. As long as Leylin achieved victory
after victory as he led them to gain wealth, they wouldn’t mind even if their leader was a demon!
Of course, his subordinates now were a standard mob, and Leylin urgently needed a victory to stimulate them.
‘On top of that, I need to maintain my reputation, and I’ll need to disguise this Black Tiger ship. At the very least, I’ll need some remodeling…’ Leylin stamped the deck under his feet.
“Don’t call me young master in the future. Call me Captain or Sire, is that understood?” he commanded. While it sounded dreadful for a noble to partake in piracy himself, it was nothing new. However, he still needed to maintain a reputation. He couldn’t do such things openly.
If Leylin were to be killed during a raid, the baron could not take revenge openly, and at most, do something in private.
“Yes, Captain!” Robin Hood quickly reacted.
“Good! Weigh the anchor! Set the sail! Let us plunder everything!”
pirate ship drifted quietly in the pitch black of the night. A crimson skeletal flag fluttered in the wind, holding an aura of death.

Within the captain’s room, the rocking hull did not affect Leylin the least. He was now on the upper levels with Isabel, Robin Hood and a few others, discussing their current target.

“We have over fifty sailors, but their quality is…” Robin Hood shook his head, evidently not thinking well of the sailors that had recently pledged their allegiance.

This was the truth anyway. Without the threat of death, they would not have submitted so quickly. However, having them show their loyalty was practically a joke. If there was a chance, they would definitely betray Leylin and escape without hesitation, even plunge a knife into his and the others’ hearts.

“I know this very well, but loyalty can’t be developed in just a day or two. Time will also help us phase out the people who intend to disobey…” Leylin’s voice was very calm yet held an exceptional callousness. Isabel and Robin Hood felt like they could see the near future of the many pirates, and their executions by Leylin for all sorts of reasons.

“I’m planning to develop a base to produce fish floss on Faulen Island. We’ll need a lot of money and slaves for it, and it’s too much to handle if we depend on our territory alone. We need to get this done, by hook or by crook.” Leylin stuck a dagger at a point
on the map.

The primitive method of the accumulation of wealth was a drawn-out process. If one wanted to speed it up, there would definitely be blood and sin involved. Leylin did not have the skills to slowly guide an industry. He would only go on raid after raid to quickly build up a production line. Marquis Louis hadn’t given him much time, and he was running out.

Leylin never believed in random outside protection, believing that it would only bring about tragedy to entrust his life to someone else. Hence, he would rather take some risks to increase his strength, and expanding his trade profits was just one part of it. After this was done, he’d launch a series of attacks to set his opponents back in the region.

While Isabel and Robin Hood were unaware of Leylin’s thoughts, the murderous aura that he emanated caused them to involuntarily shiver.

“This is… the Half-Merfolk Island!” Robin Hood was the first to recognise the name of the island that Leylin had his eyes on, and he gasped, “There’s a famed group called the Merfolk Pirates occupying the place!”

“A group that Marquis Louis controls,” Leylin added coldly. How could he not have pried open Steve’s lips for such information? The man had been the captain of the Black Tigers, after all.

It was undeniable that a rank 10 fighter had a stronger will, but he was only able to hold on for half an hour longer than the assassin from before.

‘Hehe… He’s but a cripple in body and mind now. Even if Marquis Louis heals him, he’ll have a headache over this!’ Leylin snickered inside. If there were grades for torture and interrogation, he would definitely be a grandmaster.

Having gone through his hands, Steve had completely broken down. Perhaps even if the highest-ranked priest cast Regenerate
and other spells on him, it would be difficult for him to return to his previous state.
Leylin suspected that Louis’ side would just kill Steve right away, it wasn’t worth inviting a high-ranked priest to cast divine spells. Even if many priests cast divine spells to heal others for a fee, it was very expensive to invite a high-ranked one. Even the sale of a rank 10 fighter couldn’t cover such a cost.
“The outer seas right now are just being discovered and developed. There’s no order here, only chaos…” Leylin’s palm caressed the map on the table, covering a large area, “Numerous adventurers, nobles and pirates rush to this place, but they can’t even get to developing 10% of the islands. Just 10% alone signifies an astonishing amount of profit and wealth!
“Our final goal is to subdue or eliminate all the pirates in this region, making us the undisputed kings of this dark world. Let all those of other flags end up struck down to the bottom of the sea!”
Leylin’s voice was low, but these calm words seemed to be filled with an allure that caused Robin Hood’s breathing to grow rough.
In some areas, Leylin was even better than a devil at persuasion and negotiation. The promise of a beautiful future seemed to have moved the first mate.
“We have a huge advantage here, compared to those regions where the power struggle is complicated. There are no extremely powerful organisations to hinder us, only our greatest enemy in Marquis Louis.” Leylin smirked.
Marquis Louis had control over the Baltic archipelago and practically over 60% of the new trade in this region. Hence, he’d become the rule setter here, and his profits were unimaginable to most.
Leylin’s goal was to eliminate him and become the boss! The smart followed the rules, while the wise created them themselves. Leylin was going to completely destroy Louis, and make his own laws.
To attack Louis, it was necessary to first eliminate his subordinates and the pirates he commanded.

“Do you still have anything against my decision?” Leylin glanced at Robin. As for his cousin? As long as this had anything to do with Louis’ family, she was likely eager to join.

“No, Captain! I obey your every command!” Robin Hood immediately bowed, pledging himself with a serious expression.

“Good! There are only three large pirate organisations in this region, the Black Skeletons, Tigersharks, and Barbarians. Once we annex the Merfolk Pirates, we’ll be somewhat comparable to them.” What Leylin did not make clear was that the two of these three pirate organisations were linked in countless ways with Marquis Louis, and the Marquis might even be the one in control from the shadows.

If any of them had been sent to attack Leylin’s family, his only choice would have been to escape with Mistress Sarah. However, Louis had evidently underestimated Leylin’s side. That was why Leylin had managed to seize such an opportunity. Things would not be as easy the next time.

“Black Tigers, Merfolk, Black Skeletons and Tigersharks. These look like all of the pirates that Louis’ family has control over…” Leylin’s eyes glinted, ‘If two of them are taken care of at one go, I’m sure he’ll have a spectacular expression on his face!’

Robin Hood was a very good navigator, and after Leylin sent down the order he immediately used the stars to determine the location of the ship. He altered the shipping route so that they headed towards the Half-Merfolk Island.

The Black Tiger gradually left the shallow seas in the tranquil night, heading for the more mysterious and treacherous deep waters.

‘It’ll take a day or two of travel to get to Half-Merfolk Island…’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled. With the help from the A.I. Chip, his calculative abilities still far surpassed his first mate and navigator
even without a moving scale or any tools. Just when Leylin was about to blow out the lights, a disturbance was heard. There were even sounds of weapons clashing, causing Leylin to frown.

“What happened?” Leylin furrowed his brows, putting on a coat and heading out. Isabel walked over from the room next to his. When they got outside, the yells and curses grew even clearer.

“The sailors are rebelling?” Leylin indifferently walked with Isabel to the deck. Many of the prisoners stood together on deck, holding machetes and all sorts of weapons. They had forced Robin Hood and a few soldiers into a corner.

Compared to the thirty to forty people here, Robin Hood’s few subordinates seemed lonely and weak.

“How senseless!” Leylin flicked a finger, and a few pirates that were in the way turned into ice statues. The rest of the pirates moved away in fear, allowing Isabel and him to walk all the way to the deck.

“My apologies, young master! After hearing that we’re going towards the outer seas tonight, the sailors all began to rebel!” Robin Hood’s forehead was beaded with sweat as he explained to Leylin. Many dangerous sea monsters liked to forage in the night, and unless they were exceptionally powerful fleets, nobody dared to head towards the deep seas now.

On top of that, these pirate captives weren’t all that obedient from the start, and were full of rebellious spirit. They were also a majority, which meant that it wasn’t unexpected for them to rise in revolt, especially with people deliberately stirring up the situation.

“Seems like Isabel and Robin Hood listening isn’t enough to control them…” Leylin sighed from the bottom of his heart, and then walked ahead, “Put down your weapons, or you’ll regret it. When it comes to the outer seas, I can ensure that your safety is
guaranteed.”
“Don’t believe him! This son of a bitch and the woman from before just want us to die!” Just when the pirates were hesitant, a voice sounded from amongst the crowd.
“Come here!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed, and the mooring ropes placed at the ship’s railing seemed to gain lives of their own. They began to wave around, charging into the pirates like a python as they wrapped around one with triangular eyes, pulling him out.
“Vulgar maggot, did you think I can’t do anything against you if you hide in the shadows?”
With a flick of Leylin’s finger, a boiling hot fireball rushed out! It rumbled as it hit the bound pirate, lighting him up like a torch with sparks flying everywhere. Miserable cries sounded out, causing many pirates to retreat with fear on their faces.
“A wizard! It’s a wizard!” The pirates exclaimed. Most of the pirates had melee professions. True tall, rich, and cool wizards were a rare sight even amongst huge pirate groups.
Wizards were often more intimidatingly powerful than high-ranking fighters, knights and other such Professionals.

“I’ll count to three, and if you don’t put down your arms and kneel in surrender, you’ll follow his example!” With a tug of the rope, the charred remains were immediately scattered into the ocean. This intimidating strength immediately made many pirates think of retreating.

It was a pity that this was the ocean, and they were surrounded by water as far as the eye could see. Even if they wanted to run, they had nowhere to go.

“One.” Leylin’s face twitched as he announced without any hesitation.

“Two.” Two rays of ice flew out, turning the fleeing pirates into ice sculptures.

“Three!” Leylin’s eyes were filled with a heavy killing intent. These terrifying eyes finally led to the collapse of the pirates. They abandoned their weapons one by one, and knelt on the floor while weeping bitterly.

“Robin Hood, tie them all up!” Leylin rubbed his hands together. After all, he could not possibly kill all of these captive pirates. If he did, who would sail the ship?

In this world, a captain could only fight to the death in the face of mass mutiny. However, powerful people like him could put down
their entire crew with a hand tied behind their back. “As you command, Captain!” Although this was not the first time they had seen the young master’s power, the soldiers’ eyes were still filled with respect.

Given that those pirates didn’t dare to rebel, the soldiers on the deck could easily control them. Even if there were troubles on the ship, Isabel would resolve them before Leylin could even grow impatient.

Isabel would’ve taken care of the situation this time even if Leylin hadn’t. It was just that the situation would have ended up with many pointless deaths.

In the end, all of the captives who had taken part in the rebellion had been tied together and gathered on the deck. The soldiers and the rescued pirates who had not taken part in the rebellion erected several enormous wooden crucifixes there.

Leylin peacefully stood in front of the pirates, but he did not say a single word. However, this made the pirates begin to tremble in fear. Leylin was determined to go through with this purge, and did not have any intention of letting them off.

“Find me the leader of the rebellion!” With Leylin’s command, as well as the pirates identifying each other themselves, several wild and untameable ones were pushed out from the crowd.

“There’s only four or five? This is far too few!” Leylin shook his head, “Robin Hood, pick one out of every five to kill!”

Soon after, the remaining pirates huddled together in alarm. Robin Hood counted here and there, and every fifth pirate was immediately dragged out by the soldiers. This repeated until 5 poor devils had been chosen.

This was a method from Leylin’s previous life, called decimation. It was a way of investigation, used similarly to what he had employed to execute criminals.

“This is your sentence.” Leylin waved his hand, and his
subordinates quickly swarmed around the criminals, binding them on top of the crucifixes.

*Thud! Thud! Thud!* The other pirates were alarmed by the sounds as several nails were hammered into the offenders, even if they avoided the vitals. Drops of blood ran down the nails.

“Bastard! I won’t let you off!” “Even if I die, I’ll drag you to hell with me!” “My lord, please spare us! Please spare us!”

Blood-curdling screams rang out, intermixed with curses and pleas. “Aren’t you lively? I hope you can be like that tomorrow too!”

Leylin smiled faintly.

This method of crucifixion was very inhumane. The targets inched closer and closer to death as they gradually bled out. The sort of fear it induced could lead to a nervous breakdown in normal people.

These physically strong people could perhaps stay alive until the second day. However, that was of no use; it only meant more insane pain and torment.

The violent sunlight of the sea would drain them of every drop of moisture in their body, until they were mummified. And in the end, they could only chose between bleeding to death, dying from sunburn, or dying of thirst.

Many of the captives who thought of this scene were so frightened that they couldn’t help but wet themselves. They didn’t even dare to meet Leylin’s eyes; the smell of urine spread.

“As for the rest of you, I’ll be gracious and show you mercy. You will only receive ten lashes. Now all of you, clean the decks immediately! If I see even a single speck of dust tomorrow, you’ll have to lick it clean! Do you all understand?” Leylin shouted.

When grace was absent, the fear of death was an effective deterrent. Of course, the prerequisite was that one needed enough power. Still, who amongst Leylin’s subordinates could surpass him in strength?
*Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!* Leather whips specially soaked in seawater were used to punish these pirates. On one hand, the salt in the water would prevent the wounds festering, but on the other hand, the pain would be even more severe. These lucky pirates did not dare to grumble, and they began to clean up the deck even more quickly. Those who were currently crucified were deeply reminded of their betrayal.

‘Fear me, respect me, hate me!’ Leylin stood at the ship’s bow like a tall mountain, filled with a deep and immeasurable strength.

‘The hate and resentment of an ordinary person seem to result in some additional spiritual force and soul force emanating from them.’ Leylin shut his eyes, sensing the respect from the pirates on the ship.

‘What a pity… If this number was multiplied by a thousand times, and continued for over 10 years, it would be possible for me to comprehend divinity, and become a divine being.’ The power of fear was a standard tool for demons and devils. It was very effective, a god only needed to absorb the energy of faith arising from mortal fear. His subordinates’ shifting moods had allowed Leylin to touch on a path to divinity.

‘Pity. This method is completely undesirable, not to mention what the churches would do once they discover me trying to spread fear to become a god. Perhaps their first course of action would be to come and destroy me…’ It was very foolish to peep into the realm of gods without even becoming a Legend.

“Cousin, aren’t you going to rest?” Isabel arrived at Leylin’s side at this moment. She was the only one who would dare to do so.

At the same time, Leylin noticed that Isabel was looking at these condemned convicts with eyes filled with regret. Naturally, she wasn’t regretting their deaths, but she felt it was a great pity to lose so many sacrificial offerings.

“My dear cousin!” Leylin began as he watched Isabel, “You
shouldn’t just act according to the other party’s wishes when dealing with an abnormal life form. Sometimes you need to negotiate, and even refuse… Perhaps this can help you.”

Leylin took out a black notebook and passed it over to her.

“Rules of Negotiation with Abnormal Entities- Demon Edition!” Isabel let out a low cry. This book contained knowledge about demons, and to the churches it was a standard demonic item.

“This is part of my teacher’s collection, I copied it out using magic. Perhaps it can help you, don’t let anyone else see it,” Leylin smiled faintly. In fact, this was from Beelzebub’s memories. After all, he was the commander of the devils’ army, and he had a deep understanding of those demons that were his enemies.

At the same time, devils were also the greatest experts in deceit, threats, and modifying contracts. With Beelzebub’s knowledge, the least it could do was to ensure that she wouldn’t suffer too big a loss when making deals in hell or the abyss.

“Even if you sell your soul, make sure it fetches a good price. Don’t be swayed by a few words and offer it up without thinking it through. That would simply be too foolish…”

“T-Thank you!” Isabel hugged the black notebook close, as if it was her entire world.

“Also, it seems like we won’t get any rest tonight…” Leylin waved his hand and said to Isabel, “Be careful!”

“What should I be careful of… AH!” Isabel was rather doubtful, but she immediately felt a huge jolt. As she was still firmly holding onto the notebook with both hands, she almost fell to the deck.

At this moment, a pair of powerful hands held her up steadily.

“If you feel that the storm is too much, go back to your room and leave this place to me,” Leylin’s words were filled with self-confidence, and it seemed to give her a great sense of security. Isabel agreed in a rather foolish manner, and really walked back to her cabin.
Yet after a short moment, she’d changed into her leather armour and grabbed her longsword, rushing back out.
“I’ve put away the thing you gave me!” Isabel’s face was flushed as she flusteredly explained.
At this moment, Robin Hood’s voice rang out, sounding completely exasperated, “Tigershark! It’s a Mutant Tigershark!”
The expressions of the people on the ship immediately changed greatly. The Mutant Tigershark was a type of deep sea monster. It possessed an enormous body larger than ordinary whales, and it had a savage nature. It particularly enjoyed hunting at night.
This Tigershark’s body could easily flip over the Black Tiger. Such a thing was exactly why these pirates were so afraid of sailing at night.
“What are you panicking for? Calm down now!” Leylin’s voice spread immediately, charged with a pacifying force. In just a moment all of the alarmed pirates calmed down.
The ship’s hull was tilted to an alarming degree, and it was tipping further. It was like a powerful monster was shaking the bottom of the ocean. At this moment, everyone on the ship could only pin their hopes on Leylin, the wizard.
Isabel stood the closest to Leylin, and she discovered that he had a strangely excited expression on his face.
“Finally! I’ve been waiting for this. This opponent is mine, don’t interfere!” Without even waiting for her to respond, Leylin immediately jumped off the deck of the ship.
The bitterly cold seawater seemed to chill one to the bone as the mountainous black figure suddenly appeared in front of Leylin.


“Not bad, not bad. With this physique and abundant energy, it’s worthy of being called a deep sea creature…” Leylin’s eyes seemed to glow a crimson red.

Aquatic Swiftness! A glowing enchantment draped itself over Leylin’s body, and he obtained greater speed in the water. It made him as nimble in the water as he was on land.

An enormous sound wave spread out, causing massive vibrations. The forcefield around Leylin’s Mage Armour creaked, as if unable to bear the attack.

The Tigershark seemed to care very little for the insignificantly tiny Leylin, and it occasionally used its giant dorsal fin to smash against the Black Tiger. It looked like it wanted to flip the ship over.

In this situation, Leylin immediately arrived at the back of the Tigershark, and climbed up the coarse surface of the shark’s skin. “According to the perspective drawing on the map, it should be...
Numerous shadowy daggers suddenly appeared from Leylin’s hand as he shouted, “Cloud of Daggers! Ice Knife!”

*Shlook!* The ice daggers plunged into the Mutant Tigershark’s back, making it suddenly swing its entire body around. Copious amounts of fresh blood poured out from its wounds. Its sharkskin seemed like paper under Leylin’s attack.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* At this moment, the Mutant Tigershark’s body seemed to become a burden to it. As it was so enormous, it could only violently shake its body and hope that this would throw Leylin far away. It was to the point where the Tigershark once slammed the part of its body where Leylin was against the ship. It seemed to want to crush Leylin to death.

However, long before that enormous collision could occur, a glowing dagger that was the colour of blood appeared in Leylin’s hand, the Devilblood Dagger.

“Its artery is here!” Leylin’s eyes seemed to glow, and he stabbed down.

The Mutant Tigershark bellowed with rage, and its movements momentarily stilled. Afterwards, it began to sway and twitch even more violently than before, which made Leylin feel like he was riding a rollercoaster.

Leylin used Adhesion, and was finally able to stick firmly to the Tigershark’s body like a lizard. He felt a strong heat flowing from his palm, the dagger in it like a greedy devil that was relentlessly absorbing the Tigershark’s life force.

Accompanying the absorption of life force by the Devilblood Dagger, the Mutant Tigershark’s back began to atrophy first, exposing dried-up and eroded flesh. Following this, the corrosion began to spread. The Tigershark’s death throes were extremely violent. It gave up on the Black Tiger, and began to travel at a great speed into the sea, swimming deeper without stopping.
However, Leylin remained unmoved by the situation. The Tigershark had such a powerful body that the boost he gained from it was very considerable. He listened to the A.I. Chip’s constant prompts and saw his own slowly increasing stats, clearly feeling the surging life force of the creature constantly being drained. The Devilblood Dagger converted its life force into another form of energy, and transferred it into his body.

Finally, the Mutant Tigershark had one last spurt of movement before it stilled. Its malevolent eyes lost their lustre, and it slowly fell towards the seabed like a sunken ship, dead.

It did not end just like that. The Tigershark’s originally glistening skin had completely dried up, now looking like ancient tree bark even as it had shrunk to half its former size. If it was dissected, then it would be possible to see that the Tigershark’s internal organs had also lost all their life force and had become a pile of waste.

[Beep! Host has killed the Mutant Tigershark, and received a boost from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength has increased by 0.1, vitality increased by 0.3, spiritual force increased by 0.009.] At this moment, the A.I. Chip sent over its final summary, and Leylin noticed his updated stats.


‘This Tigershark seems to be much stronger than the assassin from before. However it only raised my stats a little, and the most it did was to raise my vitality by 0.3. My spiritual force doesn’t seem to have changed...’ Leylin’s expression was a little gloomy.

As his stats increased, and every stat broke through 10, the Devilblood Dagger would grow less useful. He would eventually grow completely immune to its effects.

‘However, the open sea is full of resources. Many drops of water
make up an ocean, so it should be enough to let me advance to become a rank 9 or even rank 10 wizard…” Leylin’s expression clouded over.

This was one of his plans. The Devilblood Dagger’s flesh devouring ability meant that outside of high-level Professionals, the only place that had enough flesh to feed it was the open sea. The bodies of deep sea creatures were terrifyingly massive, and organisms full of life force could be found everywhere.

Naturally, these monsters all had their own intelligence and faith, so slaughtering them as one pleased would damage one’s reputation and could even attract an intervention from the gods of other races. It could even draw the attention of druids, who were all lunatics and naturally hostile towards those who destroyed nature.

Now however, the blood on the Black Tiger had attracted the spontaneous attack of many monsters so it wasn’t possible to give them preferential treatment.

One could imagine that in the near future, more than one sea monster would be attracted by Leylin, and all of them would become an unending stream of life force, pushing forward his advancement.

Leylin’s body split open the surface of the sea with a loud splash, and he landed on the deck.

“Cousin Leylin! Are you alright?” Isabel looked at him worry in her eyes.

“I’m alright, continue sailing!” Leylin waved his hand, and all the sailors who heard his command suddenly became sluggish.

He was alright, but it was clear that the terrifyingly powerful monster from earlier was still howling unstoppably on the seabed. They could guess at the powerful battle that occurred after Leylin jumped into the sea, while standing on the deck.

It appeared like their captain could kill even a Mutant Tigershark! Very quickly, even the most frightening pirates looked at Leylin
with eyes filled with respect. They only admired the strong, and now that Leylin had revealed his savage nature, he had also exposed his own powerful abilities. This carrot-and-stick method was enough to subdue these old pirates. The subconscious actions of theirs made Leylin smile at the scene that would occur many, many more times in the future. After the battle of Half-Merfolk Island, he would possibly possess an army of pirates that only listened to him.

……

Under the sunny and cloudless sky, Robin Hood’s eyes were filled with unconcealed respect as he reported from behind Leylin. “Captain, we will arrive at Half-Merfolk Island in half an hourglass’ time!”

“I know, pass on the order. Prepare for battle!” Leylin looked out towards the distance, and seemed to be rather distracted. Yet Robin Hood did not notice that, and immediately began to carry out his order.

In reality, Leylin was experiencing an enormous change at this very moment. Ever since he had fought that Mutant Tigershark, he had also attacked various other sea monsters. Under Leylin’s Devilblood Dagger, they all became gifts of experience which helped his stats steadily rise.

The most important thing was that after the boost from this power, the A.I. Chip’s rate of analysing the Weave had increased greatly. Many rank 0 and 1 symbols glowed in front of Leylin, as if forming the mystery of the universe in their array.

Only when he heard a sharp and clear ring did Leylin snap out of his trance-like state. The A.I. Chip displayed its newest progress in front of him.

[Beep! Rank 1 Weave has been fully analysed! Progress is 100%]
The higher the rank of the Weave, the harder it was to analyse it. This was especially true of the rank 3 Weave, the analysis of which hadn’t even reached 1% yet. However, Leylin was already very satisfied.

[Beep! Rank 1 Weave has been fully analysed. The host now has all rank 1 magic models, and spells will not be deleted. Host is exempt from forgetting magic!] The A.I. Chip’s prompts came incessantly. Leylin now felt that a layer of the Weave had been uncovered, and many rank 1 spell models, from the most basic Alarm to the Endure Element spells and even frightening spells like the Necromancer’s Ray of Enfeeblement were displayed before him.

After the breakthrough of the rank 1 Weave, not only did was he exempt from all the limitations of rank 1 spell models, he could directly use spiritual force to perform magic. It even gave him a lot of authority within the Weave.

It could be said that the benefits brought about by the advancement were of greater help to him than advancing to a higher rank as a wizard, especially when he was on the verge of attacking Half-Merfolk Island.

Leylin couldn’t help but glance over his stats:


Day after day of sailing, as well as constantly attracting sea monsters, had made enormous contributions to his strength.
‘M
y spiritual force has reached another bottleneck. I might be able to break through after this battle.’ A month had yet to pass since Leylin broke through to rank 7 as a wizard.
This frightening pace of advancement was something even your average genius wouldn’t be able to match. His speed was absolutely monstrous.
Naturally, Leylin could only advance so quickly because of the Devilblood Dagger’s work, and even more so because of his strong foundation. It was because of his foundation that he could control the explosive increase in his life force and stats. In his situation, Isabel would long since have gone insane or become a devil.
“There’s a fleet ahead!” The pirate in the loft called out suddenly.
“I see the flag of the Merfolk Pirates, it’s their battleship!” Leylin did not feel particularly alarmed by this news. This sort of sneak attack couldn’t be successful over and over again.
The Merfolk Pirates would have long made preparations around their lair, and it wouldn’t have been difficult for them to spot him.
“Call the sailors out, prepare for battle!” The most important thing about naval warfare was long-distance ranged attacks and boarding. Under Robin Hood’s roar, tens of pirates and sailors stood out, their hands suffused in the blue light of weapons slicked with poison.
The Black Tigers who went up against the Merfolk Pirates had a
look of great apprehension in their eyes. Only the weapons in their hands and Leylin’s presence could calm them down slightly.

“These pirates need to undergo a longer period of training…” Isabel and Robin Hood came to Leylin with worried expressions. “Don’t worry, the battleground is the best teacher. Death will help weed out the trash. After all, if they still lose to the enemy even with the weapons I provided, then I won’t care even if they die,” Leylin’s expression was completely cool.

“This type of weapon…” Robin Hood raised up the longsword in his hand. The edge of the blade was suffused with a blue glow, which was clearly a powerful toxin. He had personally tested this poison, and discovered it had a powerful paralytic effect. Even a shark could not endure it for more than a few breaths. ‘This sort of poisonous weapon could fetch a price of more than ten gold coins in the black market…’ Robin Hood unconsciously licked his lips. He had a quiver of poison arrows on his back, which when combined with his archery skills gave him the confidence to challenge a rank 5 fighter.

‘I didn’t expect the boss to have mastered alchemy as well…” Robin Hood glanced at Leylin with eyes full of respect. Such an achievement made him feel even more fearful. If he ever offended his boss, he probably wouldn’t even realise how he died.

In reality, those poisonous reagents were a result of Leylin’s boredom. He was already a grandmaster in the field, and after familiarising himself with the flora and fauna of the World of Gods over a few years, his experience naturally translated into results. The raw material of these poisonous reagents was the juice of the most commonly seen pike fish on the Faulen Island. No matter who looked at it, they wouldn’t associate that fish with deadly poison.

Even cousin Isabel envied Leylin’s poison, and although she did not apply it to her own longsword, she still asked him for a small
bottle.
“Isabel, Faulen guards!” Leylin commanded.
“Boss!” This group of people were small in number, but they had the highest loyalty towards Leylin. Once they heard his command, they immediately assembled by his side.
“If you don’t obey,” Leylin added, his tone becoming even more stern.
“Pick up your weapons!” Once Leylin issued his command, the guards brought out their longswords. The icy blue glow they emitted filled many pirates with fear.
“Although I’ve already boosted their damage once, it’s better to have more insurance,” Leylin pointed his finger, and a shining spell entered Isabel’s black longsword.
This was Enchant Item, a rank 1 spell which could boost weapon damage as well as defence. Although Isabel had not soaked her own sword in poison, seeing her sword immersed in a layer of magical light caused a joyous expression to appear on her face.
After a weapon had been enchanted, even temporarily, its power far surpassed that of poisoned weapons. Of course, enchantments were more expensive as well.
However, Leylin’s act did not stop there.
Enchant Item was cast again and again as Leylin added a layer of enchantment to the weapons of all his own guards.
“Cousin, will you have enough spells after this? Don’t tell me you’ve used up all your spell slots to enchant weapons?” Isabel stood at the side as she watched the guards, and even the pirates, receive the same magical light to their swords. Her eyes were full of envy and she almost even drooled.
Enchanted equipment would increase an individual’s battle strength by leaps and bounds. Imagine if you struck someone, and your opponent’s weapon snapped in half, and even their armour would not be able to stop your sword. How would that make you feel?
With this support, those guards now had a lower chance of dying. This was Leylin’s goal, as these talented people were his true capital.
and the core of his strength. Family was still family, and they would receive differential treatment right from the beginning. Leylin surveyed his surroundings and was very satisfied with the result. “Did you see that? Demonstrate your loyalty to me in the future, and you shall have whatever you want!” Leylin shouted. Paired with his earlier use of magic, his voice was full of persuasive power.

At this moment, a small fleet appeared in the waters. It was a group made up of a battleship as large as the Black Tiger and two smaller boats, advancing in a threatening manner as they surrounded Leylin’s ship.

One could even see numerous pirates on the decks, as well as a pirate flag of a merfolk skeleton on their flagpole. “Welcome them on board. Prepare for a battle on the sea!” Robin Hood shouted. Many sailors could not help but firmly grasp their weapons, the only thing they could rely on to make themselves feel safe.

‘The Merfolk Pirates are close to the Black Tigers in strength. However, they have nearly 200 sailors, including merfolk, shark people, and even other marine tribes…’ Leylin’s keen eyes allowed him to see farther than others, distinguishing the characteristics of the opposing marine tribes. His eyes glowed with interest.

‘I wonder… What is the difference between the marine tribes here and the ones from the Magus World?’ Leylin knew that this question would soon be answered. Because after this battle, he would have an enormous number of test subjects to experiment on.

*Bang!* As soon as both sides were within a mile of each other, the opposing battleship let out a massive explosive sound. An enormously long harpoon was shot out towards them. *Shua!* The terrifyingly fast harpoon had immense kinetic energy, and only Leylin was able to see its orbit through the air.

Fresh blood flew into the air, and a great number of pained cries
immediately rang out. The harpoon penetrated several of the less able pirates who didn’t duck in time. It pierced through the Pirates, stringing them together like an iced candy haw on a stick (Red hawthorn fruit covered in liquid sugary syrup, with a stick piercing through the middle of 6-7 fruits, chinese street snack). It even pierced through the floor of the deck and embedded itself there. Fresh blood flowed from the harpoon, and the more tenacious pirates still managed to issue cries of pain as they attempted to struggle. This made the other pirates retreat, their eyes filled with fear.

‘These bastards! Luckily I never thought of depending on them!’ The dismal performance of the pirates made Leylin shake his head. He then winked at Isabel, and used a Flight spell to soar into the sky.

Once Leylin got closer, he could hear the commotion on the opposing ship. “Wizard! The enemy has a wizard!” “Prepare your bows and arrows!”

Powerful spell casters had a strong reputation that spread throughout the continents of the World of Gods. Why a respected wizard would join the pirates and suddenly attack was something the Merfolk Pirates could not understand. However, the fear had already taken root, leaving them bewildered and open to attack.

The fluttering arrows soared into the sky, but lost their energy mid-air like kites with their strings cut. They swayed here and there as they fell.

At Leylin’s height, if they wanted to really threaten him, they had to have a Professional who used bows, such as a Ranger or an Archer. However, it was obvious that the opposing group would have a limited number of these talents. The few times they tried to attack him, Leylin easily dodged them.

Once a wizard could fearlessly shoot his spells from the air, calamity would begin.
Fireball! Gust!
A massive fireball flashed in Leylin’s hand, and immediately exploded on one of the smaller ships’ sails. Magic fuelled its flames, and the Gust spell caused it to spread. The entire ship went up in fire.
*Splash! Splash!* The sailors who had been set on fire jumped off the ship one by one, and were struggling in the middle of the ocean.
By the time the other small pirate ship faced the same fate, some of the men on the main battleship had gone mad.
“Damn it! Where is this damn wizard from?” The Merfolk Pirates’ leader was a strong man. Only the two faint traces of scales on both sides of his cheeks hinted that this person had once won the blessing of a devil, and possessed the power of a demon.
Currently, the pirate captain looked at how half of his force had been destroyed, and almost went mad. He would never have thought that he would clash against such a mighty wizard. Seeing that the wizard was able to fly and skilfully cast spells in mid-air, he had to be at least rank 7. He could even be a powerful rank 8 or 9 wizard!
With this sort of strength, he could become a noble on the continent. So why was this wizard coming here especially to bother him?
‘I don’t really want the other two ships, but this main battleship is rather good!’ Leylin purposefully lifted the effects of the Flight spell, and landed on the Merfolk Pirates’ deck.

“What? This foolish wizard dared come here by himself?” The captain of the Merfolk Pirates was overjoyed, “Get up there! Kill him!”

Two odd-looking pirates, with the heads of a crab and a squid, swarmed around Leylin and surrounded him completely. Their eyes were filled with ferocity.

*Puff! Puff!* The air seemed to twist, and two sharp daggers which looked just like a pair of poisonous snakes appeared and bared their sharp teeth at Leylin.

“Mm! This Sneak of Shadows is comparable to Mankeh’s…” Leylin had a ferocious smile on his face, “What a shame that you squids alone aren’t enough!”

In a flash of blood-red light, the Devilblood Dagger appeared in Leylin’s hand. As he held the dagger, he seemed to transform into the image of a night elf, his every act and every move seeming to be filled with a unique beauty.

“Shadow Dance!” With the A.I Chip’s support, Leylin used a skill that could normally only be used by high-ranking rogues and assassins. The blood-red light turned into a whirlwind, immediately dragging the two assassins into itself.
The dagger’s lifesteal greatly surpassed that of a vampire. Once stabbed by it, the two assassins were instantly turned into corpses, falling to the floor.

*Bang! Bang!* Metal weapons clashed against each other loudly, and the mermen closest to Leylin fell to the ground. As traces of their blood-red energy was absorbed by Leylin’s dagger, they completely lost all of their life force, to the point where their corpses would scatter into dust at the lightest touch.

“He’s a devil! A demon from the abyss!” This horrifying scene scared all of the ferocious pirates so much that they wet themselves. All intelligent creatures feared the unknown. Although they could usually kill without even batting an eye, they had apparently never seen this sort of tragic manner of death before.

“As expected, personally harvesting lives myself is the most enjoyable experience…” Leylin’s lips quirked up into a rather evil smile, “Bull’s Strength! Cat’s Grace!”

Two rays of magic light flickered, and after receiving the boost of strength and agility, Leylin seemed to become death incarnate, reaping the lives of all the pirates around him. While he was killing, countless rank 0 and rank 1 spells shot out from Leylin’s hands without stopping.

The Devilblood Dagger was not some ordinary metal weapon. Of course, it did not have any effect on a wizard’s spellcasting, but without the Weave impeding him, Leylin’s movement was even quicker and smoother.

“As expected! On of a shipful of pirates, all of them have close-ranged professions, and there’s not a single Conjurer…” Leylin was like a tiger amongst a flock of sheep. His eyes swept across the entire ship, as if he was hunting for prey.

If anyone of the Conjurer profession came out to fight, even if they only had the Web or Grease spells they would become rather troublesome.
However it was a pity. The Merfolk Pirates were secretly controlled by Marquis Louis, and he wouldn’t put a Sorcerer or other high-ranked Professional with a bunch of pirates. Perhaps only the three largest pirate groups would have a Sorcerer in their midst.

“Did you see that? Our boss has already destroyed two of their ships, and there’s only one left. Get up there and kill them all!” Robin Hood lay on top of a railing, and after seeing Leylin’s success in battle, he roared loudly from the back.

At this moment, the pirate prisoners also let out a wolf-like howl, “Kill them! Kill them!”

The pirates who previously completely lacked morale now exploded forth with 200% of their fighting spirit and hot-bloodedness, loudly roaring at the Merfolk Pirates as they clashed in battle.

The battle between the ships would erupt at any moment, when they came side to side.

“We can’t continue like this! Fuck, where are these pirates from? They’re so strong and they even have a wizard supporting them, and they’re still coming here to cause me trouble?” The Merfolk Pirate captain looked as the sight of his underlings being killed one by one, and the Black Tiger pirate ship advancing quickly ahead. His expression grew even uglier.

Yet at this moment, the wizard was clearly advancing with thoughts of destroying the captain, and whatever ideas or hopes he had were all for naught. This captain understood very well that even if he chose to surrender, perhaps the normal pirates would end up alright, but he and his confidantes would absolutely be forced to walk the plank.

At this thought, his eyes gleamed ruthlessly. He tore off the cloak on his body, revealing stainless steel armour beneath.

“Make way! Archers, prepare!” As he was forced to an impasse, the captain prepared to personally enter the fray. After all, as the
captain of the crew he was very strong.
“Battle skill Charge!” The pirate captain was completely wrapped up in a dense layer of qi. He charged forwards like a battle tank.
“He should be a rank 10 warrior, and his armour and ring…” Leylin quickly retreated, his gleaming eyes making the pirate captain shiver.
At this moment, the A.I. Chip had already collected the captain’s stats and displayed them to Leylin. [Name Unknown, Sex: Male, Estimated stats, Strength: 11+, Agility: 5, Vitality: 8, Spirit: 3, Predicted Fighter Rank: 11. Evaluation: Dangerous! Armour and ring are radiating magic, deduced to be magic items!]
After his Charge skill, the pirate captain swung from his waist, and the broadsword in his hand began to rotate like a windmill. “Ha! Battle skill Whirling Slash!”
*Bang! Bang! Crack!* The sword flew like the wind everywhere he went, slashing most of the deck open. Wooden splinters flew everywhere.
This battle skill was something the captain was very proud of, and something he had learnt very recently. He had to work hard under a Professional fighter’s guidance for three years before he had managed to gain their recognition and tutorship.
However, this was all worth it. After learning this skill, he had used its terrifying revolving strength to kill several warriors of a higher rank than him, and finally gained the treasured position of the captain of the Merfolk Pirates.
Needless to say, his opponent was only a wizard, and even if he had the abilities of a rogue, he could not beat a warrior of similar rank to him.
The pirate captain’s mouth split open into a wide grin. If the wizard was caught by Whirling Slash, then he could almost see his body being torn apart.
“You have a rather good battle skill there, it’s a pity that you’re too
slow…”
*Puff!* The sound of a heavy hammer hitting leather rang out, and a layer of protection suddenly burst from the captain’s armour, offsetting the dagger’s attack trajectory. Even so, the tip of the blood-red dagger left a very deep mark on his chest.
Seeing that his armour had almost been cut through, the pirate captain’s face was filled with triumph at his luck.
‘What a pity! If I hadn’t used a rank 3 spell slot to memorise Flight, then one Dispel Magic could have broken through his defense just now and killed him.’ Leylin’s figure hadn’t stopped at all, and he charged once again through the group of pirates. Several severed heads were sent flying into the air, and fountains of blood gushed out.
Before it had the chance to touch the ground, the blood was absorbed by the dagger in Leylin’s hand. All the small cuts to his body healed immediately, as if they had never been inflicted in the first place.
“This ability… You’re a vampire!” The pirate captain seemed to recall a rather unpleasant memory, which made him cry out in alarm. This ability to absorb life force and his quick regenerative ability, was very similar to that of the rumoured vampires.
*Bang!* A huge impact spread across the deck like a grade 8 earthquake.
Just when Leylin had single-handedly contained all the pirates, the Black Tiger smashed against the side of the ship. Many small boats hooked onto it, and pirates climbed the cables aboard. A great number of them waved their glowing blue weapons as they came on deck.
These weapons which had been soaked in Leylin’s poison did a great deal of damage to the Merfolk Pirates. Even the tiniest cut would paralyze them and drop them to the ground, to then be killed
by their enemies. The magic weapons that Leylin had enchanted, used by the guards, were even more formidable. Isabel took the lead like a Valkyrie, and many Merfolk Pirates were killed so quickly that they died in confusion.

“What? Thinking of escaping?” Leylin’s face was wreathed in smiles as he looked at the ugly expression on the pirate captain’s face.

“Ha! Battle skill Blast Slash!” It was clear that this pirate captain knew that unless he could thoroughly shake Leylin off his trail, he didn’t have a single hope of escaping. After his expression changed, he charged forwards immediately, his broadsword shining like a blade of light.

Just as the captain was charging towards Leylin, the ring on his right hand suddenly emitted a beautiful burst of magical light.

“Swift Explosion!” The sudden blessing from the spell increased the captain’s attack speed fivefold. If his enemy did not notice this, they were sure to regret it.

However, Leylin had long anticipated this. He only smiled at the pirate captain, and gave him a signal, “Grease!”

*Clang!* The deck immediately became impossibly slippery, and the expression of the charging captain changed. He completely lost his balance.

“I already know about all your trump cards. Under these circumstances, you only have one fate, and that is to peacefully walk the path of death…” Leylin seemed as graceful as a dancer as he began to step out, his elegant figure flying over to the Merfolk Pirate.

A severed head flew high up into the air, and soon after blood rushed out from his neck.

The Devilblood Dagger let out an icy-cold laughter after it had feasted on the fresh blood, and its wings seemed to become even
more true to life, as if the demon sealed within it had recovered.
Eylin put the Devilblood Dagger away. He sensed that he had absorbed an enormous amount of life force, and it had all been transformed into spiritual force. Having already reached the peak, this additional energy pushed him to a breakthrough.

[Beep! Host has gone through a battle. Devilblood Dagger has completed the energy conversion! Spirit +0.1] [Host’s spiritual force has reached 8, rank has increased. Host is now a rank 8 wizard.] [Host has advanced to rank 8! Number of rank 3 spell slots increased by 1, number of rank 2 spell slots increased by 1.]

A few prompts jumped out all at once, and Leylin’s mouth curved up into a wide smile in response.

Converting almost all of this Merfolk Pirate captain’s flesh had given him an increase of only 0.1 in his Spirit stat. However, it helped him break through the threshold of a rank 8 wizard, something that many low-ranking wizards on the continent couldn’t even beg for.

‘However, it’s better not to let others know about this strange way of breaking through. Otherwise I will definitely become a public target…’ Leylin stood aside and watched the guards clear up the remnants of battle on the pirate ship.

In reality, after the Merfolk Pirates’ captain had died, the battle could be said to have been decided. Many Merfolk Pirates suffered a collapse in morale, and they either tried to escape from the ship.
or threw away their weapons and surrendered.
Leylin did not take action again after that, but he coldly watched Isabel and the others clear up the last of the pirates.
“This time, we don’t want prisoners. Archers get ready, kill all those pirates who jumped into the sea!” On hearing this cold command, the pirate crew’s fighting spirit grew even more fierce.
Yet Leylin showed not the slightest concern. He looked at his status window which had changed. The A.I. Chip displayed the newly collected data.

[Leylin Faulen, Race: Human Rank 8 Wizard, Strength: 3.5, Vitality: 4.5, Spirit: 8, Status: Healthy, Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Spell Slots: Rank 3(2), Rank 2(4), Rank 1(??), Rank 0(??)]

A rank 8 wizard did not have the ability to access a deeper level of the Weave. The only benefits Leylin received were two more spell nodes. What was more important was that the advancement had increased his contact and authority within the deeper levels of the Weave. This was bound to be of great help to the A.I. Chip’s analysis.

As Leylin continued to advance in rank, the speed of the A.I. Chip’s analysis would only increase.

‘With the Magus World’s standards, a rank 5 Professional is on the level of an acolyte. A rank 10 Professional is on the level of a rank 2 Magus, and someone at rank 15 compares to rank 15. A rank 20 Legend would enter the realm of Morning Stars…’ After living in the World of Gods for so many years, Leylin had developed a very deep understanding of how ranks were calculated here.

‘A rank 25 peak-ranked Legend is equivalent to a Radiant Moon Magus! If it’s like this, then the divine would be equivalent to a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magus. A demi-god here would be equivalent to a semi-rank 7 Magus, which is the same rank as my original body…’

‘The weak minor gods are the same as rank 7 Magi who have
comprehended laws, and the major gods are similar to Magi who have fused laws, and are rank 8 beings like the Mother Core who’ve found their own path…”

At this point, the entire power rankings of the World of Gods began to unfold before Leylin. Although it was possible that some ranks did not entirely correspond, but on the whole Leylin believed in his own deductions and the A.I. Chip’s simulation had never been wrong. There were also no holes in its logic.

‘Although this native body is making rapid progress, in reality my current strength is only equal to a rank 1 Magus of the Magus World…’ This comparison rendered Leylin completely speechless. It seemed that he still had a long way to go on his path to becoming strong in the World of Gods

“Boss! We’ve cleared out this ship completely! Victory is ours!” Just at this moment, Robin Hood appeared before Leylin and reported with a face filled with excitement. He didn’t seem to care about the traces of blood still left on his face.

“It’s already finished? Have the casualties been counted yet?” Leylin had a neutral expression on his face. He had personally completely destroyed the most powerful opponents and even half of the normal crew. If his sailors couldn’t achieve victory under these circumstances, then he would need to completely reevaluate his strategy.

“With the weapons you gave us, many comrades only received slight injuries. Three have died, and five were seriously injured. We’ve already eased their suffering and sent them on their way…” Robin Hood spoke with a trace of helplessness in his voice.

Severe injuries on the sea were like a death sentence in this era unless one was lucky enough to have a cleric or other precious healing skills or items on them.

“Mm, keep track of them. Calculate and distribute rewards accordingly when we’re done…” Leylin suddenly hit himself on
the head. “Oh right! After we capture Half-Merfolk Island, set out again and bring the family members of the pirates who surrendered to us to the Faulen Island. Give the families of the dead ones a pension.”
This was really to cut off the pirates’ escape route, and grasp their family members in his palm. With this, the chance of them betraying him was now very small.
“As you command, boss!” Robin Hood clearly understood Leylin’s intentions, and nodded vigorously, not daring to object at all.
“We really do need a cleric to raise morale and heal wounds. It seems like we can’t do with them.”
“If you have no objections to rank, then I know a few…” Isabel came to Leylin’s side at this moment, with a strange look in her eyes. Leylin scratched his nose, as he clearly knew why her expression was different.
It was easy for her to relate to what he had done before, and it was also the reason why he had ordered for there to be no captives, decisively slaughtering all the Merfolk Pirates in a hurry.
His subordinates, on the other hand, were still on the other ship and couldn’t see his actions across the wide sea. Even though he had left those mummified corpses, a wizard had skills which could achieve the same effect such as Absorb, Vampire’s Touch, and Life Drain, so nothing could be proven.
Although this could fool Robin Hood and the others, but it definitely could not fool Isabel, who was also a follower of a devil. Her expression showed that she’d discovered something.
However, they were both on the same boat. Leylin believed that Isabel wouldn’t betray him, because the church would never accept her either.
“Take a group out to sail this battleship. We’ll go together to Half-Merfolk Island!” Under Leylin’s command, they rushed to clean up the marks left by battle. The two enormous ships then sailed
towards Half-Merfolk Island together. At this moment, the pirates’ eyes were filled with fanaticism and emotion. After all, they knew very well that after Half-Merfolk Island had lost their entire pirate group, the defenceless girls would not be able to refuse their tyrannical advances. Also, the Merfolk Pirates had been in business for many years, and the wealth they had accumulated had made their eyes green with envy. Before they reached land, Leylin gathered his troops together. “I’ll say this once again!” Leylin’s gaze swept across the group of pirates. Through continuous shows of power, they did not dare to betray Leylin’s slightest command, and their loyalty to him had even increased considerably. “We currently need their wealth and their slaves to work for us! We even need them to join us and become fresh blood. If they dare to resist us then immediately kill them without discussion, but I need captives. Understood?” In Leylin’s view, the family members that survived the pirates would be very rebellious, but they would make good slaves. Even if that wasn’t possible, then they could still be sold for a tidy profit; so what was the point of killing them all? Humans were a very valuable resource on the sea. Even island natives had special teams of slave catchers enter the jungles and brave the difficulties of disease and monsters. They would then bitterly struggle against different tribes to get their hands on some more slaves. “Don’t worry, boss! We know what to do!” Robin Hood began to laugh, and the sound of it was an ugly as an night owl’s hoot. Leylin nodded, knowing how his underlings, who were like complete animals, would behave after they took over Half-Merfolk Island. Perhaps they wouldn’t murder the prisoners, but the islanders would suffer a lot of abuse. Leylin decided to turn a blind eye to these sort of things. In any case, an appropriate amount of deterrence was necessary, and
perhaps this would be beneficial to keeping his rule over them stable. After all, pirate women didn’t have any chastity to speak of, and it was in their instinct to follow the strong…

Eagle Eye! After the spell took effect, half of the island appeared before Leylin’s eyes.

‘Mm, it looks like there are the beginnings of a small hamlet. Not bad!’ In his field of vision was a tiny port, and next to the port there was a developing wheat field. The pirate captain that had died at his hand had some talent in running the place. Surprisingly, he knew to gather people to reclaim the wasteland, and he’d really produced results.

It was a shame that all of this had been so conveniently given to Leylin.

Seeing the Merfolk battleship return, and even bringing another ship back, the port burst into an uproar. There were even people who thought that it was the Merfolk Pirates returning victoriously, and began to gather at the port to welcome them back.

It was not until the ship drew closer that they realised that the deck had traces of a fierce battle. The flag which represented the Mermaid Pirates had changed hands. Only then did they cry out in alarm and scatter everywhere, just like wild ducks whose nest had been disturbed.

“Brothers, get to work!” Robin Hood’s booming voice rang out, ushering in a burst of excited cries.
The afterglow of the sun slowly dispersed on the surface of the sea, making it look like a rippling golden scale. By sunset, the battle was already winding up. It couldn’t be really be called a battle. The elites of the Merfolk Pirates as well as the adult merfolk had all died in the earlier naval battle, and the only ones left were old, young, or female. Even without many pirates under his command Leylin’s raid had been successful.

Once the sun had set completely, Leylin stood on the balcony of the two-floored house that had belonged to the pirate captain. He was watching the tiny spots of flames flickering in the port. Large-scaled arson would have completely destroyed the place, so Leylin had forbidden it before they completely looted it.

Robin Hood’s face was flushed with excitement. He stood in the room with Isabel who did not participate in the plunder, reporting the results of the battle to Leylin. Leylin could tell that the spoils were quite decent just by looking at his face. A smile arose on his face as Robin Hood finished his report.

“Boss, we’ve struck gold!” Robin Hood had already grown to resemble a pirate more and more, or perhaps he had just stopped repressing his true nature, “Just the loot from the warehouse could fill half the ship; there’s massive quantities of sugar, silk, and even pottery and woodwork!”

“We also found this inside the villa,” Isabel added as she kicked
open a black trunk next to Leylin’s feet.
The wooden lid was covered in floral patterns, and a golden radiance poured out of the chest when it was opened. Robin Hood’s eyes filled with greed, but he quickly suppressed it.
“That fellow hid his treasures very well, it took a lot of effort to find this,” Isabel’s eyes were also sparkling like little stars, as if she had also completely fallen in love with piracy.
This was just like what Leylin had read in one of the ancient tomes in this world: ‘Gold! What a beautiful and adorable little thing. It can turn a coward into a warrior and evil to good. It can make rivers flow upstream, and such a tiny thing can send a damned soul to heaven!’
Even the churches needed wealth, and their requirement was massive at that. They needed it to influence their believers, and expand the scope of their power. This was especially true of Waukeen’s, which hoarded more money than dragons. They stuck their hands in every source they could find to earn more money.
Inside the wooden trunk were stacks of gold, alongside a few precious gems which almost blinded Robin Hood. Isabel was more resistant to the allure, perhaps because she was a noblewoman. She still remained rational in the face of the riches.
“There are a total of 782 kronas, and each one weighs 18 grams. That’s at least 1500 pieces of Dambrath gold! Adding on the precious gems, this entire trunk is worth over 2000 gold…”
Leylin picked up a single gold krona, which was heavier than the gold coins he was used to. The decorative designs on them as well as the portrait were completely different to those of the Dambrath Kingdom’s coinage. “Mm. There’s no need to exchange the kronas, they can still be used on the continent.”
In the World of Gods, any organisation that was a duchy or greater in authority could issue its own coins, and this created many different metal currencies. But the church of the Goddess of Wealth
was always dedicated to normalising their own gold coin, the krona. They wanted it to replace all other coins, becoming an official standard. Still, due to the secret resistance of many gods, they had never been successful. The gods believed such a thing would bring Waukeen many followers, so it would only be odd if they supported it.

Even though this was the situation, it was the Goddess of Wealth issuing these coins. All the churches serving her would vouch for them, so it was still the strongest currency circulating in the entire World of Gods.

‘It looks like these pirates all hid their wealth in their homes,’ Leylin thought of the captives he had. If he had directly murdered Steve in his home, and dug out his buried treasures, he would have certainly gained as many benefits as he had now. It was a pity that he didn’t have the time back then that he did now.

“Putting the treasure aside, what about the people and the slaves?” With this funding, Leylin had the confidence to build a profitable industry centered at Faulen Island. The most important thing now was to be able to obtain enough human resources.

“Our force was too small to blockade the port immediately. Many of the islanders managed to escape…” Robin Hood’s expression grew ugly when he mentioned this point. “We’ve managed to capture 90 people by now, most of them elderly, women, or children. There was also some retired pirate trash.”

Robin Hood spat out, and it was obvious that he had suffered while capturing these violent old pirates. Becoming either physically handicapped or growing senile with age, these pirates had been forced to retire. However, their ferocious and bloody nature hadn’t left them one bit.

“I hung them to the death.” Robin Hood did not dare to conceal anything in front of Leylin.

“Mm… Even if they are captives, there are many ways to
distinguish them. How many of the captured ones are merfolk, how many human? How many of them were originally slaves?” Leylin clearly did not plan to pursue those problems, and he instead directly asked about his biggest concerns.

“The merfolk resisted most violently, and many of them fled. We’ve only managed to capture 19 so far, the other 71 are humans and natives. All of them seem to have been slaves.” Although he didn’t have the definite details on the numbers, what Robin Hood did have was enough to satisfy Leylin.

“Very good. There are different classes and ranks even amongst slaves. The merfolk were originally the highest class here, and now that we’ve killed their families and stripped them of their wealth we’ll have gained their enmity. They won’t put their faith in us, so just kill them all.

“As for those other humans and the native slaves, take all of them away and slowly screen them.” From his own life as a human, Leylin had deeply understood the feeling the rest had: ‘If they’re not human, they won’t think and act like us.’

On the other hand, Robin Hood didn’t think of those Merfolk Pirates as the same as him either. He immediately agreed to leave and slaughter them.

“Wait, why don’t you hand all those captive merfolk to me?” Isabel stepped out at this moment, her eyes filled with a bloodthirsty gleam.

“That’s acceptable,” Leylin nodded immediately. Demons all loved chaos and massacres, and her acts of piracy had most likely given Isabel many benefits.

Night fell, and the whole port wept after it was ravaged by the invaders. Smoke was still rising from it on the next day.

“The goods have all been transported to the Scarlet Tiger, boss!” Robin Hood respectfully reported.

“Very good, sound the bugle!” Leylin stood on the deck of the
newly christened Scarlet Tiger, and issued the command with a peaceful expression on his face. This Scarlet Tiger was the same as Black Tiger from before. Leylin had just decided to massively refit the ship, and he’d additionally decided to change its name. He could imagine the name of this ship spreading across the entire Dambrath Sea in the future, accompanied by his cousin’s reputation in battle. The deep bugle horn sounded, and after a night of wreaking havoc, a whole bunch of sailors with dark and heavy bags under their eyes scattered out of the islanders’ homes in twos and threes, gathering on the deck. “Listen!” Leylin opened the treasure chest filled with gold kronas in front of the pirates, and the golden glow made their eyes light up with greed. Yet, looking at whom the foot currently stepping on the gold coins belonged to, they immediately withdrew their greedy gazes. Over the voyage and their battles, Leylin had already used countless lives to demonstrate his savagery that exceeded theirs. Sweeping over all the pirates with his gaze, Leylin was satisfied with the bowed heads that didn’t dare look him in the eye. Only then did he continue, “Everyone here will get three gold coins, and those who’ve killed an enemy get yet another. Professional kills will be counted separately.” Many pirates immediately cheered at this news. Leylin was very satisfied with this atmosphere. Just using military force to intimidate these pirates was not enough. It was necessary to demonstrate that, with him, they could snatch more things and gain more benefits. Only then would they follow him even to hell. From now, these pirates would probably take some more initiative in battles. After he had distributed everything, Leylin immediately issued a
new command, “Set this whole place on fire! Afterwards, we sail!” Dense black smoke quickly rose from the port as it was engulfed in raging flames. The fire quickly spread. The two pirate battleships laden with riches and slaves slowly left the port, and some of the pirates still had looks of regret on their faces.

‘The terrain and condition of the place was very good, and there was a neat foundation as well. Such a shame, it was an excellent base…’ Leylin looked on as the fire lit up the dock’s sky, but his expression did not change. He had always planned to burn down Half-Merfolk Island. It wasn’t just the island, even the Black Tigers’ stronghold as well. These places did not belong to him, and the pirates had been subordinate to Marquis Louis. Even if he occupied this place, Leylin would perhaps soon attract the attention of the Black Skeletons and Tigersharks.
The only thing Leylin could do now was hide somewhere secret, where his enemies could never find him. Only a fool would jump about shouting when he was weak.

“Isabel, Robin Hood!” he suddenly called out.

“You were looking for me, boss?” Robin Hood respectfully arrived in front of Leylin. After the battle, this first mate seemed to have changed dramatically.

Leylin stretched his hand out on the map of the ocean. “Mm, the two of you take the merfolk ship and bring the slaves to the pirates’ families.”

Be it Faulen Island or Marquis Louis’ fiefdom, the Baltic archipelago, they were all new discoveries in the waters surrounding the Dambrath Kingdom, and that was also the only characteristic they shared. New, uninhabited islands seemed to emerge endlessly one after the other, full of both wealth and dangers. It was simply too easy to find a temporary base for his crew.

Of course, the condition was that Leylin could deal with the dangerous beasts in those territories, and they could brave the harsh weather and environment.

Taking into consideration that Robin Hood had the other sailors’ loyalty, Leylin intentionally sent his cousin Isabel over as well. With her there, even if he couldn’t control the entire ship, he could presumably intimidate the disloyal ones without much problem.
As a matter of fact, Leylin had plans to nurture this cousin of his. After all, he couldn’t remain here commanding the pirates forever, so Isabel would serve as his stand-in. Although Robin Hood was more suited to this role, he was too feral. Leylin could not give this fellow too much space to make decisions so early on in his venture. It wasn’t because he was scared that Robin would betray him, but it was just that Robin didn’t have the instincts of a superior.

On the other hand, Isabel did not possess much authoritative power, but what she did have was enough to cow these pirates into submission.

Watching the merfolk ship leave, Leylin waved his hand. “Set off, we’re going to Pirates’ Cove!”

Pirates’ Cove was a port that provided services for pirates. It could be called the gathering part for the shady figures of the seas. The port sold intelligence, goods, and even top-grade elven slaves. Of course, one needed to have the courage to take the risk and buy something; as a port where pirates disposed of stolen goods, the things they sold were definitely unclean in origin. Even Marquis Louis, who controlled the Baltic archipelago, did not allow too many stolen treasures pass through his territory, regretfully giving up on the profits that came to Pirates’ Cove.

As for the port’s location, many of the old pirates under Leylin knew of it. The route wouldn’t be a problem at all, but there were several dangerous areas they had to pass through.

“Are you sure the route won’t have any problems, Cyclops?” Leylin opened up the map of the ocean as he called over a one-eyed pirate. The sailor had a courage bred from years of killing, and although he had only one eye its gleam caused others to tremble with fear.

It was only at this moment that a flower-like smile bloomed on Cyclops’ stubbled face. He revealed his few yellowing teeth, “Don’t worry, Boss. I’ve sailed to Pirates’ Cove with Steve a few times,
and at that time I was even the navigator’s assistant. I can get there with my eyes closed!”

“Very well, you’re now the ship’s navigator. If you do well, you’ll be the Scarlet Tiger’s first mate once we reach the port.” This was the promise Leylin made to this pirate in whom he had just placed his trust.

“Yes, boss!” A first mate would receive a greater share of the booty than the other pirates, and would also have authority over the others. Cyclops’ remaining eye gleamed with excitement.

“Very well, you can leave now. Send Giant over!” Leylin waved his hand and watched Cyclops’ back as he left. His eyes showed that he had fallen into deep thought.

Although he was giving these defeated pirates positions one by one, he hadn’t completely let his guard down against them. For example, he couldn’t trust that Cyclops wasn’t deliberately leading the fleet into dangerous waters. He had already obtained the coordinates of Pirates’ Cove through other means, from merchants and pirates.

‘He told me the correct location, and also suggested the most efficient route. It looks like he’s truly pledged his allegiance to me.’ Cyclops didn’t know that he had just narrowly avoided death’s door. On the contrary, he was in good spirits from Leylin’s promise, and he quickly executed the tasks that Leylin had asked him to do.

“Boss, lookin’ fer me?” A deep, coarse voice sounded as a heavyset man walked in. He was more than 8 feet tall, and he had to lower his head to enter the captain’s cabin. His flesh trembled with every step he took, like he was some sort of half-giant.

“Yes. Giant, I want you to lead the Scarlet Tiger’s battle squad. Choose ten men for now, wait until we reach Pirates’ Cove and recruit more.” Leylin told him the plan with crossed arms.

The leader of the battle squadron was often the right-hand man of
the captain. The battle squad was also at the forefront of every fight, so the position of its leaders had rather stringent requirements on strength.

Leylin had personally tested the might of this pirate that was called Giant. Not only did he have boundless strength, but he also had unparalleled talent in cultivation as a fighter. He could already release his qi and use martial techniques. Other than Leylin himself, only Isabe; could match him in close quarters combat.

Furthermore, this Giant had a straightforward personality; after numerous losses while dueling Leylin, he became more obedient and was easy for Leylin to control.

“Just pick anyone, huh?” Giant asked, clearly thinking of putting his own men into his team. However this was normal, otherwise even if he was strong as an individual, he would still be crushed by the other pirates.

“Yes, the sailors on the Scarlet Tiger, be it my sailors or the captured pirates, are all for your choosing,” With regards to this point, Leylin turned a blind eye.

“Aye, I’ll go and wake them up, and choose them one-on-one!” Giant looked extremely excited.

“As you wish!” Leylin didn’t have anything to say about Giant’s method of recruitment, and just waved him away.

As the leader of the battle squadron, if there weren’t a few trusted aides on the battlefield to take a knife for him, then perhaps he wouldn’t even be able to survive a single battle. It was necessary to allow him to choose his aides.

Furthermore, Leylin also believed that Giant wouldn’t dare to betray him. He was confident that the cost of rebellion was so incredibly high that it would eliminate all thoughts of betrayal…

The endless voyage, the battles and the struggle, challenged them over and over again. Leylin was confident that this journey to Pirates’ Cove would whip his crew into shape.
'On the whole, even a well-known pirate crew on the outer seas needs about a hundred pirates,' Leylin traced his finger on the map carelessly, 'Take the Black Tigers, or even the Merfolk Pirates which we just destroyed; normal pirate crews all have more than a hundred people, and their captains are even rank 10 Professionals with exceedingly good equipment.'

'Truly large-scale pirate crews need at least 300 pirates and above, and also need a number of ships. If I want a main battleship, it will have to be magically refitted or receive a cleric’s blessing.'

Such a crew was configured like the small coastal fleet of a minor coastal duchy. If he had such strength, Leylin would be able to find a rather good position amongst the continent’s navy, or even that of other countries. Who, then, would fight him without good reason?

As a result, there were only three truly large scaled pirate crews in the Dambrath Seas: the Black Skeletons, Tigersharks, and Barbarians.

Two of those pirate crews were even under the control of Marquis Louis. In addition, the other fleets owned by the marquis could not be underestimated. One of them was a professional slavers’ fleet. This fleet had always been at the forefront of clashes with the natives, and Marquis Louis had used a lot of gold coins to arm it. It was even more powerful than the kingdom’s elite navy!

Leylin’s elimination of the Black Tigers and Merfolk Pirates would at best be him taking out the marquis’ trashe. He couldn’t be considered to have encountered the marquis’ main force.

Only once he was able to destroy the Black Skeletons, Tigersharks and the slavers’ fleet in one fell swoop would he be able to deal a fatal strike to the Baltic archipelago’s trade. However, this was almost impossible. Leylin could only continue to act from the shadows, and first clip the marquis’ wings.

It was very unrealistic for Leylin to fight against a Marquis of the kingdom now. However, Leylin was not an ordinary person. He
would use any means necessary to accomplish his goals, without fear of the consequences.
He was the sort of person that could described as a reasonable lunatic, or perhaps he was the most insanely reasonable man.
“I’ll need many men to accomplish this goal… Or allies,” Leylin naturally would not be stupid enough to act against the marquis alone.
Furthermore, fighting Marquis Louis was one thing, but Viscount Tim was another. Although Leylin had targeted Marquis Louis all along, the one who would bear the brunt of it was still the Viscount who coveted the Faulen lands.
Leylin wasn’t sailing to Pirates’ Cove for no reason. Besides recruiting the men he needed, he was preparing to look for more supporters. Marquis Louis would have offended quite a few people with his dominant character, even if he had done so unintentionally, and Leylin wanted to round those people up and take advantage of their power.
Leylin pressed his fingers heavily on the mark of the Pirates’ Cove on the map, his eyes regaining their previous calm.
This was Pirates’ Cove!

It was rumoured to be the holy land of pirates on the outer seas, where one could dispose of any problematic goods in exchange for attractive gold, or anything else your heart desired. They had the best women and the best rum, but only if one had enough gold. If anyone dared to cause trouble in the port, the enforcers would make them rue the day they were born!

As the most diverse place in the sea, where honest men and crooks mixed with each other, it was awash with information. Quite often, a plump and juicy target passed by and one could see the magnificent sight of thousands of sails spreading open.

Many pirates spontaneously formed privateering operations, and disguised among the myriads of ships were a few powerful battleships armoured with magic. There were also a few unsinkable ships blessed by the Emperor of the Sea. Naturally, there were also much smaller boats that could only accommodate a dozen people, and even a few small canoes owned by the pirates.

The Pirates’ Tide had occurred once, over 50 years ago, and they’d damaged a duchy’s navy in the process of plundering a massive amount of wealth. The story became an excellent way of enticing ignorant fishermen’s children into become pirates.

However, once Marquis Louis’ Baltic archipelago rose in power, Pirates’ Cove had grown weaker day by day. Once two of the great pirate crews were roped in by the marquis, the place grew to no
longer be as prosperous as before. It slowly turned into an ordinary den of pirates, where they fenced their stolen goods.

Even though it had become like this, the background of the port was still extremely important. Not only had it established a town with an air of importance, they had won over many churches as even pirates needed the healing of the gods or the comfort of a priest.

Furthermore, the evil gods would not deny pirate believers; some perhaps even schemed to become the gods of piracy…

One morning, a fleet with a bizarre flag entered the docks. The crew could be considered large for its kind, and they seemed to have experienced many intense battles. The hull still had marks of battle, slashed by swords.

‘This looks like the main battleship of a crew… Why don’t I recognise the flag?’ The clerk who was responsible for registering ships on the dock rubbed his eyes in disbelief. He could confirm that he’d never seen that bright scarlet flag in his career, with its sinister lifelike skull and dagger.

It was at this moment that a group of pirates came down from the pirate ship, and the clerk welcomed them with a professional smile, “Welcome to Pirates’ Cove, here we have…”

Before the clerk could finish speaking, the young man just waved him away with the toss of a golden coin.

The gold coin that the young pirate had used wasn’t a Dambrath coin, but it was the even more valuable gold krona!

‘Is this youth the captain of these pirates? What a dangerous man…’ The pirates standing behind the young man had an aura of death about them, especially the giant who was over two metres tall. He could’ve been mistaken for a small mountain.

However, these fearsome fellows all acted like fluffy little white rabbits behind the young man, which made the clerk’s heart jump into his mouth. He came to realise that the man he faced was
possibly a very extraordinary person.
“I know all the rules of this place, isn’t it 5 coins to anchor our fleet here for a day?”
The clerk was a former pirate himself, and subconsciously assessed others in strength. The internal injuries which forced him to retire still persisted, forcing him to take up clerical work.
In truth, Leylin felt like the clerk was a very interesting person. Very few in the World of Gods received an education, and a pirate who could write was as rare as the mythical phoenix. Still, he didn’t have the heart to discuss anything with him after the long journey. They violent storms and sneak attacks from the other races had fatigued him a little.
“Recommend the best inn, and tell me where I can recruit some sailors. You see the ship behind me, no? It needs to be reworked heavily.” Leylin immediately tossed out these requests, and before the clerk could show his dissatisfaction, he immediately added, “If your recommendations are good, then this will be yours.”
Another gold krona glowed brightly in his palm.
“Aye, your lordship! There is no one more familiar with Pirates’ Cove than me!” The clerk unwittingly swallowed, his Adam’s apple bobbing in his throat.
He simultaneously shot a glance at the signature that Leylin had left, the beautiful cursive making his heart jump, before he noted the information written. ‘Scarlet Tiger pirate crew? I’ve never heard of it before, has it just sprung up out of nowhere?’
Small pirate crews were born frequently in these waters, and death was frequent as well. Nobody would raise an eyebrow at a new pirate crew that relied on fishing to make a living in peacetime, only turning to amateur piracy when their options ran out. These weaker pirate crews were like ants and could perish at any time, but more pirates would emerge the next year.
The treasures of the outer sea, the frequent wars on the continent
and its politics, as well as the persecution from the church… All these caused many adventurers, unbelievers, and even those faithful to demons and devils stream into these seas. The sea was a place where good Gods had little influence, and the few strong evil gods did not mind them. It only rendered the place even more complicated.
The Dambrath area was only a tiny part of the outer seas, and it was still in the early years of development. As a result, no especially strong organisations had formed, and Marquis Louis, with the kingdom’s support, had become the strongest person here.
“If you would like me to recommend an inn, then the ones opened by the Barbarians are the best choice!” The clerk immediately answered without hesitation.
“Barbarians…” Leylin’s mouth curved into a smile as he thought of the crew. They were part of the big three. The Barbarians were different from the other two crews, the organisation was made up purely of a single race. Made of barbarian warriors and priests, they were the only ones who had not been reined in by Marquis Louis.
The Barbarian crew shared a deeply hostile relationship with the Black Skeletons and the Tigersharks, and seemed to launch a large-scale battle with them every few years. They were the current head of Pirates’ Cove, and the other free crews had formed the Dark World organisation to protect them. There was nothing wrong in saying that this place was the base camp of organisations who opposed Marquis Louis.
The inn opened by the secret master of Pirates’ Cove was naturally the safest place in the whole area.
“As for sailors, just shout out in any random tavern and ten pirates will run up to you. How you choose them is up to you, and of course you need to settle the tabs of those you hire at the bars…” As expected, the clerk was extremely familiar with the Pirates’
Cove, and he even fervently recommended a certain shipyard to Leylin. That shipyard may not have a high degree of credibility, but they were certainly good enough to do some routine maintenance on a pirate ship.

Leylin silently remembered the address of the shipyard, but he did not choose to go there directly. Instead, he brought his men to the barbarian inn recommended by the clerk. On the way, Leylin wordlessly assessed those around him. Most of the people who were able to live in Pirates’ Cove were retired pirates or others of that ilk. Although some were too weak to even stand up to the wind, and some were even disabled, they all had one or two skills that kept them going.

Of course, many more were prostitutes in revealing clothing, directly soliciting customers. Although Leylin didn’t think much of them, there were a bunch of animals following behind him who were clearly unable to hold back. If it wasn’t for Leylin’s command, a majority of them would have broken formation.

‘They even have a Thieves’ Guild!’ Leylin looked at the crossed dagger symbol on a street corner thoughtfully. He did not feel worried as he had plenty of time left, and still needed to arrange a place for a large group of men.

The barbarians’ inn was in a prime portion of Pirates’ Cove, and there were even two armed barbarian warriors standing guard at the door. It made everyone feel exceptionally safe.

Leylin did not trust in the law and security of Pirates’ Cove, and did not want to cause any trouble. Even if it cost a bit more money, staying there was an excellent decision.

‘They’re actually using two rank 5 Professionals to guard the place, is this pirate crew very strong? It’s not surprising that they can contend against the two large pirate crews propped up by Marquis Louis,’ Leylin assessed the two barbarian guards with interest.

The barbarians were scattered throughout the World of Gods, much
taller than ordinary humans with light green skin and muscles that were as solid as granite. Whether male or female, they were all muscle maniacs. 
Rumour had it that they were mentally challenged and were even more stupid than orcs. As a result, only a few uncivilised gods preferred to favour them, and they occupied a weak position in the civilised world. In many places, mercenary associations were periodically tasked with clearing up barbarian bandits and tribes.
I. Chip, scan their stats!’ Leylin commanded inwardly.

[Beep! Establishing mission, initiating scan.]

Invisible ripples swept across the area, and the stats of one of the barbarian guards were soon displayed.
[Name: Unknown, Race: Barbarian Warrior, Rank 5, Strength: 5, Agility: 2, Vitality: 4, Spirit: 1. Feats: 1. Strong: Barbarians possess increased strength and vitality. 2. Berserk: When they hit emotional extremes, some barbarians have the ability to enter a berserk state of violence, increase strength by 1 and reducing agility and spirit by 0.5.]

The A.I. Chip scanned the other barbarian as well, and he had similar stats.
‘These two barbarian warriors both have Berserk abilities?’ Leylin secretly compared them to his own men, ‘If they really fight, then even Cyclops can’t beat them. Perhaps Giant could get in one strike if he risked his life, but after that…

‘After all, it’s rumoured that barbarians are very well suited to be warriors, but the intelligent ones amongst them can also learn spells, and are capable of using magic…’

This sort of magic ability which was linked to the bloodline was different from that of wizards, somewhat similar instead to the powers of Warlocks. However, their magic was rather restricted, and only a select few were able to use it.
Not even the elite troops of the continent dared to provoke barbarian clans with members who had the ability to use magic.

‘It is generally understood that with the scale of the Barbarian pirate crew, the number of women and children that they have to feed must be even greater. On this basis, it’s normal for them to have a few magical Professionals. No wonder they were able to resist Marquis Louis for so long…’

All of these thoughts whirled through Leylin’s mind in the blink of an eye. To anyone watching from the outside, it looked like he’d merely glanced at the warriors before sweeping past them into the inn.

A dense odour of rum mixed with tobacco smoke welcomed him inside, causing him to wrinkle his brows. Many other travelers were seated in the inn’s reception, and the tables there were heaped with a mountain of roasted meat and fruit. Barrels of rum were opened directly, despite a number of drunkards next to them glugging them all down.

Many scantily dresses maids flitted like butterflies through the main hall, occasionally felt up by various customers. They cursed at it, but still laughed all the while.

One really could not ask for more from an inn which specially catered to pirate customers. Fortunately, Leylin’s earlier frown was just a natural reaction from many years of living like a noble. His years of enduring hardship still allowed him to endure the vile environment he was now in.

It was clear that his group had attracted the attention of the other customers when they suddenly burst in, especially since Leylin was such a pretty little thing. There were even some reckless fools who wolf whistled at him.

“Giant!” Leylin said in a low voice, shaking his head.

“Do you want to die?” Giant emerged from the shadows. His enormous muscles and the faint traces of scars on them gave him
an incredibly oppressive aura. The pirates jumped in surprise, and Giant disdainfully spat a mouthful of saliva at them and drew a line across his throat meaningfully.

“Well? If you’re not happy, then let’s take it outside,” Giant clearly knew the rules, and Leylin nodded at his words inwardly.

The pirates looked at Giant’s enormous body as well as the intensely dangerous feeling he gave off, and immediately sat down obediently like a bunch of small chicks, not daring to utter another word.

It was absolutely necessary for a pirate to have an instinct for danger. One look at Giant was enough to know that he was not to be trifled with, forget Leylin who was his master.

The pirates were beginning to secretly regret their earlier blunder, but there were naturally a few whose eyes gleamed with sinister intentions. One could not dominate Pirates’ Cove with strength alone, and every day there were several reckless and arrogant novices whose bodies were chucked into the sea.

Leylin was very happy to see the pirates developing plans to provoke him. When the time came, he resolved to teach them the true meaning of fear.

The hall remained silent for only a moment before returning to its normal uproarious state. No one wanted to break the rules laid down by the Barbarians and offend the crew.

“What can I do for you, guest?” As Leylin came to the counter, he found that the boss was a tall and beautiful woman who wore a scarlet low-cut dress and a fur shawl.

Her long red tail naughtily swept across her waist. She shot Leylin a sugar-sweet smile, and the mole at the edge of her mouth grew animated. The boss of the inn was a fox girl, and a stunningly top-grade one at that. Leylin could almost hear his men salivating from behind his back.

“I have 23 men here, are there enough rooms for them all to stay?”
Leylin asked immediately. His eyes swept over the fox girl, but his gaze did not linger for too long. There was a flash of surprise in the fox girl’s eyes at his attitude, as it was very rare that a young man like him could resist her allure.

“Haha… Of course there are enough! I just need to know what kind of rooms you need,” the fox girl changed her strategy, slowly shifting her sinuous waist and revealing her beautiful curves, “We have ordinary rooms here that can fit 5 people. They cost 2 silver bars per night. The medium-ranking rooms are for 3 people, and costs 5 silver bars. What do you need, little brother?”

Her eyes sparkled brightly as she looked at Leylin appraisingly, “Of course, a young nobleman like you would want our best rooms. Not only will it be for you alone, but you will also have an enthusiastic maid serving you. It’s not too expensive, and it’ll only cost you two Dambrath gold coins per night…”

Leylin clearly felt the power of an enchantment coming from her eyes, but it was completely useless. His spiritual force had already reached 8, and this was nothing.

“I need a single room. Giant, Cyclops and Hulk will have a medium-rank room. The rest will all stay in ordinary rooms,” Leylin confidently gave himself the best room, and placed his two officers as well as a soldier from his family into the medium-ranked room. The rest were given ordinary treatment. This was only right, it wasn’t like gold fell from the sky.

The bunch of common pirates were already grateful to have the chance to stay in such a luxurious inn. If Leylin wasn’t afraid that he would find all his men’s corpses in a dreadful ditch on the second day, he would have planned for them all to stay in the Scarlet Tiger itself.

“You can all leave after you receive your room number and key. I have have one requirement: you must all return at night!” Leylin’s announcement immediately attracted a burst of cheers from the
pirates behind him.  
After the period of killing, and the battles with the wind and waves, these pirates had long been physically and mentally exhausted. They wished to let off some steam.  
“If you have any requests, remember to call for me.” The fox girl boss twisted her slender and supple waist as she brought Leylin to his room, leaving behind a string of coy smiles as she left him at the door.  
Cyclops had his ear pressed against the door, and nodded after a moment, “Boss, she’s gone.”  
Leylin was rather speechless at his method, but this was Cyclops’ territory. There were too many methods and means to obtain information, and he didn’t particularly care to dispel the enthusiasm of his men. He simply nodded and said, “Do you know why I called all of you over?”  
“Boss, if you have an order then just tell us!” Giant scratched his head. His coarse face made him look a little foolish, but Leylin had once seen him sturdily squeeze the heads of two enemies until they directly exploded. He wasn’t fooled by his appearance whatsoever.  
“Mm, the men have gone out to indulge in drink and pleasure. Watch them closely, and don’t let them stir up any trouble. This time tomorrow, I want all the information on Pirates’ Cove here, understood?”  
“Aye, boss! I’ll watch those scallywags!” Cyclops licked his lips, smiling sinisterly.  
“Very well, go out and have fun!” Leylin threw three small money pouches to them, and the experienced Cyclops immediately knew it was the merry clinking of gold coins.  
“Blimey! There’s a bonnie gift, boss, thank you!” After opening the money pouch and seeing the golden light that spilled out, Cyclops seemed to forget himself. Even the silent Hulk had a different look in his eyes.
Even though he put overwhelming pressure on them, he still had to fall to using money to bribe them in the end. Leylin did not have any other ideas; he needed special means to build a pirate crew that was capable in battle.

Leylin only rose to his feet after the three had left, and began to appraise the room with his hands held behind his back. The deluxe room was worth its price of two gold coins a day. Not only was it very spacious, with rather opulent decor, it even had its own washroom with a gleaming white porcelain bath crafted by elves, a precious luxury even on the mainland.

“May I ask if the guest is here?” Just when Leylin was preparing the bath, the tender voice of a girl came from outside the door, making Leylin furrow his brows.

“What’s the matter?”

“I-I’ve come to pour hot water for you,” the girl outside the door seemed to be rather uneasy and disturbed, which made Leylin feel rather curious. There seemed to be many maids who engaged in part-time work at the inn, but this maid’s performance was particularly interesting.

“Come in, the door is unlocked.” As the door opened, a half-elf girl in a maid outfit walked in, with wheat-coloured skin and a tall and slender body. She wore a pair of black silk tights, and looked extremely suggestive.

‘A half-elf? No, this is…’ Leylin’s eyes suddenly narrowed.
Elves were a populous intelligent race that all lived a secluded life on an enormous island. There were however remnants of some branch families on the mainland. They lived well under the protection of the elven god, and were blessed with good talent and long lives. Many of them made prominent contributions to the arts.

Naturally, elven slaves were highly sought after. Despite the protests and warnings of their race, their price had only increased, with wave after wave of adventurers hunting for them.

Half-elves were more common than purebloods. They still inherited the elfin beauty and elegance, and most of them stood out in terms of appearance, which had led to several disasters. It was not particularly surprising to see a half-elf maid in Pirates’ Cove, but Leylin’s expression had changed in spite of that.

“What’s your name?”

“My name is Karen, respected young master!” The ‘half-elf’ forced a smile. It appeared that she was not very well trained, and could not properly display her bodily assets to her customers.

“It looks like you haven’t been doing this for very long, how much are you for one night?” Leylin asked directly.

This sort of sudden humiliation made Karen want to clench her teeth, but she held herself back and revealed a dazzling smile, “One Dambrath gold coin…”

The price was a little high, but Leylin still nodded, “It’s a
reasonable price, especially for a half-drow like you…”
The moment he called her half-drow, Karen rose up angrily. She was like a kitten whose tail had been stepped on.
“How do you know that?” she blurted out. She immediately covered her mouth, but clearly realised that she’d already all but confirmed it.
“Your eye colour. The colouring agent you used to stain it can’t fool me. You ears are also pointier than normal mixed-bloods by 12.4%, and they are slightly concave…” Leylin lightly pointed out the gaps in her disguise. His sharp observations made Karen subconsciously take a few steps back.
The corner of Leylin’s mouth tilted up in a smile as he saw Karen’s stats:
[Name: Karen, Rank 5 Assassin, Race: Half-Drow. Stats: Strength: 1 (3), Agility: 2 (5), Vitality: 0.5 (2), Spirit: 3, Feats: 1. Night Vision: Dark elves have the ability to see even at night. 2. Shadow Perception: Dark elves are sensitive to shadow particles, and are innately gifted assassins and pirates. Status: Poisoned by unknown toxin, causing strength, vitality and agility to fall!]
Karen’s physical stats somewhat surprised Leylin. She even had the abilities of a rank 5 assassin, but some unknown poison had taken control of her, locking half of her strength away.
It was very clear that the person who controlled Karen from the shadows only thought that she was an ordinary half-elf, otherwise they would never have let her come here. Would that not be like sending someone out to assassinate himself?
Leylin smiled faintly. This rank 5 assassin could not touch even a hair on his head.
“Haven’t dark elves always lived underground? How could you appear here, and even take up this line of work?”
Dark elves were a type of elf which were rumoured to live in the darkness. They had awoken the dark nature in their blood,
becoming extremely brutal. They longed for violence, blood and chaos, and had separated from the regular elves to move underground. Some rumours said that their gifts in bed could make both men and immortals die of pleasure, that it was comparable to charm and pleasure magic.

“I’m a halfblood. I moved out from the underground with my clan, but we were all scattered in an attack. When I woke up, I was on a trading ship which was later attacked by the Barbarians…” Leylin’s eyes seemed to be filled with magic charm, and Karen could only helplessly tell her story.

‘No wonder… Half-drow really don’t differ too much from half-elves, and only a specialised scholar would be able to tell the difference. She’s a rank 5 assassin, and she did not have enough power to fight back against the entire Barbarian pirate fleet, not to mention that she was affected by the toxin’s restrictions… Of course, an assassin’s camouflage and disguise abilities could let her fool others, so that they thought that she was an ordinary half-elf.’ Something dawned in Leylin’s eyes as he said, “And after that you were controlled by the pirates, and now work for them as a maid?”

“Yes…” Karen nodded, and her eyes seemed to fill with momentary hope. She immediately knelt on the ground, looking up at Leylin, “Sir! I beg you, please save me from this hellhole!”

“Save you?” Leylin had an evil smile on his face as he sat back down, “Why would I save you? Give me a reason.” Even Leylin had to admit that Karen was a rare beauty, especially with her eyes which were like the ocean waves. Her unique charm gave him a subconscious favourable impression of her.

“I…” Karen bit her lip, “I’m a rank 5 assassin. If you can save me, I’m be willing to serve you for a hundred years. I swear it in the name of the Dark Maiden!”

The Dark Maiden was a god who tended towards the good alignment, and could not be reconciled with the gods that other
dark elves believed in. If Karen believed in this god, then perhaps this was the reason why she had been driven away from the underground.

“Why would you do that? Can’t you save up money to buy back your freedom?” Although she seemed rather out of practice, this was clearly not the first time she had done this sort of thing. This sort of life wasn’t completely unsuitable for a half-drow, and Leylin couldn’t think of why she would want to pay such a huge price for freedom.

“Is their price very high?” Leylin could only guess.

“No!” Karen’s lips curved into a rather heartbreaking smile, “They won’t ever let me go. As a slave, I don’t have the authority to buy my freedom. After I can’t be a maid anymore, those barbarians will sacrifice me to their gods…”

Leylin realised that the barbarians had saved her for some bloody and violent sacrificial rituals. Seeing Karen in that state, perhaps she had recently seen this happen several times, and so she began to plan her escape, begging Leylin for his help.

Even though she was pleading for help, she would meet an even worse fate if she asked the wrong person. Leylin seemed to have an air of nobility about him, and Karen was sure that he was not a pirate.

As a result, after realising that her cover had been broken, Karen immediately asked him for help. She almost did not mind promising to become his slave instead.

‘He’s a young man after all, if I could charm him…’ her eyes were filled with anticipation.

As a half-drow, she was born with the knowledge of how to handle males, and did not require further education on that matter. Although Leylin did not look too easily charmed, she was quite willing to at least try. When she thought of this, Karen’s heart seemed to be fired up, leaving two faint traces of a blush on her
face. She appeared even more charming and lovely.
“A rank 5 assassin?” Leylin looked as if he was thinking over the matter with some difficulty, making Karen reluctant to mention her thoughts.
“You… Do you know anything about sailing?” After a long moment, Leylin stopped pondering and asked this question.
“Sailing?” Karen was shocked dumb. She originally thought that Leylin would come out with an outrageous request, but she had long made her mind up to use all her techniques to mesmerise him. She never thought that he would ask such a completely irrelevant question.
“Yes, I am a pirate captain, and I’m in need of sailors to be my underlings.” Leylin waved his hand and seemed to admit it very reluctantly. There was a trace of humour in his eyes, as if he was playing a joke on her, and Karen immediately knew that he had seen through all her plots.
“I… Honestly I don’t, but I will work hard to learn. I beg you, Sir,” Karen wanted to come up to Leylin and hug him, but Leylin nimbly dodged her.
“Then it looks like you aren’t much use to me,” Leylin said, making Karen’s heart completely sink.
“However, since you’re a dark elf, and you lived in the Underdark before, then you’re slightly worth something,” Leylin continued, his voice drifting into Karen’s ears and raising a thread of hope once again.
“Tell me, Karen, are you willing to become my dagger in the shadows, to help me dispatch my rivals, and drink the blood of my enemies?”
An invisible hand tilted Karen’s chin upwards, making her eyes widen considerably. “Mage Hand! You’re a wizard!”
This nobleman had come to a port where pirates fenced their goods, and although she did not know why, all Karen could see
was opportunity! “I’m willing! In the name of the Dark Maiden I swear this: I will become your sharpest dagger!” Karen respectfully knelt down on her knees, making a strange gesture with her hand. “Very well,” Leylin nodded. He really had recruited her on the basis of her being a half-drow assassin. After all, he currently lacked a spy network and assassin group. Since Karen had recently lived in the Underdark, she would have good experience and knowledge in torture and interrogation as well as assassination. As a rank 5 professional assassin, she was just barely good enough to be of use…
Very well, I’ll speak with the boss later about the issue of your ransom,” Leylin promised, rubbing his hands together.

“Many thanks, master!” Karen immediately began to address him differently. Although she currently looked like a weak little elfling, Leylin knew that once he cured her of her poison and armed her with a sharp dagger, this half-drow would immediately become a powerful god of death in the shadows.

After she had thanked him, the room’s atmosphere immediately grew awkward.

“Master… Would you like me to call my sister maids over?” Karen twisted the corner of her skirt, and looked extremely embarrassed.

“There’s no need. Didn’t you come to help me pour the hot water?” Leylin smiled faintly. The bloody battles and the accumulation of a great deal of life energy had left a fire in him that needed quenching.

“Yes, master!” Karen’s lips curved into a charming smile, and the entire room was soon enveloped in a layer of youthful lust.

Breakfast in the Barbarian Inn was a rich affair. The staples of fluffy and soft wheat bread and milk were present, and the intoxicating aroma of cheese and fried eggs was in the air. There were even several strings of juicy berries in a rattan basket nearby, to tempt one’s appetite.

There was a white napkin around Leylin’s neck as he enjoyed his...
meal with fluid movements. Karen sat on his side and occasionally stole a few glances at him with a blush on her face. These gestures made Leylin smile inwardly; she was a very lovely creature indeed, and he had exceedingly enjoyed his stay last night.
The half-drow seemed to have special talent in that area, but Leylin was not some incapable youth himself. His strength was too much even for a dark elf.
At this moment, Cyclops’ voice came from just outside the door, “Boss, can we come in?”
“Enter!” With Leylin’s command, Cyclops, Giant and Hulk entered the place all at once.
Looking at the massive dark circles and bags under their eyes, it was easy to tell that what kind of merriment they had gotten up to last night. Even after they had diligently cleaned themselves, Leylin could still smell a strong stench of alcohol and perfume on them.
Cyclops and the others noticed Karen by Leylin’s side, but the three pretended as if they hadn’t seen her, their eyes filled with a rather questionable smile.
“I’ll leave for now, master,” Karen said after seeing the others enter. She knew that Leylin had things to discuss with his subordinates, and smartly prepared to leave despite not finishing her breakfast.
“No need. You’re one of us now, so you should stay and listen,” Leylin said, motioning for Karen to stay.
Cyclops was shocked at this action, and he looked over the girl in appraisal. She was certainly just an elfling girl, and also a part-time prostitute, so why would she be recruited by the captain of their crew? However, since this was Leylin’s decision, they could not object to it.
Leylin picked up the white silk napkin and wiped the corners of his mouth before turning to Cyclops and the others, “So, how was last night?”
Cyclops knew that Leylin was naturally not enquiring about what
mischief they had gotten up to. He cleared his throat, and began revealing the information they’d found, “Boss! I’ve already fully found out…

“In Pirates’ Cove, there are several merchant families that are interesting in our goods. However, our biggest patron is the boss of this inn… Haha.”

“That fox girl?” Leylin nodded, “What offer has she made us?”

“860 Dambrath gold coins for the whole lot! This price is rather average amongst the offers we have received, but it would be the safest option,” Cyclops spat fiercely before continuing, “Other families may have offered us a higher price, but I can tell with just one eye what they are planning. Those fuckers!”

Cyclops was a pirate after all, and he subconsciously exploded into foul curses. However, Leylin did not mind the merchants. Pirates’ Cove had a mixed bag of characters, and it was not surprising that a pirate would have their own ideas and want to devour their fleet and their goods all in one go.

Compared to this, as the Barbarians were the biggest players in Pirates’ Cove, it was entirely normal for them to take in these stolen goods to sell them for a profit.

“Mm, this price isn’t bad.” Although Leylin had buckled down on a pile of sugar for himself, the rest of his goods were worth at least 3000 gold coins and above. Since they were stolen goods and therefore ‘dirty’, Leylin would be satisfied with a small profit after it had changed hands a few times.

“This is a detailed map of Pirates’ Cove, including the locations of all the churches!” Hulk respectfully handed a sheepskin scroll to Leylin, and also brought a reply from the shipyard, “The shipyard’s owner has already had a look at the Scarlet Tiger, and has said that there shouldn’t be any problems repairing it. However, the owner said that it would be impossible to magically refit the ship. As for the cost, he will need at least 300 gold coins more…”
“Our little bunny rabbits played hard last night, but nothing big happened. They only had a fight with a few other drunkards,” Giant triumphantly announced, and just looking at his face one could tell that he did not lose the fight.

“Mm, we’ll rest here for 5 days. Hand the maintenance duties over to the shipyard owner, and ask him to finish the work as quickly as possible. We can make some concessions on the price.” It was only routine ship maintenance, and was not as if the ship’s entire keel was being replaced or massively refitted. In this world of extraordinary ability, if the shipyard master could put in all his effort to quickly complete it, there should virtually be no problems.

“Rest assured, boss!” Cyclops beat his chest confidently, taking control of the task. Hulk, who stood at his side, had a rather gloomy expression on his face.

Leylin pretended not to see this sort of infighting amongst his men’s factions. As long as it didn’t interfere with his or the others’ ability to fight, he didn’t particularly want to intercede.

“Mm, so Cyclops can sort it out. Hulk and Giant, come with me to get rid of the goods and hire some men as well.”

“Alright!” “Yes boss!” Since Leylin had issued the command, everything proceeded as expected.

The main hall of the inn was not as noisy as it had been last night, but there were bits of debris on the ground, and even drunkards on the floor.

“All of you, take this drunkard who can’t pay my money back to the docks. Put him in hard labour, and give him a harsh whipping every day until he pays back his debts. Don’t let him leave until then,” the fox girl boss from yesterday ordered the two barbarians from behind the counter, her hands on her hips.

“Oh, young master! Why have you gotten up so early?” After seeing Leylin, her expression quickly changed. She eyed Karen who was standing to one side, and under her piercing gaze, the
elfling couldn’t help but unconsciously shrink back. “Unless you’re dissatisfied with Karen’s service, in which case I’ll swap her for someone else for you!”

“No, no need. She’s very good,” Leylin scratched his nose, “I still don’t know my lady’s name?”

“Haha, my name is Tillen. You can call me Madam Tillen!” Madam Tillen smiled amorously at Leylin, a smile filled with the charm of a mature woman.

“Mm. Dear Madam Tillen, I want to talk about our transaction, and about this maid’s ransom as well,” Leylin said directly.

“Ransom?” Tillen swept her eyes across Karen, her eyes filled with a special look, “Well, it looks like our Karen has satisfied the young master well…”

Tillen seemed to yawn lazily. “This isn’t the place to talk, follow me!”

She swayed her sinuous hips as she left, leaving behind the strong fragrance of her perfume. Leylin smiled a little before following Her into a small room.

Madam Tillen brewed a floral tea that was said to come from the elves, and waited until white steam had risen before a shrewd expression appeared on her face. “You’ve asked me for my name, young master, but I don’t know how to address you.”

“You can call me Leylin,” Leylin replied with a smile. Since he wanted to form an alliance with her, trust was crucial. She was only asking for his name, which she could have easily found out later with some investigations.

“Alright, young master Leylin!” Madam Tillen crossed her long, slender legs, her fiery fox tail caressing her supply waist.

“I can take charge of the negotiations for the goods, but Karen is a slave of our inn. If it’s to do with her, I don’t have the authority to deal with this matter.”

“I know everything here is the personal property of the
Barbarians!” Leylin smiled as he rubbed his hands. *Crackle!* A powerful electric current flashed, filling the room with a piercingly bright light. “Since it’s like this, call the person who can make a decision here.” He followed up in a deep voice, his powerful magic force lingering near his body. “Wizard! You’re a wizard!” Madam Tillen’s voice grew somewhat shrill, and it was clear that she had not discovered Leylin’s identity. A noble wizard was very rare in the outer seas. On top of that, Tillen realised that the energy undulations rolling off of Leylin put his strength higher than rank 5. A wizard of that level was a decent adventurer, and could even have a stronger master backing them! ‘A wizard named Leylin… That’s enough for me to find out who he is!’ Unless he used a fake identity, Tillen was certain that Leylin would not be able to escape her information network. “I never thought that my guest would be such a powerful wizard,” Tillen clasped her hands to her bosom, inadvertently revealing a wide and creamy expanse of her delicate skin. However, Leylin made very clear the division between business and pleasure, “When is your boss coming over?” “Don’t be in such a hurry! The latest you’ll meet him will be tonight,” Tillen threw a flirtatious glance, “Before that, our store has many things to pass time with, does my guest care to have a look?”
“No need, I still have matters to attend to. I’ll return at night,” Leylin got up to reject her, ignoring Madam Tillen’s resentful expression behind his back.

“Master, where are we going?” Karen stood next to Leylin, as well-behaved as a maid. Although the talks had not even begun, she acted as if she already belonged to him.
Hulk and Giant stood further away like a pair of loyal Imperial bodyguards.

“Call a few over to come with us and recruit the sailors,” Leylin said. Be it the Scarlet Tiger or the merfolk ship, they currently had a severe shortage in sailors. As a result, they needed to recruit a great number of sailors as quickly as possible. Pirates’ Cove would always have plenty of these fellows, one only needed to carefully choose from them.

‘Whips and Whiskey!’ Leylin looked at the tavern’s name rather speechlessly, but still opened the wooden door. Although it was still morning, the tavern was filled with people doing business, as well as many hungover drunkards.

“Boss! We found some people last night, and they’re all waiting here for you!” Giant smiled in his simple manner, suddenly hammering on the surface of the counter. It made all the hanging beer mugs shake chaotically with an ear-splitting sound.

“So it’s you, the fellow from last night! Hurry up and settle your bar tab!” A bleary-eyed old drunkard crawled out from the small
door behind the bar, glaring at Giant with disdain. Once he saw Leylin however, his eyes seemed to brighten up considerably. Perhaps he had seen the beautiful clothes that Leylin wore, and reckoned that this was the golden benefactor who could settle the bad debt.

“Greetings, dear customer!” The old man bowed deeply, smiling until his eyes almost seemed to disappear into his wrinkles. There was a huge gap in his treatment of Leylin and how he had treated Giant before, but Giant only muttered a few words under his breath, and did not dare to say anything else. After all, he had tasted Leylin’s methods before.

“What would you like?”

“A glass of rum! The rest of you are free to choose your own!” Leylin waved his hand and sat next to the counter, “Where are the people you found? Call them out and let me have a look at them.” His standards were not too high at the moment, and ordinary pirates would suffice. Death would help him select the cream of the crop.

“Wait, boss!” Giant scratched his head, and rushed to gap between a few sofas like a hurricane, and began to beat the sofas up with kicks and punches. Loud curses could be heard from inside the sofas. After a few seconds, over ten badly battered pirates with swollen faces and bleeding noses were driven out by Giant. Although they were wounded, these pirates had a rather lively temperament, which was beyond Leylin’s expectations.

“Giant, are these the people you fought with last night?” Leylin suddenly had a premonition.

“That’s right, boss!” Giant laughed in his simple manner, “These fellows are pretty tough, and they can hold their own against my beatings. I think they would do well in the battle squadron…” Giant’s gifted strength was already on the level of a rank 5 Warrior,
and he would not do badly against rank 6 or rank 7 Warriors either. For him to give this evaluation, the men must be rather powerful themselves.

At that point, they also knew that Leylin might become their employer, and they looked uneasily at the big fellow standing in the middle amongst them.

“Mm? What’s your name?” Leylin looked at the fellow that was obviously their leader. He had a bearded face, and a pair of eyes that looked half-asleep, which glimmered with intelligence from time to time.

“This is a fellow with a lot of stories to tell!” Leylin judged him on his very first glance.

“Ronald! My name is Ronald, my lord!” His tone of voice was very respectful and decorous, and he even seemed to have learnt a little noble etiquette.

“Can you read?” This sort of subtle distinction aroused Leylin’s interest.

“I previously spent some time in the Tillen scholars’ family learning how to write,” Ronald was very humble, and although they had only just met, he had immediately realised that Leylin was not an ordinary youth.

Not only could he subdue a subordinate like Giant, his temperament was different.

Only a life of abundance, and a long period of etiquette and culture lessons could nurture such an awe-inspiring presence, and an air of nobility.

In these times, a man like him represented hope!

“Very good! Ronald, are you willing to swear loyalty to me?”

Leylin smiled, requesting loyalty rather than employment. This was clearly the invitation of a noble, and Ronald was stunned by it.

He was only startled for a short moment however. Ronald clenched his teeth and asked, “I want to ask my lord if you’re part of the
Louis family? If so, then please forgive me, as it would be difficult for me to agree!”

“Why is that? Are they your enemies?” Leylin asked with great interest. He immediately saw a trace of hatred within Ronald’s eyes. This complex change in emotion surfaced only for a moment, but it could not be concealed from Leylin’s gaze.

“Yes,” Ronald clenched his teeth and took a gamble. After all, if Leylin was a young master from the Louis family, then this situation would not end well for him.

At this moment, the atmosphere became rather delicate. The ten pirates next to Ronald glared at Leylin and his men, as if they were ready to leap into action if the response was unfavourable.

The boss of this place had long hid under the counter, and was obviously experienced with these abnormal situations.

“Haha… Haha…” Just when the atmosphere grew so tense that time almost came to standstill, Leylin suddenly laughed. His rippling laughter disrupted the heavy atmosphere, just like a rock being thrown into still water.

“I’m not one of Marquis Louis’ cronies. On the contrary, my family has a grudge against him,” Leylin spoke slowly, “After all, even if the Marquis needed men, it would be impossible for him to come and recruit here in the Pirates’ Cove, wouldn’t it?”

“Then, this Ronald is willing to accept your employment, my lord!” He skillfully answered Leylin’s previous question, and clearly did not put any heart into his reply. However, that was normal.

Leylin was not brain-dead enough to think that once he exuded his oppressing aura as a hero, subordinates would come running over to worship him.

Perhaps only after he had lead Ronald to begin taking action against Marquis Louis, would he be able to obtain true loyalty from him. Only once he had destroyed Marquis Louis would Ronald be willing to die for him.
‘However, having this sort of effect at the beginning is already good!’

“Very well, from now on you will be a sailor on the Scarlet Tiger ship. Ronald, you are my second officer!” Since there were many available positions now, he needed to fill the gaps quickly.

“Haha… This fellow, welcome to the family! Boss, bring the rum!” Giant firmly slapped Ronald’s back, making him stumble.

“No problem!” The boss who had previously hid under the counter immediately stretched out his hand, a cunning expression on his face, “Only… Shouldn’t you clear your bar tab before you continue drinking? Since you’ve already been hired by someone, doesn’t that mean you’ll have money very soon? Poor old Fade can’t stay afloat any longer…”

After he finished, he even winked at Leylin several times and squeezed out a few drops of crocodile tears. After he heard this, Ronald and the others bowed their heads, and their faces flushed in shame.

‘It looks like these people all didn’t have enough to pay their bill, and were locked up here last night,’ Leylin grudgingly sighed.

“Tell me! How much money do they owe you?” After walking out of the bar, the group of men behind Leylin’s back still looked rather ashamed.

“I’ve given you the criteria of the men I’d like to recruit, so now it’s up to you to recruit people. I need 100 men!” Leylin said to Hulk, after they had walked for a while.

“Don’t worry, my lord!” As a guard of the Faulen family, Hulk’s loyalty towards Leylin was very strong.

“Mm, go and attend to your business. There’s no need to follow me,” Leylin waved his hand to dismiss the others behind him.

“Master!” Karen followed behind Leylin with a worried expression on her face.

“Don’t worry, once I make a promise, there is no way that it won’t
be fulfilled,” Leylin said in a gentle voice, but Karen involuntarily trembled.
“Alright. Please be careful, Pirates’ Cove is extremely chaotic…”
“Mm, I know,” Leylin nodded, disappeared into an alley on the side of the street.
Pirates’ Cove had a complex labyrinth of back alleys, and each one could allow only one person to pass. It was obviously crowded and chaotic and the floor was filled with slop and filthy things, making it smell absolutely awful.
However, Leylin’s gaze was fixed on a unique symbol in a corner of the alleyway. It was a symbol of two crossed daggers, which faintly pointed towards a certain direction.
“The Thieves’ Guild!” Leylin smiled, and immediately walked in the direction that the daggers were pointing to.
In the World of Gods, more and more people were able to advance into a profession. However, the one’s that attracted the most attention and had endured the longest were the three guilds- the Thieves’ Guild, the Warriors’ Guild and Wizards’ Guild!
These three guilds would frequently issue missions, which would bring great benefits to adventurer groups.
In the World of Gods, the number of shrines and whether the three major guilds were hosted there, was a major indicator of the prosperity of a city.
Pirates’ Cove naturally did not host the Wizards’ Guild, but Leylin had seen the Warriors’ Guild as their symbol had been very striking.
The Thieves’ Guild was an enormous organisation which had been secretly hidden in the dark, and their missions tended towards secrecy. Most of them were requests for assassinations or theft.
However, it was this dark network that seemed to permeate the entire continent, and rumour had it that they had the blessings of many gods.
Yes, the three great guilds each had the backing of more than one god!
As he walked in the direction that the daggers pointed, his surroundings became increasingly remote. The liveliness of Pirates’ Cove was gradually left behind, and Leylin began to feel a pervasive sense of eeriness and desolation. This feeling grew even more obvious after he walked down a flight of stone stairs. The terrifying senses of wizards allowed him to notice that there were three pairs of eyes spying on him in the shadows.

“It really feels like I’m walking down to hell!” Leylin chuckled. The sun was covered by vast dark clouds, projecting tremendous shadows.

He pressed his palm onto a gray rock covered in moss, and a gap immediately appeared in a wall nearby. He did not hesitate as he quickly ducked into the gap, simultaneously feeling many astonished gazes directed at him.

There was a very short path behind the wall, and at its end was a wooden door with an iron ring.

*Thump! Thump!* Leylin used the ring to knock loudly on the door, and it let out a distant sound.

The door creaked open slightly, revealing the face of an old man holding an oil lamp. He had practically no facial muscles anymore, looking like a withered corpse under the flickering light of the lamp. His two eyes looked dazed, the eyeballs completely motionless.
“The night is always lonely,” The old man said in a hoarse voice, as if he had not spoken for a long time.
“For those who are seeking brightness and hope!” Leylin smiled slightly, a dagger flying into his hand and beginning to dance through the air as elaborately as a butterfly.
The old man gave Leylin a probing look and opened the wooden door, “Come in, brother from the Underdark!”
With the light from his oil lamp, Leylin could see a deep and pitch-black passageway that seemed to go all the way to the core of the earth. A distant sound increased in volume as he made his way across it, until it turned into what seemed like a market bustling with life.
*Pak!* Two enormous gates opened, revealing an even more expansive underground world.
What entered his sights was a hall formed from a deep cave, with sinkholes in the floor and underground streams trailing off to numerous others. People from all walks of life populated this area, most strangely covering their faces with shrouds. Only pairs of vigilant eyes were revealed.
In the distance were a few wooden constructions and a large announcement board towering ahead. Below were many masked people gesticulating at it. While they tried to lower their volume, the sounds of discussion from the whole crowd joined to form a buzz.
“Welcome to the Thieves’ Guild! Is this your first time, kid?” A slender and tall person like a bamboo stick closed in, trying his best to create a stiff smile, “Need a guide? I…”
“No!” Leylin rejected resolutely.
This was the dark world of Pirates’ Cove. How could there be good people here? Even if one looked to hire people, just showing the slightest of weaknesses would cause these people to pounce on you like wild wolves, dividing everything amongst themselves after
murdering you.
“Mister… I…”
“Scram!” Leylin glared at him, and the murderous aura born of indiscriminate slaughter forced the man several steps back.

Having killed people meant nothing. Everyone here had the blood of at least one or two people on their hands themselves, but Leylin’s own murderous aura was far more powerful than that. It was that of someone who’s truly honed themselves on a bloody battlefield, not someone to be trifled with.

An important part of being a thief was knowing oneself well. The slender bamboo stick of a man laughed awkwardly and disappeared into the darkness. He had a feeling that if he were to continue staying here, what happened next would be something he would regret.

“Is this darkness…” Feeling the blood and violence lingering in the air, as well as the pure malicious intent, Leylin revealed a nostalgic look. He was originally a dark Magus after all.

He ran his eyes over his surroundings casually, and began to head towards the large announcement board. The thing seemed to grow bigger the closer he got, until it was the size of a small hill.

Numerous enchanted words flickered on it; just maintaining this effect would require at least tens of gold coins everyday. The extravagance caused Leylin to nod to himself.

‘Mission: Track down whereabouts of a batch of silk cloth!’
‘Mission: Investigate reason and happenings for the fall of the Half Merfolk Island!’
‘Mission: Assassinate Viscount Lorraine’s wife!’
‘Selling information: The recent shipping route of the cargo ships of the Heigel chamber of commerce!’
‘Selling recipe for poison: Tears of Molin! Interested parties must come for a face-to-face meeting!’

All sorts of information and news flickered on the announcement
board. The missions for investigation and assassination caused Leylin to let out an involuntary sound of surprise, ‘I didn’t expect news of Half Merfolk Island to travel here so quickly, and… Missions for the assassination of nobility put out here in public…’ The only impression that Leylin got was that as long as money was involved, these assassins could do anything. He gazed steadily at the board as the A.I. Chip rapidly scanned everything, collating the information on all these missions into one system.

While it was only the names of the mission, Leylin grew to understand the outer seas better from it.

‘Crimes and chaos… I like it…’ Though he only saw a corner of this dark world, Leylin knew that things were definitely not all quiet and tranquil in the region.

Many rebellious powers lay low in the shadows, preparing to deal Marquis Louis a fatal blow at any time. This would completely destroy the market dominance that the Baltic archipelago enjoyed, allowing them to plunder the riches and resources there!

Once the A.I. Chip showed a prompt that it had recorded all the information, Leylin walked straight to the wooden house at the back.

Many roads immediately showed up like a dense cobweb. Some fellows with dangerous auras occasionally appeared in Leylin’s senses, but there was only a very fuzzy image of them there.

‘This feeling… Is it a protective layer due to some divine force? In addition, this seems to be from a god I know well…’ Leylin snickered and strode inside.

*Pila!* The void was torn open at this moment, and an icy glint of steel was aimed straight at Leylin’s neck like a poisonous snake’s tongue.

The rank of this assassin seemed to be rather high, and he had almost escaped Leylin’s senses. It was only at the moment of the other party’s attack, that instant when their murderous intent surged
out, that Leylin located them.
‘Mage Armour! Fragile Barrier!’ Two layers of protective spells immediately appeared with a thought.
But at the same time, he saw an icy look in the assassin’s eyes. The rays of light from a divine spell shone out.
Dispel Magic! Under the glittering light, Leylin’s protective spells instantly crumbled, revealing his astonished gaze. The dagger in the assassin’s hand ruthlessly swiped at his neck, and he evidently would not stop until it was all over.
Most wizards would need a period of time to recover their senses and contact the Weave after being hit with Dispel Magic. This slight moment would be enough for the assassin to carve Leylin into multiple pieces. After all, a wizard that had lost all ability to cast spells was just a regular human.
[Beep! Host affected by divine spell, suffering a temporary loss of ability to sense level 2 and 3 Weave. Countdown: 5 seconds!] The A.I. Chip’s prompt arrived in that instant, but strangely enough, there was no mention of the level 0 and 1 Weave. Leylin could sense that his ability to use that still existed.
‘I see. So after I complete the analysis of the Weave, I’m immune to isolating skills?’ Leylin could now cast rank 0 and 1 spells in an instant, drowning this assassin. However, he immediately gave this idea up.
An ability that was too unexpected would give rise to suspicions, which was not beneficial to him at the moment.
‘Since it can seal the magic abilities I have, then…’ A magic scroll instantly appeared in his hands, emitting terrifying light.
“A rank 4 spell!” The assassin produced a sharp cry. Meanwhile, he could feel his dagger piercing into what seemed to be the most solid granite, unable to penetrate through it even by an inch.
“Rank 4 magic, Stone Skin! You despicable maggot, you even made me use such a precious scroll!” Leylin feigned fury as he was
completely covered by a layer of stone skin, as if he now wore armour of stone. This was Stone Skin, a rank 4 spell. Its defensive power was outstanding even among other spells of its kind. This scroll was something that Ernest had given Leylin while he had still been in the manor just in case. He hadn’t used it during the previous times of danger, but he’d done so now. This was a rank 4 magic scroll! Even if its value wasn’t enough to equal that of a city, it was very precious, and the fury on Leylin’s face was understandable.

“You should not have come here!” The assassin’s voice was hoarse as he hurriedly retreated.

“Trying to leave now?” Leylin’s expression was filled with fury as he swung his fist.

*Thud!* The tip of the dagger was broken off by the stone fist, but it did not stop there. It crashed into the assassin’s body with great power.

*Crack!* A layer of his defence was destroyed, and the assassin’s body was sent flying backwards, the imprint of a fist clear on his chest.

“Never… Never has someone been able to treat me this way. I will kill you…” The assassin pulled his mask down, revealing a sullen face, with blood trickling from the corner of his mouth.

“Let’s see who dies first!” Leylin strode closer, a murderous aura apparent on his face.

“Esteemed guest, please forgive him!” At some point, a figure dressed entirely in a black robe came to the centre, a streak of divine force flying to the assassin’s body. Under the light, the assassin’s wounds healed at a startling rate.

“Cure Serious Wounds! A rank 3 divine spell!” Leylin’s eyes narrowed as he saw the emblem on the other party’s chest.
“A priest of Cyric?” Leylin stepped backwards, “Since this is what the God of Murder’s pries wants, then I’ll forget it…” He had no plans of killing people here, he was in their territory after all.

“Lord Priest, please let me…” At this moment, the assassin on the ground began to crawl, eyes full of hatred for Leylin.

“Enough, fall back!” The voice yelled at the assassin without favouritism, causing him to freeze.

“You just wait!” The assassin glared at Leylin, drawing a finger across his neck before disappearing into thin air.

“Hehe… Little Cly was far too reckless and impulsive. Esteemed guest, please come with me!” The priest politely gestured at Leylin to move on. Leylin rubbed his nose and walked with him.

……

Leylin left a long while later, having acquired what he needed. This priest then turned here and there in the underground world, and finally left the Thieves’ Guild and arrived in a secret room. The flames around them flickered sinisterly. At the very centre of the place was a shrine to the God of Murder.

In front of the figure was an old man with wrinkles all over his face, praying as powerful divine force rippled forth from his body.

“Lord Bishop!” The priest from before bowed respectfully.
“Is that person gone already?” The old bishop opened his hazy eyes. They somehow held a lustre that could see through one’s intentions.

“Yes, he has already left. He bought a lot information regarding Marquis Louis!” The priest did not dare conceal anything, and stated all of Leylin’s activities.

“I saw it. He will be the source of chaos in the future. His many murders and the chaos he brings will definitely bring joy to our master!” The bishop muttered.

“Then what should we do? Help him?” The priest asked, confused.

“There’s no need for that… Keke… Just be neutral. If required, he will definitely seek our help…” Lord Bishop snickered, “In addition, gift the news of him coming here to the Barbarians. Also, warn Cly not to interfere with the Master’s great work just because of a brother’s death, or I will put him on trial…”

The God of Murder’s punishment was notoriously brutal, and even this priest began to tremble in fear once it was mentioned.

“I understand! Our Master’s glory will definitely spread across the lands!” The priest said a prayer, and then left respectfully…

‘The God of Murder? How interesting!’ Leylin evidently realised that today’s incident had to do with the wave of assassins he’d faced before.

However, assassins were people who worked for money. Mahnke might have sided with Marquis Louis at the beginning or had been hired by him, but he had already been turned into a pile of bones. Leylin could not be bothered with him. Rather, a high-ranked assassin like Cly was a threat he could not ignore.

“Seems like this Thieves’ Guild is neutral. It’s under the rule of the Barbarians, but also has connections with Marquis Louis…” Leylin smiled grimly.

Churches always saw things from their own point of view, the conflicts of mortals transient like fleeting clouds. As long as their
own rule wasn’t affected, they didn’t care about the king. It was so with the church of knowledge, as well with the church of murder.

‘The exploration of the sea started recently, but the place has already entered the sights of the gods. I need to step up my plans…’ Leylin’s expression could not help but darken, but after he returned to the inn he had calmed down, not revealing any hint of what he’d felt before.

“Boss!” Giant and Hulk stood up in the inn’s main hall, accompanied by the tens of pirates they’d brought. Ronald was also there amongst them.

“Mm!” Leylin’s eyes swept through this group of pirates. All who met his gaze felt a piercing feeling in their eye, and had no choice but to lower their heads.

“Tell them that I’ll get the bill for the roasted meat and rum over these few days!” It had to be said that Leylin had a pretty good impression of these people. At the very least, these pirates were more ferocious than the rest.

Of course, that was the extent of it. It wasn’t easy to recruit Professionals at or above the middle grades.

“Master, Madam Tillen has invited you to the back!” Karen noiselessly appeared behind Leylin, her footsteps incredibly light like those of a seasoned thief. She no longer showed any signs of her previous weakness.

“Has the poison from your body been removed?” Blue light flashed as Leylin asked in surprise. He only needed a bit of effort to obtain a cure for Karen’s poison, but Madam Tillen had already taken care of it. It showed her favourable attitude.

After all, she had the Barbarians backing her. It was currently the only organisation that could contend against Marquis Louis in the outer seas.

“Yes! She’s already removed my slave contract. Henceforth, I serve under you, Master!” Karen had already removed that maid uniform
that gave rise to wild thoughts. She was now clad in black leather attire, a black leather holster for her dagger on her thighs that were as thick as ivory. It made her seem even more gallant.

“Good. Lead me there!” Leylin knew that Madam Tillen had already reported everything about him to the Barbarians, she was a part of them after all. They were now looking for him to lay all their cards on the table.

It was the same room as it had been in the morning, though there was now another giant in there.

This was a barbarian with green skin, sitting on the large sofa nonchalantly and with a great aura to him. The floorboards beneath him had slightly sunken under his heavy weight. He wore a cowhorn helmet made of wrought iron, and revealed a fine and solid upper body. His fierce looks were coupled with a pair of shrewd eyes.

At his right hand was an exotic saber (a single long broad blade, and a long handle suitable for two-handed use made to slice through horse’s legs, dating from Emperor Cheng of Han) at a position from which it could be brandished most easily. Its sharp edge held a magic glow to it, evidently a result of it being enchanted by an alchemist.

“Hehe… the young master of the Faulen Family!” Madam Tillen now sat on the thigh of the barbarian, beaming up at Leylin. Her fiery-red tail brushed against the barbarian from time to time, giving off an untameable feeling that was very tempting.

The two sat together, and Leylin suddenly had a bizarre feeling that this was rather similar to ‘Beauty and the Beast’, but Madam Tillen did not seem to think so. Her eyes were full of love as she stared into his eyes.

“Hehe… I never thought that young master Leylin, the heir of a Baron, would become a pirate!” Madam Tillen now sized Leylin up and down, eyes emanating a beautiful luster, “That’s not all. I’ve
heard about young master’s talent in magic that even makes your
mentor feel ashamed of himself. How extraordinary…”
In just a few sentences, she’d revealed that she now had all the
information regarding the current Leylin.
“And so? Nobles will never admit it, and I obviously won’t!”
Leylin chuckled and sat on the sofa on the opposite side. Karen
stood behind him, her body involuntarily trembling as if it had
evoked some past trauma.
The Barbarians would’ve been too stupid to hold influence over
the outer seas if they couldn’t find information on him given his
name and the fact that he was a wizard. The sincerity was a
requirement of an alliance.
“Nice! Young master Leylin’s words are completely different from
those dignified nobles,” Madam Tillen’s tone seemed to conceal
some hatred, “They appear to be openhearted and benevolent, but
in reality they’re worse than beasts…”
The barbarian warrior did not utter a single word all this time, but
the pressure he gave off made him seem like a mountain,
constantly attacking Leylin.
“This is…?” Leylin asked Madam Tillen bluntly.
“Oh, look at me!” Madam Tillen patted at her bright forehead and
gave him a flirty look, “Let me introduce. This is Ogde
Battlehammer, my lover! He’s also the captain of the Barbarians!”
As she introduced him, Leylin’s eyes flickered. The A.I. Chip’s
robotic voice sounded, and part of the information was projected
before him.
extremely dangerous!]
Beside the numbers was a 3D image of him, including the magic
saber. Just from the image, Leylin could tell that he had numerous
magic items on him.
‘A high-ranked warrior above rank 15, with a bonus in strength as a barbarian! Even on the continent, this strength would bring him fame. Even if it’s the Marquis, with help from the barbarian race, Ogde should not be on the losing end in a battle against the Marquis.’

Leylin found that he had to recalculate the strength Marquis Louis had. In the World of Gods, Professionals between ranks 5 and 10 were elites. Those above rank 10 were great in their own right, and as for rank 15s and above, they were respected throughout the kingdoms and treated very well. However, even a high-ranked warrior like that, with the power of his whole race on his side, was on the losing end against Marquis Louis. How powerful was the noble? At this moment, Leylin felt lucky that he’d left immediately after taking care of Half Merfolk Island.

As these thoughts flashed past, Leylin nodded at this high-ranked barbarian captain, “Nice to meet you, revered exemplary!” Comprehend Languages flashed, allowing Leylin to understand what the Barbarian meant.
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“Foreign wizard! I can sense an aura emitting from you, that only clan priests possess!” The high-level barbarian warrior, Odge, had his eyes fixated on Leylin’s hands, “In addition, you’re also a soldier worth respecting!”

His astonishing sharpness allowed him to sense Leylin’s accomplishments as a warrior.

“Then… Speak your purpose in coming here!” After Odge spoke, the fox lady Madam Tillen immediately stood obediently as the side, as though she was a maid showing respect.

Leylin took a deep breath, then said his request, “I would like to join forces with the Barbarians’ to attack the Baltic archipelago!”

“Are you crazy, young lad?” Even the fox woman couldn’t listen to such a fantastical plan. She stood up as her chest heaved violently, “Do you know how many Professionals Marquis Louis has under him? You actually want to rope us in as his enemy? Don’t think we’ll think highly of you because you exterminated the Black Tigers and Half Merfolk Island. Wait till you’ve gotten rid of the Black Skeletons or Tigershark Pirates, before saying that again!”

“But… you’re ALREADY enemies with the Marquis. I’m just offering a helping hand, am I not?” Leylin shrugged his shoulders and said with a smile.

“Good lord! To think that I actually know a chap like you who doesn’t understand the complexity of the situation…” Madam
Tillen was so furious that her entire body started to tremble, and she was close to chasing him away immediately. But at this very moment, an enormously powerful pair of hands stopped Tillen from taking action. “Let him continue!”

“Odge… You…” The fox lady turned around and saw the interested expression in the barbarian’s eyes. “The enemy of our enemy is our friend!” Leylin smiled and spoke frankly with assurance. “Not only can the Faulens offer you support as a noble family, I am also a wizard, with a formidable tutor as my backing.”

The power of magic was the eternal sorrow of these barbarians. Odge’s expression changed greatly in response. Even though there were a few barbarian priests who had inherited magical abilities, they were always at a disadvantage compared to human wizards. Upon seeing this, Leylin became more confident. “I presume… that you also know how powerful magic can be, right?”

“Yes, we will require the assistance of formidable magical power to aid us in defeating Boruj!” The Barbarian Warlock nodded. “Boruj… Is that the chief wizard of Louis’ family?” Leylin quickly recalled the information he had purchased at the Thieves’ Guild. “That’s right! I can tell you for definite that he’s a high level wizard above rank 15! Without him, if they relied only on Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates, I’d have ripped those two pirate crews into shreds a long time ago…”

“A wizard above rank 15!” Leylin exhaled deeply. Such high level wizards often had great mastery over powerful plane transmission spells and life spells, which made killing them exceptionally difficult.

“Such wizards are probably few and far between even in the Dambrath Kingdom, right? Why would he agree to work under Marquis Louis?”

If it was him that was the marquis of the empire, there would still
be a possibility of attracting a high-level wizard to work for him. But Marquis Louis evidently didn’t have this qualification. In the entire Dambrath Kingdom, the only person who had the ability to recruit a high-level wizard would only be His Majesty.

“As a matter of fact, I know a little about this…” Seeing that Odge didn’t reject the alliance, and even appeared to admire Leylin, Madam Tillen took a deep breath, no longer looking down on Leylin.

“According to my intelligence reports, that marquis apparently promised to build him a wizard tower, and used this to pay for the wizard’s assistance…”

“We absolutely must not let him successfully build a wizard tower!” Without waiting for Madam Tillen complete her sentence, Leylin had already made up his mind. Even it was a wizard tower of the lowest standards, the amount of wealth required was astronomical. Two million gold coins was the most basic requirement, and they had to be kronas.

With such a huge temptation, it was no wonder that Boruj would cast himself as one of Marquis Louis’ subordinates. It was also not surprising that his table manners were exceptionally unsightly 1, as he was a person who wanted any kind of benefits. But the more it was so, the more Leylin wanted to destroy their alliance.

No one else understood the terror of a wizard tower more clearly than a wizard himself. A low-ranking wizard tower was equivalent to a rank 15 wizard, the sort that did not need to rest day or night, with boundless energy. Once he successfully constructed his wizard tower, the entire Baltic archipelago would be so sturdy that it would be impenetrable under Boruj’s supervision.

With the wizard tower, not only would Boruj take a step forwards to advancement, it also meant that he could groom a steady flow of wizard apprentices!
It only took a few reminders from Leylin before Odge’s eyes shone with resolution.

“But… According to our intelligence reports, Marquis Louis is already secretly buying mithril and refined gold in bulk, and they even increased the intensity of their slavers’ fleet. He even sent people to the mainland to acquire high-grade construction blueprints…”

“The more he moves forward, the more we cannot let them succeed, or else his will be the only voice in the outer sea in the future!” Leylin’s expression was serious, “I’ll incessantly raid his shipping routes from now, I’ll need your cooperation for intelligence reports and to fence stolen goods.”

Hearing Leylin’s simple yet crude plan, Madam Tillen had a rather thoughtful expression on her face. What he offered was something the Barbarians themselves could not do.

Were they to do such a thing, it would mean the start of a war! The Marquis’ powerful fleet of ships would arrive at Pirates’ Cove in the blink of an eye, but it was different for Leylin. He was executing this in private, but still had the identity of a noble on the surface.

Even Marquis Louis would not dare to commit the heinous crime of attacking another noble family’s territory without any evidence. Besides, only a wizard like himself would be able to avoid the detection and predictive spells of the wizard working under Louis. As for dispatching pirates and the like, did he think the other nobles were fools? There was a church on Faulen Island as well. As long as the high-level wizard Boruj was not around, Leylin dared to join up with the Barbarians, and make sure that Boruj would walk the path of no return.

Many thoughts passed through the barbarian’s mind. One should not be baffled by his appearance; although he was a barbarian, his ability to hold the throne of leadership showed that he was no
simple character. Moreover, no matter how he looked at it, the one taking the risk would be Leylin and his family. There wouldn’t be any gains or losses on his part. This was what Leylin had planned long ago, and it would soon bring sorrow to his weaker opponents.

“Madam!” At this instant, there was a light knock on the door. “What’s the matter? Didn’t I say before that you can’t approach the lord if there isn’t anything important?” Madam Tillen scowled, but continued to swing her hips as she opened the door by a small crack.

“Madam!” A maid with extremely clever eyes lowered her head and secretly scanned her surroundings, before whispering something in Madam Tillen’s ear. After closing the door, Madam Tillen returned to her seat. She looked at Leylin oddly. Her facial expression changed a few times, before she leaned forward on Odge’s shoulder and said a few words to him.

“You’re good!” Odge gave Leylin a profound look. He then whispered urgently and hastily in Madam Tillen’s ear. A high-ranking warrior of Odge’s level could already manifest their qi into the external environment. Isolating an area from detection was simply a piece of cake for him, and even Leylin couldn’t hear anything they were discussing.

“Alright! Our chief has agreed to form an alliance with you, and even share our intelligence reports and the channel where we dispose our stolen goods with you!” Madam Tillen grudgingly shot a bitter glance at Leylin, as though he had gotten some huge advantage, “However, we want half of the benefits of your profits every round!”

“Ten percent at most, or else I will not be able to pay my subordinates!” Once they were back to this matter, Madam Tillen seemed to have
returned to being that shrewd wife. Leylin couldn’t give them his benefits just based on a few sentences she uttered, and they settled on the criterion of thirty percent in the end.

Since the leaders of both parties had already confirmed their inclination towards a collaboration, the rest of the matters could be settled by their subordinates. Odge stood up, causing a slight tremor in the process.

“Nobleman from the outer seas, wizard Leylin! Are you my friend?”

“Of course. May our friendship last for a long time, and even carry over to our descendants!” Leylin solemnly made a promise.

*Thump!* Two fists, one large and one small, collided, producing a light crack. This was a contract of their alliance and a pledge between men.

Of course, how long this would be maintained was a question that Leylin found hard to confront. However, before the fall of Marquis Louis’ influence, their relationship as allies would be relatively solid.

After Odge left, the fox lady moved next to Leylin. Her petite frame which could light up a fire in most men was almost completely leaning against his body as she said in a feminine voice in his ear,

“Hehe… Odge seems to like you very much?”

“My apologies, Madam! It’s about time for me to leave!” Leylin pushed her away courteously and got up to take his leave.

Hearing his words, a trace of disappointment flashed across her eyes, although it wasn’t clear if it was genuine or false. “Your behaviour really does deeply wound me! However, elder sister still has two gifts for you!”

“Karen! You belong to Mr Leylin from now on. You need to satisfy all of his demands, understand?”

“Understood, Madam!” Karen agreed like it was a conditioned reflex, before a hint of shame and fury flashed across her face, as
though she had come to a realisation.
Although he was fully aware that Madam Tillen was being
generous, at least she had gotten the approval of the barbarian, or
else she definitely wouldn’t have dared to free Karen of her
imprisonment. Leylin thanked her anyway.
And the other gift?” Leylin looked at the appealing fox lady in front of him. There was a glimmer of anticipation on his face like that of a little boy-next-door. Such an attitude made Madam Tillen blush instantly, and her heart almost could not take it, “Although I know perfectly well that you’re just putting on an act, I still was nearly captivated by you…” Tillen swayed her hips. Her fiery-red fox tail drifting gently with the wind, “The second one is an intelligence report. It’s about the God of Murder’s church.” Leylin’s expression turned solemn as he listened carefully.

……

After several days, the Scarlet Tiger had been repaired at the pier of Pirates’ Cove. The blood-red flag with the skull and dagger motif fluttered in the wind. The damage to the ship’s hull had been completely mended, the bottom of the ship polished, and even the bow of the ship had been replaced. The entire ship seemed to have been given new life, making Leylin feel deeply moved and feeling that his gold coins had been well-spent. Now, Leylin was standing at the front of the deck with his hands behind his back, looking down at more than a hundred pirates.
These men were all recruited at Pirates’ Cove, and would make up the members in his future pirate crew. Although Hulk and Giant had diligently attended to the matter, Leylin still had a glimmer of dissatisfaction due to the short period of time they had. It could not be said that he was discontented with these pirates below him. It would be a wonder if these stubborn and unruly pirates submitted immediately upon discovering that their boss was a youngster. Thus, Leylin was not upset about that. What made him unhappy was how weak these pirates were. The number of Professionals were so low that it could be counted with his fingers, and not a single one was above rank 5. Ronaldo’s group was already considered the cream of the crop, but they had at least seen bloodshed before, so they wouldn’t be lenient during a battle. Furthermore, the few who had pretty decent strength seemed to be up to no good. They didn’t even have the inclination to lay low for a while, which made Leylin shake his head inwardly. ‘Forget it, an elite pirate crew isn’t made in one or two days. Hulk and Giant have done quite well.’ Leylin sighed secretly, then stood in front of everyone, “I am the captain of the Scarlet Tiger and will be your captain in the future. Does anyone have anything to say?” He roared loudly all of a sudden, and his voice even made the pirates’ eardrums hurt, “I know many among you are unwilling to obey me.” Leylin slowly ran his eyes through the crowd, seemingly able to read every single pirate’s heart, “Some of you have your eyes on the handsome pay. Others are here purely to have some fun. Furthermore, some of you, perhaps, simply harbor prohibited thoughts and wish to kill me and seize control of the boat at sea.” An uproar came from the pirates below, but Leylin’s voice was
loud enough to repress it.
“But it doesn’t matter, I can put all that aside. However, if you disobey my orders on the ship, or are unable to complete even my most basic requests, I will wring your brain out and stuff it up your anus. Do you understand?”
This arrogant threat immediately created a commotion among many of the pirates. Even Ronaldo was slightly displeased.
“Ya tender white swine! How dare ye speak to adults like that! Be a good lil’ boy and run back to yer mommy’s bosom to drink her milk!”
A jarring voice sounded from the crowd and hoots of laughter instantly erupted.
“Stop hidin’, Damphair Aeron. I can see ye. Get out here!” Giant and Hulk were rather furious.
“Hey! Hey! Mateys! Are we gin’ let a mischievous imp climb over our heads?” The crowd parted. A pirate with a fake eye and yellowing teeth walked out with more than a dozen men behind him.
“Browntooth Torworld, Pinchface Jon Myre, Red Oarsman Lucas Codd, Quellon Humble…” Giant’s expression grew worse as these names were called out one by one.
These were all famous pirates. Most of them worked alone, but they still were forces to be reckoned with. Moreover, they had great popularity among the various pirates. Even Cyclops felt that this wouldn’t be easy to settle.
“Finally, you appear.” Leylin shook his head, “Then what do you plan on doing? Don’t forget we are still at the pier.”
Leylin was speechless regarding how those few had appeared all of a sudden. Even if they were just being compliant on the surface, but were secretly conspiring to seize control of the authority, Leylin could still use them temporarily for a period of time. It was better than disposing of them immediately.
“Nothin’, respectable young master!” Aeron snarled, making his yellowing teeth even more conspicuous, “I’m just hopin’ that young master can appoint me and these mateys as assistants onboard. This way, we’ll be able to pass on a portion of the benefits to ye. A person with such honorable status like yourself can refrain from headin’ out to sea and takin’ risks. Ain’t that reasonable?”

“Is this what all of you think too?” Leylin looked down at the newly recruited pirates.

At this point, even Giant, the most slow-witted of them all, understood that they were plotting to seize control. He immediately stood behind Leylin, along with Cyclops and the other older pirates. Their gazes were filled with pity.

Based on what they knew of Leylin, they instantly predicted that this was the beginning of a show of force and massacre.

The majority of the pirates lowered their heads, but a few jeered rowdily. The crowd still showed tacit approval on the whole. The loyalty of pirates was as chaste as prostitutes.

“Aeron! You’re too much!” Ronald stood apart together with his brothers, drawing the boundaries with him.

“A silent majority, and a handful of rebellious people?” Leylin laughed while looking at Aeron, who seemed to be at a loss of what to do. His eyes were filled with panic.

Upon seeing Ronald step out, he evidently understood that the situation had escalated to a point where it would be difficult to tell what would happen.

At first, they had more than a dozen brothers that were not inferior to Leylin’s men. While the remaining newly recruited pirates wouldn’t have helped an outsider.

But now, the tables had turned. Since Ronald decided to defect while bringing some people along, the tides turned immediately. The number of people in Leylin’s team rapidly increased, which intimidated majority of the remaining pirates.
Aeron deeply understood that, with his reputation, it was possible to get some of these pirates to fight for him. However, it would be impossible for Ronald to fight for Aeron as if his life depended on it.

“Damn it Ronald, ye made me lose such a huge juicy sheep! Watch out!” Aeron cursed and moved to leave with his subordinates. Death, however, was already knocking on his door. A nimble black silhouette suddenly appeared out of thin air.

“Shadow Stealth!” The figure that had appeared was an assassin. Her dagger slashed an elegant arc across his neck.

Asassin skill Cutthroat!

A great amount of fresh blood splurted out. Aeron covered his throat with both hands, and struggled as he collapsed on the floor. His death was quick.

“Anyone with the audacity to offend my master, will die.” Karen stood behind Leylin, wielding the dagger.

After the poison was expelled from her body, Karen finally returned to her original strength as a rank 5 assassin, which immediately intimidated a few people.

Now, she faced these pirates with the blade of vengeance.

“A rank 5 assassin! Mateys, charge! Avenge Aeron!” A red-haired pirate, who had been standing behind Aeron, immediately yelled out as a layer of qi burst forth from his body.

“Don’t move, all of you!” Leylin raised his hands and stopped his subordinates from causing trouble.

“Perhaps you once heard how the captain of the Scarlet Tiger was a powerful wizard but, upon seeing me, you instantly thought it was only a rumour,” Leylin strolled in front of those traitors. What he said made their expression change drastically and, at this point, many of them were already secretly regretting their actions.

“But let me tell you that, unfortunately, your guesses are wrong.” A refined and courteous smile was plastered on Leylin’s face. What
he did next, however, wasn’t so civilized.
“Fireball!” Two balls of fire shot out, and the red-haired pirate was instantly torched.
The powerful force of the spell immediately made numerous pirates retreat one by one, a look of respect emerging on their faces.
“Animate Rope!” Leylin pointed his finger. The once useless cable suddenly started moving about, as if it had a life of its own. It nimbly bound the rebellious pirates together, and hung them upside-down on the deck.
The numerous ropes resembled the tentacles of a formidable monster as they danced around continuously, while Leylin looked like the powerful wizard who tamed the monsters of the sea only found in legends. Many pirates couldn’t help but kneel down.
“Ah! Release me! Release me! This is the Pirates’ Cove, ye can’t do this! The Barbarian Pirates crew ain’t gonna let ye off!”
A few pirates were still putting up their final struggle. Their high-pitched voices pierced the air, attracting a team of barbarian guards. There was a glimmer of hope on the faces of the captive whey they saw the guards. However, it was unfortunate that their hopes were immediately smashed to smithereens.
Upon seeing the flag of the Scarlet Tiger, these barbarians left immediately, not even bothering about the tragedy that was taking place.
“This treatment! It means there’s an alliance with the Barbarian Pirates crew! Boss has already made an alliance with the Barbarians!” The numerous pirates immediately began to heartily surrender. With the assistance of the prestigious Barbarian Pirates and his own formidable strength, Leylin knew that he had finally established a definite amount of trust with these newly recruited pirates, at least for the time being.
“Boss! Please spare us!” “Respectable and powerful Lord Wizard!
Red Oarsman Lucas Codd is willin’ to pledge loyalty to ye!”
At this point, the pirates hanging upside-down sank into despair, and many began begging for forgiveness.
“Traitors must be dealt with strictly and severely. That way, the others can witness how high a price one must pay for betraying me!” Leylin’s indifferent tone sent a chill through the hearts of the other pirates.
Following his orders, the cable ropes suddenly tightened, forcing out copious amounts of blood.
*Thump! Thump! Thump!*
Splashes of blood burst out. The gazes of the other pirates were filled with fear; right now, Leylin looked like the king of all devils.
“Master! Your beautiful strength is like a resplendent jewel, brimming with a dazzling brilliance!” Karen, who was standing beside Leylin, immediately complimented him. As a half-drow, she seemed to have regained her natural instincts after being liberated. She was gradually recovering her darkness and thirst for blood, which was characteristic of the drow.

“Alright, get up.”

Cyclops and the other pirates who had long pledged their loyalty were already aware of the outcome, thus they didn’t appear to be flabbergasted. The new pirates, on the other hand, were all frightened out of their wits, especially Ronald and his group.

“So, what do you think? Does anyone else have any objections?” Leylin ran his eyes over the crowd. The other pirates didn’t dare meet his gaze, yet their eyes were brimming with reverence.

“Excellent! I like the respectful look in your eyes.” Leylin nodded. His subordinates immediately pulled out two trunks of silver kronas and copper coins.

This was the only payment he had obtained from selling the majority of goods he had on hand. Madam Tillen had ruthlessly cut the prices, probably in an attempt to vent her anger.

However, this much was sufficient to maintain the pirate crew for a few months. As for the months after that? Why would he still worry about providing for his men after getting a hold of the riches
of the entire sea?
“The pay I promised earlier will not be reduced.” Leylin opened the chest. The twinkling radiance of the silver kronas blinded the eyes of numerous pirates.
“Each buccaneer of the Scarlet Tiger will obtain a fixed salary every month, in addition to the loot plundered,” Leylin announced loudly. This policy was quite different from the usual pirate way, and it instantly received cheers from the pirates. Although it was akin to opening a huge hole in the finance department, Leylin needed to create a strong pirate crew as fast as possible, and he couldn’t care less about anything else.
After all, immense pressure and death threats were insufficient to govern a huge group. A system that gave encouragement through incentives had to be established. Otherwise, why would they join a crew with a temperamental captain like Leylin, when there are so many other pirate crews?
As soon as news of this spread, no matter how savage Leylin would be rumoured to be, he probably would still have enough manpower sources. Perhaps he could even attract a few Professionals, which would be incredibly amusing.
‘As expected, these pirates don’t have a single bit of loyalty.’
After giving out the money, the newly recruited pirates were immediately in high spirits. They looked as if they had completely forgotten what had happened earlier. Leylin secretly shook his head.
However, this was the objective truth, and there was absolutely nothing that could change that. Leylin could only take a laissez-faire approach.
After all, the control that any pirate captain had over his men was always the same. Unless authority was rooted deeply after long periods of time together, and trust was established through continuous victories, this was all it would amount to.
If it was not like this, Leylin wouldn’t have been able to subdue the Black Tiger crew previously, and set up a new crew with them as the first few subordinates.

‘These incentives… It seems like it is still not enough.’ There was a flash in Leylin’s eyes as he stood on the platform, “Giant!”

“I’m here, boss!” Giant immediately half knelt on the floor. His body resembled a small-scale mountain.

“You killed more than ten enemies when you accompanied me last time. You’re also the Professional with the highest rank among all my men. I want to reward you.”

Leylin waved his hands and a piece of leather armor, that resembled a singlet, flew in front of Giant. There was an armor plating in the most crucial body parts, offering better protection.

Giant put on his sleeveless leather armour. His face, however, changed when a magical brilliance burst from his armour. He couldn’t help but shout in surprise, “This is magical armour!”

“What? Magical armour?” This immediately attracted envious looks from the other pirates.

Even though it was the cheapest of all magical goods, it had to be supported by primary smelting spells, and was worth hundreds of gold coins. Furthermore, a life-saving item such as this one was priceless.

“Yes. It has been reinforced by the “Hardness Spell” three times. Even a heavy hammer would be unable to break through your defense with a single blow.”

Actually, the raw material of this leather armour had been looted from the captain of the Merfolk Pirates after the battle. Leylin had found it to be beneath him, thus he decided to modify it for his men to equip.

Giant didn’t know what else to say and could only scratch his head as he smiled foolishly, while attracting a few jealous looks.
“Also, Ronald!” Leylin turned his gaze to Ronald. 
“Young master! You called for me?” Ronald knelt on the floor with one knee, with a strange feeling in his heart.
“Yes! Your earlier actions attest to your loyalty! This rapid explosion ring is yours!”
This had also been a contribution made by those unlucky Merfolk Pirates. Leylin did not feel a tad bit embarrassed.
“Many thanks!” Ronald felt as though he had been struck in the chest by a heavy hammer.
While knowing that he had only coincidentally been there when Leylin needed to point out role models amongst the new pirates, he was still elated.
This was indeed a magical item! It was so valuable that it could be a family heirloom for commoners, knights and lords.
“I will always be loyal to you!” Ronald kissed the ring on his finger, and solemnly accepted this precious treasure into his embrace, also attracting many envious stares. Mainly, many of the new pirates had flushed faces. They gazed at Leylin as though they were looking at a god.
As long as they worked hard, there would be hope. As long as they put in the effort, there would be reward.
More often than not, the people of the lower classes only hoped for so much, yet the upper classes cruelly deprived them of even this slight hope.
But now, Leylin showed them hope of being able to completely change their fates. This alone was sufficient to arouse their enthusiasm and will to fight.
“Raise the flag! Set sail!” Seeing their boosted morale, Leylin loudly announced his command.
“Aye! Aye!” The multitude of pirates immediately started to get busy. Under the directions of Cyclops, Hulk and the others, the Scarlet Tiger was quickly driven out of the dock.
At this moment, the bishop and priest from the God of Murder were silently observing the situation from the shadows, until the ship departed.
The bishop spoke after a long silence, “What do you think?” “He’s firm when dealing with issues, determined and unscrupulous. It’s hard to believe that he is only fifteen!” The priest seemed unwilling to admit it, but eventually admitted. “But even so, we don’t have to tell him about ‘that’, right?” The bishop replied with a cold snort, “Cly has already violated the teachings of our master, and is bent on avenging his brother who betrayed the church long ago. He must be punished for such conduct.” However, these were just excuses, The pivotal point was that Cly was a hindrance to his own plan. For a person with great influence, disposing of a small pawn was nothing in the face of the bigger picture. As long as the glory of the God of Murder continued shining across the seas for eternity, what was the worth of a few highly-ranked assassins? “I’m looking forward to what will happen to him” The bishop smiled as his silhouette slowly faded into the darkness. The priest’s eyes were filled with shock. As the bishop left, he started understanding that the bishop actually placed great importance on that young nobleman.

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The Scarlet Tiger sailed on under the azure skies, although it appeared to be moving slowly, it was travelling at high speeds. “Five hundred metres ahead! I spotted an unknown ship without a pirate flag!” The mariner on the observation deck called out. “Boss!” Giant immediately appeared behind Leylin, donned in his
newly-attained leather armour. Cyclops also appeared next to Leylin and reported softly, “I asked around beforehand. A bunch of scurvy dogs are coveting our booty and ship.”

“Organisations that have been blinded by greed?” Leylin suddenly raised his brows, “Their vessel doesn’t look too shabby. We are still lacking a few buccaneers and slaves, aren’t we?”

After hearing Leylin’s words, Giant and the rest were already dedicating a moment of silence in mourning for the pirates on the other ship. They would never know what a terrifying chap they had provoked.

“Prepare for battle. I want to check out the strength of these men,” Leylin instructed Ronald, who was standing behind him.

“On it, young master! You will see it!” Ronald retreated respectfully.

With such a formidable wizard on board, he couldn’t see the slightest possibility of them being defeated.

The two ships came into contact. Without the slightest bit of hesitation or shouting, they both launched their attacks.

After the whistling of the harpoons and numerous rounds of feathered arrows flying back and forth, they immediately jumped aboard each other’s ships and descended into a chaotic battle.

Giant laughed maniacally as he brandished the enormous claw hammer in his hand. He was covered in the enemy’s blood and resembled a fiend emerging from the abyss as he charged forth in the frontline.

Behind him, Ronald commanded the new pirates, and assembled them into a few simple formations, obtaining favourable results. He felt as if he possessed an irresistible force, especially with the weapon infused with poison that Leylin had provided.

Seeing his fluent commanding skills, Leylin couldn’t help but be fond of him, ‘Who would have thought that Ronald would be a
“You guys attack them as well. I’m going to meet with an old friend.” Leylin waved his hands and flew out of his ship, landing onto the opponent’s deck.

Ray of Frost! Fireball!

A hell made of fire and ice spread across the ship, along with the ghoulish wails and painful howls of numerous pirates.

“He’s a wizard!”

The powerful force generated by the spells instantly dealt a huge blow to the morale of his opponents. The situation seemed to be tipped in favour of Leylin and his party.

At this moment, however, several secret consciens with the intent to kill approached from the darkness. Their keen aura had the characteristic of highly-ranked assassins.

“It’s indeed you guys!” The corners of Leylin’s lips curled into a gentle smile as he tore open the magic scroll in his hands right away.

“Ice Storm!” The snow attack covered an even larger area, and had the powerful might of a rank 4 spell. Leylin’s surroundings instantly turned into a land of ice and snow.
Plunk! A few figures were forced out of stealthy advancement, and their bodies bore the traces of having been frozen.

“How did you find us?” Cly’s face was now filled with disbelief. “Dead men don’t need to know anything!” The blood-red Devilblood Dagger appeared in Leylin’s hand, making him look more evil.

*Whoosh!* He turned into a phantom, pouncing towards these few assassins.

“Damn it…” Feeling sluggish from the frost, Cly’s expression was incredibly sinister. Somehow, he already knew who had sold him out.

In the end, all he saw was a dazzling blood-red.

*Pu! Pu! Pu!* Making use of the hindrance from the ice storm and the poor visibility, Leylin took care of the assassins in an instant. The many enemies with immense injuries caused by the ice storm finally lifted their white flag to surrender.

However, Leylin was disinclined to bother with matters like his subordinates looting and taking prisoners. He looked at the prompt his A.I. Chip gave him.

[Beep! Host has been enhanced by the Devilblood Dagger. Agility has increased by 0.3!]

‘0.3? Not bad. If that’s changed into spiritual force, that might be even less than 0.0001!’
Leylin was very satisfied with this. He had far too much spiritual force, and slight increases like this meant nothing to him. Hence, he focused on his shortcomings. Making use of the ability of the Devilblood Dagger, he was confident that he could develop his stats in an all-rounded way to become the perfect existence! Though that was only for perfection below rank 10. His stats had turned into: [Leylin Farlier. Race: Human. Rank 8 Wizard. Strength: 3.5. Agility: 3.3. Vitality: 4.5. Spiritual force: 8. State: Healthy. Talents: Sturdy, Erudite. Spell Slots: Rank 3(2). Rank 2(4). Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

At this moment, Karen came beside Leylin. “Master, all the remaining people who resist us have been purged!” “Good! Send news to the Church of Murder to say that I have already received their goodwill!” Leylin now had a satisfied grin on his face.

……

Faulen Island, in the temporary camp that Leylin had first built. Jacob, who was patrolling the area, suddenly heard his subordinate reporting to him in panic. “My lord, there’s an unknown fleet nearing us!” “What? Are they pirates? Be on the alert!” Jacob’s expression was solemn. On the outer seas, pirates would never go extinct. They were like a pack of ravenous wolves, attacking any ships or ports that would bring them wealth. A bell rang urgently, and with the soldiers urging them on, the slaves hid within wooden houses. The rest of the soldiers took their weapons and watched the sail in the distance. However, even Jacob involuntarily gaped, unable to say a word. Large. It was much too large! There were three huge ships with
densely packed human figures atop them, causing Jacob to say bitterly, “These numbers are probably enough to attack the whole Faulen Island. Could this be the three legendary large-scale pirate groups?”

“It’s the time to show your loyalty to the family till the end!” Jacob gripped the weapon in his hand tightly and yelled.

“Long live Faulen!” “Long live!” Many soldiers yelled together, but their voices were filled with immense fear. A few soldiers were already looking out for escape routes. Not everyone could view death with equanimity. Under the threat of death, too many things could happen.

The three huge ships did not hesitate as they drew closer. However, there were no pirate flags at the top. Could this instead be three large merchant ships?

Merchant ships? How was that possible? Jacob was completely confused.

At this moment, a figure flew like an eagle from the ship, heading in his direction.

“That’s Fly! It’s a mid-rank wizard spell, could it be…” Jacob’s expression changed, eventually turning into one of anticipation and elation, “It’s young master! Young master is back!”

As the streams of air dissipated, Leylin’s figure stopped in front of Jacob, “You did well with the camp!”

He’d taken a quick look at this camp from the skies and found that Jacob had completed everything according to his plans. It already was in a good state, able to take in a new population and slaves, which would help him with his trading plans.

“Many thanks for your praise! It’s actually thanks to the slaves. They work diligently everyday, but it’s a pity there are too few of them…” Jacob placed his right hand on his chest, bowing respectfully.

“You don’t have to worry about the slaves. I brought a lot… and
there are other surprises as well! Prepare to dispatch people to take them.” Leylin had a trace of a smile on his expression. A huge flame flew from his hand, forming an obvious signal. The three ships began to move slowly, releasing countless little boats that rowed in their direction like ants.

“Three ships…” Jacob’s eyes widened.

“Hehe… These are ships of the Rhodes Merchant group. I made a deal with them and bought large numbers of slaves and coarse sugar…” Leylin watched the many little boats, frowning slightly.

“Here!” He pointed to a coastal area, “We’ll need to build a new dock. Of course, there were far too few people before, but this won’t be a problem now…”

Seeing the unending stream of slaves and baskets of coarse sugar, as well as other construction materials unceasingly being sent ashore, Jacob clenched his fists. His face flushed. While he had no idea how this mysterious young master had gotten a hold of this, that had nothing to do with him, did it? As a subordinate, all he needed to do was carry out his superior’s orders. That was enough! Just seeing how much Leylin had spent, it was obvious that he was planning to go big.

“Jacob! Make arrangements for the slaves being shipped over. Males and females are to be separated and watched. Don’t let them get up to anything funny!”

Leylin’s blueprint had been very large, and he had even especially left out blank spaces in it. Hence, it was not an issue to take in hundreds of slaves. Besides the unskilled labourers, there were many confused faces. The sickly slaves who were chased into a camp barricaded with pointy wooden fences. There, Nunooker, whom Leylin had appointed as head of the slaves, had already commanded the older ones to bring out pots of mashed fish soup to share with the newcomers. He then darted to
Leylin upon catching sight of him, kissing the soil under his feet, “Respected master, Nunooker expresses his reverence for you!”
“I heard you managed the slaves well. Good job!” Leylin nodded. Nunooker had already put on linen clothing and looked somewhat like a commoner now. There was even a lash hung at his waist that seemed rather worn out, making it look well-used. His clothes and whip all showed the rise in his authority and status.
“Do it well. After this, I’ll remove your contract as a slave and free you. I’ll even give you some land!” Leylin was never stingy with those who sided with him, and this would also set an example for others.
“Oh, great master, I praise you! Your benevolence is as vast as the ocean!” Nunooker knelt down once more.
A manager clad in silk clothing with gold threads on his cuffs came beside Leylin, “My lord, the goods have all been received. There are a total of 275 slaves and 5000kg of coarse sugar! There are also other goods as well. This is the bill for your account…”
“Mm, the numbers are right!” Leylin took a glance at him, knowing that he had not done anything fishy with them. The manager wouldn’t dare to anyway, since Leylin was a channel to dispose of stolen groups belonging to the Barbarians.
It was understandable why he feared Leylin. In addition, even if they were to practice fraud, this would not be able to trick Leylin. Hence, Leylin quickly signed his name after looking at the bill, then stamped it with a special ring of his.
This was a dagger and skull, the mark of the Scarlet Tigers! This ruby ring could be opened at the top, and it held Leylin’s pirate imprint inside. This was also proof that he had dealings with the Barbarians.
“Alright, you have already paid for the goods before. The deal has been completed successfully. Thank you for your cooperation!” After seeing Leylin sign his name, the manager sighed in relief and
then revealed a genuine smile. “Thank you for your cooperation!” Leylin’s eyes moved swiftly away, thoughts already on other matters. Once he had left from Pirates’ Cove, Leylin had wiped out a few pirate groups who had wanted to take advantage of them. Once he had established his reputation and secured his status, he met up with Isabel and the rest at a place they had previously arranged. Due to the many battles and prisoners, Leylin’s pirate group had already changed greatly by the time he met up with his cousin and the others. He now had a tremendous organisation, with three battleships and over two hundred pirates under him! Though they seemed like nothing more than a mob, it wasn’t as if there weren’t any talents amongst them. If Leylin was counted as well, this new crew was the strongest one out of the big three. He even had the capital to challenge the larger pirate groups!

What happened next was obvious. With information from the Thieves’ Guild and Barbarians, Leylin brought his subordinates and plundered countless merchant ships that belonged to the Louis Family, killing all of the passengers. The goods were naturally mostly sold to the Rhodes Merchant group using the Barbarian Pirates’ connections, and in return he earned many slaves and resources.

Following that, the pirates that had endured countless battles needed to rest and reorganise. Leylin seized this opportunity to let his cousin Isabel take over, announcing her the acting captain with Hulk, Cyclops, Giant, Karen and Ronald assisting her. Meanwhile, he returned to his own family’s territory.
Here were a few special little families in this batch of slaves, those of the Black Tiger pirates who were no more. Leylin planned to integrate them into his people to fill up the population here. At the same time, they could be treated like hostages; any pirate that pledged his life to him at the start would no longer need to be doubted.
Without any major changes, the possibility of their betrayal was at their lowest.
‘When it comes to the accumulation of resources, plundering is truly the fastest method!’
Of all the resources this time, there was a special batch that was the spoils of war that Leylin would keep for himself. This included the crude sugar obtained on Half Merfolk Island, as well as items that were difficult to dispose of.
After all this privateering, it could be said that the basic conditions to build the production lines were already in place. The next step was to attempt to produce the items themselves. Had he used the normal method of having his family invest capital into the project, he would have to slowly buy slaves and make attempts to produce the product. He would have suffered difficulties even in the beginning!
“No matter what kind of production it is, privateering is the key part…”
Leylin sighed, “It’s a pity that after Marquis Louis’ organisation
dispersed, I can’t go on being a pirate. After all, then I would be viewed as an enemy by many, and there would even be people who have formed grudges against me…” Destruction and plunder easily gave rise to hatred. At the same time, it had the quickest results, which was why people could not give it up so easily. Leylin being able to make this decision showed his foresight and wisdom.

The pirates would not give up, and that led to the entire region of the sea being abandoned by merchants. Only massive growth of trade would serve as a source of wealth, which was why Leylin wanted to create a sugar and fish floss trade.

Of course, this did not mean that Leylin would disband the pirate group.

In reality, he had already thought of the alternate route for the Scarlet Tigers in the future. They would no longer engage in piracy, instead they would share their ill-gotten gains from collecting protection fees and naval escort services, for instance.

In essence, they would be taken from exploiting others openly, to exploiting them from the shadows.

Leylin was very ambitious! To do this, he had to first become the king of the outer seas, or at the very least, the king of the dark world and possess the power to draw up rules and regulations!

That would also be the rise of his power over the seas! If all went well, he might even be able to create a powerful country based on this sea!

Leylin would not reject the chance to gain power in the secular world. Rather, that was what he was working hard and making preparations for.

As the gods of this world needed the faith of mortals, especially for the newly-advanced gods, having a stable foundation for faith as well as their own territory was far too important. This was what could be relied on to protect and prevent the fall of their divine
nation.
The gods were far-sighted. Leylin could not steal the followers of
the old gods, because that would only result in a terrifying battle
with a god!
His way would be to develop a new territory of his own, and
expand the population to gain faith.
Any issues when it came to the time it would take was never a
problem for gods.
Three ships steered away from the port under Jacob and the others’
watchful eyes. Leylin clapped his eyes, smiling at Jacob, “Alright!
What happens next is our responsibility. How are things on your
side?”
Jacob looked startled, “Please come with me!”
Leylin opened the wooden door to one of the little storehouses in
the camp and was met with the smell of sea salt and fishiness.
There were rows of wooden frames inside, where a large quantity
of fish floss were tightly sealed well in porcelain jars.
“Based on the method Young Master taught us, the fish floss we
created can be kept for over a month. If we use this method of
storing it, it can last for over half a year…”
Jacob sounded excited, “With this shelf life, we’ll be able to sell the
fish floss to the continent…”
“Mm! The key now is to have a small profit but rapid turnover!”
Leylin nodded.
Techniques to create fish floss were not all that meticulous. What
was important now was upscaling and industrialising it, which
would reduce costs.
Even so, there were a limited number of consumers. At the very
least, Leylin could not place his hopes on the farmers and tenants in
villages
All they could squeeze out of them was meagre, and they’d be
happy if they just got to eat black bread.
Leylin’s target market lay in the larger cities. There were handicraft workers, free citizens, many adventurers and mercenaries, who Leylin were counting on.
The villages in the World of Gods were never places where wealth gathered. The cities were the only places with the greatest profits.
He didn’t need much. As long as he could break into a few cities near the shore, the profits alone would make Leylin smile brilliantly even in his dreams.

“As for the sugar refinery, due to the lack of acid and activated carbon that Young Master spoke of, we have only stockpiled a batch of raw materials in storage…”
Jacob brought Leylin to another warehouse. Sealed under dry conditions, the sugar was piled together, with some yellow and even black inside.
This was coarse sugar that was even slightly bitter. However, the bit of sweetness within was already a pretty good luxury for the nobles.
However, as this was the outer seas, the moisture in the air caused the white sugar to show signs of coagulating into clumps despite methods that attempted to rectify it.

“It doesn’t matter for now, since there will still be another process. The fine white sugar created after that will need even more attention though!”
This was the greatest wealth that Leylin had gotten for himself. Fish floss would garner small profits but a rapid turnover and thus expand production. However, methods to refine white sugar would have to be kept a secret. This way, he had control over both high and low-end markets, and if he was lucky, this might be able to keep the Faulen Family rich for centuries!
Leylin was rather ambitious about this. In his plans, this place would become the Faulen Island’s most important port, and even the core of the island!
Of course, before either of these two were developed, Leylin would keep all these plans deep inside his heart. Though it looked more convenient and safer to plunder another island, Leylin was unperturbed. The problem here was the feudal fiefdom! In theory, the outer seas of the Dambrath Kingdom naturally belonged to the king. Once unclaimed lands were occupied, that would imply losing protection from the kingdom and would stir up hostility! What would it imply, for the outer seas without land held by nobility, with no shrines, churches or priests? Terrifying diseases could not be healed with divine spells, and could only be endured. People also had to deal with the ferocious natives and terrible climate. In the deep seas, there were also numerous terrifying monsters, with some able to massacre a whole island! Every year, the number of people who died while trying to break into the outer seas was a number that would cause one to tremble in fear.

Hence, as the Faulen Island had been cleared and cultivated, with a great port, people and church as foundations, it was inevitable that Viscount Tim coveted it. However, Leylin had long since treated Faulen Island as his own, which determined the pitiful fate of the poor Viscount. "Jacob, send down the order to give the slaves another meal tonight. We begin training tomorrow, where we are going to prepare the selected outstanding artisans to take part in the production. The rest of the slaves will extend the camp. Whatever it is, we can’t have them idle!"

The method to create fish floss was extremely simple, but the method to refining sugar was something Leylin was planning to keep a secret for a few years. While he would be left with no
choice but to hand over the techniques later, the immense profits before that happen were going to be terrifying.
Leylin was already planning to sternly exercise control over the artisans, and even set out individual residential areas that would be monitored.
Leylin was the worthy master of this land. Once he made a decision like this, it would be enforced without question.
When Baron Jonas arrived, what he saw was an area buzzing with activity.
“Such a huge camp with so many slaves, wouldn’t that cost thousands of gold coins?”
Baron Jonas walked along the streets in disbelief, carefully sizing up the camp. The ground was tidy, and there were spaces at both sides meant for shops, blacksmith stores and tailor stores. It was clear that Leylin had planned this out very carefully, and had built this place up like a little town.
“Yes, master! To create this camp and purchase the slaves, it would be possibly only if we invest months of profit from our entire port…”
Leon’s eyes betrayed his shock, especially after he saw the many slaves being managed by Leylin in such a clear and orderly fashion. His eyes flashed and he looked on speechlessly.
Only he, as the main housekeeper, knew how difficult it was to tame so many natives!
The young master, who was able to do this, was truly the treasured child of the gods!
At this thought, Leon could not help but to say a prayer.
But this was just the start. After seeing the completed product that Leylin spoke of, Baron Jonas and Leon were even more shocked.
“Is this… truly cane sugar?”
Eyeing the snow white sparkling cubes that were reflective like mirrors, Baron Jonas picked up a cube in disbelief.
Such a translucent luster was mind-blowing to him, “It’s too-too beautiful! It’s like a crystal. This is a work of art!”
Baron Jonas mumbled as he tossed it into his mouth, and a sweetness then exploded in his mouth.
Such a sweet taste caused Baron Jonas to be so moved that he could not even speak.
“I can tell you for sure…” After a long while, Baron Jonas huffed out, “The sugar cubes will definitely be a luxury that the nobility long for. Without it, those extravagant banquets will lose much splendour…”
“You are right, Father!” Standing at the side, Leylin revealed a smile.
Leylin put down the plate that contained the sugar in his hand and looked at Baron Jonas, “Father, how much do you think I can sell these refined sugar cubes for?” Baron Jonas closed his eyes for a moment and answered with certainty, “It should be at least ten times the price of coarse sugar! If we weren’t afraid of someone backstabbing us or coveting this, we could perhaps sell it at even twenty times.” Leylin smiled and nodded. “Then I’ll leave the avenues of selling it to Father!” The moment the method to create such refined sugar cubes entered the market, it would have a huge effect. How could Leylin match up to Baron Jonas in behaving appropriately, finding backers, transferring profits, and building profitable partnerships and the like? His father was a very experienced trader. “I’ve just seen the fish floss jars, and they’re not bad!” Baron Jonas looked at his son, his eyes full of indescribable emotion, “Sigh… You’ve really created a difficult problem for your father! Such immense profits…” While he was sighing, the Baron still could not conceal his smile. Leylin always seemed to be able to surpass his expectations in unimaginable ways.

……
With enough manpower and physical resources, the fish floss and sugar trade that Leylin was anticipating finally began to take shape. Baron Jonas knew full well that such immense profits were something that his family could not handle alone, so he made use of the two items to rope in a few other noble families that had their lands in the outer seas. He also got in touch with the local forces, and gave them a large portion of the profits. This way, there were a lot of people he could drag into deep waters to bear the brunt of the backlash with him.

The moment Faulen Island’s refined white sugar entered the market, the effect even surpassed the baron’s imagination. Its pure taste was as sweet as heaven, and immediately conquered many nobles. They rushed to find this luxury item like they’d been driven insane. Just the profits from the first month reached a startling 2000 gold coins!

The fish floss was not as popular, but the market’s reaction was not bad. Its characteristic of being convenient food as well as the benefit of being able to store it for a long period of time made it popular among mercenaries and adventurers. Even the military of the kingdom expressed their interest.

The profits of this becoming military rations… was there more to be said?

Making use of these two items earnt them tons of wealth, the Faulen Family began to grow at a rapid rate. Leylin had to even open up a few production lines in order to match the insane market demand!

Of course, this couldn’t have been done without the Scarlet Tiger pirates investing a lot of funds. With Leylin controlling everything from the shadows and the aid from the Barbarians, the Scarlet Tiger Pirates had gone all out, attacking numerous ships that belonged to Marquis Louis under Isabel’s lead.

Leylin waited on Faulen Island, like nothing had to do with him.
The Barbarians were also exceptionally quiet, making the marquis unable to find any evidence. He could only grit his teeth in the shadows, preparing to exact revenge.

Nearly a year passed in the blink of an eye. The camp that Leylin had constructed had now turned into a bustling harbour with limestone floors and tiled houses. There was an imposing aura in the area, and the port was arranged very logically. Security was very good, and there was not a trace of trash on the ground. When compared to other ports, this was unimaginable. They were nasty and filthy, and usually the sources of diseases and epidemics. Leylin obviously would not tolerate this. Furthermore, a clean, tidy, and orderly port was unimaginably attractive for sea merchants.

With the fish floss and the refined sugar cubes dominating the markets, the port was now a money-making area. A lot of ships stopped at the pier every day, loading up completely on goods before leaving. Even at night, the labourers would still work with much clamour; the place looked prosperous.

Leylin named the place Port Venus, an allegory for a rising star. And indeed, once it was constructed it attracted many merchants into frequenting Faulen Island, and it silently became another trading hub of the outer seas.

Originally, The Baltic archipelago and Pirates’ Cove which belonged to two different powers dominated the scene, but Port Venus marked the rise of a third power. Such a huge change obviously attracted the attention of intelligent people.

“My lord, here’s the latest news!” A middle-rank warrior in exquisite chainmail armour respectfully passed a letter sealed in wax to Jacob.

Jacob hastily opened it up, and after skimming through a few lines his expression changed, “This is… I’ll tell young master myself!”

Once they left the room, two rows of elite warriors followed behind him, all of them with a strong and bloody aura. Their eyes
even seemed to glint, they were naturally elite warriors who had activated their qi.
After walking out of the city hall, Jacob mounted a handsome black stallion. While he could use a horse carriage as a public security officer, his fighter habits made it such that he preferred to ride horses himself.
Glancing at the luxurious and imposing city hall at his back, the many middle-ranked warriors behind him, and the eyes of people on the roads looking to curry favour with him, Jacob was slightly absent-minded.
‘Everything has really changed!’ Jacob sighed. When they came into their wealth, Leylin and Baron Jonas did not hoard their gold like greedy dragons. On the contrary, other than to construct more production lines and Port Venus itself, Baron Jonas had the great vision to take out almost all his savings to increase the power of the Faulen Family.
Exquisite chainmail and stainless steel longswords replaced the leather armour, metal forks and wooden pikes from before on a large scale. He even recruited huge batches of Professionals. While it wasn’t quite possible to get high-ranked ones at rank 15 and above, the middle-ranked ones and especially close combat warriors just could not reject the conditions the Baron had offered. After serving here for a long time, many of these with professions fell in love with the atmosphere and brought their families here, becoming free citizens of Port Venus. Leylin was extremely welcome to the idea, and was generous in his treatment and the promotions. This formed a virtuous cycle, which helped his subordinates get even stronger.
Jacob knew that there were already Professionals over rank 10 siding with Leylin. If not for him following the Baron around since childhood and working hard for the family, his own position would long since have been filled with someone else.
Even so, the sense of danger kept lingering in his mind. ‘I need to train even more. I have a feeling that the bottleneck that’s been bothering me for years should be able to be broken this time!’

With the rise of the Faulen Family’s income, Jacob and those of his batch naturally benefitted. Their salaries rose sky high, and Jacob felt that he was not deserving of this. Not only did he use this money for lessons from scholars, but he also sought powerful warriors for their advice. He had now reached the peak of rank 7, and was a step away from rank 8.

The new wheat farms met him outside the port, the green wheat filled with vitality freshening up the air. Jacob couldn’t help but take in several deep breaths. Those farming here were the farmers who had migrated over from Faulen Island, and there were also slaves that had been released and the families of pirates.

Leylin especially made it a law that as long as slaves worked hard, they would regain their status as free people after a certain number of years, and would acquire 0.6 hectares of land. After paying three years of taxes, they could go to the city hall and apply to redeem it at a low price and become farmers of their own plots of land. The promise of becoming free men motivated the slaves to work with all their might.

Leylin knew that no matter how human society changed, a hierarchy would always remain. Allowing mobility between the levels would give those at the bottom hope, and was the only method that would ensure the vitality of both the organisation and government.

Past the wheat fields were even more guards. Jacob could sense knight-errants, thieves and even assassins spying from the shadows as the farms gave way to an industrial zone. This was where the fish floss and sugar were produced.
Ever since his first trade profits made their way into his hands, Leylin had shifted his production line to the area to give the port more space. It was also convenient to supervise it and ensure the secrecy of the place. With the expansion of the profits from trade, the issue of security became increasingly serious. It was at the point that Leylin and his master Ernest came here personally to take charge of it. Most of the Faulen Family’s elite forces were here, which frightened off numerous spies. However, as long as there were huge profits, the spying would never end. Leylin’s villa was next to the factories. He was never one to mistreat himself, and the villa took up a lot of space. He had even brought over his servants from the manor, including the housekeepers. Of course, Clara and Claire came as well. Jacob only saw Leylin after two rank 10 warrior patrols. His sixteenth birthday had passed, and Leylin now seemed more mature. His curly blonde hair was like the sunlight, and his blue eyes like the sea. Every inch of his musculature was perfect, which made one feel that his proportions were in perfect harmony. Rather, with his current appearance he seemed like the ideal lover for a noble princess. The sisters’ eyes showed how intoxicated they were by him; they hadn’t even noticed Jacob’s entrance.
“Young master, we’ve received news that a Gold Priest of the church of wealth would like to meet you. He’ll reach Venus Port in the next few days.”

Claire and Clara blushing brought Jacob a goblet of mixed fruit juice after waking up from their reverie. This was a drink of the elves that Leylin found delightful.

“Gold Priest? Just having a Silver Priest coming over would already be enough…” Leylin half-reclined on the elven rattan chair, looking languid, comfortable, and not ruffled at all.

Waukeen’s priests were divided into a few ranks, the highest of which was the current Patriarch. The rest of them were arranged according to currency, copper being the lowest and gold the highest.

A Gold Priest was equivalent to an archbishop, a status that greatly exceeded that of Bishop Tapris from the church of knowledge. Even if Tapris was converted by Waukeen, he would only be a Silver Priest.

The church of wealth sending out a Gold Priest showed that Faulen Island’s trade volumes had reached a terrifying level. It was to the point that it even attracted some attention from the Goddess of Wealth!

“Understood. Tell them to give him VIP treatment!”

While this was important, Jacob felt relaxed after hearing Leylin’s instructions. It was like he believed that as long as he did as Leylin
said, things would go well!
This was the prestige that Leylin amassed over time, and at times, had the ability to reverse the trend of events.
After watching Jacob leave, Leylin pursed his lips and took a drink of fruit juice, a strange grin emerging on his face, “The Goddess of Wealth? Not bad…”
Port Venus was like Leylin’s personal fiefdom. While it belonged to Baron Jonas in name, Leylin held the real power here, and had tight control of the management of the port. He had not constructed any churches here, much to Bishop Tapris’ chagrin.
But neither Leylin nor Baron Jonas wanted the church of knowledge to solely occupy Faulen Island. And besides the God of Suffering, the Goddess of Wealth was the god that was most worshipped by nobility.
The nobles held the most faith in their own benefits and power. Of course this led to them believing in the Goddess of Wealth. After all, who could resist those adorable and dazzling bundles of gold?
Baron Jonas had long hoped to be able to attract the church of wealth into building a shrine to their goddess here. However, the Faulen Family had been too poor before, and the church of knowledge had obstructed it. However, this was now a request from the church of wealth themselves, and with a Gold Priest being sent over it was obvious how serious they were.
Leylin welcomed the church of wealth’s presence here. The benefits it would bring to the region’s development were obvious. The priests of wealth were amazing at making profit. They didn’t limit themselves to business; even with their gamut of profitable ventures there was nothing they did not do. From storing precious items, to remitting gold, to converting money between the different metals, they even provided high interest loans, as long as it was profitable there was nothing they wouldn’t dare do.
However, it could not be denied that with the church of wealth
would partially take over the role of a bank, and there would only be advantages in trade and economic development. Since this was a request from the other side, how could Leylin let go of such a great chance to rip somebody off? He could also take this opportunity to take revenge on what they had done in the past. At this thought, Leylin’s smile widened. He took a look at his stats. 


This past year, Leylin had secretly worked to help the Scarlet Tigers eliminate their enemies. Isabel now had the nickname of the ‘Scarlet Witch’ and was notorious in the outer seas. Half of that was thanks to Leylin. The Devilblood Dagger also took this opportunity to drink the fresh blood of enemies, pushing Leylin to rank 9. A rank 9 wizard was an existence that could make contact with fourth level of the Weave! At this point, Leylin had basically graduated from his study under Ernest. If not for Leylin’s continuous motivation, Ernes would’ve been embarrassed to see his disciple. He had spent a lot of effort and broken through all the way to rank 10.

“Now that I can cast rank 4 spells, master Ernest has nothing to teach me anymore…” Leylin sighed. He could now cast rank 4 spells, and due to his specialisation, Ernest rarely learnt spells out of Abjuration and Evocation. Leylin felt like it was a great pity. He now spent most of his time in self-study. Of course, with the Faulen Family’s current wealth, buying some foundational spell models and scholarly volumes was no problem. However, what vexed Leylin was that the kingdom’s wizard guilds were useful for low-ranked wizards, but spell models at rank 4 and above,
including research, were kept a tight secret and not sold publicly. As for information for high-ranking wizards, or even about Legends, it was the most taboo of all and was protected quite well. There was no way for Leylin to see it.

“Master Ernest has already given me a letter of recommendation. With this, I might be able to get the qualifications to get into a wizarding guild in the Dambrath capital…” Leylin’s eyes were half-closed, and his brain continued to ponder different ideas.

“It’s a pity that the outer seas cannot operate without me. Marquis Louis’ patience must be at its limit, and his attacks of vengeance can come at any moment. And then there’s also the partnership with the Barbarian Pirates…”

After a long while, Leylin sighed deeply. He obviously could not leave now. At the very least, he had to give Louis’ family a firm push, but the day was near for that. Leylin’s eyes blazed…

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“Trash! You’re trash!” The ink, quill pen, parchment and all the miscellaneous items on the table were flung onto Viscount Tim’s body.

“A year has passed! A whole year has passed, but what have you done? Not only have the few ships you have been sunk by him, he’s taken most of our trade! How did I get a son like you?” Marquis Louis exclaimed, the veins bursting out on his forehead in his fury.

“Father! My investigations show that there’s a large possibility that Leylin, the son of Baron Faulen, is the person behind the Scarlet Tigers. We can ask for a trial from the kingdom and catch him on charge of being a pirate… And then there’s the Barbarians. As long as we amass all our strength and attack Pirates’ Cove…”

Tim lowered his head, concealing the icy glint in his eyes and trying
his best to persuade his father. He hated Leylin and the Scarlet Pirates to the bone. Leylin seemed to have become his nemesis. Ever since the incident with the Black Tiger Pirates, the few shipping routes in his control had been fiercely attacked, and his few attempts at revenge were seen through when he was trying to implement them. He had metaphorically been slapped in the face, and the organisations under his control had all been mostly or completely lost. He had lost the favour of his father, and even the servants began to treat him with less importance. Of course, there was also his most hated big brother, who ruthlessly poured salt on his wounds and took the opportunity to take over much of the businesses he had possessed. His brother was even brazenly recruiting his men!

*Boom!* A black crystal ink bottle was thrown at Tim’s head. Ink flowed down Tim’s forehead, mixing with blood and leaving him frozen.

“Are you stupid? Guilty of being a pirate? Do you have any evidence, or do you want to implicate us too?” Marquis Louis’ yells were even louder, “And attacking Pirates’ Cove? That’s the biggest joke I’ve heard all year! That’s the place where all the dark organisations in the outer seas gather. Even if we attack, what good is it for us? We’ll even have to take on their counterattack…”

“Father!” At this moment, a gentle voice could be heard from behind the door. Marquis Louis immediately regained his calm, and the light in Tim’s eyes dimmed.

The door pulled open. His brother, who seemed to have been blessed by the gods from birth and possessed all the fortunes of the world, walked in.

“William!” Seeing the son of his first wife walk in, Marquis revealed a rare smile.

“My men have already found traces of the Scarlet Tigers, but they
seem to be very alert and don’t stay on an island for long…” William smiled while he announced this, and Tim who was nearby felt like his face was burning.

“That’s normal. They have a powerful wizard who even escaped Boruj’s scrying and probes,” Marquis Louis muttered to himself, “It’s rumoured that Baron Jonas’ son, Leylin Faulen, has a wizard behind him. I suspect that the wizard could be part of the pirates!”

“Father, please give me control over the Black Skeletons. I am confident I’ll be able to destroy the Scarlet Tigers in 3 months!” William bowed, dealing Tim the final blow.

“Don’t underestimate them,” Marquis Louis regained his previous expression of a scheming man with deep foresight after his moment of rage had calmed.
“We are all nobility, and can only follow the rules of the game between nobles…” Marquis Louis spoke slowly, “The Faulen Family was very weak before and had no real backing, which was originally a very good opportunity for us, but…” Having said this, he glared at Tim, resulting in Tim lowering his head further. The Faulen Family used to be like duckweed floating through the air, but even then Marquis Louis did not dare to deal with them out in the open. He’d only sent out pirates in secret. Furthermore, if those pirates had succeeded, the family would be annihilated! But things could no longer be played that way. The Faulen Family now had more connections in the region, as well as backers. The strength they possessed was rapidly increasing. If he did not use all the strength he had at his disposal, Marquis Louis was not confident that he could wipe them out. But was this possible? Even as a marquis of the kingdom, he could not attack the territory of another noble for no reason. When it came to pirates, even with both the Black Skeletons and Tigersharks working together, Marquis Louis was still not confident, especially since the opponent had a church on their island. With such a large-scale pirate invasion. It would be hard to avoid
confronting the church. Furthermore, for those on the outer seas, who did not know that these were the two most powerful pirate groups under Marquis Louis? His goal was far too obvious.

“The timing’s gone! We’ve already lost the best time to attack…” Marquis Louis sighed, “The profits from these two goods, sugar and fish floss, really do measure up to the slave market…”

“Don’t worry, father! I’ll definitely get those two techniques!” William spoke with confidence, “The current situation is that we have many ships and shipping routes out in the open, but the Scarlet Tigers hide in the darkness where they have freedom. They can be the eyes and ears of the Faulen Family. On the surface neither side can make a move, and only rely on battling it out in the shadows. I’ll definitely annihilate the Scarlet Tigers and break off the opponent’s eyes and claws that exist in the darkness!”

Such profound insight immediately had Marquis Louis nodding.

“Very good. I’m relieved that you thought of that! Besides the Black Skeletons, I will order the Tigersharks to listen to you as well. The military fleet will await your orders at any time. You must destroy our enemies!”

At this moment, Marquis Louis’ ruthlessness in staking everything on this was shown.

“Understood, father!” William’s voice trembled slightly. To be able to have so much support made it clear that his status as the successor was unshakeable, and this was already the beginning of the shift of power.

“Also, the opponent has a powerful wizard. We can’t ignore that! Wizard Boruj!”

“Lord Marquis!” An old man wearing grey wizard robes walked out from the shadows, eyes glinting with wisdom. The magic rays around him made those around him feel suffocated.

William and Tim hastily bowed towards the chief wizard of their
family. Even Marquis Louis did not dare treat him with disrespect, “We will have to trouble you for this matter!”
“No problem!” Boruj’s voice was hoarse, with the trace of a foreign and exotic accent, “I’ve long since wished to have a duel with that old rival whom I have yet to meet…”
“Henceforth, Wizard Boruj will accompany you until the Scarlet Tigers have been annihilated!” Marquis Louis stated.
“U-Understood!” This abrupt but pleasant surprise made William feel dizzy, and even his voice slightly trembled.
“Good! The future of our family will lie with you. Don’t disappoint me…”
Tim was standing at the side. Seeing the pretty picture of the father and son together made him feel like an outsider. He was roaring inside crazily, but could only put on a calm expression, not daring to show any of his resentment on his face.

……

A giant golden ship slowly sailed to the dock of Port Venus. This large ship had extremely extravagant decorations, and there was even a layer of metal that emitted golden luster. From afar, it looked like a ship made entirely of pure gold.
At the ship’s bow was a large emblem made of pure gold that shone with dazzling light. This was a symbol of the Goddess of Wealth, taking the form of a huge gold coin.
‘They’re truly nouveau riche! It would be a disservice for them if they didn’t ruthlessly spend this money.’ Although he thought this, Leylin didn’t dare show anything on his face. On the contrary, he had no choice but to put on his friendliest smile and welcome them.
There were others beside him. Baron Jonas, Madam Sarah, housekeeper Leon… Basically all the respected people here showed
up. It was obvious how mind-blowing it was for them to see a Gold Priest.
“Welcome to Port Venus. We hope you like it here, beautiful madam!” Against Leylin’s expectations, the Gold Priest who had arrived was a female!
She looked to be about 17 or 18, and her eyes seemed to be shining brightly. They held hints of the shrewdness unique to merchants, and her skin was as exquisite as ivory. She had a tender and splendid smile about her lips that made her look like the little girl next door. Her appearance made it difficult to associate her with the profession of a priest.
However, her brilliant high-ranking priest robe with vibrant colours as well as her powerful divine light, made her status clear.
“Hello, Sire Leylin! My name is Xena. This is a port brimming with hope. I sense the flow of a great origin of wealth…”
As was expected of the priest of the Goddess of Wealth, this was the first thing she mentioned.
“Haha... It’s great that Mistress Priest likes this place!” As the successor of the Faulen Family, as well as the delegate to represent her, Leylin elegantly extended his right hand helped her down.
“Powerful! Is this the power of a high-ranked priest?”
The instant their skin made contact, Leylin seemed to see a body brimming with godly luster. All sorts of power from divine spells converged to form a high-pressure electrical network that kept her safe within it, giving off a sense of danger. This was the path of a priest. High-ranked priests prayed devoutly and borrowed the strength of gods to purify their souls, achieving the effect of existing in harmony with god. There was even the possibility of becoming a holy spirit!
Even the A.I. Chip was unable to scan her exact stats, and could only give the conclusion that she was extremely dangerous.
‘Rank 15! She’s definitely a high-ranked priest who’s at least rank
15!’ Leylin went on his guard. Meanwhile, she seemed to have noticed him spying and shot him a dark look.

“Oh, my apologies!” It was only at this point that Leylin realised he was holding on to her hand. This was rather impolite. However, as someone who had gone through various worlds, he could adapt quickly and immediately took care of the awkwardness.

After the banquet, Baron Jonas returned to the manor, which left Leylin alone to entertain the Gold Priest.

“It’s rumoured that Baron Jonas thinks highly of his first son and has been giving him more authority lately. Seems like it’s true!” Xena, who was on a mission set by the church, watched Leylin sitting opposite her, her eyes flashing with interest. He seemed to have a unique temperament and a lot of confidence. The fact that a mere 16-year-old could have such a presence astonished her. Of course, he seemed to be a decent wizard, though it wasn’t much in Xena’s eyes.

For the rich and overbearing church, cultivating a few spellcasters was no issue. In the Goddess of Wealth’s church, there was no lack of legendary wizards.

After all, for the wizards who readily spent gold coins at every turn, there was nothing more comfortable than being able to embrace the church of wealth’s golden thighs.

“This porcelain is very high quality!” Xena looked at the cup in her hands. It had many complicated and intricate flower patterns, showing the exquisite craft of the elves.

“How about trying the cocoa from the eastern archipelago? It’s said that this marvelous plant has the amazing effect of perking one up without harming the body…” Leylin smiled while pouring her a steaming hot cup of cocoa.

Xena had naturally seen this drink before. The production of cocoa beans was meagre, and on the continent it was sold at an astronomical price. Of course, what shocked her even more was
Leylin’s capability.
‘Does that mean… he’s already built up a connection with the eastern pirates?’ Xena’s eyes shone, and she then put down the beautiful porcelain cup in her hands.
“Mister Leylin, I’m sure you know my intentions in coming here. May I know what you think of establishing a church on the port?”
“I’m definitely not opposed to you joining in, but there’s actually a plan already for the Port Venus. Every plot of land has its own function… of course, it’s not a problem to squeeze out a section, but…” Leylin had a standard smile on his face.
“The Goddess of Wealth will not mistreat any follower of hers!” Xena placed a golden card on the table, “This is a proof for the withdrawal of money. With it, you can exchange 10 000 kronas from any church of wealth. Treat it as the capital for buying this land!”
Rich and overbearing, Leylin now knew what rich and overbearing truly meant! The church of the Goddess of Wealth was truly rich, unlike the stingy Tapris who probably wasn’t even willing to pay rent.
Of course, this was a problem left behind from Baron Jonas’ time. This would not happen again with Leylin in charge.
“Then there aren’t any other problems. The city hall will mark out the land tomorrow!” Leylin smiled gently, a hand taking and keeping the golden card on the table without batting an eyelid.
The Goddess of Wealth generously contributed her own divine realm, providing currency storage services. With her divine force as a mark against fraud, trying to trick anyone in this was just shooting oneself in the foot.
However, with this, there were fees to pay if people wanted to store their money with her. Then again, this was to be expected from a goddess even greedier than a dragon.
Apart from the issue with the church, there is also another matter which is related to why I came…” Xena’s gaze pierced straight into Leylin. ‘Finally, here it comes,’ He thought inwardly. He had long felt that as his profits from his two avenues of trade grew greater and greater, he would eventually attract the attention of larger organisations. As this moment had come, his earlier alliances to protect his profits were no longer of any use. In reality, Leylin had already planned in his heart to exchange his techniques with them. He’d long since understood the rules of the game in this world, and that he could no longer maintain a monopoly by virtue of his own strength. He was already surprised that he was able to gobble up a year’s worth of profiteering. Now, he would need to find a sufficiently powerful backer to sell his techniques to. From this point of view, the church of wealth was evidently a rather good option. “Is it the fish floss and white sugar?” Leylin directly pointed it out. “Yes, as well as you!” Xena’s eyes were filled with humour. “Compared to those two techniques, the person who invented them is much more worthy of our consideration. You have Midas’ touch!” “Me!” Leylin pointed at himself, feeling a little ridiculous. Secretly, however, he was constantly on guard and a little apprehensive. It looked like he had been acting too conspicuously recently.
For now, Xena was only interested in his mind, but what if she discovered more things about him? As he thought about it, Leylin suddenly made up his mind. After he resolved the issue with Marquis Louis, he had to disappear for a while. Otherwise, once he received the attention of even more deities, his troubles would certainly grow.

“These two techniques came about due to luck. I have always loved reading books, and discovered the invention from the writings of the ancients by chance. I’m also very thankful to my father as well, as he allowed my nonsense and even specially bought some craftsmen slaves for me…”

Leylin felt a magic undulation sweep across him, clearly trying to find out whether he was lying. Although Xena’s action was performed in secret, how could he possibly not notice it? He raged in his heart, but on the surface he did not make a single sound. His expression made Xena rather suspicious, and as she felt the feedback from her divine spell, she grew even more confused.

‘It can’t be, he’s telling me the truth?’ Xena felt a little disappointed, but did not continue to discuss the matter of the two trades with Leylin. No matter how one looked at it, the profits from the fish floss and white sugar were absolutely mind boggling. If she could not stick her hand in these two trade rivers which were overflowing with gold, she was sure to lose Waukeen’s favour, and would be replaced with other priests of gold.

Leylin’s nature and the A.I. Chip’s adjustments were more than enough to hide information from a high-ranking priest. Looking at Xena’s crestfallen face, Leylin inwardly smiled to himself, but his expression was still as serious as ever.

“Then, let’s discuss the issue of the the two trades.”

“Say it! How many gold coins do you want to give me the techniques?” Xena said with a rich and powerful air, suppressing her emotions completely.
“The entire curing process of fish floss, as well as the can sealing method and even the skilled craftsmen can all be given to you for 100,000 gold pieces!”

For Leylin, it was necessary to mass produce things like fish floss. The greater the volume he was able to sell, the more lucrative it would be. The capital and investment necessary was enormous, and the technique was not particularly sophisticated. After a few years it was sure to be imitated, so it was better to sell it off in one go.

“100,000 gold pieces?!” Xena bit her lip. From her view, this price was on the high side. However if skilled craftsmen and the sealing technique were included, then it was much more worth it.

The crucial point was the sealing technique that Leylin used. Xena could immediately see the advantage in using the sealing jar to preserve food for a long time. Even if it wasn’t used for fish floss, it was enough for her to make a profit.

So what if this industry needed a lot of initial investment? For the church of wealth who threw money at all their problems, that would never become an issue.

“This price is really far too high, unless you include the technique used to refine white sugar as well…” Although she had already inwardly agreed to the deal, she had a forced smile on her face, and on the surface she looked like she was moments away from throwing a tantrum.

“The white sugar purification technique?” Leylin muttered to himself. This was a different technique to the fish floss, and he was secretive about it as there were several key steps to making it. Additionally, it did not require a big production line or much investment, and it was a business that he could continue in the long-term.

The white sugar trade brought in over half of the Faulen Family’s
income, and was like an inexhaustible gold mine! As their profits grew, naturally the number of sharks that were attracted by it also grew. This was something that Leylin understood very well.

“Well?” Xena clearly seemed to understand the difference between the two techniques, and her eyes flashed in anticipation.

“This is…” Leylin’s expression looked as if he was mired in difficulty, and his fingers began to involuntarily drum on the table. Xena’s heart seemed to also throb along to the rhythmic tapping sounds.

‘Why… Why did I do that?’ Xena’s face seemed to flush red as she inwardly chastised herself.

However, Leylin looked at her softly. “The purification technique for white sugar cannot be sold to you. However, can we discuss the matters of the church of wealth?”

“The church of wealth?”

“Yes! For example, how many priests you will dispatch here, how many paladins, and other matters like that…” Leylin smiled like a crafty fox, leaving Xena feeling as if she had met the most unreasonable devil in her career.

After a while, Xena bid farewell and left, looking as if she had been driven to distraction.

“I’ll need to carefully consider your proposal!” were the words she left behind.

As he watched many priests and paladins escorting the figure below him, Leylin’s lips slowly curved into a smile.

As a matter of fact, his proposal was not complicated. It was only to allow the church of wealth to become a partner in the business, and gradually pass on the technique over three years, enough time for the Faulens to fill their own coffers.

Leylin had additionally emphasised a clause in their agreement, If Faulen Island came under attack the church of wealth would have to send out priests and paladins to fight alongside his guards.
This was practically a request for the church’s protection. Even if they only sent out a low-ranking priest, it would be enough. After all, even Marquis Louis would not dare to declare war on the church of wealth unless he was tired of living.

Leylin had also heard several rumors which made it necessary for him to protect his own lair. Binding the church of wealth to his chariot of war was undoubtedly the safest thing for him to do. Naturally, he would not have unrealistic expectations of the church protecting the Scarlet Tigers as well. Even if Marquis Louis wanted a truce, Leylin was not willing to agree. Without enough enemies and flesh, how could he fulfil the Devilblood Dagger’s needs and quickly advance?

‘The clause is not too harsh, and I believe that in the end, this Gold Priest won’t be able to withstand the temptation…’ Leylin’s eyes continued to flash, ‘Once the church of wealth puts down their roots here, perhaps my plans can begin…’

After returning to his villa, Leylin waved his hand at Claire and her sister, who had faces full of anticipation, “I won’t need you here for now, leave first!”

“Y–yes, young master!” The sisters had a secretly bitter expression on their faces but did not dare to say much as they meekly left the room.

“Come out!” Leylin looked towards the window sill. For a moment, it seemed as if no one was there and the window was tightly shut, without even a small crack.

However, a shadow slowly emerged from the darkness, and the outline of a curvy body could be seen. The owner of this body was a half-drow, who wore the tight-fitting clothes of an assassin and a thief. “Master!” she immediately knelt down.

“I’m afraid that your stealth is no worse off than some middle-ranking assassins!” In the World of Gods, a middle-ranked class was a formidable Professional of over rank 10. Such an assessment
coming from Leylin was indeed high praise. Perhaps this half-drow had practised like she was mad after shedding her past humiliating identity, and made great progress. Karen currently had the heavy responsibility of communicating between Leylin and the Scarlet Tigers.

“Master, we looted two more merchant ships from the Baltic archipelago this month, the estimated profits are about 5000 gold pieces. Additionally, Miss Isabel has acted according to your plan and begun to intentionally leak our whereabouts…” Karen reported respectfully.

“What about the Barbarians?”

“I have already notified them and they have promised to act when the agreed time comes.” How could Leylin not take advantage of the assistance the Barbarians could offer to recklessly fight Marquis Louis?

“Mm, even so, we would increase our success rate if we could plant a high-ranking spy in their camp…” Leylin said, seemingly with a sigh.

“Master! This humble servant deserves death. The thieves and spies that were previously sent to the Baltic archipelago in the past all seemed to have been uprooted, and the ones that are left can only divulge ordinary information…” Karen immediately begged for forgiveness. Only after working for Leylin for so long did she realise how deeply terrifying he was.

Compared to this master, those pure-blooded drows in the Underdark seemed extremely kind-hearted!

“The reason I said that was not to blame you,” Leylin shook his head, thinking that his servant’s cowardice was not a good thing at all.
et out immediately towards the Baltic archipelago, and find someone for me,” Leylin could not help but to get Karen’s attention, as he saw the bewildered expression on her face.
“Who?” Karen was surprised. Could it be that the master had made other preparations over there? Did this mean that he had lost trust in her? Once she thought of the consequences of being abandoned, Karen involuntarily began to tremble.
That display made Leylin inwardly laugh to himself.
“Go and find Viscount Tim, and tell him the truth about who you are. In addition, tell him that I am willing to form an alliance with him and help him become a marquis!” Leylin laughed coldly, as if he were the devil.
“Viscount Tim?” Karen was shocked, and couldn’t help but to lift her head up. She had heard many times about the Faulen family’s affairs after joining Leylin’s troops, and she certainly knew that Viscount Tim had been the main ringleader in coveting the Faulen Island’s territory.
This viscount was also the Scarlet Tigers’ biggest enemy right from the start, so how could they suddenly shake hands and talk of peace?
“Carry out the order,” Leylin waved his hand. Karen respectfully bowed, disappearing into the darkness.
“That’s politics for you… The enemy of my enemy is a friend, and
no matter how one fought to the death against the other the previous day, to the point of wanting to directly kill each other, one must join hands against the common enemy all the same…”

Although the ambushed spies in the Baltic archipelago could only divulge the most basic of information, Leylin could still see a lot of things in them. For example, the discord between Marquis Louis and Viscount Tim, as well as the eldest son William’s outstanding performance.

According to Leylin’s understanding of human nature, he had over a 50% chance of success to rope in Viscount Tim., a chance great enough for him to try and grab.

Even if he failed, he would not suffer any losses, right?

……

A few days later, The Gold Priest Xena eventually accepted Leylin’s conditions and signed the agreement. She received the sugar refining technique under the condition that they would protect the Faulen family for 3 years.

Both sides were very satisfied with their deal, and perhaps it would take a long time for both their profits and losses to come to light.

When all of these matters had been accomplished, a resplendent church had been erected at Port Venus.

As she had money, Xena, that prodigious bitch, seemed to simply use gold coins to accelerate the progress. Naturally, it had shockingly good results. The main body was up within ten days, several times faster than Leylin’s construction of the city hall.

Naturally, this could not have happened with the efforts of the priests. As they could recover their divine skills just by praying every day, they were not afraid of generously using their skills to support the construction. Leylin could only look on in envy.

On the day that the construction was complete, Xena personally
prayed and brought down the divine grace of the Goddess of Wealth.
Although the goddess herself did not appear, just being able to give all her followers in the port some additional luck and eloquence, as well as quick calculation abilities, was enough for those fellows to earn enough to fill their coffers in the future.
Naturally, the divine grace which was as boundless as the sea, and the imposing divine might, left a deep impression on Leylin. The Goddess of Wealth was just a mid-ranked god, and shared the same status as a rank 8 of the Magus World. However, the feeling she gave Leylin was far more terrifying than many rank 8 entities. Perhaps this was because it was her home turf, but it still gave Leylin an enormous shock. The powerful qualitative change that occurred when the power of faith was united with the body’s power of laws greatly inspired him.
There were still a few discordant voices in the crowd. The priests of the God of Suffering did not say much; his believers were of the lower classes, such as slaves and labourers, as well as others like farmers. They simply did not care about a goddess of merchants, because in reality the total of their belongings did not even add up to a single gold piece!
However, for the Bishop of the God of Knowledge, Tapris, having priests of the Goddess of Wealth stationed here was a great challenge. Although he still sent people over to congratulate them, he turned a cold shoulder to Baron Jonas.
Leylin and Baron Jonas completely ignored his attitude. As a representative of the nonreligious royalty, there were some essential benefits that they would never relinquish, and would even defend to the death.
Leylin stayed there for a while, until the transaction involving the fish floss technique had been completed and Port Venus was back on track. Only then did he retreat back into his laboratory.
The azure sea sprayed stinging salt and a soothing sea breeze at the same time. A black shadow whizzed past, leaving ripples on the sea surface behind it on its way. An enormous fleet of pirate ships was quietly moored on the horizon, a terrifying skull and dagger flag the colour of blood on their flagpoles. The Scarlet Tigers had made a name for themselves in the nearby region, and their strength began to approach that of the three great pirate crews.

It was rumoured that the captain of that pirate crew, the Scarlet Witch, was from the abyss of evil, and even enjoyed bathing in the fresh blood of her enemies. Just the mention of her name could make small children cry fearfully at night. However, the rumoured Scarlet Witch, Leylin’s cousin Isabel, stood with the other high-ranking pirates on the deck, as if waiting for their true captain to appear.

“You’ve worked hard!” Leylin’s figure slowly descended in the howling wind. He first nodded at his pirate crew, then turned to face his own cousin. Afterwards, his brow slowly furrowed. As she had sacrificed a great deal of blood and flesh, Isabel’s power had improved very quickly, and she was now almost a rank 15 high-ranking Professional. She was the number one combatant under him.

At the same time however, Isabel’s demonisation had also grown even more serious. Although her appearance was still human, occasionally she emitted an extremely demonic and icy aura, which was terrifyingly evil. It was enough for weaker people to fall into a dead faint if they got too close to her. As a result, even the most ferocious pirates did not dare to get close to Isabel.

“Our people have all been set up according to your plan,” Isabel had no interest in the fearful gazes from the others, and arrived at
Leylin’s side.
“You’ve done very well,” Leylin captured Isabel’s small hand. Although it was as cold as ice, there was a touch of warmth to it that still belonged to the living.
“Ronald, come to the captain’s room. I need to hear your latest report,” Leylin looked towards Ronald, who immediately bowed and obeyed his order.
Of all the mates, he was the one with the best foundation. He even had some ability at leadership, something that had caught Leylin’s attention. His current position had slowly been elevated above that of Cyclops, and he had become Leylin’s top talent apart from Isabel.
Naturally, Leylin did not treat his old subordinates badly, and had given them a ship and 10 pirates. They were promoted to middle-ranked leaders and had awe-inspiring prestige, but now that their status had been upgraded, their thoughts also seemed to change a little.
After the pirates on the deck all left after reading the mood, Leylin spoke in a low voice to Isabel, “If you make the decision, then I still have ways to get rid of the demonic transformation of your body. However if you really wait until the transformation is complete, then I fear you will directly descend into the abyss, and your soul will never receive salvation…” Isabel played with her long hair. Only in front of Leylin would she do these little feminine actions.
“After I give up my power, how do I get revenge on my enemies? I made a vow, that every day I live I will seek the deaths of my enemy to comfort the souls of my family…” Listening to what Isabel said, Leylin could only fall into a gloomy mood. His cousin’s character was so strong that it could give him a headache.
“Alright, since we have nothing left to do after this battle, we can take our time to consider how to resolve it. I only hope that we
aren’t too late…” Leylin looked towards the sky where clouds were slowly gathering, heralding the arrival of a storm.
“My sword has long been thirsting for blood…” His cousin stood next to him just like a valkyrie.

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“Damn! Damn! Damn!” Viscount Tim cursed as he slammed the bedroom door handle, holding an bottle of empty bottle of rum. Those serving maids? He had long roared at them to leave.
“One day! One day, I’ll make all of you who despise and insult me pay the price!” Thinking back to those looks of contempt he had received recently, Viscount Tim’s mood became even worse.
“Mm? Who is it? Didn’t I say before, to all get out of my sight…” Viscount Tim’s voice stopped, because the person he had discovered standing in his bedroom was not a maid, but a thief.
“The Scarlet Tiger pirate crew gives you our greetings!” This thief had a sweet voice that was pleasant to the ears, and her figure was very good.
Viscount Tim looked at her from head to toe, and his expression changed completely. He even looked like he had woken up from his drunken stupor. Scarlet Tiger? Were they not his enemies?
“Haha… Are you here to take my life?” Tim took a few steps back, and his dark heart was filled with hate. If it was his father and William’s place, that thief would been chopped to pieces before she could get this close to them. Only here in this neglected second son’s house could an assassin easily step through.
However, if he could fight for a little more time, the guards would notice something was amiss and immediately rush through.
“No, we’re here to help you! You, do you wish to become a Marquis?” The temptation of a devil poured out from Karen’s lips.
“Marquis?” Tim’s expression changed greatly, and he immediately
shut his bedroom door with a dark expression.
“Go on! You were sent by William, weren’t you. What are you plotting?” Tim immediately sat down to one side.

“Haha… I’m afraid that your brother can’t order me around. If you want to confirm my identity, how about this?” Karen lifted her hand, and a scroll covered in the Scarlet Tiger’s skull and dagger seal flew directly to Tim.

“It really is you people…” Tim touched the unique imprint on the parchment in disbelief, his eyes slowly growing as round as saucers.

“What do you want?” Without quite knowing why, Tim’s heart began to beat wildly.

“Didn’t I say before? We’re going to help you become the marquis, my lord,” Karen smiled.

“What sort of joke is this, William is still here, and apart from him there’s still…” Tim mumbled.

“Then just let them all die,” Karen’s words were filled with venom.

“Let them all die!” Tim bonelessly flopped onto his chair as he heard her speak his mind, but his eyes actually shone brightly.

“You want me to work undercover and sell out my own family?” He asked slowly.

“That depends on your decision. What do you want, a broken family? Or the glory and power that your brother William currently holds?”
Karen could tell that Tim never really had a choice. The night wind blew through the window, and the curtains continued to wave in the breeze. However, there was someone missing from their earlier position in front of the window. After a long time sitting uneasily in his chair, Tim felt dizzy and confused. However, an idea had seeded itself deep within his mind. ‘That’s right. If I can’t have it, you can’t either! I’ll destroy everything, this entire Baltic archipelago should belong to me!’ Under the moonlight, Tim’s back seemed to have twisted demonically.

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“Master, everything went smoothly. Tim also gave us the route maps of the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates.” Tim had completely revealed Marquis Louis’ plan to them; the forces he was mobilising, William’s route, even the news of the wizard Boruj’s return.

“Ah, is this Tim crazy?” Isabel stood next to Leylin, looking at the final part of the parchment which held the map of the entire Baltic archipelago. He had completely betrayed his family and even given them the defenses of the marquis’ house.

“Desperate and crazy people can be unreasonable like this. He clearly knows that his family is the only thing left that he can rely on, but he willingly wants to destroy it. It’s really too funny…” Karen knelt down even lower, and did not dare to look Leylin in the eye.

Although she had a rather intimate relationship with this master of hers, she realised that she couldn’t even begin to understand Leylin yet. For the sake of benefits, even his enemies became his allies, and the ability to accurately grasp someone’s heart made him seem like a demon wearing human skin.
Indeed, a demon! In Karen’s heart, perhaps only the Archdevil of the 9th level of hell would have such a cold and cruel mentality. “What, are you afraid of me?” Even this light thought was discovered by Leylin, and his casual way of asking made Karen tremble all over. “No! No, your servant was just concerned that Viscount Tim would go back on his word. After all, nobles are not to be trusted. Even if we succeed, I fear that he will act as a witness against us…” Karen immediately replied. “Before William dies, the likelihood of Tim going back to their side is very small,” Leylin did not get angry after discovering his servant’s fearful state of mind, it was a very normal reaction. Only in front of the Scarlet Tigers did Leylin abandon his aristocratic airs, showing his true self to the crowd. Because of it, he had earned the other pirates’ genuine awe and fear. Were Isabel not slowly transforming into a demon in body and mind, perhaps even she would feel fearful and alienated by him. “After we succeed, whether Tim will ask for help from the Dambrath Kingdom or testify against us…” Leylin laughed gently, “Did I let you leave behind any evidence or information that points towards me?” “No,” Karen dimly began to realise. “So from beginning to the end, this entire matter is only related to the Scarlet Tigers and Tim. Is Tim willing to gamble away his future and be hanged for the crime, just to testify against a bunch of pirates?” “Master is wise!” Karen only understood at this moment how deeply Leylin had thought about everything. “Not only that… Louis and William are the marquis and the marquis’ heir, even containing royal blood. The Baltic archipelago is the marquis’ fiefdom, do you really think we can go swaggering in after disposing of them both and take it over?”
“If that happened, the king would lose his mind and attack us!”
“That’s right, so we should at least support a puppet agent on the surface, and Tim is rather suitable, is he not?” Leylin folded his hands, “With him there, then we can cover up the whole matter as a fight between a noble family’s sons, and isn’t this sort of thing common in the Kingdom?
“This would let his majesty and the royal family save face, and although they will continue to resent us, the possibility of them wasting manpower and resources to exterminate us will be very low.”
“Your servant understands…” Karen’s face was still rather shocked as she respectfully withdrew. It was clear that Leylin’s view extended further into the future than she had realised.
‘Don’t tell me that all humans are as full of convoluted schemes and foresight as him? The extent of this plot, perhaps even those Matriarchs of the Underdark…’ Karen left with a heavy heart.
Leylin was comforting his cousin, “I know your family’s debt of blood includes Tim’s. Don’t worry, when the time is ripe he WILL pay the price…”
“There isn’t a trace of doubt in my mind,” Isabel looked deeply into Leylin’s eyes, “Additionally, I would like to finish him off myself…”
“No problem, I can leave William to you,” Leylin’s eyes flashed coldly, “Notify the Barbarians as well, this time we will eliminate their naval force in one fell swoop!”
A grey falcon with a scroll tied to its leg disappeared into the sky, as quickly as a flash of grey lightning. With this sort of raptor-like speed and flight, it would only take half a night to reach Pirates’ Cove.
A strong breeze flowed past, lifting the heavy curtains.
“What an adorable little fellow, haha…” Madam Tillen caressed its ash-grey beak, and retrieved the message tied to its feet. After
glancing through the message, she turned to the Barbarians’ captain in her room, “The operation can begin!” Several loud grunting sounds could be heard. An enormous hand attached to an arm the size of an entire baby was grasping a huge goblet filled to the brim with golden spirits. Odge’s throat was gulping down the drink, and occasionally some liquor would leak out from the corners of his mouth and flow down his prickly beard. “Boruj, Boruj, Boruj! I’ll turn your skull into a wine glass!” Odge growled, snatching up the enormous saber. A powerful spell glinted on the swordpoint. “Send the order, we act now!” Odge roared, and the two barbarian warriors outside immediately flew out. Pirates’ Cove immediately burst into a flurry of activity. Under the command of their captain, teams of barbarian warriors boarded their ships in an orderly manner, amongst them shamans who wore colourful feathers and had painted faces. They were the rare spellcasters of the barbarian tribe, and one could tell Odge’s resolve and caution from how all of them had been dispatched. “The Pirates’ Tide! It’s similar to the last Pirates’ Tide that happened decades ago…” The barbarian pirate crew did not consist solely of barbarians. As the head of the Dark Alliance in the outer seas, they had many pirates under them of other races which were all currently taking action with them. Several thousand ships sailed out from Pirates’ Cove, which gave off a rather chilling feeling. “I smell killing, and the plot is afoot… This festival will please our lord greatly!” In a dark corner, the Cyric priest murmured to himself, next to him the bent figure of the bishop from before. “Prepare your men to assassinate the leaders of both sides, and let the chaos grow even more turbulent!” After this reshuffling of the pirate organisations, the situation in the outer sea would change
greatly. However, this bishop’s purpose was greater than that. All he asked was for there to be chaos! After the chaotic battle, no matter who rose to the top, they would represent order. However, this would clearly displease the God of Murder, as he only wanted an endlessly chaotic outer sea, full of all kinds of murder and conspiracies.

Murder and plots were Cyric’s most favourite things. If they could accomplish this, then he was bound to receive the grace of his god. He would advance by 1 or 2 ranks as a priest at the very least, and even receive other advantages. Compared to that, how could allowing the entire outer sea wither even compare?

“As you command!” The priest now understood the tip of the bishop’s plot. Neither their past neutrality nor the current assassinations mattered, all that was left was a sacrifice of chaos and death!

These sorts of methods obviously brought great pleasure and excitement to him. With high spirits, the priest’s body slowly melded into the shadows, leaving behind the bishop who watched the sails alone.
"Young master! We’ve received word that those Barbarians at Pirates’ Cove are acting strangely!" It was very unlikely for such a large-scale shift in manpower to be hidden from other organisations. William got a report quite quickly.

“The Barbarians? Get me a map of the sea!” William put down the copper telescope. The feeling of possessing so much power left him in a marvellous mood.

Under him was a huge three-masted ship that was over 300m long, able to displace 500 metric tons of water when sailing. The terrifying battleship, its deck and hull coated in magic armour, was a symbol of invincibility and tyranny in the outer seas.

A flag with a sinister black skull on it flapped around in the wind, the mark of the Black Skeletons. This was one of the three great pirate crews of the outer seas of Dambrath, with over 300 elites and ten large battleships. Their flagship had been remodelled with magic!

At this moment, a young pirate walked over, opening up an intricate map next to William.

“You’ve worked hard, Captain Crowe!” William nodded politely. Captain Crowe had translucent fair skin and a tall forehead, the bridge of his nose long and straight as a snowy mountain. His eyes were long and narrow, as were his proportionate eyebrows, and he had a delicate yet seductive aura.
However, William did not dare underestimate him. Crowe was a high-ranked Professional exceeding rank 15, his outer appearance only the effect of his bloodline.

Indeed, this was someone with a bloodline. His powers stemmed not only from his Profession, but also his innate constitution. The power he inherited from his bloodline allowed him to possess greater vitality than the average human, and the bloodline itself would awaken spell-like abilities as he grew.

However, bloodlines had limitations as well. He could only cast from a limited pool of spells, and there was a limit to the number of uses.

However, even the simplest rank 0 spell was useful for high-ranked warriors. On top of that, his bloodline allowed him to cast spells so quickly that defending against them was pointless.

It caused many to describe bloodline holders as lucky people who possessed gifts from their ancestors. Crowe himself had a high grade of bloodline, but he was also a knight that was over rank 15.

Still, the influence of his ancestor’s bloodline naturally lent to a savagery and violence that was in his very genes. He was like a devil king in the outer seas.

However, the Black Skeletons were subservient to Marquis Louis, and Crowe had a great attitude towards William. It could have to do with the high-ranking wizard by his side.

While similarly ranked as Professionals, a wizard far exceeded knights and bloodline holders in power. Perhaps, given time to prepare, a high-ranked wizard could contend against several enemies of their rank.

As a nobility of the seas, William knew these basic things well. After using a vernier caliper and making marks, he stowed the map away. “They set off from Pirates’ Cove just yesterday. Based on the distance, it’ll take them at least two days to reach the battlefield. We should be able to exterminate the Scarlet Tigers in that time…”
“When the time comes, please leave the Scarlet Witch to me!” Crowe bowed elegantly, seeming like a refined noble. It was impossible to connect him to piracy on the seas.

“No problem!” William frowned, but quickly smoothed out his expression. He stood on deck, watching the over 30 battleships behind him, “Send down the command that we are to increase our speed, we should strive to annihilate the Scarlet Tigers within a day!”

The flag bearer immediately got up to the observation deck and sent down the order. The vessels sped up, creating a spectacular sight. Most of the ships belonged to the Black Skeletons, and only a few were marked with the symbol of the Tigershark Pirates. However, William would not underestimate them because of that,

There were many white lines next to the fleet, the dorsal fins of many tigersharks. They looked like innumerable fish scales that emitted a dark luster in the sunlight.

This was a group of tamed tigersharks, the main force of the Tigershark Pirates! A formation of them spelled disaster in the deep seas, easily able to flip ships over and rip the flesh off their enemies from the waters.

“Keke… seems like Citamo’s little darlings are already impatient, or am I wrong?” Crowe coquettishly greeted a sharkman behind him. “I want to rip off every bone of the body of that Leylin, inch by inch. I’ll then let my children share every drop of flesh and blood on his body…” Citamo was a hybrid between a shark and a human. His outer skin was like the solid cartilage of a shark, and his smile revealed a row of sawtooth-like teeth. The corners of his lips extended all the way to his ears. Such a huge mouth could easily swallow a full-grown man.

William gulped, “It’s rumoured that the Tigershark Pirates and Merfolk Pirates have connections. After the Merfolk Pirates were annihilated, Citamo even tried to cause trouble for the Scarlet
Tigers, but the opponent fled…”
“The captain of the Merfolk Pirates was a bastard of yours, no? Don’t worry, the enemy won’t be able to run!” Crowe’s eyes had a bloody glint in them as he ruthlessly revealed the secret.
“Crowe! Once the battle’s over, I’ll wring your head off!” Citamo widened his mouth, revealing a terrifying tongue with sharp barbed tips on them, “I’ve long since wanted to taste a bloodline holder…”
“Enough!” An aged voice sounded just as William furrowed his brows and was about to stop the fight. Boruj slowly strolled to the deck, leaning on a slender magic staff.
While he looked like a shrivelled old man who already had a foot in the coffin, and there was only a little bit of light in his eyes, Crowe and Citamo both did not dare underestimate him. This was a high-ranked wizard, a spellcaster who possessed immense strength! No matter where he went, he would be greeted with reverence.
“Master Boruj, you’re just in time!” With Boruj’s arrival, William was more confident.
“I hope you can use Sending to inform the naval commander that he doesn’t need to come over here. He’ll just have to carry on stalling that trash at Pirates’ Cove for a while…” William’s eyes now held rays of wisdom, “Though they definitely won’t be able to make it to the battle, I still feel uneasy…”
Sending was only a communication spell that high-ranked wizards used. The distance it allowed and its convenience far surpassed old methods. Of course, Leylin was still unable to use this as he was still too low-ranked.
“Don’t worry,” Boruj looked hard at the two pirate captains and headed back to the hold of the ship.
“I still have some thoughts on the upcoming massacre, I invite the two of you to discuss this together…” As if not seeing the dark look in their eyes, William put on his sincerest smile and called for Crowe and Citamo.
As they were planning for the battle, Leylin’s various channels gave him an unceasing stream of intel.

“Mm. William’s main force is two large pirate groups. He’s protected by the high-ranked wizard, Boruj, and they’ve already reached the Strait of Storms?” Leylin looked at the gigantic map on the wall and stuck a few flags on it.

“Yes. Marquis Louis’ slaving fleet has already shifted towards the Hygar Islands, blocking the path that the Barbarians are sure to pass by. It’ll take a long time for victory to be decided between them…” Only Isabel and Ronald were beside Leylin, even Karen had been sent out. Evidently, this was a military meet for those of high rank.

“Good. As we expected, they sent out their last resort…” Leylin clapped his hands, “Is that stuff prepared yet?”

“We’ve already made contact with the people there. They delivered all the goods right away once we paid them their gold. We’re currently storing it here…” Ronald’s voice trembled slightly as he said this. While he had talent as a commander, he was still shocked by Leylin’s risky actions.

“Act based on the plan. Remember to keep it a secret! Let’s go out and see the leader of the other pirates…” Leylin clapped his hands and decided the fate of many people, and then walked out as if it was nothing at all.

“With a wave of his hand, he can take the lives of tens of thousands at one go and even show no remorse. Is this the way the truly powerful behave?” Ronald muttered to himself as he followed Leylin.

Lights illuminated the hall atop the Scarlet Tiger. Numerous pirate leaders stood at the two sides of the long table, with the elites and trusted aides behind them.
“Boss!” Boss!” After having brought Isabel and Ronald inside, Leylin occupied the host’s seat as he took a quick look around. The Scarlet Tigers had grown to over 500 men strong in the past year, even if they didn’t have many elites. Many familiar and unfamiliar faces appeared in front of him.

“I’ve gathered you here today because we are going to deal with the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates!” Leylin’s voice was low as he announced his objective.

The moment the words came out, there was a slight commotion below. One-eyed Dragon, Hawk, and the rest that Leylin was more familiar with merely whispered, while the rest of the pirates grew noisy.
oss, why do we have to go against the Black Skeletons and Tigersharks? Marquis Louis and the Baltic archipelago are behind them, and we’re no match for THEM… Isn’t it better to stay out of the way like we did in the past? The sea is so vast. They can’t find us…” A pirate who looked kind stood out.

“Are you questioning my decision, Stalker?” Leylin’s voice was low, immediately causing the hall to turn chilly.

This was the disadvantage of staying at Port Venus and avoiding trouble. Since he controlled the pirates from the shadows most of the time, he still didn’t have enough of a grasp on them. This was especially true of those like Stalker who’d just joined. He’d originally commanded a few ships himself, and had never experienced how brutal and callous Leylin could be. There were things he did not understand.

Stalker froze, but still mumbled everything out anyway, “I obviously wouldn’t want to do that, but we have to worry about our brothers…”

“Wouldn’t want to? So that means you’ll still do it?” Leylin chuckled, a flash of lightning shooting out of his hands.

With his strength as a rank 9 wizard, plentiful battle experiences, and excellent techniques, taking care of a Professional merely about rank 10 could be done in an instant.

*Crackle!* Amidst the fierce electric currents, Stalker turned into a
few portions of charred ash.
“Ah… Head!” “What are you doing?”
The trusted aide standing behind Stalker brought out his curved knife in his grief, but was immediately drowned out by Ronald’s underlings.
Leylin played with the electric currents that struck fear into the hearts of the pirates, leaving them trembling in their fright. He then ordered in leisure from his seat, “Ronald, go and take over their ship!”
“Understood, Captain!” Ronald immediately brought his men and left, leaving behind a group of pirate leaders quivering at their seats. It was only at this point that they remembered the Scarlet Tigers had been established with the captain’s ruthlessness and cruelty.
They had to carry out his orders with determination. The only other option was being purged callously!
Shouts could be heard, and there was some chaos in the distance but Leylin didn’t care. Sensing the wordless communication amongst his subordinates, He snickered inside, ‘As expected, the truly troublesome ones aren’t hot-blooded. There are more of those who only pay lip service…’
After a year of work, the batch of people under Leylin had all grown rich, gaining control over certain sections. They were now smalltime leaders themselves.
Due to a shortage of manpower, Isabel and Ronald had no choice but to hand over some power to others, which then led to a few other hidden leaders amongst the pirates. Leylin kept them under control by pressuring them with his power. While this made sure that they wouldn’t dare rebel, the hatred in their hearts increased by the day.
After the fools who had the guts to speak out all died, the only resistance was left hidden in the shadows. It was alright if they only
paid lip service, but how many out of these people had contact with Marquis Louis and betrayed him, turning into spies? Leylin sneered on the inside. On the surface, the opponent’s strength far exceeded his, even in terms of his noble status. This was the loneliness at the top of the pyramid. Worldly matters were like water that would wash away the people beside him, the mere thought of like-minded companions from the past difficult to remember.

‘But even if you work from the shadows, you can’t stop me.’ Leylin was unfeeling and merciless.

“Captain! Stalker’s ship has been cleaned out!” At this moment, Ronald pushed the door open and walked in hurriedly, bloodstains still on his body. “We found some assassins from the church of murder on it, and this too!” A few noble emblems with blood on them were flung to the long table.

“This… It’s the family emblem of Marquis Louis!” Someone who recognised it yelled.

“Hang all the assassins. Kill all of Stalker’s assistants. Let them know what the punishment for treachery is!” Leylin instructed calmly, deciding the life and death of tens of people in an instant.

“Now, do you have any other opinions?” Being glanced at by Leylin’s lightning-like eyes, the many leaders immediately lowered their heads, having no courage to meet his gaze.

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After the meeting was adjourned, Leylin might have used his might to forcefully allocate tasks, but the undercurrents still flowed. A few suspicious figures sneakily met up at the bottom of a ship’s hold in the deep night.

“Nondetection” An expensive scroll was torn, and once the rays of light from the spell filled the area, the people finally heaved a sigh
of relief.
“Is this place safe?” One of them asked with a rough voice.
“I spend a lot of money to get this magic scroll. Even a high-ranked wizard might not be able to find us!” Another voice sounded exasperated.
“Fine, stop quarrelling!” An old and hoarse voice sounded, immediately suppressing the dispute, “I believe Liberty…”
“Didn’t I tell you not to call me by my name? Not even my nickname!” The voice from before sounded again immediately.
“Fine, sorry.” The elderly voice halted, and then continued, “There are now tens of ships. We have people keeping watch over the Scarlet Tiger, and there’s the power of magic involved. He definitely won’t discover us, so we can discuss at ease…”
“The captain’s been getting more ruthless lately. Stalker merely said a word and was killed by him just like that. Even his underlings weren’t spared…” A voice of indignance could be heard.
“Did he discover something?” This was the worried person.
“The reason us brothers are banding together is for our own benefits, but now the captain wants to go to war on those two huge pirate groups. Tell me, what are our chances of winning?”
The elderly voice replied, “Actually, if the captain’s still like before and lets us loot and plunder as we like, while he’s in charge of disposing of the stolen goods and distributing profits, I have no issues with that. The issue is that things are different now. He wants us to risk our lives! Even if we get rid of the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates, they still have the Marquis and Baltic archipelago as their backing and can quickly regain their strength. What about us? On top of that, they have a tremendous slaving fleet…”
At the end of that, the elderly voice suddenly grew louder.
“Then what do we do?” The reason they had gathered was not because they truly had plans to start a rebellion, but were merely
agreeing on an alliance in order to protect their own interests.

“We’re pirates. How valuable could trust be? If put in a spot, we can just rebel against him and side with the other pirate groups. Whether it’s Marquis Louis or the Barbarians, anything can be considered…” The aged voice held hints of resentment.

Eyes full of wit shone in the dark room like a pack of wolves.

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“Reporting! Traces of the Scarlet Pirates have been found!” A pirate respectfully reported.

“Follow them, follow them! Keep a tight hold of them!” William’s eyes brightened.

The huge ships pulled at the sails, and they formed a huge arc in the strong wind. The entire fleet began to sail at a terrifying speed. ‘This is all thanks to master Boruj!’ Experiencing the strong winds in his face, William could not help but take a look at the high-ranked wizard next to him in admiration. The Breeze spell he’d cast had raised the fleet’s speed more than twofold.

Wizards could adapt to all sorts of complex environments. With the numerous types of spells they could cast, they were useful in all sorts of abrupt situations. In his opinion, the Scarlet Tigers would not be able to escape.

“An island has been discovered up ahead, and there are ships anchored there!” At this moment, the sailor at the observation deck exclaimed.

“What?” William immediately darted to the railings, using the telescope to observe. A huge barren island appeared in his line of sight. There was a series of pirate ships anchored at the side, the flag of the Scarlet Tigers extremely obvious on them.

“They’ve abandoned their ships and landed? Have they gone mad?” While still in disbelief, William gritted his teeth, “Go! Sink them!”
Whatever it was, he needed to sink the opponent’s ships. This way, they would be completely trapped. The offensive went smoothly. Not many had been left on watch, and Crowe and Citamo hadn’t even needed to act. Their first and second mates had taken along some people and seized the thirty pirate ships.

All the pirate ships that Leylin had spent a year seizing with his own pirate crew now fell into William’s hands. The process was so smooth-sailing that it was difficult to believe. The merfolk’s ship, and even the Scarlet Tiger with its blood red flag were at his disposal.

“His ships were all very clean and had no traps. Based on the information from the slaves, this is a temporary stopping point for them, and they’ve built a few simple defenses…”

Crowe fiddled with the black curved knife in his hands, “So? Should we sail them away?” Such a huge fleet was worth at least tens of thousands of hold, an impressive amount of wealth. Even large pirate groups would go green in envy at it.

William muttered to himself, and then gritted his teeth. “No. Sink them all! Even if they’ve done anything to the ships, it shouldn’t affect us.”

After all, there were a few terrifying toxins and curses that could be hidden from the senses of magic, and even divine force. He had come out to obtain a beautiful victory to secure his position as the successor. Nothing could go wrong.

“Master Boruj, what do you think?” William did not forget to ask for Boruj’s opinion at this point.

“Alright!” The wizard nodded, causing Crowe and Citamo to curse inside. As expected, wizards were all spendthrifts!
haotic sounds rang out, and the bulk of the ships sank down into the sea one by one. William, however, had a blank expression on his face while he watched the Scarlet Tiger sinking. The largest ship of them all was being swallowed by the merciless waves.

“Is this… victory?” This presented him with an even greater enigma, which was whether to proceed with ground warfare or not. “What should we do now?” William turned to look at Boruj rather awkwardly.

“I can feel a huge amount of life energy on the island. If I’m not wrong, he should still be there. But I can’t probe further into the details, and there are also disturbances deterring my predictions. After all, they have a wizard with them too…” The radiance of spells shone over Boruk as he shook his head with a bitter smile.

“Why would we attack? We can just patiently surround the island here, it’ll be impossible for anyone there who isn’t of a high rank to survive the loss of the ships…” Crowe’s expression was specific to the craftiness of a pirate.

“That’s a pretty good idea, but there’s another thing we have to consider. They might be trying to stall us here, I’m worried about the other fleet…” As loyal as the bribed pirates could be, they were nothing compared to the dogs they raised. William was aware of that.

Moreover, loyalty and trust weren’t words in the pirates’
dictionaries anyway. They were merely instinctive loonies that sought refuge from the strong!

The sudden blinking of a communication spell cause Boruj’s face to drop.

“I’ve just received news that Pirates’ Cove is immensely determined this time, and they even sent out the Pirates’ Tide. The slaves’ fleet has suffered great losses, and a few high-ranking captains were even murdered. We suspect that the God of Murder’s organisation is behind it…”

“The God of Murder? Damn it!” Nobody who heard the name off this crazy deity would be too happy. William was about to implode. At the same time, he felt some sort of change in the eyes of the two bulky captains beside him.

The main reason why the Louis’ family could terrorise these pirates was because of their enormous military fleets. If they lost too much power now, even without the Scarlet Tiger keeping them in check it was possible that these pirates would mutiny. Common countermeasures were useless against the pirates if they were set on betrayal.

“My Lord! The pirates that we’ve sent out have come back!” A subordinate announced as he led in a rogue dressed in black skintight clothes.

“My Lord, this is the information from ‘Night Owl’!” The rogue presented a letter to them. William slightly jerked his head to the side, signaling for his grey-haired butler to receive the letter and put it through a thorough check.

“No anomalies,” the butler reported after scrutinising it. He then passed the letter to William, who took his time to absorb the information.

His expression grew progressively better, “I’ve decided! We’re gonna land immediately and ambush the Scarlet Tigers!”

‘Has he had a spy among the Scarlet Tigers for a while?’ Crowe
watched everything quietly, but something flashed across his eye. William looked at Crowe. “They have around 500 pirates, if we were to face them head on, do you have the confidence to defeat them all, Captain Crowe?”

“Without any confirmed numbers of professionals over there, they are just merely just 500 midgets to me! My subordinates can finish all of them by themselves!” A sinister smile flashed past Crowe’s face.

The look of bloodlust induced some fear inside of William, ‘It’s been rumoured that most bloodline holders are nuts, and are easily aggravated or have extreme bloodlust; seems like it’s true!’

“It’s decided then! Captain Crowe will bring some men alongside me to the land and Citamo will guard this place!” William commanded. Most of Citamo’s main power was still within the tigersharks, so only a small number of people could help on land. ‘I need some deeds to prove myself. As long as Master Boruj is here, everything should be alright!’ William glanced at the expressionless wizard at the side and cheered himself on.

Very quickly, an elite team led mostly by the Black Skeletons with some of William’s guards and the Tigershark Pirates reached the island.

The team had a manpower of around four to five hundred, but in terms of skills they were far better than whoever Leylin had under him.

“They’ve built a simple campsite here and stored a minimal amount of water and food, enough for more than two months. Also, they’ve also set up many traps, a majority of which are venomous snakes, in the canyon.”

William’s informant seemed to have given him more than enough intelligence, and he even provided a rough map.

“We’ll be fine as long as we have this!” Crowe’s bloodlust-filled smile widened, and it was indeed intimidating.
With the informant’s report and their own pirate scouts, they successfully passed the trap-filled canyon and arrived at the pirate campsite. The wooden fence was sharp, and in front of it were some ugly pagodas. Many were looking at these, secretly letting out fearful gasps every now and then.

……

Isabel walked into the center of the campsite, “The enemies have made it past the venomous snake canyon, I was right about them having a mole in us. And the spy is at least a middle-ranked one, god damn it!”
“This is nothing out of the ordinary. You can leave for now.” Leylin waved his arm, and a dispirited pirate leader walked out.
“You used Dominate Person?” Isabel asked. Although the pirate leader didn’t look like he was in his best condition, it didn’t look like he was controlled either.
“Nope, just a simple psychological hint. And with those kinds of spells, even if spell slots weren’t taken into account I don’t have enough power and spirit to control so many intelligent creatures right now.” Leylin shook his head. “Survival is the first instinct of all creatures, and to be able to leave a spiritual imprint on this base nature is very difficult. On the other hand, it’s easy to give them a lasting hint, furthermore…”
“My Lord!” Ronald came in on time, and knelt down respectfully, “All the preparations are done!”
“Great! Let us go welcome them, or else they wouldn’t launch the attack at all.” Leylin stood on top of the fort with Isabel and Ronald by his side, directly looking into the eye of a young aristocrat in the opposite force.
“Is that Leylin Faulen? The son of the the Baron?” William was looking at them too.
“Yes, I’ve checked! It isn’t any illusionary spell or camouflage. The Scarlet Witch is there as well.” Boruj confirmed.
“The rest is up to you, Captain Crowe!” William looked at Crowe beside him, the man’s eyes already filled with killing intent. Blood vessels were popping up on the man’s eyes.
“No problem, but that Scarlet Witch is mine!” Crowe growled, “Black Skeletons, follow me!”
“Animate Dead!” “Strengthen Undead!” “Skeleton Call!”
An array of spells launched from Crowe’s body, forming a bone armour around his body first of all. It caged him securely. The ground then bulged, small bones jutting out as skeletons crawled their way out. They seemed to come from hell, holding rusty axes and broken swords as they rushed towards the campsite.
“Undead creatures!” “It’s the undead!” The pirates in the campsite were in chaos. If it weren’t for Leylin’s early preparations, it might have sparked a rebellion.
“It has been rumoured that the Black Skeletons’ captain is a bloodline holder, and is able to call upon the dead, looks like the rumours are real!” Even though low-ranked skeletons like this would not cause much trouble, it was a huge blow to his men’s confidence. Leylin furrowed his brows, sending out a few spells.
“Berserk!” “Blizzard!” “Resist Energy!”
Under the influence of Berserk, many low-ranked pirates started yelling as if their bodies were filled with immense strength. Bows were continuously in action, the arrows they shot out turning the skeletons to dust.
“These spells, we can already confirm it’s him.” William nodded his head as he watched, feeling a little upset. Even though his opponent had a good affinity for spells, to waste his slots from the start made him no different from those stupid and rash bloodline holders.
‘Alright. We can end the war if we capture him, but on top of that
we can even blackmail Baron Jonas for the refined sugar and fish floss techniques.’ William was extremely jealous of these two money-makers and started growling, “I will bestow 1000 coins upon anyone who’s able to capture that wizard. You can also do whatever you wish to the captured women!”

All the pirates got excited at the great rewards, and started charging madly towards the fences.

“Our low-ranked pirates are of such inferior quality, they couldn’t improve much even with the enhancement of the spells. And my spells are limited in time and scope.” Leylin laughed bitterly to Isabel as he looked at the pirates who were starting to give way. Both of them retreated from the frontline and came to the hall.

“Prepare to leave!” Leylin signalled with his hand, and Ronald started moving away the obstacles to reveal a passageway in the corner of the hall. This was a passageway that Leylin had made when he built the campsite back then, its existence was known to only about 3 people. Ronald had only found out about it today.
Brothers, we can’t risk our lives for that wizard who fled and left us all behind!” An unexpected figure stood out in the front line.

Cyclops growled, “If we surrender, they’ll overlook all the sins we committed against them. He’s a viscount, mateys! What are you sprogs still waiting for?” This pirate, one of Leylin’s first subordinates, betrayed him in the blink of an eye. Cyclops had even established contact with William some time before.

As they realised that Leylin was indeed absent, the morale of the other pirates was greatly affected. They were shaken by the suggestions of their leader, and many decided to throw down their weapons and surrender.

The door of the campsite was thrown open, and Cyclops stood aside respectfully to let Crowe and his gang in. Even if they still had any last remnants of resistance, it was of no use in this current situation.

“You’ve done well, I will put in a good word for you to my father!” William patted Cyclops’ shoulder contentedly, which made the pirate looked very touched.

“Where are Leylin and the rest?”

“Don’t worry, we’ve already sent our men to block off their paths, they won’t be able to escape!” Cyclops proceeded to welcome William into the meeting chamber, while the summoned skeletons were disposing of a handful of pirates that were still putting up a
fight.
“What’s going on? What happened to all of you? I thought we had come to an agreement!” Cyclops raised his attention as he saw a few of the pirate leaders who had conspired with him grouping together.
“Be careful! I felt uneasy the moment I stepped in here.” Boruj whispered to William as he cast some spells.
“Mage Armour II!” “Detect Danger!” “Eagle Eye!”
Soon after, his expression grew dark. “Shit! Run!” A teleportation gate appeared and Boruj pulled William with him as he threw himself into its depths.
“Come and see the fireworks.” Outside the campsite, Leylin and Isabel stood next to each other and watched the camp near them.
*Boom!*
Dazzling sparks of flame emerged from all around the campsite, and immediately encircled the pirates within.
Cyclops was at a loss. Before he could even figure out the situation, an immense force ripped his body apart.
Terrifying explosions sounded, and a mushroom cloud soared into the sky. The resulting shockwaves were so strong that even the trees near Leylin were uprooted. Earthquakes ensued, the ground seeming to let out a deafening lament as it split wide open.
“With the money from the fish floss as well as some money borrowed from the church of wealth, I bought goblin explosives. What a scene!” Leylin commented as he observed the scene unfolding itself from afar.
Ronald stood behind Leylin, shock was written all over his face. Only his psychotic leader could think of a plan as crazy as filling the campsite with dynamite to send both his enemies and his own men to hell, hand in hand.
“But, even though we used a big amount of dynamite, this impact is just too big. This is as powerful as a rank 9 area of effect spell.
Actually, it might even be equivalent to a legendary spell!” Ronald muttered, without noticing he had just voiced his opinion out loud. Leylin smirked. In reality, the credits weren’t solely to the dynamite. He had added his own techniques and the A.I. Chip’s processing, enhancing the explosives and increasing their damage.

Furthermore, Leylin made meticulous preparations, using many concealing spells to avoid the enemies’ suspicion. Well, at the very least, the Black Skeletons became history. This plan ended up creating a huge hole in his wallet and exhausting him to the bones, but the results were satisfying. As for Boruj, Leylin did not plan on keeping the wizard around. A bad thing about high-ranked wizards was that it got increasingly difficult to eliminate them once they grew familiar with teleportation.

But the rest of the people on the campsite were not so lucky. “Be prepared, out men will soon catch up to us.” There were still around a hundred elite pirates under Leylin’s control. These were Leylin’s true subordinates, the loyal ones that he chose through many bloody battles. Even their families had been sent to the Faulen Island to be supervised.

“Kill everyone in the campsite. No exceptions,” Leylin commanded icily at the crucial moment. He could not spare any time to care about collateral damage.

He knew that, even if it was stunning, this enhanced explosion’s damage was still limited.

After all, at least the rank 15 Professional Crowe would be able to run a few hundred meters away before the explosion, leaving the area with highest damage. However, he would still be severely injured. In addition, Professionals at or above rank 10 would still have a high survival rate. The deciding factor would be their injuries.
Others, however, would have no chance to live. Leylin had added some special elements to increase the damage, contaminating the campsite with large amounts of neurotoxins. With the explosion, the toxic gas would finish off any remaining people. This was Leylin’s niche, so he was obviously confident about it. As for his current subordinates, they had already received their doses of antidote, so there was no need to worry. These trained pirates charged into the hellish campsite and started attacking every person and creature in sight.

Every Black Skeleton survivor was severely injured, and was no match for these guys. Thus, there was no way of resisting their fate. On the other hand, Leylin and Isabel were able to locate Crowe through their spiritual force and stop him from going any further.

“Captain Crowe, please be on your way soon. I’m extremely busy today.” Leylin spoke politely while he scanned the severely injured Crowe. He meant what he said. After all, once Crowe was dead, Leylin would have access to a huge number of ships.

The deaths of those stupid pirates meant nothing. As long as his 100 elites remained, he could have as many men as he needed. Of course, if the Black Skeletons’ magic battleship was included, then that would be a perfect ending.

However, Crowe suddenly did something out of the blue.

“My young lord Leylin! Please let me off! I promise you my loyalty and all of the Black Skeletons’ fortunes!” He got onto his knees with a thump and buried his head in the mud. This arrogant pirate had actually surrendered.

‘Really?’ Leylin looked at him with an undecipherable expression. Crowe’s condition was obviously not at its peak, but Leylin could feel that he still had the power of qi.

“This comes from the bottom of my heart! Furthermore, the ships are still being watched by the sharkman Citamo, I can kill all of them for you, my precious Lord!”
“It’s unbelievable that our cruel and merciless Black Skeleton Pirate captain still had this side to him!” Leylin smiled, “But I won’t be fazed by this little bloodline trick. You can stop your performance right there.”

‘He noticed!’ Crowe raised his head, while spell power glowing on his body.

But Leylin was faster. A crimson shadow flashed, and the Devilblood Dagger was pinned onto Crowe’s head in no time. Crowe’s expression was weird as his body slowly fell. All the spell rays on his body broke into pieces. This brutal bloodline pirate, and high-ranked knight, ended up dead.

Loud gurgling noises could be heard. The Devilblood Dagger was glistening with blood, numerous blood vessels emerging and coiling around Crowe. Everything was sucked from him, causing the demonic skull to emit an excited growl.

After all, it had never encountered a creature of this strength. An immense power spread from the dagger, and Leylin felt a little uneasy.

[Beep! Host body enhanced by Devilblood Dagger! Strength+0.7, Agility+1.5, Vitality+0.3] The A.I. Chip’s alerts made Leylin realise his stats had updated once more.


“You really live up to the fame of a high-ranked Professional. Look at the extent of this enhancement.” Leylin smiled with satisfaction as he felt his limbs become more nimble and light.

Crowe’s high rank was no joke. The enhancement he brought upon Leylin was great. He wasn’t interested in spirit enhancement from the man, given that everything he had would only raise it by 0.2, but there were better candidates to harvest spiritual force from
anyway.
The A.I Chip flashed another prompt. [Beep! Target hods the ‘Wolf Skeleton’ bloodline, 12.19% compatible with host’s body. Begin absorption?]
“No, extract the bloodline instead!” Following Leylin’s command, a dark drop of blood appeared from Crowe’s forehead, seating itself inside a black bottle that Leylin was holding.
Leylin had no interest in this sort of bloodline power, but it would be useful to give to his subordinates so he could create a few bloodline holders.
"Is that the item you made a deal with the devil for?" Once everything was over, Isabel walked in slowly, eyes focused on the bloody knife in Leylin’s hand. She’d known something was off about her cousin from the start, and that he was evidently hiding something. In addition, Leylin hadn’t tried to hide anything from her just now. Hence, Isabel knew that Leylin’s quick rise in strength definitely had to do with a devil. However, even if she found out, she had no plans to divulge it. Part of it was because of their relationship from childhood. On the other hand, they were all in the same boat. Although demons and devils shared a completely antagonistic relationship and were two opposing forces, there weren’t many differences in terms of their followers.

Isabel was rather worried, because making deals with devils usually meant giving up one’s soul. On top of that, devils liked to use all sorts of plots in order to nibble away at the contractor’s soul, causing them to completely become depraved. It could be said that for those who were experienced, devils were far worse than demons. Of course, due to devils keeping to their side of the deal even more strictly, there were even more believers praying to devils than demons in the World of Gods.

After seeing Isabel’s gaze, Leylin could tell what she was thinking. “Don’t worry. I didn’t deal with my soul!” Leylin launched a fireball from his hands, burning the withered corpses on the
ground to ashes. Though there was nothing much to hide from his cousin, it was still better to keep some things secret from his underlings.

“Be careful. The devils’ cunning is famous even in the vast multiverse.” Isabel went silent after the warning, her eyes now filled with some sort of determination. Once they were back to the camp, Ronald and Robin Hood, who had not been seen for a long time, welcomed them.

“My lord, the whole camp has been purged!” Robin Hood reported respectfully. It had originally seemed like he’d been demoted, and few paid attention to him. The truth was that he’d been hidden in the shadows, helping Leylin manage the true elites in his forces.

“Good! Let’s go to the fleet. Things should be lively there…” Leylin’s face lit up with a smile.

……

A while earlier. At the seaside, on the Black Skeletons’ ship. A teleportation gate burst into existence, and Boruj and William stumbled out pathetically.

Without high-ranked Mage Armour, William had been affected despite having escaped quickly. A large portion of his handsome hair had already been burnt off, and it was now like a bird’s nest. There were burns all over his body.

“What’s going on? What’s that?” Terrifying explosions could be seen even on the shore. William grabbed onto the railings looking dazed, crying out maniacally. The feeling of having a brush with death left fear in his heart.

“It should be the explosions, but the power has increased by quite a bit! My men are going to be annihilated!” Boruj was completely fine, but his brows furrowed while looking doubtful, “Why didn’t I find anything? Is this some sort of new concealment technique, or
the effects of a large-scaled spell formation?”
“Something’s off.” All of a sudden, Boruj’s expression changed, and a ring on his hand exploded, producing a powerful magic barrier.
Mage’s Sword! A magic sword appeared, colliding with a huge metallic flying hatchet. A huge crash could be heard in the air, the resulting undulations causing several huge pits to appear on the deck.
“An enemy! Who is it? Where’s Citamo? Show yourself!” William had noticed something was off too. The large explosion from before had attracted their attention, but he had not found anything strange in his surroundings.
It was far too quiet on the deck, and all the pirates who had stayed behind to guard it had disappeared.
“Are you looking for this?” A huge shark head was tossed to the ground. This was the head of a sharkman, and one that William was very familiar with.
Citamo looked to have suffered before death. The area under his neck still had blood dripping unceasingly, and it looked like his neck had been squeezed off him while he was alive.
A huge barbarian appeared in William’s line of sight, his footsteps thudding on the ship’s deck. He raised a huge saber, the bloody injuries on his body already healing quickly in demonstration of his astounding life force.
‘It’s Ogde, the captain of the Barbarians! He sneak attacked the guards who stayed behind!’ William immediately guessed at something.
“It turns out that Hygar Island was just a facade. You’d already left… Everything was a trap!” It would take two days to rush here from the battlefield, but if there was a batch of elites that had set off earlier, this would be easy to conceal from others. William’s lips quirked bitterly. Most of his family’s power was
destroyed, and he might even be in huge danger. This would also be a huge blow to his status.

‘Without our men coordinating with them, this plan would never have worked. Who was it?’ William roared inside.

“Be careful! I might not be able to protect you in a bit!” Boruj’s voice rang, causing William to look even more bitter.

“Hehe… Young master of the Baltic archipelago, we finally meet!” An alluring fox lady walked out from behind Ogde, with tens of barbarian warriors above rank 5 with her.

“What about those Tigersharks? Why did they come here so easily?” William was in denial that the whole Tigershark Pirates had been wiped out. After all, it was a large-scaled group comparable with the Black Skeletons, and even had a huge group of Tigersharks. In the seas, they would definitely be the king.

“You mean those little fish? I’m afraid they’ve sunk to the bottom of the sea. Someone provided Tears of Tigersharks to us, and the effects are pretty good!” Madam Tillen produced an exquisite crystal bottle and shook it, looking innocent and flirtatious like a little girl who had gotten a beloved toy.

William stared at her blankly, beginning to lose focus in his eyes.

“Be careful! This is a bewitching spell by a bloodline holder!”

Calm! A huge sound boomed by William’s ear, allowing him to regain his senses, no longer daring to take another look at the fox lady.

“Boruj, high-ranked wizard Boruj. I will chop off your head and use it as a wine cup!” The leader of the Barbarians huffed roughly, eyes turning red as if he had seen a foe.

As Marquis Louis’ leading wizard, Boruj had worked hard when expanding in the outer seas. The number of Barbarian Pirates who had died at his hand were innumerable, and the relationship between them was completely irreconcilable.

Ogde snarled, his saber emitting sparks that flew for a few meters.
Looking nonchalant, he slashed at Boruj. As the light burst out, even the deck that had been remodelled and covered with a layer of magic seemed to be plowed through by something ruthlessly, revealing huge ‘bruises’. Boruj looked solemn and serious after witnessing the terrifying offence by the Barbarian, the spell slot in his memories breaking out.

Arcane Hand! A huge magical palm reached out, clashing with the blade to form a terrifying explosion. Once the undulations had passed, the sharp saber light cut the huge palm into several fragments, its own radiance dimming. However, it still proceeded towards Boruj. Boruj frowned and pointed towards the ground. “Wall of Iron!” A thick, metallic wall appeared, blocking the blade. Still, there were now terrifying streaks of injuries on him.

“This can’t go on!” Boruj watched the elite barbarian warriors surrounding him, especially with Tillen who could use magic and a few barbarian priests, already having thoughts of retreating. With a shake of his sleeve, an intricate spell scroll fell to his hand. Gazing at it, a rare expression of heartache appeared, but he still tore at it.

*Bang!* A dark green mist spread above the deck, and the barbarian warriors who were affected immediately collapsed, bodies still twisting unconsciously. “Be careful, this is a Death Cloud spell!” Madam Tillen’s voice sounded. Afterwards, a few roars could be heard from within the mist, bringing a horror with them.

*Roar!* A few huge dark green monsters pounced from the mist. They looked like giant lizards that had meaty wings on their backs. Their bodies were covered by a layer of scales and they spat out bundles of corrosive fluids.

High-grade Monster Summon! Just as these few two-legged
wyverns began to trouble Ogde, another even more enormous two-legged wyvern spread its wings and flew away with two people in tow.
“Ah…” Seeing the two-legged wyvern agilely avoiding the long-distance attacks by the archers, Ogde thundered, breaking the neck of a wyvern in front of him.
“Master, why aren’t we teleporting away?” While on the expansive back of the two-legged wyvern, William grabbed onto a scale and made an enquiry.
“I only memorised one teleportation spell. After that, I’ll need to use scrolls…”
Boruj had a wry smile, “I’m not sure if the enemy will still chase us, so we need to conserve our strength!”
“Damn it! Damn it!” Thinking back to the failure this time, William’s facial muscles began to contort.
“That Leylin and the Barbarians! One day… one day… All the humiliation I have suffered will be returned to you!”
“I’m afraid you won’t get that opportunity!”
Purplish black light glinted off a blade that brought demonic strength with it as it descended from the sky in an instant. The source was a nimble body that emitted the terrifying aura of a high-ranked Professional, the long sword in its hands beamed with the bright radiance of qi. The sharp longsword broke through the two-legged wyvern’s scales, carving down in a perfect curve.

*Boom!* First there was a sea of blood, then the creature’s gigantic head came crashing down from the horizon, like a meteor.

“There’s an enemy!” A teleportation scroll appeared in Boruj’s hand, ready to be used.

[Dimensional Anchor]!

At this moment, a flying black figure dove down like a falcon. The rays of light in its hands interrupted Boruj’s teleportation spell with perfect timing.

“A rank 4 spell! He’s already a rank 9 wizard!”

The shadow belonged to the high-ranked fighter from before, and a youthful, handsome face was revealed. It was Leylin. Isabel’s arm was covered in demonic scales. Making use of Leylin’s power, she struck out with another attack in midair.

Purplish black qi slashed through Boruj’s high-grade Mage Armour, resulting in a horrifying wound.

*Splash! Splash!* Boruj let out a blood-curdling screech as he fell
into the icy-cold seawater together with William. Following them into the sea, Leylin and Isabel looked like two nimble fish, easily swimming their way towards their target. The wizard Boruj, who had always lived the pampered life of a prince, began struggling as large amounts of cold seawater entered his nose and mouth, and intense pain afflicted his chest. Especially after he caught sight of a shadow of a soul out of the corner of his eye, their fight intensified.

Crimson rays surged out from the seabed. With frightening sharpness, the Devilblood Dagger broke through the multiple temporarily activated layers of magic defense, piercing into Boruj’s shoulder.

Feeling the immense life and spiritual forces gushing out as if a dam had just been opened, Boruj could only smile wryly as he observed the calm expression on the young wizard’s face. A 16 year old rank 9 wizard with such meticulous strategies and absolute calm in battle. Marquis Louis had gotten himself a terrifying enemy.

While he desperately wanted to escape and warn his master, all his spiritual force was sealed the moment he was stabbed by the Devilblood Dagger. His limbs could only flail instinctively. Large amounts of energy coursed through the dagger and entered Leylin’s body. Its smooth and unhindered flow made him want to shout at the top of his lungs. However, he forcefully suppressed the desire. He did not relax his grip on the dagger until Boruj turned into a withered corpse.

As a high-ranked wizard, Boruj’s highest attribute was his spirit. Based on Leylin’s calculations, his spirit stat should be above 15, and Leylin was conveniently getting all of it without much effort. Pure spiritual energy was transformed by the Devilblood Dagger and greedily absorbed by Leylin. With his experience of the law of devouring in his main body, Leylin had proficiently grasped this
conversion process.

Soon enough, a prompt came from the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Host has gone through enhancement by Devilblood Dagger. Spirit +1.]

In Leylin’s stats, it could be seen that his spiritual force attribute had finally reached 10. As soon as that threshold was broken through, Leylin experienced a strange transformation. His soul ascended without limits, and it was as if he could see an even more terrifying layer of the Weave. However, his spiritual force had not reached the requirements yet, and thus he could only shrink back helplessly.

‘Level 5 of the Weave? It’s a pity, but I can’t go in yet!’ Leylin sighed.

[Beep! Host’s spiritual force has broken through to 10 points. Analysis of the Weave is now faster.] The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded, as it continuously refreshed.

[Beep! Host’s spiritual force has broken through. Wizard ranking has increased. Now a rank 10 wizard.] [Beep! Host has advanced to rank 10 wizard. Rank 4 spell slots increased by 1, rank 3 spell slots increased by 1, rank 2 spell slots increased by 1.] [Beep! Change in host’s stats. Recalculating.]

Soon enough, Leylin’s stats were being recalculated.


‘As expected, a wizard’s rise in rank is useful for the analysis of the Weave.’ Leylin studied his new stats and the progress of the analysis of the Weave, as a look of satisfaction appeared on his face.
Beep! Detected that host’s spiritual force stats reached threshold. Triggered reaction. Devilblood Dagger’s enhancement to increase of spiritual force is now weakened!

‘So the day has finally arrived.’ Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip’s last prompt and could not help but sigh.

10 points of spiritual force was really the threshold. From hereon, the dagger would be less effective.

Killing a high-ranked wizard had allowed him to raise his spiritual force by 1 point. Next time, however, it might not even be enough to raise it by 0.1.

‘This is just a passing phase, so I cannot rely on the dagger too much. However, I can still use it to raise all other stats to 10. I have a feeling that if I’m able to get everything to the threshold, something incredible might happen.’

Leylin had always believed in his premonitions.

On the enemy’s corpse, there were a few items that were sparkling with a magic lustre. A high-ranked wizard’s equipment was invaluable, and also very suitable for Leylin. His eyes shone.

After Boruj was almost completely skinned, Leylin destroyed the corpse and floated up quickly.

‘Even with the power of magic, I’m no divine being. I still need oxygen.’ Leylin flung off the beads of water on his hair and looked towards Isabel, who had also resurfaced.

“How is it? Everything’s taken care of?”

“It’s just noble trash. How hard can it be?” Isabel had a dazzling smile on her face. This expression of hers was rare after she’d demonised. After exacting revenge, at least in part, something that had been binding her down seemed to have disappeared.

“Good. William, Boruj, Crowe, and Citamo are all done for. I’m actually interested in Marquis Louis’ expression after hearing this.”

“That old fool won’t have long to live!” Isabel declared his death.

“Exactly. What’s pressing us right now is the meet up with the
Barbarian Pirates and the destruction of the slaving fleet to completely destroy Louis’ influence on the sea.” Leylin grabbed Isabel’s hand and, as rays of a flight spell flickered, the two of them soared into the sky.

Once they were back on the Black Skeleton Ship, Ronald and Robin Hood hurried over just in time, along with Leylin’s subordinates. They separated out into an entirely different group from the Barbarians.

“Hehe, we meet again, young master Leylin!” Mistress Tillen whipped her fiery-red tail, smiling as she greeted him. The previously stiff atmosphere immediately turned warm.

“I really need to thank you for the Tigershark’s Tears! I never thought this kind of poison has such great effect on the schools of Tigersharks.” Tillen’s beautiful eyes sized him up, as if wanting to pry into his heart.

“This is a potion my master made. He has great knowledge in poisonous concoctions and alchemy.” Leylin spouted lies with a straight face, intentionally or otherwise raising the status of his master.

In reality, Ernest only dipped slightly into alchemy. It would be a dream to be able to brew such high-grade poisons. Leylin, however, didn’t mind labelling and giving him a more terrifying fame.

As expected, after hearing Leylin’s mentor was a terrifying master of poisons, the other elite barbarian fighters had a sombre look in their eyes.

They had witnessed the scene before. Just using a Tigershark as bait made the entire group go berserk, and they even began to kill each other. Their blood also turned into a frightening poison that infected the others.

If a poison like this, that targeted species, was used against barbarians… Just the thought of it caused a chill to run down
“Based on our agreement, the Black Skeletons belong to me and the Tigersharks go to you. Any objections?” Leylin focused on the captain of the Barbarians, Odge. Currently, Odge had less than 50 men, and there were many casualties. Leylin’s 100 elite members were completely fine. However, Odge’s higher-grade military power was intact. Therefore, both sides were evenly matched.

“You are… great!” Odge glanced at Leylin, voice sounding like metal rubbing against metal.

“Let’s go!” Odge’s gigantic figure left first, followed by the other Barbarian fighters.

“Handsome little young master, don’t forget we still have another agreement!” Mistress Tillen was the last to leave, prompting Leylin with meaning.

“Don’t worry, I would never forget.” Leylin watched them as they left the Black Skeleton Ship. From then on, this huge, magic-modified warship belonged to him. That was not all. The other large warships that Crowe had built with his blood and sweat were now Leylin’s as well.
he flag representing the black skeletons was slowly lowered from the battleship’s mast, replaced with the bright red flag of the Scarlet Tigers.

“The old Scarlet Tiger is already at the bottom of the sea, but the crew shall now give it a new life. The Black Skeleton shall henceforth be called the Scarlet Tiger!” Leylin announced this decision as he stood on the deck, which immediately attracted cheers from his men.

Compared to the previous Scarlet Tiger which had been built on top of the Black Tiger, this ship was deserving of being Crowe’s flagship. Not only was it fully covered in a layer of magical armour, giving it a shocking defence, just the size of the vessel and the water it displaced far exceeded his former ship’s.

However, Leylin had benefitted at his opponent’s expense. All of this was now his. “Robin Hood, allocate some of the men to start up the battleships behind as well!”

“Aye, boss!” Robin Hood rubbed his hands together excitedly. The fleet of ships under the Black Skeletons was extremely luxurious. There were more than ten large battleships, and none of them was inferior to the previous Scarlet Tiger. The Scarlet Tiger pirate crew could truly eat their fill this time.

“Drive the ships off first, then we’ll replenish our manpower and depart for Hygar Island to take part in the naval battle!” After destroying two large pirate crews in one go, the remaining slaving
fleet armed with military equipment was the only force that Marquis Louis was left with. How could Leylin let them off? However, he was now facing a severe lack of manpower. After barely being able to start up the vessels, there were few people left to participate in battle.

Such a situation made Leylin laugh bitterly.

‘I’m afraid that these large-scale warships have to be kept safe for a period of time. The number of men I’m bringing with me to the naval battle this time round might not take up more than five large boats…’ He clearly had such huge ships, yet didn’t have enough manpower. This was the predicament that Leylin was currently facing.

He even wanted to let his family’s bodyguards disguise themselves as pirates, but quickly gave up that idea. After all, his adversaries this time round were different from pirates. They were a military fleet under an influential nobleman, whose name would not be revealed for purposes of secrecy. The bodyguards of his own family perhaps might not dare to take action.

It was needless to mention the effects of bringing them here. Leylin didn’t want to lose them. Hence, he could only bring his own men to engage in war, but unfortunately, the majority of his subordinates had sacrificed their lives during the previous explosion.

But these were all trivial matters. When news of the Scarlet Tiger destroying the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates spread, there would be plenty of pirates pleading to join him. The two fleets started to part ways, while Leylin hid in the captain’s room and looked through his gains.

Crowe’s cabin was very spacious, and had all kinds of vibrant oil paintings and other artworks on the walls. They were evidently accumulated over his long life as a pirate.

“Crowe’s private treasury is just a small matter. After all, most of his riches are on the magical battleship under my feet. What’s truly
valuable is the wizard’s equipment!” Leylin unabashedly occupied the golden seat embedded with precious jewels that once belonged to Crowe. He sized up several items on the table with bright eyes. The first thing that came into his line of sight was an old-fashioned leather pouch.

“A Bag of Holding!” Leylin’s eyes brightened. He had been envious of this legendary piece of equipment that was standard for high level wizards. It was a pity that it was hard to purchase one even with the Faulens’ current financial resources. But now, Boruj had actually taken the initiative to deliver it to him. A personal Bag of Holding would definitely have curses and other mechanisms on it, but they could not hide from the A.I. Chip’s scans. Leylin easily broke them.

The Bag of Holding was close to ten cubic metres in size, which pleasantly surprised Leylin. In a corner of the space was a messy heap of gold coins and gems that he estimated to be worth tens of thousands of gold kronas, but it was actually the pile with the lowest value.

“So many… So many high level spell-casting materials… and wizardry books…” Leylin’s smile became wider. These were all items that couldn’t be bought with money. When his eyes paused upon a few ancient-looking scrolls, his smile was the brightest it could ever be.

These scrolls were adorned with complex designs, and the scrolls themselves were made using leather from some sort of animal. There were even traces of its scales on the surface. As Leylin gentle caressed the scrolls, he could sense a subtle layer of mental deterrence.

‘This is the power of a dragon! Dragon skin was used to make these few scrolls!’ Leylin’s eyes glistened as he slowly opened the scrolls.

[Beep! Spiritual energy data detected, initialising scan.]
The scrolls contained a multitude of magic circuits and strangely-shaped writing. This was a way of storing information that allowed a huge amount of characters and resources to be stored within the relatively small scroll. Although there were still other kinds of encryption on it, Leylin felt that they were not worth mentioning. The A.I. Chip immediately prompted. [Decryption complete. Transmitting to memory…]

Following the A.I. Chip’s voice, Leylin first saw a row of words: “Re: Structure of the magic circuit within the low-level wizard tower…”

‘As expected, are these the materials that Boruj prepared for his own wizard tower?’ Leylin scanned through the next few scrolls. Apart from techniques to construct a wizard tower, there was also information about defensive golems and methods of manufacturing their bodies.

‘Who would’ve thought that Boruj was also a master of golems? But what a pity… Everything he had prepared now belongs to me.’ Leylin was full of ambition. As a wizard, the benefits he could reap from the assistance of a wizard tower on his path of advancement would be unimaginable.

‘Speaking of which, there still seem to be large quantities of raw materials on the Baltic archipelago that Marquis Louis had prepared for the wizard tower, especially mithril and pure gold. It’s practically priceless!’

Leylin secretly made a decision. He quickly stowed the Bag of Holding away, and looked over a few other items. The radiance of the Identify spell kept flickering on Leylin’s palm.
‘A magical staff that stores enchanted missiles, and an anti-detection cloak? Not bad…’ Leylin evaluated the items one by one, and his gaze finally fell on a black ring.

After the Identify spell flashed, the relevant information was revealed and digitalized by the A.I. Chip before being presented in
front of Leylin’s eyes.

[Name of item: Wizard Ring. Weight: 11 grams. Materials: Obsidian, wizard alloy, dragon blood. Effects: Addition of one spell slot allocated to all spell slots below rank 5 (exclusive to wizards). Description: This is a ring that possesses formidable magic powers, and will likely be coveted by other beings. A brilliant smelter could possibly strengthen the material.]

“This ring might just be Boruj’s best piece of equipment!” Leylin sighed. “It’s definitely a far cry from the legendary Lich Ring, which allows a single addition to all of the wizard’s spell slots, but it’s still a godly tool for a lower-ranked wizard!”

Leylin estimated a high price of five hundred thousand gold coins for just Boruj’s equipment. It showed how affluent wizards were, especially the high-ranked ones. Any of their equipment chosen at random could be sold at a sky-high price!

‘This ring!’ Leylin gently stroked the surface of the black ring. He could feel faint traces of spiritual energy from it.

“Dragon blood was added to this ring when it was forged, but it seems to be mixed with something else as well…” Leylin muttered to himself. “If matched with other precious materials, it does indeed have room for improvement. However, my current wizard rank is inadequate…”

After a few rounds of scanning and verification, Leylin wore the Wizard Ring on his left hand. At that instant, his statistics changed.


To a wizard, every increase in spell slots meant a significant upgrade in terms of strength. Leylin could imagine the trouble he would face if the existence of this ring was discovered by other
wizards.

“Perhaps I should add a form of concealment to it. It can’t emit such a strong halo of magic light at least, it’s practically asking to be a target…”

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The setting sun was painted blood red. Numerous tattered and fragmented remains of a ship were drifting across the surface of the sea in the vicinity of Hygar Island. Dozens of floating corpses belonging to the mariners of Baltic archipelago were strewn everywhere. Some of the dead bodies had been immersed in the seawater for so long that they had inflated, and appeared extremely terrifying.

A flag that represented Marquis Louis’ influence was slowly bobbing up and down in the water, and a big part of it seemed to have been burnt off at the edges.

After taking a while to rest and reorganise themselves, Leylin and Odge had brought their men, taking their main battleships to fight the military fleet.

Dealing with the Pirates’ Tide had already been a problem, but with the addition of Leylin and Odge the situation on the battlefield changed drastically. Under attack from both sides, the military fleet was instantly defeated. Even the commander-in-chief was hit by an artillery shell, and he died on the spot.

Numerous ships were attacked and they sank one by one. Countless mariners of the Baltic archipelago were either dead or injured.

The two pirate crews raised their flags bit by bit in the afterglow of the setting sun, and left the battlefield one after the other. Next, they would pillage the territories and harbours belonging to Marquis Louis separately. They could make up for their losses this round,
and conveniently strike it rich.
“Our honeymoon period with the Barbarians has already passed…” Leylin exhaled deeply as he stood on the deck, watching them leave.
Following the complete fall of Marquis Louis’ men at sea, remarkable changes immediately occurred to the situation offshore. Leylin and the Barbarians originally had no choice but to ally in their fight against Marquis Louis’ oppression. However, with the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates destroyed, that pressure had completely vanished with the sinking of the military fleet he’d painstakingly built. Now, a rivalry formed between the two crews. As there was still a gigantic cash cow right in front of their eyes, the conflict between both sides certainly hadn’t escalated to a great extent. Still, it was already impossible to prevent future fights. Leylin had long prepared for this.

“Set sail! Let’s go to the Baltic Harbour, straight into the base camp of that old fox!” Leylin’s order was accompanied by cheers from his pirates. They started up the Scarlet Tiger, which was like a gigantic creature of the sea as they headed towards the Baltic Archipelago.

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*Thump! Shatter!* The sharp and clear sounds of glass and chinaware falling onto the ground could be heard, occasionally interspersed with bellows of rage. The maids and subordinates in the marquis’ residence did not even
dare to breathe heavily, fearful of becoming the target of his fury. Ever since news of William’s death had made its way here, Louis had sunken into a state of complete hysterical. Several servants had been dragged out and beaten to death, including a few personal female servants that Louis once favoured greatly. Under such circumstances, it was understandable that the servants were being silent out of fear. For some reason, Tim was secretly very elated upon seeing the situation. He was even filled with the rejuvenating pleasure of someone having taken his revenge. ‘Has that damn William been completely fed to the fishes?’ Tim laughed maniacally inside, yet did not dare to show it. ‘If that old fellow knows about this intelligence report, will he get so angry that he’ll breathe his last?’ “Father! We have the latest news of our family’s fleet!” Tim’s voice was a mix of unease and apprehension, as though he was a criminal waiting to be executed. “Come in!” Marquis Louis’ voice came from the within the room as he tried to repress his anger. Tim sneered secretly, and entered. The marquis’ study was currently very messy. Shattered glass and porcelain shards were strewn across the floor. On the desk lay a dead body, totally void of life. It was a young and beautiful female servant. Her eyes seemed to show a longing for survival, and her body was covered with traces of abuse, particularly the bruises on her neck, which were the main culprits that led to her death. “Someone, tidy up this place!” Marquis Louis adjusted his shirt collar. With his order, an expressionless butler entered with a few maids, and they quickly cleared up the entire study room. When the door closed, only Tim and Marquis Louis were left. Seeing that the marquis had seemingly regained peace after venting his anger, Tim suddenly felt a chill in his heart for some reason. “Father…” Tim tried his best to make his voice appear more
sorrowful.
“Speak… Have those bunch of morons been completely wiped out?” Marquis Louis sat on his soft armchair, his expression without a hint of grief or delight.
“Yes. Our family’s military fleet was besieged by the Scarlet Tigers and the Barbarians, and has confirmed to have been totally defeated near the Baltic archipelago.”
What Tim did not expect was that Marquis Louis’ expression did not change much after hearing such earth-shattering news, as though he had long predicted it.
“I know… After the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates were destroyed, our family’s fleet walked down the same road as well? Heh heh… From today onwards, the Gold Thornblossoms’ authority over the Dambrath seas will be thoroughly destroyed…”
The marquis’ eyes seemed unusually bloodshot. It was the pain and insanity of having his life’s work ruined.
However, Tim actually felt more at ease after witnessing this. He would be assured only if the marquis was in such a state.
“Give instructions to prepare to leave this place!” Marquis Louis said to Tim.
“Leave? To where?” Tim seemed rather puzzled.
“Return to the mainland, the Dambrath capital. It’s no longer safe here with the great loss we’ve suffered in our strength. Those pirates will frantically pounce on us like starving dogs. We must leave as soon as possible while their mind is still on the other ports and wealth.”
Marquis Louis explained indifferently as he gazed at Tim with a gentle look in his eyes. “Tim, you’re now my only adult son. As long as we live, the kingdom will not let the Baltic archipelago have a change of ownership.”
The delayed trust made Tim feel as though there were two hot streams crashing into his eyes. He pouted, but said nothing in the
end.
*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Muffled cannon blasts sounded in the study, interspersed with the whistles of pirates. No matter how good the sound-proofing was, the noise could not be blocked out. “What’s going on?” Marquis Louis ran to the window and opened it. The sounds became clearer, and he could see many clouds of black smoke. There were even silhouettes of hordes of pirates. “How could they intrude so quickly? What about the fort and sentinel points that the team of guards had set up? Why aren’t they of any use? Could it be…”

Marquis Louis could finally smell conspiracy. Although he had lost his soul after his beloved son died in battle and after his maritime fleet was entirely wiped out, the marquis who had endured the test of battle immediately reacted at this critical juncture, but it was all too late.

He suddenly turned around, and immediately met with a pair of eyes resembling a wolf’s!

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“Kill!” “Heh heh… Charge!”

Numerous pirates roared wildly. After destroying the battery and several guard assembly points, the other pirates spread themselves out like maniacs. They charged towards to the refined stores and enormous mansions like wild dogs. Smashing sounds could be heard everywhere, and lone pirates with luxurious silk hung around their necks and their pockets stuffed with huge amounts of jewelry and gold coins could be seen scuttling across the streets from time to time.

Of course, there were bound to be massacres and death, and even little children could not run from their fate. Women were being disgraced in many dim corners, as they let out sorrowful cries.
Restraining the pirates like they were a military troop would be a joke. These pirates were excited by the tremendous amount of wealth here after they had abruptly broken into the place. They were like rats that had fallen into a rice vat, and had exposed the most despicable side of humanity.

In order to cause the greatest amount of wreckage, Leylin had even lowered his standards. He’d recruited a huge bunch of inferior pirate vassals, and brought them here. These were the scum of all scum, and they instantly displayed their powerful destructive abilities.

One could see that the entire harbour wouldn’t regain its popularity in the next few years after this ended.

On the largest battleship equipped with magical armor, the Scarlet Tiger, Leylin put down the telescope in his hands as he revealed a satisfied expression.

“Excellent. That’s right, kill them all, rob them all, burn them all! When we depart, all I need is to see a wasteland!” Leylin was now wearing a silver mask, and so was Isabel.

They were still noblemen after all, and naturally had to be mindful. Otherwise, they would meet with trouble in the kingdom if they left some magical image behind. Even though the mask covered his expression, Leylin was now like a respected devil of the underworld. His aura made other pirates retreat one by one, their faces filled with panic and fear.

The Baltic archipelago was the feudal land of the kingdom after all, and Leylin could not brazenly occupy this place openly. Thus, he wanted to completely destroy everything here, and turn this beautiful and wealthy archipelago into a purgatory. It would never be able to contest for the spot of an offshore trading centre with Faulen Island henceforth!

“You will see it!” Isabel’s eyes were rather bloodshot. Her aura once again began to rise sharply.
Such slaughter and chaos were evidently a demon’s favourite. If she was able to conduct a ritual before they pillaged the place, perhaps they would reap even greater profits. But Leylin wouldn’t let her do that, of course. Once devils and demons were involved in something, it would definitely attract the attention of the church. He was still unable to contend against those colossal beings.

“Tim’s map of the port’s defences shows that there are still some forts, and also the residences of several people in authority and their strength. It can’t get any easier to raze this port to ruin.” A harbour was completely different with intel on it than without. Tim had an extremely high status, which was of huge benefit to Leylin as a spy.

At this moment, Robin Hood came forward to report to Leylin. “Boss! The troops stationed here have already been completely wiped out. Ronald is currently bringing our men to attack Marquis Louis’s mansion.” His body was covered with many bloodstains, and there were even pieces of meat and other items hanging from the blade of his sword.

“Marquis Louis must die here! The others don’t matter.” Marquis Louis was an old fox after all. If he escaped, there might be other troubles that would ensue. Leylin wasn’t that idle to fool around with him.

“That Tim…” Robin Hood seemed like he wanted to say something but stopped himself.

“Depends on his luck. Marquis Louis has a few other children who are not of age yet anyway. We just need someone to succeed the Gold Thornblossom family, so that their feudal land will not be confiscated by the kingdom.” Leylin waved his hands. “Come with me, there are even more important things to do!”

To Leylin, two places here were the most important sources of
wealth. One was the official residence of the marquis, and the other was naturally where Boruj gathered the materials for his wizard tower.
853 - Assassination

Boruj was a high-level wizard who led a luxurious life and had a respectable position across the entire Dambrath Kingdom. The only reason he was following Louis in developing the outer seas was because the marquis had promised to construct a wizard tower for him. This was a wizard tower, something all high-level wizards needed to conduct more profound research into other planes. It was how they raised their ranks. High-level wizards with the protection of a tower were miles ahead of vagrants with nothing to their name. Given the many advantages, there was no doubt that the construction of a wizard tower was just as horrifying in its expense. Even the cheapest one costed more than two million gold coins. Leylin was sure that Marquis Louis had invested close to half of his trade profits into this wizard tower which was still under construction. For him, this was equivalent to a gift from heaven. If he could completely plunder these supplies, it would be much easier for him to build a wizard tower for himself in the future. Leylin had already found the construction blueprint unique to the wizard tower in Boruj’s bag of holding, but the base materials were also very precious. Marquis Louis had spent a endless amount of money and manpower to transport them from remote parts of the distant mainland. He brought his men to the designated location for the wizard tower by following Tim’s map. There were already several camps here,
and a simple foundation for the tower had already been laid.
“If we really had let him build his wizard tower, we absolutely
wouldn’t have been able to break through the port’s defence today.
It’s even possible that we’d have suffered a total defeat,” Leylin
said with a lingering fear to the people next to him, as he saw that
the project had just begun.
However, the camp was now in chaos. Many corpses were strewn
messily across the place, and it was filled with pirates in a killing
frenzy as they dashed from one room to another.
“Stop them!” Leylin waved his hands. He didn’t have a twinge of
mercy for those random pirates who went crazy with bloodlust and
lacked discipline.
Robin Hood brought his men over and started hacking frantically at
the other pirates right away. When several of the pirates who were
roaring away were beheaded, the remaining few finally came to
their senses.
“Put down the things you robbed, or you will die here.” Leylin
spoke indifferently, looking as terrifying as a devil to them.
Under the threat of death, most of the pirates obediently threw out
the items in their hands, and rushed towards the port. There was
also an endless amount of wealth there, and giving up their lives
here was not worth it at all.
However, there were still a minority of the pirates who coveted and
could not let go of the riches in their hands. With a wave of
Leylin’s hand, Robin Hood and his men immediately went towards
those stubborn pig heads.
“Open the storehouse!” Once they were done purging the entire
area, Robin Hood grabbed a person who seemed to be in charge.
Using his blade that was covered in fresh blood, he forced him to
open all the storehouses one by one.
In that split second, Leylin’s men were immediately dazzled by a
colourful radiance.
“Diamonds, ironwood, the core for configuring puppets, and so many wizarding alloys… Not bad, not bad, these are all goods that aren’t available overseas, and are necessary to build a wizard tower.”

On top of that, Leylin had even found a tiny warehouse after cracking a tiny mechanism, which stored copious amounts of mithril and pure gold. These two metals could absorb magic very well, and were precious materials required in many wizarding items.

‘These are probably only a part of it!’ Leylin sighed sorrowfully. “Slave trading is indeed the most profitable business!”

This was undoubtedly the reason why his family didn’t engage in the trade of refined sugar and fish floss for long, or else they would have been able to accumulate an unimaginable sum of wealth.

“Organize the men. Move all of this onto the Scarlet Tiger, and specially assign people to guard it!” Leylin instructed Robin Hood. Then, he brought Isabel and the others next to the marquis’ residence which had already been besieged.

Ronald was now launching a violent attack with his men, but the people inside were resisting tenaciously. What Marquis Louis had accumulated over the decades wouldn’t be destroyed so easily. Even if they had already gotten rid of most of his men at sea, there would still be faithful officials appearing at times like this.

However, their pointless resistance dissolved into nothing after Leylin appeared. With just a few fireball spells, the entrance to the marquis’ mansion was completely blasted open, revealing the interior of the building in all its dazzling and glorious splendor.

Isabel dashed in like a valkyrie, her black magical longsword taking in its fill of hot blood. She didn’t have any mercy whatsoever towards these foes who had caused her family to perish.

Leylin called Ronald over and gave him a grim order, “Ronald, tell
those pirates that the entire marquis’ mansion and a few of the other important storehouses are ours. Anyone who dares to covet them will be killed right away!”

He wasn’t some kind of saint; he had gathered all these miscellaneous pirates here only to strengthen his influence. He was already kind enough to let them plunder the place wilfully, how could he give them the greatest benefits?

“Yes, young master!” Ronald was brimming with enthusiasm and vigour. He, too, had a burning hatred towards Marquis Louis’ family. Now that he had gotten his revenge, he was full of so much admiration towards Leylin that he would kneel at his feet.

The entire process was going rather smoothly. While Ronald was directing his men to empty the stores, Leylin had already obtained a battle report from Isabel.

“The entire mansion has crumbled completely. Other than Tim and a few others, the rest have been arrested, and even Marquis Louis was found dead in his study, is that alright?”

“It’s enough, let’s go!” Leylin sneered as he scanned the city centre. A few places were still rather tranquil, and were even radiating light, that was the location of the church!

Even a bishop would be unable to obstruct the tsunami of pirates, and could only passively rely on the powers of the god in their church to strengthen their defense.

Leylin certainly wouldn’t be so foolish as to let his men attack the church. As for the other miscellaneous pirates who had already lost their minds, he naturally didn’t have to bother about them anymore.

Moreover, Leylin’s attack this time was achieved by catching the marquis off guard. If the other churches reacted and even colluded with each other, it would be very troublesome for him.

“Yes, young master! The other pirates?” Ronald saluted with his right hand on his chest.
“They came for wealth, and will now die here because of wealth. Isn’t it perfectly normal?” Under the influence of a crazed atmosphere, there would only be a handful of pirates who would eventually discover danger, promptly wrap up their business here, and leave. Besides, if they could achieve this, then they would naturally have the right to continue living. The Scarlet Tiger and a few battleships departed the harbour, which had already degraded into a living hell. They even lit up a few large fires, yet it did not attract the attention of many pirates. Those soaking in madness and slaughter would always have a relatively slow reaction towards the outside world. A few rays of holy light obstinately shot out from the flames, even protecting the surrounding civilians. It was just that there seemed to be a few shadows within the rays of light emitting from the church. “Heh heh… The church of the God of Murder? We will settle our debts one day…” Leylin smiled sarcastically. The look in his eyes was serene, yet it seemed to contain a devilish glint.

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“Respected bishop, all the pathfinders have assembled, and are ready to set off any moment!” A young female priest looked across the refugees in the plaza of the church, her face flushed red with indignance and her gaze filled with pity. “Those damn pirates! The light of our God will purify them completely one day!” The young female priest said, aggrieved. The elderly bishop’s eyes seemed to contain the entire world, yet they were also brimming with a soft luster. He slowly started to pray to the sculpture of Ilmater in the centre of the church. “Dear god, take pity on the common people! Alice, you have to understand that our forces are unable to contend against all those pirates outside. We must wait for a suitable opportunity…” The
bishop’s voice was aged but resolute, yet seemed to have some sort of calming powers that allowed the young female priest to attain peace within her heart.

At this moment, a figure hurriedly ran in. “Sir! A priest of the church of Lathander is requesting to meet you!” “Very well, invite him in quickly!” There was a glimmer of joy on the bishop’s face.

Lathander the Morninglord was a deity with a formidable occult force. He bore an intense hatred towards all kinds of evil and sordid behaviour, and his priests were unyielding towards cracking down on dark forces. With the assistance of his pathfinders in quelling the entire harbour, there would be hope in restoring peace!

“Respected bishop!” A priest with lustrous golden hair, clothed in a Morninglord priest gown entered with quick steps, an extremely resentful expression on his face. “Our church will dispatch all the forces we have on hand to attack those vicious people. I hope we will be able to receive your help!” “But of course, we will not shirk our duty. I- Eek!” The bishop turned to look at his chest, stunned. A black dagger had been thrust into it, the blood like a blooming rose as it spread under it unceasingly.

A malicious curse immediately invaded the wound, one that even a divine spell couldn’t dispel.

“You… You’re not a Morninglord priest…” The bishop slowly collapsed. In the final moments of his life, he saw the priest’s face change weirdly, and it eventually became the face of a sinister person. He started slaughtering everyone around him as he laughed maniacally, and the young priest Alice fell into a pool of blood.

“Shadow Jump!” After assassinating the bishop, the assassin who was above rank 15 immediately mobilized a high-level technique and vanished into thin air. With the convenience of the shadow plane, he had arrived somewhere else when he reappeared.
“M y lord, Ilmater’s bishop has fallen!” The high-ranked assassin respectfully reported to the people next to him.

“You did well!” Beside him was evidently the bishop of the God of Murder at Pirates’ Cove. At some point in time, he had come to the Baltic archipelago and hidden himself in the shadows, killing the regional bishop of the God of Suffering.

“Master, please accept this offering from your humble servant!” Seeing a broken ray of light amidst the sea of fire, the bishop of the God of Murder flushed as he knelt and began to pray. This light belonged to the church of suffering.

A pair of powerful eyes focused on this area, strong enough for even the high-ranked assassin to sense. This was the strength of the god that he believed in, of Cyric the God of Murder!

His eyes filled with elation, and the radiance of divine force flickered into existence.

‘Grace of the Gods! It’s the grace that will raise his ranking permanently!’ The high-ranked assassin saw the light shining on the bishop’s body, as well as the increase in his aura. The bishop’s eyes burnt with more fervour as he began to pray silently, “Dear master Cyrik, you are…”

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The unrestrained acts of the pirates continued for several days. The Scarlet Tigers and Barbarians acted separately, conducting surprise attacks on all of the Baltic archipelago’s ports and cities. There were also other ‘fake’ pirates mixed in, following their bosses as they wreaked havoc while robbing all that was in front of their eyes. This was a feast for pirates!

Cyric’s priests seemed to be acting from the shadows in these outrageous events, apparently with the God of Murder’s divine force mixed in. It made it seem like there really was a conspiracy afoot.

It was even said that the chaos and massacre here had attracted the attention of demons and devils from the abyss. Someone had personally witnessed their marks on the ruined corpses from the calamity.

This immediately caused concern in the Dambrath Kingdom. An investigation team formed of elite priests and paladins of the God of Justice Tyr swore to find the main culprit and punish them.

Accompanying the investigative team was a special envoy sent by the king, responsible to confirm the survival of the descendants of the Golden Thornblossom family, as well as the cause of Marquis Louis’ death. Of course, that was all a front. What truly attracted one’s attention was the Baltic archipelago, and the fertile territories on the seas.

It was a pity that they were destined to be disappointed. After the pirate attack, the Baltic archipelago had lost over 50% of its population and much of its amassed wealth. The other ports and cities were burnt to nothing, turning into dead regions no merchants were willing to go to.

Trading in the outer seas had begun to shift towards other noble families’ islands. The Faulen Island obviously got the most out of
it, and began to develop rapidly. It even began to try taking over the spaces that Marquis Louis had left behind, laying its hands on the slave trade.

Leylin had now assembled his subordinates on the Scarlet Tiger ship, announcing a decision.

“I plan to leave for a while, I plan to travel the continent.” Leylin looked solemn as he saw his trusted aides in the captain’s room. This was a decision he had made after careful deliberations. There was no way around it. He had gone too far this time, and it was necessary that he hide it out for a while. In addition, the outer seas were now gaining even more attention from even the gods. It was truly an unsuitable area for him to continue keeping a low profile.

“After I leave, the Scarlet Pirates will be under Isabel’s command. You must listen to her as you do me, is that understood?” After all the members left, Leylin made Isabel stay behind.

“Are you really leaving?” Isabel gazed at Leylin’s handsome face, looking reluctant.

“I’ve no choice! While everything might seem great with us now, we still need to be cautious!” Leylin’s eyes were on Isabel as he began to instruct her, “I’ve already completely broken off relations between the Scarlet Tiger pirates and the family. I’ve even killed off all the disloyal ones, so it should be fine for you to take over. As long as neither of us are caught, it’s impossible to get real evidence!”

The only connection between the Faulen Family and the Scarlet Tigers was Leylin. Without him there, the investigators could only watch helplessly. The churches and the kingdom naturally still needed evidence to act openly.

“And though the Barbarians have parted ways with us, I’m not worried about them. We have power on the surface!”

“Power on the surface?” Isabel looked doubtful.
“Yes. After I get back, I’ll suggest that Father build a military fleet of our own. This is something pirates will never be able to do.” Leylin’s eyes flickered with extraordinary intelligence.

“There are only two sides of the outer sea, the light and the dark. In the dark, there’s the Scarlet Tiger pirates contending with them, but they can’t do anything against us in broad daylight. After all, commerce will never be able to match up to the power of nobility! With this advantage, we’ll definitely be able to suppress them, turning into the next Marquis Louis and gaining supremacy in the outer seas!”

Leylin shared his complete development strategy, “Do you understand what I’m saying?”

“We just have to make our foundations stable?” Isabel was intelligent.

“Yes, it’s all about stability! Once we completely take over the outer seas, the churches won’t be able to do anything even if they know about our actions.”

“What do you mean?” Isabel was astonished.

“It’s power!” Leylin waved his hands, “As long as the outer seas are under our control, the churches can’t put us on trial even if they know we’ve sinned. They have to spread their own faith as well.”

With his abundant life experience, what could Leylin not see through?

“Look. Even if Marquis Louis was involved in the sinful slave trade, with his hands dipped in blood, he had control over the profits in the outer seas and had close relations with the kingdom. Even a priest of the God of Justice couldn’t put him on trial!”

Leylin’s eyes blazed with ambition, “As long as we’re superior on the outer seas, those churches will only be able to lower their heads to us!”

Obviously, Leylin had failed to mention something. At the beginning, they could learn to do what Marquis Louis had, but after
that, there had to be changes. He already had a plan for that. In order to control the outer seas, his own strength was also vital. He believed they needed a Legend in charge at the minimum, but if everything went according to plan it was still feasible. By the time his family had gotten to that point, he’d have become a Legend himself.

This was the realm of Legends, people who had a say in the entire World of Gods! After all, the gods couldn’t descend to the prime material plane in their own bodies, only able to do so through incarnations that weren’t much stronger than high-ranked Legends. Of course, Leylin only had the guts to do this in the outer seas, where the gods’ organisations were frail. Otherwise, he would just be seeking his death!

“With those pirates in the middle being scapegoats for us, the churches won’t go after us right away. Our Scarlet Tiger pirates must be aware of this!” Leylin estimated that the Barbarians would not grow hostile to them right away. Instead, they would absorb the surrounding pirates and increase their strength. For this reason, however, they would attract even more attention, and unknowingly take the brunt of it from the Scarlet Tigers. Meanwhile, the Scarlet Tigers would keep a low profile and amass more power, waiting for an opportunity to rise.

Only after his plans were completely explained did Leylin leave, feeling at ease. Seeing Leylin’s figure flying in the horizon and turning into a black spot that eventually disappeared, Isabel turned with an icy look on her face.

“Gather all the leaders. We are to hide in the deep seas for a period of time!”

“Understood!” Ronald shrank back. He had a feeling that after the head left, the “Scarlet Witch” that struck the outer seas with terror would return.

Ronald was aware that she would not make allowances for anyone
else, destroying anyone she caught. He did not dare complain and jogged away from the deck.
With Isabel pressurising them, the Scarlet Tigers pirates carried out Leylin’s plans exceedingly well, hiding in the deep sea.
Dambrath only held a small portion of the outer seas, and the further out one went the more dangerous it was. It was rumoured that there was a country of aboriginals at the depths of the sea, protected by the gods. Of course, this was just a rumour.
The Scarlet Tigers’ actions wisely allowed them to evade a round of unrest. The organisations of the outer sea and the enraged nobles of the Dambrath Kingdom combined forces with the church, beginning a new round of purging the outer sea pirates. Even the navy was employed.
The priests and paladins of the God of Justice could be seen roaming around at this point. The pirates that had just started to get arrogant were put in a tough spot as they were stabilising themselves. Many were exterminated, and even the Barbarians suffered huge losses with no choice but to do things on the sly.
Whatever it was, the sea was vast. The Dambrath Kingdom had no way to maintain the huge expenses of the navy, and this could only terrorise the region for a while. After the navy left, this would still be the pirates’ territory!
The reshuffling from this new round continued. The Faulen Family would make use of their status as nobility, trading their two profitable goods into becoming the hub of the outer seas. Of course, that was all in the future.
Emon was a port city along the coast of the Dambrath Kingdom. It relied on the flourishing trade of the outer seas to develop, and at one point had over ten thousand free citizens making up its society. The lights never went out at night, and it created the image of prosperity. However, the Pirates’ Tide in the outer seas, especially after the ransacking of the Baltic archipelago, stopped the sea trade for a while. Many small merchants had even committed suicide in the sea out of bankruptcy, leading to a further decline in prosperity. This was all until one day, when a young man in grey robes came to the city gates.

“Entry fee is a copper coin!” As they had been standing guard here for a long time, the two guards had developed great insight. Noticing that this young man was not to be messed with, they did not create much trouble. After handing over the fee, the young man entered Emon City. The city’s roads were desolate, with guards patrolling everywhere. Since this was a port on the sea, there was a theoretical chance of pirate attacks, and those timid aristocrats and nobles were scared stupid by the Pirates’ Tide, increasing the city’s security. Most of them had probably hidden themselves further inside the mainland by now.

“I’ll probably need to go the Mercenary Guild later!” After finding an inn, the young man slipped his hood off, revealing curly hair
that was as dazzling as gold and a handsome face. This was obviously Leylin. After taking care of all the matters and handing over all sorts of materials to Ernest, causing him to go giddy in his ecstasy and begin construction of a wizard’s tower, Leylin openly left Faulen Island, taking a ship to the continent. Of course, this was in the name of travel and learning, something that was a matter of course for wizards. He currently held a recommendation letter from Ernest in his lap, something that would allow him to train in the capital’s Wizards’ Guild for a while. Leylin had intended this trip for a while, there was nothing that Ernest could teach him anymore. And with Boruj’s bag of holding, he could now move about with more ease. 10 cubic metres of space was huge, and he could put his tent, rations, and essentials inside it, making things less difficult for him. After getting on the coast, Leylin was like a drop of water that disappeared into the river of people. Things were rather sensitive right now, and he did not want to cause any trouble. Travelling at this point was a very troublesome matter. If he lacked proof of free citizenship from the city hall or some other documents like that, he’d be treated like a runaway slave or indentured farmer. The rest of his life would be spent in jail or bankruptcy. Of course, if he showed his proof of nobility, all cities would leave their doors wide open for him. But he wasn’t foolish enough to do that. If he became a mercenary, he would be able to move about with no obstruction in most areas, though the guards would roll their eyes at him. Mercenaries who broke order were one of the most headache-inducing issues for security officials. The Mercenary Guild was located by the Warriors’ Guild, one of their requirements was that one was a Professional. Of course, this wasn’t too hard. If he trained for many years, could
use a few weapons proficiently and had a certain amount of experience, he could easily be certified as a rank 1 fighter.

Leylin entered the Warriors’ Guild that was guarded by two burly warriors, in the distance seeing shrines to the gods of warriors and war. There were even a few resident priests in the guild, overseeing everything. They were in charge of healing injuries, even though it obviously came with a price.

Behind the Warriors’ Guild were a few bigshots. Without their support both on the surface and in the shadows, it would have had no chance to spread throughout the continent. Since warriors were the most common Professionals amongst the many races, becoming one did not require much talent.

“Is this Mister’s first time here?” After seeing Leylin’s entrance, a maid welcomed him while watching him with a strange look. After all, most warriors were muscled, and it was rare to see people like Leylin.

“Yes. I would like to apply for the fighter test!” Though the Wizards’ Guild was more suitable for him, and being a wizard would gain him more respect, Leylin was here to stay out of trouble. He naturally wouldn’t do that. He was not even planning to use the recommendation letter Ernest had given him.

“Please come with me!” The maid brought Leylin to the second level of the guild. There were many little rings here, where warriors were fighting hand-to-hand or battling it out. While they were using wooden swords, people would still get injured.

At this moment, a priest that had been waiting at the side would be useful.

“Please register first. May I know which rank would you like to take the test for?”

As if afraid that Leylin did not understand well and because of his face, the maid explained to him enthusiastically, “Our tests here are conducted based on varying levels of strength. You’ll need to fight
against a similarly-ranked or two lower-ranked opponents for a period of time to be able to pass the test, and there are often casualties…”

“Thank you for your good intentions. I’ll do what I can!” Leylin came to a counter and put in his particulars, filling up the form. “Let’s see. Your name is Ley, you’re 18, and you want to take the test for a rank 5 warrior?” Sitting at the counter was a withered old man. He lifted his glasses and looked at Leylin, who was outside, “Young man, don’t try to push yourself too far. A rank 5 warrior can already use their qi, and some have even grasped battle techniques. You could maybe try rank 3…”

“What? You’re choosing the rank 5 test?” The maid looked astonished, her sharp voice causing surrounding people to gather around and watch. “Why didn’t you listen to me?” The maid stamped her feet, pretty flushes appearing on her cheeks. “I’ve already made up my mind, I’ll do this!” Leylin furrowed his brows. While he had lied about his age, this was still shocking. Of course, it wasn’t that bad. It was much better than being a 16 year old rank 10 wizard, and he then nodded, “Please accept this application.”

“The application fee is 10 copper coins!” After Leylin paid up, the old man sighed helplessly, “Teenagers these days…”

“Interesting! I haven’t seen such an interesting kid for a long time! Let me be his opponent!” A forthright voice sounded out, and immediately after a burly man who was two heads taller than average pushed the crowd away as he walked over. His upper body was naked, the muscles solid like granite. There were several scabs from blades on his face, emanating red light that made him seem more menacing.

“It’s the Bone Shatterer, Fafnir. This guy’s in for it!”

“It’s rumoured that he’s a savage person who likes to pinch and...
shatter his opponent’s bones. Why’s he suddenly causing trouble for a kid?

“It should be for a woman, right? He’s been interested in Nina for a long time!” This immediately caused the maid to blush beet red, “Fafnir, what are you doing?”

“Nothing much. I’m a rank 5 warrior anyway, so isn’t it normal for me to be an examiner? Am I wrong?” Fafnir watched Leylin, a malicious smile on his face.

“What about it?” He looked at the old man at the counter.

“You can give up on this test and come back tomorrow,” The old man sighed. He probably did not want to see a young man like Leylin having such a great setback.

Leylin was speechless inside. He hadn’t expected to meet such a vulgar person.

“It’s fine, he’ll do.” Wait till tomorrow? He didn’t have that much time to waste.

“I won’t worry about you anymore!” This nonchalant attitude resulted in Nina leaving while fuming in anger. Meanwhile, a crisp explosion could be heard produced from Fafnir’s hands.

“Kid, you’re dead meat. I want to pinch and shatter all the bones in your body bit by bit. Hope that you won’t hurt bad enough to call for your mother…” While brushing past him, Fafnir looked at Leylin and made a gesture as if slitting his throat.

“Don’t worry. Isn’t there a priest? I actually hope you brought enough money…” Leylin rolled his shoulders and picked up the long sword used for the testing.

As it was wooden, the handle was very light. However, there was a layer of metal on the blade that made it seem more durable.

The two slowly walked into the ring, and the judge then waved his right arm downwards. “Ready? Begin!”

“Destroy him, Bone Shatterer!”

“I’m supporting you, kid. Hang on!” The other bored warriors
immediately began to jeer, and a few got the bets going, on how many moves Leylin could take from Fafnir.
Nina reappeared in the audience, watching the centre of the site anxiously.
“Kid, repent in hell!” Fafnir yelled as he charged.
This speed and technique was far from what Jacob had at the beginning, and Leylin could only shake his head inside. However, he did need to conceal his strength too, and he only dodged ‘by a hair’s breadth’, sword swinging onto his opponent’s shoulder.
“Stop wasting time! I’ve things to do!” A faint layer of qi emanated from Leylin’s body.
“It’s qi! This guy’s already activated qi!!” The onlookers exclaimed.
“This kid’s not bad!” Fafnir immediately began to get serious, and he wrapped himself up in these rays as well. An opponent who had already activated qi was not so easily defeated.
“Battle technique: Shatter Bones!” He accelerated, charging towards Leylin.
afnir actually used a battle technique!” The audience all exclaimed.

“How boring!” Leylin slipped past the opponent’s slashing while his wooden sword pierced forward.

“Battle technique: Charge!” An immense force struck Fafnir, causing his huge body to fly like a sandbag. However, Leylin’s attack hadn’t ended yet. He seemed to turn into a gust of wind, sticking close to the hulking man who was in mid-air.

*Crack!* *Crash!* Terrifying sounds of bones shattering were heard. When Fafnir fell, his arms and legs were all twisted at strange angles, and he even fainted.

“How is it? Did I pass?” Leylin looked at the judge, who seemed dazed.

“Oh. I announce that Ley has passed this test!” He finally said, as if he’d woken from a dream. The surrounding crowd began to make a ruckus.

Leylin cared little about this, and he went to the counter. This time the crowd opened up a path automatically, respecting the strong.

The old man chuckled as he asked, “Hehe… I don’t often make mistakes! Kid, any interest in learning here for a period of time?”

“No thanks. I still have something urgent to do!” Leylin had seen that this old man was about rank 10 as a warrior. This was pretty good, but he’d almost killed a dozen high-ranked warriors himself on the outer seas.
“Alright! Sigh, young people these days…” The old man lethargically flung a copper badge to Leylin, as well as a piece of parchment, “Take it. This is your warrior badge and verification. That’ll be two silver kronas.” This was slightly too expensive and seemed to be on purpose. However, since he was very efficient, Leylin paid the bill and quickly left.

After walking out of the warrior guild, Leylin went to the Mercenary Guild next door. The gold behind the counter revealed a professional smile, “Welcome. May I know if you are here to issue a mission or to apply for remuneration?”

“I’m here to apply to be a mercenary!” Leylin stated his purpose. “Please go to counter number 3!” Applying to become a mercenary was very simple, and only required proof of one’s Profession. After seeing Leylin’s rank 5 fighter badge, the person in charge of counter 3 happily helped him with the proof of being one.

As a newbie, Leylin had no choice but to become a copper-grade mercenary, which was the lowest rank. Only after completing multiple missions could he advance. However, being verified as a mercenary and Professional. He would be able to enter the large cities in the future.

For Leylin, who looked towards becoming a god, focusing on raising his mercenary ranking was a joke.

‘Since my path is now decided, next is go to the Dambrath Kingdom and study at the Wizards’ Guild… Or should I go to another country… It’s said that Moonlight City in the north has a whole set of information on magic. The city owner might even be someone chosen by the Goddess of the Weave, and many of their advanced wizard spells can be compared with the elves. I can consider training there for a while…’

Information on high-ranked spells in this world was highly confidential, and if Leylin wanted to gain this knowledge he would
have to enter some large organisations to be acknowledged. Of course, he could also ignore that and focus on raising his wizard ranking first. However, his battle might would then be pitiful. If a high-ranked wizard only grasped a few spells, that would be a disgrace to all of the same rank as him.

‘Come to think of it, I wonder if the spell models of varying ranks in the Magus World can be modified to be used in the World of Gods? But the amount of time required for that would be too terrifying…’

Leylin had a tentative plan to make the path of Magi available to the World of Gods. It was an all-inclusive path that centered around the truth, and of all the paths to power it was very flexible and adaptable.

It was plausible to conduct research into producing Magi in the World of Gods, people who could cast spells without the Weave. However, that would require a great deal of processing power. Most of the A.I. Chip’s resources were focused on the analysis of the Weave, and in a situation where it had no spare time to run simulations in this area he could only shelve his plans for now.

‘Research on casting spells without the Weave is definitely a huge taboo in the World of Gods. I’m afraid I’ll only be able to do something in that field after I become a Legend.’

Leylin stroked his chin, ‘But if I’m able to get information on this, even if incomplete, the A.I. Chip’s rate of analysis will be increased by a great amount… I’m sure there were many Magi participating in the Ancient War who had the same thoughts as I do now…’

While thinking this, Leylin entered the mission hall in the Mercenary Guild. Numerous large fireplaces were blazing in the place, making the hall seem cozy. The many mercenaries were split into their own cliques. Some were drinking and making merry, while others were gazing at the huge mission board at the centre of the hall, discussing things amongst themselves occasionally.
The aroma of strong rum, coupled with that of roasted meat and bread, lingered in Leylin’s nose.

“High-grade mission: Purging ogres! Only mercenary groups that are gold-ranked and above may take this on.” This mission was on the top of the board, written in huge bold font. The great rewards caused many mercenaries to drool at the sight, but few dared to go forward.

“Yeah! I heard that a bunch of ogres migrated towards one of the main paths to the capital. They’ve already attacked numerous caravans and passersby, it’s no wonder that the rewards are so plentiful!”

Hearing the surrounding mercenaries whispering amongst themselves, Leylin had a better understanding of the mission.

‘An ogre tribe? No wonder it’s a high-ranked mission!’ Leylin nodded inside. The classification of mercenaries was very simple. The lowest was copper, followed by silver and gold. Gold mercenaries were already high-grade and possessed immense experience, and were usually powerful Professionals.

Above gold-rank, was said to be Mithril and Platinum. However, in general, they would not be in such people a small city like Emon City.

Gold-ranked mercenary groups were powerful troops with numerous gold-ranked mercenaries. Only this level of strength would be effective against an ogre tribe.

Leylin looked at the bottom of the mission board. There were many missions to clear ogres out here and there, from the lowest ranked to powerful ogre shamans. All that one was required to do was bring back their ears as proof, and the difficulty was lower. Once in a while, a few mercenaries would go over to discuss before taking on the missions.

“A large-scale ogre tribe has more than 200 ogres. The shamans will have bloodlines, with abilities similar to magic. On top of that,
the ogres themselves are resistant to magic…” Leylin muttered to himself.
“I won’t be able to handle this myself unless I take the long route. However, that’ll consume a lot of time, and I’ll need to pass through a few dangerous regions, and the danger isn’t all that different from the ogre tribes. There are even drake tribes there…”
“Seems like I’ll have to wait for some large-scaled mercenary groups to complete missions or join some caravan…” Leylin mumbled to himself. He was preparing to go the capital, and even without Ernest’s recommendation letter, he had enough power to enter the Wizards’ Guild. Over there, he would be able to obtain the newest intel and the like.
“On top of that, even if I were to prepare to travel to the north to train, I’ll definitely need to pass through the Dambrath Kingdom…” Leylin sighed. He went to the front desk counter near him belonging to the guild, “Give me cider. Are there any missions soon that will take me to the capital? The best would be those with large groups. I want something safe!”
As he said this, a silver krona appeared in his hand, emitting a tempting light in the air.
“Do you have urgent matters to attend to in the capital? That’s no problem at all. A large caravan is going there soon, and they’re recruiting people because of those wretched ogres!” Seeing the light in Leylin’s hands, the attendant gulped and then responded. A tyrant like Leylin obviously gained more abundant and specific details.
After setting a time with the attendant, Leylin headed to the entrance of the Mercenary Guild. The streets of Emon City were very desolate, probably having to do with the double blow with the sea trade and the ogres.
Seeing the many stores that were closed, Leylin was about to return to meditate in his inn when a grey-robed person blocked his way.
“Mister, please whip me ruthlessly!” In front of Leylin was a young female in grey robes. She was pretty and was clad in coarse sackcloth clothing, and there were also many scars at her neck and cuffs. Currently, she was standing in front of him with a look of anticipation, two hands holding a thorny whip. The numerous tiny thorns looked extremely sinister on it. She looked pure and holy, ready to die for a just cause, and had a resoluteness that only belonged to crazed followers. There was even a hint of anticipation. “What’s with this… a trap?” Leylin’s eyes went past the crazy woman and landed on a little girl next to her. She was holding a donation box of the church, and after noticing his attention was on her, she especially shook the box such that the coins inside made sharp and crisp noises. Leylin saw a strange holy emblem at the little girl’s chest. “So you’re a priest of the Mistress of the Whip!” Thankfully, Leylin had seen much in the world and recognised her identity. “Yes! Please help with our praying ritual and allow my soul to obtain redemption through suffering!” The female answered seriously, and then thrust the whip into his hands. “I… I… I…” Leylin was completely speechless now. He wanted to escape, but the passersby thought nothing of it. Some even looked over with knowing smiles.
The Goddess of Weeping, also known as Mistress of the Whip, was called Amyter. She was a kind-hearted goddess, and her teachings included having her followers redeem their souls through suffering. It was like when a forest was larger, birds were all the same. In the World of Gods, a few exotic gods existed, and this crying female was one of them.

The God of Suffering, Ilmater, taught his followers to suffer and endure the pain, but Amyter was different. She even requested that her priests and followers abuse themselves and obtain redemption through suffering!

Oh Gods! Even if Ilmater requested his followers to endure, he never wanted them to actively abuse themselves!

Hence, in simpler terms, Amyter’s followers were a bunch of insane people who abused themselves, especially the priests. Whenever there was a huge celebration, Amyter’s priests and followers would gather, using lashes, wooden cangues and even red hot brands to ‘pray’. This would earn themselves favour from the goddess, and amongst the divine spells the goddess granted were some that raised one’s endurance of pain.

Gods like these had no market amongst regular commoners and were rarely seen. Leylin had almost not recognised her at the beginning, though she seemed to be welcomed by some exceptional enthusiasts.
This priestess of the goddess walked along the streets, praying for passersby to bestow pain on her to gain donations. This was an event that their church retained.

“I apologise, but I believe in the God of Knowledge, Oghma… This is just…” Leylin knew he was no pervert and immediately used an excuse.

“The goddess taught us not to mind the identity of the person inflicting pain on us, because they give us the redemption that is in suffering. We need to be grateful towards them… Please help me with my prayer!” The priestess looked resolute.

“I…” Leylin was rendered speechless. In addition, an increasing number of people were gathering, and he wanted to escape as soon as possible.

Just as Leylin tossed a gold coin to the little girl’s donation box and raised the whip, as if preparing to finish it in one go, he suddenly felt his hair stand on end. It was like he was being stared at by some terrifying beast.

Knowing something was off, he dodged, evading a frightening qi slash.

*Crash!* The powerful qi blade of light swept the area Leylin had stood at and smashed the limestone behind him to smithereens, revealing the strength of the person who had launched the sneak attack.

Along with this attack came the dainty call from a young girl, “Ah… Such despicable behaviour of bullying women is just an insult to my way as a knight. I, Rafiniya, won’t let you off!”

“Which moron is it?”

Leylin turned back furiously. It was bad enough being requested to abuse someone by their request, but he was now being treated as a thug who was bullying the weak. Even with his thick skin, he was beginning to get ashamed.

“You dare do this but not admit to it? Everyone on the streets saw
your violent behaviour, you despicable bastard!”

The person who had attacked him was a young and beautiful female knight, her wine-red long hair tied into a ponytail. Her pretty cheeks were now flushed in her anger, eyes fixed on Leylin and shooting out hatred. It was as if she could not wait to bite off a piece of flesh from Leylin.

“A high-ranked knight? Have you even made sense of the situation yet?” Leylin looked at the way this knight was dressed and the tall warhorse behind her, rather surprised.

Though they were still a physical Profession, knights were far removed from warriors. Not only was their armour extremely expensive, but a warhorse that one could ride into battle was not so easily obtained.

A warhorse was worth over ten times as much as a regular one, and on top of that it needed a specialised groomer and other service Professionals in charge of it. In exchange, it allowed a knight’s destructive power to be far ahead of a warrior’s.

In addition, high-ranked ones could, after affirming their faith, turn into knights of gods, learning to cast spells. Such Professionals were the ideal prince charming in the hearts of many young girls.

‘To be able to become a high-ranked Professional at such a young age, this doll must have a pretty good background. She should be nobility…’ Leylin sized her up. Through the attack just now, he could estimate that she should be at or above rank 10 as a knight.

‘A.I. Chip, scan!’ He commanded on the inside.

[Beep! Mission established, beginning scan...] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out his instructions, and soon enough, a passage of information was relayed.

[Name: Rafiniya. Gender: Female. Strength: 10 Agility: 6 Vitality: 7 Spirit: 5(Estimate). Rank 10 Knight. Abilities: 1. Abilities increase from 11-19% in power when mounted. 2. Armour: Full body knight armour has increased physical defence, but led to a similar]
decrease in resistance towards magic.

‘As expected of a high-ranked Professional, She even has a boost from her mount!’ Leylin nodded inside. However, brazenly sizing her up was only making her more angry.

“What’s wrong with this city? How can these hoodlums commit such evil in broad daylight? Has this place turned into a city praying to the devils and demons?”

The female knight’s chest bounced up and down. The teasing gazes of the passersby only made her more infuriated.

“Please withdraw your unfair allegations!” At this moment, the priestess of Amyter stood out. “Our Lady Amyter, opposes all evil! In addition, you need to apologise for interrupting my prayer ceremony, else you’ll be profaning our Lady!”


Following that, a patrol guard separated the crowd and came up to them, staring at the female knight with malicious intent, “You’ve destroyed the appearance of the city. Based on city hall law number 329, you must pay a fine of 10 gold kronas, or else we’ll have to place you in prison…”

……

“Oh God of Justice! This actually happens? There’s no such person at my old place…” After the ruckus, the surrounding crowd, patrolling soldiers and the priestess quickly left, leaving Leylin and the female knight Rafiniya behind.

However, her face was like a huge red apple. This was her shame. However, at the mention of the goddess’s name, the girl immediately halted. No matter how preposterous and strange this goddess’ style was, she was still a goddess! She needed to show respect at least on the surface, or she’d risk being put on trial by the
other churches.
“You must be from another area, right? This goddess really doesn’t have a great reputation, but it’s best to find out about stuff like this before leaving on travels. The consequences of doing something taboo will be dire…” Leylin gravely reprimanded her, controlling his urge to laugh.
After the fine had been paid, the priestess of Amyter had requested a very strange compensation of Rafiniya, she wanted the knight to whip her ruthlessly!
Leylin ‘kindly’ handed his share of this matter over to the girl, getting her to do it as an apology. It was obviously humiliating for this knight who seemed noble and refined to lash a weak person like a scoundrel.
Thankfully, everything was soon over, or else Leylin reckoned Rafiniya would probably commit suicide.
“I understand!” She went over to the side of her war horse, showing her back to Leylin to hide her embarrassment, “I apologise for what happened just now. I shouldn’t have treated you that way before making sense of the situation!”
As a knight, Rafiniya still did as should be based on the code of honour. At the very least, she had done well upholding justice, and was willing to change after learning that she was in the wrong.
“My name is Rafiniya, and I’m a travelling knight. Nice to meet you!”
“Mm. My name is Ley; I’m a mercenary.” Leylin scratched his head. A travelling knight? That was practically a joke! It was well-known that knights had huge requirements when it came to logistics. Without a professional groom and someone maintaining armour as well as weapons, a knight was useless.
Leylin looked at the warhorse behind her sympathetically. As expected, it was already looking dispirited and showed signs of malnutrition.
‘It’s already strange that a noble lady is training to be a knight. She’s even travelling alone. How open is her family? Or is this perhaps one of those people who are escaping marriage?’

Being eyed by Leylin, Rafiniya lowered her head, slightly ashamed. She abruptly got onto her war horse, elegant and speedy, showing the results of bitter training, “Though there was a misunderstanding in our meeting, things thankfully ended well. May I know the way to the Mercenary Guild?”

“Head east, and you’ll find it quickly!” Leylin was speechless at this young girl, who looked like she’d been brainwashed by stories of knights.

“Thank you very much! Someday, under the guidance of fate, we’ll meet again!” She naturally urged her handsome horse forward, and the mount snorted as it darted away.

“But that’s the west. You’re going in the wrong direction…” Leylin watched the direction in which she had left, but she had already disappeared.

“High-ranked knights who are directionally challenged are really quite rare. She didn’t prepare much and is adventuring. Hopefully, she won’t get attacked by ogres or gnomes and become jerky…” Leylin silently prayed for her and then returned to his inn.

For him, all that had happened today was merely a fun event in the long journey that was life. It was not worthy to ruminate over.
The gates opened, and a huge large group of merchants left Emon City. All sorts of flags flew, with over five middle-scale groups and tens of other small ones in the caravan. There were also too many independent merchants to count. The group was like a museum for the races of the World of Gods. Humans, dwarves, gnomes, halflings, half-elves, and many other half-bloods mingled, leaving Leylin’s mind blown.

There were a lot of Professionals amongst the mercenaries, but there wasn’t a single leading commander so everything looked chaotic with all sorts of people mixed in. Leylin saw a few dwarves riding wild boars running past him while hiccuping. He was rendered speechless.

‘There are even more races than the types of pirates I’m in charge of… The Professionals are all a mess…’ These mercenaries allowed Leylin to have a better understand of the Professions in the World of Gods.

From the most common warriors, thieves, squires, and assassins to the higher-grade knights, gunmen and archers, Leylin could also see some low-ranked bloodline holders as well as druids. They were attached to those large mercenary groups and were employed by the medium-ranked merchant groups.

As for the weak group that Leylin was a part of, they were employed by a small merchant group with no other choice. With their route interrupted, not being able to drop their goods off was
one thing, but the terrifying fines of violating contracts was enough to render their families bankrupt. In this world with deities, those protected by the gods could have their church dispatch priests and paladins to demand payment, and even the king would not dare renege on a debt. Waukeen loved doing this with her wealthy church, and of course the fee was very high. Hence, under the threat of going bankrupt, these merchants had no choice but to force themselves onto a path blocked by ogres. However, they were no fools. They issued a few large missions, and recruited enough mercenaries and helpers to form a huge caravan. This have them enough strength to protect themselves. However, Leylin had his doubts about the strength of these low-ranked Professionals. They were destined to be cannon fodder! "Everyone of the Night Halls, I entrust the fates of me and my sister to you!" Before they left, their employers had come to see them personally. It was a pair of noblewomen who seemed like sisters. "Haha… Don’t worry, *hic* … With Old Pam around, those darned ogres will die as they come!" The leader of this little group, at least in name, made his promise while patting his chest. This hiccupsing dwarf with a red brandy nose was called Pam. He was a rare gunslinger, though the butt of the gun at his waist was already filled with rust. Leylin felt like the firearm was just scrap metal at this point, only useful as a hammer in close combat. Leylin hadn’t even remembered all his ‘teammates’ here yet. ‘Besides that inferior dwarf gunman Pam, there’s a halfling thief, a human archer and me, a warrior. This is really the worst of the worst. We only met yesterday through the attendant at the Mercenary Guild… These sisters were obviously made a fool of by that attendant…’ Leylin never expected for there to be fraud organisations like this in the World of Gods, established temporarily to trick customers. Still,
he had no intentions of changing anything.
‘Though they tried to swindle people, the bit of commission you paid got you a rank 10 wizard. You’ve really made a huge profit!’ he thought inside.
At this moment, the noble lady in the horse carriage sighed, knowing that she had dug a hole for herself.
“Everyone…” The hanging curtain in the carriage was pulled to reveal the corner of a beautiful face. She looked to be about 25 or 26, more mature than most young women. However, one could see sorrow from her furrowed brows, as if she had some doubts.
“In order to ensure the safety on this trip, I’ve especially invited an adventurer! She is a high-ranked knight, and I’m sure she’ll get along well with everyone!” The noblewoman looked apologetic, but the person who paid money was the leader here. Pam, knowing how much weight the Night Halls carried, only mumbled a little but agreed.
“A new adventurer? And a high-ranked knight at that. It’s… her?” Leylin suddenly had a bad feeling.
“Sorry that I’m late, Sister Hera!” A black warhorse streaked through the gates of the city like lightning, and the tender voice of a female could be heard from the knight on her mount.
“Rafiniya!” Hera, who was inside the horse carriage, revealed a tender smile that caused Old Pam and the rest to look dazed.
The knight quickly arrived at the carriage and flipped over to get off the horse, revealing a face that Leylin was exceptionally familiar with.
“Sister Hera!” Rafiniya first pulled at Hera’s hand enthusiastically, and then looked at the mercenaries nearby.
“Hello, everyone! I’m Rafiniya, and we’re going to adventure together, huh…” Halfway through introducing herself, Rafiniya abruptly stopped, eyes widening. “Ley, you bastard, you actually cheated me!”
The tender voice of a young girl, as well as her appearance, made it easy for people to have misconceptions. The dwarf Pam discreetly gave Leylin a look of approval, while the human archer seemed envious.

“I didn’t, you’re just a person with a poor sense of direction!” Leylin touched his nose and rolled his eyes, not feeling like speaking to this girl who was directionally challenged.

“Who did you say has a poor sense of direction?” Rafiniya was immediately like a kitten who’d had her tail stepped on. She burst out in anger.

“Do you know each other? That’s even better! Come here, Rafiniya. Tell me about what happened yesterday…” Hera came to mediate, and it was evident that she was very tactful.

“But…” Leylin focused on Hera’s hands. They were rough, and there even calluses at the side. They were much like the hands of the maids in Leylin’s manor, and her clothes were rather simple. The edges were slightly whitened. It was obvious that she did not have a good family background, but had employed Leylin and the others in the name of a noble.

‘A noble born of a commoner? Or does she have a more troublesome identity? Did she get Rafiniya because she seemed to have a great status? She’s quite shrewd…’ Leylin watched Rafiniya enter the carriage, and the sounds of laughter could be heard once in a while. He shook his head inside.

He did not discriminate against Hera. All methods were valid when one’s survival was at stake. As long as it didn’t affect him, he wouldn’t bother unveiling her plot.

“Tsk! Ley, look at that warhorse! It’s even taller than the two of us. I’ll bet you that this horse has a value of at least 200 Gold kronas!” Old Pam was now demoted to a horsekeeper and was gloomy. He temporarily took care of Rafiniya’s horse on her behalf. The sight of a dwarf leading a tall horse was rather amusing, though the man
himself did not realise this. His hands kept caressing the black horse while muttering, “A pity… What a pity… Look at how she’s abused this good horse! This colour of the coat and the abrasions would make those horse peddlers reduce their prices…”

“Please, she’s a lady of a noble family and didn’t even bring a horsekeeper when she came out. It’s already good enough that she didn’t starve it to death…” Leylin laughed as he patted Pam’s shoulders, which gained the man’s approval.

“Mm, mm,” Pam kept nodding, “I’m not bragging, but my father’s father was once a horsekeeper for the city owner. He was able to raise even the best warhorses with heavenly bloodlines till they were plump and healthy…”

“That doesn’t seem right…” Leylin was speechless as he shook his head. Dwarves usually liked to brag, not to mention those that had taken alcohol.

At this moment, a gold krona was thrown from the window and hit Pam’s head.

“Take care of this horse and it’s yours!” Golden rays shone in Pam’s eyes, and he didn’t even get mad, “No problem at all! Old Pam will help you take care of this treasure, esteemed lady!”

‘Inexperienced.’ This was Leylin’s evaluation of Rafiniya. There had been many eyes fixed on her horse, and after seeing the gold krona she had casually tossed away, those gazes turned to greed and malice.

Even the halfling thief and the human archers had changed expressions now, they were up to no good.

They were all mercenaries who’d banded together for now. Why would they trust each other? On dangerous roads, they could easily become robbers and bandits.

‘Even if Rafiniya’s a rank 10 knight, she won’t be able to evade the plots against her.’ Leylin could practically predict the fates of these three noble ladies.
‘Ogres are the best cover. As long as someone’s careful, they can push the blame to the devils. After all, would they actually contend with those ogres?’ Leylin took a look at his surroundings. The merchant groups had mostly gathered, though the people in charge of a few medium-sized groups had no intentions of leaving, as if waiting for some important people.

‘Could they have banded together and recruited a high-ranked Professional?’ Just as Leylin was wondering, an elite team appeared from Emon City. The leader was a middle-aged man wearing shining armour, a resolute expression on his face. Under his thick eyebrows were a pair of radiant eyes.

Behind him, a pale eagle flag fluttered in the wind.
It’s Lord Siegfried of the Ashen Hawks!”

“With him around, Old Pam’s at ease now!” The dwarf Pam exclaimed excitedly.

‘Powerful’ was Leylin’s first impression of the man. Siegfried was at or above rank 15, and there were even energy traces from magic items on his person. That wasn’t all; the members behind him were the cream of the crop as well, and Leylin even spotted a wizard among them.

While she was clad in black wizard robes, that unique spiritual temperament could not deceive Leylin. However, she did not seem to have a high rank and had only made contact with the third level of the Weave.

Seeing the mercenary group of the Ashen Hawks meet with the medium-scaled merchant groups, as well as the subsequent signal they set off, Leylin asked by Pam’s side, Is that Siegfried very powerful?”

“But of course. Lord Siegfried is the only mithril mercenary in Emon City! Mithril, you know? On top of that, he’s a high-ranked warrior who’s gone through numerous battles. Our city hall even invited him to take charge of the garrison, but he rejected them…”

At the very mention of Siegfried, Old Pam talked non-stop, as if he himself was a member of the Ashen Hawks.

The Hawks had a huge reputation, and it resulted in an uproar amongst the large merchant groups. Be it the mercenaries or
merchants, all of them had delighted looks on their face, as if just having them around meant their safety was guaranteed.

‘Yet another bunch of tragic people who place their safety in the hands of others…’ Seeing this, Leylin sighed inside, ‘No matter how powerful he is, he’ll definitely be protecting the few medium-sized merchant groups that hired him first and foremost. How could he stay by your side like Pam would? There are over a hundred ogres…’

While some were still immersed in their fantasies, the mixed bag of people set off.

‘How boring…’ Leylin was now dressed like a fighter, armoured in moderately new leather. At his waist was a longsword made of steel, the grip wound with coarse rope that allowed him to unsheath it smoothly at any time.

The large caravan moved very slowly. Apart from the leadership problems, food, water, and camping at night were huge issues for them. Even proper legions couldn’t manage such a thing well, forget this ragtag group. Sometimes they didn’t even make it past a few kilometres a day.

Leylin had already expected this, and he stayed in his group while at ease. With so many people present, he would only be used as cannon fodder to bait the ogres out if they ended up meeting. That would allow him to escape successfully.

He’d already made up his mind. Once he passed the danger of the ogres, he’d immediately leave this large group and proceed on his own. As for the matter of the commission and trust, would he even care?

Leylin thus had nothing going on for now. He’d made a deal with a merchant for one silver, and was allowed on one of the carriages. Besides his requisite patrolling duties, the only things he did were resting, meditation, and secret research.

‘A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!’ Leylin commanded.

‘My spiritual force is greatly disproportionate to the time I’ve spent meditating. With the reduced effect of the Devilblood Dagger, I can’t advance so easily anymore. I can only try to raise my other stats to 10 points…’

In Leylin’s view, raising of his other stats was a process of perfecting his own genes. Once they all broke past a certain limit, they could give him a pleasant surprise.

Leylin took a quick look at his stats and shifted his attention to the Weave’s analysis, his most important work.

‘Slow as ever…’ Leylin could do nothing about this. The Weave was under Mystra’s control, and she was a powerful goddess. The A.I. Chip analysing the Weave already went against the will of the gods. He couldn’t do much without alerting her.

‘The speed’s decreased after it started on level 2. It would be unnoticeable if not for my increase in rank… Perhaps I should use another method…’ Just as Leylin was pondering over what he should do, an unwelcome guest opened the door of the truck.

“Sister Hera has already explained everything to me. I’m sorry!” Just from the voice, Leylin could tell that this was Rafiniya and he opened his eyes. Even in the darkness of the truck, he could see her flushed face.

“I accept your apology. Are we done now?” Leylin gestured for her to leave.

“How can you do this?” Rafiniya’s embarrassed face reddened further, but this time in fury, “I’m here to apologise to you, yet you’re acting so rudely? Besides… Pam and the others are…”
“I’ve done my tasks for the day. Pam and the others are just unwilling to put in the effort… Also…” Leylin stood up. Just the natural elegance in his movements caused the knight to shrink backwards in retreat, as if she’d her own father in his fury.

“Also… who is it that keeps staying in the employer’s carriage? And who keeps evading patrol duty?” Leylin’s eyes rested on Rafiniya, causing the knight to lower her head. At this moment, she realised that this Ley indeed was doing his duty unlike her.

“That– That’s different! I’m a girl!” Rafiniya stomped her foot, “Who knew travelling was so tedious? There’s grime everywhere, and nowhere to even walk on. It’s even harder to find a washroom…”

Her subconscious thoughts were poured out in front of Leylin. Noticing his half-smile, she couldn’t help but go beet red and lower her head.

“So now you know the hardships of travelling? Don’t be fooled by the glamour of heroes on the surface. In truth, they could be suffering more than you… Go home, little lady!” Leylin rarely showed kindness such as this. He only did it because all it required was for him to speak a bit.

“You sound like you know a lot, but do you really?” Rafiniya turned and left, as if she had gotten used to and annoyed by these lectures. Leylin only sighed, “Rebellious children…”

The days passed, and the ragtag group got closer to the region rumoured to have ogres around. They hadn’t met trouble before this, their numbers enough to scare off vagrants and those with malicious intent. Within the group however, the bandit Professionals had bad luck. No matter where they went, they were watched vigilantly.

When it came time to camp, they did it on a flat field. Numerous mercenaries constructed lofty tents and lit bonfires. Hot water was then poured into pots; with the addition of their rations, some wild
vegetables that a few older mercenaries found outside the camp, and jerky, it was cooked into a savoury stew. Pam hugged his rum bottle while salivating at the pot, occasionally taking a drink.

“Everyone’s worked hard today!” Hera and Rafiniya got off the horse carriage, and the mercenaries of the Night Halls sat around the bonfire.

After spending some time together, Leylin now had another opinion regarding Hera. While she was a slight schemer, it was because of her living conditions. She did not regard herself to be much better than those mercenaries who were working hard. With his experience, Leylin could naturally tell if she was sincere or putting on a front. Her younger sister seemed to be called Yalani, and was protected well by her sister. She spent most of her time on the carriage, and even Leylin had only seen her a few times before. That meant Hera was aware of the dangers outside.

After Hera brought the dinner that had just been made back to the carriage, Old Pam impatiently drank his rum and began to chatter on.

However, in the long chilly night, there was little to while the time away. Hence, the other members approved of it tacitly. Rafiniya especially seemed to have fun, and probably even took Old Pam’s stories to be true.

“Hello. May I know if this is Lady Hera’s carriage?” At this moment, a person in charge of one of the merchant groups walked over.

“What is it? Please tell me!” Rafiniya blocked the way. Days before, there were a few guys who were lusting over the beauty of the sisters. She’d kicked them out, but she was now on her huard.

The person in charge who had been rejected frowned, but then put on a smile, “Well, we’re reaching the dangerous regions where the ogres appear. Lord Siegfried told me to come inform everyone to
remain vigilant at night. Remember to send people to patrol the area…”
Once they sent the man away, the mercenaries all had imposing expressions on their faces. Only Rafiniya was cheerful as she took out her sword with an eager look on her face, “We finally get to fight?” This expression of hers immediately attracted displeasure from her comrades. “In that case, you can be the first to go on patrol tonight!” Leylin unceremoniously dealt her a blow, damping her energy. Old Pam didn’t dare to say anything, but he secretly gave Leylin a big thumbs up. Seeing Rafiniya huffing angrily and ducking back into the carriage, Leylin and the others smiled in a carefree manner. Only, Leylin’s smile was rather dark as he turned back to look at where Rafiniya had gone to. ‘This… It feels like something might have happened…’

……

At the moment, another special group entered Emon City. Their leader was a paladin in bright silver armour, the piercing light of which caused the city guards at the gate to inch away from them. Their faces were filled with reverence and awe as they looked at the divine light on the paladin’s chest. “Our intel says that they vanished without a trace once they went ashore.” His badge was based on a blue shield, with a warhammer
balanced on top of a scale as the insignia. A holy light lingered about it.
“A paladin of the God of Justice!” Someone would call out in a low voice from time to time, and the street thugs and hooligans all completely disappeared without a trace.
The divine light that this paladin possessed was of course that of the God of Judgment, Tyr. That god possessed powerful divine force and was committed to his cause of fighting against evil. The zealous paladins under his command were the greatest nightmare of all evil organisations.
“Leylin Faulen… This insignificant little noble must be in cahoots with that earlier Pirates’ Tide. He can’t run from us!” The paladin had a resolute expression on his face, “Under the divine glory of our lord, all evil must be punished!”
“Paladin Lorent! Do not forget the teachings of our God. Without a trial, that person still has the status of an aristocrat, so please watch your words and manners!” An old priest warned from behind the paladin.
The God of Justice’s priests were serious about punishing evil as well, but unlike the radical paladins they knew that the world wasn’t black and white. They had learnt to compromise, which was the only reason that Tyr’s church had survived to this point. This priest’s eyes were filled with sorrow, but they were soon flooded with determination.
“Only… The lives of thousands of civilians on the outer seas, as well as the disappearance of tens of thousands of innocents must be answered for. He must cooperate with our investigation. The God of Justice will never let an evil man off, and neither will he misjudge an innocent person!”
“Praise the Lord!” Several high-ranking members of the church began to pray from behind the priest.
This was an investigation team that’d been sent by Tyr to the outer
seas of the Dambrath Kingdom. There were several high-ranking paladins and priests in their numbers, and once they reached the outer seas they were shocked by the atrocities committed by those evil pirates.

When the Pirates’ Tide spread its sails, it almost destroyed the entire Baltic archipelago. Only a few small noble fiefs managed to escape the purge unharmed. Since the pirates took no prisoners and left none alive, it had been very difficult to gather evidence.

After passing through many obstacles, just when they had finally almost pinned their culprit as the Pirate Cove and Scarlet Tiger pirate crew, they discovered a small noble family who seemed to have played a very important role.

The unstoppable investigation team immediately arrived at Faulen Island, only to be told the news that Leylin had long since left. In desperation, the investigation team could only divide into two groups and continue to investigate the outer seas. They proclaimed the doctrine of the God of Justice, and the group immediately went back to the continent to apparently request Leylin to cooperate with their investigation.

In reality, once they were within the grasp of these paladins, even the most cunning of nobles could not live for more than a day! The priests of Tyr did not lack in divine torture spells that could force their target to surrender. Sometimes, even a simple ‘Detect Alignment’ was able to solve many problems.

In the presence of powerful gods, the minor nobles who were caught with evidence did not have any power to resist. In turn, if there was no evidence, even high-ranking bishops could not directly put a noble on trial.

Leylin had long broken off the relationship between Faulen Island and the Scarlet Tigers, so unless they could catch him the investigation team could not take any measures against Baron Jonas and their fief. He’d taken care of this before deciding to travel
abroad.
“Damn… These nobles ignore the suffering of so many civilians, and instigate one disaster after the other…” A female priest said resentfully.
“Be cautious!” Although the paladin thought the same thing, on the surface he still restrained his female companion’s actions.
The spread of faith in the prime material plane did not curb the power of secular loyalty. It caused the churches a lot of frustration.
“We cannot completely cleanse the world of all its filth, but we can continue to judge every sin we see. Ultimately the world will be purified” The paladin Lorent said strongly, “Raphael, notify the town hall that we need their help, as well as those left behind…”
After several days, Lorent and his party were able to find several of Leylin’s suspected identities.
“This one can also be ruled out!” Within a splendid and opulent mansion, many guards were left sprawled in confusion on the ground, including several strong Professionals. The paladin Lorent regretfully put down a pale-faced young noble who was trembling all over in fear.
“However, he has also committed numerous crimes. He’s promoted imprisonment, murder, corruption, and countless other things. Hand him over and have the town hall dispose of him!” The female priest. Raphael, glared with disgust at the trembling young noble, as if she had seen a maggot. Allowing this maggot to continue living was almost like an insult to her god.
Although she dearly wanted to directly kill the noble, she managed to endure it.
“Those mercenaries are so mobile that it is very difficult to distinguish between them in such a short period of time even with our capabilities. However, the larger merchant groups in recent times are very suspicious!”
“I was thinking the same thing.” Lorent turned and left, leaving
behind a scene of disorder, “We have already tarried here for far too long, we must speed up…”

After a short while, the newly gathered investigation group strolled out of the gate of Emon City. The rest of the city officials and nobles watched them from far away as they breathed a sigh of relief, wry smiles on their faces.

The investigation group left, but they’d swept up a lord, two nights, and an extremely unlucky noble by pure coincidence during their stay. Even the various gangs had been exterminated. Emon City had been cleansed, and was now much more safe. However, they had left behind a huge mess.

……

‘Is this feeling of being chased because of that investigation group from the God of Justice? Looking at the time, they should have arrived at Emon City by now…’ His keen perception and meticulous way of thinking let Leylin guess the truth in just a moment.

‘Tyr… Haha, in the eyes of many nobles, this powerful god is not at all inferior to the God of Plague…’ Leylin laughed coldly to himself, ‘However, if I do not become a high-ranking wizard and build a wizard’s tower, I fear I won’t be able to return to Faulen Island.’

The situation was more dire this time. If Leylin’s father was like the Marquis, or even a noble of the kingdom, he wouldn’t be suppressed like this. However, the Faulen Family pitifully didn’t have such a background. As a result, were they to be caught by the investigative team it would spell disaster for them. The paladins of the God of Justice were not harmless vegetarians.

Naturally, even the God of Justice’s most resolute paladins had to learn to compromise, and once Leylin displayed his greater power
and strength, showing that their reward was not worth the efforts, it
would not be impossible to erase this matter.
‘No! I just need to let Dambrath Kingdom’s officials handle it, then
this entire matter will not concern me,’ Leylin’s eyes shone brightly,
‘Even the God of Justice’s priests need to pay attention to evidence.
It looks there are still many more things for me to do in the
kingdom…’
Of course all of this was based on the fact that Leylin would remain
a noble wizard, and his crimes wouldn’t be exposed. If he was
thought of as an invader from another world, or a believer in
devils, then he would be endlessly pursued by all the gods, and all
the kingdoms on the continent would unite against him.
‘Interesting, it really is interesting!’ Leylin’s original plan was to
leave Faulen Island to train after his work there had been
completed, rapidly advancing in rank until he became a god, and
finally linking up with his original body.
He was still following that plan, and the Faulen Family was
developing rapidly. Although the investigative group was
troublesome, he could still resolve that issue.
“Be careful! The footprints of an ogre have been discovered
ahead!” At this moment, news came from the carriage in front of
them, stirring up the entire merchant group.
After they had entered the region, Leylin could not continue to hide
and be lazy. He had to fulfill his duty as a mercenary, accompanying
his employer’s carriage to protect it. Through the carriage’s gauzy
curtain, he could see two similarly frightened pretty faces.
I861 - Ogre

t’s alright, the mercenaries will protect us!” Hera kissed her sister’s forehead, which helped Yalani calm down.
“I’ll go and take a look!” Rafaniya had already gotten off the carriage and put on her knight’s armour and steel gloves. The warhorse she sat on let out a snarl, rushing to the front of the group.
The horse had showered Pam’s head and face with dust, and he hadn’t managed to dodge in time. Even his beard had been filled with pebbles, the comedic performance causing the girls in the carriage to laugh quietly. Hera’s stern eyes seemed to have softened.
“These little bitches are really… Phooey…” Old Pam spat out the sand in his mouth, his hand going to his gun case. He’d polished most of the rust off, and it now smelt of gunpowder. Leylin still believed that it wouldn’t be as useful as a hammer in melee, though.
Leylin was sceptical as to whether this dwarf, who had not even reached rank 5, was brave enough to fight against a high-ranking knight with his life, Although dirtying their beard was a very serious insult for some dwarves, Old Pam seemed to have assimilated into human society, and become crafty and sly.
Or perhaps it could be said that after working with humans extensively, he had learnt to be cowardly and picked up a few bad habits. Naturally, the dwarf would perhaps not agree with this assessment.
Leylin could not detect the slightest trace of a dwarf’s stubborn and tenacious temper from Old Pam. When Rafiniya flew back like the wind, he was already eagerly leading her warhorse along for her and even received a silver krona as a tip.

It must be said that Old Pam could indeed look after warhorses well. Over the past few days, Rafaniya’s originally malnourished mount now looked very energetic. The noblewoman had already expressed the desire to hire the dwarf as her personal horsekeeper, and Old Pam looked rather satisfied with this arrangement.

“What’s happening up ahead?” Leylin did not particularly care about Old Pam’s future career, and immediately asked about the state of affairs in front of them.

“A few scouts and thieves have reported that they’ve discovered the footprints of an ogre. The imprints are fairly fresh, and it looks like it was just half an hourglass ago. We should be ready to get into a fight at any time…”

After hearing Rafiniya’s statement, all the mercenaries immediately grew nervous. The halfling thief and the human archer couldn’t help but grip their weapons more tightly. Pam involuntarily began to inch closer to Rafiniya’s side. On the whole, this young lady was the most powerful deterrence in their entire group. Since danger had befallen them, she could adapt the fastest and had the highest chance of escaping.

“Well, Rafiniya, you will protect me, won’t you?” Old Pam looked at Rafiniya hopefully.

“Are you not a mercenary?” The young lady had always been completely disdainful towards soft-boned cowards like him. “Heavens… Do it for Nick’s sake, you can’t treat your horsekeeper like this. Pitiful Old Pam will be torn to pieces by the ogre, and who would look after your Nick then?” Old Pam’s tears were about to overflow from his eyes, and he clung to Rafiniya’s legs with all his might.
Nick was the name that Old Pam had given to Rafiniya’s warhorse in passing.

“Very well, very well! It’s a knight’s duty to protect the weak!” Rafiniya was rather scared of the expression on his face.

“Oh! I admire you, great knight…” Pam immediately started to babble without stopping.

“However, your pay as my horsekeeper will be cut in half!” Rafiniya had learnt a lot after travelling with them, and could even haggle over prices now.

“Out of the question, the most is 10%!”

“40%! You think I can’t find any other horsekeepers? My family has a dozen!”

“30%! You can’t lower it by any more, otherwise Old Pam can’t even afford to drink watered-down rum!”

“Deal!” The lady knight was still rather young and inexperienced when all was said and done. She had retreated in defeat under the dwarf’s pitiful tactics, and Leylin could not help but find it funny.

Just at this moment, a dismal cry came from the front. “Ogre! The ogre is here!”

“Stay alert!” “Stand guard!” Leylin took out his steel sword in a flash, his vigilant eyes attentively watching the uproar in front of him.

Aside from the cacophony of human voices, the sounds of strange roars and clashing weapons now sounded out.

“The ogres have really appeared!” The halfling in the squad immediately took out his dagger and hid in the shadowy corners of the carriage. The human archer climbed on top of the carriage to find somewhere suitable for himself, and his wooden bow that he usually carried on his back was now grasped in his hand.

“Ogres? I’ve been waiting for you for a long time!” Rafiniya excitedly got up and reined in her horse, immediately changing direction.
“Wait, I’ll come with you!” She heard a man’s voice come from behind her and her eyes widened in response. “When did you come?”

No one knew when Leylin had mounted the warhorse and sat behind Rafiniya. To this high-ranked knight, this was completely unimaginable.

A knight and her horse were meant to be one entity, and being approached like this without even noticing was very dangerous if the man had malicious intent. Rafiniya’s heart turned icy, and the attitude of the man seated behind her back made it difficult for her to bear.

“Perhaps you should be a thief instead! Get down immediately, Nick won’t like this at all!” At this point, the closeness of their bodies was rather strange, and Rafiniya began to lightly blush in response.

“Be a good girl, let’s go!”

“I’m not a child!” Rafiniya protested weakly, but Nick bolted out like a black whirlwind beneath them.

At this moment, Rafiniya revealed her superb horsemanship. Even in the situation where she had someone riding behind her back, she passed through the chaotic troops and obstacles to make her way to the front of the caravan.

Many carriages were in retreat, and several mercenary groups were already brandishing their swords and bows in a semicircle. Standing across the defensive troops were a group of enormous monsters, with fewer than 20 amongst their numbers.

“Are these ogres? This is the first time I’m seeing them!” Rafiniya curiously peered at the monsters in front of them.

The very first ogre was nearly 3 metres tall, with the torso of a man. It looked like an obese fatty, with dark-grey skin, a thick neck, greasy matted hair and vile sarcomas all over its body. There was a wide and flat nose under its beast-like eyes and it had
exposed its jutting black teeth, making it look as malevolent as a devil. The one standing at the very front was the chief of this group of ogres. It wore simple tanned animal skin around its waist. The other ogres were completely in the nude, everything flopping about.

“It smells awful!” Just over a dozen metres away, a putrid stench directly assaulted her nostrils, making Rafiniya involuntarily cover her nose.

“Not bad! It looks very similar to the image in the illustrated handbook of ogres, only we haven’t seen its different variations such as the two-headed ogre and the ogre shaman…” Leylin now sized up the ogres opposite him, his blue eyes shining brightly for reasons that an ordinary person would find difficult to accept.

‘A.I. Chip, scan the ogre’s stats!’

[Beep! Initiating mission, beginning scan… Data is being collected, generating graphics!] The A.I. Chip loyally executed Leylin’s command.

In a short space of time, a hologram of an ogre was projected before Leylin, along with detailed information about its stats.

[Name: Unknown, Race: Ogre, Gender: Male, Strength: 7, Agility: 3, Vitality: 10, Spirit: 1. Feats: Regeneration: Ogres possess extraordinary regenerative abilities, and can survive for a very long period of time even if they have their heads cut off. 2. Armour Skin: The grease on an ogre’s skin mixes with dirt to become a separate layer of natural defense, its effects are comparable to normal leather armour, with no resistance to magic.]

‘These stats are comparable to an average rank 7 or rank 8 fighter, and it’s only an ordinary ogre…’

‘In addition, these ogres have powerful constitutions, and terrifying regenerative capabilities. The cells in their body must be much more active than in ordinary people, and if the Devilblood Dagger
can absorb it, then perhaps it could raise my vitality by 2 or 3 points, reaching the 10 point bottleneck!’ Leylin was now looking at these ogres like they were an enormous treasure chest. Even by the most conservative estimates, this ogre tribe could raise his vitality by 1 or 2 points; it was equivalent to being blessed by the grace of a low-ranking god.

However, Leylin simply did not dare to provoke such a huge group of ogres by himself. He even needed to rely on the others for protection before he was certain he could pass through this region safely.

However, the large caravan group was currently pit against the ogres, and Leylin saw his chance.

“It’s just a scattered group of ogres, no need to worry!” At this moment, members of the Ashen Hawks rushed over, led by the impressive high-ranking fighter Siegfried who Leylin had previously met.

Seeing that there were fewer than 20 ogres against them, Siegfried’s expression relaxed.

“There aren’t any shamans. There’s few enough that the other mercenaries and carriages can gain experience from it. It won’t be as frightening in our next encounter then…” Siegfried was fully aware that if the strengths of their large caravan group could be united, then it would not be a problem at all for them to pass through this region.

However, humans were often knocked down by their fear of the unknown, especially when these ogres had such a frightening reputation in the rumours. It made it much easier to trigger collective panic, and that would be even more devastating to them than a tsunami!

As a result, it was very important to let these cowardly merchants know about these ogres in advance.
The Ashen Hawks will keep everything under control in the rear. The rest of you, advance!” Siegfried reined in his horse and allowed his members to form a defensive line behind him.

“The reward for beheading them and the contributions and monetary reward from the mercenary guild will all be yours!” Siegfried was deeply aware of the weak points of humanity, and was shrewd and ruthless enough to immediately throw out more bait to entice the others.

Several medium sized mercenary groups immediately began to desire it, but before they could discuss their decision more, the ogres across from them could not wait any longer.

“Ow ow!” The ogre who stood at the very front threw its ferocious mouth wide open like a beast and let out a terrifying roar, the unknown animal bone it gripped in its hand becoming a huge club that swept across like a fierce gale.

*Bang!* The bone club pounded at the shields of the Shield Fighters at the very front, and a dull sound could be heard. Several mercenaries immediately collapsed, their arms snapping loudly.

The general strength of an ogre was around 5 or 7 points, equal to the strength of an elite rank 5 fighter. It was something that ordinary mercenaries simply could not contend against.

As if responding to their chieftain’s roar, the ogres behind him brandished their enormous clubs and hammers, or even raised their
bare fists to throw themselves at the mercenaries. Several medium sized mercenary groups had their frontlines collapse immediately, and their leaders shouted commands to no avail. Everyone could tell that Siegfried’s expression grew dark.

‘The data and attributes of this world do not exactly follow the superposition principle. The sum of two actions does not necessarily equal the effect of each of the actions performed alone…’ Leylin watched the scene, but began to ponder other matters.

After experiencing so much in the World of Gods, he finally realised that the attribute data was different in this world.

‘Although ordinary people have an average level of 1, it seems more difficult to advance further on. Even breaking through the bottleneck of 1 for all my stats was very difficult in the beginning, and I spent quite a lot of effort to do so. After raising my stats to 5, every time I raised my stats by 1 level, it became several times more difficult to do so again. After I reach 10 points, the disparity will become even more obvious…’

Leylin had a premonition that after his average attributes reached 10 points, every time it was raised by 1 would perhaps be equivalent to the sum effects of his previous advancements. His overall strength would increase and he would grow considerably. This sort of exponential increase was different to what he was used to.

*Whooosh!* A strong gale blew across the region, and Leylin subconsciously noticed a shattered armour fragment on the floor, with mottle bloodstains all over it. This shifted his attention directly to the battlefield.

“Kill those dark-skinned bastards!” A medium sized mercenary group’s leader bellowed, radiating a tremendous force of qi.

These ogres were few in number, and did not even have a tenth of a medium sized mercenary group’s number. After the medium-ranked Professionals went to stall the ogres, the superiority in
numbers became clear.

"Ha! Kill!"

Ten low-ranked mercenaries grasped their pikes and grouped together in a simple formation, tightly trapping an ogre in their circle. Even these simple group attacks could not be deciphered by the ogre’s brains, and along with the captain’s command, ten pikes stabbed through one like vipers.

“Ow ow…” The ogre raged, and although it had caught the head of two pikes, many more pikes pierced through its body. Great quantities of fresh blood flowed forth, and the ogre struggled continuously but was firmly trapped by the prison of steel pikes. The alliance of ten low-ranking Professionals had the power to seriously hurt an ogre. The pikes used by these mercenaries seemed to have been remodelled, with the spearhead containing bloody grooves and barbs. Once one pierced a target, it would undoubtedly spread the wound and cause a hemorrhage.

Blood spurted out like a torrential fountain, and although ogres were proud of their shocking regenerative ability, it could not save the life of this one.

The ogre’s roars grew fainter, and the light in its eyes also began to dim. Its enormous corpse finally thudded onto the floor, mixing fresh blood with dirt to form a strange mottled pattern.

“Ow ow! Ow ow!” No matter how stupid a brain the ogre chieftain had, watching many of its clansmen being surrounded and cut down made it began to roar, shattering the arm of an unlucky mercenary in its hands.

The sound of its cry had changed from its earlier frenzied state, and seemed very curt. The other ogres who heard the sound began to fall back, and some even turned their backs and paid the price of being struck by the mercenaries to flee the battlefield.

“Hey! Don’t even think of running away, cowards!” At this moment, Leylin felt the black warhorse beneath him immediately
gallop off, advancing towards the ogre chieftain.
The other mercenaries were astonished when they saw a black warhorse carrying a slender knight, directly leaping over the crowd to arrive at the frontline. There was even a fighter seated behind her who seemed like he did not know whether to laugh or to cry.
Knight Battle Skill Charge! Knight Battle Skill Braveheart Knight Battle Skill– Sharp Qi!
A powerful glowing flame burst out from Rafiniya’s lance, and many mercenaries cried out “High-ranked knight!” in astonishment. The warhorse had been reinforced by many battle skills began to gallop even faster, and overtook the ogre chieftain in a flash.
“Ha!” Rafiniya thrust her lance with great force, and as it had been reinforced by Sharp Qi it immediately shattered the ogre chieftain’s defences. The lance pierced through its chest and exited through its back, and blood suddenly began to rain down.
As a rank 10 knight with a noble steed, armour and a lance, if Rafiniya could not take down an ogre who was merely equivalent to a rank 7 or rank 8 fighter her master would probably throw himself into a lake.
“Good! Who is that?” Siegfried had watched the battle from the side, and his eyes landed on the high ranking knight. This was a powerful Professional, and it often represented a good background. Not everyone could afford to raise a master knight.
“They’re not from the medium-sized mercenary groups, perhaps they’re wandering mercenaries!” A wizard clad entirely in black robes replied from his side, her eyes flashing.
“A wandering mercenary? It looks like there’s still a lot of talent at the bottom of the barrel. Send some men over to speak to them!” Siegfried stroked his chin, feeling rather curious about the knight’s identity. At this point, the wizard nodded indifferently.
“Haha… So the rumoured ogres are only at this level?” Rafiniya strung up the ogre chieftain’s corpse on a pole, a playful voice
coming from within her armour. Leylin could tell that there was some uneasiness hidden in her slightly shaky voice. “Hey hey… Shouldn’t you let me down first?”

“Ah! How are you still here?” As expected, Rafiniya had already forgotten all about Leylin during her earlier charge, and only recalled that there was still someone seated behind her now. At the same time, Leylin heard her mutter to herself, “Awful, how awful, it’s so dirty… I don’t want this lance anymore…”

……

Although Rafiniya had intervened at the very end, the fight had spread towards the caravans, and after she had finally charged towards the ogre chieftain, the rest of the ogres ran even quicker. In the blink of an eye, they seemed to have disappeared into the dense shrubs by the road, which made the mercenaries who wanted the reward money feel crestfallen.

Rafiniya had won the credit, and seemed to be in a trance-like state. She did not even respond to the men sent over by the Ashen Hawks, and finally Leylin had to present himself and chat with them.

Only after returning to their own carriage did Rafiniya reap the reverent gazes of the others, and usually this little lass would have been so happy that if she had a tail, it would be rapidly wagging. However, the girl seemed most preoccupied with throwing away her steel lance which was covered in the ogre’s blood and stench. She went alone into the sisters’ carriage, and a faint sound of retching was heard. Leylin reckoned that she still needed some time to adapt.

Old Pam once again had picked up scraps, and collected the lance that Rafiniya no longer wanted. He put it away carefully as if it was some treasured object.
After hearing that Rafiniya had abandoned the ogre’s ears as she was afraid of how dirty it was, Old Pam threw a huge tantrum and stomped his feet. He even scolded Leylin loudly for being a wastrel. The level of his greed made Leylin wonder if Old Pam descended from the blood of a hoarding dragon.

“Haha… If those ogres come again, Old Pam will let them taste the power of my gun… HURR…” Old Pam was gripping a bottle of rum in both hands, and belched from time to time, his face completely flushed with excitement.

After fighting the ogres, the entire merchant group began to continue on their journey. However, they had all calmed down and were no longer as afraid as they were before. After passing through their first trial, they had realised that ogres were not up to their level. Although the ogres were very strong, they would still get injured and bleed, and they even took the head of the chieftain as a souvenir.

After the fear had passed, all of their thoughts grew lively again. Even Hera and her sister seemed to smile more.

‘Really…’ Leylin looked down at the scene and inwardly shook his head, a trace of suspicion in his eyes.

‘Why do I feel that there was something off about these bunch of ogres? It seemed like they were using… A plan against the soldiers? What a joke! Even if they had the mental capacity, how could they come up with that idea? Perhaps it was just a coincidence… No, the rumoured two-headed ogres or ogre shamans would perhaps have this sort of intelligence…’

‘If it’s true, then things will become interesting…’ Leylin’s lips curved into a meaningful smile.
The events proceeded according to Leylin’s expectations. Several ogres came up to challenge them once in a while, from five or six to over a dozen at a time. Obviously unable to harm their large group, they would run away with their tails tucked between their legs, sometimes leaving numerous corpses behind.

Many mercenaries were terrified at the beginning, but as time went on, they would lie on their fronts on the carriage roofs and watch the pathetic ways the ogres fled while bursting out in laughter. This relaxed attitude even infected the Ashen Hawks. Leylin found that besides Siegfried and that wizard, the other members seemed to overestimate their enemies.

“There are two more days till we get out of this region. It’s the easiest mission Old Pam has ever done!” As the group proceeded, the dwarf, Pam, clung to his bottle of alcohol as if it was precious, and his brandy nose shone brilliantly.

“I never want to see those disgusting vermin again…” Rafiniya’s resentment was obvious. Ever since the time she had tried to show off, she had not participated in the attacks on the ogres. It seemed that this little lady had been scared stupid by the painful experience.

*Awoo…* At this moment, the terrible cries of the ogres sounded ahead of the group. Old Pam contentedly hiccupped, not the least bit affected by the sounds.

“Hic… again, again! The ones giving us money for free are back…"
I wonder who’ll be lucky enough to get the ears of the ogres. The rewards are very good…”
“Things aren’t going to be so easy…” Leylin unsheathed his own longsword, looking grim.
“What do you mean?” Pam had some suspicions, but his expression quickly changed. Continuous cries sounded from all directions, concealing a terrifying intent that even caused the warhorse Nick to neigh in distress.
“Damn it, there are so many of them!” Old Pam’s bottle fell to the ground, creating a crunching sound. However, he had no time to feel sorry for his treasure, and instead immediately whipped out the firearm at his waist.
*Tak tak! Tak tak!* Ahead of the group now was pure chaos. Many merchants abandoned their goods and fled for their lives the way they’d come, creating an even larger uproar. There were many casualties among the mercenaries, and a huge number of tall figures could be seen in the distance.
“It’s a trap! We’ve been surrounded!”
“Help! There are over 200 ogres!”
“Damn it, where are the Ashen Hawks? Where’s Siegfried? Could he have already died by the hands of the ogre shamans?” Many voices mixed together, and everyone next to Leylin instantly paled. They were then drowned out in a chaotic stream of people, forced along with the crowd. Helpless as leaves in a typhoon, they had to flee for their lives.
“Sister Hera!” Rafiniya yelled, jumping onto the horse carriage and taking over the job of the horsekeeper who had disappeared, holding tightly onto the reins. The halfling thief looked like he wanted to help but was incapable enough to, and disappeared into the masses.
As for the human archer? That fellow had gotten onto Rafiniya’s precious horse, Nick, and galloped off quickly when the chaos had
started. Rafiniya had needed to control the horse carriage and had no time to care about this, which allowed the archer to successfully steal the horse.

Wails and shrieks could be heard again and again, and the roars and cries from the ogres behind them were the strongest catalysts. The entire large caravan group completely fell apart.

The crowd pushed and squeezed their way through. In order to get on their way, they did not mind pointing their weapons at their own people.

With such a huge confusion, Leylin quickly disappeared along with the carriage. Of course, this was his intention.

‘So this actually was a trap! Though it’s just a pocket formation (military tactic, enemies lured into narrow enclosed ‘pocket’ area, their entrance/exit is surrounded by soldiers to seal up the ‘pocket’, isolating the enemy), I didn’t expect that that these ogres were so intelligent… I really can’t look down on them anymore.’

At the moment, the cumbersome horse carriage was like a broken sailboat in a tsunami, on the verge of being destroyed at any moment. The dwarf Pam from before had already disappeared. Based on his physique, Leylin could only pray that Pam was not trampled to death in the chaos.

‘It’s my chance!’ Leylin’s figure nimbly danced through the crowd, heading in the opposite direction. The cries of the ogres were even more clear there, and the horrifying sounds of tearing flesh rang out.

‘The main forces of the ogres should be here. I can take perfect advantage of this chaos, furthermore…’ Leylin’s eyes glinted coldly.

The ogres did not hold a numbers advantage over the mercenary group. They could try to defeat them heads on, but it would come at a terrible cost. Instead, they’d set up an ambush, even leaving an escape route at the back.
This wasn’t out of goodwill. Their goal was to further incite chaos among the group when there was still a chance of escape, not everyone would be courageous enough to look forward and risk their lives. In order to have a chance at survival, how many would not hesitate to strike at their own companions? More importantly, pursuing scattered soldiers was a battle that practically could not be lost.

‘Only the two-headed leaders or ogre shamans could come up with such a plan…’ Leylin’s eyes glinted, ‘So the only way to survive is to head in the opposite direction and break through this formation. Their main forces are here, and there’ll be many scattered soldiers and prisoners. There’ll be little chance of people pursuing me. As long as I get a quick horse and sprint for a while, I’ll be able to get out of this ogre-filled region…’ Those who could see this path and take it were truly determined, and held perseverance. It was a pity that Leylin could see practically nobody who’d come to the same decision as himself.

Perhaps, there were a few intelligent merchants would have been able to understand this, but their panic had lowered their ability to think by a great amount. Or perhaps they were aware but lacked the strength to do this, and could only go along with the crowd and pray to the Goddess of Luck to aid in their escape.

‘Furthermore… If I don’t go to the frontlines, where will I get high-ranked ogres to absorb strength from?’ Leylin burst into an empty large horse carriage.

He was no longer dressed in leather armour, and the steel longsword that he usually used was tossed aside. He’d dressed himself in black form-fitting clothing, using the same to hide half his face like a common thief.

The ring of wizardry glimmered faintly from his left hand on occasion, and there was a cold bloody light that flickered in the cuffs of his right hand, like the tongue of a poisonous snake.
The further he got, the lesser people there were. Flags, carriages, armour and weapons were abandoned everywhere. Blood flowed without end, forming dark red puddles on the ground. A few ogres occasionally munched at incomplete corpses, just the sight alone enough to terrify someone. There were a few mercenary groups still immersed in battle. At the heart of it, the Ashen Hawks’ flag stood tall.

“Captain, our brothers can’t hold on for long!” The wizard waved her arm, and Inspirational Boost and several similar spells were cast unceasingly. It allowed the mercenaries nearby to perk up.

The Ashen Hawks and a few other midscale mercenary groups had previously held back a large portion of the ogres, allowing the merchant groups a chance to escape. An unending stream of ogres still surrounded, even outnumbering them at this point.

“We bought them the time time to escape, we’ve done our jobs! Prepare the spells; the entire team will scatter and leave. Let’s meet up again at the Giant Rock Town we passed by earlier!” Siegfried now had surging qi twining around his body. His armour emitted a slight luster, and surprisingly enough it was a magic artifact that had a high grade. His giant silver-white blade was now stained with the blood of the ogres.

Heaven Breaker! The terrifying might of the battle technique of a high-ranked fighter was much more powerful than Rafiniya’s. Qi burst out like an arrow, instantly resulting in massive casualties amongst the ogres. There were even some cracks in the encirclement.

“Break out!” Siegfried urged his horse on madly, but while passing by the wizard, he spoke in a low voice, “Let’s break out through the front and meet at the largest city ahead!”

As a veteran captain of a team, Siegfried was not as righteous and great as he appeared to be. In reality, good people never made it for
long as mercenaries. As long as he and the wizard lived, the Ashen Hawks could be rebuilt at any point.
‘Just from the perspective of a mercenary, he’s done very well. He shouldn’t be reprimanded for what he said at the last bit…’ At the sidelines of the battlefield, Leylin hid in the shadows and hugged his arms while evaluating Siegfried, ‘But.. The ogres this time aren’t quite so simple…’
He looked past the encirclement right in front of him. At the back, he saw a hint of intent to kill.
Chain Lightning! The black-robed wizard tore a scroll, and silver-white lightning chains exploded, leaping through the group of ogres. Those who were struck collapsed with a cry, a charred smell transmitting and opening a path for the wizard.
Upon seeing this, the wizard was delighted. However, before she could do anything else, a powerful magic undulation was transmitted from afar.
“Crap!” The wizard’s expression quickly changed.
These new ogres were more than two metres tall. They were dwarves given the ogre standard, but they had tattooed bodies and barbaric runes with unknown purposes. "Ogre shamans!" The black-robed wizard exclaimed to herself. Shamans were the ogres who held bloodlines, ones who would awaken abilities similar to magic with age. They were the decision makers of ogre tribes. It was surprising that they lay in wait here. The black-robed wizard suddenly had a premonition of a great catastrophe. "Roar..." The ogre shamans gave the black-robed wizard no time to think. The tattoos and runes on their bodies shone layer by layer amidst their roars, their innate abilities as bloodline holders allowing them to cast such spells without learning or memorising anything. However, they still had the support and usage of the Weave. Magical power gathered together, and numerous huge fireballs glowed orange as they tore apart the wizard’s frail armour. The wizard was burnt to ashes along with the horse she rode. "Lena!" Siegfried’s eyes turned red, and he turned back despite having broken out of the siege, charging straight for the shamans. While he might cold and selfish, Siegfried still prioritised his true friend and lover. The death of Lena immediately made him hot-headed, filled with the desire and impulse for revenge. *Clang!* A silver-white longsword was smashed mid-air by a large
black claw hammer, producing a dull and loud sound. The terrifying recoil allowed Siegfried to somehow regain his composure and take a proper look at his opponent. This was a two-headed ogre who was over four metres tall, its skin a frightening blood-red with scales on it. One of its two fierce-looking heads was larger than the other, disgusting saliva dripping from the canine teeth. The thing rode a deformed earth lizard with a similar number of heads, although one of those was just a huge tumour with vague features.

*Roar…* The two-headed ogre exclaimed, brandishing a giant, black claw hammer that had come out of nowhere, charging towards Siegfried. The horrifying strength from its astounding physique caused Siegfried to retreat. While his warhorse was fierce, it was no match for the ogreish beast. It was already spewing white froth, evidently unable to continue.

After the appearance of the two-headed ogre, the rest of the shamans and ordinary ogres seemed to have found a pillar to rely on, and began to pursue and kill the other mercenaries. With the help of the shamans, the casualties of the mercenaries were immense. Only a few successfully broke out, and none of them dared take a look back and fled.

“There’s even the two-headed ogre commander and ogre shamans!” Leylin exclaimed, eyes constantly flickering as he called up their stats.

[Name Unknown. Race: Ogre (Mutated) Gender: Male. Strength: 16, Agility: 7, Vitality: 15, Spirit: 6. Description: Two-headed ogres are mutants that occasionally appear in ogre tribes. Their two brains often leave them stuck between being wise or confused. Of course, there are exceptions where the intelligence of the ogres evolves. After evolution, the two-headed ogres are more powerful than ordinary ones. They, who have advanced in their wisdom, usually...
become the commanders of the ogre tribes.] [Name Unknown. Race: Ogre (Shaman). Gender: Male. Strength: 5, Agility: 4, Vitality: 9, Spirit: 10. Feats: 1. Regeneration. Ogres have extraordinary regeneration abilities, and even if the head is detached, they can still survive for a long period of time. 2. Bloodline Holder: The ogres who have activated the bloodline of primordial spellcasters possess abilities similar to magic. However, the type of spells and number of times spells can be cast depends on how far the bloodline has been awakened.]

‘Pretty good stats. If I can devour all of them, things will be more perfect…’ The Devilblood Dagger silently appeared in Leylin’s hands. The devilish head hummed, as if speaking to its thirst for flesh and blood.

“Now!” When Leylin stepped out of stealth, the dagger had already pierced the throat of an ordinary ogre. Terrifying devouring force exploded, causing the other party to instantly turn into a withered corpse. A hot stream of energy flowed into his hands from the dagger and rose along his arm, followed by a prompt from the A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Host has gone through a one-time amplification from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength +0.1, Vitality +0.05.]

‘As expected of the ogres, they have very dense life energy!’ Leylin sighed in praise, feet still moving. It was like a death god had begun to dance, the dagger glinting with blood.

Afterwards, he jumped onto a masterless warhorse, riding away in a cloud of dust. The mercenaries had no idea what was happening beside them, nor did the simple-minded ogres. All they saw was a vile human jumping out and killing a number of their people.

*Roar!* Amidst the furious roars, an ogre shaman brought a few elite ogre warriors and gave chase.

The two-headed ogre who was their commander was still contending with Siegfried. He was a high-ranked human warrior
and not so easily defeated, and it could only let out a few cries that nobody could understand. A few ogres quickened their movements.

A handsome brown horse sped through the path, followed by a few boosted ogres. This strange group of a human and his pursuers soon covered a long distance.

There was a limit to the duration of a strength buff. Just as the shaman began to despair, it was delighted to see that the human in front of it had stopped.

“Just one ogre shaman? What a disappointment.” Leylin reined in the warhorse, seeing the little team that had pursued him while looking disappointed.

However, the simple-minded ogres did not care for what kind of expression Leylin had on his face. In reality, if not for the lead of the two-headed ogre, they might not even know how to set up the simplest traps. Hence, after seeing their foe, all of them charged forward.

Tattoos lit up on the shaman’s body, turning into countless small fireballs.

Flight of the Dragon! The rays from a spell flashed at Leylin’s side, and immediately after he elegantly soared from the back of the horse rapidly.

This advanced version of Fly allowed wizards to change directions quickly, and for those with great control like Leylin it only served to make them stronger.

*Rumble!* The warhorse that had been struck by the flames didn’t even have the time to produce a miserable cry before it turned into a pile of ash. Leylin’s figure, on the other hand, was like an eagle as he swooped down from the sky.

*Roar!* Leylin easily dodged a few fireballs, and a blood red light glimmered as he pierced through an ogre’s throat.

With these quick attacks, the enraged shaman’s spells had been
emptied, and it had turned into someone even weaker than a normal ogre.
“Even if you can use magic, you’re too simple-minded to use it well.” A crimson tornado blew past, and the ogres that now had no defence became prime targets for the airborne Leylin. After a few pass-bys, the ogres collapsed one by one. At the end, the bloody dagger struck the shaman’s forehead.

[Beep! Host has gone through a one-time amplification from the Devilblood Dagger! Vitality +0.2. Agility +0.1. Strength +0.2.] The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded.

Ogres had strong muscles and flesh, and were comparable to middle-ranked warriors. They weren’t easily found in such great numbers. However, Leylin’s spirit state stayed constant, which was a pity.

After hitting the threshold that of 10 points, the Devilblood Dagger had become much less effective. If not, the once-Sovereign King of Gluttony, Beelzebub, could use just the Devilblood Dagger to establish a terrifying army that would get stronger the more it fought. He’d be able to take over the prime material plane.

‘Since I’ve confirmed his location…’ Leylin thought about it, and then flung dust behind.

“Dust of Disappearance! Spell of Invisibility!” Once the spells were cast, his body grew transparent and slowly disappeared into thin air.

As a wizard, Leylin naturally had considered using a flying spell and passing through this region, but he’d then abandoned this thought. The ogre-infested region was vast, and it was impossible for him to identify Beelzebub’s location. There were also limitations when it came to flying spells. If the place he landed was where Beelzebub moved about, or if he caught the attention of ogres and was attacked with magic or crossbow attacks… Leylin was not willing to take on the consequences.
As he was right now, it was impossible for him to win against the two-headed ogre commander, much less the joint attack from numerous huge ogres. Now though, with a general understanding of where the ogres were located and with their attention focused on the human merchant organisations as well as the mercenaries, Leylin was confident in being able to sneak back. After all, an opportunity to see so many ogres was rare. Leylin also wanted to raise his abilities all the way to 10 points. With the help of an invisibility spell, Leylin successfully returned to the battlefield, the ordinary ogres unable to discover him at all. Unless a shaman had awakened a detection spell and used it at the right time, he was safe. The battle was already reaching its end. Many mercenary bodies were strewn everywhere, turning into the ogres’ rations. Only the central battlefield still had sounds of a fight.
865 - Another Meeting

At the centre of the battlefield were the high-ranked warrior Siegfried and the two-headed ogre commander.
Siegfried’s body was now soaked in blood, and his warhorse had long since disappeared. There was a massive wound on his thigh now, and he could only use the silver-white longsword as a crutch to stay upright.
Opposite him, the two-headed ogre only seemed a little ruffled, but had no large injuries. Just from its heaving chest, it was obvious that much of its energy had been exhausted, and it might even have suffered internal injuries.
The few shamans nearby surrounded the two along with the regular warriors. Evidently, the victor had already been decided. Unless he got some assistance or pulled out a powerful magic scroll, the future of this high-ranked warrior would be bleak.
“Huff, huff… So I’m finally going to die?” Everything in front of Siegfried was a blur. Watching the two-headed ogre closing in, his limbs were like lead, with no strength in them whatsoever.
“Lena, I’m coming to keep you company!” The various scenes from his life appeared in Siegfried’s mind, finally stopping on the instant that the black-robed female wizard smiled.
Afterwards, he watched the large claw hammer strike down, the target obviously being his brain. If nothing went wrong, his head would have burst apart like a pumpkin.
However, the lady luck seemed to favour him at that moment. The
huge claw hammer stopped still in mid-air, and the two-headed ogre’s expression was filled with fury and shock. A crimson dagger appeared through its chest.

“What’s going on?” A hint of doubt flashed on Siegfried’s face, and his body began to involuntarily rise.

A young man with a draconic expression had grabbed hold of his arm and was flying speedily, the winds that struck Siegfried’s face were so strong that he could feel pain. At his back were the enraged howls of the ogres, as well as a few useless fireballs or lightning arrows.

‘Hold Person! As well as Flight of the Dragon! Have I been rescued by a passing wizard?’ Siegfried suddenly felt a hope for survival.

At this moment, he saw the wizard doing a pretty turn in mid-air, evading the attacks of the shamans on the ground. He pointed downwards with his right hand, and terrifying black corrosive clouds descended and blocked the views of many ogres.

Cloudkill! Leylin, who now had nothing to worry about, flapped his wings and carried Siegfried away from the battlefield.

Feeling his head spin as he flew, Siegfried crumpled to the ground, the smell of soil and crisp grass having him him involuntarily take a few greedy breaths. It was only at this moment that he could size up the wizard that had saved his life.

‘Very young, but his magic abilities far exceed Lena…’

Siegfried respectfully lowered his head. He knew that there were many spells that could help maintain one’s youth. The wizard who looked young in front of him might very well be an old freak with mood swings.

‘But he looks rather familiar… Wait!’ Siegfried struggled to get up, “Are you the fighter who was accompanying that high-ranked female knight, Ley?”

“You actually remember me?”

“Whatever it is, thank you for saving me!” Siegfried thanked him
sincerely, and tacitly did not ask questions regarding Leylin.
“Don’t worry about it. I just couldn’t bear to let this go to waste!”
“Couldn’t bear to let what go to waste?” At that moment, Siegfried felt an unprecedented sense of danger, but he who was grievously injured had no way to resist. At the moment of his death, all he saw was a blood-red dagger piercing his throat.
‘If he was going to kill me… why save me?’ Siegfried closed his eyes with this question inside his head, while Leylin felt the immense power gained from the Devilblood Dagger.
A two-headed ogre commander and a high-ranked warrior on top of that; it made him feel slightly full.
At this moment, the prompt of the A.I. Chip sounded in Leylin’s mind. [Beep! Host has gone through a two-time boost from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength+2.5, Agility+1, Vitality+2.65, Spirit+0.001.]

A hot stream flowed from the dagger to all parts of his body, and was greedily absorbed by his cells. Leylin lifted his right arm, the slender palm holding within it strength that was now not lacking when compared to the ogres. On top of that, there were even constant after-images from it.
“I’m quite close to having all my attributes at 10 points, reaching the fundamental first step of perfecting my genes…” Leylin mumbled, looking at his stats. There were already changes.

“Vitality is already very close to the bottleneck. Besides, a stronger body is more suitable for my spiritual force…” Regular wizards commonly had powerful spiritual force but weak bodies. Leylin, however, was entirely different. Along with powerful spiritual
force, he also had a terrifying vitality and strength comparable to holy warriors!

“Things will only be perfected when my vitality matches my spirit. Strength and agility are both important as well... Are these the laws governing the World of Gods?” Leylin sighed, and his hands then began to search the high-ranked knight’s body in a practiced manner. As a high-ranked fighter and the captain of the large mercenary group, the Ashen Hawks, he should have some good items on his body. Leylin never let chances like these pass by, but was left disappointed.

“Besides the magical armour and weapons, he doesn’t even have a bag of holding? Does that mean all mercenaries are poor, and even a first class captain is the same?” Leylin only managed to find a few magic artifacts and a coin pouch from Siegfried’s corpse. There were tens of gold kronas inside, as well as a few cards from the church of wealth, which would come up to around ten thousand kronas.

It was a pity that these cards were bound to the user and had to be authenticated to use. After his death, nobody could take out that money unless they could deceive the verification methods of divine force, as well as deal with the rage of the Goddess of Wealth. When it came to those who vied for coins with her, the Goddess of Wealth would probably become even more crazed than an enraged dinosaur!

For regular bandits, such a profit was a great wealth enough to squander away for half a lifetime, even though the crystal cards could not be converted. However, Leylin cared little for this.

‘Something’s off! To take care of such a large mercenary group, the Ashen Hawks as well as wizard, he should have more wealth than that. Could there be other hiding places? In that case…’ Leylin quickly peeled off Siegfried’s clothes and checked everything inch by inch.
Finally, he found something. At an area near his chest on the shirt, there was a difference in terms of texture as compared to the surrounding regions. If one did not look closely, it was impossible to identify. This method of concealment immediately aroused Leylin’s interest. He quickly cut out this material and began to unravel this riddle. ‘Mercenaries use potions of invisibility at most. With the A.I. Chip’s simulation tests, they’re easily found, but with a wizard by his side, it might be necessary to use magic…’ Such intricate decryption work obviously was not a huge issue for Leylin. Soon enough, after being soaked in a solution, the fabric of the shirt was dyed a light yellow.

Reveal All! Appraisal! Rays from a series of spells appeared, and light red lines appeared on the parchment to form a map. “A treasure map? Interesting!” Leylin memorised the map in an instant. Upon seeing the name of the region in the corner, the sides of his lips quirked slightly. “So it’s in the Dambrath Capital? I should take a look then…” After hastily tidying up the traces here, Leylin then left the area. “I took care of the two-headed ogre, and without a leader, there will probably be unrest amongst them. There’ll even be power struggles for the new commander position; they likely won’t have the energy to pursue me. The merchant group have walked quite a distance, and I’ll be able to reach Gloomwood Castle a short distance away. That’s an important checkpoint into the kingdom. After that, I’ll enter the central plains, where I won’t be threatened by the ogres…” Leylin found his way and began to hasten towards Gloomwood Castle.

“Sigh… I should have kept the warhorse. I’m going to have to walk there with my own two feet. I hope I’ll find a few lost warhorses. Even if they’re worn out, I’ll still take them…” Just as
Leylin was mumbling, his expression suddenly changed, “What the hell, there really is one!”
His expression abruptly showed delight as he turned to the right. A couple hundred metres ahead there was a black dot eventually turned larger, and the regular sounds of trotting were heard. After that, a figure being carried on the back of the horse entered Leylin’s sights.
However, after he got closer, Leylin’s smile widened.
“Hey, we meet again!” Leylin took the initiative to draw close and greet him, while the other party looked as if he had seen a ghost.
“Damn it– No, I mean… Ley! Why are you here?” In front of Leylin was that human archer who had stolen Rafiniya’s warhorse amidst the chaos. As for his name? Leylin had never taken notice of that.
He had actually dared break out of the siege by fleeing in the opposite direction and succeeded! His luck and guts were not to be underestimated. However, he did not seem to be in the best condition now. Not only did he have injuries, the large wooden bow that was always by his side had disappeared.
I don’t care what you’re thinking right now. Give me that warhorse!” Leylin watched him, his eyes full of ridicule. “He… hehe… I’m only borrowing it from Rafiniya. I was going to…” The archer had a forced smile on his face, but then his expression suddenly changed, “Look there!” Without waiting for Leylin to turn, he raised his arms and shot three spring-loaded arrows towards Leylin’s face. “Go!” After shooting those arrows, the archer did not even give Leylin another look. Instead, he whipped the horse he was mounted on, wanting to leave as soon as possible. He could tell that Leylin had no injuries at all and was in a much better state than he was. To be able to break out of the encirclement of the ogres without injury meant that Leylin was not someone he could contend with at this point. Hence, the archer firmly chose to flee. “A great decision, though it’s a pity that it’s pointless…” A magic missile flew from Leylin’s hands. With a strange trajectory, it sent the arrows flying, and without losing power struck the archer’s back. *Pak!* The archer suddenly flew from the horse, a terrifying sunken wound on his back. “You– You’re a wizard!” The archer struggled, eyes full of longing as he reached towards the skies fiercely with fingers like chicken claws. His body thrashed around wildly as if he was in the throes
of death. Seconds later, he stopped moving. Having lost its new master, Nick stopped galloping. The warhorse whinnied as it began to leisurely nibble at the grass on the side. “I’m your master now.” Leylin moved forward and grabbed Nick’s reins, swinging onto its back without hesitation as he announced his ownership. Nick had no objection whatsoever to his actions, as expected of a warhorse with no integrity. Or perhaps, it had a one-track mind and had no ability understand something so profound. As Leylin squeezed his thighs against the horse, the black warhorse immediately seemed to turn into a streak of lightning and began to speed ahead on the ground. As a knight’s mount, it was obviously more spirited than other horses, and Leylin found it wonderful. He wasn’t too far from their previous battlefield, and there was the occasional luck, or perhaps unfortunate, person who had escaped the ogres’ pursuit. Leylin chose to pay no attention to their cries for help. Even if those merchants showed off their sparkling gold kronas, they meant nothing to him. After all, the added wealth of all these little merchants might not even be enough to make up the amount of gold krona that he used in a single experiment. Why would he bother with this? However, after passing by a small forest, something unexpected happened. Nick, who had been tame all this while, suddenly went mad and dashed into the bushes. “Why is it doing this? Don’t tell me…” While he could forcefully control the horse, Leylin only pulled at the reins for a bit and then gave up. In his opinion, there was no harm in doing something if it was convenient for him, and he could even save his own party without putting in a lot of extra effort. He had no idea how effective his
help would be, though.
After passing through the thick layer of black brambles, a desperate scene appeared in front of him.
A carriage that had lost its mount had collapsed to the side, whereat Hera and her sister were embracing each other and shivering. Numerous terrifying ogres surrounded them, eyes full of unconcealed greed.
Rafiniya was holding her sword with both hands, her armour full of holes. There were traces of ground flesh and blood on it, and it was clear she had experienced countless bitter battles.
The female knight now had a deep wound on her thigh, where one could even somewhat see the bones. This made the girl grit her teeth, crystalline tears appearing at the corners of her eyes. Despite it all, she maintained the determination on her face. Without her protection, Hera and her sister would long since have become rations for the ogres.
Putting two and two together, Leylin had a general idea of what had happened. After being separated in the streams of people, they had run wildly all over the place. With Rafiniya’s help, they took care of many enemies and had finally arrived here.
“However, if they chose this direction purposely instead if accidentally, Hera is more wise than I previously assumed…” The three ogres that were attacking them were normal warriors, and there were no shamans present. They may be huge threats to the heavily injured Rafiniya, but they were nothing at all to Leylin.
“Hey, beautiful ladies. Good morning!” Leylin seemed to arrive like an unexpected guest, leisurely greeting everyone as if he had coincidentally and naturally bumped into them on his afternoon stroll.
“Nick!” Rafiniya saw her black warhorse, eyes blazing, “And Ley! You darned thief! If not for my companion being stolen, how would I have…”
Leylin was completely immune to the words of this female knight. Upon hearing her words, he merely rolled his eyes, automatically tuning her out.

*Growl…* After seeing Leylin’s appearance, the few ogres with simple minds had no other thoughts as they pounced forward.

“My longsword was discarded just now. What a pity…” Leylin patted at his warhorse, and Nick was able to leap in a way it was unable to usually. It jumped over the ogre’s head and came to Rafiniya’s side.

“Give me that sword.” Rafiniya initially looked ready to refuse, but for some reason she felt a sense of terror as she looked at Leylin’s calm face. She obediently handed it over.

‘Strange… why did I…’ Before she had the time to ponder this, however, her little mouth opened in shock and amazement.

“Not bad!” Leylin shook the knight sword in his hands. As a high-ranked knight, Rafiniya’s equipment was all of a high grade. Whether it was her horse or her sword, they were much better than what he had before.

The glaring brilliance of qi burst forth from Leylin’s hands. Battle technique: Qi Strengthening! Battle technique: Charge! Battle technique: Cross Slash!

Leylin’s figure instantly turned into a streak of black, and the longsword was enveloped in the luster of qi as he began his assault on the three barbaric beings.

Cross-shaped light-rays flashed ahead, and three malicious heads flew off. Even after the corpses of the giant ogres crumpled to the ground, Rafiniya still seemed to be in disbelief.

‘On top of being able to activate Qi, his advanced battle techniques and his proficient battle techniques are even better than my teacher’s…’ Rafiniya looked absent minded, not even able to catch her longsword properly when Leylin tossed it back.

The battle techniques Leylin had just shown were not inferior to the
most powerful person she’d ever seen, and that was a high-ranked paladin!
“Thank you.” At this moment, Hera hugged her little sister as they stood up, eyes full of gratitude aimed at Leylin. If not for Rafiniya and Leylin, she and her sister would long since have turned into jerky for the ogres to stockpile. There was no way to even escape. As for Leylin’s sudden ‘disappearance’, this lady rationally chose not to pursue this. Things were very dangerous now, and in a situation where Rafiniya was gravely injured, they were in need of Leylin’s protection. Leylin did not even need to harbour malicious intent. As long as he abandoned the three girls, they were in deep trouble.
She immediately spoke out, “Thank you Mister Ley. I’ll increase the commission once we reach the town, I’m sure it will satisfy you.” She had especially lowered her own status while speaking, and Leylin nodded on the inside.
“Wait… If you’re going to talk about raising the commission, then poor Old Pam should have a part of it too!” At this moment, the carriage at the side completely fell apart, and a dwarf with a broken leg rolled out like a ball.
“Things were completely chaotic when we were surrounded. Thankfully, we had Rafiniya protecting us, and we also bumped into Mister Pam after that…” Hera smiled forcefully as she explained the situation to Leylin. He merely rolled his shoulders, speechless at the dwarf’s luck in keeping his life. Or perhaps, he was really blessed by the Goddess of Luck?
Leylin and the group set out immediately after some rest and reorganisation. This was still a danger zone, after all. However, the horse carriage from before was now useless. Leylin had no choice but to modify the remains of the carriage to a handcart, allowing Hera, her sister and Rafiniya to squeeze together. They had to bring the dwarf Pam along as well. The warhorse,
Nick, was regrettably demoted to a worn-out old horse, exerting all its strength to pull the cart forward slowly. “You didn’t see it, but three ogres pounced towards Old Pam! Each of their mouths were as large as my head…” From atop the cart came Old Pam’s bragging with gusto. Rafiniya squeezed forward, looking at Leylin. “When are you returning Nick to me?” “Give me a ransom in exchange. Don’t forget, this warhorse is something I got from winning against the archer. This is a place is protected by the laws of the kingdom. If you want the horse, go look for the archer…” Sitting atop Nick, Leylin spoke seriously. This was much like the thinking of a bandit. “Damn it, that archer’s corpse should have already entered the stomachs of the ogres!” Rafiniya mumbled to herself, occasionally muttering words like ‘thief’. At the end, she unwillingly tossed a gold card at Leylin. “These are all my savings. I have nothing more…” “That’s not bad…” Taking a look at the numbers, Leylin then began to whistle contentedly, “Deal! It’s yours!” Rafiniya then gloomily found out that she was unable to ride Nick due to her injuries. Everything seemed to stay the same as before.
867 - Gloomwood Castle

“Thank you, Ley!” Rafiniya’s voice sounded after a while.

The female knight was no fool. She knew that without Leylin, they really would have died at the hands of the ogres, disappearing into their mouths. She obviously didn’t want to die like that, and just the thought of it already left her in fear.

All those adventure books were scams! There were no romantic heroes and beautiful princesses. Rather, there were thieves and bandits, as well as ogres who ate people alive!

“So… Now that your fantasies have been destroyed, will you still continue adventuring?” Leylin asked in curiosity.

“Of course. This is my path as a knight!” The female knight’s voice was filled with resolution. “As long as I can endure, evil will be destroyed by my hands one day. With my work, the world will regain its beauty!”

“…” Leylin rolled his eyes speechlessly. This directionally-challenged moron seemed to show no signs of waking up to reality.

“What kind of expression is that?”

“No, I was just thinking that you’re very suited to becoming a paladin of the God of Justice. Really!”

……

Thankfully, the Goddess of Luck finally showed mercy on them,
allowing their little group to leave the region where the ogres had wreaked havoc.
If not, once Leylin was surrounded by the ogres, he would probably abandon everyone and make a path for himself to escape. Besides him, everyone, including the warhorse Nick, would become rations and jerky for the ogres.
“Are they all confused because of the commander’s death?” On the way, he bumped into a few members of the merchant groups who had been separated, and even a few thieves and the like. It was a pity for them that even Rafiniya had learnt to steel her resolve. The high-ranked female knight who had regained a portion of her strength did not need much energy to take care of these people.
All that had continued until this day, when a small city with a black wall appeared in front of Leylin.
“We’re here, this is Gloomwood Castle. After this place, we will reach the central plains of the Dambrath Kingdom, the territories there managed by people directly subordinate to the king.” After seeing this city, Rafiniya screamed in joy. Hera and Yalani smiled, looking as if a weight had been lifted from their shoulders. They were only halfway through their long trip, but the exhaustion and terror was more than enough to leave them in fear.
“Halt! Stop the vehicle for an inspection!” At the city gate, Leylin’s group of strangely-dressed adventures were immediately stopped by the guards.
‘Oh? These soldiers seem pretty strong... And they’re Professionals who have seen blood already.’ Leylin saw Hera going up ahead to negotiate with them, his brows furrowing slightly. With his experience, he could obviously see that the guards were stronger than usual. They could even be people in charge of Professional groups, incomparable to the previous party.
He could sense tens of elite archers aiming their weapons at this
area from the shadows, leaving him with a sense of danger. ‘To even give me a sense of danger… These archers should have equipment like the Spellslayer Arrow. How wealthy…’ Leylin shot a glance towards the top of the city wall discreetly, and then maintained a nonchalant face as he looked at Hera and the rest. After checking the proof that they were mercenaries and nobles, the middle-aged soldier who seemed to be the leader headed over to them.

“Terrible events have occurred at Gloomwood Castle lately. Don’t stay long if you don’t have business here.”

“Thank you for kind intentions. Officer, is this about the ogres?” A hint of curiosity showed in Hera’s eyes.

“The ogres? They’re far from real devils…” The middle-aged soldier sneered, but did not elaborate. Only when he passed by Leylin and the other mercenaries did he warn them, “Don’t stir up trouble inside, or else…”

His threatening words immediately angered Rafiniya. Leylin and Old Pam, on the other hand, had met such situations before. They rolled their shoulders back in answer, though it was not obvious whether they truly took heed of the advice.

“Hmph…” The leader did not argue about this with Hera, looking disappointed. He waved his hand, “Go on!”

“The strength of this legion doesn’t lose out to the ogre tribes…” Leylin hung his head, eyes flickering with wit.

‘Seems like the kingdom’s power and soldiers are the true trump cards of the human race in the World of Gods. Those inferior mercenary groups can’t be compared at all…’ Leylin could finally see the aura of a nation’s soldiers, with as many sharp swords as there were trees in the forest and as many pikes as there were thorns in a bush. They might even have the support of wizards and priests. The mid-ranked officer just now had an aura very similar to a high-ranked warrior, and he had evidently gone through
numerous battles. The aura of someone who had seen blood in battle was something most mercenaries could not match.

‘With how he spoke, something definitely happened here…’ The desolate streets and the tight security in the city left Leylin frowning.

“We plan to rest here for a while. We might also need to buy a carriage and recruit a few more mercenaries…” Hera said once they found an inn, looking tired as she spoke to Leylin and the rest.

“Mm, we do need a new carriage.” Rafiniya was obviously approved of this plan. They had finally made it to a human city with great difficulty, and she could not wait to get some good rest. For a lady of nobility, there was nothing harder to endure than filth and grime. It was a pity that there was no lack of these on the journey, especially for mercenaries. That the poor girl hadn’t already gone insane showed the resolve she’d gained from her knight training.

Pam approved of this well. He was already itching to exchange the ogre ears for the commission, as well as buy a new batch of rum.

“Alright, we’ll meet here three days from now.”

Leylin nodded without much care. He was now slightly curious about the events in Gloomwood Castle.

“Wait, Ley! Your friend is in need of your help! My injuries need healing from a priest…” When the time to part came, Old Pam grasped Leylin firmly, eyes gleaming with tears.

Looking at the state he was in, Leylin had no choice but to roll his shoulders back and bring Old Pam, with his broken leg, along. The dwarf worshipped the God of Warriors anyway, and the church wasn’t too far off from the Mercenary Guild.

“Divine spell Cure Moderate Wounds!” Holy light shone from the priest’s hands at the church of warriors, and the injury on Pam’s thigh quickly recovered. A new layer of tender flesh grew out.

“The fee is 5 kronas!” The priest looked pious, but did not lower
the fees at all. Most churches functioned by getting money for healing the wounds of their followers. The gods needed money themselves to construct their extravagant churches. More importantly, they needed to lure in worshippers with more generous conditions. Old Pam, who was usually miserly, paid up happily and did not dare take advantage of this at all. Only after he left the church did he look regretful.

“If not for our employer wanting to leave in the next few days, Old Pam would rather look for a doctor or potioneer. Damn it, 5 kronas! How many bottles of rum would that get me… Oh, mighty God, Old Pam did not say that on purpose…”

Old Pam continued to mumble, “No! This should be included in the fees we get from our employer. You’ll back me up, right, Ley?” Leylin pretended not to hear anything, walking to the entrance of the Mercenary Guild with the dwarf. Old Pam impatiently exchanged the ogre ears to make up for his losses, while Leylin went to the mission hall.

The hall was much smaller than the one in Emon City. A few mercenaries were seated there, and whether in terms of quality or quantity they seemed to be lacking.

This strange atmosphere was explained after Leylin looked at the mission board.

“High grade mission: Track down traces of devil followers. This mission is extremely dangerous. Please think over it carefully before choosing it.”

“High grade mission: Investigate the evil god ceremony in the home of Lord Wokdo.”

“High grade mission: Investigate cause of death of Baron Faylen.”

Numerous high grade missions were hung up in a row, looking marvellous. It was a pity that few mercenaries dared take them on.

‘Interesting. A devil?’ A smile rose about Leylin’s lips all of a sudden. As he recalled the unusual mobilisation of the troops, as
well as the worried look on the mid-ranked officer’s face, everything grew clear.
Gloomwood Castle was in a strange state because of the activities of devil worshippers. These high-difficulty missions were usually left to the churches and nation’s troops. It was no wonder that the mercenaries were not interested.
However, them having no interest did not mean that Leylin was the same. He’d always been curious about hell and the devils in this world. Beelzebub’s memories had ensured that he knew as much about them as an Archduke, but theory and reality were two separate things.
‘Based on his memories, there are nine levels of hell here. Each have their own rulers governing them, as well as a few public regions... To be able to break through the restrictions of the dimension and arrive at the prime material world to spread belief... This is something that only a ruler of the same rank as him could accomplish...’
At his most powerful, the Sovereign King of Gluttony, Beelzebub, was as strong as a Magus who’d comprehended laws. At the very least, he was stronger than the lesser gods here.
It was no wonder then that the traces of devils had set the city on high alert.
The scene that the soul seed had projected at the beginning appeared before his eyes once again. ‘I wonder how that little guy Tiff is doing now? He received the power of the soul seed from my main body. If he managed to adapt to it, he should be rather strong now...’
When their souls had first battled for control of the body, Leylin had managed to help Tiff out, bestowing formidable powers on him. It was intended to be an experiment; not only would a surviving Tiff be of huge aid to him, but it would also give him some rare results. How could he not have left himself a counter against the powers he had originally bestowed? Furthermore, who could compare to the ancient Magi with regards to the control over the soul force. ‘My soul force wasn’t originally accustomed to the laws of the World of Gods, and couldn’t help but diminish continually. But Tiff was a native. Hence, there was still a possibility that he could be sustained by absorbing the powers that I left him. In view of that, his stats would…’ Something flashed in Leylin’s eyes. It made sense for soul force from other worlds to be unable to survive in the World of Gods. But the strength that Leylin left for Tiff was like a seed, and it changed him completely. Furthermore, as long as the foundation was there, no matter how far Tiff advanced in the future, he would not be able to resist the influence Leylin held over him. If Leylin exploited him correctly, Tiff would be an advantageous pawn for him. ‘I was staying overseas back then, and did not care much about the mainland. Thus, I also didn’t ask about Tiff, but it’s an entirely different matter now. The time is ripe,’ Leylin decided.
“Greetings, copper-ranked mercenary, sir! Can I help you?” The maid behind the counter asked in a professional but mechanical tone after she saw the identity proof Leylin handed over. It was all she’d do for a copper-ranked mercenary.

“Show me the details of the top 3 missions!” Leylin wasn’t bothered at all about it.

“The missions of those devil worshippers?” The girl raised her head, and scanned at Leylin with a look of derision. “Superior missions could only be accepted by a mercenary ranked gold and above, so please work on raising your grade!”

“I was not thinking of taking it, I just wanted to catch a glimpse of the report. I remember all mercenaries have the authority to do this, am I not right?” Leylin furrowed his brows.

“That- That’s right…” The maid unwillingly replied. It was probably her first time encountering someone like Leylin, “But details are only free for those at the silver grade and above, you have to pay 10 coppers!”

“That’s no problem at all!” Under her contemptuous gaze, Leylin threw 10 coppers on the table and grabbed the documents from her hands, before heading towards the corner seat to look into them. Being able to obtain information for such a price was already a profit for him.

But after reading the first few sentences, Leylin’s expression darkened. Surprise, astonishment and all sorts of other expressions flashed across his face before it landed on a sinister smile, “Old friend…”

He dropped his eyes to one of the sentences,

“…the victim’s carcass was badly damaged and parts of the flesh were missing…”

“…when the Baron was found, he was kneeling on the ground in a bizarre manner, pouring blood. His tongue was severed and forced down his throat…”
“...the soldiers launched surprise attacks on a few dangerous locations but gained nothing in return. The thieves found pentagrams used to commune with other dimensions in the flooring of the house, and determined it to be the coordinates to the ninth level of hell...”

‘A sacred emblem with the image of a twisted fang... Only devotees of Beelzebub would adopt such a method of murder...’ Leylin smiled as he read on. If he had to choose a devil to face, he’d definitely choose this one whom he’d fooled previously.

‘The fellow should still be asleep. The region of hell that he was occupying will soon be overturned. Furthermore, he is unable to receive prayers nor provide spells for his followers, their faith might be challenged...’ Leylin’s eyes shone, he’s found the perfect prey.

‘If you piece all these reports together, it’s the prelude to a big bloody sacrificial ceremony, and the target is that Beelzebub...’ Leylin’s rich experiences along with Beelzebub’s memories allowed him to see everything clearly within seconds.

‘I’m afraid this is those worshippers’ last resort, given that they haven’t been able to communicate with him for a long time.’ Leylin’s expression wasn’t looking too great. Big, bloody sacrificial ceremonies would affect the whole city, and the death toll would number greater than a thousand.

But of course, all this was useless. No matter how much they sacrificed, Beelzebub would not regain consciousness. Instead, this would attract hostility from the gods. Most importantly, Leylin would be dragged into this whole mess!

‘Well, I guess I’ll gladly receive Beelzebub’s followers.’ This empty church had lost the protection of its god, and was also compatible with the law of devouring he had grasped. To Leylin, this hollow shell was a big present.

Though most of the members were the cruelest dregs of society, or
even unusual beings and demonic creatures, its sheer size was enough to make Leylin jealous. He had to accumulate all of this himself to become a god in the future.

As for Beelzebub, he was long out of Leylin’s consideration. He walked out happily with his gains, and turned into a dark alley…

Once he made sure nobody was around, Leylin’s aura transformed into that of a god. “My follower, Tiff!” he made a solemn call, and a strange energy dispersed.

Moments later, Leylin opened his eyes, his expression looking weird, ‘With such a short distance, is he in the Dambrath Kingdom?’

A dark shadow was moving at great speeds through the broad plains. It stopped all of a sudden, revealing a pale, aged face. He looked emotional, and was even tearing up. He immediately knelt on the ground as he managed to choke out his next words, “My great lord, Kukulkan! Have you finally heard me?”

This man looked a lot like Tiff, but it wasn’t the boy from back then anymore. A large amount of energy circulated around his body.

“My God…” Tiff looked staunch after his prayer. Ever since Eldath’s church had destroyed everything he had, he’d set himself on the path of rebellion. This was why he was a wanted criminal throughout the World of Gods.

Thankfully, the power Leylin left him back then helped him through the toughest period of his life. As a result, the bogus about Kukulkan that Leylin had once made up had warped into his absolute faith.

“I can’t believe I felt the power of you as I went out to keep an eye on the devil worshippers, my Lord…” Tiff’s body compressed into a stream of shadows, and sped towards Gloomwood Castle. He was even faster than a rank 15 Professional.
At the same time, in the campsite of the ogres.
*Roar! Roar!* The ogre warriors waved the large warhammers in their hands in they fought, using magic as an aid every now and then. It was a pity that all of their efforts were nothing but a joke to the paladins.
‘Smite Evil!’ ‘Divine Punishment!’ Piercing holy light shot out from Lorent’s sword, and broke an ogre’s warhammer in a split second with its immense strength before slicing his head off. On the other hand, the clerics who had mastered divine spells from the God of Justice were also killing off the ogre shamans with no issues.
“How dare you see humans as food! The sins of this ogre tribe are unforgivable!” Lorent wiped his sword on the skin of one of the ogres beside him, and flashed a face of disgust. Flesh started showing.
“The vile ogres only deserve death!” The ogres in the campsite fell into chaos, merely ants to the high-ranked paladins and priests.
A ear-piercing growl sounded from the other side before low gasps and silence ensued. It was unsettling.
“Managed to get anything out of them?” Lorent looked at their team’s interrogation officer as he walked out, hands still freshly dyed in the ogres’ blood.
“They don’t have the biggest brains, and what they do have is reserved for fighting and eating. Even if I tried my best, the only information I got was that their leader was killed by a human wizard who then escaped…” The officer looked mildly disappointed, “If only we could use A memory extracting spell… But that would be trespassing into the domain of evil…” Lorent was discontented with the officer’s attitude and mindset, but he did not want to create any conflicts at this point in time. “That is enough… At the very least, the possibility of the wizard being
Leylin is high…
“It was probably this ogre tribe that attacked them first, forcing them to retaliate…” he said as he nodded.
“Then what are we waiting for now, let’s chase after them! My tools are getting impatient…” The officer licked his lip, his disgusting and sinister expression making Lorent look away. He wondered how someone like this managed to sneak into the investigative team.
The team continued their journey after sweeping the ogre site clean and headed towards Gloomwood castle.

……

“I’m afraid I can’t stay for long…”
Leylin was changing his disguise at the moment. Things that could expose his identity, like the Ring of Wizardry, could absolutely not be worn. He even had to alter his hair colour and change his face’s shape.
‘But, judging by the God of Justice’s hatred for devils, if his followers find out that there are devil worshippers within this castle, would he still put in so much effort and look for me?’ Leylin smiled sinisterly.
Leylin looked at himself in the mirror, and was satisfied with his new appearance. He originally looked like a westerner in the World of Gods, with bright golden blonde hair and clear blue eyes. However, his locks were now dyed black, and his eyes were a rich dark with blood-red sclera. His new appearance Exuded a never-ending aura of evil.

“With this extent, I don’t think anyone will associate me with the young master of the Faulen Family.” Leylin wore a sinister looking silver mask over his face and disappeared into the darkness. Obviously, a change in appearance wouldn’t be enough. Thus, when Leylin reappeared his whole body seemed to have undergone an even greater and more terrifying transformation. He looked as if he were someone wrapped in mysteries, sinister energy encircling his body with a charming trace of the power of laws.
Once all the brilliant energy had fused into his body, Leylin completely resembled a devil who had ascended from hell, and even the aura of his soul had changed. A sense of power and danger emanated from his body in waves, and the surrounding space seemed to fold in on itself, as if everything was being devoured.

This was divinity! Only a divine power could accomplish this! Leylin had now become a divine being who grasped some power in the domain of devouring!

‘This imitation isn’t bad at all.’ Leylin looked at his new self and
nodded in approval. His understanding of the law of devouring had already reached a peak. Only after he acquired Beelzebub’s divine force and divinity could he advance to become a rank 7 Magus. In the World of Gods, this would be considered as having achieved godhood.

His understanding of the law would not disappear with reincarnation. Though it was tough to create and draw out divinity from nothing, it was still an effortless task for the A.I. Chip to imitate the aura and appearance of a divine being with the power of devouring.

‘I definitely cannot ascend to godhood solely in the domain of devouring. Even if I do that, I’m afraid I’ll be sent straight to hell. Even if I’m going to go there in the end, I can’t be thrown down so passively…’

There was also another advantage of being in his current form. Divine beings were practically immune to scrying spells, and Leylin, an otherworldly guest, was obviously immune too. It would be an absolute joke if anyone tried to gain more information on him through scrying.

“The show has begun,” Leylin turned his gaze to the bright moon before his silhouette suddenly blurred and disappeared into the darkness.

Most of Beelzebub’s truesoul and divinity had been devoured by Leylin, along with a hundred thousand years of his memories as a devil. Thus, all of his followers were nothing but tragic beings in front of Leylin.

Everything was stored in his A.I. Chip, included Beelzebub’s methods to communicate with them, or his habits and disposition and even the list of bishops and demons in different regions of the prime material plane.

Beelzebub’s followers were unable to hide from Leylin, and thus Leylin had already made his plans after strolling about the castle.
Leylin’s deified incarnation arrived in front of a vast building. Two guards there were loyally carrying out their responsibilities, making sure the entrance was secure.

‘Even security officers fell to the attacks, no wonder they could carry out the blood sacrifice of an entire city so brazenly…’ Leylin put both his hands behind his back and swaggered into the mansion.

The moment he stepped into the vicinity, he couldn’t help but take a deep breath at the aura of evil within. He would have been completely unable to sense the soul undulations so precisely without the divinity that his current body possessed. Evil forces continued to circulate in Leylin’s surroundings, making the glow of his imitated godhood even brighter. It seemed as if it was turning his pretense into reality.

‘Eye of the Divine!’ Through his imitated divine powers, Leylin was able to use something like magic to make himself invisible to the tight security. Once he passed through, he followed his instinct to a descending passageway behind a rock garden that was obviously concealed.

“The stench of human blood… and the aura of low-ranked devils…” Leylin sniffed, but did not plan on making his way further.

“Who’s that?” His movement had alerted a nearby watchman, but he deliberately lowered his voice, seeming like he didn’t want to blow the matter up.

But in the darkness, a handful of otherworldly beings have already felt their way towards Leylin, obviously with the intention of mounting a sneak attack. However, when he saw these creatures up close, he didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry at the sight of them. “Are these what you are relying on? Devil priests like these? Is this an insult?”

Through his night vision, he had already seen who his attacker
was, an amalgamation of badly damaged human carcass parts and heads. It looked like a massive ball of flesh. This inferior devil was of the lowest grade, and it was also the most common cannon fodder in the ninth level of hell.

The A.I. chip sent over the creature’s data to him.

[Inferior devil. Strength: 3 Agility: 1 Vitality: 5 Spirit: 0.1
Description: This is a common magical creature found in hell, usually a reincarnation of deceitful humans. Its IQ equates to that of a retarded human, and it is easily controlled by high-ranked devils. Feats: 1. Fire Immunity, Poison Immunity. 2. Cold Resistance. 3. Acid Attack]

“Scram, you lowly ants!” Leylin said icily, using the language of the devils of hell.

Instantly, those poor devils were rendered completely defenceless under Leylin, someone who was as good as a near Archdevil. They immediately fell under his control.

The watchmen were left in shock, “W-Who are you exactly?”

“They aren’t qualified to know that.”

They did not dare to retaliate even as Leylin walked further in. Naturally, that was perhaps because they felt the intrinsic quality of a devil within him. Once he pushed through a door covered in fresh blood curses, a room that looked like a dining hall appeared in front of Leylin.

Fresh, steaming flesh was laid on the long dining table, and many worshippers raised their heads to look at Leylin who was an unwanted and unexpected guests. In their shock, they forgot to even wipe off the remnant blood from the side of their lips.

“What’s going on? Sybar, why did you let an outsider in?” The plump noble seated right in the centre sounded unhappy, and put on an resentful expression.

“The bloody banquet. Isn’t this another one of Beelzebub’s favourite ceremonies?” Leylin recognised the ceremony being
conducted. “All you maggots, can’t you tell?” Leylin’s voice was low but powerful, exploding with the dignity of divinity. “This- This is the divine force of our Lord!” A devil priest yelped out of surprise, and the whole room suddenly followed him as they knelt down before Leylin. “My Lord, you haven’t made contact with your followers for 20 years…” Tears filled the eyes of the priest. “I have received the gift of our Lord and have become his Chosen and his substitute to lead you! Any objections?” Leylin announced bluntly. Pretending to be Beelzebub’s Chosen and a divine being would allow Leylin to take control of all his followers as well as his priest network in the prime material world. This was Leylin’s goal. He’d grown jealous of what was formed by a hundred thousand years of operations by an Archdevil. Moreover, he already had the Manderhawke Plate. “None at all!” The priest was the first to surrender his loyalty to Leylin, dropping to his knees and kissing Leylin’s boots. “Hold up, even if he has the favour of our Lord and has gained divinity, what give him the rights to take control of us completely?” A royal raised up his opinion from the crowd, feeling like his interests were breached. But he was silenced shortly after. A crimson blade was pinned into his throat in a split second, and the terrifying power of devouring had sucked him dry in no time. Many took in sharp breaths and others cried out in surprise, “The Devilblood Dagger!” “Any more objections?” The blade returned to Leylin’s hand as the carcass of the royal turned to ash, and in return Leylin gained the respectful gazes of almost everyone in the room. As Beelzebub’s worshippers, they definitely knew what the Devilblood Dagger
could do.
One had to have sacrificed the flesh of more than ten thousand humans and high-ranked priests to receive such a terrifying weapon. One needed to prove their strength to complete the sacrificial ceremony and survive for so long, and the Devilblood Dagger confirmed Leylin’s.
“Great Lord, we pledge our loyalty to you!” Many followers chanted.
“Very well! Our Lord is currently injured and needs time to recover. My mission is to act on behalf of his conscient, and bring together all the churches in the prime material world to restore our Lord’s health with enough faith and followers.” Leylin said halfheartedly.
“I see…” Most of them had already guessed that Beelzebub was hurt, but at this point in time it was too late for them to turn their backs on Leylin.
“Now, I’ll give out the first mission. A team of paladins is heading towards us, I’ll need your help.” With his divinity, he was a Chosen of the church. He could sometimes even override the church head’s authority!
After confirming his identity, Leylin deployed every follower with specific roles and ordered them to stall those paladins. These people were no match for them, but they were proficient at plots to stall time, as well as scheming and intrigue.
In addition, stop performing large-scale blood sacrifices. There’s no need for such obstructive activity before you hear further from me, especially something that’ll attract the attention of the churches,” Leylin reminded them again before leaving. “Of course, Chosen of our Lord!” The devil priest answered without hesitation, not that he had any authority to go against Leylin’s words. Moreover, the reason for their enormous blood sacrifices was to attract Beelzebub’s attention. Now that he had already sent a substitute, there was no need for that anymore. “Lord’s substitute, please grant us your name!” The aged devil priest plucked up his courage to ask right before Leylin left. “My name?” Leylin smirked beneath his mask. “My name is Kukulkan!” The power of faith essentially came from fear and obedience, respect and admiration, or from one’s soul force. Godhood originated from that as well. With a specific name, great power, and falsely assuming the identity of Beelzebub’s Chosen, he could win the reverence of these devil worshippers. He could even disseminate and spread Beelzebub’s faith before usurping everything. However, this was the only mature organisation of Beelzebub’s that Leylin found somewhat acceptable. When he would build his own church in the future, these people would not be of much help.
After all, Leylin would not want his own church to be a gathering point for devil worshippers.
The next step was to cancel certain blood sacrifices and evil rituals that violated his core values. This was the domain of a benevolent god, and also an essential step for a divine being to gain extensive approval in the prime material plane.
“Lord Kukulkan, we will do as you wish and prepare for the recovery of our Lord!” Leylin was startled from his reverie as he watched the devil followers shouting his name loudly. A special energy akin to soul force enveloped him within the zealous ambience.
The false divine power of devouring almost went out of control and wanted to swallow this energy to transform completely, but Leylin resisted it.
‘The power of faith?’ Leylin signed internally before disappearing into a private room.
“You heard the Lord’s orders!” The devil priest straightened his back and looked at all of the followers, especially directing his gaze at the nobles. Having lost the powers that the devil bestowed upon him, the arrival of this divine being allowed him to regain some confidence.
“Get the tasks done quickly so that we can welcome those paladins of the God of Justice!” There was no room for reconciliation between devil worshippers and paladins. If they met, it would be a fight to the death.
While one paladin was more than enough to slaughter an entire room of devil worshippers, strategy, allocation of manpower, and hidden actions would make things difficult for them.
“Of course!” A few of the nobles laughed sinisterly, the shadows they cast on the wall behind them looking like terrifying demons themselves.
‘I can’t believe I have to play to dress up as god and play the devil twice in a day…’ Leylin had currently arrived outside the city. He looked around vigilantly. His appearance of a powerful divine being was but a pretense, and he himself was only a rank 10 wizard. Had the devil worshippers just now rebelled against him, he was not sure that he’d have been able to suppress them. However, as he’d borrowed the superior aura of a high-ranked devil, he was certain he wouldn’t lose out.

However, him pretending to be a divine being, on top of his possession of the Devilblood Dagger, was enough to scare the hell out of those followers. Moreover, those who had offered sacrifices to the devils already had shackles on their souls. If they did not wish to be tortured even after death, they had to act according to Leylin’s wishes.

‘ Compared to dealing with those low-ranked followers, this needs more attention… ’ Leylin pulled himself together with a slight sigh, and a thread of flames appeared on his figure, taking the shape of a flame-winged serpent. The small blaze lit up the Gloomwood, giving off a demonic feeling.

‘ He’s here! ’ Leylin turned quickly. A black spirit was running towards him so quickly that it couldn’t be followed by the naked eye.

‘ Advanced Barrier! ’ ‘ Advanced Protection! ’ ‘ Advanced Invisibility! ’ A few enormous spell barriers were erected, separating the area from the outside world completely.

‘ A high-ranked Professional? No, he’s even stronger than Odge and Boruj, almost a Legend… ’ Leylin inwardly assessed as the person he was thinking of arrived in front of him.

“Tiff!” Formidable divine power circulated around the area, making Leylin seem like a god as he called out to Tiff. At the same
time, the aura of his original form also rolled off his body.
“You’re not my God, but you have his power!” Tiff was indeed standing in front of Leylin, but he did not look like his previous self. His hair was now greying at the temples, and his vigilant eyes glared unwaveringly at Leylin.
Leylin felt several different probing spells targeted at him immediately, and if not for the fact that he was the original body and had the A.I. Chip’s help in concealing his abilities, it would have been difficult to deal with the fellow.
Brilliant divine power floated above Leylin’s hand as he stared Tiff in the eye, “So, do you still have any suspicions?”
“I wouldn’t dare! You are the favoured one of my Lord!” Tiff pressed his right hand to his chest as a form of respect and bowed, showing his acknowledgement of Leylin’s identity.
Strong beings like this were not easily subdued. Honestly, if Tiff were to make any moves, he would have found out that Leylin was only a pretentious false god. Once he figured that out, taking care of Leylin would be as easy as popping a bubble.
“Since you’ve summoned me, what can I help you with?” Tiff still looked suspicious about the whole situation.
“Our Lord has already defeated the Archdevil Beelzebub and I’ve received orders to take over everything Beelzebub has in the prime material plane!” He kept to the truth. Tiff was the one person Leylin trusted the most here, even if he seemed doubtful of everything right now.
Even if the boy decided to go against him, Leylin could use the power he’d formerly left with Tiff to make him turn back.
‘However, he was able to use the energy I left behind as a foundation to receive magical powers and become similar to a bloodline holder… Or should I say half-chose? He’s somewhat talented…’ Leylin seemed to have already seen beyond Tiff’s facade.
“You’ve defeated the Archdevil? The Sovereign King of Gluttony?” Tiff’s voice involuntarily cracked. He had obviously heard about this earth-shaking rumour. The loyalty of these worshippers, who’d already lost the magic abilities bestowed by the devil, had long been shaken. Some information had spread out.

Worshippers in the prime material plane were shallow. If Leylin had waited to make his move a couple of decades later, Beelzebub’s people would have almost completely disappeared. Thankfully, that was not the case.

“Mm. I’ll need your help, how much manpower do you have in the Dambrath Kingdom?” Leylin asked. Unless his background wasn’t optimal, a near-legend like Tiff would have a certain amount of influence.

“I’ve created an organisation with faith in our Lord. There are fewer than 300 followers right now, and the highest ranked among them is a Baron…” Tiff clenched his teeth, and told Leylin unwillingly. The familiar soul suppression was too strong on him, and he had no choice but to speak the truth.

‘An organisation in worship of me?’ Leylin was pretty taken aback. ‘To sustain a miniature organisation without the support of divine power… He has a lot of potential…’

The difference between true and false gods was that one could grant their priests divine spells and other powers, ranging in ranks from rank 1 to rank 9. With the great power separating their planes and the prime material plane, the highest rank of spell a powerful devil or demon could bestow upon their worshippers was rank 5. Anything past that would require a blood sacrifice to go through, or have some other such restriction. This type of worship of false gods would suffer a unanimous crackdown by the true gods.

Demigods were similar. Without enough power to grant high-ranked spells to their followers, they were not widely spread. The Feathered Snake God, Kukulkan, that Leylin had made up
previously was an otherworldly demigod who was still in deep sleep! He would not be able to grant even a rank 1 spell.

Leylin felt a special respect for the fact that Tiff could still sustain worship for Kukulkan under conditions like these, to the extent of enticing a baron. While he’d have used his own methods for it, it was still rather amazing.

‘But I can’t let this situation continue for too long… I’ll soon have to give them some hope!’ Leylin decided. A god that was unable to respond to prayers and grant spells would be eliminated like Beelzebub sooner or later.

‘If his original form is still recovering from his injuries, it doesn’t make sense for me to confer divine spells in his stead!’ Leylin’s original form as a near rank 7 Magus was from another world after all, and the World Will of the World of Gods was hostile towards his power. Not to mention the amount of energy that would be consumed by crossing the crystal sphere shell. If he were to use his original form to bestow divine spells, he would quickly go bankrupt and even die.

‘The only way is to advance to become a Legend and condense my divine force. By doing that, I’ll have the most basic capability to respond to my followers.’ Leylin gritted his teeth.

“Devout follower of our Lord, Tiff! I have something for you to do. Let us meet at the capital city of the Dambrath Kingdom.”
After listening to Leylin’s declaration, Tiff glanced at him with a serious look. It resembled the sharp gaze of a hawk, as if he was trying to pierce through the defense of the divine power to see Leylin’s true form.

“I follow my God’s will!” Tiff disappeared into mid-air after finished his sentence, and everything that had just occurred seemed like an illusion.

‘He has magic abilities similar to a Chosen of my original form, and he’s a high-ranking ranger or thief…’ Something flashed across Leylin’s eyes as he headed back to Gloomwood Castle. He wasn’t worried in the least about having his identity leaked. After all, his divine powers were enough to keep everyone in the dark. Even if Tiff eventually found out that he was Leylin Faulen, he would be under the impression that Leylin had received favour from his original form and had divine powers bestowed upon him.

‘Well, now that I have Tiff I can launch many of my plans…’ Though it was already confirmed that Leylin would take over all of Beelzebub’s followers, he still needed someone to take over the operation and carry out the work of a commander. It looked like Tiff was very suitable for that position. Apart from being sufficiently powerful, he had good leadership abilities as well. If the conditions were right in the future, he wanted to nurture Tiff into his first pope.

“Pouring power into the natives, and allowing then to adapt and
change into a form that is accepted in the World of Gods… This is a very good issue to pursue.” Leylin had a profound look in his eyes.

Through his short time with Tiff just now, Leylin had already learnt much from the energy that emitted off his body. It had given him a general direction for his plan to induct Magi into the World of Gods.

“This method of forcibly pouring power into a subject should have failed for sure. My success with Tiff was a fluke, and should be considered a rare case.” Given his experiments in various worlds, Leylin was sure of this, “Thus, I’ll still have to observe this specimen, and test how it will change under different circumstances…”

Leylin immediately ducked into an alleyway. When he reappeared, he had already returned to his appearance of a mercenary.

“Well, I guess I can only scare people with my divine form…” Leylin sighed and returned to the inn.

“I, Rafiniya, a high-ranked knight, successor of the way of the knight, pledge my life to fight against evil.”

Before he stepped into the door, the young female knight’s voice could already be heard and that gave Leylin an immediate migraine.

“What’s going on?” He walked in suspiciously before seeing a fully-armoured Rafiniya raising the knight sword in her hand in a pledge.

“Oh! Heavens! Ley you’re finally back!” Old Pam waved his hand at the side and said, “This lady knight here was all ready to fight upon hearing that there were traces of devil worshippers in the castle. No one was able to persuade her…”

Hera, who was standing beside Old Pam, couldn’t help but smile helplessly. As for Yalani, she had already had enough of everyone and escaped to her room.

“Don’t those devil followers run rampant at night? I want to rescue
the innocent commoners from the hands of these devils! Ley, let’s do it together, shall we?” Rafiniya spoke righteously, but unfortunately she seemed to have grown more sensible, as she was ready to drag the powerful-looking Leylin along.

“My dear Miss…” Leylin was rendered speechless too, “Look at the time now, please rest soon!” Honestly speaking, why would he go against his own men? Were Rafiniya to go alone, it would probably end up with him saving her instead of her saving the world. She just might have ended up repenting her choices from within the stomachs of those worshippers.

“Rest? The people of the city are currently suffering from the devastation of devils and you want me to rest?” Rafiniya looked holy and staunchly declared, “None of you shall stop me!” “Then, do you still remember the rule that all knights need to abide by? To keep their promises?” Leylin sat down, and even had the mood to ask the servants for a pot of red tea and some snacks. After all, he had been so busy the whole night that he ought to have some rest.

“Knight Commandment 54: I must comply with the contract and keep my promises and oaths!” Rafiniya was rather familiar with that.

“Good! So don’t forget, you’re still under Hera for now!” Leylin wiped his lips gracefully with the napkin, “What if your employer decided to leave the castle tomorrow?” “That’s right! Rafiniya, I’ll be leaving tomorrow to head towards the Dambrath Kingdom!” Hera caught on to Leylin’s acting real quick and continued the show and spoke meekly, “You won’t abandon me and my sister, would you?” “I-” Rafiniya froze, the two knightly virtues of defending the just and keeping her promises circling her mind. She looked very conflicted.
Hera only managed to thank Leylin after they’d managed to send Rafiniya back to her room, “This is all thanks to you, Ley! If not I’m really afraid of what Rafiniya would have done.”

“Don’t mention it, I wanted to leave earlier too. After all, anything that has the least bit of contact with the devils will always be problematic..” Leylin was speaking against his conscience, but it received agreements from both Hera and Old Pam. The horrible image of the devils had long been deeply ingrained into the minds of commoners by the gods.

This was especially true of Hera, Hera who decided to give up on her original plans to rest. There were still many cities they could rest in on the way, and they didn’t necessarily have to stay here and deal with the devils. Even if Leylin hadn’t mentioned it first, Hera had plans of leaving earlier.

“Then, I guess, goodnight everyone! We’re leave here tomorrow, as soon as possible!” Leylin rose to bid them all goodnight, but he was smiling in his heart. Due to his interception, the activities of the devil followers had already been stopped. However, he didn’t have to mention that to them.

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The next day, a well-supplied mercenary team hit the road. Rafiniya sat alone on Nick and led the way with a sulky expression on her face. Hera and the others were sensible enough to not disturb her. Hera seemed to have learnt her lesson and did not hire any more mercenaries. She only found a more down-to-earth horsekeeper and a horse carriage. It seemed as if she had placed all of her trust and safety in Leylin.

“After we pass Gloomwood Castle, we will reach the central plains of Dambrath Kingdom, which is also the most important agricultural base. The king has gathered most of the military force
here and the security of this place is generally great.” Honestly, Leylin thought that if the sisters were bold enough, it would be completely safe to continue the journey with just a few servants. But they were evidently shocked by the ogres previously, and would rather raise the commission than leave Leylin’s side.

“But to be able to hire a high-ranked knight and a rank 10 wizard with this price, it’s still considered not bad.” Leylin didn’t have any other opinions. He didn’t feel pressed for time currently. After all, whatever plans he’d left behind were enough to stall those paladins for a long time.

It was definitely impossible for the devil worshippers to face up against paladins, but they could indeed admirably fulfil the task of delaying them without showing any traces of themselves. This was sufficient time for Leylin to reach the Dambrath Kingdom with no worries, and he could even start planning his next step with ease.

Thus, he was currently in a relaxed state and even had the mood to tease Rafiniya. Wasn’t it the duty of a devil to push a pure and resolute person to hell? Though Leylin only held the memories of an Archdevil, he wouldn’t mind giving it a try.

As expected, everything was like what Leylin had predicted. After entering the central plains, the security of the surroundings became much better and they could see little villages along the sides of the roads. There were even standby guards and patrolling militia.

Large-scaled bandit organisations would not be able to survive here. As for ogres and other dangerous beasts? They were wiped out by the king’s men long ago. The only few exceptions that Leylin and gang met were small-scaled bandit groups with fewer than 20 members. Even Old Pam could face them, not to mention Rafiniya.

Days later, the outline of a huge city started showing in the horizon. “We’re finally here! Dambrath’s capital!” Hera pulled the curtain of the carriage to the side, and excitement filled her eyes. If not for
Leylin and the rest, she and her younger sister might have already died on their way here.

“Dambrath Kingdom, it is rumoured that the first generation king killed an evil dragon along with his followers and distributed the earnings from the dragons to the commoners. From then on, he built a city and developed it into a kingdom.”

Rafiniya couldn’t help but show signs of admiration, yet Leylin found it funny. Stories that praised kings like these were nothing out of the ordinary, their sole purpose to make these kings seem more divine and lawful. Well, those civil servants could say anything they wanted, but Leylin would not believe a single word they said.

“Killing an evil dragon? This isn’t even an environment that dragons favour…” But obviously, no one cared nor did they hear Leylin’s grumbles. Even Yalani peeped her head out of the carriage to check out the surroundings, and listened to Rafiniya’s story with glee.

After they’d all reached the capital, Hera brought the horse to an aristocratic area on the east and they arrived in front of a prestigious mansion,

“We were able to reach the capital safely all thanks to you guys! Thank you for all of your protection along the way, my fiancé and I will definitely repay you!” Suddenly, the normally quiet Yalani spoke up, with a trace of arrogance on her face.
“O hoh… Fiancé? Hera, you actually brought your sister here to get married?” Rafiniya was the first to shout, her eyes seemingly full of stars, “Gallant adventurers protecting the beautiful princess, who has come to the imperial capital to meet her prince. There’s nothing more romantic than this…”

Pam and Leylin said their congratulations, making Yalani blush a little, but Leylin was rather flabbergasted. He had thought that this journey revolved around Hera, but who would have thought that the final lead was actually Yalani, the young lady who hadn’t even reached adulthood yet?

‘Plus, her elder sister is the one sending her off to get married? Such a tradition doesn’t seem to exist in the kingdom. Did something happen to their elders?’ Leylin could sense that something was not right.

Seeing the mercenaries make a racket in front of them, the two bodyguards standing at the gate of the mansion could no longer hold themselves back. “What are you doing? Don’t you know that this is the viscount’s residence?”

A bodyguard walked out. He was wearing a brand new set of armor, wiped so conscientiously that it was shining without a single speck of dust on it. He towered over Leylin and his company, his eyes filled with disdain.

The reputation mercenaries held in the imperial city was only
slightly better than that of bandits and gangsters. They were never a synonym of law-abiding citizens, and the nobles even loathed having any sort of relation to them. It would be so embarrassing!

As for the fiancé and so on? The bodyguard sized up Hera and her sister, who were dressed plainly, and evidently chose not to believe them. Yalani tugged at the hem of her elder sister’s skirt, then turned to look at her own clothes. Her family wasn’t very well off to begin with, and they had encountered huge misfortune. After a long and arduous journey on foot, even their best clothing would look like beggars’ rags.

She and her sister now looked like unsophisticated girls from the countryside, entering the city for the first time.

The young lady lowered her head, and practically wanted to bury her head underground. “Young sir…”

Hera was flushed red, but could only pick herself up and negotiate. “I’m from Emon City…”

She simultaneously took out a small cloth bundle that she treasured. Peeling it open layer by layer, she revealed the medal of a noble family that was in good condition. Perhaps it was the effect of the badge; the bodyguard glanced at Hera before taking the badge in to inform others, even if he was still doubtful.

Leylin and his company waited in the wind for more than half an hour. Rafiniya had grown rather impatient by the time the entrance to the viscount’s mansion finally opened slowly. Someone who looked like a butler walked out, his face plastered with a professional smile.

“May I know who is the young miss from the Lanta family?” Hera inhaled deeply and walked forward, with a smile to please. “I’m Hera Lanta! She’s my sister, Yalani!”

This was their reality: they had no choice. She and her younger sister had no one to rely on in the imperial city, and they could only attach themselves to Yalani’s viscount fiancé if they wanted a good
life. They couldn’t leave a bad impression on the butler whom he trusted as well.
“Respected young ladies, please follow me in. The viscount is waiting for you!” The butler bowed at the side.
“Also… They are the mercenaries I hired. I was able to make it safely to the imperial city all thanks to them…” Hera looked over at Leylin and the rest and explained herself.
“Mercenaries?!” Disdain was apparent in the butler’s eyes, and only Rafiniya, who was riding a warhorse, made him do a double take.
“But the viscount only mentioned two ladies…”
“Hera, you guys head in first! We’ll just wait a while longer at most…” Leylin smiled as he said to Hera. He glanced at the scornful look in the butler’s eyes, and inwardly smiled to himself. ‘This expression… Does he treat Hera and her sister like poor relatives who came knocking because they ran out of money? Interesting, interesting!’
Leylin magnanimously forgave the butler’s offense because he was watching a show. He even pulled Rafiniya back, someone whose expression showed that she had a belly full of anger, leaving her with no one to vent it on. Leylin was laughing so hard to himself that his stomach was about to start cramping.
Hera sent him an appreciative look, then took her sister’s hand as she walked into the entrance.
“Ley, look at them! That expression!” Rafiniya’s hair was completely about to explode, like an enraged kitten. “Ahh… I can’t take it. At worst, I won’t take the commission this time…”
“You don’t have to take it if you don’t want to, but don’t drag the rest of us down…” Leylin’s sarcastic blows at the side met with Old Pam’s common sentiments. His eyes went watery. “Missy! You can’t let poor Old Pam leave without a salary…”
“You haven’t gotten your salary? Just the mere ogre ears we got on the way should be enough of a profit…” Rafiniya mumbled to
herself, but her temper did not flare up. In actual fact, Hera and her sister didn’t have many assets to begin with. The two announced that they would raise the commission on the way, but after half the journey their group was stunned; the amount of cash they had on them was not even enough to pay what they’d promised before! Furthermore, they hadn’t paid half of the coachman’s commission and the fee for the carriage at the Gloomwood Castle! Although Rafiniya didn’t give a hoot about that little sum of money, she couldn’t not care about the others. After hearing what Leylin and Old Pam said, she could only walk away while fuming. “Anyway, I won’t demand the money, you guys can split it among yourselves…” “Oh, Rafiniya! You’re really the most kindhearted lady in the world!” The dwarf, Old Pam, immediately cheered. Even the coachman at the side revealed a smile. He had gained a deeper understanding about this strange team of mercenaries after spending time with them. Rafiniya didn’t lack money at all, and neither did the mysterious Ley. The only remaining people who would split the money would be him and Old Pam. People of the lower class never once minded having an extra share, even if it was just a few copper coins. *Clang!* The main door swung open once again. Yalani’s arm was hooked onto a young nobleman’s, while Hera and the butler were standing behind them. “These the mercenaries you employed? There’s even a dwarf? I think joining a circus would be more suitable for it… Oh, right, have you seen the the Golden Dwarf Circus?” This youthful nobleman had a wan face and very dark eyebags, making him look like a person whose body had been wasted entirely on wine and women. He appeared very depressed, and completely disregarded Leylin and company, turning around to chat with Hera instead.
“Daniel, Rafiniya and Leylin are both extremely powerful Professionals…” Hera smiled cordially as she began to turn the nobleman’s attention to Leylin and the others. “I believe that they’ll be of help to you if you win them over…”

Although she had started to notice that Daniel was harbouring malicious intentions, Hera still tried as much as possible to indirectly make her point, even though this made Rafiniya shoot a resentful look at her. She was indeed trying her best to ‘help’ Leylin and the others from the bottom of her heart.

Rafiniya aside, the only way out for civilian Professionals was to wait upon a noble family. This way, if they did great service decades later, they might be able to receive their master’s favour, and obtain the position of an honorary knight or a lord. With this, they would be able to seek a piece of territory and gain a hereditary title. From then on, they would have entered the ranks of the upper class. In actual fact, that was how Leylin’s grandfather started out, just that the person he had vowed his loyalty to was the king.

“Hm… You’re right!” Viscount Daniel couldn’t help but swallow a mouthful of saliva as he stared at Hera’s full bosom. As compared to his fiancée, who was still a young girl, her sister was evidently a much more mature woman. Of course, it would be perfect if he could have both of them.

Under the beauty’s pleading, Daniel finally looked at them in the eye reluctantly as he sized them up. “You are very lucky. I, Viscount Daniel, am willing to accept all of you as my followers. Kneel and swear an oath!

“And you! You can be my honorary knight, my personal one…” When his gaze fell on Rafiniya, Daniel’s eyes clearly got brighter, and his eyes lingered for a little longer on her slender thighs. His butler, however, was trying his best to bite his lips, and didn’t say anything.
He understood his young master’s character very well, and knew that he would absolutely turn a deaf ear to any advice. But how could he promise to take them in as followers so easily, especially when there was also a dwarf and a coachman in their party? However, the young master would regret his decision after a few days at most, and give them a random position as a guard or a servant or something. They would be satisfied anyway. Even if they were servants, people in the viscount’s mansion were a notch higher than average civilians! This was an established theory in the butler’s mindset.

“What? Aren’t you going to quickly thank the viscount for his grace?” Hera signalled at Leylin and the others with her eyes. She thought that she had found the best way out for these mercenaries. After all, compared to living a life of brushes with death, what was so bad about being a nobleman’s subordinate? It was an unavoidable fact that although she was sharp-witted, she had a rigid mind. Or perhaps this was the way nobles thought.

“Mighty master, I, Pollan, hereby swear that…” What exceeded her expectations was that Rafiniya, Leylin and even Old Pam did not move an inch, only the coachman leapt forward with bright eyes. “We are extremely grateful for your kindness, distinguished viscount. Unfortunately, I do not have any intention to serve a noble family. We are here just to settle our commission…”

“You all…” Hera was flushed with anger. This was the first time she felt hateful towards Leylin. How dare he decline her good intentions? Did he not know that there was a world of difference between a noble and a civilian? Even Rafiniya frowned at this move, not appreciative of Hera’s ‘kindness’. Now that she thought herself to be the mistress of the viscount’s mansion, Leylin’s actions instantly made her feel like her pride had been hurt.
Interesting! Her change in status actually brought about such a huge change in her mentality so quickly?’ Leylin found it meaningful that the sisters had begun to change so quickly, despite being of the same status as them a little while ago. The mere change in their status made these two sisters act in such an unfamiliar way. As they required Leylin’s protection on their journey, they had chatted with him in an amiable manner. But now that they had reached the imperial capital and had someone to rely on they drew the line, dividing their position and social class in the blink of an eye. Leylin used Beelzebub’s memories to analyse most of her thoughts in a flash.

‘Excellent. Such an interesting soul will be the best candidate to corrupt and degrade into a devil… A vain heart…’ Just as Leylin was considering whether he needed to corrupt her, the rightful master, Viscount Daniel, finally spoke. “Hmm, if that’s the case, then forget it. Give them a sum of money and make them leave quickly. What would others think if they saw them?”

“Yes, young master!” The butler standing behind Viscount Daniel tossed out a small bag of coins. “Take the money and get lost, you greedy vultures!”

“You…” Rafīniya instantaneously felt as though she could no longer recognise her her close friend, and suddenly became
“Let’s go…” As she patted her mount’s head, Nick immediately let out a whinny, while Leylin scratched his nose and followed behind Old Pam, who had picked up the bag of money. Viscount Daniel’s voice could be heard faintly as they left. “Why would you bother with those country bumpkins. Hera, Yalani, let me take you to…”

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“Repulsive! Abominable! Why did Hera and Yalani turn out this way? Did they fall under the spell of a devil that took control of their hearts?” The young female knight finally yelled after they had walked a distance.

“Alright. These nobles are all revolting. Old Pam has seen it all. Only gold never lies!” Rafiniya was totally speechless at his greed for money, and could only roll her eyes after hearing what he said. Leylin, on the other hand, asked interestedly, “Why didn’t you just swear to become his follower right away? He’s a nobleman after all!”

“If I did that, the elders would kill me! Besides, do you think a dwarf will be conferred a title in a human country?” Old Pam winked, exposing his innate cunning self, “Old Pam would rather than drown in rum than slog his guts out for a noble and end up with nothing…”

“Haha… You are a clever dwarf indeed…” Rafiniya was still a young lady after all, and was immediately amused by his humorous tone...

Leylin was the first to suggest disbanding when they reached a crossroad. “If there isn’t anything else, should we part ways here?”

“Part ways? Aren’t we going to get paid for the mission at the mercenary association?” Rafiniya was surprised, and also a little
reluctant for some reason. “I have other things to do.” Leylin declined tactfully, but even Rafiniya could read between the lines: he wanted to be alone. Once she understood this, she even had the urge to cry. “Then… where will you be going?” The young female knight still asked stubbornly. “I intend to stay in the imperial capital for a period of time, then begin my journey once again. My objective is not clear yet, perhaps I will make a trip to Silverymoon City up north. Goodbye…” Leylin seemed as though he was waving elegantly as he left. But Rafiniya and Old Pam did not realise that a gloomy thread of light had already wound itself around Rafiniya’s body like a strand of hair, one that disappeared almost instantly. ‘The mark of a devil. I look forward to the moment when your soul falls from grace…’ The low mutter of a devil sounded in Leylin’s heart. There were a few reasons he occasionally did right by Rafiniya and the others. For one thing, they were his group and saving them was a matter of course, but another reason was to observe the souls of people and attempt to corrupt them. Leylin wasn’t a masochist. Why would he insist on waiting outside the viscount’s mansion otherwise? Did he lack that small sum of money? It was only at the actual scene that he could grasp the most subtle undulations of the soul and guide it! ‘From the looks of it, Hera and her sister have been consumed by vanity. With just a slight push, it would be perfectly normal for them to be lured in by the devil. Rafiniya, on the other hand, has the purest soul. Once she’s corrupted, she will possess strength that will make all the other devils drool…’ Once a soul like Rafiniya’s fell from grace, it would be extremely enticing for any formidable devil. However, Leylin was already a near Archdevil, and he naturally didn’t have to resort to such
unclassy behaviour. It was out of prudent consideration that he decided to personally make a trip down to experiment on average human souls.

Since his main body had already robbed Beelzebub of all it had, having dealings with the underworld and other devils would be unavoidable. Even Leylin himself had a few devilish characteristics.

Souls in the World of Gods were different from those of the Magus World after all, and Leylin had to personally verify this matter. When he was in the outer seas, the people of his family were unsuitable to experiment on. As for those pirates, their souls were even similar to those of devils wreaking havoc!

Only Rafiniya and the others made Leylin’s eyes light up. This was precisely why he left made the mark of a devil on her, making it convenient for him to track and monitor her at any time.

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‘All of these other matters can be put to one side. There are even more important matters to attend to on this trip to the imperial capital!’

The first problem that Leylin had to resolve was to cleanse himself of any suspicions of his piracy. Otherwise, the priests and paladins of the God of Justice would always follow him like houseflies, which was impossible for him to defend against. Even if he destroyed one group, others would emerge to come after him.

However, both Leylin and the nobles were very skilled when it came to distorting the truth and covering up evil deeds.

‘It’s simple in theory. As long as His Majesty makes a statement to conclude the case, it will be sufficient! After confirming the murderer, even the church of the God of Justice would be unable to continue investigating…’
Leylin was very clear on the fact that he currently was not considered a suspect. Even the priests and paladins of the God of Justice could only ‘seek his assistance in their investigation’ at the very most. However, if they really did so, it would be all over for him! Which noble didn’t have a crime penalty tied to them, or wasn’t implicated in a grey area? Once a single event was uncovered, it would be linked to even more. He wouldn’t even be able to think of walking out of the church alive at the end of it all. His only path was to nip this in the bud; the church’s hand was reaching too far. ‘Once the king makes his final conclusion, it will be difficult for even the church to overthrow it. After all, they must respect the royalty in this region. The network of connections that the Faulen Family has is insufficient for this…’ Leylin was in deep thought. ‘It would be best if a member of his majesty’s inner ministerial circle spoke on my behalf, and he would have to be a very important person. The network that Beelzebub left behind would probably come in handy in this aspect…’ The higher one’s status as a noble, the easier one would become corrupted and collaborate with the devil. The same happened to the king of Dambrath, and even the person in charge that Beelzebub had personally appointed himself before he entered dormancy. It was undeniably a form of mockery towards the gods. ‘Let me see… In the list of names of the chiefs in charge in the Dambrath region, the one situated in the Dambrath Kingdom’s capital is…’ Leylin browsed through the information that the A.I. Chip had recorded. An odd smile gradually crept onto his face. ‘Interesting… A devil?’ In Beelzebub’s memory, the imperial capital of Dambrath was obviously the main disaster area where devils wrecked havoc. He had even specially dispatched a devil over for the convenience of
control.
Although she was suppressed by the prime material plane, she should still have the strength of a high-ranked Professional. She had even mastered a few special concealment techniques to help Beelzebub’s believers successfully avoid countless searches by the churches.
“A smart chap,” Leylin evaluated her indifferently. If Leylin had used his true strength to subdue her, then the outcome of the fight wouldn’t even need to be considered. Unfortunately, fairness didn’t exist in such matters from the start.
With Beelzebub’s memories, Leylin had control over a trump card that could instantly make him an archenemy!
“But before I subdue her, I’ll go meet an old friend!” A strange smile flashed across Leylin’s face.

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“Damn it! Damn it! Those loathsome nobles all have their eyes on my territory, and have completely forgotten about their friendship with the Golden Thornblossoms...” Also in the imperial capital was Leylin’s old acquaintance. Viscount Tim had returned from the imperial palace, crestfallen.
Being a spy, he’d fortunately escaped the unforeseen event of the Pirates’ Tide, and had even brought a portion of the family’s wealth to the mainland. Soon after, he began to take action in the imperial capital in hopes of obtaining the title of Marquis of the Gold Thornblossom family, as well as the territories in the Baltic archipelago.
However, reality had slapped him in the face. Once the old marquis had passed away, his original relationships had all become invalid. Those nobles of the imperial capital with their insatiable appetites had started planning to split up the Baltic archipelago; the profits
from oceanic trade were enough to make these nobles go green with envy.

After multiple trips to the palace to meet with the king, he realised that His Majesty also seemed unenthusiastic about his requests.

‘Although we are blood relatives, the benefits are irresistible to others. Unless someone with real authority is willing to support me… I didn’t bring a lot of gold coins, who should I choose…’

Just as Viscount Tim was pondering over that, a servant entered to ask for instructions. “Sir, there’s another noble requesting to see you. He displayed the Faulen Family’s badge…”

*Ping!* The exquisite porcelain cup in Viscount Tim’s hand fell onto the floor right away.

“The Fau… Faulens!” Tim covered his forehead. “Is he still not going to let me off?”

In his heart, there was no difference between Leylin and other demons and devils. Ironically, that was indeed the truth.
After much consideration, Tim still gave the command. “Let him in!” He met Leylin with a solemn and tragic expression on his face, and was startled by the youthful face before him.

“This is the first time we have met, Viscount Tim. However, we have already made many deals in the past. I’m Leylin, Leylin Faulen. Pleased to meet you.”

“Get out, all of you!” Tim rudely chased his subordinates out, and fiercely shut the door and windows. Leylin was even considerate enough to add a magical protective screen.

“I’ve already done as you requested. Why have you still come here?” Tim asked in a rage, but Leylin could still see the fear and weakness under his tough and unyielding expression.

“Don’t take offense, alright? After all, we had a really pleasant time working together before, didn’t we Viscount Tim?” Leylin said with a light smile.

“You damn bandit, you absolute savage…” The veins on Tim’s face bulged grotesquely, “Aren’t you afraid I’ll inform on you to the king and the church?”

“What do I have to be afraid of?” Leylin laughed exaggeratedly, then whispered next to Tim’s ear, “After all, the person who killed the old marquis wasn’t me!”

Once the words left Leylin’s mouth, Tim immediately curled up on his seat and started crying bitterly, as though his spine had been
ripped out of him. “It’s you guys! You guys forced me…”
“No one forced you… If you came clean to the old marquis, both of you could have fled before the pirates came…” Leylin sneered.
“Also, you don’t have to make yourself look pitiful in front of me. You really should hire a new acting teacher.”
The cold look in Leylin’s eyes told Tim that the wizard had seen through him.
“If that’s the case, then why did you still come and look for me?” Tim took out a napkin to wipe the tears on his face. He calmed down in an instant, and his expression was even gloomy.
“Haha… Good! That’s the person I want to negotiate with!” Leylin clapped his hands, “Of course, the same as last time. A deal!”
“A deal? Speak!” Tim wasn’t even half as timid as earlier.
“I will help you obtain your title and territory, and in exchange you will end all suspicion on me.” Leylin was very direct. Tim was the key person in his plan to cleanse himself of suspicion. After all, if even the victim proved Leylin to be innocent, what else could anyone say?
“End all suspicion? Tsk tsk… Seems like the investigation team of the God of Justice is giving you trouble!” Tim folded his arms in front of his chest.
“Just a little, but you can forget about haggling. I have many other options as well, just that things would become a bit more troublesome. But the only person in the entire imperial capital who can support you in your obtaining a title of nobility is me!” Leylin appeared extremely enigmatic.
“I need to see what you’re capable of,” Tim did not agree at once. The Faulen Family’s head was just a baron after all, and Tim did not believe that his influence would extend beyond the outer seas.
“You’ll soon see!” With an indifferent smile, Leylin got up to leave. Now was the time to utilise the devil network. Leylin made turns here and there in the imperial capital, as though he was just
strolling around, and finally arrived at an entertainment club.
“Young master, we are not open yet…” The doorman said awkwardly. Leylin examined his surroundings. This place was evidently a street filled with the entertainment facilities of the imperial capital. There were similar buildings all around, just that the streets were rather deserted; after all, not every noble was so idle as to come over to play around in the day.
“I know…” Leylin stretched his right hand open in front of the doorman. A bizarre magic pattern appeared in the centre of his palm: a thorny rose. The colour of its petals changed continuously as time elapsed.
The doorman’s face changed drastically upon seeing this mark. “Come in with me!” he said as his aura changed, and his languid gaze brightened up greatly. After vigilantly glancing around Leylin’s surroundings, he opened the main door and let Leylin in.
Pink veils greeted him everywhere when he entered through the main door. There was a strong scent of perfume here, and wine bottles and scented handkerchiefs were strewn across the floor. A smooth arm or sleek thigh would peek out from the cracks of the doors from time to time. The entire place was filled with an exotic atmosphere.
The doorman led Leylin to the deepest corner of the club straight away, into a hidden private room.
“Let me meet with the person in charge!” Leylin no longer bothered to conceal his identity. His eyes turned blood red, and he emitted traces of the aura of the devil.
“Yes, sir!” The doorman performed a ceremony exclusive to followers of the devil, and retreated respectfully. He even seemed to be trembling as he could distinctly sense the aura of a powerful devil radiating from Leylin.
The boss arrived swiftly. The devilish undulations radiating from her made Leylin smile.
“Oh! Handsome young master, were you looking for me?” A relaxed voice said. Leylin then saw a beautiful and alluring lady enter the private room. She was clothed in a crimson evening gown, which revealed half of her snowy white shoulders. Her eyes were glistening as she coquettishly entered the room. With a gentle tap of her right foot, the door of the private room closed slowly. As she shut the door, the high slit in the hem of her gown inadvertently revealed her smooth thigh, as well as her pretty little feet and her toenails that were painted with daffodil juice. She didn’t seem to be wearing anything under her luxurious clothes, and she radiated an aura which was infinitely tempting. ‘A rare creature!’ This was the first thought that came to Leylin’s mind. She was even more attractive than that fox lady, Madam Tillen, whom he had met previously. She was an already-extinct Creature that could make men go crazy. “It’s me!” Leylin looked her up and down without even bothering to be polite. Her clean, bare feet that stood upon the carpet were especially attractive and flirtatious. However, what he said made her face change drastically in a split second. “As expected of a high-ranked pleasure devil, one that graces the beds of men…” “A pleasure devil? Are you joking, young man?” The beautiful lady covered her mouth demurely, and even appeared a little pale. This was a natural reaction that normal people would give after hearing about a devil. “No need for this pretense. Since I know about this place, it means that I already know everything about you that there is to know, including your real identity…” With a flick of Leylin’s hand, a magical barrier formed immediately. Shadowy divine force suddenly erupted from his body. “Master’s divine force!” This fake divine force made the attractive lady across him cry out in surprise. It was as though her fog of
disguise had been pierced, revealing her true form. The amorous smile persisted, but her pupils had turned a strange burgundy. Her violet hair was topped with a curved horn characteristic of devils, and she appeared charming and adorable. Her feet had also turned into a pair of cloven hooves.

A layer of strange purple runes appeared on her body. They were like tattoos on her skin, yet they had a bizarre charm to them. Although one would recognise her as a devil with one look, she was more attractive than before.

“So you’re the divine one that appeared in Gloomwood Castle: Kukulkan!”

The pleasure devil looked at Leylin restrainedly, fear showing on her changed appearance. As the priest in charge of the entire Dambrath Kingdom, she’d certainly paid close attention to Leylin’s appearance then. The worshippers from Gloomwood Castle wouldn’t dare hide anything from her either.

If not caring about costs, she could receive news rapidly from across the kingdom.

“Yes, it’s me!” Leylin had his hands behind his back, and seemed extremely mysterious. His divine force was suppressing the devil opposite him.

“Are you here to add me to your party? Hehe… What a pity, but without master’s orders, I will not comply with you.” The pleasure devil watched Leylin with vigilance. As a high-ranked devil, she had personally seen Beelzebub before, and knew that he was absolutely impossible that it would bestow his divinity on other devils.

“I’m afraid that’s not for you to choose, Lady Delia! Or perhaps I should call you… Adelius Dodocrow Menjfakel Anconina…” Leylin uttered a string of complex and tongue-twisting syllables. When the pleasure devil heard this, she immediately turned wild.

“How… How did you know?” Her expression changed drastically.
With a wave of her hand, a powerful magic force appeared in the private room once again, similar to a large-scale confinement spell formation.
The reason why Lady Delia was so anxious was entirely because Leylin had just uttered her truename. A truename that was reserved for devils!
High-level devils had unique truenames, and these were their greatest secret. They were almost as important as their lives! Once it was divulged, even ordinary wizards would be able to easily imprison them, and enslave them or boss them around!
As the Sovereign King of Gluttony who had control over her, it was only natural that Beelzebub knew the truename of this pleasure devil, and could cast a deadly curse on her at any time. This was the greatest form of control he had.
Leylin, who had stripped Beelzebub of everything he owned, had obtained the truenames of all the devils Beelzebub controlled from his memories. It was this trump card that he counted on.
“Why? Do you want to hit me?” Leylin smiled weakly. The rune representing Lady Delia’s truename had already flown into his palm. His terrifying divine force was like a vicious dragon, ready to smash the rune into pieces at any moment.
“No! Don’t!” The pleasure devil cried out in alarm, and knelt on the floor. “I am willing to obey your orders, master!”
As a devil, she would of course treasure her life. As for loyalty and moral principles, they had long been fed to the dogs.
Good! I won’t deprive you of your position, but you must use all the resources you have to assist me.” Leylin glanced at the pleasure devil in front of him and nodded indifferently. With Beelzebub’s divine force and knowledge of her truename, this devil would even agree if Leylin said he was a reincarnation of the Sovereign King of Gluttony. With her life under a threat, it was not difficult to make requests of her.

“How vast are your connections? Can you influence the king?” Leylin asked bluntly.

“Master, I secretly have control over around a thousand followers. Two are earls, and five are viscounts… I can also indirectly affect two marquises and a duke…” Delia immediately reported to him. Beelzebub was completely ignored by the two of them, such is the sad fate of the loser.

“Only Marquise Louise can influence the king. She is the king’s lover, and his newest conquest.” The pleasure devil bit at her lips, looking very seductive. In order to survive and gain higher status, she did not mind using her own body. Hence, after the scare, she still unwittingly displayed her beauty in front of Leylin.

She was very confident. No matter how resolute a human was, they wouldn’t be able to resist her charms.

“Marquise Louise?” Leylin was astounded. He had not expected this devil to be so effective as to influence the highest class of the
kingdom.
Madam Delia finally explained how it was done to Leylin. Like other devils, she first used her pleasure house to attract nobles, and tempted them into their falls. Shady methods had allowed her to gain control of a large number of noble families’ madams and ladies.

Making use of these social nobles, she frequently held dinner parties for the fallen, attracting even more to join. This network was like a virus that constantly expanded.

Recently, Madam Delia herself had personally guided the Marquise, Madam Louise, to try out some forbidden pleasures and successfully captured her. She had become devil worshipper and was even sent to the bed of the king.

Delia herself had the true body of a devil, and it was impossible for her to bypass all the detection methods and the wizards inside the court. However, it wasn’t an issue for pure humans.

“I now have control over a batch of noble ladies, and they are all followers of the master. If you like them…” Madam Delia licked her lips, sending him an invitation that was very attractive.

“If I’m free in the future, I’ll give it a try…” When it came to such a sweet invitation, Leylin did not hesitate to accept. He did have these needs usually anyway.

“Hehe… our services here will definitely satisfy you, master…”

After hearing Leylin’s promise, Madam Delia seemed to feel relieved. At the very least, while she still had value, Leylin would not get rid of her. Her entire body relaxed, which only made her seem more charming.

After understanding the power she held, Leylin nodded and sat on a couch nearby.

“Have you heard of Viscount Tim from the Baltic archipelago?”

“Him?” Delia shot Leylin a glance, seeming to be guessing at Leylin’s relationship with the person in question.
“I’ve heard of him. He used to be the commoner son in the Gold Thornblossom Family, and he’s scheming to get a position as the Marquis, as well as land…”
“What do you think are the chances of him succeeding?” Leylin laced his fingers together.
“There are many nobles hoping to obtain the Baltic archipelago. There is a marquis eyeing it, but the other party is the nephew of the king. While he did not do well and had his land attacked by pirates, that’s the problem with the previous marquis. His tragic story already earned him pity points, and I expect that he can get what he wants at the end. I’m not sure how much or what he’ll have to hand over in exchange though…”
Delia was a devil after all, and had also worked in the Dambrath Imperial Capital for many years. She, who had seen these power struggles countless times, could easily guess what would happen.
“Does master wish to help him?”
“No. Dispatch some of our people to make contact with him, but don’t give him anything too substantial… I’m sure you’re great at that…” Leylin stroked his chin.
“Dangling a carrot in front of a donkey’s eyes so he can see it but not eat it, and therefore get him to struggle hard in vain? Hehe… master, you’re terrible!” Madam Delia grinned brightly. Truth be told, devils were the best at using benefits to entice humans, unceasingly tightening the ropes around their necks or getting them to sell their souls.
“It’s good that you understand. Do this for now, I’ll inform you about other things in the future…” Leylin stood up, completely ignoring her astounding beauty and looking ready to leave.
“Master, aren’t you staying?” Madam Delia was truly surprised.
“No, I still have many things to do in the capital. I’ll come over whenever I have time…” Leylin always drew a clear line between work and pleasure.
Seeing this, Delia could only watch as Leylin left. Only after his figure completely disappeared did she look grim, “Damn it! How could he have my master’s strength and know my true name? Just a look at him makes it obvious that he’s a steel-hearted freak who wouldn’t treat his underlings more leniently because of their beauty…”

It was the greatest misfortune of a pleasure devil to fall under such a master. However, with her truename in his grasp, Delia could do nothing else.

“Damn it. DAMN IT!” She could only begin to curse hatefully.

The other servants and dancers watched their boss fearfully. Only they knew what violence and darkness was hidden under her perfect and beautiful face. Hence, they all wished they could turn into ostriches, burying their heads in the ground.

Upon seeing this, she yelled even more violently. “You dwarf swines, get working! Do you want to get whipped?”

Days later, Leylin had changed into noble clothing and headed out of the church of wealth. Using the transfer services of the church, he’d received a large amount of gold from Faulen Island. Due to the fall of the Baltic archipelago, the family’s profits from trade had risen bit by bit, which gave Leylin even more abundant funds.

Wizard training could not be sustained without money. They needed it for their expensive experimental materials and magic tomes.

“Tim’s side has also surrendered. Everything is going well. I might go to the imperial capital and train for a while, since the Wizards’ Guild can give me access to any materials below that given to high-ranked wizards. With help from my connection with mentor Ernest…”

Leylin looked at the distant wizard tower that reached through the clouds, and his eyes couldn’t help but glint. His plans were going extremely smoothly. After seeing Leylin’s strength, Tim’s side had
easily agreed to the deal. After all, compared to what the other nobles could want from him, Leylin only needed Tim to confirm the deal and asked a low price. With Leylin having evidence of Tim having murdered the old marquis anyway, it was impossible for them to go their separate ways. Hence, as long as he was still in the outer seas, he would have to consider Leylin’s stance. After considering it comprehensively, Tim naturally knew what to choose.

With proof of harm, Leylin would just need to create a ruckus, forcing the king to make an announcement and with proper documentation, make everything official. What would the church of the God of Justice be able to do then?

“On top of that, even if the king finds out the truth in the future, he won’t acknowledge that this is the truth. He’ll stubbornly protect the legitimacy of his reputation. He represents the dignity of a kingdom, so how could the king announce something that might be wrong? For his own reputation, he would rather allow absurd events like this. Such is the sorrow of those with power…” Leylin’s lips quirked up into a cold smile.

Offending a king just for the son of a baron, who was only guilty of piracy and therefore less of an issue than associating with devils and demons? Was that worth it? The priests of the God of Justice would have to consider this properly.

With this done, Leylin, who was now considered clean, could revert to strutting around on the streets in his original appearance. Come to think of it, there was no crime pinned to him. At most, there were only suspicions.

“Now that I’ve shown my face outside the church of wealth, the others should emerge soon, right?” Leylin had never doubted the rate at which intel flowed between large organisations. After all, even Madam Delia had a huge intel network, much less the churches.
With the transfer of money at the shrine, his status, name and all other information were exposed.
“I’ll be waiting!” Leylin chuckled and walked into the Wizards’ Guild.
The Wizards’ Guild was less cheery than the Thieves’ Guild or Warriors’ Guild, but in turn it was filled with a solemn, stately aura. Two magic puppets loyally guarded the place, emanating magic light. There were evidently spells of eternity cast on them.
‘With such an air of wealth and extravagance, as well as their expenses… It’s no wonder that there’s only one Wizards’ Guild in the Dambrath Kingdom.’
“Welcome! May I know which services you require?” A wizard apprentice received him and bowed towards him with etiquette that befitted wizards.
“I am Leylin Faulen of Faulen Island. I’m here to take the wizard ranking examination.” Leylin had a bright smile on his face.
If he planned to study in the Wizards’ Guild, he’d obviously need to have his rank verified. The rigour of this was far greater than what warriors underwent. He even had to make clear whom he’d learnt from before and what he’d studied. Wizards were a bunch of serious people!
However, Leylin was already prepared for this, and was therefore unafraid.
Meribald was a 367 year old high-ranking wizard, although he preferred to be called a scholar. With the power of his magic, even at his age he was plenty vigorous, and had very supple skin as though he was a young man. Only his greying hair betrayed his age, but it seemed more like an accent to his wisdom and foresight.

He had served as president of the Wizards’ Guild in the Dambrath Imperial Capital for over a hundred years, and had handled innumerable major events. He had also awarded numerous medals to talented wizards, and judged notorious ones. By now, he’d begun to think his still and unfeeling heart would no longer receive any blows.

He hadn’t expected how stunned he would be today. Meribald pushed his spectacles up, his finger brushing against the uneven imprints on the identification document. There was no problem with the magic imprint! That was what his abundance of experience was telling him, but he was horrified by what the results of his investigation meant.

“Proof of nobility! Wizard Ernest’s testimonial! And the final round of examination of the documents didn’t meet with any issues! In that case, this young noble, who is just sixteen years of age, is really a rank 10 wizard? In Azuth’s name…” Meribald’s jaw slowly dropped as he looked at the young man in front of him. With such innate skill at his age… Meribald wondered whether he
“Excuse me, guild leader. Is there any problem?” The question raised by the young wizard across him shook Meribald from his reverie.

“Of… Of course not! Congratulations, wizard Leylin!” Meribald secretly sighed as he placed his magic imprint on the wizard ranking document. This document would be filed away as proof of Leylin’s identity as a wizard.

“From today onwards, you are a mid-ranked wizard as verified by the Wizards’ Guild! May Azuth bless you…” Although this was not the deity he believed in, Leylin still lowered his head respectfully to express his humility.

Meribald passed Leylin a wizard robe enhanced with a ‘Remove Dust’ spell and other coats of arms and documents. When conducting the ceremony, Meribald could see Leylin’s love of magic and the pursuit of truth in his eyes; this same look once existed in his eyes when he was younger!

‘Perhaps only such a person will truly have the ability to break through into the realm of Legends, and become a being that I can only dream of…’ Meribald gasped in admiration to himself, a warm hearted expression on his face. He kindly gave some advice to Leylin as well. “Wizard Leylin! Although you have already entered the ranks of a mid-level wizard, I suggest that you study in the imperial capital’s Wizards’ Guild for a while. A few of the latest philosophies and models in magic are present here, and will be very important for you right now.”

“That is precisely what I wish for, distinguished guild leader!” Leylin performed a wizard’s bow to the high-ranked wizard. His movements were unbelievably graceful.

‘I didn’t expect that things would get this troublesome. It seems like the talent I displayed made me quite outstanding. However, I can’t get the attention of the other guys without doing so…’ Leylin
A sixteen-year-old rank 10 wizard! Such innate talent seemed rather horrifying. After verifying his rank, a few old fogeys immediately acted as though they had suffered a stroke, and even involved the guild leader. Fortunately, he’d already earned his fame as a genius wizard. All of his improvements had been witnessed by Ernest, and it had saved him a lot of trouble. With regards to the Devilblood Dagger and other items that would easily be associated with evil, Leylin didn’t carry any of them with him.

‘Proof that I’m a rank 10 wizard. Even if I travel abroad, it’s enough for me to receive preferential treatment…; Leylin fiddled with the wizard insignia in his hand. It was decorated with a silver moon and stars, and there a sense of indistinct beauty to it. In addition, it was also bound to its wizard owner, and outsiders would absolutely be unable to make a counterfeit copy.

“Leylin Faulen!” A few men carrying the symbol of a high-level inspector stood at the door of the wizard guild. A team of guards crowded around Leylin, intercepting him. Leylin even saw a few priests of the God of Justice among the team, watching him with judgeful stares.

‘They’re only here now? It’s a little late… Or are they afraid of the power of the wizard guild?’

“Is anything the matter?” Leylin asked the inspector in front of him with a smile.

“You are suspected of a crime in the open seas. I need you to assist in our investigations!” The inspector said expressionlessly. Judges, public security officers, policemen and the like all advocated righteousness, and were the main source of followers for the God of Justice. Leylin wouldn’t be surprised if they had the backing of the church of the God of Justice or if they were tipped off by them.
“If I say no?” Leylin looked at him ridiculously.
“You do not have the authority to reject!” With a wave of the inspector’s hand, a few guards immediately closed in.
“You…” Leylin gaze was as harsh as lightning, and he raised his voice by a few notches.
“Don’t tell me you dare to apprehend an innocent nobleman in the imperial capital? And slander a noble mid-ranked wizard in front of the wizard guild at that!”
Noble! Wizard! Once these two upper-class identities were revealed, many guards immediately retreated in fear.
In their plain and simple thoughts, this was definitely a struggle between influential powers. Why should they take part? Aren’t they afraid of getting into trouble for being involved?
After witnessing this scene, the inspector knitted his brows. But before he could take his next course of action, the intense sound of a horse’s hooves could be heard.
“His Majesty decrees that Leylin Faulen will enter the palace and have an audience with the King!” An imperial knight dressed in a splendid suit of armor dismounted his steed and displayed a document to the inspector with the king’s royal seal stamped on it.
“His Majesty wishes to convene a legislative hearing with regards to this, and has specially gathered Viscount Tim to testify…”
For some reason, Leylin’s peaceful state gave the inspector a bad feeling. However, he couldn’t stop this from happening, or he would be declaring war on the law that he had vowed his loyalty and devotion to.
“You know… Even when things seem black and white, there will always be infinitesimal shades of grey existing between them. Isn’t that right, Sir Inspector?” Leylin mounted the horse and taunted.
“Even with Viscount Tim bearing witness, His Majesty definitely will not let you off.” The inspector’s face changed drastically, but he eventually chose to have faith in the king.
“I’ll wait and see,” Leylin smiled lightly as he disappeared into the end of the road along with the knight.

“We’ll wait in front of the main entrance of the court. I don’t believe it…” The inspector bit his lip and waved his hand firmly. Evidently, the unease he felt had become stronger.

“What a pity… If Lorent and the others can reach in time…” The priest of the God of Justice sighed. “Even if that’s the case, the sinner must receive trial and punishment!”

……

The events that followed progressed like a stage play. Numerous people appeared on stage one by one like marionettes at Leylin’s fingertips, and evil got the last laugh.

With the victim, Viscount Tim, testifying personally, as well as the instigation by Marquise Louise, when her husband was asleep, Leylin didn’t even need to open his mouth to speak. When it came to such matters, taking part in them himself would lead to a loss. He had to maintain the reserved and cold attitude of a noble.

The inspector’s last trace of persistence was thoroughly smashed to smithereens with the king’s single statement.

‘With regards to the murder of the Gold Thornblossom Marquis in the open seas, our investigations have confirmed it to be a crime committed by the pirate crew called the Barbarians. I hereby order the arrest of the leaders of the aforementioned, namely Odge and Tillen…”

“Why? Why did it turn out like this?” The inspector knelt on the floor with tears in his eyes as he began to sob silently.

“Because this was a misunderstanding to begin with! In actual fact, I’m proud of how the kingdom has such a responsible and diligent inspector like you…” Leylin happened to walk out at this moment, and saluted elegantly to the inspector upon hearing him. He had the
attitude of a person who was trying to put a stop to the enmity between them with a smile.
There were now two more titles to his name. One was his identity as an imperial wizard, and the other was as an honorary viscount. They weren’t of much use, but they had a nice ring to it. He had received them after entertaining the king.
Even though the king used to be brilliant when he was younger, he was clearly addicted to wine and women at present. As long as it didn’t involve his authority and prestige, the king wouldn’t have any reaction. Leylin had his methods of handling such an old fellow.
What made him happier was that after this statement was issued in writing, no one else would give him trouble about the pirates. He could also conveniently hinder the Barbarians. What wasn’t there to be happy about?
“Why…” Leylin smiled gracefully as he skillfully mingled with the circle of nobles in the imperial capital, and was even chatting cheerfully with Viscount Tim as if they were blood brothers. Seeing this, the inspector sunk completely into perplexity. At this moment, his faith was even in danger of being shattered.
“My child… Justice has always been lonely. The road of people persisting in justice is inevitably filled with thorns, but we believe that the ultimate victory will definitely belong to us!” The priest’s warm hand landed on the inspector’s shoulder, becoming his sole support.
‘The God of Justice? Hmph!’ Leylin’s expression didn’t change, but he sneered secretly to himself.

……

Outside the imperial capital, Lorent and company could finally see the city walls after a challenging trek.
“We finally made it. According to our intelligence reports, he’s in the city. He can’t run away this time!” Lorent’s face was filled with excitement, and also a little fury at the same time. Previously in Gloomwood Castle, they had first been impeded by the matter regarding the devil worshippers. As compared to pirates, the movements of devil worshippers were obviously much more important. But after busying themselves with it, they discovered that it was a false alarm. Not only that, they had wasted a huge amount of time, and even let their original target get to the imperial capital! Fortunately, with the church’s information network, he had nowhere else to run to now. “Prepare to accept punishment, Leylin Faulen!” Although they hadn’t met, Lorente had already sketched an image of him in his heart: cunning, savage, and full of evil! This noble should have been burnt alive at the stake!
Hold up, Lorent!” The high-level priest in the team walked forward at this moment. “What’s the matter?” Lorent furrowed his brows. The priest’s expression gave him a bad feeling. “I got the latest news through a Sending spell. The king has already issued a statement: the Barbarians have been found guilty of setting loose the Pirates’ Tide on the open seas. With Viscount Tim as a direct witness, there’s no hope of saving this situation…” The priest was visibly upset, but still informed the others of the latest news. “We can’t continue to investigate him as a subject. This mission must be abandoned.” “Then our hard work? Those thousands of innocent lives lost at sea? Will it go to waste just like that?” Lorent seemed to burst into an indignant red-hot flame, and suddenly drew his sword and shattered an enormous boulder next to him into pieces. “There is nothing we can do. We can’t go against the king’s authority directly…” The priest had a helpless expression on his face. Although there would be no problem overturning the entire Dambrath Kingdom if the church of the God of Justice was mobilised, the crux of the matter was that the powers of the church were spread across the entire mainland. It could not control the entire Dambrath kingdom.
Besides, the human kingdoms regarded the church overriding the king’s authority as taboo. Success would only cause more problems than it gave benefits. Other churches were also eyeing them covetously, like tigers stalking their prey. They wouldn’t allow the church of justice to become the most powerful party here.

“Are we just going to let that noble escape his punishment?” Lorent’s eyes were bloodshot.

“Of course not! The kingdom’s statement represents His Majesty’s pride, and we can’t overthrow that of course. We can no longer accuse him of being a pirate, but we can search for other crimes…” The priest was very experienced in this aspect. After all, this was not the only noble family who had ever committed such deeds.

“However, we can’t act against him for the time being. Let’s carry out other missions first!”

“No! I want to stay here, and I won’t go anywhere else until he admits to his crime!” The paladin said willfully. He was a bullheaded individual, and once he made up his mind, it would be impossible to hold him back.

The priest could only sigh helplessly upon seeing this.

……

A luxurious carriage slowly came to a halt on the roadside.

“Here. Careful, it’s slippery!” Viscount Daniel was clothed in an extravagant suit. He alighted from the carriage, followed by Yalani and her sister Hera.

However, the pair of sisters were now dressed in splendid attire, and appeared very sweet and charming. Yalani blushed as she gazed at Daniel, her face lit with joy. This young girl was just fourteen years old, yet she had now lost her immaturity, and had
the bearing of a mature and sophisticated woman. Hera stared at the unmarried couple in front of her, and could only sigh helplessly to herself. She was so astute, but how could she not have realised the changes in her sister’s body? ‘Daniel is too impatient, and Yalani… Sigh… How could she have let Daniel get his way so easily? They didn’t even have a simple wedding…’ Hera sighed secretly to herself, and recalled the way Daniel looked at herself.

His gaze felt invasive and was brimming with wildness, even mixed with a distinctive sense of violence. It was as though she was meeting a wolf face to face. Hera had seen her fair share of such looks, yet none gave her such immense pressure; this was the tragic part about having to rely entirely on someone else!

If not for Daniel’s inclination towards fooling around instead of settling down, perhaps Hera herself would have been taken advantage of by him. Grief suddenly overwhelmed her.

‘Rafiniya and… Ley, I wonder how they’re doing?’ Hera quite liked little Rafiniya, and the mercenary named Ley had also left a deep impression on her. He was powerful and mysterious, his eyes filled with an unprecedented purity that could make one feel at peace.

‘Forget Rafiniya, even that Ley guy rejected my good intentions!’ But resentment crept into her heart in a split second.

“Madam!” The butler bowed respectfully and supported Hera as she alighted from the carriage, even passing her a handkerchief adorned with exquisite embroidery.

“Thank you very much!” Hera accepted it gracefully, and suddenly felt much better.

‘You can be a mercenary for the rest of your life, Ley! When you’re old, perhaps one day you will regret declining my offer then as you’re chatting with your grandchildren…’ Hera gripped the
handkerchief tightly. It was only now that she realised why he left such a deep impression on her.

“Yalani, the person we’re about to visit is a viscount, no wait. Perhaps I should now address him as Marquis Gold Thornblossom… This marquis just inherited his title, and a large fief off the mainland…” Hera could hear Daniel constantly speaking from ahead of her. She could even detect an unconcealable envy from the tone of his voice.

That’s right, envy! This was huge territory and the title of Marquis, things that Daniel couldn’t obtain even if he worked hard for the rest of his life!

After interacting with and observing him for a short period of time, Hera could roughly tell that Viscount Tim actually wasn’t as rich as he appeared to be. Living in the imperial capital was extremely expensive, after all.

Daniel was still giving strict instructions ahead. “Yalani, you must bear your manners in mind. After all, he’s a noble that hails from a royal family, and has high demands when it comes to etiquette…”

“Also… Hera!” Daniel suddenly turned around, and abruptly stopped in his tracks, which almost made Hera bump into him.

“I’m… I’m very sorry!” Hera was slightly flushed as she curtsied in apology.

“It’s alright…” Seeing Hera’s mature and beautiful face, Daniel was slightly intoxicated by her, but quickly came to his senses.

“The main point is, Marquis Tim is still very young, and he’s never even had an official engagement. Do you know what this means?”

Daniel looked into Hera’s eyes.

“Could it be…” Hera felt a chill in her heart, but surprisingly didn’t reject the idea. Becoming the wife of a marquis was simply a dream that she had never even dared to think of previously.

Although competition for the spot of his actual wife would be fierce, it would be a great help to her small family in any case as
long as she managed to have some sort of relationship with him.
‘I’m afraid Daniel thinks the same way. He wants to get into Marquis Tim’s good books through me, and even take a step further by getting support from him…’ Hera was rather sorrowful. She suddenly turned to look at her younger sister, who was tugging at Daniel’s arm. She, too, was wearing her best clothing, and her face was filled with both arrogance and vigilance, just like when she was hugging her own doll when she was younger.
‘Afraid that I’ll take her husband’s favour away from her? What a naive lass, I’m not her enemy…’ The two sisters shared similar facial features, and were both nobles in their own right, which would arouse the interest of males.
‘I hope Daniel won’t do that, or else…’ Hera grieved secretly, yet could only force out a stiff smile. “Rest assured, brother-in-law, I know what to do.”
“That’s great!” Daniel continued walking ahead, relieved.
The Gold Thornblossom Marquis’ mansion was indeed more imposing than theirs. It was said that this was just his temporary residence, but the entrance to his house was long filled with carriages, practically all of them belonging to nobles. The struggle for title and territory in the Baltic archipelagos had just passed. Those nobles who were on the lookout naturally had to express their goodwill, and even wanted to receive a share of profits from the overseas trade. In fact, Daniel was one of them.
Viscount Daniel clearly hadn’t thought that it would be such a grand occasion that the house would be filled with distinguished guests. Hera and Yalani could only accompany the viscount to the tiny drawing room and continue waiting.
After several hours, Yalani had already made countless complaints, and even Hera was starting to get a little impatient. A young noble then entered through the door.
“Daniel, my friend!” He embraced Daniel cordially, and hurriedly
looked over at Hera and her sister. That kind of expression made Hera’s heart sink. “Are these the beautiful sisters from the noble family you mentioned? They seem pretty good!”

Tim rubbed his hands together. In fact, ever since that incident, there had been a demonic fire burning in his heart, waiting to be unleashed. Daniel wasn’t even some figure with authority. But on account that he had such a pretty fiancee and sister-in-law, perhaps Tim could consider his request…

After enjoying the taste of immense power, Tim’s eyes seemed to be ablaze. Yalani tugged her fiance’s hand tightly. But the flattering smile on Daniel’s face that Yalani had never seen before made him seem like a stranger.

‘Something interesting has happened!’ Leylin wandered around Marquis Tim’s mansion with his hands behind his back.

In reality, this mansion was entirely his. Without the Faulens having a residence in the imperial capital, Leylin had moved into the place to create the idea that he and Tim were like blood brothers to outsiders.

After all, the Gold Thornblossoms had bought this place specially to use as a stop-over in the imperial capital. Its surroundings and all that were much better than those of hotels.

Tim had been scared out of his wits by Leylin’s tricks. Once Leylin showed some interest in this place, he immediately transferred the deed and other things over, offering the entire estate to him. Hence, as a matter of fact, this was already his territory.

Leylin thought of how he still had to stay in the imperial capital for a while longer to study in the Wizards’ Guild. His family also needed a place to lodge in the imperial capital as well, so he accepted it without caring about politeness.

‘It’s better to have Tim in the outer seas than a stranger. There are so many opportunities for our family businesses to collaborate…’
leylin was rather satisfied with the current situation in the outer seas on the whole. Were external powers to take root there, extra variables would arise. Marquis Tim was someone he understood very well, so it was fine for him to be there.

Being fully aware of the Faulens’ abilities, Tim definitely wouldn’t stupidly declare war on his own initiative. In fact, Leylin believed that the powers he revealed during this operation were sufficient to intimidate him.

Given that Tim had already completely surrendered himself to him, Leylin didn’t mind letting Tim have a taste of success. After all, Tim was the most influential nobleman in the outer seas, and at the same time, he was a vassal of the royal family. It would be a good thing if Leylin could bind Tim to his chariot of war through a mutually beneficial alliance.

No matter how deep one’s hatred was, it would melt like ice and dissolve in the face of sudden huge profits. Moreover, there were only a few ‘misunderstandings’ between them. Still, although Tim had already expressed his will to pledge his allegiance to him, Leylin certainly wouldn’t put down his guard against him.

“Ooh… No….”

“Boohoo… Sister… Daniel… Save me!”

A familiar voice could be heard from the room. The guards and maids in the area undoubtedly recognised Leylin, and roughly
knew his relationship with their master. They even knew about the
transfer of the estate, and thus could only stare blankly at him as
they didn’t dare to stop him.
“Interesting! How should we play this game?” The corners of
Leylin’s lips curled into a smile as he pondered over this. Shortly
after, he suddenly pushed open the door that had been tightly shut.
“What’s going on? Tim, my friend? I think I hear an unusual
voice!” Leylin scanned the room with a ‘puzzled’ expression.
Daniel stood at the side, his face as red as an apple, while Tim’s
pants were already half undone. The pair of beautiful sisters stood
next to the office table, weeping.
“Oh, Leylin!” Tim greeted Leylin as if it wasn’t awkward at all, and
gave Daniel an introduction at the same time. “He’s a court wizard,
an honorable viscount. This is Sir Leylin. My closest friend!”
Tim then turned to Leylin and said, “This is Viscount Daniel!”
“Sir… Sir Leylin!” Daniel felt that Leylin looked rather familiar, but
he had long forgotten the mercenaries from earlier, hence he still
bowed calmly. Court wizard! Honorary viscount! Although these
were empty titles, they also represented an exceptional amount of
glory!
He could even be favoured by His Majesty, and Marquis Tim was
also his good friend. Just these facts were enough to crush Daniel
completely.
“Good day, Sir Daniel!” Leylin had a doubtful expression on his
face as he gestured towards Hera and her sister, whose clothes were
all over the place.
“Oh! This is a pair of sisters that Daniel sent over from a noble
family. What do you think? If you like them, I can give them to you
for a while…” Such occurrences were extremely common among
nobles and were not worth paying attention to. Tim had evidently
misunderstood Leylin’s gesture.
“Yes! Although I’ve popped the younger sister’s cherry, I didn’t
touch the older one. She might even be the purest of all virgins…” Daniel was obviously an expert in this field as well.
It was just that from his supposed point of view, that statement seemed wrong. Perhaps he didn’t even intend to actually marry the younger sister, and was just toying with her, thus he could just offer her as a gift without the slightest bit of hesitation.
Hera gave up all hope upon realising this. However, when she saw Leylin once more, her expression suddenly changed drastically.
“Ley? You’re Ley! Are you here to save us?”
“Ley?” Yalani was using the clothes on the floor to cover her chest as she sized up the noble who had hastily barged in. He really did look exactly like the mercenary from earlier, just that he now had the air of a noble.
“Ley… The mercenary?” At this point, Daniel had finally realised why Leylin looked so familiar. Wasn’t this Ley the mercenary who had escorted Hera and her sister to his doorstep previously?
It was just that this was a court wizard, an honorary viscount! Compared to a mercenary who was worth as much as mud, they were obviously on two different ends of society. Even Daniel couldn’t immediately see the connection between the two.
Hera felt as though her face was burning hot, and was ashamed to death. She quickly came to her senses.
To think that she thought she had magnanimously given Leylin a way out! Who would have thought this Ley was so secretive that even Marquis Tim, whom Daniel was trying to curry favour with, would be afraid of him?
All her previous actions were probably clownish in his eyes, right? No matter how much adversity they had met with earlier, Hera did not waver. Now, for some reason, streams of tears had begun to flow uncontrollably from her eyes.
“Erm… You guys know each other?” Tim scratched his head as he looked at the people around him, who seemed to be caught in an
awkward situation.
“Yes. We met once on the way to the capital…” Leylin spoke very
ambiguously. “Viscount Daniel is my friend as well. If there isn’t
any other trouble…”
Since it was such a trivial matter, Tim did not particularly mind
helping Leylin save face. “No problem. I agree to the matter you
raised previously!” Tim said as he clapped Daniel’s shoulder, who
immediately showed a joyful expression.
“Thank you so much! Thank you Marquis Tim, and Viscount
Leylin! Thank you so much for your help…” Daniel was so
emotional that he couldn’t even speak clearly, and could only
incoherently express his gratitude towards Leylin and Tim.
‘Hehe… I heard that Yalani is Daniel’s fiancée! He actually even
brought her here for this purpose, just to receive a tiny amount of
benefits,’ Tim secretly viewed Daniel with disdain, but did not
show it. What he was more interested in was the relationship
between Leylin and the sisters.
What were women worth to him? If he couldn’t get these two, he
could find others. However, if he could use the sisters to discover
Leylin’s weak points or the people he held dear, that would be
absolutely perfect.
Due to Leylin’s deliberate interruption, the situation that had been
about to occur naturally couldn’t continue. Hera and Yalani swiftly
rearranged their clothing. “Thank… Thank you…” Hera muttered
as they brushed past him, her voice as low as a mosquito’s buzz.
“It’s nothing much.” Leylin looked at Hera, whose face was
flushed, and Yalani, who was visibly silent. The corners of his lips
suddenly curved into a strange smile. “If you feel like you can’t
stay on in his place, perhaps you can look for Marquise Louise!”
“Marquise?” Hera obviously noticed the honorific.
“Yes.” Leylin had to forcefully hold back his urge to laugh. This
woman had just crawled out of a trap, yet was about to fall into an
even deeper abyss. “Oh, and Lady Delia as well. Go straight to them, I believe they’ll definitely help you.”
“Thank you! Thank you! Leylin, you’re really such a nice person!” Hera looked at Leylin, who was helping them ‘wholeheartedly’, then recalled her attitude towards them earlier. She started to sob so hard that it was silent.
Leylin watched as the sisters departed, and could even hear Yalani and Daniel screaming and quarreling not long after. Seeing this, Leylin’s smile grew wider.
‘My dear Delia! I found you a pair of vain souls, don’t let me down… What will they become with your exploitation? Pleasure devils? Or lust demons? I look forward to it…’
“Sorry for disturbing a happy occasion, Tim!” Leylin turned to Marquis Tim, who was next to him.
“No matter. It’s my pleasure to be of use to you, sir!” Seeing Leylin in this state, Tim suddenly felt a chill in his heart for some reason. Trying to pry into Leylin’s thoughts was really such a foolish decision.

……

Tim eventually left the capital and returned to his territory, the Baltic archipelago. However, with a handwritten letter of alliance from Leylin, Tim now had a little more confidence to continue surviving in the outer seas, and also develop new areas.
After Tim had left, the enormous and magnificent mansion now belonged entirely to Leylin. Tim was even smart enough to leave behind a huge sum of operating funds for Leylin to squander, which pleased him greatly.
With Ernest’s recommendation letter, Leylin successfully met another high-level wizard, Simell, and even obtained the authority to conduct experiments alone in Simell’s wizard tower.
Although the president of the Wizards’ Guild, Meribald, had made the same gesture of goodwill, Leylin eventually chose Simell after thoroughly considering the matter. After all, given that he was the president of the Wizards’ Guild, choosing Meribald would bring about a lot of trouble, but with Simell, it would purely be a working relationship. Additionally, Master Simell had remarkable academic achievements in alchemy, which appealed greatly to Leylin.

Through his studies, he had gradually fused the alchemy techniques of the Magus World and this world into one, allowing him to regain his original ability as an alchemic Grandmaster.

After reading extensively through the Wizards’ Guild’s latest magic research and the library resources, Leylin’s understanding of magic continuously grew deeper.

Time ticked by, and two years passed within the blink of an eye. Winter had passed and spring had just begun. After the harshest season had passed, the giant trees in the garden were impatiently sprouting their tender buds, full of vitality.

In the study room of his mansion, Leylin was half reclined on his chair. His eyes were slightly shut as he connected to the A.I. Chip. ‘A.I. Chip! Display my current statistics.’ Leylin inwardly commanded.


The A.I. Chip faithfully executed Leylin’s order, and displayed a row of data.
The lack of changes to his stats and wizard ranking was within Leylin’s expectations. After all, he had used the Devilblood Dagger to advance in rank before, and couldn’t be as arrogant now that he was in the capital. The bottleneck was understandable.

What he had gained with the materials here was that he’d managed to complete the analysis of the 2nd level of the Weave, removing the restriction on spell slots for it.

‘Though I haven’t been working hard on increasing my wizard ranking to avoid arousing suspicion, I have already accumulated enough resources. There won’t be any problems with becoming a high-ranked wizard. Once I leave the capital, I’ll be able to advance quickly…’

Leylin was very happy about his progress in power, but there was something that made him frown. Since two years ago, he’d already sensed a malicious intent circling the surroundings of the capital, and felt a sense of someone watching him. He had a feeling that if he were to leave all of a sudden, he would immediately be met with a terrifying attack.

‘Is it that bunch of evil paladins of the God of Justice?’ This was the capital after all. If Leylin made his mind to hole himself up, the other party could only watch on helplessly. Leylin had a general idea about who those people hiding in the shadows were. He was planning to take care of the problem in one fell swoop when he
left.
“I’ve recorded most of the information that I can from the Wizards’ Guild. There are only a few aspects of research left, and those are nearing completion. Dambrath is a small country after all, and it’s already amazing enough that they have reserves suitable for up to rank 15 wizards…”

After the experiences over 2 years, Leylin had the chance to move once more. As for the destination? Leylin already had numerous choices, with Silverymoon City in the north as his most fitting choice.

“But before leaving, there are a few things I need to handle… I should use this opportunity to take a look there…” A map appeared before Leylin’s eyes. This was the sacrifice from the unlucky captain of the Ashen Hawks, who had been a high-ranked warrior.

“The scope of the map is generally the capital, but there have already been changes to the names of places and their locations. Even with my abilities, I’ve only just incidentally found this place… I never expected it to be there. What kind of surprises are lying in wait for me?” Leylin mumbled to himself, before getting up and leaving the room.

“Young Master!” “Young Master!” The maids and servants that Leylin saw on the way bowed to him with exceptional respect. They were well aware that he was not just a noble, but also a powerful wizard. He was practically the same as those people in the legends of old!

“Mm.” Leylin looked very calm as he hummed in answer, and it was enough of a response for his servants to feel grateful for.

While walking on the streets, Leylin’s wizard robes gathered reverence from many. His symbol which marked him as a rank 10 wizard gave rise to even more cries of awe. Leylin had gradually gotten used to such treatment. In no time, he arrived in front of a tall wizard tower.
“Leylin!” A few low-ranked wizards who were similarly in wizard robes were already waiting there. A delicate and pretty female wizard took the opportunity to greet him, her eyes gleaming at the sight of him.

“Mm. Julia, Jale, Angelo. Good afternoon!” Leylin nodded, with a gentle and calm expression on his face. These wizards were all Simell’s students. He was currently studying with them under Simell, and they therefore they were somewhat like classmates.

“Senior Leylin, help me take a look at this bottle of ‘Exploding Potion’! I’ve tried it so many times but to no avail…” Julia produced a fiery-red test tube, almost leaning against him.

She knew very well what kind of background he had. Not only did he have exceptional talent at magic, his family had control of the tremendous trade in the outer seas!

Such status had turned Leylin into a sort of prince charming for many ladies in the capital. Some had even taken the initiative to proclaim their love for him, but unfortunately, Leylin politely rejected all of them. In his opinion, that sort of thing was just too boring. If he wanted to enjoy himself, there were more than enough means to do so at Delia’s place. Why would he waste effort on this?

The warm treatment he received from the women made other male wizards shoot envious looks at him, but Leylin was completely unperturbed.

He took the test tube and took a quick look at it, “There are errors in the settling time of the neutralising agent. Also, the spell was cast far too early…”

While he had only made a few comments, many wizards suddenly looked enlightened.

“Alright! If there’s nothing else, I’m going in.” After casually chatting with others, Leylin entered the wizard tower, leaving behind gazes of envy.
“Mentor Simell gave Leylin the authority to enter the wizard tower as he wishes. That’s something only a few disciples get the chance to have!” Julia gazed at the tremendous wizard tower with an envious expression.

“He is a rank 10 wizard, the most powerful magic genius here! If you get to rank 10, mentor will also give you that right…” A male wizard beside her glanced at the badge at his chest. The symbol that implied his status as a rank 5 wizard had always been the source of his pride, but it only seemed unsightly now.

“We really can’t match up to that talent…” The few other wizards were around rank 5, and could only smile wryly at each other after hearing that sentence.

“Grandmaster Simell!” Leylin had rather good luck. Simell hadn’t been performing any experiments, rather resting in the entertainment room outside.

“Oh, it’s Leylin. Come in, take a seat!” Simell was a very spirited old fellow, less than a metre tall with a kindly look on his face. Strictly speaking, Leylin was not his disciple. Their relationship was similar to modern-day postgraduate students who helped their mentors with experiments, and things were easy and comfortable between them.

After hearing that, Leylin did not hold back and sat down, exclaiming, “Grandmaster Simell, I hope to get the authority to enter Alchemy Room Number 1!”

As he spoke, he placed a golden card on the table. While he was free to do as he wished, there was still a price to pay. Leylin knew this very well.

“Mm, looks like you’re finally preparing to begin! Have you gathered all the materials?” Simell chuckled as he glanced at Leylin’s left hand.

“Thanks to you, I’ve collected everything. I still need to perform the last step in lab conditions within the wizard tower…” Leylin
rubbed the ring on his left hand.
“Mm, I’ll authorise the tower genie to let you in. Also, please take Julia and the others into your care a little. I don’t have that much time…” Simell spoke.
How could ordinary, low-ranked wizards or wizard disciples compare to Leylin in his extravagant spending? Every day, they could only accumulate spell slots, and then through brewing potions or smelting items at an elementary level, gain rewards of a few gold coins.
For those who were unlucky, they would have to copy large quantities of spell scrolls and slowly save them so that they could be exchanged for spellbooks and other materials to break through. Some mentors would just completely forget their students. Simell having Leylin help out meant he was already quite kind.
“Alright, I got it!” Leylin got up and took his leave. Within the alchemy lab, Leylin took off his Ring of Wizardry on his left hand. This ring that could increase the number of spell slots of rank 5 spells by 1 was like a divine artifact for low-ranked wizards. It was also made of unique material with possibilities to strengthen it further. Through his studies under Simell and his own ideas, he had finally found a way to strengthen the item.
“Tower genie, do I have the right to go in yet?” Leylin asked bluntly.
“Master has authorised wizard Leylin Faulen to use Alchemy Room Number 1, as well as the elemental pools, particle accelerator, rank 2 magic puppets…” A robotic voice sounded. This was the tower genie of the entire wizard tower.
With its help, a wizard’s abilities could be displayed to the limits. However, the tremendous price to create one meant that even if many wizards hoped to have one of their own, they couldn’t go through with it.
Mithril, adamantine, and all sorts of items were shifted out of
Leylin’s bag of holding.
“It took me such a long time. I finally have a way to use it…”
Leylin had a smile on his face, the Ring of Wizardry already on the table. Dazzling lights enveloped the ring.

……

Seven days later, Leylin gazed at the brand new ring in his hand, a look of satisfaction on his face.
The A.I. Chip immediately showed the stats.
[Item Name: Ring of Wizardry. Weight: 15g. Materials: Obsidian, Wizard’s Alloy, Dragon Blood, Mithril, Adamantine, Rainbow Feathers. Effects: 1. Spell slots for all spells under rank 6 increase by 1. (Specific to Wizards) 2. Secondary rank 5 spell, Wail of the Banshee. (Available for use once every 7 days). Power is comparable to a weaker version of Wail of the Banshee. Description: This is a powerful ring that other existences might covet. Its materials have been utilised to bring out its utmost power. Close to becoming a Legendary item.]
The Ring of Wizardry now seemed darker in colour. The powerful magic rays from before had completely disappeared.
“Mm! After refining the soul force on the ring, I get a rank 5 spell? Wail of the Banshee, a rank 5 sound attack spell? Not bad!” Leylin was very content with this improvement.
Wearing the ring that was now slightly heavier than before on his left hand, Leylin got up and left the wizard tower. He had accomplished all that was possible for him to do here, and there was now nothing holding him back from leaving.
‘All that’s left is this map…’ Leylin looked through the information the A.I. Chip supplied as he muttered to himself.
‘The names here are the original ones, and it’s been hundreds of years since some of these places had these names… Seems like this
isn’t Siegfried’s treasure map but something even more mysterious…” Leylin even had the suspicion that Siegfried had not explored the map enough, because there were far too many riddles here, to the point that Leylin was left scratching his head in his confusion.

Thankfully, Leylin had had a lot of time in the past two years. He’d whiled his free time away trying to decode the map. Recently, he had finally begun to discover its true secret!
“This secret was hidden so carefully. I’m growing more and more interested.” Following the map, Leylin arrived in front of the capital’s library.

The library was in the central district, a place mostly visited by nobles. In an era where the passage of information was strictly regulated, the so-called public library actually only catered to a few high-ranked people like scholars and wizards. Leylin was a frequent visitor, to the point that even the doorman recognised him. “Mister Leylin!” He called out sweetly, not surprised at all at Leylin’s arrival. Leylin had frequented this place in the last two years, using it to augment his database on the World of Gods. With the various databases in the A.I. Chip having gradually been filled to completion and its foundations completed, his visits had also grown more infrequent.

The library was as tranquil as ever. The white marble building stood tall, seemingly eternal, and the only sounds within it were the rustling of turning pages.

The interior of the library was very spacious and empty. Next to the rows upon rows of bookshelves were a few rattan seats, where many scholars rested.

In these two years, some had become acquaintances that Leylin was on nodding terms with. They would nod at him if they caught his eye, before bending their heads down and wading into the sea of knowledge again. Everyone quietly did their own work, and Leylin
loved this atmosphere.

‘I never expected that something I’ve been trying hard to find was right by my side!’ Leylin sighed inside, arriving in the deeper parts of the library.

It was rather dim inside, and many of the tomes on the shelves had already fallen apart. Numerous scattered pages were sandwiched in worn-out book covers. The sight already left people dizzy.

While the area had already been tidied up, a putrid smell from printing ink still lingered in the air. This region was where the library piled up random books and documents, and very few ventured here.

‘The results of only passing on knowledge to the elites means that once society collapses, information can no longer be passed on…’ Leylin looked at the thick layer of dust on the shelf and sighed at the thought. Of all the historic records that he had gathered, from the invasion from the Magus World till now, there were many blanks in the middle. This was the result of a loss of culture.

Descriptions of the dawn of the gods was a taboo amongst taboos. If any scholar dared tread on this forbidden zone, they would end up put on trial by large churches and burnt at stake.

‘Trying to conceal it won’t solve anything. Even rank 1 Magi of the Magus World know already about the ancient Final War, and have been working hard to regain the glory of the ancient times. The World of Gods is more conservative… Is it because the World Will is asleep, or is it a restriction on the gods?’

Leylin’s eyes shone as he arrived at the depths of the library. This was a very remote area where it was exceptionally quiet. Not a soul was in sight, and even the cleaners rarely came here.

“No bad, not bad! That saves me a lot of trouble.” Leylin sized up the surroundings, nodding in satisfaction. A transparent magic barrier isolated this place from the outer world. Just in case, Leylin had added a layer of illusion such that anyone who came here
would only see a mess and darkness, with volumes and trash lying around.

“The immemorial elf of spring…” Leylin slowly chanted a passage of a mysterious incantation. This was something he had obtained from the map, where the secret incantation to activate it was hidden in the poem next to the map.

‘They actually use the Mek Coding which has been lost to history, hiding the secret incantation at the beginning of every line. If not for the A.I. Chip analysing it against a sea of data, it would have been impossible to decode it…

‘There’s even a restricted time where it can be opened. It has to be after the ancient ‘Spring Sacrificial Ceremony’, or there won’t be a response. Why do I find this method so familiar…’ Leylin looked at the changes to his surroundings with interest. This method of maintaining secrecy and such elaborate set-ups reminded Leylin of Magi.

Indeed, Magi! Only they, who pursued the truth with the most extreme of harshness could think of something so intricate, with coding and an incantation that was complicated to the extreme. It only served to further his anticipation.

“This is the beginning of spring, and the ceremony just passed. It’s 2 o’clock in the afternoon, and it matches with the poem, ‘The scorching sun travels to the northern corner of the sky’…” Leylin muttered, eyes glinting.

A specific time, place and secret incantation. With these three requirements fulfilled, an ancient bookshelf suddenly creaked.

‘It’s not a magic formation. I didn’t notice anything when I scanned this place earlier. Such concealment techniques…’ The glint in Leylin’s eyes brightened.

The shelf shifted away, revealing a path that led downwards. However, Leylin did not descend.

‘If I didn’t interpret it wrongly, I’ll only enter a dimensional maze if
I go there. Even high-ranked wizards could die there… The real treasure is here.’ Leylin headed to the shelf that had shifted, a spell formation appearing at his fingertips. This was not a spell model of the Weave used by wizards, but a real, higher-grade model similar to that in the Magus World! Countless rays of light fused together like a loop to form a special three dimensional rune.

“In the name of sklngla, open!” Leylin chanted. The spell model in his hands flashed and disappeared into the shelf. The light quickly dimmed, and nothing changed. However, a hint of delight showed on his expression. He knocked at the back of the shelf, and a hollow sound resounded.

“The solid wooden shelf became hollow…” Leylin mumbled to himself, “The item wasn’t actually hidden here but in another void node. Only at certain times with the correct incantation will it link with space and time in order to show the true treasure…”

His expression constantly changed, “Such a method of overlapping space and time is practically a reproduction of methods in the Magus World!”

Slightly agitated, Leylin used the dagger to slash at the shelf to take the treasure that his predecessor had hidden. At this stage, he was certain that Siegfried had never come here and only been lucky to get the map.

The shelf itself was small. Even though it was hollow, only a thick black book made of parchment paper was there. This was the harvest from Leylin’s exploration.

“I sense… an aura similar to Magi… There must have been Magi who comprehended laws conducting experiments here trying to induct Magi into the natives…” Leylin was in no hurry to begin reading. After verifying it was harmless, he immediately kept it in his bag of holding and quickly began to clear the traces of his presence.
After he left the library, the shelf had been silently shifted back to its original position. Even the wooden planks that had been hollowed out were exchanged.

Once he had returned to his residence, he sent the servants away and went to his underground secret room. After activating his protection spell formation, Leylin made himself a hot cup of tea and began to look through his profits this time.

Past the black cover, much of the parchment paper had rotted. There were strange, twisted letters on it, with a unique air to them.

“It’s the Amidix Script used in ancient times! Thankfully, I’ve seen content on this before… The A.I. Chip already has enough data to analyse it . . . ” Leylin began to interpret the words in the book.

‘The stars in the horizon are falling! I . . . I’ve seen the falling meteors when a true god dies! They are a group of powerful gods from another world. They call themselves . . . Magi!’

“Is this a record by natives of the final war? Interesting, interesting!” Leylin read on.

‘The sky is crying, the earth is wailing . . . The continent is in pieces in an instant. After the paramount high gods sank into slumber, the battle god Ares and Mother Earth fell one after another . . . ’

‘The Magi and the gods brazenly showed their strength. A careless attack seemed to consume what had accumulated in the universe over millions of years . . . ’

As so much time had passed, there was still damage despite the perfect protective methods. It made it more difficult for Leylin to interpret.

‘. . . In the dark era . . . A god from another world descended. It called itself the Distorted Shadow, a great rank 8 Magus!’

‘The Distorted Shadow enlightened humans and imparted great power of magic . . . ’

“The gods all sent down their avatars, ruthlessly killing all who had inherited the power of distortions . . . ’
“The rejection by the world eventually caused the fall of the Distorted Shadow…”
The gods finally defeated the Magi and sealed off the World of Gods, establishing a network to fend against magic to prevent something similar from happening again…”
‘Year 327 of the Dark Calendar. Another generation of people with extraordinary powers emerged. They successfully went through experiments to break away from the Weave, and called themselves arcanists. They had powerful arcane arts that allowed them to burn mountains and fill seas. Even the gods feared them…’
‘Year 981 of the Dark Calendar. The Arcane Empire was destroyed, and thus began the age of the gods… Arcanists became taboo. Any spellcasters who did not use the Weave were listed as wanted and annihilated by the churches of various gods…’
Eventually, the dark history of the gods showed itself before Leylin. “As expected, experiments to make Magi natives were conducted before, and they succeeded as well… All during the dusk of the gods.” The rise of the arcanists evidently was a result of this. Those obscure methods to cast spells were a mutated version of spell models from the Magus World.
“It’s far too troublesome to simulate a profession out of nowhere. Even with the A.I. Chip it’ll take a long time. But if I can get an arcanist’s inheritance…”
leylin was inspired. Truly, truly inspired from the bottom of his heart. Compared to the emasculated profession that was wizardry, the arcane arts were practically built for his sake. If he could change professions and become an arcanist, his power would definitely grow.

He was also very interested in the inheritance of the ancient Magi who had comprehended laws. It was a pity that most of the content in the notebook were records of history. There were only a few sentences that mentioned arcanists.

“A matured path to power and an account of experiences will be a much better reference.” Leylin’s eyes shone as he scanned through the book, hoping to find any clues regarding arcanists.

Arcanists had solved the problem of being rejected by the World of Gods. While they had been celebrated for a short while, they soon became taboo and intolerable to the gods. All information about them had been destroyed, and this was the first time Leylin was seeing descriptions of them.

Through the A.I. Chip’s precise analysis and research, Leylin finally found a place that somewhat had connections with arcanists. However, once he found the location on the map, his expression changed.

“Never thought it’d be here.” Leylin unhurriedly memorised the landmark and then stowed the black notebook away.

“From the tone and clues, the person who wrote this must have
been an arcanist. In that case, their words should be trustworthy…” Arcanists were the result of the painstaking work that ancient Magi had done to adapt to the World of Gods. Though it was not as if Leylin could not begin his own research into the department, it would be a massive waste of time. He wouldn’t be able to go as far as what those Magi had. He had to get the arcanists’ inheritance!

“But it’s coincidentally in the north… This is just…” Leylin sighed, “I guess I’ll need to bring my schedule forward. Thankfully, I don’t have anything else to do in the capital. All the information accessible to wizards below the higher ranks has been recorded…” At this thought, Leylin headed outside and clapped his hands, “Men!”

……

As the first son of a baron and honorary viscount, Leylin’s status made him a nobody in the capital. His leaving would not raise any ruckus… except from those who had their eyes on him, of course.

*Crack!* The wooden cup cracked, clear water splashing out from the gaps in his fist.

“What? He’s finally leaving?” Lorent was still in his paladin attire, though he now looked rather haggard, and his eyes were bloodshot. Ever since his decision to hang on to Leylin, he had been hiding in the shadows of the capital, waiting for his target to mess up.

Unfortunately, that little noble was very slippery. He basically did not leave his residence, and the places he frequented were like the Wizards’ Guild and places for nobles that were guarded tightly. He had not even left the capital, making the paladin grind his teeth the entire time.

His target seemed to have noticed that he was being spied on, and had been unbelievably kind in his daily actions to the point where it
was unquestionable. He lacked the terrible vices some nobles had, and he was practically the model that all nobles should have sought to emulate. Since he could not find other proof of him committing crimes, Lorent obviously could not do anything to him. After wearing down his patience, Lorent had already decided to make his move and take Leylin in! However, this was something he was doing in private. He could not attack a noble in public in the capital, or the church would be the ones that would not let him off! While Lorent detested Leylin, he had no plans to die together with him. Hence, the operation had been put on hold till now.

“There’ll be plenty of opportunities once you leave the capital! You will definitely be punished for your crimes!” Lorent mumbled to himself, face gleaming majestically righteously. It was as if he was the personification of justice and kindness.

……

Days later, a carriage slowly left the range of the capital. A few bandits that had been eyeing it definitely saw a young noble getting on the carriage and immediately sent out a person to inform the people at the back.

“A bunch of troublesome flies…” Leylin was evidently the one inside. His eyes were now closed, obviously having discovered the people peeping on him long before.

‘The followers of the Sovereign King of Gluttony in the Dambrath Kingdom have all been gathered and managed by Delia. The faith is still spreading…’ After making sure that the bait was now on the hook, Leylin strangely thought of something else.

In two years, he had reorganised the devil worshippers in the entire Dambrath Kingdom, and with Delia’s power as a pleasure devil, it
was easy to control them. At the thought of Delia, Leylin was reminded of the depraved balls that she hosted for the fallen. He had to admit that she was very fascinating and knew how to enjoy herself. A certain pair of noble sisters were on the verge of becoming famous, and Leylin watched their souls in secret to find that they were just one step away from falling to become devils. ‘Seems like I’m rather proficient in the abilities of devils… But even if they transform, those sisters will only become regular devils. Only souls that are exceptionally pure and determined will be even more powerful after falling, turning into the most terrifying devils…’

Leylin suddenly recalled the female knight, as well as the priest and paladins of the God of Justice. Those souls were the ones that had devils extremely thirsty for them. The purer a soul was, the greater the possibility that a legendary being would be born when it fell.

“She might be going north too…” Leylin thought back to the scene from before when they’d bade farewell, a slight smile about his lips, “Till then…”

The carriage slowly rode out of the gates of the capital, and there appeared a wide expanse of wheat fields at both sides. After walking past a few ranches, signs of human activity gradually grew more sparse.

“Master…” The voice of the coachman was heard from the front, “I sense a wave of enemies nearby!”

He was evidently not a regular coachman. It was unknown what kind of methods he had used to conceal the powerful energy undulations on his body.

“Don’t worry about it. Go on!” Leylin chuckled nonchalantly, “The fish couldn’t wait any longer and took the bait…”

He’d tolerated the paladin for long enough too.

Smite Evil! The other party had more tolerance than Leylin had
anticipated. After driving into a low forest of shrubs, golden light in the shape of a crescent shot out from the roadside, the target evidently the carriage Leylin was in.

The paladin’s Smite Evil glowed incomparably hot, and held purifying power. It was very formidable against the undead, devils, demons, and all other evil. Even Leylin did not want to contend with this purification energy.

Intense magic rays flickered from the carriage, and Leylin tore through a few spell scrolls.

Magic Barrier! Dragon’s Breath! Fireball!

Boiling hot flame energy met the evil slash in the air. Qi and flames shot everywhere, exploding in resplendent heat and light. A magic protective layer had already risen in the surroundings, having the effects of preventing probings and prophecies.

These were Leylin’s accumulations over these two years. Not only had he learnt more spell models, he also had the wealth and physical resources to make suitable magic items and scrolls for himself.

“Evil will be punished! Leylin Faulen, you will be put on trial for the loss of innocent lives in the outer seas today!” Lorent had on a full set of paladin armour, the rays of light on his expression dazzling to the extreme. There was even an unusual flush on his face.

“Hehe… Paladin? Haven’t you seen the kingdom’s decree and statement?” Leylin pulled the fabric of the carriage and walked out. He seemed to be teasing the paladin, “The pirates in the outer seas have nothing to do with me. As a follower of the God of Justice, are you holding fast to your own justice by trampling over the law?”

Evidently, when it came to battles of the tongue, Leylin absolutely dominated him. Lorent immediately turned red.

“Ah… It’s because there are so many evil maggots boring into the
holes in the laws that criminals like you can get away with any crimes! Today, I, Lorent, will end all these mistakes!” Knowing he could not refute Leylin, Lorent chose to use his own method to defend his justice.

Holy light filled his longsword, and a powerful qi even more powerful than Siegfried’s exploded. Shrouded in this light, the paladin seemed even more unsullied. It formed another layer of translucent armour, completing his original metallic breastplate.

‘Paladins are all so troublesome! Not only are they immune to many negative effects, they have a terrifying vitality that gives them resistances to all sorts of illnesses…’

“Unfortunately, I am not your only opponent…” The spell that Leylin had prepared for a long time was launched. “Hold Person II!”

Even if his opponent had resistance to magic, he still hesitated for a moment in the face of Leylin’s high-grade spell.

The coachman, who had been cowering aside, suddenly made a move. A black dagger instantly appeared in his hands, allowing him to break through the protective barrier and appear in front of Lorent.

The dagger, which concealed a powerful curse, broke straight through Lorent’s defences and formed a huge wound on his chest.

“You… Tiff The Defiler!” Lorent retreated, rays of divine healing spells flickering on his body. His habit of holding back when it came to commoners made it such that he did not have his guard against the ordinary-looking coachman, and he had been ruthlessly attacked by Tiff.

“You’re actually banding together with someone like him? This crime alone could you send you to be burnt at stake!” Lorent glanced at Leylin, who was in front of him, looking delighted because he’d finally found evidence of Leylin committing a crime!

“Is that so? That’s only possible if you can send that information
on!” Leylin shrugged his shoulders.
Indistinct shouts and cries could be heard, causing Lorent’s expression to change.

“We’ve been surrounded, and their numbers are huge…” A high-ranked assassin suddenly appeared from the shadows, a demonic claw with sharp nails poking out from his chest. The assassin mumbled and collapsed, revealing the figure of a high-ranked pleasure devil behind him.

“You’re actually colluding with a devil!” Lorent yelled, unhesitatingly striking out. He had been overwhelmed with shock. This noble seemed to have some terrifying secret that surpassed his imagination.

“Quick! The confusion spell that I set up won’t last for long. We can’t let even one person go!” Leylin’s expression was icy.

After two years, Tiff and Delia were now completely under his thumb. He had gathered the strength of all the devil worshippers to kill Lorente in order to ensure it was done!

“Don’t worry, master!” Delia had now completely demonified herself. With Tiff, who had almost legendary strength, it was no problem to kill a mere high-ranked paladin.

Given that they were of factions that were natural enemies, with hatred accumulated between them, things blazed the moment they started fighting. All sorts of spell undulations rained destruction on the region.

It was a pity that Lorent’s extraordinary willpower and strength
made no difference. A high-grade devil and a near-Legend Professional were enough to crush him. His surrounding comrades all cried out for the last time in their lives, gnawing at his soul like ants.

“Has it… has it reached this state?” Lorent’s eyes were slightly blurry, with a black dagger stuck into his chest. His longsword had disappeared long ago, and his armour was full of holes from the devil’s corrosive fire.

He panted. There was no remorse for losing his life, instead indignance and pain that justice was not served,

“Why… Why are there people like you in the world!” He looked at the young wizard drawing close, eyes like saucers and even blinking bloody tears.

“Because devils run amok in this world!” Leylin seemed to sigh, and the Devilblood Dagger slammed into Lorent’s forehead.

The Devilblood Dagger trembled. This was a high-ranked paladin who was subordinate to the God of Justice, definitely the strongest person it had ever absorbed strength from! It transmitted terrifying, berserk draconic energy to Leylin’s body, sending it in waves. It eventually cried out, unable to take the burden.

‘My Devilblood Dagger was made on Faulen Island. I hadn’t used any high-grade materials, which is why it can’t take this pressure…’ Leylin’s eyes glinted. A dark luster shot into the dagger from his hands.

“Woo Woo…” The skull at the end of the dagger roared, numerous tiny blood vessels extending and latching onto all parts of Lorent’s corpse.

Something that looked like a tumour was absorbed from these blood vessels. Powerful holy force was transformed, to the point that the dagger itself showed signs of breaking.

*Ting!* Finally, with a sad cry, the Devilblood Dagger shattered with a dull sound.
But the moment before it cracked, Leylin felt the transfer of tremendous life energy. The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded:
[Beep! Host has gone through a one-time boost from the Devilblood Dagger. Strength +1.9. Agility +2.2. Vitality +0.8.]
Leylin’s current stats were abruptly refreshed, [Strength: 10. Agility: 10. Vitality: 10. Spiritual Force: 10.]
The massacre and all of Lorent’s life force had pushed the rest of Leylin’s stats to the bottleneck of 10 points. Alike to 1 point, this was an incredibly difficult hurdle in the World of Gods, showing how tough breaking through was.

Leylin now heard a sharp ringing sound from his soul. After his various stats had broken through, a long-awaited power spread throughout his body and limbs, landing him in a strange state.
The A.I. Chip’s prompts continued to show. [Beep! Host’s various stats have reached 10. Obtained Feat: Elementary Perfect Body.]
An introduction to this feat followed. [Elementary Perfect Body. As the host’s genes have gone through their initial upgrades, host has obtained a quality unique to exceptional creatures in the World of Gods. Body now possesses elementary resistances to poison, fire, cold, and corrosion. Endurance in various environments has increased.]
“So having a property of 1 all round is a threshold for regular beings. 10 is the threshold for exceptional creatures…” Leylin’s eyes flickered. His current stats had changed.
After breaking through this bottleneck of extraordinary power, Leylin felt the limitations on the advance of his spiritual force loosen. It now grew extremely lively, to the point that he was only a step away from making contact with the 5th level of the Weave.
“Deal with the aftermath according to my orders.” Leylin slowly exhaled, as if he had gone through a complete transformation.

“Understood, Master!” Madam Delia respectively bowed, her flaming tail and devilish wings playfully bouncing about. While they already knew his identity on the surface before, Delia and Tiff were now even more reverent towards him. On the surface, he seemed ordinary, which meant what was hidden underneath that front was something more terrifying. For Delia, who had been a devil for numerous years, she understood this fully well.

As for Tiff, an existence that had been invaded by Leylin’s soul force for years, the effect of Leylin himself being in front of him was obvious.

“Good! Tiff and I will go ahead secretly. Delia, you’re in charge of the network in the Dambrath Kingdom as well as the surrounding followers…” Leylin gave instructions for his plans.

Once everything went as he had planned, Leylin turned to gaze in the direction of the imperial capital.

“The next time I return, things will be completely different…” Leylin’s eyes shone.

……

Great azure waves roiled and crashed in the vast sea, and ice sheets and a snowy barren island could faintly be seen in the distance. A few seagulls soared in the horizon, occasionally letting out a few clear cries.

A merchant ship heading north was speeding through the winds and waves. The sailors controlling the ship had tanned skin, their hands full of dark calluses gripping tightly on the mooring rope as if it was their life and everything.

“The oceans in the north are slightly different from the outer seas
of Dambrath in the south.” At this point, the guests had all returned to the hold of the ship, and only Leylin and Tiff who was disguised as his butler were on deck. In the face of such a sudden stormy sea, Leylin did not find it hard to adapt. Rather, he began reminiscing about his time with the Scarlet Tigers.

‘The kingdom’s navy has long since returned. I wonder how Isabel and the rest have been doing…’ Leylin gazed at the huge waves afar, yet he did not seem to see them. He instructed Tiff, “Legends are active in Silverymoon. Your identity is sensitive, so once we reach the northern lands you don’t have to follow me. Try to gather some forces in secret…”

“Understood!” Tiff pressed his right hand to his chest, looking exceptionally solemn. In this period of time, he was now certain that this little noble must be the chosen one of the feathered serpent god, Kulkulkan, and could even be the child of the god…

“Come to think of it, we’re finally reaching the northern harbour…” Leylin nodded, noting that the ship had already successfully passed through the storm.

The World of Gods was vast, and hastening on the journey was an exhausting and dangerous matter. Even as a medium-ranked wizard and with Tiff who was on the verge of becoming a Legend protecting him, it still required much effort to reach the north from the south.

They set off from the Dambrath Kingdom and headed north, passing through numerous human kingdoms and bypassing a few regions belonging to other races. They had even met with danger a few times.

The horse carriage had been relinquished after that, and they switched to a ship. The entire journey took around a year’s time.

“Welcome, esteemed young master!” The leader of the sailors came over, a trace of respect in his gaze. To be able to take on such huge
waves without even a twitch meant this noble was a true man of the sea! That meant he was worthy of being respected by these sailors. “Mm! We’re finally past that stormy area…” Leylin laughed.

“Recently, the sea tribes in this area have been very irritable. The tsunami was caused by an angered deep sea whale. Thankfully, our druid managed to calm it down in time…” His expression was grim, “If this situation continues, I’m afraid we’ll have to give up on this route and invite a great or even legendary druid to investigate the cause…”

Leylin had to admit that druids were extremely proficient at protecting the environment and placating dangerous species. Being closely attuned to nature, most druids were elves, though there was no lack of humans and other races. This was even more obvious in Silverymoon.

“So we’re finally reaching the jewel of the northern lands…” Leylin exclaimed in admiration.

Silverymoon was the city of wizards. This legendary city was also called the jewel of the northern lands! The city was protected by the Chosen of the Goddess of the Weave, who was also her daughter. She represented the peak of magic among humans, and every year countless wizards were attracted to this place so they could further their studies and train. Silverymoon contained the most advanced research on magic, and the imperial palace even held information about legendary spells!
eylin obviously would not let go of this city of magic. Dambrath didn’t have much information past that to get to the higher ranks, forget becoming a Legend. Furthermore, the A.I. Chip deduced from the ancient notebook Leylin had obtained that the inheritance of arcanists and Arcane Arts was likely to be found in the northern lands. Given all this, it was necessary for Leylin to go to Silverymoon City.

“While the journey took almost a year, it’s not as if I gained nothing…” Leylin smiled as he took a look at his stats.


After obtaining a Perfect Body, Leylin sensed his body could adapt better to terrible environments. On top of that, his spirit seemed to have broken through some bottleneck. His rate of improvement had increased, as if there was a further boost to his own innate talent in wizardry.

Leylin had broken through to rank 11 after a year of meditation, even without the ability of the Devilblood Dagger. He could now cast rank 5 spells!

In the World of Gods, rank 3 wizards could cast rank 1 spells, rank 5s could cast rank 2 spells, rank 7s rank 3 spells and so on. A rank 11 wizard could cast rank 5 spells, and once one became a rank 15
wizard, they could cast rank 7 spells without backlash. That was when one became a high-ranked wizard.
High-grade professionals above rank 15 would get special treatment no matter where they went, and that was especially so for high-ranked wizards. With a large number of spells that affected groups, their destructive power surpassed that of those that relied purely on their physiques. This put them at the peak of power.
Were there no gods in this world, given that they could cast spells of priests, druids, and sorcerers would long since have named the World of Gods the World of Wizards.
Wizards held the balance of power in the World of Gods. The arcanists had even established a tremendous empire after the the twilight of the gods, but with the comeback of the gods they soon collapsed…
‘It’s because of the powerful abilities of high-ranked wizards that information on these spells are strictly regulated in all nations. The only place where things are less stringent is Silverymoon…’ Leylin thought inside.
This was so because they were extremely wealthy and also had the backing of Mystra, the Goddess of the Weave. They naturally had the means to do so.
‘It’s said that the master of Silverymoon City, the Chosen of the Weave Goddess who is rumoured to be her daughter, is a peerless beauty…’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘The secret rumours state that one can get the favour of the Goddess of the Weave by growing close to her, and it’s even possible to increase the number of low-ranked spell slots in one’s possession…’
This slight benefit was nothing to Leylin. Having analysed the first three levels of the Weave completely, he no longer needed these low-rank spell slots. Furthermore, if he were to get too close to the Goddess, his disguise could be noticed. That would be a true tragedy.
‘Come to think of it, the analysis has progressed more quickly ever since I hit rank 11. Level 3 is almost completely done.’ The higher the rank of a wizard, the further one could make contact with the Weave. The A.I. Chip could therefore analyse the Weave at a faster rate, which was something he had already tested before.

‘Given the resources Silverymoon can provide it won’t be difficult to become a high-ranked wizard, but I’ll need to get lucky to become a Legend. The Devilblood Dagger won’t help much either, there’s no point smelting another one…’

With stats below 5, the dagger’s boost remained obvious. Even from 5 to 10 points it would be found lacking, not to mention its weakness later. On top of that, it wasn’t logical to carry a devil’s item by one’s side for such a slight increase in stats.

After all, this was not a rural area like Dambrath. There were legendary wizards here, but on top of that there were the Chosen, who were personifications of the gods. Leylin had no confidence in facing them.

Since the dagger did not give him any obvious boost, Leylin was already prepared to stop using it even if it had not been destroyed, and perhaps hand it down to his underlings.

‘When it comes to raising strength quickly, there are quite a number of ways in Beelzebub’s memories. They can all help one reach the realm of Legend and above… It’s a pity that there’s either terrible repercussion or the contamination of devilish energy. It’s far too troublesome to deal with that. I guess it’s better to walk the path of a wizard step by step… It’ll be even better if I can get the inheritance from the arcanists…’

Just when Leylin was deep in thought, a shy voice sounded from his side, “May– May I know if you are a wizard apprentice heading towards Silverymoon City?”

It pulled Leylin out of his thoughts, and he eyed the three females behind him– No, the three little girls behind him. They had
evidently heard about the sea having calmed down and come on deck. The one who had spoken was the youngest of all. She had brown hair, and under her fair forehead were a pair of azure eyes. The slight smile on her lips easily gave one a favourable opinion of her. Beside her were two female companions, one taller than the other. They seemed to be sisters, with similar faces and both wearing blue checkered skirts with little flowers at the edges. Tiff glared at the girls who had interrupted his young master. Though he concealed his strength, his aura alone left the three girls feeling suffocated and terrified.

“I– I’m sorry, mister! I– I was just curious!” The girl in the middle grasped her skirt, looking on the verge of tears. Though they had housekeepers and nannies sent out by their family by the side, they had never faced an old man so stern that it was frightening.

“Stop it, Tiff. You’re scaring our friends!” Leylin saw the figure behind him and chuckled like the warmest spring wind. It melted away the terror.

“My apologies, young master!” Tiff took a step back, “And the three young ladies as well!”

“It’s alright…” The girl spoke more fluently now, “My name is Bessany, and the two sisters here are Ena and Isadora. We’re all looking to apprentice in Silverymoon… Are you the same, mister?”

‘Wizard apprentices…’ Apprentice wizards were below rank 3. They had talent in wizardry and could use magic, able to cast rank 0 spells. Leylin scanned the girls to see that they all had the spiritual undulations of wizards, and they’d all made contact with the first level of the Weave.

“My name is Leylin, and I’m a wizard!” Leylin smiled, hiding his rank. After all, there was no point in that.

“As expected!” Isadora spoke from beside Bessany, “Where are you from, Leylin? Why do I hear a southern accent from you?”
These girls were like excited little sparrows as they surrounded Leylin, asking a whole bunch of questions noisily. Leylin smiled as he conversed with them. This was the sort of infectious power he had, able to instil a favourable impression in the hearts of weak existences. Of course, this could also be attributed to his training as a noble.

From his conversation with the three girls, Leylin quickly came to know of some basic information. Bessany and the sisters came from two little families in the north. They had tested with talent in wizardry, and their families had sent them to train in Silverymoon. Bessany was good-natured and spoke the most enthusiastically. As for the sisters, Ena was not as carefree and bright as Isadora, seeming more shy.

“My family gave me 500 gold coins this time, and I’ll need to use it sparingly. Hopefully, I’ll be able to train under a middle-ranked wizard…” Bessany suddenly sighed, looking worried.

500 gold coins was obviously a huge amount that was enough for even a noble to live liberally for five years! However, this amount was far from enough for the development of wizards.

But what could be done? Bessany’s family was merely the smallest of noble families. The 500 gold coins themselves had required quite a bit of effort, and they’d had to sell some property to raise that much.

Still, it would all be worth it if a wizard arose from their ranks. At this thought, Bessany inwardly gritted her teeth.

“The registration fees for the poorest wizard academy in Silverymoon is already 100 gold coins. As for studying under a middle-ranked wizard? That’s basically impossible… Apprentices like us from small noble families can only help others with experiments or copy scrolls to earn money…” Isadora laughed wryly. Evidently, she had a better understanding of the training of wizards.
Leylin realised something. These wizards were probably sucking up to him so that they could become allies.
‘As expected of nobles, huh? After studying so much, they consider more than the average person. It’s a pity that most of it is useless…’ Leylin sighed.
He looked less than 20, and without the emblem that showed his wizard ranking it wasn’t surprising for him to be mistaken as an apprentice. If he really was a low-ranked wizard, he might have played along for a while, but he had no intentions of doing that, they were not at the same level!
Having made up his mind, Leylin naturally made his stance clear.
“In that case… we won’t bother you longer…” Bessany sounded somewhat disappointed and even upset as she pulled at Ina’s hand to leave. Isadora, on the other hand, seemed unresigned, but similarly did not say a word.
“How nice it is to be young…” Leylin stared at the backs of the three disciples and sighed. If he added up the years from his main body as well, he was old enough to be their grandfather’s grandfather, perhaps even older than that. He naturally was qualified to say such a thing.
Tiff, who was beside him, saw how old and experienced Leylin seemed, and his eyes revealed a trace of shock.
“Oh, we’ve reached the harbour!” Leylin cast Eagle Eye on himself and gazed at the harbour in the distance, unable to stop the smile blooming on his face. The sailor on the observation deck noticed this as well, and cheers immediately spread through the ship.
After getting off the ship, Leylin first parted ways with Tiff, telling him to work from the shadows. He, on the other hand, hired a carriage and hastened towards Silverymoon City. With how close the port was, it only took about a day via horse carriage.
The coachman driving the coach was an old man with a crooked back. Lean muscles protruded on his arms, and there were a few long scars on his face which seemed to be memories from a time
adventuring or in the army.
He was called Old Bayer, and was rather entertaining. His smile revealed a few missing teeth, but not only did it make him look less threatening, it even made one fond of him.
*Pak!* Old Bayer swung his whip in a practiced manner while talking to Leylin, “You must have great foresight to have chosen our company. Honestly, do you think there’s an area here Old Bayer doesn’t know well? The northern lands, especially… When I first joined the army…”
Leylin’s eyes darted everywhere as he took in the sights. The first impression he had was that the northern lands were vast, the boundless plains not having a soul in sight.
The second thought he had was that it was cold! It was not yet truly winter, but the people outside were already wearing thick coats.
Seeing the white breath steaming from Old Bayer’s mouth, Leylin chuckled, “Army? So you’re a retired soldier? Who did you go to war with?”
Upon hearing this, Old Bayer made a conclusion, “You must be from another land, yes?”
“Indeed. I come from the south, the Dambrath Kingdom!” Leylin had nothing to hide when it came to his birthplace. He had no criminal record, and the only thing worthy of picking at was his work as a pirate, but the king himself was vouching for him which rendered it meaningless. After reaching Silverymoon, he was prepared to show his status as a noble and see if he could get special treatment.
“The south… That’s a good place…” Old Bayer sighed. “How can there not be battles in the north?”
Not waiting for Leylin to ask, he continued, “We have to fight off the invasion of the orcs and other ambitious human kingdoms, and even clear the plains of the green-skinned goblins. Those wretched goblins really know how to breed, and we have to wipe them out
practically every year. Compared to the orcs and knights from other kingdoms, I’d rather stay on the plains and kill the elves…”

“Orcs?!” Leylin slapped his head, “Right, I forgot about them…”

The World of Gods was huge, and Silverymoon City of the north was only the most northern human-occupied region. Through the Sunrise Mountain Range and past the boundless wilderness, there were many orc tribes and even a kingdom!

Humans had their gods, and the orcs also had their own. Under the command of the master god of the orcs, Gelsh, there were practically wars every year as they invaded the civilised world. Due to having their own circumstances and personalities, the gods had divided factions and clashes when it came to their own organisations. They even fought themselves.

“Seems like gods can never rid themselves of their emotional state of mind. Of course, it’s the same for Magi who comprehend laws…” The so-called gods and Magi of laws were merely powerful mortals. Leylin knew this well.

Of course, he preferred it this way. If he lost his personality and emotion, even if he became a true supreme god what difference would there be between him and a computer. Immortality and freedom were two aspects that could never be separated.

With varying circumstances, the orc empire frequently had clashes with the kingdom, and even caused war to break out. Those in the north obviously would not wait to get killed. They gathered in Silverymoon, and with some guidance formed an alliance. They used the power of magic to tenaciously resist the invasion of the orcs.

In this world, humans had a great advantage. Their divine strength far exceeded that of the orcs. Even with internal strife, it was still possible for Silverymoon to stand tall.

With the unceasing battles, Silverymoon’s status grew higher and higher, to the point that the lands they had influence over expanded
bit by bit.
There were already faint cries for the Chosen, the ruler of Silverymoon, to become the queen and establish Silverymoon Kingdom, and even unify the northern lands! This was the cause of the current biggest crisis and catastrophe.
Of course, Old Bayer hadn’t said everything. Some things Leylin had gathered from his descriptions.
‘New nobles wish to rise, and older ones are unwilling to let go of their status and land. There’s an obvious backlash! The orcs wouldn’t let go of this opportunity, which is why the human world is now in chaos. The external support the northern lands get is very little, and from the looks of it the past few decades have not been calm…’
A slight smile rose on his lips, ‘It’s good that things aren’t calm. It’s better that things aren’t calm!’ As a foreign noble, it was still impossible for Leylin to get into the core of Silverymoon and obtain knowledge limited to high-ranked or legendary wizards, even as a middle-ranked wizard.
No matter where nobles or wizards were from, they all were prejudiced against foreigners. This still held true even in Silverymoon that preached openness and freedom.
Under normal circumstances, unless Leylin stayed here for a few centuries and went through life and death situations for the city and signed a large number of unfair contracts, he would not have hope of entering the core of the government.
However, with war looming ahead, everything would change! In times of war, everything could be by-passed for the sake of victory. The usually harsh rules for advancement could be disregarded. As long as one had military merits, then advancing quickly was possible, perhaps even to the core. But only if one did not fall before succeeding.
Hence, for Leylin as he was right now, war was a huge opportunity!
It would save him a great deal of time in getting to the core of Silverymoon, and was the best path to gain high-grade and legendary spells. As for danger? Haha… When had Leylin ever been afraid?

“Tiff needs to work quickly. I’ll have to change my plans. Rather than entering the Wizards’ Guild, I’ll do all I can to become a guard of the city…”

War marked suffering for commoners, but it was a stage for heroes! With the trails of blood and elimination of rotten old organisations, there were plenty of opportunities for new organisations to rise.

Leylin was obviously going to take this opportunity. While it would bring great suffering to the people, what did that have to do with him?

‘Once I sneak into the city guard, I’m sure I can gain merits rapidly through battles in exchange for high-grade information on spells… It’ll be much faster than entering the wizard tower and slowly accumulating merits…’

The city guards belonged exclusively to the master of the city, which meant that he would directly be subordinate to the Chosen. Mystra would be another guarantee of his safety.

“I’m pretty lucky…” While Leylin was nodding inwardly, his expression suddenly changed. Old Bayer stopped the carriage and cursed, “Damn it! There’s trouble ahead!”

“Mm.” Leylin jumped off the carriage. His clairvoyance and the quality of his body now making it easy for him to see the scene ahead. There were three carriages lined up one in front of the other, and they had been surrounded by a group of creatures.

It was a group of green-skinned monsters, looking like dwarves with muscular dystrophy. Their heads were large, and their noses and mouths protruded. They were mostly naked, holding wooden clubs, rocks and all sorts of weapons as they surrounded and
attacked the carriages.

“That darned bunch of goblins are out again. Are they preparing food to tide them over for the winter?” Old Bayer cursed and laughed bitterly, “I’m afraid we’re in trouble. Those goblins have noticed us…”

The goblins in his line of sight had already discovered Leylin, and dispatched a wave of green streams that surrounded them. Though legends stated that goblins could not even win against a child of ten or so years old, Leylin guessed that there were over 500 of them! If the numbers were vast, in the hundreds and thousands, even the weakest worm possessed terrifying strength! That wasn’t even considering the large goblins and bugbears in this wave. These two types of goblins had bodies similar to regular humans. They even wore tattered armour, and had weapons that required elite human warriors to take care.

“For the winter? Tiding them over?”

Leylin recalled the contents of a geography book he had read before, ‘The extremely cold winters in the northern lands can even freeze the earth. Going out in these conditions means certain death! The elves and other wandering beasts in the wilderness, and even the orcs at the Sunrise Mountain Range all attack humans to build up their food reserves, and do not even mind starting wars…’

This was a battle for survival, which was why the closer to winter it was, the more these living beings would become crazed. This was because if they did not have enough food, they would be the ones dead in the end!
Leylin noted the bloodshot eyes of the goblins that were charging towards them. As winter drew near, even the weakest and most cowardly goblins would go crazy. They were small, and it was hilarious to see a group of green-skinned, short people pouncing towards you. However, their gazes were as fierce as wolves, enough for even a retired soldier like Old Bayer to tremble in fear.

Dying at the hands of enemies was just death, but dying by the hands of goblins meant that their corpses would be dragged back for food! Old Bayer shuddered at the very thought.

“Please mount the horse and leave, my guest!” At this moment, a trace of decisiveness flashed on his face. He produced a rusty longsword from under the seat of the carriage and released the old horse that had been pulling the carriage.

“It may be a worn-out horse, but these bunch of short-legged creatures won’t be able keep up with you. After you break out of here, just go backwards. Don’t stop till you get to the harbour!” Old Bayer passed the ropes to Leylin, turning back and now in a defensive stance, “As a noble young master, you must have learnt how to ride, yes?”

“Mm,” Leylin nodded, but did not leave since his luggage was still on the carriage.

“Can you tell me why you’re leaving your chance at survival to me?” He asked, slightly curious.
“I’m hot-blooded, that’s why! You nobles are so troublesome… Quick. Quick! There’s not much time left!”
Old Bayer yelled. The goblins had already surrounded them, so close that they could see the filth on the goblins’ green skin. Their putrid smell invaded their nostrils.
“You are a true soldier! But... I am not like those weak nobles…” Leylin calmly walked ahead. He abruptly closed his eyes, and a threatening aura burst forth.
Intimidation! A domain with the might of a dragon erupted from him, making the goblins halt their attacks immediately.
“You filthy vulgar bastards! How dare you block the way of a mighty wizard. Even death would be too kind a fate for you!”
*Rumble! Rumble! Rumble!* Bundles of dazzling flames abruptly appeared by Leylin’s side.
Lesser Fireball! Numerous spheres of blazing energy shot out, and then exploded amidst the group of goblins.
*Rumble! Rumble!* The flames ripped apart the bodies of the goblins, throwing them everywhere together with the soil. Even those bugbears could not resist the power of magic. Numerous huge pits appeared in the ground, and the goblins then completely collapsed!
They may have gone crazy for food, but the goblins wouldn’t challenge an enormous dragons. There was a warning from their very souls, that if they proceeded forward they would all die.
“Ooga!” “Ooga!” Amidst the terrified cries, Leylin’s spell had murdered tens of the hundreds of goblins. The rest howled as they fled. The road was covered with the wooden clubs and stones, and some goblins were even trampled. The goblins that were grievously injured crawled in the opposite direction from Leylin, as if evading a demon.
“You’re an esteemed wizard after all!” Old Bayer wiped off the cold sweat from his forehead. As someone living near Silverymoon, he
was no stranger to the power of magic.

“Thank you very much!” Old Bayer sincerely thanked Leylin. If Leylin had not been around, he would be reduced to the fate of becoming goblin shit. That was not an honourable way of dying. ‘With this strength, he’s probably not a disciple or elementary-ranked wizard. He’s at least a mid-ranked one…’ Old Bayer thought himself.

At this moment, there seemed to be a ruckus in the carriage ahead, revealing the frightened expressions of a few female disciples. “Sister… I’ve used up my spell slots!” Isadora scowled miserably. Apprentices had few spell slots anyway, and the problem was that they were not that powerful. If the target was not directly hit, they could not even kill a single goblin. This was why rank 0 spells were also known as cantrips.

“Hold on! We’ll get reinforcements from Silverymoon soon!” Bessany gritted her teeth, misty rays shooting out from her hands. Vertigo! A hobgoblin who had been charging forwards fell to the ground in a daze, dropping the wooden club in its hands. It rubbed its head, but before it could react further, someone who looked like a housekeeper used a giant axe to chop off its head.

“Good job..” A joyful expression appeared on Ena’s face, but she then saw the housekeeper being pushed to the ground by even more goblins, a few of them widening their large brown mouths to reveal sharp teeth.

“No…” Bessany wept. The sounds of gnawing had her on the verge of breaking down.

“Are we going to die here? I don’t want that! I’m a noble, and I’m a wizard. I shouldn’t die like this. M–My fate…” At the other side, Isadora looked ready to fall apart. Ena was usually quiet, but at such a crucial moment she was able to persevere. If not for her care, Isadora would long since been dragged away by the goblins. Just as Bessany was on the verge of total despair, a carriage behind
them suddenly caught her attention. Powerful spell undulations were transmitted, and a young wizard got off the carriage and took care of the goblin attack with a few fireballs.

“It’s… Leylin! We have hope!” Bessany looked ecstatic, suddenly waving the handkerchief in her hands.

“Leylin! Mister Leylin! Please save us!” The tender voice of a girl pierced the air and attracted Leylin’s attention.

“Oh, I didn’t think I’d meet acquaintances!” Leylin recognised the young ladies he had met on the ship, “Since we meet again, you’re in luck!”

Leylin didn’t mind a passing kindness. After all, he could improve their favourable impression of him. Of course, he still found these three wizard apprentices beneath him. What he truly valued was Silverymoon’s evaluation of him.

The city guards of Silverymoon would definitely investigate the incident. An impression that he was kind was much better than one that he was wicked and callous. Leylin never did anything that went against his principles. Everything was based on benefits.

“Rank 4 Beast Summoning!” Summoning rays flashed, and four wild wolves which were two metres tall jumped out of them. Spell rays flashed on Leylin’s body again, and after two more summoning spells he now had control over 12 wild wolves.

These large carnivorous animals had stiff fur, sharp canines and an astonishing jumping ability. Their eyes were filled with bloodlust.

“Charge!” With the guidance of Leylin’s spiritual force, 12 wild wolves charged towards the group of goblins that had already crumbled mentally.

*Awoo!* *Awoo!* Wolf cries could be heard faintly in the distance. As their gleaming white teeth tore at the flesh of the slower goblins. There were even miserable shrieks from the goblins that had fallen from the ground and been torn to pieces, further causing others to flee.
With Leylin’s attainments in his spiritual force, controlling the wild wolves was no issue. Under his command, the direction in which the goblins fled was controlled, and they began to pounce towards the carriages ahead.

“Ooga!”

The large hobgoblin ahead roared, smashing the head of a deserter with a mace in its hands, but that did nothing to deter those who were now frantic. It was quickly drowned out by the goblins.

The hundred goblin deserters who had surrounded Leylin darted into the goblin formation behind, resulting in great disorder!

Though goblins weren’t orderly beings from the start, they had orders to attack and withdraw. Now, however, they were in great disarray. Howling and trampling could be noticed everywhere, and even the hobgoblins and bugbears found themselves useless.

The faint howls of the wolves sounded. All of a sudden, a wild wolf perked up and threw itself at a bugbear, its sharp canines biting through its neck. Under Leylin’s directions, the wolves ignored the fleeing goblins, targeting the active group instead and prioritising the hobgoblins and bugbears.

Their command system completely broke down, and it was natural that the goblins were defeated. Numerous goblins abandoned the wooden clubs and rocks in their hands, fleeing in all directions and leaving behind the carriages and survivors.

Only 8 remained of the 12 wild wolves under Leylin. All of them had injuries, but Leylin did not feel bad for them. After the spell dissipated, they would return to the place they had come from. If they died, then so be it.

‘Even if it’s a mid-ranked wizard, it’s not that easy to defeat 500 or so goblins…’ Old Bayer’s eyes were filled with astonishment and shock, ‘That last attack in particular had strategy to it! Is that the art of command that the corps leader once spoke of?’

Leylin was also quite satisfied with the results. Casting suitable
spells at opportune moments was something all wizards had to learn. Being able to disperse this group of goblins at the most minimal cost and limiting the casualties of the attack wolves was something that made him proud.

“Are you alright?” Of course, he limited his pride to that single thought. Leylin had the abundant experiences of his main body and if he couldn’t manage even this he should just have killed himself.

“We’re alright. Thank you, Leylin!” Bessany thanked him gratefully, eyes reddening as she began to bawl over a destroyed corpse nearby, “Sob… sob… Uncle Eita…”

This corpse already had several parts missing, and there were also many small bite marks. It looked exceedingly horrifying. This was the masterpiece left by the goblins from before. If Leylin had arrived a little later, everyone in the carriages would have been reduced to this state.

The aftermath had Ena and Isadora quivering in fear as they expressed their gratitude to Leylin over and over again.
Leylin and Old Bayer were speechless at the scene before them.
The victims’ remains were collected, unable to be buried here lest they were dug out by goblins. They would be taken to Silverymoon City, given their final rites and blessings by clerics, and then buried.
“Thank you, Lord Leylin! Are you a mid-ranked wizard?” Bessany had recovered, and her eyes had swollen to the size of walnuts.
“Yes, I suppose so. I’m also going to Silverymoon City to study,” Leylin looked at the scenery outside and indifferently replied.
After meeting Bessany and the others, and since they were going to the same place, Leylin naturally did not mind accompanying her. The others happily welcomed him with open arms, as that last attack had scared them into cowardice. Without Leylin’s protection, perhaps no one would dare to continue on the journey.
The young ladies in the carriage were all surprised, it was rare to find a mid-ranked wizard as young as Leylin after all.
“How amazing… I always thought that mid-ranked wizards were all white-bearded grandfathers…” Isadora exclaimed. She’d actually recovered quite quickly.
“It’s nothing, there are many more wizards who are more gifted than I am. Mm, there will be many of them in Silverymoon City,” Leylin replied modestly, and after chatting for a while the atmosphere of the carriage grew more solemn.
After all, a mid-ranked wizard was a big deal to minor nobles. Isadora and the others did not dare to say anything more in fear of offending him. Bessany seemed as if she was about to speak, but she was not able to say anything until they reached Silverymoon City.

Leylin understood her intentions, as she had recently told him on the boat that she was looking for a tutor. However, he would gain no benefits from taking her on as his apprentice, and it was not something that could be done with no extra trouble. Where would Leylin even find the time? As a result, he could only pretend that he did not know.

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“You were attacked by a goblin swarm?” A patrol officer from Silverymoon City seemed to take the matter very seriously, and had personally come to register them. “I understand, our city patrol will soon leave on their watch. The monsters in the wilderness have increased greatly in recent times, you must all be more careful.” A clerk began to record the identities of Leylin and the others as well as their ranks. When he got to Leylin, his pen paused, “Wizard, please show me your proof of identity…” “Mm,” Leylin nodded, taking out his proof of nobility as well as his wizard insignia and handing it to him, which immediately made the clerk cry out in surprise.

“Please take back your identification, mid-ranked Lord Wizard!” A rank 10 wizard was uncommon even in Silverymoon City, especially one who looked as young as Leylin. It was actually rather scary.

“Good, I want to join the Silverymoon City guard, do you know where I can enlist?” Leylin asked with a smile.

“You want to join the city guard?” It wasn’t just Bessany and the
others that were extremely astonished. Even the officer from earlier walked over, attentively sizing Leylin up.

“Yes, I hold Lady Hope in the highest esteem, and I would love the atmosphere of Silverymoon City. I hope that I can fit in here.” This Lady Hope was the ruler of Silverymoon City. Her name was Alustriel, and she was a tolerant and good person who was one of the Chosen of Mystra.

It was rumoured that this city ruler had a very liberal attitude towards her subordinates from different races. She very much enjoyed disguising herself as an ordinary person outside of her palace to observe the lives of common folk, which won her the support of the lower classes.

Naturally, Leylin was telling a bald-faced lie. His true purpose was to assimilate into the lady’s troops as quickly as possible, and make preparations for the war ahead.

News of the war had broken out. Perhaps many knew, but information would be limited to the city ruler’s core organisation. This was precisely where Leylin would be able to seek benefits.

“You must be clear on this, once you truly join Silvermoon City, there will be many restrictions on your freedom, Sir!” Although the human fiefdoms all recognised the other’s’ nobility, the nobles on the continent all traditionally thought that only those with hereditary titles and with their own territories could be considered true nobles.

It was evident that Leylin’s title as an honourable viscount was not equal to the respect he got as a mid-ranked wizard. Perhaps if he really inherited Faulen Island it would be different and he’d be treated better, but Baron Jonas was hale and hearty so Leylin could only remain his heir.

Noble heirs like him were usually called sirs, and did not gain any particular privilege or preferential treatment. The office reminded Leylin of this point, and naturally made other implications.
“That won’t be a problem,” Leylin calmly shook his head, indicating that he already clearly knew all of this. Although foreign wizards could occasionally receive missions from the city governors, and receive patrol duties, it was clear that it was part of the system for outsiders. They were destined to never become part of the inner circle of governance. When the war came, those patrolling wizards would not be able to escape their fate of forced enlistment. As a result, Leylin thought that since he would have to eventually participate in the war, it would be better to join in advance with his status as a noble heir. The officer stared at Leylin, as if trying to predict what the wizard was trying to do. In the end, he could only grudgingly give up. Afterwards, he called another officer to take Leylin away, “In this case, Aulen, go through the procedures with this wizard Leylin.” Even as she saw Leylin’s back disappear into the streets, Bessany retained the expression of disbelief on her face. “He’s immediately joining the city guards? Perhaps Lord Leylin is actually a second son of a noble family, and hopes to get knighted through this method?” Alustriel naturally had the power to confer noble titles, and in reality the authority she possessed in the north was not at all inferior to any human country’s king. She was very generous as well. For second or third sons of nobility, or even other adventurers, serving Alustriel to become a viscount was a rather good option. As a noble wizard in the city guard, he would naturally receive more attention and preferential treatment compared to the others. What other benefits would an heir get? “Perhaps serving as a military wizard would grant higher authority in Silverymoon City’s wizard library, and they can read even more advanced books. Lord Leylin probably had this thought in mind when he joined…” Ena shook her head from next to Bessany as
she expressed her own opinion. It had to be said that although she was normally rather uncommunicative, her guess was close to the truth. However, they had their own family interests, and could not be as reckless as Leylin was and do as they pleased.

“It’s such a pity... As a wizard, we should of course immerse ourselves in the sea of knowledge, and not wander around attacking and killing,” Isadora was the most dim amongst the three, and felt that Leylin’s decision was a great pity, “Let’s not talk about this anymore. Which college should we go to? I’ve heard that Silverhand is rather good, but they don’t offer accommodation. And if we choose it...”

The three apprentice wizards very quickly forgot all about Leylin under Isadora’s influence, and began to discuss their future studies. For them, this was the truly most important issue at hand.

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“It really is very nice,” Leylin followed behind the officer named Aulen and sized up the facilities around him. As the city of wizards in the north, Silverymoon’s design was extremely exquisite, and was filled with a sense of artistry, borrowing from the artistic sense of the elves.

In addition, Leylin saw many different races on the streets, including dwarves, halflings, elves, pygmies, and even beast slaves. This country appeared to be very liberal.

“What, is it surprising?” Aulen smiled as she took off her helmet, revealing shiny long hair as bright as silver and pointed ears as well as fair and delicate skin. It was clear that this guard was an elf.

Although most elves heeded the call of the elven god to live in an enormous island overseas, there were still many tribes who stayed in the continent. In the north, Silverymoon City was an important elf settlement, and no more than 40% of the population was pure
humans. A fifth were free elven citizens.
“Mm, it’s because I used to live in the south,” Leylin lightly explained.
Although dwarves and halflings could be seen in the Dambrath Kingdom, they were few in number. As for elves? They were the highest grade of slaves, and were very rarely seen outside.
Ever since the Baltic archipelago had fallen, Faulen Island’s Port Venus had received part of their slave trade, and there had been a few pureblood elves amongst them. Naturally, neither Leylin nor Baron Jonas would admit to this.
After that, the elf officer Aulen led Leylin to the city hall. Every year, Silverymoon attracted many wizards and outsiders into joining it, and they had a well-established process.
The procedures were completed smoothly, as Leylin’s identity had not been fabricated after all. The arcane imprints on every file were completely in order.
“All done. Congratulations on becoming a member of the city guard, child!” Leylin’s professor was an elderly wizard who looked very energetic. He wore a handsome military uniform which molded to his body, and had sharp eyes from many years of serving in the army.
This wizard was a battlemage, and his experience definitely far exceeded that of those who worked in laboratories. In addition, the undulations he gave off made Leylin wary of underestimating him, at the very least, these were the undulations of a high-ranked wizard!
Although talented wizards were scarce, Silverymoon City obviously didn’t lack in them.
A military uniform set was handed to Leylin under the high-ranked wizard’s blessings, similar to the one he wore. It only lacked the medals of honour and other military decorations.
“With the uniform, you’re now a member of the Silverymoon city guard. The magic equipment is enchanted with three uses of Mage Armour and one Cure Moderate Wounds. Please use them sparingly…”

“Yes, sir!” Leylin played his role very convincingly as he accepted the military uniform.

The uniform was soft in texture yet it felt tough and durable, and glowed with magic. Leylin couldn’t help but sigh at the luxurious and rich Silverymoon City.

Eternal enchantments were naturally very precious, so the wizard uniform was naturally limited in its uses. However, every year the guards would receive a new set, which could be considered a very good perk.

“Tell me, why did you want to join the city guard?” The elderly patrol wizard finally asked in a respectful manner. Leylin felt hidden magic undulations probing him.

‘Is this Lie Detection? It was personally cast by a high-ranked wizard as well… Such a shame that I’m the target.’ Leylin inwardly laughed coldly to himself as he raised his head and puffed out his chest, his face lightly flushing with emotion, “I wanted to quickly raise my ranking as a wizard, obtain many more wizard resources for my research and to study. I could only receive these benefits as a city guard, sir!”

The elderly wizard sensed the answer his secret spell fed back to
him, and his eyes softened considerably. “Mm, you’re very honest. At ease!”
“Yes sir!” Leylin saluted smartly and respectfully withdrew himself. The elderly wizard inwardly nodded to himself at this swift and decisive reaction, ‘I haven’t seen a young man of his calibre in a very long time.’
A beam of light lit the room up once Leylin left, and a portal opened unexpectedly. A high-ranking elven wizard dressed in green exited it. The robe was embroidered with many plants, and looked almost like an ornate and exquisite dress.
“What’s the matter? Is there a problem?” The elderly wizard furrowed his brows together.
“No, I’ve investigated the recruit’s background. He is the heir of the Faulen family of Dambrath, and he matches the major image as well!” The elf nodded lightly, and continued in a graceful voice, “In addition, he has shown a powerful aptitude for magic since he was a child, and passed the rank 10 wizard certification when he was 18 years old.”
“Impossible! He’s already rank 11, his speed of advancement makes us in the older generation blush with shame,” the elderly wizard smiled wryly, “So you’re saying that there aren’t any problems with him?”
“I can only determine that there are none at the present. After all, we don’t have any conflicts with those human kingdoms in the south. As for his temperament, his reason of choosing to join us for more advanced magic spells is acceptable.”
The elven wizard nodded, “This sort of genius wizard will be a huge advantage for us in the future. Remove some limits on him for a few basic resources.”
“Understood,” The elderly wizard nodded solemnly. As a high-ranked wizard of Silverymoon City, he had already begun to anticipate the dangers the lay in the future.
“Congratulations, wizard Leylin!” Aulen congratulated Leylin on the outside, seeing him clutch the military uniform. “You are now one of the patrol wizards in our city guard. A benefit of being a new recruit is the private accommodation in our barracks. You can set up a small laboratory in there, and Silverymoon City’s wizard database will be open to you. You have three days to report to duty at the barracks.” Aulen began to explain several things of note to Leylin.

Given that patrol wizards were fully integrated into the military structure of the city, and they even had restrictions on their freedom, they received excellent benefits and a great salary. With him being a noble genius, Leylin obtained even more than normal. “Although we’re part of the city guard, we usually don’t have much else to do apart from a few patrols and inspections. I’m hosting a banquet in five days, and my hand-made scallion pancakes are really very good… I hope you can come, I can introduce a few people to you!” As an elf, Aulen had a long lifespan. However, she did not seem to renounce her desire for art and beauty, and still enjoyed life pleasurably.

Leylin could easily discern her character from her appearance and other aspects. On the other hand, it was difficult to find an elf’s gender without the A.I. Chip or spiritual force scans. Aulen clearly regarded Leylin as a true colleague, extending this benevolent invitation.

“Oh, of course, thank you for inviting me,” Leylin thanked her sincerely.

After he parted ways with Aulen, Leylin strolled around Silverymoon City, in his hand a map that she’d given him. As it was a city of wizards, there were a lot of them out on the streets.
Many of the shops nearby sold magical resources as well. Leylin leisurely walked into a shop and looked at the magic materials inside a transparent crystal showcase. ‘Mm, I’ve almost used up all of my magic materials, I should replenish them,’ Leylin looked at a few materials which looked like blue crystals, ‘This blue diamond is very pure, I never thought I would see this inside a normal shop in Silverymoon City…’ Leylin called the shopkeeper over and replenished all the magic materials he was lacking. Of course, they were only his most basic resources. He later headed towards the sections with magic potions and alchemical reagents.
‘There are a lot of low-grade potions and limited-use alchemical items, however there are very few premium products. Perhaps I can work a bit harder to find some,’ Leylin nodded to himself, noting the sky-high prices written below the high-grade alchemical items. Rank 10 and fifth level spells were a very important threshold in alchemy. This was because of Permanency, a rank 5 spell which could make any spell effects permanent. Permanency was something one couldn’t do without when they wished to practice making magic items and everlasting alchemical items. Even in Silverymoon City, wizards who could use rank 5 spells were not exactly a dime a dozen, and there were even fewer who had high attainment in alchemy. As a result, the extremely high price of high-ranked magic items was understandable. ‘In addition, as the war draws closer, those high-ranked healing potions and completed sets of magic items which can rapidly increase strength will naturally soar in price. For the same reason, the price of raw materials will drop.’ Leylin couldn’t help but stroke the Ring of Wizardry on his right hand. If he auctioned his ring, which was nearly legendary, it was sure to create a violent
commotion.
Perhaps, I can refine a few toys to earn some money…” Wizards would never turn their backs on earning more wealth, and Leylin was the same. To become a Legend required the support of enormous wealth and resources, and poor little boys who dreamt of soaring in advancement after putting in back-breaking effort were just dreaming up a fantasy.
“In comparison, low-ranked wizards and apprentices can only undertake the most basic processing tasks, and they don’t earn much from it. It would be difficult for them to maintain their lifestyle and continue with more advanced studies,’ Leylin thought about this indifferently, before taking out a gold card account from the church of wealth.
Just when the serving girl had respectfully left, several other acquaintances had entered.
“Wizard Leylin!” Bessany called out in astonishment, with her Ena and her sister.
“Wow! That’s a gold card from the goddess of wealth! Only those with property worth at least 10,000 gold coins can have it…” Isadora’s eyes were fixed on the gold card in Leylin’s hand, and countless stars seemed to appear in her eyes. She only regained her senses once Ena pinched her hand.
“Oh, it’s you. Have you entered a college?” Leylin asked indifferently.
“We’ve already registered at ‘Oakleaf’, their tuition is cheap and they have inexpensive student accommodation as well. We’ve come to buy some materials,’ Bessany had been similarly shocked by Leylin’s net worth, but she felt that this level of wealth was appropriate for a mid-ranked wizard.
Although she was still a little bitter in her heart of hearts, Bessany still managed to smile, “Has Lord Leylin joined the city guard?”
“It’s alright to just address me as Leylin,” Leylin appeared very
amiable and approachable, “As for the city guard, I have of course become a patrol wizard. I hope I can still meet you all in the future.”

Every wizarding college in Silverymoon had its own assignments, and the compensation for joining the city guard on their patrols was very generous. If the three of them continued to stay here, they would certainly have the chance to meet Leylin again.

“Really? That’s amazing! I wonder where Mister Leylin lives, I hope I can come and visit soon,” Bessany bit the bullet and decided to seize the opportunity.

“Visit?” Leylin looked at the little girl and shook his head, “My residence is in the military barracks. I’m afraid that without a pass, you cannot enter.”

After hearing this, the little girl’s eyes were filled with disappointment.

“However, I’m preparing to buy some property in Silverymoon City, to begin alchemical experiments and the like. If you agree, we can meet there.”

“I agree! Of course I agree!” Bessany immediately shouted, and her face flushed immediately, “What I mean is that… The three of us are very willing!”

Establishing a relationship with a mid-ranked wizard was a very good decision, so Ena and her sister both nodded as well.

“Very well!” Purchasing reagents and collecting resources, as well as selling the products afterwards were all tedious tasks. Leylin had long prepared to employ a few apprentices to do this. If they were already acquaintances, then it would be even better.
A year passed very quickly.
North of Silverymoon, in the enormous Moonwood. Gigantic trees which towered into the clouds hid the moonlight filtering through them. The still pitch-black surroundings filled one with a sense of foreboding. A small squadron with both humans and elves wearing the uniform of Silverymoon city guards were now pushing their way through Moonwood without rest.
“It’s here!” The squadron leader, Aulen, parted a thick shrub and saw dark brown blood stains on the ground, with a grave look in her eyes.
“Leylin,” she turned and looked at the patrol wizard behind her. Detect Evil! Leylin was currently clad in his wizard uniform, and looked very dignified and solemn with a mature air about him.
*Sss! Sss!* Black streams of air began to soar, centering on that particular area, before it pointed to somewhere in the distance.
“Stay vigilant!” Aulen said in a low voice, and at her call the others gripped their weapons tightly. Even Leylin had a very grave expression on his face.
It was because this place was the Moonwood! It was a dangerous place filled with werecreatures who believed in the god of the hunt, Malar. They had formed a powerful tribe called the Blackblood, and hated the civilised life of Silverymoon City. The guard’s skirmishes with the werecreatures had turned to
battles, and they had become the biggest complication apart from an invasion by Sunrise Mountain’s orc empire.

“I see you!” Aulen and the other members followed the spell guide to the entrance of a pitch-black mountain cave. Aulen quickly gestured to Leylin.

With the mutual understanding they’d developed over a period of time, Leylin nodded his head. The surrounding members involuntarily let out a breath of relief, and shortly after Leylin pointed towards the middle of the cave.

Light! A blindingly white light momentarily illuminated the area, and several crossbows with Spellslayer Arrow loaded were aimed there.

Under the brilliant light, they swept through the cave with a single glance. However, there was not a soul in sight apart from some ragged clothes and a human skeleton on the floor.

The clothes were severely damaged, and the style could be vaguely related to a city guard uniform. Several scraps were even found covered in mottled bloodstains which had turned dark brown.

“Kell Rosa. This is the missing bowman,” Aulen took out an emblem from the rags of clothes bearing the name, and although Leylin thought it looked like a dog tag, he pensively muttered, “This arrangement, is that the ritual of the god of the hunt? Those wretched werecreatures!”

The god of the hunt, Malar, was one whose name many were too scared to mention. Although he was a weaker god, he very much enjoyed slaughter. His believers were a bunch of savage werecreatures.

They were different from orcs in that werecreatures only retained part of their beastly characteristics, and they had some unknown hereditary disease. From Leylin’s view, they looked like the symptoms of genetic instability. It was rumoured that these werecreatures came from the laboratories of a wizard, and Leylin
was in favour of this opinion. The suffering that the werecreatures went through made their minds more prejudiced, and they were filled with hatred towards other living beings. As a result, they enjoyed slaughter, and they just so happened to hold the same view as the god of the hunt.

There was a chance that captured orcs could become slaves, but as for werecreatures, this was just a dream. Moonwood was the gathering place for the werecreatures, and they occupied the entire north of it. Blackblood was large enough to threaten Silverymoon. The ruler of Silverymoon City, Lady Hope, due to her kind heart and other considerations, had once actively sent out bowmen in the hope of improving the lives of those residents of Moonwood, but they had frequently been attacked.

This Kell had been one of the unfortunate ones.

“Kell Rosa was a loyal, brave ranger. The suffering of the world can no longer tarnish your soul, may you go in peace to the kingdom of god…” Aulen prayed. Other than being a powerful ranger, she was also a cleric.

As Aulen prayed, Leylin and the other squadron members lowered their heads one after the other in tribute.

It was at this moment that Leylin’s eyes suddenly widened. “Someone’s there!” The thief in their squadron was the second one to notice, and a dagger immediately flew into the shadows.

A dull whining sound came from the shadows like a wild animal’s growl, and the nearby tree leaves began to tremble.

“It’s a werecreature!” An armoured fighter went over to brush away what was obscuring the werecreature, and only saw a bloodstain. Still, the beast fur nearby was very conspicuous.

Those werecreatures had innately inherited some unknown disease, but at the same time they possessed tremendous life force and other strange abilities. It was rumoured they’d been created by a Legend.

“Our task was to search for them, not to kill! The werecreature
must have gone to find its comrades, we must all leave for the time being,” Aulen held her elven rapier at her waist, but finally they left without a choice.

Playing hide and seek with the werecreatures in the Moonwood was something only an insane person would do. They were very good hunters, and with the advantage of being in their homeground, unless the entire main force came with high-ranked wizards as well as Legends to clear the path, they could push through the Moonwood.

Although Aulen and the others retreated very quickly, the werecreatures were soon about to overtake them.

The roars of wild animals came from all around them, and all the damned werecreatures hid in the shadows of the trees. All the squadron members had unsightly expressions on their faces.

“Damn! Leylin!” Aulen took off the longbow on her back and notched an arrow with a grey eagle feather to it.

“Mm. Enchant Weapon!” Leylin and Aulen had worked together many times, and they had established a deep rapport. A burst of magic spread across the arrowhead.

*Ss!* Elves were excellent at archery, and Aulen was a ranger. The minute she let go of the bowstring, a muffled grunt could be heard in the darkness and an enormous shadow fell from the branch. While a common arrow naturally would not penetrate the defenses of a werecreature, a magic arrow would have no problems doing so.

Enchant Weapon! Forcefield! Bull’s Strength! With Leylin’s tireless actions, many of the squadron members glowed with the light of amplification spells.

“Well done!” Aulen praised him. In reality, she had always been afraid that this new colleague would be haughty and arrogant because of his status as a genius wizard, and would not listen to her command. However, Leylin’s performance clearly exceeded her
expectations.
Not only did he obediently obey orders, he even fit in very well with the other squadron members, he really did not seem like a wizard at all!
‘Perhaps after we return, Leylin’s titles should be changed… With Leylin’s qualifications and contributions, he might be promoted this month,’ Aulen thought to herself, but afterwards pushed the matter to the back of her mind. No matter how much she thought about it, they had to make it out alive before they had the privilege of enjoying promotions.
“Kill them!” A jarring sound of metal scraping against metal came from the darkness, and the surrounding werecreatures seemed to go mad as they charged towards Leylin.
“Follow me, we need to break out of this!” Aulen gritted her teeth, and the bow and arrow in her grasp shot out arrow after arrow. Once done, she tossed the bow away and replaced it with a slender rapier that had been hanging at her waist.
As a patrol wizard, Leylin was protected at the centre of their formation, and did not suffer any injuries.
‘In battle, a wizard’s spell slots should be used to serve their comrades. However, a wizard’s spell slots are limited, and so they must leave their own safety in the hands of their teammates. In this situation, unless they were good friends who would give their lives in return, it would be almost impossible for them to remain on good terms with one another.’
“I’m almost out of spell slots!” He shouted gravely, but in reality he was lying. Whether it was spiritual force which would allow him to directly use the first few ranks of spells or the Ring of Wizardry, Leylin still retained a great deal of power. However, he had to keep it a secret.
“How many spell slots do you have remaining?” Aulen looked at Leylin anxiously. At the moment, she did not have the time to even
wipe the traces of blood off her face. She no longer had the grace and elegance of an elf. Without the support of spells, they basically could not break through the siege of these werecreatures.

“Still have Cloudkill, and I only have rank 1 and rank 0 cantrips left,” Leylin replied with a solemn expression on his face, “In this forest, I don’t have the ability to meditate and recover.”

“Damn! Everyone, immediately break through the siege and run for your lives. Whoever can make it out will make it. Leylin, follow me and immediately cast your spells once most of the others have left!” Aulen had another cleric in her squadron. Jinx’s palm lit up radiantly with a divine spell. Although Aulen’s rank as a cleric was very low, the divine spells of a cleric did not require spiritual force and mana. One only needed to pray every day to obtain divine spell slots, and it could be considered very convenient.

After several healing spells, the other fighters all seemed to have recovered their vitality one after the other. Even the small wounds they had accrued on their bodies seemed to have been restored. With this power, Aulen and the others finally broke through the tight encirclement.

“Now!” Aulen roared.

Cloudkill! Leylin pointed behind his back, and the terrifying Cloudkill dispersed, engulfing all the werecreatures within it.

“Let’s go!” The other fortunate people began to summon up their courage one after the other in the hope of making it out alive, and followed behind Aulen.

……

“We’ve finally made it out!” Aulen looked at the scattered squadron members behind her back with an expression of hatred.

“Those damned werecreatures, they’ve been acting up more and
more frequently these days… Leylin, our escape is all thanks to you. Your spells were fully put to use and very precise, and I will include this in the report.”
Aulen looked at the distant silhouette of Moonwood with a heavy expression in her eyes. Once she turned away from it however, her expression had changed completely. “Now, let’s go home!”
‘Even the ordinary soldiers feel the looming shadow of war?’ Leylin nodded expressionlessly as he reflected on the issue in his mind. He didn’t remain in the barracks upon their return, instead returning to the property he’d bought.

‘I’m done with yet another mission. The contribution points I earned should be enough for me to buy that information, right?’

The database for wizards in Silverymoon could not be accessed purely with money. There were specific requirements to get things, and high-grade information on spells required contribution points to access. This was part of why Leylin had entered the city guard.

At this thought, he couldn’t help but glance at his stats.


Silverymoon City was truly the birthplace of wizards in the northern lands. With ample resources and research material, Leylin was able to move up a rank just by diligently working towards it.

With more information, the progress on analysis of the Weave had also advanced at lightning speed.

‘Analysis of level 3 of the Weave has already progressed to 99.99%. There’s just a little left…’ Leylin sighed as he entered the workroom.

“Good- Good morning, Mister Leylin!” Three wizard apprentices
jumped up just like startled rabbits. Bessany looked a little flushed, and the sisters behind her were obviously trying to clean up the messy lab table.

“Welcome home, sir!” Bessany spoke in the end, having gathered her courage. A year of study had taught them how difficult it was to cross rank 10, which meant that this young noble in front of them had a lot of talent and status in the wizarding world.

“Mm,” Leylin nodded sternly, “I hired you at the price of ten gold kronas per month; you also have permission to use my workroom. You don’t have to feel embarrassed…”

While helping with Leylin’s work, these girls had also been attempting to train their alchemy. It was a pity that without guidance from their mentor, it was difficult for them to improve by a large extent even if they had an alchemy lab.

“Oh!” Just as Leylin’s voice sounded, Isadora cheered, “I knew Mister Leylin wasn’t a stingy person…”

“So… that’s how you thought of me in the past?” Leylin rubbed his nose, scaring Ena into dragging her sister to apologise with her. There were countless apprentices in Silverymoon City, and their chances of finding such a good job were meagre. If not for their coincidental meeting with Leylin, the three of them wouldn’t even have been able to get this position. Hence, Ena treasured her current job.

“Forget it… I was just joking!” Even if it was what he had said only in passing, the beautiful apprentices in front of him were already cowering in fear. Such was the power of a high status. This power originated from Leylin himself, and nobody could snatch it away from him.

Leylin waved his hand with waning interest, approaching the sales counter on one side and opening its magic lock.

“How have the sales of magic items been lately?” Leylin took out a black boxing glove from the locked counter. The dark hide on the
surface had a chilly glint to it, and looked to conceal some sort of strength. Under the guard was an incomplete magic formation. A few parts of the circuit were obviously broken off.

“The two items we asked Hawke’s Bazaar to sell have already gone on the market. We have received a total of 8000 gold coins. Based on the contract, they will receive 10% of the profits and the funds have been remitted to your account at the Goddess of Wealth’s church, able to be withdrawn at any time… Also, a few other magic item shops and auctions have contacted me, saying they wish to obtain your masterpieces…” Bessany reported normally.

Leylin was a Grandmaster Alchemist in his previous life. Once he made sense of the rules of alchemy in this world and got a hold of Permanency, his magic items were rather good. Bessany was definitely envious of Leylin given that the items he made randomly sold for thousands of gold coins.

It was a pity that she was only qualified to take care of the sales records and statistics. Whether it was delivering magic items or transferring money, this was something Leylin personally took care of with the clients. There was no way for her to interfere.

Tempted by greed, humans could abruptly gain terrifying strength and not even twitch in the face of death. Knowing this well, Leylin obviously would not give her the chance to betray him.

‘It looks like Bessany is rather skilled at this type of work. There’s some value in nurturing her…’ Leylin thought to himself, placing the boxing glove on the table while putting on a device over his eyes which was similar to a magnifying glass.

A fine powder mixed with mithril floated down softly from Leylin’s fingertips. It emitting a shiny silver luster in the ink bottle it landed in, after which Leylin used a fountain pen and dabbed at the ink before beginning to draw on the magic formation.

Bessany and the sisters immediately held their breaths, watching his actions closely. Alchemy masters all had their unique techniques.
Even in Silverymoon, it was rare for people to let others watch without reservations. The other alchemy apprentices would go crazy over this if they found out!

His movements as fluid as water, Leylin quickly finished drawing the last magic formation. A radiance then appeared on his hands. With the incantation done and energy provided, the magic formation began to radiate energy that enveloped the glove.

“Now!” Leylin’s eyes shone, and he unhesitatingly cast a rank 5 spell. The gorgeous, powerful lustre of Permanency caused the girls to look intoxicated. With it, the rays from the magic formation grew in strength, and then began to be hidden within the guard.

[Beep! Glove of Strength successfully created!] A prompt sounded from the A.I. Chip, followed by the item’s stats.

[Item Name: Glove of Strength. Weight: 525g. Materials Used: Giant Skin, Limestone, Mithril. Effects: Able to increase user’s strength by 1 point (limited to those under 10 points). Description: This is a glove filled with strength, the love of all warriors and knights. The maker used a unique technique in creating it, giving this guard even more power!]

“Hm, not bad.” An item of this rank was something Bessany and the rest could not even hope for. For Leylin, however, it is was merely something to practice his skills on.

After soaking the fist guard in a solution from a glass bottle, he proceeded with the last adaptability procedures. Leylin then spoke to Ena, “Tell the people in the shop to come over and get the goods.”

“Understood, Mister!” Ena bowed respectfully and left the room.

“How is it? Did you understand?” Leylin glanced at Bessany, a teasing look in his eyes. As for Isadora, he completely ignored her.

“No! Sire’s techniques are even more profound than those of the elven masters…” Bessany unknowingly used honorifics. She obviously wanted to become Leylin’s official student, but it seemed
like he had no intentions of taking her on whatsoever.
“Alchemy needs to be learnt systematically. It’s natural you can’t understand it for now…” Leylin looked at Bessany, seeing her thirst and determination towards magic. Out of the three, perhaps only she would be able to succeed.
“In that case… Are you willing to give up your pay every month and work for three hourglasses more everyday? This will be in exchange for half an hourglass’ worth of time every week being mentored on alchemy,” Leylin asked. Passing on knowledge in exchange for manual labour was common amongst high-grade wizards. There were even cases of female wizards giving up their bodies in exchange for tutoring.
“I am! Of course I am” Bessany immediately grew so ecstatic that she kept repeating her words. With her background, truly studying alchemy was but a dream. Besides Leylin, no master would be willing to take her in as a apprentice.
“Good! Come to my room after you get off work.” Leylin nodded and headed out of the shop.
He could not keep staying here to create more magic items. Since Bessany had interest and talent in this area, there was nothing bad about teaching her.
“Congratulations, Bessany!” Behind him, Isadora’s congratulations and Bessany’s tearful delight sounded out. A ruminating smile was left on Leylin’s lips.
Things that belonged to a devil were not so easily obtained!

……

At the heart of Silverymoon, in the Wizards’ Guild next to the palace. After passing through a series of stringent tests, Leylin came outside the wizards’ vault.
The tower genie’s robotic voice sounded, “Welcome, Lord Leylin
Faulen. As a middle-ranked wizard with the army, you can view the content at the first three levels. Level four and above can be accessed through contribution points.”

The wizards’ vault was a small library, and inside a few old wizards were reading. Leylin did not bother them as he found a book he was in the middle of. He began to read ‘Exploring The Sixth Level Of The Weave.’

The A.I. Chip continued to work, recording everything he saw.
When it was time to leave, Leylin spoke to the managing genie of the wizards’ vault.

“Lord Leylin, you now have a total of 580 contribution points. Exchanging for these two magic resources will require 80 contribution points. Continue?” the tower genie asked.

“Yes!” Leylin touched the emblem on his chest. With some secret probes, he could sense that the tower genie was communicating with the information in his emblem and refreshing it. Soon, it deducted the correct number of contribution points.

*Boom! Boom!* Two earthen statues walked over, holding crystal balls with information inside them.

The tower genie’s voice sounded again. “Please note: The information is only meant for the wizard to use alone. It must not be shown to outsiders, or you will be punished by the enforcers of the palace.”

Leylin already knew about this rule, and he shrugged his shoulders, taking the two crystal balls and walking out of the guild.

‘Regular wizards can only read the information on the first two levels, and there are even some restrictions on that. My permissions are already the highest that all foreigners can get...’ Leylin sighed inside.
Whatever it was, he was still a foreigner who had enlisted for less than a year, and was only a middle-ranked wizard. While he had a little bit of a reputation as a genius, he was nothing before he had fully grown into his power. ‘All the research and procedures that are free to read in the wizards’ vault has been stored in the A.I. Chip. I need to spend contribution points for the rest…’ Short of becoming a Legend, he couldn’t access the vault free of charge. He could only use his accumulated contribution points to slowly get the information on the disciplines he wanted. Were there no war, it would have been delusional to completely obtain all the information he wanted with his current means. However, things were different now. Leylin’s eyes glinted icily, “Soon… The shadow of war will soon be upon us…” The advent of war was no secret. Intelligent people like Leylin could tell this was about to happen years ago, and now even the junior-most officers like Aulen had found out. The most obvious evidence of this was the obvious decrease in the number of wizard apprentices and official wizards coming to Silverymoon. The crowd on the streets had even thinned out. The city guards had been mobilised more often recently, and they were even openly recruiting. Of course, those who joined now would not have the great treatment that Leylin had gotten. With his own foresight and the advantage from his information, Leylin had made the most of this final chance to enlist. Now, if he was lucky, he could be recruited into the middle ranks. However, this was obviously not what Leylin needed. What did that mean to him? What he needed was to have achievements; by unceasingly getting more contribution points and spreading his fame, he could soar straight to the inner circle of Silverymoon City. His actions would definitely be hindered by those stubborn
conservative members, which was why it was necessary to walk the less trodden path.
‘Tiff is doing well right now. He’s gathered some power that I can make use of…’ Leylin continued to scheme.
“Oh my! Isn’t this our genius foreigner from the south, mid-ranked wizard Leylin?” This peculiar voice and the sarcasm in mentioning Leylin’s title made him immediately aware of who it was.
“Commander Cassley!” He inwardly rolled his eyes, but on the surface Leylin still straightened his chest and saluted.
“Mm! I heard that you did well this time and saved Aulen and the others from a group of werecreatures. Not bad…” Standing in front of him was a young officer. His ears were slightly pointed and he had fair skin from his elven heritage. His appearance concealed his true age.
He was a true high-ranked wizard! On top of that, he was also a higher-up amongst the city guards, and Leylin had to treat him with respect. He obviously knew that the instant he seemed disrespectful, things would be deliberately made difficult for him. Hence, all his actions strictly followed the etiquette in the army with no errors.
Seeing Leylin’s display, Cassley had an shady look in his eye and even some restrained fear.
“I heard that your next mission is a punitive expedition. Work hard. Once we expand the army, it’ll be a chance for you youths.”
Taking the general encouragement, Leylin got out of the way and stood by the side of the road. Only after the commander vanished from the Wizards’ Guild did he continue forward, sighing in relief.
Even a world with extraordinary powers was similar to ordinary human societies, with factions and power struggles. Leylin’s achievements that outstripped his age already left a lot of people unhappy with him. With the quick promotions, his increasing contribution points, and the spread of his name, this discontent had
reached the limits. In order to get more opportunities, Leylin had taken the initiative and entered Aulen’s faction, thereby relying on the bigshot behind her. There was no other way around it. If he wanted to climb forward, his own strength was far from enough. It was necessary to get be backed by other factions.

Without anyone backing you, it was only a matter of time before you were eliminated. While he found this beneath him, lacking in strength Leylin could only play by the rules. In that case, was there a faction better than his own immediate superior?

By relying on Aulen and the power backing her, Leylin had been able to survive up to this point. However, this also led to him offending the other factions. The high-ranked wizard Cassley, for instance, was obviously from another faction. Leylin and Aulen had long become eyesores to him.

Of course, with Alessandro and the elders around, this competition was still positive. Nobody dared make a move in public. Hence, since Leylin had presented himself perfectly, Cassley could find no excuse to reprimand him.

“Looks like he’s going to give our team trouble in the next mission…” Leylin muttered to himself. This degree of treatment was still within the scope of the rules, and his backer must have also done something as well.

“But he’s taking the lead to make things difficult for us and is unafraid of telling me about the dangers of the mission. Does that mean they are absolutely prepared?” Leylin’s expression was grim. This action of his implied a 60 to 70% confidence.

Of course, Leylin was already used to concealing his strength. A plan based on his surface strength would fail to account for his true might. This alone could lead to Cassley losing everything he banked on.

“It’s a good idea to discuss this with Aulen as soon as possible, and
see if the bigshot behind her can help us…” Leylin had a feeling that this was a confrontation between the two organisations, and his team had coincidentally been involved. The two sides had long since discovered the incoming battle and were now doing all they could to suppress their opponents and gather more strength. That he was pushed to the front of the stage to become the vanguard meant things were now very dangerous. As the bannermen, they would obviously be attacked at full strength. ‘But danger is also an opportunity!’ Leylin laughed grimly to himself, ‘As long as we can get past this, the rewards won’t be meagre. How else could this be fair?’ Leylin never feared danger.

‘Leylin! Hey, hey! I’m here!’ The young girl’s tender voice attracted the interest of many people, causing them to stop and look on. However, the person who had called him out did not seem to be affected in the least, and was even waving her arms. ‘Is she finally here?’ The feeling from the devil’s mark already told Leylin the identity of this person. He looked up and came before the female knight, “Long time no see!”

“Long time no see, Leylin!” Rafiniya was still in a knight’s attire, but there were now a few servants guiding the horse. It seemed like she had matured quite a bit in these two years, and grown a few centimetres taller. Her powerful and lush thighs immediately stopped passersby in their tracks. It did not feel good to be ogled at like this, so Leylin brought Rafiniya away. “You’re a wizard! I knew it; you were bluffing me all this time! Also your name is Leylin, not Ley!” Rafiniya exclaimed huffily, her personality still the same as before. “Haha… that was all a disguise in the past!” Having been seen through, Leylin didn’t even blush.
“By the way, why are you here?” There was a huge distance between the north and the west. Leylin had reached Silverymoon ahead of Rafiniya, but the fact that she had actually come here still surprised him slightly.

“I’m travelling around now, and I heard rumours that a war’s going to happen here. I came because you were here too.” Rafiniya spoke seriously, “As a knight, my dream is to maintain justice and protect the peace of Silverymoon!”

‘I knew it…’ Leylin massaged his temples. Only foolish girls like Rafiniya would run to battlefields when there were no benefits. He glanced at the servants behind her, eyes full of pity, “With a mistress like this, it must be exhausting.”

Upon hearing this, the servants behind Rafiniya nodded vigorously, but when Rafiniya turned back, their expressions immediately changed, looking indignant.

“Struggling for a career of righteousness is all I live for!”

“The miss’ methods are correct. We support you wholeheartedly!”

“How is it? So many people are supporting my dreams! Silverymoon City will definitely win this time, and the evil orcs will definitely lose!” Rafiniya proudly raised her head.

“Yeah, yeah. Have you joined the city guard?” Leylin asked bluntly.

“Not yet. I came to meet you once I arrived!” Rafiniya answered truthfully.

“Good! I’ll introduce you to people then. How about joining my team?” Leylin suggested. With Aulen’s authority, taking a new recruit into his team was no issue.
Wile Rafiniya had a screw loose, she was still a real high-ranked knight. A hot-headed idiot like her was still useful in battle, able to take care of things on the front lines. As long as he brought up the path of knights and justice to sway her, this little lady knight would be charge forward like an enraged bull in spite of the dangers ahead.

“Well then, I’ll leave things to you!” The female knight casually spoke, making the few servants behind her turn pale.

“Miss, the master let you come out and travel, not to join the army. You’re making it hard for us to answer to the master…” the oldest servant summoned up the courage to say.

*Boom!* However, before he could finish his words, the the little girl’s slender fist struck his right eye directly and he toppled. The power of a high-ranked knight was not something that a mere servant could take on.

“How shameless… Too shameless…” Rafiniya’s entire body trembled, “Such a person with no heart for justice whatsoever is my servant? That’s an insult to me!”

“How about you? Anyone against it?” Rafiniya’s metallic gloves produced sharp sounds, causing the other servants to immediately shake their heads and toss the unlucky guy on the floor aside.

“There’s no problem now!” Rafiniya clapped.

“You guys… come with me!” Leylin had a dark cloud over his head but did not say much in the end as he led the way.
In the barracks.
“Hey, Leylin! There’s trouble…” Aulen’s anxious expression did not ease up, and she didn’t seem to notice Rafiniya who was behind him. She looked completely disheartened.
“What’s going on? Is this the mission that Cassley messed up further?”
“You know about it already? That bastard mixed blood! If not for his sorcery, it would have been impossible for him to become a high-ranked wizard even in three centuries…” Aulen cursed. Life in the army had caused the elves to lose their original elegance.
“Skill with sorcery? Bastard mixed blood? Haha… Aulen, I never knew you were good at swearing…” Leylin chuckled. The A.I. Chip had already told him Cassley had both elven and giant dragon blood in him.
With three bloodlines, he truly was a mixed blood. Giant dragons and elves were both proficient spellcasters, and with their blood Cassley had become a high-ranked wizard before he turned two hundred. That was a classic example of relying on the heavens to succeed.
“Oh, there’s also an outsider here! My apologies!” It was only now that Aulen saw Rafiniya behind Leylin. The female knight was astonished by the profanities the elf had spouted.
“This is Rafiniya, a high-ranked knight and an old friend of mine. She wishes to join us.” Leylin introduced her to Aulen, as this was basic courtesy amongst nobles. “Rafiniya, this is Aulen. She’s not usually like this…”
“A high-ranked knight? Not bad, not bad! Is this the external help you got for this mission?” Aulen’s eyes brightened.
“No! It’s actually just a coincidence. Besides, I don’t know the
contents of the mission in detail yet…” At the mention of proper business, Aulen turned grim.
“It’s an extermination mission. They want us to annihilate a camp of werecreatures, with at least five high-ranked Professionals and even possibly Malar priests. Damn it, it’s basically telling us to go on a suicide mission…” Aulen spoke aggrievedly.
“How about that elven wizard? Has he managed to get us anything?” Leylin was referring to their backer.
“He seems quite determined now. A team of theirs with powerhouse is also going on a dangerous mission, and the upper house as well as master of the city have approved it…” Aulen laughed wryly, “All that he’s obtained for us is a group of new soldiers and some supplementary items. We still have to do the mission though.”
“Never mind the new troops. They aren’t that powerful and might affect our rapport. What do you think about roping Rafiniya in?” Leylin suggested.
Aulen had the same thoughts as Leylin, and she nodded, “Mm, that’s what I was thinking! As for those stupid new recruits… I know them better than you do…”
“Well then… Are you willing to enter the city guards and join my team, Miss Rafiniya?” Aulen asked seriously.
“Of course! Spreading justice and punishing evil is the reason I’m travelling around, and my lifelong path as a knight!” Rafiniya’s face seemed to glow.
“Great. Welcome! From today onwards, you are a comrade that we can rely on.” Aulen exclaimed seriously. She seemed to have a favourable impression of this female knight whose thoughts were incomparably pure. Rafiniya had always been very carefree, and that personality allowed her to integrate into the team quickly.
Upon noticing this, Leylin asked for information regarding the mission and headed out of the camp. He walked along the streets
aimlessly, suddenly disappearing into a little alley.
A layer of dark magic light began to spread around Leylin’s body and completely concealed his figure.
In a private house nearby, Leylin caught sight of Tiff.
“Young master!” Tiff had now swapped to another face and was wrapped up in a black coat, emitting a strange aura. After seeing Leylin’s arrival, he immediately bowed respectfully and set up a powerful isolating barrier.
With his strength nearing the legendary realm, nobody would be able to see through it unless the Chosen herself decided to stalk him by intention.
‘Is he already about to break through?’ As the ‘god’ that Tiff believed in, Leylin had a great understanding of Tiff’s feelings. The energy in Tiff’s body had already almost been completely purified, and he was truly only one step away from becoming a Legend. Observing the process of someone else becoming a Legend was a huge source of enlightenment and motivation for Leylin now.
‘The realm of Legends holds true power in the World of Gods. It’s also the beginning on one’s path to godhood, not as easy as purifying one’s power…’ While Tiff was not purely a wizard, there was still much information that Leylin could make use of. Light flashed in the depths of his eyes, and Tiff’s stats and aura undulations were accurately copied by the A.I. Chip.
“Mm. How have things been lately?” Leylin indifferently asked.
“I’ve taken in more followers, though a few organisations have begun to take notice of this… Also, news of the incoming war can no longer be hidden. It’s quickly being spread amongst the regular people, and the price of rations and weapons in the black market has been steadily rising…” Tiff reported conscientiously.
He had initially been a loyal believer of the winged serpent god, Kukulkan. He now treated Leylin as the saint of his god and his substitute, so if his loyalty was quantified it would be at the highest...
possible value.
With Tiff’s strength approaching the legendary realm, he was one of Leylin’s trump cards. Leylin sent him out to gather strength, ready to make a move at the most opportune moment. He was someone who had been able to do as he pleased for a long time due to his strength. His abilities and schemes were marvellous, and with Leylin’s financial help, the plans proceeded smoothly.
After reselling some rare and scarce items, he had even earned much wealth.
“The war has yet to break out, and we still have our most important mission. Once the invasion of the orcs begins, nobody will have time to watch us closely…”
Leylin rubbed his chin, “Perhaps our mighty and benevolent city master will announce something that can coincidentally rid our group of all suspicion…”
War was comparable to allowing the people to carry arms, and demanding that they bring their own rations and take care of themselves. When the situation was dire, the city master probably would not raise too many objections against these empty promises of titles.
“Understood, young master, your will is my command.” Tiff nodded gravely to show his understanding.
“Also, there’s a large base in the dark forest. Do you remember it?” Leylin immediately produced a map used by the military and pointed at the location where the mission was to be carried out.
“This place…” Tiff’s brows furrowed, as if he had been put in a difficult position. Such an expression on Tiff’s face meant that something was abnormal, and it could even be dangerous.
“What is it?” Leylin immediately asked.
“This is a werecreature camp on the outskirts. I’ve had dealings with them before…” The people Tiff took in were obviously not good, pure people. They were the elites of the dark world, and
werecreatures were included on the list. It was completely normal for him to have had dealings with the Moonwood or even the Blackblood tribe before.

“How powerful are they?” Something that put even a near-legendary being on the spot was naturally not easy to take care of. Even knowing that Cassley would definitely give him the most difficult mission, the difficulty it posed seemed to have surpassed Leylin’s expectations.

“There’s a being there that even I feel is dangerous. Also, they have priests of the God of the Hunt there…” A being that could make Tiff feel danger was at least on the same level as him. On top of that, if this organisation had a priest, then they would be at a completely different level than before.

“If young master must attack this base, please allow me to follow you in secret!” Evidently, Tiff was not optimistic at all about Leylin’s mission.

“Alright. Add the more powerful ones you’ve recruited as well, and have them tail us secretly.” Leylin did not try to make things hard for himself. He was merely a rank 12 wizard now, and there was quite a number of people who were more powerful than him in Silverymoon.

“However, compared to the great tide of orcs and orc Legends, as well as the god backing them, the Blackblood tribe is rather weak…” Leylin sighed.

Given how difficult this mission was, Leylin would probably rise to the middle ranks of Silverymoon after it was completed.
‘Cassley… I’ll remember this!’ Leylin obviously wasn’t someone who’d take a blow lying down. Everything Cassley had done to him would be returned tenfold, even a hundredfold! Wasn’t everything possible in times of war?

……

As the cold wind whistled, a small team slowly set out from the gates of Silverymoon, radiating a solemn atmosphere. Although they know that the journey was perilous, they could not escape their orders. Such was the sorrow of enlisting in the army.

“Rafiniya, knights can’t be mounted in the Moonwood. There are too many trees and brambles…” Aulen was still telling Rafiniya about things she should take note of.

“Don’t worry! My skill is passable. I don’t need to work together with a warhorse…” Rafiniya patted her black sharkskin scabbard, looking relaxed.

Mounts were usually half the strength of many high-ranked knights, but things were different with Rafiniya. After her previous experiences, she had deliberately trained herself in this area. She still retained much of her original strength even without a mount. She was on a completely different level when compared with those who could only become heavy-armoured fighters once they lost their horses.
“That’s good… Let me introduce you to the main forces of the troops!” Aulen exclaimed happily while introducing her to the rest of the men.

“You already know Leylin, our wizard. That is our scout captain, the thief Lanshire…” Aulen pointed towards a slender figure wearing tight-fitting clothing with half his face covered.

“Then there’s the brothers who lead our warriors, Ogg and Otto.” As the defensive forces in the team, Ogg and Otto had sturdy muscles and carried halberds, claw hammers and other heavy weapons. Behind them were almost twenty elite warriors wearing steel armour like chainmail. They were rank 3 warriors or greater, and could be considered rather strong.

“Hello!” Ogg and Otto smiled and greeted her. Their expressions were very innocent, a stark contrast to their insanity in battle.

“And then there’s our healer and the beauty of the team, the cleric Jinx!” Aulen approached a blonde girl. She wore white cleric robes, and sat on a white horse summon.

“Sister Aulen… don’t tease me. What do you mean by beauty…” Jinx blushed slightly. With her cascading golden hair, she had a calm aura.

“We used to be a team of 50, but due to a bitter fight, tens of our men died. We haven’t had the time to replace them…” Aulen brought Rafiniya to take a look at the team, looking desolate and regretful. Even she did not dare bring in new friends when they were about to carry out a dangerous mission, not to mention that there could be spies in their midst.

“Rafiniya, you’re a knight. As usual, you will be assigned two servants and four grooms. Every month, you’ll receive an extra salary for them. Don’t hesitate to report your name,” Aulen waved her hand generously.

“I only have four servants. Sister Aulen, just do what you need
to…” Rafiniya answered without care. With her background, she naturally did not think much of the allowance from the army. However, for many commoner knights, this was great wealth. In order to get more gold coins, commoner knights did not mind reducing the number of servants and grooms while still earning the same amount. Leylin could not help but sigh, embezzling money by adding nonexistent servants to the payroll was a common situation everywhere, it seemed. It didn’t need to be specially taught.

“Alright then. We’ll treat it as two servants and two grooms…” Aulen watched Rafiniya attentively, but discovered she was not acting strangely. She could not help but shake her head, feeling ashamed of her thoughts.

“Oh look, are those goblins?” Rafiniya’s mind was obviously not on this matter, and her attention was already on something else. There were a few green-skinned creatures in the wilderness, looking exactly the same as the goblins Leylin had seen before. They were staring at the group greedily but did not dare charge forward, seemingly timid and afraid.

“Yes. Don’t worry, they wouldn’t dare attack fully-armed human troops…” Aulen exclaimed, and then watched speechlessly as Rafiniya urged her horse to go forth. She then looked towards Leylin, who shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

“Alright, I finally understand why you had such a reluctant expression when introducing Rafiniya to me…” Aulen urged her horse to Leylin’s side and rolled her eyes.

……

Though the journey was more fun with the lady knight Rafiniya, they were now increasingly closer to the Moonwood. The atmosphere in the group grew increasingly solemn. Night came, and tens of tents were erected in the army camp. Heaps
of bonfires were ignited in an orderly manner, with simple army rations cooking above them. Leylin had opened a can and poured solid fish floss into the boiling soup.

“It’s fish floss! I often ate this while travelling in the south!” Rafiniya, who was seated beside Leylin, twitched her nose.

“Is that so?” Leylin smiled slightly, not revealing that he was the master of the supply chain. Due to the location and matured supply chain, the church of wealth hadn’t left the Faulen Family alone in its work. They’d invested in them to gain most of the ownership rights to the fish floss.

With the support from their tremendous wealth and network, sales of fish floss had extended to the north in a few years. It had even become the required army rations in Silverymoon, which made him feel rather honoured.

While imitations had begun to appear in the market, the quantity, scale and techniques could not compare with the shrine of wealth. Hence, the profits would be maintained for a long time. Leylin received these updates as the family sent him money every year.

Although he was improving himself, Leylin hadn’t relinquished control of his family and other organisations. Becoming a Legend, or even a high-ranked wizard would be enough for him to do as he pleased in the World of Gods, but his goal wasn’t just personal improvement.

He wanted to become a god, and personal strength wasn’t enough for that. Even the great gods who were high above needed support from followers.

‘Actually, the rules to become a god in the World of Gods aren’t that strict…’ With Leylin’s foresight, he could obviously see through many things, ‘If I become a new god, it will be easier to get support from the world origin force. A thousand pious believers are enough to support the birth of a new god. It’s the old ones facing more trouble. They need to expand about tenfold, and
can easily become enemies to other gods with similar roles…” Leylin’s eyes glinted, ‘Of course, there’s an easier way to become a god; through luck! If I manage to obtain divine power crystals as well as the godhood of a fallen god, it would be easy to become one… But even after becoming one that way, I would still be a mortal. Resurrecting as a god will not be a certainty…”

Leylin actually thought little of these gods that had gotten lucky. Comprehension of the powers of laws could not be completed in a day. Even high-ranked Legends may not be able to fully comprehend the power of laws, much less those who had once been regular people.

It was like using a child’s strength to brandish a huge hammer. The result would be obvious.

Of course, Leylin was different. His main body had the experiences of a near rank 7 Magus and assistance from the A.I. Chip. If he ascended to godhood with weak divine power, it was still possible for him to embrace and support it.

‘It’s a pity… Something as good the heavens granting divinity no longer exists… The gods will never be forgotten. Even if they die from unnatural causes, godhoods and divine weapons will still land in the hands of the gods that killed them. It can’t be given to others…

‘Comprehension of another law like this will only pollute my path…” Leylin looked incomparably grim. He was still a Warlock at heart, and followed the path of Magi. Rank 7 Magi needed to completely grasp the power of one law, and rank 8 Magi needed to comprehend multiple laws.

Only by finding their own path and smelting the power of laws into oneself would a person find themselves at the peak of rank 8, peering into the realm of rank 9. With a rough idea of the path, Leylin wasn’t willing to mix in more laws.

‘Unless it’s a law of divinity that I need, even should a godhood
with powerful divine power dangle before my eyes, I won’t pay it any mind,’ Leylin gave a deep sigh.

“Heh… what are you thinking about?” His expression naturally aroused the interest of Rafiniya beside him.

“I’m wondering when this fish soup will be done.” Leylin shook his head. If he were to tell the female knight beside him that he was considering becoming a god, she would definitely think he was a lunatic. Someone who wasn’t even a rank 15 high-ranked wizard dared say that he wanted to become a god? Even those Legends did not have the guts to do so!

“Mm, almost there.” Rafiniya breathed in deeply. She obviously had more experience from before, and seemed to have some culinary skills.

“My apologies for bothering the two of you!” Jinx came over at this moment, her pure white robes gliding across the grass. She radiated a sense of exceptional beauty.

“Captain Aulen told me to notify all officers who are squadron leaders or higher to come to the central tent immediately…”
he flame of a thick wax candle flickered within the tent, illuminating the area brightly. Leylin, Rafiniya and the other team leaders formed a circle with Aulen in the captain’s seat. The map of the Moonwood was hung on one side of the tent. “This mission is going to be quite difficult. Do any of you have viable plans?” Aulen furrowed her slender brows, but the responses disappointed her. “Leylin, what do you think?” She looked over to Leylin expectantly. As an army wizard, he held a remarkably high position. Besides, he had already proven his ability before; he was second only to herself in the team. “There have been no further intelligence reports. I only know their rough position and the presence of high-ranked werecreatures within their team. In this situation, we can only reinforce our security and wait for the right opportunity to grab them by the throat.” Although what Leylin said made sense, it wasn’t enough to satisfy her. Aulen knitted her brows once again. Leylin naturally understood her worries; he did indeed have a plan. However, it required Tiff and the devil worshippers, so he naturally couldn’t tell Aulen and the team. She looked around the room disheartenedly, before waving her hand to dismiss them, “Well, alright then. I’m sorry to have interrupted your dinner, let us end the meeting here.” Despair was
evident in her face.

“Don’t worry, sister Aulen! Justice always prevails, those damned werecreatures will not win against us!” At this point, the only one left who was full of confidence was of course the young female knight.

Ultimately, this was still a world led by physical strength. Rafiniya only attended the meeting because she was a high-ranked knight: it afforded her a position equivalent to a military officer who was a low-ranked captain.

“I trust you.” Aulen smiled helplessly, unable to find the strength to respond to Rafiniya in any other way.

“Leylin! Why did Aulen look so dejected towards the end?” Rafiniya wasn’t able to contain her curiosity after leaving the tent, “Is the mission too challenging?”

“No idea,” Leylin shook his head, and realised that the girl hadn’t been changed at all by prior experience.

“The fish broth is done, miss.” Rafiniya’s servant brought up two bowls of fish broth and the staple white bread, not forgetting the wild berries they picked along the way.

“Woo!!” Rafiniya cheered and began digging in.

Leylin laughed mindlessly at Rafiniya and tore his bread unhurriedly before dipping it into the broth and sending it into his mouth. He only called out to her as they were about to part, “Rafiniya!”

“Yeah? What’s the matter?” There were still leftover crumbs on the side of her lips, and she resembled a gluttonous little kitten.

“Nothing, I just have a premonition that tonight won’t be peaceful. Keep your weapons close.” Leylin notified her.

After going their separate ways, Leylin looked around to make sure no one had their eyes on him before sneaking into Aulen’s tent…

The silver moonlight was exceptionally dull this night, broken only by a few lone storm clouds that passed the region every once in a
while.
The winds howled and temperatures dipped, and everyone else but from the patrolling soldiers had long ducked into their respective tents. Only the unfortunate soldiers on night duty were left to fend for themselves as they cursed at their luck.
Out of nowhere, a thick dark cloud floated across and swallowed the moon whole. The moonlight disappeared completely in the span of a second, and the only remaining light was from the handful of bonfires around. The guards’ line of sight grew hazy and they could only see things within 5 metres even if they sat by the bonfires.
“What a dark night… And such dense fog!” A patrol soldier grumbled.
“Come on! I’ve seen even scarier fogs in the endless wilderness, to the extent that you can’t see your fingers even when you’ve stretched your hand out.” Another patrol soldier replied with disdain.
“Well, you’re right!” The younger soldier nodded his head, but then he tightened his grip on his weapon, “Who’s there?”
A shadow approached them in the fog. “It’s me!” it spoke with a familiar voice.
“Oh, it’s the captain. Ma’am!” The patrol soldiers saluted immediately. However, in the instant they bowed, a few slashes flashed coldly in the night.
“Ack-” Fear and confusion brimmed their eyes as they tightly pressed their hands to their necks for dear life, blood seeping through the fingers. The collapse of both their bodies attracted no unwanted attention.
The hazy shadow seemed to let out a sigh of relief before arriving in front of another tent.
“Who’s there?” Leylin asked from within the tent.
“It’s me, Lanshire.” The shadow sounded calm.
“I see, is there anything? Hold on, I’ll deactivate the alarm!” The tent lit up for a brief moment and Leylin lifted the entrance open with confusion written all over his face, “Come in!”

Walking into the tent, the bright light carved out the figure of the shadow. She was slender, as thin as a thread, and wore a mask that covered half of her face. It was the scout of the team, Lanshire. “It must be urgent for you to visit at such an unearthly hour.”

Having shed his wizard robes and wearing only a plain white shirt that revealed his firm chest, Leylin exuded masculinity. “Well.. I have an idea with regards to the mission.” Lanshire’s voice was rather strange.

“Idea? Why didn’t you bring it up during the afternoon meeting? Was something preventing you from mentioning it?” Leylin’s expression turned dark and he took a step closer to her. “Um, actually…” Lanshire lowered her voice causing Leylin to move closer towards her in an attempt to catch what she said.

Something unexpected happened at that moment. A bright silver dagger appeared in Lanshire’s hand out of nowhere as she mercilessly slashed at Leylin’s throat, the moment he was completely defenceless.

Given that she was a high-ranked assassin, there was only one way for this to end. Leylin would die. *Pew!* The dagger cut into Leylin’s throat without difficulty, but the situation was different from what Lanshire had expected. Instead of having blood splatter all over, Leylin’s body turned into a huge soap bubble, burst in front of her and left nothing but a strong gale in its wake.

“This must be… High-grade illusion!” All colour drained from Lanshire’s face upon realising that the Leylin she had just encountered was just a fake. She fled from his tent.

But things did not go well for her as she walked out into a group of people surrounding her. The real Leylin was wearing his robes
neatly and was already aiming his staff at her, with a fully-armoured Rafiniya by his side. And in the midst of them all, Aulen looked at Lanshire in disbelief and, of course, disappointment.

“Lanshire! I can’t believe it’s you. We’ve already been friends for more than 50 years, and you still couldn’t resist the temptation of having power!” Aulen looked sorrowful.

“Friendship? Really?” Lanshire removed her mask to reveal a youthful face, but the remnants of a scar were still evident on her left cheek. It was like a flaw on a piece of art, completely destroying her beauty and rendering her rather ugly.

In a world of divine powers, scars like these would be easily healed. But the people who had gifted her this scar back then left a destructive power in the wound that deterred the healing abilities of any divine powers.

“Since that night, I’ve never been the same!” Lanshire laughed coldly before putting her mask back on with hatred-filled eyes.

“I see, you’ve never been able to let it go…” Aulen said in a sorrowful voice, “Who are you working for exactly? The werecreatures? Or another faction?”

Leylin couldn’t care less about emotional entanglements like these. He stood out from the crowd and sent orders to surround Lanshire completely. Anyone who fought him was an enemy, and if they could not be roped in then he could only kill them. This was the code of law in the World of Gods!

“Kneel and confess all your sins! This is your last chance of survival!” Leylin stated fiercely, but he knew a surrender from Lanshire was almost impossible. She was a particularly determined avenger with a strong will. People like her could even drag others to hell with them just for revenge.

Leylin was familiar with unmoving fellows like these, thus he sent the command just as Lanshire smiled: “Kill!”
Magic and vindication clashed in the blink of an eye. Lanshire was just a high-ranked assassin, and though she could certainly bring much trouble to Leylin and his team if things were done in the dark, an open face-off like this was obviously not a strength of hers.

Having cast Slow and with Rafiniya’s help, Leylin brought Lanshire down in no time. She was stabbed in the abdomen by two enormous steel swords, and hot blood trickled from her wounds.

“Cripple her of all fighting ability! Jinx, treat her!” She was Aulen’s friend, after all, Leylin still had some sense in him.

“Hah! I’d rather die than receive treatment from you! And do you think this is over?” Lanshire’s mask had fallen off long ago in the middle of the fight. Blood trickled from the corners of her lips, and she looked even scarier than before with her menacing appearance.

“What?” Aulen’s expression didn’t look too good.

“Cap- Captain!” Just then, Ogg who had originally been in charge of planting traps and exterior defenses was carried in by the others, and it was clear he had suffered an attack.

“It’s the werecreatures! Their abilities are beyond what we’ve imagined!”
The roars and howling of beasts filled the vicinity, putting everyone on edge.

Lanshire laughed hysterically, “Hah! All of you will die with me! You can never beat those werecreatures! Every one of you will be torn apart and then swallowed; your souls will be caged in the depths of hell!”

After spitting out her malicious curse, Lanshire’s face flushed and fresh blood spurted out from her mouth. Her aura completely disappeared as she died.

“Ignore her! Listen to me, engage defensive formation.” Seeing that Aulen wasn’t in a good condition, Leylin took over command.

It was only now that he found out what exactly had happened directly from Ogg, and began to organise the troops. In reality, everything that happened tonight was within Leylin’s plan. Firstly, he found Aulen and told her that they may have a spy within their ranks to win her support, which allowed him to plant the trap.

And to make things easy for the possible attack, the brothers, Ogg and Otto were sent out to be on standby.

“There were high-ranked werecreatures, so many of them, I— I can’t be sure of the exact number, but my brother tried to protect me- He tried to protect me and—” Ogg’s eyes swelled red with tears and his facial muscles began to twitch.

“Heal!” A spell flew forth from Jinx’s hands, and swiftly cured most of Ogg’s severe wounds.
“I’m gonna kill those damned beast bastards!” He stood up and grabbed his enormous claw hammer without waiting for his wounds to recover completely.

“Were you the only one who managed to escape in the close combat team? It looks like I underestimated our enemies this time round.” Leylin looked slightly ashamed, but a light flashed deep within in his eyes.

Whether it was done intentionally or not, the capture and exposure of Lanshire’s identity as a spy and her death had dealt a huge blow to Aulen. Moreover, the troops led by Ogg and Otto were now left with casualties, and Otto had even died; Silverymoon City would have to compensate Otto’s family for that later on. Jinx was a priest and under heavy restriction, while Rafiniya was a new member and did not have enough experience.

The event seemed to have cleared quite a number of obstacles for him, but Leylin would never admit to that. He would probably say that it was a coincidence!

By then, the werecreatures were already directly outside the campsite, their mountainous shadows and the screams of the guards causing horror to tinge the atmosphere.

“Everyone stay close, we’re in trouble.” An Eternal Flame spell lit up Leylin’s palm, and he managed to repel a large amount of the fog. As the soldiers gathered together, he managed to see the werecreatures more clearly.

This was a humongous group with at least 200 of the monsters among them, six of which had exceptionally strong physiques and savage auras.

“High-ranked werecreatures, and there’s 6 of them!” Even the perturbed Aulen was now anxious. The werecreatures’ strength had greatly surpassed their expectations. If they were at all careless, their troop would be completely wiped out.

Suppressing her emotions, Aulen returned to her cool-headed self...
and sent out commands, “Defensive formation number 2!”
How could she not have realised that Lanshire had conspired with
the werecreatures to kill everyone here?
“Lanshire, my friend. I’m sorry!” Aulen muttered to herself and
drew out her elven sword, the shaft decorated in plant motifs. Its
lustre suggested that it was an enchanted item.
*Boom! Boom!* Giant footsteps sounded out, and several giants
that were at least ten metres tall emerged from the fog. They were
like walking hills clothed in coppery skin.
“G-Giants! These werecreatures managed to tame giants!” Aulen’s
hand trembled ever so slightly as she watched these human-like but
also bizarre creatures, and some soldiers even yelped in despair.
“Giants? Those extraordinary creatures from the north?” Leylin
massaged his temples in distress as data of the creatures was
presented to him.
Description: A unique creature that only exists in the north. Cruel
and fierce in temperament, unintelligent, easily tamed by other
barbaric tribes.]
“Looking at this strength, they’re most certainly connected to the
Blackblood tribe. They might even be a branch! Cassley obviously
wanted us to die.” Aulen laughed bitterly.
“Prepare to break through! We can only evacuate as many as we
can.” She now seemed to have lost heart.
“Elf from Silverymoon City, and other humans!” A shadow walked
out from the group of werecreatures.
He was 2 metres tall, and had an appearance similar to that of a
human. The difference was that he had unusual beastly patterns all
over his face, and certain body parts of a beast.
He choked in disgust after sniffing in the direction of Leylin and
the rest, “Damn Silverymoon City! That is a place of evil, it should
be wiped clean!”
As followers of Malar, the werecreatures were naturally hostile towards the civilised beings of Silverymoon City and hated all who dwelled within it. The city guards were undoubtedly their first target.
“All of you will die here today! You are all too worthless to even be sacrificed to my Lord!” The werecreatures growled, and more petrifying shadows headed towards them.
Werecreatures had robust physiques and a staggering jumping ability. The temporary barriers by the side of the campsite posed no deterrence to them. *Roar!* The giants grunted and every step they took was like a miniature earthquake, flipping tents and crushing soldiers under their feet.
“Damn it! Leylin, protect me!” The elegance of an elf was long forgotten to Aulen as her eyes were red with anxiety and she pulled the elven bow from her back.
Greater Magic Weapon! Leylin’s expression became heavy as the lustre of a high-grade spell burst forth from his hand.
*Phew!* Silver arrows went off like shooting stars, the spell-filled arrowheads hitting the giants right in their eyes, their weakest points. The giants’ defences still couldn’t match high-grade spells, and this was aimed at their eyes.
The giants roared as their eyes cracked apart in a soft explosion, copious amount of shimmering liquid and blood dripping everywhere.
One pressed a palm against his injured eye as he went berserk, charging towards Aulen.
Grease! Spell rays enveloped the giants as Leylin took advantage of this moment. He wouldn’t be himself if he let go of the chance to target the giants’ weakness.
*Bang!* Magnificent lights shot out of his hands like fireworks, and the group of giants immediately went berserk. Even the
werecreatures were unable to calm them down. Everything was in a frenzy as they roared wildly and attacked everything in their vicinity, including a handful werecreatures who were shredded into pieces.

“It’s a high-grade spell attack! Get rid of that darned wizard, I’ll dispel it!” A werecreature clad in a priest robe stood out in the chaos. He, too, had strange decorative motifs and paint on his face. “Kill!” Aulen made use of this chance and charged forwards with Rafiniya and the rest. The only way they could survive under a situation like this was to go all-in. The soldiers were well aware of this too as they plucked up their remaining courage, following Aulen’s lead and charging ahead.

*Roar!* The clash of the two opposing sides created a fierce orchestra of howls and clangs of steel meeting steel. And yet everything was in vain. Aulen’s numbers started to dwindle, and they could not win no matter how great their fighting spirit was. The werecreatures were just too many.

“Go to hell!” Having been enhanced by magic, the sword in Aulen’s hand was brighter than ever. It could easily pierce through the defences of the werecreatures and cause unimaginable damage to their internal organs.

With it, Aulen severed the heads of 3 werecreatures in a flash and attracted the attention of their companion a high-ranked werecreature.

“I admit you’re strong. But too bad; you’re still going to hell!” The werecreature priest suddenly towered over Aulen like a huge and tenacious mountain which she could not scale.

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“I’m your opponent!”

Leylin had already cast Fly, and was blocking the priest from
saving his companions.
“Mid-ranked wizard, you’re not worthy to become a sacrifice!” The werecreature said in pity, and looked into Leylin’s blood-lust-filled eyes as if looking at his prey. It caused Leylin to furrow his brow uneasily.
‘I can’t be sure what other abilities this rank 15 or higher priest has. Hopefully Tiff and the rest will make it here soon!’
But of course, Leylin had more than one plan. He was also confident of escaping. As a wizard, there were countless life-saving spells. A simple Fly could get him out of the scene in a matter of seconds as long as he wasn’t shot down. Rank 15 wizards would escape death even more easily with Teleport. This priest in front of him would just be a headache.
Although it’s possible for me to deal with a magic-based Professional at rank 15 or above, it really doesn’t make sense…’ Leylin watched the werecreature priest while feeling a headache coming on. He was only a rank 12 mid-ranked wizard, and could not do anything that stepped beyond the boundaries of what was proper. Such a thing would attract the attention of powerful forces, which was the last thing Leylin wanted. However, with spiritual force that exceeded that of regular wizards, as well as the scanning functions of the A.I. Chip, Leylin was able to discover some magic undulations that had been concealed. He abruptly stepped sideways, turning left to dodge a sudden long green arrow. This corrosive arrow did not reduce in strength as it whizzed right through the body of a werecreature, turning it into froth. High-grade Poison Arrow! Leylin looked grim, and the Mage Armour inlaid in his uniform activated. “Why are you not in your Blackblood Tribe? What are you doing out here?” “Hehe… that’s not something you need to know, because your head’s about to become my loot!” The priest opposite him snickered. At this moment, the situation changed again. Another high-grade werecreature suddenly emerged, launching a sneak attack on
Aulen!
A dagger with terrifying black corrosive energy stabbed into her chest. “AH… AULEN!” Upon seeing this, powerful and dazzling qi burst from Rafiniya. It seemed to have a burning effect, causing the other werecreatures around her to back off as she took Aulen into her arms.

“See this? Your leader’s going to die. Give up! As long as you give up your faith, swear in the name of the God of the Hunt and join us, I can let you off…” Tempting words left the werecreature priest’s mouth. Perhaps he had also realised that Leylin would be difficult to deal with. While it was possible to win, there was a high chance that Leylin would run off.

“Hmm….” Leylin chuckled, and it caused the priest’s expression to change suddenly. Seeing the summoning rays light up on the opponent’s body, Leylin knew that his preparations had been successful.

Even as the priest looked confused, he suddenly retreated and activated the spell scrolls he had prepared long ago.

Magic Barrier II! Thorns! Summon Guards!
Immensely powerful spell barriers instantly cleared out the area, enveloping Leylin and his teammates. Meanwhile, a thorny forest rose swiftly from the ground. Heavily-armed soldiers were constructed from the soil, rising to confront the werecreatures.

“What’s going on?” After seeing the fall of the werecreature priest, a few leaders immediately headed over.

“Our base is being attacked. It must be a plot by those crafty humans!” The priest spoke in frustration.

The other werecreatures’ expressions quickly changed, “What do we do?”

The high-ranked werecreatures watched Leylin and the others within the barrier. While basically everyone had injuries, they naturally still were able to fight to a certain extent and had magic
protection. While it wasn’t impossible to break through and wipe them out, they needed time…

In this period of time, their own camp could be wiped out! However, if they were to divide their troops, not knowing the power of the opponent would be very dangerous. Leylin’s troops were not the benevolent type. These vile humans were of no importance at all compared to their own mission. While werecreatures were synonymous with brainless savages, the ones who could become leaders still possessed some level of intelligence.

“Let’s go!” The leader suddenly waved his arms, and the others quickly retreated.

“What about them…” One of them looked unwilling to do so, but was immediately shot down, “Just think for a moment with your stupid brain. What is more important, our camp or these humans?” The priest was also in favour with this decision. As he left, he gave Leylin a deep look. “This isn’t the last you’ll see of us!”

“I look forward to it!” Leylin answered with a slight smile. They retreated quickly. In tens of seconds, they’d completely disappeared.

Arcane Eye! After using a few detection spells, Leylin nodded in surety, “They really left and didn’t leave behind any traps…”

“Oh, we succeeded!” “Haha… I survived!” “I knew I wouldn’t die so easily…”

The ecstasy of living through a desperate situation immediately caused the soldiers who had survived to descend into a chaotic mess. Many of them even began to cry.

After this excitement, they looked at their camp that now looked to be in complete disorder, as well as their comrades who were dead or gravely injured. A soldier began to sob, and soon and all sorts of wails began to burst out from the others.

“Ley- Leylin!” Aulen had a huge wound on her chest. Even with
Jinx applying pressure and casting divine spells with milky-white light, the blood still gushed out. The bright blood dyed Jinx’s pure white priest robes red, making her look slightly disturbing.
“I’ll leave my brothers to you. Promise me that you’ll bring them back to Silverymoon alive!” Aulen’s lips were cracked, looking like a traveller on the verge of dying of thirst.
“What do I do? What do I do? This sort of wound needs a Cure Serious Wounds spell at the very least! I’ve used up all my divine spell slots…” Jinx sobbed. Clerics and priests that used up all their divine magic were even more useless than wizards without spell slots.
“I promise!” Leylin nodded grimly.
“Then… I can relax now…” Aulen’s hands hung down, her eyes closing slightly.
“Captain! Captain!” Jinx began to weep.
“She’s not dead yet!” Leylin was speechless as he pulled Jinx aside, a spell scroll abruptly appearing in his hands.
Create Water! Freeze! The powerful magic encased Aulen in a gigantic later of ice like an insect. There was still a look of shock on her face.
“She might be able to hold on for a while longer.” Leylin looked serious, “Jinx!”
“Yes!” The female priest looked up, stunned.
“I have an important task for you!” Leylin looked at the priest before him, “I need you to escort her back. You’re our only cleric beside Aulen, only you can keep her alive… As for safety, I’ll send a few people to accompany you!”
“No problem!” Jinx wiped off her tears and answered quickly. After they lost Aulen, Leylin now had the right to command them all.
“Wait, won’t you go back with me?” Jinx only managed to react after a moment, asking in surprise.
“Go back? Do you want to be court-martialled? Cassley definitely won’t let us off…” Leylin looked serious, “I’ll stay behind and complete the mission!”

Leylin now had a noble aura similar to a hero, which touched Jinx’s heart.

“Oh…” Her tears began to flow again, “Don’t worry, I’ll complete the task without fail and tell the church of your achievements…”

As she was a cleric, Jinx was one who would not be criticised. She obviously believed that Leylin was giving her this chance of survival, which completely moved her. Leylin picked two soldiers who seemed alright to send Jinx and those who were gravely injured back.

After Aulen left, the entire squadron was now entirely in Leylin’s control. With the priest leaving, there was nobody who would be monitoring Leylin, and he could now act without reservations!

“But this method… will it work? I’ve never heard of it before…”

Watching the large horse carriage with ice inside leave, Rafiniya stood by Leylin’s side, looking confused, “Can using ice slow down the worsening of injuries?”

With this method, business at the shrine would pick up. Wizards would also begin to pay more attention to ice-type spells, but Rafiniya had never heard about this before.

“Yes, in theory. I haven’t tested it out before though…” Leylin nodded.

“IN THEORY!” The female knight shrieked.

“Yes. That’s at least some hope!” Leylin answered irresponsibly, and then clapped his hands to gather the rest of the soldiers.

Standing high above, Leylin looked at the few men they had below. The team had had less than 50 people originally, and with last night’s massacre and today’s injured leaving, there were only a dozen or so people left. It looked rather pitiful.

“You’ll definitely ask me why we aren’t going back…” Leylin’s
voice was low. Now, with the deaths of the many leaders and those who had gone off, he had the most authority here and was the only reasonable commander. Of course, Leylin only needed this authority. It would be much easier for Leylin to just die than make use of these scattered remnants of a defeated troop. To get them working together, Leylin even spoke of what had happened before with the mission, as well as their hostility with Cassley. After saying all this, he saw looks of despair in the soldiers’ eyes. “Yes. With Cassley around, we will become deserters if we go back and be sent to trial… Don’t think about escaping, because your identification as free citizens as well as your family are all in Silverymoon…” Leylin’s voice had a strange infectious effect. “This battle is not just for yourselves, it’s for your future! We must eliminate those wretched werecreatures. At the very least, we need to succeed in battle and return without blame…” The soldiers below were first bewildered and afraid, but flames were now blazing in their eyes. Noticing it, Leylin secretly burst into laughter.
‘Once their commander was defeated, the subordinate stood out to lead their ruined army. They faced powerful enemies and obtained an unimaginable victory! Indeed, this is how a hero should be!’ Leylin nodded inside.

His thought process was completely based off some melodramatic models in his previous life, but it appeared to be popular in this world too. After placating the soldiers and ridding himself of Rafiniya, Leylin left the camp in the name of investigating the situation.

“Young master!” Tiff appeared from the shadows.

“Mm, you did well. What harvest did you reap?” Leylin asked calmly.

Leylin’s plan had two parts, one in the open and one in the shadows. In the open, he would attract all the attention onto himself, while in secret, Tiff had brought his men to the vicinity. This is why he had allowed Lanshire to get in contact with the opponents and reveal the location of their camp, allowing for the attack. While the werecreatures turned out in full strength, Tiff would destroy their nest.

Meanwhile, with the perfect timing, they could also take care of the siege surrounding them. While Leylin alone could not match up to the joint attack of the high-ranked werebeasts, he would crush them in terms of intelligence.
“Their camp was very strictly guarded and they recovered very quickly. We only managed to break through a part of the surrounding camp and did not manage to get to the core campsites…” Tiff looked serious as he produced a scroll with powerful spell remnants. However, it had obviously been used once already.
“Based on the traces on the outside, their goal seems to be to slaughter dragons.”
“Slaughtering dragons?!” Leylin froze slightly. Dragons naturally still existed in this world, and they were extraordinary high-grade beings. They were also considered a legendary species, purebloods of which could naturally become Legends upon reaching adulthood. With skin that was basically immune to magic, they were effectively the children of the gods.
The group of high-grade werebeasts had conspired for a long time, and it was obviously not to kill a few mixed-bloods or subspecies. They would probably target an adult dragon, a Legend!
‘Why would they slaughter dragons?’ Leylin pondered over this. While the heroes of human legend gained benefits and divine items upon slaughtering dragons, he knew that things weren’t quite as simple. The dragon race was very powerful, and they had their own backers. If one were tainted with the vengeance of a dragon’s soul, they would be pursued with hatred by the entire dragon race.
Even historically, unless the heroes that slayed dragons had strong backing, few ended up well. On top of that, not every one of those dragons were wealthy enough to rival a country. Wanting to make a fortune off slaying dragons was just a fantasy.
Of course, many werebeasts were lunatics, and they could not be judged by normal standards.
‘Could it be a ceremony for the God of the Hunt? A legendary dragon would be enough for the god to show his grace…’ With a god acting, the dragons could do nothing even if they harboured a
“But… What they would lose from this would be far too much to bear. Unless there’s something else that’s attracting the higher ups of the werebeasts…” Leylin muttered to himself and asked Tiff, “Have you found their target?”

He first unrolled the scroll Tiff had gotten. There was a map of the northern lands here, with detailed markings of the various villages, mountain ranges, forests and rivers. Even the copy Leylin had made with the A.I. Chip’s records was only slightly better than this, and a map with this much detail would absolutely fetch a great price in the northern lands.

On one mountain range was a little blood-red mark of a beast tooth, looking formidable and evil.

Tiff pointed at the mark on the map. There was a label beside it, the Nether Mountains. “I used Memory Retrieval used on a few slaves, this should be their goal. The werebeasts have received intel of the existence of an adult red dragon there through various means. They aim to behead it!” he answered with certainty. While Memory Retrieval was thought to be a sinister spell, neither Leylin nor Tiff cared about it.

“Nether Mountains? The red dragon…” Leylin mumbled, the glint in his eyes brightening. All of a sudden, his eyes suddenly flashed as the Nether Mountains combined with an incomplete image of the map formed by the A.I. Chip.

‘A.I. Chip, show me the part of the northern lands where the inheritance of the Arcanists could be!’ he immediately commanded inside.

The A.I. Chip worked quickly, and a slightly blurred map appeared with a few tags. This map was something Leylin had copied from the notebook of the arcanaist. Sadly, with the passing of generations, most of the map was lost even with the magical protection.

Leylin looked unperturbed as the A.I. Chip copied a version of the
map from the scroll and overlapped them.

‘As expected…’ Seeing the location where the archon inheritance was and the beast tooth marking match up, Leylin’s eyes flashed with understanding. Tiff beside him obviously could not see changes in the A.I. Chip, but he knew that Leylin had discovered something. Still, he did not ask. This was smart of Tiff, and Leylin could not help but nod inside.

‘Red dragon… Werebeasts… The archon… What is the relation between the three? Did those werebeasts obtain clues of the archon inheritance? Or am I thinking too much, and they purely want to offer a sacrifice to Malar?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with all sorts of emotions, but then went still.

‘Whatever it is, the werebeasts must be wiped out!’ Leylin made up his mind. He put a silver mask on his face, and his eyes turned a frightening red and white. Terrifying unstable strength burst forth from his body. In that moment, he changed into his identity of the divine devil.

“My lord!” Tiff changed his method of addressing Leylin, knowing that he wanted to hide his identity.

“Alright, let’s go see the underlings you recruited!” Leylin nodded, the glow of Fly coming forth from his body…

In a hidden valley, Leylin stood on high ground to look at the underlings Tiff had brought. Almost all of them were scattered around secretly, being of various races. The only commonality was the bloody and savage aura they possessed, making people fearful at the sight of them.

“Welcome, brothers of my sect!” Leylin now wore the robes of a high priest. His clothes that were lined with gold fluttered in the air, making him appear splendidly luxurious. Tiff stood behind him respectfully, emphasising Leylin’s status.

“The winged serpent god Kukulkan is a powerful and rewarding god!” Leylin scanned through these men who would be considered
the trash of their races. They had no faith to speak of, and only believed in strength. This was how they were subdued by Tiff, “As long as you believe in our god, you will then be rewarded!” Leylin saw the looks of disbelief in their eyes and pointed at a beastman wrapped in beast skin, “You, come here!”

“What is it?” The beastman had the head of a lion and a sturdy body filled with muscles and scars. There was a rebellious look on his face.

“You will receive the blessing of our god.” Leylin’s arms wrapped around himself as he moved in a modest and respectful way. When it came to acting as a medium, Leylin had nothing to learn. Meanwhile, powerful energy undulations exploded from his body, filled with a dignified and heavy aura. Even the air was beginning to freeze.

“Hss…” A bundle of flames in the air turned into a strange giant snake with two wings. The giant snake’s pupils were trained on the lion-headed man, and a terror from his very soul got him to kneel, body quivering.

“My master, the mighty winged serpent god, Kukulkan. I finally meet you again…” Tiff who was at the side knelt down piously.

“My master is the only serpent of the world and possesses boundless strength. Your mighty divine force can swallow the heavens…” Leylin began to chant ceremonial verses, and a black ray of light descended from the snake’s mouth, falling on the lion-headed man.

*Boom!* The moment the black light descended, it turned into the most ferocious of flames for an instant as it wrapped him within itself. Miserable cries sounded out from within. Such a terrifying scene left the audience silent in their fear. However, before they could even think that Leylin was reprimanding him, the figure of the winged serpent god and the black flames had dissipated, revealing the figure of the lion-headed
man.
However, there was now a huge change to his body. His golden fur was now completely black, and there was even a black skull brand. “Thi- this…” He touched his body after the transformation, looking to be in disbelief.
“My master has enlightened you with abilities in magic, transforming you into a sorcerer!” Leylin’s eyes were aimed at the ground as he spoke calmly.
“Sor–sorcerer?” The dark lion-headed being looked puzzled, and then lifted his right arm.
Demonic magic rays lit up on his body, and the black skull brand on his body flickered layer by layer. This was Summon Undead! *Crash!* The ground split open, and numerous incomplete skeletons crawled up.
“It’s really magic!” “This is a sorcerer!” “How terrifying! He can actually bestow the gift of magic and sorcery!”
Amongst the stunned looks, the lion-headed man immediately knelt in his ecstasy, “My god, the winged serpent god! I believe in you…”
As a Professional who specialised in physical attacks, just a bit of magic would be a huge help to him. The lion-headed man sensed that he now possessed the power of a sorcerer of at least rank 5, and there even seemed to be a possibility of raising this strength. How could he not be delighted to the point of insanity?
When compared to the rewards, his faith was nothing.
“Winged serpent god… You are the serpent of the world and possess boundless strength…” The eyes of the others’ began to shine as they started to pray, voices filled with sincere piety.
Faith is actually a contract between gods and mortals. Mortals place their faith in the gods, and in return they receive divine skills. When they die, their souls will have the right to advance to the kingdom of the god.’ Leylin watched those fellows who were fit to be ordinary believers with bright eyes. ‘If they receive more benefits in return, they won’t hesitate to make offerings and worship even a bogus god. This is why there are still so many worshippers of devils and demons in this world…’ Of course, there was a limit to the worshippers that gods took in. They naturally couldn’t bestow their divinity without restriction, or they would make a loss. They could possibly lose a chunk of their divine force, even their godhood!

Leylin was currently in the early stages of building the foundation of his church. He had to give his first believers more benefits than normal. How else would he attract the faith of others and have them believe in this non-existent feathered serpent god? As his main body was still in deep slumber, he was completely unable to respond to his followers’ prayers and bestow them with divine skills. In reality, that winged Targaryen phantom and the bestowal of the sorcery was all part of a show that Leylin had fabricated and performed with this body. Given that he was but a part of the main soul, even Tiff wouldn’t be able to discover any flaws once he disguised himself. As for the
magic-like abilities, although those with bloodlines in this world could only rely on what they inherited, Leylin had no fear of bloodline transformation experiments. He was already a mid-rank 7 Warlock after all.

Warlocks had always been the best among those who possessed bloodlines. Leylin himself had reached great peaks in the use of bloodline energy, and to use a few captured bloodlines to manufacture a few fake sorcerers did not take much effort.

Of course, in the World of Gods, this was a miracle that only gods, demons and devils could achieve, explaining the fervent looks of these men. Sorcery could even be passed on to their children!

These benefits were attractive enough to make his subordinates gather around the church of Kulukan, and unite under its name for the time being. They were all ready to drench themselves in blood and fight for Leylin.

Another voice sounded at this moment, and Leylin’s lips lifted even higher than before.

[Beep! Rank 3 Weave analysis: 100%! Host body has obtained all rank 3 spell models. Spell amnesia has been blocked automatically. Casting of rank 3 spells no longer requires materials.]

The analysis of the third level of the Weave had already been at the final leg, and now the conditions were ripe enough for it to complete. Leylin couldn’t help but feel that the world origin force was watching over and taking care of him.

Gods always achieved success. None were unfavoured by the world origin force, and they were said to be the World Will’s darlings!

‘Seems like the dormant will of the World of Gods can’t control the world origin force anymore. There’s a vacancy for me, eh?’ The edges of Leylin’s lips spread even wider. “In the name of our god, let’s make war!”

“Kukulkan! Kukulkan” Everyone’s thirst for battle had already
reached its peak. Of course, Leylin wouldn’t admit that he had intentionally influenced this.
Within the high-ranked werecreature camp in the Moonwood.
“Damn it! There are actually other humans!” The werecreature commander ruthlessly flung a trembling werecreature onto the ground as he huffed.
“Luckily, only the outskirts were taken down, and they didn’t reach the core camp!” The werecreature priest on the other side added coldly as he held onto his human bone staff.
“We need to tighten security across the entire camp, I’m ready to carry out a large-scale sacrificial ceremony for our Lord’s favour. He’ll send out hunters from his kingdom to assist us.” The lesser God of the Hunt, Malar, was a gigantic monster similar to apes and monkeys. It didn’t get rid of most of its bestial characteristics after it successfully deified, and had a morbid thirst for slaughter. The hunters were an exotic species in Malar’s kingdom, and they were created specifically to hunt prey. The weakest of them was more powerful than a high-ranked Professional, and if the sacrifices of his followers in the mortal world pleased Malar, he would even open up a passage to dispatch the elite forces of his kingdom.
Although such forces from the heavens were definitely a little weaker as compared to a incarnated deity, the advantage was that they could be replenished without much heartache.
“Hunters?” The highly-ranked werecreature grimaced; the sacrificial offering required clearly cost him dear, “Our forces were already enough, but in order to ensure nothing will go wrong, let’s go ahead with that! I believe… if we can use the legendary red dragon as an offering in a moment, our master will surely be very pleased…”
“Then I will begin…” The werecreature priest arrived at a miniature altar within the camp. This was clearly the core of the
camp; it did not suffer from any damage from Tiff’s surprise attack. But the instant the priest entered the temple, his expression changed drastically.

*Wooo! Wooo! Wooo!* Crimson divine force poured out from the altar into its surroundings, the dazzling radiance representing some sort of special message.

“There’s an enemy…” The sound abruptly came to an end, following which an icy cold ray of light flashed past. With a blade cold enough to freeze the entire room, it ferociously thrust itself into the chest of one of the highly-ranked werecreatures.

“A thief who has almost reached the rank of Legends! It’s the person who launched a sneak attack on us!” The werecreature chief roared violently, and landed his fist on the ground with a thump. Powerful undulations spread in all four directions.

Earth’s Fist! A high-level physical Professional skill erupted in a series of invisible ripples, forcing a black shadow out of thin air.

*Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!* The silhouette bounced around nimbly, and ran several hundred metres away, his figure barely visible. The werecreatures he passed by on the way collapsed with their hands covering their throats.

“You won’t get away, despicable raider!” The werecreature chief had a fierce look on his face as he followed behind at supersonic speed.

But right when the chief was at the entrance of the camp, the priest’s voice could be heard. “Be careful, it’s a trap! He might have a formidable spellcaster!”

The reminder obviously came a little too late. Just as the werecreature chief came to a halt, a sinister figure with a silver mask suddenly appeared, with a terrifying spell instantly taking shape on his palm.

Rank 5 spell: Dragon’s Breath! A powerful corrosive force instantaneously swept across the entire area, scorching the hair on
the werecreature chief’s chest.
“Damn it!” The werecreature flew backwards as a dark green radiance on his body flickered continuously. A powerful force was resisting against the corrosive effects of the Dragon’s Breath at lightning speed. The werecreature priest behind the chief was constantly employing treatment spells.
After retreating more than ten metres, the werecreature chief had already completely broken away from the attack range of the Dragon’s Breath. However, the average werecreatures around them were not so lucky. They all collapsed onto the ground, and the entrance to the camp was instantly filled with victims everywhere.
The crowd controlling powers of wizards were always one thing that commanders were most fearful of.
“Who are you?” The werecreature chief clearly didn’t recognise Leylin, who was in disguise. Moreover, his opponent was formidable and nefarious, which made him feel as though he was facing his greatest foe.
“This feeling, as if he was devouring everything around him!” The werecreature chief’s pupils constricted. He now saw Leylin as the most dangerous enemy he had ever met.
*Zoom!* Without giving the chief a chance to even speak, Tiff immediately charged forward. His powers as a highly-ranked Professional, which were close to being legendary, burst out from him completely. His magic abilities flashed on his body from time to time, and he actually managed to forcibly stall five highly-ranked werecreatures although it was one against five.
“Kill! Argh!” A wave of troops charged towards the camp. An eldritch lion-headed person who was almost entirely covered in black led the front line. With a ferocious roar, a suit of armor made of bones appeared on its body, along with numerous bony pikes that suddenly thrust forward into the line of werecreatures that couldn’t flee in time. Fresh blood dripped continuously along the
bony pike.
“Charge!” The army of scum instantly broke into the werecreature camp. They were from different walks of life and all kinds of races, but had been brought together by Tiff recently. After seeing what happened to one of them earlier, these dregs of society were investing 120% of their strength in combat in order to obtain the power of a bloodline and even let their descendants inherit it. Even though their opponents were blessed by the lesser god of the hunt, Malar, they too were protected by the mysterious feathered snake god, Kukulkan.
It was undeniable that those who were chosen by Tiff were all rather strong and talented. They were on par with the werecreatures in the camp.
Mass Frenzy! Mass Healing! The werecreature priest hid somewhere behind as he watched the enemies solemnly. The races that made up the opponent’s army were very diverse, thus he couldn’t think of which influential party they belonged to at all.
“Could it be that a new influential force is already emerging in the vicinity? With their nearly-legendary experts, this group cannot be belittled!” The werecreature priest muttered. He raised his hand and continued producing a spell which he had been preparing for a long time.
Dispel Magic!
A violet pillar of light descended from the sky, interrupting the werecreature priest and hindering him from casting spells. Leylin folded his arms, calm and unruffled in the midst of chaos, as he stared at the werecreature priest on the ground.
“Your opponent is me!” Leylin’s eyes were ice-cold. Previously, he couldn’t employ all of his strategies in order to conceal his true strength. But with his identity as a ‘divine emissary’, he didn’t need to have any considerations!
He raised his hand, and lightning chains shot out. Pale blue electric currents bounced across the place, causing a few low-level priests to collapse to the floor.

When in combat, kill the clerics first. That was the norm in practically every battle, and Leylin certainly wouldn’t sit idly by and let those low-level clerics leisurely heal and assist their troops. After Leylin fixed his attention on him, the werecreature priest suddenly felt a chill in his heart, as though he was facing a gigantic dragon. Vast amounts of probing spells flashed by, yet shortly after they returned with a message that made his expression change drastically.

“Divine one! Which god do you serve?” The werecreature priest asked in a deep voice, scared out of his wits by Leylin’s false godhood.

On the continent in the World of Gods, stronger beings who could obtain divinity were scarce. The greatest possibility would be that they were bestowed divinity by the gods. Evidently, this werecreature priest considered Leylin as the saint of some deity.
Communication between gods was an extremely solemn affair. If a powerful being was bestowed with divinity, he was bound to have an eminent status even in a god’s church.

As for a subordinate of one god provoking another? That would practically be the beginning of a war between the gods! The werecreature priest began to feel rather dizzy. Although there had been conflicts and friction between churches and even between the gods themselves ever since the dusk of the gods, starting an undeclared war like this was a rare event.

After all, even a weak god would almost be unrivalled in their divine realm. Battle between two gods was a very grave matter, and it could span various dimensions and thousands of years!

As a cleric, the priest undoubtedly knew this. He watched Leylin with restrained fear.

“You had the cheek to covet our master’s wealth!” Leylin’s reply was very vague, but the werecreature priest’s expression changed drastically. “As expected, it had to do with the Nether Mountains…”

Although the priest stopped himself in time, Leylin still got what he wanted. ‘Sure enough, these werecreatures are up to something. It’s not as simple as just the red dragon…’

He didn’t give the priest another chance to speak. Leylin moved swiftly in mid-air, and the spells that he had been preparing for a long time shot out continuously.
Fog Barrier! Missile Storm! Fireball!
A layer of dense fog formed both a barrier and a cage, confining Leylin and the werecreature priest within. It prevented outsiders from intervening and probing them while spell attacks rained down like terrifying meteors with great destructive force.

“A presumptuous extremist that started a battle on his own initiative. You shall suffer from punishment by the gods!” The werecreature priest had a pious expression on his face. He seemed to be clothed in a milky white suit of protective armour, and a strong radiance kept emanating from his body.

The enormous scorching fireball struck the ground. Chrome yellow flames started spreading in all directions, continuously engulfing everything in their way. They quickly formed a gigantic depression in the ground that was covered in black scorch marks, as if it had been crushed by the bottom of a black pan.
The werecreature priest stood at the edge of the blackened pithole, his expression extremely solemn. The priest robes he was wearing had been torn into shreds, and he was almost entirely charred.

“Master, Malar, Please grant me strength…” The werecreature priest murmured. He stripped off his robes in one stroke, exposing his hairy torso. His muscles started to throb, and the dark scars from the flames burst open.

[Beep! Opponent has activated an innate skill, Wild Surge!] A glimmer of light flashed in Leylin’s eyes. The Eye of the Hawk, coupled with the probing abilities of the A.I. Chip, revealed everything about the opponent right in front of his eyes.

[Wild Surge: A special ability of the followers of the Lesser God of the Hunt, Malar. Activation buffs strength and vitality by one point, additionally granting hunting vision. (If in the massacre state, the ability will bestow mid-rank regenerative effects. Cell activity will...
The extraordinary Wild Surge technique was an unusual ability bestowed by the Lesser God of the Hunt to his followers, and its usage would lead to terrible aftereffects. The increased cell activity would drain one’s vitality to make up for the deficiencies, and the use of this skill would reduce life expectancy greatly.

But it was undeniable that this technique was still incomparably formidable. Leylin could feel the werecreature priest on the ground enter a strange state. Not only had the injuries on his body completely disappeared, sharp claws had even shot out of his fingers. Even though he was just a clergyman of the Lesser God of the Hunt, he seemed to have transformed into a horrifying Hunter after activating the skill!

“AAHH…” The muscles on the priest’s leg twisted as he leapt more than ten metres high. His cold razor-sharp claws ferociously slashed across Leylin’s face.

‘So fast!’ Leylin’s eyes sparkled.

“Your greatest mistake was to falsely think that you could take me on alone!” Two white puffs of air spat out from the werecreature priest’s nostrils.

“I have a premonition that you will be the most terrifying enemy us werecreatures will ever have! I must kill you here, and this little amount of strength is not enough! Not enough!” The priest roared. He suddenly pointed his claws towards himself, and ripped out a huge chunk of skin and flesh.

“Our god, I offer you sacrifice! Please bestow me with the strength to kill this foe!” The two clumps of flesh started to squirm violently, and then exploded. A temporary portal opened to reveal two enormous beasts.

‘Dimensional summoning? This creature does not seem to be from the prime material plane of the World of Gods…’

*Oo Ooh Aa Aah! Oo Ooh Aa Aah!* What appeared before him
were two giant primates covered in green scales. They were over three metres tall, and their sharp claws were nearly a foot long. Their crimson eyes were filled with bloodthirst. ‘A.I. Chip!’ Leylin inwardly commanded. The chip loyally returned information on them in the blink of an eye.

[Hunter: Strength: 13, Agility: 15, Vitality: 10, Spirit: 5. Feats: 1. Wild Instinct 2. Poison Claw 3. Extraordinary Regeneration. Description: This is not a creature from the mortal world, but a beast bred by the God of the Hunt in his divine domain. It has been specially bred for the hunt, and has almost no rationality. If Malar is pleased with his worshippers’ sacrifices, he sends down these creatures to assist them.]

‘It has flesh, blood, and a life force, and it even requires a sacrifice of the soul?’ Leylin thought indifferently as he watched the light dim in the eyes of the werecreature priest. “Kill him!” The two tall hunters at the werecreature’s side saw a finger point directly at Leylin.

*Swish!* The two hunters who previously seemed to have been playing a game instantly disappeared into thin air. Even Leylin with his powerful sight could only see the afterimages of their movements.

‘They’re even faster than the priest when he activated Wild Surge!’ Leylin rapidly ducked under the sharp claws sweeping across him, but a shadow flickered and another hunter emerged behind his back. Two arms twisted with muscles violently swept towards Leylin, seemingly wanting to tear him to pieces.

*Bang!* Mage Armour II appeared on Leylin’s back, buying him a second’s time. Once that was done the clothes on his back seemed to get shredded completely, the scraps flying up into the air like scattered butterflies.

*Thump!* Leylin hit the ground heavily, and dust and smoke flew up into the air.
“You can’t outrun them. Hunters can bring out their utmost power while hunting!” The werecreature priest stood opposite Leylin, his eyes filled with a longing for fresh blood. He could already see his claws tearing across Leylin’s throat.

‘It deserves to be called a creature made by a god. I didn’t know the hunters of legend had such power.’ A crack appeared in Leylin’s silver mask, and he stood up as his body shone with a healing glow.

‘However, even high-ranked hunters still have their weaknesses,’ Leylin’s hands hung down, enveloped in his billowing sleeves.

“Kill him!” Having lost his ability to fly, the werecreature priest found it more beneficial to stay on the ground with the hunters. Both the priest and the hunters seemed to have transformed into black hurricanes, enveloping Leylin in their midst.

The formidable wind swept up several small rocks, smashing them to powder. As dust and dirt flew around the area, the three clawed beasts completely sealed off Leylin’s escape. They flew at him violently, and with evil intent.

“Even if they are a god’s creation, they will still have some defects,” Leylin sighed. In the instant before the clawed beasts arrived, he urgently used the Ring of Wizardry on his hand.

*OOOOOHH!* A piercing and shrill female voice rang out suddenly, and in a moment overwhelmed their senses. The earsplitting noise was like that of metal scraping metal, and it brought everything in that space to a standstill.

The ear-piercing sound became an air explosion which pushed the three shadows apart.

“Ow…” The werecreature priest cut a sorry figure as he departed, blood trailing from his eyes and ears.
“Sound wave attacks? Wail of the Banshee? No, if it was that I would be dead already!” The werecreature priest was already in this state, and the two hunters were in an even worse situation. They rolled back and forth on the ground, letting out pleading cries as if they had suffered an injury to their very souls.

“Wailing Howl… The power of this simplified version of Wail of the Banshee is rather good,” Leylin touched the ring on his left hand. He’d released the spell from his Ring of Wizardry a moment ago, pulling off an attack against his enemies.

Even a god could not create life, and those hunters were clearly hybrids that Malar had cobbled together from different animal characteristics and souls. Once they were attacked by sound, they immediately became violently unstable.

When it came to experiments on flesh and life, were Leylin to claim second nobody would dare claim first. He was the pinnacle expert of the World of Gods in that field. This was the pride of a bloodline Warlock.

“Very well, I’ve seen most of your spells and abilities. Let’s bring this to an end,” Leylin looked at the werecreature priest before him as dispassionately as he would look at a corpse, with neither joy nor sorrow in his eyes.

“To an end?!” The werecreature priest’s expression grew heavy, and his heart was filled with a dark premonition. A rune of a beast fang had soundlessly fallen into his hand.

“Up!” Along with his command, the two hunters who had already stopped their plaintive wails once again threw themselves at Leylin. The runes in his hand flashed with the light of a portal.
Using its inborn sharp senses, the werecreature priest immediately felt a sense of danger, one that was enough to threaten its very life! Hence, it happily abandoned the two hunters behind to serve as cannon fodder and activated the transportation device it had to leave. But how could Leylin give it the chance to do that?

“Dimensional Anchor!” Exquisite control over this spell allowed Leylin to destroy the werecreature priest’s transportation rays in an instant. Afterwards, the now-grim priest saw something it could never believe, causing its huge mouth to gape even more, to the point of dislocation.

Seven-coloured rays of light were launched from Leylin’s hands. Rank 2 spell: Colour Spray! The effects of such a weak spell only forced the hunters to pause for a while, but then they charged over again without hesitation.

But Leylin’s performance was far from over. Colour Spray, Colour Spray, Colour Spray … Nine spell rays flashed at Leylin’s hands as if from rainbows, each one cast instantly. While a low-ranked spell had limited effects, a large enough number would result in a fundamental change unless one was completely immune to them.

Evidently, these two hunters were swallowed up by these many spells, and they sunk into dizziness and hallucinations.

Flaming Sphere, Flaming Sphere, Flaming Sphere… Fireball,
Fireball, Fireball…
Numerous rank 2 and 3 fire spells took shape in Leylin’s hands, forming a scene like the stars in the sky. While they were all low-ranked fire-type spells, amassing them like this made them similar to the legendary spell, Meteor Shower!
Even the two hunters that had broken away from the attack before still sensed immense danger and retreated quickly.
“Consider it an honour that you’re dying under this move.” Leylin smiled slightly. With the guidance of his spiritual force, the flames in the sky descended like meteors.
*Rumble!* Continuous explosions sounded out, and the two hunters were drowned out by the multicolour spells.
“Hehe… The internet in my previous world also had the five fireball school, where they took over the world with five casts of fireballs. But this isn’t just five!” Seeing the dazzling flames, Leylin continued to let his imagination run wild.
Meanwhile, the werecreature priest saw the hunters who had exploded till there was nothing left of them, and now had a very grim look.
“So many spell slots, and you can even cast them instantaneously? Are you a Legend? No, even Legends can’t do anything about the limit of nine spell slots…” The werecreature priest now looked to be in a complete mess, on the verge of a breakdown.
Leylin smiled at the priest’s reaction. Spellcasters suffered in this world; while they could use the Weave, they were restricted by spell slots. On top of that, Mystra took something from them every time they cast a spell, holding a part of their spiritual force. For this reason, a few wizards could only cast some low-ranked spells. Even Legends lost all battle power after casting a few legendary spells.
But Leylin was different. He had completely analysed the first four levels of the Weave, and there were no restrictions whatsoever on
rank 0 to rank 3 spells. As long as he had enough spiritual force, he would be able to cast low-ranked spells instantly! On top of that, he’d refilled his spell slots the day before. Leylin could cast spells now, but also had extra ones from before and therefore more spiritual force to spare. This resulted in his terrifying abilities in casting spells. In terms of the number of low-ranked spells, he surpassed regular wizards by several times, and could easily use the power of his low-ranked spells to drown his opponents out. As long as the opponent was not completely immune to spells, he had nothing to fear! Of course, this was his greatest trump card. If news of it were ever to spread, the consequences were obvious. Hence, all those who saw his trump card would have to die! With Leylin’s previous identity, he had not dared used this without thinking it over. Now, this werecreature priest was fated to die here. Watching Leylin unceasingly drawing close, the werecreature priest now looked to have given up all hope. All of a sudden, his face twitched, “I know, I know! You’re an arcanist. You must be an arcanist! Your companion is in my hands… I can… Ah…” Terrifying spells flooded out once more. While they were merely low-ranked rank 0 to 3 spells, they were enough to drown out opponents. Watching the priest melting away in the flood, Leylin’s interest was visibly piqued. ‘What a surprise… I never thought a werecreature priest in a remote camp would know of the existence of arcanists! On top of that… a companion, huh…’ It seemed like the priest had also met an arcanist before, and had even kept them captive. As long as he killed the priest, everything in the camp would belong to him. Why would Leylin bother trying to bargain with him? The misty barrier dispersed, and Leylin looked at the surroundings. The entire camp was in chaos. Numerous werecreatures and the bodies of their comrades had fallen everywhere, the flowing blood
Motivated by the great rewards, Leylin’s underlings had gone all out, and they were all immersed in battle.

On another battlefield, however, even with near legendary strength Tiff was still on a disadvantage. He was facing five high-ranked werecreatures, and looked to be in a sorry state.

“Let’s go!” With Leylin’s arrival and the disappearance of the werecreature priest, the high-ranked werecreature leader’s expression changed, and he abruptly waved his arms.

He was intellectual, and could obviously tell that his spellcaster had been taken down. Now that the other side’s high-ranked spellcaster could attack as he wished, there would be a calamity. While he was unwilling to do so, he still gritted his teeth and sent down the orders to retreat.

But how could Leylin give him this chance? While he could not cast a torrent of spells again, as someone who was nearly a high-ranked wizard he could still turn the tables.

Greater Entanglement! Hold Person! Greater Vertigo! After taking a casual glance at the battlefield, Leylin flew over to Tiff’s battle. Debuffing spells rained down like a storm.

“Damn it, he has so many spell slots? What’s up with the priest? He didn’t even make this person use up that many spell slots and died so fast!” The werecreature leader roared, but no matter how hard he thought about this, he could not guess the truth. He could only fly into a rage and then welcome the attack from above and around him.

After seeing the death of the high-ranked priest, the werecreatures’ morale had already dropped, and Leylin was now even more ruthless. Considering the circumstances and taking one of them captive, Leylin then began to crush the werecreatures.

Moon Bow! A dazzling lightning bow and arrow descended from the skies, piercing through the orc leader’s chest.
Even with this terrifying attack, the leader could still persist for a while before it crumpled to the ground, exhibiting its powerful life energy. After the deaths of the spellcaster and high-ranked werecreature, the entire werecreature camp lost all courage to continue resisting them.

Numerous werecreatures howled as they left, while some were hacked to death by some underlings who had gone mad in the fun they were having in the slaughter.

“Clear out the camp and maintain order. Prepare a few slaves, I have uses for them.” After handing the only surviving high-ranked werebeast prisoner to Tiff to tie up, Leylin did not care any longer and headed into the core of the camp.

The ground still had bloodstains that had yet to dry, and it was still slightly sticky when one walked across. However, the battle had ended quickly and the main infrastructure had not been damaged.

*Boom! Boom!* With Leylin’s lead, the statue of Malar and the altar was destroyed. Traces of dim golden rays were still shining from the fragmented pieces.

“Even a true god will still have restrictions. For instance, they can only sense the surroundings of the altar up to a certain distance, and if they were to descend, they would need to cooperate with the priests here, where they would offer sacrifices or even trigger a holy tide… But there’s nothing here at all. Coming down here forcefully would result in damage to one’s divinity. Why would that happen for a few high-ranked werebeasts?”

Leylin guided the underlings outside, and only after Malar’s statue was destroyed did he enter the range of the altar.

“Once it’s completely smashed up, he won’t be able to sense anything around it…” Until now, the altar had been the safest place. With a wave of his arms to send away a few men who were quivering on tenterhooks, he arrived by the altar.

“While there’s no divinity here, I can still sense the God of the
Hunt…” Leylin closed his eyes, caressing the shattered giant cyan rocks of the altar and sensing the divine force left behind by Malar. An aura filled with bloodlust, death and hunting lingered around him.

“Oh, this is a lesser god, the accumulation isn’t half bad…” Leylin sighed, the darkness in his eyes expanding, “Devour!”

Traces of golden divine force surged out of the remains of the ruins, and Leylin devoured it all. While it wasn’t quite possible to grasp divinity like this, he could still ingest some divine force. In the World of Gods, gods still sent down their divine force to help their followers advance in their professions on occasion. But Leylin was different. He was not Malar’s follower, and Malar would not bestow his grace upon him. Since the god wouldn’t give it on his own, Leylin would take it himself. This was the kind of person he was!

As the divine force entered his body, a terrifying, fragmented conscient slowly awakened in Leylin’s sea of consciousness, turning into a huge incomplete ape monster.
D evouring divine power like this was a very dangerous thing. Even if incomplete, even Legends couldn’t resist a divine conscient. If any idiot devoured the power of an existing god, he would either go crazy due to the huge conscient or get devoured by the divine force instead and become an incarnation of that god.

Yet Leylin was different. His original body was equivalent to a demigod to begin with, and he had the conscient and memories of his host body. He wasn’t the least bit afraid of this incomplete conscient.

*Hiss!* An unnerving phantom of a winged snake emerged from Leylin’s soul, glaring at the disabled monkey in front of it. Even if it was only a conscient, the monkey screeched in fright. The monkey screeched out of fright despite that it only being a conscient.

*Boom!* The Targaryen looked at the monkey with disdain before swallowing it whole. Leylin’s body trembled involuntarily as the A.I. Chip made a report: [Beep! Unknown energy absorbed by host body! Determined to be divine essence, near high-grade. Spirit increasing...] [Beep! Energy fully absorbed by host body, Spirit+1.]

Leylin’s spirit force increased to a stunning 13 after devouring Malar’s divinity. His spirit was raised substantially, and he could make contact with more of the Weave.
Meanwhile, the A.I. Chip was still giving him feedback.
[Host body’s spirit stat has reached 13, host has advanced to rank 13 as a wizard.] [Host has received one rank 6 spell slot, one rank 5 spell slot, and one rank 4 spell slot!]
‘Did I finally break through?’ Leylin looked at his updated stats.
[Weave Analysis Progress: Level 0: 100%. Level 1: 100%. Level 2: 100%. Level 3: 100%. Level 4: 56.77%. Level 5: 12.15%. Level 6: 0.01%.
“A 20 year old rank 13 Wizard. I reckon there aren’t many like me in Silverymoon City. I’m almost on par with a Chosen now, though I guess I did advance with the grace of a god…” Leylin had fully digested Malar’s energy, and whilst the god himself realised that he’d lost some of his divinity he had no idea why.
‘Well, it seems like I’ll be entering an eternal feud with the God of the Hunt now.’ Even if he hadn’t devoured Malar’s divine force, Leylin would have made an enemy of the god’s church anyway. He had killed too many of his werecreature followers.
‘I’ll have to face a god sooner or later anyway. The God of the Hunt? Interesting domain.’ Leylin smirked.

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“My Lord.” Tiff, who was waiting outside the altar, was aware that Leylin had changed. However, he didn’t point it out. “We’ve detained and imprisoned a group of captives according to your orders and… I found something in the cell at the core of the campsite.”
“Oh? Bring me there to have a look.” Adrenaline rushed through Leylin as he came to a securely sealed cell with Tiff.
“I’m the only one who’s entered the place. I thought it would be better for few people to know about this.” Tiff bowed before positioning himself beside the door like a loyal guard.

‘Can it be…’ Leylin had a few guesses in his heart, but he was still hesitant as he pushed the door.

*Clang!* The thick and heavy door bellowed.

The light inside was dim, and it was covered in the distinct runes of the werecreatures that gave off a barbaric aura. Leylin could tell that it was a high-grade anti-demon spell formation to block off contact with elemental energy and the Weave.

It evidently a trap, and the person within the cell moved suddenly and raised their head.

“You– You’re not a werecreature!” They mumbled, so softly that Leylin could barely hear.

*Cling clang!* The chains scraped against each other as this prisoner moved, and Leylin noticed the unique cuffs on their hands. “Antimagic cuffs? Looks like they were really wary of you.”

Leylin sized the captive, she were humanoid, but looked like a half-elf. Beneath their long viridescent locks were a pair of pure obsidian eyes and translucent fair skin. Their aura was distinct in spite of the long imprisonment.

A faint energy was emitted from their body, but restricted by the antimagic cuffs on their hands. It was clear that this captive was a wizard.

“A female half-elf wizard? Tell me, why did the werecreatures imprison you?” Leylin asked.

“I heard screaming and slashing just now. Have you eliminated all of them?” The female wizard raised her head and shot Leylin a glance with her unreadable eyes.

“Hm, I guess you can say that!” Leylin nodded in agreement.

“Then aren’t you going to release me?” She waved her cuffs in question.
“Nope. Law says you’re now my captive, unless you have something of value to exchange for your freedom.” Leylin shook his head. “Besides, you’re a half-elf wizard, you should know your value.”

This was the standard practice in the mainland, but things were different in Silverymoon. The city’s leader was good, and if she heard of the situation she might even have redeemed the half-elf with her own money. But Leylin didn’t plan on reporting it.

“Redemption? Hah, I guess you came because of ‘that’ too. Ignorant idiot. You don’t know the suffering it will bring you.” The female wizard laughed, her eyes brimming with complicated emotions. Leylin saw a brief moment of regret.

“Are you talking about the inheritance of the arcanists near the Nether Mountains and red dragon territory?” Leylin was sick of beating about the bush. And as expected, the moment he mentioned the Nether Mountains, red dragon, and arcanists, her expression changed. “So you knew.”

“Actually, I know more than what you think I do.” Leylin looked at her robe which was evidently different from the regular robes of other wizards and snapped his fingers.

A scorching light struck between her hands and melted the antimagic cuffs. Boiling molten iron dripped to the floor and sizzled, producing white fumes in its wake. But the female wizard had better things to pay attention to, as she stared at Leylin unbelievingly, “Instant cast? It can’t be! You- You are an arcanist!”

“An arcanist? I’ve yet to become one, I just have a few incomplete arcane spell models, just like you.” Leylin smiled at her.

The use of arcane spells was obviously different from that of normal spells. The biggest difference was that one didn’t need the help of the Weave to use them, instead using the elemental particles in the air.

Leylin had made these plans long ago, but the A.I. Chip was busy
with the Weave. Still, he’d managed to build a few arcane spell models in his leisure. The scorching ray that he casted just now was one of them.

Given his abilities, it wasn’t impossible for Leylin to completely reconstruct the arcanaists given enough time. Still, it could take tens of millennia. The transformation of normal spells into arcane spell models would be enough to keep him busy.

When there were ready-made ones, why would he continue to make them himself? Leylin’s real interest lay in the research of those arcanaists and the inheritance from those Magi who had comprehended laws.

There was more than one Magus who comprehended laws in the final war, and countless rank 8s who were similar to the Mother Core. An understanding of their paths and laws would be extremely beneficial to Leylin. Being a localisation of Magi, arcanaists must have received the teachings of the ancient Magi. It was quite possible that they possessed information in those fields.

‘Observing the different paths of law will be a great benefit. Though the ultimate path of every Magus is definitely different, it can at least give me a general direction.’ Leylin looked at the female wizard as multiple thoughts ran through his head.

On the other hand, she let down her guard after seeing Leylin cast that spell. Her expression loosened up, and a sense of pity and reliance overcame her. It was as if she had found her own kind.

*Bam!* A ball of green elemental particles started burning on the tips of her fingers, and she made a bizarre gesture, looking cautious.

“In the eyes of the Arcanic Fire, I will comply with the path of truth and abandon confusion, weakness and suffering. I will succeed the path of the arcanaist. The light of Netheril will never be dimmed. My name is Helen. May I know who you are, my Lord?”

Helen looked over to Leylin after the ritual with expectation.
“Is that how ancient arcanists greet each other? I’m sorry, but I really don’t know how to do this.” Leylin spread his hands out and laughed helplessly, “Honestly, I’m just an ordinary wizard who got some fragments of arcanist inheritance.”
After a round of confusing explanation and using the arcanist notebook as proof, Leylin finally proved his identity. Helen’s own origins gradually grew clear before his eyes.
The half-elf in front of Leylin was called Helen Carter. She claimed to be a survivor of the ancient arcanist empire who dabbled in the arcane arts. The inheritance of her family had been badly damaged by the oppression of the churches. She was actually a rank 11 wizard, and other than Arcane Fire which she used to prove her identity, she knew no other arcane spell models. If things were put in perspective, she was weaker than Leylin. As for her motive in going north, she’d found something akin to the inheritance of an ancient arcanist in her old family tome. She was hoping she could find something there to revive her bloodline. “Even with this world’s strict prohibition of them, arcanists still exist?” Leylin touched his chin. As a matter of fact, this was a very good thing. It meant that even if he managed to become an arcanist in the future, he wouldn’t have to work too hard to conceal his identity.

“Yes. Even with the disapproval of the churches, any wizard that has reached the rank of Legend will have to set foot into the essential step of Weaveless Casting. The Netheril empire didn’t leave their inheritance in a single place. Even though most were destroyed in war, some people have managed to luck across remnants of it.” Helen tucked a few strands of hair neatly behind her jade-like ear. Her beauty was really on another level.
“That being said, Legends still have to do their research on arcane spells in secret, and once non-legendary wizards are found to be affiliated with any form of arcane spells, they’re absolutely done for.” Helen laughed bitterly as she spoke about it, as if she was was reminded of something she didn’t want to be.

It seems like she and her family had endured their fair share of suffering at the hands of the gods and their churches.

“In any case, thank you for saving me from the werecreatures. I can tell you everything my family knows about the arcanist inheritance in return.” Helen told Leylin sincerely.

That was a wise choice. Even if she rebelled, Leylin would have his own methods of achieving what he wanted, such as spells like Memory Retrieval. Helen wasn’t a match for him. Additionally, she recognised that Leylin was someone related to the arcane arts anyway. That alone had led to her lowering her guard against him.

“Thank you. When I find the documents and information I’ll make a copy for you.” Leylin didn’t reject her offer. He certainly thought that he deserved it all, “Before I discover any remnants of the arcanists, I’ll need you to move within range of my detection, is that okay?”

“Yes, that will be alright!” A consequence like this was already a whole lot better than being imprisoned by the werecreatures, where she might eventually become a sacrifice. Helen readily agreed to Leylin’s request without any negotiation, she was aware that her life was in his hands now.

“My Lord!” Tiff showed no signs of surprise when he saw Leylin bringing Helen out of the room.

“Right, this is Miss Helen. You can consider her our client.” Leylin said ambiguously. Helen wasn’t pleased about how she was being introduced but she chose to not voice it out.

“We’ve cleared the entire campsite. The high-ranked werecreature and tens of normal ones that we’ve knocked out have been put
“Aside.” Tiff resembled a hard working housekeeper, reporting everything to his owner.

“There’s enough food for 200 people here, and enough weapons to equip an elite combat squad. I also found some half-done high-grade magic potions and other magic items in the leader’s room. They’re all very strong, probably intended to kill the dragon.”

“Got it, take away all the weapons and armour and leave half of the food.” Leylin kept the high-grade ingredients that Tiff handed him. These materials were valuable even outside their use for killing dragons.

“Bring me all the captives, I have some use for them!”

Things got simpler after he saw the people who participated in the battle and helped transform their bloodlines. He then asked Tiff to bring Helen along and lead the rest to bring the supplies away before changing his appearance back to how he looked before.

“Why took you so long?” Rafiniya’s grumble could be heard the moment Leylin returned to the campsite, “If you were a little more late, I will already be on my way to find you!”

“Something cropped up, gather everyone now and prepare for attack!” Leylin was flushed with excitement.

“Why?” Rafiniya mumbled to herself but the rest of the men had very quickly assembled themselves.

“I recce the area just now, and I found that the werecreatures’ campsite was completely transformed.” Leylin sounded ecstatic.

“They were attacked and a few of their leaders died. If we go there now, we will be able to wipe them out completely and uproot them! We can finish this damned mission!”

All the eyes of the soldiers’ lit up upon hearing Leylin’s words.

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Alec opened his eyes, and that wizard’s face surfaced in his mind
“Damn it! My head- Ugh-” Alec stood up with much difficulty and saw his almost-destroyed campsite and collapsed captives. Looking at the few survivors between the corpses, even if he wasn’t that intelligent, he knew that the mission had failed. He kicked the fainted captives violently in an attempt to wake them up and ordered them to do the same to the others as he sat down. His head still hurt, and messed up his already chaotic thoughts. “Human, wizards, attack… captives! Where’s the captive?” Alec ran to where Helen was imprisoned before, only to arrive at an empty cell. “Those bloody humans-” Alec growled in anger causing everyone around him to cower in fear. “I’m the biggest here, I’m the head of you all!” He struck a few of the stronger werecreatures to show his authority. The rest could only whimper in submission, he was a high-grade werecreature after all. He exceeded the rest in both strength and speed. “We, go back— Blackblood…” Alec made a decision, he could only abandon the campsite in its current state. But before anyone could object, a voice sounded in his head. ‘Don’t go back! Those darned humans, I haven’t made my revenge on them. The others will mock me if I go back!’ The voice circled his head and overtook his previous decision. Alec got dizzy for a bit and decided to abandon his decision and gathered all his subordinates. “Those despicable humans, me, Alec, your new head will avenge!” After announcing his decision, he received stares of fear instead of excited growling— Leylin’s previous attack had frightened them. Before Alec could think of anything else, chaos erupted at the entrance of their campsite. A group of human adventurers barged in. No, it was the city guards, but they seemed to be few in number. Alec scratched his head. He’d attacked both guards and adventurers
before, the only distinction in his mind was that guards were
greater in number and had more tender flesh.
“They want to attack us just based on that amount of people?” Alec
was triggered despite his low intellect.
“Kill them!” He bellowed before charging forward in front of the
rest. The first person he saw was an armoured young female knight
emitting a dazzling aura.
“A strong one from the humans!” Alec was taken aback, but that
didn’t last for too long before he charged at her.
“Kill them!” The remaining city guards were filled with bloodlust,
charging forward for their future and life, as well as for vengeance.
They burst forth with bloodshot eyes and the last remnants of their
strength.
The werecreatures who had endured the previous battle were only
at half their strengths, and the rest carried injuries that made them
weaker than before.
“Perhaps we really can win this time!” The soldiers watched Leylin,
who ran before all of them, with a glimpse of hope.
Mass Bull’s Strength! Cloudkill! Enchant Weapon!
“Charge! Victory is ours!” Leylin roared, spells shooting out from
his hands as the knights slashed at the werecreatures with their
swords, sending a werecreature’s skull rolling to the floor.
‘The paralysis effect is still not over, especially on the high-ranked
werecreature. The spiritual suggestion is still working though!’
Deep inside, Leylin was actually observing the battle quietly.
He’d left these captives behind on purpose, to give the city guard
some achievements, How else would he return? Light from a large-
scale spell shone, and Rafiniya noticed in shock that her strength
had increased greatly.
“A mass buff? Rank 6 spell?” She looked at Leylin in confusion.
“He’s actually broken through!” Rafiniya’s eyes widened slightly. She obviously knew what the casting of Mass Bull’s Strength implied. It was a rank 6 spell that only rank 13 wizards could cast. This sort of spell that could boost a group was very popular in the army. As a noble, Rafiniya knew more than regular people and definitely understood how terrifying this was.

“He’s only twenty!” Rafiniya glanced at Leylin, who was so young that it was ridiculous, and suddenly felt down. While she was considered a genius, she was nothing in comparison to him…

*Aoo aoo!* However, getting distracted during battle was very dangerous. The female knight had made this exact mistake. Alec thundered from opposite her, his muscles bulging bit by bit. His claws swept forth, seemingly severing even the air itself. Wild Burst! He had clearly obtained this power from Malar.

*Boom!* Rafiniya felt a burst of strength from his hands, causing her double-handed blade to whistle sharply as it flew off.

“Crap!” She wanted to retreat, but it was already too late. The high-ranked werecreature charged forward, his coarse pores and nauseating skin distinctly visible to her. Alec snarled, only having one thought in mind. Tear! He would tear this knight in front of him apart!

‘Am I going to die?’ Rafiniya slowly shut her eyes, ‘How could I let myself get distracted in battle?’
However, the pain that she anticipated did not appear. Rafiniya opened her eyes and found Leylin’s tall figure in front of her, blocking the attack. A sabre fell, and the high-ranked werecreature’s head rolled to the ground, blood spurting out of his neck like it was a fountain. *Woo woo…* The other werecreatures saw that their new leader had fallen at the hands of a human, and the emotions of terror that had been accumulating ultimately exploded. They whimpered and turned to escape pathetically, yet were easily pursued and killed by the human warriors. Most deaths in battle came when one fled in chaos, as such opponents were the easiest to take care of. ‘Is he a hero like in the legends?’ Rafiniya got up, gazing at Leylin with his sabre. Something glinted in her eyes, causing a slight flush to rise upon her cheeks.

......

A meeting was being held in Silverymoon, regarding Leylin and his men. “I’m against this!” Cassley slammed the table, causing a small earthquake. “There’s something wrong with squadron 5’s mission completion!” His face was flushed. “A huge camp with numerous high-ranked werecreatures, as well as an altar of the God of the Hunt. How could they have defeated them all?” He’d seen Leylin before, “I firmly stand against them being given credit and promotion!” Cassley was almost on the verge of shouting at this point. Such ungentlemanly behaviour caused all of the other members to frown slightly. ‘He’s a sorcerer after all, he’s far too emotional. Not like a wizard at all, what a fortunate guy…’ More than one high-ranked wizard was silently thinking of this.
“We’ve already gotten our men to take a look and verify the bodies of high-ranked werecreatures and the others. What else do you want?” The elven wizard whom Leylin had seen once before asked coldly. “Besides, did you only just find out how dangerous this mission was? Who was it that had guaranteed at the beginning that it was only a ‘tiny’ camp?”

Unusually, the elf wizard was obviously out to get someone. ‘Looks like Cassley’s side is at a disadvantage…’ After seeing this, the other big shots all nodded, now having a better understanding of the struggles and strife between the elf wizard and Cassley. But this was the truth! When both sides’ strength were about the same, it was impossible to deny or fake anything.

“You’ve seen the report! The camp had already been raided by some unknown organisation before, which was why squadron 5 got it easy…” Cassley still did not let up, “Therefore, we can’t consider this as squadron 5 completing the mission. We need to investigate this carefully!”

“Gods! How could you not distinguish what’s right and wrong here!” The elf wizard was so furious that he was trembling, “Our Silverymoon has never banned anything like that. Even if Leylin got external help, that’s because he’s capable!”

“Enough!” A deep voice sounded from the person sitting at the head of the table. He had an immense presence that seemed to have gone past some sort of boundary, entering the domain of Legends. “Commander!” Cassley and the elven wizard were immediately discouraged as they saluted and apologised. “The reason we have gathered is not to discuss the achievements of a subordinate’s squadron. There are more pressing matters at hand!” The old wizard spoke slowly, looking like a regular human. He had muddy eyes and wore a simple grey robe. There was nothing special about him whatsoever. However, it was this old man that had control over all the high-ranked military officials in
Silverymoon is an open city-state confederation. Obeying rules is the basis of our existence. Even if squadron 5 overstepped any boundaries, they still completed the mission and should therefore get what they deserve!” The old wizard made the final decision. Cassley’s lips twitched, but he did not say anything in the end.

After all, if Leylin had truly succeeded and completed the mission, he could at most only fault him for the process. Legitimacy belonged to the victor, and that had always held true. Seeing the elven wizard opposite him look all smug, his heart blazed even more.

He had brought up this issue and taken care of everything in the shadows himself. He’d thought that he could ruthlessly give Leylin a setback, but the result had surprised him. The defeat this time would mean the people in the faction would view him less favourably, and the effect on him was practically destructive.

‘Leylin, is it?’ Cassley thought over this name ruthlessly, ‘In a situation where the captain had to return with grievous injuries, he still finished the mission resolutely. On top of that, he was even lucky enough to get the werecreatures at their weakest… If he’s trying to be a hero, hehe…’

Leylin had gotten just a bit of attention before, but henceforth Cassley would ferociously attack this little wizard. As a person in a leading position, he was now seeing a pawn have the guts to move in a way he had not planned it to, and one that was even baring his fangs at himself.

Even if that was the current situation, Cassley would never imagine that the fellow he’d treated as a pawn would be hiding something terrifying.

“Our next topic is the allocation of funds for the perpetual fortification on Sunrise Mountain Range…” Cassley perked up again.
One loss meant nothing. What was more important was the orcs’ upcoming attack.

……

“This is all thanks to you, Leylin!”
The sunlight shone through the windows of an infirmary room that was obviously of a high-grade. The motes of dust floating through the air were rendered visible.
Aulen looked slightly pale as she lay in bed, surrounded by the group of officers who had survived.
“With saving my life and completing the mission, you’ve helped me twice. I will remember it!” Aulen guaranteed.
“It’s nothing. I did it for myself too!” Leylin smiled. Aulen now looked nothing like she had been as a soldier, instead seeming rather delicate. It seemed like the matter with Lanshire had given her a huge shock.
“After this, I’m no longer fit to stay in the city guard. I’ve already submitted my resignation. I hope you can take care of our brothers for now. It won’t be long before you get your rewards…” Aulen smiled bitterly.
“Squadron 5 is my foundation. I’ll never give up on them!” Leylin guaranteed, looking enthusiastic.
“That’s good… cough cough…” Aulen began to cough violently for a while, and then eyed Leylin, “As for your rewards this time… You’ll definitely become a battalion commander. That’s a high-ranked officer in the city guards, and you might even be granted a hereditary title. Even in other countries, you will be recognised…” At the mention of this hereditary title, the other officers began to look envious. Once one became a noble whose title could be succeeded by his descendants and held his own land, he would truly enter the upper classes of society. His children and
grandchildren would become noble youths above the rest. That was the dream of all the officers at the bottom tier, but in less than two years of entering the city guards Leylin had won it all. While some jealousy arose, these feelings melted like ice in the sun after seeing the wizard emblem on his chest.

This was a rank 13 wizard at such a tender age. That achievement was more than enough for him to get everything, and the huge gap caused the feelings within them to dissipate.

By the time Aulen returned, Leylin had gotten his newest appointment and rewards.

“As expected, I’m now a battalion commander and a baron.” Leylin sent the soldier who had come to send the order away, and then glanced at the parchment paper with an enchanted imprint on it. He smiled as if thinking about something.

Individual strength was rather powerful in the World of Gods, especially the city guards of Silverymoon. It had a powerful army made of practically all sorts of Professionals. Having the authority to command over 200 people was already rather powerful.

If this was times of peace, Leylin would never get this role. However, they were expanding the army in preparation for war, and Leylin was considered an ‘old soldier’ from before, which gave him an advantage.

From this appointment, Leylin could smell the war that would soon arrive.
To be given the title of baron, as well as receive a hereditary title, it was usually necessary to meet with the city’s ruler. To tell the truth, Mystra’s Chosen was also the Lady of Hope from legends— Alustriel. Leylin was rather excited to meet her.

In his two years within Silverymoon, he had never met with her. He had only caught sight of her a few times from the sidelines. Rumour had it that this lady had a very good temperament and even enjoyed blessing the celebrations of ordinary citizens randomly. She was even willing to help beastmen.

Leylin’s judgement of her was like this: A political idiot, an empty-headed and hot-blooded fellow like Rafiniya who, if not for her formidable power and the elders and the city hall wiping her ass would bring down the entirety of Silverymoon.

Leylin felt that Alustriel was more suited to be a humanitarian than a politician. Her naive and natural personality was ill-suited for politics and court, just like Rafiniya. That hot-blooded and righteous lady knight was a very good companion and friend, but she was not a good superior. If she was allowed to run a city, it would all end in disaster!

Now however, Alustriel governed Silverymoon City properly, and the most impressive thing was that she possessed even more formidable personal power. In times of peace, everything had been good. However, Silverymoon now faced the orc invasion which
amplified every flaw in her governance. Leylin gradually grew aware that a great calamity would soon be upon them.

Court etiquette was a very big problem for newly-promoted nobles. They could not be lacking in manners during the ceremony to confer titles as well as their audience with the city’s ruler, else the other nobles would mock them. Nobles who had risen from nothing had always found this process very difficult. It was also the main reason why those old nobles despised the new ones. In their eyes, those country bumpkins did not deserve such a position, and neglected the vitality that came with interactions between different social classes. In the end, they had only slowly declined.

Fortunately, Leylin had received instruction from an etiquette teacher. He had learnt it quickly and after a single afternoon, the etiquette teacher, who had been specially sent by the court, had left satisfied.

Alustriel also wanted to meet him before the ceremony. This sort of private meeting did not matter much to him, as he did not feel she would be able to see through his false identity unless he was face-to-face with her god’s true body.

……

Leylin had seen Silverymoon’s imperial palace in the distance several times. However, he did not care much about any outstanding wealth in the palace. He was only interested in the rumoured legendary spell resources that it could contain.

However, once he truly entered the palace, he drew his spiritual force firmly back into his body and did not dare to carelessly investigate.

‘There were at least five high-ranked magic probes at the gate. There will be many more high-ranked wizards guarding the palace
itself…” Leylin lowered his head but something flickered in his eyes. Silverymoon’s palace and the Wizards’ Guild were the most well-defended and strict places. It was rumoured that the strongest in these places could not be bribed, and even Legends did not dare to provoke Silverymoon City, who had the backing of the Goddess of the Weave.

However, Leylin never had the intention of robbing the place, and was thus very calm. He was currently clad in the splendid attire of a noble, the clothes which were embroidered in gold thread stifling him. He looked like a peacock who had spread its feathers. There was nothing that could be done. The clothes of a noble were rich and garish, as if they wished to put everything he had on display. Leylin normally wore robes or leisure clothes at home, but it would certainly be inappropriate to wear those now.

“Her majesty the queen wishes to receive her guest in the side palace hall.” At this moment, a female official trotted over and announced in a steady voice. Leylin then followed her to a separate part of the palace.

“Here it is!” Leylin was not left waiting for long. In a moment, he felt the security around him had increased to its utmost, and there were even two powerful soul forces near him. He immediately contemplated them inwardly.

“Good day, Sir Leylin Faulen!” A peal of laughter rang out like a silver bell, and Leylin finally saw Alustriel. Her eyes were like moonlight, and she seemed like the very embodiment of beauty. She only wore a simple gown, but she was naturally breathtaking.

“I do apologise for my lateness. I went to Uncle Cooper’s roast meat banquet, and I brought a blueberry pie that he personally baked for you. It can’t be a more appropriate congratulatory gift for you…” Alustriel fixed her gaze on Leylin with a smile on her face,
passing a basket of roast meat to Leylin.
“Your majesty!” Leylin rather speechlessly accepted the gift, and respectfully bowed exactly as he had been taught by the etiquette teacher.
“Your majesty, how could you see your vassal in such a manner! There are still a few more items on today’s schedule to address as well…” A white-bearded old man chased after Alustriel into the palace, with thick sheets of parchment and quills in hand. After seeing Leylin, he even smiled helplessly.
‘Scholar Buren, full name Buren Eustace. Alustriel’s clerk and the leader of the elders, as well as her most trusted subordinate. He’s actually the prime minister of Silverymoon…’ A string of information flashed across Leylin’s mind.
Naturally, what drew his notice were the powerful magical undulations coming from both Alustriel and Buren. It meant that they had both broken through mortal limits and had entered to realms of Legends.
Alustriel’s body possessed a trace of divinity from the Goddess of the Weave, and it in particular attracted a deep interest from him.
‘I really want… I really want to devour her! Such a pity. If I did that, the Weave Goddess will be the first to hunt me down…’ Leylin sighed in his heart.
“Haha, Baron Leylin! You don’t need to be so formal and stiff, you don’t seem like a 20 year old youth at all!” Alustriel undeniably had an aura that was as refreshing as a spring breeze. Conversing with her made Leylin loosen up considerably. Her charisma was great.
“Your title ceremony will be held in three days’ time. Tell me Leylin, tell me like a friend; do you have any requests?” Alustriel gently said as she looked at the wizard before her.
“If it’s like this,” Leylin took a deep breath as his eyes filled with determination, “I hope I can freely read through the court’s collection of wizard resources…”
“You may!” Alustriel agreed very readily, surpassing Leylin’s expectations and filling him with astonishment. Hey, hey! Wasn’t she meant to ask him to climb to her inner circle before finally being allowed to peek at those documents? Was it really alright to give it to him so happily?

“Cough cough… Your Majesty!” At this moment, the saviour of the show appeared. Scholar Buren coughed with all his strength, attracting Alustriel’s attention over.

“Although Baron Leylin is a genius, legendary spells will only pose difficulties for his current state. For his own good, we can give him those resources that are below the rank of Legends.”

“Oh, I apologise! I’ve forgotten that point,” Alustriel looked at Leylin, “Because of the rigid nature of Legends, the Legend-ranked resources would not be beneficial to your growth now. I can first give you those resources below that rank, and once you advance to become a high-ranked wizard…”

“Cough cough…” Scholar Buren looked at this failure of a queen and began to cough like he was choking to death.

“This is more than enough already. Thank you, Your Majesty,” Leylin smiled as he bowed, and his elegant demeanour astonished even Buren. Disappointment had indeed flitted across his heart, but he did not show it at all.

For those wizards below rank 15, research materials at or above the legendary realm really was too complicated, and Alustriel had meant well when she restricted them. However, Leylin was different. He was not some low-ranked wizard, and he could even understand information on godhood if it was given to him. However, he could not admit this.

Buren’s actions could also be understood. If this sort of thing was handed out now, then how would he be rewarded for outstanding service in the future?

Just because he could understand the reasoning behind the forceful
interruption did not mean Leylin’s heart was not ill at ease. After chatting with Alustriel for a while and receiving the visitor’s pass for the palace library, Leylin left the palace. It had to be said that Leylin had developed a new understanding of Alustriel after meeting with her. It could be said that he had a favourable impression of her, but maybe not of Buren. “What did you think of him, Buren?” Alustriel asked with interest as she cupped her face with her hands. Even if she was naive, she had changed with the polish of many years of experience, although the changes were not particularly big. “He did not have any traces of evil intent or the aura of a devil on him,” Buren’s eyes turned crimson, looking extremely terrifying, “And his thirst for knowledge is sincere, not faked!” “If it’s like this, then how come you didn’t allow me to give him the authority to view those resources?” Alustriel said, feeling hard done by. “Resources ranked legendary or above must be exchanged for contributions, this rule is the cornerstone that protects our Silverymoon City!” Buren looked at Alustriel, who was acting like a little girl, with a helpless and bitter smile. “Also, giving an insignificant wizard like him those high-ranked and above resources is more than enough. After he reaches rank 15 and swears the oath of eternal loyalty to the Styx, then we can pass on the legendary-ranked resources…” “Alright, alright,” Alustriel waved her hand, “You can make the decisions. Oh, tonight I have to attend Mister Nudu’s dinner party.” “Please forgive me, but I must remind Your Majesty that as the ruler of our Silverymoon City and the alliance, it is highly inappropriate for you to suddenly turn up at the party of our ordinary citizens…”
Buren’s warning was serious, but Alustriel seemed to have had enough of him. She waved her arms, and a teleportation gate flickered into existence as she disappeared.

“She’s so…” Watching this irresponsible queen, Buren could only roll his eyes speechlessly.

Under the terrifying magic formation in the castle, only the Chosen of their goddess could make use of teleportation gates at will. Even though Buren had already reached the realm of Legends, there was nothing he could do.

……

Leylin used this period well, staying in the library to copy all of the information on under legendary magic. After a series of long and complicated arrangements, he was conferred his title. He obtained some uncultivated land next to the Moonwood. He changed its name to the Violet Territory, and he became the Violet Baron.

There was no way around it. All lands that were fertile, rich and safe had long since been taken up by the nobles. Getting them to spit it back out was far from an easy task. The area surrounding the Moonwood was filled with danger and the frontlines for the battles with the orcs. That was why it was being given out.
However, it was only a wasteland now. The only good thing about it was that because the intention was to compensate Leylin, the area was two times larger than the land given to normal barons.

‘I have no plans to live here permanently anyway, so it doesn’t really matter…’ Leylin thought as he fiddled with the noble coat of arms he had designed himself. The main body was a violet with intricate plant decorations around it.

If Baron Jonas were to know of this, he would definitely be delighted. A title and land was something the upper class people in the World of Gods desired the most.

Leylin could not only gain the title as Baron Faulen, but also be the master of the Violet Territory. Once he had a son, he would let the boy take over and help the Faulen Family branch out. That would count as expanding the power of the family.

With joint marriages and swallowing up of families, there would be changes and exchanges in titles. Once the scattered territories linked together, a huge noble family would be formed, maybe even a kingdom. Such a rise usually took a few centuries.

Of course, the possibility of such a thing was very low. At most, the later generations themselves would begin to bicker amongst themselves.

This had nothing to do with Leylin. The only thing that left him more satisfied was that he was now a true noble, and no longer had to work in the name of the next in line. The power and treatment a true noble and an heir had were completely different.

He was quickly appointed as a captain of the city guard, and he was assigned a complete troop. The army expanded from the 5th legion, and had 200 Professionals and about the same number of troops and commoners. Altogether, there were about 500 of them.

‘This power is sufficient for me to do a lot of things. Of course, compared to the orc army that’s coming, it’s not much…’ Leylin observed the dark clouds in the horizon, his brows gradually
furrowing together. With the orc tribes maneuvering, the gloom of war was already enveloping the northern lands. Shops had closed permanently even in Silverymoon, and pedestrians were moving hastily. The Sunrise Mountains and the orc tribes were practically synonyms of savagery and war. Not only were these orcs born with powerful bodies, but the also had the protection of their own god. Their god was powerful.

In the World of Gods, orcs and humans were huge races that each did not lose out to the other. Their gods had powerful divine force, comparable to peak rank 8 Magi. This was practically the limit of what the universe could accommodate.

Without the protection of a powerful god, the treatment one was given in the World of Gods was entirely different. Under the huge incoming threat, even the fall of the entire northern lands was likely. Leylin had intel that the members of the mobilised tribes were very powerful, and it wouldn’t be trivial like the simple fights and robberies before.

With so many tribes banding together, there was a sense of a fledgling empire taking shape. If left unchecked, an orc empire would rise up!

If they wiped out the Silverymoon Alliance and took over the northern lands, then this empire would form atop the corpses of their enemies. Perhaps this too was a hope of their god.

As for the human faction, Leylin had also heard about something that did not mean well for them. The Silverymoon alliance was too powerful, referring to Alustriel in particular. She was a Legend who was also the Chosen of the Goddess of the Weave. The influence of Silverymoon had risen in recent times, and there were more and more cries proclaiming her to be the Empress.

The Silverymoon Alliance was an alliance amongst the northern lands’ organisations. This included all the human cities in the northern lands, as well as a few other large territories. At the
beginning, the intention was to fend off the orcs more effectively, and they had built up offensive and defensive strategies. Alustriel had used her personal charm and the great strength of Silverymoon to keep her position as the head of the Silverymoon Alliance. With her lifespan and reputation, she could very well integrate the scattered federations in the next few centuries and form one terrifying empire!

This was obviously something the orcs did not want to see. Of course, there were many amongst the nobles in the northern lands that approved of this and even helped to achieve it. Meanwhile, there were those strongly against it, doing what they could to hinder it in secret.

‘How interesting… The accumulation of these conflicts is now allowing the orcs to invade them?’ Leylin chuckled as he glanced at the castle behind him. Powerful spell rays lingered eternally on the walls and magnetic bricks, giving it a unique beauty.

‘The conflicts between humans and orcs, the contradictions of whether to be unified or to split, and even the conflicts between gods… With this spiral of events, I wonder how long the beautiful and fertile Silverymoon can last…’ Leylin’s eyes flickered with wit.

[Beep! High-ranked wizard information has been recorded. Spell model database is now complete. Constructing host’s wizard spells.]

The A.I. Chip suddenly showed this prompt. After he spent a lot of time scanning through all information below the rank of Legend in the palace, the Chip’s database was now complete. At the very least, Leylin would not be hindered before he became a Legend.

‘Good! A high-ranked wizard, at rank 15, is publicly known to be someone powerful. A.I. Chip, how long will I take to reach that point if I meditate as I do now?’ Leylin asked.

[Beep! Mission established. Checking compatibility with host. Proceeding with theoretical tests…]
The A.I. Chip quickly calculated, numerous 0 and 1s flashing by in front of Leylin’s eyes. In a few seconds, it gave an answer. [Based on host’s current stats, estimated time to reaching rank 15 is in 731 days 13 hours.]

‘Around two years? That’s probably the time that the orcs will attack…’ All of a sudden, Leylin’s expression changed as he looked towards the north.

“This undulation… It’s from a legendary spell! And it’s at the fort of the Sunrise Mountains! Could it be…”

……

North of Silverymoon, Sunrise Mountains!
This was a huge mountain range that extended through the humans’ northern lands and the boundless wilderness of the orcs. It allowed for a clear divide between the worlds of the two.
The humans in Silverymoon had used spells and a lot of manual labour to construct a large defensive fort, and they deployed their military to guard it. Atop the black steely wall was the newest results of Silverymoon’s research: the Automatic Magic Cannon.
The troops stationed at the garrison were the most powerful of Silverymoon. There were over 20 high-grade wizards there, and there were even rumours that there was a Legend in charge.
Over these many years, this fort alone had forced the orcs to return with their tails between their legs. No matter how crazed the attacks were, the fort had stood tall like a reef in a tsunami.
For this reason, the original name that had been complex and awkward had been discarded. In its place, it was given the beautiful name of ‘Unfallen Moon Fort’. It represented the silver moon flag of Silverymoon that, at the front of the city in the fort, would never fall!

*Pak!* However, at that moment, the beautiful and intricate silver
moon flag had slowly descended into the burning flames, turning entirely into ashes.
*Roar!* *Roar!* Numerous snarling werecreatures shouted crazily as they crawled up the walls that were said to never fall. Werejackals, werelions, wereleopards… There were even gigantic behemoths, snakemen, and foxwoman priests.
Numerous orcs with varying appearances arranged themselves in a square-shaped formation, crowding around a golden werelion as they cheered enthusiastically, “Saladin! Saladin! Emperor of the orcs! Emperor of the orcs!”
This orc called Saladin had fur that pointed up like steel spikes, and his eyes were electric. Numerous Legends, heads of their respective races, could only prostrate themselves before him.
He was Saladin, emperor of all orcs, and the Chosen of the orc god Gruumsh. He who possesses the divine weapon of the orcs, the Thunder God’s Hammer!
With the power of the divine weapon, he had destroyed the fort’s defences in an instant, and even killed the human Legend.
“I, Saladin, emperor of the orcs, king of all kings, shall conquer the northern lands as a jewel on the crown of my god!” Saladin snarled, and the many orcs cheered together.
Calendar of the gods, year 37665. Unfallen Moon Fort fell to their enemies, after being completely invaded by orcs on all sides.
With their huge numbers, the orcs had many peak experts. The fort quickly changed hands. There weren’t even many magic warnings issued, allowing them to have the time to lay low in wait for the reinforcements once the original guard was taken care of.

After a few rounds, the teleportation rays no longer flickered, and the orcs controlled the fort with ease, setting up their own teleportation spell formations. The Unfallen Moon Fort had its own arrangements for escape routes. The wizards had left themselves teleportation gates that would allow for convenient access for assistance. The orcs in turn had messed up the spatial undulations here and sealed off all teleportation.

Just as the camp was in a frenzy, a pair of golden eyes looked down from above. In that moment, the Weave within tens of kilometres seemed to rebel, and powerful thunderclouds formed silently.

“Mystra, what’s happening? Are you trying to go against our contract?” A gruff voice sounded, and the thunderclouds in the sky dissipated to reveal shining moonlight. The orcs below did not even realise that they’d been at death’s door, and they all silently gathered their loot.

The dim golden eyes did not make any more movements, and instead seemed to streak through the sky and focus on an orc.

“Gruumsh!” The owner of the golden eyes called out the name of the werebeast, the flames of her fury growing.
“You saw that. I didn’t make the first move! It’s a result of the
guys’ fight!” The orc god chuckled, sounding gleeful.
“Furthermore… We’ve gotten the support of many gods, for
instance the guy who’s been following you…” Gruumsh reported
another piece of news and then was satisfied to see the anger in
Mystra’s eyes.
The powerful conscient left, looking exasperated at seeing such a
conflict happen so close.
“I can’t suppress someone as powerful as the Goddess of the
Weave even at my peak. However, the competition on this path is
ruthless. Whether in the dusk of the Magi and Gods, or now…”
Gruumsh mumbled, and then he disappeared after sending down a
powerful oracle. With their priests, the maddened orcs seemed to
spread throughout the north.
Survival and reproduction were the two main goals of living
beings. The orcs were like locusts as they looted all that they saw,
and much blood was spilt. The states that were lucky to survive in
the northern lands sunk into an arduous battle after being
summoned by Silverymoon. The situation was in a deadlock.
On one hand, the land that the orcs obtained needed to be
governed, and the soldiers needed to be reorganised. On the other,
with the sudden attacks, the Silverymoon Alliance had suffered
continuous losses and desperately needed some respite.
Another great wave of attacks could burst forth, and small
skirmishes were a constant thing these days. The mercenaries,
adventurers and even dreamers of the human world risked their
lives to come to the northern lands, hoping to get some part of the
glory. More merchants and commoners fled, which was a huge
headache for the country.
In this chaotic world, a name that had been in the shadows before
began to grow in intensity and shone in the battle with the orcs,
thus earning the name of a hero…
Unwittingly, a year passed. Year 37666 of the calendar of the gods, Silverymoon City.
A handsome black horse galloped along the road, its bloody hooves evidence of it having passed through a battlefield. The troops following behind it held orc ears, proof of merit and rewards. The knight at the head was astonishingly a female!
“It’s the Knight of Light, Rafiniya!” An adventurer along the road saw the female knight, their eyes filled with obvious admiration and worship.
“Mm! I heard that the lady became a high-ranked knight at a young age. She’s been shining in battles with the orcs as of late.” A young girl’s eyes twinkled, “Even more worthy of admiration is the fact that Lady Rafiniya is the personification of justice. She treats commoners and nobles all the same and does her best to protect the interests of the weak… Just like the city master…”
“That’s why so many adventurers are coming from all over the world!” Someone who was obviously the leader beside the girl supplemented, though he was critical on the inside, ‘Few agree with the city master’s ideals and want to participate in battle. Most people prioritise benefits.’
Although he knew this, he wouldn’t say such a thing out loud. Merit was the best way for adventurers to become nobles. The city master of Silverymoon was known for her generosity, so what harm was there in keeping mum?
‘Her commander, Baron Violet, seems to be a great example of this…’ The adventurer leader thought inside and urged his people on, “What are you looking at? Go to the Mercenary Guild and get the rewards from the mission!”
Due to the war and the surge of many mercenaries and adventurers,
Silverymoon strangely seemed to be prosperous. The citizens who had lived calm and comfortable lives had disappeared, and in their place were mercenaries and adventurers who reeked of blood. Besides hotels and the shops at the sides of the streets, there were many shops that sold all sorts of steel weapons and low-grade potions and the like. In general, they were items that would raise one’s battle might. The Mercenary Guild’s business was going so well that they were filled with adventurers every day.

‘Mercenary missions can only give money… Who knows, after a period of time when the war eases up, I’ll want to take a walk amongst the city guards…’ The leader was still considering his plans for the future. These were the true thoughts of unimportant characters in a chaotic world. They did not care who was in charge and only bothered about their own benefits.

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The female knight naturally did not care about this group of adventurers by the road, this was a common thing in Silverymoon. The procession entered one of the camps, and Rafiniya took off her armour to change into a casual outfit. She entered Leylin’s tent. He was blanked out while looking at a huge map of the northern lands, as if he hadn’t noticed Rafiniya entering. Upon noticing this, Rafiniya suddenly had a mischievous look on her face and sneakily ran to Leylin’s back.

“Stop playing around, Rafiniya!” Leylin spoke unenthusiastically, causing Rafiniya to deflate like a ball.

“Come on, can’t you just let a girl have her way? What happened to your gentlemanly attitude?” Rafiniya expressed her discontent to Leylin, who seemed to have grown a pair of eyes on his back.

‘Haha… With the spiritual force of a wizard, she wouldn’t be able to escape the detections of the A.I. Chip no matter how cautious
she was, unless she was a high-ranked assassin or thief.

“Have you completed your mission?” Leylin was now the main commander here, and Rafiniya was his underling.

“Yes! I’ve completely wiped out that group of scouting orcs. What bastards! They massacred three whole villages!” Rafiniya exclaimed, feeling indignant. This had always been a life or death struggle between two races, and Leylin merely raised his eyebrows a little but did not say more.

In addition, he had another thought in mind.

‘They’re killing so much in the areas of their enemies!’ Leylin sighed. His intel said that old, ill, weak, and disabled orcs were already entering the areas that had been taken over, and clearing the land for cultivation. They had scattered seeds and were clearly trying to restore life to the land.

What surprised Leylin more was that these orc villages already had signs of human slaves.

‘There’s someone capable among the orc invasion…’ This was not a short term policy, and that caused fear among the higher-ups of Silverymoon. Leylin, however, was unperturbed. As their desires and goals were different, their worries varied. Watching those nobles down on their luck, Leylin even felt refreshed.

‘A.I. Chip, show me my current stats!’ Leylin commanded. The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s orders, and showed a group of stats.


Leylin had risen by a rank in the past year, which the other wizards
found unimaginable. If not for the war, he might even have advanced faster. Given his continuous outstanding military service, he’d even obtained Legend-ranked information.
It had to be said that the World of God’s structure of the high-grade magic strength system was still a great inspiration to Leylin.
‘I’ve already checked the Nether Mountains a few times, and can confirm that the red dragon’s cave and the ruins of the arcanists are there…’ Leylin’s eyes glowed brightly.
Leylin had never forgotten his original objective. His long-term goal in the World of Gods was to ascend to godhood and allow his main body to enter this world. On the other hand, his short-term goals included advancing to the rank of Legend as quickly as possible, and obtaining enough power to protect himself.

His main purpose in coming to the north was to find the inheritance of the arcanists, as well as information on legendary spells from Silverymoon City. Compared to these goals reputation, territory, nobility, and riches were nothing but dog shit.

Although he now looked as if he was pursuing those things, it was only to give others the wrong impression. When it was time to abandon it all, he would do so without the slightest trace of hesitation. What were those things compared to eternal life and freedom anyway?

“I always thought you were a fellow with a lot of secrets,” Rafiniya mumbled to herself as she glanced at Leylin, sitting down with a melancholic air.

‘Such keen perception… She really is a first-rate tool,’ Leylin inwardly smiled to himself, but it was a pity that this lady knight had such an exceedingly pure soul. She had not seen past the facade into his true nature, else she would have been scared to death, forget daring to stay by his side.
“Alright, what are you looking at the map for? Is it time for us to act?” Rafiniya nibbled at an apple, propping up her toned and slender legs directly on the table. After serving in the army for a year, this lady knight had thrown her aristocratic grace and reserved nature away to the outer seas.

“Mm, it looks like we’re in trouble,” Leylin replied, adding emphasis on ‘trouble’.

“Is it that Cassley? I want to chop him up!” The lady knight exclaimed.

“The day will soon come,” Leylin stuck a small flag onto the map, marking down several lines of letters.

“Tell me, how is he going to trap us this time?” Rafiniya rolled her eyes.

“It can’t really be called a trap… He needs troops to go and defend the territories of several noble families near the Moonwood, those orcs are acting up again. There have even been rumours of the Blackblood tribe colluding with the Orc Empire…”

“Then why is he demanding that we go? He’s asking us to die!” Rafiniya shouted. Just the Blackblood tribe was enough to challenge Silverymoon City, and if orcs were added into the mix then it would be a complete deathtrap.

“We don’t have a choice, those nobles whose territories are being threatened are getting anxious. Additionally, my Violet Territory is also near there…” Leylin’s lips curved into a mocking smile. If he was truly a minor noble, then it would have been imperative for him to go. Otherwise, neither Silverymoon City nor Cassley would let him off. The secular world’s shackles as well as strict martial law could not be joked around with.

In Leylin’s view however, what did they matter? Naturally, he’d put some effort in on the surface. He also had no choice in actually going to the moonwood, but it was entirely up to Leylin whether he wanted to fight sincerely.
“Send the command, all personnel have had their holidays cancelled. They must go into standby mode, prepared to set off at any time.” With Leylin’s order, the entire barracks was immediately thrown into chaos. Against such powerful enemies, even the officers trembled in fear.

However, Leylin didn’t bother with his subordinates. After he had gave the command, he mounted his horse and travelled alone to his residence in Silverymoon City.

“Mister Leylin!” Only Bessany remained in the vast residence’s laboratory. She appeared to be very cold and cheerless. After the news of the great war had erupted, Ena and her sister had been strictly ordered by their families to return. Only Bessany had stayed.

“I’ll run the bath for you, sir. Also, the funds from the previous business deal have already been transferred to your bank account. Here is the receipt,” Bessany immediately left the alchemy table and bowed to Leylin. She had kept everything in good order while he was gone.

It had to be said that this young lady took her work quite seriously and worked hard. ‘After all, she’s a seedling that I raised myself,’ Leylin thought.

“No need for that,” Leylin waved his hand, “Bessany, I have something that I would like to ask you.” Leylin looked at Bessany attentively. She had grown up very well, and had even reached the realm of a rank 5 wizard.

It was a shame that her power was nothing but a speck of dust in front of the great army of orcs.

“Please tell me, Sir.” Bessany clasped her hands and seemed rather ill at ease.

After spending such a long time with Leylin, she naturally understood that he was enigmatic and impossible to predict. Questions that even the high-ranked wizards of the colleges could
not answer were easily solved by him. She had only been able to break through to a rank 5 wizard under his guidance. Compared to her, Ena and her sister were still lingering in the realm of rank 3 wizards! For all this, Bessany knew that she had to pay the price. It was only that when the moment came for her to do so, she seemed rather uneasy.

“With the orcs pushing the battle closer to this place, Silverymoon City will become very dangerous. Don’t you wish to go home to your family?” Leylin looked at his apprentice and asked with great interest.

“My family?” Bessany smiled rather bitterly, “I don’t want to go home! I want to continue walking the path of a wizard and advance. If I go home with my current strength, I’ll have to serve my family until I die…”

As a low-ranked wizard and alchemy apprentice, Bessany’s family would absolutely not allow the goose who laid golden eggs to marry out of the family. Bessany’s only future was to be a sacrifice for her family, and silently devote her life to them until she died of old age. Or perhaps her family would want to carry on the bloodline of a wizard, and adopt several men she disliked into the family. Just envisioning this sort of life made Bessany feel like she was going insane.

“Then… Do you wish to continue receiving my instruction?” Leylin asked, looking deeply into Bessany’s eyes.

“If… If that’s possible, then my gratitude will know no bounds!” After hearing the thing she wished for the most, Bessany felt that she was the most fortunate person in the world, and almost fainted in happiness.

“Alright! I would now like to hire you as an alchemist for the Faulen family. Have a look at this contract,” Leylin passed a scroll
of parchment to Bessany. “A contract?” Bessany opened the parchment, looking at the contract which had been written in black ink. It stipulated that she needed to serve the Faulen family for 50 years, and through that obtain Leylin’s financial assistance and advice as a wizard. It was a spirit-binding contract, and there was a beautifully intricate pattern around the parchment. “I have no problem with this. I agree!” Bessany scanned through the contract and confirmed that she had no issues before gritting her teeth and agreeing. “Alright, then sign your name in your own blood.” This demand was a little strange, but Bessany still bit her thumb and signed her name at the end of the parchment. *Crash!* In the blink of an eye, the entire scroll floated into midair and spontaneously combusted. Bessany’s eyes grew dazed as she felt herself losing something she could not name. However, she also felt like nothing had really happened. “Good, the contract has been established. On behalf of the Faulen family, I welcome you into our ranks,” Leylin smiled as he placed several items down on the table. “Here’s a hundred gold coins, as well as several scrolls and magic items. Take them with you just in case. Tomorrow, you will go to the south, to the Faulen Islands. There you will find wizard Ernest, who will set up arrangements for you…” “Scrolls? Alchemic materials?” Bessany gently stroked the magic scrolls with her fingers, and the powerful energy in them made her quake in fear. Leylin had personally smelted these magic items, and they were absolutely priceless. Compared to that, the gold coins were worthless. “Why must I leave? Could it be that Mister Leylin is not optimistic about the future of Silverymoon City?” “Mm,” Leylin answered without the slightest hesitation. His answer
made Bessany’s body sway on the verge of collapse.
“How is that possible? The city is under the protection of the Goddess of the Weave…”
“Our enemies have their own gods. Additionally, only the ruler of our city can survive. It doesn’t mean that you ordinary people will,” Leylin’s cold voice shattered her delusions, “Of course, after Silverymoon City, it won’t be possible for the battle to spread further south. Your family won’t be in danger, so there is no need to worry.”
Sending this rather distracted young lady away, Leylin smiled as he looked at his right hand. A trace of the purest soul origin force had arrived in his palm.
Even if Bessany died now, her soul would belong to him. This was the power of a devil!
“My young lady; if you don’t pay attention when you sign a contract, it’s difficult for you to not lose out…” Putting tricks into a contract was the favourite method of many devils from all dimensions. The decorative border around the parchment was the simplest trick.
Naturally, even if Bessany had heard of such a thing, she didn’t regard Leylin as a devil. As a result, she most likely had not even considered that he would do such a thing.
‘It’s just child’s play, whatever happens will happen…’ Leylin could easily educate many alchemy students to her level, but since it seemed that Bessany was innately gifted, and her luck was rather good, he didn’t mind helping her a little.
“Silverymoon City…” Leylin sighed softly. What he had said earlier wasn’t just fear-mongering. The possibility was real.
‘The Silverymoon Alliance has already threatened the central human kingdom, and those kings do not wish for a powerful human kingdom to rise in the north. There are many nobles who share this thought in the north, and as a result the support that the
Silverymoon Alliance will receive is limited…’
This was still the material plane after all, the gods of human factions could not unite in solidarity. Mystra could only rely on herself to take on all the orc gods. Even with the assistance of several gods she was on good terms with, the city did not have hopeful prospects.
Leylin could be at ease while the gods held petty, conflicting views. Were they to be united, there was no way he would be able to survive and grow in the prime material plane. His alternatives would be the deep abyss or hell itself.

‘The slumber of the World of Gods’ World Will, the Overgod, has encouraged many gods to harbour their own agendas.’ Leylin recalled the World’s Will of the World of Gods. The gods were the children of the world, and the World’s Will was their leader, the one and only Overgod!

In Leylin’s opinion, the World Wills of the Magus World and the World of Gods had reached the realm of rank 9. Omniscent and omnipotent, they were but one step away from eternity. It wasn’t just the gods and Magi who’d traded blows in the final war, the Wills had participated as well. Both sides suffered, and entered a heavy slumber.

Before its slumber, the Will of the World of Gods had completely sealed the world in a crystal sphere that isolated it from any communication. This move had effectively protected the World of Gods and allowed new gods to grow. However, once they were done dividing up the faith, the limit in number of worshippers had caused great internal conflict. Having lost their foreign enemies, the gods were now infighting.

At the very bottom of his heart, Leylin held a strong conviction that there were gods who coveted the seat of sovereignty. After all, they
would fall if their worshippers dwindled in number. The only way was to extract world origin force and surpass the existence of a god.
The only thing standing in their way was the World’s Will!
‘Isn’t this ironic? To nurture a child that would eventually oppose you…’ Leylin’s eyes narrowed with a gleam of determination.

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Outside the city walls, Leylin bumped into an entirely unexpected person.
“Wizard Cassley, good morning!”
“Good morning, wizard Leylin,” Cassley nodded at him, “Perhaps I will ride out with you and your troops, so when the time comes I hope you will cooperate.”
‘Cooperate?’ Leylin’s eyes narrowed, but the smiling expression on his face did not change as he slowly left.
Although he was a little weaker, the two were almost equal in status. He no longer had to give way to the other wizard as he had been forced to in the past. Since the troops were mobilising, coordination was purely between the mid-ranks and not an order given by the higher ups.
It was important not to underestimate this point, as it could be used to devastating effect in the midst of true battle. At the very least, it would put an end to Cassley’s informal and unnecessary orders, and eliminate the possibility of him sending the troops off to die.
“Damn!” After Leylin’s back disappeared from view, Cassley’s gently smiling expression completely collapsed. It was substituted with the most chilling intent.
Leylin Faulen! This name had grown offensively conspicuous ever since the orc invasion. Most notably, Cassley’s several retaliatory attempts against the wizard had all been played off, and even
served to enhance the other man’s reputation. In the end, many people had gradually come to lump him and Leylin together, likening the two of them to the brightest new stars in the sky. From Cassley’s point of view, the fact that they had gone as far as to place someone from the younger generation on the same level as him was a bald-faced insult! Additionally, after he had suffered the defeats, the faction backing him had gradually withdrawn their support. This was something that he absolutely could not stand. There was only one way to resolve this mess, and that was to make the source of trouble, Leylin, disappear entirely from this world.

‘I look forward to the face you’ll show me before you die…’ A trace of darkness flashed across Cassley’s eyes, and he returned to Silverymoon City without looking back.

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Two days later, nearly a thousand troops slowly left Silverymoon City.

“I’ve always found that Cassley an eyesore, and now he’s even deliberately riding out with us. He’s trying to make trouble for us, I’m sure!” The lady knight seethed next to Leylin.

“I’m afraid that he won’t simply cause trouble for us,” Leylin was well aware of the murderous intent that his companion was so clearly radiating. “Only… I’m not sure what will happen in the end,” A strange smile formed at the edges of his lips.

“We’re entering dangerous lands, stay alert!” As they drew closer to the Moonwood, even Cassley became even more vigilant. Werecreature attacks were a possibility now. After the orc invasion, the forces near Silverymoon Alliance began to get restless, especially the Blackblood tribe who immediately occupied the entire Moonwood. Patrolling rangers had been able to
routinely enter the place and gather information before, but now that was a death sentence. An alliance between the werebeasts and the orcs now seemed entirely possible. After all, humans all thought that they had similar looks and characteristics. Working together was natural when the conditions were right. Once the Blackblood Tribe joined the orc faction however, Silverymoon City would suffer an inconceivable setback. ‘The queen of the city, her majesty Alustriel, must be in distress…’ Leylin indifferently thought to himself. A loud chirp sounded abruptly, coming from a grey and white eagle. This was an animal companion of one of the druid scouts. “Baron Andrew’s castle is under siege!” The druid immediately reported to Leylin. “A siege?” Leylin furrowed his brows. He could faintly see smoke and ash rising at the edge of the horizon, “By werecreatures or goblins?” “It’s the werecreatures! I’m very certain, I saw the Blackblood tribe’s flag there!” The druid nodded vigorously. “What are we waiting for, let’s go!” Rafiniya drew her longsword. Ever since she had seen the orcs and goblins massacre entire villages, she had become a resolute believer of human superiority. “Wait, we should at the very least inform Cassley,” Leylin helplessly grabbed Nick’s reins and let an orderly inform their allies. There was a rather begrudging expression on his face as he said, “I’ve known you for so many years already, but you haven’t even matured a little…” Before long, the orderly had already brought back Cassley’s reply. “Commanding Officer Cassley says that he is in charge of the defence corps, and he will leave these matters for you to resolve!” The orderly announced loudly, and bowed as he left. Before they had set off, he had not known what tricks Cassley had
employed, and in the end he had unexpectedly obtained the mission of defending a few nobles. The mission Leylin had received was to attack and push the orcs’ frontlines back into the Moonwood. Far behind the front line, Cassley was in charge of defence. He had even incidentally blocked his grain supply channels. The impression would be that Cassley would defend the area when Leylin completely failed. His mission was similar to defending the city walls, but Leylin had been the pioneer who had taken the initiative to attack.

‘This fellow is already thinking of an unthinkable outcome behind my back…’ Leylin shook his head. If an ordinary person was in his position, perhaps they would die playing Cassley’s game. It was clear how deeply Cassley hated him from how readily he had issued the command.

‘Those who are meant to back me haven’t supported me at all. Is it a question of loyalty?’ Leylin sighed a little. He had risen to power too abruptly and had not truly won their trust. Otherwise, they wouldn’t have behaved so passively.

‘Once a wizard of Silverymoon City reaches rank 15, they sign a very powerful contract to pledge their loyalty. The effects can even extend until they reach the realm of Legends…’ Leylin suddenly thought of a rumour. Now, it seemed to be true. ‘Once I reach rank 15 and become a high-ranked wizard, something similar may fall to me. Cassley’s already signed the contract, which is why he’s so easily trusted…’

The troops under Leylin saw a look of unswerving determination on their leader’s face.

“Onwards!” Leylin finally issued the command. A besieged castle rapidly appeared before them, the village next to it already burnt to the ground. There were corpses strewn everywhere, and many of them were badly mangled. “Charge! Leave none of them alive!” At the sight of this scene, the
soldiers immediately saw red. Leylin duly issued the command to attack. “Kill!” Rafiniya led the way on horseback as the captain of a small squadron of knights. She and her subordinates fiercely advanced like black jackhammers into the werecreature army. The people in the castle let out a cheer at the sight of the reinforcements. “There aren’t many werecreatures here, and they’re spent after the attack on the castle. If we coordinate with those inside the castle, they’ll have no luck in defeating us,” Leylin’s gaze swept across the entire battlefield as he demonstrated his natural leadership. The army made up of 200 Professionals became the most precise and accurate of tools in his hand, calmly and efficiently reaping the lives of the werecreatures before them.

When Cassley finally arrived from the rear, he only saw the scene of the auxiliary troops sweeping the battlefield clean. His eyes narrowed at Leylin’s abilities, and afterwards a dense killing intent leaked from him.

“I am Baron Andrew, I thank you all for coming to our aid!” At this moment, the securely shut castle door was flung open. A middle-aged noble walked out with his retainers, a trace of fear still lingering on his face.

“I am Cassley from Silverymoon City. You and your people have been saved.” At this moment, Cassley stood at the forefront and willingly took the credit. He looked as if he had no qualms about doing this, and Leylin’s subordinates were extremely angry at the injustice.

‘Haha... This is reality. Even geniuses must be restrained by the rules,’ Cassley had absolutely loathed this rule in the past, but now he felt very carefree.
At the sight of Cassley stealing his credit right in front of him, Leylin subtly lowered his eyes and concealed the strange expression within them.

“Then I have to express my thanks towards you, sir! I have already prepared a banquet to welcome everyone as well as rooms. Please come back to the castle with me and rest.” Baron Andrew naturally would not be able to tell what had happened in a single glance, and attentively received the guests.

After following the Baron into his castle, Leylin saw many refugees within with panicked expressions on their faces.

“These damned werecreatures, our harvest this year is ruined…” Baron Andrew grumbled as he walked in front of them. Afterwards, he instructed his housekeeper and his wife to make preparations for the feast.

A magnificent feast was held within the castle’s enormous great hall. Roast chicken which looked a little scorched, wine as red as liquid ruby, and mountains of white bread were brought out. It could be said that to host Leylin and the men, this Baron Andrew had taken out what remained of his store of quality items.

Naturally, no matter how the world changed, the lifestyle of those in the upper classes would always be much better than those below them. Leylin swayed his wine glass and watched the dark red wine swirling within it, a strange smile on his face.

“Please be assured, Baron Andrew. Silverymoon City will not sit
idly by and watch these werecreatures attack. The tax exemption is an entirely different matter, and you will need to contact the city hall…” In the position of the guest of honour, Cassley was cheerfully chatting with the baron. His manner of speaking made Baron Andrew nod slightly, looking completely convinced. Even those young ladies near him who were clearly his daughters had peculiar looks in his eyes.

“Wizard Leylin!” Just at this moment, Cassley called out Leylin’s name.

“Lord Cassley, how can I help you?” Leylin did not move from his seat and nodded slightly to indicate he had heard. His action filled Cassley’s eyes with dissatisfaction.

‘This fellow, he should have died long ago!’ Cassley raged within his heart. On the surface however, he still wore the smile he had on earlier, “According to military command, I will organise the nobles’ defences in the rear. I’ll leave the fighting on the frontlines to you!” Baron Andrew looked at Cassley then at Leylin, his eyes filled with astonishment. He wasn’t a slow-witted person, and now he seemed to see something different..

‘This wizard Leylin, he seems to have rather good standing. However, he seems to have some conflict with high-ranked wizard Cassley,’ Baron Andrew would normally exploit this relationship for his own gain, however he was now worried.

‘In these times, infighting will just exacerbate the wear and tear on one’s own troops. What are those fellows in Silverymoon City thinking?’ Baron Andrew grumbled, and at the same time thought of his previous actions. Only until he had confirmed that he had not neglected Leylin and his faction did he secretly let out of a sigh of relief.

At the same time he also decided to disregard the situation between Leylin and Cassley.

“Of course, that is my original mission after all,” Leylin very
readily agreed to Cassley’s demand, which went completely against his expectations and left him feeling rather astonished. “Then, I’ll ask you to go towards Vaughan Village and station the men there,” Cassley replied, as if this was all as a matter of course. “Please forgive me for this, but you have no right to interfere. The front line is under my command,” Leylin smiled as he rejected him, which made Cassley flush bright red. “Very well…” After rudely huffing a few times, Cassley began to forcefully pressure him, “However, to maintain our line of communication, I need to send a contact member out with you. Your troops also need support in terms of rations from my group.” This was a restriction and also an unspoken threat. “I can agree to this,” Leylin expressed his approval after thinking for a bit. Cassley watched Leylin’s troops slowly depart from the top of the castle, his expression immediately becoming malevolent.

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Two days later, amongst Leylin’s troops. “Lord Leylin, I feel that we should not continue towards Cade village,” A gorgeously dressed fellow broke formation and came to Leylin, a highly arrogant look on his face. Rafiniya watched him walk over with a look of loathing, and urged her horse ahead to leave them behind. This fellow was named Malfoy, and he was the communication liaison that Cassley had forced on him. He reportedly was the heir of a Marquis and was well-placed in Silverymoon City. Unfortunately, he had Cassley backing him so he was rather unscrupulous. He did not even address Leylin with the minimum amount of respect. “Oh? What do you propose?” Leylin calmly looked at this
impertinent fellow.
“I believe we should follow Lord Cassley’s previous proposal, going to Vaughan village is the correct decision,” Malfoy replied fearlessly. He had the backing of a formidable faction and was a knight of Silverymoon. How would a bumpkin like Leylin dare to do anything to him?
“I refuse,” Leylin looked at this fellow with a trace of ridicule. Perhaps the strength of a faction would be useful in times of peace. Since they were in an era of war, however, the man who held greater military might would be the stronger power. This fellow who couldn’t even understand that would just die.
“What?” Sir Malfoy’s anger was out of this world, “You actually dare…”
His fingers trembled as he looked at Leylin, as if he was seeing his greatest enemy. Malfoy never thought that he would meet such a rude person, and thoughts of Cassley flew out of his head. Perhaps he did not realise that his life lay in Leylin’s hands. In this situation, how could Leylin dare to rebel against him?
*Thump thump!* Right at this moment, an enormous dust cloud swept over them. The dust had been kicked up by a great number of troops and their horses.
“Stay alert!” The alarm rang. Malfoy almost fell to the ground in fright, his face paling rapidly. His behaviour made those knights around him smile disdainfully.
The deafening sound of hooves clopping against the ground was followed by a huge squadron of troops appearing in their field of view. The purple flag of the Violet family was dazzling as it hung on the carriages.
“It’s the Violet flag! The insignia of the commander’s family!” The soldiers all cheered.
“This… This is…” Malfoy trembled as he saw the massive squadron ahead slowly integrating together with their own troops.
An old man who looked like a housekeeper even personally came to pay his respects to Leylin.

‘Almost 500 personal troops, as well as so many carriages full of grain…’

Leylin’s carriages were full of elite soldiers, and there was even an enormous cart in the fleet with sacks filled to the brim with grain.

‘At this point, his power is really…’ Malfoy’s face grew pale. With this assistance as well as Leylin’s original 200 Professionals and 300 auxiliary troops, he commanded over 1000 soldiers. He could even provide rations for his troops by himself, and he did not need to Cassley’s support at all.

‘The most frightening part is that if these men only answer to Leylin, and if they decide to rebel with him, then perhaps it’s enough for them to…’ Malfoy grew even more frightened, and his voice grew shrill, “No, that’s impossible! How do you have so many men?”

“Perhaps you’ve forgotten that my Violet territory is here?” Leylin taunted him with a smile.

“Violet territory?” Malfoy stared at him blankly, and immediately thought of Leylin’s fiefdom which was only a huge wasteland. Even savages did not live there.

Looking at Malfoy’s stunned expression, Leylin laughed inwardly to himself. Although his Violet territory indeed possessed nothing, it served well to boost his position and aid his pretense.

After receiving this title, Tiff and the others in the organisation all became Leylin’s vassals. They could even transport their previously hoarded resources and rations, as well as weapons and other military materiel to this place.

Everything had happened in one go, resulting in this.

“Young master, we’ve received the news,” Tiff’s expression grew sombre as he murmured into Leylin’s ear.

“Oh, that? I understand…” Leylin looked at Tiff, who had broken
through his limits to become a Legend.
“Spread word of my command, we will go west. Our target is the
Nether Mountains!”
“What? What?” Malfoy was the first to blurt out, “Lord Leylin,
please take note of the orders you are under! Don’t tell me that
you’re thinking of disobeying Silverymoon’s army?”
“Even if I disobey, what can you do?” Leylin smiled as he ridiculed
the man, watching as blood drained from Malfoy’s face.
“Did you really think that martial law and Silverymoon’s noble title
would tie me down?” Originally, Leylin’s subordinates were all
Silverymoon’s men. Whatever plans he had could not be realised
unless he left by himself, and he would become a wanted criminal.
Now, everything was different. The private vassals of a noble
would be absolutely loyal to him alone. With this power in hand,
Leylin could now completely coerce all his subordinates.
In the beginning, he secretly controlled over half of this unit. After
a year of leading them, he now no longer had any problems.
“What? You dare to disobey orders?”
“Mm, I’ve always found you an eyesore. Drag him down and
behead him!” Leylin waved his hand as if he was swatting a fly.
Two bulky and muscular vassals immediately hoisted Malfoy up
from under his arms, wringing him like a chick.
“Since you’re about to meet the god of death, I’ll tell you some
news,” Leylin drew closer to Malfoy, a malicious smile on his face,
“The orc hordes have already launched a surprise attack on
Silverymoon City, and have completely surrounded it. In other
words, that privileged noble status which you have been so
intensely proud of is about to disappear…”
he orc armies had launched a surprise attack! Silverymoon had been besieged! This was the earth-shattering news that Tiff had given Leylin. Tiff was a legendary of the dark world, and the network under his control passed this information to him even faster than Cassley did.

Leylin counted on this news when he made the decision to abandon everything. After all, the so called martial law, the rules and nobility of Silverymoon, was built on the basis that it still remained. What about when it was no more?

Looking at the larger picture, even if the defence of the city was ultimately successful, the chaos of war would continue to spread. In times of such disorder, what were the deaths of one or two knights?

Given his power in the region, those in Silverymoon could still be forced by the circumstances, giving out numerous rewards for Leylin to send his troops out to ‘save the country in times of danger.’

“However, the situation doesn’t seem good with the Goddess of the Weave. I’m afraid there might already be traitors in the alliance…” Leylin muttered to himself, “She’s still a powerful greater god, and she will definitely be unscathed. With her status as a Chosen, Alustriel will probably be safe as well. The ones who suffer the most in war are the commoners, who are at the bottom of the hierarchy…”
Of course, none of these had anything to do with Malfoy. The pitiful knight had been rendered completely lifeless after hearing Leylin’s words. Only when the soldiers began to drag him out did he begin to yell, “Ah… forgive me! Please forgive me, Sire Leylin! Lord Leylin! ‘Silverymoon needs you! I guarantee that as long you bring me back, I’ll tell my father to give you everything you want… Everything! Ah…” After a short period of pained cries, Malfoy’s voices came to a stop with a grunt.

Leylin’s underlings had gotten used to these scenes and were expressionless. Only Rafiniya looked slightly disturbed. In her eyes, no matter how hateful the other party had been, Leylin had gone too far, and her heart was a little shadowed by the traumatic experience.

“What was he saying about Silverymoon at the end?” Since Leylin had whispered those words directly into Malfoy’s ears, the girl did not know the full story.

“Just some nonsense!” Leylin carelessly chuckled, “My butler has already given me the newest information. Thanks to the Goddess, those simple-minded werecreatures only have thoughts of occupying the Moonwood and then come out and rob people. They have no interest in allying with the orcs to eliminate the Silverymoon alliance…”

“Thank the gods!” Upon hearing this, Rafiniya heaved a sigh of relief. She hated the idea of this beautiful city being destroyed just like this.

“In that case, what was it you said about the Nether Mountains?”

“That’s nothing. Since it isn’t that dangerous here, I’m planning to do something private and explore some ruins that I found a while ago!”

Leylin now looked relaxed and satisfied as he flung the horsewhip, “Didn’t you hear my orders? We’re changing directions towards the
Leylin’s authority had solidified over the year. Even in front of these ordinary troops, it was necessary to emphasise the need to obey superiors, much less one like Leylin. The troops of Silverymoon had planned to risk their lives against the werecreatures, but with Leylin’s personal troops inciting them, they soon went with the flow and obeyed the orders. The army of men and horses changed direction, heading west towards the Nether Mountains.

‘Cassley… I hope you like the present I left behind for you…’ Leylin snickered inside. In this sort of situation, it was difficult to understand what exactly the werecreatures were thinking. In addition, once his main forces retreated, Cassley would face with the brunt of the pressure from the werecreature armies. When the time came, would he retreat to Silverymoon and ask for support or stay behind to take care of the werecreatures? Leylin anticipated his choice.

“He… He’s changed…” Rafiniya watched absent-mindedly as the groups of men and horses brushed past her, looking to be in disbelief. The Leylin just now was very different from the one she was used to. While he was as handsome, straightforward and refined as always, he had a domineering aggression to him. Or rather, the aura of impetuousness and a devilish charm.

“He’s like a completely different person. Why…” Rafiniya’s mind was now turning black as a huge sense of fear appeared.

“Captain, are you alright?” A knight nearby asked in concern after seeing how she was acting.

“I- I’m fine!” Rafiniya managed to spit out. She urged Nick to catch up to the troops ahead, but her brows furrowed further.
The Nether Mountains were a straight vertical stretch in the north. While there was nothing horizontal across it that created a divide between the northern lands and the wilderness of the vast Sunrise Mountains that belonged to the orcs, it was an important dividing line in the northern lands. It clearly divided the Moonwood and the orc organisations.

The mountains had a terrifying spell pollution and energy isolation. Even the Weave was a little weak here, and in some areas it was even impossible to detect. These places were known as magic-dead zones, and whether they were wizards or priests everyone turned useless in these regions.

Due to the terrifying contamination, the plants and animals in the Nether Mountains went through a bizarre transformation. Not only were they more powerful, they were also more savage and bloodthirsty.

Legends said that this was a result of the battle between two divine soul saints which completely changed the geography, turning the place into a forbidden zone for life.

A group of human soldiers had abruptly entered these mountains on this day, cutting the trees and thorns as they moved on, relying on the strength of powerful spellcasters and warriors to enter the depths of the mountains.

“The Weave seems to be much better here compared to those dead-magic zones.” Leylin had gathered all the senior officers in the heart of their camp at night. There were two factions among them, Leylin’s personal troops and the officers of Silverymoon.

“I have gathered you to discuss our current target: a fully grown red dragon!” Leylin announced in a low voice as he looked at the huge Nether Mountains’ map on the wall.

Tiff did not voice any objections upon hearing this, evidently knowing of it. However, the officers of Silverymoon caused a
storm of protest with Rafiniya at the head.
“An adult dragon? That’s a legendary being!” Never in Rafiniya’s wildest dreams did she think that Leylin harboured such insane thoughts as those of slaying a dragon. Dragons were all in the legendary realm, and were even more powerful than equivalent humans!
“Mm, it’s not like we don’t have any legendaries on our side.” Leylin pointed towards Tiff, and he exploded forth with terrifying energy. It was like the might of a dragon itself, the roars of an ancient beast.
“ Legendary?” Rafiniya gaped, looking towards Tiff and then at Leylin, suddenly feeling bitter, “Is that what you’ve been preparing for? The wealth and glory of slaying dragons?”
“All I need is for you to do is deal with some dangers in the surroundings to restrict it from a distance. You don’t need to deal with it head on. How about it?” Leylin sighed ruefully. If not for having an army of a thousand Professionals, it would be difficult to enter the Nether mountains. The endless monsters they had met on the way were already enough for small adventuring groups to be wiped out.
“Understood, commander!” The officers who had come from Silverymoon looked towards each other. While it wasn’t surprising that senior officers of the army would use their troops to do personal work, it was rather rare for people to be so brazen and unbridled.
However, after watching Tiff who seemed to be a regular fighter let loose his aura, as well as Leylin’s personal troops staring at them intently, they decided to submit. This actually was possible thanks to Leylin gathering all communicative tools from them. Because of the geography of the Nether Mountains, this group temporarily had no contact with the outside world. If not, and they learn that Silverymoon was in a
siege, they could possibly have descended into complete chaos. Leylin could suppress the dragon with his own troops when the time came, but this obviously would weaken his battle power.

“Alright, I’ll assign your roles now,” he ordered without inhibition, especially satisfied with this situation.

Once the meeting was over and the officers had left, Rafiniya stayed back alone. The female knight stared at him, “You haven’t answered my question.”

“Oh, that,” Leylin nodded, coming to a sudden realisation, “I came to Silverymoon to obtain more information on spells. After finding out about the existence of the red dragon, I started to make plans regarding it. Is there a problem?”

Leylin’s utter honesty caused Rafiniya to be at a loss. It felt like her heart broke at this moment, and it hurt.

The female knight bit her lips, “Alright then. I’ll help you this time, but I’ll leave after that.”

‘Is this girl finally aware of the cruelty of reality?’ Leylin’s quirked up in a slight smile, “Of course. I’ll also give you a portion of the wealth from slaying the dragon.”

“I don’t need it! Take that filthy wealth of yours and die.” Rafiniya flipped the entrance of the tent and jogged away, leaving Leylin scratching his head, “While she knows this is cruel, she’s still not practical enough…”

Whatever it was, Leylin’s plan was still carried out well. With a legendary in charge as well as the temptation of glory and wealth from slaying a dragon, these officers and their underlings were very enthusiastic.

The good news came soon enough. The exact location of the dragon had been found.
Roar! A huge silhouette streaked across the sky, and a huge monster that was tens of metres long immediately pulled its terrifying meaty wings before disappearing into a dark cave.

"Mm, that truly is the red dragon." Leylin nodded. Dragons in the World of Gods were like huge lizards with wings, though they looked far more sinister. Their eyes that looked like spheres of lava left an especially deep impression on him.

"Ye– yes, my lord!" Helen answered from next to him, her body trembling.

"Is this because of the dragon’s aura?" Leylin looked at Helen, suddenly understanding and shaking his head with regret.

‘Looks like the Professionals under rank 10 shouldn’t come. They can’t handle the intimidation from the aura…’ he concluded. In his view, this fearful draconic aura was a weakened version of a spiritual force domain. Just facing the dragon would be a problem if one lacked a strong mind or spiritual force training, let alone attacking it.

‘As expected, the regular troops can only fight in the surroundings.’ Without alarming this huge creature, Leylin brough Helen secretly back to the camp. Following that, the team did as Leylin ordered. Like a huge, intricate robot, they began to work automatically.

“My lord, it’s done!” Tiff brought a group of elite Professionals to Leylin. In each of their hands were weapons with high-grade
enchantments, and they seemed to be coated with something else as well.

“Mm. This magic potion we got from the werecreature tribe is meant to deal specifically with dragons, it should hopefully be useful!” Leylin could not help but think back to the werecreature camp. They had obviously been making preparations to slaughter the dragon, but all their materials were now Leylin’s.

Now, what they had gathered would serve the same purpose.

“Mm. Give the dragon intoxication potion and other items to the high-ranked scouts to sprinkle at the dragon’s cave. Hopefully, it’ll fall for the trap…” While there was a large distance between the camp and the dragon cave, it was still unsafe considering the range that the red dragon could see. On top of that, it wasn’t hibernating like many of its kind, which left Leylin on guard.

This camp was too eye-catching. It would be found the moment the dragon flew out on patrol, and its fate then would be obvious. Hence, Leylin did not count on the high-grade assassins’ poison trap working. The next day, he brought fifty people to the entrance of the dragon cave.

The bare ground had not even a blade of grass growing on it, and seemed very solid. There was also a strange smell lingering in the air.

“This is the smell left behind by the dragon. Most animals wouldn’t dare approach this place…” Leylin glanced at the group behind him. They were all high-grade Professionals, including Tiff and Rafiniya.

“Based on the observations of our thieves, this is the time that it usually rests. Furthermore, the red dragon has also eaten the goat with special ingredients that we especially prepared for it…” Leylin muttered to himself. At this moment, a dark shadow emerged from the sides, calling out in a low voice, “Boss!”

“How’s the situation?”
A high-ranked scout began his report, “I can confirm that the red dragon is inside, and our route is very simple. There is only one pathway, and there’s a possibility of other creatures in the way!”

“Good. Guide the way in front.” Leylin let the thief walk ahead, and a procession of excited people clutched the weapons in their hands as they entered the cave.

The passage was long and seemed to go all the way to the belly of the mountain. It was very vast, and the walls were dry.

“It’s up ahead!” The thief ran to Leylin’s side as he spoke. Leylin nodded and ordered the group to stop. They were now extremely quiet, making no sound at all.

“Bring me there.” Leylin and the thief went forward. After they passed through a curved path, they came upon an even larger karst cavern. Boiling hot light flickered at its entrance, with some quartz and shiny items present within.

Two other strange creatures were standing guard at the cave’s entrance, as if on sentry duty.

‘Hm? Earth Dragons? A subspecies of the dragons? But it’s not exactly similar.’ Leylin looked at the two which were obviously subspecies with auras that greatly resembled those of purebloods. His eyes glinted with wit.

‘Rumour has it that once an adult dragon gains intelligence, it normally enslaves some members of other races into working for it. Ancient dragons can intimidate entire races, I never thought the red dragon would do this as well.

Past the two earth dragons, Leylin sensed an even more powerful life undulation in the cave. It was heaving with rhythmic breaths, evidently in a deep sleep. In this situation, any sounds could wake it up.

“Tiff!” Leylin immediately called the Legend in his team.

“Young Master!” Tiff arrived by his side and bowed slightly.

“Can you kill them without alarming the red dragon?” Leylin asked.
“It will be slightly troublesome. This type of subspecies have very tenacious life force. I can make one disappear without a sound, but I can’t take care of two in an instant.” Tiff frowned slightly.
“That’s alright. I’ll help you in that area!” Leylin answered lightly.
“Then that’s fine…” Tiff’s eyes flashed with strands of black, and he quickly disappeared.

……

By the cave, a red earth dragon was loyally protecting its place, occasionally looking towards its comrade. All of a sudden, it saw something that appalled it. A dark figure seemed to appear from the air, raising its arms as if opening up a black hole to devour its comrade.
Shadow Jump! Singularity! Just as this Earth Dragon was about to howl out in warning, it was surrounded in light that rendered it immobile. This was Hold Monster. The dark figure darted out, and the giant black hole swallowed its body as well.
The whole process was a hair-raising experience, yet only happened within a few seconds. Not even a peep was made.
‘Noiseless casting!’ Helen’s pupils shrunk from behind Leylin. She’d witnessed the whole process.
“Let’s go!” Leylin made a sign, and entered the cave with Tiff.
Inside, they found the target of their expedition snoring. The red dragon had dark red scales with smooth murky patterns on them that shone like metal. Its two meaty wings were ashen brown and hidden on its back. Its neck twisted sinuously like a snake’s as it buried its vicious head into its chest. Its nose occasionally puffed out two streams of white smoke.
A dense spiritual might was being emanated from its body, enough to cause the cowardly to break down.
‘It really is a dragon, and it’s an adult that’s reached the realm of
Legends!’ Rafiniya’s palms trembled slightly, and she could not help but hold tightly onto her longsword. Only she, Tiff, and Leylin were in the cave right now. The rest were standing guard outside; even asleep the dragon had powerful senses.

‘Based on its detection abilities, only Tiff has the ability to attack it once. After that, it’ll definitely awaken…’ Leylin gave Tiff a look with his eyes, and he immediately understood. Tiff drew closer to the giant, holding onto a golden dagger. Rafiniya and Leylin also prepared their own attacks.

“Begin!” Tiff’s golden dagger pierced into the triangular scale under its neck. That was its reverse scale, and the largest weakness. *Roar!* In that moment, blood splattered everywhere. The red dragon roared abruptly—it was now awake!

*Pak!* Tiff was sent flying by a red tail, his figure wrapped up by many shadows while in mid-air.

“You… You despicable mortals. How dare you harm the mighty Sylvester…” While the injury Tiff had given it with its dagger was much smaller than the area of its body, the red dragon still snarled in its fury, preparing to give these little ants a lesson such that they’d repent in hell.

“You’re even thinking of using something like a toy…” It roared, eyes like fireballs trained on Leylin. All of a sudden, its voice disappeared.

“My strength… What’s going on? You wretched worms, what have you done to the mighty Sylvester?” The red dragon’s voice was filled with astonishment and anger, while Leylin was very pleased with the results of Tiff’s attack.

The golden dagger that he had held was a Dragonslaying Dagger Leylin had specifically prepared for this. The powerful toxins and curses were something even a dragon could do little against.

‘A.I. Chip!’ Leylin ordered calmly. At this moment, the A.I. Chip
immediately showed its stats.
[Name: Sylvester. Race: Red Dragon (Adult) Strength: 21 (25), Agility: 10, Vitality: 19 (21), Spirit: 16 Status: Weakened from curse. Strength, vitality weakened. Feats: 1. Intimidating Aura 2. Dragonscale Defence 3. Dragon’s Breath 4. Suggestion spell. Description: This is a creature that has reached the realm of Legends. It possesses extraordinary strength and can even destroy a small city or army. It has acquired the magic and memories of the pureblooded dragon race, and there is a chance that its bloodline can improve further.]

“Do it!” Leylin yelled, his attack and Rafiniya’s reaching the red dragon’s body at practically the same time. The longsword was edged with sharp qi. The enchanted weapon glinted as it ruthlessly tore through the dragon’s huge meaty wings. Leylin’s attack struck just then.
Chain Lightning! Freezing Sphere! A burst of powerful light appeared from Leylin’s hands and struck the two wings on the back of the red dragon in an instant, causing a chilling cold in the air.

Leylin proficiently controlled the power of the spells, launching attacks on the wings with powerful spells.

Dimension Hop! At this moment, Tiff’s figure flickered behind the dragon’s back, and two curved knives ruthlessly slashed into the base of the red dragon’s wings. With added support from powerful spells, even the defensive dragon scales began to show signs of damage, scalding dragon blood spurting out.

“Damn it, damn it! You bunch of wretched worms!” The red dragon exclaimed, blasting crimson flames from its throat that were hot enough to smelt metal.

“Let’s go!” Leylin summoned numerous walls of ice in succession, but with the dragon’s breath, they could only hold on for a few seconds. That allowed him to escape from the cave with Rafiniya. Their strategic goal had been reached. Staying behind any longer for a fight to the death would be foolish.

Dragons possessed wings, and once they soared into the sky, the others could only blink and watch with a dumbstruck expression except for Leylin and Tiff. That was why Leylin had chosen the battlefield to be in the cave and focused entirely on the wings. This would cripple the red dragon and render it unable to fly.
Once it no longer had the advantage of flight, he would use his men to tire it out and then kill it.

“Quick, attack!” Seeing that Leylin and the other two had run out of the cave, Helen immediately launched huge fireballs from her hands, targetting the red dragon behind them.

“Attack! Are you all deaf?” With Leylin’s yell, those high-ranked Professionals jolted to awareness, brandishing the large weapons in their hands and charging forth.

“You darned worms! I will tear you to shreds!” The red dragon Sylvester continued to shout. These human mercenaries seemed to have come prepared. Not only had their weapons been smelted with special methods, there were also toxins smeared on them. Even its thick hide and muscles could do nothing against them.

*Roar!* A huge figure flashed past, and the red dragon flung its tail. A few Professionals who could not dodge in time were sent flying, spilling blood in mid-air and fated for death.

*Rumble!* The red dragon opened its mouth once more, and a powerful cone of flames spewed forth violently. Tens of Professionals who could not evade were incinerated into ashes in that moment.

“You will pay for your foolishness, mortals!” The red dragon roared, its mouth full of sharp teeth holding a Professional within. Horrifying sounds of chewing could be heard, and great chunks of the corpse’s flesh and bones tumbled to the ground. The poor fellow still had half of his body hanging outside the dragon’s jaws and was shrieking bloodcurdling screeches.

It was only at this point that the Professionals came to their senses. The being in front of them was a legendary dragon, and while slaying it would give them abundant wealth, it was not something they could even begin to set their sights on. With the dragon’s fear aura, terror weighed down on their rationality and sanity. A Professional howled and quickly ran in the
opposite direction.
*Pu!* The light from a blade flashed, and that Professional’s head fell. Following which, Tiff’s figure was seen in the air.
“Based on military laws, all deserters will be executed!” Tiff had a cold look on his face, and strange flaming scales appeared on his body.
“A sorcerer! I never expected Lord Tiff to be a Legend in sorcery!” Tiff soared into the air, eyes trained on the giant red dragon in front of him. With a raise of his hand, numerous spells flickered into existence.
Dimensional Imprisonment! Absorption!
“As expected, these Professionals are only passable with someone guiding them.” Leylin was not surprised by this sight. As he watched Tiff guide the other close-combat Professionals to stall the red dragon, his expression was calm.
“Pay attention. Shoot!” Under his guidance, many archers released the Spellslayer Arrows in their hands. With powerful magic held within, the arrows landed on the dragon’s body like raindrops. There were terrifying devices mixed into this rain of arrows.
[Beep! Surrounding physical environment data has been successfully scanned. Trajectory calculations complete.] Leylin was now controlling a ballista, aiming the crossbow that was four metres long and as thick as a person’s arm at the red dragon.
*Thump!* The entire ballista thundered when the mechanism was pressed down. An explosion rang out as black lightning streaked through the air and penetrated into the red dragon’s chest. The huge groove on the arrow tore at its injuries, causing boiling dragon blood to flow unceasingly, forming a dark pool on the ground.
“Dragonslaying Arrow! How could you have the blueprints to it?” The red dragon spat out in disbelief.
“Someone gifted it to me!” Leylin glanced at the ballista that had fallen apart, not looking to find this a pity at all. These items were
prepared by the high-grade werebeasts, and this was their final attack. It was a pity that it only had a one-time use.
The red dragon Sylvester had a bad feeling that it was really going to die, and suddenly began to fight harder, all its might put into the constant use of powerful magic.
It was a pity that with Tiff in charge and Leylin the wizard around, it had no chances at all. Even the dimension was completely sealed off, giving it no chances of escape.
“Let me go! In the name of the Dragon God, I, Sylvester, vow to give you all my wealth and never seek revenge!” The red dragon thundered.
“Hehe… a dragon’s promise?” Leylin snickered, grabbing a large vorpal sword and charging forward.
“Tiff!” Leylin yelled.
The Legend had also launched his last attack now. Terrifying corrosive energy struck the dragon, causing a large portion of its chest to wither up.
“Hah!” Leylin’s sword pierced into the wound from the Dragon Slaying Arrow, ferociously splitting it open.
Chain Lightning! Freezing Sphere! Disintegrate!
The terrifying wounds tore apart once more, and the flesh and blood even glinted as they charred up. Huge amounts of scalding blood splashed onto Leylin’s body, practically drenching him.
“The dragon race will not let you off!” The light in the red dragon Sylvester’s eyes gradually weakened till it disappeared. Its mountainous corpse crumpled to the ground, causing a small earthquake.
“You won’t let me off?” Leylin snickered, and then sensed an aura similar to a vengeful spirit spilling out of its body and pouncing onto him.
“Is this something like a revenge mark? Hehe…” Leylin’s eyes glinted, and in that instant he wiped this mark out thoroughly,
leaving nothing behind. The hot dragonblood bath still continued, and the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded out.

[Beep! Host has been baptised by dragon blood. Strength +1. Vitality +2. Skin has increased resistance. (Matches with part of Perfect Body and has been combined!)]

“The power within dragon blood?” Leylin experienced the burning with his senses, “It holds so much strength! Even the Devilblood Dagger wouldn’t be able to devour everything…”

This sort of dragon blood was basically poison for all with a vitality below 5. They could not handle the corrosive energy within and would only be fated for death. However, for high-grade Professionals, this was a pretty good boost, though only if they could withstand it.

“Gather the dragon blood! Do it fast!” Dragon blood was a very precious magic ingredient, and wasting all of this had even Leylin feeling a tinge of regret.

Afterwards, the red dragon that was like a hill was dismembered by Leylin’s underlings. Its blood was gathered first, followed by a complete layer of its hide. This would be a great material to make armour out of. There were also the dragon bones, dragon crystals and the like, which were pretty good.

When Leylin’s underlings saw the treasures in the red dragon’s cave, the excitement in their eyes could not be concealed as they began to cheer. Dragons liked to collect shiny objects, and while most would be quartz and glass, there were also many precious metals and even magic items which must have belonged to some poor fool.

“I want the materials from the red dragon’s body. As for the gold and silver, divide it amongst yourselves!” Leylin kept the materials from the red dragon in his bag of holding, not even giving the various metals piled like a mountain there a second look. After hearing this order, all the troops’ cheers increased in intensity.
In the night, the soldiers set up a feast to celebrate their success in slaying the dragon. Being able to witness the birth of a dragonslayer was something they would be able to brag about for their entire lives. The participants would receive even more glory. The celebration went deep into the night. Besides the guards on duty, everyone was completely drunk.

A few dark figures arrived at the dragon’s lair at that time.

“Are you sure it’s here?” Leylin gently touched a black wall, the traces left behind from a great battle still vivid in his mind.

“Yes! I can confirm that the gate to the ruins is here.” Helen crouched down and found a twisted rune at the corner of the wall.

‘The inheritance of the arcanists was under this red dragon’s lair. Is this a coincidence or an intentional arrangement?’ Leylin’s eyes had a searching look in them. Some arcanist flames then blossomed from his hands, disappearing into the twisted rune in the corner.

*Rumble!* A secret passageway appeared. The fact that it had been undiscovered by the red dragon for such a long time exhibited its terrifying concealing abilities.

“This should be some sort of space-time technique.” Leylin nodded and entered the passageway with Helen, while Tiff stood guard outside.

‘What is the difference between arcane spells and those of Magi?’ Leylin’s eyes glinted, holding within them a trace of hope.
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“Where is this place?” Helen asked as she touched the solid metallic walls in the surroundings. They had a silver-white lustre, making them look like a product of science fiction.

“It seems like it is a pocket dimension made by an arcanist, though it’s quite small…” Leylin closed his eyes, and his astounding senses spread out. They allowed him to feel the undulations connecting the dimension.

“This place is already on the verge of disappearing. It was always sealed, but now that we’ve activated the dimension we’ve started the countdown to its demise.” Leylin had an interest in this spatial overlay technique that sprung from the depths of his heart. These preparations showed that once the Magi who comprehended laws showed them the path, they’d combined those experiences with advanced technology to do amazing things.

“What a pity…” There was a trace of regret in Leylin’s eyes. The pocket dimension was incredibly tiny and only as large as two football fields. It was on the verge of being destroyed now, so it held no value.

If not for that, were this pocket dimension to be revealed all legendary wizards would try their utmost to obtain it. A wizard tower constructed atop this place would make for a covert and stable den.

Once they became a god, this pocket dimension could even be
transformed into a divine realm! Of course, with the current state of the plane, it was impossible to remodel it.

“A pocket dimension? Destroyed by this sort of spatial storm?” Helen shivered. A dimensional storm caused by the destruction of space was something even legendaries weren’t guaranteed to survive.

“Mm! But we should still have three hourglasses’ worth of time…” Leylin snapped his fingers, and light flashed as an Endurance spell enveloped him. The environment in the pocket dimension would not be the same as in the prime material plane, possibly more extreme.

Of course, this place shouldn’t have been that way given that it was prepared by an arcanist, but Leylin liked to be ready just in case. After seeing what Leylin had done, Helen suddenly came to a realisation and did the same, adding another layer of protection.

*Rumble!* The silvery metallic door was pushed open to reveal rooms that were arranged like in a honeycomb. The floor was spotless, and even one’s image could be reflected in it.

“That’s all the information I have. How about you?” Leylin looked at Helen behind him.

“I only managed to see some fragments left behind in my ancestor’s notebook…” Helen’s smiled wryly.

“Looks like we can only check them one by one…” Leylin glanced at the flickering chandelier, “The core energy is still working, so there might be some traps left behind by the arcanists. Be careful!”

While it was possible for arcanist inheritances to be here, Leylin wasn’t sure if arcanists shared the eccentricities of wizards.

“Don’t worry, my lord!” Helen nodded, her slender figure disappearing into the passageway.

‘Looks like she’s going to rely on luck to get her through…’ Leylin nodded before shaking his head, and then he placed his hands behind his back and entered a random room. The two of them went
their separate ways…

Inside one of the secret labs in the arcanist’s pocket dimension, a light blue screen brightened to show images of Leylin and Helen. Lines of red text streaked across it.

“Beep! Invaders discovered. Activating rank 1 defensive measures.”

“Arcane spell elemental reserves 1.09%! Unable to activate… Legendary Golem, Dimensional Banishing Spell Formation scarce. Implementing plan B…”

“Scanning of alchemic golem complete, is 34.17% intact. Beginning charging.”

“Charging complete. Starting preparatory defensive mechanism number 0331.”

After the lines of text appeared, a door that had been closed for a very long time opened up from one of the rooms, and an alchemic golem that was almost three metres tall walked out.

“Number 2133 awaits commands. Received mission, beginning task.” Blood red light brightened in its eyes, and a screen appeared with a projection of Helen. Sounds like the cracking of knuckles rang out, and the golem charged in her direction.

*Rumble! Rumble!* Leylin was reading a book, and the slight vibrations caught his attention.

“Hm?” He put down the incomplete draft in his hand, and thought hard, ‘Looks like the defensive mechanism of the laboratories aren’t completely damaged. That makes things much easier…’

Besides deducing the existence of arcanists, Leylin knew nothing about the ruins. He wouldn’t be able to take too many things in the time before this place broke down. As long as there was an intellectual core or tower genie, the laboratory would be the most valuable region.

Setting aside the items in his hands, Leylin headed in the direction of the vibrations.
“Leylin, save me!” Running for her life, Helen saw Leylin walking over and brightened up. She cut a sorry figure. There was a beast skin scroll in her hands, with the energy undulations of high-grade magic on it. This wasn’t an enchanted item, the energy was similar to those of magic artefacts from the Magus World! With the way Helen refused to let go of it, this had to be something good. Still, Leylin as he was now thought nothing of it.

*Thud! Thud!* At this moment, the alchemic golem that had been pursuing her appeared before Leylin’s eyes. It was like an armoured knight from the medieval ages, though there were two small barrels on its shoulders that looked to be a fusion of magic and science.

“Beep! Discovered primary target, annihilating…” After seeing Leylin, its eyes emanated a terrifying crimson lustre.

“Beginning charging of miniature magic honing cannon!” A layer of terrifying energy undulations condensed within the barrel on its shoulders, causing Leylin to feel a slight sense of danger.

“This is completely different from the techniques used before.” Leylin looked interested, and he moved abruptly. A rumble sounded out as the miniature cannon fired, hot light causing even the metallic ground to show signs of melting.

*Pu!* Leylin was struck by those bright rays of light, but then turned into dark shadows and exploded.

‘It’s a high-grade illusion!’ Helen hid aside. A battle of this level was something she had no say in, ‘But as long as we hold on for some time, Lord Tiff who’s guarding us on top should be able to come down. With his legendary strength…’ Helen was still making calculations as she grasped the scroll tightly.
However, she then gaped in shock.
“After tens of thousands of years, it’s still preserved to this extent. Not bad!” Lights flashed, and Leylin appeared behind the alchemic golem, noting the damaged armour, adamantine runes and other lines.
“A pity though… The energy here is about to be completely consumed. Even legendary teams can’t come in…” The passage of time was the most terrifying of attacks. With its tempering and developments, even the setup of arcansists would leave holes behind.
“A completely different tower genie from the World of Gods and the structure of this intellectual core… They’re all like decorative items in front of me…” Leylin sighed. With some light at his finger, he pressed the puppet.
Arcanists were mostly born of Magi, so of course they would’ve used or improved upon the ideas of many Magi. They were like kids playing house to Leylin, especially with the help of the A.I. Chip. Connected with the puppet, Leylin’s soul immediately reached the core control room through the network in the pocket dimension.
At this moment, a piercing giant red font filled the screen in the hidden room. “Warning! Warning!”
“External information attempting to rewrite core authorisations. Rejecting, activating defensive wall…”
“Wha- What’s going on?” From Helen’s perspective, what just happened was like a magical show. Once Leylin made contact with
the alchemic golem, the entire pocket dimension had begun to
tremble, and the lights had flickered unsteadily. Huge blue arcs of
lightning had sparked out, making it seem like the end of the world
had come.
A moment later, however, everything returned to normal.
“Come.” With authority over the laboratory’s core, Leylin now had
a different aura on him that compelled Helen further. She was
astonished as he brought her all the way to the core of the
laboratory, as if this was a familiar route.
Be it the password-locked door or any other hindrance, all
obstacles were easily taken care of in his hands. It was like he was
the owner here.
“Identity verified. Welcome, master!” A door with a statue of an
angel on the left and one of a devil on the right opened with a
rumble. Helen followed Leylin inside, watching the door with fear.
‘He passed through a legendary curse so easily?’ This ease was
unbelievable, and it made Helen realise that Leylin had an
increasing number of secrets to him.
Who on earth is he? He’s just a minor noble of Silverymoon City on the surface, but secretly he possesses the power of a Legend. Besides, he seems to be very familiar with this place... So why did he lie to me earlier?’ Helen was completely puzzled, but she carefully hid all her thoughts. After all, Leylin now held the right of life and death over her.
The core of the control room was unexpectedly small, and it only had an area of 5 or 6 square metres. At the centre was a strange hexagonal prism with all sorts of strange screens next to it. Some of them had already lost their glow or were filled with a grayscale static, while others were working.
“Open!” The outer shell of the hexagonal prism opened with Leylin’s command, revealing a blue crystal structure within. “This is...” Helen looked at the splendid and magnificent blue crystal which sparkled beautifully, it was like she had been bewitched.
“This core port controls half of the laboratory and is also a communication terminal. Many resources can be downloaded here,” Leylin said lightly, unconcerned as to whether Helen understood him. He pressed his palm to the surface of the blue crystal.
[Beep! Spiritual force interface established.] In a split second, Leylin seemed to have become a demigod, and nothing in the
pocket dimension could be hidden from him anymore.

‘Weapons, live specimen libraries, database!’ Various images and words appeared before him, and it was only at that moment that Leylin realised how fortunate he was to grasp it all.

‘Its energy reserves haven’t even reached 2%, and its powerful weapons cannot be activated at all. The magic and spell formations are also damaged, and half of the golems have been destroyed. It looks like I can only send out one or two defective items…’ Leylin sighed. He believed that this pocket dimension would have been able to hinder even high-ranked Legends at its peak. Now however…

Of course, it would have been very difficult to seize control of the entire core back then. Whether it was a legendary wizard, thief, or even an elf, they would not be able to attack the lab’s intelligence core through the communication terminal. After all, they were on completely different planes.

However, Leylin was different. He was very familiar with this type of structure in the ilk of those made by Magi, and the A.I. Chip supporting him had even more knowledge reserves. It was purely because of this reason that he managed to seize the entire core unharmed.

[Beep! Laboratory’s power source reserve has reached its critical point, and is unable to absorb more energy from the abyss. Time before collapse: 1h 13min.] The A.I. Chip displayed yet another message in front of Leylin.

‘As expected, the demiplane has deteriorated with age and is about to collapse. Is it too late to stop it? If it’s like this, then the most valuable thing here is…’ Leylin’s eyes were filled with regret at first, but then his expression brightened considerably.

‘A.I. Chip, record all the information from the terminal.’

[Beep! Mission established, initiating download program.] The A.I. Chip executed Leylin’s task immediately. The magnificent light
shining from the hexagonal prism was projected onto the walls all around him, as well as onto all the screens. Leylin was bathed in its light, and a multitude of data and characters flashed across his eyes. The most important bits about the arcane arts and spell models, various alchemic experiments, research, improved meditation techniques, and anatomical records were presented to him. There were also diaries and other useless news from the terminal, and that too was fully copied by the A.I. Chip. The extensive library of data was transferred in a split second. Compared to this, the tiny little bit of information Helen had almost given her life for to obtain was worth nothing. [Beep! Information about the arcanist profession has been collated, and overlaps with the host’s wizardry. Combine?] “Yes,” Leylin replied without the slightest hesitation. Afterwards, his aura began to change. An arcane flame began to burn, and powerful force poured into his sea of consciousness and began to remodel and process his profession. Leylin soon saw his status change from that of a wizard into that of an arcanist. *Snap!* Leylin almost blacked out at the acute pain that came from his very soul. He felt his connection with the Weave instantly break off. Fortunately, this severed state lasted only a moment before it reconnected once again. However, the connection was now somewhat different. In this split second, there seemed to be a pair of golden eyes focused on him. However, it was immediately deceived by Leylin’s grasp of the first 4 layers of the Weave. The A.I. Chip’s reminders continued to ring out. [Beep! Host has become an arcanist. Profession changed.] [Beep! The host has gained arcane specialties: Energy Detection, Amplification.] There was a detailed description beneath each of the specialties.
[Arcane Energy Detection: Arcanists are able to supercede the Weave’s restrictions and directly perceive the arcane energy in the environment, drawing it in to form arcane spells.] [Arcane Amplification: Arcane energy is amplified by 10-20% when an arcanist casts a spell.] [Beep! Host’s spiritual force has broken through, Spirit +1. Host has advanced to become a rank 15 arcanist.] Leylin’s mind suddenly jolted, and afterwards his spiritual force directly made contact with the 7th rank of the Weave. Looking at the Weave from an arcanist’s perspective gave him a completely different feeling. The feeling of jumping out and watching the Weave from afar increased the speed at which the A.I. Chip analysed the Weave.

Leylin’s stats had also changed.


‘As expected, the greatest benefit of becoming an arcanist is to break away from the Weave’s method of performing magic. Additionally, arcane energy has replaced my spell slots,’ Leylin nodded. Moreover, his separation from the weave affected only that aspect. This meant that Leylin could now also prepare rank 7 spell slots, and wait to use them the next day.

Naturally, due to the restrictions of rank, he only had 1 rank 7 spell slot.

‘Using arcane energy to cast arcane spells would perhaps consume more energy than using the Weave to instantly cast low-ranked spells. However, it will use up fewer spell slots,’ Leylin stroked his chin in thought. After fully analysing rank 0 to rank 3 of the Weave, he could instantly cast low-ranked spells. Overwhelming his opponent with a torrential number of spells had always been his killing move, but it was of course established within the authority
of the Weave. It was equivalent to stealing Mystra’s power for himself. If he only used arcane spells, then he wouldn’t have this benefit anymore. However, the greatest benefit of being an arcanist was that he could retain wizard spell models instead of forgetting them, and at the same time he could use the Weave!
‘As a result, I’m now outside the system but I can still enjoy the system’s benefits. Just using its power without any of the obligations, it’s so straightforward…’ Leylin sighed, ‘It’s a pity that if more people like me are born, then the Weave would fall apart.’
“You’ve broken through?” Although Leylin had only taken an instant to advance, Helen distinctly felt that something was different.
“Mm, I have,” Leylin smiled. What he had gained today couldn’t just be described as a breakthrough though.
‘I’m now an arcanist, and I have a great number of arcane arts with me. My improvement from now will be rapid. As a rank 15 Professional wizard, I’m of the highest class…’ Leylin was turning the idea over in his mind. He was a genius who had advanced to become a high-ranked wizard at the tender age of 21. Apart from the gods’ chosen or demigods, he was near the peak of the prime material plane.
“This place is very dangerous, it’s best that we leave as quickly as possible,” Leylin furrowed his brows and took Helen away from the core database.
The trip had gone fairly smoothly, and he had obtained resources from the arcanists as well as many arcane arts. It all saved him a lot of effort, but he hadn’t accomplished his most important goal yet; he didn’t get the inheritance of those Magi who had comprehended laws!
The A.I. Chip hadn’t found anything related to such Magi amongst all the resources it had scanned, and it filled Leylin’s heart with
disappointment. The direction and experiences of the ancients would have been of great help to him.

‘It’s a matter of course. Not every arcanaist can receive the instruction of a being like the Distorted Shadow, and even if he left an inheritance it wouldn’t be here…’ Leylin comforted himself, ‘The profits this time are sufficient. Just what the A.I. Chip has stored in its database would be enough to fetch an extremely high price.’

“Let’s hurry up, there isn’t much time before the pocket dimension collapses…” Leylin suddenly stopped in his tracks and turned his head in astonishment. He discovered that Helen had disappeared into thin air without his notice.

‘Impossible! I’ve always paid attention to my back, and I even have an arcane mark on her. How can the A.I. Chip’s sweeps not discover her?’

‘A.I. Chip! Sweep the entire laboratory and find Helen!’ Leylin immediately ordered. He had seized the core authority in this place, and even if most of the equipment was depleted or damaged a basic search was still possible.

Very quickly, the results were sent back to him. However, Leylin’s expression turned even more unsightly at the information.

‘Nothing! There isn’t a single trace left of her, and she didn’t even leave a corpse. It looks like she just disappeared suddenly…’ He had not felt such a powerful sense of déjà vu for a very long time.
“Is this the effect of a high-ranked Magus’ radiation?” Leylin murmured, “To achieve this even after thousands of years, only someone at rank 7 or above could do such a thing…” Leylin stood by himself in the empty and desolate passage, slowly shutting his eyes. He slowly found traces of energy from a completely different world.

“The power of distortion! As expected, it’s Distorted Shadow… Over there!” Leylin’s eyes were filled with excitement as he suddenly advanced in another direction. He had sensed a clue to the inheritance of an ancient Magus who had comprehended laws! Such an incredibly precious treasure was enough for him to brave the risks that surely lay ahead.

‘The ancient Distorted Shadow’s path of laws should deal with space or distortion, or something related to that. No wonder he could make so many dimensions overlap…’ As he ran, Leylin instantly thought of the the fold in space he had encountered just before, ‘Legend states that Distorted Shadow was at least a rank 8 Magus, and he was a peak rank 8 who had perfected his own path!’

*Bang!* He followed his instincts to a laboratory, and a strong gust hit his face when he opened the door.

Arcane Missile! Leylin’s fingers shot out a more powerful version of Magic Missile. The thing was full of arcane energy, and it smashed the metal gears that were wrapped within the strong wind.
to the ground, leaving behind dents in it. “This place…” he looked around him. The room was modelled like a giant workshop, with many metal lathes and machine arms tidying and moving things back and forth. Some of the machines had a layer of green rust on them. ‘Is this some golem processing workshop?’ Leylin followed his instincts and found a trace of distortion left behind. “Mister Leylin, save me!” Just at this moment, Leylin suddenly turned his head and he heard Helen’s voice came from his side. “Helen?” He suddenly shouted, and several layers of protective light glowed on his body. “Save me…” The only reply he received was her weeping. Leylin gritted his teeth and walked towards the direction of her wails. He passed through a tall fireplace, and saw the back of a silhouette that seemed like Helen sitting in the darkness and crying. “I… I can’t get up…” “Mm?” It was only then that Leylin discovered that the originally smooth floor had become spongy. There were several black hands spouting out of it, holding firmly onto Helen’s ankles. A faint black shimmered in Leylin’s pupils as they widened, and he called out in the ancient Byron language. “Malicious intent? Get lost!” “Sss…” His soul essence had already transformed into a phantom Targaryen, and it suddenly began to roar. *Puff! Puff!* The sound reverberated in the room, and those enormous black hands suddenly swelled as sarcomas boiled out from under their skin. These tumours grew larger and larger until one could see veins within before finally exploding. “Ah!” Helen let out a blood-curdling shriek. The giant black hands had disappeared, but a layer of skin on her ankle had been torn off as well, leaving behind a horribly infected wound. The black pus seemed to have great corrosive ability, and it ate away half of
Helen’s clothes in an instant.
*Sss!* Great quantities of the black rain landed on the metal surfaces nearby, corroding everything it touched.
Cure Moderate Wounds! Leylin immediately cast a healing spell and raced to Helen’s side, “Are you alright?”
“I’m… I’m alright…” Helen sluggishly turned her head, and Leylin’s eyes narrowed. What appeared before Leylin was a strangely distorted face. Her facial features were screwed into incorrect positions, and it was full of distorted veins and scars. It was more disgusting than the most disgusting monstrosity!
“What on earth are you?” Leylin immediately moved away from it, watching this freakish monster who was undulating Helen’s soul force.
“Sir Leylin, it’s… It’s me, Helen…” The monster let out a panicked voice, but its distorted face wore a malevolent expression. The huge mouth on its forehead opened, revealing sharp yellow teeth and a barbed green tongue.
‘It looks like Distorted Shadow never had the intention of leaving an inheritance behind. Perhaps he had only come here and left an evil spiritual parasite. Now that the pocket dimension is about to collapse, the evil intent has awakened…’ Leylin was startled as he thought of this possibility.
An evil intent left behind by an ancient rank 8 Magus would put him in grave danger, and could even kill him.
Fireball! Fireball! Fireball!
Scorching Ray! Scorching Ray! Scorching Ray!
Leylin launched his killing move in this life or death situation. Many rank 2 and 3 fire spells combined to form a meteor shower from the sky.
“Spell Torrent!” The violent surging blaze submerged the monster in its flames. The effect of many low-ranked spells piled up on top of each other to reach near-legendary power.
The blazing fire melted the surrounding lathes and mechanical arms considerably, forming white-hot molten iron that slowly pooled to form a stream on the ground. After the torrent of spells, Leylin saw a bare passage appear before him. The monster had already disappeared without a trace, and seemed to have been burnt to ashes. The molten iron was red through and through now, making the black material look even more unsightly. It hadn’t been corroded, instead bobbing up and down unsteadily. “That’s the beast skin scroll Helen had before” Leylin was suddenly alarmed, and a stony grey hand emerged from the scroll. The black hide was stained with blood, but it did not dissolve in the molten iron. This made a strange expression appear on Leylin’s face. “Leylin! Save me…” As the voice sounded, the hand suddenly broke through Leylin’s spell defences. A power of distortion struck Leylin’s shoulder. *Crash!* Whether it was his robe or armour, or even his body’s own defences, everything was torn apart like paper by this hand. “Damn it!” Leylin’s expression grew fierce, “Fuck off!” The Targaryen phantom felt the danger as well, and its vertical eyes narrowed. A formidable devouring power spread into the surroundings. Blink! Leylin’s silhouette flickered and he arrived outside the workshop. He didn’t even bother looking back at the monster within as he broke out into a run. Several Haste spells flashed on his body as he dashed out of the exit. Although Leylin would take risks to obtain a rank 8 Magus’ inheritance, he definitely wouldn’t court death for it. The moment he discovered that the danger here far exceeded the benefits he could gain, he made the prompt decision to leave. Chirps and honks sounded as a twisted laughter rang out from behind him. He felt a terrifying force pursuing him as the entire
passage began to distort, like a rag being twisted to pieces. Freeze! The torrent of spells appeared once more, and many Freeze and Create Water spells formed a mountain of ice behind him. The enormous ice mountain immediately blocked off the entire passage, and stopped the terrifying creature’s pursuit. Still, crack after crack formed on it without end.

Leylin seized the chance to suddenly rush to the exit, throwing himself outside. Furry green claws distorted as they swiped at Leylin’s back. Thankfully, he’d managed to make it out in that instant and they only managed to cut the corner of his clothes.

A loud rumble suddenly sounded. Leylin immediately jumped out of the secret entrance, and soon after it was submerged in a silver storm. The pocket dimension had already begun to collapse, and many disasters had arisen within.

“Young master!” Tiff walked over to him with a worried expression.

“I’m alright, I only ran into a storm in the plane. I was rather lucky.” Leylin smiled, a healing glow already spreading across his shoulder.

“Lord Leylin?!” He heard a woman’s voice and trembled at the sound of it.

He turned his head rather stiffly and was greeted by the sight of Helen! Helen stood there, hale and hearty, with a concerned expression on her face.

“What? Weren’t you still in there?” Leylin’s eyes narrowed.

“What?” Helen’s astonished expression deepened, “You had me leave first after we exited the core control room, my Lord. You said you wanted to continue exploring alone…”

“I indeed saw Miss Helen arrive first!” Tiff testified for her.

‘Then the Helen I saw earlier, who was it... It even distorted my senses…’

“Then this thing? Do you recognise it?” A black blood-stained
scroll made of beast skin appeared in Leylin’s palm. He had used various methods to verify that Helen was really made of flesh and blood. The soul undulations were the same, and she was not disguised by some evil intent.

“My scroll…” Helen exclaimed, touching the bag of holding at her hip. Her face slowly paled, “Gone! It’s gone! I had it in my bag of holding…”

‘Ha… As expected of the Distorted Shadow!’ Leylin sighed deeply, ‘Having already grasped the concepts of distortion, space, and time, he even managed to distort my senses?’

“Young master, is there an enemy?” Tiff now realised that something was wrong. He stood on alert next to Leylin, his eyes fixed on Helen. If she made the slightest wrong move, he would kill her where she stood.

“It’s nothing… Just a mishap,” Leylin waved his hand. He had experienced far stranger things than this in the Magus World, and developed some immunity to this sort of thing.
This was a peak rank 8 Magus with the power to twist time and change the future! The thought of himself reaching that realm left Leylin with a sense of longing.

“Whatever it is… This operation ended well. Let’s talk after leaving this place…” Leylin swept his eyes across the information in the A.I. Chip. The plethora of data about arcans in there was real. Leylin’s complexion only improved after they left the dragon’s cave, once he breathed in the chilly air that smelt of nature.

‘While the pocket dimension crumbled completely, there’s a possibility of something being left behind. I shouldn’t get too involved with this sort of thing before this body rivals my main one in power…’

There was fear in Leylin’s heart, ‘If the Distorted Shadow truly had malicious intent towards me, that one streak of intent would be enough for me to die there. So why did he let me off at the end, and even give me this scroll?’

Leylin glanced at the black scroll in his hands and then at Helen, who clearly kept peeking in his direction with a terrified expression.

“Do you know more about this thing?”

“No, I don’t! I found out from an ancestor that the Distorted Shadow had some manuscript in one of the rooms in the ruins that recorded some information about arcans…” Under Leylin’s gaze, she trembled as she spoke the truth.
“I’m afraid this isn’t what you were looking for, and it’s very
dangerous. Just leave it with me for now…” Leylin did not seem to
have any plans of returning the scroll. The Distorted Shadow had
too many ways to mess with a little rank 11 wizard. He could have
distorted her memories and implanted a fake, which were all easy
tasks.

“Alright, my Lord!” Helen felt a little discontent with his decision,
but still agreed. After all, what had happened had truly scared her.
Leylin looked towards this half-elf wizard and suddenly exclaimed,
“Mm! I’ll compensate you based on an agreement. Let’s say the
way for arcanists to rank up and a portion of an arcane spell
model.”

“Tell me what you want.” Helen had developed a very good
understanding of Leylin over this period of time. He would never
do anything that would not benefit him. Of course, once an
agreement was reached, he would treat all equally.

“Vow me your loyalty for a hundred years. Swear it upon your soul
and with the Styx as the witness.” Leylin spoke nonchalantly,
watching the conflict in Helen’s eyes.

She was undoubtedly clever, though. “Alright.” After struggling
over the decision for some time, she agreed and immediately swore
to it.

‘Mm, her soul is real, so she should be the real Helen…’ Leylin
nodded inwardly. The vow of a wizard’s soul when resonating with
the river Styx was something binding, and it could not be faked.

As he was now, a rank 11 wizard was dispensable to Leylin. The
key point was the verification and authentication he obtained from
the vow. This Helen truly seemed to be original, though her
emotions were all over the place.

‘Then… what did Distorted Shadow want to tell me? Did he
manage to survive the dusk of the gods, or did he fall completely?
No, with his strength he’d leave some soul fragments behind if he
died. They would await resurrection for a long time…” At this thought, Leylin’s expression grew sombre once again.

……

After killing the red dragon and exploring the ruins, there was no point in lingering on the Nether Mountains. Leylin hence ordered that they return. The group, which had dropped to around seven hundred in number, brought with them the immense glory and wealth of killing a dragon.

Rafiniya, however, looked sullen. It seemed that after like she would part ways after they left the Nether Mountains.

“Slaying the dragon and exploring the ruins took less than ten days. The outside world must be in chaos now, no?” Leylin’s thoughts were filled with delight at this disaster. He didn’t care about the female knight’s mood. Such was reality.

‘What’s going on? Why have they imposed this level of martial law?’ After leaving the mountains, Rafiniya could obviously tell that something was off. Many of the surrounding villages had been completely abandoned, and there were sometimes some who were very guarded, extremely alert against strangers.

‘Could the werecreatures have invaded again? Or have the orcs launched a huge attack?’ Rafiniya quickly came up with two possibilities, beginning to get anxious, ‘Leylin’s explorations will definitely have him accused of being a deserter…’

The female knight suddenly begun to get worried, but then she shook her head, ‘A sly person like him must have long since prepared an escape route. Even without that, why do I have to worry about him?’

At this moment, a scout ran over. “Report! A friendly force has launched a signal up ahead!”

“Mm, launch the signal. We’ll go over!” Leylin nodded calmly,
knowing who was coming.
In the dark forest, there were no other people besides him. As expected, after the scout sent the message, dust could be seen flying in the distance, and a human figure was like a black falcon swooping in from the sky.
“Leylin Faulen!” Cassley’s neck bulged from his immense fury as he arrived in front of Leylin.
“Why did you leave your battle zone? Also… where’s Malfoy?” After seeing the group of over 700 people behind Leylin, Cassley froze a little, but that was then drowned out by his anger.
“Did you know that because you neglected your job, I had to deal with the werecreature attacks and give up on helping Silverymoon?”
“Stop! Wait! I still don’t know what’s going on. Saving Silverymoon? Why?” Rafiniya felt a little dizzy.
“You don’t know yet? What a terrible excuse. Have you all been hiding in the woods in the past few days?”
Cassley had a mocking look on his expression, “The orc armies have already surrounded Silverymoon! While I, high-ranked wizard Cassley, was engaged in a bloody battle, your wretched new recruits dared to give up on the area they were supposed to be defend! You should all be hung!”
“Orcs surrounding the city?” Rafiniya staggered backwards, eyes full of disbelief. She was now completely disheartened, “You must have known that this would happen… Right?”
“Then… Why, mighty high-ranked wizard Cassley, did you not bring your own troops, and the volunteer army belonging to nobility and help them?” Leylin did not bother himself with Rafiniya and instead looked towards Cassley, ridiculing him.
“That’s because I need to guard against surprise attacks by the werecreatures!”
Cassley glanced at Leylin haughtily, “While you neglected your
duties and thus committed a crime, I won’t pursue this. Baron Leylin, in my capacity as the chief officer of the northern lands, I command you provide support to Silverymoon now. Immediately!”
Till this point, Cassley still had no plans to stop setting him up.
“Hehe…” Leylin looked straight at Cassley till he was almost exasperated, and then answered slowly, “Why…”
“Why? You mean you even have the gall to go against my orders? Are you forcing me to execute you right this instant?”
Cassley narrowed his eyes slightly. His strength as a high-ranked wizard was what he prided the most. His opponent was at most a rank 14, and even with his own troops and other men, he was nothing.
Furthermore, the documents that appointed him as the chief officer of the northern lands had been sent over through urgent channels. With his status now, it should be fine to kill a Baron, much less one that had committed the crime of neglecting his duties.
‘Yes, killing a genius wizard myself seems to be a good idea! However, I have to wait first. When Andrew sends the troops, and I take over Leylin’s army… Heh heh… They even have a great deal of rations, which is pretty good! In the northern lands right now, it’s best to have both rations and men…’
A myriad of thoughts swirled in Cassley’s mind, but before he could come up with another plan or decide if he should temporarily be nice to the other wizard, Leylin suddenly chuckled. “If you want to kill someone, do it. Why overthink it?”
“What… ugh…” Cassley suddenly felt an intense pain in his chest, and his body stiffened. He looked down and found that a black dagger had pierced through his chest.
“That’s impossible… I have a high-ranked wizard armour and instantaneously casted Mishap! Enemies definitely won’t be able to break through my defences in an instant, unless… Legend!”
Cassley crumbled down, and what he saw last was Tiff’s...
expressionless face.
“Trying to control me once the organisation collapses and using its might for that... Should I say you’re stupid, or stupid?”
“You... killed him?” Rafiniya’s voice was hoarse.
“No. Cassley died at the hands of werecreatures, on the line of duty!” Leylin laughed without the slightest of scruples.
“Pay attention! All on guard!” Leylin looked towards the friendly army that had finally arrived, and then shook his right hand with a sardonic smile.

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The light of sunset looked like blood.
Andrew and a few nobles were respectfully speaking next to Leylin, “High-ranked wizard Cassley died at the hands of werecreatures. Our northern lands are really in a pinch....” After saying this, they could not help but wipe off the tears. What happened that afternoon had scared them stupid.
“Oh! Also, the clash this afternoon...” Leylin spoke a bit louder.
“That’s a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding!” Andrew immediately took the initiative to say this, astounded and fearful of Leylin’s ruthlessness.
Since that’s the case, could all of you please sign this report of battle merits? Don’t forget to stamp it with your seal!” Leylin produced a document and waved it around, laughing sinisterly like a big bad wolf.

“We’re already at this stage. Who would dare go against him?” Baron Andrew laughed wryly inside and signed it.

“Good!” After all the barons and officers present signed their names, Leylin was all smiles as he kept the document, changing his attitude entirely, “As the subordinate of officer Cassley, I do feel regretful and sad about what happened. Divide his team amongst yourselves as you see fit!”

After hearing this news, everyone’s eyes brightened. The army that Cassley had brought with him was composed of a few nobles’ personal troops along with those of Silverymoon. Just the regular soldiers, horses and rations were enough for them to go green with envy.

‘After getting us to surrender, he’s having us divide the ill-gotten gains amongst ourselves? How evil...’ Baron Andrew sighed inside, but did not have the guts to voice his objection.

In reality, they were now prisoners of the sort. Leylin’s personal troops had completely defeated their allies this afternoon. After all, his underlings were battle-forged high-grade Professionals. It would’ve been strange if they hadn’t won.

Leylin didn’t force them too much at that time, instead ‘inviting’
them to talk peace.
‘After returning to the northern lands, we still will have to see how he decides to proceed…’ Andrew tried to console himself.

……

“Have you finally gotten what you wanted?” Rafiniya glanced at Leylin, her gaze icy.
“You’re talking about this?” Leylin lifted the joint declaration of the nobles and waved the document around, “No, this is just all in name. Essentially, with the chaos of war and there being even a question of whether the Silverymoon Alliance will still exist, who would care about the death of a wizard?”
Leylin wanted this in writing because it was better than nothing. Its presence would make a huge difference in any cases.
“Silverymoon Alliance not existing? Are you that pessimistic?” Rafiniya was rather astonished by Leylin’s conclusion.
“That’s how it is…” Leylin sighed, “The might of the Silverymoon Alliance already threatened the status of the human countries in the south. Mystra is facing all the orc gods practically alone.
Rafiniya paled at his simple analysis. There had been many who realised this in the past, but none had the courage to reveal it so clearly. Leylin was now breaking all pretense, revealing the naked truth to Rafiniya.
“You saw it in Silverymoon, didn’t you? The queen only has control over the land of Silverymoon. The Silverymoon Alliance states might support her when things are going well, but now…” Rafiniya’s heart dropped at Leylin’s words. She’d long since known that this was how nobles acted.
“Since things have gotten this bad, let’s go back to uphold the justice and peace I desire!” Rafiniya took a deep breath, eyes showing her emotional state.
“You… you’ll help me, won’t you?” The female knight had already guessed at the outcome, but still watched Leylin full of anticipation, hoping for a miracle.
“I’m sorry…” This girl was practically shining, the true model of a hero. It was a pity that Leylin would never do anything like like seeking his own death.
“Silverymoon has now been surrounded by the orc armies, and they even have several high-ranked Legends in charge. This level of strength…” Leylin presented his reasoning point by point, causing the light in Rafiniya’s eyes to dim. The Leylin in her memories and how he was right now were two completely different people.
“But… You are the hero of Silverymoon. At this point…” Rafiniya gave it one last try.
“Oh! Please don’t call me that, ‘Knight of Light’!” Leylin’s obvious rejection caused Rafiniya to finally give up.
“Even knowing that this will take my life, I will not give up on my sense of justice. This is my path as a knight!” Rafiniya’s voice resounded in the tent.
Watching her back as she left, Leylin stroked his chin and muttered to himself. “What conviction she has. It’ll be difficult to make her fall…”
She planned on using her strength alone to turn the tide of the losing battle, to become a shining hero! When he was young before, in his previous life, Leylin had read many novels of that type. He’d thought them to be chock full of emotion and hot blood, but in the end only bitterly smiled at it.
Reality and imagination were two completely different things. Turning the tables under such terrible circumstances was something only possible in stories, and it was just an author trying to please the readers. In reality, such a thing had less than a hundred millionth of a chance of happening.
Such shining heroes who were full of fiery passion were indeed worthy of respect, but Leylin would never join their ranks! “Besides… such an impulsive person like Rafiniya will probably die halfway to her goal. In the end, will her achievements allow her to be reputed as a hero?”

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The next day, Leylin received word that Rafiniya’s departed without informing him. Using her own charm, she had even persuaded some people and taken about twenty with her. Leylin merely rolled his shoulders back in answer, “Since they’re fools, let them go!” After gathering Andrew and other nobles, Leylin discussed their next move. “Silverymoon is now under siege. As part of the Silverymoon Alliance, I grieve and lament the situation. I’ve already dispatched my knights to bring people to provide support. If there’s anyone here who wants to go, please announce yourselves!” Leylin exclaimed with a smile. What came next was a difficult silence. The nobles who were seated all knew that the orcs were extremely determined. Their elite army of a hundred thousand had surrounded Silverymoon thoroughly, and going forth with the small numbers of people and horses they had was just suicide. On top of that, Leylin’s army had low morale, and it had recently dropped even further. Hence, all these nobles wanted to do was bury their heads in their chests like ostriches. ‘The personal troops of the nobles will only be able to do as they please in their own territories…’ Leylin shook his head at this and then clapped, “Good. Next, let’s discuss the direction of my army...”
The nobles looked at each other when Leylin acted like the master here, but nobody dared oppose it. The term ‘my army’ obviously included them as well. Officially, Silverymoon had pulled back all of their forces. Leylin’s army basically had the highest power. Alustriel had personally invested him with the title of a Baron whose power extended over generations. He was a noble who had been granted territory near the Moonwood. Who else had more power than him?

Most importantly, when it came to strength, Leylin alone would be able to eliminate the rest! The reason he had gathered them was only to nominally receive their agreement, and the nobles had all sensibly chosen to consent to this silently.

This was what Leylin had prepared. The moment any of the nobles dared go against him, he’d just slaughter them. In the turmoil of war, what would the deaths of a few people amount to?

A large military map was hung up on the wall. At the center of it was the wizards’ city, Silverymoon. The jewel of the north already had multiple red arrows around it, showing how it was surrounded. The map also showed the surrounding terrain. Most of the lands in the north had fallen to enemy hands, coloured black. In the west were the Moonwood and Nether Mountains. As the orcs had expended most of their strength in surrounding Silverymoon, or perhaps because of the werecreatures’ Blackblood tribe, the humans were still somewhat in charge there. However, the terrifying werecreatures were already a huge threat, and these nobles were fleeing with all their might.

There were now three routes for Leylin and the rest. One was to provide support to Silverymoon selflessly, clashing head on with the orc army. The second was to stay here and pray that Silverymoon could hold on. After the war had ended, they could then settle their accounts. The last was to move to the south and abandon the territory and people here.
Leylin was more inclined towards the third. “Silverymoon is the wizards’ city after all. The queen is a Chosen, and even if the orcs can breach Silverymoon, they would have to pay a huge price, and that would make it difficult for them to go south…”

Such an explicit declaration put the nobles on the spot.

“Lord Leylin, Silverymoon won’t be able to hang on with its strength…” While many of the nobles were greedy, despicable and shameless, there were also many who were clear-headed and unwilling to part with their territories. This was the only source of their power! In order to protect their interests, nobles could even make a deal with the orcs or devils, and disregard the threat to their lives.

“It’s best to let the orcs and Silverymoon harm each other. This way, nobody would be able to bother with us.” There were also many who thought the same.

Leylin made a quick scan of the surroundings and understood their thoughts.

‘How childish… Do they think they’re out of the woods if they bury their head in the sand?’ Leylin snickered inside, though he knew that getting the nobles to abandon everything was not reasonable.

Thankfully, with the report just before and the joint declaration as well as the document, there was no change in whether they stayed or left. Besides, the negative effects of bringing these people along far outweighed the benefits.

“Alright! All of you can leave alone if you wish to. Any who are willing to head south with me can stay here…”
With Leylin’s current reputation and the nobles now seeing his true colours, they politely spouted a whole pile of meaningless words. They then sped off as if their rear ends had been set on fire.

Soon enough, the tent began to seem a little desolate. Only a few figures chose to remain, one of which was someone Leylin was on familiar terms with.

“Baron Andrew! I never thought you would make such a choice,” Leylin said calmly as he looked at the middle-aged noble, who was constantly taking his silk handkerchief out and wiping his face.

“The orcs are attacking extremely ferociously. Even the werecreatures were not so easily dealt with. The ration stores in my territory aren’t enough to get us past this winter famine…” Baron Andrew laughed wryly, “I only have a humble request… When we pass by my territory, may I bring a part of my family along?”

Leylin nodded, “As long as the numbers are within a hundred, and if you bring your own supplies.”

“Thank you very much!” Andrew lowered his head.

While it was tough losing his position as the leader, Andrew could clearly see the situation in the north. Those fools and swines wanted to compromise with the orcs, or had the hope that the other side would let them off lightly. That was as impossible and laughable as the sun rising from the west!

“Great then. I’ll give you a day to prepare. Once time is up, we will
depart immediately!” Leylin decided.

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A large army slowly marched across the scorched wilderness. A few knights dashed ahead on horseback, their bodies stained with blood and filled with a valiant aura. The knights darted to a giant carriage, speaking respectfully, “My lord, we’ve taken care of the troubles in front. It was a wave of goblins and dwarf bandits, there are no casualties.”

“Alright. Order the troops to quicken their footsteps!” Leylin said slowly from within the tent, his eyes closed. He stopped his deep contemplation, and the group’s speed increased with his orders.

“This is really quite massive…” Leylin opened the windows of the carriage and watched the lively crowd, especially the disorderly refugees following next to his people, and sighed. The orcs’ main forces were focused in the direction of Silverymoon, while the werebeasts were occupied with the territories that Leylin and the rest had abandoned. They were more than glad to see all these people leaving. Including the people of Andrew and the other nobles, Leylin had over a thousand in his entourage. That was enough to intimidate others. Large military armies would not think much of them, and they were able to deal with the harassment of smaller groups. Hence, the trip to the south was very safe even though these refugees were rather unexpected. The fierce attacks of the orcs and other large organisations completely broke Silverymoon and the regions to the north. It resulted in a tremendous wave of refugees. Many humans were fleeing south, and quite a few were bringing their families along. Things were very chaotic.
There was wave after wave of bandits, thieves on horseback, and goblins committing all sorts of crimes in the autumn wilderness, be it fighting, raiding, or plundering. It could be said that reaching the south safely without any military protection was just a pipe dream. Along the way, it wasn’t as if commoners or nobles did not come over and beg for his protection. However, Leylin himself had very few rations left. It didn’t make sense to give them to people he did not know. Besides taking in a few nobles as external support, he did not accept anyone.

However, there were refugees who tagged behind Leylin’s group and made use of their might. There was no way around that, and as long as they posed no threat Leylin could not be bothered to deal with them.

‘The glory of the north is now consigned to history…’ Leylin walked out of the horse carriage and got onto a handsome black horse, surveying the entire group. Everywhere he went, whether it was the family of the nobles or the original troops, everyone lowered their heads in respect. They knew that Leylin was their leader, their shield as well as the one in control of their lives. If he grew hostile and chased them away, they would be like those pitiful refugees!

On top of that, this high-ranked military official was also a high-ranked wizard! In this chaotic world, those with strength gave one a sense of security.

Tiff was more aware of this. After leaving the Nether Mountains, Leylin intentionally had him hide himself. Even though there were rumours, most people expressed their disbelief in it. How powerful was a Legend? Why would he suddenly serve under Leylin?

On top of that, most of the Legends in the north had risen to fame a long time ago. Tiff was an unfamiliar face, and on top of that he was using an alias.

“Lord Leylin!” Andrew brought a handsome white horse to
Leylin’s side, seemingly wanting to curry favour with him. After seeing his mount, Leylin had the urge to laugh. Commanders who rode white horses were normally very unlucky in his previous life, white was the easiest to spot after all. It was the same now. If there were assassins or archers here, their first target would definitely be Andrew. His mount and the ornaments indicating his status as a noble were far too obvious.

“Mm. There’s about three more days left. We’re about to reach Yorkshire already. What are your plans?” Leylin asked.

Yorkshire was the human territory to the south of Silverymoon. It was also the place where Leylin predicted the orc waves would stop. The expansive regions in the north were already more than enough for them to take, and there were other organisations unwilling to see the orcs and their gods expanding further.

“I have a few relatives there, so I’ll seek shelter.” Andrew now had a forced smile on his face, “Perhaps I’ll be able to buy a villa in the city and a few manors outside. It would be impossible to live as luxuriously as I had in the north though…”

The extravagant lifestyle of nobles all came from their territories, with the taxes squeezing the people dry. Once they lost their territories and troops, they had basically lost all their power. This was why many nobles had stubbornly stayed behind in the north. It wasn’t that they could not see the obvious outcome, but they could not bear to leave! In comparison, Andrew’s choice was more sensible and firm.

“Yorkshire…” Leylin had a ruminating look.

“Yes. That is Marquis Lancet’s territory,” Andrew said, but he did not continue.

That marquis was an important power in the Silverymoon Alliance. However, his stance was rather dubious in this calamity, and he had been stuck in a rut. He also had good relations with other human kingdoms in the centre.
Of course, Leylin’s method of escape was not particularly impressive, so there was no use criticising Andrew for his decision. ‘No matter what world we are in, as long as nobody is foolish is enough to threaten the central nobles, the chances of placating the regional nobles is still very high. Even in the World of Gods, this holds true.’ Leylin deeply understood the thoughts of those who held power. After those in the south struck the Silverymoon Alliance, they definitely would not want the orcs to grow stronger. Hence, after Silverymoon collapsed, they would regain control of the orcs again. This was what Marquis Lancet wished for. He definitely did not want his territory to turn into a battlefield, instead making use of this time to gather more strength! While it was impossible to pacify everyone by dividing up the territories in Yorkshire, it was very likely that he’d give away the area surrounding Yorkshire as a buffer for the escaping organisations. ‘They’ll give us the territories at the north of Yorkshire and let us become the frontlines and cannon fodder to fend off the orcs…’ Leylin stroked his chin, a peculiar smile lingering on his lips, ‘Who knows, after entering Yorkshire, someone might draw me into a marriage proposal…’ Stripping a noble of territory was just too ugly. Doing this through a joint marriage was a far more gentle and acceptable way. The large nobles would definitely not want to be accused of doing something so terrible, so this was basically inevitable. Three days later, the large group entered Yorkshire. Order had been reestablished here, with well-equipped elites patrolling the entire area. There were even batches of cavalry on occasion. Evidently, Marquis Lancet did not dare believe the orcs at the north. After all, they were simple-minded, and it was natural that they
might suddenly have a change of heart. Compared to orcs, these refugees would pose a threat to security!
At the very least, after seeing Leylin’s organised troops, the soldiers looked wary. Leylin nonchalantly showed his noble and military rank pass, and then let them do what they needed.
‘I finally see it… the power of the churches…’ Leylin could see many huge tents set up in an orderly manner outside the city. Numerous priests with differently coloured church emblems and symbols were hastily walking around and helping refugees.
With a calamity on the horizon, this was the time for a huge harvest for faith. Leylin saw many crying ugly tears and repenting after obtaining oatmeal for emergency relief, and then entering churches. ‘It was rare to see them in the north when there was a calamity, but they’re all gathered here. The thoughts of humans and gods are obvious…’ Leylin thought inside.
Of course, it wasn’t as if there weren’t other types of priests in their midst. For instance, Leylin saw a small group of holy warriors and mercenaries rushing towards the north.
‘These are the paladins and priests of the God of Justice, Tyr. They’re rushing to the battlefield in their own name…’ Leylin thought to himself, ‘The gods with human factions are usually the most neutral. How could the God of Justice allow his own followers to participate in the battle in their own name? What a ridiculous internal power struggle…’
Leylin snickered. However, this was a chance for him.
able manners’ were very important. Even Leylin needed something to cover up Cassley’s murder, those large noble families often investigated these things thoroughly.

Due to the racial conflicts, the rulers of various human nations had sent their armies to help in the north. However, even the most ferocious armies could only push the frontlines of battle closer to Yorkshire. There was basically no difference even with them around.

There was a solemnness and tragedy to the paladins who were heading north alone. Leylin didn’t dwell on it long, though. Soon enough, the troops of Yorkshire brought the conditions of the city. Leylin and the nobles could enter, but the army would have to stay outside. That was their bottom line. Leylin merely rolled his shoulders back and accepted this condition calmly.

The surge of nobles from the north had inflated Yorkshire’s prices greatly, to the point that even nobles found it hard to stomach it. Of course, there were still benefits to holding power. A luxury villa was arranged for Leylin, with everything free of charge.

Leylin then met the Marquis Lancet he had heard about so often in rumours.

“Baron Leylin, I’ve long since wanted to see the rare wizarding genius of the north!” Lancet had a head of silver, curled hair, and a poised appearance. After seeing Leylin, even the wrinkles on his
face smoothed out. He had evidently conducted a thorough investigation before meeting him.
“I am extremely grateful for the Marquis’ generosity when the north has fallen into enemy hands!” Leylin’s behaviour astounded the marquis. Most geniuses were arrogant, but Lancet saw none of that in Leylin’s expression.
On top of that, he lacked the inflexible thinking and apathy so common to wizards, and instead seemed more like a scholar. His bearing even surpassed a few of the grandmasters he had paid a great deal of money to hire.
Lancet poured Leylin a glass of dark red wine, looking sorrowful.
“Before we get to the formal discussions, I wish to tell the Baron something with regards to the north…”
“Has Silverymoon fallen?” Leylin’s eyes glinted as he asked indifferently.
Lancet’s hand halted pouring the wine for an instant, causing the stream of liquor to break off for a while. He then sat in front of Leylin as if nothing had happened, a profound look in his eyes. “It seems like you have your own intelligence channels, Baron… Indeed, Silverymoon fell just yesterday…”

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One day ago, the north. Silverymoon City.
As the chief advisor to Silverymoon, Scholar Buren who was like the prime minister was watching Alustriel with worry in his eyes. She looked tired, her brows furrowed. The sight was heartbreaking.
Forgetting her real age for a moment, if one were to judge her based on her mental age and outer appearance, the life and death of the city had been put into the hands of a little girl. Scholar Buren thought this was just too cruel.
While Alustriel had great reputation and charm, she was not a qualified leader. The stress of war practically overwhelmed her. “No, the Goddess has yet to give me an answer!” Alustriel now seemed to have ended her meditation, the wrinkles on her forehead deepening.

The Goddess of the Weave, being a greater god, was the cornerstone that maintained Silvermoon’s existence. Now, however, she was rejecting Alustriel’s prayers and requests for help, which made things clear. “It’s not just any god. Has even the mighty Mystra abandoned us?” Seeing this, even a powerful legendary wizard like Buren felt his heart sink.

*Roar!* The cries of distant beasts travelled into the palace, causing Alustriel’s expression to change. “It’s starting again,” Scholar Buren sighed. A teleportation gate opened up, and Alustriel stood on the city walls next to Buren. “Long Live Her Majesty! Long Live Her Majesty!” Seeing her appearance, the morale of the city guards soared. They were now full of hope.

Alustriel had displayed her might as the Goddess’ Chosen these past few days. Only the orc emperor Saladin could contend with her. ‘But the queen is the leader, her responsibilities do not lie here. Battling the opposing high-ranked Professionals should be the job of the military wizards!’ Scholar Buren sighed inside. While Alustriel had immense charm and strength, this queen was still too inexperienced.

Buren watched the orcs’ formation under the city. There were huge siege vehicles and terrifying behemoths with them, and the worry in his heart increased. Even with the aid of all sorts of smelted items, as well as high-ranked and legendary wizards in charge, they were now at a disadvantage.
‘We have too few men... Few in the Silverymoon Alliance contributed much, and the troops that were sent out with orders didn’t bring any others back. Less than half of the original city guards that could take on the most rigorous missions returned...’

Scholar Buren thought it over, and then proposed to Alustriel, “Your Majesty, things have gotten this bad already. Please consider my suggestion!”

“No need for that. I can’t abandon my people, especially at a time like this!” Alustriel resolutely interrupted Scholar Buren’s words. “Look!” She pointed downwards, “There are still so many of my people, so many of those who believe in me here. How could I abandon them and leave?”

Alustriel’s face flushed red, an even greater might exploding forth from her body. Rafiniya quietly looked in the queen’s direction from a corner of the crowd. Powerful energy undulations were radiated outwards, and the golden light shining on her made her feel comfortably warm.

‘Is this grace? No! This... It’s a large-scale buff!’ Rafiniya’s face flushed, and she felt as if she could slay a dragon right at that moment.

Alustriel’s little face was now pale. Even with support from the large-scale magic formations under the city walls, such a large boost was still difficult to cast. She had even used up some divine force for this. However, she wouldn’t appear frail. The young, girlish voice resounded, “We will achieve victory!”


Rafiniya was moved, her eyes glimmering with sparkling tears. As she watched the paladins around her whose faces were just as flushed as hers was, eyes showing their firm resolve, she felt as if she had truly chosen the perfect path for herself.

‘This is the work of justice! Fighting for well-being and happiness!’ Rafiniya clenched her fists tightly, ‘Leylin... Someday, he’ll
definitely come to realise his mistakes and regret this!’

*Roar!* At this moment, the orc emperor Saladin had arrived at the frontlines.

“A large-scaled buff?” There was no emotion in Saladin’s eyes right now. The maids and other orc leaders beside him all lowered their heads respectfully, not daring to move at all.

“All preparations are done. Our master’s strength can descend at any time!” A few high-ranked priests headed over as they reported.

“Very good!” Saladin suddenly took a step forward. The earth’s surface seemed to tremble as a terrifying might burst forth from his body.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Saladin’s body abruptly increased in size, and in an instant he turned into a miniature giant, five metres tall and still growing. His clothes, armour and all items shattered with the violent movements.

This was the legendary spell— War God’s Possession!

Finally, Saladin turned into a terrifying giant over fifty metres tall. Only one item scaled up with him, the Thunder God’s Hammer!

“Lightning Strike!” Rafiniya heard Saladin’s voice loud and clear. The loud, horrifying sound caused her eardrums to tremble, with a stinging pain.

Afterwards, berserk lightning filled the skies and tore the clouds apart as everything gathered at the battle hammer.

Lightning from the highest of heavens rumbled as it seemingly turned into a terrifying dragon, releasing the most powerful flames of its fury!

Violet! As if a new world was being born, violet light quickly spread around the area. Under this light, the city gates and everything else completely melted away…

……
“Just like that, the orc emperor Saladin brazenly went against the agreement in the continent and used a terrifying legendary spell. With the boost of a divine weapon, he defeated Silverymoon thoroughly in one shot.”

Marquis Lancet narrated calmly. However, from how he suddenly gulped down a mouthful of wine, it seemed that this strength of legends still caused terror to well up within him. Leylin listened to everything he said. While he knew this would happen, he was still unclear on the exact process, “Then… Where is Her Majesty Alustriel now?”

Seeing Leylin getting the main point, the Marquis’ eyes were full of praise, “It is said that her whereabouts are unknown, but there is a large possibility she survived. After all, the vitality of those with divine force is frightening…”

With Alustriel’s strength, few would be able to find her if she truly wanted to conceal herself. However, based on her personality, she was unlikely get back on her feet quickly after this. She would probably require a long time to recoup.

At the end, Lancet intentionally brought up something, “Leylin, I have a wine reception here the day after tomorrow. I hope you can come!”
as the feast for the division of power and party after the war already begun?’ After walking out of the Marquis’ mansion, Leylin sighed inside. After the fall of Silverymoon, the chaos in the north could be said to have ended.

With powerful defensive spells and numerous strong beings, Silverymoon did cause huge damage to the orc forces. Even the orc emperor Saladin had sustained grievous injuries and was now in a coma. It was said that he had only been able to retain his life because of the god’s possession.

After swallowing up Silverymoon and the surrounding regions, the orc armies now had no more strength to carry on south. With the trials and unions of war, an orc empire took shape and slowly established itself in the skeleton of Silverymoon. This was much more important than expansion.

Once they succeeded, this would also be a boost for the orc god Gruumsh. After all, he was the god of all orcs.

‘The human gods wouldn’t let the orcs head south anyway…’ Leylin sat in the horse carriage, his eyes dark.

‘Mystra is far too powerful, and that caused the reservations of the gods from her faction. The numerous conflicts that amassed in the north combined to give this result… All the scheduled plans have succeeded. Weakening the Goddess of the Weave is enough, and the human gods would probably not want the orc god to get
Leylin was rather surprised by Mystra’s tolerance. That she could even disregard her daughter in name and Silverymoon showed how immense the stress on her was.

‘In general, the orcs have gotten a pretty good opportunity. It’ll be hard to get them to spit up what they’ve already gained, but they also don’t have more strength to stir up trouble…’ Leylin had a keen grasp on this, something far too few in the World of Gods understood.

The gods here were held high and untouchable! With tens of thousands of years of praise from the churches, regular humans now treated gods like true saints, believing them to be emotionless. They forgot that these deities were merely stronger versions of regular people, and had it in them to feel happiness, anger, sorrow and joy.

On one level, the gods were even more emotional than regular humans!

‘It’s not that they can’t recognise it. It’s more that they’re afraid to do so!’ Leylin snickered. ‘It’s not as if I haven’t seen people who blindly make excessive declarations and fool themselves into believing it while they’re at it…’

This was an exaggeration caused by the environment, and a limitation from the era they were in. If not for Leylin coming from another world and having had experiences in the Magus World, he wasn’t guaranteed to have seen through this either.

Not everyone dared tear off this pretense, looking down on the gods with contempt. The terror of burning at the stake for disrespect had long since shackled the original occupants of the World of Gods.

The few who were aware of the situation could not make any changes to it, and could only grieve and go insane over this…

“Master!” A dim light enveloped the cabin in an instant, creating a
noise-isolating barrier. A small figure jumped out from within the cabin, bowing to Leylin respectfully. Even with Leylin’s strength, it was impossible to create a tremendous intelligence network out of nothing in a short period of time. However, with Beelzebub’s generous aid, things were different.

Leylin had taken control of all the worshippers of the Sovereign King of Gluttony in the north. The methods he’d used were the same as always. The name of Kukulkan had long since been blacklisted by many churches, marking him a wanted man. “Did you investigate properly?” Leylin flicked his nail, producing a crisp sound.

“Yes… the human nations in the south have already passed a secret motion regarding the division of land amongst the feudal vassals in Yorkshire and other places. Marquis Lancet seems to be backed by the church of wealth, though he is also colluding with devils…” Working with devils did not mean believing in them. Who knew, it could even be someone under Beelzebub.

In reality, other archdevils were doing quite well in the prime material plane. While gathering his forces here, Leylin had met followers who believed in other devils as well. After all, the worshippers who had lost Beelzebub’s protection were the best prey. “While everything was done on the sly, our men managed to find out about it…” The tiny figure sounded smug, but Leylin was not really happy. After all, it was easy for devils to discover other devils.

“Do you know which devil it is?” Leylin asked dully. “Archdevil Mammon, in charge of the third level of the nine hells of Baator. I’ve seen one of the devils under him, and he’s appeared near the Marquis’ manor…” The small figure answered surely. “Greed? That does seem to suit Lancet.” Leylin chuckled as he
The World of Gods had a huge dimensional universe. The outermost layer was the terrifying crystal sphere, tenaciously rejecting all communication with the outside. Within it, the prime material plane was the foundation of the rest. There were tremendously vast dimensional spaces both above and below it, greatly surpassing it in scale.

If the World of Gods was compared to a meat pie, then the prime material plane was definitely the filling. The top was the land of the world of gods, while the bottom layer was the boundless abyss and hell. Around the pie were many semi-planes, littered around like sesame seeds. While this description had some errors to it, it was pretty accurate. The prime material plane wasn’t just connected to numerous semi-planes and the dimension’s core. It was also the world’s main source of faith and souls. Thus, the gods, demons, and devils all coveted it, launching into wars for its control. This had already happened numerous times.

The hells of Baator had originally been one with the abyss, but they’d separated for some reason. The devils and demons had turned into mortal enemies, occasionally breaking out in huge bloody wars.

The hells now had a total of nine levels. However, as the devils were in charge of order, they usually had the upper hand in battles. The archdevil unlucky enough to fall at Leylin’s hands, the Sovereign King of Gluttony Beelzebub, was the master of the second layer of hell.

‘The first layer of hell is a public area, where many huge, ambitious devils try to gain control. There are even some humans and other races living there. The second layer is Beelzebub’s territory, though it now lacks a master. The third belongs to Mammon…’ Leylin immediately recalled the intel he had on the hells. That was only
possible thanks to Beelzebub’s selfless contributions.
“Greed, huh.” Leylin sighed. As devils could control human hearts, these archdevils’ laws were usually inclined towards emotions. “Forget it, don’t do anything for now.” Leylin shook his head, “Anything else?”
“Hehe… Master, I bewitched another follower on my way here. She wanted my help to protect her status as a noble, and I’ve already agreed…” The tiny figure’s voice became tender, like a little girl acting coquettishly.
“Don’t even think of doing that in front of me.” Leylin warned her, a dark lustre shining in his eyes. That immediately caused the figure to start quivering.
“Your– Your subordinate wouldn’t dare!”
“A noble? Who is it?” After disciplining her, Leylin asked with interest.
“Miss Mila of the Shump Family! Her father and brothers all died at the hands of horse-mounted, and their territory is coveted by her other relatives. Without support, she’ll probably await death in a monastery…
“Based on what I know, she will appear at Marquis Lancet’s wine reception!” The figure added.
“An arranged marriage? While this might be a terrible custom, it really is the best method.” Leylin nodded. Thieves still had to observe table manners when sharing the loot. It was far too difficult to allow the poor to directly become nobles, and the resistance was far too powerful.
A marriage would make things easier, making the other nobles accept things more comfortably. In a situation like this where all the direct family members were dead, the daughter they left behind was a target that a whole group of wolves would drool over.
“She’s rather smart. What does she want? What can she give?” Leylin asked calmly.
“The Shump Family has the hereditary title of viscount, and they have land north of Yorkshire. She can take in our people and allow them to hold office in the territory that will belong to her husband. However, only heirs of her bloodline will succeed the noble title…”

“That’s not too harsh. I’ll agree once I see her…” Leylin nodded.

‘However, taking her as my bride at this point would seem like I’m showing off. Getting the title of viscount while my father is still a baron makes things awkward… More importantly, I can’t stay in the north permanently…’ Leylin sunk into deep thought.

‘Seems like Miss Mila should look for a husband from among my underlings. Tiff’s not that bad. It’s not like we can’t change things in terms of his appearance and age, and I can use this opportunity to give him a new identity…’ Leylin promptly decided the fate of this noble lady.

This was how cruel the real world was. If not for Leylin taking over, she would be in a more pitiful state.

“I’ll also need to help my men settle down and reward them…” Leylin knew fully well that the reason they were following him was because they believed he could bring them wealth and status. It was the basis of their loyalty.

Most of the time, what those at the bottom yearned for was to have his leftovers after he took the juiciest benefits. It was only because of their existence that Leylin could participate in this feast of bandits, getting his share of the profits with difficulty.
An enormous ship sailed across the ocean, its black bottom making it look like a floating castle of steel. Leylin sat in the most luxurious room of the ship, looking at a scroll made of beast skin.

‘It’s already been over 5 months…’ Leylin sighed. A lot of time had passed since the feast where they had divided Silverymoon’s power. Tiff had followed Leylin’s instructions and married the viscount mistress, forging an identity and becoming a glorious noble. As for their feelings? That merited a chuckle, many noble couples disregarded all that.

Afterwards, Leylin had cleansed and reorganised his own troops. He had hired trusted aides and the elites, leaving the rest for Tiff to settle in his territory. He would give them wealth and land. In the end, he had circled back to finished what he had started.

The northern territories had gradually grown more stable, and the orc empire had been established without incident. Saladin had become the first emperor, which caused a sensation in the World of Gods.

After seeing that there were no benefits left for him to pick up, Leylin happened to receive a letter from his family and chose to return home.

‘If I hadn’t been backed by a Legend, then I would have been completely unable to participate in the inner circle’s feast…’ Leylin sighed, his eyes filled with a thirst for power.
The changes in the northern territory had led to the orcs emerging as the fully deserving winner. The other human gods had also won what they wanted, and Leylin had also arrived in time to ruthlessly cash in on the opportunity. The only losers were Mystra and Silverymoon itself.

However, competition between gods were very slow. The Goddess of the Weave was very powerful, and this recent defeat couldn’t harm her fundamentally. She would be able to lick her wounds in silence and could make her comeback in the future.

However, all of this no longer affected him. Leylin looked outside the translucent closed glass windows at the boundless azure sea. There were even a few white seagulls circling in the distance.

“I’ve gained enough from this trip to the northern lands…” Leylin silently counted up his profits. In terms of power, he’d received a great deal of material on the arcanists and even raised his power to rank 15!

He was now a rank 15 arcanist-cum-wizard! At his age, it was universally shocking for him to have attained so much in such little time. Even before the dusk of the gods, in the times of Netheril, no genius could be compared to him as he was now.

Moreover, he’d exchanged military merits for Silverymoon’s collection of resources for legendary wizards. It was enough for him to grasp the path of wizards as well.

If his wizard tower on Faulen Island had been completed, Leylin was certain that he would be able to increase his wizard ranking further. It wouldn’t be impossible to become a Legend, although it would need both innate talent and luck.

In actual fact, Leylin had also thought of going to Silverymoon City while he was in the northern territories. When the city walls had fallen he had considered wantonly making a killing, but he had given up on this idea in the end.

Although it was quite possible for him to make a profit, the dangers
were similarly extremely high. Having obtained so much already, leylin didn’t intend to take more risks.

‘As for organisations, the northern territories’ Beelzebub worship network has already been subdued. With Tiff a viscount, the territory can be considered a gathering point for the organisations, and more can be done there in the future…’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘And as for goods, I have legendary red dragon materials, as well as this!’

A bag of holding flashed, and a black scroll of beast skin appeared in Leylin’s hands. It still had traces of dried blood on it. Leylin paid attention to the scroll, growing sombre.

‘Why did Distorted Shadow leave this scroll behind?’ Leylin felt a lingering fear as he thought of the dangerous experience he’d had. Distorted Shadow was an ancient rank 8 Magus who had found his own path, and if his true body had appeared it would have been bad.

As for that pocket dimension, even if it had fallen already the thing left behind would certainly be profoundly interesting. “The remains of Netheril must still hold some secrets…” Leylin muttered to himself. As he had been tempted into opening it, that pocket dimension had already collapsed. However, Leylin believed the ruins weren’t that simple in layout.

‘And Helen…’ After careful consideration, Leylin had decided not to bring the half-elf arcanist and mid-ranked wizard along. He had left her in Tiff’s territory in the north.

‘The power of the law of distortion…’ The intent Distorted Shadow had left behind had been extremely terrifying. More so was the power of distortion that it wielded, which could affect even time and space. It completely exceeded Leylin’s expectations, which fuelled his interest further. If not for that, he would long since have disposed of something like this beast skin scroll.

No matter what these ancient Magi had prepared for him, wouldn’t
it all be useless if he did not take the bait?
‘The ancient Distorted Shadow… Even in the Magus World, there exist very few records of him. It is only known that he is not a native of the Magus World, but a formidable power from another world. No one has ever seen his true body,’ Leylin thought of the research that his main body had seen, ‘As for his path, clearly the law of distortion is his main one. It has the power to melt time and space, and even has illusory abilities.
‘Is it inevitable that the path of a rank 9 Magi must touch upon laws dealing with space-time?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed as he rose to his feet, moving in front of the desk beside him.
The mahogany desk was mottled with black dots and marks, as well as numerous nicks. The debris on top of it had already been cleared and the desk was clean, leaving behind only a distorted pentagram array.
He put the beast skin scroll into the center of the array and his eyes seemed to glow blue.
“A.I. Chip! Pay attention to scanning and record all the information down,” Leylin commanded.
‘The World of Gods rejected the laws of the Magi. Because of this, Distorted Shadow couldn’t use his full power. The risk of contamination should be low…’
“Seawater, salt, petals, dragonblood stones, feces of a nightmare bat…” Leylin threw everything into the corners of the pentagram, occasionally spitting out incantations.
‘The power of the bat and the dragon’s blood, adding in the blessings of the petals…’ It had to be said that even though it was an improved version, his spell models were filled with the style of a Magus. If other wizards saw this, perhaps they would be scared to death by this strange ritual.
Leylin finally snatched up a pinch of green sand and sprinkled it down lightly.

*Bang!* The grains of sand spontaneously burst into green flames in mid-air and rained into the pentagram array. Little by little, the flames wrapped the beast hide scroll into itself.

“In the name of the devouring serpent, reveal the truth within the illusion…”

*Zzz! Zzz!* The scroll seemed to melt into the green flames, and the bloodstains on it grew even brighter and more real. Drops of beautiful blood began to drip down, bringing with them the power of distortion.

[Warning! Warning! The power of another world’s laws has been detected, reaching the limit of the World of Gods’ suppression.] At this moment, the A.I. Chip also issued a new red warning.

‘Wait!’ Leylin’s face was flushed. He suddenly made up his mind and plunged his finger into the array.

A warm feeling spread into him the moment his finger touched the red bloodstain. Afterwards, Leylin saw his hand grow endlessly old and rot. The skin grew wrinkled, yellowed and even rotted black. The ageing process spread unceasingly, extending from his fingertips to his shoulder, his chest, then his entire body.

*Zzz!* The skin was followed by his flesh and bone, the red and white wasting away under the force of time. Time seemed to speed up in the region, and the world seemed to transform. In the blink of an eye, several thousand years had passed.

‘I am the Distorted Shadow! Your devouring serpent shall feed my heart!’ In the end, all that was left of Leylin was a pair of eyeballs. It was at this moment that he finally saw a formless mass spreading everywhere. This was Distorted Shadow who lacked a true body.

[Beep! Energy has been exhausted from law probe, process automatically terminated!]

‘Mm?’ Leylin looked at his hand. His white fingers were bright and
clean and filled with the vitality of youth. There was not the slightest trace of age and decay. Nothing in the room had changed, as if everything that had transpired had only been an illusion. The pentagram array’s green flames had already burnt themselves up, and the bloodstained scroll rested nicely in the centre of the array. However, the dragonblood stone and other items had already disappeared without a trace.

“The belongings of ancient Magi are very dangerous. As expected, it’s strange enough to be terrifying…” Leylin muttered, “Did I immediately get cursed after I opened it? Did Distorted Shadow use this method to resurrect himself? Or did he make other arrangements…”

After pondering the matter for a long time and meticulously examining the A.I. Chip’s records, Leylin sealed the scroll and put it away. At the very least, it had the traces of a rank 8 Magus’ craftsmanship and his power of laws, so it was a great inspiration to him now.

‘No matter what, I’ll still continue to walk down my own path. Growing stronger is always the right thing to do,’ Leylin’s goal had always been extremely steady, and did not change under any circumstances.

‘There’s still some time left before I reach the outer seas of the Dambrath Kingdom, which is just enough for me to completely read through the arcanist materials. I can record all the arcanist spell models as well…’ Leylin tidied up the desk and sunk deeply into his thoughts once again.
A noble youth with curly golden hair and blue eyes lay on a soft silk bed in a dim room, a contemplative look on his face.

‘Arcanists… Magi who comprehended laws descended into the World of Gods during the final war, and created them to adapt their power into this world’s laws. They attempted experiments to make themselves like natives, and this was the result… They were the founding fathers of wizardry…’

Leylin viewed the materials he had obtained from the ruins of Netheril. With the A.I. Chip’s powerful capabilities, he had copied all of the ruins’ information and begun to arrange them into categories.

Arcanists weren’t simply battle spellcasters. There was a whole lot else to them as well. Alchemy, botany, enchanted architecture, forcefields, arcane runes… It was almost an all-inclusive package. If arcanists were used as the standard to select the best wizards, then the number of wizards would drop by over 90%.

After all, arcanists were Magi who had localised themselves to the World of Gods. They couldn’t be compared to the wizards who used the Weave.

Among all this data, what Leylin cared most about was the Magi who comprehended laws. These ancient Magi were gloriously powerful, and Leylin admired them deeply. He longed to learn from them.
Although it was difficult to perform research on arcanists, Leylin didn’t think much of it. The only thing that he needed to focus his mental and physical efforts on was the paths of those ancient Magi and their inheritances. Their thoughts and reasoning spilled forth from the arcanist inheritance.

This was the truly valuable aspect and the greatest guiding light for him!

The inheritances of the Magi had been damaged due to the ancient final war. Only the inheritances of mysterious and powerful ancient Magi circulated in the World of Gods, but there had been very few truly crucial and pertinent ones.

Although Leylin’s original body had risen to near rank 7, only after meeting ancient existences like the Mother Core did he truly begin to come into contact with Magi who comprehended laws. Even those existences did not truly comprehend the paths walked by other rank 8 Magi.

Far too many Magi had fallen in the final war, and few had been able to leave behind inheritances.

Leylin had completed integrating everything he’d gleaned from the arcanists’ inheritance. With this he could finally form an image of an ancient Magus, and acquire a general idea of the path walked by those who comprehended laws.

‘A Magus needs to surpass an enormous threshold every three ranks. Rank 1 to 3 Magi cultivate their spiritual force, and rank 4 to 6 Magi expand their soul force. For rank 7 and above, one needs to grasp the power of laws!’ Leylin’s eyes gleamed.

‘A rank 7 Magus needs to grasp a complete law, and rank 8 Magi need to grasp several different ones. To break through the threshold of rank 8, one needs to refine all the laws they’ve grasped to form their own path. And in one’s own path, they need to leave enough leeway to grasp the power of space and time, else they will never be able to advance to rank 9.’
Leylin’s eyes glowed even more brightly, ‘The path cannot be walked twice, and perhaps a peak rank 8 existence like the Mother Core walked down the wrong path. Her powers cannot extend to control spacetime, and she can’t advance.’

“As for my path… How should I plan this?” Leylin muttered to himself. His path of advancement had to remain steady, and the choice of what laws he would refine was even more important. This was just like the ancient Distorted Shadow. Although Leylin could not confirm what laws he grasped, he understood that the power refined from them was one of distortion!

The power of distortion held the law of spacetime within it. As a result, Distorted Shadow had been extremely close to the realm of rank 9. Even having fallen thousands of years ago, he could still cause some trouble today.

‘It is very important to have a stable foundation of laws. The feeling that I get from Mother Core is one of stability and gravity, so her foundation must have something to do with the power of the earth and fire. Perhaps it’s too difficult to extend that to control spacetime,’ After his worldview was expanded, Leylin held a deeper understanding of the strength of the other Magi who comprehended laws.

‘The Snake Dowager is different! Although she has not advanced to the peak of rank 8, the power of shadows she has chosen is rather good. At the very least, the power of shadows is more compatible with space, so if she truly obtains the world origin force of the Shadow World and breaks through to the limit of rank 8 she’ll be stronger than Mother Core. Still, it’ll be difficult to advance to rank 9 since shadows aren’t related to time at all…

‘One needs to choose a path compatible with spacetime before advancing to rank 9,’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Then… is it possible to directly refine the laws of space and time in rank 8? No, impossible! Someone who has yet to form their own path cannot
touch the power of spacetime at all. Normal refining methods cannot touch the laws of spacetime…’
As his understanding of the paths of ancient Magi grew deeper, Leylin’s knowledge of his own path also furthered.
‘With the arcanists as a guide, I’ll advance rapidly. The ability to break away from the Weave will allow me to overcome its restrictions. Although instant casts of legendary spells will be impossible, it won’t be a problem to use rank 9 and below spells if I pay a bit of the price…
‘Even if I am discovered by a god, they would most likely think that I’m an arcanist’s descendent or perhaps a fortunate person who discovered the inheritance of an arcanist. This will always be better than being thought of as a visitor from another world…
‘Since it’s like this, I can put many of my earlier plans into action!’
“The news came at just the right time.” Leylin’s eyes grew more serious. Having become a high-ranked wizard, the legendary realm would not be a bottleneck to him. He could later prepare to ascend into godhood.
At the very least, he would have to be careful in choosing his divinity in the future, making sure to pick one that was compatible with the path of his original body.
‘The path of divinity will affect my ascent to godhood and my church, so it must be considered carefully!’ Leylin’s expression grew sombre. Many divine wars had broken outs between gods due to opposing paths. He did not want to cross swords with other powerful gods the moment he ascended to godhood.
‘I’m currently a human. Those of us who ascend to godhood automatically join the human faction, so the best thing to do would be to ally with the pantheon of gods. This eliminates many divinities and territories… It’s also necessary to find something that would be compatible with the future path of my original body…’
Leylin massaged his temples, and found all of this a headache.
‘However, if a god dares to stand in my way, then I can only ask them to die as soon as possible…’ Gods such as these did not have the qualifications to stand in the way of someone like Leylin, someone who had grasped the path of laws and truth. From his point of view, these gods would only have mastered one or a few powerful laws at the very most. There was too large a gap between them and a Magus who comprehended laws. This was the limitation of godhood. Since their power came from the world and their followers, there would naturally be limits to it.

A god was like an officer. They could use their divine force to wield power on par with Magi who comprehended laws. In their own divine realms, they could even surpass such Magi. It was just that, once they left their realm or their followers lost faith, they wouldn’t even equal peak legendaries.

Magi were different, however. No matter where they were, their strength would at most be suppressed. However, their power could not be stolen or exchanged, it belonged to them and them alone. Consequently, there were rank 9 Magi who managed to find their own path. However, the most powerful amongst the gods with greatest divine power was the Overgod, who was also the the incarnation of the World of God’s World Will.

‘Once I ascend to godhood, I will only be a weak god comparable to a rank 7 Magi in the Magus World. If I were to encounter a mid-ranked god or rank 8 Magi, or other gods who are like peak rank 8s, then it won’t be possible for me to win. As a result, it’s best to avoid those two. I should also avoid clashing with any Chosen…’

‘This leaves me very little wriggle room, but luckily it’s not like I’m out of options,’ Leylin’s lips curved into a rather strange smile.

……

As he drew closer to Dambrath Kingdom, Leylin’s studies had also
increased in speed.
[Beep! Arcanist build has been recorded, spell models collected. Legendary: 3, Rank 9: 17, Rank 8: 23…] The A.I. Chip’s prompt caused Leylin to nod in satisfaction.
He still saw many of these arcane spell models using wizard spells as their base, and several of them were similar to the spell models of Magi. If he relied on the A.I Chip’s slow analysis, perhaps he would need thousands of years to deduce all of this. However, he had relied on own power to achieve this knowledge, and did not need the A.I. Chip’s deductions.
[Rank 8 Arcane spell models have been completely recorded. Record rank 8 spell models?] The A.I. Chip issued yet another prompt.
‘Yes.’ Leylin now had the power of a rank 15 arcanist, and could use rank 7 spells without consumption. Rank 8 spells on the other hand needed some extra effort.
For a rank 15 Professional to use rank 8 spells, a traditional wizard would have their requests completely rejected by the Weave. Arcanists however would use their arcane knowledge and some preparations to successfully cast such spells after paying a certain price.
As it was like this, rank 8 and rank 9 arcane spell models would become Leylin’s strongest trump cards. It was comparable to the spell torrent that he released using the Weave.
[Transmitting rank 8 arcane spell models!] The A.I. Chip loyally fulfilled Leylin’s orders.
Sensing that his sea of consciousness suddenly possessed even more data on arcane spell models, Leylin nodded as he looked at the other benefits he had gained. He had found other interesting things in the data from Netheril.
A multitude of data and news flashed before his eyes, before it stopped at several short poems.
Leylin had found information regarding the arcanist ruins in the Dambrath Kingdom, using a book he’d found from decoding a map. Leylin now found something else from the information the A.I. Chip had copied. The information that the A.I. Chip had recorded was complete, with the information on the spell models that arcanists had used among others. This included even personal diaries of some arcanists and the like. There was some short poetry in the disordered data, something that most people would probably overlook. No! In the short span of time it took for the pocket dimension to collapse, most adventurers would find it difficult to even find information on the arcanists, having to turn their heads. Only someone like Leylin who possessed the A.I. Chip could copy this information. Along with these few poems were some recipes that caused Leylin to look disconcerted. Even if adventurers unknowingly found the resources that had this information, they would quickly ignore it, but he was different. With his previous experience breaking code, he immediately saw that there was something different about these poems. They were encrypted the same way, and likely came from the same arcanist. ‘Such high-level encryption and difficulty in getting the resources… The secrets hidden must be astounding…’ Leylin
transferred the information into his mind with interest. With his previous experience breaking code, he made much quicker progress. It took just a few hours for the information hidden within the incomplete phrases to be laid bare before him.

“The coordinates of a location and a specific time?” Leylin scratched his head.

“If I calculate it... year 37670 of the Calendar of the Gods. That’s three years from now. When the black crows cry out to the blood moon... It’s in the Frostfall Valleys, slanting to the east of Cygnus.”

“This again... A specific time and location. What appears will be...” This method of stacking space caused Leylin to frown slightly, he associated it with Distorted Shadow. Only he could warp space and hide his items as he wished, waiting for people to unearth them.

“But... Distorted Shadow has already passed down his path. It might be possible for a legendary arcanist who was his disciple...” Leylin pondered over this as even more information was decrypted.

“What will appear is a floating city?” Leylin stroked his chin, seemingly in disbelief. A floating city didn’t seem like much to his eyes. The Magi of Sky City had already developed such a technique.

The city floated eternally using the powers of the Adept Scepter, something that could even boost one’s vitality a single time. Leylin had made use of that feature, and even toured the core control room of Sky City to personally touch the scepter. He hadn’t found it all that amazing.

“No, that’s not it. It mentions a floating city, it might be due to an arcane spell that the legendary arcanists came up with by themselves! It’s a fort used by arcanists to fight gods, and one of the major accomplishments of arcane spells. How could it be that weak?” Leylin’s expression changed, and he then looked through the descriptions of the arcane spells.
Soon enough, he learnt that the arcanists’ floating city and Sky City’s floating vessel were two entirely different things. “I see… a true floating city is powered by a Mise energy core, and needs the strength of a pocket dimension. At its final stage, it’s a dimensional fort! In such a floating city, legendary arcanists would be comparable to gods! So terrifying, even divine realms aren’t much in front of this… Sky City’s floating can at most be considered a weakened version that lacks this amount of power,” Leylin muttered.

It now seemed like the arcanists’ floating city had truly inherited the design concepts and core of the ancient Magi. Sky City was probably a copy from incomplete information and not authentic. It was like a clumsy version of a toy made by a child. ‘Interesting! When my main body awakens, I should get the Monarch of the Skies to do research on my behalf for a few days…’ Leylin quickly made up his mind. Given his strength near rank 7, the Monarch of the Skies had no power to resist whatsoever.

“As for this…” Leylin eyed the resources in his hand, sighing a little.

The information hidden in the short poems said that an arcanist who was performing experiments during the fall of the Netheril Empire had made a mistake. Due to it, he’d jumped the floating city to a lost plane. The legendary arcanist, his students, and all other life forms had died in the floating city, but that plane might still exist. Due to this incident, the floating city evaded the gods’ investigations and luckily got away. That was probably the only one in the World of Gods.

The arcanist who had left this trail behind had spent his life pursuing the peak of arcane arts, and had found this treasure in a ruin. He had successfully deduced the time and location that the
floating city could return. However, He had been born far too early. There were over ten thousand years till the floating city leapt back. Evidently, unless he successfully become a god or turned into an undead lich, he would not be able to wait that long. Hence, he chose to leave the information and related clues behind for others to discover. “From the inheritance left behind, the arcanist that discovered the clues must have died long ago…” Leylin sighed. After the destruction of the Netheril Empire, the churches went all out in persecuting the arcanists. To be able to find this, the arcanist must have reached the legendary realm himself. That led to more fear from the gods, and chances of him still surviving were far too low. However, that made things easier for Leylin. “A floating city that can rival the gods’ realms?” Leylin stroked his chin, eyes full of wonder. Ancient floating cities were very powerful. There had even been records of legendary arcanists piloting them to attack divine realms Even if it wasn’t for defensive purposes and just research, Leylin was very interested in the design, Mise energy core, and magic cannons. “A floating city without a master that can independently operate for tens of thousands of years and even automatically leap back to the World of Gods… The intellectual core and Mise energy core must be incomparably perfect… “Treasures from the peak of arcane culture? Interesting. Interesting! I’ll have to give it a go if I get the time.” Leylin made up his mind. ……

Tens of days passed by. The weather was exceptional that day, and Leylin had left the hold of the ship and arrived at the deck. The sea breeze had a clean, salty smell, and the warm sunlight felt
very comfortable.
“I’ve already made records of the arcane spell models. Information on the floating city has all been deduced…” With these two parts done, Leylin was in a good mood, “The calculations say I should reach Port Venus today.”

He’d left home for many years, and was finally returning. In that moment, Baron Jonas, his wife, Ernest, Jacob, and many other faces appeared in Leylin’s mind, causing him to feel emotional.

“I was only around rank 10 when I left, but now I’m a high-ranked wizard. Master Ernest will be shocked.” Leylin took a look at his stats.


Becoming an arcanist had changed his stats greatly, and the window had grown more concise. He could still use spell slots like before, and he also had the spell slots for a rank 15 wizard, but after becoming an arcanist Leylin now had another card up his sleeve beside the analysis of the Weave.

‘After somewhat breaking away from the Weave, the A.I. Chip’s analysis of the Weave has increased in speed… Seems like the Weave has a very tight hold on wizards…’ Leylin took a look at the A.I. Chip’s analysis report of the Weave, lowering his head in thought.

At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s prompt rang out, and Leylin’s stats changed once more.

[Beep! Analysis of level 4 Weave: 100%. Obtained all rank 4 spell models. Spell slot limitations removed. Host is now immune to forgetting rank 4 spells, no materials will be required to cast them.] [Analysis of Weave: Level 0 Weave 100%. Level 1 Weave 100%. Level 2 Weave 100%. Level 3 Weave 100%. Level 4 Weave 100%.
Level 5 Weave 55.21%. Level 6 Weave 33.89%. Level 7 Weave 17.22%.
[Spell Slots: Rank 7(1), Rank 6(4), Rank 5(6), Rank 4(???)
, Rank 3(???)
, Rank 2(???)
, Rank 1(???)
, Rank 0(???)
]"
Rank 7 spells were considered high-ranked spells. The Ring of Wizardry had now lost all its effect, increasing only a single spell slot for spells below rank 6 originally.
“I’m advancing too quickly! My equipment isn’t keeping up with my needs.” Leylin muttered to himself, “Thankfully, I still have many ingredients from the legendary red dragon that I can use to make a new batch of items…”"
Port Venus was right up ahead. With the Pirates’ Tide and the fall of the Baltic archipelago, the port was now booming. Countless shipping routes were opened up, and the closer one got to the port the more ships they could see. The port had already expanded several times, and there was no issue with accommodating over a hundred ships now. This had been something Leylin had considered when choosing the location. His choice of a wide deepwater port showed his foresight. The dock was crowded with people, though there was also a gathering of some who were out of the ordinary. A few people in the front were wearing gorgeous noble attire, and Leylin’s excellent eyesight allowed him to vaguely see some familiar faces. Right in front were Jonas and his wife. Madam Jonas was waving a white handkerchief in his direction, occasionally wiping away her tears. The moment he got off the boat, Madam Jonas pounced into Leylin’s arms before he could even greet her, “Oh… child! My child! How could you be so heartless as to leave us behind for so many years…” Upon seeing this, Leylin could only nod towards Baron Jonas and begin to console his mother. “Alright. That’s enough, darling! Leylin’s return is something to be happy about!” Baron Jonas looked much older now. The hair on his temples was already greying, but he seemed to be in good
The stern decisiveness he had from his time in the military had dulled. What was left was grace, calmness and the steadiness of power.

“Father, I’ve returned!” Leylin smiled and bowed.

“It’s great that you’re back!” Baron Jonas nodded, and then led a pair of children who were around five or six years old over.

“These are your brother and sister, Jake and Sherlyn. Come, meet your brother!”

“Brother!” “Brother!” The two pairs of eyes held innocence and fear within them. They were still at an age of ignorance, but still listened to their father and sweetly called out for him.

“Mm.” Leylin nodded. Leylin sensed his father’s bloodline in these children, but they didn’t have his mother’s blood.

However, this was common among nobility. Children born of concubines had no status whatsoever, made obvious just from the fact that their mother had not come along.

As children of concubines, the most they could do was enter a god’s church or become the housekeeper of another noble family, unless of course Leylin was willing to divide and hand over part of his territory to them.

As they posed no threat to Leylin’s status, Madam Jonas was not hostile to them.

“Hello Jake. Hi, Sherlyn!” Leylin now acted like a gentle big brother. While had not known this would happen, he still managed to produce gifts quickly. A beautiful rag doll and intricate moccasins he produced caused the children to cheer.

Leylin had long since prepared a ship full of presents to distribute, and naturally wouldn’t mind giving out two more.

“Seeing you being so friendly puts me at ease,” Baron Jonas nodded in satisfaction. What Leylin was doing was making his stand clear. At the very least, he would not need to worry about
how his children would be brought up after he passed away. Based on his understanding of Leylin, he definitely knew that when it came to scheming and strength, the pair definitely could not match up to him.

‘Now, I can only hope Jake and Sherlyn know to be content with what they have…’ Baron Jonas sighed inside.

“Jacob! Leon!” Leylin greeted a few other people, passing them their presents.

“Young Master Leylin!” Jacob and Leon bowed respectfully, looking emotional. They looked to have aged a fair bit, and it was about time they retired.

“It’s been hard on you!” Leylin scanned the area, and then saw the Gold Priest of the Goddess of Wealth, Xena. “And Priest Xena! Long time no see!”

“It’s really been a long time!” Xena still maintained her appearance as a young girl. The glory from the gods allowed her to slow her aging, to the point that she would retain her youthful looks even at death. The look in her eyes, however, showed how she had matured.

“I have many things to discuss with you regarding Port Venus and our future cooperation. By the looks of it, I think it’ll be better for me to visit you in the future,” The priest spoke considerately.

Leylin nodded. There hadn’t been change in the management of the church of wealth here, but there was in the two others. There were new bishops for the God of Knowledge, Oghma, and the God of Suffering, Ilmater. They met up with Leylin individually, getting to know him as he did them,

“Come to the wizard tower tonight. I have something to show you!” Ernest was still the same as ever, leaving after throwing him a few words as if he had an important experiment to attend to.

The corner of Leylin’s lips quirked slightly. At this point, the wizard tower should have been about finished. He was sure that his
master wanted to discuss something related to that.

‘When the time comes, I hope my progress doesn’t scare him…’

After the complicated and disorderly welcome ceremony, Leylin returned to his villa in Port Venus. With the maturation and development of this area, the core of the entire island had shifted to this area, turning the manor into a resort.

“Young master!” “Young master!” Two beautiful maids lay in wait inside the villa, their eyes reddening as they saw Leylin.

“Claire, Clara!” Leylin nodded. The pair seemed to have matured quite a bit, and looked on the verge of tears.

“The decorations in the room haven’t changed at all.” Leylin placed his hands behind his back and looked around. The arrangement of the furniture, carpets, curtains and the like were the same as when he’d left.

“Madam was afraid that young master would feel uncomfortable after your return, so we maintained the appearance of the room.” Claire spoke softly. She had now grown into a strong woman.

Leylin sighed inside. At this age, most maids in the manor would probably have gotten married. The fact they were still here definitely had something to do with him. Before he said a word about this, even the father of these two beautiful sisters, the old housekeeper Leon, would not dare make any decisions.

Sometimes, a mere idea by someone with power could cause a huge change in the lives of the people below. However, Leylin had no other thoughts about this. What was past was past. At the most, he could just give them some more compensation.

“Boil some water, I’m going to take a bath before bed. I’ve had enough of life on the sea!” Leylin ordered, and the sisters quickly did as he said well.

Leylin didn’t have much time left after a brief rest. Far too many things had piled up when he was gone.

First was the wine banquet at night to welcome his return, and it
also included interaction with a few other powers. He had to go attend. After that, Leylin went to Baron Jonas’ study room. The baron’s study room was much larger than before. There was a faint aroma from the dark red Semen Hoveniae, and it was illuminated with magic lights. The conditions were much better than before.

Baron Jonas sat at the desk and watched his son, “You did well, my child. You are my pride!

“It’s a pity about the north. We’ve no choice but to let go of the Violet Territory, but the title of the Violet Baron can be passed to your other heirs…” Leylin had mentioned his title in the north to the baron before.

His Violet Territory was in the hands of either orcs or werecreatures, having become a part of the orc empire. It was impractical to expect to reclaim it. However, what Baron Jonas prioritised was the title of Baron that could be passed on through generations. This was much better than the titles of the nobles in the court, and could also be passed down through generations.

Leylin had lost his territory through the chaos of war, but his title had not been robbed from him. A loss of territory was an unspeakable humiliation for many nobles, but they still retained their titles. Already passing the threshold of status, they could climb up the ranks much more easily elsewhere.

Even with the loss of the land in the north, it wasn’t difficult to gain it in Dambrath. There were still many deserted islands in the outer seas, and with some work Leylin’s hereditary barony could well be transferred to Dambrath. In that case, the Faulen family would have two baronies to pass on, so in a sense their strength would double.

Perhaps the baron viewed the ability to pass down land as something worthy of being happy over.

“With our family’s current strength and trade relations, it won’t be
difficult to influence the king. You’re also a noble, and as long as
your land is in the outer seas and doesn’t affect the interests of the
other nobles in the continent, there shouldn’t be many going
against you…” Baron Jonas spoke confidently.
Even now, his eyes were still trained on land of the nobles, as well
as the profits from trade.
Leylin listened on, declining to answer. His only target was
immortality, but different people had various paths and ideas. He
would not force anything on the baron.
“How about Marquis Tim? Has he made any trouble for us?”
“Him… After coming back from the capital, he’s become more
honest… I actually called you back for other matters,” Baron Jonas
turned serious at this point.
“What is it?” The letter had only said that some issues had come up,
so Leylin had no idea what this was about.
“Traces of devils and demons are becoming more common in the
outer seas. Cyric’s church is rising, and the Barbarians have
returned and are expanding…” Baron Jonas spoke unenthusiastically.
everything was happening in secret. The baron’s enemies were not so easily dealt with, and the person most qualified to do so was Leylin.
He now had control over the Scarlet Tigers and had even gotten rid of the Baltic archipelago. Baron Jonas had his suspicions about this, but the father and son maintained a tacit understanding and did not lay it bare.
“I understand!” Leylin nodded. In his opinion, the return of the Barbarians and the rise of the devils and demons was only to be expected. The period post calamity was a golden time for churches to expand, but so it was for demons and devils as well. The ripples caused by the Pirates’ Tide still hadn’t faded.
“And Cyric?” Leylin’s eyes shone. He had some things to settle with this church. What they had done before had left Leylin slightly discontent.
“I’d be at ease handing all this over to you. If there’s anything you need, do tell me. Prioritise your safety, I don’t want to lose an outstanding heir. Is that understood?” Baron Jonas spoke seriously.
“Yes, father!” Leylin nodded.
“Good! Go meet your Master Ernest. He has a surprise for you!” Baron Jonas had a smile on his face, “Spend more time with your mother now that you’re back. We can’t delay your wedding either…”
At the mention of this, Leylin felt a headache coming on. He found
an excuse to leave the study room.

......

It was night, and Port Venus still had lights everywhere. At the very least, there were huge torches burning at the pier, where ships hurried to unload their cargo. This would have been unimaginable in huge cities. With the labour and physical resources in the dark ages, the cost of illumination in the night was a huge burden.

Till now, Leylin had only seen one city capable of using lights to brighten the area, and that was Silverymoon. Port Venus was now added to that list. It was a pity that the port was several times smaller than Silverymoon, so it wasn’t comparable.

“It’s beautiful, isn’t it?” Ernest watched the pier that seemed to glow with stars, his voice showing his awe.

“This is the result of the effort of father and everyone else!” Leylin spoke in a very humble manner. He could tell the delight and fondness in his master’s tone. Ernest probably treated this like his second home.

“The more prosperous Port Venus is, the more people will come. The crime rate here is now almost at a stage that even the guards can’t deal with it. The Mercenary Association and the Warriors’ and Thieves’ Guilds will definitely increase the pressure on public security, as will the requests of other churches...”

Ernest stated calmly, while Leylin listened close. He was controlling the situation from afar, and what he knew was surely less than what the wizard who had been staying here all this while did.

“That’s why we planned to build this, right?” Leylin looked at the main part of the huge wizard tower, a smile on his face, “Once the wizard tower is built, those mice in the sewers should stop...”

Ernest nodded in agreement. The two of them were on a mountain
next to the Port Venus, one that had a clear view of the port. The general structure of a wizard tower had already been built at the top of the hill.

With the power of wizard towers, even the most low-levelled wizard would still be able to control Port Venus without trouble. It would also serve to intimidate others. After all, a wizard tower was comparable to a high-ranked wizard! This was a loyal slave that was fully controlled and knew no exhaustion.

“Thanks to the batch of resources you brought back and our investment later on, we’ve finally built the main body…” Ernest caressed the sturdy body of the tower, a smile on his face.

“Want to see her?”

“Of course!” Leylin smiled and nodded.

The construction of a wizard tower would require an investment of at least two million kronas. Some high-ranked wizards might not be able to amass so much wealth even if they worked hard for centuries. There were plenty who were willing to sell themselves for it.

If not for Leylin looting the Baltic archipelago and retrieving the materials meant for the wizard tower, as well as the Faulen Family’s investment from Port Venus, the wizard tower would not have been built so quickly.

“The main material for the wizard tower is granite and wizards’ alloy. It’s a total of 32 metres tall.” Ernest brought Leylin into the wizard tower, making introductions as they walked.

“The strengthening runes and defensive spell formation of the tower have been completed. The mithril and adamantine that you brought have been completely used up, and we’ve even had to buy a new batch. The tower itself has seven floors, with the basement, drawing room, storage room, laboratory, leisure room…” Ernest seemed to be very invested in the tower.

He abruptly pulled a large door open. It was empty and very dry.
“This is the storage room. It can hold enough rations to last two hundred people a year. There’s eternal warmth and maintenance spell formations, so the food won’t go bad. You can cultivate fruits and vegetables in the garden…

“Also, the spell formation connecting the four main elemental pools has been completed. Energy can be unceasingly drawn from the four elemental pools, and the pure water from the water elemental pool can create a water cycle…”

At this point, Ernest looked to be hesitating, but still spoke, “Also, based on what you said you wanted in the letter, the dimensional summoning spell formations and negative energy pools have been set up in the basement…”

As a traditional wizard, Ernest had a natural hatred for these things, but could not prevent this. Advancing from higher ranks to the realm of legendaries definitely required research in these two areas. He believed that Leylin knew to restrain himself and not deal with devils and demons, and was rather at ease.

“Of course, with your current strength and talent, you’ll be able to use these facilities within ten years…” Ernest spoke with confidence.

In his eyes, the strength Leylin displayed gave him a very good chance of becoming a high-ranked wizard within ten years. That speed alone would have been shocking.

After all, the advancement of wizards was not similar to other close combat professions or priests. There was a lot of accumulation required, which was also why many young wizards were weak.

“You didn’t call me here to discuss this, right master?” Leylin smiled. He had not placed his wizard ranking emblem at his chest. He hadn’t verified that he was rank 15 even in Silverymoon, so he was being treated like a rank 12 to 13 wizard. For Leylin’s age, that was already outstanding.

“Yes… uh… how do I explain this…” Ernest had a flush on his
Ernest muttered, “You know that vitalising a tower requires at least a rank 7 spell, a high-ranked wizard is necessary… While we can discuss this after you’ve advanced, the safety of Port Venus is of immense importance. We have to activate it immediately…

“I think we should consider inviting a high-ranked wizard to cast an Activate Intelligence spell. Of course, they’d have to join the Faulen Family, sign an oath with the Styx and hand over the tower afterwards. However, that would only be used for observation for a while. This level of strength alone will arouse the interest of many high-ranked wizards, and can greatly increase the number of trump cards we have… After all, a wizard above rank 15 is a true high-ranked spellcaster!”

Ernest was very inarticulate at the beginning, but he spoke smoothly later. The control of a wizard tower was a sensitive subject, and anyone would hope for their own people to have it. Sadly, both he and Leylin were quite a distance away from meeting that requirement.

“While I’m still a low-ranked wizard, I never thought there’d come a day that a wizard’s tower would be right in front of me, yet I’d be unable to control it…” Ernest laughed wryly as he spoke.

“Bring me to the core room,” Leylin nodded calmly.

Upon hearing this, Ernest brought Leylin to the top floor and entered a narrow room, “Everything has been prepared. All that’s left is a high-ranked wizard who can cast a rank 7 spell…”

Ernest sighed, but it was followed by a look of surprise as Leylin walked to the core of the spell formation.

“What are you doing? Did you think you can start the tower?” Ernest was stunned as he watched Leylin place his hand on the core control crystal.
“While what you say makes sense, it’s too dangerous to let others control the wizard tower. Even with the restrictions from the oath, it can’t be guaranteed that the outsider won’t have their own methods. This could be fatal to the safety of the family’s land…” Leylin spoke.

While an oath to the Styx was binding, in his experience there were many ways to find loopholes. Of course, that would’ve been their course of action if left with a choice. However, he already met the requirements, so why would he give the control of the tower away?

“Alright, alright, little Leylin… I know you’re not resigned to this, but… I! Oh, god…” Ernest had been advising him while finding this hilarious, but then gaped immediately after.
Powerful spell light shot forth from Leylin’s body, to Ernest’s shock. He’d only sensed this sort of terrifying, imposing aura and pressure from high-ranked wizards before. Now, however, this had appeared on Leylin!
“A high—high-ranked wizard! Haha... I’m definitely dreaming! This is a dream, right?” He slapped himself so hard his face was swollen, but that didn’t allow him to wake up. He could only choose to accept this reality grudgingly.
“A rank 7 intellectual activation spell?” Leylin had chosen to hide his energy undulations before, and Ernest obviously did not have the ability to see through it. Even high-ranked priests would not be able to discover it.
‘While this spell can illuminate the entire wizard tower, the tower genie that’s generated will only be a low-ranked kind which won’t be all that intelligent. It won’t be able to become a wizard’s right hand man... Besides, I didn’t memorise this rank 7 spell yesterday...’ The spell slots of a wizard had to be prepared a day in advance. Leylin only had one rank 7 spell slot now, and he obviously wouldn’t have saved Activate Intelligence.
However, with the numerous arcane models in his hand, Leylin now had more choices.
“The rank 7 arcane spell Activate Construct is better than the rank 7 wizard spell...” Arcanists naturally had their own wizard towers, and they had
invented countless methods to activate them. Every genie born of their processes was far more exceptional than the alternative, so Leylin easily made his choice.

“In my name as Leylin Faulen, activate!” Leylin silently chanted in his mind, multi-coloured lights flashing at his hands. Through the crystal, it spread out.

“These energy undulations… This is definitely a rank 7 spell… But it doesn’t seem to be Activate Intellect!”

Ernest had yet to become a high-ranked wizard, and obviously could not tell the difference between an arcane spell and a wizard spell.

Arcane spells looked just like wizard spells on the surface, they just weren’t bound by the Weave. Forget Ernest, even if high-ranked wizards were here they wouldn’t have been able to see the difference.

The dazzling light first lit up the core control room, spreading in all directions. The four elemental pools began to rumble as they began to draw continuous streams of energy from the four great elemental planes.

Level after level of the wizard tower lit up, the powerful magic light like bright torches in the darkness. A wondrous scene was created at Port Venus.

This wave was sensed by many powerful beings. Be it priests or other exceptional powers, everyone lifted their heads in the direction of the wizard tower, concentrating on the scene.

Bishop Xena of the Goddess of Wealth gazed at the wizard tower in the distance, looking stunned for a moment before regaining her usual calm. “I never expected that you’d already hired a high-ranked wizard to look over us in secret. Congratulations, Lord Baron, it looks like the security problems we were worried about can be set aside…”

“Oh, not at all…” Baron Jonas had a professional smile on his face.
While he was saying something so modest, he was just as confused. ‘Where did Ernest find a high-ranked wizard to help out? I wasn’t even greeted before.’ The Baron couldn’t believe that a child like Leylin could advance to rank 15 either.

Many swears were uttered among the crowd at the port. Many shadows snuck out of the sewers, darkness, and even private houses, disappearing quickly from the harbour.

“Damn it! How did the Faulen Family activate the wizard tower so quickly? The intel isn’t accurate!”
“Leave quickly! The detection abilities of a wizard tower are not to be trifled with!” With the powerful suppression from the wizard tower, all the schemes of these people had failed disgracefully.

……

Inside the wizard tower.

A hazy image of a girl’s face formed in the crystal. Her eyes gleamed as she smiled at Leylin, “Master!”

In more vulgar terms, the tower genie was the seed of the wizard who’d activated it. The natural brand extended deep, and changing the master of the tower was a troublesome matter.

“Alright. Report the operational state of the wizard tower!” Leylin commanded.

“Defensive spell formations completely activated. The four elemental pools are operating normally and have amassed 12.15% energy,” the female tower genie reported to him in a formal tone.

“Mm. Start the detection spell formation and set the scope to be Port Venus. The baron’s residence and city hall are to be inspected thoroughly. Immediately report any energy undulations above rank 10!”

“Understood!” The tower genie quickly carried out Leylin’s wishes. Leylin then brought Ernest away from the core control room, layers
of powerful lustre enveloping the area. Ernest seemed reluctant to leave. He knew that once the tower genie was activated, nobody could enter this place besides Leylin.

“What’s going on? When did you become a high-ranked wizard?” Ernest shouted after they returned to the drawing room, unable to hold himself back anymore.

“It’s a long story…” Leylin smiled slightly. The considerate tower genie then ordered for a few stone puppets to send over some cups of clear water. This potable water was sourced from the water elemental plane. Since it was a new construct, the daily commodities would only be moved here the next day. However, neither Leylin nor Ernest minded this.

“The stone puppets are at most comparable to rank 5 Professionals, which is a little low. They can only be used for odd jobs…” Leylin took a sip of the pure water that had a sweet taste.

After drinking all the cool water in front of him from the jar, Ernest finally regained his calm. However, his two eyes were firmly trained on Leylin, like huge searchlights, “Enough! You’d better give me an answer now!”

“Alright…” Leylin laughed wryly. He raised his hands in surrender before giving a brief account of his experiences. Of course, he withheld quite a bit and added some fake information. He was great at telling stories anyway, and many of the details were still hair-raising.

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“So that means… my son has already become a high-ranked wizard…”

Leylin was inside the baron’s study room, left with no choice but to retell the story in front of the baron and his master.

“Yes! He really is a wizard genius. I don’t doubt his ability to
become a legendary wizard at all! Who knew that I, Ernest, would be able to guide a legendary apprentice? The next time people see Leylin, they’ll first think: Oh! So it’s Leylin! The wizard that Ernest taught…”

Ernest was obviously immersed in his fantasies, while Baron Jonas was more practical.

“Good! I wouldn’t feel at ease handing over our family’s wizard tower anyone else anyway, so this is the best scenario…”

Leylin bowed. “Yes, father! However, please announce that you invited another high-ranked wizard to keep this secret. I would like to take this opportunity to help the family solve some issues at one go.”

“Do as you please. I support you all the way!” Baron Jonas found that he had nothing to say to Leylin. From childhood, his son had never given him anything to worry about. Sometimes, he even wondered if this child of his was a genius or a freak.

“The port seems a lot more peaceful ever since the wizard tower began monitoring it…” Leylin sighed.

“That’s normal with a wizard tower,” Ernest rolled his shoulders back.

“I’m planning to leave for a period of time after this, I’ve handed most of the permissions of the wizard tower to master. There shouldn’t be any problem with controlling it for now… We should also begin to take in wizard apprentices from our territory…”

Leylin stated his thoughts.

With the wizard tower and a high-ranked wizard around, there would be no difficulty in nurturing apprentices by themselves. Even Ernest would be able to do this well.

“Don’t worry. I discovered a few good seeds here, and only lacked resources and an environment to teach them…” Ernest’s eyes showed how emotional he was. If a high-ranked wizard could improve by using the wizard tower, the benefits to a middle-ranked
wizard like him would definitely be immense. It could be said that the existence of the wizard tower made him believe he had the opportunity to become a high-ranked wizard in his lifetime!

“Mm. I’ve also left behind some foundational and high-ranked wizard information in the wizard tower’s library. Master can take a look…” Be it Ernest’s advancement or gaining a few wizard apprentices from their territory, everything would increase their strength. Leylin would be more than happy for all this to happen.

“Information on wizards…” Ernest’s eyes brightened. Meanwhile, Leylin was snickering inside. Though no wizard organisation would allow wizards who had studied with them to leak high-ranked information, wasn’t Silverymoon City already destroyed? Well then…

Still, he kept back the information for legendary wizards. It would be far too shocking, and Leylin did not want to get too much attention.

“Alright! Do you want to solve the issues with the Barbarians? The devils and demons? The churches? Do you need any help?” Baron Jonas muttered.

Leylin thought about it for a while. He then leaned his head to the side as he spoke, “The pirates first, then!”
The Barbarians had once been Leylin’s ally. However, with the defeat of Marquis Louis, the relationship between them had gradually turned into a competition. Leylin had no guilt whatsoever of beating them. If they had a chance, he was sure that they would do everything in their power to destroy his own organisation.

This was the law on the outer seas. Cruelty and logic prevailed, not allowing for a whit of emotion.

“Mm, the Barbarians are a large issue. When the imperial navy still existed, they lay low for a period of time. Now, though, they’re suddenly appearing and even attacking our commercial groups!” Any huge merchant would hate these pirates to the bone. Only nobles could plunder, how dare those barbarians steal their things? Although there was a bias here, this was the general thought process.

“Don’t worry, they won’t be active for long!” Leylin promised.

……

“Good morning, Lord Wizard!”
In the blink of an eye, numerous days had passed. Within the wizard tower, a freckled girl saw Leylin approach and put down the book in her hands, shyly greeting him.

“Good morning! Your name is… Dylia, right? Work hard!”
Leylin answered without thought, and the girl instantly turned red, “Yes! I’ll do that!”
Leylin was not surprised by her attitude. Her rough skin and hands full of calluses made it obvious that this apprentice was a commoner.
If not for Ernest finding her talent at wizardry by coincidence and Leylin just finishing his wizard tower, it was impossible for her to get here. However, with all these coincidences piling up, the girl’s fate had changed.
She was destined to work the fields, marry someone, endure the rough treatment of her husband, and rack her brains over her children. However, now there was another possibility. She could become a wizard, serving a noble master and changing her fate! This hope alone was enough for commoners to fight hard for.
As he thought about this, Leylin placed the spellbook he had copied into the shelves and then left the library.
The wizard tower had become more lively. After gaining permissions to a few laboratories and a pass to go around most areas, Ernest had moved in and brought five or six apprentices. The tower had been constructed like a fort, so it could guard two hundred people inside it for numerous years without much effort. It was completely possible for a few apprentices to live there, and the place was even very comfortable.
Not bothering Ernest, who had become slightly deranged, Leylin came to the core smelting room at the upper levels.
“Tower genie, how’s the progress with the items?” Leylin asked indifferently.
A projection of the tower genie’s appearance formed, and it spoke to Leylin respectfully. “Master! The Red Dragon’s Sword has already been completed. What’s left is the last bits of processing and pyretic nourishment.”
“Good!” Leylin nodded, lips curving at an angle. He’d evidently
thought of Ernest’s look when he gave him these legendary materials.
This was a dragon, a peak being in the World of Gods! Killing a legendary mature dragon required one to brave perilous dangers, and if not for the thousand elites and Tiff who was a legendary himself, it would’ve been basically impossible for Leylin to eliminate the red dragon. His life would probably have been lost as well.
Of course, once the dragon was successfully slain the profit was immense. Just the legendary materials from the red dragon was enough for any alchemic wizard to go green in envy.
“The Ring of Wizardry and a few other items before now give me very little benefits. I’ll need to crush the Barbarians as well, and things might be troublesome if I don’t have a few items I can use…”
Leylin came before a large petri dish, producing a red long sword from the silver solution. The slender blade of the sword emanated piercing light, and it had a beautiful arch. The hilt even had carvings of the red dragon. By design this was a sword for women, the draconic pride that was its motif causing a content smile to arise on Leylin’s lips.
The A.I. Chip projected the related information to Leylin. [Item Name: Red Dragon Sword. Length: 91.5cm. Weight: 2512g. Materials: Red Dragon Bones, Dragon Scales, Refined Metal. Item Effects: 1. Armour Break. 2. Sharpness. 3. Fireball (3 uses a day) Description: This is a sword made with materials from a legendary red dragon. Based on the categorisation of this world, it has entered the ranks of legendary items! This item has a terrifying sharpness and ability to pierce through armour. In the face of this sword, most defences are frail. The blade also seems to have a mysterious magic that thirsts to drink the scalding blood of its enemies.]
‘A legendary item? Not bad!’ Leylin nodded and wiped the sword
clean. He then sheathed it in the dragonscale scabbard. This was not for him, but a gift for someone else.

With Leylin’s attainments as a grandmaster in alchemy in the Magus World, and mixed in with his skills of the World of Gods and the runes of the arcanists, there was no difficulty in creating legendary items.

‘But it consumes so much magic… I can only complete it with the help of the wizard tower…’ Leylin then headed to an area outside two glass rooms. Through the thick, reinforced crystal glass, he could see a dark red leather armour and a magic staff with a strange shape at the middle, enjoying the powerful force being channelled into them.

‘The effects of fusing alchemical methods from the two worlds has quite good…’ Leylin pondered over this once he witnessed the scene. If he were to do this based entirely on the methods in the World of Gods, creating a legendary item would require a lot of time. It would be astounding for him to make even one.

Now, however? The progress and innovation in production techniques was definitely a huge source of motivation for him. Leylin suddenly recalled something from his previous world and shook his head. Memories of that time were far too distant from him.

‘Perhaps the techniques there aren’t entirely useless. With my capabilities, I can begin to attempt fusing different laws together with various techniques. The antimatter experiment at the end would be very powerful even in the World of Gods…’

The A.I. Chip continued to twinkle, and the attributes of the two items were projected in front of Leylin.

[Item name: Dragon Armour (Incomplete) Weight: 1599 g. Materials used: Dragon Leather, Dragon Scales, Siren’s Hair, Rainbow Feathers. Magic Effect: Can materialise Mage Armour II twice a day. Description: This is a powerful defensive armour. As
the leather of a legendary dragon was used in its making, it is immune to most low-ranked spells. It can also adapt well to the spells of a wizard.]
Though a legendary red dragon had a lot of leather, not much of it was the true, essential portion. Leylin had extracted the best parts to make this legendary armour, and the rest of the leather could only be used to make regular exemplary items, even if their defence wouldn’t be too bad.
Leylin then focused on the staff in the alchemy room, which had a strange structure. It had slender red scales on its body, and at the head was something similar to a dragon’s claw that held onto a large red crystal. Within it was the faint image of a red dragon, roars still resounding.
[Item name: Red Dragon Staff (Incomplete) Rank: Legendary 1. Length: 91.5cm. Weight: 3500g. Materials: Dragon Crystal, Dragon Soul, Dragon Bones, Dragon Blood, Dragon Scales.] [Item Abilities: 1- Storage. This staff can store spell slots. Currently empty: Rank 7 (1), Rank 6 (3), Rank 5 (5) 2. Spell: Can materialise Dragon’s Breath thrice a day. 3. Ability: Dragon Aura Domain. 4. Soul Burn: By extracting the power of the dragon soul, one can create a single-use legendary spirit attack (This will harm the dragon soul).]
Description: This is a magic staff made entirely with materials from a legendary red dragon. Its creator has unreasonably confined the dragon’s soul inside it, giving it unbelievable strength. However, this will lead to the hostility of the dragon race.
It was evident that this Snarling Red Dragon Staff was the true star of the show. Many wizards would covet this legendary staff, but few would have the gall to use it. Even Leylin had made up his mind not to use it unless things were dire, and then he would silence those who saw it.
The dragon race in the World of Gods were quite powerful. Those
ancient or primordial dragons were beings the gods themselves did not have the courage to provoke.
‘The essence of a legendary dragon gave me the materials for three legendary items.’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘This is a very high yield. Other alchemist grandmasters would not be able to do this, and even I feel quite emotional…’
‘In addition… its bloodline seems to be quite useful…’ Even Leylin had to admit that everything on the legendary dragon’s body was a treasure. It was no wonder that they were coveted by all sorts of races.
“These two legendary items should be enough to allow me enter the realm of legendary…” Leylin was rather satisfied with his work. “Once they’re complete, I should head into the outer seas and settle debts with the Barbarians…”
Leylin’s eyes suddenly glinted with a chilly look. He had plans for the outer seas, and it would be a great foundation to build on in his ascent to godhood. No outsiders could get a share of this!
For many sailors, the deep sea regions were fearsome areas comparable to the abyss and the nine hells. In the darkness under the peaceful blue surface were numerous strange sea monsters, greedily staring up at the ships. Or rather, at the beings on the surface.

If a ship was destroyed and a sea monster were to be around, there was basically no chance of survival. For sailors, those who had conquered the deep seas were the truly strong, worthy of reverence.

Night deepened, and the gloomy surface of the sea was like a terrifying monster opening its mouth, waiting for its chance to devour everything. Its peace was broken by a tremendous pirate fleet, cruising along with the might of a conqueror.

On the largest magically armoured ship was a crimson flag. The flag seemed to be dyed by blood, and had the symbol of a skull and dagger on it. In the Dambrath outer seas, this was a terrifying legend!

The Scarlet Tigers! They had wiped out the original Tigershark Pirates and Black Skeletons, and were a large-scaled pirate group that had taken over the outer seas.

It was rumoured that the leader of the Scarlet Tigers, the Scarlet Witch, was a demon of the abyss. She bathed in the fresh blood of the living, using their pumping hearts to maintain her strength and beauty. At this point, the Scarlet Witch’s name had even reached the
mainland, terrifying little kids into tears at night. This Scarlet Witch whose fearful name had spread far and wide was currently on deck, looking into the distance with a look of anticipation in her eyes.

“Long time no see, Cousin Isabel!” A dark figure descended from the skies like a night hawk, bringing with him furious winds. Leylin observed his cousin, who seemed to have changed a lot yet not at all. She greeted him with a smile.

“So you only remember me now? It’s been four years. Four whole years!” Isabel exclaimed maliciously, though her eyes seemed to be glimmering.

Afterwards, she yelled at the pirates who had been alerted, “What did you come out for? This isn’t an invasion. Get back, or I’ll hang you on the flagpole tomorrow for three whole days and then cut off your dick to go with some alcohol!”

It was evident that Isabel held high prestige here. After the roaring came the sounds of doors and windows closing.

“Hehe… you haven’t changed at all.” Leylin rubbed his nose and laughed. Isabel was still the same as she had been years before, though her long golden hair become much shorter, and she was specifically hiding an area on her forehead.

“My lord!” “My lord!” A few other leaders rushed to the deck, looking emotional.

“Mm. Karen, Robin Hood, Ronald! Have you all been well?” Leylin called them by name, one by one.

“Gods, everything is going well!” Robin Hood had been a soldier of Leylin’s family, and was the first to speak.

“Good! Let us have a meeting after this.” Isabel rudely sent the other leaders away and stared at Leylin, causing some fear. “Where’s my gift?”

“This?” Leylin laughed wryly and produced the Red Dragon Sword. “I think it suits you well. I already told you when we
talked…”
*Rumble!* Isabel didn’t even listen till the end. The moment she saw the dragonscale scabbard, her eyes twinkled with a wondrous look. She was almost barbaric as she snatched the sword from Leylin’s hands before moving back.
*Roar!* A slight draconic aura burst out, accompanied with the enraged howls and roars of a dragon. Red light flashed on the blade, bringing with it traces of flames.
“Legendary! A legendary item that has even gone through an excellent enchantment!” Isabel had been a pirate for many years, and her judgement was much better than before. She saw through it instantly.
“What do you think? Do you like it?” Leylin asked.
“It’s mine!” This question didn’t need answering. Just Isabel’s expression alone was enough.
“Mm, it’s good that you like it. Also, we have some things to discuss. Shall we go to your room?” Leylin suggested, and he saw the flush that rose on her face. He could not help but rub his nose awkwardly, feeling like he had been impudent.
However, Isabel still did as Leylin wished and brought him to her bedroom. The pink curtains, the canopy, the crimson carpet, and works of art with varying styles mixed together to form a unique look. These were all the treasures that Isabel had stolen.
A pungent incense entered Leylin’s nostrils, concealing the smell of the sea. Females were obviously more attentive than males.
“Actually, I’ve come prepared to solve the issues with the Barbarians in one go. Odge and Tillen seem to be stepping out of line lately…” Leylin’s eyes were trained on Isabel, “But by the looks of it, there’s something more important that we have to deal with now.”
He went forward, lightly pushing away her fringe. A few strange scales had already appeared at the edge of the girl’s fair forehead.
“Has the demonification already come that far?” Leylin frowned slightly.
“Don’t worry about it. I’m actually feeling the summons from the abyss even more. Who knows, I might just fall at any moment…” Isabel had a resolute look on her face.
“Mm, I feel that as well. But this doesn’t seem difficult to solve!” Leylin stroked his chins, and saw the hope in her eyes.
“Well, do you trust me?” Leylin sincerely looked into her eyes.
“Who if not you?” Isabel lowered her head.
“Good!” With a flick of Leylin’s finger, a barrier silently appeared.
“I need you to cooperate with me fully and do as I tell you to, alright?” he instructed her carefully, a test tube containing golden-red blood appearing in his hands.
“Mm!” Isabel nodded her head slightly, suddenly blushing a little.

……

The morning sun rose from the east, shining golden ripples looking like fish scales on the sea’s surface.
“How do you feel?” Leylin looked to be slightly tired, though his eyes were still bright.
“I feel… better than I ever have before!” Isabel touched her forehead. The scales had disappeared, and her original short golden hair had turned a dark red like fire.
“Thankfully, you didn’t choose to sell your soul and were only corrupted by the demonification. That can be concealed and neutralised with a more powerful bloodline…” Leylin evaluated.
“I never thought you could even transform people into sorcerers!” Isabel looked towards Leylin, as if remembering something embarrassing from the night before, and lowered his head. In front of her cousin, she truly no longer had any secrets.
“Not a sorcerer, but a Warlock! A Dragon Warlock!” Leylin
corrected her.
“Warlock?!” Isabel tested out this word, “I’ve never heard of it before…”
“I’ve combined the legendary red dragon’s blood with your body. From hereon, you will control the power of the red dragon, and can even awaken magic abilities!” Leylin had no plans to explain further and handed a meditation technique to Isabel. “You can try training in this ‘Dragon King’s Mystic Might’ in the future. It will do you good…”
“Dragon King’s Mystic Might? Do sorcerers— no, Warlocks need to train?” Isabel expressed her confusion.
“Of course!” Leylin nodded sternly.
This Dragon King’s Mystic Might was obviously not the high-grade meditation technique Leylin had gained in Twilight Zone. It was one he’d refined with that as a foundation. Leylin had actually found information on it from the ruins of the arcanist, and with the A.I. Chip’s help integrated the two. It could be said that with the meditation technique and bloodline modification, Isabel now had the potential to surpass sorcerers! In addition, the blood of the legendary red dragon would be enough to suppress the demonification for a long time.
“Alright! Let’s go meet your cute underlings!” Leylin got up to leave, and Isabel followed closely behind. For high-ranked Professionals like them, a night without rest was no issue at all.
Pulling the door open, they arrived at the deck and saw the dubious smiles on the faces of Robin Hood, Karen and the others. Evidently, news of Leylin spending a night in her room had spread and given rise to some associations. Unexpectedly, Isabel had not gotten mad but instead rejoiced inside. However, she still glared at them icily.
“Alright! There’s a lot to do, so let’s discuss it over breakfast!” Leylin had long since passed the age of caring about this, and
waved his arms with vigour, bringing everyone to the dining room. Making use of this opportunity, he got more familiar with the leaders under Isabel. He knew some of them very well, but was complete strangers with some others. They must have joined some time after he left.

“We’ve been developing well in these few years, especially after the imperial navy left. There are no opposing organisations left in the outer seas…” Isabel spoke with pride, “We now have twenty large warships with over 1500 men…”

“Mm, you did very well!” Leylin listened closely and got a better understanding of the recent growth of the Scarlet Tigers, “How about the Barbarians?”

At the mention of this, Isabel immediately turned grim.
Those darned barbarians are the only forces with the guts to oppose us. Half a month ago, they even launched a surprise attack on one of our fleets and sunk three of our pirate ships…” Isabel looked glum, “Also, they even control Pirates’ Cove. We’re barred entry!

“That’s not all. I have a feeling that they have something to do with the cause of turmoil in the outer seas recently. I mean the power of the abyss and hell, as well as the church of the God of Murder…”

The half-drow assassin, Karen, supplied.

The female assassin had hidden her aura and would now be a Professional of at least rank 10. Now, she was impatient to show off in front of Leylin. This was obviously inappropriate, and under Isabel’s gaze Karen quickly fell back.

“Interesting… Interesting…” Leylin sat upright. His devilish ability to grasp the hearts of others allowed him to understand his underlings’ state of mind easily.

‘Karen… She was discriminated against because of her background and prior relations with me. What is she trying to show me? That’s not all… I have a feeling that she’s hiding something. This anxiety… is her race trying to rely on me for protection…?’

Leylin sent her a cursory glance, but this only made the half-drow nervous.

“My– My apologies, master!” The half-drow apologised miserably, tears almost flowing from her eyes. Leylin’s nonchalant gaze
seemed to look straight into her heart, causing her little schemes and calculations to disappear. The half-drow suddenly had a thought, ‘Perhaps even the matriarchs in the Underdark don’t have such terrifying gazes…’

“Isabel is the person I’ve assigned power. Before she gives permission, none of you are to speak out. Is that understood?” Leylin’s voice was low, “If this happens again…”

“No, I swear! I promise that there will never be another time!” Karen immediately knelt down, kissing the back of Isabel’s hand. “Please forgive me…”

“Forget it.” Isabel nodded. Leylin’s attitude satisfied her, and that was enough.

There had been a slight mishap with the female assassin, but after that the scope of the discussion returned to the Barbarians.

……

Pirates’ Cove.
Though the imperial navy had tried to wipe out this place several times, Pirates’ Cove still showed no signs of weakening. Due to the Faulen Family quickly taking over trade of the Baltic Archipelago, the original golden shipping routes had not been abandoned. There were still merchant ships with all sorts of wealth on them travelling here, and the environment after the chaos of war made this a playground for pirates. Pirates’ Cove even showed signs of gaining more prosperity.

In a secret room in the barbarian inn. The Barbarians’ leader, Odge, was seated imposingly with the eternally beautiful Madam Tillen at his side. Now, however, her eyes were wary, and the fox tail at her back had been tucked in. Her fur stood on end, as if she was on her guard against some terrifying enemy.

Facing these two was a young noble with a head of black hair
wearing gentlemanly attire.
“Well then… are the two of you interested in my proposition?” The young noble had a kind smile on his face, the manners showing his noble education. It felt refreshing, but Madam Tillen did not seem to be at ease.
This was because the youth in front of her was a devil! Compared to those evil beasts that specialised in seducing human souls and leading to their fall, the barbarians and goblins were great people. To Madam Tillen’s knowledge, devils were always the synonyms of swindling and craftiness. This made her even more vigilant. The young noble in front of her did not seem to notice her fluctuating thoughts, and still continued on coolly, “Based on what I know, the genius wizard and successor of the Faulen Islands, Leylin Faulen, has returned. He also seems to have roped in some external support and activated their wizard tower, making Faulen Island a natural stronghold…”
A port with a wizard tower guarding it was entirely different from one without. Even Odge began to look grim. Leylin had become a high-ranked wizard in the Netheril Ruins, and had met with the chaos of war with the orcs. There was no way to determine his ranking. Naturally, this news did not spread.
“Leylin…?” Madam Tillen suddenly thought back to that little imp that had repeatedly caused her trouble, and could not help but tighten her grip.
He was like the devil in front of her, they were all very elegant and slippery characters. When it came to their own profits, they would never budge.
‘No… Leylin Faulen, the heir of the Baron, seems to be more terrifying than this devil…’ This thought suddenly rose in Tillen’s mind. This was a woman’s intuition. There was no reason at all, and she frowned.
“Not only does he have large armed fleets, he also has help from
the pirates. On top of that, with the Faulen Family’s current status, they obviously would wish to attack the pirates in the outer seas to ensure that trade routes and trading remain unimpeded. Hence, you shall be their first target. You need my strength!”

The young devil spoke slowly, traces of darkness flashing in his eyes. Meanwhile, he was also astonished at the pressure the return of this noble caused to these two. It was above his expectations.

“Your name.” At this moment, Odge suddenly rose from his seated position and watched this devil from above.

“Neville! You can call me Neville. I would be happy to serve you…”

The devil named Neville had a sincere smile on his face. Behind his handsome features that could cause young noble ladies to go crazy, Madam Tillen saw a poisonous snake. She could not help but shiver.

Blood-red flames rose, and the young devil bowed elegantly, disappearing with the teleportation flames. After determining that he had left, Madam Tillen set up an isolation spell formation.

“I think… We shouldn’t work together with devils. You know how they are…” Madam Tillen had a worried look, expressed with her eyebrows.

“We have no choice! Leylin’s faction is too powerful. We can’t go against them.” Odge spoke seriously, resulting in a wry look on Madam Tillen’s face. When it came to the strength of pirates, the Barbarians had no fear regardless of how the Scarlet Tigers emerged as a force to be reckoned with.

However, the Faulen Family was not just about the pirates! With their trade control and immense wealth, they’d rapidly set up terrifying armed fleets surpassing even Louis’ old ones. They were nobles, and in the name of protecting the shipping routes Leylin could openly expand his forces without restriction. Soon, it would surpass what Pirates’ Cove could control.
In the face of the purge on the surface and in the shadows, the Barbarians’ might in the outer seas had already begun to plunge. While it wasn’t a devastating decline, it wasn’t anything good. At the very least, mobilising another Pirates’ Tide was impossible.

“The benefits of the Barbarians in the outer seas are never to be seized by outsiders. Never!” Odge thundered, his gigantic enchanted sabre seeming to sense its owner’s feelings and beginning to buzz along.

Odge was not just the captain of the Barbarians. He was also the protector of the barbarian race! The entire barbarian race relied on his protection to survive, which was why he would not fall back now.

“Dearest! I will help you. Even if it will send me down to hell, I’ll go there with you.” Madam Tillen had a tender look in her eyes as she hugged Odge’s arm.

……

Just as the scene was beginning to get comfortable and soft, Madam Tillen’s body suddenly trembled, rays of high-ranked communication spells shining.

“There’s another guest! It’s a priest from the God of Murder’s church!” She quickly rubbed eyes.

“Let him in.” Odge was blunt.

Soon enough, they saw the emissary. He was an old friend, the priest Leylin had seen in the Thieves’ Guild.

“I’ve brought the newest information regarding that devil!” It had to be said that when it came to scouting out information, the bunch of people under Cyric had exceptional talent.

“Speak!” Madam Tillen’s expression was icy.

“While we aren’t sure what their main body is, we can be certain that Neville comes from an organisation in the third hell…” The
priest spoke slowly.
“The third hell? Is he the underling of the master of greed, Mammon?” She looked to be deep in thought. Mammon, or whatever it was, wasn’t the devil’s real name. It was only something similar to a nickname, and calling it would not alert him in any way.
“Yes! The continent has been noisy lately. The devils in the Dambrath Kingdom seem to have gone through some reshuffling of power, and it’s said that this has to do with the disappearance of Beelzebub…”
The church of the God of Murder seemed to have worked with the Barbarians more than once, to the point that they even shared such classified information.
“Also… We are working hard on making inquiries regarding the location of the Scarlet Tiger and where they get their supplies. I’m sure that there will be results in the near future! Under the gaze of my god, everything they do is clear as day!”
The priest’s eyes were bloodshot, and he looked a little sinister. This quickly dissipated.
“Sigh… Even the God of Murder can’t be trusted…” After the priest left, Madam Tillen lamented, looking worried.
“Could it be that powerful greater gods have fallen to the lower planes like in the rumours… This is truly a period of great unrest…”
Cyric was an ancient and very famous god. His divinities were in murder and conspiracy, and he was a powerful greater god. He was an ancient god that had even outlived the dusk of the gods! It was said that he knew numerous ancient stories, and had an undefined relationship with the gods, though it was one more of hate.

However, there was a strange rumour in the past few hundred years. It was that this god had gone insane, and was even becoming a demon. This deviancy could be like a matter of life and death for the gods.

Such a situation was growing more and more obvious in recent times. He was sending down all sorts of contradictory prophecies, and the priests could not get used to it.

“Sigh… the God of Murder has gone insane! The orcs in the north are building an empire, and there are traces of devils and demons in Dambrath and on the outer seas… Perhaps only the dark ages are comparable to this…” Madam Tillen sighed.

……

“I see a future with devils and demons around…” On the Scarlet Tiger, Leylin observed a crystal ball on soft goose leather padding. He was in a dark cabin, and there was a complicated look in his eyes.
Using the power of magic to foresee the future was something only astrologers and oracles could do. They had their own methods—Some used tarot cards, while others used the trajectories of celestial bodies.
Arcanists had a similar skill, and with his experience in the Magus World Leylin could do so as well.
“The opponent’s main forces should be in Pirates’ Cove. We will obtain absolute victory in this operation, and we’ll find traces of a devil there…” Leylin put the crystal ball down and used a white silk cloth to wipe at his hands, speaking with conviction.
“I think there’s something wrong with you…” Isabel was reclined on the door, looking like a loyal bodyguard, her eyes now filled with curiosity, “I don’t remember you training in prophecies. Also, the oracles don’t do as you do…”
“Hehe… This is a method I saw in Silverymoon. Don’t think too much into it…” Leylin laughed slightly. While the fact that he had become a high-ranked wizard was a secret, he had already told Isabel about it, giving her confidence.
Marquis Louis had been able to do as he wished in the outer seas with just the power of a high-ranked wizard as well. He had also absorbed the Black Skeletons and Tigershark Pirates, pushing the Barbarians to the brink. If not for Leylin’s appearance, he would probably have become the sole tyrant of the outer seas.
“But things are different now! The disaster of the Pirates’ Tide has attracted the attention of too many powerful beings…” Leylin sighed. The outer seas had not been developed that much in the past, and the terrain and organisations were very simple. A barbarian tribe was already terrific then.
However, in current terms, they were nothing. This was why Leylin was a little uneasy, attempting to predict the future.
While the World of Gods’ ability to screen this type of spells was too powerful, gods and legendary beings could do this easily.
Leylin did not believe that the Barbarians could do the same. “That’s good then…” Isabel was all smiles as she spoke, before her expression abruptly changed. 

*Rumble!* *Kachak!* A slight noise sounded, along with voices of the pirates’ distress. “Seems like they found something on the deck… Let’s go…” Leylin smiled as he followed Isabel to the deck. At this moment, the pirates were circled around two figures. One of the two was Karen, while the other was an assassin dressed in black form-fitting clothing. Sharp blades clashed endlessly, and the winds they produced left the pirates with no courage to go forward. “Karen, stop playing around!” Leylin tapped his finger, and a terrifying cone of flames blasted forward, accurately hitting one of the figures. The raging flames immediately devoured it. “That was just a puppet,” Leylin look towards the mast, “Is that right?” “Hoo hoo! As expected of the one who established the Scarlet Tigers and defeated Marquis Louis, Sire Leylin!” Laughter that sounded like an owl could suddenly be heard, and a distortion emerged from the side of the mast to form a human figure. “We meet again, Lord Leylin! Let me introduce myself. This humble servant is Arfo, a priest of the mighty God of Murder. We met once at Pirates’ Cove!” Arfo was currently dressed impeccably like a priest. It was unknown when he had arrived on Leylin’s ship. “How dare you!” Karen had noticed that the figure in the flames had disappeared, revealing the original appearance of a high-ranked illusion and turned grim. “Wait!” Just as Karen was about to charge forth, Isabel beamed as she pulled her back. “You must be very gutsy, huh? How dare you play tricks on my
people?” Isabel stared at Arfo, her eyes narrowing dangerously. “The great name of the Scarlet Witch has spread in the open seas. I never thought it would be such a beautiful lady.” Arfo looked to be somewhat intoxicated.

“Good, good!” Isabel took two steps forward, a smile on her face. All of a sudden, she made her move. The Red Dragon Sword was instantly unsheathed, and faint draconic roars sounded out. A tremendous spiritual force field extended and caused all the pirates to back off, while the priest looked alarmed, “Dragon aura!” The fiery-red sword produced a clear cry, flames spilling over in the air.

*Hss!* The priest took several steps backwards, looking terrified at the charred marks on his wrist.

“Karen is one of mine. It’s not up to you to bully her!” Isabel looked to have no intentions to kill him and slowly sheathed her sword with a snort. This immediately gave rise to gratitude in Karen’s eyes, as well as some shame.

“I never thought the Scarlet Witch wasn’t a demon sorcerer. You’re someone who inherited the blood of bloodline of a red dragon, and even have a legendary item!!” Arfo looked somewhat awkward while pondering over this.

Such a huge difference caused him to flare up at the thieves that had collected this information, ‘While there’s a similarity between demonification and becoming a red dragon, it shouldn’t be to this extent. They should be killed!’ Just a slight deviation or mistake in intel could cause irreversible consequences. Such a huge change immediately put Arfo on his guard.

“Who do you represent?” Leylin asked while snickering inside. Using Isabel’s status as a Dragon Warlock to hide her demonification had also been one of his plans. After all, red dragon sorcerers also had the ability to manipulate flames and grow scales.
This would be enough to confuse people. Demons were beings the churches would always crack down on ruthlessly. It was better not to have dealings with them. Sorcerers, on the other hand, were fine. Most importantly, Leylin had not explained anything himself. Everything had been assumed.

“I come representing the will of my god!” Arfo looked serious as he spoke.

“Do you have a prophecy from the mighty God of Murder?” Leylin looked at him, a teasing glint in his eyes. However, that only scared Arfo.

“No, but our bishop has received intent from my god!” When it came to his faith, Arfo naturally did not dare lie as he recalled the order he had received.

‘Have the outer seas descend into chaos? Just for a massacre, you provoke the two largest pirate groups? What kind of joke is this? Damn it… Ever since the bishop received god’s grace, he’s become more irritable and crazy…’ However, as a subordinate, he had no right to make any suggestions and could only carry out the orders of his superior.

“Since it’s the intention of the church, let’s have a listen shall we?” Leylin brought Arfo to a meeting room. The pirates automatically stood at two sides, eyes trained on Arfo. It was as if the moment Leylin gave the order, they would chop him into mincemeat, and that gave him immense pressure.

“Well then, emissary, what are your suggestions?”

“The dark world of the outer seas needs to be unified. We believe that the Scarlet Tigers are more suitable for this than the Barbarians.” Arfo did his best to suppress the fluctuations in his heart, saying words he did not mean. Wizards could easily detect any changes in mind or mood, and he would be seen through.

“… To show our sincerity, we are willing to provide intel regarding the Barbarians and help you achieve victory…” Arfo placed a
sheepskin scroll on the table as he spoke. “Oh?!” Leylin found this hilarious as he took a look. This was an exquisite map of the sea, marking out the location where the Barbarians resupplied. One large island had obvious blood-red marks.

“These are the areas where the Barbarians resupply. The last mark is where the barbarian tribe resides.” Arfo glanced at Leylin and spoke with confidence.

“The island where the barbarian tribe stays?” Isabel gasped, “Are you trying to create a lasting enmity with the Barbarians?” “Since you’re already enemies, why not take it to the extreme?” Arfo spread his arms like a scoundrel.

“Haha… haha…” After a long period of silence, all he was met with was Leylin’s crazed laughter, “You said it well. You said it well! Since we’re already enemies, how about we take it to the extreme?”

Just as a smile bloomed on Arfo’s face, something happened…
“Kill him,” Leylin indifferently waved his arm, as if he were chasing a house fly away.

“Why?” Arfo’s expression immediately changed, his body flashing with the undulations of a teleportation scroll. However, the bright light shattered immediately, leaving him in despair. Numerous weapons struck out. One filled with red qi, which was almost on par with a legendary dragon, immediately made mincemeat out of this emissary. Only after they subconsciously acted did the pirates respond, bodies beginning to tremble slightly. Dear gods! They had actually killed the priest of an actual deity! While the pirates were capable of anything evil under the sun, they still held reverence for the gods.

“Isn’t this just a priest? If he’s dead, he’s dead. There’s something more terrifying than this to deal with next…” Leylin clapped his hands indifferently. Red flames descended and burnt the body to ashes, causing the pirates to feel as if they were in a dream. “So, his information was false?” Isabel’s attention was on something else.

“No, the information is true.” Leylin shook his head and rolled the map up, “Give this to our navigator and have him go on the offensive while we head along this route.”

“You still…” Isabel found herself unable to keep up with her cousin’s thoughts.
“While the map is real, he has malicious intent. I have enough strength now, so I have no choice but to kill him!” Leylin laughed as he spoke, his eyes cold. He had been too weak during the Pirates’ Tide, and had even needed help from the Barbarians and the Thieves’ Guild. At that time, he had to tolerate these people’s sneaky actions. But things were different now: he was a high-ranked wizard and an arcanist, far exceeding others of the same rank. He had Tiff under him who had legendary strength, and Isabel had become a Dragon Warlock which allowed her strength to increase rapidly. While her bloodline limited her, it wasn’t an issue until she became legendary herself. On top of that, the Faulen Family was not the same as before. They might not rule the outer seas, but their power controlled most of the seas’ regions. With such strength, Leylin was the king through and through. Was there a need to make compromises? On top of that, if the priests of the God of Murder truly were powerful, why would they still scheme and plot to stir up more tension between the two sides and not take over this region themselves? Hence, Leylin was sure that they did not have favourable impressions of neither himself nor the Barbarians, and should be making plans to eliminate them all at one go. “The God of Murder…” Leylin used the A.I. Chip and instantly found all the information regarding this greater god. ‘While he is very old, he’s known for being temperamental. There have been recent rumours that he’s going insane. Given that he’s like this, he will probably find it difficult to react quickly even if a branch with a bishop in charge were annihilated… Also…’ Leylin looked through the description displayed on the A.I. Chip’s screen, a look of fear flashing across his face.
‘He once fought with Distorted Shadow and announced that he killed this great rank 8 Magus…’ Leylin now had a profound understanding of the might of Distorted Shadow. It was impossible for him to fall so easily at this god’s hands.

‘Things started changing from that time. Cyric started to become more insane and unreasonable…’ Leylin stroked his chin, looking to be deep in thought, ‘Was he seriously injured in battle, causing the change in temperament, or was he tricked by Distorted Shadows and affected by the power of distortion?’

While the dusk of gods was over, the shadow Magi left behind in the World of Gods were not easily dispersed.

‘Whatever it is, the claws that the God of Murder extended into the outer seas must be cut off!’ Leylin decided and announced, “Let us set off!”

The tremendous Scarlet Tiger thundered, like a deep sea giant monster advancing to a battlefield.

Such a huge movement of the Scarlet Tigers had naturally attracted the attention of many organisations in the outer seas. The Barbarians had also assembled all their warriors in Pirates’ Cove, and a life or death battle was coming up between these groups. This would determine the ruler of the outer seas.

Such an enormous change immediately made many people fear the consequences. They knew full well that no matter the winner, this would be doomsday for them.

Even more crazed beings were making preparations in the shadows, hoping to get some benefits from the battle. They hoped to wipe out the two large pirate organisations so that they could become the kings of the dark world!

“He killed my child, Arfo!”

*Rumble!* The flames suddenly rose several times in size, reflecting the distorted face of the bishop underground.

“Y– Yes, my lord!” The thief’s voice quivered as he made the
report. Ever since the bishop had gotten their god’s grace, his personality had also been affected. He had become very stubborn… and crazy!

For instance, the bishop would definitely not provoke the two pirate groups into a deathmatch to wipe them out together before.

“Hah… how despicable… I want to kill him. Kill Leylin!” In the hidden room was a statue of Cyric. There seemed to be a layer of dark red smoke around it, causing some changes. At times, the bishop looked sinister standing under the statue, and at other times poised. He was basically a madman.

“Hehe… It’s also good that he’s dead. Arfo should have gone to hell long ago. He did well, because that’s saved me a lot of trouble!”

“My- My lord, I’ll take my leave now!” Seeing the bishop in this state was also very stressful for the thief. He reported all this with fear, trying to shuffle backwards.

“Since Arfo is dead, why are you alive?” The bishop turned back, glaring at the thief. His gaze was so chilly the thief felt like he’d fallen into a house of ice.

“No, that’s none of my business, my lord!” Knowing that things did not spell well for him, the thief turned and ran, but it was too late. The black flames rumbled around and swept through the area, enveloping the thief and causing him to squeal like a dying pig.

Seeing the thief gradually disappearing in the flames, a sick smile appeared on the bishop’s face. After he was done executing the thief, he knelt before the statue and lowered his head, beginning to pray, “Keke… Soon, my master. I will sacrifice more flesh and souls to you!”

The statue gazed at the bishop below coldly, the dark red rays around it becoming more dazzling…

……
“It’s Fire Slave Island. This is it!” It was impractical to get the pirate fleet to completely encircle the island. However, with the help of magic, it was not difficult to seal off a few shipping routes. Leylin gazed at a completely red island through his telescope, one that had a volcano on it.

“Based on the intel, Odge’s barbarian tribe should be staying back and increasing their numbers here…” He put the telescope down.

“All fighters are to leave the boat. We will massacre this place!” he ordered.

One could be completely unscrupulous in war, but this was still taboo. Leylin would not have the courage to do such a thing in the past. The moment he did, the other party would also head over to Port Venus and attack his family. Now, however, he had the wizard tower. Leylin even hoped Odge would take the initiative, and seek his own death at Port Venus.

The order was sent down quickly. Numerous pirates got on little boats and headed to the shore like ants.

“Robin Hood, Ronald, Karen.” Leylin spoke more slowly.

“Boss!” Robin Hood came to Leylin’s side and respectfully waited for instructions.

“Take the fleet and leave. Only come when I send out the signal!” Leylin ordered.

He could tell that once news of him attacking this area got out, the Barbarians would definitely pounce here like madmen. When the time came, Leylin definitely did not want his pirate fleet to be damaged.

It would be too troublesome to attack Pirates’ Cove, so if he could draw the opponent out here, why not?

“I can’t even imagine the heat and terrible environment here. Why did the Barbarians choose this place?” Isabel cut apart the vines blocking her way. There were broad green-leaved plants that
dropped dew with a pungent smell. It caused her to frown.
“These barbarians migrated here. The safety of the tribe is of the utmost importance. Since you think they won’t like this place, they can do as they wish…” Leylin explained.
He had nothing to worry about once they were on the large island. As long as he knew the general location, large life force undulations couldn’t be hidden from him.
“Boss! We’ve encountered resistance on a mountain pass up ahead. It’s barbarians!” A pirate said, having just run over.
“Kill him, we don’t need prisoners.” Leylin nodded indifferently. The pirates wouldn’t mind killing them even if they were the same race, much less people of another.
Soon enough, Leylin passed through the stronghold and saw the ground full of barbarian corpses. Many wounds were still leaking blood, and these ones looked smaller and weaker than average.
“Seems like these are the old and weak, females and children. Odge must have pulled all the strong youths to his crew.” Leylin nodded, no longer having any doubts about destroying the tribe.
Honestly speaking, Odge was a very wise leader. Not only did he resolutely bring his race to the outer seas, he had also survived tenaciously. A tribe like this needed external help and resources to develop, and for that reason they were forced into piracy.
He was very capable, able to mould them into one of the three large pirate groups in the outer seas and even gain control of Pirates’ Cove. It was a pity that he was in Leylin’s way. His only fate was to be purged…
The raging flames continued to blaze. The piercing screams and wails never ended, accompanied by the roars and manic laughter of pirates. Barbarian corpses piled up in this place one after the other, the blood splitting to form little streams. Once Leylin decided to attack this place, the Barbarian tribe was completely done for. As Odge had taken most of the strong and the young, all that were left behind were a bunch of frail, elderly, female or children beings. It could be said that in front of these vicious pirates, resistance was pointless.

“This barbarian tribe seems to hold some secrets…” Leylin touched his chin, a devilishly charming smile on his face as he arrived at the heart of the tribe. The sacrifices were made here, but it was to some unknown god. A large piece of obsidian was carved into a firm altar, on which there was a large animal skin flag and strange crimson runes. In front of the altar were a few struggling barbarians, all of them unbelievably old.

“You of another race, do not come here!” they exclaimed. They were so frail they looked like reeds. A few youths next to them held on to the last spears and weapons they had, trembling as they aimed at the invader with eyes full of fear.

“A barbarian priest? A sorcerer?” Leylin watched these barbarians who already had one foot in the grave and sensed the power of
their bloodlines. He could not help but nod to himself.
“Scram!” Arcane spells burst forth, forming terrifying large elemental hands that tore the few sorcerers into shreds. Their stubborn resistance was futile, and such strength instantly left them at a loss.
A few arcane fireballs rumbled forth, burning the rest of the barbarians to ashes. Leylin stepped over the corpses to arrive at the altar, nothing in his way.
“Spirit? Soul? Or is it without a conscient…” As he felt around the coarse notches carved into the stone, Leylin closed his eyes.
‘Are these barbarians trying to gather divinity with the power of their community?’ With tons of experience, Leylin immediately saw through their plans. The power of faith far exceeded extraordinary force. With years of worship and sacrifice, this place had already begun to develop traces of a primal power.
The altar had strong faith within it. There were spirits of powerful beings mixed in, those who had died over time, and the foundation was currently very firm. Just a bit more time could really have given birth to divinity.
This was how many ancient tribal gods had been born. A high-ranked barbarian could use this bit of divinity to cross the threshold of becoming legendary. They could even become a demigod with their advance, combining that with their faith to ignite godfire.
As he too had plans to become a god, Leylin could comprehend this thought process.
“As for the person chosen to become a god, it should be Odge, or do they have another powerful pawn? How ambitious…” Leylin stroked his chin.
There had always been many intelligent people in this world. As the outer seas did not have the attention of too many gods yet, becoming a god in the outer seas was much less difficult than in the
continent. For this reason, Odge had set his sights on this area, which coincided with Leylin’s plan.

“Is this a god of the barbarian race? With how weak the outer seas are, a demigod would immediately unify the place, making it a playground for the barbarians…”

Leylin’s eyes glinted, “Very creative, but it’s a pity that you met me.”

Leylin had long since treated the outer seas of Dambrath as his territory. While the barbarians had their own plans, he would have to disappoint them.

“The spirits are valiant, guarding the tremendous power of faith and soul origin tightly.” Leylin observed the obsidian carvings and animal skin runes, an unenthusiastic look on his face, “Seems like every barbarian that dies will return to this place…”

This was the hope of a race! In the World of Gods, a race without protection from a god would not have a future. Mixed with their hot-bloodedness and sacrifices, it was both inspiring and tragic.

Leylin shut his eyes, and he felt like these spirits had encircled him. A tremendous malicious intent descended, “Scram! Scram!”

This was no illusion, but the power of rejection from the altar itself.

“Tsk tsk… How powerful does the unified heart of an entire race get, with blood sacrifices urging it on?

“Such strength! I wish to defeat it. I shall strike down the ascension of your race, and crush your hopes completely!”

A deep and dark power could instantly be seen in Leylin’s eyes.

“Devour!” Leylin willed it, and the altar creaked like it couldn’t bear the weight. The ground began to shake as if there was an earthquake, creating numerous dark holes.

Heat! Lunacy! Energy that was filled with soul force surged out from the altar like a tsunami.

“Mm…” Leylin’s expression was incomparably sinister for an
instant, all sorts of emotions flashing in his eyes. The barbarian spirits were extremely crazed and vengeful, launching forth with all sorts of snarls and counterattacks as they began their last struggle. It was a pity that this was a minor issue for Leylin. After all, he was experienced with souls.

“Hss…” The phantom of a Targaryen emerged in Leylin’s mind, and in one mouthful devoured the numerous souls and consciences. In the face of Leylin’s soul origin, the attack from these valiant souls were as weak as ants. Varied soul force burst forth as they shattered, carrying berserk emotions and numerous memory fragments.

“A soul is a small matter. The issue is that there’s still these berserk emotions within the soul force…” Leylin sighed. The basic requirement to absorb divinity was that one was legendary, and this was not without reason. Those who were yet to cross that threshold wouldn’t even be able to live through the attacks of these souls.

“God… I pray that you protect our barbarian race!” “You must make the barbarians the most powerful race!” “Please ensure the survival of the barbarians…” “I want to have meat. I want meat everyday…”

Such chaotic thoughts appeared in Leylin’s mind that they could cause a regular person to go mad. Even someone with legendary strength could acquire a mental disorder, the chaotic soul energy causing cracks in their memories. However, Leylin had the A.I. Chip. He also had prior experience in this area, and his own soul origin was near rank 7. He could still take this.

“Hss…”

“I am the limitless Jörmungandr, the master that devours all things!” The Targaryen phantom appeared in Leylin’s pupils, and the power of devouring appeared, forming spirals that devoured all
the chaotic soul origins at one go. After being converted, the strength surged into Leylin’s sea of consciousness. The A.I. Chip’s prompt sounded at this moment. [Beep! Host has taken in a large amount of energy, determined to be soul origin essence. Absorbed!]

Large amounts of icy streams of air converged in Leylin’s mind, allowing his spiritual force to revolve rapidly.

[Beep! Host has absorbed soul energy. Spirit +1]

The accumulations of the barbarian tribe over countless years had made things easy for Leylin, and even allowed him to raise his spiritual force.

Leylin looked at his hands and murmured, “My spiritual force has increased a bit. I feel like every small increase in stats past fifteen points is a huge advance.”

The A.I. Chip’s prompts continued. [Beep! Host’s spirit has broke through, becoming rank 16 arcanist!]

At this moment, his stats were refreshed.


[Progress on Weave analysis: Level 0: 100%, Level 1: 100%, Level 2:100%, Level 3:100%, Level 4:100%, Level 5: 67.35%, Level 6:41.91%, Level 7:22.33%.] [Spell slots available: Rank 7(2), Rank 6(5), Rank 5(7), Rank 4(?), Rank 3(?), Rank 2(?), Rank 1(?), Rank 0(?)]

The advancement of arcanists required growth in both spiritual force and soul force, as well as the comprehension and sensing of arcane energy. However, with Leylin’s attainments in magic with his main body, he already surpassed many legendary arcanists. There was practically no bottleneck for his advance, and his spirit
breaking through automatically led to a rise in his rank. ‘The barbarian tribe hasn’t formed a divinity yet. Just a bit of the power of faith mixed with soul energy can help me increase a rank? Perhaps I should focus on finding information in this area…’

In Leylin’s eyes, the power of faith was the power of emotion, and also soul force. There had been no bottlenecks in his advancement, and all he needed was enormous energy and his ability of devouring. When all the conditions were met, he could quickly advance.

For Leylin, this was also a shortcut to more power. As long as there were barbarian worshippers, it was possible that they had formed great soul energy like this, be it in the outer seas or various other areas in the continent.

Of course, if an altar had truly gathered divinity, Leylin would not dare devour it. If not, his own temperament could change, and that was not something trivial.

Becoming the patron saint of the barbarians would be even worse than killing himself.
uter seas, on board the Barbarians’ ship.

“AGH…” Odge suddenly dropped to his knees, roaring in pain.

“Dear, what’s the matter?” Madam Tillen rushed to his side and helped him up.

“My family’s sacrificial altar… It’s gone! The response has been completely cut off…” Odge spat out the words through gritted teeth, and the implications in his statement made Tillen pale in response.

“We haven’t caught up to them?” After they had received the news, Odge had immediately set off. However, they had to conceal their movements and the barbarian lands in Fire Scale Island were very far from Pirates’ Cove.

Originally, this had been done for their own safety. But something like this happening would make it extremely difficult to mount a rescue.

“We must avenge them!” Tillen bit her lip so hard that a trickle of blood spilled out. Since their sacrificial altar had been destroyed, it was obvious what had befallen the members of their tribe.

Her heart dropped. It wasn’t just one or two barbarians that had fallen. Everyone in the tribe, be it the elderly, the frail, the women, or the children, had perished. The souls of hundreds of years of the tribe’s experts, their sacrifices and devotion, had been completely destroyed.
Even if she wasn’t a barbarian, Tillen could imagine how this sort of aftermath would lead to the Barbarians going berserk.

“Ah… In my name as Odge, the king and leader of the barbarians, I vow to the gods that I’ll wrench that damned wizard’s skull off!” Odge roared, slicing his cheek with his dagger. Boiling dark red blood rolled down from the cut, making his boorish face seem even more malevolent and terrifying.

“Oh! Kill him! Kill him!” The barbarians below him all saw red, as their family and children had all been at Fire Scale Island. There was no chance that they had survived.

The fox woman Tillen gritted her teeth, but spoke out in the end, “Odge! I believe that now isn’t the best time to fight him, he must have prepared a trap for us!”

After the words left her mouth, she could no longer continue speaking. This was because she saw the expression in Odge’s eyes, that look of undying, frightening hatred! After what had happened, forget a trap, Odge would traverse hell and high water without the slightest hesitation.

At this moment, even if she had come to advise on the situation, her persuasion would not have the slightest effect.

‘Is this part of his plan? Using the power of hatred to lead these barbarians into a trap…’ At this moment, Madam Tillen suddenly felt a deep chill in her heart, caused by that noble wizard.

……

Fire Scale Island was within their sights. Dense black smoke continued to pour into the horizon, and the entire island seemed to have descended into hell. Seeing their tribe’s land wrapped in a great fire, the barbarians all descended into frantic roaring.

“Find them! Tear them apart!” Odge tightly gripped Madam Tillen’s shoulder. Rivulets of blood appeared on her skin.
“I will!” Madam Tillen vowed. After saying this however, she realised that she did not need to use tracing spells. This was because several ships from the Scarlet Tigers appeared in her line of sight, and they seemed to have not left in time. Tens of small barbarian corpses were hung from the mast as bait.

*Roar!* After seeing those corpses, the barbarians collectively went berserk. Odge brandished his enormous saber and the other sailors rowed with all their might. There was only one wish in the barbarians’ hearts— to find those damned robbers and get their revenge!

The Barbarians were the only ones allowed to bring death and suffering to other races in these regions of the outer seas. Now, they were suffering the fate that they handed down to others. Madam Tillen’s heart suddenly grew sorrowful, and a single tear rolled down her face. She could already see the shadow of her own death, and could not escape from it.

*Mmmmmmm!* The deep sound of a bugle horn could be heard, bringing to one’s mind the coming siege.

The Scarlet Tigers’ elite troops emerged and completely surrounded all of the Barbarians’ ships. They were like an enormous pocket wrapping around its goods. In their fury, these simple-minded barbarians did not sense the danger before them at all, and immediately took the bait.

“Kill! The boss is giving 5 gold coins for every barbarian’s head!” Ronald loudly ordered, and the reward was spread widely through the use of signal flags.

*Boom! Boom!* The goblin cannons boomed without end, and near them were the sounds of dwarven artillery firing volleys of gunfire. Under Leylin’s command, the Scarlet Tigers had slowly come up with their own style of combat.

*Roar! Roar!* Row after row of barbarians collapsed in a flicker of flames. Even their tough skin could not withstand the combined
power of gunpowder and magic. Odge grew even more berserk at this presentation. After the long-range battle had ended, it was time for the traditional methods of jumping and boarding ships. Odge immediately ignored the charge of a pirate towards him, lifting the fellow up by his head.

*Krrch! Krrch!* The human pirate’s complexion twisted, and rivulets of blood flowed down from his forehead. Crazed roars sounded as this unfortunate pirate’s skill burst like a watermelon in Odge’s palm.

*Chhh!* Blazing hot white light flashed past, and the surrounding pirates were directly slashed into two halves by the saber’s qi.

As the strongest in the barbarian tribe, Odge was a high-ranked warrior. His barbarian bloodline and the support of magic items allowed very few below the realm of legendaries to rival him.

It was a pity that all of this was as negligible as a grain of sand in the face of the Scarlet Tigers. A scarlet red figure suddenly flew from the opposing ship, letting out a powerful clear cry in midair.

*Roar!* A domain of intimidating draconic power extended from the ship. This oppressive power stemming from a bloodline made Madam Tillen take a few steps back in fright. After, she saw a winged half-dragon creature swoop down at great speed, a longsword burning with raging flames intercepting Odge’s saber. An enormous crack appeared on his blade.

‘A human demi dragon? No, it’s a dragon’s disciple! This power…’ Madam Tillen dumbly looked on at Isabel who was covered in red scales, with a despondent expression on her face, ‘Is this the bloodline of a legendary dragon? But how is this possible? Wasn’t she corrupted by demons?’

Madam Tillen did not know what power a successor of a legendary dragon’s bloodline could wield, but now it was made clear to her.

“The Scarlet Witch?!” Odge looked at the crack on his enchanted saber with a pained expression on his face. This was the weapon he
used most after all, and it had helped him cut off the heads of many troublesome enemies.

Now however, a crack had appeared on the enchanted saber after just one clash with the witch.

“A legendary item!” Odge looked at the blazing red longsword in Isabel’s grasp with an increasingly ugly expression. He sensed an unknown danger coming from that weapon.

“Don’t let her weapon touch you, and be careful of her dragon breath attack! I’ll help you!” Madam Tillen’s expression was very anxious, and she readied several amplification spells in her hand and was about to cast them.

“I am your opponent! We meet again, beautiful lady.”

*Rumble!* The raging flames of a fireball engulfed them, blocking Madam Tillen’s way. The entire area was thrown into chaos, with barbarians and pirates fighting wildly. One of the barbarians fell on occasion, and their head would be chopped off immediately.

Blood stained the ground, but even in this hellish scene Leylin had nary a speck of dust on him. He even greeted Madam Tillen in a refined and courteous manner, as if he was the most respectable noble.

“Leylin Faulen…” Madam Tillen called out the wizard’s name through gritted teeth, her eyes slowly filling with fear. That man’s grasp of human nature was even more terrifying than the devil’s.

It had not been long since she had seen a true devil in Neville, but the feeling that he gave her was not as evil and as profound as what she felt in Leylin’s presence.

“It has been four or five years since we last met, hasn’t it? Madam is still as beautiful as before…” A sincere smile broke out on the noble baron’s face, and Tillen felt that if she gave him her hand, he would have kissed it in greeting without the slightest hesitation.

However, the eyes of the wizard who stood across from her were ice-cold, and he looked at her with a face utterly devoid of
emotion.
“I apologise, my beautiful lady. I don’t have much time left, so can I ask you to hurry up and die for me?” In a single second, the light and breezy conversation turned dangerous. Wind howled, and Leylin smiled slightly as powerful magic converged. An earth-shattering attack was cast resolutely, ignoring all the beauty that Madam Tillen possessed and indifferently sending her to her death. This sorrowful feeling made Madam Tillen’s heart feel depressed. Her feelings lasted only for a moment though, and afterwards she no longer had the capacity to reflect on it.
Berserk energy particles converged into a splendidly brilliant longsword. The swordpoint had a spiritual quality to it, and it was directly thrust at Tillen. A strong wind seemed to directly slice at the skin on her face.
“Mage’s Sword! A rank 7 spell! You’re already a high-ranked wizard!” Trickles of blood dripped down, but Madam Tillen’s face was still filled with incredulity. She finally knew how she had lost. A high-ranked wizard could completely crush the barbarians here.
‘But he’s only a little older than 21 years old! With this power, he must be a genius that even the gods will envy…’ Madam Tillen was unable to think anymore after this. The sharp Mage’s Sword pierced through the layers of her defence, directly running through the fox woman’s bosom.
Even though she had been a sorcerer and the chief wizard of the Barbarians, Tillen’s attainments in magic were only on par with Ernest. She had only achieved that through her bloodline power. She was simply unable to endure a single blow from Leylin.
At this moment, the victor of another battle had also been decided.

Dragon Breath! Isabel was still in the state of her draconic transformation. The flame-red scales on her body were just like a dazzling armour that looked like freshly-cut flowers. She looked like the incarnation of a valkyrie.

After she saw that the fight would drag on, Isabel activated her bloodline abilities without the slightest hesitation. Dragon disciples would inherit the spellcasting abilities of a red dragon. The bloodline that Isabel possessed was indeed that of a Legendary red dragon. Her spellcasting abilities would gain an extremely powerful boost.

The frantic flames consumed Odge in a flash, and no matter how determined and how tough a barbarian he was, he now let out painful wails.

Sharp! Break! From the looks of it, Isabel had immediately activated the abilities of the Red Dragon Sword.

In a flash of light and a crisp snapping sound, Odge’s peak-ranked alchemised saber suddenly split apart.

With its obstacle removed from its way, the Red Dragon Sword unhesitatingly pierced through Odge’s heart. The blazing flames destroyed all the vital organs in his body immediately.

“Ah…” Odge lowered his head with great difficulty and looked at the scorched black flesh on his chest. The light in his eyes slowly
“…No!” Madam Tillen let out a mournful wail. She summoned energy from some unknown well of strength and unexpectedly struggled to crawl next to Odge’s body. “My… beloved…” She held Odge’s huge lifeless hand, her eyes filled with content as if she had grabbed hold of the most precious thing in the entire world, and slowly shut her eyes.

“What a sad and beautiful romance… Isn’t it?” Looking upon them, Leylin and Isabel did not try and hinder them in any way. They quietly watched this pair of eternal soulmates pass into the afterworld.

“I really do feel that it’s rather unlike you to say that sort of thing!” After hearing Leylin’s idle comment, Isabel speechlessly rolled her eyes.

“Also… Why are you this impatient?” Isabel looked all around them. Now, all of the barbarian pirate crew had been forced into a weak position.

After Odge and Madam Tillen had been slain, the remaining barbarians grew even more frantic. In the end however, they were ultimately left to struggle in the throes of death.

After the final few barbarian shamans had died, the entire barbarian pirate crew’s destruction was inevitable.

Under such heavy suppression, the remaining barbarians crumbled at last. They jumped into the sea one after another to flee, but they were shot dead by Robin Hood who had long anticipated their retreat.

This was the trouble of naval warfare. Once they had lost, it was difficult to flee. One could only win absolutely or lose completely, but once you lost it was very difficult to free oneself.

Leylin’s luck had always been good. Rather than calling it luck, it was better to say that he had the support of planning well-devised strategies.
Isabel turned towards Leylin. Since he was the planning type, seeing him choose to pursue a fast-paced fight and unhesitatingly massacre the barbarian tribe and even use their own people as bait was unexpected. His methods stank of shortsighted vision.

“You could tell? Then there is no harm in you guessing what guards I’ve prepared in advance…” Seeing his cousin mature, Leylin’s heart was rather gratified. She could be considered his greatest helping hand in the outer seas.

“It can’t be… The priest and thief from last time!” Isabel only needed to think about it for a moment before her eyes flashed in understanding.

“Mm!” Leylin nodded, waving his hand carelessly. A translucent wave rose, with a small water screen floating atop it. Although there was no indication of their identity, the sailors onboard radiated a uniquely murderous aura.

“Are these… Pirates? Ones which were groomed by the god of murder? They’ve always been hiding in Pirates’ Cove, I never thought…” Isabel breathed in sharply. Until now, she had always believed that the pirate crews in the outer seas now only consisted of the Scarlet Tiger and the barbarian pirate crew. She had neglected those fragmented little pirate crews.

In reality however, these fragmented, small-sized pirate crews were the most important strength of Pirates’ Cove! They formed the majority of the ships within the Tide of Pirates. Even a small part of those in service could assemble into a power force to reckon with.

“Luckily you discovered them already, otherwise after we engaged in mutually assured destruction with the barbarians, these locusts would descend. The consequences would have been unbearable…” Isabel said, with a grave expression on her face. She now no longer had the slightest doubt in her mind that the church of murder were not just ordinary fishermen.
“Mm, you’re absolutely correct!” Leylin agreed with Isabel’s point. “In reality, the reason why I avoided using Pirates’ Cove as the place for this final battle, apart from not wanting the Barbarians to have a favourable location, was to avoid these maggots of the dark…” The corners of Leylin’s lips quirked up into a sneer, “However, now that we’ve discovered their plan and made the preparations after destroying the Barbarians, what have we got to worry about?”

“What do you mean?” Isabel hesitantly asked. She stood by Leylin and smelt the special scent of bloodthirst. “Let’s welcome them and kill them all!” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he made up his mind, “Now is the best time, the entire church of murder in the outer seas have all assembled here. Once they’re all dead, it will deal a great blow to the church.”

“A blow?” Isabel had never thought that Leylin’s ambition would grow so large to the point where he would dare to strike down a true god’s church. ‘Without getting rid of them, how can i spread my own religion…’ Leylin smiled coldly to himself, ‘There is a dead calm here in the outer seas, and the dark world’s greatest religion is Cyric. Once he is cut off from his lackeys in the secular world, all the faith in the outer seas will belong to me…”

In reality, this wasn’t a question of benefits. Leylin had long taken a fancy to the outer seas as his base, and had prepared to establish it as a base for his followers. Thus, there had been a clash with the existing religion here. The first was Cyric, because he had the biggest influence in the outer seas, and even had quite a few of the pirates as his followers. In addition, this god was an evil god. Publicly fighting him wasn’t an issue, and on the contrary it would perhaps earn him favour from the benevolent gods. It was possible to predict that in the future, Leylin would sweep
across the outer seas and possibly eliminate all the native religions and evil gods in one fell swoop.

“Don’t worry, cousin. The god of murder’s influence isn’t that strong in the outer seas, and he is suppressed by many other benevolent gods… Additionally, even the Thieves’ Guild is not entirely under his control…” Leylin had acquired a lot of inside information on the three great guilds after travelling in the continent.

Cyric could only considered a shareholder in the Thieves’ Guild and not a chairman. There were still many other gods supporting the organisation from the shadows. The Warriors’ Guild was the same, and those gods would not permit some true god to monopolise their channels. Even the narrow-minded Wizards’ Guild was not monopolised purely by the Weave Goddess, and still had the God of Knowledge Oghma and others dividing up the goddess’ believers. Consequently, his fight against Cyric and attacking the Thieves’ Guild were two entirely separate matters.

“So it’s like this… After all, he’s a powerful true god,” Isabel’s eyes were full of anxiety. Needless to say, not even a weak god would willingly relinquish his own territory, let alone suffer a big loss to their believers. Even if Cyric’s influence in the outer seas was very weak, he wielded great power on the continent. He controlled many high-ranked military powers from the shadow. Dispatching one or two Legends over to fight for him was something that was entirely possible. Legends were the ultimate decisive force in the entire Prime Material Plane. Once such a high-ranked expert arrived, Isabel was very aware that there was no one on her side who could offer the least resistance. Ordinary people could not reach the realm of Legend. Everything
that the Faulen family possessed was nothing in the eyes of a Legend.
“Even if a legendary comes to hurt my family, they’ll have to step over my dead body first!” Isabel declared firmly, tightly grasping her red dragon longsword.
Leylin was naturally aware of the resolution in her eyes, but did not speak of his intended plans to her.
Cyric could possibly be fly into a rage and send legendary over from the continent. However, this required time. Perhaps by then, Leylin would have already advanced to become a Legend himself!
In addition, if one wanted to develop, it was absolutely necessary to forcibly plunder the benefits that originally belonged to others. Naturally, this would lead to conflict.
Leylin had chosen the outer seas, and it was already the least controversial decision he could have made.
If he had chosen to start developing in the continent, perhaps he would have already attracted Legend-ranked experts over to take him down.
‘Ultimately, it’s all a question of strength! With enough strength, even if I take over the outer seas and slay the priests of the church of murder, what else can i do?’ Cyric and Malar, these chaotic evil gods, were already held in poor opinion by the public. Leylin could thus use any means he wanted to deal with them.
‘Choosing the right faction is of the utmost importance. Since the good faction is out of the question, I must not lose the lawful faction…’ Leylin stroked his chin as he pondered the situation meaningless.
“My lord! The Barbarians have been destroyed! Only five ships have been sunk, the rest are now under our control!” Just when Leylin and Isabel were about to speak, Ronald had completed his mission and bounded over to excitedly report to them. There were still traces of barbarian blood on him.
“Mm, prepare to launch plan 2! Take all the heavily damaged captive ships away. We must prepare to fight the next battle,” Leylin lightly ordered.

“Hm? We still have enemies left?” According to Ronald’s thoughts, after destroying the barbarian pirate crew, the Scarlet Tiger was now the strongest crew in the entire outer seas.
As long as we are the kings of the outer seas, our challenges will never cease…”
Leylin smiled, “This time, it’s only a few little mice who overestimate themselves… Ronald, how do you think we should deal with them?”
“Of course we should mercilessly cut off their heads and claws, and store them in oil bottles!”
Ronald answered with a murderous spirit. For those that challenged their status and profits, there was only one answer, as was law of the pirates in the outer sea—To kill them all!

……

The shadow of the sail danced. Numerous sailors and pirates yelled as they controlled the sail and steering oar, allowing the pirate ship to sail more quickly.
Amongst them all, on the largest ship, a bishop was frowning while having a bad feeling about this.
“Rogers, make the ship faster! We need to hurry there as soon as possible!”
“Understood, master!” A pirate captain next to the bishop answered respectfully, “But this is the fastest we can go…”
“Is that so? Then why is it that the Scarlet Tiger and the Barbarians’ Tsunami can go faster than eighteen knots?” The bishop frowned.
“That’s because those are large pirate groups. Those two are also the main battleships that have been enchanted!” Rogers thought inside but did not dare speak his thoughts. After hesitating for a while, he answered as if put in a spot, “Those are individual abilities and nothing to do with the speed of the fleet…”

“No, no. You’re all trying to deceive the mighty God of Murder and his priests!” The bishop watched Rogers, facial muscles contorting to become incomparably sinister.

“No, that’s not it… Master, my loyalty to the god… No, please forgive me! Please forgive me!” The captain of the pirates, who had seen the ruthless methods of the bishop, immediately knelt while looking absolutely terrified.

This accusation was not something trivial. Recently, this bishop had become strangely bloodthirsty and insane, and would occasionally kill people because of small matters.

The captain, Rogers, was now beginning to regret responding to his recruitment.

*Pu!*

However, before he could plead and beg for forgiveness, a black dagger had slashed through his throat and cut apart his windpipe. Large amounts of blood spurted out.

Rogers’ eyes rolled back, hands grasping at his throat tightly. Blood unceasingly flowed from between his fingers, causing guttural groans from his throat.

The struggles of a dying man ended quickly. The captain, who had been lively and frisky all this while had turned into a corpse in a instant.

The surrounding pirates froze, beginning to wish they could hide their heads in their chest.

“Dispose of him! Also… increase the speed. Any questions?” The bishop glanced at the assistant pirate next to him.

“No– None at all! I guarantee you, my lord, that there’s no issue at
all!”
The assistant had been scared stupid, but after seeing the chilly glint in the bishop’s eyes, he immediately felt sober and shouted.
“Then go, or else this is how you will end up!”
The bishop waved his arms, no longer caring about those pirates who were doing everything in their capabilities. Gazing into the distance, he had a profound look in his eyes.
“Damn it! That darned little noble! I shouldn’t have let him off during Pirates’ Tide!”
The bishop’s plan had been perfect, where he would provoke both sides and help the weaker one. Once the Scarlet Tigers and Barbarian Pirates weakened, his team would gobble up these two organisations and become the king of the outer sea.
He even had plans to unify the dark world and make the outer seas independent, and even construct a godly realm on the ground here!
However, all of this had been wrecked by the darned noble.
Veins began to show in the bishop’s eyes. He’d never thought that the noble would be so gutsy as to kill the emissary he had dispatched.
“Such a fearless and disrespectful being must be executed immediately, and then nail his soul on the wall of the faithless as he howls in anguish…”
As a religious person, the bishop immediately loathed Leylin with all his heart.
A person who held no respect for the gods could never become a lamb of his master. If Leylin could not be subdued in terms of his mind, then he would have to destroy his body.
From ancient times, this was how power worked.
However, he had no idea that when the gods started out, they were also just as fearless. This was the joint belief of all those heroes whose names remained in historical records.
If they could not succeed, then they could only roll of a cliff and
turn into the corroding soil underneath. While he did not know of this concept, the bishop determined to have blood. He wished to eliminate this being as soon as possible...

“There’s still time. The Barbarians must have just fought them not long ago… Even if my plans are slightly affected, the Barbarians’ strength should be enough to cause immense damage to the other side. When the time comes…”

While the bishop was immersed in his fantasies, he suddenly gaped at the dense number of sails in the distance, at the horizon. The Scarlet Tiger ship took the lead. The bloody skull and dagger symbol had all of the pirates becoming restless.

Gods! The Scarlet Tigers was the finest pirate organisation in the outer seas. He had basically heard them expand and gain reputation, and now that they were going to fight them, it was impossible for him not to feel stressed.

*Rumble!* *Rumble!* *Rumble!*

The Scarlet Tigers unhesitatingly opened fire. Like table knives, the many ships cut the huge fleet apart into numerous fragments like butter.

Compared to how the pirates at the lowest rung depended on their elite troops and morale, the Scarlet Tigers wanted to leave their opponent far behind. This was an unequaled confidence in themselves from cutting off the heads of countless enemies.

“Do you see it now?”

Leylin handed the commanding to Ronald and Robin Hood. After all, he was more proficient in casting spells. From the many years he had not been around, he was also unfamiliar with the group. Knowing one’s flaws and doing his best to make up for it was the attitude of those looking to improve themselves. While I’m not suited to some roles, I can choose people who would do better and control them.
If not, someone wanted to do everything well would only tire themselves to death.
“Seems like Robin Hood and Ronald are doing very well!” Leylin said to Isabel next to him while laughing..
“They are the people you’ve nurtured. Are you trying to brag about your extraordinary foresight?” Isabel was actually very astonished. Leylin seemed to have a pair of special eyes, and he would never go wrong when it came to judging people.
However, in order not to make Leylin too cocky, she worded her answer huffily.
“No! I just…”
Just as Leylin was preparing to answer, his expression suddenly changed and he abruptly pushed Isabel aside.
A translucent figure arrived before him, as if traversing through space.
Shadow Jump! The powerful ability of a high-ranked assassin, and a high-ranked technique that could only be comprehended by assassins nearing Legendary! It allowed one to shift locations through the shadow dimension and attack enemies instantly.
This ability was basically everyone’s nightmare!
When a wizard like Leylin was in close quarters with a thief and was the one who was being attacked in surprise, the result was obvious.
This high-ranked assassin did not have any excess movements, and lacked even the elation of completing a mission successfully. There was only an apathetic and dead look in his eyes. The black dagger that held a powerful curse inside had already pierced through the defences and into the area where Leylin’s heart was.
“No!” Isabel immediately went crazy, transforming into half-dragon form and pouncing over.
The feeling of meeting flesh and the scalding blood spurting out finally gave rise to a glimmer in the eyes of the assassin. With a
burst of strength in his right hand, he planned to draw the dagger out and leave.
After all, fighting with a high-ranked swordsman was not something for an assassin to do. He had assassinated the leader of the opposing side, and that was enough!
Surprisingly, he was unsuccessful in plucking the dagger out. The assassin froze, and was stunned to see flesh ‘sprouts’ appearing in ‘Leylin’’s chest. They were like the vines of plants that bundled up the dagger tightly.
Just that moment of being stunned left him no chance to flee for his life.
*Boom!* ‘Leylin’s’ chest exploded, and numerous bloody tendrils burst towards him and bound the assassin tightly. Like suckers, they were already trying to pierce through the skin and absorb fresh blood.
“Necromancy? No, no…” A shocked, coarse voice sounded from under the assassin’s veil.
“That’s just a Flesh Puppet, a spell I made just for you!”
A teleportation door opened to reveal the real Leylin.
“You should be the high-ranked assassin who tried to assassinate numerous bishops of varying churches during Pirates’ Tide, right? This is a rather great gift!”
“So… you’ve already become a high-ranked wizard!”
The assassin’s eyes did not fluctuate at all, allowing the bloody vines to take over his body. It seemed that he had lost all will to escape.
“Stop pretending. All of your methods are visible before my eyes!”
Leylin spoke coldly. Numerous spells shot out. With Dimensional Anchor locking on, even the shadow plane had been sealed.
“Damn it… you!”
Now that his last trump card had been seen through, the assassin was now no longer as relaxed before. He was then killed with
Leylin’s Finger Of Death.
“Bastard, do you know how worried I was for you? At least discuss this with me beforehand!”
“I’m sorry, dear cousin! At this point, it’s better to get things done before we discuss things…” Leylin waved his arm, and another teleportation door opened.

Isabel stepped out of the teleportation door and immediately heard the uproar from the surroundings, as well as enraged shouts. Without any excess movements, she activated her bloodline abilities and the hidden techniques of the Red Dragon Sword Dragon Aura Domain! Fireball! The legendary dragon’s spiritual domain and blazing fire rumbled, causing all the pirates to cry out miserably as they were sent flying. There were traces of charring all over their bodies.

The other pirates in the distance were also shrieking as they lay immobile on the ground. There was no way out for the weak in the face of the spiritual domain of dragon aura, and they would only be massacred by their enemies.

In actuality, the dragon aura of a regular dragon was still just average. One from an ancient or primordial dragon could take out even most high-ranked Professionals, and even affect legendaries to a great degree.

“Teleportation doors? High-ranked wizards? And a dragon sorcerer!” The God of Murder’s bishop cried out in alarm, light shining around his body.

After seeing Leylin step out of the teleportation door as well, his
pupils shrank, “It’s you! You’ve already advanced to become a high-rank wizard?”
“Cut the bullshit…” Leylin gave the bishop a disdainful glance, the arcane spell he’d already prepared launching forth.
Mage’s Disjunction!
*Boom! Boom! Crackle!* Numerous spell rays shattered, returning to form the original magic item. They returned to the ring in the bishop’s hand, then his necklace, followed by his luxurious clothing.
One after another, magic items exploded on the bishop’s body. As he had too many on him, he was unlucky enough but to have to flee naked.
“A rank 9 disjunction? A high-ranked wizard above rank 19?” Uncaring of his own image, the bishop sunk into shock. In a few years, the opponent had become a high-ranked wizard, which shocked him to no end. On top of that, he was already a rank 19, very close to becoming legendary.
However, the power of Mage’s Disjunction had been shown right in front of him, which was something he could not understand at all.
‘This is the might of arcane spells…’ Seeing the bishop who was now completely in the nude, Leylin sighed inside. He was a high-ranked priest who was at least rank 17, and his wizard ranking would not be enough to subdue the priest. The opponent possessed a large number of powerful magic items.
However, being an arcanist allowed him to bypass the limitations of spell slots and the Weave. As long as he had enough arcane energy and the correct spell models, any spell under the legendary realm could be cast for a price.
This rank 9 Mage’s Disjunction, for example, was a spell used specifically to deal with magic Professionals. Its focus was very powerful, and all items below legendary would be undone under this spell.
It could be said that arcane spells were the bane of all wizards! Most of the battle might of wizards depended on their magic items, and being stripped of them would be a deadly blow! On top of that, the heartache of having the magic items formed with blood and tears, made of materials and resources that had been gathered painstakingly, was enough for wizards to cough up blood.

A prime example of this would be the bishop now. With his wealth and the numerous spells and items to aid his escape, Leylin’s surprise attack alone was not enough to kill the opponent. Now, however, all of the preparations he had made had been unravelled under Leylin’s spell, completely losing their effects. Most high-ranked priests’ divine spells were for buffs and healing. There were few that were meant for killing. Leylin’s spell had taken out most of the bishop’s strength.

“Damn it… How did you advance so quickly?” The bishop’s face was almost green, eyes now bloodshot. No matter how much he had overestimated Leylin’s strength, he would never have imagined that Leylin was extremely close to becoming legendary. It was this huge oversight that led to his failure.

‘This is just the effect of a Mage’s Disjunction spell. If it’s the legendary version, that would be the nightmare of all legendary wizards! Not only legendary items, even divine weapons could be damaged…’ Leylin’s eyes showed his thirst and intoxication. He then landed his gaze on the bishop.

“What do you want?” The bishop still held no fear for Leylin. There was only immense regret; regret that he had not prepared more.

“What I want? That’s what I should be asking you, my dear bishop!” Leylin answered with a slight smile. At this moment, Isabel had abruptly sent out a few Dragon’s Breaths and burnt a few high-ranked assassins to ashes.
Upon seeing this, the corner of the bishop’s eyes began to twitch. These high-ranked assassins had been great helpers that he had nurtured with care. While their power was lacking in comparison to the one that had attacked Leylin, they were all elites! Now, however, their corpses lined the area, destroying all of the bishop’s hard work over the years.

The defences of a Dragon Warlock’s scales were exceedingly terrifying. On top of that, she had a legendary item in the Red Dragon Sword. These assassins’ high-ranked enchanted daggers were no match at all, and once they crossed swords their lives were easily ended.

Meanwhile, the battle between the Scarlet Tigers and the bishop’s pirates began to show who was on the winning side. The high-ranked pirates that had been hastily gathered were no match for Leylin’s elites that had gone through countless battles.

The sounds of yells closed in, and even the warship that was the main force was caught up to and surrounded by the pirate ships. Numerous fleeing pirates surged out like the tide. Leylin seemed unruffled in the situation, a confidence inherent to his very being.

“Bishop. I haven’t dealt with your church before, but you show malicious intent against us. Care to explain?” Leylin watched him, the glint from the A.I. Chip strengthening.

This bishop gave him a very different feeling from many priests. He’d seen his fair share, like the Gold Priest Xena who was in charge of the church of wealth on Faulen Island. The bishop wasn’t like that.

[Beep! An abnormal energy reaction has been detected within the host’s body.] The A.I. Chip performed a full body scan in front of Leylin’s eyes. Many dark red spots had appeared on the translucent model, making it look demonic.

‘As expected… Is this the contamination from abnormal energy?’ Leylin wondered inside, ‘It’s a high-ranked priest, so this
contamination should come from divine force!’
In Leylin’s eyes, the holy light of a high-ranked bishop had now been contaminated so badly that it was beyond recognition. No matter what kind of god, divine force was better when it was pure. However, what Leylin saw was divine force that had been contaminated and warped. ‘Has the God of Murder really gone mad? He doesn’t even care about his priests… Also, this power of distortion…’ Leylin felt a chill in his heart.
Legends said that Cyric, the Greater God of Murder, had begun to go insane. He was even planning to transform into a demon. His divine realm had signs of falling into the abyss, and it looked to be a possibility now!
The only being able to influence him that greatly would be Distorted Shadow!
‘As expected of an ancient peak rank 8 Magus! Even after falling, he can still cause his opponents so much trouble…’ Leylin could not help but sigh inside.
“Hm?” The bishop’s eyes raised slightly. In this situation, Leylin’s words sounded like he was amenable to persuasion. “This… I can explain…” The bishop immediately gave Leylin a reason. Backing him was a true god, and a greater god at that. It was understandable that Leylin feared him. In the prime material plane, there had never been anyone with the guts to go against a greater god!
This was his belief in his god.
‘The plan to use military force has completely failed, but it won’t be bad if I can pull him to my side and make him a follower…’ Traces of dark red light flashed in the bishop’s eyes. He could not help but unclench his fingers from around a pendant he’d been clutching tightly.
“Now!” Leylin’s eyes flickered, and an invisible spatial undulation
flashed with a bright light.
“Hm?” The bishop was stunned, and immediately felt a sharp pain in his wrist.
*Pak!* His right hand fell to the ground, bright red blood seeping out. A miniature statue of a god fell down.
‘He had no plans of complying!’ The bishop’s eyes went wide, and insanity flashed within. The only hand he had left began to grab towards Leylin’s heart.
“It’s too late… Finger of Death,” Leylin sighed. The dark rays from his hand disappeared into the bishop’s forehead, causing the light in his eyes to dim.
*Thud!* The bishop’s corpse fell heavily to the ground, causing the pirates to break down.
The rest of the matter was naturally left to his underlings. Leylin stood beside the Bishop’s fallen right hand and saw the small pendant, looking deep in thought.
‘God Descent? The material is strange, and it’s even immune to the Mage’s Disjunction attack…’ With this thought, Leylin picked the pendant up.
It was rather small. It was a miniature statue of a god, with thin silver chains threaded through it glimmering brightly.
Buzz! The statue of the god began to rumble, divine force rippling like waves in water. It was as if it was about to come alive. However, with the external activation not coming forth, the pendant restlessly shook a few times and then unwillingly stilled, losing its sheen.

“The divine summoning failed, huh. Apart from the divine force here, there is also the presence of the divine realm’s coordinates and even the conscient of a god…” Leylin muttered. At this moment, he felt an extremely bitter conscient radiating great power from the pendant, as if its rage was about to overflow.

‘I’d need to worry if this was the true body, even if it’s an avatar… But what’s a trifling conscient like this?’ Leylin harrumphed, and a Targaryen phantom appeared in his eyes.

“Hss!” The conscient of a near rank 7 descended, annihilating all signs of the conscient lingering in the pendant. Just before that conscient dissipated, the raging divine force calmed down like a wave in a tranquil sea.

“Not bad at all! The divine force contained in here could perhaps give me an unexpected surprise…” An expression of glee spread across Leylin’s face.

The divine force of gods, to put it bluntly, was just a high-ranked power in a different form. It was considered venomous to others, and clerics could only receive the divine force of the gods they
worshipped. However, it was all a supplement for Leylin.
‘What a pity… If not for those powerful gods, I would have long
since broken into many churches and robbed them of their divine
force…’ Leylin began his deductions.
Divine force, divinity, godfire, worshippers, divine spark; these
were what the gods needed the most in increasing order.
With his current strength he could barely absorb some divinity, but
it would destroy the foundations of his own cultivation. Needless
to say, godfire or divine sparks were even more destructive for his
body.
As for divine force? That was still well within Leylin’s absorption
capabilities. Moreover, Leylin had deliberately digested the divine
force of certain gods. Until now, he had only managed to have
chance encounters with Malar and Cyric.
These two crazy and sinisterly evil gods had overlapping domains,
which laid out a foundation for Leylin’s future plans.
‘Looking at the divine force stored in this pendant… It should be
enough to increase my spirit a little, or even balance the other
aspects of my stats…’ Leylin rubbed his chin. After eradicating the
original conscient in the pendant, the divine force was now
ownerless. Leylin could now absorb it slowly, with the greatest
efficiency.
Through digesting this divine force Leylin would be able to analyse
the process, helping him understand Cyric’s divinity. If he met
other gods of different domains, he would be able to create a whole
new divinity all for himself!
‘After tossing away this thing, even if this bishop managed to
survive, he wouldn’t have a happy ending… No! He would be
even worse off after his death!’ Leylin looked at the corpse on the
floor and sighed.
Gods held control over the souls of their worshippers, and this was
a high-ranking priest on top. Leylin hadn’t completely destroyed
his soul just now. Once it was inspected by the God of Death, this priest’s soul would definitely be sent to Cyric’s divine realm. As for what punishments the cleric would receive, no more words had to be said.

“What a pitiful fellow…” Leylin was, of course, not sympathetic in the slightest bit. He quickly tossed this matter to the back of his mind.

“It seems like they were small crews roped in from Pirates’ Cove. Apart from the elites of the churches, there aren’t many forces would could execute something like this!” Isabel trod on the face of a pirate captain, using their robes to wipe clean the Red Dragon Sword as she grumbled.

With the activation of the bloodline, she’d also inherited a warrior-like thirst for war.

“Yes. Had they been given time to train we would’ve had a much bigger problem…” Leylin nodded his head in approval, very soon ordering Ronald to clean up the mess.

As dusk approached, the sky above the sea was dyed a crimson red. The entire region was littered with the remnants of broken ships and boats. Splintered masts and flags covered half the place, and not too far from that scene were many floating corpses, blood continuing to ooze and trickle from their bloated bodies.

The enormous pirate crew slowly left, leaving a trail of destruction behind them. From this day onwards, everyone would know that two epic battles were fought in this forsaken region, devastating and annihilating two giants of the seas in one stroke.

“This atmosphere and scenery… I really want to lift my voice in song…!”

*Crash! Rumble!* A figure wearing lavish noble robes descended from the sky. He exuded an aura of charisma and elegance, yet a pair of black wings spread from his back. Apart from the difference in colour, this figure looked just like an angel, with
many beautiful features. However, his image was shattered the moment anyone looked into his eyes.

“That Baron Leylin… He rules the outer seas from today, eh? I really am looking forward to it…” This person was obviously Neville, but his pupils had now turned a silvery hue, with no traces of affection in them. With just one glance into his eyes, one would feel their soul turning frigid.

Neville’s black wings shook slightly as they supported his weight. At this moment, this demon looked at the Scarlet Tiger ship sailing away, as he pondered deep in his thoughts. ‘Strong, determined, decisive, brave… Once a soul with these qualities falls, the strength that would manifest would definitely be able to give birth to a greater devil…’

“As expected, it’s a devil huh?” An indifferent voice sounded behind him, which turned made Neville freeze in his motions. He turned his head around slowly, looking at the young noble wizard that should have left. Yet he was now floating in the air alongside him with his arms crossed, a hint of mockery flickering in his eyes.

“Hello mighty wizard, ruler of the outer seas! I am Neville, of the third hell. I hereby extend my greetings to you, with utmost respect!” After giving Leylin a once-over, Neville greeted Leylin decorously, with his right hand on his chest.

“I believe that in the future there will be a day where you’ll require my services!”

“One cannot trust a deal with devils. Not to mention that you tried to lure me into a ploy… Anyone who tries to challenge me will never live past the day…” Leylin uttered his words icily, and a silver spell formation wrapped Neville up.

“Wait… I can still give you… Many things that you would not think of! Material possessions of the prime material world, authority that cannot be challenged, and also many beauties…” The silver spell
formation seemed to be able to suppress devils. As his black feathers came into contact with the light barrier, they burnt up to release a charred smell.

“The promise of a devil? Hahaha…” Leylin smiled faintly, his golden pupils turning a deep hue that was darker than the abyss. The phantom of a Targaryen appeared behind him.

A terrifying devouring energy burst forth from the spell formation, completely engulfing Neville within.

“This devouring power… as well as laws… You are…!” Neville’s eyes flashed with understanding, but before he could utter the truth his body vanished into the spell formation.

“The ruler of the third level of hell, the Duke of Greed… Mammon, huh?” Leylin uttered his breath and closed his eyes, relishing in the energy that he was absorbing.

[Beep! Host absorbed a large amount of energy. Agility +1, Vitality +1.] The A.I. Chip voice intoned.

Very soon, another notification appeared, and it caused Leylin to become gleeful.

[Host has devoured a devil from the third hell. Laws of devouring have been activated, obtained information on laws of greed]

“Isn’t this the devouring technique of my main body?” Leylin muttered. His main body controlled the laws of gluttony, and through constantly devouring these laws he would gain a higher enlightenment of them. The devil from the third hell had enlightened him a little in that aspect.

“My main body’s injuries have begun to heal faster than normal then… Its support has increased…” Leylin was elated. His stats had now changed:

“I have also absorbed some information on the laws of greed? It seems like Beelzebub was indeed one of the dukes of hell. Even after making changes to it, it is still highly adaptable to the laws from the abyss!”

Leylin gazed towards the horizon. “The outer seas are now my base, impenetrable to outside forces. Be it from hell or any divine realm, no threat…”

A high-level flight spell lit up, and very soon Leylin’s figure was just a black dot in the distance, slowly disappearing into the horizon.

More repercussions were brewing and intensifying in the aftermath of this event…

……

In another part of the continent, in the midst of a gloomy valley. An aura of death permeated the air, and there was a black church at the valley’s center. Magical light filled the area, and even legendaries would perish within it. Just as the bishop was about to perish, a white-browed priest raised his head in the church.

“Men!”

“Your holiness!” Several dark robed priests answered immediately with reverence in their eyes. Standing in front of them was a core member of the Church of Cyric, a legendary priest!
Jesfano, that piece of trash. Not only did he die, he also lost the master’s token…” The old man’s voice was incredibly hoarse, and it held an unendurably strange tone as he pointed out an earth-shattering fact.

“What? That happened at the Dambrath outer seas?” These black-robed priests exchanged glances, seeing shock in all of their eyes. They were unwilling to think about what had happened to Jesfano. In the Underdark, the druid elves that angered the spider empress Lolth would turn into terrifying half-spider monsters. For Jesfano, whose soul was in the hands of his god, he would be in a worse state. Even the black-robed priests felt sorrowful on his behalf, but it didn’t last for long. The old man slowly scanned them, the whites of his eyes brightening slightly, “Jesfona was already a high-ranked priest. We’ll have to dispatch a legendary to be able to find out what happened. Who’s free right now?”

One of the priests muttered to himself, then continued, “Lord Shadow Mask’s whereabouts are unknown now, while Crimson Eye is at the barren west. It’ll be very inconvenient for them…”

“As for my own subordinates, the north is still rather unstable. A few lords have been pursuing Queen Alustriel, and there still haven’t been any results…” another black-robed priest reported. This was the pain of large organisations. While their influence was spread throughout the prime material plane, it was not so simple to
make use of their high-tier forces.

“How’s the Cadaver Collector doing?” Since the old man had ordered this, he must have his own plans.

The last one hesitated for a while before speaking, “He has yet to complete his experiments…”

“Tell him to rush to the outer seas once he’s done. I want him to skin the scalp of the sinner who had the gall to kill my master’s priest!” The elderly man spoke slowly, and then knelt in front of the idol and began to pray, immoveable. He was like the most solid statue himself.

The black-robed priests glanced at each other and retreated.

……

Leylin was completely clueless about the matters on the mainland, but he had his own predictions. He had returned to Port Venus undisturbed, and hid in his wizard tower.

“This serenity should be maintained for a period of time. Even if the God of Murder’s church wants to take revenge, the time taken for them to investigate and dispatch men should be enough for me to advance…”

Leylin was now seated in the core of the wizard tower. There were terrifying isolation runes on the walls around him, and the tower genie was strictly monitoring everything. With its help Port Venus had become the harbour with the best security. Crime rates were currently very low, which attracted even more merchants into business here.

Leylin knew very well that even more trade was coming in. That was the result of eliminating the Barbarians.

‘Cousin should know that they can attack Pirates’ Cove and treat that area as an eternal base…’ Leylin placed the steaming cup on the table, a ruminating look on his expression, ‘I never thought I
would become the source and driving force of chaos in the outer sea…’
At this thought, Leylin could not help but look at the other item on the table. This was a pendant of a strange make, containing surging strength within. Yet, it had lost its own spiritual nature and turned into an enormous source of energy that anyone could use.
“Now that I’ve removed the conscient and sealed it, the God of Murder shouldn’t be able to sense it anymore, no?” Leylin did not mention Cyric’s name. This was cautiousness on a fundamental level. Just mentioning a god’s name would allow them to sense things.
‘The information in the Wizards’ Guild stated that greater gods can obtain 15 to 18 words of information on the ones who call their truenames, regardless of where they are…’ Leylin stroked his chin.
This ability was somewhat similar to a part of the abilities of great rank 9 Magi, who were capable of everything and knew everything. It was a pity that this was just a part of it, and was a unique law that had been generated specific to the World of Gods. There were far too many ways to evade it.
‘Also… such a tremendous divine force… What a huge gift!’ Leylin spread his fingers and began to rub on the surface of the pendant. Threads of chaotic energy had been transformed by his devouring power, becoming the purest dark gold. Leylin absorbed it unceasingly.
Leylin now had given up the vulgar method of devouring everything at one go, and had switched his method to making fine adjustments and changes continuously. While the divine force of the God of Murder was powerful, it seemed to impure, and the power of the Distorted Shadow was continuously seeping in from it. What Leylin needed was to refine the purest divine force and use it on himself.
As the divine force was poured into himself, a golden mist formed
around Leylin, like he was a god cast of gold. The A.I. Chip’s prompts kept sounding out. [Beep! Host has absorbed large amounts of energy essence. Determined to be a greater god’s divine force. Effect similar to eternal grace from the god.] [Host’s stats have increased, Strength +1. Agility +1. Vitality +1.]

As the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded, Leylin felt like his body had been enhanced. Terrifying strength burst forth from all his cells.

“As expected of a greater god’s divine force…” Leylin sighed with satisfaction.

“A.I. Chip, assess the value of all the divine force!” He commanded.

[Beep! Mission established. Constructing model of host’s body. Beginning simulations…] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s orders. Within seconds, it had a comprehensive conclusion.

[Beep! Preliminary results show that the pendant will be used up completely in 145h 12min. Host’s average stats estimated to reach 15, will advance one rank as an arcanist.]

“Is that so? That’s not bad… On top of that…” Leylin saw the A.I. Chip’s prompt below. [Beep! Analysis of level 5 Weave at 100%. Host has obtained all rank 5 spell models, is now immune to forgetting spells. No materials needed to cast rank 5 spells.]

There was a new change to the A.I. Chip’s interface, in the portion related to the progress on the Weave.

[Analysis of Weave: Level 0: 100%, Level 1: 100%, Level 2: 100%, Level 3: 100%, Level 4: 100%, Level 5: 100%, Level 6: 53.33%, Level 7: 34.97%.

“So divine force is also effective at deciphering the Weave…” Leylin nodded, ‘It also seems to have something to do with me becoming an arcanist. Now that I’ve somewhat broken away from it, the analysis has quickened quite a bit…’
Becoming an arcanist was a huge advancement for Leylin. It wasn’t just a change in combat ability, he could now completely break through the Weave that limited wizards. With the restrictions of the Weave, high-ranked wizards after rank 15 would find advancing extremely difficult, Becoming a legendary was also incomparably harsh. It was easier for legendary warriors; becoming a legendary wizard before turning three hundred would already make one extremely young!

Leylin had a feeling that, after experiencing the dusk of the gods and the rise of the Netheril Empire, the gods had consciously limited the abilities of the spellcasters and prevented them from improving and growing. However, this did not apply to arcanists. As long as they had the theories and a foundation, as well as enough resources, there was nothing stopping arcanists from advancing! However, the difficulty for arcanists lay in constructing theories applying to the higher ranks or even legendaries. This was much harder than for wizards. In ancient times, the difficulty in arcanists advancing far exceeded that of the wizards. But Leylin was different. His main body was a near rank 7 Magus of laws! His foundation was extremely solid for the nonlimited arcane arts. With enough capabilities, he could constantly improve.

With the recuperation of his body and restoration of his law of devouring, as well as Cyric’s bishop’s ‘altruistic’ offering, he was pushed into the fast lane of advancement.

‘Only legendaries are high-end battle powers in the prime material plane. I must become a legendary as soon as possible; only then will I have the confidence and capital to separate the outer seas…’

When it came to his future development and plans, Leylin practically had a complete set of steps to follow.

‘Before this, I need to crack down on the faith of the natives and the various devil and demon worshippers, as well as the followers
of evil gods…” Leylin got up slowly, the great energy in his body turning into terrifying streams of air in the private room. ‘I’ll need to alter my outer appearance. It wouldn’t be fun to be misunderstood as related to the God of Murder!’ With a thought, all of Leylin’s divine force was converted into the purest energy. The faint golden light on his skin completely disappeared. “Master, the guests have arrived outside the tower!” The tower genie spoke respectfully, her little face appearing at this moment. “I’ll greet them myself!” Leylin nodded. He headed outside the wizard tower and saw the figure of Gold Priest Xena. Beside her were the priests of a few other churches, though they were only around rank 10. “Bishop Xena, everyone else, welcome to my wizard tower!” Leylin had a cordial smile on his face. In that moment, it was as if spring had arrived and all sorts of beautiful flowers were blooming. ‘This power of influence… How terrifying! What state is his spiritual force in now?’ While having shock in her eyes, Xena similarly revealed a smile, “Lord Baron, you’re too courteous! As guests, our gifts are lacking. This isn’t good manners…”
After giving them a tour of the tower, Leylin brought the priests to the drawing room. The metallic golems arrived quickly, presenting tea and snacks in elven porcelain.

“May I know why Lord Baron invited us here?” Xena took a look at these golems that were about as strong as rank 10 Professionals, and increased Leylin’s rating in her mind.

Beside her as a representative of the Goddess of Wealth’s church, there were also priests from the Gods of Knowledge and Suffering. However, Xena was the highest-ranked, and the influence of the Goddess of Wealth was the greatest here. It allowed her to act on behalf of the other two.

“Before all that, I’d first like to give you two gifts!” Leylin clapped, and another golem came forward, placing two boxes in front of them. Once they were opened, a pungent smell wafted out with large amounts of lime powder. It caused Xena to furrow her brows. She slowly drew closer.

“This is…” She suddenly took several steps backwards after seeing what was inside.

“Ah…” “It’s actually…”

If Xena had reacted that way, the other two priests had even larger reactions.

“Lord Leylin, are you using this to scare us?” Xena’s tone was of dissatisfaction, as the box contained two sinister heads. Showing heads to these priests was no sign of goodwill.
“Hehe… I’m obviously not offending you. Please take a closer look…” Leylin had an easy smile on his face. After confirming that Leylin would not fall out with the church of wealth, Xena endured the nausea and discomfort and began to observe the sinister faces in the box. After taking a closer look, she found something was wrong. “Hm? This…”

The two other priests also seemed to have noticed something as well, delight showing on their expressions.

“Lord Leylin, this is…” The priest of the God of Suffering, Avdonia, began sounding unsure.

“Indeed, this is the high-ranked assassin that killed numerous men of the clergy during the Pirates’ Tide.”

Leylin pointed at the box on the left, “As for the one next to him, it is the bishop of the God of Murder hidden in the outer seas, Jesfano!”

“Hah… On behalf of all my comrades that met harm, I thank you!” Xena covered the boxes and sighed. The two other priests also thanked him happily.

During the Pirates’ Tide, the God of Murder had dispatched his subordinates to assassinate those of godly duties without regard. This had resulted in massive losses on the gods’ end. The churches that the three priests in front of Leylin represented were also included in the scope of the attacks, so it could be said that they had a feud with these two people.

The fact that Leylin had given them these two heads as gifts made them rather pleased.

“Well then… What does Lord Leylin wish to speak about?” The priest that had come in the bishop of the God of Knowledge’s stead was one that looked like an elderly scholar. The man called Salilus questioned Leylin with an intelligent glint in his eyes. After hearing his words, Xena and Avdonia focused on Leylin.
“Actually, these two heads were surprises that I obtained when exterminating the notorious Barbarians…” Leylin explained slightly. “The Barbarians? You mean the culprit that started the Pirates’ Tide causing heavy casualties in the outer seas? They’ve been wiped out?” Xena was rather surprised, while Leylin snickered inside. By defaming the Barbarians over the long term, especially with the king’s announcement, the Barbarians were now complete criminals. There was no way to absolve themselves of this reputation. “Mm. They weren’t just pirates, they were connected with the God of Murder’s church!” Leylin declared, which then earned him flattery reserved for young heroes from Salilus. “But…” When Leylin continued however, his tone completely changed, which made the three priests aware that Leylin was about to come to the main point. “I believe that the outer seas as they are right now are in urgent need of a purge of faith in evil gods. This applies especially to those pirates and natives…” Leylin spoke in a low voice, his true intentions now revealed. “A purge of faith?” The three of them exchanged glances in their surprise. “Yes, a purge!” Leylin nodded resolutely. While he treated the outer seas as his trump card, he could not offend all of the gods. Cyric and Malar’s reputations were rotten to the core, so that didn’t matter, but the few churches on Faulen Island needed to be roped in to his side. They could be considered as the Faulen Family’s natural allies. As for the unlucky bishop of the God of Murder, Leylin was sorry to say that he could only be treated as just another stepping stone. “Also… when it comes to dealing blows to the devils and demons, there are many ways we can cooperate in the future. I myself have come up with many new spell formations to detect demons and devils…” Leylin looked extremely furious.
Getting the favour of the good faction via proclaiming his wish to
attack the devils and demons was a part of his plan. He could keep
subduing them in the shadows to expand his strength, which made
it like killing two birds with one stone.
“Oh? Please allow us to discuss this for a while…” Xena looked
towards the priests beside her and answered, finding herself put in
a spot.
From Leylin’s actions, it was apparent that he was making a
declaration to dominate the outer seas. Most importantly, with the
annihilation of the Barbarians and uprooting the God of Murder’s
church, there now seemed to be no other opposing forces on the
sea.
As those of the clergy, they would first have to consider the
benefits to their churches. Everything else was secondary.
Unifying the outer sea and cracking down on faith in evil gods and
devils was unquestionably beneficial for the gods they had faith in.
Of course, this was only if they stood on the same side as Leylin
and worked together with him.
‘He has the ability to destroy the Barbarians in secret… Seems like
the rumours that the Faulen Family has control over the Scarlet
Tigers is true…’ Xena glanced at Leylin, who was all smiles, and
pondered over this.
‘With huge armed fleets on the surface and a pirate group in the
shadows, as well as huge trade benefits and shipping routes
supporting him, it is undeniable that he shall be king of the outer
seas. Rejecting his goodwill at this time is very unfavourable to the
goddess’ upcoming plans…’
Xena was actually very unwilling to see a single organisation
becoming the dictator of the outer seas. She would rather this
region be a place for free trade. However, she was currently left
without choice.
The moment she infuriated a large organisation like this capable of
unifying the outer seas, there would be a huge blow to trades in this region. This was also disadvantageous to the spread of faith in the Goddess of Wealth. Xena kept weighing her options.

‘But… attacking the evil gods, devils and demons?’ Xena shot Leylin a glance. While she had no clue what he was actually thinking, doing this meant she could tell what faction Leylin was in. At the very least, he was not on opposing ends with the Goddess of Wealth.

“In this regard… Please give me some time, my Lord. I need to discuss this with other members before I can make a decision!” While she already had a general inclination to agree, Xena still answered this way.

“The same goes for us.” At the other side, Salilus and Avdonia gave the same answer.

“Of course! This is just my intent. My family also has no plans of sending out troops on a large scale as of yet…” Leylin knew that these priests needed the permissions of their churches and even gods, which was why he didn’t pressure them. Whatever it was, this would be beneficial to them. He was sure that those with foresight could see this.

“As for the new detection spell and spell formations that you mentioned…” Before leaving, Xena displayed her strong interest in what Leylin had mentioned.

“Those are things I put research into and created unwittingly. They’re about half a fold more effective than ancient detection techniques, and the same goes for the range!” Leylin spoke indifferently, but that only caused the priests’ eyes to glint.

Demons and devils were the most hated beings in the prime material plane of the World of Gods! Altars and spells that could detect and distinguish them, especially those as effective and with as large a range as Leylin had said, were definitely the dreams of the churches.
“To be able create new spells alone… I was actually doubtful of my Lord’s talent in spells, but my doubts have been set aside.” The priest of the God of Knowledge, Salilus, spoke with conviction. Even if it was the simplest distinguishing and detection spells, being able to create a whole new spell model meant that Leylin’s knowledge in terms of spells had reached a very profound level. Wizards like these were more capable of reaching the realm of legendaries. This was how it was recorded in many documents. Leylin had exhibited his abilities here, and Salilus could not help but brighten up.

“Many thanks for the praise. I can discuss matters related to this more comprehensively if you wish to!” Leylin was, on the surface, still a follower of Oghma. Naturally, he had to give this bishop preferential treatment, as well as give the other two some pressure.

“Of course, of course!” Salilus nodded with his eyes wide, while the other two looked wary.

After sending the three priests away, Leylin strolled back to his room.

‘There aren’t anymore issues in persuading them…’ he thought, ‘I’ll have a reason to purge the outer seas and call for help. All that’s left is to make preparations…’

By purging the faith of the natives in the outer seas and stealing their soul strength, he could constantly advance, speeding up his contact with the legendary realm. In the meanwhile, he could also expunge the devils and demons. This was Leylin’s main plan that would never change!
aulen Island, the basement of the wizard tower. Within the negative energy pool.

This was a place where wizards conducted taboo experiments, with dimensional spell formations specifically to summon demons and devils. Hence, a powerful binding formation was an essential protective measure for this place.

Researching demons and devils! Obviously, once priests or paladins found out, he would become a wanted man, a sinner that all the humans would call out.

It was a pity that most high-ranked wizards had to make use of negative energy to advance. There were few who followed some lesser-known paths. After becoming a legendary wizard, those madmen might even completely disregard the gods and brazenly go against their ban, becoming involved in the domain of arcane spells.

In the eyes of those strictly forbidden scholars, the gods were merely a group of powerful wizards. Who exactly was up there was a function of luck and one’s birth.

Due to their pursuit of truth and their research, wizards often harboured thoughts of becoming treacherous, and were hated by the gods to the bone. They had then done all they could to create the Weave in order to limit the spellcasters.

Unfortunately, even with the annihilation of Netheril and the crippling of most wizards through the Weave, legendary wizards
still walked the path of doubting the gods. The immense pressure they exerted caused even more vigorous backlash, which was in a way very ironic.

“A dimensional summoning spell formation? While I can only summon beings from various planes within the crystal sphere, it’s still not bad…” Leylin now stood at the edge of a spell formation with various runes drawn all over it, possessing an inquiring look on his face. After sending the three priests away, he focused entirely on research in arcane spells. He was already a rank 16 arcanist, and it was obvious that he would perform practical experiments in this area.

“There seems to be a very powerful limitation in summoning spells within the World of Gods. There are also different factions. Of course… anyone can summon demons, as long as they are controlled well after that…” Leylin murmured to himself and activated the runes on the spell formation.

“Though it’s my first time using this, I guess I’ll summon demons. After all, I’ve gotten familiar with devils, but haven’t gotten the chance to observe demons myself…”

Demon summoning! As this was the first time, Leylin had not planned to summon a particularly powerful demon. However, after casting the spell, he suddenly found his spiritual force connecting with a large, deep, dark and chaotic plane.

“Is this the abyss? This power of space and chaos…” The abyss was currently known to have hundreds of layers, and most of it was definitely undiscovered. There were even rumours that the ninth level of hell had initially been part of the abyss and been separated.

With Leylin’s current spiritual force, it was impossible for him to advance to far into the abyss, even with spells and spell formations supporting him. He could only tour the surface layers.
Mm! There’s a confusing and chaotic soul aura here, but it feels infinitely tiny. This should be a type of abyssal worm. That’s too weak… But then this one is too powerful. I think it’s approaching the rank of legendary. Everything is so different… I give up…”

With his fine spiritual force control, Leylin had more choices than other wizards. Finally, after a generally searching the area, he found his target, “A powerful soul aura and a strength that isn’t too strong or too weak. It’s you! Summon!”

The planar coordinates locked onto the target, and Leylin saw a teleportation gate opening. A strange, terrifying demon was teleported over.

*Kukaka!* What entered Leylin’s sights was a huge demon that looked more like a bald eagle on two legs. It was completely naked and had large wings on its back, the disgusting red chicken skin evident. Its human arms were tipped by incredibly sharp claws. It did not hesitate to attack once it saw Leylin. The bloodlust, chaos and insanity within the soul caused his eyes to widen slightly.

“This should be a Vrock! While evolved from abyssal worms, it should be considered a mid-ranked demon! On top of that… this amount of chaos and level of attack… Hmph!”

Leylin huffed, the binding spell formation he had prepared beforehand flickered with dazzling light. Tens of lightning rays formed a huge prison. The Vrock’s talons clashed with the electricity, and it immediately caused a huge sound. Large amounts of black flames began to blaze within, causing even the Vrock to retreat pitifully. There was finally some fear in its eyes.

“This guy only knows to be tough on the weak but is afraid when treated harshly!” Leylin shook his head, his right index finger pressing on his temple, “A.I. Chip, scan it and gather data!”

[Name unknown. Race: Vrock (Tanar’ri) Strength: 16 Agility: 17 Vitality: 15 Spirit: 13 Feats: 1. Demon Skin 2. Flight 3. Corrosive Aura 4. Ability similar to magic. Description: This is a mid-rank demon. There is chaos and evil of the abyss in its very soul. Unless its mind is controlled, one will definitely be met with a powerful counterattack.]

‘It’s the model of a high-ranked professional, and its stats in all areas surpass them!’ Leylin evaluated dully, and then saw its faction lights and soul temperament. ‘What kind of insane and chaotic soul is this! It even has such an evil feeling…’

It had to be said that while he’d heard of this before, actually meeting one had Leylin losing completely hope in demons. “They’re just a bunch of evil lunatics with power in their hands!” After seeing its temperament, Leylin finally understood why the demons kept losing in the bloody battles with devils. While they were all evil existences, these beings that hid within chaos were just unworthy of his attention.

“The chaotic temperament from the abyss? Where is this coming from?” Leylin had a searching look in his eyes. He observed the Vrock trapped by the binding formation, the intense gaze causing even the insane demon to feel some fear.

“I don’t have much time, but I do have patience for my first specimen!” Leylin had an apathetic expression as a small, silver surgical knife and other tools suddenly appeared in his hands.

……

“While the flesh itself is filled with a filthy power of chaos, the temperament of demons seems to be rooted in the soul itself…” The laboratory was now completely empty, and there were only bloodstained bits of bone left here. Some creature’s last wails seemed to linger in the area, filling the place with a frightening
However, this did not affect Leylin at all. After washing away the blood and dirt on his hands, he focused on studying the potion in the test tube he held. A dark red liquid could be seen in the test tube, a dark light within shining with varying amounts of intensity as he shook the tube. It seemed evil and frightening.

‘This is the potion that was made from extracting the demon’s energy. A.I. Chip!’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled as he ordered.

[Beep! Item Name: Middle Demon Potion. Effect: Raises vitality and strength of all beings below 10 points by 1 point. For those with these stats below 15 points, vitality and strength increases by 0.5. Ineffective for all professionals above rank 15. Description: This is a potion with powerful demonic energy. Drink it if strength is desired, although be fearless of the corruption to your soul. You might fall to the abyss forever.]

“Not a bad result. What a pity…” Leylin sighed. While this potion was pretty good at boosting his underlings’ strength, the demonic corruption that would result was a huge issue. If he wanted to continue working in the prime material plane, then his underlings could not be a group of demons!

However, his underlings could not be too weak either. He was preparing to nurture talents for the church he would build.

“What a bother! While I’m unafraid of such corruption, it won’t be the same for others…” Leylin muttered, “I need to adjust the soul to remove the corruption, which would increase the costs too much. This can only be used as a reward, and not an ordinary potion to be passed down…”

‘And… the abyss?’ Leylin stroked his chin, recalling that mighty surge of chaos he had felt before.

‘Chaos is a rather powerful law. After grasping it, I might even be able to command strength even more powerful than greater gods and work together with the abyss. Unfortunately, it doesn’t suit me
at all… I should head to the abyss and hell after becoming legendary to take a look.’
With Leylin’s abilities, the abyss and hell were good choices to reincarnate in. However, Leylin had pondered over this and then given up. Compared to the prime material plane, these two areas were far too dangerous. There were battles everywhere and basically no peace whatsoever. Right after reincarnating, Leylin would be at his weakest. How could he gamble on this?
“Even if I wanted to try my luck, would I, an invader, still be cared for by the World Will?” Leylin had a feeling that even while the World Will was in a deep sleep, its malicious intent towards Magi would not disappear so easily.
However, with his law of devouring, he would certainly be able to let his talents shine if he were to enter the abyss and hell. Leylin had no hesitations when it came to that!
Within a dim room. Powerful golden divine force was raging like stormy waves as it gushed out of a small statue. It was then absorbed by a huge black vortex in mid-air. Completely transformed, a pure energy gathered at the body of a quiet figure sitting there. Powerful divine force condensed to form a faint figure of light, a thread of divinity sparkling as it emerged.

‘The analysis of divine force has slowly given me information over divinity…’ Leylin pondered over this. In the eyes of Magi, this so-called godhood was merely an elementary understanding of the power of laws. A true god had comprehended one law completely. From there, one would ignite their godfire to join the ranks of the other true gods, a process improving comprehension of laws as they grasped them.

“But… The World of Gods has unique rules of their own. With the power of faith, comprehension of the laws can be hastened. The power of laws possessed after becoming a true god can also be boosted through faith. With the comprehension of laws as the core, one can rob or present this divinity that comes from faith…”

It was extremely difficult for the inhabitants of the World of Gods to surpass the limitations on their own bodies and obtain divinity. Unless one was lucky enough to get into the good graces of the gods or pick up a divine weapon with divinity hidden inside, this was basically impossible.
However, having already grasped the true essence of laws, Magi didn’t find it too difficult to create divinity as long as they had enough materials.

‘Honestly speaking, divine force is actually the material to form divinity. It takes other gods too much energy to transform it, to the point that they’re unwilling to do so…’ Leylin studied the statue in his hands. The divine force within was almost completely depleted.

“Even with all the divine force stored inside being able to raise the my average stats, I still can’t form any real divinity…” Leylin muttered to himself. After absorbing all the divine force within the statue, his strength had improved just a bit. He now had a better understanding of Cyric’s godly duties and domain, but he still could not condense divinity. This was not an issue in technique, but just that there weren’t enough pure ingredients.

By his estimation, he would require all the divine force from a god’s avatar to condense the divinity he needed.

“Eliminating an avatar?” Leylin stroked his chin, beginning to ponder over the feasibility of this matter.

It wasn’t possible for a god to descend on the prime material plane in their true body. Their personifications were at most high-ranked legendaries and saints, about as strong as rank 5 or 6 Magi. They would also lose their holiness, and could therefore be killed.

Of course, even the avatar wasn’t someone Leylin could deal with easily.

‘I completely understand Cyric’s divine force…’ Leylin reflected, ‘With multiple domains like murder, massacres, conspiracies, and death, he has entered the ranks of the greater gods. An avatar from him would be the cream of the crop…’

In Leylin’s eyes, however, of all of Cyric’s laws, the only ones Leylin found worthy were those of massacre and death. These two domains were very formidable, and they were what Cyric had relied on to enter the ranks of the greater gods.
It would take a tremendous amount of divine force to condense a divinity in these domains.
‘Even if he’s gone insane, this is still far too difficult… I should change my target…’
Ever since Leylin had started out here, he had only offended two gods; the God of the Hunt, Malar, and the God of Murder, Cyric. This had naturally been done after some pondering. As the path he had chosen caused conflict with these two gods, becoming hostile was obvious.
‘Malar is only a lesser god, and his avatar would be easier to deal with. I don’t want anything to do with his domain of hunting, but it won’t be hard to transform it into a divinity in massacres…’
Only middle gods and above in the World of Gods could transform divinity between similar fields. However, any rank 8 Magus could do so This was the result of differences in comprehending laws.
With Leylin’s temperament, those benevolent and honest roles meant nothing to him. Not only was his soul unsuitable for that, it would also pollute his path to becoming a rank 8 Magus. Hence, he had few choices.
With research on ancient Magi like Distorted Shadow, he now had a better understanding of his own path.
‘My path is definitely inclined towards ‘evil’ for this world. Will I completely walk the path of a rebel?’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Based on the novels from my previous world, rebels never lead good lives. That’s rather… interesting…’
‘But… the power of devils will definitely gives rise to massacres and death. That’s rather fitting…’ The corner of Leylin’s lips suddenly turned up in an evil smile.
He did not fear sin on his path to eternity, nor did he mind grasping evil laws.
*Boom!* At this moment, the miniature statue in his hands exploded. His continued absorption over this period of time had
completely exhausted the divine force within. “Is it depleted already?” Leylin closed his eyes. The cells all over his body greedily absorbed this pure energy that had been transformed, and there was even a huge improvement on a genetic level. At this moment, the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded. [Beep! Host has absorbed pure energy. Effect similar to eternal grace from the god. Strength +1, Agility +2, Vitality +1, Spirit +1.] [Host’s spiritual force has broken through, rank increasing. Host is now a rank 17 arcanist. Arcane Energy +10.] [Obtained spell slots: rank 8(1), rank 7(1), rank 6(1), rank 5(1)]
All his stats had now exceeded 15. Power erupted in Leylin’s body, and it felt as if every cell was dancing in elation as if they had broken through their shackles.
[Beep! Host’s stats have all reached 15. Feat Elementary Perfect Body has become Intermediate Perfect Body.] The A.I. Chip’s prompt continued to show. Afterwards, the explanation of the Perfect Body feat was refreshed. [Intermediate Perfect Body. Host’s genes have been optimised. Characteristics of exemplary beings has been strengthened, and host has obtained mid-rank resistance to toxins, fire, cold, and corrosion. Endurance in varying environments has been increased by large degree.]
‘So all of the divine force and demon potions recently have
allowed me to rise to this point?’ Leylin nodded, looking satisfied. The rise in his arcanist ranking allowed him to reduce the consumption needed for arcane spells. Besides for rank 9 arcane spells, he would not need to pay any price at all. The rise in his wizard ranking also allowed him to obtain a rank 8 spell slot, which was pretty good.

“And then… Intermediate Perfect Body?”

Leylin wondered about this. The advancement in his perfect body meant he was transforming into a higher-grade lifeform. Once he became a legendary, he would probably get a Greater Perfect Body or even Legendary Perfect Body as his feat.

“Even those old legends must have endured long periods of training to improve their stats, allowing them to possess a Legendary Perfect Body. However, at the rate that I’m improving, my feat with the Perfect Body alone after becoming a legendary would allow me to catch up tolegendaries who have been amassing strength for so long…”

“Also, a powerful vessel would allow me to make preparations to take on more power!” Leylin had a feeling that once his Perfect Body reached the legendary domain, there would be huge advantages to absorbing divinity and even igniting his godfire to become a god.

“Whether it’s the remaining evil organisations in the outer seas or dealing with the God of Murder, all this would require me harnessing great power…” The Faulen Family might have become a king of the outer seas, but lacked the power to completely control the situation!

Only by quickly becoming a legendary could he fearlessly take on the attack from the God of Murder’s church, and therefore make the outer seas a solid foundation for him to become a god.

“My speed of advancement is already very fast. If I want to continue, the only method would be making use of the faith of the
natives in the outer seas…”
Leylin’s progress slowed once he became a rank 17 arcanist. He performed experiments on negative energy and other planes everyday within his wizard tower, and occasionally taught some apprentices. He led a leisurely life. As he possessed crucial techniques and strength, he was not in the least bit anxious. And just as he expected, others could no longer hold themselves back.

“Lord Baron… Were you really the one to create these three spells? Detect Demon, Detect Domain, and Sense Devil?”

Xena did not seem to be in the best mental state. There were dark bags under her beautiful eyes, and it was apparent that she hadn’t had a good rest in a long time. For her, this was something unthinkable.

“Yes!” Leylin answered with a smile, and he then saw Xena’s eyes that were full of shock and astonishment that she could not hide.

“The many gods will definitely notice your contributions to the World of Gods!” After obtaining an affirmation, Xena immediately guaranteed.

This was because Leylin’s invention was far too astounding. Even if the paladins had spells like Detect Evil, its categories and scope were far too narrow. After personal testing, Xena found that the spell models that Leylin provided far exceeded the detection methods from before, whether in terms of accuracy or scope. The effect it would have on the operation of dealing with demons.
and devils was obvious.
Xena’s eyes were now full of fervor as she watched Leylin. If she could offer up these techniques to her goddess’ church, she might even have the confidence to compete the next ‘Holy Coin’ church election!
“I’ve always had zero tolerance for evil organisations!” Leylin’s experiment showed how ‘righteous’ he was, but he was snorting away inside.
He himself was half an Archdevil, so making a few techniques to detect devils was far too easy. Having met a high-ranked person from their faction, being betrayed and sold out was just the devils and demons being down on their luck.
With this, Leylin could also show his resolution in his faction.
Of course, as the person who created these detection techniques, Leylin had long since come up with their respective defences and counter spells. Of course, he had given all those to his own devil underlings.
‘It’s wonderful to use another’s strength to eliminate your enemies…’ Leylin assessed to himself, ‘If these spells grow widespread, then all the devils and demons hiding in the mainland will face heavy losses. It’ll be a chance for my worshippers of gluttony…’
Thankfully, Xena had no idea of what Leylin was thinking, or else she’d definitely attack him.
“But I can only sell the spell scrolls and alchemic items related to this to you. The basic spell model has to be kept a secret. At the moment, I will only be selling them to you three and your churches,” Leylin’s next words caused Xena’s expression to change.
“After all… my Faulen Family is merely a small power that’s unable to go against the devil and demon forces of the whole continent. You wouldn’t wish for our Faulen Family to be
massacred by violent devils and demons, would you?” Leylin watched Xena, looking helpless. While this Gold Bishop’s expression changed, she still had no choice but to acknowledge this.

Even Xena had no confidence to say that the church of wealth would definitely protect the Faulen Family, because this was impossible.

Those devils and demons definitely did not care for the Goddess of Wealth.

“Mm, alright. You will also need to swear that you will never leak news that I am the seller!” Leylin spoke seriously. While dealing blows to devils and demons was good, he did not want to invite trouble. This was why it was necessary to take all these steps as well.

Most importantly, there was a limit to the spell scrolls and alchemic items that he was selling, so that the effect could be regulated. With the ability of Magi and arcanists to seal things, Leylin was confident that he could press this advantage for over a century. Even a legendary wizard would not be able to decrypt his spell models.

In addition, with his ‘pitiful’ speed, there was a limit to the spell scrolls he could make. Part of the time was also needed to be spent on research. Hence, the actual damage to the demons was rather slight.

Based on his speculations, being able to wipe them out of the Dambrath Kingdom within a decade was something very amazing. This would prevent certain powerful demons and devils from being driven to action in their desperation. With such a long period of time, they would have the time to come up with plans and deal with it.

By selling this stuff, he could also rope in the three churches. He’d already considered the possibility of them joining hands to pressure him. Firstly, the three of them were in the lawful good faction, and
would never use sinister methods. With their three gods controlling each other, he would also have the chance to benefit from them all. Only a legendary, with decisive power in the prime material plane, would be a sufficient foundation to protect the interests and safety of his organisation.

“… I understand… After this, I’ll contact the other two churches.” Xena gave Leylin a look, having thought of many things in that instance, “Our church of wealth is very much in favour of the Faulen Family expanding in the outer seas!”

“Thank you very much! Oh, I’ve already prepared the specific spell scrolls. The price is ten thousand gold kro, so please come and get it anytime!” Leylin smiled winningly like an unscrupulous businessman. The church of wealth had money after all, and who was he to say no to that? They were more than capable of paying for this.

……

After the exchange of benefits and agreement, the Faulen Family’s inclination of unifying the outer seas was unstoppable. They’d already subdued other, smaller nobles, so they met no opposition on that front. The rest were like Marquis Tim of the Gold Thornblossoms, too afraid to oppose this. After seeing the three churches standing by the Faulen Family, he was already scared shitless. Tim knew how ruthless Leylin was. He had dared massacred the Baltic archipelago, and after gaining support from the churches he was fearless. If Tim had the courage to fight back, he would end up in an even worse state than the old Marquis. He was a smart man, and obviously made the right choice. In that moment, the outer seas belonged to the Faulen Family’s to do as they wished. Only the ships that had the family’s flags could move around in the outer seas uninhibited.
Recently, there were even rumours that Tim and his band of nobles were planning to petition to the Dambrath King to consider the Faulen Family’s expansion and ‘outstanding contributions’, in hopes to raise Leylin’s feudal rank and give him more land.

With all the troubles on the surface dealt with, Leylin focused his attentions on what was going on in the shadows.

“There are actually only two forces in the dark world of the Dambrath outer seas. One is the evil force with the pirates in power, but with the annihilation of the Barbarians, they now pose no threat. The other is the native islands with their faith in evil gods…”

Using a conjured water mirror, Leylin was now deep in a frank conversation with his cousin Isabel.

She had already completely taken over Pirates’ Cove and turned it into the Scarlet Tigers’ base. It could be said that the fall of Pirates’ Cove meant that the outer seas’ pirate world had been unified. There would no longer be any forces on the sea that could match the Scarlet Tigers.

“Also… The native tribes’ belief in the evil gods is something very troublesome. They are rather ignorant, greedy, and savage, and believe in natural spirits. They rely on beings with great might to shelter them, and become a huge threat to passing ships…”

As the noble child of a merchant of the seas, Leylin had long since gotten a deep understanding of these native tribes. Even if the Dambrath Kingdom had entered an age of discovery in the seas and gone through generations of migration, there were still few ‘civilised people’ in the outer seas than natives.

It was said that further into the deep seas, there was a large continent where an empire built by the natives existed!

Hence, in order to completely unify the outer seas, he could not let go of these natives’ tribes, especially since they had natural spirits that had formed after hundreds or even a thousand years worth of
offerings.
These primitive totems had, with years of faith from the natives, obtained immense strength. Possessing divinity or even igniting divine flames was nothing special from them.
“\text{I hope you can head the elimination of the native tribes in the outer seas, in the regions that we know of.}\” Leylin spoke to Isabel through the communicator.
He now somewhat had a group of underlings with reasonable strength, and there were some things he did not have to do himself. In that sense, he’d turned from a pawn into the player.
In order to truly leap out of the chessboard, he’d at least need legendary strength. To take part in the games of the gods, he would need to be a member!
“\text{Make records of all the natural spirits and totems with legendary strength and above, and also the native tribes that believe in the Goddess of the Ocean. Let them off temporarily.}\” Leylin had consistently been taking advantage of the weaker ones and afraid to go head on with the powerful. Nothing changed here.
“\text{I understand!}\” As a senior pirate, Isabel knew full well the terror that the Ocean Goddess could inflict. There were many amongst her own men that followed her. Once she was provoked in the ocean, then one would only be engulfed by boundless storms.
Isabel could even imagine that once she ordered those pirates to attack the Ocean Goddess’ church or altar, those pieces of trash would collapse in their fear.
First ensure the safety of the shipping routes. If there are those you can’t deal with, make a record of them and leave them to me!” Leylin went through things to take note of and then ended the communication.

“With the expansion of the outer seas, there should still be many left even after eliminating those too powerful or with powerful backings.” Leylin’s eyes glinted with wit, immediately recalling the barbarian altar from before.

“I don’t need that many. As long as I find around 10 of the natives’ sacrificial areas like that of the barbarian tribe, the accumulated energy should be enough for me to advance and even get close to the realm of legendaries…”

Leylin willed it, and the outer seas immediately grew lively. With the Scarlet Tigers taking the lead, numerous pirates yelled out as they swept through the native islands close to important shipping routes.

Besides those with powerful backers or the protection of powerful beings, basically all the native tribes were purged. Most of the adult males in these tribes were killed, while the rest were turned into slaves.

With abundant supplies, the price of native slaves in the outer seas fell steeply by 50%, causing many slave traders to go bankrupt. Of course, in this whole disturbance, the Faulen Family made use of prompt news and abundant resources to gulp down much of the
share in the sales of the slaves.
With such a storm, the little businesses could only be crowded out. The true big shots would use these methods to massacre the market and remove all competitors in their way. They could then monopolise the market.
Leylin could be said to be very familiar with this. With the war, all sorts of loot and slaves were shipped to the Faulen Island. There were even totems and ritual items for evil gods here, which actually helped Leylin to learn a great deal.
Within these items were some form of power of faith. Leylin found this useful. Through these years of hard work, the power he held gradually took shape. He need not bother himself with many things, because his underlings would take the initiative and do everything well.
This was the advantage of being the master of a large organisation.
‘No wonder even gods would create churches and work hard to operate them. While they look like saints, the intent behind it is rather similar…’ Leylin found that he now had a better understanding of the methods of the gods. Afterwards, however, something snapped him out of his thoughts.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* The faint sounds of shattering could be heard from Leylin’s shirt tail, causing his expression to change.
Leylin reached down and came up with several fragments from a crescent shape ruin. This was supposed to be a complete crystal, but had now shattered into numerous tiny pieces. The luster on it dimmed in an instant.
“Is there trouble?” Leylin’s eyes did not waver as he mumbled. This was a communication rune he had made especially for his cousin, which could bypass most spatial separation. This sudden alert meant that Isabel had met with a very problematic issue on the outer seas. She had no choice but to cut off all communications, a desperate step.
“Send down the message that I’ll be leaving for a period of time” Leylin told the tower genie dully. The intellectual core quickly understood Leylin and carried out his order. Ernest headed to his drawing room directly.

“Why are you leaving now? Don’t you know that our experiment has reached a crucial stage? Oh! Also, the trade of your family is the best it can be! Poor Leon needs to calculate bills all the way till deep in the night everyday…” Ernest spoke, as if blaming Leylin.

“We can set the experiment aside. Anyway, those gem kelp that we were observing need another two years until they have fully matured. There’s also nothing to worry about with the family business. If anything happens, look for my father, Baron Jonas. The churches will also help you as much as they can!”

Leylin rolled his shoulders back.

“Fine… Seems like you’ve made up your mind. Can you tell me why?” Ernest looked curious, “Let me guess… it’s… for a woman? Am I right? Only beautiful girls could make someone of your age more boyish…”

“What do you mean by ‘more boyish’?” Leylin stared at him, speechless.

He was most worried about the Scarlet Tigers that he’d established suffering a huge blow. The safety of his cousin Isabel was also of utmost importance. Of course, she was a beautiful woman, but this had nothing to do with what Ernest was talking about.

“Oh, teenagers… don’t worry… I’ll explain to your father!” Ernest winked suggestively at Leylin, a suspicious look on his face.

“Fine, fine.” Leylin shook his head and walked out. He had a feeling that Master Ernest must have noticed something, and everything he was doing was on purpose!

……
At the same time, a blazing fireball was launched from the Red Dragon Sword. In that instant, all the thorny vines wiggling in the air were burnt to ashes.
“It’s the seventeenth time!” Isabel huffed, though her gaze was still strong, “Everyone, retreat to the cave. Quick!”
Red Dragon Transformation! Dragon Breath! Following that, Isabel unhesitatingly activated her bloodline force and turned into a half-dragon with fiery-red scales and a pair of large wings extending from her back.
The heated conical flames formed a triangular blank space. A few natives who could not evade in time were struck by the flames, and became huge chunks of ashes.
“Damn it, there’s something wrong with this tribe!” As she guided the surviving men into the cave, Isabel cursed and grabbed a black rock by the side of the cave.
This operation had started swimmingly. The tribe they were going to wipe out did not have the protection of true gods like the Goddess of the Ocean. There were also no legendary natural spirits and totems here, so they were rather weak.
However, just as Isabel prepared to destroy the huge tribe in one go and make all of them slaves, a series of unthinkable things happened.
This tribe actually had relations with the rumoured native empire, and they had coincidentally met with their support forces! At the thought of the unpredictable killings in the forest, Isabel turned glum.
The black rock in her hand produced noises before ultimately shattering, turning into fragments of lime and sprinkling everywhere.
Such a violent scene immediately caused the pirates to shrink back, afraid that her palm would arrive at their heads next.
This was the most solid greenstone! Through the polishing and
corrosion of an unceasing water flow, it had grown lustrous and hard. It felt indestructible, but it was like white bread in her hands. “Pfft, a bunch of cowards!” Isabel disdainfully turned back. With her remodelling as a bloodline Warlock and the fusion with the legendary dragon’s blood, her power was increasing by the day. By using the Dragon King’s Mystic Might meditation technique, Isabel could sense her strength was increasing. It was as if a dragon resided in her body! If not for her underlings dragging her down, she would find it easy to break out of here alone.

“The signal has already been sent out. Hmph! Once Leylin’s here, I’m going to burn these disgusting monkeys to death!” The sword in Isabel’s hand glimmered with light. Crimson qi immediately destroyed numerous tropical trees, revealing the elite native warriors and their summoned creatures.

They were now in a gigantic tropical rainforest, and there were native tribal warriors everywhere. What attracted Isabel’s attention the most were actually the elite warriors from the empire. ‘Based on their dialect, the reinforcements are the Forest Hunters and Amazon Warriors?’ Isabel recalled the information she had obtained before.

The system of Professionals in the World of Gods was huge. Besides the most common warriors, thieves, and so on, there were countless other hidden professions, such as the arcanists. There could even be systems of power from the dark era in remote regions.

The native empire had their own system of professions, which Isabel thought to be a normal occurrence. ‘I just don’t know if there are gods in the empire of natives.’ Isabel suddenly considered this. While they were base and lazy, and the power of faith they offered less pure than even that of regular people, the amount was still pretty good.

If they could find a new continent with the native empire with no
gods, then even a god would go green in envy!

*Rustle!* The natives that had been scared off by Isabel’s attack shrank back, while Isabel looked on every corner of the battlefield. A slender figure soon appeared behind a broad-leaved tree.

“How is it, Karen? Have you found their commander?” Isabel asked without hesitation.

“No!” This was the pirates’ scouting captain, the half-drow Karen. She was shaking her head regretfully, “The leader is very vigilant and seems to have great anti-detection abilities. I can’t find their core…”

“Damn it! We can only wait for reinforcements…” Isabel sighed. She began to feel deeply uncomfortable at the thought of being unable to complete Leylin’s mission, though she couldn’t quite tell why.
Numerous elite natives formed a heavily-guarded defensive line within the tropical rainforest. Behind them were several crudely constructed tents. Based on the traditions of the natives, these tents were adorned with colourful feathered decorations on the surface, as well as some runes smeared on with fresh blood.

“Has Special Envoy Agigikro caught them yet?” asked a native who was evidently their leader. He wore a large golden crown on his head, but looked rather slender, almost bony; it was a stark difference. This man was currently watching another white-browed native.

This native called Agigikro had evidently experienced much over many years. His eyes showed his wisdom, and he was half a head taller than the leader, which showed that he had been raised in a more nourishing environment.

“They are very powerful followers of another religion. The elite Forest Hunters and Amazon Warriors that I brought couldn’t even take a blow from that monster in human form! To force them to come here, I’ve already lost 27 elite warriors…”

Agigikro was evidently not this leader’s subordinate, and his tone made him sound like they were on equal terms.

“Also… I’ve only come here to accept offerings to the empire and had no intentions of taking part in this!”

After seeing that this envoy was beginning to get mad, the native
chief grew restless, “But... With these outsiders and those of another religion around, my island is now getting increasingly unsafe. My people are losing their lands. If you weren’t here, I might have chosen to abandon this place and find a land that those blue-eyed ones can’t see...”

Seeing that his complaints and chattering did nothing to convince Agigikro and only made him more enraged, the head wrung his hands and looked to be in pain, “Fine... Fine... To thank you for your help, my friend, I can offer you some things privately. They’re all...”

After hearing a whole bunch of promises, Agigikro’s frown smoothed out. The islands around this place weren’t much to those from the natives’ continent. However, this one place was different. This chief in front of him was the only way they could procure the specialties of this place, and they were very precious in the empire. If not, Agigikro wouldn’t be so kind hearted as to help him fight off the invaders.

‘Perhaps... I should find a chance to beat the method they get their tributes from out of them...’ Agigikro looked towards the head, eyes glinting with a chilly gaze like a poisonous snake hidden in the shadows.

While this was a mere glance, the head was already beginning to get uncomfortable, “Well then, about those invaders... What do you say?”

“Them?” Agigikro froze, and then looked furious. “Those who have the gall to kill so many of my men will never be let off easily. I’m going to skin off their scalps and use their bones as musical instruments, eternally hung in front of the doorframe to my house.

“But... They seem to be powerful beings who’ve grasped evil strength. If we go in with dull strength, we’ll also have casualties. On top of that, the terrain is hindering us... Hence, I believe we can push the timing to attack them back. What do you think about
tomorrow night?”
Agigikro’s eyes were filled with a sneaky luster.
“Tomorrow… Night? You mean—” After hearing this, the head’s eyes brightened.
“Exactly. With that around, those of another religion can only embrace the eternity of death, no matter how many of them there are…”
At this thought, the head applauded, now in a better mood. The tent was pulled open soundlessly, and then a group of girls with different-coloured fruit plates balanced on their heads flitted in like butterflies. They had eyes like black pearls, and their lips were extremely charming. Every part of their bodies held vitality that only youth possessed.
The maids respectfully put the fruit plates down. There were all sorts of precious tropical fruits within, while the plates themselves also emitted a charming golden light. They were made of pure gold.
“Envoy, there’s still much time till tomorrow. How about you take a look at what we have planned here?”
The head smiled and he clapped. A group of musicians began to play elegant tunes, and the girls began to dance gracefully. The provocative dance had a unique beauty to it, and in that moment the tent began to undulate with youth.
Agigikro stared hard at one of the dancer girls, who was the most beautiful, and he began to peel a grape while looking intoxicated.
The head, who was watching, snickered inside. On the surface, he looked ready to flatter the envoy more.

……

While the natives danced to show happiness and prosperity, Leylin had secretly arrived at Pirates’ Cove. This place had now turned into the Scarlet Tigers’ main base, and any barbarians or
organisations related to the church of murder had been uprooted. The Scarlet Tigers had conducted a purge after occupying this place. Powerful ammunition had exploded on half of the dock; blood still stained the port from that day. However, pirates lived like locusts. The scattered pirates reappeared after the purge of war, like bamboo shoots in the rain. The bars and dancing halls were open the whole night, and the place seemed dazzling and prosperous. This motivated more sailors to turn to the path of piracy. While most were killed, the lucky ones who survived did strike it rich and turned into a new legend. This encouraged generation after generation of pirates.

“My Lord!” Now, in the core residence of Pirates’ Cove, Ronald and Robin Hood’s foreheads were dripping cold sweat as they watched the young noble in front of them. While Leylin had not released his aura, the pressure he gave them was enough for them to feel like they were in front of a dragon. In this situation where Miss Isabel was heavily surrounded, it didn’t matter if this was an error on their end, but they knew they could be hanged for this. Knowing how terrifying Leylin could be, the thought of fleeing did not even rise in their minds. They could only keep praying that Leylin could show them some benevolence.

“I took a look when I came. The construction of the harbour went well. Robin Hood, you’ve put in much effort!” Unexpectedly, Leylin did not begin to reprimand them first thing. His approval immediately had Robin Hood feeling slightly better.

“Many thanks, young master! I only did what I had to do the best of my abilities!”

“And you, Ronald!” Leylin then glanced at the middle-aged pirate next to him. Through years of experience, this subordinate that he had recruited
now had the aura of someone at the top. His strength had also grown by a large amount, as was expected of a seedling that Leylin had chosen himself.

“My Lord!” Robin Hood went down on a half-kneel, “I am in charge of the sea routes. No matter what happened, I am partially responsible for this. Please forgive me!”

Much time hadn’t passed since the establishment of the Scarlet Tigers, but a few groups and factions had already formed. While most were under Leylin and Isabel, there were still others. Compared to a general like Robin Hood who had come straight from the garrison, Ronald who had entered midway lacked confidence. Of course, this might also have to do with Leylin having too much power.

“Since this has happened, I’m not going to put the blame on anyone. I just hope we can solve it as soon as possible…” Leylin waved his arms. He’d already had some expectation that this might happen. However, as long as there were people around, the losses could be quickly replenished, which was not an issue.

“I’ve looked through the records in the meeting, and you aren’t in the wrong. You have no need to worry about it…” This was the main point. Otherwise, Ronald might not even be able to walk out of this room.

“My lord…” A warmth surged in Ronald’s heart, and his chest felt stuffy, yet he could not say anything.

“Enough. Who are you putting this show for?” Leylin stopped Ronald and then spread out a huge sea map on the table. This was the most complete map of the areas the Scarlet Tigers’ had gathered. There were also some areas added in that had been explored by the Barbarians or other pirate groups. At a glance, the entire Dambrath outer seas could be seen vividly in his mind. This was a priceless treasure.

“Come, Ronald. Mark the route that Isabel has taken this time!”
Leylin took a vernier caliper and moved it around, and then passed a red marker to Ronald. “Yes, my lord!” Ronald took a deep breath and calmed himself down. Meanwhile, after recalling some memories, he drew a crooked red line on the map. “As most of the outer sea native tribes have been wiped out, Lord Isabel’s hunting targets are now closer to the deep sea… In the previous sail, we communicated. Things had been normal up till this point!” “The red coral sea? That’s rather close to the outer regions…” Leylin glanced at the area Ronald had marked out on the map. The red marking was the most southern part of the map, and extremely close to the boundaries of the outer seas. With a few days of sailing, she could sail away from the scope on the map. “My cousin… I already reminded her not to go too far…” Leylin sighed as he shook his head, “There are far too many native tribes in the south, and things are complicated. There are even rumours of the native empire there. She was trying to wipe them out with just one pirate fleet… sigh…”
“Ready a ship and men. I’m going to leave immediately!” Since he had confirmed the location, Leylin would obviously go on a rescue mission immediately. Robin Hood and Ronald listened respectfully. Not long after, they had everything prepared…

A day later. Isabel had just met her life’s largest crisis in the rainforest.

“What… what the heck is this?” A powerful draconic aura spread out, and a few black monsters were burnt to ashes. These black monsters had a strong, dark-red fog around them. They were shaped weirdly, as if formed of soil.

*Rustle… Rustle…* Even if it was burnt off by the flames, the dark red gas gathered once more to spawn more monsters.

“Damn it! They can’t die?” Karen used her dagger and pierced into a monster with three human heads, one each belonging to an elderly, a middle-aged man and a youth. However, the injuries quickly recovered and even swallowed her dagger. Sensing the immense danger, Karen could only abandon her weapon and leave.

“Only powerful attack spells or the explosion of qi from a high-ranked Professional can truly hurt them!” Isabel was now in her half-dragon form. Those fog creatures quickly evaded a powerful Dragon Breath, and that finally gave the two a path to retreat.

“I never thought that there would be such strange things in the forest!” Isabel gazed at the moon on the horizon. The moonlight,
which should be bright, was now stained with a layer of purplish-red and looked incomparably evil.
Things had originally been going smoothly. After withdrawing from the rainforest, the attacks and searches of the natives had weakened, and she was even considering escape routes. But the night held a huge surprise for them.
“It’s like the whole forest turned into a ghost region!” Isabel looked alert. The danger here far exceeded her expectations.
“Hehe… play with me!” The forest seemed to change under the purplish-red moonlight, dark red fog filling the area. A large banyan tree twisted abruptly, and numerous vines turned into flexible arms that grabbed at Isabel. A baby’s face appeared on the trunk.
“Even my dragon aura is useless? What the hell is this?” The crimson Red Dragon Sword exploded with burning qi. The conical flames from Dragon’s Breath were launched unceasingly, causing the giant hands that formed webs to be ignited and fall off. This finally allowed Isabel to clear off an area to move into.
“Hehe… It doesn’t hurt at all!” The large banyan tree had pulled itself out of the soil, the many roots turned into countless tendrils. Dark red fog lingered, and the vines that had been cut off and burnt regrew.
“I won’t be able to hold on at this rate…” Glancing at the other side, where her subordinates were heavily injured, Isabel could not help but force a smile.

……

Many natives were gathered outside the rainforest, looking solemn. At their centre was a tremendous altar. Twisted and evil runes, dark red in colour, were present around the altar. Blood plasma was smeared on it, and the droplets of blood
that rolled downwards along the cracks of the stone made it look exceedingly terrifying.

Many of the natives now wore fancy feathers and hide. They kept chanting and praying to the altar. On the altar was the face of a young female native who seemed pure and holy. However, her eyes had lost all signs of life, and there was a large wound on her wrist. Evidently, an extremely evil sacrifice was being done here, and the target was no known god, devil or demon.

The chief looked like a worthless person in imposing clothing to Special Envoy Agikikro. He glanced at the man and suddenly asked, “I never thought the enemy would enter this forest, that’s a great help for us. I wonder if this will affect us from getting our offerings?”

“Please do not worry! Our ancestors have carried out the sacrifice numerous times. There won’t be errors…” The native head could do as he pleased in his tribe, but he did not dare show any sign of negligence to the envoy of the empire. Droplets of sweat even appeared on his forehead.

“I’ve even invited our tribe’s great priest for the sake of success. With a group of powerful followers of another religion being the sacrifices, the effects will be much better than before. The number of offerings might even be several times more than usual!” The native head had a flattering smile in his eyes, “When the time comes, I can gift you a few extra!”

“Thank you very much then!” At the thought of the miraculous effects of the product, Agigikro immediately revealed a smile.

Meanwhile, however, scorn flashed in his mind, ‘These darned swines who only roll around in the mud all day! If not for the offerings only appearing here and needing to be extracted with specific talents found in their tribe, the empire would long since have occupied this place!’

“It’s beginning!” The head called out. He naturally had no idea
about how the envoy of the empire was scorning them.

“Hm?” Agigikro focused on the altar.

A layer of murky dark red fog shrouded the top of the forest, breaking through some boundary with the deaths of the pirates. It began to extend towards the altar, causing the chief to look delighted as the chants increased in volume.

Dark red fog continued to spread, like a huge beast that had opened its ferocious mouth. A lot of it gathered to form a large eight-clawed spider.

“Leave this place quickly!” The great priest was the first to run upon seeing this fog spider, fast and nimble. The other priests did the same.

“Ah…” “Save—…”

A few native guards that ran a little too slowly were swallowed by the fog. Before they could even complete a sentence, they collapsed and died. Their bodies withered in an instant as if they had lost all life energy.

The fog spider grew more vivid after swallowing all this life. It came to the altar, its terrifying, ferocious, and ugly mouth making contact with the girl.

*Ka-chak! Ka-chak!* With the fog spider’s work, the young native girl’s body made a few strange movements, like a puppet controlled with strings.

Upon noticing this, the great priest halted and that focused his attention on the altar unblinkingly, “Alright. The mighty Balulukulu has already taken in enough lives. It will no longer be dangerous.”

The purplish-red moon was at its most dazzling, practically a little sun. The fog spider seemed to have met its goal, and it dove into the orifices of the native girl.

*Gulu! Gulu!* The girl’s flat and smooth stomach strangely began to expand, and numerous warts began to move, as if a colony of mice was living under her skin.
“It’s a success!” The great priest cheered, and brought the other priests to the side of the altar. They flipped the girl over to reveal her stomach. She looked like a woman who was ten months pregnant, with a dark red tattoo in the shape of a spider on her fair back. It was like a living image, and very vivid.

“The grace of Balulukulu!” The great priest looked solemn as he took an obsidian knife from an apprentice and began some chants. After cutting his own forehead and thumb and smearing a few markings with blood, he placed the black blade at the swollen stomach of the girl. There was a cold glint in his eyes as blood spurted everywhere.

“Is this the sacrificial ceremony here? As heard from rumours, it’s very unusual!” After seeing something so bloody, Agigikro could still converse with the head next to him at ease.

“Hehe… this is the best method that my ancestors found after thousands of tries!” The head now had a prideful expression on his face, “Well then, envoy! Please accept my gift!”

With the chief’s nod, a priest took a golden circular plate and brought it over. On it were a few blood-red crystals the size of chicken eggs, still stained with blood and pus on the surface.

“Balulukulu’s crystals!” Agigikro’s eyes were fixed on the item on the plate, and he looked intoxicated. This crystal was a specialty of the natives, only found on this island. If someone strong swallowed this, they would gain extraordinary strength provided they survived the aftereffects. That was not all. The higher classes in the native empire had even found that burning these crystals produced a unique gas. It would give rise to an incomparable ecstasy, and was a luxurious item that the higher class enjoyed. It was extremely expensive.

“Being able to obtain this on this trip makes it worth it!” Agigikro looked impatient and nodded to a warrior to take the golden plate. At this moment, however, an abrupt voice interrupted them.
“This really is good stuff. Can I take a look?” It was as if an invisible force pulled at things in the air. The blood-red crystals flew from the golden plate, entering the hands of a noble youth. “Hm? Who is it? Take him down!” Having had such an important item stolen, Agigikro roared hysterically. Immediately after, many native warriors pounced forward.
As a special envoy from the native kingdom, Agigikro had also brought a batch of elite fighters with him. This included the Forest Hunters and Amazon Warriors. They were the ones who had attacked and held Isabel as well as her underlings back, and forced them into the dangerous forest. Now, however, a youth had suddenly broken through all these people’s defences and arrived at the core circle. He was even threatening the safety of the two leaders here, so how could they not be furious and terrified?

Along with Agigikro’s enraged yell, countless Forest Hunters brandished the lances in their hands and, alongside the Amazon Warriors with strange tattoos on their bodies, immediately surrounded Leylin. The sharp weapons even formed a storm that aimed to tear Leylin to shreds.

However, Leylin’s expression was rather interesting. He cared little for these enemies and instead stared unblinkingly at the crystal in his hands, as if it was the only thing that mattered.

“When I got onto the island, I already had a feeling that something was off. My instincts shouldn’t be wrong. This power…” Leylin’s eyes glinted with wisdom.

“Kill him!” At this moment, numerous natives roared as they pounced forward.

“Die, you weaklings!” Leylin, who was immersed in studying the crystals, waved his hand in annoyance.
Arcane spell—Missile Storm! Explosive Cloudkill!
With immense penetrative force, the arcane missile ruthlessly went
through the neck of an Amazon Warrior, and then opened a gaping
wound on one Forest Hunter’s chest.
Numerous spells were launched, giving rise to waves and waves of
blood being spilt.
After the Cloudkill spell, it converged to form a black tornado that
disintegrated all the natives that had fallen, and even caused the
corpse to begin corroding.
In the blink of an eye, the native elite fighters surrounding Leylin
turned into one corpse after another.
“How is it possible? Is—Is he a death god? Or a devil? Or demon?”
Agigikro watched Leylin who was standing within the tornado,
muttering in disbelief. He knew the strength of his subordinates
very well.
The Amazon Warriors could use their bare hands and kill a
Sawtooth Tiger, while the Forest Hunters could wrestle with
pythons and alligators in the tropical rainforests. Now, however,
they were falling in large numbers like grass being mowed, the
speed at which they were going down far exceeding his
expectations.
“Go!” “Kill them!” Now, yells were sounding from all directions.
The pirates that Leylin had brought along were beginning to make
their move.
“Get here!” Leylin pointed, and Agigikro as well as the native head
was grabbed by a huge stone hand, pushing them till they were
before Leylin.
“Agubaba… Klagila…” At this moment, Leylin saw a native
smeared with oil all over his body and feathers stuck on him. Like
someone having epilepsy, he began to twitch while facing him.
“A spellcaster? Is this a curse? That’s so weak! This is just too
weak…” He pointed lazily, and a ray of light struck the head of the
great priest, white and red spilling everywhere. Seeing the honourable great priest’s body falling headlessly, all the natives completely crumbled. Leylin, who was standing in front of them, was like an enemy that they would never be able to resist. He was as omnipotent as a god in the sky. The voices of the pirates outside gradually drew closer. In no time, Robin Hood and Ronald arrived before him.

“Boss! There are approximately a few thousand people in this tribe, but those here should be their military. They’ve been defeated…” Robin Hood reported. Those who had come from Pirates’ Cove could be said to be the best of the best, and there were already a thousand powerful pirates. Compared to the natives, they had an absolute advantage.

“Mm, clean things up here. Try to catch them alive if possible. I have uses for them!” Afterwards, he sized up his own prisoners and the blood-red crystal in his hand. The crystal now emanated dazzling rays that gave rise to a look of intoxication in Leylin’s eyes.

‘My instincts can’t be wrong. This is dreamforce! While there are slight differences, this is power that belongs to Dreamscape!’ From the moment Leylin had gotten onto the island, he had sensed that the native island was enveloped by a layer of strange power. After seeing the dark red fog forest and the natives’ offerings, he could confirm that there was actually dreamforce here—a power that hailed from Dreamscape!

This discovery immediately aroused his interest.

“My– My lord, please forgive me. I am an envoy of the empire. You can’t…” At this moment, Agigikro who was being grabbed by the large hand suddenly spoke in the language of the continent. While he stammered, Leylin could somehow understand him. Leylin came before Agigikro, and as if seeing hope, he began to speak with as much energy he could muster, “Let me… go. I can…
pay the price of ransom…”
“Seems like there really is a native empire!” Leylin’s palm landed on Agigikro’s forehead. “If it were me in the past, I might be very interested in this, but now… I think I’ll do it myself!”
Memory Retrieval! Leylin’s pupils were shrouded in white in that moment, and Agigikro looked to be incomparable pain, as if he was experiencing some torture.
“Grace of the Balulukulu? Using this as anesthesia? What a waste…”
Leylin, who moved his palm away, had a general understanding of what had transpired. Agigikro, who had experienced magic, had now turned into a drooling idiot.
“Envoy of the empire. The skills of the native races, and Nightmare Island…” Leylin arrived before the native head and did the same as before; he immediately found the information he wanted.
“So… that’s what it is?” The general context appeared in front of Leylin in its entirety.
During the dusk of the gods, not only was there the invasion from the Magus World, other powerful beings they had subdued had also entered this area as retinue. Amongst which was a powerful Magus who used dreamforce!
Of course, due to the unique laws of the World of Gods and the gods being unexpectedly stronger, the Magi of laws from the Magus World met with huge losses. Even the Magus who was proficient in dreamforce had fallen here.
It might be just a part of his body or some item he brought with him in battle that fell into the prime material plane. Coincidentally, it fell onto the island, causing such a unique environment here.
The powerful radiation from high-ranked Magi could easily modify an island. When it was the night of a full moon, the forest in the island would usually see strange events. The first to notice this were the native tribes. They could not explain this occurrence at all,
and could only pray as if the reason for these happenings was a godly spirit.
After tens of thousands of years of exploration and bloody, unreasonable experiments, they finally had a better understanding of the laws of dreamforce, and attempted to extract and use it for themselves.
Perhaps it was because of the contamination from staying here long-term, but only the natives in the tribe had the ability to extract the dreamforce crystals. Of course, they called this grace from Balulukulu and tried to eat them in order to gain strength.
“They say the ignorant have no fear. So true!” Leylin stared at the crystal in his hand. In his eyes, this ‘refined’ item was still full of many impurities. If swallowed directly, there was a 90% chance of death, while the survivors would obtain some specific ability after incitement from dreamforce. This efficiency was far too low.
“As for the ecstasy from burning the crystals? Dreamforce definitely can give people great mental joy, but that will also lead to contamination. The upper class in the native empire must be in a terrible state…” Leylin shook his head, and began to use the A.I. Chip and scan the crystals.
[Beep! Mission established. Beginning scan…] A ray of blue light shot out from Leylin’s eyes, not letting off any corner of the crystal. Soon enough, the A.I. Chip gave an answer. [Beep! Scan completed. Determined to be Dreamscape Origin Force Crystals. Similarity to that in database at 98.77%. Discovered unknown mutated composition.]
‘Mutual complementation? That’s not a surprise. For the World of Gods, dreamforce is the most adaptable force. Regardless of where a being is, dreamscape can exist as long as they have intelligence. Hence, there’s a very high compatibility…’
Leylin observed the mutated composition chart that the A.I. Chip and sank into deep thought.
If it was some force from the Magus World, the World of Gods would definitely expel it. However, dreamforce’s compatibility was rather high, and after modifying a portion, it could still live on here tenaciously.

‘Just from this, it’s obvious that the Magus who had control over dreamforce had attained great power and was at least rank 8. He had probably even found his own path, and was a peak rank 8 existence that had already fused laws…’

This discovery had Leylin sighing in awe. The ancient times was truly the Magus World’s golden period. Any Magus was incomparably powerful.

There had been the peak rank 8 Distorted Shadow, and now he’d discovered another powerful Magus who grasped dreamforce.

‘Dreamforce… is powerful. If I can tell the rhythm at which it weakens, then it’s much more powerful than the average law… In addition, dreamforce can accommodate time and space, and it’s very good choice!’

After all, in Dreamscape, all time and space could be warped. Using Dreamscape to sustain the power of time and space wouldn’t be dangerous. For Leylin, this was like a pillow being presented to him while he was taking a nap.

‘The powerful Magus who could grasp dreamforce must have known the rhythm at which dreamforce weakened and made use of it. He found a way to evade that…’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled.
“With how powerful Magi who comprehend laws are, just a fragment should contain a portion of his conscient and memories. There might even be a chance of getting some inheritance…” Leylin muttered, “I must get that Nightmare Wizard’s inheritance!”

Dreamforce had always interested Leylin. The A.I. Chip stored the progress on his work the data from his continued experiments. He’d never given up studying it.

Rank 7 Magi needed to grasp powerful laws, while rank 8s needed to find their own path to fuse these laws, using a certain power as the base.

Leylin’s goal was immortality, and he had definitely considered the future properly. If possible, he definitely wanted to use the origin forces from the Magus World and World of Gods to fuse his own laws. It was a pity that this was impossible. He might alarm the two World Wills, and on top of that there were other existences that wouldn’t allow him to do so.

Dreamscape was the next greatest power. It surpassed big worlds like the Purgatory and Icy Worlds, and if not for its weakening phase the two strongest worlds in ancient times would have been joined by a third.

Dreamforce at its peak was the most powerful origin force beside those of the Magus World and World of Gods. Only a path that fused laws with dreamforce would stand up to Leylin’s ambition!
However, to completely analyse dreamforce and find ways to evade the weakening phase was still a huge and arduous task for him now. Even with help from the A.I. Chip, he estimated that it would require over ten thousand years. Instead, a bright future was right before him. As long as he obtained the legacy of the Nightmare Wizard, then the issue with dreamforce could be immediately solved! With such a huge temptation, Leylin’s inquiring footsteps were unhindered by the great dangers within the forest.

“Captain! We’ve interrogated the prisoners. Miss Isabel was forced into this forest. Every full moon, the forest will be filled with great danger, and nobody has ever survived!” Robin Hood was extremely glum, while the knife at Ronald’s hip was stained with blood, his expression dark.

“I’m going in,” Leylin suddenly spoke.

“Captain!” “My lord, let me go!” Robin Hood and Ronald immediately persuaded him not to. From their point of view, they had already lost Isabel to a trap, and if Leylin too were to disappear within it all that awaited them would be the ire of the Faulen Family.

“Don’t worry, I’m confident in myself. Tell the pirates not to get close to the forest and the dark red fog. It’s best they retreat close to the coastline…” Leylin waved his arms and spoke resolutely. He inspired more fear than even Isabel in the older Scarlet Tigers, and his orders were carried out decisively.

“Is this contamination from a combination of mutated dreamforce and the laws of the World of Gods?” Leylin put on his wizard robes and wore his dragonhide armour. The Red Dragon Staff in hand roared, and the cries of the dragon soul inside could somewhat be heard from the crystal grabbed by the dragon claw.

As he had rejected the pleas of Robin Hood and the rest, he was now alone. That meant he could use his strength as he pleased. The
pirates would only have been a burden in areas contaminated with dreamforce.

“A.I. Chip, begin transformation!” Standing at the side of the forest, Leylin immediately commanded.

[Beep! Transferring Dreamscape spell model, fusing with arcane spell information. Begin creation of arcane dreamforce spell model!] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s order.

“Arcane dreamforce spell— Eternal Light!” Leylin pointed his right index finger forward, and a milky-white flame flew from the tip of his finger. It grew with the wind, reaching the size of a pumpkin in an instant.

The dark red fog dissipated under the pure white flames, revealing the original appearance of the forest.

“A.I. Chip, scan for energy undulations!” Leylin flipped his palm over, and the shattered alert rune appeared once more. A scan gave him the general direction, and he disappeared into the thick fog.

The moment any dark red fog entered his surroundings, it would be engulfed by his Eternal Light spell. It formed a strange isolated area around him.

Leylin’s decision to explore the area was naturally because he was confident in himself. He could rely on arcane dreamforce spells!

With his research in the Magus World, he possessed many spell models for dreamforce spells. Using his arcanist inheritance, he could easily convert them for use in the World of Gods. There was no issue at all given the A.I. Chip’s powerful analysis and calculation abilities.

“Dreamforce spells are the best way to deal with beings contaminated by dreamforce,” Leylin sighed.

A dark red fireball immediately burnt a strange ent up ahead to ashes. Unlike Isabel’s, his attacks left the monsters with no chance of revival.

“I’m close… Over there!” All of a sudden, Leylin’s brow twitched.
A large pair of wings instantly sprouted from his back, allowing him to soar into the sky…
Meanwhile, Isabel’s crisis had reached its crescendo.
“Scram!” Angered cries and terrifying flames caused a large centipede to take several steps backwards.
“Keke… too weak… too weak…” Strange human faces were sticking out of this monster’s outer shell. Amongst them were those belonging to the pirates under her, their eyes emitting a red lustre as they began to snicker.
Her draconic flames left not a trace on the monster’s shell, as if it had a defensive power that made it hard to destroy.
“Become a part of me!” One of the faces opened its mouth, corrosive green liquid spraying out like rainwater.
Even the dragonscale defence sputtered upon contact, steam billowing out. The immense pain from the corrosion caused Isabel to frown hard.
“Quick, come!” Karen appeared at the side, pulling at Isabel’s arm and running.
“I never thought it would just be the two of us left. I shouldn’t have come in.” Isabel now looked regretful.
“This is not the time to worry about that. Sister Isabel, I’ve taken a look around. The dark red fog wall seems to show signs of dissipating. As long as we hang on for a while longer, we can exit this place!” Karen encouraged her.
“Leave… haha…” Isabel now looked extremely pathetic, but much of the damage was to her mind. She had never thought she would see such strange things as she had this day. It was more than she had experienced in her lifetime.
After she had brought her subordinates and retreated into the forest, all sorts of weird things had appeared when night fell. At the beginning, she had thought it was some sick joke, but she soon found that she had to pay for that in blood.
Trees that could walk, flowers and grass that could sing, stones that had qi, the dead being able to revive, numerous clowns... All sorts of things she could not even name attacked them in succession. They were grotesque and variegated, almost causing her to think that she had gone insane.

The subordinates under her fell one by one, gulped down by either real or imaginary beings. Now, only she and Karen were left.

“That centipede monster is very strong and at least has legendary strength. Does that mean we can only evade... Hm? What is it, Karen? Are you hurt?”

Isabel looked at Karen beside her. The half-drow now had her back to Isabel, shoulders trembling slightly.

A palm touched Isabel’s shoulder, and her expression immediately changed, “There’s no heat. You’re not Karen!”

“Hehe... adorable little captain, if I’m not Karen, who else can I be?” Karen turned back, light shining on half her face. However, Isabel’s pupils only shrunk. Her beautiful face had now split from the middle, revealing terrifying white razor-sharp teeth, as if her face had turned into a large mouth.

“Damn it, what the hell are you?” Isabel yelled. Terrifying flames formed rings of fire that were several metres long, managing to get ‘Karen’ to back off.

“Heehee... What could I be?”

*Rumble!* The earth split, and the human-faced centipede appeared once more. Karen snickered as she dug her hands into the centipede and fused with it. At the end, the monster that looked like Karen completely disappeared, its only remnant a pale face.

*Chi! Chi!* The huge centipede let out earth-shattering cries, cold air bursting forth from its mouth. The surrounding trees and soil were covered in a layer of ice.

“It has a clone with a power of ice, and can’t die. Gods... Could this be some sort of special variant of god?” This was the only
conclusion Isabel could come up with. The terrifying chilliness began to freeze her body, causing even the dragonblood in her body to still.
“No, I can’t die here!” Isabel looked resolute as the red scales on her body exploded.
“Blood Explosion!” The bloody red fog blocked the ice off, finally giving Isabel a route of escape.
Blood Explosion wasn’t sorcery. It was an unknown spell recorded in Dragon King’s Mystic Might that allowed a Dragon Warlock to burn their bloodline in exchange for ultimate strength. It was something used when left without choice, a decision to make when in complete despair.

While the blood fog hindering the chilly fog, Isabel now had a path of escape. However, she had now reverted to her human form and could no longer transform. On top of that, the areas that had been covered in dragon scales turned into a mass of bruises. However, her desire to survive still pushed her to advance forth in the fog forest.

“So I can’t hold on anymore?” The haemorrhaging blood and injuries caused everything to blur, and it all turned into darkness.

“Hm? Boss!” Before collapsing, the last thing she heard was a voice of surprise.

……

“Ugh… I’m not dead yet?” Isabel raised her right arm and caressed the Red Dragon Sword, the burst of warmth from the sword sheath instantly making her feel relieved. While she felt just as weak as before, having a weapon in her hand would allow her to die with more dignity.

Isabel laughed wryly as she began to assess her surroundings, ‘It’s
rather small here, and I seem to be in some enclosed environment. There was also that voice I heard before I fainted…”
“You’re awake!” A muffled voice sounded by Isabel’s ear, and her pupils widened slightly. It was Karen’s voice!
“Where— Where am I now?” Isabel asked slowly, her eyes doing their best to adapt to the darkness as they looked for traces of light.
“We’re inside a hollow tree. We haven’t escaped danger yet!” Karen did not seem to be in the best state either, as she stumbled over her words, “He- Hehe, I’m guessing you saw a monster that looked a lot like me, right? I also met with great danger with someone I knew well!”
Isabel was not so easily convinced, “Who’s the vice captain on our ship?”
“Three Ears, although he was struck a fatal blow and eventually crippled in the last naval battle. Karen especially pressed her lips to Isabel’s ear, “Also… I know a lot more private information, such as what you hide under your pillow…”
“Enough! I believe you’re the real thing!” A flush rose on Isabel’s cheeks as she interrupted Karen.
“This is such a critical time, and that is what you decided to point out?” Isabel’s low voice was filled with anger.
“We need to change our mentality,” Karen said solemnly, “Did you notice that these monsters have held back from killing us? It’s like… What’s an appropriate word… Teasing us. Yes!”
“You mean…” Isabel had the same thought.
“Exactly! I think those monsters feed on human emotions. They keep scaring us to cause despair…”
Karen sounded agitated, “Beings like this exist in the Underdark as well. That’s why I’m doing my best to hold in the fear and unease in my heart. Surprisingly, I haven’t bumped into any particularly powerful monster, and have managed to hold on till now…”
As a half-drow from the Underdark, Karen evidently had a better
understanding of such evil monsters. It was a pity though. Her ideas may have been valid in the World of Gods, but dreamforce wasn’t as simple.

Still, Isabel now had no choice but to believe her, “In other words, I can deal with them easily if I suppress my emotions?”

“I can only say there’s a slight effect, since completely obliterating all emotions are things only legendary mind flayers can do…”

Karen had a wry smile on her face.

“Also… be careful not to experience intense emotion. It will only attract more powerful monsters!”

“I understand…” Isabel nodded, “These things only seem to appear at night. As long as we can hold on till sunrise tomorrow, we might be safe…” Isabel now had no thoughts of bringing more men to explore the area. She only hoped to escape as far as possible.

*Rumble!* The surface of the ground trembled slightly, and a strange monstrous laughter sounded out. Isabel began to get nervous, “Be careful, something’s here!”

She could see the human centipede crawl over slowly through the hole in the tree, large amounts of saliva dripping from its head. The surrounding trees were pushed away, revealing the sinister and terrifying human faces on the shell.

“Relax, as long as we calm ourselves, it can’t find us…” Karen’s voice trembled, evidently still uneasy at this life and death gamble.

‘Don’t think too much. No! Don’t think about anything, and don’t have any emotions!’ Karen thought to herself as Isabel tightened her grasp on her sheath.

It seemed like their prayers had been answered. The giant centipede didn’t seem to discover them as it wandered past the large tree.

‘It really worked!’ ‘We did it!’ Isabel and Karen exchanged a glance, looking hopeful and excited.

*Huala!* The large trunk was split apart all of a sudden, revealing the two. They stared in shock as the giant centipede swayed back
and forth.
“Keke, is this a game of catch?” The faces on the shell kept changing until a child’s face appeared, speaking in a young voice.
“What a pity… You thought calming your emotions would help you escape Zelos. How childish!” The human face warped, becoming that of a middle-aged pirate. The voice grew older as well.
“Hehe… the game’s over! Become a part of me!” The large centipede yelled, the numerous faces on its shell separating themselves and turning into white human silhouettes with masks. They moved slowly, looking blank as they surrounded the two.
“No, why did this happen? Did we guess wrong?”
“This is a nightmare. This has to be a nightmare! No… let me wake up! I want my mother…” Karen was the first to break under the immense pressure, seemingly laughing and crying at the same time.
“Damn it, I knew women aren’t dependable at critical moments!” Isabel cursed, her sword being thrust into a white figure to no effect. They were still slowly surrounding her.
“There’s no way… There’s no way at all… I’ll really die here…” Isabel seemed bedazzled in that moment, her life flashing before her eyes. A hint of tenderness appearing in her gaze, “Unfortunately…”
“Arcane dreamforce spell— Flying Palm!” Just as the white figures were about to completely surround them, a black figure fell from above. Powerful spells shot out, pulling the dark red fog together to form a large palm.
*Thud!* The large palm pressed down abruptly, and countless white figures were crushed. With a swipe, the rest were sent flying.
“Thankfully, I got here in time!” Leylin turned back, glancing at Isabel’s expression as she looked shocked and elated, “Are you two alright?”
“We’re fine! I’ll leave this to…” Isabel felt very suffocated, and only managed to say this at the end before fainting.
“Has her stamina completely run out? And this one…” Leylin watched Karen on the ground, who had been scared stupid, “She looks like she was terrified. Not surprising; not everyone can bear the shock of experiencing dreamforce…”

“Keke… another one! Another one that will become a part of my body!” The large centipede’s head now split open, revealing an old face filled with wrinkles. The other fragmented white figures were inhaled into its body, and masked faces appeared on the crust.

“Such a large being contaminated by dreamforce… it’s at least a legendary, hm?” Leylin looked up, elated, “Just the radiation alone can create a legendary being here… Whatever is here must be even more astonishing!”

“Kid, you dare ignore…” The centipede monster began to howl, and more cysts appeared on its body. They looked ready to explode.

“I have no time to play with you right now. See you next time!” Leylin was the absolute master of this region contaminated by dreamforce. He didn’t even frown, feeling no fear.

“Arcane dreamforce spell— Distrait Dream!” Dark red undulations spread from his hands, and their surroundings strangely went silent.

“Let’s leave first!” Making use of this rare opportunity, Leylin grabbed Isabel and Karen as he spread his wings. He flew to the edges of the forest where the dark red fog converged like a cage.

“Open!” Leylin exclaimed, and arcane spell energy poured into the Red Dragon Staff, blazing flames breaking through the lock. With a few flashes of his body, he disappeared into the horizon.

He was still unable to deal with the large centipede and naturally would not waste his strength on that.

……
It was now morning. Isabel, who had recovered most of her strength, arrived outside the tent. She then saw Leylin, who was studying the edges of the forest.

“I’m sorry… We were completely wiped out. I’m the one to blame for all this…” Isabel gritted her teeth and stammered.

“This was really an accident. Others would have had the same results.” Leylin was focused as he took samples of the soil, while Isabel looked fearfully at the forest. The lesson she was taught in there was etched into her mind, and she hoped that she would never return to this place in her life.
“You’re just in time. I’ve given Karen a tranquilising potion, and she should be starting on the road to recovery. Bring them all back to Pirates’ Cove!”

Leylin stowed a test tube into a box where things were carefully separated.

“We’re going back? Then what about you?” Isabel asked in surprise.

“This place is very interesting, I’m getting ready for some extended research. There needs to be someone overseeing things at Pirates’ Cove…” There was a fanatical expression in Leylin’s eyes. Most wizards liked to research all sorts of strange things, which was why Isabel was not the least bit suspicious.

Still, the danger she’d experienced before had made her rather anxious, “But things are too dangerous here…”

“Don’t worry, wizards always make preparations for this. I’ll also need you to send me some magic materials and daily essentials periodically.”

Whether it was the confidence in his tone or his successful rescue of her yesterday that moved her, Isabel finally agreed.

“Fine… You have to be careful. Perhaps I could stay here?”

“No. Nobody besides you has complete control of the Scarlet Tiger. This period is very crucial…” Leylin told her seriously.

After spending a lot more time persuading her, Leylin finally let his cousin take most of the pirates and leave. Watching the ships sailing
away in the distance, he could not help but sigh.

‘Now, this Nightmare Island shall be mine...’ He nodded, arriving at edges of what was now called Nightmare Forest. There were already a few pirates in wait.

“My lord, command us as you will.” While they looked exceptionally ferocious, they could only withdraw all their fierceness in front of Leylin. They even had pleasing smiles, looking more harmless than little rabbits.

There was no way around this. Leylin’s reputation had scared them out of their wits. This was their true leader, so how would they dare be careless now?

“Mm. Build me a house here, I’ll be staying for a while.” Leylin casually pointed at an empty area.

“No problem, you’ll see a villa soon. Iron hook Calon is very honoured to serve you!” The pirate at the front bowed respectfully, and after Leylin nodded he brandished the whip at his waist, “Heard that? My lord wishes for a villa to be built here. Start work immediately!”

*Pak! Pak!* It had to be said that the pirates who were now foremen were rather good talents. With their fiendish threats, the rest of the native slaves soon understood what they wanted and began to clear the base and start cutting down wood.

“Mm, not bad!” Leylin nodded in praise. After gaining his approval, Calon raised his head with more pride, as if he had obtained some incomparable honour.

‘Based on the memories of the native chief, the nightmarish phenomenon only appears during the full moon of every month. It is otherwise a normal forest...’ Leylin then looked towards the forest. The dark red fog had long since dissipated, and there was even a layer of white mist at the surface of the greenery. Nothing looked special about it.

‘I only get tens of hours for research every month. That’s just too
short. Looks like I’ll have to stay here for a long time…” Leylin thought, and he sighed.
If those who’d comprehended laws in the Magus World knew of his thoughts, they would definitely go green in envy. A chance to study dreamforce and obtain the legacy of the Nightmare Wizard was something they would scramble for even if it would take them tens of thousands of years.
Leylin’s regret only stayed for a moment. He then began his intense research.
Ruins from Magi were even more dangerous than the World of Gods’ wizard ruins. They were filled with unknown variables, and with an existence dealing with dreamforce, there was now a higher difficulty in his exploration.
“Even the most surface layer of dreamforce contamination has created a legendary monster. Deeper down, it definitely gets more dangerous… Thankfully, I’ve already obtained firsthand information, so I’m not without direction…” Leylin glanced at the tremendous Nightmare Forest, a zealous look in his eyes.

Spring left and autumn arrived. In the blink of an eye, a year had passed.
The island that Leylin had named Nightmare Island now looked completely different. The native tribe had completely disappeared, having been killed or sold as slaves.
There was now a two-storey villa next to the forest. The garden at its front had blooming golden tulips, and violet wisteria climbed all over the fence. A faint aroma lingered in the air.
By the flowerbed, Leylin now held a white watering can as he leisurely took care of the plants in his garden. The soil around the roots of his flowers quickly grew damp as they greedily absorbed
the water. Sparkling droplets of water remained dazzling on the petals and stems.
‘Time passes so quickly. People at home and my cousin are very dissatisfied with how long I’ve stayed here…’ After finishing the work at hand, Leylin picked up a white towel and wiped his hands. He then sat on a rattan chair amongst the flowers as he began to admire the fruits of his labour. However, the A.I. Chip’s light didn’t dim from within his eyes. It continued to conduct precise simulations, performing analysis and calculations.
“With all these years of study, there’s finally results…” Leylin saw the map that the A.I. Chip projected. On the translucent viewport, Nightmare Island was now separated into three layers. Nightmare Forest was only on the first.
‘The ancient Nightmare Wizard’s inheritance has sunk underground. The forest here is a structure formed from some vaporised dreamforce that’s similar to a secret lock?’ Leylin looked grim.
The legacy of such a terrifying existence of laws was something even his main body had to approach cautiously. With his strength as a clone, every step had to be taken prudently, or he could just die too easily.
“Thankfully, with the information I had before on Dreamscape, as well as the mutations to dreamforce in the World of Gods, finding a few methods to break through the lock is still simple…
“However, what’s important now is to increase my strength…” Leylin headed into the villa and entered a secret room. He saw the many strangely-shaped rock carvings, totems and the like, and looked deep in thought.
These sculptures and decorative figures all had a very boorish style, and were also extremely incredible. They were filled with primitive daydreams towards exemplary strength, but what was more similar
was the power of faith on them. Golden rays shone brightly as they illuminated the room.

“Immature power of faith?” Leylin muttered to himself. All this was loot from the Scarlet Tlgers’ attacks on the native tribes. They were items that those natives worshipped, filled with primitive power of faith. There even valiant spirits and some sort of nature spirits in there as well, albeit sealed.

‘While I avoided native tribes protected by the Ocean Goddess or nature spirits of legendary strength, the outer seas are boundless. There aren’t many of those…’

Leylin wandered aimlessly to a piece of blood-red animal skin. On the dark brown surface of the flag was a double-headed wolf totem, drawn in bright colours. Varied and dense power of faith spread from it, and the strange wolf seemed ready to pounce out at any moment, but was held back by the strong seal.

‘This one is halfway between a dark soul and a natural soul. It hasn’t even obtained divinity, so how can it go against Isabel, a Dragon Warlock?’ Leylin sensed the valiant spirit on the flag. It had already grown sharp teeth and pointy ears, and a wart began to bulge at its neck. Evidently, the soul of the ancestor of the natives was already turning into a double-headed wolf.

‘A poor guy who’s held by the power of faith…’ Leylin watched the confused valiant spirit, eyes not showing any pity.

This valiant spirit must have been some kind of hero in the original tribe. He had been worshipped extensively after death, and the faith of the tribe had intertwined with their worship of him. Had he completely transformed, a new god would have been born one day. Unfortunately, Leylin’s path conflicted with his. In that case, what else was there to say?

‘Thankfully, these faith totems did not transmute divine force, or I might not have been able to absorb them…’ Leylin raised his right hand, a faint Targaryen figure emerging in his eyes as terrifying
devouring power enveloped the animal-skin flag.

“Innate skill— Devour!”

*Whoosh!* It was like a long dragon drinking water as threads of golden light were pulled out of the flag with a formless force, disappearing into the dark hole. Immense power of faith, with souls and intense emotions mixed in, was devoured by the formless black hole, turning into the most pure origin force.

In the time of a few breaths, the dark golden lustre on the animal skin flag completely died down, and the wolf totem had now lost all life, turning into a dead item.

[Beep! Divine force absorbed, increased energy reserves by 3.8%. Total progress: 89.77%!] The A.I. Chip prompted.

“As expected of the offering of a small tribe. It’s too little!” Leylin shook his head, looking dissatisfied. With a wave of his hands, the other statues and totems soared in the air.

The tremendous black hole devoured all these elementary sacrifices in an instant, turning them into the purest energy source. Afterwards, Leylin saw the numbers on the A.I. Chip’s screen beginning to rise steadily.
Beep!] [Beep!] The value rose continuously, very soon reaching 100%.

*Bang! Bang!* The totems and primitive statues lost their lustre, and hairline cracks began to appear on their bodies.

‘These were all primitive gods. Did I just kill over a dozen deities?’ Leylin chuckled inwardly at the thought of it, and very soon he tossed this matter to the back of his mind.

Although these primitive totems hadn’t gained divinity, it was worth mentioning that the power of faith was extremely strong. The problem was that one god’s faith was another’s poison, and this faith was heterogeneous. Only someone like Leylin, who’d mastered the law of devouring, could easily expel the thoughts and consciences within them, turning them into the purest of energy that he could use.

After the reserves had reached 100%, the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded out. [Beep! Divine force reserves completed. Beginning to transfer energy to the main body, simulating divine grace!]

Leylin’s reserves depleted quickly, and soon he’d expended it all. Compared to the previous times when he had absorbed the energy, this time round it was much more powerful!

[Beep! The host has undergone a divine baptism. Spirit +1]
[Beep! The host’s arcanist rank has increased to 18! Arcane Energy +10!]
[Beep! Obtained one rank 8 arcane spell slot, one rank 7 arcane
spell slot, and one rank 6 arcane spell slot!]
Very soon, Leylin’s stats had undergone changes too.
[Progress of Weave Analysis: Level 0 100%, Level 1 100%, Level 2 100%, Level 3 100%, Level 4 100%, Level 5 100%, Level 6 76.88%, Level 7 51.30%, Level 8 19.60%.
[Spell Slots: Rank 8(2), Rank 7(4), Rank 6(7), Rank 5(???), Rank 4(???), Rank 3(???), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???).
“This is the power… of divine grace?” A surge of power swelled through Leylin’s body, intoxicating him. It was only now that he learnt how powerful the gods here were.
“So all that matters is divine grace. If I ignore the divine force requirement, I can also turn a pig into a legendary?” Leylin’s improvement in strength right was akin to having received divine grace from a god, except that he obtain it through other means.
“It seems like Alustriel isn’t just a Chosen, she also has some of Mystra’s divinity. She is at least rank 25, and coming face to face with a legendary would not faze her one bit…” The situation in the north was still in a mess, especially the borders between the orc empire and the humans. That had turned into a place of unrest where darkness and chaos were prevalent.
“It seems like that queen has been devastated and is planning to live in seclusion?” Leylin rubbed his chin. He still held a hidden card in the north; Tiff was living there in territory he owned. It was possible for him to intervene in the battles and tip the balance of the scale.
‘However this is also a blessing in disguise. The north has attracted the attention of the central continent and the gods, which makes it easier for me to carry out my plans in Dambrath…’ Leylin
pondered before leaving the secret room, without casting another glance at these sacrificial items which were much too mundane to him now.

……

Night fell, and the full moon appeared. A thin red fog had spread around Nightmare Forest starting at dusk. A group of pirates and human slaves had retreated immediately, as if the fog was their nemesis. Some of the human slaves even knelt in the direction of Nightmare Forest, praying loudly despite the whips of the foremen.

“Damn it! How many brothers has this cursed forest taken from us already?” Calon wiped the cold sweat off his body as he looked in apprehension at the forest enshrouded in the mist, his knees buckling weakly. His only thought now was to run away if something was off in the slightest.

Having served Leylin for the past year, he had seen the workings of this sinister forest. Despite repeated warnings, there were still foolhardy pirates who approached the forest on a full moon, and they never appeared before him again.

The numerous events had etched the memories of this forest deep in Calon’s mind. His fear of it had long surpassed what he held for those monsters lurking in the deep seas, and equalled what he felt for demons and devils.

‘Good heavens! Our Lord is actually conducting his research in this place, he really doesn’t fear death! Almighty Goddess of the Ocean, I seek your blessing in leaving this cursed area at the next available chance…’ Looking at the maroon-coloured moon and the mist enshrouding the forest, Calon prayed towards the gods piously for the first time…
“No matter how many times I’ve seen this, it still moves me…” Leylin stood at the edge of Nightmare Forest, fully armed. He stretched out his hand and grabbed a trace of the dark red mist, his eyes filled with emotion. ‘The dreamforce from another world seems to have reached an accord with the laws of the World of Gods, developing a mutual tolerance…’ Dreamforce was common in other worlds as well, and it underwent a necessary mutation to adapt to the laws of the World of Gods. If other beings who had comprehended laws learnt of this they would go insane over the discovery. ‘Without a doubt, this could be the reason why the Overgod’s conscient fell into slumber. Otherwise, it absolutely would not allow this sort of malignant tumour to smoothly grow…’ Leylin stroked his chin, watching the dark red dreamforce in his hand twist into a variety of forms. “A.I. Chip, establish mission: Investigate the feasibility of transmuting external powers into the World of Gods!” [Beep! Mission established, added to secondary investigation list!] The A.I. Chip loyally reported. “Nightmare Island… What surprises will you bring me?” Leylin’s lips curved into a smile as he slowly melded into the forest, his figure swallowed by the dark red mist. “The dreamforce in this forest completely explodes outwards during the night of a full moon, but normally even ordinary creatures can pass through the forest.” A milky white flame lit the path ahead of him, and all Leylin could see on either side were trees. At this moment, the forest seemed to take on a life on its own and all the trees became ents. They hugged their shoulders, shying away from the bright light of the everlasting flame. They even spared to
the time to whisper to each other, “Hurry! Look! That human came again…”

“Hey! Ouch! You stepped on me, it hurts! Don’t you know that it’s very rude to step on an old person’s head?” An aged voice came from beneath Leylin’s feet. Leylin soon discovered that the green rock that had originally been there had grown tiny little hands and feet, and was now uprooting itself from the soil. An elderly face even appeared on the surface of the rock.

‘Is this a Life Activation technique? It seems to have been corrupted.’

Under the influence of the World of Gods’ transmuted dreamforce, the entire forest seemed to have come to life. Various unimaginable things were running to and fro.

“Oh, human! You have returned. Are you looking for Zelos?” A squirrel greeted Leylin, perching onto the shoulder of a giant ent.

‘Zelos? Is it that giant centipede? Is it his turn to come out?’ Leylin nodded, “No, but could you tell me where it is?” He withdrew a pine nut from his pocket and tossed it to the squirrel as he spoke.

“Mm, my favourite!” The little squirrel immediately stuffed the pine nut into its cheeks, its teeth quickly gnawing through the thing. Its words were rendered rather unintelligible as it ate.

“Zelos has been looking for you all this time! It’s in the east… No! It’s already here, run!” The little squirrel immediately took the pine nut and left, the nearby ents following it in succession. The area quickly emptied, leaving Leylin standing there alone.

‘How lucky! Every night of the full moon, a different creature becomes the strongest one each time. I’ve seen a Nightmare and a walking piano before. Compared to them, unravelling the mystery behind a giant centipede is much easier…’ Leylin had a relaxed smile on his face.

*Bang! Bang!* An enormous black shadow suddenly erupted through the soil. It had innumerable feet, and a humanoid face rose
out of its shell. The face, that of a youth, turned its crimson eyes to
gaze coldly at Leylin.
“We meet again, giant centipede!” The Red Dragon Staff in Leylin’s
hands suddenly shout out a red light.
“No, I am Zelos the Third. What you met before was my father.
You should not have trespassed here, intruder!” A droning voice
came out of the youthful mask.
“Very well, this damnable dreamscape period has complicated
everything significantly…” Leylin looked at this giant centipede
with a serious expression. “Are you going to obediently get out of
my way, or do I have to slaughter you?”
“Vile human!” It was clear that his attitude had infuriated the
centipede. The giant monster roared loudly, bearing down quickly
on Leylin with its entire body.
Bang! Rocks and soil were sent flying everywhere, and the place where Leylin had just stood immediately turned into a giant pit in the ground.

‘Extremely fast, with great strength. As expected of a defensive creature that was contaminated by dreamforce…’ Leylin assessed the centipede indifferently from the very edge of the pit.

“Human, you have provoked me! I, Zelos the Third, will make you pay the price!” The giant centipede shouted. Face after face separated from its body, each transforming into a strange, humanoid figure.

“I’ll be honest. You’re much easier to deal with than a Nightmare that can use dreamforce skillfully or a walking piano that can’t be dealt with via normal magic.” Finishing this earnest declaration, Leylin pointed the Red Dragon Staff at the centipede.

“Soul Burn!”

*Roar!* A powerful draconic aura erupted from the staff. The red dragon’s soul seemed to endure some torturous force on the staff’s tip. It shrunk as its spirit withered considerably.

A surging red energy glowed at the end of the staff, transforming into the upper body of a mature red dragon.

*Roar!* This monster which had appeared so abruptly had reached legendary strength, and a swipe from its enormous dragon claws sent the centipede flying. Afterwards, this legendary dragon spat out its dragon breath!
*Bang! Bang! Bang!* The ground trembled continuously, and even the dark red mist in the air was dispersed considerably. The enormous red dragon phantom dissipated, only leaving behind a giant imprint of a centipede monster on the ground. The monster looked very miserable and the summoned mask creatures had been completely exterminated. Even the armour it wore seemed to be rather damaged.

“Ow… How could the power of the normal world harm Zelos the Third?” The centipede monster had been torn in half, its breastplate shattered to pieces. Its fiery red energy core was even exposed, but the mask on its skull did not show the slightest hint of suffering. It continued to absorb traces of dark red mist that repaired the damaged shell.

“Of course the power of the ordinary world cannot harm dreamscape creatures, but what if dreamforce was used as well?” Although he saw that the creature was being rapidly restored, a smile of success still flashed across Leylin’s eyes.

“Arcane dreamforce spell— Void Blade!” Some unknown force caused the dark red fog to condense, transforming it into an arc of light.

“If one wants to break through the first layer of the Nightmare Forest, you need to make a sacrifice to Sibyl!” After two years of slow and fumbling analysis, Leylin had developed an exceptional understanding of the Nightmare Forest’s surface layer.

“Giant centipede, become my sacrifice!” The dark red blade of light flew from his hands and streaked cleanly through the centipede creature’s exposed red core. Enormous cracks appeared on the surface of the core. A crisp sound rang out as it exploded loudly, shattering like glass.

The whimpers and howls of many aggrieved spirits lingered in Leylin’s ear as confused souls poured out from the centipede monster’s wounds. These souls took the form of the natives of the
forest, and there were a few familiar-looking pirates mixed in with them.
“Open the path with souls, Sibyl’s sacrifice!” Leylin’s hands sketched out numerous runes at lightning speed as he chanted ancient words out loud.
*Bzzt!* A layer of suffocating energy swept across the forest. Many souls were gathered together and became a gorgeously lit passageway.
“The blood of a witch, a dark raven’s wing, and the dark matter from Manter’s sacrificial rites... The conditions have all been fulfilled!”
A sound of muffled thunder came from above as Leylin’s actions seemed to have given rise to some chain reaction. Violet lightning blanketed the sky!
*Ka-cha! Bang!* The passageway of souls rushed forward in a flash, and an enormous tunnel seemed to appear in the ground. The floor began to rumble as if an 8-point earthquake had been triggered.
“Was it a success?” Leylin’s figure emerged from the smoke and dust. He waved a hand, and a dark red hurricane immediately swept away the dust to expose a devastated landscape. The giant centipede monster and the spell array from before had vanished without a trace. The very earth seemed to have cracked apart, revealing a crevice that was unfathomably deep.
“The power of the lock has been broken, revealing the entrance to the lower layers,” Leylin jumped into the crevice without the slightest hesitation. The turbulent darkness below gobbled him up as if he had leapt into the mouth of some giant monster. The air whistled past his ears loudly, and spots of fluorescence constantly flashed in the darkness like fireflies.
“My research indicates that the Nightmare Wizard’s inheritance has three locks total. The higher locks are closer to the World of
The creatures in Nightmare Forest were bigger than those of the normal world. The deeper inside the forest one went, the greater the contamination of dreamforce. Even laws began to distort at a point.

Leylin had deduced that the third level of the lock would not have such constructs as time and space, instead being a mere assembly of thoughts and concepts. After all, it wasn’t difficult for dreamforce to contort spacetime at its strongest.

“No matter what, I have to at least see the remnants of this ancient Nightmare Wizard…”

*Thud! Thud!* Leylin suddenly felt a strange sensation from the solid ground. He stood rooted in place.

“Not granite… but mahogany planks?” Leylin raised his head, and sunlight shone gently into the room he was in. Motes of dust could be seen floating in the air, making the place look hazy.

“Little Ardin! The great wizard Poffert is here to recruit an apprentice; you must succeed this time!” A lady with a kind and gentle expression stood before Leylin, and her husband sipped on coffee as he read the newspaper. She gave a red haired boy a poached egg as she instructed him.

“What’s happening?” Leylin’s brows furrowed and he felt a chill down his spine. He tried to react, but found that he had completely lost all energy. He was now only a spectral observer, forced to just stare at the scene.

‘Dreamscape! I’m in dreamscape! This is the second floor of the lock, countless fantasy dream worlds!’ Leylin was suddenly enlightened.

‘This must be the Nightmare Wizard’s memories of his youth…” Leylin now looked at the little boy tucking in on a high seated chair and hastily wolfin down a meal. His legs were dangling off the ground as they shook, giving off a comical vibe.
“I know, mother!” The red haired boy promised and began to quickly finish eating his food.
“When I send you to the wizard later, you must remember to be polite at all times! Honey, why don’t you say a few things to him too?” The wife glared at her husband.
It was only then that the dead husband raised his head from the newspaper, revealing a perplexed expression, “Yea, you can do this!”

“Ah, the grace of gods! Someone save me, I can’t stand this any longer. Don’t you know how important today is for little Ardin?” The wife seemed to turn estranged.
“I know, I know! It’s just Poffert isn’t it? I once…” The middle aged man reminisced the past.
“Stop boasting of those adventures you claim to have had. No matter what, you’re just an inspector on the roads of the city…” It was apparent that the wife did not believe a word that her husband said.
“I’m done eating!” Ardin pushed his plate away as he stood up.
“Oh! Wait… Milk! Your milk!” The woman called out behind him. Ardin ran very quickly, soon leaving his mother in the distance as he left the simple house.
*Boom!* A fiery explosion suddenly occurred, and blazing flames filled the scene. Shrapnel grazed past Ardin’s face, leaving behind a cross shaped wound on it.
Leylin felt like he was watching a movie, unable to help in a time of tragedy.
‘No! If I go all out, I might be able to…’ The flames engulfed Leylin whole, but could not affect his body in any way. A phantom Targaryen appeared as terrifying devouring power took form in Leylin’s right palm. He grabbed a broken glass.
*Boom!* He felt an immense force immediately, as if he was clutching onto the claw of a dragon. The whole world began to
shake as if rejecting his existence.
‘Even if it’s dreamscape, I cannot tamper with this… The memory
is just too vivid…’ Leylin began to deliberate over the situation.

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Soon after, the trembling of the world stopped and the void
swirled.
“Hey kiddo! Are you awake now?” The scene changed as little
Ardin opened his eyes and rubbed his face. The sharp pain from
the touch caused him to inhale a deep breath.
“Don’t look anymore, you’re disfigured now… Hehe… Not bad,
you’re to my liking…” An ancient voice spoke with a tinge of
mockery, as if it contained all the evil in the world. It would cause
one to cower in fear.
Little Ardin raised his head, and only saw darkness in front of him,
just having taken on human form.
“Huehuehue… I’ll give you a chance because of your father. As
long as you manage to survive, you will become the disciple of the
Nightmare Wizard…” The darkness disappeared after the black
figure spoke, revealing a pack of hungry grey wolves which eyed
the little boy ravenously.
Leylin had learnt his lesson this time, and only watched on coldly at
the struggle between little Ardin and the wolves. His gaze was
indifferent, only with the occasional flickering of light from the
A.I. Chip.
“This should be a small world close to Dreamscape. Also, the way
this Magus chooses his students is rather savage…” Leylin knew
that back when he was still a human, he had no chance of dealing
with these creatures.
The second layer of Nightmare Island was constructed of numerous dreams. Leylin now wandered through many dreams, looking for an opportunity to break through. He felt weightless again, and found his surroundings changed once more. Ardin had now grown into a young man, but the scar on his cheek had not disappeared. He’d activated some sort of talent in that life or death fight to successfully survive the attack, and was now an apprentice of the Nightmare Wizard. The Nightmare Wizard’s method of teaching his apprentices was very crude, and he had several apprentices like Ardin who were treated almost inhumanely. Many died, and only Ardin’s desire for revenge allowed him to persevere and strengthen himself rapidly. Many of these dreams involved him with a female junior, creating some of his most tender memories.

“Next is a great darkness… That must be the reason he transformed…” Leylin muttered to himself, both hands waving to create strange runes as he broke through this dream, entering deeper levels. What appeared in front of him was darkness was so dense that it could not dissipate. Endless malicious intent converged to its limit, attacking his senses and almost turning him insane.

‘Nothing can hold me back!’ Leylin looked indifferent as he took a step forward.

*Bzzt! Bzzt!* The darkness separated, revealing orange dots of
candlelight. There were many fragmented and incoherent scenes here.

“Keke… dear apprentices, your last test is to kill each other in this pocket dimension. Only one can survive, and that person will absorb all of your life forces and ingenuity, becoming my most outstanding disciple…” The Nightmare Wizard laughed wildly, sending all of his apprentices to a bloody pocket dimension. Ardin clenched his fists, glancing at the female apprentice who was like a white lotus next to him. She now looked slightly pale, and while she at most could be considered graceful, she still had a unique aura that captured his heart.

‘No! There has to be another way! There has to!’ Ardin bit his lips till blood was spilt.

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‘The next dream should be in a bloody pocket dimension...’ This level of darkness was nothing to Leylin. With a slight caress with his right hand, he seemed to push a curtain aside. However, the next scene surprised him. Torrential rain fell, and terrifying dreamforce spread everywhere. The area looked to be full of debris, and there had evidently been a great battle here.

“Haha… Ardin, my dearest disciple, are you going to betray me?” The Nightmare Wizard formed of numerous shadows watched the young Magus in front of him. This was obviously Ardin, who now only wished for his master’s’ death. He’d lost one of his eyes, and the other had turned purple.

“Do you not know that my nightmare clones have spread across the whole world? Without the determination to destroy the world, don’t you know you can’t kill me?” The Nightmare Wizard laughed madly, a dreamforce spell forming a three-headed helldog. Hellfire blazed as it ruthlessly pushed Ardin to the ground.
“I was the one who taught you all your magic, so what are you going to use against me?” He continued to snicker wildly as the bloody eyes of the figure stared at him, “Speak... how do you want to die?”

“I want you to die!” Ardin yelled, his arms surrounding the three-headed dog.

*Awoo!* Terrifying hurricanes formed at his forehead as a red eye opened up. Streaks of green veins protruded from it, shooting out rays that dissipated the fog and absorbed the dispelled dreamforce.

“Ah... Ah...” Ardin’s clothes burst bit by bit, and he turned into a monstrous giant of five metres, with a horn, red scales, and a third eye between his brows.

“This is... the physique to absorb nightmares! How is it possible? I’ve already checked it before, you can’t have this bloodline...”

“Nothing is impossible, old man. Die!” Ardin, who had turned into a giant, grabbed forward in the air. Dark phantoms were pulled out of the dreams of numerous intellectual beings, and then exterminated.

“So your true body was hidden in Dreamscape. I found you!” Ardin exclaimed, and then seemed to open a channel straight to Dreamscape. Powerful dreamforce forced the old Magus out.

After seeing the old man, the black figures from before pounced forth, the injuries they had transferring over to him. The old man’s expression quickly changed as he coughed up black blood.

“Hehe... as expected of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, the rumoured favourite of Dreamscape! Cough cough... He actually managed to link with Dreamscape and expel my true body... cough cough...”

Mouthfuls of black blood spurted out from his mouth, but his gaze as he watched Ardin was like he was seeing treasure.

“Cough cough... The Nightmare Absorbing Physique has the natural ability to link with Dreamscape and absorb its origin. What
I’ve been pursuing all my life has finally appeared before me…”
The old man’s eyes were filled with fervour, like a devout follower finally meeting his god.
“Are you done yet?” The giant walked over to him, the scar from the knife wound now seeming more jagged and obvious.
“I ensure you that even your truesoul will be crushed, and I won’t give you the chance to enter the astral plane!” Tremendous Dreamscape origin force poured into Ardin, to the point that he could even somewhat sense laws.
*Rumble!* After the powerful tremors, Ardin returned to his original state. Traces of black blood still flowed from his right fist.
“Henceforth… I am the Nightmare King!”

……

Light flashed, and the scene changed.
“Little Ardin! The great wizard Poffert is here to recruit an apprentice; you must succeed this time!”
Ardin’s mother urged him repeatedly…

……

‘As expected, the dreams are repeating themselves. Is this a maze formed of the life experiences of that Nightmare King? If I can’t break the seal and find the entrance to the third level, I might be trapped to death here…’
Leylin watched the scenes a second time, feeling like a movie was being replayed.
‘But...the Nightmare Absorbing Physique! I never thought it actually existed! Ancient records say that those with such a physique are the darlings of Dreamscape, and can even have Dreamscape origin force poured into their bodies. They are treated
even better than the children of planes… This physique can absorb a large amount of dreamforce and compensate for its weak phase, the Nightmare King must be incomparably close to rank 9…’

“But… How do I get out of this dream maze?” The A.I. Chip’s light shone in Leylin’s eyes,

“Based on the A.I. Chip’s observations and calculations, there were 38 key points in the dreams just now that could have changed his fate. There are 34198 chances to indirectly change it… but most important is probably the lost memory of the battle in the pocket dimension… I’ll try them one by one first…”

“Plan 1…” Leylin pushed at the milk on the table, causing a large cup of milk to splatter onto Ardin’s clothes.

“Ah! What’s going on, Ardin? Your clothes!” The housewife cried, “Are you going to meet that esteemed wizard in this state?”

“I’m sorry, Mama! I’m going to change now!” Little Ardin ran into the next room and began to change his clothes.

As expected, his efforts had led to Ardin staying inside the house. Immediately after, a huge explosion burst out and enveloped the building…

Lights flashed, and the scene changed again.

“Little Ardin! The great wizard Poffert is here to recruit an apprentice; you must succeed this time!” Ardin’s mother urged him repeatedly…

“Alright! Looks like killing Ardin won’t work. I need to try something else…” Leylin had no choice but to watch this scene unfold again, and he began more tests…

……

‘Getting him to escape and then study under the Nightmare Wizard… fail!’

‘Saving his parents and having the whole family move to another
city... fail!'
‘Accident during experiment, finding a new strength system... fail!’
“It’s already the 17,862nd time... My spiritual energy can’t hold on much longer... But I’ve already found the key to proceed to the key memory region!” Leylin now looked resolute. The scene had changed to the time when the Nightmare Wizard had wanted the apprentices to kill each other.

“After so many experiments, I finally found the key point. Dreamforce, stop!” The scene froze with Leylin’s will. Be it the crazy laughter of the Nightmare Wizard or the worried apprentices and Ardin biting his lips, everything stopped like a statue.

The world lost all its colour in that instant, turning monochrome like a photograph.

Leylin headed to the female apprentice that Ardin had feelings for, staring at the jade pendant on her chest. It had a white lotus on it.

“Break!” Concentrated dreamforce passed through the pendant like a needle, and the entire scene seemed to shatter like porcelain. The dream no longer repeated, and everything descended into darkness.

Two paths flickering with dark red light appeared in front of Leylin, and there were even strange eyes on him from the back of the paths.

“One of these two should lead to the third layer, and the other should be the sealed memories...” Leylin stroked his chin, “If I were the Nightmare King, finding out that an outsider dared peep on my sealed memories would make me...”
eylin had a critical decision to make. At one end was heaven, and the other hell. He could enter the third layer of the island to find the legacy of the Nightmare King. On the other hand, the consequences could be dire for entering the hidden memories.

Of course, Leylin was unsure of the way this king thought. Perhaps he wanted to share his memories with other Magi, and wanted to slaughter those who wanted to get the legacy.

‘Most importantly… all detection methods are useless. I have no idea what’s at the end of the paths…’ Leylin’s scalp began to tingle. He was a fairly conservative person. While he’d braved many dangers, he only did things when he had a 70-80% assurance of success. This half and half situation caused him to hesitate.

“I hate things that are so difficult to grasp like luck. It kills me…” Leylin complained. His luck was average, but he hated having to do things like following the will of the heavens.

Right now, however, the choice wasn’t in his hands. The surrounding dreams began to shatter and would soon affect him. They wouldn’t pull him into another cycle, but rather, twist and crush him into powder without leaving even his truesoul behind.

“What do I do? Do I choose one at random? With this probability, it’s too…” Leylin began to get nervous. This was a rather new feeling, and he was somewhat savouring it.

“Left… I sense large amounts of chaotic concepts and coordinates
on the left. This should be the third layer!” After a lot of analysis, Leylin gritted his teeth and made his decision.

*Whoosh!* At this moment, however, something sounded in his body, causing his expression to change. He looked down abruptly to find that it was from his bag of holding.

‘It’s that thing!’ Silver light flashed, and an ancient animal-hide scroll appeared in front of Leylin. Fresh blood still dripped from stains on it, and sound, light, and even the shattered time and space began to distort in front of the scroll.

“This is... the power of distortion! The might of Distorted Shadow!” Leylin muttered, “As ancient Magi or even allies, Distorted Shadow’s remains alarmed the Nightmare King?”

Boundless distorting power took shape, and the two dark red paths were affected as they twisted and fused under this energy.

*Bzzt! Bzzt!* After the light dissipated, the two paths had become one, forming an even larger spatial gate. Blood red dreamforce runes flickered on it.

‘What a sly Nightmare King. He even had this planned!’ Now, Leylin didn’t even have a choice. He rubbed his nose and turned grim, glancing at the scroll before stowing it away.

The surface of the scroll was now very soft. It squeezed under pressure from Leylin’s fingers, no longer having the power it once did. It was like an ordinary magic scroll. However, he did not dare underestimate this thing.

‘This scroll has Distorted Shadow’s strength and even conscient sealed inside?’ Seeing that this item was adamant on following him, Leylin could only roll his shoulders back and accept it.

This body was a mere clone after all. At worst, he could abandon it even if it caused grievous injuries to his main body. With enough strength to protect himself, he naturally feared nothing and had the guts to try everything!

“No matter what it is you want me to do, you have to give me
benefits first!” Leylin’s eyes glinted with intelligence as he placed the scroll away, streaking into the spatial gate.

The third layer of Nightmare Island.

“As expected… The extent of dreamforce contamination here is even worse. This place has only the purest intent…” Leylin now found himself unable to sense his own body, only able to exist as the most fundamental form of his soul and conscient.

He was surrounded by a boundless universe, filled with the feeling of weightlessness. Leylin seemed to be a lonesome boat in the turbulent seas.

There was no concept of another existence around, and only nothingness. Leylin had no qualms in believing that he would stay like this until the world was destroyed if he did not make the first move.

Having lost his body, his sense of time began to slow. He had no idea whether seconds had passed or tens of millennia. All he felt was that the sense of self he had was gradually vanishing.

‘No, this won’t do! I have to persevere. Once my sense of self disappears, my truesoul will also disappear…’ Leylin abruptly burst forth with strength, and his willpower took control all his thoughts. His body suddenly condensed and became distinct.

“Hah… How is this third layer of defence constructed? Even the essence of Magus concepts are dissipating…” Having reinforced his sense of self, Leylin glanced fearfully at his arms that had formed once more.

“This is the lost land… And also the place where the Nightmare King lost his self…” A few black feathers fell, and Leylin found a black crow was ‘flying’ towards him.

In this void with only concepts and no matter, a crow was something very strange. What caused Leylin even more astonishment was that it could move about freely in this void.

“We meet again, Mister!” The black crow combed its feathers and
greeted him happily.

“Have we met before?” Leylin asked, confused.

“Hm. To me it’s in the future but for you it’s in your past. My future form is a single-eyed owl.” The crow was a chatterbox.

‘Single-eyed owl!’ Leylin immediately recalled the time after he’d advanced to rank 5, when he’d been afflicted with a Dreamscape curse. He’d obtained a present from the owl within a dream then, allowing him to come into contact with dreamforce.

“My apologies, but may I know who you are?” Leylin asked the question he wanted to.

“Me? I’m just a mass of concepts. I shall exist as long as Dreamscape survives…” Leylin had a feeling that this crow or owl or whatever it was wasn’t speaking the truth, but he did not fixate himself on that.

“You’re saying this is the place the Nightmare King lost his sense of self? What does that mean? Has he fallen? Who did it?”

“As long as the Nightmare King did not want to die, nobody could make it happen. Here, however, he abandoned his sense of self. This means he’s completely dead, without even a fragment of his truesoul left behind…” The crow seemed to know about matters of ancient times very well.

‘If he’s abandoned his sense of self, doesn’t that mean he’s committed suicide? So when the Nightmare King invaded the World of Gods, he was already determined to die?’ Leylin had a feeling that perhaps the Nightmare King Ardin had died long before. After the bloody battle in the pocket dimension, the Ardin that still existed had only been a walking piece of flesh. However, he was far too powerful, to the point that he could not even kill himself. Was that why he needed help from the gods?

‘As expected… High-ranked Magi mostly have mental issues. It’s too serious with the Nightmare King. I can’t become like him in the future…’ The example this senior set gave Leylin a good warning.
A real peak rank 8 Magus would never be able to fall if they did not want to die. This was the case with Distorted Shadow. He had already died for tens of thousands of years, and yet could still create trouble. The Nightmare King was bent on dying, which is why he had truly died…

“Well then… Magus, tell me your intent in coming here!” The crow opened its beak, its two black beady eyes looking mischievous.

“I…” Leylin gritted his teeth and spoke anyway, “I hope to obtain the legacy of the Nightmare King. At the very least, I want to find a method to evade the weakening of dreamforce!”

“Grasping dreamforce? Caw caw… that’s not very easy. Are you sure you want to do that?” The crow asked.

“I’m very sure.” Leylin answered seriously, eyes filled with resolution from his pursuit of truth. There was no fear of death.

“Caw caw, good! I see Ardin’s shadow on you…” The crow cawed, and its body started changing.

*Whoosh!* It suddenly swelled, turning from the size of a dove to that of a large evil dragon, jet-black neck showing dense black scales. Its beak widened to reveal sharp teeth like those of sharks.

*Ka-cha!* A strike of blood-red lightning fell right on the forehead of the strange black dragon, turning into a bloody third eye!

“This… this…” Such a tremendous change had Leylin stunned.

“Accept it! This is a gift from Dreamscape!” The strange black dragon howled, the bloody third eye turning into a ray of light and disappearing into Leylin’s forehead.

Agony! Leylin felt everything go black as he felt himself being torn into, collapsing into a dead faint. Large amounts of dreamforce flooded into him like a tsunami, enveloping his body completely in a huge crimson cocoon.

When the tide of Dreamscape weakened, the crimson cocoon had disappeared. Only the black crow was still around.

“Old friend… After helping you this time, I’ve repaid all my debts
to you…” The crow murmured to the air, its body becoming less corporeal as it disappeared into the vast nothingness.
Rumble! The pirates witnessed a marvellous scene outside the forest. The thick red fog that shrouded the forest transformed continuously, dissipating to reveal the original lay of the land. The earth trembled as numerous small cracks and even pits appeared in the ground. At the very center of the island, the bare mountain peaks issued a wrathful roar. Fiery lava shone faintly as it flowed over with agitation.

“This is bad. Earthquake! The island is about to erupt… My Lord! Where is the lord?” Calon didn’t care at all about those worried native slaves and pirates. He rushed to the border of the forest in search of Leylin’s figure. This wasn’t due to loyalty; he knew that if he dared to abandon Leylin and flee in secret, the enrage Scarlet Witch would flay him alive!

The island was flooded with an aura of death and despair. Many creatures fled from the thickets, the small cracks in the rocks, and through underground caves to escape. It became an exodus, and even the little ants had bored out from their tunnels beneath the ground.

“Damn… Damn! How could these natives have settled their tribe on a volcanic island? Why weren’t there any signs before?” Large droplets of sweat beaded on Calon’s forehead.

However, the gods above seemed to hear his prayers. Just when Calon was prepared to abandon everything and flee, he finally
spotted Leylin’s silhouette near the forest border.
“Oh, thanks to the Ocean Goddess! My lord, you’ve finally appeared, let’s quickly leave this place!”
Leylin seemed rather distracted however, and he caressed his forehead as if he didn’t hear a single word that Calon said. Just when Calon was considering carrying this lord’s body away, Leylin’s eyes finally regained their vigour, “This place is now useless, let’s go!”
“Yes Sir!” Calon’s eyes were overflowing with hot tears. He felt as if he had just heard the most pleasant words he would ever experience in his life.
The pirates were masters of handling ships. Although they had wasted quite a bit of time, they still managed to leave Nightmare Island before the volcano fully erupted.
*Rumble!* Strong black flames rose into the skies, covering the bright white moon. Only in the skies of Nightmare Island would the moonlight become purple on the light of the full moon, and now it would never happen again.
The fiery red lava flowed in streams resembling human arteries as they snaked across the entire volcano. It even spread relentlessly to the area outside of it.
‘I never thought that the island was on a fire ley line. Once the dreamforce suppressing it was gone, the volcano immediately erupted… Perhaps this eruption was even more berserk because of the long suppression. This entire Nightmare Island probably won’t exist any longer…’ Leylin looked expressionlessly at the distant island, which was now engulfed in lava. Right now, all his attention was captured by the A.I. Chip’s information records.
[Beep! Sustained unknown influence, scanning has suffered interference. Effect has been temporarily lost!]
[Beep! Intense interference… Currently…]
‘The third level of the lock relates to memory. It made the A.I. Chip
unstable for a while too… Really terrifying…”

However Leylin shifted his attention to the densely packed prompts below it:

[Beep! Host’s truesoul has suffered unknown interference, probability of radiation to the body in the Magus World is 98.77%! Initiating separation! Experiencing interference… Separation has failed, unable to complete the task!]

‘Ah…’ Leylin breathed in a lungful of cold air, ‘So even my main body’s truesoul was affected. Dreamforce is truly nefarious and frightening.’ After displaying this record, the A.I. Chip’s information seemed to flow even more smoothly. It seemed as if the earlier interference had completely disappeared.

[Beep! Host has absorbed a great amount of energy essence! Determined to be mutated dreamforce! Initiating absorption!]

[Beep! Host has absorbed mutated dreamforce! Spirit+1!] [Beep! Host’s arcanist ranking has increased, currently rank 19. Arcane Energy+10. Obtained Feat: Dreamscape View, Obtained Specialty: Illusions] [Beep! Host’s soul has advanced. Level 6 Weave fully analysed. Host has obtained all rank 6 spell models and is immune to forgetting them. No materials are required to cast rank 6 spells.]

[Beep! Host has advanced to rank 19. Spell slots obtained: rank 9: 1, rank 8: 1, rank 7: 1.]

Below these messages were introductions to the two feats.

[Dreamscape View: Host possesses the ability to see through Dreamscape, can now look straight at the souls of other people. Any concealment will be rendered immaterial, and nothing can hide from the host’s eyes.] [Illusions: Host automatically grasps illusions, granting an additional 20% to the power of illusory spells.]

The A.I. Chip once again refreshed Leylin’s stat window:

Healthy. Feats: Sturdy, Erudite, Intermediate Perfect Body, Dreamscape View. Specialties: Arcane Energy Detection, Arcane Amplification, Illusions] [Progress of Weave Analysis: Level 0 100%, Level 1 100%, Level 2 100%, Level 3 100%, Level 4 100%, Level 5 100%, Level 6 100%, Level 7 77.99%, Level 8 38.21%, Level 9 0.11%.] [Spell Slots: Rank 9(1), Rank 8(3), Rank 7(5), Rank 6(???), Rank 5(???), Rank 4(???), Rank 3(???), Rank 2(???), Rank 1(???), Rank 0(???)]

‘I’ve finally reached rank 9 of the Weave. Is this the limit of the Weave’s casting ability?’ Leylin shut his eyes and sensed the Weave’s network across the entire World of Gods. After the first 10 levels of the Weave, after rank 0 to rank 9, there seemed to be an even more vast world out there. However their souls were tightly shackled, unable to continue connecting to the Weave.

“It looks like the forbidden domain of the gods exists past rank 9,” Leylin muttered to himself.

He had his own hypotheses on what came after the ninth level of the Weave. It could very well be the gods’ divine spell network, the ‘personal’ network that the gods had made for themselves.

‘Using the Weave to transmit divine spells? It could very well reduce the consumption of the gods considerably, and make it easier for them to cultivate followers. Ha, these gods have calculated it all very well, however…’ Leylin controlled himself from speaking any further, as it was not something he could deal with at his current level.

‘I’m close to becoming legendary now. Being rank 19, I’m only half a step away. I should refine my own power as quickly as possible, stepping into the domain of legendaries. Only true legendaries have a say in the continent.’

A rank 20 only had a few extra spell slots, not much different from a rank 19. The difference came in the refinement of their power, something that allowed them to perfect their theory.
Leylin thought of records chronicling the advancement of wizards. Although every legendary could still advance further, they had all walked to the peak of their own paths. Their theoretical knowledge was extremely rich.

‘It’s even more complicated to become a legendary arcanist. I need to condense my theories into a skill tree or a circulating energy loop. However, this won’t be a problem for me. All that’s left is the work on refining energy…’ Leylin touched his forehead, a puzzled expression on his face.

The previous situation with the third level of the dreamscape lock surfaced before his eyes once again. Only now, his forehead gleamed pure white, as if there were no abnormalities.

‘The final gift, what on earth did it mean?’ His visit to the nightmare world had allowed him to absorb a great deal of dreamforce, and pushed his ranking to rank 19. However, Leylin was not granted his greatest wish of obtaining the Nightmare King’s inheritance, and the method to avoid the exhaustion of dreamforce.

‘Was this created by Dreamscape?’ Leylin looked at his hands. The white palms contained unyielding power, but Leylin felt that his corporeal body had already been perfected to its limits. However, at every day and in every moment, he still tirelessly absorbed the nearby light and electromagnetic waves to refine his power. This was all to break through his bottleneck.

‘After walking out of Nightmare Island, I keep feeling that I have changed greatly. Yet I can’t place my finger on how exactly I’ve changed…’ Leylin’s eyes held a trace of suspicion.

“Where are we headed, milord?”

“Mm, let’s go to Pirates’ Cove first!” Leylin replied. When he turned his head however, all he saw was Calon who had fallen to his knees in shock, his complexion deathly pale.

“What’s the matter?”

“Nothing! There’s nothing wrong! Your humble servant has bad
eyesight!” Calon had a flattering smile on his face. He left at lightning speed while murmuring to himself, ‘I must have drunk too much rum, how can Lord Leylin have three eyes? And those blood-coloured patterns on his face, ha… Haha…’

Calon shook his head with all his strength, as if trying to shake the memory of Leylin out from his head. However, he discovered that no matter what he did, his arms and legs still involuntarily trembled. He could only crawl his way back to his bedroom with the support of the wall.

“Three eyes and blood-coloured runes?” What Calon did not know was that his mutterings in the ship’s hold had all been heard by Leylin. After he left, Leylin conjured up a water mirror with a wave of his hand.

What appeared in the mirror was the appearance of a young noble. His complexion was a little wan, with sky blue eyes as deep as the ocean. His golden curls fit with his thin lips, and he was handsome, without any abnormalities whatsoever.
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What Leylin saw in his reflection did not put him at ease. He instead grew even more grim, “Is this an evolution of the truesoul?”

He touched his forehead, and all of a sudden he felt an intense pain that caused him to close his eyes. The next time he opened them, he found a red streak at the middle of it.

*Whoosh!* Water droplets dispersed to reveal Leylin’s serious expression. “The physique to absorb the energy from nightmares… from a bloodline?” Leylin rubbed at his forehead, now at a loss…

“……

“A.I. Chip, check my bloodline!”

All sorts of scanning runes were activated within the wizard tower, and scanning light immediately gathered upon Leylin’s body. He was back on Faulen Island. He’d met up with Isabel for a bit at Pirates’ Cove. He’d decided on the next path for the Scarlet Tigers, and was then at ease to solve his own issues. He’d already given control of the tower to the A.I. Chip. He was using its power to check the abnormalities on his body.

[Beep! Mission established. Scanning… Host’s blood is 99.99999% pure-blooded human.]
“So nothing can be found? Use the atomic microscope, and level 2 antimatter observation. Continue scan.” Leylin sounded grim.

[Beep! Obtained host’s blood. Magnifying specimen…]
The A.I. Chip immediately showed a screen with Leylin’s blood sample. 100,000x, 1,000,000x… The image was magnified ten million times.

Leylin had to reach the smallest unit of his previous world, the limits of the sub-atomic level, to find the problem.

“This…” Leylin’s eyes widened. He saw a few strange black dots amongst wandering photons.

“Lock on to that. Enlarge it!” The black dot moved extremely quickly, but at the end, it was still successfully caught by the A.I. Chip. Slowly, the appearance of the dark shadow appeared in front of Leylin. This was a hexagonal structure with strange patterns on it.

The patterns were rather complicated, in the shape of dark red flowers that gradually evolved into a scaly giant with three eyes. The bloody third eye at the middle seemed to have a will of its own as it stared at Leylin indifferently.

*Thud! Thud! Thud!* Leylin took several steps backwards, the surprise on his face more evident.

“As expected… my body was implanted with a portion of the Nightmare Absorbing Body’s bloodline abilities at the third level…” With his main body imbued with the power nearly equal to a rank 7 Warlock, Leylin was definitely no stranger to bloodline power.

“I just wanted some information. What are you giving me bloodline strength for?” Leylin now felt himself growing dizzy. It was like a beggar asking for some humble pie being given a mountain of gold.

What kind of physique was this Nightmare Absorbing Body? It was one of the most powerful bloodline abilities, something that
allowed the Nightmare King to immediately start a massacre the moment he activated it. With the origin force of Dreamscape, he’d shot up to become a peak Magus of the ancient world in one go!

Leylin was very vigilant of such good luck.

‘It’s too impractical. There has to be something off about a strange event like this. Even if Distorted Shadow was giving me benefits in exchange for making use of me, this is a little too much!’

Leylin was never afraid to expect the worst of his enemies. These sudden benefits implied a huge danger was to come!

‘But… I never thought this Nightmare Absorbing Body wasn’t a physical thing. It can even affect the truesoul, including my main soul in the Magus World…’ As an outstanding bloodline Warlock, Leylin knew that sort of bloodline ability would fuse inseparably with his soul. It would also radiate into his main body in the Magus World through strange channels.

‘The power of Dreamscape can bypass the crystal sphere? Just a temporary energy transmission path alone would be terrifying… I must definitely grasp this strength!’ The ability of dreamforce to pass through two large worlds caused determination to rise in Leylin’s heart.

‘I’m going to take the bait and toss the hook back. How’s that?’ Leylin stroked his chin, a slight smile appearing on his lips. Even Distorted Shadow could not guess that he had the A.I. Chip, and could find any issues.

This would be the greatest misstep in the plan Distorted Shadow had in store for him! Of course, he might have been thinking too much. All this could be a opportunity for him, but he had always liked to be prepared for the worst.

‘A.I. Chip! Begin task: study this bloodline force!’ Leylin looked ruthless. Even if this would interfere with his analysis of the Weave, he would not find it a pity!
Months passed in the blink of an eye. Leylin was sitting cross-legged within the wizard tower, the doors and windows tightly closed as isolation runes flickered inside. If an outsider saw him as he was now, they would be scared stupid or treat him like a monster.
Leylin was now nearly a giant at almost three metres tall. His body had red scales and strange patterns on it, his face so sinister that it could drive children to tears. There was a slight crack on his forehead, shining blood red.
Formless power was attracted to this lustre, transforming into a dark red fog as it seeped into Leylin’s skin and became something more powerful.
“This strength is…” Leylin’s mind followed the path of the undulations and found the source, followed by scenes:
–The old butler Leon looked proud in Port Venus, “Our young master Leylin is…”
–In Pirate’s Cove, an old pirate was teaching a few new pirates a lesson, “When you come out here, foresight is the most important. There’s someone more frightening than the Scarlet Witch in our crew…”
There were even more, though they were all scenes within the north and Dambrath Kingdom. The large batch of devil worshippers that Leylin had gathered as Kukulkan were now transmitting an unending amount of fear.
‘This isn’t faith, but some emotional force one level lower than faith… What’s going on? Why can I take this power in now?’ One could only absorb faith after becoming legendary, much less this sort of low-level emotional force.
However, Leylin soon found that he could easily absorb this emotional force in nightmare form, boosting his strength.
“Could it be that…” Leylin muttered to himself, closing the third eye between his brows. The numerous scenes disappeared, and the channel for emotional force closed.
“As expected… The power of the Nightmare Absorbing Body can take in all emotional forces aimed at me. The effectiveness and rate of conversion is even better than gods, and most importantly… I’m not even half a god yet…” At this moment, Leylin realised the terror of this ancient physique.
‘A.I. Chip, has anything been found?’
[Beep! Statistical model of host’s bloodline force has been established, running with no abnormalities. Found no remnant spiritual brands.] The A.I. Chip answered loyally.
“There’s still no problem? There’s nothing left in my bloodline? Is this a real gift?” Leylin shook his head, dispelling the nightmare form. He shrunk once more, returning to his original appearance.
With the A.I. Chip’s help, his grasp of bloodline force far exceeded the expectations of everyone else. Now, he could basically switch between the two forms smoothly.
“The Nightmare Absorbing Body is a special physique from Dreamscape. Seems like I’ll have to head over to that world a few times in the future…” Leylin muttered to himself, “In addition, with the rate the physique absorbs emotional force, I might be able to raise my arcanist ranking very soon…”
At this moment, the tower genie’s clear voice interrupted his thoughts, “Master! Gold Priest Xena has come to pay a visit!”
“Xena? Get her to wait for me at the drawing room!” Leylin shook his head, draping a white bathrobe around himself.
“But my form after the second transformation might lead to some associations. It’s best to use it as little as possible in the World of Gods…” A moment later, Leylin had tidied everything up and met the priestess of the Goddess of Wealth in the drawing room.
“Wizard Leylin truly is great at making me wait. It’s already been
two years since the last time…” Xena glared at him, looking annoyed.
“Ahaha… my apologies! I’ve been immersed in an experiment. Anyway, hasn’t Master Ernest continued the trade of the devil and demon detectors?” Leylin laughed and then changed the topic, “May I know what you’re here for today?”
“You’re in great trouble!” Xena took a deep breath and spoke cautiously.
“Oh! Have the people from the God of Murder’s church made their move?” Leylin got it right in one go, since there were few large organisations he had offended.
“Yes! One of their legendaries, Cadaver Collector Soros, has completed his experiments and is about to come to the outer seas…” No matter where it was, a legendary was a big shot. Xena was worried that this genius wizard would not be able to pass this hurdle.
“But… from how he’s been acting, we know he’s inclined towards attacking devils and demons. Our church has dealt with him, and the intel we got is proof of that. Unfortunately, we don’t know what he’ll do…”
Actually, Xena did not think well of Leylin’s future. After all, that person was a legendary! There wasn’t even a half-step legendary in the outer seas, so a true legendary would be able to suppress everything.
The existence of a legendary was an important standard for the prime material plane to judge the size of an organisation!
“Legends?” Unexpectedly, Leylin did not panic at all after hearing the news. He instead asked with interest, “Please tell me what you know. We have our deal on sharing information.”

Xena rolled her eyes at him. “Cadaver Collector Soros is the honorary executioner of Cyric’s church. He likes to torture his target’s mind, causing them to crumble and commit suicide before he takes their body. He shot to fame 281 years ago…”

She spoke as if she was making a report, expressionlessly introducing this person generally. Still, she couldn’t keep up the facade and ended up staring at Leylin.

“Lord Leylin! You’re still young and possess such astounding talent. It isn’t a mere dream to become a legendary, but you need to accept reality. Pledge to join Goddess Waukeen’s church and hide in the mainland. Our goddess will shield you…”

Xena was sure Leylin would understand, even though he would have to abandon the outer seas, including Port Venus and all other industries.

After all, the church of wealth was more conducive to Leylin’s potential than all the organisations in the outer seas. With the value he was showing and how he was steadily raising his strength, he seemed to have more than a 50% chance to become a legendary. This was definitely an investment worth making for the church of wealth.
However, Leylin’s answer did not match up to her expectations. “Thank you very much for your kind intentions, but I won’t give up my work here…”

She frowned slightly, watching Leylin discontentedly, “Do you know what a legendary is? Cadaver Collector Soros is an infamous assassin. Even if we sent out a legendary to protect you ourselves, you could still be killed, much less…”

“I know all that!” Leylin interrupted her, looking apologetic, “I saw Her Highness Alustriel at Silverymoon. I read and studied about legendary wizards, and I know that numbers are nothing to a legendary…”

Leylin knew the terror of a legendary better than anyone else. They grasped the power of domains, similar to what a dragon’s aura cast. No matter how many low-ranked Professionals were pit against one, it was useless.

In addition, legendaries had refined their life essence, and could absorb and control divine force, walking the path of godhood.

However, the path that Leylin had chosen was entirely different from Xena, which was why he reacted differently.

“Are you trying to face off against a legendary head-on? Just with a wizard tower? You’d probably be destroyed within seconds…”

Xena felt insulted by Leylin’s arrogant tone, and especially by that resolute gaze that said he didn’t need charity.

“You…” She felt humiliated and discontent, but all that soon faded away into shock. “The– The spell rays on your body…”

“My rank rose a little during these past two years of experiments.” Leylin sounded calm, as if he were describing something insignificant, yet Xena almost choked in surprise.

While they were both high-ranked wizards, rank 15s were nowhere close to rank 19s. One had just entered this grade, while the other had reached the peak of wizardry, beginning to step into the domain of legendaries.
‘Two years! In less than two years, he’s already become a rank 19 wizard!’ Xena froze as she watched the spell rays that Leylin intentionally leaked.

‘A genius. A genius of the World of Gods! No, this is more than just a genius, he’s probably a monster! Outside of Chosen, he’s even faster than close combat Professionals as a wizard!’ Xena zoned out slightly. With his aptitude, she was now sure that he would definitely become a legendary if he didn’t die this time!

“Apologies! I was too harsh with my words…” Now treating Leylin as a to-be legendary, Xena’s tone became more respectful.

“Actually, Mister Leylin, I still stand by my previous suggestion. With your talent, there really is no need to tackle your enemies head-on in the outer sea. The church of wealth shall forever be your shield…” Leylin naturally showed his gratitude towards Xena’s kindness, but he did not relent on his decision not to dodge this, leaving Xena helpless.

After sending her away, Leylin returned to the training room alone, looking deep in thought.

‘Cyric’s counterattack is later than I expected…’ The presence of a legendary meant nothing to Leylin. After all, Tiff had become a legendary long ago, and he’d personally led a team to kill a legendary dragon. Normal legendaries did not terrify him at all.

“However, I can’t disclose Tiff’s identity or transfer him here. This makes things complicated…” Leylin stroked his chin, eyes brightening, “I should use this opportunity and try that…”

“Tower genie!”

“Master!” The female form of the tower genie emerged, bright eyes full of anticipation.

“Seal the place off. Nobody is to bother me for now, not even Ernest. Is that understood?”

“Yes!” The tower genie’s primary objective was to carry out Leylin’s orders. She obviously had no objections to this. With
Leylin’s will, the apprentices and even Ernest were moved out of the tower, emptying it out.

“Sigh… I don’t know if this kid can do it…” Ernest naturally knew something only higher-ups did here. While things were calm in Port Venus, he could tell that this was the calm before a storm.

The pressure that a legendary could cause was far too immense. Leylin’s operation was thus misunderstood to be a dangerous action to raise his strength quickly. Ernest was naturally worried. He definitely knew how intelligent his student was. There were a few materials to raise strength quickly in the research of ancient wizards. However, there was a steep price to pay.

“I hope he doesn’t go too far…” Ernest had a helpless smile on his lips. Ever since Leylin reached adulthood, he could no longer persuade Leylin even as his master.

While he was still Leylin’s teacher in name, Ernest knew that there was nothing he had taught Leylin other than foundational skills. Yet, he had obtained even more than he’d given.

“I believe in him. Sometimes, he’s someone who can create miracles!” Ernest kept encouraging himself, “It’ll be fine! It’ll definitely be fine…”

Meanwhile, the wizard who Ernest was worried about was not conducting any taboo experiments within the tower. However, in some sense the method Leylin was using to gain strength was more dangerous than the methods of ancient wizards.

“There aren’t any living beings in the tower any more. I don’t have to worry about my secret being discovered or leaked… begin!”

*Whoosh!* A layer of dark red patterns appeared on Leylin’s skin. He swelled strangely, and broke through his casual clothes in an instant. His forehead also split vertically to reveal the third eye.

Nightmare form! Leylin was now demonstrating the Nightmare King’s Nightmare Absorbing Body.

“Absorb the wandering emotional force…” The vertical eye on
Leylin’s forehead opened slightly, emitting red light that broke through space to connect to all emotions related to him. It was like a spider web.

Reverence, fear, love, hatred…
Dense emotional force was originally formless and therefore useless. However, the vertical eye turned it into a dark red fog that was then devoured by the Nightmare Absorbing Body. This force was intensified, and the blood-red runes on his body grew more dazzling.

“In essence, faith is just extremely dense emotion. It contains energy dispelled from soul undulations. The Nightmare Absorbing Body is terrifying. As long as it has to do with the host body, any emotional force, no matter how meagre, can be used…”

Leylin’s eyes were now completely blood red, and a large serpent appeared behind him. This was the Targaryen, big as the world, with black scales, devilish wings, terrifying claws, and a single horn at the top of its head.

“Hss!” The Targaryen had now transformed slightly. Traces of dark red fog shrouded its body, causing its scales to begin turning dark red.

A strange vertical eye appeared between the two snake eyes, splitting open.

“Ahh… Devouring power, erupt!” With Leylin’s control, the power of devouring and dreamforce worked together flawlessly. The Nightmare Absorbing Body took in the vast jumble of emotional force, and Devour transformed it into the purest energy.

After who knew how long, the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded, like the sweetest melody he had ever heard. [Beep! Energy reserves at 100%, sending to main body…]

A warm surge spread throughout his body, extending to his very soul. The sound of a crystal shattering sounded, and Leylin sensed his soul go through another evolution. His very essence was
baptised.
Beep! Spirit+1.] The A.I. Chip sent another prompt as many stats began to change.

[Beep! Host’s arcanist ranking has advanced. Host is now a rank 20 arcanist! Arcane Energy +10.]

[Beep! Host has advanced to rank 20. Spell slots obtained: Rank 9(1), Rank 8(1), Rank 7(1).] [Beep! Host’s stats have changed.]


‘I’m finally rank 20. All that’s left is becoming legendary.’ Leylin shut his eyes. He felt an enormous wall blocking him at this moment, the boundary of the legendary realm.

As a non-religious Professional, he would enter the legendary realm at rank 21. This was the greatest power in the central continent, giving one the ability to determine the state of any region and absorb divinity itself.

‘I still have one rank left to become a legendary… If I wasn’t
worried about the contamination from the power of emotions, I could use the law of devouring to absorb most of the energy. Perhaps it would’ve been possible to become a legendary directly...’

Although he thought this, Leylin did not have the slightest regret. The foundation was the most important thing. A lot of emphasis was placed on one’s foundation in the legendary realm, and Leylin did not want to advance without caution. It could lead to detours in his future path.

[Beep! Nightmare Absorption abilities have been activated! Host has obtained a bloodline ability— Dream Eater!] The A.I. Chip sent yet another prompt.

“Is this the bloodline magic ability by any chance? With Nightmare Absorption’s power, the power of this magic technique should be incredibly terrifying, shouldn’t it?” Leylin muttered to himself irresolutely. He could be said to be an expert in exploring bloodline magic and putting it to use.

Once the abilities of a Warlock were combined with the power of this ancient bloodline, the results would be sure to surprise him.

“Bloodline ability— Dream Eater!” Leylin looked at the A.I. Chip’s window on the skill, and discovered nothing besides the name.

‘Even the A.I. Chip has no records of it in the database. Seems like it’s an entirely new magic ability. I can only rely on myself to explore it and perfect it...’

......

Soros the Cadaver Collector was an expert wanted by the church of justice. His extensive criminal record was difficult to chronicle; he’d even massacred an entire town before. However, the man himself was someone who’d always been shrouded in a dark robe. Nobody knew that under this cloak, the church of murder’s
legendary ‘honorary executioner’ was a boy with a warm and sunny aura.
“Many thanks, Uncle Newman!” Soros slid down from an ox cart piled high with foraged grass, thanking the old man in front of him. “Ah, it’s nothing much. No one would reject a polite and obedient child like you a ride. Is this your destination, young fellow?” The driver of the cart was a wizened old man. His arms were lean muscle, beaten by the weather. His face was wreathed in a carefree smile, revealing his sparse teeth. He had a scattered beard that looked like iron wool.
“Mm! I want to go to Port Venus, I heard it is the most prosperous port in the outer seas,” The tall youth’s expression was a little bashful, but his eyes were filled with determination, “I want to earn money there, and then I can… Oh! This is my gift for letting me take your cart.”
Looking at the pretty little shell in the youth’s hand, the old man’s smile bloomed even more happily, “Haha! Well work hard, youngster. I wish you the best!”
‘The spiritual influence of despair held within that shell, I wonder how long it’ll take to kill him off?’ After leaving the cart, Soros lowered his head. His eyes held a trace of darkness as he laughed demonically.
If that old man saw how he looked now, he definitely wouldn’t have let Soros hitchhike on his cart.
“I still need to keep this identity a secret… Such a pity,” Soros licked his lips. When he lifted his head again, his expression had already changed into that docile and harmless smile he had shown before. His youthful appearance easily gave others a favourable impression.
“Big Sis, could you please give me…” Soros chose a random inn to stay in. His words caused the middle-aged woman who was the proprietor of the inn to light up brightly. The village woman gave
him a room for half the price. Soros’ face only darkened after he entered the room and made sure he was alone. “Damn it, that disgusting hog had actually dared to provoke me… If not for this mission… Oh right!” The tall boy clasped his hands, “After this mission ends, I’ll give this town a bloodbath. It seems that our revered god likes sacrificial rites like this anyway… Hehe…” As a legendary, and a criminal wanted by many of the good churches, Soros knew how much his identity weighed on their minds. Powerful beings definitely had their own set of perverse fetishes, and Soros’ was to put on an innocent image and wait for the very last moment to reveal his true self. He would watch as his target broke down. He felt more twisted joy from this sorrow than any divine grace could give him. Of course, Soros himself would not explicitly admit this point.

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Soros moved towards Port Venus the next day, having gotten ample rest. He headed for Leylin’s wizard tower. ‘This defense system is well thought out. The detection spell formations are activated constantly… Something like this is pretty good for a place like the outer seas.’ A look of pity flashed across Soros’ face. ‘Leylin is extremely wary, he’d see through any disguise straight away. Well, it isn’t a big deal. I have many other skills, and this will be a good time to test them out.’ Sudden Strike! Soros’ body floated up into the sky, and an illusory gold claw struck the wizard tower. Red alarms flashed immediately. “Warning! Detected energy waves with legendary power. Tower has taken 35.99% damage!”
“Found it! So it was here all along?” Soros’ pupils contracted as he merged into the shadows. He followed the energy pathways of the tower, and arrived at a laboratory before he emerged once more. This place was likely where the core of the tower resided, and he looked at the frightened noble wizard in front of him.

“Le… Legendary! You are waging a holy war…” The young wizard seemed to be frightened silly, and his teeth clacked when he spoke. “Only a legendary-ranked wizard tower could hold me back!” Soros’ face was full of mockery, the same way a golden lion would look at a rabbit. As if in accompaniment to Soros’ voice, the tower genie gave off a high-pitched tone, “Intruder alert! Current location: Core Laboratory. Deploying magic gargoyles… bzzt!”

Soros made a slicing motion with his finger, cutting the image of the tower genie into pieces.

“You don’t have to take out these toy gargoyles…”

*Bang!* He immediately turned into countless black figures, and the gargoyles that surged from the defense mechanism were all destroyed, with no life left in them.

“Tower core 87.99% destroyed, operations ceased!” At this point, the tower genie could not even muster a hologram of itself. Only its voice rang out, as if coming from an old gramophone.

“How… how is this possible?” The young wizard’s legs buckled as he sat on the floor, staring listlessly at the ceiling, “But I’d spent…” “This place is just like a backyard for someone in the legendary realm.”

Soros enjoyed the process of toying with his prey. The young wizard cried out, his eyes bloodshot as if he was a gambler who had lost everything. “No! I still have…”

*Roar!* The young wizard’s robes tore apart into pieces, releasing a mighty draconic aura. He’d become half-dragon, and his skin was topped by scales. He spewed flames from his mouth, destroying all
the glass apparatus in the laboratory.
“A half-dragon? The bloodline of a dragon species? This is your trump card?” Soros’ brows furrowed, before he released his own aura. The air in the vicinity was blasted away, giving rise to a vacuum. “What a pity, everything you do is in vain. The only thing left for you is death…”

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“But Rumble!” The mighty tower collapsed, sending smoke and dust billowed high up into the sky. Soros walked out of the rubble, carrying a freshly severed head that still had blood trickling down it. The draconic scales faded, revealing the pale visage of the late wizard. His eyes no longer had any trace of life, glazed like that of a dead fish.
“Something seems off…” Soros raised his right hand as he stared into the aggrieved eyes of the incapacitated young wizard. Still, his sense of touch and various detection techniques confirmed that he was already dead. However, even Soros had to admit that this wizard was extremely talented. He’d become a near-legendary at such a young age, possessing a powerful dragon bloodline. His battle might was already greater than that of some rank 20s.

“You were a genius… It’s a pity, mortals should never provoke god…” Soros seemed to lament in pity as he gently closed the eyes of the wizard.

At this moment, multiple figures from Port Venus had already discovered that something was amiss. They ran over, while some high-ranking priests chose to fly there directly.

“The Goddess of Wealth’s church huh…” Soros shook his head in disdain, but did not choose to engage. He disappeared without a trace.

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Within the God of Murder’s church, the bishop looked at Soros with a pleased smile, “Well done, my child. Now, let us offer this sinner’s head to our revered god…”

*Buzz!* Cyric’s statue let out a loud rumble once it received the
sacrifice, golden divine force rippling out into the air. The sculpture soon seemed to come to life, taking the shape of a man with a wicked face.

“Worshipper Soros, you’ve done well. You shall get the rewards you deserve!” The voice of his god’s incarnation was extremely deep and magnetic. Soros felt an immense amount of divine force descend on his head as it sounded.

“This…This is divine grace! And of the highest grade!” The bishop cried out hoarsely from the side. Seeing the traces of dark gold light falling on Soros’ head, he couldn’t maintain a neutral expression any more. The ancient scripture detailing the sacrificial rite fell to the ground.

“And divinity too?”

“Are you questioning our revered Lord’s decision?” Accepting copious amounts of divine force and divinity, Soros now looked like a golden statue. Lightning occasionally streaked within his eyes. The benefits he had observed this time was extremely huge. The God of Murder had actually raised him by a rank and even granted him divinity!

“No, I wouldn’t dare. Our god has chosen you, and you shall be his emissary on the continent!” A trace of fear arose in the bishop’s eyes, but his reply was still clear and distinct.

The foremost authority in any church was the god themselves. Directly under them would be the Bishop or Chosen, and from one standpoint Soros’ status was now equal to that of the the bishop. The difference between the two was merely the amount of divine grace they had!

“Haha…” Being able to look at his former superior squarely in the face, Soros laughed in a carefree manner, forgetting the uneasiness that he had felt despite finishing the mission. He disappeared into the void without a trace, and a single vertical eye appeared.
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30 years later, Soros slammed an old wizard into the ground as he laughed, “Haha, Madrid, you have never believed that you would land in my hands one day huh!”
“No…This is not possible. Why are you this strong? Your progression is too fast!” Madrid’s body was littered with injuries, and his voice was barely audible.
“This is all the grace of the god!” Soros grabbed the collar of this wizard, “Back then you were stronger than me in every way, and even managed to become a legendary and steal Vanessa’s heart. But now, you’re as weak as a dog…”
“Kill me… Kill me…” The helpless wizard mumbled.
“I won’t you off this easily! You’ll be repaid the suffering and anguish I felt all these years…” Soros carried the wizard away. The vertical eye appeared once more, forming a crack in the void to reveal crimson light...

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200 year later, in the church of the God of Murder.
“Cough cough…” The lord bishop looked at the dagger lodged in his chest, and the high ranking officials across him. He turned his head around in disbelief, and saw the sinister look on Soros’ face.
“You…you actually…”
“Old fool, the cardinals and the honour guard have chosen to abandon and betray you. You’re past your time now!” Soros’ smile was even more malevolent than before.
“Our god… Will never forgive…” The bishop clenched these last words out of his teeth before his body combusted.
An immense conscient descended to the planet, “Soros!”
“My Lord, you are the emissary of death, the supreme amongst the stars…” Soros knelt onto the ground.
“You have successfully conspired to kill the previous bishop. Well done! I hereby appoint you the next bishop of my church!”
“I will dedicate my life to walking the path you’ve chosen. I shall throw the entire continent into chaos and conduct many massacres…” Soros affirmed, his eyes turning slightly bloodshot. The vertical eye behind him was now more than half open, yet nobody could discover its presence.

……

Time trickled by, and the church of murder grew under Soros’ charge, spreading across the World of Gods. Soros himself had managed to ascent to godhood, becoming a lesser god under Cyric. Several thousand years later, he grew increasingly dissatisfied with Cyric. He waged a holy war, managing to defeat and absorb his former master, becoming the Greater God of Murder, Massacre, and Death.
Soros continued these wars after, building a system of faith where he was the one and only deity. Finally, he usurped the Overgod’s throne. He now sat on the highest pedestal of the World of Gods’ divine hall, his gaze passing across the rivers of time and into eternity.
At this moment, the vertical eye behind him fully opened its eyes!
“Hmm? Who is it?” Soros felt an immediate threat to his life. It was a warning that came from the depths of his soul, a feeling that this attacker could consign him to eternal damnation.
“Why is there someone else in the highest of realms, is there something that can transcend the entire world?” The throne split into half as Soros turned around with a look of disbelief.
At this moment, the giant vertical eye was omnipotent, its gaze
crystal clear, as if nothing in the world could escape its eyes. A trace of crimson mist appeared, gnawing at the corners of the World of Gods.

Soros felt his hair stand on end once he saw this vertical eye. It was like this eye had been observing his every moment in life.

“What are you? A devil?” This feeling of being pried on caused immense fury to arise in this sovereign.

“Hah!” Divine force gathered in Soros’ hands, turning into a purple lightning that could split the world in half. This lightning formed a spear that landed in his grasp.

The spear was thrown, and it tore the void apart as it moved, carrying the various blessings of the gods.

*Boom!* An attack which could annihilate gods struck the vertical eye, yet not a single sound was produced. It was as if a speck of dust had come into contact with a rock, dissipating just like that.

“How...is this possible? I am the sovereign! The world origin force is at my fingertips!” Soros staggered backwards, the fear in his heart growing stronger.

“I’ve seen the creation and annihilation of the world, the rise and fall of many tribes. Only the foolishness of mortals is eternal in the rivers of time!” The information struck Soros at the deepest part of his soul, and he understood the underlying meaning within.

“A mortal? How can I be a mortal...” Soros let out a hollow laughter, before his face contorted. He discovered that he had turned a mortal, mere flesh and blood. This feeling of falling from heaven caused him to suffer a mental breakdown.

However, the vertical eye did not give him any chances for a mental recovery. It opened up and gazed at Soros.

*Rumble!* The whole world was devoured by the red vertical pupil, and Soros was but a struggling speck of dust, screaming in anguish before finally disappearing into the pupil of the eye.
In the room of an inn, Soros’ sleeping head was sharply twisted to one side. He was dead.
Leylin rubbed his temples outside the inn, seemingly exhausted. “The power of this Dream Eater spell is really terrifying. To construct a complex world, even if it’s fake, is just too difficult for me right now…”
“But it was all worth it…” Leylin’s face could not help but change at the pleasure of devouring Soros’ entire dream. This ability to devour dreams also allowed him to absorb the target’s memories, experiences, and even more. It caused him to feel full from the essence of his very soul, and Leylin knew that he had fulfilled all conditions to become legendary. He only needed to digest what he’d absorbed.
“If not for using Dreamscape Vision and entering Soros’ dream, I might not have had it this easy… It seems that the best way to use this Dream Eater skill is to first lure the enemy into a dream and combine with a spell. Distract Dream could do it…”
Having acquired what he wanted, Leylin disappeared from the inn without a trace. The outer seas basically belonged to the Faulens right now, and although it wasn’t easy to conquer the entire territory, the pirate forces would pave the way for them to expand their territory.
Leylin had sorted the information to identify suspicious activity and targets. He would personally confirm it all with his eyes.
Soros had just been unlucky this time, like a beautiful butterfly having flown into an intricate spider web. Caught by Leylin’s Dreamscape Vision, all attempts to conceal himself were to no avail.
The tranquility of dawn was broken by an ear-piercing scream. With two buckets by her side, the innkeeper looked at a lifeless youth on the bed. This boy, who’d made her heart flutter yesterday, had now lost all traces of life. “No external injuries nor any traces of spells. His identity certificate is forged…” The public security officer felt a headache coming on as he hurried over to inspect the scene. His many years of experience had told him that this case was going to be very troublesome.

“Can it be some acute illness?” The public security officer spoke in an imposing manner to mask the nervousness that he felt. “Find a priest to come and pray over him, then send the corpse to the burial mound…” Seeing this officer unwilling to let things get out of hand, the plump lady didn’t hesitate to agree. They downplayed this death through various procedures, and finally invited someone to bless the burial. However, this person wasn’t an official priest. It was an acolyte handling the menial tasks of a church.

The acolyte did not even have the cultivation to cast a rank 1 holy spell, let alone find out what was wrong with Soros’ corpse. After a quick blessing, he let the the men in charge of burying the corpse carry it away.

The one in charge of burying the legendary-ranked Soros’ corpse was a filthy, skinny, middle-aged white man who reeked of alcohol.
His blackened teeth carried a putrid odour, and he thoroughly searched through the corpse once he was outside the city. He was looking for little valuables that the corrupt official hadn’t discovered.

“Hehehe… What a fair skinned boy. A pity that the officer already squirreled away his purse and other things…” Soros’ corpse had been stripped even of its shoes. Every inch of his body that could have contained gold was looked at by this man. Soros was a legendary however, and his priceless bag of holding, spatial ring, magic artifacts, and other items had been taken away by Leylin. The officer had grabbed the gold that was left, leaving nothing for this man to take.

However, just the set of clothes and shoes alone was enough to satisfy him.

“Hehe… This kiddo is rather rich. All these clothes are worth at least 30 bronze pieces. I can visit Mary once or go to the pub and drink all night…” The man looked at the stark naked corpse, nodding his head in satisfaction.

“Since you’ve given me this much, I’ll dig your grave bigger than the rest.”

“This is the outcome of a legendary like Soros, huh? What a sorrowful scene!” A sinister voice mocked throughout the surroundings, scaring the man away. “Who, who is there?”

*Zip!* An icy blade flashed, and the man dropped to the floor with blood gushing from his body.

“A legendary who was among the top ten experts of the church couldn’t even escape death…” The void warped as a the figure of a high-ranked thief appeared. He masterfully picked up Soros’ corpse, and the expression on his face grew darker.

“No… this isn’t right! How can his body only be as resilient as a regular human’s? He was a legendary!” The high-ranked thief cried out, “If not for the top secret information I received from our
bishop, I would have treated him as a regular human as well!”
“What’s more… The most important thing is that the soul has disappeared completely… Such ruthless measures…” The pupils of the thief narrowed, and he felt that a terrifying presence was in the vicinity. He did not dare tarry longer, and immediately vanished with Soros’ corpse.
He was only a high-ranked thief in the church, nowhere close to being legendary. If even Soros had died here, wiping him off the face of the earth wouldn’t be a major issue either. The thief knew this clearly, and there was no way he would stay another moment.

……

Church of Cyric, within the gloomy valley.
The bishop had received this news as well.
“I have already contacted our god. It seems like Soros’ soul did not enter his divine realm, instead vanishing mysteriously.”
“Was it some sort of confinement spell?” A high ranked thief chimed in from the side.
“No, not confinement. It’s completely missing! Even… Even our god’s imprint had completely vanished…” The bishop grew extremely solemn. Legendaries were the foundation of a church, yet one of theirs had died just like that. It was an enormous blow even to an organisation like theirs.
Furthermore, the ability to wipe out a legendary without a trace left the others extremely uneasy. The bishop closed his eyes and pondered before speaking in an icy tone, “Find out everything for me! Everything!”
“Yes!” The thief bowed respectfully and left to pass on the orders.
Although there was no evidence, he was very clear in his heart that all of this was linked to Soros’ primary target, the noble wizard of Faulen Island.
‘An expert who managed to kill a legendary! Having me investigate this monster… Aren’t you asking me to go and die?’ The high-ranked thief lamented to himself, ‘Luckily this is just an investigation mission. It looks like even the Lord Bishop himself won’t carelessly go against this person…’

“Faulen Island’s Leylin?” The high-ranked thief had a premonition that this wizard was the man of the moment in the World of Gods. No! Having showcased this power, this wizard was now a powerful player who could shake the entire continent!

……

Leylin did not pay the slightest attention to these conjectures and the dark clouds looming in his future. After he quietly murdered Soros, he peacefully returned to the wizard tower without alerting a single person.

What was truly terrifying was the unknown. If he revealed his ability to kill legendaries, it could lead to excessive fear of him. He needed to slowly digest the power he had devoured.

“The Dream Eater ability is truly the most terrifying bloodline power. The bloodline abilities it gives are also extremely demonic and powerful…” Leylin sighed.

He was a rank 20 wizard, while Soros was a legendary expert. Using an analogy in the Magus World, it was like a Crystal Phase Magus squaring off against a Morning Star. The gap between the two was as wide as that between heaven and earth.

And still, the Dream Eater ability acquired through his bloodline had allowed Leylin to kill Soros easily. Nothing as insane as this had ever happened even in the ancient times.

The barrier between ranks 3 and 4 was one of a qualitative change from spiritual force to soul force. Even an army of rank 3s would be slaughtered by a Morning Star, yet Leylin had managed to win
across this gap!
“A.I. Chip!” Leylin commanded. The A.I. Chip had already collated all the previously collected data, and it displayed the information on this bloodline ability.
[Nightmare Absorption bloodline ability: Dream Eater: Allows host to infiltrate the target’s dream world, constructing an illusion and causing their truesoul to degenerate. The host can then devour the target’s dream world and absorb everything. Warning: If the target’s soul force is too powerful, or they see through the dream world, it may injure the host in an unpredictable manner! As the host’s bloodline concentration is limited, it can only be used once every 10 days.]
“So it’s a battle between souls using an illusory technique. However, with my main body’s experiences perhaps nobody except a god coming in person can best me in that regard…” Leylin had a premonition that this bloodline ability would be his most important hidden killer move.
“Besides, using Dream Eater to devour energy seems to be even more effective than before. I can gain everything that belonged to my opponent, and even walk down their path to power once for myself. The benefits from that will be immeasurable…” Leylin felt that he seemed to have found the reason why that Nightmare King was incomparably powerful.
The legendary body of Soros the Cadaver Collector comprised of all his experiences as an honorary executioner. Leylin had effortlessly obtained all of this, and all that had been left was a decaying corpse.
After devouring the soul of a legendary and obtaining all his experiences, Leylin had reached the threshold of the legendary realm.
“Ascending to become a legendary! Refining my power is the first step, and the next is to cultivate my spiritual conscient and
construct an inner circulatory system... I have already fulfilled all of these criteria.” Leylin’s eyes flashed brightly. His aura began to dampen as he entered deep meditation.

Just at this moment, a visitor had arrived at Faulen Island. “Lord Jeffries!” Xena, the Gold Priest of Waukeen’s church, bowed deeply with respect at a middle-aged man. “My lord has travelled a long way. I have already prepared accommodations and everything else, I entreat my lord to…” Xena’s voice was humble as she spoke. This person was Jeffries, the Spear Crusader! He was a legendary expert of the church of wealth, and his status and reputation was far above that of a Gold Priest like her.

“There is no need of that for now. I didn’t come here to seek pleasure. You had better hurry and take me to see that wizard. It’s difficult to protect a person being targeted by the Cadaver Collector…” Jeffries the Spear Crusader had a head of long silver hair, an aquiline nose, and thick lips. He gave off a resilient and ascetic aura, and his eagle-like eyes revealed the endless turmoil within him.

Although he did not intentionally release his aura, the elemental energy particles in the surroundings continuously swirled around him. This was a legendary, the goal of all Professionals in the prime material plane!
U nderstood. I’ll have it done immediately!” Xena lowered her head to show respect, while she sighed on the inside. ‘They’ve even sent this lord over. Looks like the church thinks very highly of Baron Leylin…’ She could tell the favour the church had for this baron. After all, he’d created two great sources of revenue and improved their methods of detecting demons and devils. She hadn’t had much hope with her proposal, but the fact that they’d immediately sent over the legendary Spear Crusader showed his value! ‘It’s not just his talent, but also the possibility of him becoming a legendary.’ Only a future legendary was worthy of the church’s investment. Thinking of this, Xena couldn’t help but envy Leylin. “I heard that he’s created many magic items to detect devils, and even our church can’t make sense of them. That wizard has left us all pleasant surprised…” While he was annoyed at being dispatched so urgently to deal with an ordinary human, Jeffries was rather curious about this young wizard. “He’s really a rather interesting person…” Xena could only continue speaking as Jeffries asked questions, but she soon discovered a strange expression on his face. “What’s wrong, my lord?” “These undulations? Perhaps…” Jeffries stared at the hill outside Port Venus, focusing on the wizard tower that stood tall and grim. “Where is this Leylin right now?” he suddenly asked.
“He’s inside the tower. I heard he’s been conducting some important research. This child really doesn’t know his priorities…” Xena spoke without thinking. After which, she was stunned to find that Jeffries was hurrying towards the tower, “Wa- Wait! My lord, are you planning to meet the wizard right now? At the very least, you should…” Jeffries seemed to have no plans of listening to her. He only proceeded forward, looking to be in disbelief.

“His expression… Did something happen at the wizard tower?” Xena seemed confused, and she glanced at the tower in the distance.

……

At this very moment, Leylin was indeed experiencing a transformation within the wizard tower. Normal Professionals on the continent entered the legendary realm at rank 21. This involved a refining of strength, and it was as difficult as it was for rank 3 Magi to advance to Morning Star. It was a sort of qualitative change, an upgrade to the very soul. Having experienced this once before, and with Soros’ own experiences of advancing this stage wouldn’t pose any difficulty to him. The A.I. Chip was working furiously, and large amounts of data flashed by Leylin’s eyes to form a few prompts.

[Beep! Arcane spell network construct completed. Host’s internal cyclic foundation constructed.] [Beep! Host’s spiritual force has reached the limit, breaking through and solidifying. Host is advancing to the legendary realm!]

At this moment, Leylin felt his soul and the Weave growing chaotic. It felt as if his soul was being attacked by the Weave.

‘If I was an ordinary wizard, it would be exceedingly difficult for me to advance under such circumstances. Thankfully, I have long
since become an arcanist, so my relationship with the Weave isn’t as close as it was before…’ Leylin manipulated his spiritual force with his powerful will, allowing everything to progress steadily. Finally, under immense pressure from the outside world, the misty spiritual force in his sea of consciousness abruptly gathered at the centre, forming a rainbow-coloured crystal. It felt as if some invisible bottleneck had exploded, and Leylin’s entire soul seemed to be soaked in a hot spring. It left him feeling very comfortable.

[Beep! Host’s spiritual force has experienced a qualitative change. Spirit +1.] The A.I. Chip prompted.

[Host has advanced to rank 21 and has become a legendary.] A huge shock seemed to impact Leylin’s very soul, to the point that he grew slightly absent-minded.

[Beep! Host has become a legendary arcanist, and has broken through the outer Weave. Contact with the inner Weave initiated.] Leylin’s spiritual force broke through some restraints at that moment, moving past the surface levels of the Weave into a deeper domain.

“Is this… the inner Weave?” From his broad perspective, Leylin could see that the Weave was a network that surrounded the World of Gods. It had layers like an electrical network, and he’d gotten access to a golden network within. This was a channel for divine spells, numerous instances of which descended from their respective divine realms like stars. They were sent down in exchange for faith.

‘With control over the inner Weave, the gods treat it as a channel for divine spells?’ Leylin immediately thought back to the arcanist records, ‘Some arcanists who break through the restrictions of the Weave attempted to steal divine spell slots from priests. This remote power system, the profaning of priests. While this caused discontent and a death sentence from the gods and churches, arcanists were poorly regarded to begin with. One more issue
meant nothing…”
The benefits of breaking past the outer Weave weren’t limited to being able to observe and channel divine spells. Leylin could now cast legendary spells.
Leylin was already as strong as the legendary arcanists of the Netheril Empire. Once he grew familiar with and recorded down the legendary arcane spells he had, even gods’ avatars wouldn’t be able to frighten him.
The A.I. Chip continued to flash its prompts..
[Beep! Advancing to the legendary realm has strengthened feats. Sturdy has become Legendary Sturdiness. Erudite has become Scholarly.]
[Beep! Host has obtained legendary specialty: Origin Force Detection, replacing Arcane Energy Detection.]
More information about the feats and specialty was shown below.
[Legendary Sturdiness: Rigorous tempering and advancement has rendered your body comparable to that of a legendary beast. Regeneration has been strengthened.]
[Scholarly: Having accumulated a tremendous amount of knowledge, including many secret inheritances, you have explored many of the secrets of the World of Gods. Appraisal has reached the maximum level, allowing you to appraise any material from the World of Gods.]
[Origin Force Detection: Legendary arcanists were not satisfied with casting spells using elemental energy. They set their sights on the deeper secrets of the world, discovering the existence of the world origin force. They named it origin energy and tried to control it, engendering the ire of the gods with their deep research.]
“Origin Force Detection? Making use of the origin force? This is something only beings who have comprehended laws can do…” Leylin sensed the majestic origin force sea of the World of Gods, feeling slightly disconcerted.
The Magus World only gave him an opportunity to absorb origin force once every century as a near rank 7. And this was after he made a compromise with other beings of laws. It was evident how precious world origin force was. No wonder the gods eliminated the arcanists, they were trying to steal their ‘meat’.

“Even if I can use it, I definitely can’t make it obvious, or the gods won’t let me off…” A legendary wizard with research into arcane spells wasn’t much. However, one who could make use of the world origin force would definitely force the gods to act and crush him.

Leylin felt that there was an increasing number of secrets he possessed. Revealing any one of them would leave him consigned to eternal damnation.

“In any case, I already have a lot to worry about. What’s one more? Let it be!” Leylin easily came to terms with this.

[Beep! Host’s stats have been refreshed. Stat box refreshing.]

The A.I. Chip projected a 3D image of Leylin, the numbers having gone through some changes.

[**Leylin Faulen. Race: Human, Legendary Rank 21 Arcanist.**  

[Analysis of Weave: Level 0 100%, Level 1 100%, Level 2 100%, Level 3 100%, Level 4 100%, Level 5 100%, Level 6 100%, Level 7 97.83%, Level 8 66.56%, Level 9 34.55%.]

[Spell slots possessed: Rank 9 (3), Rank 8 (5), rank 7 (7), rank 6 (??), rank 5(??), rank 4 (??), rank 3 (??), rank 2 (??), rank 1 (??), rank 0 (??)]

“Hah… It’s been over twenty years since my soul split and entered the World of Gods. Am I finally at the peak of the mortal world?” Sensing the boundless strength within his body, Leylin sighed in
relief.
He had finally reached the domain of a legendary! This was not just the peak strength that a mortal could achieve, but the beginning of an exemplary road!
In order to digest divinity, ignite godfire, and become a god, being a legendary was a definite prerequisite.
In addition, after becoming a legendary, the chance of dying was small as long as he was not too reckless, since the gods could not send their main bodies down.
Now that his safety was covered, Leylin focused on something else. “Now, I need to obtain as much divinity as possible and digest it, and then ignite my godfire before becoming a god. I’ll then get my main body to descend… Yes! Only about a year is left till the floating city appears. I could try to obtain it…”
Leylin’s movements were never hindered by anything. What he pursued was only truth and eternity! Everything else was like passing clouds to him.
already contacted him via magic. He should come out immediately…” Xena stood behind Jeffries, looking puzzled, “With my lord’s status, is there a need to stand on ceremony?”

However, Jeffries had no intentions of explaining himself. On the contrary, he stood even taller, like a pike that could pierce through the heavens, eyes fixed on the main entrance of the wizard tower.

“He’s here!” Jeffries exclaimed softly.

*Rumble!* The main entrance opened to reveal Leylin, looking apologetic in his golden-purple wizard robes, “I never thought Lord Jeffries would come himself…”

‘Hmm? Why does it feel like Leylin has changed…’ Xena sized up the young wizard in front of her, bewildered. While he looked just as young and handsome as before, she had a feeling that he had undergone a huge transformation.

‘It’s his aura! He’s giving me the feeling of being on equal terms with Lord Jeffries… How is that possible, when Jeffries is a legendary? Oh!’ Xena seemed to think of something, and then vigorously shook her head, as if trying to shake the thought out of her mind. ‘What am I thinking? How is this possible?’

“Indeed, my Lord. You have entered the realm of legendary.” The moment Jeffries said this, the entire group broke out in a ruckus.

“So… So he’s really entered the legendary realm. How long has it been since we last met?” Xena covered her little mouth, looking
stunned. She wasn’t the only one to forget herself in the moment, the others began to create a disturbance as well. This was a legendary wizard! The Faulen Family would now shake the outer seas!

Legendaries held peak strength in the World of Gods. They could influence the change of rulership, and were even more important to a kingdom than the king. A kingdom without protection from a legendary could not last long.

“Although I did sense the energy from your breakthrough, I never thought it would be you. Your age, it’s…” Jeffries smiled wryly, “… Actually, even us old folks find it hard to believe…”

“Age!” It was only at this moment that Xena and the others reacted, “Right, Lord Leylin is not even 25 yet! Gods! A 25 year-old legendary, and a wizard at that! It’s the hardest profession to advance in!”

There was too much shocking news, and the entire area turned mute, as if everyone had been shocked stupid by Leylin’s miracle.

“Heavens… Gods… this…” Xena now had no idea how to describe Leylin’s aptitude, ‘I’m very sure that he must be some miracle in the wizarding world! He’ll definitely be written down in the records for eternity, and his achievements will be narrated to our later generations…’

“I was just lucky!” Leylin had a good-natured smile on his face. Whatever it was, since the Goddess of Wealth dispatched a legendary to protect him, he definitely had sensed their goodwill.

“Come, let’s go in and discuss this further!” Leylin seemed to only have Jeffries in his sights.

“Let’s go!” Jeffries appeared amiable to someone of similar rank, and Xena and the rest only found this natural. A legendary would only take another of the same level seriously. Similar strength was the prerequisite to associating with one another, this was the law everywhere!
The God of Murder’s church.
An old bishop was reading the information in his hand as he muttered to himself, “Legendary might and also a secret trump card that can kill other legendaries… seems like the rise of the Faulen Family in the outer seas can no longer be stopped…
“Make it known that our men have to be very cautious while investigating! Try not to be discovered by him!”
“Understood, Lord Bishop!” A black-robed priest quickly bowed and left, knowing that they would give up their plans of revenge for now.
There weren’t all that many legendaries even in Cyric’s church. The fall of Soros had already dealt them a huge blow, and before knowing what Leylin had up his sleeve it was not a good idea to take such a risk.
The God of Murder never cared about honour anyway, and he was the best at conspiracies. With enough time, they could definitely bribe someone and break in, finding out all the secrets of this young legendary wizard!

Within the Dambrath Kingdom. The aging king had abandoned his afternoon entertainment for a report from a trusted aide. Hearing what was said, the king went silent for a long while before speaking in a low voice, “So that wizard has already become a legendary?”
“Yes, your majesty! Lord Jeffries of the church of wealth has proof of it.” The person speaking was the king’s trusted aide, as well as the leader of the court wizards.
There was a tartness in this silver-eyed wizard’s smile. He was only a high-ranked wizard himself, and Leylin advancing at such a young age was a huge blow for him.
“You’re a wizard yourself. You should know this best, speak without reservations and I’ll trust in you.” The king rubbed his temples in distress, and then waved his arms.
“Understood, Your Majesty!” The high-ranked wizard thought for a while, and then spoke, “Legendary strength is the peak in the secular world. It can even…”
“I know, I know. Get to the point,” The king answered in annoyance.
“Alright!” The high-ranked wizard took a deep breath.
“Our first priority should be to avoid angering him. Thankfully, our information shows that he has good intentions towards us. He is a court wizard himself, and that status is something Your Majesty granted him… I believe we can also do what Marquis Gold Thornblossom proposed… Actually, a legendary wizard in our kingdom will surely be helpful in our diplomacy…”
“Granting a title?” The king took a deep breath and made his decision, “Then let’s do that. Take care of it for me!”

……

In a city near the north, the God of Justice’s church. A slender knight was piously praying to a god’s statue. Divine force that was bright and full of righteousness rippled about her body, causing the young female knight’s face to glow.
At this moment, a benevolent old priest walked over, “Rafiniya, the church has a mission for you to complete!”
“Grandma Maria!” Rafiniya immediately helped this priest who was so old she would pant with a few steps, “I am also a member of this church. On top of that, you saved my life. If there’s anything I
can do, please tell me!”
“Good…” Maria gave a summary of what had happened at Faulen Island, and then said, “The church wants you to be the envoy. After all, you are friends with him…”
“Leylin? I’ll need to think about it…” Rafiniya bit at her lips.
After the priest left, the image of the young wizard appeared before Rafiniya’s eyes, and all that she had experienced with him appeared vividly in her mind. Sulking after her attempt to get Leylin to help Silverymoon had failed, she’d headed to the battlefield on her own, arriving at the broken city.
Gravely injured in the war, she was saved by the paladins of the God of Justice and accepted their call. She grew faith in the God of Justice, and joined Tyr’s church. Perhaps from the attraction from her very nature, she improved very quickly and was now already a formal paladin!
With her training going well, she’d assumed her past was no longer important. Yet, such a thing was happening now.
“You… You’ve already become a legendary?” Rafiniya muttered to herself, and then recalled the hot-blooded knights that had backed her up at Silverymoon. Their bones had all turned into ash.
“Those that chose to help are mostly dead, while you who chose rationale became a legendary. Are you trying to mock me?” Rafiniya suddenly began to chuckle, the glimmering rays on her body now more distorted than ever.
“God! Please forgive me for my lack of resolution before. I promise to stand by justice, and even death will not make me feel fear!” Rafiniya immediately knelt by the statue and began to pray, looking decisive and cold.
‘Even if you’ve become a legendary, I won’t give up on my dreams and my path. At the end, I’ll definitely prove to you that your decision was wrong! The only things in the world worthy of protection are love and justice!’
As news of Leylin’s advancement spread, an increasing number of envoys from various organisations arrived at Faulen Island, causing Port Venus to be even more prosperous. Along with the envoys came large merchant groups, and all the merchants in the surrounding seas now chose to trade here. After all, the protection of a legendary was a considerable boon in the World of Gods. Ordinary merchants only needed a fair and safe trading environment. This was only possible with enough strength! What was more persuasive to them than a legendary?
The vacant manor on Faulen Island was opened up once to welcome the honoured guests from the continent. Baron Jonas had sent all the manpower he had, but he was still a little undermanned for the guests that were still pouring in. What’s more, guests from the western desert and the northern lands were still on their way to the island. These organisations had to travel far and wide to reach them. Even if they had received the news by magic, the emissaries would reach Faulen Island later than the other guests.

Very soon, the guests had no choice but to seek lodging in the inns of Port Venus, which was a huge opportunity for the merchants here. The prices for various items had increased manifold.

As Baron Jonas scurried around to tend to the guests, he was also suspended in a state of disbelief. Fortunately, butler Leon was around to tend to things, so order could still be maintained.

‘My son has already become a legendary?’ Baron Jonas and his wife felt as if they were on an emotional rollercoaster. While they weren’t at the peak of nobility, they still had a certain understanding towards the power system in the world of gods.

A legendary was a powerful entity that could influence an entire kingdom! Bards would forever sing hymns of their tales, the tales of these beings at the apex of power! Right now, their son Leylin had achieved such an accomplishment too!

Right now, the esteemed guests were also fervently discussing this
youth who had become legendary.
“Hehe… A legendary who has yet to reach the age of 25! Lord Leylin has broken the record in the continent!”
“There are rumours that he is a favoured soul of the Goddess of Wealth, there are no other plausible explanations…."
“A favoured soul can only advance quickly as a cleric, and even that would require a large amount of divine force….” Evidently, this emissary was more privy than the others to the powers of the extraordinary and rankings in the power system. “From my observation, this Leylin must have had some sort of extraordinary talent, which would explain his progress…:”
“Rumour has it that he’s taken up piracy in the past, and he’s even conducted taboo research relating to Netheril!” A voice filled with annoyance and hostility sounded, apparently belonging to someone who treated Leylin as his enemy.
“That’s indeed a problem before one becomes legendary, but almost all legendaries engage in such dark research. To use this to condemn him is just… Also, for his past as a pirate, haven’t you seen that even the Dambrath court’s chief wizard is here?” This deep voice spoke with a very logical stance, which stumped even the hostile emissary.
Only a while later did someone lament, “This is a legendary we’re talking about…” The voice reverberated throughout the room.
Amidst the fervent discussion between the forces, Leylin chose to hole up inside the wizard tower, seldom seen by the public eye. He was draped in comfortable robes within his chambers, his golden hair gently resting on his shoulders.
A dark red light glowed under this golden hair, making him look extremely sinister. Leylin hadn’t taken on the nightmare form completely, but his body was covered in dark red runes. A red line appeared on forehead, radiating a light of dreams.
In this state, he was able to grasp the power of faith and emotions
much easier. Using dreamforce as a catalyst, he could see the actions of each and every person that he chanted his name, their joys and sorrows, and everything else…

After entering the legendary realm, his body and soul had achieved a quintessential upgrade, the beginning of his journey to godhood. A legendary could already sense the faith of any worshippers, and even respond in return. If one was able to amass a following of devout worshippers, they could accumulate faith over a long period of time, progressing in their own strength and giving rise to divinity. They could even ignite their godfire, becoming a demigod. However, the churches all suppressed the worshippers of anyone who hadn’t become a complete god. Forget legendaries, even divine beings and demigods weren’t spared.

This unspoken rule showed Leylin the hostility the gods had towards someone joining their ranks. Unless one could become a god immediately, or had the backing of a powerful god themselves, it was very difficulty for a being from the material plane to attain godhood. This was a perilous path riddled with danger.

The divine hall was now extremely packed, and they did not wish to see any other newcomers joining them.

‘Even without this restriction, legendaries, divine beings and demigods would still find it difficult to compete with the churches of true gods…’ Leylin sighed.

Legendary experts could only vaguely respond to prayers, and divine beings could only respond somewhat more clearly. Demigods could bestow divine spells, but only up to rank 5. Only those true gods who had their divine spark were able to bestow rank 1 to rank 9 divine spells.

The ordinary people of the prime material plane were not fools. It was obvious who they would choose in this competition. The gods had leveraged many restrictions on the powerful mortals, all for the sake of protecting the source of their faith.
‘Although I’m still only a newly advanced legendary, my sensitivity to the power of faith is greater than some weaker gods thanks to Dreamscape Vision. Apart from not being able to bestow divine spells, I’m much different compared than a true god. The most crucial point is that Nightmare Absorption can even absorb the power of emotions. This source of strength is greater than what those true gods have…’ Leylin assessed his strengths and advantages.

A legendary’s response to their followers’ prayers was like that of an old handphone with a bad signal. Nightmare Absorption was like an extra antenna, greatly amplifying Leylin’s sensitivity to the signals he received.

Although the power of emotions was weaker than that of faith, there were more sources of it. The quality may not be equal, but emotions far exceeded faith in quantity. This was too crude and complex for gods to use, but Nightmare Absorption disregarded such things, allowing Leylin to make effective use of that power. It increased Leylin’s probability of ascension more than fivefold.

And indeed, this was what Leylin was looking at now. Having become a legendary, he’d placed his sights on godhood. He could not halt his steps because of a little bit of praise and admiration from those in the secular world. He always had to look up at the stars above.

“To become a true god, one must not lack godfire or divine rank. Godfire is just a transformation of divinity once it has accumulated to a certain level. To attain divine rank, the legendary first has to comprehend laws, combining them with the power of faith from their worshippers…” Leylin already had a great deal of experience in all the aspects required for his ascension to godhood.

‘The faith of their worshippers and the power from their prayers can help gods comprehend laws, allowing them to form a special structure called the divine rank… The laws of the World of Gods
are really quite bizarre…’ Leylin thought. As for the divine spark, it was an emblem of a god’s strength. Only those who had ascended to become a true god could possess this.

A divine realm was also something that only true gods possessed. It was an external plane used to accommodate the souls of their worshippers, and it also served as a hideout for themselves. In their divine realms, gods could wield amazing power. The ancient Magi had not understood this during the last war, and some had even died to that mistake.

‘The divine spark and divine realm aren’t too far off in the future. The most crucial point is to accept some potential worshippers and try to obtain divinity. I can then continue to accumulate worshippers, soon igniting my godfire to become a demigod.

‘I need to select my first worshippers carefully. Their prayers and philosophy will affect my domain and my divine realm. Clerics will be the most important, they help raise gods.’

Leylin began to feel rather vexed as he thought of this point. Although the seas around the Dambrath Kingdom were at his disposal, this was a developing area. There weren’t many cultured and civilised people here.

Beelzebub’s worshippers weren’t even worth thinking about, it wouldn’t be wise to let a group of devils function as priests and clerics. Leylin seriously suspected that those worshipers would pray their way into Beelzebub’s stomach in the end.

One reason Leylin had accepted Beelzebub’s worshippers was that they were an established power. Another was to quickly raise his own strength. After advancing to the legendary realm, he was certain that he could take over Beelzebub’s entire worshiper network, and obtain a secret church whose members could be found all over the continent.

This framework would only nurture clerics the next generation. This was a worrying delay. He’d already put his plans into action
though, having his followers in Dambrath accept orphans and the like, sending them to Viscount Tim for secret training and instruction.
He also had a few plans to migrate people to the outer seas.
‘I need to pay more attention to the race of the worshipers. Although racial gods are very powerful, it’s far too limiting…’
Leylin was inside his secret chambers in the wizard tower, using a portion of his Nightmare Absorbing Physique powers. Many dreamforce runes had appeared along with his vertical eye. This state allowed him to sense the prayers of his worshippers extremely clearly, and also pulled tremendous amounts of energy from their emotions. It then allowed him to absorb it, which served to strengthen him.

It was exceedingly difficult to advance once one entered the legendary realm. However, to Leylin it was like walking a level road. He was enjoying the feeling of constantly gaining strength, and he continued to make his plans for ascending to godhood.

‘It would take too much time to move somewhere else, and spreading faith is a problem as well... While the quality of the worshippers would be high, there’ll be too few of them... It’s better to turn the devil worshippers, and have the natives of the outer seas worship me as well...’

Leylin’s eyes closed, and the blood-red eye between his brows cracked open. He continued to think as dark red patterns covered his body.

Worshippers were a very important resource for a god. They provided an unending amount of faith while alive, and became petitioners in death, similarly continuing to support their god. They could even turn into valiant souls or holy spirits, comparable to
rank 5 and rank 6 Magi!
This was why all gods took good care of their worshippers. The faith of evil gods wasn’t allowed to spread.
There was even a specialised God of Protection known as Helm, and he dealt specifically with these matters. Verifying a true god’s qualifications and deal with belief in false gods were all within the scope of his divine powers.
As the continent was so vast, worshippers of devils and demons could develop in secret. A new legendary like Leylin would not be the target of much attention.
Inside the prime material plane itself, Leylin now had enough status and strength to protect himself. Even so, a few churches could band together, sending high-ranked and legendary Professionals along with an avatar to kill him in mere minutes.
‘I should work in the shadows and be more careful. I can’t arouse suspicions… It’s best that I amass strength quietly and become a true god. I wouldn’t have anything to worry about then…’ While deep in thought, Leylin completed his meditation and absorption of the power of emotions for the day. He transformed back into the youth.
“Master! The Spear Crusader Jeffries has come to visit you. He’s already been waiting outside for half an hour…” the tower genie appeared and reported, “Additionally, the Dambrath Kingdom and church of justice have sent special envoys to you, requesting private meetings.”
“God of Justice?” Leylin frowned. Nobody inclined towards evil had a good opinion of this person. “I haven’t dealt with them often enough… Could they have found out that I killed a paladin before? No, that’s too trivial… Whatever, all will be clear once I meet them…”
With enough might to protect himself, Leylin was no longer as cautious as before. After all, as long as he did not collude with
devils and demons, plot to bring chaos to the continent, or spread his own faith and try to become a god, no large organisations would willingly offend him. However, out of politeness and his status, Leylin still met with Jeffries. “My sincerest apologies! I was stuck in meditation…” Leylin looked apologetic. “Hehe… It’s nothing at all. Only a wizard as meticulous as that can achieve the results you have, Lord Leylin…” Jeffries revealed a sincere smile. Truth be told, he admired Leylin’s hard work. He’d seen many talented geniuses, but never one as disciplined as this wizard. The puppets served a scented tea along with snacks. After some idle conversation, Leylin asked in puzzlement, “I wonder what my lord is here for…” “Oh! Actually…” Jeffries slapped his forehead, looking flustered as if he had only just recalled this. “Legendaries are already at the peak of the mortal world. For this reason, there are a few established rules we need to follow. Since I’m the one who first witnessed your advancement, it’s my duty to explain them.” “Ah, yes.” Leylin nodded. Any world with extreme powers had a concept similar to no first use. If not for that, constant wars would destroy the world no matter how large it was. “I obviously won’t refuse. Do I need to sign some sort of contract?” “No, not at all! They’re just conventions that you need to obey…” Jeffries’ waved his hands while he smiled more warmly. He began to go through the rules one by one, and Leylin listened attentively. “We don’t really have many restrictions. We shouldn’t initiate battles in densely populated areas, collude with devils and demons, spread our own faith privately, and things like that… Also, since you’re a legendary wizard you can’t cast legendary spells or
conduct experiments that could pollute a large area.”
In general, the restrictions weren’t too stringent, but what surprised
him the most was that he didn’t have to sign any magic contract.
‘Then again… These are all restrictions in their own right. No
legendary would be willing to attach such an act to themselves
unless they’re masochistic. Also… the fact that legendary wizards
study material on arcane spells is an open secret…’ Leylin suddenly
understood.
“Cough cough…” Jeffries’ smiling face seemed to be saying ‘good
that you know.’ He continued seriously, “Alright then. Lord Leylin,
I welcome you to to the continent’s alliance of legendaries. We hold
meetings every year, and all new members are welcome to join. It’s
taking place at…”
“I will attend, if time permits.” Leylin still planned to obtain the
floating city, but he didn’t reject Jeffries outright. Having obtained
what he wanted, the Spear Crusader left in delight. Waukeen’s
church had given him a valuable gift as well.
After he left, Leylin then met the special envoy from the Dambrath
Kingdom. This person was supposedly the court’s chief wizard.
This envoy’s ranking meant nothing to Leylin, though, and
thankfully the other party understood this. He was rather courteous,
and did not put on any airs.
At the least, Leylin knew why this court wizard had come here.
First was title. His father Jonas was made a Marquis, and a word
from the king rendered the barren islands around Faulen Island a
part of his fief. In reality, these islands had already come under
Faulen influence, effectively being their land anyway. The king was
just formalising this, but it still made Leylin elated.
Even if these islands made up a tiny area, the sea region that he had
control over far exceeded the lands of any Marquis, the size of half
a kingdom. In actuality, the king had basically given them half of
the outer seas.
Of course, this was his right as a legendary wizard. Leylin’s own title had been upgraded as well. He was now an honorary duke, similar in status to this chief wizard in front of him. While they were indirect, Leylin understood these kind intentions. Leylin chatted with the wizard for a while after he happily accepted it all. It was more like he was giving the court wizard some tips, and when the time came the wizard left reluctant yet satisfied. A legendary wizard’s lessons weren’t an easy thing to come by.

“Tower genie… Send over the envoy from the church of justice.” Leylin had spent most of his time as a legendary training and strengthening himself. He also met with envoys from various organisations, and although it was somewhat annoying he had to do it anyway for the sake of expansion.

Seeing the projection of the tower genie disappearing, Leylin stroked his chin, “Hmm… I should put upgrading the wizard tower in my schedule. There’s so much to do…”

……

Leylin had never had a good impression of the God of Justice’s church. This was obvious from the order of the people he was meeting. However, the envoy left Leylin slightly surprised.

“Long time no see, wizard Leylin!” A female knight bowed politely, “On behalf of the God of Justice’s church, I sincerely congratulate Lord Leylin on your advancement to the legendary realm. We hope to be able to work together to safeguard the justice in the continent.”

“I shall accept your blessings then!” Leylin watched the long-legged female knight in front of him as he recalled the past, “It’s truly been a long time, Rafiniya…”

“Come to think of it, I haven’t asked you about what happened after you left. When did you enter the God of Justice’s church?”
Leylin first got Rafiniya to take a seat with an enthusiastic smile like a good host, and commanded a puppet to send over a plate of tropical fruits.

“Come! Try some special produce from the south. It’s rarely seen in the north…”

“Thank you…” Rafiniya had a complex expression on her face as she picked up a purple fruit similar to a longan. While she had fantasised about meeting Leylin, she’d never thought it’d be in this situation. For some reason, Leylin’s nonchalant expression caused fury to erupt in her heart.
At the thought of the task that the church had entrusted to her, Rafiniya suppressed her emotions and forced a smile. “This is pretty good! The captain mentioned it before in the north…”

‘Not bad. It looks like you’ve matured a little after entering the church, though it’s a pity that it’s not much use.’ Sensing her emotions, Leylin snickered inside. ‘Unfortunately, She’s far too naive.’

“Right, I still don’t know what happened to you…” Leylin now held a cup of hot tea like a child wanting to hear a story.

“Once we separated, I returned to Silverymoon and met Her Highness. Then, I took part in the city’s final defense…” Rafiniya laughed wryly, eyes glazed over as she immersed herself in her memories, “… Well, that’s what happened. That paladin saved me, and after I recovered, I joined the God of Justice’s church and have been working hard to protect the refugees in the north…”

“Right…” Leylin nodded gravely. He could sense that the devil mark he’d planted on her had already formed a perfect balance with the God of Justice’s strength.

‘A soul that’s balancing on a dangerous path? That’s even more interesting…’ Leylin’s thoughts didn’t make their way to his face. “I’ve heard of the God of Justice’s blessings. Is there anything else?”

Leylin looked unhurried as he held his cup, and Rafiniya wanted to
sigh deeply. However, she thought back to her orders and spoke gravely, “I’m also here to ask my lord for help.”

“Help? What help?” The rising steam blocked the teasing look in Leylin’s eyes.

“It’s related to the north. We’ve already made contact with Queen Alustriel, and we’re trying all we can to help her restore the country. However, we currently lack strength and manpower, especially in terms of legendaries. While the church is doing all it can to help, there also similar problems in other areas…”

Tears began to well up in her eyes, “On account of those innocent commoners who are suffering in the north, I hope you can help us. After all, you were once helped by Silverymoon…”

‘How naive,’ Leylin shook his head, ‘You’re trying to invite a legendary without any form of payment?’

While he had gotten a lot of knowledge from Silverymoon, it was all earned from battle achievements and many other things. He didn’t feel like he owed the city anything.

In addition, he’d have to fight the orc empire if he joined this war. Even if Gruumsh was being suppressed by Mystra and Tyr, their emperor Saladin alone was a huge problem.

“I have something very important to do for now, I’ll be in the west for a while…” Leylin answered, causing the light in Rafiniya’s eyes to dim.

“However…” Just as she felt complete despair, Leylin changed his words, “I might be able to come to the north if you wait a while.”

“It won’t be a problem at all! We’re only preparing right now, and it’ll be years before we begin. I can wait!” Rafiniya stood up, looking emotional, “Whatever it is, thank you very much. The commoners who are being trampled upon by the orcs in the north will never forget your contributions…”

“Mm,” Leylin answered speechlessly, rolling his eyes inside. ‘If I didn’t have to go to the north for a bit to get something, do you
think I would agree to this?’

Watching Rafiniya leave, Leylin stroked his chin as he sunk into deep thought. ‘I never expected this. Tyr’s church has already made contact with Alustriel, and they’re even trying to help her rebuild her kingdom. It seems like the God of Justice has plans for the north…

‘It is surprising that Alustriel agreed to this. Either Mystra and Tyr came to some sort of compromise, or she was moved by the refugees in the north. With her personality, it’s probably the latter…’

Tiff had informed Leylin that the humans in the north weren’t faring well. Other than the few lucky ones who’d managed to make it into the southern human nations, everyone was dead, exiled, or enslaved by the orcs. After all, the brutish creatures did not know agriculture, and needed human help in that department. However, the feeling of a master becoming a slave felt terrible, and they were definitely treated worse than before. While Saladin was a wise emperor, he was still an orc. He needed to consider things from the orcs’ point of view.

In addition, even if the orc empire sent down order after order about it, slaves were still abused or killed for entertainment. The humans in the north were in a living hell right now.

After seeing this situation, Alustriel, who had been living in hiding, had probably changed her mind. After all she was the type that was soft-hearted and unable to watch the weak plead for help. Were it not for Mystra’s backing and her own strength, such a personality would have killed her countless times over by now.

‘How many gods are gambling on the turbulence in the north? Mystra will definitely want to make a comeback. Tyr has made his stance clear, but his true intentions are still unknown. What do the other gods think?’ Leylin’s brows furrowed slightly.

He’d been small fry in the past. No matter what he did, he would
not attract attention from the gods. However, things were different now. Legendaries could affect battles with avatars, and his own stand would be important. Leylin now had to consider every move carefully, else he might immediately form enmity.

‘Whatever it is, the moment I help Alustriel rebuild Silverymoon I’ll become an enemy of all orcish gods. The human gods have a questionable stand themselves…’ Leylin rubbed his eyebrows and sighed deeply, ‘But there is something I must get my hands on in the north. Even if it’s dangerous, I’ll need to give it a try!’

‘In order to get out of this uninjured, my strength will be key!’ Leylin’s target had never changed. No matter what the future held, he would never be wrong in working hard to increase his own strength.

‘I won’t be able to advance in rank significantly in just one or two years…’ It took centuries to increase in ranking after entering the legendary realm. Leylin was already extremely fast. Still, he was weak compared to avatars and the better-known legendaries.

‘Raising my own rank is too slow a way to strengthen myself in the short term. I can only rely on other items…’

The rules in the World of Gods were very stringent. Legendaries with high-ranked legendary items or divine weapons evidently surpassed all ordinary legendaries in terms of strength. Leylin now placed his focus on this aspect.

What divine weapons existed that could amplify one’s strength more than a floating city? A floating city was the most suitable artifact for a legendary arcanaist in Netheril’s era. The two combined could even match a lesser god!

Besides Netheril’s greatest accomplishment in the Mise energy core, every floating city needed to merge with a semi-plane. This made every complete floating city equivalent to a divine realm. It was basically an impregnable stronghold!
‘If I obtain that floating city, I can do whatever I want in the prime material plane. I needn’t even be afraid of the gods’ avatars!’ Leylin himself was already a legendary arcanist. If he obtained that floating city, he could probably become even stronger than the legendary arcanists of Netheril’s time!

After all, the depth of Leylin’s research as a near rank 7 Warlock in the Magus World far surpassed that of ancient arcanists.

‘The first order of business is to deal with matters in the outer seas. I’ll then head for the western desert.’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled as he made his mind.

In the following days, Leylin met different envoys with great statuses. They had come from huge organisations in different parts of the continent, all offering Leylin their blessings on his advancement as well as gifts. However, they didn’t know him very well so there weren’t any deep conversations.

Leylin was glad to see this happen. Without conflicts of interest, he mixed well with the many envoys, and everyone was happy.

Afterwards, Leylin hosted a huge ceremony. He officially accepted the congratulations of other small groups as the edict from Dambrath’s king was announced.

The Faulen Family were now a lineage of Marquises, and were basically free to do anything in the outer seas. With a legendary wizard like Leylin there, the family’s glory and honour would last a long time. After all, wizards had long life spans.

The outer seas would count on this legendary to maintain this freedom. With all the small organisations nearby joining the Faulens, the entire outer seas had basically separated from Dambrath. The Faulen Family’s glory was only just beginning…
The World of Gods was vast and boundless, with the prime material plane being the core foundation. It had many other planes above and below it, and between them were an unimaginable number of scattered semi-planes. The combination of all this formed the mysterious ecology of the World of Gods. All sorts of elementals, fleshly beings, angels, devils, and demons led to joys and sorrows, intense emotions and all forms of beautiful and bloody battles over race.

With its location and other advantages, the prime material plane had become the area with the most intense competition. Be it the gods up above or the devils and demons down below, everyone cast their greedy eyes on this place. Even the most barren western desert was contested.

Because some secret information had leaked, a few special existences had already placed their focus on this place.

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The western desert was at the edge of the continent. It was huge and barren, containing parts of numerous empires. The occasional black sandstorm made it a forbidden region for all life, and only a few desert races managed to survive near oases. Living in such harsh conditions, the natives of the western desert were fierce fighters, and everyone the place produced was
extremely ambitious and terrifying. They were widely known for their bloodthirst. While the western desert was extremely barren and there were few signs of human inhabitation, there were still a few merchants who would come to purchase its specialities, and there were some who especially came here to experience this environment. They would use the harsh environment of the desert to discipline themselves in their faith, breaking through the limits of life. Some even attempted walking through the desert, reaching an unimaginable realm upon success. Of course, most people died. Most bodies were buried by the sands, while some became food for the desert’s creatures.

It was now the prime season again, and merchants and adventurers headed towards the place. The traders went annually, while the adventurers dreamt of gold. There were also mercenaries, and those seeking to temper themselves once again in the severe environment of the desert.

Everyone headed west, towards wealth, power, passion, and sexy dancers...

The town called Narwick was in the outer regions of the desert, formed around a little oasis. Its name translated to corner or edge, and it prospered as the entrance to the western desert as well as a point of service. Various merchant groups and tourists from all over the world entered this place in the trading season, practically filling the entire city. Beings of all races and alignments walked the streets, and there were goods from everywhere in this place.

Some individual merchants chose to sell their goods here, getting more time to head deeper into the desert. It also attracted more business.

Scimitars made of refined ore from the depths of the desert, female slaves who were so flexible they were said to be boneless, those
slaves from the native tribes… There were many items from ruins here as well, both originals and fakes filling the market.

A white-robed wizard entered Narwick in this prosperous time. “It’s the annual opening day? How lively!” Leylin nonchalantly watched the passersby and the many stalls, his footsteps never halting as he glanced past what were said to be treasures from the ruins found deep in the desert.

With his foresight, he could definitely tell that most were fake, and the rest weren’t valuable enough for him. He would definitely have to pay a terrible price for those.

The entire city was filled with people of various races and all walks of life, which helped him widen his perspective. Warriors, thieves, assassins, bards… There were even rare wizards and swordsmen who were unique to the desert. These people were guarding merchant groups or forming parties for adventure. There were even some lone wolves who gave off a very dangerous aura.

‘These people should be hoping to make some wealth while the black sandstorm’s dissipated…’ Leylin shook his head inside. This desert was rumoured to be formed during a great battle amongst the gods. It had once been beautiful and fertile land, with numerous powerful civilisations.

Astounding ruins now hid beneath the yellow sands, and some people were lucky enough to uncover some and strike it rich overnight. This motivated generation after generation of adventurers and explorers to enter the ends of the desert, fearless of death as they looked for traces of the past.

Leylin too needed a guide to bring him into the desert, until he reached the Frostfall Valleys.

‘Even if I’ve bought a map, it’s too vague. A mere piece of paper can’t explain the dangers along the way either…’ While thinking this, Leylin entered a bar.

His senses were flooded by the clamour the moment he pushed the
door open, the smells of alcohol, meat, and perfume entering his nose.
This place was evidently a combined bar, inn, and stage. It was loud, and a musician in strange clothing was beating the drum at his waist. A dozen passionate women danced to this vulgar beat, wearing clothing that revealed their belly buttons. Their eyes were tender, and red veils covered the lower halves of their faces, only making them seem more mysterious and tempting. Gold hoops moved across fair legs that stamped to vigorous moves as bodies swayed. The bells and tassels intertwined smoothly. The guests cheered endlessly as they watched this graceful dance. The occasional merchant was so intoxicated they threw silver and gold coins on the stage, causing the atmosphere to grow more heated.
“Not bad…” Leylin nodded slightly. He could sense the aura of a few powerful beings in the inn. A few merchants were evidently being guarded by high-ranked Professionals. He then glanced past them and focused on a large round table on the right. A swordsman decked in white took up the entire thing, yet nobody protested it. He wore a veil and white turban unique to the natives, and his long narrow eyes gave off a sense of coldness. A black scabbard for a scimitar lay at his waist, the shaft having no ornaments but still giving Leylin a slight sense of danger. ‘A near legendary swordsman? He’s probably the strongest in the inn…’ With Leylin’s current rank, he’d not caught the attention of this man after spying on him. Casually throwing a gold krona at the attendant in front of him, he was respectfully invited to a seat at a table.
“Give me lamb chop, vegetable soup and fruit juice…” Compared to steak that was tender and full of fat, lamb chop had a unique fragrance. With the seasoning that was similar to pepper as
well as the unique meaty texture, it was drool-worthy. Once his stomach was filled, the attendant came over to tidy up. A golden lustre flickered between Leylin’s fingers, “Tell me where I can find the best guide, and this gold krona is yours…” “You wish to enter the desert alone?” There was a trace of greed in the attendant’s eyes, but he seemed to be put on the spot as he spoke, “The best guides have been hired by the large merchant groups. The rest are probably not better than me in terms of knowledge of the desert… It’s very dangerous to enter the deserts alone. It’s best that you join a group or form a group with other mercenaries…” While he really wanted to earn this gold krona, the attendant still advised him tactfully. “Is that so… Whatever it is, I like people who aren’t led by their greed. This is yours.” Leylin had never hoped for much anyway, so he nodded and put the coin on the table. “May the gods protect you, esteemed customer!” Not expecting anything, the attendant was pleasantly surprised, “If you don’t mind, I could help you contact a few adventuring groups…” “There’s no need for that!” Leylin waved his arms. Low-ranked Professionals would just burden him now. Besides, he had a clear goal, and entering a group would only cause strife. After sending him away, Leylin picked up a glass of dark red wine, as if slowly appreciating it. In actuality, the A.I. Chip’s detection was operating at its limit as it gathered information from around him and tidied it up. This sort of place was where information circulated best. With the A.I. Chip’s unusual abilities of gathering and sorting information, Leylin soon had a general idea of the identities of the people in the hall and the organisations they belonged to. “… A month later… Frostfall Valleys…” At this moment, a conversation conducted in hushed whispers could be heard,
causing him to freeze. Making use of the movements of drinking his wine, he nonchalantly glanced to the side at the swordsman he’d taken note of. There were now a few others seated around him, whispering to each other as they discussed matters.

One of them was evidently a wizard, and she drank some clear water as her right arm secretly created a noise barrier. Unfortunately, this much was the same to Leylin as not doing anything at all.

‘A month later… Isn’t that the time that the floating city will appear? The location’s right as well!’ Leylin then turned grim, ‘It looks like I’m not the only one with information about the floating city. This is going to be troublesome…’

Fortunately, Leylin had somewhat expected this. There were many arcanists interested in the floating city after all, and it was hard to guarantee that others hadn’t found this secret in historical records and deduced the time and location of its appearance.
My luck is still pretty good. A guide appeared of their own accord…’ Leylin glanced at the white-robed swordsman and his group, a hint of blue shining in his eyes before he left immediately. The wizard of the group watched their swordsman freeze. She asked with surprise, “What is it?”

“Nothing much. Something felt off for a moment.” The swordsman looked slightly baffled, his right hand on his scabbard as he took a look around. He sat down once more, looking puzzled. He’d felt a chill up his spine that moment, as if death was right before him. However, that sense of danger had disappeared before he could take stock of the situation.

“You’re being paranoid. We can’t leak news of our mission…” A black-robed person spoke in a low voice.

“Perhaps that’s it,” he said as he sat down. His hand was still on his scimitar, though, and his frown didn’t dissipate.

……

Leylin had already left the area, and was now strolling along the bustling streets.

‘His senses are good. Even if it was only for an instant, the ability to sense my intent is quite impressive. He’ll probably become legendary in a few years’ time, but that’s only if he can survive
His noble attire, rosy cheeks, and extravagant accessories were signs of wealth, and they caused many small peddlers to pay attention to him.

“Take a look at this, esteemed customer. Old Jafar has the best things here…” One in particular held a golden scepter up for Leylin to see. It was an old white man with golden hair, “Take a look at these patterns and decorations… I unearthed this while I was still an adventurer, braving deadly danger in an ancient ruin. It’s said to hold the secrets of the ancient Sun Dynasty within, and it can be yours for just one hundred kronas…”

“Ancient Sun Dynasty?” Leylin halted his footsteps, a teasing smile on his face. He watched this Old Jafar do all he could to introduce the item.

“Indeed! It was a dynasty from a time before this place became a desert. Legends talk of a large golden river, flowing not with water but honey and milk. The land was filled with golden words in that era, and this scepter contains a secret of theirs…”

“Your name is Jafar, yes?” Leylin stopped in front of the stall, watching this old man who was evidently not a human from the deserts, “Why did you settle here?”

“Sigh… I met the mother of my children during my life as an adventurer. I naturally can’t leave…” Jafar chuckled. Although he seemed honest, there was still a sly look in his eyes that could not be concealed.

“So? Since we’re both from the south, I can sell it ten kronas cheaper. The Goddess of Luck is smiling down on you…”

“I’ll take a look…” Leylin seemed interested, and he crouched down in front of the booth.

“All these things are from ruins?” Jafar had placed decorative ornaments on a greasy black cloth, and some of them still had a layer of rust on them. It gave the illusion that he was speaking the
truth.
Unfortunately, Leylin had acquired the Scholarly feat when he’d advanced to the legendary realm. His appraisal skill had hit its limit, and he used the A.I. Chip to immediately see through these fakes.
“This looks pretty good. It’ll look good on my wall…” Leylin ‘appraised’ a dark gold mask that was carved in the likeness of a cobra.
“Of course! How can there be nothing decent from the ancient ruins for an esteemed guest like you?” Jafar’s face wrinkled in his delight.
“This, this, and this. I want it all…” Leylin acted like a deceived noble, buying seven to eight items. Jafar’s smile was so wide he couldn’t close his mouth.
“This too, and these…” Leylin continued to point at things with both hands, basically buying everything in the stall.
“Old Jafar is going to get rich at this rate…” The surrounding peddlers all stared hard at Jafar in envy.
“I’ll buy all of this… Hmm… there seems to be an issue with carrying them…” Leylin looked troubled.
“No issue, there’s no issue at all!” Jafar quickly discarded the items Leylin didn’t want, his movement faster than a high-ranked thief. He placed the four ends of the cloth together and bundled the items up. “How about that? So easy. I can even send this to your inn…”
Old Jafar had a cajoling smile on his face, “That comes up to 1372 gold kronas, and I’ve already given you a discount…”
“Umm…” Leylin appeared like those generous guests that were easily cheated, “Fine! Do you accept bills from the church of wealth, or will you come with me as I withdraw the gold?”

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Every market had a church of wealth, and a huge market like the
western desert obviously wouldn’t miss out. The small town had one to serve the merchants.

Leylin sent the extremely thankful Jafar away once they exited the church, turning a corner on the street.

‘I never thought I’d find something great from a peddler…’ Leylin flung the bundle in his hands, and all the fake gold items clattered to the ground like trash.

‘A legendary magic beast hide with some information on it…’ Leylin stared at the greasy cloth, blue light flickering in his eyes. This was what he’d set his sights on, the cloth Jafar used to display his goods.

‘I wonder how he managed to get this hide. Could he really have been an adventurer?’ Leylin stroked his chin, but didn’t linger on the thought. He’d paid for the items, so this was his now. He couldn’t be bothered with how Jafar had gotten his hands on it.

‘Just the material alone is worth the price. I’ll need to have the A.I. Chip decipher the information on it.’

Leylin knew the history of the west desert well. It had once been the core of Netheril, and in its days of glory been filled with fertile land and a huge population. Unfortunately, with Netheril fading away and wars involving gods occurring in the place, the west had become a desert.

If not for that, why would an arcanist who leapt through dimensions keep his floating city here?

‘This encryption… It doesn’t seem like an arcanist’s, but there’s still some exemplary strength… It even contains the secrets of a lost civilisation…’ Leylin’s eyes glinted. If Jafar learnt of the secrets of this hide, he’d probably grow so annoyed with himself he’d just commit suicide.

Leylin was in a great mood now that he’d obtained a treasure. He walked out of the corner and then glanced through the items in the stall with more focus. With his foresight and experience, no
treasures escaped his sights. Unfortunately, that had been the only one. Nothing stuck out to him after that.

……

“Boohoo… Please help us. Please help us…” Some cries attracted Leylin’s attention at this moment, leading him forward. A large crowd had formed a huge circle up ahead, and caused a disturbance that Leylin took notice of as he drew closer. In the middle of a circle was an adventurer and a crying little girl. The adventurer had fallen down, looking like he’d met with great hardships in life. He was no longer young, and his lips were blue. It looked like some sickness had acted up all of a sudden.

“Uncle, uncle! Please wake up…” With such a huge crowd watching, the girl’s cries made her seem even more helpless.

“He must have gotten poisoned. There are many dangerous beings in the desert nearby…” An experienced mercenary went up, touching the adventurer’s neck and pulling up his eyelids to check, “Unless I have a specific antidote, I can’t do anything. Do you know what poison it was?”

The little girl froze after hearing this, and began to bawl more sorrowfully, “I- I don’t know. Vivian is so useless, sniff… uncle…” “Sigh… Unless a high-ranked priest is here to cast Neutralise Poison, he’s…” The mercenary looked around, “Who amongst you is a high-ranked priest?”

The crowd avoided his gaze, evidently not wanting to be involved in this. A death would cause the guards to come here, and the interrogations and the like would be very time-consuming. They could even be blackmailed by shameless jailors and officials, which caused most of the crowd to leave.

The area was bustling with activity, yet they pretended not to see
the little girl and the adventurer who seemed to be breathing his last. There was a great sense of detachment in this place. “Little girl, we need to look for other methods… At the very least, we’ll need an inn…” The mercenary looked troubled, obviously seeing the impatient urging from his companions. He halted midway his speech, realising that no inn would take in an adventurer on the brink of death, and he was only making things difficult for himself. “Sigh…” With this thought, the mercenary too looked agonised and place a small bag of copper coins in front of the wailing girl, “Take these and bury your uncle well!” He then left quickly in large strides, as if afraid of something.
966 - Implantation

The streets were bustling with life, starkly contrasted by the sorrowful cries of a young girl. The bystanders dissipated quickly, death something they’d seen all too often in the desert. They were all in a hurry to strike it rich, so who would care for something like this? A few thugs even eyed the coin pouch in front of the girl. They were also looking at her person. Even though she was very young, beauty shone through her crying face. There would probably be many people who’d want someone like her. Selling her to child traffickers would be profitable.

‘Interesting… How will things progress from here?’ Leylin watched on with his arms in front of his chest, apathetic like a god up above. He wouldn’t be moved by the lives of these individuals. His focus suddenly shifted in another direction, at a monk that headed over slowly. He had a pugilistic aura, with short brown hair, thick eyebrows and a weak-looking gaze. He only wore coarse sack clothing, with patches all over it making it look tattered. He only wore one shoe. The monk even had a putrid smile, causing the crowd to distance themselves from him.

‘A monk!?’ A trace of fear shone in Leylin’s eyes. This person was powerful, already at the legendary realm. Monks were people devils did not want to meet at all. They rejected the pleasures of life, their staunch souls not corroded by anything.
Meeting a legendary monk was like hitting a jackpot. ‘There’s a monk here at this time… Does it have anything to do with the floating city?’ Leylin frowned. That adventuring team with near-legendary strength wasn’t worthy of his attention, but he’d have to focus on this monk’s actions. Were their targets the same, another variable would be added to his plan.

“Let me try…” The monk approached the crying girl and spoke with a hoarse voice, as if he had not drunk water in a long time. “Boohoo… It’s not use. The mercenary just now already said that unless you’re a high-ranked priest…” Vivian wept, but still passed the coin pouch filled with copper to him, evidently treating him as a beggar.

“Thank you, kind-hearted young lady, but I can’t accept any gifts or money…” He smiled gently, and then moved closer to the unconscious adventurer. “It’s the Hellthorn Flower, a common and very poisonous flower seen at the edges of the desert. But it’s already mutated a few times… This will be difficult.”

A bundle of warm light emanated from the monk, and seeped into the body of the adventurer on the ground. The healing light caused the adventurer to improve visibly.

The spell naturally attracted the attention of bystanders, and someone with good eyesight soon exclaimed, “Poison Removal? No, that’s True Resurrection!”

“A rank 9 divine spell that one has to be rank 19 to cast…” Everyone froze, their eyes trained on the monk with reverence. It was a respect for strength. Seeing the situation changing, the thugs disappeared into the corners of the streets, leaving in the blink of an eye.

“Ugh…” The bruising on the adventurer’s lips dissipated, and he blinked before opening his eyes completely. He looked at the little lady in front of him. “What’s wrong, Vivian? Where am I now?”

“Uncle! Uncle, you’re awake!” Teardrops sparkled on Vivian’s face
as she threw herself into his embrace.

“Uncle, you fainted on the road. It scared me so much! This grandpa saved you,” Vivian said as she pointed to the monk.

“Thank you very much, grandmaster!” The adventurer knew his adventures much better than the girl did, and therefore understood the strength and abilities of the person who had healed him. Upon hearing this, he immediately got up to thank the monk, and then reached for his coin pouch.

Priests required a fee to cast spells on their believers. A high-ranked divine spell was very expensive.

“There’s no need for that… We clerics are duty-bound to help the injured and dead…” The monk shook his head and rejected the man with a smile, and then swaggered into the market. However, nobody dared to underestimate him this time.

As he left, the monk’s dark eyes scanned the area Leylin had been in. Seeing nobody there, he looked puzzled.

Only after the monk’s figure disappeared from the streets did the adventurer leave with the girl. It was then that Leylin walked out from the shadows.

“Tsk tsk… as expected of a legendary. His senses are better than that swordsman…” Leylin sighed, heart heavy. If this man was also here to contest for the floating city, things would be very troublesome for him. And his instincts told him that this was almost certainly the case.

‘Ugh… It seems like more than one organisation knows about the appearance of the floating city…’ Leylin looked grim, ‘Looks like I’ll need to make my move as soon as possible…’

……

Night soon fell. Lights and fire emerged everywhere in the market, illuminating the dark area.
The market bustled with activity even at night. However, once the moon crawled halfway across the sky, the shops that had been boisterous before turned completely silent. The merchants and the rest entered their dreams after a long day.

‘Dreamscape View!’ Leylin currently stood at the top of a tower, eyes flickering with strange red lights as a red crack appeared on his forehead. Scattered spots appeared all over the town in his vision, twinkling like the stars in the sky. These various starlike spots were actually the dreams of different people. Those that were whitish in colour belonged to the weakest commoners. Professionals were much more dazzling, while high-ranked ones were bright as torches. The legendaries were like pillars of light reaching into the skies, obvious in an instant.

‘The dreams of regular humans are far too weak. If I’m not careful, I could kill a whole bunch…’

These dreams showed Leylin things that hadn’t been revealed in the day.

‘First is Jafar… Hmm, that beast hide was something you picked up by accident. No wonder you didn’t know its true value…’ Shifting his attention from a dim speck, Leylin glanced towards the west, looking serious.

‘As expected of a legendary monk. I can’t see through him, nor his dreams… Not like I intend to deal with him anyway. Dream Eater is a trump card, and I’d be foolish to cast it even before I see the floating city…’

Without alarming him, Leylin found his main target. There were dazzling dreams in the inn, like pillars of light. Leylin could see them through Dreamscape, and almost visualise a young man who’d been practising his sword skills from a young age.

‘Here you are…’ Leylin smiled slightly, launching dark red dreamforce that formed a winged eyeball.

“Go!” With Leylin’s command, the eyeball flapped its wings and
flew into one of the dreams. With the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, Leylin’s grasp of dreamforce had reached great heights. With the different system of power being applied on him, the target didn’t even notice the eyeball.

……

Many merchants aimed to make use of the cool weather in the morning, walking the path of hopes and dreams. The high-ranked Professionals began their journey as well. “What’s wrong, Allerie?” The white-robed swordsman asked the wizard journeying with them, puzzled. “It’s nothing much. I just recalled my dream last night, and it was a little disgusting…” The wizard had a terrible look on her face, and she retched. There were dark circles under her eyes, as if she hadn’t had a good rest the whole night. “Dream? Disgusting?” The swordsman was startled, but he didn’t ask further. “Yes, it was just a dream!” she repeated, as if trying to encourage herself. However, at the thought of the vivid dream, the wizard couldn’t help but tremble, even as a high-ranked spell caster. She’d actually swallowed a winged eyeball whole in her dreams! It had been exceedingly vivid, to the point that her throat still remembered that disgusting and greasy feeling. “Could this be some specific curse… No, no, I’ve already checked properly. There’s nothing strange. That was just a nightmare. But… why did I dream of that…” She looked confused and touched her forehead, “Looks like I’ll need to get something to soothe my nerves tonight…” Within the town, Leylin glanced at the map in his hands while looking deep in thought. The situation of the little group appeared
in a crystal ball next to him, the point of view that of the wizard.
“The implantation was successful. Now that I have their position,
they won’t be able to escape…” Leylin was rather satisfied with his
work. These guides would make his own journey more convenient.
Having them show the way, he could follow their path at a distance.
There was no danger or trouble whatsoever. Watching them from
such a large distance, it was impossible for him to be discovered.
berserk energy from the four elements roared in a large semi-plane outside the prime material plane, causing ripples in the sky. The sky seemed to distort and shatter. There was no sun nor moonlight here, only a sparkling ambient light. Layers of ashen-white bones littered the ground, their height unknown. There were some little white flowers growing out of eye sockets, the most beautiful flower buds blooming. Numerous vines crawled over the bones, as if subsisting on them.

A gale blew past the area, and it was like a rain of flowers as the plants dispersed to reveal bones on the ground. This plane was actually formed of all sorts of bones piled together. These bones were about the same size as those of humans. Some were exceptionally small but thick, likely coming from halflings and dwarves. There were even some extremely large animal bones scattered in the area, forming little hills.

This semi-plane was one of bones, on the verge of being smashed into pieces. It was hidden in the gaps between numerous dimensions, unvisited for a long time.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* At this moment, a slight cracking sound could be heard from underground, followed by some shaking.

*Gulu! Gulu!* A hill of bones gave way, and large amounts of smoke and dust were sent flying. Meanwhile, a protruding round head rolled out of a crevice in the ground.

This was a dazzling human skull. The eye sockets flickered with
two still flames, and dead black soul force lingered around the area, emitting powerful undulations. The skull’s teeth chattered and its jaws creaked, seemingly shaking in confusion.

“I’ve been asleep for a thousand years…” The skull spoke in a desolate voice, its tone ancient. Only a scholar who had researched the past would be able to understand it.

*Crunch!* The skull meshed its teeth together and seemed to spit out something similar to parchment paper. A layer of light flickered, and letterings as well as a map were projected in the air.

“The year where the elemental tides streak through, when the black crows cry out to the blood moon… The Simoshel Canyon… east of Cygnus!” A fire blazed in the skull’s eyes as it found a few sparkling bones, slowly recreating its body.

“The floating city. The best achievement of the arcanist era, able to match up to the gods’ divine realms…” The skull spoke as if it was chanting, an aura of despair from the very soul covering the area like a cloak.

“That floating city is definitely mine! The Skeleton Lich, Illyrio Paxlude!” A staff of bones automatically moved its way to the lich, a blood red gem at its top emitting crimson light.

*Roar!* The lich tapped the ground with his staff, and it split apart to reveal the head of an enormous creature.

This creature was tens of metres tall, with large bony wings and two heads that looked abnormally sinister. A brilliant soul energy could be seen within the thing’s skull. This was evidently the necromancer’s favourite pet— A two-headed bone dragon!

“Keke… Let’s go, darling…” Strong winds blew, and the double-headed bone dragon flapped its wings, carrying the skeleton lich on its back and entering the terrifying elemental storm. The violent storm seemed to quiet under their might, forming a pitch-dark channel.

The bone dragon roared and disappeared at the end of the plane…
People had gotten wind of this at several other places. “Abnormal movements from the bone kingdom? Seems like that lich has awoken…” “Illyrio… It’s really been a long time. I have yet to settle that grudge with him…” “The envoy of death, the skeleton lich? How interesting…”

All sorts of mysterious godly conscients flickered all over the world, and then all focused on the bone kingdom without prior agreement. A few gazes seemed to have their own goals, heading towards the western desert.

......

Scorching sunlight fell on the sand dunes, causing heat waves that distorted the air. Practically all moisture had evaporated, and each breath one took in this place was like breathing in fire. The desert’s surface was reaching the limits of temperature, and could practically roast a person alive! The entire desert looked like a place disallowing of life. Even the scattered cacti around the area had disappeared, and there was not even a hint of greenery.

The leading swordsman looked at the map in his hands, beginning to check the distance, “We’re already very deep into the desert, so we have to do our best to retain our strength. We’ll also need to plan for our items and water… What’s wrong, Allerie? Still thinking about the dream that night?”

Upon looking up, he found the wizard in his group had grown absent-minded once more, and his question revealed a slight annoyance. “No, I’m feeling better now… it’s just this weather…” Allerie gathered hair behind her ear and felt her dry skin while sighing inside. That dream no longer disturbed her, but the terrible
environment in the desert was now giving her a vivid lesson. Even with the protection of magic, she felt this difficult to endure. Seeing this, the swordsman could only curse in his mind at the nonexistent stamina of wizards. Still, there was nothing that could be done. He encouraged her, “Hang on for a while. We’ll reach the dream oasis soon enough, so you can get some rest there…” The mention of the dream oasis perked up everyone in the group. They were currently deep inside the western desert, and it was exceedingly dangerous. Terrifying black sandstorms could erupt at any moment.

Even if they were near legendary adventurers, there was nothing they could do in the face of nature; there would still be dangers. The dream oasis was the only source of water in the depths of the western desert. It was said that this was a moving crescent lake and shrub forest, as well as the only hope for survival that lost travellers had.

“My most recent information, and this map, all indicate the dream oasis is up ahead. We can’t be wrong!” The swordsman yelled to raise the morale. With that hope, the group sped up quite a bit. However, none of them realised that someone had noticed all their actions from behind them.

“The dream oasis… That place is very close to Frostfall Valley… I might not even have found it if not for these guides…” Leylin was riding a sand scorpion, a winged eyeball flapping in front of him. It showed him scenes of those people. With the group of adventurers showing the way, he did not need to take detours. As long as he followed the safe path they did, everything would generally be fine. With the distance limiting them, normal detection spells wouldn’t be able to find him.

“Once here… How do I say this… their value is decreasing…” Leylin stroked his chin. In his opinion, this group was the weakest wave of those eyeing the floating city. “But they seem to have a
leader. I’ll just put them ahead and see what they attract…”

Leylin patted the scorpion he was riding, and the large beast immediately cried out. It’s eight legs alternating in motion as it sped up its advance through the desert…

There was nothing to see along the way in the desert but sand, except the bones of all the monks that had died. Leylin had even noticed a withered corpse with no moisture, one that looked like a mummy.

Monks trained by toying with their lives. Without clear water, they would end up dead, and there were few who would be saved by kind-hearted merchant groups.

“But… it seems too calm…” No longer bothering with the many corpses buried by sand, Leylin urged the sand scorpion to keep moving forward.

The western desert definitely had many dangers. However, there was a group of elite high-ranked Professionals ahead. Besides natural disasters like the black sandstorms, they could deal with anything. Their numbers hadn’t even dropped yet.

While it seemed normal, Leylin found something strange. The path to the floating city shouldn’t have been so clear.

It was at this point that Leylin’s face showed a sudden understanding, ‘It appeared… I never thought that there would be natives deep within the western desert. Could these people be remnants of Netheril?’

At this thought, he gave up his ride and cast a flight spell, soaring into the air while flapping his wings.

Once he passed countless sand dunes, a deep green entered his eyes. In a place where the only thing on the horizon was yellow sand, there was a sparkling crescent lake and a large oasis. Seeing this in an area void of life could move someone emotionally.

However, there were signs of disharmony here. A vigorous fight had already begun near the oasis.
“No wonder I felt something was off. This was the place!” Leylin looked like he realised something all of a sudden.
A gruesome massacre unfolded by the lake in the grassy plains.
A group of strangely dressed men on one-humped camels attacked the group of adventurers. They wore the trademark attire of the desert, white, loosely fitted robes with a scarf wrapped thickly around their heads, revealing only a pair of wolf-like eyes. With a whistle from the leader of these camel riders, his men encircled the adventurers, where some of them had even drawn their bows.
Looking at this turn of events, the expression on those adventurers took a turn for the worse.
They were already lacking in numbers, without even mentioning the high-grade equipment being used against them.
“What are they saying?” The female wizard Allerie asked the assassin after casting a few layers of defensive spells on herself.
“They said that… We have intruded on their land, and must use our blood and lives to wash away our sins…”
The assassin leader face darkened as he hurriedly explained, “We’re in deep trouble, these are the desert tribes. The original inhabitants of the western desert, and this is the place they call home. They also possess a strange ability for casting curses.”
“Hacaree! Hacaree!”
The desert warriors immediately rushed forwards and released the arrows nocked.
A few bamboo-thin warriors leapt high in the air, brandishing sabres with gems embedded in them as they slice downwards in an beautiful arc.

“Good timing!”

The assassin leader shouted as he struck with the dagger in his hand.

An icy blade flashed past as many of the desert warriors fell of the ground, the sabre in their hands shattered into pieces like dancing butterflies.

“Head! How can you strike first and even deal such a fatal blow!”

The other adventurers looked on in disbelief at the leader.

“We don’t have a choice…” The assassin smiled wryly, “’hacaree’ means don’t leave anyone alive…”

However, they did not have the leisure of conversing moments later. The desert tribe leader hopped off his camel and dashed towards the assassin.

*Peng!*

A thick and bulky saber whistled through the air, and the gale force brought upon them made the assassin somewhat apprehensive.

*Clink!*

“Howling moon art!” The assassin howled and clashed his dagger against the sabre. A surge of qi dispersed into the surroundings, leaving countless pits on the surface of the desert,

*Shing!* Just when the two blades were about to clash, a blade from the desert leader’s body flashed. Another small dagger appeared in his hand and he thrust it directly at the assassin’s eye.

“Secret technique — Dual Serpentes!”

“Leader!” The female wizard cried out as she pointed with her index finger which glowed and shouted, “Mage Sword!”

An illusory blade appeared in midair and deflected the fatal blow from the desert leader.

“Damn it! Get lost!”
In this situation of life and death, that assassin too unleashed all his might and roared. The muscles on his body began to bulge and very soon, he had turned into a smaller version of a giant. The dagger in his hands now exerted a larger force, which sent the desert leader staggering backwards. That desert leader cried in a high pitched tone and hopped away as nimble as a swallow, her eyes clear as water.
“A woman?”
This assassin felt the back of his neck tingling. His carelessness almost had his eyes gouged by a woman.
“Leader, what now?”
At this moment, the arrows fell like rain, throwing the rest of the party into disarray.
“Gather by Awar’s side, we will break from the encirclement. Allerie, concentrate and support if needed!” The assassin gave his orders.
“Hah! Berserk!”
The party member Awar was the group’s berserker and meatshield. He produced a low grunt and the muscles on his body bulged.
“Bull’s Strength! Bear’s Endurance!”
Allerie, on the other side, had also added multiple layers of buffs which glowed.
“Hah! Kill!”
After entering berserk mode, Awar seemed to change into a human tank with the shield in his hands, sending many of the desert warriors flying with blood momentarily.
“Wodarnike! Arberdoniya!”
The female desert leader gave a few commands and directed her men to rows of defense. It seemed as though as she did not want to stop until this group of adventurers were dead.
“Your opponent is me!”
The assassin inhaled deeply, before a layer of battle qi was imbued
on his rustic dagger.
In the face of peril, this assassin had shown his most tenacious
side. He decided to engage directly with the enemy’s leader, buying
time for his teammates.
*Shing!*  
The female desert warrior did not say a word. Instead, she crossed
her sabres and unleashed her explosive force.
Her body seemed to leave behind an afterimage as she dashed
towards the assassin. Her attacks came from all directions, her arms
seemingly boneless in their flexibility.
“Hng! Scorching gale blade!”
The assassin shouted coldly. With his eyes blazing, the blade in his
hand formed a gale which matched the power of a sandstorm,
parrying the attack of the female warrior.
“Ooh… There are actually martial art techniques in this area…”
Leylin leisurely watched on from the air, applying a layer of
illusion magic around him.
“That female warrior is nearing the strength of a Legendary, but her
technique is at the legendary rank! The desert tribes do have some
talents… This group of adventurers are in danger…”
Leylin’s estimates were extremely accurate. In a situation where one
was in an unfamiliar setting with a smaller number of people, the
disadvantage could not be made up by just a sudden burst of
strength.
*Thud Thud!* Yellow sand flew in the air. Facing against a
berserker like Awar, those desert warriors chose not to engage head
on, but to ride their camels, dragging along multiple metal chains
behind them.
*Peng! Peng!*
The furious roars of the berserker carried on, yet he was still
trapped like a bug in a spiderweb, and could only resist to no avail.
Some time later, the berserker’s roars grew softer, and his physique
turned back into the original size, looking dispirited. “Not good, his berserk mode has ended!”
Looking on, Allerie went forward and shove a spiritual force potion down Awar’s throat, her face filled with worry.
Even with the resolution of the assassin, he could not help but be demoralised looking at the current circumstances.
“Hmm… If there aren’t any reinforcements, then most likely this group of adventurers will perish here…”
Leylin concluded while in midair, “However, their backup has arrived…”
Leylin’s face turned solemn as he looked at a direction, pulling his distance away, as if somewhat apprehensive.
While he had used illusory magic to cover his tracks, he was still very likely to be discovered if someone of the same rank was here.

*Zoom!*  
At this moment, in the direction where Leylin was looking at came a very hazy and loud noise. It sounded like the chirps of a thousand birds, and thunder from the sky.

*Boom!*  
A bright starlike object appeared in broad daylight, with a dazzling afterimage as it shot over with a whizzing noise.
When the object drew closer, it was made out to be a thrown spear. The friction it produced while speeding through the air had turned it a bright red, as if it was going to melt anytime.
This scene could only be made out with Leylin’s visual prowess. As for the desert tribe, they could only see a dazzling light shooting towards them, piercing several warriors and camel at the same time, finally landing before the female leader of these desert warriors.

*Clink!*  
Against such an attack, the desert leader face turned solemn. She withdrew both her hands and crossed them, into a jagged cross symbol.
*Bang!*  
A loud explosion sounded as steam rose from the ground, followed by the smell of rust.  
After the dust and sand had settled, the female desert warrior was no longer there, only broken bits of the sabre were scattered around where she stood.  
“Uwuuu~~”  
As if receiving some sort of order, the sand tribe immediately turned their backs and fled, not lingering for one bit.  
They retreated quickly and in the span of a few breaths, no one from the sand tribe could be seen, only flurried tracks from the camels remained.  
“It’s our lord! He’s here!”  
Allerie squealed, as the assassin and other members heaved a sigh of relief.  
“You guys are late!”  
A giant, metallic arm reached for the spear as its owner spoke in a booming voice.  
He had curly, wine-red hair, and a silvery unibrow. The expression on his face was extremely stern, commanding respect and intimidation.  
“Our apologies! Lord Rogero, there were some circumstances on the road…”  
The assassin’s face turned slightly pale and spoke in a soft voice.  
“Also, thank you for saving us, my lord…”  
Allerie’s eyes held a tinge of adornment, but Rogero did not care the least.  
“You bunch of useless creatures! Such a simple matter and you already can’t deal with it…Moreover…”  
Rogero’s gaze seemed dazzling to Allerie, as he looked from her face down to her belly, causing her to turn red.  
“You were being followed and no one knew it, you group of
fools!”
Rage began to replace the puzzled look on Rogero.
“Hn? Followed? No way, I…”
The female wizard looked blankly at the spear pointed at her, feeling flabbergasted.

Soon after, she was stunned as she looked at her hands. The original jade white skin now was covered in thick tumors filled with pus. As those tumors erupted, it caused her to wail loudly.
*Sssii!*

White smoke rose from the body of the female wizard, and her blood-curdling screams struck fear into the heart of others. When the smoke had dissipated, the female wizard no longer stood there, but only a puddle of pus left on the sand.
“What... What happened? Allerie... she...” The assassin stared blankly ahead.
“What a venomous spell, is it a curse-type magic or a poison element spell?”
Rogero squatted by the pool of pus, his expression extremely solemn.
“Right after I discovered a trace, it was decisively broken? The killer behind this is extremely cunning and cold-blooded... It’d be a worthy opponent...”
“Allerie! Allerie!”
Only realising what had happened now, the members all cried out in anguish. Especially Awar, who knelt to the ground, and seemed to have suffered a mental breakdown.
Looking on, the assassin sighed. He had long since knew that Awar had feelings for Allerie, but the female wizard had only set her sights on strong people, which left Awar feeling rather dejected. But now, the two of them will never be together.
“Is this a venomous curse-type magic by the sand tribe?” The assassin asked as he looked at the sand that left no corpse behind, a chill running through his spine.
“It’s very likely not the sand tribe, but the person that had followed you before you entered the desert!”
Rogero shook his head, and the spear in his hands whizzed in a whistling sound.
“Let’s go! We can’t waste any more time on this. The prophesied event is about to happen… We must reach Snowfall Valley before then…”
“Yes, my lord!”
The assassin and the rest did not have any objections, and very soon set off on their journey.
Only the sizzling pile of pus remained, as if reminding someone that it was once the life a high ranked class which had perished.

……

“Rogero?”
Leylin walked out from the darkness in the distance. “I’ve heard of this name before, he is a legendary that specialises in using spears. Having a high reputation amongst the western region, I never thought that he’d be here today…”
“The gathering of weeping crows and the blood moon… It’s soon approaching. I wonder how many experts who are blinded with greed will still be coming…”
Leylin raised his head and looked in the sky as he muttered, before vanishing from the spot.
At this point, he no longer needed a guide.
Because the Frostfall Valleys were in fact the sacred grounds of the sand tribe, which they had protected for generations.
When he appeared again, Leylin had entered the oasis. He looked around at the mess on the ground and picked a sand tribe corpse from it. Very soon his eyes had flashed with various memory fragments.
“So it’s there…”
Spells which could retrieve memories were already considered rare, but this skill to do so from a corpse would shake the world.
After getting the information he needed, Leylin formed a giant
scorpion with the sand and looked towards a direction. He then sat on it and with the point of his finger, the sand scorpion began to sprint towards the direction as if it had life within its body.

……

However, after arriving at the Frostfall Valleys, the ongoing scene still left Leylin somewhat flabbergasted. Corpses! Corpses that filled the area for as far as the eye could see! Many of the sand tribe members had numerous injuries on the bodies. Their faces carried rage, and even utter fear. It seemed like there were traces of a castle, but right now it had been destroyed by a powerful force and reduced to just a rubble. “This doesn’t seem to be the style of Rogero and his men…” Leylin stroked his chin, and looked at a pair of corpses that had died while fighting each other. The sand tribe warrior had a malevolent expression, as he gnawed off the throat of his opponent. The other party had plunged a dagger into the sand warrior’s skull, and his eyes were still moist, as if he had planned to sacrifice himself to kill his opponent. However, there was one thing that could not escape Leylin’s eyes. “The aura of death… Is this a necromancy-type magic?” Leylin reached his hand out and grabbed a black gaseous matter above the corpse. “It seems like a necromancer came here and raised the undead to wipe the forces of the sand tribe here…” A necromancer! It was a sub-class of wizards, who fervently delved into the research of the physical body and spirit. They dealt with corpses everyday and in the dark, they engaged in the research of souls which was a taboo. Their presence was unwanted second only to arcane wizards, but were still outcasted the same. However, a truly strong necromancer had prowess much stronger
than peers at the same level. Their summons of the undead would be enough to trample and annihilate kingdoms.

“To crush the sand tribe here with an undead army, this necromancer is very likely a Legendary too…”

Leylin inhaled a deep breath and followed the trail of destruction into the valley.

The further in he walked, the more he could see traces of a bitter battle. Occasionally, there were a piece of bone lying on the floor, seemingly from a broken undead skeleton.

After entering the middle section, Leylin saw several figures.

In the middle section of the valley was a huge field, as if the core of the sand tribe. It was now a mountain of corpses.

Several figures stood facing each other, seemingly in a confrontation.

Rogero and his men were inside. Leylin even saw that Legendary monk that he felt apprehensive about!

The monk shifted a corpse into the ditch. The corpse had a soft body and eyes clear like water. Her eyes spoke of the desire to live. It was the female desert leader from earlier, but now all signs of life was not found.

“Someone else is here!”

Leylin’s arrival roused the attention of others. They observed him with wariness in their eyes.

Naturally, Leylin did not reveal his true features, but to use the image of Kukulkan. He wore a mask and dressed in black robes. His appearance was the manifest of evil.

A faintly discernible trace of divine force surrounded the area, preventing all sorts of detections and probings.

“What an intense demonic aura!”

Rogero gripped the spear in his hands tightly, as faint sparks of lightning flashed at its tip.

As for the monk, he put down the task he was doing and looked at
Leylin in a hostile manner.
“Haha… I never thought that it’d be someone from our camp!”
Although there were several groups of people standing on the field, it was distinctly divided into two sides.
The monk, Rogero, and a few paladins drew close to each other, which was evident that they had formed a camp together.
As for the other side, they were a few powerful people who were alone. Most of them chose to mask their appearance like Leylin, and exuded an aura of evil as well.
However, on the contrary of the opposing camp, the good alignment, these people did not trust each other as much and maintained their distance from one another.
The person who spoke was a purple haired woman who carried a snake headed whip with nine falls. Behind her stood several powerful people who too took up a very large headcount.
“I’m Evida, and I welcome you my friend. I wonder who you are…”
The purple haired woman’s eyes were filled with doubt. After all, the number of Legendaries were limited, and she should have recognised him. However, the vibe that Leylin gave off to her was extremely foreign, and dangerous!
This piqued the curiosity of the woman.
“If I’m able to bring this Legendary stranger to our camp, our divine god will definitely give me a handsome reward…”
As she thought of this, her eyes were only more coquettish, and even her words sounded as if they were honey-coated, intoxicating and tantalising.
However, Leylin did not bother with her at all. Instead, he chose to walk to a corner and give off an unfriendly vibe.
“Damn it, is he blind?”
Evida could only curse him, and doubted her beautiful appearance.
“Well… Now that we are opposing each other, there are simply no
benefits to be gotten!"
Evida stared furiously at Leylin and stood out to speak to the good alignment camp. “That skeleton demon has already entered the deeper parts. Do we have to fight here and let it take all of the benefits?”
Evidently, the evil faction still held the upper hand with numbers despite their lack of trust in one another.
“We’re here to capture the skeleton demon Illyrio. The floating city is not our concern!”
The leader of the paladins was a middle aged man wearing shining armour. He made his declaration in a low voice.
Even paladins had to learn to compromise. If they, at this moment, begin to shout things like ‘eliminate all evil’, the only outcome would be them being grinded to a pulp by the evil alignment.
“Cough… We want a certain item from the floating city!” Rogero said.
“Very well! Although there are certain conflicts of interest, but it doesn’t mean that we cannot mediate! Why don’t we enter the floating city, and obtain the items we want to our own capabilities?” Evida suggested.
It was apparent that none of these people here wanted to take action with the absence of a tangible benefit.
When two parties have close to equal strength, coming to an agreement was a common matter.
Even though the opposing camp had not mentioned a word, the legendary monk quietly made his way to the deeper parts of the valley after burying the corpse.
“Hng!”
Evida snorted cutely with a satisfied expression, as she brought her men deeper in. The two parties too began to make their way in.
never thought that he would be here too. It seems like the castle earlier which had been reduced to a rubble was his doing…”
This was a lich! They were the pinnacle of necromancy, having abandoned their bodies and split their souls to obtain some degree of immortality. Some extremely powerful liches were even strong enough to face gods!

Skeleton Lich Illyrio was someone Leylin had heard of before. Rumour had it that an accidental leakage from one of his soul experiments had contaminated and killed half a kingdom! The paladins had put him on the wanted list, and he was an extremely vile existence that had to be wiped out at all costs.

‘Not all legendary necromancers are liches, but all liches are legendary necromancers… His movements make him seem like he’s a high-ranked legendary, above rank 25…’ Leylin immediately marked the lich as the biggest threat to his operation.

Evida looked around, suddenly asking, “The Dead Sea scrolls passed down by our church indicate the floating city will appear deep in Frostfall Valley. Do you have any more information?”

The group sunk into silence. Even if they had possessed the information, it wouldn’t be revealed so easily. Rogero was the one who spoke in the end, “We have information from the esteemed diviner Frederic, our location is even more vague…”

“Then things are going to get troublesome… Illyrio has a partial inheritance from ancient arcanists, and probably knows more about the floating city than we do. He might even have entered the dimensional fortress already…” Evida bit at her lips.
‘Hm?’ Upon seeing this, Leylin shook his head inside, ‘Seems like they don’t have accurate information either. Looks like I’m the one that knows more…’

He couldn’t help but recall the time and location he’d decoded. It would be when the black crows cried out to the bloodmoon, within the Frostfall Valleys slanting to the east of Cygnus.

“It’s about time…” Leylin looked up, gazing into the horizon. The sun descended slowly, the light dimming. The temperature of the region dropped, as was the norm in the western desert. The daytime sun could roast people alive here, and the night could freeze them to death. Few could survive besides some like the sand tribes.

‘It’s the right month and time. The location is slanting to the east of Cygnus? Based on astrology, that should be…’ Leylin’s eyes twinkled as he immediately calculated the precise location of the floating city. ‘If the skeleton lich obtained an arcanist inheritance as well, he should be lying in wait there…’

“Since we know that it’s deep within the Frostfall Valleys in general, how about we split up in our search?” Evida suggested at that exact moment.

“Mm, sure.” Rogero and his group of powerful elites from the good faction naturally didn’t want to mix with an evil person like Leylin. They immediately agreed.

The legendary monk showed his intent with action as well. Numerous figures scattered as they cast many detection spells, everything dazzling Leylin.

Just as Leylin planned to head in a certain direction, an aroma travelled over as Evida followed close behind Leylin, “What is it? Do you wish to head that way, my lord?”

“Mm, I’ll take a look. The floating city will create a huge ruckus when it appears anyway, anyone will be able to find it within the valleys…”
Leylin would always decline invitations from this woman who might have been connected to the gods.
“But the people who enter first will still have better chances. Or am I wrong?” Evida’s beautiful eyes were trained on Leylin as she spoke, hinting at something.
“Do you intend to go this way? I can leave it to you…” Leylin rolled his shoulders back nonchalantly. This attitude caused Evida to feel doubtful.
“Hehe… How could I steal your path? I was just joking…” She twisted her beautiful hips after she spoke, leading her powerful group away. It caused Leylin to blink. ‘Has this woman discovered something?’

*Rumble!* All of a sudden, something happened! Bright, brilliant holy light rose from a direction, filling the skies and brimming with holiness and righteousness.
“Illyrio, accept punishment of justice!”
A thick voice travelled all over, holding within a steel determination.
“It’s a paladin, and a legendary one at that!”
Leylin and other evil ones had terror showing in their eyes as if they had met their natural enemy, while staring at the silver rays in the sky.
“It’s the Judge!” “Quick, go there! He’s discovered the lich!” Other paladins cheered as they twisted the blades of light in their hands. As if trying to threaten him, they glanced over a few times like children that could now rely on their parents.
Evidently, once their legendary judge took care of Illyrio, they definitely wouldn’t mind wiping out this evil that was Leylin.
“Keke… Felbard, I see that you haven’t died yet…” The sound of a cold snicker could be heard. A dense wave of dead spirit clouds covered the skies that even the holy light could not penetrate through.
Along with the intense dragon roars and terrifying dragon aura, a tremendous bone dragon with two heads revealed a bit of itself from the clouds.

“Die!” The legendary paladin exclaimed, body burning with holy flames as the sword in his hands turned into a pillar of light, breaking the dark clouds apart.

The dead spirits spread out, revealing a crystal skeleton with a black robe. The lich now stood at the head of the ancient dragon, and with a wave of his hands, countless bons appeared to form a bone shield with skeletal decorations, withstanding the paladin’s sudden attack.

“It’s him! Illyrio! That must be the place where the floating city is about to appear… Go!”

Immense energy undulations alarmed all of those powerful existences as they darted towards the place where the battle was.

“Damn it… he’s so unprofessional at hiding. I was planning to lead a few away…”

Leylin sighed inside and headed in Illyrio’s direction. That was the exact opposite direction he was planning to go towards!

Leylin had intentionally made a wrong choice, hoping to cheat a few of the strong beings. Unfortunately, the appearance of this legendary paladin had spoiled his plans.

“On this day… nobody can obstruct me!”

After announcing something so huge, the fire in Illyrio’s eyes blazed brighter as he extended his palm made of bones and caressed the head of the bone dragon.

[Legendary Skeletal Strengthening!] [Boost to Legendary Pet!]

Berserk spell rays were launched at the bone dragon. *Roar!* It burst out in an earth-shattering, angered snarl, and its terrifying dragon breath was launched, corroding everything in its way.

“A legendary dragon’s breath?” After seeing the attack, the legendary paladin immediately looked grim and covered himself
with a milky-white armour.
[Holy Light Protection]!
[Holy Light Cross Slash!]
A cross of pillars of light rose in the air, colliding violently with the bone dragon’s breath and began to be consumed rapidly.
The terrifying storm from a battle between two high-ranked legendary beings finally caused some fear amongst the surrounding powerful beings.
It was only at this moment that they remembered the reputation of the skeletal lich and the legendary paladin.
Of course, there were also some who proceeded forth fearlessly, and obviously those with similar strength.
“Even the pet is a Legend? As expected of a high-ranked one!”
Leylin moved forward unhurriedly, getting closer and closer to the centre of the battle. Terrifying waves of wind swept through the area, but that did not even result a crease in his clothing.
“You are indeed powerful! I’m sorry, but I think I might need your help later!”
Evida now looked extremely grim. The black-robed people behind her all came in front while taking turns to block the stray ripples from the battle. After seeing Leylin dealing with the situation without issue, she immediately drew close to him with a charming smile.
“My goal is also the floating city, so there’s no way we can work together. The spoils won’t be easy to split…”
Leylin apathetically shook his head to reject her.
“You never know. My target isn’t the entire floating city. Besides, the people there will need us to work with them to cope…”
Evida’s serpent head whip pointed at the paladins and monk ahead, looking relaxed.
“Hm? Crap!”
However, at this moment, Leylin’s expression suddenly changed as
he retreated by a large distance.
“What’s going on?”
Evida looked puzzled, and soon felt a surge of spatial force crashing to her body, causing her to be sent flying while coughing blood.
The few black-clothed beings in front of her had been burnt to ashes under the immense force, and nothing was left behind.
*Rumble!*
The lich and paladins who were in battle in mid-air simultaneously stopped, and then flew back by a large distance.
A powerful spatial storm that formed a tornado began to wreak havoc on the area.
Leylin looked up at the moon in the sky, which now had a bloody-red creeping all over it.
“When the black crows cry out to the blood moon! It is time… The floating city will soon do a spatial leap here. I never expected the storm formed before the appearance would be so violent…”
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“I t’s the floating city! My floating city is finally about to appear!” The skeleton lich Illyrio burning gaze was fixed on the core of the spatial storm, the fire in his eyes blazing brightly.

*Rumble!* The air trembled and the earth thundered, and the Frostfall Valleys lamented as if unable to take on the pressure. Whether those of the good or evil factions, they all gazed up after retreating a large distance, watching the miraculous scene of the appearance of the floating city.

The stars that filled the skies seemed to lose all their lustre, and it was as if a supernova was born in the sky as a star more dazzling than any other descended, enveloping the world with colour.

*Bzzt! Bzzt!*

Terrifying spatial undulations spread in all directions and in the blink of an eye created a gigantic and deep pit in the ground. The shadow of a dimensional plane loomed over, as if there was a single point of it trying to fuse with the prime material plane!

Even while it was a tiny dot, that was only in comparison between the sizes of two worlds. The tiny point that linked the two unceasingly increased till it formed the figure of the floating city!

This was a large base that was a hemisphere. The shadows of the roofs of many buildings could be seen, forming a large human city. In the Nether Arcanist Era, the floating city not only was the main area for arcanists, but also a large city and social hub. It could
easily fit a hundred thousand people without it getting crowded. The four elemental plane seemed to have opened a special energy channel as immense energy surged and whistled forward. It was as if the end of the world for the western desert. If not for there being few people here already, there might have been a terrifying catastrophe or deaths here.

……

After goodness knew how long, the astounding storm finally dissipated, and everything calmed down. A dark shadow was projected to the ground, hiding the glow from the stars and the moon. Leylin looked up and found a large shadow. This was the base of the floating city. This immense and vast city had now completely descended into the prime material world! Watching the large body of the city as well as the bright arcane runes, the whole world seemed to stop breathing. Deathly silence! In that moment, even the Legends on the ground sunk into a temporary silence. “Keke… my floating city!” Illyrio was the first to react, riding his bone dragon mount and pouncing towards the city. “Dream on!” The legendary paladin obviously could not just watch as he got to the city and soared up high as if stepping on air, body moving rapidly. “We’re going too! That’s the floating city, and the only one in the World of Gods! It’s the crystal of the Nether Arcane civilisation…” Other legends also began to get restless.

……
In that moment, within the floating city where nobody seemed to be around, sparks flickered within a certain control room. Lights gathered to form flower elves that were around ten centimetres tall. The little faces now looked stiff as they spat out in a robotic tone, “Dimensional leap completed. Damage to floating city at 1.77%. Energy consumed at 75.99%. Activating maintenance procedures.” After which, a glaring red alarm sounded as a layer of screen projections showed Illyrio outside. He had his bone dragon pet fight against the legendary paladin while he headed towards the city, and was right about to enter the city’s territory.

‘Discovered intruder. Strength at grade A3, determined to be high-ranked Legendary. Activating energy membrane… Beep! Energy membrane damaged at 52.33%, unable to be activated. Changed to automatic defensive mode. Activating magic missiles with automatic calibration and firing.’

With the commands from the intellectual core, the armours at the sides of the floating city opened up to reveal steel cannons that were like a beehive. In that instant, the floating city turned into a large porcupine!

‘Target calibrated. Launching magic missiles!’

*Boom!* A boiling hot white energy of pillar whistled as it shot out of the cannon, arriving before the skeleton lich in a moment. “Oh, shit.”

The skeleton lich somehow managed to show immense fear on his expression.

*Tzz tzz!* After the glowing white rays, there was no sign of the lich left whatsoever.

“It- it can’t be! That’s a high-ranked Legend!”

The terrifying might of the cannon finally scared off the greedy Legends. Only then did they remember what made the floating city so terrifying.
“This is only the automatic cannons without a legendary arcanist working it. The most powerful dimensional cannon of laws and pure energy defensive membrane has yet to appear…” Leylin gazed up at the floating city that was showing off its strength, the fervour in his eyes becoming more obvious. “But… that bone dragon hasn’t disappeared. Seems like Illyrio isn’t a high-ranked Legend for nothing…” Leylin noticed this and slowly retreated without leaving traces behind. *Whoosh…* Now, white light flickered. A layer of bone powder turned into a gale and blew by the area Illyrio had disappeared. The ashes from his bones converged to form a crystal skeleton. “Tsk tsk… thankfully, I still had a substitute. This amount of strength is as expected of the floating city…” Illyrio floated in the air but no longer had the guts to just enter. He used the joint in his wrist to and used his palm to support his chin, the fire in his eyes dimming. “It’s getting difficult… Even with the dimensional leap consuming most of its energy reserves, just the least powerful automatic defences can’t be broken through by a legend as long as the intellectual core exists… If I don’t obtain control over the floating city soon, the personifications of the gods will definitely strike out… Things will be troublesome then…” Illyrio gritted his teeth, “It’s a pity that I only obtained a portion of the inheritance of the arcanists and didn’t become one. If not…” At this moment, the floating city produced a loud rumble. Within the core control room, the personification of the core that were the flower elves had screens that appeared before them, gathering images of the people below. ‘Beep! Discovered arcanists! Activating transmission mode. Starting spell formation to receive them!’ Numerous screens shifted till they locked onto two beings. One had
a silver mask and looked extremely mysterious, and it was Leylin, who was planning to make his move!
The other was actually Rogero!
*Rumble!* With the sound, a bridge of light shot out from the top of the highest building of the floating city, landing on Leylin and Rogero who were caught unprepared.
With a flash of light, the two disappeared.
“Huh? What’s going on?”
Evita froze.
“Crap, the two that disappeared should have been arcanists! The master of the floating city must have set up a certain procedure for his legacy. Only when arcanists appear will the floating city take them in and even transfer the authority to control it!
Illyrio now looked very anxious.
“What do I do? What do I do?”
Just when Illyrio was gritting his teeth, a new situation broke out at the ground.
“I have no choice… god!”
Evita closed her eyes, and the next time she opened them, there were now a pair of dark golden eyes. A tremendous might had descended into her body.
“The personification of a god has descended! So she used the method of having the god possess her body!”
“Has a god already found out about this place? How quick!”
“God!” The guards Evita had brought along, who were lucky enough to survive, quickly knelt.
“We can’t let other organisations get control of the city! They’ve activated a spatial channel, which means there’s a hole in their tight defences! I’ll send you right in, so find it at all costs!”
‘Evita’ spoke unhurriedly, and a faint goddess’ image appeared behind her.
Mighty divine force turned into a terrifying wave that swept those
black-clothed people into the city.
The consumption like this must be terrifying, because once all this was done, Evita passed out and crumbled to the ground.
“Now’s the moment. It’s a good chance!”
Making his mind, a rhombus-shaped red-blue metal tile was shattered and formed spatial force. This allowed Illyrio to go along the gods’ tears and enter the city.
Dazzling divine force rays flickered on the legendary monk and paladin, allowing them to enter the floating city.
“Is this… the inside of the floating city?”
Leylin’s eyes blinked open as he took in his surroundings.
“Yes! Welcome to Shadow City, where the flowers of the Nether Arcanists never wither!”
A flower elf projected itself in front of him, flapping the translucent double wings behind it as it surrounded Leylin.
“Congratulations, Arcanist! You have obtained a chance to inherit the floating city and all knowledge of the mighty Great Silver Hand!”
“Chance?”
“Yes. As two have been determined to be qualified, one of you will inherit the floating city!”
The flower elf spoke primly, obviously carrying out the will of the original master loyally.
“Speak. What is to be done?”
It was impossible for this intellectual core to go against its procedures. Besides, this floating city was not a ruins of the past, and since the flow of information and firewalls were still intact, using his mind and the A.I. Chip to invade it would be just stupid.
This was why Leylin went straight to the point.
“This is the floating city’s core energy room, and also where the Mise energy core is…”
The flower elf showed an image. This was within an empty room,
where there was a floating ball emitting lights that showed the heat it emitted.
This is your current location!” The fairy showed Leylin a map, indicating his current position within the floating city.

“You must compete with the other qualified person. The first to reach the power room will obtain the authority over the Mise energy core. That will allow you to take control of the floating city and get control over the core…”

The fairy’s bright eyes were trained on Leylin, voice robotic, “Please take note. Master has set up various hindrances along the way, and… Because I do not have enough power, a few invaders have entered the floating city…”

Scenes flashed and separated into smaller squares, allowing Leylin to see the skeleton lich, legendary paladin, monks and other people. “Have a few worms snuck in as well? With the floating city’s own defensive strength, there should be a few specific methods or gods acting in the shadows that allowed them to break through the outer defences of the city.”

Leylin grinned, thinking back to Rogero who had also been chosen. “I never expected this… a legendary with a reputation for his combat skills also has the strength of an arcanist! Rogero, you’ve cheated a whole continent… Pretty good… but unfortunately, you met me!”

Even if it was just a conjecture, Leylin knew what the floating city’s master had planned. It was definitely something to do with testing
the power of arcanists. He was now a legendary arcanist. Even in the Netheril era, he had about the same strength as the master of the city, which made him qualified to enter the arcanist elder union and obtain his own floating city. He was obviously unafraid.

On the other hand, Rogero too had become a legendary based on his combat skills. However, even with training hard in private, his arcanist ranking wouldn’t be that high.

In this area, Leylin could overlook his opponent.

“The most important thing right now is to get control over the city before the gods react!” Leylin took a look at the map that the fairy projected, and the A.I. Chip recorded everything before choosing the most suitable route.

“You who are qualified, I hope you can succeed in becoming my master!” The fairy glanced at Leylin’s back, and then gradually disappeared…

After walking through a path styled in a futuristic, sci-fi way, Leylin entered a drawing room.

*Chi chi!* Two magic golems that looked like monkeys stood in wait, large robotic eyes shooting out red lights.

“Gatekeepers? Even with the A.I. Chip choosing the most optimal route, I need to pass through at least 20 stages. I need to quicken my speed…”

Leylin did not stop walking and walked in between the two puppets, figure disappearing into the path.

After he left, the two magic golems exploded into pieces… At the other side, Rogero was advancing quickly, his lance emitting terrifying qi as he ripped a steel door apart.

“An opportunity! The best opportunity!”

Rogero’s eyes blazed, “I’ve hidden my arcanist inheritance for so long, and I finally have this chance! The floating city will definitely be mine…”
At this thought, the image of his competitor showed up in his mind as his emitted a bloodthirsty air.
“I must get the floating city. All who get in my way must die!”

……

Compared to the test that the two of them got, the other invaders were treated poorly.
*Boom! Boom!*
“There’s so much wealth from ancient civilisation, and every single item is priceless. The price of one would be enough to purchase half of a large city. Why do you still keep chasing after me?” Illyrio turned and yelled, sounding distressed.
“Destroying evil is the role the heavens have given to me. Did you think mere greed over wealth can confuse me?” The paladin looked resolute as he followed behind relentlessly, causing the skeleton lich to have to run tirelessly and feel annoyed.
Usually, he could just turn back and fight three hundred rounds with the paladin. With the floating city and remains of historical civilisation for him to explore here, having to waste his energy on fighting caused Illyrio to feel his heart bleeding.
“Just you wait…” He knew that paladins had brains like concrete, and could only come up with ways to eliminate him.
“Beep! Detected invader. Automatically activating defence mode. Activating metal golems!” Once the two entered a plaza, a robotic voice sounded out. A large gate suddenly opened as a puppet with armour walked out. Many energy fields surrounded it, causing the skeleton lich and paladin to sense immense danger. They could not help but stop in their tracks.
“It’s the metal golem! The legendary golem!” The lich sounded as if he was sighing in awe, “Such a high-ranked golem is the top secret of the Netheril arcanists. Wizards now can’t create imitations
of it…”
*Boom!*
After this, however, the skeleton lich could no longer laugh. The golem instantly vanished in an instant, and the next time it reappeared, it was behind Illyrio, large steel fist aimed at his head. “So fast! It’s almost like instant shifting. Is this really a golem?” Spells flashed continuously at Illyrio’s body as he quickly set up several bone walls, the bone spurs and bone lances shooting towards the key areas of the golem and bringing with them great gusts of wind.
*Crackle!* The many attacks reached the defensive surface layer of the metal golem and created sounds like rainfall, and then scattered. *Rumble!* *Ka-cha!* The golem cared not for these attacks and raised its huge fist, preparing to strike at the bone wall. There was a huge whistling sound in the air, and the bones flew everywhere. A defence that a lich had formed with all his strength actually was completely destroyed under this attack!
*Boom!*
By the time the legendary paladin arrived, all he saw was the lich embedded into the wall. He was perfectly ‘printed’ onto the wall, neck twisted at a very odd angle. If he was alive, he would long since have died.
Even if he was a lich, the fire in his eyes had dimmed quite a bit, and he was evidently gravely injured. “You monster full of evil! Prepare to be judged by justice!”
Upon seeing this, the paladin heaved a deep sigh of relief, both hands raising the large sword that signified light and judgement. ‘Beep! Enemy discovered!’ However, before the paladin’s sword could fall, a metal golem had already arrived behind him, electronic eyes emitting dangerous red rays. For legendary metal golems, there could be liches or paladins, but
all were invaders and needed to be exterminated. If Leylin had been here, he would have exclaimed ‘Such high technology’! Or ‘Transformers’, but unfortunately, the paladin with an inflexible mind did not have so many stray thoughts. In his eyes, metal golems like these were not much better than demons of the abyss or devils of hell. ‘Beep! Enemy scanned to be model of ‘paladin’. Activating extermination plan number 2. Activating extreme gravity engine. Activating nuclear furnace!’ The steel golem made sounds that the paladin could not understand then spread its arms.

*Boom!* The gravity around suddenly increased, and the ground caved in, now seeming extremely solid. The chest area of the golem opened up to reveal a red hot furnace that rotated in a turbine, producing a frightening whirr. “What- what monster is this!” Noticing that his attack at full power had been easily blocked, his exemplary sword that was almost legendary grade melted in the furnace at the golem’s chest. No matter how strong his mind was, the paladin now held hints of despair… A similar scene could be witnessed at various parts of the city. The outsiders who had entered without permission were now under terrifying attacks, and there already were casualties. After all, the floating city was a nest of the Great Arcanists of ancient times, so how could they just allow enemies to barge in? At this moment, other ‘guests’ had also arrived outside the city. “I never thought even with the consumption from dimensional leaping, the defences of the floating city is still so terrifying. The divine force that the body I’m possessing can amass is nearly depleted…” ‘Evida’ opened her eyes, gazing at the large floating city while looking expectant.
However, this relaxed look only maintained for a moment. Evida quickly turned to the other side, “Her Highness, Mystra, and others…”
“We meet again…”
A young girl dressed in black walked out from the shadows, having the dignity and coldness that only gods possessed.
She gazed at the empty area next to her, looking hostile.
Golden lights flashed, and numerous orc gods also appeared. They were all avatars, causing fear to appear in Evida’s eyes.
For true gods to descend into the prime material plane, there was the most dangerous truebody saintly form, as well as an avatar and possessing a body.
An avatar was a clone formed of divine force and godhood, while possessing a body would require taking the body of a follower.
In comparison, possessing the body might be safe, but the power could not compare to an avatar.
“After the hall meeting of the gods, there have been few gatherings between many gods…”
An elderly being wearing white, scholarly attire had a wise look in his eyes. This was Oghma, the god of knowledge and a powerful greater god.
“After all, this has to do with arcanists and the floating city…”
The other gods all went quiet, focusing on the Weave Goddess, Mystra.
“Arcanist civilisation must never be allowed to be revived. That is the bottom line!” Mystra announced first. The many gods who had gathered revealed a tacit understanding. While they were confident that their avatars could enter the floating city, they were still afraid of the enemy. Who knew if there were traps specifically meant for gods, left behind by the Great Arcanist in the city? “It’s not advisable to go against it for too long. How about we…” However, just as Oghma broke the silence, an astounding change happened in the city. Dazzling rays enveloped the city and teleportation rays filled the area, causing it to seem translucent. “Dimensional leap? No, it’s a random teleportation. Stop it!” The many gods quickly made their moves, using powerful divine force to form a golden sealing web. However, they were too late. The floating city completely vanished, leaving behind gods exchanging gazes.

……

A while ago. Near the core power testing room, Rogero stared hard at the blue test tube in front of him, looking nervous.
“The expectations that the Great Arcanist had for his successor are a little too much. Even as a high-ranked arcanist, it’s still too difficult to successfully brew the mild blue light potion. Thankfully, I have this…”

Rogero placed a white crystal under the test tube, and in the moment that it made contact with the test tube, the crystal instantly heated up.

“A stabilising potion that increase chances of success by 50%—The dream stone, Sage Abofeld! Success or failure shall be decided in this moment!”

Rogero took a deep breath and placed another pipette at the mouth of the test tube.

“If the potion turns blue, that means it’s a success. If not, it’s a failure… There’s only one step till I get the inheritance…”

Rogero prayed the most devoutly he ever had in his whole life. “Whatever god you are, please bless me! If I can succeed this time, I will become your most pious follower…”

It was unclear if a remote god had favoured him, or if this was luck.

The moment after the pipette dripped a bit of the potion, the entire test tube began to boil. Thick liquid boiled and kept changing colour, till it stabilised to a faint blue.

At the beginning, the blue was not stable, and Rogero could feel cold sweat beading on his forehead. However, the dream stone that was like white crystal emitted white rays that enveloped the entire test tube.

The mild blue potion stabilised, and he immediately looked elated, “It’s a success!”

He quickly darted over to the crystal door with a large vertical pupil carved in and splashed the freshly-made mild blue light potion onto the eye.
After the potion made contact with the eye, it was as if sponge met water as it was absorbed.
Rogero looked nervous as he waited for the results, feeling uneasy and nervous.
‘Beep! Brewing of mild blue light potion is successful!’
Time seemed to pass slowly, but it also seemed to be mere seconds. When the robotic voice sounded, Rogero could not help but give a whoop of delight.
*Rumble!*
The eye rolled and produced the mechanical sound of unlocking. The large door slowly opened, revealing a path straight to the power room.
“Haha… I’ve succeeded. I’ve succeeded!” Rogero roared in his excitement. “As expected, there aren’t many arcanists left around. That black-clothed person might be an arcanist, but his ranking can’t be higher than mine. I definitely was the one to pass the test first, so I’ll get full control…”
While looking emotional, Rogero’s footsteps never slowed. The path was short. With his speed, he quickly reached the core power room and saw the Mise energy core that was continuously providing the floating city with strength, floating in the air.
“Haha… as expected, I was the quickest!”
Upon seeing that nobody was around, Rogero could not hold himself back and chuckled loudly.
“Mine, mine! The ancient floating city, the remains of the Great Arcanist and all the arcanists’ treasures all mine and mine alone…”
Rogero looked expectant as he headed to the Mise energy core. He looked moved and greedy as he reached his trembling right hand out.
The fairy appeared nearby, watching on expressionlessly.
“Intellectual core, hand over control to me!” Rogero shouted, “As
the master, I’ll definitely treat you well…”

*Beep!* The fairy nodded expressionlessly, and the flooring under the Mise energy core opened up to reveal something like a control desk. A purple crystal flickered with dazzling rays above.

“Good job!”

Rogero laughed heartily and his right hand reached forward. However, just a centimetre away from the purple crystal, something happened!

Glaring rays surged and enveloped his body. These were spell rays from a teleportation spell formation.

The high-ranked legendary arcane spell: Dimensional Banishment!

“No! Mine… my everything…” Rogero looked unresigned as he vanished, leaving behind his voice that echoed in the empty secret room.

“Aha… he took so long to get here. I waited so long…” A transparent human figure walked over from a corner of the secret room. The illusion on his body gradually disappeared. This was Leylin!

He was now yawning, looking nonchalant. “He couldn’t even recognise the dimensional banishment trap. Ha, to think he was a high-ranked arcanist. Looks like there’s something wrong with his inheritance. I’m pretty sure it’s incomplete…

“But even if he recognised it, the way to get rid of this legendary spell is for it to work once. He made me wait for so long…” Leylin looked dissatisfied.

“Only a legendary Great Arcanist like you can detect the arcane spell trap that master set up!”

The fairy now bowed low to Leylin, “While I’d already confirmed that only you, who is also a legendary Great Arcanist, can take over the city that is the glory of the Netheril era, I had to do this for procedure’s sake. Please be understanding…”

“It’s nothing much… Proceed with the transferring of authority
Leylin headed to the control desk. The dimensional banishment spell had now been completely removed.

"The Mise energy core... Rumors have it that any item that touches it will be hit with something like a legendary disjunction spell and crumble into numerous particles. How powerful can this be?"

Leylin sighed, right index finger touching the purple crystal.

'Beep! Confirmation of qualified person. Beginning transferring of control.' The fairy cooperated with the operation. Leylin felt that his self linked with the entire city, and that it seemed to become part of his body, and he could even see scenes of the invaders.

[Beep! Obtained control over floating city. Supplementary scan ongoing.]

The A.I. Chip’s voice sounded. With its help, Leylin could easily control the floating city. In terms of his proficiency, he immediately reached the level of the original owner.

"The energy reserves are at less than 50%, and there are also divine force undulations detected outside?"

Leylin looked at the report and frowned slightly.

"Fairy, begin preparations to teleport floating city. Activate concealing spell formations and spatial location confusion spell formations..."

Leylin commanded.

"Understood, master! The previous master always called me Shaylin, but you can call me something else..." The exquisite face of the fairy broke out in a smile and carried out his order.

"Also, send me to these locations. I still need to take care of a few worms before teleporting..."

Leylin waved his arms high spiritedly, but at this moment, his expression changed.

A strange beast skin scroll automatically floated from his
dimensional pouch. The seals that Leylin had put on had all cracked.
The Mise energy core emitted terrifying energy undulations, creating a pillar of light the size of a thumb at the middle, shining on the scroll all of a sudden.
The energy that could break up all matter did not cause the scroll to be damaged, but the luster on it grew more dazzling as it slowly opened up. It revealed an arcane spell model that was so complicated it was terrifying.
[Beep! Discovered high-rank arcane spell model. To scan?] The A.I. Chip asked.
“Yes!”
With Leylin’s order, the A.I. Chip immediately scanned and recorded the model. After which, the scroll seemed to be done with its mission and rolled itself back.
“As expected, this scroll isn’t something dead but contains some will of Distorted Shadow?”
In Leylin’s tests, the scroll obviously sealed something amazing. If it were opened suddenly, it might result in terrifying contamination or curses.
But now, under the radiation from the only Mise energy core in the continent, this seemed to be the correct way to open it. He had been given a terrifyingly complicated arcane spell model.
“This…”
Leylin took a look at the A.I. Chip’s taskbar. As the spell model was exceedingly large and difficult, the effects and abilities still needed time to be deciphered. The only thing Leylin could confirm was that this spell had a very high grade!
“The price for all these arrangements and even giving me my bloodline ability is finally showing itself?”
Leylin looked solemn, but his eyes were now full of bloodlust and violence all mixed together.
“What are you standing there for? Teleport quickly!”
Leylin yelled at the fairy who seemed to have been scared stupid.
Leylin knew the principle of equal exchange. However, seeing some of the tricks Distorted Shadow had pulled on the sly, he was left in a bad mood. At this moment, he decided to vent all of his anger on the intruders. The teleportation light shone, and Leylin’s body vanished. As for the intruders in the different parts of the floating city, they were about to meet their maker!

......

It was a complete mess at the arcane field. The metal golem’s head was missing a huge chunk, and the right arm was ripped off. As for the energy core, it stopped functioning completely. Even though it stood still, that malevolent and dangerous feeling still radiated from its body, striking fear into the hearts of others.

“Pant…Pant… Thank you!” The legendary paladin half knelt on the ground in the middle of a pool of blood. He was grievously injured.

“Cough…Cough… Saving someone from dying and banishing evil… Cough cough… Is what we were born for…” This was the monk from before, but his injuries were far more severe. His chest had already lost a huge piece of flesh, and blood flowed from his
lips endlessly. Even with the constant healing spells, it was impossible to restore his body to a fighting state. “The floating city is really this strong… Just one metal golem and it’s so troublesome…” The paladin sighed, apprehension still in his eyes. He fought a bitter and losing battle with the golem earlier. If not for the sudden appearance of the monk, who used his tough body to take on most of the hits, he would have died a long time ago. “Hey hey… And me? Why haven’t you thanked me…” The crystal head of the skeleton lich began to chatter. Under extreme danger, he put all past feuds behind him and chose to team up with the other two. After an arduous battle they had won, but this demon was unlucky, left with only its head intact. At the moment, the paladin gritted his teeth and stood up before walking over. “Banish all evil!” “Wh…Damn! We were allies mere moments ago, how can you just about face?” The lich began to wail, “Help…Save me…” In actuality, he wasn’t afraid at all. As long as his phylactery survived, he could resurrect after death. It just required a very long time. “Forgive me. Even if we worked together, to eliminate evil is my calling.” The paladin stood in front of the lich, holy light forming a sword in his hand. “Scram!” Teleportation light flashed at that moment, and the paladin grew stupefied as he was knocked away. “I’m in a very bad mood right now. Tell me, how do you all want to die?” Leylin walked out in the silver mask, looking at the three injured people like a god of death. This made Illyrio feel as if he had met a demigod being in the distant past. Intense, overbearing evil that can devour everything whole.
“It’s that Legendary from the evil camp, now that he has control over the floating city’s teleportation portals, does it mean that the authorisation has been handed over to him?”
The crystal skull on the floor tumbled several rounds before stopping, the dark fire in its eyes stopped flickering.
“What an intense evil... The magnitude now is countless times more than before... Had he just been putting up a front all these while?”
The pupils of the paladin and the monk narrowed, as they tracked the item that they were struck by. It was the decapitated heads of the other contenders inside the floating city!
“You are the only intruders left, after disposing the lot of you I will begin the transfer of authority...”
Leylin’s features were hidden under his mask, so no one knew his current expression. Only his pair of eyes could be seen, cold and indifferent, as if it could freeze the soul of one who looked into his eyes.
The evil black light covered the grounds. Compared to him, the aura of the demon seemed like a kiddy item.
“Cough... Have the others been slain by you?”
The paladin coughed, time to time spitting blood from his lips.
“Most of them had perished under the arcane traps. As for the rest, they have been done in by me. It’s only you three left...”
An icy killing intent was prominent in Leylin’s voice. Suddenly, he appeared behind the legendary monk, “You possess the most threat amongst the three of them...”
“So, let me invite you to go to hell...”
Leylin’s right hand seemed to turn into a pair of devilish claws which tore through the hardened defense of the monk, reaching for the heart directly.
“Urgh... Before this trip, I felt the restlessly during one of my meditation... As if some great evil was about to be borne... Hence
I followed my heart and was directed to the western desert…”
Droplets of blood dripped down, momentarily taking away the pain seen on the monk’s face. He inhaled violently, as if pacing back and forth through death’s doors.
“I originally thought that… It was the descent of the floating city, which would bring great destruction to the world. But I know now it’s was due to your existence…”
The monk struggled to force the words out of his parched lips.
“Too much nonsense…” Leylin clenched his fist, and the monk’s heart was shattered into countless bits.
“Dead?”
The paladin and Illyrio’s eyes dimmed, as if seeing something unbelievable happening within minutes.
“Even if I have to ignite my soul, I have to stop the evil in this world…”
The next moment, the monk’s eyes which had dulled violently opened, and emitted light rays even stronger than the sun. His right palm now took on a golden hue as he gently pushed out. The force felt even stronger than being crushed by a mountain, and even the air was pushed away. It was unstoppable.
Legendary technique — Vajra’s Palm!
*Boom!* The golden palm pushed through the phantom behind Leylin’s back and turned the construct behind into smithereens.
“You’re not bad huh! Old man, is this the legendary ability — Life After Death? You are indeed a powerful and gifted monk, even after your body is destroyed, you are able to sustain life for a period of time…”
The monk’s life was extremely tenacious, and now with this legendary ability, even if his heart was taken and having sustained grave injuries from before, he could still produce such a might.
“Giving your all to beat me huh? Why do I feel like a final boss like the great demon king in the novels of my past life…”
Leylin squinted his eyes, and saw all of the righteousness represented behind the palm of the monk. “A pity that an attack of this magnitude… It’s not enough to hurt me…” Leylin mocked, as his nostrils flared. “Let me put you into utter despair…” The floating city can never land in his hands, if not the world will enter even more suffering…” The paladin now too struggled to get up, “The final holy buff…” Radiant rays shone on the paladin, and stopped all of his injuries in their tracks. Very soon, a sword made of light appeared on his hands. “In the name of righteousness…” The paladin held his sword up high, the energy swirling into a violent gale. “Divine Intervention!” The radiant sword made of holy light carried the intent of killing as it sealed Leylin’s retreat route. “Blazing Point! Vajra’s Palm!” The monk ignited all of his life force into blazing fuel. The palm which covered the skies seemed to be able to incinerate anything in its path. The demon Illyrio who was lying at the side had an extremely unsightly expression. He knew that against this wave of destructive attacks, if he was in Leylin’s shoes, there would be irreversible damage caused! “I’ve already mentioned it… There’s no use…” Under Leylin’s mask, there seemed to be… lamentation. “Right now, I am not someone you guys can oppose…” Against these ultimate attacks, Leylin indifferently raised his hands. “Time…be still…” *Suuuu* At this instance, the dust stopped in midair, and the air grew thick
and dense. Even those attacks which could destroy heaven and earth were stopped.

*Buzz…*

After Illyrio regained his consciousness, he only saw the two corpses of the other two legendary being shattered into pieces.

“That moment earlier…. No, this…. This is an arcane spell at the legendary rank… The divine ability of the legends that can stop time. Only legendary ranked arcanists can cast this spell — Timestop…”

“He is actually a legendary ranked arcanist? Haven’t people of this calibre perished a long time ago? Has he survived since the Mise period?”

The dark flame in Illyrio’s eyes continuously flickered, as if struggling with his thoughts. The performance that Leylin displayed earlier had scared him.

“I can only stop time in this region… It’s still a mile away from fully controlling time. However, power like this is still extremely intoxicating. It is indeed an arcane spell from the limits of rank 8. I could even feel a strand of the laws of time…”

Leylin exclaimed inwardly, before walking to the demon.

“Subjugation, or death?”

“Subjugation? Ahahaha… hahaha, You’re very strong, at the legendary arcanist level, and also control the floating city. However, to want me, skeleton demon, one who has a kingdom of undead army, one who has survived three holy wars and participated in numerous holy wars that even gods had transcended and used human vassals… Me, the great demon king, Illyrio, to subjugate? Hahaha…”

As if hearing something hilarious, the mouth of the skull continuously clacked, evidently in a mocking tone.
“Is that right….” Leylin spoke blandly, leaving Illyrio unamused.

Leylin had been of good mind to take him under his wing. After all, this was a legendary expert who could fight many experts at once! He was a treasure trove of knowledge, and a talent in the research of spell models. Most importantly, he was aligned evil, so there was a possibility of him aiding Leylin.

“Alright… I’ll admit that you are very strong, but so what? As long as you’re unable to find my phylactery, the most you can do is kill me…”

Illyrio put on a front like a dead pig who was unafraid of boiling water.

“Nope! I can choose to seal you for eternity and prevent you from committing suicide and therefore, resurrecting.”

Leylin’s shoes stepped on the crystal skull. Illyrio immediately discovered that his connection with the weave had been completely disconnected. He could not even kill himself now.

“Wait a minute…”

Under such extreme terror, Illyrio finally let up. After all, being sealed was not a fun thing. Moreover, if there weren’t anyone to break to seal later on, it was equivalent to dying.

“Although I could have coaxed you… But you gave me a pretty good suggestion…”

975 - Phylactery
Leylin smiled as he sealed the crystal skull, mockery in his eyes. “phylactery huh?” As the highest achievement of a necromancer, the lich had chosen to store his soul into the phylactery, and obtain eternal life — as long as the phylactery was intact. Even after death, it could resurrect through the phylactery.

As for the phylactery, it was the most protected secret and the life essence of the necromancers. They would store it in the safest of havens, some even with detection and prophecy-type spells. To put it in another way, if the phylactery was in the hands of another, the lich would be completely controlled, unless it sought death.

“It’s unafraid because of the phylactery huh?” Leylin stroked his chin. “With the techniques in the world, finding the phylactery of a lich necromancer is extremely difficult. But…” In the field of soul research, Leylin had obviously surpassed the world of gods’ standards. Afterall, he had the accumulation of knowledge from a completely different world.

Moreover, in this demonic life transfer, he saw many familiar things. ‘This type of life transfer, together with soul transfer, and also arcanists… No, there are traces of Magus spells in this. It seems like the wizards here have absorbed some knowledge from the Magus World… Although I don’t have a spiritual connection to the Magus World, I can still identify traces of it through this clone… Not to mention I have Dreamscape Vision to peer into its most innermost thoughts…’

Leylin now looked at Illyrio in pity. He couldn’t kill himself even if he wanted to.

……
Through the Mise core, Leylin teleported into the control room.
“Master!” The flower genie flew to Leylin’s side and rested on his shoulders.
“The intruders have been completely wiped, energy required for the activation of teleportation portal is complete…” The flower genie reported in a rather upbeat tone.
“Alright, begin to move! Make sure to mask the coordinates of the space, I don’t want those gods to find me…” Leylin waved his hand, before beginning to operate the teleportation system of floating city. The way Leylin handled the operations expertly left the flower genie blushing.
“Hmm? The other gods are arriving now? Too bad, they’re late…” Leylin smirked at he looked at the screen monitor. He operated the floating city and easily broke through the seals of the gods, disappearing from the Frostfall Valleys.
“He actually got away?” Oghma’s avatar looked at Mystra, as a golden light flashed in his eyes. “Prophetic spells are not working, it seems like the person is very used to the functions of the floating city…”
“To be able to control the floating city this quickly, he must definitely be a Great Arcanist! I never thought that someone from the Mise period is still around…”
“It’s a problem that you must handle now, Mystra!” The gods broke into fervent discussion, venting their frustrations on the Goddess of the Weave.
Mystra inhaled a deep breath before explaining, “Everyone here witnessed the fall of Netheril. I can guarantee you, not one legendary arcanist managed to survive it…”
“No matter what, this is your job. I hope that you’ll be able to handle this matter well…” A golden orc spoke.
At this moment, the other gods were watching on with a degree of schadenfreude. Mystra had always been too powerful, and now that
she had suffered a blow, it was time for them to vent their frustrations. Many of the divine conscients held their discussion in midair before dispersing into different directions, leaving behind Mystra who looked on at the direction of where the floating city disappeared...

……

In a quiet space of void, with boundless darkness surrounding it, the air current whistled violently, as a floating city quietly sat on the turbulent air currents. This was the outer membrane of the physical world, where many half-dimensions were produced and destroyed. Even gods found it difficult to follow every space that was created in the outer region. “Shaylin, send me another report of the energy stored and the armoury stock!” Leylin sat in the control room and asked the flower genie. “Yes master! Currently, the floating city has 12.77% of energy reserves! The Mise core will be able to regain its lost energy approximately the time of 271 hourglass trickles… Furthermore, there are damages suffered to the external parts of the floating city, and the 23.7% of the firearms are unable to be used. There are two missing legendary ranked golems, and one which is stopped operating as the damage is over 50%! The flower genie also pulled an image, which was the golem that the legendary ranked paladin and the monk had defeated. Right now, it had already been returned to the storage and the many golem constructs had been working to repair it, but the progress was extremely slow. “Apart from all these, there are 3 main cannons which engages in the laws of secondary energy, 347 homing cannons, and 239812
other various cannons. 80% of them are able to function normally, and two of the main cannons have damages amounting to over 20%…”
“As for magic golems…”
“The arcane garden…”
The flower genie displayed every aspect of the floating city, which left Leylin nodding his head in satisfaction.
“This is really a fortress which can rival that of a divine kingdom in its prime… However, it’s not as it’s full capabilities yet…”
The floating city now had suffered damages and its energy reserves were lacking. Leylin would definitely not choose to use it now to war gods with casualties on both sides.
He had a better use for the floating city.
“Master, that lich has woken now, and kept crying about wanting to see you after sensing something.” The fairy reported.
“Oh? It seems like he has realised it, bring him in!” Leylin beckoned.
Seconds later, a golem walked into the hall with loud thudding on the floor. It carried a giant silver tray. On this tray lay a crystal skull, artistic like an ornament, with two dark glows in its eyes.
“Skeleton Lich Illyrio, will you finally subjugate?”
Leylin toyed with a purple-gold coin in his hands as he asked in a teasing manner.
“My phylactery, how could you find…” The lich wailed. He might have very well attacked Leylin if not for the seal.
“Illyrio, I have to admit this is rather clever. You made the phylactery a metal coin of nobility, and even put it in the hands of a coins collector. It took me some effort to find him and to have it handed over…”
Leylin raised the coin in his hand. It was an ancient coin from the previous dynasty, and there were archaic carvings on the edges. The previous owners had kept it with great care, and the reflection
of the light on the coin was dazzling. Nobody would believe that this was actually a phylactery of a lich!
Leylin had read some journals of necromancers constructing their phylactery into everyday objects, some even into pebbles at a seabed, that they could never find it again on their own.
While this could prevent their enemies from finding it, but if they were casually picked up and destroyed, their life would be over. Compared to them, Illyrio’s method was much more ingenious. The value of the purple gold coin was extremely high, often representing a hundred gold pieces in the previous dynasty. Now it had become a valuable asset for coin collectors and every of its owners would keep it in a good condition.
However, even after so much preparations, it was futile before Leylin’s soul searching method.
“It’s not important how I found it… So? Subjugate, or die?” Leylin added, “Even if you don’t agree, I will be able to turn you using the phylactery into a golem. This means is enough to deal with another legendary…”
“If you did that, my lifeforce would be stripped almost to nothing, not to mention that summoning me to the frontlines has the greatest risk of me dying… Do I even have a choice…?” Illyrio muttered and grumbled, but he still chose to serve. “Great arcanist, master of the floating city! I, Illyrio, will pledge my allegiance to you…”
“Great!” Leylin clapped and removed the restraints on Illyrio. “Since you’ve chosen to be subservient to me, then we’re on the same side. There’s no need for a contract or anything like that…”

That’s what Leylin had said, but he nonchalantly kept the phylactery into his dimensional pouch under the desolate gaze of the lich.

Compared to any promises, this was the ultimate restraint! With the phylactery, Leylin had plenty of ways to make Illyrio wish he were dead. He knew full well that Illyrio would never dare betray him. On the other hand, if he were to just give the phylactery back to Illyrio, it was unclear what would happen.

“I will give you part of grade 2 control over the floating city. From hereon, you’ll focus on maintaining the arcane gardens and the golems. Shaylin will transfer the information to you soon…”

Leylin waved his hands.

Since Illyrio was now his subordinate, it was natural that he use the lich as much as possible. After all, this was a scholarly-type wizard, and was probably very useful if nurtured.

Illyrio laughed wryly in answer. If this were in the past and he had countless information as well as authority over the floating city in front of him, he would definitely go crazy in his elation. However, if the price was losing his freedom… That was a little too much…

“Understood, Ma- Master!”
“Shaylin!”
After Illyrio left, Leylin commanded the intellectual core.
“While he’s submitted already, it’s still necessary to monitor him. In addition, if he ever gets near the Mise energy core power room or any grade 1 important areas, I give you permission to kill him immediately!”
“Recorded into main procedures!”
Shaylin looked to have human emotions, but in essence, was an intellectual body formed of a bunch of codes. Her primary goal being to carry out her master’s orders, she never hesitated when it came to Leylin’s orders.
“Mm. I want some peace now…”
After taking care of all these matters, the floating city was now far from danger and under Leylin’s control.
It was only now that Leylin finally had some idle time.
After the flower elf, Shaylin left, it completely went silent. Only the arcane spell lights emitted tender rays of light.
With a flash of silver light at his right hand, the scroll Leylin had obtained from the Netheril Ruins appeared.
“Ancient Distorted Shadow… What do you want…”
The rays from the A.I. Chip shone in Leylin’s eyes, “A.I. Chip, how’s is the research on this going?”
After getting control over the city, the Mise energy core’s tremendous power had seemed to unseal something in the scroll and given Leylin a terrifyingly complicated arcane spell model to him.
Leylin had been using the A.I. Chip to decode it, and only now did he get some idea of what it was.
[Beep! Progress of arcane spell model analysis at 100%. Displaying quantified information.]
After which, the complicated numerical data of the spell model showed itself before him.
[Arcane spell name: Karsus’ Avatar. Rank 12 arcane spell (???)
Effects: Allows the caster to substitute the Weave Goddess and take over control of the Weave. (Minimum requirements: Great Arcanist, 100% analysis of level 7 Weave.)
Description: This is a mysterious arcane spell. With the caster’s understanding of the Weave, its might changes. Grasping it allows you to become a powerful higher god in an instant!]

“An arcane spell that surpasses even a legendary arcane spell… Allowing me to become a powerful higher god in an instant?”

Leylin’s eyes widened and he stroked his chin, smiling slightly, “Interesting! How… interesting…”

An arcane spell of this grade was obviously not something developed by those great arcanists, but a spell of the Magus World that a peak rank 8 like Distorted Shadow could design.

“This arcane spell model already is out of the domain of arcane spells. It can only be explained with spells from the Magus world. It’s at least a powerful rank 7 spell…”

Leylin muttered to himself. Even his main body only grasped one rank 7 spell, which was Alternate World Incarnation, which already had an astounding effect.

“It’s at least a rank 7 spell there. If the caster’s understanding of the Weave has reached 100% of level 9, that would make this a rank 8 or 9 spell in the Magus World…”

Leylin gasped in awe.

Allowing the spell caster to replace the Weave Goddess and obtain control all of the Weave… What was this?

Based on the rankings of the Magi, that would be like making a Morning Star Magus a peak rank 8 Magus in a moment. That was might comparable to Distorted Shadow, Nightmare King and the Mother Core!

“But… can a frail spirit and mind take on such power? The only probable outcome would be getting control of the Weave and
becoming a greater god for a moment, and then dying from the tremendous amount of information and energy being transmitted over. It’ll be like a child who decided to touch a high-voltage power grid…” 

Leylin now looked grim, “Even if it’s my main body of a semi-rank 7 Warlock and help form the A.I. Chip, I’ll only barely be able to control the Weave. Due to a difference in my godhood and divinity, my path will be contaminated and be corroded from the consciences of the other gods…” 

“But at least I finally know Distorted Shadow’s intentions. So he wants to destroy the Weave?” 

Even after death, a peak rank 8 Magus still could leave behind a conscient and not disappear even after hundreds of thousands of years. With a slight chance, he could be revived!

Distorted Shadow seemed to have been setting up this plan before and even given Leylin great benefits at the Nightmare Island. That had made Leylin feel very uneasy. 

Now, he finally understood what Distorted Shadow had been planning! 

His goal was to destroy the World of God’s Weave! 

“Hehe… You really think rather well of me!” 

Leylin knew that besides being a channel for wizards’ spell slots, it was also used for the priests’ divine spells. 

The moment he showed his intentions, he would not only be viewed as an enemy by most wizards, but the Weave Goddess would immediately become his mortal enemy. 

The other gods would also not be willing to give up the convenient channel of faith through the weave. 

“This meant he would be going against the whole World of Gods!” 

“No wonder he chose me! Aside from an outsider like me, even devils or demons wouldn’t be willing to do this…” 

His eyes twinkled as he grabbed the beast hide scroll.
“Unfortunately… I won’t be a pawn for you. If I do become one, I’ll do it as the player!”
“Ancient Distorted Shadow… Did you think that your conscient could keep following me in the shadows?”
Leylin spoke in the Magus World’s ancient Byron language, voice hoarse and activating a trace of the power of laws.
After which, a formidable sealing force enveloped the hall. This was power he had from controlling the city.
*Hss…*
With immense support from the city and seal from another world, Leylin finally showed off his full strength. A Targaryen figure as large as a world appeared behind him.
*Rumble…* In the remote, faraway Magus World, Leylin’s mighty semi-rank 7 body that had been in a deep sleep caused a magnitude 8 earthquake and opened a slight channel, transferring streams of bloodline force over.
*Hss…*
A terrifying Targaryen with a single horn, devil fleshy wings and two claws appeared behind him.
There seemed to be slight changes to the Targaryen. There were now traces of dark red fog surrounding it, and its scales were turning dark red. In its eyes that were like stars, there was a blood-red line had seemed to form a third eye.
“Did you think that I wouldn’t notice you doing something behind the shadows while I had bloodline power planted in me?”
“Get out here!!!”
Leylin yelled and tossed the beast skin scroll away, his clothes exploding open. Traces of black blood that had been contaminated streamed out from his pores.
A distorted black shadow appeared in the sky, numerous tendrils at the dies. It seemed to want to hold onto Leylin, but with Leylin’s yell and sudden powerful bloodline force, was forced out.
*Xiu!*

There was a sharp whistle in the sky, and the shadow that was Distorted Shadow clashed with the scroll, and then began to burn with phosphorescent green flames. The flames slowly turned black, and a distorted human figure soon appeared.

“We finally meet… The ancient Distorted Shadow!”

Leylin panted slightly, but he now felt extremely comfortable. Even his soul seemed to have been refreshed, and his connection to his followers’ prayers was now more distinct, as if he could produce divinity at any moment.

“Tss… Your body and spirit fuse perfectly with bloodline force, tss.. No wonder the Nightmare chose you…”

Ancient spiritual force sent over this information, similarly using the ancient Byron language.

“Isn’t this great? There’s no exploitation whatsoever. We’re conversing on equal grounds…”

Leylin watched Distorted Shadow in front of him, the Targaryen behind him spitting out his tongue, bloodline force created a dense armour over him.

“Tss tss… Warlock! I need you to destroy the Weave. In return…. I can give you all the inheritances of primordial Magi…”

He seemed to know that Leylin would be difficult to deal with, but more importantly, was aware of the terror of the powerful isolation force of the floating city. He gave up on conspiring anything and proposed a trade on equal grounds.

“Fine, but I will choose when it will be done.”

Leylin did not give even an inch, “What is inside the Weave? I can somewhat guess, but I need you to confirm it…”
Leylin observed the trace conscient of a peak rank 8 existence. “Your goal is to revive yourself, right? What does that have to do with the Weave?”
“There are three layers to the Weave. The outermost layer is the channel for all spell slots. The inner Weave is a network of faith and divine force for the gods. Lastly, there’s the core, which is the ultimate seal where the gods have sealed conscients like me inside. That’s also the largest hindrance to us reviving…”
Distorted Shadow sent a spiritual undulation.
“Seal at the core? Conscient fragments? So that’s what’s at the heart of the Weave…”
Leylin’s eyes narrowed, “In that case, there should be many other conscients sealed inside…”

*Boom!*
After goodness knew how long, Distorted Shadow automatically dissipated, and the beast hide spell scroll also completely vanished. This was just a dead conscient, and after showing himself, he could not maintain himself for long.
The seal on the floating city was released, and Leylin sank into deep thought, “Revival? This seems to be getting more serious…”
Now, he felt that he had made contact with the greatest secret of the
ancient gods’ battle that led to its dusk.
From what was known in the Magus World, the World of Gods had buried numerously mighty ancient Magi of laws, causing huge damage to Magi organisations and leaving them no choice but to withdraw from the World of Gods.
If those rank 7 gods already had the possibility of revival after falling, then this was even more possible for ancient Magi of laws. Rank 8 and peak rank 8 existences were already beginning to attempt at containing the laws of space and time in their bodies. Even if they were to fall, their truesoul could still sleep in the long river of time and space, and wait for a chance of revival. They would leave behind many conscients and make arrangements to give themselves another way out.
In the World of Gods, which was the battlefield of a large war, this would definitely happen.
Hence, the gods had worked together to develop the Weave. Using power of the entire world, they had gathered all the conscients of the fallen Magi and sealed them at the deepest parts of the Weave, and even formed the Weave Goddess to guard over it.
However, even though the gods had done their best to scour through the world, there were definitely still some that had escaped. Distorted Shadow was the largest one that had gotten away.
Now, after tens of thousands of years, Distorted Shadow had finally found a Magus suitable to deal with this situation. That would be making use of Leylin, who had used Alternate World Reincarnation and arrived in the World of Gods!
The moment he used Karsus’ Avatar, the Weave Goddess would immediately fall. Making use of his temporary hold over the weave, Leylin could destroy the seal of the gods and let out the conscients of the ancient existences of laws.
“Dying here in ancient times and still leaving conscients behind in wait for a chance at revival… These are all at least rank 7 Magi of
Leylin stroked his chin, clicking his tongue as he imagined this. “While they’re a bunch of dead people who are powerless, the mystery of Magi can’t be easily understood by the gods. They can probably regain much of their strength in a short time or even completely revive. That would mean the reappearance of the ancient final war…”

“His plan is great, and he seems to have something planned not just in the floating city…”

Leylin’s lips quirked in a smile, “Unfortunately… he met me…”

Initially, with Distorted Shadow’s laws, he could entirely cast the power of distortion by making use of the conscient and energy in the scroll. That would cause Leylin to unknowingly walk the path that Distorted Shadow had determined.

It was a pity that even the peak rank 8 ancient Magus, Distorted Shadow, knew nothing about the existence of Leylin’s A.I. Chip. His main body had reached an unimaginable level and could discover the Magus and even expel him, therefore allowing him to have the upper hand.

Now, the key to starting the final war once again and letting out the conscient of numerous existences of laws were all in Leylin’s hands.

The main body of Distorted Shadows had already fallen, and much of his conscient were sealed in the core of the Weave. With Leylin, he could only try to make a trade and entice him to doing what he wanted.

It was a pity that Leylin had no intentions of letting them out.

“I’m too weak… my main body is only a semi-rank 7 Warlock. When it comes to battle might, I’m only comparable to a rank 7 Magus of laws, and I’d find escaping from a rank 8 existence to difficult, much less those peak rank 8s…”

Leylin evidently knew himself well.
The World of Gods was like a playground for him now. Why would he divide it and hand it over to others? In addition, these methods of causing a life and death struggle would definitely result in an all out counterattack from the gods. Leylin wasn’t so eager to please the Magi that he would do this. “But if I don’t do anything, those ancient Magi might do something desperate, so I need to give them some hope…” Leylin’s eyes darted around as he came up with a plan. Having this Karsus’ Avatar was an important deterrence and meant that he could turn the tables at any moment! Even if his identity was found out or leaked, then he could just move on. When faced with a threat like this, it was probably the gods who were more fearful. “But this is only in the worst case scenario… I have to focus on becoming a god first…” Leylin pondered inside. He knew clearly what his path was. While he was merely a semi-rank 7 Warlock, successfully becoming a god and receiving his main body to descend here would definitely allow him to advance to a whole new level. “I’ve made all the theoretical preparations. I just have to wait for energy to be poured in.” Leylin sighed, “Looks like I’ll have to go to the north and spread faith in me as well as prepare to get priests. That’s the priority now…” Trying to become a god as a Legend without help from any god could be said to be insane. However, after getting the Shade City, Leylin now had the confidence to say this! The fusion between a great arcanist and a floating city would even cause a true god to tremble! “Things are dire now, so there’s no need to return to the outer sea. I’ll go to the north then…” Leylin’s eyes flashed and he transmitted
a few orders.
The Shade City that was in a spatial turbulence rumbled and, like a huge warship that was ten thousand tons heavy in the sea, split the waves at both sides and pushed the elemental turbulence aside. It began to move at what appeared to be slow but was actually quick pace in a certain direction.

……

The north, at the edges of Sabu Valley.
Noble cavalry with the flag of a viscount unhurriedly moved along, protecting a noble couple within.
There were green wheat fields at the sides. The ears of wheat were being extracted, and farmers caressed them with their two hands lovingly as if watching one’s lover, elated at the harvest.
For refugees from the north, obtaining life as it was now had been difficult.
Just surviving from the orc disaster three years ago meant needing protection from the Goddess of Luck, and very few were lucky enough to arrive at human territories. The others either starved to death or were killed by bandits or orc soldiers, and even became rations.
The refugees that survived had no guarantee that they could settle down, as there were far too many of them from the north. This resulted in great pressure for the master of the territories.
Those who had gotten the distributed territories could only weep at the difficulty in dealing with the disaster.
In comparison, the benevolence of this master of the land was enough for these victims to pray to him sincerely.
“The harvests from the newly plowed farmlands aren’t half bad. Looks like we’ll be able to get through winter…”
The viscount mistress spoke reservedly, glancing past the farmer
that had bowed towards her. Only a few lucky ones were fortunate enough to be acknowledged by her by the nod of her head, and she had the air of an arrogant noble lady. Now, she watched her husband. When it came to her husband, she wasn’t satisfied nor dissatisfied. This was a mere transaction. Thankfully, the people in the organisation had not lied to her and gotten her to marry some old man at death’s door. That was something lucky for her.

The Viscount mistress looked at Tiff, who seemed like a middle-aged man, and could not help but sigh deeply. Recalling what had happened to the north, she could not help but shiver. Those fierce and violent orcs had killed her family and slaves, and she herself had almost fallen into their devilish palms. While she had been fortunate enough to escape, she had then met a few greedy pigs. Thankfully, with some quick-wittedness and luck, she had managed to keep her family’s name and territories. However, almost half of it was gone, but the pitiful lady did not dare hope for more.

“Next… I’ll have to give birth to a few children…”

She watched her husband as well as the few cowering maids behind him, looking hostile. Only the mistress of the territories who gave birth to a male successor had the most secure position. There were already many girls wanting to climb into the bed of the master and get a better life, many of whom had once been nobles in the north.

“Indeed… while we spent a lot, we’ve finally settled this batch of refugees…”

Tiff had changed his appearance. He was now nearly two metres tall with bushy eyebrows and large eyes and seemed very masculine. His silver hair was slightly curled but combed neatly, and looked exactly like a traditional middle-aged noble in the north.
The poor mistress had no clue that in terms of his real age, Tiff was probably even older than her father. However, if his age was to be considered in comparison with the average for Legends, Tiff was rather young. However, nobles never cared about age, did they?

“What’s wrong, darling?”

She found that her husband looked lost in thought.

“Oh, it’s nothing. You can return first. I’ve gotten someone to call the jewel merchant and tailor to come over. They’re going to pick the most beautiful and luxurious gown for you…”

Tiff planted a kiss on his lady’s hand and sent her away.
Although she knew her husband was hiding something from her, Tiff’s mistress still listened to him. Tiff had great power backing him, which caused her to feel slightly afraid.

With the ability to forcefully snatch something from the northern nobility, he wasn’t someone she could spy on.

“Let’s go to the village office!” After she left, Tiff brought his soldiers to a building near to the village. This was the village office, the building Tiff provided for public use. He could take orphans in here, many of which were refugees. It made him look like a benevolent man.

These kids were so young they couldn’t work, and they were destined to die of hunger quickly. Usually, nobody outside of the churches would take them in, and the disaster in the north had created an uncountable number of them. The few churches alone wouldn’t be able to take them all in.

A black-robed person with a silver mask was standing in front of the village office’s wooden door. The moment he saw this person, he greeted him without hesitation.

If anyone else saw the viscount calling someone ‘Master,’ they would definitely gape in shock. Someone with the authority to have a viscount bend the knee in a bow was a great noble, at least a marquis!

However, the knights behind Tiff did not even blink as they did the
same, “Master!”
Most of them were trusted aides that had personally battled with
Leylin before. There were also a number of subdued devil
worshippers, so they obviously knew who Leylin was.
“You’re doing well, Tiff!”
The person who had arrived here was obviously Leylin. Through
the astounding speed at which Shade City had moved in the spatial
turbulence, he arrived in the north quickly and arrived at his base.
From all he had seen and heard on the way, he was rather pleased
with Tiff’s recent work.
“Everything is going as per Master’s instructions…” Tiff answered
humbly.
“Let’s enter together! I want to see what you’ve achieved…”
Leylin waved his arms, entering the office with Tiff.
On the way, there were children, teachers and nannies around
bowing towards Tiff. By the looks of it, he had amassed a great
reputation.
In private, Tiff continued to transmit to Leylin, “In order to avoid
the priests and reduce expenditure, we only have five village
offices like this. We’ve taken in almost a thousand children, and the
average age is from 9 to 12, which is the prime time to educate
them…”
Tiff now brought Leylin to a window, through which many yellow
wooden desks and chairs could be seen. Tens of young girls
listened attentively as a scholar taught. There were simple letterings
on the black board, which meant this was a class to teach them how
to read. This scene immediately had Leylin recalling the schools in
his previous world.
“In addition, after seeing that we’re giving them an education, some
peasants have gotten their children to come and listen as well. I’ve
agreed to that…”
Leylin listened closely, nodding occasionally as he saw the glint in
the children’s eyes within the classroom. That was hope!
“After studying for a while, the children who are believed to have the aptitude and perseverance will enter the higher-grade…”
Tiff brought Leylin deeper into the office. Nearby, Leylin could sense undulations from powerful beings monitoring the area, which meant security was tight.
“Divine studies… is a class about the gods. Here, I would like to introduce you all to a god, whose godly name is Kukulkan…”

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“Praying and meditation are compulsory courses for priests…”
The things being taught here were somewhat immoral, which was why the students were all orphans who had been trialled and would stay here. They used something like primary school education as a model.
The scholars who passed down the information all wore black uniforms, and there was something about their aura that was contradictory to their roles.
After seeing Leylin, they immediately trembled and made to greet him, but Leylin waved his arms to stop them.
Exactly. These people who were instructing children with aptitude to become priests had all been devil followers, and had high priest rankings!
With Tiff’s help, Leylin had long since subdued all followers of gluttony in the north.
He then did a round of selections and allowed only those who had gone through several trials and were truly loyal to nurture the future reliable priests!
Yes, all of those village offices and the education provided was all a pretense! In actuality, this was about selecting children and nurturing numerous priests. These would be the people providing
Leylin with energy to become a god! Something like this was far too sensitive, which was why Leylin had no intentions of doing this in the outer seas on his own territories. Here, there was no issue. Firstly, due to the invasion of the orcs in the north, many refugees had lost their homes. The situation was very complicated and could be said to be a disaster. That had resulted in a large number of orphans, and turned into the best natural circumstances for Leylin. Tiff being a Legend, those teaching the advanced parts being devil followers Leylin had subdued and the place where all this happened being Tiff’s land, Leylin could do anything and create layers of seals that made it difficult for information to spread. Most importantly, even if discovered, Leylin could just abandon this place. He could just cut off all ties easily, but there would be no damage to his foundation! By the looks of it, Tiff was doing very well. “We’re limited by the qualified teachers we have as well as secrecy. This is the limits of what we can do…” Tiff looked a little ashamed, evidently because he was unable to do more for the feathered serpent god, Kukulkan. “That’s alright. You’re already doing very well…” For the gods, the faith from priests was an essential part. They were beings that would be the prime mode of communication with followers, which was why they were very important. Outstanding priests had to be learned scholars and even needed to have some grace. Whether it was the peasants at the bottom of the hierarchy or nobles who were all about poise, they needed to be able to deal with all these people well. These were all seeds! Once the church stopped being in the shadows and came to the light, the other students might not become priests, but they could also be workers at the church. They would be the core strength of
the church. In this age, it was not so easy to have elites who possessed knowledge. If loyalty was required as well, then there was no way but to nurture them the whole way. The inverted image of the Targaryen appeared in Leylin’s eyes, causing Tiff to kneel reverently.

“My divine class has been expanding and is beginning to touch upon the domain of slaughtering. The prayers should also change slightly, including information to do with killing…”

Leylin now looked very much like a oracle, like some powerful being had possessed him.

“Understood, my master! You are the stars in the sky, and the serpent of the world that will devour everything. Murder shall be your sharpest sword…”

Tiff had lived for many years after all, and with just a moment, he managed to come up with a prayer.

This was obviously something temporary. There would need to be divine scholars and high-ranked priests to discuss and refine it, before leaving it to Leylin to make a decision.

After all, this was something important and could even change a god’s domain, as well as the start of a godly war.

However, Leylin was now doing something very sneaky anyway, so he couldn’t really care less.

“Mm, notify me once everything’s confirmed. Also, prepare a quiet room for me and then summarise all the information gathered regarding the north…”

“Understood!”

Tiff respectfully withdrew, though his eyes now showed his excitement, “Is he finally making a move?”

He had always been the most enthusiastic about expanding the feathered god, Kukulkan’s organisation.

While he had tried his best to hide it, taking in a thousand children
and providing them with the chance at an education was astounding. With some hidden context, the nobles of the north were now fearful.

In the shadows, there was already a powerful resistance both in the shadows and in the open. Tiff knew that it was impossible if he wanted to expand here. The only method would be to force the way through!

Leylin’s actions pointed to making a huge ruckus, which caused the hot-bloodedness in Tiff to rise.

……

“Hm, looks like the orc empire and werecreature tribes reconciled…”

Tiff moved quickly. After enjoying a great dinner that was made with the style of the north, Leylin quietly skimmed through intel regarding the north in his study room with the rays from magic lights.

With the A.I. Chip’s help, he could read the documents incredibly quickly. With a slight glance, he could practically read ten lines and did not need any rest.

It was only after he put down the last piece of parchment that Leylin closed his eyes slightly, the information forming a network and showing him what had happened after he left vividly.

The largest change to the north was obviously the orc empire, formed from the remains of the Silverymoon Alliance.

Under Emperor Saladin’s lead, the orcs stepped into the human’s northern district that their ancestors never had the ability to do, and formed an empire of their own. Saladin’s reputation amongst the orcs shot through the roof, and he could possibly become a god.

While the orc empire worked hard, the orc gods had also obtained immense benefits, especially the orc god Gruumsh. It was said that
he had advanced in the path of the greater gods, and there were a few other orc gods who had increased their rank, becoming a lesser god to an intermediate god, which boosted the orc gods’ strength by a large extent.

On the other hand, the resistance that the orc gods had also increased.

Not only did the greater gods, Weave Goddess and Tyr become their arch enemies, there were also the human gods who believed that the orcs were powerful enough that they needed to be kept under control.
The orcs were the ones who’d instigated the war, and on top of that they’d committed such a huge atrocity afterwards. The elven and halfling gods would not support them much. They thought the orcs too ruthless, and developed a desire to contain them. This put the orc gods in a predicament. If it continued without end, they would likely only be able to find allies from the abyss or the hells. This was why the orcish gods went all out in their search for new blood, especially the Blackblood Tribe in the Moonwood and the God of the Hunt, Malar. Orcs and werecreatures weren’t much different, and they even looked rather similar. On top of that, Malar’s original form was that of a huge ape-like monster, so there was a high chance of him joining their side. With their tough situation, the orc gods would be relentless in their pursuit of this chance. The decision from up above ensured that the orc empire tried to befriend Blackblood Tribe. They’d only be making a din in the dark forest at most, and with the territories that the orc empire now had, it wouldn’t be too much trouble to give them that land. While orcs were the majority, there were still an astounding number of humans left in the north. After all, only the human race could measure up to them in terms of their rate of reproduction. The effects of the humans’ reign over so many years were not so easily
removed.
In reality, despite the establishment of an orc empire many places weren’t under their control. There were even a few armies hidden in the corners of the north, giving Saladin a headache.
With all the racial conflict, these rebel armies received the support of multiple organisations both in public and in the shadows. They’d won a few battles and liberated some cities, leaving the orcish armies up to the ears in work.
“While there’s a revolt from the humans in the north, this is all guerrilla warfare, and there isn’t a real leader and flag. This makes Alustriel key…”
Leylin finally understood why the church of justice would begin a plan to reclaim the kingdom now. Some time ago, the orc empire’s strength had been concentrated and been difficult to deal with. Things were different now though, since taking over land and completely occupying it were very different things.
They were now scattered across the northern lands, making the orc army thin out. It was no wonder that just a guerrilla band could achieve victory so easily.
Tens of years later, the people of the north might succumb under the government of the orcs and completely forget about Alustriel. After all, the adaptability of humans was fairly terrifying.
Having seen this all, Leylin could not help but shake his head. ‘Tsk tsk… Even though they’ve grasped a good opportunity, it’ll be difficult to completely reclaim the kingdom.’ Based on his deductions, Alustriel being able to establish a few bases to go against the orc empire was already rather impressive.
“The church of justice will recruit legendary beings, probably not just to deal with Saladin but also the avatars of the orc gods…” Leylin’s eyes glinted as he quickly went through the pros and cons. “I now have too little information, so I can only consider working with them after meeting Rafiniya and other Legends…”
Rubbing at his temples, Leylin pondered over his next course of action before leaving the room.

“Master…”

Next to the door, there were two pretty maids that had been waiting for a long while who quickly knelt down.

Leylin could smell the scent of a purebred Pleasure Devil on them. However, their eyes were now filled with adoration and reverence for him.

After all, Leylin’s soul essence was practically like half a devil archduke.

All devils who sensed his abstruse and dark strength would naturally do all they could to get close to him. This was an instinct of devils at all times, imprinted deeply into their genes.

“Hm, not bad!”

Leylin had no plans of being a saint now and placed his arms around the beautiful female devils who were like sisters, and entered the bedroom…

The next day, having removed his other appearance and regained his looks as a wizard, Leylin entered the outer parts of Yorkshire’s church of justice.

“I’m here to see Rafiniya. This is the token she gave me.”

Leylin passed an emblem that was gold on one side over. On the base that was like a shield, there was a cross sword and image of a rose.

“Please wait a moment. I will pass on the message for you!”

The church guard’s eyes widened. Leylin’s aura immediately made him feel like he was seeing someone important like the king. He was also in wizard robes, and the power that signified more than shocked him. Hence, he presented himself politely.

The guard who went in returned very quickly, though this time, he bowed so deeply that his nose practically touched the ground,

“Welcome, esteemed wizard Leylin! Paladin Rafiniya is now away,
but we have already informed her. We believe she will return soon… Many apologies for this. Please take a short rest in the church…”

The guard was actually trembling inside in fear. This was a legend! The pinnacle of strength in the continent, and even a legendary wizard at that!

As the youngest legend, and one that had become one in the most difficult path of a wizard, Leylin’s reputation had long since spread in the continent. However, there were few who had actually met him.

“Fine. Lead the way.”

Leylin entered alongside the guard, and upon entering through the doors, a few people hastened over, evidently to receive hi.

“Oh, Leylin, my friend! We finally meet…”

Next to the white-robed bishop of the God of Justice, Leylin saw another noble. His astounding memory caused Leylin to freeze for a second, and then put on a smile while going forward.

“Marquis Lancet! Long time no see…”

The noble who had come along with the bishop to meet Leylin was the one who held power over Yorkshire, and the one that had split the territories of a few unlucky noble families, Lancet.

“After hearing the beautiful birdsong from skylarks this morning, I knew something great was going to happen. I didn’t expect it would be your arrival…”

Lancet now had a sincere smile on his face. He had a vivid memory of this kid who had gotten a position as a viscount during the feast of the dividing of lands in the north. Tiff, who he was helping, seemed to be doing something strange, but that wasn’t important!

Leylin was now a legend! It was impossible to go wrong with improving their relationship. Actually, Marquis Lancet was already regretting not giving Leylin more.

“But… who would have known that he would become a legend in
a few years?"

Lancet observed Leylin’s young face, removing the jealousy deep in his heart with some difficulty and then smiling brightly.

“Also… this is a bishop of the God of Justice, Scholar Benedict, who’s also a friend of mine…”

“I express my deepest gratitude for Sire’s determination in offering yourself in the name of righteousness… The refugees suffering in the north will never forget your contributions…”

Benedict’s voice was kind and resolute, and there was a glint in his eyes unique to those willing to die for their cause.

Leylin had no qualms that if Benedict were to be told that his death would save the lives of all commoners of the north, he would kill himself without hesitation.

It was pity that the people who were the most resolute were also the most troublesome…

“I’m only here because of a promise with Rafiniya. Whether I’ll make my move at the end and when I do it is my freedom…”

Leylin had no plans of being careless with this and answered, causing the atmosphere to turn cold in an instant.

“Uh… haha… Whatever it is, having Sire Leylin coming all the way here is already enough… It must have been difficult to come so far. Please get some rest, and you can meet the other comrades later tonight…”

Lancet’s mind moved quickly and immediately dispelled the awkward atmosphere.

“Even though he’s the youngest legendary, has he already been corroded by reputation and power?”

After Leylin left, great resentment shone in Benedict’s eyes. In his eyes, all legends on the continent were the same. They only wished for power and enjoyment, and never did what they should.

There were few willing to sacrifice themselves in the name of justice, and now this seemed to also go for the youngest to become
a legend.
“But of course! He became a legendary with much difficulty and reached the peak in the continent. There are countless things for him to enjoy, so what right do you have to make him die for your sake?”
Lancet snickered inside while maintaining a smile on his face, “Sire Leylin just has yet to come to terms with what’s going on yet. I’m sure with time, he’ll change his mind…”
“Sigh… I hope so! The refugees of the north can’t wait for long…” Bishop Benedict sighed, looking as if he were bemoaning the state of the universe.
“The paladins and priests of the god of justice are all lunatics…”
While already mentally prepared, Leylin had honestly been scared by his naivety. If the bishop was like this, then he could guess at what the clerics were like. They were definitely not people Leylin would like.
“But only a church with such a zealous ambience would attract Rafiniya and have her treat this as her final home…”
Leylin sighed inside. A member of the clergy guided him to the back of the church.

Golden sunlight streamed into the room through the windows, showing the motes of dust in the air. Furniture and all other decorations were simple, as was customary in the church of justice.

“If you have any needs, please press the doorbell here. We will await any orders… Also, the meeting with the other lords will be after dinner. Paladin Rafiniya will arrive very soon.” The servant that had brought Leylin in withdrew and closed the door.

Rafiniya came quickly. After all, Leylin was a legendary, and it was necessary to show him the required respect. Unfortunately for such a moronic paladin, Leylin had no common topic to discuss with her.

After enjoying a simple dinner, Leylin was guided to a small drawing room. A few masters with powerful auras were lying in wait.

‘Are these the other legendaries?’ Leylin nodded and headed inside. The room was rather small. There was a bright red fur rug on the ground as well as a fireplace that was blazing brightly. However, there was no scent of smoke in the air. While this was the north, the room was still as warm as if it were spring.

“You… You must be the rumoured wizard from the outer seas. Leylin, right? You really are very young!”
Leylin’s entrance immediately gathered their attention. A long-haired woman wrapped in a red mink fur coat stood up with a kind smile on her face.

“Besides us old geezers of the north, you arrived quite quickly.” She was evidently a legendary, and from the elemental domain power around her, she was a legendary wizard!

“Let me introduce myself. My name is Lillian, and next to me here is the paladin of the god of justice, Sire Patrick. Next to the fireplace is the protector of the north, the legendary druid, Alegor.” There were very few legends in the room, numbering only three. The Queen Alustriel of Silverymoon and her chief scholar, Blu were not around. They were people that Leylin had wished to meet, and this left him slightly disappointed.

“Greetings…”

Of course, Leylin presented himself humbly on the surface and greeted the three of them politely while judging them. Lillian was a traditional wizard. Undulations from magic items and scrolls were emitted from her body, and there even seemed to be some hidden aura there, likely some legendary item she had with her. Her battle might was not to be underestimated.

Patrick, on the other hand, was a man of few words and looked rather cold. This actually had Leylin snickering inside. Recalling the legendary paladin that had died at his hands, who had been said to be a judge or something like that, he was sure that the god of justice’s church must have been dealt a great blow.

The last one was the legendary druid, Alegor, who was dressed in an interesting manner. He was a burly man over three metres tall and with a thick brown beard. Next to his fuzzy ears was a pair of large forked horns like that of elks, with some leaves appearing at the tip. This druid did not wear much, and only had some beast hide and leaves that had been used to make an apron. This revealed a hairy and broad chest,
which made him seem rather wild.

“Initially, as the protector of nature, I should not participate in these activities. However, those orcs are destroying nature to a terrifying degree, which goes against the most fundamental cycle and harmony here…”

Alegor now looked solemn, giving Leylin all the information he needed in a few sentences.

In general, all druids took on the responsibility of protecting nature. They were strongly against any actions taken to destroy it, and there was even the rise of radicals against this.

After occupying the north, the orcs were doing more damage to the environment in order to obtain more resources and materials.

The queen of Silverymoon had a great relationship with druids, which was why they began reminiscing about the time when she had been in power. It was understandable why they were hard at work here.

“Eye of the North… Protector of nature, as well as a paladin who is comparable to the judge from before…”

Leylin estimated the power they had.

With these the four of them, it was impossible to turn the orc empire upside down, but it was possible to affect the successes or failures of a few campaigns!

In addition, they were only the first batch that had arrived. The true trump cards were still hidden.

‘What a pity… Even so, it’s not possible to sway the orcs’ power in the north. At the most, we can crack their foundations as a kingdom, but unless all the human gods band together, it’s impossible to chase them out and restore our power. However, is that plausible?’

While having all sorts of complicated emotions inside, Leylin walked out of the church and into Yorkshire, where it was now night.
While it was late, this place was still rather boisterous. From the dazzling rays from various churches, there were also large oil lamps in front of shops. Some citizens strolled around after dinner, melodious holy songs and prayers sounding in the background. It was leisurely and relaxing.

“But… seems like the effects from the refugees of the north are yet to disappear…”

Leylin found that there was a very high frequency of patrolling, as well as occasional thievery, and he could not help but shake his head.

The surge of residents of the north was the greatest challenge for security. The huge increase in population, as well as entrance of nobility from the north, had increased the price of daily necessities and resulted in many citizens unable to voice their unhappiness.

Actually, the people of Yorkshire did not think well of these refugees. All believed that they had not only stolen their jobs, but were also a huge burden.

Perhaps they knew of a legend’s senses and that sending people to monitor him would be useless unless a legendary thief or assassin were dispatched. Leylin strolled around and found that there were no people following him nor any magic for that.

“Of course, perhaps they have assured themselves that with the gods support, I wouldn’t be able to do anything against them…”

Leylin shook his head and could not help but laugh, before then turned into a dimly lit alley.

Streams of dark red fog appeared by him, concealing his original aura. It was as if he had turned into a whole other person.

The people around him were all in a flurry, and none discovered this abnormality.

“With dreamforce concealing me, anything monitoring me will be rendered useless…”

Leylin stepped out of the alley that had an illusion hidden within
and, as his figure flashed a few times, disappeared from the road. With Leylin’s legendary strength as well as boost from the illusions of dreamforce, it was just too easy to prevent any spying on him.

Light fluctuated, and the next time Leylin appeared, he had arrived in a secret room.

The black fog in the surroundings seemed to be like a huge beast that devoured everything. There was only a yellow light in the centre that emitted bright rays.

A few figures with powerful auras were dressed in black robes, waiting by the light.

“You’re early…”

One of the black-robed people spoke to Leylin in a crisp, female voice.

“I never thought you’d have arrangements here in Yorkshire too…” Leylin watched the female wizard before him. Under the light, she had removed her disguise and revealed her original appearance.

This was the legendary wizard he had just seen, Lillian! “Why did you transmit a message to me right before leaving… and there’s these people…”

Leylin looked suspicious.

While this legendary wizard had looked normal during the meeting before, she had suddenly sent him an address at the end, wanting him to come here alone. There were also other powerful beings, and every one of them was a legend.

A gathering like this was definitely not for some sort of banquet. “I’ve already set up multiple isolating spell formations. Even if it’s a god, none can discover our conversation unless their true body were to descend.”

Lillian spoke with a smile, eyes seeming to burn, “Do you still not know the reason why we legends have gathered?”

What great plans could there be when a group of legends had sneakily gathered?
If profits were the largest priority, then what could attract these exemplary beings would be ascension to godhood. Leylin knew this full well and smiled, “Well then, you haven’t introduced me to them yet…”
“Keke… Is a little brat who just entered our domain capable of plotting with us?”
At this moment, a black-robed person standing next to Lilian snickered, sounding like an ghostly owl in the night, causing hair to stand on end.
*Boom!*
A tremendous and cold deathly aura with great pressure attacked Leylin in the next instant, like raging waves. There were even cries from maligned souls as well as powerful negative energy, corrosive auras.
The rest of the black-robed beings did not move as they watched on with smiles.
“Is this a probe? As expected, in circles like this in the dark, power is everything!”
With a thought, Leylin’s body did not move and allowed the deathly aura to go past him. Many undulations rippled on the wall behind him, but he was completely unharmed.
“What a dense deathly aura... And you are?”
Leylin then smiled at the stunned black-robed person and asked.
“You’re capable!” He declared, but did not make any more movements. Evidently, he found Leylin worthy.
his is the necromancer, Mallister! He is a powerful death wizard who gained fame 1200 years ago, and has already entered the ranks of a high-ranked legend. It’s even said that he’s on equal grounds with the lich, Illyrio…” Lilian introduced him to Leylin, looking astonished, “While that was a slight probe, Wizard Leylin being able to take on the attack so easily means he must have quite a number of secrets…” “Alright! Since everyone’s here, let’s begin.” Mallister urged, sounding enthusiastic. The great desire in his tone shocked Leylin slightly. As Leylin was right now, he had become more sensitive to emotional force. From the excitement of this old wizard coupled with the situation in the north, it was evident that they had huge plans. “The reason we’re gathered here is obviously for the eternity that gods have…” Lilian spoke softly, sounding just as eager. Even if they were necromancers, Legends like them who did not turn into liches or spirits could only live for at most a few thousand years. This was a stark difference from the mighty gods in the skies. As legends, they felt that they did not have any less talent or invest less effort than the gods did. The only thing they lost out in was that they were born too late, which meant they had no opportunities
by then.
In this situation, which legend would feel content with staring at the gods up high and in eternal glory?
Basically every single one of them had the ambition to ascend and become a god!
While there were agreements between the legends on the continent as well as rules of churches or organisations, private gatherings like these still happened.
After all, godly roles and positions were all accounted for. To successfully become a god, one or perhaps even a few had to be pulled down!
Even if many legends were to gather, they could at most only beat up an avatar. The true forms of gods in their godly realms were practically invincible.
Hence, it was necessary to wait for a battle between gods! Only when they began attacking each other did the legends have a single chance at obtaining divinity, godspark or even a godly role!
The legends all knew of this possibility, which was why they had gathered.
“I’m sure all of you know the situation with the north. The Weave Goddess and God of Justice have made a deal, so the decision to support Queen Alustriel in regaining her kingdom won’t change. There’ll definitely be a battle against the orc gods. Based on my intel, other human gods aren’t going to do much about this…”
Lilian now looked extremely zealous and ready to make a gamble, “The Weave Goddess and God of Justice are greater gods, while the orc god only has a greater god, Gruumsh. However, he’s supported by intermediate and lesser gods. The battle with the two greater gods will soon arrive, which will be an opportunity for us…”
Leylin finally knew why the legends had gathered here. They were counting on the gods getting injured in battle, which would give them the opportunity to obtain divinity or a divine spark.
However, even the weakest true god was not something a legend could deal with. This was not much less difficult than pulling chestnuts out of fire.

However, this matched well with Leylin’s goal. Hence, his lips quirked in a smile, “A good choice… Well then, may I know what your targets are?”

“We obviously won’t put any hope on the three greater gods. Wizard Mallister is only interested in divinity and divine roles that have to do with death. He’s only requesting the divine force amassed from the avatars as well as any divine weapons that might appear…”

Lilian did a brief explanation and then looked at him, “How about Sire Leylin? Do you have any goals?”

“Me?”

Leylin rubbed his nose, “As I am now, I don’t think I can ask for much. I’ll go along with what you do. All I want is a trace of the divine force from a true god…”

“For ordinary legends, that is a very good choice…”

Mallister gave Leylin a long look.

For most legends that wanted to become gods, they first needed to amass followers and faith, and then attempt at comprehending a law. By combining that with faith, divine force would be formed.

It was a pity that this was the most difficult part!

Even in the Magus World, Morning Star Magi could not get past the hurdle of laws. Only after becoming a rank 6 Breaking Dawn Magus and after a soul became completely positive could one start to comprehend laws.

In the World of Gods, while there was the power of faith as a cheat, actually getting past the hurdle was very difficult.

However, stealing a trace of divine force would be able to solve this problem, allowing one to get past the threshold of laws. This was a huge temptation for legends.
“Then… which god are you aiming for?” Lilian asked.
“Probably Malar…” Leylin brought up the name of this unlucky person. This was one of the gods that had been mentioned in the discussions before.
“Mm, that matches up with our original plan. There aren’t any conflicts either. After I get back, I can use my influence and have you join in the operation to attack Malar’s avatar. Of course, you’ll have to mention your interest here…” She nodded.
The God of Hunt, Malar, was a very good choice considering the plan.
There was no other reason than that Malar was but a lesser god and the weakest of all. This was the most important, because the legends were not that confident that they could take down the avatar of a greater god.
Secondly, Malar was not an orc god and merely an ally. He would not have too many reinforcements with him.
Thirdly, and also most importantly, he was an evil god! There were no risks of tarnishing of one’s reputation for eliminating him, and might even get a good name of being righteous and all that.
In addition, the faith in him was underwhelming. Besides the werecreatures, there were only a few intellectual beasts. He had few powerful beings he could truly make use of.
With all these factored in, the tragedy that Malar would become was obvious.
Leylin had been eyeing Malar’s divine force for a long time.
Initially, with his strength, the scale of the followers and his comprehension of the law of Devour, he should have been able to produce a trace of divinity of gluttony or devour.
Unfortunately, these two were too obvious in that he could easily be associated with Beezlebub.
Beezlebub had only just fallen into a deep sleep, and if Leylin were to suddenly appear, the gods would definitely start making associations. Gods were no fools and, on the contrary, were extremely intelligent. It was just that they were sometimes influenced by their godly roles and the emotions from it.

“Beezlebub and the other archdukes in hell are all targets for me to kill in the future, but not now…”

Leylin stroked his chin as he pondered. Besides this choice, he had few others. After all, this also had to be compatible with the path as a rank 8 Magus that he would take.

“My path must contain emotional force and the vileness of all living things. With dreamforce being used as the base, I will then contain the law of space and time…”

“With this foundation, the only thing compatible with the might of devils can only be massacre and death…”

“The temptations of devils will definitely give rise to massacre and death. After fusing them, it will form the most basic sin!”

He had a number of things restricting him due to his goal, and he therefore had little choice. The only two paths possible for him were massacre and death.

These two godly duties were very powerful, and it was not advisable to provoke gods who grasped these roles.

The one controlling death was the greater death god Kelemvor, as well as the god who had relations with both massacre and death, the God of Murder, Cyric. They were both greater gods.

If Leylin had plans to go against these two’s divinity, Leylin felt he would be better off looking for a better method in death.

Besides these two, there was only Malar, with the role of hunt, that somewhat had relations with the law of massacre.

If it was said that a full godly role meant having 100% comprehension of a law, then there would only be at most 10% of divinity. For the godly role of hunt, this obviously included
‘pursue’, ‘slaughter’ and many others that would make up around 80%, as well as other miscellaneous laws.
On this basis, even powerful intermediate gods could easily obtain the divinity of massacre and pursuit from his avatar.
While Leylin’s ranking in terms of strength was slightly lacking, he was still a Magus of laws. It wasn’t that troublesome to separate and change the power of divinity that he required.
“If I really have to form a trace of divinity for massacre, it’ll still take me a decade even with prayers from my followers…”
Leylin sighed.
It would take a decade just to obtain divinity, much less ignite his godflame and obtain a godly role or becoming a true god.
While this speed would otherwise be astonishing, Leylin was still unsatisfied.
Ever since he met Distorted Shadow, he had been feeling very nervous.
Since Distorted Shadow wished to revive himself and had his conscient survive for tens of thousands of years, he definitely had more up his sleeves than just the taboo arcane spell Leylin had. There had to be other pawns.
The moment he did not make a move quick enough, Distorted Shadow would definitely show his trump card.
Distorted Shadow was an ancient peak rank 8 Magus! In comparison, Leylin was like an ant and the passive party.
Hence, it was necessary that he come to the north and obtain a trace of massacre divinity.
After obtaining it, legends could become more sensitive to one’s followers’ prayers, and the speed at which faith and divine force was amassed would quicken.
“From divinity… and then igniting godflames to become a demigod… And lastly getting a divine role to ascend and become a true god!”
The system of advancement in the World of Gods was clear.
Dark forests blocked the sky, hindering all light. All sorts of twisted branches lay on the ground, the dried out old bark black as if they were the arms of devils and demons. It caused the forest to seem sinister and frightening. This was a famous area in the north, the Moonwood. After the orcish empire was established, the Blackblood Tribe took this place over. All intruders were killed upon entry. However, a black-robed wizard was now walking indifferently through the forest, and the werecreatures and mutated beasts didn’t even seem to see him as they walked straight past him.

“Moonwood, Blackblood Tribe… It’s been a long time.” Leylin observed the familiar terrain as scenes of his time at Silverymoon appeared vividly in his mind. Still, it was but a tiny section of his long life, and he regained his indifference once more. Making his way to a cave, Leylin seemed to walk through some barrier to disappear inside. He then heard an impatient voice ringing by his ear, “You’re late.” Two figures showed themselves from within the darkness. These were legendaries he’d seen before, the druid Alegor and Lillian. The Paladin Patrick was around as well. Surprisingly, the four of them had taken on a mission together since they’d met, as if something like fate was pulling the strings.

“My apologies… I needed some time to make preparations…” Leylin answered apologetically, “We’re dealing with a true god.
While this is only an avatar, we need to be ready…”
The others did not retort, evidently accepting his explanation.
“If your side is done, what’s next is Patrick’s side…” Lillian continued, as if implying something.
Indeed, this group of legendaries had planned to kill the God of the Hunt, Malar. After their secret meeting, a few of the other legendaries who ‘wished for justice’ had been called in. They had joined in on this project, which included many faces Leylin had seen in the secret meeting.
Although they knew these legendaries weren’t pure of mind, the church of justice and Queen of Silverymoon still accepted them. After all, Alustriel lacked the power to rebuild her kingdom and was in urgent need of help from these powerful beings.
As for their motives? Mystra and Tyr may have known what was going on, but they did not pay much attention. After all, even gods had to reward legendaries if they ordered them around. Most of them kept one eye closed to legendaries coveting divinity or divine spark. After all, these gods were using their power for their own gain as well.
It wasn’t as if there were no legendaries with divine force on the continent, but it was only a minor boost to their strength. They wouldn’t ascend to godhood even in hundreds or thousands of years.
Divinity was just the first step on the path to becoming a true god. They had to ignite their godfire, obtain a divine domain. All this was even more difficult. Besides, the avatars of gods were not so easily dealt with. Leylin and the rest would have to be amazingly lucky to get even a thread of Malar’s divinity.
In general, the two greater gods were more at ease even with Leylin and the other legendaries plotting against them. However, they had no clue about the kind of terrifying thing that had entered this group, definitely becoming a huge variable in their plans.
“Good. Once we set up the greater isolation array, even a god’s avatar will lose a part of its strength. The trap has been set, what’s next is to wait for the prey to walk in…” Lillian spoke softly. The gods were very powerful. Even mere demigods were immune to spells, and even Leylin’s Timestop spell would be useless against them. The same could be said for lower-ranked spells. What they would face now was just an avatar, but they still held a trace of the might of the gods. They were immune to spells below rank 7, maybe even rank 9. They also possessed all sorts of unimaginable buffs to their bodies and regeneration.

Even with all their traps and plans, Leylin and the rest would be facing a terrifying peak legendary monster!

“Is it alright at Patrick’s side? Are you sure Malar would be so enraged as to send his avatar down?” Leylin frowned. A god’s avatar was basically their most powerful body in the prime material plane. Avatars and true bodies were also closely related, and the avatar’s elimination would damage the true body itself to a degree. He was honestly rather skeptical of whether the prey could be lured out.

‘Come to think of it, Malar is quite unlucky. Legendaries like us are coveting his power, but on top of that even the church of justice won’t stand his existence…’ As a lesser god allied with the orcish gods, Malar was a huge target. Even without Lillian pushing for it the church of justice had determined that he was to be eliminated. At the start of time, it was very common to weaken an opposing god through a battle of their avatars. Leylin had his eye on Malar’s divinity, so he naturally didn’t hesitate to join in on this mission. Rafiniya was rather gratified, thinking that Leylin had separated himself from some sort of vulgar interests and made his mind up to join the mighty project of saving the north.

“There’s no problem. The Blackblood Tribe should be holding a legendary hunting ceremony right now to please Malar… Records
state that this ritual is very important to him. If it’s interrupted, he will immediately become enraged… And if his followers and subordinates fail to find the person who caused this, then there’s a large possibility of him sending his avatar down…” Lillian did not hesitate when mentioning Malar’s name, not even trying to avoid it.

They now had two powerful greater gods on their side, which was enough to shield them from Malar’s senses. This would allow him to enter the trap without having his guard up.

*Roar!* *Rumble!* Meanwhile, large sounds and violent tremors could be felt through the boundaries. Even with the great distance and layers of weakening, there was still a huge ruckus in the cave. Leylin and the others immediately twitched.

“It’s begun.” Chaos reigned as the cries of werecreatures closed in. Evidently Patrick had succeeded in stopping the ceremony, and he was now being pursued.

“Get to your spots and make sure the connection is good so you can hear my commands.” Lillian’s eyes glinted as her body turned into a soil puppet that soon crumbled. Her true body had already left.

“The time to get rid of the disharmony in the dark forest has arrived…” The legendary druid Alegor muttered and left, his large beast body as agile as an elf in the trees.

“What a spectacle! Looks like Patrick really riled up these werecreatures quite a bit…” After opening up the teleportation gate, Leylin narrowed his eyes, watching the werecreatures that filled the grounds. These beings that were very similar to the orcs now had reddened eyes as they pursued a white streak of light.

*Roar!* At the moment, there was a black ape-like creature over five metres tall in front of the werecreature team. Its scales reflected a metallic luster, and claws with rough, long nails ruthlessly pushed apart everything in its way.
“Swish!” It was as if the air was cut and pushed away, creating an intense blast.

“Hah! Holy Light Protection!” The figure amidst the ray of light suddenly turned back, a large sword that seemed to be made of crystal emitting holy light to form a large wall. A large figure seemed to clash against the pursuers.

*Boom!* The trees and soil were shaved off, sending numerous weaker werecreatures flying. Making use of this opportunity, the paladin darted to Leylin’s side and took a breath, “Be careful, they’re coming…”

“You even lured out a legendary Hunter. What did you do?” Leylin was rather curious about how the paladin had achieved this effect. He instantly recognised that the monster following right behind the paladin in a crazed state was something mutated by Malar, a guard of his divine kingdom. It was a Hunter!

Unlike the previous monsters, though, this one had already become legendary. Even Leylin himself would find it difficult to take this being down.

“Hehe… I just stole all of the legendary blood that the Blackblood Tribe has amassed. There’s this too!” The paladin Patrick tossed a large ape head away. This was obviously a legendary hunter as well.

Seeing this, the werecreature soldiers grew more fervent in their pursuit. They roared as they pounced, like they’d seen a mortal enemy. Which was the case anyway. Since the ceremony had been interrupted, Malar was now enraged and had even devoured a few high-ranked priests. Those were people he usually liked a lot.…. If they could not capture these sinners and sacrifice them, there was a possibility that Malar would give up on all the werecreatures here. After all, what did anyone have to say to someone who was half a beast?

“If we wipe out all these soldiers, he’d probably send his avatar
down, right?” Leylin nodded in approval, and then unhesitatingly cast a spell.
Blazing rings of fire immediately lit up around him, causing the skies in this region to darken. Traces of red emerged from dark clouds, as lava fell like raindrops.
Legendary spell, Skyfire Rain!
Drip! Drip! Droplets of lava the size of human heads fell from the sky, bringing with them the burning power of fire. Under their glamour and beauty, they hid a terrifying might.

The earth kept rumbling, and each contact between the lava and the ground caused explosions that formed huge pits. The surrounding forest was also set aflame, resulting in a horrifying sea of fire.

The werecreatures seemed tiny in this fire. Even if they’d only been touched by a bit of it, their oily skin lit up like they were torches.

The wails of the werecreatures resounded as an overpowering charred smell permeated the air. Paired with the vast sea of fire, it was as if this was the end of the world.

“The destructive power of a legendary spell really is immense. It’s no wonder that the legendary council on the continent made it taboo…” The paladin Patrick was obviously shocked as well. While he could easily kill a legendary Hunter, his area of effect was nowhere as terrifying as this was.

Thousands of werecreatures were burnt to ashes in a single attack, and many more suffered grievous burns. With no priests to heal them, their contaminated wounds would lead to certain death.

“Now isn’t the time to watch.” Leylin pointed his finger. A few black figures that overcame the flames soon arrived before them. Leading them was the legendary Hunter, but it was evident that Leylin had focused quite a bit on it. The Skyfire Rain had been
aimed at it, and much of its scales and fur had been burnt. Bones were jutting out of some parts of its body, creating a terrifying sight.

Behind the Hunter were a few werecreatures who looked just as pitiful. The fur and beards on their faces were mostly burnt off, and they were now watching Leylin and the paladin with vigilance. One of them, evidently an older priest, stood out and stared straight at Leylin. Its gaze contained a hatred that was etched into the bones, “Legendary wizard of the outer world, we of the Blackblood Tribe don’t seem to have dealt with you. Why do you suddenly hinder our holy sacrifice, and even harm our people?”

Patrick had been ignored. With the difference in their factions, the two groups were natural enemies anyway, so what more was there to be said?

“I used to work for Silverymoon,” Leylin answered. He was smiling slightly, but felt a twinge of pity inside him. Even with the bonus of being an arcanist and his other skills, large-scale legendary magic still didn’t cause much damage to the truly powerful.

Blue light shone in Leylin’s eyes, ‘This is just a ranged attack after all. A single target spell would’ve taken one of them down forever…’

“So you’re one of Alustriel’s people!” the old werecreature exclaimed. The Blackblood Tribe had stood on the side of the orcish empire, so they were now the arch nemeses with Silverymoon. The werecreatures had all heard that the Queen of Silverymoon was preparing to reclaim her lands, so there was no need for discussion anymore.

“So that’s why you’re against us. Indeed, that conflict can’t be settled…” the old priest muttered, his eyes turning bloodthirsty, “But while you did interrupt our holy ritual, you’ve provided us with even better sacrifices. The lives of two legendaries should be
enough to appease our master. Get them!” The priest roared, and the legendary Hunter finally had an outlet for its impatience. It leapt out, leaving a large pit on the ground. Cracks spread like spider webs in all directions as the creature barrelled towards Patrick like a cannonball, its terrifying poisonous claws striking down on the paladin’s head.

“We need to show overpowering might. If not, it’ll just be more powerful werecreatures…” At this moment, Lillian’s voice sounded by Leylin’s ear. It seemed like she and the druid were still concealed, as if the most patient of predators waiting for their prey. “That’s what I like!” Lowering his eyes, Leylin exuded a murderous aura.

Banshee’s Wail! A piercing shriek that seemed to emerge from the very soul burst forth, the sound spreading in all directions to freeze everyone’s thoughts for a moment.

“Now’s the time. Greater Binding!” Leylin’s hands moved like he was a professional bard, constantly pulling at the strings that were the elements in the Weave. Dazzling spell rays emanated from his body.

*Roar!* The legendary Hunter seemed to be bound by some invisible force in mid-air, and it was left stuck in that position.

“All evil shall be persecuted, Divine Trial!” The paladin had finally gotten his chance. He’d arrived in front of the Hunter with his crystal sword enveloped in holy white light. His eyes burned with platinum flames.

Clean Break! The legendary Hunter’s scales and energy defences were split apart by the paladin’s sword like it was a hot knife slicing through butter. Blood spurted in all directions as a giant head fell to the ground.

Their proficient techniques and teamwork allowed Leylin and Patrick to instantly take care of the legendary creature. This amount of strength evidently surpassed the imaginations of the higher-ups
amongst the werecreatures, and the legendary priest resolutely placed his hands in his bosom, as if about to pick out something. [Beep! Based on energy undulations and judgment of shape, chances of opponent taking out sacrificial dagger are 99.99%. Divine force sacrifice will begin in 0.27s.] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded, and the prediction caused Leylin to move quickly. A mysterious light swept forth from his hand, disregarding all defence in an attempt to strike the old priest head on. The priest stared at his hand blankly. The gorgeous dagger that had once been there had cracked apart, to the point that there wasn’t even a handle left. Legendary arcane spell, Great Disjunction! Even a divine weapon would suffer the wrath of this arcane spell, much less normal items of the mortal world. That was not all. The old priest’s necklace, his staff filled with divine force, his beast teeth, and all sorts of magic artifacts that were brushed with exemplary strength were all broken apart.

‘As expected of an arcanist legacy. Even just Great Disjunction and Timestop can allow me to do whatever I wish amongst legendaries…’

Although Leylin had a few standard legendary spells, they couldn’t compare to the arcanist legacy he held. He had even gotten himself a floating city! He had all the arcanist secrets and spell models he wanted.

“This strength…” It wasn’t just the werecreatures that were surprised by Leylin’s strength. Even his allies in Patrick, Lillian, and Alegor were shocked in secret.

‘How can he have so many high-ranked and legendary spell slots? Could he be a lover of the Goddess of the Weave? No, that’s not it. There’s another possibility… Arcane spells!’ Lilian’s eyes burnt with fervour, ‘His attainments in arcane spells far exceeds my expectations. It’s already at an inconceivable level…’
As a legendary wizard, she too had performed research on arcane spells and obtained a few low-ranked arcane spell models. She definitely knew that this would allow her to cast more spells. It was a pity that there were few she had seen who had obtained and could use legendary arcane spells easily. They were all old freaks who had lived for thousands of years, none as young as Leylin!

‘No wonder he advanced so quickly. So he’s already grasped some secrets of the ancient arcanists?’ Lillian pondered inside, thinking she’d unraveled Leylin’s secrets.

Leylin had expected this, though. He paid little mind to it, for the leak of information was intentional. After all, it wasn’t taboo for legendary wizards to perform research on arcane arts, and he was just skirting the line slightly. The more strength he revealed, the more he could do.

“Why are you still standing there? Go!” Like now, for instance. The dazed paladin listened to Leylin’s commands subconsciously, charging towards the few remaining powerful werecreatures, who were at a loss.

Meteor Explosion! Bigby’s Crushing Hand! With the paladin attacking, Leylin used his terrifying control over spells and took care of the situation in an instant.

By the end, Patrick’s mind seemed to crash as he saw Leylin rendering the last of the werecreatures to dust. ‘Such a violent yet refined method of battle, as well as that last fight, is even more crazy than a berserker… Is he really a wizard?’

“Be prepared. Now’s the true test!” Leylin reminded him with a serious expression.

The paladin turned grim as he glanced at the Blackblood Tribe. A terrifying roar resounded in the area, containing great amounts of fury. Seeing so many of his subordinates dead, Malar could no longer take it. He sent his avatar to take the stage!
owls and roars echoed in the area. Many high-ranked werecreatures had gathered around a central altar in the Blackblood Tribe’s lands, chanting hymns of praise to Malar. Group after group of high-ranked captives were slaughtered before the altar, their fresh blood dripping into the pool of blood at the center. Prior experience told these priests that a large-scale blood sacrifice would soothe the God of the Hunt. He would even bestow great divine grace on them. Now, however, Malar’s fury did not cease. He only grew more violent with every blood sacrifice, like a distant cloud of volcanic ash brewing to its peak. A terrifying roar rang out, and an avatar rose abruptly from the altar. A powerful suppressive pressure originated from its soul, which made the priests prostrate themselves on the ground. They prayed for Malar’s fury to swiftly be quelled. It was a great pity that the God of the Hunt did not listen to the prayers of his worshippers. More roars reverberated through the altar, and the blood pool rippled violently as if in a storm. It immediately engulfed the trembling captives and priests. “It’s our Lord! Our Lord’s avatar is about to descend…” The other priests who had fortunately been spared from the wave fell to their knees in succession. They began to chant prayers to their god.

A foot stepped out of the central altar at this moment, clad in
golden fur. The atmosphere seemed to freeze in that moment, and the air was charged with a stifling and oppressive feeling. The golden figure slowly walked out into the full view of the worshippers. It was an enormous and powerful monster that stood over ten metres tall, looking like a cross of man and ape. Its body was covered in swathes of scales and hair, and fierce claws grew from its hands. Its body glowed with a faint golden aura, making the enormous ape creature look like the darling of the entire world. It seemed to be an existence at the core of the world! This was an avatar of the Lesser God of the Hunt, the protector of hunters and werecreatures. It was an avatar of Malar the Blackblood Beast, completing its descent into the prime material plane. It possessed divine grace as boundless as the sea, divine might as stifling as a prison cell. All the werecreatures’ minds froze, and their bodies acted mechanical in their loud chants of Malar’s name. Malar’s avatar did not pay the worshippers the slightest attention. After all, they were all like ants to him. With a divine domain in hunting, he easily obtained news of his prey from the undulations in the atmosphere. *Whoosh!* Malar’s figure disappeared in a flash, chasing after those hateful and lowborn thieves who had disturbed the legendary blood sacrifice. He had already decided to tear out the souls of these blasphemers, and have them wail in terror for a thousand years within his divine kingdom. ……

‘It’s coming! Even from such a great distance I can feel its might. As expected of a true god,’ Leylin was inwardly apprehensive about
Malar’s power, but this was only an avatar after all.
‘However, Malar’s true body is equal to a rank 7 Magus, I can still take this on. I wonder what power he could show if we fought within his divine kingdom,’ Leylin’s eyes were filled with expectation.
“I discovered Malar’s avatar. It’s heading our way right now… The epic isolation matrix is working well, it won’t be a problem no matter how much energy it has to contain!” Lillian’s voice floated over to him. He could sense the anxiety in her voice, they were about to battle a god after all.
Only legendary mortals could accomplish such a magnificent feat as slaying a god!
Right at that moment, the A.I. Chip flashed a prompt in a blood-red window, mapping out several exit routes. [Beep! Powerful energy undulations are approaching this location at high speed, danger level is extremely high. Suggestion: Leave the vicinity immediately!]
‘He’s fast!’ Leylin’s eyes narrowed as he caught a glimpse of the monstrous golden figure. ‘No! When did it get here?’ Fortunately, he had heeded the A.I. Chip’s prompt and dodged into safety. In the end, he had only escaped the beast’s claws by a hair’s breadth.
While he’d dodged, the layers of Mage Armour on Leylin’s body immediately collapsed. It was clear that the beast’s claws had also launched a wind attack, and even Mage Armour II could not withstand the beast’s power!
‘Terrifying! Is this the power of a god’s avatar? At the very least, it has the strength of a peak Breaking Dawn…” After Leylin regained his senses, he found out that he had already retreated by several hundred metres. Patrick himself stood a distance away from him, miserable with his face incomparably white. The paladin had lost an arm, and fresh blood poured out of the injury.
Evidently, this paladin was unable to escape Malar’s sneak attack
and lost an arm in the process. His prowess was reduced considerably.

*Swish!* “AAHH!” Only now did the angered cries of Patrick travelled through the air, which was in an extreme disorder to the senses.

‘I was able to see him injured before hearing his cries. Does this mean that the speed has already exceeded the speed of sound?’ Leylin sweated nervously. ‘An agility like this, it’s most likely over 40!’

As a wizard, he could understand Malar’s attack. The god had used some method to exceed the speed of sound, and put in a vivid manner if Patrick had been killed Leylin would still only have seen the corpse before the sound of the battle.

‘Only death awaits if you’re reflexes cannot keep up with this…’ Leylin sighed inwardly as he looked at the golden ape the size of a mountain. “This is the avatar of a god? And for a lesser one at that?”

“What happened just now?” Lillian’s enraged voice sounded beside Leylin’s and Patrick’s ear.

“Patrick is injured. We need to move our plans forward, execute them right away. Malar’s strength had greatly exceeded our expectations!” Leylin rubbed his temples. His voice was incomparably calm, and he seemed not the slightest bit frightened.

“No… No problem! Before that evil is vanquished, I will not fall!” Patrick snorted, and milky white light glowed on his injury. His stem cells began to regrow his flesh, and the bleeding soon stopped.

Malar’s avatar merely watched the process mockingly, as if savouring the fear of his prey.

‘Playing mind games and only striking when the enemy suffers a mental breakdown? Fool, this is just a good chance for me!’ Faint blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes. ‘A.I. Chip, scan target!’
The A.I. Chip duly carried out Leylin’s commands. Soon after, a 3-D hologram was projected in front of Leylin’s eyes, with a large amount of data on the side.

[God of the Hunt – Malar (Avatar). Estimated Stats: Strength: 30 – 45, Agility: 40 – 42, Vitality: 30 – 31, Spirit: 24 -27. Feats: 1. Epic Damage Reduction: All physical damage below the legendary rank is negated. 2. Epic Magic Resistance: With divine protection and divine force, an avatar has great magic resistance. All magical damage below the legendary realm is negated. Note: Legendary arcane spells such as Timestop will not work on the target. Divine Strength: Lesser God. Alignment: Chaotic Evil. Domains: Murder, Hunting, Pursuit. Weapons Owned: Beast Claw. This legendary weapon has great attacking power, being fashioned after Malar’s original.]

‘Epic damage reduction and magic resistance. This means that without legendaries, the battle cannot be won with mere numbers…’ Leylin inhaled a deep breath upon seeing the stats of the avatar.

“If we cannot get rid of the domain, our chances of winning today are extremely low…” Leylin questioned himself. If it was a one versus one battle with him and Malar’s avatar, he would definitely perish if he did not summon the floating city.

Even with the added support and some traps prepared, he was not more confident.

‘I need to use the floating city at the end and get rid of Malar…’ A glint of ruthlessness flashed in Leylin’s eyes.

Back then, he had used the appearance of Kukulkan to steal the floating city. While this had alerted the powerful factions that there was a rising powerhouse and even fooled the gods, they did not know his identity. If he were to use it now, he would be admitting his identity.
However, if he was forced to the edge, what other choice did he have?

“Wait for me, I’ll activate the array and support you again immediately!” Lillian too, wanted to seize this rare opportunity. She placed her bets like a gambler.

[Beep! Sealed formation activating! Beginning in….] the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned, but Leylin could not longer pay any heed to it.

Just as Lillian activated the formation, Malar’s senses told him the situation had become dangerous. He immediately charged towards Leylin. Although he was no longer faster than sound, he could still deal Leylin a fatal blow.

“Roar!”

At this moment, Leylin was forced to reveal one of his smallest trump cards. The dazzling wizard robes were shredded into pieces, revealing a legendary dragon armour. A draconic staff found its way into his hands.

Legendary Dragon Breath! Soulburn!
A phantom dragon appeared, roaring out with legendary might. Leylin had ignited the red dragon’s soul without a single thought to the consequences, conferring unimaginable power to the dragon. A mighty draconic aura almost fully materialised, and dazzling crimson light dyed the skies red. *Boom!* A river of magma flowed into Leylin’s position, with Malar’s towering avatar at the centre. Having borne the brunt of a legendary attack, his skin was now charred. It was the first injury he’d sustained today. Leylin’s figure appeared beside a tree across him. The dragonscale armour had three long gashes in its breastplate, inflicted by Malar’s attack.

“Damn it, isn’t it ready yet?” Just as Leylin began to curse, the pleasant voice of the A.I. Chip finally rang out. [Beep! All preparations have been completed, epic spell formation activated.] Golden threads began to float in the air, engulfing their surroundings. Malar felt the imminent danger, and bellowed in rage. Many of the golden threads began to converge into chains as they coiled around the avatar.

At this moment, Leylin could see Malar’s feats of epic damage reduction and magic resistance weaken, and finally disappeared. He heaved a sigh of relief. The ambient temperature fell drastically, and hexagonal snowflakes sparkled as they drifted down from the sky.
Summon— Giant Frost Sprite! The snow converged into an icy white giant. Each of the giant’s movements added a layer of frost to its surroundings.

“Apologies for the delay!” Lillian said as she sat on the shoulder of the frost sprite, “Malar’s resistance was too high, but it’s been negated by the spell formation…”

The several legendaries present heaved a sigh of relief as they looked on. They weren’t about to give the avatar any breathing room.

“Roar!” A legendary roar sounded once more, but this time much stronger than that of Leylin’s phantom dragon. A black shadow covered Malar. Accompanying the deafening roar was a red-scaled dragon that dived to attack the avatar. Its razor sharp claws met his, causing blood to spurt out.

‘A legendary dragon? No! There seem to be a trace of ancient dragons…’ Ahead of Leylin was a legendary dragon. An ancient aura radiated from its body, and its dazzling crimson scales glowed like mesmerising rubies.

“Well done, Alegor!” Lillian’s eyes widened as she charged forward with her frost sprite.

‘Alegor? The druid… So this is legendary Transfiguration.’ The crimson dragon seemed incomparably authentic to Leylin’s eyes. Nobody would have been able to tell that it was a druid.

Malar’s speed had been reduced by the frost sprite, and he’d suffered from the melee against the dragon. The avatar was now in bad shape. Drops of dazzling golden ichor spurted from it, rising off the ground as steam.

“Die!” Patrick seized the opportunity, and radiant light shone from behind his body. A holy figure appeared, restoring him to full strength immediately and wreathing his crystal sword in flames.

*Shlick!* The holy sword stabbed into the avatar’s thigh, almost
breaking the bone. Malar who had suffered some injuries howled loudly, “AH… TYR, you deformed thing! I’ll never let you get away with this…”

‘Tyr struck as well?’ Leylin turned to the holy figure behind Patrick with some apprehension. It was obvious that a hand was missing from his body, and legend had it that the God of Justice had been injured while trying to seal Cerberus.

‘Avatars are indeed the best counter to their kind… I should be more cautious of them in the future…’ Leylin lowered his head slightly as he gripped tightly onto an ancient purple-gold coin.

“Argh…!” The injury to the thigh caused a lasting effect on Malar’s body. His damage resistance had dropped, and even his hair charred. It made him look miserable.

Having been pushed to the edge, Malar finally decided to use his other powers. All this while he’d only engaged in melee, but how could a god not have any spells at hand? After one last roar, the avatar disappeared into the void. Neither the dragon, the frost sprite, or the paladin could detect any traces of him.

‘Is this Absolute Stealth? It’s rumoured to be the most powerful stealth technique for rogues…’ Leylin turned serious. This skill allowed his opponent to completely conceal himself, and rendered him immune to all attacks. However, the body was still in the prime material plane, and he could launch a sneak attack at any time. It was worthy of being called the ultimate rogue skill.

“Be careful, he’s still inside the array!” These legendaries weren’t less experienced than Leylin himself. After all, they’d reached this peak from a mountain of bloody corpses. Once Malar’s avatar disappeared, the other legendaries immediately began to attack as a defensive measure.

It was a pity though. It was all a child’s game against the God of the Hunt. Just as Patrick had sheathed his sword, the enormous figure of Malar’s avatar appeared before him. A shadow sprung forth
from his terrifyingly omnipotent body, engulfing the paladin completely.

“Help! Save me!” The other three legendaries all understood the importance of working together, and even Leylin began to act.

It was a shame that Leylin suddenly perceived a tremendous evil intent in the atmosphere at this moment. He immediately activated all the defences of his dragonscale armour, and the Red Dragon Staff thundered as it launched a Dragon Breath in the danger’s direction.

“Aah…” A momentary hiss sounded, and an illusory shadow seemed to disappear in a blazing tower of flames.

“This must be... When did they prepare a Phantasmal Killer?” Leylin began to think at lightning speed. This was the advantage of being a god—even such a high-ranked skill could be used as long as one had sufficient divine force.

“Get lost, you abomination!” Lillian and Alegor had also been blocked by Phantasmal Killers, and were both delayed from acting.

In this short span of time, Patrick’s fate had been sealed.

“Aah! Chaotic evil, why can’t you disappear from this world?” Before death had its grasp on him, Patrick displayed his peak legendary strength. The burning crystal sword widened in a flash, immediately becoming a broadsword that was over five metres long. It clashed fiercely with the bestial claws of Malar’s avatar, who radiated divine force even more fiercely. Malar seemed to be on the verge of possessing the paladin.

*Snap! Crack!* Faint shattering sounded from the points where the claws clashed with the sword. The special ability of the claws was Shatter!

Patrick could only watch with a dumbstruck expression as Malar’s avatar snapped his longsword with its claws. The giant claws covered in golden fur snatched the knight up immediately.

“Ah…” Powerful divine force imprisoned Patrick, and he could
only frantically howl in response. Nothing he did managed to harm a single hair on his opponent. His surging qi began to wane. In the end, all Patrick saw was an enormous smelly mouth clustered with sharp teeth that stood straight like pikes. Leylin and the others saw Malar’s avatar toss the legendary paladin directly into his maw and chew him up. Patrick’s defences were useless against Malar’s teeth, and a crunching sound made everyone’s hair stand on end as a great amount of blood and bones fell from the corner of Malar’s mouth, trickling down his fur. Four great legendaries had surrounded Malar’s avatar. Of them, the paladin Patrick had now fallen. “Damn, should we retreat?” For the first time, Lillian felt that she was not prepared. Even just the avatar of a god possessed unimaginable strength. She hesitantly glanced at the legendary druid beside her, who was still in his red dragon form. “It’s just an avatar, and its divine force reserves should be running low… It used up a lot against the paladin earlier, now is our best chance!” ‘A.I. Chip! Calculate the avatar’s trajectory!’ [Beep! Mission established! Avatar’s coordinates have been input… Simulation established!] The A.I. Chip loyally executed Leylin’s task. Afterwards, Leylin’s eyes glowed as he cast a legendary spell that he had long prepared—Greater Disjunction! *Snap! Crack!* Malar’s bestial claws were still only a high-ranked legendary weapon in the end, and not a divine weapon. They had sustained some damage fighting the paladin, and Leylin’s Greater Disjunction caused them to finally crack. “Now’s our chance!” Lillian and Alegor’s eyes lit up with hope as they advanced, revealing their own greatest trump cards. “Legendary spell—Ice Age!” Lillian chanted in a high voice, and the surrounding air seemed to turn into a blizzard. The trees, and
even rocks around them all turned into sparkling ice, as if the entire world had returned to the Ice Age.
“So what if you’re a god’s avatar? You shall fall!” On the shoulder of the giant frost sprite, Lillian was like a goddess of snow. A layer of ice covered Malar’s feet, planting him firmly on the ground as an icy meteorite hundreds of tons in weight broke through the skies to land on the avatar.

“What the hell. Is this woman crazy? This attack will also affect us…” In the face of such earth-shattering strength, Leylin was forced backwards. Even Alegor in his dragon form flapped his wings with as much strength as he could muster to keep a distance.

“You mortals profane gods…” Malar’s avatar transmitted spiritual undulations in the face of the meteorite. Yet, it crashed down before he could finish speaking, and his words were drowned out.

*Rumble!* A magnitude ten earthquake erupted abruptly, shaking the land and causing dust to form a terrifying mushroom cloud in the sky. Everyone with strength in the north felt the earth shaking in that instant!

“Hah… this mad woman…” Leylin had grown himself a pair of powerful wings of air, and he looked down at the huge pit from the meteorite. The terrifying hole was tens of kilometres deep, and the middle was pitch-black with a base that could not even be seen.

“Has the avatar died yet? I doubt it, but he’s sure to be heavily injured…”

“Alegor, quick!” Lillian seemed to be on the verge of collapse after casting this legendary spell. She couldn’t even maintain the giant
frost sprite under her, only able to let it explode back into ice and snow in the air.

*Roar!* The legendary dragon threw himself into the depths of the pit, and what followed were furious snarls and yells. A large black figure was flung out, like a small mountain being tossed away. Leylin’s astonishing eyesight had allowed him to see what happened clearly. The legendary druid Alegor in his dragon form had been caught by the tail, and Malar’s avatar had thrown him out like he was tossing a hammer.

Leylin’s pupils shrank, and he muttered to himself, “Such tenaciousness… So this is the avatar of a god.”

“You who profane the gods! I will extract all of your souls and place them in my divine kingdom, burning them in holy fire for a hundred thousand years!”

The gigantic ape monster walked out of the pit, clearly agitated. However, he clearly wasn’t doing well either. Golden liquid flowed out of his wounds, glowing with the light of divine force. Still, it was hindered by an invisible force.

‘Seems like he really is gravely injured,’ Leylin thought as he nodded to himself. Still, Malar’s body was just a convergence of divine force held together by a god’s conscient. It was this divine force that allowed him to maintain physical form. Even the blood spurting out of his wounds was the same, slight injury unable to harm the god’s origins.

And yet things were different now. His wounds were making it difficult for him to maintain his form in the material plane, and his divine force was already beginning to dissipate.

“Mortal woman, how dare you harm my divine body…” The golden ape monster appeared in front of Lillian in the next instant, its giant claws slashing forward.

“Ah…” In spite of crystal armour and tens of layers of frost shields, Lillian’s defences were broken apart. The legendary
wizard’s body shot out like a cannonball, and smoke filled the skies.
The red dragon was nowhere to be found in the deep pit. Instead, Alegor’s original form lay there unconscious.
“Damn it… So I’m the only one left at the end?” Leylin rubbed his nose, wondering with a wry smile.
‘There’s a few dogs beside this monkey, it’ll be a little troublesome…’
“Keke… there’s one left? Are you trying to flee? Come, let me enjoy this hunt!” Malar’s eyes were fixed straight on Leylin, emitting a crazed bloodthirst.
However, in the next moment, a large palm pushed the head of the avatar into the ground. This was Crushing Palm!
“Are you crazy? I finally got my prey here after much effort. Why would I leave?”
Leylin’s eyes were cold and wise, “A god letting me leave? The divine force forming your avatar is now lacking, and you urgently need to replenish it.”
How could Malar’s thoughts escape Leylin? The four legendaries had made preparations for a long time and given so much. While the avatar had persisted up till this point, the grievous injuries he had sustained were serious enough!
“ROAR! I will kill you… Kill you!” The large monster ape pulled up from the soil and shook his head in fury.
“You won’t be able to kill anyone!” Leylin’s voice was cold as he pointed to the avatar’s head with his right hand.
Legendary Spell— Meteor Blast!
Four large fireballs fell from the sky, exploding on top of Malar’s head. The exemplary flames immediately caused Malar to snarl in anger, “Legendary spells again! Why? How do you have so many spell slots?”
“You can ask again in death.” Leylin looked apathetic as legendary
spell was cast after legendary spell. Legendary Absorption. Legendary Detonation!
“Im…possible…” The avatar blustered. Much of his negative energy and defences had been neutralised by the absorption spell, leaving him open to the detonation that struck his neck. Malar’s large head disintegrated.

Having become a legendary arcanist, Leylin had integrated his research as a Magus with the analytic abilities of the A.I. Chip to cause a terrifying qualitative change. He could now cast legendary spells near-instantly. Having been drowned in them, it was no wonder that Malar’s avatar died.

“Still… We haven’t even started the true battle yet…” Leylin stared at Malar’s avatar’s corpse unblinkingly.

The collapsed body was undergoing a huge transformation. The pieces of the corpse melted to form a thick golden liquid, much of which fused to form a large golden sphere. Malar’s cries could still be heard from its core.

“The avatar isn’t made of flesh and blood after all. Even if the head is cut off, it can still move. Then again, a form made of just divine force is extremely fragile…”

Leylin understood the various forms gods could take on. Malar’s avatar wasn’t completely dead yet, and as long as he could flee to his divine kingdom and fuse back into the main body he would suffer no real losses.

“This unique ability of divine force, the ability to vary its form, is what makes it difficult for people to capture it. It is also the key to murdering a god…” Leylin glanced in the direction of the unconscious Lillian. She was currently gravely injured, rendered immobile.

The original plan was for her to capture the avatar. She would use extremely cold ice to dull the life of the divine force, then use a special container to capture or directly absorb it. Of course, Leylin
had not expected too much of her. He had a better method.
“Don’t you leave!” he yelled, numerous thin green threads forming
a large web that shot forth from his fingertips.
“Did you think a mortal object like that… could…” As he saw what
Leylin was doing, the bundle of light that was the avatar scorned
him. However, Malar was then left unable to laugh.
*Swish!* The large green web stopped most of the golden ball.
The liquid divine force could not break through its seal!
“How’s this possible? What kind of web is this?” Malar roared, but
was unable to do anything about the tightening of the web. He soon
reached Leylin’s palm.
“As expected, a web formed of origin force works very well at
detaining the divine force of a god. The A.I. Chip’s predictions
were right.” Leylin saw the struggle within the web, where Malar
was like a large fish that had accidentally fallen inside. He could not
help but snicker as he grabbed the web tightly.
World Origin Force! This was the origin power of everything, what
arcanists called origin energy.
A web formed of origin energy was the bane of all godly beings. It
was no wonder that the ancient gods and arcanists were arch
enemies, and the arcanists had been wiped out.
Leylin was probably now the only Great Arcanist on the continent.
He had no problems with turning origin energy into a web, and this
was the insurance he’d prepared for this operation. As the large
web tightened up, Malar’s avatar’s cries grew soft until he
completely stopped moving.
*Rumble!* Tremendous undulations filled the skies in the direction
that the other small part of Malar’s avatar had escaped, and his
worshippers’ prayers formed a golden light
“So we weren’t the only ones coveting the avatar after all. I
managed to lure them out by letting that small part go…” Leylin
had no plans of stopping. While the smaller avatar still had most of
the firepower focused on it, he opened a teleportation gate next to him.
“Please wait, Lord Leylin!” Numerous figures shot over at this moment, all with powerful divine force on their bodies. This was a group of legendary priests. They were led by Benedict, the bishop of the church of justice.
Hat belonging to mortals shall go to mortals. That belonging to gods shall go to them. Please do not delude yourself.” Benedict’s tone was almost pitiful of the fate of mankind.

“Tsk, I hate mediums like you. You’ve even brainwashed yourself…” Leylin looked behind him, unsurprised to see the legendary priest of Mystra as well, “Isn’t this all for this avatar I have? Even the Goddess of the Weave is joining forces with you…”

“You should know not to slight the wills of two greater gods. As long as you hand over the source of evil in your hands, our church will definitely compensate you satisfyingly…” Benedict now had a merciful look in his eyes, as if he was saving the world.

What a joke that was! Would Mystra or Tyr hand over a portion of divinity in exchange for the avatar? Even if they were willing to, Leylin himself wouldn’t want it. Leylin was used to getting what he wanted, and did not accept charity. This situation caused anger to rise from the depths of his eyes. “Sorry, not interested.”

The clear rejection immediately stunned Benedict. He then grew indignant, “You’re so stubborn!

“Go!” Five high-ranked legendary priests moved forward at his command, forming into a pentagram as they circled Leylin. It exhibited great prohibitive strength.

“So… now that we’ve shed all pretense of cordiality, it’s time to do
it by force?” A dangerous smile rose by Leylin’s lips, “Luckily, I’m not entirely unprepared…”
Watching Leylin surrounded by the pentagram, a kind smile arose on Benedict’s face, “This spell formation is boosted by our gods, and it is impossible to destroy it from within. Do you still not repent?”
Leylin took at the sparkling array, seemingly deep in thought. ‘These are pretty good sealing runes. I’ll need some effort to break out from within…’
After hearing the man speak, however, he snickered, “It wouldn’t do good for you to dispose of the legendaries you invited yourselves.”
“You think too highly of yourself. Our church can bear the consequences of losing a mere legendary…” Benedict sighed, “Looks like Leylin has been corroded by greed. Go!”
“Exactly what I was thinking. Do it!” Leylin nodded.
“We’re already at this point, and you still…” The fury in Benedict’s heart grew, and in that moment he made up his mind. He would suffer the loss of reputation in exchange for Leylin’s death.
However, his expression quickly changed.
*Woo! Woo!* A deathly aura, as dark as ink, had filled their surroundings. Numerous bony hands dug their way out of the ground, some with rotting flesh remaining on them as they roared with ire.
“This profaning of souls, it’s a necromancer!” The priests’ bodies immediately flashed with divine spells.
“Keke…” The bones started to laugh with a strange sound as they formed a gigantic horned skull. The skull struck the pentagram.
*Rumble!* Although divine spells were the bane of necromancy, the opposite was true as well. The pentagram trembled under the deathly aura, reacting like hot oil would to cold water.
*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* Many black cracks crawled along the spell
formation, seeming like human veins. The formation then shattered loudly.

“This strength… It’s a high-ranked legendary necromancer!” Benedict exclaimed in his shock as a mouthful of fresh blood dyed his snow-white collar red.

“You got it in one. I’m sorry you don’t get a prize…” Leylin’s figure flashed, and in an instant he’d disappeared from the formation. By the time the black light flashed again, he was already outside the encirclement.

“Chase him!” Benedict yelled, no time left to care for his injuries. The supporting soldiers he’d brought had terrifying might. There were many legendary priests from the Goddess of the Weave, and there was even an entire regiment of paladins.

*Crack!* *Crack!* However, all these people were drowned out by the army of the undead. The skeletons enveloped them like an endless tsunami, and few spells could fight off this army of cannon fodder. Benedict’s eyes widened further.

“Stay here!” he shouted, activating quite a few high-ranked divine items. Still, even he was met by a wall of skeletons. A strange skull watched him coldly, a dead expression in its empty eye sockets.

‘Legendary spell, Skeletal Wall. It’s said to be so powerful even legendary paladins need to hack at it hundreds of times to deal with it…’ Benedict recognised the origins of this wall. Unable to suppress his injuries any longer, he spat out a few large mouthfuls of blood.

He rejected attempts to help him along, now looking like a ravenous wolf in winter. “A high-ranked legendary necromancer. Use this to identify and trace him!”

Although he said that, Benedict knew full well that powerful necromancer had very long lives. Some even just turned into liches, and it was unclear how many of them were hiding in the corners of the world. It would be a mere fantasy if one wanted to
determine the identity of this one.
Besides, with how things were, what was the point even if they did find out?
“Damn it! DAMN IT!” At the end, the bishop could only let out an angry growl like that of an injured animal, unable to do anything more.

……

In a different location.
The little bit of Malar’s avatar that Leylin had deliberately let off streaked through the skies like a shooting star, breaking through a few seals to reach the outer planes.
However, just as it was about to return to his true body in his divine kingdom the Beast Wasteland, he was suddenly grasped by a palm. It continued to snarl, evidently frantic as if in peril. Divine force rippled forth, but dissipated like a cool breeze in front of the hand.
“Quiet!” A discontent voice sounded, seeming to carry with it the power of laws. Every single movement of the hand seemed to be paired with a vast divine force, causing Malar’s avatar to immediately cease all movement.
“I never thought there would be someone in the prime material plane able to intercept Malar’s avatar…” The Weave rippled, and a goddess with starlike eyes descended to look at the person who’d grasped the avatar in his hands.
“Although there were surprises in our plan, it’s still under our control…” The god that rendered Malar’s avatar unable to fight back looked rather strange. He wore ordinary warrior clothing, and looked incomparably haggard. His eyes were lined with blood, and he was missing his right hand. He looked like an old veteran whose will was still strong.
However, he’d still managed to grab Malar’s slime-like avatar with his remaining one. The avatar was completely unable to move. This was Tyr, the Greater God of Justice and the protector of all paladins!

“Alright, Mistress Weave. Let us see to Malar…” Tyr spoke slowly, following Mystra to the outer regions of Malar’s divine kingdom. Once they arrived at this place, the golden sphere that was Malar’s avatar seemed to grow more emotional. Loud howls echoed from within the divine kingdom.

“Now, Malar. Swear to the Styx that you won’t take part in our battle with the orcish gods, and you will have your avatar back. Silverymoon will also acknowledge the current boundaries in land and let the Blackblood Tribe remain in the Moonwood…” The Weave trembled, sending the goddess’ words into the divine kingdom.

Malar’s roars quietened down for a while, but he did not walk outside. Being a beast did not mean he was a fool. The God of Justice was right outside! If he dared walk out, Tyr would definitely annihilate him. Mystra would probably be happy to see this happen.

Hence, Malar resolutely hid in his divine kingdom, occasionally releasing a few animalistic howls that were hard to understand. Of course, for the gods, understanding each other’s thoughts was very simple.

……

A long while later, Tyr nodded and sent Malar’s avatar into his realm, and then left the realm with the Goddess of the Weave.

“Alright… Malar side is taken care of. Thank you for your help…” Mystra told Tyr.

“With our divine force, it would be a simple task to break into
Tyr began to speak. “He’s still a true god after all. Now that a war between the gods can erupt at any time, we shouldn’t waste too much divine force. Besides, while Malar is someone who works alone, I know that he has dealings with the gods of fury…” The explanation rendered him quiet. Even the God of Justice had to learn to compromise. Had he not, he would long since have fallen. “The preparations in the mortal world are almost done. While those legendaries have their own plans, I have it under control…” All sorts of images flashed in front of Mystra, revealing recent events. “Now that the attack on the avatar is done, the battle between legendaries should start soon. When the time comes, I’ll send my divine weapon down. It will challenge the possessor of the Thunder God’s Hammer, Saladin…” Tyr reiterated their previous agreement. “Justice will definitely triumph over evil. The mighty wills of the various universes came to this decision, and I now say this representing the suffering commoners of the north.” The god’s eyes seemed to pass through time and space, seeing everything…
Quiet spatial turbulence was stirred as a crack opened up between planes. Fierce elemental energy surged through it, annihilating everything in its way.

A floating city stood tall in this region, as if a powerful fortress that was indestructible and eternal. Only after entering the ghost city did Leylin heave a sigh of relief.

“Welcome home, Master!” Shaylin, the fairy who was like a housekeeper, appeared to greet Leylin. Only this place had arcane spell formations that rendered him immune to the spying of the gods, as well as other divination spells.

Once he tossed his coat to an attending golem, Leylin turned to the skeleton lich Illyrio, “You did well.”

“It is my honour to serve Master!” Illyrio pressed his right fist to his chest as he spoke. He was in his crystal skeleton formed, but he was wearing something akin to a black suit. The clothing formed a vile harmony with the skeleton.

Although he knew Illyrio wasn’t speaking from the bottom of his heart, Leylin felt it was enough for the lich to act upon his commands. Sensing the immense power of the God of the Hunt, he’d contacted the necromancer through his phylactery, commanding him to stay concealed and ready to act at any time.

It seemed like the lich truly was experienced. His grasp of time and usage of skills was split-second perfect. If not for the coincidental suppression of the ghost city and the phylactery, Leylin definitely
wouldn’t have been able to deal with him.

“You won’t be recognised by others, will you?” Leylin asked without choice. Skeleton Lich Illyrio, was a name synonymous with trouble and death in the prime material plane, and in recent times his name had even been connected with the ghost city.

“Please don’t worry, Master. What I used were common death-type spells, and I even left behind little details that might point to other liches…” Illyrio’s skeleton snickered, “If they really did try to pursue me using the clues I left behind, I’m sure it would make for an extremely interesting situation…”

Seeing his expression, Leylin could not help but mourn for the paladins. He sent him away, and turned to the fairy. Shaylin immediately flew to his shoulder, beginning an incessant report.

“I’ve been working hard to help manage the ghost city ever since you left, Master. That lich has been diligent as well, and the city is now restored…”

Shaylin was once the intellectual core of the ghost city. Once its owner had died, she’d managed it independently for tens of thousands of years, and she was obviously very practiced in matters like this. Leylin nodded along as she spoke.

Time was now on his side. With the restoration of the ghost city complete, it finally began resuming is usual operations. The Mise energy core was stockpiling energy, and soon enough it would regain the powerful ability to match up to the gods.

“Good. Bring me to the core restriction room, and prepare 20% of the Mise energy core reserves for use. Additionally, get me the arcane energy powder and golem rainbow crystal from the storehouse.”

Leylin looked at the large green web in his hands, it was now time to deal with Malar’s avatar. Still, this was the avatar of a god and could have some hidden abilities. It was best to be on the safe side and absorb him in the floating city.
“Even if I let some of it get away, the divine force and divine will here, as well as the information on domains should be enough for me to refine a trace of divinity in massacres…” He brought Malar’s avatar to the core restriction room, and once all defences were operated he revealed the avatar’s true form within the web. It was currently a large pool of golden gelatinous matter, an unmoving huge slime that seemed dead.

“While I did give him some rough treatment, it shouldn’t be to this extent…” Leylin shook his head, “Perhaps the most fundamental divine will and conscient is still waiting in there, ready to devour me…”

Compared to the gods’ inconceivable strength, even a high-ranked legendary’s soul seemed fragile. Many people had been deluded into thinking they could absorb divinity in the prime material plane, but they were instead absorbed by the gods and turned into avatars. Some were indeed lucky enough to succeed, but they experienced a great change in their temperaments and turned into lunatics.

“What a pity… Your plans will not come to fruition!” Leylin touched the semi-solid divine force on the ground with his finger, “Is the origin conscient of a mere beast trying to swallow me?”

In the instant that Leylin’s mind and the avatar’s conscient made contact, the image of a terrifying giant serpent flashed in Leylin’s eyes. Having absorbed the power of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, the Targaryen seemed to have reached a more inconceivable level. It even seemed to echo within the World of Gods, and its strength continued to grow.

Sensing this conscient, the pile of slime quickly shrunk back. Yet, Shaylin was prepared and restrained it, leaving it with nowhere to go. Leylin took hold of it, and powerful devouring strength exploded forth from his body.

“It has begun…” Leylin closed his eyes, beginning the contest between their conscients and the transformation of divinity.
There was little to say about the battle between consciences. Malar’s avatar couldn’t even begin to resist the Targaryen before it was devoured, and he even leaked some information about divine domains. When Leylin opened his eyes again, a trace of dark gold divine force twined around his arm.

“Is this the power of the divinity of massacres?” Leylin looked at the divinity of massacres, which seemed as thin as a hair on one’s head. Sounds of slaughter filled his senses the moment his thoughts made contact with it, causing his eyes to redden slightly.

“This thread of the divinity of massacres contains about 10% of the law of massacres. There’s a great amount of divinity, as well as the power of faith from Malar’s followers…” Leylin identified the components of the thread.

Divinity was very important to gods, and even true gods would take some time to recover after a portion of their divinity was cut off. Malar had lost most of his avatar, so he would likely be in a terrible state right now.

“Stepping into the realm of the gods using the power of massacres? I like it!” Leylin laughed slightly. A thread of the divinity pounced forward, fusing with his body seamlessly. The process was simple; he’d long since tamed this thing.

Bits of comprehension of the law of massacres emerged in Leylin’s mind. An intense, qualitative change occurred inside his body at the same time.

[Beep. Host body beginning to absorb divinity. A.I. Chip upgrading…] The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded, and what followed was silence.

After an unknown period of time, the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded once more. [Beep! Auxiliary system successfully upgraded.
Detected large changes to host body’s stats. Recalculating…

Afterwards, numerous prompts shot out.

[Beep! Host has successfully absorbed the divinity of massacres. Has been changed as a life form, transitioning into a divine being.]

[Beep! Host has absorbed divinity. All stats +1.]

[Beep! Host’s spirit has advanced, arcana ranking increased. Currently rank 22.]

[Beep! Analysis of level 7 Weave at 100%. Host has unlocked all rank 7 spell models, and will no longer forget spells. No materials needed to cast rank 7 spells.]

[Beep! Host has obtained divine body feat: Epic Adaptability.]

[Epic Adaptability. Divine beings have a great tolerance for various extreme environments. All divine beings can survive in lava and frost, be suffocated, or starve. Note: This feat overlaps with Intermediate Perfect Body, and is now encompassed under it.]

Leylin also found that his stats were refreshed again.


[Analysis of Weave: Level 0 100%, Level 1 100%, Level 2 100%, Level 3 100%, Level 4 100%, Level 5 100%, Level 6 100%, Level 7 100%, Level 8 87.56%, Level 9 57.72%.]

[Spell Slots: Rank 9 (4), Rank 8 (6), Rank 7 (??), Rank 6 (??), Rank 5(??), Rank 4 (??), Rank 3 (??), Rank 2 (??), Rank 1 (??), Rank 0 (??)]

“Divine being? A change to my state?” Leylin looked at his hands. Golden veins appeared under them, and then died down.

“The progress of analysis has increased as well. With the analysis of level 7 complete, I’ve met the minimum requirements to cast the
legendary rank 12 arcane spell, Karsus’ Avatar…” Leylin recalled the powerful model that Distorted Shadow had given to him. It was a terrifying arcane spell that would release all the conscients of the ancient Magi, and could steal all of Mystra’s strength in an instant and cause her to fall.

“If this was in the past, Distorted Shadow would definitely have appeared and used all sorts of methods to distort my senses, forcing me to become arch enemies with the Goddess of the Weave and then make his move.”

A smirk rose about Leylin’s lips. He was now no longer a pawn to be used as others pleased. While the Weave Goddess’ church was slightly hostile to him, they weren’t mortal enemies and their differences weren’t irreconcilable. Naturally, there was also no need to make any moves yet.
What Leylin prized the most was free will. For its sake, he wouldn’t even mind falling out with Distorted Shadow.

‘Besides, now that I’ve grasped a thread of divinity and become a divine being, I’m formally on my way to godhood. I can now sense the prayers of my followers and respond to them, although I can’t bestow divine spells. Still, this is quite good…’

Leylin closed his eyes. He could now sense the countless threads of faith in the air even without his Nightmare Absorbing Physique. It was easy to trace them back to their sources…

The territory of Viscount Tiff, in the northern lands. The Viscount was performing his daily prayers in a secret room, when he suddenly heard a voice within his mind. “Dear follower, I am here. I exist within you!”

Through his spiritual force senses, Tiff felt his prayers connect with a very familiar existence. That feeling immediately caused him to kneel, with tears streaming down his face, “Master, Winged Serpent God Kukulkan, you are finally awake…”

The same incident occurred with many of Kukulkan’s worshippers. They all began to pray, the power of their faith constantly transmitted to Leylin through the Weave and absorbed by his divinity of massacres.

‘The next step is to spread my faith and nurture the divinity, before I attempt to ignite my godfire…’ A fire seemed to blaze in Leylin’s eyes, ‘The power of faith is similar to that of a domain… Is this the
massacre domain?’

“A.I. Chip,” Leylin commanded.
[Beep! Mission established. Host has obtained partial information on the massacre domain. Beginning simulations.]

‘The domain of the divinity of massacres awakened when I acquired it, but I need a lot of power of faith to operate it, using my own comprehension of the law…’ Leylin pondered, his eyes flashing as he stroked his chin.

Domains were the true assets of the gods. They used them to connect with the faith of their worshippers, and transform it into their own strength.

Leylin had only made superficial contact with the massacre domain, and the A.I. Chip couldn’t numerise it yet. After all, this divinity of massacres was not his own. Only with a better understanding of the law of massacres could he truly grasp the domain. The A.I. Chip would be able to numerise the information about the domain then.

Leylin stood up slowly, his breathing blowing a gust of wind across the secret room. The wind struck a steel plate, which began to buzz.

‘How strong am I, now that I’ve absorbed divinity?’ Leylin raised his arm, and a mirror made of water appeared. He was still strong and with a good physique, his golden curls matching well with his deep blue eyes to create the most standard image of a noble youth.

However, Leylin noticed a very hazy golden lustre being emitted from his body. It was very weak, and could even be overlooked if one wasn’t paying attention.
“Also…” Leylin stared at his eyes. Traces of gold flickered within the depths of the deep blue.

‘Is this what happens after absorbing divinity?’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘I’ll be able to conceal it in its entirety once I adapt to its power in a few years. However, I don’t have that much time…’

“Shaylin, move the floating city towards the outer seas of Dambrath,” he ordered. He wore a purplish-gold robe with starlike patterns on it.

The entire ghost city began to rumble with his will. Elemental turbulence rocked the outer planes as it charged towards the space surrounding Dambrath. Anything obstructing its path was ground to powder.

Sitting at the control area, Leylin sneered. “Gods? The north? Hmph! What use are your plots if I just leave?”

He’d come to the north to obtain Malar’s divinity in the first place. His goal was now met, and he’d sensed the situation in the north. What better time to leave than now?

Such unhesitant decision-making was one of the reasons for Leylin’s survival to this day. Although there were immense benefits to be had in the north, he had offended the churches of two greater gods. How would he dare continue staying there?

‘Right now, the churches of the God of Justice and the Goddess of the Weave are preoccupied with helping Alustriel get her kingdom back; most of their forces will be concentrated in the north. There’s
little chance of them making trouble for me…’

‘Tiff will be in trouble though…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed. ‘It’s only something I did in my leisure anyway. There’s little to hang on to there.’

At this thought, Leylin sent a prophecy down Tiff’s thread of faith. “Immense danger will arrive soon. Take all your forces and acolytes out of the north, and head to the outer seas of the Dambrath Kingdom…”

“Immense danger? Is it the church?” Tiff looked solemn as he began to pray, “My Lord, you are the master of everything. I shall carry out your will…”

“What’s wrong, darling?” Tiff’s mistress looked over from beside him, evidently worried. Although they’d shared a bed for many years, she still felt like this person was a stranger.

“It’s nothing much… I’m leaving…” Tiff ruthlessly got up and put on his clothes, “You can either come with me or stay behind to manage our lands…”

While she was still stunned, Tiff had already left the room. What came next was a huge ruckus.

Leylin could give up on the land and wealth in the north. Still, his acolytes had been nurtured painstakingly and were too important to be abandoned.

Tiff understood Leylin. He had the loyal acolytes leave as quickly as possible from the north, keeping them safe. With their quick and
resolute departure, all the two churches found was what he’d abandoned. They had no clue of what they’d let escape.

……

Leylin had left without a sound and returned the same way. Besides Ernest, Baron Jonas and a few others, the people of the land did not even know that the legendary wizard who was their young master had left and returned in secret. The ordinary people found it normal for a wizard to hole up in their tower for a year and a half.

Once he greeted his parents and mentor, Leylin had no plans to care for the land. Instead, he stayed within the wizard tower, having his men settle these tasks.

His primary purpose now was to amass the power of faith and train his divinity, preparing to ignite his godfire and become a demigod…

A distorted layer of the massacre domain spread within the wizard tower. Leylin was currently wearing loose wizard robes as he felt the threads of faith in his territory.

It may have been because he was within his lands with many people protecting him, but the threads of faith were even more distinct than before. The massacre domain expanded, allowing him to have a better understanding of this great domain’s power.

‘The massacre domain should grow through constant battles, nurtured with lives. This ominous feeling, it’s like it can even steal
life energy, which means the more I kill the more powerful my main body will get…’

Leylin saw the A.I. Chip make another prompt, [Obtained information regarding the massacre domain.] In his opinion, he would be able to control and analyze the domain quickly.

‘Tiff and the rest should arrive soon. I need to find a place to massacre, and nurture the divinity in my body…’ Leylin pondered as he stroked his chin.

He could sense that his divinity had grown by about 10% after absorbing so much power of faith.

‘The divinity of massacres I obtained was only an introduction, a medium. After I cross the threshold, I can transform the power of faith and boost my own divine force…’

Leylin seemed to understand something. Whether his divinity had another power was another matter altogether. Before becoming a divine being, it would have been impossible for him to communicate with his followers and absorb their faith without help from the Nightmare Absorbing Physique. Now, he could even transform the power of faith in preparation to ignite his godfire.

‘It’s best to comprehend the domain of massacre while spreading the source of faith… Is this… conquering?’ Leylin sank into deep thought, ‘Where can I find a large unconquered land and not attract the attention of the gods?’

The gods had basically divided up the prime material plane already, and there wasn’t much land left to take over. Even if Leylin wished
to head to Karen’s home in the Underdark, he would still need to seize the faith of Lolth and a large number of other underground gods. Most importantly, they were all true gods, and it was impossible for him to go against them.

‘I’ll need to make my choice carefully… Tiff and the rest are going to arrive soon, so I should settle them down first and have them mix with the commoners of the land. I’ll make up my mind after fully unearthing the potential of this territory…’ With the current circumstances, Leylin could only plan things this way.
Waves splashed into the side of a majestic warship, yet it didn’t falter at all. It stood tall like a mountain or reef braving the wind and waves, advancing into the depths of the outer seas.
The ship was flying the flag of a scarlet skull and dagger. Numerous others followed behind it, with fierce cannons and countless pirates on board. Even the largest of merchant groups would be scared out of their wits at this sight.
This fleet was that of the Scarlet Tigers, the organisation that controlled the outer seas of Dambrath. The Scarlet Tigers had the best of the best, with over a hundred large warships and more than five thousand men.
With their several expansions, the Scarlet Tigers seemed to have bitten off more than they could chew. However, with Tiff and the other elites joining from the north, a powerful pirate fleet was formed that rivalled the imperial navy.
“I never expected the native empire to actually exist…” Isabel was on the bow of the Scarlet Tiger, her legendary Red Dragon Sword hung at her waist. She emitted a faint draconic aura, her bloodthirsty eyes staring pointedly into the horizon.
The memory of her time on Nightmare Island was still fresh in her mind. She’d been made a fool of by the natives there, and now she’d obtained information regarding their empire through repeated attacks on native tribes. Having determined their location, she was
planning to deal them a huge blow. ‘But I never thought cousin Leylin would agree to this. He even came here himself…’ Isabel looked towards the ship’s hold, seeming serious, ‘Is this for faith, to become a god? Is a god going to be born out of our family?’ In the past, Isabel didn’t have the guts to think of such blatant blasphemy. However, things were different now. Leylin had performed miracle after miracle, cementing his cousin’s confidence in him. In addition, Isabel had been able to sense the power of divinity on Leylin’s body. ‘My cousin will successfully become a god. All who stand in his way will be killed, regardless of their identity!’ Isabel reached for the hilt of her sword, her mind made up. The sombre atmosphere caused all the surrounding pirates to shiver in fear as they glanced at their leader. Once she’d become a Dragon Warlock, Isabel had completely suppressed the demonification of her body. Dragon King’s Mystic Might had even allowed her to cross the threshold of the legendary realm! Her title in the outer seas had changed. She was no longer the Scarlet Witch, instead the Daughter of the Red Dragon. Along with Leylin, she was one of the two main forces in charge of the outer seas, one on the surface and the other in the shadows. All the other organisations knew of their backgrounds, and were obviously fearful. Leylin could sense Isabel’s conviction. Sitting quietly in the captain’s room, he couldn’t help but chuckle. ‘A conviction formed out of love?’ Leylin nodded as he sensed an extremely thick string of fate. Learning of his ambitions for godhood and that he’d already obtained a thread of divinity, Isabel had become one of Leylin’s worshippers. She even began to spread the faith of the Winged Serpent God Kukulkan amongst the pirates, and even if Leylin
wasn’t a match for the gods of the storms or the like, her methods caused a portion of the pirates to change their faith.

What surprised Leylin more was that Isabel’s faith for him was extremely firm and zealous. Albeit slightly, it was even more sturdy than Tiff’s! Leylin knew for sure that if he’d become a god already she would be a devout follower of his.

Leylin sensed the faith of the other pirates, and could only smile wryly. “I’d be lucky to have even one with such a firm conviction as her…”

Although Isabel was doing all she could to assist him, Leylin was still only a divine being. He could only answer the prayers of his followers, not grant them divine spells. He wasn’t competitive at all with the true gods, or even false gods, demigods, or devils. Worshippers were bright, after all. Why would they invest effort into someone who couldn’t give them anything?

If not for Isabel using her position and doing everything in her power to promote this faith, the religion of the Winged Serpent God would have failed terribly.

‘I need to give my worshippers some real benefits as soon as possible. I should become a demigod and bestow divine spells to them, but I’ll also need to give them material compensation.

‘This is the principle of equal exchange.’ Leylin suddenly had a revelation. The path of faith in the World of Gods still followed the Magi’s principles of equal exchange. Worshippers provided their faith, and in return the god promised to receive their souls after death, taking them into their divine kingdom. They would also provide shelter, divine spells, and other things. In essence, the thread of faith was a contract between god and man.

Of course, even the Magi’s concept of equal exchange did not necessitate that the things traded were of equal value objectively. The two parties just had to find the traded items that valuable.

That concept allowed the gods to pay less than their worshippers
offered up. This was the only way for them to accumulate divine force and increase their power. Sadly, these days the churches were growing more competitive. The gods had to give in greater amounts to obtain more and better followers. This internal competition caused wasteful consumption of divine force.

On top of that, there were devils and demons stealing their ‘food’.

‘This is the sorrow of the gods. As their foundations are with the mortals, they can never abandon the faith in the prime material plane. Gods whose faith has been lost will gradually die out, and their eternity is but an unrealistic rosy view…’ Leylin sighed. Although this path was powerful, it was so limiting it wasn’t worth him immersing himself in it.

This body was only a clone, while the original walked the path of the ancient Warlocks. This had never changed. That was strength that truly belonged to him, and Leylin knew this very well.

Of course, the path of faith was the most compatible with the rules of the World of Gods, and there were many areas of it he could learn from. Clone as he was, this Leylin did not hesitate in his attempt at godhood.

After pondering the contract between gods and humans, Leylin focused on other matters.

‘But… Even I didn’t expect that just as I was trying to find a place to expand my faith and comprehend the domain of massacre, the native empire suddenly emerged… Could the world origin force be helping me in hopes that I succeed? What kind of joke is this?’

He’d originally planned to conquer another territory to boost his relationship with his worshippers, comprehending the massacre domain and disseminating his faith. The information about the native empire had been a huge surprise.

Although there were legends and rumours about the native empire in the outer seas, Isabel had now found a number of safe shipping routes. It seemed too much of a coincidence, so Leylin smelled
something fishy.
To the consciens of the gods, a Magus like him was an intruder and their arch nemesis. Why would they try to help him? It would be more normal if he was being hunted down!
‘What’s with this situation? Could it be that the World Will treats me as a complete native after reincarnation, and is trying to get me on its side? Or is it in such deep sleep that it doesn’t react to the matters of the world anymore. Maybe this is to balance power… Have the gods’ goals deviated from that of the World Will, and they’re betraying it?’
Numerous possibilities flashed in Leylin’s mind, and were simulated by the A.I. Chip to find any possible changes in the future.
‘There are many changes in the future… But I can’t go wrong with grasping the present!’ After planning for a long time, Leylin sighed, ‘Whatever it is, occupying the native empire and comprehending the massacre domain amidst constant slaughter is key. I need to spread my faith afterwards as well…’
At this thought, Leylin sent out a divine call.
“Master!” A moment later, Tiff’s figure emerged from the shadows without a sound or any trace of energy undulations.
“Have you met Isabel? You will work with her in the future, and spread faith of me in the native empire…” A golden ray flashed in his eyes.
“I’ve seen her… If Master already has such power in the outer seas, the native empire will not be a problem for you.” Tiff spoke reverently.
He was actually rather surprised that Leylin had a legendary sorcerer under him, and rather relieved as well. He obviously did not dare to be negligent when it came to Leylin’s divine orders.
Watching Tiff’s figure disappear, Leylin nodded inside. Tiff’s retreat from the north had gone quite well. While he had lost a few
helpers in the process, they were outer powers that did not know their true secrets. The group of acolytes that Leylin prized the most successfully reached the outer seas, giving Leylin the confidence to declare war on the native empire.

After all, faith could provide unimaginable effects when one was invading and occupying another territory. This war could be said to be a selection and training for the priests. With Leylin’s foresight, he would definitely be able to discover a large number of people who would form the sturdy foundations for his church in the future.

He had two legendaries in Isabel and Tiff, as well as an experienced army. They were being led by a divine being in himself, and on top of that they had the continuous support of the Faulen Family. This was what Leylin was counting on!

He’d basically sent out all his elites for this battle, his ambition evidently not something a mere fief with a small population could satisfy.
An intense military discussion was taking place within the captain’s room of the Scarlet Tiger, with few participants. Leylin, as the person in charge, naturally sat at the front of the table, with Isabel and Tiff by his side. At Isabel’s side were Robin Hood, Ronald, Karen, and the other leaders of the pirates. Next to Tiff was the organisation Leylin had run in the north. This included devil worshippers and real devils. Even if they concealed it, their aura still caused the pirates to feel a sense of danger and unease.

Next to the devil worshippers were a few priests, higher-ups with grim faces. These priests were seeds that Leylin had nurtured. Although they were young, they were already beginning to show merciful and kindly traits, and did not seem to be compatible with the devils. However, they still sat together, which created a rather interesting atmosphere.

These two groups were meeting for the first time, and could not help but size each other up curiously. These were all Leylin’s elite forces, as well as the fledgling form of his future church and army. They were also the capital Leylin was using on an expedition to the native empire, and he naturally had to integrate them well.

After the long self-introductions were completed, Leylin coughed softly. Immediately after, the area went quiet.

“Isabel, describe the current situation.” Leylin always called Isabel by name in official settings, and this was something that would
continue even after he became a god. To long-lived beings like them, blood relations and the like were pointless. Their only interest lay in immortality.

“One of the pirate groups under me found the native empire. It’s on a large island the size of two or three kingdoms like Dambrath put together, and its vicinity is always filled with dangerous storms and ocean currents. There’s only a small period of time every year where ships can successfully sail past the area, which is why their contact with the outer world is minimal. My underlings now have a clear idea of the patterns of the currents, and have created an accurate shipping route…”

Identifying ocean currents and shipping routes was a fundamental skill for the pirates under Isabel. With their lives depending on the seas, their ability to navigate and determine their location based on the stars far exceeded that of the navigators of normal merchant ships.

As the greatest captain in the outer seas, Isabel naturally had many talented people at her disposal. Once they’d determined the location, identifying shipping routes was a simple task. It would take some time, though, and the many tests would have to come at the costs of lives.

“Hss!” Isabel’s speech immediately caused gasps to sound from Tiff’s underlings. “The size of two or three Dambrath Kingdoms? That area is akin to a small continent already!”

“The Dambrath Kingdom is made up of roughly a million people. Even the most conservative estimate puts the native population over 2 million. We have to face so many, how frightening!”

The simple ratio caused uneasy looks on some pirates’ faces. After all, they had less than ten thousand men, and they had to fight over a hundred each. If not for their naval advantage and the shipping route, they would have thought of escape already.

“Quiet!” Tiff yelled. “Are you trying to humiliate yourselves in
front of our master? Or are your minds that weak?”
The strict questions combined with his legendary might immediately caused everyone to quiet down.
Leylin nonchalantly waved his arms. “Although there are many natives, it doesn’t mean much. You’ll know how things are once we get onshore.”
Even in Leylin’s previous world, the colonialists in the age of discovery had conquered the Americas using mere hundreds or even tens of people. With thousands of criminals, pirates and many others, they had taken over the whole continent. In the end, they had become the heroes of heroes, like Cortéz who used just a thousand people to take over the fifteen million Aztecs in just five years.
This native empire wasn’t much different from the Aztec Empire of his old world, a backwards civilisation full of savagery and ignorance. With their advancements in civilisation and technology, conquering some oversized land with a backwards people was no different from slaughtering a fat pig.
And most importantly, with a ‘god’ like Leylin on their side, what chance of failure was there? As a divine being, Leylin had an invisible aura that was greatly infectious. Seeing his confidence, the fears of the rest were allayed.
Leylin nodded at the result of the situation, allowing Isabel to continue the introduction of the native empire.
“Based on our usual practices, I call this newly discovered island Debanks Island. We know of a native empire at the very centre called Sakartes, translating to ‘the sun that never sets.’ It takes up most of the flatland on the island, with a population of about a million and a half. There are a few warring tribes around the Sakartes Empire, most subservient to it. Altogether, they add up to about five or six hundred thousand as well…”
Isabel evidently valued intelligence, being able to gather such
definite information about the Sakartes Empire. It was pretty good. Although they were prepared for it, some of the people still gasped when they heard they would be declaring war on about two million people.

Looking at her subordinates’ actions, Isabel exclaimed coldly in a condescending tone, “Hehe… that’s nothing, you brainless things! They aren’t two million enemies, instead two million healthy slaves! There’s also countless treasures to be plundered and fertile land to be won!”

It was then that the rest of the pirates reacted, remembering the frail natives. They took these people as slaves, so they obviously knew that just the sight of their blades could scare them into subservience. They would not resist no matter how they were flogged, and sometimes a single supervisor could manage hundreds of them at a time. Now disregarding their numbers, the pirates finally reacted with a feeling of vast superiority.

“ Exactly! Those natives are so frail. What’s there to be afraid of? Besides, we don’t have to declare war on all of them at once. We can work from the surrounding tribes and subdue a few groups to work for us and let them kill themselves…” Ronald spoke in a low voice, “If we conquer such a large land, or even just ten percent of it, all of you will be able to obtain unimaginable amounts of wealth and even become nobles who have land…”

Pirates always lived with their lives on the line. Hearing something so tempting, their breaths began to grow ragged as their eyes turned bloodshot.

“That’s right… With our Marquisdom, my family has the authority to confer titles. When the time comes, I definitely won’t be stingy…” Leylin’s promise immediately caused the pirates to cheer. The temptation of becoming nobles would convince these lowly pirates to work torturously.

The people at Tiff’s side began to grow a little restless. After all, the
members of the clergy needed to eat and drink, and lead safe and comfortable lives.

“It is an order from our Lord, we are to take over the native empire and spread his faith there!” Tiff grimly announced.

“For our Master!” The rest began to pray devoutly.

Learning about each other, everyone left the room in succession. Only Tiff and Isabel were left behind.

“It doesn’t matter if there are ten times more natives than us, but… has Master ever thought about the possibility of them being protected by gods?” Tiff asked solemnly. This was also what Leylin had been trying his best to avoid.

“Mm, I also wanted to warn you about this. In the few native tribes of the outer seas, there are faith totems. Some were even comparable to legendaries or demigods…” Isabel spoke seriously. From their point of view, no matter how useless the natives could be, they could still have one or two true gods. That would be terrible.

After all, Leylin was merely a divine being. The cruelty of divine battles could be experienced from many historical poems and poetic sagas.

“You don’t have to worry about this. The Debanks Island does have a few native religions and divine beings, but at most, there’s only a demigod and not a true one… On top of that, the gods of the continent have no interest in the faith of the natives…” Leylin guaranteed.

When it came to gods, he obviously was the one with the biggest say. Upon hearing this, Isabel and Tiff relaxed. Although there was a large gap between him and true gods, there wasn’t as much of a difference between a divine being and a demigod. They still had the courage to risk their lives for this.

As for how Leylin knew about this, Isabel and Tiff sensibly did not ask more questions. Gods always had their own secrets…
Leylin too had no intention to share his plans. After they left, he went to the bottom of the hold of the ship and saw a group of native slaves cowering in fear. In preparations for this expedition, these natives would be the translators and communicators. This would reduce the natives’ hatred of this colonial invasion.
‘A.

I. Chip, show me the schematic from the soul research.’ Leylin seemed to have no reaction to the natives’ fear. A wave of the hand had a wizened old man approach him, and he pressed his palm into the old man’s head with a glint in his eyes.

Time passed, and the man’s expression warped quickly. There was happiness and suffering, but mostly confusion. The rest of the natives backed off as they watched this ‘god’ ‘bestow’ gifts upon him.

In their point of view, the leader of the slaves and the supervisor were both amazing people. As for Leylin, who headed thousands of pirates and had several hundred large ships in his possession, he far surpassed their tribal chiefs or priest elders. Perhaps the only thing that could compare to him were their totems.

[Beep! Soul schematic analysis completed. Beginning comparison…] The A.I. Chip projected a coloured image in front of Leylin, comparing the native’s soul to that of a regular person. A few darker regions were specifically marked out.

Putting the now-useless lab rat down, Leylin returned to his bedroom alone. Large amounts of data flashed across his eyes, and he began to turn serious.

“As expected, there’s something wrong with the natives’ souls…” A long time ago, Leylin had discovered an extremely interesting phenomenon. None of the native tribes in the outer seas believed in
any true gods. This was something unthinkable! The gods were so thirsty for faith that they wouldn’t even leave strange creatures and mud beasts alone. Why would they abandon these intelligent natives? Even if their souls weren’t even a tenth as strong as that of a commoner from the mainland, the gods still understood that little things would add up.

However, of all the tribes that Leylin had attacked, the natives all believed in natural spirits and totems, and there was no appearance of the gods from the mainland at all. The only explanation for this would be that there was some flaw in their power of faith, which left the gods with no choice but to give up on them and treat them as trash. They allowed the natives to do as they wished, and even if they knew of the large native empire they didn’t bother with it.

With large amounts of research and comparisons, as well as with his own abilities as a divine being, Leylin had finally touched upon the secret.

‘This spirit… The problem isn’t exactly internal. It’s actually contaminated…’ Leylin was now solemn, ‘On top of that, this mutation is familiar, with the mark of arcane and Magus spells… It reaches the depths of their genes, and has been passed on generation after generation.’

In essence, the power of faith was just soul energy that was dispersed when worshippers reached an emotional peak during their prayers or ceremonies, full of fervour. Using their domains and divine sparks, the gods absorbed this specific soul energy and turned it into divine force. There was no essential difference between lesser and greater gods either. It was the same process.

“What happens if we absorb this mutated soul force?”

‘A.I. Chip, simulate the absorption of the natives’ power of faith,’ Leylin commanded, stroking his chin with his interest piqued.

[Beep! Mission established. Beginning simulations… Preparing model…] Large amounts of data flashed by Leylin’s eyes, giving
form to a scenario. The statue of Malar from before had been enshrined around a native altar, the rest of the natives worshipping it. Visible only to divine beings, power of faith rippled as it gathered at the stone statue.

There was no change to the statue at the beginning, and his divine force increased in strength. However, a decade later the statue began to grow indistinct. A dark red lustre lingered around it, and Malar turned more violent and asked for regular blood sacrifices.

A century later, Malar’s divine kingdom exploded amidst his despairing roars. A gigantic ape body fell into the prime material plane, bound securely around the native priests.

Five centuries had passed, and Malar was now a beast with no mind of his own. He had turned into a golden flag, with the figure of an ape on it.

‘I used Malar as the model because I’m more familiar with his divine force, but I never thought this would happen…’ Once the simulation had passed, Leylin fearfully recalled the scene just then.

“There’s definitely something wrong with the natives’ power of faith. It’s greatly contaminated, and can even cause a true god to weaken, eventually even fall to the prime material plane. Combined with the sacrifices, they become bound to the planet, their mind slowly erased until all that’s left is pure instinct…”

Such a miserable thing was no different from suicide. It was no wonder why the gods had forsaken these inhabitants.

‘They lost their holy kingdom, and were banished into this area with their consciousness eroding over time. It’s worse than confinement… The power of their faith is contaminated, but it’s a hereditary thing that they simply can’t change…’

Leylin pondered over the issue, ‘Since that’s the case, I don’t have to worry about other gods meddling if I enact my plans on this kingdom. However, I’ll have to bear the burden all on my own…’

Although the worship of these inhabitants was lacking, and the
spirits they bound weren’t as powerful as gods, a demigod who assimilated with those spirits could become comparable to gods! The totemic demigods would be that strong! Of course, once they left their area, the power of these demigods would fall drastically.

‘No matter what, there is a chance here. A huge one!’ Leylin’s eyes flashed as countless possible scenarios unfolded in his mind. All that was left was to bring them to reality.

“However… The incompleteness and contamination of these spirits still makes me uneasy. If I don’t understand them completely…” Leylin recalled several samples of these totems, his divine conscience delving deep into the genes where the ancient memories were located…

There was a fire on the battlefield, floating cities crashing into the ground like meteorites. The arcans who were always intelligent and farsighted, who controlled all the truth in the world were now being slain. Their murderers? The gods!

The last remaining arcans of Netheril cried out in hatred and anguish, “The spark of the arcane spells of Mise will never cease! We will never yield…”

Multiple memory fragments were revealed to Leylin, and even with his power he could only process a small portion of them. However, the information divulged from even that small portion was enough to move him.

“So these people are actually immigrants from the Netheril era!” Leylin gasped. He’d previously seen other people from the Netheril era before, like Helen. Although it was a rather miserable thing to see them run and hide for their lives, they were living in heaven compared to these people.

‘Who’d have guessed that the progressive and cultured Netherese have been reduced to such a state over tens of thousands of years. They’re called barbarians and fools, some even captured and
turned into slaves…’ Leylin sighed inwardly. He could now understand what had happened before. The gods had been displeased with the fearless research of the Netherese arcanists, and it had eventually led to war. They began to kill what looked like all living arcanists, and most of the floating cities crashed into oblivion. The Netherese civilization had crumbled in a day.

It was at this moment that a group of Netherese had gathered. They likely wished to resist the enslavement of the gods, and were resolute in their decision. They swallowed a medicine that caused them to reject the power of faith, the rest unlucky enough to be swept into the high-ranking battle and ending up as collateral damage.

In any case, the Netherese had experienced a complete change in spirit, and were now considered venomous to the power of faith, and in turn to the gods themselves! They definitely wouldn’t be taken in by the gods, so they escaped across the seas and started reproducing here.

During this process, due to the powers of the gods and other backhanded means, these people from the Netherese Era had regressed. What was once a renowned and cultured civilisation had now turned into a group of barbaric and foolish tribals… ‘If my guess is correct, the ancestors of these natives turned into barbarians after rejecting the power of faith. This had stopped them from finding even one god to turn to, how pitiful…’ Leylin felt the anguish of losing a whole civilisation from the bottom of his heart. His eyes turned red. ‘However… Since matters have turned out like this… Hand over your blood, tears, hatred, and your power of belief—everything…’

The gods may not have been able to resolve the issue, but Leylin could circumvent it. His ancient Nightmare Absorbing Physique could absorb emotion itself, and the emotions of millions of people
would definitely grant him power to rival gods!
‘Of course I have to keep a low profile about this. At least before I begin my ascension, the ability to make use of these inhabitants’ power of faith shouldn’t be divulged…’ Leylin rubbed his temples, feeling a headache. The number of secrets he was hiding continued to grow.
‘I’ll have to devise a meticulous plan. Fortunately, Debank Islands is a solitary one, with almost zero contact with the mainland, so there’s a chance to keep information from leaking!’
Hundreds of towering warships glided across the outer seas, making for a magnificent sight. However, it wasn’t so beautiful to the one in charge of the long voyage. There were five thousand men to feed and take care of, which was a huge problem on the seas. On top of that there was the restlessness, and the disease that constantly crept up on Leylin’s men. Fortunately the crew were originally pirates of the Scarlet Tiger, so they could handle such long distance sailing. Tiff himself had dispatched the acolytes under him to each and every ship, boosting the morale of the men. Without holy magic to aid them, it was a very big test.

Leylin was on the deck of the flagship, looking out at the boundless sea. He breathed a light sigh, “Our food and water supplies are depleting quickly. This long distance war is really a huge gamble… Fortunately, we are able to reach Debanks Islands before our stock runs out…”

A flush of red appeared on Isabel’s face, a rare sight. Being the captain of the Scarlet Tigers for so many years had killed that elegant young lady. She was now a pirate, filled with savagery and deceit. Only when she was with Leylin like now would she reveal a part of her girly side. “Are we depending to seize supplies upon reaching the shores? That might not be the safest method!”
Hearing Isabel’s surprised words, Leylin shook his head. “We have a limited number of men. Each of them is extremely precious, so we can’t make senseless sacrifices…”

Even in Leylin’s previous world, it was difficult to win wars after a period of travel.

“What are you thinking of?” Isabel looked at him.

He’d already drawn out a navigation map with Debanks Island at the center. The drawing scale was somewhat absurd, but it had sufficed.

“We will first make a detour and circle to this area.” Leylin pointed at group of islands beside Debanks Island. They were large enough to each have a ruling kingdom, with many smaller islands beside them.

“You mean to say… So we take down the Chihuahua Islands first, and use them as a supply point?” Isabel surmised. Although she had thought of this strategy as well, it required too much time to prepare. Leylin had maintained an unhurried pace in front of the pressing situation.

“Yes. There seems to be a tribe with over ten thousand members here, we could use them as practice to polish the skills of our men…” Although both Leylin and Isabel were confident in their army’s strength, it wasn’t possible to establish coordination in a day or two. Leylin wanted them to undergo some training.

“I got it…” This sort of slow and steady advance told Isabel how determined Leylin was, so she immediately passed down the orders.

……

The Chihuahua Islands were close to Debanks Island. The tribe that resided here were vassals of the Sakartes Kingdom, but because of the ocean separating them they were quite independent.
With their lack of skill at boat-making, even if they chopped up all the trees in the area to make wooden rafts they still couldn’t stage a rebellion. Even if the ruler of the tribe had such thoughts, his elders and priests would advise him otherwise. In such a situation, this tribe was doing fairly well compared to the others who had to offer much more tribute to the empire.

The chief of this tribe was named Abasa, and he was being sheltered and served by his maids. Lazily enjoying tropical fruits, he was being fanned with a giant banana leaf.

Abasa was dark skinned, and extremely obese. Layers of fat on his body made him seem like a giant hog. However, his neck was extremely slender, the sign of nobility. There were several metal piercings on his lips, with oil marks on his face hiding his original features.

As Abasa enjoyed the service of his maids, an extremely skinny old man dashed in. “Something has happened!”

“Oh? Wise priest, what has made you come in such a flurry?”

The high priest smelled heavily of incense mixed with lamp oil, and wore a feathered five-colour crown. Its plumes were three metres tall, the feathers themselves angled very dangerously.

The high priest fell and knelt on the ground, sounding serious, “Mighty chief of the Chihuahua Islands, our ancestral spirit is enraged. You need to be there personally…”

“The might ancestral soul is furious? Were our sacrifices not enough?” With such a matter coming up, Abasa found it difficult to enjoy himself. He pushed the maids away, eyes surrounded by puffy skin staring at the high priest.

“No, I think this is more like a warning.” There was a patch of blood on the high priest’s forehead, and he was evidently shocked by what had happened.

“Bring me there!” Abasa waved his arms, and a few natives who were like monkeys raised the chair he was sitting on and began to
Less than an hour later, all the natives in the tribe seemed to gather as they watched the high priest in the centre performing a ritual. There was a sort of anesthetic incense burning in the air, and gas in the surroundings.

As their leader, Abasa wore his ceremonial attire with difficulty. He stood at the front of the procession in five-coloured beast hide, watching the high priest dance unceasingly as if his body was writhing with epilepsy.

At the heart of the procession, traces of reddish gold appeared on a crude animal-skin flag.

“Mighty ancestral spirit… What hint do you wish to give us?” Abbas knelt, and the rest of the natives followed suit.

*Rumble!* As everyone kowtowed, a huge cloud rose from the heart of the altar. The phantom of a creature flashed past, releasing a few roars that were difficult to understand.

“The ancestral spirit is warning us!” At this moment, the high priest jumped as if he had obtained some divine enlightenment.

“Unprecedented enemies will appear from the west. They ride steel fortresses across the sea and bring massacre and death… They are —” The high priest foamed at the mouth.

“What are they?” Abbas pulled at the high priest’s neck till he turned purplish-red, as if about to suffocate to death.

“They are the fair-skinned devils!” After spitting this out, the high priest fainted.

“Fair-skinned devils?” Abasa rubbed his chin, “Send down the order. All the warriors are to bring the pikes and stone blades to the western coast…”

The vocabulary and experience of natives was limited. Even the chief did not understand what a fair-skinned devil was meant to be. All they knew was that the enemy was coming.

“Oh!” With the encouragement from the ancestral spirit, the sturdy
warriors of the tribe completed this task at great speed. Abbas was full of mettle as he guided his subordinates, “I shall skin the scalp of the enemy’s leader and hang it on the wall to serve as my medal…”

……

“Hm? Our attack seems to have been discovered…” Leylin frowned from on deck.
“Luckily, this is just a small tribe. The natural spirits they worship are divine beings at best.
Seeing the native warriors at the coastline nearby, Leylin spoke, “Isabel! Tiff!”
“‘Here!”’
“You’ll take over command. There’s no need to worry about anything else, just take out the Chihuahua Islands. Remember to seal off the sea, don’t let anyone escape!” Leylin set off after giving these instructions, charging towards a divine being. After all, it was best to restrict news of his invasion as long as possible.
Isabel, who had taken over command, drew the Red Dragon Sword in her hand and glanced at the native warriors on the coast disdainfully. They had wooden pikes and stone blades, as well as canoes.
“Bombard them! Let them see our might!” Isabel yelled. The natives were equipped so poorly, and there were less than two thousand warriors. This was like a fat piece of meat being presented to them.
“Go!” Immediately, the pirates released terrifying howls from the warships. A wave of cannonfire shot at the native tribe. The ferocious explosions as well as terrible cries by his ears left Abbas frozen.
“Ancient ancestor! This huge fort on the sea… and that godly
fire… What have we provoked?” Countless warships closed in. Their canoes were already capsizing, and the guards by his side were already yelling as they tried to flee. The chief could not help but release bellows of despair.

In the next moment, this old chief had his head chopped off by a blade.

“Heh! This fat pig is obviously a high-ranked person. I wonder if there are rewards…” As this voice sounded, the gold and silver accessories on the chief’s body disappeared in an instant…

“Is this the natives’ guardian spirit? While there’s divinity, it has low intelligence…” Leylin took a look at a divine being that looked like a flaming bird, eyes flashing with light from the A.I. Chip.

“Your followers are being massacred, and the power of your domain is diminishing. Submit to me, and I can let you live!” Leylin used his divine will to send a wave of information, but what he got in return was a howl of rage.

*Chiu! Chiu!* A bundle of golden flames enveloped Leylin, causing the air around him to distort and rise.
“Hmph, what a pigheaded idiot! You haven’t even ignited your godfire yet and have the gall to go against me?” Leylin snorted, and the flames immediately went out. After obtaining divinity, he no longer saw anything in regular divine beings. This divine creature in front of him was merely seeking death.

At this thought, Leylin looked through the results of the A.I. Chip’s scan.

[Totem spirit (Flaming Bird) Divine being. Strength: 15 (+5) Agility: 17 (+5) Vitality: 19 (+5) Spirit: 20 (+5) Possessed feats: 1. Domain: In the range of its worshippers’ prayers, the totem spirit will be buffed. All stats will increase by 5. 2. Affinity with flames. 3. Holy Form: Immune to all spells below rank 5. 4: Unknown ???] ‘While in the range of the followers’ prayers, all stats increase by 5? This really is a god similar to earth-bound spirits…” Leylin snickered, “Is this what you’re depending on? Unfortunately… This isn’t your time anymore. With the loss of your followers, the boost you get from your domain will decrease. Now is the best time to have you serve me…”

The boost from the domain came due to the existence of its worshippers. Now, however, the pirate army was closing in and the young men of the native tribe were being slaughtered. The power of faith was quickly diminishing. The effects of the massacre itself were trivial. The problem,
however, was that without the totem spirit protecting them the faith of the natives collapsed. Leylin saw the +5 at the end of each stat slowly drop to +4. As the land his army occupied expanded, the number dropped further.

“Is this faith? So powerful, and so pitiful…” Leylin sighed, noticing the fraud that was totem spirits. If he really could become a true god and bestow divine spells, the followers’ faith would not crumble so quickly.

*Chiu! Chiu!* Leylin actually planned to subdue this flaming bird totem. It would be his primary guide on Debanks Island. Unfortunately, the bird had no plans to make use of Leylin’s kind intentions. It ended the conversation with a ball of fire.

Golden flames struck Leylin’s vicinity, the boiling-hot fire absorbing all the oxygen in the surroundings. Something similar to a vacuum was formed.

‘It’s ability is like magic, but it can’t make use of the divinity and power of faith in its body well. It’s like the instinct of beasts.’ Leylin sighed, and the Red Dragon Staff appeared in his hands.

Since he’d used Soul Burn a few times already, the red dragon’s soul within the staff had already diminished, and it looked rather dispirited.

Dragon Domain! Cone of Fire! In the face of a mere legendary divine creature, however, Leylin did not even need to burn the dragon’s soul. A powerful draconic aura rippled out with a wave of his staff.

*Roar!* A phantom red dragon appeared above Leylin, spewing out a cone of fire at the flaming bird. It immediately caused the giant bird to snarl without end.

*Rumble!* Two streams of fire strived for victory in the air, turning the horizon red.

“How can such brutish strength contend against me?” Leylin yelled, the cone of fire piercing through the flaming bird’s golden fire and
enveloping it.
*Chiu! Chiu!* Enraged howls sounded from within the flames, but there was something peculiar about the situation. All of a sudden, the red dragon’s flames exploded into what looked like a red lotus. At the heart of it, the flaming bird did not seem to be injured at all. Instead it seemed even larger. It chirped in its excitement, swallowing the red dragon’s flames with large gulps, its golden flames turning crimson.
*Chiu! Chiu!* The flaming bird that had assimilated with the red dragon’s flames grew larger in size, eyes looking human and filled with pride as it flew towards the red dragon phantom in the air.
‘It can absorb flames? The A.I. Chip should have found out. Is this a unique divine ability?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with wit, “Are you trying to swallow a legendary dragon soul? In that case, I’ll give it to you!”
Soul Burn! The dragon soul at the tip of the staff completely withered, its body enveloped by translucent flames. With that act, the phantom in the air grew more corporeal, each scale more vivid and each claw glinting with a sharper light.
All of a sudden, the red dragon’s eyes showed intelligence. It roared as it crashed into the flaming bird. High-pitched dragon howls and bird cries surprised both the natives and pirates on the ground. All of them gazed upwards, watching the battle between the red dragon and flaming bird. Some natives were able to recognise their totem and immediately tossed their weapons aside, beginning to pray right away.
“What are you standing there in a daze for? Go!” A similar draconic aura burst forth from Isabel, and she withdrew the Red Dragon Sword from a native soldier of unknown role as she berated the pirates loudly.
Having two legendaries in charge, and being better than their opponents in strength, equipment, and warriors, they completely
crushed the opponents. The pirate army had now pushed through to the outer regions of the tribe, and the enemies they faced had turned into a mob. The old were appearing now, as were the youths, females, and the frail natives.

“Those who do not surrender are to be killed with no exceptions!” With her long life as a pirate, Isabel lacked the pity that normal women displayed. The pirates and devil worshippers were originally evil themselves, so they carried out her orders ruthlessly, perhaps being even more cruel than necessary.

‘All I can do is give him all my faith, and take care of the mortal battles…’ Isabel’s eyes showed her understanding of her position as she charged to the depths of the tribal area. Draconic flames followed her around, making her look like the most beautiful war goddess.

*Chiu! Chiu!* Meanwhile, the battle in the sky between the legendary beasts had reached its conclusion.

Although the red dragon was a legendary beast that was burning its soul, it had died long ago and its power was diminished. Its opponent was equal in power, but also had divinity on hand! After several rounds, it had torn large chunks of soul force out of the red dragon’s body and swallowed its flames, causing its golden fire to turn red.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* At the end, as the bird gnawed at the head of the red dragon figure, the crystal with the dragon soul at the tip of Leylin’s staff shattered.

“Tsk… after so many uses, the red dragon’s soul force is completely consumed…” Seeing the dragon soul vanishing in front of him, Leylin did not look the least bit surprised. The flaming bird, on the other hand, released an elated chirp and gulped down the red dragon figure while absorbing the flames it possessed.

“Then again, it’s time about I changed the core!” Leylin floated up to the flaming bird.
After absorbing the dragon soul, its body had become more enormous. A draconic aura emanated from it as it met Leylin’s gaze without fear. There was even desire in its eyes.

“Oh? Trying to eat me too?” Leylin could not help but begin to chuckle after understanding what the bird wanted, “It really is a beast. It can only do everything by instinct and doesn’t even care if it can digest me.”

“Go crazy…” Leylin snapped his fingers, and the flaming bird immediately began to writhe, layers of flames rising as half of the red dragon’s head appeared from its body.

“While being able to assimilate the flames is an advantage for you, you might want to be careful since eating too much could mean you might be assimilated instead…” A sinister smile rose by Leylin’s lips, “You’ve been fattened up well. As you are now, you truly are prey worthy of slaughter…”

“Return!” Leylin tossed the Red Dragon Staff in his hands, and it began to soar into the air till it reached the head of the flaming bird. Its sharp end quickly pierced down into the head.

*Chiu! Chiu!* The large flaming bird could have easily dodged the attack, but it seemed to have gone stupid as it stayed where it was, golden and red flames twining around and eating at it.

*Swish!* The red dragon staff was like a sharp arrow that disappeared through the head of the bird, causing flames and golden blood to spurt everywhere. The bird cried one last time as a huge explosion sounded. The sound began from its stomach, transforming into a storm that swept the bird within.

Leylin stood at the side, watching the large body being torn and devoured by the storm…

‘If all earth-bound spirits on Debanks Island have this level of strength, I have nothing to worry about. However, with the support of the native empire, those earth-bound spirits are probably as strong as demigods…’ Leylin sighed inside.
The pirate armies had now killed their way into the inner parts of the native tribes. They began their ruthless massacre of the old, weak and ill, as well as all sorts of atrocious activities.

“Is this what conquering is? Increasing my strength through continuous massacre…” Leylin’s eyes showed his bewilderment for a moment, before the A.I. Chip sounded. [Beep! Host has killed a divine creature. Additional information about the massacre domain has been found. Model established, beginning analysis…]

[Beep! Host has grasped the massacre domain!] [Massacre Domain: This domain allows one to obtain strength by constant slaughter. In such an environment, host’s stats are increased by 1% (Current Effect). There is a chance to obtain an opponent’s soul energy, and the boost from the domain extends to the deployer’s worshippers.]
“Maccade domain? Truly powerful…” Leylin muttered to himself, “You can strip the enemy of their life and soul energy during massacres and quickly recover yourself… Gods also have specific bonuses, and it might increase in power if I kill more powerful existences…”

The A.I. Chip’s prompts continued. [Beep! Host has killed a divine being. Massacre domain has been boosted, absorbing the opponent’s divinity.]

In that instant, Leylin had sensed that he’d absorbed the trace of divinity from the flaming bird, something formed by over a century of worship from the natives. A golden light spread across his body, and with the massacre domain in effect its power was transformed into a part of his own.

‘The profits this time alone have allowed my massacre divinity to grow greatly. It’s worth at least two to three years of worship…’ Leylin looked excited, ‘This trip to the outer seas definitely is worth it!’

Truth be told, the fastest way for a god to advance was to seize divinity, divine force, or even divine spark from battle. However, the native empire as it was now was not valued. The power of faith in these earth-bound spirits as well as their divine force had huge flaws, which was why the gods did not set their sights on them.

However, Leylin did not fear contamination from the Magi. On top of that, his Nightmare Absorbing Physique allowed him to naturally
absorb the might of these native earth-bound spirits without issue. ‘After absorbing the divine force, I’ll be able to make use of this large bird’s divinity and soul to a great degree…’ Leylin tapped the crystal on top of the Red Dragon Staff.

*Chiu! Chiu!* Dazzling light figured as the red dragon imprisoned within disappeared. In its place was a terrifying large bird, burning with golden-red flames.

“Using a divine being’s soul to substitute a legendary dragon soul, that’s a pretty good deal…” Leylin observed the soul of the flaming bird. It was now firmly chained within the crystal, and it cried out in refusal.

‘Although I’ve taken the soul already, I still need to forge it into something usable. Until I do that, the Red Dragon Staff needs to be sealed…’ Leylin estimated that once he reforged it, the new Red Dragon Staff, although the name would have to be changed, would be more powerful than a legendary item…

As Leylin was killing the flaming bird, the flag above the tribe’s altar tore. Ferocious flames devoured the totem. The gathered natives cried out in alarm, and their high priest’s face warped and twitched before he fell into a dead faint while frothing at the mouth. The other priests and acolytes reacted in the same way.

The followers of gods possessed some totemic power, which was what allowed them to communicate with the god and do all sorts of otherwise unimaginable things. However, now that their totem spirit was dead they would meet a similar fate.

The extraction of power that had fused with the body was like the removal of organs from a human. It was no surprise for a few of them to just die. Had they been worshippers of a true god, things would have been even more serious.

While it could be worse, this situation left the natives horrified and panicked.

“Ah… the ancestral spirit…. It’s dead…”
“The evil god of the enemies, the fair-skinned devils killed our ancestral spirit…”
“Boohoo… our chief, high priest and ancestral spirit have died…”
The situation instantly caused the old, young, and ill to fall apart. They’d originally persisted with the belief that their ancestral spirit would protect them from the attack. The death of that guardian was a huge blow to them.
The fighting continued, and the spirit of the natives was swayed immediately.
“All who resist us will be killed, whether they are elderly or children!” The pirates and many devil worshippers that Leylin had subdued walked towards the tribe’s altar.
“My followers!” At this moment, all the pirates who followed the Winged Serpent God Kukulkan heard a low and solemn voice in their years.
“I give you my blessing. You shall obtain power through slaughter; the fresh blood of your enemies shall give you courage, and the moans of terrified souls will restore your vitality!” The words sounded like a divine order as a terrifying phantom Targaryen appeared in the sky.
“It’s our Lord! The Winged Serpent God has shown himself!” Unlike the regular worshippers, the acolytes Tiff had nurtured had a more profound reaction to this.
“Massacre domain, boost!” Leylin’s figure reached the skies above the battlefield. He willed a dark red light to move from his domain, having it appear by his followers.
“It’s the power of our god! The Winged Serpent God is protecting us!”
Robin Hood chopped off the head of a native with a wave of his hand. In this process, he could feel that the stamina he had lost was somehow restored. He took a look around and saw the pirates who should have lost their stamina seem full of life.
‘What kind of terrifying might will this ability grant us in battle?’ The effects of this domain were incomparable in battle. The little resistance that the natives had still posed crumbled completely, and the tribe descended into a bunch of cries and howls.
With Leylin showing up as a god and displaying his protection of his worshippers, the conviction of the natives completely died out. Many began to surrender, and dense black flames enveloped the skies above the native tribe…
Evening arrived, and the reflection of the setting sun on the sea was as red as blood. Leylin had moved into the chief’s palace, listening to his subordinates’ reports.
This place was made up of multiple smaller tribes, with a little more than ten thousand people. This ‘palace’ was just a slightly larger house with beautiful beast fur on the walls. It was still pretty good compared to the houses of the normal natives, though.
“This operation was a complete victory. We killed about a thousand native warriors, and have taken over ten thousand prisoners. Mere tens of our men were lost…” As Isabel spoke beside him, Robin Hood and Ronald began to flush with excitement.
“Also, the sea routes were blocked so not one of the natives’ canoes escaped. News of this will definitely not spread.” Tiff added. With him and the other elites in charge of stopping the natives, breaking out had been an impossible task.
“Good! Next is to organise the slaves and search the island…” Many natives had still fled in the chaos of war, especially with their lacking manpower. Leylin didn’t mind, though; this was an isolated island after all. Now that he had control of the sea routes, where could they go?
“The most important thing to do now is to subdue the natives of the tribe and spread my faith. I can establish a secondary army made up of natives after that…”
The stories of colonialism from his past life gave Leylin many
examples to follow. The elite pirates were his core group, and they couldn’t easily be dispatched lest they suffer huge losses. Each operation with them had to be a huge success, and give the elites the image that they were all-powerful. His next task was to manage these natives, dividing them up to form a secondary army and his guard. It would be necessary to assist the native nobles, provoking the tribes to attack each other and causing strife. It would be even better if he was helped by disease.

Due to differences in their worlds, the battles between gods were extremely important. If Leylin could eliminate the totems that the natives had faith in, everything would be much easier. Debanks Island was just a fat pig waiting to be slaughtered. But that was all in the future. Leylin focused his attention on organising the natives of the Chihuahua Islands for now…

Night fell, and chilly winds brought coldness into the tribe. Numerous tied up natives were grouped together, hoping to get some warmth from each other’s trembling bodies. In contrast, a huge bonfire was burning in the centre of the plaza, the altar from before long since destroyed and replaced by a brand new idol. On top of the gigantic obsidian base was a sinister-looking serpent, huge and with fleshy wings. It had sharp claws and a single horn, and its scales seemed to gleam. Large demonic wings spread wide apart, and vertical eyes revealed a ruthless bloodthirst.

This was the statue Leylin had chosen for himself. He still feared the other gods, so he couldn’t show himself. The next best thing was the image of a Targaryen. The natives were being sent to the statue batch by batch, ordered to swear allegiance to it. Before this, they even had to trample the flag of the flaming bird.

No matter how stupid they were, the natives knew this blasphemy meant subjugation. It caused waves of chaos, the influence of an
ancestral spirit not fading so easily.
However, regardless of the disturbance, the hot-bloodedness of the natives died down in the face of the pirates’ blades. Facing them, one of the natives was cowed into service. The rest soon followed suit.
Leylin could sense the faith of the numerous natives, and the fear that accompanied it.
He looked around and sighed, “Is the reverence for gods by all lifeforms the source of faith? The essence of divine force is astuteness and dignity…”
Under threat of imminent death, the natives succumbed to the devilish snake that had slain their ancestral spirit, giving it their faith. Although with some unknown contamination, massive and unbridled power of faith surged into Leylin’s body through the Weave.

“Reverence turns into faith…” Reaping this new power, Leylin now understood the path of the gods better. A contract between gods and mortals was just the base of divinity. Another important requirement was reverence. If reverence was lost, it was only a matter of time before the power of faith moved to someone else. And murder and death were the most efficient ways to command this reverence!

‘It’s just that these natives’ faith is incomplete…’ Detecting a huge amount of contamination that would erode his own divine powers and eventually destroy him, Leylin smirked, ‘But how can my quintessence be so easily tainted?’

*Buzz!* Dark red runes crawled over Leylin’s body. The Nightmare Eye opened between his brows, beginning to absorb the contamination and refine it into pure dreamforce.

‘Dreamforce is definitely the most accommodating of different powers…’ Leylin nodded his head in satisfaction. With his abilities as a Warlock in addition to the Nightmare Absorption Physique, he could absorb the faith of these natives easily.
“However, I need some time to properly digest this much…” Leylin could feel the intertwined emotions of his worshippers through the Weave, and the instability of their faith. Still, this was only the beginning, and he’d gotten it through murder. Leylin was satisfied with the result.

‘What matters is the other tribes. I need to change my strategy next time…’ Leylin recalled the knowledge from his previous world. Blood and tears proved time and time again that war would always occur. No matter how much one drove for peace, someone would always strike at their enemy’s lowest point.

The only way to conquer them was a display of force, constantly killing off their forces until they finally assimilated. There were many unorthodox ways to go about it as well, but they were easily countered.

The theory was simple, it was just a dog eat dog world! Had Leylin been a simple leader, he would have decided to kill off all the tribes. After all, he already had a disadvantage in numbers. No matter how much they were assimilated, even smaller groups caused problems to large communities, let alone in this situation where the numbers were reversed.

The glory of the bald eagle, of the United States of America, had come on the back of blood, sweat, and tears. However, from a god’s standpoint, Leylin had to adopt a different approach. Gods transcended humanity. Having stepped into such a realm, their vision was no longer limited to that of humans. With everlasting life, the conflict between tribes was trivial.

To put it bluntly, even if he had to use all of the incomplete power of faith that came from these natives to match the power of gods, Leylin would be willing to do it. He thus absolved himself of all conflicts between tribes, only focusing on the power of faith. The more a person worshipped him and provided power of faith, the more glory they would get.
Even a native would be able to become a cleric or even a bishop! As long as they were devout and prayed piously, of course. Leylin recalled a famous proverb from his previous life, ‘Everything between heaven and earth is but a stray dog!’ Although there were many interpretations of it, Leylin himself knew that everyone was treated equally by the divine, with no bias. That was the approach the gods of this world had adopted, at least. However, the truest lack of bias could only be attributed to the various World Wills. Realistically speaking, as long as a majority of his faith came from the pirates and devil worshippers, Leylin would favour them. However, in the future he would have to rely on the power of faith from Debanks Island once he conquered it. The scales would be adjusted then.

It was only pragmatic and necessary to pick up natives and make them priests or saintesses, showing that everyone was equal and giving them hope. Leylin turned his attention to the field using his divine sense.

The battle continued, with not every native being cowed by the fear in their hearts. When a change of faith was forced, ‘heroes’ were wont to step up time and time again. Be it man or woman, youth or elderly, the only similarity was the unwavering resolution in their eyes, and the spirit of martyrdom.

The pirates simply beheaded them, the fresh blood pouring into the battlefield striking more fear into the natives’ hearts. Beautiful woman who did not comply were a way for them to flaunt their manhood as they slayed the old and young.

Isabel did not stop these acts. A change of faith had to be ignited by fresh blood, and those who wouldn’t comply even superficially would only have death awaiting them. If their faith could not be forced from their soul, they would disappear in the flesh.

Before humans grew civilised, killing eliminated problems without solving them. As culture progressed, this method was abandoned.
However, the laws of the jungle still prevailed in the World of Gods, even on the mainland.
‘There won’t be thorns sticking out anymore, but there should be some who’ve only complied on the surface. They’ll be scheming something else in the background…’ Leylin mocked this train of thought in his mind. Like the proverbs went, one would grow accustomed to kneeling. Once they swore loyalty to him, he could acquire their faith and strengthen it in the future.
The hidden problems were easy to solve. As a divine being, Leylin could tell deceit and true reverence apart. Those fellows would never climb up the hierarchy, and once they exhibited any signs of rebellion they would be executed immediately.
Using the method of the carrot and the stick, Leylin would convert them completely, making them unwavering in their devotion.
‘It’s just that I don’t have enough time…’ Leylin shook his head.
At this moment, many black-robed clerics flooded the battlefield, soothing the natives like they were lambs. “Forget the false gods you believed in, and put your faith in our Lord. Even your family will experience salvation for your choice.”
A threat to one’s life left them vulnerable in many ways. Tiff understood this himself, having sent the acolytes out to soothe the natives without instruction to. With the gentle words of these acolytes, even more of the natives pledged their faith to Leylin, which strengthened his connection over the Weave even more than before.
A native girl looked up at Tiff, her eyes betraying her apprehension. “If…If I choose to believe in your god, will father be saved?”
Tiff smiled gently, kneeling down. “Who is your father, and where is he?” he asked the girl who had pale yellow skin and dark hair. There were traces of mud and coal on her face.
“He… He was a brave warrior of the tribe. He died today on the
shore…” the little girl said timidly.
“He will be,” Tiff stroked her hair, “Our Lord has mastered the massacre domain. All souls that perished under him can definitely be salvaged. If you pledge your faith…”
“Then, I choose to believe!” The girl knelt before the statue and kowtowed with utmost sincerity. It was so much so that her forehead began to bruise, and blood appeared.
“Almighty bishop, I know where a group of the tribe’s warriors have gone, including the chief. They are in a mountain-hole at Bakala.”
The natives stirred in unrest, shocked by the little girl’s betrayal. Her calmness surprised even Tiff.
“Very well, you shall be rewarded!” Tiff eyed an acolyte at the side, who relayed this important information to the other leaders. He looked at the little native girl fondly, trying to think of a reward. Before he could do that, though, a golden light shone out of the Targaryen statue. The power caused everyone to kneel unconsciously.
“Almighty Lord…”
A divine aura seemed to come to life under the holy light, and a beam of it entered the native girl’s body.
“You are kind yet resolute, you shall be blessed!” The golden light circled the girl’s body, leaving a mark on her forehead.
Once the light dimmed, Tiff looked solemnly at the girl. “Your name?”
“I am Barbara! Barbara Morui!” The girl repeated her name.
“You have received the blessings of the Winged Serpent God. From now, you are the saintess of our church!” Tiff hoisted the girl onto his shoulders, “May the winged serpent always be with you!”
“Kukulkan! Kukulkan!” The numerous acolytes cheered Leylin’s divine name in zealotry.
At the same time, this atmosphere, with Barbara hoisted up high,
renewed the hope of the natives. Leylin felt the power from their faith surge again, and the web of their faith grew sturdier.
Congregations are indeed a good way to embellish the atmosphere… No wonder the churches of my past preferred to hold worship on selected days each week…” Leylin who had withdrawn his vision shook his head. It was just a matter of time before the tribes of the Chihuahua Islands would come to his side. He believed that Tiff understood his intentions, and could exploit the worth of a saintess. After all these matters were settled, Leylin’s gaze turned to Debanks Island. He did not have time to conquer all the tribes of the Chihuahua Islands. He had to conquer the few largest ones first, producing his own divinity and ascending to become a demigod before he could challenge the Sakartes Kingdom. Once the internal affairs were taken care of, a new round of battle preparations was underway. ‘It isn’t just subjugating the tribes and killing them. The quest to conquer the natives has to be filled with death and plagues.’ To truly win with his small numbers, he had to regard those last two aspects as well. If he wasn’t limited by secrecy from the outside world, Leylin would even have sent people to ask for help from the Goddess of Plagues. With her belonging to the evil alignment, she would definitely be glad to do it. ‘Forget it, they’d find out I can absorb the natives’ faith. Might as well do it myself.’ Pride welled within Leylin. As a Magus, he
wouldn’t find it difficult to create a new plague if he spent some time. Moreover, being a bloodline Warlock he could even come up with one that was very infectious and fatal, capable of eliminating entire tribes.

While he did not have to resort to such extremes, it was still necessary to give them a good scare. Any tribes going against him would contact the plague. With people dying all the time, the only way to save themselves would be to pledge their faith to him. How much power would that produce?

While some clerics could use magic to resist the plague, how sparse were they amongst the commoners? With their limited spell slots, it would be great even if they could just save the nobility.

Furthermore, their gods were just earth-bound spirits or demigods at best. Their divine spells were rank 5 at most, and the number of casts paled in comparison to those of a real god. This was one major limitation.

Having conquered the Chihuahua Islands, Leylin’s army could finally plant their feet down firmly close to Debanks Islands. With the support of their warships, Debanks Island’s counterattacks would not amount to much. Even if they discovered Leylin now and took the most efficient course of action, they wouldn’t be able to chase Leylin away.

In addition, Chihuahua Islands was now a constant source of war supplies, warriors, and most importantly power of faith. The natives Leylin had brought on board were now released, acting as translators and mediators that aided his governance.

While high-ranking cleric spells like Language Proficiency did exist, the acolytes on the ground couldn’t use so many spell scrolls. The likes of translators were of paramount importance.

Of course, this was only the first wave, very soon a new civilisation would be introduced with the common language spoken on the continent. This was in fact how colonialism worked,
Leylin had merely borrowed a page from its books. However, instead of harvesting resources he was harvesting power of faith… Another month passed with this set in stone. Two fifths of the pirates Leylin had brought were now either injured or running operations on the ground. He brought the remaining three thousand on deck and headed for Debanks Island, and the true native empire. This was three thousand against a million! It sounded extremely absurd, but after past events the crew had placed their utmost trust in Leylin. This fervent worship was the necessity for zealotry. Leylin believed that once he took these pirates through the unimaginable war, the survivors would definitely turn into fanatics. Getting close to Debanks Island, Leylin passed down the orders for all ships to stop sailing. It was as if he was waiting for something. To him, each and every one of his troops was extremely precious, so venturing in the dark would be too dangerous. According to his plan, what came next would be an effortless victory. *Zoom!* Five hourglasses trickled by, and a red figure approached from the horizon and landed on Leylin’s deck. “Here he is, just as planned.” Isabel was now in her draconic form. Crimson scales littered her body, and a pair of giant red wings protruded from her back. Her pupils had become vertical slits, as typical of dragons’. However, Isabel seemed to be in a miserable state. The scales on her back were somewhat twisted. “What happened? Is something wrong?” Leylin raised his hand, and an arcane healing spell covered her body. Large amounts of the shattered scales quickly regrew. “While we were plundering others, we were discovered by the totem spirit and pursued. But it was like you said. It automatically backed off a certain distance from the tribe…” Isabel now looked much better as she tossed an unconscious native to the deck.
The captured native was dressed in bright robes. His rosy cheeks and exquisite skin showed that he’d been brought up in a great environment, and had at least as much power as the chief of the Chihuahua Islands.

“Good! Lock him up at the bottom of the ship and ensure that he doesn’t die. We can then happily blackmail the tribe and ask for a ransom…” Leylin waved his arms, and two pirates immediately went forward to carry the unconscious native chief down.

“This is such a crude plan. Will they fall for it?” Isabel asked. Tiff had no intentions of questioning him, as if Leylin’s word was gospel, but in spite of Leylin’s imposing divine aura Isabel was still his cousin.

“Who knows? We can’t go wrong with trying it…” Leylin rolled his shoulders back, feeling like there was a large possibility of this working out.

The natives were foolish, ignorant and naive, just like in the Americas of his previous world. The western colonialists had used extortion to gain countless riches.

While the situation was different, the natives here had sacrificial ceremonies for totem spirits and higher-ups like high priests. There was even a system of divine and royal power. This chief would have some descendants and faithful officials, no? Anyway, Leylin had made up his mind. If this didn’t work out, he could just kill the captive and capture a high priest or something.

Fortunately, the tribe did not seem to be able to bear the death of the chief. After Leylin sent out an emissary, the other party’s people quickly arrived. In the stipulated coastal waters, a large wave of natives rowing tens of canoes arrived under the Scarlet Tigers’ ship. The pirates on the deck watched the canoes under them disdainfully. In their eyes, just a slight splash from their large ship could drown the entire army, capsizing their boats and killing the people.
After that, though, they could not shift their eyes away. Any teasing or attempts at attacking these natives’ canoes would result in a ruthless counterattack.
This was because they saw golden light! Golden light all over the canoes! Bright yellow gold household utensils and large chunks of gold nuggets were transported to the deck as a ransom for their chief! The dazzling colours immediately filled the pirates’ sights, and greed appeared on their expressions.
Was this not why they’d become pirates, and struggled with their lives on the line in the perilous deep seas against military and merchant ships?
‘While it doesn’t amount to much, having them piled together is quite eye-catching…’ Leylin knew that in reality Debanks Island didn’t have plentiful amounts of gold.
Gold and silver was currency on the mainland, but here it would be items like cocoa beans or obsidian. Gold was just for decoration. If Leylin’s emissary hadn’t specifically requested this, they could even have brought a pile of obsidian over as ransom. The natives saw being able to get their chief back by handing over a pile of useless decorations as striking it rich.
Leylin stroked his chin, watching the emissaries from the natives’ side crawling before him. From their point of view, this large ship was like a lofty mountain, no different from a miracle.
“Mighty beings with fair skin who traverse through the seas and possess tall and large ships, I have brought the items you wanted. Please let our chief go. From hereon, you will also have the friendship of our tribe…” a priest with status said while cowering, and Leylin had no trouble understanding him.
Regular divine beings couldn’t compare to him in comprehension ability. The moment he became a demigod, he would be able to understand all languages by instinct.
The priest was now showing cowardice before Leylin.
“I see the ransom, but that isn’t enough…” Leylin branded his meaning into the minds of the natives, “A king can only be redeemed by a king. You can meet your chief. After this, you are to declare war on the neighbouring Angodub. Bring their chief captive in exchange for your own!”
Making sure that the emissaries understood what he was saying, Leylin confiscated all the riches that they had brought. He then showed them their chief who was still alive, and chased them out of the warship.

“Do you see this? There are riches all over this island, and the natives managing all this wealth are so cowardly and ignorant…” Leylin stepped on the gold, watching the greedy eyes of his men. He grinned, “Half of this gold and everything we get in the future will be yours. Divide it amongst yourselves…” The pirates erupted into cheers.

Although the gold seemed to be a lot when piled up, how much would one person get when it was divided amongst three thousand? Still, this display served to increase their greed, and gave them a deeper impression of Debanks Island’s wealth. It would motivate them to fight!

Many of the pirates were now zealous, eager to take over the entirety of Debanks Island and willfully plunder its wealth.

If he asked people to believe in him without any benefits, they would not advance wave after wave in the face of death, at least not now. Leylin needed to show them profits, and the sparkle of gold was the best of them all.

“Will they really do it?” Isabel ignored the clamouring crowd behind her, standing on deck to watch the canoes leave. “Angodub is related to them by marriage, no? Their great relationship is what
lets them govern this region together…”

“That depends. We aren’t natives, and don’t know how they think. Besides, how is it possible for two tribes to live so close to each other without friction?” Tiff brought up an opposing opinion.

“Mm. Besides, even if they don’t do it we can help. For example, we can spread news of them preparing to attack Angodub, or just pretend to be natives and attack a nearby village…” Leylin’s eyes glinted with intelligence. “Once seeds of doubt are planted, they’re not so easily removed. There will definitely be a war!”

Isabel now understood Leylin’s plan, and had to admit it’s feasibility. “Once both tribes are tired out, we can wipe them out with minimal cost, bridging our way into Debanks Island.”

Still, she frowned soon. She continued asking, “What happens if the Sakartes Empire finds out. This is a large operation after all. Considering our current strength, we’ll be chased away once they step in…”

Debanks Island was the size of several kingdoms, with the Sakartes Empire at its heart. A few tribes surrounded it. Although Leylin enacted his schemes in an isolated area, this was still a single island. There was no ocean to blockade it off, so news would spread quickly.

“Don’t worry. They’ll be too busy to bother with us soon…” Leylin smiled and shook his head, the hidden meaning causing Isabel and Tiff to shiver in fear.

……

Time passed quickly. Soon enough, the two tribes Leylin had chosen were immersed in war, without Leylin even needing to step in. After all, they were both occupying the same lands. How could there be true friendships between rivals for resources? On top of that, the totem spirits of the tribes wanted to devour each
other to strengthen themselves. With all sorts of factors favouring it, it was natural for war to break out.
To show his sincerity, Leylin’s fleet did not stop by the continent and instead sent away many of the ships. Some of those that were left kept away from the warzone, as if this had nothing to do with them.
Leylin even bought slaves from both tribes. They were sturdy, courageous natives, great for regular slave work at the Chihuahua Islands or as soldiers. He wasn’t stupid enough to pay in precious materials like gold or silver, instead providing weapons and ammunition.
These arms caused the natives to grow more powerful, and the selling of slaves continued. To avoid falling behind, the opponents had no choice but to do business with Leylin, which created a vicious cycle that caused both tribes to shed blood. Leylin’s side had a great harvest.
Amidst the flurry of activity, Leylin stayed holed up inside his lab. The trade was taken care of by his men, who had prior experience in capturing slaves from piracy. His own task now was extremely important, and that was to prevent the Sakartes Empire from meddling in his affairs.
He looked at a petri dish under dim light, at a half-rotten piece of meat. His eyes flashed with light as the A.I. Chip performed a scan. ‘Has it been nurtured to this state already?’ The piece of flesh in the petri dish was from a native’s body. Continuous experiments allowed Leylin to roughly understand the structure of their DNA, and create a toxin that would be extremely lethal to them.
[Beep! Number 2’s infection is stable, beginning extraction of data...] The A.I. Chip sent a large amount of information to Leylin, which left him nodding his head.
“Very well…” Using a pair of tiny tweezers, Leylin clipped the piece of flesh and placed it in a test tube with clear liquid.
[Beginning experiment 17642, recording data...] the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. Leylin looked at the piece of flesh dissolve, shaping up like a tentacle before bubbling up.
‘Alright, the fission is stable. The chances of success this time are extremely large!’ Leylin nodded his head, and spells glowed forth from his hand on occasion, using the radioactive energy to catalyse the reaction.
Once the violent reaction ended, Leylin smiled at the test tube, which itself was now red as blood.
[Beep! The lethal virus has been completed. Name?] “Pathogen 1,” Leylin named it nonchalantly.
[Beep! Name recorded, storing data...] The A.I. Chip carried out Leylin’s instructions, before displaying the data in front of his eyes.
[Pathogen 1: It is a genetic weapon that is extremely contagious. Can thrive in extreme weathers and lives for a hundred hours. Spread through the respiratory tract, with 90% infection and 90% lethality. No cure available, capable of two degrees of transmission. Note: The pathogen is extremely effective against the specific specimen, namely the first set of natives stored in the database.]
This pathogen only infected natives, and was highly contagious and lethal. It was like smallpox combined with the flu, and Leylin did not doubt for a moment that once it was released it would strike more fear than even devils or demons could.
Even the 10% chance of survival was not Leylin’s kindness. Were all the natives to die, there would just be nobody left to give him power of faith.
‘Although I can’t let all of them die, I don’t need a large population of worshippers either. The survivors will provide enough power for me to ascend to godhood…’ Leylin pondered as he stroked his chin.
Had the same pathogen been unleashed on the natives of his previous world, the people would have been wiped out completely.
However, the rules of this world were different. Taking into consideration the existence of gods and extraordinary abilities, the 10% chance Leylin had given would leave a small number of survivors.

‘Once I release the plague, I need to make special medicine and vaccines…’ Although nobody was immune to this plague, Leylin had still left a backdoor open for external immunisation. Having died wave after wave, how would they see the ‘cleansing’ of the disease by Kukulkan? The vaccines could grant them the ability to survive, and they would be none the wiser about it.

It would already be a blessing for those totems and demigods to protect the nobles. There simply weren’t enough spells to go around saving the commoners. Leylin was quite sure that this situation would be a great harvest of the power of faith.

‘The death of their worshippers will cause the power of the totem spirits to drop. Even demigods won’t be able to do a thing about it, much less the earth-bound spirits. The huge drop in strength will be checkmate!’ Brilliance flashed in Leylin’s eyes. With a simple wave of his hands, he could now determine the life and death of several million natives. The word evil could not begin to describe his current actions.

If he were to filter this power of faith, he could turn into a god of plagues or biological lives, immediately usurping the throne of the Goddess of Plagues. But he wasn’t interested in that at all.

‘Although I shouldn’t absorb faith in the domains of plague and disease, there is one domain I cannot miss… Death!’ Leylin’s plans were always multi-layered. On one hand, the plague and vaccine would allow him to conquer the entirety of Debanks Island quickly without expending much energy. On the other hand, the sheer amount of death would allow him to comprehend the death domain.

Massacre and death were two powerful domains that suited Leylin’s
needs, and he coveted the latter now. With the millions of lives lost, the power of death would definitely reach a frightening level. At that point, it wouldn’t be impossible to comprehend the death domain. Compared to this, the other trivial matters could be neglected. Leylin believed peace only followed chaos. After a period of suffering, the people of Debanks Island would choose his rule, welcoming the revolution he would bring about.
In Leylin’s opinion, the famed big shots whether in his past life or the current one all had something in common. Once they determined their target, they would advance with fortitude, possessing absolute faith in their path. Since they’d long since marked their path, they feared nothing, and would be unscrupulous.

In his pursuit of eternity and freedom, Leylin cared not for the lives of the natives.

‘All I pursue in this life is eternity. Even if I collapse halfway through and face the backlash from my actions, I’ll have no regrets…’ A tough glint flashed in Leylin’s eyes, proof of his staunch resolution. With such motivation, killing humans, burning cities, and wiping out hundreds of people was a mere sacrifice on his higher path.

……

The battle between the tribes grew increasingly intense. It had been a long time since anyone came to care for the chief that Leylin had captive. The two sides were blinded by battle, their primary goal to take out their opponent.

People who started battles did not normally know how to end them. During the war, they would slowly forget their initial goals, leading to tragedy.
The Sakartes Empire seemed to have found out about the situation, dispatching a ten thousand strong army to interfere alongside a large group of clerics. It was likely that mediating wasn’t their only goal. Precautionary measures or wiping outsiders like Leylin out would be high on their list. Sadly, the empire’s interference ended quickly, having accomplished nothing much. There was no battle, but the grim reaper had descended on them.

En route to the warring tribes, a plague broke out without warning amongst their ranks. It was infectious, and the rate of death was terrifying. In a few days’ time, it had spread across the whole army. With how crowded their army was, and the lack of hygiene amongst the natives, it was difficult to survive the disease without divine healing. The members of the clergy were hard-pressed and overworked, only able to save some of the officers and elites. They had no choice but to watch the ordinary soldiers fester and die. With their limited number of divine spells, what they’d been able to do was already amazing.

In an era of cold weapons, a casualty rate of over 30% was terrifying. This time, the plague had brought an additional psychological pressure with it. Under the threat of death, the army soon forgot its goal. Some even tried to desert!

With more than half the soldiers dead, the army could do little about the runaways. The officers shouted themselves hoarse trying to bring the defectors back and behead them. Truth be told, even a few officers themselves had fled in fear of the plague.

Soon enough, the army completely broke down. The soldiers spread everywhere, bringing the bacteria in their bodies to even further places and spreading the plague more. The natives died in batches, leaving fields overgrown with weeds. The fowl had wandered off.

The plague had reduced the entirety of Debanks Island to tears. It
worried the upper class of the empire out of their minds. Still, there was nothing they could do to stop the spread of the plague. As for the intruders, they weren’t a priority.

Taking care of the external interferences, Leylin began completely annihilating the two tribes that had fought each other. Many of them had been infected by the plague in the chaos of war. 60% of them had died out, including almost all of the healthy young men. Small as the two tribes were, their totem spirits were merely divine beings. They were greatly weakened by the loss of worshippers, and weren’t able to obstruct Leylin’s attacks anymore. Absorbing their divine force, Leylin sensed the massacre divinity in his body greatly increasing in strength. He was getting ever closer to the threshold of being able to ignite his godfire.

After he got rid of what the two tribes believed in, it was natural for Leylin to take them over. The remaining members were gathered to establish a whole new town, complete with a large new Targaryen statue.

The natives abandoned their old faith. Being baptised by prayer and holy water in front of the statue— in actuality just potions and vaccines— they sensed their suffering and ailments vanish without a trace. It immediately triggered a zealous wave of faith.

The infectious power of faith generated by providing those who were on the verge of death help was something even Leylin hadn’t expected. Many who had been at their last breaths, their bodies decaying, became fervent worshippers of the Winged Serpent God after being ‘saved’. It allowed his strength to increase.

Soon enough, the surrounding tribes got word of a god’s abilities to heal the disease. Getting blessed, they brought their entire families over with their wealth, requesting to join the town.

While the priests of the totem spirits could use divine spells to remove the sickness, they had a limited amount of divine force and spell slots. They could only save those of status, able to do nothing
about the commoners who fled for their lives. Even if they couldn’t get a single divine spell from the Winged Serpent God, it was already enough to wipe out faith in the rest. Knowing this well, Leylin dispatched his own priests everywhere, bringing holy water and the like to surrounding tribes and displaying his abilities and achievements. It had a very favourable response. In the face of death, the authorities could do little to stop them. Groups of natives came and prayed for blessings from Leylin, soon enough filling the town up. Leylin named the town that had been built upon the two tribes Hope Stronghold, denoting new hope. It was the beginning of his conquest of Debanks Island. Making use of his ability to heal the plague, Leylin had acquired the faith of the natives as well as an army. With the method of the carrot and stick, his organisation began to expand rapidly…

A year had passed, this winter especially chilly. Snow fell even on the southern seas, coating the islands in white. This applied to Debanks Island as well. The gods seemed to be lamenting the loss of lives, showing their sorrow. The snow on the continent was extremely thick, the older generations unable to remember something so terrifying. Many of the natives that hadn’t prepared for this froze to death. Though the cold weather somewhat curbed the spread of the plague, it could not halt the footsteps of the reaper. Debanks Island had become a hell for the natives in the past year, the horrifying plague spreading unceasingly around the island. Whole populations were wiped out. There was even a dead city now, one that was completely empty. The corpses of natives filled it, and many rats and crows roamed about the houses and the streets, gnawing at everything. The eyes of the wild dogs on the road had grown bloodshot from eating too much human flesh.
In this land swarming with starved people, Hope Stronghold and the rumoured Winged Serpent God by the sea were their hopes, able to do anything. Information had spread that this god possessed the powers of massacre and healing. All faith would be treated with kindness, and even if someone was infected by the plague they could still be healed. Now that these ‘rumours’ had spread, huge batches of natives fled towards Hope Stronghold. No matter what the bigwigs did to stop them, it was pointless…

East of Hope Stronghold, near a mountain of the Sakartes Empire. A surge of natives wearing thick fur coats trudged on in the snow with much difficulty. One of them was a young girl, who was encouraging her little brother. “Hah… push ahead. We’ll reach the area near Hope Stronghold soon…”

“Will we be saved once we get there, Sister Aya?” The young boy next to this Aya looked about fourteen or fifteen years of age, and he wore a thick fur coat as well. However, his face was almost purple from the cold, and he was cringing as he spoke. “Yes… The totem spirit there is a huge serpent that governs all life. It can remove the sickness…” Aya kept encouraging her little brother and helped him along, afraid that he would slip in the midst of the crowd. However, as she mindlessly followed the procession up ahead, she sank deep into thought.

The events a year ago had been like a nightmare; a plague had appeared without any warning whatsoever. The infected first saw greenish-black spots on their bodies, like sesame seeds. They were followed by low fevers, and eventually devolved into comas where even divine spells could not help. At the end, the flesh of the infected would rot and fall off bit by bit. Aya had seen this once, and it had left her unable to eat for quite a few days.
The plague had arrived fiercely. At the beginning, it had just been rumours at the borders of the empire, but in a few sunsets’ time, it had spread to the larger cities. The high-ranking priests and nobles hid at the altars and prayed hard with blood sacrifices, but it seemed to have no effect.

The other shamans could do nothing, and soon enough the plague had affected their city. She lost all her relatives to them, the only one left alive her little brother. She followed the stream of people escaping the town to head south. Unsure of what to do, she rushed towards Hope Stronghold.

Although this rumour could be a lie, it was her last hope!

“I’ll definitely bring my brother there safely…” Aya kept telling herself as she prayed, “Oh Winged Serpent God in Hope Stronghold. If you truly can cure the plague, then please descend and help us! I am willing to give up everything…”
There were many people like Aya, all fleeing for their lives, but she was lucky in that they had enough food. With nearly half the empire dead, the stored up food was more than enough. Many times, Aya had to muster up her courage and enter dead villages to clear up some land. She then could enter the homes and find food, one of the primary reasons for staying within this group. After all, making contact with bodies and going into the houses of dead people was very dangerous. Few were willing to do this. However, once all the reserves of grain disappeared, the famine that would follow would be a huge issue. There were no longer any farmers planting crops, the plague this time had caused immense damage to Sakartes’ societal order. Of course, few of the natives considered this. They only hoped to live past the day.

“AH! Alosasner! Alosasner is here…” At this moment, there was an uproar at the front of the group. Aya could not help but grab her little brother’s arm, the two of them freezing upon hearing the word. These people did not worry about the pursuit of the imperial army or dangers from outside the city. What truly worried them were attacks of the plague!

In the natives’ language, Alosasner meant ‘the devil unable to be fathomed and found everywhere.’ It also implied a bout of serious
illness.
“Is there someone in front who’s gotten the plague?” Aya had seen quite a number of healthy people who’d just been walking suddenly cough out black blood and collapse by the road. It was the arrival of death.
The siblings passed the watching crowd and only vaguely saw a little figure falling into the snow. People avoided the figure like it was booby-trapped.
“My Adodole! I was just playing with him a few days ago…” Aya’s brother exclaimed with shock, and then lowered his head.
When sickness occurred, life seemed so very fragile. Aya could only hug her brother’s head and console him tenderly. These people were already numbed to death, and after moving away from the corpse the large group began to move along more slowly.
Aya recalled the figure that had fallen and sighed inside, ‘I hope we reach Hope Stronghold soon… It’s too much of a waste to fall here…
‘I definitely won’t let that happen to my brother. Once we’re past this mountain, we’ll have reached the territory of Hope Stronghold…’ she tried to encourage herself.
At this moment, another ruckus sounded from the back of the group. Voices began to spread, resulting in even more confusion.
“Did someone collapse? No, it’s…” Aya’s pupils shrank.
“The imperial army! Those darned things… Turn around and run!” A burly native stood out, brandishing a fish fork as other strong natives grasped their weapons. While the men were hard at work, the old and weak quickly dispersed and fled. Aya took her brother and ran with all her might as well, getting away from the army’s pursuit.
None of the bigwigs could tolerate losing citizens, even with the plague. They ordered the troops of each military base to stop these refugees. Of course, they couldn’t be bothered to worry about how
to save these people who were stuck. Originally, even the troops of the native empire weren’t willing to carry out such orders. They, too, were afraid of the spread of the plague. However, a divine order sounded and all the guardian and totem spirits joined hands to stop the refugees from entering the region of Hope Stronghold.

“GO…” The sounds of fighting could be heard behind her, causing Aya’s heart to clench. She could only pull at her brother and try to escape.

However, she felt a tug on her arm at this moment, and the dull thud of a heavy object hitting the snow.

“What happened? Did you fall? Get up…”

“AAH!” Aya had turned back to find her little brother in the snow. She immediately turned him over, but soon found that her brother had lost consciousness. The traces of black blood stung her eyes. ‘He’s been taken by the sickness too…’ The instant that that thought flashed across her mind, two unstoppable streams of tears began to fall from her eyes. Aya did not care for the possibility of infection as she took him into her arms. “Please save him… Someone, please save him…”

The sounds of battle drew closer, but what Aya saw was hope, “The army has a priest. He’ll definitely be able to use divine spells to save him…”

“Be careful, he’s infected!” Soon enough, the imperial army had reached them. They watched the siblings on the ground, and didn’t dare to draw close. The infection was obvious, and it caused fear to arise on their faces.

“Please, save my brother!” Aya unconsciously went forward, but was forced backwards by numerous lances.

“Don’t come over…” Countless soldiers circled her, as if defending against a monster.

“Get the priest and officer. There’s a source of infection here!” This
iciness and resolution in that voice immediately caused the girl’s heart to sink.

Horses trotted along, and an officer and priest wearing bright feathers arrived quickly. Seeing the black bloodstains on the ground and Aya’s unconscious brother, the two of them immediately frowned.

“Kill them quickly! Toss dried wood here and then burn it!” Aya’s last hopes were dashed ruthlessly.

“Brother… I’m sorry…” The girl’s tears fell on her brother’s cheek and neck one by one, and she then closed her eyes.

*Whoosh! Whoosh!* The sounds of arrows being shot could be heard, but there was strangely no pain.

Aya quickly opened her eyes, and then saw that there was an arrow in the officer’s neck. The tail of the arrow was still vibrating, like a little snake trying to dig into the ground.

“Enemy attack! Enemy attack!” Sounds of fighting could be heard again, and numerous figures emerged from the surrounding jungle.

“It’s the army of that foreign god…” The priest’s expression quickly changed, and he urged his horse along to leave. The rest of the natives quickly abandoned the lances in their hands, looking like they were about to fall apart.

‘It’s people from Hope Stronghold!’ Aya held her little brother and headed towards the group of priests that had just arrived, “Kind… and benevolent ones… please save…”

*Thud!* Having expended too much stamina, Aya who’d also been infected fell.

Right before everything went dark, she could hear distant voices, “It’s a pair of commoners! Saintess Barbara…”

……

Warmth spread through Aya’s body, allowing her to feel some
strength in her limbs. She slowly opened her eyes to see a warm bonfire, a huge tent blocking the cold air.
“What’s your name? How do you feel?” A native woman sat by her bed. She had long black hair and black pupils, with a golden mark on her forehead. She was radiating a sacred light.
“My name is Aya. Thank you for saving me!” Aya expressed her gratitude while blushing, but her expression quickly changed, “What about my brother? Where is he?”
“Don’t worry, he’s here as well. He was just infected for a longer time, so he’ll need more healing…” Saintess Barbara stopped Aya from struggling further, “This is Hope Stronghold… you are safe…”
Three days later, Aya, who had regained much of her strength, elatedly walked out of the tent her brother was in. Gazing at the large Targaryen sculpture in the town, she could not help but kneel down sincerely and begin to pray.
“O great god, thank you for saving my brother. I am your devout follower from now…”
Similar things like this happened in every corner of Hope Stronghold. Waves of resolute and zealous power of faith unceasingly entered Leylin’s grasp.
‘The number of worshippers has increased again! Looks like sending the army to the surrounding regions to rescue the refugees was a good choice!’ A divine will was extracted from the threads of faith, allowing Leylin to see the general situation.
Due to the hope to be cured as well as gains from various areas, the region with Hope Stronghold at the heart gathered a population of over 300,000 natives. And since he was their ‘saviour’, the faith these people provided, and their gratitude, were all true.
Tiff and his acolytes had put in a lot of work as well, to solidify these threads of faith and have them become devout worshippers who would pray to him regularly.
‘Seeing the situation, it won’t be a problem to ignite my godfire as long as we take care of all these people. It might even be enough for me to ascend to godhood…’ Leylin looked agitated. With the expansion of Hope Stronghold, and especially with the tribes nearby dying away, Leylin had managed obtain the divinity of quite a few totem spirits. With their help, the power of massacres in his body had risen to its peak, to the point that he felt like he was on the verge of igniting his godfire. Anyone could see the divine golden lustre on his body. This power of divinity had completely fused with his body and grown to the extreme. That was not all. With the deaths of nearly a million natives, Leylin had now made contact with the domain of death. While he had only obtained some information about it, and the A.I. Chip could not analyse it yet, it was already quite fast. ‘The phase of taking in refugees is done. Next is the war…’
The plague had cut the population of the Sakartes Empire in half, and their military power had sharply declined as well. Leylin’s Hope Stronghold continually absorbed the nutrients of Debanks Island and grew ever more prosperous. However, he estimated that a new wave of power would soon arise. ‘The earth-bound spirits and totem spirits should be planning something massive…’ Leylin stroked his chin and pondered. The spirits of Debanks Island were in fact borne of the wandering spirits of the various regions. Their strength was somewhat limited to the area they came from and the knowledge they possessed. Leylin had only slain the spirits of small tribes thus far, even the strongest among the totems containing a shred of divinity. Even if such a spirit possessed a domain, Leylin did not fear it in the least. However, the Sakartes Empire had several powerful spirits with strength approaching the level of demigods. In their own domains, their powers would be amplified to put them on par with true gods! Put bluntly, if Leylin stepped into the boundaries of the Sakartes Empire he would be mobbed to death by godlike spirits. On the contrary, if those spirits dared to venture out from their domains, they would at most have the strength of demigods. Their strength would even deteriorate in the vicinity of Hope Stronghold. Due to these conditions, Leylin was not eager to challenge them. Instead, he would continually weaken them and erode their forces. To him, these spirits were like caged beasts. He could weaken them...
easily with the power of faith and mortal armies, so there was no need to hurry. With the aid of the plague, Leylin’s forces grew without any resistance, slicing through their opponents like hot knives through butter. There were even occasional natives who had thrown off their faith in their totem spirits and requested entry into the stronghold. One tribe’s nobles themselves had abandoned their beliefs to come seek shelter. After all, Hope Stronghold represented life to the mere mortals. Outside of it, one could only wait for death. Under such immense pressure, only the most zealous worshippers of the totems would be unwilling to convert. The spirits did not have any solution to Leylin’s plan at all. Given their powers, the priests and clerics they had nurtured would at most be able to save a small part of the nobility. The commoners would be left to die. What was even more shameless was that Leylin’s pathogen could infect a person even after they had been healed previously! Debanks Island had now turned into an island of plague. The natives who didn’t comply with Leylin could only hide in their city corners or altars, waiting for the inevitable plague to strike. Once most of them had abandoned their faith, the totem spirits and earth-bound spirits would be a bunch of sitting ducks. A demigod couldn’t sustain their divine force on the backs of zealots, priests, and nobles. Their holy magic would decrease, causing more people to die. It was a vicious cycle. As their control over their worshippers dwindled, so did the domain of their powers. Right now, Leylin’s influence had spread to almost a quarter of the island. Although it started at the corner of a region, the totem spirits of the empire were unable to do anything about it. Meanwhile,
Leylin’s influence only grew more as each day passed. Leylin felt like he didn’t even need to personally attack them. The regional spirits would go extinct purely due to a lack of worshippers.

On the other hand, it wasn’t as if these spirits lacked countermeasures against him. Although large scale battles were impossible since the inception of the plague, they had passed down oracles with a strategy to stop the natives from moving over to Leylin. They were spreading rumours that it was Leylin himself who had spread the plague, which ironically was the truth.

“The giant serpent from the west cruelly dug out the hearts of our people, using their fresh blood to make a sacrifice to evil. That is how this devil of a plague was born…”

“The fair-skinned devils never came with good intentions. They covet our wealth and fertile lands, and are even prepared to use our lives in doing the bidding of their gods…” Such rumours were very prevalent on Debanks Island, some even making their rounds within Hope Stronghold.

However, it was precisely from these actions that Leylin detected something abnormal.

‘Life and reproduction are the most primordial desires of living beings. The strength of this desire leaves even gods in awe…’ He looked at the bustling Hope Stronghold and grinned widely.

‘And the desire to live is far greater than the desire to reproduce… Even if I proclaim that I am indeed killing the natives and using their flesh and blood for sacrificial rites, they still have a strong will to live. As long as they are able to undergo my baptism and get rid of the plague, there will still be many natives who come over… Before the gods find an antidote to this plague, this situation will be irreversible. As for the rumours, they can at most increase the workload of Tiff and the church.’

The pathogen Leylin had devised was backed by his ability as a Magus, and the power of bloodlines from another world. In
addition, it was only effective on the natives. It was almost impossible for those gods to find a cure for it.

“Almighty Lord… You are the colossal snake which will devour the world, the torchbearer of massacre. One day, you will turn into the stars in the sky…” Tiff entered from a large door behind Leylin, dressed in pristine white robes.

In this vast and boundless world, Leylin had finally established a church with a proper schedule. Constant battle and conquest had given him a great number of worshippers, and the acolytes had undergone a baptism as well. They were now equipped to carry out his bidding.

He had given Tiff a group of clerics, and placed a member of his own family in charge of administration, leading to immense gratitude from both parties. Apart from that, he had a foundation of zealots in huge numbers and a church. Everything else would just fall into place.

Leylin had named it the Colossal Serpent Church, with an image of a Targaryen as the insignia. Tiff was taking care of the holy scriptures and the like. Given that he’d been infused with Leylin’s soulforce and was the second legendary of the church, he had naturally been appointed as the pope.

With Tiff’s contributions in nurturing the acolytes, the position was his anyway. This was in line with Leylin’s plans, and Isabel would never fight over this position.

“What is it?” Leylin turned around, the occasional imposing aura radiating from his body.

“We have already captured a few suspects spreading rumours to taint your reputation,” While Tiff had an inkling of the greater ploy at play, neither him nor Leylin would openly admit to it. In cases like this, unless they caught the perpetrator himself in the act of spreading the pathogen, what evidence would suffice?

As for the cure and holy water, they could justify it by saying that
Leylin’s divine force countered the pathogen. He had not cultivated the domains and godhoods of plague and disease anyway, so he wasn’t afraid of an investigation. Truth be told, if the gods did try to get to the bottom of this, the Goddess of Plagues would become a scapegoat for Leylin. Who asked her to enjoy doing malicious things like spreading plagues and diseases in the first place? An epidemic not backed by divine powers was unheard of in the World of Gods, where such a thing entailed ascending to godhood in that very domain. After all, what Leylin had done came from another world. “Almighty Lord, should we punish them?” Tiff asked in a low voice. The punishment would naturally be their life. After all, Tiff had originally been from the dark world, and had done countless things like this. Even the purest of good gods had people in the church carry out their dirty deeds. “Tiff…” Leylin’s voice was extremely gentle, but it carried a dignity that could not be opposed. Tiff stiffened and listened earnestly. “The church is open and above board. We will grant a fair trial even to those vile rats from the darkness, especially in such matters…” “I understand…” Tiff put on his best thinking face and left respectfully. Leylin’s meaning was for him to convict them of their crimes immediately, only publicly. He could not fool the sages and intelligent people, but so what? In every era the commoners made up the largest part of the population. Making the Arrest official, and substantiating it with some proof, Leylin could use his rulership to convict them. He and the church needed a white cloth to cover themselves in, and if they disposed of people on the sly it would only lead to more rumours. However, if his prestige and reputation were to pick up, those people who
could see past his ploys could no longer overcome this surging wave.
Sometimes, superficiality was extremely important. With his troves of data and memories, Leylin was way ahead of the gods of Debanks Island in controlling the hearts of others.
Several days later, the trial began under the watchful eyes of the people, who bustled to watch the scene.
Tiff did not press them to admit their crimes, instead charging them for ‘smearing the holy name and causing distrust amongst the worshippers.’ It caused a huge buzz amongst the gathered people.
Hope Stronghold and the baptism of its god was the only salvation of the natives of Debanks Island. Only where the light of the Winged Serpent God shone could they avoid the plague. They could even continue living healthily, unafraid of suddenly vomiting blood and ending up dead by the roadside.

Once Tiff exposed these suspects of their crimes, it immediately drew public outrage. The masses jeered and shouted, and if not for the peacekeeping troops on standby these convicts would long since have been ripped into shreds.

These unlucky suspects were adjudged guilty. Not only did they spread rumours and dig for information on Leylin’s background, they were even looking for the origins of the holy water, an extremely important mission. Each and every one of these acts was an attempt to smear the reputation of the church.

As expected of the holy protectors, these suspects whom the natives had seen on a daily basis were quickly captured. All evidence pointed towards their guilt. Although they wanted to deny these alleged crimes and confess to their other wrongdoings, they discovered that nobody would believe them.

The stereotype that bad people committed more misdeeds was a prevalent one, and the truths they spoke were dismissed. Very soon, Tiff righteously announced the crimes of these spies, and sent them to burn at the stake. This was accompanied by jubilant
cheers from the public. The rumours floating around were very soon suppressed by this event.
Leylin had less and less interest in the dealings of mortals these days. The natives only had two choices anyway; they could either convert to his faith or die from the plague. With the only options offered death and salvation, it was extremely easy to conquer Debanks Island.
Having lost their worshippers, the totem spirits had turned into a thing of the past. They had no more chances to turn the tide. However, these spirits were no fools. With their existences threatened, they would choose to gamble with their lives…
The very night Tiff ordered the execution of the criminals. The sky was bright and clear, with not a single cloud blocking the vast river of stars and the silver moon. Moonlight and starlight dimly shone upon Hope Stronghold, giving everything they touched a silver glow.
Tiff and Isabel had just ended their daily duties. Suddenly, they felt their hearts constrict and palpitate, as if some prehistoric beast was drawing towards them from the distance. A nervousness made their hair stand on end as they made their way to the windows.
“This is…” they gaped.
A trail of fire lit up the sky, its dazzling rays lighting up the horizon and basking Hope Stronghold in its radiance. At the end of this golden light were several figures with monstrous auras that left the two of them somewhat suffocated.
“The tribal gods! They came here directly…” Tiff cried hoarsely.
These totem spirits weren’t foolish enough to let Leylin chop them apart. With the immense pressure he put on them, they decided to band together in a ferocious counterattack. Their sources had confirmed that Leylin was the one behind all this. If Leylin’s main body was killed in a holy war, then everything would be over.
“God…” Tiff clenched his crest subconsciously, with apprehension
in his eyes.
Even if those spirits had left their strongholds, they were still demigods. Although their powers had waned, they planned to overcome Leylin with sheer numbers. Although Tiff knew he couldn’t lose his grip in such times, his heart still skipped a beat.
“It’s the Flaming Guardian!” “Almighty Akaban, the sun god…”
The phenomenon in the skies had alerted the natives, and when many of them looked up into the skies they saw the demigods they had forsaken. They cried out in fear, calling the names of the gods they used to worship.
“There is no need to fear, children…” A voice sounded from the Targaryen statue, travelling to the depths of each worshipper’s soul. It seemed to come to life, the voice carrying a soothing energy which calmed them down immediately.
*Hss!* A phantom Targaryen appeared in midair, facing the enemies.
“Leave this to me. Focus on the natives’ fight on the other side…” Leylin transmitted into Tiff’s and Isabel’s minds. Done with that, he raised his head and sized up what would be the most powerful opponents he’d faced since his arrival in the World of Gods.
‘Once I eliminate them, the entire Debanks Empire will fall into my hands…’ Leylin’s eyes reddened as the Nightmare Eye appeared on his forehead. Splendid golden rays lit up his body, seemingly on the verge of burning up. The powerful aura caused a few opposing totem spirits to change their expressions.
*Ooo—* Few totem spirits had come in the first place, they likely knew that divine beings could do little to him. The ones here were all demigods, blazing with their unique godfires.
At the middle was a gigantic flaming chariot with a half-naked native on top. He wielded a golden lance and had a grave face, emitting the distinct aura of a king as his eyes glinted with wisdom. What was more surprising to Leylin was that the blazing horse that
pulled his chariot was also a demigod, yet it stayed under the native and allowed itself to be used as a mount. On the sides of the flaming chariot were a double-headed lion with golden fur standing on end as well as a scorpion that seemed to be made of pure gold. ‘Four demigods… Is this all the hidden divine power of Debanks Island?’ Leylin met their gazes without weakness nor fear. “Intruder, undo this sickness! I, the founding emperor of the Sakartes Empire, the Sun God and King of All Kings, Controller of All Flames, Mountains and Rivers, Akaban, can grant you a dignified death if you comply!” the demigod on the war chariot exclaimed in his tongue, holding onto the reins of the blazing horse. Since demigods could comprehend all languages and writings, there wasn’t an issue with communication. ‘Hm? His mind isn’t corroded by the faith of the natives?’ Leylin was slightly surprised, ‘Is it because he was a native soul who merged with the faith of the empire, becoming a valiant soul after death?’

As Leylin pondered over Akaban’s threats, the demigod lion and scorpion snarled terrifyingly. Scanning him more closely, Leylin could not help but feel great pity. ‘What a pity… While you’re doing all you can to comprehend godhood, you’re too ambitious. That won’t help you break through the restraints of the natives and become a true god…’

Akaban was obviously very wise in strengthening his domain, but he was still unable to become a true god. It showed how tedious this path was. Leylin conjectured that there were two plausible reasons for the failure. Firstly, there were the flaws with the natives’ souls. On the other hand, Akaban himself might be too ambitious. The domains of the sun and moon could actually contend against greater gods, but Akaban still wasn’t satisfied with them. He wanted to spread over into other roles, becoming an overlord. Pitifully, the meagre bit of faith the natives could provide wasn’t
enough to do so. It left him stuck as a demigod. Had Akaban chosen domains related to the natives or savagery, he might long since have become a true god. If that were the case, Leylin would have had nothing to do with Debanks Island. ‘Akaban… your misfortune is my greatest fortune!’ Having thought this through, Leylin seemed to hold the pearl of wisdom. The look of absolute confidence he had evidently stabbed at Akaban’s ego.

“What can a mere divine being of another race, someone who isn’t even a demigod, do to resist attacks from all sides?” Given that he was a founding emperor, there were no such words as modesty or consideration in Akaban’s vocabulary. He looked at convenience and benefits.

With a wave of his hands, the double-headed lion and golden scorpion surrounded Leylin. Akaban himself rode the chariot to roam the battlefield, bundles of golden flames splashing everywhere and forming a resplendent scene in the night. The blazing horse, itself a demigod, whinnied, and a shadow of a sun rose up behind Akaban. The imposing aura curbed much of Leylin’s energy, and Akaban prepared to deal Leylin the final blow. *Chik! Chik!* The golden scorpion cried out without end. Its tail shot forth, containing toxins within that were much more potent that the wizards’ Finger of Death. The double-headed lion roared as well, using its innate skills. One head spat out flames, while the other spat out blue lightning.

Most importantly, their domains rippled out, beginning the process of crushing Leylin.
Surrender. You will lose in a mere contest between domains.” Akaban’s voice echoed throughout the battlefield. He was circling Leylin leisurely, aside from the two demigods in combat. He had the valiant spirit of an emperor, and before becoming a demigod he had clearly been a tactician. His words were designed to affect Leylin’s mind. Sadly, Leylin’s own hardships had given him a will that was harder than diamond. Such challenges were pointless, only revealing Akaban’s lack of confidence to him.

‘Are you worried about any trump cards that I have? Or is it my background on the mainland?’ The gears in Leylin’s mind whirred, and he soon understood what the other party was thinking. Akaban seemed to know a little about the gods on the mainland, which was why he was guessing at Leylin’s identity.

Unfortunately, Leylin was now completely alone. Even if he were to be killed here, nobody would cause trouble for Akaban… Besides his main Warlock body, that is.

‘I can wipe out all four of them easily if I use the floating city, but then it won’t be a secret anymore…’ Leylin looked deep in thought. He had amassed a tremendous number of cards up his sleeves, and the jaws of the other gods would probably drop if they found out about it.

The floating city had shifted to the area outside Debanks Island, awaiting his next commands. At its peak performance, the floating
city could contest against true gods! Taking care of a few demigods was like playing around. Unfortunately, such power would be sensed by the other gods, making things difficult for him in the future.

“Massacre domain!” Leylin chose to fight it out with his own strength. The dark red domain burst forth from him, allowing him to get a huge boost in strength. He was now on home ground, after all.

The dark red domain that held the power of tyrannical bloodlust abruptly expanded, and even pushed the domains of the two demigods away. They were now on equal ground.

‘Such pure bloodlust, and the strength of this domain…’ Watching from the sidelines, Akaban immediately seemed to be put deep in thought, as if he’d gotten some inspiration from Leylin’s domain. ‘Is it the purity? I was too greedy in the past… To become a true god, I’ll need to completely grasp at least one aspect.’ This inspiration seemed to change Akaban’s body, making his divine form more solid. This was the most terrifying part about him, he could learn and improve even in battle!

If Akaban could walk out of this battle, then he would be able to get rid of the heterogenous elements in his domain and obtain a divine domain. That would make him a true god!

‘Unfortunately… you won’t get that chance!’ Leylin laughed wildly, the legendary spell in his hands seemingly cast instantaneously.

Meteor Explosion! Crushing Palm!

A dazzling explosion and a large palm drowned out the two demigods fighting him. Enraged howls sounded out amongst the bright spell lights as Leylin used Dimensional Leap to arrive in front of Akaban. A golden staff appeared in his hands.

*Chiu! Chiu!* Lights flickered, and a flaming golden bird came into existence. Its gigantic wings flapped out flames like they were petals as its large beak began to peck at Akaban.
“A divine being’s soul? Is that what you’re counting on? How naive!” Facing such an attack, Akaban merely frowned slightly. The horse in front of the chariot abruptly snorted, absorbing all the scattered flames.

“Seeing that you gave me pointers on my path, let me send your truesoul to the astral plane!” The golden lance in Akaban’s hand pierced forward, striking the beak of the large flaming bird. A crisp shattering sound rang out, and the flaming bird’s beak began to fragment like glass, revealing the golden staff underneath. The beak of the bird had actually been the staff’s tip.

“Be it the strength of your domain or your accumulation of divine force, you cannot match up to me…” Akaban seemed to sigh, his golden lance mercilessly striking the crystal at the top of the staff. *Chiu! Chiu!* The large flaming bird soul in the crystal emitted a miserable cry, and the core that held a slight hint of gold shattered. However, Akaban felt that something was off.

“Haha… Thank you very much, you helped me take care of the last bit of resistance. I would have found it rather difficult to tame it!” Light flickered, and Leylin’s figure quickly left. The flaming bird at the tip of the staff exploded, and reformed. However, unlike before it seemed to lack intelligence, looking rather stiff. Bundles of flames enveloped the staff, and energy undulations with more than legendary might rippled out.

All this happened in what seemed to be the blink of an eye. Leylin had made use of Akaban’s strength and completely subdued the flaming bird, even refining the Red Dragon Staff once more.

“The name Red Dragon Staff now no longer suits you. Let’s call you the Blazing Sceptre!” Leylin sized up his work in satisfaction. As he had used the soul of a divine being and had help from a demigod, even if it wasn’t a divine weapon yet the Blazing Sceptre was much stronger than other legendary items.

‘A divine weapon needs the flesh and divine force of a god to be
completed…” Leylin sighed in thought. Meanwhile, Akaban was thoroughly enraged in front of him. “Wretched sinner! How dare you make a fool of me!” His fury was like that of a regent, and a large hole opened up in the night skies. Blue lightning, each bolt as thick as a human arm, fell continuously. Akaban felt the ultimate humiliation in being made use of to refine a weapon, and teased by a mere divine being. The wrath from such disrespect could only be eased with the fresh blood and soul of the sinner! “I will show you the sin you have committed!” The warhorse snarled, and the flaming chariot charged forth. Akaban’s lance danced as the lightning in the skies gathered at its tip. *Roar!* *Chik! Chik!* Meanwhile, the two demigods Leylin had occupied for a while pounced over as well. Although they looked a little pitiful, there weren’t any injuries. The joint attack of the four demigods pushed the air out of the region, forming a strange vacuum. The pressure on Leylin rose rapidly, and the force that surged towards him from all directions seemed to want to tear him apart. “As expected, a divine being trying to fight a demigod will lose…” Leylin could only smile wryly, and then began to look resolute. “Did you only just notice? It’s too late! Your body shall be placed under my golden throne to be used as an eternal decoration…” Akaban roared. Along with the other three demigods, his attacks soon drowned Leylin out. Lightning, flames, poison… All sorts of forces mixed in with the power of divine force. The domains formed a colourful, spotted, and chaotic region of energy. Leylin’s aura quickly weakened within, to the point that it completely disappeared. “Even I won’t be able to deal with the attacks from four demigods…” Akaban withdrew the golden lance in his hands, “It’s a pity that I didn’t get the method to undo the plague, but I now
know that becoming a true god is possible… Hm? Wait!”
Akaban’s expression quickly changed, as he sensed the descent of powerful World Origin Force.
*Whoosh!* The skies quickly darkened, and the stars and silver moon quickly hid their luster. It was as if a berserk dragon was travelling through the dark clouds, and compared to it Akaban’s lightning was like that of a kid playing house.
“The descent of World Origin Force… This is the appointment of a demigod!” Akaban had experienced this once before, and naturally would not get this wrong.
Just as he was about to do all he could to interrupt the process, an absolute and powerful strength burst forth. Traces of the conscient of the World Will sent him and the three other demigods flying.
The gods truly were the darlings of the world, and when they advanced they naturally caught the attention of the World Origin Force. The isolating energy that came was not something four demigods could deal with.
The World Origin Force that had come roaring in immediately attracted the attention of a few powerful gods. While the advancement of a demigod was nothing much, there were a few existences who still noticed him.
“This… it feels like a demigod, and the location is at the the south of the south seas, the natives’ territories. Has a totem spirit or natural spirit advanced?” To the gods, the totems of the natives were like a group of useless things. They were weak and could not leave their respective areas, which was why they were not worthy of attention. Several streaks of godly conscients gathered in the skies, and then dissipated like this had nothing to do with them.
However, no matter how careful Leylin was, his reputation of being the youngest legendary wizard was sound, and he had caught the attention of some existences.
Golden light flickered on Faulen Island, within Waukeen’s church.
It turned into a woman dressed in luxurious golden robes. ‘I could never be wrong. This aura is that of the wizard! Has he become a demigod?’ Waukeen’s eyes crinkled in a smile, ‘Interesting! His name as a genius will probably resound through the continent once more…’

At this thought, Waukeen called out sternly. “My servants!” “Mistress!” A few priests of wealth knelt and listened to the goddess’ commands.
Leylin had no time to care about the events outside. He was currently immersed in an extremely peculiar state.

Becoming a demigod was as difficult as scaling into the skies, but it was no issue for Leylin. He’d amassed enough divine force a while ago, but he’d lacked a turning point. That turning point appeared today. The immense pressure of four great demigods allowed him to break past his limits, and pushed the ignition of his godfire.

Becoming a demigod required cooperation with the laws of the world. It was a very valuable experience for Leylin.

‘In the moment of becoming a demigod, one is shrouded in World Origin Force and laws. It is probably the safest place…’ Leylin did not worry about the events outside, immersing himself in his senses. This was just him becoming a demigod. When he attempted to become a true god with a divine kingdom, even a greater god would not dare attempt anything on him that moment.

The gods usually waited for the process to complete, attacking the new god at their weakest. Compared to their eternal life, a period of patience was minuscule. Just the same, Akaban’s group chose to watch on, keeping some distance so as not to infuriate the World Origin Force.

“The sea of origin force has descended…” A golden light glinted in Akaban’s eyes as he saw a large sea of origin force that was even greater than the Weave. It surged forth and whistled, forming songs
of praise.
‘Based on the current situation, the chances of his success are high…’ Akaban frowned, sensing that he now had another impressive enemy. But then, he laughed involuntarily.
Unlike him, the three beasts did not have many worries. ‘Even if that divine being successfully becomes a demigod, he’s still a newbie who can’t control divine force properly yet. How could he be a match for the four of us combined?’
They only felt an instinctual fear right now, unable to help growing intoxicated from studying the process in the hope of benefits. It was a rare opportunity to watch the sea of World Origin Force surrounding the ascent of a new god, and no god would let it pass them by.
‘These fellows…’ Akaban shook his head, shutting his own eyes and using his divine vision to observe the web of origin force. This gushing sea of energy represented everything in the World of Gods, showing Akaban its secrets from behind the veil.
However, this intoxication only lasted for a moment. Akaban’s eyes widened in shock as he turned in Leylin’s direction. The origin force had already formed a spiral like a black hole, its might leaving his heart thumping in fear.
‘What a huge tide of origin force… This is already comparable to a true god… Does that mean his accumulations far surpass my own?’
The strength of Leylin’s ascent was several times greater than his own. The implications left Akaban in no mood to appreciate the World Origin Force further.
Few in the history of the World of Gods could have drawn such a tremendous sea of origin force as a mere divine being. Although Akaban did not know what this meant exactly, his expression turned dark.
However, no matter how complicated his feelings were now, he could only watch the whistling origin force surge and roll, before
being sucked into the black hole with Leylin at the centre.

……

[Beep! Unknown energy detected, host’s soul has experienced a transition. Secondary system updating…] The A.I. Chip went to sleep.

Legendaries of the World of Gods were equivalent to Morning Stars of the Magus World. High-ranked legendaries were comparable to Radiant Moons, while divine beings were at the Breaking Dawn realm. A demigod was close to rank 7!

In other words, Leylin’s clone was now as strong as his main body in the Magus World. It was quite natural for the accumulated energy to allow the A.I. Chip to upgrade itself. Leylin was already beginning to anticipate the day he could return this upgraded secondary system to the original. When they combined, they would surely possess terrifying abilities!

Originally, the powerful cheat that had helped him become a Magus, the A.I. Chip, was all-powerful amongst those below rank 7. However, beings of laws had thinking speeds that did not lose out to the supercomputers of his previous world.

A series of inexplicable changes occurred as they traversed through space and time, and the A.I. Chip had fused with Leylin’s soul. It could now develop with him. The chances of such an event were so small it would likely never occur again in the multiverse.

This miraculous property had allowed the A.I. Chip to upgrade itself multiple times, assisting Leylin. It could give him the upper hand at decisive moments during battles with other beings of laws!

‘It’s good for the A.I. Chip to sleep for a while anyway. I want my main body to feel the power of laws again…’ Leylin slowly withdrew his divine conscient. The golden lustre on his body had grown even more dazzling, causing him to seemingly turn into a
god made of gold. It made each and every action of his seem holy.
Lights converged, and began to blaze underneath the sea of origin force. Leylin had taken in Beelzebub’s worshippers from the mainland, and established a base in the outer seas. Just the faith from that could support a demigod.
But he wasn’t satisfied with just that. He’d crossed the seas to occupy a portion of Debanks Island, and he now had over 300,000 native worshippers! They were indebted to him for saving them from the brink of death, so their faith was very enthusiastic. Even with the flaws in their souls, the power of this faith was still massive, more than enough to support a new god!
All these things combined, Leylin’s accumulations could be said to have reached the limits of a demigod. His massacre divinity had condensed to a point unprecedented in history.
A regular divine being would just explode, unable to contain so much power. However, Leylin was different. His main body was near rank 7, and a Warlock at that. His previous experience allowed his divine will to reach all parts of his body, controlling everything.
At this moment, all the followers that worshipped Leylin felt a surge of desire in their hearts. In this state of intense longing, all of them set aside what they were doing. They faced the holy radiance in their hands, a statue in the church, or even just the skies as they began to pray.
“Our Lord, Kukulkan… You are the world serpent that devours all. With the sharp blades of your massacres, even the stars in the sky lose all their lustre before you…” An exceptionally strong wave of faith rushed forth, immediately giving rise to an even more intense change.
*Rumble!* The divinity on Leylin’s body was now completely visible. It burnt off all his clothing, leaving him in his birthday suit. Amidst this surge of faith, he was like a huge fire in a pool of gasoline!
*Rumble!* Golden flames immediately appeared on his body, glowing with a sacred lustre. With the amassed power of faith and the massacre divinity, Leylin’s own fleshly body fueled the resplendent glow of the flames.

*Drip! Drip!* Leylin closed his eyes, each and every action following that of the World Origin Force. Under the illumination of flames, his perfect body melted like wax into the flames. The powerful aura fell silent as everything condensed down, including the golden flames. The godfire shrank to the size of a soybean but the power that bean gave off was horrifying.

This was the foundation of a god, the godfire~ Once it was ignited, divine beings would become demigods, truly demarcating themselves from mortals. They had reached the realm of the gods! The godfire seemed to be a condensation of all laws, and it kept shrinking and growing. It was like the flames were breathing in faith, transforming it into a pure divine force.

Only with divine force were gods able to bestow divine spells upon their followers. It was what qualified them to be gods. This godfire was what allowed the power of faith to be transformed into divine force.

While Leylin had amassed a large amount of faith with the unceasing prayers, his pitiful priests had not one divine spell. They could only spread his faith through word of mouth, and if not for the ‘holy water’ that could cure the plague, he could probably die trying to spread his faith on Debanks Island. Doing the same in the continent would render far worse results.

The golden threads of divine force sketched an outline of a human figure, forming first the golden bones, then the flesh, veins, and the skin. This was followed by his eyes and other features, as a god’s body made of divine force took form. This was a process all demigods had to go through, their lives themselves experiencing a qualitative change as their souls were refined to a higher level.
The golden divine force vanished, to reveal the divine body’s true features. Muscles bulged to form elegant and beautiful lines, holding a trace of laws as if the body itself represented the origin force of some will. His facial features were distinct, and filled with a masculine beauty. Although Leylin’s appearance had not changed, he now had a tremendously imposing aura to him.
Is this the feeling of being a demigod?” Leylin muttered under his breath, sensing the ever more sturdy threads of faith as well as the terrifying origin force in his body coming from the godfire. He extended his right hand, and a trace of golden power appeared in the veins on his palm. This power was something unique to him. His will could transform it into all sorts of energy, be it qi, magic, or something else.

“The tremendous power of faith had been transformed by the godfire, becoming a large amount of divine force that filled up Leylin’s body. He felt like he could tear the very world apart.

[Beep! Upgrade complete!] the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded at this moment. With Leylin’s own soul advancing into the divine, the A.I. Chip had also reaped unknown rewards. Having resumed operation, it began the tedious work of updating Leylin’s hugely changed stats.

[Beep! Host has ignited his godfire, becoming a demigod. All stats +5.]

[Host’s arcanist rank has risen. Now rank 27.]

[Beep! Host’s stats have all reached 20 points. Intermediate Perfect Body has advanced with the bonus of becoming a demigod, and is now Divine Body.]

[Beep! Secondary system has been upgraded, computational power increased. Analysis of levels 8 and 9 of the Weave are at 100%./.}

1005 - Divine Spells
Host has obtained all spell models, and will no longer forget any spells. No materials required to cast spells.]
This was evidently the boost the godfire had given to his stats. However, even Leylin himself found the extent of the increase terrifying. Because of the restrictive laws of the World of Gods, it was very difficult to increase one’s stats. Once they reached a threshold, each point would grow more and more difficult to attain, and at the same time increased one’s might greatly.
This stat increase of 5 points each wasn’t small at all. It was a huge increase in his power, over tenfold!
[Beep! Host’s stats and data have changed greatly. Recalculating…]
Almost at the instant this prompt showed, the A.I. Chip showed his stats on a screen.
[The outer Weave has been analysed completely. Beginning analysis of the inner Weave.]
“With the outer Weave done, I need to begin on the divine spells and web of faith in the inner Weave. I’m already a demigod, so I have the right to use a part of the inner Weave anyway…” Leylin muttered to himself before looking at the description of Divine Body.
[Divine Body. A god’s true form is made entirely out of divine force, and can change in any way. Grants peak tolerance to all environments as well as the ability to travel to the outer planes. Grants the permanent ability to understand all languages, as well as Epic Damage Reduction and Epic Magic Resistance. Grants immunity to all spells below rank 9, as well as other spells like]
‘Divine Body? So that’s where the true strength of a demigod lies!’ Leylin sighed in awe as he read through the information relating to the feat. The defence the divine body provided him ensured that few beings in the mortal world could harm him. Regular and arcane spells imbued with divine force would now become his best weapons.

‘But I can’t see my divine force statistic yet. I’ll need to determine units for it, and then find the patterns and rules behind it myself… ‘Most importantly, I can finally bestow divine spells on my priests. But that’s only up to rank 5…’ As was instinctual to a god, Leylin immediately knew what divine spells he could bestow.

‘In general, they’re all blessings and cures. There’s also Devil Detection and Massacre Blessing.’ A large number of divine spells appeared before him, along with general descriptions. There were rank 1 spells like Blessing, Cure Light Wounds, and Command; then there were rank 2 spells like Bear’s Endurance and Bull’s Strength. It went up to the rank 5 Cure Light Wounds (Mass) spell and Summon Monster. There was huge variety.

The two specific spell models he named left Leylin in deep thought. The divine spells priests could cast were all virtually the same, but sometimes there were unique ones characteristic of the god that bestowed them.

These two were Leylin’s. He was proficient at identifying devils and his domain was the massacre domain. It gave his priests spells like Devil Detection and Massacre Blessing.

‘Having acquired divine force, demigods can establish churches. It gives them a chance to eventually compete in the mainland… After all, there isn’t much of a difference other than the lower level divine spells. In fact, the time of a church’s establishment is the best time to join, the first worshippers will be offered the greatest perks…
Most demigods only established their churches after igniting their godfires. Leylin, however, seemed to be ahead of the pack. If not for his astonishing capabilities and the devil worshippers and natives aiding him, he couldn’t have done it so easily.

Now, his church finally had a sturdy foundation, which gave him a shot at competing with other gods for faith.

There was a special title for such demigods in the World of Gods. They were called false gods. They could bestow holy spells and reply to their worshippers’ prayers, but weren’t true gods yet. They were often repressed by Helm, the God of Protection.

However, Leylin’s church was located on Debanks Island, so he wouldn’t have to fend that off. The churches on the mainland would wind up in a worse state, so much so that they would have to cease their operations and hide in the abyss. This caused originally good demigods to shift to evil as well...

The transformation ended. What seemed to be a long while to Leylin was only minutes for the four demigods.

“He’s out!” Once the tidal surge of forces died out, Akaban looked solemnly at the figure that emerged. Leylin had put on an illusory white robe now, and although his features weren’t different he possessed an imposing aura. This was the authentic aura of a demigod!

“You’ve gathered a lot of faith!” Akaban looked Leylin deep in the eye, his expression betraying his jealous thoughts. The two-headed lion, the golden scorpion, and the blazing horse had similar reactions.

“I am the devouring serpent, the ruler of massacres, the monarch of the devils… The Winged Serpent, Kukulkan!” Divine force streaked past Leylin’s eyes. He did not pay any attention to the four demigods, instead letting out a divine decree. A giant half-bodied phantom appeared above Hope Stronghold, declaring Leylin’s authority and might.
Having advanced to become a demigod, he could finally get rid of the constraints that held him back when he was weak. He could now connect with his worshippers in his true form.

“Almighty lord, you are the saviour of my soul, the salvation of the mortal world…” Many clerics found after a prayer now that multiple divine spells were inside their bodies. They were like normal magic spells, and could be cast if they were willed. Even the most foolish would realised that the Winged Serpent God had advanced and grown stronger. They immediately cheered. The large group of priests felt like they’d gotten power which could suppress everything.

Although holy spells were not as efficient as regular spells, clerics trained much faster than wizards, not to mention the number of people who would be training at the same time. The holy spells were extremely effective at shocking the natives. No matter what plans Akaban had made, they’d now failed completely. The numerous cheers and the tidal surge of faith formed an astonishing current beside Leylin.

“Not good! Now that he’s a demigod, this is his domain. Retreat!” As a regional spirit, Akaban had the same weakness as totem spirits. The power of faith he possessed waned if he left his lands, and another divine domain would suppress him.

Before Leylin had advanced, it hadn’t been at evidence. Now that he had, though, the suppression was one of equal levels, and it had a frightening effect. Akaban had originally dreamed of crushing Leylin with numbers, but after seeing Leylin’s true might, but this founding emperor of Sakartes shuddered in fear.

“First you taint my domain, then you want to leave? Isn’t it too late for that?” The massacre domain stretched out, covering the entire sky in crimson. It had already been strong, but Leylin’s advancement had maximised its potential.

“I control massacre itself! The ichor of gods will provide me
strength, their wails giving me energy. Your bones will form my sceptre, and your eyes will be turned into jewels…”
These words sounded like a song of legends, and the decree of a curse. Leylin instantly appeared before the two-headed lion.
*Roar!* The demigod knew that it was in danger, and let out a crazed roar from the depths of its soul. Immense divine force appeared from its jaws.
A formless, contorted forcefield appeared after the A.I. Chip’s notification, halving the two-headed lion’s might. What remained had no more effect on Leylin’s divine body, not even affecting his robes.

‘Divine forcefield? So in a battle between gods, the focus is now on divine force, divinity, and their domains?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed as he ignored the lion’s attack. He had a way to negate it, but now that he had the powers of the divine forcefield, he could do even less.

The lion roared with rage, and Akaban and the other two demigods saw an unforgettable scene.

“Let it out…” Ignoring the lion’s attack, Leylin jumped on its back and ripped through his skin and flesh. Ichor splattered across the sky.

*Shing!* Even as cries of anguish sounded, he pulled out the lion’s spine.

Such a thing would cause severe injuries even to a demigod with a divine body. After all, the divine body took an immense amount of divine force to build. Leylin had used the World Origin Force to make it the first time, but such a thing could only happen once.

“Your blood will give me strength.” Leylin’s chant reverberated in the massacre domain, as if the best of musical accompaniment.

“Your bones will form my sceptre, and your eyes will be turned
into jewels!” The chant reached a high note, and the severely injured lion shuddered. Four grotesque claws appeared from the void, stabbing the two-headed lion’s four eyes. These claws were a murky green, the skin as dry as the bark of an ancient tree. Strange curse runes were all over them, more intricate even than the runes carved by arcanists. The four claws pressed on the lion, causing it to cry out in extreme pain. Soon, each of its four eyeballs had been forcefully extracted from their sockets, and they flew to Leylin’s palm.

“And your soul… will become the pool of energy for my divine weapon!” Leylin looked at the lion and spat out the final line in this sacrificial rite.

*Boom!* Golden flames filled the sky, melting the lion’s spine to form a short staff. The eyeballs shrank continuously in midair, finally embedding themselves into the crown, becoming four differently coloured jewels.

Once Leylin spoke the last line, the world itself had seemingly stopped. Formless power restrained the lion, bringing its body in front of Leylin.

“Incinerate!” A wisp of black flame began to engulf the lion. One could see the shape of the totem spirit within, forcefully being extracted from its body and transferred into the staff. The flames licked at the corpse until they reached the godfire.

*Bang!* The golden flames dimmed after the lion’s death. It extinguished itself on its own, the power it had contained leaving Leylin cautious.

*Crackle!* White lightning streaked across the sky, as if sending off this fallen demigod. Only then did Akaban and his party regain their senses.

These demigods only wished to leave this dreamy state. What had they just seen? A demigod perished! He was on the same level as Leylin, but he was slaughtered like a lamb and turned into a divine
weapon.
It had happened too quickly. By the time they regained their senses and wanted to help the lion demigod, it was already dead. Leylin ignored the other demigods, and looked at the staff embedded with four jewels. ‘Hmm… Although it’s a weapon made from a demigod, it’s an incomplete divine weapon, at most at the same level. Still, it should be enough as the sacred item of the church in the mortal world…’
“What’s next… is you guys…” Leylin’s eyes slanted to one side as he glared, emanating an incomparably murderous aura.
*Chik!* The golden scorpion chirped, turning into a black gust of wind as it disappeared. The speed at which it fled made Akaban’s expression turn even darker. His trustworthy comrade had actually been scared away from just a glare.
“This isn’t the strength of a demigod. Who are you?” Akaban asked, teeth clenched. He knew that the void had locked in on him, so he instead chose to ask the wise question.
“Me? I am the Winged Serpent Kukulkan! The serpent which devours everything and controls all massacre. Of course, you can address me as Leylin!” Leylin grinned, and walked over to Akaban. The increasingly pressing aura left even the demigod’s horse neighing in unrest.
Although they were both demigods, Akaban could only feel fear in front of Leylin!
“Are you mocking me? How could an ordinary demigod have a strength such as yours?” Akaban howled, his eyes turning red.
“You just watched me advance…” Leylin replied honestly, but it made Akaban want to puke blood. If he knew that Leylin would be this powerful after advancing, he would have killed Leylin at all costs the moment he appeared on Debanks Island. However, it was too late for regrets now.
Leylin laughed inwardly as he saw Akaban in a state of
bewilderment. Although he had accumulated many trump cards, he was ultimately only a demigod. To really crush others on the same level was impossible. However, he didn’t just have one body. There was an even more powerful Warlock, nearing rank 7, in the Magus World!

Once Leylin advanced in the World of Gods, the injuries to Leylin’s main body had recovered. They did share the same soul, after all. He could now provide even more strength to the clone inside the World of Gods. Hence, fighting Leylin right now was like fighting a demigod and a near rank 7 Warlock at the same time!

Furthermore, a long period of research, along with the appearance of the World Origin Force and laws, had enlightened Leylin in many areas. It allowed him to transfer Magus spells over to this world. The claws from before, the ones that butchered the two-headed lion, were an amalgamation of his learning.

However, he still wasn’t very familiar with the laws of the world. He could only cast Magus spells every once in a while, and even he hadn’t expected such good results. It had only been theorized before.

The extremely powerful Magus spell had killed a demigod and scared away another. Leylin could not have asked for a better result. Of course, Leylin would not reveal these secrets to Akaban, only creating a fearsome image which would be imprinted in Akaban’s mind.

“If you are an evil god from the main continent, don’t ever dream of controlling my empire…” A holy war between gods was based on the power of faith, which was the most raw and resolute of battles. There wasn’t an inch for negotiation. Akaban’s gaze was resolute, as golden rays radiated from his body.

*Neigh!* As if understanding his determination, the blazing horse in front of the chariot neighed loudly, as a light golden domain was opened.
“Conquest domain, huh? And with such a combination…” The A.I. Chip’s light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, but he was not one bit unafraid.

‘That’s great, it’s about time to test units for divine force. A.I. Chip, begin recording!’


“Hah!” Akaban was riding the flaming chariot now, waving his golden lance about. The sun runes on his body were even more visible than before, as the shadow of the sun behind him grew even more radiant and searing.

“A tribal demigod is indeed just that. There’s no technique at all,” Leylin said in disgust, a wave of divine force welling in his hands.

“Divine force transformation— Absolute Break!” With divine force as the source of his power, this legendary arcane spell had obtained even more power than before. A dark light instantaneously hit the tip of Akaban’s lance.

A crack soon spread from the tip of the lance, looking like a spiderweb. A moment later, the lance turned into dust. The same came into effect on Akaban’s chariot, and his blazing horse’s armour. Akaban stared in disbelief as he separated from the flaming horse.

This Absolute Break spell had obtained an unimaginable victory for Leylin.

“However, the native demigods really are destitute. Apart from the weapon and the chariot, there weren’t any other artifacts…” Leylin waved his hand, and the golden light of divine force formed a palm.

Shattering Fist! The golden fist grew larger and larger, the runes on it as clear as water. This fist seemed to be made of flesh and blood, and carried a massive amount of power as it sent Akaban flying with a trail of blood.
“This is the strongest demigod on Debanks Island? What a disappointment…” Leylin waved his hand again, and this time an incomparably large Mage Sword appeared, shining with divine force. He chose not to control this one with his spirit, instead grabbing it by the hilt.

“Die!” The Mage Sword slashed downwards, and golden light filled the spot where Akaban was struck. The immense power even split a mountain behind the demigod into two.
Wooh! As the Mage Sword was about to strike him, an enormous figure appeared before Akaban’s eyes in a flash of red flames.

“No!” Akaban watched his beloved mount get torn apart before his eyes, pitiful moans spilling from its gaping jaw. The flaming horse had moved in front of him, laying down its life to take the killing blow.

“Was that Flame Teleportation? I wouldn’t have been able to stop you if you fled… What a pity.” Although he was uttering such words, Leylin still moved to the flaming horse’s side. The demigod seemed to sense its imminent death, and it turned towards Akaban. Its eyes were full of admiration and helplessness, regret that it had to leave its partner behind.

The horse then summoned up the remaining trickles of its divine force, and an enormous sphere of flames enveloped Akaban. He disappeared from sight.

“NO!” The only thing that remained was Akaban’s pained roar, his regret reverberating in the plains.

This noble steed had been his partner in all his fights. He loved and trusted it more than he did his imperial concubines and offspring. Even in death, he wanted his horse to accompany him. Were it not for such passion, how would a demigod allow him to ride it?

Now, everything would be destroyed.

“So you had such affection for your steed? What a shame…”
Leylin praised Akaban’s loyalty, but the Mage Sword in his hands was unhesitatingly put to use. Whether he was a hero or a villain was all a matter of perspective. He clearly knew that with the horse’s loyalty the chance that it could be soothed into submission was practically zero. What was his course of action, then? With the grudge between them only resolvable by death, he considered the complete destruction of his opponent the most reasonable course of action.

‘He’s already escaped the outskirts of Hope Stronghold? He really is quick!’ Having shut his eyes and sensed a faint trace of Akaban’s coordinates, Leylin gave up on his plan of pursuit. After all, Akaban was one of the tribal gods of the natives. With the power of faith in the Sakartes Empire, he was infinitely close to becoming a true god. Given Leylin’s current strength, chasing after him would be a masochistic idea.

This went the other way as well. Had Akaban not acted so stupidly in bringing his subordinates into Leylin’s divine domain, he wouldn’t have lost as badly as he had.

‘The battle of the divine has come to an end. Now, it’s time for the battle of the mortal world…’ Although he did not intend to continue his pursuit, Leylin did not plan to let Akaban off. Since the demigod was so reliant on the natives’ faith, it was time to dig his foundation out. Once he conquered the entire Sakartes Empire, Akaban would be a stray dog with no home. Anyone could slaughter him.

“Tiff!” After returning to the cathedral, Leylin immediately expressed his intentions.

“My lord! You are the stars in the heavens, and the ruler of all there is to devour. Slaughter is the sharp sword that you hold in your hand…” Tiff answered Leylin’s summons before long, appearing at the center of the cathedral. His eyes were filled with emotion. His body still had trace bloodstains on it. It was clear that the
mortals had acted in tandem with the gods that had united to attack Leylin. It was a shame, though. All their schemes had disintegrated the moment Leylin ascended and bestowed his divine spells.

“How’s the current situation?” Although he could mostly divine what had happened, he still needed Tiff’s personal report to obtain the concrete specifics.

Tiff knelt on the ground as he respectfully reported the situation, “The Sakartes Empire conducted a surprise raid. Luckily, my Lord, we had your blessings and managed to force them into retreat. We didn’t even sustain heavy losses; those who were injured healed extremely quickly with your divine spells, returning to their troops.”

The difference of morale between troops who had priests and those who didn’t was like night and day. The power of the healing arts was too formidable. Healing resources were rare in the prime material plane, so the divine spells of the priests were the only clutch that injured soldiers could depend on to survive the battle. The priests were also indispensable when boosting morale directly. The native troops hardly equalled Hope Stronghold’s legions. The only upper hand they had was the surprise attack, but once the clerics came into play they were utterly defeated.

After all, their shamans and other divine Professionals could only wield their divine spells within their god’s domain. In Leylin’s territory, the opposing troops didn’t have the home ground advantage. It was pointless to discuss victory and defeat.

“Mm,” Leylin nodded. “It looks like you didn’t face many enemies this time. They seemed to have pinned all their hopes on the divine battle, and these troops were only used to sow chaos and serve as a distraction…” His eyes flashed with understanding as he bestowed this divine edict.

“Those despicable natives. They will inevitably pay for their actions today in blood!” Having become a demigod, Leylin’s aura had
grown even more powerful. It even held a trace of the power of laws.
“As you command, my Lord! Hope Stronghold will start a war. This time, we must teach them a painful lesson!” Tiff respectfully bowed his head.
“No, not a lesson. This will be extermination! I wish to never see the word Sakartes marked on a map ever again!” Leylin’s cold reply caused Tiff’s heart to constrict in fear.
Tiff gritted his teeth, but he still replied with determination, “Your will shall be done.” After all, Leylin was the absolute authority in this place.
“Very well!” Leylin nodded, and with a wave a golden staff flew into Tiff’s hand. Its handle was decorated in the motif of a lion, and the four differently coloured jewels on its crown shone radiantly. The entire staff seemed to be encircled by a formidable power.
“Is this… a divine weapon?” Tiff asked as he looked on in bewilderment.
“Yes. It’s a weapon I refined using the enemy’s false god. The jewels on top contain the power of lightning and fire. It’s only a demigod-ranked weapon for now, but it should serve as the authority of a pope.”
“My Lord…” Tiff’s voice was choked with emotion.
“Go, I will watch you from the skies.” Leylin waved him away.
“Yes, my Lord. I will defeat the entire Sakartes Empire for you, and conquer all of Debanks Island!” Tiff solemnly swore to Leylin.

……

Leylin’s ascension hadn’t just affected him. Hope Stronghold itself had grown enormously stronger. With the support of the priests’ divine spells, the troops could now show a military power that was
several times greater than before. As for seizing the opportunity to conquer the Sakartes Empire in battle, it was already a foregone conclusion.
With the boost from Leylin’s divine aura and divine weapons, Hope Stronghold’s main army effortlessly invaded the heart of the Sakartes Empire with irresistible force. The decadent native troops were unable to withstand a single blow.
Well, this was all really just the propaganda spread by the church. Although the outcome did not differ much from what was in the official reports, the course of events was something entirely different.
Away from their homeground, Leylin’s armies were facing enemies that had the support of a demigod and similar numbers of clerics and other divine Professionals. Their opponents possessed several hundreds of years more of accumulated resources. However, spring had arrived. Sadly, the plague that had been curbed by the bitter cold broke out vehemently once more.
In Leylin’s previous life, spring had always been the season where epidemics spread widely. The situation here was comparable, so it was hardly surprising. The plague was even more ferocious than before as it swept across the entirety of Debanks Island, creating more and more ghost towns. With its ability to infect even those who were once cured, even the divine Professionals were left up to their ears in work.
Leylin had previously killed two demigods, and it was the same as cutting the number of available clerics in half. With the balance at such a crucial point, even a single feather’s weight was of paramount importance. What then about losing half of your clerics? Sakartes was now met with another wave of death. There were so few clerics available that even nobles were dying out, forget the commoners. The troops from Hope Stronghold who had forced their way into Sakartes numbly took over ghost town after ghost
town. A high number of enemy troops had surrendered to them as well. There was nothing else to be done. If they continued to stay, all that waited them was death. Defecting would give them the holy water that could save their lives. At the same time, those natives who had surrendered used themselves as an example to show that none of them had been turned into sacrifices, or demoted to slaves after their surrender. Naturally, this situation was not without pressure. Furthermore, for the sake of preserving their lives, those native commoners had fallen over each other in their eagerness to riot and erupt in chaos before the troops from Hope Stronghold arrived. They had even sent people to request the Stronghold to rescue them. Generally speaking, the current situation was going great. It would only be a matter of time before they conquered Debanks Island. In these circumstances, Leylin chose not to personally get involved. At this point, his personal perspective and status had already changed. He only needed to respond to the daily prayers requesting divine spells, and Tiff and Isabel would take care of everything else.

Leylin had now entered seclusion. After becoming a demigod, there were far too many differences between him and an ordinary mortal. Without much experience being one, he needed to slowly feel out his new role. With his special senses as a god, his followers were presented before him in successive screens. They were even clearer than when he’d been a mere divine being. His connection with his priests was incomparably more convenient, and a lot quicker than before. Within the limits of the Weave, he could gather faith and bestow divine skills with ease.

“Mystra probably only has complete control of the outer Weave. She can only interfere slightly with the deeper levels…” Leylin
understood the innate character of the Goddess of the Weave in that moment. She was essentially a jailor in charge of looking after the many Magi at the core. The numerous gods would never entrust their own worshippers to Mystra’s control, so there were considerable limits to her influence.
The inner Weave is a convenient way for a god to channel faith towards them. It didn’t reject me using it, so it seems to be open… The basic requirement is that one is a demigod?’ Leylin looked lost in thought.

‘The innermost core of the Weave, as well as Karsus’ Avatar, the rank 12 spell…’ The thought of how difficult it was to release the consciences of the numerous Magi, even Leylin frowned. He had to get rid of the entire Weave to do so, which included the outer Weave that numerous wizards counted on and the inner Weave that the gods used as a channel for faith.

Would the gods willingly abandon such a convenient channel as the Weave? Regardless of their intellectual abilities, and their ability to count the number of worshippers in their divine kingdoms in an instant, the Weave was more than just an upgrade to their calculative abilities. It greatly reduced the cost of bestowing divine spells, and increased the convenience. Having become used to such a great advantage, could they still accept and tolerate more traditional methods?

‘Once I shatter the Weave, I’ll be going up against the entire World of Gods…’ Leylin looked grim, ‘It won’t just be true gods. All demigods, and even nature spirits or divine beings who can use the Weave will probably become my enemies as well…’

Only Leylin who was from a foreign world would have the guts to take on an entire world. However, even he had to consider his
options carefully. While Distorted Shadow still had incomplete consciences in the outer world, he had not done much in tens of thousands of years. That was only to be expected.

‘I’m afraid I’ll have to push my agreement with Distorted Shadow back…’ Leylin stroked his chin, having made up his mind.

Now that he was a demigod, the injuries to his main body should have completely healed. Having taken over Debanks Island, the faith in him had greatly increased. It could even support his ascent to godhood. Time was definitely on his side.

If this dragged on, and both his bodies reached a higher realm, the terror that would be brought forth when they fused would be enough for him to take the plunge and challenge the world!

‘The spread of faith is one thing in ascending to godhood. Another is to guide my worshippers, forming my unique role as a god.’ Leylin was now aware of the relationship between faith, godfire, divine force, and a god’s roles.

Faith was the source, being transformed by the godfire into divine force. This was the root of all gods, and the power of faith wasn’t all the same. There were slight differences, and for example the soul energy radiated by great anger was completely different from that in extreme fear. The faith in a demigod was heterogeneous, so it took a lot of effort to transform it into divine force.

A god’s roles acted as a guide, planning for the soul energy of their worshippers in advance. If godfire was an engine that purified faith to provide a more stable source of power, a god’s roles were the key to separate the diesel from gasoline.

While in general the soul energy that could be absorbed after a god classified themselves would decrease, it would grow in purity. It reduced the burden on the divine, to the point that the amount of divine force left after the transformation was actually greater than before.

After all, which was easier— burning either diesel or gasoline, or
both? Most probably would know the answer to that.

‘A god’s rule doesn’t simply separate soul energy. It involves delving deeper into that domain, and acquiring even more terrifying might…’ Leylin could now sense the faith from the pious worshippers and their tremendous soul energy. His godfire burned more vigorously than before, a few runes representing laws beginning to appear.

When it came down to it, a god’s role was an embodiment of their laws. These runes indicated that he would soon form his own! Even the incomplete golden characters allowed Leylin to gain a better understanding of the World of Gods.

‘The essence of the runes seem to tend to massacres and conquest, as well as sickness and healing. Will my first role as a deity be amongst these?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with the rays of the A.I. Chip, ‘A.I. Chip, is it possible to record this script?’

Although these law runes were incomplete, they were very unique. They weren’t three dimensional, instead perhaps near four-dimensional. The A.I. Chip of the past would have been powerless at this, but after the upgrade it’s limits weren’t defined yet. Leylin wanted to test what it could do.

[Beep! Mission established. Beginning scan…] the A.I. Chip loyally intoned, large amounts of blue data streaming past Leylin.

[Beep! Target scanned. Discovered high energy force field, attempting to break through. Successful, beginning to analyse the characters of laws. Recording… Beep! Target has the properties of a 4D image, discovered interference from spacetime radiation. Data partially lost…]

[Beep! Characters have been scanned. Records only 67.66% complete.]

The large paragraph caused Leylin to grin in glee. He looked at the database of the A.I. Chip, seeing a subdirectory under laws called ‘godly role runes.’ Within it were the characters that had just been
Although they seemed less complete than those in the godfire, they still had the distinct charm of the original. The A.I. Chip of the past would definitely have been unable to make this scan. That it could force a partial copy gave Leylin a pleasant surprise. ‘If all these characters are analysed completely, the chances of even natives igniting their godfires to obtain godly roles should increase by 50%…’ Leylin nodded in satisfaction, and then focused on the analysis of the characters. ‘Massacre and conquest, sickness and healing?’ The results of the A.I. Chip’s preliminary scans were according to Leylin’s expectations. This was indeed the image he gave the natives of Debanks Island. The selection of a god’s role could easily give rise to battles between gods. Based on the A.I. Chip’s conclusions, Leylin sank into deep thought. ‘The characters of laws show that most of my faith comes from massacre and sickness. They’re the most likely way for me to become a god. There’s less in terms of conquest; the natives don’t really have a concept of races and culture, and there are many battles even between their tribes. Faith in healing is the least, huh.’ Pure faith would not lie, and Leylin could only laugh wryly. From the looks of it, even if his church bestowed holy water and helped with the sickness, the natives still treated him as a personification of massacres, sickness, and death. ‘Well, faith arising from reverence is always more stable than that from love and respect…’ The grin on Leylin’s face widened, ‘Looks like I’m not fated to be in the good faction…’ Leylin had already decided to walk the path of massacres. With the power he held, he definitely wouldn’t side with the good gods anyway. “From the power of faith alone, massacre and sickness seem more
stable…” Leylin had made his choice. He valued a domain in massacres more than one in sickness. Besides, few gods had grasped it, some of them being Cyric and Malar. Although Cyric was a greater god, he was half-crazy, paying no mind to the administration of his mortal church. It had caused the priests of murder great distress. Things were different with sicknesses and plague. Leylin would rather fight against lunatics and beasts than the Goddess of Plagues who was clear-headed. He did not wish for there to be occasional plagues in his territories. “And… Cyric?” Leylin lowered his face, ridiculing him with soundless laughter…

……

From the viewpoint of the gods, everything on Debanks Island was right before their eyes. “Saintess, our vanguard has already taken over the two citadels in Ado City and Dole City. As long as we get Dul City as well, the capital of the empire shall be right before our eyes!” The troops of Hope Stronghold were proceeding smoothly along the massive lands. The girl Leylin had conferred a title to, Saintess Barbara, had completed her routine prayers. She was now listening to the routine reports of a native army official. Golden light flashed on her fair forehead, causing her to be bathed in a holy lustre. Aya and her little brother stood respectfully at her side, having become her maid and servant. Out of gratitude for their saviour, as well as the need for survival, the two of them now worked for her. The Saintess seemed to admire the great relationship of the pair, and had brought them with her. “The capital?” Aya’s eyes lit up as if she had recalled something, but that quickly dimmed.
Barbara seemed to think of something, and she asked, “Aya! You came from near the capital, right?”
“Mm! I was once a clanswoman of Ado City’s Juna Tribe. I escaped with the rest of my tribe once plague struck…” Aya spoke slowly, and her brother bowed his head as if he had recalled something terrible. Truth be told, most of the natives that had fled with them had died on the way. Sickness and famine were the greatest natural enemies of the commoners. Less than one in ten had gotten across the mountains and waters, making it to Hope Stronghold.
Recalling the hardship along the way, and how they’d made it safely, Aya felt like she was in a dream. ‘This is all due to Master Kukulkan!’ At this thought, she couldn’t help but grab the sacred crest in her hands, beginning to pray silently. ‘Mm, the imperial capital of the Sakartes Empire. If I can take that down and offer it to the master…’ An idea arose in Barbara’s mind, filling her thoughts. She wasn’t being greedy, everything was just happening too smoothly. Although she’d brought less than ten thousand troops from Hope Stronghold, many natives suffering from sickness had requested to enter. Even those from the imperial army changed sides. On top of that, having obtained the news about the divine battle through some secret channels, even the nobles of the Sakartes Empire began to waver. The consequence of this was that Barbara’s army expanded without effort, even getting close to the capital with easy victories. Along the way, many native refugees had taken on arduous jobs, to obtain the ‘holy water’ and the blessings of the Winged Serpent God. The secondary army also suppressed rebellions to express their loyalty. Knowing that Hope Stronghold lacked people, Barbara accepted the offers of all the refugees and armies. In a short period of time, their army had expanded fivefold to reach 50,000 strong. Tiff had originally been worried of spies sneaking in, but it seemed
like the natives had no such intentions. Instead, it was the huge numbers that made command and logistics a headache. There had been a few times when things were extremely chaotic. Unable to contend with such an oversized army, the Sakartes Empire seemed to be done for. The continuous successes had naturally raised Barbara’s ambitions.

‘As long as I take Dole City down, the imperial capital will lose all its protection…’ Barbara planned in her mind. But then she looked at the city in the distance and was stunned. Thick black smoke rose into the sky, and screams could be heard in the distance. A knight darted over, looking like he had some urgent information. “Report!”

“Let him come!” Barbara waved her arms, and the guards that had held him back dispersed.

“Saintess, a few leaders of Dole City have joined hands in rebellion. They have control of the entire city now, and agree to worship the Winged Serpent God… But only if we give them holy water as soon as possible. They also hope that we can take the city’s people in now that there’s chaos…”

“Proceed!” Barbara sent down the order after a nod. These scenarios had gotten her very excited at the start, but by now she was numb. There was even a feeling of disappointment, that these achievements weren’t her own. Still, there were important things to do at the moment.

The takeover of the city went smoothly. Under the threat of death, there were very rare cases of false surrender. With previous experience, Barbara sent a few people to help fight the fire before meeting the leaders. After she promised holy water, the entirety of Dole City was somewhat within her grasp.

The ‘somewhat’ arose from the continued existence of altars and priests. It was the last resistance Dole City had to offer. Battles involving faith were far more terrifying than the rest, so Barbara
didn’t relent and instead headed to the altar.
“Saintess, the altar here is for two false gods. One is the giant flaming horse, Woods, and the other the founding emperor Akaban. Although the horse’s priests have lost all power, the clergy of Akaban still has the support of divine force. They’ve managed to get a group of soldiers to guard them…”
One of the leaders who were now on their side led the way, smiling slyly. After changing sides, their totem spirits had immediately become false gods. Were Leylin here, he would definitely lament the practical nature of humans.
“I understand. Leave the rest to the church!” Barbara watched the altar that was now a defensive structure, and her beautiful brows furrowed slightly. Although she was disgusted by the betrayal of these leaders, she had no choice but to take them in as examples for the rest.
Having lost two demigods, the priests could no longer meet the demand for healing. At this rate, death was certain. Barbara understood the betrayal for the sake of survival. Still, the remaining resistance made things a little troublesome.
“Bring the warriors of the church.” Having walked around the defensive structure, Barbara finally acknowledged that the enemy’s elite forces were truly powerful. Thus, she sent her own elites as well.
The natives had exemplary Professionals as well. There were hunters and amazon warriors that caused Isabel some trouble. Many of those guarding the altar were of the same type.
However, the Giant Serpent Church was a military church as well, and he now had a huge number of natives under him. A batch of half-naked native warriors with devil tattoos arrived in front of Barbara, each of them highly capable.
“Saintess! The warriors of our Lord shall heed your commands!”
“Good! Use your fury to expel the last remaining filth of these false
gods!” Barbara commanded, standing in front. Almost the instant the mobilisation order arrived, these natives changed greatly. They all began to grow, their muscles bulging bit by bit as they quickly became miniature giants. The lustre of divine spells lit up their bodies, carrying the unique radiance of the Winged Serpent God. Under the illumination of this radiance, the devil tattoos on their bodies grew more vivid, and their eyes shone with a demonic glare. These warriors had been bestowed abilities reserved for devils! “For our Lord!” The native warriors charged forward without hesitation, their attacks as powerful as a tsunami around the altar. “The number of our Lord’s warriors has increased greatly…” Barbara now looked reassured, and she cast divine spells alongside the other priests to boost them.

Priests and military strength were extremely important to a church. Tyr, for instance, offered a distinct path for paladins. Combining his knowledge of Debanks Island with his own strength and the A.I. Chip’s calculations, Leylin had created a whole new path of strength for his own church. They were the devil hunters! Like the name implied, devil hunters combined a sensitivity to devils with the tracking ability of the hunters. By activating their tattoos, they could even obtain abilities similar to the bloodline powers of devils! This profession was a fusion of warriors and sorcerers. It was very powerful, but it also had a few flaws. Those who trained in it had to have an extremely powerful will. The pain during the branding of a devil tattoo was horrifying. Thankfully, Leylin now had many subordinates. He had slowly selected beings from the 300,000 people, and it wasn’t difficult to raise a few thousand devil hunters.

Leylin had especially created something special for this strength system. If a hunter could capture a real devil and seal it in their
own body, they would obtain a lot of the devil’s strength. It could even increase their rank! All true devil hunters had devils sealed within them.

Although Leylin did not have a blood feud with the devils yet, they were clearly mortal enemies. He’d created these hunters to strike all devils except Beelzebub’s own followers. This would begin to weaken the strength of the Nine Hells of Baator.

Nobody would complain about such acts. Devoting effort into attacking devils was the ‘right’ course of action on the continent.

Barbara naturally knew nothing of Leylin’s intentions. She was just sighing in shock at the astounding abilities of the devil hunters.

Those who had retreated into the church and guarded the altar were obviously fanatic followers of the false gods. There was no need to differentiate between them, it was enough to kill the whole lot.

Once the altar was purged, Barbara grimly stepped inside the hall. The green flooring was now dyed blood red, but she did not find anything wrong with it. To the natives, stealing everything from their opponents was something natural. This included their lives.

At the heart of the altar was an obsidian statue of a warrior riding a chariot. However, the horse leading the chariot had shattered a long time ago.

*Buzz! Buzz!* As if sensing the disrespect, a terrifying pressure arose from Akaban’s statue.

“Hmph! False god!” Barbara merely glanced at the emperor disdainfully, and gripped the holy crest in her hands.

“Our Lord, the Winged Serpent. Master Kukulkan, please give me strength!” Holy light that was characteristic of Leylin emanated from the holy crest. White light flashed, and the immense pressure disappeared to reveal cracks on the statue.

“Destroy the statue, and purify everything that has to do with it!” Barbara ordered solemnly.

Soon enough, statues, holy crests, books, and even drawings hung
on the wall were torn down, turning into ashes from the flames.
Done with the basic cleanup of the church, they erected a statue of the Winged Serpent God. With Saintess Barbara’s lead, numerous warriors, soldiers, and nobles knelt to pray.

“Praise to our Lord, the Winged Serpent God Kukulkan. You are the serpent of the world that devours everything and grasps the power of massacres. Your body extends across the universe, stretching into past, present and future. Your beautiful eyes are like the clearest of lakes, the water from which can cure everything…”

The statue of the Winged Serpent God began to glow with the prayers, setting the worshippers’ minds at ease.

“Our master has responded, the statue is complete!” Barbara exclaimed in delight, and then began to pray loudly. The power of faith converged to form a tide.

Within this tide of faith, the two eyes of the statue seemed to come to life as they brightened with intelligence. Dazzling divine force spread in all directions across the church, covering the city and even the skies outside. It was as if it was cleansing something, repelling and rejecting a golden glow tinged with dark red.

“This is a battle between faith!”

From the perspective of a god, Leylin could see all this happening even more clearly. A large region, with Dole City at its heart, had now completely escaped Akaban’s control. His own power now filled the area.
Akaban’s regions were now dwindling. From hereon out, the area around Dole City would no longer be his home ground, instead becoming Leylin’s territory. Akaban’s strength would drop if he came over, and Leylin would easily slaughter him. Maps showed that the faith in Akaban had been reduced to a minimum. All that was left was a tiny region surrounding the imperial capital, the remaining lands surrounded and nibbled away by Leylin. The day they broke into the capital would be the day of Akaban’s death.

This was the tragedy of earth-bound spirits and gods. They could not abandon their territories and followers, for only death awaited them otherwise. And for the same reason, Leylin wasn’t in the least worried that Akaban would flee.

‘Those true gods lead much better lives in comparison. They aren’t limited to specific domains or regions for their faith, and even if they fall they can recover as long as faith in them still survives in the prime material plane, if their worshippers call the god’s name from the bottom of their hearts… They’re basically as tough as Magi of laws.’

As Leylin was pondering, his eyes suddenly shifted.

“Hm? That guy still dares to come here?” His body disappeared, reappearing at a church near the bounds of his territory.

*Chik! Chik! A large golden scorpion was waiting in midair. Seeing him, it took the initiative to move out of the way, stowing its stinger and claws as if acknowledging allegiance to Leylin. Some information was transmitted into Leylin’s mind.

‘Looks like it isn’t here to fight. Beasts have an instinct to follow the strong, huh.’ The demigod golden scorpion was obviously here to pledge its allegiance. Seeing the death of the double-headed lion, as well as Akaban’s constant weakening, this was an obvious course of action.

“Then… prove your worth to me!” Leylin transmitted with a divine
glint in his eyes. He already had plans to take the scorpion in. After all, it was a native god and had so many uses. Since he planned to expand his power and establish a pantheon, he needed to have gods in that category.

Akaban wouldn’t work. He represented all of the natives here, and naturally had the right to succeed and rule over the region. Leylin had to destroy him. However, things were different with the golden scorpion, and he could use it as an example.

“You should be the totem of the Raring Winds, right? That large tribe of natives?” Leylin stared straight at it, “Use all your strength and join my attack on the capital of the Sakartes Empire. That will prove your loyalty. I also hope to see you around in the divine battle.”

This condition evidently did not surprise the scorpion. Without any hesitation, it agreed.

“Alliances are so fragile in the face of disaster…” Leylin lamented as he watched the scorpion leave.

The rapid weakening of the powerful native gods had given him a great warning. When he built his pantheon in the future, he had to consider things more comprehensively. There was a need for firm contrast, and also a requirement for equal opportunity and justice at the minimum. Without these things, even if the gods grew powerful they wouldn’t escape the fate of betrayal and abandonment.

“The last campaign will begin soon,” Leylin looked into the distance in the direction of the Sakartes Empire and made his own prophecy.

……

With no more defences blocking her, Barbara was planning to take over the rest of Dole City in one spurt. However, that was
interrupted by an order from the church.
“I should await orders? The pope and Lady Isabel are coming as well?” Barbara gasped, and then glanced at the emissary, “I will definitely abide the will of the pope!”
No matter how courageous she was, Barbara would definitely not go against Tiff and the others. When it came to status, she was still a native, while Tiff and the rest had been long-time worshippers. Although there was talk of equality and freedom, the natural gap between them was hard to overcome.
In addition, she was a mere worshipper herself. She naturally had to abide by the orders of the church. Barbara knew full well how much influence Pope Tiff had, and she was merely a worshipper who was bathed in their god’s favour and come to be called a saintess. As long as she was not a Chosen of their god, she had no power to go against Tiff.
‘What should I do to gain more of the Lord’s favour?’ Barbara placed her palm under her chin and sank into deep thought…
Leylin didn’t bother with such trifling thoughts of his followers. As long as they wanted a better life on Debanks Island, all beings would side with him for a variety of reasons.
This battle was one that would wipe out an entire nation. A new order would be built on the ruins of Sakartes, and something like that would net a person both fame and fortune. It wasn’t something to give someone like a saintess.
In reality, even Tiff did not have the qualifications to do so. There was only one person that could govern the area to combine both reason and law. And that was someone who had Leylin’s blood flowing in them! For this very reason, once Tiff and Isabel brought the elite army of fifty thousand troops over from Hope Stronghold, Leylin himself arrived at the barracks quietly.
That their god personally came down for them immediately raised the morale of the soldiers to a terrifying degree. In comparison,
Dole City was in a dismal situation. Huge numbers of nobles chose to give up on the rule of Akaban and his children, pledging their allegiance to Leylin in secret. Once the Raring Winds that believed in the scorpion demigod hastened over with their elite warriors and over ten thousand men, they combined forces with Hope Stronghold. With such an army surrounding the imperial capital, even those who had resolutely believed in their emperor now faltered. The tall city walls could not hinder the spread of the plague, and they could obviously do nothing against the crumbling will of the people. In a mere three days, the capital of the Sakartes Empire was broken into from the inside. Flames surged into the sky from the imperial palace, causing the army that had planned to fight to halt in their tracks. They could only watch as the palace that represented the glamour and splendour of the royal bloodline vanished. On that same day, Leylin intercepted Akaban who was planning to escape. He killed Akaban with the scorpion’s help, officially ending the more than five-century rule of the Sakartes Empire. The horrifying news that their god was destroyed shocked the leaders and nobles. Having lost someone to pledge their loyalty to, few chose to fight Hope Stronghold, especially since it had holy water that could cure the plague. Most quickly chose to side with the Stronghold. The new capital was now called Faulen, and a whole new empire was formed after the flames of war washed away all filth. Because it was a country formed from faith, Leylin was unwilling to pass on the responsibility to others. He became the very first emperor, and from then the rulership would be succeeded by those with his blood for all eternity. The new empire was quickly acknowledged by the surrounding tribes. After everything that belonged to the Sakartes Empire was
taken over, and his organisation had expanded to the entirety of Debanks Island, they began the intense effort of eradicating the plague and clearing land. With the ‘holy water’ and the god’s baptism, the grim reaper that devastated Debanks Island was finally controlled. To the commoners, the Giant Serpent Church was like the sun in the sky. Since the war had ended quickly, and they’d taken in a large number of tribes, the initial assessment of the population in the region came up to an astonishing 920,000. The plague had taken away about half of the initial 2 million natives, but it also left behind a huge amount of wealth. After all, the mean wealth was lower when a huge population shared limited resources. This was also the cause for life and death battles between tribes. Now, however, the overgrown lands far exceeded the needs of the population, and the intense societal conflicts were eased. After organising the clearing and plowing of land, as well as announcing the liberation of some slaves to take charge of their own land, the empire quickly gained a positive reputation. Leylin took in all the faith of the followers, turning it into a firm power that would support his ascension to godhood.
Calendar of the Gods, Year 37671. With 5000 pirates, Leylin Faulen had taken down Debanks Island which had a population of more than two million people, destroying the Sakartes Empire to create his own country. He himself had become a demigod, becoming one of the higher-ups in the World of Gods.

Many were astonished. This youth was only 26 years of age, and yet he’d achieved something so astounding; they could only look up to him now.

Numerous elite devil hunters and native knights surrounded a group of luxurious horse chariots in the new Faulen City. The knights’ crests and the caravan’s flag were symbols of a giant serpent, indicating the might of royalty.

“The plague’s been taken care of, and we’re beginning to plow the land for spring. We’re doing great!” Leylin pulled apart the curtains of the chariot, gazing at the green fields with a hint of satisfaction on his face.

Saintess Barbara knelt at his side along with beautiful maids, their eyes full of an unconcealable fervour. The empire would be governed by the blood of its god. This was the decree of Leylin’s Giant Serpent Church.

To get a more stable foundation, this god himself had brought a few natives around. Almost right after the new country was established, the twenty purest and most beautiful refined girls of
Debanks Island had been sent to the palace. It didn’t seem like such things would stop any time. Leylin never rejected such matters. Besides, this suited his standards better.

He was currently travelling to proclaim his strength to the entire empire. The view of his fleshly body would also draw in more worshippers. Leylin had developed a better understanding of the island’s situation through his travels, and at the same time imprinted the might of the empire deeply into the hearts of the natives.

“This is the most fertile land in the empire, and it’s close to the imperial capital. It’s understandable for them to have such results…” Barbara said, her eyes glinting.

“It’s great that they have knowledge in this area, especially when it comes to these matters…” Leylin understood the schemes of his worshippers like the back of his hand. Hearing what Barbara said, he had no idea whether to laugh or cry. However, such things were also a part of the path of faith, and Leylin had to consider his options carefully.

“Based on the way things are going, we should be able to get past this year’s famine well…” After patrolling the entire country, Leylin was in a better mood. While the plague had greatly affected societal order, activity was slowly resuming normal levels. Thanks to the accumulations of the Sakartes Empire, this new country was headed in a better direction.

‘A lot of things determine the strength of an empire. There’s the population, agriculture, economy, military, and faith…’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘I have 50,000 soldiers stationed in the capital. With Debanks Island itself only having 900,000 residents, it’s definitely the greatest military. On the other hand, my finances are a problem… The agriculture and economy were affected by the plague, and it will take some time to return to normal. Most importantly, there’s faith…’
Leylin had dealt fatal blows to Debanks Island’s totem spirits and nature spirits. All those unwilling to serve were wiped out along with their tribes. With the golden scorpion at their head, the rest became subordinate to Leylin. That took up a portion of the faith in the empire.

Leylin was more than happy for this to happen. After all, his church was still the majority with more than 80% of the faith. The nature spirits could only divide the remaining fifth amongst themselves.

On top of that, he was a demigod now. His priests had divine spells, something that the shamans of the native gods could not compare to. He had a huge leg up over the competition, and was obviously unafraid of competing with them. These gods would likely be forced to hang around near him with no other choice.

‘Then there’s governance. I’ve already rewarded the pirates greatly, with land, slaves, and noble status. However, they are still fewer in number than the original native chiefs and nobles…’ Leylin shook his head.

From his position as a ruler, the population of the natives was terrifying. On the other hand, there were less than five thousand who’d followed an outsider like him. The difference was like that between a drop of water and a lake.

Leylin had no doubt that if he did nothing, basic governance would fall to the natives in less than thirty years. Outsiders could only join in, be it passively or actively. To change this he had to bring some new people in, and kill some others. Only by bringing people from Faulen Island and killing natives could he ensure the stability of his power.

Unfortunately, Leylin wasn’t just a ruler. His bigger priority was his godhood, and a massacre that dropped the number of natives would only reduce his power of faith. It would not benefit him. While he was conquering them, these natives were his enemies and
it was essential to reduce their numbers. Now, however, they were part of his ascent to godhood. Killing them lost all meaning. A god didn’t care if the one governing the empire was a native or an outsider. All that mattered was that he received the same amount of faith. With the support of the church, his descendants wouldn’t fall to the level of mere symbols or puppets. That would be enough.

“There is no eternal empire, but the gods have long lives,” Leylin muttered. Compared to the long life of a god, even the most glorious of empires in history seemed short-lived.

[Beep! Response to today’s prayers completed. Handled a total of 348,761 cases, bestowed 13,286 spells.] The A.I. Chip’s prompt caused Leylin’s lips to curve upwards in a smile.

Gods had to take care of their worshippers’ prayers, and bestow divine spells every day. While his now divine soul could process fast enough to take care of this himself, it wouldn’t be a walk in the park. The effort would drain him.

With over 900,00 followers, a following even more enormous than that of some true gods, the amount of work he had to do was vast and complicated. However, the A.I. Chip took over the tedious work, which made things more convenient for Leylin.

Even for a true god, such difficult work took more than just their bodies and avatars. Some even designated subordinate deities to the task. The A.I. Chip performed these tasks better than most gods, and on top of that Leylin could trust it absolutely without fear of betrayal.

“Your Highness!” Heading all the way back to their emperor, the numerous youthful and beautiful maids greeted Leylin immediately. Most of them exposed their bare arms and lower abdomens, showing their smooth skin with a heated gaze.

Leave alone the girls the tribes had offered, even the maids in Leylin’s palace were rather good. Some could even be the heads of
noble families. Leylin didn’t mind a cordial conversation with them on the average day, but now he had something more important to do.

The centre of the capital’s power had been Akaban’s church. It had been remodelled into a headquarters for the Giant Church after the war, dedicated to Leylin’s worship. Leylin was standing on the location of the old altar, observing a gigantic piece of obsidian on the pedestal.

This rock had a metallic luster to it, and looked like a black brick. However, Leylin’s astute senses found something different with it. If not for Akaban’s statue being destroyed, it would never have shown itself.

‘I’ve finally found it… Is this Akaban’s trove?’ Leylin placed his hand on the surface of the black brick, immediately linking his divine will to a huge space. Divine force surged in the air, clearly beginning to dissipate already. Numerous translucent souls looking to be sleeping on the surface, with some still withering away. They filled an entire layer of the place.

‘The souls of Akaban’s followers… I never thought I’d be so lucky as to find a semi-plane containing them. While it isn’t all that large, it’s still much better than most demigod weapons…’ Guiding the souls of followers was the task of divine souls. Whether pious worshippers turned into petitioners, valiant spirits, or holy souls, they were all of great help to their gods. Naturally, they wouldn’t easily be abandoned.

Demigods lacked their own divine kingdoms, so many built their own demigod weapons or other items to be containers that could store the souls of their followers. Akaban was obviously very lucky to have found a semi-plane.

‘There are at least a million souls…’ Having estimated the number of souls within the brick, Leylin was shocked once again by Akaban’s accumulations.
A semi-plane was no divine kingdom. No matter how hard one tried to protect them, the worshippers within would still die. Akaban would only guide the most devout of followers into the plane, which eliminated a large number of natives with more general faith. Akaban’s fall had killed most of the souls, and those left over were actually the best of the best. They were the essence of the millions of native souls over the empire’s centuries of existence!

‘This is what true gods count on. I am far too weak in comparison…’ Leylin sighed and observed the semi-plane. These souls evidently only worshipped Akaban, and they were useless to Leylin unless he destroyed them to take their soul origins. However, that was too wasteful. Instead, his greatest harvest was the semi-plane itself!
Demigods had confirmed their path to ascension. All that they had left to do was make their preparations. They required faith and a divine role, but other things like a divine kingdom were also indispensable. If, by coincidence, one already had a semi-plane, it would take much less effort to build their divine kingdom.

To a true god, their divine kingdom was where their true body lay. No matter how much care was put into creating it, it would not be enough. Leylin already had his own plans for his divine kingdom, but now that he had a semi-plane he could use it to contain the souls of his worshippers.

‘I can make use of it once I’ve modified it slightly. Hm, it’s better to seal all of Akaban’s worshippers’ souls here.’ Leylin had soon determined the uses of the semi-plane. With the standard divine power to alter reality, the semi-plane began to whistle.

Golden divine force rippled the air, pushing out Akaban’s brand and alarming a few powerful souls.

“Who encroaches on the master’s country?” Golden flames blazed, and tens of native souls ascended into the skies, glaring at Leylin, “False god! This is not a place for you!”

“Ooh, valiant spirits?” Leylin knew that the souls of these natives should have been heroes of the Sakartes Empire’s past. There could even be a few past emperors amongst them.

“Akaban has fallen. It’s about time that you, who have been
abandoned by the changing eras, enter the trashcan of history…” In Leylin’s eyes, these valiant spirits were zealous worshippers of Akaban. They were useless to him. As his chant sounded, the snarling spirits suddenly froze as the spiritual force that made up their bodies fell apart, beginning to dissipate.

“How gutsy are you, to dare go against a god?” A tremendous aura exploded forth from Leylin, and the few valiant spirits that had managed to hang on disappeared. Their existences had been supported by Akaban’s divine force. With his fall they were far weaker than before, so how could they do anything in front of Leylin?

After he took care of these last bits of resistance, the rest of the souls all became confused or fell into a deep sleep. They had no power whatsoever to rebel. Something like a hurricane swept through the semi-plane. A large black hole appeared at its heart, and many souls were swept in.

At the end, the tail of the hurricane reached Leylin’s hands. A huge number of souls were piled up into a golden crystal ball, swimming inside like tadpoles.

‘Akaban already made this place suitable for the souls of worshippers. However, it’s still lacking…’ Looking at the desolate semi-plane, Leylin frowned.

‘Divine force— change reality!’

“I command… Let there be light!” It was like magic. The moment he spoke, a dazzling light was formed amidst the chaos, expanding and chasing away all the shadows.

“I command… Let there be water!” The dry ground immediately closed up, as streams appeared and formed lakes and seas.

“With the water must come plantlife!” Tender green sprouts emerged from the barren soil tenaciously, and the greenness that was full of life spread through the area. Soon, they covered the entire semi-plane and formed large plains and forests.
“That should be it for the basics.” The tremendous amount of divine force required to alter the semi-plane was slightly strenuous for Leylin. With a flick of his sleeves, thousands of milky-white souls fell into the plane, turning into bewildered souls.

“You will stay here for now.” Amongst them were natives, pirates, and even a few that looked like devils. After hearing Leylin’s voice, they all knelt down respectfully and began to pray, “Yes, Master! You are the the serpent of the world that devours all, the master of death who guides all souls like us…”

“There is an agreement between a god and his worshippers. As the worshippers give up their faith, I must protect their souls after death…” Leylin muttered to himself. This was the responsibility gods took on. Taking care of it, he’d suddenly felt his connection with his worshippers suddenly grow more firm.

“It’s still fine to place the followers’ souls here for now, but I still have to become a true god as quickly as possible and build my divine kingdom. That’s the only place souls should return to…”

The use of altars, divine weapons, or even semi-planes to contain souls was something only demigods did, and it was because they had no other options. It was a make-shift strategy that could not protect the souls of followers well.

A semi-plane was slightly better than altars or divine weapons when it came to the rate at which souls disappeared. It was usually so fast that demigods’ hearts ached. On top of that, the life in the souls would be erased slowly.

The gods obviously would not stand seeing their wealth dissipating. However, all methods to contain worshippers’ souls had this flaw, except of course for divine kingdoms.

However, becoming a true god was still extremely tedious for demigods. Leylin couldn’t forget about the middle god Helm, whose role was to be the protector. His church prioritised attacks on false gods, and unfortunately he definitely viewed Leylin as
such. Thankfully, his main territories were in Debanks Island, and there was a proven problem with the natives’ faith. He hadn’t gathered attention yet. However, with his rise right now the secret couldn’t be kept much longer.

“No, there already are gods who’ve noted my existence…” Leylin looked towards the harbour, seeing a numerous fleet. The howling sea breeze and terrifying ocean sprays smacked on the gleaming, splendid surfaces of these large warships. At the top of the warship was a large, bright gold coin bending in the winds. This was the Gold Ship, belonging to Gold Priest Xena under the Goddess of Wealth. Leylin had seen it before at Port Venus’ harbour, and it was now approaching the seas of Debanks Island.

“Priestess! Based on the directions of our god, we will reach the continent soon!” At the bow of the Gold Ship, Leylin saw a familiar Bishop Xena. She was dressed in a white deer skin coat, looking lost in thought.

“I understand. You may leave…” Xena waved her arms and sent the captain away, her mind like the great waves on the surface of the ocean.

‘A Giant Serpent Church is rising amongst the native islands. I must know everything about it!’ This was a divine command Lady Waukeen had given her. Only a decree from the goddess could get this gold priest to abandon Port Venus, where gold seemed to flow like a river, and instead risk immense danger to enter the native sea regions.

‘Show goodwill, but also observe carefully!’ Xena thought over the goddess’ words, looking slightly hesitant. The goddess’ hints that the native empire had something to do with Port Venus thrilled her. ‘Though I don’t know why, I’m certain that the only one capable of doing this is the legendary young master of the Faulen Family!’
Xena had an instinct that was unique to women.
“There are ships ahead. Be on alert!” At this moment, the sailor at the observatory tower yelled at the top of his voice.
“Enemy ships? The canoes of the natives?” Having had several experiences with them, Xena found it hilarious as she gazed at the waters, but then could no longer laugh.
Tens of huge warships leaped out through the horizons, under the lead of an even larger pirate ship that was modified with magic as they surrounded them. On the warships were numerous elite soldiers and sailors.
When had the natives obtained such giant warships? Xena was puzzled, but after seeing the blood-red skull and dagger flag at the top of the giant ship, she gasped.
‘The Scarlet Tigers that are famous in the outer seas! It’s actually them? Is this their base?’ Xena had a very strong impression of these famous pirates. Some special channels had informed her that the Daughter of the Dragon was actually a legendary sorcerer, and the fear she had for them rose.
What shocked her more was that the Scarlet Tigers definitely had connections with the Faulen Family!
“If they’re showing their flag, does that mean they’re fearless now?” Xena forced a laugh and sent down the order, “Show our banner. We come bearing goodwill!”
After the signal was put up, the fleet at the other side quickly gave a response. They lined up at the two sides of the church’s ships, as if they were guards.
“They want us to maintain our speed and follow them!” The sailors quickly understood the meaning of the other side’s banner.
“Do as they wish!” Xena took a deep breath and calmed the anger within her, making a logical choice.
“They were scared so easily. I was even going to plunder the Goddess of Wealth’s ship…” On the pirate ship that headed the
rest, Ronald disdainfully pursed his lips and put down the copper binoculars in his hands. “Bring them to Port Pado. All members and attendants must be checked carefully. Be vigilant! We are now the navy of the empire, don’t get up to any tricks or I’ll cut you into pieces!” “Understood, head!” The other pirates chuckled and giggled as they answered. It was evidently difficult for them to change their attitudes. Those native sailors, however, were now much more respectful. They would be the backbone of the imperial navy in the future. Ronald sighed with relief, now filled with hope!
Port Pado.

After handing over an application and going through a strict examination, Xena and her people were finally allowed into the port proper. They were given accommodations in what seemed to be a rushed building. Although they used wood and stone bricks, Xena could still see the shoddy work of the natives. Compared to the grass huts next to it, however, this building seemed vastly superior.

‘A port that’s under construction?’ Xena recalled the market she’d just seen. It couldn’t even compare to the commercial street of a small town, at most the gathering of a pile of stalls. The items were only sold in clay jars, and trade was with barter without any basic currency. From her point of view, this was blasphemy towards her goddess!

“These darned natives. How lazy and filthy they are!” A few attendants complained, but Xena did not think the same way. Although they’d only been in contact for a short time, she had seen how energetic Debanks Island was.

‘Goddess! Although these natives are base and weak, all their jewellery is made of gold… If this industry can be developed…’ Grasping an opportunity to make more gold was instinctual to the priests of the Goddess of Wealth.

‘I never thought this expedition would have such great harvests. However, the ocean currents in this sea region are far too
dangerous…’ Xena frowned inside.
Dinner was the natives’ version of curry rice. They used banana leaves as plates, and the spice was astounding. After enjoying the sumptuous dinner, Xena summoned a high-ranked thief to her room.
A golden lustre filled the room. Although Xena didn’t believe the natives could be all that powerful, she was still very cautious.
“How is it? Have you made any discoveries?” Xena looked at the tall, slender figure in front of her that seemed to want to disappear into the shadows.
“How could we get so much information in a day? Thankfully for the blessings of our goddess, the natives didn’t seem to know how to keep secrets. We managed to get some intel through their legends and songs…” The thief’s voice was hoarse, like he was a bald eagle.
“Speak.” She frowned.
“Firstly… This place used to be called the Sakartes Empire, but a war occurred recently. Fair-skinned godly beings came from the west and defeated them, destroying their empire. That’s the direction of the mainland…
“There’s something more surprising. There seemed to be very few of those ‘fair-skinned godly beings,’ numbering less than twenty thousand total!” the thief supplied.
“Twenty thousand?” Xena was caught between laughter and tears, “But the Scarlet Tigers have about that number of people… An empire conquered by twenty thousand people… Haha…”
She looked pleased as punch, thinking the Sakartes Empire to just be some large native tribe.
“If you knew the true might of the native empire, you definitely wouldn’t be laughing now.” The thief interrupted her coldly.
“What’s their population?” Upon hearing how serious he sounded, Xena reacted appropriately.
“Based on what they said, it would take fifty sunsets to walk from
the beginning of the empire to the end. Each city has numerous
tribes within, and the empire was also protected by the Sun God
who governed everything, Akaban!”

The thief now looked solemn, “A conservative estimate puts the
empire’s population between five hundred thousand to a million.
Their outer borders were as extensive as a kingdom’s, and they
were protected by a false god!”

“To be able to defeat such a powerful empire with less than twenty
thousand pirates… Goodness! It would be difficult to do so even if
they were five hundred thousand pigs…” Xena exclaimed,
shocked.

“Exactly! What I’m going to say next is key.” The thief now
sounded slightly emotional, trembling from fear, “Remember the
holy water we were sprayed with when we first got onshore?”

“That’s just water with some sort of potion. It isn’t holy water!”
Xena called to attention. This was rather important when it came to
religion. She would never admit to being blessed by another god,
unless she was sure she wanted to betray Waukeen.

“Alright… That potion…” The thief quickly realised he had
misspoken, and immediately corrected himself.

“There seemed to be a tremendous plague at the beginning of the
war. Large batches of natives died, and the Winged Serpent
descended suddenly, possessing the abilities to heal them. They
gave the natives the holy water…”

“Winged Serpent?” Xena quickly thought of the Goddess of
Wealth’s divine orders, as well as how she was required to look
into the Giant Serpent Church.

“Yes. The ‘holy water’ has astounding healing abilities, and was
exceptionally effective against the plague. These fair-skinned
beings were seen as heroes sent down by the heavens to save them,
and are supported on a large scale. That’s how they defeated the
original Sakartes Empire…”

“Is that so…” Xena looked down, clearly deep in thought. She then turned to the thief, sounding serious, “Do you think… That plague has anything to do with the Plague Mistress?”

“It shouldn’t. I’ve fought the priests of her church. While she can spread sickness, it shouldn’t be so infectious… Also, her priests only know how to kill others and not save them…” The thief muttered bluntly in answer.

“Good then… Get more intel, especially related to the Giant Serpent Church…” Xena gave a long sigh and sent the thief away, staring at the oil lamp on the table as she muttered to herself resolutely.

“The Scarlet Tigers, the legendary wizard of the Faulen Family, and the winged serpent capable of healing sickness… What is the relationship between the three of them?” At the beginning, she’d thought this was just a practical joke on Leylin’s side. However, by the looks of it it seemed impossible.

“Mistress. Please give me guidance!” Xena gripped the holy crest in the palm of her hand, and began to pray piously. A golden lustre enveloped the entire room, making it look misty.

……

“So it’s the Goddess of Wealth… I’ve had the greatest amount of contact with them. Port Venus has Waukeen’s Church, so it’s natural for them to have recorded my aura…” Leylin wasn’t all that surprised. After all, it was necessary for Debanks Island to interact with the outside world. Debanks Island had far too much work to be done, and trade would greatly help recover its vitality. It was much better for them to be discovered by Waukeen than by Helm. After all, the goddess was neutral in alignment.

With the plentiful resources from Debanks Island, and the Faulen
Empire as a whole having so many consumers, Leylin had no doubt the gold priests would be greatly attracted. However, it wasn’t worth Xena risking her life. The only thing that could spur a gold bishop on was the Goddess of Wealth, Waukeen!

“No matter what she expects, Debanks Island can definitely support itself. There’s no need to fear any blockades or threats… Of course, if they can be enticed and we can get support from the trade network on the mainland, it would be great…”

Leylin moved his arms, “Send down the order. Receive them with the most politeness possible, and send them gold and cornelian-embedded utensils. Cover the floors with fleece, and welcome her to my palace…”

Leylin wasn’t just the ruler of a new empire. He was also its patron god, so his orders were carried out without any hesitation. Xena and her people obtained large amounts of gifts from the natives, and seemed to be dazzled by their wealth. They made multiple stops along the way, before reaching Faulen City which was being rebuilt.

This had been the Sakartes Empire’s capital. The roads and houses were already very spacious, and were now being expanded further. The vast driveways could even let a dozen horses walk side by side and speed along.

“The planning of this imperial city… The conqueror’s ambition is very obvious…” Xena mentioned Leylin indirectly. In the natives’ eyes, he was someone who represented blood and massacre, but she saw more than that. Because of the natives’ minimal comprehension and the communication gap, she still had no idea who he was. Still, she was certain that he was extremely courageous, with great might and possibly more slyness than a devil.

The huge disparity and powerlessness she felt caused Xena to sigh
deeply. If not for the light of the goddess supporting her, she would have long since escaped from Debanks Island.
“Information on the Giant Serpent Church is very vague, but the priests definitely have divine spells. The person behind the Giant Serpent Church should at the very least be a false god…” Anything that had to do with gods would be a source of trouble. Xena could feel an intense headache coming on.
“We’re here! This is our emperor’s palace. Only you are allowed to enter!” Elite devil hunters blocked the rest of the emissaries at the splendid golden entrance to the palace.
As the bodyguards that would guard Leylin, these natives were definitely loyal. Their strength was also first rate, and they could even be considered heroes. Their potential power was something that left even Xena’s heart thumping in fear.
The main doors of the golden court flew open, revealing an enormous hall devoid of a single soul. Spotless white fleece was laid down on the floor, as delicate as a snowflake, while bright red curtains embroidered in gold hung at the corners of the huge French windows. This was the empire’s hall of government. Normally there were learned sages, treacherous bureaucrats and those with dreams struggling here, criticising each other. All manners of plots and massacres were borne of those moments, a normal scene unable to convey any of that atmosphere.

A delicate and unique fragrance hung in the air, but the incense was not thick enough to be intoxicating. Xena seemed to grow nostalgic, and she once again transformed into a naive 19-year-old young lady.

Leylin had not been in possession of this place for a long time, but this palace still seemed to have some unique historical charm. It seemed like the very air had accumulated hundreds of thousands of years of the vicissitudes of life.

Even a gold priest like Xena was left in a trance when shrouded in this atmosphere. Just as a gap appeared in her spirits, the sound of steady footsteps drifted into her ears. It sounded like the walls were heavily besieged as several deep cracks appeared.

She saw a young man walking unhurriedly into the palace hall. He wore white robes, tailored precisely to fit his body. His even pace
and bearing revealed his extraordinary confidence. Since the young man walked with his back towards the light, Xena could not see his face clearly. All she could sense was a brilliant radiance shining continuously from his body.

“I am Gold Priest Xena, an emissary from the mainland’s church of wealth. I request an audience with you, Your Majesty the Almighty Conqueror…” Xena had already inwardly confirmed the man’s status. She bowed deeply to show her great respect.

“No need for pleasantries. After all, we’ve met several times in the past.” The voice was far younger than she’d expected, and also one she could never forget. Xena raised her head, finally able to see Leylin before her.

“So it’s you!” Xena’s tone revealed her confidence in her own hypothesis, as well as unconcealed shock. Although she knew him to be a legendary wizard, Xena had never expected him to conquer the entire native empire with a pirate crew. Still, that wasn’t the most pressing matter…

‘This aura… A divine being, no, a demigod! Only a demigod can put me under this much pressure! A legendary wizard who’s just over 20? Hah, he’s already a demigod! How could this be possible?’

Although she was stupefied, Xena recovered her composure fairly quickly. After all, she’d dealt with many churches in the past, and had plentiful experience.

It wasn’t unheard of for ordinary people to meet with unexpected success in the World of Gods, ascending into the heavens with a single leap. Cyric had only been an ordinary thief as a mortal, and now he wielded formidable divine power as the God of Murder. He’d had the luck of obtaining a fallen god’s godhood, along with their divine weapon. This had instantly made him a powerful deity himself.

Compared to that, even if Leylin’s progress was universally
shocking it was still acceptable. Leylin himself didn’t dwell much on Cyric. The God of Murder had obtained his strength by pure luck, and his powers were nothing if not for his divine boosts. As a result, he would easily suffer the control of his own powers. He was already halfway insane, so he couldn’t be considered a formidable enemy.

Furthermore, Leylin had grievously offended Cyric already. He had even killed a legendary of his church, and their hatred and desire for revenge was boundless. This was the main reason why Leylin had chosen the path of massacres. Although compatibility was one consideration, he wasn’t afraid of slighting Cyric again.

It would have been a little short-sighted to ignore him, stirring up trouble instead with a mid-ranked god like the Mistress of Plagues who he had no grudge against. Besides, a godly role in plagues was more limited in scope and application than one in massacre, without much room for development.

A god could process all these thoughts in a split second. To Xena it seemed like Leylin asked his next question without hesitation, “Xena, why have you come all this way?”

Leylin currently had a formidable divine aura, and in her reverence Xena almost knelt down before him. Still, she was still a gold priest of Lady Waukeen. A trickle of power surfaced from the holy crest on her chest, lending her its strength.

“I am here to pass on my master’s sincerity.”

“Lady Waukeen’s sincerity?” Leylin looked at the bishop standing before him, a trace of playfulness flickering across his transformed golden eyes.

Not so long ago, a youngster like him had needed to cautiously weigh up the disadvantages and advantages of his schemes in front of a bishop of her rank. He’d even had no choice but to let a part of his profits go in order to rope her in. Now however, Xena could only crawl and pray for his benevolence. This gap between gods
and men was so clear one could get drunk on the power. The momentary silence caused Xena to assume that Leylin was put off. She immediately continued, “I’ve noticed Debanks Island has ample reserves of gold and silver. Your people luxuriously use pure gold for ornaments, and if these things were transported to the continent just a tenth of them would win you unimaginable profits. The accumulated wealth would allow you to build ten cities as large as Faulen…”

It had to be said: when Waukeen’s priests saw enormous profit their expressions changed completely. They would discard their cowardice, daring to deal with even devils and demons. Now, an inferno raged in Xena’s eyes as she faced a demigod. Her pretty little cherry lips spouted devilish words of enticement.

“Trade? Well, I can consider it…” Leylin seemed to be considering Xena’s deal on the surface, but there was a different story in his mind.

‘Is it a trap? But Waukeen has always been strictly neutral. Is she just attracted to Debanks Island, or maybe its my potential?’ The fight against false gods was Helm’s job. Leylin had never heard of the priests of the church of wealth actively taking such jobs.

On the contrary, the priests of wealth were often dazzled by the sight of gold. There were occasional rumours of secret deals with the devils even. Although most were groundless rumours, Leylin was keen enough to notice an inkling of truth in them.

Unlike demons and devils, false gods weren’t considered particularly evil. Furthermore, even if Debanks Island had enough resources to satisfy him for now if it received the support of trade with the mainland it would recover much faster. This would also supply Leylin with a greater amount of faith.

“I can accept the trade, but you need to talk concrete details with Tiff and Isabel,” Leylin no longer hid his association with the Giant Serpent Church.
Or perhaps he didn’t particularly care if other gods discovered that he was the serpent Kukulkan. Too many gods had been known to assume false identities, using avatars in the prime material plane.

“Apart from this, my master has several very, very small requests. If your Majesty can help her, my Lady will absolutely be willing to provide many things that will leave you satisfied…”

“Oh? How interesting, do continue,” Leylin stroked his chin, a smile blooming on his face.

……

After a short while, Xena quietly left with a self-satisfied expression on her face. Leylin was left alone in the great hall. A divine glow flashed across his eyes as he watched Xena’s departing back, his gaze filled with pity.

Even the Goddess of Wealth had to comply with the oaths and unwritten rules of the gods. There were many things that she had to do despite her reluctance. Business with a false god, for example, was prohibited.

This was why Waukeen hadn’t shown her true self. She’d sent one of her priests here, to serve as her shield at critical times. If Xena did not manage to see the truth, she wasn’t likely to have a good future.

As for Waukeen’s commission itself, Leylin was rather interested.

“So she wants me to help her find several items, using them as an exchange? How interesting… First is the Sceptre of Savras?” The image of a magic staff appeared before Leylin’s eyes, before quickly shattering into pieces.

“This divine artifact is rumoured to be able to guard against prophecies and tracking by gods. That much is true, but the main part of the sceptre could be in any corner of the prime material plane. It could even be down in Baator or the abyss. Despite all
that, she still covets this the most…” Leylin furrowed his brows rather distrustfully, ‘This woman, what on earth is she thinking?’ It was a shame that she was an intermediate god, equivalent to a rank 8 Magus of laws. Leylin could not pry apart her thoughts. ‘One thing’s for sure. Be it for the trade or to hunt these items, I’ll have to leave Debanks Island. I need to go to the mainland or the outer planes, is that what she wants?’ Leylin couldn’t help but guess. They weren’t close in any way, so he wouldn’t believe that Waukeen could so generously come over and help him so suddenly. ‘If what I guess is true…’ Leylin’s drooping eyelids obscured the dim light in his eyes.
After days of careful contemplation, Leylin summoned Xena and agreed to the Goddess of Wealth’s conditions. He handed over all matters pertaining to the native empire to Isabel and Tiff, while he followed Xena’s ship back to the Faulen Island. He was currently back at his wizard tower. Although this tower had already been upgraded several times, Leylin still found it too crude. This wasn’t an issue with design, rather that he’d advanced too quickly. The basic facilities of this place couldn’t keep up with his demands. Thankfully, he did not have high expectations for the environment he was to be in. With the wizard tower’s isolation abilities as well as his own divine force as a cover, the preparations were complete.

*Chiu! Chiu!* Inside the enormous forge at the core, a golden staff floated in mid-air. Threads of pure gold flames were dispelled in the surroundings, forming the figure of a large, gorgeous bird. What had been the Red Dragon Staff had undergone massive changes and improvements. The coarse and solid staff was now more slender, and the dragon claw at the top had been refined, forming the claw of a bird. The most important part, the soul within the crystal, was now replaced by the flaming bird.

[Beep! Red Dragon Staff has been re-smelted. Connection and containment perfect. No conflicts in energy.] The A.I. Chip projected large amounts of information before him. [Item Name: Blazing Sceptre. Rank: Legendary 3. Length: 0.76m.]

1015 - Sceptre of Savras
Weight: 2900g. Materials: Dragon Crystal, Dragon Bone, Dragon Blood, Dragon Scale, Divine Spirit, Divine Blood

[Item abilities: 1. Storage. The staff can contain spells: Rank 9 (1), Rank 7 (3), Rank 5 (5). (Currently Empty) 2. Blazing Skyfire, legendary spell. (Can be used once every twenty days). 3. Domain of Terror. 4. Blaze: Absorbing the strength of divine souls, the staff can deal a one-time mental attack or boost itself. Will harm the imprisoned soul. 5. Fire Immunity.]

[Description: This staff once imprisoned a powerful legendary dragon soul, but its owner attempted a more terrifying experiment, sealing the soul of a divine being. All who use it without permission will suffer the wrath of gods!]

‘What I gave Tiff was symbolic of the church. This suits me better…’ When he conquered Debanks Island, Leylin did indeed come into possession of the flesh and souls of other demigods. However, this staff was still his most perfect creation. Although what he’d given Tiff was a demigod weapon, it was impossible to upgrade it. This staff had a limitless future!

‘I can upgrade this staff at any time as long as the materials I have on hand are suitable. It could even become a divine weapon…’ Leylin was very confident in this.

Having completed the Blazing Sceptre, Leylin did not opt to rest, instead going to another room. He closed his eyes as if in meditation, but his mind was actually communicating with the A.I. Chip. ‘A.I. Chip, how goes the task I set you on?’

[Beep! Analysis of legendary arcane spell, Chain Contingency at 100%. Transmitting into Host’s mind, beginning preliminary branding…] the A.I. Chip’s robotic voice sounded. It had never let Leylin down before.

‘A demigod is at the apex of the mainland. Debanks Island is too remote, and it’s impossible to dispatch large armies and labourers on the long journey here. If they want to deal with me, there are
only a few methods. This is the one with the best chance of success…’ Leylin pursed his lips, and lost tremendous amounts of spiritual force and arcane energy. A continuous stream of divine force made up for these losses just in time, creating a unique cycle. It took a night of this to finally set up Chain Contingency.

While he had his own conjectures, he still chose to follow through with his plans. After all, it was foolish to offend a goddess without any evidence. Besides, he had his own plans as well, and he needed her cooperation to complete them.

‘I hope all this is all in my head… But it’s not bad to make preparations, right?’ Immense divine force surged out, erasing the spell’s aura from Leylin’s body and hiding it within the aura of the divine.

It wasn’t long after this was done that Gold Priest Xena visited him. “Our church already has leads on the Sceptre of Savras. However, we need your help, my Lord.” Xena looked respectful as she spoke, her eyes showing that she wasn’t faking any of this.

‘Looks like this priestess thinks that her true mission is to find the sceptre…’ Leylin sighed, and then smiled, “As long as we do things according to our agreement, I’m fine with it…”

……

At the borders of the Dambrath Kingdom, west of the werejackal mountains.

Because of the suitable food and climate, there was a large number of werejackals around this place, including high-ranked sorcerers and Professionals with greater intelligence than their peers. They monopolised the entire mountain, making the area dangerous. All who were not werejackals had one fate in this mountain: they would be torn to the bone and eaten. There was little the Dambrath Kingdom could do about this.
They’d employed a legendary, but even he’d had to retreat. The werejackal mountains became a forbidden area with the passage of time.

Rumour had it that there was a mysterious large door at the depths of the werejackal mountains, leading straight to the abyss and the werejackal god, a sovereign who loved flesh! The closer one went to the place, the more desolate the nearby villages got.

One particular path, a group of knights were hastening on their journey. Their unruffled aura alone showed that they weren’t mere elites of the kingdom. They were guarding a young man and woman in the middle, each riding a handsome horse. However, considering the might of the two, it was hard to say who was being protected.

“The lead for the Sceptre of Savras is in the town up ahead?” Leylin sniffed at the air, frowning slightly.

“Yes, my Lord!” This was Xena speaking. Ever since the priestess found out that Leylin had attained a realm she could never hope to reach, she had become increasingly respectful to him. She had even taken to addressing him as ‘my Lord’, and if Leylin had not stopped her, she might even have called him ‘Your Highness.’

“A hunter from the village said he entered the werejackal mountains once by accident, and at the outer regions of the valleys saw a terrifying statue and the illusion of a sceptre emitting multicolour light.”

“That’s all?” Leylin’s eyebrows raised.

“We dispatched our own legendaries after that, but even two weren’t enough to break through the outer regions of the valley. However, the two of them saw the sceptre as well, and it’s matching the Sceptre of Savras by more than 90%…” Xena explained, laughing wryly as she still needed Leylin’s help.

“A boundary that even legendaries can’t enter? And the sceptre’s there?” Leylin nodded. “In that case, this trip is worth it… But I’ve
been staying at the outer seas recently. What’s happening on the continent?”
After hearing that this was not confidential information, Xena gave him a simple rundown of the situation on the continent. Firstly, the unrest in the north had attracted the attention of the entire prime material plane. It was possible for it to escalate even further. The alliance of Mystra and Tyr was something all the orc gods feared. They’d first wiped out their reinforcements in Malar and a few others, then supported Alustriel’s war in the north. After a few large battles, Alustriel had successfully gathered her revolutionary forces and taken over a decent amount of land. With the support of a few great noble families in the north, she had ascended the throne a few months ago and re-established the Silverymoon Alliance.
However, the orcs were still as powerful as before. Orc Emperor Saladin had the help of the divine weapon, the Thunder God’s Hammer, and was still one of the most powerful beings in the prime material plane. If not for Alustriel blocking Saladin personally in a few battles, as well as the orc being afraid of the side effects from using the weapon, success would not have come so easily.
With all that done, the orc empire had grown enraged. They began to gather their armies after being dealt that heavy blow. At the same time, the people of Silverymoon trained hard as well, obtaining more support from the nobles and gods of the north. It wasn’t hard to imagine the even more terrifying war that would break out in the future, the greatest test for the newly reformed Silverymoon Alliance.
On top of that, there was the short-lived reappearance of the western desert’s floating city. A number of legendaries had fallen there, the death of just one enough to stun the entire continent. This was something to do with a floating city! The only reason the news
was this delayed was that the western desert was remote, with little in the means of communication. A few churches had verified the theft of the floating city by a mysterious person, and they’d posted a great bounty for the same. It had caused a great flurry in the dark world. Numerous old monsters had been startled out of their shells, pursuing the traces of the lich Illyrio. It had to be said that this was why Leylin had kept Illyrio. The lich could shoulder the brunt of the blame.
he only things that alarmed the continent were the matter with the north and west desert. The rest are just small issues…” Xena stopped at this point, her beautiful eyes turning to gaze up at Leylin, “But of course, if news about you were to be leaked, my Lord, that would create a whole new storm…”

‘Those two things actually have something to do with me!’ Leylin thought as he rubbed his nose, but he had no plans of coming clean.

Xena lowered her voice, speaking by Leylin’s ear, “The birth of a new demigod and the conquest of over a million natives with just five thousand pirates… Either one of these events could stun the mainland, even affecting the outer planes…”

“I’d rather not for now. I don’t want to attract the attention of Helm’s church.” Leylin sternly stopped her, but this only caused a sly look in Xena’s eyes.

“Please don’t worry, my Lord. Our church has worked with those like you before, and both sides have returned satisfied…”

“Hm? I think we should discuss this in more detail tonight.” Hearing Xena seemingly hint that she could help him solve the problem with the God of Protection, Leylin’s eyes darted around. While he was unsure if everything she said was the truth, it was always better to have more knowledge…

They reached the little village Xena had spoken of without issue.
Soon, however, Leylin found something strange about the place. “There aren’t any commoners here? They’re all Professionals.” The radiance of a Professional’s soul was vastly different from that of a normal human. If the former were like a grain of sand, the latter was a firefly. Although they were both minuscule to Leylin, there was still a difference.

“Once we discovered this valley, our church bought the surrounding regions and stationed our knights to patrol and guard the area.” Xena clapped, and four dark figures charged over from the village ahead. Their agility showed that they were high-ranked knights.

“Priestess! My Lord!” The four high-ranked knights seemed extremely humble as they led the two’s horses along like servants. The scene left Leylin speechless. He sighed after a long while, then said, “As expected of the church of wealth. They’re overbearing…” Xena didn’t immediately respond to this, but her eyes showed her pride.

“Who’s defending the valley now?” she asked a black-armoured knight in front of her.

“It’s the Spear Crusader, Lord Jeffries!” The knight unknowingly showed a look of worship, “We beat down a few waves of werejackals recently. A group of adventurers from the kingdom were attracted to this place as well, but none of them were powerful.”

The churches of the World of Gods possessed divine spells and limitless wealth. They also had large numbers of zealous followers, as well as true and eternal gods backing them. They could be called the most powerful organisations in the prime material plane. Even the human kingdoms had to yield to them, giving their people the right to worship.

Given the situation, about half the powerful beings of the world were undoubtedly affiliated to churches. Unlike soldiers and
adventurers, paladins had better equipment, more guidance, and overall better lives. If not for this advantage, they would consider changing gods.

“We’ll rest here tonight, and enter the mountains to meet with Lord Jeffries tomorrow. What do you think of it?” Xena now acted like the master here.

“Yes, that sounds good.” Leylin had no objections, although a dark hint flickered in his eyes.

‘There don’t seem to be any traps, or they might be buried too deep…’ Night soon fell. Leylin gazed up at the starry skies and then at Xena and other knights who knew so little. His eyes showed how indifferent he felt.

“They’re all dispensable… The gods are that heartless, huh,” he muttered, his voice so low nobody heard his words.

……

“This is the valley where the strange events took place. Lord Jeffries is waiting for you up ahead!” Xena had unknowingly become a guide. She was even attempting to rope Leylin into her church, although all she did was fated to be in vain.

“Ah, Lord Jeffries!” Xena jogged forward, bowing towards the legendary that Leylin had met before, “My apologies that you had to come all the way here to meet us…”

“Lord Leylin! It’s only been a few years since we last met, and you’ve already attained so much!” Jeffries didn’t pay attention to Xena. To legendaries, those below their rank were ants unworthy of attention.

However, Leylin was different! An intense bloodlust and threads of envy arose from Jeffries’ eyes.

All legendaries desired to become gods. While Jeffries had glory that most could not even begin to imagine, as long as he remained
in Waukeen’s church he would never be able to rid himself of the shackles that bound him. Seeing Leylin having taken that important step and left him far in the dust, Jeffries had a strange expression. ‘What a pity… No matter how powerful you are, or how talented, you won’t be able to fight off fate and the gods…’ Jeffries sighed inside, steadying his faith that was on the verge of crumbling as he carried an amiable smile on his face.

“You gave me a very good impression during the ceremony, Lord Jeffries.” Leylin answered easily and conversed for a while longer. They soon entered the valley shrouded with mist.

“The elemental aura here is strange, and the mist seems to have a powerful sealing strength. Be careful!” Jeffries led the way ahead. There were more and more black vines about even as the area turned more sandy, and the grey mist around them became increasingly thicker.

‘Such great sealing strength… Even a large-scale spell formation can’t be maintained for long; it would take up too much energy. It makes sense for this to be the radiation of a divine weapon, since the Sceptre of Savras is rumoured to have powerful sealing abilities…’

“Werejackals, human soldiers, and adventurers seem to have been corroded by the mist. They’ve morphed into a different life form, so they’re difficult to deal with.” Just after Jeffries spoke, the winds howled and strange sounds echoed as a werejackal darted out of the mist. The strong smell on its body caused Xena to frown.

“What a joke!” Jeffries brandished his spear and a milky-white light hacked the werejackal into two, revealing black innards and bones.

“Once they’re corroded these things gain great vitality. It’ll take ages to kill them…” Jeffries explained. He then saw Leylin crouch on the ground in seeming interest, observing the flesh where the werejackal had been sliced apart.
“This is the contamination in the outermost regions. It’s even worse inside. If not for there being traces of a divine weapon here, I’d be prepared to tell the druids’ association and let them know of this natural pollution…” Jeffries’ annoyance could be heard from his voice.

“Oh, I’m sorry. It’s my first time seeing beings like this!” Leylin got up and apologised, and the group continued to advance amidst the mist.

“We’ve already tested this place. Even high-ranked legendaries can’t get through half of the valley…” All of a sudden, Jeffries stopped. He looked at the normal-seeming Leylin and Xena who was straining already, a strange expression on his face.

“Fight me,” Jeffries suddenly requested.

“Lord Jeffries, Lord Leylin is an esteemed guest of the church! How could you do this?” Xena exclaimed loudly before Leylin could respond.

“Hmm… You’re attacking now? I’m curious, why didn’t you bring me further in and surround me?” Leylin raised his eyebrows in doubt.

“What? Attacking now?” Xena took several steps back, suddenly realising that she knew nothing. She’d been played like a puppet.

“There’s no fun in attacking you with others. A proud legendary should never fall just like this! I’ve also wanted to battle with you for a long while now.” A milky-white spear suddenly appeared in his hands, its sharp barbed tip emitting a terrifying chill. “Besides, you’d noticed it before I even told you, no?”

“Mm,” Leylin did not deny it. “I just wanted to confirm my suspicions and see how evil you are.”

Golden rays emanated from Leylin’s body, as if giving him golden armour. The dark red massacre domain abruptly extended, causing Jeffries to breathe roughly.

“There’s no need to hide anymore. Get out here!” As Jeffries’
enraged roars sounded out, powerful energy undulations rumbled out before a few figures appeared around Leylin. The grey fog slowly condensed into a cage-like structure, revealing a barren area. “So it’s you, Benedict. Are you done with the matters at the north?” Leylin had never expected that he’d see an acquaintance.

“Leylin! You almost wrecked the plans of our master back then, and turned into a sinner of the north!” The bishop of Tyr was standing right in front of him. This fellow had attacked Leylin once before. Behind him was a group of paladins, and next to them were priests and wizards that worshipped Mystra.
‘Mm… Waukeen, Tyr, Mystra, they’re pretty much all here… huh?’ Leylin was surprised by an unfamiliar organisation amongst them. Their armour was spotless, with red capes attached. On the breastplates and capes were the symbol of a large golden eye, seemingly never closing. The armour was threaded with gold and had gems embedded in it, making it look dazzling.

“Armour with the Eternal Light spell, as well as that symbol… Are you priests of Helm?” Divine force flashed, the powerful massacre domain causing everyone’s expressions to change.

“False god!” one of Helm’s priests spat out, and layers of light emanated from the eye at his chest. It was clearly on equal ground with Leylin, perhaps even overpowering him. Helm was the God of Protection, and his church was built to crack down on faith in false gods. Naturally, they had experience in dealing with divine beings and even demigods.

“Our mission is to crack down on the belief in false gods, purifying the origin of the world!” The priest looked pious, as he prayed with the rest of Helm’s warriors and priests. They each took a step forward, their eyes full of fervour as if they were heading to church.

*Rumble!* A surge of power whistled out, and a golden eye appeared in the air. It locked on to Leylin, showing an inverted reflection of him.
[Beep! Host has been marked by the God of Protection. Divine force locked, domains weakened by 20%. Host’s location will be relayed every 3 hours. Remove?] the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded, and Leylin turned grim.

‘As expected of a church that deals with false gods. They’ve made ample preparations…’ Leylin was still smiling confidently, and he ordered in his mind, ‘Prepare to remove, but wait for my order. Remain in observation mode.’

Leylin was not surprised that Helm’s church had surrounded him. After all, the God of Protection’s mission was to deal with false gods. As long as news about Leylin was revealed, the zealous priests would come join in on the fun, bringing their own rations along with them.

‘Still, I never thought I was being lured into so many enemies. It looks like the gods are afraid of me… Or were they alarmed by some divination?’

“You’ll have to explain this later, Jeffries,” a priestess of Mystra said as she walked out. She had silver hair, and her eyes glinted gold. She was looking at Leylin like he was a dead man.

Jeffries answered with a cold snort. All legendaries had their own pride, so how could he bow down to someone else? On top of that, Jeffries served Waukeen, and he had nothing to do with Mystra.

“I stand by my request. If you win over me, I shall leave immediately.” Jeffries pointed his spear at Leylin, causing the priestess to turn red in her fury.

“Forgive me, but before that can I ask who planned this out?” Leylin interrupted.

“It is the will of our god!” the priestess admitted. She looked flushed.

This slightly exceeded his expectations. He wouldn’t have found it surprising if Helm’s church had been the ones to identify him, planning an attack. The same went if Waukeen was coveting his
lands and wealth, or even Benedict who just hated evil. However, none of this had anything to do with the Goddess of the Weave. From how it seemed, she was the person who feared him most.

‘Are the prophetic abilities of the gods that great?’ Leylin immediately recalled his rank 12 arcane spell, Karsus’ Avatar. He himself wasn’t even as strong as a lesser god, and was unable to deal much damage to them. This spell, though, defied logic. One use of it would give him control of the Weave’s power, causing Mystra to fall.

On top of that, the destruction of the Weave would release the consciences of the numerous ancient Magi from the core, causing the ancient Final War to once again rock the World of Gods.

‘Is she afraid of what I can do if I develop further? I could become a huge threat to her, so she’s making the first move?’

It was impossible for Mystra to know the existence of Karsus’ Avatar. The only possible explanation was that she had a premonition that Leylin would bring great danger to her. When an ant threatened them, most people would just end it with a stomp. This was obviously Mystra’s own course of action. But since much of her strength was stuck in the north, she’d roped in quite a few other helpers. In such a situation, it was likely that Leylin would fall.

‘Things would’ve been troublesome had I not made preparations…’ Leylin ran through his thoughts, and came up with numerous possibilities.

‘If I’m at my wit’s end I’ll definitely risk using Karsus’ Avatar. That’ll give me a chance of survival… But that means Distorted Shadow could also have something to do with this…’ Leylin had a strong feeling that Distorted Shadow had leaked his location, as well as the degree of threat he posed.

After all, he was an ancient peak rank 8 Magus, equivalent to a greater god. How could the conscient in the ruins be the only thing
he left behind? It required no effort to use the power of distortion to show the ‘truth’ to the goddess, or even just give her some clues. If the process itself was much too complicated, then one could find the truth by looking at who would benefit by the result. Thinking everything over, Leylin believed that the most likely case was that Distorted Shadow had played his hand from behind the scenes.

‘If it’s him, I won’t be able to use the ghost city as I wish. So I have to abandon plan 3…’

“So, who’s going to be first?” The pure gold Blazing Sceptre emerged, and powerful spell energy surged out. It caused everyone’s expression to change.

“Our church has arranged a spell formation specifically to subdue false gods. He can’t use the power of his domain completely! The channel of faith from his worshippers has also weakened greatly, and our Lord has marked him— AH!”

The priest of Helm soon cried out in pain, covering his eyes. Leylin had commanded the A.I. Chip to remove the mark, and it caused the golden eye in the sky to fall apart. It seemed to have affected these priests.

“Haha, good! This is the kind of opponent that I want!” Jeffries burst into laughter. He’d let go of everything in his mind at that moment, only focusing on his opponent. He let loose a sudden attack, and faint black lines appeared around the holy spear as it crushed the space around it.

Benedict seemed to be operating some spell formation as well. Large beasts the size of hills crawled out of the mist, and the legendary wizard nearby seemed to be preparing some legendary spell.

“This is what I’ve prepared for you…” Benedict now had an unnatural flush on his face. A few of the giant beasts roared as he waved a hand, the thorns on their backs emitting a chilling glint as they attacked Leylin. “I’ll let them play with you first.”
Four churches had joined hands here. Even a small attack could cause the entire prime material plane to gape. Still, Leylin’s expression did not change in the face of this attack that could almost kill gods.
*Chiu! Chiu!* He tossed the sceptre out and the flaming bird totem appeared, bashing into the giant beasts.

“Sacred Spear? Is that considered amazing?” Leylin stared at the spear that seemed to be moving in an instant, as if dealing with it was beneath himself. Two spells were cast simultaneously with a wave of his arm, striking the tip of the spear and the black cracks surrounding it.

Greater Disjunction! Shattering Palm! Jeffries’ spear crumbled instantly against the disjunction spell, and the gigantic golden palm sent him flying. His chest caved in, and blood spurted out of his mouth.

‘He can instantly cast legendary spells?’ The legendary wizard that had come with Mystra’s church noted the spells Leylin had cast, and then at the large number of materials in his hands with the spell he was halfway through preparing. His expression grew extremely dark.

“I don’t care anymore!” As a wizard himself, he understood how powerful Leylin had to be to cast legendary spells instantly. After weighing the pros and cons, he immediately made his choice. A teleportation gate open, and the legendary wizard immediately took his apprentices and hid away. He showed Leylin a few signs, a declaration of peace amongst wizards.

“You…” Mystra’s priests saw the legendary wizard leave and suddenly twitched, on the verge of coughing up blood. Although they’d known wizards lacked faith, they hadn’t expected it to be this bad!

Truth be told, there was little they could do about him. At the very least, he’d come all the way here. With his connections, attacking
the legendary wizard would cause chaos within the church. “Damn it. If the goddess’ avatar were here, nobody would dare do that…” The female priest gritted her teeth, but there was nothing she could do.
Leylin was growing more vicious in his attacks, seemingly blinded by the killing. He was going to beat them at their own game, and after looking at which opponents were going to attack he would show his strength and intimidate the rest. He was basically exhibiting his full power here. That was the full power of a demigod! The support of an endless stream of faith and emotion combined with his experience as a near rank 7 Magus, giving Leylin a battle might he himself was surprised by.

He tore two of the giant mist creatures apart with his bare hands, and suddenly jumped. Once he touched the ground he’d caught up to Jeffries, who was quickly retreating.

Having been hit with the Greater Disjunction, Jeffries’ spear had been destroyed, as well as a silver necklace on his neck. That was followed by his robes, his boots…

“As a legendary, you still have some dignity.” Leylin’s evaluation was apathetic, though the movements of his hands never showed. A colourful Mage Sword formed in his grasp. This sword, moulded by his spiritual force, was now comparable even to divine weapons.

“Save our ally!” A few priests wearing the uniform of Helm’s church were startled, and quickly cast a holy shield for Jeffries. “Don’t bother me!” Leylin frowned slightly, and the Mage Sword created a few beautiful cross-shaped slashes in the air.
*Swish!* Two of the priests were hit by the slashes, and the many defensive spells on their bodies were ripped apart. Afterwards, their bodies were cut open. It was still a slight breather, though, and Jeffries continued to retreat.

“While I do admire you, it’s impossible for you to change your faith…” Leylin quickly chased up to him with a look of pity in his eyes. The Mage Sword in his hands pierced forward, breaking his last layer of defence.

“Hehe… I didn’t think you’d be so powerful… Cough cough… What a shame. I will never be able to see the gorgeous Summer Warbler Flower of the northern seas ever again…” Jeffries was now heavily injured, and no longer had the ability to retreat. Hearing Leylin’s words, he slowly closed his eyes to await death.

“Please pardon Jeffries, Leylin Faulen.” A slender palm grabbed Jeffries’ collar, and teleported out of the battlefield in an instant.

“Xena… no, my Lady!” Jeffries gazed at ‘Xena.’

The gold priest had originally been scared stiff, so weak she was cowering in a corner. She’d been lucky enough not to get involved in the battle, but she looked frozen and pale.

Now, although she maintained that appearance every action of hers was filled with absolute dignity and confidence. She wasn’t even a legendary; Xena could not have such a divine lustre on her body, nor could she rescue Jeffries.

The only explanation was that she’d been possessed by a powerful existence. The only being that a priest would give their mind and body up for was naturally the god they worshipped.

“Nice to meet you, Lady Waukeen!” Leylin bowed elegantly, and then easily decapitated two more priests of Helm’s church. Such savagery and poise were very conflicting.

“I apologise… You were a child that I thought well of, but I already had a deal with Mystra, and I need to play by the book…” Waukeen pulled at Jeffries as she moved backwards, speaking
calmly and with grace.
“It was only a singular deal, though. I can assure you that your territory will not be affected, but only if you survive this and grant them the glory of a true god…”
By the time the last word was spoken, Waukeen had already brought Jeffries away from the valley. A dazzling golden arc quickly left Xena’s body, forming the image of an elegant woman wearing gold robes. Only half her body was shown.
As the one who’d been a container for her goddess, Xena had been abandoned. She paled again and fell into a coma, obviously not in a good state. It was likely that this incident would reduce her lifespan.
“Divine ability: Space-time Shift!” Waukeen’s figure pointed towards Leylin while in mid-air and then exploded, disappearing into nothingness.
Leylin, on the other hand, felt like everything was spinning. By the time he regained his senses, he was almost out of the valley, and at an area he had been in before. Tens of giant mist beasts were eyeing him like he was prey.
‘An intermediate god has such mysterious abilities…’ The corner of Leylin’s lips quirked up in a smile, ‘Was what she said at the end out of goodwill or a threat? At the very least, I can be sure that she plotted against me because of the deal. After this, they don’t owe each other anything anymore…’
“There are only three true enemies then.” Although the people from the church of wealth had left, the powerful beings who had fallen apart due to Leylin’s sudden outburst had time to regroup.
“Haha… you’re fated to fall here!” Veins visibly bulged in Benedict’s eyes, like he was a crazy gambler who’d been at it for three full days.
“Oh? You’re so confident that you can take me down?” Making quick work of the paladins and giant mist beasts, Leylin shot a
glance at Benedict who looked like he had a card up his sleeve. ‘Demigods are practically the peak of the prime material plane. Unless the true bodies of the gods descend as saints, nobody can match up to them void of a group of high-ranked legendaries unfearing of death. Another option is for several avatars to mount a sneak attack, but he probably won’t be willing to pay such a huge price. There’s only one method left…’

Even greater gods had to abide the rules of the World of Gods. Avatars weren’t all that powerful in the prime material plane, and the only thing that would make a difference was their numbers. However, it was too much of a waste for a few avatars or high-ranked legendaries to fall for the sake of killing Leylin. Unless there was such enmity between them that it could only be resolved by death, it was unlikely for them to go that far.

“It’s done!” Benedict’s gleeful voice sounded at that moment, and the mist in the surroundings quickly dissipated to reveal a huge, four-sided magic formation.

*Bzzt! Bzzt!* One grey pillar of light rose into the sky after the other, forming a terrifying cage that sealed Leylin within. Benedict used a crystal core to control it.

“This undulation… Looks like it really is…” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he pointed straight at Benedict, “Order of Law, Death!”

“Get away!” The surrounding priests quickly yelled.

Had he let go of the crystal at this moment, Benedict would definitely have had a chance of survival. However, he did nothing. He seemed ready to die as he continued to transmit energy from his body to the core.

*Bang!* His corpse crumpled to the ground, and the grey pillars shrunk, turning into a sealing-cum-teleportation spell formation. With a flash of light, Leylin’s figure disappeared from within.

“Benedict…” A few paladins gathered, gazing at Benedict who breathed no more. There was a slight satisfied smile on the corner
of his lips.
“You shall obtain light. May your soul rest in the divine kingdom…” After a few sorrowful words, the rest of the survivors gathered and began to pray for Benedict.
“We may fall for eternity, collapsing on our paths as we root out evil. However, justice shall always follow!” A paladin who had broken his arm from the scuffle with Leylin sighed as he spoke. Such thinking immediately garnered the approval of Helm’s church, while Mystra’s priests all went quiet. However, the silver-haired priestess suddenly exclaimed, “NO!”
“What happened?” This sudden action immediately gave rise to glares from the paladins. The priestess continued without hesitation, “There are no traces of him in our master’s divine kingdom! The false god was not teleported there!”
Due to the powerful suppression of the prime material plane, the gap between avatars and demigods was minimal and they were almost on equal grounds. Things were different in the outer planes though. Although a lesser god’s avatar wasn’t much different from a greater god’s here, the gap between them there was like that between the heavens and the earth!
This was even more evident in divine kingdoms. No matter which divine kingdom Leylin entered, his only fate would be death as he met the true bodies of the gods in their own nests. This had been their plan all along. Since she was a greater god, as well as the person who planned this, the teleportation formation that had been set up led to Mystra’s divine kingdom. That was why it was so difficult to activate.
However, while the spell formation had worked successfully, it had not achieved the expected results. The group turned grim, looking at their companions’ bodies and Benedict’s smile in death. It had become the greatest irony in the world.
Two gods stood shoulder to shoulder in the vast spatial cracks. Be it spatial turbulence or the expulsion of the four elements, everything before them was automatically dispersed, forming a safe zone. This strength indicated that they were at the very least avatars of greater gods! Leylin was also extremely familiar with the two of them.

Amongst them was someone who looked like an old veteran with his right hand and eye missing. The other was a young girl who looked like a wizard, the power of the Weave surging within her body. This was Mystra and Tyr, the Goddess of the Weave and the God of Justice!

It took a long while for Mystra to open her eyes and speak, “The teleportation was disturbed. He did not reach my divine kingdom.” “I checked the area here, including the dimensional cracks. There’s no sign of the floating city,” Tyr replied.
The information should be incorrect, Leylin might not have obtained the flying city Thultanthar. Either that, or he’s extremely crafty and predicted our ambush…”

Mystra’s beautiful gaze pierced through the void, seeing the scenario unfolding in the world. Had Leylin been here, he definitely would’ve broken out into cold sweat. Had he actually used the floating city to attack the backbone of these churches, the gods lying in wait for him would definitely show him why the flowers were dyed red.

This was two greater gods! Leylin had a chance to resist them in the prime material plane, but outside it there were no more restrictions. There would be no chance for him to fight back.

“Where did you obtain this information?” Tyr asked, rousing from his silence.

“One of my worshippers met a devil during his travels, and obtained the information from him. However the devil was already dead by the time I got there, and his soul had disappeared as well…”

A trace of doubt surfaced on Mystra’s face. “I feel an extremely irksome and sinister aura, more vile than the three monarchs of the deep abyss. This is a mysterious existence…”

“More sinister than evil itself?” Tyr shuddered, as if having recalled some unwanted memory. “You should go and check the seals. Remove any contamination around the area if needed…”
“You mean…” Mystra inhaled deeply, spitting out the taboo word of times long past, “Magi…”

……

Teleportation light flashed as Leylin stepped out of a distortion in space. A mere moment before, the A.I. Chip’s voice had sounded out, [Contingent conditions met, instant teleportation activated!]
‘Instant teleportation was indeed the safest option. I fear nobody in the main world, but I can’t be too sure in the outer planes. Right now, I’m most likely in…’ Leylin looked around. Meteors streaked past the crimson sky, dancing in the air. His surroundings were a charred mess, the desolate earth littered with small rocks. A few hills in the distance broke the even landscape.
“Huuu… This seems to be…” The air was filled with a tinge of malevolence and dread, clueing Leylin in to his whereabouts. Of course, the little streams of blood flowing around the land left no more room for doubt. ‘Baator, the Nine Hells. I knew this felt familiar!’
Leylin stretched his back lazily, before sending out a command, ‘A.I. Chip, conduct scan.’
[Beep! Mission established, beginning scan…] the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned. It was followed up instantly.
[Environment scanned, air analysis complete. Current location: Avernus, the first level of Baator.]
[Beep! Laws in the area are different from the prime material plane, analysing…]
It quickly showed the properties of the world.
[1) Gravity normal.
2) Time flow normal.
3) Space Unlimited: The nine levels of hell extend indefinitely, but are always a fixed distance from the abyss and their lower levels.
4) Divine form: An organism requires the strength of at least a lesser god to transform the Nine Hells, and this transformative control extends over the regular organisms of the region.
5) No elemental affinity: All elements are balanced in power.
6) Minor lawful evil: Any beings of the chaotic or good alignment are weakened, and devils will attack them. Beings of the lawful evil alignment receive a slight buff to powers.]

“This is indeed the territory of the devils.” Leylin inhaled deeply. He felt like he’d merged into one with the entirety of Baator, an impression he’d been given because he’d devoured Beelzebub before.

But the impression wasn’t necessarily false. His own disposition was quite aligned with the laws of hell, which meant this place could bear the weight of his ambitions. He would soar into the skies!

‘Demigods can traverse planes. I can return to the prime material plane if I want to, but since I’m already here…’ Leylin stroked his chin. ‘Anyway, Debanks Island is quite far from the mainland, and won’t be influenced easily. I can manage my worshippers and their divine spells just as easily from this place. I’ve wanted to make a trip to Baator anyway, so I might as well get on with it…’

Baator had nine levels, called the Nine Hells. It was an ideal destination for travellers, a place where treasure hunters could satisfy their greed and paladins would seethe with rage. As a dimension it was the ultimate embodiment of lawful evil, laced with the cold, harsh cruelty of schemes and ploys.

It was the garden of various devils, including bearded devils, horned devils, ice devils, barbed devils, pit fiends and countless others. They had a hierarchy here, and apart from the devils were also hellcats, hellhounds, imps, kytons, dream eaters, demonic beasts, and even humans!

The devils of the Nine Hells abided by a hierarchical system, with
status obtained through schemes and ruthless action.

“The Nine Hells of Baator, the endless abyss, and the everlasting Underdark. The underground planes of the World of Gods…” All wizards were erudite. On top of that, Leylin had Beelzebub’s memories and researched this land before, so his knowledge of and familiarity with the Nine Hells exceeded even that of those in the celestial planes.

‘Baator has a total of nine levels, a place for fallen souls. Legends say that it was once part of the abyss, from which it later separated itself. The ruler in name is Asmodeus.’ Information on Baator surfaced in Leylin’s mind.

Although Asmodeus was hailed the Supreme of the Nine Hells, he only had control over the Ninth Hell, Nessus, a plain filled with canyons deeper than any marine trench. His control over the other eight hells was limited.

Rumours said that Asmodeus had ascended to his throne through countless battles. He’d schemed his way along, putting together an epic army consisting of pit fiends and greater devils, securing his seat as the leader of the Nine Hells with the assistance of the overlords of each level.

According to Leylin’s own understanding Asmodeus did not have much control over the other hells. The overlords of each level were about the same ranking as him. Of course, Asmodeus himself wouldn’t admit to this matter, making efforts to stand out amongst the rest.

As the most powerful of Archdevils, Asmodeus had unparalleled strength. He was not inferior to any of the greater gods. He’d expanded his influence over Baator in the past several thousand years, showing his wild ambition to unite it all.

When Beelzebub had gone missing from the second level, he’d grasped the chance to strengthen his control of it. Of course, the six remaining Archdevils did not agree. Jealous of Asmodeus, they’d
employed a series of ploys until the Nine Hells had reached a miraculous balance. That was, of course, until Leylin flew in like a butterfly—No, he was a Tyrannosaurus Rex that would disrupt the scales. The forces here now had a new variable to consider!

‘There are eight Archdevils in Baator, with the first level being in a common area that is the frontline of bloody battles. There’s even some gods who’ve housed their divine kingdoms here, like the Kobold God Kurtulmak and the Shark God Sekolah. On top of that, due to the battles with the demons Asmodeus has a great amount of influence here. The Dark Eight, his eight generals, are stationed in this place…

‘As for the second level, Dis, it’s a place I’m extremely familiar with. It was Beelzebub’s fief, and right now he’s probably hiding somewhere inside, deep in slumber…’

With most of his divinity and divine force devoured, Beelzebub had sustained serious injuries. He was recovering even if slowly, with chances of a complete recovery. After all, he was the Archdevil of this level, someone loved by the will of Baator. The fortunes he’d amassed would be enough to tide him through this crisis.

However, Leylin aimed to complete devouring Beelzebub, taking everything in his position!

‘The third level of hell is Minauros, a filthy marsh ruled by Mammon the Lord of Greed. Legends say that if one is tainted by the greed and corruption there, they will sink deep into the marsh and eventually get swallowed by it…’

‘The rest of their levels have their owners as well, with Asmodeus in the ninth…’ Leylin counted on his fingers, ‘Eight Archdevils, plus a few gods and the pit fiends on the First Hell. They’re the strongest in all of Baator…’

These people were exceptionally powerful, and they also had their own forces behind them. Someone able to grow their influence in
hell itself was no easy character, capable of many ploys and conspiracies. However, the more this was true, the more burning desire Leylin felt. “I really want… really want to kill them all…” Leylin had never shied away from powerful enemies and unimaginable difficulty. On the contrary, such things only ignited his fighting spirit and his confidence. He would amass his strength steadily, and finally defeat them in one fell swoop!
A nightmare trod across the barren land that was littered with shattered rocks. Its blazing hooves left a deep imprint wherever it stepped.

*Boom!* A meteorite crashed into the ground, leaving a large pit. However, the horse nimbly avoided it.

This nightmare had a human on its back, the very act of taming a beast such as it indicating that this was no average person. That simple line of reasoning had saved Leylin from many problems.

The roads in this area were filled with regular souls, and even petitioners. It told Leylin that his destination was near.

Lawful evil humans from the prime material plane, if they prayed to devils, had a very high chance of entering Baator after they died. Their souls would morph, making them petitioners or even lesser devils. Some devils liked contorting these souls into grotesque forms, expressing a form of aesthetic view like they were ornaments. These creatures had rather appalled Leylin at first, but after seeing a few of them he came to ignore it.

He stopped the nightmare in front of a soul. This one had pale skin, with twisted eyes and a nose. It seemed to be suffering, but still looked at Leylin with vigour. This was the reverence it had when looking at a powerful devil.

“What’s your name? Do you remember your past?” Leylin noticed that this soul was rather plump, and the originally lavish robes
indicated that he’d led a rather good life back in the prime material plane.
“Lucas… Or something else, who knows… Poor me has to arrive at the Bronze Citadel in three blood days, or my owner will not forgive me…” the soul lamented, “I was just a small merchant from the north in my previous life. I even prayed piously to the Goddess of Wealth…”
Leylin rolled his eyes inwardly. It was extremely common for merchants to turn to Waukeen. Even normal worshippers, as long as they didn’t commit heinous crimes in their pasts, would likely be redeemed and sent to her divine kingdom. As for Lucas, he was either lying, or pretending to be a worshipper; hence his current predicament.
This very exchange showed that these souls had learnt the trademark of the devils, of pretense and deceit.
“Bronze Citadel? That’s my destination as well.” Beelzebub’s memories said the Bronze Citadel was the core of Avernus. It was constructed boorishly, built to be an inflexible structure. The many devils in it were always prepared for war, and since they were often under siege it was expanded and repaired constantly.
“Alright then, esteemed lord, do you need a map or a guide? With the magnanimity of someone at your level, you won’t refuse a reward, will you?” The eyes of the soul spun quickly. Even with a contorted face its intelligence and greed were apparent.
“Or perhaps… a small trade?” Lucas’s thumb and index finger grinded against each other, giving off a very wretched look.
“As expected, you really are suited to hell. Filled with greed as you are, why didn’t you enter Minauros immediately upon death?” A pillar of evil light rose up from Leylin’s body, and the surroundings were dyed crimson. Everything came to a standstill, and even the meteors crashing down from the sky were stopped in mid-air.
This was a Devil Aura. It was one of Beelzebub’s powers that had
been devoured by Leylin, finally revitalised and emerging from a corner of his soul. The A.I. Chip provided data on the ability.

[Devil Aura: Passive domain. Restricted to powerful devils, it allows the user to naturally impose fear upon others. Any lesser devils in the vicinity are put under control, confusion, and fear. Note: The aura attracts the hostility of other powerful devils. If the controlled devil already has an owner, a negotiation will be held.]

“This light that belongs only to pure evil… You… are you a pit fiend?” Lucas’ body collapsed helplessly to the ground, his eyes radiating fear, “Master… Lucas’ master!”

‘As expected, Devil Aura works differently in hell. It can’t vanquish the devil in sight immediately.’ Leylin shook his head. As Lucas wailed for help, a contractual force arose from his body. It finally formed the figure of a night hag wearing a pointed hat. “Jiejie… Ancient and powerful devil, has my slave offended you?” The night hag’s voice sounded coarser than an owl’s chirps, making one shudder in fear.

These night hags often appeared in Baator and the abyss during transaction, acting as merchants. Collecting souls was their favourite pastime. Although what had appeared was just a phantom, it still showed strength greater than that of a rank 15 wizard.

The night hag could not see through Leylin at all. Although he seemed to just be an evil human, the Devil Aura and his alignment could not be faked. Thus, she assumed the he was a powerful devil who’d assumed human form. Leylin’s divine force masked his identity anyway, and coupled with his own evil alignment even an Archdevil wouldn’t be able to unmask him.

“Indeed. He seems to be a little out of it, with his intelligence corrupted by greed. He actually wanted to strike a deal with me,” Leylin shook his head, “Couldn’t even understand the underlying
traits of a trade. No wonder he’s just a normal soul, unable to even
turn into a lesser devil…”
“Jiejie… I do hope to be someone worthy of a trade with your
distinguished self… As the price for offending you, I can sell him
to you for a contract, the price being one regular soul…”
The night hag looked at Leylin, but was regrettably declined, “How
foolish do you think I am, to trade for this fellow using a soul…”
He pointed nonchalantly at Lucas who was shuddering in fear. “It’s
obvious that you cheated him, or used some kind of underhanded
means to nullify the original contract with his owner…”
“What a pity…” The night hag did not show the slightest form of
repentance. Just like Leylin said, the soul was something she’d
picked up along the way, not worth much.
“You can deal with Lucas any way you like; just remember to repay
me later.” The phantom flickered, and was about to vanish.
“Wait!” Leylin said just then, holding the night hag back. “I’m not
very interested in this soul, but there is something you own that I’d
very much like…”
Leylin continued, “I’m a traveller from Dis. Much of the
information regarding Avernus is now out of date, so I need the
freshest information about this place. I also need information about
the Blood War, and detailed maps… You’ll be very satisfied with
my price.”
“Jiejie… I do like generous customers!” The night hag cackled like
an owl, “Ever since your lord disappeared, a lot of devils from Dis
have been coming here…”
The night hag handed the information over to Leylin, even adding
some details regarding Dis as if by accident. To be privy to such
information, the being had to be both strong and been a resident
for a long time.
However, Leylin had Beelzebub’s own memories. He knew the
lands like the back of his palm, so the deceit and trickery planted
within didn’t affect him at all.

“Hehe… Okay then, powerful traveller from Dis. I need three regular souls, or something similar in exchange.” A green parchment floated beside the night hag. A phosphoric glow surrounded it, giving it a mysterious vibe.

‘A spatial spell? Baator seems to have some good stuff.’ Leylin’s eyes flashed, and three slumbering souls appeared beside him.

“This…” The night hag gave off a fervent gaze, as if seeing good liquor. She stepped forward immediately, and continued to give her approval.

“Jiejie! Very powerful souls, indeed. It’s a pity that they’re branded by gods. That’s a huge problem, I want at least five of them to make up for the defect.”

“Are you kidding me?” Leylin said indifferently, and his Devil Aura grew even more intense as it pushed the night hag away.

“The souls of pious worshippers are pure and powerful. Furthermore, the gods that they pray to are now dead, so there won’t be any consequences. These souls are worth at least two to three times a regular one, and I’m already offering you three. Your greed knows no bounds, Mammon would likely be a better lord for you to serve.”

The night hag wasn’t embarrassed at all once exposed. It was the most basic nature of a devil to haggle. She agreed to the trade in the end, but Leylin refused to sign any form of contract with her. Devils were experts at deceiving people through contracts, and Leylin was not in the mood to engage in wordplay with a night hag.

“Jiejie… We shall meet again, generous guest…” The night hag vanished into thin air, along with Lucas. Having borne the cost of the teleportation, he was sucked dry and had his body crushed by the void.
so she used the body on the other side of the transmission to supply energy for the delivery?’ The A.I. Chip’s light flashed as it recorded the incident, allowing Leylin to see through the ability that the night hag had displayed.

It required much less energy to send a phantom than one’s true body. Had it only been that, Lucas would still have had some hope of survival. However, the night hag had sent over a scroll of information, something that Lucas had to act as the energy for. Lucas had completely disappeared, the price for the sheepskin scroll Leylin now held. All his energy had been poured into delivering it.

‘So not even a single petitioner’s energy is spared. Devils are truly masters of accounting and meticulous plans. If I hadn’t factored Lucas’ cost into the price, she absolutely would’ve demanded a greater payment from me…’

After this deal, Leylin’s understanding of the the cunning and shrewdness of devils had deepened.

‘However… The line of contract that I saw on his body was real. Although I had to pay a little, I got what I wanted in the end.’

[Beep! Scroll scanned. 13.86% is fake or miscellaneous, discarded. Remaining portions merged with relevant items. Organising… Transmitted to host’s memory.]

‘Looks like the night hag didn’t deceive me. Is it because of my
strength?’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Also, the souls of these fanatics are unexpectedly useful.’

Leylin had used the dormant souls of some of Akaban’s worshippers for the trade. Souls were an absolute, hard currency used in the abyss and hell, and in order to gain enough souls devils and demons disregarded the churches to conduct massacres. They stepped over the corpses of their comrades in their rush to the prime material plane, and were the causes of much slaughter. Compared to the painstaking efforts of those demons and devils, Leylin had simply broken into a demigod’s shrine and acquired several hundred years of Akaban’s soul reserves. Sakartes’ reserves of pious and powerful souls had been accumulated over several hundred years, and they were a treasure that could even tempt Archdevils.

Leylin had no way of turning those believers’ souls into his own petitioners, and directly absorbing them was far too much of a waste. Using them like this could be considered as making use of trash.

‘However…’ Leylin’s lips curved into a faint smile, as if he was looking at some sinister scene in the future. ‘A native’s soul is indeed different from souls from the prime material plane. The contamination from those souls is something that even gods dread.’ The power of faith could be considered the strength of a soul, and the faith of a native was poison that even gods dared not touch. The contamination originated from the depths of their souls, and those without Leylin’s power of observation wouldn’t be able to tell at all.

Needless to say, Leylin had faked the souls of Akaban’s worshippers for the trade. He’d made them look no different from ordinary souls on the surface. Many demons and devils would be affected once these souls became a part of the general market, something Leylin looked forward to from the depths of his heart.
Now that he had an accurate map, Leylin picked up his pace. As he drew closer to the Bronze Citadel, more and more devils appeared around him. It seemed like he could see armoured devils marching in their camps every day. However, perhaps it was due to his lawful alignment or his powerful aura, few came over to bother him. He arrived at Bronze Citadel after a peaceful journey. This city was known for being cast into 12 concentric rings of sturdy bronze walls. Each ring was equipped with a powerful and sinister war machine, which was both formidable and serious. When Leylin first laid eyes on the Bronze Citadel, he felt as if he was looking at a steel beast laying on the ground. There were many lesser devils and imps working hard to reinforce the citadel’s defences alongside petitioners. One could see a lot of bone-like scaffolding and supporting pillars, and hammers and shovels were laid out nearby. The citadel was being expanded, with no end in sight. Although all signs pointed towards a bustling scene outside, the imps, lesser devils, and petitioners were performing their work methodically. The entire perimeter of the fort was like a huge and precise machine, ordered in its motion. Visitors lined up outside the Bronze Citadel in rows, accepting the inspection of the garrison. They entered the fort in an orderly fashion. Had this been the abyss, everyone was likely to have broken into a riot long ago. However, devils were different. They were lawful creatures, obeying the system was in their nature. The Nine Hells especially favoured such ‘good children’ who abided by the rules. Leylin could only shrug and join the queue. A group of lesser devils were in charge of this area. Most of them were barbazu,
otherwise known as bearded devils. They had the goat horns and scales characteristic of devils, as well as wings of black bone. Most were armoured, and one of their hands looked like a steel hook. They were covered in thorny barbs, and the flickering cold light and poison intimidated others immediately. These bearded devils sometimes worked as guides for evil souls, but it seemed like that wasn’t available here. As a result, their tempers were rather poor. Leylin had seen several poor devils dragged away in front of him, suffering the torture and interrogation of chain devils, kytons.

The queue slowly but steadily moved forwards, and very soon it was Leylin’s turn.

“State your name, identity and proof of your allegiance…” a two-headed barbazu said from in front of him. There was an imp nearby as well, its broken wings pattering behind its back and evil eyes filled with greed. Flames continuously cycled between its mouth and the rest of its face, just as poisonous insects crawled in and out of its various orifices.

“I’m from the Second Hell, Dis. I belong to the lord’s legions, under the jurisdiction of pit fiend Azlok,” Leylin parted his hair a little, and a powerful aura transmitted out to form an obscure mark. Nobody in Baator was truly without a master. The devils were strictly restricted by the hierarchy, and each one had a hierarchy. Their superiors were governed by even more powerful devils, going all the way up to the eight Archdevils of hell.

“From Dis as well! That place is getting more and more chaotic after the Archdevil disappeared…” The imp mumbled to itself, revealing a fearful expression on its face.

Leylin’s aura was undoubtedly that of a greater devil, and the imp had only just become a lesser one. Although superiors didn’t have jurisdiction over their colleagues’ subordinates, Leylin could easily kill it if he so wished.
Thinking back to its previous plots and the competitors who now eyed its position, the imp’s heart grew cold. It subconsciously switched to a more pandering expression.
“There’s been many devils from Dis here recently, you should take care, my Lord.”
“Mm, I hope to hide this record for now, and obtain news about my rivals,” Leylin said in a low voice while nodding.
“Oh?” The imp’s expression grew sluggish, but it was soon pulled aside by the bearded devil behind it. “Ten coins. Or other riches. I’ll give you the news immediately.”
Devils could very easily be bribed. Leylin could not help but feel slightly sorry for those poor devils who could not afford the bribe before him.
“Here, give me the information,” he carelessly took out a flaxen bag and opened it a little, revealing the lustre of the souls within.
Be it coins, items, or riches, everything had an equivalent amount of souls in Baator. The imp and the bearded devil glanced at each other, before very happily replying in unison, “No problem, we have a deal!”

……

With all that done, Leylin finally entered the Bronze Citadel. Many lesser devils mingled with each other here, before leaving for the Blood War. With lower devils and petitioners thrown into the mix, it formed a clamorous and lively bazaar.
Leylin was currently strolling through the streets, thinking back to the information he’d just received. His eyes held a trace of wistfulness.
‘The impact of Beelzebub’s disappearance was greater than I ever expected.’ Leylin could not help but inwardly sigh at this. The laws of hell were incomparably strict. The devils formed a vast and
precise hierarchy, and the distinction between ranks was sternly enforced. At the peak of this hierarchy was Asmodeus, the Supreme of Baator and the master of the Dark Eight. The Dark Eight, Asmodeus’ eight generals, had many greater devils and pit fiends beneath them, each one in possession of a great many subordinates. They put in great effort in their pursuit of status and power. Normally, all this led to a tranquil environment. However, once one of the cornerstones of the hierarchy was lost in Beelzebub, it created a chain reaction that led to a complete collapse. His disappearance had caused the strict hierarchal network to lose a majority of its social fabric, causing chaos in Dis. If it wasn’t for the remaining 7 Archdevils taking action to instil order, perhaps the second layer of hell would have been sucked into the abyss. The devils would have become the laughing stock of the entire world if that happened, nailed down to the rack of shame. Still, a lot of pit fiends and other Archdevils contested for the position of Dis’ Lord. Had Asmodeus been the true ruler of Baator, he could’ve recommended a greater devil or pit fiend from his own faction to the position, or sent his own children. However, he was only nominally the Supreme, and his authority was limited to the Ninth Hell Nessus. Besides, Beelzebub was only missing, not dead. His authority hadn’t disappeared completely yet.
A uthority or rank in the Nine Hells, put bluntly, was the right to the origin force of Baator. As such, it was of paramount importance, and became the foundation of the devils’ hierarchy.

The eight Archdevils divided most of this authority between themselves. They had tight control over the devils under them, and could even decide which devils would rise and fall in rank. Because of this, without the approval of their direct subordinates, it was impossible for low-ranked devils to move up.

The lords of each hell had their own individual subordinates, and possessed an absolute right over their lives. This was evident from how Leylin could do as he wished in the prime material plane using Beelzebub’s memories. He’d easily taken care of the church of gluttony.

Devil society was like a bureaucracy. Status was difficult to obtain, and it was impossible to advance in rank without pushing someone else down. This made it so that the ascension of a greater devil left another one demoted in rank. The new one would gain tens of enemies that were eyeing the same spot. It was so competitive that it was almost pitiful.

The disappearance of a lord was an unprecedented matter in Baator, unheard of since the ancient dusk of the gods. Now, the pitfiends, greater devils, and even the more powerful devils that were loyal to Beelzebub found that they had lost their powerful
These people lost their senses when met with the possibility of advancing to the highest rank in Baator. In such turbulent darkness, Asmodeus and the six other Archdevils joined in and caused Dis to enter even more chaos. This was also the reason why numerous devils left.

If the Nine Hells were analogous to a region in ancient times, Asmodeus was the emperor in name. The remaining seven Archdevils possessed their own lands, subordinate kings with troops and generals of their own, the pit fiends and other greater devils.

The emperor wished for more power, but these kings all wanted to increase their territories as well. The generals under them worked extremely hard, hoping for a chance to be promoted. Some even wished to take over their master’s position. Conspiracies were rife, and the most ambitious side would have the last laugh. The reward? The greatest authority in the Nine Hells.

Beelzebub’s disappearance was like the loss of a king. The resulting unrest was only the tip of the iceberg. This alone put Leylin on guard.

‘The Second Hell has already descended into panic. While Beelzebub still holds power, many have begun to sense his weakness…’

Leylin looked at the ordered devils as he strolled around the entirety of the Bronze Citadel, the place bustling with life. He then stopped in front of a demon’s skull, as if admiring the valuable spoils of war.

‘The devils think this is a conspiracy. Beelzebub’s underlings are saying their leader isn’t as weak as the rumours state, and he’s only hiding in a dark corner waiting for everyone to come after him. He’ll capture all of them in one shot, they say… Quite a few lords have done such things since the race came into being. Even
Asmodeus himself used a similar strategy once, and to great effect…
‘Other rumours say that Beelzebub has been captured by another lord, and is imprisoned somewhere having his energy extracted… These devils are really quite imaginative…
‘I stole most of his law of gluttony, as well as almost all his divinity and divine force. He’s definitely in a deep sleep right now, and no matter what happens in the outside world it’ll be hard for him to awaken…’ Leylin’s main body was the one who’d reduced Beelzebub to his current state, so there was nobody who knew the truth better than himself.
Having taken over much of his power and memories, Leylin naturally knew how grievous such an injury was. Unless Beelzebub defeated his Warlock body and devoured everything in return, it was basically impossible for him to return to his previous state. A weak lord was a form of prey that his underlings anticipated.
‘There’s numerous secret lairs and treasures made just in preparation for this. They’re all over Baator, as well as across other planes…’ Leylin had a grim look in his eyes. Because of their sly natures, their ability to set up safety nets was something nobody could compare to.
‘It seems like he’s considered the idea that someone might obtain his memories. The probability of him using those lairs is minuscule, and there could even be traps there instead…’ Numerous thoughts crossed Leylin’s mind, allowing him to quickly come to a decision, ‘Whatever it is, I have to go to Dis!’
Leylin would find the Lord of Gluttony, and devour everything that was his. It would make for the best opportunity for his main body to advance, something he would never give up on.
‘Authority amongst devils, as well as access to the World Will. How interesting!’ The astuteness he had as a Magus combined with the origin force detection of a legendary arcanist allowed Leylin to
sense something. Although Baator had great amounts of World Origin Force, there was no complete will. It was possible that the World Will that controlled this origin force had been split into eight, one part each going to the lord of each level above the first.
Leylin now had access to much of Beelzebub’s powers, which gave him authority over the World Origin Force. He could demote or promote any pit fiends and greater devils. He also had the authority to kill the devils subordinate to the other lords. This was a decision of Baator’s origin, something that couldn’t be fought or changed.
‘Devils are far too pitiful compared to demons. They need the approval of their lords to advance, and it uses up a large amount of soul energy as well. The higher seats have long been filled, and one can only wait for the right chance to ascend.’
Leylin suddenly felt thankful that he hadn’t been reincarnated in hell. However, further thought told him that with Beelzebub’s authority there was nothing holding him back. He would advance rapidly as a devil, all the way to the highest echelons. He would control others, not the other way around.
‘As long as I kill Beelzebub and take over that last bit of law and authority, I’ll immediately become the lord of Dis,’ he realised. He also knew that because of the chaos on the prime material plane, as well as the great authority in Baator, people still thought Beelzebub held on to his power. The terror of that protected the sleeping Archdevil, preventing others from killing him. It seemed rather ironic.
‘The authority to access Baator’s World Origin Force…’ Leylin closed his eyes. Ever since he’d come to the Nine Hells he’d felt like he was one with the place. The world itself seemed to answer to his very breaths, its power ready to listen to him. Upon his command it would burst forth, becoming an absolute pressure that dominated everyone else.
Of course, he could not use this as he pleased, or he would face
unthinkable consequences. However, Leylin had already estimated
that the strength he could muster with the power of this authority
was greater even than what he’d gained when he’d sacrificed the
Wisdom Tree sapling to awaken the Purgatory World’s World Will.
‘With this boost, even ordinary devil in hell can use the strength of
a Magus of laws without restriction… It’s similar to the gods. If a
mortal were lucky enough to acquire godhood, they can jump past
all the loops to become a powerful being of the World of Gods
straight away.’
Leylin suddenly understood how the hierarchy of the devils
worked, ‘Lesser, intermediate, and greater devils, as well as the pit
fiends… It’s all a display of how much power they have in this
world. However, the lords have true access to Baator’s origin force,
what the rest obtain is only a slight bonus bestowed upon them by
the lords they serve. It’s difficult to move up and down the
hierarchy of devils due to this, and with how easy it is to recall it
caused the false opinion that the lords of Baator can give and take
life as they wish…’
Understanding all of this, much of the fog in his mind seemed to
dissipate, allowing him to see the truth of the Nine Hells,
‘Asmodeus and the other six Archdevils want to take over the
authority in Beelzebub’s possession!’
Having come to know their true aims, Leylin would find it much
easier to counter their plans. He could even connect this to other
matters, ‘Then Avernus should technically have a lord as well…
Where is he?’
Someone with the authority to the First Hell was on the same level
as Beelzebub. He would face no difficulty in taking over the place.
‘Perhaps there are too many powerful devils on the level, or maybe
the existence of the two true gods and their divine kingdoms causes
the authority to be split further… In that case, there might be rogue
devils here that don’t fit into the hierarchy.’
With authority over Baator’s origin force, even if it was partial, a devil would gain complete independence. They could advance without the approval of a superior! This was obviously an existence that the eight lords would never allow to exist.
The deceit and slyness of the devils was something Leylin knew extremely well. If a devil had nothing restricting it, what sort of chaos would it bring to Baator? Just the thought caused him to shudder; there was never a lack of ambitious beings among the devils.

Leylin then thought of another possibility. ‘Of course, it might also be because the eight Archdevils are too scheming and powerful. They’ve divided up the authority that should’ve been sole property of the Ninth Hell, causing an equilibrium to be maintained.’

As he was considering these issues, he’d unwittingly released his aura. Along with his grasp of the authority, he’d alarmed a tremendous existence.

“Such an ancient and noble aura, this is a might only Archdevils possess. Who is it?” Loud draconic roars sounded out, and a gigantic five-coloured dragon crawled out of a cave. This cave was next to a skull that formed a huge base.

It had five sinister dragon heads, each of varying colour. Its huge claws caused tiny earthquakes with each footstep, making the legendary dragon Leylin had seen before seem like a baby.

“It’s the area’s guardian, Chromatic Dragon Tiamat.” It was obvious that the dragon strolled around the region regularly. The devils did not seem to panic.

Leylin had only leaked his aura for a mere moment before hiding himself well. Tiamat’s five huge heads smelt the air, but in the end
could only shrink back without any other choice. Peace and order was quickly restored on the streets. Many people continued travelling, but Leylin stood looking at the cave the dragon had disappeared into, seemingly deep in thought.

‘Guardian of the Bronze Citadel, Chromatic Dragon Tiamat. She’s a humongous dragon with power comparable to gods.’

The A.I. Chip had managed to scan Tiamat in the short period she’d come out, and it now presented the information to Leylin:

Abilities: 1. Epic Dragon Breath: Each of Tiamat’s five heads can attack using different types of breaths, namely frost, acid, corrosion, lightning, and fire.
2. Fierce Aura: Tiamat’s presence alone causes unease in her enemies. This power is automatically under effect when Tiamat takes flight, charges, or attacks.
3: Spells. Tiamat is a rank 20 evil priest. She also holds the power of a domain as well as divine spells.
4. Magical ability. As a rank 20 sorcerer, she can use the following spells thrice a day: Command Plants, Control Weather, Darkness, Dominate, Fog Cloud, Gust, Arcane Mirage, Plant Growth, Suggestion, Swarm, Veil, Ventriloquism.
Feats: Alchemy, Deceit, Focus, Diplomacy, Intimidation, Draconic Knowledge, Sense Intent, Spell Identification, Survival, Battle Casting, Flying Attack, Heavy Damage – Adept, Instant Cast (coupled with power of domain), Acrobatic Flight.]

‘This is the might of a real legendary being that’s lived for a long time. Not only are all her stats high, she also has great experience and background. The abilities and feats alone make her comparable to demigods…’

Leylin had an interested look on his face, ‘Also, Tiamat seems to have male companions of five different evil races. When they act
together, they’re strong enough to fight the God of Kobolds and the God of Sharks. Of course, that’s only outside their divine kingdoms…’

Based on Beelzebub’s memories, the Bronze Citadel was at the very frontlines of battle between Baator and the abyss. It was often attacked by demons. Although many demons were chaotic and crazed like wild dogs, they outnumbered the devils twenty to one. They caused great damage to the citadel.

Unfortunately for them, the devils depended on order and schemes. They would never allow the demons to break into the fort, on the other hand even planning numerous campaigns into the abyss to gain the upper hand in battle.

However, with no distinct outcome yet in the battles between chaos and order, some even suspected that this would continue to the end of the world.

This extended war also gave Asmodeus the opportunity to lay his hands on Avernus. He took advantage of his eight devil generals, gaining control over the Bronze Citadel during a siege and obtaining the authority to station them here. He now controlled half the citadel.

Rumours said that Tiamat had gradually been reduced to a mere symbol, the guardian of the Bronze Citadel.

‘The Bronze Citadel influences less than a third of Avernus, and he only took control of half of that…’ Leylin shook his head, feeling that Asmodeus’ title as the Supreme of Baator was quite the joke.

“The demons! The demons are here!” “Wild dogs! A wave of wild dogs is attacking!”

A shrieking alarm sounded out all of a sudden. Leylin frowned, his divine conscience immediately finding a large amount of chaotic power moving towards the Bronze Citadel. The demons obviously didn’t attempt to conceal themselves, and were spotted miles away.

“Begin preparing dinner.” Eight great evil auras rose up,
representing the highest power in the city other than the pit fiends that were vassals of Archdevils.

‘The Dark Eight… Asmodeus’ loyal dogs are attacking… Does this mean this siege is a scheme to deal with the demons?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed. With the devils’ order and care, it was impossible for their lair to be attacked without warning. The only possibility was that they’d planned something against the demons, hoping to make use of the Bronze Citadel to wipe them out and reduce their might. Such plans had been implemented many times already, but the demons still got tricked every time. Crazed as they were in their bloodlust, they did not even understand the concept of schemes. Besides, the glory of attacking the devils’ lair was the top priority in their simple minds.

However, Leylin soon found himself unable to laugh. Under the command of the Dark Eight, all the devils in the fort marched out, as if there was an invisible network that was passing orders. Nupperibos followed lemures, who themselves followed spinagon. Under the lesser devils, they formed squadrons led by barbazu, imps, and excruciarchs, mid-ranked devils. These squadrons formed up behind greater devils like osyluths, barbed devils, horned devils, ice devils, and many others. At the summit were the Dark Eight, and everything combined into a hierarchy that distributed work like a beehive or ant nest. The army was very efficient, and worked in perfect harmony.

‘This is the power of authority.’ Leylin quickly understood how this network worked. There was a natural difference in the types of beings here, as well as the power of their authority. The Dark Eight were pit fiends, the highest rank of devils. They’d also received power from Asmodeus, gaining some access to Baator’s origin force. Although it wasn’t direct, the power they displayed when they banded together could overwhelm anything. It allowed the devils to maintain control of the Bronze Citadel.
By this logic, any Archdevil of Baator controlled the lives and advancement of devils that were pit fiends and below. Even if these devils were under the jurisdiction of other Archdevils, they would still feel a natural pressure arising from the same origin force.

‘The rules of Baator give some freedom to any other pit fiend inside the Bronze Citadel, but it still has to listen to the commands of the Dark Eight. However, it can still reject them at the cost of torture or demotion, depending on the Archdevil it follows…’

Leylin looked at the devils beside him. They all retained their wits, but still did not reject the commands of the generals. Even though these greater devils served different lords, they still carried out their orders in silence, as if this was how things should be.

‘This is the authority of the World Origin Force. Every difference in rank is like the gap between the heavens and the earth…’ He hadn’t noticed it closely before, but once he discovered the difference Leylin immediately sensed an enormous network through his authority over the origin force. An immense will from the depths of the network connected to the Dark Eight. The connection also gave Leylin some other information, but he ignored it.

[Beep! Discovered digitised network. Automatically obtained highest authority. Organising…] The A.I. Chip was now working at top speed.

‘If the eight pit fiends work together, they can take over the Bronze Citadel. Even Tiamat wouldn’t dare underestimate them. However…’

Leylin felt strongly that he could take over this network with but a thought, becoming an existence above the Dark Eight that commanded all the devils in the Bronze Citadel. After all, his authority came from the Archdevil of the Second Hell. Unlike the Dark Eight whose authority was second-hand, he had direct control,
Unfortunately, the moment he did that he’d expose his identity to the other lords, which didn’t serve his intentions. Once the A.I. Chip was done analysing the network, Leylin immediately commanded, ‘A.I. Chip, begin concealment!’ [Beep! Mission established. Beginning concealing process. Activating control behind the scenes] the A.I. Chip intoned loyally.
Without a single Archdevil inside the Bronze Citadel, Leylin now held the greatest authority. He had fooled the Dark Eight with a single illusion, making them think he was a high-level leader commanding a great army. Rather, he’d secretly changed his own position given the secret authority he’d obtained, which was rather easy to do.

The A.I. Chip had been tasked with making this process even easier for him.

[Beep! Host’s data has been altered, now editing the host’s position within the network.] In just a moment, the A.I. Chip’s information surfaced before Leylin’s eyes.

[Current identity: Greater Devil — Leycian (Horned Devil), from the plane of Dis. Allegiance: Beelzebub. Status: Temporarily commandeered by a higher level of authority: Baalzephon of the Dark 8.]

Once he joined the network, Leylin immediately joined the lesser devils who’d already been mobilised. He no longer felt like an outsider. The A.I. Chip’s prompts even showed him that he had tens of lesser devils as his direct subordinates.

‘This feeling… really is exquisite. No wonder devils can often defeat superior forces that are over 20 times more powerful than them,’ Leylin mounted his nightmare and growled as he revealed the appearance of a horned devil. This was fake of course, but even an Archdevil would be fooled into thinking it wasn’t.
The nightmare neighed, expressing its bloodthirst and desire for slaughter. Its flaming hooves left deep marks behind on the street. “Officer Leycian, Hanalin reports to you.” With the speed of the nightmare, they reached the second tier of the bronze walls in the blink of an eye. By the time Leylin arrived, a large squad had already assembled for him. A dozen lesser devils stood at the forefront of the squad, not exchanging a single word with each other. Once they saw Leylin, they all confirmed that he was their superior. This group was mixed. There were imps and barbazu, as well as steel devils, kytons, and an erinyes. There were also some rare falxugon and amnizu. Hanalin was the beautiful erinyes, and she stood at the front of the squad in a graceful bow. ‘So there’s even an erinyes, that’s pretty lucky!’ Leylin nodded and accepted their pledges of loyalty. Erinyes were lesser devils, a power the lower devils could not match. To advance to one required a transformation of the soul, and the criteria for that were very harsh. Erinyes were always pampered toys of greater devils. After receiving their vows of loyalty, he was now the commanding officer of this brigade of devils. “Mm, the rest of you— report your names,” Leylin imposingly commanded. “I’m Al!” “Buck!” “Your servant is named Kimmel!” One lesser demon after another respectfully announced their names— of course it was not their true names, but their nicknames. Leylin was only their current commander, and as a greater devil he couldn’t command these devils to reveal their biggest secret to him. Of course, if he’d used his authority as an Archdevil they wouldn’t have been able to resist. “Good. Come with me beyond the walls, we are in charge of the defence of a fifteen kilometre stretch west.” Leylin only asked the lesser devils for their names. He cared not about the lower devils
and captains, instead rapidly leading the group to the western section of the city wall. Many devils were stationed along the perimeter, the only gap being the section he was in charge of. The defensive equipment had all been prepared for him ahead of time.

“Hurry. Al, you’re in charge here. Buck, here. Kimmel, you’ll be responsible for the reserve troops.” With the A.I. Chip’s help, Leylin completed his own preparations rapidly, “And you, Hanalin, you’ll serve as my communications officer.”

“I am honoured to serve,” The erinyes stood by Leylin’s side. Leylin’s current appearance was rather wicked, but also greatly charming. Her eyes were filled with admiration and reverence. Naturally, Leylin suspected that Hanalin cared a bit more about his status as a greater devil rather than his appearance. But they were currently at the city wall, and this was not the time to flirt with his team. It seemed like once all the devils assembled into place, a line of fire could be seen in the distance.

‘This kind of formation…’ Leylin surveyed the scene from a higher position, speechless, ‘Perhaps today I can finally see the rumoured scene of military chaos? They’re running around like headless chickens!’

At the end of the wilderness was a huge legion of demons. Their formation was currently in complete chaos— No, they couldn’t even be said to be in formation. They looked like a bunch of headless ants crawling everywhere, some even moving in the wrong directions. They were tearing and biting apart their own brethren. Trampling over each other at every moment.

This sprawling mess ambled over, and it was no wonder that even if they outnumbered the citadel twentyfold the devils didn’t get worked about it. Instead, their eyes were filled with ridicule. Even if it was like this, Leylin discovered that not a single one of the devils on the wall had rushed rashly into action, or been
provoked. Even the lowest of petitioners stood still.
“Our victory is assured,” Leylin sighed in a low voice.
‘Await orders, sir! Before General Baalzephon has issued the command, none are permitted to fight the enemy!’ A messenger delivered the news of the latest command to Leylin and his eight officers.
‘It looks like the original network can only decide position and subordinacy. The fine details of command must be left to the devils themselves to control… No, perhaps the Dark Eight themselves have the authority to directly control the network, but the consumption of energy and authority is too great. As a result, they never use it apart from in the very beginning.’ After receiving the missive, Leylin kept the slightly restless devils under control, allowing the demons to draw even closer.
Looking from his vantage point, Leylin saw many demons in front of him closing the distance. They were mostly dretches and quasits, cannon fodder. Mixed in with the lower demons were lesser demons like vrocks, hezrou and glabrezu. There were even legendary-ranked demons, such as balors and six-armed mariliths. Balors were powerful demons of the abyss, possessing a control of fire that allowed them to go toe to toe with pit fiends. Leylin could now see the scales of every demon down below, and the frenzy in their wicked eyes.
“Fire!” A balor cried out loudly, and many demons shot out fireballs, filling the sky with a rain of fire.
Although most of the fireballs fell on their comrades, as well as some unlucky flying demons who were shot down from the sky, some of the fireballs landed on the Bronze Citadel.
“Activate the primary energy defence,” Leylin calmly ordered. Soon after, a layer of defensive energy surfaced above the citadel’s wall, completely blocking the attacks. With the devils’ fire resistance, even the blazing heat that made it through didn’t really
affect them.
With just a single wave of attacks, the demons had killed thousands upon thousands of creatures, although most of them were their own comrades. Of course, with their dim minds and confusion, perhaps they hadn’t meant to do it at all.
Following all the slaughter and death, the demons grew even more berserk. They roared and bellowed, trampling all over the corpses of their kin as they violently attacked the Bronze Citadel.
“Attack!” With the signal to attack given, many of the commanding officers let out their own roars. The entire citadel seemed to become a powerful war machine in an instant, as the devils used their armour as well as the walls and artillery to destroy large swathes of demons.
However, demons were indeed the most insane and chaotic of creatures. The disadvantage was not enough to put them in fear, instead only intensifying their bloodthirst.
‘With how it’s going, they can seize about half the wall with some difficulty, losing half of their own army in the process. However, this won’t be much use. The citadel has eleven more…’ Leylin speechlessly speculated on the fate of these demons. If they did not change their strategies, their fate was certain.
[Beep! Host has received a mission from Baalzephon! Details: Feign defeat, retreat to the 11th city wall, and defend it.] Rare as it was, Baalzephon transmitted an order directly through the network. ‘It looks like my previous hypothesis was partly correct. Baalzephon has the authority to use the network, or perhaps he can only contact other greater devils. Which means he can only issue important missions through this network, and other orders need to be more conventional. It looks like his authority is difficult to use…’
This was Leylin not understanding the struggles of the weak. These pit fiends did indeed possess a part of Asmodeus’ authority, and
could be said to be barely below the eight Archdevils. However, the control they had was false in the end. Their abilities were restricted, so how could they be as wasteful and extravagant as him?

“Hanalin,” Leylin commanded without the least hesitation.

“Sir!” The erinyes’ expression was extremely grave. After all, if they lost the war and were convicted, she had a high chance of being demoted to a nupperibo, devils who undertook the most dishonourable work. It would be a fate worse than death.

“We need to feign defeat, and retreat slowly to the 11th city wall,” Leylin ordered.

“Are we going to surround them completely?” Hanalin’s eyes held a trace of excitement, and she rapidly alerted the others to the new commands. She also tried her hardest to appear intelligent in front of Leylin.

‘She’s chock full of schemes and intrigue… Keeping her by my side would be too troublesome.’ Little did she know, Leylin had a completely negative impression of the erinyes from the beginning.

The devils’ movements were strikingly coordinated and unified. They abandoned the original wall, and began to retreat in an orderly fashion. The demons however could not see the plot for what it was, and they all fought to outdo each other as they jumped into the middle of a trap.
The Dark Eight can’t simply want to kill some demons…’ Having retreated to the eleventh city wall, Leylin’s eyes flashed as he saw the encirclement gradually taking shape. ‘If we just rely on the walls to kill the enemy, then the stronger demons will still manage to flee in the end. Just killing a group of dretches, who can be generated every day without fail, will not harm the enemy whatsoever… ‘Baalzephon is most likely targeting the demon corps’ greater demons, such as mariliths, balors, or even flame balors.’ Although the demon army had strength in numbers, that was dwindling. As they fell deeper into the trap, the greater demons followed them in as well.

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“Get ready! We need to teach those wild dogs of the abyss a lesson they’ll never forget!” Eight strong pit fiends congregated at the highest point of the battlefield. They were even more powerful than the rest of their kin. These were the Dark Eight, Asmodeus’ confidantes. They controlled the elites of the devils’ army, and were the generals in charge of the Blood War. If they could suppress the demons with all their might, pushing them back into the Plain of Infinite Portals, they could obtain the favour of Baator’s World Origin Force as well as praise from
Asmodeus. A vague rumour had stirred up the Dark Eight recently, and they’d begun to build up their merits. After all, the prize was the throne of an Archdevil!

Pit fiends stood near the peak of devil society. If they coveted anything at all, it was to overthrow the reigning Archdevil of their Hell and take their throne. The Archdevil of Dis had disappeared, and Asmodeus himself had changed a little recently. They finally saw an opportunity to fulfill their desires.

“I’ll need your help!” A member of the Dark Eight arrived in the vicinity of Tiamat’s cavern.

“Of course. I only need you to honour your promise after everything is done.” A tremendous voice boomed from the depths of the cavern, accompanied by a formidable draconic aura. Loud roars of male dragons could be heard from within as well.

“Not a problem. We have already signed a contract, after all. The reputation of the devils is well-known throughout the multiverse!” The pit fiend smiled as it left.

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“Get moving!” Leylin sensed that the atmosphere had changed, and a great wave of commands were being transmitted. The devils carried the orders out perfectly.

The devils purposefully pretended to lose, and the eleventh wall of the Bronze Citadel was breached. The tenth wall soon followed, then the ninth, all the way until the 6th wall near the core district. Seeing that they could capture the Bronze Citadel itself, many of the demons went completely berserk. This was an unprecedented feat in their history.

The entirety of the citadel had become a big lure. It thinned the demons out, forming a trap for them to fall into.
“Now!” The eight pit fiends appeared at the forefront of the battlefield, their thunderous voices reverberating throughout the Bronze Citadel.

*Roar!* A teleportation spell flashed brightly, and the enormous figure of a chromatic dragon descended upon the land. The demons who did not dodge in time were squished to pulp. This was the former master of the Bronze Citadel, Chromatic Dragon Tiamat!

“Remember your promises!” Tiamat roared into the sky, her enormous body directly blocking the gap in the city wall. Her draconic aura erupted, almost tangible in the atmosphere.

*Roar!* Over a hundred feet of lightning, acid, corrosive gas, frost, and flame spewed out in bursts from the five dragon heads. Tiamat seemed to transform into a fortress with massive firepower, sweeping the demons in a single strike.

“Draconic spell— Summon Companion!” A teleportation spell flashed by Tiamat’s side. Five smaller dragons appeared, swiping at the demons all around her with their enormous claws. They sometimes used their deadly teeth to attack, the grinding noises horrifying as blood mixed with pus and scales trickled down from the sides of their mouths.

‘Oh! Tiamat is doing her best? It looks like the Dark Eight have found something that can move her heart.’ Leylin only glanced at the scene outside, and soon turned his whole attention to the battlefield directly in front of him.

The network originating from Baator’s origin force quickly got to work. It seemed like the Dark Eight no longer cared to save their energy, instead going all out in their attack. Elite troops that hadn’t been seen before now appeared to fill the gaps in the walls, wearing exquisite armour and wielding epic weapons. Tiamat and the five smaller evil dragons were the most important pieces of the formation, and these devils sought to fill in the gaps
surrounding them. The Bronze Citadel had encircled most of the
demons, including the more powerful ones.

[Beep! Host has obtained a mission from Baalzephon of the Dark
Eight! Content: ‘Hand over authority to your vice commander,
activate all your elites and bring them to kill the greater demons!’]

“As expected. Hanalin, I leave this to you. The remaining captains,
follow me!” Leylin roared and leapt down from one of the city
walls, radiating his Devil Aura. The commanders of the different
sections had now left their regions in fervour, searching for
demons to kill.

“Charge! Kill them all!” At this point in the battle, the powerful
demons were affected by the chaos around them. They had no
intention to retreat whatsoever, the language of the deep abyss
reverberating around the area.

‘I’m just here to play. I’m not a true devil, so I don’t have to work
as hard.’ Leylin understood his position clearly, and did not choose
to go towards the balors. Those were the prey of the pit fiends.
Instead of the balors, who had good bloodlines and great potential
to advance, he chose to fight a marilith instead.

However, what the other devils saw was Leylin choosing a marilith
that was larger than the rest. Each of her six arms wielded epic
weapons, and she had near legendary might.

“Wretched devil, die!” A natural enmity triggered within her upon
seeing Leylin, and the marilith came charging at him. Her six scaly
arms brandished a sword each, causing a powerful gale to descend.
She had the power of three assassins packed into one, and the
torrential wave attacks seemed about to grind Leylin into fine
pieces.

‘So weak. But her weapon itself isn’t bad, this level of swordplay is
equivalent to grandmasters of the prime material plane.’ Leylin
shook his head inwardly. On the surface however he let out a large
roar, shooting out a dark whip that collided against his enemy’s
weapon. The collision energy rippled out into the void.
‘This swordplay isn’t that bad. She should have the Weapon Proficiency and Multiweapon Fighting feats…’ Leylin discovered his enemy’s trump card in the first contact, even without using the A.I. Chip.
“Very well, I’ll play with you.” A mysterious force extended from Leylin’s fingertips, forming many small circles in midair. The whip was amplified by these circles, spinning like a hurricane as it sucked the marilith in.
*Crack!* Weapons broke and bones shattered within the hurricane, and a fine crimson mist sprayed out. By the time Leylin retrieved his whip, there was but a pulp of flesh on the ground alongside many small pieces of broken equipment. The marilith had already disappeared.
“Not even mildly interesting. Just a tiny bit of force and she’s dead…” Leylin sighed. He was at the level of a sage with melee weapons, and a mere marilith without even legendary strength was no match for him.
“Perhaps I can try challenging a higher difficulty. The balors seemed to be fine specimens and guinea pigs…” Leylin surveyed the battlefield.
Because of the devils’ counterattack, the demon army had suffered severe casualties, losing more than half its troops. The greater demons being targeted had caused even more confusion in their ranks, but perhaps they never obeyed rules in the first place.
As for the demons who were already crazed from the killing, they did not mind their safety as they dashed towards the high walls of the Bronze Citadel, finally dying under the siege weaponry of the walls.
At the centre of the battlefield were numerous flames. Explosions resounded in the area, with each fight isolated. The destructive force here was so great that even the demons avoided it at all cost.
With Leylin’s vision, he could make out through the flames that several massive devils and demons were fighting within.
“One of the pit fiends of the Dark Eight just used a powerful stealth spell and teleportation. The flame balor is hurt, and now they’re wrapping up…” The flame balors who’d been surrounded wielded weapons like executioner swords and fiery whips. Each of them had left a deep impression to Leylin.
‘They are indeed the elites of the deep abyss. Compared to the pit fiends, they have a unique type of wild and domineering aura. However, their chaotic evil alignment impedes them from using every ounce of their strength perfectly…’
The flame balors were the prey of the Dark Eight, so Leylin would not interfere. He passed the centre of the battlefield, landing his sights on a regular balor.
As a pre-evolution of the flame balors, regular balors lacked that primordial chaos and the power to wield flames. However, they still managed to pique Leylin’s interest.
A huge balor stepped over the body of an orthon. “I, Jesdric, am the strongest!” it yelled out, its huge demonic wings flapping as blood spurted out of a wound on its chest. The orthon was a greater devil, and its sneak attack had caused a certain amount of damage. The balor’s chest was in a complete mess, the price for killing its opponent. Scales were upturned with flesh and blood on them, and one could even see pale bones and a thumping heart within. Although such injuries were not fatal to demons, the balor would still take some time to recover. Jesdric was a powerful demon with a noble bloodline, and many devils eyed it with greed; there were even demons that did the same. As long as a demon could kill it, it would obtain a portion of Jesdric’s power. It would allow the attacker to rise in rank, even becoming a balor! Next to the body of the orthon were also torn up demons. These were the demons that wanted to steal the kill; of course, they were torn into tiny bits. “Come! Give me a little more flesh and souls so that I can advance!” A layer of blood-red energy appeared on Jesdric’s body, and large amounts of lava formed tiny blood vessels that covered it. This balor was evidently at the brink of advance, and perhaps just one more high-opponent would allow it to please the abyss’ World Will and let it advance to the peak of all demons, a flame
Hold Monster! Sudden spell light halted the enraged roars of the balor. Its eyes filled with anger and astonishment, it saw the figure of a devil emerge from the shadows. This enemy had sinister horns, it was evidently a greater horned devil.

Fireball! Greater Entanglement! The other party did not give Jesdric a chance to speak. Powerful flames drowned the balor with a wave of the arms, and were followed by the light of a summoning spell. Summon Devil! Leylin’s lower devil underlings appeared, attacking the balor with all their might.

“Haha, concealing spells and a sneak attack! You devils are despicable!” The balor roared, and vile energy caused the weak devils to quickly retreat.

“I’m a devil anyway. What should I do, play knight?” Leylin snorted, and a black dagger plunged into the eyes of the demon.

“AAAAHH…” Pitiful ear-splitting cries sounded out. They were followed by terrifying snarls, “I’ll kill you! I’ll pinch your skull into powder!”

Red flames burst forth from the balor’s eye, the great heat melting the dagger into liquid.

“It– It’s about to evolve!” One of the lesser devils under Leylin exclaimed in astonishment, and was quickly grabbed by the crazed balor. Terrifying flames erupted into the sky, forming a bright torch of fire.

“You will all die!” Another wave of fire shot out as the balor bellowed, and most of Leylin’s underlings died in an instant. By the time the flames reached him, Leylin used a Greater Teleportation scroll to leave the battlefield.

“Don’t even think of escaping!” With the flames now burning on its body, Jesdric looked no different from a flame balor. Catching sight of Leylin from the corner of its eye, it roared and pursued him in a frenzy.
Be it a devil or a demon, anything in its path was minced apart. Jesdric created a bloody trail behind it.

“Darned devil, don’t run!” Making use of the only eye it had left, Jesdric found that the vile devil had already escaped to the fortress wall, seemingly about to return to reinforcements. Furious, it charged forward, disregarding any danger.

*Bang!* However, a sudden trap on the ground caused Jesdric to lose its centre of gravity. Its enormous body fell into a deep pit that appeared out of nowhere, creating a small earthquake.

Dimensional Scan! Water Shower! Ice Breath! Devils appeared out of nowhere to surround the pit, flinging spells at the balor in the centre with vigour.

“Sir!” Hanalin headed to Leylin’s side. He’d informed her earlier to set up this trap, but she’d been surprised that the target was a balor. No, one could even believe that this was a flame balor! In that very moment, Leylin’s might was deeply imprinted into her mind.

“You did well!” Leylin nodded to show his approval, and then glanced at the balor that now had pieces of ice all over its body.

‘A.I. Chip, how’s the data gathering going?’

[Beep! Flesh sample obtained. Physical and soul scan completed] the A.I. Chip loyally intoned.

“Okay, you’re useless now.” Leylin leapt forward, and a thin black line crossed the balor’s neck. An interwoven soul attack caused the chaos in its eyes to completely die down.

“No, it’s impossible… I, Jesdric, am the most powerful demon. I still need to evolve into a flame balor… How can I die here…” it muttered, and its huge body collapsed.

The moment he killed the demon, Leylin sensed a tremendous amount of soul energy pouring into his body. He could even sense the favour of Baator.

‘The Blood War is still the best way to evolve…’ While this bit of strength was nothing to Leylin, if he really was a devil this would
have given him most of the soul energy required to evolve.

‘High risks beget high rewards. As long as I survive the Blood War between devils and demons, I’ll definitely be able to advance greatly. Its no wonder that the Dark Eight will risk complete death to lure the demons into a fight…’

Devils normally used crafty schemes and machinations, changing the battlefield to anything but the Nine Hells. There was a secret to this that only Archdevils, now Leylin, and well-informed pit fiends knew of. If a devil were killed in Baator, that would be a true death. There was no way for them to be revived, unlike from other planes where it only had a price.

In other words, the devils that died in this Blood War could not be revived, even if Asmodeus himself wanted to do so. Having taken such a huge risk, the Dark Eight were definitely eyeing something huge.

*Rumble!* Just as Leylin came to a realisation, a terrifying explosion rocked the heart of the battlefield. A storm of flames whistled past the region, tearing everything apart as it formed a red mushroom cloud.

‘It’s the self-detonation before a balor’s death. It looks like the Dark Eight succeeded.’ More huge explosions rang out, and Leylin was certain that four flame balors had died at the hands of the Dark Eight.

The only ones who could dodge these attacks were the pit fiends, who used Greater Teleportation. The remaining greater devils were wiped out alongside numerous demons.

‘Victory is decided. Four flame balors have died in succession, as well as a pile of powerful demons. Even the Archfiend of the abyss will lose his morale and mourn this for a long time…’

It was not just Leylin alone who understood this.

The moment the first flame balor exploded, an ear-splitting scream sounded as an enchanting succubus darted out of the siege of the
four pit fiends. At the price of grave injuries, she streaked across the horizon while leaving a blazing trail behind.

‘That should be Red Shroud, the commander of the demon army. She’s also the most beloved daughter of the Incubus King, the Archfiend of the abyss. Unfortunately, this defeat might put her status in danger…’

Powerful beings had died, and the commander had fled. This was a fatal blow for the enemy army. As many greater devils entered the battlefield and massacred the weaker demons, time was only counting down to the demon army’s complete destruction.

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Most of the demon army was killed in the battle, the only escapees being Red Shroud and a small number of lucky demons. This included four flame balors! The disgrace of the abyss’ demons was carved into the Bronze Citadel once more. Such dazzling achievements were rare even in the history of the Blood Wars.

Chromatic Dragon Tiamat had persisted to the end of this battle, blocking the fort walls. She deserved credit for her work. Leylin saw parts of her tremendous body caved in, with signs of burns all around.

A headless male dragon nearby also looked sluggish. They’d taken on the frenzied attack of the demons that were in a hurry to retreat, and the explosions from the flame balors at the end had injured them gravely.

Leylin now understood why they’d worked so hard. The Dark Eight had promised to hand over control of the Bronze Citadel to Tiamat, acknowledging her as its ruler.

He smelt a conspiracy afoot. Control of the Bronze Citadel was something Asmodeus had schemed for over a thousand years, but now he was handing it over so nonchalantly. Even a lemure could
tell that something was off. Devils only compromised as such in the face of even greater profit.
Before the Dark Eight handed over control over the Bronze Citadel, there was first a majestic round of settling the results. As the devil army had been formed by temporary transfer of personnel, all devils would immediately regain their freedom once the battle was over.

‘It’s not quite right to call this regaining their freedom, because they retain all memories of the Blood War and think it as something they should have done… But while they still hold regard for the higher-ups, the absolute obedience they had as subordinates before has disappeared.’

Leylin glanced at the succubus Hanalin next to him. Her eyes were now clear, and while she looked like she could not wait to sidle up to him, it was obvious that she was scheming even more inside.

This went for the imps and lemures as well. However, before the devils all completely regained their order, there was something more important at hand, and that was settling all achievements and sins here.

The devils sought the beings that were ahead of them all their lives, while those that were behind them caused fear. Their hierarchy was very strict, and there was a unique power system. Hence, their advancement was not like the demons, where they could evolve after getting enough soul energy in the Blood War. Instead, it was a very complicated process.

Usually, a devil needed approval from their direct superiors to
promote. However, in all situations, any devils with even higher rankings could revoke the promotion. In other words, if a lesser devil wanted to advance, it would need approval from its weakest superior who would then perform a promotion ceremony for it. However, if a greater devil was unsatisfied with this, it could revert the recently-promoted devil to what it had been before.
The ones with greatest authority were the eight Archdevils that split up the World Origin Force of Baator. Not only did they manage the devils and the promotion of pit fiends, they could break convention with their might, promoting even lesser devils straight through several ranks.
The combined authority of the Dark Eight was great, and they could even promote greater devils. While the original superiors of these devils had the power to revoke this, most would not dare go against them.
And just like that, Archdevils could demote a devil back to its original status. This would be a symbol of shame, and was something devils feared the most. Any demoted devil lost a part of their intelligence, and would be sent to perform the most humiliating and difficult of tasks. But before that, they would face a punishment.
Pitiful cries resounded in the Bronze Citadel. There was something like a supreme court in the expansive square, where the devils took all the seats. The unlucky beings that influenced this battle negatively were put on the prisoners’ row.
There were spinagon, lemures, and other lesser devils. There were also imps, barbazu, and other lower devils as well, along with a few greater devils. Although their strengths were varied, what was common was the expression on their faces: terror!
Their crimes had been determined, and they were awaiting the punishment of being demoted. Normally only their superiors had
such rights, but the Dark Eight possessed a great amount of authority that allowed them to administer the punishment. Such were the rules of Baator.

Unless an Archdevil, someone with even more power than the Dark Eight, came over to overturn their ruling, these devils would not escape punishment. However, why would such a thing happen? “I declare you all guilty. You shall be demoted.” Zapan, one of the Dark Eight, hammered the gavel. The crisp sound caused strange changes amongst the sinners.

They howled in pain, their bodies tearing apart as an invisible force surrounded them to deliver the most severe punishment. Demotion was a horrifying torture that ripped a part of a devil’s intelligence away. They would become savage and foolish once more, something that devils who flaunted their intelligence found the hardest to accept.

The poor things continued to howl as the laws of Baator took effect. The devils’ bodies were broken apart, and a large number of hell worms crawled out to form their new appearance.

In general, most of the devils determined to have sinned had been demoted by one rank. A bearded would become a spinagon, and a spinagon would become a lemure. Their foreheads were branded with a symbol of shame. Be it here or with their old superiors, they would only take on the most lowly and menial jobs, the chances of being promoted again minimal.

The more unlucky ones were turned into nupperibo, xerfilstyx, and all other devils that had been demoted. Their power was also reduced greatly, and there was also a huge change to their personalities.

Many normal devils watched this with fear on their faces. It would keep them working diligently, abiding by the rules.

“Next is the promotions!” Baalzephon declared after Zapan retreated. Unlike demotions, promotions were something to rejoice
over. Few were lucky enough to have this.
To the devils, every promotion was an opportunity. It normally needed a ceremony, held by their superiors who needed to approve it first. A tremendous amount of soul energy would be consumed.
At this moment, the approving superiors would be the Dark Eight, and the soul energy would be that accumulated from the Blood War.
The order of devils was simple. There was the most basic petitioners, and then the lower devils. They were the lemures, spinagons, and then the lesser devils which were the bearded devils, imps, steel devils, kytos, pain devils, amnizu, and then the greater devils that included the bone devils, orthons, barbazu, ice devils, horned devils, dogai, paeliryon and various other forms. The pit fiends were at the very top. Each devil’s appearance was a rank higher than the ones behind them.
Promotions and demotions all followed this order, normally by a single step. A steel devil would become a kyon, for instance, or a kyon would become a pain devil. A leap in promotions, such as a steel devil becoming a pain devil, was an advancement of two steps! There was also the advancement from a spinagon to a lesser devil, the bearded devil. While it was one rank, it needed a huge amount of soul energy. There were also the erinyes, succubi, and the special cases like the nupperibo and xerfilsytx that only appeared during demotions.
Leylin looked at the devils surrounding him. Most had smiles on their faces. While they would have to deal with their own superiors after they returned, they probably would not go against the authority of the Dark Eight and revoke the promotion. Hence, this was a great profit!
Even without enough achievements to be promoted, the soul energy amassed was worth it. Leylin had killed a marilith and a balor, that alone was enough for him to be promoted. Even his
subordinates had a shot.
Honestly, from Leylin’s point of view, this promotion ceremony was not much different from the demotion before. The original body was broken down, and a new one would be moulded. It was just as bloody, and the weak-willed would easily descend into chaos or faint. The promotion may keep memories and intellect intact, but there was a drastic change in personality. Leylin didn’t care about those lesser devils, but the only one worth mentioning was Hanalin.
As most of the lower devils under Leylin had died during the attack of the balor, her achievements were second only to Leylin. She had advanced into a powerful erinyes. This was a huge leap! Even Hanalin’s previous superior should only be a succubus. Leylin could already imagine the ruckus that would be stirred up after Hanalin returned.
After all, devils were often very strict with their subordinates. Hanalin would probably be filled with hatred towards her own. She would probably constantly be thinking of ways to pull her superior down, and with this strength her plans would be more feasible.
The large-scale promotion got the Dark Eight the praise of all the devils. They were now called benevolent commanders, generous masters, and many other titles; the devils were certainly not stingy with their praise.
‘The way this promotion is hosted is too magnanimous. The merits of many devils are still iffy, and they’ve passed everything… They aren’t even considering the superiors of these devils…’ Leylin thought inside. He found something different about this.
He could already predict the unrest after this wave of devils that had advanced returned to their superiors. With how scheming the devils were, this was inevitable.
Leylin’s temporary senior officer, Baalzephon arrived in front of him.
“Brave warrior, you killed a balor on the verge of evolving! This achievement should be enough for you to become a pit fiend.” Baalzephon looked truly regretful, as if really feeling indignant for Leylin.

“Unfortunately, your superior, the greedy Azlok, is a crazy person filled with jealousy, so we can’t allow your advancement unless he approves of it…” After these words were said, the gazes of the devils landed on Leylin, ridiculing him.
Leylin remained silent, but his eyes flashed, he’d acutely sensed Baalzephon’s conspiracy. ‘So he’s instigating me, huh? He couldn’t meet his purpose, so now he’s full of hatred and jealousy.’

Had he been a real devil indeed, he would’ve fallen for the ploy by now. After all, to stop someone from advancing would make a blood enemy out of them. Furthermore, his ‘superior’ was a pit fiend as well. If Azlok did not agree, he could overthrow the decision of the Dark Eight and stop Leylin’s advance. Given the nature of the devils, this was definitely going to happen.

‘Pit fiend? The most efficient way to garner more hatred is to skip evolutions…’ An ordinary devil that had just evolved would be resented by twenty to thirty others. They would look everywhere for any mistakes they’d commit, trying to get it demoted. However, if a devil had jumped ranks the hatred would be tenfold, maybe even a hundred times worse!

As for a greater devil evolving into a pit fiend, Baator had limited origin force. There could only be a certain number of pit fiends at any one time. If no other pit fiends died, Leylin’s advancement would rob another potential candidate of their chance.

This scenario was likely to play out in Leylin’s case. That was why greater devils would have to have rotting brains to let their subordinates advanced.

Most devils who jumped forms did not meet a good end. The only
ones that did were those who were extremely scheming themselves, proving their mettle with their brawn and brains.

“Come. Although you can’t evolve, please hold on to this; you deserve it!” Baalzephon handed Leylin a crystal that stored a holy spirit’s energy, “The energy stored inside this is enough for you to evolve into a pit fiend.”

Baalzephon was not in his pit fiend form right now. He’d instead adopted a human shape, looking extremely conniving. His poorly constructed face put on a ‘kind’ smile.

“Thank you, my Lord!” Although he felt extremely disgusted, Leylin still thanked him for the gift.

“Alright Leycian, I think you have great potential. We could have dinner one day…” Baalzephon invited. Leylin could do nothing but smile wryly and agree.

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“Goodbye, Leycian! I’m returning to Malbolge. My superior is Madam Thatcher of the Copper Citadel. You can look for me there, I’ll be excited to meet you again, soon…”

Hanalin bid her bittersweet farewell to Leylin after the tense trial. She was currently in her evolved form, with black wings and an angelic face. She looked even more seductive and charming than before.

However, Leylin had astutely discovered the change in her personality and character, obvious even from how she addressed him as an equal and even tried to lure him in. Now that she’d skipped multiple evolutions to reach her current state, her enemies were far stronger and more terrifying than before; they included her very own superior!

Her enemies would definitely be more attentive than before, looking for any loopholes that would cause her to be demoted,
turning once more into an ugly lower devil. Knowing this, she was already trying to garner as much support as she could. “Got it!” Leylin memorised her destination and the route, putting on a solemn expression. ‘It’s best to leave a backdoor, who knows whether I might have to use it in the future. I recall that the lady of the Sixth Hell is the Hag Countess.’

Leylin had been focused on Dis recently, but he couldn’t eliminate the possibility of travelling to other levels in the future. If Hanalin were still alive when he did, she would be a useful connection. Hanalin departed, satisfied with her gains. Leylin looked instead at the Bronze Citadel, with its flames reaching high in the sky. He scratched his nose as several half-dragons appeared abruptly, as well as the visages of several jackals.

‘Has the transfer of authority already begun?’ Leylin thought as he directly arrived at the Dark Eight’s garrison. His identity was verified, and he was immediately lead to Baalzephon in his vile human form.

“My lord Baalzephon! I am immensely honoured by your invitation,” Leylin bowed in gratitude. He glanced at the dining hall’s preparations— the carpet was a deep red as if it had been stained with blood, the floor-length curtains embroidered with glistening golden motifs of Baator, and chandeliers hung from the ceiling. There was even a demon’s head hung on the wall, and it looked as if it was Baalzephon’s.

The tableware was all made of the finest gold, inlaid with all kinds of diamonds and pearls. The maids were all beautiful erinyes and pleasure devils.

Several petitioners, moulded into twisted forms, pushed a cart into the dining hall, one that was entirely on fire. They bowed in respect before taking their leave, allowing the erinyes and pleasure devils clad in black and white maid uniforms to place the dishes in front of The two.
Soup was first, a bubbling milky-white broth.
“Haha, no need to hold yourself back, my friend. The taste of cold soul worms is not as palatable…” Baalzephon smiled widely, scooping out a translucent soul worm. The thing was still wriggling. Several struggling and miserable human visages could be seen on the worm, but Baalzephon just directly swallowed it down. An intoxicated expression appeared on his face.

Devils enjoyed enticing mortals to fall. Torturing the souls of petitioners and absorbing their immortal essence and soul force was their pleasure. After a petitioner had been sucked dry, they would be tossed into the hellforge and suffer torturous transformations. They would then become the lowest of the low—a lower devil.

Only a select few souls were able to survive the treatment, becoming lower demons. They would be a bit stronger than others of their kind, and were more likely to be promoted. Devils used the absorbed soul force of petitioners to climb up the ranks and grow stronger. Naturally, there were those who directly swallowed them up like Baalzephon—rumour had it that he was supposedly searching for the most beautiful texture and taste in souls.

Although Leylin was not opposed to swallowing souls, his personal preferences were different from devils. He did not like this twisted torture. As a result, he glanced away and found another topic to change the subject to.

“Well, Lord Baalzephon, may I ask if you are ready to move?” Leylin gestured at the busy lower demons, imps and others of their kind. They were all toiling away, lifting several huge demon ribs with complex carvings upon them. It seemed as if it was a spoil of war that was used to commemorate some bloody battle.

“Mm. We’d signed an agreement to hand the Bronze Citadel back to
Tiamat… Not even a devil would betray a binding oath to the Styx.” Baalzephon sniffed the dark red blood in the tall wine glass, elegantly swirling the liquid around in leisure. “Please forgive me for being direct, but such a high price for the victory of a single battle— isn’t that a bit much…” Leylin had deliberated over his wording carefully. “Haha, Leycian! You really are an interesting fellow. To be honest, many of our subordinates dare not say anything, but inwardly they must be ridiculing us eight ‘fools’…” Baalzephon’s eyes seemed to see through everything, the corners of his lips curving into a humorous smile. “Of course not! Even if half of the Bronze Citadel was exchanged for the destruction of the demon army, and especially the four flame balors and a bunch of greater demons, it would be extremely worth it!” Leylin naturally chose to continue Baalzephon’s discourse. “You’re right! What do those ignorant animals know?” Leylin’s words had evidently touched Baalzephon’s heart. He stood up suddenly, walking around the dining hall in excitement. “What is the Bronze Citadel even worth to us? It’s just a dead piece of land. The only useful thing is souls. Only with more souls can we forge more devils to improve our power and kill those chaotic bastards.” Two hellish streams of flame were shot out of Baalzephon’s nostril. He looked like he truly hated the crazy and chaotic demons. “Are you willing to assist me, Leycian?” Baalzephon looked at Leylin, his eyes blazing with fervent emotion. It seemed as if this was the main reason he had invited Leylin here. ‘If I don’t agree, will he grow hostile immediately?’ Leylin seemed to go into shock, but in his heart he just laughed coldly. The solicitation of a devil was extremely unreliable. No matter how it looked, Baalzephon most likely just wanted to use him as cannon
fodder.
“*I am most grateful to my lord for valuing me. However, Lord Azlok is my direct superior.*” Leylin’s expression was rather hesitant. After all, a loyal devil would find it difficult to change factions.

“Azlok? Hmph…” Baalzephon smiled disdainfully, but did not bring up the matter any further. It was clear that he was waiting for Leylin to make a decision. Besides, he’d completely exposed his true motives, and it was not possible to reveal anything more.

‘Mm, it looks as if my past in the second layer of hell has attracted his interest. So, the Supreme of Baator, that ruler only in name, has ambition towards Dis?’ An electric beat seemed to pulse in Leylin’s heart.
1029 - Pledging Loyalty

Devils were usually excellent at persuasion. Their sharp tongues seemed to be coated with both honey and poison, even able to convince the purest of paladins.

Baalzephon was evidently even more brilliant than normal. Although he’d said nothing and merely snorted, it still told Leylin a great many thing.

‘Think about it! Azlok has been so greedy, envious and foolish to prevent all his underlings from advancing. In comparison, Lord Baalzephon is benevolent, generous and kind… Isn’t the answer obvious?’ Such were the thoughts Leylin was supposed to be tempted by.

Even worse, devils already held a deep-rooted hatred for their superiors. It would be strange if Leylin was completely unaffected.

“Does my lord mean… you want me to start a rebellion?” Leylin’s voice was as hoarse as a wanderer about to die of thirst in the desert. Truth be told, he’d planned to side with the Dark Eight anyway and see what the Supreme of the Nine Hells was up to. Unexpectedly, Baalzephon had come up to him on his own.

“No, no. This is only an uprising, a fight against injustice!” Baalzephon twirled his fingers. “Believe me. Once you join us, Lord Asmodeus will definitely give you a suitable position… Or he could personally oversee your promotion. Becoming a pit fiend definitely won’t be just a dream…”

While Asmodeus was only the Supreme of the Nine Hells in name,
his title was still very useful. In addition, his power was still greater than that of the remaining eight Archdevils.

“Lord Asmodeus…” Leylin’s voice tremored, and his eyes lit up with fervour and a firm look, “In that case, I offer my loyalty to you, Lord Baalzephon!”

At the very moment that Leylin stated his allegiance, he suddenly felt the descent of Baator’s origin force. It turned into a powerful binding, prepared to imprint a means of communication between the two. It was extremely difficult for a devil to back out of a contract.

Of course, playing around with sly word games was a common tactic. Devils did not slander those who were successful at cheating others, instead mocking the losers for being stupid.

“Good! Sign this contract, and I’ll accept your loyalty.” Baalzephon was obviously prepared, and a contract that had been verified by the origin force appeared in front of Leylin.

Green phosphorescence blazed on yellowed parchment paper, forming a large number of conditions. Still, this was concise for a devil. From this aspect, Baalzephon seemed quite sincere and had not made any traps in the choice of words.

‘A devil can only be loyal to one superior. Once two oaths of loyalty are sworn, the next promotion will grow chaotic. A choice will need to be made between the two, and one needs to be eliminated…’

Leylin snickered inside. If he was really Leycian, he would have no way to choose right now. While Baalzephon made things sound pleasant, he could very well become hostile right away if Leylin had any thoughts of rejecting him.

Unfortunately, the person Baalzephon was facing now was Leylin. Leylin, who with his authority of an Archdevil surpassed him greatly!

“Such a lax contract! Lord Baalzephon, your leniency and
benevolence is well known even on the prime material plane…” The horned devil now seemed so emotional that he could not control himself, trembling as he extended his right hand.

‘A.I. Chip, begin interference!’ Leylin commanded in secret.

[Beep! Mission established! Host’s authority far exceeds target, dulling target’s origin force sense. Interference in progress…] the A.I. Chip intoned loyally.

The moment Leylin’s finger touched the parchment piece of paper, perhaps in a millionth of a second, an astounding change occurred. Another piece of parchment that looked exactly the same appeared, replacing the contents of the original contract. It was still a pledge of loyalty, but the punishment was much more severe. The master and servant had changed place, and Baalzephon would now pledge his allegiance to Leylin.

Given that Leylin far exceeded Baalzephon in authority, the devil did not notice anything wrong with the contract. Baalzephon could also sense a thread of loyalty from this ‘Leycian.’

An authority that surpassed Baalzephon’s own, as well as the powerful abilities of the A.I. Chip, allowed a substitute to replace the original in an instant, completing a magnificent feat in the Nine Hells. What the A.I. Chip had formed was instantly hidden in the original parchment, and all Baalzephon saw was the horned devil signing his name with his right index finger.

“Good! You made the right choice!” Baalzephon nodded with satisfaction. After sensing the thread of loyalty made of origin force, he glanced at the parchment paper. There were no changes to the green phosphorescence of the letters, save for the signature at the lower right corner.

‘Strange… why did I suddenly feel fearful?’ Baalzephon shook his head, and tossed this thought out of his mind. After ascertaining that this was the contract he had created, he entered his name at the position of the superior.
A blood-red truename formed on the paper, and it quickly burnt up. A phosphorescent green imprint disappeared into each of Leylin’s and Baalzephon’s chests.

[Beep! Fealty contract obtained. Target: Baalzephon of the Dark Eight. Note: Target has signed a contract with another superior. If host’s orders clash with Asmodeus’, there is a 50% chance that Baalzephon will grow confused.]

‘Good. Continue concealment.’ Leylin had now become Baalzephon’s superior, and as an Archdevil, it was a breeze for him to cover a portion of his senses.

Baalzephon obtained a simulated thread of loyalty, and was extremely satisfied.

“Very good! Tell me, Leycian, why are you here in Avernus?” Superiors were what devils feared the most. Baalzephon now believed he had complete control over the devil in front of him. If not for this devil for still having his uses, he would have long since abandoned his false pretence and interrogated him properly.

This sudden change caused ‘Leycian’ to feel a sense of foreboding.

“I… I obtained an order from Lord Azlok to search for…” Leylin’s voice showed his fear, and he cowered back.

“Search for what? Make yourself clear! Do you want me to demote you into the most lowly nupperibo?” Baalzephon’s breathing began to get rough, and Leylin could even sense the intense emotions in his mind.

Leylin pretended to be unable to take Baalzephon’s gaze, gritting his teeth as he said, “Azlok commanded that I come search for all traces of Dis’s Archdevil, Beelzebub…”

“Beelzebub? Has he really gone missing?” Baalzephon grabbed at Leylin’s arm, eyes glinting.

“Y- yes. Even Lord Azlok doesn’t have any news about him!” Leylin now seemed like he had been scared stupid.

“Haha… haha… so the intel was right! An Archdevil has gone
missing. What a wonderful thing…” Baalzephon laughed maniacally, and finally calmed down.
“Good! Tell me all you know and don’t hold back, or else…”

……

A long while later, a horned devil walked out of the bronze tower, looking lost.
‘I see. So Asmodeus finally can’t hold on anymore, and he wants to act?’ Leylin was actually the one scheming here. He’d blurted out a large amount of fake information just now, and Baalzephon had let his guard down against him to reveal some information as well. ‘He plans for one of the Dark Eight to take over lordship and become an Archdevil?’ Leylin stroked his chin. ‘This doesn’t seem like something Asmodeus would do, but this is so great a temptation that the Dark Eight don’t consider the danger…”

Based on what Baalzephon had revealed, Asmodeus finally decided to take care of this confusion and get one of the Dark Eight to take over Dis. But the position of the Second Hell’s lord had been empty for a long while. That was an empty spot to be an Archdevil of Baator, representing the peak of Baator’s might!
He seemed to depend on the Dark Eight’s merits, including dealing blows to the demons, expanding Avernus, and so on. That was why the Dark Eight had set a trap without hesitation, wiping out a demon army. The pit fiends, dazzled with the lordship as they were, would go around attacking everything to expand the territories of Avernus.
When this happened, a mere strategic location, the Bronze Citadel, was not that important. In order to obtain Tiamat’s approval and help, the Dark Eight had not hesitated to give up the place. After all, the chromatic dragon was still one of their allies, and there were many other places in the First Hell that they could attack.
The trap at the Bronze Citadel would be the last time the Dark Eight worked together. Next they would go at it alone, hoping to obtain enough merits to be acknowledged by Asmodeus. They all wished to become the Archdevil of Dis.

‘Sadly, this is just a huge trap. Without the authority being transferred and now that they can’t get a hold of Beelzebub, would Asmodeus appointing them to the post actually do anything?’
When it came to Baator, there were less than ten devils with as much knowledge as Leylin. He knew extremely well how far Asmodeus’ influence extended. Although Asmodeus was the most powerful devil, his might was restricted to the Ninth Hell. The other seven Archdevils did not bother with him. Him appointing a lord of Dis? That was just a huge joke! Even so, many of the Dark Eight were lured by him; at the very least, they wanted the reputation of having taken over the Second Hell. Although it would be a false reign, it would at least be supported by Asmodeus.

‘In comparison, Baalzephon is more pragmatic!’ Recalling the plan that he had revealed, a smile appeared on Leylin’s face.

......

Leylin looked around, and quickly saw a city of iron ablaze. Red hot hellfire scorched the inner walls, and thick smoke rose to form great amounts of black fog that covered the entirety of Dis. The walls were red, and the slightest of contact with them would result in grave burns. Even the metallic pebbles that used to form the road were experiencing high temperatures. Without immunity to fire or special shoes, the pedestrians would soon be thrashing around on the
ground in pain, before burning up. The drafts around the street corners often carried miserable cries that seemed to come from the depths of hell. This was the lament of the prisoners in the large underground prison, including slaves, petitioners from the Blood War, and even mortals that had been kidnapped from the prime material plane. Once the souls grew ripe with the torture and suffering, the better goods would be sent to the lofty residences around, to be enjoyed by nobility. Many noble devils liked holding banquets. They would gather together, discussing which portion of a prisoner was more delectable, and then come up with even more exquisite ‘cooking’ techniques. Just standing on the street, Leylin could feel the breathing and thumping of hearts under Dis. Unlike Avernus, he felt like he could use all the power of this plane, as if he were its owner in the first place. The turbulent origin force of Baator moved to Leylin’s will, with only the slightest bit of resistance. That was Beelzebub, still alive and possessing that last bit of laws and authority. ‘Dis! If I completely devour Beelzebub, I’ll be like a god in his divine kingdom!’ The authority Archdevils had in hell could definitely compare to what true gods were like in their divine kingdoms. Of course, this was limited to the territory they were lord of. Leylin sighed inside. This was Dis, the second layer of Baator. It was a huge city of iron, so huge there were no boundaries at all. The city made up an entire plane! “What are you standing there in a daze for? Aren’t you moving yet?” A grey-robed person standing beside Leylin berated him. “Yes, my lord!” Leylin bowed humbly, while actually snickering inside. This person in disguise was naturally Baalzephon. The pit
The fiend obviously had not followed Asmodeus’ game, expanding the territories of Avernus. Instead, he had secretly arrived at the Second Hell.

However, his goal was abundantly clear. The pit fiend, who was one of the Dark Eight, intended to take over lordship of this hell. He wanted to find the missing Beelzebub and take him prisoner. He would then extract Beelzebub’s strength, becoming the true Lord of Dis!

Asmodeus’ orders would be nothing to him then, the lords of the Nine Hells were on the same level as the Supreme!

Evidently Baalzephon had already betrayed Asmodeus in secret, but Leylin was not the least bit surprised. After all, betrayal and schemes were nothing new to the devils, especially when it came to their superiors.

‘Honestly, Baalzephon’s going in the right direction, but there’s something wrong with his plans. He’s not the only person thinking of doing this… Whether it’s Asmodeus or other lords, they’re all probably planning to lay their hands on Beelzebub…’ Leylin sighed inside.

“I’m preparing to sneak into the Iron Tower and investigate. Do you have any plans?” Baalzephon pointed at a conspicuous at the centre of the city that towered into the clouds.

This was the Iron Tower, Beelzebub’s palace. He seldom left the place, but it had already been decades since there was news of him last. Once tens of attempts at communication failed, and there was no reaction even when they barged in, news of Beelzebub’s mysterious disappearance began to spread.

However, with how cunning the devils were, nobody knew if this was some scheme by the Archdevil. Even Baalzephon was not quite sure himself.

Of course, Leylin had given him enough confidence that he was even entering the Iron Tower to take a risk and investigate it. He
hoped to gather information regarding Beelzebub’s disappearance. Leylin was egging him on to serve his own purposes. After all, finding Beelzebub and devouring him before the other Archdevils did was his main purpose in coming to Baator.

“Lord Baalzephon, there are some fairs and markets around Dis. We could find a way to sneak in from there…” Leylin earnestly gave a suggestion.

As his personal stronghold, Beelzebub’s Iron Tower had a large amount of tricks and traps inside. There were golems and contracted beings guarding the tower, and within the Iron Tower itself Beelzebub was basically invincible. This was why he rarely left the area, nor did he allow any devils to enter.

From Leylin’s perspective, the reason he never left was out of caution and cowardice. It was also because he was using the Manderhawke Plate to connect to the prime material plane, spreading faith and contaminating souls.

Obviously he’d also tried to make contact with many other places, finally succeeding in escaping the crystal sphere. Had his timing been right, he could even have surpassed Asmodeus in strength, using an unending supply of souls to become a true Supreme of the Nine Hells. Unfortunately, he’d met with tragedy in the form of Leylin.

‘From what I sense, there’s no sign of Beelzebub in the Second Hell…’ Leylin thought as he followed Baalzephon. ‘With him covering me, there won’t be much suspicion. The other Archdevils should be furiously trying to find traces of Beelzebub, so I can temporarily use their powers…

‘The Manderhawke Plate is also an important target inside the Iron Tower…’ The Manderhawke Plate was a mysterious item that could weaken the crystal sphere. Even a mere imitation of the patterns in his memories helped Leylin enter the World of Gods, so in his view this plate’s uses surpassed even most divine weapons.
“Market? Are you trying to make a fool of me?” A dangerous glint appeared in Baalzephon’s eyes, and the green flames of the contract appeared on his hands.

“You’re part of the guard corps of the Archdevil serving under Azlok, one of Beelzebub’s lackeys. That pit fiend manages the safety of the Iron Tower, do you not have any methods to enter it? Huh?”

The flames on Baalzephon’s hands flickered, causing a look of pain to appear on Leylin’s expression. Of course, this was fake.

“Please wait, my Lord! I’m supposed to be away right now, so it’s impossible for me to get approval from Azlok…” Leylin sounded like he felt wronged.

“That’s your problem. I need to enter the Iron Tower within three hell hours. If you can’t do that, you’ll become a foolish and ugly xerfilstyx!” Baalzephon threatened, showing the natural temperament of devils.

Devils like to treat their subordinates harshly, and even give them impossible tasks before punishing them. This was usually done to the subordinates closest to them physically, in order to ensure that nobody could pose a threat to them.

Those subordinate devils could only complete every task in fear, and grasp every single opportunity to ascend. They would use all their power to climb up the social ladder, betraying their superior at the appropriate time and staging rebellion. They would want to reach the peak of power in Baator to rid themselves of this suffering.

In Baalzephon’s eyes, however, the horned devil called Leycian still had his uses. This tactic was used unknowingly.

“Alright, I’ll immediately come up with a way!” Seeing Leylin darting away like his ass was on fire, Baalzephon grinned in satisfaction. Only if he used a whip and viciously lashed at these devils would they obediently listen to him. It was also necessary
that shackles were placed on them, which would prevent them from attacking their masters.
Baazelphon was actually abiding by all of a certain devil’s maxims.

……

Two hell hours later, Leylin had returned.
“My Lord…” The horned devil now had a flattering look and a modest smile on his face.
“I’ve done my best to get Azlok to believe that I’ve found clues regarding the whereabouts of the Archdevil, which is why I’ve returned to Dis. I’ve also made contact with some of my people and bribed them. I managed a chance to enter the Iron Tower for a thousand jingles…”
Devils could obviously be bribed, but the price caused Baalzephon to frown. “What a greedy guy. Are you sure that his promise is true, and he won’t sell you out to your superior?”
Pay the rest yourself! Didn’t I reward you with a huge amount of wealth already?” Baalzephon placed his hands behind his back and left, seemingly interested in the unknown flesh being sold on the market. The smells of all sorts of spiced meat wafted through the market. Baalzephon hummed nursery rhymes in contentment as he seemed to pass the time.

‘Not giving subordinates wealth is akin to not giving them strength… Not giving them chances, is akin to not letting them be promoted… If your subordinates have wealth and the chance to advance, then your head will become a decoration in their rooms… ‘ Seems like superiors controlling their subordinates is a huge trend here…’ Leylin glanced at the pitifully tiny soul gem in his hands and snickered.

Unfortunately, all that he’d said had been a lie. While the devils that guarded the Iron Tower were Beelzebub’s trusted aides, their loyalty wasn’t spectacular, especially when their superior was weakened. Dis was like his own backyard, and the guard legions were basically like a sieve with numerous holes. Why? It was naturally because of the prime material plane. Leylin had already subdued Beelzebub’s followers from the prime material plane, and he’d had some of them return to Baator in secret.

Besides, with the authority he had and the law of devouring, no
devil would suspect anything even if he pretended to be Beelzebub himself.
‘Baalzephon isn’t the only one here. There’s still many organisations around laying low, so I can’t be too high-profile…’ Leylin sighed inside, and arrived at a luxurious residence near the Iron Tower.
A pit fiend appeared and bowed deeply to Leyin, “Master!”
“Mm. There will be huge changes here soon. Take all the subordinates who are loyal to me and leave. Also, get Jack to do what we agreed on.”
“Understood, Master of Devouring, Lord of Dis!” The pit fiend pressed his right hand to his chest and bowed, eyes full of reverence and flattery.
“Lord of Dis. I quite like that name, Azlok…” Leylin burst into laughter.
Indeed. The pit fiend standing in front of Leylin was Beelzebub’s trusted aide who was in charge of his armies. He was the greater devil in charge of the Iron Tower’s guard, Azlok! When he’d seen Leylin’s law of devouring and his control over Dis, Azlok had bent the knee instantly. He hadn’t even hesitated a moment to betray Beelzebub.
However, even Azlok had no clue of where Beelzebub had gone. The Lord of Gluttony hadn’t even contacted this devil before he left. It was evident that Beelzebub had actually never truly trusted him. Or perhaps the word ‘trust’ was too far-fetched to use amongst devils…
Dark fumes filled the skies, causing the Iron City to be lit up purely by the fires of hell. Groups of petitioners and lemures were guided by imps to all parts of the city, modifying it to fit into the Second Hell and performing repairs. Rumour had it that the city would continue to expand under Beelzebub’s wishes, with no end for all eternity.
There was no such thing as sunrise or sunset here, and the devils of Dis used specific devices to record time. However, they had no need for rest. As long as there was an opportunity to obtain souls, many would charge over for it without fatigue.

“It’s time. Let’s go!” Baalzephon glanced at a crimson pocket watch, and brought Leylin towards the Iron Tower.

Numerous noble residences were built around the Iron Tower, all of them looking imposing and magnificent. However, most of them were now empty, the whereabouts of their owners unknown.

Beelzebub’s disappearance had been a huge blow to Dis, even if the lesser devils hadn’t noticed it yet. The greater devils were filled with ambition for the lordship, or were afraid of the unrest and left. Only one legion was still performing its duties. An armoured lower devil watched every person trying to get close to the Iron Tower, regardless of which plane they came from.

“Enter from the west. Jack’s guarding that side today.”’Leycian’ brought Baalzephon deeper into the city, looking like he was familiar with the route. They finally arrived at a steel sentry that had been scorched red with hellfire.

Seeing the guarded looks of them any armoured devils here, Leylin yelled a greeting towards the sentry. “Hey, Jack. Look who’s here!”

‘Prevent Teleportation, Detect Stealth, and an anti-demon formation. There’s also spells boosting the defence of the guards, giving them magic immunity…’ Baalzephon’s eyes showed awe and a trace of nervousness, ‘These defences… Even us of the Dark Eight would need to send out all our legions, spending a month or two fighting before we could get in…’

“Leycian?” a gruff voice sounded, as an enormous devil appeared in front of Leylin and Baalzephon. He was huge and swollen, with disgusting tumours on his skin and scales. His bulging eyes made him look like a toad, and his matching mouth revealed densely packed sharp teeth.
This was the peak form of a greater devil, the paeliryon. Only pit fiends and the overlords of hell exceeded him in might.

“Yep! You look just as strong as before! So… does our agreement from before still count?” Leylin handed over a large number of soul gems.

“No need to worry. Nobody here would dare to reveal anything, unless they want to be imprisoned in the dungeons and punished with eternal hunger…”

The dungeons were something all the devils of the Second Hell dreaded. Hunger, in particular, was used on those who made mistakes. With the influence of the law of gluttony, those punished thus would grow incomparably hungry, with nothing that could satiate them. They would grow so frantic they would eventually choose to gnaw at themselves!

While Beelzebub had set the law that those who could endure seven days of hunger would be forgiven regardless of their errors, none had been able to last that long. Most devils of Dis would rather be demoted into ugly nupperibo than take on this punishment, such was the terror it caused.

Hearing what their superior said, the other devils all but wished to sew up their mouths, perhaps burying their heads in the ground.

“Good! I like your attitude!” Baalzephon nodded in satisfaction, preparing to enter with Leylin.

“Wait!” However, an unexpected incident happened. After Leylin entered, Jack immediately blocked the way, “One thousand jingles for one chance. One has already entered, so the contract has been
fulfilled!”
“What are you saying?” Baalzephon’s brows furrowed threateningly.
“You need to pay an additional amount!” Jack pointed at Baalzephon
“So if he doesn’t enter, I’ll get the chance to enter?” Baalzephon frowned. He did not want to attack anyone here, especially when this would reveal his identity.
“Keke… My apologies, but no!” Jack chuckled in a strange manner. The surrounding devils quickly picked up their weapons, aiming them at Baalzephon.
“You darned horned devil, I really should have turned you into a nupperibo. How could you have even created a contract with so many loopholes that devils could make use of…”
Baalzephon was in a spitting rage as he glared at Leylin, who was almost scared stupid, “You pay up the thousand jingles!”
“Apologies, master, but I don’t have any more…” ‘Leycian’ sounded on the verge of tears, causing the fury in Baalzephon to blaze.
“You piece of trash!” He now looked extremely grim and took out a soul gem, “Take it, you greedy fiend!”
The huge paeliryon hugged his hands to his chest and answered fearlessly, “Sorry, but there’s now a change to the price. It will be two thousand jingles. Also, your humiliation caused spiritual damage to me, so it will be a hundred more on top!”
“Damn it, damn it! If I get a hold of you, I’ll definitely demote you to a nupperibo and have you pick up manure in the Rotting Pit for ten thousand years…” Baalzephon’s chest heaved, but unwilling he was Jack still urged him into handing over the jingles.
“My- my apologies..” Seeing Leylin right now, Baalzephon couldn’t even be bothered to get mad. After all, if he were to kill or demote him to a nupperibo, then weren’t all his previous efforts in vain?
The other party was a greater devil after all, and he could be used as cannon fodder while exploring the tower. That was Baalzephon’s decision.
After passing through the sentry, they finally arrived in front of the Iron Tower. Beelzebub’s lair was so high that it reached the clouds, its body enveloped in a dull light that flowed around as it changed the quality and style of the tower.
‘The throne of Dis… Here I come!’ Baalzephon gazed at the pedestal within the Iron Tower, his eyes flickering with unconcealed ambition as he quickly brought Leylin in.
The audience is coming in…’

Baalzephon had yet to notice the glint in the eyes of the horned devil cowering behind him. The Iron Tower was Beelzebub’s lair, a place that was filled with danger even for Leylin. While he’d already obtained Azlok’s loyalty, Azlok was merely a guardian of the outer regions of the Iron Tower, and he couldn’t enter the place himself.

If he wanted to completely scope out this lair, Leylin would need hundreds of greater devils or even many pit fiends. Leylin naturally didn’t want to purge his own subordinates, and at the same time he wanted to lure everyone coveting the lordship out of hiding. This was why he’d kept his strength hidden, entering the tower alongside Baalzephon.

Baalzephon’s actions would result in a chain reaction, breaking the initial balance in the Nine Hells. With his actions, the Dark Eight and Asmodeus would be besieged from all sides. That way, Leylin could use the powers of other devils to scope out the tower.

……

Ninth Hell of Baator, Nessus. Deep gorges and valleys filled the area, forming large expanses filled with lifeless rocks. It looked like the land had been formed by a huge explosion, or perhaps a battle between existences compared to gods. Nobody knew the real truth
Inside a valley that was unimaginably deep and wide was a fort called Malsheem, standing tall with a dark, grand, and hellish beauty. The citadel was extremely large, and numerous miles wide. Its dimensions were unimaginable for all devils.

More than a million devils lived within this city, and conspiracy theorists said that they would one day start killing their way out, drowning out the entirety of Baator in Asmodeus’ quest to take over all of Hell.

“Ah, Malsheem. She’s so beautiful! I want to possess her and touch every bit of her skin lovingly…” A voice full of greed suddenly rang in the air, and a devil appeared. His upper body was human, while the lower half was that of a huge poisonous snake. He held what looked like a harpoon, and his triangular eyes looked full of avarice.

This was Mammon, the Lord of the Third Hell. He possessed the laws of avarice, and was one of Baator’s eight Archdevils that stood tall above the rest.

“Mammon! Long time no see, old friend. It’s been five hundred years since we last met, no? I remember it was in Minauros…” An illusory devil appeared at the peak of Malsheem. He looked like an aged devil with black hair that was combed back perfectly. He had a black goatee, and his eyes shot flames. His courteous greeting was as if Mammon was a friend he hadn’t seen in a long while.

“Your hypocrisy makes me want to hurl, Asmodeus!” Another Archdevil appeared next to Mammon, revealing Asmodeus’ identity. This one had flames twirling around him, seemingly like fury incarnate that could burn everything in the world to nothingness.

The old devil that had appeared atop Malsheem was the legendary Supreme of the Nine Hells, Asmodeus. This was Baator’s ruler in name.
“Oh, it’s Samuel! You’re just as angry as always…” Asmodeus seemed to think nothing of the power Samuel exuded, and his grin widened.

“When will you abandon this form, and dare meet us with your true body?” Pure white snowflakes fell one by one, instantly freezing a large portion of the valley. A devil that grasped extreme cold walked over, his eyes fearless as he met Asmodeus’ gaze with an aura exuding arrogance.

“Oh, so Levistus is here too! Cough cough… Forgive me; with the injuries to my body, it’s already amazing that I can appear in this form…” Asmodeus’ pale face now had a slight flush, looking like an old man on the verge of death from illness.

Rumour had it that the Archdevil of the Ninth Hell had sustained grievous injuries. He’d now taken the form of a high-ranked projection, an avatar of sorts. Even so, Asmodeus’ power was still the greatest amongst the Archdevils, the sight of which would shock other devils into silence.

Mammon, who controlled the third layer, Samuel who controlled the fourth, Levistus, who controlled the fifth, and the original ruler of the Nine Hells, Asmodeus. Four of the Archdevils had actually appeared here!

Ever since the conspiracies of the ruthless Blood Wars, and the incident where the abyss broke off from the Nine Hells, the Archdevils rarely met. Their fights had even affected the prime material plane, and the gods’ divine kingdoms. With four of them meeting, people would believe that a conspiracy that would turn the world upside down was being hatched. It wasn’t as if four lords of Baator meeting could result in good.

“Cough cough… May I know why you have gathered here?” Asmodeus produced what looked like presbyopic glasses as he began to flip through a thick sheepskin book. The book had a
black cover, with hellfire atop it. It made it seem extremely evil. Within the book, the paper recorded numerous vile contracts!
“Of course it’s about Dis, and Beelzebub!” Mammon was the first to speak, “The rest of us seven wouldn’t be able to decide on the appointment of an Archdevil even if we were to have a joint discussion!”
“Is that so?” A poisonous worm crawled out from Asmodeus’ goatee, which he then picked up and swallowed. “But… From the contract of our alliance, you don’t seem to think that way…”
Asmodeus flipped to a certain contract and pointed at the clause, “So? Need me to read it and explain it to you?”
“That’s only when the Archdevil of a layer is unable to fulfill one’s task. You have the power to help them, but only temporarily!”
Samuel exclaimed in anger.
“But as the Supreme of the Nine Hells… Fine, even if only in name it’s my responsibility to maintain the stability and order of Baator…” Asmodeus spoke up for himself.
“Even so, you can’t appoint someone to the Second Hell when its Archdevil is in danger. What’s worse is that you’re choosing from the Dark Eight, who don’t even have any authority…” Levistus snickered.
“They might be mere pit fiends, but if they can ensure there is order in the Second Hell, it would make sense to give them some rewards…” Asmodeus still persisted.
“All I see is them plotting and causing destruction!” The flames on Samuel’s body leapt into the sky.
“The only one who can stabilise Dis right now is Beelzebub with his authority over the place. Which of you knows where he is?” Mammon’s eyes were filled with greed.
“It’s said that after getting gravely injured, he’s hidden in the prime material plane. One of my followers found traces of him on the surface, and there even seems to be some interesting guide…”
Asmodeus spoke nonchalantly, as if this was no secret. Such honesty and magnanimity had the three overlords puzzled. It took a length of time before Levistus spoke up. “What are you planning?”

“That’s what I should be asking you,” Asmodeus looked innocent, “You barge into my house and rudely block my door. Why is that?”

“It’s obviously for the stability of Baator! You’re not to interfere with Dis anymore!” Samuel yelled.

Although it was acknowledged that Asmodeus was the strongest and most mysterious of the eight lords of hell, there wasn’t much of a difference between them. Still, he was the strongest devil despite his injuries. Rumours were abound that a fully healed Asmodeus could even unify all of Baator itself!

As the situation was now, Asmodeus would be able to defeat a single Archdevil in combat. Even then, he wouldn’t be able to kill his opponent. Two Archdevils working together could even suppress him! With three Archdevils present here, he would definitely lose a battle.

“Give up. The Hag Countess won’t help you. Baalzebul will stay at Maladomini forever, and can’t be bothered to leave and meddle in this. You might be able to rope Mephistopheles in, but you still won’t have enough numbers. You won’t win a vote amongst the lords of Baator without bribing us, and I’m quite interested in what you’re willing to pay…."

Mammon sized Malasheem up and down, “Give Malsheem to me, and I might consider it. I promise it on the honour of an Archdevil of Baator!”

“Looks like I really have no chance of winning…”

Asmodeus waved his arms around with no other choice. “Alright then. Based on the contract, I’ll stay in Nessus! However, Dis does need a substitute. How about we sign an agreement?”

Before the other Archdevils could speak, Asmodeus continued on,
“Let’s all stay here till everything dies down and order resumes. Let’s not go anywhere. How about it? Isn’t that your goal?”
“That’s all you have to suggest? Nothing else?” Samuel and the other Archdevils looked at each other, disbelief in their eyes.

Although Asmodeus had the Dark Eight, the other lords weren’t without their own subordinate pit fiends. Combined, the forces of the three could annihilate Asmodeus’ underlings.

Asmodeus grinned, tossing out great bait, “Nothing else. Until everything is done and dusted, we should all just stay here and let the developments play out for themselves!”

“What do you think?” Mammon looked at his two companions. He’d already been moved. After all, there was an entire level of Baator at stake here!

“You want to sow discord amongst us?” Samuel laughed, “You’re going to be disappointed…” Although he said that, nobody believed a word of it.

“Your physical form should remain here, including those of Mephistopheles and the rest,” Levistus added.

“Alright, I’ll have them sign another contract. The other lords that aren’t here shall need to stay in their territories as well, not acting until everything is settled.” Asmodeus chuckled, “So?”

“Order is everything! If we reject it, even if it’s for the sake of Baator’s World Origin Force the Nine Hells will be thrown into turmoil. The World Will will repudiate us.” Levistus’ analysis was calm, and he ended up answering, “I agree to this contract!”
“I concur!” “I as well!” Mammon and Samuel agreed as well. After all, this outcome far exceeded their expectations.

“Very well! The Hag Countess, Baalzebul and Mephistopheles have given me their reply as well. Let the River of Styx be our witness!”

Asmodeus now turned his book of contracts to a new, blank page. Once the other three ascertained that there was nothing wrong with the contract, they nodded their heads, making the most solemn of vows to the river of the underworld…

……

Right now, Leylin had no inkling of this contract made between the Archdevils of Baator. However, the ripples of this event would soon throw Baator into a flurry of events, culminating in the dawn of a new era.

“Beelzebub’s Iron Tower…” Baalzephon looked at the heavy coat of darkness in front of him, his eyes filled with deceit and solemnity. “Leycian. What do you know of this place?”

This was the castle of an Archdevil! Baalzephon was but a pit fiend, and he didn’t dare make any assumptions about the place.

“Lord Baalzephon, the Iron Tower has always been forbidden territory in Dis. Even my former superior, Lord Azlok the chief guard, has never stepped into this place…”

Leylin had spoken the truth. His earlier investigations and Azlok’s own testimony told him Beelzebub was someone who did not entrust things to his subordinates. Very few devils were permitted to enter the Iron Tower, perhaps a shortcoming of their race. Legends said that the only way to enter the Iron Tower was to sign a contract with Beelzebub under witness of the Styx, foregoing everything to protect it for life. Even so, the contract restrained all these devils to the interior of the tower. Leylin wasn’t gullible enough to say such things blindly. The
reason he did was that Baalzephon still had some value.
“Legend has it that the Iron Tower contains numerous curses, and
is guarded by a huge army of golems. There are ancient, powerful
devils here, contracted to protect it. We’re currently in the
outermost regions of the Iron Tower, the Plains of Gluttony. This
place is guarded by an army of hungry spirits Beelzebub has
trained, and only devils with permission are allowed to enter. Any
others will have to perform a rite of autocannibalism.”
“Hungry spirits?” Baalzephon nodded his head, and felt that this
new subordinate he had recruited was rather useful,
“Autocannibalism is where you make an offering by eating a part
of yourself?”
Baalzephon’s face was filled with worry. He wasn’t reluctant to
sacrifice a part of his body, but the most prevalent rule of the law
of gluttony was that any powers sacrificed could never be regained.
Evidently, this was Beelzebub’s first line of defense. Without his
permission, anyone who wanted to enter would first have to
weaken themselves.
‘Are there any ways to bypass this rule?’ Baalzephon pondered,
before shaking his head helplessly. How could there be a way for
him to beat the cunning of an Archdevil of Baator?
‘The most important part of the ceremony is that it requires a part
of one’s core power. Any other energy is useless…’ Baalzephon
glanced at Leylin standing beside him, restraining himself from
acting upon his impulse.
‘I’m going to lose a part of my powers before even meeting the
Archdevil… This isn’t a good start…’
Just as Baalzephon was mulling over this, he felt an imminent crisis
looming over him. He didn’t think twice, immediately using an
instant Greater Teleportation spell inscribed into his body.
He disappeared from his original location in a flash, reappearing
nearby. It seemed like the restrictions of the original realm of
gluttony made it extremely difficult for him to use teleportation magic and escape this realm.

“Damn! This interference…” Baalzephon swore foully as he raged, but he soon looked to his right shoulder in astonishment. A large chunk of flesh was missing from that shoulder, and threads of evil energy still circulated around it. A fish-like illusory monster had suddenly appeared as he tried to teleport earlier, rending apart the fire resistance and other defences that all devils were so proud of. A single bite had reduced him to this state.

‘A creature with the Teleportation feat? No, this is a top-level ability to traverse two planes and blur the distance between them! I even sense the unique aura of a creature from the astral plane…’ Leylin had managed to gather a lot of information immediately, using Baalzephon as a big pathfinder stone.

Although he’d devoured most of Beelzebub’s memories, the devil had clearly hidden some of the most important secrets. Those scattered fragments had lacked many important details, which meant that Leylin lacked knowledge about the iron tower.

‘Besides, even if I knew all about it, perhaps there is no better way. After all, the Iron Tower itself only recognizes Beelzebub’s aura. Even Baator’s authority and devil essence would be useless here…’ Leylin smiled wryly to himself.

While Leylin was able to stabilise himself, Baalzephon, on the other hand, was about to throw a fit.

‘Damn! This creature is definitely not something from hell and has never appeared before on the prime material plane. Don’t tell me it’s some abomination borne of a god?’

Baalzephon’s knowledge did not extend to things beyond the World of Gods, let alone the astral plane. To him, an existence that possessed powers even a pit fiend couldn’t comprehend was an abomination, the flawed offspring of a god! Only something with the power of a god could create such a bizarre and powerful
creature.
In a short span of time, Baalzephon was attacked several times. The loss of some of his body was but a small matter, but he sensed his own origin being lost with the passage of time. It left him extremely horrified.
‘Damn, what do I have to do to leave this place?’ Baalzephon continued to try using teleportation spells. However, those hungry spirits chased after him, biting his flesh apart and devouring his power.
Forget demons and other races, a devil’s greatest enemy was other devils. Beelzebub had specifically arranged his preparations to target his kin. Baalzephon was unfortunate, being toppled so simply.
‘Mm, how clever,’ Leylin cut a sorry figure as he stood at the side, but he was only pretending.
The hungry spirits sensed the energy on his body, not daring to stick close to him. There were several berserk little fellows who dared make contact with him, but they were immediately dissolved by the devouring power coming from Leylin’s body. They ended up becoming a part of him.
‘Mm, it seems like it’s some sort of spiritual body. They are undoubtedly some sort of astral creature…’ The A.I. Chip’s light flashed, and displayed the results of its investigatory research before Leylin’s eyes.
‘It looks like Beelzebub relied on the Manderhawke Plate to acquire several interesting things from the astral plane…’ Greed flashed across Leylin’s eyes. Soon, he heard Baalzephon’s despairing roar: “There’s nothing else for it, hurry up and begin the autocannibalism!”

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Even as Baalzephon struggled bitterly, something was happening within the burning Iron City of Dis. An enormous teleportation portal opened up, and troops of armoured devils marched out to take over the enormous city.

Small-scale conflicts continued to occur, but the devils who had lost their leaders and the core of their operations were far weaker than these elites. They lost very quickly, and beat a hasty retreat.

Due to Leylin’s earlier arrangements, Azlok had evacuated with the devils who were still loyal to the Winged Serpent God, and luckily they had not been involved. The main army soon moved to the vicinity of the Iron Tower, headed by seven pit fiends.

“That fool Baalzephon, he actually dared to come by himself! Does he think that he is a match for an Archdevil alone? Besides, he actually even dared to betray my lord!” Zapan of the Dark Eight snickered as he looked at the tall glowing tower which broke through the clouds.

“Hurry and take over the defences. We need to surround the tower, the main forces of the other Archdevils will get here soon!” Another member of the Dark Eight urged him on, his fiery eyes full of longing and ambition.

Asmodeus’ order had arrived, and the unanimous decision of the remaining Archdevils let the Dark Eight, who stood unable to break free of their torment at the pinnacle of hell, see their only chance at lordship!
Even the most powerful pit fiends in Baator lived under a shadow of anxiety and fear. Although they possessed formidable power, that was compared to ordinary devils. They were direct subordinates of Archdevils instead, subject to more stringent requirements and treatment. Even the slightest thoughtlessness would engender punishment. The harsh treatment and death threats from their superiors was a curse no devil could escape—unless of course it was someone at the peak of society, an Archdevil!

Consequently, when the seven Archdevils publicised their agreement to let their underlings battle for the Second Hell, many pit fiends went wild. The Dark Eight were only the first wave of entrants, and many more devils would end up participating. Even the dragons and gods of Avernus couldn’t resist the opportunity.

Be it the Dark Eight or their colleagues, everyone had become as frail as paper in front of the great temptation that was the lordship of Dis. As cunning as devils were, the backstabs and assassinations that followed were only expected. Now, even greater devils on par with the Dark Eight did not expose their backs to anyone else…

Just as the Dark Eight were taking over the Iron Tower, a desolate bugle horn resounded as an army under a different banner appeared on the horizon of the City of Iron. It was formed entirely of kytons, devils covered in twisting iron chains, and looked like an elite troop.
“The kytons of the Third Hell, underlings of the Lord of Avarice! They came so quickly!” A pit fiend of the Dark Eight lamented. “Get ready! The army has completed their battle preparations… Additionally, shouldn’t we send someone over to negotiate?” Devils preferred small-scaled conflicts over larger battles, or even ingenious diplomacy as a method to solve their problems. “I’m afraid it’s too late for that. After all, the attraction of the lordship is something that can’t easily be extinguished with words alone. We need to fight, to let them see our true power,” another member of the Dark Eight proposed. “No! I propose that we immediately send out emissaries!” Yet another devil immediately suggested something else. “Look…” A few pit fiends looked towards the direction the others had pointed at, and soon they discovered that two more armies had drawn closer, harbouring evil designs. The flames that burnt on their body, as well as the unique ice devils amongst them, revealed their identities. “The armies of the Fourth and Fifth Hells?” another pit fiend lamented, “As expected. With the distance our reinforcements need to travel from the Eighth And Ninth Hells, we’re at a disadvantage here. It’ll take a very long time…” “Let’s negotiate.” The Dark Eight very quickly came to an accord. Negotiation did not damage the prestige of a devil, and in the first place they never really cared about something as useless as their reputation. Tens of pit fiends gathered together quickly. There were no blockheads among them, any such candidates long since wiped out by their subordinates’ plots. Each one was shrewd and insightful. All the pit fiends of Baator had come to an agreement in a hurry, resolving the situation. Each of them would enter a limited portion of the tower. They would compete fairly with the Iron Tower at
their centre, aiming to win the unlikely prize of becoming an Archdevil.

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Baalzephon, the first to infiltrate the Iron Tower, had currently brought Leylin to a black door. The enormous door was made of cast iron, with terribly twisted sculptures protruding out of it. The most prominent one was a model of a three-headed cerberus, filled with a sense of ruthlessness.

‘This door seems to depict Beelzebub’s rise and history,’ Leylin meticulously looked through the sculptures on the door. Looking at the characteristics of the devils and other beings there, it seemed to proclaim Beelzebub’s feats in style, embellishing them with beauty and praise.

Once they reached the door, Leylin immediately discovered that several of the images matched with Beelzebub’s memories, explicitly confirming his position.

“Dammit… DAMMIT! The autocannibalism ceremony consumed half of my energy.” Unlike Leylin who was calm and collected, Baalzephon was flustered and utterly discomforted. His deliberate curses clearly demonstrated his coercive intentions. At the very least, Leylin felt that Beelzebub’s earlier arrangements had taken out three quarters of Baalzephon’s strength. However, he still had more than enough strength to suppress a mere horned devil.

‘Hmm? Don’t tell me that he wants to pull something on me to intentionally expose the flaws in the door?’ Leylin’s eyes flashed. Devils weren’t chaotic like demons were, there was a particular reason for everything they did. This was especially true between superiors and their subordinates. Even the harshest of superiors required sufficient evidence to punish their underlings.

For example, Leylin was currently masquerading as the horned
devil Leycian. Although he posed a threat to Baalzephon, the horned devil had always obediently followed his master’s orders and completed his job. Even the pit fiend couldn’t recklessly dispose of him.

Naturally, if Leylin did not resist the coercion, and executed his own subversive plot now that Baalzephon was weak, the pit fiend could crush him without second thought.

“I feel like we’ve reached the core of the Iron Tower, my Lord.” It was a great pity that Leylin’s current persona didn’t give Baalzephon the slightest opportunity to do so. Instead, he acted like the most devoted of subordinates, standing protectively in front of his master.

“This is the Palace of Gluttony, the core of the lord’s power. Rumours say—” Leylin happily played the role of a guide.

“What do the rumours say?” A regretful look flashed across Baalzephon’s eyes. It was clear that he felt disappointed that Leylin had not taken the bait.

However, keeping Leylin with him seemed to have been the right decision. After all, it was rare for a devil to have any understanding of the Iron Tower, even if it was just a few rumours. Perhaps it was a clue that would end up being of extreme importance.

“They say that this place is guarded by a contracted ancient devil!” A coarse voice sounded, answering Baalzephon’s question. However, it was not Leylin who had replied.

“57 years! It’s already been a full 57 years… Beelzebub has not supplied me with enough souls and flesh, and seems to have completely disappeared…” Roars of rage and dissatisfaction sounded, and a tremendous voice seemed to ring in Baalzephon’s heart.

*Bzzt!* The enormous iron doors in front of him rumbled, and the statue of the cerberus suddenly grew more lifelike, a bright glow surrounding it. This red eyes opened one after the other, emitting a
radiance that was a thousand times more dazzling than rubies. A trace of purple greed flashed within that red, demonstrating a thirst for blood and souls.

“This is… A hellhound!” Baalzephon retreated further and further. Hell was not limited to the devils. There were also hellcats, hellhounds, nightmares and even humans who’d moved here from the prime material plane. These beings had strong experts amongst them, with strength on par with greater devils. One could build the most perfect of fortresses, and hire them to protect it through contract. This hellhound greatly surpassed others of its species, but had been confined by Beelzebub in this tower.

“I am the King of Hellhounds— Soul Devourer Chekov!” A tremendous clang resounded, and the cerberus leapt out of the iron door. Its body was wreathed in flames as it grew in stature, only the tip of its being still connected to the door.

“The King of Hellhounds?” Baalzephon rather speechlessly looked at the enormous Cerberus in front of him, a crafty glint in his eye, “Then why is someone who is powerful enough to lead an entire race here?”

*Rumble!* It was clear that Baalzephon’s words had touched a sore spot. Chekov suddenly roared, and infernal flames spread all around them.

“It was Beelzebub! That greedy devil, the cruel glutton! He deceived me!” Without waiting for Leylin and Baalzephon’s coercion, Cerberus began to hog the conversation, “He trapped me with a fight, the loser having to serve the winner for 9900 years…”

In this moment, even Baalzephon looked at Cerberus with eyes of pity. Engaging in a game of chance with an Archdevil never ended well. The pathetic hellhound was lucky it didn’t get crushed to death. It being shackled here was natural, and with almost ten
thousand years of a contract it definitely wouldn’t end well.
“What did the competition entail?” Leylin asked inquisitively.
“Souls. I competed with Beelzebub to see who could devour the
most souls in a short span of time,” Cerberus’ three heads all
drooped, hanging low with an air of dejection. “Originally, my
three heads could devour even a city of souls in an instant.
However…”
Leylin was inwardly laughing to himself, and even Baalzephon
shook his head and sighed. Competing in an eating competition
with the Lord of Gluttony? One had to wonder whether this King
of Hellhounds had a defective brain, or was actually a demon in
disguise.
“What a sorrowful tale…” Baalzephon finally said, summing up the
incident.
“Well then! None of you have the slightest trace of Beelzebub’s
aura on you. Are you intruders?” Cerberus’ gaze glinted with
danger.
“Although I hate that fellow, I regret that I must follow the rules of
the contract. I will devour the souls of all intruders!” Cerberus
grinned, revealing a mouthful of towering fangs and a barbed,
scarlet-red tongue.
The cerberus continuously radiated a powerful aura. Its might could repel even the strongest of pit fiends, and it caused Baalzephon to feel uneasy. Leylin, on the other hand, was only frightened on the surface. He was snickering in his mind.

‘Such a silly dog, it can’t even see through my disguise. No wonder a devil could manipulate it so easily…’ The fact was that Leylin’s stealth was too powerful. Even the famed cerberi of hell couldn’t sniff anything off about his soul.

“Wait… Wait! Negotiate! I think we can negotiate!” Baalzephon retreated several steps as he called loudly. He did not have much of a chance against this King of Hellhounds. Moreover, he hadn’t found a trace of Beelzebub’s whereabouts. He wasn’t dumb enough to waste his resources and even risk his life here. Devils considered diplomacy the path of experts anyway.

“The contract was sworn upon the Styx. If you can remove it for me, you’ll have my gratitude. I’ll open the gates to the Palace of Gluttony, and share every bit of information I have about Beelzebub…” Chekov spoke from his left head, but the other two heads still snapped at Baalzephon without hesitation.

“Leycian, hold it back!” In this time of crisis, Baalzephon ordered his subordinate into danger.

“Yes, my Lord!” He saw this horned devil he’d contracted stand reluctantly in front of him. However, Leycian was smacked away.
by a swipe of Chekov’s paw. Even if Leycian was a greater devil, the difference between him and Chekov was still too large.

“Dammit, do I have to use one of my trump cards now?” Baalzephon hastily pulled out a silver shield.

The shield seemed to be forged exquisitely from the finest silver. Numerous runes were inscribed on it, and gems embedded as ornaments. The shield gave off an extremely holy aura, glowing with a gentle light.

The moment the shield came into contact with him, Baalzephon’s hands corroded quickly into white smoke. The pain caused him to frown. This shield was made of whitesilver, a noble element with powerful corrosive effects against all devils.

Of course, this effect depended on the target. Even buried in a pool of whitesilver would just leave a pit fiend itching.

However, the shield in Baalzephon’s hands didn’t seem to be any ordinary whitesilver item. It was imbued with great energy, and even had a hint of a god’s aura.

“An item used against devils!” Cerberus howled, and flames soon began to engulf the two figures as they engaged in a ferocious battle.

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“Well done! Keep it up!” The horned devil who was smacked to the side by the cerberus got up from his lying position.

‘One must first face the gatekeeper to enter the Palace of Gluttony. But since it’s engaged in battle now, there’s a chance to sneak in…’

After reaching this area, Leylin immediately recalled Beelzebub’s memories and grew familiar with the place. He discovered that there were several hidden tunnels, meant for Beelzebub’s escape in times of need.

And now, Leylin began to execute his plan like it was a matter of
'It seems to have been a correct decision to bring Baalzephon along!' Leylin stood in admiration of himself at he looked at the miserable figures of Baalzephon and the cerberus before disappearing into the darkness. 'I sense more pit fiends coming here, I have to hurry…’ With the help of Beelzebub’s memories, Leylin soon skirted past the giant gate that the cerberus was guarding, coming to a circular corridor. The ground was covered in crimson carpet, and oil lanterns flickered on the sides of the corridor. There were a large number of paintings on the walls, depicting scenarios of the underworld. Some works even showed the battles against gods in the prime material plane. ‘The winding corridor of exhibitions! I’m finally here… Beelzebub’s treasure vault!’ Leylin excitedly appreciated the oil paintings with both his hands behind his back. In Beelzebub’s memories, this was an important treasure vault. It contained about a third of an Archdevil’s wealth, and had numerous treasures gained from dangerous expeditions. ‘If only Beelzebub had stored the Manderhawke Plate in here… But that’s unlikely…’ Leylin pondered in front of a painting. The aesthetic views of devils were often grotesque and fear-inducing from a human perspective. There was a fundamental difference in their definition of beauty, but even then the intentions of the artists were the same. The painting in front of Leylin was rare, one of humans. A devil was lifting a kneeling human by the collar using one hand, the other holding a curved dagger up as if to pierce the human’s heart. Set to a crimson backdrop, the human clutched onto a piece of parchment holding a contract of sorts, his face convulsing in fear. ‘Is this to commemorate the temptation Beelzebub poses for humans? This person had to be a king for him to act personally…’
Leylin did not care anymore about the meaning behind the painting, and reached out with his right arm.

“To break the curse, I remember that I have to…” Leylin spat a series of syllables in a language that only an Archdevil would know. As he spoke those words, a brilliant light appeared on the oil painting and a defense mechanism that seemed to be a glass protector appeared.

“Activate!” Leylin emitted his devil aura, causing the glass to melt like ice. He stretched his right hand into the oil painting, pulling out a curved dagger.

[Beep! Host has obtained a high-energy item, beginning scan…]

The A.I. Chip’s light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and very soon the scanning came to a conclusion.

[Epic Demonblood Dagger (+5). Weight: 666 grams. Ingredients: Pit Fiend Bones, Souls of Avarice, Crystallised Soul of Gluttony.]

[Abilities:
Offering: The owner of this dagger can extract the life and souls of their enemies, allowing them to absorb power effectively until they’re a high-ranked legendary. Rate of conversion depends on the compatibility and willpower of the wielder.
Summon Devil: The dagger contains a devil contract, and allows the wielder to summon a greater devil up to once a day.
Judgement: The wielder needs to strengthen their will and alignment towards evil every three days. If they fail, Beelzebub will appear from the depths of hell and devour their flesh and soul.]

[Description: This legendary Demonblood Dagger has evolved under Beelzebub’s powers of extreme evil. No living creature can resist its temptation…]

‘An epic weapon?’ Leylin toyed with this dagger in his hands. It was evident that the dagger was an exquisite item made by Beelzebub himself, much stronger than the one that Leylin had crafted himself back on Faulen Island.
Because of how common the materials he’d used were, the Demonblood Dagger Leylin had made himself lost effect after his stats all reached 10. However, this epic dagger could enable the wielder to enter the legendary realm through devouring others! If adventurers in the prime material plane were to learn of this dagger, they would do all they could to obtain it, even if it meant losing their souls.

‘One needs to slay an opposing church’s pope even to be bestowed an ordinary Demonblood Dagger. This one most likely requires one to kill someone with divinity…’ Leylin also found several heinous traps laid in the dagger. This was a personal touch of Beelzebub: anyone who wielded it would immediately be put under his control.

‘Although it’s useless to me, it makes for a good item to bestow to my men…’ Leylin casually tossed the dagger into his spatial pouch. Since he’d comprehended the law of gluttony and even gained Beelzebub’s powers and authority anyway, he could remove the traps with just a thought.

‘Each and every one of these paintings is a treasure chest, and even other Archdevils will lust after the items within…’ The next painting that Leylin walked up to depicted a bloody battle between Beelzebub and a fallen flame balor. The demon did not have even the chance to self-destruct.

“In here, there should be…” Through the same process, Leylin obtained a fiery gem that seemed to be beating.

[Flame Balor Heart: This is the quintessence of a flame balor, and can be used to forge legendary or even demigod weapons. Any weapon it is used to forge will be aligned to chaos. If a demon swallows this, it will awaken the flame balor bloodline, gaining the chance to evolve into one,] the A.I. Chip stated.

‘Not bad. Demons will go red with desire as they fight over this. After all, it isn’t easy to find the carcass of a flame balor…’ Leylin
stowed the fiery gem away, looking into a different direction. “You let me pillage the items just like that. Are you really a protector of this place?”
“Haha… I have no chances against an Archdevil at all. After all, this was part of the contract I signed with Beelzebub…” As the ancient voice sounded, a withered looking figure stepped out from the darkness.
This figure assumed a human form, seeming like an old man who was about to turn into a tree. There were wrinkles all over his face, and he seemed to pose no danger at all. However, how could someone that Beelzebub contracted to look after his treasures be easy to deal with?
Leylin nodded. “You’re much smarter than that dog,” he said in praise.
It’s my honour to be complimented by an Archdevil!” The old devil bowed humbly to Leylin, with all the formality of a noble. His eyes were filled with solemnness.

“You were already here when I took the first item. Now, tell me… Why are you here?” Leylin’s eyes squinted, and the old devil shuddered as he formed cold sweat.

“Freedom! Of course it’s for freedom! Being confined in this dark, icy place and having to guard the treasures…I’ve already done more than enough!” The old devil clenched his teeth and cursed vehemently.

“I sensed the terrifying powers of the law of gluttony on you, along with a part of Beelzebub’s powers and aura. I can pledge my allegiance to you, letting you obtain everything in here, and also inform you of all of Beelzebub’s secrets. I want a small favour in return: Annul the contract on my body. If you want, I could even serve you for a hundred years…”

“Hmm, these are great conditions!” Leylin looked in interest at the cunning demon in front of him, perhaps the strongest guardian in the City of Iron, “How are you so sure that I can annul the contract for you?”

“Beelzebub had used his identity as the lord of Dis to confine me…” The devil blinked, “As long as Dis obtains a new owner, they’ll have the authority to annul the contract…”

‘Devils really are extremely cunning…” Beelzebub himself would
never have set a rule like this. It was likely a condition that this old devil had fought for himself. Since he’d signed the contract reluctantly, this devil didn’t have much loyalty to Beelzebub. On the other hand, Beelzebub had been extremely confident of sitting on his throne forever. Before his demise, that is.

“Alright, I accept your conditions!” Leylin agreed because he wouldn’t face any losses at all. However, he did not sign any contract: once he officially became the lord of Dis the contract with this old devil would shift to him. At that time, he could do whatever he wanted with him.

Leylin had no capacity for trust in devils, especially long-lived ones like this. That was another reason why he wouldn’t sign a contract.

“My Lord!” Evidently, the old devil understood his intentions, and could only smile wryly in return.

“So then, tell me your name. Since you’re the guardian of this place, do you know of the Manderhawke Plate?” Leylin wasted no time, getting to the point directly. In front of his might, the old devil couldn’t retaliate at all.

“My name is Borke, my Lord.” A strange expression appeared on the devil’s face, “Of course I know the Manderhawke Plate, it was originally mine. But Beelzebub, that disgusting, conniving thief! He stole it away from me…”

“Yours?” Leylin was somewhat taken aback. After all, Beelzebub’s memories regarding the Manderhawke Plate had been sealed strongly. Leylin himself didn’t have much information regarding the item. Now that he had met the original owner, his interest was piqued.

“Okay, Borke, tell me. How did you get your hands on the Manderhawke Plate then?” Leylin had an extremely strong urge to research the background of that object. That clay disc could change one’s destiny.

Noticing the glint in Leylin’s eyes, Borke sounded out a feeble
protest, “My Lord, that’s mine…”

“Was. Past tense. It’s currently in Beelzebub’s hands, no? Also, do you want your freedom or not?” Leylin eyes slanted. He had never held any trust for devils, so he would crush any plans they had, again and again.

Borke was most likely being dishonest with him, already engaging in wordplay. However, no matter what sort of ploy he set up he would have to give some amount of true information.

“That… It was many underworld years ago, so far into the past that I have even forgotten the history of that era. The City of Iron had not yet been built, and Dis was just a barren land…” Borke muttered, his eyes seemingly lost in some distant memory.

“As a devil my lifespan is that of Baator. I’m effectively immortal, and before we harvested souls from the prime material plane my hobby was to journey across the endless barren lands. The Manderhawke Plate was something I chanced upon in a ravine during my travels…

“I used it to travel to various planes, and I advanced into the peak of devil kind, becoming an ancient devil. It was then that I met the Lord of Gluttony, and after that…” Regret welled in Borke’s eyes.

Leylin’s eyes flashed, ‘Looks like this devil only discovered the plate’s ability to connect to other planes. He hasn’t tried breaking through the crystal sphere of the World of Gods.’

Travelling between planes was one thing, but it was completely different to break through the crystal sphere. However, regular devils would never consider such a thing. Leylin realised that Borke had a very vague understanding of the Manderhawke Plate, and likely couldn’t even use it as well as Beelzebub had. Naturally, he would not know anything about it having the ability to change destinies.

‘There’s a chance he’s trying to fool me as well, hoping to get it back another day…’ Numerous thoughts flashed past Leylin’s mind
as he continued to plunder the treasure vault relentlessly. After all, this was a portion of the treasures accumulated by an Archdevil of Baator. Even demigods would be tempted.

“Ignore that for now. Do you know where he is?”

“He’s disappeared for sometime. Last time he returned, he’d come back from another plane, gravely injured…” Borke didn’t withhold any information in this regard. He needed Leylin to free him from his current position anyway.

“I searched for his soul through our contract, and I know he’s extremely weak right now. Even a mere pit fiend could defeat him!” Borke exaggerated the extent of Beelzebub’s injuries, for fear that Leylin might back down. “However, he has hidden himself well. Even I myself am unable to find any traces of his whereabouts…”

The old devil laughed malevolently, regret and greed appearing on his face. It seemed like he wouldn’t have hesitated to strike if he’d found Beelzebub himself.

“So even you don’t know where he is. Is there not even a clue?” Leylin’s brows furrowed. Things had become more troublesome now.

“Apologies, my Lord! Due to the restrictions of the contract, I can only move about within the circular corridor and its vicinity… Even if he’s hidden in a part of the Iron Tower, I wouldn’t be able to notice it. In any case, Beelzebub is the owner of this place…” Borke’s explanation was backed by logic, but somehow Leylin felt that he was holding back some information. Was it not a necessity given the crafty nature of devils?

*Rumble!* At this moment, space rippled as an explosion rocked the tower, the reverberations of the sound causing the items within to vibrate. Both Leylin and Borke turned around, looking towards the Palace of Gluttony.

‘This aura… Pit fiends! There should be at least ten of them to
break Beelzebub’s seal!’ Leylin had estimated their strength immediately, ‘This degree of unity… It seems like there’s something happening that I’m not aware of…”

‘However…” Leylin looked at Borke who resumed his calm after an initial shock, and smiled. He too adopted a calm disposition. Borke noticed that Leylin had not taken the bait, and felt regretful. However, he still fulfilled his duty and explained the situation. “Beelzebub’s defences can’t be broken that easily by a group of pit fiends. Moreover, there isn’t any treasure there. There are certainly many guardians in the area, each no weaker than the cerberus…”

“Where are Beelzebub’s experimental lab and resting area? Mark it down for me!” Although Leylin wasn’t influenced by the plans of these hotheaded devils, he would have to take action now. He did not wish for anything to land in their hands. ‘It’s just a pity that…these remaining treasures…” Leylin’s figure faded into the void, leaving behind Borke who looked deep in thought as he watched Leylin disappear.

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“Baalzephon! I have never seen you in such a miserable state…” A few greater devils mocked Baalzephon. Chekov’s carcass lay at a side, and teleportations or dimensional leaps would allow one to grasp it by the claws.

“Zapan… and Lyle, you’re all here…” Baalzephon’s expression changed numerous times, finally changing into a gentle and agreeable smile, “I was about to inform you guys… that there is a great discovery here…”

“Oh really?” Zapan cared little for Baalzephon, and the other members of the Dark Eight too watched on in mockery.

“Open the Palace of Gluttony!” Zapan commanded, and many large paeliryon and various other devils ran forward in a disorderly
manner. They caught the carcass of the cerberus, tossing it into the air and smearing its blood on the giant metal gates.
The huge amount of blood was quickly absorbed by the gate, and it greedily sucked Chekov dry. A crack appeared in the centre of the gate, spreading to both sides.
We’re finally here. The Palace of Gluttony, the core of the Iron Tower…” Zapan muttered, his eyes blazing as the gates opened.

“What are you doing?” A loud shout sounded suddenly, and Zapan saw Baalzephon’s body turn into a blur as it zipped between the cracks of the gate. However, the other pit fiends watched on without the slightest inclination of stopping him.

*Rumble!* A blinding flash radiated out, and thunder boomed as Baalzephon’s body was struck by golden lightning. It disintegrated into nothingness. The only thing he left behind was a barely audible cry of rage as he screamed, “No!”

“Tch! How can the defence mechanism of an Archdevil’s core territory be breached so easily?” Another pit fiend shook his head in disdain and mocked the Dark Eight, “Such a foolish devil can also become one of the Dark Eight… Ahahah…”

Devils normally competed across the different hells. They had no qualms with bringing their counterparts down.

“Damn it, do you want to fight?” Corin of the Dark Eight stood out, his eyes showing fury.

“Alright alright, Corin!” Two other pit fiends stopped him, “We share goals right now. Any internal strife will stop us from entering the Palace of Gluttony, and gaining access to the lord’s lair…”

“Alright then!” The other pit fiends heaved a sigh of relief upon seeing Corin recollecting his cool. However, their eyes showed that
they now harboured even more schemes.  
‘This general… His rage earlier was most likely just an act. Did he do it so he could get better terms?’ ‘Someone with empathy? Ha!’ Although many of the devils present were second guessing themselves, the pit fiends finally came to an agreement to break into the palace together.  
The void flickered right after they left, revealing Leylin’s figure.  
“Haha… Should I say it’s as expected of devils?” His gaze settled on something in the distance as he shook his head, giving off a mysterious smile. Gods were high and mighty, able to peer into the future.  
An army of devils appeared within Avernus, launching a frenzied attack at the two divine kingdoms within. Five dragon corpses were piled up in the Bronze Citadel, like small mountains as they surrounded the Chromatic Dragon, Tiamat. She roared furiously, “You despicable liars!”  
The armoured devils were fearless, as if the rage of this dragon couldn’t affect them. They poured forth like a torrential wave, eventually cutting off Tiamat’s five heads. Once the last crimson head fell to the ground, Tiamat’s body crashed down with an epic thud, causing a minor tremor inside the Bronze Citadel. Chromatic Dragon Tiamat, who’d just received full authority over the Bronze Citadel, had perished.  
“Commander, Tiamat’s death has been confirmed!” This news was quickly sent to an unknown pit fiend.  
“Very well, occupy the whole city, and begin cleansing it of werewolves, wereleopards, and dragons. Any who resist are to be killed immediately, there will be no need for further updates.” The commander of the army was a size smaller than his peers, but his eyes were cold as frost. A red scar streaked across his face, making him look malevolent. The bridge of his nose was extremely tall and sharp. The devil seemed complicated, possessing savagery and
tyranny but at the same time tenacity and experience.
“Yes!” The messenger had no intention of disobeying his commands. Very soon, the order had been spread throughout the Bronze Citadel. Wails and cries resounded as Tiamat’s kith and kin, those half-beasts who had been attracted by her evil, were purged. The majority of them would definitely not live past the night, and those that did would become slaves to the devils, toiling somewhere with no day and night.
A huge conspiracy began to engulf the Nine Hells with Tiamat’s death. Similar events were occurring in the Third through Fifth Hells, and a large undercurrent erupted into the limelight, as if planning to devour all prey at one go.

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Dis, the City of Iron.
“Argh…” Another assassin cried in anguish as he was swallowed by darkness. However, the expressions of the pit fiends were extremely calm, as if a common sight.
“The Sentinel’s Passage is the best guarded place after the hall of gluttony. Rumours say that we’ll be able to reach Beelzebub’s palace if we follow this road…” Dagos of the Dark Eight had assumed human form, looking like a scholarly and well-mannered sage. However, his evil aura betrayed his disguise.
“Our mission ends with this wave, the rest depends on you!” Dagos spoke to the other pit fiends.
“Of course… We will abide by the rules. You, get over there!” A pit fiend walked forward and pointed at a paeliryon subordinate.
The pit fiends had all agreed that using their subordinates as cannon fodder was the most optimal way, and they would count the losses and each sacrifice some of their men.
“My Lord…” The paeliryon which was extremely massive looked
on at the darkness, its face extremely solemn. “Cut the bullshit. Do you want to become a lower devil?” The pit fiend roared, revealing its aura. Devils had great control over their subordinates. They could promote or demote them, and using their auras with the threads of loyalty, the pit fiend could force this paeliryon into danger regardless of circumstance. *Ka-cha!* *Ka-cha!* Devils were extremely meticulous and cautious, and most traps would not faze them. However, that wasn’t true for traps laid by an Archdevil. This particular paeliryon was extremely nimble and cautious as it ducked past several traps, even seeing the end of the passage. However, it was soon engulfed by a silvery liquid that fell from the sky. It screamed in anguish, its veins and bones visible as the liquid corroded its entire body… “It’s Devil’s Solution. To think he used it here…” Zapan had grown rather irritable. After all, most of the traps had been laid against devils themselves, causing great casualties. This also confirmed that devils themselves had only one type of opponent—other devils. The defenses of the Iron City had to be maintained however, and they were limited in numbers. With the pit fiends sending out their subordinates one after the other to activate all the mechanisms, they would be able to overcome them sooner or later. “We’re finally out!” Everyone was relieved after exiting the passage, especially the greater devils that had survived the ordeal. However, the smiles on their faces very soon turned still. What was in front of them was a large field. Rows of metal and lava golems stood neatly in formation, making up an army. A black figure seemed to be sending out orders from the centre. “Fuck, the information was inaccurate! Didn’t they say everything would be alright after we got past Sentinel’s Passage?” A pit fiend hurled vulgarity as it berated its fellow devils. Devils found it instinctual to push blame, even harming others
when met with difficulty.
“You trespassers shall soon feel the glorious wrath of Lord Beelzebub. This army of golems…” A booming voice sounded from the golem army. It sounded rather young, but still carried a dignified tone.
The golems raised their head once the voice sounded, as if possessing their own souls. They immediately launched an attack. The devils quickly suffered another wave of heavy casualties.
“We can’t teleport in here, shit!”
“These are arcane golems, and have some diamonds embedded within them. O’ Supreme of Baator, has the Lord of Gluttony obtained a flying city?”
“There’s no other choice. Have the subordinates hold them back, we need to try and break through!” Devils were expert leaders and diplomats, and many of them sought a straightforward attack. However, their current opponents were extremely effective against their kind, leaving them feeling helpless.
However, the temptation of a lordship was currently dangling in front of them like a carrot, causing them to lose sight of the precarious situation.
Pit fiends found it normal to send their subordinates out as sacrifices, using them to escape danger. Some of them had even brought a large group of greater devils along just for this purpose. They were running out of cannon fodder, however, and Beelzebub was yet to be seen.
“Die! Fireball!” “Summon Hellfire!” “Summon Devil!”
With the urging of their superiors, the greater devils could only put all they had into a frontal collision with the golem army. Broken limbs and flaming pieces of metal flew in the air as brilliant flashes dazzled the battlefield.
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‘It seems to be a mere imitation of a Netherese golem…’ Leylin hid in the darkness, watching the big duel in the square. With the advantage given by Beelzebub’s memories and the fact that the golems were fixated on the pit fiends, the chances of him being discovered were minute. He could stalk behind this pit fiend, using it at the last moment to break past the blockade of golems in the square. ‘Only after the greater devils are all dead will the pit fiends be fatally wounded…’ Looking at the pit fiends who were still alive, Leylin shook his head inwardly. Many of the greater devils had taken the brunt of the golems’ rampage, and even some pit fiends were unlucky enough to be left behind and trapped in one’s vicinity. With the golems’ personalities, it would be completely suicidal for their colleagues to rescue them. Consequently, those pit fiends ended up with a tragic death, finally falling to Beelzebub’s traps. Even members of the Dark Eight had fallen amongst the other pit fiends. The palace of an Archdevil was not something they could go after carelessly, even if it had fallen out of its owner’s control. And yet despite all this, many of the pit fiends had ambition written all over their faces. A tall statue stood before them, looking over their broken flesh. It had multiple pairs of eyes, and six strange fingers. A grin was on its face, spread from ear to ear, and all one could see were rows upon
rows of jagged fangs.
“The Lord of Gluttony… This definitely has to be his palace!” Zapan’s eyes grew wide, and he greedily looked at the small palace building behind the statue.
The building was in the style of the devils. It was distorted and terrifying, with strange and intricate descriptions. There was still a little hellfire burning atop it, seemingly going to continue burning to the end of the world.
‘The lord’s bedchambers. It’s rumoured that a lot of his treasures are hidden here. It’s an extremely important clue…’ Many pit fiends immediately began breathing heavily, and began to distance themselves from each other. Even the Dark Eight began to do the same.
They had all taken great risks to come here, all for the inheritance of the Archdevil. They wished to grasp the power of gluttony, obtaining mastery over the origin force of hell. Only then would they qualify to become a Lord of Baator.
In that pursuit, every other devil here was a competitor. Even former colleagues weren’t in the least bit worthy of their trust.
The pit fiends exchanged glances. There seemed to be some invisible signal as they all rushed into the palace in unison. Devilish power fuelled fireballs that rained down on their peers, their earlier partnership put aside now that they were here. This wasn’t infighting: they’d never been united in the first place.
“Get lost, this belongs to me!”
“Kibosh, I’ll remember this!”
“Damn, wait until we fight a bloody battle!”
All these devils coveted the lordship. They used all possible tricks, some even with a trace demonic influence.
Leylin had no intention to take part in this great battle. He could keenly sense that Beelzebub was absent. Yet, having suffered a great injury it wasn’t like he’d scurry back to his den to lick his
wounds. That would only lead to death from his competition. All devils would betray their superiors, so Beelzebub wouldn’t even think of returning to his palace. ‘The most I can find here will be a few baubles and treasures; it won’t surpass what I’ve taken before. This statue, however…’ Leylin stealthily rested his hand on Beelzebub’s statue, and felt the surface texture and temperature. His eyes shone with the light of the A.I. Chip’s prompts. ‘This is one of Baator’s rarest materials, and it can preserve its temperature forever… The A.I. Chip’s scan didn’t glitch after all!’ Leylin’s eyes flashed, ‘Still, this statue must have been crafted by a master, it even expresses Beelzebub’s divine charm. On top of that, it has a trace of the laws of gluttony…’ The gods of the World of Gods, just like Magi of laws, had comprehended the laws of their world to some extent. Their true bodies were a manifestation of these laws. When he’d become a demigod, Leylin’s own body was imprinted with the laws of massacre and devouring. Of course, devils had their own power of laws, and Beelzebub was the embodiment of gluttony. His true body represented the laws of gluttony, and if a Magus could observe his body they would feel the power of gluttony. It was precisely this reason that a devil’s true form and truename were taboo, and offenders of the same were investigated by the churches. ‘Something that preserves the feeling of the power of gluttony like this statue can really be considered a treasure. But I feel like there’s something a little off about it…’ Just as Leylin prepared to research this a bit more deeply, his eyebrows suddenly twitched. He quickly concealed his form, becoming illusory and hiding his aura. A stealthy figure hurried across his vision, heading towards Beelzebub’s palace. The person was using a powerful invisibility spell in tandem with many blessed items, but he still couldn’t hide
from Leylin’s True Vision. Nothing could be hidden from the eyes of a god.

‘Baalzaphon! So his death was faked after all,’ Leylin immediately realised who that stealthy figure belonged to.

He had been entirely correct. The devil who was drawing closer seemed to be the member of the Dark Eight who had fallen in the Hall of Gluttony. This was the person who’d brought him all the way here, Baalzaphon!

His private actions had already made him a traitor, so Baalzaphon hadn’t hesitated to fake death in order to avoid being questioned and attacked. His acting had been extremely successful, and as fixated on Beelzebub’s powers and authority as they were the fiends let him get away with his actions. The only one he hadn’t hoodwinked was Leylin.

Baalzaphon had done the same thing as Leylin, furtively following behind the competition. The group of pit fiends cleared his path, but because his ability at stealth was awful he’d ended up trailing behind Leylin.

‘There are consciences of Archdevils following behind these pit fiends. There must be some other hints…’ Leylin didn’t have much of an opinion about what had just happened, but he looked with anticipation towards the palace. Devils understood each other best, and perhaps the meddling of the other Archdevils could expose traces of Beelzebub.

However, if any of them actually discovered Beelzebub, who could win a fight with him?

“I’ve found it!” A voice exclaimed in pleasant surprise. It attracted the attention of many pit fiends.

There were powerful fluctuations in the area, and the pit fiend seemed to have activated some sort of mechanism which revealed the shadow of a semiplane that Leylin hadn’t noticed before.

A blazing pillar of light lit up around the palace, forming a
mysterious array. It formed an illusory entrance. "That Archdevil must be within the semiplane!" All of the pit fiends looked on with covetous eyes, frantically rushing towards the opening plane.

“It’s mine, it’s all mine!” Baalzephon had cast off his stealth as well, running in the same direction. However, none of the pit fiends cared. All of their attention was now fixated on the authority of the Archdevil.

Only the few from the Dark Eight let out cries of surprise. ‘He hid it well, going as far as to secretly create a semiplane…’ A holy radiance flashed gold, and the blood red massacre domain came into existence. Many of the pit fiends were completely shoved aside.

An incomparably perfect god appeared amongst the devils, his platinum form handsome and imbued with the greatest majesty. Seeing his target, Leylin had made an outrageous move, the outcome something even Baalzephon could not imagine.

“Divine force! It’s a god, a god has snuck in!” “It’s only a demigod. If we obtain his essence…” The greedy devils quickly surrounded Leylin.

“Hmph.” Leylin only snorted disdainfully, and an enormous tide of divine force turned into a spiritual storm that spread across the area.

“Stop him! How can we allow a god to obtain something from Baator?” Threatened by a demigod, the devils stood together in a rare show of teamwork. They cut apart the bindings of the divine force and the massacre domain, coming in front of Leylin. However, just at this moment, a strange smile curved in the corner of Leylin’s mouth.

He turned his head and roared at Baalzephon: “Baalzephon, my servant. Stop these thieves, with no mercy. I command you as your superior!”
“Are you joking? Do you think you’re Asmodeus?” Baalzephon’s face split into a smile of ridicule. However, his movements soon dulled. Under the restraints of the contract, he couldn’t help but stop dead in his tracks. He stood solidly and blocked the other pit fiends, his bulky flaming sword slashing at them quickly.

“Damn, this is the power of a contract! When did I—” Baalzephon wanted to cry out, but he was entirely unable to. Restrained by the severe difference in their ranks, he was forced to attack the other pit fiends fiercely.

Sadly, all of his power was used up against the attack of so many of his peers. It took a short while for the other devils to completely tear him apart.

However, this was already enough.
With the help of Baalzephon the ‘traitor,’ Leylin was the first to enter the semiplane. Powerful spatial force flickered in this place, and he could barely make out the world at the other side. This was a plane of lava, and at its heart was a massive devil deep asleep. The chest of this veritable mountain heaved up and down in his slumber, his devilish wings and giant eyes quivering with a powerful life force.

“Beelzebub’s true body!” The pit fiends who saw this scene rejoiced loudly, the fire in their eyes blazing intensely. In front of them was an unequaled throne. It was a position at the head of all devils, exempt from eternal damnation! Yet Leylin slowed his footsteps, coming to a halt. He’d already fulfilled his goals the moment he entered the semiplane. ‘It’s so lifelike that it almost fooled even me, but…’ The A.I. Chip’s light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, following which he left and disappeared without the slightest hesitation.

With the domain and divine force that was repelling the pit fiends removed, they’d entered the semiplane as well.

“What do we do now? That god seems to have left, could this be a trap?” Zapan blinked. Beelzebub may have seemed strong here, but he still coveted this place greatly.

“How about we send some cannon fodder up to see if it’s the real thing?” A devil suggested from the side. Its body was spewing
flames occasionally.
“You bunch of cowards, now it’s all mine… Haha…” Even as the rest of the devils grew indecisive, one of the pit fiends laughed maniacally and dashed into the semiplane. Following that precedence, the other pit fiends joined in as well.
“Pearza was the first one to enter. I’m not going to be promoted next year anyway…” another devil sighed, “I’m going to leave…” Demons would have rushed in without thought. However, devils weren’t the demon horde. They were of the lawful alignment, and possessed great intelligence.
“I smell a trap as well. Pardon me, I’ll excuse myself…” The devils who entered this place were the unlucky ones, those who were going to fare badly in the next evaluation and thus wanted to prove their mettle. The others saw that the scene before them was too good to be true, and they planned to retreat.
“The god may have left, but that doesn’t necessarily mean it’s a trap. Besides, if we combine our forces…” Even more devils grew restless, trying to persuade their peers.
*Rumble!* However, a terrifying change had occurred in the semiplane. It thundered loudly and distorted, as if turning into a terrifying beast. The entrance before them turned into a monstrous mouth.
*Bang!* Being the first one to rush in and touch the true body in the semiplane, Pearza exploded into a wisp of smoke. The giant figure of the Archdevil began to melt within the lava, turning into a putrid black liquid that clung onto the bodies of the devils and corroded them.
“Argh…This is…” The devils in the semiplane wailed. It was like they were being digested in the stomach of a strange beast, the black liquid being its stomach acid. This new beast roared out as a force of suction was formed at its mouth.
“Damn it, it’s a trap! Hurry and leave!” Zapan of the Dark Eight
bellowed, but he soon discovered that the force had grown to encompass him. The giant mouth covered the sky and earth, as if wanting to swallow everything within. Many pit fiends died to the black liquid. This beast only stilled after devouring many of them, emitting the evil energy it had digested in satisfaction. It then sent its energy to a certain location.

……

“What a pity…”
Ninth level of Baator, Nessus. Asmodeus was atop the great citadel of Malsheem, sighing. Mammon, Samuel, and Levistus jumped at the same time. “Our subordinates, what have you done?”
“It was to complete a contract I had with Beelzebub…” Asmodeus shrugged his shoulders. “I never schemed against your men, it was agreed upon before Beelzebub entered his deep slumber. He laid a trap to invite an enemy in, and if he was able to successfully devour them, he could heal from his injuries and retain order in Dis. However, it seemed like the beast couldn’t fool that enemy…”
“Which is to say… You have been deceiving us all these while?” The frosty aura around Levistus had strengthened.
“Oh no, not at all my friends.” Asmodeus smiled maliciously, “The agreement sworn to the Styx is still in effect. If your subordinates had managed to grasp Beelzebub’s weakness and take over, I would have acknowledged it for sure. However, they failed and became medicine for a lord of Baator. It’s not all that serious, is it?”
“Which means we helped Beelzebub recover for nothing in return? Damn it!” Mammon and Samuel howled, “Let us return, it should be a mess at our side now…”
“I’m afraid not. After all, the pact has not yet reached its
maturity…” Asmodeus blinked his eyes, as if everything in the Nine Hells was laid before him, “Please, let us wait…”

……

“So he wanted to devour me through this trap to recover?” Leylin’s figure appeared atop the Iron Tower, his divine force causing the area around him to still. He looked at the beast devouring the pit fiends without a care in the world, and his eyes glowed. He had confirmed that this was a trap laid by Beelzebub, aiming to ensnare him so that the Archdevil could regain his lost authority and power. However, even if Beelzebub’s plan had failed he’d managed to devour a lot of pit fiends. They now fuelled his recovery. Even if swallowing Leylin would have been most effective, this was better than nothing.

“Too bad… Your trap had one flaw, and an undeniable truth!” Leylin’s eyes smiled. “The fact is that you’ve already entered a deep slumber. You could only lay this trap in a hurry, but couldn’t control it from the background. It’s a little shabby.

“As for your fatal error… The energy this beast sucked in is being transported to you through a tunnel to somewhere nearby!” One could not transport energy an infinite distance, and Beelzebub himself was a master of tactics. The most dangerous place would also be the safest one!

“But I still can’t sense your existence. There isn’t a trace of your aura in the plane…” Leylin’s eyes squinted, “There’s only one way for that to happen, the Manderhawke Plate. You used it to carve a small space out of the void, huh? That way, even if you’re not in Dis you’re still nearby.”

‘A.I. Chip!’ Leylin fiercely commanded.
[Beep! Bringing up data on the Manderhawke Plate…] the A.I. Chip intoned, sending a large amount of information to Leylin’s memory.

He’d made several attempts to replicate the Manderhawke Plate back in the Magus World, and now it seemed to have paid off. Elegant runes and patterns began to appear from Leylin’s fingertips, forming a complex and intricate pattern. The patterns had all joined together, forming a strange circular rune.

[Beginning replication of Manderhawke Plate, searching for similar wave bands…] Looking at the notification, Leylin descended to the ground and moved towards Beelzebub’s statue. The semiplane beast had ripped the entire palace to ashes, but this region had been spared that treatment.

[Beep! Search complete. Target’s location: 00] the A.I. Chip prompted.

“So it’s here!” Leylin did not hesitate any further, pressing the replica up against Beelzebub’s statue. The rune buzzed as it began to merge into the statue. It was like something being dropped in water as it opened up a mysterious space.

This place was extremely small, and the world seemed to be in grayscale here. There was an aura of extreme evil in here, being radiated by the body of a devil that was curled up in the centre.

“I’ve finally found you, Beelzebub…” Leylin muttered.

He’d never thought that this Archdevil would have grown so weak. Although he looked to be the same, Beelzebub had dropped to the size of an infant. Illusory tubes connected his body to the semiplane beast, absorbing the power it devoured.

A conscient awakened slowly, immediately beginning to give off feelings of fear and anxiety upon seeing Leylin.

“From the Magus World to the Purgatory World, and back to the World of Gods before the Nine Hells. Our feud is finally coming to an end…” Leylin looked at Beelzebub, sighing at the sight of his
enemy. Crimson runes began to cover his body, as a vertical eye split apart his brows.
“Nightmare Absorption— Dream Eater!” Leylin used the best method of absorption he had for the World of Gods. Dark red dreamforce engulfed the entire space, forming an oval egg. The egg began to throb slightly, as if alive and breathing.
In front of Leylin was an incomparably vast dream world. Innumerable crystal planets formed what looked like a honeycomb, each with a figure of Beelzebub flashing within. Having survived from the ancient dusk of the gods to this date, Beelzebub’s memories encompassed everything in all these years. If it was all put into the mind of an ordinary mortal, they would perhaps go insane from the overload of information. Even with Leylin’s background, it still took him a while to fully digest it. However, this was exactly what Leylin wanted. It wasn’t just Beelzebub’s authority and power of laws that he was after; he was quite interested in the lordship and the remaining portion of the Archdevil’s memories.

‘Is he trying to delay me with such a long dream?’ Leylin’s mouth curved into a wry smile. He had completely seen through Beelzebub’s intentions. ‘Pity… Even if ten thousand years pass in this dream, only a moment will pass in the real world…’

*Hss!* His body burst apart violently, becoming a formless crimson smoke that gradually formed the image of a Targaryen serpent. The serpent opened its jaws wide, devouring the entirety of the enormous crystal structure. A single blood-red eye formed at the centre of the crystal, containing an image of Beelzebub. Having acquired the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, Leylin was currently the ruler of Dreamscape. Within it, Leylin accompanied
Beelzebub in a trip through his entire existence. Over the tens of thousands of years, he obtained everything he wanted.
A very short amount of time had passed in the real world, and the blood-red eye opened to swallow Beelzebub up in his entirety. Just at this time, something occurred in the outside world. The infantile devil trembled, losing all of its aura.
The ruler of the Second Hell, the Lord of Gluttony… Beelzebub was now dead!
Beelzebub’s original body was then corroded by dreamforce, exposing a round plate embossed with patterns.
‘The true form of the Manderhawke Plate! So he hid it within his body…’ Leylin examined this round plate. The intricate patterns on it rather intoxicated him as the plate weakened the world’s boundaries greatly.
‘With the Manderhawke Plate opening the way, dreamforce should be enough…’ A brilliant glow was emitted from the Manderhawke Plate, forming a deep and mysterious black hole.
‘Beelzebub’s last bit of divinity, as well as his divine force and power of laws…’ Dark red light glowed in Leylin’s palm, immediately getting sucked into the black hole. It disappeared without a trace.

……

Targaryen Castle was now a mottled building, filled with a sense of history. It was the residence of many high-ranking Kemoyin Warlocks, as well as Leylin’s own Targaryen bloodline.
*Rumble!* With its link to Dreamscape, the dark red light quickly exited the World of Gods, arriving at the Magus World. A gentle tremor shook the castle.
Having long since developed its own conscient, the castle automatically protected the Warlocks within. It didn’t allow a single
person to be injured, and at the same time it transmitted an enormous sense of joy.
At the bottom of the laboratory, Leylin had long recovered from his injuries, but he had been awaiting something else. He finally opened his eyes, and the strange phantom of a giant serpent slithered across his pupils.
“My plans of over ten years, as well as the risk of splitting my soul... They have finally succeeded,” Leylin sighed. His true soul rapidly communicated with the A.I. Chip, and in an instant he had comprehended everything.
“The complete comprehension of a law, and hence my advancement to rank 7... It happens today!” Light flashed as Leylin was completely enveloped by a blood-red fireball. He quickly moved outside the boundaries of the Magus World, arriving at the boundless astral plane.
Comprehending a complete law was no small matter; he wasn’t certain that he could contain all the radiation. Targaryen Castle was full of Leylin’s subordinates and blood relatives, so he wouldn’t accept any large accidents.
“Dreamforce!” Leylin gently chanted, and dark red runes appeared on his body.
Before he’d advanced to become a demigod, Leylin had already recovered from his injuries. However, he was still in a state of slumber, and apart from waiting for his clone all he did was to get accustomed to the power of his new bloodline.
Although his clone was the one who’d acquired the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, his main body had also been upgraded in that process. Nightmare Absorption was the ultimate bloodline of Dreamscape, its mysterious abilities far exceeding Leylin’s expectations.
A vertical eye opened between Leylin’s brows, its gaze seemingly piercing through the barriers of space and time to connect to his
clone’s body through Dreamscape.
[Beep! Host has obtained the origin of laws, determined to be the
laws of gluttony! Assimilation with the body: 99%. Transferring…] the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
[Beep! Law of devouring has been analysed completely.]
[Beep! With the influence of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique,
the host’s bloodline abilities have been perfected. Targaryen bloodline advanced to rank 7!]
[Innate Skill Devour advanced to rank 7.]
An update on the skill followed.
[Devour (rank 7 innate spell)— With a perfect comprehension of
the laws of devouring, its power has greatly risen. The ability can
now be inherited.]
[All requirements met, advancing to rank 7.]
After the law of devouring was completed, Leylin didn’t restrain
himself any longer. He projected his bloodline, and a Targaryen the
size of a star hissed as its devilish wings flapped up a massive gale. Its razor-sharp claws and horns radiated light.
With the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, the Targaryen’s scales had
turned a dark red. A vertical eye had formed between its two eyes
that were as large as stars. A torrential surge of his bloodline power
assimilated with the law of devouring, wrapping Leylin within a
mysterious process.
[Beep! Host has advanced to rank 7. Body of laws has been
perfected. Stats have changed greatly, recalculating data.]
The A.I. Chip’s prompts brought Leylin back to his senses. He
looked at his hands, mulling over the change. ‘A perfect body of
laws. My body is now completely made up of my laws and
bloodline; as long as the laws are not extinguished… I’ll be
indestructible?’
Leylin felt the law of devouring within his body. The feeling of
obtaining a full body of laws was incomparable to what he’d gotten
when he’d approached the boundary of rank 7.

[Beep! Host’s stats have been recalculated.]

Very soon, Leylin’s new stats were projected by the A.I. Chip.

Strength: 215.73, Agility: 170.21, Vitality: 300.05, Spiritual Force: 575.44. Soul Status: Body of Laws. Laws comprehended: Devouring (100%), Massacre (57%). Host’s body of laws has lost all constraints, and can now absorb World Origin Force to increase in power.]

‘Rank 7 Warlock! A Magus that has comprehended laws! Only…
At this stage I can greatly sense the pressure to pursue eternal life…’ His soul now made of laws, Leylin’s gaze transcended all distance. He could see into the infinite river of time and space. As long as the origin of his laws survived, this river would allow him to be reborn even if he were felled.
This was the secret of Magi and Gods!

“I also seem to have acquired more authority…” Leylin rubbed his chin, and then his own secret imprint appeared. It was an inverted triangle with a black snake coiled in the centre.
“This will be my emblem from now. No matter which intelligent life, or where the place is, as long as they pray or make sacrifices to this emblem, I will be able to sense it, and send my powers to them… I seem to have inherited part of the gods’ powers huh? Or do all paths eventually converge?”

Leylin eyes saw into the distance, his vision traversing countless worlds to look at two different places.

“Your Excellency Leylin! Welcome to the realm of rank 7…” In the subterranean part of the Magus world, Ignox and Mother Core congratulated him.
The other location was the Purgatory World, within the endless ball of snakes. The Snake Dowager looked bewitchingly at Leylin,
“Rank 7 now, huh? Don’t forget our pact.”
“Cunning woman!” Leylin shook his head. After turning into a rank 7 Warlock, he had finally mastered his own bloodline. In other words, the Targaryen bloodline had no connections with the Snake Dowager from now. This strength was his own, his absolute power. He was not constrained by any bloodline.

As close to rank 7 as he was before, he’d still been a rank 6 Warlock. His plethora of trump cards had allowed him to equal Magi who wielded laws before, but now everything had fallen into place.

“We’ll discuss this later!” The two powerful consciences diminished, and Leylin looked at the Magus world once more.

“My bloodline has already spread this far? It seems like Syre and Daniel have been fulfilling their duties…” At this moment, Freya, Celine, his other few female counterparts, and their children surfaced in Leylin’s mind.

“Although it isn’t consistent with my original plans, I should see them again. It’s been such a long time!” With just a thought, Leylin’s body appeared at the centre of the Targaryen Castle. There were no traces of any energy waves, demonstrating the terrifying abilities of a Magus who wielded laws.
Crash! Rumble! A vile power surged forth, and great amounts hellfire erupted into the sky.

The entirety of the Second Hell seemed to be roaring, rejoicing. The flames grew in intensity with the evil power, and the City of Iron seemed to come alive. The walls and ground grew hotter and hotter, even glowing orange, and the slightly translucent lava now seemed able to melt metals. Any unlucky devils swept up by this torrential force turned into torches as they fell to the ground.

Baator’s origin force welled up, welcoming its new owner.

*Hss!* The terrifying phantom of a giant serpent appeared in the sky, but was very soon covered by the dense blanket of smoke. Hell’s authority was being handed over; Leylin had now taken on Beelzebub’s role completely, becoming the new Lord of Dis!

‘The Second Hell is now my divine kingdom.’ Leylin felt an extreme amount of power here, one that he could activate at any time. His eyes sparkled with excitement.

‘Although I’m still a demigod, I can now use my powers as a rank 7 Warlock. I needn’t even be afraid of greater gods anymore. More importantly, now that I’m the true Lord of Dis my power is similar to that of a divine kingdom…’

Every Archdevil was the Lord of a different layer of Baator. In their own hells these lords could even suppress gods, a power akin to what true deities held inside their divine kingdoms. Were a greater
god to enter Dis right now, Leylin could make them suffer a huge loss.

‘But still, this is just one level of Baator. The relationship between me and Dis isn’t as intimate as that of a true god and their divine kingdom either, and there’s no way to bring my worshippers’ souls here…’ Leylin did not wish for his worshippers to enter Baator after death, becoming lower devils.

‘However… I’m sure this incident exposed my status to the remaining Archdevils…’ He seemed to smile as he looked down, his gaze piercing through the numerous hells all the way to Nessus…

“The authority over Dis has been transferred, a new lord has been born… But it doesn’t seem to be a devil.” “Within Malsheem, Asmodeus sat facing three other Lords of Baator. His expression remained gentle, masking his true intentions.

“Damn it! Somebody actually took advantage of our infighting… We’ll become a joke to those demons of the abyss… I’ll go there and kill him now! Before he is completely familiar with his authority!” Samuel’s body blazed with heat as he howled and flew up into the sky.

“Please wait. You cannot leave until the contract is fulfilled.” Asmodeus waved his hands, and the contractual power immediately stopped Samuel from going further.

“What’s happening? Wasn’t the contract supposed to expire when Dis gained a new lord?” Samuel looked at the binding power of the contract, his face incomparably dark. He sensed that Asmodeus had made him a pawn in his game.

“Asmodeus! Explain yourself!” The Lords of Avarice Wrath roared, their figures pressing towards Asmodeus.

“Hehe. Everything is stipulated within the contract. Haven’t we discussed this already?” Asmodeus tapped the black book containing the contract in a slow and unassuming manner, “Let us
see…”
*Rustle!* The pages flipped under his control, until finally landing on the most recent contract.
“The contract says that we have to remain here until Baator has regained peace. None of the lords may participate, only allowed to watch the developments…” Asmodeus used his pointed fingernails to touch the words, and a dark green flame spewed from them to form a projection in the air. He enlarged it so the remaining lords could have a closer look.
“We agreed on all of Baator. That is to say, as long as at least one of the Nine Hells is in chaos the contract remains valid. “ Asmodeus smirked as he faced the furious gazes of the other lords head on.
“So Dis wasn’t your only target. You also made plans on Avernus?” Mammon grabbed his harpoon, but didn’t act immediately. He was after all of the lawful alignment, and even as an Archdevil contracts were firm and unbreakable. Were he to breach one, Baator’s will would view him with disdain, forever robbing him of part of his power.
“I still say the same thing. Let us wait and see.” Asmodeus still had that genteel smile one him, but now it spoke volumes.

……

First Hell of Baator.
A large army of devils had assembled under the lead of a smaller scarred pit fiend. Centred at the Bronze Citadel, they’d already occupied a third of Avernus. The only regions left were treacherous, or part of the two divine kingdoms in this hell.
The pit fiend finally stopped his army outside the realm of the Shark God Sahuagin. A sharkman cleric walked out, his face extremely solemn. He was followed by other worshippers as well as a squad of elites.
“As per the agreement, this will be our new boundary,” the cleric said solemnly.
“Of course. Lord Asmodeus is extremely thankful for Sahuagin’s help, and he sends his blessings and friendship!” The pit fiend spoke in a well-mannered tone.
“Don’t forget your promise. Bring us the items agreed to in the contract immediately!” the cleric reminded the pit fiend once again…
“It’s finally settled…” The pit fiend heaved a sigh of relief after looking at the newly demarcated area, having an erinyes pour a cup of red wine.
“A third of Avernus,” the pit fiend muttered, “that should be enough to make the lord happy. If his plan comes to fruition, we of Nessus will be able to unite all of Baator. The council of eight Archdevils will become a thing of the past, and I’ll have paved the way for the future!”
However, energy rippled out from Dis at that moment. It notified the Nine Hells of the changes in the second. Being the First Hell, Avernus experienced the ripples of energy most strongly. The extreme change, coupled with the rejoicing of Baator’s origin force, caused the pit fiend’s expression to change drastically. The glass holding the wine crashed to the ground, shattering with a crisp sound.
“The devils in the second level have failed… Those useless fellows, I have should reduced all of them into lesser devils…No, bugs!” After venting his frustration, the pit fiend could only dismiss his troops helplessly.
Before he left, the pit fiend cast his gaze deeper into hell. “Even if there were changes in Dis, the little miss will still be alright. Our lord still holds the upper hand!”

……
Sixth Hell, Malbolge.
This was an endless realm of mountains and valleys. The terrain
was rocky, and boulders constantly fell from above that were so
strong they could smash anything in their path to smithereens. The
sky rippled with ever-changing clouds.
In this vile environment the devils could only take shelter within
their copper fortresses, although even then many perished to the
steep slopes and frequent landslides.
Rumours were abound that underneath this rocky surface were
numerous holes, holding some ancient beings of Baator and
primordial devils within them. However, the Hag Countess, the
current lord, had sent men to search these areas to no avail. They
all ended up dead.
The Countess was a night hag, an outsider to Baator. Her fortress
was at the centre of a giant mountain, surrounded by lava.
The devils were rising up in this area that day, a common sight in
Baator. With the hardships their superiors put them through, these
devils often took great pain to finish their missions, at the same
time frenetically searching for their masters’ weaknesses. Once any
weaknesses or loopholes in contracts were discovered, a bout of
unrest would begin.
However, the Hag Countess was one of the Lords of Baator. She’d
seldom received any challenges of the sort, and back in the past no
devil had been foolish enough to challenge the might of a lord.
However, an exception was made today. The dusty gates of her
palace were forced open, and many devils equipped with heavy
armour followed a beautiful erinyes inside. The erinyes looked at
the rotting night hag on the throne in front of her, eyes blazing.
“Hag Countess, your reign will end today!” The erinyes had
unbelievable strength and beauty. Her body possessed a fatal charm
that could intoxicate the devils nearby. Yet at this moment, she
tossed the head of a pit fiend towards the foot of the throne, putting on a proud and icy demeanour.
“Hahaha… So it’s Glasya, the little princess of Nessus… I was wondering which devil would have this audacity…”
The betrayal of her subjects and the death of her guards should have been extremely dangerous to her, but the Countess did not look fazed in the slightest. She looked mockingly at Glasya, her withered finger pointing at the erinyes as she spoke in a hoarse and raspy voice, “Do you really believe you can overthrow me with this bunch of trash? This is Baator, not the abyss. Without the power of laws, you cannot usurp my authority!”
With control over the World Origin Force, the Lords of Baator far surpassed ordinary devils in strength. Even pit fiends could only tremble under one’s authority. However, there was one rank of devil between the pit fiends and the lords. It was only awarded to the most beloved of an Archdevil’s subordinates, and it was known as the exception. They were called dukes!

Were a pit fiend to evolve to its very limits, with permission from its lord it could undergo a bizarre promotion. It would give them a special morphed form, distinguishing them by gender and allowing them to master an ultimate ability. Dukes were the Archdevils’ most trusted confidantes, and given that there was a limited amount of origin force to go around they were very rare. Glasya was one such Duke!

She was Asmodeus’ daughter, the princess of the Ninth Hell. When she’d advanced to the peak of pit fiends, her father’s favour had allowed her to be moulded into a unique form. She’d become the Queen of Erinyes!

This change gave her the ultimate charm, and great influence. Her abilities approached the pinnacle of power, and she could be considered second only to an Archdevil.

“Tut tut, what a pretty little erinyes! I believe the nupperibo under me will be very fond of you…” The Hag Countess looked at Glasya. Her pit fiends were crowded around the duke as well, their
eyes filled with a scarlet light.

“Has Asmodeus gone demented? Does he actually think that he can take me down just by sending a bunch of devils?” The Hag Countess’ voice grew higher and higher in pitch, until the very sound radiated an aura of absolute authority and might. The energy snapped the bewitched devils back to their senses, and their eyes now exuded a sense of fear.

The Hag Countess occupied the throne of Malbolge, and would forever be the lady of the Sixth Hell. How could she be easy to deal with? Her formidable power and schemes had been etched into the deepest part of these devils’ blood.

It wasn’t so easy to overthrow a Lord of Baator. They were powerful ancient beings in their own right, and on top of that they had the power to utilise Baator’s origin force. Within the Nine Hells, any of them could exhibit the strength of a rank 7 Magus. And similarly, in their own territories they were like true gods in their divine kingdoms!

The only reason Beelzebub died so easily was that he ruined himself. When he projected his power out to external worlds, he’d been brutally suppressed by Leylin. Seriously injured, he’d been forced into a coma. If not for that, Beelzebub could have easily suppressed a demigod within Dis.

That was the same situation here. This was the Sixth Hell, the Countess’ territory. In addition to her powers as a rank 7 Magus, she could use Malbolge itself to suppress her enemies as if it was her divine kingdom. The only way to defeat her here, and even then only cause her to retreat, would be a combined attack of three other Lords of Baator.

Even if they managed to defeat the Countess and obtain the authority over this hell, there was a more difficult issue. Devils were a bunch of lawful creatures, whereas rebellion and foolishness were the domains of demons.
Although Glasya’s methods were unorthodox, the Countess had decided to teach Asmodeus a lesson that he would never forget. In any case, every lord had equal authority in Baator. With Glasya the one at fault, the Hag Countess wasn’t afraid of Asmodeus’ retribution.

“So this is the authority of Baator’s origin force?” Looking at the surging origin force and the powerful suppression that brought her close to death, Glasya’s eyes grew a little intoxicated.

“I’m the only one suited for such power and authority!” Two contracts flew out from Glasya’s hands, glowing beautifully in midair. The light they gave off completely eliminated the Countess’ control over the origin force, returning everything to peace and tranquility.

“How?” Sensing the suppression of her authority, and her disconnect with Baator’s origin force, the Hag Countess’ face warped with unbearable rage.

“This is a contract that you signed yourself!” Glasya’s lips curved into a smile. Her beauty seemed to momentarily transform hell into heaven.

“The agreement between the seven Lords of Baator was that you will all remain within your locations until Dis gains a new lord, and the unrest in Baator ends…” Glasya illustrated with her pleasant voice, but it caused the Hag Countess to break into cold sweat.

“Until the unrest in Baator ends, not Dis. Which means all levels of Baator are open for contest, and the winner will obtain eternal glory as a Lord of Hell!”

“Ah! NO…” The Countless snarled, pulling out the contract and noticing that it wasn’t just Dis.

“Strange isn’t it? Did the tens of thousands of years as the Lady of Malbolge rot your brain? Did you think nobody would ever challenge your authority again?”

Glasya waved her hand, “She’s lost the power of her authority for
now, any strength she wields is her own. Kill her!”
The devils roared forth under the bewitching words of the Queen of Erinyes, their eyes an abnormal red.
“Dream on!” the Countess screamed, and a murky green metal whip appeared in her hands. A pit fiend was caught within the moment she brandished it, and she immediately smashed him to flesh and bones.
“Even without the power of Baator, I am an epic being of evil. You pathetic devils dare to oppose me?” The Hag Countess looked malevolent as she reached out with her claws, smashing two more greater devils to pieces.
“You’ll go to prison and be sold as a lesser devil, thrown into a pit of males. I believe they’ll be able to treat you properly…” Even as she made her threats the Hag Countess dealt heavy damage to Glasya’s army. In a mere moment the palace was riddled with corpses.
However, The Countess found that her threats had no effect on Glasya, who maintained a calm demeanour.
“Even without their authority a lord is not somebody I can face right now.” Glasya bit on her tantalising juicy lips, reaching out with her right hand to point at the second contract.
While the former contract was to reveal the loophole regarding Dis, this one looked rather archaic. It was covered in runes, and seemed to be from ancient times.
“This is why I’m so confident in taking everything from you,” Glasya purred.
“This is… the primordial contract! So you were holding on to it!” The Countess screamed in rage, and energy undulations radiated from her body.
“That’s right. My father fought the gods themselves for this contract, all in the name of Baator. All fallen souls shall belong to the Nine Hells.” Glasya’s eyes glowed with pride.
“This is why my father obtained great support from Baator’s origin force. This contribution alone will garner him additional support as the Nine Hells are being united. Although it doesn’t have power of authority like an Archdevil, it is enough to deal with you!”

The primordial contract was a legendary agreement signed between the devils and the gods. It stipulated that the Nine Hells would obtain all fallen souls that lost their lives in the prime material plane. This contract was the foundation of the devils, and of Baator itself. It also qualified Asmodeus’ claims to be the Supreme of the Nine Hells.

However, there had been severe changes since then. Baator’s World Will had broken apart, split into eight parts which were controlled by the eight different lords. Asmodeus’ true body had been gravely injured, so now he could only harness a fraction of his strength. The Nine Hells had splintered apart.

Still, Asmodeus was the rightful ruler of the Nine Hells. As for Glasya, his daughter, she had the right to exercise this power as well.

“You…The other lords will never let you off! Absolutely never!”

The Countess was finally overwhelmed by the primordial contract and the wave of incoming devils. Right before her head was severed, she unleashed a final howl of fury.

“Sure! Even if they don’t come to me, I will be going to them!”

Glasya grabbed onto the head that was still dripping with blood, as she cleaned the blood on her sword using The Countess’ corpse.

She looked once again at the unresigned look on the Countess’ face and smiled, before issuing her next orders. “Hang this ornament in my room as a decoration.”

……

The grave changes in Malbolge and the shift of authority there
swept Baator as well. Many devils clutched their heads in bafflement, such a series of events had never occurred before in their memory. In a single day, two of the Nine Hells had shifted rulers. This would definitely lead to an epic change in Baator, and even incite the wild ambitions of other devils! “Asmodeus!” Several livid roars were heard as three lords left Nessus in a hurry, immediately returning to their respective planes. They were seemingly shocked by the spate of events. “Sixth Hell, Glasya huh?” Leylin felt the changes as well. “As expected of the Supreme of the Nine Hells. Asmodeus is the most cunning and versatile Archdevil of the lot. Even as his plans for Dis failed, he’s obtained a third of Avernus and the entire plane of Malbolge!”
Leylin put on a solemn expression.

“If I hadn’t interfered, then they would have gotten authority of Dis as well. At that time, with the powers of three levels of Baator and another third of Avernus, he could have ousted the other lords from their thrones…

“Right now, as long as Asmodeus consolidates his strength, stabilises his position, and ropes in one to two more overlords to his side, he will become the dominant force in the Nine Hells…

“However, this has nothing to do with me anymore.” Asmodeus had indeed lived up to his name as a crafty old devil. He had capitalised on the precarious situation that Dis was in, and carried out a revolution.

Although this had alerted the other lords to his schemes, the devil had already met his goals. His power had grown, and he now held a superior position. It wouldn’t be impossible for him to unite Baator in the future.

“Hmm? He even sent me a message, and wants to speak to me?” Leylin had received a spiritual energy wave, evidently a message from Asmodeus.

“Indeed, getting the assistance of an outsider like me would be best. My position in hell is still unstable after all. However, this devil’s goodwill cannot be trusted at all; and the best way to avoid all negotiations is to leave.” Leylin put on a mysterious smile.

“Azlok!”
“Your Excellency, I’m here!” When Azlok arrived, he had some of Leylin’s worshippers in tow. The collective armies of the different hells had now returned to their own levels of Baator. Had they remained, Leylin would most likely have assimilated them into his own forces.

“I’ll be leaving for a while. Take care of the affairs in Dis for me. I also have a few missions for you to take care of.” Leylin did not hesitate to hand the tasks down to his men.

Azlok wasn’t in a position to refuse him, and even if he was why would he? This pit fiend was extremely glad to be able to take over an entire hell.

‘Since I’m the one with the authority, when I leave Asmodeus can only look on without doing a thing…’ Leylin turned back and looked at the City of Iron for one last time before leaving Baator. ‘Once my goals are achieved and I finish ascending to godhood, he can only eat back any schemes he’s plotting…’

It would be extremely simple to leave Baator. Even a demigod could traverse planes, and Baator was already close to the prime material plane. There was a portal in the outskirts of Ribcage City whose guards could be bribed.

However, Leylin was now a Lord of Baator. He had the right to move to the prime material plane as he wished. Although many others found it difficult to travel between different worlds, to Leylin it was like taking a walk in his backyard. Before the other lords could react, he had already returned to the prime material plane.

……

The newly established Faulen Empire on Debanks Island, within the Giant Serpent Church.

‘Almighty Lord, you are the serpent that controls all, holding the
powers of massacre.’ The church itself radiated a colourful sheen, and many of the priests prayed piously. Tiff was at the back of the church, meeting a white-robed Leylin.

“Master!” he began a report, his eyes blazing with fervour, “We moved Marquis Jonas and his wife to the empire as per your decree, along with all their servants…”

“Well done,” Leylin nodded his head. This was something he’d planned immediately after he’d become a demigod. He couldn’t entrust things such as this to the Goddess of Luck Tymora. He was always fastidious, and would have these things settled himself. His family was on his lands now. There was no faith here other than that he approved. Along with his church containing multiple legendaries, totem spirits, and another demigod to help, Leylin could finally be at ease. Were any god or church to make an attempt on this place, they would all gang up on them.

‘You need at least a hundred thousand elites to take over Debanks Island, and they need to travel a long distance over sea. You’ll also need many high-ranked legendaries, and have to sacrifice multiple divine avatars…’ Leylin’s eyes blazed.

‘In fact, if the churches that tried to group up against me tried to do it again, they will definitely suffer heavy losses. Furthermore, at a critical time I can turn to their enemies, forming an alliance with the evil gods… The costs far outweigh the benefits. Even Mystra, as much as she hates me, wouldn’t be so foolish.’

“How’s the empire been faring lately? Has there been anything special on the mainland or Faulen Island?”

“We’ve planted the first batch of rice this season. The plague was controlled by a free supply of holy water as well. There was some commotion on Faulen Island due to the withdrawal of the Jonases. Still, the remaining managers managed to minimise the impact on trade.”

Tiff had only needed a moment of thought to answer. With the
Faulen Empire being a theocracy, Tiff was the one with the greatest authority as the country’s pope. With his many years of travel in the mainland, he’d deeply experienced the ups and downs of life. Paired with his strength and knowledge, he’d managed Debanks Island well.

“The churches you had me keep an eye on have been rather dormant, bar the church of protection. Helm has declared that you’re a false deity!” When he came to this point, Tiff had grown enraged. To a pious believer their god wasn’t a mere part of their beliefs. The Lord meant everything!

“Those vile gods, they actually dare slander my Lord like this! One day, I will make them pay the price for this insult. The slate will only be wiped clean with their blood!”

“As it should be,” Leylin didn’t blush in the slightest as he made this promise, despite being a false god through and through. “We only need to endure this for now. Focus all your attention on developing the empire.”

This put Tiff’s heart at ease. He listened to Leylin’s orders with respect and left. As he was leaving, a contemplative look emerged on Leylin’s face.

‘It’s unlikely that they’ll mount a massive invasion, so I’ll need to take precautions against elite squads and ambushes. Another important aspect is the agriculture. I can’t ignore it until after I become a true god, with my own divine kingdom and a strong foundation. Then I can open the crystal sphere now, letting my main body in along with many more Magi of laws.’

Godhood was an enormous threshold to cross in the World of Gods. True gods were the darlings of the world, and obtained everlasting life and immortality. Even upon death they could revive themselves as long as worshippers still believed in them, emerging once more from the river of space and time. Even the most formidable gods had to pay a great price to breach a divine
kingdom, granting all true gods an extremely powerful defence. Besides, deities themselves only valued other true gods, and viewed them with equal standing. In other words, Leylin would become a member of the pantheon once he advanced. It would also give him the means to confront the Goddess of the Weave!

‘I already have my godfire ignited, and plenty of divine force. What’s left is my divinity and divine kingdom. Once those requirements are met, I can accumulate faith to form an exalted throne…’ Leylin was well aware of how ascension worked.

‘My domain will be in massacres. Cyric and Malar are huge problems, yes, but I’ve already offended them greatly. What’s the harm in enraging them further? The crucial point is still the power of faith…’

The ascension of gods in this world was rather peculiar. A new member of the pantheon only needed an echo of origin power with a certain foundation of believers to easily ascend to become a true god. However, these sorts of gods would always be extremely weak. They could only be lesser gods, living under the asylum of the more powerful.

After all, with the slow development of this world’s civilisation, asking the populace to accept something new would be a bit too forceful. These sorts of gods would need hundreds or thousands of years to develop.

The advantage was that they would not be in conflict with the other gods, and they had rather good potential for development. With Leylin’s knowledge and experience, he had thought of several domains that the World of Gods did not currently possess, with excellent potential for development. It was a shame that he had rejected all of them.

There was reason for this. The plan was far too long term, and he himself would be too weak. This wasn’t in line with his current
situation.
Becoming a god of massacres would eliminate these limitations. This divinity would greatly aid his combat strength, and met his requirements for power. It could also develop rather well later, at the very least making him a greater god.
The only catch here was that there were already gods in the domain of massacres. Leylin’s ascension would be encumbered by the conflict.
‘Even if a native is only worth a tenth of a believer on the mainland, I still have enough faith to ascend to godhood. The problem is still the divinity…’ Leylin’s wish for a powerful divinity to support his ascension increased his requirements for faith. He estimated that he already had enough faith to become a god of disease, but massacres required over ten times the faith.
Next I need to continue to nurture my believers, grasp the divinity of massacres, and slowly accumulate resources…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed gold as his vision penetrated through the walls of the church. He looked past it into the events in his empire, and even further into Debanks Island. This sight extended all the way past the ocean, piercing into the mainland.

His body gradually turned golden, its dazzling radiance illuminating the vicinity of the church. Under the divine radiance, Leylin’s body gradually became more illusory until it disappeared. Gods needed to maintain their distance from ordinary mortals to maintain a sense of divine mystery. When it came to farming, he could determine the work of Tiff and the rest remotely, using the connection from their daily prayers.

Now he needed to spend a long period of time preparing his body for the transformation, spending time with his family members. Once he advanced to become a true god, a new life awaited him.

A god’s birthday was the day they’d ascended, not the day they were born as a mortal. Once Leylin took this step, he would experience an earth-shattering change. He would bid farewell to his past life, severing his fate as a mortal. This was a necessary step in one’s ascent to godhood.

He would leave two blood descendants, to his cousin and the other ladies of his household. Perhaps that would be appropriate.
As the clone in the World of Gods sank into cultivation, the entire world grew more tranquil. Most of Leylin’s attention shifted to his main body in the Magus World. Deep within the Magus World, under the seventh layer of the subterranean world. A sphere of red flames pulsed like a heart in the endless darkness, and a pair of chrome yellow eyes appeared. “We meet again, Lord Leylin. Your speed of advancement really puts me to shame.”

“Mighty Mother Core, before one such as you, a near-immortal being, I’m wholly insignificant…” Although he was now a rank 7 Warlock, near the peak of the Magus World in power, Leylin still appeared humble before the person in front of him. Mother Core was someone at an even higher realm, and her strength was something he aspired for.

Although this form was different from the one she’d shown before, the power of a being that had comprehended laws still lay before him. Her existence greatly surpassed Leylin’s, and even the A.I. Chip couldn’t probe her. She was a mighty existence, one who’d refined her laws to forge her own path!

In front of such strength, it was only prudent to act humble. Leylin was smiling on the surface, but his eyes blazed with longing.

Once he reached rank 7, Leylin’s remaining path was already laid out before him. A rank 8 Magus needed to master multiple laws, refining them greatly and purifying them into their path as they reached the peak.

Leylin had already made his preparations for him, and his path was already beginning to be formed. His foray into the World of Gods had truly given him far too many benefits.

“Lord Leylin is truly far too humble. After all, your Majesty’s law
of devouring is an exceptional power, its battle might and regenerative abilities absolutely incomparable. It is equivalent to the sum of several weaker paths of laws…” Ignox now stood at Mother Core’s side, his body wreathed in endless twisted rings of darkness.

“I assume you’ve come here to ask to absorb the World Origin Force?” Ignox asked with a smile. He’d foreseen Leylin’s objective completely.

“That’s right. I want to use the power I’ve accumulated to comprehend laws and absorb World Origin Force,” Leylin said gravely.

The Magus World and the World of Gods were two extremely powerful worlds that had a massive source of origin force. This origin force provided untold benefits to those who grasped laws. The World Will of the Magus World lay dormant at its core, allowing the lowest level of the subterranean world to possess a share of power. This place even emitted the essence of World Origin Force.

The opportunity to absorb the Magus World’s origin force was a great one, and it only came every hundred years for those who had comprehended laws.

It was a great shame that Leylin had only been close to rank 7 before. His body was limited in capacity, and he’d already been saturated in terms of World Origin Force. It was like he was a wineglass too small to hold everything.

Now it was a completely different story. Having advanced to rank 7, his body had greatly grown in capacity. He could absorb a large amount of World Origin Force once more, increasing his might. Taking advantage of his increased stats, Leylin could continue to grasp laws. It would complement and adjust his path, greatly improving his future. Leylin naturally wanted to make use of this option.
“You’ve long since signed the contract, and are a native of the Magus World. Of course you have permission!” Mother Core emitted a soul conscient, and a large gate swung open to expose a surging sea of origin force.  
“Many thanks, my Lady, my Lord!” Leylin bowed slightly and entered the gate…
Once he left and the black door closed, the atmosphere turned silent once more.
“Mother Core, I feel that you are too lenient towards him. Even if he advanced to rank 7, you needn’t go out of your way for him.” Ignox spoke his doubts. Only he knew what a terrifying existence a peak rank 8 like Mother Core was. Even in ancient times she’d been an overlord amongst the Magi.  
Mother Core had survived the Final War against the World of Gods. She was much stronger than the Nightmare King or Distorted Shadow. Someone with her vaunted existence did not need to pay much heed to a new rank 7 Warlock.  
The ball of flame turned silent before answering Ignox’s doubts, “I held a conversation with the Wisdom Tree not long ago, in the river of time and space…”
“Wisdom Tree? The existence which had enlightened many ancient Magi?” Ignox could not ignore the famed vision of the Wisdom Tree, “Didn’t it disappear into legend a long time ago?”  
“It gave up on eternal life, walking a different path…” Mother Core did not elaborate, but the few words she said painted the image of a terrifying existence, “It gave me a prophecy. The Final War is coming for us once more.”
“What?!” Even Ignox, a rank 7 Magus who was near indestructible with hundreds of thousands of years of existence, was surprised by this alarming news.  
The Final War had already pushed the World Wills of the two strongest worlds in the astral plane into deep slumber. Many
powerful existences had perished, and it had ended the golden era of the ancient Magi. That war was about to repeat? However, he couldn’t doubt the Wisdom Tree and Mother Core. “But this…But…” The dark mist around Ignox rolled around in the air. He had been truly shocked, to the depths of his soul.

“The Final War will demolish all laws, and obliterate a world…” The meaning of Mother Core’s words were obscure, yet there was an underlying tinge of excitement. “In ancient times, the war between Magi and the gods could not be avoided. Only the victor would discover the path to eternity… However, both parties suffered heavy casualties at the end. As for the upcoming war, it will be even more harsh and brutal before. Many elites lost in the last one will surface once again, returning to the limelight!”

“The resurrection of ancient Magi?” Ignox didn’t know what to say anymore. He could only continue to listen. Once he heard everything and understood it, he realised that the war erupting once more was very likely.

Having established bodies of laws as they entered rank 7, Magi were near indestructible with almost eternal life. Even if they were killed their truesouls would enter a deep slumber in the river of space and time. They would bide their time there, waiting for resurrection along with many conscients lying in wait in different locations.

Ignox was merely a rank 7 Magus. The resurrection of a large group of peak rank 8s was a scary thought. After all, the resurrection would not only happen in the Magus world. The World of Gods too would traverse planes to the river of space and time, once again reclaiming their divine seats! In such a brutal battle, even rank 7 Magi could perish easily!

“What does this have to do with Leylin?” Ignox asked with a hoarse voice.

“We need to treat anyone rising up just before the Final War with
great importance,” Mother Core’s voice was still as steady as before. “They could be favoured by the World Will, obtaining even more power from the origin force. It isn’t just Leylin, I’ve sent my other clones into other worlds like Purgatory and the Icy World, looking for powerful Magi with the strength to lead us into war!” “We’re making preparations for the second war? I understand!” Ignox nodded his head vigorously, wanting to return and start his preparations. He wasn’t a coward, but the war was just too terrifying. A rank 7 was mere collateral damage in a battle between peak rank 8s, and he was now in danger of death. He wouldn’t even know how he’d died.

‘However, danger walks hand in hand with opportunity.’ Ignox’s eyes flashed after Mother Core left, ‘In the midst of such an epic battle, we Magi can absorb the gods’ comprehension of laws and grow stronger quickly. It won’t even be impossible to advance to the peak of rank 8…

‘Legends say that the path to eternity will open up when the Magi and gods determine a victor, devouring the other party completely.’ Talent, determination, and luck were all factors required for a Magus to advance to rank 7. However, the most important requirement was something else— ambition! Ignox, too, aimed for immortality!
Misty green origin force surged in a boundless sea, containing absolute strength as it swelled and roared. This energy represented the Magus World itself, the power of its origin! Even Leylin, a rank 7 Warlock, was a mere ant in front of the might of these waves of origin force. As a Warlock, Leylin had already assimilated this aura into his soul. The origin force didn’t reject him, instead enveloping him gently and replenishing his powers.

“Almighty and pure, as expected of the Magus World. Only the origin force of the World of Gods could be of similar quality…” With his advancement to a demigod in the prime material plane, along with his experiences in that other world, Leylin identified the differences very quickly.

‘It’s not entirely impossible to reach peak rank 8 or even rank 9 if I could fully master this origin force…’ Leylin’s eyes held a trace of longing, but it was only a dream for now.

Through his acute senses, he felt that this roaring sea of origin force had an extremely powerful conscient sleeping within, with numerous broken laws seeping out. One could absorb some of the origin force, but if they wanted to monopolise it they would only be courting death! Even existences such as Mother Core were not able to do as they wish.

‘Even with Baator’s origin force I can only wield the power my authority gives me. Ultimately it isn’t mine, and can be taken away
any time. The Hag Countess was a good example…” Leylin sighed. Lords were like feudal emperors. They could only mobilise their troops freely when they themselves were powerful. Similarly, once a lord no longer occupied their position they would lose control over the World Origin Force. This was why Leylin would not hesitate to leave Dis. It was fine to use strength that was not his in the short run, but he would only be courting death if he relied too much on it. However, the scenario now was different. Although the origin force that he was absorbing was minute, but once he took it in it would become his own strength. It couldn’t be taken away.

[Beep! Host is absorbing the Magus World’s origin force, statistics rising…] Leylin smiled after looking at the indicator on the A.I. Chip. ‘Rank 7 is just the beginning. I need to grow stronger, advancing in rank…’ Leylin relinquished control of his body, absorbing a large amount of origin force. After converting it using the laws of devouring, he turned this strength into his own. His mind and soul were focused on comprehending these laws.

The exposure to the laws of the world was a good thing for Leylin. With his body recently becoming a complete body of laws as well, his understanding of them was elevated. First were the laws of devouring and gluttony, followed by massacre, destruction, disease, and healing. The World of Gods was simply a paradise for a Magus who wielded laws, the power of worship aiding their understanding of the world. As long as their worshippers continued to pray, a Magus would continue to grow in their understanding of their domains. It would aid them in their comprehension of laws. This process was too fast, though. Leylin wanted to slow down, avoiding an unstable foundation. ‘My path leads to destruction, and is covered in darkness and evil. In the future, it will consist of a
foundation of time and space, and dreamforce is the bridging factor…’
Under such a conducive environment, Leylin repeatedly simulated the laws he’d comprehended, finding that there were some imperfections in his understanding that he corrected immediately. Time passed by without him realising it.
[Beep! Time has ended!] Leylin recollected his senses with the A.I. Chip’s voice. Just as the voice sounded, the large doors appeared once again.
“Sigh… I wish I could stay here forever, comprehending all laws completely and only leaving when my body is satisfied with the origin force…” Leylin lamented as he left.
In actuality, that was just a farfetched dream. The origin force of the Magus World was extremely precious, and the World Will would grow furious if too much was absorbed at a time. There was a limited amount that one could assimilate. On top of that, there was a long queue comprised of beings who’d comprehended laws waiting for this small amount.
If not for Mother Core’s preferential treatment and protection, Leylin would not have had this privilege. Sometimes fairness was an advantage, especially to new people like him.
Having understood this, Leylin went to thank Mother Core personally, seeing one of her clones to express his gratitude.
‘A.I. Chip, display stats,’ Leylin commanded inwardly.
‘Mm, it looks like I can absorb it again. I’m not fully saturated with World Origin Force,’ Leylin had a satisfied look on his face at the increase of stats. Compared to those Magi of laws who easily needed thousands upon thousands of years to advance, his speed
was indeed frightening to everyone around him.

‘However, the Magus World’s data calculations are still different from the World of Gods. The worlds’ laws are different, and cannot be changed.’

The World of Gods had its own unique laws, where each growth in one’s statistics led to a more significant boost than the last. The Magus World was different, with the increase not significant.

‘However, even with a conservative estimate I could even be stronger than lesser gods. Of course, that’s ignoring their divine kingdoms…’ Leylin had a very clear understanding of his own strength.

“I have to visit Freya, Celine and the first level of the subterranean world…” Leylin shook his head, feeling extremely busy. He had many things to do, and with so many of just his direct descendants populating the area he had a headache ahead.

However, the Targaryen bloodline was strengthened through the flourishing of the Farliers. It gave him a bittersweet feeling.

Leylin had a detailed plan on his schedule. First, he had to look for his women, children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, nurturing those with talent.

Next would be a trip to Dreamscape. The Nightmare Absorbing Physique was a mystery, and the quality of dreamforce was changing. However, he had to find answers as to why the power of dreamforce fluctuated so, after all it was of utmost importance to his growth.

For a peak rank 8 to advance to rank 9, their paths needed to accommodate spacetime. One needed a good foundation that could endure that power, and choosing the wrong type of force would prove fatal to him.

This stringent condition had stumped countless ancient Magi. Leylin too had suspected that Mother Core was in this position, hence she could not advance another step. He’d never heard of
someone being able to change their path after starting on it.
‘Dreamforce is currently in a weak phase, and the dangers there are
minimal. It’s a great time to explore. Once I find what I need and
digest it, it’ll be ripe time to meet the Snake Dowager!’
Although the Snake Dowager had sent Leylin a message when he
advanced to rank 7, Leylin had no intentions of carrying out his
obligation immediately. She had to be kidding! With a thousand
years on the contract, why would he act so quickly?
The Snake Dowager had cancelled all their previous enmities by
laughing it off. However, Leylin did not think that way. She would
still have resentment that he’d split the throne over the ten thousand
snakes, forcefully taking bloodline origin from her. She wouldn’t
be able to put it down so easily. If he could help her obtain the
Shadow World, his path would be riddled with traps and danger.
Even if the Snake Dowager wanted to let bygones be bygones and
sincerely work with Leylin, he did not feel that he was invincible
now. It was necessary for him to explore Dreamscape before he
fulfilled his contract with her.
Even if Leylin gained nothing from the exploration itself, he could
completely understand his powers as a rank 7 Warlock. It would
also give him time to absorb more origin force, stabilising his
standing and prowess amongst his peers. By then. He’d be more
confident in dealing with a possible pretense.
No matter when, no matter who, only people with similar strengths
could bargain on equal grounds. This was something Leylin held a
firm belief in, and would continue to believe…
With his speed as a rank 7 Warlock he could move anywhere
within the Magus World in a moment. Leylin had returned to the
core of the Ouroboros Clan, to Targaryen Castle, in but the blink of
an eye. This place housed many of the Targaryen bloodline.
“‘Father!’” A group of Warlocks was waiting for him there, led by
two handsome youths who resembled Leylin closely.
Of course Leylin looked young himself, but his eyes revealed his extensive experience and maturity. Standing side by side, the three looked like brothers and not father and children.

“Syre! Daniel! Rise!” Leylin smiled gently as he looked as his two sons, their mothers behind them with his other clan members.
Leylin sized up both of his sons.
The eldest, Daniel, had inherited Leylin’s law of devouring in addition to dreamforce, given the name Jörmungandr. Syre, the son of his first wife, had instead inherited his ability of endlessness, and thus was called Ouroboros. Currently Daniel seemed to be stronger, already a peak rank 6 Warlock because of the power of his mature bloodline. Yet, although Syre wasn’t as strong, his inheritance obscured his future, giving him an infinite potential!
As the progenitor of his own bloodline, Leylin made a judgement the moment he saw his sons, ‘I need to adjust their bloodlines…’
Other Warlocks inherited negative side-effects from their bloodline, such as bloodline shackles and emotional instability. However, Leylin’s Targaryen family did not face this problem. As the progenitor of the bloodline and with the help of the A.I. Chip, Leylin could fix its flaws. Such an ability ensured that few of his descendants experienced paranoia and madness, causing the Targaryens to be highly regarded by others.
Now that Leylin’s own bloodline had been purified once more, his descendants stood a greater chance of improving themselves. Leylin spent some time at Ouroboros Castle, enjoying playing with his grandchildren. Although such a thing was odd, Leylin even had great grandchildren now. He had to placate all the women he’d left
behind when he holed himself up. Leylin adjusted the Jörmungandr and Ouroboros bloodlines, removing all negative effects in their genes and preventing his future descendants from facing defects at birth. At the same time, however, he began preparing to enter Dreamscape from the shadows.

‘The flow of time in the Magus World is different from that in the World of Gods…’ After a sumptuous banquet, Leylin entered his own laboratory once more, carrying a crystal ball with a strange expression on his face. He’d invited several of the Ouroboros Clan elders to the gathering, and even other rank 6 Magi from the central continent.

Back when he hadn’t stepped completely into rank 7 yet, these people had all been like ants before him. Now, it was even more so; his sons being able to beat up all the Breaking Dawns on the continent, Leylin had lost all interest in proving his might. Only a slight hint at his desire for information on the flying city on his part had his descendants and subordinates frighten the Monarch of the Skies into handing over the information. However, given his level Leylin did not wish to rob these pitiful people. It felt like he was bullying a child. Thus he opened his treasure vault up, allowing the Monarch’s subordinates to take a few items as compensation. This way, the Monarch would be satisfied in having struck a good deal.

‘The flying city in the Magus World should be the original form of those from the World of Gods…’ The A.I. Chip’s light flashed, and the information within the crystal ball was all copied as it compared Sky City with Thultanthar. In doing so it discovered many problems.

‘City flight was indeed something devised by Magi, but the arcanists changed it. Adding secondary energy functions, they turned flying cities into a weapon that could threaten the divine
kingdoms of gods…’
Not everything from the ancient past was useful. The creativity of
the arcanists had put the flying cities of the Magi to shame, even if
it was likely that Distorted Shadow played an important role in
establishing them in the World of Gods and developing their cities.
Yet all that didn’t matter to Leylin. He wanted information about the
original flying city so that he could better understand how to
operate Thultanthar. He cared not for old and new, good and evil.
Disregarding status, he would use what benefited him and toss
away anything that would bring him harm.
‘Everything of value in the world is for me to use!’ This was the
quintessence of ancient rulers’ philosophies, and the motto of all
Magi who’d comprehended laws! They pursued the truth,
extracting strength from what had value. Such was the basis of
their operations..
‘Although the limited laws in this world stopped the Magi from
harnessing its full potential, the theory behind the flying cities is
similar…’ Leylin nodded his head.
[Beep! Technology behind Sky City has been sorted, storing into
database. Filename Flying City, analysis 100%. Ability to transfer
usage to Thultanthar: 9.85%] the A.I. Chip’s voice intoned.
‘It is a prototype after all. An increase of 10% is already decent
enough.’ The Netherese flying city he’d obtained in the Frostfall
Valleys had always been one of Leylin’s trump cards. He would
improve it with every chance he had.
In ancient times, Great Arcanists armed with flying cities were
something even the gods had feared. In the end, the gods had
destroyed them at all costs. However, Thultanthar had been hidden
away, now found by Leylin to become a killing trump card. There
would come a day when it resurfaced in the World of Gods again,
opening its malevolent jaws towards the gods themselves…
‘A.I. Chip, transfer the data to the auxiliary chip in the World of
Gods!’ Leylin ordered. The Manderhawke Plate had stabilised his connection with the World of Gods. He believed his demigod clone on the other side would be able to make full use of this information. Done dealing with these trivial tasks, Leylin focused on the lab once more.

“Dreamscape…” Leylin muttered, the dark crimson dreamforce appearing around the place giving off a misty and heavy atmosphere. The red light revealed multiple runes on his body, as well as a vertical eye between his brows.

Dreamscape had stilled right now, dreamforce entering a period of weakness. It made it extremely difficult for any beings to survive in the place, and even the vile existences of Dreamscape had to seal themselves up. It was even harsher for the other creatures, the usage of dreamforce becoming more difficult greatly weakening them.

However, this wasn’t a problem for Leylin. ‘So much dreamforce responded to a single though, and that’s when dreamforce is at its weakest…’

He was rather moved. ‘The Nightmare Absorbing Physique is indeed something else. It’s like the authority of a Lord of Baator… Nay, its power is even greater. After all, Baator is but one part of the World of Gods. As for Dreamscape, at its peak it can even rival the Magus World itself…’

Leylin was no stranger to dreamforce. He’d explored Dreamscape once back when he was still a rank 5 Warlock. With the bloodline origin he’d absorbed from the Snake Dowager also giving him a boost to his ability with dreamforce via the Alabaster Devilsnakes, Leylin’s control over Dreamscape had increased greatly. His affinity with Dreamscape itself was extremely high too.

However, all that paled in comparison to the Nightmare Absorbing Physique. No, it was incomparable! Leylin felt an intoxicating call from Dreamscape’s origin force.
‘I used to think the Alabaster Devilsnake bloodline was extremely powerful due to its ability to enter and leave Dreamscape at will. However, compared to the Nightmare King’s bloodline it’s nothing at all…’

If the Alabaster Devilsnake was of a commoner status in a kingdom, then the Nightmare Absorption Physique was a prince, even a king! Apart from Dreamscape’s World Will, Leylin didn’t have to bother about anyone else.

‘No wonder the Nightmare King could rise to such power and was unstoppable in his tracks, it’s like a hack…’ Just this one connection with Dreamscape left Leylin feeling extremely powerful. He would even dare challenge the Snake Dowager if they were in Dreamscape!

‘I don’t have any mortal enemies, but if I did I would drag them all into Dreamscape and make them suffer, or even die…’ Leylin’s mind ran numerous calculations, combining the advantages of the A.I. Chip and Dreamscape itself. Even if it was the Snake Dowager or Nefarious Filthbird, he had a sixty percent chance of slaying them within it.

‘But Magi who comprehend laws cannot act like that.’ Leylin sighed inwardly. Having become a rank 7 Warlock he now had a better understanding of the social game in the upper circles. Magi of laws were just too powerful, and it was extremely hard for them to die. Even if they did resurrection was an easy thing. This had caused many existences to join forces in fear.

It was extremely easy to isolate oneself by blatantly declaring war on such existences. More important was that he had a decent relationship with the Snake Dowager, and she had even requested his assistance. He had no enmity with the Nefarious Filthbird either, so there was no need to do such a thing.

Of course, if those dignitaries of the Purgatory World still bore grudges and wanted to give him trouble, Leylin would not mind
teaching them a lesson.
On the other hand, it was time to consider a joint effort. The cake in the World of Gods was too big. Leylin would definitely be ganged up by the gods if he were to start a war. Hence, seeking arrangements and help from other forces had to be considered.
Returning To Dreamscape

‘Be it the ancient Magi sealed at the core of the Weave or the beings of law outside it, none are easily dealt with…’ Leylin stroked his chin, already having a clear strategy in mind. 'Having these sides control each other seems like a good idea. Whatever it is, when the time comes I’ll be the leader and tyrant there. I’ll get the greatest benefits anyway.’

To gain these benefits Leylin had to create a good impression. At the very least, he had to guarantee that when the time came and he called out loud, numerous Magi of laws would follow him in exploring the treasures of the World of Gods…

“I still need to wait and amass faith in the World of Gods, but I can begin exploring Dreamscape soon…” Leylin muttered under his breath, his body gradually fading away as he vanished.

In the boundless astral plane, the World of Gods and the Magus World were like two large funnels taking up most of the space and resources. They also possessed the most powerful World Wills and Origin Forces. Numerous small worlds surrounded them like stars, the strongest of them being worlds like Purgatory, the Shadow World, the Icy World and the like.

However, there was an interesting existence amongst all these worlds. It was everywhere, grown by dreams yet with true form. At the peak of power, its World Origin Force was comparable to that of the Magus World and World of Gods.

This was Dreamscape, a place full of strange incredible
phenomena, a bizarre and terrifying world that could even warp time and space. Dreamscape was the only amazing place able to come into contact with the World of Gods and avoid being suppressed greatly. In ancient times, the Nightmare King had used his Nightmare Absorbing Physique to become the quickest to reach the peak of rank 8, turning up his nose at numerous Magi and becoming a nightmare for the gods. He had wished for death himself, the World of Gods unable to do anything about him otherwise. Leylin had inherited such a bloodline, now seeing things from the perspective of the Nightmare King and beginning to focus on the outline of Dreamscape. Usually when traversing through worlds, Leylin could only passively rely on the abilities of his bloodline. The elusive defences of Dreamscape had left him grasping at straws for information of its working. Yet right now Dreamscape seemed to treat Leylin like its own child, unhesitating as it showed everything behind that mysterious veil. ‘This affinity… I’d believe it if someone told me that the Nightmare Absorbing Physique is a reincarnation of part of the World Will of Dreamscape!’ Leylin’s eyes showed his shock as he saw the seemingly boundless world in front of him. The place he was at currently seemed to be a crevice without mass and volume. It was like an intersection between a two dimensional space and a three dimensional world. An edge twisted up like a monster, showing him an unending number of dream worlds mixed with spacetime. Large amounts of small dreams were birthed at the edges of Dreamscape, just as quickly dying away. Many powerful dreams instead intersected with each other, forming strange warped regions with such destruction at their core that even Leylin would fear them.
Most importantly, Leylin noticed that the entire Dreamscape was like a huge black hole, pulling in bits of light without end. They were dreams of intelligent beings from all the worlds, attracted by Dreamscape’s might. All beings capable of thought could dream. And when they dreamed, they would unconsciously be attracted to Dreamscape!

Dreamscape was actually a combined body of dreams from most intellectual beings. These beings originated from all worlds, including the Magus World and World of Gods!

‘This means there was no such thing as Dreamscape in the beginning. However, with the advent of intellectual beings, the dreams of powerful life forms coalesced to form Dreamscape?’ This possibility left Leylin speechless. It made him recall the World of Gods, which itself was similar in its working. There had been no divine beings before faith took hold.

‘This is why Dreamscape is so strange, being both strong and weak at the same time.’ Leylin sensed that he had somewhat grasped the key to the weakening of dreamforce.

“But I can’t conclude it just like this. I need to explore, move around, and see more… Whatever it is, I still have time as I cultivate my clone. There’s a millennium left for the contract with the Snake Dowager…”

Crimson light flashed as Leylin broke through the boundary of Dreamscape, arriving in a true dream.

*Whoosh!* Surging, howling origin force appeared around Leylin, like a kindly mother seeing her son return home dead tired from travel.


‘No!’ Leylin shook his head, dissipating the origin force around him.

The World Origin Force from Dreamscape was much more
abundant than from the Magus World, equivalent to what all the
Magi of laws had access to combined. It would be enough to raise
him to the peak of his current existence.
However, Leylin didn’t have the courage to do that. Before he dealt
with the flaws of dreamforce, suddenly adding Dreamscape Origin
Force to the mix could cause great problems in the future.
‘Dreamscape’s going to be here anyway. I can come over whenever
I want and absorb it, it’s not like I’m missing any chances…’
Having thought this through, Leylin did not lament as he sent away
the roaring origin force and sized up his surroundings.
The place was desolate and bleak, lacking life. The plains, forests,
valles, lakes and streams from before had completely turned into a
yellow desert, and even the air itself had lost almost all moisture.
Leylin’s soul force spread far and wide. With his attainments as a
rank 7 Warlock, he could still only find the traces of a few life
forms in the vast area. It was like the entirety of Dreamscape had
died.
‘No, it isn’t death. More like Dreamscape is hibernating…’ His
powerful truesoul that was powered by laws combined with his
delicate control over soul force to allow Leylin to notice some
differences. Weak, tiny lives were hidden layers underneath the
barrenness, like seeds germinating under the safe protection of the
earth. It perfectly preserved their last chance at life, awaiting the
arrival of spring.
Destructive snow floated down a few regions, upon several
powerful and vile soul undulations that were lying in wait. These
were the evil gods of Dreamscape, the Lords of Calamity. Even
these existences of laws had chosen to seal themselves in,
struggling at death’s door.
However, one would be making a huge mistake underestimating
them. Any lord that sealed themselves definitely had contacts, and
could sense what was going on outside. The moment anything
happened that would harm them or their reputation, they would unseal themselves. While dreamforce was weakened, the Origin Force and accumulated soul energy in their bodies would couple with their advantage as natives of Dreamscape, allowing them to bring devastation and kill the invaders!

Before this was known many people had sought treasure when dreamforce weakened. They’d all died. Now they were much smarter, like the one-eyed dragon he’d met before.

‘Come to think of it, is this really the place where Gillian and her people once lived?’

With the authority coming from his Nightmare Absorbing Physique, Leylin naturally chose an area in Dreamscape that he would be comfortable in. However, as he gazed at the boundless barrenness, he could not help but look rueful. While knowing changes in the environment of Dreamscape happened quickly, he had not thought it would be so rapid.

In his discussions with the Snake Dowager, he had come over for a while. However, the environment had drastically changed, but the terrain was still somewhat similar. Hence, he had found the place where Gillian had stayed at.

But now? All traces, particularly the terrain, had completely disappeared.

‘The smells in the air tell me that it’s been about fifteen thousand years since I last came…’ Leylin’s nose twitched slightly as he sniffed at the air, and then came up with a conclusion unwillingly, ‘Looks like this place was unlucky enough to be affected by a terrifying wave of accelerated time…

‘She did say she wanted to go to the territories of the Lord of Calamity in the north… I should take a look…’ Leylin stroked his chin.

The reason Leylin had come to Dreamscape was to resolve the
issue of dreamforce weakening, and Gillian was just something on
the side. So much time had passed already, and even her great
grandchildren would have died of old age. It was very likely that
her entire tribe had died out.
However, Leylin had a strange feeling. Before dreamforce
weakened, the changes to her people could bring him a huge batch
of helpers and strength if he was lucky. And in Dreamscape,
anything could happen!
‘Also… this is just on the side. A.I. Chip!’ Leylin commanded.
[Beep! Mission established. Gathering Dreamscape Origin Force
undulations… Current progress: 0.0001%. Estimated time of
completion: 3987h 13min. If host can obtain samples of rank 7
lifeforms of Dreamscape, this can be quickened.] The A.I. Chip
faithfully intoned.
‘The A.I. Chip’s analysis can continue as long as I’m in
Dreamscape. Now I can go see the Lord of Calamity in the north,
finding out their secrets.’
Leylin’s body instantly turned into a boundless darkness sweeping
towards the north, and two gusts of wind raced behind him
sounding powerful and terrifying.
The last time he was here Leylin had sensed the auras of numerous
Lords of Calamity in the north. Then he’d been unwilling to
antagonize them, and was also busy with the World of Gods. Thus
he’d retreated.
However, things were different now.
The place Leylin had chosen was significant. It was where he’d first met the one-eyed owl, what he now suspected was a clone of the Nightmare King. The owl was the one who’d given him his dream feather, making his lab connect to Dreamscape.

It was also at this place that he’d discovered Gillian, a native of Dreamscape. That time had given him precious research materials, allowing him to increase his understanding of dreamforce.

The many Lords of Calamity stayed to the north of this place, at least five to six of these sovereigns of Dreamscape there at the minimum. Normally they would radiate their powers unconsciously, bringing disaster upon the natives. It made the place a forbidden ground for them.

But now, it was different. Dreamforce had weakened, and the area around these existences was the only place they could survive. After all, the reason that was the place the Lords of Calamity chose was that it would resist the weakening of dreamforce.

Compared to total annihilation, a blizzard, radiation, or any other calamities were a joke. This was why, in a critical period, it had made sense for Gillian’s tribe to move north. Those evil sovereigns ignored their kind like they were ants anyway.

“Is this the wondrous nature of life?” Leylin exclaimed. He could sense that the north contained the most life in all of Dreamscape.

There seemed to be a strange parasitic ecosystem of the inhabitants there, where the natives sought shelter behind the Lords who
resisted the weakening of the dreamforce. There were many tribes there like Gillian’s.

‘This should make for a good investigation. Hmm?’ Leylin stopped in midair, as he scanned the gigantic dark figure with the A.I. Chip, and recalled that familiar aura.

“I finally meet someone I recognise?” Leylin smiled, “Let’s go greet him!”

*Rumble!* Leylin had grown used to his powers as a rank 7. With the addition of Dreamscape Origin Force, he could exert earth-shattering power.

“Break!” Leylin willed the very earth to split apart, revealing a bottomless abyss. Even this was with him restraining himself, not using the power of the origin force. Had he done so, a small part of the continent would have been split apart easily.

“Transform mud to rocks! And earth to metal!” Magi of laws were close to the source of magic. There was nothing unnatural about these effects, especially given Leylin’s study of the World of Gods.

Under his control bloodline energy fused with dreamforce, forming spells that seemed to be from both Magi and gods. Leylin was just like the gods who could perform magic with just a word, changing reality as the ground he’d split open had turned into a huge steel plate.

*Boom!* A fast-moving black figure crashed into it underground, denting it even as an earth-shattering sound rumbled out.
“Damn it! Why is there a steel plank here? No, is this a layer of the ground made of metal?” The surface of the earth was clawed open by two large dragon claws, and a tremendous dragon poked its head through like a dejected groundhog.

Unlike the dragons of the World of Gods this one only had a large yellow eyeball, two thorny barbs like mountains on its back. Its large meaty wings that could cover the skies were currently curled up, streamlining its body while kept at its side. It was very suitable for digging underground.

Even more terrifyingly, the body of this dragon emitted terrifying energy undulations like those of Magi of laws. It showed the being’s power. In the World of Gods, perhaps only the legendary Platinum Dragon could compare to it.

“Long time no see, Mister one-eyed dragon from the Ultron World!” Seeing the one-eyed dragon who’d changed his profession to excavation, Leylin did his best to stifle his laughter as he greeted him politely.

“Hm? Who dares make fun of the mighty Gigakell dragon race?” The dragon patted his head with his huge claws, seeming to recover from his stupor, “And here I was, thinking that it shouldn’t be possible for me to miss something happening straight ahead. So it’s that Magus from before!”

While mumbling and complaining to himself, he pulled his large body out of the ground. “It’s been a few thousand years since we last met, but you’ve already completely entered rank 7. Such talent leaves me envious… But then again, this is Dreamscape. Who knows how many years have passed outside? It might have been
tens of thousands of years that just slipped through my fingers…”

“Does that mean you’ve been staying in Dreamscape all this time, my Lord?” Leylin asked in surprise.

“Of course! Don’t you know how plentiful the treasures in Dreamscape are? Especially at the core… the lustre of the pure suolo gems…. Ah, those are ten thousand times more beautiful than the Mother Dragon’s eyes… If not for that damned Lord of Calamity stopping me then, I would have… pooh!”

The one-eyed dragon seemed to notice that he had accidentally revealed something and used claws to cover his mouth.

“I see!” Leylin nodded, while scorning him inside. The greedy nature of dragons was something that would never change even in the vastness of the astral plane. Be the dragons in the World of Gods or the Magus World, they all seemed to have a similar characteristic.

“But— please forgive me for my bluntness— but you seem to be in need of help…” Leylin focused on this body that was as large as a mountain. A number of purple eyes were stuck to the dragon’s thick horns and scales, looking rather disgusting.

Streaks of deep wounds appeared next to these purple eyes, constantly healing and tearing apart. Just the sight could almost cause one to feel the great pain.

‘Taking into account all that he said, could it be that he coveted some Lord of Calamity’s treasure and was unlucky enough to be caught, thus leaving him in this state? He has no choice but to keep
escaping…” Leylin thought inside, but his hands did not stop moving. A light green layer of clouds covered the body of the one-eyed dragon, tiny droplets of water dripping down.

The one-eyed Dragon observed Leylin warily with his yellow eyes as the green mist arrived, sniffing with his long snout. That seemed to leave him satisfied, and he did not shy away.

*Pss Pss!* The green rainwater made contact with the wounds, creating large amounts of corrosive white gas. However, the wounds that healed no longer ripped apart, allowing the dragon to snort comfortably.

“There are two types of injuries on your body. The most terrifying is the curse of the purple eyes, which I’m unable to remove for now. However, I can remove the accompanying effects of eternal clawing injuries…” Leylin looked satisfied.

When it came to healing injuries made by dreamforce, this was a very rare opportunity for him during his travels in Dreamscape. Besides, it was not so easy to get a guinea pig with the strength of a rank 7 Magus, as well as the chance to sense the strength of a Lord of Calamity so closely.

“Plague, calamity, curse…” However, being so close, the power of calamity he could sense from the purple eyes caused Leylin’s expression to change. This was formed practically out of the most evil powers of law, which even he was frightened by.

“As expected of a Lord of Calamity. This ability perhaps surpasses the limits of rank 7…” Leylin sized the one-eyed Dragon in front of him up and down. Just the fact that the dragon could survive with
his life while being pursued by such a terrifying character was more than enough for Leylin to think highly of him.

“Haha… thank you, Magus who possesses the abilities of healing. I feel much better now!” The dragon happily stretched out his bodies, yellow eyes reflecting Leylin’s figure. “You are a good Magus, worthy of the friendship of the Gigakell Dragons!”

The tremendous one-eyed dragon sniffed at Leylin, “My real name is Bodach Avdizlok Ultron. I swear on my truename that I shall make a contract with you. As long as you or your blood summon this name for help, I of the one-eyed dragon clan shall give you power. Of course, you’ll need to hand over a something of equal value as payment…”

As an existence of laws, there was no need to doubt his vows. However, seeing the sly look on the dragon’s face, Leylin was speechless.

‘Are you trying to bully me because I’ve never been to the World of Gods and don’t know about the ‘Dragon Tribe’s Contract of Alliance’?’ Leylin ridiculed him inside. The ‘Dragon Tribe’s Contract of Alliance’ in the World of Gods was said to be the contract with the least limitations. As long as enough gold kronas were paid up, a whole pile of demigod dragons could be called up. Of course, the cost was so high even Waukeen’s church would go bankrupt.

The one-eyed dragon Bodach’s contract was the same. While this looked to be a contract for summoning at any time as thanks towards Leylin, the rewards he’d want would be enough for anyone to cough up blood.
Leylin had a strong suspicion that the dragon had given all his friends the same contract, in order to amass his wealth.

“Forget it. I’m not going to use it anyway…” Leylin rolled his eyes inside, and then looked at Bodach.

“Thank you for your goodwill, but I think it’s better if we discuss the curse on you now…” With Leylin’s experience, the speed at which his attitude changed caused even the dragon to be astonished, “Unless it’s the spellcaster themselves, it’s very difficult to remove it. On top of that, with the passage of time, it could cause even more horrifying harm to you…”

While Leylin was certain that he could remove it with a few years of research, especially given the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, he decided to hide this.
Leylin, my friend, you must help me!” At the mention of this curse that was like a maggot hidden in his bones, Bodach put on a painful expression. His huge body laid down on the ground, eyes pitiful as he gazed up at Leylin like an ant. The scene was rather hilarious.

“This… It’s quite troublesome…” Leylin furrowed his brows, as if this was extremely difficult. “Why don’t you try settling this with that Lord of Calamity? He’s currently hibernating, so he probably wouldn’t be willing to offend a foreign being of laws too much, no?” He proposed.

“No, his suolo gems are still with me… Err… No, Bodach didn’t steal anything. I’m being maligned…” The one-eyed dragon confessed everything without being pressed.

“I see…” Leylin turned and left, having no interest in offending a powerful Lord of Calamity for a thief.

“Uh… Wait, my friend. Bodach can help you!” Seeing Leylin intend to leave, the dragon immediately began to panic. Having been tortured by these injuries for such a long time, he knew that this Magus was the only one able to help him aside from that Lord of Calamity himself.

“Oh? Help me?” Leylin halted his footsteps, judging the huge body of the One-Eyed Dragon and his yellow eyes with interest, “You know what I need?”

“No…” Bodach answered honestly, “But Bodach once smelled you
near the northern territories of the Lords of Calamity….”

“My smell…” Leylin did not know whether to laugh or cry, but he did know that one-eyed dragons had extremely sensitive senses of smells.

More importantly, they did not just distinguish between the particles in the air, but tracked things down based on the smells of souls. Hence, even though thousands or tens of thousands of years had passed, anything that Leylin had made contact with back then would not be able to escape his senses.

“Yes… It’s a tiny area where some natives work. I once smelt your scent at the very centre… It was rather weak… Whether the tribe, or you back then!”

The one-eyed dragon had a crafty look in his yellow eyes, “I assume… pursuing that friendship in your youth must be one of the reasons that you’ve come to Dreamscape, right?”

‘Seems like he really has once seen Gillian’s tribe…’ Leylin nodded, ‘But… you’re too naive. Did you think I would offend a Lord of Calamity over a few natives?

‘Even with my personal feelings towards them, the value of the natives can’t be compared with what might happen…’ His relationship with Gillian and the rest were just like strangers coming together at best, taking what they needed from each other. Leylin had probably even invested more, and merely wanted to take a look at them on the way.

Taking care of a complicated curse just to obtain information on them, even offending a Lord of Calamity? Leylin wasn’t that foolish.

“I hate Magi the most. They’re all so cool-headed and full of schemes… Don’t you know that in the Ultron World helping others is a great virtue?” Bodach mumbled in his dissatisfaction.

“That’s why the Ultron World was swept into a few great wars, dropping down from a medium-ranked world to a low-ranked
world without a name for itself. Perhaps you’re its only remaining being of laws…”
Leylin gazed at him, causing the other party to unconsciously look away, “Did you think that I’d never read the epics of Ultron’s rise and fall?”
“Fine! Your great knowledge makes it such that you won’t ever be at a disadvantage! I’ll need to include this in my reflections about the scent of Magi, and pass it down to those of my race…” The dragon looked crestfallen, “You’ve won. Speak! What do you want before you’ll heal me?”
“That’s the way!” Leylin turned, a smile on his face.
News of a few natives was obviously not enough for him to change his mind, but a rank 7 dragon of laws was somewhat passable.
“Firstly… The Dragon Tribe’s Contract of Alliance from before needs to be amended! Give me news about the natives too… And… even if we’re found by the Lord of Calamity, I’m just a doctor that you sought out and have nothing to do with this. You are to swear all this upon your truesoul of laws, to the astral and river of space and time!”
As a Lord of Baator, Leylin’s ability with contracts was almost comparable to the great Archdevils. Even the one-eyed dragon broke out in cold sweat.
“Goodness… Even the Tieman astral beings, known in the astral world for how harsh they are in their contracts, can’t set up such stringent and harsh contracts…” Bodach lamented, grabbing at his head with his huge dragon claws.
Unfortunately, the ball was now in Leylin’s court. He still needed to get Leylin to solve his problems, and therefore had no way to say no.
After they both made the soul oath using their truesouls of laws, Leylin sized up the one-eyed dragon who was as large as a mountain and frowned. “Your body is too huge. Become like me!”
“That’s easy…” Bodach agreed, body shrinking and melting into a purple light as he turned into a middle-aged man with long purple hair. Perhaps it was the difference in their races’ aesthetics, but Bodach had a single eye in this form, a yellow vertical one. Numerous red blood vessels bulged everywhere, making him look somewhat frightening. However, Leylin did not mind that much. After all, there were far too many strange beings in the astral plane similar to humans. Dreamscape was a region with even more creativity in this area, which was why there was nothing strange about strange life forms similar to humans here.

“But…” Leylin took a look at the back of Bodach’s hand, arm and shoulder. There were still purple eye marks there, stubborn and not disappearing.

“See for yourself… It’s so troublesome…” Bodach pinched and broke a purple eye, and large amounts of yellow pus dripped to the ground, corroding into it further to leave a deep dark hole. A new circle of eyes appeared around the purple eyeballs, even more slender than before yet still possessing the same immense hatred and malicious intent.

‘You stole someone else’s possessions and still dare complain?’ Leylin rolled his eyes inside, speechless. However, he knew that what he’d done was more infuriating than that, and besides he was making use of the dragon. He wasn’t in a position to criticize Bodach.

“I’ll need some time to remove the malicious intent…” Leylin extended his right hand, swiping up some pus with his index finger. The corrosive liquid obviously could do nothing against Leylin, and was burnt to ashes by some green phosphorescence. Traces of black gas appeared above the green flames, converging to form a few wailing faces that gradually dissipated.
“This person’s knowledge on souls is not too bad. It’s an expert…” Leylin nodded, motivation and fervour evident in his eyes.

“Leylin, my friend. Based on the contract, you need to remove a portion of the curse to prove your abilities before it can be effective…” The middle-aged cyclops that Bodach had become gazed at Leylin with anxiousness. Desire and thirst were evident in that single eye.

“Though I can’t remove the curse immediately, it shouldn’t be a problem to interfere with his tracking you. Wear this.” Leylin rummaged through his item-storing magic artifact and found a silver hoop for the head, tossing it to Bodach. The hoop was completely silver and had strange crimson lines on it, similar to a human’s veins as it squirmed slightly.

“Hm? Leylin, have you gone to the Shadow World before too? The Towa people there like this style of accessories a lot…” Bodach examined it again and again, and even sniffed at it with his nose carefully. At the end, probably after determining there was nothing with it and perhaps from faith in the contract, he chose to wear it.

“Hm? I sense that the malicious intent that seemed to be on my back has finally disappeared…” The moment the one-eyed dragon the hoop, he immediately sighed in relief. He’d been afraid of the Lord of Calamity tracking him down before, which was why he’d been fleeing like a stray dog when he bumped into Leylin. No matter what he did, there was no way to stop the tracking from the curse. However, this feeling finally disappeared from his bones.

“Great! This is great…” Bodach cheered, his sound so powerful that the dust in the surroundings vibrated. Leylin waved his hands and spoke stonily. “Alright. Bring me to the place you felt me connected with last, and be quick about it!”

“No problem,” Bodach patted his chest in guarantee, before looking at Leylin with worry, “It’s at the boundary of the River of
Annihilated Sighs. We need to pass through regions where three Lords of Calamity are sealed. Leylin, my friend, does this thing really work?”

“Don’t worry. Let’s go!” With how Bodach was acting, Leylin knew that he must have offended one of these three Lords.

However, he was rather confident in his concealment. Besides, while Bodach had been discovered and was being pursued, the fact that the two of them were existences of laws would still strike fear in the other party’s heart. When the time come, Bodach could hand over that suolo gem or whatever it was, and the other side would not put too much pressure on them.

‘And… a Lord of Calamity?’ That would be an evil god native to Dreamscape. Between two existences of laws, with one possessing the Nightmare Absorbing Physique, who would have the upper hand?

Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he suppressed the fervour in his mind.

……

The old one-eyed dragon was an experienced treasure-hunter after all. He was extremely familiar with the regions in Dreamscape, especially the special underground passages.

Under his lead, Leylin passed through the regions of the three Lords of Calamities without any dangers and arrived at the depths of the northern region. Life in this area was much more abundant, and according to Bodach’s information Gillian and her tribe had most likely relocated to this area, and seemed to be doing pretty well.
The dried earth suddenly burst apart, forming two dark holes. A cloaked figure emerged from each of the holes, one of them removing his cloak to observe the surrounding soil. While it was still as barren as before, there was at least some form of life here. The place was not entirely dead.

“Bodach, why are all the routes you know underground?” Leylin glanced at the one-eyed dragon, doubting its race.

“Hehe… Don’t get hung up on those trivial things! So? I wasn’t wrong, was I? As long as we go through the underground whistling passage, we’ll be able to evade the wild regions with masters…” Bodach chuckled.

Leylin was one who only cared for the results and not the process, so he did not pursue the matter.

‘A.I. Chip, conduct a scan.’ Leylin immediately received information on the environment, tracking its hydrology and even the origin force. A look of astonishment flashed on his face.

“It’s not bad, huh? Compared to other places, this is already like an oasis!”

Leylin’s scans revealed a few small dried up shrubs in the area, making it look like the Gobi Desert. The presence of plants indicated moisture, and this flora would coexist with animal life. In an environment like Dreamscape which was often weakened, this was incredibly difficult to achieve.

‘Yet in order to survive many have to kill each other. Death is
unavoidable…’ Leylin wondered in his mind. Survival and reproduction were the two primitive desires of all living beings, and in order to attain these two goals they could explode forth with surprising strength. Of the two themselves, survival was the first priority. From ancient times wars for survival were the most bloody and ruthless of battles. However, Leylin’s attention had shifted from the battles between tribes, instead focusing in another direction. ‘Why is this place so special? Dreamforce waning should affect the entire world…’ His interest now piqued, Leylin’s gaze penetrated through the skies, mountains, and rivers, as powerful soul force burst forth. At that very moment, the skies and the ground seemed to freeze. ‘Hmm? Where are the Lords of Calamity here?’ Leylin instantly noticed the difference here. Theoretically, the places where the natives lived should be on the land of a Lord of Calamity, yet Leylin had found no signs of such. That wasn’t all. Destructive snow was nowhere to be found, as if there was nobody in charge. “You noticed it as well?” The one-eyed dragon chuckled as he explained, “The Lord of Calamity here has the true form of a dream demon. It chose a unique virtual seal as its innate skill, allowing it to avoid all attacks from destructive snow…” “So that’s why.” Leylin nodded, understanding the situation. Dream demons were a very rare species in Dreamscape. They were very compatible with dreamforce, and it was rumoured that adult dream demons grew as large as entire continents. Given one’s size, it could seal its territory up alongside itself. The gift of the virtual seal was one of the bloodline abilities of the dream demons. They could make their truesoul illusory, being sealed into the dreams of numerous life forms.
“In other words… This vast territory that we see here is a part of the dream demon’s body… and its thoughts and will have been broken up into pieces and sealed into the dreams of the beings dwelling here, silently taking in nutrition and fighting against the weakening of dreamforce?”

Leylin felt enlightened.

The way dream demons dealt with methods was just too ingenious. By surviving within others’ bodies, they could both prevent the weakening of dreamforce and evade the destructive snow. Evidently they’d formed a special symbiotic relationship with the other natives of Dreamscape.

A dream demon could nourish the natives with its dreamforce and help them with its body, who in exchange would give it the soul energy to support its truesoul and prevent it from weakening. Dream demons were one of the creatures least weakened by dreamforce entering a trough.

“But this method would need to be paired with a specific bloodline ability… There might be a single pure-blooded dream demon in all of Dreamscape…” The one-eyed dragon Bodach sighed beside him.

“Whatever the motive is, this Lord of Calamity’s methods has allowed numerous natives to survive…” Leylin was quite in favour of methods like these where both parties benefited, “Given the characteristics of Dreamscape the chance of a native turning into an evil existence is one in ten thousand, maybe even one in a billion, but over the long term the dream demon will obtain goodwill and connections, which by themselves are terrifying…”

Leylin immediately categorised the dream demon as someone not to be provoked.

‘But my goal in coming here isn’t to go against the comatose demon. It probably wouldn’t even care if a native or two disappeared, that’s like plucking off a strand of hair…’ Even as he
thought this, Leylin hastened towards the place with the most concentrated life aura, Bodach alongside him. The dragon said this was where he’d smelt the souls with Leylin’s scent. The dragon had only been looking for treasures then, too lazy to come and take a look.

Hard soil had condensed into slabs as solid as steel here, but Leylin nodded in satisfaction.

This region was much better than others in Dreamscape. The ground over there was full of sand, with no signs of anything else to be found. In comparison, with the nourishment and support of the body of the Dream Demon, the life here could somewhat be comparable to terrible places in other worlds.

*Swish! Swish!* Two black streaks suddenly appeared from underground, pouncing towards Leylin and Badoch.

“Hm? There’s a living being? Not bad!” Leylin grabbed forward, and two mice with coarse fur were caught suspended in the air, beady eyes full of insanity turning into fear as the hunter became the prey.

“Sawtooth mice? The toughness of the fur and the contamination…” Blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and the A.I. Chip’s scans immediately allowed him to gain all information regarding them.

‘A vitality and radiation comparable to a rank 1 Magus. Unfortunately, that’s only the bottom of the food chain here. The intelligence hasn’t completely developed either, it can’t even realise our might.’ The single-eyed dragon snorted in annoyance, unable to understand why Leylin was interested in a few little ants.

“Then again, creatures who don’t know their place won’t live for long!” Leylin waved his hands.

*Crack! Crack!* A sharp sound rang out as the two mice with bones like steel broke apart. Their eyes lost all lustre as they fell to the ground.
Leylin gazed into the distance and spoke profoundly, “Be careful, Bodach. We have guests.”

“Guests?” Bodach looked in the same direction with puzzlement in his eyes, and a look of understanding then flashed across his face. Two powerful existences were present there, waiting quietly in place. A soul aura that was slightly more powerful than that of the two sawtooth mice slowly drew closer.

The black grass in the distance rustled, and as if the being had discovered something the sounds stopped. It gave Leylin the feeling that the other party was feeling hesitant.

However, perhaps the temptation of the two coarse-furred mice was too huge. After a period of muffled breathing, a slender dark figure headed over.

It looked like a child, only coming up to Leylin’s shoulder. He wore tanned leather hunting gear that was torn in many areas, with countless patches on it. Even then, he was still revealing a lot of skin.

Even with all these layers Leylin could still the purplish patterns on the skin. It immediately caused him to recall Gillian and her people. The young hunter’s face was tanned, and it was difficult to see what kind of expression he had on his face. His eyes first darted to the prey on the ground, and then at Leylin and Bodach, obviously frightened. No matter how he saw it, someone wearing such complete and luxurious clothing were not people to be provoked.

Gulping, the young man struggled for a long while before pointing at the bodies of the mice on the ground, “This… mine…”

Thanks to Gillian, Leylin had learnt the language of Dreamscape, so there was no language barriers. However, this wasn’t much anyway. After becoming a demigod, he was able to understand all languages, and existences of laws too could transmit information through soul communication.

“Yours!” Leylin gestured, inviting him to take them. Following his
gaze, he obviously saw the purple pattern markings on the two mice’s hind legs.

‘He ran so far just for these two, and even risked offending us. Looks like the scarcity of food here is rather terrible…’ Seeing the young man cheer and rapidly throw himself over, Leylin had his own thoughts.

The natives of Dreamscape had all experienced dreamforce being poured into their bodies, their strengths boosted greatly on average. Leylin estimated that they would have no problems with becoming comparable to rank 2 Magi upon reaching adulthood.

The young man was now kneeling on the floor, seeing the blood that had spilt onto the ground with a look of pity on his face. He then picked up the mice and sucked the fresh blood out of the wounds.

The blood of these sawtooth mice had a strong taste of iron. With just a look Leylin could tell that there was a terrifying amount of radiation and contamination inside, yet the youth looked like he was sampling something extremely delicious.

“Tsk… What a good appetite! It’s comparable to our rot-eating dragons…” Bodach pursed his lips.
There were now three travellers crossing the barren plains. One of them was a young man in tattered hunting gear. He had a black ironwood lance on his back, from the tip of which hung two coarse-furred mice. Leylin and Bodach were following him at the side. After that ‘friendly and enthusiastic’ interaction, they’d successfully gotten the youth to bring them to his tribe. They had found out his name as well. He was called Cabadole, and was a descendant of a large tribe nearby. While he had yet to reach adulthood, he’d already had to take on some responsibilities. Having obtained his prey the youth was obviously elated, and he even began humming a strange tune. While Leylin suspected that these two mice could only provide for a few meals, but based on what the young man had said, this was already plentiful.

“The animals in the wilderness are extremely sly. Even the best hunters in the village can’t be confident that they will get harvests every time…” Cabadole stared at Leylin and Bodach with worship in his eyes, “Are you the legendary emissaries of the Master?”

“No!” Bodach answered resolutely. He had no idea why Leylin was so interested in these ants, but since he was the one asking for a favour, he did not dare go against Leylin’s wishes. However, Cabadole would never get any goodwill from him. Unfortunately, the young man was now full of curiosity which even
overshadowed his fear. “Then… did Mister Bodach come from the city? Is it Maxi City? I’ve been there before…”

……

Along the way, Bodach almost broke down from all of Cabadole’s antics. When they saw the low walls in the distance, the dragon was the most excited of the group, finally able to escape. The tribe Cabadole lived in didn’t just own some land. They’d built a wall at the outer regions of the village. While the defensive abilities of the wall were questionable, the strength this implied comforted Leylin.

*Clang!* At this moment, the entrance to the village opened. A group of villagers dressed in coarse black clothing walked out, a few elders at their center. There seemed to be some sorrow in the air, and many women were weeping while covering their mouths. “Looks like they aren’t here to welcome you, kid!” Bodach chuckled, but Cabadole did not retort at all. His eyes were fixed at the few native elder at the centre, fists clenched so tight that he was almost bleeding.

“Are they expelling the elders?” Leylin had a feeling that when productivity was lowest, many tribes would choose to chase the elderly with no ability to work away. “No… they’re doing this voluntarily.” Cabadole’s voice was low, “For the better survival of our race…” “This is what’s so heavy about life. Even though I’ve passed through so many worlds, I can’t help but sigh at this…” Bodach gave Leylin a long look, “Could you allow me to create a historical poem to record this?”

“No!” Leylin rejected him without hesitation. This one-eyed dragon’s talkativeness was also worthy of being recorded into a poem. His writing skills, in particular, were more than enough for
those bards to cough up blood. He was also rather shameless, which left Leylin speechless.
At this moment, Cabadole put the lance down and picked up his prey, looking perplexed.
“What is it? If you’re going to hand it over, do it quick. A mouse like that won’t be able to last for long anyway…” Bodach mumbled to himself, but was then shut up by Leylin. “Fine… Fine, I won’t speak. I won’t say anything!”
From the very beginning, even after taking out the prey, Cabadole had not hastened forward. On the contrary, his eyes were filled with hot tears as he watched the few elderly walking straight into the dark wilderness with their backs straight.
“The children in the tribe need this more. My lords, please!” With what had happened, Cabadole seemed to have mature a great deal. He stood up again and led the way.
“Mm, not bad. This kid has the potential to become a leader!” Bodach nodded, and then covered his mouth.
After entering the village, Leylin could tell that there was a distinct difference. This did not come from the natives who, on average, had the strength of rank 2 Magi, but something at the heart of the village.
“That… that has the aura that I’m familiar with! And…” Ignoring the natives that had surrounded them, Leylin headed into the deeper parts of the village.
The further in he went, the more secure the place became. At the end, there was even a glint in Leylin’s eyes.
At the innermost region of the village was a square built next to a large black mountain. Natives with metal armour and sharp weapons formed the last line of defence here. A deep hole had been excavated into the mountain, powerful radiation emerging from within.
‘These energy undulations are already comparable to rank 5 or 6
Magi. So you’re the real guardian of this place?’
“Foreigner, this is a forbidden area. Halt your footsteps!” A man who stood taller than the rest blocked Leylin’s way. Tens of elite hunters with armour and lances stood by him, including Cabadole. However, he looked rather anxious.
Bodach could take this no longer and stood out, a ruthless look flashing in his eyes. “Keke… When have mice become so gutsy as to block my way?”
“Wait!” At the crucial moment, Leylin stretched out and stopped him. These were the descendants of someone he knew, and it wasn’t good to do things so forcefully. He could feel the unique aura of knights and Magi from the Magus World from these guards. Evidently they’d passed through rigorous training as knights and Magi, likely sourced from Leylin himself.
‘Seems like after the huge change to Dreamscape and the strength system I passed down, they’ve managed to study and achieve something…’
“I do not have malicious intent…” Leylin said, though he did not hesitate in the least in his movements.
Along the way, all who wanted to obstruct him collapsed silently to the ground.
“Tsk! I could just swallow them all!” Bodach muttered in disdain at the sight, but he still followed closely behind Leylin. It would take but a thought for existences of laws like them to destroy the entire village. However, for old time’s sake, Leylin did not want to go too far.
The cave was not deep, and they reached the end after walking a few steps in. Minerals similar to quartz crystals filled the ceiling of the cave, reflecting fine rays of light. The ground was slightly damp and had watermarks on it. There was also a sort of black moss that had grown everywhere.
“We meet again, Gillian…” Leylin gazed at the depths of the cave
where a huge pit was curved in. The skeletons of many animals, mixed with green vines, formed a thick layer here. A white marble pillar in the shape of a cross stood tall here, on it a strange statue seemingly merged within. The top of the statue was that of a young girl with strange purple patterns on her face. The face was somewhat similar to Gillian had been in her memories, though she seemed to have matured quite a bit. Waist-down, everything had dissolved into a chrysalis, looking like the combined body of a human and a pupa. The young girl looked serene, as if only in a deep sleep. Leylin closed his eyes and felt as if the girl who had called him uncle was right by his side. 

“Silence? Mutation?”

Badoch widened his eyes and made a big fuss, “Could this human-pupa be the ancestor of the natives outside? Isn’t the gap too large?”

“Mm! She should be in the fission stage of her soul, so we shouldn’t disturb her…” While Gillian looked like a statue right now, Leylin could still sense the powerful vitality in the human-pupa. The special energy radiation that she emitted was like how a ferocious beast marked its territory, chasing away all other terrifying life forms and protecting its clansmen. Leylin closed his eyes, somewhat guessing at what had happened.

‘Gillian at that point must have been the same as her other clansmen, where their strength mutated. Out of desire for survival, the entire tribe moved to the north…

‘There’s no pattern for dreamforce entering the body, and mutations are extremely common… With this power, Gillian and her tribe could finally settle in safety… After that, some things must have happened that I don’t know about, which left Gillian alone and reaching the limit as a rank 6 Magus. She fell into a deep sleep
here to evolve, and has been protecting her clansmen for so long?’ After walking out of the cave, Bodach suddenly spoke. “I smell the scent of the dream demon on the sleeping native just now…” The one-eyed dragon had exceptional talent in smelling out souls, able to find traces of Leylin from thousands of years ago. “But of course. With how powerful Gillian is now, how could the dream demon let go of her dreams?” Leylin shook his head and answered, but then he suddenly froze. ‘Dreams, absorption, powering up, replenishing… yet another cycle? If that’s how it is on a small scale, it could be a pattern used in an entire world…’ A trace of understanding flashed in Leylin’s eyes. ‘But… there’s no point just knowing this. Without any strength, there’s nothing I can do!’ Leylin shook his head, and then watched the frenetic and anxious natives surrounding them. “What are we going to do now?” Bodach asked at the side. “I’m just here to see someone I knew long ago. Now that my goal has been achieved, we could take a look around or attempt to remove your curse…” Leylin didn’t mind at all. As long as he stayed in Dreamscape, it would be easy to research this world. Hence, there was really nothing he had to do.
“Wait, my lords!” The tribe leader had regained consciousness at this moment, kneeling before Leylin with respect. The slightest power Leylin had revealed made it obvious that this was someone powerful, and he’d had someone verify that the ancestor was still safe. How would this middle-aged man not realise that these two were actually friends of his tribe? With the strength they possessed, these people could easily crush them if they wanted to. Hence, it was necessary to better his relationship with them.

“Are you two lords friends of the ancestor? Please stay here for a while, and let us serve you…” The leader of this tribe was nearly two metres tall, adorned in a slightly mouldy smooth leather coat. His bulging muscles seemed as hard as steel. This man had thick lips and a high nose. His slanted eyes seemed cold, and the crossed scar on his cheek was proof of his gallantry. To survive a native had to be ruthless, violent, and most of all courageous. However this man was doing all he could to smile, humbling himself given his lower status. As the one with the most knowledge in the tribe, he naturally knew what these two powerful beings represented. Even if they just wanted to destroy the village at will, it was enough for them to let go of all pride and serve these beings humbly.
On top of that, they were actually friends of his ancestor? Did that not mean that they must have been old monsters that had lived for hundreds or even thousands of years?
The middle-aged man was alarmed and sorrowful, knowing that his tribe having this piece of land was nothing remarkable. All sorts of powerful native tribes could die here, even wandering beasts not guaranteed to survive. The scarcity of food had led to the battles between the existing life forms to increase in intensity. The only one they could count on to protect the tribe was their sleeping ancestor.

‘With the power of these two lords on our side we might even be able to defy the city’s orders…’ The middle-aged man had a thought. The next time he looked up, he looked into a pair of eyes that seemed to be able to see through everything.

Leylin chuckled, not expressing his opinion and walking till he arrived in front of the kneeling man. He used an invisible force to lift his chin. “If you’re inviting us to stay, then tell me your name.”

“Hosain! I am the chief of the Redbud Flower Tribe, Hosain, willing to follow all of Sire’s instructions!” Hosain led his clansmen and had everyone kneel and bow. The exposure of crucial regions like their backs showed a complete subservience to the strong.

“Bodach! Looks like we’ll need to stay here for some time…” With nothing at hand, Leylin agreed indifferently. Anyway, he was rather interested in studying what was happening to Gillian.

“I’m fine with it!” Bodach gazed at Cabadole beside him, pursing his lips, but did not object. After all, he knew that the moment Leylin decided on something, he had no right to go against his wishes.

……

A fireplace burned away from a wall of the most luxurious building
in the village, spreading warmth. A yellow copper stove stood atop a red mahogany table, burning some unknown powder that emitted white tendrils of fragrance.

Cabadole was curled up in a corner, watching Leylin and Bodach respectfully being invited to sit on a soft goose-feather rug. Looking at the numerous exquisite foods and drinks placed in front of the guests, he could not help but gulp.

‘How extravagant…’ the young man thought to himself, and then looked outside the window. The light outside had dimmed, and there was already a layer of white frost by the windowpane. The contrast with the striking red of the silken curtains left him unable to look away.

“It should be quite cold and dark outside now, right?” Cabadole wondered silently. This region had no sun nor moon, and only had faint rays of light. The natives here used the brightness to differentiate between night and day.

Once night fell, temperatures outside could reach as low as -80 or -90 degrees, or even -100 degrees centigrade! While he did not understand the concept of cold, he knew that there were always unlucky people who froze to death at night every year. Without enough food nor fuel, the lack of heat would leave them helpless to resist the arrival of the grim reaper.

If this was the case in the village, things were much worse outside. The elders who’d left today would probably not live past this night. The young man felt a hot gush at his eyes, and some warm fluid fell from the corner of his eyes.

“Here, my lords. Please!” At the banquet, Hosain did not have so many thoughts. His face was now flushed red, and the area around his scars had turned bright red as he urged the two lords at the main seats to drink.

“Mm.” Leylin answered his request and picked up the wooden cup, pursing his lips. Bodach couldn’t even be bothered to do that.
Based on Leylin’s observations, the alcohol here was fermented using some underground plant stolons with plentiful fat and starch. As the method was very primitive and behind his times, and on top of that the filtering hadn’t been performed well, the alcohol was too muddy. Bodach obviously found this beneath himself. However, to ordinary natives, this was already a delicacy they could never obtain. This was also the same for Hosain. However, to Leylin’s surprise, every person in the village, besides the infants, all had a cup. The adults were extremely cautious and had a satisfied look on their faces.

‘Equal distribution within the clan?’ Leylin shook his head and looked at the table again.

In order to serve the two of them, Hosain had gone all out. The food on the table could be said to be sumptuous. The dessert was a sort of purple fruit that was slightly tart and sweet, while the main was a round pastry made with starch, baked till golden-brown. Even the two coarse-skinned mice that Cabadole had caught today had been brought to the table despite how precious meat was. The aroma from such a sumptuous feast had all the clansmen gritting their teeth, doing their best to keep their bearings. Fortunately, this was rather crude to Leylin and Bodach. Given the one-eyed dragon’s original size, even the entire village would only be an appetiser for him. The delicacies and the great alcohol that Leylin had experienced before made it lacking for him as well. Hence, in the face of this, Bodach found this beneath him, while Leylin ate a few fruits out of courtesy and stopped.

Upon seeing this, a slight embarrassed flush rose on Hosain’s face. He could not even bring himself to call up the beautiful young girls he had prepared meticulously beforehand, “My apologies that our esteemed guests had to have such simple food…”

“It’s already enough. Here, let’s raise our cups to our friendship!” Leylin lifted his cup.
“For friendship!” With Leylin’s lead, the rest did the same as Hosain and somewhat warmed the mood.  
“I was once friends with your ancestor, so if you have any needs, please let me know…”

After putting down the cutlery, Leylin spoke respectfully. Of course, all this was out of politeness. If the request could be easily completed and he was in a good mood, he might help for old times’ sake. However, if the other party brought up a difficult issue, such as having Leylin become their guardian, then Leylin would probably become hostile and leave.

“This is quite embarrassing, but we really have come across an issue we can’t solve with our strength.” Hosain’s voice sounded grim, “We make use of the land here to survive, but we need to give Maxi of the east saige and slaves as taxes… His requests this year are far greater than we can give…”

Hosain explained the situation to Leylin. The Redbud Flower Tribe weren’t the only survivors in this area, and they were all attached to a powerful city-state named Maxi. They would have to pay the city every once in a while, giving them a type of food called saige as well as slaves as proof of subservience. Otherwise, they would be attacked.

A few accidents had greatly reduced their crop yield this year, and it was impossible for the Redbud Flower Tribe to reach its target. However, those with power in Maxi did not care for this. The moment Hosain could not hand over enough food, they would be forced to move away, or else they’d be attacked. It wasn’t just dream beasts in the wilderness coveting this land, or stray spirits.

“While the ancestor can provide us with protection, Maxi City also has an elder in power with similar strength. Besides, the ancestor is in a deep sleep…” Hosain laughed wryly as he voiced the trouble they were in.

The rest of the clansmen now stopped eating. They understood that
if this did not go well, the whole tribe would be exterminated. The food may have been fragrant and tasty, but it no longer tempted them.

“Elder in office? Is that a synonym of power or authority?” Leylin stroked his chin. He had to admit that this Maxi city had piqued his interest. “A city where a large number of inhabitants of Dreamscape gather? And there might even be powerful beings comparable to rank 5 or 6 Magi there…”

This city-state would definitely maintain traces of Dreamscape’s glamour and culture before dreamforce weakened. Since he wanted to study this world, it was of extreme importance to Leylin. Besides, what was a city-state not guarded by a being of laws to Leylin?

“I understand. Let’s find a day, and have Cabadole bring me and Bodach there.” Leylin nodded in agreement, obtaining the gratitude of Hosain and the others.
In the depths of the Redbud Flower Tribe, in the corner of a dark cave dug into a black mountain. White quartz glimmered as it illuminated the moss-covered area, giving the place a sense of life. There was a pillar near the end of the cave, shaped like a cross. The humanoid pupa that was Gillian’s current form had fused perfectly with the base, showing her beautiful curves and face off like the most exquisite work of art.

‘This silent evolution is similar to those of Magi…’ The A.I. Chip’s light flashed in Leylin’s eyes as he reached forward to touch the statue, feeling the weakness and regret of the soul at its core. Having said that, though, this weakness was in comparison to Leylin himself. The soul was already as powerful as a rank 5 or rank 6 Magus.

“Have you sensed my arrival?” A slight smile rose on his face. “Seeing as you’ve been helpful in my research, let me give you a tiny gift.”

A dark red glint extended from Leylin’s fingers, leaving behind two elegant trails as it formed strange arcs in the air like a dancing butterfly. It landed on the statue’s shoulder.

*Pu!* Red lights flickered, and the points of light and skin of the statue immediately dissolved upon contact with it. The entire human-pupa began to move slightly, and the eyes now appeared to have gained some life in them.
Sensing the rate at which her soul awoke being quickened, Leylin turned to leave, seemingly uncaring of the situation, “You can do it, little Gillian…”

The lives of beings of laws were extremely long. Leylin could foresee that if Gillian failed to become rank 7 this would probably be their last meeting.

“Is this how people who can live for eternity feel? Loneliness? And transcending worldliness?” Leylin’s looked melancholic, recalling a great number of people. Images of Bicky, Kroft, and even many enemies flashed across his mind.

Many of them had been unable to endure the passage of time, entering the cycle of death.

‘Still… Even so I want to seek out the extraordinary, achieving true eternity!’ With a fling of his robes, Leylin unhesitatingly left the cave. ‘A.I. Chip, what are the results of the investigation from before?’

Upon hearing its robotic reply, Leylin sighed. “There isn’t even a specific time. Looks like a sample of a native who has yet to become a being of laws can’t be useful towards my research…”

Leylin’s primary goal in this excursion to Dreamscape was to study the weakening of dreamforce, completely grasping its power and making it the foundation for him to fuse laws and enter rank 8. The A.I. Chip’s analyses had all been pointed towards this direction.

Unfortunately, a sample and model comparable to a rank 6 Magus still could not help the A.I. Chip progress further. Only a true rank 7 existence of laws could give Leylin some enlightenment.

‘Then again, one gains a body of laws merged with the world after entering rank 7. They experience a complete change, and I can only use such existences of laws to study the World Origin Force…’

“But going around here will still give me some results…” Leylin transmitted a wave of soul undulations, summoning the one-eyed dragon Bodach who had disappeared somewhere.
“Get Cabadole. We’re going to leave!”
“Leave? For Maxi?” Bodach scratched his head, “I don’t think that sort of place will have what you want… All the treasures of this territory, the cute little sparkly things, they can’t escape my sense of smell…”

Bodach had guessed at this point that Leylin was probably looking for something. Still, with his limited knowledge and thought process, he only considered dazzling gems and crystals treasures. As for signs of civilisation or historical poems and the like, those were only used to pass time. With the one-eyed dragon’s great background in the Ultron World and the memories passed down through generations, it was nothing to him.

Leylin suddenly turned back, a depthless darkness in his eyes. “I’m warning you right now. You’ve already provoked one Lord of Calamity. Don’t provoke another or I won’t let you off!”

It caused the one-eyed dragon to shrink back in pure terror, shaking his head, “Fine, fine. Don’t worry, I won’t be that stupid… Besides, the dream demon likes to collect dreams, which I don’t care for…”

“It’s actually because you don’t care for his treasure trove!” Leylin rolled his eyes and waved his arms, signalling to the hunter Cabadole, “We’re here…”

“My lords!” Cabadole had now changed into different clothes, this one with at least fewer patches. His face had been washed, revealing freckled cheeks that were slightly red from excitement. Intelligence flashed in his eyes.

He now knew that Leylin and Bodach were definitely amazing people. Though he would just be a guide, even their tribe leader Hosain was envious of his position. As long as he could obtain their favour, the tiniest thing they handed over to him could last him a lifetime.

“I’ll guide you well, my lords!” Cabadole puffed out his chest as he
guaranteed, holding tightly onto the black lance in his hands. “You’re just a guide though!” Bodach snorted disdainfully. “This might be a little different from before. We’ll be flying, so you’ll just need to show us directions…” Leylin reminded him. “Flying? We’re flying?” Cabadole felt slightly dizzy, and then gaped as he saw Leylin jumping into the sky. While the people here had the vitality and soul durability of official Magi, they could only fly if they mutated to form a pair of wings. The laws of Dreamscape were very harsh. “Stop getting so surprised, kid…” Bodach picked him up by the collar, and all Cabadole felt was a powerful gust of wind from below as his feet left the ground. *Thud!* He released his hold, and the black lance from before fell to the ground, slanting as it entered the soil. “Careful there, kid. Don’t blame me if you fall!” Bodach snickered, finding that he had discovered a way to deal with Cabadole. How about a 360 degree dance in the sky? Or a few flips? Faster than sound flight? That kid would probably spit out last night’s food from his nostrils. Bodach laughed vilely… Until, unfortunately, Cabadole’s incomparable adaptability as a child who’d survived the harsh wilderness showed itself. By the time the three reached Maxi City, Cabadole was pale no longer. Instead, an excited flush had risen on his face. “That was amazing! If I could fly, I’d be able to hunt even demonic wolves down using my arrows!” He looked towards Bodach with anticipation, “My Lord, can you teach me how to fly?” “Damn it, damn it! Can I strangle him?” Bodach looked towards Leylin. “Of course not. Unless you want our journey to end here…” Leylin glanced at Cabadole, who was shocked at the bloodlust Bodach was exhibiting. A kind smile arose upon his face, “Don’t be afraid.
Your uncle Bodach was just joking with you!”
“That joke isn’t funny at all!” Cabadole muttered, and his footsteps were intentionally faster as he ran to Leylin’s side.
“Tsk! Foolish people will always make more foolish choices…” Bodach turned away with contempt.
He shifted his attention to a huge arch made of white marble at Maxi City’s entrance, as well as the high city walls with elite warriors on top. His thieving instincts began to show themselves.
“Tsk tsk… I never thought a bunch of immigrants in Dreamscape would have this much wealth. Unfortunately, I’ll only need three periods of refining metal to loot this sort of city…”
“Be more careful and don’t make us more enemies!” Leylin clutched at his forehead, beginning to wonder if bringing the dragon along was the right decision.
“Maxi is governed by its own citizens, its officers and protectors being elected into office every hundred days at the outdoor square…” Cabadole was performing his job well, introducing Maxi City to Leylin and Bodach.
“Citizens? Them?” Leylin looked to the side of the road. The citizens Cabadole had mentioned could be seen by the gardens and marble fountain. They dressed themselves up tidily in white, their garb held up by a single ring on their shoulders. It made them look languid and comfortable.
Their derision for Cabadole and the like was obvious from their very gaze, arising from their souls or maybe even their genetics.
“Yes. They’re citizens of Maxi, with enough food and servants to attend to them…” Cabadole lowered his head. The reason these citizens could avoid work and yet enjoy food and servants was obvious; they were exploiting numerous tribes like the Redbud Flower Tribe.
Bluntly speaking, the environment here wasn’t the only reason for the terrible plight of the natives. It could be attributed to the citizens
of Maxi as well.
Eylin looked at Cabadole, whose whole body was stretched taut like a little leopard, and petted his head. “What? Does the current situation leave you dissatisfied?”
“No. I just hope to obtain more strength in order to protect my clan,” Cabadole answered.
“What a clever answer!” Leylin praised him.
In his previous world, such extreme exploitation would long since have given rise to violent revolts. With so few ruling over so many, and so blatantly abusing their power at that, they would just be courting death.
Unfortunately, this was a world where extraordinary strength crushed everything else! Even though the minority was in power, exploiting their position atrociously, all the majority could do was crush their desires for revolution. After all, this minority possessed great military strength. The ones with the greatest power held the greatest authority. Strength was the truth.
“Get out of the way! Get out of the way!” At this moment, two rows of warriors dressed in black armour and held iron spears and shields darted onto the streets, moving the people to the sides of the road.
‘Hm? Even citizens won’t have this much authority. Could this be the government or some security officials?’ Leylin glanced at Cabadole next to him, but the boy was now trembling all over, and his lips seemed to turn darker in his fear.
“No…” Cabadole bit at his lower lip, gritting out a few words, “The power of the government comes from the citizens, which is why this is impossible for them… The only possibility is the legendary Lord’s Envoy! There are many city-states like Maxi in this area, but they all have to bow down to the Lord’s Envoy lest they be destroyed.”

“Lord’s Envoy?” Leylin thought this phrase over, sensing the terror within the surrounding natives of Dreamscape. This terror had nothing to do with the higher or lower class, the rich or the poor. Even the citizens of Maxi who had been relaxed just moments before were the same as them.

‘The Lord of Calamity himself, that dream demon, should be the one with feudal power here. Are these soldiers of his armies?’ Leylin made a guess.

The Lords of Calamity weren’t alone. They had great numbers of subordinates that formed huge armies. When Dreamscape intersected with the real worlds, the other worlds in the astral plane would face nightmares in the form of the Lords of Calamity and their armies. Besides the Magus World and other large worlds, there were few who could resist their invasion.

However, Dreamscape weakened regularly. Even if a Lord of Calamity could take over an entire world, they would soon have to give up on it. If not for that, other worlds like the Purgatory World, Icy World, and Shadow World may not have been able to resist Dreamscape.

“They’re here! They’re here!” People at the front began to get restless, while Leylin and Bodach saw the ‘Lord of Calamity’ that had large numbers of people crowded around.

“Oh? So that’s how things are. No wonder these natives are so afraid…” What appeared in front of Leylin was a legion of high-energy beings similar to moths. The moths were extremely large, with some near three metres tall, and others at around a metre tall.
They had even evolved to have forelimbs similar to human hands.

“This is the dream demon’s illusory moth army. Although they aren’t all that powerful, they’re pretty proficient in illusions and poisons…” As someone who knew this well, Bodach was now introducing them to Leylin. Still, unlike them this one-eyed dragon was obviously strong enough to wipe Maxi City out easily.

However, these Illusory Moths weren’t the main characters here. At their centre was a human.

Indeed, a human. This was a native of Dreamscape, with yellow skin and wavy hair. The red tattoos on her body indicated that she wasn’t from the Redbud Flower Tribe, but with a single look at her Cabadole quickly covered his mouth.

Most of the other citizens of Maxi did the same, stopping their impending shrieks of terror.

Escorted by the numerous Illusory Moths was a young native girl, with a beautiful, slender waist and a face full of vitality. However, her eyes were muddied and filled with a deathly aura, a white being laid down on her lush hair.

This being had a furry body, its two wings mottled in different colours. A large proboscis had pierced into the girl’s soul from in front of its large compound eyes, as if sucking something out.

Leylin could feel the majesty of laws from the body of this white mouth. Although it was only a trace aura, it represented the essence of what it had once been.

‘Is this some sort of backlash?’ Leylin sighed.

The Lord of Calamity in this region was an exceptionally large dream demon. Its body had rotted to form a huge piece of land, sustaining the lives of many natives.

This naturally wasn’t done out of pure goodwill. Even the most powerful Lords of Calamity in Dreamscape had to seal themselves up, fighting against the weakening dreamforce. Even if they did so they would be tormented by the destructive snow, sapped of their
strength. Dream demons did something different. They used the
ir bodies to nourish a group of natives, splitting their truesouls
and entering the dreams of all beings living in their territories. This
would help them evade the destructive snow, allowing them to wait
out the weakness of the World Origin Force.
Relying on the people’s dreams to preserve their life allowed dream
demons to wield most of their strength even after being sealed. The
inhabitants who were being protected would give up a portion of
their soul force, in exchange obtaining a chance at survival. This
was a trade that benefited both parties.
However, there were unexpected situations that could crop up.
Although the dream demons carefully controlled their intake of
power, they were still Lords of Calamity. If they were agitated by
the natives’ dreams, and their absorption unknowingly increased,
things would be disastrous.
Just 0.00000001% of the soul power of a dream demon could easily
absorb all life from a native. Once the native died, these dream
demons would also lose a body to attach themselves to, weakening
rapidly as they awaited death.
Although this process was irreversible, there were still exceptions.
If the dream demon realised in time that it had absorbed too much,
the perfect control would repair the balance of the symbiotic
relationship.
However, the native they were attached to would have been
absorbed greatly, inclusive of their souls. They would become an
empty husk.
Such a shell was actually a huge treasure for a dream demon. At the
very least, it would leave no issues with its survival. With another
layer of protection from a native, there was no need to be afraid of
the effects of being in an environment that was weakening. It could
also retain some strength and influence over the outer world.
These humans who were controlled had another name in the world:
the Lord’s Envoys. Being raised by the dream demon, natives like Cabadole, and even citizens of city states or their leaders, all had parasites within them. Seeing the Lord’s Envoy, it was understandable for them to feel distress.

“Hmm?” Just as Leylin and Bodach were sizing up the Lord’s Envoy, the girl with the moth on her head also turned to look at them. “I never thought I’d be able to see guests from another world here!” she exclaimed, her eyes gaining some vigour.

An astonishing conscient began to awaken in the girl. In that moment, Leylin even saw the body of a dream demon moving through the universe, spreading wings that could cover a small world as it greeted him.

“We’re only travellers touring the area, and unwittingly entered your territory…”

Leylin was not all that surprised by this. While those like Cabadole had a portion of the dream demon’s truesoul in their bodies, these fragments were mostly in slumber. They could only subconsciously absorb the dream energy as food. However, the truesoul inside an envoy was awake, possessing a portion of the main body’s conscient. This made it easy to spot Leylin and Bodach, who had done nothing special to conceal themselves.

The Lord’s Envoy’s beautiful eyes swirled towards the one-eyed dragon, her next words causing Leylin to turn grim, “I remember the smell of your spirit. You’re the person who once coveted my treasure trove…”

That wretched greedy dragon had really once wanted her treasure trove before!

“Ah… hehe… Haha, the weather’s quite good today… Haha…” Bodach rubbed his head and began to laugh dryly.

“However, your humble servant’s treasure trove must have disappointed my Lord…” The Lord’s Envoy was now occupied by a powerful conscient. Leylin estimated that the awakened conscient
had now completely gathered here. However, she seemed to be exceptionally easy-going, and was even apologising to Bodach like a wise lady.

“Oh, it’s nothing! I don’t have much interest in dreams that are like bubbles…” Bodach waved his arms and spoke bluntly.

“Apologise!” Leylin pressed Bodach’s head down, and then smiled apologetically at the Lord’s Envoy, “My apologies… This guy has a screw loose…”

“If you don’t mind, we could discuss this further elsewhere…” The Lord’s Envoy pointed away. The natives and citizens of Maxi were currently frozen stiff, especially a few beings with golden olive wreaths on their heads that seemed to be members of the government.

“Sure!” Leylin nodded, and then pointed at Cabadole, “I have some connections to his ancestor…”

There was nothing else that needed to be said. He was sure that she would handle this matter well. After all, the goodwill of another existence of laws for something so trivial would definitely be worth it.

As he watched Leylin and three others depart, Cabadole’s mouth was wide open. He was at a loss of what to say, but the hint of flattery and reverence in the eyes of the citizens surrounding him told him that things would definitely be settled now.
The boundless skies shattered to reveal a huge hole, allowing one to see some large stars and bands of light. Leylin, Bodach and the Lord’s Envoy stood side by side, enjoying this broken scenery.

“When Dreamscape Origin Force weakens, the entire world descends into stillness…” The envoy’s face showed hints of sorrow before she looked towards Bodach, “I see a tracking curse on your body from Salilus… And the shine of suolo gems…” Bodach’s expression froze, and then he tried to speak up for himself. “Uh… haha… you must have gotten something wrong. I’m such an honest dragon… Why would I steal something that belongs to someone else… Haha…”

“You’ve got the wrong impression. I don’t really have any dealings with Salilus. On the contrary, there are some conflicts between us…” The young lady’s voice was like a silver bell, pleasant to the ear. The clear look in her eyes made it seem like she knew everything.

With this gaze on him, even the one-eyed dragon lowered his head, ashamed. “In that case… that’s great!”

It had to be said that there were few people Leylin had met who were as thick-skinned as Bodach was. “Hehe…” Even the dream demon was evidently entertained by how shameless he was, and the girl that she had possessed pursed her lips and began to smile.
“I just want to remind you that Salilus’ poison curse is the most vile in the entire universe. In order to obtain enough malicious intent, he even pushed a small plane into the Plains of Despair… Just to absorb the hatred arising near the death of a continent…” Leylin’s expression changed. The astral plane had a few large worlds in it. Planes were a rank lower than worlds, but even then they were still as large as entire continents, with populations of tens or even a hundred million. Destroying a plane just to obtain the hatred and malicious intent was something that would do more than just raise people’s hackles.

‘Or has he gone mad or turned chaotic?’ While Leylin wasn’t a good person in any way, he suddenly felt that like he had an actual bottom line, something better than those beings.

“With the vengeful energy from millions of life forms, as well as Salilus’ own powers of disaster, the curse formed isn’t something that the Yosi Blood Hoop on your head can suppress…” “So this thing is a Yosi Blood Hoop? Doesn’t seem to be that useful…” Bodach discontentedly prodded at the silver hoop on his head and complained.

“Shut up and don’t move it, you idiot!” Leylin’s expression changed, watching as Bodach took the hoop that had been on his head down curiously.

*Wooh!* In that moment, the Yosi Blood Hoop revealed a piercing red light. Blood vessels wriggled as a piercing female shriek resounded. The blood-red luster became more exuberant till the whole hoop exploded, creating a tiny poof and only leaving behind silver ashes.

“What the… heck… what’s going on?” The one-eyed dragon gaped at the silver granules in his hand and cursed.

“Found You!” A powerful conscient exploded from the purple eyeball behind him, accompanied by a chilling evil and bloodlust.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* The curse that Leylin had under his control
burst forth as the purple eyes exploded one by one. Yellow pus flew everywhere, causing Bodach to cry in misery. This liquid fell into the surrounding areas, and even more tiny purple eyes appeared as they began to cover the dragon’s entire body. Leylin could sense a powerful soul aura locking onto Bodach completely, an aura unique to Lords of Calamity awakening…

Still in the north, but south of the dream demon’s territory. Within a region of calamity.

“You wretched, despicable little thief, Salilus has finally found you!” Snow fell with immense destructive power, but it could do nothing against a large ice crystal at the centre of this place. The ice sizzled sharply and melted down, emitting dazzling lights as runic chains broke apart.

Howls resonated as the large ice crystal exploded, and an enormous body jumped out, disappearing into the clouds and quickly heading towards the dream demon’s territory.

“Wha-wha-wha- what are we going to do?” Bodach clutched his head with both hands, barely keeping the urge to tear off his own flesh at bay while staring at Leylin pitifully.

‘Hmm? No… No matter how careless Bodach might be, he still prioritises his own safety. At the very least, there had not been any mishaps in the journey before, so why would there be issues now? ‘The only change is that we now have a Lord of Calamity by our sides, and it’s the dream demon with strange abilities…’

With a thought, Leylin quickly had a feeling that something was off.

[Beep! Soul enchantment found, searching for source of contamination.] the A.I. Chip’s voice sounded. The atomic microscope revealed a layer of mysterious powder floating in the air, centred around the dream demon.

“Damn it, it really is you! Without my Nightmare Absorbing Physique, I’d probably be caught in your magic as well…”
Annoyed, Leylin began to move the Nightmare Bloodline within him and dissolved all of the powder that had entered his body, quickly feeling his mind clear.

“An astounding illusory ability. Seems like the anger in my heart was also induced by the powder… As expected of a demon that manipulates dreams and illusions!” A series of thoughts flashed in his mind, but Leylin was on the surface still berating Bodach furiously. His gaze fell on the dream demon, and he put his guard up.

“Don’t worry. Like I told you, I share enmity with Salilus, so I won’t let him into my territory. We can team up to deal with him together…”

Seeing the anger in Leylin’s eyes, the lady was soon elated. She then saw the vigilance in his eyes. This was very normal. All existences of laws had to be on their guard when attacked by the Lords of Calamity in Dreamscape, which was why she said what she did.

As she spoke, Leylin noticed the microscopic powder in the air ripple slightly, enchanting the soul slightly and affecting one’s judgement. Bodach, for instance, kept nodding.

Upon seeing this, she dealt another blow, “Mm. If we defeat or seal him, then the curse on my Lord’s friend here will be taken care of.” “Agree to it, Leylin. Agree to it!” Bodach kept nodding like a chick pecking at grains of rice, and the soul undulations became more vigorous.

“But of course, I agree…” Leylin seemed to be taken with the idea and, after seeing her delight, could not help but take several steps closer, fine soul powder rippling on his body. All of a sudden, his eyes flashed.

“I agree to nothing!” he exclaimed, and a loud hiss resounded as a tremendous phantom Targaryen appeared behind Leylin. The serpent extended its terrifying mouth, biting down on the dream
demon.
Leylin had acted exquisitely, covering his actions with his control of laws. This way, he’d managed to deceive this Lord of Calamity. The sudden trouble caused shock and astonishment to arise in the dream demon’s eyes, causing Leylin to feel good once more.
*Ka-cha!* The mouth of the snake, formed with the laws of devouring, bit down, causing even space to disappear into nothingness. Everything was taken in and transformed, turned into Leylin’s own energy.
While the young lady that had become the Lord’s Envoy was a product of the dream demon devouring a truesoul but not its dreams, she was still a normal person. Her transformation had been recent, and there was nothing she could do to evade Leylin. She immediately melted away into boundless darkness, leaving behind a conscient emitting light.
“You destroyed a part of me!” Great anger emerged from the conscient, and the entire land seemed to roar as well. All the natives living on it immediately knelt and began to pray.
*Bang! Bang! Bang!* A native who was praying for the Lord to calm his anger had his brain exploded, and a point of light flew out of his brain followed by many others. The numerous points of light gathered on the ground, seemingly glued together.
Having obtained so many motes of light, the Lord of Calamity began to tremble. A strange aura of life awakened in the land, accompanied by the surging conscient of a rank 8.
“She’s desperate enough now to forcefully unseal herself?” Leylin had a teasing smile on his face. The other party was still sealed, and the weakened dreamforce was now his best helper.
“Unfortunately, it’s too late!” Leylin sighed slightly, red light flashing in his eyes. The bit of the conscient in the air exploded noiselessly, and numerous memories and fragmented comprehensions of laws leaked out.
The result of having a portion of one’s conscient destroyed was terrifying. The entire territory began to roar, volcanos erupting as earthquakes occurred. The ground cracked apart as a large hand made of lava arose, covering all else.

“She isn’t really injured, and her aura only weakened slightly… Seems like she’d only awakened a small part of her conscient.”

Leylin spoke with pity in his tone, turning into a dark arrow that pierced through the large palm in the air. With the dazed Bodach in tow, he fumbled a little in the air as he disappeared. Tens of seconds after Leylin disappeared, a great number of moths filled the area to form the large face of a woman. She gazed in the direction that Leylin had left, her eyes full of hatred. Seeing the destructive snow falling suddenly, fear surfaced in her eyes as she quickly disappeared.

Everything calmed down once more.
Destructive snow was a limitation Dreamscape had set up for the sealed Lords of Calamity. It was a shackle that imprisoned them. Most of the time, the lords relied on layers of powerful seals to protect themselves. The moment they were unsealed, they would have to face the destructive snow head on and be weakened. This was from both the origin of the soul and from the World Origin Force. No Lord could handle being weakened like this, which was why they were always in sealed states, unless there were special circumstances. The large female face exploded, leaving behind another little girl. Her eyes were muddied, and she also had a white moth on her head. However, she was smaller than the one before. Once the dream demon quieted down, the destructive snow also weakened until it was bearable. “Damn it… How did that Magus get away from my soul powder…” The dream demon’s avatar looked confused, and she transmitted some information. “Hm? Dream demon… You’ve found the thief who stole from my treasure trove?” Tens of minutes later, a terrifying amount of pressure formed as a large tornado moved towards the dream demon. Powerful destructive snow hovered around this tornado, eliminating the ice, the rocks, and all forms of life.
The one who had spoken was a steel knight over a hundred metres tall. He wore ice-blue armour, and on his chest was a striking, gigantic rune in the shape of a cross. With his face covered by a helmet, it was difficult to see his expression. Only an inquiring red light seemed to shoot out, the evil gaze seemingly bringing disaster. Endless black clouds revolved over this person’s head. Terrifying destructive snow fell, to the point that even the dream demon’s avatar had to retreat a distance. Everything under his waist was hidden in the great tornado, vaguely revealing huge blocks of ice. The terrifying tornado whistled, combining with the destructive snow.

The powerful law of calamity as well as a malicious might of vengeance formed more than a hundred million faces around the tornado, all of them crying. This was the Lord of Calamity Salilus, a rank 8 existence! He’d grasped many laws like calamity and hatred. This evil god that made numerous worlds weep had now descended with his main body!

“Long time no see, Salilus…” The dream demon smiled as she greeted him, “Looks like you really detest him, to the point that you’ve moved your true body!”

“He’s stolen one of my suolo gems! Without it, my main body will need ten thousand years to recuperate after a disaster!” Salilus sounded hoarse, like the sounds of numerous crows squawking together. His voice had a strange ability to turn one’s stomach, hiding extreme anger within it.

“That damned thief! I want to send him to the Plains of Despair and seal his true soul, and then slowly skin him for ten thousand years!”

“I’ve obtained information about the thief. He also has a rank 7 Magus helping him, so you have to be careful…” The dream demon in the form of a young girl raised a finger, and a moth flew...
up to Salilus. The Lord of Calamity swallowed it. Through this strange exchange, Salilus immediately obtained footage of Bodach, and Leylin next to him.

“Just two newly-advanced rank 7s? I can destroy their truesouls with just one hand!” Salilus shook his head nonchalantly, and then looked at the dream demon, “In all my memory, you’ve never been so kind-hearted…”

“Hehe… he’s also harmed my avatar and even caused me to lose a portion of my conscient…” A trace of paleness could be seen on her face.

“That’s true… your strength relies more on charm. While even a rank 8 existence might be unwittingly caught in your trap, once the other party has their guard up…” Salilus smiled as he spoke, controlling the tornado into chasing the direction of his imprint.

All the land here had been merged with the dream demon’s body, making her detection ability terrifying. As a result, the girl could determine that Salilus had truly left after a moment. She watched the direction that he had left in, a strange smile on her face.

“Relies more on charm?” Although the dream demon wasn’t acknowledged for combat power amongst the Lords of Calamity, she had been their longest survivor. Her origins traced all the way back to the ancient Final War! How could someone of this level of strength have weaknesses and be seen through easily?

While the other lords believed that the Dream Demon’s abilities were charm and sealing, this was actually not the case. What she was most proficient in was actually sensing souls!

‘Disregarding that one-eyed dragon, the young Magus is giving me an evil and dangerous impression. That’s not because of a Warlock’s bloodline ability, but… it’s like we’re mortal enemies…’ The girl’s eyes were serious as she recalled this dangerous Magus.

She and Salilus were, in reality, not on good terms. There was no point in offending two existences of laws for him. However, after
taking one look at Leylin, her innate soul senses told her that he was extremely dangerous. It seemed like he would become a mortal foe.
For this reason, the young girl had tested him out right after meeting him.
“He isn’t afraid of my soul powder at all… And this doesn’t even seem to be the limits of his abilities…” The young girl bit at her lips, her delicate eyebrows furrowing and exuding a heart-breaking charm. It was because of this danger that she’d abandoned all intent to pursue them.
“Forget it… That stupid Salilus will be right at the frontlines if anything goes wrong… Let me see how many cards that Magus has up his sleeve.” A sparkling moth’s body trembled, producing a puff of dazzling powder, and the entire body disappeared as the dream demon secretly followed Salilus.

……

“Damn it, Leylin! Are you crazy? Why did you attack our ally?” Bodach’s huge body was tossed by Leylin onto the ground, causing dust to fly everywhere while he yelled and shook his head.
“You’re the one who’s gone crazy! Aren’t you clear-headed yet?” Leylin glanced at Bodach, suddenly punching his face using a fist covered in blood-red flames.  
*Bang!* Bodach immediately fell backwards like an artillery shell, breaking through several tall and hard mountain peaks.
“Damn it… You dare to hit my handsome face. I will fight you to the death… Ugh…” Bodach shook his head, spitting blood out that stained his teeth. Of course, much more soul powder was spat out. He was first cursing everywhere and almost transformed back into his original body, but his expression soon changed. Fury turned into puzzlement, and then slight fear! Soul powder that
could affect the truesoul directly was better than any illusory spells. It was something that even existences of laws found difficult to resist!

“That darned moth actually tried to control me, One-eyed Dragon Bodach, the prophet of the Ultron World and great scholar… I, who’ve travelled through numerous worlds and left behind numerous treasured legends was almost controlled?”

*Roar!* Bodach yelled. The fear had been replaced by rage once more.

For these existences of laws, small injuries were just losses of energy. With their limitless time, They could be healed, which was why this was no issue. However… the moment someone tried to interfere with their free will or even enslave them, what would be left was endless hatred!

“Dreamscape’s Dream Demon Lord! I’ll remember this!” Bodach hatefully spat out some white air, but wasn’t foolish enough to say that he’d immediately return. Evidently, he still retained some reason.

He was a rank 7, while the other party was rank 8. On top of that… he still had a curse on him, and was now being pursued by another Lord of Calamity.

“Leylin, I’m sorry!” At this point, Bodach obviously knew that Leylin was his true ally, and he could not offend him. This was especially when there were many things he needed to trouble Leylin with.

“Hmph… Awake now?” Leylin snorted, but found this situation strange.

‘That dream demon is acting so strangely. She doesn’t know us, but she suddenly attacked. And still, she didn’t pursue us either. Did she notice something?’ Her strange behaviour caused Leylin to think up all sorts of possibilities.

However, he was interrupted by a prompt from the A.I. Chip.
[Beep! Host’s devouring talent has been used. Completely digested conscient of law. Host has obtained partial information regarding the law of ‘charm’. Host has obtained partial law of ‘illusion’. Host’s illusion proficiency has been strengthened.]

Using his law of devouring, Leylin could absorb the powers of existences of laws, turning them into his own comprehension.

‘Unfortunately… Even a rank 7 who has evolved can’t obtain more from those existences of laws. If I were to use the A.I. Chip’s terms, I haven’t even obtained 1% of the law. That’s even worse than the World of Gods…’ Leylin sighed.

There were obviously some things lost during the conversion of laws, but for Leylin, this was so low it was rage-inducing.

Although that was just a portion of the dream demon’s conscient, if this was a god in the World of Gods he wouldn’t have had trouble in forming a thread of divinity. The difference was more than tenfold!

‘Even with my devouring law I’m in this situation. Things would be even worse for other existences of laws. Then again, if everyone can advance so rapidly, the Magus World doesn’t need to send people over. It can just fight and devour as well as annihilate itself… Only the World of Gods can be the true hunting grounds of Magi.’

Unlike how hard it was for Magi to comprehend laws the divine laws in the World of Gods were easy to acquire. They were learned quite quickly, so much so that devouring a god could allow one to obtain the complete comprehension of a law! That was the reason Magi were crazy over them!
W
ith the attraction of the two World Origin Forces, and such immense benefits, it’s no wonder the ancient Final War was so intense…” Leylin sighed inside. Had he been the one who’d found a world where he could absorb the comprehension of laws by killing deities, he’d have gone crazy as well. The fall of other Magi and the suffering of the commoners was nothing in comparison.

The reason why divine laws convert so easily… Is it because of the origin forces being compatible, or do they complete each other?” At this point, Leylin was now beginning to believe the rumours more and more. When victory was decided between the World of Gods and the Magus World, the victor would devour the loser’s path to power to open the path to eternity!

‘It’s also possible that the Magus World and World of Gods were a single body in ancient times,’ Leylin guessed.

One had to consider why the rumours that gave rise to the ancient Final War spread so widely. The ancient Magi of laws and gods were no fools, and they would not do something without benefit.

‘Unfortunately… The Magi miscalculated how difficult the gods would be to deal with. With the mysteriousness of divine kingdoms, the result was that both sides suffered and there were no winners, and it brought about the end of the glamour of the ancient times…”

Leylin’s eyes glinted as he clenched his fists, ‘But the Final War that
I shall cause will not go down the same path. The road to eternity is mine and mine alone!’

Leylin had previously been ordinary, able to keep a low profile. But when this epic universe held a hope for immortality, no restraints and limitations would hinder his goal any longer. He would pay no heed to those who didn’t block his path, but when conflict arose he would attack to destroy, regardless of who it was!

[Beep! Captured conscient of existence of laws. Similarity to dead body cells: 100%. Beginning revitalising…] the A.I. Chip prompted at this moment.

‘A living specimen of the dream demon?’ Leylin smiled slightly. The dream demon’s humongous body had merged with this land, so it was naturally possible to obtain her cells anywhere. However research had shown that the shell left behind was but a pile of nutrition, devoid of laws. Only with the body and conscient together could a real living specimen be obtained.

As he had been afraid of the dream demon, he had not laid a hand on the regular people with her parasites. However, after she had become hostile, Leylin no longer had any reservations. The A.I. Chip quickly gave him good news.

[Revitalisation successful. Host has obtained sample of Dreamscape existence of law. Rate of analysis of World Origin Force quickened by 27%.]

‘There are differences between various existences of laws. Another sample will get here soon…’

Blood red light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and a red line opened up between his brows as a strange twisting force rippled in the air.

“Oh! Oh no… it’s Salilus! I sense that he’s closing in…” At the other side, Bodach began to cry out pitifully.

The purple eyeballs on his body seemed to have sensed that their original owner was arriving, and they all began to wriggle about in a craze. They then exploded one after the other, causing Bodach to
cry out.
“Hmph, shut up!” Leylin turned back, the red line between his brows opening slightly.
*Rustle!* Something strange happened then. The purple eyes on Bodach seemed to be frightened by something, and abruptly shrank back. Bodach’s cries quieted, and he watched Leylin with disbelief.
“This…”
“Quiet. Don’t you want to remove the curse?” After activating the Nightmare Absorption bloodline, Leylin was akin to a king in Dreamscape. Dreamscape Origin Force was now hovering around him at all times, causing Bodach to unknowingly close his mouth.
“Return to where you came from!” Leylin chanted in an ancient tone. Threads of Dreamscape Origin Force descended, forming blazing red runes that disappeared into Bodach’s skin. The purple eyes quickly retreated due to these runes, eventually forming an exquisite purple eye sealed by a ring of fiery red on his back.
“That- that’s it?” Bodach waved his arms around, looking stunned. A curse formed of malicious intent from a Lord of Calamity who massacred hundreds of millions of living souls was sealed so easily?
The whole process was simple, to the point that Bodach felt he was dreaming.
Upon seeing this, Leylin nodded slightly, suddenly coming to an understanding. ‘As expected… I guessed right. As long as it uses dreamforce as a base, anything can be suppressed by my Nightmare Absorbing Physique!’
Even if it was a Lord of Calamity with powerful laws of calamity, if he was still in essence a being of Dreamscape he would have to survive using Dreamscape Origin Force. That would mean that he could be suppressed by Leylin’s bloodline ability.
“This suppression seems quite terrifying…” Leylin looked at the World Origin Force hovering around him, and the slight attention
from the World Will. ‘If this were a rank 8 existence from another world, even though I might be confident in defeating them in Dreamscape chances are they’d escape. However, if it’s a Lord of Calamity… They probably won’t even get a chance to escape… It seems like this is the world’s wish! Hm? Wait!’

Leylin’s eyes went as wide as saucers, feeling like he had grasped something crucial in that moment. There was no hatred nor love without reason in the world. Giving birth to the Nightmare Absorbing Body must have been an act of Dreamscape itself, which made the goal in doing this rather interesting.

Inducing the formation of a bloodline and investing so much origin force and care required a huge amount of effort.

“Hah…” At this every moment, a ravaging tornado appeared in the horizon, large amounts of destructive snow overhead as it hastened in their direction.

“Leylin… Sire! He’s here!” Bodach changed the way he addressed Leylin and placed himself below the Warlock.

“Great timing! I just had a thought I need to confirm.” Leylin nodded, while also very satisfied with how Bodach was acting. His actions seemed to have tamed the dragon a bit.

“Huh? But he’s a rank 8 Lord of Calamity. Are you going to attack him?” Bodach couldn’t believe what Leylin implied.

“Of course! Do you have any objections?” Intricate dark red patterns appeared on Leylin’s body. Powerful bloodline energy surged forth, revealing a boundless aura that seemed to echo within the entirety of Dreamscape.

After seeing this, Bodach shook his head like a rattle-drum. He could sense that Leylin right now was more terrifying than that Lord of Calamity!

Besides, he was the one who had provoked Salilus, and Leylin was technically helping him. Most importantly… Bodach took a look at the seal on his back and the purple eyeball that had been torturing
him.
Leylin had merely made a seal but not completely removed it. While things did not seem troublesome now, Bodach did not dare believe Leylin had not done anything else to him. It was already terrifying enough to offend one Lord of Calamity, but another? This…
“Damn it! I’ll go all out! Roar…” Having found determination, Bodach’s body exploded into yellow smoke, forming a large one-eyed dragon. Leylin stood atop its head.
With a draconic aura that far surpassed normal dragons, and a strength that could freeze time itself, Bodach spread out his wings that could span the heavens as he exhibited might that only beings of laws possessed. He bared sharp teeth at the attacking Lord of Calamity, “Salilus!”
Two rank 7 existences from varying worlds, as well as a rank 8 Lord of Calamity from this world, quickly began an intense battle!
*Roar!* Bodach raised his head, taking a deep breath through two nostrils…
*Whoosh!* The sand on the ground abruptly floated into the sky, and all of a sudden it was as if two large black holes had appeared. When Bodach inhaled, practically half the air in the continent was absorbed by him, forming a gigantic vacuum.
*Boom!* The air was compressed to the limits in the one-eyed dragon’s lungs, turned into something like two white streams of air that penetrated through space and hurtled in Salilus’ direction.
“Not bad! As you are right now, you barely have the power of a rank 7 existence!” Leylin nodded in praise. If this was in the Magus World, that breath would have consigned half the natives to death by suffocation. Even rank 1 or 2 Magi would not be spared.
Thankfully, this was Dreamscape, where the land was vast and boundless and in a still state. Besides the dream demon’s territory, there weren’t many living beings here, which was why things were
not so disastrous. The air cannon that had been compressed to the extreme hit Salilus straight on, while this Lord of Calamity immediately bellowed, “You thief! You dare attack me?” “I am the master of calamity!” In the moment that the attack hit him, Salilus exhibited the true strength of a Lord of Calamity. A boundless snowstorm formed a strange phantom centaur behind him, roaring quickly in the ancient Byron language. Powerful dreamforce gathered at his hands, forming a large black hatchet with a human face etched on the surface. “Die!” He struck down with the hatchet, and a black flash of light passed. *Bang! Bang!* The air clashed with the black lines, forming boundless distortions. Large areas of Dreamscape were destroyed, and terrifying explosions resounded soon after.
Rumble! The air cracked, and the ground trembled. The very world tremored in the face of a battle between two existences of laws.

*Hsss! Tinkle! Chi!* An energy undulation rippled out, and in that moment all the Lords of Calamity in Dreamscape awoke from their sealed slumbers. They emitted powerful radiation that protected their own territories. The Dream Demon Lord, in particular, had countless moths cover the sky in layer upon layer that quickly fell. Her armies paid great casualties to block most of the stray energy, multi-coloured lights mixing with the air and meteor fragments to stop everything else.

*Pu! Pu!* All of a sudden, a thin black thread shot through the region and arrived in front of Bodach. The dragon scales that the one-eyed dragon prided himself on so much had no effect as they were pierced through, and dragon blood appeared. A layer of tiny black dots began to surround the injury, spreading outwards with the powerful might of calamity.

“Despicable thief, you will pay for your sins today!” Salilus’ figure burst out from the smoke, his sparkling armour showing no damage. This already showed who was winning right now.

“As expected of a rank 8 Lord of Calamity.” Leylin also made his move at this moment. He gathered dreamforce as well, forming a thin red layer that covered the dragon’s wounds and suppressed the power of calamity.
“You’re…” Salilus halted, glancing at the Magus on the one-eyed dragon’s head with serious red eyes. Leylin’s robes rustled in the wind from the stray rays of the explosion, and traces of dreamforce still lingered around him. The giant that was a hundred metres tall had not noticed this tiny thing at all before, but once Leylin stood out, he seemed to have turned into the heart of everything! Salilus’ gaze unconsciously focused on him.

“Magus… no! Bloodline Warlock!” Salilus stopped moving, the large black hatchet in his hands appearing protectively in front of him, “Your bloodline ability has unique characteristics of Dreamscape…”

The dreamforce surging out of Leylin’s body was making him feel unsettled, as if he had met a natural enemy. Memories from ancient times were sealed within his blood and genes, and now they were emerging. Yet, these memories were being covered by something, giving rise to a depression that made Salilus want to cough blood up in anger.

‘A Lord of Calamity, a rank 8 existence!’ Leylin focused on his enemy. This could be the most powerful being he’d ever fought. When he’d fought the Snake Dowager and the rest in the Purgatory World, he’d had the advantage of being in the right place at the right time. Leylin currently did not have that luxury, he would have to rely on his own strength!

‘Of course, my bloodline ability from the Nightmare King is a trump card.’ Without that as an insurance, Leylin would have prudently avoided making a move here. He currently needed a Lord of Calamity as a guinea pig so he could confirm some suspicions, if not he definitely wouldn’t have stopped here and waited for Salilus to arrive.

‘Good timing…. Let me see the differences in a bloodline Warlock after rank 7!’ The figure of a looped snake was reflected in Leylin’s
eyes. Purplish-red bloodline force surged out, and torrential
strength seemed to make contact with several large worlds. The
power of numerous blood descendants was transmitted over to
him.
Having broken away from the Snake Dowager, Leylin had become
the progenitor of a new bloodline. He had a bunch of bloodline
abilities he could use.
*Hss!* Boundless bloodline energy formed a phantom Targaryen
that soured through the skies. The large winged serpent suddenly
pounced forward, savage and dominant like a tyrant hunting for
prey. It took a good bite out of the centaur, dragging it all the way
to the astral river.
The auric phantom forms of these two beings of laws began a huge
war in the starry skies, causing great energy undulations that
destroyed numerous planets.
“Have I been asleep for too long? Since when could mere rank 7s
challenge me?” Salilus roared, the black hatchet in his hands
instantly turning into a streak of light aimed straight at Leylin.
“I am a Lord of Calamity!” Numerous malicious spirits were pulled
out of thin air, forming distorted figures that surrounded the
incoming black light. These faces wailed, their eyes filled with tears
of blood. A black mask in the shape of a crying face solidified in
the air, forming a strange mark of calamity.
“The moment he brazenly releases all his might, this land is
completely done for…” Leylin noticed what Salilus was doing, rather
surprised.
Based on normal logic, rank 7 existences like them could cause
immense damage to their environments with a single move. Battles
would be avoided at all costs. However, this Lord of Calamity
seemed to be having none of that. He had no qualms in his strikes,
caring naught for the consequences of his actions.
“If you do this, aren’t you afraid of the World Will interfering?”
Leylin berated. At the same time, numerous crimson shields spread in the skies, seemingly indestructible.

“Bloodline Shield!” PURPLISH-RED light reflected off the metallic lustre of these shields. Many vortices formed, like countless huge mouths waiting for their prey. The combination of rank 7 bloodline energy and the law of devouring created a powerful defence.
When the devouring shield clashed with the blade, numerous vortices rapidly spun around to absorb the power of calamity from the hatchet. Horrifying crunches sounded out as the shield surrounded the hatchet, acting like a huge mouth doing all it could to digest the object.

“What’s a World Will to me?” Salilus laughed maniacally. His views seemed to be different from those of the Magi, as red light gained in intensity on his helmet.

“Break!” A great rumble resounded as the numerous crimson shields shattered. While the law of devouring was exceptional, it was currently put up against a rank 8 being. The burden being too great, it could hold on no longer.

Once the bloodline shields were eliminated, the hatchet of calamity also seemed to have used up all its strength. It gradually disappeared.

“Warlock, I admit that your power is not bad amongst rank 7s. No… Of the worlds I have travelled to, your ability is at the top. But so what? Can your law of devouring overpower mine?” Salilus chuckled madly, a black knight’s halberd appearing in his hands. The spearpoint blazed with terrifying flames, while the battleaxe glinted with light. The sharp teeth on its side seemed chilling, able to pierce through the void itself as great power of laws lingered around it.

“It’ll be difficult to fight the accumulated strength of a rank 8 existence, especially if he doesn’t just use the law of calamity… But then again, if he can even say something like “What’s the World
Will to me,” it seems like the path they walk goes against the World Will.’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with understanding. This was actually rather easy to comprehend. Which other world forced their beings of law to this point, causing them to seal themselves in and reduce their energy consumption, unable to escape? One would have to oppose the World Will to warrant such treatment.

‘It might also be due to the unique environment here, leaving them with no choice.’ Leylin now felt like he had a better understanding of Dreamscape now.

*Lulu!* At this moment, a victor had been decided between the giant snake and the centaur. The tall centaur roared, ruthlessly kicking at the neck of the Targaryen. The winged serpent also opened its mouth, leaving behind an injury that allowed one to see bone at the centaur’s chest. The Targaryen disappeared unwillingly amidst its last struggles, leaving behind a centaur with injuries all over it. It thundered out, “sksklgnlsdgnl!” the words translating to ‘I am the king of calamity!’

“You’ve seen it, haven’t you? Your power loses completely to mine,” Salilus raised his head proudly, “Admit defeat, and I can consider letting you go.”

“Unfortunately, you and I both know that’s impossible!” Leylin answered nonchalantly, caressing a cross blade that appeared in his hand. The weapon blazed with crimson light. If he’d planned on peace from the start, Leylin would at least have forced Bodach to hand over the suolo gem, seeing if it was possible to calm the fury in the Lord of Calamity’s heart. Instead he’d attacked at the very beginning, which meant he wasn’t going to be benevolent.

“Don’t forget me, the gem thief from the boundless world, one-eyed dragon Bodach!” The one-eyed dragon Leylin had mounted
flapped his wings, snorting out a terrifying dragon breath. In normal worlds this breath alone could render entire species extinct, but things were fine here.

As the three beings of laws went all out in their attacks, the surroundings were completely destroyed. The space around them grew disordered, and the ground disappeared into grey fog of primal chaos.

Large amounts of the power of laws spread everywhere in this region, the horrifying radiation destined to make this a dangerous land of Dreamscape.

Once the dragon breath was launched, Bodach’s mountainous body pounced agilely towards Salilus, forming a straight white line in the vacuum.

“Keke… coward, you’ve finally gotten the courage to face me?” Salilus chuckled madly, the blizzard above his body becoming more concentrated.

“Unfortunately, that’s all useless!” He leant over and aimed at the one-eyed dragon charging over… *Boom!*
With Bodach himself having a terrifying body at rank 7, this explosion was massively powerful. Simply put, such a strike aimed at the Magus World would likely be a disaster on the level of an asteroid hitting the earth. The entire surface would be decimated, and perhaps even the subterranean world would be affected!

However, Bodach was surprised to see Salilus grip his wings with both hands, the Lord of Calamity’s large body as sturdy as a rock beneath a waterfall. It was like someone stopping a full speed train with their bare hands!

“Keke… that wasn’t all that powerful. It just hurt a little!” Salilus snickered, and it brought an ominous feeling. Bodach found himself sent flying, and a number of his bones cracked as he coughed out nearly an entire ocean’s worth of dragonblood.

“Is that so? Then how about this?” Making use of Bodach’s charge, Leylin had arrived in front of Salilus. He pierced the crimson sword in his hands into Salilus’ armour.

*Clang!* With Leylin’s body size, the sword in his hands wasn’t even comparable to a toothpick in Salilus’ eyes. However, this very toothpick had left a red spot on his armour.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* It was like some chain reaction had been triggered. Black cracks spread in all directions from the initial point of contact, soon covering the entire armour. Blood-red flames crackled as they broke up even that blizzard.
The dark red light caused the armour on Salilus’ body to explode inch by inch, revealing his original form.

“This… That armour is used to seal my boundless might!” Salilus thundered. Sensing immense danger, Leylin retreated without hesitation.

*Rumble!* An aura ten times more horrifying and evil than before exploded forth, causing the world to freeze for an instant. The destructive snow roared, but it could do nothing against this immense figure. The huge tornado dispersed, putting out the blood flames and revealing Salilus’ body. He had shrivelled limbs, tanned skin, and a slender body. He smelt of decay, like this was the body of someone who’d starved to death. His bones were joined by a mere layer of skin, all that kept him moving.

Yet, this body that seemed more withered than a mummy’s was emitting an exceedingly terrifying aura, showing off the true power of a rank 8! It caused Leylin to turn serious, ‘His main laws should be calamity and decay.

‘I was wondering why he looked so strange. He seemed quite frail… So that was because of that seal?’ Leylin looked at his own palm. Although it had only made contact with Salilus through the bloodline sword, a layer of old and dead skin had already appeared on his hand, losing all lustre of life.

The power of decay within his palm was the most poisonous of curses, spreading unceasingly as it mixed with the strength of calamity.

‘Most rank 7 existences would find great trouble just dealing with this contamination…’ Leylin clenched his fists, and purplish-red flames emerged to burn the dead skin to nothingness. New vibrant skin grew out from the flames.

……
“Hehe… Salilus is truly angry now! That’s good. Let me see what trump card you have then, Magus…” A moth with colourful phosphorus powder on it appeared in the distance, carrying the conscient of the dream demon, “The anger of a rank 8 Lord of Calamity is not so easily calmed…” Soul powder filled the area, carrying a special power of laws that prevented the moth from being affected by the battle. However, at this moment, Salilus’ withered sole red eye gazed in her direction, bringing with it immense hatred, “Scram!” “Salilus… your improvement exceeded my expectations…” The moth emitted faint undulations from the conscient before a trace of decay rotted it into ashes. Such was the true might of a rank 8 existence,. The charming girl within the dream demon’s land did not send out another scout. After all, the fury of someone on equal footing with her was troublesome, especially a berserk Lord of Calamity. A visit to her lands would leave her territory in complete shambles. And that was the situation with the rank 8 dream demon. Facing Salilus head on, Leylin was under even more pressure. “I’ve long since heard that evil gods of Dreamscape are extremely powerful beings, which is why they can sweep through numerous worlds and leave behind a resounding reputation for themselves…” Leylin could sense the space around them being frozen, as darkness, calamity, and decay gathered to form the traces of a path to power. Leylin could not help but reveal a bitter smile. “An evil god, a Lord of Calamity of Dreamscape, definitely surpasses the dignitaries from the Purgatory World when unsealed…” This was Leylin’s newest estimation. Rank 7 existences of laws could contend with Lords of Calamity for a moment, but would fall eventually. Even their truesouls would rot away.
“I am the master of disaster, holder of the power of decay! At the end, all beings will wither away in the river of space and time…” Salilus chanted hoarsely with his dry throat, a terrifying bony hand grabbing forth in Leylin’s direction. “Decay!” “Disaster!” “Terror!” Streaks of the power of several laws appeared to form malicious claws by Leylin’s side. These claws seemed to sing praises of Salilus, chanting along. This was the power of faith Salilus had gathered from fear. Leylin didn’t doubt in the least that, with these accumulations, Salilus could become an intermediate god in the World of Gods in one go! *Grr!* In the face of the attack of a rank 8 existence, Bodach’s snarls seemed exceedingly weak. His opponent had no need to focus on him, a mere sweep of remnant power able to injure him seriously once more. The huge dragon was filled with traces of decay, not knowing where to go. “Disaster!” “Decay!” Two streaks of Salilus’ most powerful laws formed a strength akin to primal chaos within those large claws, whittling away the law of devouring on Leylin’s body. Once this final layer of protection had disappeared, Leylin would die in both body and soul! It was obvious that Salilus’ hatred of Leylin in that moment exceeded that towards Bodach. “As expected, as I am now it’ll be too difficult to go against a rank 8 without any help…” Leylin sighed. This test told him of the limits of his own strength. Although he was amongst the top of rank 7s, he was still lacking when compared to rank 8s. ‘If I didn’t have something to fall back on, I would only be able to escape, being grievously injured and finding it difficult to recuperate. Thankfully…’ Leylin rubbed at his forehead. A red line slowly cracked open there, revealing a dark red vertical eye!
“Damn it, it’s this feeling again! It’s this feeling full of mortal danger! Like I’m meeting a mortal foe! Who is it that can give a Lord of Calamity the premonition that they will bring death?” Seeing Leylin being surrounded by the huge devilish claws, Salilus had no trace of elation on his expression. On the contrary, his dried out and malicious face was filled with madness. The feeling of mortal malady that he’d felt today had caused him to enter the peak of his power without reservation. However, be it that wretched dragon or the rank 7 Warlock, they were both ants in front him, one merely a little bigger than the other. Now, however, his keen truesoul of laws was trembling, the feeling of danger intensifying tenfold. This hinted at the attack of something dangerous.

“Who exactly is it?” A sharp cry immediately pierced through the skies.

*Rumble!* *Bang!* As if in answer to his snarls, the devilish claw formed of laws exploded, revealing Leylin’s figure.

*Buzz…* The surroundings that had been ravaged by the battle, but dense black clouds suddenly gathered in the skies. It covered the lustre of the astral plane and the other worlds, the destructive snow intensifying in its power tenfold. The entire Dreamscape seemed to awaken in this moment, placing its powerful focus on this area.

“The World Will. Did you think I’d be afraid?” Large amounts of dense black smoke rose from Salilus’ body, forming a strange screen that blocked the destructive snow. Dreamscape’s World Will did not react at all, like a supreme master watching silently from above for eternity.

The Dreamscape Origin Force that had been weak suddenly surged in strength, yet it didn’t answer Salilus’ summons as it gushed in another direction.
“The Warlock from before! It’s you!” Salilus’ withered eyes suddenly opened, seeing the figure walking out of the ocean of origin force. He would never have imagined that the World Origin Force would favour this Warlock more than it did a Lord of Calamity!

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Tremendous footsteps sounded as a large figure walked over slowly. He was only half a head shorter than the over hundred metres tall Salilus.
He had a perfect body, with each shimmering muscle incomparably faultless. Intricate dark red patterns filled his body, like an exquisite armour. A blood red vertical eye opened up on the faces of both the handsome being and the Warlock, bringing with it a ruthless cold will.
Most importantly, the Dreamscape Origin Force that was like a sea lingered at Leylin’s side, rolling on in waves. After being controlled by Leylin, it was extremely tame.
sea of World Origin Force surrounded Leylin, carrying Dreamscape’s will. The world seemed to abandon Salilus, instead suppressing him with ill intent.

“This…” Salilus was stumped. Very soon, remnant ancient memories and his fear of Dreamscape brought him back to his senses.

It wasn’t long before the veil of mystery was removed, “This unique power… It comes from the Nightmare King! You’ve inherited his powers… the Nightmare Absorbing Physique that even Lords of Calamity dread!”

‘Power that all sovereigns dread…’ Leylin understood this vaguely, as he accepted the faint excitement of the World Will along with the endless origin force.

“Yes! The bloodline that all lords despise! You’re dead!” Black smoke arose from Salilus’ nostrils, many contorted faces writhing within as they wailed and cried.

“The ancient Nightmare King is the fear of all the lords, nobody wishes for his return. You’re dead!” Salilus repeated deliriously, “If this news spreads, all the Lords of Calamity will gang up on you!”

“It’s useless… The World’s Will had sealed this area already, you can’t transmit any information outside anymore…” Leylin sighed, “Furthermore, I am not any weaker than you right now…”

With Dreamscape buffing his powers, the Leylin now was no different than he was back in the Purgatory World. No, he was
even stronger than before!
He was already a rank 7 Warlock. The Nightmare Absorbing Physique was extremely demonic on its own, and with the support of Dreamscape Origin Force his pure strength alone put him at rank 8. He surpassed the Lords of Calamity!
Leylin sighed, striking out suddenly. The destructive snow formed a sword in Leylin’s hand, and he slashed at Salilus. Destructive snow was a weapon Dreamscape used to weaken and punish the Lords of Calamity. Now, Leylin was merely using it to exact punishment on behalf of the heavens. “You vile gods have willfully seized the World Origin Force. I represent the heavens themselves in your annihilation!”
The snow had converged into a broadsword, the intent of annihilation gathered upon it. Leylin braced himself as he swung the sword downwards, speaking a forbidden chant by instinct. The powerful sword had repelled the black mist, allowing Leylin to see a face riddled with fear and surprise. That same instant, Leylin saw the truth of the past.
The Nightmare Absorbing Physique is the adored child of Dreamscape. However, a world would never do something so senseless, why did Dreamscape create this? That was a question Leylin had always sought the answer for, and now he’d finally got one.
What would happen if beings of laws were brazenly taking the World Origin Force without regard? The Lords of Calamity were a good example, they would be suppressed by the World’s Will and have their dreamforce weakened. Destructive snow would form a natural disaster around them, proving that the World Will wanted them dead.
Even a magnanimous World Will would be infuriated by a bunch of greedy rodents. However, beings of laws were far too powerful. Even with the suppression of the World Will through the
destructive snow, as well as the disconnect from World Origin Force, the Lords of Calamity managed to seal themselves into safety.
However, the World’s Will could not do the same. It couldn’t bear weakening itself for extended periods of time, and had to stop and revive its origin force. It gained nourishment from other worlds. To Dreamscape’s World Will, the Lords of Calamity and Evil Sovereigns were like bloodsucking parasites! Unable to bear it any longer, it gave birth to the Nightmare Absorbing Physique. In this gamble, Dreamscape did not withhold any authority or power, giving birth to an executioner to get rid of these parasites.
Hence, every Nightmare King bore the burden of purging unwanted parasites on Dreamscape, in order to protect the peace and balance. “Greed without restriction will only bring about chaos and destruction!” After he understood this point, killing intent welled within Leylin. His bloodline itself was an embodiment of these lords’ nemesis. It was do or die, there would be no negotiations between both parties.
Leylin, who wanted to use dreamforce to absorb laws, would definitely benefit after slaying a Lord of Calamity. His comprehension of laws would be boosted, and the World Will itself would give him greater authority.
“You must fall here today!” After clearly understanding his own killing intent and paving the path for his future, the power that surrounded Leylin had suddenly reached a new height!
*Rumble!* Bolts of black lightning tore the void apart, isolating everything within a cage. This lightning wanted to kill the ferocious prey within, a powerful existence that was rank 8.
“No! I am a Lord of Calamity, one who holds the power of decay! I’m near peak rank 8, how would I just perish here?” Salilus roared as he raised his bony hand and attempted to deflect the black lightning.
*Boom! Bang! Flash!* The World Origin Force roared, and turned into waves of destructive lightning that crashed down under Leylin’s control. Every bolt could severely injure a rank 7, but it had taken five to six strikes to merely shatter Salilus’ left arm. A strange black current of evil gas wrapped itself around the wound, not dissipating. Many droplets of thick yellow blood fell to the ground suddenly, giving rise to black smoke. It seemed to form a strange embodiment rather like rotten mud, and wails and screams sounded as they tried to escape.

“Hmm? Leylin’s brows furrowed, and the black lightning streaked past him and destroyed these abominations. One droplet of a rank 6 Magus could already carry independent thought and even spiritual force, not to mention rank 7 and above.

Having suffered grievously with his left arm shattered, Salilus was weakened by layers of destructive snow, his dreamforce growing feebler and feebler.

“Damn it. DAMN IT! OUT! COME OUT!” Salilus waved his stump of an arm against the lightning and snow. “Fight me openly and aboveboard! How can I, Salilus, die to such a wretched thing?”

“Stop being a fool!” Leylin’s voice rumbled throughout the sky. “A victor will always be victorious! My style of engaging enemies is to scheme and not fight with brawns. By using the smallest price in exchange for the largest benefit and outcome… Your value is meaningless against it!”

“Meaningless…? Meaningless… Meaning…” The thunderous voice reverberated across the sky amidst the black lightning and destructive snow. Salilus’ eyes had now held an even more frenzied look.

“Hehe…Meaningless?” Salilus calmed down immediately, and the atmosphere turned even more sinister. “Even so, I will demonstrate the final power that a Lord of Calamity holds…”

*Rumble! Rumble!* Warts began to appear and float on the surface
of Salilus’ skin, causing his bony body to become extremely swollen. Over time he turned ball-like, his skin stretched to its limits as it showed signs of ripping apart at any moment. The aura in the air was extremely unstable, yet it converged around Salilus’ body.

‘This shape, does it want to…’ Leylin’s expression changed. Nine chains of laws were like razor sharp blades as they pierced into Salilus’ body.

“This corrosive attack was actually prepared for my enemy, the Lord of Despair…But now…” A low growl appeared from Salilus’ body and it began to rumble louder.

*Crack! Crack!* A grey ripple began to appear on Salilus’ body before his body exploded. The iron chains which came into contact with the grey ripples began to corrode, sizzling before they turned to fine dust with the explosion.

The frightening explosion did not stop, touching the destructive snow along with the prison of black lightning.

……

“What happened?”

“Why did the World’s Will seal that area?” The many Lords and Sovereigns sent their consciences or even their avatars, but before they could exchange a few lines, a radiant flash from an explosion was leaked from the sealed area. The consciences and avatars of these existences were wiped completely due to the destruction.

“The final decay! Has Salilus gone mad?”

“Not good! Leave, quickly…”

Even those who were quick to dart away and escape were eventually caught up to by the flash of radiant light, and they could only perish after leaving behind their furious bellows.

“Lords! Save us…” The dream demon’s land was the closest to the
explosion, and received the greatest collateral damage. Sixty percent of the natives there had died in an instant. “We have to move!” The girl that the dream demon had possessed clenched her teeth. The ground began to rumble as a pair of grey wings manifested, taking her far away and deeper into the void. Opening up a certain distance, the dream demon girl looked in Salilus’ direction, her eyes filled with worry.

……

“These Lords are not easy to deal with, I can’t believe that I have to activate my own powers for the final bout!” In the heart of the explosion, the radiant rays were repelled by dark crimson runes on Leylin’s body. It cost a lot of origin force, but since he was linked with the World Will he spent it without feeling the pinch. Once the explosion rippled away, blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes. A giant figure stepped forward as the surrounding scene changed, like he was teleported to a different dimension. In it was a gigantic black skeleton.
Leylin looked at the blackened skeleton in front of him, focusing on the abyssal red flames within its eye sockets. “I told you you’d definitely perish here today,” he said slowly, as if stating a fact.

“Hahaha! Nightmare Warlock, I curse you in the name of calamity!” Black teeth clattered, sending spiritual vibrations from the depths of Salilus’ truesoul.

“You showed your final corrosive attack, but after that all you have is this feeble curse? What a disappointment…” Leylin brought his hand down against this surging curse power.

*Crash!* All the World Origin Force in Dreamscape surged violently, becoming endless destructive thunder. Powerful arcs of lightning swept across the area, exterminating all traces of the curse’s power.

*Swish! Swish!* The moment the curse was broken, Leylin and Salilus both executed their moves. The two transformed into endless glows that crossed the speed of light in their intent to kill. The entire space seemed to distort in a single moment. In a fraction of a fraction of a second, they’d exchanged hundreds of blows. Salilus’ laws of calamity and decay constructed a black skeletal structure whose rigidity far surpassed all the metals in the world. It was enough to calmly bear the indiscriminate bombing of destructive thunder as if nothing was happening.

Red runes appeared intensely around Leylin’s body, blooming with
bright light. They formed an indistinct crimson armour as the entirety of Dreamscape’s World Origin Force roared. Before Dreamscape itself was consumed, the defense of his armour would not be broken. Even if it sustained damage, it would repair itself rapidly.

*Ring! Ring! Ring!* The two reached the limits of speed in a flash, disappearing from Dreamscape to arrive at a strange place. Time and space were slightly distorted in this region, a vast glowing river of space and time flowing beneath them.

“Is this a region close to the spacetime river? Only a place such as this can withstand our wrath. It is more than suitable to serve as your burial ground…”

*Crack! Crack!* Leylin’s chest was scratched by a black skeletal finger. The crimson armour fell apart at once, but was immediately restored to its original unblemished form. Tens of strikes upon the dreamforce armour dimmed the red radiance within Salilus’ skull, and the black skeleton began to crack.

‘Fights between beings of law come down to a contest of inside information and origin force in the end, eh? It looks like I need to put making origin force weapons on my schedule…’ Leylin gravely faced his opponent.

Even though he had traded blow for blow, his consumption of origin force had reached a terrifying level. If it wasn’t for Dreamscape footing the bill, perhaps he would have exhausted all his resources already, and even his soul would have been sucked dry.

Now however, backed by the support of Dreamscape, Leylin had forced the Lord of Calamity Salilus to an impasse.

[Beep! Origin Force Imitation Weapon has been constructed. Correcting orbit!] After trading blows hundreds of times, the A.I. Chip had captured the orbit of Salilus’ movements. Dreamscape roared, and a misty green sword directly appeared within Leylin’s
grasp.
Using concentrated origin force as a weapon was not something that Leylin had envisioned, this could only be considered to be a prototype.
“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Your glory came from Dreamscape, and unto Dreamscape you shall return!” Leylin chanted in a low voice, thrusting his longsword in a strange arc.
*Clang!* In an infinitesimal moment, the green origin force longsword momentarily weaved through Salilus’ defences and pierced into the centre of his skull.
This was the main focus of Leylin’s attack. Faint cracks had long began to appear on the skeleton, but now it exploded even more violently. The clanging sound seemed to start a chain reaction, and finally the black skeleton was blown apart. Pieces of the skeleton continuously crumbled without end, becoming fine powder that was melted away by the destructive snow.
“No, how could I fall here? I, Salilus, am a Lord of Calamity, the Monarch of Decay…” After his body was finally destroyed, the red spark of a truesoul of laws emerged from the endless explosion. It was filled with the power of laws of calamity and decay.
Breaking away from its mortal shell, the truesoul of laws now became even more powerful. It suddenly burned up, its form momentarily expanding to become a star that burned with white heat.
The massive star was in upheaval, and it suddenly rushed towards the river of space and time. The vast and mighty river itself was a little attracted, emitting a strange inwards force.
“You’re already dead, your time has ended! Stay…” Leylin naturally would not allow Salilus to slip away from his grasp. In his current form, he had taken the initiative to throw himself into the spacetime river. He could perhaps accumulate energy over a few thousand years, allowing himself to revive.
A phantom Targaryen roared from behind Leylin’s back. Runes of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique appeared on the serpent’s body, melding with the laws of devouring to become a powerful black hole that extended formless shackles towards Salilus’ truesoul. “This is… The attraction of dreamforce! Damn…” The enormous truesoul star roared, numerous marks appearing within it. These were all scars left behind by using dreamforce, and all of a sudden they had broken out.

As a native of Dreamscape, Salilus fundamentally did not have the ability to resist the attraction of Leylin’s ability. At the brink of the spacetime river, a strange scene appeared. An incandescent star unwillingly changed its marks, slowly retreating away. A roaring figure faintly appeared at its centre.

The powerful starlight was continuously swallowed up by the black hole, turning a tunnel of distorted light. In the end, that phantom of a truesoul was swallowed whole by the black hole that was many times smaller than it, and not even one ray of light had escaped.

“Ah…” The dark crimson runes on Leylin’s body began to squirm, dripping off like melted metal. His skin split apart as his body grew larger.

[Beep! Host is absorbing extremely high energy matter, detected to be rank 8! Body of laws will not be able to endure it much longer. Time left…] The A.I. Chip alerted Leylin with a red notification, and even the screen began to flicker.

‘As expected… A rank 8 existence is not something that I can devour right now. If I were to forcefully shove this down my throat, I will be choked to death!’

Leylin’s expression changed, ‘If not for Dreamscape…’ He did not hesitate to use his bloodline powers, teleporting back into Dreamscape itself.

*Rumble!* The World Will projected a feeling of joy, and imposing origin force surged forth to form a two-plated millstone that slowly
removed the origin force Leylin’s body was exuding. Leylin stood within the centre, in a mysterious state as he closed his eyes. His body had reached tens of metres in height, but now it began to shrink once more. The origin force mixed with Salilus’ powers escaped from his body, returning to nature in an extremely complex conversion.

……

At this moment, Leylin too had entered a strange dream. The owner of this dream was none other than Salilus, but at this point only a creature who’d grasped a sliver of the power of laws. After a period of observation, the corners of Leylin’s lips curled up.
“You’ve already fallen, but your will is still hoping for something more? What a pity… My bloodline ability is the bane of your last hope!”
“Innate bloodline ability— Dream Eater!” A red eye opened behind Leylin’s back, swallowing everything within the dream. The sky broke apart and the earth crumbled. A crescent moon appeared within the endless void, a faint withered eye upon it.
“I’ve found it!” Leylin roared, killing the memory of the high-energy creature that would turn into Salilus in the future. He rose into the sky with a stomp.
“Annihilation!” A punch that carried massive destructive power struck the crescent moon, attacking with origin force. Under a howl of utter despair and anguish, the blood red moon exploded, and the withered eye within shattered as well. The dream now shattered, Leylin absorbed it ten times as fast.
By the time Leylin’s consciousness returned to his body, he looked like a normal human being once more.
[Beep! Energy dissipating, Host’s body returning to normal!]
[Beep! Law of decay absorbed, host has obtained information. Stats changing.] Very soon, the A.I. Chip showed Leylin his new stats.

Leylin Farlier, Rank 7 Warlock, Bloodline: Targaryen Serpent (rank 7). Strength: 257.71, Agility: 200.01, Vitality: 350.98, Spiritual force: 611.27, Body of Laws. Law Comprehension: Devouring (100%), Massacre (58%), Calamity (27%), Decay (15%), Curses (1%). Origin force saturation level: 27.99%

“Calamity, decay and even curses?” Leylin stroked his chin. He had garnered enough divinity back then with the first two laws. It seemed that Salilus too had relied on them to enter rank 8.

‘Although it is much better than swallowing the dream demon’s will back then, I’ve only received this much of a reward after devouring a rank 8 Lord of Calamity… The World of Gods seem to reap a higher amount of benefits in that case…’ Leylin shook his head in exasperation.

He knew for a fact that Dreamscape had expended even more powers than him, hence it had reaped the greatest amount of rewards this time. The origin force that aided him in battle was provided by it, so it absorbed the Lord of Calamity as well. As for himself, he had only managed to comprehend some laws.

Of course, a portion of powers that Salilus had not found in Dreamscape were also absorbed by him, hence the increase in his stats.
Leylin had only used the origin force as a weapon during the battle, not absorbing it at all. This was why his origin force saturation hadn’t increased. In the end, Dreamscape itself was the biggest beneficiary of the battle.

‘However… Calamity, and decay?’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘They’re not quite compatible with my path. While the law of calamity is extremely powerful, it has its own limitations. Decay has more potential; after all there are aspects of time within it…

‘However, my comprehension and analysis of this law isn’t too much…’ Now that he’d set his own path, Leylin wouldn’t change it easily. These laws weren’t very compatible with him anyway.

‘Something high… more…even more…’ Dreamscape projected an intent to Leylin, sending information to the bottom of his mind intermittently.

At the same time, Leylin felt that his connection with the world had became even more closely knit than before. The origin force that he could control had also increased. Even more…

He raised his hand, and a small thread of weakened dreamforce emanated from his finger. Suddenly, the dreamforce shuddered and the colour turned denser, before a stronger wave of energy radiated from his finger.

‘I gain increased authority from Dreamscape, as well as the ability to control its crests and troughs? It should only be limited to my own powers, if not the power would be too inconceivable.’
Leylin sighed. After slaying and sacrificing a Lord of Calamity, he had indeed obtained many benefits from Dreamscape. At the very least, the dreamforce which was a part of his power had increased. Furthermore, if this power could still be increased, and he could also control the extent of dreamforce that the Lords could muster, it was akin to having another killing move against them in the future. Powering his own dreamforce to the peak and weakening his opponent’s… It would be a sight to behold.

‘Not only that, the world seems to be starting to recover…’ Leylin acutely felt that Dreamscape was now different than before. Originally, Dreamscape was like a large withering tree. There were parasites around its roots, weeds sucking up its water and nutrients. But now that Leylin had slain a Lord of Calamity, the tree had finally gotten a break. It felt like Dreamscape had regained some of its vitality.

‘A pity… It’s only a little better. I need to kill at least five or six more to completely revitalise it…’ Leylin inhaled a deep breath after arriving at his own estimation. The harm that these Lords had done to Dreamscape was beyond terrifying!

‘Dreamscape survives on absorbing the dreams of intelligent beings of the astral plane. The Lords of Calamity pilfered its origin force on the same basis, stealing the foundation of its strength. A world would not be able to bear even a rank 8 existence for so long, leave alone an entire bunch of them…‘ Only now did Leylin begin to understand Dreamscape slowly.

If he was a monk at his own home, having unwanted guests who constantly took his belongings would make him want to kill them.

……

“How are you, Bodach?” Leylin came to the chaotic borders to find the one-eyed dragon sprawled on the ground. Bodach’s body had
been shattered, revealing his heart and internal organs. However, his consciousness was still rather clear, and critical areas had already started to mend themselves. If not for the surrounding powers of decay and calamity, he would have recovered even more by now. From this one could see the terrifying vitality that laws possessed.

“I’m alright, Your Excellency Leylin!” Bodach looked up at Leylin in a reverent gaze, but Leylin’s brows furrowed. A slit appeared between his brows to reveal a red vertical eye that devoured the laws of calamity and decay from Bodach’s body.

*Rumble!* With Leylin’s help, Bodach soon returned to being a middle-aged one-eyed man.

He looked at Leylin, his adam’s apple trembling as he stuttered out, “Le– Leylin, Your Excellence. Does you coming here mean that you beat Salilus into retreat?”

Even if he’d witnessed Leylin’s prowess earlier, Bodach would not dare to dream otherwise. Bodach’s understanding told him being able to beat the Lord of Calamity into retreat was already a good end.

Leylin smiled as he chose to speak the truth. “No, he’s dead. He won’t be troubling you anymore.”

“He– He’s dead?” Bodach racked his brains, “The great arcane! Am I hallucinating? Leylin, are you sure you did not use the wrong verb? Dead, and not repelled?”

“Of course! Salilus is no more.” Leylin did not hesitate to state the truth. “No, although I destroyed his truesoul the river of space and time will remember his aura during the ascension of a rank 8. He can still revive himself, but it’d be extremely hard to meet the requirements. It would need tens of thousands of years in preparation…”

Beings that could wield laws had already left their personal marks on the river of space and time. Even if they fell, they had a chance
for revival. It was like the ancient consciences in the World of Gods, only that it would be much more difficult.

“But that is a rank 8 Lord… Oh my heavens… I have roamed around fifty seven-worlds and hundreds of dimensions, but never before have I heard of anything like this… Even back in the Final War, it was extremely rare for a rank 8 to be slain, not to mention the Lords of Calamity which were known for their battle prowess…” Bodach muttered, and his large eye did not give off any light, as if he had suffered a huge shock.

“It’s not the time to discuss this. We have to leave now, or it’ll be troublesome.” Leylin pulled Bodach away with no intention of explaining.

“Leave? Where to?” Bodach was still feeling lightheaded.

“Leave Dreamscape! No matter where is alright, let’s find a small plane to hide in for now, Unless you want a group of Lords of Calamity hunting you down…” Leylin looked at the surrounding seals that were slowly lifted, and the departure of the World Will. The reason he’d blatantly revealed his trump card before was that he’d had the help of the World Will sealing the area, and he could kill the Lord of Calamity in a single blow.

Now that the seal was lifted, Leylin didn’t dare to be reckless anymore. After all, his Nightmare Bloodline put him on the opposing side to all the Lords of Calamity, and his secret couldn’t be revealed.

If he left now, the group of Lords would only know that Salilus had been slain by two rank 7 beings from a foreign world, unable to pinpoint the identity of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique. If they were to clash and Leylin revealed his powers, he would die surrounded by a group of rank 8s!

Now that the battle had ended, the World Will needed time to savour its spoils of war. Its willingness to help Leylin once more had to be put into question.
This was why Leylin chose to flee decisively, leaving the Lords of Calamity perplexed. It was extremely difficult for these Lords to leave Dreamscape, especially with dreamforce weakened. The world itself had turned into a giant cage.

And the only exception is Leylin, who owned the Nightmare Absorbing Physique. With the Nightmare King’s bloodline and his own inheritances, he could enter and leave as he so willed.

‘This is most likely a limitation Dreamscape set as well. With the Nightmare King able to leave immediately after killing a lord to regain his power, no matter how furious the other lords are they can only look on… And when the Nightmare King amasses enough power to crush them, they will be faced with their doom.’

The more Leylin pondered, the more he felt that his deduction was right. Each time Dreamscape had sealed itself in and weakened its own power, it was in fact allowing the Nightmare Absorbing Physique to have a killing feast. It was a hit and run tactic, allowing the rank 7 Nightmare King to tire the Lords of Calamity out. After all, the Nightmare King had the help of the world itself.

Once the seal on Dreamscape was lifted, the lords would enter a frenzy of infiltrating other worlds in a hope to discover the Nightmare Absorbing Physique. Failing that, they would gather more origin force and strengthen their truesouls, preventing themselves from being the next prey.

The stronger beings would have longer lives, Dreamscape was just that brutal. Understanding this logic, Leylin did not hesitate to leave.

His deduction had been extremely accurate. Right after he left, the lords began to barge into the area the World Will had sealed.

“Sssii… No remnants, no traces of aura, they carefully cleaned up the area…” The lord who spoke was fat and round, his massive body topped by three heads. The head which spoke was that of a green viper, the other two being a black goat and a human.
“The lack of traces should be the greatest clue. Hiding it means he possesses a secret nobody should know…” Another lord floated in midair. It was a giant chariot wheel which had numerous eyes around its body. Its rotations radiated abyssal flames.

“Speak of your conjecture, Eye Emissary!” A female giant spoke last, her body crackling with the sound of thunder.
The Lords

Destructive snow spiralled powerfully. Three Lords of Calamity had gathered here, the power they attracted clearly greater than usual. That white snow floated down slowly in great swathes, melting away everything it touched. However, these three lords did not seem to feel a thing as they discussed their own affairs.

“It’s very difficult to determine…” The enormous wheel blinked its many eyes, clearly hesitant. “Few secret treasures can allow a rank 7 to withstand someone of our power, even from the ancient times of the Magi and the World of Gods. I’m more inclined to think that it’s a peak rank 8 faking their identity. Such an existence would find it very easy to hide from a dream demon’s senses…”

It was absolutely unthinkable for a mere rank 7 being of laws, or even two for that matter, to get rid of a Lord of Calamity. Had a peak rank 8 wanted to conceal themselves, even the perception of the dream demons wouldn’t allow them to distinguish the real from the fake.

“If that existence was truly disguising their form, then the previous information we received needs to be completely thrown out?” The human head of the three-headed monster asked.

“This is actually the best case scenario,” the Eye Emissary said coldly, “Salilus falling due to his vengeance and hatred would actually be the best case scenario.”

“Then, what is the worst case scenario?” The female thundergiant
asked.
“Don’t you feel like the situation is very familiar? Especially the interference from Dreamscape itself… “ As the Eye Emissary spoke, destructive black lightning streaked past the horizon.
“You’re saying… The one whose bloodline we collectively cursed?” The three-headed monster hesitated in its words.
“That’s impossible!” The female thundergiant’s eyes grew intensely agitated, the sparks undulating along her body revealing her anxious heart.
“You don’t know the price we paid for it! We sacrificed the souls of seven great worlds, and only motivated the last Nightmare King into depression due to the sacrifice of the Monarch of Despair. It was after all that that he thought of ending his own life. If it wasn’t for the fatal flaw in the Nightmare King’s psyche and truesoul, our plan would never have succeeded!
“The Nightmare King finally chose to use the World of Gods’ protective sphere and ended its life there. The inheritance of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique ended there!” The female thundergiant roared, “Yet now you’re telling me that the Nightmare King has returned! Did he crawl back out from the World of Gods?”
The giant grew more and more emotional as she spoke, her voice trembling faintly. It was clear that her fear for the previous Nightmare King was limitless. After all, he’d killed over a dozen Lords of Calamity, a powerful existence at the peak of rank 8!
“It’s only speculation…” The enormous figure of the Eye Emissary trembled as well. It was clear that he’d remembered those bitter times unwillingly.
“However, there are other ways to sway Dreamscape’s conscient. A peak rank 8 existence can easily conceal itself against it…” He added finally, “It’s still only a possibility.”
“In brief, the Nightmare King has already left Dreamscape. We
must wait until the World Origin Force lifts the seal and dreamforce recovers before we can venture out of Dreamscape to investigate.”

The three-headed monster’s black goat head said, “Before that happens, to avoid discovery, shall we combine our seals together?” “Endless power of dissolution, the black goat’s egg of rippling decay… Your suggestion is very good, but it’s a shame that I can’t trust you.” The female thundergiant shot a glance at the three-headed creature, “I have other allies. Even if I wanted an alliance, I would never think of joining with you. You had better give up on this.”

“No, Molina! I’m so crazy about you…” The three-headed monster howled in anguish, the human face in the centre seemingly on the verge of tears. “This proposal is very good, let’s transmit it to all the other Lords of Calamity. Let them cast their votes!”

“Give up… Even without Salilus, I would never love you!” The female thundergiant suddenly turned into lightning and streaked off to the end of the horizon. Only the three-headed monster was left behind, incessantly bellowing in rage, “Aaahh… Damn you Salilus, I’ll kill you! Even if you revive, I’ll kill you once again!”

……

Time passed. Leylin had returned to the Magus World once again, currently at his laboratory.

The experiment table had not changed in the slightest. The flame at its side still continued to give off light and heat, as if Leylin had only left for a brief moment.

In that brief moment, however, a Lord of Calamity had died at his hands. If news of this got out, it would surely shake countless worlds. However, that would be accompanied by the spread of Leylin’s name. The Magus World would face the retaliation of the other Lords of Calamity.
Although the subterranean Magi of laws had the ability to resist the attack, the surface world did not. Leylin did not feel that Mother Core would so generously make an enemy out of a whole group of Lords of Calamity to protect him, so it was better to keep a low profile.

“How long was I gone this time?” Leylin walked to the corner of the laboratory and looked at the black sculpture of a demisnake. *Crack! Crack!* As soon as his voice was heard, the statue’s eyes lit up with two red flames. Its smooth and perfect body began to move.

With a rumble, the statue seemed to come to life within a short span of time. It became a demisnake golem guard and respectfully bowed to Leylin. “You have been away for 7 days and 9 Magus hours, my Lord. Lady Freya came to find you in this time, leaving a short message…”

“I know,” Leylin waved his hand, letting the statue resume its original position and form. A look of contemplation flashed across his eyes.

‘I spent far longer in Dreamscape than a mere seven days. The discrepancy in the flow of time between the two sides is too great. Is this the influence of my seal in Dreamscape?’ As he came to a bookshelf, Leylin flipped through information on Dreamscape’s flow of time and recorded the content he’d discovered himself.

The red ink left behind bright marks on the yellowed parchment, the complex ornate characters holding a strange power of law. Although Leylin could use the A.I. Chip to record everything in a flash, he still persevered with making hard copies of some experimental data as a backup. These resources would be extremely precious to his family and subordinates. With some concept of laws left behind, they would become a treasure passed from generation to generation.

Completing this, Leylin began to sort out the benefits he’d reaped
from Dreamscape.
“First is this…” A gold draconic ring appeared in Leylin’s hand, with three marks on its surface. This was an item left behind by the one-eyed dragon Bodach. After Leylin had removed his curse, the dragon had returned the favour with a pledge of eternal secrecy. He’d promised three favours for Leylin, the draconic ring being the proof of the same.
Leylin didn’t indulge in the fantasy of having a being of laws submit to him. Those at rank 7 and above had their own dignity, and this outcome was already excellent.
‘However… A rank 7 one-eyed dragon’s promise isn’t worth much to me now. Perhaps I can only leave it for my family…’ Leylin sighed a little and put the dragon ring away.
A rank 7 existence wasn’t much to him anymore. However, this sort of existence would be a great boon to his family. The three favours were practically a meat pie from the heavens falling into their laps.
It was rather ridiculous that Bodach and Salilus’ grievances were due to Bodach’s wrongdoing, but Leylin had entered and stirred up a strong change. Because of his bloodline, Leylin had become the arch nemesis of all the Lords of Calamity. On top of that, Salilus himself had ended up falling.
The cause was all due to a stolen Suolo gem! If Salilus still lived, wouldn’t he feel that he had been treated unjustly?
“A.I. Chip! Show the analysis map of Dreamscape’s Origin Force!” [Beep! Mission established, currently transferring…] The A.I Chip loyally implemented Leylin’s order. An extensive library of stats was displayed before Leylin. With powerful calculations and analytical ability as its base, the A.I. Chip shaped the data into an analysis of Dreamscape Origin Force and displayed it to Leylin.
Leylin’s body of laws had strong reasoning abilities. His previous life’s work could now be more easily understood and accumulated. With consciences from Salilus and the dream demon, as well as
authority from Dreamscape’s own World Will, his understanding of that world could not be surpassed. Once the origin force chart was completed, Leylin was quite certain of being able to use dreamforce to refine his own laws.

“What belongs to others will still belong to them in the end. However, using Dreamscape’s authority, I can now also manipulate dreamforce to its peak, but once I lose this limit…” Leylin had always been meticulous about his work. Before he considered victory, he first thought of defeat. How could he leave such a huge loophole to fall into?

He’d always been analysing and researching dreamforce. Obtaining the chart of Dreamscape Origin Force, he would immediately undo many locks of mystery. His research would advance a thousand miles in a single day.

‘Before too long, I’ll be able to control the pattern of dreamforce exhausting itself without the world’s support…’ Leylin’s eyes burned with fervour. The path he would walk after he rose to rank 8 had been paved with its most important cornerstone!
eylin was now extremely clear on his path as a Magus. A rank 7 comprehended one complete law, and a rank 8 had to master many. A peak rank 8 then needed to infuse a law they created themselves into their body, representing it as a path of sorts. To advance to rank 9, this path needed to contain the power of spacetime itself!

‘The foundational law that represents your path is the most important step!’ Leylin smiled, ‘This power shouldn’t just accommodate all the laws involved in forming your path, it also has to be strong enough to deal with spacetime, harnessing such powers to allow you to advance to rank 9. Dreamforce perfectly meets all these requirements, and it’s more capable of infusing other laws than I thought…’

Many at rank 7 and above did not know the pros and cons of the path ahead, and deviated from the correct route. Pitifully they were stuck unable to change their path, forced into a dead end. Leylin had a strong suspicion that peak rank 8s like Mother Core and many others had suffered this pitfall, left unable to advance after such a long time.

Compared to them, Leylin was extremely lucky. His A.I. Chip could simulate the future results, allowing him to compare the pros and cons of different laws. In addition, he’d learnt of the secrets of many ancient Magi, also being well-travelled amongst the many worlds. He was currently on the right track.
Leylin deeply understood that hard work alone was futile. Only by finding the correct path and putting in relentless hard work would he be able to see success, and even that would need a sliver of luck.

‘My path has already been chosen. I can only tune it now, not make great changes… Unneeded laws need to be removed…’

Leylin ordered, “A.I. Chip, display my stats!”


Leylin looked at his stats and the comprehension of laws, his eyes turning into a dark abyss.

“Devouring and Massacre are set to take on important roles in my path. However, Calamity, Decay and Curses can be removed from my truesoul… Fortunately, my comprehension of these laws is not too deep. With the construction of my soul and the A.I. Chip’s meticulous workings, I can remove them from my body without any harm…”

For rank 7 existences and beyond, if one did not need the laws residing in their bodies, it was best to extract them out. Other rank 7 and 8 Magi would definitely pay a sky-high price for them. However, Leylin had a better plan than that.

‘A.I. Chip! Activate the Manderhawke Plate’s power to travel worlds, and connect to my secondary clone in the World of Gods!’

The Manderhawke Plate floated from Leylin’s palms, strange runes filling it as it opened a black tunnel.

In the World of Gods, Leylin’s demigod clone open its eyes and a golden light flashed through them. Black animal skin appeared, carrying intricate runes and radiating an ancient yet mysterious aura.
This was something Leylin acquired in the western desert. Back then, he’d only thought of the seal as rather unique and guessed that it had contained much information.

*Beep!* Two rays of golden lightning struck the animal skin from Leylin’s eyes, the patch of skin immediately floating into the sky as a lot of information was transmitted.

“A.I. Chip, begin to synchronise the transmission!” the demigod Leylin ordered before closing his eyes again…

At this moment, Leylin completed his transmission from the Magus World, using the tunnel created by the Manderhawke Plate to send information to the auxiliary A.I. Chip.

[Beep! Receipt sent from auxiliary chip, transmission 100% completed. Decompression ongoing…] The A.I. Chip projected a lot of information to Leylin in the Magus World, on a large flickering screen.

A trove of data was sealed within that obscure piece of animal skin, containing the accumulation of information from an ancient civilisation. The demigod had done most of the decrypting, so Leylin only had to peruse the information sent over to the A.I. Chip.

“The theory of overgod weapons…”

“Origin force sensing and construction…”

“The foundation of overgod weapons— 4D planes…”

The folder was extremely large, containing a sea of information. Most of it pertained to the construction of overgod weapons.

“They were a short-lived civilisation that appeared after the dusk of the gods, in the period known as the dark ages. Inspired by arcanaist theory, the civilisation specialised in weaponsmithing. This overgod weapon is their ultimate design, but even the might of their entire civilisation couldn’t help them finish it…”

Leylin’s eyes blazed as he looked at the information. This was an overgod weapon, a concept from the World of Gods! The
engineers of that civilisation had wished to construct a weapon stronger than the divine, an overwhelming tool that could slay even gods!
Leylin believed it likely held another name. It was an Origin Force Weapon, a tool that was fuelled by the World Origin Force designed to harm beings of laws.
Now that Leylin himself was a rank 7 Warlock, he realised the difference of this realm from the rest. Most rank 7s had already stopped spell fights, instead using their own laws combined with the World Origin Force. Few innate bloodlines could be activated at this realm.
Because of this, Leylin had to devise new measures for battle. A weapon made of origin force would definitely increase his power tremendously.
‘During the process of constructing a divine weapon, the gods will often put in their own flesh, blood and soul into it. That is why a divine weapon achieves such godly powers. Origin force weapons work on the foundation of origin force, bringing greater difficulty into their construction. Of course, the weapon’s might increases as well…’
Leylin nodded his head at the information. The engineers of this civilisation had a very strong comprehension of laws and origin force.
‘I wonder if their death was attributed to the fact that they tried to obtain origin force. After all, this was a taboo to the gods…’
Leylin thought about it a little longer before putting it off. There weren’t enough clues, but according to his guesses if the gods realised that ‘lowborn’ humans tried to utilise origin force to construct a weapon, they would definitely want these human beings destroyed. Ants had to know their place; the gods would wreak destruction on anything in their paths, and their wills could never be disobeyed!
‘No wonder they were unable to construct the overgod weapon in the end…’ Leylin used his soul force to skim through ten lines at a time. Finished with the manual to construct this weapon known as the Black Sacrifice, he shook his head.
‘How much origin force can a regular mortal absorb? They’re severely lacking if they want to construct a weapon made of origin force. They wouldn’t even be able to construct the core components…’
‘Forget that, origin force is such a sacred and rare resource for the gods. How could they waste it on weapons? The basic requirement to construct an origin force weapon is being equivalent to a rank 7 Magus.’
Leylin shook his head, no longer baffled by the failure of that civilisation. ‘However, this Black Sacrifice book is useful to me. It has given me a model for me to create an origin force weapon, which means I don’t have to use as many processors of the A.I. Chip on it anymore…’
To Leylin, the construction of a weapon using origin force was not a problem. His authority in Dreamscape would allow him to do so. After all, he wouldn’t dare absorb too much of Dreamscape’s origin force himself, so it was viable for him to use it on his weapon.
With origin force as a foundation, an overgod weapon was not something as simple as purely wielding origin force to attack. It was two different concepts.
Deep down in Leylin’s heart, he devised an even grander plan. He wanted to inscribe the laws that were useless to him onto the origin force weapon, and create an even more terrifying tool of destruction!
With the laws of devouring, he’d definitely consume even greater existences in the future, in order to pry apart the laws that they had comprehended. As for the laws which were not useful for his path,
Leylin would then transfer it to this weapon and increase its power. With that many laws infused in it, Leylin could only guess at what a monstrosity it would become in the future. One day the name of this weapon would reverberate around the entire cosmos, making the many existences of law shudder in fear!

……

Behind the construction of this origin force weapon was the quintessence of an entire civilisation. Even with Leylin’s processing ability together with the help of the A.I. Chip, he needed some time to fully digest the information and wield it for his own. Not only that, he had to simulate new models, optimising and perfecting it. Time passed by quietly as Leylin began his experiments on manipulating Dreamscape’s origin force to the construction of the overgod weapon. During this period of time, he had not recklessly attempt to challenge any Lords of Calamity, but only accompanied his family members in living a rather tranquil yet comfortable lifestyle.
Until one day…
Leylin’s laboratory had been transformed into an enormous maze of infinite space. A few furnaces within burned with the unquenchable fire of origin force. The powerful energy was restricted by many shackles formed of laws, poured into the enormous spell formation at the centre. At the heart of this spell formation was an enormous pool, liquid origin force from Dreamscape present within. Just a drop of this could drive other beings of law crazy. A faint black shadow could be seen at the centre of the pool, greedily absorbing the surrounding energy and origin force to radiate a vaguely sharp and deadly aura. It seemed like some cruel giant creature of prehistoric times lay there, dormant.

“It took several hundred years, but the embryo of the weapon is ready. Next is the sculpting…” Leylin stood by the pool dressed in black robes, his eyes filled with satisfaction.

“Leylin… Leylin…” Just at this moment, his expression changed. A summons was transmitted from his bloodline, full of intoxicating power.

“It’s the Snake Dowager! Has the time of our thousand year contract come already?” Leylin sighed lightly as he stepped away. He watched as the surroundings changed greatly.

As spacetime began to change, Leylin had already arrived outside the world boundary of the Magus World. His true body now emerged in the endless astral plane. A woman dressed in black was
waiting for him in the limitless starry skies.
“We meet again… Snake Dowager!” Leylin said softly. He now had a clear estimate of the Snake Dowager’s strength. She was a rank 8 Magus! Even if she hadn’t formed her own path by refining her laws yet, and her combat power was a little inferior to the Lords of Calamity, she was a creature who’d lived countless years and most likely had several trump cards hidden.
“Your Excellency Leylin! Every time we meet, I seem to be ever more surprised…” The Snake Dowager’s face was veiled with a black muslin cloth. Only her glittering eyes, as bright as stars, were revealed to the outside world. They rippled with endless charm, filled with sweet-tempered emotion.
One could see a fondness for life and beauty from her eyes, and anyone could see their most perfect image of a woman at its centre. It had to be said that when it came to laws of charm, the Snake Dowager’s comprehension had reached a terrifying level.
“With your current power, you’re at the forefront of rank 7 existences across all worlds. If it’s like this, then I can feel at ease…” The Snake Dowager stood shoulder to shoulder with Leylin. Her thousand snake form did not have the sphere of serpents below her, but Leylin felt that this was a true form, not her avatar.
He smelt the fragrance of a maiden as well as the rippling of silky hair—and the most important thing was the intimate connection of bloodline. It gave all her bloodline descendents the feeling of being favoured by the gods.
Still, no matter how beautiful she was, she was still just a cooperative partner to Leylin.
“I have not forgotten our thousand year contract about the Shadow World. So, why have you come to find me?” Leylin wrinkled his brow.
It was not easy to fight over a large world, especially the Shadow
World which was equivalent in rank to the Purgatory World. There would be many beings of law in that place, and what’s more they’d managed to expel her in the past!
Snake Dowager was originally an existence of laws from the Shadow World, and had been a rank 8 Magus for a while. It was a pity that while fighting over the control of the world, her refinement of the power of shadows into her own path had failed. She had been forced to bring her bloodline descendents to the Purgatory World.
Since then, parts of her bloodline had circulated outside. They were tinged by the chaotic nature of Purgatory whatever world they spread to.
Strictly speaking, Leylin’s Kemoyin Warlock inheritance had been part of her legacy. Because of that, there was no way that the path of bloodlines and its conflict would be so easily resolved.
Since it stemmed from this reason, and he also intended to quell his quarrels with her, Leylin finally decided to help her out once. As for the other conditions and treasures, in truth it wasn’t enough of a motivation for an existence of laws to act.
“Is this fate?” Leylin’s eyes brightened. As if something had snapped, his aura began to come to a standstill. At this, the Snake Dowager’s eyes glowed with extraordinary splendour. It was clear that her junior Leylin had surprised her.
“Of course not. I had an agreement with the Trial’s Eye as well as other supremes to act at the most appropriate time,” the Snake Dowager said in a nasal voice, her tone clear and silky. All who heard it unconsciously lost themselves.
“Have you completed your preparations, Your Excellency?”
“I have, I’m ready to act at any time,” Leylin replied. His origin force weapon was now mostly complete. He’d need time to pour laws in and sculpt it, something that could not be rushed. Still, his current battle might exceeded that of ordinary rank 8 existences,
making it very possible for him to escape with his own life. Besides, if he was able to drag the Snake Dowager into Dreamscape, Leylin was sure that he would be able to teach her an unforgettable lesson.

With his confidence in his own power, Leylin now dared to reveal his true self before the Snake Dowager. After all, his opponents were not limited to the existences of laws within the Shadow World. In the depths of Leylin’s heart, he had never trusted the Snake Dowager. This was so even if he’d signed a bloodline contract with Dreamscape as his witness.

“Very well, then. Let us depart now. We need to pass by five other worlds to reach the Shadow World, passing through the cracks between worlds…”

A giant pitch-black serpent emerged from her dulcet tones, the Allsnake symbol upon its head as it leapt into the endless astral river.

This sort of ultra long-distance world transformation was required to transport Leylin and other existences of laws like him. Astral gates were unable to bear such a burden, so it was necessary to use the most primitive form of travel.

Leylin shrugged his shoulders and stepped onto the path paved by starlight, walking side-by-side with the Snake Dowager as they journeyed towards the Shadow World.

The astral plane— This was the concept that the ancient Magi had of the distant universe. It represented the limitlessness of space with its endless borders. The ancient Magi had all been fond of exploring and exploiting the astral plane.

The astral plane was full of numerous dimensions and worlds, planes, demiplanes, and even special places where the remains of ancient Magi lay dead. It was filled with danger, and the chaotic flow of space there would make it difficult for even rank 5 and rank 6 Magi to survive. It was even more pointless to talk about the
strange and savage creatures here. During ancient times, Magi below rank 7 used astral gates to explore the astral plane, danger omnipresent in their expeditions. However, for these two who were strolling through the astral river, the danger that was enough to annihilate a legion of great Magi was nothing more than some entertainment in their leisure time. The frantic space storms did not raise a single corner of the pair’s clothes. The astral creatures all made a detour around them, the turbulent and berserk auras of their bloodlines causing all weaker creatures to flee. Currently, the Snake Dowager seemed to maintain a very low profile. When they encountered the aura of existences of laws, it had always been Leylin who had confronted them. She naturally wanted to preserve the surprise of their attack, but Leylin felt that this was a rather useless gesture. Leylin had not come unprepared. He’d already researched everything to do with the Shadow World, even if it was a shame that the Final War and its distance from the Magus World had left the news near useless. Leylin only knew that the Snake Dowager’s contest for the control of the Shadow World had failed, and she had been banished. However, he was completely in the dark about who her opponent had been. The Snake Dowager had not breathed a word about the matter to anyone. Leylin reckoned that it was only when they reached the Shadow World that she would honestly tell him everything.

*Awooo! Awooo!* Standing on the path of starlight, Leylin watched as a huge creature with an extremely long tail walked past them with interest.

The creature’s physique could not be described with just stats. It was roughly the same size as the Snake Dowager’s astral body, with dark brown leather on its skin imprinted with scales.
thousands of gigantic feet beneath its fat body, their shapes strange and twisted. Six pairs of broken fleshly wings were on its back, and it saw them through a pair of amber eyeballs that had only just appeared. Its light green pupils greedily scanned across its surroundings.

An enormous tongue occasionally pulled several floating creatures into this body, even the stronger astral creatures unable to escape this fate.

After seeing Leylin and the Snake Dowager, the enormous monster snorted. Two destructive pillars of smoke erupted from its nostrils. With a wave of its tail, it disappeared deeper into the astral plane.

The Snake Dowager introduced the creature to Leylin, “This was Merxiname, the astral plane’s ‘streetsweeper’. It feeds on the corrupted trash of the astral plane, and has a gentle temperament…”

“I’ve seen its description before in books on the astral world, but this is the first time I’ve seen it in person…” Leylin looked at the enormous body of the Merxiname, his eyes filled with a faint regret.

The creature’s body was almost as big as a plane, so it could only survive on the amount of food it would get in the astral plane.

“Also, the Merxiname has the ability to create astral wormholes. Follow it, perhaps we can save some time.” This secret was just one of many an ancient existence like the Snake Dowager would know, such as the burial grounds of treasure from ancient Magi. Even one bit of news could drive others crazy.
Mistress of the Night

The ‘Astral Plane Devourer’ dragged its enormous body ahead on its path. Merxiname’s two tails swayed without the slightest care.

Devouring a broken fragment of a plane, this enormous ‘streetsweeper’ of the astral plane roared out like a tiger, causing the surroundings to tremble. The space in front of it cracked apart, causing a pitch black tunnel to emerge.

“An astral wormhole!” The Snake Dowager looked at the spatial tunnel with some excitement, “I smell the unique aroma of the world’s ridge at the end of the tunnel. It’ll help us save nine astral days on our journey.”

“That’s really lucky, given how random the Merxiname’s wormholes are. Being able to find a useful one by coincidence… this is rather fortunate indeed. It seems to be an omen of good luck,” Leylin echoed.

“Speaking of spatial techniques for the astral plane, the Magus World’s astral gate is the most outstanding of them all. Pity it’s not suitable for our ranks, it would require ten years’ worth of resources for a single trip…” The Snake Dowager spread her fair and tender fingertips, her alluringly red nails bright and glittering.

“The World Spring technique is probably the most suitable transportation method for those of our rank. With Merxiname’s astral wormholes combined with a shortcut through Dreamscape… Such a pity, Dreamscape is currently exhausted of origin force…”
As she spoke of it, the Snake Dowager’s bewitching eyes were pointedly fixed on Leylin.

“Oh? My lady’s information truly is extensive, I’m ashamed of being so inferior to you…” Leylin’s skin was currently so thick that he posed with a modest expression.

“After I wrest back control of the Shadow World, I would be quite willing to spend some time with Your Excellency. I have many secrets from ancient times that are worth sharing with you…” The Snake Dowager laughed in a silvery girlish tone. However, it was filled with the enchantment of a mature woman, able to drive all male creatures crazy.

Leylin scratched his nose and did not say much in reply, instead diving directly into the astral wormhole.

……

Having experienced the astral wormhole and the magnificent world ridge, Leylin and the Snake Dowager arrived near the boundary of an enormous world.

“I have returned… This time, no one will be able to banish me!” The Snake Dowager looked at the enormous murky world in the distance, the shadow force surging above it causing her eyes to fill with determination and desire.

“My opponent is very good at concealment, and my enemies that are hidden in the shadows have a sharp perception. Follow me…” The Snake Dowager took the initiative and led Leylin by hand, fleeing to a different location.

The space here was empty, in a region a little smaller than a semiplane. It seemed to be rooted outside the Shadow World, yet strangely isolated from it. Without the Snake Dowager actively leading him here, Leylin would have spent a long time trying to find this place.
He withdrew his hand, reflecting on the soft satin-like skin of the Dowager as well as the connection of their bloodlines. However, he soon turned his attention elsewhere. Several existences had been waiting for them within this secret space. On the left was an enormous vertical eye wielding the power of trials and laws. It was the Trial’s Eye, someone Leylin was intimately familiar with. There were two other beings of law beside it, an old fellow dressed in luxurious black robes and a sphere of smoke.

“Let me introduce everyone. This is Leylin of the Magus World,” the Snake Dowager took centre stage and warmly introduced Leylin, “You’ve met the Trial’s Eye before. This is Yuri the Conqueror of the Thunderstorm World, and Lady Massa of the Dark World…”

When her finger moved from the imperial old man to the sphere of smoke, the Dowager added, “My apologies, Lady Massa is a little shy in front of strangers.”

‘How did such an exotic flower bloom amongst the beings of laws?’ Leylin thought to himself. Still, he didn’t show any of this on his face. The two experts’ strengths hadn’t been disguised.

Yuri looked at Leylin with an exacting glance before turning his attention to the Snake Dowager, “A rank 7 Warlock? I suppose he barely qualifies as this elder’s ally. Only, Snake Dowager, you should tell us what happened since we are all here now. I don’t want to cross swords with an enemy that I know nothing about…”

“Ah, I wanted to discuss that now anyway,” The Dowager looked all around her with a rather bitter smile, “My enemy is not a native of the Shadow World. She’s an outsider!”

“How an outsider!” Leylin cried out in alarm. This had surpassed his imagination, and it was no wonder that the Dowager had been so reluctant to loosen her lips on the matter. It was inconceivable that the World Origin Force would favour an outsider over an existence
of laws that it had nurtured itself!
Since it was an outsider, the information on this enemy was very sparse, especially since they grasped the laws of concealment..
“Yes… The enemy was like an incarnation of shadow, receiving the favour of the entire world,” the Dowager slowly stated.
From her description, she had the advantage of having a soul native to the Shadow World, which meant that she would easily obtain the favour of the World Will. Once she reached rank 8, she waited until she had grasped her own path and refined shadow force to advance to the peak of rank 8.
At that time, perhaps she would have chosen to fuse with the entire World Will and become the avatar of the Shadow World. From then on, she would be eternal with the world. It was a shame that it had all changed after the outsider had arrived.
“When I discovered the outsider at first, I felt that their aura was very strange. Although it had been concealed by concentrated shadow, it still felt a little weak…” The Snake Dowager’s beautiful eyes were a little distant, as if she had sunk into her memories.
“Once the outsider entered the Shadow World, the entire World Origin Force seemed to cheer, as if it had found its true master. It was in such high spirits that no one could comprehend. I never thought that a World Will could be so fond of a living creature…”
“With World Origin Force pouring into the outsider, they seemed to recover quickly from their weakness. They advanced at unthinkable speed to rank 8. I began to grow impatient, and chose to fight over the authority of the Shadow World, and all of you know the outcome already…”
Although he couldn’t see her face, Leylin felt the Dowager’s soul aura begin to fluctuate, filled with resistance and resentment.
‘According to the Dowager, the outsider had received the great favour of the Shadow World. Perhaps they surpass the Nightmare King with his Nightmare Absorption Physique already. Then, that is
to say that the World Will approves of the outsider and feels that their path is the most suitable for the Shadow World?’ Leylin thought to himself and involuntarily sighed. He felt that things had gotten a lot more complicated. Even though the outsider did not have other existences of laws to help them, once a World Will got involved, they could become very powerful. Fighting at close quarters in a world brimming over with hostility, with the child of that very world? Leylin would not do something this stupid. The unfortunate Lord of Calamity Salilus had been the best example of the problems with that. Leylin saw that Salilus could perhaps flee in another world, but in Dreamscape Leylin used the World Will as an unstoppable weapon to slay him. Winning against his enemy in such a way was awfully entertaining, but being challenged himself like that was quite frightening instead.

“Dowager! According to what you said, when we fight the outsider, won’t the entire Shadow World support them against us? Since it’s like this, are you still choosing to fight the enemy from the shadows?

“Even if we are allies who have signed a contract, we still have the authority to retreat when faced with such danger!” It was clear that the World Will of a great world had the Trial’s Eye feeling fearful. None of the beings of law here dreaded the World Will of planes, they themselves could easily steamroll it. A small world’s World Will would call for a little more power, while a medium-sized World Will would surpass the power of an existence of law. Two or three, however, would be sufficient to win.

But the Shadow World was a large world. One would need peak rank 8 strength to contend with it! Sadly, none of those gathered here possessed that power. In other words, if the Dowager used to have a helper of that rank she wouldn’t have been banished so
easily. “You can be rest assured on this point. I’m a native of the Shadow World, my innate soul approved by the World Will. The opponent, on the other hand, is an outsider. Their soul of laws has been branded differently, and cannot be changed. With the hundred thousand years I lived here before, I still have some authority in this world.”

The Dowager stood there and tried to comfort the others, otherwise the group of members would immediately flee.

“It isn’t possible for the Shadow World’s World Will to give up on the outsider, but it’s possible to force the other native beings of laws into a neutral position, which means that the Shadow World won’t especially target us. We still have a chance of success. My impatience was what originally led to the opponent gaining the upper hand!” The Snake Dowager gritted her teeth.

“Mm, then it should be possible if this is the situation. Right, what is the name of your enemy? What form do they take?” Leylin stroked his chin and soon asked.

“She enjoys hiding in the shadows and darkness, and no one has seen her true face. Her public form is that of a strange elven girl, so she’s called the Mistress of the Night!” the Snake Dowager said softly.

“The darling of the shadows? The Mistress of the Night?” Once Leylin heard of this description, he immediately reacted with thoughts of the World of Gods.

‘I remember very clearly that there was a Mistress of the Night who controlled shadows in the pantheon before the dusk of the gods. Shar disappeared mysteriously after the incident, so it can’t be a coincidence!”
Mistress of the Night, Shar. The Goddess of the Night, Shadows, and Magic. This was an intermediate god. Shar’s power was equivalent to that of a rank 8 Magus. Rumours said that she used the form of an eccentric elven maiden dressed in black muslin, worshipped by many wizards who walked the path of darkness. If a god of such standing came to the Shadow World, it was quite possible that she would obtain the favour of the World Will and origin force.

‘There seems to be an error in my previous thoughts,’ Leylin’s brain quickly whirred into action, ‘During the ancient Final War, Magi arrived at the World of Gods, but those gods could also come out. If they were willing to give up their godhood and divine kingdoms…’

To a god, giving up their godhood and divine kingdom was like destroying the foundation of their entire being. It was equivalent to committing suicide.

Besides, the World of Gods was sealed, and gods could only face off against Magi due to their divine kingdoms. In the astral plane they’d be heavily suppressed, so why would a god who’d almost been killed do such a thing as go there?

Even the ancient Magi didn’t think such a wonderful god would exist. Sadly they’d forgotten something due to the differences in their lines of thought. Luck was a very important factor in the birth
of a god, maybe even the primary reason. This led to the existence of many wonderful and exotic gods.
‘Besides, if a god had their followers slain and their divine kingdom destroyed, they’d be left with no burden. It’d make sense for one to give everything up…’ The more Leylin thought about the matter, the more certain he was that his hypothesis was possibly correct.
‘As a result, when Shar entered the Shadow World, she appeared rather weak. Only with the help of the Shadow World did she very quickly recover her power and banish the Snake Dowager…’
Without faith and their divine kingdoms, gods basically had graves dug and waiting for them. However, Shar had effectively changed her ‘class.’ It could be said that, after a painful process of abandoning her immortality as a deity, she’d become a Magus!
As a result, she had successfully lived and hidden ‘behind enemy lines’ and rooted herself beneath the eyes of the Magi.
‘I smell the aftermath of the Final War…’ Leylin began to feel horrified. How many in the astral plane were existences like Shar? If they burst out at the suitable moment, then what impact would they have on his own plans?
Though they had never met, Leylin’s heart was over 90% confident that the Mistress of the Night who had taken over the Shadow World and banished the Snake Dowager was none other than Shar of the World of Gods!
‘A surviving god, it’s better for her to die…’ In his heart, he had unhappily passed a death sentence on Shar.
He was thinking a little logically. Leylin was a Warlock, and since he was with the Magi he naturally wanted to quickly exterminate this remnant god. Of course, the benefits he’d gain with this were a whole other matter.
“What? Leylin, did you think of something related to the Mistress of the Night?” The Snake Dowager clearly discovered that Leylin
had momentarily become absent-minded. Her beautiful eyes turned towards him, which also attracted the attention of the other existences of laws.

“Oh, it’s nothing much. I just recalled the name of the Mistress of the Night, and I feel like it’s a little familiar…” Leylin thought and decided not to drop that bomb. After all, he wasn’t certain that it would bring him any benefits at all.

It wasn’t just that. There were few records of the World of Gods after the Final War, and they were very messy. The name of the Mistress of the Night wasn’t something these existences could connect things to.

“I’ll go and have a look first, but even if we can’t dispatch of the Mistress, fleeing wouldn’t be a problem. At the most crucial point, we can send communications to Mother Core and others of that rank to kill the god. We’re just the frontlines of the battle…” Leylin thought irresponsibly.

“The name of Mistress of the Night has been used by many. I propose that we start with the identity of the enemy existence of laws. How could a rank 7 or above being not leave the slightest of traces across the astral plane?” the old emperor Yuri suggested.

“You’ve found the direction, but there’s still an issue. The enemy is not an existence from our astral plane, but has instead come from the sealed World of Gods. The crystal sphere prevents all exchange of communications!” Leylin sighed in his heart.

“It’s no use, I went looking for Sage Anthony before this. Even someone who can listen to every piece of news in the astral plane didn’t find a single record of a being of laws going by the name of Mistress of the Night…” The Snake Dowager shook her head.

“Very well! The enemy’s history isn’t important. The most crucial point is your plan, Snake Dowager,” Yuri waved his hand and looked at the Snake Dowager. He completely ignored the effect of her bewitching eyes and floating silky hair.
“Leylin and I share a bloodline that originates from the Shadow World, so we won’t be rejected by it. So this time, let me first go with him into the Shadow World and see the latest news, while you all wait outside the world for our response,” the Dowager unhurriedly spoke of her plans.

She was a native of the Shadow World, and Leylin had originally been of her bloodline. The Kemoyin bloodline would naturally not be rejected by the Shadow World and could harmoniously enter. He would not suffer the attention and suppression of the World Will. As for the other existences of laws, they could only unfortunately continue to stay here. After all, the entry of a foreign existence of laws into the world would certainly arouse the Mistress of the Night’s attention.

“So you’re sure that the outsider hasn’t broken past the peak of rank 8 and fused with the World Will? After all, according to what you just said, the Mistress is incomparably compatible with the Shadow World!” Lady Massa questioned from within the mist.

“I am very doubtful that this has happened. I previously left an imprint on the Shadow World Will, and if the Mistress fused with it I would know immediately. However, there has been no response until now, which implies that the Mistress was unsuccessful…” The Snake Dowager frowned, obviously puzzled by this point as well.

Even if she was an outsider, with the Shadow World Will’s tolerant attitude, she should have been promoted to the peak of rank 8 already. The Snake Dowager could only give up and stay in Purgatory World. However, several thousands of years had already passed. The Mistress’ strength had not grown greatly, and only recently had there been some change. This aroused certain feelings in the Snake Dowager’s heart.

It was Leylin who guessed the reason. ‘Was it the influence of the god’s brand? It’s true, a rank 8 existence changing factions as she pleases, even if it is their character, what sort of joke is this?’
He estimated that Shar had spent thousands of years after she banished the Snake Dowager adjusting and adapting. Only after her innate self had been transformed completely could she fuse with the World Will of the Shadow World, advancing completely to the peak of rank 8.

It was clear that the Mistress was about to succeed. The Snake Dowager could not sit still, and she’d initiated her final struggle to the death.

Indeed, this was a struggle to the death. In Leylin’s view, the Dowager was a native who’d grasped the right time and location, fulfilling all the essential criteria to fuse with the World Will. It was a shame that Shar turned the tables on her, causing her to fail her first attempt. It was even more pointless to discuss the second attempt.

Shar had now spent several thousand years recovering and adapting to the Shadow World. The World Will didn’t hold back in terms of origin force, and she should have been close to peak rank 8, almost an existence like Mother Core.

‘If the Snake Dowager attacks again, her only fate is defeat. Not only is Shar shockingly powerful, her shrewdness and schemes are similarly outstanding. This is a powerful evil god we’re talking about, her name enough to make all the gods of good tremble…’

‘However, since she has me, this has all changed,’ Leylin thought shamelessly, ‘This time, the Dowager must pay the price for my satisfaction. Otherwise…’

“So, your Excellency Leylin, do you have any objections towards my arrangement?”

“I have none, but just to be cautious, we had better move separately,’ Leylin added.
After everything had been decided, several existences of laws began to act swiftly and decisively. The Trial’s Eye, Yuri, and Lady Massa hid in different places, awaiting the Dowager’s summons. Leylin and the Snake Dowager concealed their auras, directly arriving outside the world boundary of the Shadow World. ‘This abundant World Origin Force, as well as this sort of radiance…’ Leylin looked attentively at the enormous Shadow World with a trace of regret lingering in his eyes, ‘I see the light of civilisation above the sea of origin force, glittering and splendid.’ “It seems as if the Mistress of the Night did very well after I left,’ the Snake Dowager’s eyes seemed to grow a little despondent as she stood there in her maiden form. She was even more dismayed by her fall. It was clear that in terms of helping the world to evolve, the Mistress of the Night had far surpassed her. Under her faction, the feeling that the Shadow World now gave Leylin surpassed the aura of large worlds like Purgatory and Icy World. Only the Magus World, the World of Gods and Dreamscape were a little superior. “So, would you still like to continue?” Leylin politely asked, looking at the despondent form of the maiden who stood beside him. “Of course! After I return, I’ll do much better than the Mistress!” The Snake Dowager’s expression seemed to change. Her regret and jealousy completely transformed into the flames of revenge. “Besides, this time I won’t leave again!” Black datura petals bloomed beneath her feet, enveloping her entirely into a black flower bud. In this form, she touched the membrane of the world boundary. The Shadow World did not react and allowed the black flowerbud to merge through the membrane. This was the method that the Dowager used to pass illegitimately through the boundary.
Female jealousy!’ Leylin shrugged his shoulders, sighing helplessly before he followed the Snake Dowager. His current abilities allowed him to pass silently through the crystal sphere of the World of Gods, so the Shadow World wasn’t a challenge.

The force of his Kemoyin bloodline surrounded him, and the Shadow World emitted a comforting aura. It immediately admitted Leylin inside…

At the core of the Shadow World, within the limitless sea of origin force. There was a magnificent and refined palace here, built out of black stone. Shadow force pervaded the surroundings, and at the very centre was a large black crystal. A beautiful girl could faintly be seen within the crystal, lying in slumber.

‘Hehe, the Weave has responded, the prey has taken the bait. Is it the Dowager?’ A laugh like the tinkle of a bell sounded, as a maiden dressed in black muslin emerged from the shadows. She looked just like the maiden sleeping within the black crystal.

“Let’s see, where are you?” The maiden stretched out her fair and delicate fingers. She seemed to connect with the authority of the world, and a bright and beautiful screen appeared before her.

The screen showed a black datura flower bud and a blood-red cocoon transform into streaks of light, advancing like lightning through the world’s boundary. They streaked across the skies.

“Ah?” However, just as the maiden was about to zoom in and
follow their trails, the screen suddenly flickered with static. A mechanical voice sounded out, “Unknown interference has occurred, tracking terminated.”

“Haha, what an interesting opponent. They want to play hide and seek with me? Well, I just happened to want to go out for a walk.”

The maiden stretched lazily, exposing the graceful curves of her body before disappearing into the palace. Multiple shadows formed to conceal everything within.

“Damn, what was that just now?” The Snake Dowager’s flustered and exasperated voice could be heard ahead of him. Leylin’s lips curved into a faint smile in response.

‘A magic network, or should I call it a Shadow Weave? If it wasn’t for my previous experience with the World of Gods’ Weave, as well as my research into Karsus’ Avatar, it wouldn’t have been this easy to disrupt it.’

“Dowager, I’ve already blocked the Mistress’ surveillance. The situation has changed now, but we had better split up at once!” The blood-red cocoon turned beautifully in midair, changing its trajectory.

Before they parted, Leylin kindheartedly reminded the Dowager, “Be careful, perhaps the current Shadow World is completely different from the one that you remember.”

After officially entering the Shadow World, Leylin knew why the Dowager wanted to drag him in. The Shadow World tolerated Leylin in the same way as the Magus World did. He did not feel the slightest sense of rejection, as if he was a native here.

‘Is this complete lack of rejection and suppression due to the original Allsnake bloodline? So only the Dowager and I can minimise the surveillance of the World Will, and avoid discovery by the Mistress of the Night.’

The Dowager was originally a Shadow World native, and had been the person closest to controlling the entire world. She had been
greatly favoured by the World Will. Since he was once a descendant of hers, Leylin carried the brand of the Shadow World in his body. The world would not reject him innately, which would allow him to conceal his presence as much as possible.

The Trial’s Eye and their other allies were different. They would be discovered the moment they touched the world’s edge, and the Mistress of the Night would act against them immediately.

‘My interference will put Shar off our trail for a short period of time. Still, it might not be enough to secure our safety.’ Leylin took out a few bizarre dolls with painted faces.

‘I never would have thought that I would use up the voodoo dolls that I made earlier in this place.’ A blood-red glow appeared on the dolls’ bodies. Enveloped by light, the strange dolls seemed to inflate and giggle cheerfully.

“Hee hee!” “Haha!”

Having grown to the size of normal humans, the paint on the dolls’ faces changed. They grew more and more animated, and their auras slowly changed to resemble Leylin’s own.

*Bang!* The three voodoo dolls separated, the original blood-red cocoon dividing into three and falling in different areas.

‘This Shadow World has been radically changed by the Mistress of the Night. The most startling change is the warning system surrounding the world boundary.’

In his former location, Leylin had already concealed his own figure and begun descending slowly. He felt like Shar had transformed the Shadow World into an extremely secure fortress in all these years, which meant their own operations could meet great difficulty…

“Beep! Unidentified flying object detected, transmitting information to ground station!”

Once Leylin had divided himself into several avatars, a number of satellites that had been orbiting the Shadow World paused their normal tasks to send a warning to ground control.
Inside a large hall with receptors for the signals from the satellites, those within working tirelessly. A soldier stood up and marched over to her superior, handing him an image. On the image was one of Leylin’s avatars in the shape of a blood-red meteor. “Sir! An unidentified flying object has been spotted. This is the video capture from drone #3.”

“Mm, what does the warning officer advise?” The commander was a middle-aged man with faint white streaks in his hair. He had eyes like an eagle’s, his gaze sharp and chilling.

“The images from the satellite show that the target’s volume does not exceed two shadow cubits. It’s not a giant meteorite, so it might be some astral debris or natural star fragments. However, we haven’t been able to deny the possibility that it’s some astral creature,” the soldier replied quickly.

“Mm, those astral creatures have always been extremely dangerous. Those that bring disease or curses are the most dangerous, if it spreads far it might harm society greatly.” The middle-aged man waved his hand, “Exterminate it!”

“Understood! Secondary space cannon prepared. Shadow Weave fully charged, beginning countdown. T minus 3, 2—”

Having received the order, the control tower quickly leapt into action. A blue laser shot out of the ground, accurately targeting the blood-red meteorite.

But just at this moment, the blood-red meteorite on the screen suddenly changed. A glaring scarlet flare flashed, and a sharp warning sound issued out.

“Target has issued a high-energy response. Current energy level surging rapidly. It’s already reached a danger level of 5A! Sending automatic report to the security bureau of the empire!”

A researcher looked at the twisting image on the screen and suddenly cried out, his voice filled with panic. On the screen in the main hall, the blood-red meteor seemed to have developed its own
will, drawing out a bright trajectory and directly dodging the laser attack.
Afterwards, the image of a doll emerged from the streak of light, its jet-black scleras suddenly flashing with light. The screen suddenly burst into a flurry of static.
“Drone #3 has gone silent!” The soldier from before cried out involuntarily, a stack of folders in her hands falling to the floor.
“Something malicious from another world! Has a powerful existence entered this place?” The commanding officer, that middle-aged man, wrung his hands as he muttered under his breath, “I never thought that I would run into another one.
“Everyone, the security bureau has issued the highest of orders. It is time, we must dedicate our lives in our loyalty to the empire!”
The middle-aged officer stood up and tore his collar off. He began to shout himself hoarse with orders, “Fire all the guided missiles from the surface! Destroy the target at all costs! Cancel all vacations of the surface armoured vehicle department, all members are to remain on standby! Also, connect me to the empire, I need to obtain the highest authority in Ando City’s Shadow Weave!’
“Sir, yes sir!” Multiple drills and the obedience training caused the soldier to bow and accept his order. Her heart was still at a loss, however, ‘These preparations, doesn’t it mean we’re gearing up for a world war?’
“Report!” Just at this time, the control tower’s communication device rang out. An alarming voice rang out, “Satellites #4 and #5 have encountered residual high-energy, unable to capture the meteor.”
*Crash!* A tremendous vibration rattled the area. The floor and the ceiling trembled continuously as the new energy-incandescent lights blinked on and off. A glaring red alarm flashed across the entire hall.
After a long time, the voice of a communications officer could be
heard, blank and frightened, “Target has launched an offensive. Second division base has lost communications!”
“The fifth attack, enough to destroy the empire. Is it about to arrive?” The middle-aged officer’s glasses fell from his face, shattering into countless shards of glittering glass on the floor. He limply sat on his chair, seemingly losing all signs of energy.
‘What was that satellite just now? It looks like this world’s technology surpasses my expectations.’ Connected via his truesoul, Leylin could see the satellite that the voodoo doll had attacked. Strictly speaking, it looked no different from the satellites from his previous life. However, it seemed to be powered by a different source of energy.
‘Besides, they tried to attack the voodoo doll with laser weapons. I should try to attack and see their defence!’ Leylin gave the command with no hesitation, and later saw a scene that satisfied him.
‘It seems like it is a branch base, their defence is on the level of Breaking Dawn Magi. Still, that base was being controlled by ordinary people!’ It was a pity that this sort of strength was nothing to Leylin. With a wave of his hand, his puppets could easily erase them.
Remain hidden as much as possible. Gather information and wait for further instructions.’ Giving commands to the rest of the puppets, Leylin descended into the atmosphere himself. Currently still in stealth mode, he was small enough a target to avoid the satellites’ detection even if they were still here.

After passing through a thick cloud full of radiation, Leylin saw a mysterious continent in front of his eyes. It was filled with the radiance of civilisation.

‘A.I. Chip, begin preparing plan 1,’ Leylin commanded. [Beep! Plan 1 activated. Gathering data on gravity and atmosphere, remapping physical constants…] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s orders, and then presented an analysis chart filled with information to him.

‘The atmosphere here is suitable for the survival of large life-forms. The other physical constants aren’t much different either, just that the inertia of the elemental particles is greater. So I can only absorb them through specific channels?’

Leylin felt like the Shadow World was rather interesting. Microscopic soul sensing allowed him to discover a huge and terrifyingly powerful Weave here.

‘In essence it’s like the one in the World of Gods, but there’s some difference in its scope and ability. As well, its mainly powered by shadow force. Should I call it the Shadow Weave?’
Now Leylin was left without doubt about the identity of this Mistress of the Night who’d taken the Shadow World from the Snake Dowager. It was evidently the Goddess of Shadows from the World of Gods, Shar!

‘Rumours say that the faith of dark wizards allowed Shar to involve herself in the domain of magic. Seems like it’s true…’ Leylin didn’t connect to the Shadow Weave directly. After all, Shar may have implemented some special restrictions, and any misstep could cause him to be discovered.

‘The most important thing now is to blend in and slowly get access to the Shadow Weave, obtaining enough power to control it.’ Leylin’s eyes glinted. With his experience from the World of Gods, it wouldn’t take long for Leylin to analyze the Shadow Weave.

*Vroom!* The sharp sound of a fast engine sounded out, and a large, foreign, yet all so familiar body flew past Leylin’s eyes. Its streamlined design could reduce air drag greatly, and the two wings at its side maintained its balance. The powerful engine drove it forward, allowing it to fly in the sky with several thousand people within.

‘A plane? I never thought they’d be so advanced…’ Leylin sighed. He could see the numerous specks of light that represented souls within the flying vehicle. These souls were so tiny a mere ripple of power on his end would completely decimate them. Still, the knowledge of these puny things had allowed them to successfully conquer the skies!

‘A similar inclination towards technology and development…’ Leylin had a look of nostalgia in his eyes as he stood atop the upper cabin of the plane. He slowly sat down, memories from his previous life appearing in his mind.

“What’s going on?” Within the cabin, a young girl with a ponytail gazed at a brown-haired young man anxiously, “Are you feeling sick, brother? Should I get an attendant?”
“No I’m fine, Jill. I just felt uncomfortable all of a sudden. This terror, only that time with the school bus can compare…” The brown-haired youth smiled with a pale face, but his hands were still trembling unconsciously.

“That accident?” Jill’s eyes darkened. She knew fully well that her brother Xavier was exceedingly talented, and his natural sense of danger was quite powerful. Once in primary school, it had allowed them to avoid a serious traffic accident.

Recalling how terrible the news had reported it to be, as well as the scene where none of her classmates had survived, the girl’s eyes reddened. She couldn’t control the tears that fell, “It’s all my fault… If I didn’t force Brother to go as well…”

“Er… Didn’t I say it already? Don’t worry about it, and act as if we’re going to crash in the next second…” The young Xavier glanced at the surrounding passengers sheepishly and quickly hugged Jill, smiling apologetically at everyone else.

What he hadn’t mentioned was that he hadn’t had such a premonition before getting on the plane. It was just that he suddenly quivered in that instant, feeling helpless and despair at a sure death. This feeling buried itself into his heart, causing great trauma.

However, this feeling disappeared just as quickly, leaving not a trace. It made him feel like he’d gone crazy.

“It’s nothing. Stop crying, Jill!” Xavier could only do his best to console his little sister, but he could not help recalling what had just happened.

‘That feeling of a sure death that suddenly disappeared… What was that about?’ At this thought, the young man could not help but pull out a pendant at his neck, the bright red string having a black snake rune on it, ‘Is there a force here that can destroy this plane in an instant? Or is a war about to break out soon?’

“Haha… A crash? You’re hilarious!” A middle-aged man who was
reading a magazine at the side put the book in his hands down, adjusting his glasses, “Crashes were indeed common twenty years ago. You could be unlucky enough to have failing components or meet a bird. However shadow force has come quite far since then, and all aircraft are integrated into the Shadow Weave. All vehicles have powerful shadow armour protecting them, so even if you bump into a prehistoric dragon you won’t face any problems…” “Exactly… I’ve gotten on so many flights, and I’ve yet to hear about any dangers!” A curly-haired woman beside them began to chatter away.

“Is that so?” Jill was still very childlike in her thoughts. Having heard this she immediately stopped crying. Beads of sparkling tears hung on her rosy face, making her look even more pitiful. “Yes!” After seeing the state Jill was in, the man who had been speaking suddenly sensed his lolicon soul come ablaze, suddenly exploding!

“Don’t worry. Look at this!” He raised his arm, pulling at a portion of his sleeve to reveal a digital wristwatch with a unique design on his wrist. On the silvery-grey exterior was the symbol of a black crown. “This…” Gasps could be heard everywhere. “The newest model of the rapid shadow series! Tsk…” “Rapid Shadow V, providing the most convenient and quick connection to the Shadow Weave. It was developed by the empire’s chief scientist Lirlian using the latest 2D point technique. It now supports the storage and download of spells at rank 3 and above, even if casting mid-ranked spells needs the caster to control things very well. Only university students of the empire and mechanics above grade 5 can work this. I never thought uncle was such a bigshot!” The young man could not conceal the envy and fervour in his eyes after seeing the man’s watch, and he blurted out all the information
about it.
“So? Are you at ease yet? Even if anything happens to components of the plane, with the Shadow Armour and Flight that I bought and stored before, it will be enough to protect you…” The man spoke, immensely pleased with himself. He then stowed the watch away, amidst cheers and sounds of admiration.
“Thank you, uncle!” Jill yelled sweetly, and the man sat back down, pleased.
“Right… Maybe I’m too uptight? How could there be supernatural happenings in this day and age? The records at home are like legends. They’re all fake…” The youth, Xavier, heaved a long sigh, beginning to doubt himself for the first time.
“Dear brother!” At this moment, a youth in a black suit and gold-rimmed glasses pulled at the safety belt, heading over with a grim look on his face.
“I think you’re very right!”
“Could you be…” Xavier was now extremely excited.
“Mm! Even with the government forcefully getting involved and increasing shadow protection for all aviation vehicles, accidents are everywhere…” the suited man said stiffly, causing Xavier to nod without end.
“This world is too dangerous. One could be struck down by a maglev just walking on the roads, much less when it comes to a flood of Shadow Weave connections allowing minors to use magic as they wish. There’s other issues as well…”
The suited man’s words were headed in a strange direction. Soon, he picked out a beautiful advertisement from his briefcase and placed it in front of Xavier. “Hence, for the sake of you and your family, insurance is necessary! Our company is now launching the newest services that involve protection from Shadow Weave radiation as well as flight risks. Take a look, and ask me any questions you have. Here’s my business card…”
“So it’s to sell insurance…” Xavier’s face was now crinkled in a frown, and Jill finally smiled after all the crying.
“Well… I’ll think about it. But the attendant is coming over…” Xavier pulled back, pointing to the long-legged stewardess with a smile on her face.
“You must choose our Imperial Love. By picking Imperial Love, you’re choosing a better future…” the youth said sternly with a nod before returning to his seat.
“Sigh… young people these days…” An old granny seated behind him sighed, causing Xavier to wish he could bury his head in his chest…
The passengers in Xavier’s cabin heaved a sigh of relief after the plane landed safely on the runway. Following that, they stared at him in blame.

“My apologies!” Xavier held his sister’s hand and left the cabin, as if running away to the airport terminal.

“Hey wait up! Wait!” The man with the watch caught up to them, “You left your purse behind!”

“Oh, thank you Mister!” Jill thanked the man courteously, taking a pink purse with a cartoon bear on it.

“Haha, I’m just 25. Don’t call me Mister, just Crowley is fine…” This man who looked like an uncle with long sideburns smiled wryly, “And your names are?”

Xavier gripped his sister’s hand, and spoke politely, “I’m Xavier, and this is my sister Jill, we’re here to study…”

Crowley noticed the wariness in Xavier’s eyes, but he smiled without caring, “Oh I see… This is my number. I have some connections here in Thousand Bears City, so remember to look for me if something’s up.” Having said that, he handed a long string of numbers to Xavier and disappeared into the crowd.

“Jill, don’t just casually speak to strangers in the future!” Xavier reprimanded his sister after seeing Crowley off.

“But I felt like Mister Crowley was nice…” Jill bit her lips.

“Don’t rely on your instincts anymore. Live like a normal person!” Xavier sighed, seemingly relieved of all his burden. He hailed a
floating vehicle and boarded it alongside Jill, the wheelless machine converging into the roads that were like a network of arteries… Neither Xavier nor Jill realised that a strand of black hair had attached itself to them. It was a power that lay between material and secondary energy, so even with extraordinary powers the siblings didn’t detect it.

“I never thought I’d find the blood of the Snake Dowager while just looking around!” Leylin could sense the bloodline of the Snake Dowager in the siblings, even if it was extremely thin. The siblings possessed extrasensory powers, able to foresee bits and pieces of the future. Although he hadn’t been masking his presence, the ability to sense him was still somewhat remarkable. Because of that, Leylin made an exception and put some attention on this pair of siblings, attaching a tracking spell to them. Standing amidst the river of people, he observed his surroundings. The passersby walking to and fro did not seem to see him. The high-rise buildings with over a hundred floors, the apartments, massive billboards, maglev trains and transparent tubes that served as streets… Everything gave Leylin a sense of extreme nostalgia. It was like he’d returned to his previous life. ‘No wonder I could see traces of civilisation in the world’s shadow force. Evidently they’ve undergone a few technological revolutions, and the population has grown to a frightening number…’

A rough estimate said the population of this Thousand Bears City was more than ten million. The information he’d gathered on the plane told him this was but a middle-tier city of one empire, which meant the population of the entire world most likely fast approached that of the Magus World. And this was inclusive of the subterranean world! “It’s been proven that science and technology sustain the greatest growth of life for ordinary beings…” Without any extraordinary
abilities, living together as a species and with technology was the best option, especially when there was a mastermind behind the curtains pushing for this development.

“In relation to the population, the number of extraordinary beings seemed to be suppressed…” Leylin thought of the wristwatch, Rapid Shadows. This device was commonly worn by ordinary citizens here.

“Extraordinary powers have been changed to devices. As long as one is able to fork out a little bit of money, even a child would be able to download a spell from the Shadow Weave?”

Leylin’s eyes conveyed interest, “This Mistress of the Night, Shar, what is she trying to do?”

He turned his gaze to a giant light screen in the sky. It was made of numerous points of light, currently showing an advertisement for some product. That changed as the time for news arrived.

“A mine containing a new energy source was discovered this morning, causing stock in the energy sector to drop drastically. The market is closed for the day.”

“The Prime Minister’s wife will appear at a charity even in the Shangri-La Hotel tonight, donating to the inhabitants of the thirteen coastal cities devastated by Hurricane Darkness. Analysts say that this…”

“The authorities have once again asserted their swift, resolute decision to clamp down on all illegal markets of Rapid Shadows 5.0. In a joint effort stretched across various parties, the target this time was the fabrication of false documentation, especially that specifically required to purchase Rapid Shadows.

“Emergency Notice: Amdo City was hit by a meteorite 3 hours and 12 minutes ago, causing an infrastructure collapse. The surrounding tremors were extremely powerful, causing financial damages amounting to 37.85 million. The number of casualties is unknown at the time of this report. The local garrison troops
The reporter who wore a work outfit explained the disaster in a stern voice, as images of troops entering Amdo City was seen. “Their reaction is pretty fast, huh.” Leylin shook his head and did not pay any further attention to it. A newly developed empire with a mysterious entity like the Mistress of the Night controlling it from behind the scenes could unleash extreme power if he stepped on it. The ancient Netherese were an example. The golden period of the Nether Empire allowed it to rival even the gods!

Leylin had no doubts that, should Shar use some of her hidden cards, his very own voodoo dolls would be discovered sooner or later. However, they were only meant to distract her. He was already satisfied that they were able to last this long.

“Hmm, maybe I should watch the news more often, who knows if any news about the Snake Dowager may appear…” Leylin grinned. According to his observations, the Shadow World now was a completely different world from the one that she spoke of. Just like the differences between the middle ages and 21st century of his past life.

An antique like her may not be tech savvy, captured on some fellow’s camera due to the technological advancement of this world. However, these were all minor details. Leylin believed that even it if were to happen, the Snake Dowager would sense the difference and conceal herself.

“To put it in other words, after those voodoo dolls, the Snake Dowager will be the one who will divert the attention away from me…” Leylin’s eyes flashed. Although he was invited here by the Snake Dowager, he had no intentions of playing the role of nanny. ‘Intelligence is the current priority. I can’t connect to the Shadow Weave recklessly, I need to find an opportunity…’ Leylin looked at the news that was being replayed, and suddenly got an idea.
Outside of the city, at the second level of a small villa. Compared to the outside world which was so technologically advanced, this villa had a rather rustic and unadorned layout. Or in other words, it was old-fashioned.

“I never thought we’d be able to live at home even if it hasn’t been maintained in so long.” Jill wiped the sweat off her cheek, and her dusty hands left several black streaks on her face. She was like a kitten playing around.

Xavier, wearing an apron, saw his sister and frowned, “You’re dirty! Hurry and wash up…”

This was their old home, one that had been abandoned for many years. If not for the fact that this place could allow them to commute to school, the siblings would never have stepped foot in this place. It took some dusting and cleaning up to make it fit for living.

“I wonder why Mom and Dad didn’t sell this place off back then. Is what they say true, that this is our heritage from several hundreds of years of ancestry?”

Xavier did not believe much of it. Finishing dinner, he placed a video call to a gentle and smiling older couple.

“I have organised the things…” Xavier nonchalantly said.

“Alright! Little Xav, you have to bear the burden of an adult and take care of your sister…” The middle-aged man said, before continuing after some hesitation, “Also…In our old home, between the layer of the two bookshelves, there are some things that you can have a look at…”

“Oh? That useless book? I have seen it several times since I was three…” Xavier said in an unperturbed manner.

“What?” The voice on the other end was raised by a full octave. The man grasped as his heart as if unable to believe what he had
just heard.
“Isn’t it just a book written about some strange fantasies, magic and other nonsense? I can’t believe you actually stowed it away like some treasure, and the main point is you did not do a very good job of hiding it…”
Xavier rolled his eyes, before exchanging a few more sentences with his parents in a pacifying manner and ended the call.
“That book…This brings back some memories…” Through some sort of nostalgia, Xavier went to the study room in the upper level and found the book that was hidden between the two shelves.
Due to the accumulation of time, the cover of the book was now extremely faded and obscure, with a thick layer of dust gather on it. This caused Xavier to become annoyed before he cleaned up the place another time.
“It’s so ancient. I’d believe it even if someone said it was a thousand years old…”
Time had eroded the light yellow parchment. Not only were many of the handwritten words within blurred with age, the pages themselves stuck to each other as well. Several footnotes were stained with the trace of decay.
The book was written in form of ancient script, the worlds looping and distorted. It seemed like a three-year-old child could have written it better.
Xavier had hated reading and writing ever since kindergarten. With the ‘good fortune’ of a father with a doctorate in history, he’d had to understand various ancient writing styles since his youth. This specific script was a specialty of his, having been taught it seriously by his father.
Xavier managed to read the parts that were still legible.
“This is clearly a mythological story…” When he thought of his youth and how this storybook had accompanied him in his childhood, a faint smile arose on Xavier’s face.
“The Snake Dowager ruled the entire Shadow World, and her descendents could later be found throughout the vicinity of Sanal. They possessed great power and defeated the homo sapiens, the Elias and other ancient creatures. Finally, they occupied the entire star continent.”
“The Allsnake’s heirs were called ‘blood descendents’ and grasped the shadows, able to talk to all species of snakes. The blood descendents divided the continent into 15 kingdoms, crowning the
most pure-blooded of them as their monarch…”

“They wrote this like it actually happened.” Young Xavier continued to flip the pages. Most of the book’s latter pages were spent describing the beauty of the Snake Dowager and her power. There was also rich descriptions of the Shadow World under her rule. Just as he had arrived at the latter half of the book, information appeared that made Xavier’s eyes light up.

“When the giant serpent’s final glorious empire fell, their ancestor’s bloodline mixed with other tribes. Theoretically, all creatures who possess the bloodline of the giant serpent can go through a period of cultivation and trigger their unique bloodline power…”

Xavier’s finger traced a datura flower bud, his fingertips stroking the uneven surface. This complicated craftsmanship definitely required skill, and was not something that was made for fun. If one looked at it carefully, they could see many complex black runes on the flower. Still, about half had been worn away by time.

After the symbol was a bunch of meandering descriptions of training techniques. They suggested things like mixing together the blood of bats and lizards, smearing it under the nose to increase one’s chances of entering a meditative state.

‘This is what caused me to make such a huge fool of myself in kindergarten…’ Xavier’s face twitched a little. In his view, this book’s techniques were extremely childish. It seemed to have come from the primitive tribes who liked to prank people.

‘Even if it’s fake, they should have made it a little more realistic. Everybody knows that there is nothing like soul force or a weave. It’s impossible to harness these abilities to use magic…’ Xavier speechlessly turned over the pages until he reached the very end. The handwriting here was rather new and was clearly added later. It was written in a modern language and didn’t seem to be difficult at all.

This first part of this new content seemed to be a self-introduction
of someone known as Chanal. The main idea was that he was from the same tribe as the original author, but his ancestor’s records were far too absurd. He did not believe in the descriptions of his world travel as well. However at the every end, Chanal had added something else. Reportedly, it was a complete military technique from his own tribe. It was originally meant to be used by cultivators. “This looks a little more sincere— So it’s called Snakebite Fist?” Xavier flipped over the pictures at the very end and discovered several unusually realistic figures of a human body. It was rather genuine in its complexity, and its content looked very similar to other high-level biology diagrams. From his recent martial arts experiences, this physical training didn’t look as if it was just some crazy nonsense. Soul energy and this weave had caused the humans of the Shadow World to acknowledge several extraordinarily powerful existence. It had aroused a popular craze in martial arts and extra-sensory perception. Sadly, this fad was soon found to be full of liars. Apart from soul energy and the weave, extrasensory perception seemed to have disappeared from this world entirely. After some half-baked consideration, Xavier had wasted a considerable sum of money to enter and train in a high-ranked martial arts school. Unfortunately, the only benefit it gave him was the strengthening of his muscles. After all, those true inheritances had been tenaciously hidden away by the military instructors. Those without enough power and money would not receive proper instruction and become true brothers in training. It was unfortunate that although Xavier’s family was a little wealthier than others, they were not infinitely more opulent. Primarily based on his intellect and good relationship with his martial instructors and apprentice brothers, Xavier had learnt
several genuine things.
‘According to the teachings of the red-nosed military instructor, rank 0 to rank 2 spells are completely unable to harm experts with truly powerful cultivation techniques. Perhaps… Before the command is given, they could completely break off the wrist of ‘Swift’ that you prepared…’
Xavier looked at the resources on the Snakebite Fist and discovered that the written account was very detailed and reliable. From the most basic breathing techniques to the attacks and defensive techniques, there were also records of the necessary drug ingredients that were required for the cultivation. It could clearly be seen that Chanal was a very meticulous person at heart.
‘I fulfill all the basic requirements, so next is to buy these ingredients and make some training equipment…’ Xavier’s eyes seemed to burn with fervour, ‘Seems like I found something good when I was young. Shall I give it a go?’
“Wait, didn’t I plan to remain an ordinary man. What’s the point of these fighting techniques?”
Xavier suddenly thought of his old military instructor’s advice, “Those with real power these days are the strong mechanics who grasp several high-ranked spells. Researchers in psi energy who’ve graduated from famous universities are also strong, especially those with doctorates. Fighters have no chance of resisting their high-ranked spells…”
Xavier clearly recalled the desolate look in his instructor’s eyes.
“Yes, as long as one has enough money, they can easily download and use low-ranked spells. It’s not impossible to obtain mid-ranked spells either. Those martial artists who train their bodies and use martial arts to cultivate themselves are all fools. So why am I still considering it? I should hurry up and pass the entrance exam for the high-ranked mechanic permit and obtain the authority to use mid-ranked spells. Then, even the world’s top 500 companies will
fight for me…” Xavier sighed and shoved the voluminous book back into its original location. There was a trace of regret in his heart that, try as he might, he was unable to completely suppress… Once the youth left and the door clicked shut behind him, the room was plunged into darkness. Leylin’s figure appeared suddenly, stepping across limitless space to arrive directly inside. The bookshelf was opened up, and the large book was wrapped in a faint light that delivered it to Leylin’s hands. Page after page turned rapidly, until Leylin stopped at the symbol of the black datura flower bud. “The Allsnake descendants’ inheritance? It seems like history’s hurt it a lot…” Given Leylin’s knowledge and experience, a single touch told him this book was written 1257 years ago. The author was an extraordinary expert, about equal in power to a rank 2 or rank 3 Magus. It was only that the expert had received an incomplete form of the inheritance. With the passage of time, it had been reduced to this dilapidated state. “According to the book’s meditation techniques, it’s still possible to cultivate extraordinary power. However, the chance of becoming a monster is even greater…” “The martial techniques at the end, however, abandon meditation techniques and spiritual energy. They’re rather suitable to this world’s laws. Perhaps it’s possible to cultivate something using it…” Leylin vaguely gave his opinion before tossing the book back to its place in the bookshelf. As he was now, he was far too lazy to read this sort of thing. He instead turned his attention to the spines of the many black books that looked like a wave. “A historian’s study… It should be enough for me to know how the world has changed,” Leylin’s eyes were fixed on the upper right
hand corner of the bookshelf, where a voluminous book lay. The A.I. Chip’s light scanned across it at lightning speed. It was most likely the history of this specific family. This scholar had preserved a great deal of his material books, which made Leylin feel pleasantly surprised. Although he could access many powerful safety nets and even the Shadow Weave itself to obtain all he needed, it was difficult to avoid leaving traces behind that way. If it was discovered by the Mistress of the Night, he would face a difficult situation. Compared to that, even if this primitive method of collecting information was more tedious it could completely avoid Shar’s detection. The bookshelf showed that the teenager’s father was quite meticulous. It was laid neatly in order, sorted by dates. The bottommost section contained ancient myths and stories of bards, which seemed like the owner did not care very much for. In the middle were a stack of history books. Some of them even had their pages threaded by strings, old enough to be sold as antiques. On the uppermost portion was modern history, and the brand new covers gave off a glossy look. It was evident that these books had been picked up the most by the owner. The history and changes of the Shadow World soon lay bare for Leylin’s perusal.
The Snake Dowager ruled over the Shadow World in ancient times. Then, this place had been largely similar to the Magus World, with extraordinary power granting high status and various empires at war with each other. Wars erupted every day, and it was a dark time for the commoners.

It seemed like Xavier’s father adopted a prudent stance against these descriptions of snake descendants and bloodline carriers, thinking they were just superstitions used by people of ancient times to control them through fear.

History had changed when the Snake Dowager had lost her position about thirty thousand years ago. The Mistress of the Night had taken control of the Shadow World. Unknowing of the facts, the regular humans had met a pivotal point—psi energy and the Shadow Weave had been established.

“With the Snake Dowager gone humans took primary control of the Shadow World, allowing science to flourish. The most crucial bit was the discovery of psi energy…” Leylin’s right index finger tapped on the cover of a history book as he pondered the subject deeply.

‘Psi energy, the gift of the Shadow World. Pure and effective, it has low contamination. Even more important is that a lot of it can be stored, and humans could make containers for it quite easily. Once it was discovered it replaced all kinds of fuels, developing into many other fields as well. Now the maglev trains, aircraft, and even
the high-tech armour used by their soldiers ran on psi energy…’ Leylin read on slowly. ‘Psi energy did not exist during the reign of the Snake Dowager, instead coming right after the Mistress of the Night appeared… It is extensively used, connected to another new creation called the Shadow Weave.’ Once one read to this point, even a fool would realise it was a setup of the Mistress of the Night. ‘Ever since then, humans have had near unlimited energy. Money allows them to cast spells from the Shadow Weave, letting them toss extraordinary ability into the trash and abandon all ancient training techniques. Is this now the era of science?’ This was all within the books from Xavier’s family. Several tens of thousands of years ago, there were countless myths and legends of heroes with superpowers, but by the era of Xavier’s ancestor all small discoveries of such abilities had been carefully recorded. It was evident that history had changed greatly. ‘Make them over-reliant on equipment, having them forgo true strength and regress in their extraordinary abilities… It reduces the number of enemies, and allows you to use the Weave to control the entire world…’ Leylin felt like he understood part of why Shar had prepared all this. At the same time, a spirit force message travelled over, causing his face to change.

……

Amdo City had now been surrounded by soldiers with powerful-looking cannons. Many of these soldiers had expensive equipment on, making for an extremely imposing sight that stilled the atmosphere. At the centre was a large piece of land that had been hollowed out
by a meteorite. The extreme heat had left behind traces of crystal within, but the meteorite itself had already disappeared. A command post had been erected here temporarily, with many troops analysing data and conducting investigations within. They were all submitting their information to the middle-aged commander from before.

“The Weave has been checked, no traces of psi energy found.”

“Meteorite sample collected, sending a copy to the royal family for further analysis.”

“All troops on standby, prepared to move at any time.”

All this information did nothing to improve the commander’s mood. After all, he was facing an opponent that had obliterated a military base in an instant. What’s more, there was more than one enemy!

“So the culprit within this meteorite hid himself inside Amdo City. What about the other two, where did they land?” The officer rubbed his temples.

“The estimated trajectory puts the second landing point in the east of the empire, within 30km of Danube City. However, the base there was extremely quiet. The mission has been handed over to the local troops.” The report came from a well-trained intelligence officer with a pair of long, beautiful legs. She adjusted her spectacles as she spoke calmly, “The third landing point is at Coral Coastal City. We’ve already sent a request to the navy to find and annihilate the opponent.”

“Three apostles at a time…” The middle-aged officer seemed unable to bear this heavy burden, “And one’s already infiltrated Amdo City. How is the city’s shutdown going?”

“Our troops have already surrounded the place, forbidding any citizens from leaving the city. A couple of small fights broke out, but the situation is under control…”

“Alright then… We can only impose these heavy laws for the sake
of the empire,” the officer said with an expressionless face. Creatures from the stars were extremely dangerous. They could hide within the souls of ordinary citizens, beginning to spread contamination. They’d taken down entire empires in the past, so he had to prevent it at all costs! Even if these specific apostles couldn’t contaminate the soul, any foreign pathogens or viruses they carried could cause serious damage to the affected citizens. Thinking about it some more, the officer passed down further orders, “Relay the new safety measures once more! Deny all citizens who wants to leave, including the local officials inside too. All who disobey must be killed immediately!” “… Yes!” Listening to the merciless order, the soldier was taken aback. Still, she ended up obeying his orders. “Hehe… It looks like the Empire Hawks aren’t all that capable? They actually have a headache from such a small event?” Just as the soldier was about to leave, a mocking voice sounded from outside the strength. The green flaps were pushed open to reveal a group of soldiers in black uniform. The one who laughed earlier was a member of the group with yellow crew-cut hair. “Soldiers! Soldiers!” The soldier pulled out a minigun, aiming at the group that had barged in. She was extremely furious at the lack of security outside the tent. “Raise your hands slowly! You are now intruding in a restricted area of the army, I have the rights to kill you immediately!” The other officers pulled out their guns as well, pointing them at the group. “Hehe… Kill us? How interesting! Foolish humans…” The group of black uniformed personnel did not show any expression. As for the yellow crewcut man, he pointed his finger at the woman and twirled it. “Ahhh…” Suddenly, the woman felt like her hands did not belong
to her anymore, and the gun fell to the ground as she was lifted and floated in midair, her head facing towards the ground.

“How can this be? The Weave is sealed in here, mid-grade spells can’t be cast at all!” The other administrators were shocked.

The yellow haired man looked at the female soldier’s thighs, his sleazy eyes revealing his lust. He then asked his leader for permission. “Not a bad pair of thighs! This stocking... You’re rather wanton on the inside. Boss, can I play with her?”

“Enough! All of you, stop now! Put down your guns!” The middle-aged officer ordered. Very soon, he looked at the leader of the black uniforms, his eyes revealing a complex gaze, “Are you here to mock me, Javis?”

“I don’t have time like that to waste, elder brother.” The huge bloke called Javis looked at the yellow-haired man, who immediately released the female soldier. He then took out documents sealed by the imperial seal.

“I’m here to clean up your mess... It’s a fact that the Special Forces are the true trump card of the empire, used to deal with things like this.” All the military personnel within the tent gasped after hearing the words ‘Special Forces’.

This was a covert team put together by the empire. They consisted of people with extraordinary abilities, and were supported by many resources and the newest technology, tasked with dealing with special occurrences like this.

More importantly, the members of this team were extremely lawless. Nasty news and rumours floated around the army about them, labelling every team member a crazed criminal.

“The empire has sent out the Special Forces, do those up the hierarchy believe that things have reached such a bad stage?” The female soldier collapsed to the ground, breaking out in cold sweat. She didn’t dare to look at the yellow-haired man anymore.

“Since it’s the orders of the empire, I have no objections!” The
commander looked through the documents and even saw the seals from his direct superior. He saluted in a military pose, before handing over a silver key over to Javis, “I hope you don’t let the superiors down!”

“Relax, I’m not you!” Javis smirked, the silver key melting as it entered his body through his skin.

Suddenly, a mechanical voice sounded in the tent. “Authority passed on. Shadow Weave control of Amdo City has changed, welcome General Javis.”

“Very good! Contact Mole and Wolf Fang for me!” Javis barked out his orders. Very soon, two soldiers wearing black uniforms appeared on the screen.

“Boss! Team 1 is in position!”

“Team 2 Ready!”

“Our target this time has the ability to enter souls. The feedback from the Weave and the estimation of the central neural net say that the possibility of the enemy hiding in a citizen’s body is extremely high. This is a list compiled by the city’s surveillance system, I want you to dispose of every member there!”

Javis raised his hand, and an extremely detailed, long list of names appeared. This was the list of suspects put together by the central neural net, where the Weave had sensed the greatest number of questionable energy spikes.

“Have you gone mad?” Javis’ brother looked at the list of names. There were over ten thousand names written in there! He howled once more, “These are all citizens of the empire! There may just be one culprit while the rest of them are innocent!”
ou’ve always been so soft, brother. It’s your greatest weakness…” Javis looked at his brother. They had similar faces, but their hairs were already turning white.

“I’m the person in charge right now. If not for the citizens, I would long since have applied for the Shadow Weave Team to destroy the entire city…”

Javis dug his ears, “Where are the soldiers? Remove unauthorised personnel from this tent at once!”

Suddenly, a group of armored troops entered and chased the middle aged officer and his subordinates away.

“People who get in the way should leave. Now… Let us play our game of hide and seek!” Javis looked at the screen, his extreme insanity spilling over into calmness, “Enable city surveillance. Lock down all spells using the Shadow Weave, and disable teleportation. Scan for any strange sightings and energy movements. Begin the purge!”

“Go! Action!” Mole and Wolf Fang waved their hands in a forward motion, and the armoured troops behind them began their operation to kill the people on the list.

“Hey, what are you trying to do?” Armoured troops entered a civilian’s home, and began shooting at the family of three who were having a meal at the dining table.

*Bang! Bang!* Very soon, the head of the man exploded, and his
body lay in a pool full of blood, followed by his wife and his daughter.
Although middle-grade spells in the empire had seals that needed unlocking and high-grade spells were reserved for soldiers and royals, commoners still had the right to use low-level spells. However, Javis had already locked down on magic in Amdo City, so all Rapid Shadows watches had turned to trash. Without those tools, these commoners were weak and small in front of the armored troops. Wave after wave of flying drone encircled the air around Amdo City, releasing messages of warning. “Troops of the empire are currently in the midst of capturing spies. All civilians are requested to stay in their homes, and not to leave. We will not hurt the innocents. I repeat, we are troops of the empire…”
Gunshots sounded from time to time, and there seemed to be a flurry of activity within the city. However, the soldiers had still managed to suppress the situation and keep it in control.
After all, ten thousand was still only a small fraction of the ten million plus population here. As long as their own names weren’t on the list, these citizens wouldn’t be brash enough to resist the executions.
As for Javis, he sat in the command post and watched the screen in admiration, enjoying the wine in his hand.
*Bang!* Yet another man was killed in his own home, and blood spilled everywhere.
“No! Don’t….” This was the plea of a young lady before her death, but the soldier did not even spare her another glance.
To obey commands was the basic duty of a soldier, and one who didn’t think for themselves was basically the ultimate weapon. Only resolution and strength would carry them through all situations and missions.
The mass killing was executed quickly, but there were still some
hiccups from time to time.
“Damn it! The Empire still has a hostile outlook on us extraordinary humans?”
A bespectacled young man howled at the gun pointing towards him. Suddenly, he was covered in flames as he turned into a malevolent creature that was filled with scales.
“Shoot!” The psi energy filled bullets only left white scars on the scales.
“It’s a mutant! Extraordinary person! Hurry and call for backup!” A squad leader howled at the communicator, but it was already too late.
*Zoom! Whoosh!* The monstrosity leapt forward, turning into a black line on the screen.
*Crash!* The armour that the troops wore was soon torn apart, spilling out broken white bones and blood.
“Huff… Want me to die? You first!” A human voice sounded from the creature’s mouth, as he ducked into the sewer quickly.
“Ding! Target’s identity confirmed! Second level civilian, Chengfei! Father… Mother…Current home address:… Beginning lock-on!”
The central system screen revealed pieces of information on the target, and on the left side was the appearance of the young man before he transformed.
“Good! These mutants are hereditary. Mole, find a couple of men to get rid of him. As for the rest, look for his parents and blood-related kin!” Javis ordered.
“Kiddo! You had a fun time earlier huh?”
The sewer duct was shattered into pieces, reveal the underground pipe network and the creature’s shocked expression.
A black-uniformed soldier stood in midair before the creature, looking down on him in mockery.
“Spawn of the witch! Meet your maker today! Before you die, I hope you can give me some fun…”
“It’s only a low-level bloodline carrier?” Javis nodded his head indifferently as he watched the young-man-turned-creature being brutally killed on the screen.

The expansion of technology and the constant purges from the empire had dropped the numbers of these mutants. Some of the present generation didn’t have strong powers. On the other hand, people who had obtained extraordinary strength through training rigorous techniques were still around. However, these two types of extraordinary humans were as weak as ants in front of the forces of the Empire and the Shadow Weave. As the killing in Amdo City continued, many innocent civilians who were caught in the crossfire ended up dead as well. There were also other unlucky ones like the mutant earlier, killed mercilessly without any proof or verification needed.

These mutants formed the underground world of each city, but after this event they were completely purged from Amdo city. However, if Amdo City could survive this ordeal, they would instead reach a very high level of society. As the massacre continued, the several thousand names on the screen disappeared, finally showing only the last few hundred targets.

“All teams on alert!” As the target area grew smaller, even Javis himself had turned more solemn.

……

*Whoosh! Whoosh!* A woman wearing an office outfit rapidly ran down the streets, as if a predator that was searching actively for its prey. Suddenly, a metal net appeared from the side of her vision. She leapt upwards for a distance of more than five metres, passing through a wall to disappear from the scene.
“I have to avoid the surveillance cameras, and also throw away any hi-tech equipments related to hidden energy and the Weave!” The office lady face changed as she crushed the Rapid Shadow on her wrist...

About ten minutes later, in an abandoned factory. Blood splattered on the walls like plum blossom in a dark corner.
The office lady took off her coat, revealing a white blouse underneath. She had a hole on her hand.
“Urgh…” However, she gritted her teeth and moved her muscles, forcing out a golden metal bullet out from her body. After expelling the bullet, she heaved a sigh of relief. She then tore part of her blouse to wrap the wound, and her face turned extremely pale.
“The empire is quite resolved this time. Was our organisation discovered?”
“No! Even if we were exposed, they would not need to take such drastic actions. Moreover, the whole of Amdo City is filled with gunshots… We were just unlucky to have been discovered… Were they after some powerful mutant organisation?”
The office lady smiled wryly, “Even if I learned a few body techniques and trained my Plum Blossom Fingers to rank 5, I can only run in the face of the Empire… If not for the other mutants diverting the attention from me, I would have been captured or killed by now… After they narrow down the radius of their hunt, the situation will grow even more troublesome. I need to leave this place as quickly as I can!”
She did not realise that a strand of her hair had already turned crimson red, with a phantom voodoo doll faintly floating behind her back.
[Host Command: Gather intelligence and conceal as much as possible! Chances of current target being discovered is too great! Abandon current target immediately!]
Very soon, the phantom of the voodoo doll left the office lady’s
body and merged into the darkness.
[Current location is unsafe, attempting to leave! Traces of spatial lockdown discovered! Attempting to break through!]
Light flashed within the dim eyes of the voodoo doll.
“Found you!” Javis howled from within the command post, “Gather up immediately. Attack!”
A dazzling white light flashed as the abandoned factory and the office lady within it disintegrated, turning into dark liquid before sizzling and evaporating into thin air, not leaving behind a trace.
[Beep! Whereabouts discovered, mode changed to breaking through!] The smile on the voodoo doll’s face turned even more sinister than before, as light flashed past its eyes once again.
*Boom!* The incendiary bomb which contained a huge amount of energy caused a quarter of Amdo City to be completely destroyed.
Javis and the other members of the Special Forces stood above the explosion in mid-air, surrounding the voodoo doll.
“First apostle found!” Javis snapped his fingers, and powerful spells took form nearby. The energy waves they radiated were no less than that of legendary spells!
“Damn it! That crazy Javis!” Javis’ brother, that middle-aged commander, couldn’t help but curse as more than a quarter of Amdo City was destroyed.
“I knew it… Handing over the Weave to him was not a wise thing!”

……

Leylin was shocked for a moment as he received the news in Thousand Bears City.
“Although they have made a large sacrifice, they still managed to capture the doll and destroy it, huh?”
Leylin nodded his head from Xavier’s old home in Thousand Bears City. His voodoo dolls were as strong as peak Breaking Dawn Magi, at the limits of rank 6. On the surface world this could afford one a throne, yet that strength was now obliterated by the special forces of a single empire.

Put in other words, the Monarch of the Skies, the Blazing Flames Monarch and the like would not meet with a good end if they came to this world.

‘I haven’t discovered the Mistress of the Night yet either. She could track my dolls down using the central neural net and the Weave, forcing one out into the open. Such swift and decisive action…’

Leylin evaluated indifferently, at the same time not harbouring much more hopes for the other two dolls. With the powers of this empire, discovering the other two was just a matter of time.

However, the goals of acquiring intelligence, data, and even stalling for time had been achieved, so it was already enough.

……

Leylin stayed in Thousand Bears City for some time, watching Xavier train recklessly in the Snakebite Fist. Curiosity had gotten
the better of him, and he’d bought a large quantity of medicinal herbs and training dummies for practice.

Another of the dolls was discovered during this time. However, several important cities had suffered collateral damage to destroy it, and the destruction and viruses spread by the doll reached millions. The government had started a donation drive for the victims of this tragedy, and Xavier’s sister Jill herself donated part of her pocket money.

As for the last surviving voodoo doll, it was currently hiding in the vast ocean. However, it was only a matter of time before it was discovered.

Leylin didn’t mind that, having it gather as much data as it could before being tracked down. Past that he didn’t bother with it. In any case, he was confident in infiltrating this world even without the help of the voodoo dolls, and could avoid the surveillance of the Shadow Weave himself…

Within an underground basement. Xavier had already moved most things out of this place making an empty space the size of half a basketball court. The area was littered with sandbags and dummies. Xavier did not have his shirt on, and he’d wrapped his fists with cloth as he began practicing the technique written in the Snakebite Fist Manual.

*Sssii!* Every punch of his seemed to soften his bones, letting them twist and contort in different ways. A hiss sounded with each fist thrown, as if it was a venomous snake that was striking.

“Huff… Snakebite Fist! Ruthless, insidious, and the trick lies in it being unexpected, striking at an angle that the opponent will not anticipate! Hence, I have to soak both my arms inside a special concoction broth in the beginning stages, to soften the bones…” Xavier muttered.

After practicing one stage of the technique, he went to the nearby water tank and picked up a white towel and dabbed into it. He then
applied the black substance on the towel onto his hands, not missing a single pore.
The blackish liquid seemed to burn his skin upon contact, and bored its way through the pores into the bones, as if wanting the melt the entire arm.
“Argh… Damn… It hurts so fucking bad…” This pain caused Xavier to curse. He stuffed another towel he had prepared into his mouth as his expression turned malevolent, and faintly let out the hissing roar of a beast.
This pain lasted for over half an hour before it subsided, leaving Xavier with cold sweat.
*Pu!* He spat out the towel in his mouth and looked at his own hand. Once the residue of the concoction was washed off it revealed fair, whitish skin with a glossy sheen.
“This…” He touched his own hand, and felt that the skin had gotten thicker.
“No… It’s totally adding on another layer of outer skin…” Xavier looked at it for a while longer before he took out a needle and pierced his own skin.
Resilient and smooth, just like hide…
He needed about half his strength to finally pierce through the skin, and even that only made him feel a pinch.
“Both of my arms have an increased piercing effect, and even my bones have turned softer, arriving at the minimum requirement of the Snakebite Fist…” Xavier nodded his head, and suddenly felt his heart ache a little, “The ingredients for the concoction is too expensive, and this pain…”
His heartbeat grew fast as he looked at the manual, “Just the elementary stage cost me all my savings. I even need to put my hands in poison in the later stages, giving my strikes a toxic effect. No matter what it doesn’t look like an orthodox skill, more demonic…”
In fact, Xavier’s guess was rather accurate. Back in the past, the Snakebite Fist was a manual used by the servants, so it was not anything great. However, it granted great power in a short period of time.

However, with the thinning of these bloodlines and the suppression from various kingdoms and empires, bloodlines had regressed over time. Manuals like the Snakebite Fist instead became treasures to be passed down.

‘If he continues to train like this, he’ll most likely deviate and go crazy. Even if he’s lucky enough to succeed, it’ll at most be some skill around the mid-grade Rapid Shadows…’ Leylin stood by the side and casually watched Xavier train. ‘Forget it… I’ve been a guest this long, it’s about time I pay some rent…’

*Po!* Leylin smiled as he reached out with his hand, and a black light entered the manual of the Snakebite Fist. As this light was too weak, Xavier who had been practicing diligently did not notice it. However, the ancient manual trembled, before it resumed a stationary position.

In a certain page within the book that recorded the runes of the black datura flower, the lines of the runes continuing to extend and fill out as the flower bloomed. Very soon, these lines lost their powers and did not move any longer. However, the black datura flower which was originally only quarter full was now halfway done, and energy waves seemed to be spreading from the runes.

*Hiss!* Naturally, Xavier did not notice these changes. However, as he punched, the hissing of a giant serpent sounded once again, causing the rune of the black datura flower to flash. An energy radiation that the original owner, a Magus, had placed into the book was now drawn out, as it began to move towards the only bloodline descendant around the manual.

*Hiss!* *Hiss!*

The Snakebite Fist’s hissing sound grew louder and louder, as the
vibration of the sound waves grew stronger. It was like a giant serpent had coiled itself around Xavier’s body.
The teenager had entered a miraculous state. His eyes grew dull as he unleashed punch after punch. The teenager now had enter a miraculous state. Black gas formed a phantom of a black snake behind him, its crimson eyes and tongue giving off a dangerous aura.
With the appearance of the phantom, the skin on Xavier’s arms began to molt. Once the old skin fell off it revealed scales underneath.
‘This energy is only to pay rent. However, it’s like a key that unsealed the radiation locked inside the manual.’ Leylin smiled as he watched the black gas engulfing Xavier whole. With his current powers, he could easily grant Xavier the strength of a Breaking Dawn. However, this did not stand in line with the principles of Magi, that trades demanded equal measures.
Moreover, such a spike of foreign power would definitely alert the Weave. Why would he do such a thing?
Hence, Leylin chose to pay his rent in equal measure. This had unsealed the energy radiation within the book, allowing Xavier’s ancestor’s intentions to be fulfilled.
‘Although your ancestor was a low ranked Magus, this is a start to having extraordinary abilities. Moving forward, it’s all up to you…’ Leylin smiled, his eyes filled with anticipation.
He did not do this because he was bored, but because wanted to confirm a few things through this boy. For instance he wanted to know whether mutant organisations existed, as well as other bloodline carriers.
After Xavier demonstrated his abilities, he would immediately turn into a magnet and attract many people who intend to use his powers. This would put the boy in a bit of a perilous situation, but that only served to give Leylin some excitement as he watched.
‘Don’t let me down, young man…’ Leylin looked at the figure that was still training in the basement. The phantom of the snake now grew larger, and Leylin’s smile grew wider…

Xavier only woke up from this unconscious state the next morning. He scratched his head and muttered, “Eh? What’s happened to me?”

*Pat!* Suddenly, a piece of wood from the table that he used to prop himself up had been ripped off, causing him to fall onto the ground again.

“What? This wooden table is really unsturdy?” The teenager exerted more force, and his eyes grew bigger as he saw that the wooden block were grinded into fine wooden chips which fell to the ground.

“This situation… It’s not that the table is weak, but I’ve gotten stronger…” Xavier stood up and looked at both his hands. Suddenly, he punched out— Piercing Strike!

*Swish!* A sharp whistle and roar filled the room, carrying the bellows of a giant serpent. A small hole was punched into the walls, causing dust and wood to fall.

‘It seems like my body has completely adapted to the movement of the Snakebite Fist… and this…’ Xavier looked at his hands, at the scales that had already grown on his skin.

“Complete mastery of the Snakebite Fist?!”
Xavier remained confounded over the next few days. His family inheritance, the Snakebite Fist that was extremely difficult to train in, had been mastered just like that? It was too good to be true, leaving the teenager so distracted he didn’t even notice the change to the manual. In the end, he broke seven to eight more items in the house, being nagged by his little sister until he finally learned to control his own strength and stop crushing things. However, Xavier soon put these issues to the back of his mind. There were more important things to consider.

“Greater Skill Proficiency Test…” Xavier clenched his fists as he looked at a date circled in red on the calendar, “I need to pass no matter what. The access to the Shadow Weave will give me stronger and more powerful spells, letting me find a good job and take care of my family…”

“Martial techniques only enable one to serve as a fighter or security guard even if you master them. Talents who can use high-level techniques are instead sought by many organisations…” Hence, Xavier did not care much about the strange phenomenon that occurred to him, and immediately delved into a questionnaire and database to study for the test. Leylin too did not idle around. He casually browsed through the books that Xavier had bought, and saw a small advertisement on one of them.
“Advance sale of answers, a 100% pass rate?” Leylin smiled as he called the number that was left on the note, and got an address. “Lad, it’s you who wants that copy of answers for the high level skills test?” Leylin met two muscled hoodlums at a certain corner of Thousand Bears City. Their bodies were littered with piercings and tattoos, the kind of people one would avoid on the street. They were the type to get into trouble with the police often. “Yes! Is it true, the 100% pass rate?” Leylin left his concealed state, looking like a youth who wore a jacket and jeans. He was also carrying the ad pamphlet. “Hehe… Of course it’s true!” A hoodlum exchanged gazes with his partner. “We sell everything here, do you know Rapid Shadow 5.0? We can even get one of those, so the answer sheet is definitely not a problem!” This expression on the hoodlum, as if he was looking at a fat juicy sheep, caused Leylin to sigh inwardly. However, he still put on an expression of unease, “Okay. But I want to see the item before we trade, and it has to be simultaneous!” “Of course, what do you take me, Azure Dragon, as?” The hoodlum grinned and turned around, “Follow me…” A group of thugs were littered across a messy underground basement. *Bash! Bam!* Many items fell to the ground, and a few pitiful wails resounded as well. The two hoodlums which had led Leylin here were now lying on the floor, with blood splattered around them. The group’s leader was here as well, one with the tattoo of a black rose on his face. Leylin proceeded to step on his head. “You have guts, huh? Not only did you use fake answers to try and fool me, you even wanted to rob me? Hmm?” Leylin threw a crumpled piece of paper on his face, “How many fingers do you think I should chop off?” It was a rare chance for Leylin to be this rampant. He didn’t need to
fear security cameras, since the underground wanted nothing to do with the country. Even their accounts book was by manual entry and not digitised.

As for any authorities colluding with them? Leylin looked at the boss in disdain and gave him another kick to his stomach, causing the boss to curl up like a prawn. It was not that Leylin did not think highly of them, but collusion occurred at a far greater level than that of this unorganised rabble.

“Do you want to live, or die?” Leylin looked at the boss toyingly, and the answer was immediate.

“So then, take out all the money you have on you! I only want cash! Also… Tell me which underworld organisation is the strongest here? And who is their head?” No matter how good a society was it always had its dark side. Several rounds of questioning gave Leylin the information he needed, and he left unworried that this group would seek revenge. They wouldn’t be able to find someone with the same looks Leylin had displayed here, and even if somehow they managed it that would be their bad luck, not his.

This encounter gave Leylin an understanding of how organised falsifying documents was here. Special providers had established good reputations in manufacturing identities, able to give him true blue documents that could withstand scrutiny. As for the source? It was the extra income of a government official working in the safety bureau.

‘Exploitation by selling real yet falsified identities? Why does it give me a feeling like I’m being tracked?’ Although Leylin complained in his heart, he still paid the money. After a round of genetic inspection, an identity card was now attached to his body. From this day forth he became a third-class citizen of the empire, not afraid of investigations.

The identity card allowed Leylin to rent a house, and buy a low-
grade Rapid Shadow and even surf the net. Of course Leylin could’ve just stolen someone else’s identity by transforming into them, but he wanted to witness the authentication process himself.

‘As expected. All this genetic inspection mumbo jumbo is a lie to trick the people. The true goal is to let the Shadow Weave scan a person’s spiritual sea, huh?’ The surprise had caused Leylin’s eyes to turn darker, and even harder to read.

His experiences with the Weave in the World of Gods was why he had revealed no traces just now. Even if he’d forcefully assumed someone else’s identity it wouldn’t have ended up well. However, through the help of that corrupt official, he was now an ordinary citizen living amongst ten billion others. Even Shar would not be able to find him.

“Hello, Mister Ley! This is your communication device, and the first generation Rapid Shadow. Since you don’t have any degrees or a greater skill certificate, you can’t use Rapid Shadow 3.0 or above…”

The service staff smiled apologetically to Leylin and took the cash that he handed over. This cash and the money used to buy his identity was funded by those unlucky hoodlums from earlier.

“Hmm… They are all portable retina displays, just a little worse off from my previous world…” Leylin looked at the internet that was similar to his past life, and the various tools and advertisements within. Nostalgia filled him, but it was quickly suppressed again.

“I also need to rent a place… Do you know anywhere that would suit me? I want a house that is close to the outer circle…” Leylin mentioned the area that Xavier and Jill were living in.

“This place?” The staffer was a woman in her twenties, with some slight makeup on. This question exceeded her authority, so she was rather stunned as she looked up at Leylin.

“I’m offering adequate compensation,” Leylin added immediately.

“No problem!” The lady very quickly replied, but it was unclear
whether it was the promised money that coaxed her or Leylin’s looks. “My house is near that area, so it’s quite convenient for me as well. However, you have to wait for me to end work…”

……

After busying himself for a while, Leylin immediately moved into a house close to Xavier’s. Not knowing of their new neighbour, the siblings carried on with their own tasks.
“A first generation Rapid Shadow… Everyone in the empire has one now…” Leylin looked at the watch that had a black crown labelled on it, and activated the thing.
“Ding! ZESKNG988273221 activated, beginning automatic identity scan… Identity confirmed and locked. This Rapid Shadow is for your personal use, if it is damaged please call…”
Once the startup screen faded, Leylin immediately moved to the most important feature of the watch.
“Ding! Identity locked, account confirmed! Current Balance: 3000 Seres.” A notification appeared on the Rapid Shadow, followed by a list of spells and their prices.
“Rank 0 spell— Illumination. 200 Seres per use.”
“Rank 0 spell— Increase Resistance. 300 Seres per use.”

……

“Rank 1 spell— Shield. 1000 Seres per use.”
“Rank 2 spell— Shadow Ball. 3000 Seres per use.”
“Ding! Authorisation currently limited to rank 2 shadow spells. Please obtain increased authorisation and buy a newer Rapid Shadow to upgrade…”
“The wizards from the World of Gods would definitely cry at this sight. They take painstaking effort to learn spells, but here people
can just buy and download the same things…” Leylin shook his head. All his money had been used to buy his identity and pay for his rent, so he didn’t have much left. However, he had enough to buy a couple of rank 0 or 1 spells for fun. 3000 Seres was not even the salary for a normal office job. If the wizards came over here, they would definitely be devastated and cry.

‘However, is it really that easy? Would the Mistress of the Night be so nice?’ Leylin rubbed his chin, “Purchase Illumination.”


‘It’s the same as wizards’ spells, but cannot be stored. If one can’t control these they’ll land in trouble easily…’ Leylin very soon discovered the disadvantage of this system. ‘Furthermore… Although it is in minuscule amount, the Weave steals spiritual energy from every person who makes a transaction…’
The Weave and its spells cost a lot of energy to maintain. Even with the World Origin Force to support her, she wouldn’t use it recklessly. This was why she’d adopted a system similar to the World of Gods. Every cast of a spell extracted a small part of the caster’s spiritual force.

“But this place takes much less from the caster…” Leylin smirked in disdain. “A.I. Chip, begin analysis!”

[Beep! Mission established, analysing 3d structure of the Shadow Weave…]
A stream of data ran past Leylin’s eyes. Compared to the World of Gods, the analysis of the Weave here was much faster and more accurate.

[Beep! ETA: 68 hours 23 minutes and 19 seconds.] [Beep! Level 3 spells and above sealed. 78.55% chance to breakthrough without alerting anyone. Proceed?] The A.I. Chip voice intoned.

“Not necessary. I can just go and take a greater skill test…” Leylin shook his head and denied the A.I. Chip’s prompt.

After toying with the Rapid Shadow, Leylin immediately opened his computer and browsed the sea of information that was available on it. The entertainment and leisure section was skipped as he moved onto the empire’s map, governance, military news, and various related issues. With Leylin’s processing abilities now, he managed to quickly browse through the information on the internet. Slowly, everything in the empire was revealed to him.
“Hmm? What’s this?” Leylin witnessed something strange amidst the sea of information. He opened a new page, entering a forum. “Explosive news! Extreme beauty found in City A! I’m flabbergasted after looking!” This thread attracted many fans, and even many had applied to follow it closely. However, many of the replies were ‘seeing is believing’ and the like… “I wanted to take a picture too, but I did not bring my communicator device!” “I brought mine, but the communicator device was spoilt. I couldn’t take any photos, but she was really gorgeous, even causing a few car accidents on the streets…” “Yea! That woman mysteriously left soon after that. Many rich people in City A have been offering sky high prices to catch a glimpse of her…” “Could it be a ghost?” Leylin gave that post a downvote. Many of the posts on the thread were similar to comments like ‘OP is trolling’ or ‘Absolute bait’, until a cocky guy posted a new image. “Haha… Those above me are retards! I happened to have the latest Rapid Shadow there, and I managed to take a photo!” A rank 8 existence wouldn’t leave behind an electronic image even if she suppressed her own aura and radiation. The forcefield around their body could contort the space around them, and even if a photo was actually captured or their true name discovered it would come with unimaginable power or even curses! The person posted a blurry image on this thread, faintly revealing an extremely seductive figure. Even the corner of her dress left people wanting more. “A photo from the front! I beg you…” Many online ‘wolves’ were asking for more on the thread, but there was no more response from the person who posted the image. ‘Hmm. City A. huh? But the Snake Dowager should have moved
quickly, not wanting to meet Shar…’ Leylin could only silently pray for the Snake Dowager. After all, Thousand Bears City was extremely far from City A, and required him to travel across half the empire.

Furthermore, with the Snake Dowager drawing all the attention to herself, he would be less likely to be found by the Mistress of the Night. He only had a partnership with that woman, so only after his own safety was assured along with an equal exchange did he even consider helping her.

As for now? The Snake Dowager used to live here in the Shadow World. No matter how much it had changed, she could surely adapt to it quickly. Were she to fail at even that, Leylin would choose to walk away from the place right away. After all, lousy teammates were extremely scary creatures who could cause the party to be wiped.

“The Snake Dowager is a rank 8 existence after all… I should believe in her…” Leylin shrugged his shoulders and began pulling the window curtains apart. From his position, he could clearly see Xavier’s two-storeyed home. The study room’s light was still on, which meant that Xavier was studying hard.

“Hmm! The skill test begins in three days huh?” Leylin took out his communicator and also signed up for the test. He’d wanted to obtain greater authority with the Shadow Weave, as well as higher status.

‘Once I get a mid-grade Rapid Shadow even some extraordinary abilities won’t attract attention from the central neural net. It’ll let me do quite a bit…’

……

The three days passed very quickly, and the day for the greater skill test had arrived.

Xavier exhaled loudly and looked at the mirror after packing his
things. Ever since that mysterious change in him, he’d matured greatly in his looks. His skin had grown smooth and glossy as well, causing even his sister Jill to be jealous.

“Okay, I need to succeed this time!” Xavier cheered himself on as he looked at his reflection, before walking out of the house.

“All the best, Brother!” Jill saw him out of the house, and prayed as Xavier’s figure left. Her voice reverberated through the alley.

“Woah… There’s so many people in here…” Even if he’d prepared himself mentally, Xavier was still taken aback at the sheer number of people at the examination venue.

“The greater skill test is one of the most difficult tests in the empire. Once one qualifies they can use middle-rank spells, equivalent to holding gun rights. Apart from that, many organisations will clamour to hire you… It’s pretty normal to have so many people apply…”

A familiar voice sounded from behind Xavier, and he turned around. He saw a young man standing there, his long sideburns causing him to look middle-aged.

“Why? You don’t recognise me anymore?” The young uncle patted Xavier’s shoulders and laughed.

“What? Un…Uncle Crowley!” Xavier immediately recognised the man from the aircraft.

“I told you not to call me uncle….” Crowley touched his own face.

“My beard and sideburns are a little thick, but in fact I’m still very young… I’m only twenty five! Twenty five!”

“But isn’t twenty five already considered an uncle?” Xavier disagreed inwardly, but he still changed his form of address.

“Mm. I remember Big Brother Crowley already has his license? Don’t you already have the latest version of the Rapid Shadow?” Xavier asked.

“Indeed. I’m not a candidate today, I’m exam staff.” Crowley placed an exquisitely made license in front of his chest, “Even if we
know each other well, don’t think that I’ll go easy on you… Each and every test is invigilated by a computer system as well as the authentication of the Shadow Weave. There’s no use in cheating…” After speaking, Crowley swept his gaze at the surrounding candidates. Some of them held gazes of unease, restlessness and jealousy.

“The authorisation of middle rank spells requires technical skills, and extremely strong concentration. People who don’t meet these two criteria can go home now… If you turn into an idiot in any case, we don’t need to take any actions because you have signed the indemnity form…” However, this advice did not bring about any effects. Crowley could only sigh as he bid Xavier farewell before entering the hall.

“Drats…” After Crowley left, Xavier felt the fervent gazes concentrate around him, as if able to melt his body. His senses had been magnified by the Snakebite Fist, causing him to feel uneasy.

“So…Sorry!” he muttered, before running to the side where less people were gathered.

‘There aren’t as many candidates here, surely they didn’t overhear my conversation with Crowley?’

*Bang!* As he was looking down on the ground, Xavier knocked into someone, and the supple rebound force sent him falling backwards as his bottom hit the ice cold floor.

“Are you alright?” This was a black-haired youth with black pupils, more handsome than even superstars. That apologetic look on his face was so warm it seemed like spring had bloomed. He reached his hand out and pulled Xavier up.

“I’m fine, thank you!” Xavier couldn’t deny this man’s looks, and they even aroused his ire. He refrained from punching that face.

“Hmm, you have great strength…” Xavier responded quickly and saw the physical appearance of the youth before he praised him. Xavier had already mastered the Snakebite Fist. Even if he
suppressed his own strength, and the technique itself didn’t excel in raw power, he had a good idea of his current physical prowess. He’d be fine even if a car crashed into him, but now he’d been knocked down easily.
“Yup, I like to train my body regularly!” The youth smiled and revealed a tidy row of white teeth.
This person was naturally Leylin. His appearance had not changed much from before, and was the exact same one on his identification card. Currently wearing jeans and a jacket, he’d decided to greet Xavier ‘by accident.’
“I’m called Ley, what’s your name?” Leylin asked rhetorically.
“Xavier! I’m Xavier!” Xavier answered only after he patted the dirt off his body and inspected his belongings.
The two quickly began to strike up conversation. With Leylin’s experience and knowledge, duping a youth was an extremely simple matter. Xavier had soon lost all traces of jealousy in his heart, feeling like this Ley was a talkative and humorous person.

“Mm, so you have a little sister. Thousand Bears City’s little bear biscuits are favoured by many girls. I should bring some with me when I come to visit,” Leylin said with a smile.

“You coming over to visit is already enough. You don’t have to be so courteous,” Xavier replied. But just as he was about to continue, a sharp bell sounded out.

Drawn in by the urgent sound of the bell, the crowd streamed towards the main gate in waves, like a limitless sea of people.

“Mister Ley, the examination is about to begin! Let us continue our chat later…” With Xavier’s physique, he was involuntarily swept away by the surging sea of people, leaving Leylin behind.

“Of course!” Leylin smiled. This sort of scene seemed to bring back a rather nostalgic feeling, and he also entered the examination hall.

“The examination has been split into 2 sections—a written examination and an on-site test. Candidates AS1 to SD100 please proceed to examination hall 3,” a mechanical voice echoed in the hall. Leylin followed its prompts, arriving at an exam hall.

At the destination were several silver-grey nutrition cabins.
metallic surface shone brilliantly, looking like something out of science fiction.

“Your written examination will be conducted in the nutrition cabins, so please find your seats.” A staff member with a blue exam badge entered the hall, scanning the crowd with a piercing eagle-like gaze.

“The exam will take a long time, but don’t worry about your constitution. We will prepare enough nutrient liquids for you.” The blue-badge staff member monitored them all and Leylin found his own nutrition cabin.

“Beep! Scan has been completed. Welcome, candidate GF87.” Ice-cold and solid… This was Leylin’s first impression of the nutrition cabin. Even he felt nauseous with the influx of nutrient liquid, so it would definitely be a form of torture for normal people.

A light flashed before his eyes suddenly, and a virtual exam room appeared. The room itself was limitlessly vast, but it only had a single hardwood desk with paper and pen on it.

“A virtual environment? Mm, this can eliminate cheating, and allows the examinees to be given different questions each. Unless one can break through their cabin’s lock, they can’t possibly cheat.” Leylin sat down, sweeping his eyes across the questions on the table.

His ability to gather information was shockingly quick. He’s crammed hard last night, so none of these questions could trouble him one bit.

“It’s a written examination, but many things can be tested in a virtual environment. It absolutely won’t be limited to just these unlimited questions…” Leylin smiled to himself before answering the questions at rapid speed.

In this environment, ordinary candidates were completely unable to perceive the passing of time. Leylin was of course the exception. After completing over ten examination papers, the surrounding
environment began to change. He was taken to an operating workshop.
‘Question 35— Use the given materials to repair this Rapid Shadow wristwatch.’
Leylin looked at the lathe here, and saw a broken wristwatch upon it, with several electric pens and other items scattered around it. Its screen had been smashed to pieces.
‘This must be the on-site test,’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘Unless the on-site tests directly open the limits of authority, and evaluate the use of mid-ranked spells?’
The current empire did not have sufficiently advanced virtual reality technology to simulate magic. Only Leylin’s A.I. Chip was able to do something on that level. After all, the flesh and soul were the same as spiritual force and matter. It was an extremely difficult matter to fuse the two together and analyse all their mysteries.
It was only with the space-time travel that his A.I. Chip had abandoned physical form. It had fused with his soul, and even then it took multiple advancements to reach its current level.
Crowley had changed into a well-ironed uniform, walking into the control theatre of the examination hall. His eyes sparkled as he saw a fair-haired beauty and greeted her, “Oh, Miss Bobbi! Did you discover any useful seedlings?”
“Your job is to patrol the examination hall, Proctor Crowley,” the beauty rejected him without hesitation. It caused all the other proctors to smile.
“Alright, alright! I’m impatient too. If we discover an outstanding mechanic, we’ll get a reward as well,” Crowley looked at Bobbi with a pitiful look in his eyes, “I think we need to discuss it.”
Bobbi looked at the monitor screen and then at her wrist before she finally agreed. “Five minutes, then…”
The other exam proctors kept their calm in the face of something so unexpected. An amorous glint immediately appeared in Crowley’s
eyes, and he followed Bobbi outside. Although on the surface it seemed as if there was melodrama here, with one person pursuing the other, their conversation was transmitted to the rest through secret means.

“Let’s have dinner tonight? A new restaurant opened up recently in the Champs Elysees,” Crowley spoke non-stop, his performance making the other proctors knit their brows and turn away. In secret he’d sent a short message to the woman, ‘I see that TY13 and the others are quite good. They’re worth recruiting and nurturing…’

“I don’t have any time tonight.” Bobbi said with a cold expression on her face, replying using their secret code, ‘Pay attention to them and protect them. The best thing is to fail them in their written exams, or chase them out of the examination hall. Don’t give them access to the on-site tests. Other than that, you seem to have missed one of them…’

‘I’ll take responsibility for Xavier, don’t interfere.’ Crowley’s expression changed.

‘I know, I know, but the thing is…’

‘As long as you understand. Let’s not say too much, the surveillance from central intelligence and the Weave is quite serious.’ Crowley finished his final message and then fell to the ground to release a heart-piercing cry, “Oh, Bobbi, my Bobbi…”

The fair-haired beauty smiled coldly and returned to the control room under the surveillance of many guards and onlookers.

‘What happened?’ She’d originally expected a lot of busybodies to circle her, but she was rather stunned to see all the proctors surrounding the screen. The melodrama from earlier did not attract any attention whatsoever.

‘Did my acting skills fail? Or am I under suspicion?’ Bobbi’s heart twisted. She saw a proctor come over to her with an extremely solemn expression on his face, as well as a look of ecstasy. ‘Bobbi!
Come and take a look.”
“Mm?” Bobbi leaned against the wall with a curious look on her face. In her heart, she secretly sighed in relief, ‘I wasn’t discovered!’ Afterwards, she saw an examination paper with a perfect score broadcasted on the screen.

“Ah, so such an exceptionally intelligent seedling appeared,” Bobbi sucked in a breath of cold air. She looked at the candidate’s information column. “So his name is Ley? It seems like he answered everything correctly, this is really…”

“Everything must be compared. Look at this,” the proctor produced another record. That was Leylin’s progress in repairing the Rapid Shadow wristwatch. Every movement flowed like the movement of clouds, filled with a unique sense of beauty.

“He does not hesitate in the slightest before committing to every action. This youth has already grasped the techniques of 2-dimensional objects. His intuitive use of materials and his confidence are monstrous…” Bobbi bluntly put it, her words full of praise.

“Mm. Xavier and Rambo aren’t much compared to him…”

“Are you ready to directly recommend him to the empire?” Bobbi asked.

“No, the written examination is the most basic part. What we need is a talented person with keen spiritual force, sufficient willpower, and tenacity to manipulate high-ranked spells…” The proctor’s words were very reasonable. After all, there were many good examples of those with a good foundation but terrible spell execution.

“Then let’s wait and see,” Bobbi said with a smile. There was some hesitation in her heart, however. ‘This Ley… Nothing was strange about him before, and even Crowley didn’t discover anything. He has this sort of intelligence, how abnormal…’
With a desperate round of eliminations, less than a hundred candidates remained for the second. Xavier was amongst them, his face filled with curiosity and excitement as he looked all around him.

“Oh, Xavier!” Leylin arrived by his side and clapped him on the shoulders.

“Mm, Mister Ley has also passed?” Xavier said with a smile.

“I just got lucky, haha…” Leylin scratched the back of his head and replied courteously.


“Brother Crowley! Let me introduce you. This is Ley… Wait, what did you just say?” Xavier suddenly seemed to feel a little dizzy.

“I said that your friend isn’t as simple as you thought. He placed first in the written examination!” Crowley smiled as he shook hands with Leylin. His eyes, however, were filled with unconcealed warning.

‘He feels rather nervous, and he has a similar bloodline aura…’ Leylin looked at Crowley then at Xavier, his smile deepening.

“Oh, this really is amazing.” Xavier made a big fuss. Crowley had to quiet him down forcefully, “Take note of the exam hall’s rules!”

‘You’re the one who disrespects the rules the most…’ Xavier protested in his mind, but he lowered his voice a little in the end.
That flame, don’t tell me it’s actually a Shadow Fireball?” The candidates below were completely stunned. The whole room erupted into laughter. Xavier wanted to dig a hole and throw himself into it. The embarrassed blush on his face extended all the way to his neck. “Such a shame… You scored so well in the written examination, but it turns out you’re a squib.” The proctor regretfully shook his head.

A squib was a normal person who was innately weak in terms of spiritual force. Although it wasn’t difficult for them to cast low-ranked spells, they were idiots at the practice of higher ranked spells. With their spiritual force unable to support them, they were like machine guns with no bullets.

“Pity… Final score: 0.1 Fail!” The military instructor announced loudly. Everyone around Xavier sighed. Just as Xavier began to walk away despondently, he saw Crowley walking towards him. “Don’t be upset, everything will get better soon,” he said, and Leylin keenly noticed a look of relief in the man’s eyes. He shook his head involuntarily.

‘Normally, the juniors take advantage of their elders. Seeing a senior do that to a younger man is quite rare… ‘ Leylin watched rather speechlessly as Crowley used his acting skills to score points with Xavier.

“Next, Ley!” The proctor raised his voice as Leylin calmly stepped
forward and walked into the pentagram spell formation.
‘It seems like my performance in the written exam scared them. Did I arouse some suspicion?’ Leylin saw the bewilderment in the proctor’s eyes, and laughed coldly to himself.
‘This Ley…’ Crowley fixed his eyes on Leylin’s back, ‘It’s very strange that our organisation never discovered someone like him. It’s very suspicious… I hope he’s a natural genius, otherwise…’
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*Zzzz!* A layer of concentrated black smoke formed beneath his feet, slowly sketching the outline of a person. The proportions of the four limbs were perfect and in harmony, only its facial feature left fuzzy and indistinct.

“Master…” A hoarse voice was emitted from the shadow servant’s body as he knelt down in front of Leylin.

“This intelligence… It’s the highest grade of shadow servant!” The proctor smiled fervently, “Ley! Your complete assessment score is 1, you gave an exceptional performance!”

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‘No wonder those attendants all became like this. So high-ranked mechanics are equivalent to nobles here?’ After seeing this, Leylin involuntarily sighed. No matter how science and technology progressed, humans in the end were still divided into different ranks.

Sadly, he himself didn’t have the slightest of interest in these things. He was too lazy to even send a reply.
That flame, don’t tell me it’s actually a Shadow Fireball?" The candidates below were completely stunned. The whole room erupted into laughter.

Xavier wanted to dig a hole and throw himself into it. The embarrassed blush on his face extended all the way to his neck.
“Such a shame… You scored so well in the written examination, but it turns out you’re a squib.” The proctor regretfully shook his head.

A squib was a normal person who was innately weak in terms of spiritual force. Although it wasn’t difficult for them to cast low-ranked spells, they were idiots at the practice of higher ranked spells. With their spiritual force unable to support them, they were like machine guns with no bullets.

“Pity… Final score: 0.1 Fail!” The military instructor announced loudly. Everyone around Xavier sighed.

Just as Xavier began to walk away despondently, he saw Crowley walking towards him. “Don’t be upset, everything will get better soon,” he said, and Leylin keenly noticed a look of relief in the man’s eyes. He shook his head involuntarily.
‘Normally, the juniors take advantage of their elders. Seeing a senior do that to a younger man is quite rare… ‘ Leylin watched rather speechlessly as Crowley used his acting skills to score points with Xavier.

“Next, Ley!” The proctor raised his voice as Leylin calmly stepped
forward and walked into the pentagram spell formation.

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On his way back to his villa, Leylin went to Xavier’s house to greet the siblings, especially making an appearance in front of Jill. Agreeing to visit them again, he returned to his room and closed the doors and windows. ‘Woman of the shadows… Mistress of the Night, it’s time I greet you.’ Leylin closed his eyes slightly, his conscient traversing boundless space in an instant as it arrived at the seas. An eerie smile emerged on the oily face of the voodoo doll as it emerged from the blue depths. “Target discovered. Attack!” Many warships and aircraft carriers equipped with psi energy generators surrounded it, numerous powered submarines gathering around it like sharks. Spells gathered at the malicious mouths of the cannons, causing a great sense of danger. “Hehe…” The smile on the voodoo doll widened, and the glint in its two black eyes dimmed before beginning to flicker even more vigorously than before. This slight change resulted in an extreme transformation of the aura of the doll. From a brutal, robotic puppet hunter, it had now turned into a bundle of unfathomable darkness. *Crack! Crack!* The voodoo doll turned its neck and scanned the huge warships with terrifying artillery, as well as the dense crowd of powerful spellcasters atop. “You’ve done the best you possibly can in terms of technology.
Unfortunately, your personal evolution has been stagnant…” Leylin shook his head, and then made a sound.

*Chii!* Piercing sound waves swept the area, and large batches of the navy collapsed with blood spurting out of their orifices.

“Infrasonic attack! Quick, activate shadow protection!” The surrounding warships entered a frenzy. Guided by powerful mutants and the empire’s special forces, they formed multicolour shields one by one.

Unfortunately, these shields had no effect at all. The normal people were mowed down like grass, and only the mutants with exceptional mental power were spared alongside a few powerful spellcasters.

“Your weak mental force makes it difficult to counter attacks on the soul…” Leylin believed this to be deliberate on the part Shar. In this scenario, no matter how far human civilisation advanced it would always remain in her grasp.

Things were harder with mutants and those with ancient bloodlines. While the chances were low, some beings of laws could still appear among their ranks. This was why they had to be exterminated.

‘Take rank 1 and 2 Magi, for example. They wouldn’t be able to fight my old world’s military head on, only turning to dust under their laser cannons. However, if they were to keep a low profile they could bewitch and hypnotise people in a bid to set up terrifying organisations, and to devastating effect…’

*Rumble! Rumble!* Having lost most of their crews, the warships and aircraft carriers sank into the sea. Those workers had been normal humans, and there was little they could do to withstand the might of Leylin’s soul when he intentionally attacked them.

Some aircrafts even began to smoke and spark, exploding violently. This was the disadvantage of using external tools; all sorts of accidents could occur without a controller.
“What do we do, Captain?” The survivors gathered on the few warships left, staring at the figure that was like a devil in the sky.

“We attack!” The captain, who looked wise and had a scar on his face, gritted his teeth, “This person’s attacks are only effective against normal humans. There’s little effect on us extraordinary beings so we can take him on. Do what you can, and have the rest retreat. Get the empire to draw up other methods to annihilate them!

“We should prepare an elite team formed entirely of extraordinary beings, which will definitely be enough to dispose of the enemy…” Light flickered on the wristwatches of those present, and shadow wings formed on their backs as large numbers rose to encircle Leylin in the air.

‘I see…’ Leylin took a look around and smiled slightly, ‘Besides high-levelled spellcasters, the special operatives of the empire also have a batch of extraordinary beings and bloodline carriers? This policy of having some pulling the rest forward really seems to be instinct for large countries…’

“Quick! Notify the naval headquarters! Apostle 3 has special offensive abilities and no ordinary being can get close to him. Only the Special Forces can do anything to him, call them in!”

The surviving ships were started at this moment, and some jumped on to lifeboats as they all left the area quickly. It was like there was a great ferocious beast watching them from behind.

Leylin paid no mind to them leaving. It was like a normal being stepping on a group of ants in their way, and then continuing on while paying no heed to the ants lucky enough to survive.

‘A rank 6 blood carrier, and other ability users…’ On the contrary, Leylin was slightly interested in this wave of elites surrounding him. The burly man at the lead was almost equivalent to rank 6 in the Magus World, and he also had the inheritance of an ancient bloodline.
'The empire even managed to buy over someone like him? It looks like Shar’s plans aren’t so simple…’

“What the hell are you?” The captain eyed the voodoo doll in front of him, astutely sensing the wisdom and intelligence in it. A single look from the doll had made him feel transparent, causing a chill up his spine.

“Heehee…” Unfortunately, Leylin had no intentions of communicating with beings like this. Under his control, the voodoo doll’s smile widened and became more eerie. Light glinted in its eyes.

*Rumble! Rumble!* The survivors who had managed to escape now found that the ocean behind them began to roar, the waves surging to over a hundred metres tall and swallowing them.

*Drip! Drip!* Crimson blood fell from the voodoo doll’s straw arm as it held onto the head of the scarred captain. His wide, terrified eyes had lost all signs of life.

The voodoo doll stood silently in the sky, and only after a long while did it turn back, looking towards a certain area.

“I imagined you would do something, Mistress of the Night…” A layer of light appeared from the voodoo doll, revealing Leylin’s figure.

“Heehee… those are just some pawns. If you like it, what does it matter if you killed a few more?”

The Shadow Weave flashed, and a young girl dressed in black walked over leisurely. She had a pair of beautiful and long eyes, and a face that was just exquisite. There was a hint of a mischievous smile on the corner of her lips, and she seemed like a little sister you’d find living next door who loved playing tricks.

If the Snake Dowager’s beauty was that of maturity and charm, Shar was like an orchid that was very approachable. The Mistress of the Night sized Leylin up and down, eyes full of un concealed curiosity.
“I thought the Dowager would be the only one coming, I didn’t expect she would invite you as well. The smell of this bloodline… Hehe…” Shar’s voice was like a clear spring, graceful and beautiful.
The smile on her face grew bigger, and she held on to her belly as she started chuckling, “Haha… I never thought that woman would actually face such a disadvantage as to have a portion of her bloodline ripped out. There’s nothing more delightful in the world!”
The grace of shadow force evidently allowed Shar to see through Leylin’s bloodline with a glance. The fact that Leylin was not feeling the pressure from the world was enough proof of his identity.
“While I may have separated from her bloodline, we are currently allies,” Leylin said with a steely expression.
“That’s true… you are her ally now…” The smile on Shar’s face froze, and turned austere.
In the World of Gods, she wasn’t exactly one who was benevolent or loved peace. Gods lost their immortality and part of their personality in the astral plane, but some things would still remain the same.
“So… You came here just to see me?” Shar asked, and Leylin suddenly felt a huge pressure applied on him. Part of it came from the world itself. Large amounts of origin force surged forth, seemingly able to destroy his puppet in an instant as it tried to search for his main body.
“It isn’t quite convenient here… shall we go somewhere else?” Leylin looked exceptionally calm in the face of this threat, motioning for Shar to go first. Then, with his five fingers stroking lightly, the space seemed to open like a curtain, revealing spatial cracks and turbulence.
With a challenge like this, Shar naturally felt no fear. She was all
smiles as she took the first step, and the surrounding space immediately changed as they reached the boundary of the world. The great origin force of the Shadow World gushed and tumbled, glimmering with a hint of civility. The huge Shadow Weave revealed itself, acting like a backbone that controlled everything. Leylin watched this magnificent scene and looked back at the black-veiled girl, “Is this your goal? Using the Weave to control everything, and then becoming the world itself…” “If you invited me here to say that, then you can die now…” Powerful shadow force twined around the former goddess, the power of multiple laws signifying her power as a rank 8. Leylin merely laughed in answer, asking, “Should I call you the Mistress of the Night, or Shar?” With this sentence, the earth seemed to shatter! Her secret having been seen through, Shar’s expression changed! “You’ve been to the World of Gods?” she asked, a silent acknowledgement of her identity. Beings like her would not be so easily startled by quibbles, and since Leylin was already so sure she wouldn’t be able to change his thoughts anyway.
“Mm, I’ve been there. The world makes one wish for a leisurely life, and it’s filled with all sorts of interesting laws…” Leylin chuckled, and then looked at the weird girl, “I’d never have thought that the shadow girl didn’t actually fall, instead coming to the astral plane…”

“Faith is powerful, but it’s also a cage for us gods…” Shar grew dazed, seemingly recalling past memories, “When we were on the verge of falling in the dusk of the gods, I actually managed to see through some things. No matter how great it is, restricted power is worth nothing. In comparison, the Magi’s approach to the truth…”

“Even so, you were the only one able to make a real change…” Leylin’s eyes glinted as he inquired subtly.

“Hehe… you don’t need to try sounding me out. I was the only one who crossed the crystal sphere to come to the astral plane. Devoid of faith, we gods are like fish out of water, and things become dangerous for us. Passing through the crystal sphere in the face of imminent death requires a great amount of courage and luck. I was the only one fortunate enough to succeed…”

Shar’s lips quirked up in a smile, “I’ve answered your questions. Now, you can fall at ease …” In the next moment, she suddenly attacked!

*Rumble!* The entire Shadow World seemed to come to life. Great origin force descended through the Shadow Weave, somehow boosting her strength past its limits as she seemed to reach the peak
of rank 8.

[Beep! Target has locked on to host’s aura, is tracking. Countdown…] The A.I. Chip warned in blood red. Leylin understood that she’d be able to find his main body sooner or later if he didn’t do anything, such was the terror of a peak rank 8 Magus!

With his clone here, Shar could connect to his main body, injuring it grievously or even killing him along with it.

“The Shadow Weave allows you to completely wield extraordinary strength. It can even amplify World Origin Force… As expected of the Mistress of the Night, your wisdom is as dazzling as the stars…” Leylin was also one of those beings of laws that did not have to worry about the World Origin Force. This method was like a breath of fresh air for him. Shar’s usage of it wasn’t something simple, instead optimised, boosted, and altered slightly.

If World Origin Force was crude oil, then the Shadow Weave allowed her to process it, separating it into diesel, gasoline, and asphalt at different times, making it more usable. Leylin’s own origin force weapon was similar, though it held a few more advantages. Although the Shadow Weave gave Shar power, it restricted her movements. On the other hand, the origin force weapon could adapt to various worlds.

*Pilala!* The raging Shadow Weave emerged from different areas, like a powerful electric grid that trapped Leylin within.

“If these are your last words, then I humbly accept your praise…” Shar’s sweet voice sounded, with no bloodlust whatsoever. However, at this moment, she had already issued a death penalty to this being of law under her.

Before she reached the peak of rank 8 and completely fused with the Shadow World, Shar still had a weak point. She wouldn’t be able to break out of a siege of peak rank 8s, which was why she couldn’t let the Magus who knew her secret leave!
With her foresight, she naturally knew that Leylin’s main body was at most a rank 7 Magus, and could likely be heavily injured or killed by her. Her killing intent multiplied, and under her control the Shadow Weave swept towards him.

With the support of a large world’s origin force, even one with the power of a rank 8 Magus would definitely be in trouble under this one move!

“It’s been a pity, Miss Shar… We could have discussed more possibilities…” The A.I. Chip’s rays glinted in Leylin’s eyes, and he suddenly sighed.

*Rumble!* All of a sudden, a streak of green flames blazed on the voodoo doll’s body, and quickly spread all over its body.

“Are you trying to break all connections? Dream on!” Shar snorted, and with a wave of her hands, powerful restrictive force descended.

“You overestimate yourself.”

*Sou!* Amidst the green waves, Leylin’s figure suddenly turned into a meteor. As if he was committing suicide, he crashed into the Weave that was closing in on him.

*Boom!* All of a sudden, a feeling of extreme danger struck Shar’s soul. It was a warning of failure, instantly reminding her of the danger she felt during the dusk of the gods. In fact, this sensation was even worse than what she’d felt back then!

“What’s going on?’’ Shar suddenly retreated, numerous spell rays flickering on her body. Circles of origin force formed an armour that began to envelop her. In what had been a sea of origin force, within the palace, the girl in the crystal slowly opened her eyes, a trace of fear appearing on her expression!

*Buzz!* Turbulent! Immense! A conscient that had initially been in a deep slumber suddenly awakened as it descended.

*Whoosh!* The Shadow Weave extended, causing the little green meteor to jump out of the siege and leave behind a bright curve in
the sky before disappearing.
Shar knew that the Magus had already completely destroyed all traces of the puppet, and it would be impossible to pursue him further. Now, however, her focus was on something else.
“What’s going on? What’s with this huge sense of danger that could harm my life? And the World Will?” Shar closed her eyes, as if interacting with the great shadow will. Only after a long time did she open her eyes.
‘It sensed an aura dangerous enough to kill me?’ Shar bit her lips, looking serious.
The more powerful a being was, the more afraid it was of death. This applied even more to her, who had been lucky enough to survive the dusk of the World of Gods.
‘What is it? A Netherese flying city? An extraordinary divine weapon? Or is it the Earthen Plate of Destiny?’ All sorts of thoughts streaked through her mind, one after the other. Following that, she turned towards a region of the empire. Although she had not been able to pinpoint his location, she’s still found the general vicinity.
“Allsnake… you’ve truly found a great helper this time…” Shar sighed, her body merging into the shadows. A terrifying web of darkness encircled the region Leylin was in under her command, surging in the shadows.

……

Thousand Bears City, within the bedroom of a villa. Leylin opened his eyes slightly as a trace of black lightning flickered in the room. Some of the threads that had tried to pursue him were disconnected and swallowed, dissolved by darkness. Only once the process was complete did he stand up, recalling his meeting with Shar.
‘Most of her divine immortality has been converted…’ Leylin
sighed with a hint of pity. The divinity was the most important part. Godly power of laws could be devoured completely and used in an instant, allowing a Magus to multiply their strength. However, the reverse was not true. Having changed, Shar was no longer a god. Even if Leylin devoured her, it would be great if he got even a fifth of the law of shadows.

That small fight using his avatar had allowed him to determine Shar’s strength. She was near the peak of rank 8, only a few steps away from the boundary of rank 9! This strength exceeded that of the Snake Dowager.

If Shar had beings of laws helping her, even Leylin would have to consider retreat. Just like the wars between large countries in his previous world, these battles in the astral plane were all for profit. If there was little profit out of it along with the danger of injury or curses, nobody would want to fight.

‘But it’s too clean… the whole Shadow World doesn’t seem to have any other rank 7s aside from Shar…’ Leylin felt a deep chill inside. There were still a few beings of law under the Snake Dowager’s rule. They’d made deals with her, allowing her to watch over them without worry. However, there were no auras of law in the current Shadow World anymore!

‘Shar is from the World of Gods, after all. She wouldn’t want her secrets discovered by other Magi before she reaches the peak of rank 8…’ Leylin sighed. He had a feeling the rest of those existences had probably met their ends.

“The Snake Dowager should have discovered this by now, right?” He pushed side the curtains, his eyes seeming to pierce into the boundless starry skies and into another part of the empire.

……
There was an ancient castle sitting atop a hill at the outskirts of a bright city. Such medieval structures had grown rare in recent times, becoming tourist sites more than anything else. A lady with a long black umbrella was leisurely walking across a shady pathway. She’d worn a coat of mink fur, and her tall black heels created piercing noises as they hit the ground. With her black silk gloves, she seemed elegant and posh. Under the headscarf was the face of a middle-aged woman. Her long eyes and lips were smeared with bright red makeup, giving her an enchanting look. The Snake Dowager had evidently learnt from the previous lessons, and restrained much of her charm. While her current figure was beautiful, it was not enough to create trouble and suffering for the country. Raindrops dripped onto the roads and created a lively rhythm. The soil was all muddy, yet nothing seemed to stick onto her high heels. However, as there weren’t many people nearby, nobody discovered this startling scene.
1082 - Kidnapping

“A lilux, Jar Spectre, as well as a guardian of the mermaid clan, the prophet Kalle…” The Snake Dowager’s eyes held a trace of sadness, “You should have chosen me from the beginning…”

She walked directly into the ancient castle, but the dozing security guard did not notice her at all. Intensely familiar with everything in the castle, she continued on her way and walked into the basement. She finally arrived in front of a wall.

The dirt yellow manson stones were covered with the mottled marks of history. The likeness of a two-handle vase had been carved in there with simple skill.

“In Allsnake’s name…” the Snake Dowager bit her lip, a trace of blood appearing and piercing into the body of the wall. The entire wall seemed to collapse, revealing a pitch-black passageway.

In the end, she arrived in front of a simple altar. There she saw fragments of ceramic, radiating an atmosphere of chilling horror with concentrated resentment. The grudge had materialised even after thousands of years.

“Jar Spectre, so this is what became of your body?” The Snake Dowager picked up a dirt-yellow fragment of the vase, traces of black patterns wandering on the surface as they let out hissing sounds. It seemed like a thousand snakes were flowing over each other.

Having gotten what she wanted, the Snake Dowager quickly left.
The passageway was discovered by a cleaner later, becoming a popular tourist destination.

……

Another bright and beautiful day dawned in Thousand Bears City. “Ah…” Xavier stretched lazily and sat up in bed. “Oh dear, I didn’t manage to get my license again. I still have to ask for money from my parents at this age… Shouldn’t I hurry up and find some odd jobs to do?” He kneaded his temples in worry as he put his clothes on. The imperial university was expensive to go to, and normal families could not afford it. Xavier had grown a bit of pride over his life, and he didn’t want to use up his parents’ money after he grew to adulthood. ‘Tiring jobs like waiting tables don’t have high salaries. I should become a bodyguard instead! My physique was crafted well by the Snakebite Fist, giving me great attack power. I can earn in excess of ten Thousand Seres a month…’ His self-confidence was greatly bolstered by his sturdy physique and willpower from training in martial arts.

Several minutes later, he walked into the living room with toothbrush in mouth. He saw fried eggs, bread, and milk on the table, with a note stuffed under the plate. “Jill’s already gone to school?” The scene of a little girl cooking breakfast from atop a stool appeared in his mind, and a smile blossomed on Xavier’s face. Washing his face and rinsing his mouth, he sat down to eat breakfast and turned on the television. The television screen appeared in midair, broadcasting the clear and simple voice of a female anchor, “Welcome to the morning news. Let’s begin with economy. A few days ago the Imperial Corporation declared that…”
Suddenly, the expression of the female anchor changed.
“Breaking news! Thousand Bears City’s Golden Flower Primary School was attacked by an unknown party this morning. The casualties are currently unknown, and the police department and firefighters have hurried to the scene. Five different organisations have presently taken responsibility for this attack…”
A sudden scene of dense fireworks appeared behind the anchor, showing a primary school. The police had erected a perimeter of warning tape, and faint weeping sounds could be heard from within.
*Bang!* Xavier’s expression turned blank, the cup of milk in his hand shattering on the floor.
‘That’s Jill’s school!’ He immediately rushed out, pulling out the door with so much force that a hole the size of a fist was formed where the handle used to be.
“Mm, has it begun?” Next door to Xavier, Leylin also walked out from his residence. He saw Xavier rushing hot-bloodedly to Golden Flower Primary School, strolling behind him calmly with his own breakfast in hand.
‘Jill! Jill! You must be alright!’ Xavier looked into the distant horizon. He could already see the dense black smoke over the school building, an ominous sign. Sirens could be heard in the distance.
The closer he got, the worse the traffic jam became. There seemed to be a long queue of maglev trains on the tracks, with numerous traffic policemen maintaining order.
“Damn!” Xavier ferociously slammed his taxi’s door open and fled. In a few moments, he had disappeared to the end of the street, with money left carelessly on the seat. The driver’s mouth gaped as if he had seen a ghost.
With his agility and the fact that he was not all that far from the primary school in the first place, Xavier very quickly reached the
“Stop! What are you doing?” An armoured policeman blocked him from going ahead, examining him closely.
“...I’m the brother of a student here, her name’s Jill. How is she?!” Xavier asked in a panicked voice.
“The robbers have taken hostages, we are currently working hard to rescue them,” the policeman’s gaze turned into a pity, “I promise you that we will do our absolute best to rescue them. Now please, go over there to register and wait...”
He pointed at an empty space where a group of parents had gathered. Many mothers were weeping openly.
“Damn... I want to go in!” Xavier’s face flushed with rage.
“I’m sorry, that is impossible!” The policeman’s expression changed, “Don’t make things difficult for us...”
Seeing a gun’s black muzzle, Xavier rolled his eyes, “Fine, I’ll leave. I’m leaving...” As he slowly left and walked around the school, he arrived outside an enclosed wall. There were policemen here as well, but it wasn’t as densely protected as the last area.
“Okay, now!” Xavier deeply breathed in and emitted a serpent’s hiss, suddenly becoming a shadow which rushed forward.
“Stand still!” “Shoot!”
A cacophony of voices could be heard, as well as dangerous gunshots. However, Xavier had displayed his extraordinary power here, bending into an S as if he was a snake to dodge all the gunshots. He barely flipped over the wall into the campus, and exasperated howls sounded behind him.
“Jill! Jill!” Xavier was extremely panicked in his heart, but his thoughts were eerily calm. He began to stealthily make his way towards Jill’s classroom.
The once happy campus had now become hell. The corpses of several students and teachers littered the hallway, the fresh red blood unpleasant to the eyes.
‘It’s impossible, Jill would not have fallen here…’ Xavier encouraged himself to move onwards, silently drawing closer to Jill’s class.
The robbers had evidently based themselves here, congregating together. However, their attire was extremely strange. They were wearing black wind jackets with sunglasses.
‘They don’t look like robbers…’ A faint thought arose in Xavier’s heart. However, at this point he already had no choice. After seeing the crowded figures and their firepower, he began to feel a little anxious.
‘Right, the ventilation ducts… If I can restrain my life undulations, I can hide.’ Xavier’s eyes brightened. He used Snakebite Fist to control his entire body’s muscles and blood flow. Under the mysterious force, his blood slowly grew cold. His life undulations also became increasingly weak, until he resembled a rock on the ground.
*Bang!* A ventilation duct was kicked open, and Xavier slowly climbed towards the school building.
“Why do we have to act like robbers, boss? Can’t we just act directly?” Nobody was alerted to Xavier’s presence, exchanging words which made his heart beat faster.
“It’s the mayor’s fault, he said it would be bad influence. Well, someone else will take his position after this, that’s the price for provoking the Special Forces…”
‘The empire’s Special Forces Division?’ Xavier’s heart turned cold. He felt like he had interfered with some disastrous affair.
“Ah…” Just at this moment, the sound of a girl crying out in alarm could be heard. Xavier’s eyes widened in response, ‘It’s Jill’s voice!’
He crawled across at lightning speed. Looking through the opening in the ventilation shaft, his eyes almost popped out of their sockets at the scene he witnessed. Within the classroom, a teacher’s body
had slumped over the desk. Many little girls were crouched on the ground crying, with a huge man dragging Jill up.
“So annoying!” He pinched a nerve behind Jill’s head, which made her immediately faint.
“Let go of my sister!” Seeing this scene, Xavier couldn’t hold back anymore. He jumped down from the ventilation shaft directly.
“Oh, so there was one left?” The man in the wind jacket looked at Xavier and at the black apparatus in his hand, “It’s a shame he’s too old. There’s no value in nurturing and brainwashing him…”
“Let go of my sister!” Xavier roared as he charged ahead. However, he was blocked by a slanted-eyed youth with a pallid face. Heavy makeup was smeared on his face in thick layers, and he swiped his tongue across his brightly coloured lips, “Give this one to me, he seems rather amusing,” he said with an evil expression.
A Rapid Shadow wristwatch flashed with light, and a wall of shadows stopped Xavier in his tracks.
“Alright, but pay attention to the time,” the middle-aged man nodded. He threw Jill and two other girls over his shoulder and left.
“Damn it, DAMN IT!” Xavier’s expression flushed a deep red. His arm suddenly softened, and like a snake with sharp fangs he shattered the shadow wall into pieces.
“Oh, a martial artist? I like it!” Slant Eyes seemed to brighten, “I know from experience that trash like you can last a little longer, so don’t disappoint me…”
“Don’t even think about stubbornly resisting. I’ve already surpassed high-ranked mechanics and can directly connect to the highest layer of the Shadow Weave. Your martial skills are just a joke compared to high-ranked spells.”
“Sss…” A black shadow flashed past. Xavier reappeared in front of Slant Eyes, his fingers stabbing directly into his throat.
How... Is this possible?” Slanted Eyes fell to the ground in disbelief.
“Even if you have powerful spells, your neurons are still too weak. Your processing ability cannot keep up at all... Before you even cast a spell I could kill you over ten times!” Xavier rushed in.
“Jill! Jill!” The deadly and vicious Snakebite Fist was now used by Xavier to a terrifying degree, and very soon the remaining kidnappers had their throats torn apart, dying in a gory fashion. He went up to the roof, but Xavier could only see an aircraft flying off in the distance.
“No...” Xavier fell helplessly to the ground.
“I never thought that I’d be late!” A sigh sounded beside him, and Xavier unconsciously retaliated. However, the powerful Snakebite Fist was stopped, and the other person spoke out, “I’m not your enemy. I’m here to help.”
“You... Crowley?” Xavier recognised him and suspicion filled his face, “Why are you here?”
“I’ll explain later, right now we need to leave this place. Follow me!” Crowley’s expression was extremely solemn as he dragged Xavier and left the place. Still, Xavier shrugged off the man’s hands once they reached a corner of the school.
“What exactly is happening?”
“I said it before, I’m here to help!” Crowley put on an extremely
serious face, “Do you know the identity of those people who abducted your sister earlier?”
“The empire’s Special Forces!” Xavier spat out the name. Learning of this fact, all his hopes of police help had been dashed.
“Nn, they’re lackeys of the Special Forces!” There was a tinge of hatred in Crowley’s voice, “Not only do rampantly kill adult bloodline carriers, they capture our children and brainwash them into becoming their own recruits!”
“Bloodline carriers? Could it be…” Xavier suddenly recalled the contents of his family’s inherited book.
“I implicated all of you this time. You’d best give your parents a call, and let them avoid all risks…” Crowley said apologetically.
“Wait…” Xavier shrugged his hands. He’d learnt too much today, causing him to feel dizzy.
“Who exactly are you? Why did you say ‘you all’?” Wariness crept in Xavier eyes, and every muscle of his bulged like that of a leopard about to leap on its prey.
“I belong to the Bloodline Alliance, an organisation formed to resist the empire. Our activities in Thousand Bears City attracted the attention of the Special Forces…” Crowley said slowly.
“You criminal ringleader!” Before Crowley could finish speaking, Xavier sent out a punch that carried the phantom of a black snake. *Hiss!* The same giant snake serpent appeared behind Crowley. He punched out the same way, accompanied by the hiss of an ancient snake. Xavier’s fist was caught in Crowley’s palm, no damage done to either part.
“Snakebite Fist?!” Shock filled Xavier’s face. “Only a weakling will resent others, and disregard the true target!” Crowley let go of Xavier’s hands, “Your gift in practising the Snakebite Fist has far exceeded my expectations. Even those so-called ‘geniuses’ would not hold a candle to you…”
“Who exactly are you?” Xavier stressed each syllable. “Me? I’m known as Crowley, but my name is Xanier! Deruze Xanier! Can you see the connection now?” There was warmth in Crowley’s eyes. “Xanier! The ancestor that left us the Snakebite Fist! How? Doesn’t that mean you’re over five hundred years old?” Xavier’s first instinct was disbelief. “There are many things you don’t know about the world. Don’t be easily convinced of truth and lies… I don’t hope for you to believe me anyway. What? Don’t you want to save your sister anymore?” Crowley smiled. “How do we save her? Crow… Xan…” Xavier stammered. If what Crowley said was true, then wasn’t this man his great great great grandfather? “Crowley would be fine!” Crowley smiled, and then his expression turned solemn. “There is a Special Forces base outside Thousand Bears City. The young bloodline carriers they abducted will be detained in that place, undergoing a rigorous selection process before the best are sent over to the empire. So? Do you have the guts to go with me?” “Of course!” Xavier clenched his fists and nodded his head with resolution.

……

‘Bloodline Alliance?’ Leylin stood on the side of the street. He’d seen everything, including Xavier’s conversation with Crowley. ‘According to Xanier’s words, this organization is the one that most bloodline carriers are gathered in… These are the descendants of existences who had wielded laws, but they are now reduced to this state… It’s rather sad…’ Leylin shook his head. “Hey handsome, do you wanna chat?” A melodious voice sounded
by the side of the street. Leylin turned around, only to see a young lady whose earrings reflected the sunlight.
It took him a while to think, but then he smiled mysteriously, “Sure!”
Some time later, the two of them were sitting in the partitioned room of a cafe.
This place was rather exquisite in its design and service, and the couple’s room was also good at isolating sound. The waiter served coffee along with snacks shaped like little animals before quietly closing the door.
Leylin waved his hands, and a layer of blood red light enclosed the room. Only then did he turn back to look at the beautiful lady. “Snake Dowager! You actually dare look for me now? Aren’t you afraid of being caught by the Mistress of the Night?”
Leylin already felt that this girl had been possessed when he saw her. The Shadow Weave could have easily discovered this connection of spacetime.
“It’s alright… I’m using the chipped body of the Jar Spectre to contact you…” The young lady smiled, flashing the phantom of a shattered piece of clay and revealing the power of laws within it.
“The Jar Spectre was an existence on the same level as me back in ancient times. It possessed the law of stealth, and its pristine waters could immediately travel to any part of the Shadow World…
“However, it’s now been reduced to this broken piece…” Complex emotions whirled across the Snake Dowager’s face, “It seems like you’ve discovered it as well? The Mistress of the Night is the only being of law remaining alive in this world…”
Leylin spoke solemnly, “So then. Why take the risk to contact me?”
“An exchange of information, and a plan moving forward.” This girl before him was rather beautiful originally. However, the Snake Dowager’s possession had elevated her aura, and her wry smile seemed to hold a hint of coquettishness to it.
“She’s already gotten rid of all beings of law in the Shadow World, and has it under tight surveillance using the Shadow Weave. This psi energy of hers has replaced all sorts of fuel in the world as well… I have no doubt that she could will the civilisation of the entire world destroyed as long as she wants it…”

The Snake Dowager was a native of the Shadow World, after all. Since she wanted to seize control of the place, she’d ideally want it intact. Even then, in a crucial moment she most probably wouldn’t care about the destruction of an entire civilisation. This was a common trait amongst beings of law.

Leylin thought over it for a while. She was his ally right now after all, so he decided to chip in with some information, “Here’s some more. My voodoo doll already met the Mistress of the Night…”

“What?” A nervous expression appeared on the Snake Dowager’s face.

“Relax, she didn’t manage to lure me over. I didn’t suffer any serious injury either.” Leylin’s retort had been immediate, he’d known what she was thinking of.

“My apologies… The Mistress of the Night is someone who excels at convincing people. The Jar Spectre had been lured by her…” the Snake Dowager said apologetically.

“That’s alright,” Leylin nodded his head and continued. “From what I can see, I didn’t meet her true body. It was just an avatar.”

“An avatar! Then where is her true body at?” This information was rather important, and could determine the victory and ownership of a world. Hence the Snake Dowager pressed on.

“I don’t know…” Leylin shook his head and saw the Snake Dowager turning silent. He then asked, “Your Excellency, what plans do you have now?”

“I’ll first rope in the strength of the bloodline carriers… and there are several other things for me to do as well…” The Snake Dowager bit her lips and pointed her finger out, forming a strange
rune in the air.
“This is the imprint of the Jar Spectre. You can contact me through it anytime, it can’t be seen by the Weave.”
“Alright!” Leylin reached out his right hand, allowing this rune that looked like a jar with two ear-shaped handles to enter him through his skin.
[Beep! Host obtained ‘Jar Imprint’! Effects: Able to converse with another imprint holder unlimitedly in the Shadow World. The connection applies before all others in the world. Explanation: The ancient Jar Spectre’s original body is a giant jar with two ear handles. Legends have it that the entire water source of the Shadow World comes from it, and its two ears can listen to any information in the Shadow World!]
“I’ll need your help in roping in the bloodline carriers!” The beautiful eyes of the Snake Dowager looked at Leylin.
“I won’t refuse!” Leylin did not decline the request. He’d already set his eyes on the Bloodline Alliance anyway.
The Snake Dowager left after smiling contentedly, only leaving behind a girl who’d fainted on the spot.
“Sigh… I still need to clean up this mess, how troublesome…” Leylin shook his head and snapped his fingers. The young girl sat up immediately and looked at his eyes which contained no annoyance, “After you wake up, you will forget…”
Outskirts of Thousand Bears City.
Crowley had brought Xavier to a simple and crude building that was still under construction.
Past a board that covered up the basement was a huge place. Flickering neon lights illuminated a place with a cold, hard, metallic lustre, causing Xavier’s palms to sweat slightly.
“This is the Bloodline Alliance’s stronghold in Thousand Bears City. It’s impossible for the two of us alone to attack a branch of the empire’s Special Forces ourselves, so we’ll need some helpers. Come, let’s introduce you.”
Crowley brought Xavier to a place that seemed like a little meeting room, pulling the door open. Instantly, many judging and distrustful or threatening gazes fixed onto him, causing him to stiffen up.
“Alright, alright. Don’t get too overboard with your greetings!” Amidst this perilous situation, Crowley was like a huge reef. His words caused a large amount of the pressure to dissipate. Only then did Xavier get the strength to raise his head and size up the people in the meeting room.
Everybody here had a grim aura about them, causing the teen to feel extremely uncomfortable. However, there was one person amongst them he recognised.
“Is that… Invigilator Bobbi?” He focused on one of the many females.
“Haha… You should’ve seen her at your greater skill test. Let me introduce you once more. This is Bobbi. She has the bloodline of the ancient enchanting witch, and she’s also an official of Thousand Bears City.”
Crowley rubbed his nose, “Be careful. This old woman likes to prey on young things…”
“Who are you calling old, you smelly snake?” Bobbi twisted her slender waist as she approached Xavier. She was one head taller than him, and it gave him much pressure.
“Can you do it, kid? This isn’t playing house, you really might lose your life in this operation…”
Xavier looked up at the roaring sea and gulped, before turning resolute, “I… I must go!”
“Haha… Don’t underestimate Xavier. He’s genius enough to have mastered the Snakebite Fist at his age! With an additional set of armour, he’ll definitely be powerful!” Crowley patted Xavier on the back.
“Mastery over the Snakebite Fist?” The crowd began to get restless, and what followed next was Bobbi’s fearless laughter, “Haha… how interesting. This is too interesting…
“He’s not even twenty now. Considering his age, it can’t have been all that long…” She turned her waist and sized Xavier up and down as if watching a rare animal. She then shot a glance at Crowley with her slender eyes, the challenge and disdain within them obvious, “Didn’t you take two hundred years to do the same thing? In comparison to him, what are you?”
“Can we not discuss this now?” Crowley could only surrender to this taunt that struck at his weak spot. Xavier, on the other hand, was shocked, ‘Is the Snakebite Fist that difficult? Then why could I succeed in a matter of days…’
He now understood that what had happened to him was something unusual. He decided to keep it a secret, it was something that could
not be made known.
“Alright! Since he’s gained mastery of the Snakebite Fist, he meets the requirements to join us,” Bobbi nodded and sat down, “Let’s continue what we were discussing…”
“That’s the kind of person she is. Try not to provoke her…” Crowley awkwardly pulled Xavier to sit at a corner, no longer bringing up meeting anyone else.
“Based on our intel, the empire’s special forces have destroyed four or five strongholds of the resistance in Thousand Bears City. They’ve become more ruthless and brutal, and the number of young bloodline carriers they took away has increased…” A screen flashed with many images as a young man in a wheelchair spoke. A picture of Golden Flower Primary School caused Xavier to clench his fists.
“We can surmise that they must’ve faced a huge loss of sorts recently, so they’re eager to get new blood…” The young man on the wheelchair lifted his glasses, full of confidence, “Thanks to them, numerous organisations are now willing to pledge their loyalty to us. Of course, it’s on the condition that we destroy their base in Thousand Bears City and save their relatives… What’s most important is that the other side is unscrupulous, to the point that even the mayor is disgusted. We can make use of this and break off their most powerful support from authorities…”
“Do you understand the general situation now? Prepare to move out!” Bobbi clapped her hands, and people left the meeting room one after another. Only Xavier, Crowley, and a few others were left behind.
“You don’t have a weapon yet, right kid? Come with me!” Bobbi placed her hands on her hips and brought Xavier to the young man seated in the wheelchair.
Crowley spoke up from beside Xavier, “This guy’s called Genius, he’s our organisation’s weapons and intelligence officer.”
“Haha… did you just say I’m smart?” The young man called Genius burst into laughter, seemingly full of love for himself. However, Crowley and Bobbi did not say anything, obviously used to his narcissism.

Xavier noticed that this man was stuck with prosthetics from the waist down. He’d evidently suffered from some critical injury before, to the point that even the empire’s current technology could not allow him to recover.

Genius maneuvered his wheelchair and arrived in front of Xavier, “Speak! Tell me what you want. Even if it’s the newest version of Rapid Shadow, I can get it for you!”

“Mm, I haven’t tried the high-grade Rapid Shadow yet, and I haven’t even passed the licensing exam. The same goes for laser weapons…” Xavier scratched his head in embarrassment.

“Then…” Crowley and Bobbi exchanged an awkward glance, but they did not speak.

“Just give me armour!” Xavier had made his choice after some thought. After all, his greatest advantage was the mastery of the Snakebite Fist. Sturdy armour would greatly raise his battle might.

“Just armour? Don’t you need anything else? How about tracking cannons? Or an external Weave connection?” Genius trained a piercing gaze on Xavier, as if measuring his body size.

“That’s not necessary. All I want is something that can protect me well. The metal for my arms must be durable enough, and should not affect my movements… And for my legs, It’s best that…” Xavier gave a broad outline of what he wanted and then looked at Genius, “I’ve said a lot. Do you remember it all?”

“Haha… it’s no big deal. I’m Genius, remember?” A projection appeared in mid-air as Genius patted his wheelchair, showing an outline of armour that was exactly like what Xavier had described.

“The only thing that matches your requirements right now is the empire’s Venomsnake Armour. Thankfully there’s one stored in the
base. It can be used after some modification…” Genius’ hands moved extremely quickly. In but tens of minutes, Xavier was able to don his armour.

He waved his arm and tested the flexibility of the arms for the armour, and then entered a stance of the Snakebite Fist. “Amazing…”

“But of course! Genius really is a genius. He used to be from the Imperial Research Institute, anything he alters can be sold at astronomical prices on the black market…” Crowley had changed into a black windbreaker, “Are you ready? Let’s leave!”

“Of course,” Xavier’s fists punched out, creating dazzling sparks in the air, “Jill, I’m coming to save you!”

……

The members of the Bloodline Alliance moved very quickly. In just half an hour all its fighters were surrounding a military base.

“That’s the base of the Special Forces branch. Once the fight begins Genius will move to break off all communication with the outer world. We’ll have fifteen minutes.” Crowley sounded grim, “Remember to be on time. Any later than that, and we’ll have no other way. Once they move out from their garrison to encircle us, all of us will probably be completely decimated.”

“Fifteen minutes!” Xavier gazed at the base like it was a malicious beast and gritted his teeth, “That’s enough!”

“Good! Well then, move out!” Crowley raised an arm, and numerous black figures pounced out. In the next moment, a bright red alarm resounded in the base.

“Communications down. Haha… I really am a genius!” Genius was in the basement of the Bloodline Alliance base, sat inside a huge machine with a silver helmet on his head. His eyes were full of an abnormal fervour.
He hadn’t just cut off communications. The military base’s power had been taken down as well, causing the Special Forces’ base to quiet down.

*Hss!* Xavier struck out with a right hand that was like a venomous snake tooth. Protected by his armour, he was like a humanoid gundam as his fingers instantly severed the throat of an enemy. The Venomsnake Armour weighed nearly fifty kilos, but to him it was almost weightless.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Black figures were flung away one after the other. Xavier quickly charged out, his armoured hands grabbing onto a fat bald man.

“Where’s Jill? No, where are those primary school students you took today?” Although his was covered by armour, Xavier understood the he was looking quite sinister. His fierce murderous spirit immediately caused the man to stammer. His body trembled, and a patch of wetness appeared on his pants. He’d actually lost control of his bladder!

Just at this moment, a few black-clothed men charged over towards him, firing their laser weapons. The shots only left shallow marks on Xavier’s armour, and in retaliation he struck them ruthlessly, causing them to crash into the wall leaving huge depressions behind. Their bones shattered loudly, and it was obvious that they would not live.

“Speak quickly, or you’re next!”
“I’ll say it, I’ll say it! They’re in basement 2!” The immense threat of death cured the fatty’s stutter, and he spilled the beans in a hurry.

*Crash!* Xavier tossed him to the side and charged down to the basement.

“Trash! You’re all trash!” An icy voice sounded, causing Xavier’s heart to skip a beat. He soon saw a black-robed figure that made his eyes bulge in rage— it was the middle-aged man who had abducted his sister, and he was still wearing the same jacket!

“The guards here are too weak…” The man didn’t carry any weapons on him, and the unzipped jacket flapped in the wind to reveal the perfect abdominal muscles of his body. It gave Xavier an extreme sense of danger.

At the man’s feet were many dead members of the Bloodline Alliance, and on his body were scars from the aftermath of an explosion.

“Give me back my sister!” Xavier howled.

“Oh, you’re that kid from before… Heh, looks like that idiot Base is dead…” The middle-aged man inhaled deeply, “Make sure to remember my name. I’m Wolf Fang, the one who’ll kill you tonight.”

*Awoo—* A strong forcefield emanated from the man’s body, making Xavier feel like he was standing helplessly before a canine on the grassy plains.
*Hiss!* He quickly activated the Snakebite Fist in response, and the phantom of a black serpent appeared behind him.
“Huh, interesting. I’ll be able to toy with you a little while longer!” Wolf Fang’s eyes brightened.
*Boom!* However, the ceiling broke apart just as Wolf Fang was about to make his move, and Crowley descended to stand in front of Xavier.
“Go! I’ll stop him!”
“Thank you!” Xavier rapidly disappeared into the passage, but Crowley and Wolf Fang no longer minded him.
“Keke… Crowley, one of the top five experts of the Bloodline Alliance. You’re wanted for fifteen charges of treason, a rank SSS criminal.” Wolf Fang’s gaze at Crowley was like nothing else existed in the world.
“Javis’ lackey, eh. Your hands are stained with the blood of my people…” A pea sized ball of explosion radiated out from Crowley, and a fine black mist appeared to fight back against Wolf Fang’s forcefield. A black python seemed to emerge from within the mist, its vertical eyes glaring at Wolf Fang.
“Hahaha… Interesting, quite interesting! So that kid just now was your student? Or is he a descendant?” Wolf Fang guffawed as he charged forward like a tank. The battle had begun!
“What is this?” Having entered the room in the basement, Xavier was scared out of his wits at the sight he’d witnessed. Multiple giant nutrition pods littered the area, containing creatures of different species and even human beings. The humans themselves seemed to be from all age groups.
However, even if these people looked normal there was definitely something odd about them. Xavier peered through one cylinder of glass, seeing a little boy with purple skin and a pair of wings protruding from his back. It seemed to be some form of deformity. The little boy suddenly opened his eyes, his yellow pupils staring
icy at Xavier. It was a look of utter despair and death.
“It’s… Alive!” Darkness seemed to enveloped Xavier at this instant. He’d lived his life as an ordinary citizen so far, so this was the first time the vile, dark, reality was put in front of him. Seeing that there were live specimens here, Xavier suddenly got worried. “Jill, Jill!”
*Boom!* He destroyed a black mechanical lock, revealing an underground basement. A putrid stench emanated from within.
“Jill! Jill, are you there?” Xavier opened one of the cages underground, but he only saw a few girls with unfamiliar faces.
“Five minutes left. Make sure to withdraw in time!” Genius sounded rather nervous through the earpiece. Several other members who’d followed Xavier exchanged looks, and immediately began scouring for Jill.
Xavier did not mind the actions of the members. He had only wanted to find Jill right now.
“Get lost!” Several Special Forces members were sent flying back and died miserably as a loud serpent hissed.
This place was only a branch base, and it wasn’t prepared for such a relentless ambush. It probably held more administrators than soldiers, so Xavier with his armour on was like a ferocious beast that swept away everything in his path.
“Underground room #2!” He kicked opened a metal door, and saw several girls crouching in the corner. All of them wore the uniform of Golden Flower Primary School.
“Jill! Jill!” Xavier howled, but there was no response.
“Not here! Not here too! What’s happening?” He forcefully picked up a researcher in a white lab coat, the strength in his wrist causing the man’s face to turn red.
“Cough… Cough… The kids from Golden Flower Primary School that were captured today are here…” The researcher’s face turned purple, as he uttered several more words. “However… Some
special specimens were just taken away, en route to headquarters…

Cough, I told you everything I know, please spare me…”

“Damn it!” Xavier’s eyes turned red, and he crushed the man’s throat without much effort.

*Bang!* The corpse fell lifelessly to the ground. Xavier then waved his hands and sent the little children running out of the room. Right now, he could only walk around aimlessly in the underground base.

“Enemy troops will arrive in one minute! Evacuate immediately!” Genius’ voice sounded once again. He was extremely exasperated now, but Xavier seemed not to hear anything he was saying.

“What are you doing? You idiot!”

*Bang!* A fist struck Xavier’s face, causing him to be embedded into the wall that had crumbled partially, but it had turned him clear-headed. “Here… Jill… Not here…”

“So what? You haven’t found your sister?” Bobbi wore a tight uniform, as she punched Xavier again, sending him flying out from the wall. She then stepped on Xavier, “She’s not dead, so as long as she’s alive, there will always be a chance. But right now, you are very likely to die here before her!”

“Yes! The headquarters of the Special Forces! I have to go there!” Xavier’s pupils suddenly blazed with flames. “Thank you, Miss Bobbi, also… How is Crowley right now?”

“He’s in trouble! Wolf Fang is Javis’ right hand man, so he is very powerful. Only Crowley here can resist him, and their support troops came in faster than expected. The only comfort is that the other members in this base aren’t strong fighters, so we already rescued a large number of people.”

“I’ll help him!” Without further hesitation, Xavier jumped on his feet quickly, and ran at a speed that Bobbi could not chase after.

“Sigh… Young people nowadays…” Without knowing why, Bobbi smiled lightly. But very soon, she surveyed her surroundings,
“What are all of you waiting for? Hurry and evacuate! Take everything that can be brought away, and destroy the rest! I want the sins of this place to be burned away by fire!”

*Pit Pat! Pit Pat!* Droplets of fresh blood fell of the ground, accompanied by heavy panting.

Crowley looked at the three deep gashes on his chest, and at the blood pouring profusely out of the wounds. Wolf Fang had managed to expose his bone.

“Haha… How is it? A top expert of the Bloodline Alliance only has this much ability?” Wolf Fang laughed maniacally. His shirt had been ripped open, and his aura began to converge, forming the phantom of a wolf behind him.

Experts like them were far faster than normal human beings. Unless one could cast spells instantly, a Rapid Shadow wristwatch was of no use at this level.

“You’re a bloodline carrier as well. Why betray your kin?” Crowley asked, panting.

“You haven’t seen the might of the empire,” Wolf Fang squinted, “You’ll never be able to imagine the kind of existence that backs it up. Compared to them, I am but an ant…”

“Ah… You already lost the heart to improve yourself as a practitioner!” Crowley swayed, as if he was going to collapse at any moment.

“It doesn’t matter what you say now, because you are going to die here today!” Wolf Fang struck out, and a powerful gale accompanied his strike which looked like the jaws of a wolf, “Wolf Fang Punch!”

*Hiss!* A black figure stood before Crowley and a snake hissed loudly, but the black figure was sent flying back.

“Kid, you actually dare to return?” Wolf Fang looked at Xavier.

“Hurry and leave! You aren’t his match!” Crowley looked extremely worried now.
“Don’t worry, I’m fine!” Xavier picked himself up from the ground and patted off the dirt on his body. *Kacha! Kacha!* However, his expression soon changed. A spiderweb of a crack appeared on his fist, soon extending to his arms and even his shoulders. His armour quickly shattered into pieces, revealing the teenage boy within.

“Hehe…My Wolf Fang Punch has the power to shatter and shock anything it touches, so it is the best for destroying things…” Wolf Fang stood before Xavier, like a giant wolf which had found his prey.

“Not good, Wolf Fang is stronger than I’d expected, even the other members that Bobbi brought as support are not going to be of much use…” Cold sweat began to form at the tip of Xavier’s brows.

“No! I still have to find Jill, how can I die here?” The youth clenched his fist…

This intense desire to live made its way to Leylin, who was watching on as a spectator.

“Forget it! He is after all a descendant of the Snake Dowager. I just agreed to look after her bloodline, how could I betray that so quickly?” Leylin smiled and gently tapped in the air with his finger.
“Hmm?” Xavier lost his focus for a moment, but he soon felt something burning up in his chest. A pain reverberated from the very depths of his soul, immediately breaking the defences of his spirit to render him unconscious.

However, his body stood still in the real world. Were his clothes to be taken off, one would be able to see dark yet beautiful runes form a mandara flower that spread out from his heart. Many powerful glyphs formed its exquisite petals.

“What are you trying to do, kid?” Wolf Fang felt shivers run down his spine, and he sensed a great danger to his life.

“Damn it!” He struck out under the pressure, forming the sharpest of wind blades, “Secret technique— Feral Wind Wolf Crunch!”

*Awoo—* A distant howl sounded, and the gale turned into a giant wolf jaw that engulfed the teen. However, Wolf Fang actually felt the threat to his life increase, amplifying over tenfold in an instant. The fear almost stopped his heart.

A figure walked out of the wolf jaw, completely unharmed. Wolf Fang let out a cry of astonishment, but it was too late. A black datura flower bloomed faintly in the void.

……

“Hmm, not bad.” Leylin nodded his head as he saw Crowley taking
the unconscious Xavier away. The other members of the Bloodline Alliance had also retreated, but that was after they had set the base on fire, turning everything into ashes.

“However, what are these impure descendants of the Snake Dowager doing here? She has so many descendants of her bloodline in the Purgatory World, these few here do not even matter… Unless…” Leylin’s eyes brightened, “She wants the other beings of laws to revive using their bloodline? That’ll consume a lot… “So then… A bloodline corruption will occur, allowing her to resist Shar’s Weave?” Many possibilities flashed before Leylin’s eyes, all simulated by the A.I. Chip.

……

“Hurry and leave!” Crowley hopped onto an aircraft with Xavier in tow.

“Hmm? You actually made it out alive? Disasters do have long lives!” Bobbi exclaimed. Still, she could not hide the joy in her eyes.

“Don’t make fun of me at a time like this…” Crowley smiled wryly, and placed Xavier down. Right now, Xavier’s eyes were shut and he seemed to be unconscious.

“What happened to him? And what about Wolf Fang?” Bobbi looked at Crowley, “I know you have a lot of trump cards…” “It isn’t my accomplishment this time…” The bitterness in Crowley’s eyes were more apparent than ever before as he pointed at Xavier, “He was the one who killed Wolf Fang. If not for him, I’d have wound up dead…” “Impossible!” Many members of the Bloodline Alliance exclaimed in astonishment. Even Bobbi was stunned for a moment before she began to look at the youth lying on the cold hard floor, “You
mean… He killed a powerful figure of the Special Forces, Javis’ right hand man? He eliminated Wolf Fang? There’s a limit to how much you can joke…”
“I hope I was joking as well, but the fact is undeniable,” Crowley’s face turned stern. “I sensed the power of our ancestor awakening within Xavier’s blood… Have any of you felt it? The power of our bloodline has increased, especially in this short period of time…”
A bloodline carrier could only obtain strength from their bloodline, and their position and status depended on the purity and concentration of their blood. Bloodline carriers would thus weaken from generation to generation, and it was rare for a descendant to surpass their ancestor. However, they had all felt their powers from the bloodline increasing. This was extremely abnormal!
“What are you trying to say?” Bobbi looked at Crowley as she retracted her smile.
“It’s just a feeling… A huge revolution is soon approaching, so special occurrences are to be expected. And there’s also a genius like this kid…” Crowley exhaled deeply.
“Hey bros! If you’re talking about a revolution, I have something here that might interest you guys. Wanna have a look at it?” Genius’ figure was projected from the ceiling.
“What is it?” Bobbi frowned, “It had better be something useful, if not I’ll put your eyeballs up your ass when we get back to the base! I swear!”
Genius covered his right mechanical eye with his hand as if he was afraid, but then his expression turned serious.
“Hehe, I’m not joking. Look at this… While you guys were invading the base, I discovered several things that would send the entire world into chaos if they’re revealed…” Genius hurriedly transmitted some information after seeing the distrust in their eyes. A top secret document carrying the imperial seal quelled their disbelief.
“This is…” The light on the screen reflected off Bobbi’s face, revealing her shock.
“It seems like we need to make a trip to the eastern seas before heading for Kerallen and the headquarters of the Special Forces…” Crowley said slowly, extremely solemn.

……

A giant propeller along with the chatter of multiple people combined with the noises of shifting items shocked Xavier out of his sleep. Only then did the feeling of a devil possessing his body disappear.
“Where… Is this?” Xavier asked blankly. He could barely recall a fight against Wolf Fang with Crowley, but he had no memory of what happened next.
“Don’t move and don’t try to get up. The skin on your back will be torn apart…” Genius turned around his wheelchair, patting the healing pod Xavier was in, “How is it? This is the latest version of the healing pods from the empire, able to cure even rank 7 to rank 10 diseases. I even added the beautifying feature, no need for thanks…”
“Oh okay… It seems like Crowley is safe…” Xavier sighed, finally sensing a large sticky substance on his burning back. “What’s happening outside? Are we shifting?”
“Shift— Oh God! You can actually hear that from inside the pod? What frightening senses…” Genius gasped before he closed his eyes, causing Xavier to feel like he would be dissected at any moment.
“You didn’t answer my question…” Xavier returned in his wariness.
“Oh. Yes, we’re shifting bases. We’ve given up on this one. After all, nobody can launch an open attack on the empire without
suffering repercussions…” Genius shrugged his shoulders, “Still, it’s not really a problem. The Bloodline Alliance has many bases, from the icy north to the extreme south and the eastern seas. Our men cover the entire continent, so losing one or two bases is no big deal…”

Xavier felt the rich and overbearing outlook of the Bloodline Alliance from Genius’ words. However, this was perfectly normal. Bloodline carriers possessed extraordinary power, able to achieve great things no matter where they went. Generations of existence had allowed some bloodline families to amass a huge fortune. Even with the establishment of the empire causing the power and outreach of bloodline families to dwindle, they still possessed astounding might. Although it was extremely difficult to openly resist them, creating a dark organisation and growing in strength was no problem.

“Oh right, I need to go to Kerallen. Jill’s been taken there!” Xavier’s expression suddenly changed, and he struggled to get up. Just that movement caused excruciating pain to travel down his back, having him wince from the pain. Cold sweat dripped down his body.

“Relax, calm down! You know how much effort it took to rescue you?” Genius’ long fingers hurriedly moved on the keyboard, but he still had the time to chat with Xavier, “However, you are also rather good huh! You killed Wolf Fang but only suffered 40% damage to your body. It’s not a big deal…”

“What? I killed Wolf Fang?” Xavier’s eyes went wide open, before he looked at his own chest. The white skin there was filled with the energy of life, and there were no longer any signs of runes on it. The datura flower had disappeared.

“Did I really do it?” Xavier muttered, feeling a new force of energy inside his body, abyssal, cold, and fearsome with an imposing aura. The energy allowed Xavier to recover very quickly. It made him
confident that he could recover in a few days even without this healing pod.
“No matter what, I still have to go to Kerallen!” the youth said resolutely. With his strength growing, his confidence in saving his sister grew as well.
“Alright, alright! I didn’t say we weren’t going. We plan to visit a few bases nearby before heading for the capital…” Genius said immediately, fearing that Xavier would worry unnecessarily.
“Mm, you can go have a look in the capital first, but it’ll have to be in disguise. Don’t act on impulse…” Crowley walked in, dressed in a black coat, “It’s nice that I managed to see you awake before I leave…”
“Huh? You’re leaving?” Xavier was shocked, staring at this person who claimed to be an ancestor of his. He had to admit that unknowingly, Crowley had became a fatherly figure that he had grown to rely on.
Put bluntly, Crowley was Xavier’s only connection in the Bloodline Alliance. In fact, Xavier himself didn’t feel like a proper member yet, still unclear on the motives and principles guiding this organisation. His only hope had been to borrow Crowley’s strength to help rescue his sister, but Crowley was now leaving? How would he be able to ask for assistance from the Bloodline Alliance and gather intelligence for his mission, even deploy troops to rescue Jill?

“But why? Jill is also your…” Xavier gritted his teeth.

“But there’s something even more important for me to do.” There was a look of determination on Crowley’s face, “Don’t worry, I entrusted Jill’s rescue to Bobbi. Follow her advice in the future…”

“You’re leaving just like that?” On the aircraft runway, Bobbi looked at Crowley who was geared in full body armour. A finger was twirling her hair behind her ears, and she seemed lonely and uneasy.

“I have no other choice… This concerns the life and death of all humans on this world! You know… What the world is getting swept into… We cannot run away or hide from it…” Crowley looked at Bobbi as his lips moved, finally only being able to utter a
single word, “Sorry…”
“I knew… I knew it… You are just like the other fellows…” Bobbi rubbed glistening tears out of the corner of her eyes.
“Haha… Don’t worry! I’m a superb bloodline carrier who has lived for over 500 years! How can something like this daunt me?” Crowley patted himself on the chest. It was a strange, humorous action, as if depicting his reluctance to leave. “Will you accept me after I return from the eastern seas?”
“Scram, you old geezer. You’re several hundred years older than me, don’t try to be an old bull eating young grass…” Browley turned to Bobbi one last time before the aircraft left. She was stood still, her lonely figure like an extremely beautiful sculpture.
“Sigh… I thought Bobbi would immediately agree to wed you, and become a widow immediately…” a muscular brute with a skull-patterned bandana said in a nonchalant manner.
“Scram! Are you cursing me now?” Crowley scolded the elite soldier inside the aircraft. He then looked at the man before he started laughing.
He soon turned solemn. “Comrades! This incident does not concern just the lives of the Bloodline Alliance. Instead, it involves the life and death of the entire world. Thank you! Even if the people do not realise our contributions today, our spirit will stand forever proud for eons to come…”
“Who cares about that much… Yawn…” A doll-like girl yawned, revealing a cute pair of canine teeth. There seemed to be even some blood on her crowns. “No matter what, we must destroy the empire’s wishes at all cost. Isn’t that what we’ve been doing all along?”
Many people agreed with the girl’s words.
“If that’s the case…” Crowley cleared his throat, “Let me introduce you to one of the empire’s secret plans in the eastern seas, codenamed Project X.
“Keep in mind that this matter is of utmost importance, not something the Bloodline Alliance can handle alone. We’ve already sought help from the Coven of Witches, the Knights of the Round Table, and the Martial Arts Association. Crowley’s words caused the rest of them to sink into silence. Just like the Bloodline Alliance represented the remaining power of bloodlines, the Coven contained the remaining magicians of the Shadow World. The other two groups also represented the inheritances of different fighting styles. Put plainly, they were the remaining underground forces in the empire. What was the empire planning that these four forces had to come together to fight it?

The people in the aircraft soon turned silent as they listened to Crowley speak. The more he said, the more serious they became, and the worse the shadows on their faces turned.

……

Tens of thousands of metres under sea level, at the bottom of the eastern seas. A monster was swimming past this place, its ability to survive the sea pressure that could kill most others a testament to its might. It could transmit infrasound from near its eyes, causing many marine creatures to die immediately and become its food. *Puff!* Just a whistle produced a whirlpool in its jaws, powerful enough to destroy an entire island. The suction caused the surrounding fish and mosses to be sucked into its huge maw, expelling a large amount of water and only leaving behind fresh food. The creature did not seem to be satisfied with this meal, as it moved even deeper. A casual swipe of its tail was powerful enough to cause a tsunami on the sea surface.
This was a Metalback Whale. These creatures were the kings of the eastern seas, ruling over it since ancient times. If not for the massive burden of their huge bodies, they could have advanced to become beings of laws as powerful as rank 7 Magi. It was extremely lucky to avoid the scans of the Mistress of the Night back then.

However, things were different now. The various cities near the eastern seas had passed down legends of a ‘Sea Devil King’ through the generations, and the advancement of science had managed to reveal the Metalback Whale’s weakness.

*Rumble!* A psi energy submarine appeared here, larger than even the whale. Two psi energy webs appeared on its sides, launching a snare with powerful high-voltage currents that paralysed the beast. Shadow spells, cannonfire, and poisoned javelins soon followed, exploding on the whale’s back like fireworks.

*Woooo!* The Metalback Whale howled with anger as its massive body writhed in pain. Its thick skin withstood most of the attacks and it tried to swim away, pulling the net that was attached to the submarine.

The greatest technology of the empire was now pitting its might against this ancient beast. The waves from the tussle caused the seas to rage wildly, putting many coastal cities on alert.

It was even messier in the trench. A little girl that was as beautiful as an orchid stood alone on the submarine’s command deck that seemed like a battleship, loneliness apparent in her eyes.

Several white-haired old man in the uniform of the imperial navy looked at the whale on the large screen before reporting respectfully, “Princess, the forcefield reports on the beast are here. The submarine’s psi energy reserves are at 82%; if we have another five minutes we’ll be able to completely analyse it and activate a counter forcefield.”

If the outside world knew of this girl’s identity, they would
definitely be shocked. She was a member of the royal family here in secret, commanding the navy in an attempt to capture an ancient beast.

“Do what you must!” the princess waved her hands, her voice as melodious as a skylark.

Moments later, the Metalback Whale’s forcefield was broken, and blood spurted from its body. A dozen members of the Special Forces managed to deal fatal damage to the whale using their Rapid Shadows, employing legendary spells.

“Dawn Is ready!” a general reported in a shaky voice.

“Fire!” the princess waved her hand.

*Bzzt!* The Shadow Weave within the eastern seas whistled loudly, its energy surging into the psi energy submarine. Everyone in the region felt their Rapid Shadows fail for a few minutes, jamming up the company’s customer service hotline afterwards.

All of this energy from the Shadow Weave combined with the psi energy of the submarine to devastating effect. A beam of light that seemed to be able to split the earth in half pierced through the whale’s massive figure with a speed faster than light, before piercing through the surface of the sea and through the skies.

Everyone in the empire was able to see this beam of light, and it even attracted the interest of astrologers.

“Long live the empire!”

“O’ Great Empire!”

The Screen showed the Metalback Whale devoid of all life, its aura weakening. The troops and officers all cheered in victory as the corpse began to sink deeper into the ocean.

“This… Is the strongest power of the Empire? I wonder if it can…”

The princess muttered before sending another command, “Begin preparations to dive and salvage the loot. All mutants are to be dispatched!”

This order was carried out meticulously. Evidently, the imperial
family had a stronger hold over its citizens than most people thought. They were extremely concealed in the shadows, and their reach was extremely expansive…

The innards of the Metalback Whale were like a small world with its own ecosystem. Many marine creatures lived inside its body. However, after this sweep of the Empire’s troops, none of the marine creatures met a good end. To put it in other words, after the Metalback Whale died, their fate was already decided.

“I’ve found it!” As the information was passed down, a scene appeared on the screen.

Inside that whale’s body was a large island, floating amidst the creature’s gastric juices. On the island was a black stone tablet, and the mottled words written on it depicted traces of history long forgotten.
ons ago, the Snake Dowager who came from the Rivers of Sanar governed the world. All beings and various kingdoms of bloodlines thrived and flourished under her rule…”
The words on the stone tablet were extremely old and archaic, but the princess could understand their meaning. The information wasn’t conveyed by sight or conversation, but through another medium entirely. Still, this wasn’t the most important bit of information. The center of the tablet recorded a monumental change in history, “Until one day, when the Mistress of the Night arrived. She ousted the Snake Dowager, destroying the rule of bloodlines. She established an empire atop corpses, shifting behind the scenes to control the empire into fulfilling an unknown desire…”
Anyone from the imperial family would fly into a rage at the blasphemy and untruths in this tablet. This princess, however, had a strange expression on her face. It was a mix of joy and anticipation, perplexment and fear; a mish-mash of various complicated feelings.
“… The newly built empire had obtained glory, and the light of civilisation shone brighter than the stars. However, the Mistress of the Night was not satisfied with all of this, she needed more… more…
“I foresee that she will mercilessly purge the world of bloodline
carriers, replacing the humans with another being before finally turning the souls of these people to the same colour. The only way for salvation is…”

The princess forced herself to look away after reading this part. She’d felt a pressure from the Shadow Weave surround her, an imposing dignity representative of the Mistress of the Night. However, she still sighed deeply in her heart, ‘This relic of the eastern seas, the Dead Sea Scroll— A powerful prophecy foretold by the blind prophet Ari, left behind to save the world. This Book of Salvation is the only ray of hope, and it is no longer in the hands of those insurgents…”

“Seal this stone tablet under a restriction of class 5S. Anyone who acquires this information will be put to the death,” the princess ordered after smiling bitterly in her heart. “Class 5S!” This attracted surprise from the people around her. Even the Commander-in-Chief of the Empire did not have the authority to access such information!

“Do what I say!” the princess stated icily. The Shadow Weave rippled, the imperial token in the princess’ hands showing that her word was law.

The several old marine generals looked at each other in the eye, but could only carry out the orders helplessly, “We obey!”

What was more perplexing was that they, together with the mutants of the Special Forces, did not see anything special about the stone tablet. To them, the stone tablet was filled with strange drawings, just like the doodles of a child. They simply could not make anything of it.

However, something that had the princess come personally with a submarine that could even destroy an ancient creature was no ordinary matter.

“Not knowing is also for your own good…” The princess smiled wryly as she watched the figures of those old generals as they left.
The more she knew, the more she sunk into despair. The entirety of the empire was controlled by someone working behind the scenes? And that too for tens of thousands of years, creating the imperial family and issuing the state policies? Even the most stupid of beggars would not believe a joke like this. However, the princess knew that it was the truth!
Furthermore, she could not resist the powers of the Mistress of the Night. That was an overweeningly strong existence, her might incomprehensible.

*Beep!* A connection request from the empire streamed in at this moment, and a soldier appeared on screen.

“Your Highness,” he bowed with utmost respect before taking out a token, “I have new orders.”

“Speak!” The princess retracted her helplessness and weakness in front of outsiders, stuffing it behind a mask of cold might.

“Urgent command: The submarine has been recalled, along with the loot from the mission. The rest of you need to head towards the Demonic Islands, killing the insurgents gathered there.”

“What happened? Tell me clearly!” The princess knew that even without the prowess of this battleship, her subordinates would hold the upper hand against those rebels. However, she’d never think that the Emperor would pass such a pressing decree.

“It’s… We have just received news that our research facility in the eastern seas has been breached!”

“What? Are you kidding? There are garrison troops protecting that area!” The princess’s brows furrowed.

“Positive! The troops around the area have perished… As of now, the ones most able to resist them are you and the first admiral’s fleet…” The officer in the screen seemed uncomfortable.

“Who is it? The Coven, the Bloodline Alliance? Or is it the Martial Arts Association?” The princess frowned, and immediately stated the names of the largest rebel groups.
“Everyone, even the Knights of the Round Table! They’ve even ignored civilian casualties, using powerful weapons of mass destruction. They seem to be determined!”
“They’ve discovered it, huh?” The princess bit on her lip. She knew the kind of research undertaken in the eastern sea facility, and the content within could never be made public!
“I’ll go right away!” The princess did not back down, agreeing immediately. No matter how unwilling she was, she was a member of the imperial family. This was the tragedy and reality that she had to face from her birth.

……

Eastern seas, the Demonic Islands!
*Boom!* An alloy wall was blasted through, revealing a room with many long, cylindrical incubation pods. They held human specimens, including children and adults.
“Tsk… They’re only clones? Nothing else seems to be in here?” A person dressed like a knight from the medieval times looked at Crowley. It was him who’d struck open the door made of alloy, that act alone showing that his strength could not be underestimated. It was the top expert from Knights of the Round Table.
However, his gaze carried a questioning look.
“Although the research here might have had concerned us, it seems like a bigger base than the others. There’s not enough reason for you to invite us over,” an old person who wore robes walked up slowly. As his muddy eyes surveyed the surroundings, he was seemingly shocked by the sheer size of the facility.
“Of course not… Cough…” Crowley had his ribs wrapped in gauze. The journey here hadn’t been easy.
“What I intended for all of you is to see this!” He brought the two deeper into the facility, to a large safe that was marked with a huge
‘X’ on the outside.
“Fortunately we have witches with us. We wouldn’t have been able to get the password otherwise…” Crowley punched in a string of numbers and took out an eyeball covered in blood, allowing the iris scanner on the safe to scan it.
After seeing this heavily guarded safe, the knight and the old man looked solemnly at each other.
*Pat!* The safe was opened, revealing the contents within. There wasn’t much, just a few spiral test tubes and a computer disk.
“Look at this…” Crowley handed the disk over.
“Plan X — Introduction: This is a plan suggested by an imperial professor, codenamed ‘X’, using the clones of the embryo to get rid of the garbage lying within the Empire. Current progress: 571 years. Completion: 67%!”
Crowley rasped.
“This… This… This… It’s so hard to believe that all this is true…” The knight and the old man muttered, but the information on the disk had stated everything.
“What have they got to gain from doing this?” The knight muttered.
“Control! This is the strongest benefit… Through controlling these clones and the ‘reproduction’ of these embryos, they can ensure that our descendants will no longer have any extraordinary powers. Even training in martial techniques would prove to be extremely difficult… The most important thing is they have stored a program in the depths of these mutants, and will be able to control them at any point in time.
Crowley’s tone was extremely heavy, “Think about it, the entire world would be your enemy in the future. All of your neighbours, your friends…”
Cold sweat dripped down the foreheads of the knight and the old man.
“So… How much progress has the Empire made?” The old man’s
voice was extremely hoarse, and it carried a foreboding sense of despair.
“They have these facilities throughout the Empire. However this is the headquarters where everything began. Our investigation results weren’t positive…”
Crowley’s watch projected a screen, showing two strings of DNA sequences.
“This is a regular human, and this is the ‘X’ body of the empire. The differences lie here.” As Crowley enlarged the image, a rune labelled as ‘X’ appeared in the charts.
“This is a failsafe plan the empire put in secretly. It can be used to verify identities, and anyone with this X factor in their genetics is a clone that can be controlled by the empire…”
Crowley’s voice grew soft, “The control and contamination of this gene is extremely powerful. If an ordinary human mates with a cloned X body, it’ll only need two generations for their descendants to possess the X gene in their bodies as well.
“Haha… So you’re saying that there are people like that who exist even amongst us now?” The knight laughed so hard he teared up, “You’re saying my family, and even myself, might be the production and spawn of these clones. One day we will turn crazy and turn into machines that can be controlled by the Empire, even slaying our own family and friends?”
“My apologies, but what I speak of is the truth. We have already discovered several members of the Bloodline Alliance, with these genes…”
Crowley bowed, “However, this control on their subconscious is not strong enough. The right amount of resolution or a powerful bloodline can still help suppress it…”
I’m sorry, Mr. Crowley. Your beautiful dreams are about to be ruined…” A witch in crimson red robes strolled over, an ancient tome clutched in her hands. “Witch Maya!” Crowley bowed reverently. This charming lady was an existence who was even older than him, the head of the Coven of Witches. In truth, without her support and her assistance, their breach of Demonic Islands would not have gone so smoothly. “This truly is a demon island. Our opponent is an existence who is infinitely more evil…” Witch Maya muttered under her breath. “What does Your Excellency mean?” Crowley scratched his head in thought. “Project X involves controlling the body. Have you ever heard of the ‘Tree of Life’ project?” “Tree of Life? What’s that?” The knight and the old fellow felt that they would have a mental breakdown. “This is the empire’s most top secret plan, on the same level as the X research…” The witch’s first sentence made the others breathe in sharply. Project X was already this terrifying, how much more evil would this Tree of Life project be? “This project is a medium to connect the Shadow Weave to regular human beings directly…” Witch Maya looked at everyone present. “The final goal of the Empire is to implant the Shadow Weave directly into all humans, making their consciousness one with the Weave and eliminating the unnecessary steps. This will form an
extraordinary human…”
“Control everyone’s mind through the Weave…” Crowley was stumped for a moment, because he knew that the Rapid Shadow of today was such a universal object. Cold sweat formed again on his body.
“Yes. Project X is to remodel the human body, and the Tree of Life Project is to remodel the mind. Once their plan succeeds, the entire Empire will become one being! Furthermore… As long as they wish, any civilian would immediately become a powerful assassin! The citizens will turn into the most elite, indomitable army!”
Maya’s voice was still as calm as ever. No one knew how much she had sacrificed to obtain this piece of information.
“This… How much… What have…” Crowley and the others present all possessed extraordinary ability. Nothing was more unbearable to them than having their bodies and minds taken away.
“Insanity! Madness! This world is going berserk!” The old man from the Martial Arts Association mumbled. Crowley was genuinely concerned that he would face a mental breakdown soon as well.
“We have to defeat them and overthrow the Empire’s rule!” The knight swung his sword downwards, forming a huge trench on the alloy floor.
“We need more members, and to form a larger alliance. I believe that many will wish to join us once these projects are leaked!” Crowley hurriedly suggested.
Suddenly, Maya spoke. “I see the omen of death on your faces!”
“Would you please clear up our doubts, Your Excellency?” Crowley asked in earnest.
Maya’s eyes turned white as she screamed in an ear-piercing tone, “Everything that you are doing will surmount to nothing! You will never be able to overthrow the Empire, much less the existence that stands behind unless you can find the Book of Salvation left
behind by Ari!"
“It’s a prophecy!” Crowley’s eyes lighted. “We still have a chance!”
“No!” Suddenly, Maya let out a cry of anguish, and collapsed to the ground.
“Your Excellency! Your Excellency!” Crowley hurriedly went forward, but he discovered that her life force was declining rapidly.
“The Book of Salvation is already gone… I see blood and flames of destruction in the future…” Maya grasped onto Crowley’s robes as white bubbles frothed from her mouth, before she started to spurt blood.
“Wait… Let me heal you…” Crowley fumbled.
“No! It’s too late, listen carefully…” Crowley could only stop his movements due to the powerful strength from the witch’s clutch.
“I see it… That shadow, and the return of the primordial ruler… Great Serpent…” Suddenly, Maya’s body jerked, and there was no life left in her.
“Witch Maya! Maya…” Crowley was flabbergasted. He would not believe that the leader of the witches, the pillar of the rebellion who had lived much longer than him, had just perished like this.
However, although he was in denial, the cold, lifeless body that suddenly seemed extremely old confirmed the fact.
“Rumour has it that a prophecy exceeding one’s strength will sap away a witch’s life force… Maya’s drunk from the River of Life before, and her bloodline would give her at least a thousand more years of life…” The old man from the Martial Arts Association mumbled.
“How powerful is that existence that someone as long-lived as Maya would die just like that?” The knight shivered in his armour. He stood in front of the corpse, giving the witch a knight’s salute.
“Witch Maya… Although you have come to pass, the flames of resistance will never be quelled… Let us inherit your dying wishes, and stop this evil empire!”
Crowley clenched his fast, “Right! Project X and the Tree of Life Project! The Empire must never succeed. If they manage to rule this world completely, we’ll all be eradicated immediately!”

“There’s no need to wait until then…” an icy voice sounded out. A sharp blade appeared from the shadows and pierced the Martial Arts Association head immediately in the chest. Blood splattered as the voice’s owner revealed himself, a man dressed in military uniform.

“The chief of Special Forces, the largest lackey of the Empire—Javis!” Crowley gritted his teeth and looked at this person who came. He wanted so much to tear Javis’ body to shreds with just his gaze.

“Officer! Enemy ambush! The navy and the Special Forces… They’re extremely powerful… Beep! Beep!” A flustered voice sounded on the transmitter on Crowley’s collar, but it disconnected very soon. The sender had most likely been killed.

“You’re extremely lucky, we are killing you under the orders of the princess of the Empire. So much glory, isn’t it?” A sick, maniacal laughter came from Javis.

“Hmm?” Suddenly, Javis darted backwards and avoided a powerful fist.

“Tian Can, you damned geezer of the Martial Arts Association! Not bad, you were able to dodge my Shadow Pierce…” Javis snorted, looking at the old man with a blade in his chest seeming fine.

“I’ve mastered the source of qi, my body holds no weaknesses…” Tian Can patted his chest, a small glow appearing from within to mend the hole.

“I knew you wouldn’t die this easily, old man!” The knight called out excitedly.

“Yea! Steel Man of the Knights of the Round Table, Tian Can of the Martial Artists Association, and also Crowley of the Bloodline Alliance… You guys are all criminals with a large bounty on your
Explosions rang out continuously, and it seemed like the Empire’s forces were slowly approaching the area. What was more terrifying was that at least a dozen members of the Special Forces had already entered this area stealthily. Intense fights broke out everywhere.

“Javis… Don’t be delusional. Do you know of the Empire’s projects? X and the Tree of Life? Even you yourself will be sacrificed in the future…” Crowley tried to persuade him again.

“These matters… I knew of them long ago…” Suddenly, Javis’ eyes turned bloodshot, “Massacre Domain!”

A blood red forcefield with a suppressive aura was emanated, engulfing Crowley and the other two leaders.

“I am different from you guys! I will be able to obtain eternal life once my consciousness is merged into the clone… Right now, it’s time to rid of useless trash…”

Javis wrapped himself inside a black shadow. A mountainous beast charged out towards them from behind him, breaking the limits of speed and strength.

‘Crazy! This person has gone crazy!’ These were the thoughts Steel Man conveyed to Crowley when their gazes met.

“Leave him to this old man… The two of you should hurry to support out elites on the outside…”

*Bang! Boom!* Tian Can walked forward with both arms behind him. He blocked the path of the beast quickly but calmly.

“I have never fully unleashed source of qi, I can finally do it today…” Tian Can muttered, as a violent gale of an aura burst forth from within his body. It was almost as powerful as Javis’ skill earlier.

*Kacha! Kacha!* The clothes on his body were ripped into shreds as his muscles bulged. The veins on his body seemed like fat, squirming earthworms.

In just the blink of an eye, this old man had turned from a skinny
figure into a three-metre-tall giant with murky green skin.
*Roar!* The giant stretched both of his hands, deflecting the claws of the black beast. The two entered a deadlock, causing the area to tremble violently.
“Hurry and leave, young men. I’ll leave saving the world to you…” Crowley and Steel Man were enveloped in a warm gust of qi, sent outside the massacre domain. The words of the old man still rang in their ears.
“Don’t…” Crowley had detected an ominous feeling from the words of the old man. Those of Tian Can’s sect could release their qi in a burst and gain tremendous powers, but the price they had to pay was extremely high as well. This was especially so when it was performed by someone so old. Crowley immediately thought of Maya. Didn’t she too expend all of her lifeforce before she died?
“What’s more… I may look young on the outside but I’ve lived for over 300 years already! I should be the one to sacrifice myself… Damn it!” Crowley clenched his fist as blood dripped down from his palms.
“Hey… Don’t let Tian Can’s sacrifice go to vain. The situation outside is even worse!” Steel Man pointed ahead. Those outside were still stuck fighting. Crowley could see many of the Empire’s elite troops covering the surroundings, carrying the imperial banner.
The members of the imperial family are here indeed. They even brought the personal bodyguards of the imperial family.’ Crowley thought of the information gathered by the Bloodline Alliance. The imperial family of the Shadow Empire usually kept a low profile, but the strength that they had hidden was extremely powerful. Their personal bodyguards could cast shadow spells instantly, and amongst them were many mutants and bloodline carriers.

“We’re in danger today. The two of us could even die here. Are you afraid now?” Crowley looked at Steel Man.

“Haha… Cowardice does not exist in the commandments of a knight!” Steel Man’s answer was extremely heroic. A layer of white light glowed on his armour, forming a second layer of defence. Flames began to burn on the knight’s sword. Faced with such a perilous situation, Steel Man had evidently used a secret technique.

“Then… Let’s begin to break through the encirclement…” Crowley ripped opened his coat, revealing a scar-ridden upper body. The tattoo of a serpent came alive on his back.

“Unseal!” Crowley shouted, and the giant serpent was awakened. It opened its scarlet eyes and spat its forked tongue out, hissing loudly.

“Kill!” The both of them were like raging dragons as they roared, charging into the incoming troops.
Days later, on an island.
“Cough…” Crowley opened his eyes, spitting out the fine sand in his mouth.
Listlessness soon turned to concentration, “How did I end up here… Right, we were in the research facility! The Empire’s backup troops and imperial bodyguards… Steel Man, what a pity…”
Even Crowley would not be able to survive such an onslaught. Hence, after discovering that he had not died nor been taken prisoner, he was extremely perplexed.
“Are you awake?” An extremely enchanting voice sounded out beside him. Crowley turned towards it, and his throat immediately turned dry. His heart began to beat faster as well.
It was a lady in a black gown. Her appearance was only average, but it carried a powerful, intoxicating attraction. What surprised Crowley even more was the feeling of closeness he had, a reverence that almost had him kneeling and kissing the soil her feet had trod on.

“May we speak for a moment, sir?” A lady dressed in uniform stood before Leylin in Thousand Bears City, waving her pass in front of him. The badge was representative of the Empire’s dignity and power as it shone in the crowd.
Passersby avoided the both of them, and some of them even looked at Leylin from a distance with schadenfreude. Anyone who had angered the department this young lady was from would meet with a miserable end in the Empire!
“I didn’t know… I’m rather popular now, huh? Follow me!” Leylin
smiled and rubbed his nose, before moving into a cafe. He had no intention of being aware that he was treated like a suspect. What made the onlookers flabbergasted was that this policewoman did not hesitate and followed him, even carrying a warm and gentle smile on her face.

“Tsk! Were they roleplaying? What audacity!” A short and fat man rubbed his glasses and chided in jealousy.

“Retard!” His friend beside him immediately covered his mouth. “This is a public area, under the surveillance of the central network and the Weave! Would anyone dare to use a fake identity on the streets?”

“What a pity… She was such a beautiful flower, and also my favourite type!” The fatty fought to retort.

“I actually think that they’re rather compatible, that boy is also cute!” A girl beside them spoke with stars in her eyes.

“Welcome!” The cafe waiter opened the door and welcomed them politely, but was momentarily stumped. Evidently, he had recognised Leylin. Because this was the very same couple cafe that Leylin had entered together with the Snake Dowager.

And not only did Leylin bring the other girl into the private room, but he even left the bewildered girl lying there. This had left a deep impression on the waiter. In fact, if not for Leylin leaving some words for him to say to the girl before he left, the waiter would already have alerted the nearby authorities.

Although his facial expression did not change much after seeing Leylin bring in another girl, his eyes betrayed his thoughts. Leylin was apparently a skirt-chaser.

“I want to have a couple’s room, the same as before.” After listening to Leylin’s request, the waiter was left speechless. However, his professionalism had allowed him to grant Leylin’s request quickly. What was more remarkable was that it was the
“Do not disturb us no matter what happens!” The policewoman instructed him after he served the coffee, affectionately pulling Leylin into the room. The waiter was left speechless again after seeing this scene. Before he shut the door, he even gave Leylin the thumbs up…

The room was suddenly enveloped by shadows, and the policewoman stretched her body with a relaxed expression. Just that movement alone caused her aura to change drastically. Her face grew even more exquisite than before, and a pair of watery eyes seemed to speak a language of their own.

“We meet again, Shar…” Leylin sighed, looking at the young lady that had changed from head to toe.

This was the ruler of the Shadow World, the Mistress of the Night who was once an intermediate goddess from the World of Gods—Shar!

He did not ask how she managed to look for him. After all, she had the entire world under her. After failing to search for Leylin’s aura, she would have definitely guessed that Leylin had used a fake identity to become a citizen. Through meticulous investigation, it was not a difficult task to track Leylin down. How would a group of corrupt officials peddling fake identities be a match for the ruler of this world?

“This brought you to me, didn’t it?” Leylin waved his identity pass. “I never thought that the empire I raised single handedly has reached to such a level of corruption…” Shar admitted implicitly. Her eyes shone like stars as she looked at Leylin, “This is not your true body, but only a body formed by energy…”

“I came with grace, why wouldn’t you accept it?” Shar frowned, as if she had gotten upset. But Leylin’s expression did not change at all.

She had to be joking! Had he believed Shar, then he was really
courting death. Her level of deceit was absolute perfection. Even rank 7 and above beings would be deceived by her if they weren’t careful.

Hence, after Xavier and the Bloodline Alliance left, Leylin’s true body had already left Thousand Bears City, only leaving behind this projection here carrying all items that could identify him.

“Let’s not talk about that… Why are you here today, Miss Shar. What do you want to discuss?” Leylin sat on the soft satin couch, gesturing for her to sit down too.

“The spell that you used the other day… I saw the shadow of the World of Gods and of the arcanists…”

There wasn’t much room for discussion for beings like them. Seeing that her deceit was exposed, Shar immediately delved into the main topic.

“You’re right, this is my harvest from the World of Gods.” Leylin admitted. Shar sat beside him in a reserved manner like a virtuous lady. Just the white skin on her hand was extremely alluring.

After hearing Leylin’s reply, Shar’s face changed for the worse, seemingly affected by his words. It was apparent that the fatal strike had left fear in her heart, and she felt extremely uncomfortable.

However, Leylin did not mind it at all. He actually used a more unbridled stare and observed this female goddess in front of him. He had to admit that Shar’s body was extremely gorgeous, especially that strange temper of hers that added a layer of wildness. Many males would want to subdue her.

Moreover, he’d showed this trump card to Shar on purpose, using it as a deterrence that would allow him to gain the upper hand in the discussion.

It was like a country which possessed nuclear weapons speaking to one without. This confidence and dignity, caused Shar’s expression to change.
“I caught a whiff of the Snake Dowager’s aura… You have met her before, in this place!” Shar digressed, looking at the place where the Snake Dowager once sat.
“Yes. We’re allies, it’s necessary to convey information and news…” Leylin did not avoid the question, and even stressed on the word ‘allies’.
“So then, what kind of price do I have to pay for you to break away from your alliance with the Snake Dowager? I believe that I am a better ally than her! How about we share the origin force of the Shadow World? You have the bloodline of the Shadow World, the origin force will definitely be extremely beneficial to you!” Shar immediately stated her price.

……

Even more shadows had now enveloped the room, sealing the room tightly. Leylin had even sensed a seal from the world’s origin force. Shar was being extremely careful.
After having a great chat of over two hours, Leylin left the cafe under the envious gaze of the waiter.
“Break the alliance I have with the Snake Dowager?” Leylin shook his head. He had signed a bloodline pact with her, and Dreamscape itself bore witness to it.
Although his Nightmare Absorbing Physique was perfected, his powers would definitely reduce if he went back on his words. It was something that Leylin did not wish to see right now.
“So, the best way is for Snake Dowager to relinquish her rule as well… After all, I am a peace lover…” Leylin shameless gave himself a righteous tag to his name.
High in the skies, a semiplane had been opened up temporarily. Leylin’s main body opened his eyes within, seeing the mark of a two-eared jar in front. A trace of laws burst forth, activating the imprint.

The Jar Spectre was a being of laws who’d existed since the era of the Snake Dowager. Rumour had it that it could hear sounds from all over the Shadow World, regardless of who it was. The Snake Dowager had made use of this fact, collecting its body’s fragments and turning them into imprints that could be used for secure communication.

The pitiful end of this being of laws allowed Leylin to learn of Shar’s methods.

“Allsnake! The Mistress of the Night has already found Thousand Bears City, and my main body has already left…” He gave a summary of what had transpired and quickly received an answer. “Imperial Capital Kerallen, this is the place where everything ends…”

“By the way, I’ve obtained two very interesting things. Want to take a look?” Without waiting for an answer from Leylin, the Snake Dowager impatiently sent two documents to him.

“Oh! Project X… and the Tree of Life project, huh?” Leylin stroked his chin, reading through all the contents in an instant.

“Shar’s playing with fire!” The Snake Dowager’s voice held a rare hint of excitement, “The World Will is the conscient of all life
forms in Shadow World, including the mountains, rivers, and forests. It will only consciously make a thought every few hundred thousand years… what she’s doing will definitely result in anger from the World Will… this is an opportunity for us!”

“You’re too naive…” Leylin ruthlessly poured cold water on the Snake Dowager, “Did you think I didn’t notice the issues with the genes of the surrounding humans? This isn’t quite it… look…”

He then sent the information he had recorded to the Snake Dowager. There was a period of silence from the other end, though the jar imprint began to show tremendous vibrations. Evidently, she was extremely shaken, “How— how dare she…”

“The X project wasn’t only applied to humans. Bugs, animals, even microorganisms. About 60% of all biological creatures in the world have already been affected…” Leylin’s tone was icy, “Also, the plan doesn’t just end there. Extradimensional spectres, pure energy being, and even the conscient of the land itself… The radiation of the Shadow Weave has trapped everything, and they can’t escape…”

With the A.I. Chip collecting data for him, Leylin’s abilities in this area obviously surpassed all other beings. With his great persuasive power and analytical graphs, the Snake Dowager on the other end did not have any chance to speak.

“If Shar’s target was just the humans, then that would really be an opportunity for us, since they only have at most 20% of access to the World Will. Doing this will definitely result in them being abandoned by the World Will…”

“But she instead holds such extreme control, nibbling away at the world from the Shadows. She controls over half of the World Will already; no matter how much you try to resist you won’t be able to match the favour she receives.” Leylin concluded.

In actuality, he thought well of Shar’s methods. If they were not around to interfere, she would most definitely succeed. Besides,
fusing with the World Will would definitely cause one to lose a part of themselves. This was an assimilation in thought of all intelligent life forms of the Shadow World, and even Shar could not avoid this. However, once these two plans were complete, there would no longer be any obstructions. In other words, Shar was currently in the process of fusing with the World Will, becoming a conscient that has devoured a whole world. Indeed, only a god could have such guts. The rationality of the Magi would never let them do something so insane. Truth be told, Leylin would most likely do something similar given the situation as well. Warlocks were slightly more crazy than Magi, after all, and he did believe there was a great probability of success here. Shar was an example. The Snake Dowager remained quiet for a long while at the other side, before she finally sent a soul transmission full of unwillingness, “So… we can only give up?” “No. We still have a chance, or I’d long since have left the Shadow World…. ” Leylin’s thoughts were the complete opposite of the Snake Dowager’s. “This plan is actually flawless, but there’s not enough time to proceed with it. This could be the price that the Mistress of the Night had to pay for exterminating other existences of laws, as well as to recover. That could be why she still isn’t done corroding the World Will yet…” “Our only chance at destroying her plans is the very moment that the Tree of Life moves…” After placating the Snake Dowager and arranging to meet at the imperial capital Kerallen, Leylin closed off the jar imprint while looking deep in thought. Shar had given Leylin a great lesson in understanding the World Will.
‘By the same logic, nibbling away the control to take over the World Will seems plausible in the World of Gods, though it would be more difficult…
‘Now, while Shar has control over more than half of the World Will and can use the World Origin Force at any time, this also means a complete break away from the original relationship of having fused with the World Will. The part of the World Will that had not been controlled will definitely fight against this corrosion and perhaps clash against Shar violently. Who knows, her main body could be busy with this… The fact that the Snake Dowager and I can still lie low in the Shadow World and not be found by the Mistress of the Night is the best proof!’
Space shimmered, and Leylin’s main body soared into the skies. The stars and moon flickered in the dark skies, as cold gusts of wind blew fresh air into his face.
“It’s already night…” Leylin looked in a direction, “Imperial capital Kerallen! Let’s settle everything there!”

……

The imperial capital was the hub of researchers and mechanics in the Shadow Empire, the birthplace of the legendary Rapid Shadow series. Many things not yet available to the greater world, or things that were only rumoured to exist, were all present here.
The imperial guards stationed at the centre of the city had the best of equipment, protecting the imperial palace day and night.
The imperial city had an area of about 10% of the capital, but it wasn’t any extravagant structure. Rather, it was a robotic city full of technological character. The imperial research centre, imperial university, and all sorts of high-tech research institutions surrounded the area, forming a circle around the city.
There was an extremely secret darkroom within this hi-fi city,
located thousands of metres underground with mendur alloy walls almost a hundred metres thick. This metal was the most solid known to the Empire, with the best isolation properties. It would normally be sold by the gram for astronomical prices.
The princess silently headed to the entrance of the darkroom, removing her wristwatch, bracelet, and all other technology from her body. Only after multiple strict, humiliating tests could she finally enter the darkroom.
The room had very simple decorations, with an oil lamp emanating faint rays of light within. One could somewhat see the many volumes that were falling apart on a few broken bookshelves. Behind a black hardwood table was seated a middle-aged man with grey hair, seeming extremely poised. A faint lustre emitted from the ancient spell formation behind the man, twining around the princess.
If one looked closer, two items could be seen at the heart of the spell formation, one being a power-recharging source, and the core a few crimson fish scales and a pair of shrivelled eyeballs.
“Father…” The princess slowly knelt.
“The blind prophet Ari’s Book of Salvation has been fished out and stowed away, sealed completely. The rebel armies at the Demonic Islands were mostly exterminated, but Crowley of the Bloodline Alliance managed to escape… Please punish me, father!” The princess reported primly.
“You’ve done well enough, Ling!” The emperor who had control over the entire Shadow Empire spoke, “As long as the master is happy and shifts attention away from us, then we’ve succeeded! Even while at the cost of the Book of Salvation…” The emperor seemed rather excited, a rare flush rising on his cheeks.
“Do you know who the blind prophet is?” The emperor seemed rather eager to talk today, and even if she was the princess, Ling had no choice but to listen obediently.
“It was a master of ancient times, holding the same amount of power as the Snake Dowager. Ari was a reincarnation of a portion of prophet Kalle’s conscience. This is the reason for the Book of Salvation containing such terrifyingly powerful predictions!”

“The prophet Kalle!” The princess looked up, focusing on the shrivelled eyeballs in the spell formation behind the emperor.

“That’s right, these are Kalle’s eyes, the reason Kalle could only be called the blind prophet after reincarnated. There’s also the reverse scales of the mermaid protector of the unknown master!”

The emperor suddenly began to cough vigorously, the flush on his face more pronounced, “The Empire has laboured over hundreds of generations, and made use of countless favours to obtain these two items. Only with their protection can we communicate so freely without fear of being found out by that person…”

At the mention of that being, the emperor still lowered his voice, evidently from a habitual fear.

“Now is our chance! The Book of Salvation has predicted that the Snake Dowager shall return. She has the ability to fight that person, so when the time comes our plan can succeed. The royal family will truly be revived, no longer slaves to a master!”

Somehow, Princess Ling sensed a crazed look on her father’s face as if he were a madman, taking a huge gamble for this. Ling went silent for a moment before she persuaded hoarsely, “Even so… suddenly changing the Tree of Life plan and project X could…”

“I’ve planned everything. There won’t be any problems!” The emperor waved his arms decisively, “When the time comes, my master’s thoughts after having assimilated will allow them to become a god in an instant, freeing the royal family from control!”
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Ling sighed once more as she looked at her father behind the table. She felt like the person was a stranger. And yet, she deeply understood his insanity. After all, the degree to which that person behind the scenes had oppressed their imperial family was ingrained into their very bones! She still remembered the shock she’d felt when she heard of the incident at a young age, being aghast at the kind of sacrifices the imperial family had to make to break away from control. More crucially, her background and bloodline only allowed her to stand in the same faction as her father.

‘That master intends to control everything, turning the whole world into something that belongs to her alone without caring for the ants seeking refuge in it.’ In her heart, Ling could only smile with helplessness. The only thing she could do now was to dedicate her all to bringing this project to fruition, to helping her father. It was a horrible feeling, like she was piloting a broken canoe in the largest of seas. No, it was much more terrifying than that!

She understood that if the other party were to strike first, the whole imperial family would be destroyed in a moment’s time. Perhaps they knew about it long ago but didn’t pay much attention. Humans didn’t care much about ants fighting either. Ling tried to console herself internally.

……
Xavier’s body was wrapped up in a black cloak. He was staring at the dim lights in the vast advanced city, clenching his fists as he spoke, “Kerallen! I’m coming!”

“Heh… we have good news!” Genius came over, seated in his wheelchair. “Our branch members managed to pull your parents out safely, they’re currently en route here as we speak.”

“Oh? That’s great, thank you Genius!” Xavier sincerely gave his thanks.

“Ha Ha …. You don’t have to be grateful to me, this were all Sister Bobbi’s orders,” Genius glanced around him like a thief, moving closer to Xavier and whispering, “I didn’t expect that she cared so much about Crowley despite how she acts aloof on the surface…”

*Bang!* A ray of heat brushed past Genius’ ears, caught by Xavier with his bare hands. It was an extremely hot piece of stones, the edges of which were about to melt.

“The next one will be aimed directly at your smelly mouth,” Bobbi said in a cold voice.

“I got it!” Genius made a gesture of sealing his mouth. He then pointed at Xavier’s palm, trying to shift attention towards him again. “Look! Xavier’s improved again!” he said with an exaggerated expression.

“Indeed…” Xavier looked at his palm, the surface of which was covered in a layer of fine black scales that were emitting a dark light. He’d earlier relied on this protection to be unscathed as he blocked Bobbi’s attack.

“This terrifying improvement… It’s growing faster and faster…” Xavier muttered. He could feel his bloodline roiling every day as his body strength leaped up.

“Yes, it is good. You’re about 70 to 80 percent as strong as that smelly snake now, enough to be dispatched as a trump card.” Bobbi was dressed in military uniform, and she arrived to stand between
Genius and Xavier.
“Is there any news from Crowley?” Xavier asked Genius.
“Our communication with the eastern seas has been severed completely. The last we heard, they met with an attack by the imperial guards in the vicinity. Their luck is terrible—to meet a core member of the imperial family nearby……”
Genius shook his head, “The latest news from the three-eyed crow says that the empire’s troops released a public list of rebels who were eliminated in the encounter. Witch Maya, Steel Man, and Tian Can from the Martial Arts Association… The good news is that there’s no information about Crowley right now……”
However, the deaths of three leaders was enough to intimidate the other forces. After all, only after thoroughly understanding how strong these people were would they be able to know how terrifying the Shadow Empire was.
“We can’t say anything about Steel Man and Tian Can, but Maya wasn’t killed by the enemy. I’ve been in contact with the Witch Association, she should’ve been killed by a dangerous prophecy. She already arranged everything and selected her successor before she left.”
Bobbi shook her head. Witch Maya could be considered a person of repute.
“So it seems that she already had a premonition while heading towards the Eastern Seas. Why did she head there after knowing what would happen…” Genius touched his jaw.
*Beep Beep!* Suddenly, one of the handles on his wheelchair opened and revealed a screen with a blinking warning light.
“Blood Nest, Blood Nest! We’re Transport Fleet 3. We’re facing an attack from the Special Forces near the Black Onyx Lake. Requesting assistance. I repeat, requesting assistance!”
“Blood Nest! Blood Nest…”
The current situation of the other party was extremely precarious,
and red light flashed intensely on the screen.
“Aren’t my parents on that fleet?” Xavier clenched his fists, causing a trace of powdered stone to fall from the gaps between his fingers.
“Hateful… I’d originally thought that saving Jill could allow us to have a family reunion in the capital…” His pupil slightly turned red. He rushed out immediately, “I’m leaving!”
“Such a troublesome little brat, I hate being a babysitter the most!” Bobbi cursed, “Genius, prepare a rescue team according to Transport Fleet 3’s situation.” Soon after, her silhouette suddenly changed into a hurricane and she followed behind Xavier.
“Sigh… all of you are the same, why is the one staying behind always me…” Genius sighed, and following that a layer of the earth beneath him suddenly split apart to reveal an elevator. Following Genius sighing, the layer of soil beneath suddenly split opened and revealed an elevator. A few kilometres of travel later, a large base surfaced in his eyes.
“Everyone, attention! An urgent rescue mission is in operation!” Seated in the central control room, Genius spoke with a serious tone. The whole base turned orderly in a moment’s time.
Most members of the Bloodline Alliance owned an untainted citizenship record, thus receiving an advantage when in the face of the Imperial’s inspection. This time around, the transport fleet had been disguised as a tourist bus, littered with young children and elders. Outsiders wouldn’t link them with the enemy, so their guard would be reduced.
Unfortunately, a problem arose this time around. When Xavier rushed to Black Onyx Lake, what he saw was three overturned tourist buses, and the flames on the body of the tourist bus sign seemed to be laughing at his incompetence
“Looks like they were all taken away. They should’ve met the capture team of the Special Forces, not the extermination team. There’s still hope for their survival.” Bobbi rushed to Xavier’s side
and grabbed his shoulders, apparently warning him not to be rash. With a large number of policemen sealing the scene, they couldn’t be sure that there weren’t any Special Forces members lingering in secret.

Biting his teeth, Xavier managed to squeeze out one word, “Alright!”

As the two of them slowly left, a middle-aged man blocked Xavier’s path, “Young man! It seems like you need help?”

“Javis!” Bobbi suddenly cried out in puzzlement, and Xavier’s own subconscious reaction was to attack. Snakebite Fist activated suddenly, and a sharp cry sounded out as he shot forth. After all, with all the current propaganda Javis was synonymous with the devil to the Bloodline Alliance!

Shadow Arm!

The middle-aged man’s arms flashed rapidly, as two black metal arms extended from behind him to form a cross that managed to block Xavier’s attacks.

“I’m not Javis. You have to believe in me right now!” The man’s way of speaking could convince people. He pointed at their surroundings, where Xavier’s actions had attracted the attention of the neighboring police and a few observers.

“Let me handle this.” The man walked to the policemen with a smile, showing them an ID and speaking a few words. They turned to leave, and he saluted them.

“Hmm? Is that sufficient to show my sincerity? If I had any bad intentions, all I had to do was shout,” the man laughed bitterly.

“Indeed, you’re not Javis. However, such high level Rapid Shadows are only used by the army, and they have unique ways of masking their identities. I’m afraid you’re nothing better.” Bobbi snorted coldly, but she didn’t immediately leave.

“Follow me!” The middle-aged guy laughed bitterly, leading the way and bringing the two of them to a secluded place.
*Bang!* An electronic ball was suddenly suspended from his hands, emitting a layer of translucent energy that isolated the area. “With that taken care of, we can speak at ease…” The middle-aged guy took the initiative to explain.

Right now, Xavier has also discovered a slight difference in this man. Although he looked quite similar to Javis, the greying hair at his sideburns showed that he was obviously older. “That’s the shadow pulse jammer developed by the army! You’re a military official!” Bobbi said with certainty.

“Add former to that. I was once the head of the anti-air team at headquarters, but now I’m just a glorified retiree, an unemployed uncle…” He laughed bitterly once more, “Let me introduce myself. My name is Clive, I’m Javis’ older brother.”

“Hmm… We do have intel about a Clive. However, why would you abandon the empire and your little brother to help us?” Although Bobbi obviously wanted to rope in the other party, she knew how terrifying it was to have a someone with ulterior motives hidden beside you. Her eyes were thus filled with vigilance.

“I naturally intended to be loyal to the country at first. But then I retired, and I used my previous connections to get the Project X plans from Javis. I have to prevent that from happening!” Clive’s face was filled with sincerity.
They plan to eliminate ordinary human beings with genetic manipulation, using the Tree of Life to control their minds and turn the whole world into a puppet. This wickedness… It far exceeds even the worst cruelties the ancient empire ever inflicted on its people.”

There was a look of righteousness on Clive’s face, “Some of the military who had access to project details couldn’t accept it. We formed a secret organisation, uniting our forces to resist the decadence that has taken over the imperial family!”

Clive turned redder and redder as he spoke, his voice growing higher in pitch. Without the protection of the pulse jammer, they probably would have attracted attention.

Although she more or less believed the other party, Bobbi still sneered as she crossed her arms, “It’s a pity that your brother doesn’t know about this.”

Hearing that mentioned, Clive turned helpless as his expression filled with sentiment and grief, “Javis… He’s another one of the reasons I established this rebellion. Take a look at this.”

He pulled a golden necklace off his neck, the locket attached to it in the shape of an oval shell. A family photo was within.

There were three boys in the photo, two of them looking like Clive and Javis.

“This is our third brother,” Clive said, pointing to a red-haired boy standing at a side. He was the shortest of the lot, wearing a
checkered black-and-white shirt. He seemed to have a shy personality.

“The three of us originally got along greatly. However, once we joined the army a mistake I made in compassion caused our third brother to become a vegetable. Currently, he doesn’t have the ability to think anymore.” Clive revealed his secret.

“His situation is very tricky, with aspects of the soul involved. Even the most advanced technology of the Empire couldn’t remedy the situation, and ever since then Javis has hated me. His personality turned more extreme and brutal, and he used that to his advantage to rise quickly as he joined the Special Forces…”

Not knowing why, Xavier suddenly felt like both Clive and Javis were quite pitiful.

“What does the death of your brother have to do with your loyalty towards the empire?” Bobbi asked acutely, and then she covered her mouth, “Could it be… because of the X project?

“No. It’s the Tree of Life orchestrated by the empire…” Clive seemed determined in his betrayal as he casually spoke of classified information, “The project aims to use magic via Rapid Shadows as a medium, using immense pressure to directly implant the Shadow Weave into humans. This will give the royal family control over the thoughts, and even the soul! Ultimately, all humans in the Shadow World will be integrated into a hive mind, forming an extraordinary existence…

“This is why Javis is loyal to the empire. The Tree of Life is the only hope for our brother to recover, the resonance of extraordinary power that comes with the implantation of the Shadow Weave able to bring him back. On top of that, the empire promised to hand over some autonomy to the souls of the higher-ups, which is why some of them are still loyal. An empire they control, with no public opinion or resistance to worry about, letting them do whatever they want. To some of them, this is heaven!”
Clive revealed a mocking smile. “You should be entitled to this as well, right? Wouldn’t it be great? Once it happens you brothers can live happily together once more…” Xavier couldn’t help but ask.

Clive suddenly hesitated for a moment, then he caressed the pendant in his hand. “My only wish is to see my little brother recover. For that, I’m willing to sacrifice everything. However, he certainly wouldn’t want to wake up to such a dark world…”

He breathed out a long sigh, “I erred once, but I do not wish to do so again. Are you willing to join hands with us in our fight?”

“You’re reasoning is flawed,” Bobbi said with disdain. However, just as Xavier thought negotiations were about to break down, she continued, “However, an undercover agent from the empire could forge a more flawless background. I believe you—for now.

“Of course, our people have clashed so often before that they currently hate each other. It’s impossible for us to act in tandem, at most exchanging information for now.” Bobbi’s analysis was very reasonable. After all, the resentment between the Bloodline Alliance and the empire wasn’t just a matter of a day or two.

“I agree,” Clive nodded after a while.

“So… This is what I need to know. The bloodline carriers on the Starry Tourist bus, including the old and young, where were they sent?”

“Silver Mountain Research Institute, close to Kerallen. These are the coordinates…” Clive sold out the Special Forces without hesitation. Perhaps he wanted to use this to win Bobbi’s trust in the first place.

“It’s a training and logistics centre for the Special Forces. They were hit pretty badly recently, so they’re most likely collecting fresh blood to train. The chances of survival are very high. A few on our side also have passwords to a few crucial entrances.

Xavier’s eyes lit up as this was mentioned, and he grabbed Clive’s
arm, “What about my sister? Is Jill inside there?”

“Jill? I’m sorry, I’ve never heard of this name….” Clive politely retreated, “However, if your sister is young and was sent to the imperial capital, it means that her innate talent is extremely high. There’s a great chance that she was sent there.”

“That’s great!” After receiving the news, Xavier resolutely clenched his first. ‘Jill, Mom, Dad… Soon, I’ll be there soon!’ he said in his heart.

“If you need any more information, just head over to the capital’s Golden-Purple Flower Road, building 377 there to look for me. The boss is a disabled man, all you have to do is say ‘Open Tulips’ and he’ll naturally understand what you mean.

Once everything was explained, Clive quickly stowed away his pulse jammer and gradually vanished into the darkness.

Bobbi and Xavier waited in place for a moment before the communication device on Bobbi’s collar rang out, “The target’s left, sister. There’s no traces of an ambush in the vicinity.”

“Very well, let that old man leave… He does indeed have some sincerity. Send the rescue team over!” Silhouettes that formed a sparse encirclement slowly emerged from the surroundings and made Xavier jump.

Earlier on, if Bobbi had felt that the other party was lying, would Clive most likely have received a shot in his head?

“Contact Genius!”

One of the members immediately half-squatted, revealing a transmitter. Bobbi inserted a disk Clive had given her into the device and sent it to Genius, “Genius! This is the map of the Silver Mountain Research Institute, along with a few passcodes. Eliminate their firewall, and paralyze their base within half an hour.”

“No problem! I AM a genius after all…” The youth on the screen looked like a ruffian, and pity and grief surfaced on his face, “Damn it, why did you give me all these passwords? I can hack
them myself! I thought I had a good opponent, but now it’s like I’m using cheats…”
“Scram!” Bobbi hung up the transmission and turned to look at Xavier. “So, what now? This is the imperial capital, with the most powerful guards in the country. Do you dare to do something big?” “What’s there to be afraid of?” Xavier suddenly shouted. In fact, he had indeed felt afraid. However, with his family members trapped inside, he had no choice but to go.

……

When Bobbi brought the elites of the Bloodline Alliance to attack the Silver Mountain Research Institute, what she saw was completely unexpected. There was no heavy guard here, instead a base that had been ruined.
“What happened? Has someone gotten ahead of us?” Bobbi’s face filled with surprise and uncertainty. Other than the Bloodline Alliance, she could not think of another force that had the guts to be so rampant.
“The Coven? But there are no traces of magic attacks. The Knights of the Round Table or Martial Arts Association? Right now, with the deaths of the majority of their elites and important figures, they can’t even care for themselves much less others… Clive? There is no beneficial reason for them to do so.” Possibility after possibility was crossed out of her mind.
“The fighting traces are quite recent, and the enemy seems to be a small force or even a single person!” A scout came back to report. “The empire will respond soon. We must evacuate as soon as possible……”
“I agree!” Bobbi had yet to reply when a black silhouette walked out of Silver Mountain Research Institute. Numerous alerted gazes suddenly disappeared after looking at the familiar appearance of
the other party, and Bobbi released a pleasant cry.

“Crowley!”

“Mm. I swept away the Special Forces, and arranged for the bloodline carriers and captives to be sent to safety. I stayed behind to wait for all of you…” Crowley foolishly laughed.

However, Xavier felt that the air around him had changed drastically. The pressure from his bloodline, especially, made cold sweat emerge on his forehead. His body was expressing a continuous desire to just surrender.

“You were away so long, where exactly did you go die?” Bobbi stared at Crowley. He seemed to have changed a lot, but at the same time seemed no different from usual.
Let’s discuss this after we leave. The story is quite bizarre, almost like a fairy tale…” Crowley touched his head and laughed bitterly, “Also, I’m working under a mighty lady right now. If you meet her, remember to… Nevermind, I doubt you’ll need me to tell you.” “Crowley!” Xavier rushed towards Crowley, “I… I…” Without his knowledge, the words had gotten stuck in his throat, He couldn’t spit it out, and his face turned red in embarrassment. “I rescued your parents. However…” A trace of regret surfaced on Crowley’s face, “I couldn’t find Jill… I’m sorry…” “Alright… These are all minor details. Let’s leave this place immediately.” Contacting Genius, Bobbi slapped the head of the depressed Xavier and shouted, “The imperial guards will surround us in five minutes. Get a move on, let’s break out!”

……

Imperial capital Kerallen, inside the palace. “This is the recording from the attack on the Silver Mountain Research Institute,” Ling reported to her father, pulling out a projection of Crowley surrounded by shadows. This man named Aragon, the graceful master of the Shadow Empire who had greying hair, was filled with serenity. The imperial army’s lack of a result or the significant losses encountered by the
Special Forces weren’t of much importance to him. “Hand these issues over to the garrison and military to handle. Your only goal right now should be the project. Understood?” A faint trace of reprimand could be detected from Emperor Aragon’s tone. “I understand,” Ling complied, and she went on to another report, “I found another suitable body that resonates with the project.” “Oh? Let me look at it now!” Emperor Aragon emperor’s fervent attitude was so frightful that even Ling felt fear. “I ordered the Special Forces to bring her here, and a series of tests revealed that the purity of her soul is extremely high. She can completely withstand the effects of the eye array and the converter.” Ling presented an image of a curled-up young girl in an incubator, traces of tears still on her face with closed eyes. This was Xavier’s sister—Jill! “Very well… Haha… You’ve done well…” Emperor Aragon did not care about the other party’s origins nor her suffering, looking at the data and research results. The joy was evident on his face. “She’s the twelfth, and with that the foundation for the Tree of Life project is complete. You’ve done well, Ling, no wonder you’re the daughter I dote on the most.” Emperor Aragon aimed to dominate the conscience of the extraordinary being formed by the Tree of Life, obtaining the power to fight the control of the Mistress of the Night. However, such a thing was very difficult to do, especially with the complex emotions arising from so many humans. He wouldn’t be able to digest all that power himself. Thus, he had to establish a few transfer nodes to absorb a significant amount of insanity and evil, making the process much easier. Research showed the empire that the soul refining array required twelve females with extremely pure souls, the kind only present in young children. It would allow them to call upon their
strength to purify the evil. 
As for what happened next, and whether those souls could 
withstand the tremendous pressure or dissipate under the load, 
Aragon had no need to consider it. After all, these young ladies 
should actually be excited to sacrifice their lives for such a 
significant cause. 
It took a while for the Emperor to subdue his excitement. However, 
the first sentence he spoke afterwards shocked everyone, “Find a 
chance to make a report to that fellow. The empire’s preparations 
are complete.”
‘We’re finally about to begin?’ Ling looked at the emperor’s face. 
Although he seemed tranquil on the surface, the flames in his eyes 
could not be concealed.
The prophet’s eyes and the mermaid’s scales ensured that Aragon 
had no need to hide anything anyway. He managed to hide his 
emotions from the outside world, and not even the empress or his 
other daughters could realise that anything was unusual. This was a 
fundamental requirement for one to become an emperor.

……

“Why bring me here?” Xavier asked Crowley, looking in 
puzzlement at the man. Ever since he came back, this man in front 
of him had been acting quite strangely. The atmosphere around him 
had become more daunting, yes, but it also seemed like he’d 
acquired another master. Bobbi had ended up bringing him out of 
the base to confront him directly.
“Sigh…” Crowley scratched his head, smiling bitterly. “Some 
things you only believe if you can see them. Rest assured that I 
won’t harm you. In fact, if we manage to get that person’s 
assistance the chances that we’ll be able to save Jill will grow 
tremendously…”
“Are you serious?” Xavier’s face filled up with disbelief. “I’m your bloodline ancestor, and have lived for longer than five hundred years. I will not harm you!” With this issue being brought up, Xavier could do naught but roll his eyes in secret.

Crowley soon brought Xavier to the entrance of a red villa at the outskirts of the imperial capital. “This is an estate I purchased during my travels. It’s written to the accounts of a housekeeper and my progeny, so it’s very safe…” Crowley’s voice contained a prideful tone. “My master, the great lady I serve with all my heart, is currently within…”

“I feel something abnormal…” Xavier felt like his legs had gone soft, and he tried to leave. The blood in his body suddenly ran rampant, causing his eyes to turn scarlet. A few fine scales emerged on his face and the back of his hands. “Bloodline Ressonance!” he spat out with an expression of stone, his speech like the hissing of a snake. The red villa in his line of sight had turned into a blood red whirlpool, attracting him to no end.

His free will fought back without break, but his resistance was growing weaker. He almost entirely gave up. “Alright… Allsnake, stop oppressing your juniors the first time you meet them. You did the same thing when I first met you…” Just as Xavier couldn’t hold on any longer, a voice broke the pressure on him. The villa returned to normal in his eyes, as if what he’d just experienced was but an illusion.

‘Wait, I know this voice!’ Xavier turned his head, only to see a cloaked Leylin wielding a black staff. “Ley? Why are you here?” He’d had a deep impression of this man who’d displayed astonishing ability during the greater proficiency test. “Hello! Long time no see, gentlemen.” Leylin laughed as he avoided Xavier’s question.
“Wait… He is very suspicious!” Unlike Xavier, Crowley was deeply vigilant against Leylin. However, this attitude flipped completely as he heard something, and he turned humble as he continued, “Welcome, mighty existence. Mistress Snake Dowager is waiting for you inside…”

“Alright!” Leylin did not exhibit any courtesy, immediately treating Crowley like a servant as he passed his hat and staff to the man. Following Crowley’s lead, he arrived at where the Snake Dowager was.

“Your Majesty!” the Snake Dowager nodded her head, and Crowley automatically moved to her side like a proper servant. Everything about her was so alluring, allowing her to become the centre of attention regardless of where she was.

“This… This… This…” Xavier’s eyes were wide open and bloodshot. His heart was beating so rapidly blood was leaking from his pores. “This feeling… Why?”

“That is the Snake Dowager. She’s the origin of your bloodline, so you’ll enter such a state whenever you meet her. The only way out is to become a being of laws, breaking away from her control completely…” Leylin explained with a smile.

“Are you trying to play tricks on me right now?” The Snake Dowager threw Leylin a glance. Still, even when she flared up she contained amazing charm. Crowley turned away immediately, as if he knew that he’d make a fool of himself if he continued looking.

“Alright. Crowley, take my descendant downstairs, I’m aware of why you’re here. I have something more important to discuss with Lord Leylin right now…” the Snake Dowager ordered.

To Crowley and Xavier, the instructions from their origin of bloodline held the utmost importance. They would follow through even if it cost them their lives.

Crowley saluted to the Snake Dowager and Leylin, supporting Xavier as they moved out. Leylin and the Snake Dowager were left
alone in the place.
“This is the first time out real bodies met in the Shadow World, no? If the Mistress of the Night discovers us this is probably a great chance for her to solve everything in one go…” Leylin had a joking smile on his face. However, just after he spoke those words he showed a startled look, and seemed to fall into thought.
Every action performed by a being of law had a far-reaching impact on the world. Even the words they spoke would be prophetic. Of course, the possibility that these prophecies came true hinged on many other factors as well, especially considering similarly powerful beings.
“Her hold over the Shadow World is quite weak right now. It allowed me to do quite some things…” The Snake Dowager blinked her watery pupils, and her gaze seemed to ripple with endless flirtation.
“I followed the plan as well. The Coven of Witches, Martial Arts Association, and the Knights of the Round Table have been suppressed, and at the same time I leaked some inside news to them. They should be rushing towards the capital right now, although I don’t know how much use they’ll be…”
The Snake Dowager was exceedingly protective of her descendants in the Shadow World. She’d even especially asked Leylin to suppress any possible chaos in the organisations with extraordinary strength, guiding them to the capital. Leylin could sense something strange from this.

“I and a few others are the source of all the extraordinary power in the Shadow World, so these descendants will be quite useful…” That was how the Dowager explained it, but before she could finish speaking Leylin’s expression changed.

The entirety of the Shadow World began to howl out, and a huge net of purple and gold materialised all over it, full of an enchanting beauty.

“The origin force of the world is boiling… What is the Mistress of the Night up to?” The Snake Dowager muttered.

“I’m afraid she wants to deal with our allies, and also pull us into her trap. Remember my prediction just now?” Leylin now looked grim.

“Have Trial’s Eye and the others been discovered already?” The Snake Dowager wrinkled her beautiful brows, and then straightened them out, “That doesn’t matter. Even if the Mistress of the Night is just one step away from the peak of rank 8, Massa and the rest are also beings of laws. If she truly has the guts to walk out of the Shadow World, that’ll be a great opportunity for us!”

Leylin shook his head, “I’m sorry, but I still stand by it. If she
chose to act, then she should be rather certain that it’ll work. It’s better we stay hidden.”
At this point he’d grown some respect for the Mistress of the Night. The courage to leave the Shadow World whose origin force protected her was really something, even if it was only an avatar. After all, this avatar of hers would hold most of her power. The moment it fell, Shar would fall into a condition similar to or even worse than Beelzebub!
Currently, outside the Shadow World. Under the illumination of the boiling sea of origin force, Shar appeared in her black gown. She took one step forward, and the astral plane formed the most resplendent of pathways under her feet. It allowed her to reach the astral plane in an instant.
Rank 8 strength erupted out, merging the auras of several laws together as it suddenly swept past a gigantic black mountain in the astral plane.
*Crack! Crack!* A solid mountain the size of a small plane was shattered instantly by this strength, and the black dust generated from it devoured by the shadows. From the outside it looked like Shar had a massive black hole in her hand, sucking in everything without even a speck of dust left behind.
“I’ve got you!” Shar smiled like a flower all of a sudden, her jade-like fingers pointing at a grain of dust that hadn’t been absorbed. Space trembled violently, and a hidden plane opened up slowly amidst golden radiance.
“Trial!” “Justice!” “Judgement!” The golden light seemed to form a song of praise, forming a rune in the shape of a large, vertical pupil. The mysterious rune flashed as it exited the semi-plane, the power of light and electricity surrounding it.
“Trial’s Eye, the final judge? Why are you going against me?” Shar’s own body seemed to grow in the face of this giant eye that seemed to span the entire astral plane. She was eventually a head
taller than the eye, bringing with her the pressure of an entire world.
“I guard contracts and enforce rules!” Trial’s Eye used its own actions to answer, boundless golden light forming a holy lance that flickered with the laws of trial and justice.
“What a pity… I would have wanted someone like you to work with me!” Shar’s expression showed the pity she felt as a large green web appeared in her hands to meet the lance.
This was a weave she’d constructed personally. It could not compare to Mystra’s Weave or the Shadow Weave, but it was already enough to restrain Trial’s Eye. Threads of shadow twined around the golden runes, corroding into them.
Evidently, Shar was more powerful than the Trial’s Eye in terms of sheer might. While both of them were rank 8s, Shar was close to the peak.
*Crack! Crack!* The golden lance was melted away by the web, but the eye betrayed no emotions.
“Light of Judgement!” A thin white streak flew out of the centre of the eye, pushing space apart in the astral plane as it imperiled the planes and small worlds around them.
This was the power of judgement, the Trial’s Eye’s core law. In the face of such an attack, Shar had no choice but to get serious. Terrifying energy storms were formed in her surroundings, sweeping through the skies. A tremendous vortex absorbed the light..
From a distance this golden lustre was like a huge dragon, surging forward in the horrifying sea of shadow force.
“Hehe… stupid woman, you’ve actually left the Shadow World…” A voice suddenly sounded deep in Shar’s mind, and an image of an old man wearing luxurious clothing appeared before her eyes.
“A spiritual attack? No, it’s one on my truesoul itself!” Shar bit at her lips, and a layer of shadows quickly enveloped her.
“It’s no use… I am a spirit grandmaster! No material power can hinder my soul energy!” Yuri began to chuckle madly.
“So this is the soul energy of a spirit-sucking monster, a brain-seizing devil?” Shar bit at her lips. All of a sudden, a smile full of confidence emerged on her face, “I got another one!”
“Stop trying to conceal it. I can see the terror and weakness hidden in the shadows of your mind.” Yuri continued to attack her with all his might. The soul energy dispersed in her body, and Shar found that her control of her own body gradually weakened, as if there were two wills trying to gain control of her body.
“How foolish! Did you think you can truly see my mind? Get out here!” Shar yelled out, and terrifying soul force spread through the area like a giant invisible web going taut.
*Whoosh!* A streak of black lightning appeared in the sky, striking down to reveal an old man in imperial robes.
“Show your true face!” Exceedingly powerful shadow force was transformed by Shar’s hand, the effects of divinity and magic combined within. It undulated power, at least as strong as a rank 7 spell.
The boundless shadow force turned into a black sickle that slashed at the back of Yuri’s neck.
*Schlick!* The blade cut through silently, and the black lines it caused immediately moved out into the sliced through the world. Yuri’s body melted away, and the luxurious imperial robes immediately fell and turned into a pile of ashes. The body that was like molten wax regathered to form a new figure, that of a terrifying spirit-sucking master with tens of thousands of heads. Numerous tendrils hung down from these heads, making it like a willow that was even larger than a plane.
However, at this point, a hundred of its heads had all exploded at the same time, causing smelly yellow pus to flow out. Evidently, Shar’s attack had injured its main body badly.
"I judge you!" The light of judgement broke out of the vortex during Shar’s exchange with Yuri, arriving before the former goddess. A lustre that could melt worlds away was blocked by the black clothing, but Shar’s right glove turned to powder as a look of pain emerged on her face.

One could not help but pity her. She was outside the Shadow World, no longer supported by its origin force. She was strong enough to have the upper hand against a single rank 8 existence, but fighting two would be difficult. As for three? As for three? Unless she was a peak rank 8 or had a specific advantage that targeted the enemies’ weak points, that would be impossible!

A bundle of darkness slowly squirmed until it was underneath Shar, abruptly opening its mouth wide open. “Keke.. I like the shadow force on you very much!” Massa’s voice sounded out, making her move upon Shar once she noticed the former goddess was injured.

However, there was a tone of greed and violence to her voice this time, completely different from the bashful lady that Leylin had met. It was like Snow White becoming an old witch.

Massa came from the Dark World, and she was enamoured by the law of shadows. Her understanding of the law of darkness gave her a natural advantage over Shar.

Three rank 8 existences were surrounding Shar in a triangle. The situation seemed to be a complete deadlock.

“Whatever it is, this isn’t the Shadow World anymore. You’re alone, and there’s no way you can contend with the three of us…” Yuri’s nine thousand or so heads emitted powerful spirit undulations, “Let us all attack… I want this woman’s main body’s brain!”

“Inform Allsnake, have her rush over with Leylin. That’s the most dependable method!” Trial’s Eye shook, separating a tiny golden eye from itself that suddenly dropped into the Shadow World.
Within a red villa, the Snake Dowager and Leylin were standing on the balcony. Their expressions changed as they saw a golden meteor fall to the ground.

“The aura of the jar imprint? So it can be used this way too…” Leylin nodded, finding that he had learnt something new. The golden light split in two, entering the eyes of the Snake Dowager and Leylin, allowing them to know the events of the astral plane as if they’d experienced it themselves.

“Seems like there’s a great chance of them winning, now that Shar has given up the reinforcements from the Shadow World. What do you think?” Leylin glanced at the Snake Dowager with a half smile.

“I actually have the same thoughts as you do. Shar isn’t someone so easy to deal with, so she must have some plot. I’ll send down the order to have them all retreat immediately!” The Snake Dowager’s beautiful eyes moved, the words that she said stunning Leylin slightly.

“There’s no use. Massa needs the shadow laws to make up for her own darkness. Yuri is also very envious. In a situation like this where things seem to be going so well, your suggestions will still…” Leylin shook his head.
“N o matter what, we should at least try. If not our future plans will be more difficult to enact.” The Snake Dowager smiled wryly as she whispered a few words into the Jar Spectre imprint. Two beings of law looked towards the sky from a balcony in a red villa, their gaze piercing across the horizon as they peered into a cosmic battle. The Snake Dowager turned her head suddenly and asked Leylin, “Say… What is Shar scheming?”

“Hmm…” Leylin rubbed his chin. “It’s very hard to kill a rank 8 even if they’re not strong at battles. They’re very tenacious, and even heavily injuring an opponent at that level is a great accomplishment…

“However, Shar’s different. She has extremely wild ambitions, so her goal won’t be so simple. Her greatest power is the support of the Shadow World and Shadow Weave…” Leylin’s eyes brightened, “Could she pull all her enemies at once into the Shadow World? If that’s the case, Trial’s Eye and the other two would be in danger of dying…”

Snake Dowager pondered further but she shook her head eventually. “That’s impossible. Don’t you know how hard it is to set up a teleportation formation for rank 8s? Moreover, once Trial’s Eye and the other two discover that they’re being teleported, they’d be able to interfere in a moment and cause the teleportation to fail…”

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“The more you think it’s impossible, the more I think it isn’t! They’d believe the same thing, and let down their guard.” Leylin rubbed his chin, his eyes filled with wisdom. “There’s more than one way to do this… If you want to get to a mountain, you could also have the mountain move to you…”

“You mean…” The Snake Dowager’s expression changed, “We have to let them know immediately!”

“I’m afraid that it’ll be too late,” Leylin shook his head helplessly, yet his eyes portrayed a very strong interest, “Such craziness and bravery, counting it all in one bet, this is indeed the Mistress of the Night!”

*Rumble!* The sun in the sky began to roar under their gazes, radiating even more light and heat than before as it seemed to expand continuously. At the same time, earthquakes and tsunamis burst out everywhere in the Empire. The earth split apart, revealing deep gorges in the ground as every single harbour was flooded. Destruction rained in but a few seconds. And this was only on the surface. Someone gazing upon the Shadow World from the astral plane would see it come alive, as if breathing with life.

“Allsnake asked us to leave immediately. She says there’s danger!” The Trial’s Eye’s enormous body floated in midair, and its eye that was as large as a world continuously flickered with lightning. There was a faint image of Shar’s reflection within. Shar was like a black lotus now, beginning to wilt under the attack of the other three.

“What? We just have to endure it for a little longer!” Yuri and Massa disagreed. These two would reap enormous benefits from Shar, hence they did not want to give up this easily.

“I’ll take our alliance into account. Three helping hands, and I shall leave.” The Trial’s Eye made its decision after considering the request of the other two.
“Okay!” Yuri and Marsha looked each other in the eye as they gritted their teeth and agreed. “This damned Snake Dowager, we could have made the Mistress of the Night perish if she were to join us at the start…” Massa’s spirit was extremely vengeful in the darkness, harbouring a grudge against the Snake Dowager. Suddenly, she stopped talking. “No! Something’s wrong! My soul! Why is there a shadow overcast on my truesoul?”

“What?” Yuri was shocked as well, even if he was a specialist in souls. He racked his brains as he peered deep into his abyssal truesoul, using all his might to see the same shadow on his. It was extremely eerie. “I’m a soul specialist, but a shadow was cast on my truesoul and the barriers broken down without my knowledge?” Yuri screamed in anger. A foreboding sense of danger crept over his truesoul once he discovered this shadow. It was something that could kill him! “Not good, let’s leave!” Only now did they agree to the Snake Dowager’s suggestion to leave.

“Lacking! Very lacking! As beings of laws, your ability at detection and usage of laws is extremely inferior to that Magus and Allsnake. They would never be confused by my Soul Shadow…” “Also… Don’t you think it’s too late to leave?” Shar waved her hands from the middle of the three, “It has begun!” *Boom!* The Shadow World surfaced up into the vast astral plane, its borders writhing continuously as they seemed to breathe with origin force. The borders of the Shadow World suddenly expanded, its boundaries a terrifying monster that devoured everything. The parts of the astral plane around it—the spatial storms, rifts, meteors, and even small planes—were all devoured.

How powerful was the Shadow World? It was the strongest world in the astral plane apart from the Magus World and the World of
Gods. As the monstrous borders began to expand, the dimensions beside it were annihilated. It had already grown half a fold, and these existences of laws had undoubtedly come within its bounds already.

Without the strength to fight against the entire sea of origin force, or the ability to cover half the size of the world in an instant, there was no way these people could escape their fates. A tide of world origin force formed, tens of thousands times more destructive than a tsunami.

The Shadow World had consumed four beings of law in an instant! The expressions of Yuri and the rest changed instantly, because this swallowing came with suppression.

Even if the Shadow World used up a large amount of its origin force, it was still a powerhouse. It had great reserves that allowed it to suppress rank 8 existences at will. Under the powerful intent of the world, all origin force, vitality, elements, energy particles and everything that contained energy in the Shadow World separated from the three beings. They could only rely on their own reserves, but the laws they wielded were suppressed as well. They grew many times weaker than before.

“Advancement of a world! You actually forced the Shadow World to advance! This is crazy, wouldn’t the Shadow World be afraid of its origin force being depleted? Why would it allow you to do this?” The Trial’s Eye sent a message.

The Shadow World was a large world. An attempt to expand once more would put it on par with Dreamscape. Nothing good would come of doing such a thing without sufficient energy; most of the world would turn desolate and barren.

And now the Shadow World had forced an advancement. Without enough origin force to advance, the World Will would only suffer! The Trial’s Eye could not figure out why the Mistress of the Night was allowed to do this.
“Haha… Because I represent the Shadow World’s Will!” Shar took a step forward. Everything before her had been consumed by the Shadow World, and she was considered its core. A large amount of origin force converged at this point. Even if it was weakened, the origin force allowed Shar to reach the peak of her power. A black crack appeared on the crystal inside that palace within the sea of origin force, the one that contained Shar’s true body. Now that she’d activated the origin force of the world on behalf of its will, her strength grew close to the peak of rank 8.

On the other hand, Trial’s Eye and the rest were weakened, almost dropping below rank 8 in power. The tables had turned! “Let’s go!” Trial’s Eye, Yuri, and Massa tried frantically to leave through the edges of the world.

“You’ve come to my home. How could I let you leave without attending to you well?” Glee spread on Shar’s face, and she moved her hands like a master of the zither.

*Chi! Chi!* The true form of the Shadow Weave revealed itself, different from the one she’d conjured before. This Weave permeated the entire Shadow World, using the support of origin force to allow even the commoners of the Empire to cast spells. The three beings of laws were like fish in a net. Repelled by the origin force, they were like caged beasts.

“I’ve caught you guys…” Shar walked up leisurely, and smiled with a wide grin. “So what if the origin force would be depleted? As long as the three of you are sacrificed, most of the origin force would be replenished, wouldn’t it?”

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“It is indeed a world advancement!” Protected by an invisible barrier in the red villa, Leylin sighed. “Those three are in danger……”
“We warned them of the trap early enough. At least one of them should be able to escape...” The Snake Dowager said with indifference, only able to predict the future.

“Massa has the least chance. After all, her element is suppressed the most. Outside of this world she can control shadows with darkness, but within the sides switch. Even if Shar doesn’t manage to catch the other two, Massa will not escape...” Leylin added as he stroked his chin.
"The contract requires us to rescue them. You’re not getting ready to move?" The Snake Dowager stared at Leylin with her beautiful eyes. The power of law surrounding them was weakening, their powers being chipped away. This was the penalty for violating the agreement. Still, it didn’t contain any malice or deliberate harm, only causing a slight drop in power which Leylin could handle.

"Not now. Shar has control of the situation, and within the Shadow World itself she’s currently invincible," Leylin heavily shook his head.

Shar was a shrewd goddess, with a plan to solve all her problems in one fell swoop. She would surely have her ways to handle Leylin and the Snake Dowager, so if they rushed forward now they would effectively be falling into her trap. Even the Snake Dowager had no choice but to be prudent when facing this crazy and savage goddess.

"I feel the same way…" the Snake Dowager sighed. But then, she was startled by a layer of large black clouds that covered the skies. Crimson lightning flashed as a precursor to a rain of blood, and a bloody storm fell upon the Shadow World. Leylin could feel the entire world cheering with In the rainstorm, the depleted World Origin Force recovering before it fell below dangerous levels.
The Snake Dowager suddenly sighed, “Massa has fallen… I felt the annihilation of her truesoul…”
Shar’s cunning and power had obviously exceeded her imagination, causing her to lose confidence in her plan. A second rainstorm struck not long after.
The intellectual creatures of this world could feel grief and pain in a terrifying roar that resounded from the rainstorm, “AHHHH! MISTRESS OF THE NIGHT! ALLSNAKE! YOU…”
“Yuri couldn’t manage to escape either…”
“Trial! Trial! Trial!” A golden light shone through the western skies after Yuri’s death, and phantom vertical eye appeared in mid-air. Violent lightning tore through the Shadow Weave, and the huge eye instantly split into two. One was surrounded by the Shadow Weave, while the other took the chance to escape the bounds of the world into the astral plane.
“The Trial’s Eye managed to escape, but with serious injury,” Leylin sighed, “Two fell, and one escaped with heavy injuries. Three existences of law lost their power in a split second. Such effort and scheming is truly worthy of the Mistress of the Night.”
*Crack!* The imprint of a jar shattered in the Snake Dowager’s hands. She furrowed her brows as she told Leylin, “I just received news from the Trial’s Eye. It plans to return to the Purgatory World, and won’t be coming back.”
“Seems like it suffered heavy injuries,” Leylin nodded, fear lingering within him. The Trial’s Eye had been quite unlucky this time round. Of course, compared to the other two who fell, it could be considered lucky.
“However, with a lack of preparation to advance the world itself, this would be suicidal behaviour on the part of the World Will. We can conclude that Shar has more than 50% control over the world.”
The Snake Dowager nodded imposingly at Leylin’s conclusion.
The advancement of a world was no joking matter. Even if it
expanded in size, the current Shadow World would face great danger if it tried to advance without accumulating enough origin force or making progress in its civilisation. The cities that had originally been brimming with elemental power were affected by the advancement, dropping in energy concentration. A chain reaction was triggered, but its effects were yet to show themselves. Leylin believed this move would render half of the original Shadow World barren, and the soil would lose its fertility. Without sufficient food, the humans would suffer heavy casualties. With the reducing number of intelligent creatures and the death of the flora, the World Will would weaken. It would have to suffer the consequences of all this damage, so it was effectively committing suicide. An independent World Will would never do such a thing. This made it clear that the majority of the World Will was now under Shar’s control. Leylin faintly felt like this was only a half-advancement, merely an expansion of size. The energy it required for this was much smaller, so the situation could be stabilised, albeit barely, with a few existences of law as sacrifices.

……

Within the imperial palace, Princess Ling rushed to Emperor Aragon’s side, “Father!” “Yes. What happened? Rest assured, I can handle the news!” Emperor Aragon ordered impatiently. “Yes…” Ling glanced secretly at the emperor, taking a deep breath before reporting the bad news, “The data says this is a level 9 earthquake. Half the capital has already fallen into ruin. We don’t have data about the other cities yet, but the situation there isn’t looking good either. We’ve lost contact with several coastal cities
that have experienced both earthquakes and tsunamis…

“Estimates say more than ten billion citizens were affected, and the damage extends throughout the empire. It poses a fatal blow to our economy, and experts are saying that the famine and plagues that will follow are going to exhaust our food reserves. In the worst case scenario… in the worst case scenario…”

Ling couldn’t continue speaking, but her trembling voice already made everything clear—this disaster was enough to destroy the whole empire.

“Haha…” Emperor Aragon instead calmed down after hearing the news, his laughter like that of an injured wolf.

“Great Master, are you prepared to abandon us?” Aragon’s bleak expression ultimately turned into madness. “Ling! Don’t you think it’s best chance now? No matter how hard we try to remedy the situation, the whole empire won’t be able to avoid the fate of destruction. We might as well do it ourselves!”

Ling silently pondered over the matter. Indeed, what her father said made sense. This terrifying disaster would be the root cause of the empire’s destruction anyway, but if the Tree of Life Project was initiated the entire empire could grow immortal and wipe out the rebel existences.

“Moreover… that voice at the end, you heard it as well, didn’t you?” Emperor Aragon’s eyes sparkled. “The Allsnake has returned alongside an unknown existence. This follows the prophecy left behind in the Book of Salvation by Ari!”

“That indeed is an astonishing power… If it weren’t because of the disaster, I’m afraid that it we would have questioned its existence…” Ling couldn’t help but think back to the voice that rang out in the hearts of all intelligent creatures, as well as that unresigned roar. Especially the name of Allsnake, it was exactly the same as in Ari’s prophecy.

“With the arrival of our mistress of ancient times, the flames of
rebellion will rise,” Emperor Aragon mumbled. He then waved suddenly, “Ling, go out and reveal the second half of the Book of Salvation to the rebel soldiers.”
“What do you intend to do?” Ling hesitated. The existence of a rebel organisation was no secret in the army.
“Release the news to the rebel organisation. We need them to attract the attention of the ancient master and restrict her. We might earn enough time to complete the alternate Tree of Life…” Aragon’s eyes flashed with cunning. To scheme against multiple existences of law at the same time was like dancing on sharp knives.
“I shall obey!” Ling left after a moment’s hesitation. Outside the secret chamber, she moved to a high platform where she could see the entire capital in a mess. Even with the protection of advanced technology and the Shadow Weave, half the city had been destroyed.
More than ten million people were wandering the streets aimlessly and crying. It had a serious impact on social security. Even though the empire’s special disaster relief team backed by its wealth could appease millions, the scale of the disaster greatly exceeded even their limits.
“Alas… Is such a beautiful and glorious empire in its twilight? What awaits us at the end of this path, total darkness or the light of dawn?” A single tear dripped down her face.

……

Night time. Leylin and Allsnake were seated in a hall, enjoying a candlelight dinner as Crowley waited on them from the side with humility and respect.
“Mistress!” Crowley had received some news from the Bloodline Alliance, “People from the Bloodline Alliance have contacted me hoping to receive your guidance.”
“Do they know of our existence?” Leylin wiped his lips with a white napkin. He felt like the technological advancement of the Shadow World had spilled over into their culinary skills.

“Yes. Bobbi’s saying a member of the rebel soldiers gave her a part of the Book of Salvation that details Mistress’s existence. The prophecy says you are the one true saviour!” Crowley said with excitement.

“Blind Ari?” The Snake Dowager gently closed her eyes, seemingly trying to sense something. “Familiar yet strange… This prophetic power, is she a reincarnation of the prophet Kalle?”

“So, what do you plan to do?” Leylin laughed. Their dinner done, Xavier tidied up the table and placed a chessboard on it. He was dressed like a waiter.

“What do you think?” The Snake Dowager gazed at Leylin

“We’re currently the king and queen,” Leylin pointed to the core of the board, “the most important cards. We shouldn’t throw that away so easily, instead sending some pawns first to test the waters.”

Having said that, he picked up a pawn and moved it one step forward.
Indeed!” The Snake Dowager looked at the board and nodded before she turned towards Crowley. “You are henceforth my representative, able to command all rebel forces.” Dark red bloodline force formed a serpentine black eye that surrounded Crowley, causing his strength to rise several degrees once more. “Yes, Mistress. Your will is my command!” Crowley knelt down. “You go follow him,” Leylin told the slightly fervent Xavier. “Re– Really? Thank you, Master!” Xavier hurriedly responded. The unbearable pressure had made him subservient somewhere along the line, especially now that he was in the presence of two of these terrifying existences. “You served us well, so here’s a tidbit of information. Your sister is currently inside the palace as well. Try harder, kid!” Xavier hadn’t left yet, and this news caused his body to tremble as he picked up his pace. Once the two of them left, a strange atmosphere enveloped the surroundings of the villa. “What do you think of their chances of success?” the Snake Dowager broke the silence. She stretched her body, causing Leylin to smell a unique scent that caused his heart to skip a beat. Leylin opened his mouth after a moment of silence, “Project X has been in progress for so many years, and a big portion of the natural world has been taken over. The Shadow Weave’s influence has also
permeated the whole world… Our opponent can choose to act at any time.

“Instead of leaving the button in the hands of the Mistress of the Night, why not have the subordinates detonate the bomb in advance? Isn’t now the best opportunity?”

It was impossible for the Mistress of the Night to have taken care of three existences of laws without paying a certain price. The opponent would definitely be weakened, so the chances of their success were much higher. Things would grow more unclear once she made a complete recovery.

“The Mistress of the Night squandered away a great amount of the world’s accumulated origin force, it’ll be difficult for it to recover soon.” Leylin grasped a wisp of air while revealing a bizarre smile.

The advancement of the Shadow World this time had failed. Its reserves of origin force were insufficient, and the civilisation itself wasn’t prepared either. Shar naturally understood this, so instead of causing it to advance she’d had the place expand. The World Origin Force had yet to condense, and there were numerous other missing factors as well.

Because of all this, the Shadow World had been weakened by nothing. The sacrifices of Massa and Yuri only allowed it to recover slightly.

However, if Shar had enough time on hand she could lead the Shadow World to recovery, causing it to burgeon with origin force. At that time, the Mistress of the Night would not be so easy to handle.

……

The Blood Nest had changed greatly by the time Crowley and Xavier arrived at the capital. Although the earthquakes hadn’t caused much damage to their core base, a large number of strangers
had gathered in the basement’s inner conference hall. Among these strangers were people dressed in black Chinese gowns, witches with sharp hats, knights clad in armour, and expert martial artists. The ones that attracted Xavier’s attention were the group of people clad in army uniform that occupied the area. Everyone there had an aura of blood and iron that was unique to the armed forces.

‘This should be the rebels Clive mentioned before…’ Xavier noticed that several members of the Bloodline Alliance interacted with the rest of the groups, whereas the soldiers waited silently without any communication whatsoever.

The situation in the hall was chaotic, with many people arguing over the changes that occurred a few days ago. Everyone had been frightened by that disaster that seemed able to destroy the world. Project X and the Tree of Life were brought up frequently as well.

“Everyone, quiet down!” The arrival of Crowley and Xavier immediately attracted a great deal of attention. The thousands of eyes in the hall caused every pore in the younger one’s body to tense up.

After all, none of those gathered here were exactly ‘ordinary.’ Any other citizen of the empire, even your average soldier, would’ve collapsed under the immense pressure.

Bobbi pushed the other members of the Bloodline Alliance aside, her face filled with expectation, “How is it? Did that person agree?”

“No, but she didn’t reject us either…” Crowley shook his head.

“The ancestor appointed me to act on behalf of her will to overthrow the decadent empire.”

“Without their assistance we won’t be able to resist the mastermind behind the empire.” Clive shook his head from within the group of levels. Only the higher-ups of the empire truly understood how terrifying the Mistress of the Night was.

With her support, the imperial family held absolute power. If not
for the threat of Project X and the Tree of Life, these soldiers would never have done something so arduous and thankless as rebelling unless their brains had gone haywire.

“What age are we in right now? To believe the existence of ancient myths based on some prophecies? Isn’t that ridiculous?” A questioning voice sounded out from the crowd, attracting numerous opinions in favour of the ridicule. Although they all held extraordinary powers themselves, they still had their reservations about ancient myths.

“This is a treasure the empire retrieved at the cost of their largest submarine. The Book of Salvation was left behind by the blind prophet Ari, and we managed to decipher the prophecy. As all souls become one, the day of doom approaches. That’s already happened. We need the help of the Snake Dowager!” Clive tossed a stone tablet out, translating the words and images upon it.

“These mysterious ancient relics have no credibility!” The same voice spoke out.

“What about this?”

*Hssssss!* A terrifying hiss resounded in the massive hall, and turbulent bloodline energy formed a gigantic chimera made up of over a hundred different snakes, seemingly covered by various grotesque scales.

“This bloodline?” Many of the bloodline carriers in the Bloodline Alliance descended from the Snake Dowager. Looking at this scene, they’d immediately knelt down. They felt the will of their ancestors surround Crowley, his bloodline causing them to swear allegiance by instinct. As the origin of their bloodline, the Snake Dowager could subdue Crowley and the rest with but a wisp of her aura. Such was the absolute control of a higher bloodline. It afforded more power than any spells of the soul, and it was impossible for
the weaker bloodline to break out of their superiors’ grasp unless they managed to extract the source of their bloodline from them. However, Leylin was the only one in history who’d managed to do such a thing.

“He’s surpassed the energy limit!
“He broke through the rumoured energy limit just like that?” someone else muttered, and everyone changed in complexion. Crowley looked down upon the kneeling bloodline carriers like he was an emperor.

The so called energy limit was propaganda created by the empire. Technology and the Shadow Weave could only do so much, and they hadn’t been able to pass a certain threshold. Because of that, they’d called this threshold the energy limit.

The empire’s strongest energy weapons were only equivalent to a peak rank 6 Magus in power. Nobody had broken through that barrier.

And yet, Crowley managed to break through that rank with mere borrowed power. His body and spirit had been transformed by the Snake Dowager, increasing his capabilities to the peak of rank 6. With the help of the temporary authority from the Snake Dowager he could use some bloodline power to pass the bottleneck and become a half-step rank 7.

Although near rank 7 strength still left him having to kneel down in front of other beings of law like Leylin, Crowley was now undoubtedly the strongest person in the empire. He opened a path up with ferocity and violent imposition, instantly finding the fellow who’d been speaking all along.

“Do you have any opinions?” Strong winds blew to accompany his kingly demeanor.

“No! Not at all!” The person who spoke was a youngster with dyed hair and pierced ears. In the face of the terrifying pressure, he couldn’t even speak properly.
*Boom!* The floor shattered, and Crowley’s silhouette instantly appeared in mid-air. The hall overflowed with the arrogant and overbearing aura of the hundred snakes, and the other bloodline carriers felt it difficult to even breathe.

“I’m the best proof of her existence. Her help allowed me to break through that so-called energy limit, entering a new realm…” Crowley gazed upon everyone from above, “Furthermore, that existence agreed to stop the Mistress of the Night mentioned in the prophecy. Can all of us not even handle the imperial family?”

He roared in a loud voice, “Everyone here is aware of the existence of the two projects. Thus, now it is time for us to make a choice. Die loyal to that empire, or join me… In rebellion!”
Crowley’s oratory wasn’t particularly outstanding. It neither caused their blood to boil nor attracted their attention. By all rights the speech was a failure that couldn’t even fool little kids.

Fortunately, he had great assistance. The Shadow Empire’s recent actions had enraged the heavens and the peoples. Project X and the Tree of Life Project were too wide-spread, affecting everyone be they nobles, peasants, or prisoners. The upper class couldn’t be blamed for instigating a rebellion.

If someone was disturbed in the comfort of their home by a stranger who told them they were but clones who would be assimilated to a whole, and that they’d become complete idiots, it was only to be expected that they’d grow mad. This was just a disaster occurring in broad daylight.

Although this wasn’t really the fault of the imperial family, the others would still lump them together. The Empire had already disparaged the Bloodline Alliance and other organisation, causing great distrust from the public. Now it seemed like they were psychopaths plotting to bring about the end of the world.

This situation endangered ordinary citizens and government officials alike. Rebel funding grew greatly, developing further. If they’d planned such a huge counterattack on the outskirts of the Empire before, they would’ve been killed by the imperial guards who came knocking on the door. Now, however, things were
different. The refugees who’s jumped ship felt bitter as well. They had to support the rebel groups with all they had. What would assisting the Empire achieve? Good politicians would never believe that the empire would leave their souls free after assimilating them into the whole.

As a result, it could be said that the Empire had given birth to the rebel army.

“Down with the Empire!” “Overthrow the Empire!” Under the pressure of death, the heads of several major organisations had quickly reached a consensus.

“Excellent!” Seeing the many faces flushed with righteous indignation, a smile bloomed on Crowley’s face. He pressed a button, and a map was projected behind him.

“This is the imperial capital!” Unlike before, the city was now devastated. The surrounding regions had been thrown into disarray as well, “We only have one target this time, the Imperial Palace! We have to thoroughly destroy the core of all evil!” Crowley vehemently clenched his fist.

“There are at least 300,000 troops surrounding the capital on normal occasions, not to mention the police and the Special Forces. We’d never be afforded such an opportunity in that case. However… General Clive!”

“I will only say two things!” The grey-haired Clive was filled with bloodlust, and like a true military man he didn’t mince his words. “Firstly, the horrific disaster hurt the army greatly. Many soldiers are still participating in the relief efforts, and their information network has been broken up. While us old fellows who are held in some prestige cannot incite the troops to march with us, temporarily stalling them won’t be an issue…

“Second. As a result of a lack of support for the royal family, our people have already maneuvered themselves into key positions, including several major transport hubs and the Ministry of
Defence.”
Hearing Clive speak, the eyes of the audience came alive. With so many favourable conditions stacking up, they finally saw a glimmer of hope for success.
“We can’t delay. Let’s plan this operation out immediately!” Bobbi said. She then glanced at Crowley, “We should also designate a chief for us.”

……

Kerallen, within the Imperial Palace.
Emperor Aragon was sat on his throne, glancing down at a rare scene of numerous royals enjoying a sumptuous dinner in one place.
The Empress was here, alongside his several sons and daughters, the Secretary of State, the Minister of Maritime Affairs, and the Minister of Defence.
‘Which of these people is truly loyal to me?’ Emperor Aragorn suddenly felt a sense of melancholy. He completely lost interest in the wine within the crystal flask.
“Father!” Ling walked in just then, dressed in military uniform. Javis was following behind her like a loyal dog. She performed a salute before making her report, “The Special Forces learned that the Bloodline Alliance is conspiring to attack the palace.”
“Hmm?” Empire Aragon’s brows twitched, and Javis immediately knelt down, “I can vouch for the credibility of the news with my life!”
“Sigh… These are truly troubled times!” Aragon put down the crystal flask, massaging his brows with his right hand in helplessness. The entire hall was silent, as if they could only hear the heavy breathing of their monarch.
Just when everyone assumed that the Emperor would order the
capture of the rebels, he instead made a shocking decision, “Alright then. Initiate Project X and the Tree of Life Project immediately! “Sigh… Everyone please follow me. All the entrances of the palace are to be shut. Without my orders, no one is allowed to enter or leave!” A long sigh escaped from Emperor Aragon. Upon bringing a wave of important ministers out of the palace, numerous high-ranking guards followed after.

All the forces of the Empire, be it the Special Forces, the intelligence team, or other elites fell into order under Ling’s command. The whole place wound up, as if a machine.

“It’s ready!” The other royal family looked at each other, and a strange silence soon followed. The older princes’ gazes were fixed on Princess Ling, their thoughts unknown.

The princess herself told Javis to leave, moving alone to another meeting room. A few miserable cries sounded out, and complete silence followed them.

“I didn’t think that the Minister of Defence would have betrayed me. Ha, and to think he was my best friend…” Emperor Aragon walked out a few minutes later, sighing as he used a white handkerchief to wipe the bloodstains off his body.

“My path is destined not to be understood by others, but I have no choice!” Emperor Aragon couldn’t help by sigh as he looked at the only child to whom he could entrust this task.

“All preparations have been completed, father. Please follow me.” Ling didn’t betray any emotion on her face, the calm in her eyes making it impossible to guess her thoughts. The two arrived at the imperial garden, all the vegetation within flattened to form a huge plaza.

“Let’s begin!” Emperor Aragon commanded, holding back the excitement in his heart.

The entire plaza began to tremble, the earth gradually splitting open as it formed a box. A fantastic white tower appeared from the
ground, its interior completely solid while its exterior was filled with light. It dazzled with a gorgeous lustre.

Twelve bright pearls could be seen atop the tower, forming a circle connected by thick black metal chains to the centre. A girl was sleeping in each pearl, and Jill was amongst them. They were curled up like babies in their mothers’ wombs, and their eyebrows furrowed from time to time. And just like a womb, there was a large amount of translucent liquid around them, a crystal clear thread from within connecting to their bodies.

“The console of the Tree of Life!” Emperor Aragon looked at the metal console in front of him with a crazy and fervent expression. “Look at it, Ling, such a beautiful crown…”

“Yes,” Ling’s eyes were filled with a radiance as well. She had to admit, the brilliant tower with its twelve pearls looked like a massive crown.

However, she was very clear that this was a test for her father. If the Mistress of the Night appeared here at this point, she and her father would be fated for death.

‘No… Perhaps father might survive, but I’ll definitely die.’ Ling looked at her father’s hands. Only she knew that the array from the strongroom had been transferred to his body, Kalle’s eyes and the mermaid scales on his person.

Before he continued, Emperor Aragon called out to his daughter, “Go activate the final X mutation before the Tree of Life Project begins. No matter who our opponents are, they’re likely to face great trouble.”

Ling’s body trembled as she received this command, one that was equal to setting the devils loose. Still, she managed to retreat respectfully from the place.

“Sword Saint, Night Devil, follow closely!” Emperor Aragon commanded immediately after. Two silhouettes appeared behind his back, his final line of defence. Right now, he’d sent the two of
them out.
The two old men saluted to Emperor Aragon, slowly blending into the breeze. Emperor Aragon looked at his surroundings and revealed a trace of smile as he walked into the plaza.
*Ding!* A layer of pure white energy instantly separated the plaza from the outside world.
“All the unstable factors have been removed.” Emperor Aragon looked around, seeing that he was alone at the console tower. He couldn’t help but reveal a smile of satisfaction, “I will definitely be able to devour the assimilated soul body, becoming a God!”
He walked towards the centre of the metal tower with unswerving determination.
By this time, the rebel army had successfully infiltrated the capital under Clive’s lead. They were heading towards the palace as Clive’s communication device rang out. Several words were transmitted over, causing Clive’s facial expression to change immediately.

“It’s a code from the palace, we’ve been found out! The palace has been closed down, and the imperial forces were mobilised…” Clive’s expression grew unsightly, “Without those insiders it’ll be much more difficult for us to break into the palace…”

“We didn’t expect to avoid much trouble in the first place. In fact, just being able to infiltrate the capital is worth being excited over, isn’t it?” Crowley looked behind him.

They were currently in the capital’s streets, those behind them all bloodline carriers and warriors armed with firearms, along with a portion of the military. This motley crowd radiated grandeur as they walked forward.

Even more surprising was that the capital’s citizens were all hiding behind closed doors, glancing occasionally at them but not standing out. It was like the guards of the capital had all perished. The group felt strange, as if the imperial army and the entire capital accepted their presence.

“Looks like revealing the existence of Project X and the Tree of Life to the public has indeed been effective…” Bobbi looked at her surroundings, “At least those lower-ranked soldiers will not fight
“More important is that outing the royal family destroyed their trust in their government. We now have to work separately. Cut the palace’s power; even if they have a spare we can still take advantage of the confusion.”

An unswerving determination appeared on Clive’s face. “The interior of the Special Forces headquarters contains a detailed map of the palace. It can help us with our plan, I’ll take care of it!”

“Do you want to settle your grudge with your brother?” Bobbi rolled her eyes. “It’s up to you. Although I’ve had problems with them for a while, our target right now is the palace.”

“Thanks!” Clive straightened his back, an unyielding and determined look on his face. “I promise I’ll succeed!”

A portion of the retired and serving officers separated from the rebel army, rushing towards the headquarters of the Special Forces.

“Eh? What’s going on?” After arriving at the Special Forces headquarters, Clive was stunned to discover that it has become a slaughterhouse. Numerous black cloaked bodies fell on the ground with an unbelieving expression.

“This was all done by one person, and…” Clive stood up and walked past a dead body while entering the headquarters.

“You’re finally here, my benevolent brother!” Javis had long been waiting here, his eyes containing an evil sneer.

Preventing the others from indiscriminately rushing into action, Clive spoke with a heavy tone. “You killed those people outside? Why?”

“They were a group of fools. They started to panic and think of rebelling after hearing the rumours, so I had to send the useless trash off personally.” Javis blew his fingernails while speaking, as if he had only killed a few ants.

“Even now you still can’t let it go? I’m sorry for what happened, but our brother should not be the reason for you to turn to evil. It’s
“time to stop!” Tears brimmed in Clive’s eyes as he spoke. “Stop? Are you kidding me? The project is going to succeed, and third brother’s soul is about to come back. At this point in time, you are telling me to stop?” Clothes ripped apart, and a cloud of black energy emerged from Javis’ body. “I’ll turn you into a corpse!”

“Sigh… I didn’t expect that it would come to this between brothers…” Clive sighed, “You were a genius from birth. However, you lacked the most important quality of the strong as you advanced on your road for power… Love, and forgiveness…”

One of the soldiers raised his laser gun, firing a warning shot towards Javis. “It’s not too late for you to change your mind,” Clive tried to persuade him for the last time. “You should be the one changing their mind, not me!” Even surrounded by the rebels there was not a trace of fear in Javis’ eyes. Instead, he seemed like he was watching a good show.

“Not good!” Clive understood his brother well, and he’d noticed the abnormality. Still, he couldn’t make out what it was.

*Thud!* One of the rebels suddenly fell to the floor, twitching unconsciously.

“What’s wrong?” Clive’s astonishing eyesight allowed him to instantly notice a layer of dark green spreading on the surface of the soldier’s neck.

*Thud! Thud!* The condition seemed to spread, numerous rebels starting to fall one by one. The rest were left staring at each other. “The X gene mutated! Have they begun to act?”

Javis seized this moment’s opportunity to attack. “Shadow Wind!”

*Whoosh!* A violent tornado suddenly blew everyone away. A cluster of shadows suddenly turned those who remained standing into a fog of blood.

“Guards!” Javis’ rampant laughter was oddly obvious in the wind.
*Creak! Creak!* The metal floor opened up, rows of armed robots moving out to surround Clive and the rest.

“How now? Who’s surrounding who?” Javis looked at his brother. “To be absent minded with the fall of a few soldiers, you haven’t changed indeed. Still so hypocritical!”

“Even if I’m being hypocritical, it’s still my duty. Just like I rushed here, not to save the country but to prevent you from falling further. Come back, brother!” Clive suddenly stood up.

“Annoying preaching…” Javis dug his ears and turned back. “However, I can give you a chance.

“A showdown between the two of us, where both our people are not to interfere. If you can defeat me, I can give you anything you want. Be it the palace plans or the most important of intelligence…” “Just what I had in mind!” Clive clenched his fists, and a terrifying aura exploded in the air.

“Well, then come with me!” Javis walked in and brought Clive to an ancient colosseum. “So how’s this for an arena? It’ll serve well as your burial place, won’t it?”

“If death can save you, I will not hesitate.” Clive finally understood that his brother had changed long ago. He’d become a demon the moment he joined the Special Forces.

*Boom!” Two silhouettes rammed ferociously into each other in the dusty sky, a terrifying battle aura flooding the whole colosseum.

……

During this time, a majority of the people in the capital had quietly fallen to the ground. Be they merchants, officials, or even royals, nobody was spared. Everyone who fell foamed at the mouth, a layer of dark green spreading around their bodies. The change was especially pronounced in their eyes. Blood vessels thickened as their pupils lost colour, the eyes turning a complete white.
It wasn’t just the humans facing such a situation. The entirety of nature and the ecosphere had suffered from disaster. A majority of insects and other small animals broke out with the symptoms immediately, while those with larger bodies soon followed. The dark green spots spread continuously around their bodies, finally forming a huge mark—the letter X!

“X Gene! This damned Empire, they really did dare to act!” Crowley looked in fury as his men fell to the floor without end. Still, it was the soldiers, martial artists, and knights that suffered the heaviest casualties. The protection of extraordinary power allowed the Bloodline Alliance and the Coven of Witches to escape the calamity with minimal losses.

“With Project X activated, the Tree of Life won’t be far behind. We need to break through the palace as soon as possible and get rid of the evil!” Crowley gazed at the huge capital. The masses that were crying due to the previous disaster had received another blow, half of the city dead silent while the other half screamed. The X gene had spread through more than 60% of the population. About sixty amongst every hundred people had fallen under the Empire’s control the moment it activated the program.

“It seems like they’ve only lost their mobility and consciousness? They might still be saved!” Bobbi released a sigh of relief.

“No. Don’t you feel like this is suspicious?” Crowley’s facial expression was instead imposing. “Look at the current situation. Doesn’t it look as if the Empire is purging their original consciousness to pave the road for the Tree of Life’s activation?”

“Report!” Just then, a liaison officer ran over. “Our front lines have reached the palace, but the enemy robots are holding us back. We’re currently in a stalemate!”

“Sure enough, the Empire has prepared for this situation!” Crowley waved his hands. “Let’s rush there… We can only hope Clive deals with Javis more quickly…”
……

The entrance of the Imperial Palace.
Xavier, who was in the midst of battle, suddenly noticed the defensive forcefield of the palace weaken, the robots losing the radiance in their eyes. A pleasant smile surfaced on his eyes. “Clive’s succeeded! Everyone, rush in with me!”
The morale of the rebels rose instantly. Although the Empire had a reserve energy source for moments like this, they didn’t have the time to switch. Their defence was suddenly broken.
Three groups merged inside the palace. Xavier looked at a wounded Clive and revealed a smile, “Well done, Mister Clive! We have one last target remaining!”

“Mm. Javis told me about the Emperor’s arrangement, and a backdoor to manipulate the robots before he… died…” Clive wasn’t smiling. His expression had a trace of loneliness. “He could’ve killed me, I didn’t expect him to back off so suddenly at the end… He’s so pitiful…”

“Everything was caused by the Empire. We’re here to correct that mistake!” Crowley and Bobbi came over, looking resolute.

“We don’t have much time! The Tree of Life is over there!” They could already see a white beam rising from within the palace, connecting with the skies to release a shocking glow of light.

“Snakebite Fist— Ultimate Snakebite!” Black energy roared forth from Xavier’s fist, the terrifying destructive energy it contained even surpassing laser weapons. The robots blocking their road were sent flying and broke apart in midair.

“Mister Leylin… Made me this strong with a few pointers…” Xavier ran inside the palace, the occasional robot blocking him turned into scrap metal. He’d finally understood just how terrifying Leylin was. Just the fact that he could be beside the Snake Dowager was sufficient to show his status.

“Hiss… Scram!” Although Xavier’s strength was already shocking, he was quite lacking in comparison to Crowley. That one low roar
of his caused a gigantic beast made of a few hundred phantom snakes to surface, black air condensing to turn it real. 
*Rumble!* *Rumble!* The chimera crushed a wave of robots into pieces, the corrosive liquid coming from the snakes causing the entire palace to collapse…

“Hmm?” Breaking open a brilliant and beautiful door, Xavier retreated a few steps in clear intimidation. 
What welcomed him was a dazzling sight in the palace, exquisite dishes filling an entire long table. However, a few youths in royal clothing were lying on the ground, a dark green X visible on their skin. 
A poised lady was clutching at her chest, sitting upright with a pained smile and an exquisite dagger stabbed into her body. A rose of blood had bloomed upon her clothes. 
“This is… What’s going on?” Xavier murmured in disbelief. 
“Just a simple change in the palace…” Bobbi walked in and glanced around, her eyes filled with disdain. However when she saw the few young princes and princesses on the ground, her facial expression finally changed. 
“The X gene! Even the royal family wasn’t spared? Our old thoughts might be wrong; that existence doesn’t support the royal family, instead just using it as a puppet or plaything!”

“Why are you still staring blankly? The whole world is filled with such tragedy right now. We have to find the anti-teleportation array and anti-gravity room quickly. I don’t want to waste time breaking through each room one by one!” Crowley’s roar transmitted from the outside. The entire building was demolished with his ferocious strength as he continued rushing towards the incoming robots. 
*Bang!* The huge building collapsed under the weight of marble, its pillars bending into an arc before it crashed into the ground. Numerous robots collapsed, but an even denser horde took their place, walking out from all directions like a terrifying flood. The
scene numbed the scalps of those present.
“Damn it! It looks like the other party has long been prepared…” Xavier bit his teeth, and his body started to shake. A trace of black mist was emitted from his pores, and Bobbi was shocked to discover that her ability to sense him weakened, as if he was disappearing into thin air.
“These robots’ scanners are inflexible, I’ll sneak past them.” A resolute expression surfaced on Xavier’s face. Under the control of Snakebite Fist, his blood slowly cooled and he began to restrain his energy fluctuations.
“Wait for me, Jill!” Xavier broke through the robots, rushing directly towards that pillar of light.

……

“Such a troublesome little demon,” Crowley said from atop the giant beast, “Don’t tell me I’ll have to use that move…” The beast started hissing even louder as if sensing his intentions, terrifying energy converging on its body.
“The target is the Tree of Life. Great Mistress, please give me strength!” Frightening balls of energy formed with Crowley’s prayers, merging together rapidly and rippling with terrifying power.
“Ha! Scram!” The surging balls of energy formed a massive black hole. Be it the robots, the forcefield, or the building itself, everything was devoured by the black hole to reveal a wide, spacious passageway.
“Dawn, activate!” A slender mechanical figure descended just then. A terrifying furnace roared as the Shadow Weave stilled around the area. The beam of light that had killed the Metalback Whale appeared once more!
Extremely dazzling white light instantly collided with the black
hole, their collision distorting the surroundings. A storm of annihilation ensued, instantly destroying most of the palace and inflicting great casualties amongst both the robots and the rebels. A mushroom cloud rushed into the sky, and the Tree of Life held firm and steady. A strange mechanical armour stood in front of Crowley, forming its last line of defence. The armour was smooth yet slender, its back attached to a skeletal wing and a hooked tail. It looked like an angel revealing its dark side.

“Scram, or you’ll end up dead!” An increasingly murderous look appeared in Crowley’s eyes. Regardless of who it was, being interrupted in the moment before success in life would cause one to fly into a rage.

“I’m sorry, I can’t that.” A female voice was transmitted from the glowing armour.

Ling was staring at the screen from within the control room, the man standing on the gigantic beast drawing all her attention.

“An attack surpassing the Empire’s energy limit… If I hadn’t taken Dawn from the submarine I’m afraid I wouldn’t have been able to block that attack…” Ling’s face revealed a bitter smile.

“Dawn is the pinnacle of the Empire’s technology, built to the limit of our energy. It’s our last trump card, our final defence…” Ling turned and looked at the direction of the Imperial Garden.

“Father… This is all I can do for you…”

“Attack, kill them all and get rid of the Empire!” Crowley did not stop just because the other party was a girl. Such a thing would be extravagant for the rebel army. In a critical moment of life and death, any who blocked him would only be torn apart!

“For the Empire!” Ling shouted, and the radiant armour activated as a light sword with the power to cut through space appeared in its hands. The robot collided with the giant snake.

“Old man! The final moment is here…” The shadows flashed, and
two old men on the verge of collapse appeared.
“Yeah… It’s been a long time since we fought alongside each other, Night Devil…” Sword Saint wiped the handle of his broken iron sword, sighing suddenly.
“The last glory of the Empire… shall be protected by us!” Night Devil suddenly roared, he and Sword Saint forming streams of light that rushed towards the rebels with the robot army.
“Kill!” Bobbi made eye-contact with the other higher-ups, deciding to fight. Both sides were fighting for their goals and beliefs; there was no possibility of turning back.
Outside the Imperial Garden, the rebel army and last resistance of the Empire collided. The overflowing energy scattered and caused a terrifying fluctuation.

……

“Emperor!”
“To govern everything!”
“God!”
Emperor Aragon’s eyes were filled with eagerness as he stepped onto the central metal platform. A flash of light verified him as he moved towards the top of the Tree of Life, towards its crown. The surroundings of the platform were absolutely empty, with but an isolated metal seat present.
“The resistance of hundreds of generations, thousands of years of unwillingness… Dear ancestors, please bless and protect me!” A trace of resoluteness appeared on Emperor Aragon’s face, and he took a box out of his bosom. Inside was a pair of shrivelled eyes and some mermaid scales.
“Bring it on!” Madness flashed in Aragon’s eyes as he directly swallowed these items, “I am the world!”
Immediately after, a horrifying change emerged on his body.
Tumours spread out along his body, with scales and humanoid faces on them. Aragon struggled to sit on the metal throne.

*Kacha! Kacha!* Many channels opened up around the tower, revealing needles attached to tubes. The tubes seemed to possess their own lives, encircling the Emperor.

*Pu! Pu! Pu!* “AAAAHHH!” Soon after, hundreds of thousands of these tiny needles pierced into Aragon’s body, stimulating all his nerves. The pain he felt exceeded the limits of human ability, able to cause a normal person to perish instantly. Even he couldn’t help but release a bestial roar.

Numerous tubes wriggled amidst this terrifying roar, seemingly trying to draw something in as Aragon’s body shrunk rapidly. He turned into a near-corpse.
The hundreds of thousands of tubes sucked Emperor Aragon dry in just a moment, devouring all his nutrients until he seemed less than a corpse. His body suddenly trembled, the fire in his eyes dying out. However, a heated soul broke through the boundary of illusory and real before the moment of his death, moving through the tubes to reach the bottom of the tower instantly. Subsequently, a mindblowing light beam suddenly soared into the sky!

“This is…” Xavier involuntarily exited stealth, a frightening expression on his face. Just a glance had sent terror into his heart, as if an inescapable crisis was approaching him.

“Project Tree of Life… I must stop it… Eh? Jill?!” Xavier shouted as he suddenly saw Jill’s silhouette within one of the twelve pearls. His little sister was sadly unconscious, not able to respond. “I’m coming right away, I’ll save you! You have to persist!” Black scales instantly covered Xavier’s hands, and he released a strong power.

“Open for me!” Xavier attacked the defensive forcefield repeatedly with his fists, but his Snakebite Fist could not cause it to even tremble.

“How can it be? Why is this so?” Xavier was about to fall apart, the black shadows converging on his hands repeatedly smashing the light. However, this was the core of the Empire’s defence, using the most advanced technology and resources. It stood unmoving as a
mountain, firmly rooted to the ground.  
*Buzz!* A soul emerged from within the pillar of light at this moment, near the crown of the metal tower. It seemed to bellow out as it emitted a light that stirred the hearts of the people. The Shadow Weave materialised on top of the tower, covering the entire world. The light beam crackled as it separated from the metal tower, connecting instead to the Shadow Weave. Branches continued to spread out, and within a few moments a primordial tree made of light was formed in mid air, its many branches tightly linked to the Shadow Weave.  
“The Tree of Life… It’s begun…” All the survivors in the Empire looked up at this moment, seeing the massive tree.  
“Damn it! Damn it!” Xavier brandished his fists constantly. Even his scales shattered to the force of his blows, blood spilling onto the membrane of light.  
“Snake Dowager, or Leylin… Either one of you… please give me strength!” Falling into despair, Xavier couldn’t bear it anymore as he prayed…  
Within the palace, Leylin and Allsnake were in the middle of their chess match.  
“It looks like those bloodline carriers are experiencing difficulties… What do you think?” Allsnake twirled a piece in her hand, a smile on her face. It was as if everything had happened in front of her.  
“Regardless of what they do, the Empire… No, the royal family is destined to fail…” A trace of disdain could be seen in Leylin’s smile, “Even we can sense this easily, how could it escape Shar? I’m afraid she’s letting them continue these small tricks, waiting for the right time to harvest the rewards.”  
“But what should be do about it?” The Snake Dowager stared at Leylin with her beautiful eyes, a trace of coquettishness in her expression. “I’ve noticed you have other plans in your mind.”
“That’s a secret, and the source of my confidence. Forgive me, I cannot reveal it to you right now.” Leylin shot the Snake Dowager a sincere look, “When the time is right, I’ll fulfill my end of the contract. Please trust in me until then.”

“What about now? Are we not doing anything?” The Snake Dowager leaned back lazily, whether she really believed in Leylin’s words unknown.

“Right now? We can add in a variable or two, waiting for Shar’s reaction.” Leylin smiled softly, placing a finger on a datura flower rune.

……

Outside the Imperial Garden, Xavier suddenly felt his body heat up.

“This feeling…” He tore his shirt apart, seeing a beautiful black flower slowly blooming on his chest above his heart. The pain seemed to tear his body apart, constantly eroding his nerves.

The last time this happened he’d been unable to endure the pain, losing consciousness. However, things were different this time; several upgrades in strength allowed Xavier to persevere, gnashing his teeth in an effort to remain conscious.

“Hee… AAAH…” The extreme force caused his gums to bleed. At the same time, he felt a terrifying power moving within his body.

“Snakebite Fist!” A black phantom snake with scarlet eyes suddenly emerged in front of Xavier, a few stories tall. An earth-shattering roar resounded as he punched out, the surrounding earth trembling as the defensive forcefield shattered.

“Jill!” Xavier instantly rushed towards Jill’s location.

“Scram!” The pillar of light radiated anger, and numerous needle tubes suddenly charged towards Xavier.

“These insignificant things…” Xavier used his hands to catch them,
but the moment he made contact his face changed. ‘So hard, even harder than alloys. It’s also so powerful, and this current…’

*Bang!* The boy was sent flying.

“There cannot be any damage to the Tree of Life!” The tree completed its preparations amidst the fluctuations of the soul, suddenly spreading out.

“Eh?” Xavier suddenly felt light-headed, as if his spirit had been extracted. Fortunately, the datura flower’s protection had allowed him to remain conscious. However, he would rather have fainted than watch the scene in front of him. Particles of light emerged from everywhere in the capital like rain, converging on the pillar of light. The twelve pearls lit up, the faces of the girls within revealing painful expressions.

Once the powerful soul energy was transformed, it gathered at the centre of the tower that housed the Tree of Life. The tree grew in size, slowly increasing its pull on Xavier’s soul.

“It has started!” Ling, in control of Dawn, released a sigh of relief as she separated from Crowley.

“Hateful! This is all your fault!” Crowley looked at his surroundings as an invisible net of energy began to materialise, looking like a bunch of branches that grabbed onto the fallen whose bodies had been infected with the X gene.

A particle of light was then drawn out of these people, moving towards the tree as if this web was a bunch of roots. Looking at the scene, Crowley could not help but feel extremely terrified.

“It’s useless even if you knock me down now…” Ling forced a bitter smile while looking at Crowley, “It’ll start with the bodies affected by the X gene, their souls providing the Tree of Life its initial nourishment. Then will be the ordinary people who weren’t infected, followed by ability wielders and bloodline carriers… With the Tree of Life’s rapid growth, the force with which it will absorb these souls will grow… No one can escape, and abandoning the
Rapid Shadows just ridiculous. The Shadow Weave is everywhere, such a thing would only help delay the inevitable by a few minutes, nothing more…”

“Since you knew all this, why not do anything to stop it?” Crowley was thoroughly enraged. The chimera of snakes roared and rushed forward.

“Because… This is my fate…” Ling laughed bitterly, her eyes showing reminiscence.

“Cough…” She suddenly coughed and spat out fresh blood.

“It looks like I won’t be able to continue from now? After all, I only have an ordinary physique…” There was a trace of a smile on the princess’ face as the armour collided with the beast, roots from the Shadow Weave appearing to bore into her body. The feeling of one’s soul being grabbed caused her face to stiffen.

“Self-destruct!” Before losing her consciousness, Ling issued the last order.

*Boom!* The armour grabbed the chimera of beasts, before disintegrating in a terrifying explosion.

“How I wish to go back to my childhood, looking at my father push my swing…” Ling smiled before she fell into total darkness, her body swallowed by the fire.

“Crowley! Crowley!” Bobbi rushed over, only to see a bottomless black hole. The range of the destruction had been surprisingly small, but this wasn’t Ling’s goodwill. She’d instead focused all the destructive might on her opponent. The area surrounding them had been annihilated, the earth itself completely gone to reveal a bottomless underground tunnel. Crowley had borne the full brunt of this attack, would he be able to survive?

Bobbi’s face was filled with tears as she constantly called for Crowley.

“Cough… Rest assured! Before the destruction of the Empire, I will
not die…” A few long back snakes similar to vines grabbed the edges of the pit before Crowley climbed out. However, he was not in a good state—Half of his body had been destroyed, both of his legs and his right arm gone.

“She was a respectable opponent, but also a pitiful person…” Crowley looked at the pit and sighed.

*Whoosh!* His body muscles suddenly squirmed, and he finally even grew out a new arm and legs. His newborn limbs had delicate white skin, seeming no different from the rest of him.
Perhaps it was because of the bizarreness of the recent events, Bobbi just accepted Crowley’s regeneration with some elation. He managed to help the others upon his return, killing Night Devil and Sword Saint before moving to the final battleground.

It was there that he saw the elegant and imposing metal tower, with the needle-topped tubes surrounding it seemingly alive.

“Crowley! Hurry!” The large metal pipes moved once more, stopping Xavier outside the tree. There were numerous wounds on his body, but the youth continued to sprint forward as he headed for the tower with pearls.

“The Tree of Life!” The tree’s huge roots had spread throughout the top of the tower, its huge branches covering the skies and making for a vantage point over the entire empire.

There was a crimson glow on the tree’s bark, forming a vague image of a face filled with madness.

“Ling is so useless!” Rage appeared on the face once it saw and the rest come over. A powerful gust of energy shot forth as many of the roots of the branches of the Tree of Life shot forward to attack them. Many of the rebel troops were caught by these vines, their souls immediately extracted as corpses fell to the ground.

“At such a time… There’s nothing to be afraid of even if I die…” Crowley pushed Bobbi away, revealing a black serpent imprint on his back.
“The final seal… Unseal now!”

*Hiss!* A powerful surge of darkness spread out, and the chimeral serpent appeared once more. Only now, it looked even more illusory than before.

“I give you all my life force… Annihilate it!” Black blood oozed out of Crowley’s pores, continuously entering the body of the giant serpent. It hissed as it received the nourishment, a powerful ball of energy converging in its mouth as it materialised again.

“I’ll bury you!” Several hundred balls of energy converged, forming a terrifying black hole once more. The branches were destroyed in front of its might, saving many lives.

Facing this attack, even Aragon who’d turned into the Tree of Life had to be cautious. The massive tree shrank down a little as powerful soul force formed a thick wall before the black hole.

*Boom!* An explosion rocked the place the moment the black hole came into contact, shattering the wall.

However, the Tree of Life still stood tall after the dust settled, and even worse there was no damage to it at all!

“I’ve already become one with the Tree of Life. With the first stage of soul collection complete, nobody in the world can annihilate me anymore…” Aragon bellowed as his face appeared on the now-crimson tree.

“Just the soul energy of the empire could bring me to such a realm… I will plant firmly into the earth, becoming the core of the realm as I spread my roots throughout the world!” Aragon’s spirit projection seemed extremely zealous, his insanity overwhelming.

“Are you afraid now? Do you feel that fear? Run for your lives! If you’re lucky enough… you might be able to last through the end and watch the world perish with me… No, you’ll watch the beginning of a new world!” Aragon issued his decree.

The Tree of Life immediately swelled as he spoke, terrifying roots piercing into the ground and covering the entire palace in an
instant. The twelve pearls were operating at full force. A few of the
girls were already unable to withstand the damage, blood spurting
out of their orifices.
“Jill! Jill!” Xavier roared in rage. There had never been a day when
he’d felt as cowardly and helpless before.
*Kacha! Kacha!* Cracks appeared on the ground as the Tree of
Life’s roots continuously expanded through the planet. Very soon it
spanned the entire empire. The crown of pearls grew at the same
time, expanding until it reached the skies to connect to the Shadow
Weave. Even after that it continued to expand.
It wasn’t just the cities, and it wasn’t only humans. Anything in the
Empire with the ability to think had its truesoul absorbed by the
Weave.
“Javis told me the Tree of Life expands in three stages. The first
time it will cover the entire region. The second time it will move to
cover the entire planet. The third and final stage is when it will fuse
with the world itself, becoming a god!”
Clive stepped forward, “It will be impossible to defeat in its second
and third stages of growth. We need to take this opportunity now to
eliminate it!”
Bobbi nodded her head. “Even as it continues to expand it’s
protecting those twelve pearls. They should be its core!”
“Young people, the world needs you! The old will create an
opportunity for the future!” Clive stood forward with other
survivors.
“That’s right…”Crowley had stood up as well, even if he was close
to collapsing. “Even with the bloodline phantom we won’t be able
to escape the final purge of the Weave… We can only gamble on
this once chance!”
“Listen up, Xavier! We’ll concentrate our power to make a chance
for you. Your mission is to charge in and destroy the twelve pearls.
Remember, don’t attack the tree. That’s on a completely different
level from you!” Crowley looked at Xavier and smiled, “Don’t you wish to save your sister? Then do it. Do it and, at the same time, save the world!”

“Let’s go!” Clive charged ahead, activating a platinum card against the numerous branches and pipes. “The newest technology in the Empire, a Space Reversal Pulse. I hope it’ll be of some use!” One last smile escaped Clive’s face as his body turned to dust amidst a large explosion.

“Wait for me, old man!” Another steel-faced soldier dashed forward, choosing to destroy himself without any hesitation. The sacrifice caused Xavier to clench his fists tightly.

*Rumble! Rumble! Rumble!* Explosions rang out one after the other, and a path was built upon human lives.

“This is great… That soul fortress from before can’t restore itself so easily after this much damage. We have a better chance…” Crowley pulled at Xavier, a hundred-headed giant snake charging into the vicinity of the metallic tower.

*Whoosh!* Numerous terrifying needles shot towards them like enraged beasts, the Tree of Life up above howling in anger.

On the other hand, the powerful bloodline carriers dashed out in silence, using their lives to open up the path to victory.

*Chi! Chi!* Great numbers of thin needles pricked into the hundred-headed beast, the terrifying incisions causing the huge beast’s torso to shrivel up. It soon turned into a bag of skin and bones, and Crowley seemed to have lost all blood in his face.

“No! Why is this happening?” Hot tears blurred Xavier’s sight.

“Kid, did you think we’re doing this for you? No, this is for the world!” The continuous sacrifices brought them ever closer to the platform. 20 metres… 10 metres… 5 metres…

Aragon was infuriated by the time they reached the place, the terrifying soul attacks of those branches surging violently in their direction.
“I’ll marry you, Crowley…” Bobbi stood up from the snake at this moment, her back turned to Crowley. She then jumped off the giant beast, a pair of dark green butterfly wings extending from her back in mid air. It looked dazzling and beautiful.

A dark green lustre appeared around the wings, and although it seemed weak it managed to withstand the onslaught of attacks. The Tree of Life’s attack was like the palm of the devil king. However, a frail butterfly still managed to dance under the might of this devil, shining brilliantly with the last bit of life it had.

Bobbi’s sacrifice finally brought Xavier and Crowley to the twelve pearls. The former could see Jill within one of them, able to tell apart every pore on her body.

“Xavier! You can only count on yourself in life. The Mistress is far too superior to us; hoping for her to pity us is only something the inferior trash does…” Crowley had his back to Xavier as he spoke quickly, “This is my final realisation! Hence… The only ones able to save humankind are ourselves. Do it!

“Aragon! Die!” Crowley’s body turned into a ray of light amidst his roars, merging into the hundred-headed beasts as he formed Xavier’s last line of defence.

“Guys… guys…” Xavier’s tears flowed uncontrollably, but he did not hesitate further. He knew full well that he could not give up this chance that everyone had fought about with their lives. Snakebite Fist leapt into action as the black datura flower bloomed on his back. All his other issues solved, he stood properly in front of Jill.

“Stop!” Terrifying soul fluctuations reverberated from behind him, but Xavier did not turn back. Someone reliable was protecting him.

“This bullshit empire!” Terrifying black energy appeared on Xavier’s hands.

“This bullshit project!” A beam of light from the datura flower engulfed Xavier’s body, allowing his strength to reach its peak.
“You bullshit Aragon! Die!” he bellowed, unleashing his strongest punch ever.
As he threw this punch, Xavier was exceptionally certain that he’d reached the peak of his power. All his power, his hot-bloodedness, his emotions, everything had been gathered into this one punch, containing the hopes, of Crowley, Bobbi, Clive, and all the rest. Crowley would’ve had a better chance at breaking these pearls. However, Xavier knew very well that he himself wasn’t powerful enough to stop the Tree of Life. If they switched places, he wouldn’t even have a chance to raise his fist. The Tree of Life would eliminate him instantly, and Crowley would lose his chance to attack.

This was why Crowley and the rest had placed their hopes for the world on him, and Xavier understood this enough to throw his everything into the punch. He was confident that even a fort made entirely of steel would be destroyed by this one blow.

*Clang!* His fist collided with the outer wall of the pearl, but there was no damage at all.

“NOOO!” Xavier bellowed, and raised his fist once more. Unfortunately, he was not given a second chance. A terrifying energy attacked his back, causing him to go limp.

‘No… Everyone’s sacrifice and hard work… Is the world done for just like this?’ He felt complete despair. He looked at his little sister within the pearl, seemingly in a deep sleep, as he prayed in his heart, ‘Ley, Snake Dowager! I know you can hear me, so please
make a move! I’m willing to pay any price…”
Unfortunately, he soon felt himself being enveloped by a terrifying web, his soul taken captive. His thoughts grew stagnant. Before entering complete darkness, he raised his head and looked at Jill within the pearl, “I— I’m sorry…”
The girl in the pearl had been asleep, but all of a sudden her eyebrows twitched as she awoke, her black eyes meeting Xavier’s own.
“You… this is great…” Xavier’s lips curved into a slight smile before he sank into complete darkness.
Unfortunately, he hadn’t noticed that the girl’s eyes lacked all emotion, as if she was just looking at a stranger.
“Keke… those meddling ants are now finally dead…” The Tree of Life continued to mature, and the blood-red tumour on it continued to grow in size as Emperor Aragon chuckled in a carefree manner.
“How could my blood and sweat be destroyed so easily? He seems to be related to you, little lady, he worked really hard in his effort to save your life…
“Now… it’s time to make use of you all. Wake up and help me purge the evil…” The terrifying Tree of Light had now extended its roots through half the empire, the soul energy gathered from the act quite frightening.
Numerous frenzied black spots were absorbed by the tree’s roots and branches, gathered into the twelve pearls with the girls in them. Many of the tubes couldn’t even take the pressure, causing swollen tumours to bead into the pearls. The pearls emitted dazzling rays as they purified all the evil and insanity. The clean power was then supplied to the Tree of Life, being directed to the blood-red tumour.
“Haha… very good. That’s the way, that’s the way! I will soon become god!” Aragon said from within.
“You’re no god. You’re just a mere mortal!” A distinct voice
sounded from within the pearl. Jill watched the tree tumour coldly, a look of scorn in her eyes.

“How is this possible? How can a purifier like you speak?” The huge tree tumour made a sound, and Emperor Aragon’s face appeared. However, his expression was now distorted, transforming even as it turned into a fog.

“How can a small bit of evil intent stop me?” ‘Jill’s lips curved up in a snicker, “Only mortals like you would lose their sense of self after assimilating too many souls… How sad!”

“Mortal? Who in the world are you?” Emperor Aragon’s voice now became extremely sharp.

“Me? Haven’t you been trying to go against me all this time?” Jill’s aura changed all of a sudden. Her eyes turned into stars of wisdom.

“Mistress of the Night! You’re the Night Mistress!” Emperor Aragon howled like a mouse seeing a cat.

“Didn’t you find it strange? I discovered your little plot long ago, but pretended not to notice and allowed you to do as you wished…” Shar smiled as the soul tree continued to work, large amounts of soul energy being purified and entering the tumour.

“You want to become a god? You want to go against me? That’s all a part of my plans. If not, would you still be working so hard at completing this task?” The smile on Jill’s face grew, “Also… You’ve even been so kind as to give me a chance to make use of you… How… foolish!”

A powerful will descended at this moment. The twelve purifiers continued to work, but now things were different. A pure white soul energy travelled across these channels to enter the blood red tumour, even beginning to form a huge web that unceasingly corroded Emperor Aragon’s strength.

The girls within the eleven other pearls opened their eyes as well, smiles of ridicule on their faces.

“I will be the one controlling the final body, not me.” The girls’
bodies blurred out as this proclamation resounded, as if they’d transformed from the material to become a flow of energy. The network gave them great power as they abruptly passed through the metal tower into the tree and its tumour.

“No… I’m still protected by Kalle and the mermaid… I haven’t lost yet…” Emperor Aragon appeared crazed and twisted, his face now a complete blur. The twelve young girls held hands around him, chanting a strange song with him at the centre. Aragon didn’t even have a millionth of a chance of winning against the will and power of a rank 8 existence. The calming melody of the folksong seemed to appease the Tree of Life, causing the dark red tumour to gradually turn pure white as it faded away.

The crown of pearls stopped moving the moment the tumour disappeared, traces of cracks appearing on it. Aragon’s withered body suddenly flaked apart atop his throne, turning to a pile of ashes.

Two streaks of light suddenly appeared within the ashes, causing terrifying whirlwinds in the sky.

“Kalle, Kou… Do you still wish to go against me?” The Shadow Weave flickered, and Shar appeared on a branch of the Tree of Life, dressed in black. The two spirals grew in response to her question, slivers of bloodline force pulled out from all parts of the palace.

“This is… the bloodline of your descendants, and the power of malicious intent? I see. Is it Allsnake?” Shar bit at her lips as two illusory figures walked out of the spirals. The tyrannical power of laws from the past quickly returned.

“We already made a mistake once, Shar. We won’t make it again.” Prophet Kalle was an elderly man filled with wisdom, while Kou, who belonged to the sea tribe, looked like a mermaid. The great waves of the sea surged underneath them…

Nothing seemed to have changed within that red villa on the
outskirts of Kerallen. Leylin had just finished his last move, ending the chess game.
‘I see… She used that hatred and the death of descendants to awaken the last remaining conscients, huh? It seems to be some ancient ceremonial spell…
“Sadly, even if you’ve called them out they don’t have the same absolute power as they did in the past. You’re making your move?” The Snake Dowager nodded. “I’ve been waiting too long… Today, everything will end!” She took a step forward, and the air before her shattered.
*Whoosh!* Terrifying spatial turbulence formed. The Snake Dowager’s hair rustled, its many strands in disarray as they transformed into giant snakes. A ball of snakes that looked like a star formed underneath her, carrying the great power of her bloodline.
The Snake Dowager had taken on her ultimate form. The numerous malicious snake heads somehow didn’t diminish her charm, instead making her seem more mysterious and wild…
From the astral plane it seemed like a huge tree emanating white light had formed within the Shadow World, growing as it attempted to fuse with the world itself.
A ball of snakes the size of a world suddenly appeared, the serpents snarling and hissing at the tree of light…
“Allsnake…” Shar was not at all surprised at the Snake Dowager’s appearance, “This ten thousand year war ends here…”
“Indeed, but victory shall be mine. Your terrifying control will destroy the world!” The Snake Dowager retorted without hesitation. In the meanwhile, two streaks of purple-red light were launched from the ball of snakes, entering Kalle and Kou.
The great amount of bloodline force immediately consolidated the two’s powers, strengthening their auras.
“What a pity… If the Trial’s Eye was here to make for three, you
would definitely fall here…” The Snake Dowager and the two other ancient existences in the Shadow World now stood shoulder to shoulder, creating a huge amount of pressure.
Most important was that they were natives of the world. They were the ones who’d fought over the World Will in ancient times, the ones with the authority to control the world’s outcome!
“Yo’ve always been like this, Allsnake… Hoping for help and allies, remaining unaware that the most reliable support is yourself…” Shar revealed a bizarre smile as her eyes scanned the Snake Dowager’s surroundings. “What about that Magus ally of yours?” The Snake Dowager’s expression changed immediately upon Leylin’s mention. “Have you reached an agreement with him?” Leylin was the ally she placed the most importance on, someone she valued more than the other three rank 8 existences. It might’ve been because she’d previously suffered at his hands. “Nope! But since he decided not to show up, I can feel at ease when dealing with you…” A sincere smile appeared on Shar’s face, the terrifying killing intent causing the skies to darken as snow fell to the earth. “That’s exactly what I was thinking…” The Snake Dowager had resolved herself to kill. *Whoosh!* A layer of obscure black wind instantly engulfed the entire Shadow World. The Snake Dowager spat out a frightening black storm from her mouth that seemed to sweep everything away. This was an attack covering the entire Shadow World. Since the Mistress of the Night had chosen to take control of everything, she would instead destroy the planet. The destruction would lead everything back to primal chaos, akin to resetting the world. The Snake Dowager had thought this
through, working up the determination and courage to do so. Even more terrifyingly, her near peak rank 8 strength made it possible to succeed. How terrifying would a near peak rank 8 existence be? A tenth of the Shadow World’s surface had been decimated by her strike within a few minutes, and the corrosion continued to dig deeper. Even the Tree of Life that was fusing with the world suffered great damage, a few branches scattering apart into motes of light. “You’re trying to provoke me, Allsnake. I never imagined you’d be so foolish.” Shar looked at the Snake Dowager with pity in her eyes.

A raging will emerged in the skies, its core surging with oppressive origin force. The act of returning everything to primal chaos would naturally erase the World Will, pushing it to wait for its rebirth. However, the Dowager currently intended to completely destroy this will! Shar wished to control it, while the Snake Dowager wished to eliminate it entirely. The latter obviously engendered more hate. Disregarding her nativity, the World Will raged with fury. However, Shar already had control of more than half of the World Will, allowing her to gain the power of the World Origin Force. Thus, it made no difference to the Snake Dowager how the rest of the World Will behaved. “Allsnake… To have accumulated several tens of thousands of years of power, you are indeed worthy of being called the Shadow World’s favourite daughter…” Shar’s voice was calm as a huge Weave emerged in her hands. Although the terrifying black storm had destroyed a great amount of the Shadow Weave, it recuperated quickly. On the other hand, energy consumption became a problem. The black winds were slowly pushed back after being devoured, wrapped up by the huge Shadow Weave.
“It’s a pity… With control over the entire Shadow World, I am invincible…” Shar currently seemed like a frightening spider queen as she relied on the Shadow Weave to suppress the Snake Dowager completely.

With the great consumption of energy, the Snake Dowager was like a fly trapped in a web. Although her initial struggles could break a few strands, she still couldn’t avoid the fate of being captured and poisoned to death.

The mermaid guardian Kou stood out at this moment. She had brilliant golden hair and beautiful green pupils, her lower body the tail of a fish. Her green scales shone with splendor.

“Ocean,” she said softly.

The entirety of the Shadow World’s ocean suddenly roared, a territory that was more than twice as large as the entire Shadow Empire. With control over the law of the ocean, Kou could bring forth great disaster once she mobilised the seas.

Almost instantly a violent tsunami engulfed the lands, bringing destruction to the Empire once more. Unlike the previous incident which only affected the coast, the waves this time were hundreds of metres high as they made their way inland. The rivers of the Empire changed direction as the sea level strangely increased.

The azure ocean, the cradle of life, revealed its ferocity for the first time. With the sea level rising a few metres, a great portion of the mainland would likely be submerged. On top of that, Kou was controlling this. What if she decided to let the disaster continue?

The waves instantly swept away the flora and fauna of the land, the terrifying pressure erasing all traces of life on the ground. The life forms of the land had been annihilated before the Tree of Life could even spread its roots completely, leaving no value to them.

Such was the level of a battle between existences like Shar and the Snake Dowager. The Dowager and her allies were racing against time to destroy everything, while Shar had to ensure the completion
of the Tree of Life at all costs. Shar’s opponent this time around was far more troublesome than the Trial’s Eye. Being near the peak of rank 8, the Snake Dowager had strengthened herself for tens of thousands of years as she plotted her vengeance. Her power was unpredictable, while Kalle and Kou weren’t opponents Shar could ignore either. More importantly, these three existences were native to the Shadow World, born with power to rule it. They naturally had great resistance to the World Origin Force. With the bloodline energy from the Snake Dowager reinforcing them, even if Kalle and Kou weren’t in top condition they still posed a terrifying threat. They already hated Shar greatly for their fall, and with their souls being mere residues now they had nothing to fear.

“I see origin force converging… Be careful, she’s trying to buy some time for the Tree of Life to mature and engulf us.” Kalle had been watching Shar attentively all this while.

“There’s no need for such trouble! I can settle all of you now!” Perhaps due to the humiliation of her plans being exposed, the current Shar no longer had any reservations. The force of the sea whizzed up as the scattered origin force of the world was recalled instantly. The Shadow Weave suddenly retreated without the protection of the origin force, and the speed of the world’s destruction grew tenfold. However, neither the Snake Dowager nor Kalle betrayed any joy. They were currently facing an existence almost at the peak of rank 8 who’d drawn in all her power to strike. With the control over the World Will and the great amount of origin force she’d recalled, Shar had stepped into the absolute limits of rank 8 for a while. Had the Tree of Life project gone more smoothly, she would’ve stepped into that stage permanently just
now.
“I was born into shadows, and grew up within them. I am the daughter of shadow itself, I should be the original master!” Shar stepped forward with that declaration, and the entire world roared out with oppression. Powerful origin force chopped through a few snake heads like a knife through butter, blood spilling from the Snake Dowager’s hair.
“The dead should no longer exist in this world!” Shar’s sentence was echoed by the Shadow World, causing Kalle’s face to change continuously.
“I see that… She’ll complete the Tree of Life… AAAH…” Kalle’s eyes changed colours, but before he could finish his prophecy a hand filled with origin force pressed down on his head.
“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The eternal astral abyss shall be your final destination…”
Kalle’s body sizzled as it melted under dazzling light. Shar’s power of laws managed to reduce the prophet to ashes even if he had the Snake Dowager’s help. After all, only a part of his soul had managed to revive, and he was far from his prime. He was weak compared to Shar who was at her peak.
Once Kalle’s body dissolved completely, a bunch of lights similar to star fragments dissipated from Shar’s hands. These fragments were the remnants of his will, representing the failure of his resurrection.
Kalle’s truesoul had been sent to the astral plane, where he would have to wait a really long time before he could move into rebirth. It would take tens, maybe hundreds of thousands of years. Shar’s actions had revealed her terrifying strength.
“Allsnake… Do you really think I didn’t realise those two soul residues were acting?” Shar abruptly raised her head, coldness hiding in her clever smile. “A complete World Will doesn’t just include thoughts of creatures, the earth, the seas, and the sky.
Beings of laws are included as well. Only when everything is conquered would the World Will form a true body.” She spoke softly.
“Kou, you’ll be next!” The Snake Dowager’s face changed suddenly.
The World Will certainly comprised the thoughts of all life forms. This obviously included beings of law, and what’s more they took up a disproportionate portion of the World Will. An ordinary person wouldn’t comprise a millionth of a millionth of a percentage point of the World Will, but any being of laws would take up at least a hundredth of the world. This was what had allowed the Snake Dowager to escape after her prior fight. A being of laws was the darling of the world, and they also held a portion of its essence.
“You’re wrong…” Every step Shar took spanned a thousand miles as she came face to face with the huge star-like ball of snakes. “I’ve stripped away all of the World Will’s laws in the Shadow World, except the bit you possess.”
The Snake Dowager turned frantic upon hearing this.
The Snake Dowager saw Shar’s path to be one of control, where she’d devour the World Will after gaining the Shadow World to reach the peak of rank 8. Her plan had been detailed and thorough, going all the way to using the Shadow Empire to hasten progress on the Tree of Life that could rob all thought and take control of the World Will.

Unfortunately, there was one issue with this plan, and that was the existence of the Snake Dowager. She’d taken part of her authority over the World Will with her when she fled, the few percentage points of the will she possessed as a being of law native to the world. Without that portion of authority, Shar would never have complete control over the World Will, which was really annoying.

After all, it wasn’t as if she could rush over to Purgatory World and pull the Snake Dowager out. She lacked a portion of power, so the World Will would never be complete. The peak of rank 8 would forever remain an unattainable dream.

The Snake Dowager’s return was an opportunity for both parties. The former had her vengeance, while Shar had a chance to take over her authority to complete her hold over the World Will of the Shadow World. After devouring it, Shar would instantly reach the peak of rank 8!

In order to go through with this plan, Shar did not mind letting the empire get wind of project X and the Tree of Life plan ahead of schedule. She had even taken the initiative to attack first,
eliminating unstable factors like Trial’s Eye and the two others. And now… it was time to do the harvesting!

“Your target… is me?” A rare look of confusion appeared on the Snake Dowager’s face.

“Foolish being… As a native of the Shadow World, you’re an important part of the World Will!” Shar came before the Snake Dowager, meeting her gaze fearlessly, “And now… all of the World Will shall gather to form a whole new body!”

A huge, terrifying web that covered the skies suddenly appeared from all parts of the world, a purplish gold lustre about it as origin force roared. This was the true form of the Shadow Weave, and its original state. Shar showing this to the Dowager meant she had no plans of letting her leave.

“All grudges and victory should be settled by now…” The Snake Dowager bit at her lips, the calm expression on her face able to cause all male hearts to break.

“Allsnake Devour!” A tremendous amount of purplish-red bloodline force extended from the star of snakes. This was what she’d accumulated over all these years.

In the meanwhile, scenes of large snakes living their lives out appeared behind her, including their fights and reproduction. It was like an epic detailing the culture and history of giant snakes. Terrifying snake souls hissed and roared from within this glorious scroll of civilisation, launching a surprise attack on the maiden in the shadows.

This was a gathering of generations of bloodline power, able to cause the entire Shadow World to tremble under its prowess. The ground cracked to reveal numerous large snakes with phosphorescent fires in their eyes. Their huge bodies began to move, like the world had returned to their rule.

“Are you deluding yourself into thinking a civilisation that has already been lost can be revived?” Facing this epic attack, Shar
merely snickered. “Your time has passed, Allsnake. Now I’m the source of everything!”
“Shadow Weave: Implantation!” Almost at the very moment Shar gave the command, all the mutated bodies of the Shadow World that were still alive began to twitch. Threads of mysterious power entered their bodies, and their blood vessels popped out as they shook violently.
A foreign being had taken over their bodies. With its control over their souls, the Tree of Life had turned these people into walking bags of flesh. However, their eyes lit up with intelligence once more as a darkness spread across their bodies. They’d gained powerful abilities similar to magic.
“Mistress of the Night… You are our master, the one who rules all!” Numerous intelligent life forms knelt down on the ground. Then, they began to massacre the revived snakes.
“Psi energy conducive to attacks, preparing launch of shadow spells!” Everyone had turned into a cold blooded war machine. Under the control of an efficient mind, they’d become an ordered army that flung shadow spell after shadow spell at the snakes. The serpents had no way to retaliate.
If the cheetahs, hawks, beetles, and even sharks knew how to cast shadow spells, what would be the outcome? The soldiers of shadow outnumbered and outpowered the Snake Dowager’s army, beating down her attempt to return things to savagery quickly.
“I am the current master of the Shadow World.” With the Tree of Life complete, its holy light already covered the skies to become the core of the world. It was filled with sanctity as it gave off a vague sense of maturity.
“There’s more,” Shar stood atop the Tree of Light and arrived before the Snake Dowager.
“That… That’s the aura of the World Will…” The Snake Dowager’s expression changed. The light of the Tree of Life had already
gathered over 90% of the Shadow World’s beings’ thoughts and souls. This included the skies, the seas, and the earth, representing the will of the world itself. Even she felt the urge to succumb.

“Leave… Leave the Shadow World and never return…” Kou blocked the way to the Snake Dowager with terrifying waves.

“How could a mere law of the ocean contend against the entire world? Return!” Shar didn’t even have to act personally. A large number of the Tree of Light’s branches spread through the ocean in an instant, stunning Kou for a moment as a tendril abruptly pierced through her body. A few grains of lights flickered with intelligence as they were sucked away to enter the tree.

“Now, my tree of light represents the World Will… You can cannot defy it!” Shar made a proclamation of victory.

Under her control, the Shadow Weave left no means for the Snake Dowager to escape. In the meanwhile, the Tree of Light spread its terrifying roots through the ball of snakes to drag her out.

“Give me everything that you possess, everything!” Shar arrived behind the Snake Dowager, two hands grabbing onto her arms tightly as her intricate face displayed a smile of satisfaction. The Tree of Life in the skies grew even larger.

Bits of obscure thoughts, mixed with the power of bloodlines, were unceasingly absorbed by the roots of the Tree of Life. Numerous snakes shrivelled up powerlessly, representing the continuous weakening of the Mother of all Snakes.

At this critical moment, a fierce look appeared on the Snake Dowager’s face.

*Boom!* Her body that was like a star suddenly exploded, and the surging bloodline force lost the control of a master, beginning to destroy everything in the vicinity.

Layers of the Shadow Weave shrouded Shar. She looked at the lifeless body in her hands and frowned, using some shadow flames to burn them to ashes.
*Boom!* The head of a snake exploded elsewhere, revealing the figure of the Snake Dowager. Without the ball of snakes and its accumulated bloodline force, the beautiful lady seemed extremely weak.

“You’ve taken what’s mine from me…” She hissed, like a gambler who had lost everything.

“A portion of your thoughts, as well as the authority over a portion of the World Will belongs to me!” Shar did not pursue and attack the Dowager further, and instead looked at the tremendous Tree of Life behind her.

Now, the roots had turned a blood red. The original torso of Allsnake that still possessed bloodline force, mixed with a bit of something more abstruse, was all absorbed by the tree. After obtaining this, the Tree of Life seemed to obtain the last thing it needed, and the body instantly became more solid. The rays of light vanished and allowed it to gain a hint of life.

“It’s the rumoured World Tree that will only appear when a world is established from primal chaos!” The Snake Dowager was immediately stunned by the scene in front of her.

“Yes… the source of all life is the source of the World Will!” Shar approached the Snake Dowager, “Your failure is set in stone, I’m the only victor!”

“Failed?” the Snake Dowager muttered hatefully, but confidence appeared in her eyes once more, “True, but I don’t admit my loss yet… My descendant shall defeat you!”

“Is that so? But he doesn’t seem to have made a move, and he’s been watching you suffer a crushing defeat all this time…” Shar chuckled.

“That’s because you don’t know him…. Out of all my experiences across the worlds, his patience is the greatest…”

The Allsnake looked at the giant World Tree, her eyes dazed, “I had no idea what he wanted, but now it’s extremely obvious!”
*Whoosh! Whoosh!* A gust of origin wind blew past the area, and the World Tree’s branches and leaves broke up to show a mysterious fruit on the main branch. “The main body of the World Will! A real, solidified World Will, able to fuse the scattered thoughts of the world and return to the origin! Shar, your plan is truly admirable!” Leylin’s figure appeared under the World Tree. He sighed as he gazed at the beautiful fruit glimmering with light. “Lord Leylin… so you still chose to come and be my enemy!” Shar now looked helpless as she sighed, the sight enough to cause heartbreak for onlookers. Despite her fear of Leylin, she tried to bargain with him, “My previous promises still hold. Once I become the ruler of the Shadow World, everything here is yours!” Unfortunately, Leylin was unmoved by this sort of temptation. It was far too dangerous to make deals with someone at the peak of rank 8, and besides, he much preferred getting what he wanted with his own abilities.
Leylin gazed at the World Tree, his face filled with awe. Rumour had it that this was the source of all life. Only once life formed in a world would all thoughts gather to form its will.

Shar had used all sorts of impossible schemes to gain control of the intellectual beings of the Shadow World, using the Weave to gather all conscients and rob the beings of law of all authority. She’d managed to reverse origin, purifying the World Will and giving it form.

Leylin didn’t think he’d be able to do it better himself. This World Fruit undoubtedly represented a complete World Will, and the moment Shar ate it she would instantly reach the peak of rank 8 and sweep through everything.

This was directly against Leylin’s interests. Given that she was an enemy anyway, Leylin didn’t hesitate to step out.

“What a pity… We still became enemies in the end. I thought you would make the more rational decision,” Shar was obviously disappointed.

“My apologies…” Leylin’s expression did not change as he walked to stand by the Snake Dowager.

“Then I’m sorry, but you’ll have to fall here!” Shar’s expression instantly turned cold as she aimed a finger at Leylin!

*Rumble!* Terrifying! Vast! Seemingly limitless origin force crashed down on Leylin with the weight of the world, nearly...
crushing him to powder in an instant. Shar didn’t spare him another glance as he arrived before the World Tree that was radiating life. The fruit was already mature, about to fall any moment.
Shar knew very well that obtaining the complete World Will was the most important part of her plan. As long as she could devour it, she would be unafraid of any challenges. Even if Leylin announced her existence and brought other peak rank 8 Magi to besiege her, she could force all of them to return home in defeat as long as she stayed here.
After reaching the peak of rank 8, she had plenty of time to deal with Leylin.
“A very smart decision!” When faced with such terrifying pressure, Leylin could only sigh helplessly.
“Things are already so bad. If you have any trump cards, get them out now!” The Snake Dowager took a look a Leylin, eyeing him flirtatiously.
“You think too highly of me!” Leylin laughed helplessly while stroking his chin.
“If you don’t have any confidence you’ll be able to turn the tables, your only option now is to run as far as you can.” The Snake Dowager was unexpectedly more confident in Leylin than herself.
“That’s true…” Leylin took a look at the A.I. Chip, the top-most record on the task schedule extremely striking. [Beep! Progress of analysis of rank 0 to 9 of Shadow Weave: 100%.
‘Let’s see what you’ve left me, Distorted Shadow…’ Lightning flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and the surrounding atmosphere suddenly grew mysterious and terrifying. The Snake Dowager looked at Leylin with shock before moving backwards greatly.
“Hah…” Leylin cried out under his breath, terrifying power of laws sending a great amount of energy into the spell.
This spell model was extremely unique. It was the only rank 12
arcane spell in existence, Karsus’ Avatar.
The A.I. Chip operated frantically, recording large amounts of data.
[Beep! Host body is a great arcanist. Analysis of Shadow Weave at
100%. Meets prerequisites.] [Bee! Charging of energy complete.
Arcane spell model launching.] [Grade 12 arcane spell: Karsus’
Avatar, launched!]
The skies turned gloomy all of a sudden, and the world was
brought to a standstill.
‘This again. That feeling of fatal danger!’ Shar’s expression quickly
changed as she trained her eyes in Leylin’s direction, not letting any
of his movements escape her view as she grabbed at the World
Fruit.
*Crack! Crack!* Great numbers of cracks began to appear on that
crystal in the sea of origin force. The young girl sealed within it
opened her eyes, a trace of terror appearing on her face.
“Your greatest mistake, Shar, was to fuse the Tree of Life with the
Weave.” Leylin rose to the skies, a resplendent arcane spell forming
in his hands.
“Target the Shadow Weave. Karsus’ Avatar!”
*Rumble!* Shar’s expression changed in that moment, her body
freezing and growing slightly transparent. It was evident that she’d
been injured heavily.
“AAAAHH!” She clutched at her head as she released piercing
screams, “MY WEAVE… YOU ACTUALLY STOLE MY WEAVE!”
Even though Shar had known that Leylin had a trump card in his
possession, she’d never have guessed that it had to do with the
Shadow Weave. The ability to strip her of her control was far too
shocking.
Whatever her feelings may be, the Shadow Weave that Shar had
put painstaking effort into creating had been stolen by an outsider
just like that. Even the Snake Dowager was stupefied.
Shar would already have fallen if she was Mystra. However, she
was lucky that she’d changed her own origin, shifting onto the path of the Magi. Still, losing the Weave caused her immense and unimaginable harm.

If Shar was in this situation, Leylin had it even worse.

‘Rank 8! This Karsus’ Avatar is definitely a rank 8 Magus spell!’ Leylin’s face was flushed. The A.I. Chip sped up further as it accepted more information about the Shadow Weave, large amounts of data flashing across his mind. If not for his body of laws and experience in the area, the only possible result of this spell would be an explosion of his brain!

‘Distorted Shadow definitely had malicious intent!’ Leylin was now certain about this. There was nothing wrong with the arcane spell itself, but the problem was who would take over control of the Weave.

After breaking away from Shar’s control, the Shadow Weave immediately went berserk, giving Leylin the impression that it was like a high voltage electrical network. And now, he actually would have to use his own two hands and placate this power grid!

‘Nobody but the Weave’s original controller can take control of it in an instant. Be it a great arcanist or a being of laws, forcing control would only cause them to die alongside it. It isn’t even possible to stop and save your skin…’

Leylin had once thought that the advantage of his main body and the support of the A.I. Chip would make it simple to replace the Goddess of the Weave. However, he now knew that his conjectures were completely off!

If just the Shadow Weave could render him in this state, then the true Weave that extended throughout the World of Gods could only be more terrifying! With his current strength, launching this arcane spell could possibly mean nothing would be left of him; he would basically be doing free labour for Distorted Shadow!

‘As expected of a sly Magus from ancient times. He hid something
in that arcane spell that even the A.I. Chip couldn’t simulate…”

Cold sweat beaded down Leylin’s face. If not for this practical test using the Shadow Weave, he’d likely have been tricked into death in the World of Gods. Sacrificing himself to help others was definitely not his style.

‘But… with this data, I’ll be able to right the mistakes from before…’ The Shadow Weave was inferior to the real Weave, but with one experience of such a terrifying change Leylin had something he could work with.

“Get over here!” The Shadow Weave was now entirely under his control. Being founded atop the Weave, the World Tree was naturally his as well.

In a moment, the World Tree abandoned Shar and became Leylin’s. With most of her strength lost to the grievous injuries, she could do nothing to stop it.

“The last step!” Leylin pulled at the air with two hands, and the origin Weave of the Shadow World came into view.

“With the Shadow Weave as the offering, mature!”

*Rumble!* A pair of hands made of primal chaos erupted from a part of the World Tree, grabbing the purplish gold Weave and kneading it into a bundle before disappearing back inside.

Leylin felt no regret when it came to the Shadow Weave. He could also make use of this opportunity and rid himself of this high-pressure electrical network.

The World Tree finished the final stages of its growth with the Weave, placing its terrifying web of roots into the World as its lush branches took the place of the original Weave.

“This is the final implantation plan…” Leylin sighed and approached the World Tree. The fruit had now grown murky, containing authority over the entire world.

‘This is a World Will, concentrated to the limit and completely solidified!’ Leylin had a mysterious lustre in his eyes as he reached
out and plucked the World Fruit, “Holding it is akin to holding a whole world…”
Leylin couldn’t help but grow intoxicated by the feeling of having an entire world in his grasp. The fruit that Shar had painstakingly cultivated had become the greatest of his profits!
The moment he consumed it Leylin would instantly become a peak rank 8 existence, gaining control of the entire Shadow World. It would make him the world’s master, and give him an extremely long life. Unless the Shadow World was destroyed, he would never fall.
The Shadow World was a large world itself, and without any disasters that could destroy the astral plane itself it definitely wouldn’t face any problems. In other words, if he willed it Leylin could obtain terrifying power and lifespan in an instant, living as long as the astral plane itself! This was definitely a huge temptation for any Magus, something everyone spent most of their lives pursuing.
The huge temptation in front of him didn’t manage to cause the slightest change to Leylin’s expression. “False Eternity? Hmph!” he shrugged with apathy as a sneer surfaced on his face.

What Leylin pursued was the immortality afforded by reaching rank 9, a realm of power that exceeded the scope of the astral plane itself. This World Fruit would bind him to the Shadow World, stopping any further advance. Perhaps the other Magi who had no hope of advancing would make such a choice, but this definitely wasn’t so for Leylin.

However, the Snake Dowager couldn’t stay calm after seeing him take over Shar’s achievements. Unconcealable desire revealed itself in her eyes as she leaned forward. After all, this World Fruit was the essence of the Shadow World’s Will, able to give her dominance of the Shadow World once more as it fused with her laws to advance to the peak of rank 8.

Leylin knew that the Dowager had no choice but to agree to any requests he made right now. Unfortunately, he did not deign to speak. She and Shar were both rank 8s, and only together would they be easy to control. If one of them advanced to the peak of rank 8, they would choose to kick him aside.

Leylin hadn’t fought desperately and plotted for mere goodwill, or the World Origin Force. The Shadow World was a big world, and he felt it better to keep it with him. It wasn’t necessary to fuse with
the world to control it.
‘These two women aren’t simple characters. Neither of them can be left behind alone as a representative. Instead, I can leave them both here so the two will have to act in tandem whether they stay or leave.’ This was Leylin’s decision, and right now was the best opportunity to enforce it. The Snake Dowager and Shar were both seriously injured, and currently he was the only one with enough power to call the shots.
*Bang!* However, Shar’s avatar lost the last of its strength at this moment, fading away as her silhouette dispersed.
“Where did she go?” The Snake Dowager frowned.
“Back to her true body, of course. Having taken so much damage, it’d be surprising even if she manages to stay awake.” Leylin shook his head. With the World Fruit in hand, he could see everything about the Shadow World.
“I’m heading out,” he said as his figure disappeared abruptly. The Snake Dowager was filled with resentment as she looked at his departing back.

……

The sea of origin force in the Shadow World had thinned down greatly. With the light of civilisation exhausted, all that could be seen was an ancient stone palace.
Leylin’s figure appeared to hover over this palace, and the origin force instantly separated, opening up a path for him meekly. He walked unimpeded into the palace, seeing Shar sealed in a huge crystal.
Leylin looked at the huge crystal and nodded, ‘The World Crystal! Is this the consequence of her trying to control the World Will?’ The girl sealed within the crystal seemed to notice Leylin’s arrival, slowly opening her eyes. A blob of shadows emerged outside the
crystal, forming a figure he was familiar with. It was just that her aura was greatly weakened.

“You’re finally here… Are you here to destroy me?” A bitter smile surfaced on the young lady’s face. Although this Magus hadn’t yet eaten the World Fruit, the authority he had at his disposal made it easy for him to take care of her.

“I’m afraid you’re mistaken.” Leylin waved his hands, and the World Crystal that sealed Shar’s body cracked apart. Her body was thrown out.

“My Lord… This…” Having regained her true body, Shar opened up her eyes to stare at Leylin.

Although this body had the same face, Shar looked more pale now, like a young lady who’d been sick for a long while. Her aura was weak, making her look much more attractive than her previous gaudy look.

“I wouldn’t need to do much to destroy you. However, the conflicts between Magi and gods don’t concern us.” Leylin said with a smile, one of his hands behind his back.

“Now, it seems like we need to have a ‘long chat’…” Shar’s eyes betrayed a shrewd smile as she took the initiative to grab Leylin’s hands and lead him to the depths of the palace. The defeat had changed her mindset completely.

……

It took several more years for Leylin to leave the Shadow World. He glanced around him, seemingly able to see the figures of Shar and the Snake Dowager as the corners of his mouth revealed a strange smile.

Might made right. Leylin was currently the strongest person in the Shadow World, thus he was also the one with the authority to divide the cake. He’d taken his time and split up control of the
Shadow World.
It was impossible for his true body to stay there forever, so he’d chosen the Snake Dowager and the Mistress of the Night as his representatives. He gave each 20% of his authority, keeping them both on the same level but still leaving himself the majority of power.
Although the Snake Dowager had been reluctant about it, she understood that she’d have been able to gain nothing without Leylin. She didn’t make a peep. On the other hand, Shar was the loser so she didn’t qualify to make any demands at all.
Furthermore, it wasn’t impossible to reach the peak of rank 8 themselves with 20% of the world’s authority. They’d be able to use the Shadow World’s origin force to recover, and strengthen themselves. Thus, the two of them both submitted to their new master.
Each of them had used all means possible to entice Leylin as a fighting partner, but in the end he’d run away with the greatest benefits. The Snake Dowager kept to her old promise, transferring a portion of her bloodline origin so he had control over her bloodline descendants. Shar refused to be outdone, so as a former intermediate god she divulged a great number of secrets regarding the World of Gods. Leylin learnt what to take note of when he advanced to become a true god.
As for any other interactions… Leylin touched his chin in reminiscence as he looked at his status.
‘I’m at the limits of origin force now…’ The Shadow World’s origin force wasn’t defective like that of Dreamscape, so Leylin had
had no problems with absorbing it. It was something Shar and Allsnake had used to entice him before, but he’d just ended up becoming their master. Even the shrewd Shar would never have imagined that she’d become subordinate to a rank 7 Magus. With more than half of the authority over the Shadow World, Leylin had naturally used as much origin force as he could to max out his attributes.

‘I’m still a rank 7 Warlock… I’ll come back after I advance to rank 8…’ A trace of a smile emerged on Leylin’s mouth. So what if the Magus World’s origin force was controlled by Mother Core and Dreamscape’s was flawed? With the support of the Shadow World, he could still advance by leaps and bounds. He couldn’t feel great enough for becoming the master of a world.

‘Shar and Allsnake went overboard this time… The Shadow World needs time to recover. If not, it would’ve given me much greater benefits…’ Leylin was currently the master and judge of the Shadow World, and he’d tasked the Snake Dowager and the Mistress of the Night to restore the world to its former glory.

“Ah, the contract’s been taken care of!” Leylin continued on his journey without hesitation, light constantly flickering in his eyes, “There’s only two things I have to do in the Magus World now… “First is to talk to the other beings like Mother Core. After all, I can’t take out the entire World of Gods myself…” Leylin was aware of his limits. His attempt to control the Shadow World had nearly cost him everything, and if not for the arcane spell that was his trump card the results would probably have been greatly different.

The World of Gods would be far more dangerous. The enemies there were tens of thousands of times more powerful, and on top of that there were cunning and wicked Magi like Distorted Shadow waiting there with traps at the ready.

Leylin intended to surround himself with allies, bringing the entire Magus World along as he used absolute power to crush everything.
As long as he revealed some information about the World of Gods, he didn’t have to worry about powerful Magi not taking the bait. “As for the other, I need to take care of the Lords of Calamity in Dreamscape… The Nightmare Absorbing Physique…” Leylin sighed deeply. The Nightmare Absorbing Physique was a gift from Dreamscape, but it was also the dagger the world used to eliminate its thugs. It was intended to destroy locusts like the Lords of Calamity.

However, Leylin didn’t think so simply. Proverbs said that the hunting dogs would be destroyed once the rabbits were killed, and even if he wasn’t afraid of such a thing he had to take precautionary measures.

The Nightmare Absorbing Physique was intended to restrain the Lords of Calamity. If Leylin revealed his might to eliminate all the Lords of Calamity, what would Dreamscape’s World Will do then? Would it leave him in control of such power? Leylin felt like he had to let the Lords of Calamity survive, because this would bring him great benefits.

‘Maybe I can do the same thing I did here, punishing the Lords of Calamity like a judge after I spark infighting among them…’ Leylin didn’t want to be someone else’s weapon. Such people didn’t face good ends. Instead, he wanted to be the one in charge, the person making the rules.

Since Dreamscape was weakening itself because the Lords of Calamity were taking too much of the World Origin Force, he would restrict the amount they used. That way he would be able to please both sides, at the same time managed to preserve himself.
1109 - Pouring In

"Of course, most of the time you end up pleasing neither side if you try to please both. My finesse and ability are going to be put to the test... Power is still the most important." Leylin’s eyes flickered as he grasped the crux of it all, ‘Only a peak rank 8 power can force Dreamscape’s World Will to concede. That’ll be when I can deter the other Lords of Calamity as well, it’s the bottom line for this plan to work.’

The space between Leylin’s brows twitched slightly at this thought, and a bright red line appeared at that moment. Leylin’s soul flashed with radiance, almost instantly linking to the large and vast Dreamscape.

With a Lord of Calamity sacrificed to Dreamscape, Leylin was like a fish inside water in this world. His powerful soul force swept across the major regions.

‘Dreamforce is growing stronger as well, but it’s still very dangerous. Also...’ Leylin’s expression turned grim. He could sense the evil auras of the Lords of Calamity in the world, able to tell that those scattered beings had gathered in groups for protection. Their sealed lands had been linked together; they’d evidently discovered something.

Leylin’s current strength allowed him to deal with a single Lord of Calamity easily, but if they attacked him together he wouldn’t be able to handle them. There were no fools amongst the existences of laws. Even if Leylin had shrouded himself in mystery they’d still
managed to find something off about the situation and put their guard up.
‘Looks like my plan of gaining an advantage by taking out a few Lords of Calamity won’t work…’ Leylin shook his head, but he didn’t find it particularly regretful. Even if Dreamscape’s World Will helped him reach the peak of rank 8, it wouldn’t be worthy of ecstasy. Borrowed power would never be his. Dreamscape could give him a great many things, but it could also leave him with nothing in an instant. Only something he had obtained for himself was truly his! Leylin calmed his beating heart, heading not to Dreamscape but to the Magus World. With Mother Core and other peak rank 8s in charge, the Magus World was completely calm and without any problems. Of course, to existences of laws nothing that didn’t affect their kind was a problem.
‘A few more organisations are fighting on the mainland in secret?’ As he gathered information, Leylin laughed and he shook his head. While the surface of the Magus World was under his jurisdiction, he couldn’t be bothered with ants fighting amongst themselves. ‘No matter how powerful their geniuses are, as long as they don’t grasp laws these organisations will remain useless… They were born in the wrong era…’ Leylin sighed at this conclusion, a trace of pity in his eyes. Once the Final War resumed, these geniuses would not meet good fortune. It wouldn’t be possible for them to reach rank 7 so quickly, and even though they’d crawled their way up to becoming Morning Stars that only qualified them to be cannon fodder. Was there anything more unlucky than that? Of course, there would be special cases of people who grew with battle, even peeking into the realm of laws. However, the chances of this were so low it was pitiful.
Targaryen Castle.
Flames from the Fiery World raged in the extraplanar laboratory, gigantic spell formations flickering with boiling heat. A thick layer of World Origin Force had been condensed into a pond at the core, showing the true form of the origin force weapon Leylin had poured his blood and sweat into for centuries. A kingly aura seemed to radiate from the hazy fog, as if a terrifying primordial monster had awakened from its slumber. Rainbow lights flashed as an absolutely lethal weapon showed its appearance. This weapon had all forms. It was a sword, a blade, a hammer, a lance, it was every weapon used in war. Every edge and corner was extremely sharp, making it seem like an assembly of all lethal weapons from ancient times to the present. This weapon didn’t even need to be waved around to cause damage, the sharpness of its aura alone could cause the surrounding space to fragment. Noticing Leylin’s arrival, the weapon began to emit sharp sounds that gripped the heart and soul. Even rank 2 or 3 Magi would probably have their souls destroyed under this illusory attack. “You can’t wait to be born?” Leylin smiled as he looked at the results, a satisfied smile appearing on his face, “It still isn’t time yet.”

With a wave of his hand, a surge of World Origin Force as terrifying as rivers and lakes in the world suddenly poured in, filling the World Pond in an instant. Everything seemed to be in a surplus compared to before. The origin force weapon cheered, and greedily began to devour this origin force. Leylin watched on while deep in thought, ‘With the supply from the Shadow World, it will probably surpass all divine weapons in the future and delight in consuming the fresh blood of the gods…’ The Magus World was obviously the most abundant in its origin force, followed by Dreamscape and the Shadow World. However, he could only pick up scraps in the Magus World, forced to share
equally with a large number of beings of laws. Dreamscape treated Leylin like its child, and as for the Shadow World? Leylin was its owner, possessing a terrifying amount of authority over it! Thus, he would be able to gather the most origin force from the Shadow World, followed by Dreamscape and the Magus World. This was the benefit of having a world to himself.
That wasn’t all, Leylin had something else prepared as well. He would shape this origin force weapon into a lethal weapon that would shake the astral plane!
“A.I. Chip!”
[Beep! Preparation for stripping of laws is now complete. Beginning infusion. Laws being stripped off: Calamity (27%), Decay (15%), Curse (1%), Shadow (33%).] The A.I. Chip loyally carried out Leylin’s orders.
The laws Leylin had devoured weren’t of much use to him, and they would only contaminate his path. It was necessary for him to remove them. With the help of the A.I. Chip, he could isolate his understanding completely and pass it on as a present, or sell it. It was similar to divine force and divinity in the World of Gods.
Of course, beings of law would pay an astronomical price for this comprehension. If, by chance, they needed these specific laws in the first place, they’d be able to give up anything!
However, this was too extravagant for Leylin. It was better for him to grasp his own laws. If these laws were unusable, he could just pour them into his weapon. An origin force weapon with the power of laws would then have the grandeur of a true divine weapon!
“Begin!” Leylin’s eyes immediately turned black as the rank 7 Targaryen phantom appeared behind him. With devilish wings, a single horn, vertical pupils and two claws, the winged serpent widened its huge mouth and spat out threads of darkness that fell into the pond, containing the laws of disaster, decay, and other
powers that he’d comprehended.
The pool began to boil, and the origin force weapon at the centre roared out. Runic patterns crawled onto its body, physical proof that the laws were getting to work.
Pouring the power of laws inside the weapon was not something that could be done in a day or two. Leylin spent a total of three years emptying his useless laws into it, so much so that his truesoul seemed to weaken.
‘But it’s all worth it.’ Leylin took a look at the dark figure in the pool. The origin weapon had already lost its fierce aura, no longer showing off its power. Its splendour had been restrained, which only made it even more horrifying.
‘The truesoul may grow weaker with the elimination of the extra laws, but it’s also sharper now.’ After getting rid of the laws that would contaminate his path, Leylin felt that his truesoul had now become more clear and sensitive, as if thirsting for more along its path.
‘This is shown before rank 8… Does that mean I’m at the peak of rank 7?’ Understanding arose in Leylin’s eyes. Rank 8 involved understanding multiple laws, later forming their own path based on these laws. He wasn’t confused about it anymore.
‘The path of a Magus cannot be altered once it’s set. Any extra laws will only corrupt the truesoul. All my confusion has been removed, and I can now see my path clearly. Everything else, my path to eternity, is in the World of Gods!’
“Soon! Soon!” Bright light flashed in Leylin’s eyes as he clenched his fists.
Leylin’s figure appeared in the seventh level of the subterranean world, and he sent a powerful surge of soul force out, “Mother Core!"
*Tok! Tok!* Dark red light appeared in the darkness, pulsing with power. If one looked closer, they could see that this was a crimson gem made of lava, seeming like a vertical eye sitting at the core atop numerous veins. This was another form of Mother Core, different from before.
“Lord Leylin, you’re finally here!” Mother Core proclaimed loudly, not the least bit surprised at Leylin’s arrival.
“Yes. And I come with sincerity. The Final War is about to erupt once more, and I wish for your help!” Leylin spoke exceptionally sincerely.
“The Final War never ended. However, a few new variables have entered the scenario, about to make it more fierce…” Mother Core spoke as if making a prophecy.
“Mm, an opportunity’s arrived. I have a way to breach the crystal sphere,” Leylin admitted bluntly.
What? Your Excellency Leylin, do you know what you’re saying?” Ignox’s figure appeared in the abyss, a ring of darkness. Other conscients moved out as well, showing their interest in the matter.

Leylin inhaled a deep breath, “Of course I do. I have a way to get past the crystal sphere, and can already send those with power up to the Breaking Dawn realm past it. Transferring beings of laws is a problem, but I’m looking into it.”

“Interesting! Interesting!” Leylin felt several malicious intents descend on him immediately, wanting to pry open his mind.

“Get lost!” He grinned malevolently, bright red light from Dreamscape shining as a vertical eye appeared between his brows. The evil conscients wailed in anguish instantly, retreating in haste.

“It’s the symbol of the Nightmare King!”

“No wonder he’s growing strong so fast, he isn’t beneath us rank 8 existences anymore…”

The many conscients were alarmed. Only until now did these powerful existences regard Leylin properly. Equal power was a basis for communication, and Leylin had never doubted that fact. If he didn’t reveal strength rivalling rank 8, these Magi would snatch away all his achievements.

“I’ve said this before. Leylin became one of us after he signed the contract.”
*Boom!* An immense explosion resounded, showing Mother Core’s determination. A peak rank 8 that wished to try prying on Leylin stopped immediately.

‘Legend has it that Mother Core comes from the centre of the Magus World and has tens of millions of clones, each in different form. Looks like that’s all true…’ Leylin nodded his head as light flashed in his eyes.

“The fruits of your research will be protected.” The massive body that represented Mother Core moved up and down, indicating her will.

“Thank you, my Lady. However, I wish to share the results of my research with the rest…” Leylin smiled and tossed a bait that the other existences could not refuse, “In exchange for a small price of equal value…”

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A flurry of discussion later, shocking news travelled out from the Magus World. A rank 7 Magus had actually discovered a way to break through the World of Gods’ crystal sphere, and this had been confirmed by Mother Core.

This news caused a huge wave of controversy. After all, the war between the Magus World and the World of Gods had never stopped. With the World of Gods unable to turtle up anymore, it would most likely resume in full force. And now, it seemed like that epic war was upon them once more.

It was worth mentioning that the crystal sphere blocked all communication into and out of the World of Gods. The divine beings there did not learn of this news at all. They continued to feel that, with the protection of their crystal sphere, the Magus infiltration was extremely far away.

The person at the root of all this commotion was actually quite
calm. Having displayed power equivalent to rank 8s, nobody in the astral plane except existences on par with Mother Core could touch him. Even if such a person appeared he could always escape to Dreamscape or the Shadow World, leaving those existences unable to do anything about him. With these trump cards in hand, Leylin’s true body would not be affected by the trials and hardships he’d have to face.

Leylin had only passed down methods to have creatures at or below Breaking Dawn enter the World of Gods, leaving the methods for beings of law to himself. This was indeed a fact—after all, he was still in the outside world and even the Manderhawke Plate couldn’t let him get in—so he wasn’t afraid of someone interrogating him.

Magi weren’t short sighted people, but the information still stimulated their greed. The astral plane grew more lively as numerous powerful and evil gazes locked onto the World of Gods. The Final War would blow up once more, and it could happen at any moment!

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On the other end of the astral plane, within the crystal sphere. The numerous gods of the World of Gods remained unaware of the impending danger, continuing their scramble for power and profit with crafty plots and machinations.

The mainland had calmed down in its never-ending war, a truce being called between the Orc Empire and the Silverymoon Alliance. Everybody’s focus had instead drifted south, towards the rumoured native empire.

Faulen Island.
This was originally the territory of the Faulen Family, but Leylin had moved his entire clan to Debanks Island a while ago. This
caused a decline in its status, but the island was still the primary port of the southern seas, an important transfer point. Huge quantities of sugar, salt, and food items continued being sent up from the south, transported to the mainland in exchange for iron, cloth, and technology. An unknown number of merchants had grown rich on this channel of trade, whereas smuggling continued unabated despite repeated crackdowns. It gave the shipping route another name— the Path of Gold.

Rumours were abound that even ordinary sailors could become millionaires after a few years of working this route. They’d attracted a huge wave of adventurers, filling the bars and hotels to the brim as they caused the city to prosper.

On this day, a small transport ship anchored itself in the port. Unlike the others that were anxious to fill every nook and corner with goods, this one seemed to be comfortable as every passenger had ample space. It was a favourite of many aristocrats and businessmen.

Escorted by an old butler and knight, a youngster whose face was covered by a white veil walked down the deck.

“So this is Port Venus, the rumoured land of wealth and hope?” The youngster took a look at the huge beams and mechanical arms in the harbour. Huge tools could be seen everywhere in the two piers, nimbly dancing around with a life of their own as they transported massive wooden crates down enormous ships from distant lands. The crates were wheeled outside the pier along a long track.

There were numerous sailors waiting here, their exposed torsos showing their strong muscles. The youth’s attention was drawn to the fact that humans weren’t the only ones here. There were black and yellow-skinned southern natives, fishmen with obvious traits of the ocean, beastmen with dense fur, dwarves, and halflings abound, as if they’d found a place that belonged to them.
“Such a strange device... Normal beams are far less flexible, unable to sustain such great weight.” The youth took a look at the huge network of beams and merchandise that covered the entire area like black clouds.

“Yes, it looks like a veritable mountain. In fact, even if a mountain was placed here I have no doubt that they can move it away in a short period of time. This equipment shows their lord’s astonishing attainments in engineering.” The old butler wiped his spectacles, “Such a magical place, but this isn’t our destination. You should go in and rest, young master…”

“Yes... This place isn’t where I should be...” The youngster’s voice grew gloomy as he left the pier with his knight. However, he hadn’t noticed that his temporary stop had attracted the attention of others...

Outside Port Venus, within the wizard tower atop the hill. Ernest had just raised his glasses, his head already covered with white hair as he looked extremely old and weak. Leylin had left him in charge of Faulen Island’s defence, giving him a majority of the control over the wizard tower.

“An interesting little fellow... It’s a pity I have no energy to play with you.” Ernest sighed from his wheelchair, a thick blanket spread across his lap with spirit-crafted ceramic teapots and cups beside him.

“Tower spirit, send this information to the Giant Serpent Church... The matter won’t be our problem anymore...” Ernest waved his hands, then closed his eyes slowly with graze. It seemed like he didn’t want to waste the slightest bit of energy.

“O’ time you are so ruthless and cunning, having stolen my memories yesterday but suddenly placing them in front of me today...’ he whispered softly, as if recalling something.

His mind’s eye showed him the appearance of his greatest disciple, the pride of his life. That young genius had advanced, becoming
the youngest high-ranked wizard and legendary wizard as he broke the prejudice of the world against wizards. The rest of the world saw in him how a true genius rose to power, and now his student had already started to peek into the realm of the divine!

“O’ Oghma, God of Knowledge… I pray sincerely to you, hoping to receive enough time to witness his moment of glory!” Ernest took out an emblem from his chest and started praying.

Most wizards held weak faith, and Ernest himself had previously worshipped the Goddess of the Weave. Due to some unspeakable reasons, although he’d ended up changing his faith, he hadn’t joined the Giant Serpent Church. He instead turned towards the God of Knowledge, Oghma. After all, knowledge was power, wasn’t it?

Ernest did not know that the youngster and his butler would pull the attention of many other existences here, setting off a storm that would spread across the entire mainland before crossing over to multiple worlds…
Night time.
The sea looked even deeper in the darkness, terrifying monsters seemingly hiding within as strange whining sounds could be heard within the fog. Steel boots moved along the coastline as a few silhouettes walked out of the sea.
“We can borrow the power of our Lord to escape the monitoring of the wizard tower,” a man wrapped in gray robes said.
“Bah, the territory of a false god. I’ll personally destroy it one day!” a robust man exclaimed, a look of disdain in his eyes.
“Pay attention to your words, Mare.” Their leader turned back. He was wearing exquisite armour, the large single eye emblazoned on his cape a symbol of his church. “Our mission is to pursue the remnants of the evil church. The affairs of the south sea do not concern us. Unless we receive personal orders from master or our church, there will not be any conflicts with others during this mission.”
“I understand, Bishop Morand.” The man muttered, but he eventually quieted down.
“Is everyone clear on the mission?” Bishop Morand looked at his own subordinates and could not help being prudent. “Our target is the descendant of an evil god. If the church survives, it could assist in his resurrection, so it needs to be cleaned up.
“My intelligence says they intend to escape to Debanks Island. We must not let them succeed!”

1111 - Escape
“Debanks Island… The land of the Giant Serpent, a hell on earth with unending death and fear…” Soft murmurs circulated within the group, and Morand’s face grew unsightly.

Leylin was a false god who’d managed to resist the suppression of Helm’s Church, even killing a large number of clergymen. He’d been on the Church of Protection’s list for a long time.

Unfortunately, this fellow had holed up in Debanks Island, controlling what was once the Sakartes Empire. He also had numerous subordinates, including another demigod. Although they’d sent several squads with high hopes, none of them had managed to survive Leylin’s countermeasures.

A few attempts later, Debanks Island had been marked as forbidden grounds for Helm’s Church, even mentioning it garnering the hostility of its paladins.

“Let’s set off! We swear to crush the demigod!” Bishop Morand’s face held an unswerving determination as he led his subordinates into the night.

……

“My Lord, you are like the stars up in heaven, your wings of healing protecting the world in their embrace. Massacre is your sharp sword, and your eyes are brighter than the sun…” A bishop was leading the prayer within a concealed room on Faulen Island, dressed in robes embroidered with a giant snake.

Leylin had yet to become a true god, so his church was not recognised by the other gods on the mainland. If they revealed themselves in public, they would be attacked, so the church held its prayers in a secret area.

Once the daily prayers were completed, the bishop entered an office where a few valiant believers were waiting, a few natives in particular amongst them. Although the natives were slightly shorter
than the rest, the violence in their eyes and their ice cold killing intent put a faint pressure on the rest.

“Good day, everyone. We have all gathered here today under the gaze of the Winged Serpent Kukulkan,” the bishop nodded towards the rest.

“Under the gaze of our God!” Everyone immediately prayed in unison, fanaticism noticeable in their eyes. Regardless of personal power or faith, these natives had proven themselves. The bishop did not reveal any disdain.

The bishop suddenly remembered, ‘Word has spread that a large number of natives have joined the church’s headquarters in Debanks Island, and there’s a high chance that the next pope will be a native saintess…’ He then gripped the emblem on his chest and started repenting in his heart, ‘Everything is the will of our only Lord. Please forgive me for my wavering faith…’

Of course, the rest only saw the bishop clench at his holy emblem before sitting down behind his desk.

“Illustration from the city hall and wizard tower say that an incredible figure seems to have entered our territory.” The bishop banged on the table, taking out a stamped letter that he showed to the rest.

A subordinate took a look and spoke out with his doubts, “Poison Scorpion Church?”

“Yes. It’s a church that worships an ancient scorpion demigod. They’ve been developing in secret for a long time, but sadly they were discovered and suppressed by the forces of Helm while their lord was ascending. Rumours say the demigod fell…” Mockery appeared on the bishop’s face as he explained this, “There was no need to pay attention to such a small church before, but according to wizard Ernest, the demigod’s descendant has fled to Faulen Island, planning to journey to Debanks Island.”

“This matter can be quite troublesome… We’re currently trying to
maintain peace with the forces on the mainland as we develop, this
might invoke a war…” One of the subordinates frowned.
“Of course. I’m aware of that, but we cannot allow them to act with
total disregard for law.” The bishop looked at his subordinates with
resentment. If under normal circumstances, would there even be a
situation out of his control? Unfortunately, he had only taken over
this branch recently, and it was the former headquarters of the
Faulen Family.
Of course, they listened to Leylin’s orders, but outside of that it was
troublesome to unite them. These elites couldn’t be dispatched if
they weren’t convinced about the situation.
Just as the bishop was troubled, his face suddenly changed. A
strong will descended on the place abruptly, and flames were
ignited on the statue of the feathered serpent.
“Our Great Lord has descended!” The bishop was the first one to
kneel down in prayer, the others quickly following suit.
A thought was soon transmitted out of the statue, causing a hint of
joy to appear on the bishop’s face, “Worshippers, I am in need of
you…”
“Are all of you clear of our Lord orders?”
“Yes!” the formerly rebellious subordinate stood out, saying
resolutely, “This is the will of the Lord, we’ll complete the task
even if it costs us our lives!”
“Good!” The bishop nodded in satisfaction.

……

The youth and his two servants were still unaware of the huge
crisis that was about to befall them. They’d already set up at a small
inn. The youth had tried to escape, but now he’d been arranged in a
clean room. The butler moved to the edge of the window, taking a
few glances before he tightly shut the curtains.
The knight stood at the door like a sculpture, similar to a loyal guard.
“You’re the son of our Lord. Please pay attention to your actions. How could you run out on a whim? Aren’t you aware that the Church of Protection is right behind us? They definitely won’t let us go if they’re given the opportunity…” The butler’s face had blackened.
The youngster shrank down. “I’m sorry, bishop… I, I only wanted to look at that lord’s wizard tower…”
’Sigh… He’s still a child after all, this responsibility is too heavy for him to shoulder…’ The bishop who was dressed like a butler let out a secret sigh, softening up at the sight of the youngster’s face. “Please endure it for a while. We’ll be safe once we reach Debanks Island.”
“Debanks Island?” A rare trace of joy appeared on the youngster’s face. “The place with the rumoured native empire and the Giant Serpent… We won’t have to worry about Helm’s Church once we’re there?”
“As long as you can obtain their protection, yes!” A kind and amiable smile surfaced on the butler’s face. “Our Lord interacted with the Giant Serpent Church before, and they’re willing to help innocent people like us who’ve been suppressed… More importantly, our gifts will definitely gain his favour.”
The moment gifts were brought up, the knight subconsciously gazed at the youngster’s neck. A crystal pendant was hung there, emitting soft light. “They will only shelter you for such an artifact…” The butler stroked the child’s hair, “You don’t have to be sad. This is something our Lord gained in an accidental encounter. I’m sure you can exchange it for your safety and the opportunity for the church to rise again in the future. I’m sure he would have agreed as
well…”
The youngster did not notice the trace of pity within the butler’s eyes. A child of god was someone who’s descended from a true god. Demigods’ descendants barely qualified to be addressed as such, and in fact their Lord had several heirs as precaution. Unfortunately, this child was the only one among his brothers and sisters who’d survived.
‘If a true god falls, as long as their believers continue to call out their true name with devout faith they’ll return after a period of time. However, it’s different for a demigod… The conditions are harsher, and there are additional requirements that will make resurrection more difficult…”
Although his heart felt pity, the faith in the butler’s soul ultimately won. He recovered his previous expression.
The face of the knight changed at that moment. His figure that was similar to an iron fortress moved forward, smashing the floor apart.

*Hss!* A thin shadow arose from the floor with a vertical blood-red eye. It looked like a tiny black snake.

“Wait a moment! This is…” The butler stopped the knight, placing his hands on the floor in all seriousness. The little snake stuck out its tongue and licked his fingers, moving towards his ears without hesitation before it released soft hisses.

The black snake exploded once it conveyed the message, and the butler’s face immediately changed, “Not good! The Church of Protection discovered our tracks, they’ve been behind us all this while!

“Forget the luggage. We should flee immediately, use the windows!” The butler had made his decision in a moment. The trio left the building secretly after they packed their essentials, leaving a candle burning to make it seem like the room was still occupied.

‘They left? That’s good. Regardless of their reasons, the fight shouldn’t have happened at the centre of the city, it would have affected our reputation significantly.’ A man draped in black robes emerged from the street, looking in the direction the three had headed. A long, thin snake slithered out of his sleeves, looking like the same one that had spoken to the butler.

“Bring this news to the lord, little precious. Those hateful guards of
Helm have caught the trail as well…”
The black snake’s movements were as fast as the wind, and it instantly disappeared into the darkness.
“Hoohoo… We should have them suffer this time, letting them know that the Giant Serpent Church isn’t so easy to provoke.” The black shadow laughed coldly.
It was at this moment that an icy voice from behind startled him, “So you people are determined to oppose us?”
A hint of ice-cold killing intent pervaded the place, shortly followed by a dagger being pierced through the robed man’s chest.
“Despicable thing, trash like you belongs in the Nine Hells and the Abyss!”
When the man in black turned around, he saw a thief standing there with a cold expression. There was a condescending look in his eyes, Helm’s logo on his armour abnormally prominent.
“Huh?” Just as the thief was about to pull his dagger back, his expression suddenly changed, ‘There’s something wrong. The resistance…’
*Boom!* The man in black exploded, numerous black snakes scattering as they quickly spread themselves through the street.
“Hoohoo… Helm’s assassin… Just wait as my precious little snakes devour you…” A voice similar to an owl echoed from all directions, causing the assassin to turn grim. His figure disappeared into the darkness, only to reappear in front of Bishop Morand.
“I’ve failed, my Lord.”
“It isn’t your fault.” The bishop seemed quite forgiving, “The Giant Serpent Church chose to get involved, and our men have found traces of the false god’s descendant. Your orders have changed; in the name of the Lord, eliminate the spawn of the vile demigod!”
“In the name of the Lord!” Everyone quietly prayed, even the assassin. Fervour seemed to radiate from their eyes…
*Whoosh!* A massive number of black shadows encircled the
fleeing trio as Helm’s Church chased after them. “Waaaa!” A youngster’s cries echoed through the desolate beach. The butler had decided to use this route since there weren’t any people here even in the day because of frightening whirlpools, but people from Helm’s Church were still on their heels. This was a sufficient display of the church’s abilities. By the time the youngster came around the knight was already on the floor, cut in two. His kidney had fallen out and his intestines were exposed, a scene surely to plague the youth’s nightmares for a long time… If he could survive, that is. The kid himself was alive solely due to the efforts of his butler, who’d torn open a protective magic scroll. However, looking at the dense encirclement, the magic would not be able to sustain itself much longer. “High-ranked wizard?” The knights of Helm opened up a path for Bishop Morand to walk through, and he did so without hurry. He looked at the butler’s face, a trace of pity in his gaze, “I didn’t expect the Poison Scorpion Church would have a high-ranked wizard remaining. You’re pretty good, to have survived the fall of that vile false god…” The demise of their god was a fatal blow to any church. It wasn’t just a problem of conviction, the priests of the church would be greatly weakened, instantly revoked of their status. An average body would be unable to bear the pain that followed. In other words, a pure priest without any other profession would receive a fatal blow once their god died. The same held true for the lower-ranked members of the clergy as well. Only warriors, wizards, or other Professionals at high ranks would be able to survive that loss of power, even then on the condition that they were young and strong in terms of the soul. This butler in front of Bishop Morand was one such person. The damage done to the bishops of a demigod when it fell was lower,
and on top of that he himself was a tenacious high-ranked wizard. He managed to endure the backlash, allowing him to escape while their pope and a considerable number of other bishops had died. The man had taken on the responsibility of protecting his god’s child.

“The Poison Scorpion Lord is a real God, I will not tolerate your blasphemy.” The butler maintained a solemn face, his dignified temperament not betraying a hint of anger.

All devout worshippers held unyielding faith in their gods, making such fervent followers much more frightening than the rest. This butler was naturally one such man, or a high-ranked wizard would never join a demigod’s church.

“I can still give you a fair trial. Surrender, and hand over that spawn of the devil!” Bishop Morand spoke with a compassionate tone, and a giant eye appeared behind his back as he looked at the old butler.

“Don’t even think of using teleportation or a random portal. Our Lord has locked down the surrounding space. You shall be burnt at the stake!”

The youngster looked around him. The knights of Helm had taken out golden crossbows from their backs, the weapons incredibly frightening at close range. Forget teleportation, even if they tried to flee on land or in air they’d be unable to escape the attacks.

“Watch over me, my Lord.” Revealed to be a high-ranked wizard, the butler’s face was solemn as he spread a few tiny scorpions on the ground.

“Enslave!” “Greater Transformation!”

*Roar!* The tiny scorpions roared as they grew in size, becoming five metre long two metre high monsters, acting like tanks in front of the wizard.

“Young master. I’ll make an opening for you a while later, take the chance to escape. Bring that pendant to the Giant Serpent Church
or the Faulen Family, and plead for their help.” The butler stood in front of the child, resolved to fight to the death.

“I…” It was already a significant feat for a youngster of thirteen or fourteen years of age who’d never experienced suffering to stay conscious so long.

“Sigh…” The butler could only helplessly sigh, turning around to face his opponents once more.

*Bang! Ka-cha!* The giant scorpions were dismembered rapidly under the knights’ attacks. A paladin had already rushed up to him.

“My Lord… You’re a star of the heavens, and one day you shall return to your throne…” The wizard mumbled, the fear of death absent from his face.

However, this expression changed after but a moment. A keening sound rang out as a black spear broke the spatial barrier to pierce through the paladin whose holy sword was raised.

“The sinister light in the air…” Bishop Morand frowned, turning towards the main culprit. It was a native warrior of the southern seas, short but full of toned muscle.

But then he saw the tattoos of devils bound with iron chains on the bodies of the man and his allies, and he went livid.

“The Giant Serpent Church’s elites, devil hunters! They’re high-ranked devil hunters who’ve sealed real devils!” Morand didn’t even send out any orders. His subordinates were already shrieking.

These devil hunters evidently had an unsavoury reputation in the south sea. Devils themselves were known to be cunning and secretive, with vile powers. How much more powerful did devil hunters have to be to defeat these devils?

Even if they were aligned neutrally, devil hunters used the powers of the devils they captured. It caused people to associate them with the devils as well, something the hunters did not care to explain. Their bad reputation had accumulated, and stories of them caused children to cry at night.
Morand wasn’t as ignorant as the commoners though, and he had a clear understanding of his opponents’ abilities. ‘Devil hunters are very powerful. They need to be high-ranked Professionals to seal devils in the first place, and some of them are even legendary…’ He quickly glanced at the many shadows hidden in the darkness, making the wise decision to reveal his identity.
“I am Bishop Morand of the Church of Protection! What are you lot trying to do?”
The Church of Protection?” The leader of the devil hunters sneered. His muffled voice and thick accent couldn’t cover up the ridicule in his tone. “How dare you ridicule our god?” Rage could be seen on Morand’s face. No bishop would lie down and take an attack on their god. “No, no. How would I dare ridicule a true god?” The devil hunter was dressed in the distinctive garb of the southern seas. He had yellow skin and thick lips, his brown hair styled with several small pigtails. “It’s just… We have the opportunity to punish those who attack the faithful, as well as imposters.” “Imposters?” Cold sweat beaded down Morand’s forehead, and he had an extremely bad premonition. “Follow the Lord’s orders, check for devils!” This diminutive leader did not give him the chance to do anything, shouting out all of a sudden as holy light flowed to reveal a few Detect Devil spells were already cast. Leylin was a Lord of Baator, so other than fundamental holy skills members of his church could also detect devils. The spell was something Leylin had invented himself, and over time it had shown itself to be a 100% accurate. All this was to say that devil hunters held authority when it came to checking for devils. And just as Morand hesitated for a moment, the situation fell out of his hand.
“Oh!” The milky white holy light around one of Morand’s subordinates suddenly shifted to a bright red, the face of the man changing a few moments after the spell was cast. A blood-curdling screech rang out as the man grew a horn, and a layer of hellfire surrounded him.

This paladin had turned into a devil in a moment’s time! Morand and the rest were flabbergasted at the sudden, fierce, change!

“You’re daring enough to shelter a devil, pretending to be paladins… What sort of blasphemy is this?” The leader spoke righteously, “Kill them all!”

“Justice! Justice!” the other devil hunters shouted, a terrifying wave of hellfire raging forward in attack.

“You…” How would the bishop not know that they’d fallen into a trap? The only thing he couldn’t understand was— why had the Giant Serpent Church that had made every effort to avoid clashing with them before changed so suddenly, becoming a savage, crazy beast?

All the doubt and astonishment ultimately condensed into one question. “HOW DARE YOU DO THIS?” Morand roared.

Unfortunately, nobody replied. Seeing his opponent remain obstinate, the leader of the hunters issued an order, “Transform!”

“Hehe…” Numerous high-ranked devil hunters suddenly smiled with malice as the tattoos on their bodies grew active. Parts of their bodies, normally hands and legs, started to demonise in the midst of terrifying hellfire. Bright red scales formed as sharp demonic nails grew out of their hands. Thin, needle-like chains coiled around their arms.

A devil hunter retained their human intellect and normal abilities when they transformed. On top of that, they obtained a devil’s physique, and similar magical ability.

The strength from this sinister change instantly drowned their opponents’ resistance. Even Bishop Morand threw out his trump
cards one by one, eventually burnt to ashes by the hellfire. The leader of the devil hunters left his group, walking towards the boy and butler who’d been shocked stupid. “I’m aware of your identities. Please follow me!”

Although he’d returned to his normal appearance, the frightening form from before had been etched into the boy’s mind. It would inevitably leave a strong impression on him. His butler was in better condition, able to maintain his courtesy. Sealing the admiration in his heart, he replied, “Devil hunters? Truly a formidable army. If our Lord had such guards, he wouldn’t have met his demise so easily…”

After sending the two of them off with respect, the look on the small guy’s face immediately changed.

“Are all the preparations done?”

“Leader!” Another monkey-like devil hunter walked to his side and whispered to him, “Everything is completed. The devil transformation was recorded, and we located the affected commoners and nobles.”

“Well done. Contact the central church post haste! Settle things before they can even react!” The small man touched his chin, a predatory gaze within his eyes…

The wit of these subordinates was inspiring, and they’d performed such deeds repeatedly. It was tragic that all of it had to be condensed into a few pages when they reported to the headquarters of the church in Debanks Island.

“Hmm?” Tiff raised his spectacles. Even someone like him, with legendary strength, seemed to have been eroded by the passage of time.

However, the truth was that this was all an act. His appearance had been changed on purpose, a kind old man as the pope more acceptable to the citizens.

As the pope of the Giant Serpent Church, he’d performed his work
very well so far. What was once the Sakartes Empire had slowly recovered over this long time, and was flourishing once more. In fact, the Faulen Empire was even more prosperous than Sakartes at its peak.

More land had been put to use as they acquired technology from the mainland, and the number of goods sold on the streets had grown in number as well. Most importantly crafts had been introduced to the natives, bringing them from the dark ages to the iron age. Tiff had a feeling of glory as he looked down from the mountain atop which the Giant Serpent Church stood to gaze at the capital.

The pope massaged the spot between his brows until his eyes felt better, starting to read the report from his subordinates.

“The issue in Faulen Island was dealt with pretty well. The Church of Protection suffered losses, even… The person in charge is called Tubanke? Pass down the order, have him transferred to headquarters.”

A transfer order stamped by the pope was sent out quickly, causing the surrounding clergymen to grow envious. The man would obviously be promoted. However, Tubanke had gotten this by fighting on the frontlines. They had nothing to say about it.

“The Poison Scorpion Church’s child has secretly set sail, on his way here alongside a high-ranked wizard… They’ll be here in ten days?” Flipping over to the next document, a rarely seen expression surfaced on Tiff’s face.

‘I need the Lord’s guidance.’ Tiff stood up and tidied himself up before heading to the rear of the church.

This place was forbidden grounds within the church, even guards few and far between. The lack of people gave it an atmosphere of seclusion. The original marble palace had been worn down by time, its lustre changing to one of archaic charm.

There was an enormous shrine behind the headquarters of the
Giant Serpent Church. A statue of the Feathered Serpent God Kukulkan lay within, built atop ninety nine marble pillars as it emanated a trace of sacred brilliance.

“Master… You are the stars in the sky, with the authority of massacres. All commoners crawl under the protection of your wings…” Tiff started praying.

The thread of faith connected itself to the statue, and the Feathered Serpent buzzed as a youth emerged from the golden radiance. Tiff lowered his body further; his master had arrived.

“Tiff!” Leylin was wearing a loose white robe, every inch of his body flawless as a result of his godfire. Golden light flashed in his eyes as he looked at Tiff.

“I learnt of the incident with the Poison Scorpion Church. You’ve done well!” The first thing Leylin did was approve of Tiff’s work. He continued with his decision, “When they get here, bring them to me. I’ll receive them personally.”

“Your wish is my command. May your divinity spread throughout the world!” Tiff replied in excitement. Leylin had always maintained a low profile, starkly in contrast to his attitude today. He naturally knew that his Lord had decided to change his actions, and that change would cause an enormous transformation in the prime material plane.

‘Is it time?’ Tiff suppressed the elation in his heart, withdrawing slowly.

‘Such an intelligent chap!’ The golden gleam in Leylin’s eyes grew even more dazzling as he looked at Tiff’s back. A hundred years had passed in the astral plane, and the World of Gods had experienced an even longer span of time. His preparations for ascension had finally been completed!

Leylin can’t help but to take a look at his own status.


‘My divine force has finally manifested…’ He seemed to be happy, ‘The island’s population has increased as well, and is sufficient to support a God of Massacres. Everything’s ready!’
Becoming a god was the lifelong goal of every being in the World of Gods, something they all longed for.

And now, Leylin was standing at the threshold to becoming a god! Ascension held even greater meaning for him than most; only a divine soul would allow him to open the crystal sphere from the inside, allowing his main body to enter the World of Gods!

To be blunt, the moment he successfully became a god, there would be little time left until the Final War resumed. This was why Leylin took godhood very seriously.

Besides, meeting the requirements did not mean one would successfully become a god. In the history of the World of Gods, there were plenty of examples of people falling during their ascension, or being ambushed by the enemy right after. He obviously did not want to be one of those poor gods.

‘Malar and Cyric will definitely sense my ascension, our roles clash… They wouldn’t let me off… This is something decided by natural circumstances, just like how there can only be one male in a pride of lions. This is an unchangeable fact…’ Leylin stroked his chin, looking grim.

‘Then there’s Mystra, Tyr, and Helm. They already plotted to kill me once. I’m afraid they won’t let me off; the moment my divine kingdom is prepped they’ll attack me immediately. My body will have grown divine, so I won’t be protected by the prime material
plane anymore…’
Leylin was currently relying on the fact that he was only a demigod. He’d holed himself up on Debanks Island, and the other gods could only glare at him without being able to do anything. With true gods unable to descend, their avatars and clones were basically a free meal for him. On top of that, Leylin was protected by his church and empire, rendering battle tactics on land and sea useless.
For this reason, he was able to do as he wished up to this point, rather than being pursued and killed. However, after becoming a god, everything would change. The prime material plane would reject his body and expel him to the outer world. When that happened, things would get ‘fun’.
Outside the prime material plane, Mystra and his other enemies would definitely be furious and ready to take revenge at any time. What was more terrifying was that they, in the outer world, no longer had restrictions that they would have had in the prime material plane, and could wield their powerful might as greater gods!
Greater gods were equivalent to peak rank 8 Magi. With a possibility of attack from their true forms, Leylin could already feel the fear rising in him. Without the time to establish his divine kingdom, it would be impossible to block these malicious beings. When the time came, he would be in danger.
Falling right after becoming a god! Lelin felt like he would become the greatest joke in the World of Gods if such a thing happened. ‘Also… I should worry about Baator…’ Leylin sighed.
He had successfully robbed Beelzebub’s authority and become the master of Dis, hiding his true identity. But who was Asmodeus? This sly devil had also made use of a series of schemes to obtain most of the power in hell, and he’d now placed his attentions on Leylin.
Leylin had never been interested in working with the devils. After
all, while they did trust each other to an extent, they wouldn’t hesitate to trick outsiders. He wouldn’t accept any offering of peace, instead gunning to become their master.

This was why Leylin had created the Devil Hunters, powerful Professionals that only the Giant Serpent Church could create. It was partly for empowering his subordinates, but also because he wished to crack down on devil worshippers in the prime material plane as he lay out a path for himself to walk.

Evidently, the devils that were loyal to Leylin could evade Devil Detection spells without paying any price. The rest, however, were not as lucky. The remaining Archdevils were growing increasingly dissatisfied with Leylin, and he could already guess that some of them were already talking to the gods for a chance to overthrow him.

At the same time, Asmodeus’ sly hand was reaching for Dis. He didn’t seem satisfied with using his daughter as a substitute for the Hag Countess to give him authority over Malbolge. Rather, he seemed greedy for more, wanting to unify the Nine Hells and become the true master of Baator! Who would be a better target than Leylin, who had appeared midway?

Leylin had no doubt about it. As long as there was an opportunity, Asmodeus would definitely put all of his resources into gobbling him up and taking control of Dis.

‘Hehe… Come at me with your schemes! I just hope you won’t break your teeth in the end…’ Leylin snickered inside.

It wasn’t as if he didn’t have any cards up his sleeve. Thultanthar was waiting silently in his semi-plane, the flying city seemingly impatient to drink the blood of the gods. A great arcanist with a flying city had been able to intimidate even the gods of ancient times.

At the same time, there was a Magus of laws waiting outside the crystal sphere, greedily eyeing the World of Gods. Those that were
preparing to attack Leylin would soon be shocked to find that the rabbit in their hands was actually an evil primordial dragon!
Putting this aside, Leylin took a look at the A.I. Chip’s records.
‘A.I. Chip! Show me the revised version of the grade 12 arcane spell, Karsus’ Avatar!’
[Beep! Karsus’ Avatar is being revised. Estimated time: 677h 23min 13s] the A.I. Chip intoned loyally.
This was a terrifying card in Leylin’s hands. It could let him dispose of Mystra in an instant, at the same time releasing numerous ancient Magi from the core of the Weave. With his experiment in the Shadow World, Leylin now knew the power of this arcane spell model.
Of course, the backlash was immense. However, with the A.I. Chip and his test data, it would be a breeze to fix the issue. Leylin was sure that regardless of what other tricks Distorted Shadow had planned, it would have to do with this arcane spell.
However, he had taken measures to deal with this and was amending the arcane spell model. This meant Distorted Shadow could only watch on helplessly.
‘So if I think about it, I do have quite a few cards…’ Leylin stroked his chin, ‘But… I still need a few people to lead the way!’ A pair of master and servant shivered somewhere in the southern seas. They assumed it was because of the sea winds, heading into the hold of their ship. Who knew what the future held.
At the thought of the child of a god, Leylin immediately recalled the true master of the Poison Scorpion Church, who was a demigod.
‘With how much of a moron Poison Scorpion is, it’s natural that he was disposed of. It would be strange if he wasn’t…’ Poison Scorpion had dealt with his Giant Serpent Church before. Rankings were very strict on the continent. Everyone had their own rank, and since Leylin was neither a god nor a high-ranked legend but a demigod, he naturally wouldn’t mix with beings of other statuses.
The only ones able to speak on equal terms with him were other false gods and demigods. Hence, it was extremely normal for beings like them to form secret alliances. In the face of suppression from the true gods, the demigods and false gods who lacked people to back them up had to learn to band together.

Leylin had obviously made friends with a few of them, making oaths of alliance. Even if it was useless, it would afford him a breather when he ascended and faced the pressure from the other gods.

There were many demigods who held the same train of thought as Leylin did, which was why diplomatic activities went rather smoothly. The Poison Scorpion, master of the Poison Scorpion Sect, was one of the demigods that Leylin had met. Unfortunately, the power of divinity and godfire seemed to be warping his rationality, and he was in a crazed state half the time everyday.

It had to be said that a demigod like this being able to support a church and only being eliminated now had exceeded Leylin’s expectations.

‘The law he comprehended was massacre as well. That’s the only thing that I want…’ Leylin stroked his chin. Poison Scorpion’s divinity was similar to his own, so he began to formulate a vague plan. It was for this reason that he had ordered his subordinates to make contact with him, and then invite the last blood descendant of the Poison Scorpion to the Debanks Island.

‘Just a Poison Scorpion isn’t enough… I need more… I need more targets!’ In that moment, the figures of various demigods flashed by Leylin’s eyes.

Becoming a god was no trivial matter, and new gods were far too eye-catching. Leylin’s methods were simple. He’d have his allies ascend alongside him, leaving them to absorb some of the damage. Of course, it would be even better if they were willing to ascend ahead of him, as that would mean he had more experience.
‘Before I officially become a god, I still need to see a demigod ascending…’ Leylin had always liked being prepared, and if another god could provide him with this experience, that would be for the best.
While he had already subdued Shar of the Shadow World and obtained much information about the gods from her, she was an old being after all. She understood little about the current situation in the World of Gods, and Leylin did not feel too confident.
‘A true god…’ A low sigh rang in the palace…

……

“Young master, we’re here!” An old butler was helping a youth down a boat in Debanks Island’s pier. Ten days had passed in the blink of an eye.
“Wow… Is this the native empire? I almost thought I’d returned to the huge port in the continent!” The youth jumped off the deck and gasped after seeing the port even larger and more luxurious than Port Venus.
“This is His Highness’ land. Please be careful of what you say!” The old butler reminded him cautiously.
The old butler and the youth were guarded by a group of ‘friendly and polite’ native soldiers after they entered the territories of Debanks Island. Since they were in a land that was not their own, they allowed this arrangement. After a few days of uneasy waiting, they managed to arrange a meeting with Leylin. On their path to the holy mountain, the old butler looked at the youth solemnly. “Do you remember what I told you, young master?”

The youth had stiffened up in the tense atmosphere, but he still managed to nod, “Mm.”

‘Sigh… This beautiful and fertile country… It’s a powerful base even for demigods. No wonder he can flourish for so long without fear of being destroyed by the mainland…’ The old butler gazed at the flourishing imperial capital and sighed in awe. Leylin truly had picked a great place. Not only was there a large population to provide faith for him, the mainland had little influence here.

However, thoughts were just thoughts in the end. Few were as bold as Leylin, aiming to take over the natives’ empire. With the defect in the natives’ souls, the gods avoided them like the plague. With all sorts of factors, Leylin somehow managed to get the best parts of everything. If not for the natives, Debanks Island would long since have been divided amongst the gods, and he wouldn’t have had any chances.

*Clang!* The heavy gates of the Giant Serpent Church opened
slowly. The devil hunters guarding the sides and the large number of priests and acolytes walking around added a certain weight to the atmosphere.

“Welcome!” Tiff was dressed in his regal attire, crown included. Standing on the steps, he looked like a kind and holy man. “The Pope shouldn’t bother with humble servants like us…” The butler pulled at the youth, who quickly realised his position and hastened to bow.

Tiff merely smiled in answer to the tiny mistake of the youth, “Please follow me. My master will see you personally…”

Hearing this news, the butler and youth obviously grew more nervous.

‘The Giant Serpent, the youngest legendary wizard in the world who conquered an empire with a few thousand people… Leylin Faulen, the legend of legends…’

The youth exchanged a glance with his butler, obviously uneasy. However, Tiff had already moved out, and the two couldn’t avoid this confrontation anymore. They could only follow behind in apprehension.

The three soon arrived at the palace behind the headquarters. A god in white robes was already waiting there, standing under his own statue. Golden light sparkled off his body, causing the large statue of the winged serpent to grow radiant as well. He seemed in harmony with the shrine, almost blending into one body.

After taking one look at this person, the butler was certain that this was the Leylin Faulen of the legends! This was the master of the Debanks Empire, as well as a demigod magician!

“Oh great being, please accept the worship of a humble mortal!” The butler bowed down and knelt, and the youth followed soon after.

“High-ranked magician, Daybreak Hand Schliff… your loyalty is worthy of praise…” Leylin did not speak loudly, but it still
reverberated throughout the shrine. The tone of the voice showed that it was unquestionable. The Giant Serpent Church had long since revealed all of this high-ranked wizard’s secrets. His true thoughts couldn’t be hidden in front of Leylin.

“Is this the Poison Scorpion’s son?” The god’s gaze moved past Schliff, focusing onto the youth.

“Ra... Raike greets His Highness...” the youth stuttered out. He could sense that Leylin’s imposing aura was even more powerful than that of his demigod father, who had once been the master of his church.

“Yes... Raike inherited the Master’s bloodline and glory, and will surely become a saint in the future!” At the mention of his faith, Schliff just had to speak, “Your Highness, please help us on account of the goodwill from our master in the past...”

In answer to this mortal’s humble request, Leylin did not comment. Rather, there was a look of pity in his eyes as he watched Raike.

“As the child of a god, do you know what your destiny is?”

“Destiny?” Raike’s eyes showed his confusion and bewilderment.

“As the descendant of our Master, he has no other choice!” Schliff answered loudly, obviously trying to hide things for a while longer.

“Heh!” Leylin merely shook his head and smiled, but did not reveal the truth.

True gods only needed faith to revive themselves, but things were wildly different for demigods. The master of the Poison Scorpion Church hadn’t accumulated any divine force, and now that he’d fallen even if he obtained enough faith in the future he lacked the most important thing for revival—a vessel.

The vessel needed to be powerful enough to take on the power of a god. Most importantly, this person had to have the same blood as the god. This Raike was evidently Poison Scorpion’s vessel, and someday in the future his father would break into his body and
revive within to appear in the world once more. It was not just demigods. In actuality, many true gods liked to use this method. Leylin had once even wondered whether Alustriel, the queen in the north, had been prepared for such plans by the Goddess of the Weave.

“There’s a contract between Poison Scorpion and I, to give each other all the help we can. Promises at our level cannot be broken.” Leylin answered in the affirmative.

“Many thanks, Your Highness!” Schliff bowed in excitement. Even he had not expected things to go so smoothly. However, after seeing Raike, Schliff hesitated before steeling the look in his eyes.

“Mighty master, this is a humble offering from us.” Meeting Schliff’s gaze, Raike gritted his teeth and pulled out the sparkling pendant from his neck, offering it up with both hands…

Once everyone left, Leylin focused on the necklace in his hands. ‘A divine weapon? And there even seems to be some force hidden inside…’ The A.I. Chip’s light flashed in Leylin’s eyes, and he nonchalantly threw the item into a semi-plane. As he was now, refining an origin force weapon, a divine weapon was nothing much. However, it wasn’t bad as a collectible.

“Raike… I sense a dense aura of deity blood…” Leylin looked in the direction that Raike had left, eyes seeming to reflect scenes of what would happen after he left.

……

Within the carriage, Raike seemed to have made up his mind before he asked Schliff, “Just now… what His Highness mentioned…”

“You don’t need to know about that, young master!” Schliff immediately put on a cold expression, his powerful aura preventing Raike from speaking further.

“All you need to know is that you were born for the sake of our
master. Everything that is yours has to be sacrificed in order for the revival of the master…” Fervour glinted in Schliff’s eyes, the terrifying zeal causing Raike to shift his gaze down.

……

Demigod as he was, it was easy for Leylin to peek on a high-ranked wizard without them even noticing. Many secrets revealed themselves before him. Unfortunately, he felt no pity towards Raike, and he had no desire to help him. “His blood is concentrated, so the chances of revival are greater… But that isn’t enough…” His divine sight seemed to transcend the seas, locking onto the vast mainland.

……

In the south of the mainland, within a dangerous marsh full of lush bushes.
A devil hunter with the crest of the Giant Serpent Church cautiously maneuvered past numerous assassins’ territories as well as the tribes of barbarians and kobolds, arriving at the depths of the marshes.
This was an ultimate region of death. It was rumoured that there was a nine-headed monster dwelling here, and the poisonous fog it emitted could kill any living being. Even divine spells were useless in front of it.
However, few on the mainland knew that a tribe similar to humans lived deep inside.
*Ooooo—* Numerous humanoids gathered with the sound of a large cow bugle. These beings had a distinct physical appearance, looking like werejackals or kobols.
Some kind of shaman walked up to an altar. “Ukekelu, our Lord… We pray to you devoutly, and offer a blood sacrifice!” A few sacrifices had their clothes stripped from them as the old man prayed, trembling as they were delivered to the platform. His eyes bloodshot, he picked up an obsidian dagger and kissed it once in devotion before standing in front of the slaves. It looked like he was watching some lambs to be slaughtered.

The shaman dismembered the sacrifices easily, a technique passed down through centuries allowing him to keep them alive until he made the final cut. Only such a thing would please Ukekelu enough to grant them his favour.

Demigods, devils, and demons who were false gods were different from true gods. They could do anything for the sake of faith and power, seeking out new followers with greed.

Most of the time, Leylin believed that it was because there were people like these who were so shortsighted that the reputation of demigods was tarnished so badly. It made it such that his Giant Serpent Church could not operate well on the continent.

However, he was merely blabbering on. Without blood sacrifices, demigods would long since have died out with the bit of faith they obtained from their followers. Only Leylin, who took control over the Debanks Island and had nobody vying for faith with him could treat his followers so generously and give them more benefits. In the long run, this was the best method, but it was difficult for everyone to do this considering the circumstances.

As the shaman proceeded with his ceremony, the other worshippers quickly knelt in prayer. Blood poured everywhere, as if nurturing some horrifying force.
A large number of guards had been moved to watch over the ceremony. The lax guard allowed the devil hunter to sneak inside easily. When he saw the sacrifices on the altar, a disturbed look appeared in his eyes. ‘Blood sacrifice? ‘Poor followers. Only our Lord truly cherishes us, even if we worshippers make mistakes he kindly gives us his guidance…’ A sense of superiority surfaced in the hunter’s mind as he compared himself to these people. Comparing this sacrifice with the methods of the Giant Serpent Church, his devotion actually grew a bit. His faith stat would’ve grown by a few points if such a thing existed.

*Wooooo—* The sacrificial ceremony reached its peak at that moment, the heart of the altar pooling with blood. An indistinct silhouette walked out of the boiling blood, with a human head but the body of a lion.

“Ukekelu! The mighty Ukekelu has descended!” The old shaman bowed in agitation as he started chanting prayers, followed by the other worshippers.

“…” Ukekelu lowered his head, looking at the shaman as he spoke in an unknown language. It caused the shaman’s expression to change immediately.

“The Lord says there is a spy here. Guards!” The guards that looked like ravenous wolves immediately howled out.

‘Not good, I’ve been found!’ The devil hunter squatting in the grove felt his heart freeze, and he prepared to break out and escape.
“Ugh!” However, bright light burst forth from the giant snake emblem on his body at this moment. He soon lost consciousness, his body taken over by a great will.

“Lord of Debanks Island, the Giant Serpent sitting upon the throne… Welcome, Your Majesty Leylin!” The human-headed lion hovered in the air, releasing a few howls. The old shaman retreated alongside his guards, leaving the place to the two.

“Mm. Long time no see, Your Highness Ukekelu.” Leylin found it sluggish to move around in this body, like a huge elephant who’d been squeezed into human armour. However, that didn’t matter much. His conscient was only borrowing this body, so even if it perished he’d only lose a vessel and some divine force. It wouldn’t be much.

The demigod in front of him was a part of Leylin’s alliance. Legendaries had their own circle in the prime material plane, and the same naturally held true for demigods.

Unfortunately, numerous demigods were placed in an awkward position. Not only did they have lack gods willing to protect and promote them, the divinity within their bodies clashed with specific other gods that caused delays in their ascension. They’d formed cliques of their own to help each other for this very reason.

Poison Scorpion was one such god, and so was Ukekelu.

“If you’ve come to the marshes yourself you must have important matters to discuss…” Ukekelu said as he sharpened his claws. He was quite envious of Leylin’s following and his distance from the mainland. Even more importantly, this person had begun preparing for ascension before even becoming a legendary; his schemes were shocking.

“Have you heard about Poison Scorpion?” Leylin directly revealed the purpose of his trip.

“The Church of Protection… Those lunatics!” Ukekelu’s face grew unsightly at the mention of the topic. Helm’s church was clearly the
nemesis of all false gods; just its mention would be such a powerful deterrent.

“Poison Scorpion has already fallen. Either of us could be the next target…” Leylin’s soft words caused Ukekelu’s face to darken. Between the two of them, he was both an easier target and a closer one.

Looking at the other party becoming restless, Leylin revealed a confident smile. “We have to come up with countermeasures.”

“It’ll be easier to have Helm fall than have him abandon his duty, and both are impossible.” Ukekelu was clearly aware of his own position.

“Mm, but he’s only bound to slay false gods. What about true gods with their own divine kingdoms?” Leylin revealed the primary purpose of his trip.

“True god? You plan to ascend?” Earth-shattering shock rippled out from Ukekelu’s body of blood.

“Of course, there’s no demigod who doesn’t want to.” Leylin didn’t cover his intentions up in the slightest. Ascending was indeed the best solution against Helm’s Church.

“Pity… I haven’t accumulated enough faith to ascend. If I try now I’ll only face the backlash of the World Origin Force, falling immediately.” Ukekelu was indeed tempted, but he ultimately shook his head.

“Of course, if Your Majesty Leylin has such intentions, I would definitely fully support you!” On the other hand, Leylin didn’t trust such verbal promises.

“Your Highness is the oldest of us demigods, I believe there shouldn’t be a huge deficit for you… Would this be enough to bridge the gap?” Leylin seemed to see in Ukekelu a fish that wouldn’t bite without bait. He smiled in secret as he revealed a diamond emitting golden light, having it float towards the other.

“This… Divine force suiting my role, and experiences of
ascension… Why do you have this, and why are you willing to give it to me?!” Ukekelu was obviously frightened by Leylin’s present. “Your Highness doesn’t have to worry much about the source. However, I’m sure your chances of ascension will increase significantly with this?” Leylin’s secretive smile caused Ukekelu to think that a true god was supporting him. After all, a demigod couldn’t get a hold of such items. However, this was enough for a demigod. As expected, Leylin saw greed and ambition rising within Ukekelu’s gaze. No demigod would be able to reject such temptation, even if they knew a trap lay in wait.

Ukekelu had been a demigod for a long time. If he didn’t advance soon, he would share the fate of Poison Scorpion. The Church of Protection wouldn’t ever let him off as long as he was a demigod.

Numerous expressions flashed past that face of blood, but ultimately Ukekelu still absorbed the diamond into his body, “I shall accept Your Majesty’s presents. What price do you require for them?” “A simple agreement, and no matter which of us manages the last laugh we have to assist the other demigods…” Leylin faintly smiled.

“I’m going to the Sea of Death and the Dark Grasslands after this. They’ve been demigods too long as well…” “You want us to advance together to reduce the attention?” Ukekelu wasn’t stupid, and he managed to catch Leylin’s intentions quickly. It was of benefit to him as well, so he naturally didn’t object. “That’s right… We can also aid Poison Scorpion before that… After all, he’s one of us.” Unknowingly, Ukekelu suddenly felt an extreme chill in his heart after seeing Leylin’s smile.

……
Within a city on the mainland, inside the huge Church of Tyr. “Paladin Rafiniya!” An old warrior-priest walked into the room, unswerving determination on his face. This room was largely unfurnished except for necessary supplies, with no extravagant furniture. The owner of the place was frugal. “Cardinal!” Although Rafiniya looked the same as before, her body had grown more well-rounded, and her face was filled with more mature charm. Even though she still looked young, she knew everything had changed. Years of experience had moulded the feeble-minded knight into a paladin of justice. She was now the legendary Holy Paladin, the Knight of Light! Her position had grown constantly inside Tyr’s church, and she’d even amassed numerous followers. “The Lord has a mission for you!” The old cardinal warrior passed a scroll to Rafaelia. “The target is the Poison Scorpion Church. They intend to use their descendant to revive their fallen demigod. When he revives, the Poison Scorpion Lord will definitely bring suffering to the masses. Our Lord has decided to take action for the sake of justice!” Looking at the sacrifices and consumption of blood as detailed in the documents, Rafiniya felt like she couldn’t repress the anger in her chest anymore. “To fight for justice!” She suddenly drew out her long sword and solemnly agreed. “Very well! Another thing…” “During this operation. Other forces like the Giant Serpent Church might be there to lend assistance, you’ll have to be careful…” When the cardinal said this, it seemed difficult for him to speak.
iant Serpent Church?” Rafiniya’s expression changed, as sealed memories came to light.

“Leylin, huh…” The scenes in her mind seemed fresh, and it caused Rafiniya to stagger a few steps. The youngest legendary wizard appeared in her mind once more in all his handsomeness, a memory of the shadow that had been cast on her entire life.

‘We’ll meet again…’ Rafiniya thought to herself. The last time she’d met Leylin, she invited him to the north to kill Malar. However, they’d separated on the issue of the sharing of loot, and she’d heard that he beat back several churches to emerge triumphant.

Even more shocking news followed afterwards— Leylin Faulen had taken an army of five thousand men to the natives’ empire, taking the place over completely. He’d advanced into a demigod, and built the Giant Serpent Church!

The news had made it clear that her former leader had already chosen a different path, and walked further down it than she had hers. Rafiniya gritted her teeth.

She was extremely aware that her current status as a legendary paladin was due to Tyr’s blessings. But why would Tyr give her his attention in a church filled with paladins? She hadn’t wanted to think of the reasoning and avoided the issue, but she couldn’t back down anymore.

“I must believe in justice, and fight for what’s right!” Rafiniya said
out loudly, as if reaffirming her thoughts. “Very well. Our Lord is watching you!” Having received the reply he wanted, the cardinal left. However, Rafiniya clenched her fists tightly. ‘Demigods, blood sacrifices, and filthy transactions. Leylin… If you’re there, I won’t hesitate to pull you out and punish you in the name of justice!’

……

With Helm’s support, the Church of Justice travelled extremely fast. It had only taken them three days to confirm the location of the Poison Scorpion Church. The two lawful churches gathered their warriors outside a small city. “This is Cardinal Romese, of the Church of Protection. He’ll be in charge of this operation, we’re to assist him!” A priest on Rafiniya’s side pointed out.

Romese’s eyes brightened after he took a look at Rafiniya. “Lady Rafiniya, the star of hope for the commoners! Please accept our greatest respect for your love and protection.” Rafiniya was an absolute beauty, and she possessed an aura of purity and holiness as a paladin. “Your participation in this mission gives us more confidence.” Cardinal Romese expressed his heartfelt welcome to Rafiniya’s participation. This was extremely normal, as no one would reject the help of a legendary.

“Let’s skip the small talk. I will definitely comply with orders. I hope you don’t bear any grudges, eliminating evil is the foremost priority.” Rafiniya spoke icily and meticulously. However, this attitude caused Romese to appreciate her even more. He waved his hand, and a priest moved forward to present her with a map written on parchment. “Our intelligence says the Poison Scorpion Church is performing a
blood sacrifice, using the bloodline and strength of a deity to revive their false god… The other false gods are supporting them, including the Lion-headed Golem, the Lord of Murky Darkness, and the Giant Serpent of the southern seas…”
Romese spoke briefly of the current situation, causing the expressions of those listening to turn solemn. Demigods were extremely powerful beings that had the blood of many on their hands. Many of their order had fallen to these opponents. It was a pretty simple affair. Any demigod that was easy to deal with had already been executed by the lawful churches. If they could survive for so long, these false gods weren’t ordinary, possessing great strength and cunning.
“This is the place they chose for the sacrifice. The Tree Castle.” The cardinal pointed to a red circle on the map, the wording extremely clear.
“The baron in the Tree Castle has been brainwashed by the Poison Scorpion Church, so the troops and civilians there are already under their control. We’ve obtained the decree of the royal family — All heretics in the area are to be executed immediately!”
No one objected to Romese’s words. Cultists weren’t human to those on the holy mission, only a group of creatures that had lost their sanity. They had to be purged!
“The garrison troops and the paladins will cooperate with us. Our target this time is the blood descendant of that false god, and the upper echelons of the Poison Scorpion Church.” Romese distributed portraits of Raike and Schliff. The drawing was extremely lifelike, and nobody would make a mistake.
“This is the descendant of the false god, the crux of their blood sacrifice. His name is Raike, and he’s our primary target.
“This wizard is known as Schliff, and he’s one of the church’s core bishops. He’s a high-ranked wizard, not legendary in any domain. He excels at instant teleportation and portals…”
“Our mission is simple. If there aren’t any false gods lending a hand, we can take care of it on our own,” Rafiniya concluded after Romese’s brief. However, they knew that demigods were possibly here, so nobody dared to let down their guard.

“Does everyone understand now? Set off immediately!” Romese got on his warhorse, and the tall, sturdy horse neighed loudly.

*Thud! Thud!* The warhorses bristled with energy as this small group of elites from the churches set off in the direction of the Tree Castle.

……

The Tree Castle had turned into another wasteland. Black mist covered the area like a creature’s maw, gobbling up the entire region.

A large eye floated in mid-air. Romese seemed to obtain some information from his god, and he said with certainty, “This is the might of a false god… Their blood sacrifice is at its critical point.”

“May the Lord lead our way!” The other clerics prayed fervently, as a weak white glow appeared on their bodies. The black mist was soon dispelled, revealing a concealed path.

“Let’s go!” Romese took the lead, with Rafiniya following closely behind. The scenes she saw had caused her to tighten her grip on the reins. The crops in the area had already withered, and the farms were left empty and in a mess. It was as if the farmers were removed forcibly from the area.

“The castle is there!” Romese turned around and headed towards another direction.

The faint traces of blood told of the merciless situation that had unfolded in the area. Rafiniya gritted her teeth and made an oath, “Vile gods, I’ll never let you go!”

Castles often represented a long history, providing absolute
protection to the inheritance that nobles were so proud of. However, the baron of the Tree Castle now stood at the corners of a wall, and his gaze was extremely strange yet fervent. The pride and reservedness that a noble was supposed to have, and most importantly the intelligence, had disappeared from his body.

‘Twenty thousand civilians, and aristocrats and nobles as well. I hope the Lord is satisfied with my offerings!’ The look of zealotry on the baron’s face was reserved for only the most pious of believers.

“The Poison Scorpion Lord will definitely feel your sincerity.” Schliff was carrying a large tome of the church, dressed up in papal attire inclusive of a crown.

“Enemy troops will be here soon. I hope you’ll be able to fight to the very end, all the troops of the church are yours to command.” Schliff handed a golden sceptre with scorpion carvings on it to the baron.

“All for our Lord!” The baron swore as he received the sceptre in a stately manner.

“Very good!” Schliff did not hesitate to leave the castle walls. Why would he fear entrusting this task to such a zealous apostle?

Many of the Poison Scorpion Church apostles remained within the castle. There were many bodies of young ladies and masters of nobility that were strewn across the floor.

The reception hall of the castle had already experienced a huge change. Many items of the core infrastructure had been removed, replaced with a towering altar stacked with dead bodies and flowing with blood.

At the top of the altar was a throne made of white bones that also resembled a cage, locking a youth within it.

Seeing Schliff, the youth eyes brightened, “Schliff, save me! I don’t wish to die!”

“Nonsense!” The malevolence in Schliff’s voice as he berated the
boy called Raike to grow breathless, “You’re the seed of the Lord. The purpose of your existence is to be sacrificed for his sake!” Schliff’s icy speech broke every delusion the boy had had. “But… But I…” Raike’s face turned pale immediately.

“There’s no ‘buts’… The lord will definitely be reborn from your flesh. That will be great glory for you!” Schliff walked up to the pedestal which had many waiting apostles.

“Brothers and sisters. Our Lord hasn’t fallen, only left temporarily.” Schliff opened his arms and decreed, “Now, as long as we chant the name of our Lord piously, he will gather enough energy to change the world and appear before us, leading us into bouts of victories ahead!”

“Lord, O’ Lord! You are everything, my flesh, my blood, my soul…” The apostles here were the craziest of the lot. They began to chant immediately, and even though there weren’t many of them the power of their faith had already converged onto the altar.
Gods could not die. Even if they fell, as long as their worshippers chanted their truenames day and night they would one day rise up from the astral plane, returning to their former glory.

Now, under the fervent chanting of the Poison Scorpion Church, the altar seemed to light up with a strange flame. Flesh and blood began to fuse together, revealing faces warped with pain.

“Almighty Lord, the God of Scorpions—Chester Potter!”

“Chester Potter!” “Chester Potter!” The worshippers recited the name again and again, soon joined by the warped faces on the altar. Some mysterious force seemed to attract a conscience here, having it descend upon the place.

“O’ lord… Arise from your slumber!” Schliff’s hands and legs began to tremble with excitement…

“The false god’s ceremony has already started! Stop them!” The elites of the two churches had already reached the castle under Romese’s lead, a large number of soldiers following behind them.

“A fallen demigod has no need to revive!” Romese unsheathed an icy blue sword at his waist, and an icy gale began to stir. “All high-ranked Professionals follow me, the rest of you focus on the attack on the castle!”

No matter how tall and sturdy it was, a castle not protected by high-grade spells was but a joke to powerful Professionals. Romese wrapped his body with qi as the fight began, leaping upwards in a
moment. He covered a dozen metres in a single jump, landing on the castle walls with a thud.
“Kill him!” An exasperated voice sounded out, and many warriors with black armour began to surround him.
“Know your place!” Romese harrumphed, and snow began to dance around his body. An icy gale instantly turned the apostles of the demigod into frozen statues, and they crashed down to the ground.
“Are you the baron of this castle?” Romese leapt again, flying past all obstacles to arrive before a man dressed in noble clothing. There was a sceptre in his hand, imprinted with a scorpion.
“You vile watchdog!” Flames seemed to spew forth from the baron’s eyes as he rushed forward with the sceptre.
“No traces of psychic spells or intelligence reduction…” Romese shook his head, “You are a true sinner, the apostle of a false god. Face your judgement!”
Blue light flashed, and the sword pierced through the baron’s chest. The man moaned painfully, looking at his chest in disbelief.
“Hng! You think the identity of a noble is your amulet? How naive,” Romese said indifferently. However, as he looked towards the centre of the castle where the hall was, his brows furrowed. A terrifying evil spirit had converged in that area, forming a powerful whirlpool.
“Chester Potter! Chester Potter!” “You are the Lord of Slaughter. In your left hand, you wield the Hammer of Annihilation, and in your right the Book of Judgment. Any enemies will turn into a quagmire of flesh and blood before your presence. You are the home for our souls, I am willing to…”
The power of worship of the apostles and faces combined formed a crimson glow that converged atop the altar, landing on the throne of bones. The crimson energy engulfed Raike, entering him through his skin pores as the boy howled without end.
Raike’s aura continually grew stronger and stronger, until eventually the energy beneath his skin began to surge and contort his body. It was like something was about to burst through his skin from the inside.
And still the boy’s body seemed like a bottomless pit, absorbing all the energy that came. The conscient couldn’t enter the body.
“There aren’t enough apostles,” Schliff muttered as he looked towards the castle walls, “Even with the sacrificial formation and twenty thousand souls we cannot revive our Lord…
“Have they been breached already? They probably have some legendaries helping them!” Time had grown short.
“It seems like there’s no choice but to use this…” Schliff took out a golden crystal, shaped like a rhomboid. It was a gift from the Giant Serpent Church, but he didn’t want to use it unless all else failed. That Giant Serpent was not a simple person. There was definitely something concealed within everything he’d given them. However, the current circumstances left Schliff with no other choice. “Lord! Please guide me and show the way!” He prayed for one last time, and his eyes filled with resolve. He then threw the crystal onto the floor.
*Bang!* The altar had a violent reaction to the golden crystal. A terrifying amount of power of faith and divine force was released, causing the whirlpool to spin a dozen times— no, a hundred times faster!
The crimson ball atop the altar suddenly blazed, melting off all the flesh and blood in the area to form layers of rippling energy.
“Argh!” Raike’s screams rose a few octaves within the cage, and his body began to bloat.
“Lord Chester Potter! Revive now!” Schliff roared in malevolence.
*Rumble!* The ground trembled, and the altar turned into a huge furnace as all the energy began to enter the throne of bones.
*Bang!* The cage above the white bones burst open to reveal
Raike’s figure. His body had grown a few times over, crimson energy filling every ounce of it. It suddenly seemed to light up on fire, as if something within had destroyed all of him.

“My Lord!” Schliff was happy beyond tears. During the explosion, he had sensed an extremely familiar conscient overcome the obstacles of the astral plane to descend into the hall.

The crimson light ripped Raike’s body apart, and a middle-aged man walked out from within.

“My divine name is Chester Potter. I am the Lord of Scorpions, the Ruler of Slaughter!” Chester Potter waved his hands, and a surge of black gas formed robes that covered him. Blood red eyes opened up, and he roared towards the world, “HELM! I’m back, and I won’t fail this time!”

Romese and Rafiniya had just arrived to witness this scene.

“Being reborn from his own blood descendant and using the descendant’s life as a vessel, these false gods are so evil!” Rafiniya was extremely furious. She pulled out her sword, and holy brilliance filled the sky.

“I will purify you!” The light of the sword radiated out, carrying a shrill roar as it swung towards Chester Potter.

“A legendary paladin? You belong to Tyr?” Fear streaked past Chester Potter’s eyes, but more madness overcame it. He pointed his right hand forward, and a terrifying explosion occurred as it collided with the holy sword. Shockwaves rippled into the surroundings.

Meteor Strike!

“Anyone who opposes me must die!” Chester Potter issued his decree as light from a summoning spell glowed from his body.

Rank 9 Spell—Extradimensional Summon!

*Chirp! Chirp! Chirp!* Many scorpion-shaped monsters moved out of a portal, their sheer number causing Rafiniya and Romese to change their expressions.
Romese moved between a variety of expressions, but he finally gritted his teeth and made a decision, “Let’s retreat first!” Rafiniya’s lips moved, but she did not voice an objection. They were two legendaries pit against a demigod. They weren’t even on the same level.
Since the mission had failed, then protecting themselves would be the priority.
“Hurry and leave! I’ll bear all responsibility!” Romese’s blue sword released an icy power, forming walls of ice that blocked the advance of the scorpions. He roared at the scorpions behind his back.
Very soon, Rafiniya and the rest of the troops retreated to outside the castle walls. From this position, they could clearly see Chester Potter at the centre of the altar. Ominous crimson clouds circulated above him as the clouds seemed to form a funnel atop his head. The demigod gathered the flowing energy, his terrifying aura forming a malicious scorpion.
“All of you… Don’t think about leaving!” The malicious-looking scorpion chased after them, and the other summoned scorpions roared as they surged forth as well.
“My worshippers, do not panic, and do not be lost…” A gentle voice sounded out just then, carrying a mysterious soothing effect. “It’s our Lord! Our Lord has descended!” Romese knelt in a certain direction, and Rafiniya bowed with respect as well. A strange rune in the form of an eye formed in mid-air, the void being ripped open as the avatar of a god walked out.
This avatar belonged to Helm, and it was the strongest power a god could muster in the prime material plane. With the ritual successful and Chester Potter revived, the God of Protection had descended to take care of the situation himself.
He first looked at the crimson clouds and the strange scorpion, and his expression turned solemn.
“A divine being obscured our prophecy, causing us to choose the wrong time. This was why Chester Potter could resurrect successfully.” Helm’s words sent shock through the hearts of the lawful.

“Obscured? Our divination?” Romese muttered, and his heart turned frigid.

His experience told him how scary such an opponent could be. Not only was he hidden in the darkness, he was a poisonous snake waiting for an opportunity to deal deadly damage.
“Helm… HELM!” A humanoid voice sounded from the giant scorpion, but Helm’s avatar looked at the ominous clouds instead. His face turned darker the longer he looked.
Rafiniya felt a surge of might descending suddenly, causing her knees to buckle as she almost fell to the ground.
*Rumble! Rumble!* Silver lightning streaked between the ominous cloud, snaking around ceaselessly.
“This… It’s the descent of origin force… Someone’s gathering divinity to ascend,” Romese muttered, looking at the sky above the castle.
The giant scorpion roared, as vengeful spirits floated from up from its body.
“It’s him! Is he preparing to transcend now?” Rafiniya’s voice was hoarse.
“What’s happening?” It wasn’t just the opponents that were flabbergasted. Schliff’s mouth gaped wide open, and his eyes almost popped out in disbelief.
This was but a resurrection ceremony. Why was more divinity gathering now? How was an ascension attempt occurring right now? This wasn’t right!
Schliff roared in his heart, but in the next instant he recalled something and a murky shadow was cast over his figure. ‘It’s that golden crystal! There was something else within it!’
“Has it begun?” The consciences of several false gods had gathered an unknown distance away from the Tree Castle. A golden aura was shining on Leylin’s body. He smirked as he looked at the waves of origin force, “Chester Potter. You walked out of flesh and blood, and have the rights to ascend. However, you’ve slain many civilians and their vengeful spirits are now chasing you. This is your sin!”

*Boom!* Right after Leylin spoke, many vengeful spirits appeared from the void. Their clothing made them seem like commoners from the Tree Castle. Their faces were now wailing in agony, their blood-covered hands pulling down Chester’s body.

“Our Lord! We will be with the Lord!” A faint, hair-raising hymn sounded from the void, growing louder as time went on. The vengeful spirits seemed to have crawled out of the underworld, wanting to pull Chester down with them.

“A demigod cannot withstand such sin,” Leylin was extremely well versed in this area, “If Chester Potter does not want to fall again, he can only advance to become a true god, and use his divine kingdom to bear the hatred and send them away for good.”

Truth be told, this was all within Leylin’s plan. However, Chester still had himself to blame. If he hadn’t wanted to perform such a large blood sacrifice to revive himself, Leylin would’ve been unable to make use of this opportunity to push him down. As it was right now, Leylin was merely lighting a pile of firewood on fire.

‘His divinity is in slaughters… This origin force will likely attract similar gods like Malar and Cyric who specialise in massacres… Chester Potter, I hope you can last a little while longer…’ Leylin thought apathetically.
There were some other things in the crystal Leylin had given Schliff, including some of his own comprehension of the law of massacres and a large amount of divine force in the domain. It would be enough for the demigod to ascend, egging him into taking that final step.

“Your Excellency Leylin… Your schemes can even cause the devils of Baator to tremble in fear. It seems like we’re lacking when compared to you…” Ukekelu said, and a puddle of black mud at his left shone brilliantly. All the demigods here were evidently fearful.

“This is something we decided on together,” Leylin said. He discovered the fear and isolation, but didn’t worry too much since he’d been open about this from the start. If these demigods wanted to ascend, they could only cooperate with him and bite down on the bait.

“I’ve already tested what I gave you multiple times. Are there any problems?” Leylin’s rebuke caused the demigods to turn silent. Very soon, their attention shifted to the Tree Castle once again. Chester’s ascension would give them great benefits. Not only could they use this as a learning experience, they could also see the reactions of the true gods.

As for the pitiful Poison Scorpion Church, they just abandoned it. Without Leylin and the other demigods, this church was destined to be doomed if it could not escape the attention of the true gods. In fact, Chester Potter’s resurrection was the last chance that the demigods were willing to give him. In exchange for this chance, test being used as a guinea pig to test the response of the true gods was a reasonable bargain, was it not?

*Crash! Boom!* Pale green lightning struck the horde of summoned scorpions, wiping them out. Chester Potter’s scorpion phantom flickered under the pressure of the origin force, revealing his original black-robed form.
“Argh… I am the Lord of Scorpions! I control the law of slaughter, and I WILL become a true god!” Chester Potter waved his arms, and a dark gold flame blazed from his body to fuse with his comprehension of laws. This was his divine spark as a demigod, the quintessence of his form.

Threads of the law of slaughter converged on the divine spark, runes spinning around it in a sphere as they nurtured it. Chester had given his everything into ascension.

“Our Lord Chester Potter… You are a star in the skies, wielding the law of slaughter. The fear of humans shall become your strength…”

“Our Lord Chester Potter… You will sit on the throne of your divine kingdom, where our souls will nest…”

“Our Lord Chester Potter… I am willing to give up everything I have, and carry out my mission on this earth. I earnestly pray for your glory amongst the gods, and pray that you last forever!”

Schliff prayed fervently, and with utmost sincerity. The other worshippers followed his lead.

The high-ranked wizard knew quite clearly that the Poison Scorpion Lord could not overpower the remaining demigods, and had been caught up in their conspiracy. He was left without any choice but to transcend.

His other worshippers had also realised this point. Right now, the only chance they had to live was to pray and aid Chester Potter in his transcendence. The worshippers of this false god were thus literally praying for their lives.

A surge of faith converged around Chester Potter, absorbed by his divine spark and nurtured into power in his domain.

Chester’s personal comprehension of the law of slaughter wasn’t great, and he lacked enough worshippers to ascend on his own. Even amongst demigods he wasn’t the strongest.

However, none of that mattered with Leylin here. Chester’s law of
slaughter that had piqued Leylin’s interest was quite close to his own law of massacre. Converting between the two had been extremely easy. With Leylin’s ‘aid’ from the dark, giving Chester some of his own comprehension of massacres, Chester had immediately met this requirement. He’d tried to smart, wanting to avoid Leylin’s comprehension and the enmity of the massacre gods that it entailed, but his efforts didn’t pay off. With the power of the lightning and origin force, and the prayers within, this event was made known to the entirety of the prime material plane. Any existence that had crossed into the legendary realm fixed their gazes upon the area. They could see that a demigod was beginning to break through and become a true god. The sacrificial runes there told everyone of his identity. The Poison Scorpion’s truename was Chester Potter. No matter what the mortals had named him, once his ascension succeeded, this name would forever be attached to him. He would even be able to sense some of what was said whenever his name was mentioned. His worshippers would also gain strength from his truename. By just whispering and chanting his name, they would be able to connect to their god. Chester had seemed to choose slaughter as his divine domain. The sacrificial runes floating around him read ‘the fear of mortals will become your strength,’ a clear indication that he was of the evil alignment. Just this fact was enough for all good gods to oppose him. *Roar!* Right at that moment, a portal opened in mid air. A giant golden ape came tumbling out, straightening to stand up in the void. Its blood red eyes were locked onto the demigod in the lightning, as if looking at prey. The God of Hunt— Malar! ‘As expected… Anyone who tries to ascend into a divine position
related to massacres will face the hostility of the gods who wield it.’ Leylin shook his head, but doubt and confusion filled his mind. ‘What about Cyric? He’s the God of Murder, and he’s even more closely attuned to slaughter…’

……

At this moment, within the headquarters of the Church of Murder. “Blasphemy! That false god is committing blasphemy against our Lord!” The pope roared at the surrounding slaves and clerics that knelt in a circle before him. “Send out the orders: all legendaries are to cease their missions right now and move to attack the Poison Scorpion Church. Behead them on sight, I want to see the heads of every one of their priests before me!” The pope’s face was filled with malevolence as he issued his order…

Once everyone left, the pope knelt before Cyric’s statue, his quiet prayers tinged with helplessness. Only he knew that this powerful god, the God of Murder, had gone insane. He’d even issued orders for internal conflict, and the upper hierarchy of the Church of Murder had already fallen into disarray.
There were many rumours surrounding Cyric, but the most popular one was that he was originally a mortal like them. He stumbled upon the inheritance of a fallen god by chance, soaring to godhood. It caused many mortals to worship him fervently. However, many of those worshippers wanted the inheritance for themselves. If the chance befell them, they would gladly steal his luck. Since Cyric was a mere mortal before he ascended, the huge leap of power, alongside his divinity and the power of his domain, had side effects. He grew selfish, prejudiced, and slightly crazy. Exactly because of this, Cyric would definitely have reacted to a demigod ascending into his domain in the past. However, now he’d gone completely insane.

The pope looked at the statue that was wrapped up in a dark red energy, and the worry on his face grew heavier. It took a while for him to finally make up his mind, “Merrick!”

“The Lord is in a state of confusion, I think it’s due to the influence from the Book of Cyric.” The bishop’s voice was extremely raspy and hoarse. He had also sealed the church before speaking. Merrick kneeled the moment he heard this news, cold sweat enveloping his body. He thought the pope was going to silence him. After all, to blaspheme a god was utter disrespect and would be punished!
However, luck was on Merrick’s side today. The pope had not
planned to kill him, and continued talking on his own, “Our Lord
might have read the Book of Cyric recently, which is why he isn’t
responding to our prayers. Holy decrees haven’t been issued either…”
Merrick nodded his head in agreement, he’d actually been
suspecting as much for a while. The Book of Cyric was a divine
weapon that Cyric had created himself, containing the power to
confuse even gods themselves. Any being that set their eyes on the
Book of Cyric would believe the lies within— that Cyric was the
one and only true god in the world!
The late God of Thieves was the former owner of this book. He’d
succumbed to it and perished pitifully, allowing Cyric to steal most
of his divinity and divine force. However, the power of the lies in
the book was so great that even Cyric himself had fallen into a daze
after reading it.
All this was just an assumption, but at the same time it was quite
logical— assuming there was no information that he had not been
privy to. The pope now thought he understood the truth of the
situation.
“Can I trust you, Merrick?”
“Of course! I am willing to give up my life for the Lord, my
everything!” A fervent expression appeared on Merrick’s face. He
was definitely a zealot.
“Very good. I’m handing you a mission.” With trembling hands, the
pope handed over an ancient tome to Merrick.
“This is the Book of Truth. Our church spent great amounts of
resources to obtain it from the Church of Truth.” The pope fixed
his gaze upon Merrick, clasping the man’s shoulders with his
hands.
“Merrick. As the favourite of the Lord, you have seen his true form
the greatest number of times. I need you to hand this book to the
Lord, and have Him see it.”
With Cyric having gone completely insane, even the pope’s words would fall on deaf ears. However, there were some other worshippers the Lord would listen to, and Merrick was one of them. The former merchant had rocketed through the church’s ranks, becoming a powerful phantom thief. At the same time, this had cemented his faith in Cyric. The pope believed his Lord was most likely to see the Book of Truth if Merrick delivered it.
“The future of the church is now in your hands!” The pope patted Merrick’s shoulders in encouragement, “Once our Lord reawakens, these thieving false gods will forever stay in the fallen river of the underworld, and wail for eternity.”
“Rest assured, Your Holiness. Even if I have to sacrifice my life, I will complete this mission!” Merrick guaranteed. As if he had found his calling at that moment, a mysterious force suddenly enveloped his body and allowed him to bristle with strength.

……

In the Tree Castle.
Chester Potter was doing his best to resist the origin force lightning. His godfire had dimmed, seemingly about to go out soon. However, a drop of gold had already been congealed, the runes of law combining into one as if nurturing something within. The droplet almost broke out of the ball of energy.
‘The six requirements to become a true god: divinity, the godfire and divine spark, divine force, the divine domain, divine essence, and a divine kingdom. Chester already has three of the six, and all he’s lacking right now are the domain, essence, and divine kingdom…’ Leylin continued looking over the region as the A.I. Chip’s light flashed in his eyes, storing the valuable information from the experiment.
In fact, if Chester Potter managed to obtain his divine domain today, he would have turned into a true god already. Establishing a divine kingdom was a painstaking process, and without a semi-plane already in hand one would need several hundreds of years to build one from scratch. Thus, the world viewed beings with godfire as demigods, and those with divine domains as true gods. Only true gods had the right to form a divine kingdom, accepting the souls of their worshippers to form a sturdy fort.

“Lord Chester Potter… We pray that you hold the world in your hands, and your throne high up above the skies…” The prayers grew softer and fainter.

Chester Potter roared and his godfire blazed, almost forming the energy ball that would represent his divine domain.

‘Using the power of faith to hasten comprehension of laws… This is how things work in the World of Gods…’ Leylin sighed. The process was quicker than normal, but it also had its drawbacks. ‘Moreover, one law can only be enjoyed by a single entity. The other gods in the domain of massacres will immediately become Chester’s enemies…’

*Roar!* Seeing that Chester had a chance to succeed, Malar took action immediately. He unleashed his powerful massacre domain, one tempered by time. Even if Malar was a beast god, so many years of accumulation had given him greater comprehension of massacres than Chester Potter had.

*Crash! Rumble! Boom!* The origin force lightning was about to dissipate, but it converged once more. This time, there were even streaks of crimson within the lightning, carrying the power of massacres.

‘This is massacre lightning, an attack by Malar…’ Leylin sighed upon seeing this scene. Chester would definitely be done for if he and the other demigods did not help. A false god just couldn’t resist true divine might, even if that might came from a lesser god.
Malar wanted to let Chester bring out his law of slaughter and steal it, but many gods had fixed their attention on this area so he attacked immediately.
Leylin had felt several powerful divine conscients eyeing the place, several familiar auras among them. The group of false gods had huddled up together in front of these powerful presences, masking their presence. No one would jump out to save Chester at this point.
Despair appeared on Chester’s face before the crimson lightning hit, and his godfire dimmed.
“Chester Potter!” “Chester Potter!” “Chester Potter! We will be forever with the Lord, and live together with you!” The vengeful spirits on the ground grew even larger in number, and they reached out their bloody hands and grabbed Chester Potter’s body.
These crazed spirits had enough hatred to cause a demigod to fall. Over time, their pulling force had turning into a whirlpool, consuming Chester Potter within.
“Argh…Noooo…” The maniacal roar of despair did not overturn Chester Potter’s fate. He was dragged away by the spirits from his divine spark, and grew even further from his divine domain.
Finally, a streak of crimson lightning struck the drop of gold.
*Rumble!* The lightning wreaked destruction, and the golden barrier that protected the divine spark dissipated to reveal the content within. A dark golden flame within flickered out.
*Rumble!* Chester Potter who had lost his silhouette, and his true body was exposed to the lightning. The vengeful spirits around him were turned to dust as it struck.
“Chester Potter! Come with us!” “Come with us…” Even if they had been destroyed by the lightning, there were no pain seen on these vengeful spirits’ faces. Instead, glee had filled their expressions.
Once the lightning demolished his body, Chester’s soul was
exposed, seeming extremely pale and weak.
“Come with us…” These vengeful spirits moaned, and bloody hands dragged this soul into the underworld.
“Argh…Noo…” Chester Potter’s final plea of sorrow caused even the gods that were watching to tremble. He would become one of the vengeful spirits of the underworld, entering its darkest depths. Tens of thousands of souls would chew and feed on him until the end of the world…
A violent gale suddenly whistled past, and the ominous clouds disappeared to leave Schliff and the other worshippers gaping in disbelief.
“My Lord… Chester Potter…” Schliff muttered, and immediately wept. The other worshippers were also filled with distraught, and some even wished to commit suicide.
These survivors would not meet with a good end. After confirming that the false god had fallen, the paladins and Helm’s knights charged forward and killed these evil zealots.
sk… Chester really is pitiful…” Ukekelu, the lion-bodied demigod, shook his head.

“If my ascension fails, I won’t end up any differently either…” A mass of black mud issued this thought, but while the demigods continued their discussion a rain of blood enveloped the Tree Castle. Any survivors believed to worship Chester Potter were sent to burn at the stake.

On the other hand, Schliff faced much better treatment. His head had been chopped off directly by a legendary paladin.

Leylin looked around and asked, “How is it, everyone? After witnessing this scene, what do you think of my idea?”

“With the obstruction of a true god, our chances of advancing will definitely be reduced… Your suggestion is worth considering…”

“I’ll answer you before the time limit.”

The other false gods gave a reply one after another.

“Very well. I believe that, as long as we work towards a common goal, becoming true gods isn’t just a wild hope for us. We’ll definitely succeed!”

……

Once the other demigods left, Leylin looked towards the forest with an imposing look.

‘Vengeful spirits will arise during ascension, causing a tide of
pollution…’ Although Chester Potter’s situation was a unique case, Leylin did not completely overrule the possibility of the same happening to himself. ‘Experimental results show that negative energy easily attracts such mutations, and also results in powerful magnetic fields that distort space…’ He stroked his chin. If one spoke of karma, Leylin’s kill count almost equalled that of the Poison Scorpion. Even in the World of Gods alone, the number of people who had fallen at his hands was an astronomical figure. Countless natives had fallen at his hands, and numerous high-ranked Professionals. If even 1% of those vengeful spirits moved during his ascension, it would land him in a very tricky situation. ‘I need to thoroughly bid farewell to my past before I ascend? Moreover, only true gods of the World of Gods can bear the weight of the vengeful spirits…’ His understanding of deities had increased. ‘That’s not everything I gained from today,’ Leylin’s eyes shone, ‘The descend of the World Will allowed me to distinguish between the strengths of the different camps. Malar was a live example, the same kind of thing will definitely happen to me!’ Chester Potter could be called a test subject for Leylin’s own situation. The A.I. Chip had gathered a lot of valuable information from this live experiment, information that would be vital to Leylin’s advancement. ‘Once all the preparations are complete, I shall immediately return and ascend!’ Desire and thirst revealed themselves in Leylin’s eyes, and his confidence peaked. Who other than him could start the war on the gods once more?

……

‘May your soul be at peace.’ Rafiniya prayed silently inside the
Baron’s household. Those that had survived the sacrifice sympathised with evil and there was no need to let them off. She’d undertaken the task, purging the entire residence with her holy sword.

Rafiniya felt like her own heart had been stirred up by that bloody altar. Twenty thousand innocents had died, and even their corpses hadn’t been spared. Their only remnants were traces of wetness and ripped clothing.

‘Those evil and false gods are the greatest stain on the cause of justice!’ Rafiniya felt a burning flame within her chest, about to break out of her body.

“Holy Knight!” A priest of Tyr ran over, bringing over a mirror of water. An image formed on the mirror, showing an old priest that resembled a warrior. The man had a kindly face and thick eyebrows, his expression filled with determination.

“Cardinal!” Rafiniya immediately saluted to the old man. Her actions weren’t just due to a difference in status and strength, instead a respect born from her heart.

“Rafiniya! I’ve learnt that the false god has been eliminated. You’ve done well,” the cardinal praised.

“All is due to the Lord’s protection. Under the guidance of our Lord, those evil and false gods only received their just punishment.” Rafiniya pursed her lips, seeming very obstinate. Seeing this scene, a kind smile surfaced on the Cardinal’s face. He then turned serious, “Rafiniya, I have another task for you.”

“Please.” Rafiniya did not want this tragedy to repeat itself. She was in a hurry to set off, slicing the evil zealots apart to save innocent civilians.

“Very well,” A trace of unwillingness appeared within the elderly cardinal’s eyes as he looked at Rafiniya’s current state, but he soon suppressed it. “A number of demigods backed the resurrection and frenzy of the Poison Scorpion Church this time…”
The cardinal’s face was exceptionally serious, bemoaning the state of the universe and pitying the fate of mankind.

“These false gods greatly disrupt the peace of the continent. The Lord has decreed that we investigate the parties involved in this incident, and work together with the other churches to eliminate those false gods.”

“As the Lord wills.” Rafiniya knelt down on one knee and agreed.

“Where am I to investigate?”

“The southern seas, Debanks Island. Specifically, the Giant Serpent Church.” The moment the cardinal revealed her destination, Rafiniya’s body quivered.

The cardinal spoke slowly, “I know you had a good relationship with that demigod wizard. If you’re unwilling—”

“No! I accept this task.” The Holy Knight looked up, incomparable resolution on her face.

“It is true that Leylin and I were friends. However, he’s threatening the peace of the continent! It’s my duty as his friend to pull him off the wrong path!”

“What if he exceeds his limits?” the cardinal asked indifferently.

“In that case, I shall end his mistakes once and for all.” Rafiniya’s body radiated justice with her reply.

“Very well! The Lord has seen your determination!” The cardinal nodded in satisfaction, stopping communications.

“Holy Knight Rafiniya! The cardinal commanded us to follow you.” A team of powerful paladins and priests approached Rafiniya. This was only the investigation team. Once she sent confirmation, high-ranked legendaries and even gods’ avatars would be dispatched there.

“I didn’t expect us to end up like this, Leylin…” Rafiniya looked towards the setting sun, faint regret in her eyes. She seemed to recall their first meeting, a time when both of them were of similar strength. Leylin had shaken her off quickly, becoming a high-
ranked wizard, then a legendary and ultimately a demigod. She could only watch his distant back, unable to even shadow him. ‘I’m so stupid! Really, with his thirst for power and his attitude of safety over principles, it should’ve been clear from the start that we’d end up on opposite sides!’ Rafiniya withdrew her sword, the regret replaced with resolution. ‘You have your path, and I shall insist on mine. From this day forth, we are enemies!’ The Holy Knight pointed her longsword towards the south, setting into an unshakeable determination, “Let’s set off. Our target is in Debanks Island, the Giant Serpent Church!” A large number of mounted troops filed out of the Tree Castle, leaving dust on the road.

……

“Romese!” Helm’s avatar called out to his own cardinal in another camp. “My Lord! You are the guardian and defender of the true gods…” Romese knelt down, his face full of sincerity. “Although we won this time, things won’t remain so simple…” The avatar’s eyes shone with foresight. “Head towards the south, and assist the troops of justice in eliminating the Giant Serpent Church entirely.” Helm decreed, “The church will exert pressure as needed on the coastal nation, having them form a sea expedition.” “I understand! Your will is my command!” Romese respectfully agreed, but great shock entered his heart. ‘Not hesitating to gather secular forces in an expedition? This breaks custom… Has our opponent reached such a terrifying level?’ The church and state had certain tacit understanding. This action would throw the gods’ might around the secular world; such an action would attract a great deal of negativity.
There was only one reason Helm would shoulder this— the danger of allowing the Giant Serpent Church to continue developing greatly exceeded the danger royalty posed towards them. It could even threaten Helm himself!

Having thought of this, Romese suddenly felt the weight of the task that had been placed on his shoulders…

The situation in the continent hadn’t calmed after the Poison Scorpion Church was eliminated, instead growing even more strange. Numerous demigods began to stir, and dense clouds began to shroud the prime material plane. It was in such a turbulent environment that Rafiniya’s party arrived in the southern seas.
aulen Island.
Rafiniya had a nostalgic expression on her face as she stepped onto the dock once more. The last time she’d come here, it was to congratulate Leylin on advancing to the legendary realm. She’d then entreated him to take part in the operations of the Silverymoon Alliance in the north.
It seemed like that had happened just yesterday. However Rafiniya clearly knew that nothing was the same as before.
“There’s news, my Lady. All transport to Debanks Island has stopped.” A paladin arrived by Rafiniya’s side.
“I’ve seen them,” Rafiniya looked at Port Venus. The originally flourishing port had now become rather desolate. With the loss of the hugely important Debanks Island, a majority of the ships had left. There were only two or three boats here, a rather pitiful scene.
“They’ve pulled back their forces, did they discover something?” Rafiniya gritted her teeth, “Even if we have to find our own ships, we must hurry onwards to Debanks Island!”
*Bang!* Just at this moment, the earth suddenly shook beneath them. The skies rippled with a powerful aura and turned dark.
“What’s happening?” “Help!” The port was in an uproar. Rafiniya looked in the direction of Debanks Island with an experienced gaze. Strong origin force undulations were spreading from that location, and faint sounds of prayer could be heard even here. Her expression grew grave, ‘Too late!’
In the next moment, origin force from ascension spread towards them. It wasn’t only from the southern seas, gods seemed to be ascending everywhere. Rafiniya’s face paled instantly in response.

……

Within the swamp, many natives had come together and knelt in prayer. “Ukekelu… Almighty Ukekelu, you are our master…” The power of faith converged into a sweeping tide, completely enveloping the sphinx.

……

A clump of murky mud suddenly spread across the grasslands, expanding to the size of several cities as sparks of golden flame began to seep out from its body.

……

*Rumble!* The tremor of origin force spread across the multiverse in a moment. Many gods turned their gazes to the prime material plane, shock clear in their eyes.
“So many demigods are ascending…” “This is a conspiracy!” Many divine wills flowed together in the void. News of this activity even spread to the demons and devils.
Many leading existences of the World of Gods focused their attention on the prime material plane, hoping to preserve themselves or gain something from this occasion.
In the outer planes, Mystra’s avatar arrived outside a divine kingdom filled with divine light.
“Mystra, I’ve waited a long time for you to come!” Origin force roared outside the divine kingdom, congealing into an elderly
warrior who had lost both his eyes.
“We have another slip-up in our plans. Elminster had stayed in hiding and not acted all this time, but now he has already begun his ascension to become a true god…” Mystra was very gloomy, “And with that demigod’s ascension, great changes have occurred in the path of fate.”
“You still care about that prophecy?” Tyr straightened his back, “In this world, only justice and fairness can be eternal.”
“The snake that will destroy the world…” Mystra’s wry smile soon grew serious again, “I have never before felt as I do now, that his footsteps are imminently drawing closer and closer…”
Tyr could not overlook the powerful premonitions of so great a god. He grew silent, and the divine kingdom nearby seemed to grow suffocated as well, “It’s not so easy to ascend to godhood. Since that person is ascending in the domain of massacre, he’ll suffer great hostility from Malar and Cyric…”
“Let’s wait and see. My premonition is far from reassuring…” Mystra looked into the distance. Her starlike eyes seemed to cut through everything, and see directly into the future.

The ninth level of hell, Nessus.
“Father!” The current ruler of Malbolge, the Erinyes Queen Glasya who possessed unimaginable charm, bowed in front of an old devil.
Having entered the realm of laws herself, Glasya could sense the incomprehensibly formidable power that Asmodeus possessed. In spite of the primordial contract in his hands giving him natural authority over Baator, the other Archdevils had been resisting his rule. However, his innate control could not be changed…
“I sense the undulations of Baator’s origin force…” Asmodeus
took the form of a mountainous devil, his black goat horns slightly pointed and his eyes filled with immeasurably profound evil.

“A Lord of Baator is currently trying to ascend to godhood.” Asmodeus’ words made Glasya cry out in shock.

“Ascension? Who? Which devil dares to renounce…. Hmm? Don’t tell me it’s the Lord of Dis…” Glasya’s thoughts seemed to turn very quickly to the ruler of Dis. Leylin was still a mystery to her. Of course, after many years of investigations, Leylin’s true identity was not a secret to the Lords of Baator. They had even formed a unanimous pact and set plans to invade and overturn Dis in motion. Had Leylin not left Baator to reside permanently in the prime material plane, he would perhaps have been ambushed and killed already, his authority divided up among the other lords.

“Baator was never his goal… He pursues only the everlasting radiance of godhood…” Asmodeus said with great accuracy.

Asmodeus had to thank Leylin. The demigod had been a conspicuous target to date, attracting considerable ire that let his own plots play themselves out in the shadows. Asmodeus hadn’t attracted any violence yet.

With Leylin’s ‘contributions’, Asmodeus would have been willing to spend some time crafting a devil’s form for him if he wished to completely depend on Baator in the future. He would even bestow a false reputation and glory upon him. However, all of this had now changed.

“The integration of a god and a ruler of hell will no doubt give rise to many unimaginable consequences…” A poisonous worm crawled out from Asmodeus’ beard, and was tossed into his mouth. The Archdevil’s evil eyes were filled with resolution, “We need to overthrow the Lord of Dis, and sever his ties with Baator.”

“The pit fiend Azlok is ruling over Dis in his place right now, and is quite satisfied with his current positions. Even if we use the people we placed amongst their ranks and add the power of the other
Lords, it’ll still be difficult to topple his rule. Even if he isn’t a true devil,” Glasya bit down on a scarlet lip, “I need a lot more time…” The Erinyes Queen had taken several thousands of years to seize Malbolge, accumulating a large rebel army in secret before taking advantage of the upheaval in the Second Hell to succeed. Had she not first stripped the Hag Countess of her origin force and forced her out of the realm of laws, she wasn’t likely to be the final victor. That showed the power a Lord of Baator held over their subordinates. However, Leylin being human caused many devils to feel dissatisfied, and his rule hadn’t been too long either. It wasn’t a particularly favourable situation for him.

“No buts! Go and notify Mammon and the others. I’ll need their help to overthrow Dis. Even if we have to leave Avernus for it and give them that authority, I’m fine with it. You’ll be in charge of accepting and signing the contract,” Asmodeus flipped through his enormous tome of contracts before tearing out a piece of black parchment.

“Understood!” Glasya accepted the agreement. She saw her father’s resolution, and knew that with Asmodeus’ wisdom and foresight in addition to her decisiveness, their interests in Leylin could not be held back.

‘An existence which my father is willing to sacrifice profit to defeat, what sort of schemer is he? I really look forward to this, haha…’ Devils were a bunch of fast-moving creatures, especially when it came to the formalities of contracts.

In order to save time, Asmodeus had even directly opened up the network of authority, allowing several Lords of Baator to contact their moles in Dis. The entirety of Dis was soon embroiled in war. Powerful explosions resounded, as armies of armed devils rushed forth to burn the Iron City. Their primary target was the official residence of the highest-ranking devils, the core of the city’s rule— the Iron
At this moment, pit fiend Azlok was surveying the scene of the city with taunting eyes. “Mm, Dir, Modiklo and Hessas, all of you betrayed us…” Looking at his city falling into enemy hands, Azlok’s expression did not hold the slightest trace of regret or rage. He looked at these devil rebel armies as if he was looking at a bunch of clowns. “You lot have never tasted our master Kukulkan’s power…” Azlok turned and moved to a conference hall, where the old devil that Leylin had subdued appeared. “Haha, all the preparations are complete. We have our people guarding all the nodes, the devil hunters are all in position!” Borke cackled, radiating primordial evil. His power caused even Azlok’s heart to skip a beat. Only Leylin with his superior power and plots could subdue such a creature. “Very good, let’s go out and receive them! I’m impatient to see the despair on those traitors’ faces, haha…” Devils were most fond of using schemes to get rid of those more powerful than them. “I can’t wait either!” The old devil followed behind Azlok like a butler, and they slowly left the Iron Tower. Many great devil armies had already surrounded the region around the Iron Tower, held back by their fear of the tower’s defences. They were late in mounting their offensive.
Seeing Azlok and Borke walk out, the traitorous devils all took a step back.
“Surrender, Azlok. You don’t have to work so hard for the sake of an outsider!” A pit fiend dressed in barbed black armour stood out, “We’re backed by the Lords of Baator, including Supreme Asmodeus himself. This is the will of the Nine Hells!”
“Even the Nine Hells must submit to our master!” Borke stepped forward, emanating vile, devilish soul light.
“This… Primordial power… Who exactly are you?” The pit fiends were stunned. This old devil was almost as strong as the Supreme.
“Keke… My name’s long since been buried in the long and deep river of history. On the other hand, you shall become the dust and decay of yesteryear… You shall be buried in history, remembered as foolish and inferior…” Borke snickered, and a terrifying wave of origin force suddenly descended upon Dis, accompanied by some unresolved, enraged howls.
“It’s beginning!” Borke and Azlok exchanged a glance and knelt down, beginning to pray.
“Our master, Kukulkan. You are the master of Baator, the Nine Hells. You are the Lord of all devils, the personification of order, the speaker for evil. You are the maker of laws and rules, holding power and authority!”
“Our master, Kukulkan. You control the power of massacre. The blood and terror of your enemies shall turn into your strength.
Death shall accompany you wherever you go. You are the master of the end!”
“Our master, Kukulkan! Your will extends across the earth. Your divine kingdom shall protect our souls, and the souls of all your worshippers shall gain new life within!”
“Our master, Kukulkan! Your name shall become sacred. May your throne remain tall and turn into the stars in the skies!”
“This is… an ascension ceremony! A Lord of Baator is about to become a god!” Dir, Modiklo, Hessas and the other pit fiends all exclaimed at this moment.
The slight sounds of prayers could be heard from all directions. All the devils that Leylin had subdued now knelt piously, their fervent prayers gradually filling the entirety of Dis with a holy golden lustre.
Horrifying origin force howled out, and with the zealous power of faith crossed the obstruction of space and dimensions to arrive in the prime material plane.

……

Debanks Island.
At this moment, all the natives had abandoned whatever they were doing. Those of higher status gathered at churches, while the rest turned to statues or even the sky to pray.
“Our master, Kukulkan! You are the protector of natives. We natives exist because of you. You lord over our souls and protect us after death in your heavenly kingdom. Your name shall become holy amongst all natives!”
“Our master, Kukulkan. You control the power of massacre. The blood and terror of your enemies shall turn into your strength. Death shall accompany you wherever you go. You are the master of the end!”
“Our master, Kukulkan! Your name shall become sacred. May your throne remain tall and turn into the stars in the skies!”
For some reason, all the natives felt a hot rush in their hearts that they could not get rid of. Only praying allowed them to feel peace. The prayers that were similar yet different from those in Baator grew louder and louder, until they were suffused with the faith of the world to gather in the capital of the Faulen Empire.
Upon the holy mountain, the skies were already filled with terrifying dark clouds. Lightning flashed and thunder boomed from inside, as if numerous thunder dragons were roaring out from within. Golden power of faith converged to form a funnel, pushing all this power right on top of the holy mountain into the shrine Leylin was in.
This was just the start, and the intense whistling of origin force far exceeded how things had gone with Chester Potter. Tiff and Isabel stood together outside the headquarters of the Giant Serpent Church, gazing up at the origin force lightning above them. There was a look of obvious worry on their faces.
“Ascension… Our master has the accumulation of faith from an entire empire. He definitely will succeed!” Tiff’s eyes showed a crazed fervour. Over all these years of serving him, he’d developed an absolute trust in his god.
“With his accumulation of divine force, I’m not worried even with the backlash from origin force and malicious spirits…” Fine dragon scales appeared on Isabel’s body, emanating the aura of an ancient dragon. This was a form ready for battle at any time. “What I’m worried about is him being targeted by those gods…”
“Whatever it is, we will serve as a fort for our master, firm and solid!”” Tiff looked solemn, speaking in unison with a circle of powerful members of the clergy.
“Be it god or devil, anyone who wants to interrupt the ceremony will have to do it over my dead body!” Isabel gripped the Red
Dragon Sword’s hilt tightly, the look of resolution in her eyes like ice that would never thaw.

……

*WHOOSH!* The origin force lightning in the sky seemed to have reached the limit of what could be amassed. With what sounded like the enraged roars of primordial dragons, the sounds of explosions seemed to tear the skies apart.

*Rumble!* The roof of the shrine was cut through. If Leylin hadn’t sent a decree to evacuate the slaves and weaker clergymen, there would’ve been heavy casualties in the Giant Serpent Church. The lightning, with all its boundless destructive force, was stopped by a golden palm. Numerous prayers had formed a surge of faith that lingered around Leylin’s godly body.

“All these years of planning… Today is the day they come to fruition!” Leylin floated in the skies, dazzling golden light emanating from all parts of his body. Golden godfire revealed itself, using massive amounts of divine force to resist the heavenly lightning.

Numerous chains of laws flickered around Leylin. Pure runes of massacre were already beginning to enter the godfire unceasingly, terrifying power that only belonged to true gods growing within.

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*ROAAAAR!* In the hunter’s wasteland that was Malar’s divine kingdom, the main body of the God of the Hunt began to howl. The ape could sense that someone was eyeing its massacre domain, that thief that had once stolen its divinity!

Malar left his divine kingdom without hesitation, moving towards the boundary of the prime material plane.
“Another false god eyeing our master’s domain!”
Deep inside the marshes and ravines, within in the headquarters of the God of Murder’s church. An aged pope rapidly turned red, and even began coughing out large amounts of blood, “Let them work on their own…”
He feebly waved his arms, his crooked body seeming to hold an endless amount of fatigue. The pope stared at the statue of Cyric, eyes holding a last bit of hope.
“Our master still has yet to respond at all… Hopefully Merrick can get the Book of Truth to him as soon as possible, or challengers like these will only increase in number in the future…”

……

On Debanks Island, Leylin now reached a critical moment in his ascension.
*Rumble! Rumble!* Destructive lightning rained down, dying out to large amounts of divine force.
“The Feathered Serpent God, Kukulkan!”
“Our master, Kukulkan… who exists with us!”
“Who exists with us…”
In the meanwhile, a river of death formed that extended through multiple worlds. Numerous illusory souls crawled out of the river, holding the power of blood and vengeance. They tried to contaminate Leylin’s pure body.
These vengeful spirits were mostly natives, and Isabel could even recognise high-ranked Professionals who had died at Leylin’s hand. Even the late demigods of the native empire were here!
“A divine soul is the sublimation of a life form. Before this can
happen, it is necessary to put an end to all sins of the past…” Tiff mumbled.
Numerous vengeful spirits pounced forth, pulling at Leylin’s holy lustre with hands stained with fresh blood. It was like they were trying to put out his godfire.
The origin force lashed back with lightning, and these vengeful spirits shot forth with hatred. If a demigod could not hold up, they would end up like Chester Potter, pulled down to the depths of the underworld to be tortured for eternity.
With the number of lives Leylin had taken, the backlash and hatred were abnormally terrifying, exceeding the destruction wrought on the average demigod significantly.
However, just as Tiff and Isabel were starting to feel their hearts clench in fear, Leylin made his move!
“I am the master of the law of massacres. All of your pain shall become my power!!” He suddenly took a step forward, his powerful massacre domain quickly spreading out. Bloody light radiated out, and the vengeful spirits’ cries disappeared. Hundreds of thousands had been absorbed instantly, forming Leylin’s strength.
“Even if enemies that have died can be revived, none can escape the fate of death once more!” Leylin seemed to be chanting a prayer, at the same time making a prediction. Even the spirits of the demigods paled with terror, and they were immediately annihilated alongside all the other powerful enemies Leylin had killed in the World of Gods.
Lightning dissipated in the skies, and the vengeful spirits of the Styx seemed to lose all their strength in front of their master. Tiff and Isabel clenched their fists in anticipation, this was a moment they would never forget in their lives!
The godfire stabilised, surging with the power of laws.
[Beep! Host is beginning ascension. Being amplified by power of
faith, comprehending law of massacre!] [Beep! Host’s comprehension of the law of massacres is at 67%… 80%…] The A.I. Chip’s prompts were refreshed continuously.

The laws of the World of Gods were different from the Magus World, and the gods could use faith to comprehend laws. The process of solidifying one’s divine domain was, in fact, the process of comprehending that law. Leylin obviously would not let this hard-to-come-by opportunity slip past him. Great amounts of divine will rushed forth as he recorded all his realisations about massacre.

*Boom! Boom!* At this moment, the power of the Weave went berserk above Debanks Island. Mystra’s figure revealed itself, dressed in splendid clothing. Tyr’s avatar showed itself as well, holding a large blade with both hands. The avatars of two greater gods had arrived here, and they obviously harboured terrible intentions.

Some demigods obtained favour from certain gods. During their ascension, these gods would especially show themselves via their avatars and protect them. However, Mystra and Tyr were obviously not about to do this.
A huge monster made of sludge roared out over the spacious grasslands, a small godfire emerging to meet the pale-white lightning in the sky. Bolts of lightning crashed down like raindrops, the power of annihilation they carried destroying the surrounding landscape.

*Ooo!* The silhouette of the river of death appeared once more, and vengeful spirits reached out towards the monster with their bloody hands, climbing on top of its body to pull it down into the underworld.

“No!” The monster released a loud roar, and its godfire burst forth. However, its divine spark was eventually extinguished. Losing its divinity, the monster’s body was dragged down into the Styx, and it completely disappeared…

The southern swamp.

“Lord Ukekelu!” “Ukekelu!”

With the pious prayers of numerous worshippers, the lion-bodied demigod Ukekelu managed to survive the thunderstorm and the resentment of the vengeful spirits. Twisted runes of law gradually formed within his godfire, about to propel his breakthrough.

“You sinner! How dare you commit such heresy on my law of savagery?” A huge figure emerged in the sky just then, carrying the imposing aura of a true god. Scarlet lightning crashed into Ukekelu’s godfire, causing it to tremble. Space rippled at the edges of the divine spark, and power of law collided with the runes to
form such chaos that it eventually just exploded.
“Damn that true god!” Ukekelu looked up into the skies, snarling and roaring as the radiance in his eyes gradually dimmed.
“My Lord… NOOO!” The priests on the ground bellowed, soon finding the divine power in their bodies ebbing like a tide. The suffering that came with such a thing was more painful than if all their bones had been pulled out.
“Pu!” All the members of the clergy spat out blood and fainted under the horrifying attack, while some of the old and weak met their deaths directly.

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In the skies above Debanks Island, the Goddess of the Weave and the God of Justice were standing side by side.
“Two of those false gods have been defeated by Gruumsh,” Mystra said with conviction as she looked towards the horizon.
“In comparison the serpent’s accumulation is terrifying. To directly overcome the vengeful spirits and the origin force… It looks like his comprehension of his law is extremely deep as well, and it won’t be a problem for him to enter his divine domain…” Tyr looked at Leylin surrounded by origin force, the evil energy making him furrow his brows. How had they not noticed this huge tumour that had been hidden in the prime material plane before?
“He’s currently protected by origin force, as a matter of law we cannot interfere…” However, Mystra faintly added another word to this statement, “Unless…”
“Unless it’s by a god in an identical domain, who can devour the power of law.” Tyr looked at the primate that appeared in the sky. Malar’s avatar bellowed with rage, its huge claws pulling back as the law of massacre descended upon the World of Gods. It caused Leylin’s divine domain to grow unstable, and scarlet lightning
struck his divine spark.
“This damned monkey. I’ll kill it one day!” Isabel suddenly gnashed her teeth in rage.
“We’re not strong enough yet to deal with the avatar of a true god…” Tiff held Isabel back, “However, it’s not a problem to deal with the rest.”
He hinted for Isabel to look down, and she saw some sneaky silhouettes lurking towards the holy mountain.
“Those damned things!” Isabel snarled as two huge draconic wings burst out of her back. Her transformation only took an instant before a legendary Dragon Warlock pounced towards the silhouettes. The land was bathed in a sea of blood.

......

Leylin had sensed the lightning strike down on him from the sky.
“Malar,” he laughed coldly, “How could I forget you?” He’d seen the beast god use this move on Chester Potter but a short while ago, how could he not be prepared?
“It’s time to use you. Go!” Leylin’s hands suddenly opened up, and surging divine force mixed with the power of faith isolated the scarlet lightning for a moment. Leylin fished out a crystal ball with a huge amounts of blurry spirits inside it, directly transforming them into soul force that was absorbed by the godfire.
These spirits had been stored by Akaban, the emperor of the former Sakartes Empire. A small number of them had been used for tests in Baator, but now Leylin had cast most of them out. His godfire rumbled as it absorbed so many spirits, its power skyrocketing as a sparkling translucent crystal emerged, the depiction of his divine domain.
This crystal was flawless, a hint of blood to its colour indicating that it belonged exclusively to a God of Massacre.
“Such a pity. Malar is only a lesser god in the end. If Cyric was here, this demigod could only fall…” Mystra’s face was full of doubt, “Why exactly is Cyric sitting back and watching others take over his domain?”

“There’s no use guessing right now!” Tyr shouted from beside her, his huge sword in hand. “All we can do now is wait. The power of laws and the prime material plane will stop protecting him once he ascends, and he’ll be thrown out. A lesser god has nowhere to run facing my true body…” As a greater god, Tyr was confident in himself.

“That’s the only way,” Mystra sighed. Her heart was filled with anxiety, but she had no other choices.

……

Leylin currently wasn’t in the mood to care about the outside world. Once the crystal appeared in his godfire, it commanded the entirety of his focus.

*Buzz!* The crystal radiated the power of laws, trembling as it fused together with the godfire back into Leylin’s divine body. It seemed tailor-made for him, no longer able to be split apart.

At the same time, Leylin saw a vision. A powerful god was screaming from within dark shadows, holding his head as a force instantly tore a crack into his throne of massacre.

The image faded quickly, replaced by the AI Chip’s prompt:

[Beep! Host has obtained the divine domain of massacres. Comprehension of the law of massacres has reached 100%.] [All conditions have been met, host is now ascending...] [Beep! Host has automatically been classified as a legendary priest. All spells unlocked.]

All of Leylin’s followers seemed to sense something at this moment, their eyes brimming with tears of excitement as they
started praying.
“Kukulkan, my Lord, you are the lord of our souls. You shall shelter us in your kingdom after death, for you are the ruler of all!”
“Kukulkan, my Lord, you wield the power of massacres. The death of your enemies shall bring you power, and you are the end of everything!”
“Kukulkan, my Lord, your will shall shape the earth. We wish for your throne to join the stars in the skies!”
Devout prayer spread across the prime material plane, followed by Baator, the Abyss, the heavens, and even the entire astral plane. Those of legendary might, devils, demons; they all shifted their attention to this location. A true god had been born, recognised by the world to stand at its peak!
If someone were to ascend to godhood, even if they fell the very next moment they would leave an indelible mark on the history of the World of Gods, one that would be hard to forget. Numerous existences saw this moment as an opportunity, making their moves while Leylin was experiencing drastic changes to his body.
The terror of the law of massacre was enough to support a powerful god. Furthermore, Leylin hadn’t comprehended the law step by step, instead having it all thrust upon him through faith and the power of the World Origin Force. It caused him to feel bloated in an instant as the terrifying energy mixed with faith was spreading around his body. If not for the divine body he already possessed, Leylin would have exploded due to the enormous force.
With such terrifying energy, his godfire and divine force seemed to fuse with his divine domain, ultimately forming a true god’s body. In that split second, Leylin Faulen had entered the realms of rank 7 and become a true god!
*Buzz!* The whole world started to roar, and the space around Leylin began to shatter. The world was beginning to suppress him, the prime material plane unable to accommodate the body of a true
god. It was urging him on, to move into the endless void and establish his divine kingdom.

‘Establish a divine kingdom? I’m not that stupid!’ With his ascension, Leylin had an understanding of the process of establishing his divine kingdom that was almost second nature. It was so much so that, with the favour of the origin force, the construction of his divine kingdom would far surpass normal domains and save a great amount of divine force.

However, two greater gods were waiting to ambush him the moment he left the protection of the prime material plane. Only a fool would choose to do so.

“Haha… Mystra, Tyr, I’m sorry to disappoint…” Leylin laughed wildly. This was only the tip of the iceberg.

“A divine kingdom? My choice is— here!” Leylin floated up into the sky, suddenly pointing towards Debanks Island. Golden divine force whizzed out, instantly surrounding the entire island and changing the laws of space and time within.

The sea origin force attracted during his advancement had yet to disperse, giving Leylin a large reserve of energy that allowed him to cause drastic changes to the large island.

*Rumble!* Earthquakes and tsunamis rocked Debanks Island, but all of Leylin’s worshippers were sheltered by golden divine force. Large traces of divine power caused many natives to start kowtowing in a frenzy.
“Has he gone crazy? He actually wants to build his divine kingdom in the prime material plane?” Mystra was flabbergasted.

“We can think about that later. Let’s leave now!” Tyr retreated very quickly, moving above the oceans in an instant. He distanced himself from the island that had been enveloped in golden light. The two greater gods were only here through avatars. If they recklessly entered Debanks Island which was in the midst of becoming a divine kingdom, the only outcome would be death.

Mystra retreated miserably as well, but Malar’s avatar had been trapped by the golden light of the divine kingdom. It was rapidly consumed, and could only release a final cry of anguish before it perished, boosting the creation of the divine kingdom.

Avatars themselves had been reduced to such a state, so the elites that had been sent their definitely met with misfortune. Even those with legendary strength were rendered as helpless as normal human beings, killed mercilessly by the holy crusade of Debanks Island.

Golden threads of law energy appeared in the void, forming an intricate pattern above Debanks Island that was a scene to behold.

Now that Leylin could exercise his will in control of the law of massacre, he combined the threads of law into one that was meant for his divine kingdom.

“No, we can’t let him continue this! Let’s rally our troops immediately, and transfer the units and paladins in the Silverymoon
"Alliance. No matter how high the price is, we have to kill him!" Mystra’s voice had grown extremely shrill, “He’s only building his divine kingdom right now, it will take but a few avatars to destroy it. If we give him time, I’m afraid…”

Tyr nodded his head solemnly, acknowledging Mystra’s judgement, “Such pure evil should not be allowed to exist in this world!”

It took several hundreds of years to build a divine kingdom. Only after that could the realm be called a safe haven for its creator, amassing large numbers of elite troops and powerful Professionals. These places had holy spirits and valiant spirits, with such strength that even a greater god wouldn’t want to engage in so large a battle. Leylin’s divine kingdom lacked the time it would need to strengthen him. Without enough worshippers, guardians, and spirits, as well as a lack of churches and spell formations and the weak foundation of laws, his defences were at their weakest right now.

What’s more, once Leylin established his divine kingdom in the prime material plane, his true body would no longer be able to leave. He would have to remain there, stuck as a Saint. Many gods had once chosen to descend into the prime material plane as Saints and Saintesses, but they had perished. A god in such a form was just a big gift to those powerful legendaries. Mystra had no doubt that Debanks Island would turn into a haven for adventurers in the future.

If one managed to kill a true god, the god’s divinity, divine domain, and all their accumulations would become their own. Even some demigods wouldn’t be able to resist such temptation. “He’s seeking his own death!” Tyr concluded.

‘Building my divine kingdom in the prime material is just courting
death… Don’t you think I know that already?’ Leylin mocked the thoughts of the two from within Debanks Island. He was almost done with his ascension now, but it wasn’t quite done. His many worshippers were praying, “Kukulkan, my Lord, your seat is royal and divine, like the stars in the skies!”

“Your seat is royal and divine, like the stars in the skies!”

Truth be told, even if all ascension ceremonies had this line in them that was merely a wish of the gods. The establishment of a divine kingdom wasn’t something one could do overnight, not to mention that a throne among the stars. Such a thing would deplete several centuries of accumulation of a lesser god instantly!

However, Leylin was different. He’d still held onto the origin force sea that had helped him ascend, and he had a trump card. “My ascension ceremony is far from being over!” Leylin exclaimed loudly, and the entirety of Debanks Island began to tremble. The light of the divine kingdom enveloped the entire region, separating the outside space from the island itself. The ocean separated from the land, and Debanks Island had turned into a semi-plane in an instant.

“A royal seat? How?” Mystra felt like all her knowledge and expertise with the divine had vanished today. She was unable to comprehend Leylin no matter how much she tried. ‘Even if he still has the origin force from his ascension, it’s definitely not enough!’

The World Origin Force began to surge wildly. The entirety of the southern seas roared as the miniature continent that was Debanks Island was removed from it. This was an extremely big chunk of the world being taken off the map, so the repercussions of such an act were unimaginable.

Of course, Leylin did not give a hoot about such things. If not for his limited divine powers, he would gladly remove the entire southern seas from the prime material plane. After all, the size of a divine kingdom was directly related to the power of its god.
At this moment, all intelligent creatures in the prime material plane noticed a brand new star shining atop the southern seas.
“This… is a royal seat! The evolution of a divine kingdom!” Many gasps sounded throughout the prime material plane.
However, they were soon replaced by cries of disbelief. Instead of rising up into the skies, this new star had actually fallen down! What did they just see?
“Haha… Why would I want to evolve it and enter the higher planes? I can do the same in the lower planes!” Leylin laughed maniacally. It was much easier to have his divine kingdom descend than rise
Of course, either option would require a great deal of energy for any other god, but Leylin was different. He had his authority as an Archdevil of Baator, and the doors of the Second Hell were forever open to him. With his status as the Lord of Dis, Baator would not reject the descent of his divine kingdom, Moreover, he could even use the power of Baator’s origin force to help his divine kingdom evolve at crucial times!
Indeed, Leylin’s goal had been the Second Hell of the Nine Hells. He’d made the entirety of Dis almost a part of his divine kingdom! If he combined Debanks Island with the Second Hell, it wouldn’t be far fetched to make the entire plane his divine kingdom!
With the unlimited space in Baator, and the laws of Dis alongside his divine kingdom, Leylin’s powers immediately surpassed that of lesser gods to enter the rankings of intermediate gods. His divine kingdom was equivalent to ones that intermediate gods would put painstaking effort into building!
At this point Asmodeus’ schemes and Mystra’s hostility could all be thrown to the sidelines. Dis would eventually become a strong fort for him.
“The destination is Baator. Let’s go!” A phantom of Leylin appeared in the skies. At the borders of the world, one could see
the giant turn its head towards Baator.

*Boom!* A fist comprised of immense, endless origin force broke free of any obstructions posed by the prime material plane, beginning to sink down…

The Second Hell of Baator, Dis. The origin force of the world began to smoulder as an infinite power of law moved out to link with Debanks Island.

“Kukulkan, my Lord, you are the marshal of all devils, the Lord of Hell! The entirety of Dis shall become your divine kingdom!” In the innumerable space nodes within Dis, the devils that were dispatched from Debanks Island had begun to pray in unison. Dis trembled violently, as if welcoming a newborn child. Many devils of Baator sensed the change, and began to turn uneasy. However, even the highest level of their hierarchy in the Lords of Baator couldn’t do a thing about it!

“NOO!” An extremely unwilling roar rang out from the Ninth Hell. The deep valley of Nessus was split open to reveal the massive body of a devil. This was the true body of Asmodeus, the Supreme of Baator. It had been recuperating from serious injuries all this while, leaving all matters to be taken care of by a clone.

Right now, however, Asmodeus could no longer tolerate Leylin’s actions. He’d always wanted to unify the Nine Hells, and now that Leylin wanted to take the entirety of Dis for his own, never to leave, he couldn’t stand it anymore.

A primordial contract appeared in Asmodeus’ hands, causing the origin force of Baator to whistle in rage. His body expanded to nearly cover all of Baator, blocking the arrival of Leylin and his divine kingdom.

“I hereby invoke the primordial contract, exercising my right as the sole party allowed to collect souls. I have the authority to unify all of Baator. You, get lost!” As Asmodeus roared in rage, a massive wave of hell’s energy surged towards Leylin.
“You pathetic existence! You want to stop me, a true god?” The same origin force congealed behind Leylin, “As the overlord of Dis, I now proclaim that Dis is no longer a level of Baator.” With Beelzebub’s authority in hand, Leylin used it to the utmost. It took only a few moments for a huge chunk of the origin force behind Asmodeus to be ripped off.

“In my name as Kukulkan, Dis now has the authority to collect the souls of my worshippers. The primordial contract shall be rendered void!” Leylin immediately used his godhood to counter Asmodeus. Asmodeus was aided by Baator because he had the authority to harvest souls on its behalf. Now, however, Leylin removed this right by law! Such an attack hurt Asmodeus even more than just the loss of Dis.

“You actually dare…” Asmodeus seethed with venom.

“There’s no use in making any noises, get lost!” Dis rumbled, and Asmodeus’ figure immediately turned smaller. As Leylin activated the onslaught of his divine kingdom, the devil was sent flying back to Nessus.

*Boom!* Debanks Island had immediately merged with Dis, and radiated with a holy light!
Prayers resounded as the two planes experienced a perfect fusion. Leylin had prepared for this, remodelling Debanks Island to be similar to Dis so they could draw closer. A golden glow spread across the former Second Hell. A large region around the middle of the Iron Tower in the middle of Dis had been evacuated, and Debanks Island fit into the place like a tile of a puzzle. The laws of the two began to blend together, eventually forming a divine kingdom that belonged to Leylin alone.

With the accumulated area of Dis, Leylin instantly overtook all lesser gods in the aspect of his divine kingdom. Golden light shrouded the heavens and the earth, and all of Leylin’s believers regardless of race obtained an enormous boost to their power.

On the other hand, the rebel armies were dumbfounded. Entire batches of their elites started to melt under the divine light, nourishing the growth of the divine kingdom. “Haha… Dir, Modiklo and Hessas… Dis is now the Lord’s divine kingdom. Can you even run away now?” Azlok roared. With the power of the divine kingdom he was close to rank 7, and the other pit fiends couldn’t even unleash the strength of intermediate devils. They were easily tortured to death.

With his divine kingdom in tow, Leylin could suppress the
rebellion with ease. In fact, just his subordinates were enough to settle this problem.

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“So he was also a Lord of Baator… We’ve failed completely this time…” Mystra laughed bitterly. “The entirety of Dis as his divine kingdom, and an endless army of devils… He really is hard to handle…” That evil forces were thriving caused Tyr to furrow his brows. No matter how much thought he put into it, he never would have been able to guess Leylin’s plans. Even after Leylin’s success, his insane approach was still unbelievable.

“Such a large divine kingdom… Once it’s completely built up he’ll definitely be even harder to kill…” Mystra sighed. “With such resources, even as a lesser god I’m afraid his power is—”

“He’s started to raise his divine essence,” Tyr interrupted at that instant, causing Mystra to calm down and begin sensing the movements in Dis.

Divine essence was the proof of a god’s strength. To an extent, it was even more important than their position in their domain, giving them their divine rank. Some ordinary true gods, if they accumulated divine essence the moment they advanced, would just be jokes at divine rank 0.

To be at divine rank 1 just as one advanced to become a lesser god could be considered very good, while rank 2s and 3s were rare geniuses. Of course, this didn’t count those like Cyric, who had the fortune to inherit the divinity of powerful gods. Those were special cases, and could not be compared to the rest.

“He’s begun… Did he break through to rank 3 directly? He really is a genius!” Just as Mystra was speaking, the two gods’ eyes suddenly bulged.
They sensed Leylin’s divine rank rising rapidly, not slowing in the slightest after he reached rank 3. He broke through rank 4 and 5, slowing down only when he reached rank 6. He’d become rank 7 in a flash.

“Divine rank 7, near the peak of the lesser gods… His talent is really—” Tyr laughed bitterly.

“No, it’s still rising!” However, Mystra’s face changed. She sensed Leylin still growing after rank 7, breaking through to rank 8 before he stopped. He was now at the pinnacle of lesser gods!

“Divine rank 8, the pinnacle of the lesser gods… Just one level away from being an intermediate god… He’s a monster! A monster!”

Tyr and Mystra discovered that they had nothing else to say. One’s divine rank represented their power, and was the most direct way of determining a god’s battle capability. Those upto rank 8 were lesser gods, 9-17 were intermediate gods, and those at 18 and above were categorised as greater gods.

The higher one’s rank, the greater their power. As well, the abilities their divine spark granted them also grew more terrifying. Leylin was currently at the pinnacle of lesser gods, only one breakthrough away from being an intermediate god!

……

Leylin was currently focused on his own transformation, the A.I. Chip frantically updating his status as many prompts surfaced.

[Beep! Host has ascended to godhood, divine rank 8.] [Beep! Host is affected by divinity, all primary stats +8.] [Beep! Arcanist rank has been supplemented by divine rank, level +8. Host is currently a rank 35 arcanist.] [Beep! Host has obtained the divine abilities—Warp Reality, Epic Massacre.]

Leylin instantly felt his own power evolve greatly. Unlike the rest of
the astral plane, even one stat point in the World of Gods caused a drastic change. Even those with powerful divine force only had their stats floating around the fifties. “No wonder demigods can’t contend with true gods… So advancing causes such terrifying changes…” Leylin muttered.

[Host attributes have changed, refreshing status.]
The A.I. Chip soon projected the new statistics to Leylin. His status had experienced a heaven-rending change, and the new additions due to his godhood attracted his attention.

[Leylin Faulen:
Race: Human(Lesser God).
Divine Name: Kukulkan, the God of Massacre.
Alignment: Lawful Evil.
Divine Domain: Massacre.
Divine Kingdom: Dis.
Divine Rank: 8.
Worshippers: Natives, Devils, Adventurers, Clerics.
Worshipper Alignments: True Neutral, Neutral Evil, Lawful Evil.
Divine Abilities: Warp Reality, Epic Massacre]

“There’s a separate divine name?” Leylin’s eyes stopped at his divine name for a moment. He’d chosen that instead of his original name because of some plans for the future. Skimming through his new status, Leylin’s attention fell to the abilities granted by his divine spark. The A.I. Chip showed him the explanations of the two:

[Warp Reality: Anything can be changed in the presence of a god.
Host can consume divine force to change the laws in the material planes, Hell, Heaven, the Abyss, and even hostile divine kingdoms. Range is limited by divine rank. [Epic Massacre: Host can obtain divine force by conducting massacres. Any gods killed by the host’s true body will have their divine spirits thoroughly exterminated.]

Although the explanations were simple, they caused Leylin to suck in a cold breath, ‘Such formidable powers of massacre, this is what true gods rely on!’

Even though he’d skipped right to the peak of lesser godhood, Leylin didn’t have the slightest amount of doubt. After all, a god’s strength was directly connected to their divine kingdom. Take Avernus for example, the First Hell. There were two gods within it, the God of Kobolds Kurtulmak and the God of the Sahuagina Sekolah. Still, a vast region of it remained unoccupied. Leylin, on the other hand, had swallowed the entirety of the Second Hell, the lands he possessed far surpassing the two combined. Moreover, he had built a perfect divine kingdom without having to waste the slightest amount of divine force, and this in spite of only being a lesser god. Even compared to the gods, the word genius wasn’t enough to describe him. Instead, he befit the title of monster!

With the sheer size of Dis, Leylin didn’t have to spend much effort perfecting his divine kingdom. He’d even acquired a great number of devil hunters. Besides, he himself had advanced to the peak of lesser gods, with abundant divine force.

More importantly, the cards he had prepared for his ascension had been hidden away, and not all of them had been revealed. ‘This is much better than what I anticipated. The worst case scenario didn’t come into play.’ Leylin had been prepared to reveal his identity as a Magus if worse came to worst, falling out with the gods and killing Mystra directly as he restarted the Final War. Right
now, however, time stood on his side. He could spend his time accumulating power, to great effect once the war did come back. ‘It’s not good to leave my cards hidden… I should at least reveal my power and determination!’ Resolution flashed across Leylin’s eyes, and Thultanthar glowed with a chilly radiance inside his semi-plane. It was like a ferocious ancient beast, ready to devour its prey. All of Dis was now under Leylin’s control, having become his divine kingdom. Just a thought caused space to flicker as a few silhouettes appeared in front of him.

“My Lord!” Two devil hunters saluted obediently the moment they saw him.

“Tiff!” Leylin instead called out to his pope, “You shall spread my glory around the world.”

Leylin waved his hands, and a surge of divine power gushed out of them. A golden radiance fell upon Tiff’s body, and the original papal symbol that was a demigod weapon cheered as it entered the ranks of true divine weapons.

“Your will shall spread through the entire world, my Lord!” Tiff piously got on his knees to pay his respects.
Tiff’s transformation didn’t end there. Leylin had showered the man with divine grace, raising him to a legendary priest immediately. This ability was unique to true gods. Demigods could only give their priests rank 0 to rank 5 divine spells, while true gods could go all the way up to rank 9, even legendary divine spells like Revive that only existed in rumours! This was also the basis of the influence of true gods’ churches. In the past, Leylin was limited to guarding his worshippers on Debanks Island, but now he could move outside and attack like any other god. Tiff knew this, and it naturally caused him to be flooded with emotion. He was on the verge of tears. “Return and placate the worshippers on Debanks Island. Their lives will remain like they were on the prime material plane, maybe even better.” Leylin waved a hand, and space fluctuated once more as Tiff was returned to his original location. Truth be told, although fusing Dis with Debanks was good for Leylin, this was not necessarily so for the natives of Debanks Island. They were residents of the prime material plane, and being told that their lands had fallen down to the Nine Hells could terrify them to death. Some might commit suicide, or just go mad. After all, the churches indoctrinated the prime material plane with Baator being a synonym for the evil devils. Thankfully the natives
weren’t as affected since they knew little about Baator and the propaganda around it. They put their faith in the Giant Serpent, and with the pope personally telling them that their lives would only be better, they would likely settle down.

“Isabel, Azlok, Borke!” Leylin turned to his cousin and the two other large devils.

“You did well!” He started with expressing his approval, then moved on to the main question, “How are the war preparations?”

“The devil hunters are ready and waiting,” Isabel said with a bow. “The flame devils and armies of gluttony are prepared to receive your orders.”

Azlok and Borke bowed elegantly as well, their eyes full of a thirst for battle and unification. Devils liked order, and unification and laws were a representation of that. All the Lords of Baator were unsatisfied with its current segmented nature, and now these two believed they’d found a chance to combine the Nine Hells once more!

“Good. Begin operations immediately,” Space flickered, and the three figures disappeared. Dis began to make an abrupt move. All higher existences shifted their attention to the Nine Hells once more. The Second Hell glowed with divinity, causing all the divine consciences watching to be filled with suspicion and confusion.

In their view, Leylin should have kept a low profile as a newly advance god, amassing his strength. Instead, he was doing something so eye-catching right after his ascension!

[Beep! Host body has created an avatar. 100 divine force consumed.] [Beep! Host body has created an avatar. 100 divine force consumed.] [Beep! Host body has created an avatar. 100 divine force consumed.]

Three bright balls of golden light separated themselves from Leylin, warping in the air to three doppelgangers that looked exactly the same as him.
They were avatars, something every god acquired the ability to make after ascension. However, Leylin had been exceptionally quick in this, and that was thanks to the A.I. Chip. These three avatars all possessed a holy lustre, their golden pupils radiating the cold dignity of the divine. Leylin didn’t have to give them any commands, they already knew what to do.
*Rumble!* The three avatars left instantly. Reappearing in front of Isabel and the army of devil hunters.
Isabel raised the Red Dragon Sword high up, announcing, “The Lord has sent us a decree. The target is Minauros. In the name of the Lord, ATTACK!”
“In the name of the Lord!” “The mighty Kukulkan is watching us!” Huge portals opened up, and the devil hunters called out Leylin’s true name as they marched into the battlefield.
In front of them was a nasty, loathsome marsh. There were numerous imps and lemures here, stunned to see this large army all of a sudden.
One of Leylin’s avatars walked to the head of the army, body suddenly radiating an inexhaustible light, “Begin the divine battle!”
*Rumble!* Dis began to emanate bright light that corroded Minauros unceasingly, fusing with the light from Leylin’s avatar. Divine light shone to quickly neutralise Minauros, and what had been a filthy marsh dried up, congealing into solid ground.
“Go!” The devil hunters charged forward, a great battle was about to begin!
“Our mission here is just to control the battle. With the two avatars and the help of my divine kingdom, there won’t be any issues with keeping the frontlines of the battle here for a while.” Leylin’s two remaining avatars were in deep discussion with Isabel at the heart of the army.
“If it’s necessary, sacrifice the avatars. That should be enough to
hold Mammon back for a while…” Leylin’s avatar glimmered with golden light, smiling gently as he spoke.
“You mean this attack is a feint? Then your true motive…” Isabel’s eyes went wide.
“This place is one of my targets as well. But before that…” Leylin chuckled.

The earth rumbled, as even greater power radiated than before. Divine light filled the First Hell, and in that moment the laws of Leylin’s divine kingdom fused with the original laws of hell to begin remodelling everything.

Those gazing upon Baator from the outside would see an extremely interesting scene. Avernus and Minauros, as the First and Third Hells respectively, had originally been sandwiching Dis between them. Now, Dis began to emanate a bright lustre that was corroding these two Hells of Baator.

Minauros was only slightly affected, but Avernus was taken over completely. Under Azlok and Borke, large numbers of devils had broken through into Avernus from Dis.
Numerous powerful conscients arrived in the place in a moment, filled with anxious questions and terrifying roars. Nothing could exceed this situation in its abruptness!

‘So what if you’re true gods? What if Mammon is a Lord of Baator? If I don’t do this now, there won’t be a better chance in the future!’ Leylin was incomparably calm at the centre of this storm. He seemed extremely resolute, ignoring the intent of the two gods of Avernus to negotiate. Once he made up his mind about something, he would never change.

Amidst the army at Minauros, Leylin’s avatar was still speaking to Isabel.

“There’s three reasons I want to seize two of the hells immediately,” he said frankly, “First and foremost, my divine kingdom is but one of the Nine Hells. If I don’t occupy more and gain the upper hand,
the other Lords will definitely unify to resist me. While I’m not afraid of them, I’d lose the opportunity to grow further.
“However, if I can fuse the first three layers, I’ll immediately have the power to choose between attack and defence. The rest of the Lords aren’t of one mind, and I’ll be able to rope them in or attack them individually.”
“Ah. Since Asmodeus was gravely injured by the origin force during the descent of the divine kingdom, he can’t come out anymore. The rest of the Lords are leaderless, so they can’t work together now?” Isabel seemed to understand.
“Yes. Making use of the momentum of becoming a true god, I’ll suppress them and give them no chance to react or establish ties with me. In the future we can learn of each other better, then it’ll be even more difficult for them to reach an understanding amongst themselves. Instead they’ll serve me… After we take these two Hells, we’ll be stronger than them. We won’t be afraid of being overthrown!”
“The second reason is for the other gods to see,” Leylin’s eyes glimmered with wisdom.
“The other gods?” Isabel exclaimed in surprise.
“I am one of the gods, after all. They see me as an enemy and want to beat me down, so I need a reason to do this. If I attack the devils and conquer Baator, won’t that be a great pretext? I’m sure it’ll garner support from some of the good gods. More importantly, even the gods that detest me will be happy to see me expend my energy on fighting the devils, so they’ll lower their guard…”
“Making use of this time to lower their guard…” At this point, Isabel was beginning to understand Leylin’s overall strategy, and she respected it a great deal.
“But…” She bit at her lips, worry evident from the crease between her eyebrows, “Two Hells… Even if we catch one by surprise and the reinforcements can’t come in time, two true gods and one Lord
of Baator… Can we really take them down like this?”
“That’s the third point,” Leylin lifted his brows, looking decisive and unyielding, “We won’t just win, we’ll do it beautifully! That way, we can completely terrify everyone who’s unsure!”
This was Leylin’s main intention, and after thinking it through properly even Isabel had to admit that as long as Leylin’s plan succeeded he would truly be able to stand on his own two feet amongst the gods. He would no longer be afraid of any uprisings against him.
Even after understanding all this, Isabel still watched Leylin with worry, “Are you confident?”
“A 100%!” Leylin’s boundless confidence was evident in his smile. His divine body took one step forward, and arrived inside his concealed semi-plane.
“‘Master!’” Shaylin and Illyrio appeared atop the flying city, “Thultanthar is ready for launch!”
The ancient Netherese had established the splendour of the arcanists. In the period of darkness after the dusk of the gods, the arcanists had saved the commoners from savagery and foolishness, building a civilisation the gods themselves feared! Combined with their flying cities, ancient great arcanists had the power to kill gods themselves! The gods would not stand such an affront to their existence, and the arcanists who coveted origin force and touched on several taboos were exterminated. However, that very war that had destroyed the Netheril Empire had also gravely hurt the gods. Many had fallen, and the numbers of gods decreased without end. Because of this painful lesson, the arcanists became taboo and were annihilated by numerous churches. All tomes related to the Netheril Empire were destroyed, creating another era of savagery. One flying city of the arcanists had managed to survive that period, and at a specified time it had returned to the prime material plane. It was in the western desert the Thultanthar fell into Leylin’s hands. Having obtained such an instrument of death, Leylin had left it alone. Even though he’d met some crises before he hadn’t allowed the City of Shadows to reveal itself. Firstly, he’d been waiting to use this card at the best possible moment, and secondly he was working on understanding everything about it and remodelling it to his desires. If it had to do
with Distorted Shadow, Leylin would not let his guard down.
Right now, the Adept Scepter of the Monarch of the Skies, the
elemental radiation of the Magus World, Dreamscape, and the
Shadow World, and all sorts of other high-energy sources had been
piled into Thultanthar, giving it a great boost in power. It had
grown to become the ultimate slaughter machine!
As well, Leylin was currently a rank 35 arcanist. The power that
would result from him working in conjunction with the city was
something even the A.I. Chip could not calculate.
“Master! Thultanthar heeds your call!” The city’s fairy Shaylin and
the skeleton lich Illyrio knelt before Leylin, awaiting orders. Leylin
had now become a true god, and his imposing aura far exceeded
that in the past. These two beings were filled with reverence.
“Mm, I sense that.” Leylin had now been in possession of
Thultanthar for a long time, and was naturally attuned to its
changes. It was no exaggeration to say that the City of Shadows
had experienced a complete transformation, the city’s primary
material becoming silvery-grey metal. The primary cannons had
been restored completely, and the diamond golems were fully
armoured, awaiting orders.
What Leylin found most satisfying was the addition of the Shadow
Weave. How could he have let the information he got from Shar go
to waste? He’d obviously used it to immediately remodel Shadow
City.
[Beep! Connected to Thultanthar’s core authority. Shadow Weave
construction at 100%. Overall performance estimated to have been
raised by 37%.] The A.I. Chip loyally sent information regarding
the City of Shadows.
As long as the A.I. Chip was around, Leylin had no need to fear
betrayal by Shaylin and Illyrio, even at the same time.
‘With the Shadow Weave built, not only can I obtain power from
the outer Weave directly, I’m immune to all offensive magic from
rank 0 to rank 9. Most importantly, I don’t need to care about Mystra’s interference.’
This was easy to comprehend. The Shadow Weave had been created specifically by Shar to steal Mystra’s power. How could she have any control over this?
‘With the A.I. Chip’s analyses of the true Weave extending the Shadow Weave, I can now steal Mystra’s divine force directly… Of course, that can only be used as a way to kill her…’ Leylin’s figure instantly appeared in the control room of Shadow City, where he sat at the throne high up and above.
“How can the birth of a true god not be built on the ichor of the other gods?” Leylin snickered, while the A.I. Chip’s prompts continued to show. [Beep! Systems launch complete, beginning spatial jump!]
*Rumble!* Terrifying spacetime undulations erupted out, and the huge city disappeared in an instant. When it appeared once more, its surroundings had changed.
This was a deep blue sea that spanned as far as they eye could see. Sharkmen could be seen on occasion, and numerous petitioners were resting on a beach. The lustre of valiant and holy spirits brightened the skies.
Shrines filled the scattered islands, and there was a huge feeling of pressure in the skies. A great amount of divine lustre seemed to be on the verge of seeping into Thultanthar, filled with the great suppression from laws.
There was no question about it. This was the divine kingdom of a true god!
*Bzzt bzzt!* The appearance of the floating city caused great distress to the surrounding petitioners. Numerous sharkmen roared, hissed, and had various other reactions. Some fled, while others gathered around.
“Who is it that dares encroach upon our Lord’s divine kingdom?”
A few powerful holy spirits approached from the skies, yelling out loud. Indeed, they were in the divine kingdom of the god of the Sahuagin, Sekolah. A long period of accumulation had turned this place into a sturdy nest, and Leylin could currently see a dozen holy spirits around him, all powerful beings comparable to rank 6 Magi! However, in Leylin’s eyes, they were merely trying to do something impossible.

“Little worms shouldn’t try to speak here. You don’t even meet the requirements for me to use the main cannons on you.” Leylin waved his arms around casually, and Thultanthar’s auxiliary cannons shot out a malicious light. A powerful web of energy formed a black hole that melted away the surrounding holy spirits. Just one move decimated the surrounding space, and Thultanthar had only revealed one part of itself.

Numerous petitioners cried and yelled as they fled. When had they, who dwelled in the divine kingdom, ever seen a battle at this level? “Sekolah!” “Sekolah, my Lord!” The pious worshippers shouted out in prayer, the power of faith filling the skies above the ocean. *Rumble!* Lightning appeared on the blue horizon, and a terrifying suppressive force lowered the flying city’s strength.

An avatar walked over, radiating golden light. He looked like a sharkman, his eyes filled with a cold ruthlessness, “God of Massacre, Kukulkan, why do you invade my divine kingdom?” Although Sekolah was merely a lesser god, and this moreso was only an avatar, it held power akin to that of a true god with the help of his divine kingdom.

“Protector of the Sharkmen, God of the Ocean, Sekolah!” Leylin’s figure appeared outside Thultanthar. In front of a true god, he still needed to be polite. “I wish for you to move your divine kingdom away, so there won’t be any pointless conflict between us.” Leylin had been serious with his conditions, but it left Sekolah
feeling extremely enraged.
“Greedy god, you must pay for what you did today!” Asking a true
god to move their divine kingdom was an absolute insult. It would
have been strange if Sekolah agreed.
The ocean seethed with his rage, turbulent storms appearing in the
skies. The weather within a divine kingdom indicated the god’s
mood, and having stayed in Baator for a long time Sekolah
obviously possessed the malevolence of the devils as he snarled.
“I knew this wouldn’t work…” Upon seeing this, Leylin sighed.
“You gave up your last chance, Sekolah…” His figure gradually
dissipated.
“This isn’t a negotiation but an obvious challenge. I’ll satisfy you!”
Sekolah waved his hand, and powerful sharkmen armies appeared
from the depths of the ocean. They radiated with energy, power
gathering at their hands to form mottled attacks.
“Ready. Shoot!” A holy spirit waved his arm, and numerous bows
thundered as they shot a rain of arrows onto Thultanthar. On the
other side, a barrage of magic attacks drowned out the flying city.
When fighting in the divine kingdom of a god, one had to face the
frightening attacks of an unending sea of people.
“Face my fury!” Sekolah snarled as well, the terrifying pressure of
his divine kingdom appearing once more as lightning crashed
down on the City of Shadows.
Gods, in their divine kingdoms, possessed unimaginable might.
Even greater gods had to pay a terrible price to slay one, requiring
several centuries to recover.
[Beep! Launching Shadow Weave.] With the A.I. Chip’s prompt, a
translucent layer of the Shadow Weave appeared and protected
Shadow City. Any attack, be it physical or magical, lost all form in
front of the Weave as long as it didn’t possess legendary might. In
fact, the energy of such attacks was actually absorbed by the
Shadow Weave.
A tremendous stream of data entered Thultantanhar, and the city seemed to spread its wings. The invisible Shadow Weave spread out, emitting unfathomable spatial undulations.

The Netherese Core of the flying city began to roar violently, transmitting terrifying energy to all parts of Thultantanhar. A power of law radiated out that was tailored to counter the laws of the divine kingdom, and a hazy fog melted the lightning in the sky away.

“This is... Flying city!” Sekolah exclaimed in shock. The flying cities of the arcanists could contend with divine kingdoms, and they naturally had techniques specifically to destroy them.

‘The construction of this divine kingdom... I can see how the Magi from then failed...’ Leylin sighed, appearing in front of the Netherese Core in an instant.

“Let me see the power of the arcanists to kill gods!” Heat radiated from Leylin’s eyes. The Shadow Weave allowed him to connect to the core, and his power as a rank 35 arcanist was emitted without reservation.

Afterwards, incomparably terrifying energy arose from Thultantanhar, attracting the attention of all beings high above.

*Rumble!*
Light!
White light!
A scorching, dazzling brilliance that seemed to come from multiple worlds radiated origin force as it was launched from Thultanthar’s primary cannon. This was a fusion of a great arcanist and a flying city, possessing the power to kill gods! Such might showed itself once more in this world, causing many existences to cry out in alarm.

*Rumble!* Space shattered in the divine kingdom, and the avatar melted away under the white light. The light cut a path of destruction through the ocean, eliminating anything in its way. Shrines, holy spirits, or obstacles, they were all reduced to dust under the light, before even that dust was reduced to nothingness.

*Boom!* The white light finally burst through the divine kingdom, breaking through the confines of the First Hell to disappear into the endless void.

“AAAAAH!” Sekolah’s divine kingdom had received a massive amount of damage. Numerous petitioners perished in an instant, and many more valiant and holy spirits cried out in pain.

[Beep! True body discovered, sniping down.] The terrifying City of Shadows swept through numerous churches immediately, the powerful Shadow Weave spreading its tendrils to form Sekolah’s true body out.

The true body of the Sahuagin God was much larger than his
avatar. He looked to be made of gold, but he’d already lost an arm, the area around him horrifyingly translucent. This ease evidently due to to the main cannon firing just now. “Wait… I’ll admit defeat and leave Baator!” Sekolah yelled loudly. “Too late. I need the fall of a true god to pave my path to victory. This will intimidate the other gods as well…” Leylin expressionlessly sent down the order., and the terrifying cannon rumbled once more… On the prime material plane, in a hidden church in the ocean. “Sekolah, my Lord, please protect us and ensure our victory in battle…” Guided by a priest, a group of sharkmen piously knelt down before a statue of the Sharkman God. As the Lord of the Sahuagin, Sekolah was the protector of the entire race. Without him, they would instantly lose 90% of their territory in the ocean! “Sekolah, my Lord… You are the Lord of the Ocean, the Protector of the Sahuagin…” Devout power of faith gathered in front of the statue, glimmering with traces of light. *Ka-cha!* However, at this very moment, slight shattering sounds could be heard from the statue. The sharkmen below exchanged glances. Finally, someone gathered the courage against the danger of profaning a god and looked up. Afterwards the poor man gaped, his mind going blank. “The… the statue…” The other sharkmen looked up, but were alarmed to find that the glimmer on the statue was dimming without end. Finally, with a loud crack, the holy light of the statue disintegrated. The entire statue began to fragment, and turned into little piles of dust. “Priest…” The sharkmen desperately looked for their priest, but found that he was now lying on the ground, the holy light leaving his body. He was twitching uncontrollably, a look of pain on his face as he lay unconscious.
All the sharkmen cried and yelled, feeling that the mighty existence had completely cut off all contact with them and left them feeling empty inside.

“Our god… Our god, Sekolah…” An elderly sharkman knelt on the ground, large drops of tears flowing from his eyes and turned into beads of pearls that fell to the surface of the ground, producing crisp sounds.

“God… our true god has fallen…” The rest of the sharkmen cried out, moving around helplessly like headless flies. The fall of their god was a calamity!

Without Sekolah’s protection, the sharkmen would lose all their priests, met with challenges that could wipe out the entire race. Mournful wails sounded as a bugle horn resounded in the seas. The Sahuagin Emperor had sent down an order. The entire race began to grieve, while remaining on their guard.

Unlike the prime material plane, the changes in the divine kingdom were far more terrifying. Layer after layer of chains undid themselves, and terrifying destructive storms poured in from the outerworld, causing great disasters. The petitioners and valiant spirits fell without the ability to resist, while the other beings and holy spirits didn’t fare much better.

Wide expanses of space crumbled. If nothing went wrong, the laws of Baator would enter and remodel the place once more, restoring it to the wasteland of bloody streams that was Avernus.

*Bzzt bzzt!* Thultanhar rumbled violently as it moved about the divine kingdom, bringing ruin and destruction everywhere it went. The city steamrolled all resistance.

[Beep! Treasure trove discovered, energy undulations at grade C.]

A dazzling shrine opened up, revealing a treasure trove filled with gems and other precious materials that contained energy. This was something Sekolah had accumulated after he ascended, but the City of Shadows took it all without reservation.
As a time-space fort, Thultanthar was essentially merged with the semi-plane it was created in. It had near endless space, and it would be no problem for it to store hundreds of such treasure troves.

Leylin was currently standing atop Thultanthar, allowing Shaylin to sweep through Sekolah’s divine kingdom in her excitement. He was paying attention to the greatest harvest of the battle.

[Beep! Law of devouring has been activated, 80% of the target’s divine force has been absorbed. Obtained divine domain: Sahuagin. Comprehension of the law of the ocean now at 17%.

‘As expected of a god of the World of Gods. Just killing one can give a Magus so many benefits…’ Leylin looked at the golden crystal in his hand and sighed. One could gain less than 10% of the accumulation of the opponent in a battle between Magi of laws, but that number rose to above 60% in a battle between a Magus and a god. With his law of devouring, Leylin could even go as high as 80%. It was no wonder that the gods and Magi were so envious of each other, and the Final War was without end.

“But… Sharkmen and the ocean? It looks like Sekolah is only the God of the Sahuagin, only understanding a little about the ocean. Who knows, he might not even have a minor domain in the ocean… But then again, there’s the Goddess of the Ocean and the Master of Storms who are both more powerful than him, how would he dare to dip his finger into the laws of the ocean? This bit of comprehension was likely because of natural accumulation as the God of a marine species…”

Leylin shook his head. He had no interest in the law of the ocean, much less the narrower domain of Sahuagin. Being the god of such a race was worthless to him, and it didn’t even qualify to be branded into his origin force weapon.

“I’m afraid I can only gift or trade…” Leylin stowed the crystal away, “The ocean gods should have a bit of interest in the faith of those sharkmen. More importantly, they’re aligned to chaos and
Since he’d chosen to side with evil, Leylin naturally wouldn’t help the good gods. He could still find a few allies amongst them.

Currently, the destructive storm had swept through the divine kingdom and eliminated all traces of Sekolah. Few even survived. In contrast, Thultanthar stood tall in the heart of the storm, the object of everyone’s terrified gazes.

This move had allowed Leylin to show the terror brought about by an arcanist using his flying city to the higher existences. They couldn’t help but recall the brutal memories of their war with the Netheril Empire.

Just at that time, violent tremors swept through the Nine Hells. One could see a divine kingdom glimmering with gold as it left Avernus, moving towards the boundless void. The God of Kobolds slowly appeared behind the translucent divine kingdom.

Seeing Sekolah’s fate, Kurtulmak had wisely chosen to escape. After all, his strength was about the same, so if Leylin could kill Sekolah he would face no trouble in killing him.

Moving one’s divine kingdom wasn’t similar to the situation after Leylin ascended to godhood. At that point in time, Leylin had the support of the origin forces of the prime material plane and Dis, reducing the energy required for movement. It was different for a realm that had already settled down. If it moved again, it wouldn’t just use up a lot of divine force but also cause great turmoil within the realm itself.

In spite of all this, Kurtulmak chose to leave. This meant only one thing: he was afraid, terrified of Leylin! If a true god took the first step to withdraw, Leylin’s reputation would definitely spread through the worlds.

With Kurtulmak gone, nobody could stop Leylin from expanding into Avernus anymore. Under Borke and Azlok, the army of flame
devils purged all resistance. With the descent of the floating city, the Bronze Citadel was taken over without any issues. The pit fiends who had been guarding the area had their heads thrown off the city walls. The brilliance of Leylin’s divine kingdom finally spread all over Avernus, and the two planes slowly began to fuse.

“Damn it… He’s remodelling his divine kingdom too quickly… Is this because of the momentum from his ascension, or because he’s a Lord of Baator?” Glasya watched Thultanthar from outside Avernus. Seeing the city that looked like a heavenly country, she gritted her teeth before leaving, choosing not to attack. Glasya had no confidence of victory in front of a true god’s divine kingdom. More importantly, her father’s main body was grievously injured, and their allies had became unreliable. She did not have the energy to waste here.

The laws of the devils were much more cruel than those in the mortal world. Asmodeus, who was seriously injured, had become prey to many of the Archdevils. This included even her, a Lord who had risen from his shadow.
It wasn’t just the archdevils watching the changes in Baator. High up in the skies, Mystra looked away. “What a pity… if the archdevils of hell were more united, this would definitely cause a huge blow to the God of Massacre…” “Wanting those sly devils to work together is like wanting them to abide by the rules…” The God of Justice Tyr spoke up at the side. Due to the nature of his domain, he felt no goodwill towards these evil beings. “That’s true!” Mystra laughed wryly. She obviously knew what the devils were like. Every second was spent hating on their superiors, as well as scheming to obtain greater status. Things would’ve been alright if Asmodeus wasn’t injured, and with his prestige he would have been able to construct a joint army, however he’d been smashed back into the depths of Nessus when he was trying to stop the divine kingdom from descending. This injury arose from going against a sea of origin force, and even Asmodeus would have to spend a long time recovering. Would Leylin let a chance like this slip by? Worry was evident in Mystra’s eyes. “He’s now unstoppable,” Tyr stated. His voice was full of helplessness, and he seemed to see how troubled Mystra was. “If it was just a lesser god at rank 8, we could’ve launched a holy war against him. As long as we didn’t mind the consumption of energy, we would’ve been able to knock him off his throne in a few
centuries… Unfortunately…”
Mystra looked at Thultanthar that was within Leylin’s divine kingdom, knowing what Tyr was afraid of. They wouldn’t be scared off by a divine kingdom, nor by a great arcanist and a flying city. However, if the two were to be fused together, the power boost wasn’t just additive.
A flying city supported by a divine kingdom? Even the great arcanists of Netheril hadn’t considered such a thing!
On top of that, Leylin’s arcanist ranking was 35! Even in the Netheril Era he would’ve been at an unstoppable peak. He was an existence able to kill gods! Such a high-ranked arcanist and a flying city was a nightmare to all the gods.
Divine beings had enormous calculative abilities, and Mystra understood the price that had to be paid to wipe Leylin out, “Even a greater god will face destruction of their divine kingdom, and their divine force will be weakened to the limit. They’ll enter a coma, and who knows how many tens of thousands of years it will take to recover…”
For the gods, a greater god on the verge of falling was the tastiest prey. So here came the question. Which greater god would be so selfless as to give up their lives in order to exterminate Leylin? Gods were all selfish. As long as they predicted any loss, they would immediately give up. This was why Tyr felt that Leylin was now unstoppable.
“Thankfully… Much of his power is caught up in Baator. With Asmodeus and the archdevils around, he’ll be stuck in a standoff for a long while. It wouldn’t be a wonder if it took thousands or tens of thousands of years…” Clearly deluding herself, Mystra could only let things go according to Leylin’s plans and lie low.
“In this time, we’ll definitely find a way to stop him!” Tyr expressed his approval of this plan. The battles of gods were always very long, and there was nothing strange about them taking
Thousand millennia.

……

Third Hell, Minauros. The intense battle had been going on for a long time. The devil hunters of the Giant Serpent Church had easily suppressed the devils, but the devils in turn possessed astounding numbers and numerous powerful beings. The battle was at a standstill. The city of Jangling Hiter that hung above the marsh with chains had now been ruined. Countless kyton and devil hunter bodies were strewn all over the lands, quickly being devoured by the swamps. The commander of the kyton legions, Lord Mammon’s most trusted subordinate Quimas, had already had his head cut off by Isabel, a prize of war for the devil hunters. Unfortunately, even with the help of a Dragon Warlock and a god’s avatars, their advance had been stonewalled. That was because the Lord of Greed himself had descended in front of them, his serpentine lower half resting above the devil armies. Terrifying poison radiated from the trident in his hand, obstructing the path of the devil hunters. If not for the holy light from Leylin’s avatar protecting the army, all the devil hunters would be dead by now, contaminated by toxins. “The fires of greed shall burn you, and your souls shall fall into the marshes of corrosion…” Mammon waived the trident around, speaking a fatal curse. “There’s too much nonsense from you!” Leylin’s avatar floated in mid-air, and a portal appeared just then. *Rumble!* Spacetime fluctuated, and Thultanthar cast a massive shadow as it appeared overhead Minauros. “Hss… Master of Gluttony, God of Massacre… Leave, or you shall
be punished by the Lords of Baator!” Mammon stuck out his forked tongue, obviously frightened by the flying city and Leylin himself.

“Devil whose eyes are deceived by greed… have you not noticed yet?” Leylin descended from the flying city to look down on Mammon, “The reason I only come now is because I’ve reached an agreement with the remaining Lords. You… are to be abandoned.”

“No! No!” Mammon’s body twisted in unease. Evidently, as those lords had yet to send reinforcements after all this time, a great amount of psychological pressure and discouraging thoughts were already in his mind. Now that Leylin had uncovered them, the anxiety in his mind became more apparent.

The flying city extended the Shadow Weave, counteracting Mammon’s authority as an archdevil. Divine light invaded the area.

“We’re now on equal terms, with our main bodies against each other. The winner gets everything, while the loser shall turn into sludge!” Leylin’s main body walked down from above the flying city, looking like he had a cloak of golden light around him.

A Targaryen appeared in his eyes, hissing at Mammon. Its pupils betrayed a terrifying intent to devour its target, as if it had found prey it’d been hung up on for a long time.

……

*Rumble!* Not long after, the entirety of Baator was met with a horrifying change.

The light in Dis moved to the Third Hell of Minauros, and the first three Hells began to merge into a single body that was Leylin’s divine kingdom. Besides those immediately having faith in Leylin, the devils living in there and very much against him turned into soil. The power of evil was converted into fertiliser for his divine kingdom.
A few archdevils watched these changes from the lower Hells, fear evident in their eyes but unwilling to do anything to stop it. None of them was a match for Leylin alone, and they didn’t have someone to band around. Asmodeus was gravely injured, his coma causing intense unrest in Baator.

However, Leylin’s divine kingdom had also reached its limit after taking over three hells in total. His divine force was at a critical point, so he halted his movements. The divine light faded, allowing the many archdevils and higher existences to heave a sigh of relief.

Within the divine kingdom, Leylin who was standing on top of the flying city was clearly thrilled. Though this operation was extremely risky, he had succeeded! From hereon, even if the other Lords were to band together and resist him, he now had the means to contend with them! He also had no need to fear other gods interfering!

[Beep! Primary body’s law of devouring is in action. Comprehension of law of greed: 100%. Divine domain condensed: Greed.] The A.I. Chip’s prompts came to view.

‘It’s actually 100%… Is it because he’s a devil and we’re essentially the same, and also that the law of greed is compatible with me?’ Leylin stroked his chin, looking to his refreshed status.

[Leylin Faulen:
Race: Human(Lesser God).
Divine Name: Kukulkan, the God of Massacre.
Alignment: Lawful Evil.
Divine Domain: Massacre, Greed.
Divine Kingdom: Avernus, Dis, Minauros(Merged)
Divine Rank: 8.
Worshippers: Natives, Devils, Adventurers, Clerics.
Worshipper Alignments: True Neutral, Neutral Evil, Lawful Evil.
Divine Abilities: Warp Reality, Epic Massacre]
‘No rise to my divine rank?’ Leylin closed his eyes for a long while and sighed. However, he had expected such a result. He was now already a peak lesser god, and if he were to raise his rank slightly, he would become an intermediate god!
An intermediate god in the World of Gods was akin to a rank 8 Magus, grasping multiple laws and nearly immortal. The Snake Dowager, Trial’s Eye, Nefarious Filthbird and other great existences that had their names spread far across worlds were only average. How could they have advanced so easily?
“Three levels is enough. I need to keep a certain amount of divine force in case of any surprise situations. The newly-merged planes of hell and the devils also need to be reorganised…”
Leylin looked underneath Minauros, where a few archdevils looked at the divine kingdom up ahead cautiously, eyes showing their fear.
“Let’s leave things like this for now…”
Leylin smiled, and then drew up an armistice for a hundred years to the bottom layers of hell. Those devil archdukes must be eager for that.
The waves from the ascension of numerous demigods soon died down. While most of them had failed, the one who had succeeded managed to spread his name across multiple worlds. Even the most ignorant and ill-informed of people who stayed in labs all day long or liches deep in sleep heard of the God of Massacre, the Ruler of Devils. The golden light glimmering from the divine kingdom that spanned the first three levels of Baator was enough proof of Leylin’s unmeasurable strength. The Nine Hells had, because of Leylin’s arrival, undergone a massive change. Souls that fell to Baator now moved along the Styx to reach the Fourth Hell Phlegethos, governed by Samuel. Only his own worshippers would enter his divine kingdom. In other words, Leylin had used the souls of his own followers to replace the primordial contract that governed the harvest of fallen souls. With this foundation overturned, Asmodeus could no longer control the first three levels of Baator. However, Leylin still had very few worshippers when compared to the number of souls that used to fall to the three Hells. Even with the faith of the natives, these numbers did not measure up to the original harvest of the first three Hells. However, Leylin did not mind at all. His divine kingdom needed to be reorganised, and having too many devils was nothing good. Asmodeus might have dreamed all his life of becoming the lord of
all devils, but that was not what he was pursuing. Few of his worshippers in the prime material plane wished to become lemures…
The burning Iron City at the core of Dis was long gone, in its place a region with birdsong and fragrant flowers that looked like utopia. A holy mountain made of white jade towered into the clouds, with a huge shrine atop it.
Countless petitioners piously prayed and thanked their god for the favour, and golden power of faith illuminated the skies.
“My Lord!” Tiff entered the shrine quickly, bowing to Leylin who was on his throne, “The flame devil army and other devils have been reorganised. Of them, a total of…” Tiff reported the number of devils willing to serve Leylin. Leylin lifted his brows, making an inference based on the information in an instant.
The first three levels of Baator were now entirely Leylin’s territory. Those who did not submit would either be expelled or killed, becoming fertiliser for his divine kingdom. Those able to live up to this point were naturally all his followers.
Of course, it was hilarious to expect faith from devils.
“Mm, you did well!” Leylin nodded, acknowledging Tiff for his work. “Bringing the church to Baator was just a plan of convenience. Be prepared. We can’t give up the intelligence network we’ve established on the prime material plane either…”
All gods treated the prime material plane as the biggest cake, as it was their main source of faith. While Leylin had moved Debanks Island and the native empire to the divine kingdom to be used as his own territory, the faith in the prime material plane could not be abandoned.
He was now a true god! He had nothing to fear when up against the other gods’ churches, and could grant his priests spells up to rank 8! This was the largest difference between a true god and a false god. This was the best time to spread faith.
“Understood! Your will is our command!” Tiff respectfully accepted Leylin’s order.
“Mm. Also, I’ll personally bring you to spread faith and describe my divine kingdom…” With a thought, the space transformed and he and Tiff arrived high in the skies. In the divine kingdom, Leylin was everything! Nothing could halt his will.
Describing the divine kingdom of a true god was an important mission for Tiff, the pope, who had entered the divine kingdom before.
“In general… all living beings wish for something better. Even gods cannot stop their desires…” Leylin spoke.
Tiff looked around. The treacherous environment of Dis had turned to grasslands, with bright green shrubs everywhere giving it some vitality. Avernus and Minauros were undergoing the same changes, the soil becoming more fertile as regions of danger were wiped out.
In terms of the image, this was like turning hell into the mortal world, and perhaps someday, transforming it into heaven.
“Those who have faith in me wish to reach heaven after death and get a better life, which is why they’re willing to give me faith. This is a contract between them and the gods. Even greater gods can’t stop this…” Leylin waved his hand, and several scenes appeared. A few native petitioners were diligently farming some fertile land. Since it hadn’t been a long time from Leylin’s ascension, he had few dead followers. Dis could contain all of them, and there was a lot of space for more.
Leylin had partitioned out large areas for agriculture, and with just some work from the followers, heavy rice plants and fruit trees grew from the soil. Numerous petitioners prayed towards the holy mountain with their eyes brimming with tears, thanking Leylin for this miracle.
“This…” Tiff stared at Leylin in amazement.
“A petitioner doesn’t just pray all day long. This will only cause them to become rigid and rot away, or perhaps perish…” Leylin laughed, eyes glimmering with wisdom, “I’ve given them the opportunity to work, so that they understand the concept of obtaining things after putting in effort for it… Of course, this is my kingdom and I control the soil. They can put in less than a tenth of the effort and obtain tenfold or even hundredfold what they would have before… Even the laziest person can live comfortably…”

Tiff listened closely. When it came to the construction of a divine kingdom, it included Leylin’s understanding of the path of faith. As a pope, he needed to be on the same page as his god!

“Also… the feeling of superiority comes from comparison. In order for followers to understand how difficult it is to lead better lives, I’ve provided this…”

Leylin brought Tiff along and moved away. This time, they were at the boundaries of the divine kingdom, where some of the treacherous characteristics of hell remained.

Many lemures, soul shells, imps, and even chained evils, bone devils and other higher devils had chains around their feet as they moaned and shrieked. They were like slaves as they transported blazing rocks, constructing a fort and a better landscape.

“These are the devils who went against me. I’ve especially kept a few of them here…” At this moment, an imp cried out and fell down after being burned. The supervising devil hunter moved forward expressionlessly, lashing out with a whip filled with holy power.

*Pak!* The cleansing force from the whip was a punishment even more terrifying than barbs and poisonous hooks. Blood and flesh flew everywhere from the imp who had been hit, and it began to cry out. This caused the surrounding devils to tremble in fear.

“These devil slaves are in charge of the basic infrastructure in the divine kingdom. They don’t have much power… Every time a new
follower’s soul comes to the divine kingdom, you can bring them here to take a look…” A barely detectable smile appeared at the corner of Leylin’s lips.

In the divine kingdoms of other gods, all worshippers were treated equally, gaining eternal life. They did nothing, not living up to their true potential.

However, things were different here. With these lower devil slaves as a comparison, the followers would realise that the place they were living in was indeed heaven, which would give them motivation and increase the power of faith. That would be a huge profit for Leylin.

When it came to the suppression of these beings, Leylin and Tiff were expressionless, as if they had seen nothing. They were all unwavering people, and had seen more than their fair share of these happenings. As long as it was useful to them, they would never withdraw.

“I’ve prepared two choices for the new followers’ souls.” Leylin brought Tiff back to the shrine atop the holy mountain, beginning to state his plans.

“The common idea is to to live in the divine kingdom as a petitioner, becoming immortal as I am… On the other hand, they can turn into devils if they wish to, entering the army. Then they’ll follow the laws of Baator. This is very simple.”

“Also… I wish to for the original devils to be dealt with this way…” With a wave of his hands, Azlok, who had been a pit fiend, appeared, causing Tiff to exclaim.

He had obviously seen this devil commander before, but there was now a huge change to his form. He now had a translucent body that was glimmering with gold rays, causing Tiff to feel like he was approachable. He knew that the essence of this devil had undergone a change.

“Master…” Azlok’s eyes were full of fervour as he devoutly bowed
to Leylin.
“Discovered anything yet?” Leylin glanced at Tiff.
“This is… a holy spirit!” Tiff muttered.
“Mm! I’ve altered the form of the devil legions such that they have the characteristics of petitioners. From hereon out, they shall be the guards of my divine kingdom… If followers wish to turn, they will also achieve this form…”
There was no point in keeping the devils of the past. However, if he turned them into petitioners, that could increase the might of Leylin’s subordinates by a large extent, while providing him with some faith.
Leylin, who had three forms as an archdevil, true god, and Magus of laws, could make use of his own knowledge and the help from the A.I. Chip to transform devils into devil petitioners. This way, he could adequately make use of his resources. There was also no issue of estrangement between the two groups now.
“Hence… after coming to the divine kingdom, followers will still be in the form of petitioners. These devils are a personification of strength, akin to the emissaries of heaven…” Tiff’s eyes brightened as he quickly thought up a line.
“Mm! Let’s do as you deem fit…” Leylin waved his hand and let Tiff be on his way.
1132 - Paying A Visit

Telling him about the essentials of his divine kingdom and worshippers, Leylin left the responsibility of allocating duties to Tiff. The pope made preparations to take some people back to the prime material plane. Leylin paid little attention to all that, instead shifting his attention to the spoils of war. He had taken three of the Nine Hells in one move, alongside a chunk of the prime material plane. It had given him great profits, and the resources, treasures and the like couldn’t escape Leylin’s checks after Avernus and Minauros had been converted to his divine kingdom.

Unsurprisingly, the greatest profits were from the Sahuagin God Sekolah. He was after all a true god, and his accumulations over tens of thousands of years were definitely something. Just the treasure trove Thultanthar had found could fill up the greatest of warehouses, filling up a not insignificant portion of its dimensional space.

Shaylin and Illyrio spent their time doing inventory. With their knowledge, they probably wouldn’t let any valuable item slip by. It had to be said that after conquering a true god’s kingdom, Leylin was instantly much wealthier than before. He greatly increased his own resources, and was even regretful that he had let Kurtulmak go.

With the flying city having shown itself, the remaining gods definitely would be on their guard against such surprise attacks. It
wouldn’t be so easy to kill gods anymore.

“But… the greatest harvest is this!” Leylin turned his palm over, and a golden crystal appeared. It undulated with powerful laws, and just its presence caused small streams to appear in the surroundings. The sound of the ocean rang forth from the crystal, and the figures of numerous sahuagin, the sharkmen, could be seen living within.

Sekolah’s divine domain was that of the Sahuagin, and this was Leylin’s greatest harvest from killing him. It represented a complete law, able to cause other Magi of laws to go crazy. Even the gods that were interested in the faith of the Sahuagin, those related to the ocean, would be willing to pay a huge price to make an exchange with Leylin.

“It really isn’t very useful…” Leylin had no interest in a domain pertaining to a specific race. No god or demigod not related to the seas would be interested in it.

However, if he could condense the divine domain of the ocean instead, probably all of the gods would be in a hurry to obtain it. After all, much of the prime material plane was water, and the ocean was a source of faith able to support a greater god.

“There’s few able to make an exchange with me. If I were to choose… Umberlee and Talos?” There were many ocean domain deities, but even as a lesser god Leylin wouldn’t consider most of them. Those gods weren’t even comparable to him, and there wasn’t much use in getting them on his side. The only two choices were Umberlee the Intermediate Goddess of the Ocean, and the Greater God of Storms Talos.

‘Talos is obviously the better option when it comes to power, but it’s not always about power with allies. Besides, he’s of the storm domain and his faith is concentrated around the natives of numerous islands. He wouldn’t be as interested in beings of the ocean…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed with thought.
Just at that moment he sensed divine force approaching him, and he involuntarily revealed a smile.
*Whoosh!* The seas surged outside Leylin’s divine kingdom, and a god’s avatar stood upon the ocean spray.
She was dressed in flowing blue, the bottom of her clothing merged with the endless waves of the sea. Her look was one of divine dignity as she held what seemed to be a golden trident with endless waves rippling forth from its tip.
The lady did not advance, waiting outside his divine kingdom. The avatar of an intermediate god would still just be free food if they entered a lesser god’s divine kingdom. Instead she sent out her energy undulations, like an identification used when knocking on the door.
“Umberlee?” The unique nature of the divine force allowed Leylin to identify it in an instant.
“Welcome, my Lady!” He moved to the boundaries of his divine kingdom instantly, golden light opening up a path to enter. “I am the Master of Massacre, the Ruler of Devils. I express my goodwill to the Goddess of the Ocean.”
Umberlee squeezed out a slight smile and entered his divine kingdom, her fearlessness causing Leylin to nod to himself.
‘Rumours say Umberlee is a moody goddess, even capsizing a few ships at sea for fun and using such fear to obtain faith… It looks like she’s rather intelligent.’ This goddess had made quite a name for herself on the waters. There were many of the Scarlet Tigers who worshipped her.
Leylin was currently seeing another side of this goddess. She seemed calm and wise, ascertaining his goodwill with one look as she entered the divine kingdom of an unknown god without fear. She was both gutsy and scheming.
The two of them arrived at the huge church of the holy mountain. Watching Umberlee, Leylin suddenly revealed a smile, “Lady
Umberlee, may I know why you’re here today?”
“I’m here for the divinity of the sahuagin.” Umberlee had a hoarse voice, but there was a magnetic feel to it, sounding rather unique. She didn’t beat around the bush at all.
“Oh? While this divinity is indeed useless to me, why are you so sure I’d trade with you?” The smile about Leylin’s lips widened, “I have more than just one choice. There’s Talos as well, the God of Storms would probably want the faith of an ocean race. After all, the sharkmen are quite large in number…”
“Talos would just kill you and take all your divinities away,” Umberlee fiddled with the golden trident in her hands, “But I’m different. We’re close to each other in power, and without any conflict of interest we’d make for strong allies…”
“Haha… well said!” Leylin applauded, throwing the golden crystal over.
“Hmm?” Umberlee seemed slightly confused, evidently not expecting Leylin to be so generous. The crystal buzzed with excitement the moment it reached her hand, glowing water rippling around it as proof of the compatibility. Fusing with it wouldn’t require much effort.
“Aren’t you afraid I’ll just leave?” Umberlee looked at Leylin, as if trying to see through him.
“I believe in your reputation, my Lady, you’d treat another god with respect.” Leylin was very confident, not the least bit worried that she would not pay him back. Such self-confidence obviously came from his own strength, which caused a myriad of emotions to flash in her eyes.
“I came here for a trade. However, it seems I can’t quite satisfy you!” Umberlee laughed wryly, a similar golden crystal appearing in her hands. The faint sounds of blades clashing sounded from the crystal, full of the taste of blood and murder.
“Divinity in weaponry… While it’s incomplete, it’s more
compatible with your massacre domain. It shouldn’t take much divine force to mend it, this is one of my prized possessions…” Umberlee introduced.

“Not bad Those battle gods should like this… Unfortunately…” Leylin shook his head. Having chosen his path, he had no plans of lusting after other laws.

“Alright… well, what do you need?” It was obvious that Umberlee valued this divinity greatly. After all, the sahuagin were a huge race in the ocean, and obtaining this would allow her to consolidate her power in her own domain. There was no substitute.

If this crystal fell into the hands of another, they could make use of the sahuagins’ faith to have designs on her ocean domain. This was something she definitely couldn’t tolerate.

“An alliance, a single instance of help— with certain conditions of course—, and you need to guide me into the Celestial Hall.” Leylin stated his demands. Forming a so-called alliance and guiding him into the Celestial Hall would take Umberlee no effort at all. However, that one instance of assistance was somewhat useful.

Umberlee was rather surprised by Leylin’s lenience. It took her a long period of silence before she nodded.

“In my name as Umberlee, I swear to uphold a single request of the God of Massacre Kukulkan as long as it is within my capabilities…” The Styx materialised itself. An oath made to the abyssal river under the truename of a god was quite restrictive, and even greater gods wouldn’t be able to wriggle their way out of the situation. Leylin naturally eased up.

“The first time a new god enters the Celestial Hall, the palace of ten thousand gods, they need someone who’s already a god to lead their way. As your ally, I’m willing to be your guide.” Umberlee’s grim face seemed to loosen up, revealing a flowery smile.

……
At the highest point of the World of Gods, its core, was a boundless sea of origin force. A golden shrine floated within this sea. The doors held the power of spacetime, and the history of the entire world was engraved into the walls, detailing the rise of the many gods. It was filled with a sense of archaic wisdom. With just one look, Leylin felt his mind blown by the vastness and magnificence of the palace.

‘Spacetime strength… A domain only rank 9 Magi can touch upon…’ Leylin sighed with awe in his mind. Umberlee continued speaking to him. “The Celestial Hall was created by the Overgod, and only true gods qualify to enter it. It will remember your aura the first time you walk in, and a pedestal that is uniquely yours will be erected…”

‘Mm… Only legendary World Wills like those of the World of Gods and Magus World can imbue a place with spacetime powers…’ Leylin naturally knew that World Will of the World of Gods was referred to by the gods as their Overgod. It had incomparable strength, and even set up all of the gods’ laws. Its influence spanned across the various worlds that formed the cluster.

However, the World Wills of both the World of Gods and the Magus World had been greatly injured in the Final War, pushing them into a deep sleep as they recovered from the damage. The Overgod had sealed the World of Gods within the crystal sphere, resulting in the current situation.
The Celestial Hall, once ruled by the Overgod, was where all conflicts would end. It was known as the palace of a thousand gods, a place where all the deities would meet and discuss issues with other gods before presenting their case to the Overgod for judgement. The god in question would then be promoted or removed. Under the radiance of the Overgod, the many smaller worlds in the World of Gods had been operating smoothly. However, the Overgod has now fallen into a slumber now. This place has lost its original purpose and prestige, instead turning into a place for gods to converse.” Umberlee seemed to be reminiscing about the past. “The gods are now divided into different camps, each taking up laborious schemes and plots as they wildly amass wealth and power. They eye the seat of the Overgod.” Her voice grew fainter the more she spoke, and became ever more distant. The doors of the Celestial Hall seemed to buzz with the hymns of the gods and the law of spacetime. Umberlee motioned like she was unlocking them when she arrived, and they sensed her and opened up. Holy light radiated out of the Celestial Hall in an instant, shining brightly with the dignity that came with power. ‘The World Will of the World of Gods, their Overgod… So it’s been sleeping within the Celestial Hall…’ Leylin immediately
recognised this aura, it was similar to the one he’d experienced back in the Magus World.
It was like the Overgod was the entirety of the World of Gods. Even if he’d only come into contact with the World Will of the Magus World and that too when it was in deep slumber, he couldn’t be wrong about this. Leylin seemed to feel an affinity to the World Will, wanting to submit himself to it.
‘It really is an overgod, so frightening in spite of being deep asleep. If not for that baptism I experienced in my transmigration, and my essence being that of a Magus, this influence would’ve been even greater…’
“Pass the doors, and the Celestial Hall will affirm your position as a deity.”
Umberlee entered the hall first, and when Leylin went in he felt numerous piercing gazes on his body. The gazes of the divine beings within contained hostility, hatred, curiosity, apathy, and a myriad of other emotions. The gazes of the greater gods in particular could even annihilate someone with legendary might instantly.
However, Leylin was one of them now, and he was only here with his avatar. He had nothing to fear. Thus, he entered the Celestial Hall with extremely light footsteps.
*Boom!* At this instant, a will that that carried the changes of time peered into his soul. If not for him being reborn once into the World of Gods, his identity would have been exposed. Even then, Leylin had to frantically protect his secrets, the A.I. Chip’s light flashing continuously in his eyes.
‘A final confirmation of my identity, huh? So strong…’ Leylin smirked deep down, but he put on an expression of comfort. The Celestial Hall rumbled as a new divine pedestal rose from the ground. Leylin had passed the inspection, confirmed to be native to the World of Gods before he ascended.
Only after the terrifying inspection was over did Leylin look around the Celestial Hall in peace. Powerful energy waves were radiating from the pedestals with golden seats on them, carrying an imprint of origin force. Leylin could tell the identities of each with just a glance.

Greater gods, intermediate gods, lesser gods… Good gods, neutral gods, the wicked and the chaotic… The seats were arranged irregularly, but it was a picturesque sight that seemed to hold some order to it. The greater gods held the seats up front, their pedestals more than tenfold as large as those of the lesser gods. As well, the gods of the same alignment were seated together.

As a mere lesser god, Leylin’s pedestal rose up at the back of those with the evil alignment. Umberlee’s own seat was a fair distance away, close to those of the chaotic alignment as well. Her strength as an intermediate god radiated out, pushing the seats of lesser gods away from her.

She sent Leylin a message just as he took his seat. “You can see the laws the Overgod set up here. Even the greater gods cannot do anything about it… Also, we usually leave an avatar in this place to make it easy to contact each other.”

Leylin nodded in understanding. He shot a casual glance at Tyr and Mystra in the good and neutral camps, their gazes upon him carrying great hostility.

Of course, Leylin wasn’t afraid at all. After all, the Overgod itself had set up the laws in this place, and even if an avatar died it was no big deal.

‘So the Celestial Hall lost its original purpose once the Overgod entered its slumber, turning into a place for conversation and arguments, huh?’ Leylin stroked his chin, as he felt the obvious glances of the gods around him.

Most of the gods in the evil alignment looked at him gleefully, as if they were dying to know what would become of Leylin after facing
the wrath of two greater gods. It was basic instinct for them to plot and scheme against each other, and they were giving Leylin some respect by not participating in the battle. It was extremely normal for them to look at him in schadenfreude.

There was a gaze of fear amongst the many that contained mockery, and it was especially familiar to Leylin. He turned to the source of this gaze, finding the avatar of Kurtulmak the Kobold God. His divine radiance seemed rather dim, likely the after-effects of having to move his divine kingdom.

With both of them in the same camp, Kurtulmak was seated close to Leylin. However, his seat was behind Leylin’s own, seemingly because his divine rank was lower than his.

Leylin smiled as he met the respectful and fawning gaze of this Kobold God, but deep down he was contemptuous. The Kobold God was now scared of his prowess, but if there was a day that Leylin met his demise, this god would be the first to jump out manically and rip off a huge chunk of flesh from his body. However, Leylin would never give him this chance. Kurtulmak was destined to live under his shadow his entire life.

With fights banned and only avatars present, the atmosphere in the Celestial Hall was extremely relaxed. There were even many gods conversing in groups at the corners of the hall.

“It is indeed a good place to talk…” Leylin’s gaze swept past the gods, and he immediately noticed the centre of the hall. A massive throne was erected in that place, to be used by the leader of the gods. It seemed to unify all the deities, as if it was the core of the world.

Leylin’s astuteness told him that a powerful being was currently deep in slumber on that throne. The radiation of laws from the place was evident, similar to what happened in the Magus World. There was a layer of origin force crystals sealed around the throne of the Overgod, forming a mountain of origin force.
‘This is… world crystal!’ Leylin immediately recognised this crystal. However, it seemed even more useful than in Shar’s case, able to protect and not just seal. The throne was sealed within the world crystal, and the Overgod was within, deep in slumber.

World crystals were tens of thousands of times more powerful than origin force, and even the greater gods would not be able to break it apart even if they joined forces. It was this layer of protection that allowed the Overgod to unify the gods, and remain safe up to this day.

‘However…’ Leylin looked at the seats of the greater gods in front, his face filled with ridicule, ‘The World Will obviously sealed itself to protect itself from these greater gods… It seems like it already detected that it was at a disadvantage when it entered its sleep…’

This was a matter of course. Now that the greater gods stood at the apex of the World of Gods, a few would definitely want to take that last step to become the new Overgod. This desire would only be amplified by the World Will’s current slumber. The only reasons the Overgod had survived to this day were that the world crystal was protecting it, and the greater gods were being suppressed by each other.

‘In fact, the World Wills of the World of Gods and Magus World were the most powerful in the Final War. Looking at the setup here, it seems like the World Wills were either completely in the realm of rank 9 or quite nearby, incomparably close to immortality…’

Even with his divine gaze Leylin could only see a shroud of light within the world crystal, unable to view the original appearance of the Overgod. The laws around the crystal seemed to be greatly beneficial to all deities, so they would leave their avatars here. It was just like Magi observing the laws in the origin force sea. The affinity the gods had for origin force would increase in the Celestial Hall, making it easier for them to generate more divine force.

Leylin saw several avatars sitting quietly in the area, some even
turned to stone. They were apparently in the middle of comprehending some laws, and were possibly only a step away from ranking up.

‘I should think of a way to launch a devastating attack on it before the Final War commences…’ Leylin looked at the overgod’s royal seat, his eyes seemingly filled with reverence. Even greater gods who excelled in prophecies would never discover his true intentions.

‘I should probably use the ambitions of these greater gods. It won’t be such a bad idea…’ Leylin’s thoughts were as fast as lightning, and he immediately came up with a plan that was likely to succeed. The greater gods wanted the throne for themselves, so he could just fan the flames at the side and reap the greatest benefits with minimum effort. Pitting the gods against each other before the Final War was the best way to wear them down.

‘No matter how high and mighty you are, when the overgod returns, what will you guys become? One that does not become eternal is just an ant…’ Leylin’s eyes held a chilly apathy as his gaze swept across the Celestial Hall. When the Final War resumed, how many of these deities would fall?

With just a thought, Leylin’s interest was piqued. He left his avatar in the Celestial Hall, shifting most of his attention to his main body in his divine kingdom.
With their calculative nature, a god wouldn’t easily leave their divine kingdom once it was created. The kingdom served as the best of defences for their true bodies. Even if any avatars they sent out were killed they could be made up for with time, but the death of their main bodies would be a true death.

Naturally, Leylin had learnt of this method as well, stationing his true body in his divine kingdom as he started on the endless task of developing it and his resources.

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The hubbub over Leylin’s ascension died down after a while, but there was still some turbulence in the dark. Pope Tiff of the Giant Serpent Church infiltrated the prime material plane with a group of elite priests, beginning to publicise Leylin’s deeds. Tiff was a legendary priest himself, and the ability of the numerous priests to cast spells up to rank 9 symbolised the power of a true god. With such backing, the Giant Serpent Church developed rapidly in the prime material plane.

It started with the southern seas, as a large number of sailors, pirates, and adventurers began to embrace the new God of massacre. From there it spread to the mainland, unimpeded by the Church of Protection that now recognised Leylin’s divinity.
The duty of Helm’s church was to strike against false gods and protect the churches of the true ones. Regardless of their indignation, they could only give up their hostility to Leylin. A god’s domain and duties imposed great limitations on them, and most times even they themselves couldn’t break through those barriers. Violating his own laws would cause Helm’s rank to drop, and he could even lose his position and fall.

Of course, the God of Protection not hindering them didn’t mean other gods weren’t either. Tyr decreed that Leylin was a Lord of Baator, stating that it would be his mission to bring down the evil God of Massacre.

Mystra did the same, and to much greater effect. With the power of the Weave in hand, she had a great amount of influence over wizards that caused the Giant Serpent Church to be unable to obtain any powerful ones. This trend would definitely continue.

Luckily, devil hunters had magical abilities themselves, allowing the church to move along for the time being. If any problem did arise, their clerics could still play the role of magicians. Just like how battles between gods were long and protracted, the secular world was the same.

Under their god’s chosen pope, the Giant Serpent Church worked tenaciously to expand in the prime material plane. They fought Mystra and Tyr with wit and courage, the situation likely to remain in a stalemate for a long time unless something big were to happen.

On the surface, the prime material plane was gradually calming down.

Numerous gods had ascended over the ages, and the appearance of another lesser god only caused the denizens of the World of Gods to be a little surprised. The influence of his ascension was actually rather limited. As well, the upheaval in the north had greatly attracted everyone’s attention.

As the greatest source of faith and souls, the prime material plane
had numerous powerful existences eyeing it. Disaster after disaster occurred, and war was never absent from the mainland. Another round of battle had been ushered in after the period of calm. The war this time was launched by the orc empire. Having spent the winter accumulating resources, they managed to mobilize their troops and materiel as they got ready to rid the world of their nemesis the Silverymoon Alliance. The Alliance in return rose up in resistance. Headed by Alustriel, they were also actively preparing for war. Rumour had it that they’d even obtained the support of the Old Mage, Elminster. More importantly, the Goddess of the Weave and the God of Justice had now officially united, Tyr’s backing giving Alustriel the foundation to fight the orcs with. A number of aristocrats who had lost their fiefs banded together as well, giving her reinforcements. Many aristocrats in the north had ended up miserable after the war, being annexed by other nobles. Now, everyone desperately hoped for the Silverymoon Alliance to regain its original territory, taking revenge on the orcs. If Alustriel still couldn’t obtain a decisive victory, the Silverymoon Alliance would likely be buried in the pages of history. Thus, with nobles fighting for land, commoners fighting for vengeance, and Alustriel fighting to restore Silverymoon to its glory, the fog of war shrouded the entire prime material plane. With divine strengths being pit against each other in the north, the incident of Leylin’s ascension was further suppressed… The new Silverymoon was the core of the alliance. With its neat, spacious streets and the magical lights on either side of the road, the place seemed to be just like the one in the past. The old Silverymoon was currently serving as the capital of the orc empire. For Alustriel to construct a replica showed her determination. Unfortunately, the newer city was somewhat smaller and more jammed up due to limiting conditions. Only a few pedestrians were
on the street, and the occasional guards and knights could be seen rushing about. Quite a number of shops had closed down, the clouds of war affecting everything.

*Clang! Thud!* In this situation, a team of knights dressed in heavy silver armour with the emblem of the God of Justice were currently sealing the entire streets.

“Holy Knight, Lady Rafiniya! The troops are ready!” A paladin saluted to Rafiniya. It seemed like her rank in the Church of Justice had risen once more.

“Mm,” Rafiniya nodded indifferently, looking at the familiar buildings around her and seemingly recalling her past in Silverymoon.

‘It really is similar… Such a pity that we can’t possibly go back in time…’ Rafiniya bitterly lamented in her heart.

Her mission had ended in failure, and only afterwards did she learn that she’d only been bait. While she was out on the surface, a real team of elites had been sent out with Elminster to conduct a secret operation.

The lack of trust had caused Rafiniya to feel angry in the depths of her heart. However, she couldn’t do anything about it and it was this arrangement that had allowed her to avoid the deathtrap that was Debanks Island. Elminster’s team had suffered heavy casualties, and he himself had died once. The man had managed to resurrect himself with a clone he’d kept prepared, but it was still basically total annihilation.

‘The Giant Serpent Church certainly found out about us then. So they treated us like insects and didn’t pay any attention to us… Isn’t that why we were able to leave?’ Rafiniya was filled with bitterness. When had that back she’d been chasing grown so powerful, and yet become so evil and terrifying as to look upon her as an ant whose existence was to be dismissed?

Adding insult to injury, Rafiniya hadn’t been punished upon her
return, instead actually rising in standing. She knew this wasn’t due to any merit on her part, just some consideration for the future. “What… What’s happening?” She bit her lip, feeling an intense emotion corrupting her heart.

If Leylin or Tyr were present, they would notice that she was experiencing an extremely unique change. Leylin had deliberately messed with her before, causing the now legendary paladin to slowly question her own faith as she drifted from her original alignment. A glimmer of dark red power developed in Rafiniya’s soul, hiding this from Tyr.

“Justice, and faith. My Lord… please forgive my lack of conviction, I will persevere on my path in the future!” She finally stabilised her soul after a long period of struggle, “Announce it to every businessman and shop owner. Do it perfectly, these are orders from the church!”

Several paladins took her orders, rudely knocking on tightly shut doors to display notices stamped with Silverymoon’s crest to every shop owner. The faces of the merchants turned pale, sweat covering their fat and greasy foreheads.

“The Queen of Silverymoon has ordered thus— For the sake of life and war preparations of the citizens, all stores are to continue operating as per usual. Prices shall not exceed twice their original value, and an overseeing group under the Holy Knight has been formed. This order was issued on…”

The paladins smacked the store owners’ faces with the notices, ignoring any entreaties as they continued their operations. They held no favour for these greedy merchants, seeing them as synonymous with greed and evil.

These men hoarded supplies in the lead up to war, dropping supply in the market and profiting from their actions. Basically every merchant had blood on his hands, and if the alignments of those here were to be tested likely more than half of them would face
immediate death. To tolerate their existence and a doubling of the price was already great grace! Because of all this the paladins could be said to be behaving roughly, the disgust evident in their eyes. Numerous anguished wails sounded out in New Silverymoon.
On a platform within the city hall of New Silverymoon, Alustriel was dressed in a beautiful cloak and a small crown as she leaned against the railings of a balcony overseeing the bustling city. There was a bitter smile on her face. “Do you hear it, Your Highness? Do you hear the city mourning?” A scholarly old man adjusted his spectacles beside her. “I hear it… But apart from this, what other ways do we have?” Alustriel turned around and the bitter smile on her face vanished, now replaced by a solid determination. “Our people fear the ferocity of the orcs, and my backers have been unable to gain the protection of the northern kingdoms. We even have to take on their troubles instead, those merchants want to sell at ten times the cost in this kind of time! Heavens… I even pawned the jewels of my crown for such a low price, what more do they want?” Alustriel sounded exasperated the more she went on. Although she had the support of two greater gods in Tyr and Mystra, Tyr’s church had never been a wealthy one. Besides, Mystra had to cater to the rest of the world as well, so her support was limited. Even if she managed to latch onto the church, the Silverymoon Alliance was facing the assault of the orcs. Having lost everything, even with the help of the northern lords she wouldn’t be able to afford the resources of this war.

From the beginning, the war had been one between Mystra and the orcs. However, the Goddess of the Weave wasn’t particularly either,
and without enough kroena mercenaries and adventurers wouldn’t take the risk to participate. They couldn’t even equip or feed their own soldiers!

In a sort of silver lining, some ‘generous’ people had been moved and were willing to donate their money, items, and even food for the war. Still, Alustriel’s heart only felt a chill when faced with the sheer enormity of her foes.

The old scholar hesitated before speaking his mind, “But Your Highness… If you behave like this, won’t you offend the Goddess of Wealth? The church of Lady Waukeen supports the merchants…”

“I am left with no other choice…” Alustriel waved her hands in exasperation. “Waukeen is a goddess who stands in neutrality. Besides, rumour has it that she conducts some business within the orc empire, so we cannot rely on her help…”

“Furthermore…” Alustriel blinked her eyes, “The ones executing the operations are the paladins of Tyr’s church. We should be rest assured of how they conduct their business, shouldn’t we? They wouldn’t treat a good person unfairly…”

‘But… They will also never let any bad people go, yet the merchants are filled with such people…’ The old scholar sighed, yet he did not dare speak his mind this time.

As Alustriel’s right hand man and her consultant, after such a long period of time working together he had understood some things perfectly. While Alustriel seemed to have matured after the annihilation of the previous kingdom, her original naivete was still very much there.

“Sage Elminster has already arrived here. I hear he’s come with a good plan…” The scholar looked through his records and reported to Alustriel.

“That old pervert?” Alustriel said in disdain.

The scholar’s face turned beet red in embarrassment, but he
corrected his facial expression and reminded Alustriel, “Please refrain from such words, Your Highness! You must watch your image and conduct yourself appropriately in a public place. Moreover… He is your foster father!”

“Alright alright, help me send him away on my behalf… Tell him I’m not around!” Alustriel waved her hands, and immediately opened a portal and stepped into it, leaving the old scholar smiling wryly…

……

As this unwelcomed guest of Alustriel’s came, the conversation between Alustriel and the old scholar had ended abruptly. However, they’d missed one point. Despite how they’d planned some actions, the ones executing them would change it completely. Although Alustriel had told Rafiniya to have a certain tolerance for the merchants backed by the Goddess of Wealth, who were the paladins? If their thick heads made of granite would know how to adapt then there was something seriously wrong here!

One of the paladins searched the warehouse of a priest belonging to the Goddess of Wealth, acting out of order to cast an appraisal spell. He discovered traces of evil, and once the clues led to the capture of a devil everything grew irreversible.

As a torrential wave of ‘justice’ swept past New Silverymoon, the ones who suffered the most were the merchants under the Goddess of Wealth. In order to obtain higher profits and margins, these unscrupulous merchants had been willing to do anything, including bartering with the devils. There was no better way for the paladins to deal with them, and with Alustriel’s authority they began to cleanse the city.

In the process the paladins had captured several merchants that had connections with the devils, sending them to be burnt at the stake.
There were even more found guilty of corruption. Very soon, the citizens of New Silverymoon were greeted by a different sight. Most of the shops had reopened, and the shopkeepers had bright and friendly smiles on their faces as they treated every customer with respect. They were afraid of complaints or criticism, something that would cause the paladins to come looking for them once more. Deep down, these merchants who had suffered heavy losses cursed the paladins, especially Rafiniya who was at their head. The commoners went to sleep early at dusk, but even more schemes were happening in the dark.

The priests of wealth seemed unaffected by all this, and with the Goddess Waukeen backing them, they did have the right to feel that way. As long as Alustriel had an iota of intelligence she would repay them for their losses. If not, they could immediately seek the orcs and support them with materiel.

The ones who’d suffered the greatest losses were those merchants who peddled on the small and medium scales. The violent purge had put them on the verge of bankruptcy, and the unlucky ones without any backing suffered great losses. Some of them had been gobbled up by larger merchant groups…

A dim oil lantern flickered in the room, reflecting the pale faces of the leaders of the Neon merchant group.

“Someone say something! What’s wrong? I specifically rushed here for this meeting today!” A loud voice sounded. It came from a lady sat at the middle, a ravishing woman in her twenties seated on a leopard pelt.

The leaders’ bodies shuddered, and they did not dare to lift their eyes to meet her gaze. It was as if a threatening beast or poisonous centipede was in front of them. A leader gritted his teeth before speaking, “Those paladins want us to keep to the same prices as before. We already lost about 1500 gold from the frenzied buying,
and the losses will only rise…”
This loss was extremely alarming for a medium-sized merchant group like theirs. “Moreover… Once the paladins discover out dealings in the dark…” Another leader’s teeth clattered, before he collapsed to the ground, “Big Miss… We beg of you to let us leave first…”
“Dream on! Do you think you can still run away? Once our deals are discovered we won’t be able to escape those paladins at all. It might even bring your families to harm…” The harsh truth was spoken in an icy tone, condemning these people to damnation.
“Relax, it’s not like I don’t have my own preparations. The family dispatched its elites, and as long as you hide well and take the chance to send the next batch of goods you’ll be able to leave. If we succeed, the profits will be large enough for you to buy a huge villa in the south, and even marry the daughter of a noble. Who knows, you might be able to start a noble family of your own after a few generations…”
With such guarantees and temptations, the leaders’ faces grew better as the look of suffering went away. However, a shadow appeared on the lady’s face when they’d left.
After waiting a while and confirming that nobody had remained, she went to the corner of the warehouse and fumbled around for a hidden mechanism. A wall opened in the corner to reveal an underground passage, and she took up an oil lantern and walked into a narrow basement.
There wasn’t much stored in the basement, and in fact there was steam rising from the ground that caused the lady’s clothes to grow damp. There was a spell formation at the centre, shining with mysterious light.
Inserting two powerful energy crystals into the spell nodes, the woman took out a silver mirror and placed it in the middle of the spell formation.
*Tss!* Light flashed, and a middle-aged man dressed in silver robes appeared in the mirror.
“Anya!” the white-haired man began, “How’s the situation there?”
“Thanks to the Lord, our deals haven’t been discovered yet. We only incurred some superficial losses…” Anya frowned, “I’ve put the leaders at ease, so we won’t be discovered for the time being. However, there isn’t much time left, Father!”
“This situation is far worse than we had imagined…” The middle-aged man’s face turned dark, “Blake isn’t giving us any more updates, he’s likely met with mishap. He had a lot of information on hand, and we could be exposed at any time. The God of Justice and the Goddess of the Weave definitely won’t let us go if we’re found out…”
“The orcs can’t be trusted, nor can the Blackblood Tribe… Are we going to become a common enemy?” The resolute front that the lady had put on was broken. She almost crumbled to the floor, her face filled with despair.
“Don’t despair, Anya,” the middle-aged man put on a fierce expression, “The prime material plane is vast, we can definitely find a way out… It’s not just Silverymoon and the orcs here…”
“I’ve already made some contact with some other channels, we can discuss the details later. The shadow mirror seems to be waning… Your only mission is to stabilise the situation, it concerns the life and death of our family…” The image grew blurry as time went on, the voice getting cut up.
Just this short period of communication required a spell formation and several expensive energy crystals. Anya could only smile bitterly and shake her head.
“Other channels… Is Father prepared to seek out other factions? But the ones who would accept us at this time… Are they demons or devils?” Anya smiled sardonically, “Forget it… As long as we can live, I wouldn’t mind help from the Abyss itself…”
The actions of the Neon Merchant Group had reached their crescendo. Anya dreaded the thought of the consequences of them being outed now. She rubbed her temples as determination flooded her face once more, before she lifted her dress and walked away.
As she was moving out, she sent out a silent prayer from her heart, ‘Any god out there, please, protect me and my family. I’m willing to give you my faith, my life, and even my soul after this passes…’
“Neon Merchant Group? A prayer for our help?” Tiff rubbed the glasses that gave him a scholarly appearance. “What do you think, Moena?”

“They’re a medium-sized merchant group in the north, mainly trading in leather and medicine. Their current leader is Fagus Bane. We performed some investigation after receiving their prayer, and they’re not as simple as they seem on the surface. Not only are their relations in the north complicated, they seem to be in contact with the orc empire,” A high-ranked priestess said from the side.

“So that’s how it is…” Tiff suddenly laughed. “That is to say, they’re currently in a dangerous situation and if their secret is revealed they’d be exterminated by Tyr and Mystra? There aren’t many influences willing to protect them and incur the wrath of those two… Just nice, since we’re one of them!”

‘They’ll be helpful when we’re trying to expand in the north…’ Light flashed in Tiff’s eyes, ‘We need more detailed information.’

Tiff still hadn’t been enticed by what he was shown. He needed more information, to be able to weigh the pros and cons to come up with the correct decision. This attitude was also why Leylin chose him to be pope.

“You can leave for now.” Tiff waved his hands, sending the priestess away. He soon followed her out.

The entire church was filled with a festive atmosphere at this moment, numerous priests busy as they rushed about to arrange for a great amount of food and drink.

“Everyone, continue the hard work for the Lord’s birthday.” A few officers were urging everyone on, sweat beading on their foreheads.

Tiff was deeply moved by this scene. ‘Has it already been a year since the Lord ascended, detaching himself from his past to sit on
his throne? The Neon Merchant Group will make a good present for it, he’ll definitely be pleased…’

Year 27945, Calendar of the Gods. The Giant Serpent Church celebrated the passage of one year since the birth of their god. Even adding his mortal life Leylin was currently only 300 years old, quite young. However, such things as age held no significance for the gods. Still, Leylin made time to descend for the sake of his worshippers, performing a miracle that caused many of them to be moved to tears.

The holy mountain within Leylin’s divine kingdom was piled up with jade, bright light pouring out of the huge church to penetrate the first three Hells. The light dispersed suffering and evil, bringing about hope and beauty.

Leylin’s true body was sat down on his throne within the church, heavily protected by guards and enchantments as his body radiated immortal light. The theatrics done, he was turning to a report from Tiff.

An endless stream of prayers came to Leylin every day, originating from his divine kingdom, the prime material plane, and even devils from the depths of Baator. Tens of millions of prayers were received, and Leylin responded in accordance to the importance of each.

Even though gods had powerful minds, they still weren’t capable of dealing with such hard work. Many gods assigned the task of responding to prayers to a few demigods or lesser gods, helping reduce their workload.

Leylin had just established his divine kingdom, and he didn’t have as many capable and trustworthy subordinates. Instead, he’d had the A.I. Chip handle a huge portion of this task. With all the upgrades it had received over time, it was better than him at such mechanical task.

[Beep! Pope Tiff’s prayers have been found, beginning transfer…]
Tiff’s report came in the form of a prayer. The man was extremely pious, and given that he was after all the pope of the Giant Serpent Church his thread of faith was thick and dazzling. He was given great importance in the A.I. Chip’s programs, allowed to speak directly to his god.

A great amount of images and information entered Leylin’s eyes in an instant, detailing the Neon Merchant Group, Fagus, and Anya… Almost instantly he completely understood Tiff’s prayers. ‘The Neon Merchant Group, in the north…’ Leylin stroked his chin… He himself had much wider and more detailed channels of information passing Tiff’s own, and it took but a thought for him to gather more intelligence. ‘They’re sending firearms to the orc empire, and their main channel of trade is with the Blackblood Tribe of the Moonwood?

‘On top of that, they have a batch of important goods sealed within New Silverymoon right now. If they’re discovered they’ll be tried for treason, the profanity causing the entire group to be destroyed…’

‘Blackblood Tribe… Malar!’ Leylin laughed. The Lesser God of the Hunt had joined hands with the orcs once before. However, Mystra and Tyr had supposedly taught him a ruthless lesson, taming him after an attack on his avatar. Unfortunately this didn’t cause the slightest of changes to his nature. It seemed like Malar was colluding with the orcs once more…

Within the prime material plane, the Giant Serpent Church was a sea of celebration. There was unlimited food and drink, and for many worshippers it served as an opportunity to gain trust and make a favourable impression. Churches that provided the material comforts and positivity would always be far more popular than the churches of evil. Even if Leylin was a true God of Massacre, he was actually gaining faith
unlike Cyric who just liked to scheme, plot, and conduct sacrifices. At the core of the church, Tiff was currently praying to a statue of Leylin. He’d reported on the Neon Merchant Group, his Lord being aware of everything even more thoroughly than him by the time he was done.

A golden light descended upon the statue, and Leylin’s imposing voice sounded out, “Tiff…”

“My Lord!” Tiff was the pope of the Giant Serpent Church, and his prayers were treated with great priority with them still being developing. It was quite common for the Lord to descend for important affairs, and this was just a conscient. He wasn’t in the slightest bit surprised.

Of course, this was still the conscient of a true god. Even he didn’t dare be negligent as he saluted in accordance with teaching.

“Kukulkan, my Lord… You are like the stars in heaven, wielding the power of massacres, the Ruler of Devils…”

“The prime material plane has been developing well, and the celebrations went well..” The dignity of a deity was transmitted with this thought.

“The glory is mine, and the land belongs to you.” Tiff’s eyes couldn’t help but shine when he heard this, but he still didn’t dare to reveal a trace of carelessness…

The birthday celebrations left a deep impact on Leylin’s worshippers. However, they only knew to enjoy the shelter and glory of their Lord, not realizing that a team of high-ranked devil hunters had secretly left the headquarters to head north. They weren’t just going to assist the Neon Merchant Group…

……

The North.
Numerous horses neighed as a caravan with completely covered
carriages slowly left New Silverymoon. ‘We’re finally out…’ It was only after they moved their path until New Silverymoon’s outline disappeared that Anya loosened up and relaxed.

At the same time, she almost felt depressed enough to puke blood. She’d paid a lot for this permit to live, transferring all the profits of her merchant group and even having to pretend to compromise with those paladins that had rocks for brains. It had caused her to be neurotic for a long time.

‘Whatever… As long as we can take care of these things, everything will be worth it.’ Anya looked at the fleet behind her, nodding towards the person in charge.

He immediately shouted with understanding, “Everyone, work harder! As long as we reach Donnie before dark, Big Miss will give us a huge reward. We’ve also prepared fragrant barbecue and bread, along with warm beds and hot water…”
The promised rewards of dinner and good accommodations were enough to cause the caravan servants to exert all their strength. Their eyes reddened with the exertion as the caravan sped up once more to the tune of numerous shouts. “Faster! Hurry up…” The anxiety that she couldn’t display on her face made Anya recall the most dangerous deal she’d made—when she’d entered the endless wilderness to negotiate with those stinking orcs. ‘The crisis this time far exceeds our transaction with that tribe…’ Anya’s face was unchanging as she faced those orcs, but this time she was really starting to get nervous. After all, if her actions this time were discovered her entire clan would land in deep straits! Unrest and fear had tortured her so much these past few days that there were now more wrinkles above her eyebrows.

The front of the caravan suddenly stopped, causing a great disturbance behind it as some carriages were toppled directly. The scene caused Anya to be filled with anger. “What’s happening? Why did you stop?” She called out to her personal servant, holding back the urge to use her horsewhip. “Head to the front and check what’s happening!” However, before the maid even went out, a servant dressed in military clothing rushed over with a face full of sweat. “Miss, it’s the paladins! There’s a whole team of them blocking the path!”
“Those damned official dogs…” A few servants grumbled in a low voice. In their point of view, the paladins had taken most of the profits from the Bane Family, leaving them with little of the profit. Even when they risked leaving New Silverymoon in the middle of the war they still chased after the caravan. Those paladins really were extremely hateful!

However, the news only brought terror to Anya when she heard it. ‘Did they find out?’ She felt her heart fall, feeling a chill like she had been dropped into an icy cave. Sadly, her subordinates were here. Anya had no choice but to put on a bold front and hurry forward.

She soon saw a team of paladins dressed in silvery armour standing ahead of the caravan, dazzling emblems of the God of Justice on their chests. The determination radiating from their eyes caused her unrest to intensify to the limit.

“Captain Elric…” she said as she stepped forward, barely forcing a smile as she found a familiar face among the paladins. “The Neon Merchant Group has always abided by the law. We even sold 80% of our goods in New Silverymoon, and you granted us the clearance to leave…”

Anya was speaking in a thick nasal voice, the trace of coquettishness in her tone a habit learned from her line of work. It was unfortunate that this approach had no effect on the paladins, and Captain Elric’s eyes were instead filled with disgust. However, he didn’t say anything. He stood down respectfully, giving way to a female paladin standing behind.

‘The Holy Knight!’ The moment she recognised Rafiniya Anya felt despair well up in her heart, as if the bones had been pulled out of her body.

“Looking at you, I knew there wasn’t an error with our intelligence! Sinner Anya, are you still unwilling to admit your sins?” At the legendary realm, even simple questions from Rafiniya
were terrifying. The power behind them pierced through to Anya’s heart, the horror almost causing her to collapse and confess.
“It was all arranged by the captain. Do you think I’d abandon a paladin’s honour just for your worthless dirty tricks?” Elric pridefully raised his head while, disdain filled his eyes. “Exterminating you within the city would be too conspicuous… However, it is different here. Surrender obediently, and you shall receive a fair trial. We never let villains go, but at the same time we won’t treat any good person unjustly.”
Elric was naturally confident in his team. They were composed of multiple high-ranked paladins, and their leader was the legendary Holy Knight! They could clear away all evil!
“In the name of Her Majesty, I request to search the caravan!” Rafiniya declared loudly. With Rafiniya and the paladins representing both Tyr and Alustriel, a majority of the people in the caravan started wavering. Many of them had been kept in the dark, and even the expensive mercenaries seldom knew the truth.
Standing against the Silverymoon Alliance and a greater god’s church, Anya was skeptical of who would be willing to stand along her regardless of how much she she offered.
“Captain Rafiniya, you have always been my idol… I believe in your personal integrity, but I am sure that there is some sort of misunderstanding…” Anya dismounted and gave Rafiniya a ladies greeting. Afterwards, she walked to an overturned carriage and tore the tightly wrapped oilcloth off.
“Please take a look… These are all common leather and majority are empty boxes…” Anya tried to show Rafiniya her transported goods. “Everything here is approved goods, there’s no contraband.”
“Your little tricks are nothing in the face of justice. Stop showing them off, it just seems ridiculous…” Rafiniya replied with a cold face, flipping over some of the leather.
*Clank!* The scabbard on her waist released a crisp buzzing sound, and a ray of dazzling bright light drew a beautiful arc mid-air.

*Kacha!* The axle of the carriage was broken, and the wood cracked apart. The horses ran away in fright, whining as they’d been broken out of their shackles. Their escape caused dirt to stain Anya’s beautiful skirt, but she didn’t seem to mind in the slightest. Only one thought was cycling through Anya’s mind right now… They’d found out!

*Crash!* Splintered wood flew into the sky, revealing a layer of storage between the carriage’s storage and its bottom. A few pieces of dark red crystals emitting a bloody glow fell out. Even the merchants standing far away could smell the stench of blood.

“A blood sacrifice… For the blood essence to be this pure, just how many souls would it take?” Rafiniya’s hand trembled as she held onto the hilt, “You bear to sacrifice your own kind for those murderous evil gods?

“Your sins have been determined. The entire Neon Merchant Group and the Bane Family shall be punished for your sins!” Rafiniya announced loudly.

The paladins behind her unsheathed their longswords at the same time, their eyes filled with disgust and determination. The terrifying atmosphere caused those who hadn’t been aware to collapse suddenly.

“Dear Lord… This has nothing to do with me, I’m only a hired stable boy! Please forgive me… forgive me…” The legs of the coachman who was wearing a straw hat and coarse linen clothes gave way, and he directly fell to his knees with his whip still in hand.

Others reacted similarly. With both the monarchy and the theocracy against them, not many were courageous enough to fight back.

“Retreat!” The mercenaries employed by the caravans were more
quick-witted than ordinary people. Sensing a bad situation, their leader immediately shouted as he fiercely whipped his horse. They intended to fall back.
The mercenary leader obviously knew the severity of this incident. Even if he was unaware of it and was innocent, the church would rather kill the victims than let a sinner go. He wouldn’t be able to prove his innocence! And with high-ranked paladins on the opposing side, there was no way for them to win the fight. Fleeing was the only choice.
“A vain attempt to escape punishment? Fools!” Rafiniya evaluated indifferently.
Even without her acting personally two of the paladins beside her rushed out. Summoning light flickered as several celestial horses emerged, the devoted comrades of pure paladins.
With the paladins being so strong, how could mercenaries on ordinary warhorses escape?
“Wait… I can testify… I didn’t…” The mercenary leader did not manage to escape far before he was caught. His face was in despair, and he went out screaming. Unfortunately, the cold-looking paladin did not utter any superfluous words and directly pierced his heart with a longsword.
Numerous paladins riding on their celestial horses surrounded the caravan, and sealed off all possible escape routes. Everyone was left trembling on their knees.
“Sinners! How much harm is done to the world because of your greed and evil?” Looking at Anya’s pretty face, Rafiniya’s flushed red with anger. “A source of evil like you, should not exist in this world… In the name of Justice, I shall judge you!”
Milky white light condensed on Rafiniya’s longsword, and Anya sent a meaningful glance to a trusted aide that was preparing to dash forward.
“These servants are innocent and unaware, please bestow them
mercy and forgiveness….” She said at the end.
“Cunning evil sinner, are you still trying to display your hypocritical kindness?” A callous murderous spirit could be seen within Rafiniya’s eyes.
The world rumbled as a purifying sword of light crashed down, but it futilely swept through the air.

‘Hmm? Someone who could penetrate my ability to lock spacetime… Is that a legendary wizard or sorcerer?’ Rafiniya turned very serious, looking at the uninvited guest.

‘Priestess of the God of Massacre, Barbara, greets the Lady of Hope. This person is a follower of our master, so please hold back…” A native maiden wearing the robes of a priest appeared in front of Rafiniya, the holy light from a legendary priest exceptionally obvious as it emanated from her.

Beside her was a devil hunter with thick chains wound around his arms. The man with a dark aura had already caught Anya’s arm; he was the one who’d saved her from Rafiniya.

“You… you’re from the Giant Serpent Church…” Anya immediately realised the identity of the person who had saved her, a look of hope rising on her face.

“A person who makes use of the evil power of devils…” Rafiniya gazed at the devil hunter next to Barbara. He had numerous little plaits in his hair, and his tan, yellowish skin identified him as a native.

More important was that she couldn’t ascertain the strength of his aura. It seemed like she was actually looking at hell when she looked at him!

‘A legend! A legendary devil hunter!’ Rafiniya realised the identity
of this person in an instant. Only someone of such strength could cause her to feel such fear. Legendary strength, especially with devil hunters, was a qualitative increase in power. Devil hunters needed to seal legendary devils to reach that level of power! This person had legendary power himself, and on top of that he was supplemented by equivalent magic ability! Just having ascended he was equivalent to centuries-old high-ranked legendaries!

Such devil hunters were new to Leylin’s armies, having appeared after he took over three of the Nine Hells. Leylin had grabbed a bunch of devils who’d opposed him, using them to have a large number of devil hunters on the verge advance. The only issue was that there were few devil hunters qualified to reach such strength right now.

The person in Rafiniya’s way now was someone with such strength, and he was accompanied by a legendary priestess.

“Giant Serpent Church… Do you wish to help evil and go against justice?” Rafiniya looked serious as holy silver light appeared on the surface of her armour. She made a few secret hand signs to the paladins behind her.

“Don’t even try to contact New Silverymoon… Did you think we wouldn’t prepare for that?” Barbara spoke the language used in the mainland in a very articulate manner. Knowledge of all languages was an essential ability for priests.

“I’ve already altered the space here. Forget signals for help, even the power of faith will be slowed down…” The paladins’ expressions quickly changed, as if to accentuate her words. One of them pulled Rafiniya aside, whispering something to her that caused this legendary paladin to turn grim.

Hellfire! Claws of Confinement!
Large numbers of dark figures emerged from the surrounding forest, terrifying devil spells being launched from them. Even the
celestial horses didn’t dare to touch the blazing hellfire, and the paladins who’d originally had the upper hand were now constantly being forced away.

“So many high-ranked professionals!” Rafiniya’s expression was very dark as she brought up a great screen of light that prevented many devil hunters from attacking. She knew full well that the only reason she could persist to this point was that the other party didn’t want to take things too far. If not for that, she wouldn’t last long against that legendary devil hunter.

“Are you declaring war on our church?” Rafiniya questioned loudly.

“Hehe… An accusation like that is rather terrifying…” Barbara sneered, not the least bit afraid.

“Rafiniya… I remember you!” The priestess suddenly gazed at Rafiniya’s face, “You were the knight who once followed our master in the north. While his sacred and holy being has cut off all connections with his mortal self, you did serve him at one point. For that reason, you may leave…”

“Hmm?” Barbara’s words surprised Rafiniya greatly, especially when she mentioned letting them off.

“Damn it… are you insulting us?” A young blonde paladin’s face flushed red, and his neck seemed to bulge as he grabbed the hilt of his sword in preparations for a charge.

“Wait!” Rafiniya easily knocked this young and impulsive kid unconscious, and had an older paladin nearby grab him.

“This was a mistake in my plans. There’s no need for more pointless casualties… I brought you out of the city, and I shall bring you back.” Rafiniya took a deep breath, “Let us go!”

Even the most zealous of paladins had learnt to compromise. That was a price Tyr had to learn to pay in the mortal world.

“I won’t see you off!” Barbara saluted her with a gentle smile,
while the devil hunter nearby sneered.

……

“Why didn’t you keep them here?” Anya half-reclined on the devil hunter as the paladins left, her eyes on their backs. The devil hunter completely disregarded Anya’s flattering behaviour, causing her expression to stiffen and become awkward. “We could take them out with our strength, but it would have caused immense casualties.” Barbara answered in his stead, saving the situation.

“You’re being too presumptuous, Anya!” a stern voice sounded, causing Anya to turn back in surprise. She saw a white-haired middle-aged man slowly emerge from the shadows, bowing towards Barbara and the legendary devil hunter, “My lords, please forgive my daughter for her ignorance…”

“Father… why are you here?” Anya asked, stunned. This was her father, the master of the Bane Family and manager of the Neon Merchant Group.

“Isn’t it all to take care of this mess? Quick, apologise to the two lords!” Fagus glared at his daughter. These were two legendaries, who had a true god church backing them! He understood very well how terrifying such strength could be. Much more importantly, if the Giant Serpent Church were to be offended, the Bane Family would probably have no place to go in the north or even the entire prime material plane.

“Our Bane Family and the Neon Merchant Group have completely sworn loyalty to the Giant Serpent Church. From hereon, they are our benefactor…” Fagus reminded Anya.

“My apologies, my lords… I… I…” A blush appeared on her cheeks.

“Forget it! Even our master would forgive the mistakes committed
by the youth…” Barbara laughed as she waved her hands, “Besides… the reason I did not keep them here is not primarily because she and the master are acquaintances. She is a legendary being after all, and the God of Justice will surely pay much attention to her. Since we’ve tampered with this space, there’s a rather large chance of Silverymoon and the God of Justice’s Church finding out the moment a battle breaks out… The other side has already gathered Elminster and a huge batch of high-ranked legendaries. With our current strength, we still can’t go head to head with them…”

“That’s why we need to leave as quickly as possible!” The devil hunter in command, The devil hunter commander, who had looked expressionless all this time, now spoke up.

“We shall do as the lords suggest.” Fagus smiled flatteringly, as if fawning on them. It caused Anya to feel resentful and relieved at the same time. At the very least, the serious responsibilities had been taken over by the Giant Serpent Church and wouldn’t be her problem anymore.

“What are you still standing there in a daze for? Pack up, we leave immediately!” Fagus yelled at the servants who had yet to move. Only now did they comprehend what had gone on, a look of disbelief in their eyes as they watched their master.

The events today were too damaging to their mental states. First was the paladins, and just when they thought they were in a pinch that was impossible to escape from their master had brought an even more powerful group that sent the paladins running. The Neon Merchant Group was only a middling business!

In that moment, they began to revere their master. The servants moved quickly, thankfully packing up all the fallen items. Fagus moved forward, taking all the blood essence made of flesh and soul and giving it to the devil hunters.

“The blood essence here is very pure, and its characteristics make it
incompatible with spatial items. If it isn’t stored in dimensional pouches or other such storage items, it will soon lose its effects. It needs to be stored using blood-traced wood… If not for all that we wouldn’t have such problems…” Fagus sighed as he spoke.

“Mm. Let’s go!” After everything was collected, Barbara turned to leave, with the father-daughter pair of Fagus and Anya close behind.

The rest of the merchants followed the original route and hastened towards the next town. Whatever it was, they now had no taboo items on them, and would no longer be afraid of any checks.

In the eyes of Fagus and other higher-ups, they had to make the best of the situation. As long as the other merchants could take the attention off them even slightly, that would be good. What happened to all these people was not their problem.

……

Currently, within Leylin’s divine kingdom in Baator, the God of Massacre saw an avatar of Umberlee once more. The Goddess of the Ocean had an even denser aura than before, evidently growing more imposing after consuming the divinity of the Sharkmen.
“You want to attack Malar?” Umberlee’s gaze showed that she was pondering the idea, “We’re of the same alignment…”

“But not of the same alliance,” Leylin countered quickly, “The two of us work in the same domain, we’ll never see eye to eye. He sent his avatar to attack me during my ascension…”

“Hehe...” The Goddess of the Ocean smiled, radiating a crazed aura. She’d always been temperamental, “Good! Since I owe you one, I’ll help you.”

“No, I think you misunderstand me. I don’t want you to help me based on the contract. I just hope that, as my ally, you can stall the orc gods in my stead…”

“The orcs?” Umberlee now felt like it was impossible to make sense of this new god.

“Mm! The enemy of an enemy, after all. Don’t you feel like I’m a better ally than Malar?” Leylin blinked.

“Haha... Interesting! How interesting...” Umberlee burst into laughter, the terrifying phantom waves sweeping behind her in the dark showing her power. The blue waves formed a passageway, and Leylin and Umberlee slowly faded away.

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In the north, within a hidden underground room.
Numerous distorted runes were carved into every corner of the wall. If one took a close look, they could sense the power of blasphemous incantations on it. It was here that Fagus and Anya Bane sat together, discussing matters at ease.

“Father… I just don’t understand what we’re doing. We might be asking them for help, but we’re letting them handle everything that has to do with our family…” Anya’s face was slightly flushed. She’d watched her father hand over the business and the secret connections that she herself had laboured over for years, and she could not help but feel her heart bleeding.

In her mind, all of that belonged to her! Now, the Giant Serpent Church and taken everything away without any effort. With just one thought, they could easily destroy the Neon Merchant Group and the Bane Family!

“You need to see the facts, Anya. The church would only help us after we handed everything over…” Fagus seemed calm, something glimmering in his eyes, “Besides… attempting to hoodwink a true god’s church is an extremely foolish idea. We aren’t one of the huge business groups, we don’t have the right to be so haughty…” Fagus’ experiences had let him know the terror of a true god’s church. Gods never died of age, and very few deities had been killed in the World of Gods, basically not one in thousands of years.

This let the churches live comfortably in the prime material plane. Even if they were exterminated, they could still make a comeback. Compared to the Giant Serpent Church, the Neon Merchant Group was just an ant.

Fagus found his daughter’s worries hilarious. The Giant Serpent Church needed his channels and connections in the north, but the wealth gathered by the Bane Family? It probably couldn’t even measure up to a palace in the divine kingdom, right?

Besides, the Neon Merchant Group wasn’t powerful, they were the
party asking for help. Who would dare bargain with the Giant Serpent Church?
“I’m sorry, Father… I was too rash…” Anya now seemed to realise her mistakes. She had acted too conspicuously in front of her father, and ducked her head in shame.
“Mm… it’s best if you understand this…” Fagus looked at his most outstanding daughter, feeling that he still needed to guide her along. The World of Gods was mostly a patriarchy, and the girl child could not compare. However, Anya had just been far too outstanding. If she could find a husband within the family and remain, it would be very helpful for the development of their business.
Fagus hence began to speak, his voice low, “A newly ascended god has vast future prospects. Those who follow a church during its birth will naturally gain great benefits at the end. Look at the top businesses of the mainland, which one of them isn’t backed by a true god? It all comes down to the merits they gained when the church was established…”
‘Father seems to think highly of this god,’ Anya thought. But then she laughed at herself in mockery; which true god wasn’t worth the Neon Merchant Group investing their everything?
“The God of Massacre… What kind of god is this Kukulkan?” Anya muttered under her breath, a trace of admiration in her voice. She still revered and worshipped the highest existences of the World of Gods.
“Be careful with what you say! Even with the protection of the demonic words you shouldn’t utter a true god’s name without caution. They’ll sense it unless you’re in a divine kingdom or near other gods…” Fagus immediately looked solemn.
“I understand. My apologies…” Anya covered her red lips as she looked around her, as if afraid that the God of Massacre would suddenly jump out.
“Hehe… A mighty existence like that has millions of tasks to settle everyday. There’s a very slim chance of you being noticed… as long as you don’t have the worst luck...” Fagus saw how his daughter was acting, and it drew a rare chuckle from him. He finally relaxed, not having noticed the sly look within Anya’s eyes.

“I actually do know a little about this existence...” Fagus told Anya, “Do you remember the youngest legendary wizard in the world?”

“Of course!” Anya nodded, “I know all about his achievements... There’s also the wealth of the Faulen Family, and the great business opportunity in the southern seas being such hot news. I remembered it all died down suddenly...”

There were too many figurative halos on Leylin’s head. Up till this point, he was still the idol and ideal lover of many noble ladies who did not know the inside details.

“He’s the current master of the Giant Serpent Church. Leylin Faulen is the God of Massacre!” Fagus stated coldly.

“What?” Anya was now truly shocked.

“He seems to have abandoned his old name when he advanced, coming up with a new one. While this isn’t common, it has happened before... The other churches, especially those of the God of Justice and the Goddess of the Weave have sealed up all information regarding him for some reason. That’s why many on the continent still can’t associate the two...” Fagus chuckled as he revealed an open secret.

“This... this... what great aptitude. Without the remnants from gods of previous generations, he became a god...” Anya now had no schemes in her mind. She felt ridiculously base compared to Leylin.

“The native empire on Debanks Island became a part of the mighty god’s divine kingdom, which is why the southern sea fell in trade. It impacted quite a few coastal kingdoms...” Fagus narrated. Even though he was giving her a rough idea, Anya was already shaken to
the core.
“The reason I’m telling you all this is to inform you that an existence so mighty and with such talent definitely will have a farsighted goal. Hence, don’t try anything and serve him with sincerity. Only then will you gain approval from him!” Fagus finished off.
“Is that why Father handed over all control?” Anya looked like she had understood something.
“Mm. I will also send a few of your younger brothers to the church to study priesthood and learn the ways of the devil hunters…” With a hasty understanding of Leylin’s rise, Fagus completely gave up any other thoughts. He knew that any being who could ascend themselves in such a cruel environment was extremely terrifying. Not only was he more powerful than the others, but his shrewdness was also impeccable! Trying anything with an existence like this was akin to seeking death! Hence, he decided to swear his loyalty. The decision to send hostages basically meant putting everything on the Giant Serpent Church. Even if their plans failed, the Giant Serpent Church would remain completely safe. At most, they would lose a few external powers. However, the Bane Family would be wiped out completely. On the other hand, the profits coming from success would definitely surpass Fagus’ own imagination!
“What should I do, Father” Anya looked at her father, feeling that she still had much to learn. This was especially so in terms of making decisions with the big picture in mind, something impossible for the current her who still worried over the most minor matters.
“Have faith in the God of Massacre and serve him with sincerity!” Fagus answered sternly. “Of course, you’ll need some help. I’ve used my connections to have you stay by a saintess. You’ll have to perform well..”
“Saintess… would that be Barbara?” Anya’s eyes flashed.
“Yes! She’s a saintess that the God of Massacre himself chose, and has a very high position in the Giant Serpent Sect. It’s even said that she’s more powerful than the other saintesses, and is second only to the pope…” Fagus glanced at Anya, implying something.
“You mean… I have to do anything, regardless of the cost, to gain her favour?” Anya nodded, expressing her understanding of the situation as well as her determination to follow through.
The next time Anya saw Barbara, the saintess was casting a heal on an old servant.

They were in a hidden stronghold in the north that belonged to the Bane Family. There were a few powers here who provided servants and slaves to their master, Fagus Bane, and this old man was obviously one of those servants. His back was humped with all the work he’d been subject to, and his clothes tattered.

There was a disgusting stench coming from him, one that almost caused Anya to crinkle her brows and escape. She could swear that even sewage smelled better than him, and on top of that the old man had a few disgusting lacerations on his pus-filled hands that almost caused her to vomit.

The World of Gods wasn’t very advanced medically, and most priests only cast divine spells on nobles or high-ranked Professionals. Commoners had to power through sickness, while the wealthy looked for potioneers. But even the potioneers could only brew some useless anaesthetics, or they just used some bat shit mixed with canvas ash to cheat others.

With this old man’s lowly status, it’d normally be impossible for him to be healed. He was looking at Barbara with imploring eyes.

“This is from half a month ago. I accidentally cut myself with a stone knife while working, and it turned out this way…”

“Don’t worry, the Lord loves us mortals… He won’t let you suffer
this torture for eternity…” Barbara maintained her kindly smile even while facing such a person, not seeming at all bothered by the smell. Bright divine light was emanating from her hands as a healing spell caressed the wound. The swelling disappeared quickly, and much of the pus was cleaned up before bright red flesh began to emerge.

“All done! However, you still have to keep this arm clean. Don’t do anything too vigorous the next few days,” Barbara cautioned him. “Oh… So kind… Thank you, kind-hearted priestess. May I know which god you serve?” the old man asked somewhat incoherently.

“The Lord is the master of massacres and healing. He is the God of Massacre, with feet in both life and death, Kukulkan!” Barbara answered seriously, turning solemn at the very mention of Leylin.

“God of Massacre, Kukulkan?” The old man was slightly confused, obviously not having heard of this name before. However, he soon regained his senses, “Only a very benevolent god would have a priestess like you. Please allow me to donate to him…”

The old man trembled as he took a few coppers from his pocket. However, the coins fell to the ground the moment he spotted Anya from the corner of his eyes, and he trembled slightly.

“Revered Mistress Anya!” The old man did not care for the rolling coppers on the ground, kneeling down immediately.

“Mm,” Anya answered reservedly. When it came to a servant who could only spend their whole life in this stronghold and serve her family, even a slight answer was a great favour. However, she quickly caught herself and looked at Barbara.

“My apologies, Saintess…”

“The attitude of nobles towards servants is just…” Barbara shook her head, crouching down to pick up the fallen coppers.

“The Lord sees your offerings,” she said as she stowed the insignificant wealth away. She held the old man’s hands, “The faith coming from the bottom of our hearts is what the Lord wishes for.
Wealth means nothing, all beings are equal in terms of soul…”
“I will arrange for him to be given easier and safer jobs, Saintess…” Anya said immediately after the old man left. At the same time, her thoughts began to run free, ‘A kind and benevolent saintess? Good, it’s better to deal with people like her than orcs or savages…’
“I’ll be grateful, but it won’t be very effective…” Barbara shook her head, eyes glimmering with wisdom. It caused Anya to feel like this saintess in front of her wasn’t as simple as she seemed.
“We can only do what we can to save the person in front of us today. However, there are far too many people like this where our eyes cannot see, too many. As individuals, we cannot help them all…”
Barbara’s eyes glinted, “Of course, it’s great that he can get such kind treatment from you. Our Lord often tells us that success is brought about by the accumulation of small things…”
Barbara gazed at Anya with a half-smile, her wise eyes seemingly seeing through everything. “I was notified by chief Fagus that you shall be my communications official here. I will be troubling you from now…”
“No, no… It is my honour to be able to serve the Saintess!”
“Good!” Barbara used a finger to raise Anya’s chin. However, she actually seemed a little excited!
“I don’t want to stroll around yet, and I’m a little tired now. How about a bath?” Barbara suggested.
While it was strange to have a bath in the day, Anya did not question it. Although she felt slightly uneasy, she brought Barbara to a huge bathing area.
There was a marble statue here, that of a servant crouched respectfully with a vase in hand. Water was streaming out of the vase, large amounts of steam covering the huge, spotless-white jade-like pool.
Barbara’s body that was full of youthfulness and vigour disappeared into the pool, before she waved at Anya. “Come here…”
“Hmm? Me?” Anya felt dizzy at this, but her body still moved forward involuntarily…

……

Having finished the bath, Anya was dressed in a long, loose gown with a few droplets of water on her silky hair. She looked more beautiful than ever, but there was a look of perplexity on her face. In contrast, Barbara was full of life as she pulled Anya to another area of the plaza.
“Sister Barbara!” “Sister Barbara!” A few little boys who were in the middle of training immediately ran over. At this point, Barbara’s aura changed once more, and she was now like a gentle big sister living nearby as she greeted them kindly. The huge difference caused Anya to feel like she was still in a dream, leaving her slightly confused.
“These are…” she inquired robotically.
“Lost sheep that the Lord’s warriors found along the way…” Barbara caressed the head of a little boy, looking towards a devil hunter who was guiding them, “How is their homework?”
“They’re doing rather well. These kids can take hardships. Vegeta, in particular, is the most outstanding in terms of his understanding of battle techniques and learning how to read…” Upon hearing this, a trace of pride appeared on the face of the boy who Barbara was caressing.
“You did well!” Barbara’s smile grew even more tender.
“But…” The instructor seemed hesitant to speak.
“What is it? Go on.” Barbara frowned, but it did not seem to mar her beauty. It instead seemed to compliment her, making her seem
more delicate. However, the instructor trembled, as if afraid of something.
“There’s a child… who doesn’t understand the lessons at all… and has a poor physique…”
Anyaa understood the situation from the side. The Giant Serpent Church was taking in orphans, nurturing them into manpower in various areas. A child without any real talent would probably be useless in the future.
“What’s his name?” Barbara followed the instructor’s gaze, and found a petite figure crouched in a corner. It seemed like he hoped to disappear into the shadows.
“Lonce… I think? That should be his name…” The instructor answered uncertainly.
“How can you treat someone you’re so unsatisfied with this way?” Barbara glanced at the instructor, “Have Amik come over, your position is being changed.”
The instructor didn’t dare resist the enraged saintess. He bowed and left without another word.
“Lonce! That’s your name, isn’t it?” Barbara asked as she walked towards the little boy.
“Y–yes, my Lady!” When Lonce looked up, it was like he saw a being of light. The holy rays emanating from her made her appear elegant and warm.
“I believe you have exceptional talent! Don’t mourn for a moment’s failure…” Barbara kindly patted Lonce’s cheeks, causing the flush on his face to extend to his neck.
“But…” Lonce sounded ready to cry.
“If you still can’t handle this, then pray. The Lord will give you courage…”
Lonce gritted his teeth hard. Only by doing so could he stop the tears of shame that were about to surge out of his eyes.
To Anyaa and the rest, it seemed like Barbara was the perfect
saintess. She reached out to Lonce with a glowing hand of redemption, pulling him out of the shadows. The self-abasing boy seemed to grow brighter, with the courage to take on the entire world.

‘So strange.. Why do I suddenly think that way?’ Anya wiped at her cheeks, suddenly coming to a realisation, ‘This power of influence… You’ve given me an extremely terrifying and difficult task, Father…’
Walking on a cobblestone path, Barbara suddenly turned back to look at Anya.
“What’s wrong, Saintess?” Anya, who was still astonished at Barbara’s display, suddenly felt her heart drop as if she had been seen through.
“Do you know… who those children are?” Barbara’s black eyes carried the traits of the natives, but that didn’t matter. It actually left Anya wanting to get closer to her.
“They should be the refugees and fleeing slaves from the north, right? It’s become common in the past few decades. Saintess Barbara taking them in is an act of kindness!” Anya naturally knew where these children had come from. Refugees and fleeing slaves who couldn’t stand the orcs’ harsh treatment were everywhere ever since chaos erupted in the north.
Unfortunately, even here they would not be guaranteed a better life. Freezing or starving to death was so common that there were mountains of skeletons at the sides of every road and in the plains. With the situation being so bad for adults, children were even worse for the wear. If not for Barbara’s help, those little imps would probably die from the hunger or cold in the near future. There was nothing wrong with calling her actions kind.
“Yes, an act of kindness!” Anya reiterated.
“Anya… Did you know that the Lord took in a batch of refugees and children from the north when the unrest began? He nurtured
them, making priests and scholars out of those orphans… Now, as the grandchildren of these priests return to the mainland, they find their homes still ravaged by war. Things seem even worse than before…”
“Larger families, merchants, and churches would take in a certain number of children before, but now… The market is full. Lonce and the rest have nowhere else to go, and they can only starve to death…” While this was but a simple statement, Anya could see the glint in the saintess’ eyes brighten.
“Anya!” Barbara suddenly yelled.
“Yes!” Anya went forward apprehensively.
“Are you willing to change the north with me?”
‘She wants to break away from the chaos of war and help the commoners recover?’ Anya was shocked, not expecting these desires from the saintess. But another thought occurred to her right after, leaving her shocked. ‘Wait… with her status, it could very well be an order from the Lord.
‘Maybe… Is a divine battle more terrifying than that of the mortal realm about to descend upon us?’ Anya’s heart filled with fear in that moment, but she still managed a stiff nod.
“Good! I believe in the loyalty of the Bane Family, as well as your faith in the Lord.” Barbara nodded in satisfaction.
“Umm… Saintess, may I know how the church intends to end this war?” Anya asked cautiously.
“First we focus on the trade of sacrifice blood between your family and the Blackblood Tribe. That batch of blood essence will be dealt with…” Barbara glanced over at Anya.
“Does the church know everything already?” Anya’s voice showed her uneasiness. After all, not all churches could tolerate such things.
“Massacring commoners, buying slaves to be killed, and pandering to evil gods of other races…” Barbara counted with her fingers as
large beads of cold sweat fell from Anya’s face, “Any one of those sins is enough for your family to be consigned to eternal damnation. However… thankfully, the Bane Family is still of some use to our master…” The threat in her voice was obvious.

“Yes!” Anya guaranteed, “The family will adhere to the church’s instructions!”

“Good!” Barbara smiled slightly, though Anya had no right to resist, “Continue the trade with the Blackblood Tribe. I just need our people to take over…”

“It shall be as you say… But…” There was a rare hint of hesitance in Anya’s voice.

“Speak. Is there any issue?” The smile on Barbara’s face did not lessen, but Anya could sense the atmosphere chilling in an instant.

“Well… Our family is only in charge of the collection and processing of the blood essence. The main power still lies with a large business. They’re also in charge of helping us contact the Blackblood Tribe, and take profits from us in exchange for being the middlemen…”

Anya’s words implied that the smuggling into the orc empire had flourished in the darkness of the north. It was such a joke that even the higher-ups of the Silverymoon Alliance were in on the action, rumours abound that Old Mage Elminster had shares in the operation and priests of wealth were acting as guarantors.

“All trade with the Moonwood is controlled by the Blackmoon Merchant Group. We’re only wandering merchants…” Anya’s lips curved in a wry smile.

“Blackmoon Merchant Group? It doesn’t seem to be all that powerful in the north, though?” Confusion shone in Barbara’s eyes.

“It’s a large business group set up in secret, formed in the black market by offshoots of the other large-scale businesses. It controls over 60% of the trade in the north.” Anya’s eyes reflected an
obvious mockery.
“How gutsy… The queen of Silverymoon really is quite pitiful…” Barbara shook her head. Although she hadn’t met such situations in her life on Debanks Island, she still had enough experience to understand a great deal.
“Then… who exactly is it that stands in our way?” Barbara asked.
Anya took a deep breath before spitting out the name, “The master of the Blackmoon Merchant Group, Shadow Hound Gloff!”
“Shadow Hound? What an interesting nickname…” Barbara began to laugh.
“He’s always hidden in the shadows, like a hungry wolf not letting go of even rotten meat. Even the savages fear his greed and violence…” Anya’s shoulders trembled, as if she had thought up something terrifying.
“How interesting!” the smile on Barbara’s face grew, “Help me make an appointment with him…”
Dark businesses like the Neon Merchant Group and the Blackmoon Merchant Group had channels to transmit information in secret despite the surface ban on the Bane Family. It didn’t take long for Anya to receive news that Gloff had agreed to meet.
The venue for the meeting was an underground bar. The owner was an intelligent person, and they’d avoided using a place where paladins could find them here. The smell of cheap wine permeated the place, mixing with tobacco and cheap perfume to cause Anya to cringe.
Once they saw Gloff’s true appearance, however, even Barbara looked slightly surprised. Anya just cried out in shock.
The Shadow Hound just looked far too powerful. Canines protruded from his mount, and he had a spotted black nose that complimented red, bestial eyes. His skin was bunched together and wrinkly, full of fat and flesh.
‘A mixed-blood with a Shar Pei? It’s a rare combination too…’
Anya thought to herself. Such beings were normally exterminated at birth, and those who even survived were rare, let alone someone growing to such heights of power. There was perhaps less than one in ten thousand who could do so.

“Please sit, beauties!” The rumbling voice coming from Gloff’s throat made it seem like he was speaking with his tongue stuck out. Anya needed to spend a great amount of effort to understand what he was saying.

“Many thanks!” she said as she bowed sincerely, but as she sat down she soon felt a disgusting gaze scanning across her. The feeling of greed and lust immediately caused goosebumps to rise on her skin. ‘Shadow Hound, the king of rotting meat… This nickname really was created aptly…’

“What is it, ladies? You don’t seem quite satisfied with how I’m attending to you…” Gloff gulped down a fried quail stuffed with little mushrooms and spices, the sickly crimson-yellow tongue that was wagging out causing Anya to feel nauseous.

“It’s about communication with the Moonwood…” She went straight to the point, forcing down the discomfort.

“So it’s about that…” Gloff was still stuffing food into his mouth, and a servant took a large black notebook and began to flip through it in front of him.

“We don’t really have any needs in this area now, so the noble merchants will have to wait a while…”

“Are there no other ways? Do you think we could discuss the allocation of profits here?” Anya asked, sounding him out.

“It’s not about profits.” Gloff seemed rather resolute. He had already finished off all the food in front of him, and a few female fox servants were using white serviettes to wipe his mouth for him.

“But… If Miss Anya insists, we could continue this conversation in private… haha…” The red glint in Gloff’s eyes brightened.
“Damn it... That stupid hound, swine...” Anya began to complain once they reached the street.
“I do find him rather intelligent...” Barbara pushed at her black cloak, revealing her charming face.
“Saintess, do you mean I should...” Anya immediately felt bitter, but she nodded with difficulty, “If it’s for the church, I’m willing to do it...”
“H ehe... where has your mind gone to, my little Anya... “Barbara lifted Anya’s chin, “The church isn’t doing so badly that you’ll have to make sacrifices for it yet…”

Anya heaved a sigh of relief after hearing those words. Although she didn’t mind such things, it also depended on who the other party was.

“What does the Saintess mean?”

“Though I didn’t state my position, doesn’t the fact that he didn’t seem to care enough to ask say something?” Barbara gazed at Anya with a half-smile, “News of the Bane Family siding with the Giant Serpent Church surely must have spread throughout the north, and he must be unwilling to enter such muddy waters... Besides, their thought process is far more complicated than you’d think. I even suspect that…”

Anya immediately turned solemn. Only now did she realise that, even in terms of the refined war of business, Barbara was no less competent than her.

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Within the hidden meeting room in the underground bar, the Shadow Hound stood up respectfully to bow to a figure in the shadows.
“Things are as you instructed, my lord, I’ve let them know it isn’t possible and had them leave.”

“Mm,” a young noble walked out of the darkness. He was dressed in tailcoat and tie, with not even a strand of fiber out of place. He had silver hair and dark green pupils, the arrogance, reservation, and slyness that only nobles possessed shining forth from his eyes.

“You did well. Even if it isn’t enough to fool them, we’ve clarified our stance…” Every movement of the youth was filled with grace, as if he was hosting an important wine reception.

“They have dealings with a church… It’s not quite appropriate for us to get involved in this…” Gloff began, but an explosive sound rang out as a cane hit Gloff’s forehead. The man began to bleed profusely.

“What a disgrace!” The youth’s expression had changed. The smile was gone, replaced by a brewing storm.

“I was wrong, Master! Please forgive me!” How was Gloff anything like the Shadow Hound he was said to be? All he could do was shake his tail and look pitiful while kneeling in front of his master.

“Do not forget your position… you’re just a lowly mixed-blood slave. How would you have the right to suggest something to me, the noble Eric?” The youth’s expression was full of malice, but he quickly concealed it. Still, Gloff could only crawl in front of him in fear, his body trembling.

“Just remember. Your power, your status; your everything… it all comes from me. I gave you the world, but I can also destroy everything in an instant…” Eric patted Gloff’s head in reminder, a noble smile surfacing on his face.

“I will remember it well, Master! You are my everything…” The only thing Gloff wasn’t doing to express his loyalty was wagging a tail.

“The Neon Merchant Group is far from enough to fill my appetite.
However, what do you think about that saintess? She isn’t too bad…” The young man’s eyes flashed wildly, and he burst into laughter. His shadow in the wall swayed around, like a demon dancing freely.

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After following Barbara back to the residence, Anya perked up. “Here’s the information you wanted, Saintess!” She saw the legendary devil hunter that had left such a deep impression on her arrive. He stood respectfully at the side, hellfire sparking atop the surface of the chains in his hands to give him a unique, blazing aura.

“Mm,” Barbara nodded as she took a gold crystal from him. Her brows suddenly wrinkled, “You had to attack someone just now?” “A few high-ranked shadow thieves who were fearless enough to spy on us. So foolish…” The devil hunter sneered, and a few translucent faces showed themselves amidst the distorted hellfire. ‘He’s profaning souls! That’s something only devils and demons do!’ Anya’s pupils shrank as she shrieked in her mind, but she managed to hide her expression well.

However, Barbara seemed to have sensed her uneasiness. “He’s imprisoned them for now. These people will be sent to the Lord for punishment,” she consoled, though her words were suspicious. The devil hunter shot an indifferent glance at Anya, that gaze that deemed her a little bug causing her soul to tremble in fear. She understood well that this was the imposing aura that came from legendary might. If he wished to destroy her, it wouldn’t be much different to stomping an ant to death.

Only now did Anya realise how amazing Barbara’s kindness was. “Take note of your own actions. You’ve frightened my communications officer!” Barbara frowned.
“My apologies, Saintess. I’ll be on my way then.” Space rippled, and the devil hunter’s figure disappeared. He’d served the purpose of demonstrating his strength, making it fully clear to Anya that her family was just paper in front of legendary might.

“If this place was found out and there’s people watching us, should we…” Anya cautiously asked Barbara.

“There’s no need to move… After all, finding another stronghold will be difficult. With him around, everything will be taken care of.” Barbara’s tone displayed her absolute confidence. All too casually, she passed the information she’d received to Anya.

“This is… information on the Blackmoon Merchant Group!” Anya’s pupils shrunk, feeling like the papers in her hands suddenly weighed a ton. It implied that the Giant Serpent Church had a huge information network. Uneasiness rose in Anya’s heart, fear that her family would lose its use. If that happened, there wouldn’t be much time left before they were destroyed.

“Take a look…” the saintess commanded, and Anya read through everything. Her shock only grew as she read on.

‘The person in control of the Blackmoon Merchant Group is Earl Eric? He’s the grandson of the consul that Queen Alustriel trusts the most?’ The news left Anya speechless. Although she knew that the nobility was dirty, the content of this report still exceeded her expectations.

“Such is the nobility. They can betray their own ilk for profit…” Barbara smiled in mockery, “That’s not all. He seems rather interested in taking over the Neon Merchant Group… And me.” Although Barbara maintained a smile as she spoke, Anya still felt a chill down her spine. She recalled the shadow thieves the devil hunter had just eliminated, ‘He’s the one who sent them?’

“Hehe… Foolish mortal, my body, soul, and everything belong to the Supreme God, Kukulkan. Those who dare covet his belongings
will definitely be punished, their souls crying…” A sick flush appeared on Barbara’s face, causing Anya to shudder. All of a sudden, Barbara pointed at Anya, “Come, accompany me in a bath.”
“Al– alright!” Anya stammered as she agreed, the trepidation rising in her heart mixed with a tinge of anticipation.

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New Silverymoon, Church of Tyr.
“Captain Rafiniya!” The large, dusty doors of the church opened up, revealing the face of an old priest. He spoke slowly, “Your wisdom allowed you to protect numerous budding paladins. The Lord does not blame you…”
The dim light revealed that Rafiniya’s clothing was lined with spikes, and she was kneeling to atone for her sins. She seemed to be punishing herself.
“I have not forgiven myself… I let evil escape my grasp, and the innocent commoners will suffer for it. I have sinned!” Rafiniya looked extremely pale, her eyes sunken with dark lines. The torture had to have been for quite a while.
“The Lord needs you now. New Silverymoon needs you, and the commoners of the north need you more!” The old priest naturally knew what to do to affect her. “The war is about to begin, and the city is in turmoil. The innocent are still suffering, so what are you waiting for? Look at the city, it needs you!
“Besides, shouldn’t you correct your mistakes?” The old priest opened the doors, producing a barely audible sound that gave rise to a sense of urgency.
“I’ve never denied that!” Rafiniya picked up her longsword, and her aura surged with power. Even in the garb of sinners, the captain of the paladins had returned! “I’ll uproot the Neon Merchant
Group, and the Bane Family… The Giant Serpent Church as well! They’ll pay the price, I swear on it!” Rafiniya solemnly guaranteed. “Very good!” The old priest left in satisfaction, not noticing a dark lustre becoming more distinct at Rafiniya’s back… Meanwhile, in a certain grand residence in New Silverymoon. “The captain of the paladins is coming out? Haha… good, good! Leak the location of the Bane Family’s stronghold to them…” Eric began to laugh crazily, “They dare take the shadow thieves I nurture with so much effort? They must pay the price!”
“Young master, this will harm our reputation…” An old butler spoke, his words staggered.

“We’re a mighty noble family, our glory eternal. All this filthy business is the work of those under us. Got it?” Eric looked towards the butler with a gaze full of meaning. The man understood what he meant, backing down respectfully as the young noble continued to swirl the wine in his glass. It seemed like he could see those two captivating faces within the blood red wine.

“You shall all become mine! Just you wait…” he muttered pervertedly, and his cheeks flushed.

The news leaks from the Blackmoon merchant Group caused a lot of pressure to fall on the Neon Merchant Group. Under Rafiniya’s lead, the paladins went all out to completely decimate a few hidden strongholds. They even managed to find an encampment close to Barbara’s current position.

With her church supporting her, Rafiniya had grown more sly and cautious in dealing with the Giant Serpent Church. High-ranked priests accompanied practically every team, and a squad of legendary paladins were ready to reinforce them at any moment. History would not repeat itself in the next encounter.

With the millennia it had spent amassing power, the Church of Justice was just more powerful than the Giant Serpent Church. Tyr being a greater god wasn’t the only thing they had.

Anya’s face flushed red as she sent an emissary from the
Blackmoon Merchant Group away. “It’s a show of power! A brazen show of power!” she complained to Barbara, “I’m sure they were the ones who led the paladins here!”

Anya paced around uneasily in the drawing room, “Our location being leaked was just a warning. If we don’t agree to their requests, they’ll definitely hit us with something more powerful…” “Hehe… what foolish and ignorant people. They’re walking further and further along the path to death…” Barbara put the letter in her hand down, smiling with confidence. “They want to take over the Neon Merchant Group and work together with our church, and they want you to go personally as a show of sincerity? Will I have to go in the future as well?” “Saintess…” Anya looked hesitant, feeling apprehensive. “Of course we’ll fight back, and we’ll fight back strong!” Barbara sounded resolute.

“That’s right! Any sinners who have the guts to go against our Saintess must be punished with hellfire!” The legendary devil hunter entered the drawing room, accompanied by Fagus. “But the Blackmoon Merchant Guild has complicated relationships underground, and Earl Eric is someone of high status. His family can be ranked amongst the top three of the Silverymoon Alliance…” A trace of fear appeared in Anya’s eyes.

The Bane Family as it was right now did not have the means to duke it out even with the Blackmoon Merchant Group, leave alone the duke backing it. Without the Giant Serpent Church assisting them in their fight, they would be like little ants.

“That’s not all. Eric’s father, the duke in office, is a high-ranked legendary,” Fagus mumbled seriously. He turned towards the devil hunter, “How confident are you in your chances, my lord?” It was apparent that Fagus was good at public relations. Even this prideful devil hunter pondered over this seriously, before answering stiffly in the mainland’s language, “I’m confident I can
kill him, but only if there’s no interference. That’s pretty much impossible in New Silverymoon…”
“Exactly,” Fagus sighed. “Queen Alustriel and Old Mage Elminster are present there, both peak legendary beings with the power of divinity…”
Silverymoon was known to be the place with the most advanced spells in the continent, a sacred land for all wizards. Countless high-ranked spells had been created there, and even many legends had improved their craft. It even included the likes of Leylin! In the minds of many normal beings, the ascension of the young wizard was largely thanks to the great accumulations of Silverymoon.
The power the wizards had accumulated over time caused the Silverymoon Alliance to grow into a terrifying existence. Its numerous high-ranked and legendary wizards allowed it to stand the test of time, being able to hold on in the wars against the orc empire.
Most of New Silverymoon was filled with high-ranked wizards, their combined strength letting them contend even with the avatars of gods. In this light, planning an ambush or assassination was a poor decision.
“Besides, there’s no use killing Eric and the duke. Their family is huge, and has organisations all over the continent. It’ll only give us more enemies…” Fagus sighed once more.
The duke’s family was truly enormous, with numerous hidden branches and powerful beings in their ranks. They were scattered all over the prime material plane. Even if their chief and his successor were killed, they would never give up. Unless they could eliminate the entire family at once, trying to take it on would only result in an endless amount of trouble.
The duke’s family was leagues beyond the scope of the Bane Family. But that was only to be expected; after all, the Banes wouldn’t be so troubled by the Church of Justice if they had such
power in the first place. They would have instead been higher up the ladder in Silverymoon, able to live comfortably.
“You don’t need to worry about this issue at all.” Barbara stood up, solemn and dignified. A hazy layer of divine light descended upon her, and a mighty existence’s conscient began to converse with the saintess. A golden lustre flashed in her eyes, and she turned certain. She delivered a decree with complete seriousness, “The Blackmoon Merchant Group and the family of that Eric are marching to their deaths. The Lord will completely exterminate them.”
The very moment Barbara stood up, the devil hunter had knelt down to pray like a devout follower.
Anya and Fagus were crouched on the ground, their bodies still trembling. They’d been frightened silly by that imposing aura that even dragons couldn’t hold a candle to. Just the conscient could cause an ordinary being to bow their head.
After that powerful conscient disappeared, Fagus regained his senses and asked fearfully, “What? Is… Is the God of Massacre descending?”
“That’s right! The Lord has already informed me that Eric and his family will be wiped out!” Barbara spoke with conviction. From her point of view, since even the god she believed in had made a prophecy, the family would definitely be wiped out.
‘Is this the aura of a god? Even if it’s a large family like that in the prime material plane with many connections and legendary beings in charge, with limitless powers hidden in the shadows, wiping them out is an easy task… Right, how could I forget? No matter how generous and gentle the servants of this existence are, he’s a powerful God of Massacre…’
An absent look flashed in Fagus’ eyes, and Anya’s own filled with heat. This was what she truly pursued, power over millions of lifeforms!
Outside, Leylin’s avatar descended towards the north. “A land filled with the stench of war, a greater god watching over it at all times…” Leylin’s eyes flashed as he understood everything, and he snickered before entering the prime material plane. As a true god, he basically had nothing to fear anymore. He naturally didn’t have to keep a low profile.

He spread his senses slightly, and large numbers of golden thread sprang into view. They consisted of strong emotions, the souls of his worshippers forming multiple scenes before him. ‘The threads of faith are being managed quite well here. It must be from the impression I left behind at the beginning, and Barbara’s hard work…’

Leylin tapped a random strand, and it took him to the children inside the stronghold. A weak little boy was praying to his statue within.

“Mighty Lord of Massacre, I beg you… Give me the courage and strength to protect Sister Barbara!” Lonce’s gaze was extremely resolute and filled with determination, “Please, I’m willing to give up everything!”

‘Such great awareness… His faith is bordering zealotry already…’ Such people were the best of seedlings for a god, ones that had to be nurtured properly. With the emphasis deities placed on faith and piety, every zealot was a treasure.

‘Let’s see…’ Leylin sent his conscient down, scanning through the boy’s memories without him even noticing. ‘Hmm? So he’s related to Blackmoon as well. Eric rendered him a homeless orphan, and now he’s a refugee?’

Seeing these dark memories, Leylin poured a trace of his conscient into the golden thread. Lonce, who’d been praying all this while, suddenly felt himself being flooded with energy.
“I am the God of Massacre, the Ruler of Devils and Setter of Laws, Kukulkan! Speak, pious child, what do you need of me?”

The dignity and intimacy in the voice let Lonce affirm that this was the god he worshipped. Realising that a prayer from even the lowly him had been gifted an instantaneous response, hot tears filled the rims of his eyes.

“I see the future. Eric shall wail in the fires of hell in the future, while you will obtain strength to protect hope…”
The gods possessed the strength to turn the heavens and the earth upside down. Leylin’s divine ability, Warp Reality, made a joke of things such as innate talent or aptitude. Even as the boy was stupefied, some changes manifested on Lonce’s body. Before the youth even had the time to express his gratitude, Leylin’s prophetic words ended and he fainted immediately.

The incident caused a stir all around them. The priests saw the imprint Leylin left behind on the boy, and knew what to do next. ‘I’ll most likely get another zealot once news of Eric’s end reaches his ears…’ Leylin stroked his chin.

Gods had a myriad of complex tasks to accomplish everyday, and from one point of view Leylin’s actions just now were a net loss. However, his worshippers needed a boost in morale from time to time. Since Eric and his family were being destroyed anyway, he chose to reveal his divine presence. “Let’s use their demise to announce my arrival.” A freezing radiance was emitted from Leylin’s eyes.

Umberlee had put him in contact with the orc gods, and their greater god Gruumsh welcomed his arrival. Though, that being said, the orcs wouldn’t reject anyone who wanted to team up with them to fight two greater gods. However, things were different when Malar was brought up. Gruumsh had an ambiguous attitude at best, expressing
helplessness in Leylin’s conflict with the God of the Hunt. The most he could do was remain neutral. However, his reactions made Leylin feel like Malar’s relationship with the orc gods was closer than his. However, that was quite easy to understand. The orc and beast gods were of the same faction, and there was an intrinsic foundation for their cooperation. Malar had been a longtime ally, and he would be more reliable than a stranger like Leylin. However, these gods had misunderstood Leylin’s thoughts. Malar didn’t qualify to be Leylin’s enemy. He was mere prey, and not something he paid any mind to.

Leylin’s gaze instead pierced through space, entering New Silverymoon, ‘Ignorant plebeian, you dare eye my property!’ The body and soul of a saintess were the personal property of the deity they served, and this was true across all alignments and churches. Eric daring to harbour thoughts of defiling Barbara was blasphemy! Leylin hadn’t found a suitable opportunity to establish his presence and dignity before, but Eric had now come knocking on his door. Wasn’t it akin to committing suicide? Even with all its legendaries and hidden branches, the dukedom was just a bunch of ants in the eyes of a god.

“Well, it’s about time to let my main body through, so I’ll need some test subjects as well…” Leylin smiled, as if seeing the fall of Eric’s house.

……

Earl Eric had no idea of this star of death shining brightly over his house, and his high spirits hadn’t been dampened in the least. His malicious schemes and plans had led Rafiniya and the paladins
under her to clamp down on the Neon Merchant Group, and they’d obtained fantastic results. His rage had calmed down.

‘I won’t have to wait much longer before Anya comes knocking on my door, do I?’ Eric stroked his chin, anticipation in his eyes. He’d been longing for the rose of the Bane Family for a while now.

‘That saintess won’t be long either… I haven’t tasted a saintess yet…’ Suddenly, Eric’s body seemed to blaze with passion, and a small stream of heat flowed to his lower abdomen.

“My lord!” a voice interrupted just as Eric was about to get some maids to vent his lust. It was his old butler.

“What is it?” he asked with impatience, “Speak!” If the old butler had nothing of import, he would be taught an unforgettable lesson.

“The master is back. He’s waiting for you in the study.” However, the butler only took a sentence to calm Eric down immediately. It was like cold water was poured down on the boy.

Eric’s grandfather was a duke of the Silverymoon Alliance, a legendary wizard who managed the city’s consulate. He was on the same level as Old Mage Elminster, the two having studied together in the past. Put bluntly, he was the pillar of support for the entire family.

Eric seemed very powerful as he flaunted his authority, but he was nothing before his grandfather. Just a word from the man would strip him of all authority.

“I… I’m on my way!” Eric straightened out his clothes in a hurry; the duke never liked his descendants being tardy or messy. At the same time, the burning desire in his eyes was replaced by a fawning gaze.

It didn’t take long for Eric to stand before his grandfather in the study. The duke had a goosefeather quill in hand, and was continuously scribbling away at a pile of documents.

“Eric…” It took over a dozen minutes for Eric to hear his grandfather’s voice, his knees on the verge of buckling. It wasn’t
loud, but it carried a strange power that caused the young noble to straighten his back immediately.
“I hear you’ve been quite happy recently, forging close ties with the paladins of the God of Justice. Especially Rafiniya, you’ve allowed her to gain many contributions!” A hint of mockery appeared in the corner of the Duke’s eyes.
“Forgive me, Lord Grandfather. I’m only doing this for the sake of work…” Eric replied feebly.
“Let me make this clear first: the Lady of Hope holds power equivalent to mine, she isn’t someone you can covet. Now moving on… Have you been clamping down on the Neon Merchant Group as of late?”
Eric’s body trembled as he tried to reply, his back being drenched in cold sweat, “You know, Grandfather… They’re fugitives from New Silverymoon, I’m only performing my duty—”
“No matter what it is, stop now!” the duke interjected.
“But why?” Eric felt somewhat repressed. Although he had his own plans when dealing with the Neon Merchant Group, he’d also kept the expansion of the family in mind.
“The Neon Merchant Family is backed by the Giant Serpent Church. One should always show respect when dealing with a god!” Had the old duke known of Eric’s lust for Barbara, his words would not have been this calm. Right now, he only felt extreme weariness. His work in the consulate took up too much of his time, and he’d remained stagnant without advancing.
“I’ve expanded the family enough. We don’t need to grow further, we should focus on stabilising ourselves.” The duke rubbed the bridge of his nose. “Think carefully about what I said… Do not try to provoke a faction that has the backing of a god! The results will not be pretty…”
“Yes, Lord Grandfather.” Eric bowed and retreated from the study room…
The youth only started howling after he’d returned to his own room. “WHY?” he roared like a beast, “When I’m just about to succeed…”
“My Lord!” the maidservant Eric doted on the most ran in, her face filled with worry, “What happened?”
“Who let you in?”
It was then that the maid saw a pair of bestial eyes staring at her, icy and filled with murderous intent. An ear-piercing scream sounded out, but it quickly faded as everything returned to normal…
A hidden passage opened up some time later, and the Shadow Hound Gloff walked out.
“Master…” The owner of the Blackmoon Merchant Group took off his black robes, revealing animal hide and a body laced with fat as he greeted Eric with respect. The corpse on the floor did not faze him at all.
“Hurry and dispose of it, do not let it taint my room any further…” Eric kicked the maid’s corpse away, her once soft and supple body already growing brittle.
“As you wish, Master!’ Gloff moved to obey. However, he stopped for a moment in hesitation, “Also, Master, do we continue suppressing the Neon Merchant Group?”
“Hmm?” Eric frowned, before throwing a flower vase at Gloff’s head. A loud shattering noise sounded, and blood spilled to the floor. “So you got the news too. Well, aren’t you quite loyal? Don’t forget who it is that reared a dog like you!”
Fear entered Gloff’s expression as Eric bellowed in rage. However, the halfblood was instead feeling more misery than fear in his heart. No matter how powerful he seemed in the darkness, Gloff knew he was only a lackey that Eric could dispose of anytime. If Eric grew annoyed with him, he’d end up like the maid in a matter of seconds.
“Of course not, Master, how could I have the guts?! You’re the
greatest power in my eyes!” Gloff bowed his head and put on a fawning expression. He was almost licking Eric’s boots. “Listen up…” Eric’s breathing resumed a regular pace. He viewed Gloff with a higher importance than the maidservant earlier. “Our plans must go on… Only now, it should be kept secret from the others. Continue with our actions until the Neon Merchant Group yields. Is that understood?” There was no way Gloff did not understand Eric’s intentions. However, if he did not obey he would die. The Shadow Hound valued his own life over the duke’s commands, so he immediately agreed. “I understand!”
I
f that legendary duke working in Silverymoon’s consulate found out what his grandson was up to, he would probably jail and hang the youth as soon as possible. He might even have blasted him to smithereens with a disjunction spell. Unfortunately, he’d been swamped with work as they prepared for battle, leaving such a huge disaster to go unnoticed.

That was until that day, that is. Warm sunlight was shining down on the north, and a few pure white clouds dotted the azure sky to make it look like velvet that was changing patterns.

Eric was in a very good mood that morning. The pressure he’d consistently put on the Neon Merchant Group had let those fools know to compromise. They’d sent him an envelope through hidden channels, which indicated their resolve was weakening.

He believed the letter would be full of flattering words, leaving a small request at the end and an indication that they were willing to offer something in exchange. Compromises between nobles always went along these lines. Thus, at the headquarters of the Blackmoon Merchant Group, he was reclining on his couch with his eyes closed, full of the pride of a victor.

Gloff was stood at his side like a humble servant, and there was another black-robed person in front of him, “All checks have been performed, there’s no problem,” he said as he handed the envelope over.

Naturally, Eric wasn’t a careless person. The black letter had
undergone countless tests before it entered his grasp. This man in front was his most trusted subordinate.
The man had a pair of arms so shrivelled one could see pale bone underneath the skin. His eyes had sunk deep, and there seemed to be no muscle on his face. It was like his entire body had been formed of skin and bone, and he stank so badly of decay that even Gloff seemed slightly disgusted. The man’s robes were huge for his build, and a necklace of bone and black pearl flickered with a dull glow as the aura of death and evil spirits emanated from it. This man was obviously a necromancer.
Necromancers liked to play around with bodies and souls, being rejected by the remaining wizards on the continent. Alustriel, in particular, had set numerous bans on them in Silverymoon, making her rule the most severe in history.
“Since Mentor Adas has spoken, it must be true!” Eric said. With everyone else eager to beat them down, it was enormously difficult for any necromancer to develop. Still, as a result, every single high-ranked necromancer was earth-shatteringly powerful. Even if Adas wasn’t a skeleton lich yet, he was almost at the legendary realm and his proficiency in curses and spirits left no fear of threat behind.
Eric chuckled as he took the envelope from his mentor, tearing it open. This was the moment he was waiting for; the pleas of the defeated always gave him immeasurable delight.
“This…” However, his expression soon changed. The paper inside the envelope was completely blank, with nothing on it. Eric turned it over a few times to confirm, and a feeling of humiliation surged up within him that caused his face to flush red.
“This isn’t even a prank… It’s a challenge! A despicable and weak family like that dares challenge me, the grandson of a legendary wizard and the star of Silverymoon? They will pay in blood!” Eric yelled, and viciously slammed the paper onto the table.
“Ma- Master!” At this moment, Gloff suddenly found something
Strange. A dark green flame had erupted the moment Eric touched the paper, greedily devouring everything around it.

“Hm? This…” Adas quickly made his move, many magic items on his hands flickering as the spells he’d prepared were launched. Detect Curse, Holy Defence, Armour of Thorns! Numerous layers of light shrouded Eric, and a teleportation light quickly swallowed the mentor and pupil. The spatial transfer took them straight to their residence at the core of Silverymoon.

“We got the right coordinates. Even legendary beings wouldn’t dare charge into Silverymoon without caution…” Adas glanced at Eric, “Not discovering this new type of curse was my fault.”

“Please don’t say that, Mentor Adas…” Eric was still lenient in front of those with real might. “Without you here, who knows what kind of trouble I would be in now.”

At that point, Eric’s expression changed, “The damned Neon Merchant Group… They actually dare to use such underhanded means. I won’t let them off!”

“I’m actually rather interested in that new curse,” Adas caressed his necklace, “It could actually escape my detections… I hope to return and observe the reactions…”

“That’s not a problem at all. Isn’t Gloff there? He’s the best test subject you could have. With how close he was, he must have been affected by the curse as well…” Eric answered without any hesitation, the only emotion in his eyes exasperation, not pity.

“That stupid dog, I’ll need to find someone to replace it.” Eric waved his arm, and a bit of green light flashed in his eyes.

“Oh! NO!” Only when Adas exclaimed did Eric realise that the green flames had appeared once again, sticking to his fingers like maggots. Thin black lines appeared on his skin, wriggling like they were absorbing his blood.

“How can there be a curse like this? It doesn’t make sense…” Adas felt like everything he knew was coming apart.
Eric’s yells continued to grow louder and louder, until the green flames were done absorbing his blood and swallowed up the dark lines. They continued to blaze in mid-air, the enchanting fires forming a small portal.

It was a sound that nobody could describe, one that did not exist in the world and was impossible to recreate. It sounded like a roar that possessed all the resentment and hate of the world, like a low mumble from hell that was more evil than the devils and demons combined. It spread out in all directions.

“What- what’s happening to me…” Eric grew dizzy, feeling like there was a fire in his throat. His voice grew incredibly hoarse, and he sounded worse than an old bellow.

“You…” All of a sudden, Eric pointed at Adas in fear. The necromancer now had huge tumours growing on his face one after the other, and was becoming obese. Terrifying pus spilled out of the sarcomas, and great corrosive strength began to swallow up his body.

“No…NOOO! I…” Eric looked at his own hands, where abscess the size of gold coins appeared continuously, emitting pus that smelt of decay as they began to explode and corrode his skin. The great pain overwhelmed his senses.

He then lay on the ground, watching Adas who had already turned into bone and could no longer speak. He had once been someone with immeasurable strength, basically a king in the north. Now, however, he couldn’t even cry for help, much less decide life or death. Eric could only watch his body be corroded in total despair, his head swelling into a huge tumour. It went out in a loud explosion, thus ending his life of sin.

Meanwhile, everyone in the prime material plane that was related to Eric by blood was startled to find their bodies filling up with terrifying tumours that ate away at them in but a moment.

Within New Silverymoon’s castle, Queen Alustriel was gazing at
the legendary duke as he made a report.
“These are the logistics of the Nojo defensive line, my Queen…”
There were other legendary figures in the hall beside the two, including Old Mage Elminster. They were evidently discussing something extremely important.
The duke looked poised and was about to say something, when his expression changed. His skin turned a terrifying green as a tumour began to grow underneath. It was like a little mouse running around as it scurried around his body.
“Curse!” Elminster was the first to stand up and throw a dispel out. The wizards present here were amongst the best and most powerful in the world, and there were even legendary priests present. Everyone cast spell after spell, as even the duke himself tried all methods to save his life.
However, nothing worked. The rest could only watch as the duke collapsed, crying out in misery.
“A very terrifying curse!” Elminster wrinkled his forehead, using a layer to separate the legendary duke from them. He then turned to look at the duke through the barrier, or perhaps he was looking at the obsidian protection runes on the ground.
“Those are legendary substitutes that can take out any attacks, poisons, or curses in his stead. However, they’ve lost all effect…” he said to Alustriel. A trace of fear appeared in his eyes, “Looking at the current situation, even a clone wouldn’t work…”
BANG! Under the eyes of numerous helpless onlookers, desperation surfaced in the duke’s eyes. However, their legendary might was all for naught as his body suddenly exploded, flesh and blood scattering as the corrosive pus covering the barrier almost caused Alustriel and the rest to puke.

“To kill a duke right in front of us... This is a serious provocation!” A solemn look surfaced on Elminster’s face. He was disappointed that he hadn’t been able to identify the enemy from the duke’s eyes, and soon that solemnity was replaced by infinite fear. The duke was a legendary wizard himself, and he was killed so easily. What about everyone in the hall right now?

“Report!” a high-ranked wizard staggered in, the panic noticeable on his face.

“What’s wrong?” Elminster asked with a frown, overstepping Alustriel’s authority.

“Earl Eric, Chekov, Viscount Agar, and even Dorwick and Lady Merida... We just received news that they’re all dead!” The hall grew completely silent in an instant, and everyone stared blankly at the spot where the legendary duke had exploded.

“That is to say... everyone in Silverymoon carrying his bloodline was eliminated in an instant?” Elminster felt a sudden chill in the air, invading his very soul.

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“It seems like the bloodline curses from the Magus World work quite well…” Leylin withdrew his gaze. Even those with legendary might could not withstand his rage, and despite numerous powerful existences surrounding him the duke had died. This was the terror of the Magus World! With the extinction of all of the duke’s blood, Leylin had announced to the influences and gods with the north that he’d arrived.

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“This is clearly provoking us!” Seeing the unending stream of death reports from the frenetic city, an unperturbed look appeared on Rafiniya’s face. However, this was obviously the calm before the storm.

Everyone related by blood to the legendary duke had perished without reason, and the terrifying sights of their deaths had astonished all of New Silverymoon. Adding up the clones and true bodies as well as the descendants of the legendary duke and his family, there were hundreds within Silverymoon. Furthermore, numerous family members had perished in the sight of the general public.

The disturbance caused by event allowed other villains and adventurers with ulterior motives to take advantage of the situation, causing the chaos to intensify. To Rafiniya, who’d been entrusted with maintaining public order, this was an insult to her job, a shame that could never be removed!

“Dispatch the paladins to assist the garrison in stabilising the situation!” Numerous solemn paladins rushed out of the church, causing all wild schemes to fall apart in an instant. However, the vague moans of lament within the gradually recovering city caused Rafiniya’s expression to grow even more heavy.
‘A curse with hundreds of victims… If we can’t capture the culprit, I won’t be able to account to the Queen and other citizens who trusted me…’ Rafiniya swiftly started to speculate about the true mastermind. ‘Was the culprit an enemy of the duke? A wizard trying to collect souls, or an evil god trying to spread fear?’
Rafiniya knew fully well that if this incident was related to a god it would become an extremely huge problem. However, the ideal of justice in her heart would not allow her to back down.

“Rafiniya!” A cardinal said as he walked towards her, his face drooping with gloom. “We just received word that another family at the Ironsword Castle met its end, the symptoms the exact same as the duke’s family…”

“Could it be…” Rafiniya’s brows twitched.

“Yes. It’s a branch of the duke’s family that separated a hundred years ago and settled down at Ironsword Castle. Even the branches passed away when the duke died, and the old and young weren’t spared even if they were in a church at that moment…”

A faint trace of foreboding emerged within the cardinal’s eyes, “The Church gave us the same news. The branch in the central kingdoms perished as well…”

“A curse that can affect the entire continent…” Rafiniya muttered.

“Mm. Not just that, there were a few cases of other aristocrats in Silverymoon, and even a few stable lads and gardeners. There’s a lot of panic thinking it’s spreading, but we know why they died…” the cardinal continued.

‘Those licentious idiots, having numerous illegitimate children and causing a huge problem now…’ Rafiniya was secretly elated. She’d been irked by the luxurious and messy lifestyles of the higher nobility.

“The main problem is even the descendants that we weren’t aware of were killed off… This is the power of a god! An evil god has declared his arrival! The cardinal said with all seriousness.
Rafiniya nodded her head in acknowledgement. Only a true god could release such a large-scaled curse upon the mainland. Even peak legendary wizards couldn’t wield such terrifying power. “Those evil gods are the greatest threat to our cause!” Rafiniya clenched her fists, missing the cardinal’s bitter smile. ‘There aren’t many evil gods capable of killing off descendants a thousand miles away, and they’re all terrifying existences…’ the cardinal sighed in secret. With his understanding of gods, he naturally knew the terror of the one behind this event. Still, his expression returned to normal soon enough, “Paladin Rafiniya. Your mission is to assist Queen Alustriel in maintaining peace and stability within New Silverymoon City… Do you intend to shirk your duties?”

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Rafiniya’s face instantly blackened after the cardinal left, and she draw her longsword to a terrifying keen. She’d noticed a clear hint of warning within the cardinal’s words, asking her to accept a compromise. It was like the church didn’t plan to take actions against that cruel god! Even though Rafiniya knew that one needed to compromise and back down sometimes for the sake of justice, this incident had exceeded her bottom line. “Don’t tell me even the Lord’s Church has started to be corrupted by darkness…” Even though she knew she shouldn’t think that way, a trace of darkness enveloped Rafiniya’s thoughts. Her expression warped within the shadows, and that trace of dark red grew even more bright.

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“Oh Lord… Please pardon my sins, do not afflict me with such a terrifying curse…”
“No matter who it is, Lord… Please protect me, Coco, and Laffrey…”
“Dear Lord… I pray for you to swiftly end this disaster…”
“Oh Lord, whoever you are, wherever you come from… Thank you for exterminating Earl Eric and avenging my family…”

The amount of golden faith in the void had increased severalfold, and numerous prayers that matched Leylin’s expectations were transmitted to him. The horrifying death of a family protected by legendary beings had caused mass panic within New Silverymoon, and only the gods had the ability to protect and comfort these civilians.

Those of faith had increased substantially within New Silverymoon, and the strength of the faith already present had grown as well. Aristocrats and businessmen grew more generous in their donations to the churches, as if such actions would prevent the misfortune from falling upon them.

All gods had raked in a great harvest, and inevitably some of this scattered faith had been devoured by Leylin. After all, spreading terror and power could also grow faith. It was simply normal for people to pray to the harbinger of this disaster out of fear. The Goddess of Plagues and Umberlee both adopted similar methods to grow their following.

‘Although this line of faith isn’t stable, it could be considered great replenishment…’ Emotions of fear and gratitude followed the faith to Leylin. Every action of a true god would affect the entire prime material plane, and this one from Leylin could be considered a different type of miracle.

His godfire and divine domain were strengthened by the massive faith, accumulating with Leylin’s true body. However, Leylin seemed apathetic, seemingly not affected by the fanaticism of the
mortal world.
“Now that the Blackmoon Merchant Group and their backers have been sorted out, there should be no more obstacles to the plan. The transaction with the Blackblood Tribe should speed up as well…” Leylin simply couldn’t care about a possible counterattack from the good gods. Someone had blasphemed his divinity, so how could he tolerate it? No action taken in punishment would be considered too much.
What’s more, he was also an evil god! If he didn’t leave a trail of terror wherever he went, would he be worthy of his reputation?
“I never thought I’d come back to the north…” Anya stopped her horse and looked around at the wilderness, a trancelike expression in her eyes.

“Argh!” “Ahh!” Sharp growls could be heard from goblins in the shrubbery as an enormous malicious intent enveloped the caravans behind her.

If they couldn’t show a sufficient amount of force, these goblins would continue to follow them, looking for flaws in their defences as they waited for reinforcements. When the time was ripe, they’d rush into action and make mincemeat out of everyone in the caravans.

“Go!” Anya naturally knew how to deal with them. She didn’t even have to say anything before several armoured knights rushed ahead. The mounts whinnied as they brandished their swords, causing the goblins to cry out in panic.

“Haha, you green-skinned midgets!” One knight laughed loudly, the dragon-patterned greatsword in his hand driving several dirty green-skinned goblins out of the grass.

*Bang! Bang!* Several of the pitiful little fellows suffered fatal injuries, and the ones that were left remaining began to scream in horror as they lamented their fates. The remaining goblins fled quickly, the tall grass shaking as wave after wave escaped.

A caravan could not survive in the north without the ability to defeat the goblins and ogres of the Endless Plains. They would be
swallowed up and exterminated by the other merchant groups, dispatched in a harsh fight that left their bones to rot in the wilderness forever. Several goblins were then hung at the front of the caravan, screaming the loudest. These wails would be the best deterrent against danger, even if only against other goblins. Anya intentionally distanced herself from the stench of the green-skinned barbarians, draping a white scarf embroidered with gold across her face. ‘Damn, isn’t there a better method than this?’ Her eyes scanned across the normal-looking servants with a hint of resentment in her heart, ‘With them here, even if we were surrounded by ogre tribes, there’s nothing much to be scared of, is there?’ Of course, Anya was well aware that this place was now the territory of the orc empire. If they were surrounded by the horde here, even several legendaries would not be enough to save them. This was why she decided to swallow her resentment, refraining from speaking. ‘There are matters for you to attend to, Miss Anya!’ A skinny servant ran over, looking young and immature. However, his eyes revealed a calm resolution that did not match his sweet face. ‘What’s the matter?’ Anya asked reflexively. ‘It’s most likely an issue regarding our arrival at the Moonwood,’ the youth replied, causing Anya to take another glance at him. ‘I’ll go immediately,’ Anya promised, and her eyes bored into the little boy’s back with a rare trace of jealousy, ‘What a lucky fellow… Wasn’t he called Lonce? He actually received the favour of the Lord…’ When she’d first laid eyes on him, this child was but a weak boy hiding within the shadows. But now? His temperament and physique had both been transformed greatly, and he was now receiving focused training from the Giant Serpent Church.
'He awakened his talent as a devil hunter with divine inspiration… That legendary devil hunter will very likely accept him as a disciple…’ Anya looked at Lonce’ back and thought of her own brothers who were sent into the Giant Serpent Church. A wry smile appeared on her face, but she could not complain. She understood the reason behind such treatment well. The Banes were a business family without any real faith. Given that they had to be converted to Kukulkan’s faith, their devotion could not be compared to what Lonce showed. Even if the heirs to the family were still young, it didn’t seem like they would become zealots. ‘Perhaps the next generation of children can be nurtured…’ Anya deeply understood the fundamentals of the church and what it relied on to exist. Monetary and other help was one aspect, but the most fundamental aspect of one’s relationship with the church was the strength of their faith. Talent and money did not matter in the face of fervour. Anya knew that the Giant Serpent Church had a unique divine skill which could determine the depths of one’s faith through the light of faith emitted by the worshipper. This sort of analytical ability made her feel that she was in deep danger. ‘It looks like I should deepen my understanding of the doctrine of their god. Sister Barbara might be able to help me with this…’ A blush appeared on Anya’s face as she thought of Saintess Barbara, for reasons she herself did not know. “Father!” Anya rode to Fagus’ side, continuing the journey alongside him. Their current journey was so important that even the head of the family had personally joined the caravan. “We have to handle these matters well for the Lord. We cannot afford a single mistake!” Fagus said with a solemn face. “I understand, Father.” Anya inhaled deeply. Leylin had bestowed a miracle upon their family, taking out Blackmoon and the house backing it in one go. This freed up the Neon Merchant Group
immediately, allowing them to put trade with the Blackblood Tribe on the agenda.
No matter how Fagus and his daughter looked at it, the Giant Serpent Church’s actions this time were rather evil. However, they’d boarded this ship themselves, and could only walk the path that Leylin had paved for them. Fagus knew deeply of the horror of a war between gods, and now an innocent like him had been thrown into the mix. Even if he was unwilling, he could only bite the bullet and continue on.
A commotion suddenly sounded out up ahead, and Anya moved to whisper into Fagus’ ear, “Father, we’ve spotted knights of the orc empire.”
“It doesn’t matter.” Fagus looked at the flags they’d put up, a pass the orc empire had given them to guarantee the safety of their caravan.
“Argh…” “Argh…” Bleak howls sounded out as a few knights finally appeared before Anya’s eyes. These werewolves were about two heads taller than the average human, with green eyes and hair. They were riding giant wolves with silver fur.
‘The Mounted Wolves!’ Anya paled as she saw these elites of the orc empire, their equipment being able to contend with human knights. The Mounted Wolves were a nightmare to all the people of the north.
The horses of the caravan neighed restlessly under the wolves’ gazes, stomping their hooves on the ground as white vapour condensed from their breath.
Fortunately, the commander of the Wolves waved his hand after seeing the banner atop it. The wolves made way for the caravan, and they moved ahead despite their fear. The captain even dispatched two riders to protect them at the tail.
“Sigh… Compared to the Silverymoon Alliance, the strategic warfare of the orc empire is actually…” Fagus muttered under his
breath, but he didn’t end the sentence.
Anya knew what her father wanted to say. The Orc Emperor Saladin was a wise leader, possessing great foresight. Seeing how the humans flourished with the advent of civilisation, he was mimicking their ways to develop his own empire.
For the sake of food and materiel, Saladin had promised the Neon Merchant Group and Blackmoon Merchant Group to protect them within his borders. Orders had been sent for orc troops to not harass them, and only engage in fair trade. This would in turn attract more merchants, and increase the strength of the empire.
Alustriel and her subordinates weren’t even comparable in this aspect. The only thing that helped them was that they were of the same race, and the orcs were their natural enemies. The benefits of trade with the orc empire couldn’t always get rid of the shadow of war.
On the other hand, the fact that the orcs were buying magic scrolls and powerful equipment told Fagus that they were already prepared for war.
“What do you think?” a tall, and skinny figure asked Lonce, “Are you afraid?”
“No. I have nothing to fear with the protection of the Lord…” Lonce gripped a string of hemp that was tied around his neck. Something seemed to be hidden within.
“Alright then, what do you think of the orcs turning towards civilisation and protecting our caravan?” The tanned man seemed like he wanted to test Lonce’s deductive abilities. This question would be difficult even for an adult to answer.
“I feel like…” Lonce bowed his head and pondered. When he lifted his head again, his eyes no longer filled with perplexment, “The orcs give off a savage and bloody aura. It seems right to improve themselves and march towards civilisation, but I keep feeling like something’s not right.”
Although he didn’t elaborate further, the man seemed to be satisfied with his answer, “You’re right. Gruumsh, the orc god, is a god of savages. This change doesn’t match the true nature of his domain, so it’ll cause a serious problem… How many of the orc gods will want to change their natural disposition to civilisation?”

“Is it very difficult?” Lonce nodded his head. Just thinking about it proved to be extremely astonishing for him.

“It is! Sometimes the gods cannot even choose the change of alignments and disposition…” The figure sighed, “And even though Gruumsh himself approved this change, not many others will. The imbalance in power has caused a fatal blow to the orc empire…”
The emperor’s decree was enforced with might and savagery, causing fear to spread across the orc empire. The Neon Merchant Group dumped much of their goods along their way, using iron, food, weapons, and magic artifacts to trade for great amounts of precious metals. The orcs gave out some special items of the north at unimaginably low prices. Gems were but stones for the orcs, and to exchange them for weaponry, rations, and clothing was a great bargain. It led to a great environment for the Neon Merchant Group as they finally arrived at the Moonwood.

This was the Blackblood Tribe’s base, a place where Leylin had fought hard in multiple times in the part. Trade with the Blackblood Tribe was also what caused the paladins to notice the Neon Merchant Group, but with the urging of the Giant Serpent Church they continued with the transaction…

At the same time, another mounted group entered the Moonwood as well. They quickly passed the strange branches and obstructions, the slight wind in the forest raising their robes a little to reveal a silver lustre.

“The North, the Moonwood, and the Blackblood Tribe… I’m back,” their leader muttered as she glanced at the Moonwood, lost in thought. She pulled off her cloak to reveal a young face.

“It might not be where everything started, but it was where the most blood was shed… It seems like a good place to end
everything…” She muttered.
One of the cloaked figures halted beside her, revealing a benevolent and sorrowful face. “Are you feeling at a loss, Captain Rafiniya?”
“It’s nothing, Cardinal Karal!” Rafiniya shook her head, “I spent a long time here before, so I’m just feeling nostalgic…”
“Mm. Your familiarity with the terrain will be to our advantage. We need to make use of that,” Cardinal Karal made a hand gesture in front of his chest, “We’ve received intel that the sinful Neon Merchant Group is going to make contact with the Blackblood Tribe’s werecreatures here soon, and supply the other side with materials for a blood sacrifice…”
“Those unscrupulous souls should go to hell!” Rafiniya gritted her teeth, her terrifying energy raging at the back of her hands as she grasped her sword. Just the thought that they were using the blood and souls of innocent beings to please the evil gods made her feel like a frightening bundle of flames was about to surge out of her chest.
“In the name of justice, I shall purge all evil and sin!” The high-ranked paladins began to chant alongside her, their faces glowing with a faint white light.

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The Neon Merchant Group quickly met a group of werecreatures after entering the Moonwood. However, they’d obviously traded with the other party many times. The leader of the werecreatures even knew who they were, and once they showed their tokens they were quickly taken to the core of the forest where the Blackblood Tribe resided.
“It’s been a long time, Shaman Gara…” Fagus greeted a shaman that was smaller than the werecreatures around him, with many
strange ornaments all over his body.
“I smell something different on you…” Gara said as he moved forward to sniff at Fagus, causing Anya’s heart to clench. Fagus froze for a moment, but then he replied coolly, “Haha… what are you saying, my friend… Maybe it’s that darned chef of mine who put too many onions in the morning soup…” Her father’s calm expression caused Anya to feel ashamed for herself.
“Perhaps…” Gara didn’t press on as he led the way, “You’re late, my friend. You almost caused us to miss the ceremony this time. If the Lord gets angry, I swear your head will be hung to dry on a tree branch!”
The werecreature opened his mouth to reveal terrifying teeth. His tongue was barbed, and the disgusting smell of flesh coming from his mouth gave Anya the urge to throw up.
“You should know…” Fagus began to complain immediately, “Silverymoon’s guards were switched out with a bunch of paladins. All the businesses have come under great pressure… It took me far too much to make sure I didn’t miss the transaction…”
“Indeed, there’s fewer caravans coming over recently. I heard your queen is squeezing the merchants dry to start the next war…” Gara nodded, as if sympathising with Fagus. He then pulled at the man’s body in a friendly manner, making the difference in their builds all that more obvious.
“We won’t let a friend of ours suffer, I promise you that!” he exclaimed as he patted his chest. If Anya hadn’t seen how brutal the werecreatures got in their hunts and ceremonies, she would’ve thought this man to be kind-hearted and honest.
“Come, let me see what you’ve brought for me!” After the chatter, Gara soon got to the main topic.
“Of course, my friend. I’ve prepared for this trade for a long time…” Fagus smiled. A dozen servants moved forward with a clap of his hands, bringing over heavy boxes with large bronze locks.
One could see a thick layer of elven silk within, the fabulous material reduced here to a tool that pressed down on and prevented the items from shaking.

Fagus then opened up a smaller box after he removed the layers of silk, one made of mahogany covered in thick veiny lines. The blood essence within glowed with a radiance that caught everyone’s attention, and the dense stench of blood it emitted caused Anya to wrinkle her eyebrows.

“This is it… This smell…” Shaman Gara took a deep breath. He seemed intoxicated, a flush rising upon his face, “I can confirm that this is an item of the greatest quality!”

“But of course. You don’t know what I had to go through to—” Fagus started, saliva spraying out, but Gara waved him off in annoyance.

“I know what you want, my friend.” He gestured to two werecreatures, and they lifted a box of items to bring it before Fagus. The wooden box seemed rather shabby, not at all comparable to what Fagus had brought. However, the light shooting out from within dazzled Anya the moment the box was opened.

Silver, gold, rubies, emeralds… All sorts of precious materials were within the box. It stroked a thirst for wealth within the group, the kind that caused adventurers and merchants to throw out their fear of even death!

“How is it? Are you satisfied?” The werecreatures burst into laughter, watching as Fagus practically pounced onto the wealth. This was a box full of gold coins and many other valuable jewellery. With some of it twisted and bloodstains still on some because of a lack of protection, it was easy to imagine how pitiful the original owner had been while the werecreatures were ‘collecting’ them. However, O Goddess Waukeen, which merchant cared for that?
“Enough! It’s enough! Shaman Gara, your generosity is as great as the mountains and seas, more beautiful than the stars in the skies…” Fagus started to repeat his words.
“I’m glad you like it. As long as you can bring us even more weapons, magic artifacts and important ceremonial items, you can have as much of this stuff as you like…” Gara took charge, and they quickly finished the transaction. The shaman then personally brought Fagus to the edge of the Moonwood.
“You know this… When our Blackblood Tribe conducts ceremonies, we never left foreigners stay unless they are offerings to our god…” Gara laughed.
“Of course. I understand, I understand. I’ll leave right now!” Fagus used a white handkerchief to wipe at the oil and sweat on his cheeks. The werecreature shaman stood at the boundaries of the forest, watching as the Neon Merchant Group disappeared into the horizon. His smile had a deep meaning to it.

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“We should have left the territory of the werecreatures by now.” Anya watched the forest disappear into the horizon, urging her horse to catch up to Lonce and the native next to him. “Are we leaving just like this, my lord?”
“Of course. The Church will deal with the rest. The Lord does not treat anyone who trusts in him poorly. All that wealth belongs to you!” The native who looked like a servant spoke stiffly in the language of the mainland, and his body began to transform. Light flickered as what seemed like a layer of water slipped off from his body, revealing his true appearance. This was the legendary devil hunter!
“Wait… I’m willing to donate half of my profits to the church!” Fagus quickly interrupted. The mission he’d believed to be
extremely dangerous had gone so smoothly, and it had left him
overjoyed. Even if he gave half his profit to the church the rest
would still be a huge windfall for him.
“Thank you for your generosity!” The devil hunter did not hesitate
to accept Fagus’ donation. A budding church needed the donations
of its worshippers.
The Goddess of Wealth even used income as an important criteria
to measure the accomplishments of the priests of wealth, and this
was used extensively by others as well. While Leylin himself had a
great amount of property, the Giant Serpent Church was still
developing, and he naturally would not reject this.
“This is a final warning… There will be a war and conflict here
soon. Leave immediately!” The devil hunter told Fagus before
leaving with his men.
Fagus waited till the devil hunter, Lonce, and the rest disappeared
into the horizon. He then yelled, “Leave behind all the carts. Bring
just the food and gold, we’re leaving immediately!”
The mournful sound echoed in the empty plains, full of urgency.
“My Lord… I’ve already done as you instructed, and completed the trade with the Neon Merchant Group…” Gara prayed before Malar’s statue after sending the Neon Merchant Group away, “Grr… Roar!” A golden light descended upon him, and the statue released a beastly growl. Malar’s conscience had descended to pass a holy decree. The shaman would have to interpret this string of sounds accurately, but that was natural to him. Gara nodded his head from time to time…

At the same time, several gods had gathered within Malar’s divine kingdom.

“The Giant Serpent Church is too arrogant,” an orc god sneered, his body shrouded in a strangely tranquil darkness. It was Shargaas, the Orc God of Stealth.

“But bad… A mere lesser god dares to ally with us orc gods…” Another tall and mighty orc god smirked, giving off a rugged and barbaric aura. This was Ilneval, the Lesser God of Combat.

“ROAR!” Right at that moment, a series of roars and howls sprang forth from the divine kingdom.

“We know, Malar, we know… The massacre domain will definitely come to you. We’ve worked together for so many years, can’t you have a little faith?” The God of Death Yurtrus said from the side. His tone dripping with sarcasm caused Malar to want to rebuke, but the vengeful spirits around his body somehow did not take away
from his calmness. Although they were all lesser gods, most orc gods were suited to fighting. Their only greater god Gruumsh was busy preparing to fend off Mystra and Tyr, and since they only had to deal with another lesser god there was no need for him to be here personally. “The sacrifice of a god’s avatar… hehe… I can’t wait much longer…” Several avatars’ gazes began to pierce through the horizon, and they peered into the Moonwood, where a massive sacrificial ceremony was being held by the Blackblood Tribe. The tribe had consumed all the blood essence from the Neon Merchant Group, forming a river of blood in the ceremony site. Vengeful spirits seemed to be wailing in anguish on the surface of the river.

A powerful prisoner of another race was tied to the altar, their body filled with seals. The wounds littering it indicated the fierce battle it took for the werecreatures to cause it to submit, and the damage it had given to them before it lost.

As a God of Massacre, Malar blessed his worshippers for the deaths of powerful enemies. He’d even personally send his avatar down if they slayed a legendary expert.

The ritual being held by the Blackblood Tribe now was even larger than that. There were several legendary experts being used as sacrifice, alongside the blood essence of countless humans. ‘The Lord will definitely enjoy this ceremony. He’ll even give us his blessings, ranking us up…’ The shamans assisting the ceremony looked somewhat excited, their eyes filled with delight as they looked at the bound prisoners.

However, their leader Gara and several other legendary shamans didn’t seem as elated. There instead seemed to be a trace of worry in their expressions. Werecreatures had evolved from beasts, and they shouldn’t have held such emotions in the first place. That they were appearing now was a sign that the danger they were about to
face was extremely terrifying, one that even legendaries would have no control of!
“Malar, my Lord, you are the Lord of Massacre, amongst the stars in the skies. You are our protector, your name forever sacred amongst our kind. You are the one true Lord…” More and more of the werecreatures prayed fervently, and the ritual slowly reached a climax.
Several shamans draped in white robes held short black daggers in their jaws as they walked up amidst the prayers. “Malar, my Lord, you are the Devourer of Blood. The fear of your enemies gives you strength, their flesh and blood becoming your divine power. The blood of these legends shall be a source of your glory and strength…”
Even knowing their fate was sealed, the sacrifices began a futile struggle. There was even a legendary dragon amongst these prisoners, its spiritual force only inferior to the Great Dragons. However, there were no traces of emotions on these shamans as they skilfully wielded their daggers, “O’ Lord… Please accept our offerings!”
*Kacha!* The thick, sturdy scales of the dragon did not seem to have any resistance against the special black dagger, cut open mercilessly as fresh green blood poured forth from the wound. *Sssii! Sssii!* The corrosive blood burnt a hole into the ground, but the dragon’s eyes dimmed as they eventually lost their light. “ROAR!” The werecreatures seemed to cheer louder than before at the scene. The shamans expertly dissected the dragon’s body amidst the clamour, separating its limbs and tossing them into the river of blood.
The corrosive river began to boil, and a crimson glow was soon emanated from it as it absorbed all the flesh. A golden glow had settled around Malar’s statue, indicating that the God of the Hunt had been summoned successfully. The roars and prayers only grew
louder at the scene, so powerful that even the clouds in the sky were shattered apart.
As the last sacrifice, an elven prisoner, was tossed into the pool of blood, the glow around the statue strengthened. A golden ape descended upon the Moonwood amidst the werecreatures’ roars, and everyone knelt as they watched their lord with a fervent gaze. Malar howled as he arrived at the river of blood. It was apparent that he enjoyed this offering, and couldn’t wait to indulge. His powerful claws stroked several shamans who were kneeling beside the blood, and golden beams of light descended upon the teary creatures.
‘An instant rank up!’ The onlookers could only be envious as they looked at the fortunate ones with red eyes.
“Roar!” Malar unleashed a few more growls after rewarding his worshippers, jumping into the river of blood.
*Boom!* But just then, a strange event occurred. The crimson blood turned black, and the vengeful spirits within materialised as they climbed onto Malar’s body. A strange black net appeared from the river of blood, trapping Malar within.
“What’s happening?” Several shamans were shocked as they looked upon their comrades, watching dumbly as the scene unfolded. Some of the wiser ones had already reacted, “Those slimy humans! There’s something wrong with the blood essence this time!”
It wasn’t until now that they suspected the Neon Merchant Group, but it was too late to do anything about it. The black net moved into the skies, and there seemed to be an invisible rope tightening it further.
“Kukulkan, my Lord… You are the Lord of Massacre, the Ruler of Devils. You are the one true Lord of the world!” A portal opened up in the skies, and Leylin walked out amidst zealous hymns. He looked like a shrewd hunter, sapping Malar’s energy through the
large net. Once Malar expended all his energy, he would go in for the kill!
“He’s finally here!”
*Rumble!* The skies roared. Dark clouds shrouded the Moonwood, and a silver serpent emerged from within. Multiple portals opened up as the avatars of several orc gods descended upon the Blackblood Tribe, the surge of divine aura leaving the werecreatures on the ground awestruck. God after god stepped out of the portals, causing great shock to reverberate in their hearts. Only the peak of werecreature society had been aware of this, and they hastily put up defences as they retreated. They silently prayed for their side to be victorious, and for this divine battle not to spill over to them.
“Kukulkan… God of Massacre? Become an artifact for my divine palace!” the god concealed in darkness struck first. A powerful pair of claws swiped out from the void, targeting Leylin’s heart. Even a divine avatar would lose a great deal of power if they suffered such a critical injury!
‘A stealth attack, and they can conceal themselves in the shadows… Shadow Realm! It’s the God of Stealth, Shargaas!’ Leylin instantly understood who the attacker was, but his expression remained as still as water.
Golden light surged around Leylin’s body, indicating that a divine battle was about to begin!
Meteor Explosion! Ultimate Shattering Palm! Absolute Break!

Leylin moved his fingers like an expert musician as he strummed the strings of the Shadow Weave, releasing terrifying legendary magic. Numerous spells were formed without any setup, complementing and amplifying each others’ power to form a vast current of magic!

“Legendary combination technique— Arcane Torrent!” This was a project Leylin had been researching for a while. It was a divine version of the spell he’d used in his adventurer days, and this fight against Shargaas was the first time he’d used it.

The earth rumbled as a terrifying explosion hit the surface, the aftermath shrouding the space between Shargaas and Leylin. Space itself had begun to distort from the horrifying damage of the attack.

‘This God of Massacre… He isn’t even 400 yet but his comprehension of magic is so great. Did he receive the arcanists’ inheritance?’ Shargaas teleported in retreat, his body in a sorry state as his golden divine force healed the injuries. Fear could be seen within his eyes.

However, although the sneak attack hadn’t managed to injure Leylin, the pressure on Malar’s avatar lessened unexpectedly. The huge ape roared, tearing through the black net and escaping.

*Whoosh!* The avatar that escaped dissolved into a dazzling rainbow that was instantly absorbed into his divine kingdom.
Another avatar stepped forth, taking the former’s strength in as its aura rose sharply. The new avatar released a terrifying roar Leylin’s way, opening a huge portal from nowhere to send a meteor from his divine kingdom that transformed into a pair of terrifyingly sharp claws. This was Malar’s divine artifact, the Beast Claws. Other than his true body, Malar had brought everything he had to bear in this fight. It seemed like he’d been harbouring hatred over the losses he suffered at Leylin’s hand before, and had always been looking for an opportunity at revenge.

“Don’t even think of escaping. We’ve sealed off this space, and Gruumsh has sent out his avatar to intercept any possible reinforcements…” A tall god with an aura of blood and savagery waved his hands, and the group of four instantly encircled Leylin. “The Orc God of War, Ilneval?” Leylin remembered having met this god once.

“I could see through all your conspiracies. No scheme you hatch will ever succeed!” Ilneval relied cautiously, trying to probe for information even as he wanted to damage Leylin’s confidence. However, Leylin’s expression didn’t change in the slightest. He just moved on to the last god, the one wrapped in a dark robe who had a dense deathly aura. His eyebrows twitched, “Yurtrus… So the God of Death, the God of War, the God of Stealth, and the God of the Hunt… Looks like everything here was a trap?”

“Indeed, Kukulkan. Greed comes before the fall.” Ilneval roared, and Malar at the side was eager to rush forth as well. If not for the others restraining him, he would likely have barrelled over by now. “Malar has deep connections to our pantheon. Do you think our alliance could be shaken by an outsider like you?” Yurtrus asked coldly, “Your avatar will fall this time, and we’ll strip you of your massacre divinity as compensation for Malar…”
“So the Lord colluded with the orc gods to ambush another god?” Gara muttered as he watched the situation incredulously. They’d already escaped a great distance, and Gara himself only had some of the information.

“Will the Lord’s plan succeed?” the werecreature chief asked by his side, obviously worried.

“Everything is as the Lord wills. We only have to follow his instructions and conserve our energy, taking part in the battle at the right time,” a legendary shaman stated from the side. There was an unspeakable resolution contained in his voice. Although legendary might was nothing in front of a true god, they could still contribute to an assault on an avatar.

“Mm, and it’s four gods fighting him this time, our chances of victory are quite high!” Gara was confident in the current situation.

“The God of Massacre, truename Kukulkan…” the orc leader muttered to himself, “The youngest legendary wizard of the prime material plane, and someone who ascended at such a young age… That spellcasting ability… He really is a thousand year genius…”

Gara looked at the legendary magic seemingly blossoming like fireworks from Leylin’s hands, the terrifying arcane torrent causing him to subconsciously shrink his neck.

“This is the Lord’s plan, it will definitely succeed!” he tried to console himself internally, but the feeling of unrest couldn’t be erased.

*Rumble!* Endless spatial storms swept across the original land of the Blackblood Tribe, wreaking havoc upon it. The prime material plane was too weak to withstand a fight between gods, and with the entire sky filled with golden light even high-ranked Professionals would instantly be dissolved into nothingness if they tried to enter the scene. Numerous werecreatures were screaming as they escaped
the scene.
A few legendaries smiled bitterly at the sight. Even they didn’t have much confidence of being unaffected by a god’s might. Only at the higher ranks would they be able to trade blows with an avatar, hoping to kill it.
“Sure enough… these orc gods are uncivilized and ignorant, not being able to notice even basic benefits…” Golden chains spread endlessly from Leylin’s avatar in mid-air, making the entire surrounding area his divine kingdom. The dark red massacre domain was released, ensuring that any slaughter would only increase his power.
He could stand calmly amidst the centre of a barrage of orc attacks, and even had the leisure to examine his surroundings. When he sensed a familiar aura approaching the scene, a strange smile surfaced on his face.

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The elite troops led by Rafiniya and Cardinal Karal had reached the core of the Moonwood just in time to notice the terrifying fight between the gods.
“Kukulkan! And the orc gods!” A trace of excitement appeared in Rafiniya’s eyes, “Quick, inform the Lord and ask for reinforcements. Losing a few avatars should teach these gods a good lesson!”
The remaining paladins also had a look of eagerness on them, but their actions were soon stopped by Cardinal Karal.
“The Lord sees everything…” Karal’s reason was strange, and caused suspicions to emerge on Rafiniya’s face. She still maintained her trust in the church, however, following orders and standing down.
“Such a strong massacre domain, and he still has such divine
force…” The orc gods had entered a bitter struggle with Leylin. He was already a rank 8 god, his power far surpassing these orcs. If not for their advantage in numbers, they would not be his match. The crimson massacre domain expanded endlessly, about to cover the entire Moonwood.

Shargaas couldn’t hold on much longer. “Damn it… is he really a new god?” he snarled, his body covered with numerous small wounds that were leaking golden blood.

*Crash!* Lightning flashed in the sky, forming a terrifying large door. Another of Shargaas’ avatars walked out, joining the forces that were besieging Leylin. Golden light flashed continually as the other gods did the same.

“This number of avatars… Are they crazy?!” Rafiniya and the rest who were watching from afar cried out in surprise. Although the loss of one avatar wouldn’t cause significant damage to a god, the number of avatars they were throwing at Leylin would exhaust their divine force. Even as true gods, they would likely fall into a slumber or just die.

If their luck was the same as Beelzebub’s, having poured a majority of their will and divine force into an avatar that was eliminated, they wouldn’t be far off from a true death. These gods were now putting themselves at risk!

“It’s time!” A trace of a smile suddenly appeared on Leylin’s face in spite of the imminent danger.

“What’s going on?” The four gods were stunned. Leylin’s expression was completely unexpected.

However, they didn’t have more time to think about it. A loud explosion sounded as two terrifying powers descended upon the Moonwood, their strength directly breaking apart the spatial seal that the orc gods had set in place. The whole world trembled as an elderly warrior and a young lady entered the scene, their bodies rippling with the unfathomable power of greater gods.
The two entrants immediately spread out a huge net, seemingly wanting to catch the orc gods and Leylin in one go. “Tyr and Mystra! Where’s Gruumsh?” Ilneval muttered with incredulity… Outside the prime material plane, Tyr and Mystra had combined to trap a powerful greater god.

“Give up, Gruumsh,” Mystra said coldly, “We only need to mobilise a few avatars to take out those gods of yours…”
“F or New Silverymoon City, for the Alliance, and for the people of the north!” Even as Leylin was facing the orc gods, Queen Alustriel was garbed in her seldom-used armour as she riled up the troops in front of her, “The war for the north has come!”
“Ouh! Ouh!” The troops let out a warcry as they banged their swords against their shields.
With how slow armies travelled it would take a few more days of travel to reach the battlefield, but that didn’t matter at all. Alustriel was currently boosting her troops’ morale, and under Elminster’s lead several high-ranked wizards had already ambushed several orcs along the borders.
With Silverymoon’s strength and the backing of several legendary figures, their powerful spells would teach those orcs an unforgettable lesson! Alustriel’s chest was bursting with excitement and pride…
“YOU’RE DECLARING WAR?” Gruumsh roared in rage at the two greater gods before him. He’d found out about the events in the prime material plane instantly.
Tyr spoke slowly, “This is it, you’d better choose to retreat right now.”
“Stalling me here and sending your avatars to defeat my pantheon… Indeed, this strategy will deal me a heavy blow. Was it that God of Massacre that told you this?” Gruumsh immediately
understood the situation. “He is indeed a crafty and evil god, with no qualms about not keeping his words…”

“Indeed, that’s why we don’t plan to let him go. However, that will come after we defeat your lot,” Mystra said in a deep tone, the powerful Weave appearing behind her back.

……

The orc gods had been thrown into disarray by the avatars that had just descended upon the Moonwood. What was originally supposed to be an ambush had become a catalyst for a grand war, and it wasn’t something they had prepared for. They couldn’t help but take a second look at Leylin whom they’d ‘trapped.’
The battle in mid-air was extremely interesting. Several orc gods had encircled Leylin, but surrounding them were the avatars of Mystra and Tyr. These circumstances could lead to the deaths of any avatar present here with the slightest misstep, and that would result in grievous injuries to their main bodies. The orcs didn’t dare act recklessly.
Leylin’s grin grew wider as he surveyed the scene that he’d crafted himself.
His first interaction with Gruumsh had told him that the orcs wouldn’t give up on Malar. The werecreatures could rely on the orc pantheon. That was why he’d attracted Mystra and Tyr with the curse on Eric’s bloodline, so he could meet them and come to an agreement.
However, this agreement hadn’t been easy to reach. Leylin knew both his ‘allies’ hated him to the core, and he was sure they planned to attack him together with the orcs in one go. How would they let go of an avatar of a lesser evil god?
Knowing all this, Leylin didn’t hope for much from the situation. It was enough that they’d deal with the orcs for him. The quartet
would take the attention off him until they were wiped out.

……

“This is the plan of the Lord. They will first attack the avatars of the orc gods, stopping any experts from aiding them,” Cardinal Karal said to Rafiniya and the remaining paladins.
“How about that God of Massacre?” Rafiniya frowned.
“He’s promised to engage with the orc gods for now, so he’s useful for the Lord’s plans. Our goal is to deal with the orcs before we kill him,” Karal replied.
This war concerned the lives of countless inhabitants of the north, and with this excuse of dealing with the orcs first the alliance with Leylin would be accepted by most of the paladins. The Cardinal represented Tyr’s will, and wouldn’t allow the paladins to harbour any thoughts.
However, this reason that could convince many immediately caused Rafiniya to lose a great deal of faith. Her mind grew weaker and more biased under the devilish influence Leylin had planted within her, and she growled in anger. “Teaming up with an evil god? He’s the main perpetrator of the curse that hit New Silverymoon City!”
“Watch your words, Captain!” Karal’s face darkened. As a legendary priest of Tyr, he would not tolerate anyone questioning the will of his Lord. A thought arose in his mind, ‘It seems like I need to report this to the pope after the war. She isn’t fit to serve as a captain…’
“Yes, Cardinal…” A hint of unwillingness emanated from Rafiniya’s deep voice. She gripped the hilt of her sword so tightly that her fingers turned pale…
At the same time, the divine battle had reached a climax.
“Mage Flame!” A bright light was emitted from Mystra’s fingers as the Weave materialised in the surroundings. She seemed to gain the
support of the very world as overwhelming origin force surged forth. With Tyr’s cooperation, the Mage Flame seemed to blaze through the skies as it trapped Leylin and the orc gods within.

“Silver fire…” Leylin looked at the glowing sea of flames, a trace of fear emerging in his eyes. Silver fire, from what he could remember, was the source of all magic in the World of Gods. It was a materialisation of Mystra’s divinity, possessing great destructive might.

“Roar!” Malar was the most irascible of the lot, and he was the first to suffer. Several balls of fire landed on his hands, their temperature high enough to burn even the Beast Claws.

“Damn it, Mystra, why are you this determined?” Ilneval’s expression turned ugly as he watched Malar’s divine weapon being corroded. Some of the silver flames were pressing towards the rest of them.

Mystra’s legendary silverflame had the might to destroy divine weapons and even the bodies of true gods, but it consumed her divinity to burn. Ilneval was stumped as to why she was willing to give up so much divinity to harm them.

“Retreat!” Yurtrus screamed as he unleashed a pale orb of light. Many lifeless souls sprung forth from the orb, creating a translucent barrier.

*Sssii!* The silverflame began to corrode the wall the moment the two came in contact, and the barrier seemed to give way immediately.

“They’ve activated a powerful spatial lock, we’ll need more time to break through…” Ilneval frowned. They were facing the avatars of two greater gods, and even if all avatars were more or less the same in might more powerful deities had more efficient ways to dispense their powers. They still took the upper hand in battle.

On top of that, their low divine ranks caused these lesser gods to be at a disadvantage in terms of the number of avatars and their
recovery speeds. The greater gods would be able to overwhelm them in these aspects!

“Why retreat?” Shargaas roared in rage, and his eyes turned bloodshot. He seemed to have lost all signs of intelligence, turning into a primal beast.

“These aren’t just two greater gods. Don’t forget that there’s many more subordinates, what if one of them descends as a Saint?” Ilneval rebuked coldly, causing Shargaas to stall for a moment.

Although it was extremely dangerous for gods to descend with their true bodies, when they did come down they would be at the epitome of power. If Mystra or Tyr gave it their all, several subordinate gods like the God of Wizards Azuth would descend as Saints. None of their avatars would be able to escape, the loss of divine strength from the fight taking thousands of years to replenish.

Ilneval indeed excelled in strategy. He hadn’t been overcome by rage when he was ensnared in Leylin’s trap. He’d instead considered how best to conserve his energy.

“You want to leave now?” Leylin asked as he laughed like a maniac. He was now the one who’d decide if he let them go.

A phantom of the first three Hells surfaced in the prime material plane, and the powerful origin force of Baator expanded Leylin’s massacre domain until it encompassed all the orc gods.

“Are you crazy?” Ilneval asked Leylin. “Even if you give your all in this battle, they won’t let you go either!”

“Of course! I’m aware of that, but how can I just let go of a good chance like this?” Leylin’s voice covered the entire Moonwood, and the crimson glow on his body grew more apparent than before.

“Damn it, this lunatic! Is he a chaotic demon?” Ilneval suddenly felt a huge headache, but he could only think of one way out right now..

“Malar!” he sent, “Hurry and bring your worshippers into the fight!
They’ll help out!”
The giant ape had already been scared off by the power of the silverflame. He’d hid by the side, stroking his Beast Claws tenderly. His golden fur had been burnt black in that attack, and he himself had been reduced to a miserable state. Hearing Ilneval’s words, he began to roar.
“The Lord has given us orders!” Several legendary werecreature shamans charged into the battlefield without the slightest hesitation. Malar had roared out their orders, and with him being the object of their faith their zealotry left them with no choice but to obey. However, the secular leaders of the werecreatures grew irritable. Despite their reluctance, the shamans had pulled them into the fray.

“How much longer till preparations are done?” Mystra asked as she turned to Tyr. She had managed to block off the orc gods with her silverflame, and Leylin had been trapped as well.

“I need another moment, this is something we borrowed…” Tyr had reached into a ball of light that was surrounded by blue sparks. It seemed extremely magnificent, putting great pressure on the orc gods.

“There’s also some worms crawling over that don’t seem to know their place…” Mystra turned to the several legendary werecreatures. “We’ve already prepared, haven’t we? Let our people take care of them,” Tyr replied indifferently.

At the same time, the ball of light finally assumed the form of an incredibly sharp spear. Ilneval was rattled immediately by the sight, and even Leylin’s eyes flashed with amazement.

“Eicher’s Thorn! They actually borrowed it!” Eicher’s Thorn was a divine weapon that even the gods feared. It had the ability to ripple out any damage done to an avatar to its controller, and even gods...
weren’t immune to its powers. It had caused the fall of two lesser gods in history, and sent a third into deep slumber. Mystra and Tyr had somehow managed to borrow such an ominous weapon.

“Hmm?” Leylin’s brows furrowed as the A.I. Chip retrieved the relevant information from its now almost all-encompassing database.

‘So it’s from just after the dusk of the gods. This ability, and the energy it’s radiating…’ Leylin smirked, ‘So they actually just took the weapon of a Magus of laws and renamed it. So much for integrity…’

Despite his smirking, Leylin grew more serious. He feared Magi much more than he did gods, their mysterious powers posing a much greater threat to him even as he was now.

On the other end, Ilneval sent a message to his comrades, “Everyone should’ve heard about Eicher’s Thorn. If you can’t get away, it’s better to destroy the avatar than to let it injure you. A bit of your energy reserve isn’t worth being thrown into a long slumber.”

“Malar!” Yurtrus shouted, “Stop being so stingy with your subordinates! We’ll give you enough compensation later…”

……

Pressured by his party, Malar pulled back the team of legendary shamans he’d sent to deal with Leylin.

However, their efforts had been halted before they could even re-enter the Moonwood. Cardinal Karal had arrived with paladins in tow, holding a staff made of aged maple. The cardinal chanted a holy spell that caused the paladins’ armour to glow with light.

“Purge all evil in the name of justice!” The werecreatures were a bunch of bloodthirsty savages in the eyes of the paladins, existences that had to be removed from the face of the world.
“We don’t have much time…” Gara looked at the paladins before him, a menacing look filling his face as various runes surfaced on his body. They seemed to be sacrificial rites.

Chaotic energy began to descend upon the region as a large fire began to burn in mid-air. A large metal door materialised, and numerous demons charged out under the lead of a legendary balor. This was a legendary spell, Summon Demonic Army. Its unimaginable might was only canceled out by the complicated requirements it posed as a chaotic evil spell. The summoned army wouldn’t necessarily obey the orders of their summoner.

The balor looked at Shaman Gara with hostility, but another group in the area stole its attention. Paladins and demons were in completely opposite alignments, and neither group would rest as long as the other side. Just listening to the word paladin was disgraceful, blasphemy to demonkind.

“Demons from the Abyss!” A paladin screamed as he rushed forward, waving a greatsword bathed in holy light, “Holy Slash!” “(%^!%$!” The balor spoke in an incomprehensible ancient language as it looked at the group of paladins, its voice coarse and unpleasant.

“The words of blasphemy!” A white rune radiated purity from Karal’s solemn face, “This is getting too troublesome.”

The balor’s spell had been cast in an instant, rooting the charging paladin to the ground. The balor smiled malevolently as he brandished his sword, cleaving the still paladin in two.

“Hehehe… It’s the prime material plane! We can harvest souls now…” Many other demons charged out from behind the balor, throwing spell after spell as they turned the place chaotic. It all happened too quickly, and that paladin had fallen to the balor’s sword before anyone could react.

“Damn it! You evil vermin, you shouldn’t exist in this world!” Rafiniya screamed as she recovered from a daze, killing intent
boiling to the surface. However, the words the balor uttered as it looked at Rafiniya astonished her, “Hehehe… A legendary paladin? No, I smell a whiff of energy from those idiots in Baator on you…” “I am a paladin, protector of justice. Don’t try to ruin my reputation!” Even Karal didn’t put any stock in the demon’s words. They only served to agitate the paladin, and she radiated powerful energy as she drew her sword and entered a frontal clash with it. “Kill!” The other paladins looked each other in the eye before charging forward to meet with the demon army. A scene of chaos began to unfold.

……

The battle of the gods had reached its zenith at this moment. Eicher’s Thorn had absorbed all the light around it, and the spear had come to float in the air as Tyr pointed it at Malar. *Whoosh!* The spear pierced through space to arrive at Malar in an instant. The Beast Claws had already been damaged once, and a hole was pierced through them with this attack. The spear moved forward unthwarted, heading towards Malar’s brows. “ROAR!” The avatar could only cry in indignance as it exploded, filling the skies with divine light. Seeing the situation worsening, Ilneval shouted at Leylin, “Damn it, do you still want to keep us engaged? Malar’s avatar has already fallen, there is nothing left here that you would want…” “Of course… Not!” Leylin agreed immediately, just as Ilneval expected. He retracted his massacre domain, immediately reducing the pressure the three remaining gods had to face. However, none of the three noticed a spot of red light landing amongst them. “That’s right, we can still…” Before Ilneval could heave a sigh of
relief, Leylin’s next actions left him stupefied.

[Beep! Silverflame has been analysed, beginning protection with the Shadow Weave.] Leylin immediately dashed towards the fire in the sky, as if he was committing suicide. However, a dark web seemed to cover his body as he came into contact with the flames, cancelling out with the Weave and allowing Leylin to escape. Without the spatial lock of the silver flames, Leylin immediately cast a teleportation spell. White light flashed on his body as he immediately left the Moonwood.

“This…” It wasn’t just Ilneval that was dumbstruck. Even Tyr, controlling Eicher’s Thorn from the outside, gasped.

Of course, the one under the most duress was the Goddess of the Weave. “The Weave,” Mystra muttered, but then she grew silent for a moment. “No… the Shadow Weave! SHAR!” She spat out the name of her rival.

“Shar? The Goddess of Shadows?” Tyr seemed to have recalled something, “Didn’t she fall already?”

“I can’t be wrong, that’s the Shadow Weave,” Mystra confirmed. The Shadow Weave was primal and childish, but it had once been a prototype of the current Weave. How could she not recognise it?
Mystra and Shar had never been on good terms. They were both gods of magic, and the natural rivalry between the two had ensured that only one could survive.
Shar had been thought fallen in the Final War, but she’d actually managed to escape the destruction of her divine kingdom with serious injuries. Some amount of luck had allowed her to flee to the astral plane, stumbling upon the Shadow World.
Mystra, on the other hand, had established the Weave to gain the support of worshippers and other gods. She’d become the guardian of the Weave, and the other gods had moved the channeling of their powers to complement the system.
Even having become a greater god Mystra was still cautious of the Goddess of Shadows. After all, Shar was the one god that could take over her position.
The Shadow Weave was a counter to the Weave, and it had allowed Leylin to deal with Mystra’s silverflame and escape with ease. Since it was but one of his many trump cards, Leylin hadn’t been afraid of revealing it.
“Kukulkan… Shar…” It was like a bridge had been connected in Mystra’s mind, ‘That fear of death, was it because of Shar? Kukulkan managed to find some clues about her, so it gave me the feeling that he would bring about my demise?’
Although this conclusion was only logical, Mystra had
underestimated the situation. She didn’t even realise that Leylin possessed another horrifying ace up his sleeve, once that could truly end her life.

“It’s not a big deal that the God of Massacre escaped,” Tyr reminded her, “The important thing now is to kill all these avatars. Our true bodies are already engaged in battle with Gruumsh…” Gruumsh was fighting crazily ever since he discovered that his pantheon had been ambushed. Their true bodies would not be able to hold him back much longer.

“I understand…” Mystra’s face darkened, and the silverflame strengthened once more. Even without Leylin’s domain pressuring them, the orc gods couldn’t dare to act recklessly.

The silverflame net began to close in on them, and try as they may Ilneval and the others couldn’t stop Tyr’s ambush with Eicher’s Thorn. Shargaas was the one unfortunate enough to be struck by it, killing the avatar and inflicting serious injuries on his main body. Only then did the silverflame crush all the other avatars to death.

“Mystra!” “Tyr!” Many roars of hatred rang out from the large wasteland that was the combined divine kingdom of the orc pantheon, causing many worshippers and even petitioners to cower in fear.

No voice came from Shargaas’ divine kingdom. Having suffered the most damage, he’d directly been put to sleep. As for Ilneval and Yurtrus, they were a bit better off. However, they’d lost multiple avatars as well, and wouldn’t dare act recklessly anymore.

*Woooo!* A mournful and immense bugle horn note sounded in the wasteland as two orc figures wreathed in golden light appeared in mid-air.

“Gruumsh is summoning us,” The male frowned, “Mystra and Tyr declared war, and summoned their subordinates as well. But right now…” This god was Bahgtru, the Lesser God of Brute Strength. The orc pantheon was rather special. Although Gruumsh was their
only greater god, and the rest of them weren’t even intermediate
gods, many of them excelled in combat. However, Shargaas,
Ilneval, and Yurtrus were amongst the fighters, and Bahgtru alone
wasn’t enough to fill their shoes.
“Do you have any plans?” he asked the woman beside him
helplessly. Although his mother didn’t excel in fighting as the
Goddess of Fertility, she had other remarkable abilities that fell
under her domain.
“Shargaas was injured by Eicher’s Thorn. Even if life and healing
come under my domain, his true body has entered a slumber now
and I can’t heal him. On the other hand, Yurtrus only lost a lot of
his energy. I can aid him in a swift recovery…” Luthic was
extremely solemn, “But I’m not sure we’ve given this opportunity
to recover…”
*Wooooo!* Another horn sounded, this one more drawn out and
more frantic than before. The sound seemed to be filled with
restlessness as it spread across the plains.
“Indeed, we won’t have the time to heal him. We can only stop
them for now…” Bahgtru smiled wryly, “I’ll send all of my avatars
over. I’ll leave managing my worshippers and petitioners to you…”
Several golden streaks flew out of Bahgtru’s divine kingdom,
joining the large army in the prime material plane…
Mystra and Tyr had been plotting to attack the orcs for a while.
Leylin’s push had finally let them deal severe damage to the orc
pantheon, and they’d even managed to cripple one of their gods. If
they didn’t press the advantage now, what were they waiting for?
War sprung up on both fronts. The Silverymoon Alliance attacked
even as a war raged in the upper planes. Several subordinate gods
like Azuth joined with hired hands from the good alignment to
wage war on the divine kingdoms of the orcs. This was their
chance to teach the orcs an unforgettable lesson!
Within the Moonwood.
The battle between gods and those of legendary might had already
ruined half the region. The forest of twisted dark trees had ceased
to exist, replaced by a sea of burning flames. The dismembered
bodies of werecreatures dotted the landscape.
The legendary battle was now drawing to a close. With Malar’s
avatar dying so quickly, the werecreatures hadn’t been useful in the
battle between gods. Now, they were facing the paladins. The
leaders and shamans hadn’t wanted to engage in a fight to the
death, and they’d used Gara’s demon army as a distraction as they
fled.
Even if Shaman Gara had maniacally summoned an army of
demons, the relentless attacks of the paladins had reduced their
numbers until only the balor was left, fighting Rafiniya. The other
paladins had joined Karal to chase down the fleeing werecreatures.
“Hehehe…” Even if it wasn’t a flame balor, the balor Rafiniya was
facing was already at the legendary realm. It peppered her with
heretical spells as its greatsword struck towards her with speed and
precision. A common legendary would not be its match.
However, this balor was up against a paladin. On top of that this
was Rafiniya, the Holy Knight, the Lady of Hope! She was resolute
in her attacks, and even as injuries covered her body she didn’t
take one step back. Her manic behaviour struck fear in even the
demon’s heart.
Rafiniya’s armour had already been shattered, and the balor’s
sword had broken in half. The demon had also lost its whip in the
midst of battle.
“Hehehe… We shall meet again, paladin!” the balor sniggered as he
opened a portal. Even if he could still utter such words of pride, he
was far too injured to act arrogant. Even though demons were
chaotic, instinctual creatures, powerful ones like this balor still had some amount of intellect. The paladin was nearly burnt out as well. She had to rely on her sword to stay up, putting her weight on it to keep herself from collapsing. However, her eyes lit up as she saw the demon about to leave. The light was peculiar, difficult to describe in words. It contained law and chaos, good and evil. “For justice!” she howled, burning up the last of her energy as she leapt into the flames. Even at the cost of letting the abyssal flames encroach upon her, she thrust her sword into the balor’s heart. “You!” the balor collapsed halfway into the portal, terrified. However, a sardonic smile then appeared on his face, “HA, now I understand! Your power isn’t of purity. It’s the power of our rivals, the devils! In that case…” The demon used all his strength to push Rafiniya away, using a stump of a right hand to dig into his heart. “Hehehe… Here, take my Root of Evil!” A burning heart was suddenly thrown at Rafiniya, and having expended all her energy the paladin just couldn’t block it. Filthy blood coated Rafiniya’s entire body, and a pure power of evil was immediately absorbed by it. “What’s happening? Why can I absorb this energy?” Rafiniya stood up once she discovered her body was recovering, stupefied. However, the balor had been burnt to ashes, and nobody would be able to answer her question. “The church. The mission. And support…” Rafiniya’s face was blank for a long while, before she collapsed to the ground.
The balor’s Root of Evil was but a catalyst. The seed of evil Leylin had planted in Rafiniya oh so long ago had now erupted, fuelled by the weakening of her faith. Baator’s World Origin Force cheered as a legendary paladin fell from grace, turning into a devil!

“Haha,” Rafiniya knelt and wept, “Good, evil, justice… What do they even mean? What did all my effort come to?”

Flames began to burn around the fallen paladin, and a phantom image of Baator appeared as numerous devils and even the Lords of Baator cheered at the sight of a legendary paladin turning.

“ARGH…” The dark flames enveloped the Lady of Hope, causing her to shriek in anguish.

The flames greatly transformed Rafiniya’s body. Her face grew far more enchanting than before, as a pair of dark wings appeared behind her back to make her look like a fallen angel. The origin force continued to roar, turning the pious Holy Knight into an erinyes! Murky light enveloped the former paladin, instantly bringing her to the depths of hell.

Just as she was about to descend to the Fourth Hell, a crimson string of light appeared behind her. Leylin’s divine kingdom attracted the now erinyes, pulling her into the first three Hells. The cheering Lords and their subordinates instantly began to curse Leylin, but nobody dared step into his divine kingdom to seize her.

“A legendary paladin turned erinyes, huh?” Leylin knew best about
any events occurring in his divine kingdom. The power of corruption formed at the fall of such a powerful paladin was favoured by every Lord of Baator. On top of that, the paladin would become a staunchly loyal devil, the most powerful of warriors fighting under their banner.

However, Leylin didn’t have the time to pay attention to Rafiniya right now. He instructed Isabel to welcome her, moving into Thultanhthar as the flying city left his divine kingdom…

The battle in the orc wastelands had reached its peak. Soul after soul was wiped out as the light of their deaths streaked across the skies of the combined divine kingdom. Hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes… Various calamities rocked the place, causing many orcs to weep and cower as if the apocalypse had arrived.

An army of valiant spirits had set up a large formation on the outskirts of the combined divine kingdom, several hundred Professionals of each class. It was a rare sight in the World of Gods, one only enabled by the accumulated power of two greater gods over tens of thousands of years.

“Give up, Gruumsh. Leave Silverymoon and return to to your plains. It’s your only choice.” Mystra was now outfitted in armour, the army of wizards behind her emitting a powerful aura. The array of spell lights caused the orc god’s heart to turn cold.

However, it was no easy feat to attack the divine kingdom of the orc pantheon, even for two greater gods. Gruumsh was a greater god as well, and his accumulated power was not to be trifled either. The bugles continued to sound out as the orcish armies joined up, forming a defensive line under the command of the Goddess of Fertility Luthic. Gruumsh and Bahgtru sent their clones forward to meet Mystra and Tyr, blocking their paths.

The fight for the north wasn’t limited to the north. Outside the prime material plane, it had erupted into a war amongst gods! Mystra couldn’t give up on Silverymoon, while Gruumsh couldn’t
give up on the orcs. Their worshippers’ conflicts had forced them into battle, as was commonplace in history.

“Since that’s your choice…” Tyr raised his one hand slowly, “KILL!”

Wave after wave of paladins surged forward, charging towards the outermost defences of the divine kingdom.

“Damn it… That’s Mystra’s divine kingdom!” Bahgtru roared, his multiple clones radiating energy.

“We’re your opponents.” A portal opened to reveal the God of Wizards. He’d brought with him the avatars of the other gods subordinate to Mystra, as well as giant demigods to protect them.

“Your pantheon has suffered great losses, Gruumsh, you have absolutely no chance of victory…” Mystra and Tyr were squaring off against Gruumsh.

With how the orc pantheon was built, if Gruumsh was seriously injured or killed the entire race would be thrown to the brink of annihilation. Mystra held the upper hand here, able to suppress Gruumsh alongside Tyr. On the other hand, Bahgtru and Luthic were not strong enough to take on the rest of their subordinates.

Gruumsh originally had the help of multiple gods from his pantheon, putting his only strength slightly below Mystra and Tyr. However, some of his subordinates had been severely injured now, and the situation had completely reversed. She believed she could push the orcs back in one go!

Battles between gods were wars of attrition. Even Mystra and Tyr couldn’t defeat their enemies in one go, but they had to at least inflict heavy damage on their opponents, causing them to suffer losses in the upcoming wars in the prime material plane.

“Damn it… You despicable pygmies!” Gruumsh’s body wavered at the forefront, splitting into over a dozen clones each of which possessed a terrifying amount of divine force. Even having split up so many times, each clone possessed great power that wasn’t
inferior to a lesser god’s! He could overpower a lesser god just by stacking on them with numbers. However, he wasn’t facing a lesser god this time. Mystra and Tyr were both greater gods, and they exchanged a look that showed that they’d expected him to split up. More clones walked out beside them as well, as a ball of light formed into a spear in Tyr’s hand. “Eicher’s Thorn!” Even a greater god like Gruumsh dreaded something like Eicher’s Thorn that could cause grievous wounds to his main body. He gazed deeply upon the two greater gods, eventually deciding to fall back to his divine kingdom. “Alright, you two. Come in if you want to fight!”
It wasn’t easy to take out a greater god’s divine kingdom. With the home ground advantage, Gruumsh would be able to take on even Eicher’s Thorn without much trouble. On the other hand, his avatars and his son’s had bought them ample time, allowing Luthic to stabilise the situation in their divine kingdom and gather a large army of orc petitioners that were just waiting to deal a fatal strike. “It still happened…” Tyr shook his head in helplessness. This was the one situation that they didn’t want to see. “How is it in the prime material plane?” he asked. Mystra’s eyes flickered with light, and the events occurring in the prime material plane flashed before her eyes. “Both sides have assembled at the Thunder Valley, and are ready for war any time. Alustriel and Elminster will be barely enough to hold back Saladin and the Thunder God’s Hammer…” “Then all the more reason that we can’t retreat now…” Tyr made up his mind, slashing down with his hand. An explosion sounded as space itself cracked apart, a colourless hole appearing in mid-air with a crescent blade behind it. The attack struck the borders of the orc wasteland. The powerful divine attack caused the entire planes to rumble. A
huge rift was formed at the border, large whirlwinds spreading out as paladins charged into the divine kingdom.

“Charge!” The orcs had been waiting patiently all this while, and now they rushed forward as well to meet the paladins.
The petitioners in the divine kingdom were the most fervent of zealots, their gazes filled with fanaticism as they met the wave of paladins. They pit the boost from the divine kingdom against the superior numbers and strength of the paladins and wizards, the two armies clashing violently as a chaotic war erupted. The world seemed to stand still the moment they came into contact.

“Your greatest mistake was to step in here.” A massive voice boomed in the void, and the clouds in the divine kingdom turned dark.

*Bzzt!* World Origin Force whistled as lightning rained down upon the paladins and wizards, annihilating a large group of troops in an instant.

“The law of lightning… You actually want to become a Lightning God!” Tyr cried out at in alarm as he saw the lightning in the skies. The lightning contained the power of laws, and wasn’t something that could easily be created even in a divine kingdom. What’s more, the law of lightning possessed great destructive force!
“The fight’s pretty intense!” Thultanthar was flying outside in the void, hidden between spatial rifts out of reach of the powerful lightning in the orc plains. It looked like an indomitable mountain, its strength unfathomable.

[Beep! Thultanthar concealed by Shadow Weave, setting defence levels to A1…] A black net spread out in the surroundings of the Netherese city, slowly disappearing as it intertwined with the Weave in the vicinity. It concealed the city’s aura immediately, making in undetectable no matter how close it got to the battlefield.

“Initiate plan,” Leylin ordered indifferently, an icy gaze flashing in his eyes.

He’d taken a risk with his avatar before, engaging with Malar and the orc gods to help Mystra and Tyr deal with the orcs. However, his intentions weren’t to cause trouble for the orcs. After all, they were of the same alignment and were closer to him than Mystra and Tyr.

Still, he was an evil god. The only thing that brought his kind together were benefits, and he wouldn’t hesitate to betray them for his own gains. With the greater gods embroiled in battle, it was the best time for him to execute his plans.

[Beep! Mission established, tracking target… Target found!] the A.I. Chip intoned, a large amount of information being transmitted to Leylin. The backdoor he’d left via that red spot of light activated, allowing the A.I. Chip to execute its mission.
[Beep! Target confirmed! Kingdom’s defences have been broken, beginning teleportation.] A powerful hurricane engulfed Thultanthar alongside the A.I. Chip’s notifications, the violent gales beginning to glow as the city streaked across the void like a sharp sword.

*Buzz!* Thultanthar disappeared into the light, reappearing within the orc plains above a magnificent golden palace. There were many orc petitioners here, praying to a strange orcish statue. They were startled by Thultanthar’s appearance, and roared in rage.

[Secondary cannons online.] The A.I. Chip’s icy words were the only reply. Numerous cannons atop Thultanthar shot beams of light, dissolving even the holy spirits under their power. A dark web spread across the skies, locking space down before volley after volley of cannonfire razed the palace to the ground.

A god’s true body was revealed beneath the palace, dressed in loose black robes with a black-gold halo of light encircling him. A murky energy shrouded his body. Having suffered a huge loss of divine energy and being forced out of slumber, he roared at Leylin in rage. “KUKULKAN! AND THULTANTHAR!” His voice held extreme rage and shock, but there also a major portion of fear. He hadn’t been prepared for the flying city at all.

‘That tracker was effective after all.’ Leylin looked at the forlorn Yurtrus before him, his eyes flashing like that of a predator looking at prey.

Malar had never been his target. That ape was only a wild beast that had mastered a part of the law of massacre, not worthy of his attention. The only god of massacre he’d consider targeting was Cyric.

No, his real target was the death god of the orcs, Yurtrus. Massacre and death complemented each other perfectly, each domain being able to support a greater god. They synergized very well, their
powers compounding upon each other. They’d definitely serve well as Leylin’s final trump card.

Back on Debanks Island, the innumerable deaths caused by the plague had allowed Leylin to touch upon the law of death. However, it hadn’t allowed him to comprehend much, leaving him miles away from comprehending the law of death. However, this was the World of Gods, and he was a Magus! Why would he slowly comprehend a law if he could just kill a god and directly steal his position?

There were many Gods of Death in the World of Gods, the strongest of them being Kelemvor the Greater God of Death. However, he was someone too strong for Leylin to scheme against right now, and there were others from different pantheons he could target. Leylin had chosen Yurtrus, because he was considerably weaker than the others as a mere lesser god. An orc god would be much easier to deal with than the gods of the other pantheon.

More importantly, the orcs were currently at war! It was the best chance to strike! With various reasons merging together, Leylin would feel sorry for himself if he didn’t seize the opportunity. That’s why he orchestrated these events.

To fulfill his goal of killing Yurtrus, Leylin had used Malar as a distraction. He pretended to fall for Malar’s schemes in the Moonwood, using his avatar as bait and giving up his location to Mystra and Tyr to have them wipe the orcs out in one shot. The entire process was extremely perilous. If not for multiple trump cards, his avatar would have fallen to Mystra and Tyr.

However, all of that paid off. The orcs suffered huge losses, and Gruumsh was forced to engage in a divine war that dropped all defences. Yurtrus had nobody protecting him, so now was the best time to strike.

Leylin had managed to plant a tracker on Yurtrus in the midst of battle, allowing the flying city to instantly teleport to Yurtrus’
position and slay him. With Thultanthar having been used against Sekolah before, the gods would definitely have prepared against a greater god with a Netherese city. They concealed their true bodies, preventing instant teleportation into their divine kingdoms. Had Leylin not made all this preparations, he would’ve had to enter Yurtrus’ divine kingdom and track him down inside. By the time the A.I. Chip was done with its scan Gruumsh would have appeared to reinforce. However, there were no what ifs in the world. His plan successful, Leylin would enjoy his spoils of war.

“What are you trying to do? This is the orc plains. My divine kingdom is extremely close to the Gruumsh. He can immediately send any of his clones over…” Yurtrus golden face seemed to be disconcerted right now, which was an extremely rare expression on a god.

This was the fruit of Leylin’s labour. Several of Yurtrus’ avatars had been slain by Mystra and Tyr, causing enough damage to send him to sleep. Even though he’d sensed the incoming danger now, it would be a wonder if he could use 60% of his power, and he was facing a peak form Leylin alongside Thultanthar.

“Yurtrus… In the name of the God of Massacre, I proclaim you dead…” The phantom of a powerful winged serpent appeared behind Leylin’s back, its demonic wings spread out to cover half of Yurtrus’ divine kingdom. A terrifying gloomy darkness loomed over Yurtrus, devouring him whole. The serpent’s eyes only contained apathy and greed, causing Yurtrus to be overwhelmed with despair.

……

*Rumble!* The powerful lightning suddenly stopped in Gruumsh’s divine kingdom, and he roared in fury.
“What happened?” Mystra and Tyr looked ahead in surprise, watching a terrifying scene unfold.

“Yurtrus… You damned vermin, pigmy, bastard of the hells, you actually dare…” Gruumsh roared but it was too late. A divine kingdom dimmed within the orc plains, leaving the area as it headed for the void and fell into the darkness. Anguish surged in Yurtrus’ petitioners as they died without warning, and his priests in the other planes discovered themselves being cut off by the spells of their god. This could only mean one thing: the Orc God of Death… Yurtrus… He’d fallen!

“It’s the God of Massacre!’ Mystra and Tyr understood this point immediately, but were unable to change the outcome. The orc armies only stalled for a moment, beginning to attack even more ferociously than before!
A powerful spatial storm enveloped Whitejade Saint Mountain within Leylin’s divine kingdom, space being ripped apart as the silhouette of a flying city appeared within the chaotic region. A cathedral atop the mountain radiated golden light that protected the surroundings, rendering them unaffected by the flying city. “Kukulkan, my Lord, you are a star in the skies, the overlord of our souls…” The petitioners on the mountain knew Thultathanhar to be their Lord’s mount, a sacred artifact of the Giant Serpent Church. They were not fazed by its appearance, instead kneeling down to pray. “A.I. Chip, report Thultathanhar’s status,” Leylin said as he opened his eyes, sitting in the main control room dressed in gold. [Beep! Thultathanhar has suffered 36.77% damage. Energy reserves depleted, Shadow Weave broken. Secondary spell formations are 22.5% damaged…] The report caused Leylin’s eyes to twitch. He remained silent for a long time. “It’s been damaged so badly?” he finally sighed. Gods really were the darlings of the world. Even Netheril at its peak, with all its research into the arcane, had still been reduced to rubble under their might. One had to pay a price to slay a deity, even if one was a Great Arcanist controlling a flying city. Thultathanhar had already been damaged in Leylin’s fight against Sekolah. It had been undergoing repairs in his divine kingdom, but
it had been called out for this strike and damaged even more severely. It was a testament to Leylin’s ability that the flying city had even remained intact.

Leylin’s will pervaded the entire flying city, seeing through everything. There were many cracks on its silver-grey surface, and the primary cannons had suffered damage from overuse. Even the secondary core had been damaged, the city operating purely on its primary energy source. It was never easy to bear the brunt of a god’s death throes.

“Heh… It’s all worth it.” Leylin looked excitedly at the damaged crystal floating above his hands. “The divine domain of a God of Death…”

This was Leylin’s reward for slaying Yurtrus. He’d given up on searching the divine kingdom given how close it was to the other orcs’, having to flee the moment he killed the God of Death as he saw a raging Gruumsh rushing over alongside the other orc gods. If he’d tarried a moment longer, even if he could eventually escape Thultanthar would’ve been destroyed.

However, all these scenarios held no meaning whatsoever. Leylin knew that he has succeeded. and that was enough!

Leylin looked at the divine domain crystal ball and sniggered, “Kukulkan’s words will lose all credibility, and he’ll be labeled unscrupulous and crazy. When news of this spreads, there likely won’t be any more gods willing to ally with me…”

If he really was a being of the World of Gods, his actions just now would’ve led to his death. He’d be isolated by the other gods, having to hide himself in Baator forever.

However, he was a Magus. Even if he didn’t offend these gods none of them would wish to ally with him once his true body descended anyway. Even if he’d offended most of the gods and had his reputation raked through the mud, he’d managed to get what he wanted and that was enough. Baator and Thultanthar would be
enough to sustain him until he had the chance to let his true body descend.
“Soon…” Leylin muttered, resolution flashing in his eyes as a phantom Targaryen appeared behind his back. The power of devouring enveloped the crystal, causing the mysterious power of death to reveal itself. He instantly felt a connection to the World Origin Force that allowed him to comprehend the captivating law of death.
The A.I. Chip flashed with notifications as well:
[Beep! Host has devoured a law crystal, absorbing divine domain…] [Beep! Transfer completed, host currently has 50% comprehension of the law of death.]
Unlike other Magi who spent tens of thousands years to comprehend laws without much success, they word skyrocketing wasn’t sufficient to describe Leylin’s comprehension. He’d managed to comprehend half of a law as powerful as the law of death at one go, and he still felt it wasn’t enough!
“A pity… Yurtrus is just an orc god and his law comprehension is 50% at most. He’s also a god of orcs, souls, and other things… If I devoured Kelemvor I’d most likely be able to achieve 100% immediately, generating a death domain that belongs to me alone…”
However, Leylin knew his place. He was at his limits scheming against a lesser god, and a greater god like Kelemvor was beyond his reach.
The A.I. Chip’s notifications continued:
[Beep! Host had comprehended 50% of the law of death! Activating death domain…] [Death Domain: The user becomes the ruler of death, governing all that has to do with it. Any being who perishes within the domain will lose their souls to the user, giving the domain priority.] [Beep! Host’s massacre domain complements the death domain, both domains will experience a boost in power.]
“A simple explanation…” Leylin stroked his chin, thinking of a devastating possibility. “A ruler of death… That is to say that any souls that perish in my domain are mine? And with the priority, I’ll have control even before the god they worship? If that’s true, then the worshippers of the other churches would be subjected to my control… If I spread the domain throughout the prime material plane, won’t it become a new underworld?”

However, this was all in the future. He still had to finish comprehending the law of death quickly, or it would all just be a grand illusion.

[Beep! Host status has changed, refreshing…] The A.I. Chip sent Leylin the latest stats.

[Name: Leylin Faulen.
Race: Human(Lesser God).
Divine Name: Kukulkan, the God of Massacre.
Alignment: Neutral Evil.
Domains: Massacre, Death
Divine Kingdom: Nameless, located at the first three Hells of Baator.
Divine Rank: 8.
Worshippers: Natives, Devils, Adventurers, Clerics.
Worshipper Alignments: True Neutral, Neutral Evil, Lawful Evil.
Divine Abilities: Warp Reality, Epic Massacre]

‘The completely fused domain will come soon… My understanding of the law of death will improve, and it’ll only be a matter of time before I finish comprehending it… Death and Massacre, two
extremely powerful roles that lean towards negative energy. What kind of effects will their fusion bring?” Leylin’s face slowly brightened with anticipation.

……

The instant Leylin absorbed the law of death, a roar of fury rang out from the Fugue Plane, within a city filled with souls. “Someone is eyeing my throne!” The voice was extremely loud, carrying the dignity of a god. Many of the dead souls here couldn’t help but kneel, their translucent bodies shivering in fear. This was Kelemvor, the Greater God of Death who ruled the Fugue Plane! He was the one who’d managed to build a kingdom of peace for the dead, his impartial attitude allowing him to obtain the favour of the plane’s origin force and bringing him to the apex of the gods!

All Kelemvor had left to do was to weaken the remaining Gods of Death, obtaining primary control of the domain. He was actually happy to see Yurtrus fall, as it meant that there was one less God of Death in the world. Had Leylin offered to trade the domain crystal, he would’ve obtained the friendship of this greater god.

However, Leylin had used it for his own. The shift in death’s origin force couldn’t fool Kelemvor, and Leylin had henceforth made an enemy of another greater god.

However, Leylin had no plans to negotiate, or deviate from the path he’d set himself upon. There was nothing he could do about Kelemvor’s fury.

Of course, he still realised his position. Before his true body descended upon the World of Gods to initiate the Final War once more, he would sit inside his divine kingdom and not step out. With the protection of Baator’s origin force and his divine kingdom, he could still protect himself.
Kelemvor understood Leylin’s plans, and the only thing he could do was give Leylin some troubles with his dead worshippers and petitioners. He was left with no choice but to roar in rage.
Several years went by in the blink of an eye. Many events came to pass, the most dazzling of which was the battle between the humans and orcs in the north.

Having suffered defeat in the divine war, the orcs retreated between several lost battles. They were eventually pushed all the way back to the Old Silverymoon, with even a natural leader like Saladin unable to reverse the situation.

Old Silverymoon had only survived the assault with its powerful fortifications aided by the Thunder God’s Hammer. Saladin had finally managed to repel Elminster and Alustriel, causing severe casualties to the Silverymoon Alliance and forcing them to withdraw in order to consolidate their strength once more. However, the damage was already done and the orcs had to recuperate as well. Even if they were ready to fight to reclaim the lost land, they didn’t have the faculties to start another war. The north had thus been split in twain, entering an eerie, unstable tranquility.

Within the wastelands of the combined divine kingdom of the orc pantheon.

Mystra and Tyr had already retreated, but Gruumsh had already suffered. Yurtrus falling alone was more damage than losing a hundred thousand petitioners, even if they hadn’t been the ones to do it.

Leylin’s notoriety had spread amongst the gods once more, causing
a new wave of fear and hate. He didn’t bother with that at all, however.
Right after the battle, he met with a person he was familiar with.
“It’s been a long time, Rafiniya,” he said from his throne as he looked down upon his new subordinate, his old friend.
“I’ve given up on my past name, my Lord. Please call me Phoenix — Hellfire Phoenix,” the former paladin said emotionlessly as she knelt before Leylin.
‘Phoenix’ had changed greatly with her fall. She’d grown even more captivating than before, her tender white skin shining with a milky lustre. A pair of beautiful wings sat comfortably on her back, making her look like a fallen angel. Hers was a unique beauty, representative of the aesthetics of the Nine Hells.
“Alright then, Phoenix. Tell me, what do fairness and justice mean?” Leylin asked with a puzzled gaze.
“That answer is my life’s goal,” Phoenix said as she lifted her head, her exquisite face filled with determination. “However, this corrupt, filthy world cannot give me that answer. Equality can only come when the entire world is destroyed and rebuilt from scratch; I shall use my hellfire to purge this dirty world clean!”
“Words of wisdom…” Although Leylin was praising her calmly on the surface, he rolled his eyes inwardly, ‘So now she’s an advocator of the purge? Rafiniya is Rafiniya, even if she’s changed…’ All that didn’t matter, however. Another legendary devil who worshipped him was worth it.
Leylin waved his hand once Phoenix left with a bow, a mirror appearing in his hands that was connected to the prime material plane. A legendary devil hunter appeared on the mirror’s surface, the same one that had travelled with the Neon Merchant Group to the Orc Empire. He greeted Leylin in respect.
“Kukulkan, my Lord, you are the Lord of Massacre, the Keeper of Order. You are the Ruler of Devils….
“I’ve done as you wished, my Lord. The paladins and priests apart from Rafiniya are already dead, their souls trapped in their burning skeletons. I can convert them once they’re transported to the kingdom…”

Leylin’s mirror showed the prayer and report, causing him to nod his head slightly. Rafiniya’s fall was something he’d orchestrated long ago, but a single paladin or priest would’ve been able to stop her from turning when she did. That was why he’d had his devil hunters focus on them, rendering them unable to assist the Lady of Hope. That was how he’d gained a new legendary erinyes in Phoenix.

“You did well. We’ve obtained all we could in the north, and now is the time to return. Leave the necessary information paths and priests, but bring Barbara and the other devil hunters back…” he decreed.

Leylin knew fully well that this incident had put him at odds with both Mystra’s alliance and the orcs. The suppression he would face would soon grow severalfold, and in such circumstances it was better to pull his elites back before he suffered unnecessary losses. If Mystra and Tyr mobilised their forces, he would definitely lose quite a few worshippers.

As a new god, Leylin didn’t have many legendary powerhouses or much wealth to his name. Every one he lost would bite him. Anyway, he’d gotten the law of death he was eyeing in the prime material plane so he didn’t have much he wanted from it now. The faith coming from Debanks Island in his divine kingdom would be enough to sustain him.

Leylin thus retracted his gaze from the prime material plane, racking his brains as he thought about his new law.

‘Massacre and death, a perfect match…’ Leylin had obtained a new level of enlightenment regarding his role as a god, ‘The power of the law of massacre is boosted by the deaths of the enemy… There
needs to be a catalyst between all this… Either law can support a greater god, so if I turn this into a cycle…’
Leylin’s eyes flashed with wild ambition. His root was that of a Magus, and with the A.I. Chip and his comprehension of laws he instinctively knew the path he had to take. His future advancements had grown completely clear to him.
Magi started with cultivating spiritual force, before transforming the soul to let them comprehend laws. Even as a mere rank 7, Leylin already saw the silhouette of his path as a peak rank 8. This was an extremely alarming matter to the entire astral plane!
“Death domain…” A dark energy spread out from Leylin’s palace, entering the surroundings. He felt control over the life and death of everything within its increasing range, able to see every organism within.
‘Death is inseparable from the soul. Thankfully I have enough research into the soul that I’m not inferior to the gods…’ Leylin smiled, “A.I. Chip, what’s the progress on the simulation of the law of death?”
[Beep! Law of death comprehension at 50%. Beginning soul simulation with stored data…] the A.I. Chip intoned.
Another notification soon appeared on the Chip’s interface:
[Beep! The law of massacre has influenced the death domain, giving it the Death’s Decree ability.
Death’s Decree: The user of the domain can cause the death of any creature he wills. Those without divine power will lose their lives immediately, and the effects on divine beings depends on their divine rank.]
The A.I. Chip’s powerful calculative abilities had allowed it to derive a new ability immediately.
“The death domain is really powerful…” Leylin inhaled a sharp breath after seeing the results, “Legendary powerhouses without divinity would die immediately, and even their souls will cease to
exist without exemption. Even demigods have a fifty-fifty chance of dying…”
Death’s Decree would be rendered useless when facing more powerful gods, but with Leylin’s strength it made for a powerful weapon against the other lesser gods. He had a chance to kill them directly, one that increased the weaker his opponent was. Even more terrifying was that this ability would grow with him, its effects growing more powerful over time!
‘Death’s Decree… What a magnificent ability, Kelemvor has it too huh?’ However, doubt soon filled Leylin’s mind, ‘Wait. I haven’t heard of such a thing about Kelemvor or any of the other gods of death…’
A possibility surfaced in Leylin’s mind, causing him to be elated. ‘Could it be… Only those gods of both massacre and death obtain it, or only if they fulfill some other conditions? If that’s the case, once I finish the law of death won’t I be able to…’
The skies of the Fugue Plane were a misty gray. The Styx flowed smoothly on the ground, wiping the memories of the occasional listless soul clean to induce a calm lifelessness.

A city of black granite and rotting mud was erected in the wilderness. This was the City of Judgement, under the jurisdiction of the God of Death Kelemvor. Countless beings with no faith were half embedded into the Wall of the Faithless, wailing as they seemed to be getting swallowed by it. The faithless in the World of Gods were treated worse than the worshippers of rival gods, demons, and devils. They wouldn’t be accepted by any divine kingdom upon their death, only able to suffer eternally on the wall.

It was too late for these souls to pledge faith to any god. Kelemvor gave them three choices upon their arrival, and the other two were even more torturous for the faithless than the Wall. Only the Abyss or Baator would accept these beings, but even they only wished to turn them into soul nourishing bugs.

The City of Death was deathly silent and quiet despite being littered with sluggish souls. Even liches would wish to leave this place as soon as they could.

*Boom!* A large golden gate opened up all of a sudden, radiating divine light. The glow carried the power of salvation, seemingly adding a ray of hope in this land of death.
However, reality was the exact opposite. The wandering souls shrieked in shock at the appearance of the holy light, avoiding at all costs despite only seeing a single ray. This light held the power of a mighty god, and it wasn’t something they could face directly. Had they not escaped, they would have been wiped out of existence without a trace left behind.

“Damn it, a god is descending. It’s the Goddess of the Weave…” The City of Judgement bustled with activity as many of the souls hid underground and in towers. Even the liches, devils, and demons cursed loudly as they escaped, portals beginning to flash throughout the city.

Mystra’s figure slowly walked out of the bright golden door. Looking at the activity in the city, she smiled meaningfully.

“Mystra!” A giant voice boomed throughout the city, and a middle-aged man in blue robes came to stand before her. He looked extremely common, seeming like a nobleman, but his eyes shone an all-seeing black. A strong death domain was spread out with him at the centre, as if he was the ruler of death in this entire world. This was the king of souls, the Greater God of Death Kelemvor!

“You always bring me trouble!” he said as he saw the city rustling. His death domain reverberated with a tranquil power, soothing the agitated souls and rendering them calm once more.

This was a mutation of the standard death domain, Eternal Tranquility. It served to protect and soothe the dead, giving them respect.

Kelemvor was a neutral god, and he’d always tried his best to provide peace to the dead. He opposed those who tried to extend their lives, and despised the blasphemous arts of necromancy. His symbol was that of a skeletal arm holding up a balance.

There were rumours that Kelemvor and Mystra once loved each other as mortals. Their relationship seemed to have stalled after they ascended to godhood. Although the two had never admitted it,
the current scenario suggested that the rumours were true.

“Why have you come to disturb the peace of the Fugue?” Kelemvor looked at Mystra.

Their current relationship was different from before, and it was partially because Kelemvor hated magic. He felt that magic had disrupted the peace of the dead. There may have been other reasons as well: many liches and devils guessed that Alustriel was a daughter born to Mystra through a mortal named Elminster.

“It’s naturally for that God of Massacre… Kelemvor, aren’t you angry at the fact that someone is eyeing your throne and prying into your powers?” Mystra laughed coldly.

“He’s just a new god, his power is far from Nephthys and Segojan…” Kelemvor said after a period of silence. These other gods he’d mentioned were also gods of death, but they were intermediate gods themselves! Leylin was only a lesser deity, and without even a full comprehension of the law of death he didn’t pose much of a threat.

“Really…” Mystra’s expression changed, and she made up her mind. “Have you ever heard of the legend of the Night Serpent?”

“Is this what you foresee?” Kelemvor grew silent once more. “For you,” he started after a while, “I’ll lend a hand once more. However, I once made a pact with the circle of gods, and it prevents me from doing many things…”

Kelemvor was a neutral god, and without Leylin even being a God of Death yet he couldn’t just charge into his divine kingdom. It would be considered blasphemy, and if he tried it the other gods of death would ally together to suppress him. Such was his fate as the strongest God of Death.

“That’s enough… I only need you to…” Mystra smiled beautifully, and spoke of her purpose.

……
“My worshippers are being detained by Kelemvor?” News from the Fugue Plane soon reached Leylin’s ears, and it caused him to frown. This was indeed a troublesome issue. Worshippers would normally enter their god’s divine kingdom after death, and this was a pact that could not be violated. However, some things could still be done in between. While pious worshippers had enough strength of faith to directly move to the divine kingdom after death, and priests would directly become powerful holy spirits, things didn’t work the same way for regular worshippers. They first had to be sent to the Fugue Plane, being judged by Kelemvor. The False would be placed on the Wall, and the remaining would be sent to emissaries of their respective deities. Kelemvor was acting up on his contract with the circle of gods that solidified his position as a neutral god. It would cause Leylin some trouble, after all only a small number of his worshippers were fervent enough to be transported directly.

“The emissary questioned him before, but Kelemvor answered with a condition. He expects you to make a trip to the Fugue Plane yourself before he releases their souls…” the valiant spirit reported, trembling in fear.

Leylin waved the man away before falling into deep thought. He smelled a conspiracy brewing, and it caused him to smile wryly. ‘They’re clamping down hard… Not even allowing me some time…’ Even if he wanted to rest now, they would most likely not give him this chance. His laws clashed with Kelemvor’s own, so the bias would be hard to fight. On top of that Leylin had no friends among the gods, only those who would watch upon his situation with schadenfreude.

‘Thankfully I don’t have many worshippers in the prime material
plane. Most of them are here in Debanks Island, and their souls don’t need to enter the Fugue Plane when they die…’ He felt somewhat relieved at this thought. The best way to fight his opponents’ schemes was to avoid walking into the trap, if not his outcome could only be miserable.

Having confirmed that Kelemvor intended for him to travel to the Fugue Plane where he could cause even more problems, Leylin prepared to ignore all matters and hole himself up in his tortoise shell of a divine kingdom. So what if his reputation would be ruined? So what if his faith in the prime material plane would be halted? Most of his operations were within the divine kingdom, hence there was nothing to fear.

Moreover, Leylin was someone from the Magus World. Becoming a greater god was of no use to him, and the more concern he showed about the threat the easier it was to deal with him. He would only end up losing everything if he acted. Instead, he would enter a battle of attrition.

Of course, he still had to attend to the shortage of faith that would be caused as a result of this suppression. At the very least, Leylin knew clearly that the faith from the prime material plane would drop drastically soon. His worshippers in the divine kingdom would slowly turn into petitioners over time, an irreversible process that would rob him of new faith. Although there were profits to holing up inside the divine kingdom, his main source of new faith had been cut off!
Although his worshippers being in his divine kingdom would benefit him in the short run, over time they’d be whittled away. It’d be akin to a slow suicide. However, Leylin didn’t care about that in the least. What he lacked the most was time, and the longer he could drag things out the more benefits he would get. As long as he could finish becoming a God of Death before the faith from his worshippers dwindled to nothing, he would be able to bring his true body over and restart the Final War. The greater gods would be forced to deal with peak rank 8 Magi, and Leylin wouldn’t have to worry about them anymore.

‘But I seem to need something more to comprehend the law of death…’ Leylin’s eyes flashed, deep in thought, ‘It’ll go faster if more souls are provided as experimental subjects…’

However, it wasn’t easy to find the massive number of souls needed for the A.I. Chip’s simulation. Leylin estimated he’d need roughly ten thousand regular souls for every stage of progress, and the total count would need him to sacrifice all of his worshippers. Even he couldn’t do such a thing.

“I can only look to the prime material plane, the Abyss, or Baator…” Devils and demons were both formed from soul bugs, so they qualified for the A.I. Chip’s requirements. Leylin didn’t want to help the demons or devils start a bloody war in the prime material plane— even if it supported his comprehension of death
and fit his role, it wouldn’t be of much benefit to him. After all, he was a god as well, unlike the other Lords of Baator. There was no need to fight the demons either. He already had a third of Baator in hand, and with that amount of origin force sustaining his divine kingdom there was no need for him to dither around.

“With that said… It seems like I only have one choice left?”

Leylin’s gaze pierced through his divine kingdom, looking at the edge of Phlegethos.

“They seem to be thinking the same…” The place was packed with an army of devils. Leylin’s worshippers recognised him as the Lord of Baator, so it was a given that he would take over the other levels as well. The remaining lords would definitely prepare against him. Although all of them remained guarded against each other, and with their leader-in-name being lost scattering them further, they still maintained a unanimous front against Leylin. They’d managed to stop him from advancing into the Fourth Hell, the powerful Samuel most likely able to escape even if Leylin tried to use his flying city. By that time, the other lords would come to aid him and stop any other sneak attacks.

Now, the armies at the border had grown even more massive. They didn’t seem complacent in defense, instead going for the offensive as they moved to attack Leylin’s divine kingdom!

“Interesting… The armies of pride and lust as well?” The presence of the other lords’ aid was extremely obvious to Leylin’s divine will, “They finally decided to ally together against me, huh?” he smirked.

‘Even if Asmodeus was in peak form, he wouldn’t be able to bring them together like this. They wouldn’t join up even if I continued to parade as the Supreme… Furthermore, how could Asmodeus recover so swiftly without a greater god helping him?’

Leylin immediately understood the danger this time. Asmodeus had
definitely obtained the help of a greater god, unifying the other Lords of Baator to deal with Leylin. The gods would need to train another ten thousand years to be able to scheme against him. ‘So then… Is it Gruumsh, or Mystra?’ Leylin had immediately listed out the greatest suspects, and his personal opinion shifted more towards the latter. ‘The chances that it’s Mystra are extremely huge. She’s been after me for a long time.’

Anger welled up in Leylin’s heart. He immediately saw through her intentions, ‘First she colludes with Kelemvor and stops my supply of worshippers. Next she uses the help of the devils and turns the tides to attack my divine kingdom… She’s prepared to bleed me dry until I’m forced to make a trip to Fugue. Then she’ll ambush me?’

“However… The only miscalculation you made was my strength…” he laughed coldly, his conscient travelling through his divine kingdom to bring two people before him.

“The devil hunters are prepared and awaiting orders, my Lord…” Isabel was dressed in crimson armour and what seemed to be a cape of flames, radiating an aura of valiance. She’d grown much more powerful than before, seeming like a massive beast of ancient times as the dragon blood in her body was further purified by Leylin. She was now at the peak of the legendary realm.

Beside her was the former Lady of Hope, Phoenix. The more devout someone was before their turn, the more power they would acquire with their fall. Rafiniya’s staunch faith had pulled her up to become a high-ranking legendary when she turned.

Although Phoenix could adopt the appearance of a pit fiend, Leylin ended up choosing to model her after Glasya. The erinyes form gave her strength equivalent to a greater devil, and Glasya’s expression if Phoenix eventually evolved to become an Erinyes Queen would be delightful to watch.

“Good! Remember, your mission is to defend and not step out of
the kingdom’s boundaries. My avatars will assist as necessary.” Handing command of the devil hunters to the two of them, Leylin continued with his plans.

The greatest strength of devil hunters was in their ability to seal devils to use their powers. With a constant war against the other Lords of Baator ongoing, they would prove to be extremely beneficial. As long as they stayed within the divine kingdom and remained protected by its laws, they would only grow stronger with every wave of devils fighting them. And if they lost numbers? He could just recruit some more from among his worshippers.

Leylin had already considered all problems when he designed this profession, so the natural talent required of a devil hunter was not high. Their strength depended almost solely on the devils they sealed. Thus, the devil army was like paradise for those who wished to improve!

……

At the same time, the Queen of Lust was bowing towards an older devil in the endless void, “The preparations are complete, father,” the Lady of Malbolge said.

“Cough… Very good, Glasya…” The old devil seemed frail, wrought with illnesses. He had black eyes, a goatee, and a horn on his head. This was the Lord of the Ninth Hell, the Supreme of Baator— Asmodeus!

“Samuel, Levistus, Baalzebul, Mephistopheles… Thank you all for making it here, we Lords haven’t met in a long time…” Asmodeus looked at the figures of the other devils nearby. With all the remaining Lords of Baator gather together, even the space around them was screeching with agony under the burden.

“There’s a few faces lost and another gained. Beelzebub, Mammon, and the Hag Countess are here no more, but my beloved daughter
is now amongst us!” Asmodeus spoke incoherently. “Enough!” Samuel roared, flames of anger blazing on his body, “We’re gathered here for one purpose, and that’s to deal with Kukulkan!”

The other lords here may just be fulfilling their curiosity, but he himself could not remain relaxed. Phlegethos was right under Leylin’s divine kingdom, putting the greatest pressure on him. He’d had to hide within the depths of the Fourth Hell ever since Leylin slew Mammon, holing himself up in his fortified castle with curses and traps so he could retain a sense of safety.

“Indeed… We need to kill the God of Massacre, bringing Baator back to its former self.” Asmodeus’ expression hardened. Although he didn’t need to face Leylin’s pressure directly, the new god gave him a very strong sense of danger. Not to mention that Leylin’s worshippers declared him the Ruler of Devils in their prayers day and night, a resounding slap to his face as Supreme of the Nine Hells.

“Hehe…” A strange sound travelled, causing Glasya’s face to sour. “I suggest we sign a contract immediately, splitting the tasks amongst ourselves and the united front. I can guarantee that I don’t need any of the first three Hells after the war, I only wish for Baator to regain its former self as we bury that God of Massacre in the dirt.” Asmodeus flipped open the black contract book in his hands. The elated lords did not seem to notice the icy gaze hidden deep in his eyes.
“In the name of the Supreme, KILL THEM!” The great army that had gathered in Phlegethos charged out with a roar, entering Leylin’s divine kingdom under the guidance of the pit fiends present.

*Rumble!* However, they were greeted by lightning and thunder the moment they entered the place. Bolt after bolt crashed down, leaving huge pits in the ground as they completely decimated the devils in range. Some devils were even being burnt by flames, screaming miserably as their resistance to fire proved to be useless. Although the devils had come to a ceasefire agreement with Leylin, it hadn’t been all that restrictive. The contract was broken the moment the devils made their move, so Leylin had nothing holding him back.

“My Lord, Kukulkan, bestow upon us the power of massacre!” Numerous devil hunters were lying in wait behind defences created by devil slaves. Some of them watched their opponents with apathy, while others looked on with greed, even enthusiasm filling their eyes. In their perspective, these devils were only a source of power. On top of that, they could give up everything for the divine kingdom of their Lord.

Isabel and Phoenix were completely fixated on a projection of the battlefield within a command centre, one of Leylin’s avatars at their side.

1160 - Rejection
“This war shall last a long time…” he prophesied.

......

Several decades passed in the blink of an eye. Leylin’s divine kingdom stood tall in Baator, and even though the battles did not cease at all the petitioners and natives of Debanks Island slowly forgot about it.

Things were always the same with gods. Divine wars lasted centuries without conclusions, with few instances like the orc-human war in the prime material plane. Even then the orcs had only been suppressed, and the humans of the north given assistance...

At the heart of Leylin’s divine kingdom, within the gigantic shrine atop Whitejade Saint Mountain.

[Beep! Simulation 78923 complete. Test sample ER-3’s data has been obtained, storing into the law database under Death -> Raising Souls -> 2…]

The A.I. Chip’s robotic voice brought Leylin out of a trance. He glanced over the information the Chip was showing him, taking a look at the records about his comprehension of laws.

[Beep! Host’s comprehension of laws: Devouring 100%, Massacre 100%, Greed 100%, Death 99%.

“It’s already so far in, huh?” His eyes flickered with understanding, “These devils have been tremendously helpful…”

An understanding of the law of death required the analysis of a great number of souls, as well as the destructive force formed at their deaths. Even if the other Lords of Baator hadn’t provoked him, Leylin was going to invade himself to kill a massive number of people.

Right now they willingly sacrificed themselves in his divine kingdom, becoming free specimens for his experiments. How could
Leylin reject their wish? He kept up the fight with the devils, stalling them at the boundaries of his divine kingdom without much damage. He left them with some hope of victory, ensuring that they would send in their troops continuously to allow him to accumulate more and more information.

‘I’ve almost added death to my role…’ Leylin had now reached a threshold in his comprehension of death. He only had one last fragment before he could condense the law into his domain.

‘Mystra’s pressured me a lot lately…’ Leylin lowered his head, his eyes filled with determination and solemnity. The Goddess of the Weave hadn’t just colluded with Kelemvor to hold his worshippers back, she’d also instigated the Archdevils to attack his divine kingdom.

The Giant Serpent Church in the prime material plane didn’t have it good either. A large number of wizards under Elminster had abandoned all work, looking for traces of the powerhouses of the church like crazed beasts. Had Leylin not stopped expansion in the prime material plane and summoned Tiff back beforehand, the church would likely have suffered massive losses.

The influence of her actions were already beginning to show. Leylin’s faith in the prime material plane wasn’t growing anymore, almost on the verge of dwindling down.

Such a situation would be extremely dangerous for gods, who relied on faith. Without enough, they wouldn’t be able to sustain their powers and die out slowly, their divine kingdoms descending into darkness as their soul was destroyed. Without worshippers, a god was like a fish out of water.

Leylin was mainly supported by Debanks Island now, but even then the situation was very dangerous. The mortals in his divine kingdom would slowly all morph into petitioners, becoming souls that couldn’t eat, reproduce, or do anything of the like. It would be a devastating blow if that process completed, and with the number
or generations of commoners in the Faulen Empire it was close to being so.

‘Thankfully my comprehension has been smooth. My main body is almost ready as well, and even now I can come in and restart the Final War.’ A hint of coldness appeared in his eyes.

Leylin’s main body was ultimately a Magus. This clone was merely some preparation on the path of faith, and it was alright to give it up for the sake of his main body’s success. Leylin thus decided to drag things out, ignoring Mystra’s challenges and refusing to confront the issue. It gave him enough time to develop his laws to this point.

Mystra wasn’t a fool, but she’d never have imagined that Kukulkan was merely the clone of a Magus. Her methods could end any lesser god, but without the proper knowledge all her schemes were pointless. Leylin was just using her effectively to earn time, giving him the foundation to take on the coming storm.

All of a sudden, Leylin suddenly felt his heart squeeze. His divine sense told him of the arrival of an absolute danger, and he immediately traced it to the Celestial Hall.

Leylin’s avatar opened its eyes from up on the throne, looking at Mystra who was making a speech.

“For all these reasons, I propose the God of Massacre, Kukulkan, be removed!” she proclaimed loudly, looking towards him with a chilly gaze.

The numerous gods in the Celestial Hall sized Leylin up. The good gods would never accept an evil god like him, and the evil ones didn’t have much to do with him. Only Umberlee was left, looking on helplessly.

“I agree!” Tyr said immediately after Mystra’s speech.

“I as well!” a voice sounded from the pedestal of death. Leylin recognised Kelemvor at a single glance. The greater god had evidently sensed Leylin’s comprehension increasing, and he’d
grown grim and hostile.
“And I!” Gruumsh stood up from amongst the orcs, “A god that
kills his kind so brazenly does not need to exist.” His stance was
followed up by the other orc gods as well.
In the blink of an eye, Leylin felt himself becoming an enemy of all
the gods. His pedestal was on the verge of collapse as well, and the
effects of attacking other gods without allies or a foundation were
beginning to show themselves.
“Agreed!” “Agreed!”

……

Waves of origin force gathered around Leylin with the loud
clamour of the gods.
If the Overgod had been present the world would have stripped
him of his godfire ruthlessly, causing him to fall. However, with the
overgod in a deep sleep, the Celestial Hall had no power to punish
him. The only thing these gods could do was eject Leylin from the
place, isolating.
And isolate him is what they did. Terrifying lightning crashed down
on Leylin’s cracking pedestal, and the avatar was destroyed without
any way to resist.
Of course the amount of divine force he’d lost was negligible, but
the follow through would be terrifying. Being rejected by all sides,
Leylin would be left with no space to grow anymore.
Leylin had no idea that he had unwittingly created a record. Ever
since the Overgod fell into his slumber, Leylin was the only true
god to be rejected by both good and evil, being forced out of the
Celestial Hall.
S he got the remaining gods to completely exclude me…’ Leylin grinned coldly within his divine kingdom, ‘So that’s her power? Indeed, with control of the Weave and the backing of the gods of magic she has allies aplenty…’ His grin only grew wider as he recalled what Mystra had whispered to him after being ousted from the Celestial Hall. ‘She’s threatening me to hand over Shar’s location?’ Leylin rubbed his chin in interest as he thought about Mystra’s conditions, ‘Seems like she’s scared… She thinks Shar is hiding behind my back and scheming something… True, she would be an idiot if she did not not suspect anything after I demonstrated my ability to use the Shadow Weave…’ Leylin recalled the information he had at hand. Shar and Mystra had been rivals from before the dusk of the gods, their schemes against each other unending. Mystra had eventually been allowed to become the Goddess of the Weave, letting her advance to become a greater god. ‘She’s focused on Shar now, thinking I know her location…’ Leylin found it extremely hilarious. ‘However… Even if I told her that Shar was in the Shadow World of the astral plane, how would she exit the crystal sphere? And assuming she does, what’ll she do about the Magi waiting right there to attack her from all sides?’ “Now that things have fallen to this stage, she’ll most likely keep this up…” After some consideration, Leylin had rejected her
conditions. His eyes flashed as one of his avatars appeared at the border of his divine kingdom.

*Rumble!* The power of magic surged violently at the borders of Baator, many wizard souls forming a large spell formation with the Weave. Each one of them had stern faces, casting different dazzling spells. An army of golems was beside them, their metal surfaces filled with runes as all their cannons and other weapons were aimed at Leylin’s divine kingdom.

A goddess was standing at the front of this army of magic. She had an extremely exquisite face, looking so fragile that one breath could break her. Her snow-white skin and starry eyes combined with the dazzling light shining off her body to radiate divine dignity.

“Isn’t ousting me from the Celestial Hall enough to quell your rage, Mystra?” the avatar asked.

“I cannot tolerate it anymore. Kukulkan, God of Massacre. Give me Shar’s location immediately, or face my army of wizards.” Mystra’s expression turned icy, “Submit to me, and you will gain the friendship of a greater god.”

The subordinates continued chanting after she spoke, the combined spell forming with a powerful flurry of energy. Each of them had the strength of a high-ranked wizard with the unlimited support of the Weave, the energy they consumed to cast spells immediately replenished by Mystra’s divine force.

“A threat? This is your usual style…” Leylin was currently under extreme pressure. His faith in the prime material plane had suffered, and the worshippers he did have were being detained by Kelemvor. He’d also been at war with the devils for decades, and Mystra had just ousted him from the Celestial Hall. Even with all this, she immediately came knocking on his door to threaten him. The Goddess of the Weave thought Leylin would submit quickly with the size of his divine kingdom, not costing much at all.

However, not everything worked according to this goddess’ will.
Leylin had prepared for this the moment he was kicked out of the Celestial Hall.

“SUBMIT!” “SUBMIT!” “SUBMIT TO THE LADY!”

Leylin only shook his head at Mystra and the chanting of her subordinates. “Mystra,” he said sternly, “I ask sincerely, consider this once more. Do you really want to wage war with me? You won’t be able to face the consequences.”

‘How?’ Mystra’s mighty will trembled that instant, and she seemed to feel a scary omen.

However, she was a greater god! That fear was followed by utter disgrace, ‘I actually fear a lesser god? Even if he’s related to Shar and that legend of that Night Serpent… Dammit!’

She had only hesitated for that one moment. Her thoughts moved towards her allies in Tyr, Kelemvor, and the others she’d made after the battle of the north. Her forces had almost doubled since then.

“Indeed. If you still continue to resist, then there can only be war!”

Mystra waved her hands, and powerful spells surpassing even the legendary realm began to converge.

“In that case,” Leylin’s avatar slowly vanished. He appeared with his main body, carrying a strange circular disc.

“What are you trying to do?” Mystra grew extremely wary. After all, it was inconceivable for a god to step out of their divine kingdom with their true body. Furthermore, she felt a strange chill being emitted from that strange plate.

“If you want war… Then war it is…” Leylin Faulen smiled gently, but it looked extremely malevolent in Mystra’s eyes.

……

Many Magi of laws had already gathered together outside the crystal sphere of the World of Gods.

“As was decided, Mother Core and Leylin will decide upon the first
batch of Magi to descend. Is that alright?” Ignox looked at the surrounding Magi, a large bone timepiece in his hands. It wasn’t just the Magus World. Existences from the Purgatory World, Icy World, and many others were present here. This included the Nefarious Filthbird and Trial’s Eye.

“No problem!” “I concur!”

The other Magi agreed. Leylin and Mother Core had been given exclusive rights to decide the first batch of Magi to descend, granting them a lot of benefits. Leylin’s own aura had already become extremely hard to fathom, and nobody knew what his current strength was.

“It has begun… The destiny of billions of years… The final war with the gods…” many existences muttered to themselves, many emotions welling up within them.

It was at this moment that they saw a small hole opening on the crystal wall, intertwining with evil intent. Merciless roars sounded out as several of them launched themselves through.

……

“Then I shall fulfill your wish.” Kukulkan was looking at Mystra with a faint trace of pity, “The Manderhawke Plate… Show your power to connect worlds!”

He tossed the strange plate in the air. Countless repairs and improvements had brought it to a new level of completion, and it dazzled in the air as milky white light formed a passage connecting the World of Gods to outside the crystal sphere.

All of the gods watched on incredulously as their eternal wall, the unbreakable wall fortified by the Overgod, slowly melted away to reveal a passage to the outside. Several overpowering auras rushed inside, carrying the power of evil.

“Haha… It’s indeed the World of Gods!”
“I can smell the aura of the gods, and these souls… More beautiful than a skylark!”
“Kill… The divinity and ichor of the gods will fertilise my lands, until truth is found and eternity attained…”

......

“What’s happening?” All the legendary beings of the world immediately shifted their gazes to this region. The mysterious evil aura seemed to dig ancient memories out of their minds.
“This magic… MAGI!” Oghma was the first to exclaim, “Heavens… the ancient dusk of the gods, is it about to happen again?”
The frightening news instantly echoed through all the divine kingdoms, alerting even the demons of the Abyss and the devils of Baator.
“Magus! You’re a Magus!” Mystra was stumped when she saw Leylin’s true rank 7 body standing behind his clone. Her following screams almost pierced through the skies.
[Beep! Host is a rank 35 arcanist.]
“In my name as a Magus…” Leylin walked forward, powerful origin force welling up within him as it carried the intent of the Magus World’s World Will. Many Magi of laws roared out.
[Outer Weave 100% analysed, Inner Weave at 50%.]
“I announce…” The World Crystal covering the overgod’s throne in the Celestial Hall began to tremble. The entire world seemed to roar out in grief.
The one that felt these changes the greatest was Mystra. She looked at Leylin’s Magus body, and the fear she felt from that familiar aura almost caused her to turn around and run away.
However, it was too late.
[Beep! All conditions met, rank 12 arcane spell, Karsus’ Avatar—
Activated!
“LET THE FINAL WAR BEGIN!”
arsus’ Avatar had been launched! Leylin was going to take over the Weave, effective immediately!

He’d tried the spell he’d inherited from Distorted Shadow once before when he was in the Shadow World. Although there had been many side effects to it, he’d managed to get rid of Shar and obtain victory in one move. The A.I. Chip had been improving it ever since, and now it was as powerful as a rank 8 spell from the Magus World as it barrelled towards Mystra.

*Rumble!* The entire World of Gods trembled as the Weave materialised all around it, brimming with boundless energy.

“Mystra…” Leylin turned towards the goddess, proclaiming, “Your everything, is now mine.”

‘So he was the one I feared all this while, with strength that could claim my life at any time…’ Mystra’s enlightenment had come all too late, at her dying breaths. With control of the Weave shifting to Leylin, her true body revealed itself. Her face was filled with fear as the silverflame on her body raged out of control, engulfing her entirety.

……

“NO!” “HOW?” Gasps of exclamation were heard from the upper planes and even the underworld. Mystra’s divine kingdom crumbled away, falling into the infinite void.
“Our Lady… why would the Lady…” Mystra’s priests wept in the prime material plane, feeling the great agony of divine power being stripped from their bodies.

Even more shocking was the scene outside Leylin’s divine kingdom. The petitioners in the place collapsed lifelessly, their auras waning as their bodies disintegrated. Several valiant spirits and holy spirits tried to resist, but with Leylin’s control of the Weave they were wiped out immediately as well.

‘The Weave of the World of Gods…’ Despite prior experience with the World of Gods, Leylin felt an extreme burden on him the moment he took over the Weave. He felt like a little boy trying to use a large axe, about to hurt himself at any moment.

‘The Weave is incompatible with my domain. Fusing with it by force will only taint my path…’ Leylin concluded immediately after he wiped the army out, ‘On top of that, there’s still problems even if the A.I. Chip optimised the spell…’

At the same time, Leylin Farlier sneered as he felt a force of distortion congeal in the void.

“You want to control me to release your conscient? Dream on… Collapse!” With Karsus’ Avatar giving him the Weave, Kukulkan ordered its destruction immediately. This wiped out the divine role of the Weave in itself, and explosions sounded out as the network of purple veins that covered the world broke apart. The sound of weeping travelled across multiple worlds.

*Boom!* An explosion rocked the Celestial Hall the moment the Weave was destroyed, coming from the Overgod’s throne.

Many wizards were shocked by the destruction of the Weave. The construct that they’d used from the start had lost all connection to them, and any who were casting a spell at the time of collapse suffered from an explosive backlash that left them without a complete corpse. With the Weave gone, all of the wizards in the world had become worthless!
As for the gods, they roared in rage. They’d lost the channel they used to acquire faith and converse with their worshippers. The convenient Weave gone, it was a disaster to have to expend the divine force it took to contact or bless their worshippers directly. The so-called strongest system of the World of Gods had disappeared just like that. Even the devastation it caused right away was only the surface, the heavy repercussions of this loss only to be felt much later.

Still, the most dangerous effect of the destruction of the Weave had revealed itself.

“Jeje…” “Hahaha…” The core of the Weave revealed itself, and the seal that the gods had built to trap the consciences of many fallen Magi was broken apart. Leylin opened the doors of this prison, allowing these hardened criminals to escape!

Mortals, Professionals, various creatures… They all raised their heads, only to see the sky swamped with darkness as the moon connected to the Weave shone brightly in the skies. The Weave continued to crumble apart, severing its connection to the moon as dozens of powerful evil laughs escaped into the prime material plane.

“The moon! The moon has changed!” The white moon turned a dark purple to the shock of the mortals. A large, vile eye opened up in the centre, seemingly watching over the World of Gods.

“So the consciences were sealed in the moon, huh?” Leylin looked at the now-black moon, grinning, “BREAK!”

*Rumble!* The eye on the moon shattered to the tune of Leylin’s roar, several dark shadows immediately covering the world in darkness as they spread out.

“We may have been forgotten by the passage of time, but we shall never forget. VENGEANCE AGAINST THE GODS!” The fragment of a peak rank 8 Magus resurrected itself, turning into a great evil that caused the gods to turn green. The shattering Weave continued
to affect the entire world, only abated by the sea of origin force doing its best to suppress the violent ripples of energy.

“The Overgod is acting? Pity, trying to stop the effects of the Weave breaking will only aggravate your wounds,” Leylin said grimly.

The attack that should have destroyed more than half the world had been suppressed by the Celestial Hall. However, Leylin felt it more effective to deal the Overgod a serious injury than destroy some plains or kill a billions useless creatures.

“You… YOU DARE!” Kukulkan moved to encircled a power of distortion, causing a black figure to appear behind him and howl in rage.

“Distorted Shadow… You wished to make use of me and inserted a backdoor into Karsus’ Avatar. Don’t think I’m unaware of your wishes to escape the Weave.” A golden net began to cover Leylin’s clone, extending to the warped shadows nearby, “My path was never the path of the gods. Here, suffer the backlash of the Weave with me!”

Kukulkan laughed maniacally as several golden lights escaped from his body to be absorbed by the main body.

There was a serious flaw to Karsus’ Avatar. Nobody in the astral plane could withstand an instant transfer of the Weave’s authority to them, even Shar would need to spend ten thousand years adapting. On top of that, Leylin had destroyed the Weave after he gained control of it. The backlash from such an act was so devastating even the Overgod would be grievously injured. The spell was but a deathwish.

But now, Leylin’s Magus body had begun to reap the fruits of his labour in the World of Gods. Although the clone perished together with Distorted Shadow under the backlash, he remained indifferent. He’d already made preparations to transfer what was important.

[Beep! Clone’s comprehension of laws received— Massacre: 100%,
The killing of the greater god to obtain the Weave had pushed Kukulkan’s law of death to completion. The clone would likely have added death to his portfolio, but as a Magus Leylin had no need for that.

“I was prepared to lose this clone ever since I named it Kukulkan…” When he’d sent the clone into the World of Gods, Leylin had been prepared to give up on it completely. The clone would have to bind its powers to faith and worshippers, something that disagreed with his roots. Even a greater god would die without faith, and Leylin considered that simply too sorrowful.

As a Magus, he was different. Every ounce of his strength belonged to him and him alone. Nobody could take it away!
The Path

evouring, massacre, greed, and death… Various powerful laws converged in Leylin’s body, causing him to grow without end. The path to becoming a rank 8 Magus was the control of several laws, and with three new laws added Leylin quickly broke through from the peak of rank 7. Everything fell into place. Even just one of death or massacre could have brought him to rank 8, but with four different laws condensing together he broke through to a different realm entirely. A terrifying phantom Targaryen appeared behind his back, hissing like an ancient ruler of beasts. Its body guarded by fine crimson scales covered the skies, and it flapped its devilish wings as its single horn radiated terror. The most intriguing of all was its third eye, the pupil within that was as large as a star containing a trace of cold-blooded indifference. The Targaryen was a representation of the laws Leylin comprehended. Every scale contained the power of laws so strong that another Magus could comprehend some of a law just by looking at it. It was extremely precious for Magi ranked 4 to 8. Now, even more laws were infused into these scales. Death, massacre, and greed converged in a whirlpool as the Targaryen continued to grow. The creature hissed as multiple bulges appeared at its neck.

*Boom! Boom! Boom!* Three loud explosions rang out at the Targaryen’s neck as three more heads popped out, carrying the new
laws Leylin had obtained. They were slightly smaller than the original, having neither the horn nor the third eye, but other than that they were identical.

Many more heads grew beside these four as well. However, they seemed illusory, as if they lacked something important that prevented them from materialising.

“A rank 8 Magus needs to comprehend multiple laws. To reach the peak of rank 8 one needs to comprehend their own path, cultivating their own set of laws…” The serpent howled as Leylin’s spoke, each note causing the astral plane to tremble.

“My path is the root of all evil. With dreamforce as the foundation I shall fuse gluttony, greed, and wrath, pride, lust, sloth, and envy. This shall couple with massacre and death, forming the path of original sin.”

“Henceforth, I am the Lord of Original Sin!” Leylin’s voice at this moment travelled across the entire astral plane. Dreamscape trembled with joy, its origin force converging as Leylin unleashed a dark red dreamforce at the peak of its power.

With the Nightmare Absorbing Physique having sacrificed a Lord of Calamity to the world, Dreamscape gave Leylin the highest level of access to its origin force. Using it to fuse his laws would not be a problem.

*Hsss!* The four-headed Targaryen roared, using the law of devouring that mutated from devouring to fuse massacre, death, and greed. Crimson dreamforce catalysed the fusion, forming the basis of a perfect path.

An incomplete, seemingly weak light shone right into the phantom Targaryen. Leylin’s path having materialised, the beast underwent a complete transformation. Crimson light covered its body during the act, before fading to reveal a massive and powerful figure in the Targaryen’s place.

This creature had nine pairs of devilish wings, each wide enough to
cover an entire world. The scales on its body were now black, interlaced with complicated crimson runes. Nine malevolent heads roared in different directions, four real and five illusory. The head in the centre, the one with the horn and third eye, was radiating an incredibly powerful aura. This aura far surpassed rank 7, pointing towards a path that led to truth.

[Beep!] the A.I. Chip sounded out, [Host bloodline has advanced, approaching the limit of its roots. Retrieving stats... The Targaryen Serpent’s genes have been transformed, reaching perfection. Analysing law runes...]

As if dictated by something like fate, the A.I. Chip returned with a truename for this nine-headed serpent, [Beep! Host bloodline’s truename is now Nine-Headed Nightmare Hydra (incomplete). Law of devouring has evolved under the influence of the bloodline — Devour is now an innate rank 8 spell.]

‘Nine-Headed Nightmare Hydra?’ Leylin looked over all the information provided by the A.I. Chip. His bloodline had been transformed, but it still lacked the necessary laws to reach completion. It would have to wait until he devoured the remaining Lords of Baator, clearing all obstacles to his breakthrough to rank 9.

“The seven sins are the basis of vile thoughts. These thoughts lead to violence, and violence causes death. The cycle is thus formed...” The Nightmare Hydra roared from behind Leylin at this moment. Every emotion of gluttony and greed, every murder, and every death was absorbed into a black fog that shrouded it, making it seem more sinister and darker than before. The source of these emotions wasn’t restricted to Leylin’s divine kingdom. Nay, all of Baator, the prime material plane, indeed even the entire astral plane came under his control. Be it worshippers, friends, enemies, or even strangers, the sins of all beings in
existence would be absorbed by him. With the foundation of dreamforce, Original Sin would cover the entire astral plane!

“As long as intelligent beings remain in this universe, I will never die,” Leylin proclaimed.

The power of sin would become his strength, a power that nobody could escape from. Put bluntly, be it gods or Magi, nothing could ever kill him unless the entire astral plane was destroyed. Even if he was attacked and slain, he would revive from the sins of any being! Such was the might of dreamforce combined with original sin!

There were various paths that led to the truth, and thus there had been many peak rank 8s that had survived to this point. However, Leylin’s path of original sin was at the top of the list, a result of every move of his being painstakingly planned out.

Leylin shifted his gaze towards his divine kingdom. Despite his god clone being devoured by the main body and a small part of it dying with Distorted Shadow, it had remained upright. This was extremely unfathomable to the World of Gods, breaking all known laws.

“Kukulkan, my Lord, you are a star in the skies, the Lord of the Natives, the Ruler of Devils… You have shown mercy on my soul, and are my only haven in death…” Many petitioners continued to pray in the divine kingdom, feeling nothing amiss. It was like Kukulkan’s death hadn’t affected them in the slightest.

[Experiment successful. Divine kingdom remains stable, and the power of faith is moving smoothly.] Another of Leylin’s clones appeared within the divine kingdom, carrying the dignity of a god. However, its voice was the extremely monotonous tone of the A.I. Chip.

Indeed, this new ‘clone’ was being operated by the A.I. Chip, having fused with one of Kukulkan’s avatars. Even as the true body fell, this clone took over everything just as Leylin had
planned. This was also a decision Leylin had made in the past. He didn’t like how faith had so much of a hold over gods, but he didn’t just want to toss his divine kingdom and petitioners away. He’d instead have the A.I. Chip take control of an avatar, becoming the god Kukulkan itself.

This would be downright impossible for a god, but with the A.I. Chip having fused with his soul Leylin could do it. The A.I. Chip at this point was another Leylin, even one that had passed the probe of the World of Gods as it took over his divine kingdom.

“Great!” Leylin nodded, and the Nightmare Hydra spat out an illusory divine spark that it inserted into the clone. Having gained control of the divine domain, alongside the fact that this auxiliary A.I. Chip was under the control of the central one within Leylin, Kukulkan was reborn once more.

Even though the divinity the Hydra gave the clone was only a simulation, it was just like a greater god authorising their subordinates to manage their divine kingdom. Despite Distorted Shadow’s plans, Leylin hadn’t suffered any repercussions at all!
“I am Kukulkan, the God of Massacre!” The A.I. Chip clone released a powerful domain after getting the authority from the Nightmare Hydra, seeming just like the original. [Faith channeled successfully, blessing system in order.] A lot of data appeared from the A.I. Chip. The clone was but an intermediary. It allowed Leylin’s Magus body to borrow the powers of his divine kingdom, using the divine domains he’d possessed as the god. Even as the A.I. Chip made its report he could feel his main body connecting to a massive sea of faith.

Kukulkan had accumulated decades upon decades of faith, and now it was all being absorbed by the Nightmare Hydra. It made Leylin feel stronger with each passing moment. Combined with the power of emotions he just absorbed, it pushed Leylin towards a higher realm. [Beep! Emotion energy has been accumulated, beginning breakthrough to rank 8.] Leylin was a Warlock. It wasn’t just laws that he had to worry about, his bloodline and power had to be accumulated as well. However, he’d spent all this time accumulating resources, and the fusion with the divine clone brought him up to standard. Advancing was only a matter of course now.

*Hssss—* The four physical heads of the hydra continued to spew
out the energies of their respective laws. A perfect path of original sin took place, forming a phantom behind the Nightmare Hydra that repelled even the origin force of the World of Gods.

Time seemed to pass in an instant, but it also felt like a million years. By the time Leylin recovered his senses all the power inside his body had fused, forming an extremely powerful bloodline that filled each and every cell in his body with power. A black stream of energy appeared before him as he raised his hand, carrying traces of the Weave.

“The fusion of bloodline and laws, coupled with dreamforce… My power has already evolved, transforming my path into one that is completely my own. This strength, this path…” The feeling of extreme power caused Leylin to grin widely, “It shall henceforth be known as the power of Original Sin, something that can only be used by its Lord!”

The A.I. Chip had a lot of information as well.

[Beep! Host has advanced to rank 8, obtained the strength of Original Sin. The Nightmare Hydra bloodline has evolved the Devour skill; obtained innate skill—World Devour.

World Devour: The laws of devouring have reached their limits. With the support of other laws, host has gained the ability to devour worlds. The Nightmare Hydra can devour all dimensions, semi-planes, and small worlds. It can absorb the bloodlines, emotions, and even laws of what it devours…]

“Even with a small world as the limit… What a frightening ability!” Leylin sighed. No matter how small a world in the astral plane was, it still had billions of lives within it. The origin force of any one could give birth to at least a rank 7 Magus! However, these small worlds were now an insignificant meal in Leylin’s eyes.

[Beep! Host’s stats have changed, recalculating… Changes have been detected in the world due to a shift of laws. Stats calculated on the basis of the World of Gods’ standards.
Name: Leylin Farlier, Rank 8 Warlock.
Bloodline: Nine-Headed Nightmare Hydra (Incomplete Body)
Soul Status: Soul of Original Sin
Laws: Devouring (100%), Massacre (100%), Death (100%), Greed (100%)
Path: Original Sins
Innate Talent: Nine-Headed Nightmare Hydra! Devour World!
Abilities: Dreamscape Vision, Origin Force Detection, Illusions, Warp Reality, Epic Massacre, Death’s Decree

‘It adjusted my stats since we’re in the World of Gods?’ Leylin looked at the stats of his Magus body. His lips curled upwards as he looked at most of his divine force being retained, “Even a greater god only has stats hovering around 50. I’m only a new rank 8 Warlock, but my stats already surpass so many of them…”

This was quite logical. The power of a god came from their divine kingdom, their power being distributed by faith unlike Magi whose power was their own. The gods were thus weaker overall, only able to contend with the Magi due to the buffs from their divine kingdoms.

Additionally, Leylin himself had overpowering strength. He’d formed his path before even approaching the peak of rank 8, ensuring that his path of advancement smooth and his battle prowess exceptional. He was almost a peak rank 8 fighter himself, so he was vastly different from other Magi.

“This power… I can determine the life and death of a divine being!” Leylin no longer bothered with the prime material plane after his advance. It had already turned into a land of screams, being ravaged by the Magi new and old. With Mystra’s fall and the collapse of the Weave, the world had turned into a mess.

With Distorted Shadow and the Goddess of the Weave taken out, there remained nobody foolish enough to challenge Leylin outright.
The region around his divine kingdom was actually relatively peaceful.

“How can a Warlock’s advance not be celebrated with blood?” Leylin smiled lightly. He took a step into the Fourth Hell, where the devils and devil hunters were still embroiled in war.

He looked at the armoured devils, only speaking two words, “Original Sin!”

*Hsss—* The phantom of the Nightmare Hydra appeared behind Leylin’s back, seemingly turning into a black hole. The dark power of original sin that contained a trace of blood turned all the devils into ashes in an instant, even absorbing their souls.

Each of the four heads of the Nightmare Hydra had turned into a sinkhole, absorbing everything connected to original sin without end. As evil beings themselves, these devils would not be able to escape.

Phlegethos immediately turned silent, and only the six Lords of Baator showed themselves.

“Magus!” Asmodeus looked at Leylin with the greatest fear his daughter had ever seen on his face.

“The primordial contract states that even demons and devils must put aside their differences against the Magi, forming an alliance of blood. They must even join forces with the gods… For this is an apocalypse of multiple worlds!” Both of Asmodeus’ hands trembled as he flipped to the last page of his book of contracts, “If the Magi are not stopped, that shall be the end…”

Devils were naturally lawful. Looking at Leylin’s Magus body, every cell in their body radiated fear and rage, even their souls trembling. The lords showed themselves without the slightest reservation, all six putting aside their differences as they roared in unison, “More evil than the devils, and more chaotic than the demons… Magus, scram from Baator!”

Each Lord of Baator was a being of laws, and Asmodeus had
inconceivable might. Even the gods dreaded their combined strength. However, Leylin Farlier was not Kukulkan. Having advanced to rank 8, he feared nothing unless he was surrounded by a bunch of greater gods or was forced to fight in one’s divine kingdom.

“Do you know why I brought my divine kingdom to Baator? Indeed I wanted to avoid the gods, but there’s more to it… I wanted to collect your power…” A phantom hydra appeared behind Leylin, the ravenous manner in which the illusory heads looked over at them causing the Archdevils to feel fear.

“Your strength will define me. Be honoured to be a part of my path!” The void trembled with Leylin’s proclamation, as an extremely sharp weapon descended from the skies.

The weapon was extremely strange. It seemed to possess the distinctive traits of all weapons at the same time, like an ancient beast of times past thirsting for blood. Dazzling origin force radiated around its body, cutting apart the very world without end. Dazzling origin force radiated around its body, causing the void to be cut continuously. This was Leylin’s origin force weapon, similar to the overgod weapon once attempted in the World of Gods. It had the power to kill gods, being the result of an ancient civilisation’s research coupled with the A.I. Chip. This was something Leylin had taken several centuries of hard work to create!

*Hss—* The Nightmare Hydra roared, and the nine different heads each spit out a black gas that formed more runes atop the weapon, as though celebrating its birth.

“You are now my overgod weapon, the Seven Sins!”
With the baptism of the Nightmare Hydra, Seven Sins let loose a terrifying buzz of origin force. It roared with power, thirsty for the blood of beings of law.

[Beep! Information on Seven Sins has been added to the database]
the A.I. Chip reported.

[Seven Sins: Overgod Weapon(Origin Force Weapon).
Abilities:
Gluttony’s Devouring: Seven Sins can devour the blood and souls of its enemies, obtaining their power.
Blessing of Greed: The weapon’s greed boosts the user’s powers.
Massacre Amplification: The souls of any beings of law killed by Seven Sins will be dispersed.
Silence In Death: Any existences killed by Seven Sins will be wiped from the passages of time, removing all chances of resurrection.
Further effects remain locked(Respective laws required).
This weapon is bound to the Lord of Original Sin. No other existence will be able to wield it.
]

The weapon that Leylin had devoted hundreds of years to finally reared its head, showing off its viciousness to the world.

“Haha… Good abilities, I like it!” Leylin grasped Seven Sins with
both hands, and the weapon buzzed in harmony as it revealed a sword’s blade.

“This… Overgod weapon!” The Archdevils gasped in fright, looking at the weapon’s splendour with fear.

“Indeed. Your blood shall become its power!” Leylin’s eyes were filled with indifference as he appeared before Samuel, the Lord of Wrath who ruled the Fourth Hell.

“Damn it… What have you done to my land?” Samuel roared in rage. His strength increased in the midst of his fury, flames howling forth from Phlegethos as a massive wave of origin force surged into him.

“You may be an Archdevil, but the origin force of just one level of Baator will not protect you from my weapon’s terror.” Leylin swung the massive sword without fear, the weapon buzzing violently as phantoms of Dreamscape and the Shadow World took form behind it. The rage of two large worlds immediately shattered the phantom of Phlegethos behind Samuel’s back.

“Haha… Seven Sins was baptised with the origin force of two large worlds in its creation. What can a mere ninth of the origin force of Baator do to it?” Leylin was laughing like a maniac, the huge sword easily sweeping away the surging flames to sever Samuel’s right hand. At the same time, it left a deep gash on his chest.

“ARGH…” Samuel screamed in agony, not daring to face Leylin directly anymore as he retreated. A being of law, an Archdevil, had been severely injured and sent into retreat in a single strike.

How would Leylin give up on such an opportunity? “Come back!” he howled, Seven Sins transforming into a bladed chain with a black hook at the end. It hooked onto Samuel, culling him back.

“Blessing of Greed!” Seven Sins transformed continually, becoming a horned hammer. With the Blessing of Greed and two large worlds backing it, it immediately crashed down Samuel’s head.
The overwhelming attack caused Samuel to finally feel despair. He lost all confidence and dignity, beginning to plead for help from the other lords, “QUICK, SAVE ME!”

“Stop him! He’ll become harder to stop if he gets Samuel’s powers!” Everything had happened too quickly. A Lord of Baator had been defeated in almost an instant, and even Asmodeus didn’t have the time to react. By the time he moved together with the others to surround Leylin…

“A pity… It’s too late!” Leylin laughed loudly, a layer of origin force melting off from Seven Sins to cover his entire body in armour. With that protection and his own might as a rank 8 Warlock, he had no fear of the devils’ attacks.

“Cry, scream! Your resentment and anger shall become my power. Even Asmodeus won’t be able to save you now…”

Asmodeus was indeed a crafty old devil. He was much more powerful than the rest, his blazing fists breaking through Leylin’s defenses. However, Leylin was still a step ahead. Even if he was injured by hellfire the hammer continued to smash down.

*BOOM!* Phelegethos seemed to freeze in that moment. The other Archdevils cursed, screamed, and roared in rage as one of their own fell to Leylin in front of their eyes!

Leylin didn’t care about all that, however. He was focused on the A.I. Chip’s notifications.

[Beep! Host has killed Samuel. Seven Sins has activated Gluttony’s Devouring, absorbing new law… Law of wrath currently at 100%.

*Hss!* The Nightmare Hydra behind Leylin hissed loudly as another head materialised from its neck. It absorbed all of the fury in the astral plane, quickly healing itself of its injuries.

[Beep! Host has comprehended the law of wrath, Seven Sins has gained the Fury Amplification ability.
Fury Amplification: The user can double their stats by consuming the powers of wrath.]
‘It really is great to battle devils! I can get stronger and gain more abilities as I kill them…’ Leylin was extremely elated by the acquisition. He immediately activated the new ability.

*Rumble!* Asmodeus felt Leylin’s strength doubling in an instant as it pulsed with fury. The Archdevils were immediately pushed back.

“Samuel’s strength… You absorbed it so quickly?” Glasya cried out in shock. The other Archdevils, including even the haughty Levistus, turned pale. How could they deal with an enemy that got stronger the more he fought?

“No! He’s only putting on a strong front. Even a greater god can’t escape our combined attack without injuries, he’s nothing!” Asmodeus was indeed a sly old devil. He saw through Leylin’s disguise immediately, “Let’s attack together! We’ll be able to take him out.”

“I am indeed injured…” Leylin’s broken armour merged back to form Seven Sins, and the weapon grew in size. “But before I die, how many of you will pay the price and join me in death? Is it two of you? Maybe three?”

Leylin mocking gaze swept past Levistus, Mephistopheles and Baalzebul, causing their expressions to change. Even average humans would double guess themselves in a time of death, let alone these powerful devils.

Asmodeus almost vomited blood at this. Even now Leylin hadn’t forgotten to pick at their natural disposition. With him and his daughter being together, the ones being sacrificed would most likely be the other three. They wouldn’t want to die just like that.

The other lords began to have second thoughts, exposing the fatal flaw of their unreliable alliance. With this thought in the back of their minds as they faced powerful opponents, Leylin could even turn the tides and corner him instead!

“Damn it! Let’s retreat!” Asmodeus said as he looked at the evident
mistrust in the eyes of his ‘allies.’ He seethed with fury, but all his preparations had come to naught and he had no choice but to retreat.
The other Archdevils retreated as well. Seeing the divine light from Leylin’s clone covering the entirety of Phlegethos, they felt extremely humiliated.
The Lords had spent decades and sacrificed countless life to besiege Leylin’s kingdom. The result? They’d ended up suffering devastating losses. Forget conquering Leylin, they’d even given him the Fourth Hell now. Snot dripped from their noses as they cried in shame and agony.
“Leave now! It’ll be too late when his divine kingdom covers this area!” Levistus transmitted to his subordinates. As the Lord of the Fifth Hell, he was the most affected by Leylin’s actions. He would be Leylin’s next target, and this Magus was more fearsome than Kukulkan, and much harder to deal with.
“Not you.” Levistus had never thought a single sentence would crush all his hopes. He’d only been slower than the rest by a beat, but Leylin caught up to him immediately. The razor sharp blade of Seven Sins was pointed at him, carrying the power of death.
“Divine ability— Death’s Decree!” Leylin didn’t even attack him. Levistus’ consciousness just… stopped in an instant.
Powered by the laws of death and massacre, Death’s Decree was an ability that grew with its wielder. With Leylin now being a rank 8 Warlock, he was at the peak of intermediate gods, rank 17. Levistus was a peak lesser god at the most, and with the sheer difference in power he was incapacitated at once.
Levistus was actually extremely lucky. Perhaps because they were both at the level of gods in the end, Death’s Decree didn’t have full effect. However, the ability had still stalled him for a moment, a moment long enough to determine his fate. By the time he recovered his senses, the sharp blade of Seven Sins was already at his neck.

[Beep! Host has killed Levistus. Gluttony’s Devouring has been activated, host has gained a new law… Comprehension of law of pride currently at 100%.

*Hss!* The Nightmare Hydra hissed once more, another head materialising on its body. It absorbed the pride of the entire universe, turning it into the power of original sin.

[Beep! The law of pride has awakened a new ability in Seven Sins: Prideguard: The armour of Seven Sins has been fortified, nullifying all physical and magical attacks at the legendary realm.]

“Remember this… The hatred of an Archdevil cannot be ignored!” Asmodeus said in his fury. However, the other lords had only sped up on witnessing Leylin kill Levistus, and he was helpless to do much more.

The light of Leylin’s divine kingdom didn’t stop at the Fourth Hell, instead spreading out to shroud the icy lands of Stygia as well. “Alright… With the Fifth Hell in hand the devils won’t be able to turn the tides…” Leylin had possessed an advantage in power before, but now he’d become the absolute dominant force in
Baator. With five of the Nine Hells in hand, the remaining Archdevils wouldn’t be able to perform a miracle. ‘I need to return… There are many things to do, and many comprehensions to be had. I need to heal up as well, I should be at my best for the coming fights…’ Leylin seemed to be warning himself. He soothed Seven Sins down, and vanished into the void. By this time, Kukulkan’s divine kingdom already covered the first five levels of Baator. The World Origin Force whistled as it was absorbed continuously, turning the five separate levels into one whole. Many devils wept and wailed as they scampered further below into the last four. Those who couldn’t escape were given two options: They would either be sealed and killed, or they would become slaves as they pledged themselves to the God of Massacre. They would then be turned into devil petitioners. By the time Leylin returned to Whitejade Saint Mountain, his gigantic divine palace was giving off a very imposing aura. His worshippers felt the effect of his increase in strength, causing them to kneel on the ground and pray from the bottom of their hearts. “Kukulkan, my Lord, you are brighter than the stars in the sky. Your powers of massacre and death maintain order, and our souls belong with you in your haven…” Massive amounts of faith surged forth, forming a golden whirlpool around Whitejade Saint Mountain. The entire divine kingdom cheered as Baator’s origin force gushed in as well. ‘Did the clone just advance? It makes sense, it added a lot to its portfolio and its divine kingdom advanced greatly as well…’ Although Leylin could govern the divine kingdom himself, he was unwilling to bind the power of faith to his body. Using a puppet clone was a much better choice. Even if faith in him collapsed, the most he would lose was an auxiliary A.I. Chip routine and some energy. As he was right now, he wasn’t afraid of such minute
losses.
The power the Nightmare Hydra relied on was far more astonishing than the power of faith. Each of his heads could absorb certain emotions across the astral plane, and its reach wasn’t limited to those who worshipped him. Even though the power of emotions was weaker than the power of faith head on, the sheer magnitude more than made up for the gap.
With the hydra already having six heads, Leylin no longer needed to rely on the power of faith. Divinity would at most be some additional support at this juncture, so it was important to adopt certain measures to help with that.
Leylin was happy at the thought of his clone becoming an intermediate god. After all, the auxiliary chip was under the direct control of the A.I. Chip in his soul. The clone only had a simulated godfire anyway, so even if the clone wasn’t a real divine body it wasn’t different from one given his control.
*Bzzt!* A special tremble rippled throughout the World of Gods, the energy emanated as a lesser god advanced to become an intermediate god. It would be an event noticed by many powerful beings in the past, but now there were few with the time and energy to mind such things amongst the gods.
The origin force of multiple worlds gathered together, forming a faint, distant hymn. Petals of gold light fell to the ground as Leylin’s Magus body shut his eyes, feeling the benefits of the advancement.
With this clone not being a separate being like, Leylin could feel his advancement himself, to indescribable benefit. Immersed in the energy of the World of Gods, he saw a bunch of notifications from the A.I. Chip.
[Beep! Clone has advanced, currently at rank 12. Class rank increased to level 39. The multitude of divine domains have amplified the power of the clone: +4 to all stats.] [Clone body has
undergone massive changes. Recalculating stats…]
It wasn’t long before the A.I. Chip with new information.
[Divine Name: Kukulkan, God of Massacre (Controlled by auxiliary A.I. Chip)
Race: Unknown (Intermediate god)
Alignment: Lawful Evil.
Divine Domains: Massacre, Death
Divine Kingdom: First five levels of Baator (nameless).
Divine Rank: 12.
Worshippers: Natives, Devils, Adventurers, Clerics.
Worshipper Alignments: True Neutral, Neutral Evil, Lawful Evil.
Domain Powers: Massacre, Death, Devour
Feats: Herculean Strength, Master of Knowledge, Epic Adaptability.
Divine Abilities: Warp Reality, Simulate Reality, Supercomputing]
“Not bad. I still have most of the abilities, and the battle prowess only went up…” Leylin stroked his chin in appreciation.
The clone didn’t just inherit Kukulkan’s abilities and name. It gained two new skills of its own, namely Simulate Reality and Supercomputing. Of course there were also losses, most of his abilities had been transferred to his true body causing it to weaken. ‘Death and Massacre, alongside four of the seven sins… I would’ve gotten to rank 17 immediately. But the laws were integrated into my path, it’s already great that I could push up all the way to rank 12…’ Leylin felt rather regretful, but he got over it quickly. Moving along on his own path was far more rewarding than becoming a peak intermediate god.
With these thoughts in mind, Leylin looked behind his back. The Nightmare Hydra had grown more solid than before, but there was
still some illusory darkness around its neck. It seemed like as he walked further on the path of Original Sin, the power of evil from the path grew greater. Only that one part of his path seemed to be missing something.

‘So… Lust, sloth, and envy, huh?’ The most convenient way for Leylin to obtain the three sins was to steal them from the Archdevils. It was a matter of utmost importance to him.

After all, they were in the midst of a war. This was a precarious situation, and it was hard to say whether some furious gods or Magi would intentionally slay them to stall his advance. It would then take him up to tens of thousands of years to comprehend them, delaying his entry into the Final War until it ended without giving him any benefits.

He thus made up his mind. The outside world didn’t matter to him; his body would camp within his divine kingdom until he had Baator under control and absorbed the remaining Archdevils. The outside world now would be facing complete disaster, and nobody would bother him at this time. Naturally, this was the best time for him!

“Glasya, Baalzebul, and Mephistopheles…” Leylin muttered the names of his targets, “That will finish off the seven sins, but I also need Asmodeus as well…”

Although the self-proclaimed Supreme of Baator didn’t actually have any laws to his name, he was in fact shrouded by them all, making him a true embodiment of evil. He was the core of Leylin’s path of Original Sin, so Leylin held him in high regard.

“My worshippers…” the clone declared, “Pick up your weapons! Help me conquer Baator, turning the entire place into a true paradise…”

The clone was still trying to adapt to its current rank, but it didn’t sound different from before. Tiff, Phoenix, and even Isabel who was the closest to him didn’t feel anything changed.
With their Lord’s commands, the entire divine kingdom began to counterattack. Countless devil hunters surged into the Sixth Hell Malbolge, causing the devils to wail endlessly…
The Magi had appeared once more, and the Final War had resumed. There would be no news more terrifying to the gods, and Mystra would never in her dreams have thought that cornering Leylin would cause him to open up the World of Gods to the Magus threat, leading to her own death.

The chaos began at Baator, quickly spreading to the other planes. Calamity befell the prime material plane, and even the Abyss was affected…

The 45th to 47th floors of the Abyss, also known as Azzagrat, were covered entirely by a single palace that represented a power of order amongst the chaotic demons.

Furies circled the skies of this Triple Realm, with innumerable demons guarding on the ground. The Argent Palace was built from whitestone of the Celestial Planes, and rumour had it that its owner once tricked an entire city of celestials into entering the mountains and mining ore for him. They hadn’t even known it was going to be transported to the Abyss.

The archfiend that guarded these three levels was named Graz’zt, nicknamed the Devilish Demon. In spite of being aligned to chaos, he possessed the wits to plan far ahead, his vast lands filled with so many elite demons they could frighten multiple worlds.

As one of the three Abyssal lords, Graz’zt’s name had spread across the prime material plane. He had many worshippers, ruling from his proud throne within the Argent Palace.
Only after Leylin’s actions did the peace this archfiend maintained in his realm get challenged. The Argent Palace was covered in flames, chaotic green energy spreading through its entirety. Furies were crashing to the ground like airplanes, splattering blood as they hit the surface. Countless demons were decaying to death, wailing in agony as they were turned into a putrid liquid that eventually formed a river.
The sixty six ivory towers of the Argent Palace were collapsing one after the other, the attacker powerful enough to wreak chaos across Graz’zt’s lands. Explosions sounded out as altars fell, eventually forcing someone out of the core of the Argent Palace. The person looked quite human, the only differences in appearance being the small horn on his head and his six-fingered hands. However, the power of evil surrounding him easily gave away his identity. This was Graz’zt, the Dark Prince of the three Abyssal Lords!
“The scent of a Magus…” Graz’zt frowned. Even the Abyss knew of the dusk of the gods, and he’d feel nervous fighting the Magi that had caused the fall of countless gods regardless of his personal strength.
“Damn it… Why aren’t the Magi attacking the Celestial Planes? It would be so much better for them there…” Graz’zt knew his complaints would not change reality. He pulled out his acid-drenched greatsword from the Argent Palace, slashing towards the skies.
An immense power of darkness swept across Azzagrat, dispelling the chaotic green energy from the skies. The green clouds parted, but as the sky brightened they revealed a green eye in the air that was filled with wisdom and greed.
“I am the chaos Lord of the astral plane. Graz’zt of the Abyss, your power and authority are mine!”
The Chaos Lord’s conscient swept across the Triple Realm, causing
Graz’zt’s expression to darken. He’d detected power equivalent to a greater god from this Magus.
‘Magi can even kill gods… They definitely aren’t simple.’ Graz’zt could not help but grasp the hilt of his sword more tightly.
“Ahh… This aura of chaos, I love it…” The Chaos Lord had chosen to attack the Abyss for two reasons. He’d made a pact with the other Magi that stopped him from going to the Celestial Planes, and the Abyss suited his laws and abilities better anyway.
Being at the peak of rank 8, the Chaos Lord wanted to try and use the power of the Abyss to comprehend the laws of space and time, moving towards rank 9. This was, naturally, the goal of every peak rank 8 that had started the Final War once more.
Green and black energies continued to fight each other, soon covering the entirety of Azzagrat. The demons of the other levels looked on at the Argent Palace in shock, witnessing an energy they’d never seen before suppress the Dark Price and cover the entirety of the Triple Realm.
“Don’t think of asking for help. There aren’t many archfiends like you in the Abyss, and they’re mostly chaotic and selfish…” The green energy converged into the shape of a giant that could cover the sun. The Chaos Lord was dressed in large green robes, his face covered with eyes that swirled with the power of chaos. He’d grasped Graz’zt inside his palms, and the archfiend was trying to escape.
“What? Trying to ask Mommy for help?” The Chaos Lord mocked the Dark Prince trapped in his hands.
But then, the voice turned female, “Someone else has gone to deal with the Mother of Demons. Even if Pale Night isn’t injured, she won’t be able to come save you…”

……
*Boom!* Shockwave after shockwave carrying the power of origin force rocked the entire Abyss as the Chaos Lord spoke. “The Endless Maze… That’s Pale Night’s bone castle…” Many demon lords diverted their attention to the 600th level of the Abyss. They soon saw a horrifying scene of disgusting filth drowning the Endless Maze, carrying the pollution of the entire astral plane. A number of seals and spell formations activated within the core of the bone castle, helping it resist for a while. Pale Night’s faint figure showed itself, but she was like a river fighting an entire ocean, soon overwhelmed.

“Filthy Evil Eye… So disgusting… You can’t wash yourself of its odour for tens of thousands of years…” The Chaos Lord’s face was riddled with disgust as she looked at the 600th floor.

“Gugu… Jiji…” On the contrary, the ocean of filth covering the Endless Maze let out a roar of delight.

“I should’ve known the Abyss would definitely attract that disgusting beast… Just my luck…” The Chaos Lord seemed extremely displeased as she reached her hands out. A ball of chaos burst forth, and one of the three Abyssal Lords was wiped out of existence just like that.

……

“Please awaken, my Lord. Your worshippers are lost sheep, and we require your guidance…” Cyric’s pope was kneeling before his statue in the Palace of Shadows. However, the God of Murder’s madness had set in, and he completely ignored his pope’s words. A layer of crimson energy covered the statue, causing it to look even more terrifying than normal. It only caused the pope to grow more frantic.

As a legendary being, the pope was vaguely aware of the changes happening in the World of Gods. He noticed all the other churches
preparing for war, and it only caused him more despair.

“Please don’t let me down, Merrick…” The pope gripped the hem of his robe tightly, praying with his utmost sincerity…

At the same time, Merrick had finally caught traces of Cyric within the Shadow Plane. Braving a perilous journey, the shadow thief finally handed his Lord the Book of Truth.

‘I wonder why the Lord would leave his divine kingdom and come here…’ the former merchant thought to himself.

The pope and his own sources had confirmed that the Lord’s madness stemmed from the Book of Cyric. Once he read the Book of Truth, he would recover his sanity. The glory of saving a god and the blessings arising from it would definitely bring him to a whole new level!

Merrick yearned for this beautiful future, and he soon cast his gaze at the dark figure reading the Book of Truth.

‘Please awaken, my Lord, and give me your blessings…’ Merrick prayed sincerely.

“This… This… Argh…” However, things did not go to plan. Cyric only grew more manic as he read the Book of Truth, the holy light shrouding him beginning to flicker.

‘How… How did it turn out like this?’ His eyes almost popped out of his skull as he stared at his Lord in disbelief.
ARGH! Just who am I? Cyric... Distorted Shadow...”
Terrifying divine force was launched in all directions with Cyric’s screams, disintegrating Merrick’s body and soul without pause. But then again, it might have been kind to this worshipper that he didn’t have to see what happened next.
A faint red light enveloped Cyric’s body. The Book of Truth transformed into astral light that ignited upon contact with the red light, forming faint red flames. Cyric’s body abruptly split in two.
The new being was a hazy shadow that radiated the might of a Magus. “I’m back!” Distorted Shadow proclaimed, “The World of Gods, and that puny Magus... I’ve returned!"
Being at the peak of rank 8, Distorted Shadow wasn’t someone who’d die so easily. How could resurrecting with the Weave’s destruction be his only plan?
He’d inserted some of his power into Cyric’s true body before, giving himself a chance for revival as he killed the god. Using the remaining pieces of his soul, he’d successfully fooled the pope of the Church of Murder and Merrick into bringing him the Book of Truth. Even if some of his conscient had been eliminated by Leylin, his thousands of years of bitter plots had finally succeeded!
Distorted Shadow immediately recovered to the peak of his power, having robbed everything from Cyric when he ascended to godhood. Even if there were some imperfections in his cultivation, he had an obvious advantage over the other ancient Magi who only
had their consciences remaining.
“I…I shall not fail again!” he roared, his entire body shattering to form a shadow that covered the sky.

……

“How could this happen?” The pope looked at the shattered divine statue before him, sinking to the ground as if all his bones had been lost.
“So he revived using Cyric’s body…” At the same time, Leylin got wind of these events as well. He’d felt a sinister intent envelop him along with Distorted Shadow’s revival. With the damage he’d done to the ancient Magus’ conscience, he definitely wouldn’t let him off without issue.
“Heh… I don’t want to let you go either. You’ve just revived yourself, so what if you’re at the peak of rank 8?”
Leylin flicked a finger, and a golden sphere of light surged out from his divine kingdom. The expanding sphere caught hold of some shadows, and they occasionally shrieked as they fled far away.
“Damn it… He’s already found a path, it won’t be long before he’s at the same level as me…” The shadow in the sky radiated endless rage, looking at a round eye that appeared in front of him.
“You seem to have some disagreements with someone of the Magus World,” Mother Core said. The air in her surroundings froze in place, making her seem terrifyingly grand.
Both being at the peak of rank 8, Mother Core and Distorted Shadow should have been similar in power. However, Distorted Shadow had been sealed for several thousand years. Even if he’d recovered most of his power by sacrificing Cyric, he was still nowhere close to Mother Core.
“Jejeje… I don’t need you to mediate,” the black shadow yelled
before exploding. Mother Core sighed, earthy yellow flames instantly sweeping across the sky and trying to eliminate Distorted Shadow, but the power of distortion had already faded from the sky. “This is going to be troublesome…” One of Mother Core’s clones made its way to Baator, entering Leylin’s divine kingdom, “This brat really does bring a lot of surprises…” “Mother Core!” Leylin greeted her in person, having felt the clone’s arrival a while ago. “I know everything already. Pity, Distorted Shadow didn’t let me mediate in this. His crazy and cold personality is famous throughout the astral plane…” Mother Core’s conscient emitted. Following that, several vines dug their way out of Baator to embed themselves into the soil of Leylin’s divine kingdom, as if completing some sort of interaction. “Not bad!” Mother Core nodded. Leylin’s rate of improvement had impressed her greatly, “You’ve gotten us into the World of Gods, and even found your own path. You’ll definitely be something in the future.” “Everything is fated, Leylin. I’m starting to believe your existence will be the key to the battle between the Magi and the gods…” This was another reason why Mother Core wanted to help Leylin. With his rate of improvement, it wasn’t far off from the Magus World having another peak rank 8. With her vast experience, Mother Core definitely felt something about him. “No matter how the future turns out, I will always be a Magus. The Magus World is my home,” Leylin promised. “Good!” Mother Core replied. The two seemed to have reached an agreement. The tendrils from the clone spread across Leylin’s divine kingdom, penetrating deeper and deeper into Baator. The clone found and attacked all of the shadows in the area, making Leylin believe that
Distorted Shadow would find it difficult to affect his life with her as a guardian.
*Bang!* A part of the earth erupted to reveal a distorted lay of light. It was being plucked out of the ground by Mother Core’s plants.
“This is a seed of distortion,” Mother Core explained calmly, “It’s the usual kind of move Distorted Shadow makes…”
Leylin heaved a massive sigh of relief. Distorted Shadow had already been spying on his divine kingdom, something he could never have thought of. If he wasn’t careful, he would’ve suffered major losses in the future.
“Even though divine kingdoms are powerful, they pose too many restrictions to their owner. Take now, for example. We’ve learnt from experience, and are attacking the prime material plane instead of the divine kingdoms…”
Leylin nodded at Mother Core’s words. One would only be seeking death if they wished to fight a god in their divine kingdom. The smart thing to do was to attack their churches in the prime material plane, destroying the peoples’ belief in them. It was easy for Magi to bring about disasters, inflicting damage and disease that even the Goddess of the Plague could not match.
This was similar to how Leylin had attacked Debanks Island before. The divine kingdoms would lose their source of faith in the prime material plane, some even falling from the Celestial Planes directly.
Such was the result of relying on faith. It left a big gap in one’s defences, allowing them to suffer severe blows without any good way to prevent them. This was why Leylin decided not to become a god.
“Of course, it’s best that we don’t make our move at the beginning. We should wait and see how the others act…” Mother Core reminded him.
“I definitely don’t plan to participate in the Final War before I’ve forged my path completely, breaking through to the peak of rank 8.” Leylin naturally understood Mother Core’s intentions. He followed the statement up with a request, “I hope you can protect this place well after I leave…”

*Boom!* Leylin instantly left his divine kingdoms, carrying Seven Sins in hand as he infiltrated the Sixth Hell with Mother Core protecting his base. There had been a huge army of devil hunters in this place, and Leylin’s arrival caused all of the Lords of Baator to be alarmed and angered…

Of course, Leylin had pondered the consequences of having Mother Core protect him at home. He could rest assured that Mother Core didn’t interact much with Distorted Shadow in the past, and that the two had some animosity between themselves. On top of that, he was from the same world as her. But then, they also had a contract between them. This protection was also an exchange of sorts, and Leylin believed that what he brought to the table was enough for Mother Core to do her best to protect him.

‘I don’t have to worry about my divine kingdom. Be it Distorted Shadow or any gods, Mother Core will be able to stop them. Even if she fails there’s the A.I. Chip clone there as well…’ Undaunted by worries, Leylin moved to attack the rest of Baator to complete his path of Original Sin.

At the same time, Distorted Shadow let out a terrifying roar from within a secret dimension. “Damn it… Mother Core dares to defy me, the master of distortion who’s annihilated three Magus alliances and five different worlds…”

Despite his anger, he felt somewhat helpless. Mother Core wasn’t an existence he could provoke right now, and even Leylin himself wasn’t easy to deal with. Having been enlightened on his own path, the Warlock was already at the threshold of the peak of rank 8.
On the other hand, he himself had just been revived. He’d suffered a severe loss in power, and if he tried to make a move he wouldn’t have much of a chance of taking out a Leylin protected by Mother Core. Not to mention that all Magi were extremely crafty, and it was unknown how many trump cards each one held in their hands. It would be troublesome to annihilate them.

‘I should deal with the other gods first to get back my powers. Moreover, I should definitely hinder him from completing his own path…’ This so-called hindrance was an aim to stop Leylin from killing all of the Lords of Baator, preventing him from obtaining all the laws he needed. This would greatly decrease his opponent’s rate of improvement.
Magi were a patient breed. Since he couldn’t deal with Leylin directly right now, Distorted Shadow would instead wait at the side, recovering to full capacity. If Leylin did not increase in power himself by that time, he would have a chance for revenge!

……

The commoners of the prime material plane treated powerful existences like the gods and Magi like they came out of a fairytale. Regardless of what such powerful people did, all they cared about was earning a few more coppers for the next day. They just wanted bread to eat and beer to drink.

Doron was one such commoner. He came from a line of carpenters, having been forced into the job due to his background. However, his inheritance was lacklustre. In fact, he had to maintain the furniture of the regional lord for free a few times a year, including the mangers of the barn. He wouldn’t even be given food. Clearly, matters related to gods and devils were like the epics sung by bards to him. Such events did not have anything to do with him, and listening to them would only be treated as a pastime.

However, all of this changed one day. Seeing the purple moon explode as it formed an evil eye, he felt like his quiet life had come to an end.
The loss of the moon’s light was a minor thing—after all, most normal families went to sleep early because they couldn’t afford the oil for their lamps. There were many stars in the sky as well, so it didn’t really affect the night much. The only exception were ladies who loved to admire the moon with a midnight drink.

No, the important issue was the revelation the moon’s destruction brought about. Be it the moon turning into that eye or the terrifyingly large Weave shattering along with the moon, this was too similar to the work of demons and devils…

“The end is nigh. A powerful existence is about to destroy the world…” A few deranged minstrels in the town had changed from their usual waltz music, replacing it with a solemn prophecy that made Doron’s heart feel heavier.

“The gods above…perhaps i’m thinking too much. I should head to the church more often and ask Priest Rockefeller for help…” Doron looked at the amount of money in his pocket. There were a few copper coins within, shining with how worn down they were. The edges were badly damaged as well…

‘Damned Lady De Lise, she must’ve gotten that fat pig of hers to cut the coppers at the edges…’ Doron couldn’t help but complain to himself when he looked at the meagre salary he got for an entire day’s work. Of course, he wouldn’t dare to directly rebut his employer.

Having witnessed the strange phenomenon a few days ago, the uneasy Doron was considering making a trip to the local church, making a donation or something so he could ask for the Lord’s protection.

The system of church and state ruled the World of Gods. With one controlling the people’s faith and the other wielding authority over their lives, the poorest of commoners would still give one of the two all they could. Only the former may have been voluntary, but they exploited the commoners all the same.
“Doron!” A cheerful whistle sounded on the street, “You’ve finished up with Lady De Lise?”

Doron was familiar with the owner of this voice, turning around to face a young man wearing abnormally loose clothes. The freckled youth was called Mitch, and his eyes seemed to shine with brilliance.

“Mitch! Weren’t you working at the Church of Magic? Why are you back now?” Doron asked in surprise.

The town Doron lived in was under the control of a feudal lord, and the man had built a Church to Ilmater in it. Royals greatly favoured this god, wishing to make all their followers his worshippers.

On the other hand, a church dedicated to Mystra was only available in a faraway town, requiring a day and a half of carriage travel. This was basically the distance between the ends of the world to Doron— he’d only been there once and had been deeply stunned by the bustling of the heavenly city.

He was extremely envious of Mitch’s job. Even if he was only a lowly servant, the man was working at a church. He could one day awaken the power of magic, becoming a wizard respected by the rest.

Mitch grew crestfallen upon hearing this, waving his hands. “Sigh… Don’t even mention it. I came back because the church closed down.”

“The church… closed down?” Doron’s mouth fell open. He clearly couldn’t understand how these words were sharing a sentence.

Churches were overseen by their respective deities. Priests all controlled bizarre spells, and the fees of even the lowliest of churches could still make them quite a bit of wealth. How could such a place actually close down?

“It seems like you don’t know… Most of the priests of the church faced a sudden death on the day of the black moon. The rest of
them cried all day long…”

Having come back from the city, Mitch was full of conversation. He shuffled closer to Doron, hiding his mouth with his hands as he whispered, “I heard the Goddess of the Weave has fallen…”

“The Goddess of the Weave fell?” Doron didn’t have much to say about this incident. It was far removed from him, and with Mystra not being the deity he worshipped he couldn’t comprehend the stakes of the situation. Hearing that a true god had fallen, the only feeling he felt was a slight bit of schadenfreude just like when a king died.

“Mm, the wizards are out of luck…” A smile appeared on Mitch’s face. It seemed like the bullying he’d faced from the priests and wizards wasn’t just occasional. “A lot of wizards were already beaten to death by a mob of people…”

“What does this have to do with wizards? Couldn’t they use magic to avoid being beaten to death by the commoners?” Doron was obviously suspicious of Mitch’s ‘secret.’ Wizards to him were all superior individuals, people whom even the lords had to be respectful and courteous to.

Even the domineering Lady De Lise didn’t dare to offend Wizard Holdman who stayed near their town.

“Hehe… The wizards lost their ability to cast spells once the Goddess of the Weave died… Say, would the lords and commoners they persecuted before let them off?”

Mitch revealed a sharp, toothy grin, “That’s why I came back. I didn’t have much chance to become an effort anyway, so I’m here to hide… Anyway, let’s stop talking about this! We should head to Buck’s Tavern to celebrate our reunion!”

“But…” Doron touched his cash-strapped purse, “I still want to visit the church once!”

“Church? Oh right! Some of the other churches seem to be busy all day, preparing to evacuate or something. Even businessmen and
nobles can’t have priests cast spells for them right now… The church here should be the same…” Mitch patted Doron’s shoulder, his look telling the carpenter not to waste his time. “No!” Doron’s faith was more or less solid. “Okay then,” Mitch shrugged his shoulders in frustration, “I’ll follow you.”
The town church wasn’t all that large, only the size of a few houses. A small fountain towered at its front, but unfortunately there was no spring water flowing out of it. The shrine looked empty, with numerous items missing. Even the remaining servants gave off a languid air, with few people here to pray. Doron clearly noticed the change, but he still asked a servant, “Hello! I would like to see Priest Rockefeller!”
Doron still held a good impression of the kind and benevolent Rockefeller. Although the man could only cast a few low-grade spells, he could treat common injuries and had saved numerous lives in town. Doron had decided to donate to him, just in case he’d have to ask the man for something in the future. “Priest Rockefeller…” the old fellow watching the door took a long time to react. He rubbed The sand out of his eyes, “He’s already left. He took everything, only leaving a few piles of potatoes for this pitiful old baker…”
“Huh? Nobody took over either?” Doron was surprised. There were a considerable number of worshippers in town despite its small size, and no church would let go of a base where its foundation had already been laid. There should have been another priest coming over even if people were transferred. Situations like this one were quite abnormal, and it caused a bad premonition to rise within Doron’s heart. “Why? Do you want to pray and confess? Perhaps I can help you!” Old Baker Tanner’s eyes Were already aimed at Doron’s purse. “No! There’s no need!” How could Doron not understand his
intentions? He immediately grabbed his purse and ran away, Mitch following him. Only after they’d left the town did Mitch turn around, fiercely laughing at his friend. “Haha…“ he said between ragged breaths, “I’m right, aren’t I?”
“Maybe… Maybe Priest Rockefeller had an emergency…” Doron tried to defend his stance, but that didn’t last long under Mitch’s bantering gaze. “Alright alright! Let’s head to the bar, I’ll pay…” Once they arrived at the tavern, Doron and Mitch ordered some liquor and sat side by side, enjoying this flavour they didn’t normally get to taste— even this cheap liquor was extravagant for the likes of them.

The bar was evidently a place where information flowed. An unending stream of news entered Doron’s ears from all sides.

“All the wizards are finished… Hévíz, Arundel, and the city of Minaret; there were waves of wizards perishing everywhere…” a burly red-nosed man said. He looked like a mercenary, his voice so loud that it dropped dust from the tavern’s ceiling.

“Hey Red-nose! Didn’t you come back from outside a short while ago? Is there any news?” The world had no lack of curious people. A scrawny figure made a hand-gesture to the bartender, having him place a large cup of honey liquor in front of the red-nosed mercenary.

“Hehe… Whose news is more accurate than mine? My reputation is no joke…” The mercenaries around the man began to mutter as he got to the point.

“The world outside is a mess right now. All the churches and
soldiers are retreating, they’ve lost the ability to suppress the chaos. The wizards suffered the worst consequences…

“Losing their magic, those lofty mages are ordinary people like us, or even weaker…” Red nose chugged down a large cup of alcohol, and his whole face became red. ”Think about it… Just by getting rid of an shivering old man would allow them to obtain everything of theirs… Beautiful slaves, fertile lands, huge gems and bright dazzling gold… All the commoners are going crazy, and even some aristocrats fell out with the wizards while thinking of how to take action…”

Power begets power, and influence begets wealth. The wealth of the powerful wizards of the prime material plane would definitely attract the jealousy of others.

Those who could use magic were high and mighty, enjoying the best treatment no matter where they went. Wizards no longer had magic with the Weave broken apart, and with no power anymore they were just fat sheep attracting greedy gazes.

Even the wizards who paid attention to their reputations had slaves, and they’d indoubtably rely on their power to bully them. Given the chance, those with ulterior motives kicked off a vandalous rebellion.

Once it was confirmed that the wizards had no power to resist, the aristocrats were the first ones to take action. They roused the masses into fighting the wizards. The peasants could take away the trinkets, but important assets like land and property would eventually fall into their hands. They could send their troops out at a later date, pressuring the mobs into giving up what they’d plundered.

All aristocrats were skilled at maintaining personable appearances on the outside, hiding a bellyful of evil tricks that allowed them to gain the greatest benefits with little effort.

Without any more power, the wizards could only sob as their
families, their riches, and their lands were taken away. They themselves would suffer horrible punishments before death.

“Hey Red nose! Are you sure those wizards have lost their powers?” a burly man in a black cloak asked. He had a large scar on his face, and standing up he was two heads taller than average.

(Of course… It’s just that I arrived late, else I would definitely be able to snatch those gems or even women full of life back… those wizards are all rich…” Red-nose patted his chest in assurance.

“If that’s the case, what are we waiting for?” the imposing man laughed maliciously, “Isn’t there still a Lord Holdman outside town?”

......

*Whoosh!* The cold winds caused Doron to shiver. He found that he’d unknowingly made his way to the house of the only wizard in town, Holdman. There were many people surrounding the residence, cursing loudly as sounds of things being smashed could be heard.

He looked upon himself in surprise, realising he was holding a sharp wooden stick that were stained with traces of blood. Several parts of his body were hurting, but he was unaware of how he was injured. Luckily he only had minor injuries, just some scraping of the skin.

He was still dazed by the alcohol, and it took him a while to remember what he’d done under the influence.

Affected by greed, they’d all fallen to become common thugs. Led by the burly man and the red-nosed mercenary, they’d arrived at Holdman’s mansion outside town quickly. They broke through the building, merrily acting out their roles.

“Blegh…” He couldn’t endure it anymore as he saw the corpse fallen at his feet, kneeling on the floor to vomit as he cried.
“Oh God… What have I exactly done…” He looked at the mob around him as he cried, seeing some of them even burning torches. This conduct was in stark contrast to the words of Ilmater, almost making him feel like a devil had invaded his body.

“Everyone take a look…” A man with a red beard and bright mottled clothes threw out a white-haired old man to the tune of applause. The old man’s hands were like firewood, and he was hugging his head while his body shivered. It took Doron a lot of effort to connect this to that insufferably arrogant Holdman.

“This is the old fella… Not only did he instigate the noblemen to construct a wizard tower, he even wantonly looted our wealth and manpower… Take a look at this…” Red nose point towards the opened granary. Fragrant wheat filled the entire place, “We’re all starving, and this old man hoards so much food and wealth through cruel exploitation…”

Those with wealth were what the mobs hated the most in time of famine. More and more eyes turned red as the mercenary spoke, and even Doron seemed to remember Holdman’s butler kicking him and taking away some good wood from his home. Anger surged to his head.

“Kill him!” “Kill him!” “Kill him!” Numerous thugs cheered, their voices getting louder and louder. In contrast, Holdman seemed to have seen something as he struggled to climb towards a youth’s corpse and started crying.

Sadly, his death throes couldn’t wake up the thugs who were intoxicated with rage. Doron managed to clear his mind as he saw that weeping face, but then he saw Mitch climb out of a temporary tent as he buckled his belt. He gave him a glance any man would understand.

“This is a noble lady! Don’t you feel like playing?” he asked.

A memory instantly emerged within Doron’s mind. He’d once been summoned by Holdman to repair the furniture in his house, and
he’d seen a beautiful noble lady in there. She’d been dressed in white, looking like an angel. Of course he hadn’t been paid for the job, and the dirty look in her eyes had etched itself into Doron’s mind. He’d been deeply hurt, and was even depressed for a long time. As if the devils felt that the stimulation was insufficient, two white jade legs with elegant curves stretched out of the tent. The purple daffodil on the toenails constantly aroused Doron’s brain, and he couldn’t help but release a bestial roar as he rushed forth…

……

Mystra’s fall was only an opening. What was important was the destruction of the Weave. Wizards may have been the most hurt by its loss, but the gods had lost its convenience as well. The energy it took them to bestow divine spells increased greatly, making it impossible for them to cater to their worshippers as they came up with retreat strategies. This only exacerbated the corruption and the attacks on the wizards. There hadn’t been much centralised power in the World of Gods before, and a part of its management had been left to the churches. With the churches losing faith and authority, the power of the mobs was extremely terrifying. Wizards without magic were just like guns without bullets. Other than those with enough scrolls and supplements or legendary wizards who’d managed to break away from the Weave, everyone suffered the calamity. The aristocrats pushed the simmering anger of the commoners into boiling point, laughing in secret as they toasted their new harvest. When the riots ended, these mobs would only be executed or reduced to their previous, poor state. The nobles would take the greatest wealth, and almost every noble with power would gain
However, an epidemic hit the prime material at that exact time. The raging laughter was replaced by deathly wails, becoming the theme of the world. Some said the Goddess of Plagues was hatching a scheme, others that this was a curse cast by the dead wizards. The only thing that stayed true? With the plague spreading continuously, the population of the prime material plane was dropping quick!
1171 - Consensus

The pantheon was in disarray, an imposing atmosphere shrouding the disorderly Celestial Hall. The gods were all seated respectfully on their pedestals, not one of them missing. None of them were even focused on comprehending their laws, their gazes instead focused on the central region around which the greater gods sat.

Two formidable greater gods were missing from their position. Cyric was ultimately an evil god, so the others didn’t really miss him, but Mystra’s loss had struck them hard. With the Weave destroyed, they were grieving the fact that numerous ancient Magi had escaped into the world. Although only a few had revealed their existences so far, it still caused a huge effect.

“Oghma! You are the wisest of us… Please, take a look at the future of the greater gods,” one of them asked. He possessed strong divine force, being seated on a pedestal shrouded by morning light. “Not good…” the God of Knowledge turned his gaze away from the greater gods, shaking his head.

“The Weave being destroyed hurt multiple worlds, and even triggered turbulence in the four elemental planes. Most of the prime material plane is destroyed as well… This was originally the combined power of the gods; nobody here can prevent harm… The Overgod tried to stop the damage from spreading, but I’m afraid he had to pay a large price…”

A feeling of unease spread around the room with Oghma’s sigh.
The gods secretly whispered amongst each other as they looked at the huge crack on the World Crystal. Their gazes were filled with worry. Of course, there were still a few with ambition glowing in their eyes.

“That damned God of Massacre… You should have listened to Mystra and attacked his divine kingdom!” Tyr was clearly flustered and exasperated. He’d lost an important ally with Mystra’s fall, and more importantly the chaos that had erupted in the prime material plane was great cause for regret.

“It’s all a conspiracy by the Magi! We didn’t realise it in time…” The gods started to whisper. The word Magus had become a forbidden word in their circles, but they finally had to face this ten thousand year old threat. The Final War was already underway once more, and even the formidable powers couldn’t guarantee their own safety.

*Ding!* A crisp bell ring echoed throughout the entire Celestial Hall, and the gazes of all the gods fell upon Kelemvor.

The God of Death coughed, looking around before speaking with a low, hoarse, voice, “I suggest we stop all current internal conflict, banding together as we prepare for the second dusk. We are to make an oath, the violators to be eliminated…”

“I agree!” Tyr was the first to express his approval, followed by the Morninglord, Lathander.

“I, as well.” Surprisingly, the third person to approve was Gruumsh! The tall golden orc stood up, every strand of hair on his body erect as he spoke with a resounding voice, “The fight between the orcs and the north is only an internal conflict. Right now, we should focus our strengths against our common enemy. The Orc Kingdom will stop all attacks on the Silverymoon Alliance effective immediately, and the current line of control will be our border.”

With their goddess dead and the Weave destroyed, the Silverymoon Alliance was on the brink of collapse. They were after all an
alliance of wizards, and with a majority of them losing their abilities they suffered devastating damage. As long as the Orc Empire continued to attack, they would definitely be able to chase Alustriel out of the northern lands.

With Gruumsh proposing this right now, there was no need to suspect his sincerity. Oghma and the other intermediate gods expressed their stances as well, and the evil gods eventually decided that their hatred for the Magi was more important than short term goals. Everyone made an oath, the Styx being the witness.

“First we need to verify the number of Magi that invaded the world. Oghma should be able to take care of this…” Kelemvor initiated.

“Mm. My intelligence says those Magi are more cunning than before. Most of them have hidden themselves, leaving only a few revealed…” Golden divine force formed a screen that displayed the image of a different world. “The Filthy Evil Eye and the Chaos Lord are in the Abyss, while the God of Massacre Leylin is in Baator. There’s also Distorted Shadow as well, and the latter two are confirmed to be related to the epidemic spreading around the prime material plane right now…

“And these are only the confirmed ones. Even more have hidden themselves…” Oghma raised his brows, deep in thought, “The prime material plane is the foundation of our faith. These Magi have grown smart, starting a massacre there instead of directly fighting us in our divine kingdoms…”

The many gods grew gloomy. The Magi had directly struck their weak spot this time. With the prime material plane being their biggest source of faith, the death of all its mortals would cause the fall of at least half the gods in the world.

“These despicable Magi, aiming directly for the mortals…” The gods roared in anger, their helpless voices seemingly piercing
through the void of the Celestial Hall.
“Talona…” Oghma looked at a lady behind him, wrapped in layers of black gauze as she emitted a putrid smoke.
This was Talona, the Mistress of Disease. Her prestige within the prime material plane was such that some even linked the current epidemic to her. She was an expert in matters of disease.
The Mother of All Plagues stayed silent for a long time, however, before speaking with a hoarse voice, “I am a goddess of poison and disease, not cures. I can only say the Magi are using an interesting thing… It seems to be related to what Kukulkan used when conquering Debanks Island…”
How could the Lady of Poison not notice what Leylin had done on Debanks Island? His ambitions had been exposed early, or it wouldn’t have been a problem for him to get a place in Talona’s church.
The World of Gods and the Magus World were both of equal rank, possessing terrifying suppressive power. A majority of the Magi chose to stay low-profile, living quietly in seclusion as they accustomed themselves to the changed laws. It was unlikely for common bacteria and viruses to have such an effect after being suppressed, so the scale and damage of this plague caused everyone to think of Leylin’s methods.
“You’re saying Leylin did all this?” Tyr stared at Talona.
“No,” Talona chuckled, “Well, not necessarily. They seem like an inferior imitation, perhaps the work of another Magus. Leylin is currently stuck in Baator, and he won’t be able to come out without killing Asmodeus…”
Talona stole a subconscious glance at Umberlee. This intermediate god was unusually quiet, a repulsive aura being radiated from her as she clearly tried to avoid previous incidents.
“How, however, I have good news. Those Magi aren’t working together, and there are conspiracies and fights amongst them. It’s even
scarier than our own conflicts…” Talona declared loudly. “Silence!” Oghma saw the disorder in the Celestial Hall, and had to be loud to stop the gods from whispering in secret. “Since the Mistress of Disease does not have a good method, we can only rely on our priests…” Helplessness surfaced on Oghma’s face as he said this. Originally, gods could bestow an inordinate number of divine spells as compared to demigods. A single Remove Disease would be able to eliminate any troublesome plague no matter the complexity. However, that was all in the past. With the Weave broken down, spell transmission took far more energy than before. With a limited number of divine spells, the priests could only remain at a loss as huge swathes of innocent commoners died. The gods were losing their foundation. Only now did Oghma realise the depth of Leylin’s progress. The Weave’s destruction had released the ancient Magi, yes, but it had also destroyed the strongest class of Professionals in the prime material plane. At the same time, the energy consumed in granting a divine spell had increased severalfold, rendering them unable to make an accurate and timely response. Such deep cunning was terrifying, and it left the powerful gods feeling a chill of fright.
We cannot remain reserved anymore. Everyone, do not worry about the consumption of divine force… the prime material plane is our foundation.” Oghma’s voice was filled with heaviness, “If we really can’t handle it anymore then our only option will be to migrate all our worshippers into our divine kingdoms…” Divine kingdoms were indeed only suitable for spiritual existences. Mortals would undergo an irreversible transformation within, but there were still benefits to such an action. At least, for the next decade, the gods wouldn’t have to worry about declining faith. They could deal with the Magus assault and then settle their worshippers in the prime material plane once more.

“Agreed!” “I Agree!” The gods quickly agreed with Oghma’s suggestion, starting to demarcate lands as they determined times to open and connect their divine kingdoms. Looking at the heated discussion, terrifyingly dark clouds appeared on the faces of Lathander and Tyr.

“Everyone…” Tyr eventually stood up, “What we should be discussing right now is how we defeat the Magi, wiping away the disgrace of the dusk of the gods. We shouldn’t be acting like cowards, searching for ways to escape! Still, if that’s what all of you hope for, forgive my absence.”

*Bang!* His avatar slowly dissipated, and the other gods could sense Tyr’s will leave the Celestial Plane.
“I agree. However, I agree with Oghma as well: moving our worshippers into our divine kingdoms will protect them to an extent.” Having expressed his own opinion, the Morninglord left the Celestial Hall as well… Even without two of the greater gods, various decisions had been made in this discussion. The gods quickly instructed their priests to begin executing plans, attracting more worshippers to their divine kingdoms so they could attain ‘eternal life.’

……

Leylin naturally learnt of the events in the prime material plane. However, his true body was still taking care of Malbolge, and he had no time to care about this. He instead sent Kukulkan in his place, the clone walking out of the tall church to arrive at the location where Mother Core was. A towering mountain had been formed at her location, flush with a molten core that flowed out of it in endless patterns. The mountain was connected to the earth, seemingly detecting the surroundings. An eye appeared from the lava as Leylin’s clone arrived. “Great Mother Core, I believe you know why I’m here…” The eyes of the A.I. Chip clone were dead and indifferent, like a puppet that could only carry out orders. However, it still had the power of an intermediate god, so Mother Core couldn’t afford to neglect it. After all, rank 8s were at the forefront of existences in the Magus World. What’s more, the rank 8 puppet in front of her was only a avatar of Leylin’s true body. “Of course. The epidemic in the prime material plane caused at least ten million deaths, some even call you the new Lord of all Plagues now… Even though we know this isn’t your doing…” Mother Core’s conscient released a vast amount of force, and some roots extended out to form an image of the prime material plane.
“Indeed. I sensed the fear and faith headed my way recently…” Kukulkan’s expression grew a little ugly. Someone was evidently trying to pin crimes upon him, and there was only one who was familiar with his actions and could evade the laws of the World of Gods. “Is it Distorted Shadow? We really can’t chase him away…” “Perhaps he wanted to attract the gods’ attention towards you. However, he isn’t the only one capable of such things…” Clearly, Mother Core had even more information. Her path was the path of the world, and nothing could escape her eyes. “There’s a lot of Magi who invaded the prime material plane, and the ancient conscients who escaped are doing the same thing. They wish to strike against the gods’ faith, perhaps to gather enough spirits for them to recover…” This information left Leylin wondering about something. “How well are we prepared?” he asked. He was naturally paying attention towards all the intelligence about this. After all, the war between the gods and the Magi was directly related to the path of eternity. It could not be neglected. “We’ve learnt our lessons from the last time. Other than a few crazy ones who are attracting attention on the surface, the rest of us are hidden well. We’ve established contact with the ancient conscients, and they’ve promised to do their best to conform to our plans. “Nine wormholes have been opened up, and the passage connected by the Manderhawke Plate is quite stable as well. We’ve shifted it to the void sea…” Good news after good news came from Mother Core. “What about the suppression of the World of Gods?” Leylin asked the most crucial question. Being similar in power to their own world, the World of Gods had a somewhat horrifying suppression of Magi who were outsiders. “We’ve considered this as well. We’re quite lucky in this regard…” Mother Core’s voice was very heartening. “The World Will here,
their Overgod, is in a deep slumber so the suppression we’re facing is much less than that in the first war. It was hurt more during the destruction of the Weave, and we have you to thank for that...

“Even if we’re not going to drop in rank, it’s still a troublesome matter…” Leylin frowned.

Of course, this was all an act. When he merged with his divine clone and advanced to rank 8 with the path of Original Sin, his bloodline had transformed into the Nightmare Hydra. He was stunned to find out that the World of Gods stopped suppressing him at that moment, as if he was a native of this place!

The laws of the two worlds hadn’t been fused before in the history of the astral plane, and it was precisely due to this that a miracle had happened. The current Leylin was unimpeded by both worlds, not facing any suppression whatsoever.

He’d kept this all a secret, to be treated as the biggest of trump cards. Those who were unaware would be ruthlessly conned by him at the end.

Mother Core frankly addressed Leylin’s ‘concerns,’ “Naturally. We’ve been performing research on how to avoid the suppression of other worlds, and we already have some results…”

*Rumble!* The earth split apart, and numerous tree roots formed a palm that shot out to place a silvery-white metal ball in Leylin’s hands.

“This is…” The fluorescent light of the A.I. Chip flashed within Leylin’s eyes, but several probes only returned with question marks as the screen prompted an ‘unknown’ message. The silvery-white ball’s surface was extremely smooth, yet it didn’t reflect the world around it.

Leylin was speechless for a period of time before he spat out a sentence, “The World Origin Force, it’s blocked!”

“Correct… We’ve called this technology World War Armour. It was created using a new alloy that can block origin force, protecting our
true bodies so we can evade the restrictions placed upon us by the worlds. It lets us display our peak strength!"

“That’s great, but… This thing seems too fragile to support beings like us for long…” After testing it for a while, Leylin could pinpoint the armour’s weakness. It was a film that isolated the Magus from the world around them, but as armour it was useless once broken. From what he’d seen, it wasn’t exactly durable.

“We’re still trying to improve on this. However, even this version is enough for us to launch a small-scale war. Take this, it’s a gift…” Mother Core spoke generously. Leylin was after all a Magus, and he’d given up several benefits for their world. She had to display some goodwill as well.

“Then I’ll skip the thanks. I really am interested in this…” The alloy entered his skin the moment he pressed the ball to his chest. A strange white pattern appeared on his body, as if an armour protecting him.

‘It’s cut off origin force, really magical… There seems to be room for improvement, though…’ Light continuously flashed from the A.I. Chip clone.

[Reverse engineering from sample… Possible optimisations deduced!]

Having fused with Kukulkan, the current A.I. Chip had grown far more powerful. With Supercomputing and Simulate Reality, its calculative powers far surpassed those of a peak rank 8 Magus.

‘It seems extensible into the Magus World and Dreamscape as well…’ The only ability of the A.I. Chip was to deduce. As the user, Leylin could do things the chip could not, which was the advantage of out-of-the-box ideas that a mere tool could not achieve.

The discovery of this weapon instantly gave Leylin another plan. If he succeeded he could rush to the peak of rank 8 quickly, and even lay a solid foundation for comprehending the laws of space and
time!
The clone returned to the church just as Leylin arrived at Malbolge. He looked at the tilted floor beneath his feet. The Sixth Hell was a boundless slope, a plane of constant landslides as the fortresses built on these slanted lands shifted constantly. The plane was blotted out, swarming with devil hunters that had chased the devils out of this layer. Sadly, they couldn’t find Glasya. The cunning and beautiful Queen of Lust had been incredibly decisive, abandoning her dignity as an Archdevil to give Malbolge up to Leylin. She’d escaped to the lower hells. “Devils without a leader are a giant without a head or a beehive without a queen. They’re a complete mess…” Leylin didn’t encounter the slightest of troubles in taking Malbolge over, but there wasn’t any excitement on his face. His brows were instead furrowed, a trace of gloom in his expression. “This should have been the best point to block me… My powers would only increase the more layers I conquered, and their powers would weaken…” Leylin smelt an obvious conspiracy from the retreat of his opponents. He wasn’t afraid of a combined resistance. He was only scared they’d abandon Baator entirely to hide themselves within the void. That would be troublesome. Of course, this was not an easy task. Without control of their layers
they’d be abandoned by Baator’s origin force, the more serious cases losing their authority in Baator and falling from the realm of laws.

As long as there was even a glimmer of hope, the Lords of Baator wouldn’t choose to do this. Glasya’s decision to flee made Leylin sense something strange.

‘I can’t keep going like this, something big will happen. Distorted Shadow is still keeping an eye on me…’ Leylin looked at the occupied land of the Sixth Hell, and suddenly smiled. ‘I’ll still accept gifts on my doorstep, though…’

*Bang!* A layer of golden light suddenly spread out from Leylin’s divine kingdom, shrouding the entirety of Malbolge. Golden light filled the entire sky, and under the prayers of the devil hunters endless laws began to merge and transform the Sixth Hell. The rolling earth rumbled as the divine light flattened it out. The landslides lost all momentum, dying into the ground. The Sixth Hell fused with Leylin’s divine kingdom, radiating endless divine light. The last three layers seemed small and frail under this radiance, seemingly overwhelmed by it.

…. 

*Hurl!* Just as Malbolge was fused into Leylin’s divine kingdom, the beautiful Queen of Lust screamed within Nessus. She spat out large mouthfuls of filthy black blood that dissipated into the air, faintly transforming into grotesque life forms before returning to normal as a frightening pool formed on the ground.

“He… devoured… all of Malbolge…” Glasya looked unsightly as she lost her territory, as she became an Archdevil with an empty title. Glasya’s facial expression was unsightly as after losing her own territory, she as an Archdevil was only left with a empty title. That wasn’t the worst of it. Having lost the World Origin Force, she felt her own powers regressing without end as she almost fell out of the realm of laws.
*Crash!* Right at that moment, Malsheem suddenly exploded within the canyon. An all-powerful hand reached out of it, crushing millions of devils living within and sending flesh and blood flying everywhere. Distorted screams sounded out as the souls were fused into a dazzling black lightning that entered Glasya’s back.

*Zzzt!* A layer of frightening scales emerged on Glasya’s body, endless black wings extending from her back. The screams of the killed devils seemed to be captured within. Glasya continued screaming as her energy stabilised. She’d avoided the fall.

“I’ve failed, father.” Glasya looked like a black bat now, standing on the huge pal as she looked at the silhouette of an old devil.

“You did not fail, my daughter…” There wasn’t the slightest change within Asmodeus’ black eyes as he looked at the large contract in his hands. The mysterious Supreme of Baator closed the giant parchment in his hands after a long time, a smile on his face.

“Your survival is the greatest victory. With the Magi invading at the Second Dusk nigh, opportunities are aplenty. Our current job is to prepare to seize as much as we can in the future, retaining our strength as we wait for future chances…”

“Perhaps…” Glasya could faintly understand Asmodeus’ thoughts. The Lord of Nessus had always remained in human form, hiding behind the scenes. He’d finally revealed some of his ambitions.

“Are you thinking of becoming a god?” Glasya’s voice was trembling. If he wanted to become a god while already being an Archdevil, he definitely didn’t just aim to become a lesser god! His final objective was undoubtedly to become the ruler of devils, the God of Baator who truly controlled the Nine Hells! That would put him at the peak of gods.

There was one other contender for that position right now. It was the God of Massacre who’d occupied six layers of his world, the Lord of Original Sin Leylin Farlier!

“The God of Massacre’s true body is that of a Magus. He’s bound
to be attacked by the gods because of the destruction of the Weave — Tyr, Kelemvor, and Lathander won’t let that go. We only have to wait…”

“But…” There was obvious hesitation on Glasya face. She didn’t believe they had the time to wait for Leylin to be attacked. He’d be here soon to kill them!

“Nessus is different from the other eight layers of hell. This is the deepest layer of Baator, the ultimate land of evil. I’ve made preparations…” Resolution surfaced on Asmodeus’ face, “With my true body’s power and three Archdevils, we’ll separate the plane and seal it for a few thousand years…”

“Seal all of it?” That moment of shock exceeded all the surprises Glasya had ever felt put together. If they sealed themselves they wouldn’t receive any more fallen souls. They’d gradually be forgotten by the world, and they’d have to pay a huge price in order to separate in the first place.

“Keke… Don’t worry, my daughter. I’ve long accumulated enough souls in Nessus to last us that length of time. On top of that, we’ll be obstructing Kukulkan as well…”

Asmodeus let loose a sinister smile, deceit and intelligence reflected from his eyes, “He needs to unify all of Baator to become a greater god. Once Nessus separates itself, he’ll be dealt a terrifying setback. Furthermore, the defensive power of a separate Nessus alongside three Archdevils will be no less than a greater god’s divine kingdom…

“Once he loses the most important part, his plans to advance rapidly will definitely fall through. He’ll fall under the attack of the gods!” Asmodeus was sure about this.

“The only way for him to survive is to unify Baator and kill us?” Glasya looked at Asmodeus, feeling like his words were extremely foreign to her. “Why are you so sure about the matters of Magi?”

“Let me answer that question.” The shadows atop the huge hand
distorted, causing Glasya to reveal a look of fear. She hadn’t sensed the fluctuations of power from the other party’s body, and they’d easily approached her... This was an unbelievable thing for a rank 7 Archdevil!

“Magus!” Glasya screamed. Distorted Shadow hadn’t hid his aura when he revealed himself.

“Keke... We’re currently allies, and we have a common enemy,” he sneered. He then looked towards Asmodeus, “I’ve convinced Baalzebul and Mephistopheles. They’ve agreed to our plans and are willing to use their layers to delay Leylin’s progress, allowing us to complete the separation. Of course, you need to guarantee assistance in regaining their powers and that you won’t harm them.”

“Not a problem!” Asmodeus guaranteed, “I’m a devil. I shall honour my pact!”

“Let’s hope so!” two voices said in unison. The silhouettes of Baalzebul and Mephistopheles emerged in mid-air, one a disgusting worm and the other a flaming humanoid with devil wings and horns.
“It’s great that the two of you could join our alliance…”

The grin on Asmodeus’ face turned wider as he signed the contract.

“I’ve already ordered my subordinates to resist at all costs in Maladomini. We should be able to delay him for a while…” Baalzebul said. His aura had grown weak, apparently having severed connections with the Seventh Hell. Even if his subordinates knew they’d been given a suicide mission, as lawful creatures they could only surge forth to complete their orders. Such was the dignity of a Archdevil!

“Same here,” Mephistopheles chimed in, “I hope that buys us time…"

Leylin’s fearsome image, Seven Sins in hand, had evidently been etched deep into the minds of these Archdevils.

“I stand by my previous suggestions,” Distorted Shadow said, “It’s a better idea to hide in the endless void or the elemental planes than to defend Nessus at all costs…"

“That’s something that will only benefit you,” Asmodeus coldly interjected. “Once we lose all nine layers all our authority will be stripped from us. We’ll lose Baator’s origin force, bleeding in power without any chance to return…”

“Hehe…” Distorted Shadow only smiled coldly at Asmodeus’ retort, not speaking another word.

“Of course… We’re all common enemies of this God of Massacre,”
Asmodeus said slowly. Devils were extremely crafty creatures, and this was especially true for their Supreme, “I wonder if Your Excellency can call upon any other Magi who are unhappy with this God of Massacre, and…”

“My apologies, I cannot do that right now.” Distorted Shadow expressed his regrets, “Leylin found passage into the World of Gods, and the Magi of other worlds have already made a pact with him. He’s also the one who released the ancient conscients sealed in here long ago, so they already owe him a favour…”

Asmodeus’ face darkened just from hearing those few sentences. “So Leylin is like the leader of their alliance, a mascot amongst the Magi…” Glasya sighed.

“Irvin! We can only make full use of the gods’ powers to destroy him alongside his divine kingdom.”

“Damn it!” the lords cursed. They’d never thought they’d meet an enemy as powerful as Leylin in Baator. Asmodeus saw them losing morale, quickly interjecting, “Alright. As long as we stand together Leylin won’t be able to make his most crucial advancement. His death will be but a matter of time…”

However, the old devil’s expression changed the very next moment. His gigantic body shuddered, causing endless tremors through the earth.

“It’s him! He’s here!” Asmodeus exclaimed. There was only one person that could cause his expression to change this quick.

“Leylin!” the four other people gathered shouted.

*Rumble!* At this moment, an enormous flying city descended outside of Nessus. Leylin was stood atop it, looking down at Nessus which stretched far beyond what the eye could see, his gaze filled with mockery, “You thought I’d be baited by Maladomini and Cania? How childish!

“Compared to those two levels, I value you lords more…” The Nightmare Hydra phantom appeared behind Leylin’s back, its three
remaining illusory snake heads staring at their respective lords like predators stalking their prey.
“Seal the place now!”
*Boom!* The earth was blasted open, revealing Asmodeus’ massive true body. His black wings covered the skies as he stood up, revealing the severe injury inflicted upon him back in ancient times. The wound had been exacerbated by Leylin’s attack when he’d brought his divine kingdom down.
Facing Leylin, Asmodeus didn’t have the leeway to consider his injuries. He unleashed the full extent of his power, as a dark web appeared from his hand to envelop the entirety of Nessus. A power of isolation stopped Thultanthar from entering the Ninth Hell.
The three other lords used their own authorities as well, mustering what origin force they could in a final struggle. Distorted Shadow disappeared into the darkness, the shadows shifting formlessly as if he was planning on something.
[Beep! Target locked. Space has been sealed, preparing primary cannons…] A white light appeared on the main cannon of the flying city, so bright that it could kill a god.
[Netherese core prepared, firing!] A powerful light seemingly born of the very universe shot forth under the fearful eyes of the devils, its absolute power unleashed on the barrier around Nessus. The barrier rumbled as the energy scattered in all directions, annihilating hordes of devils. The energy was so powerful that it attracted the attention of many powerful beings from the Abyss and the Celestial Planes.
The stunning white light blinded the Lords of Baator. Glasya gripped her hands tightly as the energy waves began to dissipate, sighing in relief after she saw Nessus undamaged.
“Hehe… With us here, Nessus is like the divine kingdom of a greater god… What will you attack it with?” The other two lords seemed to be encouraged by the sight. They’d just been far too
fearful of Leylin slaying them.
“A weave, origin force, spells, and elemental particles as well…” Leylin looked at the dark web that stopped his attack, and how it was being replenished by origin force. The A.I. Chip recorded everything he saw.
“It seems like you’ve struck quite a few deals with Distorted Shadow, Asmodeus. I can’t let you carry on any further, or the consequences will be too dire.” Leylin stepped forward, leaving the flying city. The gem of Netheril that could house hundreds of thousands began to descend slowly, heading for Nessus like a meteorite.
“What is he planning to do? Not good!” Distorted Shadow exclaimed in shock. He had never lost his bearings like this before.
[Beep! Authorisation valid, initiating self-destruct.] Light flashed from the A.I. Chip, and all of Thultanthar’s energy converged into a massive aura.
“Explosives prepared, beginning collapse of secondary dimension. Preparing Netherese Core…” There was no expression on Shaylin’s face. The city continued to descend, growing faster and faster.
“Preparations complete. Impact in T minus 3, 2, 1…”
*BOOM!* The light generated this time was far brighter than before, unleashing great explosive force upon Nessus.
An indescribable scene occurred as the pinnacle of technology destroyed itself under Leylin’s orders. It was thousands of times more powerful than the Tunguska explosion back on his old world, feeling like the big bang as its undeniable might seemed to shoot the force of the entire world at Nessus.
“You think losing the city hurts me?” the Nightmare Hydra phantom roared, dark clouds appearing above its head. This being that absorbed strength from the emotions of all beings protected Leylin. Seeing this explosion, Leylin smiled. “Material things are just that. So what if it can kill gods? A flying city is nothing on my path to
Leylin had been extremely clear on the situations. If he hadn’t taken Nessus out immediately, the Lords of Baator would very likely hole up like tortoises and render him helpless. Hence, he did not hesitate to use his trump card as he sacrificed Thultanthar to kill his enemies.

Even if multiple renovations had given Leylin full control of the city, he couldn’t help but be wary of any backdoors Distorted Shadow had placed into it. The safest way forward was to destroy the city, just like he’d killed his divine clone after using Karsus’ Avatar to avoid harm. The deed was done now anyway, there was no need to analyse costs anymore.

Distorted Shadow grew extremely impatient when Leylin sacrificed Thultanthar. A large writhing shadow with boundless power headed to the boundaries of Leylin’s divine kingdom.

“Leave!” the void flickered, and Leylin’s clone appeared alongside Mother Core. The two gave him a strong warning at the border.
Facing the powerful Mother Core, even Distorted Shadow had to retreat. Having ousted his true body, the two returned to the divine kingdom, shattering any and all wild dreams from the other powerful beings.

A large hole had been blasted into Nessus by the explosion of Thultanthar. The entire plane was badly damaged, and even the deep gorges and valleys had been destroyed. Even if Nessus was as powerful as the divine kingdom of a greater god, it had still been damaged. Half of its powers of law had been destroyed, weakening it significantly.

*Shing!* Leylin darted in through a gap in the skies, Seven Sins howling as he killed Distorted Shadow’s clone immediately.

“Now that I’m here, what else have you guys got to say?” Leylin looked at the four devils before him, weapon in tow. His smile caused them to shudder in fear.

*Rumble!* The earth continued to tremble underneath them, Asmodeus’ clone having been destroyed with the explosion of the flying city. Having been the greatest contributor to Nessus’ defence, he was the one who was hurt the most by its destruction.

And now, his main body was forced to face Leylin. He looked extremely miserable, multiple scars on his body from the explosion alongside cuts from when the rift was destroyed. The wounds had grown bigger than before, and a part of a wing had been torn off.
“Hurry and leave! Don’t let him gather all our power!” Asmodeus howled. He knew well that Leylin had already broken through Nessus, destroying their last hope. Their only counter left was to leave Baator entirely, stopping Leylin from completing his path of original sin. He would lose momentum, and the war would come to an end.

However, how could Leylin give them this chance? The phantom Nightmare Hydra appeared behind him, each of its head releasing a deafening roar. Boundless power of laws surged forth from six of them, forming a powerful web of energy that trapped Nessus within.

“He sealed space!” Glasya screamed, the light of her teleportation spell dimming. Asmodeus cursed as well, shouting in shock. Speaking of shock, Mother Core had been far more surprised than even the father-daughter duo. She’d been observing the scene from his divine kingdom, and she noticed Leylin seal off space to prevent all escape. “The power to seal spacetime... He’s already come into contact with rank 9 laws? Such terrifying talent...”

To be able to seal the teleportation of a being of law meant he had high comprehension of the law of spacetime. This fellow wasn’t even peak rank 8 yet! This achievement surpassed those of many of his predecessors.

‘He really does have a chance to reach rank 9...’ Mother Core made a silent evaluation. Although Leylin was still far from being able to harness the complete power of spacetime to reach rank 9, she still had high hopes for him.

“Asmodeus... I am not the Supreme of Baator.” Leylin’s body grew exponentially as he moved forward, matching the size of the self-proclaimed ruler of hell. Seven Sins roared ceaselessly as two rays of light were unleashed, each containing the power of laws. Blessing of Greed! Fury Amplification! The two buffs put Leylin quite close to the peak of rank 8. Each of his actions could crush
multiple smaller worlds!

*Boom!* Seven Sins changed forms, taking the shape of a dazzling six-bladed battle axe. Leylin roared out as he swung the axe downwards, like a giant splitting the earth apart.

“Argh… The origin force of Baator, please abide by the primordial contract…” Asmodeus chanted as he revealed an ancient scroll. The parchment floated in mid-air, glowing with dull light as it attracted the last of Baator’s origin force. This was the original copy of the primordial contract, Asmodeus’ final trump card!

“Your methods are outdated, Asmodeus. I am the sole ruler of hell now, its overlord!” The battle axe shone brightly and as it swung downwards, leaving a brilliant afterimage behind.

*Crack!* The origin force from the primordial contract broke immediately upon contact with Seven Sins, and the axe swung towards his body without mercy. It caused another grave injury as he flew backwards, levelling a massive canyon.

*Buzz!* Asmodeus wasn’t the only one to feel the aftereffects. The moment the primordial contract was broken, the devils in the last of the Nine Hells began to wail. They could clearly feel that the surging power of Baator’s origin force was waning, causing their powers to deteriorate.

“Baator is now my divine kingdom. All devils who do not become my petitioners shall die!” Light flashed in Leylin’s eyes as the crimson power of original sin appeared in his hands. Seven Sins turned into a javelin as he willed it, containing the energy to split apart laws themselves.

“The Path of Original Sin is the end of all things!” The javelin was as fast as lightning, repelling even the origin force of the World of Gods. Its sharpness could destroy all laws, and this instrument of destruction appeared before Asmodeus.

*Pu!* The javelin pierced through the Lord of Baator, devouring all her powers and destroying all signs of life. Glasya’s face turned
sluggish with disbelief as she forced herself to look backwards, seeing her father.
The moment the javelin was about to strike him, he’d sent a powerful force to bring her before his body. She’d been used as a meat shield to block this fatal attack! Glasya’s beautiful face smiled wryly, and before she could say anything, she turned into dust. The A.I. Chip’s notifications sounded in Leylin’s ear.
[Beep! Host has killed Glasya. Gluttony’s Devouring activated, absorbing new law… Law of lust currently at 100%.

*Hss!* The Nightmare Hydra behind Leylin hissed loudly as another head materialised from its neck. It absorbed all of the lust in the astral plane, turning it into his law of original sin.
[Beep! Host has comprehended the law of lust, Seven Sins has unlocked Fantasia.

Fantasia: The user can elude the detection of beings of law.

“This decisiveness, should I say as expected of a devil?” Glasya’s death had only bought Asmodeus some time. Seven Sins glowed once more as the effects of Fantasia were released, causing Asmodeus and the other two to grow dull.

*Hiss!* The Nightmare Hydra roared, as an incomplete path of original sin materialised around it. It seemed like a long flowing river that immediately consumed Asmodeus’ true body.

Having entered Leylin’s powers, Asmodeus shrunk continuously before becoming a bug. The bug was encased in amber and sealed by the Nightmare Hydra.

‘Asmodeus is the key to merging the seven original sin, and the spawn of hell. His energy can catalyse the fusion of all evil, and he’s irreplaceable… However, this isn’t the right time to fuse it…’ Leylin retrieved Seven Sins, turning it into a crossblade with complicated runes inscribed atop it.

At this moment, the last two Archdevils were running towards Leylin, fear clouding their expressions as if they’d seen ghosts.
“You still think you’re running away?” Leylin brandished the cross blade. “Fantasia can even cast an illusion on rank 8 beings, how can the two of you resist it?”
With the power of dreamforce as a foundation and the strength of Seven Sins, Leylin could toy with rank 7 beings. The Nightmare Hydra hissed as the two remaining illusory heads stared down at the lords.
“Become my strength…” Leylin chanted, and the Nightmare Hydra howled as the power of original sin sealed off the space around them. Mephistopheles and Baalzebul were suppressed, and the two heads opened their maws and devoured the two Lords of Baator who could only watch on in despair.
Beep! Host has killed Baalzebul. Gluttony’s Devouring activated, absorbing new law… Law of sloth currently at 100%.
Beep! Seven Sins has unlocked Sloth’s Recovery.
Sloth’s Recovery: User recovery is boosted by 500% when inactive. Seven Sins can now repair damage automatically.
Beep! Host has killed Mephistopheles. Gluttony’s Devouring activated, absorbing new law… Law of envy currently at 100%.
[Beep! Host has comprehended the law of envy, Seven Sins has unlocked Envy’s Thief.
Envy’s Thief: User can steal the divine weapons and laws of other beings.]
The multiple notifications put Leylin in a good mood. The Nightmare Hydra’s body behind him materialised completely, each of its heads containing a different law. The power of sin across all intelligent beings was now absorbed by Leylin, forming a thick dark mist around his massive body.
At this moment, the A.I. Chip sent another notification, and Leylin grinned even wider than before. [Beep! Path of original sin completed, Nightmare Hydra bloodline has achieved complete form.]
In an instant he’d felt the power of his bloodline reach the limit, coming into contact with an extremely obscure door of sorts. The door was guarded by the power of spacetime, forming a mountain pass. Leylin knew fully well that it was the bottleneck to rank 9.
*Buzz…* The power of original sin thundered in his body as the dark mist grew even more black. The crimson energy became more animated, showing signs of life. Feeling the power of original sin as the river formed behind the Nightmare Hydra, Leylin felt like it was extremely picturesque.

He’d now completed his laws, opening his path up for further travel. However, there was something still missing.

“Gluttony, Greed, Wrath, Pride, Envy, Sloth, Lust… The seven sins form original sin, combining with Massacre and Death to form a perfect cycle. However, all this lacks an embodiment of pure evil…” Leylin looked at Asmodeus who’d been sealed within the river. Once he extracted the essence of this devil, his path would be completed and allow him to become a peak rank immediately!

However, Leylin’s incredible willpower stopped his urges. “Although I can wield dreamforce at its peak, it’s still not perfect. I need to subjugate Dreamscape’s World Will, and get it to hand over the essence of dreamforce so I can lay a perfect foundation for my advancement…”

Since he’d achieved everything he set out to, Leylin naturally intended to do things to perfection. Although peak dreamforce allowed him to harness the powers of spacetime, Leylin wanted more! He didn’t just want to become rank 9, he wanted to be the absolute best of rank 9 Magi. That was a given on his quest for eternity!

Hence, this dreamforce that would even satisfy other peak 8 Magi and cause them to be envious of him was not enough in Leylin’s eyes. The essence of Dreamscape’s origin force was an evolved form of dreamforce known as nightmare force, and that was what he wanted!

“Just nice! I have the strength to execute my plans now…” Leylin did not give another looked at the broken Nessus as he vanished from Baator…
*Boom!* *Boom!* *Boom!* Three consecutive explosions reverberated across the many worlds. Be it gods, Archfiends, or even lich kings, everyone cast a look of shock towards Baator. A golden divine kingdom within was now shining brightly, rapidly swallowing up the last of the Nine Hells. Baator was one once more, radiating with holy light as its surging origin force was converted to the power of the divine kingdom. This place could cause even greater gods to be fearful now.
The Nine Hells having a new owner meant that the devils had been destroyed. The eight Lords of Baator had been a force to be reckoned with even for greater gods, never having lost an inch to the gods or demons and instead counterattacking all this while. Now, they’d been vanquished by a Magus. Baator was the first to bow out of the Final War, reminding the gods once again of fearsome memories they’d chosen to wipe from their minds.
The powerful energy of a god strengthening themselves travelled past many worlds, causing many powerful existences to frown.
“Kukulkan, my Lord! You are the guardian of our souls, the stars in the skies! You are a haven for my soul, the God of the Nine Hells. You are the keeper of strength, the God of Wrath and Order, the Ruler of Devils…” Under Tiff’s guidance, everyone in Leylin’s divine kingdom was praying to him. The power of faith converged into a holy river, causing Baator to roar as powerful origin force entered Leylin’s clone.
Mother Core chose to leave Baator on her own accord. There was in fact a trace of alarm in her eyes as she looked at the divine kingdom, feeling a powerful repulsive force.
“This isn’t inferior to the divine kingdom of a greater god… With this as your base, you’ll be able to hold for a long while even with multiple greater gods attacking you at once. Leylin… You really have found a good place within the World of Gods.” Traces of complex emotions appeared in her eyes.
Having swallowed the Nine Hells and obtained new laws, Leylin grew quickly in power, shooting through the ranks to quickly reach rank 17. She felt like Leylin wanted his clone to advance to greater godhood!
However, the tides of faith soon dissipated, under the complicated congratulations of many powerful existences. Leylin’s rank remained at 17.
However, even this was extremely inconceivable given his birth year in the World of Gods!
Atop the Whitejade Saint Mountain, the clone opened his glowing golden eyes. Lightning that could form and destroy entire worlds seemed to streak past its gaze.
[Beep! Clone currently at rank 17.] Blue light flashed in Leylin’s eyes.
His old clone had been a part of his soul, but this one was under the full control of the A.I. Chip. With the two being originally one anyway, the auxiliary A.I. Chip could also receive faith in him, being controlled by the primary chip. He’d even managed to retrieve the split soul, so there were no longer any side-effects binding him to the power of faith.
Large streams of information flashed in the clone’s eyes.
[All stats +5! Host’s arcanist ranking has increased by 5, currently rank 40. Obtained divine domain—Fall of Seven Sins.]
The power of a domain stemmed from one’s divinity, something a demigod did not possess. Every additional domain brought great boosts to one’s strength. That is why gods focused on increasing their divine ranks, not paying much attention to other matters.
Leylin looked at his stats.
[Name: Leylin Faulen.
Divine Name: Kukulkan, the God of Massacre (Controlled by auxiliary A.I. Chip).
Race: Unknown]
Alignment: Lawful Evil.
Divine Domain (Simulated): Massacre, Death, Gluttony, Greed, Wrath, Pride, Envy, Sloth, Lust
Divine Kingdom: Baator
Divine Rank: 17.
Worshippers: Natives, Devils, Adventurers, Priests.
Worshipper Alignments: True Neutral, Neutral Evil, Lawful Evil.
Domains: Massacre, Death, Devouring, Seven Sins
Divine Abilities: Warp Reality, Supercomputing, Simulate Reality, Fall of Seven Sins.]
“The increased divine rank gave me a new domain, huh…” Leylin’s attention was drawn to his new ability, and the A.I. Chip showed information about it.
[Divine Ability— Fall of Seven Sins: As the Lord of Original Sin, the Host can use any negative emotions to affect the target’s mind, inducing the power of nightmares to have the target turn. Applies to beings of law as well.]
“Even law existences can be affected if they are consumed by the emotions of original sin. I can then subjugate them into my slaves?” Leylin rubbed his chin and sighed. In the World of Gods, be it the Magi or the gods themselves they were consumed by their inner desires. Anyone could become his puppet.
Even peak rank 8s weren’t devoid of emotions. However, they did have the ability to stem their desires once they manifested. However, how powerful was the strength of inner desires? As long as a peak rank 8 had flaws, they could be used by Leylin!
The power of dreams converged in the boundary between the real and the illusory, forming a boundless strange world. A Magus dressed in black robes stood at the corners of this world, his arrival causing the world to cheer as if a child had returned home. Dreamscape opened its doors up wide.

“It’s still this desolate here…” Leylin stood in midair, absolved from the powers of the laws. His soul of original sin allowed him to survey most of the world at once.

Dreamscape was still as desolate as before, from when dreamforce was waning and the Lords of Calamity had to seal themselves. Leylin was here in his true body, having left the World of Gods to enter the astral plane. With the Manderhawke Plate in hand and an intermediate god as a clone, the World of Gods was like a back garden that he could enter and leave as he pleased.

With all of Baator as his divine kingdom and the A.I. Chip managing things, he had no need to worry for the safety of his assets. Unless the gods could find another flying city from somewhere and have it explode on him, his defences were airtight like those of a greater god’s divine kingdom. Leylin could leave and come to Dreamscape at ease.

‘Dreamforce has been waning for thousands of years despite me killing a Lord of Calamity…’ Leylin discovered the laws of dreamforce in an instant. The current state of dreamforce didn’t make a difference to him, though. Having already grasped its laws,
he could harness the peak power of dreamforce at any time.
“Those Lords of Calamity have indeed became much smarter…” Leylin smiled. A slight scan revealed that the Lords of Calamity had sealed themselves together this time, apparently cautious of his previous actions.
“Since that’s the case, then let me greet them!” The crimson runes of dreamforce appeared on Leylin’s body, opening up his third eye. His Nightmare Absorbing Physique peaked, and the entirety of Dreamscape rejoiced as powerful destructive lightning appeared in the skies.
Unlike before, Leylin didn’t need to act stealthily. He spread his aura fearlessly to the edges of the world.
“It’s the Nightmare Absorbing Physique!”
“The eternal nemesis of the Lords of Calamity— Nightmare Absorbing Physique!”
“Damn it… Ever since the Magus World opened the crystal sphere, I knew that the Nightmare King would return…”
The slumbering Lords of Calamity were like cats whose tails had been stepped on. They woke up immediately, unleashing their auras. A blizzard of destructive snow howled, but it was repelled by a crystal mountain.
A crystal exploded as one of the Lords of Calamity walked out, possessing devastating strength. This was the Eye Emissary, the protector of light and darkness, wielding both laws to be one of the stronger Lords of Calamity.
“Molina…” Another crystal broke as well to the Eye Emissary’s voice, and a female thundergiant walked out.
“Nightmare King! No… Something more devious and inconceivable… the Nightmare Absorbing Physique has finally reappeared…” Molina roared. Her body darted like lightning towards Leylin.
The dark earth split open and a three-headed Lord of Calamity
appeared. It had the head of a black goat, a green snake, and a mysterious human face. “Oh! Molina… You’re mine…” it muttered as it turned into a black mist, chasing behind the female giant.

All of the Lords of Calamity in Dreamscape were soon awake, roaring and howling as destructive powers of calamity caused Dreamscape to tremble. The surviving creatures were pressed down to the ground, praying for these superior beings to be appeased.

“I never thought there were so many hidden experts in Dreamscape. Eighteen… No, nineteen Lords of Calamity, it’s enough to crush the Purgatory World and Shadow World…” Leylin was surprised.

These Lords of Calamity had sealed themselves in due to waning dreamforce, not joining in on the attack on the World of Gods. This made them the largest force in the rest of the astral plane, strong enough to perhaps attack even the Magus World if dreamforce recovers.

“They’re all hovering around rank 8, yet there isn’t a peak rank 8 existence… Is this the suppression from the World Will?” Leylin’s eyes flashed, and he was more confident in his plans than before.

“Nightmare Absorbing Physique… Die!” The Nightmare King was the eternal enemy of the Lords of Calamity, so one of them immediately attacked Leylin.

*Boom!* A powerful force of calamity struck down, alongside the face of a ghost that was large enough to blot out the sun rearing its bloody mouth at Leylin.

“Darned thing hiding in the shadows, come out!” Leylin’s face turned violent as a longsword formed from Seven Sins slashed forward.

*Sssii!* A bright white light flashed, and the face was slashed apart before shattering, forming corrosive rain. A strange multifaced creature appeared, wailing as it was forced out of the void. Seven
Sins slashed mercilessly into its body, containing even more domineering force.
Blessing of Greed! The power of original sin was unleashed, causing the figure with many faces to be destroyed immediately. A dark current appeared, and was absorbed by the Seven Sins. It seemed to be a taotie with endless power, devouring its opponents’ strength.
“Darkface was taken out in one blow…” The other Lords of Calamity looked at the ghost faced creature who couldn’t recover its body anymore. Its face filled with fear as it turned wary, stopping its attacks.
*Boom!* Leylin’s dark path of original sin appeared behind him, alongside the Nightmare Hydra with the vertical pupil at its central head. A powerful web of original sin appeared and enshrouded Leylin within, giving him strength comparable to the peak of rank 8.
“The Nightmare Absorbing Physique!”
“Path of laws! Peak rank 8 Magus!”
“The powers of the ancient Nightmare King!”
The other Lords of Calamity stepped back unconsciously, looking at Leylin in fright. After swallowing the Lords of Baator, Leylin was now only one step away from peak rank 8, yet his own battle prowess had already entered this realm!
The ancient Nightmare King had the strength to slay more than half of the Lords of Calamity present. Leylin was even stronger, so it would simply be too easy to beat them all.
“So, now can you listen to what I have to say?” Leylin looked around him, at the Nightmare Eye, Eye Emissary, Molina, and the three-headed beast. These were the strongest Lords of Calamity.
“What do you want to say, inheritor of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique?” The Eye Emissary’s eyes blinked continuously as it looked at Leylin. Unlike the others, he knew full well how
powerful Leylin was. With this power before he even reached peak rank 8, when he advanced with the help of Dreamscape there would be no way for them to survive.

“I know… You all fear me, hate me…” Leylin looked arrogantly at the Lords of Calamity, as if he controlled their lives and deaths, “But my purpose for coming here this time is not to kill any of you. I want to give you and the World Will another way to go forward.”

*Crack!* Leylin’s words were earth-shattering news to the Lords of Calamity. They entered fervent discussion immediately, and even the World Will began to rage with lightning.

*Hiss!* The Nightmare Hydra roared, repelling the destructive snow.

“How is it? Do I look sincere enough?” Leylin smiled at these Lords of Calamity.

The many Lords stood staring at each other. It was the female thundergiant who spoke up eventually, “How do you want to do this?”

“The Lords of Calamity are like leeches feeding off the origin force of Dreamscape, causing the world to continuously regress. You put a heaven burden on it, so the World Will wants to reverse the tide and weaken your supply of dreamforce. That’s why it gave birth to a Nightmare Absorbing Physique. All of this was just the beginning…”

Leylin spoke frankly yet with conviction.

“The origin force of Dreamscape is not endless, yet you lot feed off it without end, causing the world to deteriorate. Even you yourselves have to suffer the consequences… I wish to make a pact of the truesoul with all of you, the entire astral plane being the witness. Each of you will be given a fixed time to absorb origin force, and it has to be within the limits set by the world. On top of that, you have to find ways to make up for the World Will’s losses.

“In return, the World Will will assure that you have an endless
supply of peak dreamforce. There will be no more weakening, and you won’t have to seal yourselves in…” Leylin’s voice was extremely loud, the power of laws it carried causing the Lords of Calamity to ponder his proposal. Although they were extremely unhappy at not being able to ceaselessly absorb the origin force, it seemed much better if dreamforce was not weakened. Moreover, they wouldn’t have the threat of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique looming over their heads anymore!
A gree to these conditions, and I won’t aggress in the future. We can even explore the World of Gods together, the bounty you’ll receive there is more than what you can accumulate here in ten million years…”

Even though Leylin’s intention to tempt them with the World of Gods sounded easy, there were some difficulties he had to cross to get to them. The hardest was to showcase peak rank 8 might, suppressing all these rogues with the fear of death. He then had to deal with Dreamscape’s World Will.

Molina looked at her peers, answering after a period of hesitation, “This matter… We have to discuss…”

“Of course, discuss away. I’ll be here waiting.” Leylin smiled and waved the Lords of Calamity on, watching their consciences converse.

These consciences conversed at the speed of thought, discussing a thousand years of information in but a second. It wasn’t long before they gave Leylin a reply. The three-headed beast came forward, its goat head speaking as the human one showed a strange expression, “We accept, on the condition that you ensure the World Will honours its side.”

“Of course!” Although he knew what this creature was scheming, Leylin still readily agreed.

“Very well… Upon our truesouls as beings of law, in the name of the astral plane…” The Lords of Calamity looked at each other and
nodded their heads, making an oath with their truesouls. There was simply no pretense from the reverberation of the truesouls, and they also could not mask themselves in front of Leylin’s power of original sin anyway.

“Alright!” Leylin turned around and looked at the endless void.

“O’ Mighty Dreamscape, I will need you to honour this agreement!”

*Rumble!* Boundless dreamforce gathered, forming a pair of furious eyes. The entire Dreamscape was seething in rage!

From the World Will’s point of view, the successor of the Nightmare Absorbing Physique was supposed to kill these Lords of Calamity. Yet here he was, making agreements with them instead. This was blatant betrayal!

Purplish-gold lightning made of origin force converged in the area, possessing enough power to destroy beings of law. The crimson runes on Leylin’s body writhed, as if wanting to break free.

*Rumble!* A mighty bolt of destruction crashed down, and the three-headed creature sniggered, “Haha... You’re just a lackey reared by the World Will, and you actually want it to subjugate? The World Will is strong enough to take your bloodline back and not allow you to ever resurrect... Everyone, attack now! This Nightmare Absorbing Physique has a death wish!”

The human face of the creature guffawed. As for the green snake head, it opened its giant jaws and the laws of corrosion formed an acid rain.

“Don’t you think I’m aware of your thoughts?” However, Leylin remained extremely calm under the double team of the lightning and rain, rendering the other Lords of Calamity uneasy, “I am different from the Nightmare King. All of my powers are of my own, and that is the same for dreamforce...”

He reached out, and a platinum barrier formed around him. The origin force armour that could repel World Wills showed its prowess, pushing Dreamscape back as the power of original sin
ruled behind his back. The Nightmare Hydra roared, continuous streams of attacks shooting forth from its nine heads to destroy the lightning in the skies.

“Don’t think that you can control me like you did the Nightmare King!” Leylin had always enjoyed freedom, so how could he have been made an example of by the World Will? Having obtained dreamforce at its peak, Leylin had constantly conducted research into absolving himself of the World Will, controlling the crests and troughs of the energy himself. With his power nearing the peak of rank 8 and his being within the World of Gods, Dreamscape had found out about it too late.

Right now, Leylin wished to suppress the Lords of Calamity and the World Will, becoming an arbitrator between the two parties. The power of original sin rumbled and repelled the dreamforce, causing the clouds in the skies to dissipate. Having repelled the World Will, Leylin turned around and faced the three-headed beast.

“What are you trying to do? I…I…I…” The green snake head muttered, and the black goat head looked at Leylin in disbelief. It had never imagined that the Nightmare Absorbing Physique formed of dreamforce could repel the World Will itself!

“Impossible!” it raged silently, but it was too late.

“Watch, this is the outcome of betrayal.” Prideguard was activated, forming a silver-white armour around Leylin’s body strong enough to repel the attacks of some beings of law. Leylin moved through the corrosive rain unaffected, turning Seven Sins into a morning star that roared mightily as it landed on the creature.

Boosted by the Blessing of Greed and Fury Amplification, a mountainous force smashed the human head down in an instant, following up with the other two heads as well. Massacre Amplification and Death’s Decree erased all traces of the creature’s existence, completely removing any chances of its revival.
The Lords of Calamity just stared blankly as Leylin’s mace devoured the flesh of the beast, augmented by Gluttony’s Devouring and Sloth’s Recovery. Even his armour was repairing itself. What had they just seen? One of their strongest fighters had been killed by Leylin just like that?

“I don’t feel any of the black goat’s aura… It has three lives, and was supposed to be able to be reborn in filth…” The thundergiant grew extremely conflicted. Although she’d never liked that creature, she did acknowledge its power. However, it had died just like that! Its chances of revival were taken out, and it had been done in for good!

“So, who’s next?” Having restored his peak dreamforce, Leylin looked around in satisfaction at the fearful faces of the Lords of Calamity.

“We will comply to your wishes, mighty Nightmare King!” The Eye Emissary yielded first, bowing towards Leylin with newfound sincerity.

“Don’t call me the Nightmare King, I am the Lord of Original Sin, the controller of all evil across the astral plane.” Leylin tossed the remaining carcass of the creature into the void, “Don’t act like I’m bullying you, hurry and eat it.”

The greatest difference of a World Will from a mortal was that it was an artificial intelligence, caring only about benefits. Seeing that it couldn’t take Leylin down, and with something to gain from the agreement with the Lords of Calamity, it would acknowledge reality.

Space ground the body apart like a millstone, using the creature’s energy to replenish the world.

‘Giving your leftovers to send the World Will away, that’s really…’ the other Lords of Calamity criticised Leylin quietly, but they very soon changed their attitudes, “Mighty Lord of Original Sin, you are
the arbitrator between us…”

“In my name of the Lord of Original Sin, I promise to bind both the Lords of Calamity and the World Will of Dreamscape together fairly, all for the sake of the world’s development…” Leylin raised three fingers of his right hand and swore an oath. His voice was imposing yet dignified, and the dark path of original sin that had traces of blood rumbled behind him.

“With my path as a witness…”

*Rumble!* The entire Dreamscape trembled, as if excited upon seeing a new future, and it cheered… Powerful dreamforce circled around Leylin, peaking with the support of the world. It turned denser in colour, as a sort of innate change occurred within it. It turned into a higher power, containing an indescribable strength. It was like all of the world’s evil and dreams had been fused together, surging into Leylin’s path of original sin and making it look even more perfect than before.

“Nightmare force!” The Eye Emissary exclaimed. This was the peak of the World Will’s essence, something even the peak rank 8 Nightmare King hadn’t been granted in the past…

Be it the Lords of Calamity or the Nightmare King, they had only a vague understanding that nightmare force was the essence of the world. Even if they were the spawn of the world, they could not receive the power of nightmare force. Leylin had instead obtained it through his own powers!

The Lords of Calamity stared at Leylin, each with different feelings…

……

Each of the Nine Hells in Leylin’s divine kingdom had been separated up in an orderly manner, large groups of petitioners scurrying around the place performing their own tasks. Everything
was being built up for the future, and this divine kingdom of epic proportions gave them the best protection. Disasters wrought havoc in the prime material plane, and the gods were restless, giving them valuable time to carry out their missions.

Leylin’s clones walked out of the borders of his divine kingdom, where Mother Core’s clone had been waiting for some time.

“This new power that you speak of is about to come?” Mother Core looked at Leylin.

“Of course, do wait and see…” The clone laughed in reply, opening a passage in the crystal sphere.
Rumble! The sheer number of rank 8 auras that appeared at that moment caused Mother Core to be startled. “The power of calamity… You managed to get the Lords of Calamity on your side?”

Leylin only smiled, shifting the conversation as several powerful figures passed the crystal sphere to enter the World of Gods. “The World of Gods… A place of eternal obscurities and mysteries. The Final War has begun once more…” The Eye Emissary and Molina led six more Lords of Calamity into Baator, standing proudly in the void.

Just the gathering of such powers caused calamity to spread throughout their surroundings, causing space itself to wail. Having reached an agreement with the World Will, their powers had been restored. Free of their constraints, they no longer had to seal themselves in that jail of a world.

Leylin, the arbitrator of the contract, was someone neither side wanted to offend. He could suppress the World Will himself, and with nightmare force his power had only increased. The Lords of Calamity came along as free help.

“These eight are about as strong as intermediate evil gods. Combined, they have the power to topple an entire continent…” Leylin smiled.

Of course, he didn’t oppress or exploit the Lords of Calamity. He was working together with them to gain more benefits. Dreamscape
had given them a tremendous supply of energy to restore their powers, and now they had to go look for resources to replenish the world’s origin force. What better a place to plunder than the World of Gods?

There were two other people here alongside the eight Lords of Calamity. One of them was a young lady with extremely fair skin, her face quite exquisite and impish. She surveyed the world around her, and eventually sighed, “The World of Gods… I’ve returned…”

This was Shar, the goddess-turned-Magus who had come to rule the Shadow World. She had become Leylin’s subordinate after being forced into submission, being brought here for the war.

“Hmph…” Another young lady harrumphed from beside Shar. She had a bewitching expression on her face, looking more mature than her companion as each strand of her hair hissed quietly in the air.

“And the Snake Dowager!” Mother Core recognised this familiar face.

The Snake Dowager did not dare to be tardy when speaking to this peak rank 8 Magus, and she bowed slightly, “Mighty Protector of Earth! We meet once again…”

“Ten rank 8 Magi, together with your clone and Magus body…”

Mother Core was now completely in shock.

This force could have helped them greatly in the last battle. Now, it was even more important to her, being able to influence the entire war.

“And you…. Your path is already perfect, and you can advance to the peak of rank 8 at any time you want…” Mother Core looked at Leylin with a complex expression. Although she’d regarded Leylin highly, she’d never thought he’d come to be of the same realm as her so quickly. His strength could not be ignored.

“Mm… The nightmare force completed my foundation. Now all I have to do is completely devour Asmodeus’ essence, fusing all my laws together to form the perfect law of original sin…” Leylin
didn’t bother to conceal his path and plans, there was nothing now that could stop him. “I won’t participate in the war before I’m at the peak of rank 8, and nor will they...”

Leylin pointed at the ten rank 8s following him, and none of them raised an objection. This surprised Mother Core even more; she’d originally thought they were just allies, but he had astonishing control over them so it couldn’t be. With eleven rank 8 Magi now standing guard at Baator, even greater gods could do nothing about Leylin’s advance.

This was an absolute confidence, garnered from the strength Leylin blatantly displayed. Each of these existences would be of great use to entire factions!

“I’m about to finish up with my preparations, how are things on your end?” Leylin looked at Mother Core.

“You can be at ease. I already called out to the World Will, it’s slowly recovered over time and will be ready. The World of Gods was injured once again recently, so it’ll be at a disadvantage.”

Mother Core’s eyes reflected the depths of the Magus World, “We’re in the process of preparing the spell formation to bring the will here. Five Magi of laws are standing guard, and we’ll soon be able to bring the Magus World’s will into the World of Gods immediately, changing the laws of this world...”

The few sentences that Mother Core spoke revealed a groundbreaking plan. The audacious Magi actually wanted to bring the Magus World’s World Will into this world, destroying the Overgod in one blow!

“It’s hard to predict success, but even in the worst case both parties will suffer grave injuries which will reduce the suppression on us.”

Leylin naturally knew what these Magi were planning. Just like the gods, they didn’t want their World Will to awaken completely. Even he wasn’t willing to just let the World Will wake up and suppress him. He thus had no objections to their general plan.
“Alright. I’ll enter a long period of seclusion now. I’ll leave this to you…” A phantom of the Nightmare Hydra appeared, bringing Leylin’s Magus body to the deepest parts of his divine kingdom.

“Let’s go, everyone.” The A.I. Chip’s clone body had already reached the peak of intermediate godhood. Bringing the ten others, it shot into his divine kingdom like a shooting star. Even without the defence of a divine kingdom this lineup would put fear in the heart of any god.

‘He’ll most likely be peak rank 8 the next time he appears…’ Mother Core looked at the divine kingdom, and light flashed in her eyes before she slowly vanished into the void.

All these events had been noticed by the gods. However, a force of eleven intermediate gods with the additional support of two greater gods and a divine kingdom derailed all their plans. Even Tyr and Lathander wouldn’t dare to fight them within Leylin’s divine kingdom.

As for Distorted Shadow, all traces of him had vanished. Nobody knew what he was scheming…

The plague in the prime material plane continued to spread, and the plans to move the worshippers into the divine kingdom had begun. The Filthy Evil Eye and the Chaos Lord stirred up even more havoc in the Abyss, joined by new beings of law as they headed deeper and deeper.

The aftershocks of dazzling fights lit up the skies of the various worlds, but Baator remained abnormally silent. Leylin immersed himself into finalising and perfecting his path of original sin, and the others had their own tasks to carry out. His clone managed everything else well.

……

Within the prime material plane, Doron struggled to bring the last
of his belongings to a cart and tie them with a rope. He felt like all the events of the recent past were a dream. Having expressed their rage, the burly man and Red Nose had disappeared. Farmers and even more thugs surrounded Old Holdman’s villa, taking everything. Not even the door was left behind. They’d plundered everything in sight before setting the house on fire, reducing it to nothing. Doron pitifully dragged himself back home, hiding in there endlessly in fear that guards would barge into his house and hang him at any moment.

After several days of silence, he had realised one fact. The lord had forgiven them, not arresting them at all. The event caused him to kneel on the ground and pray to the gods for their blessings. However, everything in Old Holdman’s house had been recovered a few days later. Doron then realised that his life hadn’t changed in the slightest, the same as the rest of the thugs.

However, Doron was simply unable to comprehend it. That mountain of barley and grain, the gold and silver cutlery, that stack of gemstones… Where had they all gone?

He suddenly diverted all of his anger into a pawn shop in the town, but he didn’t dare to take action. After all, the pawn shops were owned by a powerful lord. Speaking of that lord, Doron remembered that villa that had been razed to the ground. Everything that Old Hoffman had owned now belonged to the him. Somehow, such a normal thing now angered him to no end.

“Those noble lords… They would rather watch the people die of hunger and sickness, and are not willing to even give a bronze coin away…” Normally, he would not harbour such treacherous thoughts, but it was different now…
oron raised his head, looking at the murky dark skies. Crows were circling above his head, an omen of death. A powerful plague had swept across their town once Old Holdman passed away. Some said it was a curse cast by the resentful wizard just before he died. No matter how much Doron was unwilling to believe it, it was true that the plague had caused many deaths. Even his best friend Mitch had fallen, and he was only saved from the brink of death due to Priest Rockefeller returning.

“Thank you, Lord Ilmater, for allowing Priest Rockefeller to return, and remove this curse from me…” he prayed piously.
If not for the village priest returning, he would’ve had to report to the underworld. He believed this had to be decreed by the Lord! If not for him, why would Priest Rockefeller return to them and cleanse them of the plague for free?
However, he was extremely regretful that he had to leave this place of birth, his home.

“Listen, in the name of the churches… Everybody of Blackwood Village has to move to the county town and wait for further commands…” A knight ordered.
Doron looked around his cart. There were a few scattered villagers around, each carrying heavy bags like ants coming together.
This was the decree of the Lord, and the reason Priest Rockefeller had returned. All of Ilmater’s worshippers were to be moved to the
county town, an order that made Doron feel like the feudal lord had gone crazy when he first heard it. Were there enough homes there for them to live in?

Rockefeller had promised them that there were. As the plans for migration began, the members of the cities were given priority before the villagers.

“Wuu... My Lord, look at the wheat here first... They’ve grown so well... Let Old York reap them before leaving...” A farmer was carried out of the fields by a knight. He was holding onto the knight’s thighs, begging him to be allowed to stay.

“No means no, do you want to disobey the Lord’s order?” The armoured knight kicked the farmer away in annoyance.

Truth be told even the knight found the lord’s orders odd. After all, his own manor and lands were located here as well. However, this had been decreed by both the church and the state, and they’d promised to compensate him for his losses. If not for that, he would not have complied.

‘I should be given at least twice the lands I have now!’ he thought with resolution. He grew louder and more violent with the villagers, scolding or even whipping them if he was unhappy.

“One by one, be inspected by the priest...” The end of the village road was swamped with carts containing the young, the old, and the disabled. Rockefeller had brought a batch of new priests and acolytes along, standing by the road and inspecting the health of every villager with a fever or bloody cough.

Those who had been diagnosed or suspected to have the plague were quarantined, and the people who passed were reportedly handed medicine that was said to repel any plagues.

The fear of the deadly plague was strong enough reason for the villagers to migrate. If some still wanted to stay of their own free will after all these rounds of intervention, the lords and the priests wouldn’t bother with them anymore.
“The numbers are here, Father. Over a thousand out of the 4382 villagers have died, and the final number of those willing to migrate is 2900.” An acolyte brought a parchment with a report on it to Rockefeller. He had round glasses on his face that seemed somewhat comical, but his report was given solemnly. “Almost three thousand worshippers huh? Very well, continue!” Rockefeller nodded his head in appreciation. He looked at the snaking queue, making up his mind, ‘These worshippers of our Lord must definitely be moved to a safe place!’

After the discussion in the Celestial Hall, the gods had all made it a priority for their churches to move their worshippers into their divine kingdoms. Separating the worshippers by god and moving them proved to be an extremely complicated process, troubling even the almighty gods themselves. Such big movements couldn’t ever be completed without several hundred years.

The Magi wouldn’t give them such time. Plague after plague struck the prime material plane, ravaging the lands and killing countless lives. Several rounds of discussion later, the gods had just decided to demarcate areas and move everyone within.

Towns like Blackwood Village with only one god were easy to move, which is why they were the first to be moved. Rockefeller had been sent back to the village to perform this task.

“Why, Priest Rockefeller, why… I am devoted to the Lord, but my son and daughter were taken from me… Why?” An old man in ragged clothing appeared at this instant, kneeling before Rockefeller as he cried.

“How dare you!” The priests and acolytes of the church grew furious. Saying such a thing in the open was blasphemy! “Have faith… The almighty god of suffering wants us to push through this turbulent times…” Rockefeller waved the soldiers away, personally bringing the man to his feet, “Appropriate measures of agony are needed… Our Lord is kind and benevolent,
he will forgive this small mistake of yours…” Rockefeller was a complete priest, and held the highest position here. His word was law.

“Oh… God, I have sinned…” The white-haired old man weeped even louder than before, causing Doron to feel sorry for him from the side.

That small crooked body reminded him of something he’d tried to forget. He shook his head and managed to push his cart forward. Just then, Rockefeller’s voice entered his ears.

“This tribulation is not something that the gods gave mankind. It is instead the beginning of the end.”

“The end?” Doron was startled, and he halted unconsciously.

“Plague, war, famine, death… These are things long recorded in the prophecies of the church…” Light glowed from Rockefeller’s face, causing him to look even more holy than before.

“The end of the world is fast approaching, and evils of foreign worlds have infiltrated our lands. Only the most pious of worshippers will receive salvation, obtaining eternal life in the divine kingdoms of the gods…”

Rockefeller’s proclamation of the end of the world had been prepared by the church after a long period of work. The scenario it described frightened Doron out of his wits.

So the plague that they had experience was not the end, but just the beginning. Under such an influence of the proclamation, coupled with the threat of the plague and death, even the free spirits now obeyed orders and hurried along to the county town.

Rockefeller’s proclamation continued, “These evils will infiltrate our earth and plunder everything we have. Life, flesh, and souls… These perpetrators of the end, these reapers of death… They are called Magi!”

After many millennia, the taboo of the Magi finally began to circulate around the World of Gods once more. The Second Dusk
Black County Castle was only a day and a half of a horse ride from Blackwood Village. It was where Mitch had worked as a servant to Mystra’s church, a place Doron had visited once before in his life. When he saw the tall limestone walls, Doron heaved a sigh of relief. He had never expected that this journey would feel this long. He looked around apprehensively, noticing the tired and weary villagers. Some of them were even injured, and the group looked like refugees from a disaster.

This poorly formed procession of villagers would never cover much in a day of travel. Even Doron himself had tossed away many of his belongings. With the mess of this migration, many bandit groups had tried to rob them along the way. There were too few guards and priests to protect them completely. A bandit had even charged up to Doron himself once, something the carpenter never wanted to experience again in his life.

“We can move to the divine kingdom of the Lord now that we’re here, obtaining eternal life?” Doron’s resolution had only lasted this far because of Rockefeller’s constant boasting about the divine kingdom. However, very soon he discovered that he had been thinking too much.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* There were large groups of troops around the city walls, all carrying spears that put great pressure on the villagers.

“Listen up! There’s too many people coming over, so there will be a queue. Nobles will have priority, before villagers with an identity. As for the rest, wait outside the walls…” Many knights were shouting orders from horseback as they moved around the group. There were simply far too many tents outside the city right now,
making it seem like a massive refugee camp. Priests could be seen from time to time, casting spells or passing medicine on. Temporary church buildings glowed with a golden light, protecting the area around the city.

The churches protected the people from the plagues. If not for them, with the weak immunity of these refugees and the large numbers of people, the plague would reap all of them and ruin the gods’ plans.

“Alright then… Nobles first…” The carriage of the lord slowly entered the city, as Doron watched on outside. He didn’t know why, but the fires in his heart blazed even stronger.
Doron felt like there was an endless sea of people around him, more than he’d ever seen in his life. Villagers continued to stream in towards the city from the regions nearby, quickly forming a grave problem with law and order. The food in the city was limited, so the villagers had to find ways to feed themselves. Almost every day there were some corpses being carried out of the refugee camps. In such harsh conditions, Doron waited another two weeks before it was his turn.

“Listen up! Across you is the divine kingdom of the Lord, Ilmater. Listen to the valiant spirits and petitioners when you enter…” A bishop was stood upon a platform, a large gate radiating golden light beside him. The church ordered the refugees into a line, having them make their way to the gates.

‘Behind that gate is endless fertile soil, free from plagues and disaster…’ Doron looked at the people ahead of him and the golden gate, eyes brimming with hope and longing. Finally, it was his turn. ‘New life, here I come…’ His eyes had grown wet. He sighed, preparing to bid farewell to his former life.

*Rumble!* It was then that a massive earthquake occurred.
“What’s happening?” Doron was knocked to the ground. He looked on blankly as his surroundings turned dark. A winged serpent with nine heads blotted out the sun as it projected a shadow on the ground.

The entire prime material plane trembled, and the gods seethed in
fury. It was at that moment that the connection between the Celestial Planes and the prime material plane was cut off. Looking at the golden gate shatter, Doron cried out in utter despair, “NOOOOO!”

……

Some time ago, within Leylin’s divine kingdom in the Nine Hells. Shar slowly walked into Leylin’s church, looking at the clone seated on his throne, “I’m done with the construction of the Shadow Weave. The wizards can only download rank 9 spells and below right now, but that should be enough…” The impish girl handed over a ball of purple essence to Kukulkan. Even now, the fact that a mere clone wasn’t weaker than her let her understand clearly just how freakishly strong Leylin was.

“The core of the Shadow Weave?” The clone took the orb with a half-smile on its face, staring at the former goddess. Leylin had originally thought Shar would have some problems with a war against the gods, but it seemed like she didn’t care much about that. Put another way, her one desire was conquest, and she was especially happy to receive the inheritance of her dead rival.

“You’ve done well…” Blue light flashed in the A.I. Chip clone’s eyes, and the core was scanned in one glance. Then, under Shar’s surprised expression, he tossed the core back to her. “Finish rebuilding it, and have the Shadow Weave replace the original. You have more experience in this than me…” The clone smiled gently at Shar, “I’ll leave the matter of recruiting the wizards to you as well.”

“…..” Shar cast a complicated gaze at Leylin. He’d asked her to build the Shadow Weave once more and recruit wizards to their side! A few moments of thinking easily told her how much she could gain from such a thing.
Even if the Shadow Weave didn’t grow to be as strong as the Weave that was shared amongst the gods, and the wizards would face a great loss, those who were left were still enough to support an intermediate god. Leylin had granted her such a thing so easily! Shar remained silent for a while, finally asking, “You broke through?”

“The path of original sin does not confound me at all…” Leylin replied in a profound manner.

“Go… Take the remaining wizards under your wing… Careful with those who have too much faith. We don’t want you becoming a god again…” Leylin warned.

Shar nodded and walked out expressionlessly, only leaving behind a divine clone that looked at the phantom in the sky. Given her abilities, it was easy for her to inherit Mystra’s position and build a coalition of wizards. After all, she’d been a Goddess of Magic herself in the past, and she understood the World of Gods like the back of her hand. She’d be able to complete this task quite smoothly.

Furthermore, even if the wizards were useless for now their knowledge and wisdom remained intact. With experience in spellcasting, they also had a tremendous trove of knowledge. Being in dire straits, as long as Shar tossed a few bones down the alley they would pounce over like hungry mongrels.

These wizards still had their strengths, and once they had recovered their spell slots, they would regain their standing in the prime material plane. With Leylin’s body advancing to the peak of rank 8, equivalent to greater gods, he needed to make preparations for war.

……

A loud hiss resounded within the depths of Baator, all negative emotions being consumed without end by the Nightmare Hydra.
The power of emotions became a black mist that shrouded the space nearby.
The power of emotions condensed to a liquid form in the centre of the mist, encasing a black mountain made of crystal. Leylin’s eyes opened up from within, his aura now more profound and unfathomable.

“The path of original sin represents all the evil in the world. Gluttony, Greed, Wrath, Pride, Lust, Sloth and Envy… As long as intelligent life is present in the astral plane, these sins will never cease… The seven deadly sins will provoke massacre, resulting in death… This cycle shares its life with the very astral plane itself…” Leylin felt something profound at that moment, the path of original sin appearing behind him with an explosion. It seemed to embody all the evil in the world, reaching a perfect form.

The Nightmare Hydra hissed once more, as amber light flew out of its jaws. The essence of Asmodeus was sealed within in the form of a bug, containing the root of all evil.

“The core of the seven sins, the last item of evil I need to fuse into my path of original sin… The Supreme of the Nine Hells, Asmodeus!” The path of original sin surged forward, devouring Asmodeus whole.

“NO!” Asmodeus let out one last roar as he was being devoured, but that was futile. The power of original sin completely dissolved and decomposed him, ridding him of impurities as a dark glow of light representing the essence of evil blended into Leylin’s path.

[Beep!]
The path of original sin was now complete and flawless. Leylin’s truesoul rejoiced, merging completely with his path.

“Now… Nightmare force, fuse!” The more powerful version of dreamforce shifted easily under Leylin’s control, flooding into the river of original sin. It refined his main body, making him capable of resisting the attacks of origin force itself. The path of original sin
was like the path of the very world!
“From this moment forth, I am Original Sin. As long as the power of the seven sins remains, I shall never perish!” A ringing filled the universe as the perfected path of original sin transformed into a giant Leylin with a tattoo of the Nightmare Hydra on its back. All of Leylin’s laws came alive, his body filling up with their strength and causing many worlds to tremble.

[Beep! Host has perfected the path of original sin, advancing to peak rank 8…] [Beep! Host’s soul has undergone a transformation, system upgrade in progress…]
The A.I. Chip that was akin to Leylin’s soul gave him some alerts before going silent. Leylin couldn’t feel how much time had passed before it booted up once more, perhaps it was a day or perhaps it was several years.

[Beep! System upgrade complete. Law database completed, beginning research on laws of spacetime…
Host has advanced to peak rank 8. Stats have changed, recalculating…]
Leylin’s stats were refreshed in an instant.
[Name: Leylin Farlier, Rank 8 Warlock (Limit).
Bloodline: Nine-Headed Nightmare Hydra (Complete)
Soul Status: Soul of Original Sin (Peak).
Laws: Devouring (100%), Massacre (100%), Death (100%), Greed (100%), Wrath (100%), Pride (100%), Lust (100%), Sloth (100%), Envy (100%)
Path: Original Sin (Perfect)
Innate Talent: World Devouring.
Abilities: Dreamscape Vision, Origin Force Detection, Illusion Proficiency, Warp Reality, Epic Massacre, Death’s Decree.]
Leylin took a quick glance at his stats. He was overwhelmingly powerful now, far surpassing even greater gods, but he was more
concerned with the other information that was displayed. ‘Almost everything says I’m at the peak… Does that mean I’ve walked to the end of my path as a Magus?’
The path of Magi was a path of truth, each and every step wrought with peril. Many, many worlds of all sizes and powers existed in the astral plane, but few could climb to the peak. A peak rank 8 had reached the limit of all aspects, leaving no more room to grow.

The only way to advance further was to use their own bodies to nurture the power of spacetime, successfully advancing to become rank 9 Grand Magi. Fail and one would be wiped from the sands of time completely, without even a chance to resurrect.

“My path shall not stop at the peak of rank 8. I WILL become a rank 9 Magus, an immortal being that transcends all existence!” Leylin’s giant figure shrunk back down to the size of a normal human being. The dark mist turned into a regal robe that draped itself around him.

“The Lord of Original Sin!” Everyone congratulated Leylin upon his return. His advancement caused waves of energy to ripple throughout the astral plane, his proclamation as the Lord of Original Sin being heard by every being of laws. There was no pretense in the congratulations of Mother Core and the rest, only containing respect for truth and improvement.

“You’ve waited long enough,” Leylin said with an apologetic face, seeing the suppressed killing intent in the Lords of Calamity, “But now, we may rejoice. The real battle is about to begin!” Leylin had promised Mother Core that he would participate in the
Final War once he advanced to the peak of rank 8. Now was the time to fulfill that promise!

*Boom!* The perfect power of original sin spread out from Leylin’s arms, turning into a crimson-veined darkness.

The Lords of Calamity avoided his gaze with fervour. Seeing Leylin seemed to remind them of their worst nightmares. The same went even for Mother Core, her large eye shifting away as she didn’t dare to make eye contact.

“Innate spell— Nine-Headed Nightmare Hydra Transformation!” Leylin’s body was wrapped up by the power of original sin, expanding as it morphed into the physical form of the Nightmare Hydra. As the primogenitor of the entire bloodline, each piece of his flesh was incomparably real.

*Hiss!* The Nightmare hydra spread apart its nine pairs of wings, blotting out the entire world as it vanished from the divine kingdom. The black mist whizzed through the air, roaming freely around the lower planes as he reached the Barrens of Doom and Despair.

Leylin followed the oozing river, flying across the Fugue Plane before the gods could even react. He’d reached the end of the Barrens of Doom and Despair in an instant, arriving at a large door located at the Peaks of Flame.

The Nightmare Hydra roared as its nine serpent heads spat out the powers of laws, immediately blasting the large gate into bits. It continued moving all the while, not even stopping at the entrance.

……

The gods entered a frenzy the moment the Nightmare Hydra crossed the gates. It was like a calamity had befall them.

“It’s the nightmare of the gods! The Night Serpent is here!” Many avatars arrived at the Celestial Hall, their eyes filled with worry.
“The final prophecy of the Goddess of Prophecy before her fall, the Serpent of the End… Are we at the end times?” Oghma clutched his beard in vexation.
“Forget why he knows about the secret in the Barrens of Doom and Despair, do we have the time to get there?” The Morninglord was someone who believed in action.
“No… That area is the end of all things. Teleporting there is impossible even for deities, and it’s the same for the oozing river and the Fugue Plane…” another greater god answered.
“Then why could he traverse those lands so quickly?” Lathander frowned, and Tyr did as well.
“Because his speed already surpasses all of us. He represents the end of everything, containing the same essence as the Barrens of Doom and Despair. He won’t be suppressed by the oozing river and the Fugue Plane…” Oghma collapsed to the ground in despair. “We can only hope that the final guardian will emerge victorious…”
All the gods cast their gazes behind the door, despair and more complicated emotions filling their faces.

……

*Boom!* Past the door was a land of unimaginable heat and blazing fires. A boundless ball of fire floated in front of Leylin, radiating large amounts of heat.
“The sun…” The Nightmare Hydra roared in indignation, activating the power of Prideguard. The heat that could melt all metals didn’t affect Leylin one bit.
“Let’s follow the prophecies of the gods then, and end the world!” The Nightmare Hydra roared and moved forward.
“Wait, Magus!” Just as Leylin was about to take action, another massive figure walked through the door and stopped him in his tracks.
This was evidently a god, yet he took on the figure of a beast like a gigantic monster. The golden light radiating from his body was at the peak of power, and he gave off an ancient, archaic aura. “The Father of Dinosaurs, Creator of Chult, Ubtao! You’ve been missing for millennia from the Church of Nature… So this is where you were all this while…” Leylin’s voice sounded from the hydra’s central head.

“To stop the Serpent of the End and protect the world is my calling!” Even if this monstrous god looked extremely malevolent, he actually radiated the power of justice and hope. “Guarding the sun and protecting the world may be righteous to you, I admit. But… Defeating the entire World of Gods and winning the war for the Magi is true righteousness for me…” Leylin had nothing much to say to someone who stood on the enemy side.

*HISS!* *ROAR!* Two massive figures collided in the void, the aftermath of their collision so strong even the sun had to avoid the energy. *Boom! Boom! Boom!* Space was destroyed in their fight, disintegrating into the tiniest of pieces as multiple worlds rumbled and roared. They hadn’t felt such destructive force since the dusk of the gods.

“You are indeed a powerful god of ancient times, but your time is over. You can’t compare to me in any aspect, Ubtao…” The Nightmare Hydra roared, and under Leylin’s powers of original sin Ubtao’s body was riddled with holes. The peak of a path’s power, replenished continuously from the beings of the entire astral plane, let Leylin exceed the peak of rank 8 in power. Even Distorted Shadow in his prime would have to give way to him!

“Protecting the world is the mission the overgod gave me.” The powerful beast roared out, a raging aura forming at its jaws. “Stubborn…” The Nightmare Hydra opened its jaws, chomping
down hard on Ubtao. A crimson light appeared from the vertical pupil, entering Ubtao’s head.

“Ubtao!” The fortified defences of Ubtao’s soul were corroded away just like that, and Leylin appeared in front of him with Seven SIns in hand.

Leylin roared out, swinging a large battle axe down on Ubtao’s truesoul. A forthright middle-aged man parried the attack, using a dinosaur claw that looked like a crossblade.

“Wrath!” Leylin shouted just one word in the moment of the collision. The head of wrath appeared behind him, causing Ubtao to lose his concentration. Although his soul could not be corrupted by Leylin, a momentary lapse of awareness was a fatal mistake in such a high-level fight.

*Boom!* Seven SIns broke the dinosaur claw apart, continuing downwards as it pierced into Ubtao’s skull. It carried the powers of Death and Massacre, destroying everything.

*Boom! Boom!* Ubtao’s truesoul was destroyed, followed by his body constructed with divine force. An ancient god fell just like that, causing multiple worlds to weep.

“No one, no thing can stop me!” The Nightmare Hydra howled out, heading above the sun.

The sun of the World of Gods was quite different from the other stars of the astral plane. It was extremely large and hot, almost as big as a world! It was projected into multiple different planes, providing a continuous stream of energy to the Celestial Planes and the prime material plane.

It was at this moment that a dark shadow appeared above it.

“Innate spell— World Devouring!” The Nightmare Hydra body grew incomparably large, and its nine heads formed into one huge maw, hissing as a terrifying stormy black hole appeared at the Devouring Serpent’s head. Heat could not escape, nor could small particles, not even light could escape this!
The black hole grew larger and larger, growing into the maw of a beast that swallowed the entire sun whole!
*Boom!* Beings of multiple worlds saw a horrifying scene— A winged serpent which covered the skies had gulped the sun down!
The sun of the World of Gods represented the law of light, being the source of energy for most secondary planes. The prime material plane, the various outer planes, even the divine kingdoms of the gods had grown accustomed to harnessing its energy, making it a natural condition for many things to grow. Such things were normally taken for granted. Only when it was lost would one experience true horror! Multiple worlds entered darkness when Leylin devoured the sun, causing many beings to weep and wail. They all prayed to the gods, but to no avail.

Lathander’s face grew ashen in the Celestial Hall. He was the Morninglord, someone closely connected to the sun’s glory. With the sun devoured, he suffered heavy injuries.

*Crash!* His pedestal shattered immediately as he fell down the ranks. He’d become a lesser god in an instant, about to fall if not for several other greater gods helping him.

“Argh… My sun! Dendar!” He roared in rage once his divine force stabilised, his expression contorting.

However, several evil gods looked at him in a different manner. The Morninglord was someone at odds with evil, and he offended them regularly. If not for the Magus infiltration uniting them all, they would definitely have attacked and killed him right away.

*Boom!* Multiple explosions sounded out in the Celestial Hall, as all the gods of the sun and light fell from grace. Lathander was actually lucky, several intermediate and lesser gods had just died.
immediately! It was like when the moon exploded, their fates extremely pitiable.
The gods in the Celestial Hall blanked out, unable to recover from the shock.
“Not good!” Oghma exclaimed, “Our plans to migrate our worshippers to our divine kingdoms… Even if we can create light and heat inside our divine kingdoms, we won’t be able to fulfill the requirements… Our gates were built on the sun’s energy, they’ll need to be rebuilt!”
Divine kingdoms were supported by faith, but they also used several other energy sources as well. The sun was chief amongst them. Gods were extremely stingy beings, so they’d rather use convenient things like the sun and the Weave to reduce their consumption of divine force when they constructed their divine kingdoms.
With the ability to warp reality, gods could indeed create small suns in their divine kingdoms. However, this would consume divine force, a precious resource that came from the faith of their worshippers!
The prime material plane was wrought with disaster, and the Weave had been destroyed. The gods would have to struggle if they couldn’t expend their resources at times like these, but Oghma had discovered that they were at a deadlock. They needed worshippers to win this war, but now they needed the power of faith to move their worshippers into their divine kingdoms… They didn’t have the resources right now to do so, which meant their worshippers would dwindle as the prime material plane was wracked by disaster.
This vicious cycle was the root of Leylin’s strategy, striking at the foundation of the gods and shattering it. His own divine kingdom was in Baator, and in the worst case he could just turn all his worshippers into devils. The worst that could happen was the loss
of a puppet controlled by the A.I. Chip. On the other hand, the
gods would have to give their very lives up!

……

Doron sat paralysed on the ground within the prime material plane,
unable to bother about the belongings that meant the world to him.
He was staring up at the sky, his mouth wide open.
What had he just seen? Nine heads had suddenly appeared in the
sky, merging into one and swallowing the sun! And then?
Darkness! Darkness enveloped the world, causing him to strain his
eyes to see anything at all. He almost felt like he was dreaming.
The camp had descended into chaos. Wailing and weeping
resounded throughout the city, the end of the world that the priests
had warned them off had actually arrived! The innate fear that
caused was enough for a person to suffer a mental breakdown!
“Don’t panic, be still!” Holy light radiated from the priests’ hands,
barely illuminating their surroundings. Doron saw only fear on the
faces of the others, some of them scared silly. The sun being
swallowed was like the skies collapsing!
“Check the teleportation gate!” the bishop ordered.
The priests went up quickly, but after several failed attempts they
reported back helplessly, “Not good… The door to the divine
kingdom has been destroyed. The Lord’s divine kingdom has
shifted as well, so we’ll need to relocate.”
“Then what are you waiting for?!?” The bishop frowned, but very
soon his expression changed again.
“The Lord has sent a decree! Stop all plans to shift the
worshippers…” Fear shrouded the bishop’s face as he spoke of the
holy decree word by word.
“What?” The priests were shaken. All along they’d believed that the
Lord’s divine kingdom would save them even if the prime material
plane lost the sun and headed for doom. However, the plans had been halted. It was like they’d been kicked off the ark that was supposed to shelter them from the apocalypse!

The news wasn’t kept secret, spreading very quickly. The refugees quickly began to howl and clamour, with even the paladins and knights unable to maintain order anymore. They themselves could no longer determine their own future and fate! There were even some who joined the ranks of the refugees in their outburst.

“Everyone, quiet! We…” The bishop saw things go south, but it was already too late to fix the situation. The clamour grew louder and louder, eventually becoming a violent mob. Doron was caught up as well.

A wave of rioters surged forth, stomping, kicking, and cursing incessantly. Many were trampled to death under the stampede, grabbing the priests and night in despair as they used any and every weapon available to them to vent their resentment and despair. Some officials were even torn to shreds.

The mob finally lit a large fire, tossing everyone who couldn’t escape inside it. The priests and knights were gobbled up by the fire as the rioters watched their struggles in happiness.

*Buzz!* Doron was at the outer perimeter of the rioters, still managing to maintain his rationality. It was at this moment that his ears picked up a large buzzing noise.

“Strange, what’s that?” He raised his head, seeing a giant green bee in front of him. It opened its mouth, letting more bugs fall down.

“Argh!” The rioter closest to the fire had his face pierced by the vile bugs, each the size of a human head. Their sharp stings immediately pierced through his skin, causing him to leak blood profusely as he screamed in agony.

The wailing suddenly stopped. The bug had already pierced through his brain.

“Argh… Monster! MONSTER!” Screams resounded as everyone
beat a retreat, clearing up the area quickly. Adventurers and soldiers moved forward, attacking the bodies of these bugs with sharp swords. A corrosive green substance fell to the ground as the bugs died, but the few kills had no impact whatsoever. The bugs began to blot out the skies, with hundreds of thousands, even millions of them descending upon the prime material plane. Several Professionals were killed in a short time. The buzzing continued to grow louder, coupling with the screams to form a sort of living hell. “It’s fire! They were attracted by the fire!” Doron’s outstanding observational abilities led him to discover that there were more bugs gathered around the fire. He screamed out his discovery, dropping the torch in his hands as he ran into the darkness.

……

“Our Excellency Leylin, what do you think of this batch of Lightkiller Bugs?” A giant colony of hives had been erected within the marshlands of the prime material plane, giant green bugs swarming out from the hives. Leylin was alongside Mother Core, looking at these bugs that blotted out the sky, destroying everything in their paths. “This is a lower bound of the colony’s strength. Once enough flesh and souls are harvested, it will evolve to produce stronger and stronger units comparable to Morning Stars and even Breaking Dawns… The strongest broodmothers could even become beings of law!” Mother Core seemed to be flaunting to Leylin. “There’s already forty different hives here. Our final target is to have them kill all the humans in the prime material plane…” she said indifferently. Even billions of lives were of no concern to an existence on her level.
“I really do have to thank you for your help.” Mother Core was thankful for Leylin devouring the sun. Her innate speed couldn’t let her enter the Barrens of Doom and Despair as fast or as easily as Leylin could from the Fugue Plane, so she’d only been able to watch on as Leylin completed the task. “With you devouring the sun, our preparations are now complete…” Mother Core’s massive figure appeared, and a killing intent emanated from her body. “In this Final War, we must destroy the glory of the gods!”
Darkness! Many worlds had been thrust into a sudden darkness.
The sun in the World of Gods was the core of many planes, and it was undoubtedly essential to the growth of many beings. Days after Leylin devoured it temperatures had plummeted down to 0 degrees in the various planes. The frigid cold seeped through the worlds, affecting the prime material plane greatest of all.
Without the radiance of the sun, life had entered a standstill. The gods lost a powerful source of energy, and were rendered unable to bring more worshippers into their divine kingdom. The survivors of the prime material plane would come to call this period the Dark Ages, a time ruled by death and solitude, famine and plague, a generation where all hope was lost.
Three days after the sun was devoured the prime material plane had turned into an icy hell. Large areas of growth withered within the month, dying without sunlight to nurture them. All food supplies were depleted by the year, as famine struck the world.
However, even the weakest and smallest of lives were astonishingly resilient. The creatures of the prime material plane were like cockroaches in the darkness, eking out an existence even as civilisation was replaced by savagery. Even the beloved humans turned into barbarians.
Year 5 of the Dark Ages, where Faulen Island had been located in
the past.
A portal opened up from Baator, and Leylin’s figure stepped out. Although this was just a clone, the might of a being of law was still enough to shake the lands.
“It’s already become like this?” His mind scanned his family’s lands in but a moment. The pearl of the south was now filled with death, the grey limestone walls dusty and about to break. Skeletons littered the ground, with absolutely no traces of human life in the vicinity. Even other creatures were few and far between.
*Chirp!* Several black figures scrambled out of a pile of bones, blinking their large green eyes. Their pupils were like two jade flames in the darkness as they looked around and hurriedly left the area.
“Rats?” Leylin expressed kindness and gentility to such weak creatures that would never be able to harm him. If not, a tiny bit of his Magus radiation would kill all life here.
“Adaptation to the environment is necessary, huh?” Leylin recorded the figures of those rats in his A.I. Chip. They were ten times as large as they were before the Dark Ages, the fur changing colour from black to more grey as it grew thicker to keep them warm.
“The mutation is too fast… just a few years. Is this happening under the influence of the laws in the world? The Overgod is still unwilling to see the prime material plane perish just like that…” Leylin sighed.
Evolution normally required tens or even hundreds of thousands of years, determined by the natural environment of the creature. However, even though it was sleeping, the World Will could bring about such changes much faster, giving the inhabitants of the world a chance to adapt to their surroundings. As the rats scurried away, the change was now more evident than before.
“So the animals had their genetics adjusted to the environment… But the humans seem to be a little bit slower…” The island told
Leylin enough to extrapolate to the current situation of the world. “The gods are paying more attention, it seems like they still want to migrate their worshippers…”

Leylin’s motive of devouring the sun wasn’t just to destroy the prime material plane. The World of Gods had a unique system of laws to it, in which the sun had played an extremely important part. Its loss was like a building losing its foundation, causing many mysterious changes like the shift of spacetime coordinates. This affected the divine kingdoms as well. The gods fumbled to find the new coordinates of their divine kingdoms, unable to attend to the changes in the prime material plane. It had taken them years to regain their bearing, stabilising their own camps in the prime material plane before beginning to launch a counterattack.

Leylin’s clone came to the prime material plane under such circumstances, exploring the changes caused by the Dark Ages and the influence of the gods on the land. “Desolate… Incomparably desolate…” The clone retracted all the radiance of its aura, looking just like a regular wizard as he made his way towards the continent.

Even the depths of the ocean had few creatures now. Even as the perpetrator, Leylin released a sigh as he saw these circumstances. Of course, there was a limit to his sympathy, it wasn’t like he’d make a different decision if the events played out the same way. The only good gods to the Magi were those who’d fallen, so they would take all measures to weaken their opponents.

……

The disorderly survivors in the mainland were unaware of the events in the southern seas, and even if they did they wouldn’t care one bit. Right now, they’d already grown completely numb to everything.
Surviving and fighting were their only concerns, civilisation forgotten as savagery took its place. The glory of the prime material plane was gone in a mere few years, only leaving behind zombies in its wake.

“I’m going out!” Doron gripped the jacket and leather armour on his body. The dirty leather gave off a putrid stench, filled with traces of blood. However, despite the number of patches on it, he hugged his buffed jacket tightly, giving him a bit of warmth in the frigid cold.

“Come back safely!” a voice sounded from the short room behind him, a pair of beautiful eyes in the doorway. The eyes seemed to fill his body with vigour and strength, making him forget all regrets as he left the hut and strode forward.

The icy winds whistled, the walls of the city encased in a layer of ice that caused Doron’s memories to switch to his warm hut. However, the hunger he felt right now reminded him of something; it wasn’t just himself, the lady waiting for him back home would die of hunger if he couldn’t find anything.

“Damn it!” Doron cursed, clenching the only valuable item he owned, a gleaming sword, and walking forward.

He’d been living this life ever since the Dark Ages, thinking many times that this was only a nightmare. However, this nightmare was so long it caused him to weep.

He’d only found the secret of the bugs by chance back in that camp, being able to escape because he was at the edge of the mob. He’d conveniently helped himself to a dead paladin’s sword then, the same sword that was now his treasure.

However, all of his luck had been used up in his escape. There was still plenty of food. Even if crops couldn’t be grown anymore, they already had abundant harvests. He’d roamed through an empty village, using its resources to feed himself for over a month.

However, those days did not last. Food ran out, plague spread once
more, and the bugs stole the lives of the people. He tried to join several mercenary groups, but he couldn’t last for more than a month. Either the plague or the hunger took them every time, leaving him alone behind. The bugs had gotten smarter as well, attacking the humans in groups. What terrified him was that those green Lightkiller Bugs were the lowest life forms of the beasts. Their strength had grown continuously over the years, and Doron had met one the height of a two-storey building already. It seemed like a massive red bug that crunched a paladin in one of his parties into two pieces. Several close shaves with death later, Doron had settled himself in this area. He looked around once more in caution. This place was a normal gathering point, seeming like an extremely large refugee camp, but there were specialities to it. The walls were extremely thick, and windows were small or nonexistent. Spears were laid around the circumference, making it look like a small fortress. After the survivors had escaped from the first onslaught of the bugs, they had depended on these defences. Some of the huts even had bloodstains of the bugs on their roofs. A distant warhorn sounded at this moment, and more warriors walked out of their rooms and converged into a large army. The atmosphere grew stifling, and all that could be heard was the cries of the women.
Doron surveyed his surroundings. There were many hardened soldiers here, determination written on their faces. These armoured troops merged into a main group as they walked along the streets, forming a powerful black current. The soldiers varied in age, from those just in their teens to old white-haired men. There were even some muscular women amongst their ranks. Although this made them look extremely disorderly, that was suppressed by their unique auras. The struggle of the Dark Ages had awakened the cold nature in them that allowed them to survive countless life and death situations. They shared spaces with the bugs and the beasts to eke out a living, struggling no matter where they were. The people from before these times would not be able to comprehend their thought process. Even a former carpenter like Doron was confident he could kill one of the town guards of his old village head on now. ‘I have to return, I have to. For Lina!’ Doron made up his resolve as he opened a large metal gate. Thinking of the figure waiting for him at home, he felt rejuvenated as he moved out. Although he didn’t know why he’d been soft enough to save her back then, Doron had found a partner who could understand him and whom he depended on as well. Their relationship was what lasted him through countless encounters that would have killed him, even doctors saying he was a man who’d climbed out of his
‘I don’t know whether I’ll live to tomorrow, but the next time… I’m asking for her hand…’ he rubbed his chest, exhaling a cold breath.

“Doron!” A powerful yet skinny black hand clapped on Doron’s shoulder, the impact almost causing him to fall to the ground. Doron turned around, elation in his expression.

“Big Brother Jimmy!” The person who’d patted him was a tall lanky youth. He had a cow-horn helmet, carrying a large battle axe by his side. Even if the blade was chipped, the sheer weight of this hundred pound weapon would cause others to flinch.

There were several other warriors beside him, forming a small party. Jimmy seemed to be held in high regard amongst them.

“Haha, kiddo. I knew the Lightkiller Bug acid wouldn’t kill you…” Jimmy seemed extremely excited as handed a leather pouch to Doron, “Come, have a drink!”

“Ooh…” Doron salivated, taking a careful sip after he heard several gulps around him. A powerful sour and spicy taste ran down his throat to his stomach, causing him to feel much warmer than before.

“Strong wine!” the warriors around him said in envy. Any strong wines went for sky-high prices in these times. A wine pouch was akin to a second life in the frigid wilderness.

Many members of the party looked at Doron strangely, but eventually turned away after he handed the pouch back to Jimmy. Who were they kidding? The Skullcrusher’s name resounded throughout the region. Even if Jimmy looked like a pole, the battle axe in his hands had already smashed in the heads of several people larger than him.

Sometimes, survivors were more dangerous than the bugs. Just for a small bag of wheat, clean water, or even a piece of jerky, two people would fight to the death. Doron himself had encountered
this scenario many times. However, because of this, he had a good impression on Jimmy’s generosity. Being able to retain some of his principles and kindness at times like this was really rare. Even if Jimmy had wished to make use of him, there was nothing wrong with it. After all, such charisma and sincerity was rare even amongst leaders. If Jimmy wanted to use him, that meant that he had a certain value, did it not?

Doron clenched onto the fine metal sword in his hands. “Haha... How is it? Are you still joining us for the mission this time?” Jimmy rubbed his bald head, his blue eyes shimmering with sincerity.

“No... I need supplies to tide through the cold this time. I also need to get medicine or healing scrolls, Lina’s caught a cold recently and I’m rather worried...”

Doron’s face turned red. Even Jimmy’s party would have to sacrifice lives to get everything he needed.

“If it’s like that...” Jimmy rubbed his chin.

“So I’ll be going solo this time...” Doron said after some hesitation. Jimmy grabbed his shoulders and guffawed, “I never thought that our little Doron would turn into a big man... Hahah... Very well! You can take an additional set from my spoils!”

“Th...Thank you, Big Brother Jimmy!” Doron was extremely moved, and tears almost streamed down both his cheeks.

“Don’t be this wishy washy like a woman. Hurry and follow!” Jimmy hoisted his battle axe and walked out of the fortress doors. This fortress had tall towers in the outermost areas, the central regions being fortified as well. Even if the outer portions were breached they could fall back and tighten the perimeter. The leader was at the centre, alongside the army and the Professionals. Classism had persisted into the dark ages. Someone like Doron could only squeeze his family into the
outermost unprotected regions. They were in the most danger from the beast horde, surviving the greatest casualties. This was why their homes were built like small forts. Doron’s greatest wish other than marrying Lina was to bring her to the core of the fort. Rumour had it that there were powerful spellcasters guarding the area, making it the safest place in the mainland. Each and every family had the provision of red wine and bread. Even before the Dark Ages, this was something that Doron had yearned for.

‘However… The wizards, haven’t they already lost their abilities to cast magic?’ After all, he was still marred with guilt about the events in Old Holdman’s villa. Still, the fortress relied on magic to repel the bugs and survive, so there was no need to question its existence. Doron looked towards the outermost fortress walls.

A sturdy granite tower was present there, with traces of blood and internal fluids of the bugs. Each platform had a small black cannon perched atop it. Bright runes glowed inside the cannon shafts, reassuring the people who saw them. This wasn’t the first time Doron was looking at these cannons that reaped lives in every bug attack. Even powerful red worms abhorred them.

*Rumble!* A powerful mechanism was unlocked, drawing down the bridge as a large troop of cavalry wearing exquisite armour trotted out in rank and file, causing many mercenaries to look on in envy.

This was a regiment of Professionals, possessing astounding battle might. Once someone was drafted into the army, even if they weren’t sent to the core they’d be sent to relatively safe areas and given a steady supply of food. This was a lifelong dream to many commoners. The strongest adventuring parties paled in comparison to the soldiers, making
them look like a counterfeit product. Few people, like Jimmy, didn’t feel inferior to the troops, instead competing with them on the same level.

‘One bug is worth one contribution point. I already have 90, so I only need ten more to enter the inner areas and become a member of the army…‘ Doron blazed with desire. After all, this meant that he was one step closer to his dreams!

‘Big Brother Jimmy had already amassed the necessary contribution points, but because he had several brothers staying outside, he has remained there too…’ Doron was extremely impressed with Jimmy.

*Thud! Thud!* The army entered formation at this moment, causing a solemn atmosphere that silenced the adventurers.

*Whoosh!* The cold wind blew, causing the Silverymoon flag held by one of the knights to flap in the wind, radiating a strange glow. Jimmy blinked his eyes, and saw several black spots in the skies. Without knowing why, even with the absence of the sun, his eyes had grew accustomed to the darkness. At the very least, with the help of the stars in the skies— what was said to be the light of the gods’ divine kingdoms— he could already see clearly in a fifty metres radius.

Those several black dots grew larger, and when they closed in, the onlookers exclaimed in surprise. It had been the figures of several wizards flying in the air.

“My people…” A female wizard wearing silver white armour spoke. Her appearance was obscure, yet her voice carried the vicissitudes of time, drawing the alarmed voices and gasps of the people.

“It’s the city lord!” “Silverymoon Queen! Woo! Woo!”

Doron bowed just like the rest of the people in the surroundings. No matter what, being able to seek protection under her when the world had ended was enough for him to express his gratitude and thanks.
It’s just that the queen standing in mid-air didn’t have much joy on her face, seeming to have aged greatly.
The former queen of Silverymoon had become the lord protecting the human fortresses of the north. The last hope of the human race looked down on the army beneath her, a bitter smile hidden beneath her glory.

Being Mystra’s blood daughter, Alustriel had once felt like the sky was going to fall when Mystra died. Even though she was a powerful legendary wizard with a trace of divinity in her blood, she knew full well that leading the humans of the north without her mother’s support would be extremely difficult. The Orc Empire was looming right over their heads…

On top of that, the Silverymoon Alliance was a union of magic, led mainly by wizards. The loss of the Weave absolutely shattered their unity.

Fortunately, the orcs had come to an agreement with them due to the invasion of the Magi. They didn’t send troops to wipe the alliance out.

However, the situation had turned worse after a few days. The horrifying plagues had swept their lands, and the Dark Ages had come knocking on the door.

Alustriel herself was a lucky soul. Her peak legendary power allowed her to cast spells independently of the Weave, so despite stumbling along the way like a child at first she managed to gain the ability to protect herself. Wizards under rank 20 were like unborn fetuses, unable to survive being without the Weave, but legendary
wizards were at least newborn infants at this moment, able to tide through the destruction of the Weave.
On top of all this, the trace of divinity she’d inherited from the Goddess of the Weave allowed Alustriel a chance to succeed her mother as the Goddess of the Weave. The gods assisted to secure the regime of the Silverymoon Alliance, albeit barely.
Still, she had to abandon a majority of her lands and build this final fortress, holing up against the catastrophic attacks of the insects. If the orcs weren’t considered, the survivors in this camp were the last lifeblood of the north.
‘Am I doing the right thing?’ Alustriel was a queen in an era of peace. Even in such critical moments, she was wracked with indecision.
“I have updates from the south, my Queen!” Old Mage Elminster stepped through a portal at that moment, dressed in a simple flax robe as he stood behind her like a humble follower bowing to her words.
“I’ve just obtained confirmation that a nest of the bugs popped up about a hundred miles south of us. The Gloomwood has been corroded by marshland…”
Alustriel’s heart skipped a beat. This was definitely the worst news for this camp! She’d come to learn that the tide of bugs originated from the massive colonies of hives. The appearance of a nest in an area spelled its death, an endless wave of insects engulfing the entire land and turning it barren.
“Damn it… We put so much effort into making this place arable… We’ve already cleared the lands… Just one harvest…” She lowered her voice, “It’s too late to move again. It took all we had to build this fortress. Even if we wanted to, the bugs are everywhere now. Where can we go?”
Looking at Alustriel’s mournful smile, Elminster’s heart was filled with bitterness.
“How are the wizards doing?” She seemed to make up her mind about something after a long time.
“Still training. Even the best of them can only use rank 4 spells, and this was someone at rank 20 before the catastrophe, just a step away from becoming legendary…” Elminster heaved a sigh.
They’d had to return to their roots since the collapse of the Weave, using the elemental particles of the world to gather energy from their spiritual force and cast spells. Thankfully wizards had always been performing research on the arcanists, and finding training methods in the field wasn’t a big problem.
They’d set up everything pretty soon given Silverymoon’s accumulated information and their talents. Even the gods couldn’t resist using the arcanist inheritances in this situation. The churches didn’t abolish the prohibition openly because that would tarnish the gods’ dignity, but the research was no secret.
Sadly, the ‘talented’ wizards all turned inferior when it came to the arcanist inheritance. The convenience the Weave had afforded them had caused a drop in their quality. Only with it destroyed did many wizards begin to realise how incapable they were. With their rigid lines of thought, some older wizards didn’t even acknowledge the possibility of changing their path. They were having suicidal thoughts.
In spite of Alustriel’s unconditional support and Silverymoon’s rich supplies, the best they could do right now was still a rank 4 spell. Detached from the Weave, the wizards now realised how hard spells were to control, demanding more ability and finesse. Many died trying to cast the new spells.
“Leave the last batch behind, but get all the rest.” It took a long while for her to make this tough decision, and a teardrop rolled down Alustriel’s cheek. She arrived above the army, waving them to silence.
“These bugs have taken our everything, and now they’re coming
for our lives.” Her voice echoed throughout the region, “A vicious colony has popped up close to us, less than a hundred miles away. We’re out of supplies and fortification scrolls, and we won’t be able to built another city…

“Tell me, then. ARE WE GOING TO KEEP SILENT IN THE FACE OF THIS THREAT?”

Doron held tightly onto the weapon in his hands, as if that was the only way he could get a sense of security.

“So we’re actually in such dangerous situation?” A silent thought of fiery anger surfaced in his mind.

“No! I belong to this place, I will never leave!” Jimmy started hitting his shield with his axe.

“NEVER! WE WILL NEVER LEAVE!” A fearsome growl shook the entire fort.

“Great! I shall accompany you all on this crusade, let us fight for our survival!” Alustriel promised.

“FOR SURVIVAL!” The army set off in swift fury.

Alustriel kept to her promise, leading the troop from the front on her white horse. Her divinity had allowed her to maintain her power through the collapse of the Weave, so the presence of such a powerful leader definitely lifted the spirits of the army.

“……

“Our team will be in charge of the patrol today.” The army winded along on its way forward. Unlike a regular troop, Doron’s team was a little disorganised. They weren’t in high spirits regardless of Jimmy’s encouragement.

The city was their last hope. If this hope was broken, even Doron would lose the courage to survive in this chaotic world.

“Come with me, Doron. Let’s go on patrol!” Jimmy waved his axe, unable to withstand the atmosphere.
“Alright.” Doron didn’t like the stifling aura here either, so he quickly stood up when Jimmy called him. Shrouded in darkness, the continent was full of unknown dangers. Even though many creatures had died out, unable to adapt to the new conditions, those that didn’t had become much more cunning and cruel. Doron had heard rumours of creatures from the Underdark, driders and horrifying claw monsters that wanted to use the loss of the sun to blast out from their prisons and wantonly invade the mainland. They were backed by their own pantheon, headed by the Spider Queen, Lolth. Her decision was absolutely correct. The celestial gods had to give way to the Underdark in the Dark Ages for manpower and supplies, letting them migrate from down below to the mainland. The drow were rumoured to have built a city on the surface already. The rumours said men were the lowest of slaves amongst the drow, alongside other species. They could be sacrificed to the gods at any time. Despite all this, a large number of wandering species were seeking shelter from the drow just to survive. ‘What a pity… Lolth is an evil god, and my Lord…’ Doron’s eyes flashed in struggle, but he soon turned firm. Even though the gods weren’t as glorious as they once were, their decrees remained meaningful enough to influence the entire prime material plane. The battle between good and evil had cast a shadow in Doron’s thoughts…
“Wait a moment, look! What’s that?” Doron was still indulging in his flights of fancy, so Jimmy had to pin him down to a muddy hill. A large amount of disgusting dirt entered his mouth, so rotten it could make one puke for days and lose their appetite for months. However, Doron couldn’t care less about that. He hadn’t even gotten the time to clear the dirt from his mouth before he saw numerous shadowy figures approaching them at great speed. The other party moved at great speed, reaching them almost within seconds. It was the Mounted Wolves, the nightmare of the north!

“ORCS! IT’S ORCS!” Jimmy shouted, his face warping as he saw the orcs. Their races had long been at war, killing each other even if they met accidentally.
*Whoosh!* The wolf rider arrived before them in a split second. Escape was not an option.

“Am I going to die here? Lina…” Extreme shock and fear caused Doron to turn dizzy, feeling like these were his final thoughts. However, just as the poor souls got ready to sacrifice their lives for the north, the situation moved in an unexpected direction. The Mounted Wolves did indeed surround them, but they were not harmed. The riders instead parted, making way for a werewolf on a humongous mount.

“I am the Golden Ivory Warwolf, leader of the Mounted Wolves. I need to see your leader, right now…” he said stiffly.
Jimmy and Doron looked at each other as they heard this, feeling like they’d gained a fresh lease of life…

High up in the sky, Orc Emperor Saladin was looking into Alustriel’s eyes, “The survival of the orcs has been threatened by the colonies as well. The Lord has ordered us to stand on the same side as you, facing the threat of the Magi.”

“Saladin! Your hands are stained with the blood of the north! Your people are our arch enemies! Even if we’re wiped out by the bugs we won’t—” a wizard beside Alustriel tried to intercept them.

“This is an order by the gods…” Elminster expressed a different opinion, slowly taking a pipe from his mouth.

“My Queen…” the other wizard shouted eagerly, looking at Alustriel’s hesitant face. He seemed to hate the orcs greatly.

“I’ll have no more from you…” Alustriel waved the wizard off, turning to Saladin, “I agree.”

“Great!” Saladin nodded, “I’ve brought the Thunder God’s Hammer, and I’ll also send out the best of the Mounted Wolves and battle orcs. You’ll be grateful that you made this decision today…”

“I only hope you’ll keep to your promises,” Alustriel looked Saladin deep in the eye. “However, we still have been enemies for a long time. I need your army to take a different route, we can meet at the swamp.”

“You did well…” Elminster sighed in gratitude after Saladin left.

“No. I feel like I’ve changed a lot, becoming more cruel, more of a realist…” Alustriel’s reply was indifferent.

“Trust me, my good daughter, this is all part and parcel of our lives…” The Old Mage blew a ring of white smoke.

“So you thought I was a little girl for the past thousands of years? You’re such a pedophile!” Alustriel stared at Elminster, an unnoticeable redness covering her face.

……
An agreement was made with the orc armies, and Jimmy and Doron took the chance to return safely to their team. However, Doron seemed to have his reservations about something. He tried to say something multiple times, but eventually stopped himself. He waited until everyone was asleep, moving close to Jimmy and asking him in an extremely low voice, “Hey captain, are the orcs really here to help us?”

Jimmy turned his body and replied in a blurry voice, “I think so. Nobody dares to disobey the gods in this world, except those demonic beings of other worlds…”

‘But aren’t we still at war with them?’ He wanted to say vendetta, but Doron didn’t recall any good friends or relatives dying at orc hands. Many had instead been killed by the town guard or in robberies, so it seemed even less applicable.

“Understand this, Doron, politics is complicated… Alright, I’m really tired today, stop irritating me!” Jimmy turned his body again. Doron just looked over the flap of the tent, an extremely complicated emotion in his gaze…

*Thud! Thud!* The wooden wheels of the carts hit the uneven surface of the ground as they moved along, releasing dull thuds due to their heavy loads. Doron was following Jimmy aimlessly, his beloved sword hung at his waist. The dark circles were obvious under his eyes as he seemed distracted, he obviously hadn’t rested well last night.

The army assembled into the dragon formation, all equipped with weapons and shields. It scared any predators away, making the trip relatively safe.

“Doron! Get back on your feet, do you want Lina to become a widow?” Jimmy patted Doron’s shoulder. Suddenly, the corner of his eye shifted.

“Careful!” Doron had noticed the shadowy figure speeding through
the bushes at almost the same time. A silver ray darted past him before he could act himself, shooting from Jimmy’s hand into the bushes. A shriek sounded out. “Awesome!” “Haha, captain’s the best!” “We’ve got something!” Everyone gathered around, looking at Doron with green eyes as he pulled a giant rat out of the bush. There was a silver blade stuck in its skull. “Mmm, such great meat. You’re definitely treating us tonight!” Everyone’s eyes glowed as they stared at the prey in Doron’s hands. Food was scarce in the Dark Ages, meat a dish only the higher classes could afford. Normal people hardly ever saw some. “Of course!” Jimmy looked around, agreeing without hesitation, “Everyone is invited to our campsite!” All the travellers cheer at his generosity, immersing themselves in a pool of joy. Doron looked at them with envy, ‘That’s right, I should be more hardworking, at least I’ve got to bring something back! The leaders will take care of the orcs…’ However, his determination was crushed the very next moment. A huge ball of fire shot out of the sky, aimed at Jimmy’s position. A great explosion tore Jimmy’s body apart in moments, charring his incomplete corpse. Having run over to get the prey, Doron had escaped the worst of the damage. Still, despite avoiding death, a large amount of his hair was burnt even at that distance. Looking at that region swarming with victims of the disaster, his eyes glittered coldly. “The Fireball spell… Wizard attack!” Doron knew from Holdman how powerful wizards were. Realising such powerful spellcasters were his opponents, he didn’t just go up wildly to avenge his captain, instead rolling into the bushes. He’d made the right decision, as a wave of terrifying spells followed. Cloudkill! Summon Monster! Ice Awl! Banshee’s Wail! Volley after
volley of mid-ranked spells crashed down on the army, with dazzling light. The powerful spells reaped numerous lives.

“It’s an attack from the sky!” Doron’s eyes were wide open as he tried his best to raise his head. He saw huge pairs of wings supporting dark shadows in the air, obviously Flight of The Dragon.
The dark shadows were dressed in traditional wizard robes, but one thing was different— There was a pair of twinkling purple eyes on their dark robes, alongside a holy black emblem surrounded by a purple ring.

“Shadow wizards!” Alustriel and Elminster responded immediately. They had few high-ranked and legendary wizards on their own end — It was a slap in the face for the Silverymoon Union famed for its magic to lose in that field.

They got ready for the counterattack, but the shadow wizards retreated into a portal.

“This is just the beginning!” their leader warned before stepping into the portal.

The portal disappeared immediately. Alustriel and Elminster, who were both trying to cast Dimensional Anchor, turned a ghastly pale.

“Human wizards, why are they attacking our army?” Doron’s eyes were filled with fury. He couldn’t understand why they were attacking at all.

“Also… What the heck are the shadow wizards?” He thought of this new term he’d heard today. He looked at the scattered army and the burning remains of his friend’s corpse, clenching his fists tightly and swearing in his heart,

‘No matter what, Jimmy, I WILL avenge you!’
D id you see it?” Alustriel didn’t care at all about the mess her soldiers were in, instead turning and staring at Elminster with the most serious face she’d ever made.
“Yes…” Elminster took out his pipe, but he wasn’t in the mood to enjoy it, “Black robes, purple eyes, and the purple-rimmed black badge… The Goddess of Shadows is back…”
“The Lady of the Night, Shar…” Alustriel grew fearful and troubled at the prospect of having to face the being who once competed with her mother.
“Mm… She’s also built a new Shadow Weave, and although it isn’t spread everywhere and can only support rank 9 spells at the most, it’s still a great attraction to all the wizards below the legendary realm…”
Elminster knew well how rational the wizards were, about their realistic mindset. They were weak in faith from the start, and that had only been amplified by Mystra’s death. The loss of their powers was sad and humiliating, causing many to enter deep despair. Some ignored the teachings of the gods to commit suicide!
And Shar had come to them in their darkest moments, organising the shadow wizards into a group. If they joined, they could regain their powers!
People only treasured what they had once they lost it. Learning that it would not be easy to gain their power again, those who become
shadow wizards grew more devoted and passionate. Their kind could even conduct trades with demons and devils for power, subordination to Shar didn’t even need a moment’s thought. Even Elminster would have been shaken by the idea of joining the shadow wizards if not for the fact that he was already at the peak of the legendary realm. Had he lost his powers with the destruction of the Weave as well, he would have made the same choice. Of course, that was if he hadn’t offended Shar by his closeness to Mystra.

“These spatial fluctuations… They already have legendary wizards?” Elminster frowned.

“They came to stop us from destroying the colony. They’ve joined up with the Magi…” As a peak legendary wizard with the blood of a Goddess of Magic, Alustriel had a lot of information channels in this regard, far more than the others at the same level.

“The shadow wizards have joined the Magi… Does that mean Shar defected?” The fact weighed down on the father and daughter far more heavily than anything before it. Magi and gods defecting had never happened since the two races had first made contact. If Shar had joined the Magi, it would cause great pain to everyone in the World of Gods.

“Those who disobey the gods will be punished by the Celestial Hall.” No matter how weak his faith was, external factors forced Elminster into becoming an absolute devotee.

“I hope so as well… Anyway, this attack exposed our shortcomings. We need more guards, and an emergency plan…” Alustriel was tired, “Please invite Saladin here, we need to combine our armies immediately, or at the least keep in contact. We can’t afford another attack…”

Alustriel had just ignored the hatred between the humans of the north and the orcs, throwing away her reputation and the trust of her men with this invitation. The appearance of the shadow wizards
obviously had great impact on the Silverymoon Alliance.

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Two days later, the combined army of humans and orcs finally arrived at the swamplands. The purple silt here was putrid, streaks of green mist wafting in the air to form endless hallucinations. The insect colonies caused the complete destruction of their environments, turning the lands into a poisonous swamp that was a haven for the bugs.

“With how fast it’s growing, the broodmother will wake up soon…” Elminster pointed at a scene captured by a spell within a temporary tent, a look of concern on his face, “Once the broodmother matures, the drones and workers will begin invading the surroundings. They will breed much more powerful bugs, or even another broodmother… All information points to one thing; if we can’t stop this right now, our chances of success are nil.”

Alustriel and Saladin were watching from a round table, seated upright alongside human and orc officers. The subordinates were staring at each other in silence, sparks of anger in their eyes.

“That’s certain. If we fail this time, the environment here will be wiped out. Plants, animals, water, food, orcs, humans… We’ll all be killed as the bugs continue to make more and more broodmothers and start new bases…”

Alustriel continued slowly, “If this continues, the entire prime material plane will be gone. I ask you… No, I BEG you… Please let go of past hatred, and focus on the fight for the future!”

“I agree with the queen,” Saladin looked at the orc leaders, “If you disobey, I’ll behead all of you and shove your heads up your asses!”

With the great pressure of the Lightkiller Bugs bearing down on them, as well as Saladin’s authoritative power, things worked out
quite well. The orc leaders acknowledged his words even faster than the humans.
“How much time do we have left?” Saladin looked at Elminster.
“Twenty hours, maybe less…” Elminster blew out a few white rings of smoke.
“Then let us begin right away. The Lord is ready to descend.”
Numerous runes appeared on Saladin’s body, “He’s promised to give us more power, sending an avatar to help out in the operation.”
“Thank you, for all you’ve done!” Alustriel stood up and bowed deeply.

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The army prepared itself quickly under the great pressure.
“Wizards, prepare! Breeze!” Elminster took charge of the wizards, having them gather all the wind elemental particles around them.
A gentle breeze swept past the region. With the help of a giant formation and his own legendary might, he amplified the wind as he fused all the minor spells together.
“The product of hundreds of years of study into the arcane… Legendary fusion spell— Tornado!”
Strong gusts of wind quickly formed a tornado, blades of air howling as it sucked in everything around it. The storm swept across the huge swamp, dispersing the green mist and sending the endless water flying into the sky.
Once the tornado dissipated, Alustriel appeared in front of the swamp.
“Mass Summon Earth Elementals!” A ring of brown light shimmered in her hands, pulling the elemental particles and teleporting several earth elementals to the prime material plane. The elementals roared out as brown energy particles gathered into a
spell. 
*Transmutation: Dirt to Stone!* 
The assistance of the many elementals allowed a large amount of brown light to cover the swamp. Soft rotting mud began to condense, hardening into granite. It forced the bugs out of the mud, into a final battle. 
Loud buzzing resounded from numerous pairs of wings, a horrifying green cloud of insects approaching their position. From weak bees to powerful beetles and terrifying longhorns, the sheer size of the army caused a great commotion amongst the troops. 
Standing tall amongst the insects were numerous wizards, all dressed in black robes. 
“These bastards, they came to help the colony!” Alustriel flushed with anger. Even if she’d known they were working together, their actions had stepped past her line. 
“You’ve done a great job, leave the rest to me!” Saladin stood up, moving to the front of the 
“In the name of the Lord, please grant me power!” An enormous hammer with violet lightning around it appeared in Saladin’s hands, an unseen power showering down upon him that caused his body to grow in a split second. 
*Rumble!* The very next moment, the strongest of orcs had become a towering giant! This was the legendary spell, God’s Descent! 
*Boom!* The earth shook with every one of the giant’s steps, countless streaks of lightning crashing down from the sky as the Thunder God’s Hammer grew to match its owner. 
“You bloody bugs, I will slaughter you all!” Saladin shouted, swinging the hammer down. 
Purple lightning swept across the sky, covering almost everything in the region. A streak of silver shot through the darkness, bringing light and hope as wave after wave of insects were burnt to the
ground. Many of the shadow wizards were wiped out by a single barrage.
“Attack!” The Mounted Wolves roared, charging into the deepest regions of the swamp as they followed the new path.
“CHARGE!” The humans were red-eyed with fury as well, fighting for their lives.
This was a battlefield of blood and fire, being fought with a dense sea of bugs.

Doron sliced another approaching bug with his longsword, splitting it apart into two. The originally sharp blade was now covered with the disgusting fluids of the various bugs, its edges chipped and jagged from use.

Any normal day this would’ve caused him great heartache, but at this point he didn’t even have the time to examine his sword properly. The army was like a lone boat in this sea of bugs, being rocked by wave after wave of death.

Death lingered around them without end, and all Doron could do was to wave the sword in his hands around numbly, killing one monstrous bug after the last. His comrades kept falling all around him, humans and orcs alike, but he no longer had the energy to care. He pushed forward without rest, stepping over the corpses of his comrades in pursuit of their common goal: he had to destroy this nest of evil!

In this war for survival, there was no way for them to withdraw and escape. The orcs and humans formed the most cold-blooded of armies, killing all deserters without hesitation even if they were related.

“Hah… Am I going to die here?” Doron was breathing roughly, his powerless body feeling like lead.

However, just at the moment all of his stamina was about to be
exhausted, as he was about to be drowned out by the sea of bugs, things suddenly grew bright once more. A golden light cleaved through the sea, allowing him to see the purple nest at the heart of the marshland.

Hymns began to sound in the surroundings, “Under the rays of the gods, all courageous soldiers shall be fearless…”

Doron immediately brightened up. He managed to find the wizard who’d killed Jimmy, grievously injured and fleeing into the distance. A surge of strength came out of nowhere as the power of vengeance gave him the strength to stand once more.

He stared hard at the wizard, evidently injured from a previous encounter. The man’s black robes were now in tatters, traces of lightning burns left behind on his body. He didn’t even have the strength to open a portal anymore, only able to crawl to the depths of the swamp.

Doron followed closely. The wizard obviously wanted to escape, and his path was already offset from the nest of the bugs.

“Stand right there, you darned bastard!” Doron threw the sword in his hands. The meticulously crafted blade formed a beautiful arc in the air as it pierced into the man’s thigh.

“ARGH!” The fleeing wizard swayed, falling down into the smelly marshes.

“Got you!” Doron excitedly darted forward, finding the wizard lying in the dirt. He was bleeding profusely from the wound on his thigh, seemingly having fainted.

“Got you!” Doron excitedly darted forward, finding the wizard lying in the dirt. He was bleeding profusely from the wound on his thigh, seemingly having fainted.

“For Jimmy!” Doron fumbled around the area, looking for the sword he’d thrown. He wanted to reveal the identity of this wizard. However, the ‘fainted’ wizard suddenly revealed a scroll in his hands.

Acid Splash! Doron instinctively turned away to avoid death, but this burnt the entirety of his right shoulder, turning it into a mix of corroded flesh and blood.
“Shit!” The great pain caused him to punch the wizard’s face without hesitation. The black veil fell down, revealing the man’s identity. The haggard face of an old man showed itself, looking extremely pale from the blood loss. His eyes seemed to be dead. For some reason, even though he’d killed many times since the start of the Dark Ages, Doron felt a fire burning in his heart. “WHY,” he shouted as he grabbed the wizard by the collar, “WHY ARE YOU HELPING THE BUGS AGAINST HUMANITY?” “Cough cough…” Wizards were naturally weaker than fighters. This one was even injured gravely, unable to cast any spells as he was still coughing up blood. Even a child could kill him easily right now. The wizard looked slightly confused for a while, but after hearing Doron’s questions he suddenly began to laugh. His pale face twisted with a smile, the blood causing Doron’s stomach to churn. “What are you laughing at?” Doron was full of ire, “Do you know how many people you killed? Jimmy, and all my other foster brothers. They have people back at home waiting for their return… Why? Why are you going against your own kind?” “My own kind? Keke…” The old wizard’s smile widened, “Are you my kind? While I was still a high-ranked wizard, a whole bunch of people respected me, sang praises of me, and longed to meet me. However, after the collapse of the Weave, those ruffians… What did those ruffians whose souls should go to hell after death do? “They took everything from me in front of my face, killing little Benji, and… and…” A hint of sorrow flashed on the wizard’s face, “I no longer treated them as humans… When the shadow wizards found me, I joined immediately for the sake of my vengeance. I’d be willing to sell my soul to the devils for my revenge! “Hehe… Now I’ve had those bastards enjoy the most painful and
regretful deaths they ever could have. My purpose is done, kill me!”

The old wizard closed his eyes, and Doron froze in place. The wizard’s face morphed into that of Holdman in his vision, bringing back memories of his manor and his family that stayed outside town.

The condemnation of the wizard caused him to remember his own actions, that night amidst the flames appearing once more before his eyes as if he was experiencing it all again.

“Oh… I! I…” The veins on the back of Doron’s hands popped up, and his face began to twitch as if he was trying to weigh his options.

“Perhaps… we’re all at fault. Blame this wretched world!” Doron recalled Lina, who was still waiting for his return. He gritted his teeth and picked up his sword.

“Come… Chop off my head and make this your achievement!” The wizard snickered and closed his eyes.

“Ha!” The sword dropped down on the wizard’s head with all the strength Doron could muster,

However, it felt like he’d pierced into cotton, not flesh. Doron opened his eyes in shock, finding the sword in his hands stuck in mid-air as a great pressure enveloped him.

“Sorry, little guy. While I’m sympathetic of your plight, the camp does give out rewards based on merits…” A pleasant voice sounded, and Doron’s vision went black…

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“The gods… are already recovering…” Leylin’s clone watched the collapse of a huge hive in the distance, a strange smile on his face.

“As for you, loser… I’m benevolent, I’ll give you another chance…” A dark red lustre wrapped around the old wizard’s body,
causing him to cry out pitifully as a strange transformation occurred to him.
“Kukulkan, my Lord… You are the mighty Lord of Original Sin, the sole source of sin in the universe. You are the master of everything!” What had once been the old wizard knelt before Leylin, his grievous injuries long gone.
“Go…Go somewhere else…” Leylin waved his arms, and a dark red teleportation gate opened up to take the bowing monster away.
“This test failed, huh…” Leylin shook his head, gazing into the distance. A few orc avatars were lying there in wait.
“So, Gruumsh? Are you regretting the fact that you only sent one avatar here?” Leylin smiled as he gazed at the head of the orc pantheon. Even encircled by many gods he didn’t look flustered.
‘The gods have recovered rather quickly, and set up eternal sources of light in their divine kingdoms. They can send divine spells to their priests in the prime material plane already?’ Leylin knew full well that without the help of the gods the Silverymoon Alliance and the Orc Empire couldn’t destroy a nest.
“Night Serpent… Sinner that devoured the sun…” the gods condemned him in such seething fury that they could burn even the void itself as they descended to fight him.
“The battle’s only begun…” Unfortunately, the avatar dissipated before Leylin’s punishment arrived for him, leaving behind several enraged roars.

……

Baator.
“How is it?” Leylin was standing in front of Mother Core, watching the events in multiple locations in the prime material plane.
The few survivors in the mortal world had obtained great support, beginning to send troops to destroy the nearby hives. Priests were
playing an extremely important role in this process.
“The counterattack of the gods is beginning…” Mother Core said
with a sigh.
“That’s normal, but the timing…” Leylin stroked his chin, “It’s at
just the right moment when we’re planning for the support of the
Magus World’s World Will, unable to make any clones…”
“What are you trying to say?” Mother Core focused on the Lord of
Original Sin in front of her.
“There’s a traitor in our midst.” Leylin turned solemn. Since Shar
could become a Magus, why couldn’t a Magus side with the gods?
“The power of sin in the World of Gods is telling me something. If
we don’t treat it seriously, the consequences will be dire…” Leylin
looked at Mother Core in front of him, speaking sincerely, “I hope
to call a joint conference of the Magi immediately.”
Numerous powerful conscients gathered within a secret space, their powerful auras forming huge black silhouettes. There were a few new figures amongst them, containing unfathomable power.

*Rumble!* Space split apart at that moment, and the powers of the world and original sin entered the space.

“Everyone!” Leylin fashioned a form out of original sin, looking at the silhouettes around him. Every person here was a peak rank 8 existence!

“The gods have stabilised their divine kingdoms, interfering with our actions in the prime material plane. Even as the world combination project was underway, someone divulged our current situation.”

“Keke.. So you’re saying there’s a traitor amongst us?” Another voice Leylin was familiar with sounded, carrying obvious hostility. “Of course, Distorted Shadow. Furthermore, it could even be you!” Leylin stared fearlessly at the peak rank 8 Magus, exchanging thoughts rapidly.

“I can swear upon my truesoul that I never revealed any information about the plan…” Distorted Shadow looked coldly at Leylin. “Instead, Lord of Original Sin, why did you not devour the entire prime material plane and destroy the gods in one fell swoop? You seem quite suspicious!”

“The sun is one thing, but the prime material plane is a whole other
matter. It’s the foundation of the World of Gods, the base of all existence. Destroying it would be like destroying the World of Gods itself, not something a peak rank 8 can do.” Mother Core stood up for her ally.

“I feel like the gods have begun their counterattack, and they definitely won’t miss the opportunity. Please wait and see, everyone!” Leylin glared coldly at Distorted Shadow, his indifference causing the other party to feel apprehensive.

“All we can do right now is to speed up the two-world plan…” an existence surrounded by darkness spoke up, every word seemingly coming from a deep abyss. This was the Darkness Lord, a peak rank 8 existence from the Dark World.

“Our true bodies are currently outside the crystal sphere, and we can’t easily dispatch them…” another figure spoke, radiating the green light of life. This was the ancient Tree of Life, a huge tree from the Life World that had harnessed the power of magic. However, even as the numerous peak rank 8s were discussing the issue, a rumble sounded from the depths of the Abyss, as if to verify Leylin’s words. A sort of sacred natural radiance sealed off the entire Abyss, numerous golden silhouettes walking out to the hymns of their followers.

“The gods! They’re taking action with their true bodies!” Mother Core waved her hands, displaying a huge image that allowed those present to see the gods’ lineup.

“Tyr, Tempus, Talos, Oghma, and Gruumsh… All of them are powerful gods, the Chaos Lord and Evil Filthy Eye are in danger!” Leylin looked around his surroundings, unable to find the consciences of those two existences. As chaotic existences themselves, they grew intoxicated with the pleasure of plundering the Abyss and lost all interest in the outside world. They didn’t realise the crisis they were in.

“Keke… It’s rare for such strong existences to be willing to step out
of their divine kingdoms…” The Darkness Lord sneered. “If we push the two-world plan back and move out together, at least half of them will fall.” Peak rank 8 Magi were equivalent to greater gods within the World of Gods. The difference was that their powers belonged to them alone, so in a fight outside of the divine kingdoms the Magi would definitely win. One had to agree that Darkness Lord’s suggestion was enticing, causing a few Magi to stir. “I wouldn’t do that if I were you…” Leylin stood out at that moment, speaking coldly. “Substantiate. Why? It’s not easy to find a chance to eliminate so many powerful gods in one fell swoop…” As expected, Distorted Shadow jumped out immediately, speaking with ulterior motives. “Haven’t you all realized that the most powerful existences within God’s World have yet to appear?” Leylin glanced at Distorted Shadow, his voice was full of disdain. There were differences even amongst powerful gods. Oghma, for example, couldn’t match Tempus the God of Fighting in combat. Past rank 18, there were a few gods who were known for their combat. The four elemental gods were an example. Akadi, Grumbar, Istishia and Kossuth were all ancient gods, staying within their elemental planes of wind, earth, water, and fire respectively. They stood aloof from worldly affairs, holding secrets even most gods didn’t know in their arsenal. There were also gods like Ubtao, Silvanus, Jergal, and Chauntea. They were formidable beings, powerful enough to be the monarchs of their own worlds, second only to the Overgod himself. That these powerful gods had yet to appear in the Abyss caused Leylin to grow vigilant.

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“Oh? You’re here in your true bodies? Were you ordered to abandon your mouse holes and come to the Abyss?” Azure power had converged above what was once the Argent Palace in Azzagrat, forming a many-eyed giant with a blurred face. “Since you’re here anyway, you shall become the foundation of my abyssal power…” The Chaos Lord didn’t seemed to be worried at all when facing numerous existences of the same rank. A majority of the eyes seemed to be filled with reckless insanity. The Chaos Lord didn’t seem to even care as chaotic origin force sprag forth from the depths of the Abyss, mixing with dark energy as it spread around its giant leg.

“I’ve restricted its actions. I’ll leave the rest to you…” A golden radiance was spreading from Oghma’s body, shrouding the entirety of Azzagrat. Tyr and Tempus brought out their favourite divine weapons, rushing forth towards the Chaos Lord…

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A terrifying storm swept through the Endless Maze, the constant rain forming a huge turbulent sea.

“Tsk… Why do I have to be paired with you?” The powerful God of Storms looked at the golden orc standing beside him, his face full of disdain.

“I should be the one saying that.” Gruumsh gave Talos a look.

A palace suddenly surfaced within the maze, endless power forming a gigantic evil eye that released a skin-crawling roar: “ZzzzGrrgrgrrr!”

“The ancient Evil Filthy Eye, a Magus who once killed a greater god…” Gruumsh’s eyes lit up as a bright red flag was drawn from his back.

“Only the orcs are the strongest fighters!” he roared, his body expanding in a moment as it clashed with the solid yellow eye.
The aftershocks of the battle caused the entire Abyss to tremble. The demons were intimidated by the formidable power, running about aimlessly as numerous archfiends ruthlessly cursed the gods. They hid within their castles, not daring to come out. The silhouettes of two powerful archfiends emerged at the edge of the Abyss, one of them the two-brained Demogorgon and the other the King of the Undead, Orcus. Alongside Graz’zt, these were the three Abyssal Lords, the strongest of demons.

“The gods took action according to plan, but it doesn’t seem to be attracting the other Magi…” Orcus frowned. If not for them meddling with the origin force of the Abyss and helping the gods, they wouldn’t at all have been able to infiltrate into the Abyss so quickly, sealing the Chaos Lord and the Evil Filthy Eye where they were.

“…” The Demogorgon’s two heads glanced at each other, surprisingly not arguing. “That’s fine as well. The gods want to use the Abyss as the main battlefield, but the Magi weren’t baited…” “After the chaos is settled, the Abyss will still be ours…” “It’s rare for both your heads to reach an agreement. What else should I say?” Orcus’ undead body laughed, the power of death mixing with an aura of chaos to fragment the surrounding space. “Haha… That’s right, the Abyss shall belong to us demons… Only we can stay here. No one can take it away, not Magi and not gods!” The Demogorgon parroted.

“Let’s kill those gods afterwards!” one of the heads said suddenly. “No! We shall dominate the Abyss first…” the other retorted, causing Orcus to suddenly shake his head. The unity of these heads seemed to be temporary. The chaos of the Demogorgon would be revealed once more as the threat passed.

‘However, this is indeed a good opportunity…’ A strange light flashed past Orcus’ eyes.

The demons had always coveted the prime material plane and the
gods. The Second Dusk would prove to be a great opportunity to attack.
As for their contract with the gods? Since when did chaotic evil have the concept of contracts? With their demonic natures, even the Styx could not hold them to their vows and stop the deaths of their enemies!
Currently, within the conference of the Magi.

“I’m afraid the Chaos Lord and Evil Filthy Eye won’t be able to hold up, we need to send reinforcements!” Distorted Shadow shouted frantically, but then he felt awkward when nobody stood with him. After all, Leylin’s words had made sense. It was impossible for Magi to take the risk to sacrifice themselves for others.

“If there’s still some doubt in your hearts, maybe I can prove my point…” The power of original sin shot forth from Leylin’s body, carrying traces of blood with black spots. This power that carried all the sins of the mortal world attracted numerous gazes; even if everyone here was a peak rank 8 some were shocked by Leylin’s aura.

“The path of original sin… This power…” The ancient Tree of Life seemed to recall something.

The blood dripped down in the void, forming into the seven sins as it seemed to acquire a life of its own. The dense fog shrunk to form a few tall figures.

Leylin, the Darkness Lord, Mother Core, even Distorted Shadow… They were all imitated to perfection, including the energy waves of their truesouls! Such was the mercurial power of original sin. Even the faint auras being leaked by these rank 8 existences could be analysed and imitated.

‘Identical auras…’ Numerous rank 8s were surprised by the skill
Leylin displayed, Mother Core most of all. ‘He’s grown stronger again. Even if it’s only an avatar, one can see the changes in his true body as well. It’s like he never met a bottleneck after reaching peak rank 8…’

She sent her tendrils out to gather information, finally getting to the crux of the matter. ‘This is the influence of the Dark Ages? The negative emotions generated in the end times are the best nourishment for the Nightmare Hydra…’

Indeed, that was why Leylin engulfed the sun, bringing about the Dark Ages instead of attacking the gods. The Dark Ages benefitted him greatly, giving a thousandfold the power of sin he would’ve acquired during times of peace.

Massacre, death, greed, envy… All the deadly sins had come into play in the end times. They occurred often, and were intense when they did. Without anyone knowing the better, Leylin had actually seized the powers of everyone struggling in the prime material plane to increase his own power!

It was like he had an entire world’s worth of zealots worshipping him, providing him with unending power. How could his strength not advance by leaps and bounds? The avatars that were more real than the originals crossed the boundaries of spacetime, containing violent energy.

“Kill the Overgod!” “Our glory cannot be tarnished!” “Reinforce the Lord of Chaos and Evil Filthy Eye!” Powerful consciences pierced through the sky, led by an avatar of original sin with the power of a peak rank 8 Magus. They descended upon the Abyss like several gigantic meteorites.

“Such vile power… As expected of the God of Massacre, more chaotic than the demons and more vile than the devils…” Both the Demogorgon and Orcus quivered at the edge of the Abyss. “The Magi are here! Inform the gods!”

…..
“The truth shall verify everything!” Several existences were looking at the image displayed by Mother Core. The fake avatars had just arrived outside the Abyss, about to enter its depths.

A terrifying change occurred at that moment, green light brimming with the aura of life suddenly forming a cage of green vines that trapped the party. The flora of the world roared out, as if a primordial beast had just woken up.

“The God of the Wild, Silvanus… To think he’s still alive…” Mother Core’s face instantly became unsightly. Silvanus was second only to the Overgod, the number of Magi that had died at his hands not few.

“I didn’t expect this… Even if his divine body had been crushed, he didn’t fall completely…” The Darkness Lord sighed as well, looking at Leylin with a gaze of encouragement and gratification. Silvanus’ appearance had proved him right.

“Wait for it…” Leylin actually grew even more solemn, perhaps even a little eager.

*Rumble!* *Boom!* The four elemental planes roared out, rippling with terrifying power as an endless stream of elemental power congealed to form a powerful seal.

Earth, Fire, Wind, Water! The elemental gods had shown themselves, their combined might causing the Darkness Lord to lose his voice.

The four elements formed a vast storm of origin force, instantly exterminating the avatars inside the cage. Not even a speck of dust was overlooked.

“No… These aren’t true bodies, they’re just avatars…” The Goddess of Air, Akadi, frowned. “They could even conceal their spiritual fluctuations from us… These Magi are even more difficult to deal with than the ancient ones…”

“That doesn’t matter. It is our duty to safeguard the peace and security of the entire world,” Kossuth the Lord of Fire said.
“At least we can be sure that they’re not as strong as in the last war. This is good news…” A gigantic flower bloomed as the will of nature descended upon them. Having lost his true body in the Final War, Silvanus had merged his will with the nature of the world, growing even stronger in the process.

“As long as we exist, we will not allow the Magi to advance even half a step!” The power of nature guided the four elements, forming a solid seal in front of the Abyss that prevented the two Magi within from escaping. The elemental planes roared, pouring origin force into the seal continuously, their might causing the hearts of the Magi watching to palpitate.

“Goddess of Air Akadi, God of Earth Grumbar, God of Water Istishia, God of Fire Kossuth, alongside the God of the Wild Silvanus… To think these ancient existences were actually still alive…” A peak rank 8 Magus released a cry of surprise,

“Jiejie… Very well, very well! We can settle the vengeance of previous war together now…” A few avatars from the corner sneered. They were all like Distorted Shadow, mere remnant wills sealed up by the gods. Although Leylin had set them free, their powers had dropped and they were currently recovering.

“These are five pinnacle existences even amongst the greater gods. Unless we mobilise everyone, we won’t be able to break through the elemental planes…” Mother Core said, “On top of that, the two-world plan’s defences will drop if we leave.”

“It isn’t just that,” Leylin said without hurry.

No Magus would underestimate him now, thinking of him as a new entry to their ranks. It wasn’t easy to confuse greater gods with an avatar, and being unable to see through his powers themselves couldn’t he casually mount a sneak attack upon any of them? All guarantees were fake, might being the only truth.

“I noticed another existence as well…” Leylin waved his hands, and the dark power of original sin built a murky image. A golden
light was lurking within the darkness of the Abyss, something Mother Core’s probes hadn’t managed to discover. Seeing the genuine appearance of the god, Mother Core immediately stirred up. “That’s the Earthmother, she’s mine!”

“Eh?!” Leylin frowned for a moment, but quickly relaxed. ‘Right. Mother Core has reached the limits of her path, unable to advance and comprehend the powers of spacetime. Chauntea walks the same path as well, so if she can devour the goddess to make up for her foundation she really will have a chance of advancing to rank 9…’

What was more enticing to a peak rank 8 existence than advancing to rank 9? Leylin could understand Mother Core’s excitement, her future had just appeared in front of her.

“Silvanus is mine,” the ancient Tree of Life followed. Its path of life perfectly fit into Silvanus’ domain of nature. “Haha… Very well, this is the boldness we should have! Even a greater god is restricted by their faith, only fit to become my prey…” Looking at this atmosphere, the Darkness Lord began laughing in excitement.
Two streaks of lightning crashed down in the Abyss, flashing with resentment and unwillingness. The world rumbled as a few powerful gods escaped the place, cutting a sorry figure as they assembled before Silvanus.

“Chaos Lord… Deserving of the name…” Tyr looked at a laceration on his chest, filled with chaos energy as it spread throughout his body.

The other gods weren’t much better, Gruumsh the most worse off. More than half his body had been corroded, revealing dark brown skin. Golden blood and internal organs were sticking out of his body.

It wasn’t an easy task to kill two peak rank 8 Magi, and even these five formidable gods had to pay the price.

“I’ve consumed a lot of divine force. I’ll need to enter slumber for a while, and looking at the state of my worshippers it will take longer than normal…” Oghma frowned.

“You’ve worked hard…” A layer of green light enveloped the greater gods’ bodies. Their divine force was suddenly replenished, their expressions recovering as the injuries on their bodies healed.

“I’ve gathered enough faith over the millennia to replenish your powers…” Silvanus was brimming with gentle kindness. He’d always been nice to everyone he met, the sole exception being the Magi.

“Those Magi can watch on as two of their own fall. They really are
sinister and crafty…” The other gods said in indignation, trying to come up with some sort of conspiracy.

Silvanus waved, and the elemental power of the four planes instantly isolated their location. Even Mother Core couldn’t peer in on further conversation.

Mother Core spoke up without hurry after the image was cut off, “I cannot sense the two in the spacetime river… They’ve fallen completely, their truesouls destroyed. Without the intervention of a rank 9 it will be impossible for them to revive…”

Magi gained the ability to revive from a single drop of blood at rank 6, and Magi of laws were like cockroaches that would revive swiftly as long as a trace of their will remained. However, greater gods were at the same level of power. Leylin could stop the gods from resurrecting, and so, too, could the gods stop Magi.

No small number of Magi of laws had fallen in the Final War. Thinking of that point, even Leylin felt his heart go cold.

‘The ability to stop a Magus’ truesoul from entering the river of spacetime… Even Kelemvor should be unable to perform such feats,’ Leylin’s face grew imposing, ‘There’s only one possibility. Jergal has appeared once more! Is the Final War already at that stage?’

Jergal was an ancient God of Death, the oldest god alive. Legends spoke of his weariness of his job that led him to create Kelemvor to assume his position, letting him enter seclusion somewhere in the Ghost World.

Even the ancient dusk of the gods hadn’t aroused Jergal. Any existences harbouring ill will towards him could only die miserably, and as time passed his name had become a taboo secret. However, this renowned god had exited seclusion right now, participating in the Final War at such an early stage. The turn of events surprised Leylin.

It wasn’t hard for numerous greater gods to kill two peak rank 8
Magi. However, it was far more difficult to wipe their souls from the spacetime river, something only the ancient God of Death was proficient in. Leylin felt like the coming battle would be intense, determining victory or death. However, these were all results he had to achieve. All obstructions on his path to truth and eternity would be crushed without hesitation, regardless of identity or power. A dull glow shone out of Leylin’s eyes…

Starting with the fight in the Abyss, the gods completed adjusting their divine kingdoms quickly, beginning their counterattack against the Magi. All gods, regardless of rank and power, turned out in full strength to purge the Magi from their world. Although Magi of laws were stronger on average, the gods had the home field advantage. They didn’t hold back on their divine force at all, using everything in their arsenals to take the Magi out.

With the foundation of their divine kingdoms, they were not required to worry about the problem of their backyard catching fire. With numerous peak rank 8s stuck working on the two-world project, the gods were pressing forward step by step, eliminating several Magi in succession. The flames of war spread across the astral plane, extinguishing millions of lives.

Information from ancient times was spread despite the unreasonable ancient races, speaking of the Magi, the dusk of the gods, and the road to eternity. It deeply stunned the entire world. The actions of the gods were quick and violent, like predators stalking their prey as they aimed at the weakest points to launch fatal strikes. With several powerful gods overseeing them, the gods took control of the prime material plane once more.

Numerous priests were dispatched to aid the remaining survivors, bringing food and superior weapons. The World Will adapted the prime material plane to a life without the sun, making new edible
plants that were similar to oats and rice. Alongside the mushrooms and seeds brought up from the Underdark, the humans were finally satisfied. Hive after hive of the Lightkiller Bugs was destroyed, ceasing their suppression of humanity. Survivors started to build tall walled cities once more, establishing new towns as well as civilisation was rebuilt. Everything seemed to be heading for a better future…

Sadly, in the eyes of certain existences like the Magi, these actions were pitiful death throes. Numerous peak rank 8 Magi had assembled outside the World of Gods, within the boundless astral plane. Leylin was standing at their core.

“The major preparations are finally complete. The rest will be in your hands, Lord Leylin…” The truesoul of the Darkness Lord was a lump of black smoke with fiery red flames for eyes, flickering with the cycle of life as it moved.

“That’s not a problem!” Leylin looked behind him. The silhouette of an extremely massive world was sitting there, a short distance away. It possessed the glory of the Magi, releasing energy waves that Leylin was familiar with. The Magi had actually brought the Magus World here from across the astral plane!

A massive world had been moved into the path of another equally large one. This had never happened in the history of the astral plane. This was the arduous project that the majority of peak rank 8 Magi had dedicated themselves to, combining their truesouls for a long time to complete.

*Bzzt!* A unique attractive forces was generated as the two worlds drew close. Numerous laws distorted as they fused, spreading endlessly to form a network that encompassed the whole area.

‘The mutual attraction of the World Origin Forces…’ Leylin sighed in admiration, ‘When the World of Gods and Magus World fuse completely, the hidden path of eternity will show itself… A prophecy from ancient times verified by several Magi…’
“Right… Now is the time for everything to end!” A faint light shone within Mother Core’s eyes as she arrived beside Leylin, looking at the disc in his hands.
The combined efforts of many Magi had finally repaired the Manderhawke Plate, revealing several strange and disorderly patterns that formed one harmonious entity with a mysterious glow. “It’s started!” The Manderhawke Plate in Leylin’s hands floated up, emitting a warm radiance at the boundary of the World of Gods and the Magus World.
“The End! Eternity!” Numerous peak rank 8 Magi roared, the power of laws gathering to the extreme to form turbulent rivers that represented their paths. All of it poured into the Manderhawke Plate.
With the support of such great amounts of energy, the Manderhawke Plate grew larger and larger. White light melted a huge portion of the crystal sphere, revealing the World of Gods within.
This wasn’t like the small-scaled attack Leylin used to enter before. It was a direct, violent confrontation, aimed to destroy the crystal sphere entirely! A terrifying sound spread across several worlds, causing the gods of the World of Gods to lose their heads in fear.
“The crystal sphere! It’s been shattered!” They felt an impending sense of doom. It was impossible to measure the amount of damage they would take when the crystal sphere collapsed.
1193 - A Tale Of Two Worlds

In the underworld, within the palace of a certain God of Death. The person on the throne had the most ordinary of human faces, just that his eyes were full of vigour as they radiated wisdom. The true identity of this god would definitely astonish everyone. This was the ancient God of Death, Jergal! Even the Kelemvor had to greet him with respect, calling himself Jergal’s student! “The appearance of the Night Serpent has declared the beginning of the end…” Jergal sighed slowly, a trace of light seeming to appear within his pitch black eyes. “And it is when the end arrives that the light of eternity appears.”

……

*Rumble!* The crystal sphere shattered like a honeycomb, smashing apart as numerous Magi of laws rushed forth. The two worlds trembled and roared, and in the midst of the chaos Silvanus led several strong existences to the border where both worlds met. “Vile Magi! You will inevitably be punished by the gods, burning in raging flames for thousands, millions of years!” The four elemental gods roared, causing the elemental planes to reveal themselves as they released their powers in a torrent of energy that blocked the Magus invasion. “The Final War cannot be avoided!” Numerous peak rank 8 Magi
took action under Leylin’s lead. Original sin, darkness, earth, life…
All sorts of powerful paths combined in the astral plane, becoming a powerful force that pushed the fusion of the two worlds.
A massive fluctuation instantly spread throughout the World of Gods, overwhelming everything with terrifying earthquakes. The intense collision caused earth-shattering changes to every plane. Many life forms ran around lifelessly, seeing the beginning of the end.
The laws of the Magus World forcefully invaded the World of Gods, mixing with it in an intriguing change. The two biggest worlds of the astral plane complimented each other, agreeing to the fusion as they showed the path to eternity!
World of Gods, sea of origin force.
The World Crystal protecting the Overgod in the Celestial Hall shattered, causing an astonishingly strong existence to awaken with a terrifying roar.
“It’s the Overgod! Their World Will awakened!” The expressions of the numerous peak rank 8 Magi tightened.
*Bang!* Almost instantly they saw a blurry figure wrapped in brilliant light appear before them, someone that represented everything in the World of Gods.
“Overgod…” the remaining gods saluted, “Please exercise your authority, and prevent the arrival of the end!”
The Overgod did indeed wish to merge with the Magus World to advance, However, that didn’t mean it was willing to be devoured by the Magus World. There was a big difference in who had the dominant position, so despite being injured the Overgod chose to act without hesitation.
Leylin was a peak rank 8 Magus, only one step away from the ultimate realm of rank 9. Still, only after seeing the Overgod in person did he realise that all his supposed overestimations of rank 9 power were nothing. The power of space and time wasn’t
something he could comprehend. A rank 9 used the power of their path to build a foundation with which they comprehended the laws of space and time, a realm the Overgod had clearly reached. Teleportation was sealed at the border of the two worlds, but the Overgod had appeared here instantly anyway. This clearly meant his comprehension of the laws of space and time were terrifying. A true rank 9 having revealed their hand, Leylin felt like all his speculations were just ridiculous. The sea of origin force of the World of Gods rumbled with power, descending as it carried the power of the Celestial Hall. Space froze entirely, something even peak rank 8 Magi couldn’t accurately describe. Even many peak rank 8 Magi couldn’t escape, and only those with the power of their own path could still maintain a stream of thought. ‘Is this the strength of a rank 9? Existences below the peak of rank 8 don’t even have the ability to think in his presence…’ Leylin paid absolute attention to the Overgod, the A.I. Chip’s light flickering frantically. [Beep! Observed laws of space, attempting simulation…] The A.i. Chip recorded everything at lightspeed, trying to analyse the power of space from a rank 9 existence to build a path for Leylin to follow in the future. However, the terror of the Overgod was only just showing itself. The invasion of the Magus World was put at a standstill with the stagnation of space, actually sealing off the Magus World itself! Soon after, something even more terrifying happened. “What’s going on?” Leylin was stunned to see the invasion of the Magus World recede, the fused laws separating in what looked like a strange silent film in reverse… ‘Just now… Why did my train of thought derail when the Overgod appeared… Unless…’ Leylin focused on the A.I. Chip.
[Attempting to analyse law of space… Encountered unknown interference, analysis failed…
A portion of the power of space has been observed. Analyse?]
The unfamiliar information surfacing from the chip caused Leylin to feel cold sweat dripping from his forehead.
‘Time reversal… Even an existence at my level was affected, my memories from a few moments ago erased…’ An intense chill suddenly rose within Leylin’s heart, ‘This type of law… it can cause a peak rank 8 Magus to regress to their weakest state, before they even condense their own path… It can seal strength at the peak of rank 8!’
The terrifying laws of space and time were like the Sword of Damocles, hanging over them constantly.
‘Peak rank 8s are proud of how they fused their true souls with the river of space and time, giving themselves unlimited life.. However, the law of time can bring them back to their most vulnerable moment…’ Leylin now began to understand why the Overgod and the Magus Will could lead numerous peak rank 8s without issue. Although wielding the power of spacetime wasn’t exactly the same as holding the life and death of other Magi in their hands, it was essentially no different.
‘The others didn’t feel the time being reversed, they don’t even remember!’ Leylin sighed in secret. Even at the peak of original sin he could only vaguely sense this, and he’d needed the A.I. Chip to prove it.
‘I can’t deal with rank 9s right now… Let the other one handle it…’ Leylin sneered in secret, sending out a signal.
The earth of the Magus World cracked open, revealing the seven levels of the subterranean world. The Magus Will in the darkest depths seemed to be provoked by the Overgod, awakening swiftly. Its power of spacetime finally freed the numerous peak rank 8s, allowing them to recover some of their mobility.
“Leylin! Come here quickly! The Overgod’s powers exceed our imagination!” Mother Core screamed, “Hurry, activate the two-world plan!”
*Whoosh!* Leylin, Mother Core, Ignox and numerous Magi native to the Magus World gathered together.
“In my essence as a Magus, I call upon the will of magic!”
The entire Magus World rumbled, astonishing power shooting forth from its depths as the purple web around it was severed.
*Whoosh!* The two beings with the power of spacetime instantly broke through the spatial seal, descending at the point of contact.
“Magus!” “God!” With the two most formidable World Wills having come into contact, even without any words of instigation they would be unable to coexist.
Dazzling white light erupted, as the fabric of spacetime trembled. The two World Wills rammed into each other, the ripples from their combat able to instantly annihilate anyone below the peak of rank 8.
“Not good! Get out of here immediately!” Be it the Magi or the gods, everyone was a peasant in the face of this fight. They could only escape in panic when faced with this natural disaster.
The light grew brighter and brighter, able to blind even beings of laws. An explosion occurred when it could brighten no more, a raging torrent of energy sweeping across the borders of the two worlds to annihilate everything.
However, that mysterious radiance seemed to be doing something else as well, nurturing some sort of existence.
The two rank 9s were terrifyingly fast. They’d distanced themselves instantly during the explosion, patiently waiting for everything to end.

“What… is… this?” Leylin looked at the confluence of the two worlds, surprise flashing in his eyes. The merged area was devoured under his gaze, reaching a total standstill as the World of Gods and Magus World seemed to reach a perfect balance. They now looked like a dumbbell, the two worlds joined by this point of confluence.

He instantly moved to this new land. Everything here had originally been void, but a black continent had been formed after the blast.

“The laws of space and time have crystallised…” Scanning across the large continent, Leylin found that all kinds of laws had grown stable here, the earth more solid than magic alloy while the space was extremely stable. Even Breaking Dawns would find it difficult to fly here, forget breaking through space.

Leylin used the law of original sin to scan the entire continent, finding out its specific area. It was one tenth the size of the prime material plane, without the slightest hints of life in the rocky desert.

“Where did the Overgod and Magus Will go?” Leylin asked Mother Core who was beside him.

“This place is at the centre of the confluence between the two worlds, having a strange balance…” Mother Core truly was an existence that had survived the Final War. Her insight and abundant
experience allowed her to make sense of the situation, “Although the Overgod suffered serious injuries with the destruction of the Weave, the fight between rank 9s exceeds the limit of my comprehension… “Even if the Overgod is slightly weaker than the Magus Will, I’m afraid they won’t be able to determine a winner in a short period of time. They should currently be entangled in a dimension we cannot detect, leaving the task of the Final War to the beings of law…” “You mean…” Leylin looked at the huge continent below them. Although it wasn’t suitable for life, it did indeed serve well as a battlefield for beings of law. “That’s right… With the two worlds merging together, the devouring has reached a deadlock. The rest depends on the power of the beings of law…” Mother Core pointed towards the mainland, “This is the final battlefield, a land of nirvana where the losers lose everything. If we can achieve a pivotal victory here, the Magus Will will be able to directly devour the Overgod… However, the opposite is true as well!” “In other words,” Leylin muttered, “The power of the World Wills are determined by their inhabitants. The victor of this battle here will determine final victory between the two beings of law…” “Correct. With the two-world plan and our advantage of advancing first, we have a great advantage right now… Don’t squander it!” “I’m afraid beings of law aren’t enough… We also need large amounts of cannon fodder,” Leylin mused, “We need a regiment of Breaking Dawns led by an existence of laws to take out the lesser and intermediate gods…” “Our reserves consist of all the Magi across the astral plane. We far exceed the opponent in numbers…” “We’ll gather our troops, mobilising them for war immediately…” numerous beings of law promised.
Leylin, on the other hand, was staring at the huge black continent. This would be the final battlefield, the land of the end. One could imagine how it would become a terrifying land of death in the near future.

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On the other end of the battlefield, space trembled as numerous divine kingdoms descended. They formed a strange beehive-like structure, a sort of tight fortress. Numerous prayers sounded out as holy spirits prepared to defend the mainland. The gods had completely disregarded all notions of good and evil, fighting side by side. Armies of elementals entered the battlefield, accompanied by demon lords led by the two Abyssal Lords. Massive demonic armies rushed forth.

“The divine kingdoms have descended, and all the races allied together… It seems like the gods are staking everything on this too…” Leylin sneered at the opponents’ formation.

“The final battle is nigh… The scale of this war has already exceeded the peak of our past,” Mother Core added.

“It seems so! We should begin with our arrangements too.” Numerous Magi of laws roared, the power of the fused laws allowing them to unleash their full strength without the World War Armour.

The same held true for the gods. However, such ‘fairness’ wasn’t actually fair.

“Our determination to forge forward… Everything we’ve struggled to obtain from the astral plane shall be displayed here today. The glory of the Magi will shroud everything!” The Magi roared out loud, opening the channels to world after world. The Dark World, Purgatory, Icy World… A steady stream of troops
marched out of every one, their faces flooded with bloodthirst and determination. The weakest was at the Morning Star realm, equivalent to legendaries in the World of Gods. And that was the cannon fodder!
For the sake of the truth, to advance their truesouls, these Magi set off without hesitation. Terrifying war drums echoed throughout the astral plane!
A large ghastly castle revealed itself in Leylin’s assigned area, as if a living snake that released bloodthirsty roars.
“Father!” Two young Warlocks appeared within the huge hall, and Leylin looked at them with a gentle smile on his face. “I only planned to use my accumulations in Dreamscape and my avatar’s divine kingdom in this Final War. I didn’t think you’d insist on coming, the Ouroboros Clan was too weak to help.”
Standing in front of Leylin were his two oldest sons, Syre and Daniel. Both of them had inherited his bloodline, benefitting from the power of the Nightmare Hydra. They were close to the realm of laws, just like him when he was at the peak of rank 6.
The early stages of advancement for a Warlock depended almost solely on the strength of their bloodline. In this regard, what could exceed the bloodline of the Nightmare Hydra?
“Are you aware of how dangerous the Final War is? Even Breaking Dawns are still cannon fodder here… What do your mothers have to say about this?” Leylin looked at his two oldest sons. They were already a thousand years old, having become ancestral figures of the Ouroboros Clan with children and grandchildren of their own.
“The records of the ancient war in the library described it well enough…” Syre and Daniel looked at each other for a bit, before Daniel stood up and spoke, “We told Mother and Aunt before we left…”
“You…” Leylin sighed. He could see a shadow of his past self in the eyes of his children, holding an insatiable thirst for the truth.
Furthermore, it was difficult for a Breaking Dawn Magus to advance to rank 7. Even Leylin had relied on frantically plundering Dreamscape and the World of Gods to make the leap successfully. Even though Syre and Daniel had a head start with their bloodlines, they still needed opportunities over a long period of time to bloom. The World of Gods was a shortcut to this. As long as they managed to kill a true god and seize a portion of their godfire or divinity, they would be able to obtain comprehension in laws directly. None of the Magi in the astral plane could resist this temptation. It was the reason why so many low-ranked Magi had joined despite the shocking casualty rate.

“I respect your choices…” Leylin looked at his sons, traces of gentleness within his eyes. “However… since you have decided on this path, you will have to be prepared to undertake the responsibility of your choices, regardless of the result…”

“‘Yes sir!’” their excited voices rang out. They hadn’t expected things to go so smoothly…

Leylin clapped his hands once both of them left. Two Lords of Calamity walked into the hall, bowing slightly towards him. “Follow behind them and protect their lives. I’ll raise your quota for a hundred years in exchange.” The Lords of Calamity were happy with that exchange, and they bowed and retreated. “The protection of two rank 8s, that shall be it…” Leylin shook his head. These kids couldn’t understand the cruelty of the Final War. Even with the Lords of Calamity protecting them they could lose their lives if they were unlucky enough to meet a greater god or someone of that ilk.

However, Leylin decided not to care about it anymore. He’d given them prior warnings and sent guards. His obligations were fulfilled.
The Final War had returned to the astral plane, this time occurring in a desolate land where the two large worlds converged. The dusk of the gods had returned, and legions of Magi and gods from various worlds fought with vigour. Morning Stars, Radiant Moons, Breaking Dawns, everyone died like great batches of ants.

Terrifying energy waves rocked the void practically every day, signifying the fall of beings of law. Numerous Magi were lucky enough to obtain the godfires of different gods, becoming beings of laws. The same went the other way, where those who killed beings of law turned into gods or advanced in rank.

The merciless war crushed all the laws of the world. Personal power was the only standard here, one that could determine everything.

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Leylin’s zone had become a land of marshes, the A.I. Chip clone and a large number of Lords of Calamity protecting it. They were joined by Shar’s shadow wizards and the Snake Dowager’s legion of serpents.

Numerous intermediate gods had fallen at their hands, setting a terrifying reputation for the Lord of Original Sin. He was praised and feared by Magi and gods alike.
Leylin himself was stood within the Targaryen Castle. The Nightmare Hydra was thundering, absorbing the near-solid power of sin surging in from everywhere.

“War really is the best time to absorb the power of sin…” Leylin sighed. The Nightmare Hydra behind him seemed to have traversed some sort of boundary of the world, encountering a more abstruse and terrifying domain. The essence of the entire astral plane was gathered here, the weakest fighters being in the Morning Star realm. The negative energy gathered here was frightening, only boosted by the darkness in the hearts of the weaker Magi and legendary fighters.

“What does even this much strength mean in front of the power of spacetime?” Leylin’s expression darkened at this thought, memories of the two World Wills replaying in his mind.

[Beep! Simulation of the law of space is currently at 1.97%, insufficient data. Cannot simulate the law of time.]

The highest priority bracket had two incredibly eye-catching prompts.

“I need to acquire the power of spacetime to analyse it and grasp its laws…” Leylin stroked his chin, “The path of original sin was built upon the power of nightmares, and contain the strength of spacetime. However, how do I get some? Perhaps…”

He suddenly recalled that the World Wills, despite their earth-shattering might, weren’t truly omniscient and omnipotent like the rank 9 Magi of legend were. He felt like something was off.

“Perhaps the Overgod and the Magus Will aren’t actually at rank 9, only grasping a portion of the powers of spacetime like I had with rank 7…” All sorts of possibilities arose in Leylin’s mind, causing him to brighten up slightly, “In that case…”

“Lord of Original Sin!” The power of the earth sent a message of invitation to Leylin’s ears at this moment.

“Mother Core!” Leylin took a step forward, arriving underground
in almost an instant. Mother Core’s lava-like main body was lying there in wait, Ignox standing nearby.

His guide to the subterranean world finally seemed to have gained some benefits from the war, and advanced to rank 8.

“Congratulations, Ignox!” Leylin smiled as he greeted the being.

“It was just dumb luck. Mother Core helped me kill the elvish God of Hate, Piflas, and I obtained his divinity…” Ignox answered modestly.

Leylin gave him a long look. Whatever be the case, it took some decisiveness to choose a path of evil like the law of hatred. Still, the Magus World had its fair share of Magi like Ignox. The sigh of admiration didn’t last long before Leylin shifted his attention elsewhere.

“Mother Core, is it the appointed time yet?”

“Yes, and I hope to get your help!” Mother Core’s tone was very humble.

Leylin was her equal in strength, and he had the Lords of Calamity, Shar, the Snake Dowager, and others under him. He also had an intermediate god for a clone, alongside the outreach of a huge organisation that exceeded hers. He played an important role to the Magi, occupying a position of power. His suggestions were taken very seriously by the entire alliance.

“Please speak…” Since she’d been helping him all this while, Leylin didn’t mind giving her some help to bind their alliance further.

“I wish for your help in killing the Earthmother, Chauntea.” Mother Core spoke in a low voice, but Leylin didn’t look the least bit surprised.

Mother Core was already at the peak of rank 8, but her path was limiting her advance. It couldn’t hold the power of spacetime.

Now, however, as long as she devoured the greater goddess Chauntea, she would be able to make up for the defects in her own
path with the power of the earth. This would make her foundations perfect, and create a better basis upon which she could grow in strength.
The chance to compensate for the issues in one’s path was incredibly rare for peak rank 8 Magi, something that couldn’t be given up on. Any price was worth praying for it.
“Have you found traces of her yet?” Chauntea was a goddess on the same level as Silvanus. Divine rank held no meaning to them, because they already stood at the peak of the gods. They were only second to the Overgod himself. If he needed to deal with an existence like that, even Leylin had to be cautious.
“Of course. She’s an important asset, so she needs to be at the most intense battlefields…” Mother Core waved a giant screen into existence, countless hills forming a general map of the battlefield.
“The green regions have the least intense battles, while red is places both sides are vying for. The darker the colour, the more intense the battle…”
Mother Core pointed at three areas that were almost purple on the map, “Gale Gorge, the Dark Cage, and your own swamp in the Blade Hills are the areas with the greatest amount of activity. My information says Chauntea is at Gale Gorge, and I’ve already applied to be stationed there…”
“Is that so…” Leylin stroked his chin, muttering to himself while looking at the map.
“I defend Blade Hills alongside another peak rank 8. We just taught the gods there a good lesson, so there shouldn’t be any large battles in the near future. However, I have few troops I can assign… How about this? I’ll give you a portion of my runes of sin. Call for me, and my true body will head for Gale Gorge immediately…”
Making a deal with Mother Core and discussing a few other issues of cooperation, Leylin’s figure disappeared from the underground, leaving Ignox and Mother Core behind alone.
“You should make some preparations too…” Ignox respectfully bowed and left as he heard those words, the black ring on his body glistening even more intensely.

……

The divine kingdoms at the side of the gods were filled with greenery, birdsong, and the fragrance of flowers.

“I hope you understand your role, Chauntea…” Flowers bloomed into the face of Silvanus. Without his true body, he naturally had a better understanding of the path of nature, becoming the goddess’ guide.

“Of course, tempting Mother Core and killing the Lord of Original Sin at the same time would be good…” Chauntea spoke up, radiating earthen divine force, “I’m interested in the core of her path as well…”

“Keep in mind that both of them are peak rank 8s from the Magus World… If we kill them, it’ll be a huge blow…” Silvanus looked grim, “This mission is very important, so there will be other gods aiding you…”

“I understand…” Chauntea sounded serious as her true form melded into the earth.

It was not just the Magi that wanted to hunt the gods. The gods, too, were coveting the Magi’s forces of laws, and battles filled with schemes and traps began to spread across the Gale Gorge.

……

The Nightmare Hydra hissed from atop the Targaryen Castle, absorbing the power of emotions from the astral plane and more importantly the nirvana battlefield. It was like a black fog, spreading across the battlefield to monitor everything.
“Hmm? A power of envy and greed is aimed at me…” The heads of greed and envy suddenly opened their eyes, the ice-cold pupils concealing threads of emotional force as they soon entered the heart of a certain someone.

“Hehe… so it’s you…” Leylin snickered, and circled above the battlefield. The Nightmare Hydra that fed on the power of emotional force was like a spider queen in a large spider cave, not even the slightest of movements missing his attention… Even as an existence of laws, as long as there was a gap in one’s soul, they would also be affected by the power of sins.

However, Leylin had always kept this secret well, using it as a final trump card that could turn the tables. Now was the time that he could make use of it.

“The Earth Goddess Chauntea, God of Nature, Silvanus, and…” Leylin stroked his chin, “How should I make use of this ambush? Or… perhaps I should do this. If this plan succeeds, there’s hope for the Final War to end within a century!” An intricate plan began to form in Leylin’s mind.

This was not all. He continued to manipulate the web of emotions and send certain complex feelings out. It began to affect the judgement of some beings of law.

With Leylin’s current strength, even another God of Prophecy would only see a haze in his future.
Violent winds swept across Gale Gorge constantly, forming a terrifying storm that possessed the power of laws. Even Magi of laws wouldn’t be able to hold on for long in this place, making it a choke point where the armies of the Magi and the gods faced off from opposite ends of the canyon. Dazzling runes were emitting energy mid-air.

*Rumble!* The earth whistled at that moment, the entire land trembling as large chunks of black granite condensed to form a female voice in greeting.

“Mother Core! You’re finally here…” a few beings of law flew out from the Magus camp, shockingly led by the Darkness Lord.

“Here, these belong to you now,” the Darkness Lord had a grimacing expression as he passed her a seal, “Also… You need to give half of the production of Gale Gorge up to the alliance, everything else belongs to you…”

Although there were no traces of life within this land of death created by the two World Wills, there were in fact other treasures. The Magi and Gods realised that the place had an extremely high elemental density, producing veins of precious ores. Of course, even the most precious of stones was of no value to beings of law. However, some items even a peak rank 8 couldn’t let go of easily. Gale Gorge, for example, produced some sort of wind elemental crystals that could contain fragmented power of law. It could give one instant success in entering the realm of laws.
Leylin speculated that, as the origin of such large worlds, the two World Wills were overflowing with excess laws even if they were in slumber. They’d spread out these laws in crystallised form during fighting, something completely normal for them. However, such a ‘normal’ thing was an unexpected surprise for the combatants. Even if a Magus couldn’t utilise these crystals, they could hold onto them for future generations or exchange them with other beings.

There were even rumours that fragmented laws of spacetime were being produced in the depths of Gale Gorge, something that the peak rank 8 Magi were unable to resist! Several investigations had revealed three possible locations of these spacetime fragments, the same three regions becoming the primary battlefield between the two sides. This was how Gale Gorge, the Dark Cage, and the Battle Hills became the Nirvana Battlefield.

However, despite being at the swamp of the Battle Hills, Leylin didn’t have good luck. Although he’d mobilised all his subordinates, he’d yet to see even a shadow of spacetime laws, instead finding several fragmented laws of other domains. These were sadly of no use to him, only to be added to his treasure vault or exchanged with other Magi…

Mother Core had made several secret transactions in order to be allocated here, paying a huge price. “I’m sure the Earthmother Chauntea is currently in the opposing camp here. The kind of divine force coming from there is not something normal gods can wield.” Having known of Mother Core’s target, the Darkness Lords voluntarily sold her a favour, “She seems to be fond of entering the Gale Whirlpools in search of crystals, attacking our men singlehandedly.”

“…I see. Once again, I thank you for your assistance. The Magus World shall eternally remember the friendship of darkness…”

Mother Core Guaranteed.
A huge core emerged from the earth, spreading its infinite roots out into the land. Despite being tougher than magic alloy, the ground couldn’t stop Mother Core from taking root, spreading across the entire camp to put it under her control. The range of her detection tendrils spread out unceasingly…

“I sense a problem…” Ignox snorted from behind her, “Do the Gods treat us as fools with such an obvious trap?”

“Of course, I know that too, but I can’t wait anymore…” Mother Core’s huge eyes seems to be trembling slightly, “I need her divine force to make up for my lack of foundation. This is my only chance to advance to rank 9, nobody can stop me! Definitely not!”

“Alright! We need to call for reinforcements if things escalate…” Ignox shrugged his shoulders. “No matter what, we outnumber them. We should use our advantage and push forth steadily, making all schemes and tricks useless…”

“You’re right!” Mother Core agreed, the fiery thirst unconcealable in her eyes as she looked towards Gale Gorge.

……

A dark web of negative emotions had spread throughout Targaryen Castle, allowing Leylin to absorb the essence of original sin without end. He grew stronger by the day, the Nightmare Hydra located at the core of the web seeming more and more unpredictable.

*HISS!* The central devouring head of the Nightmare Hydra suddenly opened its vertical eyes, showing a puzzled expression.

*Whoosh!* Large amount of black mist condensed as it transformed back into Leylin, emotional energy forming dark luxurious robes that draped across his body. The silhouette of the hydra flashed within his eyes, as numerous black hairs seemed to connect themselves to all the emotions in the world. Wielding the power of Shar’s Shadow Weave, and having controlled Mystra’s
powers previously as well, Leylin was familiar with the architecture of energy networks.

Leylin’s third eye opened up in the midst of his devilish eyebrows, the void twisting to form a rune.

“Save… save me…” A gust of weak emotional power was transmitted from within, carrying fear and urgency.

“Mother Core! To think she was trapped… in a Gale Whirlpool? They’ve finally decided to act?” Leylin sighed.

He’d been somewhat shocked by the amount of strength the gods had been able to display. Mother Core was a peak rank 8 existence, and it was ten times more difficult to trap someone than to kill them!

“Leylin?” A black secret imprint twisted behind Leylin’s hands, “This is Ignox. Mother Core and I have been trapped within Gale Whirlpool. This was a trap! Chauntea and Silvanus have revealed their hands… Please contact the alliance as soon as possible, and save us. We can only last another thirty hour— Bzzt— Damn, they’re interfering with the connection, it’s going to—” The imprint suddenly shifted to static. The rune flickered a few times, before dying out completely.

“Damn it…” Leylin cursed, and had a clone appear within the Magus Conference. “Mother Core and Ignox fell into a trap, we need to send reinforcements!”

There were only a few figures present in the conference right now, seeming empty and lonely.

“Keke… Isn’t this the Lord of Original Sin? You are here to request reinforcements? Unfortunately, the majority of other peak rank 8 Magi have been allocated missions. Of course, if you don’t mind, my true body can always be dispatched…” Distorted Shadow appeared, clearly amused.

“Such a coincidence…” Leylin took a deep breath, and stared coldly at Distorted Shadow.
Magi always placed importance on their own interests. Regardless of their former relationship with Mother Core, if they lacked the strength to save her from her plight not many would be willing to take action. This was how they’d watched the Chaos Lord and Evil Filthy Eye fall.

Knowing this, Leylin stopped trying to get more reinforcements. He directly disappeared from the conference hall.

……

*Hiss!* Almost all the Magi near Targaryen Castle saw a marvellous scene. The silhouette of the terrifying Nightmare Hydra shot out from its abode, moving with determination as it instantly disappeared from the sky.

“Lord Leylin!” Most Magi identified their Lord, bowing respectfully. Few panicked.

“Keke… As expected, he has dispatched his true body…” Distorted Shadow’s true body surfaced somewhere in the void.

“It’s as you said, he’s proud and arrogant…” Another black silhouette spoke out, golden light within his eyes.

“He’s the Lord of Sin, of course his laws will influence him. The influence of the seven deadly sins isn’t easily eliminated, not to mention I amplified it a thousandfold with my distortion power…” Distorted Shadow snorted coldly, ”We shouldn’t underestimate him. I’ve suffered time and time again at his hands!”

“You can rest assured. Don’t you know the forces we’ve dispatched this time?” the black shadow with golden eyes guaranteed.

“We’ve never underestimated the Lord of Original Sin. The power of a peak rank 8 combined with his prior feats… no god will take him easily…” There seemed to be a sadness within the black shadow’s voice.

“On the other hand, for you to be willing to abandon the Magi and
join us gods…” it looked at Distorted Shadow, “Once this operation succeeds we’ll begin your ascension to become the God of Chaos. You’ll be able to become a greater god easily…” “Chaos? A spoil of war stripped off from the original Chaos Lord? Keke… I like the sound of it…” Distorted Shadow’s owl-like voice resounded, as his silhouette disappeared.
The Magi at Gale Gorge had fallen into chaos with Mother Core and Ignox being ambushed. The gods launched an attack on them, divine light shining down on the area as angelic holy spirits swarmed the skies, singing praise of their gods as a light of purity razed the Magus castles.

"Hiss!" The void split apart at that moment, revealing the figure of a Nightmare Hydra that covered the skies. "It’s the Lord of Original Sin!" The Magi rejoiced. On the other side, the petitioners and holy spirits showed fear in their eyes. After all, this existence that had once swallowed the sun was still burning in their memory. That fear was etched deep inside their hearts, and now it had grown into full fledged terror.

"Original Sin!" the Nightmare Hydra hissed, and dense clouds began to envelop the battlefield. Holy spirits, petitioners, even the beings still within the divine kingdoms found their expressions contorting, as the negative emotions in their hearts were magnified over ten million times. Their eyes grew bloodshot.

"Arghhh…" A holy spirit roared, and his body was split into two. A dark beast clawed its way out, possessing the power of hellfire.

"Servants of Original Sin! Attack!" Large numbers were turned in an instant, and the dense army of the divine actually turned around to greet their new Lord. It charged out under the command of the Nightmare Hydra, heading for its original camp.

Cries of anguish rang out, and the magnified emotions were

The Nightmare Hydra didn’t stop there. The third eye of the devouring head showed itself, looking towards a certain part of the sky.

*Kacha!* The law of devouring broke the void, revealing several flustered gods.

“Stay!” A sharp silver blade flew out of the snake’s jaws, piercing through the middle of a god’s eyebrows.

*Bang!* the god’s eyes were full of shock, turning sluggish as his divine body fell down. Seven Sins had already destroyed his everything, wiping out all chances of his resurrection.

“Lathander!” Several gods seethed in fury, yet they did not tarry as they beat their retreat.

“Lathander? The Morninglord? Becoming a lesser god after the sun was extinguished, what useless trash…” Leylin didn’t feel much joy for killing a former greater god. He instead shifted his glance towards a rank 7 Magus, pulling the man closer, “Where’s Mother Core?”

Even as an existence of laws, the rank 7 felt fear seep through his entire body in the face of the Nightmare Hydra. “T–The Gale Whirlpools,” he stuttered out, “H–Here’s a map, my Lord!”

This old Magus had a cap of spikes on his head, and his beard was now quivering as if the Nightmare Hydra would gobble him up at any second. After all, he was just a rank 7 Magus, and this existence before him had killed a lesser god effortlessly just like that.

“Well done, I’ll leave the remaining tasks to you!” The dark mist covered the map, and the Nightmare Hydra’s figure vanished immediately before the old Magus, entering Gale Gorge. The blades
of wind that could repel beings of law couldn’t even create sparks on the Nightmare Hydra’s scales.

“As expected of a peak rank 8 like Leylin Farlier, the most outstanding Magus in the astral plane…” The old Magus muttered, feeling extremely discouraged.

……

“Gale Gorge!” Feeling the ever-growing pressure within Gale Gorge, Leylin sighed.

The valley was littered with azure tornadoes that could swallow up beings of law. The boundless area seemed to contain multiple smaller planes, just like a giant maze. Even powerful beings would get lost here without a map, which Leylin fortunately possessed. He stepped forth fearlessly, his current strength ensuring that there wasn’t much in the world that could stop him. The Nightmare Hydra bulldozed through the region, crushing many smaller planes into pieces as it created an extremely safe straight path.

“Whirlpool 3, I’m here!” Leylin felt weightless as he jumped into a huge whirlpool. The eye of the storm was devoid of the frightening winds and thick walls that blocked all entry.

“Mother Core and Ignox!” Leylin immediately saw two large figures sealed in thick world crystals, surrounded by numerous gods with auras powerful just standing nearby could cause one to be frightened.

“Chauntea, Tempus, Tyr, and Silvanus…” The Nightmare Hydra howled, spitting out a horrifying amount of destructive power from its nine heads. The gods quickly retreated as it began to shrink, condensing into Leylin’s normal form with Seven Sins in hand.

“Break!” Seven Sins whistled, its sharp blade ramming into the world crystals.

*Ka-cha! Ka-cha!* A web of cracks spread along the surface of the
crystals, before they rumbled and exploded. Mother Core’s true body burst out from within, accompanied by Ignox.

“You did well, Leylin!” Mother Core gazed at Leylin in delight. However, her eyes suddenly showed an intense emotion, “NOO!” Right at the moment they were saved, Ignox’s face was shrouded by a terrifying darkness. A power of distortion formed in his hands, revealing a spear as sharp as could be. The full power of a rank 8 Magus thrust it into Leylin’s chest.

“Eicher’s Thorn!” Mother Core cried out, the majestic power of earth pushing Ignox away as disbelief filled her eyes, “Why? Ignox, why are you doing this?”

“Keke… you’re asking me why I’m doing this?” Ignox laughed maniacally, pulling off his black cloak to reveal the essence of distortion. The rings of power grew more and more terrifying, and his aura eventually shifted into another form.

“Distorted Shadow!” A phantom hydra snarled from behind Leylin, a few of its heads sinking down. His hands filled up with the power of sin as he pulled the dagger out, his eyes on Distorted Shadow, “Was Ignox a clone, or did you use your powers to consume him?” His words revealed an astounding secret. The rank 7 wizard known as Ignox, always staying within the Magus World, was actually controlled by Distorted Shadow, perhaps even as a clone!

“Is there a difference?” Boundless distorted shadows filled the void as his true body descended. The black rings melded with Distorted Shadow, revealing that the two were of the same essence.

“All I know is that all of you shall fall here…” Fusing back with Ignox, Distorted Shadow became even more difficult to comprehend. He seemed on the verge of reaching peak rank 8 again.

He was initially an incomplete conscient. Even after devouring the God of Murder, Cyric, and making use of his essence to recover, he’d only temporarily regained his status as a peak rank 8. He was
still a ways to go from true peak rank 8 power like Mother Core. Now, however, his might exceeded that of Mother Core, closing in on Leylin’s peak prowess.

“Mother Core, and the Lord of Original Sin! The two extreme powers of the Magus World… I see the rise of the stars from your death!” With the four gods present as well, Leylin and Mother Core were heavily surrounded.

*Rumble!* Silvanus’ will descended amidst a green light. The leader of the gods brought with him the power of the four elemental planes. Wind, earth, water, and fire. The four elemental gods had descended, forming a terrifying seal once more as they broke off all chances of escape!

“Gods!” Mother Core gazed at Distorted Shadow, seemingly in disbelief. “For the sake of internal conflict you’re actually willing to betray us and side with the gods?”

The fight between Leylin and Distorted Shadow had only been a conflict of interest before. Now, however, Distorted Shadow joining the gods would make him the archenemy of all Magi.

“How can my tolerance and greatness be estimated by you…” Distorted Shadow laughed maniacally, “I will soon become the God of Chaos in the World of Gods, still retaining my powers as a Magus. I am the only one qualified to reach the end of the Final War, obtaining eternity!”

The distortions around Distorted Shadow’s body began to go berserk, representing the agitation in his mind at this moment.
The four elemental planes surged, becoming the essence of a seal powered by the cries of the gods. Even then, Distorted Shadow’s laughter was more piercing than everything else. “Before this… Were you the one who revealed the two-world plan and caused the fall of the Chaos Lord and Evil Filthy Eye?” Struck by a powerful weapon like Eicher’s Thorn, Leylin now looked rather pale. Still his eyes emanated a brilliant lustre, even as his truesoul of original sin was weakening and the phantom hydra behind him withering away. “Yes,” Distorted Shadow did not hesitate at all, “Who told the Chaos Lord to block my path? The law of chaos belongs to me! Besides, only the fall of two peak rank 8s could show my sincerity. I even tried to scheme against you, but…” Distorted Shadow glanced at Leylin, as if disappointed at his failure in doing Leylin harm. “So, during the Magus Conference, did you use the power of distortion to cheat the oath?” Leylin deduced. “That’s right! Ask me if there’s anything else you’re unsure of, I’ll tell you everything. Whatever it is, from hereon, all traces of your existence shall be completely wiped out. You shan’t even exist in the river of space and time…” “There’s nothing else!” A smile appeared on Leylin’s face, causing Distorted Shadow to suddenly have a bad premonition, “You lot heard this, right?”

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“Yes, very clearly!” A couple of whistles sounded in the air, and another Nightmare Hydra came into the shattered space. Numerous peak rank 8 Magi made their way here, protected by the power of original sin.
The Darkness Lord, the Tree of Life, the Blood Knight... Even another Leylin appeared, seeming completely unharmed.
“You...” The appearance of so many peak rank 8 Magi seemed to destroy the gods’ glory, and Distorted Shadow shouted in derangement.
“Did you think that just your powers of distortion could deceive the truesoul of a being of laws?” The Leylin next to Mother Core sneered furtively, his body dispersing and turning into a dark bloody mist of original sin. “Even if I specifically showed you this move, you failed to consider I might be using it...”
Leylin looked at Distorted Shadow like one would at a moron, and the Magus started to cry out in insanity, “Impossible! Why did it turn out this way? I already used the power of distortion to deceive your soul... NO! ORIGINAL SIN!”
“You finally noticed?” Leylin gazed at Distorted Shadow with pity in his eyes, “Your power of distortion lost to my power of original sin in the contest, and I fooled your truesoul...”
“How... how’s that possible?” Distorted Shadow was most proficient at using the power of distortion to silently affect other beings. Planting a seed of distortion in Cyric, corroding and devouring Ignox, and his various setups for Leylin were all proof of this.
However, with Seven Sins supporting it, the power of original sin had extraordinary effect on the mind. In the clash of these two forces, Distorted Shadow had been defeated completely. He’d failed to deceive Leylin’s soul, instead being trapped under an illusion himself to reveal all his schemes.
Being defeated in the area he was most proud of, and defecting in
front of so many Magi, this was the greatest humiliation and blow Distorted Shadow ever had ever faced in his life. “I will kill you, all of you…” Distorted Shadow had completely gone insane. “I should be the one saying that! I shall be the one to judge you for your sins!” Leylin waved his hand.

*Bang! Bang! Bang!* The eight Lords of Calamity appeared one after the other, followed by the A.I. Chip clone and the Snake Dowager. The number of rank 8 existences present caused the gods to turn grim. For the sake of victory, and his own safety, Leylin hadn’t hesitated to give up his swamps and gather all his people here.

“In the name of the Allied Magus Conference, I hereby announce that Distorted Shadow has renounced the path of truth and given up on the glory of the Magi. He is no longer fit to be called a Magus!” The Darkness Lord announced, “From hereon, Distorted Shadow is a lapdog of the gods, and the enemy of the Magi!”

“The plan failed. Retreat!” Silvanus’ conscient descended with green light, “Save your strength!”

“What are we waiting for? Now’s the best time! If we take them out we’ll save hundreds of years in the war!” Leylin leapt out and exclaimed, Seven Sins emanating a demonic luster.

“Everyone, act according to plan!” the clone bellowed, light flashing in its eyes. Although the Lords of Calamity were strong, they had to join forces to survive amidst peak rank 8s and greater gods.

“With the bloodline as a foundation!” The Snake Dowager opened her arms, and the ball of snakes that was her true body appeared, hissing and roaring as it surged with bloodline force.

“With the power of calamity as the structure!” The eight Lords of Calamity roared in range, forming eight different nodes of a formation as they balanced perfectly with the snakes.
“Bloodline Calamity!” The A.I. Chip clone was at the centre, using its terrifying computing abilities to tune the might of the nine beings of law. It synergised bloodline force and the powers of calamity, forming the ultimate killing move.

Crimson crystals fell from the sky like snow, immediately defending against the attacks of Tyr and Tempus. It created a unique space around it, possessing a trace of spacetime power that separated the two gods from Gale Gorge.

Leylin soon moved out, Seven Sins in the form of a crossblade. He guided the uncountable crystals in the sky, sending them hurling down on the gods like hail.

“Prideguard!” Seven Sins turned into an armour that deflected Tempus’ final attack. Leylin then drove the crossblade that carried the power of blood and calamity through his forehead, destroying his truesoul. Silence in Death activated, ensuring no chance of Tempus ever resurrecting again.

“Vile Magus! You have killed yet another of our ranks. Even the Styx cannot wash you of your sins!” Tyr bellowed, but he continued to retreat. The only thing he was feeling now was regret. If he could go back in time, he swore he’d have given everything to kill Leylin at all costs.

However, Leylin did not give him this chance.

“Tyr, Mystra’s ally… Today marks the end of our conflict!” Seven Sins morphed through its various forms, eventually settling to become a black horned hammer.

“Fury Amplification!” “Blessing Of Greed!” The hammer crushed down, carrying a power that could destroy everything. Tyr screamed like a damsel in distress, as he frantically fled backwards, but he couldn’t escape the joint attack of ten rank 8s, countless crimson crystals sealing off his path causing him to accept his fate.

*Boom!* The divine weapon in Tyr’s hands cracked in its clash with Seven Sins, unable to bear the burden. The hammer soon
smashed Tyr’s head in, and destructive force ravaged the God of justice.
*Bang!* Everything soon returned to normal, but there were no more signs of Tyr in this world. Seven Sins cried in victory, its whole body shuddering to make its satisfaction known. Gluttony’s Devouring had absorbed the powers of two greater gods, actually making it feel bloated at the moment.
*Crash!* The barrier of spacetime broke apart, and Leylin moved out only to see a startled expression on Distorted Shadow’s face. He was in the midst of trying to break the barrier, trying to assist the two greater gods.
“Why? Are you that surprised?” Seven Sins turned into a fine longsword in Leylin’s hands, letting out a crisp ring.
“Tyr and Tempus, these two greater god actually died just like that…” It wasn’t just Distorted Shadow. The other gods, even the Darkness Lord Leylin had brought along was dumbfounded. Distorted Shadow reacted quickly, giving up on the fight to retreat immediately. However, Leylin would never give him this chance.
“Seven Sins absorbed too much energy, let’s use this chance to unleash it!” The crimson barrier appeared once more, this time sealing Distorted Shadow. Leylin followed him in.
Seven Sins had a network of veins on its body right now, squirming with excess energy. Seeing Distorted Shadow ahead of it, it roared loudly.
“Energy release!”

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The Battle of Gale Gorge would be passed down as an important turning point in the second Final War. The gods had lost Chauntea, Tyr, and Tempus, and their elemental gods were gravely injured. Their double agent had been hunted down and killed by Leylin as
well, delivering a heavy blow. From then on, the Magi used their various advantages to continue the war. As for Leylin, the main force in this battle, hymns of his prowess were passed down through the astral plane. His legend would not fade for millions of years.
"So the hidden thorn was taken care of!" Regardless of what others thought, Leylin was currently in an extremely jovial mood. Having killed Distorted Shadow, he felt like his soul of original sin had grown purer, bringing him closer to the threshold of space and time. Having devoured three peak rank 8 experts, he’d felt an indiscernible upgrade to his truesoul.

“Everyone else wasn’t injured, and even if Mother Core has to nurse her injuries for a while she did have gains in the gorge…” Leylin rubbed his chin. Mother Core’s battle was extremely maniacal this time. She’d given her all in order to stop Chauntea from fleeing, suffering severe injuries. It took Leylin’s assistance for her to kill the Earthmother and devour her powers. This was going to be a great benefit. Once she healed, Mother Core would be a step closer to rank 9, able to try and use the powers of spacetime.

“It’s time,” Leylin sighed and walked out, “Let’s begin the true plan.” The Underworld of the Gods currently stood opposed to him in the swamp, the vast Styx like a moat that stopped any Magus attacks. However, the Nightmare Hydra roared into the skies like thunder at this moment, charging in without the slightest hesitation whatsoever as it stirred up huge waves. The corrosion and
attraction of the Underworld had no power over Leylin.
*Crash!* Leylin broke the defences of the Styx instantly, entering a land very similar to the Underworld.

“Lord of Original Sin!” A greater god surrounded by the laws of death walked out from his palace, shock in his eyes. This was Kelemvor, the opponent Leylin was guarding against.

His shock was not a pretense. Even if the Magi had obtained victory at Gale Gorde, they’d also suffered severe injuries. Rumour had it that Leylin blocked Chauntea’s final attack to protect Mother Core, or both the beings who used the power of the earth would have ended up dead. However, Leylin seemed to be in his peak form here, showing no signs of weakness.

“Die!” The Nightmare Hydra hissed, and a silver light shot out of its vertical eye as it carried the powers of illusion.

“Argh… Don’t dream about it!” Kelemvor tried to put up a final struggle, but a layer of shadow had appeared on his body. This shadow had the same face as Kelemvor, but it was filled with pride and envy, “Hehe… Arrogant God of Death. So you have always been jealous of Jergal’s power and might, and feel like a stray dog that could be left behind at any time?”

This was the influence of Leylin’s powers of emotions. He planted the seed of original sin within Kelemvor’s body, dealing with him like Distorted Shadow dealt with Cyric. He stole a large amount of Kelemvor’s divine force, binding his divine body.

*Boom!* Seven Sins turned into a silver arrow that pierced through Kelemvor’s skull, immediately causing the fall of this greater god. Leylin closed his eyes, feeling his weapon greedily absorb the law of death and nourish him.

Leylin’s powers had long since surpassed Kelemvor’s, and the only reason the god had still been alive was because Leylin was toying with him. Now that he was serious, the Greater God of Death was no match for him!
“Even Seven Sins has Sloth’s Recovery as an ability. Do you think the Lord of Original Sin, someone controlling the law of sloth, would take any time to recover from injuries?” Leylin looked over at where Kelemvor once stood, speaking in a tone of mockery. However, Kelemvor was already wiped off the face of space and time, losing all traces of his existence. Without the assistance of a rank 9 he could not be resurrected.

*Hiss!* The Nightmare Hydra reared its heads and roared. Lightning, poison, acid, flames… All sorts of matter were spewed from its heads, the only common point being the powerful destructive properties. Kelemvor’s armies were devastated, the land ravaged as his divine palace and his petitioners and holy spirits within taken out.

After everything seemed to return to the beginning of the world, the figure of an ordinary old man dressed in linen appeared in the void. He stood there quietly, not emitting a trace of a powerful aura. The only distinct thing was his eyes, which seemed extremely bright.

“Jergal! I still thought you would help that student of yours!” The Nightmare Hydra shrunk under the mist, turning back into Leylin. “Even a God of Death must die, such are the laws of the world,” Jergal said in a discerning tone.

Although this god had handed most of his divinity and divine force to Kelemvor in the past, Leylin didn’t dare be complacent in front of him. He sensed that this opponent would be more powerful than the elemental gods.

“You should know my goal by now, right?” Leylin waved his hands, and the powers of original sin sealed the area, creating an illusion that Jergal and Leylin were just staring at each other in confrontation.

“Of course, your search for truth and eternity… Even as a god, I’m influenced by your perseverance…” Jergal smiled gently, “This
endless life allowed me to learn more than the rest. The Overgod and Magus Will are currently in the core of the Nirvana Battlefield, locked in battle. The turbulent currents of spacetime there will make it difficult even for existences like us to break in…

“You need my help, Magus.” Jergal looked at Leylin. This primordial God of Death evidently didn’t share the gods’ loyalty towards their World Will. He was instead similar to Leylin, wanting to ascend himself.

“Indeed.” This was Leylin’s purpose in coming here. For the sake of advancing to rank 9, he didn’t mind allying with a god.

“Very well, follow me!” Jergal parted the river with his arms, revealing a path to the core of this battlefield. The purging powers of the Styx had no effect on Leylin’s body of original sin, causing his face to change.

“The core of the Nirvana Battlefield is protected by the ultimate defences of the astral plane. Even having spent so much time, I’ve only managed to open up half the passageway…” The Styx brought the two to an empty void after a long journey. There were no consciences of beings of law here, only wild currents of spacetime with the power to destroy everything. The path of a peak rank 8 was the only way for one to protect themselves.

Leylin could feel two overweeningly powerful consciences in the centre of this void, infinitely close to comprehending the laws of spacetime yet stuck in a deadlock. The World Wills were in an extremely slow process of devouring each other, powered by the inhabitants of their worlds.

“I’m afraid that the victor of this battle will become a true rank 9…” From what Leylin could tell, these two consciences were halfway to rank 9. Only once they devoured their opponents could they break through the threshold, the true meaning of the prophecy of eternity.

“Although we’ll obtain their favour by aiding them, the leftovers
from someone else will never compare to what you earn yourself…” Jergal exclaimed, “The combined origin force of the two worlds will definitely be taken by the victor, we won’t have much of a share at all. Eternity will be but a distant dream…”
“What do you want to do?” Leylin asked.
“Ally with me, and we’ll consume the powers of the Magus World and the World of Gods, causing their fight to come to a stalemate. A thousand years, ten thousand years, hundred thousand years, a million years… We will continuously weaken their forces, eventually consuming one of the wills each!”
A crazed expression appeared on Jergal’s face as he spoke of this blatant plan. He didn’t think Leylin had any better options, being the strongest in his own camp at this point. If they joined forces, they could even extend the Final War to a billion years, weakening the World Wills and attempting to devour them as they made for eternity.
“Not a bad plan, and the success rate is extremely high…” Leylin clapped his hands and looked at Jergal. “However, how will two broken worlds with extremely weak wills aid our advancement?”
“You have a better plan?” Wariness surfaced on Jergal’s face. Dense power of death circled around him, many black skeletons arising as his guards.
“These World Wills are already quite weak! Once we devour them, we’ll be able to advance to rank 9!” Leylin laughed heartily, Seven Sins appearing in his hands.
*Bang!* A black tome of death appeared in Jergal’s hands, its writhing scriptures having recorded the end of all creatures. This was an overgod weapon as well.
“I knew our alliance would rupture eventually, but who knew it would only last this long…” Jergal sighed.
“You think too small, Jergal. Millennia of seclusion has caused you to lose your boldness and your sharp mind.” The Nightmare Hydra
behind Leylin fixed its eyes on Jergal, as if staring at delicious prey...
The Nirvana Battlefield was a place created by two World Wills, the most stable land within the astral plane. However, a terrifying earthquake suddenly rocked it in its entirety. Space trembled, thick and complicated chains of laws revealing themselves as they began to fall apart. The shackles that could confine Breaking Dawns broke all of a sudden, as the land that was more firm than magic alloy cracked. It was like the end of the world was nigh.

“What’s going on?” “Why is this happening?” The earthshaking changes immediately alarmed several existences. Be they greater gods or peak rank 8 Magi, everyone ignored their subordinates’ injuries and rushed towards the epicenter. A strong sense of unease was spreading within their hearts.

The Nirvana Battlefield, the intersection of Gale Gorge, the Dark Cage, and the Battle Hills, was shaking, violent explosions rocking the lands as columns of fire soared into the sky. The heat could reduce anything to nothingness, leaving a huge dark pit that led to the core of the battlefield.

“Spacetime laws!” the Darkness Lord muttered in excitement, “Someone broke through into the fight between the World Wills. Who is it?”

The Magi and Gods looked at each other, immediately placing their suspicious on Leylin and Jergal. A majority of the dense fog of Leylin’s original sin had dissipated in this earthquake, and given the
absence of the strongest members of each side it was sufficient to explain several questions.

“The laws of space and time!” “Eternity!” “Let’s go!” The Magi didn’t hesitate in the slightest as they headed for the Nirvana Battlefield. It was instead the gods that hesitated, eventually following Silvanus and the four elemental gods into the deep pit.

“LEYLIN! LEYLIN!” The first thing everyone heard when they entered the Nirvana Battlefield was a voice full of resentment and unwillingness. All they managed to see was the Nightmare Hydra roaring, filled with an aloofness despite the scales on its body being scattered around and some of its heads injured.

Leylin was wielding a longsword with both hands in the hydra’s shadow, having pierced through Jergal’s tome of death to directly behead him.

A strong devouring power exploded forth as the God of Death turned into black liquid, being greedily absorbed by Seven Sins. Absorbing the primordial laws of death, the hydra rapidly healed from its injuries, growing more and more powerful.

“An inexhaustible body, the ultimate inexhaustible body… Nobody below rank 9 can contend with the Lord of Original Sin…” Silvanus and the Darkness Lord cried out involuntarily.

“Everyone is here… That’s great! How could beings of law miss the passage of history?” Leylin looked around him with satisfaction.

“Lord of Original Sins, what exactly are you planning?” The Darkness Lord asked, a slight sense of excitement in his heart.

“Hmm?” Leylin turned back, releasing the power of original sin mixed with Jergal’s laws of death. Seven Sins rumbled as it struck the barrier where the two World Wills were fighting, and it began to crack.

“It’s obviously to pursue eternity and truth!” A terrifying aura exploded forth as Leylin shot forth with one final blow. Having
been struck several times as Leylin guided Jergal’s attacks in their battle, the barrier finally exploded with a huge bang. It caused the two frighteningly powerful World Wills to descend upon them, full of blazing ire!
The Overgod and Magus Will had expended much of each other’s energy, but they weren’t too weak yet. It was far too easy for them to suppress a group of peak rank 8s.
“Overgod!” Silvanus and a group of gods immediately knelt down. “Mighty Magus Will!” Cold sweat dripped down Darkness Lord’s forehead as he bowed alongside the other Magi.
Only Leylin stood tall in this atmosphere, looking at the glamour of the two World Wills in earnest.
“Indeed, only wills with this much power can satisfy my requirements and allow me to advance!” Leylin burst into a manic laughter, his Nightmare Hydra growing in size as the power of original sin was flaunted.
A violent fury emanated from the two wills, like giant dragons that had been challenged by ants. A seal of spacetime was formed once more. The Magus World gazed down at Leylin, about to mobilise the law of time to thoroughly exterminate this ant who dared to resist.
“The time has arrived!” However, Leylin revealed a strange smile at that moment.

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A while ago, in the seventh subterranean level of the Magus World. Leylin’s A.I. Chip clone was present here, surrounding Mother Core alongside Shar, the Snake Dowager, and a host of Lords of Calamity.
“You know what we need, hand it over!” The A.I Chip clone stood out, looking at the seriously injured Mother Core, “I already helped
you obtain Chauntea’s powers. Live through this, and you’ll be able to pry into the next realm…

“Now that we don’t owe each other, will you surrender your will fragment or do you want to fall?”

Mother Core had been seriously injured in the battle with Chauntea, and all the other existences had rushed underground. There was nobody to come rescue her.

“Your actions make me lament…” A green light flew into Leylin’s hands. When faced with survival and death, she’d decisively chosen the former.

“Great, let’s begin!” Shar walked out in leisure from behind Leylin, sending a golden seed to Leylin’s hands. This was why she hadn’t appeared at Gale Gorge.

Once the green light and golden seed came into contact, a terrifying change occurred. The seed grew instantly, growing tender branches and soft green leaves as it became a lofty grand tree.

“Tree of Life Project, activate!” The clone laughed loudly, a myriad of threads hanging from the huge Tree of Life beginning to spread around the entire Magus World. The Tree of Life absorbed the nutrients of the Magus World, strengthening and growing. The injured Mother Core could only sigh sadly at the scene, leaving the range of the Magus World.

Leylin had been pondering one question ever since his return from the Shadow World, and that was on how to deal with the World Will. The Overgod and Magus Will would definitely become a hurdle on his path to rank 9, something that he couldn’t overcome himself.

Leylin hadn’t been able to think of a way to deal with these powerful existences until Shar’s actions inspired him. Although the two World Wills were powerful, they were still the same as the World Will of the Shadow World. They were existences composed of the consciousness and thoughts of the entire world!
The Tree of Life project could thus be used the same way. With some analysis and modification, the A.I. Chip had refined the Tree of Life. It was already a huge tree of light that occupied the entire Magus World, and other than Mother Core and his family that had been shifted out beforehand nothing was spared.

Having been native to the Magus World, Leylin had long since initiated the mutations and implanted himself into the subconscious of the Magus World. He was even more thorough than Shar.

“The most difficult thing to complete the Tree of Life is existences like Mother Core,” the clone muttered, “But I only need 50% of the authority to influence the World Will. Even if I don’t occupy the entirety of the underground, Mother Core’s portion makes up for the difference…”

Peak rank 8 existences formed a significant portion of the World Will. That was the reason Leylin had been so nice to Mother Core all this while, reinforcing her when she was in trouble. He intended for success in one fell swoop. With his methods, he’d already gained control of more than 90% of the Magus World!

“It has begun!” The chaos within the Nirvana Battlefield had been transmitted over at that moment. The clone entered the Tree of Life. *Bang!* The glowing Tree of Life opened its crown, spreading through the World of Gods as well, and started spreading throughout the God’s World.

Numerous fine lights similar to willows descended from the skies of the prime material plane. Every living creature, the mountains, the rivers, the consciousness of the land itself… It was all stripped, being assimilated into Leylin. The same went for Baator, the Abyss, and the Celestial Planes. Other than some of Leylin’s subordinates within his divine kingdom, nobody was spared.

Indeed, Leylin had completed the Tree of Life Project in the Magus World, having tasked Shar to prepare for this a while prior. With the Overgod forcing mutations in the prime material plane to adapt
it to the darkness, Leylin had been given the opportunity to take action there as well, initiating Project X. Furthermore, Leylin had just swallowed the most powerful god of all, Jergal. With the fragments of some other divine forces, he held more than 80% of the authority there as well. An omnipresent Tree of Life reverently descended above the dumbbell shaped fused world, releasing beautiful light into the astral plane.

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*Kacha! Kacha!* The gods and Magi looked on in shock within the Nirvana Battlefield, as the original killing intent of the World Wills ground to a halt like machines without oil. Numerous roots from the Tree of Life slowly wrapped the two up, radiating lofty light as it took control of them.

“I still need the fragments of will from the surviving beings of law to completely control the World Wills…” Leylin’s eyes swept over the gods one by one, and they started to flee in fright.

“Space Blockade!” he smiled indifferently, manipulating the Overgod into taking action. The frozen space cut off the hopes of the gods, even pulling out and caging a green figure.

“Overgod… Why?” Silvanus asked with teary eyes. Sadly, his calls had no effect on the World Will as Leylin’s sword penetrated his head.

A small light flew out, increasing Leylin’s control of the Overgod. The World Will’s roar swept all the remaining gods away.

“What about you?” Leylin looked to the Magi native to the Magus World, “Will you hand control over voluntarily, or would you prefer I take it by force?” Seven Sins was dripping with blood.

The Magi understood the situation well, immediately handing over their portion of the will and increasing Leylin’s control once more.
“More than 99.99% control…” Leylin’s gaze flickered, “Fuse together!”
The two enormous World Wills slowly started to merge together within the Tree of Life, as if in the process of exchanging laws. The Overgod had its laws of space, while the Magus Will seemed to fluctuate in time.

“With my path as the lead, guided by the power of spacetime…” The Nightmare Hydra and the path of original sin appeared behind Leylin, merging with the Tree of Life.

“He’s advancing! He’s advancing to rank 9!” Tears appeared on the faces of the Darkness Lord and the other Magi. They wanted to kneel, but the frozen space prevented from moving. They just watched on at the birth of a rank 9, as if they were on a pilgrimage…
The most important requirement for one to advance to rank 9 was that their path support the laws of space and time. With peak nightmare force, Leylin completely met that requirement. The laws themselves? They would come from the merged World of Gods and Magus World.
The first thing he acquired was the Overgod’s law of space. The blurry figure was wrapped up in nightmare force, integrated into the path of original sin.

[Beep! Host has devoured the Overgod. Comprehension of the law of space is currently at 100%…]
The same prompt followed for the Magus Will as well:

[Beep! Host has devoured the Magus Will. Comprehension of the law of time is currently at 100%…]
Host path is compatible, spacetime laws perfected. Beginning advancement…]

*Bang!* A great pressure suddenly rocked the astral plane, sweeping the Darkness Lord and the rest into a random corner of the universe. Leylin’s path of original sin grew larger and larger,
expanding until it encased both the large worlds. The essence of the two started to merge with Leylin, as the lights of eternity gradually blossomed.

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Leylin’s conscience awoke after an unknown amount of time. “This is rank 9?” he asked himself, “All-knowing and omnipotent.” He sensed the locations of Syre and Daniel, Isabel, Shar, and the rest of his kith and kin. They were doing extremely well in a large world.

Right now, Leylin could learn of anything in the astral plane in an instant, performing any task he wished immediately. He was rank 9, the Magus of Magi, a god amongst gods! Nothing in the astral plane could deceive him, even the ancient Wisdom Tree hidden at its fringes. It had exuded a friendly aura, its posture humble and insignificant.

‘So the ancient Wisdom Tree gave up on rank 9, allowing itself to roam across the universe. Even though its powers were close to that of the Magus Will, it couldn’t intervene in the real world…’ Leylin could now kill the tree with a mere thought.

However, he didn’t have any conflict of interest with it, in fact having been done a favour in the past. He thus let it live in peace… Perhaps this was a form of wisdom shown by the tree itself.

Although he could meet his family with just a thought, Leylin still decided to scan his own body first.
“Eternity… Are rank 9s truly eternal?” Leylin knew he had unlimited life. Even if the Magus World and World of Gods were destroyed, he would not be affected at all. However, this was only within his own universe. He now sensed many other beings outside the astral plane, possessing similar power to him. There was technology, supernatural abilities… All kinds of beings came before his mind.

“The more you know, the smaller you actually feel…” Leylin’s will had surpassed the shackles of the astral plane, entering another region outside it. He detected another universe nearby, equal in power to his own. From it he detected a familiar scent of science and civilisation, and noticed the planet he’d lived on before his transmigration.

‘I am close to eternity, but not truly there. With the laws of spacetime mastered, the next task is to create a law that surpasses all others, standing on the path of the truth… The larger the multiverse, the more there is for me to explore…’

Always on the pursuit of truth, Leylin found himself a new target. With a path ahead, a goal to achieve, he would never grow disheartened, never lose his motivation to forge ahead on his path.

“The future… it seems extremely interesting!” He looked over the astral plane, seeing through everything.

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In a distant time, on a blue planet that relied heavily on science and technology. This world shone in its technology, almost every citizen having their own A.I. Chip that surpassed human ability.

*Rumble!* The skies slowly turned dark, revealing a terrifying black hole.

*Bzzzz—* Many strange, malevolent insects flew forth from the black hole, devouring everything in their path as they left behind a
trail of death and terror.
“Not good, the A.I. Chip can’t analyse them!”
“Teleportation isn’t effective… What in the world are those things?”
“The starfleet and the fighters were all annihilated!”
“Bioweapons failed… The superhero team was defeated. Dimensional combat is ineffective, and the time machines have stopped functioning… The Federation is about to perish…” A lot of news was being spread through the A.I. Chips, causing despair to surface on the faces of this world’s citizens.
They’d relied on their technology to conquer world after world, developing into an unimaginably powerful civilisation. How could they be so vulnerable to external attacks?
“You can’t run away, Khail.” A face of strange worms spoke out, like a god’s decree. A sorry figure escaped from the black hole.
“This… Who are you?” a small boy asked, stunned.
“My name is Khail… I came here to escape someone. Sorry, I’ve brought you trouble!” An apologetic look surfaced on the silhouette’s face.
“That thing that’s about to destroy the world?” The small boy was flabbergasted, but the A.I. Chip in his brain told him this fellow wasn’t lying. “Who is it?”
Khail smiled bitterly. “It’s the Ultimate Destroyer, the Incarnation of Sin… The Seeker of Truth, travelling the endless multiverse… The Nightmare Hydra, Lord of Original Sin. The rank 9 Magus—Leylin Farlier!”